

## Memorandum

March 2, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Yakima City Council  
Robert Harrison, City Manager

From: Scott Schafer, Director of Public Works  
Joan Davenport, Community and Economic Development Director  
Ken Wilkinson, Parks and Recreation Manager  
Joseph Calhoun, Planning Manager

Subject: Community Gardens

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At the February 2, 2021 City Council meeting, staff was directed to begin to explore the possibilities of creating community gardens in coordination with community organizations and interested volunteers. An initial meeting was held with staff and three teachers from the Yakima School District. Ideas of coordinating with the teachers and students was discussed. The teachers stated that they will start discussions with Yakima School District Administration and identify the needed steps to proceed with student involvement. A second meeting was held with staff and with Andy Ferguson of First Baptist Comunidad Cristiana of Yakima and Jennifer Loyd with the WSU Extension 4 H Youth Development program. Many ideas were discussed. Mr. Ferguson discussed the possibility of a community garden in an area adjacent to the church which is currently gravel. Ms. Loyd discussed the curriculum she has used with student involvement in gardening. Ms. Loyd is also associated with the Master Gardeners in Yakima and stated she would inquire about Master Gardener involvement in a community garden project. A few community members have contacted the City regarding being involved in a community garden project as well.

During the meetings a list of guidelines has been started for a successful community garden project. They are as follows:

1. Active coordinators
2. Spring clean up requirement from participants
3. Fall clean up and wrap up
4. Dues
5. Written rules
6. Gardener contact information lists
7. Community garden sign
8. Written waiting lists
9. Planned periodic clean ups
10. Garden care taking policies
11. Task assignments & work requirements
12. Coordinator
13. Winterization plan
14. Written enforcement policy
15. Planned social events



There are various types of community gardens. They are as follows:

- Plot Gardens – divided into individual plots
- Cooperative Gardens – all work as a team on one garden
- Youth Gardens – work with school children and neighborhood youth
- Entrepreneurial Gardens – sell produce
- Therapeutic Gardens

Many types of organizations may be interested in partnering on a community garden.

- Churches
- Citizens' groups
- Colleges and universities
- Community and senior centers
- Community service organizations
- Cooperative extension offices
- Food banks
- Health departments
- High-density housing developments
- Housing and social service authorities
- Municipalities
- Neighborhood associations
- Parks and recreation
- Private businesses
- Railroad and transit lines
- Retirement communities
- Schools



There are a few identified challenges to consider as we enter into partnership with the community on community gardens. Below are listed the items to consider.

- No topsoil
- Water sources
- Weeds
- Angry neighbors
- Arguments between gardeners
- Abandoned plots
- Theft
- Vandalism

Continued efforts will be made in looking for partnering organizations and volunteers. Community gardens can be very successful, but do require careful organization and planning.