



Community Gardening Policy

Reference Number:	4.31
Type:	Council Policy
Category:	Environment and Open Space
Relevant Community Vision 2040 Outcome:	<u>Excellence in Customer Experience and Service Provision</u> We will foster an organisational culture focused on continuous improvement and delivering excellence in customer experience and service provision <u>Story Telling and Connection</u> We will connect with our community, telling our stories, sharing knowledge, increasing awareness, creating opportunity, strengthening partnerships and promoting achievements <u>Local Neighbourhoods</u> Our families, friends and neighbours create memories together We create local connection within and between neighbourhoods <u>Valuing Nature</u> Our city is cool, green and filled with life We work together with our community to protect our environment <u>Vibrant Places</u> Our spaces are unique, creative, interesting and engaging <u>Connecting and Belonging</u> Our community has access to spaces, services and support when needed We create opportunities for communities to collaborate, engage and connect
Responsible Officer(s):	Manager Open Space, Recreation and Property
First Issued/Approved:	12 March 2013
Minutes Reference:	CoS 5/08/2024, Item 4.29
Last Reviewed:	August 2024
Next Review Due:	July 2026

Applicable Legislation:	• Local Government Act 1999 • Community Land Management Plans • Planning, Development, and Infrastructure Act 2016 • Electricity Act 1996 • Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Commonwealth) • Environment Protection Act 1993 • South Australian Water Corporation Act 1994 • Road Traffic Act 1961 • Native Vegetation Act 1991 • Disability Discrimination Act 1992
Related Policies:	• City of Charles Sturt Open Space Strategy • Public Consultation Policy • Environmental Sustainability Policy • Living Green 2020 - Refresh
Related Procedures:	

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Community Gardening Policy is to define the principles that underpin the City of Charles Sturt's commitment to supporting Community Gardening activities and groups within the City.

Community Gardening offers a wide range of cultural, social, economic, environmental, health and wellbeing benefits to our community, including:

- Building social networks and strengthening community relationships, within local neighbourhoods.
- Building members confidence, capacity and skill in gardening, community organisation, and group participation.
- Building community connection to place.
- Increased access to fresh, local produce (which contributes to increasing our community's food security and positive benefit to household budgets).
- Opportunity for both formal and informal education, for example, sustainable gardening, horticulture, food preparation, governance skills.
- Health and fitness benefits through physical activity.
- A sense of achievement that comes through growing one's own food and/or improving the neighbourhood amenity.
- Contributing to the ecological sustainability and amenity in our urban environments.
- Psychological and spiritual benefits, including building one's sense of purpose through ongoing participation, offering a place for peace and relaxation and reducing social isolation.
- Increased biodiversity.
- Increased habitat opportunities.
- Contribute to urban cooling and mitigating climate change risks.
- Mitigation of the urban heat island effect; and
- Opportunities to build and sustain a vibrant, connected, and resilient community.

2. Scope

This Policy relates to of Community Gardening activities on:

- Council owned and/or managed land; and
- Land owned by other public authorities.

The Community Gardening Policy encompasses all forms of Community Gardening including:

- Formal Community Gardens which are Incorporated, self-insuring associations, are community led and managed, not-for-profit initiatives, where members of the local community come together to garden in individual or shared plots and produce is intended for the consumption of the gardeners.
- Informal Community Gardens, which are community, led, grow a variety of fruits, vegetables, and ornamental plants for community use and consumption.
- Community Gardening groups who adopt large and small areas of public space, including reserve areas, streetscapes, and garden beds to improve and maintain these areas in consultation with Council staff.

3. Policy Statement

The City of Charles Sturt recognises the importance of sustainably managed Community Gardening activities for the ongoing health and wellbeing of our community and acknowledges the importance of Community Gardening activities being community led initiatives.

Across our City, there are varying degrees of community capacity, social capital, and skills available to establish and maintain gardens. As such, Council has a key role in community development, capacity building, skills development, and place-making, to identify opportunities, support and empower communities to establish and manage their own gardens.

Community management of gardens will ensure:

- The establishment of a garden is based on a high level of local demand.
- The garden design and structure reflect the local communities' own needs and character; and
- The garden will have a cohesive and consistent membership base to ensure its long-term viability and sustainability.

The preferred approach is an equitable spread of community gardening opportunities across the City; however, garden distribution will depend on community interest and the availability of appropriate sites. Provision will be on an as needs basis rather than a structured or targeted approach. However, before committing to any new formal community garden, consideration must be given to the provision and capacity of other existing community gardens in the area to ensure there is not a duplication of facilities or inappropriate allocation of resources.

Forms of support for Community Gardens

It is recognised that the ongoing success of any Community Gardening group is dependent on the successful partnership between Council and the group. In this partnership, Council will assist in:

- The provision of safe and accessible public open space for the establishment, management, and operation of Community Gardening activities.
- Processes which are consistent, transparent, equitable and are compatible with other activities at the garden site and local resident needs;
- Work with Community Gardening groups to ensure security of tenure, acknowledging that Community Gardening activities are medium to long term projects.
- Assist with the development of governance and management plans.

- Provision of a suite of references and resources to assist community members in establishing and managing Community Gardening projects.
- Identification/facilitation of training opportunities.
- Promote and raise awareness of Community Gardening.
- Material support to assist in the establishment and non-regular maintenance of a community gardening project, such as labour, machinery, or construction materials. Requests for support will be considered on a case-by-case basis; and
- Identification of grant or sponsorship opportunities that are available from other sources, including state and federal government, private businesses or philanthropic sources and assistance in the application process required of such opportunities.

The degree of support that may be provided by Council in the above (or other) cases will be determined by the following:

- The level of demand and support for Community Gardening in a given location.
- The level of community-wide benefit provided by the Community Gardening opportunity (including the inclusiveness of its membership structure).
- The capacity for the community gardening activity to deliver broader place making outcomes that celebrate and enhance a local sense of community and unique identity.
- Evidence of efforts to seek support from other sources.
- The availability and suitability of resources within the Council to respond to the request for support.
- Use of Council-owned land will be considered for formal Community Gardens on a case-by-case basis.

4. Definitions

Nil