



RICHMOND GROWS GARDENS

Community Garden Handbook



DEPARTMENT OF
**PARKS, RECREATION
AND COMMUNITY
FACILITIES**

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Program Overview

How to Use this Handbook

This handbook contains information on the general rules of the Richmond Grows Program and is primarily intended to be a resource for garden stewards, or those who are interested in applying, holding a permit for one of the city parcels, and responsible for all activities on site.



All garden participants are welcome to use this as a tool and resource for their own gardens!



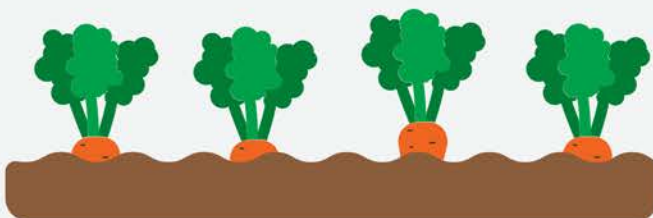
Richmond Grows Gardens (RGG) is an initiative of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities created by City Council and the Mayor's office in 2011 as a result of community input.

Goal

Richmond Grows Gardens provides city-owned parcels for community-led agriculture and horticulture projects as well as programming support in order to cultivate green spaces for growing food, community, and environmental resilience.

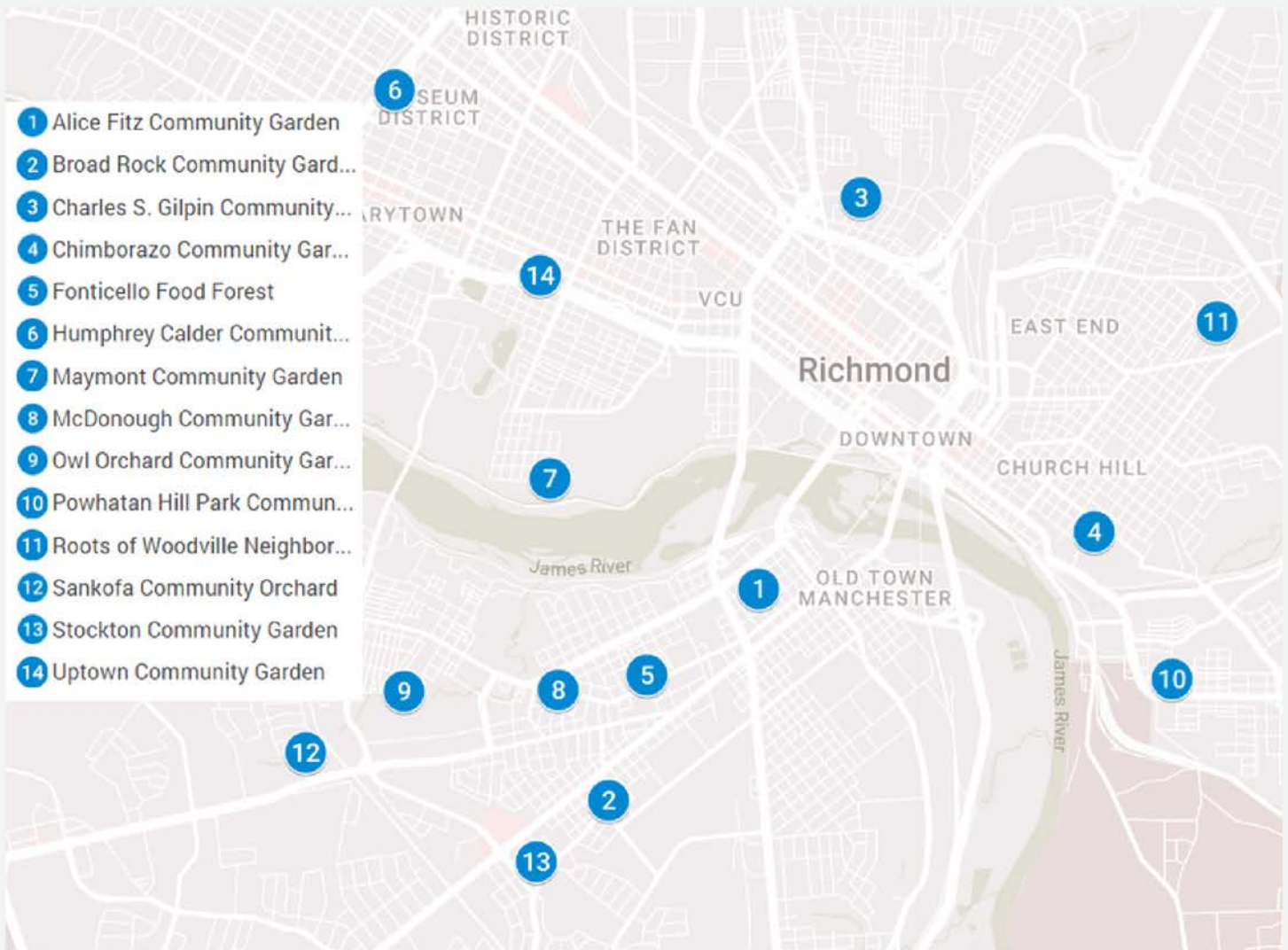
Mission

Cultivating community in city spaces with plants to achieve food access and environmental resilience



Sites

RGG currently has 25 parcels of city-owned land in the program. The number of parcels that are available for new gardens varies. Please check with the Richmond Grows Gardens Coordinator about availability.



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Program Structure

Richmond Grows Gardens has one full-time Program Coordinator, referred to as the RGG Coordinator throughout this handbook, who oversees all aspects of the program.

Responsibilities of the RGG Coordinator:



Providing technical assistance on urban agriculture topics, such as pest/disease identification and control, soil health, composting, etc.



Supporting applicants in paperwork and program requirements with their garden permit application.



Managing incoming requests for resources and distributing them equitably across sites, with a focus on sites with fewer resources.



Inspecting sites regularly to ensure they are being kept in good condition and that the sites are safe and welcoming

Complete a report twice a year on each community garden with details of the garden's status, including any problems that need to be addressed. The report will be given to the Garden Steward.



Proactive communication

- Regularly update Garden Stewards of any program changes or resources.
- Notify garden stewards if the sites are not being maintained appropriately and the necessary adjustments to prevent losing permit.



What is a Garden Steward?

Garden sites are maintained by garden groups; every garden group must have identified a Garden Steward. Garden Stewards serve as the main point of contact for the site, but also often serve in a leadership role for coordinating activities, maintaining records, and supporting the success of the garden.

Responsibilities of the Garden Stewards include:



Creating a safe and welcoming environment for community participation



Maintaining paperwork for the garden, such as permit renewals, annual fees, proof of liability coverage, and plot applications



Maintaining frequent communication at your garden site to provide updates and respond to participant needs



Coordinating any shared maintenance work for the site to ensure a clean and well-maintained space throughout all seasons



Regularly updating the RGG Coordinator of any needs, infrastructure plans, or other concerns at the site, and responding to RGG Program notices or requests within 14 days.



Participation Requirements

In order to apply for a community garden permit, the following must be met:



The permit applicant must be an individual associated with an organization or unofficial association, such as a neighborhood association or grassroots organization.



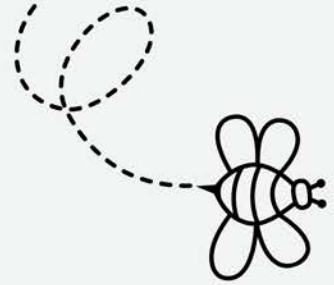
If the applicant is not going to serve as the Garden Steward, then the group/organization/association applying must designate a Garden Steward to be responsible for its community garden and to serve as the primary contact for the RGG Coordinator.



Priority for permits will be given to Richmond residents.



Application Process



Attend an Information Session Before Applying

- The RGG Coordinator hosts information sessions twice a year to review the program guidelines, best practices for stewarding a garden site, and to refer to resources. All interested applicants must attend an information session before their application will be considered.
- The sessions will be posted on the Richmond Grows Gardens [website](#) and through the department's and program's social media channels.

Gathering Neighborhood Support for Your New Garden

- Applicants will be required to demonstrate that they adequately informed the neighborhood of its plans to create a community garden by notifying all residents within a 150 ft. radius of the proposed community garden site. The organization applying for a permit shall demonstrate support for its application by any of the following methods:
 - A letter of support from the active community or neighborhood association located nearest to the proposed garden site;
 - A petition of support with at least 15 signatures within 4 blocks of the garden site.

Preparing Your Application

- Applicants will have to include a variety of details about their plans for the site in the application, such as:
 - Seasonal maintenance plans,
 - Plans for coordination of workdays,
 - Plans for recruiting volunteers or broader community involvement,
 - And any plans to build a structure(s) on the site.
- Review the example application to ensure you have all your information.



Submitting the Application

- New garden permit applications are accepted on a rolling basis, but permits are granted during October - January.
- Current Garden Stewards renewing an application or those with a multi-year permit application will be requested to review and update their garden information annually in November.
- Garden Stewards are restricted to one site per application, unless an agreement for additional sites is reached with the RGG Coordinator.
- The application to permit a site can be completed here.

Permit

- Once your application is accepted, a new garden permit requires a non-refundable \$50 fee for the first year. The Garden Steward will pay a non-refundable annual renewal fee of \$25 each following year.
- All fees will be collected by the Friends of Community Gardens via Verdant Richmond. Detailed instructions will be sent by the RGG Coordinator.
- If a garden is not in compliance with RGG program rules and guidelines and/or other City regulations, written notice will be given.
 - The garden steward will take steps to reinstate compliance within 14 days.
 - If issues are not addressed, the Community Garden Coordinator will consult with the community garden resource group to determine next steps, which may include permit termination.
- Other examples of violations of programmatic rules that could lead to permit revocation include:
 - Garden groups have abandoned their gardens or are unwilling to address or rectify violations.
 - Garden groups that repeatedly do not adhere to other City Park Rules after being provided notice.
- The RGG Coordinator is required to provide at least 60 days written notice of permit revocation.



- Multi-year permits may be granted to community garden sites that have successfully maintained a site for at least two years continuously with obvious community support and a history of following the rules and regulations.
- Garden groups or stewards can hold permits for multiple RGG sites as long as the following conditions are met:
 - Either the RGG Coordinator or the Deputy Director for Parks has granted permission;
 - Each site has an assigned representative to coordinate garden activities and volunteers;
 - The garden group or steward is providing support and meeting the needs of each garden site, and;
 - They communicate with the site representative and RGG Coordinator

Liability Coverage

- Permittees will be required to provide annual proof of insurance in the amount of \$1 million naming the City as an additional insured and indemnify the City against any individual claimant, regardless of whether or not that individual is affiliated with the Group.
 - If you are unsure where you can obtain appropriate insurance, reach out to the RGG Coordinator.



Richmond Grows Gardens Rules

Establish a Garden Type

The following are the types of community gardens that are covered under the Richmond Grows Garden Program. Some parcels are better equipped than others for particular uses. As recently passed by Richmond's City Council, all gardens (no matter the type) can sell items grown from the sites in order to generate revenue to maintain the garden program.

Community Garden, personal allotment



In allotment gardens, individuals or households register for a garden bed that they maintain on their own schedule. Individuals cannot sign up for a plot at multiple RGG sites.

Garden stewards must develop an application process for beds and maintain an active waiting list.

- Community garden participants are limited to one garden plot per household, unless
 - On May 15 of each year there are still empty plots AND there is not an active waitlist for the garden
- There should be a renewal process every year
- If a participant does not maintain, renew their plot or does not pay their fees by January 15th, the Garden Steward may offer it to the next individual on the waiting list



These gardens may choose to collect plot registration fees, but are not required to do so.

- If fees are collected, they cannot exceed \$1 per square foot of the individual's plot and options to reduce or waive fees must be offered.

Maintenance of communal spaces is coordinated by the Garden Steward or other garden leadership in the form of workdays or assignment of maintenance roles/schedules.





Community Garden, sharing garden

This type of community garden includes a shared growing space model with shared beds/plots that are accessible to all members of the garden. Designated plots for individuals or families are not a main feature of this type of garden.

Garden leadership organizes regular opportunities for the shared maintenance and harvest of crops. Volunteers may also grow for neighbors, organizations, or other mutual aid efforts.



Community Orchards / Food Forests

Community orchards or food forests are a technique often used for larger garden parcels (exceeding 0.5 acre of land). They frequently consist of edible perennial plants, such as fruit bushes and trees, that require long-term investment. These are often promoted to any community members for public forage and maintenance is coordinated by garden leadership.



Market Gardens

A market garden is a special designation for a garden or food forest parcel that plans to host markets on a regular basis. This designation means that your garden plans to offer the sale of produce onsite for the purposes of increasing neighborhood access to fresh fruits and vegetables or ongoing sustainability of the garden.

In order to receive this designation, your group must be able to legally receive the funds and maintain sales records. All money generated must be documented and reported to the department through the RGG Coordinator, or designee, upon request. If a site pursues this designation, they will be allowed to promote their market garden publicly to neighbors in immediate proximity to the site, via either printed materials or social media.



Community Conservation & Restoration

These gardens are perennial focused and aim to produce a high ecological yield. Designed to be lower maintenance than annual vegetable production over time, they still may require significant landscape restoration, such as invasive species removal. These gardens aim to enhance the environment by employing conservation landscape practices, adhering to sound ecological restoration methods, utilizing primarily natives of a local ecotype, and enhancing underutilized property to provide insect habitat and forage, stormwater management, urban heat island mitigation, and place making principles.

While edibles may or may not be incorporated, these spaces intend to achieve environmental enhancement and beautification on parcels that differ from the way sharing gardens, personal allotment gardens, orchards/food forests, or market gardens require frequent tending, ample community gathering space, permanent watering infrastructure, and/or accessibility for large groups.



Other

Richmond Grows Gardens encourages innovation and creativity. If the proposed garden does not fit into one of the previous categories, you may apply for a community garden permit in the "other" category by providing details on the organization and mission of the garden.

Create Procedures for Community Participation

Depending on the garden type, community and neighbor participation may look different. At a *minimum*, there should be an established communication channel for the Garden Steward to communicate updates to all participants and so participants can easily bring any concerns or needs to the Garden Steward. Examples include an email listserv, a Facebook group, an Instagram page, or a standing meeting with all participants. Gardens should choose the method that works best for them.

The following are strongly encouraged to ensure the garden site is seen as welcoming, encourages participation by surrounding neighbors, and responds to the needs of community:



1 Post a sign that includes the name of the garden, whether or not it is open to the public, and how to get involved.



2 Create a way for general community inquiries and respond in a timely manner.



3 Organize events and promote them in the neighborhood to increase awareness of the site and build community.



4 Coordinate volunteer workdays to support large maintenance projects.



Maintenance Requirements

No matter the garden type, each site must be kept clean and well-maintained throughout all seasons. Some basic guidelines and expectations are:



Weeds must be kept under control.



Crops harvested in a timely manner to prevent spoilage.



Plants intended to be grown for seed, pollinator gardens, or winter cover crops may be kept in the garden, as long as contained in the beds.



Only the use of organic fertilizers, insecticides and herbicides are allowed.



Ensure the timely disposal of trash and other debris from around the garden.

Grass Maintenance

All participating garden groups are responsible for grass maintenance, which should be regularly maintained to not exceed height determined by City Code Section 11-105a. Maintaining a regular mowing schedule is the responsibility of the Garden Group.

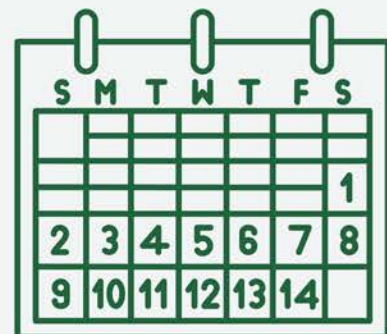
In some instances, the RGG Coordinator can facilitate city services to cut the grass. There are some important considerations and limitations of this resource.



- The grass is cut by either the Department of Public Works' Grounds Division or the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities.
- **Neither department will mow within the fence borders of a garden. This is the sole responsibility of the garden group.**
- The entities who typically cut the grass at the garden sites do their best to keep the grass cut and not damage any other vegetation or infrastructure, however, there is no guarantee that this will be avoided.
- The City's grass-cutting schedule is on a 10-14 day rotation. Due to staff, equipment capacity, and weather conditions, this schedule may vary. If your garden has experienced delays in cutting the grass, we can do our best to bring it to the attention of the appropriate team.
- We cannot typically respond to urgent grass-cutting requests. Please make requests to the RGG Coordinator at least a week in advance.

Non-compliance

If maintenance standards are not being met, the RGG Coordinator will provide the Garden Steward with clear steps to fix the situation and steps to resolve the issue must be taken within 14 days.





City Park Rules

All Richmond Grows Garden sites are located on city-owned land and managed by Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities. As a result, they are required to follow all other Richmond City Park Rules. Those include:

- Park hours are from sunrise to sunset unless covered by a special permit
- Glass is prohibited in city parks
- No parking on the grass
- No amplified music without a special permit
- Dogs must be kept on a leash
- No alcoholic beverages are allowed
- No open fires are allowed outside of park fireplaces and grills
- No golf or archery is allowed
- No tents, stages or other special apparatus is allowed without a permit
- No cutting of trees



Additional protocols, permits and city requirements



Richmond Grows Gardens Resource Group

After a few years of RGG's operation, Garden Stewards decided that there should be a collective governing approach among the community gardens that shares in visioning and program oversight with the RGG Coordinator and creates opportunities for sharing resources, both monetary and knowledge-based.

The intention of the group has been envisioned as follows:

1. Collaborating with the other garden spaces as it relates to

- Sharing resources
- Sharing infrastructure (existing or procuring new)
- Support programming, development, and problem-solving
- Promoting other gardens' works

2. Assisting the program coordinator as it relates to

- Visioning the future of the program
- Providing input on significant changes to the program
- Decisions related to pulling permits
- Advocating for City resources, policy changes, etc.



In the event that an individual garden site is at risk of losing a permit, the responsibility of the group is to ensure that the garden site is supported and that a permit is not being unnecessarily revoked. Finally, if the program receives monetary resources, the group can provide support in determining an equitable way to distribute it across the sites.



Water Access

Currently, water infrastructure varies across garden sites. As a result, there are a variety of water and irrigation options and requirements; garden stewards will need to assess which option is best for the site. Reach out to the RGG Coordinator to discuss water access solutions. Options are below.



Water infrastructure may exist at a site, for example, a spigot on a PRCF building, water fountain, or a fire hydrant. If these are available, the RGG Coordinator can facilitate access to these resources.



Portable Water Meter at Fire Hydrant

This requires a refundable deposit, plus additional monthly water usage costs. See steps below.

- Request and pay for a Portable Water Meter Permit through the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) Technical Services Division located at 400 Richmond Highway (646-3000)
- DPU will issue the portable water meter and hydrant key
- Applicant has to purchase a Reduced Pressure Zone (RPZ) backflow preventer (between \$20 to \$50) and install on the portable water meter
- Applicant will install the portable water meter with the RPZ device on the public fire hydrant. The DPU Cross Connection Specialist will inspect the backflow device installation.
- Applicant must bring the meter to the Commercial Meter Shop at 400 Richmond Highway (646-8460) to be read by the 2nd business day of the month. Failure to do so will result in a late penalty charge of \$20.00/day until meter is brought in.

The meter must be tested quarterly (every 3 months) by the 4th business day of the applicable month at the Commercial Meter Shop. Failure to do so is a violation and may result in retrieval of the meter.



If no infrastructure exists at a site

Rain barrel and cisterns

Cisterns and rain barrels are storage tanks that capture runoff water from a catchment area such as a rooftop or funnel. Cisterns are large-scale rain barrels.

To determine if a rain barrel or cistern is a good fit for your garden, the garden group should consider the following:



What is the water demand onsite? How many beds or rows are we watering? Do we need water for other purposes, like drinking?



Is there a roof available on site for catchment? If not, discuss options with the RGG Coordinator for constructing a structure to collect rainwater to be harvested.



How much rain could be captured based on our roof? For example, during a 1-inch rain event, a 1,200 square foot roof would collect more than 700 gallons. Typical food quality plastic drums and other rain barrels store 55 gallons. It will be important to identify a way to manage overflow.



Is there a fire hydrant nearby that could be used to fill our tank if we experience a drought?

If you are interested in building a rain catchment system, reach out to the RGG Coordinator for more information and potential support.

Installing New Water Service

- If rain water harvesting is not sufficient for the gardens' watering needs, the garden stewards should reach out to the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities to determine whether the site can have a new water service installed from an existing water main adjacent to the property.
 - The amount of time this can take is variable. It is the ultimate goal to install water lines in community gardens to ensure their continued success.
 - The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities reviews each request for a new water service on a case by case basis, as funding and resources are available.
 - Alternatively, the applicant can pay for water main extension to the property or advocate to their City Council member to cover the expense. The installation costs can vary between \$12,000-\$25,000.



Installation includes the following steps:

- Apply and pay for a Water Service Permit through DPU Development Office located in Room 115 of City Hall (900 E. Broad St).
- The Department of Public Utilities installs the water service from the water main in the street to the property line.
- The City of Richmond Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities would be responsible for hiring a plumber to:
 - draw a plan for the plumbing work needed on site (extend a pipe from the water meter to a spigot and install a backflow preventer within 25-feet of the water meter on property),
 - apply for a plumbing permit, and
 - install the plumbing work on the property.
- DPU would inspect the backflow preventer that protects the public drinking water system and approve setting the water meter for water service.

Garden Structures & Other Infrastructure

Garden sites reside in various zoning districts and may have different land use and building requirements according to Richmond Code. Before you start planning or building a structure, you must check with the RGG Coordinator to learn about specific requirements at your site. Timelines can vary, plan to allow for 60 days of lead time prior to the start of construction. The following is general guidance:



Any building must meet yard (setback) requirements of the zoning district in which it is located. The garden steward must obtain any necessary city approval for placement and/or construction of any improvement(s) and pay any associated permit fees.



When considering installing a fence, make a request to the RGG Coordinator prior to any digging or excavation to ensure that VA811 can be notified and complete an accurate marking of any underground materials or hazards.



The type of structure allowed on garden sites will be determined based on the zoning district, but can not exceed 150 sq. ft without the appropriate building permit.



Structures must sit on durable low maintenance temporary foundation materials. Height is limited to 12 ft.



Structures must be sturdy and lockable and include exterior grade building materials such as: hardi-plank, cedar, exterior grade painted plywood, etc.



Any structure (including but not limited to fences, walls, and sheds) visible from the public right of way in a City Old & Historic District requires approval from the Commission of Architectural Review.



Structural foundations should generally be temporary and permeable. Other structures would need prior approval from PRCF and relevant City permits. Reach out to the RGG Coordinator to learn about more details.



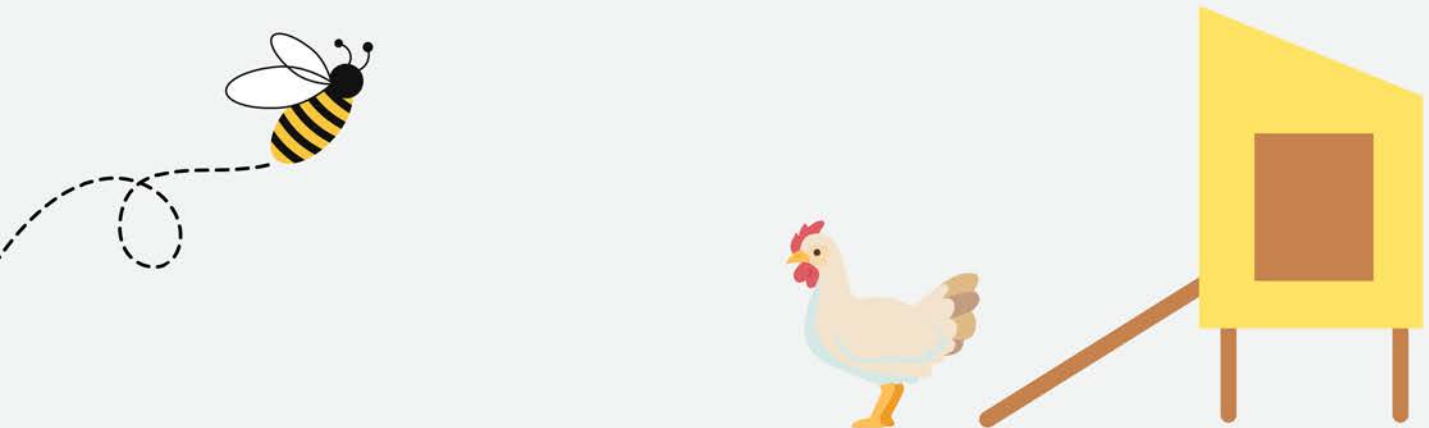
Livestock & Bees

Livestock, Chickens, and Small Fowls




- Community gardens can keep livestock at their site as long as they follow the rules of the Richmond City Code and Richmond Grows Gardens and notify the RGG Coordinator.
- Chickens and other small fowl must be kept in accordance with City Code
 - A maximum of 6 female chickens are allowed to be kept.
 - They must be housed in an enclosed area, at least 15 feet away from your neighbor.
 - The coop must have 4 walls and a roof.
 - Feed must be stored in a rodent-proof container.
- Additional details can be found in this [informational brochure](#).



Bees

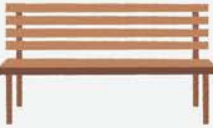



- Community gardens can keep bees for honey production or pollination but before installing any hives, the Garden Steward must notify the RGG Coordinator so that a right of entry agreement can be created.
 - Right of entry agreement definition: a special agreement with PRCF and the City of Richmond to keep bees on City property safely
 - Basics elements of the agreement:
 - Have current liability insurance for the garden.
 - Signage in both Spanish and English that explains the purpose of the bees.
 - A safe enclosure of some sort (actual specifications vary by site).



Requesting Program Resources from RGG Coordinator

Resource	Timeline for Request	Additional Details
Organic materials 	2 weeks	Items may include leaves, soil, and mulch. Delivery can be arranged. Items will be unloaded in a specified location and are not bagged.
Seeds, seedlings 	1-2 weeks	RGG will reach out when planning seed purchases for input in late fall/ early winter. When these seeds and seedlings are ready for distribution, Garden Stewards can reach out to RGG for pick up options during the months of March - May.
Water 	3 days	Water tanks can be filled at sites where there is a fire hydrant within 150 feet, or water can be transferred from a mobile tank.

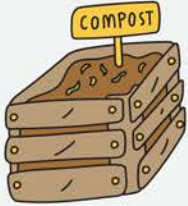
Resource	Timeline for Request	Additional Details
<p data-bbox="224 426 456 506">Infrastructure Building Support</p> 	<p data-bbox="610 449 781 485">2-3 months</p>	<p data-bbox="899 352 1419 436">PRCF can support building certain garden infrastructure, such as:</p> <ul data-bbox="927 449 1224 533" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="927 449 1224 485">• Water catchment <li data-bbox="927 495 1078 533">• Fencing
<p data-bbox="302 867 380 903">Tools</p> 	<p data-bbox="618 867 769 903">1-2 weeks</p>	<p data-bbox="899 653 1419 779">ToolBank carries a large inventory of tools for rent, including but not limited to:</p> <ul data-bbox="927 791 1393 1066" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="927 791 1182 827">• Wheelbarrows <li data-bbox="927 840 1349 875">• Shovels, rakes, pitchforks <li data-bbox="927 888 1208 924">• Pruners, loppers <li data-bbox="927 936 1268 972">• Drills, impact drivers <li data-bbox="927 984 1344 1020">• Post hole diggers, augers <li data-bbox="927 1033 1393 1068">• Weed wackers, lawnmowers

Resource	Timeline for Request	Additional Details
<p>Pre-made infrastructure</p> 	<p>Requests accepted on a rolling basis for bi-annual builds</p>	<p>Toolbank:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benches • Picnic Tables
<p>Grass</p> 	<p>1 week</p>	<p>Grass inside the fence borders of gardens will not be mowed.</p>
<p>Organic waste removal</p> 	<p>3-6 weeks</p>	<p>Pick-up and disposal of tree limbs or other large wood debris can be taken to compost or the landfill</p>
<p>Inorganic waste removal</p> 	<p>3-6 weeks</p>	<p>Pick-up and disposal of inorganic waste produced by a garden clean-up in which items no longer useful to the garden are removed by PRCF staff</p>

Waste Management



Organic Waste



Plants & Produce: If there is debris in your garden that is compostable (leaves, branches, plants), you may compost it on site. Break large pieces of plant material or produce into smaller pieces to aid the decomposition of plant material.



Weeds: When disposing of weeds such as bermuda grass (aka wire grass) or other vigorous invasive species, especially those that spread by rhizome, please bag and dispose of them in a trash receptacle. Non-aggressive vegetation can be composted but should be chopped into smaller pieces before placing in the compost bins. If you add freshly pulled weeds to the compost, the plant material is nitrogen-rich, aka "green stuff." If you allow the weeds to dry out before adding to the compost, they can provide the needed carbon-rich material, aka "brown stuff."



Wood debris: If you have woody debris, you may set it out in bundles with branches oriented in the same direction for pick up by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities for composting with the Richmond Compost Initiative or disposal at the East Richmond Landfill. Contact the Richmond Grows Gardens coordinator at least three weeks in advance to schedule pick up. If available, staff will park a truck or trailer for you to fill with debris during the garden cleanup.

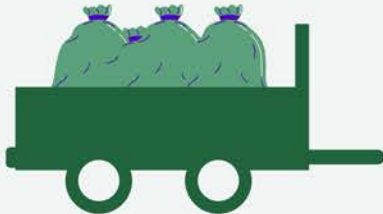


Inorganic Waste

It is an expectation that gardeners and volunteers keep gardens clear of trash that is created by gardening activities, arrives by way of visitors in the garden, or comes in from the surrounding area.



Trash Collection Service: A trash can and weekly trash service will be provided by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities if the garden is not already receiving pick up through Waste Management.



Bulk pickup: Please contact the Richmond Grows Gardens Coordinator 3-6 weeks in advance of a clean up that will generate a large quantity of non-compostable material that needs to be disposed of at the Hopkins Road Transfer Station. If possible, a trailer will be brought to the garden to be loaded directly by gardeners and volunteers, or piles may be left in a predetermined location and picked up by the Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities staff.



Compost

Gardens may accept kitchen scrap donations from the neighboring community and are encouraged to do so. Providing a place for people to drop off kitchen scraps is a valuable service for the neighborhood and helps to achieve a variety of sustainability goals.

Compost is an important ingredient in building nutrient-rich soils to grow healthy plants, maintain soil moisture, and divert waste from the landfill to reduce emissions. There are a variety of ways to effectively manage community composting, falling into the two following categories.



On site processing: Gardens may delegate the responsibility of tending compost to a gardener or team of gardeners. The composting team should maintain a balance of carbon and nitrogen by adding carbon-rich materials such as leaves. Plant stalks and large pieces of spent produce should be chopped into smaller pieces to encourage the composting process.



Care should be taken to regulate moisture, temperature, and eliminate odor, nutrient leaching, and rodents or other pests. Signage and other educational materials are available through the Richmond Compost Initiative and Richmond Grows Gardens to communicate what is desired and prohibited in the compost collection.



Off site processing: Gardens may subscribe to a compost collection service to pick up food scrap donations for processing at a compost facility. The Richmond Compost Initiative is piloting a community compost program through a USDA grant to provide this service to registered gardens in order to generate high quality compost for use in community gardens. Several businesses in the Richmond area also provide this service and can be contracted to pick up food scrap donations.



This model is recommended if the garden wishes to serve as a community composting hub without taking on the responsibility of tending the compost themselves and will result in the delivery of finished compost to amend soil in the community garden.



RICHMOND COMPOST INITIATIVE



WHAT TO COMPOST?

Help us preserve the environment. It's easy!

OK TO ADD: ✓

Food Waste:

- Fruits and Veggies
- Kitchen scraps
- Compostable Bags
- Eggshells
- Bread
- Rice & Pasta



Paper Products: ✓

- Paper Towels & Napkins
- Paper Plates
- Paper Bags
- Coffee Filters & Tea Bags

DO NOT ADD: ✗

- Plastics
- Trash
- Cooking Oil
- Pet Waste
- Diapers
- Styrofoam
- Glass & Metal
- Meat/Dairy
- Compostable Cutlery & Containers



Richmond Composting Initiative



For more information:



WHERE TO COMPOST?

- Boaz & Ruth, 3030 Meadowbridge Rd
- Chimborazo Playground Community Garden, 3000 E Grace St
- Studio Two Three, 3300 W Clay St
- Uptown Community Garden, 2201 Parkwood Ave
- Stratford Hills Shopping Center, 6780 Forest Hill Ave
- Parker Field Annex Recycling Center, 1700 Robin Hood Rd
- Powhatan Hill Community Garden, 801 Goddin St
- Broad Rock Branch Richmond Public Library, 4820 Old Warwick Rd
- Ginter Park Branch Richmond Public Library, 1200 Westbrook Ave
- Main Branch Richmond Public Library, 101 E Franklin St
- West End Branch Richmond Public Library, 5420 Patterson Ave
- VCU Learning Garden, 1218 Parkwood Ave
- MCV Community Garden, 900 Turpin St
- McDonough Community Garden, 3300 McDonough St
- Westover Hills School Garden, 1211 Jahnke Rd
- Broad Rock Community Garden, 404 E Broad Rock Rd
- Alice Fitz Community Garden, 1301 Perry St
- Charles S Gilpin Community Farm, 1420 St Peter St
- Living Water Community Center, 1000 Westover Hills Blvd
- BIG Market @ Bryan Park, Bellevue Ave

For more information, visit richmondgrowsgardens.org/composting

Conservation, Pest & Species Consideration

Gardeners may grow a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, herbs and flowers. Choosing from among the wide range of plants for the garden is challenging and fun. The guidelines below will help you make good choices. Talk to your gardening neighbors to share ideas for good plant choices for success.



Plants on the Virginia Invasive Plant List are prohibited: <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/invspdflist>. Many of these are weeds in areas surrounding the garden plots. Please control them as much as possible.

- If there is a population of an invasive species that needs to be chemically treated, reach out to the RGG Coordinator to partner with PRCF's invasive species program.



Some desirable plants can be weedy, such as raspberries, blackberries, mint, and fennel. Please keep these plants within plot boundaries

- Example: Grow plants like mint in pots to contain them. Take the plants with you when you leave the program.



It is illegal to cut down or remove any trees on city property. If you are considering removing a tree, contact the RGG Coordinator.

Proactive Pest Management

Chemical pesticides are prohibited in Richmond Grows Gardens sites. Certified organic applications may be used, though a proactive approach to raising nutrient-dense crops is recommended.

Some common best practices and tips:

- Adding compost and other amendments to the soil promotes the health of the plants, making them less susceptible to insect damage.
- Foliar feeding, proper watering, and crop rotation can all lead to strong, healthy plants which lessen the likelihood of pest infestation.
- Folk remedies, such as sliced onions applied around brassica crops have shown to deter harlequin beetles.
- If an infestation of particularly prolific and devastating insects, such as harlequin beetles or squash beetles, is found on your plants, your best option may be to remove and dispose of the crop in the trash (not the compost) to eliminate a breeding ground for pests that can destroy neighboring crops.
- Integrated pest management, such as pollinator gardens that promote species that prey on common garden pests is another approach.



Many of the fruit trees in our gardens are highly domesticated cultivars and also benefit from proactive applications of organic amendments to strengthen their defenses against fungal and insect damage. Pruning branches and thinning fruit are also important approaches to achieving successful yields.

Richmond Grows Gardens has a network of seasoned growers and educational opportunities to learn more about practices to minimize the risk of pest and disease damage and is committed to supporting participants' growth in raising crops without the use of chemical applications.

Hosting Events or Fundraisers

Community gardens are hubs of community activity. While that often includes a typical scope of activities, such as working as a group to tend the garden, hosting workshops on an urban agriculture topic, or gathering to share a meal; these public green spaces offer the opportunity for a variety of gatherings. Richmond Grows Gardens sites have also hosted yoga and meditation, and fundraising events. When planning an event, ask yourself these questions to determine if you need to reach out to the Richmond Grows Gardens Coordinator to obtain a special event permit:

Events that don't need a permit

- Workshops
- Gatherings/events with no associated entry fees
- Workdays, produce market (if appropriate garden permit designation is in place)



Events where permit fees can be waived, if associated with garden programming

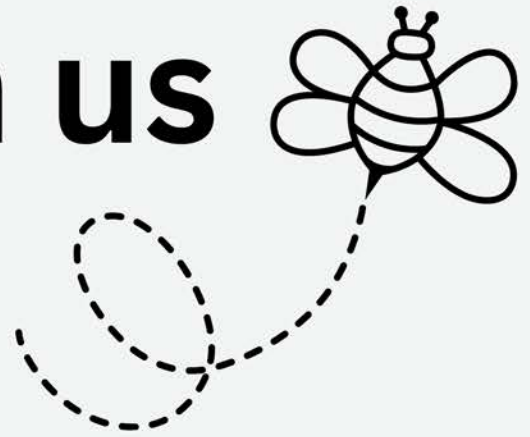
- Is this a fundraiser?
- Is there a registration fee?
- Is it hosted outside of daylight hours?
- Is the event being publicly advertised?

If you answered yes to any of the previous questions, event permit fees can be waived, but a permit must still be obtained through Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities. The RGG Coordinator will help submit your permit application to ensure proper processing. However, the request must be made no less than 21 days in advance.

Events that need to be permitted by the event organizers

- Is another person or organization hosting an event using the garden as a venue?
 - If you answered yes to this question, that person or organization must review the [event permit application](#) and determine if a permit is required for this particular event.
 - If no permit is required, the Garden Steward may allow for the use of the space.

Connect with us



rva.gov/parks-recreation/community-gardens



Parks, Recreation & Community Facilities
804-646-5733



PRCFgrowgardens@rva.gov

Friends of Community Gardens



richmondgrowsgardens.org



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