

Council Policy for Community/Mara Kai Gardens

Policy and Selection Criteria

- Council will enable the establishment of community gardens/mara kai on public open space, provided public use and access to the land is maintained.
- Community gardens will not normally be considered in premier parks or in coastal or native regeneration management areas but could be considered if no other suitable land is available in the area.
- The location of community gardens should only be on reserves or Council land that is reasonably enclosed, preferably on back sections for security.
- Only one building per site is allowed. It should not exceed 24m² in size, must comply with the District Plan and have any necessary building or resource consents.
- Council will not supply potable water for community gardens but may assist with a Community Board grant to establish a water bore.
- Community gardens must operate on a not for profit basis.
- Prospective community garden groups are required to submit a written application.
- The application shall contain a community garden management plan and will be assessed by the relevant Council Asset Manager in accordance with set criteria as listed.
- Following the initial assessment, officers will consult with adjoining residents and report to the relevant Community Board.
- The delegation for approving community garden proposals rests with the relevant Community Board.
- If approved, a licence to occupy will be formulated and approved under the appropriate officers delegated authority.
- Successful applications will be granted initially a one year trial lease with ongoing rights of renewal, for three yearly periods, following the annual review if the project is operating to the satisfaction of all parties involved.
- Annual rental be set in line with existing reserves charges currently \$170 per annum.
- The lessee will not be able to sublease to individuals.
- Community gardens must meet all necessary health and safety requirements.
- Community garden groups should have public liability insurance if deemed necessary following legal advice.

Application and Selection Criteria

- The purpose and objectives of the community garden groups.
- Benefits of the garden to the local area and community including who will benefit from the produce.

- Linkages with other community groups or initiatives.
- Whether the proposal outlines innovative urban sustainability techniques, for example water conservation.
- The proposed organisational structure and fees if applicable.
- Identified liaison person for the community garden groups.
- Skills and competencies of group members.
- An estimated budget, timeline for establishment, maintenance regime for the area and funding sources.
- Process for gardeners to make decisions and resolve conflict.
- Training and induction of new gardeners.
- Size of land required, parking and storage requirements etc.
- How proposal fits and is consistent with existing reserve management plans.
- The standard Community Garden Management Plan which should include:
 - Organisational structure and meeting requirements
 - Horticultural methods
 - Mowing and maintenance
 - Weed and pest control
 - Composting
 - Safety, security and vandalism
 - Structure and storage
 - Aesthetics and tidiness
 - Signage
 - Noise and odour
- Whether the natural and physical characteristics are conducive to successful community gardening such as aspect, topography, soil type etc.
- Access to the site.
- Health and safety issues being properly considered and addressed.
- Whether the site has good infrastructure such as drainage and bore water supply.
- Compliance with any building or resource management regulations.
- How the proposal fits with Council policies, strategies and plans.
- Potential conflict with adjoining land uses.
- How much reserve land has been allocated to similar activities within the area