

**RESEARCH PROJECT**  
**Student Involvement in Action Research**

**Municipal Community Garden Delivery Models**  
**A survey, along with a PowerPoint presentation for city Staff**

&

**Community Gardens**  
**Proposed guidelines for site selection and development**

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**TO:**

**THE CITY OF PETERBOROUGH**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Community gardens are of increasing need in local communities because of the beneficial attributes. Community Gardens possess an excellent economic tool, providing food for people of lower incomes; they assist in the remediation techniques of climate change by reducing the consumption of fossil fuels because food travels less compared to conventional corporate operations.

Community Gardens are a valuable social tool, encouraging community cooperation and local relationships; they provide educational experience, teaching people of all ages the skills required to grow food; they possess health benefits for individuals taking part in gardening operations; and most importantly, they dilute corporate control over the Canadian food system, improving Canadian food security. These valuable characteristics of community gardens are important when considering the need for more operations in a community.

From a Peterborough perspective, there are currently 11 community gardens operating in the area. (See attached map of Peterborough gardens in Appendix). The community garden sites in Peterborough operate with much success but the demand for products produced by community garden operations is significantly more than the current number of gardens can supply. This is where the participation of the municipal government comes into play.

Currently there is no program, no encouragement, and no incentive for the creation of new operations in the Peterborough area. The limitations that exist must be assessed in order to facilitate new garden operations.

This report includes a municipal community garden delivery model in order to effectively understand how the current situation must be changed, and the success of other municipalities like the City of Waterloo, Vancouver, Toronto, Regina, Kingston and Ottawa will provide good examples of how community gardens could be developed.

Also with looking over those cities the proposed guidelines for site selection and development of community gardens can be established in the Peterborough area.

The research project originated from Professor Paula Anderson class “Canadian Food Systems” in partnership with Trent’s Community-Based Education Program and the involvement from the City of Peterborough was with the help of Rob Anderson.

Currently, in Peterborough there are progresses to completing a design project for a community garden in another area of the city, and also expansion on other current gardens, but this project further demonstrates from our research activities; how community gardens should be run, where the municipality helps, where community gardens should be located, and the important criteria to run a community garden.

## **SUMMARY OF RESEARCH**

### **Municipal Community Garden Delivery Models**

- What community garden delivery models other municipalities use with the operators/organisers of community gardens
- What level of involvement do other municipalities have with community gardens
- Whether municipalities exert control over community gardens, and how is control exerted
- The extent to which other municipalities are involved in the operation of community gardens
- What the funding considerations are with respect to the various models

### **Proposed guidelines for site selection and development**

- The collection of data through primary and secondary research
- Determining what criteria have been used elsewhere
- Determining what criteria need to exist for a community garden to be successful in Peterborough
- Determining how best to prioritize those criteria to ensure the selection of an appropriate site for a community garden
- Determining minimum site development standards to ensure a successful community garden

## **Municipal Community Garden Delivery Models**

## **EVALATION OF OTHER CITY PROJECTS**

The following is the evaluation results of the research conducted in other cities in the province and country. The following cities that were studied were Vancouver, Regina, Ottawa, Toronto, Kingston, and Waterloo. These cities give a good insight into the network of community gardens where locally grown food is collected and distributed to organizations that provide food to low income families and individuals, knowledge and skills in food production, and benefits of locally produced foods, Increase use of city/local land for primary food production, and establish criteria needed to be considered for a community garden.

**Location:** Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

### **Overview:**

“The City of Vancouver recognizes community gardening as a valuable recreational activity that can contribute to community development, environmental awareness, positive social interaction and community education.” (City of Vancouver. 2009)

Community gardening in Vancouver has an extensive history. In 1943, there were over 50, 000 community gardens operating in the Vancouver area which assisted in remediating food shortages at the time. The number of community garden experienced a decrease after the 1950s. Since the 1980s, more community gardens have been sprouting up in the region. Currently there are 2,750 community run gardens operating in the Greater Vancouver District- both floral and edible by nature. These gardens are located all around the city in a variety of different settings. These gardens are highly successful

with significant government support. As it will be demonstrated, much can be derived from the way Vancouver goes about operating and promoting community gardens.

## **Characteristics:**

There are 26 edible community gardens in 11 municipalities in the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD). The City of Vancouver has the most, a dozen community gardens, and 9 of these in parks or park reserves with 580 community garden plots. The City of Burnaby has the next highest number of gardens, 3, but the number of available allotments is equal to the City of Vancouver. The rest of the gardens are spread amongst 9 other municipalities. Greater Vancouver has a total of about allotment 2000 plots. Most community gardens have a waiting list, despite not advertising.

The need to think seriously about land-use decisions in the face of growth and construction has helped the kernel of supports for community gardening to germinate. This sentiment is captured by a suburban City Councillor, Mike Thompson, in a report on community gardening to the Council of Port Coquitlam. He writes, "The cost of land for the average homeowner is such that living in multi-family complexes is an economic necessity for many. The "good old days" of large lots in which you could grow a few fruit trees and enough vegetables to feed your family for many months of the year is now becoming the unusual rather than the usual. If we are to accept higher densities, we believe that there is a genuine need to provide room for ...community gardens"

"**An Eden in the Eastside**", The Georgia Straight, Vancouver, May 13-20, 1994.

## **Criteria of Current Gardens:**



The City of Vancouver states that, “community gardens may exist in any area of the city”. The typical lot size is approximately 2.25m<sup>2</sup> and has the garden criteria such as sunlight, water source, manure and other essential inputs readily available. Starting a garden begins with identifying a potential location for a community garden. A “garden-ready” location does not necessarily have to be an option because the City of Vancouver also utilizes a raised bed technique where boxes are constructed on areas with insufficient soil for plant growth.

This allows for a wide array of potential locations for gardening operations. Approximately half of Vancouver’s gardens are located on city park land. These locations are situated on city park land but operating through neighbourhood groups. Although these operations are run by community members, the role the government plays is vital in ensuring the success of Vancouver’s Community garden Program.

Community gardens are run utilizing two different techniques: one is the traditional approach where community members cooperate in growing produce to be shared, free of charge, to the rest of the neighbourhood. The other method is an allotment style garden where individuals rent garden plots to produce edibles. Although this style is effective in promoting a sustainable food production, it is not necessarily the desired technique to operate a community garden.

The majority of Vancouver’s gardens are non-profit operations designed to benefit the community as an entity providing food for their members, as well as cooking programs. These gardens encourage the involvement of local schools, youth groups and senior citizens. They offer demonstration activities to encourage urban agriculture, ecological diversity, and an understanding of food production.

## **Role of Municipality:**

In the summer 2003, the City of Vancouver approved a motion supporting the development of a sustainable food system. This is a goal striving to enhance the environmental, economic, social and nutritional health of a land location by integrating food production, processing, distribution and consumption.

Five key principles for this motion include: community economic development, which supports greater reliance on locally-based food systems; ecological health, which promotes the protection of natural resources, reduction in food transportation, and reduction of food wastes; social justice, which advocates that food is a basic human right; Collaboration and participation, which strengthens food security; and Celebration, which promotes the importance of food in bringing people together.

Since the passing of the sustainable food system motion, the City has been engaged in a swarm of beneficial community programs such as; the Vancouver Food Charter, Gardens Gardens... and more Gardens, Hobby Bee Keeping, Grow a Row Share a Row, Plant-a-row Grow-a-row, and 2010 by 2010, and the development the “Operational Guidelines for Community Gardens on City Owned Land”.

This guideline outlines the city’s role in operating community gardens in the region are just a few examples of how the City of Vancouver to promoting the creation of more Community gardens program. *See Appendix*

The City of Vancouver does not, operate garden projects, but they do facilitate the initiate start-up by providing initial site preparation like tilling, fertilizer and any other requirements of the garden depending on the location.

It is clear that the City of Vancouver plays an extensive role in the implementation and promotion of community gardens in the area. This is accomplished through the implementation of policies, programs, and guidelines that facilitate the emergence of new community garden operations. This was accomplished through convincing proposals that outlined the benefits and implications of community gardens facilities

**Location:** Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

**Overview:**

There are 19 community gardens currently in the City of Ottawa, with approximately 1,080 gardeners. In Ottawa, community gardens initiated and managed by local residents began to develop in the 1980's. In 1997 the Community Garden Network (CGN) was created to share resources among gardens and to promote and foster community gardens. (See attached map of Ottawa gardens in Appendix)

City staff has received information from 19 community gardens, 13 of these are member gardens of the CGN and 6 are non-member gardens. Two of the 19 community gardens are former allotment gardens and still refer to themselves as the Gloucester Allotment Garden Association and the Nepean Allotment Garden Association, but are community run gardens.

Community gardens that are members of the CGN receive services such as: the sharing of resources and information, communication links through the web site and newsletter, advocacy and support. The Membership in the CGN is free. The CGN does

outreach to the community gardening community across the City, holds regular workshops and events open to the gardening public.

## **Characteristics:**

Nearly all of the gardens reported on activities that promote community building by promoting interaction between the diverse residents of local communities along common interests, such as food security, neighbourhood beautification, health and leisure. The majority of gardens support a collective, participatory approach, fostering social inclusion and community participation. Many community gardens are a source of cross-cultural sharing. For example at the Carlington Community Garden, members speak 13 different languages. Ninety-three per cent of the Carlington Community gardeners reported feeling more like a member of the community and 80% reported that participating in the garden and growing their own food made their money go further.

The Bethany Community Garden also has a focus on intergenerational exchange, but is also open to all members of the community. The Bytown Urban Gardeners (BUGS) garden has a unique outreach project, Buds for Buddies, that grows and delivers flowers to members of the community who are house bound. Many of the members of community gardens have promoted waste diversion strategies to the local community and some have partnered with neighbourhood businesses and organizations to collect and divert organic waste. Several community gardens have become sites to demonstrate aspects of the science curriculum for neighbourhood schools.

Allotment gardens are gardens planned and managed by a public body for public use on a first come first served basis. Individual garden plots are rented out to gardeners on a seasonal basis. In Ottawa, allotment gardens initially existed on National Capital Commission property and were managed by the National Capital Commission (NCC). In the 1980's these allotment gardens were transferred from the NCC to the former City of Ottawa. Currently there is one City allotment garden, the Dempsey Allotment Gardens located at Kilborn and Pleasant Park in the Alta Vista ward.

### **Criteria of Current Gardens:**

The gardens are broken into individual plots; an individual or a family usually gardens on one plot. Garden size is reported in number of plots, ranging to 200 plots, with an average of 39 plots per garden.

Most of the community gardens have been in operation during the period 1990 to 2003. The Gloucester Allotment Garden Association is an exception, having been in operation since 1981.

Some community gardens require a small fee, ranging from \$5 to \$20, for the seasonal use of a garden plot. Regardless of whether fees are a requirement or not, the majority of community gardens have an expectation that members will participate in the shared maintenance and operation of the garden and other communal tasks such as composting.

Fourteen of the 19 community gardens are currently on land owned by the City of Ottawa; two are on church property, two are on private land, and one is on property owned by the University of Ottawa. The Gloucester Allotment Garden Association has two locations, one of these is on NCC land leased by the City and the other is on City

property. The status of the land arrangements varies. Community gardens that are partnered with or sponsored by a Community Health and Resource Centre or a local church generally have more land security. Seven community gardens are partnered with a Community Health and Resource Centre. Some of the more recently developed gardens that are not partnered with any community based organization tend to be in more tenuous situations.

The majority of community gardens reported having composting arrangements, with most having a 3-bin compost system. Eight community gardens reported on their water access situation; four gardens used rain barrels and four indicated that they had access to standing pipes.

The 19 gardens reported extensive community linkages with community agencies, public sector organizations and private businesses, these include: the Community Health and Resource Centres, the University of Ottawa, the Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG), the Centertown Citizens Ottawa Corporation (CCOC), the Canadian Environmental Network Youth Caucus, the Community Garden Network, Home Depot, Lee Valley Tools, housing co ops, and local churches. Many of these links are reciprocal in nature; for example, the Bytown Urban Gardeners (BUGS) provides children's plots for the YM-YWCA in exchange for water access.

Many community gardens reported the promotion of community activities such as beautification projects, provision of community gathering spaces, donation of free plots and/or produce to organizations such as Elizabeth Fry, the Food Bank, Centre 507 and the Shepherds of Good Hope.

## **Role of Municipality:**

The Innovation, Development and Partnerships Branch of People Services provide \$25,000 in sustained funding and \$10,000 from the National Child Benefit (NCB) for the coordination of the Community Garden Network. This funding is part of the total City funding allocation to the Sandy Hill Community Health and Resource Centre. It is designated for the Community Garden Network, for the support and development of community gardening. The sustaining grant has been provided annually since 2001. The NCB funding was provided through the former Region of Ottawa and is subject to the availability of annual NCB funding.

The former RMOC also provided a \$20,000 one-time grant in 2000 for the development of new community gardens. Five new community gardens were developed as a result. A Community Environmental Project Grant (CEPGP) of \$12,270 was also provided to the CGN 2000, for remedial work on existing community gardens.

CEPGP grants have also been received by individual community gardens for specific projects such as, compost demonstration projects, promotion of water efficiency and composting.

The community gardens reported various funding sources other than the City of Ottawa including: the Trillium Fund, the Community Foundation of Ottawa, Human Resources Development Canada Summer Career Placement Program, Ministry of Health (Ontario), Toronto Dominion Friends of the Environment, local churches and tenants associations.

Transportation, Utilities and Public Works (TUPW) has provided a mixture of ongoing and onetime support, on an in kind and cost recovery basis to community gardens, generally within the context of service delivery by the former municipal jurisdictions. Services have continued to two gardens, previously within the former municipalities of Gloucester and Nepean, on a “business as usual basis”. The Surface Operations Branch also administers Spring Cleaning the Capital and the Adopt a Park program, which several community gardens have accessed.

The Utility Services Branch has provided compost from the Trail Road site to community gardens. The provision of compost was funded through the one time \$20,000 grant to community gardens in 2000 and as in kind contribution as part of the \$12,000 CEPGP grant, also in 2000. This service was discontinued in 2002 when the funding ran out. Currently the preference of the Community Garden Network is for existing community gardens to compost on site, within appropriate guidelines. The Utility Services Branch has also provided support for waste diversion strategies and water efficiency to some community gardens. Utility Services provides access to a standing pipe for one community garden.

**Location:** Kingston, Ontario, Canada

**Overview:**



Kingston Ontario is a vibrant community located at the meeting point of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. Kingston has a population of 117,207 people and the metropolitan area has 150,000 people. Kingston is very old and important community and has been working hard to implement sustainability throughout the city. One of the ways they have been achieving this is through the creation of community gardens. Kingston currently has 6 working community gardens which includes the Compton Street Community Garden and the F.R.I.L.L. Community Garden and is in the process of adding more.

Kingston, in partnership with Communities in Bloom has been working hard since 1995 to create a better living community. With the help of the community gardens, many benefits have been seen. Some of the benefits include increase in civic pride and community involvement, citizens, groups, organizations, business and municipal government all mobilized, and pulling together, information and cultural exchanges within the community and with neighbouring, national and international communities, economic development and increased property values, just to name a few.

### **Characteristics:**

The City of Kingston urges its residents to come together and form community gardens; however they do warn that people be prepared and serious. The City has offered a start up guide for its interested residents.

The city promotes the use of community gardens but also encourages neighbours to come together and commit to these gardens. They believe it is vital that numerous families be involved and are committed to the ongoing process of these gardens. They

have suggested that interested groups have at least ten families involved although this is just a suggestion.

Kingston knows that running these gardens is not a simple task and having committed users might be an issue. For this reason, they hope that community members can form a garden club. A garden club is a way of formalizing your new group. Functions of these garden groups include establishing garden rules, accepting and reviewing garden applications, making plot assignments, collecting garden dues (if any), paying water bills and resolving conflicts.

Once residents are able to form a committed group, it then becomes important to find a suitable location. Kingston offers some criteria for locating a garden but this will be explained in the next section.

As mentioned earlier, Kingston currently has six community gardens throughout the city. They are located strategically within the city in order to offer gardens to those that wish to use them. Each garden is unique in shape and size but plots at each garden range from 14 to 57. Most of the gardens have about 20 plots. Most of the gardens charge a nominal fee to use the gardens however a couple of the gardens are free. Fees start at \$10 and can go as high as \$24. A lot of these gardens have waiting lists and this is a good indication that more gardens need to be established. The community gardens in Kingston have been a success and they hope to continue that success.

### **Criteria of Current Gardens:**

When looking for a suitable location, the City of Kingston suggests that community members walk throughout the neighbourhood and find a vacant lot. The lot

should be able to receive at least 6-8 hours of sun per day. There is a suggestion that the land be flat, however, slight slopes can be terraced. The lot should be free of pieces of concrete and debris. Any debris that does exist should be manageable. Lots can be paved as raised beds can be used, but more materials would be needed.

The potential garden site should be within walking, or no more than a short drive from you and the neighbours who have expressed interest in participating. If the lot is not already being used, make sure the community supports establishing a garden there.

The City suggests that groups locate three potential spots as some may not be available or suitable. Once the locations have been selected, it is important to know who owns them and submit this information into the city for final approval.

Some of the basic elements that Kingston suggests all community gardens should have are:

- At least 15 plots assigned to community members. These should be placed in the sunniest part of the garden. Without plots for individual participation, it is very difficult to achieve long-term community involvement. Raised bed plots, which are more expensive, should be no more than 4 feet wide (to facilitate access to plants from the sides without stepping into the bed), and between 8 and 12 feet long (it is advisable to construct your raised beds in sizes that are found in readily-available lumber, or that can be cut without too much waste). In ground plots can be from 10 x 10 up to 20 x 20 feet. Pathways between beds and plots should be least 3 to 4 feet wide to allow space for wheelbarrows. The soil in both raised bed and in-ground plots should be amended with aged compost or manure to improve its fertility and increase its organic matter content.

- A simple irrigation system with one hose bib or faucet for every four plots. Hand watering with a hose is the most practical and affordable for individual plots (and it's almost a necessity when you start plants from seed). Drip and soaker-hose irrigation can be used in all areas of the garden for transplanted and established plants, but especially for deep-rooted fruit trees and ornamentals. If no one in your group is knowledgeable about irrigation, you might need some assistance in designing your irrigation system. Seek out a landscape contractor or nursery or garden center professional to help you develop a basic layout and materials list.
- An 8-foot fence around the perimeter with a drive-through gate. In our experience, this is a key element of success. Don't count on eliminating all acts of vandalism or theft, but fencing will help to keep these to tolerably low levels.
- A tool shed or other structure for storing tools, supplies, and materials. Recycled metal shipping containers make excellent storage sheds, and are almost vandal-proof.
- A bench or picnic table where gardeners can sit, relax, and take a break--preferably in shade.
- A sign with the garden's name, sponsors, and a contact person's phone number for more information. If your community is bilingual, include information in this language.
- A shared composting area for the community gardeners.

### **Role of Municipality:**

The City of Kingston believes that community gardens will only survive with the support of the community. They believe the community knows what is best and where are the best locations for these gardens. The city encourages all residents to take part and form groups which will help take the community gardening in the city to the next level. They will provide some assistance as to providing land and supplies and they may also connect community garden groups with various sponsors. Because the city realizes that these gardens success are based on community involvement, they do not want to force any gardens on any communities who do not wish to have them. They urge all groups to make sure that the neighbourhood is willing to have these plots and believe that if the neighbourhood knew the benefits of community gardens, then this shouldn't become an issue. The city also has provided residents with various pieces of literature which will better inform residents as well as provide insight if they do choose to create a garden. The Community Garden Start up Guide and the Community Garden Handbook has become handy resources for the community.

**Location:** Toronto, Ontario, Canada

## **Overview:**

The city of Toronto is a Canada's largest city and one of the most diverse cities in the world. With a population of 2.48 million people, almost half of the residents (1237720) were born outside of Canada. The city of Toronto has had to face many issues in recent history such as food security, environmental issues, and cultural identity issues. One of the largest contributing factors to the success of Toronto in regards to these issues has been the implantation of community gardens.

The City of Toronto first implemented the idea of community gardens in the city in 1997. Within a few years, the benefits were easy to see. Some of the benefits included:

- neighbours returning to outdoor green spaces;
- school teachers using parks as outdoor classrooms;
- daycare providers integrating outdoor play with indoor activities;
- seniors gathering and socializing in the gardens –

Because there was much evidence of increased community involvement and the recognition of the social, economical and environmental values to community gardens, in 1999, the city council endorsed the Community Garden Action Plan. This plan sought to establish a community garden in every ward in city by 2003.

According to the available information online, the original target year of 2003 was not met. Although some wards in Toronto now have community gardens, many of the wards still are without.

## **Characteristics:**

Even though Toronto had "Victory" gardens in both wars, Toronto has not been a hotbed of community gardening and it has been difficult to get the issue on the political agenda. Toronto barely caught the last wave of enthusiasm for community gardening in North America in the early 1970's and still lacks a cohesive, comprehensive community gardening consciousness. This, however, shows strong signs of evolving on the cusp of the 21st Century.

In 1997, the latest inventory has identified 69 community gardening projects inside the borders of the newly amalgamated City of Toronto (which consists of the former Metropolitan area and six former municipalities). There are approximately 3600 allotments or grow spaces in the gardens of this expanded City, signifying that almost 5000 people cooperate in community gardening.

Toronto community gardens can be grouped into three main streams. Fourteen community gardens are regional allotments, twenty are in or near social housing areas, and the rest are all sorts of community based projects, including school, rooftop, demonstration, therapeutic and neighbourhood gardens.

### **Criteria of Current Gardens:**

In order to start a community garden in the City of Toronto, a community group must follow the Community Garden Application Process. The application requires:

- a description of the group
- its members,
- its experience doing projects together,
- its purpose,
- the group's organization and decision making structure

- the time commitment of each member
- the tasks each person has committed to

The group is also responsible for locating a suitable lot. They must describe the lot in the following terms:

- its size
- present use, history
- access to water, sun and delivery trucks
- Submit two site plans ( a site in its current state and the envisioned project)
- Describe the impact on the neighbourhood and list of the organizations which have been or will be contacted to participate
- Submit a maintenance schedule
- Submit site preparation needs and plant needs
- Submit list of their tools and a tool storage plan

If the application is approved, the group may be eligible for technical assistance from the City Community Garden Program. They may also have access to plant material, building material and the use of tools and equipment.

The City of Toronto believes an ideal location for a community garden has the following attributes:

- It receives at least 6 hours of sun per day
- It is close to watering facilities; does not interfere with any underground pipes or lines
- It is convenient for the community members to participate
- It does not encroach on the community's enjoyment of other park facilities: dog walking, sports, picnic areas etc.

### **Role of Municipality:**



The community gardens are considered to be community projects; they will be managed, maintained and used by the community. The community itself is in charge of these gardens; however, the City of Toronto will help in the site selection process. This means that they will have the community garden coordinator (Solomon Boye) examine the locations that the group is interested in using. The coordinator investigates title history of the site to determine ownership (city or private), and other conditions for use of the site. Finally, the Coordinator, Design and Planning Department, and area Supervisor review the site for approval ensuring stakeouts for electrical, gas or telephone lines have been carried out. Once this phase is done, it is the job of the community to get their garden up and running.

**Location:** Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

**Overview:**

The Community Gardens in the Waterloo Region exhibit a range of diverse characteristics. The gardens themselves are varied in accessibility, as some are open to the public while others are only available to specific people. As well, some charge a fee and others are free. The rules and their organisation also differ. Finally, the characteristics of the gardeners differ, but this hardly affects the gardens and their organisation. Even with these differences the goals are often the same, to have good food and a strong community.

One of the first community gardens was established in 1983, and this garden has been maintained in the co-operative spirit. Numerous other gardens were started in the 1990s with the purpose of giving the population the opportunity to grow food, create a beautiful and social space, and contribute to the co-operative spirit.

There are currently 40 community gardens in the Region of Waterloo distributed throughout Waterloo, Kitchener, Cambridge, and the townships. The large majority of these gardens are volunteer run. These gardens are used by seniors, children, students, new immigrants, low-income families, middle-class families, as well as mental health and cancer patients. These gardens are truly diverse. Currently the Community Garden Network provides space and opportunity for over 700 families to garden and grow their own food.

The differences found within the many successful community gardens in the Waterloo area suggest that the gardens should not be overly structured by the municipality but rather have each group of gardeners at a garden express the user's individuality and meet their needs.

## **Characteristics**

The Waterloo Region's Community Gardens have different problems than those encountered by gardens in major cities. The major obstacle in the Waterloo Region is accessibility to the gardens. The issue of accessibility was only mentioned in some of the literature, yet it appears to be a greater problem for the Waterloo Region.

Waterloo Region is much dispersed and there is rural land located very close to the city, which may be one of the reasons there are many gardens in the Region. But this land is only accessible by car. Like Community Gardens in other areas, many of Waterloo community gardens are intended for less fortunate people, yet these people usually do not have cars. The positive benefits of gardening may be lost if land is not made accessible to the people who need it. Bus routes do not accommodate urban gardeners and car pools can only work if there is a pool of cars to rely on.

Waterloo Region's Community Gardens are lucky because there are so many generous landowners, but most of them are located outside of the city's core.

So if these gardens were actually located in the neighbourhoods they serve, the benefits would undoubtedly be increased, not only for the users but for the entire surrounding area. The gardens are open to people of all ages, where gardens attract a diverse group of people from many different backgrounds where the language of gardening overcomes many language barriers. The gardens bring new light to the community generating collaboration and cooperation that builds community.

### **Criteria of Current Gardens:**

There are two garden styles that exist in the Waterloo region. One is where the garden is run with individual garden plots with shared tasks and the garden plots are advertised through the program that's associated with that particular garden. The other gardens operate as one large communal garden where members garden together.

These gardens were established on the basis with lots of sunshine, water access or source, natural areas, pesticide-free, and participants ensure their gardening practices have minimal impact on the environment.

The other major factors were the location, parking, and transportation to make it very accessible with great diversity in gardeners.

### **Role of the Municipality:**

The role that the city of Waterloo plays in the community gardens are that they help to prepare the land (turning up the soil) where needed and water hook-up (supplying water supply to the garden). The gardens were also established with support from the

Community Garden Network of Waterloo Region Community Grants, Schools,  
Community Ministry Churches, Food Bank of Waterloo Region, Clemmer Industries  
(donation of a water tank), Regal Financial Planners, and local neighbours and  
neighbourhoods.

# **PROPOSED GUIDELINES FOR SITE SELECTION AND DEVELOPMENT**

## **CRITERIA TO LOCATING POTENTIAL SITES**

A major issue surrounding the implementation of community gardens is locating suitable location within the municipality. There a number of factors, barriers and issues that must be considered before choosing a location for a community garden. Because community gardens are meant to be used by the community it is of great importance that this gardens be situated in areas that ensure usage. Once potential locations are found, the City will decide if a garden is suitable for the desired location.

We believe this method could be of great value to the city of Peterborough as it is most important that these gardens have the support of the nearby residents.

The following is a list of criteria listed in order of importance which will aid in the location of potential lots for community gardens. This list of criteria should be considered when trying to locate a community garden. These are only guidelines and there are alternatives to these criteria.

However, it is in the best interest of the community to search for locations while keeping these criteria in mind.

- 1) Located in an area which receives at least 6-8 hours of sunlight each day. Choosing a location for your garden is the most important step in the garden planning process. Vegetables need at least 6-8 hours of sunlight for best growth. Leafy vegetables like spinach and lettuce will grow with less sunlight, however, the diversity of these gardens will usually require at least 6 hours of sunlight to ensure proper growth.
- 2) Near water or water source. It is imperative that these gardens have a source of water. Counting on just rain will not do the trick. Some gardens have the luxury of being located close to rivers or creeks, while other is able to tap into the municipal water supply. If these options are not available, rain catchment systems are available which will allow rain to collect over time, ensuring water when needed.
- 3) Located in densely populated areas. Community gardens are meant to be used by the community. The majority of the people who use these gardens do not have access to land. The gardens provide land for these people in order for them to have some where to grow food. Densely populated areas usually consist of dwellings without much land. People living in rural communities will probably not need community gardens as they most likely have land to grow on.
- 4) Located in areas of mixed income. There are a number of benefits to community gardens. They range from food security issues to environmental issues. If lower income families have access to these gardens, they are able to grow food for their family and ensure that healthy food can but put on the table. These gardens are not to exclude people of higher incomes as they may wish to grow food as well. They may

want to grow food not found at grocery stores or they may want to contribute to locally grown food and fight against agri-business.

- 5) Near public transit. A community garden is meant to be accessible to all residents of the community. If walking is not an option, it is necessary that alternative transportation methods be available to the community. If the community members can access these gardens via public transit, they will be more likely to use the gardens.
- 6) Located in areas of diversity. A major benefit to community gardens is that gardeners can grow what they wish. Many of these gardeners tend to be ethnic minorities. Many of the crops they wish to grow cannot be found in grocery stores and can be grown in Canada. Community gardens contribute to keeping ethnic identities alive in our multicultural society.
- 7) Located in areas free of pavement. Because many of these gardens are located in densely populated, urban areas, land may be hard to come by. Sometime, old parking lots are the only locations available. The cost of digging up the pavement and re-cultivating the land can be quite costly. However, there are alternatives to this issue which include the use of raised beds which may be beneficial to people with accessibility issues.

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

The choice of the Canadian cities Vancouver, Toronto, Ottawa, Kingston and Waterloo were compared and contrast their community gardening programs for lessons

that may be applicable to Peterborough. The experience of these cities with community gardening varies considerably.

We should keep in mind that Toronto, Ottawa and Vancouver have vigorous inner city neighbourhoods and relatively few vacant lots in which to site neighbourhood community gardens in comparison to other open concept cities. However, this does not mean that a lack of vacant lots cant build a strong community garden program. With the help of city sponsorship, community gardens can be established anywhere.

### **Role of Peterborough Municipality:**

In initiating a community garden program the municipality has an important role to play. Based on the examples identified from outside the municipality, there are arrays of responsibilities the local government must play.

The municipality should also encourage the involvement of the community by initiating education programs. This is accomplished through the initiation of local programs, community events and challenges to draw the attention of the public.

An application process is also necessary in order to identify who wants a garden, where they would like to start it, what will it consist of, and does the project seem plausible based on the location and an operation strategy.

The city must also help create new gardens by an initial site preparation. This will consist of setting up an appropriate water source, tilling the land, delivering initial manure requirements, providing seeds and supplies for growing produce.



All this should be discussed in a Community Gardens Operational Guidelines document which outlines the role of operators and the role of municipality in running a community garden project.

**Peterborough Site Criteria:**

As it has been demonstrated, there is much going on outside the Peterborough region in the way of community garden projects. Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto, Waterloo and Vancouver all provide good examples of how to effectively implement a community garden strategy. A great deal of information can be derived from these examples and should be applied in a Peterborough context.

With regards to the criteria of a site, all external successful municipal operations utilize the priority of site requirements to identify where a garden goes. This is based on light and water availability, access to public transit and available inputs such as mulch and fertilizer.

However, these examples show that the selection of a site is mainly dependent on the desires of the operators. From here, the municipality decides if the site can be operational or not through an application process.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The current state of Peterborough's community gardens is satisfactory but there is need for more expansion and new places. The existing operations are not nearly enough

to meet the demand of the population. The limitations that exist must be assessed in order to facilitate new garden operations. In order to effectively understand how the current situation must be changed, the success of other municipalities must be identified. The City of Waterloo, City of Vancouver and City of Toronto all provide good examples of how community gardens should identify existing criteria and the how municipality should play a role.

By implementing a better community garden program, Peterborough will experience the environmental, economical and social benefits of these operations. The characteristics of other municipalities outlined in this project are valuable in making the first step towards creating a better program.

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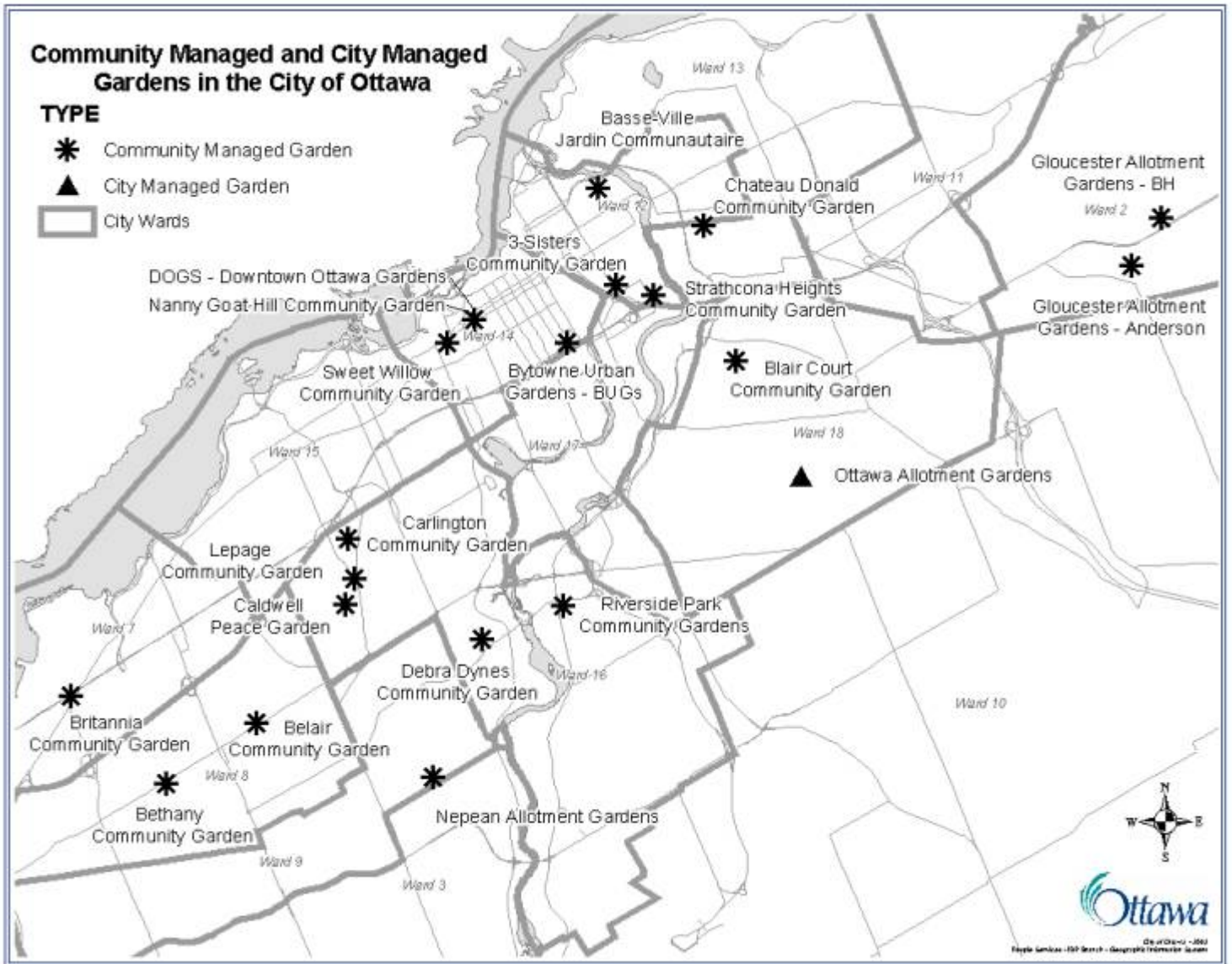
## **PETERBOROUGH CITY & COUNTY** **COMMUNITY GARDEN INTERVIEWS**

Conducted on November 30th, 2009

- Armour Road – YWCA  
Contact: Charlotte 743-3526
- Garden 579 (579 George St.)  
Contact: Rachelle 748-6857
- Northminster United Church (300 Sunset Blvd.)  
Contact: Bev 748-4881
- St. Stephens Garden – YWCA (1140 St. Paul's St.)  
Contact: Charlotte 743-3526

# APPENDIX

# OTTAWA







# Managing a Successful Community Garden Operation



A look at the current state of community gardens in the City of Peterborough



# Managing a Successful Community Garden Operation

A look at the current state of  
community gardens in the City of  
Peterborough

Hanah McFarlane and Evan Brockest

Trent Centre for Community Based Education  
Canadian Food System, Trent University

December 2009

# About this report

In 2009, the City of Peterborough collaborated with the Trent Centre for Community Based Research (TCCBE) and a third year Environmental Studies course at Trent University to create a research project that sought to assess the necessary components required for the successful operation of community gardens within an urban context.

While the City had already established an understanding of what community gardens are, the primary objective of the project was to engage in community-based research with existing gardeners. This would provide key information to aid the City's efforts towards developing policies and procedures informing the actual creation and operation of community gardens in the City of Peterborough.

*Managing a Successful Community Garden Operation* presents and analyses the information gathered from a series of interviews with several past or current community gardeners residing in the Peterborough area. It also summarizes extensive research related to the successful community gardening initiatives that have been applied in other jurisdictions.

The first section of the report, *Types of gardens*, reviews data from several interviews, as well as secondary research, to provide an overview of how currently established gardens in Peterborough and elsewhere are organized and structured. This is also supplemented with research from other jurisdictions.

The second section, *What makes a garden successful?*, uses primary research obtained from Peterborough community gardeners to convey how gardening has impacted their lives. It also elaborates on a number of factors that contribute to a garden's success, and describes the practices currently underway for dealing with potential conflicts or disputes.

The third section, *Towards more successful gardens*, is based on the interviews conducted for the report and summarizes key areas for improvement for existing and future gardens. In addition, it relays information on linking community gardeners with community-building movements and organizations.

The fourth and final section, *Establishing the City's role*, presents recommendations drawn from

research and interviewees to provide the City with a clear direction as to how to establish their role as supporters of community garden projects in the City of Peterborough.

# Methodology

We used the snowball method to locate interview participants. This process included contacting our own acquaintances, friends, and colleagues who were involved in community gardening in Peterborough to see if they were available to be interviewed or if they knew of anyone who might be. Using our networks and theirs, we interviewed a total of nine individuals. Interviews ranged between fifteen minutes to an hour and a half. In addition, we also made use of ten existing interviews that had already been conducted on the subject of community gardens during the summer of 2009. The goal of this research was to assist the Peterborough Community Garden Network (PCGN) in better understanding the

perspectives of gardeners concerning issues that affect them directly.

In order to respect the privacy of interview participants, they have been assigned pseudonyms. Interviewees were from the following gardens: Bonaccord, Millbrook, Garden 579, Ashburnham, Mark Street, Roger Street, and St. Stephens, in addition to representatives of the Community Garden Network and the Peterborough County-City Health Unit.

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# Introduction

## An overview of Peterborough community gardens

There are approximately 13 officially recognized gardens located throughout the city of Peterborough, as well as others within the county. However, this number does not include 'guerilla gardens.' This category of gardens is used to reference those that are established randomly by community members on public land, often without any form of official authorization. Some existing gardens were even established in this manner, with the Bonaccord garden as a notable example. Given that these gardens emerge randomly, and often without notice, it is difficult to get an accurate number concerning how many of these gardens actually exist within the City.

All community gardens are distinguishable by varying types, organizational structures, and with respect to the purposes they serve. For example, some gardens serve the purpose of a recreational activity for community members,

while others are devoted to supplying produce for various anti-poverty initiatives.

Regardless of the form and purpose that each garden takes, it is significant to recognize that in all cases gardens have emerged from a grassroots need, which has been determined by the local community involved in the creation of the garden, based on the needs of the neighbourhood or the people that use it.

In 2004, the City of Peterborough approved the formation of an Arenas Committee to oversee issues related to publicly accessible recreational facilities in the City. Since that time, this initial form has expanded to encompass a number of program areas, which are neatly captured by the new title: Arenas, Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee for the City of Peterborough.

Appointed by Council, the

# Introduction continued...

responsibility of this Advisory Committee is to advise and support various City departments in the formulation of policies related to arenas, parks, urban forestry horticulture, open spaces, and recreational use of trails; and recreational programs, facilities and services. Council members and community representatives constitute the Committee, and meet once each month.

Tasked with the development, implementation, and evaluation of planning and operational policies in the aforementioned categories, it is appropriate that this new Advisory Committee would hold interest in current discussions surrounding the creation an expanded community garden network for the City of Peterborough.

1. Armour Road
2. Ashburnham Garden/  
Permaculture Garden
3. Bonaccord Garden
4. Ecology Park
5. Health Unit Garden
6. Garden 579 (579 George St.)
7. Mark St. United Church
8. Northminster United Church
9. Roger Street Garden
10. St. Stephens Garden
11. Tinker Community Garden
12. Trent University
13. YWCA Housing in South end

# Types of gardens

## Use of public versus private land

Community gardens in Peterborough currently exist on both public and private land. Regardless of whether the land is public or private, each is associated with various benefits and drawbacks. When gardens exist on public land, it may be presumed that they possess greater long-term security from problems such as conversion for alternate uses or outright closure. However, this depends upon the unique priorities and conditions pertaining to different municipalities and contexts.

In contrast, private gardens are often subject to issues of insecure land tenure. This is particularly the case when land changes to different owners, or when development is planned or occurring. As one study on gardens in South-East Toronto observed, "All of the gardens were located on sites that were not directly owned by the gardeners, and many gardeners had concerns about whether or not their access to the land would be continued

over time."<sup>1</sup> Locally, community gardeners at Mount St. Joseph encountered a similar experience when the private landowners sold the land for development.

Frequently, community gardeners engage in "backyard gardening."<sup>2</sup> This refers to an established agreement between a gardener and a residential homeowner for the use of the backyard for food production. Homeowners are generally offered a share of what is produced in return for their contribution of land.

## Garden styles & methods

Currently Peterborough community gardens are mainly divided into allotment-style gardens (fig 1). In this style, the gardener is responsible for caring for their designated plot of land, which is sometimes divided with poles, strings, or planks. Often there is an annual fee of between \$0-\$25, which is used for the development of infrastructure

## Gardener's Spotlight

*"When the gardens at the Mount were closed we were forced to search for our own alternatives," - Interviewee*





Figure 1: Allotment style garden

(ie. Compost bins, tool sheds, water supply). These fees also support the purchase of various tools and materials required for the garden's maintenance.

Various methods of gardening can be utilized in community gardens. Some methods currently being explored in Peterborough community gardens are summarized below.

#### Low-maintenance gardens

- Good for busy people
- Uses self-sustaining perennials, requiring much less work than other methods (ie. Those requiring weeding).
- Utilizes mulch to reduce weeds and need for watering.

David, a recent arrival to the Peterborough community

gardening scene, believes that an additional benefit of low-maintenance style gardening is that it encourages diversity and a balanced ecosystem, as this is often necessary to grow a variety of plants to ensure a viable operation.

Low-maintenance gardens are well fitted to the demographic context of Peterborough. As a retirement community for many seniors, community gardens can help provide a therapeutic environment for the improvement of physical and overall health. This is consistent with a growing body of research that documents the health benefits of community gardening for older generations.

The findings of one peer-reviewed journal note that, "Community gardening in senior centers represents an opportunity for exercise, economic and nutritional

benefits, physical and mental well-being, and increased social contacts.”<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, community gardens can help improve the food security of seniors, a group that has been known to face struggles due to the high preponderance of low incomes and limited access to nutritious sources of food.

#### Organic gardening

- No pesticides or chemical fertilizers
- Non-intrusive methods for pest-management
- Encourages bio-diversity
- Commitment to organic must be upheld by *all* members of garden

Organic gardening methods are an effective way to eliminate the environmental impacts related to widespread use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Growers also engage in knowledge sharing practices to find collective solutions to shared problems, thereby becoming better urban farmers in the process. In this sense, organic gardening would seem to represent the preferred option for community gardening.

Examples of successful organic gardening can be seen at Ecology Park in Peterborough and at Fleming College in Lindsay.

#### No-till methods versus tilling soil

- Some debates have arisen concerning the decision of whether or not to till the soil at the community garden

#### Organizational structures

Currently, community members interested in joining a garden are advised to contact the Peterborough Community Garden Network (PCGN), which currently operates out of Peterborough Green-Up.

The PCGN assists first-time or returning gardeners in finding information around plot availability in their neighborhoods or in other parts of the City. If no plots are available, they can be put on a waiting list and be assigned a spot as soon as one becomes available.

Some gardens have more structure than others. Many gardens operate with a steering committee made up of committed volunteer gardeners. These individuals typically oversee the operations of the garden, organize meetings, as well as establish and relay the garden's structure to the other gardeners.

### Gardener's Spotlight

*“Diversity of plants is another important aspect to low-maintenance gardening, as combinations of plants can work together to balance all parts of the ecosystem, and create a predator-pest relationship. In this method, the gardener must view the garden as an ecosystem, much like that of a forest.” - David, Interviewee*

## Gardener's Spotlight

*"The garden that I was involved in during the summer, although technically organic, had quite a severe problem with poison-ivy. I was pretty shocked when, one day, a fellow gardener sprayed chemicals to try and get rid of it." – Interviewee*

The design of garden structures, including the generation of any specific rules, regulations, and gardener responsibilities, is generally conducted through collaboration and consultation with all of the community members (ie. Neighbours, garden members).

Most gardens maintain and distribute a list of rules when a new member joins a garden group (See Appendix C for an example). However, there are also many gardens that are organized in a much more informal way, without insistence upon a formalized structure of rules, regulations or

responsibilities.

For the purposes of communication, most gardens used an e-mail list to communicate between members, while others provide a mailbox or message board at the garden site. However, one interviewee noted that the listserv for the garden they participated in could have been used more effectively for the organization of regular events and to maintain communication. In addition to a listserv, information must also be presented at the garden to ensure all members are kept up-to date.

In all of the gardens researched through interviews, the majority of gardeners expressed that their community gardens created 'safer, cleaner, and open free spaces.' This is



## Gardener's Spotlight

*"Frank volunteered to till all the garden plots, but it wouldn't be fair to rototill the whole thing because some people have developed their soil over many years."*  
Interviewee

consistent with contemporary research that cites the potential of community gardens to reduce urban crime rates, while fostering greater sustainability and community identity.<sup>4</sup>

The impression was that all of the neighborhoods would much rather have the community gardens than not.

### Sources of funding

In addition to garden fees, funding may also be derived from other organizations, such as the Peterborough Horticultural Society or the YWCA.

Gardens in other cities may have at their disposal a diverse cross-section of funding sources. In the American state of California, for example, community gardens receive grants through various community-building organizations.<sup>5</sup>

Conversely, gardens may also

incorporate other creative mechanisms that foster broader forms of economic development, such as The Stop Community Food Centre in Toronto, Ontario. This non-profit organization oversees the operation of the 'Green Barn Market', which provides a site for farmer's to sell goods directly to consumers every Saturday throughout the year.<sup>6</sup> Community gardeners have thus developed a wide array of systems through which they secure necessary funding. This, of course, differs greatly from context to context, with not all solutions being appropriate for all.

Some gardens retain a portion of the land for use as volunteer-grown plots, where the food that is produced is donated to a community food security initiative or organization. Other gardens are devoted exclusively to this purpose, and often food grown under these circumstances is divided amongst volunteer gardeners.

# What makes a garden successful?

Some key elements that contribute to a successful garden are outlined below. These examples were determined based on primary research in the form of interviews with Peterborough community gardeners. Examples from other jurisdictions are also included to provide insight into the various ways other community gardens have achieved success.

## Communicating between members

In order to maintain sound communications, many gardeners expressed the need for a designated contact person who maintains an up-to-date list of all the members of the garden, in addition to their contact information to ensure that decisions can be made as a community.

Given that much of the administrative roles within the community garden context are provided on a voluntary basis, this can make it difficult to establish continuity between volunteers for fulfilling various tasks related to this kind of organizational requirement.

Community gardens in other jurisdictions have experimented with other models, such as the creation of a special position to oversee roles related to maintaining organization within the garden. At the Intervale Community Garden in Burlington, Vermont, for example, a site coordinator is elected to manage the plot system. This role is usually filled by an experienced gardener who, "for the time and labor of organizing meetings and clean-up days, helping to resolve intergardener disputes, and making sure communal tools are managed fairly, is waived the plot fee."<sup>7</sup>

## Locating gardens

In assessing potential locations for community gardens, it is important to take stock of the ways people access food in various contexts. For example, in urban centres the only point of access for food is generally the grocery or supermarket. As a market-mediated system for the distribution of food, this is directly related to food insecurity because of limited incomes and poverty.<sup>8</sup>

According to a report conducted in 2000, 57.3 percent of low-income households living in the city and county of Peterborough were found to be 'food insecure.'<sup>9</sup> This correlates with information gleaned from several city-based Peterborough gardeners, which noted their primary reason for getting involved with gardens situated within or close to the downtown area was in response to food insecurity.

Interviewees also stressed the importance of having adequate transportation, such as public transport, to access gardens that are not located in a walkable distance to their neighborhood.

## Community building

According to all interviewees, it is critical that gardens be located in neighborhoods where local need exists. In addition, community gardens require the support of a neighborhood in which they exist to ensure that a level of security and trust is built between gardeners and neighbors. When this occurs, everyone takes part in looking out for the garden, reducing the potential for vandalism, or food being removed without permission. It is significant to note that some of the gardens studied did not even have fences, but still did not have any such problems with food theft or vandalism.

Consequently, when garden members and neighborhood residents are able to trust each other and make decisions based on an equal foundation, the influence of hierarchy is greatly diminished. In contrast, the possibility for mutual forms of satisfaction in this scenario is intensified. As one garden interviewee stated, "I believe equal people with mutual goals make good decisions for their collective interests."

Another widely acknowledged point of success for community gardens is related to their potential for knowledge-transfer and social networking. Gardeners frequently

expressed that working along side others provided an opportunity for inexperienced gardeners to learn from more experienced individuals, as well as the opportunity for networking and socialization between all community members.

Beyond knowledge building and social-networking, gardens were perceived as successful when they encouraged diverse community interaction. This was viewed as beneficial because communities built around a diverse array of people provide an opportunity for the development of relationships that cannot be found at many other community events. In observation of the potential for social diversity one gardener remarked that, "Community gardening draws people together across age, language, and ability and provides empowering opportunity for individuals and communities to build their capacity."

Providing the opportunity for citizens to produce their own food and learn about the food cycle was also perceived as a success in many gardens, largely for reason that growing food by oneself was associated with the development of a deeper appreciation for food production. On this subject, one first-time gardener proclaimed that, "I now have a huge appreciation for farmers and

### Gardener's Spotlight

*"The garden has brought people together. Last fall we celebrated with a year-end harvest potluck." – Interviewee*

## Gardener's Spotlight

*"When other people are around, we usually end up talking, sharing advice, and sometimes trading veggies." - Interviewee*

everything they grow, after seeing how much work it is to maintain even just a small plot!"

### Other contributions to success

Many gardeners noted that in collectively shared plots it is important to recognize the contributions of volunteers that have influenced the ongoing successful development of the garden. Volunteers were viewed both as those who worked extensively, often numerous times each work, as well as those who worked more sporadically. Importantly, both were viewed as equally valuable for completing tasks that contributed to a successful harvest.

In some cases, notably allotment-style gardens, a number of interviewees desired the ability to work autonomously and recommended that a set of guidelines be clearly established to eliminate problems around access to resources and utilities (ie. Sheds, water sources, etc).

An additional aspect that was relayed by a few interviewees surrounded the issue of signage. One Gardner noted that clear signage helps to create an organized space where all members are kept up to date on what needs to be done, new activities, and important decisions.

The most frequently cited area of frustration for gardeners involved situations where neighboring plots were not being utilized or cared for. In one similar case, an interviewee suggested that a call be placed to all members at the beginning of each season to ensure their participation before planting begins. If a plot was not planted by a pre-determined date, the person responsible would be called and asked if they intended to come soon. If not, the plot would be reassigned to the next person on the waiting list.



# Towards successful community gardens

There were some aspects of community gardens that gardeners expressed could be developed further, or required additional support and planning. Their concerns are summarized under the following headings.

Location- many of the community gardens in Peterborough exist outside of the downtown core, making it difficult for students and low-income residents to travel to and from garden plots. When people get busy it also is more difficult to find the time to spend at their garden when travel time to and from the garden is included. It was readily expressed that locating community gardens in areas accessible by foot or by public transportation represented an ideal scenario.

Support system- most gardeners agreed that the existence of a support system in terms of organization would help to ensure the existence of several opportunities for community gardeners to meet with other members of their garden. Interviewees commenting on this subject noted that a support system helps to establish relationships and creates a friendly environment built on trust and sharing. Many interviewees indicated that they would often not see anyone when they went to tend to their plot.

Rules- most garden participants felt that an established set of rules, guidelines or procedures that could be easily conveyed to new members of the garden represented a positive intervention. Acceptable guidelines and procedures could help, for instance, ensure that all members adhere to organic practices, or in making decisions surrounding whether or not to till the soil each spring, etc. In discussions around rules, guidelines or procedures, gardeners emphasized the need for these to be established consensually and within reasonable terms.

Soil- many gardeners noted that the soil in their plots is rocky and hard to manage. To rectify this, it would be beneficial for soil and compost to be made available at each garden for use by gardeners.

Access to tools- a large portion of those interviewed lamented the fact that tools were not available on site for all gardens. They recommended that access to funding for new equipment as needed would be ideal. This could also be combined with a method of sharing tools between gardens throughout the city. As one gardener stated forthrightly, "Currently we run on practically nothing and on the goodwill of one or two outstanding volunteers."



Distribution/Waste Management- Currently food that cannot be consumed by individual gardeners frequently goes to waste. "It would be beneficial to establish a way of distributing the extra and leftover food to those who would benefit from fresh produce if gardeners produce more than they can consume themselves," mentioned one gardener.

A potential source for unused produce could be for community cooking classes and food boxes.<sup>10</sup> The Peterborough County-City Health Unit, as well as the YWCA currently operate these programs throughout the City and County, and currently obtain a large share of their ingredients from grocery stores and supermarkets.

Availability of alternate sites- Alternatives must be available for when a garden closes to ensure all citizens who want a space to grow food are provided with the opportunity to continue with their activities. A couple of gardeners were dismayed by the closure of the community garden at Mount St. Joseph and the lack of response from the City. In this specific case, gardeners approached the City for help with no success, and as a result established a volunteer-based search committee to find availabilities in existing community garden plots. Some were able to find space, and others were not.

# Establishing the City's role

Currently, almost all of the Peterborough area community gardens have at least one member who takes a leadership role. These individuals ensure that the gardens run smoothly, and that new members are introduced to the rules and/or guidelines of the garden. To supplement the existing situation, providing funding for a Community Garden Coordinator (perhaps employed under the Community Garden Network) could represent a proactive addition. This would ideally be a paid position, which would provide logistical support to established and prospective community gardeners, ensure the organizational structure for plot distribution, and take charge of the maintenance of current community garden enrollments and waiting lists.

Ideally, the addition of a paid Community Garden Coordinator would allow at least one individual the opportunity to dedicate their time to helping build communities, and assisting various gardens in sharing resources and knowledge. This coordinator could also help to organize regular meetings and events in each garden, ensuring that a balance of views is acknowledged.

Moreover, the coordinator would be

an expert to whom first-time gardeners could approach for advice or concrete assistance. This could be supplemented by the organization of public workshops in each garden, or larger events involving collaborations between gardens.

Finally, a coordinator could also design and implement new ideas for community gardens, occurring in consultation with members of the community in which the garden is to be established. This individual could also raise awareness in the community about the benefits of community gardens and the positive effects they can have in creating healthy communities.

Currently, there does not exist a clear method for obtaining a plot if an individual or group desires one. The City (or the Community Garden Coordinator) could produce and maintain a website for this purpose, highlighting each garden, the location, organizational method and a person to contact. The website would also provide references to each garden's purpose and mandates, including the way the land is used and laid out.

The City could also promote the conversion of existing greenspaces that are currently underutilized into self-sustaining edible ecosystems or,

alternatively, create opportunity for these spaces to be repurposed as community gardens. The promotion of greenspace for food production is an important addition to community where a large proportion of the population lives below the poverty line.

In addition to developing publicly accessible edible gardens' in the downtown area, the City could also plant native and non-native edible trees throughout the city, and replace grass with prairie and wildflowers. These varieties help to attract pollinators such as bees and butterflies, as well as tourists.

Finally, the City can establish infrastructure for gardeners to compost green waste. Some gardens currently have composting systems, but others simply utilize a central pile onto which neighbours may add their leaves. This makes compost much harder to use in the garden. Providing each garden with adequate compost space would help to establish localized waste cycles (Fig. 2).

Ultimately, the City should continue to support the role of the Peterborough Community Garden Network, which is the primary body currently facilitating community

gardens in Peterborough. In order to prevent the duplication of work, it is necessary to engage in full consultation and collaborative efforts with existing groups who have a vested interest in community garden initiatives in Peterborough.

It is the responsibility of government (including municipalities) to ensure the health of its citizens by providing access to basic foods and promoting an end to hunger.<sup>10</sup> However, it is important to assess need by maintaining regular consultation and communication with community members to ensure that garden projects are being supported by gardeners, neighbours, and all other invested parties.



Figure 2: Composting Cycle

# Challenges faced in research

The questions that the City originally provided us with posed a challenge as they did not necessarily reflect existing community garden models, or the structures that were already in place at many of the gardens we researched.

Some interviewees were offended or taken aback with language concerning “enforcement” and “management.” Given that none of the gardens we researched had serious conflicts that could not be resolved through listening and communication with other garden members, such terms were not

applicable in their view and experience.

Moreover, many interviewees did not reply to calls requesting interviews, making our research confined to only those who replied and the material that had already been collected through interviews by previous researchers.

# Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Sarah Wakefield et al, "Growing Urban Health: Community Garden in South-East Toronto," *Health Promotion International* 22.2 (2007): 98
- <sup>2</sup> "The Backyard Gardeners Network," *Lower Ninth Ward Urban Farming Coalition*, 15 Nov. 2009, < <http://www.lowernineurbanfarming.org/content/2661>>
- <sup>3</sup> Elizabeth N. Austin et al, "Community Gardening in a Senior Center: A Therapeutic Intervention to Improve the Health of Older Adults," *Therapeutic Recreational Journal* 40.1 (2006): 49
- <sup>4</sup> Edmund P. Fowler, "The Link Between Politics, Policies and Healthy City Form," *Local Places in the Age of the Global City*, ed. Roger Keil, Gerda R. Wekerle and David V.J. Bell (Montreal, QC: Black Rose Books Ltd., 1996) 225-226
- <sup>5</sup> Joan Twiss et al, "Community Gardens: Lessons Learned from California Healthy Cities and Communities," *American Journal of Public Health* 93.9 (2003): 1435
- <sup>6</sup> "Green Barn Market," *The Stop Community Food Barn*, 2 Dec. 2009, < <http://thestop.org/green-barn-market>>
- <sup>7</sup> Thomas Macias, "Working Towards a Just, Equitable, and Local Food System: The Social Impact of Community-Based Agriculture," *Social Science Quarterly* 89.5 (2008): 1093-1094
- <sup>8</sup> Debbie Field, "Putting Food First: Women's Role in Creating a Grassroots Food System Outside the Marketplace," *Women Working the NAFTA Food Chain*, ed. Deborah Barndt (Sumach Press, 1999) 196
- <sup>9</sup> Susan Hubay & Jaqueline Powell, "You Can't Start a Revolution on an Empty Stomach: Food Security and Community Mobilization in Peterborough," *Inspiring Change: Healthy Cities and Communities in Ontario*, ed. Ontario Healthy Community Coalition (2000) 125
- <sup>10</sup> Debbie Field, "Putting Food First: Women's Role in Creating a Grassroots Food System Outside the Marketplace," *Women Working the NAFTA Food Chain*, ed. Deborah Barndt (Sumach Press, 1999) 199

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Fowler, Edmund P. "The Link Between Politics, Policies and Healthy City Form," *Local Places in the Age of the Global City*, ed. Roger Keil, Gerda R. Wekerle and David V.J. Bell. Montreal, QC: Black Rose Books Ltd., 1996: 211-232.

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Twiss, Joan, Joy Dickenson, Shirley Duma, Tanya Kleinman, Heather Paulson, Liz Rilveria. "Community Gardens: Lessons Learned from California Healthy Cities and Communities," *American Journal of Public Health* 93.9 (2003): 1435-1438.

Wakefield, Sarah, Fiona Yeudall, Carolin Taron, Jennifer Reynolds, Ana Skinner. "Growing Urban Health: Community Garden in South-East Toronto," *Health Promotion International* 22.2 (2007): 92-101.

# Glossary of Terms

*Allotment*: a small plot of land issued to an individual or group for use in growing food or plants, sometimes for a nominal fee

*Annual*: a plant that germinates, grows, and dies in one year, and does not grow again the following year

*Anti-poverty initiative*: an organization or initiative committed to reducing or eliminating poverty, with a focus on food security

*Community garden*: a section of arable land that is used by a group of citizens for the purposes of growing food and/or other plants

*Food security*: The ability of people to access safe, nutritious and affordable food. Not necessarily exclusive to people living in poverty, as safe and nutritious food is often difficult to obtain due to the organization of the prevailing food system

*Food sovereignty*: refers to the right of people to determine their own food needs, choices--in addition to exercising agency over methods of production, including, but not limited to agricultural methods, livestock and fisheries systems, as opposed to reliance on markets for the acquisition of food.

*Greenspace*: land that is occupied by grass and/or shrubbery

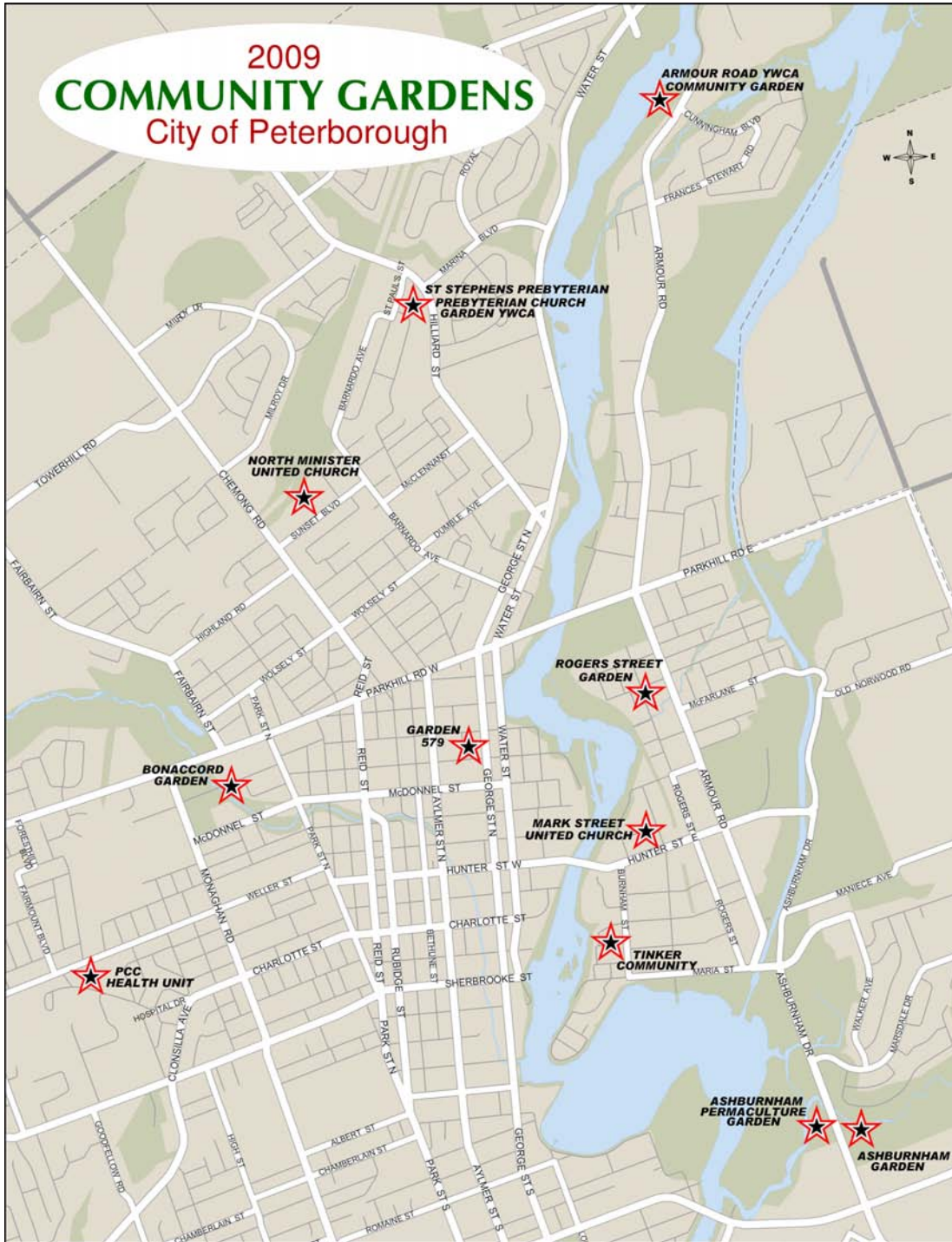
*Municipality*: the area directly pertaining to the City of Peterborough

*Neighbours*: members of the community who live within close proximity to a community garden

*Perennials*: a plant that germinates, grows and dies in one year, and then repeats the cycle in the subsequent years without having to be re-planted

*Sustainability*: allowing for diversity and balance between three key factors—environmental, economic, and social— to ensure longevity and endurance of an ecosystem, individual or organization

# Appendix A: Community Garden Map





# Appendix B: Garden Chart

GARDEN	TYPE
Armour Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allotment system</li> </ul>
Ashburnham Garden/ Permaculture Garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allotment system</li> </ul>
Bonaccord Garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allotment system</li> </ul>
Ecology Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning garden</li> </ul>
Health Unit Garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food grown for anti-poverty initiatives</li> </ul>
Garden 579 (579 George St.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collectively shared plot</li> <li>Learning garden</li> <li>Food grown for anti-poverty initiatives</li> </ul>
Mark St. United Garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allotment system</li> </ul>
Northminster United Church (300 Sunset Blvd.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allotment system</li> </ul>
Roger Street Garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allotment system</li> </ul>
St. Stephens Garden (1140 St. Pauls St.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allotment system</li> </ul>
Tinker Community Garden (Burnham Street)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allotment system</li> </ul>
YWCA Housing in South end	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residents only</li> <li>Food grown for anti-poverty initiatives</li> </ul>
Trent University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning garden</li> <li>Food grown for anti-poverty initiatives</li> <li>Food grown for campus café</li> </ul>

## Appendix C: Example Garden Guidelines

# Millbrook Community Garden Guidelines for friendly, respectful gardening

- ⊗ To be eligible for a garden plot, persons must reside or be employed within the Township of Cavan Monaghan.
- ⊗ Gardeners sign the guidelines by April 30 to secure a plot. Plots are \$5 for a small plot (5x10 feet) and \$7 for a large plot (10x10 feet) for the season. Fees collected will be used for common garden supplies, maintenance, events, etc.
- ⊗ Each gardener is entitled to one plot. If there are vacant plots they may be available to gardeners if no waiting list exists.
- ⊗ New garden plots will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Consideration may also be given to the physical needs of the gardener and/or the type of plants that she/he wishes to grow.
- ⊗ Gardeners are responsible for planting, harvesting and keeping their own plots free of weeds and debris. Gardeners may forfeit their plot if it is not maintained and becomes unkept. If a gardener is unable to tend a plot temporarily, she/he will find a garden buddy or let the Millbrook Community Garden Committee know.
- ⊗ Gardeners agree to use natural, organic gardening methods. Use of any non-organic methods needs the agreement of all members of the community garden.
- ⊗ Gardeners can add additional nutrients to their plot if they wish – well rotted manure (no chicken manure), compost, mulch, etc.
- ⊗ Community garden plots are for growing vegetables, herbs and flowers. Trees and large permanent shrubs are not suitable because they may block sun to other plots. However, it may be possible to allocate a plot that does not shade or affect nearby plots.
- ⊗ Gardeners are asked not to plant corn, as it attracts wildlife, particularly raccoons.
- ⊗ Gardeners agree to grow for their own personal use, not for commercial purposes.
- ⊗ Gardeners share garden tasks such as spreading straw on pathways, digging in manure and helping with the spring and fall cleanups.
- ⊗ Gardeners are asked to avoid wasting water in the garden. The use of watering cans is strongly encouraged rather than hoses.
- ⊗ Gardeners will take care to work safely by: working within their own personal limitations; keeping the garden area tidy and clear of obstacles; using and storing tools safely; wearing sun hats, sunscreen, gloves and protective footwear as required. We encourage gardeners to ensure that their tetanus vaccinations are up to date.

**Community Gardens: A review of local stakeholders and their relationships**

**For The City of Peterborough  
&  
The Trent Centre for Community Based Education**

**By Jessica Goodfellow & Liam Quan**

## **Contents**

1. Introduction
2. Summary of Stakeholder Groups in Peterborough
3. Discussion of Findings
4. Appendix
  - a) Stakeholder contact information
  - b) Interview questions
  - c) Interview Dialogues

## **1. Introduction**

Understanding stakeholder roles, perspectives, and relationships is vital when seeking involvement within the practice of community gardens. The city of Peterborough has expressed interest in developing policy to support and encourage community gardening. Communication with the various local stakeholders has taken place to assist the city in doing so.

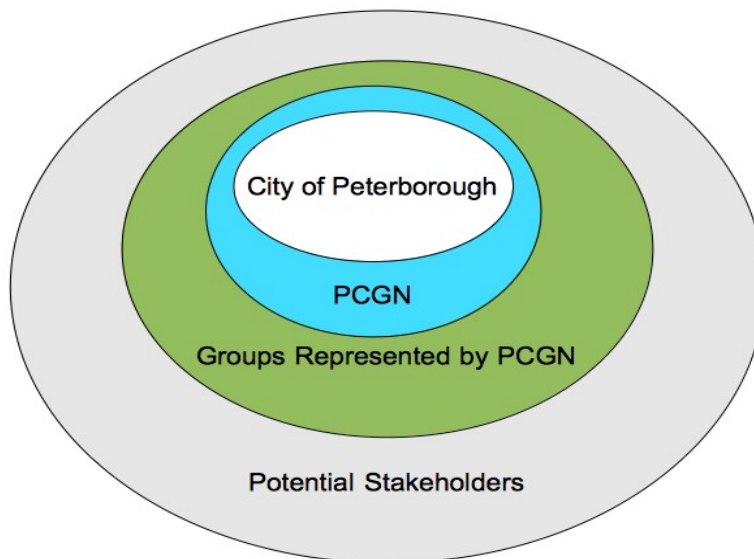
Two Trent University students composed a list of questions to be directed towards the specific community garden stakeholders within the City of Peterborough. Stakeholders were defined as a group or individual who has a vested interest in the practice of community gardening, and for the purpose of our report has an identifiable role. Stakeholders who are members of the Peterborough Community Garden Network were contacted and interviewed with regards to their involvement. There were eleven questions presented, all focusing on the interests, responsibilities, and relationships amongst the various stakeholders and their gardens. As well, information was provided by the PCGN regarding current stakeholders with various levels of involvement as well as potential stakeholder not yet involved in the network.

## **2. Summary of Stakeholder Groups**

Highly involved stakeholders are organizations that play a leadership role in the facilitation and operation of community gardens within Peterborough. Many of these stakeholders are members of the Community Garden Network (PCGN). The PCGN is an organized group of community garden coordinators that is actively working to strengthen and expand the network of community gardeners in Peterborough. Its members include representatives of the Peterborough County Health Unit, the YWCA, Trent University faculty, and sustainability and food security advocates. This core group maintains contact with organizations that have an interest in community gardens, who either facilitate gardens themselves or run programs which benefit from community gardens. Many additional stakeholder groups with various interests are represented by PCGN these are organizations that are involved in Peterborough's community gardening but do not play a leadership role in the operation of the gardens themselves. Their interests range from food security to public health to education. Groups represented in this way include the Peterborough Social Planning Council, the Mayor's Poverty Reduction Committee and the Peterborough County Health Unit. These groups often volunteer within specific gardens or their programs benefit from the produce of the various gardens. Each of these organizations are represented by a specific member of the PCGN.

Potential PCGN members are different groups that have the potential to be actively involved or are actively involved with Peterborough's community gardens, however these groups are not members of the Community Garden Network, and could bring great benefit to the network if each were to join. These groups tend to be in contact with or affiliated with groups represented by the PCGN (See appendix 4.a for an extensive list of stakeholder groups).

The central stakeholder is ultimately the City of Peterborough because it may be in the interest of the City to support such a significant community development project. As well, in the past city land has been used, not always with permission. Without specific policy in place with regards to land use and community gardens, the City's role is ambiguous. If people are using vacant city land in this way, it becomes a concern of councillors as well as city planners and the committee responsible for parks and recreation.



This figure shows the various levels of stakeholders in terms of communication.

### 3. Discussion

The stakeholders that were interviewed had multiple reasons for being involved. Certain groups such as Food Not Bombs and Garden 579 approached community gardening from a personal empowerment perspective, focused on autonomy from established food systems and mutual support within a small community. Other groups such as the Seasoned Spoon, a student run co-operative café

supported by Trent's community gardens were focused on providing healthy, local, sustainable, affordable food and those closing the system of production and consumption in the immediate vicinity of where the food was grown. Some groups such as the YWCA are involved with community gardening as a means to address specific issues within the community such as poverty and health.

We can make a distinction between the gardeners who eat the food and land owners who facilitate the practice as primary stakeholders and other community groups who have a vested interest in the success of the projects as secondary stakeholders. In terms of the relationships between stakeholders involved in the various garden projects we considered, the relationships tend to be quite lateral in terms of decision making. Generally the gardens are facilitated in such a way that the gardeners are able to most effectively utilize the land in the manner that they chose while maintaining cooperation and coherency within the group. This is necessarily a result of consensus based decision making amongst the gardeners.

Community gardening, being practiced from all different perspectives, varies in the diversity of stakeholders. Some gardens operate with minimal and informal organization while others operate under a more bureaucratic structure, but always to support the goals of the gardeners. Garden 579 (located at 579 George Street) for example, facilitates itself amongst a social network of individuals. This community garden structure consists of no formal organization and allows the involvement of new individuals in various capacities as they will. When asked who the specific stakeholders involved in Garden 579 were Rachelle Suave expressed that there are a multitude of individuals involved in the garden, non of which have formalized relationships. These stakeholders included the land owner who gave his permission to Rachelle to utilize his vacant property, the neighbours who live near the garden frequently interact with the land or the people using the land, the volunteers who work at the garden (being any individual interested in getting involved), the land itself, and Rachelle also includes the wildlife that inhabits this garden as a stakeholder.

Joelle Favreau leads the community garden project of the YWCA, represents a more formally organized example of community gardening. She represents 3 gardens in the city of Peterborough and is in contact with the Peterborough County Health Unit as well as Thomas A. Stuart high school who both have vested interests in community gardening but for different reasons. The stakeholders involved vary depending on the garden, but generally they can be characterized as the landowners, gardeners, the funding sources such as the United Way, other organizations that utilize the YWCA community

garden program such as the Haliburton Kawartha Health Unit, the Peterborough Community Garden Network and the neighbourhoods in which the gardens are situated.

Responsibility for the initiation of these garden projects varies between particular gardens. Generally, those who sought to grow their own food are the ones who procured the land to do so. However, in certain cases an organization such as the YWCA has found land on which members of its community can garden. This land is obtained by the organizations as a result of community demand. In fact, the YWCA has a waiting list of individuals or families desiring a plot of land to garden. Thus, without the demand of the primary group we defined, initiation of community gardens would not occur. The city of Peterborough however has a high demand for land to be used in this way and therefore could benefit from more organized support.

When formal organization is involved in the organization of community gardens there will inevitably be parties with more immediate access to resources than others, but invariably these organizations exist for the benefit of the primary stakeholder and therefore facilitate community garden projects cooperatively. It is necessary in these cases that the parties with access to such resources are in clear and equitable communication with other parties involved in the decision.

As to facilitate the most effective operation of community gardens there are inevitably one or two people who coordinate communication within the group and with individuals seeking to make contact and get involved with the project. These contacts are essential for the dynamic involvement of individuals and for the inclusion of new participants. However, as mentioned above, the general rules, guidelines, and intentions are formed by consensus amongst the active gardeners. When looking at the various types of gardens and the different stakeholders within them it appears that reaching a consensus could be challenging, as a lack of structure and facilitation is present within a number of the gardens. This is often a challenge that many gardeners express when being involved in a more loosely organized structure, communication is 100% reliant on personal connections and interactions. With that said, when organizations such as the YWCA are involved with community gardens, meetings are easily facilitated and communication lines are widely open.

Because of the relative scarcity of land to be utilized for community gardening, the process of obtaining land varies significantly from project to project. This means that the other primary stakeholder, aside from the gardeners, may be a group or individual who supports community gardening by offering their land or is a community gardener in their own right. The other primary stakeholder could be an organization that owns land such as a church. In some cases vacant land has



been used without the knowledge of the owner, and unfortunately in such cases the implied relationship is ambiguous. To avoid potential altercation the ownership of this land must be more easily discernible by potential gardeners through a formal means of communication, perhaps through municipal channels.

It is evident that the constituent parties involved in community gardens in their various capacities rely on consensus to make decisions about their operation. Except in cases where the landowner is unknown, all stakeholders have essentially the same goal which is to facilitate the production of food by members of the community. In certain cases this is integrated into a larger context of social support or political action, but regardless the primary intent remains the same. The scale of a community gardens immediate network obviously varies depending on the level of integration with secondary stakeholders. However in any case the role of these secondary stakeholders is to facilitate people gardening and implement this activity in a particular context. These associations of stakeholders form around the gardens as required, if there is a necessity for more complex organization for the benefit of the primary group, involvement on a more municipal level may be required. The individuals and groups involved currently in Peterborough's community gardens represent a vast range of dedicated and active stakeholders. If the City of Peterborough were to become an active stakeholder in the facilitation of these projects the municipalities ability to support community gardens could vastly contribute to the resilience and longevity of these initiatives.

## 4. Appendix

### a) Stakeholder Contact Information

Highly Involved Stakeholders	Contact Name	Phone	Email
City of Peterborough	Janet Sheward		<a href="mailto:jsheward@peterborough.ca">jsheward@peterborough.ca</a>
Peterborough City/County Health Unit	Laura Jack		<a href="mailto:ljack@pcchu.ca">ljack@pcchu.ca</a>
YWCA	Joelle Favreau		<a href="mailto:jfavreau@ywcapeterborough.org">jfavreau@ywcapeterborough.org</a>
Fleming College	Peter Hughes		<a href="mailto:PEHUGHES@flemingc.on.ca">PEHUGHES@flemingc.on.ca</a>
Peterborough Green-Up	Paula Anderson		<a href="mailto:wastefree@greenup.on.ca">wastefree@greenup.on.ca</a>
Trent University	Paula Anderson		<a href="mailto:wastefree@greenup.on.ca">wastefree@greenup.on.ca</a>
Peterborough Food	Peggy Bailey		<a href="mailto:peterboroughfood@gmail.com">peterboroughfood@gmail.com</a>
Ashburnham Community Garden	Lori Sainte	741-3546	<a href="mailto:saintelori@hotmail.com">saintelori@hotmail.com</a>
Urbantomato	Jillian Bishop		<a href="mailto:urbantomato@gmail.com">urbantomato@gmail.com</a>
Transition Town Peterborough	Trent Rhode		<a href="mailto:trentrhode@gmail.com">trentrhode@gmail.com</a>
579 George St. Community Garden	Rachelle Suave	748-6857	
Armour Road Community Garden	Charlotte Kennedy	743-3526	
Bonaccord Garden	Ted	748-5005	
Rogersd St. Community Garden	John	743-1686	
Mark St. United Church Garden	Carol Joyce	741-5803	
Northminister United Church Garden	Bev	748-4881	
St. Stephens Community Garden	Charlotte Kennedy	743-3526	
Tinker Community Garden	Charlotte Gick	761-5046	
Sadlier House Heritage Garden	Alissa Paxton		<a href="mailto:apaxton@prcsa.ca">apaxton@prcsa.ca</a>
Peterborough Poverty Reduction Network	Susan Hubay		<a href="mailto:shubay@pcchu.ca">shubay@pcchu.ca</a>
Food Not Bombs	Rachelle Suave	748-6857	
Peterborough, Victoria, Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board		748-4861	
Immaculate Conception Public School	Sue Smith	745-6777	
Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board		742-9773	
Trent Centre for Community-based Education	Christie Nash	743-0523	<a href="mailto:christienash@trentcentre.ca">christienash@trentcentre.ca</a>

<b>Groups Represented by PCGN</b>	<b>Contact Name</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
Peterborough Social Planning Council	Laurie Sainte		
Mayor's Poverty Reduction Committee	Laurie Sainte		
Community Food Action Network	Laurie Sainte		
Our Space	Laurie Sainte		
Gleaning Program	Laurie Sainte		
Faith Rep – River Run	Laurie Sainte		
Peterborough L.E.T.S	Laurie Sainte		
Edible Landscaping Project – 66 Auburn St	Trent Rhode		<a href="mailto:trentrhode@gmail.com">trentrhode@gmail.com</a>
Re-Skilling Institute – Permaculture Ecological Design	Trent Rhode		<a href="mailto:trentrhode@gmail.com">trentrhode@gmail.com</a>
Peterborough Food – Advocacy, Workshops & Garden Education	Peggy Baillie		
Local Table. Food For the Fresh - Seasonal Foods Catering	Peggy Baillie		
Farm- Chefs Collaboration	Peggy Baillie		
Peterborough County City Health Unit	Laura Jack		
Health Unit Garden	Laura Jack		
Come Cook with Us	Laura Jack		
YWCA – Food Boxes	Laura Jack		
Healthy Lunches – Good Food in Schools	Laura Jack		
Toronto Community Garden Network	Jillian Bishop		
Stop Community Food Centre/ Green Barn	Jillian Bishop		
Seedy Saturday – Annual Seed Exchange	Jillian Bishop		
Seeds of Diversity Canada	Jillian Bishop		
Urbantomato – Heirloom seeds & seedlings	Jillian Bishop		
Fleming College – Teacher, Community Garden	Peter Hughes		
Towards Balance Support Network	Peter Hughes		
Frost Campus Sustainable Initiative	Peter Hughes		

Potential PCGN Members	Contact Name	Phone	Email
Big Brothers & Sisters	Darlene Evans	743-6100	<a href="mailto:darlene.evans@cogeco.ca">darlene.evans@cogeco.ca</a>
Camp Kawartha	Jacob Rodenburg		<a href="mailto:jrodenburg@campkawartha.ca">jrodenburg@campkawartha.ca</a>
Centre for Individual Studies	Luky Corfu	749-6344	<a href="mailto:licorfu@hotmail.com">licorfu@hotmail.com</a>
COIN	Linda Slavin	743-0238	<a href="mailto:lindas@coin-ced.org">lindas@coin-ced.org</a>
Community Counseling & Resource Centre		742-4258	<a href="mailto:ccrc@ccrc-ptbo.com">ccrc@ccrc-ptbo.com</a>
DBIA		748-4774	
Food Not Bombs	Rachelle Suave	748-6857	
Garden 579	Rachelle Suave	748-6857	<a href="mailto:garden579@hotmail.com">garden579@hotmail.com</a>
Green Party	Miriam Stucky		<a href="mailto:miriamstucky@gmail.com">miriamstucky@gmail.com</a>
Kawartha Choice	Karen Jopling	324-9411	
Kawartha Food Share		745-5377	
Kawartha Heritage Conservancy	Anna Petry	743-9383	
Kawartha World Issues Centre		748-1680	<a href="mailto:kwic@trentu.ca">kwic@trentu.ca</a>
Lakefield Horticultural Society	Brenda		
Lions Club		740-2288	<a href="mailto:peterboroughlionsclub@on.aibn.com">peterboroughlionsclub@on.aibn.com</a>
Master Gardeners		741-4905	
Millbrook & District Garden Club			
Millbrook Community Garden			<a href="mailto:communitygarden@nexicom.net">communitygarden@nexicom.net</a>
Ministry of Natural Resources Community Garden	Jenny Gleason		
New Canadians Centre		743-0882	
Niiijkiwendidaa Anishnaabe-Kwewag Services Circle		741-0900	
Ontario Public Interest Research Group		741-1208	<a href="mailto:opirg@trentu.ca">opirg@trentu.ca</a>
Peterborough Aids Resource Network		749-9110	<a href="mailto:getinformed@parn.ca">getinformed@parn.ca</a>
Peterborough Agricultural Society	Kate Lowes	742-5781	<a href="mailto:info@peterboroughex.ca">info@peterboroughex.ca</a>
Peterborough Communication Support Systems	Scott Braden	748-6680	
Peterborough Historical Society	hutchinson house	743-9710	<a href="mailto:hutchinsonhouse@nexicom.net">hutchinsonhouse@nexicom.net</a>
Peterborough Master Gardeners		741-4905	
Rotary Club	Jay Amer		<a href="http://www.clubrunner.ca/CPrg/home/homeG.asp?cid=219">http://www.clubrunner.ca/CPrg/home/homeG.asp?cid=219</a>

## **b) Interview Questions**

- 1) Why did you get involved with community gardening? What perspective are you coming from (examples: Health, community building, food security, environmental issues, etc, etc...or all of the above?)
- 2) What community garden(s) are you involved with in Peterborough? What role do you play in the(se) gardens?
- 3) Who are the various stake holders involved in the garden(s) you work with, as well as other gardens in the community? Please offer a brief description of what each stakeholder's role is?
- 4) How would you describe the relationships between each of the stake holders?
- 5) Which group initiated the community garden(s) you work with, or was it a collective effort?
- 6) Does the system operate in a linear manner (where all stakeholders are equally as involved and responsible) or does the system operate in such a way that the various stakeholders are above/below one another in terms of responsibilities and decision making power?
- 7) Does a specific group (or individual) play the leadership role of the community garden(s) you work with?
- 8) If yes, what responsibilities are involved in that role?
- 9) How was the land obtained for the garden(s) you are involved in?
- 10) What stakeholder group creates/implements the regulations associated to community gardening? Does each different garden Peterborough have its own rules and regulations? If yes, do you feel that a uniform set of policies could be implemented in the community of community gardens, and be beneficial? Why or why not?
- 11) Is the system that is used to operate your garden modelled after another community garden/municipality?

## **c) Interview Dialogues**

### **Interview with Joelle Favreau representing the YWCA**

- 1) What role do you play in the operation of community gardening?
  - Represent YWCA's 4 gardens
  - 3 in peterborough 1 in county
  - Responsible for community development oversight

2) Who are the various stake holders involved in the operation? Please offer a brief description of what each stakeholder's role is?

The stakeholders vary depending on garden. Owners. Gardeners. Local high school – Thomas A Stuart.

Funding stakeholders include:

- United way
- Health life
- Peterborough County Health Unit
- PCGN
- Neighbourhoods

3) How would you describe the relationships between each of the stake holders?

- YWCA works with feedback from gardenings
- There are many people asking for plots
- Connections form through individuals participation in particular gardens - based on availability of plots.
- The YWCA works with gardeners – “it's their garden,” YWCA provides manure, sometimes tilling, tools.
- YWCA is involved in a facilitator role
- There is an annual meeting – guidelines are discussed – agreement of cooperation defined by gardeners.
- YWCA connects to volunteer assistance, provides means for conflict resolution
- \$5 is the standard charge for plot – collective chores for those who can't pay. The fee provides a sense of propriety for the gardeners.

4) Which group initiated the operation of the community garden, or was it a collective effort?

- Collective effort with facilitation by YWCA.

5) Does the system operate in a linear manner (where all stakeholders are equally as involved and responsible) or does the system operate in such a way that the various stakeholders are above/below one another in terms of responsibilities and decision making power?

- The project requires organization and the YWCA has more access to resources. Gardeners are still the heart of the process.

6) Does a specific stakeholder group play the leadership role of the community garden?

- In terms of individual gardens, there are contact people – organizers circulate information. There is one or a pair of organizers per garden.

8) What stakeholder group creates/implements the regulations associated to community gardening?

- Guidelines are formed at beginning of season at the annual meeting, evaluation of past season informs guidelines.
- Sometimes new people bring up their particular needs. It is a simple process, not punitive.
- The focus is safety and effectiveness of the project.

9) What is the process, and by whom is it completed to obtain land for the gardens?

- This process is changing currently.
- In the past: groups in touch with list of plots. People call the YWCA or garden facilitator and there may be plots available.
- Often there is a waiting list in spring.
- The YWCA may look for plots in other gardens

10) Is the system that is used to operate these community gardens modelled after another community garden/municipality?

- The system was modelled after other gardens but evolved organically.
- It is solution oriented – poverty is a particular area of concern.
- The goal was to create a space of connection and community, to break barriers of isolation that often form around people in poverty.
- Members had been involved in other gardens in other communities.
- The YWCA did explore solutions from other gardens.

### **Interview with Rachelle Suave representing Food Not Bombs**

1) Why did you get involved with community gardening? What perspective are you coming from (examples: Health, community building, food security, environmental issues, etc, etc...or all of the above?)

I believe that all living beings must have access to land in order to do the work essential to sustaining their lives. I believe that, like all other animals, humans must work each day to gather/hunt/trap/raise/grow and else wise produce their food... I believe that the global poor have been driven from their lands into the destitutions of urban starvation and poverty. I believe that profit driven economic 'development' has led to the exploitation of peoples and resources thereby creating and then profiting from global malnutrition, illness and starvation. I believe that commons such as land and water must be reclaimed from capitalist greed, by the people. I believe that all communities benefit and grow when spaces in each little part of a city or town open up providing people an opportunity to hold collective and collaborative responsibility and ownership to a project.

I come to community gardening through my work with grassroots community building, food sovereignty, anti-poverty and popular education efforts and from a deep belief that people must take immediate direct action to do for themselves. I believe that the people who live in a neighbourhood/community are the most apt to create a community gardening project that reflect and meets specific needs.

I community garden to feed myself, to feed my family and to skill share/ knowledge share with my neighbours so that food sovereignty may become possible. I believe that when a whole bunch of people work together for and towards a common need, (food and community space) community capacity is heightened.

2) What community garden(s) are you involved with in Peterborough? What role do you play in the(se) gardens?

I am involved in a number of different gardening projects. I have a personal garden plot at the Bonnacord garden site which I have kept and maintained for three years now. I have the great pleasure of seeing and speaking with other gardeners throughout the season. I do not really participate in the greater operation of the Bonnacord site. I have had the great pleasure of assisting with the incredible rooftop garden initiative at Trents in the capacity of providing labour in the field and through harvest distribution. Myself and Food not Bombs initiated a project called Garden 579 in the spring of 2008. This initiative has a two fold vision: to grow food and community food sovereignty and to open a space to the open public where grassroots community could meet that was free, accessible and community driven.

3) Who are the various stake holders involved in the garden(s) you work with, as well as other gardens in the community? Please offer a brief description of what each stakeholder's role is?

Please let me begin by saying that I find the term stakeholder and the way that research engineers relationships and actor groups awkward and displeasing. (I do understand that you have been asked to research and question what the city has asked). The term stakeholder traditionally means the person entrusted to hold the stakes while the outcome of a gamble between other parties is settled. If I go with the idea that a stakeholder is someone who has a vested interest in a given project or organization I am still left with uncomfortable thoughts as the city seeks to gather lists. I have found that the method of gathering lists of 'key people' and relationships bureaucratizes and attempts to simplify and neatly order and confine what is a complex, vibrant, sporadic, chaotic and most beautiful about community grown projects. I believe that the city is attempting to create a template/ recipe for what a community garden ought look like, act like, govern itself under etc. I have been involved in a good number of community gardening initiatives in a number of different cities and no two have ever really met a common template. I have been involved in initiatives where the municipality or other government have been involved in some way, and I have been involved in projects where no government body has been involved.

How would you describe the relationships between each of the stake holders?

As is so often the case, the stakeholders who really ought be at the table, rarely meet so. There are gardeners, land owners, environmental and social justice advocates, garden and horticultural groups/societies, municipal employees, community building groups, health, food security and poverty advocates and many more who share a stake.

Big grocery stores, land developers, insurance companies, the global oil and transportation industry and bigpharma/biotech also have less sited but absolute stakes in the debate. There are huge ramifications that come if a community actually committed to providing sufficient land for those who wished to grow their own food. This permission given for people to use land for free or a very small fee to act towards self sufficiency and away from corporate commodity purchasing threatens too much for capitalism. Community Gardening is alright on a small scale and on a small scale the stakeholders seem to be mostly people with land, people who want to grow stuff... but when the possibility is magnified and a reality where many people divert from their total dependence on a commodity food market, the stakeholders reveal themselves to be much farther reaching.

I prefer to work in community gardening projects where there is no policy or board or bureaucracy to interact with. I believe people are perfectly capable of organizing themselves and identifying problems and coming up with solutions themselves. The 'stakeholders' that I interact with at Garden 579 are the land itself, the neighbours, the hodgepodge of people who walk through or stop by, the volunteers like myself who randomly stop by and work, the squirrels and raccoons and other



creatures who really own the land. Garden 579 has a simple and beautiful relationship with the person who owns the land where he has land that he wasn't able to use that needed a cleanup and we needed a central, accessible space to seed and work our vision.

4) Which group initiated the community garden(s) you work with, or was it a collective effort?

Bonnacord, I believe is initially the result of people who were looking for gardening space and a neighbourhood looking to protect a greenspace from development working together and then the collaboration each year of those gardening plots. The garden project at Trent I believe is the result of professor who saw a purposeful use for space initially created for a research project. A gardener has been paid for in part by a student levy for the project but the wonderful harvest that results each year is the product of a mostly volunteer force. Garden 579 is a 100% volunteer and donation driven project that was initiated by Food Not Bombs who hold potlucks and cooks down mounds of compost on site. The hundreds of people who have been a part of the Garden or who have stopped in for a sit or a drink of water, a tour, an inquiry are all part of the collective effort.

5) Does the system operate in a linear manner (where all stakeholders are equally as involved and responsible) or does the system operate in such a way that the various stakeholders are above/below one another in terms of responsibilities and decision making power?

At Bonnacord there are some collective guidelines-procedures... like locking the shed after use, composting in the appropriate area that all parties agree to. Gardeners try to talk with one another and there is a contact person and a decision making structure. I have felt, for three years, like I can garden, be autonomous and honour collective guidelines Whenever important new information has come up, gardeners have always seemed, in my experience, to pass it on to one another or through a simple posting. A phone list is great for the contact person and others to have in the very rare event that large scale changes are to occur or special collective action should be taken.

At the Trent Garden and at Garden 579 the 'traditional' style community garden is significantly transformed. Instead of individual allotments for persons or families to grow for themselves, both of these projects are guided by the principles of mutuality and collaborative work for collective gain. In each case, the land used for gardening is worked as a wholistic system and all plots and all gardeners sow, tend, water and harvest together in season as it gives. The food grown at Trent is in part used by the Seasoned Spoon for their affordable campus meals- is shared by those who have laboured and is elsewhere distributed to groups that provide free meals in the community. The food grown at Garden 579 is eaten at Garden 579 on Wednesday nights at community potlucks april-nov. Those who work the garden, those who stop by and help themselves and those lovely squirrels and raccoons also share the harvest. Neighbours will come and clip some mint or drop their compost.

This way of sharing work and gain and loss and land, I believe, inherently leads to a dynamic interrelationship between all parties.

6) Does a specific group (or individual) play the leadership role of the community garden(s) you work with?

See above

\*Winnipeg has about the best community garden action I've ever seen. There are small community garden plots everywhere... there is very minimal management needed as collective responsibility and ownership mean everyone is trying to act for the commons....

