

COUNCIL POLICY	
Reference Number	840786
Responsible Business Unit	City Assets Business Unit
Responsible Officer	General Manager Infrastructure & Environment
Legislation	Local Government Act (1999) Disability Discrimination Act 1992
Relevant Delegations	Chief Executive Officer General Manager Infrastructure and Environment Manager, City Assets
Related Policies Management Guidelines Frameworks	Environmental Management Plan (2013 – 2018)
Link to Strategic Plan	Objective 1.4 - Natural Assets
Council resolution	item 12.1
Date Adopted	30 January 2017
Review Date	
Previous Revisions	2021

POLICY STATEMENT

The Rural City of Murray Bridge is supportive of community gardens. It is essential that these gardens are based on a strong community commitment and are appropriately located, managed and connected to the community in order to be sustainable and viable.

The purpose of the Community Garden Policy is to provide policy directions that ensure community gardens in the Rural City of Murray Bridge are based on best practice and will benefit communities across the City.

OBJECTIVES

The Rural City of Murray Bridge recognises that community gardens can play an important role in community development. Community gardens provide a valuable recreation activity that contributes to health and wellbeing, social connectedness and interaction, environmental education and sustainable living practices. Gardening as a form of recreation and as a leisure activity can be viewed as being positive to a community's sense of wellbeing, its sense of pride, identity and involvement in local initiatives.

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- Articulate Council's role in the establishment of community gardens within the Rural City of Murray Bridge;
- Establish criteria for Council's role in supporting and enabling the development of community gardens on Council owned and/or managed land;
- Identify responsibilities of community gardening groups; and
- Support community gardens to be self governed and managed to increase community ownership

SCOPE

The Community Garden Policy relates to community gardens on Council owned and/or managed land.

Where trees are included in a community garden consideration must be given to the requirements of Council's Tree Management Policy.

PRINCIPLES

Community garden groups will take legal and financial responsibility for the establishment and ongoing operation of a community garden. Community garden groups will also be responsible for the following:

- Nomination of a preferred site(s);
- If required, a planning permit application related to the preferred site;
- Community engagement with neighbours and potential gardeners (e.g. surveys of neighbouring residents to the proposed site);
- Site design and safety;
- Implementation of appropriate management frameworks;
- Development of a financial plan (including establishment and ongoing costs); and
- Public liability and site insurance as deemed appropriate by Council.

Council will enable and support the establishment of community gardens by providing:

- Identification of potentially suitable sites;
- Advise on whether a planning permit is required for a community garden on Council owned and/or managed land;
- Assessment of community garden proposals from Community Garden Groups;
- Development of a use agreement established under Council's leasing policy; and
- The use agreement will include provision for tenants to return the site to its original condition at the expiry or termination of the lease.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Chief Executive Officer is the delegated authority to implement this Policy and may sub-delegate matters related to this Policy to Council staff or other persons employed or engaged by Council.

The official copy will be held within Council's electronic records system. An electronic PDF version will be kept on the Rural City of Murray Bridge website.

Compliance with the Policy will be measured through evaluation of individual community garden proposals submitted to Council for support and approval. The subsequent establishment and ongoing operation of community gardens will be periodically evaluated through an annual reporting process to be mutually agreed between Council and the community gardening group (e.g. annual event, verbal and/or written report).

DEFINITION

Best Practice is the leading or innovative approach or practice from an industry perspective.

Community Facilities are the building and infrastructure that is provided for community use and benefit.

Council is the Rural City of Murray Bridge.

Council land is any land owned by Council or which is under Council's care, control and management including community land, road reserves, and land that is excluded from community land classification.

Productive Landscape is land that produces food (e.g. trees that bear fruit or nuts).

Resources are people or funding required to achieve a facility, service or activity.

Sustainability is the longer term endurance or the ability to 'keep alive'.

Verge is the land between a formalised road and an allotment (house, park, commercial development etc).