



# Committee of Council Agenda

Tuesday, June 7, 2022

2:00 p.m.

Council Chambers

3rd Floor City Hall, 2580 Shaughnessy Street, Port Coquitlam, BC

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Pages

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

2.1. Adoption of the Agenda

Recommendation:

*That the Tuesday, June 7, 2022, Committee of Council Meeting Agenda be adopted as circulated.*

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

3.1. Minutes of Committee of Council

3

Recommendation:

*That the minutes of the following Committee of Council Meetings be adopted:*

- *May 10, 2022*
- *May 17, 2022.*

4. REPORTS

4.1. Community Garden Programming Expansion

12

Recommendation:

*That Council:*

1. *Approve the development of a new community garden at Aggie Park using existing approved capital funding; and*
2. *Direct staff to conduct detailed program design in preparation for piloting a Micro-Community Garden Program.*

5. COUNCILLORS' UPDATE

6. MAYOR'S UPDATE
7. CAO UPDATE
8. RESOLUTION TO CLOSE

8.1. Resolution to Close

Recommendation:

*That the Committee of Council Meeting of Tuesday, June 7, 2022, be closed to the public pursuant to the following subsections(s) of Section 90(1) of the Community Charter:*

Item 5.1

*c. labour relations or other employee relations.*

Item 5.2

*l. discussions with municipal officers and employees respecting municipal objectives, measures and progress reports for the purposes of preparing an annual report under section 98 [annual municipal report].*

Item 5.3

*e. the acquisition, disposition or expropriation of land or improvements, if the council considers that disclosure could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality.*

Item 5.4

*l. discussions with municipal officers and employees respecting municipal objectives, measures and progress reports for the purposes of preparing an annual report under section 98 [annual municipal report].*

9. ADJOURNMENT

9.1. Adjournment of the Meeting

Recommendation:

*That the Tuesday, June 7, 2022, Committee of Council Meeting be adjourned.*



# Committee of Council Minutes

Tuesday, May 10, 2022

Council Chambers

3rd Floor City Hall, 2580 Shaughnessy Street, Port Coquitlam, BC

Present: Councillor Darling Councillor Penner  
Councillor Dupont Councillor Pollock  
Councillor McCurrach Councillor Washington

Absent: Chair - Mayor West

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## 1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

## 2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

### 2.1 Adoption of the Agenda

Moved-Seconded:

*That the Tuesday, May 10, 2022, Committee of Council Meeting Agenda be adopted as circulated.*

In Favour (6): Councillor Darling, Councillor Dupont, Councillor McCurrach, Councillor Penner, Councillor Pollock, and Councillor Washington

Absent (1): Mayor West

Carried

## 3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

### 3.1 Minutes of Committee of Council

Moved-Seconded:

*That the minutes of the following Committee of Council Meetings be adopted:*

- April 19, 2022.

In Favour (6): Councillor Darling, Councillor Dupont, Councillor McCurrach, Councillor Penner, Councillor Pollock, and Councillor Washington

Absent (1): Mayor West

Carried

#### **4. REPORTS**

##### **4.1 RCMP First Quarter 2022 Report**

RCMP provided an on screen presentation of the 2022 first quarter report with information on the progress made by RCMP civilian employees, members, and volunteers in support of the priorities, goals, and objectives laid out in the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan.

##### **4.2 Rezoning Application - Extension for 1431 Barberrry Drive**

Staff provided an on-screen presentation.

Moved-Seconded:

*That Committee of Council extend the date of expiry for adoption of Zoning Bylaw, 2008, No. 3630, Amendment Bylaw, 2020, No. 4208 to January 12, 2023.*

In Favour (6): Councillor Darling, Councillor Dupont, Councillor McCurrach, Councillor Penner, Councillor Pollock, and Councillor Washington

Absent (1): Mayor West

Carried

##### **4.3 Rezoning Application for 3857 Inverness Street**

Staff provided an on-screen presentation.

Moved-Seconded:

*That Committee of Council recommend to Council:*

1. *That the zoning of 3857 Inverness Street be amended from RS1 (Residential Single Dwelling 1) to RD (Residential Duplex).*
2. *That prior to adoption of the amending bylaw, the following conditions be met to the satisfaction of the Director of Development Services:*
  - a. *Protective fencing for on-site and off-site trees to be retained;*
  - b. *Demolition of the building; and,*
  - c. *Completion of design and submission of securities and fees for off-site works and services.*

In Favour (6): Councillor Darling, Councillor Dupont, Councillor McCurrach, Councillor Penner, Councillor Pollock, and Councillor Washington

Absent (1): Mayor West

Carried

**4.4 Metro Vancouver Housing Request for Financial Contribution - 2481 Welcher Ave**

Staff provided an on-screen presentation.

Moved-Seconded:

*That Committee of Council:*

1. *Approve \$63,000 of funding from the Special Needs Housing Reserve to support Metro Vancouver Housing's development of their non-market housing project at 2481 Welcher Ave; and,*
2. *Recommend to Council that the 2022 Financial Plan be amended accordingly.*

In Favour (6): Councillor Darling, Councillor Dupont, Councillor McCurrach, Councillor Penner, Councillor Pollock, and Councillor Washington

Absent (1): Mayor West

Carried

**4.5 Development Variance Permit Application for 1300 Dominion Avenue**

Staff provided an on-screen presentation.

Moved-Seconded:

*That the Committee of Council:*

1. *Authorize staff to provide notice of an application to vary Sign Bylaw regulations for a freestanding sign at 1300 Dominion Avenue; and*
2. *Advise Council that it supports approval of Development Variance Permit DVP00086.*

In Favour (5): Councillor Darling, Councillor Dupont, Councillor Penner, Councillor Pollock, and Councillor Washington

Opposed (1): Councillor McCurrach

Absent (1): Mayor West

Carried

**4.6 2021 Audited Financial Statement Report (Time specific 3:00 p.m.)**

Staff provided an on-screen presentation. KPMG provided an overview of the Audit Findings Report for the Year Ended December 31, 2021, and answered questions from Committee of Council.

Moved-Seconded:

*That Committee of Council:*

1. *Accept the 2021 Audited Consolidated Financial Statements; and*
2. *Direct staff to amend the 2022 financial plan to include a transfer of \$821,600 from accumulated surplus to the General Long-Term Reserve Fund and \$284,000 from accumulated surplus to the Sewer Long Term Reserve Fund.*

In Favour (6): Councillor Darling, Councillor Dupont, Councillor McCurrach, Councillor Penner, Councillor Pollock, and Councillor Washington

Absent (1): Mayor West

Carried

**5. COUNCILLORS' UPDATE**

Council provided updates on City business.

**6. MAYOR'S UPDATE**

No update.

**7. CAO UPDATE**

No update.

**8. RESOLUTION TO CLOSE**

**8.1 Resolution to Close**

Moved-Seconded:

*That the Committee of Council Meeting on Tuesday, May 10, 2022, be closed to the public pursuant to the following subsections(s) of Section 90(1) of the Community Charter:*

Item 5.1

*k. negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of a municipal service that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality if they were held in public.*

Item 5.2

*c. labour relations or other employee relations;*

*k. negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of a municipal service that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the*

*council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality if they were held in public;*

*I. discussions with municipal officers and employees respecting municipal objectives, measures and progress reports for the purposes of preparing an annual report under section 98 [annual municipal report].*

In Favour (6): Councillor Darling, Councillor Dupont, Councillor McCurrach, Councillor Penner, Councillor Pollock, and Councillor Washington

Absent (1): Mayor West

Carried

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

### **9.1 Adjournment of the Meeting**

Moved-Seconded:

*That the Tuesday, May 10, 2022, Committee of Council Meeting be adjourned at 4:43 p.m.*

In Favour (6): Councillor Darling, Councillor Dupont, Councillor McCurrach, Councillor Penner, Councillor Pollock, and Councillor Washington

Absent (1): Mayor West

Carried

## **10. MEETING NOTES**

Vice-Chair, Councillor Washington chaired the meeting.

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Mayor

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Corporate Officer



# Committee of Council Minutes

Tuesday, May 17, 2022

Council Chambers

3rd Floor City Hall, 2580 Shaughnessy Street, Port Coquitlam, BC

Present: Chair - Mayor West  
Councillor Darling  
Councillor McCurrach

Councillor Penner  
Councillor Pollock

Absent: Councillor Dupont

Councillor Washington

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## 1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m.

## 2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

### 2.1 Adoption of the Agenda

Moved-Seconded:

*That the Tuesday, May 17, 2022, Committee of Council Meeting Agenda be adopted as circulated.*

In Favour (5): Mayor West, Councillor Darling, Councillor McCurrach, Councillor Penner, and Councillor Pollock

Absent (2): Councillor Dupont, and Councillor Washington

Carried

## 3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

### 3.1 Minutes of Committee of Council

Moved-Seconded:

*That the minutes of the following Committee of Council Meetings be adopted:*

- April 26, 2022.

In Favour (5): Mayor West, Councillor Darling, Councillor McCurrach, Councillor Penner, and Councillor Pollock

Absent (2): Councillor Dupont, and Councillor Washington

Carried

#### 4. REPORTS

##### 4.1 Departmental Update - Recreation (verbal report)

The Director Recreation provided an update on the Recreation Department. Referring to an on-screen presentation she spoke to the following:

- Staff recruitment efforts
- Continued expansion of programs and services
- Regional pool operations
- Increase in participation stats
- Port Coquitlam Community Centre (PC3) - recently completed and outstanding items
- Department Highlights, including May Days, Canadian Tire Jump Start Grant, Volunteer Services and Neighbourhood Development, Return of Wilson Senior Social events, Youth and Senior Dinner, and the Youth Week Basketball Tournament
- Food services

She then addressed questions from the Committee.

#### 5. COUNCILLORS' UPDATE

No update.

#### 6. MAYOR'S UPDATE

##### 6.1 Proposed New Electoral Boundaries

The Mayor provided an overview of the proposed changes to the electoral boundaries for Port Coquitlam.

Moved-Seconded:

*That Committee of Council recommend:*

*That the City write to the Electoral Boundaries Commission for British Columbia, registering the City's opposition to the proposed electoral boundary change for Port Coquitlam.*

In Favour (5): Mayor West, Councillor Darling, Councillor McCurrach, Councillor Penner, and Councillor Pollock

Absent (2): Councillor Dupont, and Councillor Washington

Carried

**7. CAO UPDATE**

No update.

**8. RESOLUTION TO CLOSE**

**8.1 Resolution to Close**

Moved-Seconded:

*That the Committee of Council Meeting of Tuesday, May 17, 2022, be closed to the public pursuant to the following subsections(s) of Section 90(1) of the Community Charter:*

Item 5.1

*c. labour relations or other employee relations;*

*k. negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of a municipal service that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality if they were held in public.*

Item 5.2

*Section 90(1) of the Community Charter:*

*f. law enforcement, if the council considers that disclosure could reasonably be expected to harm the conduct of an investigation under or enforcement of an enactment;*

*o. the consideration of whether the authority under section 91 [other persons attending closed meetings] should be exercised in relation to a council meeting;*

*Section 90(2) of the Community Charter:*

*b. the consideration of information received and held in confidence relating to negotiations between the municipality and a provincial government or the federal government or both, or between a provincial government or the federal government or both and a third party.*

In Favour (5): Mayor West, Councillor Darling, Councillor McCurrach, Councillor Penner, and Councillor Pollock

Absent (2): Councillor Dupont, and Councillor Washington

Carried

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

**9.1 Adjournment of the Meeting**

Moved-Seconded:

*That the Tuesday, May 17, 2022, Committee of Council Meeting be adjourned at 4:04 p.m.*

In Favour (5): Mayor West, Councillor Dupont, Councillor McCurrach, Councillor Penner, and Councillor Pollock

Absent (2): Councillor Darling, and Councillor Washington

Carried

**10. MEETING NOTES**

Councillor Pollock left the meeting during Item 4.1 (2:44 p.m.) and returned during Item 4.1 (2:46 p.m.).

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Mayor

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Corporate Officer

# Community Garden Programming Expansion

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

*That Council:*

- 1. Approve the development of a new community garden at Aggie Park using existing approved capital funding; and*
- 2. Direct staff to conduct detailed program design in preparation for piloting a Micro-Community Garden Program.*

## **PREVIOUS COUNCIL/COMMITTEE ACTION**

September 12, 2017 - Budget & Infrastructure Committee: *That staff provide options to expedite the delivery of a community garden.*

April 11, 2018 - Parks Division Update (verbal report):

- Staff met with the two Port Coquitlam Community Garden Societies to review their contract agreements, garden capacities and to discuss potential expansion possibilities.*
- Both Presidents noted that they are at capacity and do not have any additional time and/or resources to put toward the creation of another community garden. They did note that any future gardens would need to be located close to high density living in order to be successful.*

June 26, 2018 - Finance & Budget Committee: *That the North Side community garden be considered in the 2019 budget process.*

September 17, 2018 - Finance & Budget Committee: *That \$35,000 be approved in 2020 for an Additional Community Garden.*

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

The Environmental Strategic Plan's target for the goal of supporting sustainable food and agriculture is that all residents have access to space for growing food. This report provides an update on the current programming available to help meet this target, as well as recommendations on next steps for expanding the City's urban agriculture program.

## **BACKGROUND**

Urban agriculture is an important community activity that can contribute to community development, environmental awareness and benefits (including decreasing greenhouse gas emissions associated with food transport, and improved air quality associated with the air filtration capacity of vegetation), positive social interaction, opportunities for learning and skill development, physical and mental wellbeing, and access to fresh local food. In line with these values, community gardening refers to a

## Community Garden Programming Expansion

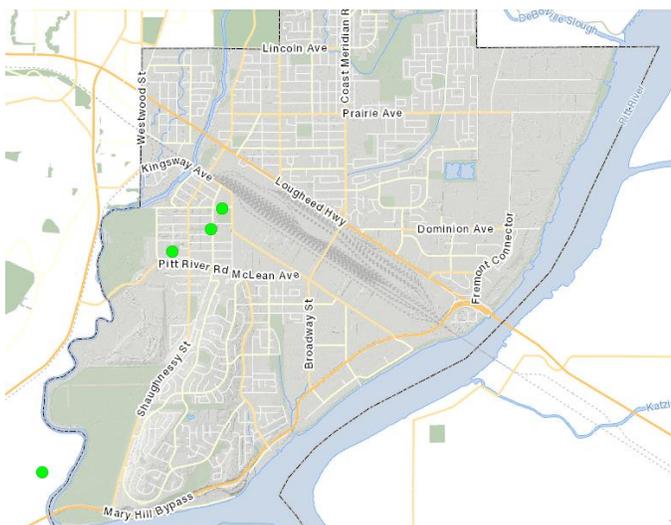
piece of land gardened collectively by members of the community, usually in partnership with a non-profit society.

Community gardening includes, but is not limited to, the following types of activities:

- Growing annual and perennial food plants, medicinal plants, and flowers
- Growing Indigenous, cultural and native plants
- Pollinator gardens and hobby beekeeping
- Permaculture projects
- Fruit and nut trees
- Demonstration farming
- Edible landscaping

There are currently two community gardens that are operated on City land leased to societies (at Elks Park and Central Park). A third garden at the Port Coquitlam Community Centre is currently in its first phase of allocations (to be explained in detail later in this report). Finally, many Port Coquitlam gardeners have a plot at the Colony Farm Community Garden in Coquitlam. Garden locations are shown below in Figure 1.

As mentioned above, capital funding was approved in 2020 for a new community garden. A portion of this funding was used to support an expansion of the garden at Central Park in order to maximize the gardening potential of the site. As shown in Table 1 below, this additional supply was absorbed immediately, and the garden has an extensive waiting list. This scenario is not unique – all of the community gardens are experiencing prolonged capacity challenges, with long wait lists and wait times, which has overwhelmed organizers and necessitated wait list closures to help manage demand. This demonstrates a clear demand for additional gardening opportunities to serve the community.



# Community Garden Programming Expansion

**Figure 1. Community Garden Locations**

Garden	Number of Plots	Number on Wait List	Average Time on Wait List	Wait List Status
Colony Farm	550	785	5-7 years	Closed to new applications
Elks Park	40	58	2-3 years	Closed to new applications
Central Park	85	50	2 years	Open
PCCC	16	170	n/a	Currently closed during allocations

**Table 1. Garden Wait List Statistics**

The demand for garden space has been increasing, but the space available for community gardens has not kept up with population growth and increasing interest in urban agriculture and local food.

This report presents two proposed projects that would increase community garden availability in our community: a new community garden at Aggie Park and a micro-community garden program.

*Official Community Plan (OCP)*

In s. 7.4, the OCP notes that Port Coquitlam, while home to some significant natural areas and a regional park, has a shortage of neighbourhood open space, parks, and recreational areas. Thus, policies in the OCP support community use of park and open space systems through the establishment of community gardens; for example, Policies for Parks # 7 states that the City will “support community ownership of the parks and open space system through community gardens and stewardship programs, where appropriate”. To further support this demand, the City works with developers to look for opportunities for on-site gardening space for residents.

Figure 2 is an excerpt from pg. 37, outlining the per capita standards for provision of open space. These figures were updated in 2004, meaning that the amounts needed to meet the standard have likely increased further since then as populations have continued to increase, outpacing the City’s ability to provide new parks and open spaces for residents to access. The micro-community garden program is intended as a creative solution to help close the gap between park inventory and stated per capita open space requirements.

# Community Garden Programming Expansion

Public Open Space Inventory and Requirements (2004)					
Category	Standard (hectares per 1,000 population)	Examples	Amount Required (hectares)	Amount Existing (hectares)	Amount Needed to Meet Standard (hectares)
Neighbourhood Open Space	1.6 ha per 1,000	School/Park sites	86.4	66.2	20.2
City Recreation Open Space	0.75 ha per 1,000	Lion's Park	41.0	35.2	5.6

**Figure 2. OCP Excerpt (pg. 37) detailing open space requirements**

## *Zoning Bylaw*

Community gardens are not explicitly defined or regulated in the Zoning Bylaw; typically, this would fall under a park/open space type use. For example, community gardens could be provided as part of the open space provision requirements during the development of multi-family residential, as explained above. Parks and playgrounds are permitted uses in most zones in order to facilitate the ability to provide an adequate amount of open space, therefore zoning is unlikely to be a barrier to this program. The PCCC garden is zoned P1: Civic Institutional, intended to accommodate uses of an educational, governmental or institutional nature which provide services. The other two gardens at Elks and Central Park are zoned P3: Parks and Natural Areas, intended to accommodate and regulate parks and open space of varying sizes used for a variety of recreational and environmental purposes including active parks and playgrounds, passive green spaces and natural open spaces with restricted access.

## *Environmental Strategic Plan*

EnviroPlan, adopted by Council in 2011, outlines Port Coquitlam's commitment to showing leadership in supporting a healthy environment. With respect to food systems, the plan envisions a "future where our families can eat healthy, local food, and enjoy clean water, clean air and clean soils". Community gardens are a valuable contributor to this vision: allowing the community to grow their own local produce and food products (as described above), as well as the intrinsic environmental value associated with increased greenspace, such as air and water filtration or soil health and stability. Today, our food system is characterized by large centralized points of production, distribution, and processing in countries all over the world. A shift towards local food production, even on small scales, as part of a more sustainable food system, helps us to increase our resiliency in the face of increasing uncertainty.

The City's commitment to the environment as described above is the main driver behind a goal of supporting sustainable food and agriculture. The target associated with this goal is that "all residents have access to space to grow food". The prohibitively long wait lists at existing community garden

## Community Garden Programming Expansion

locations indicates that we have work to do to reach this goal. Growing and processing food locally further connects us to the land, reduces energy and emissions associated with food, and can provide local employment. More than just the growing of food, this goal also relates to the food system as a whole: the processing, distribution, celebration, and waste recovery of food. In a sustainable food system, we become more knowledgeable about where our food comes from – including growing it ourselves, or helping local farmers and local restaurants to prosper from their work. In order to achieve this, we need to allocate space and resources to allow people to explore how they can contribute to this sustainable food system.

This is embodied under the *Green* pillar of the EnviroPlan, particularly Strategic Direction 4: “encourage and celebrate local, sustainable food production. Food systems include everything from farm to table and back again. A healthy food system means encouraging local, sustainable food production, and celebrating the bounty harvested from our own community”. Further, *Big Idea 6: Pocket-Size Farms* explores the idea of moving beyond traditional community gardens to look for unique opportunities to grow food in unexpected places: “the City can identify suitable locations for community garden plots including street boulevards where appropriate”.

Under the *Live* pillar of the EnviroPlan, there is a focus on complete communities, particularly Strategic Direction 1: “residents can meet their needs within their local area, and diverse opportunities exist in each neighbourhood for a variety of people to live, work and play”. Big Idea 1 identifies local food production as an important component of a complete community, allowing people to contribute to the food needs within their neighbourhood, reducing the need to consume food brought in from elsewhere.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### *PCCC Community Garden*

A 16-plot community garden in PCCC’s Terry Fox Hometown Square opened for allocations in March 2022. This garden is a unique community building opportunity; typically, a community garden is operated by a society who manages its operations, including allocations. Due to size and location, a licence agreement for this garden wasn’t a realistic option, so the City is retaining management of the garden so that the plots can be used by the community while various long-term solutions are explored. The garden had received over 190 applications for just 16 plots, reiterating the clear need for more community garden space in our community. In addition to the applications, several user groups representing underserved and vulnerable populations have reached out to staff expressing an interest in partnering on community gardening in the future. Based on this feedback, staff are incorporating community partnership beds into plans for a new community garden (described below).



**Figure 3. Photo of the raised garden beds at PCCC**

The remainder of this analysis explores the two recommended strategies to increase our ability to support local food systems in Port Coquitlam: a new community garden at Aggie Park and a micro-community garden pilot program.

### *New Community Garden*

In 2018, Parks and Environment staff conducted extensive consultation with existing user groups and societies in the form of steering workshops. The purpose of this work was to help decide on a path forward for a new community garden location in a northside neighbourhood, since community gardens are currently concentrated in the southern half of the community (see Figure 1 above). During this exercise, a series of potential new garden locations were assessed based on a set of criteria to help quantify the most feasible location. The criteria included water connection, parking and washroom availability, sun exposure, estimated cost, socio-economic factors, and more. Based on these sessions a resolution was passed to include a north side community garden in the 2019 budget deliberations, and ultimately the capital funding for this project was approved in 2020.

Through the community process described above, Fox Park, Aggie Park, Hyde Creek, and Blakeburn Park were all shortlisted as desirable candidates for a new location. All four parks have the ability to

## Community Garden Programming Expansion

be hooked up to water, enough open green-space to facilitate garden construction, reasonable exposure to sunlight, and good opportunities for community connections & partnerships. Below is a synopsis of the four criteria that most significantly set the parks apart during the analysis.

	<b>Residential Dwellings within 400m</b>	<b>Parking Availability</b>	<b>Public Washroom</b>	<b>Sun Exposure (minimum of 6 hours)</b>	<b>Additional Considerations</b>
<b>Fox Park</b>	470	Low (limited street parking only)	No	Fair	Additional community presence may help limit unwelcome park uses
<b>Aggie Park</b>	800	Good (off street parking)	Yes	Good	May need to be protected from baseball diamond
<b>Hyde Creek</b>	650	Good (off street parking)	Yes	Fair	Bear activity, archaeological potential
<b>Blakeburn Park</b>	900	Medium (street parking in cul-de-sac)	No	Good	Muddy site, will require additional ground preparation

**Table 2. Site Selection Criteria**

Based on this assessment, staff are recommending Aggie Park as the most feasible option at this time. It has the potential to serve a high number of residents in walking distance and has good off-street parking availability, limiting the potential impacts to neighbours from additional parking & traffic. It has a public washroom, which is often a critical consideration for users, access to a water source, and has good south-facing sun exposure.

Figure 4 shows the approximate proposed location of the garden. In addition to the above considerations to do with water availability and sun exposure, the siting of the garden was chosen to ensure the safety of all park users; specifically, the siting took into consideration the potential for balls leaving the baseball diamond. The siting includes a 350-foot distance from home plate, which is a significant buffer from the typical maximum slow pitch hit of 300 feet.

## Community Garden Programming Expansion



**Figure 4. Proposed Garden Location, indicated in red.**

The proposed garden location at Aggie Park is approximately 850 square metres in size. Plot types expected to be provided are a selection of beginner sized beds/half plots, full plots, raised accessible plots and a reserved set of plots for community partnership opportunities. The garden will be constructed with the remaining \$25,000 carried forward from the 2020 capital budget. Staff will explore both internal and external competitive opportunities to get the best value for the money available to maximize the gardening potential of the site. Staff will also solicit expressions of interest from community groups/societies who might be interested in leasing and managing the garden, similar to the structure currently in effect at Elks and Central Parks. If no reasonable opportunities are presented, staff will look towards building on the learnings of the PCCC community garden to manage the garden internally.

Additional amenities are expected to include a seating area, greenhouse, tool shed, and bear proof compost. Opportunities to expand beyond this footprint are limited due to the safety considerations and to avoid limiting the potential of upgrades/expansions of the ball diamond. Thus, looking forward to the future, staff is considering Fox and Blakeburn Parks as reasonable candidates for another location in 2023 and beyond. Considering the sheer number of applicants for the PCCC community garden, staff do not expect to be able to meet the current and future demand with just

## Community Garden Programming Expansion

one additional garden. Future garden expansions and/or new gardens will be presented as new capital funding requests.

### *Micro-Community Garden Program*

Micro-community gardens are gardens that are developed in under-utilized spaces to bring people together to achieve the goals of a community garden in a small space that is not currently being occupied with another use. Community gardens can be a cost-effective way to spruce up empty lots, neglected spaces, or unopened laneways, and integrating community gardens with things like pedestrian pathways, recreation areas, and designated greenways can aid in larger efforts to promote local food security and build healthy, resilient communities. Therefore, the City can facilitate, through this program, the establishment of community gardens on City-owned land, with a priority to sites that have a high potential for these co-benefits.

This program has strong implementation potential for *Big Idea 6: Pocket-Sized Farms* (discussed above). The idea has seen great success in other British Columbia communities. A high-level draft of a program scope is provided as Appendix 1. This draft is intended to provide a sample of what the program could look like, as a basis for discussion. If directed to proceed with detailed program design, staff will use this draft as a starting point to consider trade-offs and tailor the program to Port Coquitlam's unique community needs.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Construction of a community garden at Aggie Park as described is estimated to cost \$25,000, which is remaining from the \$35,000 approved in the 2020 capital plan. As explained above, approximately \$10,000 was spent to facilitate the expansion of the Central Park Community Garden to maximize the gardening potential of the site.

There is no ongoing operating funding allocated to this project at this time. Based on program uptake and oversight model, staff will determine whether additional ongoing operational funding is required to make the program successful.

# Community Garden Programming Expansion

## **OPTIONS** (✓ = Staff Recommendation)

	#	Description
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	That Council approve the development of a new community garden at Aggie Park using existing approved capital funding.
	2	That Council direct staff to construct a new community garden in a different location.
	3	That Council request a different location to be presented.

	#	Description
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	That Council direct staff to conduct detailed program design in preparation for piloting a Micro-Community Garden Program.
	2	That Council requests additional information about the proposed Micro-Community Garden pilot program.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1. Micro-Community Garden Draft Program Design

**Lead author(s):** Clarissa Huffman

**Contributing author(s):** Doug Rose, Mike Por, Scott Walmsley

## **Micro-Community Garden Program**

Draft Program Design

Prepared By: Clarissa Huffman

Date: May 27, 2022

*Purpose: This draft is intended to outline at a high level a snapshot of the direction the micro-community garden program could go in, for discussion purposes only. Staff are requesting direction to proceed with detailed program design, which means that these details will likely change as the program is tailored to meet the City's unique needs.*

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Micro-community gardens are gardens that are developed in under-utilized spaces to bring people together to achieve the goals of a community garden in a small space that is not currently being occupied with another use. Community gardens can be a cost-effective way to spruce up empty lots, neglected spaces, or unopened laneways, and integrating community gardens with things like pedestrian pathways, recreation areas, and designated greenways can aid in larger efforts to promote local food security and build healthy, resilient communities. Therefore, the City can facilitate, through this program, the establishment of community gardens on City-owned land, with a priority to sites that have a high potential for these co-benefits.

This program has strong implementation potential for *Big Idea 6: Pocket-Sized Farms* (discussed above). The idea has seen great success in other British Columbia communities. For example, the City of Vancouver has an application process for urban agriculture projects on City of Vancouver land. Proponents can initiate the process by submitting an expression of interest (EOI) with a justification for the chosen site. The full application process is well documented in their published guidebook<sup>i</sup>. The City of Victoria<sup>ii</sup> has a similar EOI process, but their program also includes a maintained inventory of City-owned sites with community gardening potential. This goes above and beyond in that it pre-assesses suitable sites, increasing the likelihood of program uptake.

Proponents eligible to participate in the program would typically be registered non-profits or societies with the capacity to manage garden operations; thus, individuals wishing to start a garden would need to partner with an existing society or start a new society for this purpose. The program would have three 'streams' of locations:

**Stream 1** locations would allow proponents to choose from a map of approved locations developed internally with input from relevant departments. Port Coquitlam has a low amount of parks and open space per capita (see above discussion), therefore in order to think holistically

about our ability to meet our park space and food security community needs, considering how to creatively use existing City-owned land will be of critical importance. The map outlining potential locations has not yet been developed, and would be developed as part of the detailed program design. Examples of priority sites could be parcels that are of undevelopable size and ‘problem’ sites where illegal parking/dumping or other undesirable uses could be discouraged with a more active community presence. Site selection would also consider trade-offs between long term intended uses, corporate priorities, development potential, risk and liability, and community need for access to parks and open space. Staff from the Parks, Engineering, and Planning Divisions would collaborate on developing this map in advance of the pilot program launch, and the identified properties will be brought forward to Council for approval prior to being included as a potential location for a community garden as part of this project.

**Stream 2** allows proponents to present their chosen garden location and their rationale for why it is a reasonable use for that space. In order to facilitate this stream, the project team will develop a set of judging criteria to objectively assess the merit of the proposal.

**Stream 3** provides an opportunity for private landowners to work with the City to develop a temporary community garden on their lot as an interim use. This stream is an effective community building and placemaking approach, and the communal stewardship of the space by garden users can help reduce costs associated with nuisance mitigation on vacant land.

Appropriate sites for community gardens have the following features:

- Informed and supportive neighbours
- Year-round accessibility
- Good sun exposure (a minimum of 6 hours of sunlight per day)
- Easy access to municipal water
- Visible from surrounding uses to provide passive site surveillance
- Will not adversely impact other land uses (existing or potential future)
- Adequate access to parking to account for users coming from outside a walkable distance

In short, the process for application to the micro-community garden program would be as follows:

1. Partner with or establish a non-profit society with the financial and technical capacity to enter into a licence agreement and manage garden operations.
2. Find a site following one of the two streams above.
3. Submit a preliminary EOI (specific information required would depend on the stream chosen).
4. After passing initial screening, submit a full garden proposal for evaluation (including design and layout, site map, plant materials, construction materials, water & waste plans).
5. Collaborate with the City on public engagement to gather feedback from local residents.
6. Finalize and approve garden proposal.
7. Enter into license agreement and begin garden construction.

To begin with, the resources required at a municipal level are fairly low, and constrained to human rather than financial resources. Parks & Environment staff have the capacity to support the program in the following ways with minimal impact:

- Promote community gardening and provide contact information to the public of existing community garden organizations (e.g. through the City of Port Coquitlam website).
- Contact and build relationships with community centres, schools, preschools, assisted living facilities, churches, housing authorities, local businesses and other land-holding organizations to explore potential community garden opportunities and to encourage programming that works in concert with the garden, e.g., cooking classes and gardening workshops.
- Support interested proponents in gathering support and initial membership at a neighbourhood level and in identifying potential funding sources.
- Provide a staff contact liaison for community garden projects who can provide site planning or horticultural expertise and support in the design and drafting of plans.
- Provide access to information on the development and operation of community garden projects.
- Facilitate connections between project proponents and other potential partners.
- Assist interested groups in searching for suitable land for the development of community gardens.
- Maintain the Stream 1 inventory of City-owned sites, with support from relevant departments as discussed in earlier sections on program design.

A pilot version of this program would include a limited selection (approximately 5) of Stream 1 locations in addition to a basic roll-out of the Stream 2 option.

In future, as resources allow, the City could explore making the program more financially appealing to proponents to further the goals of the program. Before initiating any of these incentives, staff will need to consider the associated hard and in-kind costs relative to the expected impact. Examples of this might include:

- Deliver leaf mulch to community gardens in the spring and the fall.
- Provide other in-kind support where feasible (e.g. excess materials like compost, tools for lending).
- Prior to the first season of a new garden, City staff may assist with site preparation, including but not limited to initial rough clearing and delivery of soil up to a pre-determined value.
- Offer incentives to developers for allowing temporary community gardens on land during the permitting process prior to initiation of construction and to landowners who allow

access to underutilized space on their property for a community garden to add community value on an interim basis for otherwise underutilized space.

- Incentivize or require developers to include community garden and food-growing space as part of their development.
- Provide small amounts of funding to seed garden development or to support garden upgrades to demonstrate government commitment and help groups leverage other resources.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/urban-agriculture-garden-guide.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.victoria.ca/assets/Departments/Parks~Rec~Culture/Parks/Documents/Growing-in-the-City/Building%20a%20Community%20Garden.pdf>