

# Community garden permit application templates

The Community Gardens Program provides these templates as a resource to help you start a community garden. It is not mandatory to use them. If you use any of the templates, you can customize them freely to suit your needs.

## How to use these templates

1. Click File in the upper left hand corner of this page, then click “Make a copy.” Edit any of the templates as you gather information and organize resources for your community garden.
2. If you submit your application online, you will be asked to set the sharing settings of this document to “Anyone on the internet with this link can view” and submit the URL. To do that, click the blue Share button in the upper right hand corner of the page, then under “Get link,” click Change. Set the sharing settings, then click Done. You can also click “Copy link” to copy and paste the URL into the application form.
3. If you want to submit the application by mail, fill out the “[Apply by mail template](#),” then print the relevant pages and mail them to:  
Community Parks Program  
200 S. Lamar Blvd.  
Austin, TX 78704

<b>Community garden permit application templates</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Phase 1 documents</b>	<b>2</b>
Coordinating committee	2
Interested gardeners	3
Apply-by-mail template	4
<b>Phase 2 documents</b>	<b>5</b>
Timeline	5
Budget & fundraising plan	6
Membership agreement	10
Garden rules	11
Memorandum of Understanding	12
Letter of support	13
<b>Phase 3 documents</b>	<b>14</b>
Garden description	14
Design layout example	15

# Phase 1 documents

## Coordinating committee

This is a list of the initial garden leaders and organizers. Your coordinating committee should have at least 4 members from different families and households.

Suggested roles:

### **Treasurer**

Drafts budget and fundraising plan

Collects plot rental fees

Balances fund and reports each year to the garden members and the City

### **Outreach coordinator**

Serves as City point of contact

Manages social media accounts and email

Writes grant applications

Plans community work day projects

Communicates garden information

### **Site coordinator**

Leads the design/build

Makes sure tools works and buildings are secure

Updates inventory report each year and recommends tool purchases

Coordinates composting effort

Creates a maintenance schedule

### **Member coordinator**

Keeps track of new member requests

Manages new member onboarding and training

Organizes volunteer events

Manages garden bed assignments

Name	Role	Address	Phone Number and/or E-mail

## Interested gardeners

Include a minimum of 4, but 10 or more is encouraged to account for flexibility in future gardening activities. The address and contact information of committed gardeners will never be made public. Addresses are required to assess that there is a wide base of support and that the location of the garden serves the community.

[illegible]

## Apply-by-mail template

If you cannot [submit your application electronically](#), you can print the application materials and mail them to:

Community Parks Program  
200 S. Lamar Blvd  
Austin, TX 78704

Community garden name: \_\_\_\_\_

Community garden email: \_\_\_\_\_

Community garden address: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated number of plots: \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any utilities in the area you'll be digging: \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any heavy metals in the soil: \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach your soil test results.

Please email [communitygardens@austintexas.gov](mailto:communitygardens@austintexas.gov) so that the coordinator can expect your application in the mail. Within two weeks of receiving your application, the community gardens coordinator will reach out to you for a check-in. At that time you will discuss any issues with your application and any questions about next steps.

## Phase 2 documents

## Timeline

Events to think about:

- Garden design
- Site plan exception
- Outreach and generating interest
- Fundraising
- Organizing the gardeners
- Gathering materials
- Preparing and developing the site
- Planting

[illegible]

## Budget & fundraising plan

All of the costs below are estimates provided August 2020 to assist you in planning a community garden. They do not substitute your individual research. These costs can and likely will change with time. If you'd like to suggest an update, please contact the community garden coordinator.

Item	Notes	Cost
Application and land access		
Garden Permit Application Fee	Approved application serves as a waiver of the water meter and tap installation fee.	\$50
Soil testing	Soil Kitchen provides free testing for gardeners one day a year (usually in April).  <u>\$25.00 University of Delaware Soil Test Program- Heavy Metals Test</u>	\$0 - \$75
Site plan	Site plans must be created to scale, but do not have to be professionally designed although this can be helpful. Some landscape professionals will provide reduced rates or do the project pro bono for community gardens.	\$0-\$500
Water access		
Water meter and tap installation– completed <i>commercial</i> water tap application	These costs vary greatly depending on the site (distance from the closest water line and obstacles between water line and garden).	Fees waived with an approved garden permit.
Engineering plans for water meter and tap installation by a Licensed Professional Engineer (PE)	Some PEs will create plans pro bono or at reduced rates for community gardens.	
Irrigation installation and supplies		
Irrigation for Community Gardens	This cost varies greatly depending on the square footage of the garden and the kind of soil/rock on the property, which can increase the amount of time required to complete the job,  A professionally-installed underground system of PVC pipes with hose bibs and drip line irrigation system above ground	\$1,500 - \$10,000
Pre-packaged drip irrigations kits for a small	These are sometimes used in small areas of a garden in addition to an underground irrigation system.	\$20 - \$55

area/bed		
<b>Garden design</b>		
Sign/communication board	Standard sign with community garden name	Provided by PARD
Bulletin board	Recommended to publish hours and contact information.	\$0-50
Tool shed	To comply with city ordinance, tool sheds must be no larger than 120 sq. feet (10x12), rodent-proof, and situated on the site.	4x2.5' - \$250 7X7' - \$650 11' x 7' - \$1,000
Composting container	DIY holding unit made from wooden pallets and fence ties or screws (\$5)  A DIY wire-mesh holding unit using chicken wire, fence ties and metal fence posts (\$32)  A 32 gallon plastic garbage container with lid and drilled holes (\$48)  An 80-gallon stationary compost bin (\$75)  A 28-gallon tumbling composter (\$60)	\$5-75
Rainwater collection bins	DIY rain barrel using 32 gallon plastic trash can and spigot (\$65)  50-gallon plastic rainwater barrel (\$85)  100-200 gallon galvanized steel rainwater barrel (\$200-500)	\$65-500
Fencing	Split rail fence \$3.50/ft  4' tall chain link fence \$250 + \$4.20/ft  3.5' high wooden picket \$7.80/ft  Hog wire fence (recommended) \$3-5/ft	\$1,500 - \$3,000
Pathways	If garden is being constructed in a lawn and grass is already present, mowed grass is an option.  Wood mulch is a free option provided by tree-trimming companies, <a href="#">Austin Resource Recovery</a> , or Austin Parks Foundation (in the summer and fall).  Decomposed granite runs \$33/cubic yard.	\$0-\$9,000

Borders for raised beds	<p>The use of CCA-pressure treated wood is prohibited.</p> <p>The most affordable option is cinder blocks (\$2.18/block), with cedar boards being the intermediate and composite decking being most expensive.</p> <p>Chopped limestone block - \$150.00/ton</p>	\$500-\$1,300
<b>Garden beds</b>		
Soil	\$35-45/cu.yd. <a href="#">Topsoil Calculator</a>	\$525-\$675
Compost	\$37-\$55/cu.yd.	The need for these will vary based on the types of plants, the quality of the soil and other factors. Consult a <a href="#">Master Gardener</a> (free service) or experienced gardener to estimate.
Raised bed mix	\$50/cu.yd.	
Finely-ground wood mulch	\$37-\$55/cu.yd.	
Natural cedar	\$36/cu.yd.	
Straw (50lb bale)	\$10-\$15/bale	
Leaves (in place of mulch)	Free!	
Seeds		
Plants		
Trees		
<b>Organizing</b>		
Paper	Ream of 8.5x11" paper	\$8
50 color copies		\$20
5-gallon beverage cooler		\$25
snacks	Oranges and granola bars for 30 people	\$20
<b>Tools (estimated for a medium to large garden)</b>		
Spade shovel	\$35 x 10	\$350
Square shovel	\$35 x 7	\$245
Sharp shooter shovel	\$40 x 4	\$160



Digging fork	\$40 x 10	\$400
Pitch fork	\$40 x 2	\$80
Hand trowel	\$8 x 20	\$160
Hand cultivator	\$10 x 10	\$100
Hoe	\$15 x 7	\$105
Curved hoe	\$20 x 5	\$100
Hand pruner	\$20 x 5	\$100
Lopper	\$30 x 3	\$90
Post hole digger	\$45 x 1	\$45
Pick ax	\$30 x 3	\$90
Garden rake	\$20 x 10	\$200
Wheelbarrow	\$90 x 3	\$270
5-gallon bucket	\$5 x 10	\$50
Gardening gloves	\$10 x 20	\$200
Package row cover	\$30 x dependent on number of beds	
Weed eater	1	\$100
Push mower	1	\$250
50ft garden hose	\$30 x 10	\$300
Water bill	Small (14 plots) - \$30/month Medium (29 plots) - \$85/month Large (80 plots) - \$330/month	\$350 -\$4,000 for the first year.
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED STARTUP COSTS</b>		
<b>Projected revenues</b>		
Grants		
Donations (including donations of goods and services)		
Fundraisers		
Membership dues		

# Membership agreement

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_

Did you have a garden plot with this community garden last year?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, do you want the same garden plot this year?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If no, what area of the garden would you like to be in? \_\_\_\_\_

A plot fee of \_\_\_\_\_ is required before the plot can be assigned. This fee will go toward expenses of the community garden (water bills, plant/seed purchases, community tools, etc.).

A clean-up deposit of \_\_\_\_\_ is required before the plot can be assigned. The clean-up deposit will be returned in the fall after you have removed all of your plants and cleaned your plot.

Please mark three areas that you would be interested in volunteering with during the season. Each gardener is expected to help during the season with general chores.

\_\_\_\_ Site maintenance  
\_\_\_\_ Phone calls  
\_\_\_\_ Mailings  
\_\_\_\_ Assigning plots  
\_\_\_\_ Path maintenance  
\_\_\_\_ Construction projects

\_\_\_\_ Watering  
\_\_\_\_ Annual planting  
\_\_\_\_ Fall cleanup  
\_\_\_\_ Composting  
\_\_\_\_ Social events

I have read the community garden rules and understand that failure to meet the guidelines will result in loss of cleanup deposit fees and gardening privileges.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Garden rules

- Each garden's leadership committee consists of a site coordinator, treasurer, compost coordinator, and tool coordinator. Gardeners vote on these volunteer positions yearly.
- The community garden site coordinator and community garden program coordinator don't discriminate members and garden activities on the basis of race, creed, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, materials status, age, sex, sexual orientation, or disability.
- Harassment, threats, verbal abuse or acts of violence by any person against another person are not allowed. If it happens, report to the leadership committee and the attacker will lose his or her garden plot.
- A gardener may rent only one plot within the City owned properties of community gardens. If a gardener has a small plot and wants to rent a larger plot, she or he may switch when one is available but will lose the smaller plot.
- Gardeners may not give their plot to another person. The next person on the waiting list rents the plot.
- Gardeners must control pest grasses and weeds.
- Gardeners must harvest often.
- If a garden plot isn't watered, weeded, and looked after two weeks, it's considered abandoned. If a gardener cannot care for his or her plot, contact the Site Coordinator and make plans.
- Remove all garbage, and recycle and reuse often. The City does provide recycling services to the site.
- At the end of their gardening contract, gardeners will remove all vegetation, tools, structures and debris from their plot.
- Gardeners share responsibility and upkeep of communal plots, sheds, trash bins, and compost bins.
- Attending and participating required during community work days.
- Selling plants and food needs approval from the department managing the City owned property's director. Sales only benefit the community garden.
- Participation fees should be used for payment of garden utilities. Remaining fees can be used at the discretion of the Community Garden Leadership Committee for minor tool purchases or repairs, general garden maintenance needs, work day refreshments, etc. Purchases of more than \$200 must be approved by all gardeners.

# Memorandum of Understanding

[Place on letterhead]

Between

[Nonprofit]

And

[Community garden]

[Nonprofit] agrees to:

- Hold the utility bill in their name and pay utility invoices using funds collected from gardeners.
- Provide liability insurance for the City of Austin-owned garden property, at no charge to members.
- Hold and manage restricted funds generated through payments, donations, and grants.

[Coordinating committee member's name], [community garden] liaison, agrees to on behalf of [community garden] members:

- Operate in a way that does not discriminate with regard to race, religion, ethnic group, political belief, gender expression or sexuality.
- Ensure that all community gardeners sign a liability waiver, which should be incorporated into the community garden's contract or member agreement and kept on record.
- Acknowledge [nonprofit] as a sponsor on the community garden's public outreach materials (e.g. website, event flyers, or garden newsletter).
- Notify [nonprofit] of any grant applications to avoid potential conflicts and so that [nonprofit] can determine the reporting burden.
- Respect the privacy of donors and maintain their personal information as confidential.
- Pay the following administrative fees:
  - Annual account maintenance fee of \$\_\_\_ per year, assessed in \_\_\_\_.
  - Pay administrative fees of \_\_\_% per donation
  - Pay credit card transaction fees of: \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Name of nonprofit representative]

[Title]

[Nonprofit]

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Name of garden representative]

[Title]

[Community garden]

# Letter of support

Notes:

1. If you're writing this letter as a business or community organization representative, put it on your letterhead or include your contact information.
2. Edit all of the information in brackets below.

[Date]

To the City of Austin Community Gardens Program:

I am [description of role: neighbor in X community, owner of X business, leader of X organization]. I am writing to express support for a community garden at [location]. The community garden would provide [list out the amenities or benefits here] to our community's residents. This neighborhood is a good fit for a community garden because [list reasons such as interest, elderly population, small lots, renters].

I look forward to seeing this project grow and will support it by [list activities such as spreading the word, participating in the garden build, being a garden member, donating money or goods].

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Contact information: phone number, email address, street address, or any combination]

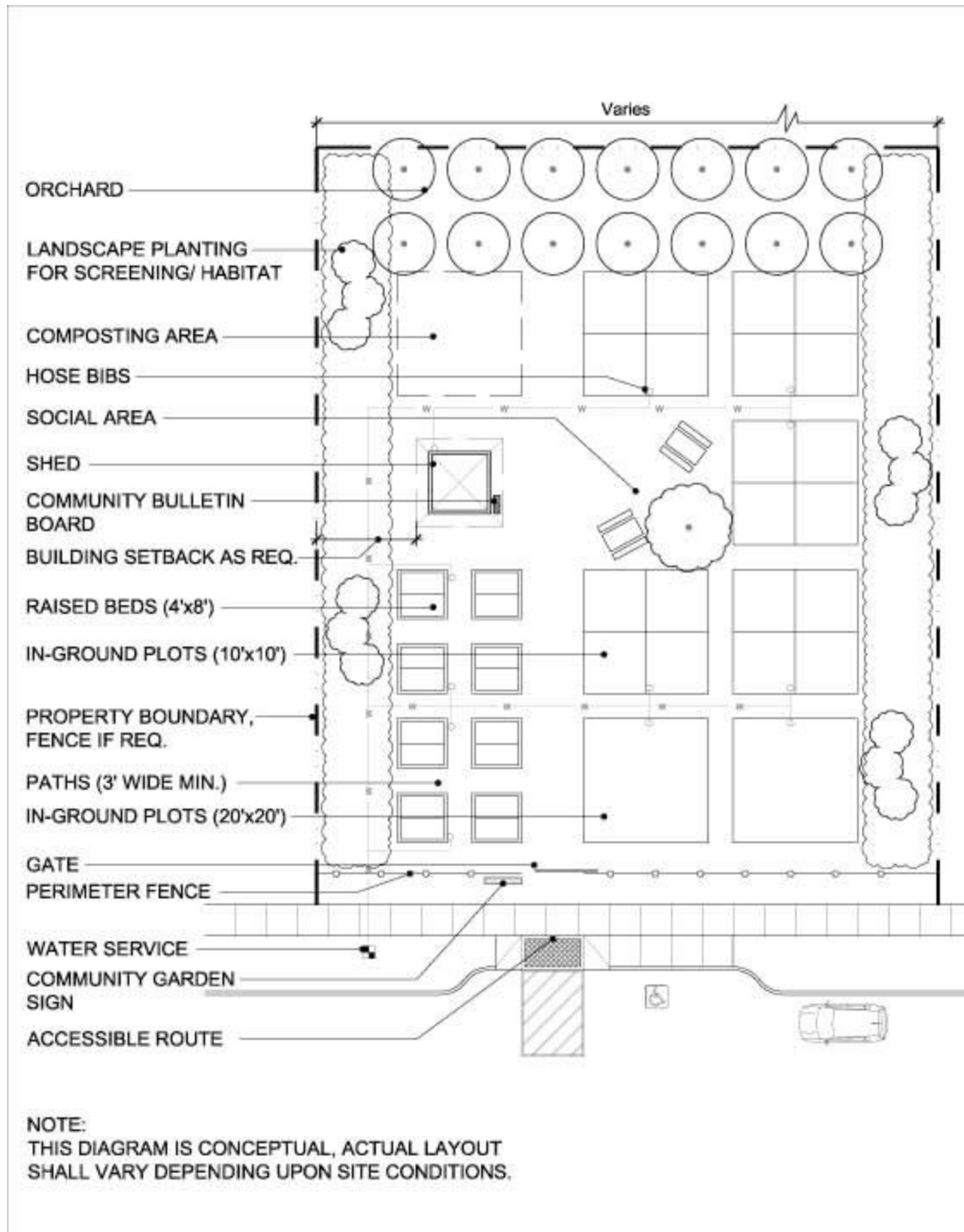
## Phase 3 documents

### Garden description

[Insert your garden description here. There is no required length.]

## Design layout example

[See more samples from the Coalition for Austin Community Gardens.](#)



TYPICAL COMMUNITY GARDEN LAYOUT

Scale: 1" = 20'

0 10' 20'