

ATTACHMENT E

**SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK FROM
COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND
ACTIONS**

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SURVEY SUMMARY
64% of respondents were aware of the existence of the City's Community Gardens Policy and Guidelines.
Of the 118 respondents who were aware of the existence of the policy and guidelines, 29% refer to it yearly while 22% have never referred to it. 10% refer to it monthly, 2% weekly, 5% daily, and 32% responded with Other.
85% of respondents rated the revised draft policy as excellent, very good, good or fair.
27% of respondents felt the draft policy and guidelines were clear, concise, and easy to use. 27% of respondents liked it and said it was supportive, educational, and informative. 17% liked the illustrations and photos

COMMUNITY GARDEN POLICY – Comments and Suggestions	RESPONSE
Gardens not on City land - Clarification whether the draft Policy applies to community gardens that are not on City land and whether the City has jurisdiction over these gardens.	The draft Policy refers to community gardens on City land, government land and private property – refer to page 2 of the draft policy. The Community Gardens Guidelines have been prepared to assist all community gardens in the city.
Insurance - Lack of clarity regarding Draft Policy about Public Liability Insurance, who is responsible and what it covers.	The City will provide public liability insurance for gardens on City owned land – refer to page 3 of the draft Policy. The City does not provide volunteer personal accident insurance for community gardeners. Insurance options have been provided on page 23 of the draft community garden guidelines.
Community access - Focus group participants from gardens that had a fence felt more secure in facilitating community access, while other groups were prevented from working with local community organisations such as schools due to vandalism and safety issues Community access - Two gardens had plans for visible, signposted areas for the community to pick from, which they hoped would allow the broader community access to crops from the garden and prevent theft of individual crops.	The City discourages high fences and locked gates on open spaces as this creates barriers to inclusion. Requests for fencing are considered based on advice from the Safe City Unit and Police on a case by case basis. Fences are discussed on page 18 of the draft Preferred Materials for use in Community Gardens Guide. The City encourages gardens who use the allotment model to have a garden bed that is for the community to pick from to decrease theft or vandalism and to encourage residents to become involved. No change required, Community gardens on Council land are to be open

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<p>Community access - Dominant barriers to allowing 24-hour community access to gardens are security and safety issues; including stealing crops, finding needles, dumping rubbish and defecation in garden beds. Submissions noted that while it is fair to allow the general community to take crops within reason, this can be disheartening to the people who have worked hard to grow them.</p>	<p>as they are located in public parks and open spaces for access by the whole community. The City encourages these gardens to be well maintained at all times to decrease vandalism and increase community support. We recommend groups have a clearly defined community garden bed to share produce with the community to decrease theft on page 7 of the draft Community Garden Guidelines.</p> <p>Community gardens can be complex working with diverse people. The City encourages groups to keep their gardens well maintained, and to promote to the broader community through open days on page 20 of the draft Community Garden Guidelines. The management plans can be used to help the group establish protocols, discuss issues and to develop strategies to minimise risk to its members and the broader community.</p> <p>Overall – The City understands the complexities of managing community gardens on lands that must continue to remain open for the access of the broader community. The City will work with the groups on a site by site basis on practices that can further mitigate theft, vandalism, and safety concerns in settings where fencing is not an alternative.</p>
<p>Social - valued opportunity for social interaction, to meet neighbours, and connect with their community. Valued collaboration with the broader community, through engagement with passers-by, other community gardens, and local groups such as churches and schools.</p>	<p>The draft Community Gardens Policy supports this position, but some amendment to wording is made to strengthen this position on page 1 of the draft Policy.</p>
<p>Footpath verge gardens are considered community gardens in some parts of the policy and not others.</p>	<p>The draft Community Gardens Policy applies to groups of residents developing a new garden or managing existing community gardens on Council, Crown and private land within the City of Sydney LGA. These community gardens are located on open spaces, rooftops and footpath verges – refer to page 2 of the draft Policy.</p>

<p>COMMUNITY GARDEN GUIDELINES – Comments and Suggestions</p>	<p>RESPONSE</p>
<p>Events - Only require Council approval for community garden events that are over a certain size.</p>	<p>The City encourages social events and gatherings at the community gardens and provides flexibility for open day events, morning teas and pop in events. The City agrees these events do not need</p>

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<p>Events - Respondents viewed it as unrealistic to expect groups to gain approval from the City to hold events which often are held and organised on the spur of the moment.</p>	<p>approval and the draft Community Garden Guidelines have been amended on page 20.</p> <p>Formal events on Council land involving amplified music, structures, food stalls and catering will require City approval as noted on page 20 of the draft Community Garden Guidelines.</p>
<p>Self-management - A less hierarchical approach to community gardens, focussing on participation and coordination rather than management would assist with achieving the aim of self-management</p>	<p>Community Garden groups use diverse skills to coordinate their members, site, events and grants. The draft Policy and Guidelines provide assistance to groups in establishing clear plans for the future so that all group members are then free to focus on participation with the knowledge of where the garden and group is heading. Management Plan information is contained on page 11 of the draft Community Garden Guidelines.</p> <p>These aspects are incorporated in the guidelines to help promote the need for communication, co-ordination and co-operation of the group so that all activities and functions can be easily communicated to members. Management activities are intended to be kept to a minimum. No change required.</p>
<p>Further information - A section for 'other things you may want to consider' may provide more guidance for unique gardens. For example: 'Is your garden situated next to a school?'</p>	<p>The City has provided the basic information for new and existing gardens. Additional information will be provided to groups in meetings, workshops and onsite discussions specific to their needs. Consulting and working with neighbours (such as schools) is addressed in the draft Policy on page 6.</p>
<p>Flexibility – A separate document for people wanting to start a garden, and for ongoing management of gardens</p>	<p>The Community Gardens Guidelines provides a flow chart outlining all the steps required to start a new garden – refer page 27. No change required.</p>
<p>Landscape Architect - The requirement for community groups to have a landscape architect was seen to be restrictive and unrealistic</p> <p>Concerns - around the requirements for a landscape architect was seen to be prohibitively expensive and take away from the valued ground-up approach.</p> <p>Flexibility – More flexible guidelines around the design stage of the gardens.</p>	<p>Some garden groups have access to high level skills or trades, whilst others can be limited.</p> <p>The City sometimes provides a Landscape Architect or Landscape Designer on Council owned sites to run a workshop with the gardeners to get the best design and outcome for the group. The designs do not have to be undertaken by a Landscape Architect, but rather in a format that is easily reviewed and communicated to the broader community. No change required.</p>
<p>Reporting - Respondents felt it is unrealistic to expect community garden groups to quantify the amount of produce grown, particularly for</p>	<p>There are already groups that are reporting and measuring gardens outcomes, from the amount of waste recycled to the number of bags of beans harvested. Reporting is kept to a minimum and</p>

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<p>those groups that experience significant vandalism, where no crops result</p>	<p>recommended requirements are in the draft Community Garden Guidelines on page 25.</p> <p>Reporting on troublesome or reoccurring issues can help the City to assist the group with management assistance if required.</p>
<p>Tone - The tone of the guidelines is prescriptive and may be interpreted as not allowing for gardeners to self-govern.</p>	<p>One of the key objectives of the draft Policy is for community gardens to be self-managed – refer page 2. The Community Garden Guidelines are provided to assist groups to develop good communication with the landowner and community to foster harmonious relationships for their site.</p> <p>They have been reviewed by the City's editor and developed in line with established communications standards used by the City. No change required.</p>
<p>Size - The guidelines are large and could be overwhelming for some people.</p>	<p>The City has reduced the number of pages in the Community Garden Guidelines from the 75 to 39. No change required.</p>
<p>Information - Provide references to further information for example about permaculture or other council policies</p>	<p>Other Council policies are listed on page 7 of the draft Policy and further information links are listed on the draft Community Garden Guidelines on page 34- 35. No change required.</p>
<p>Diverse gardens – To include the method of biodynamics.</p>	<p>The City has added the garden methods of biodynamics on page 8 of the draft Community Garden Guidelines.</p>
<p>Garden methods- permaculture food forest: suggest using plain English alternative for mycelia (e.g. soil fungi)</p>	<p>Changed the word to soil fungi on page 8 of the draft Community Garden Guidelines.</p>
<p>Checklist - Add 'social media' as this is often the sole public communications channel for many community gardens.</p>	<p>Checklist for a new community garden project to include social media on how the garden group will communicate and promote their garden to the broader community. On page 10 of the draft Community Garden Guidelines.</p>
<p>Staging your garden project - to include talking to other community garden groups. Encourage members to attend training courses and workshops in stage one rather than wait till stage two.</p>	<p>Agree – have added information to page 11 and 13 on the draft Community Garden Guidelines.</p>
<p>Storage - Add something about the safe storage of gardening materials on site</p>	<p>Agree – have added information to page 15 on the draft Community Garden Guidelines.</p>
<p>Organic or botanical sprays - are considered a last resort treatment in the Integrated Pest Management approach to pest management in organic gardening as sprays can adversely affect beneficial insects.</p>	<p>The Community Gardens Guidelines recommend a combination of cultural practices such as growing seasonal crops, crop rotation and other techniques to reduce pest and disease problems from occurring before using organic sprays – refer page 15.</p>

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Responsibilities - replace statement with 'Not use machinery, power tools or synthetic chemicals'.	Agree – have added the word “synthetic” page 23 of the draft Community Garden Guidelines.
Garden support - four groups appreciated and desired more support for interaction with other gardens, such as workshops, bus tours, events and resources being available to garden members	Using gardens as demonstration sites is a key objective of the draft Policy – refer page 2. Information about support, events, education, tours and resources is on page 13, 20 of the Community Garden Guidelines.

MANAGEMENT PLAN TEMPLATE– Comments and Suggestions	RESPONSE
<p>Social design criteria - The Management Plan Template (MPT) should include social design criteria such as decision making and conflict resolution</p> <p>Flexibility - To account for differences of styles two MPTs may be more appropriate, one for a formal model and an informal model.</p> <p>Flexibility - The one size fits all approach of the Management Plan Template may not support all groups.</p>	<p>A Management Plan Template (MPT) has been provided as a starting point which allows groups to be flexible in developing their management plan. Refer to pages 36 -39 of the draft Community Garden Guidelines.</p> <p>We encourage all groups to include decision making and conflict resolution processes in their management plan for the understanding and benefit of all members. Page 36-39 of the draft Community Garden Guidelines addresses conflict resolution. No change required.</p>
<p>Ease of use - Provide example templates, for example from other community gardens.</p>	<p>The City will upload approved management plans and designs on the web page as a resource to assist new and existing groups. No change required.</p>
<p>Ease of use - Step-by-step guides to creating an MPT or an online checklist format</p>	<p>The Management Plan Template (MPT) will be placed on the City’s web page with guidelines. Also the Community Gardens and Volunteer Coordinator can assist groups to develop the group’s management plans on a case by case basis. No change required.</p>
<p>Essential v. non-essential - Noting which questions in the MPT were essential to answer to apply for a grant.</p>	<p>The MPT covers a range of issues for a variety of community garden types and groups. The garden groups only need to answer the questions relevant to them. This has been amended on page 36-39 of the draft Community Garden Guidelines.</p>

PREFERRED MATERIALS FOR USE IN COMMUNITY GARDENS– Comments and Suggestions	RESPONSE
<p>Further information - The section that includes materials to be avoided could be expanded.</p>	<p>The Preferred Materials for Use in Community Gardens provides a basic list of items, which may change over time and can be updated as new information is provided. No change required.</p>

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<p>Further information - A “Growing Guide” for the Sydney basin would be a beneficial addition.</p>	<p>The City will work with community garden groups to develop a local growing guide which will be placed on the City’s web site. Links will also be provided to other popular growing guides. Links to assist gardeners can be found on page 35 of the draft Community Garden Guidelines.</p>
<p>Self-sustainability – Suggested materials are expensive and restrict self-sustainability.</p>	<p>The City has suggested materials for long term usage and for various budgets. Groups are free to consider safe alternatives that align with their management plan and garden design focus. The City will be available for guidance and advice in the establishment of any new infrastructure or new materials. Changed photo on page 13 to encourage the use of recycled materials. No change to text required.</p>
<p>Flexibility – The draft Preferred Materials restrict opportunities to be resourceful in using found objects, and do not consider the context of each garden such as values around up-cycling resources and building community capacity.</p>	<p>The City has a variety of gardens that are upcycling with bath tubs, bricks, timber and pots. Due to the variety of items it would be difficult to include all items and keep the pages of the document to a reasonable size. The City supports re-use of appropriate materials which provide good presentation and design. No change required.</p>
<p>Prefabricated planters - are usually bought ready to use. Caption says qualified trades required for construction</p>	<p>Agree – have deleted text from page 14 of the Preferred Materials for Use in Community Gardens document.</p>

General Comments	Response
<p>Decision making - Place more emphasis on the need for good group management and decision making</p>	<p>The draft Policy objectives emphasise the importance of gardens being self-managed – page2. The draft Policy and Guidelines have been developed to support good group management and decision making. The City’s Community Gardens and Volunteer Co-ordinator is also available to assist gardening groups with their operation and decision making. No change required.</p>
<p>Diversity of gardens - Acknowledge and provide flexibility in the requirements for the diversity of community gardens across the LGA, and the communities in which they are located.</p>	<p>The City provides opportunities for diverse groups, garden types and methods. Diversity and flexibility are acknowledged in the draft Policy and Guidelines. No change required.</p>
<p>Clarity - Greater clarity around and faster processing of grant applications.</p>	<p>The City encourages community garden groups to apply for grants. Requirements for grant applications to the City are outlined in the City’s Grants and Sponsorship Policy. The Grants and Sponsorship Policy requires that an approved management plan is in place before grants funding is released.</p>

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Safety – Acknowledgement of the safety Issues faced by some groups including needles being left in the garden, theft of crops and vandalism, and consideration of how to facilitate general community access whilst addressing these issues.

There are four community gardens within the city that have problems with discarded syringes. Unfortunately this is common in other City spaces. The City provides the community garden groups with a needle hotline number for a NSW Health contractor to remove the needles or provide training and resources for the gardeners to remove themselves. Community gardens can have positive influence with the development of the Bourke St Community Garden seeing a decrease in the amount of discarded syringes in the area.

All community gardens within the city experience theft of crops, soil and vandalism. We encourage groups to have a communal bed that allows the broader community to harvest crops. This has resulted in a decrease in theft and vandalism. Also keeping the garden well maintained, pruned to provide good passive surveillance, and free of other refuse can help to minimise antisocial behaviour and vandalism. The City reports any issues raised by gardeners to the City's Safe City Unit if required, or to the Rangers to increase patrols in the area. No change required.