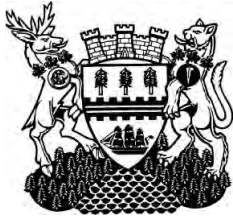


# Considered at July 28, 2020 Council Meeting

351



## City of Port Moody Report/Recommendation to Council

Date: July 10, 2020  
Submitted by: Environment and Parks Department – Parks Division  
Subject: Food Production – Parks

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### Purpose

To provide Council with an overview of options, costs, and implications associated with planting edible, but non-animal-attractant plants in City green spaces, and present a staff review of implications to consider costs and options for replicating the Victoria model of young plant distribution.

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### Recommended Resolution(s)

**THAT staff be directed to proceed with the Food Production – Parks recommendations for planting non-animal-attractant plants in City green spaces as outlined in the report dated July 10, 2020 from the Environment and Parks Department – Parks Division regarding Food Production – Parks;**

**AND THAT the budget of \$39,790 to establish edible planting locations at City Hall, Pioneer Park, and the Arts Centre be referred to the Finance Committee to identify a funding source.**

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### Background

At the Closed Council meeting held on June 9, 2020, Council passed and publicly released the following resolution on Food production:

#### CC20/112 to 114

THAT Port Moody invite the rest of the Tri-Cities to take part in a mapping study to identify available space on public and private land for community gardens;

AND THAT staff be directed to report back on options, costs, and implications associated with planting edible but non-animal-attractant plants in City green spaces;

AND THAT Port Moody support the Tri-Cities Farmer's Market to hold markets weekly in Port Moody all year;

AND THAT staff be directed to report back on costs and options for replicating the Victoria model of young plant distribution.

# Considered at July 28, 2020 Council Meeting

352

This report responds to the second and fourth clauses of the above resolution.

Food production activities on City lands currently include the community gardens, a recent offering of an edible food project, and education and outreach workshops on organic gardening for residents.

The City's first edible planter project, "Where the Wild Things Grow," was initiated by Parks staff in June 2017 in partnership with the Port Moody Public Library, with funding from existing operating costs. This initiative built upon the 2016 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which highlights the need for enhanced community food security and social connectedness. The project intent was to demonstrate how people can grow their own food at home and to promote the aesthetic contribution that fruit and vegetable plants can provide to home gardens. From June through September, 16 containers fronting City Hall were filled with 100% organic soil and planted with a variety of fruit and vegetable plants, featuring different combinations of companion plantings. During the project, staff hosted weekly tours that promoted discussions and sharing of food production best practices. Despite being well received, this project was not continued in 2018 due to the increased maintenance levels required to support the fruit and vegetable producing containers when compared with maintenance requirements for annual display planters.

Environment staff have hosted organic gardening workshops as part of the *Port Moody Naturally* education and outreach programming for Earth Week. These workshops focused on backyard vegetable growing for beginner gardeners and included information related to site location of the garden, soil preparation, plant choices, seed choices, watering, sun exposure, bear-aware gardening, diseases, gardening resources, etc. Staff anticipate hosting more workshops in 2021 and beyond.

There are two community gardens in Port Moody, the Rocky Point Community Garden (2002), and the Port Moody Police Tri-Cities Community Garden (2013), with 16 and 62 plots respectively. Both gardens have a wait list.

## Discussion

### Edible Plantings on City Lands

As noted above, staff initiated a small food production project on City lands in 2017. In response to the following clause of resolution CC20/112 to 114:

AND THAT staff be directed to report back on options, costs, and implications associated with planting edible but non-animal-attractant plants in City green spaces;

Staff have identified three edible planting options to promote education and outreach for urban agriculture within City greenspaces for 2020-2021. The proposed edible planting options vary in scope and scale and include raised planters, container planters, and a range of existing landscape and horticulture beds. A table listing details of the three options, including locations, installation costs, maintenance costs, and site considerations is included as **Attachment 1**. The total cost for the edible planting options is \$35,790. Images of the three options are included as **Attachment 2**.

# Considered at July 28, 2020 Council Meeting

353

The three options and associated costs are summarized below:

- City Hall Front Entrance (containers and City Hall Circle) – \$17,790;
- Pioneer Park (raised planter) – \$9,970; and
- Arts Centre (Creation of a high-profile Victory Garden using existing landscape beds) – \$8,030.

Food production on City lands is a relatively new role for staff. Although traditional horticulture knowledge lends itself well to plant growth, urban food production requires detailed knowledge of parameters such as soil conditions, sun exposure, plant and seed selection, drainage, irrigation, disease, and bear-awareness. In light of the factors involved in the design, installation, and maintenance of successful edible food spaces on City lands, staff recommend moving forward in an incremental manner with the options listed above.

Parks Division staff will be collaborating with Environment Division staff on the edible plantings initiative for backyard gardening workshops and with the Port Moody Public Library for family-oriented education sessions on edible gardening. Successes, challenges, and lessons learned from this expansion into edible plantings will be reviewed and appropriate adjustments will be recommended for subsequent edible planting seasons. Staff will also coordinate with the Social Planner regarding the Tri-Cities Food Security Planning process to identify opportunities that may inform expansion or other adjustments to the edible planting initiative.

## City of Victoria – Get Growing Victoria

Staff have prepared the following synopsis of the City of Victoria Edible Seedling Community Distribution Project in response to the following clause of resolution CC20/112 to 114:

AND THAT staff be directed to report back on costs and options for replicating the Victoria model of young plant distribution.

In April 2020, Victoria City Council directed staff to temporarily reprioritize operations in the existing municipal nursery for the growth and distribution of 75,000 edible plant seedlings to be distributed by community partners to support community members. The City of Victoria Food Systems Coordinator, in communication with staff, has confirmed that 50,000 edible plant seedlings have been distributed to date with another 25,000 to 30,000 anticipated for distribution in August.

*Get Growing Victoria* prioritizes support for people who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and want to grow food at home, but may be facing barriers to access food plants and garden materials, or are facing barriers to access fresh, locally grown food. An overview of *Get Growing Victoria* is provided as **Attachment 3**. Several key foundational factors had been in place for some time prior to the Council direction for edible plants distribution that enabled a swift launch of the project. These factors include the establishment of the City's Urban Food Table, a food policy council, two and a half years ago. Volunteers meet monthly to provide advice on the development of policies and programs to support urban food production and pollinators. Many members of the Urban Food Table are also members of the food growing community who receive grants under the City's *Community Garden Volunteer Coordinator Grants* program.

# Considered at July 28, 2020 Council Meeting

354

Urban Food Table volunteers were instrumental in providing advice for the project structure, particularly distribution options for the plant seedlings during COVID-19. In addition, the City was able to reallocate \$30,000 of remaining 2020 grant funds to provide support to three existing edible foods programs for the distribution of the edible plants (i.e. Greater Victoria School District, LifeCycles Project Society, and Farm to School BC). Details on the program, including seedling varieties chosen, seed suppliers, community partners, distribution, eligibility, and other City urban food production resources are included in **Attachment 3**. The following list identifies other City resources in place to support the program:

- 6,000ft<sup>2</sup> cold-frame greenhouse space;
- 2.5 FTE nursery staff to plant seeds and grow/weed vegetable seedlings (~4 weeks in April and June);
- 1 FTE Food Systems Coordinator;
- established City programming for Community Gardens and Orchards, Food Production Businesses, and Boulevard Gardening;
- established Grant Programs for City Micro-grants, Community Garden Volunteer Coordinator Grants, and My Great Neighbourhood Grants;
- 30 Community partners; and
- \$65,500 budget for Food Starts, Education and Outreach, and Distribution and Delivery.

*Get Growing Victoria* is an inspiring model for food growing and distribution to support those who have experienced loss of work, those who are immunocompromised, people with disabilities, seniors, indigenous people, at-risk youth, families in need, and/or people who self-identify as food insecure during COVID-19. Replication of a similar program in Port Moody would not be achievable at this time due to a number of factors, including: insufficient staff resources; absence of greenhouses; lack of specialized food growing programs, grants and funding; and a need for better identification and coordination of food security and food production community partners.

Though the City is not currently poised to embark on a program of this magnitude, we are moving in a direction that supports strong community foundations aimed at deepening understanding of local food security and food literacy. A successful Union of British Columbia Municipalities grant was announced this spring for the Tri-Cities and Village of Anmore Food Security Assessment and Action Plan. This regional funding will enable a food security assessment for the Tri-Cities and the Village of Anmore that includes the identification of assets, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and recommendations for action. As learned from the *Get Growing Victoria* program, implementation of food growing initiatives to promote food security and food literacy requires strong ties to build capacity between community and municipal partners. Work on the Plan will facilitate and foster these ties to better position the City to consider promotion of appropriately-scaled food security and food literacy plans and programs in the future.

## Other Options

THAT the report dated July 10, 2020 from the Environment and Parks Department – Parks Division regarding Food Production – Parks be received for information.

# Considered at July 28, 2020 Council Meeting

355

## Financial Implications

To establish new edible planting locations at City Hall, Pioneer Park, and the Arts Centre, a funding source will need to be identified for the budget of \$35,790. A breakdown of budget costs is provided in **Attachment 1**.

## Communications and Civic Engagement Initiatives

Staff will hold community outreach workshops and programs throughout the growing season to share information with residents about growing edible plants on City lands.

## Council Strategic Plan Objectives

Enhancing food security is consistent with the Healthy Communities priority in the 2019-2022 Council Strategic Plan.

## Attachment(s)

1. Future Options for Edible Plantings.
2. Edible Planting Locations.
3. *Get Growing Victoria*.

## Report Author

Lesley Douglas

General Manager of Environment and Parks

# Considered at July 28, 2020 Council Meeting

356

## Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Food Production - Parks.docx
Attachments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Attachment 1 - Future Options for Edible Plantings.pdf</li><li>- Attachment 2 - Edible Planting Locations.pdf</li><li>- Attachment 3 - Get Growing Victoria.pdf</li></ul>
Final Approval Date:	Jul 20, 2020

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Dorothy Shermer, Corporate Officer - Jul 17, 2020 - 3:46 PM

Rosemary Lodge, Manager of Communications and Engagement - Jul 17, 2020 - 6:55 PM

Paul Rockwood, General Manager of Finance and Technology - Jul 18, 2020 - 11:01 AM

Tim Savoie, City Manager - Jul 20, 2020 - 10:41 AM

# Considered at July 28, 2020 Council Meeting

357

## Attachment 1 - Future Options for Edible Plantings

Option Location		Installation Costs	Maintenance Costs*	Considerations
1. Container gardens (16) and City Hall circle	Front entrance at City Hall	Plant material (seedlings) and soil - <b>\$2320</b> Staffing (design, install) – <b>\$1470</b>	Maintenance - <b>\$700</b> average weekly (May-October) depending on length of growing season. = <b>\$14,000</b> (approx. 20 weeks).	Would follow previous work from “Where the wild things grow.”  Accessible site for educational outreach.
<b>COSTS</b>		<b>\$3790</b>	<b>\$14,000</b>	<b>TOTAL COSTS \$17,790</b>
2. Raised Planter	Pioneer Park	Materials for custom built planter - <b>\$1000</b> Staff time for assembly - <b>\$1000</b> Plant material (seedlings) and soil - <b>\$700</b> Staffing (design, install) - <b>\$670</b>	Maintenance - <b>\$330</b> weekly (May-October) depending on length of growing season = <b>\$6600</b> (approx. 20 weeks).	Located adjacent to Pollinator Garden.  Accessible water source close by.
<b>COSTS</b>		<b>\$3370</b>	<b>\$6600</b>	<b>TOTAL COSTS \$9970</b>
3. High profile Victory Garden using existing landscape beds	Arts Centre	Plant material (seedlings) and soil - <b>\$900</b> Staffing (design, install) - <b>\$1430</b>	<b>\$285</b> weekly (May-October) depending on length of growing season = <b>\$5700</b> (approx. 20 weeks).	The garden area has an existing irrigation system.
<b>COSTS</b>		<b>\$2330</b>	<b>\$5700</b>	<b>TOTAL COSTS \$8030</b>
			<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>\$35,790</b>

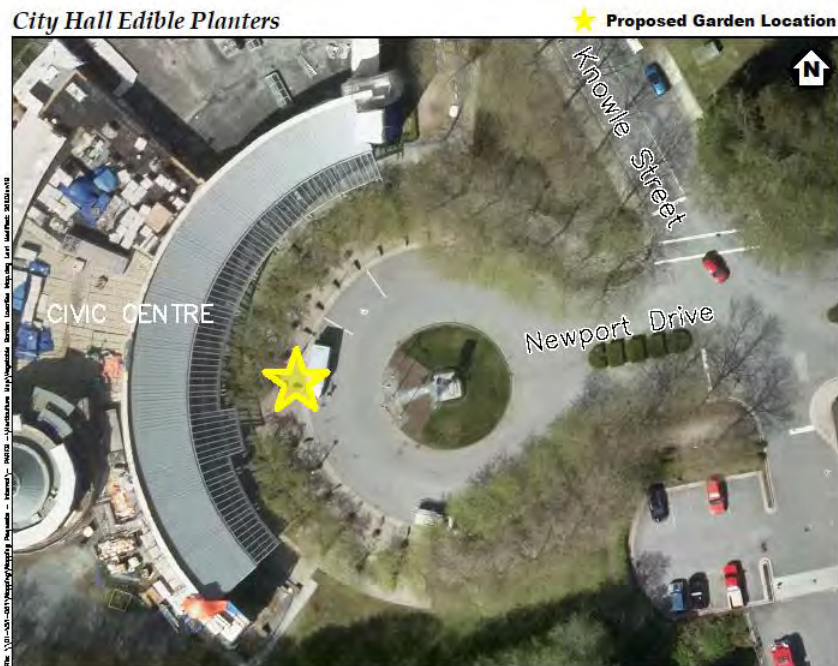
\*Maintenance includes harvesting, weeding, pruning, fertilizing, watering, and replanting.

# Considered at July 28, 2020 Council Meeting

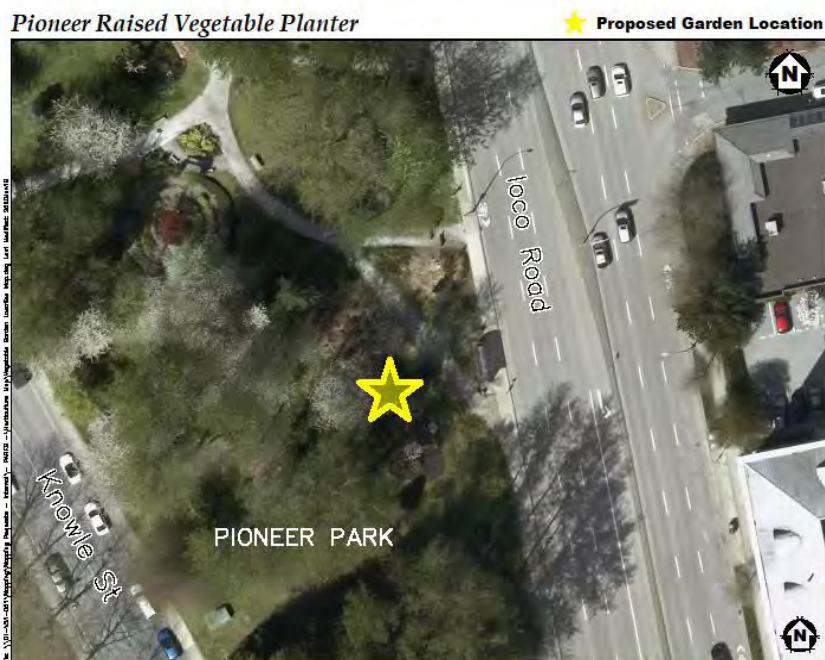
358

## Attachment 2 – Edible Planting Locations

### Option 1: City Hall



### Option 2: Pioneer Park

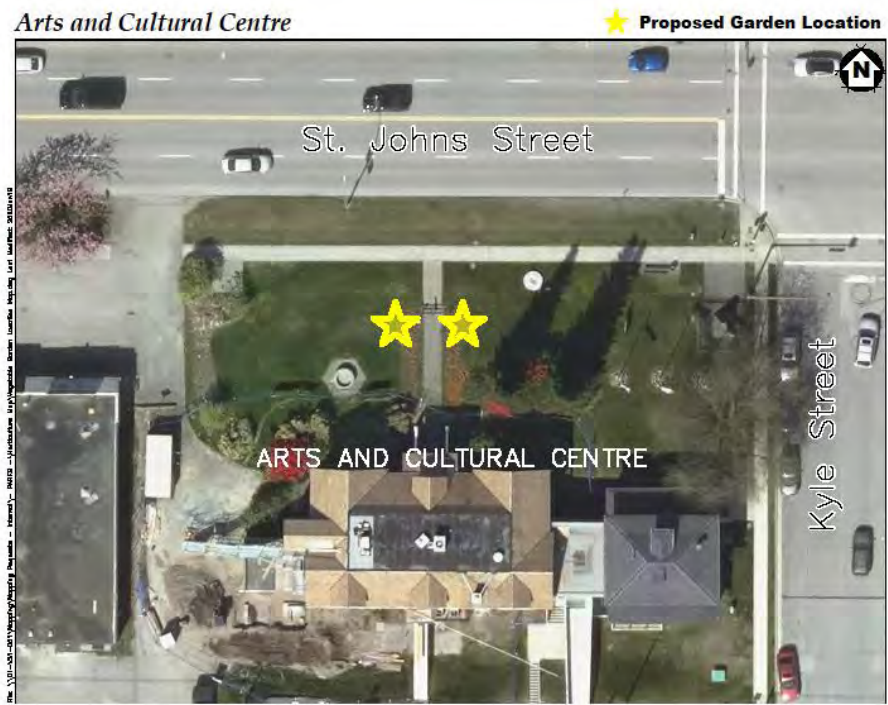




# Considered at July 28, 2020 Council Meeting

359

Option 3: Arts and Cultural Centre



# Considered at July 28, 2020 Council Meeting

360

Growing in the City | Victoria

## Attachment 3 - Get Growing Victoria



### Growing in the City

The City supports urban food production on public and private land.



Urban gardening and food production contribute positively to health and well-being, social interaction, connection to nature, and environmental education. They help create healthy and diverse ecosystems while building community and our food security.

### Get Growing, Victoria!



Get  
Growing,  
Victoria!

This free food seedlings distribution program created by the City of Victoria in partnership with community and non-profit organizations supports communities disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

There is renewed interest in community resilience, food security and learning how to grow food at home.

In April 2020, City Council directed staff to temporarily reprioritize operations in the existing municipal nursery in Beacon Hill Park for the growth and distribution of food starts to be shared over the 2020 growing season.

Over 75,000 edible plant starts are being grown by the City, to be distributed by over 30 community partners who directly serve over 10,000 households of marginalized communities. The first round of 50,000 seedlings supported over 6,000 households facing barriers to fresh food access and garden materials.

Most of our partner organizations are acting as distribution sites for community members to pick up seedlings to be transplanted at home. Some community partners are growing the seedlings in their existing operations to distribute the fresh produce through their programs.

### What is being grown?

# Considered at July 28, 2020 Council Meeting

361

7/15/2020

Growing in the City | Victoria



The seedling varieties were selected for easy growing by the novice gardener, and suitable for a variety of locations, such as garden beds in yards or container gardening on decks and balconies. Local seeds were procured from Southern Vancouver Island farms, and through West Coast Seeds and BC Eco Seed Co-op.

**Spring/Summer 2020 Distribution** provided 17 vegetable and herbs and included cucumbers, zucchini, squash, cabbage, mizuna and mixed mustard greens, rainbow and eldorado swiss chard, red russian and siberian kale, three different varieties of cherry tomatoes, stupice tomato, parsley, basil and lettuce.

## **Fall/Winter 2020 Distribution**

The Fall/Winter distribution will provide 10 vegetable and herb starts for a selection of hardy greens including lettuce, chard, kale, mustard greens, as well as peas, kohlrabi, purple sprouting broccoli and green onions.

## **Who is eligible to receive plants?**

The project prioritizes support for people who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and want to grow food at home, but that may be facing barriers to access to food plants and garden materials, or are facing barriers to access fresh, locally grown food.

That may include, but is not limited to, those who have experienced loss of work, Indigenous people, people who are immunocompromised, people with disabilities, seniors, at-risk youth, families in need, and/or people who self-identify as food insecure.

## **How can I receive seedlings?**

The Spring/Summer distribution, which ran from May 25 - June 14, 2020, is now complete. The Fall/Winter crop distribution will happen in mid-August. Please contact your local community centre to find out how to register. Plant orders will not be placed in advance. Seedling varieties can be selected by participants on site.

Each location will host the first hour of distribution for seniors and immunocompromised folks only, and after registered participants have received seedlings, the program is open to the wider public.

# Considered at July 28, 2020 Council Meeting

362

7/15/2020

Growing in the City | Victoria

For example, for locations offering 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. distribution:

**10 - 11 a.m.: Seniors and immunocompromised**

**11 a.m. - 12 p.m.: Registered participants**

**12 - 2 p.m.: Open to wider public**

## Community Partner Organizations

## Contact Information

Oaklands Community Association

reception@oaklandsca.com

North Park Neighbourhood Association

coordinator@npna.ca

Victoria West Community Centre

coordinator@victoriawest.ca

Fernwood Community Centre

info@fernwoodnrg.ca

Fairfield Gonzales Community Association

fairfieldcommunitygardens@gmail.com

South Jubilee Neighbourhood Association

SRJgetgrowing@gmail.com

Downtown Yates Street Community Garden

yatescommunitygarden@gmail.com

Burnside Gorge Community Association

info@burnsidegorge.ca

Quadra Village Community Centre

info@quadravillageecc.com

Yates Stret Community Garden

yatescommunitygarden@gmail.com

James Bay Neighbourhood

No contact

Thank you to our community partners who helped ensure the success of Get Growing, Victoria!

## Greater Victoria School District – partnership with LifeCycles Project Society and Farm to School BC

Families of the Greater Victoria School District were eligible to access free vegetable plants and educational materials. for the seedling Spring/Summer distribution that happened from May 25 to June 11 at four school sites. Over 2,000 families from 47 schools accessed to the seedlings. For more information, see here.

## The Food Eco-District – My FED Farm

In partnership with Top Soil Innovative Agriculture, My FED Farm provides free start-up food garden kits to 500 families in need. There are still remaining spots available to get your own micro-garden! To sign up or to find more information, see here.

## How do I care for seedlings?

The City has partnered with the Capital Regional Food and Agriculture Initiatives Roundtable (CRFAIR) and its *Growing Together* campaign to offer free educational resources in the form of videos, webinars and access to a new-gardener mentorship program. *Growing Together* shares knowledge from local experts, including site-planning your garden, building healthy soil, companion planting, how to safely transplant seedlings, best watering practices, organic pest management and more.

# Considered at July 28, 2020 Council Meeting

363

7/15/2020

Growing in the City | Victoria

**Start learning today:** <https://www.growingfood-together.com/learn-to-grow>

## **Growing Food and Gardening in Mixed-Use, Multi-Unit Residential Developments**

To encourage urban gardening and food production in mixed-used, multi-unit residential developments, a guide has been developed to offer resources and examples to support the successful and durable incorporation of urban gardening and food production in new and existing developments. The guide also aims to increase awareness about existing good practices and opportunities to innovate. Learn more here.

## **Boulevard Gardening**

Boulevard Gardening Guidelines are designed to help beginners and experts garden on City boulevards more confidently and responsibly. Learn how you can transform the boulevard beside your property into a beautiful and healthy garden. Learn more here.

## **Community Gardens and Orchards**

The Community Gardens Policy encourages local non-profit organizations to establish community allotment gardens, commons gardens and orchards. Find a community garden near you or learn about starting your own. Learn more here.

## **Urban Food Tree Stewardship Pilot Program**

Residents, through a community organization, can apply to plant and maintain up to five fruit and nut trees in a local green space. The City will work with the organization to find suitable locations. Trees must be planted from October to November. Read more about the program [PDF - 388 KB] and apply to become a Food Tree Steward here [PDF - 38 KB].

## **Rooftop Greenhouses**

Rooftop greenhouses can enable year-round local food production in dense urban environments. If you want to build a greenhouse on a rooftop, the Building a Rooftop Greenhouse Fact Sheet [PDF - 611 KB] will help you get started.

## **Keeping Bees and Hens**

The Animal Control Bylaw permits an unspecified number of bee hives and up to 15 female chickens or other poultry. Bee hives, coops and pens of all sizes must be set back from the property line. Check the Zoning Regulation Bylaw to see required setbacks for your zone, at [victoria.ca/zoning](http://victoria.ca/zoning). For information on good hen-keeping practices, see the Basic Chicken Care manual made available by the City of Vancouver.

## **Growing Food to Sell**

You can grow and sell edible and non-edible products including unprocessed fruits and vegetables, flowers, herbs, fibre, seeds, nuts, seedlings, mushrooms, plant cuttings, eggs and honey. Apply for a business licence to sell products off-site (e.g. in retail stores or restaurants) as well as on-site (e.g. at food stands). Learn more and get started here.



# Considered at July 28, 2020 Council Meeting

364

7/15/2020

Growing in the City | Victoria



## Resources for Urban Gardening

- The Compost Education Centre offers information on building small greenhouses, soil testing and rainwater harvesting as well as workshops on compost management, organic gardening and soil science.
- The Capital Region Beekeepers' Association offers online and in-person resources for new and experienced beekeepers.
- The LifeCycles Project Society helps people to grow their own food and have better access to fresh local foods.
- Hallburton Farm is an Incubator farm in Saanich that provides educational opportunities related to small-scale organic farming.
- The Horticulture Centre of the Pacific offers gardening workshops and access to demonstration gardens.
- To minimize pesticide use, find tips on the City's website to prevent garden pests and encourage beneficial insects.
- The Guide for Planting, Growing and Harvesting Fresh Produce to Reduce Health Risks, made available by the City of Vancouver and Vancouver Coastal Health, provides resources to prevent produce and soil contamination.
- Public markets provide artisans and local growers the opportunity to promote and sell produce and handcrafted goods in a vibrant atmosphere.
- Pollinators are a key component of a sustainable, resilient and biodiverse urban environment. Learn more about pollinators and how you can help pollinators here.