

Guide to the Fifth Street Community Garden

Introduction

This is a community garden. It serves many purposes but ultimately you will get out of it what you put into it. If all you want is a space to garden then we can offer that. However the garden can offer much more. It can build community through new relationships with people of diverse ages and backgrounds. It can help you learn more about growing food, harvesting food and enjoying the harvest through cooking and preserving. Say hello to people walking by on the sidewalk. Introduce yourself to the people you see in the garden. Offer them something from your plot, even if they aren't members of the garden. Answer questions about the garden if you can or direct people to our website at pacommunitygardens.org.

This is **your** garden so if you see something that needs attention don't expect someone else to do it. Put tools away, pick up garbage, pull weeds in common areas and anything else that needs doing. If there are problems that you can't handle on your own then contact the garden leader or ask your fellow gardeners for help.

Rules

The garden rules are provided with the application, posted on the website and posted in the garden. If you have any questions, please ask the garden leader.

Plot map and coordinate scheme

Each plot is 9x12 feet or 108 sq. ft. Most plots are arranged so that two plots share one border. Plots are labeled with coordinates of a number and letter. See the map posted on the website or at the garden for more details. Your name will be listed on the map unless you specifically request otherwise.

The corners of plots are marked with rebar and PVC - please keep them in place and notify the garden leader if the PVC is missing since rebar sticking out of the ground is a safety hazard. It is your responsibility to keep the edges of your plots maintained. You can run a string between the corner posts or just eyeball it. Grass will try to grow into your plot at a rate of several inches per year so you edge the plot at least once or twice per year. The garden spade is a good tool for edging because the tip of the shovel is flat. Swain's carries a thick knife shaped tool called a hori hori that has a serrated edge which is good for sawing through sod too.

Common areas

There are several common areas in the garden. Along the front fence there are beds inside and outside the fence. Outside is primarily flowers while inside has lots of herbs and some perennial fruit and vegetables. Under the Willow tree there are more flowers, herbs and perennial fruits. Near the center of the garden there is a plot dedicated to providing habitat for pollinators.

These common areas are intended to be shared and maintained by all of the gardeners and the

general public. They are indicated in green on the garden map. Please help yourself to anything in these areas. If you want to take care of a specific area please get in touch with the garden leader.

Greenhouse shed

The greenhouse shed sits near the back of the garden on the gravel inside the fence. The door has a combination lock set to 2013. Tools inside the shed are available for gardeners to use. Please remember to clean any tools you borrow before putting them back. Report any broken tools to the garden leader.

Tools and care

We have a collection of basic tools available including shovels, hoes, rakes, a garden spade, hand pruners and gloves. Is there a tool you think we should have, or have more of? Let the garden leader know.

There is a bucket of water with a scrub brush near the toolshed. Please use it to clean dirt off of the tools before you put them away.

We also have a string trimmer, mower and small tiller available. Regular tilling of garden soil is not recommended as it degrades the soil structure but it can be useful to work in soil amendments on a plot with poor soil quality. Do beware that the garden has some weeds which spread by rhizomes underground. Tilling these weeds can quickly multiply them to unmanageable numbers.

Please check with the garden leader before using the gas-powered equipment.

Storage area

The gravel area inside the fence at the rear of the garden is used for storage of materials. Anything back there is available for you to use with the exception of the larger pieces of lumber. If in doubt, ask the garden leader.

Compost bins

We are in the process of building proper compost bins. Once they are complete we will need someone to manage them including screening incoming material for weeds and disease, turning piles, and so on. Any volunteers?

Compost mountain

Our composting solution since the start of the garden has been to pile everything into a huge compost mountain. We're hoping to dispose of this material soon since we can't be sure that lots of weeds and diseased plants haven't been added to the pile. For now you can keep adding to the pile. Another option is to chop up your garden waste into small pieces with hand pruners and place it in your garden pathways.

Parking area

The parking area is at the back of the garden. Please avoid blocking the two gates. You may also park along the street in front or across the street in the city's parking lots.

Restrooms

City Hall has restrooms available during business hours. The Vern Burton Community Center may also be open on the weekends. The Blackbird Coffeehouse is 2 blocks to the South and has great coffee, tea and sandwiches. Other options for restrooms nearby are the Courthouse, Subway/Bella Rosa and Safeway.