



CITY OF KINGSTON
REPORT TO COUNCIL

Report No.: 12-173

TO: Mayor and Members of Council
FROM: Lanie Hurdle, Commissioner, Community Services
RESOURCE STAFF: Wally Ferris, Director, Recreation & Leisure
DATE OF MEETING: May 15, 2012
SUBJECT: Use of Correctional Service Canada Land for a Community Garden

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In 2010, the City approved a policy which supports the development of community gardens. Over the past year a few new gardens have been developed, with the support of the Community Garden Network. The City encourages community gardening by supporting the development of new sites, and the retention of existing ones. In the west end of Kingston, some resident groups interested in establishing community gardens in their neighbourhoods have been challenged to secure suitable or acceptable sites. It should be noted that there are no community garden in the west end of the City.

Correctional Services Canada (CSC) approached City staff to discuss the use of a two (2) acre parcel of CSC land adjacent to Centre 70 Arena for the purpose of a community garden. The property was formerly used by CSC as agricultural land therefore providing community access in the form of community gardening was deemed by CSC to be an appropriate use. CSC would provide use of the land at no cost to the City in return for City supervised use of the land for the sole purpose of community gardening. An RFI process would be used to identify a community group interested in managing the community garden in accordance with the terms of the City's Community Garden Policy. This 2 acre parcel of land is in close proximity to residential areas providing easy access to gardeners.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council authorize the Mayor and Clerk to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in a form satisfactory to the Director of Legal Services with Correctional Service Canada for the use of Correctional Services Canada land located adjacent to Centre 70 Arena for use as a community garden for two (2) years with an option to extend for an additional year.

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AUTHORIZING SIGNATURES:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER Lanie Hurdle, Commissioner, Community Services
ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER Gerard Hunt, Chief Administrative Officer

CONSULTATION WITH THE FOLLOWING COMMISSIONERS:

Cynthia Beach, <i>Sustainability & Growth</i>	N/R
Denis Leger, <i>Transportation, Properties & Emergency Services</i>	√
Jim Keech, <i>President and CEO, Utilities Kingston</i>	N/R

(N/R indicates consultation not required)

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OPTIONS/DISCUSSION:**Background:**

Community gardening is recognized as a valuable activity that contributes to the sustainability of its communities by encouraging healthier lifestyles, positive social interaction, community development, cultural expression, protection and use of open space, environmental stewardship, and economical production of food that is nutritious and fresh.

Interest in community gardening and other forms of urban agriculture is evidenced in Kingston by the development of 4 new community gardens and 2 elementary school gardens over the past two years following the establishment of the Community Garden Network in 2010. The City encourages community gardening by supporting the development of new sites, and the retention of existing ones. However, selecting and establishing appropriate and acceptable community garden sites has been challenging for both potential community garden groups and City staff due to their close proximity to homes backing onto parkland. Attempts to establish a community garden in the Reddendale neighbourhood, near Centre 70 Arena, were unsuccessful as an appropriate and acceptable site could not be found.

In the spring of 2011, Correctional Services Canada (CSC) approached City staff to discuss the use of a two (2) acre parcel of CSC land, adjacent to Centre 70 Arena, for the establishment of a community garden. The property was formerly used by CSC as agricultural land therefore providing community access in the form of community gardening was deemed to be an appropriate use.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The City would be responsible for the supervision of the land and its use as a community garden; ensuring all policies, rules and regulations concerning the community garden are implemented as outlined in the Community Gardens Policy. CSC will provide the land, ensure the area is fenced off and provide a gate for public access to the land. Access to the site and parking would be available at Centre 70 Arena.

The establishment of a large centralized community garden in close proximity to neighbourhoods, with roadways, sidewalks, parking and water would provide increased resident access to community gardening. It would enhance community gardening visibility and opportunities for cultural expression, environmental stewardship, and economical production of food.

Interest in establishing a community garden has been demonstrated by residents in this area. Staff would issue a *Request for Interest* (RFI) to identify a community garden group interested in establishing and managing a community garden on this site in accordance with the Community Garden Policy.

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The City would be responsible for soil testing, provision of water access through rain barrels, and constructing an accessible pathway from the Centre 70 Arena to the community garden site.

EXISTING POLICY/BY LAW:

Revenue Leasing and Licensing Policy

NOTICE PROVISIONS:

N/A

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

N/A

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

CSC will provide free access to the land, ensure the area is fenced off and provide a gate for public access to the land. City would be responsible for soil testing which is estimated at around \$2000, provision of water access through rain barrels which is estimated at \$600. These costs would be covered through the \$9,000 dedicated for community gardens in the Recreation and Leisure operational budget. The City would also install an accessible pathway to the site estimated at \$15,000 which would be funded from the existing Recreation and Leisure Services capital budget.

The establishment of gardening plots including ground preparation, layout and construction, related tools, planting materials, insurance, and ongoing maintenance, etc is the financial responsibility of the community garden group.

CONTACTS:

Lanie Hurdle, Commissioner, Community Services

613-546-4291 ext. 1231

OTHER CITY OF KINGSTON STAFF CONSULTED:

Lynda Breen, Supervisor, Recreation Programs
Denita Dyck, Assistant Supervisor, Recreation Programs
Neal Unsworth, Manager, Parks Development
Luke Follwell, Manager, Recreation Facilities
Allen McLeod, Senior Legal Counsel
Kathy Gray, Property Specialist

EXHIBITS ATTACHED:

N/A