

Bridgman Public Library Community Garden Handbook 2024



4460 Lake St
Bridgman, MI 49106
Phone: 269-465-3663

Garden Coordinator Email: BPLcommunityGarden@bridgmanlibrary.com or call 269-465-3663

Web: <https://www.bridgmanlibrary.com/Pages/Index/182066/community-garden>

BPLCG Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/BridgmanLibraryCommunityGarden/>

Registration, Policy & Fees

Anyone is eligible to apply for a community garden plot at the Bridgman Public Library Community Garden. Patrons who live and/or work in Bridgman, Lake Charter Township, or Chikaming Township are given first consideration. The annual fee is \$10 per 4'x8' garden plot. There is a limit of 4 plots per household. The fees are non-refundable. Additionally, gardeners are required to perform five (5) hours of volunteer work for the upkeep of common areas. Garden plots are for personal use only. Commercial endeavors may be considered upon request to the Executive Director depending on availability of plots. The Executive Director's decision is final.

Transferability

Gardeners may not transfer, exchange, or sublet their plot to another individual.

Plot Application & Registration

Community Garden plots will be awarded on a first come-first serve basis each year. Each returning Gardener will be given the option to keep their existing plot for the following year provided all payment and maintenance requirements have been met. The requirements are having performed the required voluntary service, cleaning the plot by November 1st, and turning in a returning gardener application by March 1st with a plot fee.

The name that appears on the Gardener's Participation Agreement is considered the "Gardener." This Gardener agrees to be the designated contact for all correspondence regarding the garden plot and assumes full responsibility for the garden plot. It is the responsibility of the Gardener to keep the Community Garden Coordinator notified of their current contact information, preferably an email address or phone number. The Gardener is also responsible for fulfilling the maintenance, logging volunteer hours, and fee requirements for each of their garden plots. All Gardeners are collectively bound by the Participation Agreement.

Communication

All Gardeners should have a valid email address or phone number to receive messages and updates from the Community Garden Coordinator. The primary form of communication will be email.

It is the Gardener's responsibility to check for messages and stay in touch with updates and current events. Messages will be provided via email blasts, website notices, and Facebook postings. Unless specifically requested, phone calls will not be made to Community Garden participants to alert them of these messages and updates.

Hours

Bridgman Public Library Community Garden will be open from April 1 to November 1. The hours of operation are dawn to dusk seven days a week. Batteries for the mower and trimmer are kept in the library and are only accessible during normal library hours.

Parking

The entrance to the Community Garden is located on the south end of the Library's property and accessible from Toth Street. Please park in the spots closest to the garden.

Use of Fertilizers & Pesticides

BPL Community Garden follows organic gardening principles. No chemical pesticides or fertilizers are allowed. For the health and safety of all participants, only organic products are to be used in the garden. Keep all organic pest-control products away from children and remove the products from the Community Garden after use.

Each Gardener accepts full responsibility for their plot(s) and any and all amendments it may or may not require. For example, if the soil pH is low (or high) it is the Gardener's responsibility to make any and all adjustments required to bring the soil to desired levels for effective plant growth. BPL Community Garden does not accept responsibility for soil and overall garden plot conditions, including drainage and other related issues. A limited amount of soil amendments such as composted horse and cow manure, composted leaves, and mulch hay may be available at the outset of each season, but it is the Gardener's responsibility to appropriately apply them. Certified organic fertilizers may be used.

Use of Community Garden Equipment

Gardeners are responsible for bringing their own tools, watering cans and other materials to the site. Watering hoses and a wheelbarrow are provided by the Community Garden and can be used by all participants to maintain your plots and transporting tools, flats of plants, seedlings, and other materials to plots. Gardeners are asked to be respectful and return all items to their designated areas when they are done using them. Additional supplemental tools may be available in the garden shed. A key for the lock on the shed will be located in a lock box whose code will be communicated to all community plot members. Gardeners are responsible for the security of any materials that they bring to the site. The Bridgman Public Library Community Garden takes no responsibility for lost or missing materials. The use of BPL Community Garden provided tools and equipment are at your own risk.

Prohibited Plants

Some plants are not allowed in the garden due to their habit of spreading out of control and becoming impossible to manage. No illegal plants, trees, cacti, castor beans or other poisonous plants are allowed. No invasive plants may be planted. If Gardeners aren't sure about a plant, please check in with the Garden Coordinator. No mint, catnip, Jerusalem artichoke or comfrey is allowed. Marijuana is prohibited.

Gardeners are asked to be thoughtful while planting vines, corn, sunflowers and other tall plants so as not to shade or invade a neighbor's plot.

Watering

Conservation of water is important. Care should be taken to firmly close the spigot and lower the arm, to prevent water leaks. The water supplied to the Community Garden is from the city, which means it is treated. The watering system is only to be used for watering plants and garden activities. Three hoses are located in the center of the garden near each cluster of plots. Watering can be done by hand using watering cans or using the hose. When using the hose, gardeners are asked to be respectful of their neighbors and their plots. All guests and children are expected to follow the rules and guidelines of the Community Garden. Anyone under the age of 16 is considered a child. If a Gardener encounters an

issue with another participating Community Gardener at any time, they should contact the Garden Coordinator immediately. We encourage all Gardeners to communicate with one another, but we would like disputes to be mediated through the Garden Coordinator for a timely and fair resolution.

Safety & Security

All garden gates are to remain closed AT ALL TIMES to prevent animals from entering. The Bridgman Public Library Community Garden makes no claim regarding the safety of the consumption of food grown on the property. Participants will hold BPL Community Garden harmless for any and all illnesses that may arise out of consuming food produced on BPL Community Garden property.

Wildlife

BPL Community Garden will do everything within its control to manage wildlife to help prevent damage to garden plots, but BPL Community Garden makes no claim or guarantee against such damage from occurring. It is each gardener's responsibility to protect his/her plots as needed, provided such action meets BPL Community Garden's organic approach, and it does not affect the surrounding neighbors.

Fall Cleanup

Please note that a seasonally well maintained and thoroughly cleaned garden plot is required to be invited to return as a Gardener each season. During fall cleanup, all plants and weeds must be removed and disposed of in the trash container. Please completely clean up the plot by removing all stakes, trellis, netting, fencing, tomato cages, watering cans, plant materials and other personal items. Gardeners should inform the Garden Coordinator via email when they have finished their gardening season. If a Gardener is keeping their plot for another year, perennial plants should be neatly pruned back, annual plants pulled and disposed of, and all structures removed for winter.

Need Help?

Please contact the BPL Community Garden Coordinator. Send emails to: BPLcommunityGarden@bridgmanlibrary.com or call 269-465-3663

Lawn & Garden Hotline

www.migarden.msu.edu – A website maintained by the University of Michigan Extension that has information on gardening in Michigan. The site includes information on which plants grow best in certain conditions and how to identify and handle plant problems. The Michigan State University Extension Lawn and Garden Hotline is answered by Master Gardeners from around the state. 1-888-678-3464, select option 1.