



Let's grow together

How to apply for a
Community Growing Space





Let's Grow Together

This booklet includes information that will help you successfully apply for and set up your community growing space.

Community growing spaces provide an opportunity for the community to work together, building more resilient and liveable neighbourhoods through growing, producing and sharing fresh and healthy food. These gardens are an effective means of inspiring and enabling food growing in the city and building social and economic wellbeing from the ground up – created for and by local people.

Community growing spaces are gardens located on public land, supported by Council, tended and cared for by the community. They may be:



a planter box on a footpath or roadway



a productive tree



a nature strip garden

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If you would like to start a community growing space, Council has created a process to assist in the establishment of your garden, making it simple, fun and safe. The steps have been outlined on the following pages:

The process of developing a community growing space

1.

Workshop

Twice a year Council will run a workshop on how to develop a community growing space and prepare a successful application. On this day council's Urban Agriculture facilitator will provide advice and assistance with the following:

means of gaining local neighbourhood support for your initiative;

preferred sites and locations for planter boxes and fruit trees and how you can address potential hazards for pedestrians and other traffic;

ensuring a suitable site which does not obstruct visibility;

any safety issues you need to consider and;

completing a thorough application to assist with an efficient approval process.

Your flourishing food garden booklet provides information on the development, care and enjoyment of your garden as well as links to other sources of information.

We ask that everyone attend a community growing space workshop prior to submitting an application.

2.

Site selection

When selecting a site many factors must be taken into consideration to ensure the safety of the community and the gardeners.

Things to look out for include:

Proximity to Services

Make sure you know what service infrastructure exists (such as sewage pipes, power lines etc) to avoid any damage. Your growing space will be in a public place and therefore you should be aware that service authorities may need to access or maintain their assets. It will be your responsibility to negotiate the protection and/or reinstatement of your planter box with the relevant service authorities.

A planter box must be located a minimum distance of 0.5 metres from service infrastructure. Specifically, this includes infrastructure related to: water; electricity/power; street cleaning; rubbish/recycling collection and emergency services (fire hydrants, emergency panels, etc). A planter box must not be located between any Council infrastructure and a property or boundary line (eg. Council seating and the property line, etc).

Roads and Traffic

When choosing a location for planter box, make sure you observe the minimum clearance distances that are relevant to your chosen location (see diagrams on next page).

Proximity to Intersection

In order to maintain visibility for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists entering an intersection a planter box must not be installed within 7 metres of the intersection.

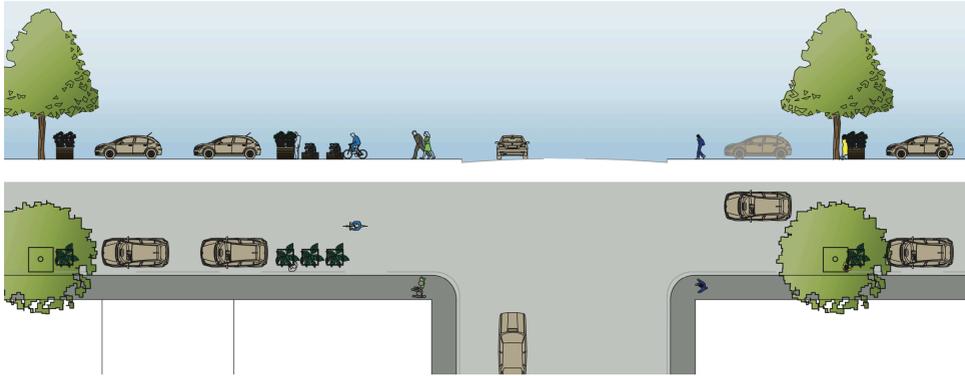
Proximity to Kerb/Footpath

A roadway planter box or nature strip garden must maintain a 0.6 metre buffer to the edge of any kerb to allow for street cleaning, parking, and the free flow of water and materials. A footpath planter box must be placed so that a minimum footpath width of 1.5 metres from the property line to the planter box is clear and unobstructed.

Proximity to Parking Bays

If placed on the footpath, locate your box between car parks, allowing car doors to open freely.

For specific site considerations speak directly with the Urban Agriculture Facilitator. Site selection will be considered carefully by Council prior to the granting of the Urban Agriculture Agreement.



Other things to consider when locating planter boxes in the road reserve

Have you maintained clear lines of sight for other road users including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists when locating your planter box?

Will the combined height of your planter box and plants reduce visibility for other road users including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists?

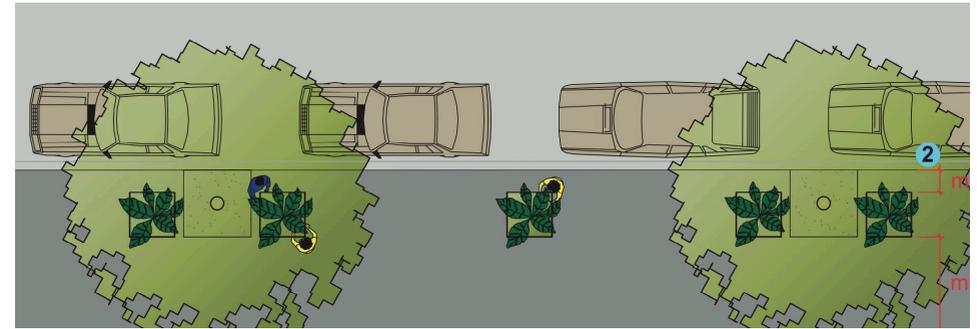
Have you located your planter box clear of dedicated disabled car spaces?

Will your planter box be visible to drivers reversing into a parallel car park?

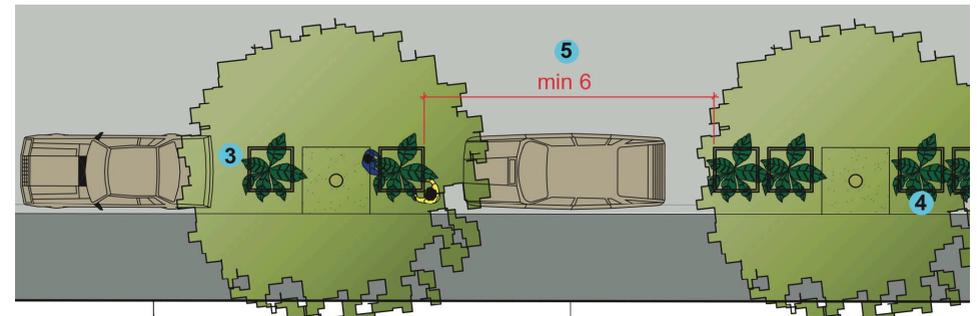
Does your planter box protrude into the roadway (ie greater than the width of the car space)?

Have you located your planter box clear of any service/drain/side entry pits?

Is your planter box located clear of driveways, crossovers and other services and signs?



...on the footpath



...on the road

As a guide, the following heights and setbacks shall apply:

Planter boxes adjacent to parallel parking

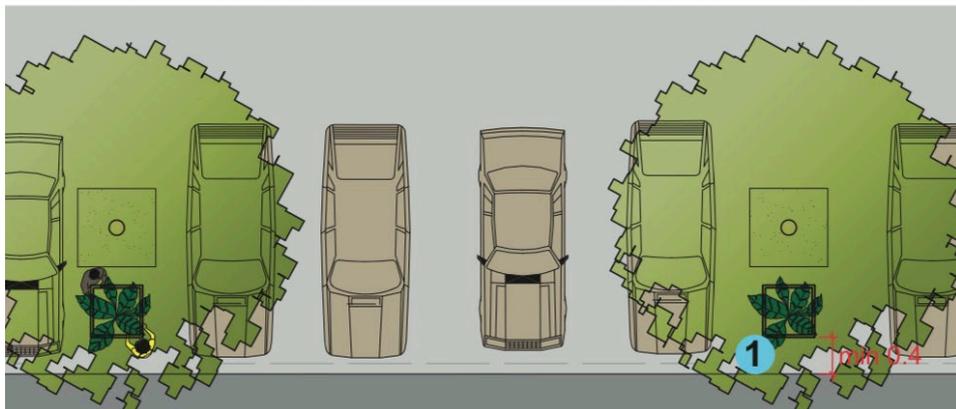
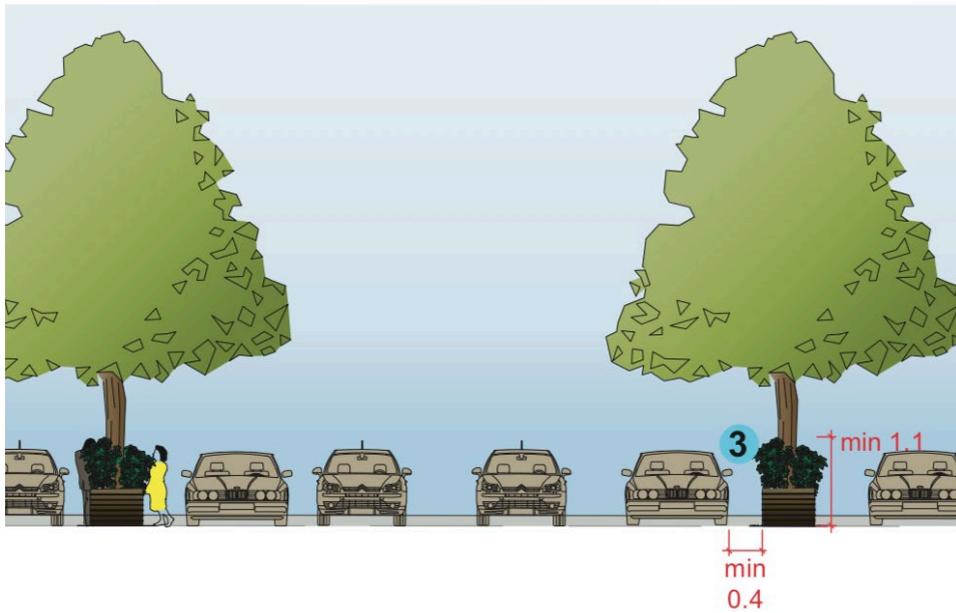
Minimum width of 1.5 metres from the property line is clear for the footpath

Minimum clearance of 0.4 metres between your planter box and the side of the parking bay to allow car doors to open

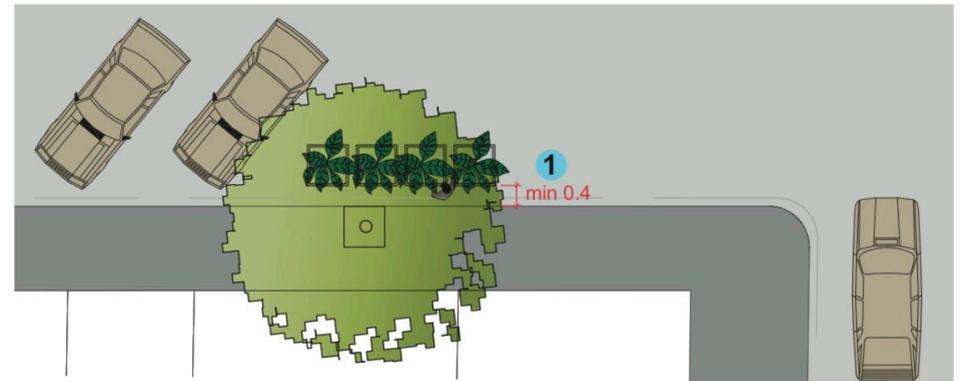
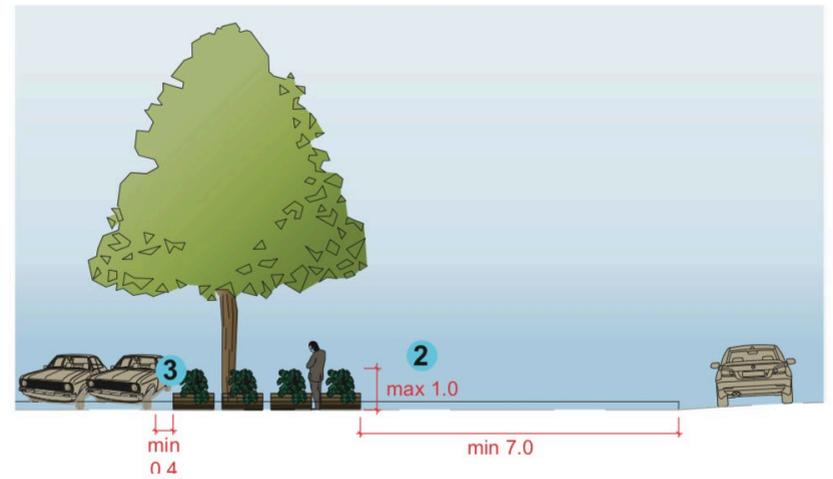
Minimum height of 1.1 metres for planter boxes (including plants) for visibility when parking

Minimum clearance of 0.4 metres between your planter box and the back of kerb to accommodate street cleaning

Minimum length of 6 metres is retained for each car space



...90° parking



...60° parking

Planter boxes adjacent to angle parking

Minimum clearance of 0.4 metres between your planter box and the back of kerb to accommodate street cleaning

Maximum height of 1.0 metre for planter box (including plants) to enable visibility for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists

Minimum clearance of 0.4 metres from parking bay to allow car doors to open

3.

Consultation

This stage begins with your neighbours. We ask you to discuss the project with your neighbours to ensure they are supportive of your idea. Invite them to be involved. All of your neighbours within 25m of the proposed community growing space must be consulted. Before we will be able to consider your application, a minimum of 85% agreement from these residents is required. Any objections over this threshold will be considered on their merit. We suggest you arrange a neighbourhood gathering to explain your initiative and give participants an opportunity to have their say. Be prepared to compromise if necessary in order to secure broad support and participation in the project. If some residents/owners cannot attend the group event, be sure to contact them individually so that they are informed. You can refer your neighbours to similar projects that have already been completed in Yarra or elsewhere and diagrams that you have drawn up of where the community growing space will be located. You may also wish to talk to others who have completed similar projects for hints on successful consultation. Evidence of this local consultation must be supplied with your application.

We encourage groups of three or more people living in the area to form a small growing cluster. Your growing spaces don't have to be located together – you can each have one near your house – however being

connected allows you to work together in the preparation of the application, as well as ongoing management of the community growing space. (eg. watering and sharing of produce, ideas, and gardening tips). Once you have established your group, each member completes a form and submit to council. Please make sure your application is clear and as thorough as possible, including clear diagrams of how you propose to lay out the growing space. This will assist council in a timely approval process and ensure your application has the best possibility of success.

Your application must be submitted to council by the deadline communicated on the workshop day.



4.

The Application

Should your application be successful, Council will enter into a simple written agreement with you. The Agreement will document:

details of the initiative as discussed with neighbouring residents and property owners

any specific conditions relating to:

- the provision of public liability insurance cover related to the growing space and,
- removal of the growing space if no longer required

the extent of the agreement as set out by Council (typically 2 years)

the gardening cluster that you belong to

By entering into the Agreement you ensure that you are covered through Council's public liability insurance policy, otherwise you may be personally liable. In the event of a successful claim against your growing space, you will be required to pay the excess of \$250.

You also agree to manage and care for the planter box and the immediate surrounds for the duration of your agreement.

Your application can be submitted online at yarracity.vic.gov.au or emailed to info@yarracity.vic.gov.au with 'Urban Agriculture' in the subject line. Once your application receives conditional approval, but before you receive your final agreement, you will be asked to pay the annual Community Growing Spaces fee of \$55 (\$27.50 concession). This fee is payable every year upon renewal of your agreement.

To be included in your application:

a diagram illustrating the location and design of your community growing space;

the name of the community group that you have formed;

evidence that you have engaged with your local community;

any relevant feedback expressed by neighbouring residents and

name and contact details of the person nominated as the primary contact for the growing group

the size planter box you would prefer

5.

Delivery

Council is responsible for placing the planter box on site. It is up to the growing group to ensure the box is received and secured before planting.

It is the grower's responsibility to provide soil and all materials required to establish the garden with the exception of the box.



6.

Measure

Yarra encourages you to record your harvests and the food scraps that you compost. This information can be both rewarding and informative for you, and the data you record helps us to see just how beneficial urban agriculture can be.

Yarra City Council suggests Farming Concrete (farmingconcrete.org) as a method of recording your results. Worksheet templates are available for you to adapt (they currently only use Imperial units) to record your harvests, or put a shortcut on your smartphone to upload your harvests each time you record them.

7.

Nuture and enjoy

Enjoy and make the most of your growing space. Please consider the visual impact of your space on the streetscape and maintain your garden accordingly. An untended garden can appear as if no one is using it and may attract vandalism or complaints. If you find that you cannot adequately maintain your garden, please contact Council to discuss options to share or forfeit your growing space. If your garden is clearly left unattended for an extended period of time, Council may remove it following consultation with the primary contact person or nearby residents.

Your flourishing food garden booklet contains more information on gardening in an urban environment.



8.

Share

We encourage you and your gardening group to attend the next workshop event to build your skills and share your experiences.

Useful information

Size (Physical and Vegetative)

Council provides two sizes of planter box: 1000mmL x 1000mmW x 600mmH and 1200mmL x 600mmW x 600mmH. Choose the size that best fits your location. The maximum height of the planter box, including vegetation, is 1.1 metres. This is in order to maintain visibility for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

Soils

All soils in the inner city contain some level of contamination. Council advises you to build raised garden beds unless soil testing is undertaken. It is best to use fresh, well-draining, soil preferably composted (such as a three-way mix). The drainage qualities and nutrient content of the soil used will have a significant impact on the success of your plants.

Being safe while working on your garden

When you work on your growing space, health & safety is your responsibility. Consider the following basic precautions: appropriate clothing, appropriate and safe use of tools, being sun smart, careful handling of materials and soils.

Also be aware of the space that you are in and keep an eye out for passing cars, bicycles and pedestrians.



#YarraUrbanGardens

Share photos of your thriving growing space using the hashtag above to win prizes and inspire fellow gardeners.



Useful websites

[Giving and receiving excess home grown produce – ripenear.me](http://ripenear.me)

[Local food initiatives and businesses in your area – localharvest.org.au](http://localharvest.org.au)

[A map of unharvested fruit trees in Melbourne – feralfruitmelbourne.wordpress.com](http://feralfruitmelbourne.wordpress.com)

[Sharing and connecting with your local community – streetbank.com](http://streetbank.com)

[Seasonal gardening tips – sgaonline.org.au](http://sgaonline.org.au)

[Food waste reduction and composting – foodknowhow.org.au](http://foodknowhow.org.au)

[What to plant and when – gardenate.com/zones/Australia](http://gardenate.com/zones/Australia)

[Record your harvest – farmingconcrete.org](http://farmingconcrete.org)

[Composting – theslowpoke.com/worm-towers](http://theslowpoke.com/worm-towers)

[Dial before you dig – 1100.com.au](http://1100.com.au)

Yarra Libraries Sustainable Living Book Collection – Garden

[Backyard Farmer – Earth Garden books](#)

[Backyard self-sufficiency – Jackie French](#)

[The Garden Guru's guide to waterwise gardening – Neville Passmore](#)

[Permaculture: principles and pathways beyond sustainability – David Holmgren](#)

[Water-saving gardening in Australia – Kevin Walsh](#)

[The water-wise garden: how to grow healthy plants using less water – Jeffrey Hodges](#)

[The green gardener: sustainable gardening in your own backyard – Josh Byrne](#)

[The organic gardener's handbook – Michael Littlewood](#)

[Sustainable gardens – Robert Cross](#)



FOR INFORMATION IN YOUR LANGUAGE ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT OR ABOUT COUNCIL, PLEASE CALL 9280 1940 AND QUOTE THE **REF** NUMBER BELOW.

ARABIC

للمعلومات باللغة العربية، حول هذا المستند أو عن المجلس البلدي، نرجو الإتصال هاتفيا على الرقم 9280 1930 وأذكر رقم المرجع المذكور أدناه.

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

欲知有关本文档或议会的普通话版本信息，请致电9280 1937并报上下列**REF**号码。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

欲知有關本文檔或議會的粵語版本資訊，請致電9280 1932並報上下列**REF**號碼。

GREEK

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ITALIAN

PER AVERE INFORMAZIONI IN ITALIANO SU QUESTO DOCUMENTO O SUL COMUNE, SI PREGA CHIAMARE IL NUMERO 9280 1931 E CITARE IL NUMERO DI RIFERIMENTO (**REF** NUMBER) SOTTOINDICATO.

SPANISH

PARA INFORMACIÓN EN CASTELLANO SOBRE ESTE DOCUMENTO O SOBRE EL AYUNTAMIENTO, LLAME AL 9280 1935 Y CITE EL NÚMERO DE **REF** DE MÁS ADELANTE.

VIETNAMESE

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REF 17040

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CITY OF
YARRA