

TWO RIVERS ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

2023 Front Yard Vegetable Garden - Pilot Program

Guidelines

Thank you for your interest in this new City of Two Rivers program that was developed by the TR Environmental Advisory Board.

We understand that people's life concerns & priorities change overtime, and are acknowledging this shift in mindset by initiating a new health-focused initiative that allows our residents the freedom & opportunity to pursue proper nutrition through participation in this well planned, comprehensive, permit driven program.

This doesn't mean the garden has to take up the whole front yard or be unattractive. You can tuck a small raised bed in an established perennial garden, for example. Or simply dig in vegetables in the spaces usually reserved for annuals that are attractive to passers-by.

Participation motives to join in this venture will vary from household to household - eating healthier from a more diverse selection of produce, keeping grocery costs down, knowing where food comes from & exactly what it is we're putting in our bodies.

The City of Two Rivers realizes that what is of concern to our residents is fluid and ever-changing, and that we have an obligation to equip our constituents with every available tool necessary to achieve personal success and improved quality of life. To that end, the City's Environmental Advisory Board has initiated this pilot program that we hope many of our residents will reap benefits from.

Why raised beds? Here's a list of the advantages:

- Easier on a gardener's back
- Looks nice
- Fewer pest invasions
- Improved drainage
- Fewer weeds
- Better soil temperatures
- It can be temporary or permanent
- Less concern about soil contamination

To ensure the success and continuation of this initiative we are providing you with the following guidelines.

NOTE: All participants must comply with the requirements of this program set forth. Failure to do so may result in forfeiture of participation, with restoration of the affected area returned to its original state.

NOTE: This program requires the participant to purchase a \$20 permit that will be prominently displayed in a street facing window. The permit & a yard sign will be issued after an application & simple garden plan are approved by the Environmental Advisory Board.

NOTE: Remember to contact Diggers Hotline if your gardening area is not a raised bed or container configuration, but of in-ground construction. If so, the City will need proof of execution.

NOTE: An Environmental Advisory Board representative will contact participants several times during the growing season to check the progress of the garden & address any concerns of the homeowner. Please feel free to make suggestions as to how the program can be improved - we want to hear from you!

NOTE: By participating in this program, the homeowner gives the City the right to take photos of the garden throughout the growing period for tracking, reporting & promotional purposes.

NOTE: Participation is limited to 20 households, so space is limited. First come, first served!

Considerations

1. First & foremost, keep in mind that the front and side yards are visible to the public - to your neighbors - and there is an expectation that your new landscape configuration will blend well with neighboring properties. We highly encourage you to utilize container & raised bed options in order to retain a "traditional" front yard flavor.
2. Familiarize yourself with the City's 10-1-15 "Height and area exceptions" ordinance available on the City's website via the link provided in the appendix.
3. A 4' setback requirement is necessary to lessen stormwater runoff during a rain event that could potentially enter the City's storm sewer system. Contaminated stormwater - pesticides, herbicides, pet waste, leaves, grass clippings & unwanted nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen - is the most significant contributor of pollutants to Wisconsin's urban waters today. These types of pollutants can harm fish and wildlife populations, kill native vegetation, foul drinking water supplies, and make recreational areas unsafe and unpleasant. There are also "Line of Sight" considerations - click on the link referenced in the appendix.
4. 3' is the maximum plant height allowed, so do a little research & find dwarf varieties of vegetables you'd love to grow, and consider horizontal trellises to stay within the 3' range.
5. 100 square feet of soil surface is the maximum allowable space for your project. Acceptable maximum dimensions of individual beds in your configuration are as follows:
 - a. square - 4'x4'
 - b. round - 4' wide
 - c. rectangular - 2'x10'
6. Raised Bed guidelines
 - a. Raised bed height allowed is a minimum of 6" and a maximum of 24"
 - b. Acceptable materials:
 - i. Brick
 - ii. Stones
 - iii. Plastic
 - iv. Milled wood
 - v. Logs
 - vi. Cinderblocks
 - vii. Cobblestones, slab stones
 - viii. Corrugated metal

- ix. Metal troughs
- x. Reclaimed materials such as old canoe or kayak

7. Consider these points:

- a. **Natural Light** - For heat-loving veggies & herbs, like tomatoes, melons, cucumbers and peppers, the plants need at least eight to 10 hours of sun a day. You can get away with less for shade veggies & herbs such as kale, lettuce, cauliflower and carrots, parsley & mint.
- b. **Upkeep** - Do you have time for weeding? You may feel extra compelled to keep a neat and tidy garden because of it being more visible than if it were in the backyard.
- c. **Water source** - Will it be easy to navigate your hose to the front garden? If not, are you okay lugging watering cans around every morning in the summer?

8. Use resources such as "**31 Raised Garden Bed Design Ideas**", "**Growing Vegetables At Home**" & "**Growing Guide - making the most of your raised bed garden**" to plan your garden. Links located in the appendix.

The Application Process

For a resident to be considered for the program and receive a permit certificate & yard sign they must:

- Return a completed application, simple garden layout rendering & list of plants that will be planted, no later than **May 15, 2023**.
- Applications will be reviewed by the TR Environmental Advisory Board, and a decision will be made in a timely manner. A Board representative will contact the homeowner during this review period to address any questions that may arise. Applicants will be advised of the decision by Memorial Day, May 29, 2023.

If you have any questions about the program, please contact the City and a Board representative will contact you as soon as possible.

APPENDIX

Ordinance 10-1-15 "Height and area exceptions"

https://library.municode.com/wi/two_rivers/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CD_ORD_TIT10ZOCO_CH10-1ZOCO_ARTBGEPR_S10-1-15HEAREX

Line of Sight requirements

need link to City website

Growing Vegetables At Home Q&A

need link to City website

Growing Guide - Making The Most of Your Raised Bed Garden

need link to City website

31 Raised Garden Bed Design Ideas

<https://www.thespruce.com/raised-bed-garden-ideas-4172154>