

RESOLUTION 2021-61

RESOLUTION TO ENCOURAGE CITY-WIDE COMMUNITY GARDENS AND ACCEPT BLUE ZONES PROJECT – BREVARD FUNDING TO SUPPORT THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW COMMUNITY GARDENS

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: The purpose of this resolution is to adopt a community gardens policy for the City of Brevard (City) and to accept \$7,500 from Blue Zones Project – Brevard. The resolution calls on the City to develop such a policy within a reasonable time frame and help establish a new community garden in the Spring of 2022. The resolution reflects the City's support for community gardens as a valuable resource and the City's commitment to collaborate with the communities, Blue Zones Project – Brevard, the NC Cooperative Extension Office, non-profit organizations, and other stakeholders to encourage and preserve community gardens on public and private land.

WHEREAS, community gardens are any piece of private or public land where plants are grown and maintained by a group of individuals in the community. Community gardens often produce food for individual consumption, but may produce food for sale, be designed for beautification of the community, or be used for educational purposes; and

WHEREAS, community gardens make a significant contribution to the civic and cultural life of communities and create gathering places that bring people together across boundaries of age and ethnicity; and

WHEREAS, community gardens provide access to healthy, culturally specific food for people of all economic backgrounds, allowing residents to improve nutrition and lower food costs; and

WHEREAS, community gardens serve as a tool to fight obesity by positively contributing to the physical activity of participants, increasing access to nutritional foods, and serving as an important environmental and health educational tool; and

WHEREAS, community gardens provide positive attributes as urban green spaces: they beautify areas, build a sense of community, help abate criminal activity, and prevent trash accumulation, dumping, and littering; and

WHEREAS, community gardens contribute to the preservation, access to, and use of open space, vacant lots, and public parks; and

WHEREAS, community gardens empower residents to become more active in their communities, cultivating cross-cultural and intergenerational volunteers and leaders who come together to preserve open space and create gardens for the benefit of present and future generations.

WHEREAS, Blue Zones Project – Brevard desires to promote healthy food policy and the creation of new community gardens will provide \$7,500 to help support the development of new gardens;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Brevard establish a Community Garden Policy that provides as follows:

1. The City supports community gardens as a valuable resource and commits to encouraging and preserving community gardens on public and private land.
2. To encourage and protect community gardens on private and public lands, the City Council directs the City of Brevard Parks, Trails and Recreation Committee along with other selected staff, and community volunteers to develop a City of Brevard Community Garden Policy.
3. The City will work with the NC Cooperative Extension Office, Blue Zones Project – Brevard, non-profit organizations, local gardeners, and other groups to identify public and private land suitable for community gardens.

4. The City will allow the use of public property, where appropriate, for new community garden sites, such as undeveloped parcels, marginal park land, and adjacent greenways such as the Estatoe Trail and other multi-use trails and will include community gardens as a desired use of public property.
5. The City will create an application process to establish community gardens on public property and provide information on who to contact and what to consider for starting a community garden on public property.
6. The City, working with other groups like the NC Cooperative Extension Office, will provide guidance for community gardens on private property, including information on who to contact, best practices, available parcels, and what issues to consider when starting a community garden.
7. The City will maintain an inventory of community gardens and their condition on public property with permission from private property owners and community garden groups.
8. The City will incorporate the Community Garden Policy into the City's future Comprehensive Plan to encourage and preserve community gardens.
9. The City Community Garden Policy will provide an assessment of the City's zoning and land use ordinances in order to encourage and provide ease of entry for community gardening, including but not limited to;
 - a. Taking appropriate measures to encourage community gardens on private and public land through re-zoning by identifying land not appropriate for gardens and ensuring that community gardens are permitted uses in all appropriate areas.
 - b. Updating zoning codes to ensure land set aside for urban agriculture and community gardens count toward existing green-space set-aside and green building regulations.
 - c. Ensuring shared access to community resources, such as water, compost, parking, electricity, and soil testing for both nutrients and contaminants, for public and private community gardens.
10. The City will publish the Community Garden Policy, a comprehensive inventory of public community gardens, application procedure, and community garden map on the City's website.
11. The City will promote cooperation and consistency in the implementation of the Community Garden Policy through communication and collaboration among City departments and agencies, including Planning, Public Works, and the City of Brevard Parks, Trails and Recreation Committee to maintain, create, and enhance opportunities for community gardening on public and private land;
12. The City recognizes the economic, environmental, and social value of community gardens and will attempt to provide budgetary support for the coordination of a community garden program.
13. The City will review all future policies to assess their impact on community gardens and ensure that these policies promote community gardens and do not create unnecessary obstacles or burdens on community gardens.
14. The City directs the City of Brevard Parks, Trails and Recreation Committee and planning staff to evaluate the implementation of the Community Garden Policy on an annual basis and present the evaluation to City Council one year from adoption of this resolution and every three years thereafter.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Policy shall become effective as of this 20th day of December, 2021.

Adopted and approved this the 20th day of December, 2021.



Maureen Copelof
Maureen Copelof
Mayor

Jill Murray
Jill Murray, CMC
City Clerk