



St. Charles Park District

Community Garden Plots



2019 GARDEN PLOT RESERVATION FORM

The St. Charles Park District is pleased to have garden plots available for the community. Perennial and annual plots can be rented from April 1 to October 31. **There is a 4 plot limit per household.** Refer to the attached packet for information on plot availability, fees and submission deadlines. **This reservation form with payment must be submitted to finalize your rental.** Reservations for new and returning gardeners are accepted at Pottawatomie Community Center. Returning gardeners may submit their paperwork via mail or email.

James O. Breen Community Park 233 total plots available

Quantity	Type	Size	Cost
201	annual	20' x 30'	\$40
32	perennial	20' x 30'	\$40

Primrose Farm Park 264 total plots available

Quantity	Type	Size	Cost
120	annual	15' x 30'	\$25
99	annual	30' x 30'	\$45
24	perennial	15' x 30'	\$25
21	perennial	30' x 30'	\$45

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ City/Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Plots Rented in 2018: # _____ # _____ # _____ # _____

Plots Requested in 2019: # _____ # _____ # _____ # _____ (4 plot limited per household)

Gardener Agreement

I, _____, have read and understand the St. Charles Park District Community Garden Plot policies that are detailed in this document. I agree to abide by the stipulations and to help the Park District protect the rights of all gardeners and community members.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please make checks payable to the St. Charles Park District.

Amount: \$ _____ Cash Check # _____ Credit Card (circle one)    

Card #: _____ - _____ - _____ - _____ Exp. Date: _____ CVV/CVC: _____

Signature: _____



St. Charles Park District Community Garden Plots

Selecting & Renting Your Plot

The St. Charles Park District is pleased to have garden plots available for the community. Perennial and annual plots can be rented from April 1 to October 31. There is a **4 plot limit** per household.

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Garden plot registration begins in February and March. A reservation form with payment must be submitted to finalize your rental. The reservation periods are as follows:

- February 4 - March 4** **Returning gardeners** may reserve the **same plots** rented the year prior.
- March 7 - March 14** **Returning gardeners** may reserve **new plots**.
- March 15** Open registration begins for all **new gardeners**.

Reservations for new and returning gardeners are accepted at Pottawatomie Community Center. Returning gardeners may submit their paperwork via mail or email but forms must be received by the applicable dates. Please review the attached in its entirety as it includes information on fees, rules and guidelines. If you have additional questions, contact Cori Hedlund at 630-513-4332 or chedlund@stcparks.org.

Perennial Garden Plots

The gardener who rents a perennial plot will have the opportunity to cultivate plants that remain in the garden for more than one year such as strawberries, grapes, asparagus, rhubarb, raspberries, etc. The Park District **does not mow or till perennial plots**. It is the responsibility of the gardener to maintain these plots and to remove all miscellaneous items stored at the plots and cut all weeds by October 31.

Annual Garden Plots

The gardener who rents an annual plot must use garden plants that do not overwinter. Conditions permitting, annual plots will be tilled and staked the first week in April, at which time gardening may begin. It is the responsibility of the gardener to maintain these plots throughout the growing season and to **remove all debris** by October 31, the end of the community gardening year.



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Finding Your Plot

Each of the District's almost 500 garden plots is identified with a numbered marker and corner stakes. Maps are available at Pottawatomie Community Center and online at <https://www.stcparks.org/garden-plots/>. Please double check the number markers and the map before planting to ensure you're on the correct plot. Boundaries run from the center of the stake to the center of the stake on each side and gardeners are expected to maintain the area within and up to those boundaries. Any plot not maintained may be mowed by the Park District (see *Working Your Plot* section for more information).



Want To Make A Difference?

Plant a row of vegetables or a whole plot to feed folks in need. Produce collection containers are available at both community garden locations. Farm and Nature staff will pick up produce and take it directly to the **Northern Illinois Food Bank** in Geneva for distribution. Pick up takes place on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons during the growing season (typically late June to early October). Need more info? Contact Pam Otto at 630-513-4399 or potto@stcparks.org.

Visiting Your Plot

James O. Breen Community Park and Primrose Farm Park are open daily from dawn to dusk. Gardeners may work in their plots any time the parks are open. If you're gardening at James O. Breen Community Park, vehicles must be parked in designated areas along the entrance road accessible off of Campton Hills Road. If you're gardening at Primrose Farm Park, vehicles must be parked in designated gravel parking areas accessible from Crane Road or in the south end of the gravel parking lot accessible off Bolcum Road. **Vehicles are not allowed inside plot areas, on grass walkways or off roads in any other parts of the parks.** Due to safety concerns, gardeners at Primrose are asked **not** to park along Crane Road.

Working Your Plot

The St. Charles Park District is dedicated to operating a successful garden plot program that meets the needs of community members and provides them with access to fresh, seasonal produce. In order to operate such a program, gardening guidelines have been established. Please review the information on the following pages carefully as policies will be enforced in an effort to protect gardeners, the community and the Park District.

If you have questions or concerns about any of the policies, please contact Registration Supervisor Cori Hedlund at 630-513-4332 or chedlund@stcparks.org. Once you've reviewed all the attached information, please fill out and sign the reservation form and gardener agreement.



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The St. Charles Park District Will Provide...

Water: Hydrants are provided throughout the gardening areas. A drop hose will be installed from the hydrant to the ground to minimize splashing as water containers are filled. **Gardeners are not permitted to attach additional hoses to the hydrants or to use drop hoses for spraying gardens.** Park District wells have limited storage and flow capabilities. Inappropriate use of hydrants or hoses may result in outages as well as restriction of water privileges. Gardeners are asked to report anyone who misuses water to the Registration Supervisor at 630-513-4332 or chedlund@stcparks.org.

Tilling: Parks Department staff till **annual** garden plots twice a year. The first tilling takes place once the ground is thawed and dry enough to work - typically in the first week of April. The second tilling takes place at the end of the season - typically in the first week of November. Please note, the agricultural grade tillers used on the annual plots turn the ground but do not fully pulverize it. Any additional tilling is the responsibility of the gardener. The Park District does not provide additional tilling services and will not re-till annual plots. In addition, District staff **do not till perennial plots**. It is the responsibility of perennial gardeners to prepare their own beds, regardless of whether they rented the plot the year before.

Mowing: The St. Charles Park District has contracted mowers that will maintain the walkways and areas around the garden plots on a weekly basis. Parks Department staff will mow abandoned, unmaintained and unrented plots. Mowing of these plots will take place three times during the season - the first week in June, the first week in July, and the first week in August. All mowing is weather permitting. The Park District is not responsible for any loss of produce that occurs as a result of unmaintained/abandoned plot mowing. Want to know what qualifies as unmaintained/abandoned? See the *Maintain Plots* section on page 4.

Stakes: In addition to the large numbered markers, the Park District installs small corner stakes each season. These stakes and the larger markers that designate plot boundaries are **not** to be removed at any time.

Compost/Trash: Trash and recycling cans are available near the garden parking areas. Parks Department staff will empty them throughout the season. Please place all non-biodegradable items in these receptacles. The District also provides several compost areas at each site. Garden waste and weeds should be placed in these areas. Parks Department staff will empty the compost piles when they get full. Other gardeners are also welcome to use community compost on their plots.



Restrooms: A temporary port-o-let will be available at each location throughout the rental season. Any problems with the port-o-let should be reported directly to the sanitation company.

Security: The Park District employs Park Safety Officers that patrol the parks including the garden plots. Should an uncomfortable or threatening situation arise, please **call 630-513-4343**. If there is an occurrence of vandalism, theft or damage to a plot site, please obtain as much info as possible and then contact Park Safety. The District commits to doing everything in its power to prevent loss of produce and theft, but ultimately, is not liable for lost or stolen items. Gardeners are urged to store tools and equipment of value in their cars or homes rather than at the garden plots.



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In Exchange for What the Park District Provides, Community Gardeners Will...

Maintain Plots: All gardeners are responsible for maintaining their plots up to the boundaries between April 1 and October 31. Plots should not be home to excessive debris or garden waste. Weeds should not be taller than **3 feet** in any section of the plot. **Plots that are not maintained to this standard or left unkempt will be mowed boundary to boundary by Parks Department staff** (see *Mowing* section for more info). The Park District is not responsible for any loss of produce that occurs as a result of unmaintained/abandoned plot mowing. If you cannot maintain your plot and wish to formally abandon it, please notify Registration Supervisor Cori Hedlund at 630-513-4332 or chedlund@stcparks.org. **Renters that do not maintain their plots and do not notify the Registration Supervisor may not be permitted to rent the following year.**

Respect Other Gardeners: Community gardens provide an excellent place to meet likeminded people and make new friends. As part of said community, all renters are expected to treat other gardeners and park visitors with courtesy and respect. Offensive and profane language is not permitted in St. Charles Park District parks or facilities. Aggressive or harmful behavior is strictly forbidden. If you or any other gardener feels uncomfortable or threatened, please contact Park Safety immediately at 630-513-4343.

Respect Other Plots: Gardening provides us with an opportunity to connect with the land - to form a relationship with our environment and to dig in the dirt. As such, gardeners are expected to respect their plot of land and the plots of others. Renters must **not** infringe on any other plots and must **not** allow pesticides, chemicals, fertilizers, water or any other material to infringe on another gardener's plot.

Refrain From Using Prohibited Items: Gardeners are asked to refrain from using hoses (see *Water* section for more info). Landscape fabric is also prohibited as it is regularly abandoned in plots at the end of the season and is incredibly difficult for Parks staff to remove. If staff cannot remove it, the remaining fabric damages tilling equipment and can ultimately effect soil quality. For gardeners wishing to control weed growth in unplanted areas of their plots, we suggest using straw or newspaper. **Renters that use prohibited items may not be permitted to rent the following year.**

Prepare Plots for Winter Tilling: Renters of annual plots are responsible for plot maintenance through October 31. They are also required to clear all debris from their plots prior to that date. Debris includes but is not limited to wire, stakes, wood, rope, plastics, fencing, trellis, tomato cages, tools, water containers, etc. These items prevent tilling and make it difficult for Parks Department staff to ensure plots are ready for the next season. **Renters that leave debris in their plot will not be permitted to rent the following year.**

Follow Basic Park Rules: In addition to the above plot-focused policies, all gardeners are asked to follow basic park rules and regulations including:

- **Fires:** Fires are not allowed in the garden plot areas.
- **Pets:** Pets are not allowed in the garden plot areas. Owners walking dogs on trail systems near the plots must keep the animal on a leash at all times.
- **Smoking/Alcohol/Drugs:** Effective January 1, 2016, the use of tobacco and tobacco products is prohibited in all park district outdoor parks, facilities, buildings and vehicles. This includes the garden plots. Alcohol and restricted substances remain forbidden in the St. Charles Park District.

More information on Park District use ordinances can be found here: <https://www.stcparks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Use-Regulation-Ordinances-June2016-2.pdf>.