

## **Garden Club of Sun City**

10725 Oakmont Drive | Sun City, AZ 85351 | Phone: 623.875.5921  
<http://www.sunaz.com/garden-club>

# **Sun City Community Garden Operating Rules and Guidelines**

**Introduction:** The Sun City Community Garden is a joint commitment between EPCOR Water (EPCOR) and the Garden Club of Sun City (Garden Club). A legal agreement, executed July 1, 2013, establishes a parcel of land set aside, with limitations, for gardening purposes for a period of 25 years. The plot pertains to a site located at Greenway Rd and 91<sup>st</sup> Ave in Sun City, AZ. Reference Addendum 1.

**Review and Approval:** This Agreement shall be reviewed annually and approved by the Garden Club Board of Directors, Garden Club Membership and, at their discretion, EPCOR Water.

**Mission and Goals:** As with any endeavor, a statement of mission and establishment of distinct goals are beneficial to guide the accomplishment of the endeavor. Our Community Garden is no exception. Our Mission and Goals are:

### **Mission:**

- **Establish and sustain a community garden to provide gardening opportunities**
- **Grow community crops for distribution**
- **Evaluate current and new gardening techniques for our Arizona environment**

### **Goals:**

- 1. Acquaint and educate our gardeners in Arizona gardening techniques**
- 2. Enjoy the benefits of gardening and the camaraderie of other gardeners**
- 3. Encourage active participation in the civic and social affairs of Sun City**
- 4. Contribute to our community through philanthropic endeavors**

## **Operating Rules and Guidelines:**

### **1. Community Garden Committee**

- a.** The Garden Club shall establish a Community Garden Committee, as a standing Club Committee per Club Rules and Regulations, to oversee the overall operation of the Community Garden
- b.** A Committee Chairperson shall be appointed by the Committee and be a voting member of the Garden Club Board of Directors

### **2. Community Garden Membership**

- a.** Members (Community Gardeners) are required to maintain membership in the Garden Club of Sun City and abide by Garden Club Rules and Regulations.
- b.** Membership is open to all residents of Sun City with a valid RCSC membership card at any time of the year.
- c.** Community Garden Membership is renewable annually to members in good standing with the Garden Club of Sun City.

- d. Should Community Garden Membership requests exceed available garden plots or beds, plots and beds shall be assigned on a first come – first served basis.
  - i. A list of gardeners desiring a plot or bed shall be maintained by the Community Garden Committee
  - ii. Plots or beds shall be allocated as they become available to the first gardener on the list
  - iii. Disputes shall be resolved in accordance with Garden Club Rules and Regulations and RCSC policy

### 3. Signed Consent and Initial Cost

- a. All Community Gardeners must consent to abide by the Operating Rules and Guidelines set forth in this document. All Community Gardeners must:
  - i. Complete and sign the Sun City Community Garden Agreement Form (Addendum 2)
  - ii. Pay the appropriate start-up fee(s).
    1. Upon initial allocation, pay the refundable clean-up fee for in-ground plots; the fee is reimbursed when the plot is returned in good condition (free of refuse). The fee is currently set at \$50.
    2. Upon initial allocation, pay the refundable cost of the raised bed container. The cost is currently \$85.
    3. Pay the non refundable, annual lease fee for plots and beds described in Para 4.

### 4. Annual Fees

- a. In addition to the annual Garden Club Membership Fee, an additional annual fee is established for each garden plot or bed. The primary requirement for the annual fee is to cover cost of infrastructure (i.e. tools, equipment, water) for the Garden and to maintain a modest reserve for garden operations. The fees shall be reviewed annually and adjusted to address these requirements. It is anticipated that the annual fee may be reduced in future as the garden area is populated and costs are spread across a wider population.
  - i. The annual fee for a 20' x 20' plot shall be \$100
  - ii. The annual fee for a 3' x 7' raised bed shall be \$50
- b. Annual fees for existing members are renewed March 1<sup>st</sup> of a given year and payable to the Garden Club of Sun City. Fees can be paid at the Oakmont office or General Membership Meetings.
- c. Annual fees are prorated for those who lease a garden at any time during the year. The fee schedule is:

Month Leased	In-ground	Raised Bed
March	100.00	50.00
April	91.63	45.87
May	83.33	41.30
June	74.97	37.53
July	66.64	33.36
August	58.31	29.19
September	50.00	25.00
October	41.65	20.85
November	33.36	16.68
December	24.99	12.51
January	16.66	8.34
February	8.33	4.17

## **5. General Property Rules**

- a. Access to the adjacent EPCOR Water Plant facility is not permitted
- b. Smoking on the property is not permitted
- c. Alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs or firearms are not permitted on the property
- d. Private motor vehicles (including golf cars) are not permitted on the property except by authorized exception. Approved exceptions are limited to:
  - i. Auto or golf car access for the mobility impaired
  - ii. Temporary pick up and drop off of weighty or cumbersome supplies
  - iii. Commercial vehicles making deliveries on the property or to perform work on a contracted basis
  - iv. All approved motor vehicle access is limited to the access road and perimeter road (EPCOR Loop). Driving is prohibited on internal pathways to prevent damage to buried irrigation pipes.
- e. Pets are permitted on the property when properly leashed or otherwise under control. Community Gardeners agree to promptly clean-up after their pets and remove any waste from the Garden.
- f. Perimeter trees and the associated irrigation system are the property of EPCOR and maintained by EPCOR. Gardeners agree to maintain the general appearance of the perimeter by
  - i. Harvesting fruit or otherwise disposing of fallen fruit and leaves
  - ii. Trimming of branches to eliminate low hanging branches
- g. Property issues shall be reported to EPCOR by the Committee Chair or appointed representative (i.e. irrigation leaks, tree, fencing or wall damage).
- h. The code to the gate combination lock is issued to Community Gardeners and is required to gain access to the Community Garden property. Access shall only be allowed between dawn and dusk.
  - i. The combination is not to be shared or disclosed to non-members.
  - ii. The combination shall be changed on an as-needed basis.
- i. Guests are welcomed and must be accompanied by a Community Gardener whenever on the property
- j. Garden plots or raised beds may be shared but not transferred
  - i. The Community Garden Committee may allocate specific in-ground garden plots or raised beds for shared use (i.e. Rose Garden, Cactus Garden, Instructional Garden).
  - ii. All shared plots or beds shall identify, by name, a primary lessee responsible for any financial commitments and rule compliance
  - iii. Gardens may not be sublet unless agreed to in advance by the Community Garden Committee.
- k. Community Gardeners agree to contribute a minimum of 24 hours of volunteer service per year, as overseen by the Community Garden Committee, toward the operation, maintenance and promotion of the overall garden property.
- l. Official communication about the Community Garden (i.e. press releases or statements) shall only be accomplished by the Garden Club President or Designee.

## **6. Garden Rules**

- a. Community Gardeners shall wear a badge at all times; the badge will indicate emergency contact information.
- b. Community Gardeners shall maintain their plot with consideration of other members and the overall community.
- c. An orderly and weed free plot and surrounding pathways shall be maintained.
- d. Plants in garden plots shall not infringe on community space and walkways or interfere with an adjacent plot.
  - i. Growing illegal plants (i.e. marijuana) is prohibited
- e. Trellises of a height of 7' from ground level are permissible within plots and beds but shall not infringe on community space and walkways or interfere with an adjacent plot.
- f. Community Gardeners shall respect the gardens' property, assets and fellow gardeners.
- g. Community Gardeners agree to use equipment and tools owned in common responsibly, treat them with care, return them to the designated area promptly and store them neatly and securely for the safety and convenience of other gardeners.
- h. Community Gardeners shall not remove garden material or supplies from another plot without permission from the plot user.

- i. Fencing, bird netting and sun shade shall be uniform in appearance and construction throughout the garden. Only approved products and techniques, as described, are allowed.
- j. Use of non-approved chemicals on garden, walkways or grassy areas is grounds for forfeiture of privileges and plot, without a refund.
- k. Planting trees and shrubs within a garden is not allowed unless approved by the Garden Committee.

#### **7. Garden Irrigation Guidelines**

- a. Water only as much (quantity) and only as often (frequency) as needed. Ask for advice and if in doubt, use a moisture meter.
- b. Avoid runoff and overflow at all times
- c. Community Gardeners will install their own method of irrigation, whether it is with a bubbler for flood irrigation, tubing with emitters, laser cut tubing, soaker hose tubing or other method
- d. Community Gardeners will be present while watering, unless automatic timers are used
- e. Water minimally during periods when the plot is idle, bare or the soil is resting. It is recommended to water once a month at a minimum to keep some water in the soil.

#### **8. Construction Guidelines**

- a. In-ground garden fencing or enclosures will be constructed with approved materiel and construction techniques as described in Addendum 3 and with the intent of maintaining a consistent and attractive garden.
- b. Raised beds will be uniformly constructed and covered as described in Addendum 4.

#### **9. Fertilizer and Pest Control Guidelines**

- a. Community Gardeners agree to use only approved pesticides and herbicides as described in Addendum 5.
- b. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is encouraged.
- c. Organic practices are encouraged even though organic certification is not anticipated at this time.

#### **10. Training Guidelines**

- a. Community Gardeners are encouraged to attend gardening classes and presentations offered throughout the year.

#### **11. Volunteer Guidelines**

- a. In keeping with the intent and meaning of a community garden, and in an effort to defray expense and maximize available funds, each member is asked to donate a minimum of 24 hours per year toward the operation, maintenance and promotion of the community garden.
- b. Activities may include but are not limited to:
  - i. Spread gravel to maintain pathways.
  - ii. Work with the compost operation.
  - iii. Inspect and repair shared tools.
  - iv. Help in the construction or repair of raised beds.
  - v. Assemble garden plots, fencing, netting or shading.
  - vi. Participate in group workdays (fall and spring clean up, bed assembly, et al).
  - vii. Contribute time toward fundraising activities to cover garden costs (e.g., plant sales and special events).
  - viii. Police the garden areas for trash and other wind-blown debris as needed and placing it in appropriate receptacles.
  - ix. Contribute to various other tasks as needs arise.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Addendum 1 License Agreement

License Agreement provided in separate document

## Addendum 2 Sun City Community Garden Agreement

I hereby apply for membership in the Sun City Community Garden. I acknowledge that I have been provided a copy of the Sun City Community Garden Operating Rules and Guidelines. I have been provided the opportunity to read the document and have my questions answered.

I further understand my participation is voluntary and specifically agree to the terms of the License Agreement (Addendum 1)

**In acknowledgement thereof:**

---

Primary Lessee's Printed Name

Date

---

Signature

---

Phone Number

Emergency Contact and Phone Number

**Community Garden Committee Use**

---

Assigned Garden Plot

Amount Paid

Date

Witness Printed Name

## Addendum 3 In-ground Garden Enclosures

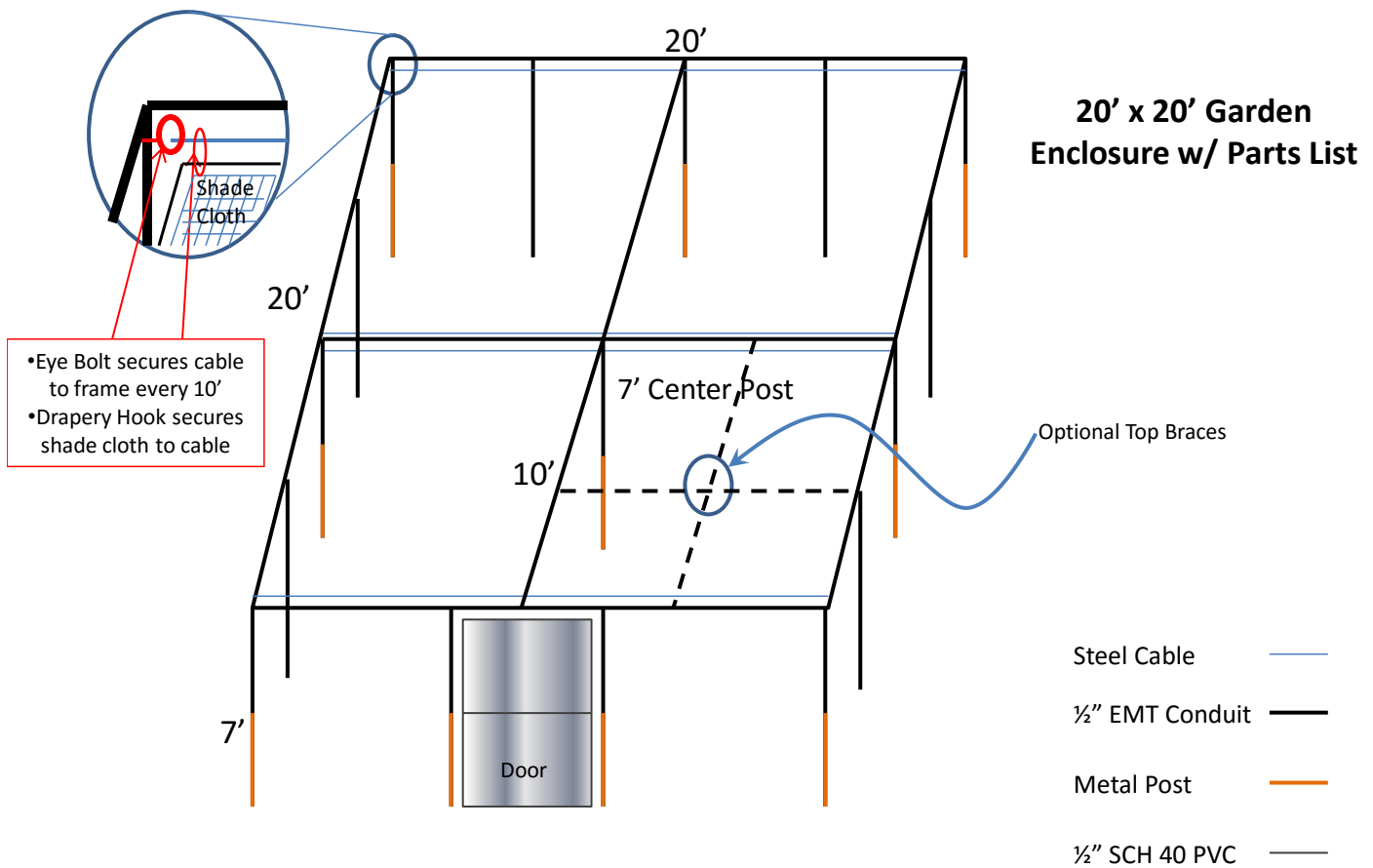
Standards are established for construction of enclosures to ensure compliance with the EPCOR License Agreement and parameters stated by EPCOR; namely a consistent and attractive appearance in the community garden. The standards are refined based on the experience of gardeners and adopted by the Community Garden Committee.

### **In-ground Gardens**

1. Gardens may be enclosed to control pests or create a frame for bird netting or shade and frost cloth. Metal fence posts must be used for support and commercial chicken wire or hardware cloth must be used for the fencing (i.e. no wooden poles or plastic fencing).
2. If a full enclosure is used, then 7 feet is the maximum height: SCH 40 PVC pipe, 1" and under and 1/2" EMT metal poles may be used to form the structure.
3. The enclosure frame must be painted a light to dark brown.
4. Raised beds may be constructed within the 20 x 20 gardens if a gardener prefers this method for square foot gardening or to define their plot boundaries. If this method is chosen, only untreated wood with a height of 10" and under is approved.
5. Any trellis used cannot exceed 7 feet in height and needs to be of natural color wood, metal wire or trellis netting.
6. Bird netting should be the commercial, black, plastic variety.
7. Sun shade should be black, green or tan commercial cloth.
8. Frost cloth should be white commercial cloth.

A sample enclosure is shown on the following page with the associated parts list and estimated costs. Total costs can vary from under \$200 for a 4' high fence with metal corner posts and gate to roughly \$500 for a full enclosure with welded steel corners and full shade cloth. Talk with fellow gardeners for ideas and ways to save costs. Constructing enclosures is a lot of work. Ask for help.

An irrigation system can typically be added for about \$50 by purchasing a battery operated automatic timer, pressure reducer and connectors and utilizing drip tape available at the garden. Get advice from other gardeners on designs and ways to save costs.



Garden Files/Community Garden/Projects

Bill of Materiel Item	Qty	Cost
1. 1/2" EMT Conduit x 10'	28 ea	\$95
• 1/2" conduit optional top support	8 ea	\$28
2. Metal Fence Posts 6'	10 ea	\$50
3. 1/2" SCH 40 PVC x 10' [48" Door]	4ea	\$15
4. 1/2" SCH 40 Tees (SLP)	17 ea	\$10
5. 1/2" SCH 40 3 Way Els (SLP) [Corners]	4 ea	\$ 5
6. 1/2" SCH 40 Els (SLP) [Door]	4 ea	\$ 3
7. Poultry Wire 50' x 72"	2 Rolls	\$120
8. Bird Netting 10' x 40'	1 Roll	\$30
9. Shade Cloth 10' x 20' w/ grommets	2 ea	\$110

#### Optional

1. Frost Cloth 10' x 20'	2 ea	\$30
2. 1/4" Eye Bolts	16 ea	\$20
3. Steel wire 1/8" x 100'	1 ea	\$10
4. Welded corner joints (adjustable)	9 various	\$40

## Addendum 4 Raised Beds with Enclosure

Standards are established for raised beds to ensure compliance with the EPCOR License Agreement and parameters stated by EPCOR; namely a consistent and attractive appearance in the community garden. The standards are refined based on the experience of gardeners and adopted by the Community Garden Committee.

A standard precast concrete box (without lid) is approved for Community Garden Raised Beds. The current supplier is Handley Precast Systems and the following figure shows a typical design.

The container measures 34" W by 92" L by 26" H (roughly 3' x 7' x 2' high) and should be painted in an exterior color approved by the Garden Committee.



The bed may be enclosed to prevent pest damage and support shade cloth in the summer and frost cloth in the winter. Construction guidelines follow along with an approved design for a full enclosure.

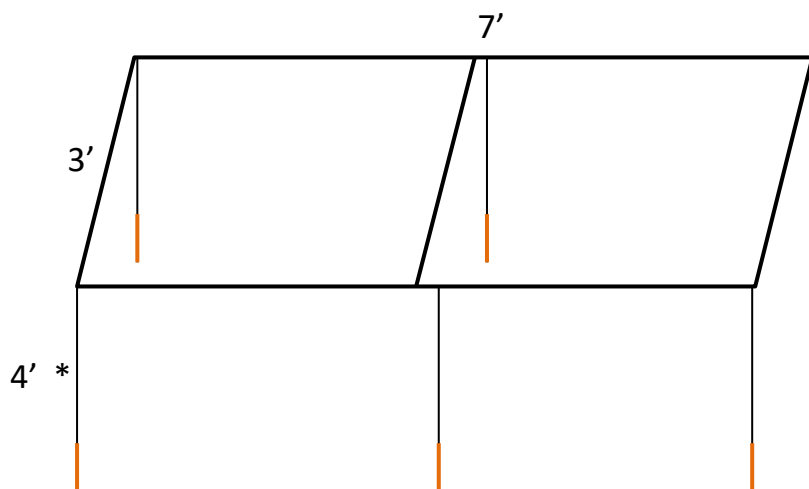
## **Raised Beds**

- a. The concrete container color must be selected from the color options provided by the Garden Committee.
- b. If an enclosure is desired, and generally one is recommended, the overall height must be 7' and under.  
This measurement is from the ground to the top of the enclosure frame.
- c. Approved configuration for the enclosure is either full cage or PVC hoops anchored in the corners.
- d. PVC pipe or metal pipe should be 1/2" EMT (thin wall conduit) or 3/4" SCH 40 PVC and must be painted a dark brown or black color for consistency.
  - i. Metal pipe is recommended for horizontal sections to prevent sagging.
- e. Any trellis used cannot exceed the 7' height as measured from the ground and needs to be of natural color wood, metal wire or trellis netting.
- f. Bird netting should be the commercial black, plastic variety.
- g. Sun shade should be black, green or tan commercial cloth.
- h. Frost cloth should be white commercial cloth.
- i. Creative alternatives are encouraged but check first with the committee before making an investment.

A sample full-frame enclosure is shown on the following page with the associated parts list and estimated costs. The costs can vary depending on the materials used but generally an enclosure can be built and covered for less than \$100.

An irrigation system can be added for under \$50 by purchasing a battery operated automatic timer, pressure reducer and connectors and utilizing drip tape available at the garden. Get advice from other gardeners on designs and ways to save costs.

## 7' x 3' Raised Bed Enclosure w/ Parts List



\* The maximum height of the enclosure must not exceed 7' above ground level

½" EMT Conduit —

1" PVC sunken sleeve —

¾" SCH 40 PVC —

Garden Files/Projects/Community Garden/Project Plans

Bill of Material Item	Qty	Cost
1. ½" EMT Conduit x 10'	3 ea	\$9
2. ¾" SCH 40 PVC x 10'	3 ea	\$9
3. 1' x 24" SCH 40 PVC embedded to top of bed	6 ea	\$7
4. ¾" SCH 40 Tees (SLP)	4 ea	\$2
5. ¾" SCH 40 3 Way Els (SLP) [Corners]	4 ea	\$4
6. Poultry Wire 48" x 28' [Sides and top] or	1 ea	\$35
7. Bird Netting 48" x 28' [Sides and top]	1 ea	\$15
8. Shade Cloth 48" x 8' [Top cover]	1 ea	\$20

### Optional

1. Frost Cloth 4' x 8' [Top cover]	1 ea	\$20
------------------------------------	------	------

## Addendum 5 Use of Chemicals

### Herbicides, Pesticides and Soil Augmentation

- I. Organically approved or a non-chemically based approach to weed and pest control and soil augmentation is encouraged in the Garden
  - a. Examples of approved products and techniques follow
  - b. If unsure, check with the Garden Committee Chair for guidance
- II. Organic approved commercial chemicals used in the Garden shall carry the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) certification unless approved by the Garden Committee Chair
  - a. OMRI Certification is displayed prominently on the container as shown below



- III. **Herbicide** - Weed control is a part of gardening and remember herbicides are prohibited unless OMRI certified or approved by the Committee Chair. Here are some common alternatives.
- Pull them by hand, making an effort to remove the root as well as the top of the weed
  - Use a hoe to minimize kneeling or stooping
  - Mulch to prevent weeds in the first place
  - Do not import non-composted manure into the garden – otherwise you are inviting weeds
  - Weeds along the fenced outside border of the Garden and paths to the Garden will be kept clear as directed by the Garden Committee Chair.
- IV. **Pesticides** – Only OMRI certified products or home –made organic products (soap water) please. Community Gardeners are urged to follow Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Companion Planting to control pests
- IPM Goal - The acceptable health and appearance of plants with the least environmental impact. The goal is not the elimination of all insects or other pests.
  - Steps in IPM:
    - Identify the problem** - Is the problem an insect, a disease, or abiotic (non-biological, such as wind damage or sun damage)? If several insects are in evidence, which one is most likely doing the damage? Example: “the leaves of my tomatoes are being eaten.” After inspecting the plant, a tomato hornworm is found.
    - Research the problem** - Gather information about the problem – Example: “Look up tomato hornworm in books or on-line, talk to other members. Identify possible controls for the tomato hornworm.”
    - Decide and Act** on your management plan – Example: “Tomato hornworms may be controlled by physical removal, use of “Bt (Bacillus thuringiensis) or several chemical sprays”.
      - Since physical removal has the least environmental impact and there are generally not many hornworms, you remove the hornworms by hand and destroy them.
      - Always begin with the control method that has the least environmental impact.
      - If that method is not sufficient, go the next level. Water can be a very effective control, as can insecticidal soaps. Use only approved pesticides or fertilizers in the Garden and even then be careful to keep the product within your own garden plot.
  - Some common approved pest control methods are:
    - Water - A hard spray with plain water to wash the insects off the plant.
    - DE” (Diatomaceous Earth) for ants.
    - Bt” (Bacillus thuringiensis) for caterpillars
    - Insecticidal Soaps (preferably commercially made, but can be homemade using Castile Soap or equivalent product).
    - Compounds using natural (not synthetic) pyrethrum or Neem oil.

## V. Soil Augmentation

- a. **Fertilizer** – Do not use fertilizers containing weed killers (herbicides) or insect killers (insecticides) in the Garden.
  - i. You may use granular, liquid or slow-release fertilizers in the Community Garden as long as they are applied according to label directions.
- b. **Compost** from the Garden Compost Center is very appropriate as a slow-release fertilizer. You may also use compost you make at your home provided there are no meat products in it.
  - i. All compost must be fully composted and have no smell.
  - ii. Manures (cow, steer, horse, chicken or turkey, goat) may be used as part of compost or alone, as long as they are fully composted and scent free. Fresh manures directly from a farm or stable need to be composted several months - it is still too “hot” if fresh.
  - iii. Compost supplies the organic materials necessary for healthy soil. It is recommended that compost be added to your garden soil before each season’s planting.
- c. **Mulch** may be composed of compost or be a purchased mulch as long as it is not a “redwood” bark or other “bark” product (e.g. being composed solely or almost solely of large or small chips of bark).
  - i. Other acceptable mulches are machine-shredded paper, clean (e.g. weed seed free) straw, and finely ground wood chips or saw dust (use lightly).
  - ii. Do not use gravel of any type or grass clippings in your garden plot as mulch.

## Addendum 6 Governance of Pete's Patch

Pete's Patch is a common-property garden of approximately 60' x 60' located in the northwest corner of the Community Garden. It is used to grow produce for distribution to senior centers, food banks and / or Farmer's Market and, on announced occasions, to members of the Garden Club. The garden is overseen by a group of volunteers, Pete's Patch Committee, who report to the Community Garden Chairperson. As such, Pete's Patch Committee is responsible to carry out the decisions approved by the Community Garden Committee.

### Responsibilities:

1. Community Garden members shall vote annually, in November, to appoint a Community Garden Chairperson and Pete's Patch Head Gardener for the upcoming year beginning in January.
2. The Head Gardener shall call for volunteers to comprise Pete's Patch Committee in January and set meeting times as the seasons progress.
3. The Head Gardener shall coordinate with the Community Garden Chairperson to announce work days for the garden.
  - Work days generally coincide with Community Garden Open House on the third Saturday of the month 9:00 – 11:00 AM
  - Harvest occurs as announced during the growing season
4. Pete's Patch Committee members shall monitor the health and status of Pete's Patch on a daily basis and address any issues that arise.
5. On a seasonal basis they shall research, decide, develop and implement a plan that will plant, grow, harvest and distribute crops. Tasks to implement the plan include but are not limited to:
  - Coordinate with our produce recipients to understand their crop preferences
  - Research to determine seed and variety choices and order the appropriate seed stock
  - Develop a calendar to guide work toward a successful garden (start seeds, fertilize, till, plant, etc)
  - Develop a row layout
  - Purchase and apply needed soil amendments
  - Participate as needed to ensure a successful season
  - Harvest and distribute crops

\*\*\*\*\*

**End of Document. Initial approval and release 11/5/2013. Revised to include Addendum 3 on 3/10/2014. Major revision to update construction details and property rules approved and released September 1, 2015. Addendum 6, Pete's Patch, approved and released May 15, 2016.**