

2026

COMMUNITY GARDEN GUIDELINES Normal Park Community Gardens

Welcome to Organic Community Gardening in Ypsilanti!

General information, of nearby gardens open to the public as rented community garden space:

- Midtown Community Garden (MCG): All raised beds, near the corner of Congress & Normal St.
- Recreation Park Community Garden (RPCG): behind the Ypsilanti Senior Center on Congress St.
- Normal Park Community Garden (NPCG): behind Washtenaw International HS on Mansfield St.

Membership in all community gardens is open to anyone, families to share and people of all ages and experience levels are encouraged to participate. **Participants must register and will be assigned a garden plot in which to grow organic vegetables, flowers, and fruit.** If any potential participants have special accessibility needs, Growing Hope may be able to accommodate them with raised beds.

Please read all of the information below for NPCG carefully before submitting a registration form.

ORGANIZATION:

Membership: Members act as partners in the process of managing the gardens over the growing season. Each garden has at least one steward who helps with problems. Members also are part of a gardening communication network, either via phone and email.

Garden Stewards: Garden stewards are volunteers who help manage the gardens, usually with the participation of a garden council. Stewards plan and run community garden meetings, help troubleshoot problems, etc. Members are encouraged to serve on the garden council or as a steward and manage some part of the community garden.

Volunteer Hours: Members of the community garden **are required to spend a minimum of 8 hours over the summer to caring for the garden common areas** (paths, borders, etc.), as follows: members are expected to participate in (1) the Early Bird Work Day scheduled in early spring, (2) Closing Day in October **AND** (3) at least one Work Party during the season. All gardeners participate in the **“Plant a Row for the Hungry” (PAR) program.** NPCG has 1 full plot dedicated to the PAR program. There will be a schedule created by the PAR Committee chairman so that each member can take a turn to maintain the PAR plot which includes watering, weeding, and/or harvesting and donating produce. In addition, extra produce from individual garden plots may be donated. All produce harvested will be donated to Hope Clinic, Food Gatherers or the Senior Center.

Plot Assignment: Based on the number of people interested in participating, garden beds will be allocated for individual or shared use. Returning gardeners get first pick. Plot sizes will be assigned as requested on the registration form. In the event that we have more applicants than we have space for, we will place them on a first come first serve waiting list.

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GARDENING RULES/REGULATIONS: - Questions? Contact your Garden Steward.

Building and parking use: • NPCG uses school property. Before the school year ends, always respect the parking area of the students/faculty. If using the parking lot to load or unload garden equipment, move car promptly after unloading.

Maintenance of individual plots: • Planting may begin any time after you have submitted your registration form and paid your rental fee. Your plot MUST be planted by June 16, 2026 • **ALL GARDENS ARE ORGANIC** (no chemical fertilizers or pesticides) • Keep your plot free of weeds, plastic, and trash • Refrain from growing invasive species (especially in the mint family) • Pick produce in a timely manner – avoid rotting vegetables in your plot! • If veggies go unharvested for more than two weeks, expect that they may be picked and donated • Make arrangements with a Garden Plot-Sitter if you will be out of town for more than one week • **Abandoned garden plots** make for more work for other members. Please advise the Garden Steward ASAP if you cannot maintain your Plot. • Clear fences, trellis, etc. from beds in the fall by October 31, 2026.

Care and protection of community garden: • Keep all garden paths and around your plot clear & weeded • All garden trash and vegetable waste must be removed from the community garden. NPCG does not have a common compost pile. Paper Garden Waste bags are provided for you.

Tools and equipment: • Hoses are communal. Some tools are also shared. • Please make sure the hose is neatly returned to its designated spot after each use. Other gardening equipment will be supplied by individual participants.

Unauthorized picking: PICK ONLY WHAT YOU PLANTED. • It is in the nature of a garden open to the public that some unauthorized picking will take place – expect it • Please report serious problems with theft to a garden steward • If you find someone picking, ask them to stop, to leave any veggies already picked, and explain that plots are rented by individual families.

Water Use: • Gardeners are strongly encouraged to use mulch to conserve water • Replace hose and turn off the water source when done watering • Any sprinkler used must not be left running.

Other: • Notify a garden steward if you are unable to plant your plot by June 15 • Pets are not allowed in the garden • Children are very welcome at the garden, but must be accompanied by an adult.

REGISTRATION AND FEES:

Participants in the NPCG garden are asked to register by **April 18th** for plots. Registration forms will be sent to you by your Garden Steward via email. Or contact Chris

Check the registration form for the Fee Structure. The fee is due at the time of registration. Registration fees pay for ongoing garden maintenance needs such as repairs, compost, hoses, stakes, lawn bags and other supplies.

Checks should be made payable to Growing Hope with “plot fee” written in the subject line.