

## About the Garden:

The Mayo Clinic Health System & Onalaska Parks & Recreation have partnered for many years to promote the Onalaska Community Garden project. This garden serves as a community gathering space and offers a variety of community benefits. Community gardens build and strengthen the community, provide economic benefits, increase social equity and promote environmental stewardship. The garden provides access to fresh produce, as well as an opportunity for community members to explore and engage with a hobby, connect with nature and enjoy the company of fellow gardeners. Additionally, a portion of the \$30 plot fee is donated to local food shelves and food distribution organizations. To provide the best experience for all gardeners, we have developed the following guidelines in order to have a fruitful, secure, and enjoyable place to garden.

## General Information:

- There are 50, 20' x 20' plots available for community garden use.
- Plots are located at 2614 Midwest Dr, Onalaska, WI 54650.
- Plots are available for use during the growing season between May and October of each year. Exact dates vary based on weather and soil conditions.
- Gardens hours are from 5:00 am to dusk, seven days a week during the growing season.
- Understanding the need to encourage new gardeners, garden plots are initially limited to five (5) per household in advance. Additional plots may be permitted if there are unreserved plots after June 15, and after exhausting any gardeners on the waiting list.
- Plot fees must be paid in full at the time of plot reservation. Plots may be reserved in person at Onalaska City Hall, Park & Recreation office. Plots will not be assigned without full fee payment. Plot fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.
- Garden plots are assigned to one person and are non-transferable. Others may garden or assist you at your plot, but the responsibility for payment of fees, cleanup, and other duties will be held to the individual whose name is assigned to the plot.
- No produce or any other items grown within the community garden may be exchanged for goods of monetary value, i.e. sold.
- The City of Onalaska Parks & Recreation Department and Mayo Clinic Health System reserve the right to cancel garden plot registrations for any reason including, but not limited to: public safety, abandonment, or misuse.

## Reservations & Plot Payment:

- **Beginning in 2023, garden plots will be reserved using the following schedule:**
  - **January 15, 2024** – returning gardeners in good standing may reserve up to five (5) plots per household.
  - **February 12, 2024** – new gardeners may reserve up to five (5) plots per household.
  - **March 11 – June 3** – gardeners may reserve any unclaimed plots. First come, first serve. No holds.
- A fee of \$30 will be assessed for *each plot* requested. Please make checks payable to “City of Onalaska” and designate for “Garden”.
- Fees may be adjusted or waived for low-income or senior (55+) garden plot participants, based on a financial need application. For more information please contact the Department of Parks & Recreation.

## **Plot Requests:**

- You may submit a written request for a specific plot(s) with your Community Garden Application. Please note organizers will make every effort to accommodate all plot requests, however, we may not be able to fulfill every request. Additionally, we do not accept requests for no-till on specific sites at this time. When requesting a specific plot, please use plot names that can be found on the Plot Map on the City of Onalaska's website.

## **Cancellations:**

- Garden plot fees are nonrefundable. Should you choose to cancel your plot(s) please contact the Onalaska Department of Parks & Recreation immediately so the plot may be reassigned. Your registration fee will be considered a donation to an Onalaska food assistance program of Park & Rec's choosing.

## **Gardener Responsibilities & Guidelines:**

### • **General:**

- Plot(s) will be clearly marked using spray lines and orange flags with occupying gardener's name.
- Use of metal stakes to secure fencing is NOT PERMITTED. All gardeners are asked to use wooden stakes and be mindful of the water lines that run below the garden plots. If you encounter or cause a ruptured water line, please contact Mayo Clinic's Facilities and Grounds Crew to report the leak.
- An updated garden map will be distributed to each gardener prior to the growing season. The map will highlight each plot gardeners have reserved for the season.
- No permanent fixtures may be installed in a plot. Temporary fencing is allowed assuming it remains within the confines of the designated gardener's plot(s), does not interfere with neighboring garden plots, and is not installed using concrete.
- Use of traps and poison are not permitted under any circumstances.
- Parking is available on the north side of Midwest Drive.
- Water access and portable restrooms are provided on the Community Garden site by Mayo Clinic.

### • **Planting Restrictions:**

- Illegal, poisonous, and aggressive plants are prohibited from being grown within garden plots.
- Planting of noxious and/or nuisance weeds or invasive plants, as defined in City Ordinance 12.01.23 is prohibited.
- Garden plots may not be used to grow illegal plants, controlled substances, shrubs trees, or plants that do not bear vegetables or spices. Annual flowering plants are acceptable.
- When planting sprawling or tall crops, be mindful of the interference or shade cast on neighboring plots.
- The use of pesticides, insecticides, and herbicides is strictly prohibited.
- Fertilizer is permitted as long as it does not in any way impact the adjacent garden plots or grass.
- The City of Onalaska reserves the right to remove or eliminate plants that do not follow the guidelines listed above.

### • **Mulch:**

- Organic mulches, such as compost, leaves, straw, and shredded bark are highly recommended to conserve water and add nutrients to the soil.
- Non-biodegradable mulches such as stone, carpet, and artificial turf are prohibited.
- Fresh manure is prohibited as it may contain weed seeds, and may have sanitary issues that could affect neighboring plots. Composted manure is permitted.

### • **Compost:**

- Compost piles are to be located on the East side of the Community Garden.
- Compost piles are reserved for plant matter and waste generated at the Community Garden site only. No dumping allowed.
- You may utilize the compost generated on-site for your garden plot should you choose.

- **Plot Maintenance**
  - Crops, plants, vines, vegetation, and structures must be contained within the designated boundaries of each garden plot.
  - Compost piles are reserved for vegetative matter only. All trash should be removed from the community garden grounds and disposed of at appropriate locations elsewhere, as garbage collection service is not available at the community garden site.
  - Gardeners are responsible for providing and maintaining their own tools. Storage of personal tools at the garden is not permitted.
  - All plots will be inspected three times per growing season. Renters of plots that have not been planted, are weedy, or do not meet the guidelines, will be notified. Failure to respond within 14 days will result in forfeiture of the plot.
  
- **Organic Gardening**
  - Use of non-organic certified herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, and pesticides are prohibited.
  - No materials of any type shall be applied in a manner that affects neighboring plots.
  - Gardeners may use composted manure and other materials approved for organic use.
  - If you are unsure what materials are permitted for use in the gardens, please contact [parkrecinfo@onalaskawi.gov](mailto:parkrecinfo@onalaskawi.gov).
  
- **Safety & Respect:**
  - Plants regulated or prohibited by federal and state laws are prohibited in gardens. If any such plants are found, the permit for the garden plot(s) will be immediately revoked.
  - No one under the age of eighteen (18) years shall be on the Community Garden property without adult supervision.
  - No pets, animals, or livestock are allowed on or in community garden property.
  - No alcohol, drugs, or illegal substances are allowed in community garden property and any use will result in immediate termination of garden plot permit(s).
  - Stealing of any kind, including produce not grown in your designated plot(s), will result in immediate loss of gardening privileges and forfeiture of any garden plot.
  - Gardeners are expected to take personal responsibility for observing all rules and guidelines listed above.
  - Theft or other illegal activities should be reported to the Onalaska Police Department by calling the non-emergency number (608) 782-7575
  
- **Extra Produce**
  - If you have grown more produce than you are able to use, please consider donating the produce to the Onalaska/Holmen Food Basket. Email [foodbasketdirector@gmail.com](mailto:foodbasketdirector@gmail.com) or call 608-783-7722 for more information.

***We rely on our community to protect each other by taking personal responsibility for observing the rules listed above. Together, we can ensure the continued success of the Onalaska Community Garden.***



# Community Garden Information

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## **Mayo Clinic Health System & City of Onalaska Responsibilities:**

### **Mayo Clinic Health System & the City of Onalaska Parks & Recreation Department will:**

- Provide and maintain water to the garden area throughout the growing season.
- Mow the area around plots in June & August of each growing season.
- Provide portable toilets to the area during each growing season.
- Provide a designated composting area for gardener use. (See garden map for location).

If you experience any issues with the on-site water or portable restrooms, please contact the Mayo Clinic Health Facility Department.

### **News & Information:**

Email will be the preferred method of mass communication to all households regarding dates, deadlines, events, updates, etc. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your garden plot, please respond by email at [parkrecinfo@onalaskawi.gov](mailto:parkrecinfo@onalaskawi.gov) and/or call 608-781-9560.