



## Standard Operating Procedure for Community Garden

### Applications and Waitlist Process

Updated January 2023

#### 1. Prep Work

- a. If needed, connect with GVI media staff to provide update
- b. Community Garden Captains connect with the previous year gardeners and confirm who will be returning in the new year. They should create a list that includes who is returning and their plot number. If helpful, GVI will provide a contact sheet and garden map.
- c. GVI and Garden Captains connect to share this information. GVI updates our digital CG Master List to keep an updated record of gardeners.
  - i. Captain is responsible for also collecting a new application from returning gardeners each season.
  - ii. Captain is responsible for telling GVI if specific beds are damaged and/or not suitable for growing. They will have a voice in determining the # of beds allotted for gardeners at their site.
  - iii. GVI is responsible for updating our website with the year's applications, garden sites and number of plots per garden site available. If applications are removed mid-season (June-August), ensure they are put back on by January/February

#### 2. Collecting Applications - Captains & GVI

- a. Garden Captains distribute the current CG Handbook to all returning gardeners in their language of choice. Captains can choose to review the Handbook with gardeners or let them review it separately.
- b. Garden Captains distribute the year's CG Handbook to all new/interested gardeners in their language. Captains can choose to review the Handbook with gardeners or let them review it separately.
- c. Garden Captains are responsible for collecting completed applications for that garden year from every gardener. Applications are online or in the back of the Handbook. **IMPORTANT:** New and returning gardeners should only return the last page of the handbook back to captains.
- d. Garden Captains are responsible for giving the completed applications to GVI in person or digitally. GVI can make copies of applications for gardeners if they would like a copy for their records.
- e. GVI's CG staff or intern is responsible for adding application data to the CG Master List and filing hard or digital applications in the appropriate place. For 2023, there is a [folder](#) for each garden to have their applications be uploaded and stored.
  - i. View application responses from ALL languages. There is a language application for English, Spanish, French, etc. Each application submission is fed into a different spreadsheet.

#### 3. Straightforward New Garden Application through Captain

- a. An interested gardener approaches a garden captain to request information.



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- b. The Garden Captain informs them of how many beds are currently available - they can determine at this time if the gardener is interested in taking an available plot, if there is one and no one is above them on the waitlist.
    - c. See above, for collecting applications
  4. Straightforward New Garden Application through GVI
    - a. An interested gardener approaches a GVI team member to request information on community gardens.
    - b. The GVI team member asks which gardens they are interested in and can quickly check the database from their computer or phone to let the gardener know if beds might be available. It is crucial that the CG staff or intern is regularly updating our database for real time accuracy.
    - c. The GVI team member takes down that gardeners information - name, address, phone number, email, and sends them a digital copy of a garden application if a physical one is not available at the time of their meeting.
    - d. The waitlist is checked to ensure no one is above this gardener on the waitlist for this garden.
    - e. The GVI CG staff or intern connects with the appropriate garden captain to ask if the beds in the database are still available and to give them the new gardener's data.
    - f. CG Captain reaches out to put the gardener into a garden plot and reviews the GVI Handbook again. Additional orientation provided as needed, many resources on our website, at Reservoir Community Farm, and events to participate in.
    - g. See above, for collecting applications - this new gardeners information must be in the CG Master List
  5. Waitlist
    - a. If no beds are available at the time that a gardener expresses interest in the specific garden, they can be added to a waitlist - a tab on the CG MasterList Spreadsheet
    - b. Gardeners fill out a community garden application with their first, second, and third choices for community garden location. If only one choice is indicated by them, contact the applicant and inform them of locations with available beds. Sample email listed below\*
    - c. The GVI CG staff or intern enters this data at the bottom of the Waitlist Tab of the CG Master List. New entries are at the bottom of the list, date of inquiry is added with year. Be as detailed as possible, fill out each cell/section.
    - d. GVI will connect with captains to confirm availability before placement.
    - e. Once confirmed, GVI will reach out to members of the waitlist three times before their spot is given away to the next person on the list. At least one outreach effort needs to be a phone call. Note: Attempt to outreach at various times/days of the week,
    - f. GVI will make sure that plot numbers are accurate in our system and verify with captains.
  6. Filling Empty Garden Plots if Waitlist for a Garden is Empty
    - a. If a garden has empty plots and no one on its waitlist, it is time to find some gardeners!



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- b. Ask the Captain if they have ideas - sometimes there are community members and neighbors who have been interested, but they have not reached out to - find them and begin Step 3
- c. Head to the Waitlist and see if anyone currently on the waitlist would like a garden plot at this garden, even if it is not their first, second, or third choice. Give them a specific date by which they must tell you they want the plot or not before you move on to the next person
- d. If no one on the waitlist is interested, a door knocking or flyering campaign may be in order! Ensure there are signs at every garden re: obtaining a garden plot, website/QR code
- e. Share open bed availability with GVI staff, board members and partners. Include updates in our newsletter and post on social media. GVI's youth programs can share with their youth/families and our Operations team can share this with Bridgeport volunteers.

Sample Communications:

#### Waitlist Email:

\*Hello community member,

Green Village Initiative is proud to support our Bridgeport Farm-ily through our Community Gardens program! This year we have received an overwhelming amount of applications and are grateful that you want to have a plot for the 2022 growing season. We are reaching out today because the location you would like to have a garden plot in is **full**. There are **no longer spots available in your first choice garden location at Ridge Ave**. Please review our other community garden locations and let us know if you would like to have a plot there. The following locations still have availability:

XXX

To view locations on a map, visit our ["Community Gardens"](#) program page. Please respond by **Wednesday June 15th, YEAR** with alternative choices. If you do not wish to have a garden in a new location, please let us know. Once we hear from you, we will work to get your plot assignment and next steps.

Thank you,

The Community Gardens Team

#### Waitlist Phone Call:

Hello! This is \_\_\_\_ from GVI. Is \_\_\_\_ there? I am reaching out regarding their application for a GVI community garden bed.



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**If they are not there:** Leave a message with who you are speaking with and plan to call again, ask if there is a preferred time or better way to reach the applicant. Thank them and end the call. Make a note in the CG tab.

**If they are there:** Great! How are you doing today?

So I am reaching out today because the garden preferences you selected are not available. We do have availability at other gardens if you are interested.

**If they say they are interested:** State and give detail to the open garden plots, confirm placement and let them know you will be sharing their information with the captain of the garden location they have selected. Let them know the name of the captain and manage expectations in response from the captains. Do not promise a captain will call in the next 24 hours if they cannot.

**If they say they are not interested:** Okay, I understand. We may not be able to guarantee a plot for you at that garden this year. We will keep you on our waitlist and if a spot opens up, we will contact you.

Is there anything else I can help you with or answer today?

Have a great rest of your day! Thank you for your time

Document any conversations on the waitlist. Update captains accordingly.