

# Aunt Charlotte McClee Community Garden 2026 Membership Application Packet

City of Gastonia • Keep Gastonia Beautiful

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## Welcome to the Aunt Charlotte McClee Community Garden!

We're so glad you're interested in joining the Aunt Charlotte McClee Community Garden! Our goal is to grow community as much as we grow food—through learning, sharing, and enjoying the outdoors together. The Aunt Charlotte McClee Community Garden is a partnership between the City of Gastonia, Keep Gastonia Beautiful, and the Highland Neighborhood.

Garden season – April 1 to December 1

## How to Apply

**Step 1: Apply** – Complete and return the application below to Keep Gastonia Beautiful.

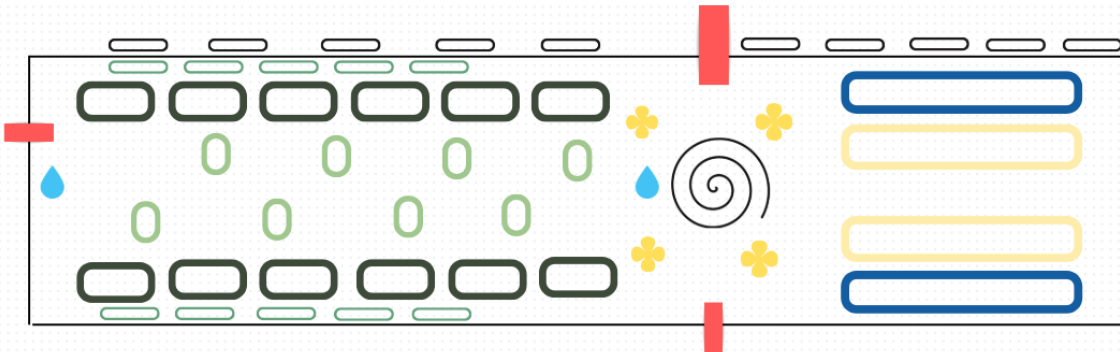
**Step 2: Selection** – Gardeners are selected based on ties to the Highland community, volunteer participation, and timely payment of dues.

**Important:** Payment will be collected after acceptance.

**Step 3: Membership Dues** – Membership dues cover adding soil, water costs, shared tool replacement, and other garden expenses. Prices are for the entire growing season (April–December):

Plot Size	Annual Fee
6.5' x 2' (10 beds)	\$5 each
7' x 4' (8 beds)	\$7 each
8' x 4' (12 beds, 4 with trellis)	\$8 each
24' x 4' (4 beds, 2 are 3 ft deep)	\$20 each

## Garden Plot Map



*Aunt Charlotte McClee Community Garden*  
604 N. York Street, Gastonia

# QUICK START GUIDE FOR GARDENERS

## First Things First

- ✓ **Submit your application**
- ✓ **Attend the orientation, if required**
- ✓ **Get your key** - one per gardener, don't share or copy it
- ✓ **Plant by May 30** - or lose your plot (no refund)

## Garden Basics

**When:** April 1 – December 1 (can vary depending on the weather), dawn to dusk

## Your Plot:

- Stay within your assigned space
- Garden organically (check before using any pesticides/fertilizers)
- Harvest regularly and keep it tidy
- Abandoned beds, not planted by May 30<sup>th</sup>, will be forfeited and no refunds will be given

## Water & Tools:

- Water at 2 designated spots - don't leave running
- Shared tools in shed - return after use

## Being a Good Garden Neighbor

- **Respect others' space** - Ask before entering someone's plot or using their tools or produce
- **Keep shared spaces tidy** - Clean up common areas and help water the community "Planting for Kindness" beds outside the gate
- **Be considerate** - Keep noise levels down and report any safety issues or full bins to the coordinator
- **Tend your garden** every 2 weeks - or it's considered abandoned
- **No** pets, smoking, alcohol, drugs, or firearms - zero tolerance
- **Secure the garden** - Always lock up when you're the last to leave
- Keep Yard Waste and Trash separated (see information below)

## Waste & Cleanup

Type	Where It Goes
Yard waste (weeds, dead plants, etc.)	Yard waste bin - When full, drag to roadside off Granite St. and return bin inside gate
Trash (bags, boxes)	Trash bin - Bag loose litter. When full, drag to roadside off Granite St. and return bin inside gate

**End of season:** Each gardener is responsible for removing all plants and prep plot for winter by end of December. Beds not prepped at the end of the season will incur a \$20 fee the following year.

# COMPLETE GARDEN RULES & GUIDELINES

These rules help ensure everyone enjoys a safe, welcoming, and productive garden. Please read carefully and keep a copy for your records.

**Season:** April 1 – December 1 | **Hours:** Dawn to Dusk

## GARDEN ACCESS

### Season & Hours

- Garden is open April 1 – December 1 (depending on weather, water may be winterized prior to 12/1 date)
- Access allowed from dawn to dusk

### Keys & Security:

Each gardener will receive a key for the gate and shed. Do not duplicate or share your key. Lock up when leaving if no one else is present.

## YOUR GARDEN PLOT

### Using Your Plot

- Gardeners may use only their assigned plots.
- Keep all plants within your plot boundaries.
- Trim plants that extend into neighboring plots or pathways.
- Do not change the size or shape of your plot.

### Plot Maintenance

- Keep your plot and adjacent paths clean and tidy.
- Remove weeds and overgrowth promptly.
- Harvest edible plants as they ripen.
- Prepare your plot for winter by removing all plants by the end of November.

### If You'll Be Away

- Gardeners must tend to their plots at least once every 2 weeks to prevent abandonment.
- If you'll be away for 2 weeks to 1 month, contact Keep Gastonia Beautiful to arrange a temporary substitute.
- Abandonment (plots left untended for more than 2 weeks without notice) results in loss of the plot and no refund.

### What You Can Grow

- Vegetables, fruits, and flowers are allowed
- No illegal plants under state or federal law

### Getting Started/Maintenance

- Keep your plot tidy, weeded, and harvested.
- Plant by May 30 or your plot will be reassigned (no refund)
- You must provide your own seeds, plants, fertilizer, and personal tools
- We encourage organic gardening
- Maintain paths and report damage promptly.

### Community Beds:

Beds outside the gate are for public sharing. Help us keep them weeded and watered. Enjoy flowers and herbs responsibly!

## **TOOLS & SUPPLIES**

### **Shared Tools**

- Common tools are in the storage shed for all gardeners (first-come, first-served)
- Return tools to the shed immediately after use
- Do not remove tools from the garden
- Report damaged or unsafe tools to Keep Gastonia Beautiful

### **Your Own Tools**

- You may bring personal tools but cannot store them on-site
- You're responsible for any damage caused by your tools
- No power tools (gasoline, battery, or electric)

## **WATER & WASTE**

### **Watering**

- Water available at 2 designated locations
- Use faucets anytime during garden hours
- Never leave faucets running unattended
- Hang up water cans when done

### **Organic Waste**

- Put weeds, dead plants, and rotten produce in bins marked YARD WASTE
- Only yard waste in these bins - plastics and trash go in separate TRASH bin
- Don't leave weeds on the ground
- If either yard waste or trash bins are full, drag it to roadside off Granite Street and return bin inside gate once emptied

### **Trash**

- Remove your own non-organic trash (boxes, bags, packets, etc.)
- Trash bin is located inside the garden. Please be sure items are in a bag.
- When bin is full, drag it to the roadside off Granite Street and return bin inside gate once emptied

## **COMMON AREAS**

### **Everyone's Responsibility**

- Keep pathways and storage sheds clean
- Report any safety concerns immediately

### **Parking**

- Park on grass off Granite Street (Aunt Charlotte's Way)
- You may also park behind the fence off Granite Street

### **'Planting For Kindness' Beds**

- Beds outside the gate are for community harvest
- Keep Gastonia Beautiful volunteers plant flowers and herbs
- Help keep these beds weeded and watered
- Free vases/jars available in shed - please share and consider donating empties

## COMMUNICATION

### Be Respectful

- Treat everyone civilly: Keep Gastonia Beautiful staff, neighbors, other gardeners, and guests
- Don't enter other plots without permission
- Don't use or take others' tools, supplies, or produce without permission
- Don't enter neighboring properties without owner's permission

### Guests & Children

- Guests (including children) must follow all rules
- You must supervise children under 16
- You're responsible for your guests' and children's behavior
- Guest violations count as your violations

### Strictly Prohibited

- **No pets or animals**
- **No firearms**
- **No smoking**
- **No alcohol or illegal drugs** (no consumption, possession, or being under the influence)
- **No fires or cooking** (unless part of approved Community Garden Event)
- **No loud music** (keep volume respectful to others and neighbors)
- **No sales** (garden is for personal, non-commercial use only)

### Follow the Law

- Comply with all local, state, and federal laws

## RESOLVING ISSUES

### Disputes

- Talk to Keep Gastonia Beautiful staff about any garden disputes or issues with other gardeners

### No Refunds or Claims

- No refunds for any reason after termination
- No claims for damages or other compensation

## IMPORTANT LEGAL INFORMATION

### Rule Changes

- Keep Gastonia Beautiful may change these rules at any time and updated rules will be posted at the garden
- Changes will be announced at the annual meeting
- Gardeners may propose rule changes through coordinators

### Non-Discrimination

- The City of Gastonia and Keep Gastonia Beautiful does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, medical condition, ancestry, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status