Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden Management Manual

This manual outlines the intended management of the Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden (the Garden). The document addresses the long-term goal of conservation by advising on responsibilities, means and methods for each area of management. This plan will ensure that the Garden retains its historical significance, while also providing the optimal experience for the Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Gardeners.
Garden photos, 2008, Mike Ricketts
Mission

The Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden will be managed as a place of history illustrating the role of the Vacant Lots Garden Club in the early development of Calgary. The four historic plots will be planted and harvested annually with a wide variety of vegetables and fruits, providing the residents of Bridgeland–Riverside with the opportunity to produce their own food. The Gardeners will be the primary caretakers of the Garden and will be responsible for planting and harvesting the four plots, thus retaining the historic organization of the Vacant Lots Garden Club.

Project Team

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The Resource
Part A:
The Resource

The Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden consists of three lots (legal parcels of land) that were cultivated under the Vacant Lots Garden Club (the Club). The Club was informally established on Nov. 13, 1911, by a resolution of City Council, and it was formally organized on March 2, 1914. The purpose of the Club was to benefit poor families by allowing them to grow vegetables, while at the same time improving the appearance of the city by ridding vacant lots of weeds and garbage. Private and City-owned lots were included in the program. At its peak in 1943, there were 3,229 lots under cultivation.
Vacant Lots Garden Club

The original impetus behind the formation of the Vacant Lots Garden Club was twofold: food supply and beautification. In the early 1900s, the Consumers League was concerned with Calgary’s rapid development and real estate speculation, which resulted in high rents and a housing shortage. In 1912, these problems were exacerbated by high food prices because local merchants were tied to a system that required them to import produce from British Columbia, instead of buying locally grown vegetables. A recent immigrant, Annie Gale, was appalled at the prices she had to pay for mouldy carrots.
and began advocating for a municipal market. The group achieved success when the municipal market was established in 1914 and became a City supported utility in 1915. Mrs. Gale represented the Consumers League on the board of the Vacant Lots Garden Club and worked tirelessly to promote the idea that vegetables were just as likely to succeed in Alberta gardens as in B.C. gardens. Her work on this initiative and other projects helped her to become Calgary’s first female alderman in 1918.

The beautification focus was based on the City Beautiful Movement, which greatly influenced Calgary’s Parks Superintendent William Reader (who held the position from 1913 until 1942).

Reader’s opinion about gardening was clear:

“…But one way in which we can serve ourselves, our home, and our community at the same time is by employing our best effort to make the earth lovelier, to tidy up neglected places, to plant trees, and to set out plants whose blossoms will refresh the weary-minded, cheer both young and aged, and make our homes and the city in which we dwell brighter places…So let everybody serve the community this year, if it is only to the extent of planting a tree or a few flowers in his garden.”

Reader’s plans for park space was built on the idea that social progress could be achieved by improving people’s surroundings, particularly by providing people in the inner city with access to land and gardens. Gardening was more than just a pleasant pastime or a way to grow food. It was a civic duty.

Another key supporter of the Club was Alexander Calhoun, Calgary’s first librarian. The Parks and Playgrounds Committee of The Calgary Planning Commission appointed Calhoun president of the committee to explore the cultivation of vacant lots in the city. This committee became the Vacant Lots Garden Club. Calhoun was primarily interested in the social benefits of food production, but was also concerned with beautification.

By 1917, with the added incentive of patriotism, the need to secure a local food supply became more important than ever. Increasing local produce allowed more food to be shipped overseas to aid the war effort. The Depression and the Second World War provided reasons to grow local gardens.

Community and Vacant Lots Garden Clubs had a number of advantages, particularly during times of scarcity or need, such as during the first and second World Wars and the Depression. They provided a way for land owners and potential gardeners to connect in a standardized way: they offered an economy of scale, where supplies could be purchased in bulk; equipment such as plows could be shared or rented and where several lots could be tilled on the same day. These lots also encouraged friendly rivalry between gardeners to produce the best crops. During the Second World War, the Garden was reportedly used as a Victory Garden.
approached the Town Planning Commission requesting that the Master Plan for Calgary include provisions for community gardens in different parts of the city. The Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden continued to be planted and harvested annually. By 2007, the Garden was the only known remaining Vacant Lots Garden in Calgary. As a result, City Council had the site transferred to Calgary Parks, where the Garden could be managed and celebrated as an important cultural landscape.

“...[that]Holders of contracts with the Vacant Lots Garden Club for 1951, for land under the control of the Land or Parks Department, be allowed free use of the same land for this year under the rules of the Vacant Lots Garden Club concerning the control of weeds, etc.”

Post-Vacant Lots Gardening Club
The end of the Second World War saw increasing development and fewer vacant lots, putting the function of the Club into question by 1948. In 1951, the Club

Gardening in Bridgeland–Riverside
Gardening is repeatedly mentioned as a key characteristic of the Bridgeland–Riverside community. In the Annual Parks Report for 1918, Reader reports on the activities of the Bridgeland Farm: “a complete survey of the city was made for the purpose of seeing what vacant land there was in large blocks that would be suitable for agricultural purposes.” Just over 23 acres were cultivated on the grounds of the General Hospital (the location of the Bridgeland Farm), with 2,141 bushels of potatoes and over 42 thousand pounds of other vegetables harvested. Bow River Boulevard and Sunnyside Boulevard were also farmed at this time, with produce going to various charities and the hospital, although there was some price competition with local Chinese gardeners on the hospital contract. Early Italian and German residents maintained gardens on the rich floodplain soil. Gardening was so popular that some houses are reported to have had two kitchens, a regular one and a summer kitchen for home canning.
### Personalities
- **1911**: Alexander Calhoun arrives in Calgary.
- **1913**: Reader appointed Parks Superintendent.
- **1917**: Annie Gale organizes sale of flowers from vacant lots.
- **1918**: Annie Gale elected to City Council, possibly first woman in British Empire to hold this office.
- **1918**: Col. James Walker contributes use of over 150 of his own lots.

### Vacant Lot Garden Club
- **1912**: Population of Calgary approaches 50,000.
- **1912**: Municipal Market established.
- **1914**: Parks and Playgrounds Committee of the Town Planning Commission established the Vacant Lots Garden Club.
- **1914**: 225 lots planted, 134 lots prepared for following spring's planting.
- **1915**: City Council authorizes 300 bushels of seed potatoes to be supplied at cost to club.
- **1915**: 2,000 lots under cultivation by 1,128 individuals.
- **1917**: About 2000 lots leased.
- **1917**: City commissioners authorized to lease vacant City land to War Veterans Association and supply 600 bushels of seed potatoes.
- **1918**: Club has approximately 1,200 members.
- **1919**: 1,128 members cultivating 1,992 lots.
  - **1936**: 1,184 fee-paying members, 16 members on relief.
  - **1937**: 1,208 paying members; 688 on relief, with 2850 lots under cultivation.
  - **1937**: Council moved that "City owned lands used for cultivation purposes be handled through the medium of the City Land Dept. and withdrawn from use by the Vacant Lots Garden Club."
- **1948**: Vacant Lots Club in difficulty as more lots sold for development, meaning fewer lots available for cultivation and not as many fees collected.
- **1952**: Vacant Lots Club dissolves.

### Bridgeland – Riverside Vacant Lot Garden
- **1907**: Bridgeland annexed by The City of Calgary.
- **1917**: Parks department cultivated over 200 acres of land adjacent to General hospital. Produce went to a variety of charities, including the Red Cross.
  - **1924-1930**: Site first cultivated, planted and harvested as a Vacant Lot Garden.
  - **1939**: Site used as Victory Garden.
- **2007**: City Council transfers the Garden back into the Parks Department to manage the site as an important historic resource.
The Vacant Lots Garden Club was an offshoot of a national movement of the same name that was inaugurated in Calgary in 1911 and formally organized in 1914. The Club allowed residents to garden on empty civic property for a small fee with a twofold purpose: beautification and food supply.

Establishment of the Vacant Lots Garden Club was conceived as an important resource, especially for working-class citizens. It secured a high quality, affordable and local food supply through increased self-sufficiency. At the time, most produce sold in Calgary was imported from British Columbia and was both expensive and of poor quality. The establishment of the Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden was a great asset to the working-class, including Ukrainian, Italian and German-speaking Russian residents of the area during the Great Depression of the 1930s and to the conservation efforts associated with the Second World War. It is also remembered for its role as a Victory Garden during the war. Its products contributed to the war effort by reducing public pressure on the food supply and allowing more food to be shipped overseas. At the same time, these gardens indirectly aided the war effort as morale boosters to those who tended them. Of the 3,229 vacant lots that once comprised the Vacant Lots Garden Club, the Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden is the sole remaining garden that formerly constituted the programme.

A2: Statement of significance

Description
The Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden is an 825 square-metre (8,991 square-foot) community garden that occupies three lots in the residential Bridgeland–Riverside area of Calgary. It is situated on a quiet cul-de-sac at the base of a hill just below the former General Hospital site. The three long and narrow lots run eastward off Seventh Street, but are currently arranged in four garden plots that are aligned north and south.

Heritage Value
The Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden is significant for two primary reasons.
1. Typological significance:
   The Garden is the only known remaining example of a Vacant Lots Garden, dating from the late 1920s.
2. Historic significance:
   The Garden is indirectly associated with Annie Gale, Alexander Calhoun and William Roland Reader, all important figures in the development of Calgary.

Typological Significance – Vacant Lots Garden
The Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden is an excellent example of a community garden and is the oldest of its type in Calgary. It is also the only known remaining community garden that was once part of the Vacant Lots Garden Club.

The Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden was established between 1924 and about 1930 on vacant land that was transferred to The City of Calgary in 1922 under a City programme known as the Vacant Lots Garden Club. The Vacant Lots Garden Club was an offshoot of a national movement of the same name that was inaugurated in Calgary in 1911 and formally organized in 1914. The Club allowed residents to garden on empty civic property for a small fee with a twofold purpose: beautification and food supply.

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A Vacant Lots Garden, c. 1920’s, Glenbow Museum

BRIDGELAND-RIVERSIDE VACANT LOTS GARDEN
**Historic Significance**

**Association with Annie Gale, Alexander Calhoun and William Reader**

Because of the Garden’s association with the Vacant Lots Garden Club (1914-52), the Garden is also a tangible reminder of the efforts of Annie Gale, Alexander Calhoun and William Reader, three civic leaders of the era and early supporters of the programme.

Annie Gale was a socially progressive, recent immigrant from England, who was appalled by the poor quality and high price of the produce available in Calgary. She worked tirelessly to improve this situation. Mrs. Gale advocated for Calgarians to have the opportunity to be more self-sufficient in the production of their food. Mrs. Gale was instrumental in establishing a municipal market in Calgary in 1914, which sold locally grown produce. She also represented the Consumers League on the board of the Vacant Lots Garden Club. Her work on these and other initiatives helped her to become Calgary’s first female alderman in 1918.

Alexander Calhoun, the city’s first librarian, was likewise interested in the social benefits associated with greater self-sufficiency in food production. Calhoun was appointed by the Calgary Planning Commission as president of the Parks and Playground Committee. Later, he headed the creation of the Vacant Lots Garden Club.

William Roland Reader is considered Calgary’s most influential Parks superintendent; he held the position from 1913-1942. This period was important in Calgary’s development as there was much migration and subsequent construction. During his 29 years as superintendent, Reader helped to shape Calgary’s public space. He was inspired by the City Beautiful Movement of the time, and his goal was to transform Calgary into a destination of the west. His vision of Calgary was as a great city with high quality open space, including public parks and tree-lined boulevards. The Vacant Lots Garden Club assisted with the beautification of the city by reducing the number of neglected and uncared for sites.
Character Defining Elements

The character defining elements are listed according to the categories in The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (Cultural Landscape Guidelines) and are as follows:

Land Patterns and Spatial Organization

• Relationship of the Garden with the four houses along McDougall Road – resulting in the division of the Garden into four north/south plots. This includes the grass paths and other informal paths that divide the plots and accommodate circulation through the Garden.

Air photo of Garden, 2007, The City of Calgary
Landforms:
• The flat sunken plane of the Garden that is located at the bottom of a natural escarpment immediately north of the site.

Vegetation:
• Annual planting and harvesting of vegetables and fruits.
• Chokecherry and raspberry bushes located in the north west corner of the site.

Viewscapes:
• View from the top of the adjacent escarpment, looking down onto the Garden.

Circulation:
• Location and configuration of adjacent path that meanders around the fenced Garden and connects to the stairs up the escarpment.
• The grass paths and other informal paths that divide the plots and accommodate circulation through the Garden.

Water Features/Elements:
• Continued use of rain collected from the adjacent homes in rain barrels.

Built Features:
• White picket fence that runs along the west edge of the Garden.
• Continued use of chicken wire to reduce the impact of rabbits.
• Compost bins at the north edge of the Garden.
• The metal gate that was salvaged from a demolished home in the community in 2006.
• Raised planting bed in the south area of the Garden.
Compost bins and metal gate, 2007, The City of Calgary
A3: Condition and authenticity

The Garden has been continually planted and harvested since the late 1920s, and since that time, little has been altered at the site. In 2007, the site was transferred back into the Parks inventory and work was completed to ensure the Garden was safe and met City of Calgary codes.

The following is a concise list of the condition and authenticity of elements of the Garden.

**Land Patterns/Spatial Organization:**
The primary land pattern and spatial organization of the site remains intact. The four plots alignment with the four houses along McDougall Road is clear.

**Landforms:**
The overall landform of the Garden has remained intact as a sunken, flat garden at the base of the escarpment to the north.

**Vegetation:**
The planting and harvesting of vegetables has been occurring annually at the site since the late 1920s.

**Viewscapes:**
The view from the escarpment overlooking the Garden has been retained.

**Circulation:**
The asphalt pathway, immediately north of the Garden, was repaved as part of the 2008 initiative to ensure the Garden was safe for users and visitors.

**Water Features/Elements:**
The 2008 work included the instalment of new rain barrels and a drainage pipe to ensure water could be collected and used easily.

**Built Features:**
The 2008 work included the instalment of a new chain link fence along the north and east edges of the Garden. The Garden shed and benches are also new elements that were added as part of the 2008 work.

The white picket fence was built from sections that were salvaged throughout the neighbourhood in the 1980s. The compost bins were built in the 1990s.
Garden photos, 2008, Mike Ricketts
Part B:
Management
Part B: Management

The Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden will be managed so that its qualities are maintained and conserved as a historic, but working, community garden. The Garden’s unique purpose will require particular responsibilities for management to ensure the historic significance is maintained, while providing the optimal gardening experience.
B1: Introduction

Heritage Protocol

The Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden is a Municipal Historic Resource. As such, The City of Calgary Parks is legally required to maintain the significance of the site and has committed to manage the Garden as an important cultural landscape.

Any alterations to the Garden must conform to The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada. The proposed changes must be reviewed by the conservation landscape architect to ensure the changes will not negatively impact the heritage value of the site.

The yearly planting, growing and harvesting of crops must result in no permanent changes to the organization of the Garden or to any of the character defining elements of the Garden.

Specifics include the following:

• The four plot alignment (oriented north/south) must be retained – each plot can be divided in half. The division must be North/South to retain the alignment with the four houses.

• The Garden must remain sunken – any attempts to elevate the land to existing curb or pathway will negatively impact the historic significance of the site.

• Continued use of rain collected from the adjacent homes in rain barrels should be retained as it contributes to the sense of community involvement and participation.

• The white picket fence that runs along the west edge of the Garden will be retained.

B2: Roles and Responsibilities

The Garden has many players involved in its success and operation. First and foremost are the Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Gardeners and Lead Gardeners who are responsible for the day-to-day running of the Garden.

The Bridgeland–Riverside Head Gardener will be an active Gardener, who will additionally be the liaison between the Gardeners and City of Calgary staff.

The Adopt-A-Park volunteer co-ordinator plays an integral role, as that position is the primary contact between the Gardeners and Parks.

Since the Garden is viewed as an important cultural landscape within Parks, it is important to collaborate with the conservation landscape architect when making decisions regarding the Garden.

Parks Operations will support the Adopt-A-Park volunteer co-ordinator and ensure that the Garden is maintained as a safe and secure community amenity.

The Bridgeland–Riverside Community Association is responsible for selecting the Head Gardener, who will act on behalf of the community association.
The Community Garden Resource Network, affiliated with the Calgary Horticultural Society, is a valuable resource for the Gardeners. This organization can put them in touch with other community gardens and offer advice regarding management, gardening practices, planting, harvesting, upcoming learning opportunities and shared resources.

Parks marketing and public education also play a key role in the success of the Garden. These staff are responsible for marketing the Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden and ensuring Calgarians are introduced to the Garden as part of the larger collection of cultural landscapes within the Parks inventory.

As this Garden is an important historic resource, the senior heritage planner will also be a resource for the conservation landscape architect.
Bridgeland–Riverside
Vacant Lots Gardeners

Role: The primary users and caretakers of the Garden. This group includes one Lead Gardener for each garden lot.

Gardeners and Lead Gardeners will be Bridgeland–Riverside residents who actively desire the opportunity to grow their own produce.

Specific responsibilities:
• Planting and harvesting an annual crop of vegetables and/or fruit.
• Maintain the Garden in a presentable and safe state (free of weeds, tripping hazards, etc.).
• Store all tools and other City of Calgary property in a secure location when not in use.
• Maintain water barrels.
• Maintain records of annual crops for annual report.
Bridgeland–Riverside Head Gardener

Role: The liaison between the Bridgeland–Riverside Gardeners and City of Calgary staff.

The Head Gardener will be a dedicated and committed Gardener who is willing to volunteer additional hours to ensure the Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden is managed in a way that celebrates and respects the Garden.

Specific responsibilities:
- Liaise with the Adopt-a-Park co-ordinator and conservation landscape architect.
- Ensure all Gardeners understand the requirements of gardening at the site.
- Be the main contact with the Community Garden Resource Network and the Bridgeland–Riverside Community Association.
- Write an introduction to the annual report that includes highlights of the year.
- Document the development of the Garden with digital photographs.

Adopt-A-Park Volunteer Co-ordinator

Role: The primary co-ordinating figure in the Garden’s management.

The Adopt-A-Park volunteer co-ordinator will be the primary City of Calgary contact for the Head Gardener and collection of Gardeners.

Specific responsibilities:
- Ensure all Gardeners are oriented and aware of the requirements of gardening at the site.
- Liaise with the Bridgeland–Riverside Head Gardener and conservation landscape architect.
- Use Parks Operations as needed to ensure the Garden is safe and maintained.
- Develop a working relationship with the conservation landscape architect.
- Co-ordinate with the public education and marketing administrators, as required.

Conservation Landscape Architect

Role: Ensures historic significance is retained.

The conservation landscape architect will be a consultative resource for the Head Gardener and the Adopt-A-Park co-ordinator.

Specific responsibilities:
- Liaise with the Bridgeland–Riverside Head Gardener and the Adopt-A-Park co-ordinator.
- Review and approve any proposed alterations to the site.
- Assess need and participate in management of new capital development or repair.
- Prepare an annual report based on information from the Gardeners.
- Develop a working relationship with the Adopt-A-Park co-ordinator.
- Co-ordinate with Parks marketing and public education administrators, as required.
- Work with Heritage Planning as required.
Calgary Parks Operations

Role: Assist Adopt-A-Park co-ordinator with the maintenance and operation of the Garden, as required.

Parks Operations will not be the primary caretakers of this Garden; however, there are specific responsibilities they will undertake.

Specific responsibilities:
• Liaise with the Adopt-A-Park co-ordinator with regard to maintenance of the site (including water supply and integrated pest management needs).
• Maintain adjacent boulevard, pathway and escarpment lands.

Bridgeland–Riverside Community Association

Role: Annually identify the Head Gardener

Specific responsibilities:
• Work with the Head Gardener to ensure the Garden is actively used as an important community amenity.

Community Garden Resource Network

Role: To act as a resource for the Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Gardeners. The Resource Network is affiliated with the Calgary Horticultural Society and offers assistance to Calgary’s community gardens in a variety of ways.

Specific responsibilities:
• Be a resource regarding the operation and maintenance of the Garden.
• Connect the Bridgeland–Riverside Gardeners with other community Gardeners in Calgary to share information and gardening resources.
Public education and marketing

Role: Inform the public of the Garden's history and significance.

Specific responsibilities:
• Provide consultation and integrate information, including educational content, with the conservation landscape architect and Adopt-A-Park co-ordinator
• Market the Garden to Calgarians as part of the collection of cultural landscapes in The City of Calgary Parks inventory.

Heritage Planner

Role: Work with the conservation landscape architect to ensure heritage significance and municipal designation status is intact and retained.

Specific responsibilities:
• Be a resource for the conservation landscape architect.

Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden Management Committee

Role: A Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden Management Committee will be convened as required by the conservation landscape architect to review the Garden’s management.

This committee is comprised of:
• Bridgeland–Riverside Head Gardener
• Adopt-A-Park co-ordinator
• conservation landscape architect

Specific responsibilities:
• Review ongoing management of the Garden.
B3: Garden maintenance

The purpose of this section is to outline a set of maintenance and horticultural practices, particular to the characteristics and elements of the Garden, that are designed to conserve the historical integrity, image and value.

The Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Gardeners and all others associated with the operation of the Garden should adhere to the following guidelines.

Horticultural standards

Maintain the Garden as a producing garden with an abundance of different vegetables and fruit. Ensure the Garden is maintained in a presentable and safe state (free of weeds, tripping hazards, etc.).

Specifics include:

- Plant within a reasonable timeframe to ensure the appropriate growing time and healthy crops. The reasonable timeframe will vary slightly from year to year – acceptable planting deadlines will be evaluated by the Bridgeland–Riverside Head Gardener, the Adopt-A-Park volunteer co-ordinator and the conservation landscape architect.
- Continuously monitor and control weeds, invasive plants and pests.
- Pest control materials and methods must be evaluated through the Adopt-A-Park volunteer co-ordinator working with the Parks integrated pest management team and the conservation landscape architect.
- Ensure all plant material has access to water. Water will be collected in rain barrels and used as required. Parks Operations may be required to supplement the rain barrels at the request of the Adopt-A-Park volunteer co-ordinator.
• Harvest all crops within a reasonable timeframe to ensure fresh produce. The reasonable timeframe will vary slightly from year to year – acceptable harvesting deadlines will be evaluated by the Head Gardener, the Adopt-A-Park volunteer co-ordinator and the conservation landscape architect.
• Monitor soil fertility and tilth yearly to ensure nutrient rich soil. Apply additives and replenish mulches as required.

Site and equipment upkeep
The Garden and associated site structures and equipment will be maintained in a safe and secure state. The Garden was historically used and maintained by the community. The intent is to retain this operational structure. As a result, most work completed in the Garden will be carried out by the Gardeners.

Specifics include:
• The Gardeners will continuously remove debris, trash and unsightly material from the Garden.
• The Gardeners will store all tools and other City of Calgary property in a secure location when not in use.
• The Gardeners will be responsible for general care and upkeep of the shed, fencing, water barrels, compost bin and benches.

• Parks Operations will be responsible for any significant work that is required to maintain the shed, fence, etc. All work will be co-ordinated through the conservation landscape architect.
• Parks Operations will be responsible for maintenance of the adjacent pathway.

Garden condition assessment
The Head Gardener, Adopt-A-Park volunteer co-ordinator and conservation landscape architect will inspect the site monthly and conduct a condition assessment using the Garden Condition Assessment form found in the appendix.

Specifics include:
• Inspecting the site, plant material, shed, benches, signage, fencing, rain barrels, compost bin and all tools semi-annually to ensure deterioration is minimized.
• Identifying areas of need and determining priorities for the Gardeners and Parks Operations.
B4: Gardener selection and standards

Selection process:
The Bridgeland-Riverside Vacant Lots Garden is a historic garden and as a result, it is essential that the Gardeners be properly advised of the extent of their responsibilities and the necessity of maintaining the Garden as a showpiece. The Garden demonstrates the creativity and involvement of current and past community residents who relied on the produce from these types of gardens to feed their families.

Each Garden plot will be assigned to the care of a designated Lead Gardener. The Lead Gardener is responsible for the actions and education of the Gardeners working in their assigned plot. All Gardeners will be City of Calgary Adopt-A-Park Volunteers. Assigned plots cannot be sub-divided.

The Head Gardener will select Lead Gardeners:

- Lead Gardeners will be chosen from a chronological list of interested individuals. Preference will be given to individuals who have been on the list the longest. The Head Gardener will further base the selection on residence in the community, prior gardening experience and a thorough understanding of the time commitment required.
- Preference will be give to residents of Bridgeland-Riverside, although residents of neighbouring communities may place their names on the list. The Head Gardener will try to provide Garden volunteer opportunities for individuals on the list.
- Because of the significant time commitment required from Lead Gardeners and because of the cumulative nature of the quality of their gardens from their efforts, Lead Gardeners will retain their positions until they indicate otherwise or operational conditions change.
- Prior gardening experience may be from having had their own gardens, working in other community gardens or from working as a gardener or volunteering in the Garden. This base of experience will ensure all plots will be under the direct supervision of individuals who realize that gardening in this environment requires constant attention, from spring preparation through fall clean-up.

- Because of the short growing season, the Garden plots must be seeded prior to the end of May. Unless the Head Gardener has given an extension, un-seeded plots will be re-assigned to another Lead Gardener in order to allow sufficient time to have a successful crop.
- Failure to meet the following gardening standards may result in re-assignment to another Lead Gardener.

Gardening standards:
The Gardeners will be responsible not only for their designated plot, but for a portion of the common area maintenance as assigned by the Head Gardener.

• Common area duties include the watering, weeding and grass cutting for the uncultivated areas between individual plots and along the adjoining perimeter fences. Duties may also include assisting in maintaining the storage shed, fencing, rainwater gathering and storage system, compost bins and benches; the watering, pruning and tending of raspberries, Nanking Cherry bushes, the strawberry box and the decorative flower and perennial beds; and the picking-up of garbage in conjoining grassy areas immediately outside the perimeter fence.
• Roto-tilling will be carried out at the end of the growing season and again in the spring. In the fall, Gardeners are responsible for cleaning up their plots and removing organic materials to the compost bin designated for collecting. For safety, the roto-tiller will be operated only under the supervision of the Head Gardener.
• This Garden is organic; the use of herbicides and pesticides is forbidden. Weed control and the introduction of soil nutrients will be done under the guidance of City of Calgary Parks Operations.
• No pets are to be brought within the Garden perimeters.
• Small children must be supervised at all times; inadvertent damage to the work of others is unacceptable.
• Work in someone else’s plot should only be done with their approval.
• There are two rain barrels available for each garden and one rain barrel and the 45-gallon drum available for common area watering.

• Produce belongs to the Gardeners. The produce from individual plots is the property of the respective Gardeners. Gardeners who participate in the work of maintaining the fruit-bearing plants may share in the related crops. Because this is a show garden, Gardeners are encouraged to share samples of their produce with visitors and especially with neighbourhood children and students from Langevin Science School. Local charities offer a grateful outlet for extra produce. Gardeners are not obligated to give away their produce. Produce must not be grown for sale.
B5 Conservation standards
All capital conservation work will primarily be the responsibility of the conservation landscape architect and will conform to the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

The following list includes these standards. The specific cultural landscape guidelines can be found on the Parks Canada website.

Standards include:
• Conserve the heritage value of a historic place. Do not remove, replace or substantially alter its intact or repairable character defining elements. Do not move a part of a historic place if its current location is a character defining element.
• Conserve changes to a historic place that, over time, have become character defining elements in their own right.
• Conserve heritage value by adopting an approach calling for minimal intervention.
• Recognize each historic place as a physical record of its time, place and use. Do not create a false sense of historical development by adding elements from other historic places or other properties or by combining features of the same property that never co-existed.
• Find a use for a historic place that requires minimal or no change to its character defining elements.
• Protect and, if necessary, stabilize a historic place until any subsequent intervention is undertaken. Protect and preserve archaeological resources. Where there is potential for disturbance of archaeological resources, take measures to limit damage and loss of information.
• Evaluate the existing condition of character defining elements to determine the appropriate intervention needed. Use the gentlest means possible for any intervention. Respect heritage value when undertaking an intervention.
• Maintain character defining elements on an ongoing basis. Repair character defining elements by reinforcing their materials using recognized conservation methods. Replace in kind any extensively deteriorated or missing parts of character defining elements, where there are surviving prototypes.
• Make any intervention needed to preserve character defining elements physically and visually compatible with the historic place and identifiable upon close inspection. Document any intervention for future reference.
• Conserve the heritage value and character defining elements when creating any new additions to a historic place or any related new construction. Make the new work physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the historic place.
• Create any new additions or related new construction so that the essential form and integrity of a historic place will not be impaired if the new work is removed in the future.
• Repair rather than replace character defining elements from the restoration period. Where character defining elements are too severely deteriorated to repair and where sufficient physical evidence exists, replace them with new elements that match the forms, materials and detailing of sound versions of the same elements.
• Replace missing features from the restoration period with new features whose forms, materials and detailing are based on sufficient physical, documentary and/or oral evidence.
B6: Record keeping

Records and archives will play an important part in the ongoing maintenance of the site. These records are both historic and a summary of how the Garden is used by the community today. The goal of record keeping is to conserve the heritage value of the Garden and to understand how the community continues to use the Garden as time progresses.

The records will include copies of old documents, as well as newly created and updated documents related to the contemporary use of the site.

New records will:
- Track individual Gardeners’ crops with respect to success and failure. Each Gardener will be required to fill out a Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden Year End Summary (found in the appendix) that will outline the various crops they planted and the various results.
- The Head Gardener and the Adopt-A-Park volunteer co-ordinator will be required to write a short report on the yearly happenings in the Garden. This will include items such as highlights of the year, photos, operational trials, weed problems, pests or environmental problems, water management, etc.
- The conservation landscape architect will be required to write a short report on the historic significance of the site, any changes to the site and any impacts to the character defining elements of the site.
- The conservation landscape architect will also be responsible for compiling an annual Cultural Landscape Report; the report will primarily include the individual year end summaries, the Head Gardener and Adopt-A-Park volunteer co-ordinator report, along with any impacts to the historic significance of the site and a financial report, if required.

B7: Marketing and public education

The marketing of parks and activities has become an important element in Parks success. The Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden is a unique cultural landscape within a group of cultural landscapes within the city, including Central Memorial Park, Reader Rock Garden, Riley Park, Colonel Walker House and landscape, Battalion Park, Bowness Park, etc. The Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden will be viewed as one of the sites in a larger collection. Broader marketing and public education focusing on Calgary’s cultural landscapes will inform the public of the history and significance of the various sites, including the historical and contemporary context of sites in the city and of the unique content and characteristics of these sites.

Specific actions that will develop awareness of the Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden include:

Interpretation:
- Information about the Garden for general visitors is offered by two signs – the first located at the Garden and the second on top of the hill overlooking the Garden.
Web-based information:

• Educational information will be made available online as part of The City of Calgary’s web site.

Tours:

• Regular tours of larger cultural landscape sites (Reader, Bowness, Riley, Edworthy, etc.) can also include, where appropriate, information about the Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden.

School group programs:

• Programs specifically designed for school groups at one of the Parks educational centres (particularly the Reader classroom and Colonel Walker House classroom) could include, where appropriate, information about the Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden.
B8: Annual operating budget

The operating budget for the Bridgeland-Riverside Vacant Lots Garden is expected to be minimal. All work is expected to be arranged through the Adopt-A-Park volunteer co-ordinator and will be absorbed as part of their regular activities.

When specific needs arise that are outside the scope and ability of the Adopt-A-Park volunteer co-ordinator and Parks Operations (such as the need for fence paint, soil additives, etc.), the conservation landscape architect will attempt to secure funds through the Cultural Landscape Maintenance fund.

The maintenance of the adjacent boulevard and pathway are considered to be outside the limit of the Garden and are maintained by Parks Operations as part of two different budgets.
Part C:
Conclusions
and Future Directions
The Bridgeland-Riverside Vacant Lots Garden is both an important community resource and an important historic resource. This document was created to ensure the Garden remains valuable for both reasons, now and into the future.
C1: Conservation and protection of the Garden

The conservation of the Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden dates to 2007, when Calgary City Council identified the Garden as a significant historic resource and decided to retain and protect the Garden.

The following is an excerpt from The City of Calgary Council Minutes on Nov. 26, 2007:

*That Administration be directed to pursue both Municipal Historic Resource designation and a land use re-designation that will ensure the Bridgeland–Riverside Community Garden is protected and retained both now and in the future.*

C2: Future directions

The Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden was returned to The City of Calgary Parks inventory in 2008. The Garden was managed by the Adopt-A-Park volunteer co-ordinator, a community representative and the conservation landscape architect. The experiences in 2008 contributed to this document.

This document was designed to be a living document that can be altered to best accommodate current situations.

Built into the document is the necessity to monitor and adjust:

- Operational practices such as optimal garden plot sizes.
- Selecting and evaluating individual gardeners.
- Specific roles and responsibilities.

The intention is to trial the management plan beginning in the spring of 2009 with a review at the end of the growing season.
Part D: Appendices
Part D: Appendices

The appendices in this section include the following:
1. Current plan and air photo of the Garden
2. Historic photos
3. Historic material
4. Calgary Heritage Authority evaluation
5. Garden Condition Assessment form
6. Gardener Year End Summary form
Appendix 1 – Current plan

Garden plan
Appendix 1 – Aerial photo of the Garden
Appendix 2 – Historic photos

1924 Air photo, The City of Calgary
Appendix 2 – Historic photos

1948 Air photo, The City of Calgary
Appendix 2 – Historic photos

Inspecting a Vacant Lots Garden, c. 1920, Glenbow Museum
Appendix 2 – Historic photos

A Vacant Lots Garden, c. 1920s, Glenbow Museum
Appendix 2 – Historic photos

Vegetable gardens in front of the General Hospital, c. 1920s, Glenbow Museum
commanded by a beautiful sandstone arch and gateway. In summer a fine collection of roses and other flowers grows at the Cemetery entrance, being perhaps Calgary’s finest horticultural feature.

Roman Catholic Cemetery—Adjoins Union.

Jewish—Near Union.

Boulevards
Calgary has 52 miles of boulevards and parking strips, 20 of which have been planted with trees.

In addition to the foregoing, small parks and open spaces are in area, 15 acres; there are about 130 persons to each acre of park in Calgary. Five baseball and three football fields are in existence.

VACANT LOTS GARDEN CLUB
President—A. Calhoun.
Secretary-treasurer—H. G. Burrows.
Office—328 Eighth Avenue West.
Phone—M 1298.

This organization, of two years existence, is rapidly transforming Calgary into a city of smiling gardens. One has only to compare the uncultivated vacant wastes of weeds, dandelions and rubbish with the clean and well-kept garden plots of luxurious vegetables and beautiful flowers, seen on numerous City thoroughfares, to realize the great change effected and future possibilities.

Growth.—Vacant Lot Gardening has become very popular as evidenced by development and increased membership.

In 1914 the membership was 173. In 1915 it was 450. In 1914 the total number of lots cultivated was 243; in 1915 the number was 976. About 100 acres are directly controlled by the Club, and perhaps twice this amount was cultivated by private owners directly or indirectly through the influence of this organization.

Amateur Gardeners’ enthusiasm and activities were stimulated, and people who had no garden before, have taken a lively interest, with good results.

Purpose of the Club—To afford families the opportunity to cultivate sufficient ground to raise vegetables at a minimum cost.

To encourage home production, greater vegetable diet, and reduce the cost of living.

Method—The land is loaned the Club by owners, and is under its control until required for building purposes.

The Club plows and discs the land and the members pay One Dollar per lot for this work.

The members sow the seeds, cultivate the growing crop and gather the matured produce, using what they
need and selling or storing the surplus.

The gardens are supervised by experts who advise and instruct in the best methods of gardening, thereby minimising failure.

Great Utility—As a utility movement it has no equal.

Calgary two years ago spent $105,000 in importing potatoes alone, saying nothing of the thousands of dollars for importing roots and green vegetables.

Today the people of Calgary are eating and enjoying home-grown roots, vegetables, etc., in large quantities.

Benefits of this Club—Proved the Alberta potato has no superior when right sorts are planted and properly cultivated.

Helped a great many people to grow and harvest an abundant supply of vegetables, which tends to reduce living costs.

Contributes to the health and happiness of the people through a more abundant vegetable diet and pleasant outdoor occupation.

Made Calgary a cleaner and more beautiful City and promotes a better citizenship.

Induced many people to become producers, and is the thin edge of the wedge to the great “Back to the Land” Question.
Appendix 3 – Historic material

Calgary Vacant Lots
GARDEN CLUB

Organized March 2nd, 1914

Rules and Regulations
1920

Officers for 1920
Honorary President
HIS WORSHIP MAYOR R. C. MARSHALL, Esq.

President
JOHN BARNEDUT

First Vice-President
A. J. COWLING

Second Vice-President
SAMUEL J. FEE

Secretary
LOUIS J. FOWLER

Treasurer
GEORGE W. MYERS

Journal Secretary
EBER C. BELL

Auditor
A. H. CARR, C.A.

MAKE THE LAND PRODUCE

BY CULTIVATING LAND YOU HELP

The Headquarters of the Club are in the Basement of the City Hall, Second St. East.

The Secretary, or others in charge, are always ready to supply information and accept applications for membership.

The Club has a large number of lots in different parts of the city to select from, the owners consent having been secured.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

The membership fee is $1.00 per annum, which entitles the member to use one lot (25x120); land equal to three thousand square feet constitutes a lot. If a second lot is given, 50 cents additional is charged.

No member is allowed more than two lots until after April 15th, and, if lots are available, a reduction is made for ten or more lots.

PLOWING

Members are urged to plow, or dig their land. If at all possible, if the plowing is done by the Club the cost is from $1.25 to $1.75 per lot. The Club undertakes to plow where there are six or more lots together.

REGULATIONS

Members are expected to cultivate the land throughout the season, the oftener the better. The practice of “Dry farming principles are urged.” This means constant cultivation, as dry seasons are bound to occur.

Weeds must be kept out; if allowed to grow, the Club reserves the right to take the lot back, after giving seven days’ notice. This condition is on the membership card—Read it.

Members wishing to use City water should make application to the Waterworks Department for special permit.

It is contrary to a City by-law to allow piles of manure to stand on any lot.

No provision for fencing can be made by the Club. Members may erect temporary fencing if they wish. Barbed wire should not be used, as it is contrary to the

Vacant Lots Garden Club
Box 1, File 2.
Appendix 3 – Historic material

continued from page 43

YOURSSELF, AND ASSIST OTHERS

City by-law. Wire used on baited hay can be secured free, and makes a good fence.

Signboards may be placed on the lot—the Club has a number that are free for the members.

In the event of an owner requiring the land for building purposes, the member is expected to give up possession on request. The Club will return the money paid.

Every member is urged to grow a flower border next to the sidewalk; at least two feet should be reserved for this purpose. Flowers will not only improve the appearance of the City, but will create a sentiment in favor of the protection of the lots.

Members cultivating the same lot year after year should realize that it is their duty to keep up the land to its original fertility by proper fertilization.

One of our big ambitions is to raise the standard of potato cultivation. Good seed, constant cultivation, proper harvesting and grading methods are necessary to make the Alberta potato the equal of any imported. We hope to have good seed potatoes and other seeds to sell to our members at cost. It does not pay to use poor seed.

PRIZES FOR 1920

The Club will offer prizes for the best Gardens cultivated by the members on vacant lots secured from the Club, the owners, or agents (provided no rent or other remuneration is paid the owner or agent). The City will be divided into districts, the boundaries being the Sections. Prizes will be offered in the different Sections, and for the best lots in the whole City.

JUDGING

Judging will be done at different times during the summer and autumn, by the most competent persons that can be secured. The following scale of points will be used:

Freedom from weeds, 30; cultivation, 20; general appearance, 10; arrangement and condition of crop, 10; varieties, 10; flowers and plants, 10; economy of space, 5; freedom from disease and insects, 5. Total, 100.

EVERY PERSON SHOULD BE A PRODUCER

MEMBERSHIP

The membership shall consist of:
All persons elected as honorary members by the Executive Committee, as provided in the Constitution and Laws.
And all persons who have paid one dollar or more, and received a membership card, or receipt.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive shall consist of one Representative for every hundred, or major fraction of one hundred, of the members who have paid a membership fee of one dollar or more for the year, before the first day of the month in which the annual meeting is held.

The Representatives shall be elected at the annual meeting by open nomination, and election by ballot.

Two Representatives from the City of Calgary, one to represent the City Council, and one the Parks Department, the City Council to elect or appoint the two.

One Representative from every Society, Organization, or Association in Calgary, whose objects are the improvement of the City by the cultivation of land not less than five lots of three thousand square feet, or the holding annually of a Fair, Show or Exhibition by or under the auspices of the Society, organization or Association.

Every Society, Organization, Association, or Corporation that shall annually contribute to the funds of the Club fifty dollars or more shall be entitled to one Representative on the Executive Committee, if not otherwise represented.

The Executive Committee may, by two-thirds vote, add not more than three members to the Executive during any one year.

The retiring President shall be a member of the Executive.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Club shall be held on the second Tuesday in November, provided, however, that the Executive may change the date to one during the same week.

EXECUTIVE MEETING

The Executive Committee shall meet on the third Tuesday of each and every month at 8 p.m.

Special meetings may be called by a resolution at a meeting of the Executive Committee, by the President and two other members of the Executive Committee, or three members of the Executive Committee.
Appendix 3 – Historic material

The Calgary has 52 miles of parking strips and 82,600 trees on its streets.

In addition to the foregoing, small parks and open spaces occupy 56 acres; there are about 100 persons to each acre of Park in Calgary. Five baseball, three football, three cinder, four, tennis courts, eighteen hockey and seventeen skating rinks are maintained by the Parks Department.

The Parks Department annually earns a revenue of approximately $25,000.00 through fees of various kinds and the sale of surplus produce, etc., thus materially reducing the cost of Park maintenance to the taxpayer.

The Vacant Lots Garden Club

President – A. J. Cowling.
Secretary – L. U. Fowler, City Hall, Calgary.
Phone – M1151; Local 87.

The Calgary Vacant Lots Garden Club came into existence in March, 1914, for the purpose of improving vacant land in the City. This movement was an outcome of the Town Planning Commission. Many who wished to see vacant space produce something besides weeds and rubbish, lent their assistance to this end. The owners of vacant lots readily gave permission to use their holdings for garden purposes.

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Calgary Horticultural Society

President – Col. A. G. Wolley-Dod, 616 Thirty-First Avenue West.
Secretary-Treasurer – J. J. Webster, 927 Four-A Street Northwest.
Phone – M4874 and M4886.

This Society, the pioneer organization of its kind in this City, was organized eleven years ago. It has been the great factor in developing the ‘City Beautiful’ idea, by encouraging the beautification of home surroundings and the cultivation of gardens. It annually holds a competitive Horticultural Exhibition, which is one of the social events of the year.

Each winter a course of meetings is held for giving of lectures and the discussing of subjects connected with the theory and practice of gardening.
The objects of the Society are to encourage horticulture in all its branches.

Calgary Natural History Society

President – Dr. E. Sigley, 397 Sixth Avenue West.
Phone – M2786.

Museum located in basement of Court House building. Open 2 to 5 except Sundays.

Calgary Public Library

Central Library

Twelfth Avenue and Second Street West (Central Park).
Secretary-Treasurer and Librarian – Alexander Calhoun, M.A.
Librarian Board – See Index.
Phone – M6924.

Hours of Opening

Week days – 9 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Wednesdays – 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Sundays – 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

The Library is closed entirely on Victoria Day, Dominion Day, Labor Day, and Christmas Day, and is open for reading only on New Year’s Day, Good Friday, and Thanksgiving Day.

Crescent Heights Branch

1506 First Street N.W. in the Hieck’s Block.
Open from 1 to 5:30 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays; 2 to 5:30 p.m. on Saturdays; and 2 to 5 p.m. on Tuesdays, Thursday and Saturdays. Closed on Sundays and Holidays.

Membership

Any citizen of Calgary is entitled to a free membership on signing application card, proving his address and furnishing the names of two friends.

History

It is now about thirteen years since a little group of Calgary citizens began to interest themselves in securing for Calgary a Public Library. Calgary was at that time a City of only about 15,000, and it took time for the scheme to mature. However, in 1908, a Library Board was formed; in 1909 the building was begun, and on January 2nd, 1912, it was opened to the public.

The building and equipment has cost $100,000.00. Of this sum $80,000.00 was provided by Mr. Andrew Carnegie and $20,000.00 by the City Council.

It is noteworthy that this library was the first Public Library in Alberta and the second between Winnipeg and the Rockies.

Constitution

The Calgary Public Library is administered by a Library Board of seven members, the Mayor being an ex-officio member, and the remaining six being appointed by the City Council for two years.
The Library is organized under the Provinces Libraries Act, which empowers the City to levy Municipal Manual 1922

The City of Calgary, Corporate Records, Archives
Appendix 3 – Historic material

“And our land shall yield her increase.”

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Calgary Vacant Lots Garden Club

ORGANIZED MARCH 2nd, 1914

EXECUTIVE FOR 1937

Hon. President: H. L. WOOD
Past President: W. E. SANDSTROM
First Vice-Pre.: W. E. WOODARD
Second Vice-Pre.: H. M. TURTLE
Secretary: J. H. MCKAY
Treasurer: F. B. COOPER
Journal Sec’y: H. C. BUTLER
WILLIAM DOTTING, GEORGE MCKAY,
R. A. MACCLUSKEY, WILLIAM PADDY,
A. E. SHOEBOTHAM, ROBERT EASTWELL,
W. C. KEITH, A. MACDONALD,
D. McWHIRTER, DAVE STAHR and
D. V. WOOD.

Representatives from the City Council:
Alderman R. H. WEIR and Mr. FRED NYE

NOTE—Members have right to take up the lots
they used from year to year, if application is
made before February 16th. After that date
unless reserved in writing it is first come, first
served. In no case will lots be held after April
15th.

BY CULTIVATING THE LAND YOU

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Calgary Vacant Lots Garden Club came into existence
in the spring of 1914, for the purpose of improving vacant land
in the City.

This movement was the outcome of the Town Planning
Commission. The report of the Commission to the City Council
stated that there was land enough within the City limits for a
population of 250,000.

Many who wished to see the vacant land improved, especially
the corner lots, then covered with rubbish and growing weeds,
cleaned up and made to produce somthing, lent their assistance
to this end.

The owners and agents living in Calgary, as well as those
living in other Cities, Provinces, States and Countries, readily
granted permission to use their holdings for garden purposes.

There are 40 1/2 sections (equal to 35,028 acres) in the City
limits. Allowing 72,000 lots for the streets, avenues, boulevards,
rivers, etc., and 40,000 lots for 20,000 houses, there will be left
approximately 92,000 and at least 40,000 are left for cultivation.
An acre will survey up about ten lots 25 x 120 feet. The Club
defines a vacant lot to be: “To be free from any building directly
or indirectly.” It may be adjacent to a building or other occupi-
ded land, but must not be connected thereto by fence, unless a
proper division fence separates the vacant lot or lots from the
occupied land.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. The membership fee shall be $1.00 for those who do not
secure lots from the Club, and not less than $1.25 for land of
the minimum size of 3,000 square feet.

2. Lots are not rented. The membership fee includes all
costs.

3. No member is allowed more than two lots. This does
not strictly apply to those who have under agreement improved
lots.

4. Members are urged to spade or dig the land if at all pos-
sible. If the plowing is done by the Club’s teams, the charge
is from $1.25 to $2.50 per lot. The Club undertakes to plow
where there are six or more lots together and reserves the right
to do this.

5. Members are expected to cultivate the land many times
throughout the season, the oftener the better. The practice of
“dry farming” principles are recommended. This means con-
stant cultivation as dry seasons come quite frequently.

Vacant Lots Garden Club
Box 1, File 4.
Appendix 3 – Historic material

HELP YOURSELF, AND OTHERS

6. Weeds must be kept out; if allowed to grow, the Club reserves the right to take the land away, after giving seven days notice. This condition is part of the contract and is on the membership card.

7. Members wishing to use city water must make application to the Waterworks Department (in the City Hall) for a special permit.

8. Members using the same lot, or lots, from year to year, should know that the fertility of the soil must be kept up, and arrange to have manure supplied. It is against the city by-laws to allow manure to remain in piles. Have it spread as soon as possible.

9. No provision can be made by the Club for fencing. Members may erect temporary fencing if they wish. Wire used on bevel hay can be secured free, and makes a good fence. The Club recommends this.

10. Signboards may be placed on the lots.

11. In the event of the owner, or agent of the owner, requiring the land for building, or other purposes, the member is expected to give up possession on request. If the garden is taken away or destroyed, the Club will refund the money paid the Club, and such other expenditure as in the opinion of the committee was necessary.

12. Every member is urged to grow a border of flowers or plants next to the sidewalk, at least two feet should be reserved for that purpose. Flowers will not only improve the appearance of the city, but will create a sentiment in favor of the work of vacant lot cultivation.

13. Since 1920 the Club has awarded prizes, dividing the City into districts making sixteen classes, and over 100 prizes.

14. Only members of the Club are eligible for the prizes, and the vacant land must be secured from the Club, the owner, or agent. If secured from the owner, or agent, no rent or other remuneration must be paid or promised.

15. The judging is done at different times during the season by the most competent persons that the Committee may secure. Points are allowed as follows: Freedom from weeds, 30; cultivation, 20; good appearance, 10; arrangement and condition, 10; varieties, 10; flowers and shrubs, 10; economy of space, 5; freedom from disease, 5. Total 100.

EVERY PERSON SHOULD BE A PRODUCER

SOME OF THE BY-LAWS

The membership shall consist of:
1. All persons elected as honorary members by the Executive Committee, as provided in the Constitution and Laws.
2. All persons who have paid one dollar or more, and received a membership card, or receipt, before the 1st of November in each and every year.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

3. The Executive Committee shall consist of one representative for every hundred or major fraction of one hundred, of the members who have paid a membership fee of one dollar or more for the year, two months before the day the annual meeting is held.
4. The representatives shall be elected at the annual meeting by open nomination and election by ballot.
5. Two representatives from the City of Calgary, one to represent the City Council and one the Parks Department. The City Council to elect or appoint the two.
6. One representative from every society, organization or association in Calgary whose objects are the improvement of the city by the cultivation of land (not less than ten lots of three thousand square feet), or the holding annually of a fair, show or exhibition by or under the auspices of the society, organization or association.
7. Every society, organization, association or corporation that shall annually contribute to the funds of the Club fifty dollars or more shall be entitled to one representative on the Executive Committee, if not otherwise represented.
8. The Executive Committee may add not more than three members to the Executive during any one year.
9. The retiring President shall be a member of the Executive Committee, and Past Presidents who are members of the Club and paid their membership by April 15th for the current year. All members of the Executive Committee must have paid their membership fee by that date to retain their position on the Executive Committee.

ANNUAL MEETING

10. The annual Meeting of the Club shall be held on the second Tuesday in November, provided, however, that the Executive Committee may change the date to one during the same month.

EXECUTIVE MEETING

11. The Executive Committee shall meet on the third Wednesday of each and every month at 8 p.m.

Rules and Regulations 1937, Part 2, The City of Calgary, Corporate Records, Archives
### HERITAGE EVALUATION FORM

**Site Number**:  
**Category**: A  
**Community District**: Bridgeland-Riverside  
**Designation**:  

**Site Name(s)**: Bridgeland-Riverside Community Garden  
**Municipal Address**: 46 – 7th Street NE  
**Date of Construction**: 1930  
**Est. Year**: (ca. late 1920’s)  
**Consultant(s)**: Joan Lawrence  
**Evaluation Date**:  

- **Y**:  
- **M**:  
- **D**:  

**Calgary Heritage Authority**  
**Heritage Planner**: Darryl Cariou, Senior Heritage Planner, City of Calgary  

#### History (H)

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<td>H.2 Age</td>
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**H (SCORE)**: 40

**Comments**:  
H.1 - the Vacant Lots Gardening Club was an *important institution* in the development of Calgary as it utilized the vacant land early in Calgary. *This site is closely connected with the Club*, but the documentation is limited to addresses of people who used the gardens and not the addresses of the Gardens themselves. The following *people are loosely connected with the site* Alexander Calhoun - the City’s first librarian, Annie Gale - Calgary’s first female alderman, William Reader - Calgary’s 3rd (and arguably most influential) Park Superintendent.

#### Architecture (A)

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<td>A.3 Construction Technology</td>
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<td>A.5 Alterations</td>
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**A (SCORE)**: 35

**Comments**:  
A.1 - this is an *excellent example*, and the only known remaining example, of one of the Vacant Lots Gardening Club.  
A.2 - NA  
A.3 - typical example of cultivating plots  
A.4 - NA  
A.5 - there have been very little alterations to the site; the original size (limited to the 3 lots) has remained constant, as has the rectilinear plots. A water source was added in the 1990’s resulting in *minor and easily reversible alterations*.

#### Urban Context (C)

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<tr>
<td>C.2 Streetscape/Landscape</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**C (SCORE)**: 8

**Comments**:  
C.1 some familiarity and significance within the neighbourhood  
C.2 relates to the open space adjacent to the site and to the buildings south of the garden.
Appendix 4 – CHA evaluation Page 2

HERITAGE EVALUATION FORM

Address:  46 – 7th Street NE

Heritage Character Statement
The Bridgeland Community Garden (as it is known today) was almost certainly one of the lots cultivated under the Vacant Lots Garden Club. The Vacant Lots Garden Club was part of the early development of Calgary. The purpose of the Club was to benefit families by allowing them to grow vegetables, while at the same time improving the appearance of the city by ridding vacant lots of dust, weeds and garbage.

Summary History
Description of Site:
The Bridgeland Community Garden (the Garden) is located on lots 11-13, block 7, plan 4301 R, 46 7th St. N.E. The Garden is at the bottom of a small hill just below the former General Hospital site. Garden plots are roughly aligned with the yards of the houses along the southern boundary of the site, which front onto McDougall Road N.E., although some rows run east-west parallel to McDougall Road.

The Garden is surrounded by a low fence. A paved pathway runs along the northern boundary, leading to a set of steps up the hill at the north-east corner of the block. The north-eastern half of the block is grass, a few flower beds and a grove of conifers.

Date of Construction:
The area was almost certainly one of the lots cultivated under the Vacant Lots Garden Club (the Club), but the precise date that the Garden came under cultivation could not be determined. The land title shows the Garden came into The City’s possession in 1922 as part of a larger parcel which was subdivided in 1963. Air photos from 1924 (garden not present) and 1948 (garden present) indicate the garden was first established some time during that period. It is estimated the garden was established in the late 1920’s as the recollections of Marshall Libicz (b. 1922), who moved into the neighbourhood in 1930 and recalls gardens at both the subject site and at 47-7 St. N.W., directly across the road. The second garden no longer exists.

Vacant Lots Garden Club
The Club was established on November 13, 1911 by a resolution of City Council, although it did not formally organize until March 2, 1914. The purpose of the Club was to benefit poor families by allowing them to grow vegetables, while at the same time improving the appearance of the city by ridding vacant lots of weeds and garbage. Private and City-owned lots were included in the program. The first year 225 lots were planted, and 134 lots prepared for planting the following year. The Club rapidly expanded during the First World War so that by 1919 there were 1,128 members cultivating 1,992 lots. At its peak in 1943, there were 2,366 members of the Club cultivating 3,229 vacant lots across the city, a ratio of approximately one lot for every 30 citizens.

The original impetus behind the formation of the Vacant Lots Gardening Club was two-fold: beautification and food supply. The Garden City Movement that informed the 1913 Mawson Plan and William Reader’s plans for parks was built on the idea that social progress could be achieved by improving people’s surroundings, particularly by providing people in the inner city with access to land and gardens. Gardening was more than just a pleasant pass-time or a way to grow food. It was a civic duty. Reader’s opinions on this topic were clear:

...But one way in which we can serve ourselves, our home, and our community at the same time is by employing our best effort to make the earth lovelier, to tidy up neglected places, to plant trees, and to set out plants whose
blossoms will refresh the weary-minded, cheer both young and aged, and make our homes and the city in which we dwell brighter places... So let everybody serve the community this year, if it is only to the extent of planting a tree or a few flowers in his garden.

At the same time, the Consumer's League was concerned with problems that are once again familiar to Calgarians: rapid development and real-estate speculation resulted in high rents and a housing shortage. In 1912, these problems were exacerbated by high food prices because local merchants were tied to a system that required them to use produce imported from British Columbia instead of locally-grown vegetables. A recent immigrant called Annie Gale was appalled at the prices she had to pay for moldy carrots, and began advocating for a municipal market. The group achieved success when the municipal market was established in 1914, and became a city-supported utility in 1915. Mrs. Gale represented the Consumers League on the board of the Vacant Lots Club and worked tirelessly to promote the idea that vegetables were just as likely to succeed in Alberta gardens as those in B.C. Her work on this and other projects helped her to become Calgary's first female alderman in 1918.

Another key supporter of the Club was Alexander Calhoun, the City's first librarian. The Parks and Playgrounds Committee of the Calgary Planning Commission appointed Calhoun president of the committee to explore cultivation of vacant lots in the city, which became the Vacant Lots Garden Club. Calhoun was primarily interested in the social benefits of food production, but was also concerned with beautification.

By 1917, the need to secure a local food supply became more important than ever before, with the added incentive of patriotism. Increasing local produce allowed more to be shipped overseas to aid the war effort. The Depression and the second World War provided reasons to keep up local gardens.

While the Club developed a card system to keep track of lots, none of its records regarding individual lots could be located. On February 15, 1937, City Council moved that "City owned lands used for cultivation purposes be handled through the medium of the City Land Dept. and withdrawn from use by the Vacant Lots Garden Club." Land Dept. administrative files regarding the Club from that year contain a number of untitled lists that give file numbers, names and addresses. Check marks appear beside each name. The name of G. Kozma of 823 McDougall Rd. appears on one such list dated March 8, 1937. A similar list dated May 3, 1937 lists E. Lacombe of 736 McDougall Rd., while another dated May 3, 1937, lists P. Gerlitz of 705 McDougall Rd. It would be reasonable to infer that these payments were for garden plots in the immediate vicinity of McDougall Road.

During the Second World War the Garden was reportedly used as a Victory Garden. This is supported by an air photo from 1948 which shows that the course of the footpath has been altered from the 1924 orientation to curve further north before striking off on the diagonal to the north-east, indicating a change in the pattern of use. The area also appears to be disturbed in a series of rectangles, suggesting garden activity.

The end of the Second World War saw increasing development and fewer vacant lots, putting the solvency of the Club into question by 1948. In 1951 the Club approached the Town Planning Commission requesting that the Master Plan for Calgary include provisions for community gardens in different parts of the city. The Club dissolved in 1952. April 14, 1952, Council decided that

...holders of contracts with the Vacant Lots Garden Club for 1951, for land under the control of the Land or Parks Department, be allowed free use of the same land for this year under the rules of the Vacant Lots Garden Club concerning the control of weeds, etc.

The principle of unofficial use of lands for garden purposes was weakly endorsed again in 1954 in regard to a garden at a different location. Referring to the demise of the Club "several years" before, the Superintendent of the Land and Rental Department informed the gardener that "if the Commissioners saw fit at the time to allow people to use lands they had been renting from the Garden Club for garden purposes, possibly it will still hold at this time," with the understanding that if the lands were sold there would be no recourse for the gardener.
### Appendix 5 – Bridgeland–Riverside Vacant Lots Garden Condition Assessment Form Page 1

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<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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<td>Site and plot alignment</td>
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<td>Crops</td>
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<td>Chokecherries</td>
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Date: 

Evaluators:
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<td>Asphalt pathway</td>
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Additional comments:
Please shade in the area you gardened this year.

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<td>10.</td>
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Please include other comments, stories, recipes, etc.