

### 3. OPAWA COMMUNITY GARDEN

<b>General Manager responsible:</b>	General Manager Community Services
<b>Officer responsible:</b>	Lesley Symington, Community and Recreation Unit Manager
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#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to provide further information to the Board in relation to the application from the Opawa Community Garden for \$7,000 from the Board's 2005/06 Discretionary Fund towards the salary of a garden co-ordinator.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Board requested background information on Opawa Community Garden in relation to its request for funding.
3. The Opawa Community Garden is situated at 163-165 Opawa Road. The garden came into being from land left over from the Brougham Street extension. The gardens are comprised of two section lots and are owned by the Christchurch City Council. The garden has been operating for five years, and is run by volunteers and committee members. The Opawa Community Garden Committee operates under the umbrella of Opawa Community Church Trust. There are currently seven Committee members. The Committee has its own rules governing the Opawa Community Garden. The Committee meet to discuss and plan activities. Financial accounts are audited.
4. The aims of the Opawa Community Garden are:
  - To provide an opportunity for community integration
  - To provide an area of beauty, enhancing the local environment
  - To provide garden produce for participants and those in need
  - To provide an educational opportunity for both adults and children
  - To provide a therapeutic environment.
5. The purpose of the paid position is to co-ordinate the garden project and to provide more services, including more hours at the garden, which volunteers are unable to meet. Several of the community gardens around the city now have part-time paid positions to co-ordinate this work.
6. The garden's main services or activities currently include:
  - Running educational programmes for groups/individuals such as sustainable food supply, glasshouse propagation, biodiversity, household waste management.
  - Providing a place where people can participate in growing organic vegetables, flowers and fruits.
  - Providing a place where people can meet with and work with other gardeners in the area.
  - Providing vegetables for the local community.
  - Composting/ waste minimalisation.
  - Open days (held 2-3 times per year).
7. The garden co-ordinator position is initially being set up for 10 hours per week. It is envisaged that these hours will increase in the future.
8. The two key aims and activities that the community garden wants to achieve with the addition of a paid part time co-ordinator are:
  - To make the gardens more accessible and available for individuals and community.
  - To undertake community liaison/networking and involve/host more groups and people in the garden.

#### **FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

9. The Opawa Community Garden does not have legal status. Council funding is therefore limited to \$5,000 or less.
10. The Opawa Community Garden has been a voluntary, financially self-sufficient group. The Committee received a \$2,000 grant five years ago towards set up costs. They have not applied for any funding assistance since they started in 2000.
11. The total cost per annum of the part-time salary is \$12,480. The Opawa Community Garden Committee will be applying to other funding agencies to support the salary cost of the worker.

#### **BACKGROUND ON OPAWA COMMUNITY GARDEN**

12. Opawa Community Garden is located at 163-165 Opawa Road, on Lot 6 and 7 DP 10073. The land is owned by Council and was obtained for the Brougham Street extension. The two sections were land left over from the above road extension.
13. The community garden was established in the year 2000 and since then, all the work has been done on a voluntary basis. The Committee has now determined that it needs a paid co-ordinator to continue and extend the work of the garden.
14. The garden provides the opportunity for local people to meet and for neighbours and residents to get to know each other through the garden activities. The volunteers are limited to when they can all meet and work in the garden. Currently they meet and are available to the community only on a Saturday on a regular basis. The paid co-ordinator hours would mean there would be someone on site during the week. The volunteers and Committee will continue but they will have a paid person to co-ordinate the whole project.
15. In terms of the co-ordinator hours the Committee wants to employ a person part-time to start with, and envisages the worker will be employed 10 hours per week.
16. The Opawa Community Garden Committee are requesting a total of \$7,000 from the Community Board for salary towards this worker.

#### **RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICY**

17. The Opawa Community Garden links with the Council's "Growing Communities Together - Community guidelines for Christchurch City Council", adopted by Council December 2003.
18. The community garden also links with the following LTCCP Outcomes  
*"A Sustainable Natural Environment", - "Our people enjoy and value our natural environment and take responsibility for protecting and restoring it" and "A City of Inclusive and Diverse Communities" - "Our City encourages a diversity of lifestyles and a sense of social connection, place and identity".*

#### **OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION**

19. Board members may be aware that recently the Christchurch Community Gardens Association employed a Community Gardens Development Worker for 30 hours per week. The purpose of this city-wide role is "to promote existing and developing community gardens in Christchurch, including their value as community resources, and issues affecting community gardens." Currently there are 12 community gardens in Christchurch. This metropolitan role will therefore support the gardens and their workers, and will assist in increasing community understanding and awareness of community gardens.

#### **OPTIONS**

20. The following outlines some of the options that the Community Board could choose:
  - (a) Grant \$7,000 to Opawa Community Garden towards the salary of a paid co-ordinator.
  - (b) Grant a portion of the amount requested.
  - (c) Decline the application .

**PREFERRED OPTION**

21. Given that the outcomes of the Opawa Community Garden Project align with the city's Community Outcomes and Council's Strategic Directions, the preferred option is to grant a significant amount of the funding requested, to assist with the initial establishment of the part-time position. The group has a stable history over the five years it has been operating, and receive excellent support from the Opawa Community Church Trust.
22. The Garden Committee has run this community garden solely through volunteers for the past five years and is now needing a paid position to further develop, expand and co-ordinate the project. A major factor contributing to the success of Strickland Street Community Garden is the presence of a paid co-ordinator. A paid position will assist this group to be more accessible and provide more services and social connection with the local community. This position will also help assist the group further plan its development as a group.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

That the Spreydon Heathcote Community Board allocate \$5,000 towards the salary of a part-time garden co-ordinator at Opawa Community Garden from the Board's 2005/06 Discretionary Fund.

**CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATION**

That the staff recommendation be supported.