

My name is Monique Bonk. I am a Registered Nurse and I have been a resident of Cannington since 1999. The Nourish & Develop Foundation announced at a garden meeting on September 20 2021 that they are closing the community garden and repurposing the land and construction will start in November of 2022.

My family has numerous plots at the Maple Tree community garden (MTCG) because my property is too shaded to grow the amount of food I do. I love to garden and after my shift at the hospital this is how I de-stress and stay sane. I personally provide food for my family, my elderly parents and my extended family. During the pandemic I was very thankful for the food preservation that I have done because it meant I didn't have to go to the grocery store as often. When grocery shelves were empty I had food in my pantry for my family and extended family.

The gardeners at MTCG are from all age groups and backgrounds; some of them do not drive or have access to a vehicle so they walk to the garden, as public transit is limited and can be cost prohibitive. The garden has been a form of their daily physical activity and therapy which is beneficial spiritually, emotionally, physically, and socially. Knowledge is passed between members and local residents from our past experiences, successes and failures.

Fixed incomes can be a challenge and this provides an opportunity to subsidize grocery costs and needs. Seeds can be obtained for free from the seed library and the food can be grown from those seeds which provides a source of fresh food for the gardener, their families and friends. The food can then be preserved in many different ways to further its usefulness and nutritional value.

Many different townships/cities have community allotment garden plots available to their residents and my hope is that Brock township embraces this project. Having these gardens would empower residents to be involved in the process of food awareness and food security. I believe it would be a beneficial addition to Brock Township's portfolio.

There is a dedicated group of gardeners that would volunteer to assist in the planning of this venture.

“Food Sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems.” [La Via Campesina](https://www.laviacampesina.org/) quoted [foodsecurecanada.org](https://www.foodsecurecanada.org)

Possible community allotment garden site: McLeod park to the east of the skateboard park on the north and south side of the roadway. Positive points are there is water access, there is parking available, accessibility is possible due to roadway, and fairly level ground, especially by where the volleyball posts are. I am not aware of other properties that might be suitable, because I do not know what the township owns, other than parks and arenas. Negatives could be vandalism and theft from individuals in the park, a fence could possibly help deter this and it would assist in helping to deter animals/pests causing damage.

Reference information for council members.

<https://foodsecurecanada.org/who-we-are/what-food-sovereignty>

What is food security?

The Food and Agriculture Organization's food security definition is when "all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."

In other words, food security is having consistent, reliable access to safe, nutritious food.

Food security is determined by four components:

- Availability: "Does food exist near me?"
- Access: "Can I get to food easily?"
- Utilization: "Will this food contribute to my health and well-being?"
- Stability: "Will food be available tomorrow, next week, next month?"

When any one of these components are stressed or unmet, it's considered food insecurity.

TNDF blog media release:

<https://www.tndf.ca/maple-tree-community-garden/>

Link for community gardens in Ontario and resources for community garden settings:

<https://sustainontario.com/initiatives/community-garden-network/>

Kawartha lakes food action plan policy:

https://www.kawarthalakes.ca/en/business-growth/resources/Kawartha-Lakes-Agriculture-and-Food-Action-Plan-2020-2024_Final.pdf

<https://ckl-unitedway.ca/edwin-binney-community-garden/>

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/livestock/urbanagbib/findingspace.htm>

<https://www.google.ca/amp/s/www.cbc.ca/amp/1.5545115>

<https://www.barrie.ca/Living/ParksTrails/Parks/Pages/Community-Gardens.aspx>

<https://www.oshawa.ca/Modules/Facilities/Detail.aspx?CategoryId=23&FacilityTypeId=&Keywords=&ScrollMap=true&id=bb784a48-261c-42ea-8b56-f9a6ac4c0c71>

Orillia policy for allotment gardens:

<https://www.orillia.ca/en/living-here/communitygardens.aspx#>