



Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are proposed to municipalities looking to amend or develop their own community garden policy.

### **1. Collaborative, Comprehensive Municipal Accessibility Policy**

It is recommended that municipalities work collaboratively with organizations, residents, businesses municipal departments and other municipalities to develop a municipally-wide and comprehensive accessibility strategy. Accessibility strategies such as Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS) have been adopted by municipalities across Canada with the goal of supporting the creation of accessible community facilities, which includes community gardens. Having a FADS document is important because it allows a municipality to return to a set strategy or policy when planning and designing municipal facilities

### **2. Geo-Spatial and Demographic Analysis**

It is recommended that municipalities perform a geo-spatial and demographic analysis of the municipality using GIS or other computer software. This will assist decision makers in gaining a better understanding of where gardens should be geographically located to ensure that residents are able to access the garden, Factors which can be mapped to gain and understanding of the municipality include: the location of bus routes, age distribution, population density, household income, location of pre-existing gardens, transportation statistics etc.

### **3. Sliding Scale Fee Program and Municipal Support**

Finally it is recommended that municipalities develop a carefully managed sliding scale gardening fee program which supports the inclusion of individuals and families of various economic backgrounds. A sliding scale system allows individuals to pay the fee that they are able to pay depending on their income. Partnerships should be developed which support the inclusion of low income individuals in a manner which does not identify the residents and marginalize their position within the gardening community. It is also recommended that municipalities carefully consider how they are financially and technically supporting community garden groups.

### **Conclusion**

Developing an understanding of how municipalities address various forms of accessibility in relation to community gardening will assist planners and policy makers in understanding how a municipal policy can encourage an inclusive community gardening environment. It is hoped that this report will be used by municipalities and community garden organizations to facilitate the development of accessible community gardens.