



Boulevard Gardening

The City of Victoria has adopted a set of Boulevard Gardening Guidelines. An increase in boulevard gardening will support the City's goals of creating healthy and diverse ecosystems, creating vibrant and attractive streets and improving local food security. The Boulevard Gardening Guidelines have been designed to help beginners and experts garden on City of Victoria boulevards more confidently and responsibly.

What is a boulevard garden?

Generally speaking, boulevards are the grassy strip of land between a property and the street and are owned by the City. The majority of boulevards have grass and trees between the sidewalk and the curb.

Boulevard gardens can create more beautiful, interesting and diverse streets, add character to neighbourhoods and increase community pride. They can also support environmental benefits such as increasing ecological diversity and providing bird, butterfly and pollinator habitats. Boulevard gardening can result in community building, traffic calming, and healthier living. Edible plants can improve the availability of fresh, local, and sustainable food sources.

Products grown on boulevard gardens cannot be sold for profit.

Who can create a boulevard garden?

Property owners can transform the boulevard immediately adjacent to their property into well-designed and well-maintained gardens. They can also invite tenants or other groups to garden in this space.

What gardeners should consider:

The safety, accessibility, maintenance, and aesthetic elements related to the project.

How to create a garden that would make them and their neighbours proud.

The quality of the soil, the cost of watering, and the appearance of the boulevard in all seasons. While food producing plants are encouraged, remember that vegetable gardens need healthy soil, require regular watering and are normally seasonal.

What to do first:

Review the Boulevard Gardening Guidelines: Specific guidelines apply with regards to safety, sight lines, access to the boulevard, tree health, plant size, garden maintenance, temporary structures, soil contamination, and community consultation, among other topics. They are available at victoria.ca/boulevards.

Call before you dig: Call BC One Call at 1.800.474.6886 to check if there are any utility lines under your boulevard. To see if there are sewer, stormwater or water lines in your area, also contact the Parks Department with your full name, address and telephone number a minimum of 10 days prior to commencing any gardening activities, at parks@victoria.ca or **250.361.0600**.

Dig with care: Use hand tools only and follow directions from the utility companies regarding where and how deep you can dig.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Parks Department

T 250.361.0600

E parks@victoria.ca

1 CENTENNIAL SQUARE, VICTORIA, BC V8W 1P6 | victoria.ca/boulevards





What to plant:

Aim to create a water-wise boulevard that looks great in all seasons. Many food producing-plants offer colourful flowers, plentiful pollen, abundant nutrition, and are delicious. Consider perennials, native plants, drought-tolerant plants and plants with winter interest.

What not to plant:

Only trees planted by the City are allowed on the boulevard. Please don't plant trees as they may outgrow the space and become costly to remove. An exception may be some varieties of dwarf fruit trees, which are similar in size to standard berry bushes when mature. Please refer to the Guidelines for further details.

Safety and Legal Considerations:

Gardeners are responsible for understanding the liability considerations that accompany taking on a boulevard gardening project. Please read the Guidelines for complete details. Safety of others should always be top of mind. Do not leave open holes unattended and ensure that plants do not hang over the sidewalk or into the street.

Cost considerations:

If a boulevard garden is planted and a property's tax bill includes a "boulevard tax" there is a process to work with neighbours on a block-by-block basis to opt-out of this tax. Please visit victoria.ca/boulevards for more information.

Gardeners are responsible for related costs – seeds, plants, tools, watering, etc.

Garden Maintenance and Upkeep:

It is the homeowner's responsibility to keep their boulevard garden well-maintained and operating within the Boulevard Gardening Guidelines. Complaints can be directed to parks@victoria.ca. The City will notify homeowners of the complaint.

If multiple (three or more) complaints are received by the City in a single calendar year, the homeowner will receive a thirty (30) day written notice to respond and remedy the situation. If the situation persists, the City reserves the right to remove the boulevard garden, at the cost of the homeowner.

Share what's been created with the City!

We want to celebrate your success and adapt our future guideline by learning about your experiences. Please send information about the location and size of the garden, what was planted and the process of creating the garden to parks@victoria.ca. This information will help to monitor and evaluate the progress of boulevard gardening in Victoria.

If you have questions or comments regarding the Boulevard Gardening Guidelines, please email parks@victoria.ca.

Happy gardening!