

7 Fun Facts About McGowan and Fellowship Community Gardens

You Can Get a Plot for Free

If you are a resident of Ridgefield Park, you can [apply for a plot](#) and join the Community Garden for free! We often have open plots at Fellowship and McGowan. Gardeners are expected to join several work sessions each season to maintain the gardens.

Public beds

Our community gardens have many raised beds planted with vegetables and herbs that are expressly for the public to harvest. From March through October we plant tomatoes, cucumbers, peas, lettuce, peppers, carrots, basil, oregano, thyme, and many more delicious vegetables. McGowan has a grape arbor. The public is invited to pick and enjoy small amounts, being mindful to leave something for others.

Our Monarch Butterfly Garden

Check out the colorful flowerbed by the Fellowship tennis court with all the native plants! Planted in Spring of 2022, Ridgefield Park adopted the [National Wildlife Federation's Mayors' Monarch Pledge](#) with the goal to create habitat for native bees, butterflies and insects, and increase the depleted population of Monarch Butterflies.

Milkweed for the Monarchs

Both McGowan and Fellowship have quite a few milkweed plants. Milkweeds are the required host plants for Monarch butterfly caterpillars (female monarchs lay their eggs on milkweeds) and their flowers provide nectar for bees, butterflies, and other beneficial insects. By planting milkweed, we are providing habitat for monarchs and also attracting and supporting pollinators.

McGowan Rain Garden

McGowan's rain garden is a depressed area in the landscape that collects rain water from the street and allows it to soak into the ground. Planted with grasses and flowering perennials, this rain garden has a beautiful collection of native plants and is a cost effective and beautiful way to reduce runoff.

No Mow May

There are many benefits to not clearing away spent plants in the winter. Our gardens allow many spent plants to remain throughout the winter to allow bees and other pollinators to have a welcome habitat.

When spring begins, we practice [No Mow May](#). We do not mow until June. The start of the growing season is a critical time for hungry, newly emerged native bees. Floral resources may be hard to find, especially in urban and suburban landscapes. By allowing it to grow longer, and letting flowers bloom, your lawn can provide nectar and pollen to help your bee neighbors thrive.

Art in the Garden

The [Ridgefield Park Arts Association](#) works with local artists and musicians to beautify Ridgefield Park. Both McGowan and Fellowship feature sculptures made by local artists and occasionally have seasonal art displays.