

# Civic Agriculture - Growing Food in Columbus

## Season Extension Structure Guidance

Season extension structures such as high tunnels, row covers, low tunnels and caterpillar tunnels for fruit and vegetable production are allowed in the City of Columbus. The following guidelines apply **ONLY** to season extension structures and their placement on the parcel.

This guidance sheet does not apply to any structures such as sheds, gazebos, retaining walls, fences, pathways or parking spaces. These items must comply with all applicable building and zoning regulations and permits, including the drafting of stamped engineer drawings. (Reference city code chapters 3332 and 3333.)

### Placement & Size

- Season extension structures should be at least **12 feet away** from any other structure, including fences.
- Season extension structures must be sited fully **within the boundaries of a single parcel**. They cannot cross property lines. All structures must comply with **all applicable vision clearance triangle and residential setback requirements**. (Reference city code 3321.05.)

### Stormwater

- If adding more than 2,000 square feet of impervious surfaces (e.g., sheds, high tunnels, crushed stone walkways, pavers, etc.) or disturbing more than 10,000 square feet of the lot (including planting beds, walkways, etc.), your project will require a storm water management plan prepared by a licensed professional. These costs should be considered during project planning.
- If there was a house on the lot within the last five years, the project will be given credit for the past impervious area before subtracting from the 2,000-square foot criteria.

### Electrical & Plumbing

- If electricity is needed for fans, lights, heaters, automated ventilation, etc., an electrical permit will need to be obtained by a certified electrician to install an electric service breaker box outside of the structure with outlets for cords to be plugged in. If you plan to install water pipes inside the structure to provide plumbing for sinks, etc., you will need to hire a licensed plumber and obtain a plumbing permit. (This is not necessary for garden hoses and simple drip irrigation watering systems.)

### Steps for Zoning Review

- Taking **ALL** of the **Placement & Size Guidelines** into consideration, draw a site plan with all distances measured between parcel lines, season extension structures, plant beds and any other use on the site (e.g., sheds, gazebos, retaining walls, fences, pathways or parking spaces).
- Email the drafted site drawing to [zoninginfo@columbus.gov](mailto:zoninginfo@columbus.gov).
- A zoning staff member will review and send you comments about potential adjustments.
  - There is no cost for this email review.
  - This email review does not provide approval, but is an informal conversation to ensure you place the season extension structures in accordance with the zoning code.

### Don't Forget!

- If you plan to add sheds, paths, fences, retaining walls, etc., you may need to apply for a full-site compliance plan which will include stamped engineer drawings.
- There is a cost for full-site compliance plan review/approval.

## Columbus-owned Land Bank Properties

To install a season extension structure on a Columbus-owned Land Bank property you must also:

- Submit a site plan to the Land Bank.
- Receive approval, in writing, from the Land Bank.
- Submit a letter of support from the appropriate Area Commission to the Land Bank before installation.

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## Questions?

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