

Department of Neighborhoods—P-Patch Community Gardening Program 2008 Parks and Open Spaces Levy Project Guide

Purpose

- To strategically expend \$2 million of levy funding to acquire and develop new Community Gardens or P-Patches
- To maximize new gardening opportunities for Seattle residents by adding at least 300 new plots and two acres of new community garden space

Timeframe

Projects completed and money expended by October 2012, sooner if possible.

The project contributes to City and Program Goals by:

- Integrating green infrastructure and urban sustainability efforts (Open Space Seattle 2100 principles);
- Strengthening food system sustainability and security (Local Food Action Resolution);
- Expanding gardening opportunities to populations and neighborhoods that are currently underserved by community gardens (DON); and
- Responding to increasing demand for community gardening opportunities (P-Patch Program).

Garden Design Expectations

Garden designs and plans will emphasize simplicity and high quality infrastructure and materials. Professional designers will be used to the extent that they:

- Help address the Design Considerations (see below);
- Use community design practices;
- Create gardens that are easy for gardeners to maintain into the future without frequent re-builds; and
- Do not unreasonably increase the cost of garden development.

Required Design Considerations

Parks-Levy funded Gardens Are Designed To Be:

- Open space resources to the surrounding neighborhood and the larger community to visit and enjoy;
- Places that encourage community mixing (incomes and ethnicities);
- Culturally and neighborhood appropriate;
- Partly “undone”, providing space for elements to emerge organically over time by the gardeners themselves;
- Unique to themselves;
- Green spaces combined with art aesthetic;
- Places that provide food and shelter for multiple wildlife;
- Safe;
- Built with Reused, Recycled, & Sustainable Materials whenever possible;
- Built with permeable surfaces, whenever possible, minimizing hard infrastructure (i.e. cement);
- Built by both community members and professional contractors, depending on the garden element;
- Welcoming places that foster community cohesion, self-reliance, and innovative ideas
- Educational spaces through hands-on experience and passive education

Required Garden Elements /Features

Parks-Levy funded Gardens Are To Have:

- Plots for community members, including individuals, families, seniors, school or other groups, to grow safe, culturally appropriate food;
- Community Gathering space;
- Common areas that can be reasonably maintained collectively by community gardeners;
- ADA Accessibility, including raised beds, with seating, and wheelchair access along main path to gathering space, to shed from beds (or alt. storage), compost bin, and water bib;
- Borders that are inviting while defining the area;
- A compost Area;
- Tool storage;
- Giving Gardens;
- Special Features as appropriate to the site such as: educational signage/kiosks, communication boards, artistic elements, scarecrows, artistic elements, greenhouses, beehives, communal flower areas, children/youth gardens (we encourage the placement of spaces for children/youth to garden as a group), native plant areas, and orchards, etc.

Site Selection & Funding Priorities

Funding allocation will prioritize garden development over land acquisition. Four or more gardens will be developed on existing City-owned properties.

The [Strategic Framework](#) guides specific site selection and funding allocation. As directed in the Levy, the project will focus on Ballard, Queen Anne, Rainier Valley, and West Seattle neighborhoods and include others as opportunities arise. Projected costs-per-plot, on balance with innovative programming and/or food security benefits, are used as an informal decision tool to guide effective use of the funds.

The project does not include maintenance improvements to existing gardens. Redevelopment of existing gardens is considered only when a significant increase in the gardening opportunities for new participants will be gained as is the intent of the Levy (i.e. minimum of a one third increase in the number of comparably sized plots.)

The project does not fund garden elements or infrastructure above and beyond the basics outlined in the Required Design Considerations and Elements. Community members may seek additional funding from other sources for more elaborate features if they choose.

Stakeholder Engagement

Department of Neighborhoods (DON) uses a community building development process that maximizes community participation in proposing, planning, community involvement, design, and construction of the gardens as a way to build on-going capacity to steward the garden.

The large volume of projects requires a modification of our usual community driven process. In order to maximize community engagement within the constraints of staff resources and time frame, DON will seek efficiencies by contracting with designers, construction contractors, interpreters, etc. so that staff support can be directed towards ensuring participation is representative of the neighborhoods and that there is good community engagement at key points in the garden development such as, outreach, design, and construction. The project will hire community organizers, interpreters, and translators as needed to insure strong community support and leadership. Contracts will

prioritize women and minority owned businesses and appropriately skilled people living in the local communities where these gardens are being proposed.

The first round of projects was identified by staff and endorsed by the Levy Oversight Committee. If feasible, we will devise a process for requesting community suggestions in line with the Strategic Framework for gardens developed with the remaining funds (approx. 1 million).

Programming

New gardens will be spaces to offer P-Patch programming including allotment gardening, market gardening, youth gardening, and food security. In addition, new gardens offer the opportunity to introduce innovative program such as large tract allotment gardens.