



CITY OF SEATTLE

March 2, 2020

To Whom It May Concern,

The City of Seattle is writing in support of GROW's Conservation Futures Tax funding application to acquire and preserve the Ballard P-Patch. The City of Seattle values community gardens and has supported the P-Patch program by expanding to 89 gardens over 48 years. Unfortunately, without Conservation Futures funding, the Ballard P-Patch would be expected to close this year.

Community gardening and open space in Seattle would be significantly diminished with the loss of Ballard P-Patch, one of the city's oldest and largest gardens. The site comprises 30% of community gardening space in Seattle's Council District 6. Given logistical and financial constraints, it would be difficult to replace that lost capacity.

The Ballard P-Patch dedicates 1,200 square feet of garden space to addressing food insecurity in North Seattle with fresh, organic produce. Each year, the donation plots contribute more than 2,500 pounds of produce to the Ballard Food Bank based on their clients' cultural and dietary needs. The Phinney Neighborhood Association's Hot Meal Program also relies on the Ballard P-Patch to provide produce. These donations from the Ballard P-Patch serve clients in at least seven zip-codes across North Seattle.

Ballard P-Patch also serves as vital open-space in a rapidly growing part of Seattle. The garden is a destination for the neighbors and is used for outdoor activities by local childcare facilities, scouting troops, families, and dog walkers. For the past nineteen years, Ballard P-Patch has hosted 'Art in the Garden,' a free, family-friendly community festival. Additionally, the P-Patch site serves as one of the City of Seattle's Community Emergency Hubs.

Given its large size, the Ballard P-Patch serves a wide range of individuals from across North Seattle. 34% of current Ballard gardeners, as well as 43% of future waitlisted gardeners, reside in multi-family dwellings, according to a 2019 survey. 26% of Ballard gardeners are low-income and report relying on the food they grow in their P-Patch.

The City also supports GROW's offer to take ownership of the Ballard P-Patch. The City, which owns almost sixty P-Patches itself, has long been a partner with GROW, jointly owning two P-Patches and leasing an additional six properties that are owned by GROW. Having a diverse set of public and private owners of P-Patches strengthens the program and broadens support for its mission. While the City firmly supports GROW's application and ownership, it is also prepared to assume ownership if circumstances require, and would succeed GROW as the owner if this becomes necessary in the future.



CITY OF SEATTLE

Saving the Ballard P-Patch will help preserve a vibrant community garden, maintain valued open space, and bolster food access efforts in North Seattle. Thank you for the opportunity to support this Conservation Futures application.

Sincerely,

Director Andrés Mantilla
Department of Neighborhoods

Councilmember Dan Strauss

Councilmember Debora Juarez

Councilmember Tammy J. Morales

Councilmember Alex Pedersen

Council President M. Lorena Gonzalez

Councilmember Lisa Herbold

Councilmember Andrew J. Lewis

Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda

Councilmember Kshama Sawant