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A Plan for Cultivating Arts and Culture in Seattle's Urban Agriculture Sites

OFFICE OF ARTS & CULTURE
SEATTLE

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NICOLE KISTLER STUDIO

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culture

mid-15c., “the tilling of land,” from L. cultura, from pp. stem of colere “tend, guard, cultivate, till” (see cult). The figurative sense of “cultivation through education” is first attested c.1500. Meaning “the intellectual side of civilization” is from 1805; that of “collective customs and achievements of a people” is from 1867.

Above: Plowing the Picardo Farm P-Patch for its 20th Anniversary. Definition from Online Etymology Dictionary, http://www.etymonline.com.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHY

Art plays an important role in the programs and public spaces dedicated to urban agriculture, and can contribute to a greater sense of community and making of a place.

Seattle's Office of Arts & Culture (OAC) is widely recognized as a leader in efforts to fund, plan for, and develop public art. This year marks the 40th anniversary of Seattle's enactment of the 1% for Art ordinance, making it one of the early adopters of a model that has become the U.S. public art funding standard. OAC is recognized nationally as an exceptional program that continually reaches out to artists to incorporate new art forms and embraces new ideas for artistic interventions.

Seattle is also a leader in urban agriculture with some of the most progressive policy, codes, and funding in the country. Significant recent achievements include the creation of the *Seattle Food Action Plan*, celebration of the P-Patch community gardening program's 40th anniversary with expansion to 90+ gardens including innovative models at UpGarden P-Patch and the Beacon Hill Food Forest, and improvements to the city's two urban farms.

To support the City's work in urban agriculture, the Office of Arts & Culture funded an Artist-in-Residence for Urban Agriculture to create this plan. The plan makes recommendations for how to enrich the culture of urban agriculture by integrating arts and cultural programs into the City's urban agriculture efforts, and proposes a number of strategies and pilot projects to implement those recommendations. Although the mission of OAC is narrower than the scope of the ideas presented here, some of the recommendations may be funded through the Department of Neighborhoods, other departments, or private funders.

The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) categorizes both community gardens and urban farms under the broader term of urban agriculture.[1] For the purposes of this report, and to better align with the *Seattle Food Action Plan*, we considered a culture of urban agriculture to more broadly include *all* the activities that surround the cultivation of food in the city—growing, harvesting, cooking, celebrating, and sharing.

APPROACH

The planning process began with site visits to over 50 P-Patch community garden sites and to Seattle's two urban farms to understand how public art is currently applied in those landscapes. We conducted a complete literature review related to urban agriculture in the context of American agricultural movements, as well as research related to artist interpretations of and reactions to agriculture. Urban agriculture stakeholders participated in interviews and meetings to elucidate how the arts currently play a role in these public spaces, and what kinds of art projects might benefit urban agriculture in Seattle. Some of those interviewed include: City staff; P-Patch gardeners in numerous gardens; P-Patch trust board members; art and design professionals involved in projects at local sites; and staff representing non-profits in active City partnerships or with related programming.

AUDIENCE FOR THE PLAN

This plan has three main audience groups: City of Seattle staff, urban agriculturalists, and artists. Each group has a unique perspective on this topic, its own technical language, and different goals and motivations. It is important for each to understand the goals, motivations and history of the others because they must all work together to implement arts and culture in urban agriculture and each may initiate and lead a project.

BACKGROUND

Beginning with victory gardens planted during World Wars I and II, waves of interest in urban agriculture have been motivated by a reaction to political and economic trends. Artists have played an important role in communicating the importance of growing healthy food in our cities. Today, our motivations for urban food gardening are rooted in public health and food safety, food justice, the 2008 recession, rising food prices, the local food movement, and the Do-It-Yourself (DIY) movement. People want true food security—fresh, wholesome food that feeds their bodies, replenishes community and local economies, and sustains a healthy environment. In fact, Seattle has made a healthy food system a priority, and created the *Seattle Food Action Plan* in 2012. To build a long-term paradigm shift, food security must exist within a cultural context with artworks integrated throughout our food system.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles help to frame the plan and its recommendations: establishing the role that the arts play related to urban agriculture in order to foster a culture of urban agriculture, and make lively places and healthy communities. We established eight major guiding principles including:

1. **Art plays a key role in forming meaning around urban agriculture activities**
2. **Art fosters community place making**
3. **Multi-disciplinary projects can reach into new territory**
4. **Professional artists help achieve arts excellency**
5. **Art has intrinsic value**
6. **Temporary art and performing arts are valuable public art resources**
7. **Growing and eating food can be art**
8. **Art has an environmental responsibility**

ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATIONS

When we, the authors of this plan, talk about fostering a *culture of urban agriculture* we mean that art should be an expression of both the individual connection to the land and the collective ebullient experience of growing food, harvesting food, celebrating and eating food together—that held at its highest ideal, all the activities around agriculture not only inspire works of art, but rely upon artwork integrated into the fabric of community places, activities and events to transmit urban agricultural knowledge, carry food growing tradition, and neighborhood memory.

Applying a holistic lens to both the activities of urban agriculture and the public facilities where these activities take place, six major concepts emerge that will be described in further detail in subsequent chapters. These six concepts include:

1. GROWING FOOD

Concept: Create an ongoing series of robust artworks, performances, events and art-based partnerships that enrich both the ongoing dialogue around food, the activity of growing food, and places where people grow food in the city, particularly P-Patch community gardens, orchards, and food forests.

2. BUILDING HEALTHY SOIL

Concept: Transform food waste into a precious resource we honor though art in our urban agricultural spaces and citywide.

3. HARVESTING, COOKING, CELEBRATING AND SHARING FOOD

Concept: Infuse programs and events focused on harvesting, cooking, celebrating and sharing the food we grow with performances and temporary art to enhance and enliven these activities in Seattle's community gardens, community centers and farmer's markets.

4. FOSTERING HABITAT FOR BENEFICIAL SPECIES

Concept: Hold a visual place for beneficial species in urban landscapes through art, while leaving them minimally disturbed, particularly in sites with new construction, parks and green spaces, street right-of-way planting strips, and residential property through SPU's *Rainwise* program.

5. INNOVATING IN URBAN AGRICULTURE

Concept: Forge new visions for growing food in the urban context by engaging artists and supporting multi-disciplinary projects at places like parklets, rooftop gardens, and other unforeseen places.

6. MENTORING: CREATING A LIVING AGRICULTURAL LANGUAGE

Concept: Foster a living agricultural language through the dialogue and storytelling that many artistic practices provide, and infuse urban agricultural education programs with art focusing on urban farms, learning gardens and school gardens as the primary places where these activities occur.

IMPLEMENTATION

Since funding through 1% for Art has limitations, implementation of the plan depends on the development of community partnerships with a focus on engaging artists and arts advocates from the community.

In its first two years, implementation relies on the continued work of the Artist-in-Residence for Urban Agriculture, who has developed community support by engaging stakeholders directly in this planning process so that the result echoes stakeholders' dreams and wishes. The Artist-in-Residence will promote the plan, introduce pilot projects, further develop programs, and shepherd artworks created by others. In subsequent years, plan implementation shifts solely to project implementation.

First and foremost, sustainability derives from cultural resilience and adaptability. These qualities are rooted in the knowledge of place and human behavior that is encoded in stories . . . we need visions that can become popular culture, through a new tradition of stories and community events in which people want to participate. To develop this kind of compelling vision that can have broad and lasting effects on human behavior, we must first be able to think in new ways.

—Kristina Hill, Visions of Sustainability

Beacon Food Forest, Pre-work party stretch

INTRODUCTION

WHY

Art plays an important role in the programs and public spaces dedicated to urban agriculture, and can contribute to a greater sense of community and making of a place.

Seattle's Office of Arts & Culture (OAC) is widely recognized as a national leader in efforts to fund, plan for and develop public art. This year marks the 40th anniversary of Seattle's enactment of the 1% for Art ordinance, making it one of the early adopters of a model that has become the U.S. public art funding standard.

The City's arts agency pioneered the inclusion of artists-in-residence within municipal departments such as Seattle Public Utilities, Seattle Department of Transportation, Seattle City Light, and Seattle Parks & Recreation. These embedded artists have crafted a robust set of art plans that analyze the work of the departments and identify opportunities for artistic endeavors within the respective agencies. The plans address and engage both City staff and municipal issues as well as suggest innovative and creative pilot projects. OAC is recognized nationally as an exceptional program that continually reaches out to artists to incorporate new art forms and embraces new ideas for artistic interventions.

Seattle is also a leader in urban agriculture with policy, codes, and funding being some of the most progressive in the country. Significant recent achievements include:

- Creation of the *Seattle Food Action Plan*, a major, interdepartmental initiative focused on supporting the local economy and communities through fostering a healthy food system in the interest of public health, equity and social justice.
- Celebrating the 40th anniversary of the P-Patch community gardening program in 2013.
- Expansion to 90+ P-Patch community gardens cultivated by nearly 5,000 citizens.
- Completion of UpGarden, the nation's first large-scale P-Patch community rooftop garden at Seattle Center.
- Initial construction of the Beacon Food Forest, an agricultural system that mimics a woodland ecosystem with edible species like fruit trees and berries.
- Improvements to the city's two urban farms.

To support the city's work in urban agriculture, the Office of Arts & Culture funded an Artist-in-Residence for Urban Agriculture to create this plan. The plan makes recommendations for how to enrich the culture of urban agriculture by integrating arts and cultural programs into the City's urban agriculture efforts, and proposes a number of strategies and pilot projects to implement those recommendations. Although the mission of OAC is narrower than the scope of the ideas presented here, some of the recommendations may be funded through Department of Neighborhoods, other departments, or private funders.

The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) categorizes both community gardens and urban farms under the broader term of urban agriculture.[1] For the purposes of this report, and to better align with Seattle's Food Action Plan we considered a culture of urban agriculture to more broadly include all the activities that surround the cultivation of food in the city—growing, harvesting, preparing, cooking, celebrating, sharing, and teaching.

Urban agriculture is both a big, new experiment and a reassertion of traditional culture—growing food in our cities to increase access to healthy food and build a connection to both the origins of our food and our environment. How can we open our gardens and our minds to include vivid self-expression, open public venues to artists, and create places where

TRENDS IN PUBLIC ART

Seattle's Office of Arts & Culture supports artists' work in traditional media like fine arts and performing arts, as well as non-traditional work like folk art, temporary art, cultural events, performance art, participatory art, sound installations, cause-related art, and place-making.[1] Seattle established itself as a national leader in public art when it enacted the 1% for Art ordinance 40 years ago in 1973, and has since expanded its funding model to include other sources. (Public art programs nationally have been built around the 1% for Art model, aimed at building a public art collection through directing 1% of capital improvement funds to public art related to those capital improvements.)

Since the 1960s, more and more artists have shifted their focus from creating permanent work to creating non-traditional experiences and dialogue about issues. These non-traditional works are often multi-disciplinary and experimental, involving new technologies, and interactive work to engage the audience. Initially, this type of work was not funded by the public and was created in galleries and private spaces. As artists have increasingly sought out audiences in public places, many public art programs have begun to respond to this shift by directing funding to temporary art, performance art, and art related to placemaking in addition to permanent work and the performing arts. Seattle's Office of Arts & Culture is nationally recognized as a leader in delivering "diverse public programming and artist services, including exhibitions; educational workshops; slide registries; and sophisticated, interactive websites."[2] Investing in these relatively short-term projects can deliver big results in terms of placemaking, and don't require long-term maintenance and associated costs.

Besides providing funding to arts and arts organizations, and commissioning art works, the city plays an important role as a property owner. Increasingly, artists wish to move their work out of galleries to engage their audience members directly in public places, both for the variety of settings these places provide as well as the opportunity to interact with whomever is coincidentally present. As public places are owned and regulated by public agencies, these agencies have a responsibility to make these places available to the public for public use as is reasonable, safe and appropriate—including public discourse through art.

[1] *Becker, 2004, p 5*
[2] *IBID, p 2*

community vision, ownership and love are present at all times?

It's not coincidental that the progenitors of several popular Seattle food movements identify themselves first as artists. It takes imagination, experimentation and perseverance to create the sort of paradigm shift that urban agriculture proponents envision. It's no coincidence that nearly every P-Patch in the city has some kind of gathering area and evidence of personal and community expression. If we only wanted to grow food to provide calories, these personal touches and community spaces would not exist. In these gardens we can see not only a community desire to grow food, but to share that experience with other gardeners. These gardeners want to cultivate a culture around growing, harvesting and celebrating food, and to share that with others in their neighborhod.

APPROACH

The planning process began with site visits to over 50 P-Patch community garden sites and the two urban farms to understand how public art is currently applied in those landscapes. A complete literature review related to urban agriculture in the context of American agricultural movements was conducted, as well as research related to artist interpretations and reactions to agriculture. Urban agriculture stakeholders participated in interviews and meetings to elucidate how the arts currently play a role in these public spaces, as well as what kinds of art projects might benefit urban agriculture in Seattle. Some of those interviewed include: City staff; P-Patch gardeners in numerous gardens; P-Patch Trust board members; art and design professionals involved in projects at local sites; and staff representing non-profits in active city partnerships or with related programming.

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City staff have a stake in the integration of arts and culture in urban agriculture and food policy as these creative endeavors can further the goals of their own programs and support Seattle's Comprehensive Plan.[2] The City of Seattle's staff are creative people who have excellent ideas, often immediately see the benefit that the arts bring to their programs, and will work to support these efforts. Urban agriculturalists range from those gardening in their own yard to P-Patch gardeners to those employed by non-profits teaching gardening. They frequently tend their gardens for years, and come to know and love the places where they grow food, meet neighbors, or make their living. Arts and culture enhance these places, bring neighbors together, provide a focus for neighborhood events and garden fundraisers, and express the identity of the community.

Many artists have an interest in urban agriculture as a creative pursuit in itself, and in urban agricultural spaces as both a venue and subject matter for their art. Performing artists like musicians often play a key role in existing harvest festivals and fundraising events. Some artists create gardens as their form of art.

It's important as we embark on this endeavor not to underestimate the contributions of any one group of stakeholders. Professional artists, architects, landscape architects, agriculturalists, chefs, and other professionals have all made important and meaningful contributions to the culture of urban agriculture. However, those sometimes considered lay-people—the immigrant farmer, the community activist, or the garden enthusiast—often have traditional and practical knowledge sometimes exceeding that of professionals.

Picardo P-Patch—Seattle's First P-Patch

CONTEXT

AN EVOLVING CULTURE OF URBAN AGRICULTURE

Although self-sufficiency has been at the heart of each wave of urban agriculture, what may begin as a reaction to political and economic conditions becomes more and more empowering over time. As people begin to interact with the seasons, plants, and animals to provide for their community, they can regain a sense of abundance, positivity, and connectedness that can otherwise get lost in the face of the daily onslaught of world news and life's challenges. This is a profoundly creative experience. Food—the growing of food, the preparation of food, and the sharing of food—is, after all, at the root of all culture.

Community gardens date at least as far back as the *Federal War Garden* program begun during World War I, and gardens planted in response to the 1893 depression (though they were not through any particular program). "Victory Gardens" gained popularity during World War II, and Ballard High School grew a large Victory Garden in support of the cause. Both Seattle Tilth Association and the Picardo Farm P-Patch (Seattle's first P-Patch, in the Wedgewood neighborhood) arose in the 1970s, related to the back-to-the-land / self-sufficiency movements of the same time. As environmentalism became a popular cause in the 1990s, urban farming had another brief upswing. During that time volunteers logging over 40,000 hours started Bradner Gardens Park. An open space slated for development, citizens launched Initiative 42 (which became City Ordinance 118477 in 1997) protecting city parks from non-park development.

Today, our motivations for urban food gardening are rooted in public health and food safety, food justice, the 2008 recession, rising food prices, the local food movement, and the Do-It-Yourself (DIY) movement. People want true food security—fresh, wholesome food that feeds their bodies, replenishes local economies, and sustains a healthy environment. In fact, Seattle has made a healthy food system a priority, and created the *Seattle Food Action Plan* in 2012.[1]

The *Seattle Food Action Plan* declares that "healthy food is integral to the health and well-being of our communities", and defines healthy food as "food that is fresh and nutritious and grown without harming its producers or our air, water, or soil."[2] The plan reflects what is happening in cities across America citing rising obesity and diet-related diseases, increasing health care costs and decreasing life expectancy. The plan further details some of the issues facing our food system:

1

National War Garden Commission, circa WWII

Balland High School Victory Garden, 1943, Courtesy of Seattle Post-Intelligencer Collection, Museum of History & Industry, Seattle; All Rights Reserved

Seattle Tilth Begins, Courtesy of Seattle Tilth

Groundbreaking at Bradner Gardens Park

Bradner Gardens Park Today

One in five children in King County does not always have enough to eat, and growing economic inequality makes healthy food even harder for many to afford. Chemically intensive agriculture degrades the quality of our land, our air, and our water. … Food inequities disproportionately affect low-income residents, children, seniors, and communities of color.[3]

With an emphasis on making healthy food available to all, the plan makes urban agriculture a key strategy, and states "growing, eating, and sharing food brings local communities together."[4]

To create the kind of long-term paradigm shift that the *Seattle Food Action Plan* suggests, food security must exist within a cultural context. If you meet and talk weekly with the farmer who produces your vegetables, cheese, and meat, that relationship and the stories that come with that connection transform those items from simply commercial food products to something that is part of a larger food culture. If your grandmother teaches you how to plant the heirloom seeds of your family's squash, tells you how your family brought them here, how to mound the soil around them, the songs her mother used to sing to them so they are happy, and how to make something divine to eat from them, then that is real cultural wealth.

As more and more rural family farms are lost to big agribusiness, fewer and fewer of us grow up on farms or in rural places. As a consequence, our society loses not only a direct connection to the source of our food, but the culture and history that goes along with that. This system not only takes away our nutrition, it dissolves our culture. When we lose our connection to the land, when we stop nurturing the soil, planting the seeds and watching the miracle of life unfolding each day, each season, each year, we lose our actual knowledge of our place. In fact, it's estimated that ninety-four percent of vintage open-pollinated fruit and vegetable varieties have vanished over the last century.

Food and food traditions are at the foundation of every known culture and civilization. Although we think of the city and the farm as separate, the advent of agriculture was also the advent of cities. Agriculture's ability to produce abundant amounts of food made permanent settlement possible. A food surplus also allows the commissioning of laborers to build things like palaces and temples, and specialized professions can develop because everyone in a society no longer needs to spend all of their time finding food.

However, in the thousands of years that have passed since the dawn of agriculture, we are at a confluence where people across the country (both rural and urban) are awakening to the reality of living in an industrial food society. There is a growing awareness that we are losing not only our supply of diverse,

nutritious and unadulterated foods, but the heart of our culture. In her book, *The Earth Knows My Name*, Patricia Klindienst writes, "As we lose our connection to the soil, we no longer understand the relationship between food and a sense of belonging to a place and a people."[5] Geoffery Hartman, author of Scars of the Spirit follows, "…the growing reality that an ancient ecological relationship, imaginative and religious in its intensity, is slipping away."[6]

If you grew up with industrial food in the city, you may not realize a loss. Instead, you may feel a sort of disconnect, a yearning for community. We are losing the barn raising with our neighbors, tasting each flavor of pie that the women brought, playing with the other kids as all the men raised the walls of the barn together. We lose the sight of acres of colorful food growing, and the camaraderie of harvesting food together. We lose the time spent with neighbors and friends singing and playing music late into the night, an expression of that place and time. We lose the functional arts that come out of a way of life in a place—the local pottery made to hold the food products central to that food culture, or the regional clothing developed to keep you warm or cool, and decorated with the plants, animals and symbols most important to that culture. This is the art and culture. How we plant a seed, tend it, harvest and eat it. How we honor and celebrate it. This act of growing food together fully engages our brains and all our senses that evolved to have this experience.

Urban farming and community gardens are a way to reassert our cultural heritage, our connection to the land that sustains us, and our food.While some have speculated that the current popularity of urban agriculture is another passing trend, many writers suggest that urban agriculture is here to stay.[7,8] "Unlike previous waves of interest in urban farming, the blossoming of projects in the twenty-first century cuts cleanly across racial and demographic profiles."[9] If this current wave of popularity is to transition into something lasting and mainstream, it must become part of the fabric of our urban culture.

As we re-discover our connection to the land that nurtures us, we have the opportunity to re-define our cultural life. Author Barbara Kingsolver and her family began farming to re-establish their relationship with their food. "Farmers aren't just picturesque technicians. They are memory banks, human symbionts with their ground," Kingsolver observes from her own experience, "My family is now charged with keeping the secret history of a goat, a place and a mushroom."[10] As they live and learn how to grow food in the special place they live, stories will emerge and evolve, and they will gradually shape a new culture.

Artists contribute a unique set of qualifications to place making and the development of a culture of urban agriculture. Employed at seeking meaning and delivering new perspectives, their work fosters dialogue, and

Picardo Farm P-Patch Barn Raising

Barn Hats by Seattle Artist, Erin Shafkind

Agnes Denes, Wheatfield—A Confrontation, Battery Park Landfill, 1982

engages the public in creative and entertaining ways. Artists experiment, they are not afraid to fail, they find robust ways to discuss, engage, and create unusual partnerships—pushing at the limits of the very definition of art. Working with limited resources, artists are specialists in creating teams, and working as a group to bring projects and ideas to the fore.

Whether stemming from the avant-garde movement or the counter-culture movement, artists have been growing food and creating food gardens as both an artistic and political statement since the 1970s.

***Wheatfield—A Confrontation*, Agnes Denes, 1982**

One of the most iconic examples of growing food as an artistic critique of our food distribution system is Agnes Denes' "Wheatfield—A Confrontation." In 1982, Denes planted two acres of wheat in lower Manhattan on land valued at 4.5 billion dollars and harvested a thousand pounds of wheat worth a little over 250 dollars. Denes said the project was a comment on "human values and misplaced priorities." Some of the wheat then traveled internationally under the title, "The International Art Show to End World Hunger."[11] The sight of a wheat field growing almost in the heart of Wall Street not only highlighted the contrast between rich and poor, it served as a monument for the loss of America's farmland.

***Crossroads Community*, Bonnie Ora Sherk and Jack Wickert, 1974-1987**

Begun in 1974 and operating until 1987, Bonnie Ora Sherk and Jack Wickert created Crossroads Community (The Farm) on underutilized land under what is now the Cesar Chavez Freeway in San Francisco's Portero neighborhood.[12] This community farm had vegetable gardens and a petting zoo offering real life experiences for children. As artists, Sherk and Wickert operated the farm as a theater of life, working during the time when "happenings" were common.

***Victory Gardens 2007+*, Amy Franceschini, 2007**

In 2007, Amy Franceschini planted "Victory Gardens 2007+" in front of San Francisco City Hall, in partnership with the mayor's office and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, as both "artwork and democracy in action."[13]

Franceschini's focus on community empowerment shares roots with the Guerilla Gardening movement started by Liz Christy and her Green Guerillas in Manhattan in the 1970s.[14] Guerilla gardeners adopt underutilized space in the city to grow food, and sometimes throw "seed bombs," balls of compost, clay and seeds into fenced lots so flowers will grow. Working to highlight just how much underutilized space is available, architect Nicholas de Monchaux, used geospatial analysis to identify thousands of publicly owned abandoned sites totaling half the size of Golden Gate Park, in his project, Local Code: Real Estates in 2009.[15] Almost conversely, Joseph Grima and Jeffrey Johnson, seeking to highlight how many resources city dwellers really need, created Landgrab City, a scale-model of how much farmland it will take to feed the city of Shenzen, China by 2027.[16]

CITATIONS

[1] City of Seattle, 2012, Food Action Plan, p1
[2] IBID, p 1
[3] IBID, p 1
[4] IBID, p 3
[5] Klindienst, 2006, Jacket Cover
[6] Klindienst, 2006, Jacket Cover quote by Geoffery Hartman, author of Scars of the Spirit: The Struggle Against Inauthenticity
[7] Fox, 2011, p 29
[8] Hanson, 2012, p 4
[9] Hanson, 2012,
[10] Kingsolver, 2007, p 79
[11] Kastner, 1998, p 261
[12] West of Center
[13] www.sfvictorygardens.org/cityhall.html
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Bonnie Ora Sherk. Boys mow lawn on The Farm (View south toward Army Street Freeway Interchange), 1976. Courtesy of A Living Library

Victory Gardens 2007+, Courtesy of Future Farmers

"The ultimate goal of farming, is not the growing of crops, but the cultivation and perfection of human beings."

— Masanobu Fukuoka, Fukuoka, 1978, p 119

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles help to frame the plan and its recommendations by establishing the role that the arts play related to urban agriculture with the goals of fostering a culture of urban agriculture, making lively places, and healthy communities. They provide a set of values under which the arts in urban agricultural communities would flourish by supporting the needs of artists, providing a meaningful platform for our city's urban agriculture community, and furthering the goals of the City of Seattle.

1. Art Plays a Key Role in Forming Meaning Around Urban Agriculture. The arts play a key role in forming meaning around the activities of growing and harvesting, cooking and celebrating food and should be integrated into Seattle's urban agricultural places and programs.

2. Art Fosters Community Placemaking. Artists who weave the interests and activities of multiple stakeholder groups together and achieve projects through cooperation, create stronger communities with higher project ownership in the project. Furthermore, public art can express the character and identity of a community, gratitude for a healthy environment, or commemorate an important aspect of a place.

3. Multi-disciplinary Projects Can Reach Into New Territory. Multi-disciplinary team members bring a variety of tools and skills to allow experimentation with innovative approaches and new ideas. This is also true for City inter-departmental teams that can function more effectively in partnership in order to achieve parallel or common goals.

4. Professional Artists Help Achieve Arts Excellency. Involvement by professional artists can help to assure arts excellency in community projects. Artists working in the public realm often ground their projects in meaning and historic precedent, with many artists doing extensive research of the topic they are exploring through their work. Artists provide mentorship both to each other and the greater community.

5. Art Has Intrinsic Value. Art can inspire, uplift, create dialogue, and can be of interest without serving any other function. While the arts can ameliorate other issues, and we often ask that they help do so, the arts play an important role in our community without serving any other purpose.

6. Temporary Art and Performing Arts Are Valuable Public Art Resources. While many public art projects have the advantage of permanance, art that is temporary, ephemeral, edible, or based in process, dialogue or engagement has value and interest. We need all types of artworks in these places.

7. Growing and Eating Food Can Be Art. Agricultural activities are themselves profoundly creative endeavors that when infused with art and carried out with a high level of skill, tradition, ritual and intentionality can themselves become a form of art and the basis of larger culture. Certainly, the songs, dance, storytelling, basketry, fabric designs, and visual art of many ancient and surviving cultures revolve around food. The British wassail–drink, sing and dance—their cider orchards to awaken them so they may bear plentiful fruit. Mayans dance with their seed bundles as part of special naming rituals that involve drinking a beverage made of corn and planting a new cornfield. Our culture is in the process of discovering how to best grow food in the city and what it means to grow food in the city. Though interest in urban agriculture is booming, it is not yet mainstream. While there might be exceptions, at this point growing food is not yet generally considered art in and of itself. However, it is a goal that we should strive for, and is therefore acknowledged in this principle and throughout the plan.

8. Art Has an Environmental Responsibility Art that truly supports urban agriculture should respect the cultivation of healthy soil, clean air and water by using resources in a sustainable and environmentally responsible way. Methods used in art should seek best practices that do not pollute our environment, but ideally work to improve it.

“Turn that worthless lawn into a beautiful garden of food whose seeds are stories sown, whose foods are living origins. Grow a garden on the flat roof of your apartment building, raise bees on the roof of your garage, grow onions in the iris bed, plant fruit and nut trees that bear, don’t plant “ornamentals,” and for God’s sake don’t complain about the ripe fruit staining your carpet and your driveway; rip out the carpet, trade food to someone who raises sheep for wool, learn to weave carpets that can be washed, tear out your driveway, plant the nine kinds of sacred berries of your ancestors, raise chickens and feed them from your garden, use your fruit in the grandest of ways, grow grapevines, make dolmas, wine, invite your fascist neighbors over to feast, get to know their ancestral grief that made them prefer a narrow mind, start gardening together, turn both your griefs into food; instead of converting them, convert their garage into a wine, root, honey and cheese cellar—who knows, peace might break out, but if not you still have all that beautiful food to feed the rest and the sense of humor the Holy gave you to know you’re not worthless because you can feed both the people and the Holy with your two little able fists.”[1]

—Martín Prechtel, *The Unlikely Peace at Cuchumaquic*

ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATIONS

When we, the authors of this plan, talk about fostering a *culture of urban agriculture* we mean that art should be an expression of both the individual connection to the land and the collective ebullient experience of growing food, harvesting food, celebrating and eating food together—that held at its highest ideal, all the activities around agriculture not only inspire works of art, but rely upon artwork integrated into the fabric of community places, activities and events to transmit urban agricultural knowledge, carry food growing tradition, and neighborhood memory. It can be an expression of what we have learned together, our story as a group, an expression or fulfillment of our understanding of the passage of time and the seasons as understood in this place. It is an art that is truly grounded in the community, in our culture and in our city. It is an art with its own roots and its own powerful creative force, because it has emerged from the source of growing, living food and our sharing of it.

Art plays an important role in the public spaces dedicated to urban agriculture, and can contribute to a greater sense of community and making of a place. Applying a holistic lens to urban agriculture, six major concepts emerge that can provide inspiration to artists and arts advocates:

1. GROWING FOOD

2. BUILDING HEALTHY SOIL

3. HARVESTING, COOKING, CELEBRATING AND SHARING FOOD

4. FOSTERING HABITAT FOR BENEFICIAL SPECIES

5. INNOVATING IN URBAN AGRICULTURE

6. MENTORING: CREATING A LIVING AGRICULTURAL LANGUAGE

For each urban agricultural activity section, there is a concept and a full description of the activity. A description and analysis of public place typologies—the places where the urban agricultural activity primarily takes place—helps lead to strategies. Each strategy has art project *precedents* (where precedents exist) and art project *ideas* for how the strategy might be applied. The artwork project ideas are meant to be illustrative and not actual proposals.

Magnuson P-Patch, Ariel by Jim Diers

1. GROWING FOOD

Concept: Create an ongoing series of robust artworks, performances, events and art-based partnerships that enrich both the ongoing dialogue around food, the activity of growing food, and places where people grow food in the city.

URBAN AGRICULTURE ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

Growing food in the city offers a wealth of thematic material for artists. Just as numerous artists derive inspiration from observing plant forms, agricultural practices themselves offer interesting subject matter. Each practice in itself could seemingly offer a whole world to explore.

Let's discuss some other examples. Growing food organically also protects the soil through integrated pest management, working with the seasons, harboring beneficial species, and planting on a rotation for the best harvest. Saving seeds of heirloom varieties most appropriate for the local climate insures both crop diversity and better survival and production rates. If you want to grow a different set of heirloom vegetables than the ones you grew the year before, seed swaps provide an opportunity to trade seeds with other people who have saved theirs. Fruit tree cultivating can involve grafting, budding, espalier, and a number of different pruning techniques to achieve different goals. Proper tree care can prevent and eliminate pests. Storm water collection in cisterns and rain barrels can help offset summer watering needs. Raising animals in the city has become a hot topic reaching well beyond chickens to include goats, pigs and other animals (though not all of these are permitted in Seattle.) Beekeeping enjoys exceptional popularity at the moment, and the shapes and forms that bees produce are also popular in fine art and design. Permaculture and hugelkulture exploit natural processes to create edible landscapes. Beacon Food Forest will practice both permaculture and hugelkulture in its new P-Patch community garden.

In each agricultural technique there are physical forms for artists to work with and enhance, and agricultural processes to explore through the creative process and through direct engagement and experimentation with those processes. Likewise, art can provide inspiration, interest and continuity for agricultural practices and should further be explored for the contributions it can make to growing food in the city.

Scarecrow at Interbay P-Patch

West Seattle Bee Garden

Gathering Pavillion at Bradner Gardens Park

PLACE TYPOLOGIES

While food is grown in many places in the city, this section focuses on P-Patch community gardens, orchards, and food forests as the primary public places focused on growing food. (The discussion on urban farms can be found in the mentorship activity section toward the end of this chapter.)

P-PATCH COMMUNITY GARDENS

The P-Patch Community Gardening Program celebrates its 40-year anniversary in 2013. Currently, there are 90 P-Patch community gardens managed by the City of Seattle P-Patch Community Gardening program. It is estimated that there are over 7,000 people tending these garden plots.[2] Seattle was able to significantly increase the number of P-Patch community gardens recently through voter approval of the Seattle Parks and Green Space Levy.

The gardens operate under several different models, on City property held by different departments including Seattle Parks & Recreation, Seattle Public Utilities, and the Department of Finance and Administrative Services. Management practices include individual plot gardening, collective farming, orchards, a food forest, and hybrid models.[3] Each community garden makes decisions through consensus and usually has a steering committee that helps to manage improvement priorities, fundraising, and events.

Seattle's community gardens play an important role in the fabric of neighborhoods often becoming a hub for neighbors to meet and talk. Neighbors involved in community gardens are often avid gardeners with their own gardens at home as well. Most gardeners say that they deeply value the community gardening experience for the camaraderie and learning they gain there. The gardens are also venues for community gathering where neighbors celebrate together, particularly in the summer months and in the fall at harvest time. These celebrations, like the Picardo Paella Fest and the Bradner Summer Music Series provide fun, casual activities where neighbors can come together and talk about their lives and their neighborhood. These gatherings provide an opportunity for neighbors to identify and share resources and work together to solve problems. Furthermore, neighbors who organize themselves on a regular basis are better prepared for emergencies, and have lower incidence of crime in their community.

Facilities and amenities available at Seattle's community gardens vary according to the method by which the garden was established, the time and effort that volunteers put into fundraising, the priorities they set, and the skills and resources available in the neighborhood. While most gardens have toolsheds, gathering places, composting areas, seating and shade in addition to garden space, others

also have children's gardens, demonstration gardens, extensive public art, bathrooms, meeting rooms, and pavilions.While most gardeners would appreciate and use a kitchen, particularly for special events and educational programs, this amenity is not generally considered feasible at these gardens due to cost and maintenance concerns.

PUBLIC ART

Seattle's 90+ P-Patch community gardens vary significantly in size, programmatic elements, design, construction, and ownership. Some gardens have rich and varied public art demonstrating a high degree of individual and community ownership. Other gardens have almost no apparent public art. Those with significant public artworks also tend to be larger gardens with more members, and also have at least one annual community celebration. P-Patch community gardens rich in individual and community expression through public art typically have at least one plot-holder who acts as an arts advocate.

The opportunities to include public art in these spaces are numerous, as evidenced by existing art. There are numerous tile mosaics in these gardens including work by professional artists, work by community groups, and work created by children through arts education or community projects. A few gardens have murals created either by individual artists or as a community project; other gardens also include sculpture. Picardo Farm P-Patch is graced by a bronze sculpture known as the Picardo Venus. Interbay P-Patch boasts a large bronze bell. Numerous gardeners repurpose items such as tools and construction materials into artful fences, gates and gateways, benches, and retaining walls. Examples can be found at the Belltown P-Patch, Bradner Gardens Park P-Patch, and Barton Street P-Patch. UpGarden P-Patch, at Seattle Center's Mercer Street Garage has a 1962 Ford Galaxy automobile repurposed as a planter and refinished with iridescent paint that changes color in the light, as well as a 1962 Airstream that has been converted into a toolshed. The vintage of the vehicles represents the year of the Seattle World's Fair for which Seattle Center was created. Oxbow Park P-Patch sits next to the historic, restored Hat n' Boots, monumental eponymous sculptural works created in 1954 for a western-themed gas station. Signage also provides an opportunity for creative community expression; the gardeners at Interbay P-Patch adorned the path signage with plant-inspired names such as Huckleberry Lane and Tulip Way.

In addition to creating these larger-scaled works, individuals often add whimsical signage, flags, bells, stepping stones, edging and garden statuary at their plots. Individual expression is seen also in complicated bean tepees and lattices on which to grow climbing vegetables. These structures are made of a variety of materials and can be quite complex, often revealing clues about a person's cultural knowledge of growing

Poetry at Belltown P-Patch Amphitheater

Performance at Belltown P-Patch

Art Fence at Bradner Gardens Park

Burlap "Picardo" Trellis on Toolshed

Toolshed at Kirke P-Patch References Church

Bradner Gardens Park Multi-Purpose Building

food. Some plots display complicated internal designs with tiny pathways, benches, and other features. A gnome theme dominates the Ballard P-Patch, where individuals interpret the garden ornament in a variety of ways suited to their own taste and imagination.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

As we put more focus on bringing public art to the making of these places, we need to understand how other design elements affect placemaking. Just as public art plays a key role in the expression of community identity in public gardens, the design of the gardens themselves and of garden architecture tend to dominate visually and affect public experience. While OAC does not typically consider either buildings or garden design as public art, new construction of buildings and public spaces provides an opportunity to include art.

Beyond the ideas of one designer, a variety of influences affect community garden design and appearance, including: the skills and interest of the community group creating the garden, era of the garden's construction, access to funds, expectations tied to funding, and to a lesser degree the institutional culture of the property owner. For instance, the Parks and Green Space Levy required that new projects funded through the levy be created through a community design process, and P-Patch hired professional designers through a roster. Similarly, Seattle Parks & Recreation requires designs be vetted through their ProView process, and emphasize creating gardens with a park-like feeling. These gardens appear cohesive and have well-proportioned gathering areas, paths, and planting beds. These professionally-designed gardens have complicated layouts, sometimes with curving pathways and thematic elements incorporated into the layout and garden features. Older gardens laid out without a landscape architect or professional designer tend to be more linear and functional in nature with focus on maximizing plots. Elements like compost areas, gathering areas and toolsheds are often located off to one side of the garden rather than integrated into the design of the garden as a whole. Including artists on the design team for these gardens could help to create rich designs, and could also set the stage for future art projects, events, and interventions.

Besides public art and garden design, buildings play an important role in placemaking. Often, toolsheds are the largest visible structure in the garden, and the design and treatment of these buildings can significantly affect the atmosphere of the place. Toolsheds vary in design and details significantly from P-Patch to P-Patch, with some being mass-produced and purchased from big box stores, to architect designed multi-purpose structures built by the community. In some cases, neighbors have altered, adorned or painted pre-made toolsheds to better reflect their community identity. Custom toolsheds vary in design from sleek, modern structures to one mimicking a New England-style

church that once stood on the garden site. Certainly, these small buildings offer opportunities for façade treatment, as well as other more sculptural interventions, particularly if artists are engaged at the design level before construction.

While OAC does not fund architecture or landscape architecture, the Department of Neighborhoods supports a range of neighborhood-based projects through its Neighborhood Matching Fund Grant program. These grants require community applicants to match the City's grants with community in-kind time and resources on the premise that the partnerships and dialogue that the process necessarily requires creates stronger communities.Improvements and planning efforts made at Seattle's P-Patch community gardens are typically funded in this way. Matching grants have supported a wide range of activities, including landscape design and planning, architectural projects, permanently sited public art, and events and performing artists in these places.Frequently, artists, performers, and design professionals lead these community efforts and volunteer their time as their in-kind match.

ORCHARDS

Seattle's Department of Parks & Recreation manages several urban orchards through its *Urban Orchard Stewards* program, a public-private partnership with City Fruit whose volunteers also collect the fruit to distribute to food banks. Volunteers with the P-Patch program also manage several orchards and many fruit trees in community gardens. Seattle's Tree Fruit Society, Seattle Tilth Association, and Common Ground also use the city's orchards to provide free educational workshops on proper fruit tree pruning and maintenance.

While currently underutilized, Seattle's orchards provide a rich setting in terms of both subject matter and atmosphere for visual and performance art, performing arts, and cultural events.

For the opening of the Freeway Estates Orchard, artist Sarah Lovett and *Giant Puppets Save the World* created the *Cedar Waxwing* puppet shown (at the right and on this plan's cover.) The puppet took the spotlight during a parade and other events.

The first, a group of Morris Dancers (British folk-dancing) from the local group Sound and Fury, host The Seattle Wassail annually in January in the apple orchards at Carkeek and Meridian Parks. In this ancient custom, groups of people dressed in costume dance, recite incantations, and sing to the trees in the apple orchards so that they thrive and produce a bountiful harvest the following autumn.[4]

The second, Center on Contemporary Art (CoCA) hosts an annual arts festival of temporary visual art installations and performances at sites throughout Carkeek Park

Puppet Parade at Freeway Estates Opening

The Seattle Wassail at Meridian Park

Orchard Room at Piper's Orchard

Beacon Food Forest, Tlaloctecutli performs

Beacon Food Forest, musicians at pavilion opening

Beacon Food Forest, Pre-work party stretch

including Piper's Orchard called Heaven and Earth. In 2012, Cameron Anne Mason and Lara McIntosh, created the installation Orchard Room in Piper's Orchard.The artists wove a dance-inspired performance space for spontaneous and planned interactions by tying silk fabric from tree to tree. The artists compare their work to the ephemeral, natural processes of the orchard.[5]

FOOD FORESTS

Based on agroforestry and permaculture, both the canopy and the understory of the food forest produce food, and the plantings are managed in such a way that each tree has companion plants that work in harmony together called "guilds." Each plant has a different function to support the whole, some plants help bring nutrients into the soil, others help balance soil biology, or provide climbing support or shade. For instance, an apple tree might be planted with sunchokes and marigolds which help balance soil biology while comfrey and borage help bring nutrients to the soil. Once established, food forests work in harmony with little or no input from those tending the landscape, much less than would be required for an annual garden.

Seattle has a two newly started food forests. Beacon Food Forest may well be the largest in the nation once complete. Meadowbrook Community Garden and Orchard has also planted along this model.

Beacon Food Forest volunteers have engaged numerous performing artists in their kick-off celebration, work parties and get-togethers and have engaged visual artists in creating signage and fencing with the aim of building a sustainable community.

Because soil building is a key step in creating a food forest that can produce high yields over a long period of time, artworks sited in these places should be able to stand alone and hold viewer interest. Then, once trees and understory plants begin to grow, these artworks should seem to fit into this changing and growing landscape. Incorporating landform into the siting of artworks is an important consideration in these landscapes.

STRATEGIES, PRECEDENTS, AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

Until recently, artists interested in making art about growing food in the city were most often creating a garden of their own as a political statement. We shared several notable examples of urban agriculture as art in the Context section (starting on page 9). As the urban agriculture movement has taken hold across the U.S., artists' works are beginning to shift to further explore the places and activities related to growing food.

There are several ways to enrich both the activities of urban agriculture and the places we engage in urban agriculture. If we engage artists as we develop techniques most appropriate to growing food in the city, the display of the resulting techniques and the places where they are displayed have the potential to be more communicative, interesting, and meaningful. With the infusion of art, the techniques themselves can thereby become a means of teaching others about growing food and convey a sense of community identity, ownership and meaning.The following are several examples of art projects that further a discussion, considering the growing of food and techniques used in growing food.

Public art projects and cultural events should engage the public in a dialogue about the techniques and processes inherent in growing food, and should contribute to making rich public places where the entire community feels welcome. We can strengthen our city's orchards and community gardens through arts that build neighborhood identity and invite the public to participate, while also creating work that is meaningful, beautiful or interesting in its own right.

We recommend four strategies for strengthening P-Patch community gardens as neighborhood hubs and continuing to build a strong urban agriculture community in Seattle through arts and culture. Each strategy is described and then followed with project ideas that came from discussions with stakeholders.Some of these project examples would require funding partnerships between OAC and another city department or non-profit like DON or P-Patch Trust.

STRATEGY 1: EXPAND THE AUDIENCE

Expand the audience for urban agriculture by engaging people through the arts and build appreciation for key aspects of land stewardship in urban agriculture (systems that promote healthy air, water and land). Public art spectacles, participatory art, temporary installations that utilize gardening techniques, parades and performances can all bring new audiences to growing food.

Paris Nature Capitale, Gad Weil, 2010

Mushroom Bumps, Hol & McClellan, 2013

middle: Cabbage, bottom: Cabbage (at night), Elizabeth Conner, 2005

PROJECT PRECEDENTS:

***Paris Nature Capitale*, Gad Weil, 2010 - ongoing**

Street artist Gad Weil created the Paris Nature Capitale, an art spectacle that transforms the iconic Champs-Elysees into a "pastoral promenade like its Elysian Fields namesake." Weil trucked in thousands of edible trees and plants as well as a huge variety of farm animals. 1.9 million people visited, viewing some breeds of pigs now as rare as some wild endangered species.[6]

***Mushroom Bumps,* Mei-Ling Hol, and David McClellan, 2013**

Artists/farmers Mei-Ling Holm and David McClelland created straw baskets that they inoculated with oyster mushrooms. The project is a temporary installation that utilizes a gardening techique. Part of a residency in New Orleans at the Joan Mitchell Center, the artists also ran a workshop to teach local residents their technique. The baskets produced a robust crop of edible mushrooms, and provided a rich soil amendment once the mushrooms were harvested. [7]

PROJECT IDEAS:

City Fair and Animal Parade

Building on the ideas of rural county fairs and seasonal food parades, several local groups have begun hosting events with a similar character.In the spring of 2013, the High Point neighborhood had a Bee Parade.[8] Bellevue residents staged an animal parade in 2012 to rally for changes to laws prohibiting keeping farm animals in the city.[9] Backyard Barter hosted a pie bake-off and preserves-tasting contest in 2012 similar to contests at many rural fairs.[10] Popular culture events of this kind could be spear headed by Department of Neighborhoods, Office of Economic Development, or Seattle Center, with support for artistic contributions like parade puppetry, performing arts, or installation work coming from OAC.

Farm and Food Stories Project

Collect stories from local people about their relationship with food, and stories they have about growing food, cooking for celebrations, and sharing food. These stories could be collected by phone, an audio professional, or other means and made available through the library, radio or online.

Food Poetry Slam

Partner with local poetry and writing groups to host a food poetry slam, and collect poems to publish in a Seattle Food Poetry Book made available through Seattle Public Library.

City Hall Gallery

Use the City Hall Gallery to displays work with subject matter related to unusual food, food photography, food sculpture, or local farming.

Mobile Garden Gallery

Potentially curated through a partnership with a local gallery or museum, a mobile gallery

could travel from garden site to garden site, reaching out to new audiences with a range of food related works.

STRATEGY 2: EXPRESS IDENTITY

Public art can express the character and identity of a community, and can literally help people identify places where people are growing food in their neighborhoods. These placemaking projects should express a unique aspect of urban agriculture and can become a focal point for community pride. While there are numerous examples of work of this nature in the City's P-Patch community gardens, opportunities to include art still abound.

PROJECT PRECEDENTS:

Helio Terra, Robert M. Horner, 2012
Artist and architect, Robert Horner constructed this seed-like sculpture for Moscow, Idaho. The rammed-earth construction emphasizes the agricultural nature of the community, and the project also acts as a sundial to highlight the solar rhythm of the area.

Cabbage, Elizabeth Conner, 2005
When the West Valley Branch Library replaced a beloved community garden in San Jose, citizens wanted a sculpture reminiscent of the garden. Conner created this iconic sculptural fountain that some see as a cabbage, others an artichoke, a lotus or "Audrey."

Gnome Theme, Ballard P-Patch
The Ballard P-Patch chose a gnome theme that each plot holder contributes to with their own interpretation. The many gnome expressions provide whimsy and show community cohesion to the casual passerby.

PROJECT IDEAS:

Iconic Sculpture
Iconic sculpture can capture the feeling of a community as well as provide a singular image representative of the neighborhood. Projects of this scope should convey the feeling and character of the community while also being timeless, and should be designed to age well with weather.

Integrated Art
Art integrated into functional pieces like gateways, benches, paving, and even hosebibs demonstrates a high level of community pride and ownership.

Garden-wide Theme
Choose a theme for the entire garden, like the Ballard P-Patch, to build pride.

STRATEGY 3: BUILD DIALOGUE

Build dialogue and connections among those already engaged in urban agriculture through arts events and cultural programming that builds community traditions and

Helio Terra, Robert M. Horner, 2012

Gnome Figurine at Ballard P-Patch

Gnome "Hats" at Ballard P-Patch

gardenLAb, Fritz Haeg & Francois Perrin

Film screening at Marra Farm, courtesy Lettuce Link

Vine Street Steps, Belltown P-Patch & Belltown Cottages (Flickr user studio-d via Creative Commons)

rituals around urban agriculture. Community traditions and rituals that build cooperation and initiate and strengthen partnerships build healthy, resilient neighborhoods. Look for public/private partnerships that strengthen the goals of both the city and private organizations. These relationships can leverage funds and resources to deliver a richer set of outcomes than any group can deliver individually. In addition, projects and events that celebrate an activity, a time of year, or milestone with music, temporary visual art, and performances have the potential to be repeated and become a tradition.

PROJECT PRECEDENTS:

The gardenLAb Experiment, Fritz Haeg & Francois Perrin, 2004

Curators used the metaphor of the garden as inspiration for a month-long collection of events, performances, experiments, parties, and exhibitions that "meditate and speculate" on the current and future ecologies of Los Angeles. The project took place at the Wind Tunnel Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, CA.

PROJECT IDEAS:

Annual Art Theme

Providing a theme for focusing attention on the arts in our community gardens and urban farms is one way to get people thinking about ways to include art, and it invites citywide dialogue.Sometimes, a theme can get creative juices flowing, and seeing how others interpret the theme can provide further inspiration. At the Ballard P-Patch each gardener interprets the garden gnome theme a little differently. Beacon Hill's Garden Club celebrated the Hill of Beans—Bean Bonanza for the first time in 2013 by giving away beans and beanie's, reading Jack and the Beanstalk, and providing a bean buffet.[11]

Story and Seed Swap

Food tastes so much better when you know the story behind it.Perhaps more than any other act, growing and saving seeds to be planted the next year helps to preserve our food culture. Saving seeds protects the biodiversity available to us, and allows us to grow the foods at the centerpiece of many cultural traditions. Besides actually swapping seeds, the event could metaphorically swap seeds as stories—the stories that go with the seeds and trade new stories. *Breadline* could host storytelling charged with urban agriculture themes.12 There could be a film screening, like the recently released documentary, Our Neighborhood Garden, about Picardo P-Patch by Elizabeth Wilmot and Andrew Storey.[13]

STRATEGY 4: BUILD LEADERSHIP IN THE ARTS AND EMPOWER CITIZENS

Places have public art when someone puts time and attention into bringing art to that place. While guerilla art can occur because

individuals see a need to create art in that place, art sanctioned by the community requires an advocate, fundraising, and a vision for what art might mean to that community. For example, this might mean that the advocate is an artist who wants to engage neighbors in painting a mural, or it might mean that a community group wants to commission an artist to create a commemorative work of some kind. The city should support these leaders with the tools and resources they need to implement projects.

PROJECT PRECEDENTS:

Belltown P-Patch and Belltown Cottages Richard Hugo House Writers-in-Residence Program
From 2003 to 2010, Richard Hugo House ran a successful residency program where writers lived, wrote and ran writing workshops from their housing at the Belltown Cottages adjacent to the Belltown P-Patch. While producing artwork, the writers kept "eyes on the park" helping deter crime.

PROJECT IDEAS:

P-Patch Artist-in-Residence Program
Establish a community garden artist-in-residence to implement an art project. An artist (who will not actually live in the garden) would work with community members to identify an art project, help find funding, and create the artwork together (different that a regular commission.)

Office of Arts & Culture together with Department of Neighborhoods P-Patch Community Gardening Program should pair P-Patch garden groups that do not have extensive art in their gardens with a professional artists-in-residence to help the group identify art projects and lead the community in the implementation of projects.

Additional funding in support of the project could come from a streamlined Neighborhood Matching Grant process with checks in place to insure that the proposed project be community-based and meet the goals of the matching grant program.

Gardens & Orchards as Arts Venues
As much as possible, the City of Seattle should provide outlets and venues for artists to show their work and engage with the public outside of the gallery environment. Urban farms and community gardens provide an excellent environment for both visual and performing artists to create site-specific work. These places provide rich thematic material for artists. Because gardens often share spatial characteristics, it's possible for artists to create work that can be installed or performed successively at several different gardens, lowering overall development costs relative to installation or performance time. A spreadsheet or other analysis tool should be created to show which gardens are good matches for which kinds of art. For instance, some gardens have large gathering spaces ideal for performances while others might have tiny pocket-park like space perfect for installations.

Artist Roster
Since each community garden makes decisions collectively and runs the garden on a volunteer basis, the Office of Arts & Culture and Department of Neighborhoods could help connect interested artists with interested gardens through a roster system. The roster system offers a kind of shopping list for gardeners, putting them in the position of choosing an artist as a product or service they could provide.

"Once established, the biointensive method of gardening actually restores the soil as much as sixty times faster than nature does. By comparison, industrial agriculture destroys topsoil eighty times faster than nature can replace it."

—Patricia Klindienst[14]

Vermicomposting (Courtesy Eve Connell, www.neighborhoodnotes.com)

2. BUILDING HEALTHY SOIL

Concept: Transform food waste into a precious resource we honor though art.

URBAN AGRICULTURE ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

Soil building holds such a key role in growing food that it has its own section here.

Experienced gardeners know that a bountiful garden begins with rich, fertile soil—literally teeming with life. In fact, food revolutionary Will Allen quotes agriculturalist George Washington Carver in his book, *Good Food Revolution*, "If you love it enough, anything will talk to you," reacting with, "To my surprise, worms began to talk to me." [15] Gardeners don't dig on a wet day for fear of disturbing their soil structure, they nurture their worm bins, and collect "greens" and "browns" for compost. Building healthy soil involves compost, microbial decay, soil structure, theories of till versus no-till, double-digging, sheet mulching, a variety of composting systems, and soil remediation of toxic substances.

Knowledgeable farmers mulch fields and plant cover crops to protect and enrich their soil. Healthy soil amended with compost and mulch can hold up to a foot more water in depth than average soil, which can help home owners save water and can help detain stormwater preventing it from overflowing into Puget Sound during heavy storms.

Every year in America, we waste 96 billion pounds of food.[16] Americans waste about 14% of the food they buy, and food waste amounts to losses for companies of over $75 billion annually.[17] Recycling our food and yard waste into compost isn't just practical, it begins to symbolically transform our relationship with the environment. When we value our waste we use it to reinvigorate our soil. When incorporated into a holistic growing system, manure is no longer an environmental hazard, and food waste doesn't accumulate in landfills creating methane. When we value fertile soil, we don't build warehouses on top of it. Instead, healthy soil becomes almost as palatable as the food we grow in it. In the film, *The Real Dirt on Farmer John*, farmer John Peterson scoops some soil into his hand, tastes it and solidly asserts, "Mm, the soil tastes good today." [18]

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) invests in programs that encourage home owners both to compost their food to reduce solid waste and to use their compost to amend their soil and mulch for better stormwater detention. Because healthy soil retains more water over time, it also uses less fresh water. Art projects that help SPU to educate customers and change the solid waste paradigm from waste to soil enrichment are clearly aligned with its mission.

Picardo Farm compost sifting

Judkins P-Patch mulching

PLACE TYPOLOGIES

Nearly every P-Patch community garden, urban farm, and teaching garden provides an opportunity to connect with and educate city dwellers and food enthusiasts about soil building. These gardens and farms each have a compost area, as well as annual work parties to spread mulch and plant cover crops.

Within urban agricultural spaces, compost areas best symbolize soil building and could provide an opportunity for artists (besides the healthy soil itself), though as a symbol they are exceptionally utilitarian. Compost areas usually include a place to chop up waste, and food and yard waste decomposes in compost bins. Some gardens also include worm bins, sometimes fashioned into benches or other clever designs. Cover crops or nutrient rich plants like comfrey should be cultivated in gardens to provide compost inputs.

Creating beautiful compost bins and erecting decorative screening around compost areas could improve their appearance. Building some sort of artistic shrine, theatrical backdrop, or meaningful surrounding for compost could be an interesting addition to community gardens.Further developing artistic and design elements to house worm bins might make them pleasant enough to situate even in gathering areas.

Besides compost areas, art projects that address soil building and food waste on a citywide scale by bringing the conversation out of the garden and to venues like City Hall or Seattle Center that have citywide or regional audience could take this conversation to a whole new level.Projects at this scale could help address the scale of our food waste in the city or celebrate our achievements in bringing our solid waste down dramatically by composting.

STRATEGIES, PRECEDENTS, AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

STRATEGY 1: SUPPORT PROJECTS THAT INFORM THE PUBLIC

An informed public will make better choices about how to handle food waste. While Seattle Public Utility customers have diverted a large portion of food waste from garbage to yard waste, we need to do a better job in preventing that waste in the first place. Art can play a role in creating dialogue around food and yard waste and its transformation into compost.

PROJECT PRECEDENTS:

Steven Siegel: *Freight and Barrel,* 2004; *Like a hive, like an egg?*, 2002; *New Geology*, 1992.
Pictured on the next page, Siegel's sculptures address the monumental nature of waste, by creating massive bundles of plastic, bales of decaying and often planted newspaper and wood, rolls of aluminum cans, and other garbage.

***Intolerable Beauty*, Chris Jordan, 2003-2005**
Though he has not photographed food waste, Chris Jordan has photographed the monumental nature of consumption in America on an ongoing basis, most recently with work on the great Pacific gyre.

PROJECT IDEAS:

Food In, Food Out
Create an installation that illustrates the volume of Seattle's daily food waste.

Compost & Food Waste Film Screening
Films about both the extent of our food waste and the state of our soils could be delivered together in one film screening event. *Dive!* by Jeremy Seifert documents America's food waste, and *Dirt! The Movie* produced by PBS helps us understand soil fertility and how intertwined it is with natural processes.[19]

STRATEGY 2: SUPPORT PROJECTS THAT CHANGE THE PARADIGM

If we want to change the way people view their food waste, and value compost, then we need to reinvent our relationship with the soil. Projects that help us honor waste as resource to build soil might also help us value the soil and the growth processes that create our food, and therefore could help reduce food waste. This strategy gives people a positive direction to focus efforts, particularly once they understand the monumental nature of their waste.

September 11th vigil at Seattle Center

Million Flower Compost from 9-11 vigil.

Steven Siegel, top left: Freight and Barrel, 2004, Pittsburg. Top right: Like a hive, like an egg?, 2002. Bottom right: Sella, Italy; New Geology, 1992, Milan.

PROJECT PRECEDENTS:

While decay is a popular subject matter for artists, most artists working with decay look at the decay of civilization and detritus of human artifacts rather than at food waste. For precedents *honoring* soil building and compost through art, ritual, and culture we have to look primarily outside the art world and consider how traditional cultures and urban agriculturalists have established and maintained both the practical and symbolic importance of a healthy relationship with waste.

Mayan Compost Shrines, pre-1990

Until at least the end of the last century, Mayan people living in traditional villages in Central America had little non-organic waste, and composted food scraps and other waste in piles at the edge of the village. They created shrines to the compost on top of the heaps where they honored this natural process.

***Million Flower Compost*, Seattle Citizens, 2001-2002**

Seattle gardeners sent a cubic yard of compost made from flowers collected at Seattle Center vigil for victims of September 11, 2001 to the Liberty Community Garden in Lower Manhattan near ground zero.[20] "Two Seattle City Council members joined New York politicians and community garden leaders from both cities in a symbolic gesture of rebirth."[21]

Compost Wedding of Jon Rowley and Kate McDermott at Interbay P-Patch

For their 2001 wedding, Rowley and McDermott invited friends to contribute items to a compost pile. Friends sent food, manure, fish heads, and other compostables rich in nutrients to the couple to incorporate in their wedding compost. The New Yorker covered the wedding—the first they covered since the royal wedding of Charles and Diana in Great Britain.[22]

***Cover Crop Canvas*, Nicole Kistler, 2013**

Though only in experimental stages, Kistler experimented with using cover crops at Magnolia Manor P-Patch to create a large planted canvas.

PROJECT IDEAS:

Reimagine the Bin Contest

Challenge artists to reimagine the compost bin and worm bin to create something more beautiful, functional and meaningful.

Annual Compost Ritual

Creating and fostering annual festivals around compost will provide ongoing appreciation for this precious resource, and provide a new tradition for learning and understanding how compost is made. These rituals should be conceived with the community, so they are truly owned and repeated on a regular basis without the involvement of the artist in successive years.

Wedding of Jon Rowley and Kate McDermott at Interbay P-Patch,

Cover Crop Canvas experiment by Nicole Kistler,

Freeway Estates Cider Press

3. HARVESTING, COOKING, CELEBRATING AND SHARING FOOD

Concept: Infuse programs and events focused on harvesting, cooking, celebrating and sharing the food we grow with performances and temporary art to enhance and enliven these activities.

URBAN AGRICULTURE ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

The activities of harvesting food, cooking, celebrating and sharing food are closely intertwined. The new wave of classes for food growers on how to cook and preserve their harvest, and the wealth of dinners, festivals, and celebrations that Seattle's growing urban agriculture community organizes astounds. Performing artists often provide music for these events, and visual artists are sometimes engaged to set the mood for an event. With so much happening in this area, there are opportunities abound to incorporate art in new and exciting ways.

Harvesting food is about more than just picking the fruits off the vine or pulling the roots out of the ground. It's about celebrating a time of year, the fruits of your labor, and about preparing food to be stored for cooking later. In many cultures, including our own, farmers help each other harvest the fields, cut and thresh the grain, press apples, make wine, and preserve food by canning, smoking and drying it.

The unique characteristics provided by the soil and climate in which food is grown, and the preservation techniques developed over time lend unique regional flavors to food, or what winemakers call "terroir." So much of a culture is expressed through cooked food, and while Seattle is known as a gourmet's paradise with its regional seafood and fresh produce, people across all strata of race, income and geography want delicious and nutritious food to eat. Temporary art and performances created in conjunction with local events should reflect the unique character of Seattle in their process and presentation.

Sharing food is one of the primary ways that people of all cultures establish social connections. When visiting people in other countries, food is one of the first things that people will offer to show their positive intentions and extend their friendship. The activities of growing, harvesting and cooking food culminate in celebration with each other and our communities. People commonly celebrate the harvest throughout the world with a variety of food festivals, parades, dancing and often religious traditions.

PROJECTS TO KNOW ABOUT

Here are some of the many harvesting, cooking, celebrating and sharing projects happening in Seattle and abroad to inspire new art projects and artistic partnerships.

HARVESTING

City Fruit Gleaning and Cider Pressing: City Fruit, a Seattle organization that gleans fruit to give to food banks, teams up with Bradner Gardens Park each year in the fall to host a Cider Pressing.

Urban Winemaking: In Paris, a neighborhood-based historic and viticultural society called Le Vieux Montmartre tends and harvests grapes, their work culminating in a public festival each October.[23] The organization, Food from the Sky London, has created an Urban Wine Company where individual contributors harvest their grapes on a set day, and come together to make wine that is later distributed evenly among the contributors.[24] While we have not heard of groups growing grapes in Seattle and using them to make wine like these other two previous examples, certainly, both amateur and professional winemaking are popular here.

Canning Food, Jellies and Preserve: The first annual Seattle Barter Fair of 2012, held at Seattle University, included a jam and jelly tasting competition.[25] Beginning in 1935 and funded through the WPA, the State of Washington operated cooperative canneries in Kirkland and Kent that helped individuals to can their own produce. [26]

COOKING

Cooking Classes: Seattleites can take advantage of cooking classes offered through local community colleges like Seattle Central, and one-time classes through PCC Markets and Whole Foods Markets. Seattle's Garfield Community Center and South Park Community Center offer cooking classes for youth.

Southwest Seattle's FEEST: a youth-led cooking program, holds weekly dinners where adults act as mentors answering questions about cooking techniques and other fundamentals. The program brings meaning to the process of preparing, cooking, and sharing a meal together. FEEST also trains adults to run similar programs.

Seattle Chefs Collaborative: This organization informs chefs about purchasing food locally and supporting both a local and sustainable food system.[27]

CELEBRATING

Harvest Festivals: The Cascade Harvest Coalition lists numerous local harvest festivals in Seattle and throughout the region. Harvest time is a great time to take part in farm tours that often have activities such as harvest markets, educational displays, chef demonstrations, corn and hay mazes, pumpkin patches, hay rides, food and music. Seattle Tilth's decades old Harvest Festival, originally intended to bring the produce of local, organic farmers to the Seattle market, has shifted to focus more on education and local food networks. The West Seattle Junction Merchants hosted a popular harvest event in October 2012.[28]

Banquets and Celebrations: Both community gardens and local farms use annual celebrations to fundraise. Picardo P-Patch hosts Picardo Paella, Bradner Gardens hosts Blues for Food, Interbay P-Patch has hosted a salmon barbeque. Open air dining is fun and it helps draw the surrounding community into the garden.

SHARING

Giving Garden Programs:
The majority of Seattle's P-Patch community gardens participate in the Giving Garden program. Each garden sets aside a specific area that is gardened by volunteers, and the produce is given to local food banks.

Community Fruit Harvest: Seattle Parks & Recreation manages several urban orchards through its Orchard Stewards program, a public-private partnership with City Fruit whose volunteers collect the fruit to distribute to food banks. In 2012, City Fruit harvested 18,414 pounds of edible fruit, and Community Fruit Tree Harvest (a program of Solid Ground's Lettuce Link) harvested 13,200 pounds for a total contribution of more than 31,000 pounds delivered to 32 organizations that support low-income residents of Seattle.[29,30]

The Seattle Potluck: Popular in both private homes and in community gardens, potlucks are an easy way to bring people together around food. Aside from fantastic puppets and music, the Fremont Art Council's Winter Solstice Feast is an annual potluck feast where hundreds of people contribute dishes.[31]

Cooking at FEEST (Courtesy of FEEST)

Dinner at FEEST (Courtesy of Seattle Times)

Interbay P-Patch Giving Garden

Apple Harvest

Blues for Food

West Seattle Farmer's Market, Courtesy Seattle Blogger Tove Tupper

Garfield Community Center Garden, Courtesy Laurel Mercury

Banquet in the Rain at Interbay P-Patch,Courtesy Jim Diers

PLACE TYPOLOGIES

Harvesting, cooking, celebrating and sharing food all happen routinely in Seattle at numerous public locations including community centers, community gardens, farmer's markets and other public venues.

Community Gardens & Orchards
Food is harvested where it's grown, so community gardens are natural places to harvest the food, distribute and share it, cook, and celebrate together. In this way, community gardens are the heart of many communities. Most community gardens, particularly large ones, have gathering areas where annual events can be held. While these events often include food, no community garden has a commercial kitchen, so barbeques and other portable cooking apparatus must be brought in on a temporary basis. Most annual events include music performances, but there is room to expand the variety of artists contributing to these events.

Community Centers
Seattle Parks & Recreation operates twenty-six community centers; many offer cooking classes and other do-it-yourself classes and are equipped with professional kitchens. Each community center plans its own programming, so class offerings vary from center to center. Garfield Community Center offers cooking classes with a focus on classes for youth and incorporates food grown from their own community garden.

Community development associations (CDAs) operating as private non-profits also run community centers with similar amenities and classes. FEEST (Food Empowerment Education and Sustainability Team) operates a youth-led cooking program through the White Center Community Development Association.[32] Opportunities may also exist to pair youth cooking classes with arts classes culminating in a coordinated event.

Farmer's Markets
Seattle's seven neighborhood farmer's markets offer city dwellers a chance to buy local produce directly from the farmer.[33] This creates a direct relationship between city dwellers and rural farmers, and offers an opportunity for farmers to educate eaters about the food they grow for them, as well as the trials and tribulations of working in farming. Farmer's Markets use visual artists and graphic designers in creating promotional materials, and employ performing artists when markets are open. Musicians create a lively atmosphere, and patrons visit markets for the experience as much as the shopping.

STRATEGIES, PRECEDENTS, AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

Art can enhance every aspect of harvesting, cooking, celebrating and sharing making events more memorable, meaningful and entertaining. When developing programs or planning events, ask, "How could art make this event more meaningful?"

STRATEGY 1: MAKE FOOD ART

We traditionally think of art as being the backdrop, decoration or entertainment for events, which is meaningful and effective in and of itself, however, food and celebrating can also be art. Here are a few examples:

PROJECT PRECEDENTS:

The Vegetable Orchestra, 1998 – ongoing

Based in Vienna, Austria, the Vegetable Orchestra plays concerts with instruments made from fresh vegetables.[34] The unusual sounds created by instruments like carrot marimbas, celeriac bongos, and pepper horns fuse together into a unique style often determined by the inherent sounds of the most recently developed instruments. Inspired by a range of music styles, the listener can hear the influence of contemporary dance music, beat-oriented House tracks, and experimental Electronica. Listening to the music, one tries to imagine which vegetable makes which sound.

Incubation, 2011 & American Morning, 2008, Jennifer Rubell

Each year for Art Basel Miami Beach, Jennifer Rubell creates a breakfast-related participatory art piece. For her 2011 project, *Incubation*, she cultured individual cups of yogurt that she raised in a "nursery." When ready to serve, participants could fill the jars of yogurt with honey that dripped from an enormous pot. American Morning was a commentary about the typical American breakfast of cereal, milk and bananas. Rubell created a giant mound of bananas as well as tables of sugar cereal produced by popular brands.[35]

Industrial Harvest, Sarah Kavage, 2010

Kavage explores food justice and the interworkings of the food commodities system with her project *Industrial Harvest*. In taking delivery of 1,000 bushels (30 tons) of red winter wheat purchased on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, Kavage hauls, mills, and endeavors to give away her flour. In the sharing of this most basic commodity, Kavage restores it to food and reconnects it to hungry people resulting in poignant stories that highlight our broken food system.[36]

Incubation, Jennifer Rubell, 2011

Wheat Penny, Industrial Harvest, Sarah Kavage

Vienna Vegetable Orchestra

PROJECT IDEA:

Commissioned Artwork

These projects tend to be so unique that no project type or general idea adequately addresses this strategy, rather, artists should be selected either on the strength of past work or on the strength of their ideas.

STRATEGY 2: PROVIDE AN ARTS LIAISON

While City departments and staff are open to including arts and culture in their urban agriculture programming and value the enhancement art brings, most do not know how to infuse their programs with art or how to best engage artists. An arts liason from OAC who understands how these programs and departments operate, their goals, the range of art available, and artists to engage could assist other departments in integrating art into their programs.

STRATEGY 3: ANCHOR ANNUAL LOCAL FOOD EVENTS WITH VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS

Engage the public through partnerships among visual and performing artists and neighborhood groups by hiring musicians and performing artists and creating visual art pieces as an anchor for annual events. Some performing arts to consider include music, traditional dance, puppetry and storytelling. Projects that engage writers and poets at an event could also produce meaningful, lasting work.

PROJECT PRECEDENTS:

Food Theater Project/ Milk-n-Honey, LightBox, 2007

This multimedia play about food, appetite, and the American experience premiered at 3-Legged Dog Art and Technology Center in downtown Manhattan on October 21, 2007. Each performance was followed by the After Show Café, where audiences enjoyed locally made treats and participated in discussions and special events.[37]

Food Truck Art

In a recent issue of Public Art Review they featured eleven different food truck art projects in different U.S. cities. One featured project, Karaoke Ice, roamed the streets of Los Angeles and San Jose attracting audiences with frozen treats and popular tunes available for listening or participating via the onboard Karaoke Bar.[38]

PROJECT IDEAS:

Mini Mobile Restaurant

Sited in series community gardens, the mini-mobile restaurant builds on the popular food truck idea, in fact, it could be a kind of food truck.

Add Visual Art to Blues for Food Event

The Blues for Food musical event raises money annually for P-Patch Trust and P-Patch community gardening projects. They are interested in including visual art in their programming to further enhance their event.

A Feast at Art Interruptions

In this example, local food is infused into the art scene. Perhaps as a kick-off or wrap up event for Art Interruptions, OAC in partnership with Seattle Chefs Collaborative could host a northwest art feast on the Elliott Bay waterfront on Seattle's Piers 62 and 63. A variety of performing and performance artists could transform the feast into participatory art.

STRATEGY 4: PROVIDE TOOLS & FACILITIES WITH AN ARTISTIC BENT

Aimed more at Department of Neighborhoods and Seattle Parks & Recreation who operate facilities related to urban agriculture and provide cooking programs, this strategy encourages these agencies to seek out the participation of OAC in providing artist services in enhancing facilities and programs.

PROJECT IDEA:

A Mobile Kitchen

Though perhaps not an investment appropriate for OAC, a mobile kitchen would be a wonderful addition to the P-Patch Community Gardening Program. A commercial kitchen could be set up in a trailer that could be rented to community gardens and urban farms for cooking or food preservation classes, special events and harvests. The mobile kitchen would however, be a great platform for artistic surface and façade treatments as well as performance art.Potential project partners might include Office of Economic Development, Office of Sustainability, Puget Consumers Coop (PCC), and private foundations.

Blues for Food

Fremont Winter Solstice (Courtesy Soraya Lowry)

Bradner Cider Press Festival (Courtesy Urban Sparks)

X-ING

4. FOSTERING HABITAT FOR BENEFICIAL SPECIES

Concept: Hold a visual place for beneficial species in urban landscapes through art, while leaving them minimally disturbed.

URBAN AGRICULTURE ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

Most agricultural landscapes have some space that is not under cultivation and not wild either, it's the space between, what author Martín Prechtel calls, "the veld—sacred, feral land."[39] It's odd to think of these places as "sacred" since mainstream society places so little value on them, places like hedgerows, untended orchards, and vacant lots colonized by weeds.

Yet, these edges are some of the few remaining places that offer habitat for those species that still try to make their homes next to human activity. Monarch butterflies, for instance, need Milkweed, commonly found in these leftover places to survive. In fact, all sorts of beneficial insects find sanctuary in these untended places, free of pesticides and often rich in plant diversity.

Besides providing a home for beneficial insects, Prechtel suggests that plant diversity benefits from cross-pollination with semi-wild species.[40] In 1924, Rudolf Steiner gave eight lectures about the Biodynamic Method that were later translated into the book, *Agriculture Course: The Birth of the Biodynamic Method*. At that time, he notes the loss of vigor, of actual protein content, in wheat.[41] Wheat is just one example, but to maintain vigor over time, plants must cross-pollinate. The veld provides a place for these other food species to exist while not specifically under cultivation, and allows for a small but significant source of cross-pollination.

Finally, the veld provides a home for our imaginations. It leaves us wondering: "Was this once an orchard, a mowed field?" "What kinds of birds live in these trees"
"What would the city be like if we left?"

Visit Magnuson Park in the summer, and you will find people lying in the tall grass, picking blackberries, and cutting a new path through an abandoned apple orchard. This untended space is the landscape of daydreaming. It's familiar and wild at the same time, and that makes it perhaps more mentally accessible for us than some ostensibly wild spaces.

These spaces provide both venue and inspiration for a growing number of artists working in ecological art, those using natural materials in-situ, and those working in site-specific art and ephemeral art not to mention performing artists whose work draws attention to the landscape without leaving a trace.

PLACE TYPOLOGIES

Seattle has numerous opportunities to create, preserve and enhance places that could serve as habitat for beneficial species. New construction and redevelopment, public parks and green spaces, street right-of-ways, and some programs on residential property all offer potential to create unique works that engage the public and enhance habitat for beneficial species.

New Construction & Redevelopment
As Seattle's real estate develops, fewer untended places are left, and providing habitat for beneficial species becomes increasingly critical. As the city develops and redevelops its properties, care should be taken to examine the land for its existing habitat value and find ways to replace that value within the developed landscape. Project managers seeking creative solutions to including the type of untended landscapes that provide habitat value would benefit from including artists interested in the urban ecology on their project teams early in the design process. Artists may find creative ways to incorporate plants needed by beneficial species that are not commonly used in landscape architecture palettes.

Temporary and ephemeral art are often highly compatible with these places, but require consideration for their inclusion upfront. These types of projects are often not selected later in a design process, because there has not been thought put into where to accommodate them. In addition, since they have not been considered early on, to include them at a later stage may require additional maintenance that can be costly, but could have been avoided if planned upfront. Instead, projects considered upfront can be part of an annual maintenance plan and can occur annually.

Public Parks and Green Spaces
Public parks and green spaces offer extensive land for beneficial species, particularly if they are managed without the use of chemical pesticides and herbicides. Seattle Parks and Recreation manages 22 parks without pesticides, and 14 of those since 2001.[42] In addition, the tree canopy found in larger parks offers habitat to numerous species, and is an essential component of a functioning urban ecosystem. Seattle Parks and Recreation supports numerous environmental stewardship activities, in fact, two of the four goals of Parks' Good Food Program are to steward parklands for long-term sustainability and to increase environmental stewardship through its food system programs.[43]

Smaller pocket parks like those managed by SDOT also provide opportunities for habitat, and could be good opportunities to include bat or birdhouses, honey or mason bee hives because of lack of conflict with other uses. Art projects that incorporated these houses, or somehow enhanced habitat would be a good fit for these spaces. Projects that connect parks and green spaces by urban corridors, much like the Pollinator Pathways project described in the next section, could create a complete urban ecosystem for beneficial species resulting in much richer food production citywide.

Right-of-Way Planting Strips
The planting strip is typically located in the street right-of-way between the sidewalk and the street. This is the area where street trees are planted, and in Seattle there are a variety of ways that people plant and use this area. While some people raise vegetables in these strips, they are prone to theft, animal defecation, and pollution from their proximity to the roadway.[44] Therefore, they may be better suited to providing a habitat corridor for beneficial species that support food production throughout the city. The Pollinator Pathways project is created in the right-of-way by each homeowner adopting the part of the project adjacent to their property. The homeowner adoption model that this project offers could be successful for other types of projects as well.

Residential Properties
Seattle Public Utilities' RainWise program encourages home owners to establish rain gardens by providing information and financial incentives.[45] Rain gardens help detain and control stormwater. Rain gardens could also function as habitat for beneficial species. While opportunities to include art are limited, artists could be included as part of a design team creating replicable rain garden designs for residential landscapes.

STRATEGIES, PRECEDENTS, AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

There is a tendency of property owners to want to tame these semi-wild places, to mow an edge or redevelop the property for a "higher" use. And while management is needed, an active educational program and some targeted landscape enhancement can help inform the public about the value of these landscapes as habitat. Temporary, ephemeral art works and ecological art can hold a visual place in the city, provide a "use", and can initiate a dialogue with the public about this landscape type. Since the idea is to support beneficial species, the most successful projects utilize natural materials, enhance the habitat value or educate the public about the value of providing a place for these species. The following are four strategies with project precedents.

STRATEGY 1: ESTABLISH AND HOLD SPACE FOR HABITAT

Engage ecological artists in creating and restoring habitat at existing sites throughout the city. For new projects, include ecological artists early in the design and planning process with the goal of planning areas and projects to establish habitat for beneficial species.

PROJECT PRECEDENT:

***Kabuya,* Sarah Kavage and Adria Garcia, 2012**

In August 2012, artists Sarah Kavage and Adria Garcia wove an extensive and complicated braided grass installation at Magnuson Park, The project's title, Kabuya, refers to sisal rope in the Taino (a native tribe of the Dominican Republic) language.[46] At their opening event, Kavage and Garcia invited the participation of a Taino tribal leader (Garcia's father), poets, singing groups, dancers, musicians, and sound artists to pay tribute to the land.

Built into the work is a kind of prayer, both in the actual work of braiding the grass and they way it holds a place for the wild. It requires tall, un-mowed grass for its creation. The work has a certain untamed beauty as Kavage and Garcia work with the terrain, the type of grass and tiny other factors like preserving (or creating) bird and insect habitat. Audience members and performers said they felt that the opening event had deep spiritual meaning for them.

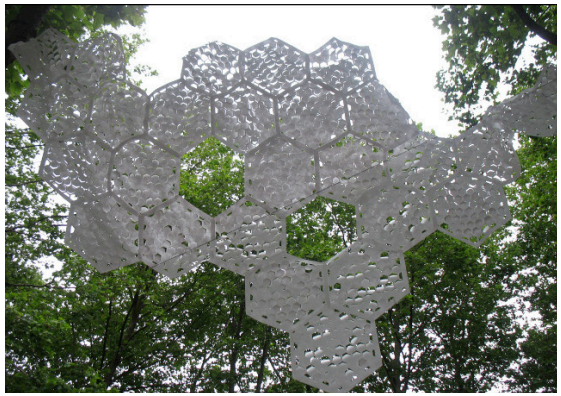
Kabuya, Sarah Kavage and Adria Garcia, 2012

Performers Practicing for Kabuya Opening

Kabuya Detail

Pollinator Pathway, Sarah Bergmann, ongoing

Flight Path, The Common Acre, 2013



Honeycomb Clouds, Celeste Cooning

STRATEGY 2: CREATE CONNECTIONS

Sarah Bergmann's Pollinator Pathways looks specifically at providing a corridor for native pollinator species, particularly bees, but planting strips in the right-of-way could be used to benefit a range of species including birds, bees, butterflies, bats, reptiles and amphibians. SDOT and Seattle Parks & Recreation should work together to establish beneficial corridors and larger park habitats for a variety of species. Once established, artists, multi-disciplinary teams, and neighbors could be engaged to develop projects along these corridors and in parks.

PROJECT PRECEDENT:

***Pollinator Pathways*, Sarah Bergmann, 2011 and ongoing**
Drawing from the ecological idea for wildlife corridors, ecological artist Sarah Bergmann sought to help pollinating insects by creating a habitat corridor along an urban street that links two park spaces together. Using the planting strip, the space between the road and the sidewalk, Bergmann and numerous volunteers have been planting native plants that beneficial insects collect pollen from and use as habitat.[47]

STRATEGY 3: MAKE PROJECTS REPLICABLE

Support a replicable project that helped establish mason bees, or other beneficial species throughout the city. SDOT pocket parks might be an excellent location for this type of project, because of the lack of conflicts with other uses.Rain Gardens are themselves a replicable project that with funding through Seattle Public Utilities, could include an art element that was also replicable by utility customers.

PROJECT PRECEDENT:

***Flight Path*, The Common Acre (Bob Redmond, Kate Fernandez, Jennifer Borges Foster), 2013**
Inspired by the similarities between human air traffic and honey bee air traffic, Flight Path locates honey bee hives at SeaTac Airport utilizing scrub land as pollinator habitat. In their second phase, the artists will transform a portion of the the airport concourse into an art and education exhibit. Finally, they will hold a series of Art+Science salons throughout King County to engage the public. The project is supported by the Port of Seattle and the Urban Bee Company with numerous other project partners.[48] The artists hope to recreate the project at other airports nationwide.

STRATEGY 4: CONSIDER A BROAD RANGE OF BENEFICIAL SPECIES

Bees enjoy immense popularity at the moment, but birds, bats and butterflies are no less important. Beetles clean up detritus, birds pollinate and eat insects, and dragonflies eat mosquitoes. Helping nature strike a balance in cities means people have to play a role in fostering habitat.

PROJECT PRECEDENT:

***Die Wiese* (The Meadow), Herman DeVries, 1986-present**

While a rural project, Project Wiese provides ideas for artists working in an urban landscape. Describing his project as decultivation or renaturization, DeVries reintroduced wild plants to a meadow in Eschenau, Germany in reaction to the industrial agriculture surrounding it.[49] He has recreated habitat for large numbers of insects, and collects and studies the butterflies and beetles that now make their home there.

Die Wiese, Herman DeVries, ongoing

UpGarden P-Patch, Eric Higbee and Nicole Kistler as KistlerlHigbee Cahoot (Courtesy of Eric Higbee, 2012)

5. INNOVATING IN URBAN AGRICULTURE

Concept: Forge new visions for growing food in the urban context by engaging artists and supporting multi-disciplinary projects.

URBAN AGRICULTURE ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

While growing all of the food consumed by city dwellers in the city poses practical limitations, the limited distance from urban farm to table offers a compelling reason to grow as much as practical. Historical examples suggest that the application of intensive growing methods and innovative thinking could boost urban agricultural production. The most obvious practical limitation is the lack of available land to grow food.

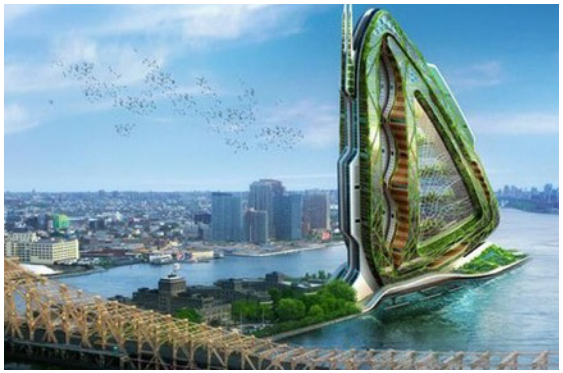
Creatively repurposing old buildings, industrial machinery, salvaged building materials, and other castoffs into places to grow and prepare food transforms things seen as urban blight into something beautiful. The vision of healthy, organic food growing in an old warehouse, like grass growing out of a crack in the sidewalk, is symbolically hopeful that we can overcome our environmental shortcomings.

Developments in water and energy efficiency make the vision for this future possible. Hydroponic systems, delivering nutrients to plant roots through a cycling water system, and aeroponics, applying a fine mist of water and nutrients to plant root systems sealed in plastic, are up to 70% more efficient that irrigated fields.[50] Aquaculture, farming fish in tanks and using the nutrients in the water to feed plants, and other closed-loop systems mean no pollution is produced. New LED lighting systems like pink houses and inventions like the Omega Carousel and low-cost solar arrays make growing plants indoors energy efficient as well.[51]

As we look for news ways to efficiently grow food in the city, we will have to experiment to see what will work and where. The ability to think “outside the box” is key to the success of this new endeavor. Artists are proven leaders in the area of creative repurposing and experimentation, which are natural outcomes of the creative process.They are well suited to work in multi-disciplinary teams to imagine a new urban future.

The Plant, Chicago, Courtesy of The Plant

Grow Lights on Lettuce at The Plant



Dragonfly, Vincent Callebaut, Courtesy of Vincent Callebaut Architects

OLD NEWS

Intensive food production in cities is nothing new.The cities of Paris and Havana have both historically grown food intensively to feed their residents. People from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines have been dreaming up innovative ways to grow food in cities, and new ways to farm in our public spaces. These inspiring examples illuminate a way forward and give artists a foundation to build upon.

URBAN AGRICULTURE IN PARIS AND HAVANA

In the last half of the 19th century, Paris's third and fourth arrondissements were the *marais*, or swamp. This area—about a sixth of the area of Paris at the time—was under intensive agricultural production. Paris's *maraichers*, 85,000 urban farmers, were growing 100,000 tons of vegetables annually on 3,500 acres of land in the city.[52] Havana, Cuba, having lost its ability to import food when the Soviet market for sugar cane led to Cuban economic collapse in 1993, has nurtured a bountiful urban agricultural program harvesting over a half a million tons of organic food annually. [53] It should be noted that while both these systems produced an extraordinary amount of food in an urban environment, neither produced enough food to feed the population exclusively. While Paris benefited from its proximity to rural farms then and now, Cubans continue to go hungry.

REPURPOSING BUILDINGS AS CLOSED-LOOP FOOD SYSTEMS

In 1984, John and Nancy Jack Todd published their forward-thinking book, *Bioshelters, Ocean Arks, City Farming: Ecology as the Basis of Design*. The book lays out a framework for designing urban ecological systems based on observing natural systems. Creating closed loop cycles by capturing nutrients produced by aquaculture, sewage, and food waste to grow plants and help heat buildings is a core concept. Some ideas put forward include: drum composters, rooftop gardens, bioshelter parks, aquaculture integrated into mundane streetscapes like bus shelters, and the vertical farming concept called "warehouse farm company."54 The Todds suggest,"The renaissance of urban agriculture may find its fullest flowering in the conversion of old warehouses and factories in down-at-the-heels sections of older cities and mill towns. One strategy for a badly lit multi-story warehouse or factory is to cover the roof with a full array of solar cells." [55] Creatively repurposing old buildings and industrial junk is finding success at The Plant in Chicago led by John Edel (an artist gone innovative developer) and in Toronto by Jonathan Woods of FoodShare. [56]

PLACE TYPOLOGIES

In cities like Seattle, where land is at a premium, people are increasingly growing food in a whole host of creative and original ways. Unlike cities with vast unused industrial buildings like Chicago and Detroit, Seattle's manufacturing and industrial spaces rent at a premium. The scarcity of these types of buildings means that urban farmers in Seattle have to look at places like rooftops or street right-of-way to locate new projects.

Balcony gardens, container gardens, parking strip planter gardens, vertical gardens and rooftop gardens are all examples where people have used their creativity to create remarkably productive gardens in small spaces. Gardens can even be temporary or mobile, like the Seattle Truck Farm.[57]

The two most significant place typologies for Seattle include Parklets and rooftop gardens.

Parklets
Inspired by International Park[ing] Day© (discussed as a precedent on the next page), Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) permits the transformation and use of parking spaces on a permanent basis. SDOT will begin issuing permits for Parklets on a trial basis for the downtown neighborhood beginning in 2013.

Rooftop Gardens
Seattle's rooftops offer open space where food can be grown in a variety of ways. While most existing buildings require a structural retrofit to accommodate the added weight of growing food, hydroponic and aeroponic gardening are sometimes light enough to operate without a structural retrofit. These systems and their apparatus offer some interesting forms for artists to work with, and an arts vision would be a welcome addition to the development of these projects atop buildings as they can be seen from numerous vantage points.

Seattle's UpGarden is the first publicly accessible, rooftop community garden in the U.S. Designed by Kistler | Higbee Cahoot in 2012, and managed by the P-Patch Community Gardening Program, the project repurposes the roof of the Mercer Street parking garage at Seattle Center.

Unforeseen Locations
Parklets and rooftop gardens are place typologies with demonstrated success in urban environments. It's important as we progress and try out new ideas that city government allow flexibility for pilot projects that might also prove fruitful in providing new places to grow food in the city.

International Park[ing] Day©, Rebar Group, Inc.

International Park[ing] Day©, Rebar Group, Inc.

Farmacy, Natalie Jeremijenko, 2011

STRATEGIES, PRECEDENTS, AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

Over the last few years, numerous arts and design projects have helped people envision where and how we might grow food in cities. While art projects in this area can be purely conceptual computer visualizations or funky experiments, this work helps us visualize how we might reinterpret the urban landscape, repurpose a building or vehicle, or some entirely new way of imagining growing food. Not only do these types of projects spark the imagination, they initiate a dialogue about the kinds of infrastructure or policy changes that need to be made to make some of these ideas feasible. While some of these examples, particularly vertical farming, are the work of architects and urban designers, they offer a model for artists to use to re-envision the cityscape. Some of these ideas are so new, and while in the development stage projects can defy categorization. Are they art? Since it's difficult to determine, we suggest strategies that support the creative process and foster discussions among professionals with a variety of backgrounds in the hope that this dialogue and tinkering will lead to interesting new and emerging work.

STRATEGY 1: HOST AN ART COMPETITION

Competitions reward great ideas and invite new talent, broadening participation in the arts to create innovative ideas. Foster creativity with an art competition that encourages multi-disciplinary teams. Artists could team with farmers, horticulturalists, architects, engineers and others to form multidisciplinary teams focused on creating replicable projects.

Art competitions demand a great deal of work that artists are only compensated for if they win the contest, so they are not ideal across the board. However, here, the idea is to ignite new partnerships and the ideas generated may be independently profitable for the participating teams.

PROJECT PRECEDENTS:

These examples, while not produced through an art competition, are precedents for innovative art and design in urban agriculture.

***AgBag*, Farmacy by Natalie Jeremijenko, 2011**
Being an apartment dweller with no place to grow food herself, artist, Natalie Jeremijenko created the AgBag, a plastic bag planted with food crops that can be hung out a window. AgBags are distributed through her project, Farmacy, created to "dispense food and food systems that improve environmental health and augment biodiversity."[58]

***International Park[ing] Day©*, Rebar Group, Inc., 2012**
This annual, global event energizes artists, activists, and citizens to collaborate in transforming metered parking spots into temporary public parks. Some of these projects have incorporated food production on a temporary basis. The project creates a dialogue about the use of our street right-of-way.[59]

Vertical Gardens
Inspired by the hanging gardens of Babylon, Dr. Dickson Despommier's book, Vertical Farming, highlights both the technologies and architectural visions that this work inspires. The iconic Dragonfly Tower by Vincent Callebaut or the Vertical Farm by Seattle's Weber Thompson are two prime examples.[60] The Swedish-American company Plantagon has broken ground on the first farm tower being constructed in Linkoping, Sweden.[61]

PROJECT IDEAS:

An art competition could lend itself to the development of numerous types of projects.

Participatory Art and Installation Directed Toward Apartment Gardening
Projects that engage low-income apartment dwellers in urban agriculture would strengthen food justice in the city. Tinkers in the maker

movement are creating hydroponic window gardens among other ideas.

Parklets

Like Storefronts Seattle (a program that places art projects in vacant storefronts funded in part through OAC and DPD), the City could encourage projects through micro-grants and partnerships with local businesses to develop Parklets into art-envisioned public spaces.

Multimedia Visioning Projects

Sometimes, ideas are so new and creative, existing building or zoning codes do not necessarily apply. Projects that help us envision our city appearing, functioning or being built in a completely new way can drive discussions about where we're headed in the future and how we need to adjust to accommodate changes.

STRATEGY 2: OFFER MULTI-DISCIPLINARY WORKSHOPS & DISCUSSION FORUMS

OAC already offers workshops of benefit to artists, as well as hosting presentations and panel discussions on numerous topics related to arts and culture. Some of these discussions could focus on how artists envision the future of urban agriculture. In addition, workshops could be team-taught by artists and tinkerers (robotics and software engineers, horticulturalists, etc.) and could provide a rich and creative forum for both professional artists and the general public.

PROJECT PRECEDENT:

***Truck Farm*, Ian Cheney, Brooklyn, NY and other cities, 2010**

Truck Farm is a multimedia film and food education project. Time-lapse photography captures the making of the farm in a truck, and goes on to look more closely at farming throughout America. They say, "*Truck Farm* entreats viewers to ponder the future of urban farming, and to consider whether sustainability needs a dose of whimsy to be truly sustainable."[62]

STRATEGY 3: SUPPORT EXPERIMENTAL PROJECTS

Projects of an experimental nature push artists to explore new territory, and seek assistance and partnerships in new places. While they require funding for research and development, they provide a high level of value for cities as they foster entrepreneurialism.

PROJECT PRECEDENTS:

***All-Terrain*, Nicole Kistler, 2009**

The All-Terrain is a remote-controlled, traveling edible landscape that instantly transforms the streetscape. Funded by OAC and 4Culture, the project made its debut at the 2009 Americans for the Arts conference in Seattle. Later that year, it won a juried art exhibition called aLIVE that featured innovative artworks that created dialogue about transportation and the use of the right-of-way.

Truck Farm, Ian Cheney, 2010

All-Terrain, Nicole Kistler, 2009

Seattle Tilth Chilrden's Program with Lisa Taylor

6. MENTORING: CREATING A LIVING AGRICULTURAL LANGUAGE

Concept: Foster a living agricultural language through the dialogue and storytelling that many artistic practices provide, and infuse urban agricultural education programs with art.

URBAN AGRICULTURE ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

Creating a living agricultural language begins by practicing agricultural traditions ourselves and teaching them to others through informal mentorship and formal educational programs. Most city dwellers are not agricultural officianatos. As we discover how to grow, eat and celebrate food in the city, we should respectfully reach out to rural farmers, immigrant farmers, and native peoples who have retained a cultural knowledge of growing food, as well as the spiritual and meaningful traditions that go along with it. That knowledge can inform how we shape a new set of cultural traditions that have meaning in our communities.

As we work with the land, with the food, and with each other, we can begin to develop a new culture of food by putting conscious intention and ritual behind what we do.This is something that many educational programs already do. Ritual does not have to be elaborate or mystical. Maybe it begins when we put a seed in the ground and make a wish that it grow strong and provide us with delicious fruits. Before we eat we can give thanks for the people, the weather, whatever we think is significant for bringing us the food. Before we begin a work party, we can check in on something fun everyone did during the weekend, and stretch. A ritual can be throwing a party at the end of the harvest each year—include puppets, a parade and music, then that celebration will be richer.

Working the land imparts a natural sense of wonder that shapes the language of our experience; you watch a miracle unfold as new seeds sprout, your hens lay eggs, and you harvest potatoes. You build a daily and seasonal rhythm as you spend time outside, and match your work with the seasons. This experience changes our point of view, and will eventually shape our society.

How do we include those who are not interested in growing food or cooking? Public events, art installations and performances that highlight the abundant diversity of fruits and vegetables grown in the city, diversity of food cooked, and new methods of gardening and raising livestock in the city will continue to entice a new group of people to try out growing food for themselves.

PLACE TYPOLOGIES

Seattle has a wealth of places where people of all ages can learn about growing food organically in the city including urban farms, learning gardens and school gardens.

Urban Farms

Seattle has two publicly owned urban farms on Seattle Parks & Recreation property that are each managed by independent non-profits with food production and education as primary goals: Marra Farm managed by Common Ground's Lettuce Link Program since 2000, and Rainier Beach Urban Farm and Wetlands managed by Seattle Tilth Association (Tilth) in partnership with the Friends of Rainier Beach Urban Farm since 2012. Seattle Youth Garden Works, a project of Seattle Tilth, operates an urban farm and youth employment program on University of Washington property. Numerous private urban farms are also in operation throughout the city, most running on a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model selling produce on a subscription basis.[63,64,65] Only the two urban farms on city property are discussed further.

Marra-Desimone Park preserves the 4-acre, historic Marra Farm in Seattle's South Park neighborhood. Located in the floodplain of the Duwamish River, South Park's rich soil historically drew numerous farmers that settled there including the Marra family. Common Ground's Lettuce Link program manages a portion of the property (¾ acre) as an urban farm for production of vegetables to supply local food banks, while the rest of the property is managed as both a park and P-Patch. Lettuce Link's volunteer-based program provides food production education to its volunteers and though classes including a children's gardening program associated with neighboring Concord Elementary.

Rainier Beach Urban Farm and Wetlands is composed of 10 acres of fields, greenhouses and wetlands producing blueberries, annual crops and perennials.In addition to providing management of this facility, Seattle Tilth Association runs farm education programs for adults and youth. The City has funded significant improvements through the Seattle Parks and Green Space Levy, as the property transitions from the Atlantic City Nursery to an urban learning farm and demonstration wetland restoration site.

These publicly-owned farms and relatively new programs would benefit from an arts and culture component. While these farms are managed by independent non-profits, each organization eagerly seeks ideas and partnership opportunities for incorporating arts and culture into the sites they manage and programs they administer.Both Seattle Tilth and Common Ground cite the need to expand the audience for their programs and a desire to bring more attention to these special places while also endeavoring to imbue their programs with a cultural and ecological connection to place.

Performing arts like storytelling, music, theater, puppetry, and dance all lend themselves to educational programming, make learning fun, and would expand farm education from learning the mechanics of growing plants to creating a new Seattle farm culture. Visual arts can also be incorporated into farm education, and can further enhance the site. Certainly, visual arts can be integrated into gateways, signage and other relatively functional components of the site, but they can also create interest in restoring the landscape and helping people explore and look closer. While most of the land is dedicated to farming crops, areas like the wetlands could become interesting places to implement or site ecological art. Artists engaged in creating work for the site as a whole could produce unique works not seen elsewhere in the city. Bringing visual and performing artists into the gardens for events could make them fun destinations, drawing people not only from the surrounding neighborhood, but the city as a whole.

Learning Gardens

Several non-profit and volunteer groups maintain edible learning gardens on Seattle Parks & Recreation properties. In addition to its urban farm projects, Seattle Tilth Association manages organic learning gardens for both children and adults at the Good Shepherd Center in Wallingford, and also teaches at Bradner Gardens Park (Bradner's Children's Garden is managed by neighborhood volunteers and available to a variety of groups). The arts play a key role in making learning fun and connecting participants to growing food and appreciating our natural resources. Whimsical scarecrows, signage and trellises help make these places fun and interesting. Permanent work at the Good Shepherd Center includes a cobblestone pathway and spiral swale by Ted Jensen (1986), a metal Birch sculpture, mosaics, and a "PEACE" banner. Musicians play at Seattle Tilth's Harvest Festival annually, and music plays a significant role in Tilth's children's programming.

The Magnuson Community Garden at Sand Point features a children's garden with varied terrain, sculptures, and a covered area in addition to garden beds. Seattle Children's Playgarden has a large garden, wetland area, play areas, and indoor classroom all designed to offer equal access to children of all abilities.[66] Art is integrated throughout the site, and seems to be used as a teaching tool to some degree. The State's Master Gardeners program also runs a demonstration garden adjacent to the Picardo P-Patch in the Wedgewood neighborhood, though it does not incorporate art.

School Gardens

Individual teachers, parents and after-school programs at both public and private schools throughout Seattle operate gardens on their property for students to learn how to grow food. Essential to making these programs successful are school administrators, faculty and staff dedicated to integrating school gardens within the regular school day. These schools tend to have more sizeable and well-developed gardens.

Some schools also provide arts education by bringing independent teaching artists into their schools. ArtsCorps is an organization that brings teaching artists to local schools by placing artists in classrooms and helping to develop new arts education programs.[67] Coyote Central is another arts organization operating primarily in the Central District that delivers afterschool art programs for youth. Combining the curriculum of existing school gardening programs with arts education could enrich both endeavors and would be a great first-step in incorporating this kind of programming in Seattle schools.

Seattle Tilth Children's Program Staff

Child Play Tractor at Bradner Children's Garden

Whale Tail at Magnuson Children's Garden

FOOD EDUCATION

Programs where both adults and children grow, prepare, cook, eat and celebrate their own food are essential components in permanently changing the food culture in our country. Two such programs, the Edible Schoolyard and the Muckleshoot Food Sovereignty Project, are worth noting.

EDIBLE SCHOOLYARD
Restauranteur Alice Waters worked with school principal Neil Smith and staff at King Middle School in Berkeley to start an edible garden next door to the school. Together they transformed the school curriculum—integrating growing, preparing, cooking and eating food into all the subjects they teach.[70]

MUCKLESHOOT FOOD SOVEREIGNTY PROJECT
Coordinator, Valerie Seagrest, works with her native tribe to collectively develop innovative and effective ways to build community food security through exploring tribal food assets and access to local and healthy foods. She began her work when she realized that older tribal members were developing health problems when they were disconnected from their native foods, and the cultural richness that came with them. The Food Sovereignty Project stems from her book, Feeding the People, Feeding the Spirit: Revitalizing Northwest Coastal Indian Food Culture, published in 2009 and nutrition curriculum she later developed entitled, Honor the Gift of Food.[71]

STRATEGIES, PRECEDENTS, AND PROJECT EXAMPLES

There are three main strategies for combining art and art education with education about food and urban agriculture; engage artists, foster partnerships among arts and urban agriculture educators, and build public leadership in the arts.

STRATEGY 1: ENGAGE ARTISTS

In addition to the art works and performances produced by many artists, artists often add an educational component to their food-related work. Engaging artists already working on the subject of urban agriculture could be a win-win, providing interesting education programming for youth while providing additional income and audience for artists. Here are some examples of artists featured in sections above that carry their work through to mentor-youth.

PROJECT PRECEDENTS:

Digital Farm Collective, Matthew Moore, 2013
The core of Digital Farm Collective's (DFC) work is documenting the lifecycle of food plants through time-lapse photography to "inspire new thinking about the food that we eat". DFC offers three programs: Seedlings, a food education program; Lifecycles, time-lapse videos and other multi-media tools that allow consumers to explore the life cycle of a plant; and a Living Library of interviews with farmers and time-lapse photography of crops growing throughout the world.[68]

Food Theater Project of Milk-n-Honey, LightBox, 2007
In addition to its performance Milk-n-Honey, LightBox created a Youth Workshop Series as part of its Food Theater Project.Conducted as five, month-long workshops in after-school programs for teens in New York's five boroughs, the program teaches students the basics of LightBox's approach to theater as well as providing hands-on food and nutrition education. Then, students write and perform their own plays about their experiences with food with the mentorship of LightBox artists.[69]

Truck Farm, Ian Cheney, 2010 – ongoing
Ian Cheney began experimenting with growing food in his truck in 1998, though the first Truck Farm tour occurred in two parts in 2010. First, it visited 9 schools, then it spent 2 intensive days in New York City during the weekend of Earth Day. The program continues with an annual Truck Farm competition reaching out to schools throughout the country. (This project also described in the section Innovation in Urban Agriculture.)

STRATEGY 2: FOSTER PARTNERSHIPS AMONG EDUCATION PROVIDERS

Foster partnerships between arts education providers and urban agriculture education providers by initiating dialogue and helping identify opportunities to work together.

PROJECT IDEAS:

Arts & Urban Ag Workshop
Bring arts and urban agriculture educational professionals and youth leaders together to find common ground in their work through music, theater, dance, and visual art exercises modeled on Washington State's Teaching Artist Training Lab.

Educational Partnership
Arts education organizations like ArtsCorps that place teaching artists in Seattle schools are ideally positioned to combine arts education with existing gardening programs like those offered through individual schools or through non-profits. A partnership of this kind would be a great first-step in incorporating agriCULTURAL programming in Seattle schools.

STRATEGY 3: BUILD PUBLIC LEADERSHIP IN THE ARTS

Young people need to express themselves. Guerilla art represents a lack of public engagement with those creating that art. Programs like FEEST and the Vera Project at Seattle Center show us that young people have powerful voices and a desire to engage community. Programs that build arts leadership among young people are essential for our future.

PROJECT IDEAS:

Student Community Garden Artists-in-Residence
Create a student Artist-in-Residence program (Picardo P-patch has University Prep Artists-in-Residence creating painted panels) that puts students in the garden. During class time, students can meet with a professional artist, then spend time sketching and observing in nearby community gardens. With the mentorship of their teaching artist and regular teacher, students will produce studio art work in reaction to their experience.

Youth-Directed Projects
Supported by adult mentors, youth-directed projects empower young people by giving them the opportunity to choose projects and ideas they are intersted in and providing mentorship and resources so that they can pursue their goals themselves. Naturally, projects operating with this model attract young people.

Digital Farm Collective, Matthew Moore

Milk-n-Honey, LightBox

Truck Farm, Wicked Delicate, Ian Cheney, 2010

Blushing Orchards, Nicole Kistler, 2013, Seattle Tilth Learning Gardens at Meridian Park

IMPLEMENTATION

This art plan has made recommendations for specific art projects. The success of these projects depends on funding, partners and locations that have also been identified.

To test the assertions of this plan, the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture funded an initial pilot project called Blushing Orchards, installed in the spring of 2013. We describe the project and its outcomes here. In addition to the recommendations made for specific urban agricultural activities, this section contains recommendations specific to overall implementation of this plan and its success.

Since funding through 1% for Art has limitations, implementation of the plan depends on the development of community partnerships with a focus on engaging both artists and arts advocates from the community. In its first two years, implementation relies on the continued work of the Artist-in-Residence for Urban Agriculture, who has developed community support by engaging stakeholders directly in this planning process so that the result echos stakholders' dreams and wishes. The Artist-in-Residence will promote the plan, introduce pilot projects, further develop programs, and shepherd artworks created by others. In subsequent years, plan implementation shifts soley to project implementation.

INITIAL PILOT PROJECT: BLUSHING ORCHARDS

Identified as an underutilized, public venue for art, four Seattle orchards participated in Blushing Orchards including: The Danny Woo Gardens, Magnuson Community Orchard, Seattle Tilth's Learning Gardens at the Good Shepherd Center and Meridian Park; and Bradner Gardens Park.

Seattle's apple trees suffer from tree pests like coddling moths and apple maggots. When the apples are still small, the apples are thinned and nylon barriers called "foot socks" or "footies" are applied to young apples to protect them from these pests. As the apples grow the footies stretch around them. Not only does it directly protect the fruit, the footies reduce the total number of pests, in turn affecting fewer uncovered fruits.

For Blushing Orchards, the footies were dyed in rainbow colors with food-safe dye instead of the normal beige. Based on color theory, each hue is intended to illicit a different mood. As people walk along and look into the trees, they might notice how each color makes them feel. The orchard stewards andvolunteers that applied the footies agreed that it was much more fun to work with a variety of colors.

The project focuses on the urban agricultural activity of growing food and supports the strategies of: one, expanding the audience by creating an unusual focal point in the garden most passersby are unfamiliar with; two, building dialogue among those already involved in urban agriculture by relying on volunteers to apply the footies; and three, built leadership in the arts and empower citizens by providing a one-on-one experience with a local artist and providing hands-on experience implementing a replicable project.

This project also provides an example of how one art project can create partnerships on a particular subject and promote dialogue about urban agricultural growing techniques throughout the city. Blushing Orchards was made possible though funding by the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture and Seattle Parks and Recreation and the support of project partners including the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods P-Patch Community Gardening Program, City Fruit, Interlm CDA, Seattle Tilth Association, the Seattle Tree Fruit Society, and Friends of Bradner Gardens Park.

CONTINUE THE ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE POSITION

Continue to have a citywide Artist-in-Residence for Urban Agriculture position to complete pilot projects and shepherd projects by others for the first two years. Some specific roles and responsibilities include:

1. WORK AS INTER-DEPARTMENTAL LIASON

Unlike other arts plans with embedded artists in one department, activities of urban agriculture affect numerous departments. Therefore, a liason that understands the goals and opportunities of both OAC and other departments with an interest in urban agriculture is essential in moving the plan and its associated projects forward.

Since the majority of the City's property holdings in urban agriculture are managed through Department of Neighborhoods P-Patch Community Gardening Program, recommendations are split between the types of projects and activities that OAC would fund, and those of interest DON or neighborhood groups.For example, OAC would fund the creation and artistic vision of an independent artist or artist group, while DON funds the creation of art as it is initiated through a community process. DON would fund architecture and design projects undertaken by the community, and OAC would not.

2. CREATE AN agriCULTURE HANDBOOK

A handbook with guidelines and best practices for artists working with P-Patch community gardens and other property owners in urban agriculture will help smooth the process of completing new projects. The handbook should establish roles and responsibilities of both the artist and neighborhood group (or project manager if no art administrator is involved.) In addition, the handbook should be a tool for those interested in advocating for art in urban agricultural places by providing best practices, for example, methods for selecting artists, promoting projects, and considering project maintenance. Topics could also include city and outside funding sources, and choosing materials compatible with sites where food is grown (and those not compatible).

3. IMPLEMENT PILOT PROJECTS

The Artist-in-Residence should carry out a range of pilot projects that demonstrate the goals, principles and strategies of the plan. These projects should be participatory in nature, and should work to promote urban agriculture, foster greater meaning of urban agricultural activities, and provide visibility for city programs in urban agriculture and public art.

4. SHEPHERD THE WORK OF OTHERS

Besides completing pilot projects initiated by the Artist-in-Residence, this person should also help connect artists with urban agriculturalists who want to engage artists in their work. The many departments involved in urban agriculture and the associated funding processes can be difficult to navigate. The Artist-in-Residence working as an advocate could help move projects along in the right direction, and increase work created on the topic of urban agriculture.

In this role, the Artist-in-Residence would make presentations on the content of this plan to city staff, to community gardeners and urban agricuturalists, and to artists and arts organizations to promote the ideas generated through the planning process and encourage proposals for new work.

5. CREATE A PUBLICATION

Seattle Office of Arts & Culture should support the research, writing, and publishing of a blog and book documenting the arts and culture of urban agriculture in Seattle and in several other major U.S. cities. Our culture of urban agriculture is rapidly growing and evolving. In fact, of the twenty distinct project precedents in this plan, twelve date just from the last three years and only two date from before 2000.

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