



Request for Investment: Seattle Preschool Program Provider Facilities Fund

School Year 2024-2025

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL) is notifying any agency under contract to provide preschool services for the Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) or the Pathway Program of a funding opportunity to support the improvement and expansion of early learning facilities and environments.

To be considered for funding, eligible applicants must submit an RFI application by **11:59 P.M. on Monday, June 24, 2024**. All materials and updates to the RFI are available on the [SPP Provider Facilities Fund](#) webpage. DEEL will not provide individual notice of changes, and applicants are responsible for regularly checking the webpage for any updates, clarifications, or amendments.

EVENT	DATE/LOCATION*
Request for Investment (RFI) Release	May 13, 2024
RFI Information Session (pre-recorded)	May 13, 2024
Question and Answer Period	May 13 – June 19, 2024 No calls nor individual meetings will be accepted. Email all questions to: DEELFunding@seattle.gov
RFI Submission Deadline	June 24, 2024 by 11:59 PM
Application Review, Scoring and Deliberation	June 25- July 26, 2024
Notifications Issued to Applicants	August 2024

**Dates/locations subject to change*

INVESTMENT GOALS AND OVERVIEW

Under the FEPP Levy, the SPP Provider Facilities Fund will support capital projects that:

- A. Improve quality or help providers meet preschool facility licensing standards.
- B. Expand space in existing SPP preschool facilities.
- C. Start new facilities, either from the ground up or by substantially remodeling existing buildings to use as part of SPP.

Allocations under this RFI will be made in the form of a grant tied to specific commitments to provide SPP services. Recipients will manage their own capital projects, and grant funds will be distributed to recipients based on negotiated project milestones.

Minimum Qualifications and Eligibility

An agency/provider is eligible for consideration if it is:

- A center, school, or home-based provider under contract with DEEL to provide preschool services for SPP or Pathway.
- In good standing with DEEL and not on a corrective action plan.



Proposals for the Provider Facilities Fund must meet the following basic requirements:

- A. Funds must be used solely to improve or expand preschool-related instructional space, as mutually agreed upon by DEEL and the agency.
- B. If the project serves multiple uses, only activities and costs related to delivering preschool services are eligible for funding.
- C. All activities must meet the definition of “eligible activities” as defined below.
- D. For SPP Pathway providers, commitment for any classrooms improved through this funding to participate in SPP within one (1) year.
 - a. If the project is not complete by the start of the school year, the agency must work with DEEL to issue an exception. This may require the agency to continue as a Pathway program provider until the project is completed and they can become an SPP provider.
- E. The proposal must demonstrate the agency has the legal authority to undertake the proposed project on the proposed property by meeting the Site Control requirements (see page 5).
- F. Recipients of funds are required to pay prevailing wages (see Prevailing Wage Requirement, page 6).
- G. Recipients must dedicate improved facilities to SPP for between 3 and 15 years, depending on the size of the City’s investment (see Table 1: Service Commitments).
- H. Funding match will be required depending on the proposal amount (see Table 2: Funding Match).
- I. For grants over \$250,000, the provider or grantee will commit to additional protections for the City, which may include property covenants, deeds of trust, or other legal agreements (see Service Commitment Security, pages 3-4).

Funding request policies:

- A. Center and school-based providers are eligible to apply for up to \$500,000.
- B. Home-based agencies participating in SPP are eligible to apply for up to \$75,000.
- C. The minimum funding request is \$5,000.
- D. Funding requests cannot exceed \$500,000.

Any agency or project deemed ineligible will be disqualified, and its proposal will not be reviewed or evaluated.

As a condition of receiving funding, a successful agency will be required to enter a contract with DEEL. The commitment will include use of the project improvements to provide preschool services through the Seattle Preschool Program indexed to the amount of funds received.

Eligible activities include:

- 1. Construction, renovation, or rehabilitation of preschool facilities, which includes instructional space as well as other related space such as kitchens, bathrooms, storage, or other space associated to the instructional space (classroom or home-based).
- 2. Design, construction, renovation, or rehabilitation of outdoor play space in accordance with state licensing regulations and best practice.
- 3. “Soft costs” or any project costs that are not construction but directly related to the development of an eligible SPP facility (which may include design, project management, and permitting costs).
- 4. Improvements that provide accessibility to persons with disabilities.



Ineligible activities include:

- Renovation costs not directly connected for use in an approved SPP facility.
- Renovation costs for infant- or toddler-age classrooms or any space not used by children ages 3 through 5.
- Acquisition of existing facilities or land.
- Deferred maintenance or repairs which do not directly contribute to making the project or property suitable for use as an SPP classroom.
- The purchase of equipment or furniture.

The agency will manage and oversee their capital projects and will be responsible for any cost overruns and for maintenance following completion. Funds that the City makes available under this RFI require commitments that the project or facility will be used for the [SPP or SPP Pathway program](#).

Anticipated Funding

DEEL has approximately \$1,000,000 available for facility awards for the 2024-25 school year. DEEL anticipates reserving about 10% of the funds for eligible projects under \$75,000 and following a process to support home-based providers listed in Appendix B.

The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals. Additionally, the City reserves the right to negotiate with an agency or provider following proposal approval and before contract award as follows:

- Regarding the amount of funding to be provided; this may differ from the amount requested in the proposal
- Terms or conditions of awards resulting from this RFI process

FUNDING CONDITIONS

This section outlines conditions the agency will need to meet to receive awarded funds.

Project Expenditure and Completion

Upon receiving notice of proposal approval, the agency will be required to meet with representatives of the City to review the project schedule and enter contract negotiations. The grant agreement shall outline major milestones for the project and payment points based on milestones. The goal will be to have a final grant agreement within 90 days of the notification of approval.

All projects should be completed within one calendar year from the contract execution start date, except for:

- Projects funded above \$250,000 should be completed within an 18-month period.
- Projects funded at \$500,000 should be completed within a 24-month period.

Service Commitments Security

Approved agencies are required to provide commitments to use the capital improvements for SPP or Pathway. The type and nature of the commitment will vary depending on the level of award.

Commitments are outlined below in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Service Commitments

Tier	Grant Amount	Required Commitment to City of Seattle
1	Awards \$75,000 or less	An agency receiving funds must commit any classrooms improved through this funding to participate in SPP for no less



Tier	Grant Amount	Required Commitment to City of Seattle
		than three (3) years, unless otherwise mutually agreed to by both parties.
2	Awards between \$75,001 and \$250,000	An agency receiving funds must commit any classrooms improved through this funding to participate in SPP for no less than five (5) years, unless otherwise mutually agreed to by both parties.
3	Awards between \$250,001 and \$500,000	An agency receiving funds must commit any classrooms improved through this funding to participate in SPP for no less than ten (10) years, unless otherwise mutually agreed to by both parties.

In order to provide the City with assurance that the improvements will be committed to SPP use, the City will require some form of security for funding awards greater than \$250,000. The specific form of security will be negotiated as part of the agreement. Acceptable forms of security may include a restrictive covenant limiting the use of the property to SPP, a personal guaranty or a deed of trust securing recovery of the grant funds in the event the improvements are not used for SPP purposes.

Match Funding Requirements

Projects seeking awards of \$250,000 or above must have at least 50% of the total project funding committed from other sources. See **Table 2** for examples. Additional points will be awarded in the evaluation for match funding above the required amount. Points will also be awarded depending on the availability of funds (e.g., funds secure, decision pending, funding application to be applied).

Projects seeking awards less than \$250,000 are not required to have a funding match. No additional points will be awarded in the scoring if an agency shows additional match funding.

Proof of committed match funds must be submitted within 12 months from the award notification date otherwise DEEL reserves the right to rescind the award. DEEL may request additional documentation.

Match funding can be in the form of:

- Commercial loans
- Grant awards
- Internal agency resources
- Fundraising campaign – should demonstrate a history of successful fundraising experience
- Other sources

Evidence of the match could include:

- Grant commitment letter
- Bank letter
- Other proof that the resources are within the agency’s current control

Table 2: Match Funding Levels by Agency Funding Request

RFI Funding Request	Required Match %	Minimum Agency Match Commitment
\$250,000	50%	\$125,000
\$300,000	50%	\$150,000
\$500,000	50%	\$250,000



Site Control

Site control of the facility, either in the form of ownership or a long-term lease is a crucial consideration for accessing the Provider Facility Funds. If an agency does not own the facility, then the lease must allow the leased space for preschool instructional space with a term that meets the service commitment requirements in Table 1. Additionally, all required landlord approvals for the improvements as well as non-disturbance agreements to the leased facility must be obtained prior to the execution of the final grant agreement between the City and agency.

An agency should include a copy of the following documents in its RFI proposal:

- Purchase and sale agreement if an agency intends to acquire the facility.
- Proof of ownership if an agency owns its facility.
- Current lease if the site is leased. The agency must demonstrate that it has any necessary landlord approvals to make the improvements.

Minimum lease terms include:

2. For home-based providers that lease their space, DEEL will require the landlord to provide a multi-year commitment to the preschool program.
3. For awards between \$10,000 and \$75,000, a minimum of five (5) years remaining on the current lease with the property owner.
4. For awards above \$75,000, a minimum of seven (7) years remaining on the current lease with the property owner.
5. For awards above \$250,000, a minimum of ten (10) years remaining on the current lease with the property owner.
6. For awards at \$500,000, a minimum of twenty (20) years remaining on the current lease with the property owner.

It is especially critical for agencies with leases to work closely with DEEL staff to ensure leases and related documents are acceptable prior to moving forward with the proposal.

If the agency vacates the facility or no longer provides the proposed services before fulfilling the City's negotiated contractual terms, the agency may be liable for repayment of the Provider Facilities Funds.

Project Costs Prior to Signing an Agreement with the City

Any agency applying for funds under this RFI bears the risk of all project costs incurred prior to executing a funding agreement with the City. An agency should not expect City funds to reimburse expenses accrued prior to executing a funding agreement with DEEL. Notwithstanding the foregoing, project costs incurred by an agency prior to execution of a final funding agreement may be eligible for reimbursement under the agreement if (i) the project is selected through this RFI, (ii) the project meets all requirements of this RFI, including prevailing wage requirements, and (iii) funding will ensure completion of the improvements for use in SPP.

Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Efforts, and Non-Discrimination in Contracting

Agencies are expected to provide equal employment opportunity to agencies' employees in all terms, conditions, and privileges of employment without regard to race, color, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, political ideology, age, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, veteran status, or physical, mental, or sensory disabilities in accordance with applicable laws, ordinances, and policies. The City encourages the utilization of women- and minority-owned business enterprises (WMBE) in contracts



funded by the City. Agencies and their contractors shall not create any barriers to open and fair opportunities for WMBE firms to participate in City-funded contracts.

Prevailing Wage Requirement

Construction projects funded totally or partially with DEEL funds must comply with applicable labor standards requirements. The City also requires payment of prevailing wages under Revised Code of Washington (RCW) Chapter 39.12. Prevailing wages will apply to the project funded by the City, as determined by the grant agreement. **Agencies should consider this requirement when developing cost estimates or obtaining pricing for construction work.** This requirement is not applicable if the project activities you are proposing do not contain a construction component. Prevailing wage rates are available from the Department of Labor and Industries at:

<https://lni.wa.gov/licensing-permits/public-works-projects/awarding-agencies/>

PAYMENT AND REPORTING

Payment Structure

Recipients of this funding will enter a contract with DEEL. Payments will be made by installments based on the Agency’s completion of each of the mutually agreed upon project milestones. The Agency shall provide an invoice on the DEEL invoice template provided, including supporting documents as necessary to demonstrate the completion of all required elements for each milestone. DEEL shall pay the Agency the applicable progress payment below within thirty (30) days of receipt of a properly completed invoice demonstrating completion of the milestone.

Common milestone details include but are not limited to:

- Design and bid process complete
- Executed construction contract
- Approved DEEL project budget
- SDCI permit sign off, Certificate of Occupancy
- Issued license from Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) for all classrooms improved through the project

Reporting

As a public agency, DEEL is responsible for maintaining transparency about how public funds are used, including details about the progress of funded projects and how they are benefiting Seattle children and families. The table below outlines DEEL’s reporting requirements for recipients of 2024-25 facilities funding.

Activity	Timeframe	Description
Site Visit	End of project (last payment milestone)	DEEL staff will do an in-person or virtual tour of the completed project.
3-month Progress Report	3 months after contract start date	Provider will be asked for an update on project progress, either in written form or during a meeting with a DEEL program point of contact.
Project Completion Report	After DCYF license submitted	When project is fully complete, provider will submit a brief written report summarizing project results and resulting benefits to children and families.



PROCESS AND CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

The Seattle Preschool Program Provider Facilities Fund RFI applications will be evaluated according to the following process:

Part I: Technical Compliance Review: applications will be reviewed for technical compliance to verify submission is complete and on time. The checklist below (**Table 3**) lists the required elements of each proposal. DEEL reserves the right to reject any application if any of these elements are missing or incomplete. DEEL may also conduct follow-up phone calls to obtain additional information from submitted applications.

Part II: Proposal Scoring: submissions that are technically compliant will be evaluated by a panel of reviewers using the criteria outlined in this section (**Table 4**).

Table 3: Technical Compliance

To be considered technically compliant, submitted applications must meet the conditions specified below. Applications deemed not technically compliant will not be evaluated further.

Compliant	Item	Documentation
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Submitted electronically via Submittable by Monday, June 24, 2024, by 11:59 P.M. See instructions on how to apply in the Section “Application Instructions” of this document.	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	All fields marked as mandatory within the Submittable application form are diligently filled in. This includes providing accurate information and ensuring that any required attachments or supporting documents are appropriately submitted.	SPP Provider Facilities RFI Application in Submittable
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Business license from the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)	Business license
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	If the site is unlicensed, attach a letter that outlines how you intend to become licensed within one year. The letter should come from the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) licensing office.	Letter from DCYF
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Evidence of the facility’s current ADA compliance or plan for how facility will become ADA compliant (only needed if licensed).	Current state licensing inspection report
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Provided documentation of minimum site control of the proposed site and the ability to maintain site control through the applicable services.	Site control documentation such as rental agreement or deed
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	If site is leased, provided written authorization from the landlord to make tenant improvements outlined in the proposal.	Landlord letter



Compliant	Item	Documentation
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Fully complete project schedule. Please download excel template from DEEL's Funding Webpage	Project Schedule Excel Template
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Fully complete project budget. Please download excel template from DEEL's Funding Webpage	Project Budget Excel Template
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Submitted evidence of commitment of other funding sources (if request is greater than \$250,000). Please download excel template from DEEL's Funding Webpage	Funding Sources Excel Template
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	All supporting documents such as zoning analysis, pictures of the site, preliminary design or other documents related to pre-development work (<i>not required but highly encouraged</i>)	Supporting documents for proposed project
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Submitted labor harmony attachment and confirmed standard practices and policies that uphold City principles that agencies work to prevent labor disputes, which may lead to work stoppages or adversely impact the ability of FEPP Levy-funded programs to achieve intended outcomes	Labor Practices and Policies

Proposal Scoring

While this is a competitive grant process, there is no guarantee that any proposals will receive funding. A review committee will first score each of the proposals meeting the technical compliance requirements using a set of criteria. The committee will establish a group score for each proposal. All projects must receive at least 50 points (see scoring criteria in **Table 4**) in the scoring review to be further considered for funding.

If a proposal meets the minimum scoring threshold and are tied, the additional criteria below will be used to determine which proposals will be selected for further consideration. The additional criteria to be used for selection are:

- Produce a net increase in licensed capacity (for example, adding an additional licensed classroom or adding more licensed slots to an existing classroom) for the facility undergoing capital improvement.
- Submit a project budget that was informed by design and construction experts.
- Demonstrate the solicitation of WMBE (women- and minority-owned companies) as part of the project team.



Table 4: Proposal Scoring Criteria

RFI Rating Criteria	Available
<p>Project Design – Feasibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligns with and supports the agency’s long-term strategic plan. • Shows a realistic and comprehensive schedule for the project, demonstrating an ability to complete project. • Demonstrates regulatory feasibility (building code, zoning, ADA, environmental, and licensing), or a clear plan to address regulatory barriers. • Have identified a well-qualified project team that may include an architect, project manager, and/or general contractor. • Budget is aligned with work plan and expenses tied directly to the proposed services. • Shows a realistic and reasonable cost estimate and budget, including prudent contingencies. 	20
<p>Project Design – Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project supports community and SPP needs as described in the application. • Applicant clearly demonstrates how the project will lead to a net increase in the licensed capacity in SPP preschool classrooms and/or other learning environment quality improvements (such as health & safety). • Location of the project is in a geographic location deemed to be a high priority for the Seattle Preschool Program (see Appendix A for details) • Project supports children furthest from educational justice (see Appendix A) 	30
<p>Proposer’s Past Experience and Demonstrated Ability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has demonstrated organizational stability in the delivery of effective childcare services. • Has experience with childcare construction, renovation, and/or expansion. 	15
<p>Proposer’s Organizational and Administrative Capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a proven track record of managing public funds, operating programs and/or capital projects. • Demonstrates financial stability and management capacity to plan and implement its proposed project. • Demonstrates leveraging additional funding sources outside of this grant (if necessary – see page 4). 	35
<p>Maximum points</p>	100



APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Important Update: Change in Application Process – from email submission to online application portal.

There is a significant change in the DEEL RFI application process: applications may ONLY be submitted to DEEL by using Submittable, an online application portal, a more streamlined application procedure. Submittable works best on Google Chrome, Firefox, and Safari. Internet Explorer is not supported.

Follow the steps below to submit an application through the Submittable portal. Instructions in video format may be accessed on the DEEL Webpage.

- 1. Access the Online Application:** Visit [SPP Provider Facilities Fund webpage](#), to access the link to the online application.
- 2. Create a Free Submittable Account:** If an organization does not have a Submittable account, the applicant will need [to sign up for a free account](#) in order to access the application form and apply. Applicants will need to provide a name, email address and a password.
- 3. Important consideration when choosing the email address for the Submittable Account:** The email address entered during the Submittable sign-up process will be the only person who can submit the application. All notifications related to the application will be sent to that email address.
- 4. Validating an applicant's email:** After creating an account, an email will be sent to the email address provided during registration asking the applicant to validate the email. Applicant should check the email inbox (including spam/junk folders) for a message from notifications@email.submittable.com
- 5. Filling out the application:** Any questions marked with an asterisk (*) are required; an applicant will not be able to apply without responding.
- 6. Collaboration on the Application:** An optional template is posted on [SPP Provider Facilities Fund webpage](#) and may be used for an organization's internal collaboration; copy and paste the final responses into the Submittable application form. An organization's final application submission must be via the Submittable portal; no other format will be accepted.
- 7. Saving an application:** To save an application so it can be completed it later, click the [Save Draft](#) button at the bottom of the application. This allows an applicant to return and make edits before the submission deadline.
- 8. Submitting an application:** The application must be submitted no later than **Monday, June 24, 2024 by 11:59 P.M.** An unsubmitted draft will not be considered. Once the deadline passes, if an applicant has not submitted a draft, the draft will no longer be accessible. DEEL recommends an applicant keep a copy of an organization's draft responses in an offline document.
- 9. Application Deadline & Portal Automatically Closing:** The deadline for applications is **Monday, June 24, 2024, by 11:59 P.M.** Ensure submission of the application before the deadline as the



portal will automatically close. No submissions may be made thereafter. Late applications will not be accepted.

10. Confirmation and Record Keeping: After submission a confirmation email from Submittable will be sent to the email address on file and should be kept as receipt of applicant's submission. Organizations that do not receive a confirmation email should send a follow up email to DEELFunding@seattle.gov as soon as possible with "Question SPP Facilities Fund RFI" in the subject line.

- To save a copy of the submitted application, log in to the Submittable account to view the submission and [download a PDF copy for your records](#).

11. Questions:

- a. For Technical Questions related to using Submittable:
 - i. Check the [Submitter Resource Center](#)
 - ii. Send questions to [Submittable Customer Support](#) AND by email to DEELFunding@seattle.gov with the Subject line: "Question SPP Facilities Fund RFI"
- b. For Submission Process questions related to the SPP Facilities Fund RFI:
 - i. Submit questions via email to DEELFunding@seattle.gov and include "SPP Facilities Fund RFI" in the subject line.

APPEALS PROCESS

The Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL) will notify applicants in writing of the outcome of the submission. Written notification will be sent via email to the email address submitted on the Submittable application.

Any applicant wishing to appeal the decision must do so in writing within four (4) business days of the email notification of DEEL's decision. Disagreeing with the outcome is not a valid reason to appeal the decision and will not be considered. An appeal must clearly state a rationale based on one or more of the following criteria:

- Violation of policies or guidelines established in the RFI process
- Failure to adhere to published criteria and/or procedures in carrying out the RFI process

Appeals must be sent by email to the following:

DEELFunding@seattle.gov

Subject line: SPP Provider Facilities Fund RFI Appeal

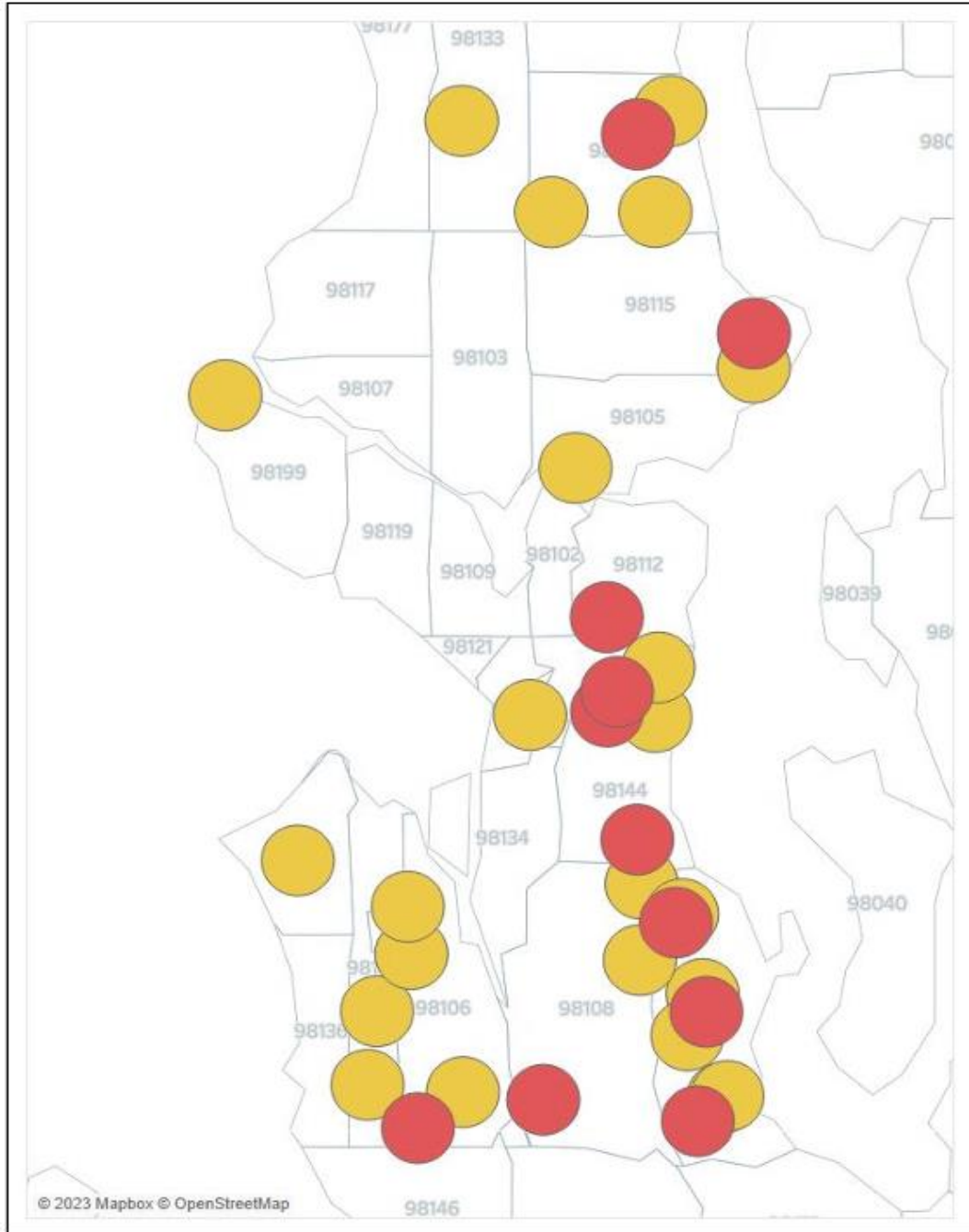
The DEEL Director (or designee) will review the written appeal and may request additional information from the applicant. A written decision from the DEEL Director (or designee) will be sent within five (5) business days of the receipt of the appeal. This decision is final.

APPENDIX A –

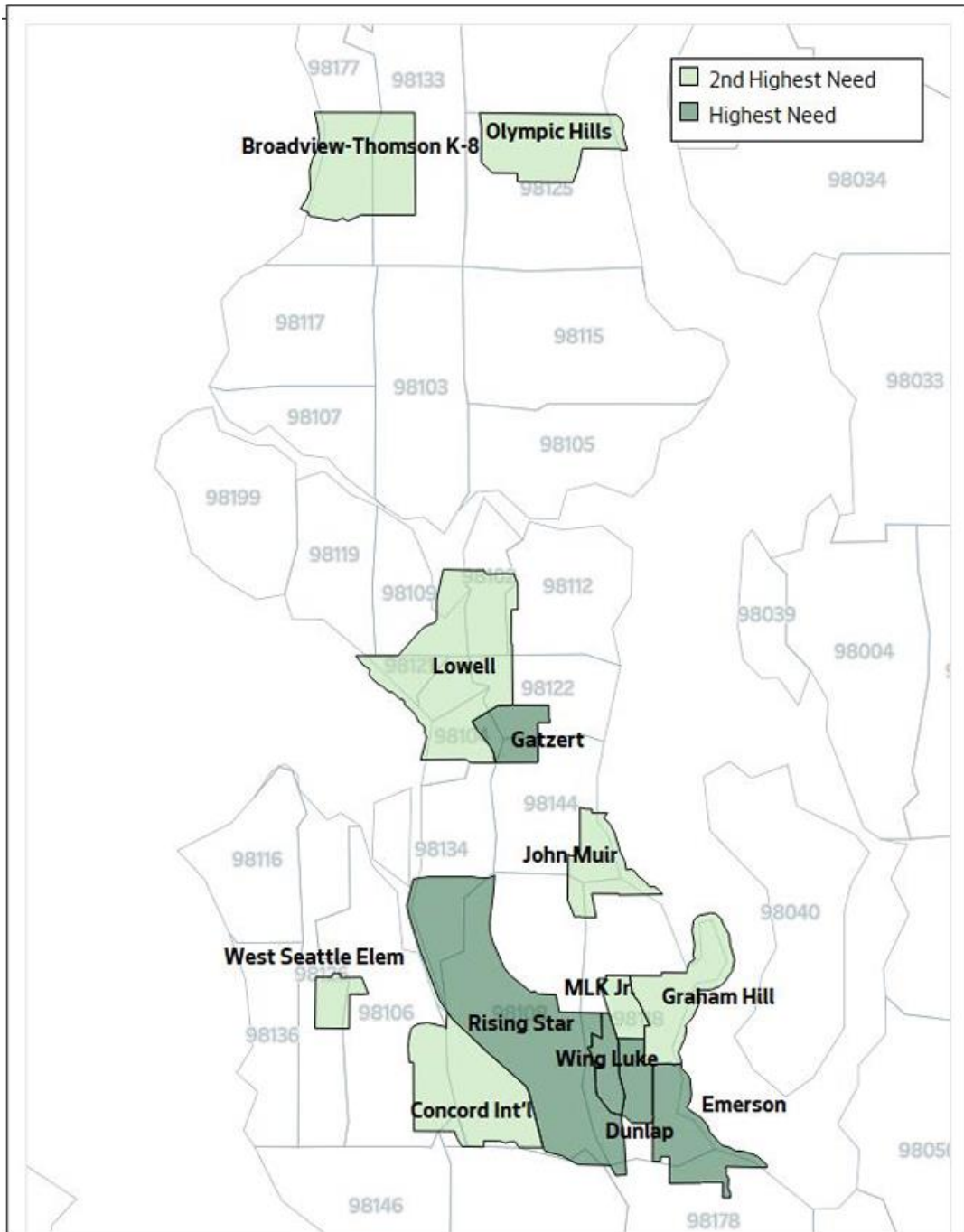
Geographic areas of need for City-funded preschool

Yellow: Represents the .5mile radius around a current SPP location that has sufficient enrollment which may allow for an additional SPP classroom to also become sufficiently enrolled.

Red: Represents the .5mile radius around a current SPP location that is not fully enrolled.



Top two Seattle Public School Equity Tiers¹, demonstrating population of children furthest from educational justice.



¹ <https://mysps.seattleschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Overview-of-School-Equity-Tiers-2022-23-1.pdf>



APPENDIX B – Technical Assistance

SPP Pre-Development Services Program

Pre-Development Services are available to aid in expanding or improving your preschool facilities.

How can this support my work?

If you are considering an expansion or development project, this program will match you with a local architecture firm with experience in child care facility design. The firm assigned to you will provide DEEL-approved services related to planning for SPP facilities development projects. Projects that have been approved in the past include:

- Assessing the feasibility of facility expansion ideas
- Developing design options that fit your needs
- Developing initial drawings and cost estimates to get your project ready for construction
- Providing expert advice and partnership in the planning stages of SPP-related construction work you are considering

Who is eligible to apply?

Family child care, center, and school-based providers who contract with DEEL as providers of SPP or SPP Pathway.

How do I apply and receive services?

To apply for Pre-Development Services, contact Jenny Choi Jenny.Choi@seattle.gov to discuss your pre-development needs. You will then be asked to fill out a short online application at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PreDevServices>

Within two weeks, DEEL will decide on your application. If approved, DEEL will work with you and the architectural firm to develop a scope of work. DEEL will then execute a contract with the firm to do the work. You will receive a copy of any plans or assessments completed by the firm.

Who is providing the services?

Three highly qualified firms, listed below, have been pre-screened by DEEL and will provide services for this program. All firms have experience in childcare facility design and working with non-profit organizations.

- Anjali Grant Design - <http://www.anjaligrant.com/>
- CAST Architecture - <https://www.castarchitecture.com/>
- SABArchitects - <http://sabarch.com/>