

P-Patch Community Gardening Program

Basic Garden Design

Tip

PP301

1/29/19

P-Patch TIPS are reference documents that address topics related to the development and ongoing management of P-Patch Community Gardens.

There is no blueprint for designing your P-Patch. Each one is unique to the community and neighborhood in which it resides. However, there are a few guiding principles that all P-Patches need to follow in order to be successful. Below are some required features and important considerations and suggestions for designing your P-Patch community garden.



New Holly Youth & Family design meeting

Design Workshops

Basic Process

The design process is an important time for building community and envisioning a space that will serve and be welcomed by the neighborhood. The conversations that neighbors have with each other help build relationships and allow the group to uncover shared dreams and priorities and to hear from each other if there are differing ideas.

Most projects follow a 3 meeting process:

- #1—share ideas, brainstorm possibilities, creative imagining
- #2—give input on 3 different alternatives developed using the ideas from meeting #1. This is an important time to share ideas about the specific things that people like and dislike about the 3 different alternatives. The final design can include favorite elements of all three.
- #3—review and refine a final schematic design that was developed using the feedback on the 3 alternatives at meeting #2
 - Generally over 2-3 month period
 - Try and be very involved events to get people engaged— consider providing ways for people to give input and provide ideas/feedback in addition to the meetings, in case not all neighbors can attend the meeting (e.g. post alternative designs at the garden, meeting results, etc. via email, or any social media outlets the garden uses and take feedback this way also)

Outreach

- Important to do outreach prior to events
- See **P-Patch Outreach Tip Sheet PP101**

Design Drawing Phases

A **schematic design** is a conceptual drawing that illustrates how your site would look with a particular garden design. It does not usually include specific details (e.g. exact number of plots, materials, or precise measurements).

The **design development** schematic design is developed and refined further with the addition of specific details, measurements, materials, and the design is modified as needed to address challenges with site, budget, etc. During this period, the design will often be referred to by percent of developed design up to 100% (e.g. “30% D.D.,” “60% D.D.”)

Once the plans are at 100% DD they become what are called **construction documents** which is the package of technical drawings that includes all the plans and detail drawings needed to construct the project.

- They can help develop basic cost estimates to build the final garden as represented by the sche-



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Landscape Architects/Designers

A design professional (LA or Landscape designer) can be very helpful during the design process. What is their role? Their responsibility is to:

- Facilitate the 3 meeting design process.
- Collect input from the community and using their design experience, they will incorporate community ideas to create 3 alternative schematic designs
- Refine the 3 alternatives, using community input to create a final schematic design.
- When it is time to move from the design to the building phase, they can be contracted to turn the schematic design into more detailed “construction documents” that a contractor or volunteer might use for permitting and construction. Sometimes they can help with the permitting process.
- How much do they cost?

The cost will depend a lot on the scope of work. You will want to be clear about the scope of work including what exactly you want them to be responsible for in terms of process and final products. For facilitation of a 3-meeting community design process, including development of 3 alternatives, a final schematic and accompanying cost estimate, the cost will usually range from \$15,000—\$25,000.

- Great info about selecting and working with a landscape architect: <http://wasla.memberclicks.net/public-information>
- How to find?

Placing an ad or request for qualifications in the Daily Journal of Commerce is the most basic way to find them. In addition you can directly invite firms to apply and spread the word via listservs, word of mouth, etc. Interview, look for firms/LA's that have specific development with public community design processes <http://wasla.memberclicks.net/public-information>

Great info about selecting and working with an LA

Design Considerations

Flow. Site lines through the space help with safety. Flow should be contiguous, include defined boundaries, and allow for regular interaction between gardeners.

Safety. “Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design”

- Partly “undone”, providing space for elements to emerge organically over time by the gardeners themselves

Building Community: Design with the understanding that it will get built by both community members and professional contractors, depending on the garden element. Community hands on work fosters community cohesion, self-reliance, community investment in the space, and innovative ideas.

Guidance:

- Build with Reused, Recycled, & Sustainable Materials.
- Build with permeable surfaces.
- Design to foster community cohesion, self-reliance, and innovative ideas.
- Think holistically, this includes land, design, building, and organizing criteria. <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/programs-and-services/p-patch-community-gardening/toolkit-for-gardeners/create-a-new-p-patch-community-garden>
- Make sure everyone has a chance to help shape the garden. Refer to [P-Patch Tip Sheet 512: Making Decisions](#)
- For a full picture of steps, [Refer to Creating a New P-Patch Flow Chart.](#)
- Outreach – the core group should ensure that all surrounding neighbors are aware of the P-Patch project. The core group should also demonstrate that they have made contact with local groups (schools, churches, businesses) Refer to [P-Patch Tip Sheet PP101: Inclusive Outreach & Engagement](#)
- In order to insure everyone has a chance to help shape the garden, each decision, no matter how small, should involve inclusion of as many people as possible. Inclusive decision-making results in better decisions, community building, and a higher degree of participation and commitment from everyone. Refer to [P-Patch Tip Sheet PP512: Making Decisions](#)



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Leaving Room To Grow

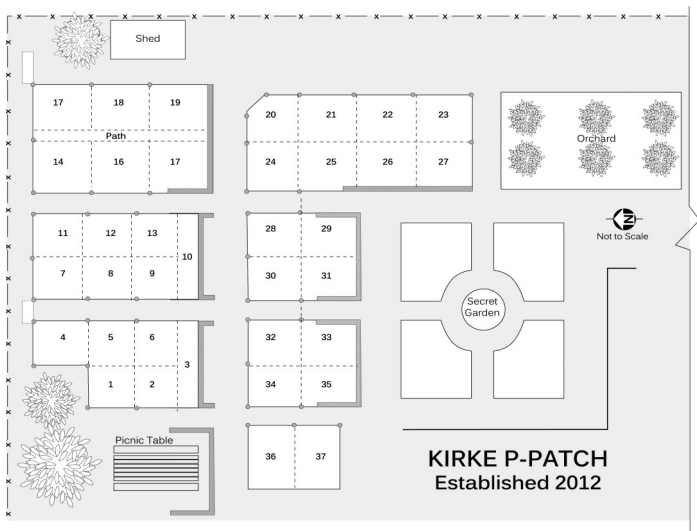
P-Patches are working gardens and as such are always changing and growing, it is a good idea to leave your P-Patch “unfinished” in the original design. Provide some extra room for adding new plots, building additional features, or creating art displays. This allows the garden to grow organically over time by the gardeners themselves.

Neighborhood

Remember that P-Patches should act as a community amenity for the entire neighborhood and should be culturally and neighborhood appropriate. It is best to design the garden to be an inviting place for people to walk through, visit, enjoy, and encourage community mixing. A garden design can foster this by including open spaces, sitting areas, and highly visible pathways. It can also be helpful to include signage and information about the history of the garden, gardening in general, and the broader community.

Environmental

P-Patches should also foster a healthy urban ecology. This can be achieved by maximizing permeability whenever possible (limit cement use). Including some food and shelter areas for wildlife, such as bird houses is also a good design principle. Built with Reused, Recycled, & Sustainable Materials whenever possible



Barton Street P Patch



Features
This garden is built around a large, central gathering space for community events, etc. Sensory gardens surround the gathering space.

Cost Estimate: \$30,542

Garden Plot Count:
Large: 31
Small: 5
Total Plot Area: 3,982 SF
*Bed counts are approximate

Option B - The Splash

Required Elements

There are a few elements that P-Patch requires in all community gardens.

Refer to [P-Patch Tip Sheet PP301:Basic Garden Design](#)

- **Spaces for growing safe, culturally appropriate food.** Overall garden size should be at least 4000 sf in residential areas; 2000 sf minimum in dense areas. These should include growing plots (individual, youth and other groups, giving gardens) and/or shared areas. Individual plots should be uniform in size.
 - Garden Bed Edging
- **Accessible Requirements put forth in [P-Patch Tip Sheet PP307](#)**
- **Common areas:**
 - Community Gathering Area
 - Seating
 - Tool Storage
 - Compost Bins
 - Collective Growing Areas
- **Fencing** or plantings to delineate whole P-Patch
- **Water Source:** Metering and Bibs-follow *P-Patch Water System Design Specifications*
- **Safety:** Design to ensure safety. Vistas should be open, well ventilated and clear. Open space should surround elements like compost bins and tool sheds.
- **Tool Storage.** Should provide enough storage to meet the needs of all gardeners.
- **Compost Area.** Needs to be located on-site and adequate for composting all garden clippings.



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