

Your name, with Food Lifeline (skip your title, etc)- a hunger-relief organization putting food on the shelves of food banks and meal programs across Western Washington, including here in King County.

Community garden volunteers from Seattle, etc.

I also have a personal interest in this plan as a citizen ^{gardeners and are concerned} interested with finding alternatives to the industrial food system and alternatives to Big Agriculture

We, at Food Lifeline, want to say thank you to Councilmember Phillips and Councilmember Hague for sponsoring this legislation to move the community garden plan forward, and to the Inter-Departmental Team for their work to put together a thoughtful and efficient plan, including meeting with community groups.

As the plan quoted from the American Gardening Association, gardens have the power to bring communities together while producing nutritious food, and can potentially reduce family food budgets during these tough economic times. We appreciated that in the initial legislation, the Council expressed ~~our~~ concern for the growing number of individuals and families in our county that are struggling to put food on the table and listed "communities with high levels of poverty" as one preference for determining garden locations. We would just encourage you to continue to follow this intent in the implementation plan and next steps.

It was exciting to see the list of County properties that are potentially available for community gardens. In addition to the location, district, and other information provided in the chart, we would ask that the percentage of residents in nearby neighborhoods that are living at or near the federal poverty level also be included for consideration.

Additionally, we recognize that this plan must be implemented within a tight county budget, and that it is wise for the County to charge usage fees. However, we hope that the cost recovery analysis for garden fees can provide a fee structure that will encourage organizations to make garden plots available to low income families at reasonable rates or to encourage gardeners to donate a portion of the produce to local hunger-relief organizations.

Thank you, again, for all that you are doing to connect residents with the ability to grow nutritious food and for the opportunity to testify. (Depending on how much time this full testimony takes, you can also add one more feel good thought.)

which is quite flawed and unsustainable

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