



Legislation Text

File #: 2010-0266, **Version:** 2

Clerk 04/30/2010

A MOTION requesting the executive to develop an implementation plan for creating and managing community gardens on King County owned property to grow fruits and vegetables for the purposes of improving public health, building community and addressing hunger.

WHEREAS, economic conditions are creating a growing hunger crisis, and

WHEREAS, food banks across the nation have experienced an unprecedented increase in the demand for services, and

WHEREAS, Northwest Harvest reports a twenty seven percent increase in the number of meals served and visits to its network of food banks between March 2008 and March 2010, and

WHEREAS, according to recent United States Department of Agriculture figures and research from the American Dietetic Association, almost eighty percent of adults are not eating the recommended levels of fruits and vegetables, and

WHEREAS, low-income communities are more likely to lack access to fresh organic produce, and

WHEREAS, the county has adopted a Public Health Operational Master Plan to address nutrition related diseases such as obesity and diabetes, and

WHEREAS, the 2008 King County Comprehensive Plan directs the county to explore ways of creating and supporting community gardens, farmers markets, produce stands and other similar community-based food growing projects to provide and improve access to healthy food for all rural residents, and

WHEREAS, as demonstrated locally and in the White House vegetable garden, community gardens are

a way to educate children about healthful, locally grown fruit and vegetables at a time when obesity and diabetes have become a national concern, and

WHEREAS, community gardens serve the nutritional needs of the community by providing produce for gardeners, food banks and others in need, and

WHEREAS, community gardening improves food security, neighborhood improvement, recreation and open space, and

WHEREAS, growing food locally has a positive impact on our region's carbon footprint, and

WHEREAS, there are many successful models of community gardening within King County and organizations working to encourage locally grown produce, community gardening and urban food production, and

WHEREAS, King County hosts three successful community gardens in the county park system: Marymoor; White Center Heights; and North Green River, and

WHEREAS, King County owns many other properties, some of which might contain areas suitable for growing fruits and vegetables, and

WHEREAS, Ordinance 16263 required the executive to conduct an inventory of county-owned or managed facilities and properties for the purpose of evaluating their feasibility for use in programs such as pea patches and community gardens, which the executive completed in March, 2010;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. The executive is requested to develop an implementation plan for creating and managing community gardens on King County owned property to grow fruits and vegetables for the purposes of improving public health, building community and addressing hunger. The community gardens shall serve individuals and community organizations seeking to produce locally grown fruits and vegetables for their own consumption or for charitable distribution. The implementation plan shall be developed in consultation with an advisory council made up of representatives of, but not limited to, Public Health - Seattle & King County Washington

State University, King County agricultural commission, food banks, gardening organizations, schools, homeless shelters and advocates for ensuring that all residents of King County have access to nutritious fresh food. The implementation plan shall seek to develop an approach for matching those who are interested in participating in a community garden with available county owned land. The implementation plan shall include a financial plan. In developing the implementation plan, the executive shall consider the many different, successful models for community gardening, including, but not limited to, the city of Seattle's P-Patch program, Solid Ground's Lettuce Link, urbangardenshare.org and other models that involve partnerships with nonprofit organizations, food banks, gardening groups, schools, day cares and homeless shelters. In developing the implementation plan, the executive shall seek opportunities for grant funding for implementing a community garden program.

The implementation plan shall include a proposed process for selecting garden sites. The selection process shall give priority to community garden sites with:

1. High levels of poverty; and
2. A community organization interested in sponsoring the community garden with the capacity to assume a leadership role in its development and ongoing operation; and
3. Readiness of the garden site and identified financial or in-kind resources to create any needed garden infrastructure.

B. The executive is requested to electronically file with the clerk of the council by November 22, 2010, the implementation plan developed under subsection A. of this motion.