

Q: What are the nearest Project Grow sites?

A: Leslie Science and Nature Center and Northside park are the two nearest Project Grow sites.

Q: Are there any historic precedents of individuals or groups changing the use of city parkland without public or staff input? If so, how have these situations been handled in the past?

A: Over the last 10 – 15 years staff are not aware of any examples where a significant portion of land has had its use changed without public or staff input. When a new permanent/semi-permanent use is proposed for park space staff and public input is an integral part of the process.

For example, in 2010, Petanque courts were added to a section of Burns Park. The courts were a donation from two residents, Howard Ando and Jane Wilkinson. They came to PAC to share information about the game and why Burns Park had potential to be a good location before any action or construction in the park took place. A public meeting was held, inviting residents living within ¼ mile of Burns Park, to hear about the proposal. Ultimately the proposal was accepted, and the courts are there today.

A larger scale example of changing the use of a portion of land was reserving a location in Veterans Memorial Park for the Ann Arbor Skatepark. A public process was followed that resulted in the location being chosen and held until a certain future date for the purpose of building a skatepark.

Another item on your agenda today is a resolution to consider changing the configuration of the tennis courts at Burns Park to include pickleball. In this case the proposed change was shared with the public, a survey conducted, and a presentation made at a prior PAC meeting before any decision on the proposed change in use is made.

Smaller scale examples of changes in parks that are approved by staff happen regularly through the Adopt-a-Park program. Residents wishing to plant flower beds and do landscaping projects at their neighborhood parks work collaboratively with City staff to have the proposal approved. This allows staff to review the types of plants, and potential maintenance concerns before any change is made.

Q: Our other food forest is a mulched-bed planting that could revert to the dominant paradigm (mown lawn) easily in the event of abandonment. Including rocks and raised beds makes any reversion more involved. Is there a long-term bonding mechanism in place that can ensure the city is not on the hook to pay for the potential remediation of this effort?

A: Should the Food Forest move forward, staff recommend a formal agreement be established. The agreement can include language regarding abandonment, insurance provisions, and maintenance responsibilities.

Q: What is your normal process for selecting a site for a project like this? Does the site selected by the NFF folks meet your criteria?

A: The City has a formal agreement with Project Grow that includes a process for selecting additional Project Grow sites. The agreement is included in your packet, but the relevant section for this question is laid out here:

EXHIBIT C

PUBLIC PROCESS FOR ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY GARDEN SITES OR EXTENSIONS OF EXISTING SITES

- 1. City staff shall meet with the Executive Director of Project Grow when either citizens request a community garden space for a particular park, or when Project Grow requests that a park area be considered.*
- 2. The site shall be evaluated jointly by City Parks and Recreation staff and the Project Grow Executive Director to determine if the site is appropriate, including size, identification of any potential conflicting use, existing easements, availability of water, access to and through site, and parking.*
- 3. Once a proposed community garden extension or new community garden site has been identified, a public neighborhood meeting will be held,*
- 4. A mailing will be sent to neighbors with a 1/4 miles radius of the proposed site. Project Grow will assist, where feasible, in distributing information concerning the meeting.*
- 5. A public meeting will be held, with the City Park Planner and a representative from Project Grow, jointly running the meeting.*
- 6. If the proposed garden is generally well accepted, as determined by City staff, then City staff and a representative from Project Grow will inform the Park Advisory Commission of the new garden in an informational memorandum.*
- 7. If the proposed garden is not generally well accepted, as determined by City staff, then City staff will provide PAC with a recommendation as to whether or not to proceed with the proposed site. PAC will provide a recommendation at their next available regularly scheduled meeting. The recommendation of PAC shall be final.*

Had the NFF approached the City prior to beginning construction steps 1 – 4 would have been followed. The fact that the site does not have water available nearby would have been flagged as a concern.

Q: Would the NFF Coalition need to become a registered non-profit organization in order to enter into an agreement with Parks & Rec, or can/will Parks & Rec set up agreements with individual residents?

A: The City can set up agreements with individual residents. Adopt-a-Park is an example of this, as is the Petanque court agreement referenced earlier. The NFF, if approved, is a larger scale project and exceeds a typical Adopt-a-Park project and staff recommend a formal agreement, similar in scope to the Project Grow agreement, be established.

Q: Is there a water source on site?

A: No. The current closest water line is located in Arrowood. It is a six-inch line. It is approximately 400 feet from where the Food Forest is proposed. Fees to put in a line that extends to the Food Forest are approximately:

\$805 - Water Tap Fee (1" tap)

\$2,696 - Water Capital Recovery Charge (based on ¾" meter)

\$422 - Meter Set Fee

\$2,000 - Installation of ¾" water line and spigot. (based on approximate cost of \$5 per foot)

\$5,923 - Total Water Charges

The first three charges are based on City rates and are standard fees collected whether the client is an internal or external customer. The last estimate is for park operations to install the line and includes materials, equipment and labor to install the line.