



UNIVERSITY OF
OREGON

Campus
Planning

March 20, 2025

MEMORANDUM

To: Campus Planning Committee

From: Clare Kurth, Campus Planning
Campus Planning and Facilities Management (CPFM)

Subject: **Record** of the February 28, 2025, Campus Planning Committee Meeting

Attending: Bob Choquette (Chair), Eric Alexander, Deborah Butler, Ihab Elzeyadi, Emily Eng, Mike Harwood, Shawn Kahl, Ken Kato, Diana Libuda, Erin Luedemann, Taylor McHolm, Janet Rose, Daniel Rosenberg, Hal Sadofsky, Lauren Stanfield, Rachel Withers

CPC Staff: Clare Kurth (Campus Planning)

Guests: Lauren Meyer (CPFM), Lillian Moses (Housing), Aaron Olsen (Campus Planning), Matt Roberts (Communications), Liz Thorstenson (Campus Planning)

CPC Agenda

1. Grove Community Garden Relocation Project – Introduction

The purpose of this agenda item was to introduce the Grove Community Garden Relocation project. This project will return to the committee in the future for site selection review.

CPC Staff reviewed relevant *Campus Plan* principles.

Taylor McHolm (Student Sustainability Center) provided an overview of the Grove Community Garden program, program purpose, and benefits related to students' experience on campus and graduation outcomes.

Liz Thorstenson (Campus Planning) reviewed Campus Planning requirements, current site and site features, site selection process and timeline (including stakeholder group), initial overview of potential sites, and site selection criteria.

Discussion:

The following is a summary of questions and comments from committee members and guests with clarification comments from Emily Eng (Campus Planning), McHolm, Aaron Olsen (Campus Planning), and Thorstenson:

Site Evaluation Process

- Member: How broadly have the proposed sites been shared?
 - Thorstenson: The potential site selection options were discussed within the stakeholder group and Grove Community Garden members.
 - McHolm: The process of meeting with the stakeholder group, which includes student representation, is to evaluate each site based on criteria, E.g., community proximity, cultivable land, and longevity.
- Olsen /Thorstenson: Other sites were initially considered; the sites presented were selected for initial additional consideration.

Safety and Proximity Considerations

- Members: Consider safety concerns of sites along the Willamette River, distance from campus, and proximity to the Urban Farm.
- Member: Support for sites with a greater separation from the Urban Farm to allow each to maintain its separate identity.
- Member: Consider the Grove Garden and Urban Farm should have a continuation of programs to support one another.
 - McHolm: The Grove Garden and Urban farm work together through a mutually beneficial partnership and specified programmatic differences.
- Member: Concern regarding site security near the Willamette River, the railroad tracks, the need for a locking fence due to high levels of foot traffic, and location on the edge of campus.
 - McHolm: The current Grove Garden fence is designed to limit deer intrusion rather than for site security. Preference is to not have a locking gate, as it contradicts the idea of a community garden that is accessible to everyone. The program is designed to foster mutual respect for the space from the community.
- Member: What are the safety and security concerns for the site?
 - McHolm: Safety concerns include student safety while using the site, and security of the site when not actively being used. It will be important to balance safety with usability of the space, and the importance of the garden feeling like a community space.
 - McHolm: Consider the need for providing bathroom access at sites near the railroad tracks, and the challenges of bringing in portable units (Sites A and B).

Future Development and Longevity

- Member: Consider the need for transparency with students about potential future building projects on student-led spaces.
- Member: Are the proposed sites all located within future development sites?
 - Thorstenson: Proposed sites E and G are within designated open spaces, while sites A – D, and F are within future development sites, although development is not likely on those sites in the near term.
 - Olsen: Consider the potential for future development and change on campus,

while development is not anticipated in the near term, there is always potential for change.

- Eng: The Grove Community Garden will be developed in a way that is compatible and intentional on the site selected.

Discussion of Site Options

Regarding sites A, B, and C (Willamette Natural Area and near the Millrace)

- Member: Concern regarding sites located near the Willamette River due to potential contamination from past industrial uses in the area.
- Member: Has testing for contaminants on sites near the Willamette River been conducted; will there be solar studies conducted for the preferred sites?
 - Olsen: The process of site selection is to cast a wide net. Soil testing will be conducted only if needed as applicable to the final site selected.
- Members: Consider sites with closer proximity to the Willamette River and the Millrace are a greater distance from student housing and have potential safety/security concerns.
- Guest: Consider the challenges of growing plants in some sites (E.g., Sites A, B, C, and G) due to soil quality and solar access.

Regarding Sites E (North of the Northwest Indigenous Language Institute (NILI)), and F (West side of Columbia St west of the Central Kitchen)

- Members: Consider Site E has good potential as a future pedestrian campus entryway and its alignment with UO values.
 - Member: Children at the Moss Street Children's Center (MSCC) currently visit the Grove Community Garden. Consider the benefit of Site E's close proximity to MSSC.
- Members: Support for the garden's new site to remain in the southeast or east campus area, creating a sense of safety and connection to the UO community.
- Member: Concern regarding site F, proximity to the Central Kitchen, trucks being routed near the site, and conflict with future planning needs.

Regarding site G (Southwest Campus Green)

- Guest: Consider the challenges of growing plants in some sites (E.g., Sites A, B, C, and G.) due to soil quality and solar access.
- Guest: Consider events that occur at this site that may be incompatible with the Grove Community Garden.

Action: No formal action was requested.