

## **Guiding Principles for Seattle's Open Space Plans**

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These guiding principles, taken from "Open Space Seattle 2100," a coalition of interests formulating plans for Seattle's integrated open space program, define best practices for the social, ecological, and economic utility of open space protection.

### **1. Regional Responsiveness**

Consider Seattle's role as an ecological, economic, and cultural crossroads; its location in one of the world's great estuaries and between two dramatic mountain ranges; its critical position as a threshold to two major watersheds (Cedar and Green/Duwamish); and its relationship to salt and fresh water bodies throughout the city.

### **2. integrated and Multi-functional**

integrate a variety of types of open space within a unifying, coherent structure. Incorporate considerations for streets, creeks, parks, habitat, urban forests, trails, drainage, shorelines, views, commercial and civic spaces, back yards and buildings. Consider layering multiple functions and uses within green spaces to create high-functioning, high value open spaces.

### **3. Equity and Accessibility**

Within a network of open spaces provide equitable access for all persons to a variety of outdoor and recreational experiences. Distribute appropriate open space types to every neighborhood, in order to address the needs of diverse population groups. Prioritize public access to water.

### **4. Connectivity/Coherence**

Create a wholly connected system that facilitates non-motorized movement, enhances habitat through connectivity, links diverse neighborhoods, and is easy to navigate and understand. Connect these in-city amenities to surrounding communities, trails and public lands.

### 5. Quality, Beauty, Identity and Rootedness

Use Seattle's many natural strengths to create an exemplary, signature open space system. Build on intrinsic qualities, both natural and cultural; reflect, respond to and interpret geographic, ecological, aesthetic and cultural contexts; address emotional and spiritual needs; and inspire a deep connection to place.

### 6. Ecological Function and Integrity

Expand the quantity and quality of natural systems in the city: Provide quality habitat for all appropriate species, with a special emphasis on the waters' edge. Design for hydrological health (water temperature, water quality, water regimes, storm water), and consider appropriate water and resource conservation strategies. Connect to regional ecosystems in order to achieve integrity, resiliency and biodiversity in ecological systems in the face of climate change.

### 7. Health and Safety

Continue to make the city a safe and healthful place to live. Reduce the risk of natural hazards (slides, flooding, earthquake, soil and water contamination) while reclaiming and treating previously toxic sites. Provide multiple opportunities for exercise, physical activity, and a connection to nature to be integrated into daily lives.

### 8. Feasibility, Flexibility and Stewardship

While visionary, the plan should be lasting and feasible, with a complementary set of near-term implementation strategies that includes mechanisms for both public and private investment that are achievable in incremental steps and adaptable over time (e.g. codes, funding sources and incentives). It should be maintainable, inspiring shared stewardship between public agencies, private businesses, and individual citizens to foster pride, purpose and community.