

THIS IS A COPY OF THE APPLICATION SUBMITTED TO THE PARKS DEPARTMENT BY THE WEDGWOOD COMMUNITY COUNCIL PARKS COMMITTEE ON SEPTEMBER 17, 2012, FOR THE INVERNESS RAVINE PARK TRAIL PROJECT. THE FINAL APPLICATION IS SUBMITTED THROUGH A WEB INTERFACE.

Project Name: No more than six words: Inverness Ravine Park Trail

Project Type: Development

Project Location: Insert address. Please remember that Development Projects must be on public property.: 8619 45th Ave NE, 98115

Attach Site Location Map here: Inverness Ravine Trail - Vicinity Map.pdf

Attach Site Photos here (up to 4 photos): Inverness Photo 1.JPG, Inverness Photo 2.JPG, Inverness Photo 3.jpg

Property Owner: If known, name and contact information for private owner, or corporation or business; or public entity of project to be developed/acquired: Seattle Parks and Recreation, Seattle Department of Transportation

Neighborhood: Wedgwood

Brief Project Description: Please give a brief description of the project in 100 words or less: Wedgwood Community Council proposes a nature trail through the currently-inaccessible Inverness Ravine Park, providing a path through the woods along a Thornton Creek tributary that provides opportunities for exercise while creating a pedestrian link from Wedgwood to Inverness, the Burke-Gilman Trail, and Lake Washington. This proposal includes permitting, design, and construction of 2,000 feet of trail, four access points, benches, and signage. The trail will create usable open space in Wedgwood (deficient in open space per the 2008 Parks & Green Spaces Levy), promotes environmental awareness of Thornton Creek, and satisfies identified needs in the Wedgwood Vision Plan (adopted 2010).

Anticipated Project Costs: \$301,044

Additional Project Funding: Amount of additional leveraging, grants: None at this time.

Attach Budget here: Estimate.pdf

Proposal Organization: Wedgwood Community Council (WCC)

Contact Person: David Grant

Home or Work E-Mail Address: wedgwoodparks@gmail.com

Project Goals: In 500 words or less, Describe the project in more detail. What is the intent or goal of the project, e.g., expand an existing park, improve trails or bikeways, habitat restoration or the implementation of sustainable energy practices? How did the idea for the project originate and

evolve.: The Inverness Ravine Park Trail project will address our community's desire for a more natural, less programmed open space amenity in our neighborhood. Seattle Parks has identified Wedgwood as being under-served in open space amenities. The only usable park space Wedgwood currently has is Dahl Playfield, which provides active-use amenities such as ball fields, a playground, a skate park, etc., but lacks quiet, natural open space. Our community is fortunate to have such a resource in Inverness Ravine Park, but that park is currently overgrown and inaccessible.

This project proposes to make Inverness Ravine Park accessible to the public by providing a pedestrian trail through the ravine and to restore the ravine's precious native ecology by removing invasive species and supplementing the existing native plants with additional plantings. The gravel trail will run along an existing watercourse in the bottom of the ravine, well below surrounding homes, and will provide an experience that is in dramatic contrast to the surrounding neighborhoods. The visitor will enter a natural realm that is quiet, cool, and lush. Several "pullouts" with seating will be provided so that one can stop and immerse themselves in the setting.

The Inverness Ravine Park is two blocks from Thornton Creek Elementary School and three other grade schools are nearby. Having access to a tributary of Thornton Creek will provide an educational resource for these schools. This project will also make a link between the Inverness neighborhood and the elementary schools that serve it (Thornton Creek and View Ridge) so that children can walk to school. Elementary/k-8 students who live within one mile of their school (i.e. Thornton Creek Elementary students living in Inverness) are not eligible for transportation services, so the opening of Inverness Ravine provides a much-needed connection between students and school. Additionally, interpretive signage will be provided so that school children and the general public can learn about watershed's hydrology and ecology.

Inverness Ravine is currently a significant barrier between the Wedgwood and Inverness neighborhoods. Completing this missing link in northeast Seattle's pedestrian circulation system will allow residents of Wedgwood to make connections to a regional trail (the Burke-Gilman), and to Lake Washington at Matthews Beach Park. Completing this link will also allow residents of the Inverness neighborhood to walk to basic services in Wedgwood's commercial core. The opening of the ravine to pedestrian use will not only satisfy the goals of the Wedgwood Vision Plan, address a shortage of open space in the area, and provide opportunities for exercise and improved walkability in northeast Seattle, but it is also consistent with the City's 2007 Urban Forest Management Plan (Goals A-4, B-1, C-1, and C-2) and the City's 2009 Pedestrian Master Plan.

Project's Level of Readiness: In 100 words or less, is the project in the idea stage or is there a professionally developed scope of work or a developed plan? (Please attach your project's site plan below if available.): WCC has completed the conceptual development phase. Should Opportunity Funds be awarded, the WCC will assist the Parks Department with the formal design and outreach phases.

Project's Site Plan - Attachment: Inverness Ravine Trail - Diagram.pdf

a. Does the project demonstrate a high degree of neighborhood support or involvement as demonstrated through a public review process and/or is the project consistent with approved plans,

such as a neighborhood, community council or other recent planning documents?: The project has demonstrated a high degree of neighborhood support or involvement as demonstrated through a public review process.

Please list out plan(s) and describe in 200 words or less neighborhood support/involvement.: This project is a response to the direction given in the Wedgwood Vision Plan (adopted 2010), which suggests the creation of “a creekside nature trail within the Wedgwood neighborhood” within the plan’s Open Space and Community Amenities section. This project has been presented to the public at several well-attended community meetings and on the WCC website (www.wedgwoodcc.org), where its posts have been viewed more than 1,200 times. The feedback received from the community has generally been positive, citing the trail’s potential to provide opportunities for exercise and connections between Inverness and retail in Wedgwood. Some feedback has been given expressing concerns about impacts to habitat and to the privacy of homes that bound the ravine, issues which will need to be addressed during the design and outreach phases of the project. The proposal was presented to the Northeast District Committee at their September 6, 2012 meeting where they formally endorsed the project. The Policy Committee for Feet First, a local nonprofit organization working to improve walkability throughout Washington, has also unanimously approved the project.

Attachment: Support Letters - A maximum of two letters of support for the project may be attached.:
Letter of Support - NEDC.pdf, Letter of Support - Feet First.pdf

e. Does the proposal restore or significantly extend the life of a current park or facility?: Developed Parks: The project repairs, replaces or upgrades aging infrastructure or facilities, extending their life at least 20 years.

Please describe in 200 words or less.: This project makes the currently inaccessible Inverness Ravine Park into usable park space, and therefor restores the park’s functions. Additionally, a portion of this project’s work will be to remove invasive species from the ravine and restore its native ecology.

f. Does the project provide health benefits or opportunities? (e.g. trails, bike paths, open space): c. The project provides improved opportunity for low intensity exercise or access to healthy food.

Please describe in 200 words or less.: This project provides opportunities for exercise and relaxation, both important contributors to health, within a forested ravine overlooking Lake Washington. The centerpiece of this project is a pedestrian trail almost half a mile in length which climbs 130 vertical feet from Inverness up to Wedgwood, providing opportunities for exercise within the park. Because the trail will open a missing pedestrian link between two communities (Wedgwood and Inverness) it will make longer pedestrian trips possible, and make connections to important fitness resources in Mathews Beach Park and the Burke Gilman trail. The ravine is also a very calming environment – lush and cool, with the sound of flowing water – that will provide meditative and relaxation health benefits to the visitor. Furthermore, according to the City’s Urban Forest Management Plan (page 21), “Trees have been shown to improve hospital recovery times, reduce air pollution and stress on children with asthma, and improve children’s performance in school... Natural areas in City parks give urban residents access to

trails and environmental learning opportunities that help keep us connected...The presence of many trees can often define a neighborhood, and conversely, the absence of trees can do the same.”

g. Does the project take advantage of an opportunity that will be lost unless action is taken?

ACQUISITION ONLY: d. No threat of loss of funding, opportunity or is a City Property.

Please describe in 200 words or less.: The Inverness Ravine Park was deeded to the City in 1972 by Crawford and Conover, Inc. “for park and recreational purposes.” By sitting idle and inaccessible since that time, the Inverness Ravine Park is an unutilized asset in the park system. If access to the park is not developed the park will remain unavailable to the public, contrary to the park’s intent, and the potential of the park will not be realized. In that regard, not proceeding with the opening of this park will represent an opportunity lost.

h. Does the project demonstrate new and/or creative methods to meet the community's need for parks and green spaces (sustainable energy practices, etc...)?: a. The project follows the Living Building Challenge's (LBC) Landscape & Infrastructure Typology, Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) or provides Sustainable Energy Practices

Please describe in 500 words or less.: This project helps to address a community identified within the City’s Parks and Recreation 2006 Development Plan and Gap Analysis as deficient in open space by making inaccessible park property accessible. Furthermore, the goals of this project are closely aligned with several areas of focus for the Sustainable Sites Initiative – particularly the control of invasive species and health and well-being of site users. This project satisfies the prerequisites of the SITES Certification Program as stated in SITES Guidelines and Performance Benchmarks 2009 and should be eligible to pursue certification when open enrollment begins in 2013.

i. How does the project leverage or have the potential to leverage other resources through the actions of other public agencies, funding from public, private or philanthropic partners, and/or in-kind contributions of time and energy from citizen volunteers?: d. No additional funding or contributions in hand.

Attach Funding Plan here.: -

Please describe in 200 words or less.: As a forest restoration project, this project has the potential to generate significant time and energy contributions from citizens and partnering opportunities with stewardship organizations such as Green Seattle Partnership, Forterra, and EarthCorps. The ravine is already an identified Green Seattle Partnership Site, and based on the high level of community interest in the project to-date, WCC believes there is an untapped volunteer base sufficient to begin active restoration of the ravine in cooperation with Green Seattle Partnership.

j. What potential effects does the project have on the City’s maintenance and operating costs?: a. No net increase in the City’s maintenance and operating costs.

Please describe in 200 words or less.: Due to the passive nature of the amenities proposed for this project (trail, seating, signage) and the predominance of mature, native vegetation, maintenance and operation costs are expected to be low. This project has the potential to generate volunteer interest which might allow for community involvement in the maintenance of the park and restoration of the native understory. Maintenance activities are expected to be safe, simple activities such as weeding, spreading mulch, etc., which can be safely performed by volunteers.