

# GROUNDSWELL NORTHWEST

## 2014 NEWS & ANNUAL REPORT

### BALLARD OPEN SPACE PLAN

by David Folweiler

Groundswell NW is in the midst of a strategic planning process--a response to the abundant residential and commercial development of our formerly quiet and sleepy part of Seattle. Tower cranes, new large buildings, and building permits in Ballard seem to outnumber the rats in my garage – we must be in need of re-evaluation!

In reaction to these dramatic changes in our neighborhood and the pressure it places on existing open space, Groundswell NW conducted an update of the Ballard

Open Space Plan (BOSP) in 2014. To assist in the process, we applied for a Department of Neighborhoods Matching Fund Grant. We were blessed with grant approval and hired the firm,

Site Story, to assist with the update of the 1996 Ballard Open Space Plan which was authored by current and former Groundswell NW board members Dave Boyd and Davidya Kasperzyk.

We recruited a team of volunteers to serve as our steering committee and had over a dozen people come together as the Ballard Open Space Committee (BOSC). We had representation from East Ballard to Sunset Hill to Olympic Manor and Crown Hill. Our study area is the Ballard District, extending from the ship canal to Carkeek Park, west to the Salish Sea, and east to 3rd and 8th Aves NW. The BOSC met with Site Story's team to develop a framework and method of evaluation. We hosted an open house in the spring and sought input about people's neighborhoods and where they saw deficits and opportunities. We received a lot of great



BOSP Discovery Day  
(Photo courtesy of Dawn Hemminger)

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### SEATTLE VOTERS APPROVE SEATTLE PARK DISTRICT

by Frana Milan

On August 5, 2014, Seattle voters approved the creation of the Seattle Park District, a move that will provide more permanent and stable funding to take care of Seattle's many parks, green spaces, community centers, recreation programs, and other facilities. The Seattle Park District is technically an independent entity. It will be governed by a board, which is comprised of the members of the City Council, and will contract with Seattle Parks and Recreation to maintain and operate the parks system.



With a capital levy expiring in 2014 and shrinking annual operating funds coming from the city's general fund, the Mayor and City Council concurred with a citizens committee, which recommended moving to a metropolitan parks district, and put the measure before voters over the summer.

The park district will collect \$47.9 million in the first year, which translates to an estimated property tax rate of \$0.33 per \$1,000 of assessed value. In other words, for a home valued at \$440,000, \$145 of a homeowner's property taxes will go towards parks.

There will also be a Citizens Oversight Committee that will make recommendations about how funds are allocated, review spending and performance, and shape future investment in Seattle's parks system. The Oversight Committee will include representatives from the Parks Board, other city commissions, and additional community members.

Groundswell NW supported the creation of the Seattle Park District and is seeking a spot on the Citizens Oversight Committee. As the park district ramps up, we'll keep up our advocacy at the city level, always with an eye on GNW's founding idea to have green

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## SUNSET HILL-SHILSHOLE GATEWAY CROSSING IMPROVEMENTS

by Dave Boyd

For most of 2014, work to improve the connection between Sunset Hill and Shilshole was primarily "maintenance mode." In addition to independent weeding by volunteer extraordinaire Ann Sauer, several neighborhood work parties met to weed the landscaped areas at the 36th Avenue NW median. Toward the end of 2014, work finally began on crossing improvements at 36th and NW 62nd Street, funded by a successful 2013 application to the City's Neighborhood Parks and Streets Fund.

The improvements, proposed by neighbors, reviewed by the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) and prioritized by the Ballard District Council, include curb ramps on both sides of the crossing and a pedestrian refuge at the north end of the median. Now those crossing this important connection will have an accessible route, better visibility and a safe spot to wait for a break in traffic at the busy arterial.

Stay tuned for spring work parties to keep the landscaped areas looking good!



AUGUST 2014 WORK PARTY: Ann Sauer, foreground, (left to right) Gwen Oaksmith, Dave Boyd, Coreen Olden, John Keating, Renee Dagseth and Vivian MacKay. (Photo by Joyce Ford)

## 2014 GROUNDSWELL NW UPDATES

Groundswell NW thanks everyone who attended our Annual Meeting on April 8, 2014 with **Mayor Ed Murray** at the Ballard Landmark Library. The mayor graciously met with our board and the community to discuss issues such as walkability and future funding of parks and green spaces. A lively question and answer session with the community followed the mayor's presentation. Also present were displays by local parks and habitat organizations. In addition to a question-and-answer with the mayor, Groundswell NW presented our annual "**Local Heroes**" awards, which recognize neighborhood citizens' efforts to create and enhance parks, public spaces, and habitat in our community. The 2014 local heroes were **JENNIFER LITOWSKI** and the Ballard Greenways for their work to create safe routes to bike and walk in the neighborhood, and **LUKE MCGUFF** and the Friends of North Beach Park for their work to restore this neighborhood's habitat area. Notice a local hero in your neighborhood? Please send us your local hero nomination to: [groundswellnw@gmail.com](mailto:groundswellnw@gmail.com).

At the meeting, we also elected our slate of officers for 2014: President David Folweiler, Secretary Jan Satterthwaite and Treasurer Frana Milan. At the end of 2014, David will be stepping down as president and Dawn Hemminger will be acting president. Many thanks to David for his efforts as GNW president!



2014 GNW ANNUAL MEETING  
Mayor Ed Murray & GNW President David Folweiler  
(Photo by Jan Satterthwaite)

### SEEKING GNW BOARD MEMBERS

Do you want to help make a difference in NW Seattle green spaces? Join the GNW board! We are a positive, committed group seeking to find ways to make NW Seattle a greener, more livable community. If you are a creative individual with skills or a passion in a variety of areas please contact GNW president elect Dawn Hemminger at: [groundswellnw@gmail.com](mailto:groundswellnw@gmail.com).

## Ballard Open Space Plan

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feedback. We conducted a survey about current usage and desires for open space. We asked a series of questions about access to open space and where people saw additional needs.

Later, volunteers canvassed the neighborhoods, going parcel to parcel to evaluate existing conditions and opportunities. Much of the data was entered into a geographic information system (GIS) via smart phone, tablet and computer, with intentions for the GIS data to live on the web, accessible by all who are interested. It will be a living document that changes with the landscape.

By the time you read this, the final report should be completed along with GIS links and accessible to you at [www.ballardopenspaceplan.org](http://www.ballardopenspaceplan.org). There will be links to the GIS data set as well. We will share some BOSP findings at GNW's 2015 annual meeting, and ask you to help us create ideas and concepts for the future of open space in Ballard. Please join us! We want your help in creating the Ballard/Crown Hill you want.

## Seattle Voters Approve Parks District

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spaces accessible to all and so that no one has to cross a busy arterial street to visit a park or green space. For more information, visit <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/legacy/committee>.

### GIVE BIG to GNW in 2015!

GiveBIG 2015 takes place on **May 5, 2015**. GiveBIG is a one-day, online charitable giving event, run through the Seattle Foundation. All donations made through the foundation's website on GiveBIG day will receive a percentage of the matching funds pool.

Get ready to support GNW  
....and giveBIG!

For more information visit:  
[www.seattlefoundation.org/givingcenter/GiveBIG](http://www.seattlefoundation.org/givingcenter/GiveBIG).



## BALLARD SELECTED FOR SECOND GREENWAY!

by Ellen Butzel

Ballard Greenways is excited to report that a new greenway is slated to be built in 2015 on 17th Ave NW from NW 90th St to Shilshole Ave NW. Greenways are residential streets with design improvements to allow more comfortable and safe travel for pedestrians and cyclists. The new greenway will connect Whitman Middle School, Salmon Bay School, Downtown Ballard and Leary Way. Ballard Greenways volunteers have worked with members of the community, City Council and SDOT to advocate for improvements at key arterial crossings along 17th Ave NW including NW 85th. Ballard Greenways also received the "2014 Amazing Advocacy Award" from Seattle Neighborhood Greenways for organizing a policy ride with Councilmember Mike O'Brien. This group rode the length of 17th Ave NW and discussed concerns as well as proposed solutions. The new greenway plan includes several of these proposed improvements.

Ballard's first greenway was built in 2013 along NW 58th St. linking Shilshole Marina through Downtown Ballard, across 15th Ave NW to 4th Ave NW at West Woodland Elementary. The greenway is used by all ages of people! SDOT reported that in 2014 the bike counter on the 58th Ave NW Greenway averaged 579 weekday riders up from 64 in 2013!



BALLARD GREENWAY (Photo courtesy of Dawn Hemmiger)

If you haven't had the chance to travel the 58th Avenue Greenway here in Ballard, give it a try. You might be surprised at how much pleasure you get saying hello to a passing neighbor. For more information or to get involved visit: [ballardgreenways.org](http://ballardgreenways.org) or [www.facebook.com/BallardGreenways](https://www.facebook.com/BallardGreenways)

## GROUNDSWELL NW 2014 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Frana Milan, Treasurer      Dawn Hemminger, Past Treasurer  
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## JOIN US MARCH 24, 2015! ANNUAL MEETING AND DESSERT SOCIAL

Featuring an Interactive Forum on  
the Ballard Open Space Plan

### Nordic Heritage Museum Auditorium

3014 NW 67th St., Seattle, WA

6:30-8:30 PM

Doors Open at 6:00 PM

address label  
placeholder

Bring your best ideas for on-the-ground action along with your sweet tooth. Refreshments and desserts provided.

## 2014 GNW MICROGRANTS SUPPORT GARDENING AND GREEN SPACE

by Frana Milan

A few years ago, Groundswell NW launched our microgrant program, thanks to seed funding from a generous anonymous donor. The program provides no-strings-attached \$500 grants to individuals and neighborhood groups to carry out projects that create or maintain public parks, habitat and green space in northwest Seattle and that involve and educate the community. GNW was delighted to award two microgrants in 2014. One microgrant supported **SAVE OUR SUBSTATIONS**, a project led by Cass Turnbull, to retain old Seattle City Light substations as public open space. There are eight substations in northwest Seattle, and although not all are suitable green space, it is anticipated that Seattle City Light will begin selling these properties as early as 2015. With the support of the GNW microgrant, Cass conducted a feasibility study looking at ways to keep these properties available to the public to enjoy as open space. Considering the rapid rate of development in Ballard, GNW heartily supported this project and will continue to be a part of the efforts of Cass and Seattle Greenspaces Coalition, which is also focused on protecting surplus City property for community use.

Groundswell NW also awarded a \$500 microgrant to the **BALLARD BOYS & GIRLS CLUB**, which used



BALLARD BOYS & GIRLS CLUB volunteers build garden plots thanks to a GNW microgrant. (Photo courtesy of Ballard Boys & Girls Club)

the funds to build raised garden beds at the club's location at 20th Ave NW and NW 64th St. The beds will be planted and tended by youth at the club, providing them with an opportunity to learn about gardening and making healthy food choices.

Do you have an open space idea that could use a boost to get off the ground? Visit: [www.groundswellnw.org/microgrants](http://www.groundswellnw.org/microgrants).



## GROUNDSWELL NW

Creating Community Parks & Habitat

February 1, 2015

Dear Groundswell NW member,

Last August, Seattle voters approved a measure to create a metropolitan parks district for the long-term operation, maintenance, and investment in our city's wonderful parks, pools and community centers.

In 2015, the City will focus on transitioning to the new Seattle Park District structure, and park district funds, which are a type of property tax, will not start to be collected until 2016. In a way, this means that Seattle taxpayers get a small break in 2015 – an estimated \$150 off their property taxes for a home valued at \$450,000, about the average price of a home in Ballard.

Whether it is advocating for the development of new parks, like the 14th Ave NW Park, shaping the future of open space in Ballard via the Ballard Open Space Plan, or simply rallying our neighbors to take care of our favorite near-by gathering place, Groundswell NW has been working for more than two decades to create and care for parks and habitat in Ballard.

As you reflect on your giving this coming year, we hope you will **consider applying that \$150 tax windfall to supporting parks and open space in your community and making a gift to Groundswell NW.**

Your support will help us in 2015 to focus on:

- Empowering and supporting neighborhood groups to develop and carry out park and open space projects through our micro-grants, mentoring, and other efforts
- Educating our local business and civic leaders, neighbors, and the city's decision-makers about opportunities to expand and enhance open space in our community

With your help, Groundswell NW will build on our 20+ years of success to make sure, as our community continues its rapid pace of change, that all of Ballard's neighborhoods will have safe, accessible and thriving parks and public spaces.

Thank you for your continued support!

David Folweiler, Groundswell NW President