

Updated August 2019

Frequently Asked Questions: the Former City Tree Nursery (Tree Nursery)

Q: What is the former City Tree Nursery?

The former City Tree Nursery is a City-owned complex consisting of buildings and land formerly used for landscaping operations. The City previously used the site to grow many of its annual and perennial plants and tree stock. The site is located at 1920 34th Avenue in Sacramento, California, in the Mangan Park neighborhood west of and adjacent to Mangan Park. The City closed the Tree Nursery in 2008. The site has been mostly vacant since, except for the temporary storage of plants and trees, and stockpiling the City's bulk materials such as soil, mulch, or woodchips.

The Tree Nursery site is approximately five acres. Existing buildings on site include a greenhouse and former administrative building. The site includes many other site improvements to support plant propagation activities, including a shade structure, irrigation systems, and bulk storage facilities.

Q: Why has the Tree Nursery been vacant for so long?

Prior to site closure, the site was increasingly underutilized largely due to the downsizing of municipal operations, staff consolidation, and changes in the method by which the City procures plants and trees for municipal use. Most of the City's planting stock is now purchased from commercial growers and only stored at the site a few months each year. The site is no longer needed for core City functions.

The site has remained underutilized and mostly vacant largely due to funding constraints and other facility priorities. Maintenance at the site has not kept pace with the deterioration of the buildings. Additional investment is needed before the site is ready for use. But there are currently no City funds allocated to complete site improvements.

The City has attempted to lease the site for urban agriculture previously, but with no success. In 2014, the City released a Request for Proposals for use of a portion of the site for horticulture and community engagement, but received no responses. *In 2016, the City undertook negotiations with a potential lessor, but negotiations fell through. In addition, due to concerns regarding lead contamination at the adjacent Mangan Park gun range, the City conducted soil testing at the site in 2017. After soil testing, the City remediated portions of the site to ensure the entire site met residential screening levels established by the US Environmental Protection Agency.*

Q: What is currently underway for the Tree Nursery?

The City is soliciting proposals from interested parties to lease and manage all or a portion of the site as a multi-use hub for agricultural, workforce development, and related purposes. The City has explored opportunities through community meetings and release of a Request for Information (RFI) in May 2019 (Bid#: I19151131037. Based on these learnings, the City released a Request for Proposals (RFP) on August 30, 2019 (Bid#: P202015113006). A primary goal for this project is successful activation of the site with strong community engagement. Additionally, the City is looking to support a project that directly aligns with its commitment to advance inclusive economic growth, particularly as it relates to workforce development, small business, entrepreneurship, and innovation.

Updated August 2019

Frequently Asked Questions: the Former City Tree Nursery (Tree Nursery)

Unlike other City-run community gardens, this effort would result in privately-managed urban agriculture activities. However, the successful respondent to the RFP would be responsible for managing sub-leases to the property and providing community access. While the City may elect to enter into one or more leases, depending on proposals received, the preferred structure would be to have one master tenant who would then manage sub-tenants with a variety of uses on the site.

Before the project can proceed, funding must be identified. The City anticipates that funds may come from a mixture of private funds, donations, and public funding. The funding approach will be confirmed based on the successful RFP respondent.

Q: What is the anticipated timeline for the project?

September 20, 2019 is the deadline for responses to the City's RFP for leasing the site. The City anticipates executing a contract with the successful respondent no later than November of 2019. Pending confirmation of project funding, site preparation could begin as early 2020, with active agriculture operations on site by Spring 2020. Timing is dependent on funding.

Q: How much will the project cost?

Total costs for the project will vary based on the type of activities and improvements that are ultimately implemented. The City anticipates that up to \$200,000 in initial site investment may be necessary to ensure that buildings and infrastructure are ready for tenant operations. Additional funds may be needed to support ongoing maintenance and operations.

Q: I am an urban farmer – how do I propose activities or gain access for the Tree Nursery?

Qualified parties can submit a response to the City's RFP by September 20, 2019 through the City's PlanetBids website: <https://www.planetbids.com/portal/portal.cfm?CompanyID=15300>. Refer to Bid#: P202015113006.

At this time, the City is seeking responses from groups that can manage the entire Tree Nursery site and facilitate access to sub-tenants and others. The RFP is not intended for those simply seeking a small portion of the site for activities such as growing. Interested individuals can monitor updates for future opportunities to access the site, which the City anticipates after a lease is executed and a site manager established.

Q: I did not respond to the May 2019 Request for Information – can I still submit a proposal in response to the RFP?

Yes, qualified parties are eligible to submit an RFP response whether or not they responded to the May 2019 RFI. Refer to the RFP for evaluation criteria and further guidance: <https://www.planetbids.com/portal/portal.cfm?CompanyID=15300>.

Updated August 2019

Frequently Asked Questions: the Former City Tree Nursery (Tree Nursery)

Q: I live in the neighborhood or I'm interested in the project – how do I learn more, or share ideas?

The City is hosting a community meeting September 4, 2019, from 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. at the former City Tree Nursery. The meeting will also serve as a pre-bid meeting for the RFP.

What: Community Meeting/RFP Pre-Bid for Former City Tree Nursery

When: September 4, 2019, 4 – 6 pm

Where: 1920 34th Avenue, Sacramento California, 95822

****All visitors must wear closed-toe shoes****

If you'd like to be included in future email updates for the site, please email jvenema@cityofsacramento.org. Also, monitor communications from District 4 and updates on the City's website and social media accounts at www.cityofsacramento.org.

Q: What else is the City doing for urban agriculture?

The Department of Youth, Parks, & Community Enrichment currently operates 16 permanent community gardens, with three planned for the future. Learn more online: <https://www.cityofsacramento.org/ParksandRec/Parks/Specialty-Parks/Community-Gardens>, or call (916) 808-4943.

The City's Urban Agriculture Ordinance reduces regulatory barriers for small-scale agricultural uses on private land. Learn more online: <http://www.cityofsacramento.org/Community-Development/Planning/Long-Range/Urban-Agriculture>.

The City's inclusive economic growth initiatives are also underway, with potential to support urban agriculture enterprises: <http://www.cityofsacramento.org/Economic-Development>

Q: Who do I contact with additional questions?

For more information on the City's efforts to lease the former City Tree Nursery, contact Jennifer Venema with the Department of Public Works: jvenema@cityofsacramento.org, or 916-808-1859.