



Date of Board P+C: September 18, 2024
Date of Board Approval (for CAC's only):
Date of Most Recent Update: September 3, 2024

Please fill out this form if your project, program, or initiative includes community engagement beyond the "Inform" level. All Community Engagement Plans should be filed as Petitions and Communications with the MPRB Board of Commissioners and submitted to the MPRB Engagement Portal on SharePoint (<https://minneapolisparcs.sharepoint.com/planning/SitePages/Home.aspx>.)

Staff Lead: Emma Pachuta

Department or Division: Strategic Planning

Project Name: Berger Fountain (aka dandelion fountain) Design and Reconstruction

Engagement Level: or (See Engagement Assessment attached)

This plan serves as a guide for the community engagement process for the Berger Fountain (aka Dandelion Fountain) Design and Reconstruction. The plan may be modified as circumstance warrants during project duration. Substantial modifications are to be communicated to stakeholders and the MPRB Board of Commissioners.

As required by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Community Engagement Policy, this project requires a Community Engagement Plan because the project falls under the Consult (for the Berger Fountain Design and Reconstruction) category of community engagement for which MPRB is required to obtain stakeholder feedback on project, initiative, or program analysis, alternatives, or decisions. This CE Plan was used with a GARE Racial Equity Tool Kit framework.

Key Stakeholders should be engaged in the creation of this plan. Please explain who was engaged: The key stakeholder for this work has been the Berger Fountain Task Force (Task Force). The Task Force includes two representatives from Friends of Loring Park, two from Loring Greenway, two from Citizens of a Loring Park Community (CLPC) and two at large representatives. All meetings are open to the public. Jana Metge, who is the Executive Director of CLPC, also provides staff and tech support as needed to the Task Force. The Task Force was provided the opportunity to comment on the Draft CE Plan prior to the plan's submittal to the Board of Commissioners.

1. Project Description

1a. Project Overview: The Berger Fountain restoration has been identified as a priority in both adopted Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) and neighborhood plans as early as the 1990, including:

- Neighborhood Revitalization Plan Phases 1 & 2 in 1992 & 2005

- Minneapolis Small Area Plan in 2013
- The MPRB Downtown Service Area Master Plan (DSAMP) in 2017, which outlined policy direction for the Berger Fountain that included fountain restoration and new elements such as a plaza, seating area, and splash pad.

The Berger Fountain Task Force (Task Force) was formed in 2014 to work independently and collaboratively with the MPRB. In 2019, the MPRB approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Task Force to support the reconstruction of the Berger Fountain, improvements to the surrounding area, and fundraising.

In January 2023, The MPRB (Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board) identified a consultant team to lead concept design, final design, and construction administration for the Berger Fountain design and reconstruction.

MPRB and the Task Force will support engagement through the concept design process which is planned between April – July 2023.

1b. MPRB Outcomes *(What goals, strategies, or values in the MPRB Comprehensive Plan does this project, program, or initiative relate to?):*

Goal:

- 01. Foster belonging and equity
- 03. Provide core services with care
- 04. Work from our strengths and determine our role in partnerships

Strategy:

- 24. Provide support for tourists and visitors to experience the park system by bike, foot and public transit, and ensure infrastructure and facilities are inclusive and welcoming to a diverse local, regional, and global population.
- 02. Care for existing historic and cultural resources, public art and memorial collection through planning, staffing, inventory, management and conservation.
- 03. Leverage partnerships with businesses, sponsors, volunteers, agencies and nonprofits to fill financial and service gaps in facilities, programs and staffing.

1c. Project Timeline:

Concept Design Timeline: Apr 2023 – Jul 2023

The consultants will aim to complete visuals to share with the community for National Night Out on August 1st, 2023.

1d. Project Funding: Park dedication will be spent on the initial concept design and staff anticipate using a number of additional funding and fundraising sources to cover the additional costs for design and construction to be determined later this year.

<u>Capital Sources</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Expiration</u>
Park Dedication Fees	\$70,000	N/A

<u>Supplemental Sources</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Expiration</u>
Berger Fountain Task Force	Printing/material costs and in-kind staff time	N/A
Total:	\$70,000	

2. Project Data:

2a. What are the boundaries of the community engagement area? *(For regional facilities include neighborhoods adjacent to the park and city/regional boundaries.)*

The community engagement will primarily take place at Loring Park in downtown Minneapolis and will broaden visibility by utilizing a few additional locations in the Loring Park Neighborhood, such as Emerson School and the Loring Greenway. Though Loring Park is identified as a neighborhood park within the MPRB system, Loring Park is also a destination for many residents who work, live, and play downtown. Social media will be used to broaden the reach of engagement.

2b. What are the demographics of the community engagement area? *(Please refer to percentages of the population when possible and note the sources of the data.)*

The Loring Park neighborhood has grown in population numbers by almost 20% within the last 15 years. The neighborhood boundaries are 12th Street to the north, I-94 to the south, Lyndale/Hennepin/I-35 to the west, and I-94 to the east.

72% of residents identify as white, while 24.5% identify as people of color. Almost one in five residents report that they speak a language other than English at home, so responding to language barriers will be important to address with the engagement. Russian, specifically, has been identified as a language to use to broaden engagement within sects of the neighborhood – pre-COVID, Loring Park had ~1,000 residents who reported speaking Russian.

The average household income in the Loring Park Neighborhood is \$53,000/year, which is less than the city’s median household income of \$66,000. Additionally, Loring Park has a high number of renters with almost 70% of residents renting and just 20% reporting that they own their own home.

Information from Minnesota Compass (mncompass.org) and Citizens for a Loring Park Community.

2c. List any key findings or excerpts from relevant plans or policies that are informing this project, program or initiative, especially if community was engaged in the policy or plan: *The purpose of community research is to collect data that will best inform specific project decisions or strategic direction and support the policy goals of effective community engagement. Research completed in advance of and during project development may include review of previously completed directives or mandates, activity plans, master plans, community studies, industry trends and historical and demographic data. MPRB staff is responsible for determining the research data necessary to support and document decision-making for a project and building off prior community engaged planning, policy, and design.*

The purpose of the community engagement this spring and summer will be to gather feedback on the design of new elements that are proposed at the Berger Fountain within the Downtown Service Area Master Plan (DSAMP), such as a plaza, seating area, and splash pad. There may some engagement about the dandelion fountain itself, especially if some items may need to change with the restoration work (location, height, etc.) but the majority of the engagement will be around the new design features.

2d. What are the data gaps? What additional research needs to be done to understand the project stakeholders and project scope?

There have been years of previous engagement, planning efforts, and plans that have researched and prioritized the Berger Fountain to be restored, including the MPRB Downtown Service Area Master Plan in 2017. A number of city documents such as the NRP Plans 1 & 2 and the Balmori Plan for Loring also give similar direction.

Though an initial assessment report of the fountain was completed by the Task Force in 2021, the biggest unknown to this project is understanding the full budget amount needed for rehabilitation or reconstruction of the fountain versus being able to build new interactive elements from the master plan. An initial cost estimate will be completed alongside the concept design to help answer this initial information gap.

3. Community Engagement:

3a. Identify Project Stakeholders

The MPRB supports the use of a variety of techniques to interact with and obtain information from stakeholders. Outreach and research tools and methods can be applied for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to the following:

- a. Evaluate success and measure community impact of existing programs, services or facilities.*
- b. Gain stakeholder insight and perspective regarding development of a new program, service or facility.*
- c. Proactively identify or explore park and recreation trends or ideas.*
- d. Determine essential services to be provided for a community or park area.*
- e. Query stakeholders when proposing or revising policy.*
- f. Resolve persistent conflicts or problems.*
- g. Educate or inform the public on proposed changes, projects, programs, and initiatives.*
- h. Reflect on projects, programs, and initiatives after adoption by the Board or report on how community input has been integrated.*

i. Learn the history of local context and community.

Project Stakeholder <i>(students, ethnic communities, neighborhood groups, community leaders)</i>	Outreach: How will you reach out to the stakeholder? <i>(i.e. go to parks, neighborhood listserv, engage with cultural media)</i>	Engagement: How will they participate? <i>(i. e. online survey, focus group, community open house, intercept survey)</i>	Reflecting Back: How will stakeholder groups be reflected back to about the project progress or outcomes? <i>(Posted on project website, ribbon cutting, e-blast, site visit, celebration)</i>
Local community groups and volunteers	A number of different engagement strategies will be used, ranging from direct emails and regular task force check ins, to newsletter blasts, social media, signage at the park and around the neighborhood, focus groups, and tabling at events	Online survey, tabling event	Information will be shared through MPRB and community partners in the form of email/newsletter blasts, updates posted on project page, National Night Out shareout
Adjacent residents to Loring Park		Online survey, focus group	
Loring Park visitors		Tabling event	
Focused audiences such as: Emerson School, LGBTQIA residents, Russian speakers etc.		Focus group, online survey, tabling at Loring Park events, both large and small	
Businesses and places of worship (St. Marks, Central Lutheran, Hennepin Methodist, Basilica)		Online survey	

If needed, describe the outreach, engagement, or reflection methods you will use that are referenced above: Much of the engagement work will be completed in partnership with Berger Fountain Task Force members.

3b. Advisory Committees: The Berger Task Force will be the primary advisory committee to the project.

Technical Advisory Committee: This roster is a list of agencies and groups that are on the TAC
The project may not need a formal TAC, however, MPRB staff will most likely need to work with the city of Minneapolis Public Works and Sewer departments to assess water/sewage lines that impact the fountain.

Project Advisory Committee: This roster is a list of MPRB departments and divisions that are on the PAC
Recreation
Customer Service
Asset Management
Planning
Community Connection and Violence Prevention
Forestry

3c. Will a Community Advisory Committee be required for this project, program, or initiative? Y/N

If yes, complete 3d-3g. If no, please delete 3d-3g from the CE Plan.

3d. CAC Charge: N/A – A CAC will not be needed (See CE Assessment for further clarification)

3e. CAC Composition Goals:	<i>Appointers and the CAC Selection Committee should appoint individuals that represent one or more of the identities/perspectives listed below to ensure diversity on the CAC. This is not an exhaustive or conclusive list, and categories should be based on self-identification, and not assumption.</i>
Racial/Ethnic Diversity	
Generational Diversity	
Socioeconomic Diversity	
Linguistic Diversity	
Diversity of interests	
Gender Diversity	
Other:	

3f. CAC Selection Committee Roster: <i>This roster of groups and individuals that are participating in the CAC appointment process for the project, program, or initiative</i>

3g. Community Advisory Committee:	
Committee Recommended Slate	Board Approved Slate
Board Individually Appointed CAC Members	
Commissioner	Appointee

4. Analysis:

4a. What questions will you be asking community to respond to in your outreach and engagement?

“Why is the dandelion fountain important to you?”

“What interactive elements would you like to see at the fountain?”

“What design elements are you the most excited about?”

Share a number of different ideas through visuals for community members to share preferences (ie plaza designs, splash pads, seating, lighting, etc.)

4b. How will your community engagement outreach, engagement, and methods make MPRB a more equitable system?

A number of audiences will be targeted during the spring/summer engagement to ensure their voices influence the design including: LGBTQIA community members, youth, folks who speak another language other than English, renters.

4c. Identify one or more key project milestones when project evaluation will be performed *(i.e. Draft design review, draft policy review, project mid-point)*

Evaluation will be completed following the summer engagement in August 2023.

5. Evaluation Summary: *To be completed at one or more project milestones as identified in 4c.*

5a. Who was engaged during the process? *(i.e. demographic info from online survey participants, the CAC, and community engagement whenever possible. Refer back to Section 2 in the CE Plan and how*

MPRB and the Task Force implemented two rounds of engagement between March and July 2023 for the Berger Fountain Concept Design. For both rounds of engagement, staff distributed an online survey available in English, Spanish, and Russian through Berger Fountain Task Force members and partners, social media posts, and lawn signs around Loring Park. The online survey received over 900 responses, with 49.7% of responses coming from those living in Loring Park and 50.3% coming from those living outside of Loring Park. Many folks who lived outside of Loring Park reported that they used to live or go to school in the neighborhood and still felt a strong connection to the area.

MPRB and the Task Force hosted six focus groups, three during the first round of engagement and three during the second round of engagement. During both phases, two of the conversations were with residents of condos located near or adjacent to the fountain and one was with residents who identified with the LGBTQIA+ community in partnership with the PRIDE office. MPRB also received community input on the designs from numerous tabling and pop up events, including PRIDE and Aquatennial.

MPRB staff released the final concept on August 1, 2023, at Loring Park's National Night Out event and engaged with local residents about the design. Copies of the final concept were posted on the project page and sent out through GovDelivery notices in the following days. Posters showing the final concept design, as well as 3-D renderings of the design were also posted in Loring Park.

5b. How did the engagement inform the project outcome? *(i.e. public tabulation and amendments following a public comment period)*

Staff compiled and completed an analysis of all qualitative and quantitative input. This input strongly informed the design priorities of the final design. Alongside the broader community input, staff also worked closely with the Berger Fountain Task Force, who collaborated closely on the engagement and design priorities.

The final concept balances the vision set forth in the 2017 Downtown Service Area Master Plan of restoring the fountain and enhancing the plaza/gathering space on site, responding to recent community feedback while being cognizant of the budget constraints.

Main elements within the Final Concept include:

- Restoration of the fountain, including the same location, size and cascading pools
- Triangle design of plaza
- Additional seating and gathering space
- Updated LED lighting for the fountain and new lighting for the cascading pools
- A design that connects the fountain to the Loring Greenway entrance, and
- Retaining and protecting all existing trees on-site

5c. Please describe any new or innovative engagement methods used during the process: MPRB staff heard from an overwhelming number of community members during the engagement process. For example, a MPRB concept design often receives anywhere from 100-300 online survey responses and Berger Fountain received 900 surveys! This could be because the fountain is such a well-known and well-loved amenity in the city and because there is such an active volunteer group working alongside MPRB to get the word out, proactively through in-person and social media outreach. Additionally, hosting focus groups with targeted audiences and producing the surveys in different languages allowed us to broaden our network of who we were able to speak with.

5d. What recommendations do you have for future engagement around this topic, park, or area? Staff should make sure to engage Citizens for a Loring Park Community and Friends of Loring Park on Loring Park projects – they have been invaluable resources to get the word out and make recommendations about the best methods to engage the community.

5e. What, if any, were the unintended outcomes of your CE Plan? N/A

5g. Were there any barriers to successful implementation of your CE Plan? N/A

5h. Were you adequately resourced, including staff support, expertise, and funding? Yes, having the Task Force and a research assistant to support engagement was invaluable.

5i. If applicable, how can this project, program, or initiative, or MPRB continue to partner and deepen relationships with underrepresented communities?

We didn't get as many responses from the Russian community, specifically, as we had hoped. Continued partnership with community organizations who may be better equipped to broaden their networks in the community is integral to future successes.