PROJECT OVERVIEW

Thanks for DREAMING BIG with us! Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board staff spent this past summer (June - September 2019) engaging audiences about Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden & Bird Sanctuary (EBWG) programming & operation needs to inform upcoming improvements to the garden's buildings and entrance in 2020-2021.

What sort of improvements? Improvements will likely include:
- Addition of an all-gendered, family-friendly, accessible bathroom
- Demolition of the existing tool shed that now doubles as a tool shed and office space
- A new tool shed to be built outside of the current fence line
- An addition to the Visitor Center to house existing staff
- A new front entrance area

Why Now? How will this be funded? Extensive outreach was done during the creation of the Wirth Park Regional Master Plan that was adopted in 2015. Recommendations made for Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden included main entry access & path improvements, bridge/boardwalk improvements (completed in 2019), and other enhancements to buildings & facilities.

Capitol Improvement Plan (CIP) funding will be allocated to Theodore Wirth Regional Master Plan in 2020-2021. A portion of those funds are projected to be used on Garden improvements. Additionally, we will be seeking out additional funding through grants and donations to complete elements of the project as we move forward.

WHO WE ENGAGED WITH

There were four audiences with whom we focused engagement with this summer. The majority of the engagement was with garden users, people who visited the garden this summer, whether it was their first visit or one-hundredth visit. We had sticker boards and paper surveys placed in the visitor center, implemented in-person engagement within the Garden, and sent out communications to several online listservs connected with the Garden, adjacent neighborhoods, and Wirth Park.

Other focused engagement was with:
- Wirth Park and Wirth Beach users
- Residents of adjacent neighborhoods
- Garden staff & volunteers
- Friends of the Wild Flower Garden

Over 700 people gave their input over the course of the summer, either through in-person engagement or by taking the online survey, with ages ranging from seven to eighty+.

The most frequent neighborhoods listed in the survey demographics were 55405, 55416, and 55403. These zip codes happen to be the Minneapolis and Golden Valley neighborhoods adjacent to EBWG, so we learned that many folks who live near the garden enjoy visiting and were interested in weighing in on proposed changes. We had folks share ideas from all over Minneapolis and the metro; we even had visitors weigh in from as far away as Bethesda, Maryland! About 10% of respondents were visiting the Garden for the first time.