

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: February 17, 2023
To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
From: Guy Smith, Executive Director, Milwaukee County Parks
Subject: Boerner Botanical Gardens Fence Funding
File Type: Informational Report

REQUEST

This Informational Report provides an update to the potential funding for a fence at Boerner Botanical Gardens. This report is a response to 2023 Budget Amendment #68.

POLICY

Wisconsin State Statutes:	
Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances:	
Specific Adopted Budget:	
Specific Adopted Budget Amendment:	2023 Amendment 68
Specific Adopted Capital Project:	

BACKGROUND

In the 2023 budget, Amendment #68 approved by the County Board of Supervisors states the following –

“Amend the narrative of Agency 900 – Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture by adding the following language:

The lack of a perimeter fence at Boerner Botanical Gardens continues to be an issue for the park. A permanent perimeter fence is essential to protect garden plantings from deer grazing, potential vandalism, and ensure visitors pay the admission fee which supports the fiscal viability of the Boerner site. The Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture shall explore and recommend funding sources for the planning and design phase of a fence at Boerner Botanical Gardens. The department shall provide a report for the March 2023 County Board meeting cycle to report its findings.”

Boerner Botanical Gardens is a formal garden within Whitnall Park that showcases plant collections and displays, as well as educational and event programming. The garden charges admissions for entry to experience the manicured garden setting, displays, and

programming.

In years before 2020, the garden was unfenced and allowed individuals to enter at will, resulting in a loss of revenue collected. Since 2020, temporary snow fencing has remained in place to deter visitors from accessing the site without paying admissions.

Recently, the potential to fund the planning and design aspect of a more permanent fence was brought to the American Rescue Plan Act Taskforce, where it was considered, but did not receive approval.

Due to this consideration, and knowing that there is currently no funding available, this project will be incorporated into Parks capital project plan for funding consideration in the future.

Related File No's:	HRA22-322; 2023 Budget Amendment #68
Associated File No's (Including Transfer Packets):	
Previous Action Date(s):	

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Describe how the item aligns to the objectives in the [strategic plan](#):

3B: Enhance the County's fiscal health and sustainability

FISCAL EFFECT

None at this time.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

James Tarantino, Deputy Director, Milwaukee County Parks

Jeffrey Orlowski, Director of Recreation and Business Services, Milwaukee County Parks

PREPARED BY:

Jeffrey Orlowski, Director of Recreation and Business Services, Milwaukee County Parks

APPROVED BY:

Guy Smith, Executive Director Milwaukee County Parks *Guy Smith*

ATTACHMENTS:

None

CC:

David Crowley, County Executive

Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office

Sheldon Wasserman, Supervisor District 3, PEEC Chair

Steven Shea, Supervisor District 8, PEEC Vice Chair

Felicia Martin, Supervisor District 7, PEEC Member

Juan Miguel Martinez, Supervisor District 12, PEEC Member

Steve Taylor, Supervisor District 17, PEEC Member

Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Mgr, Office of the County Clerk

Aaron Hertzberg, Director, Department of Administrative Services

Joseph Lamers, Fiscal & Budget Director, DAS

Vince Masterson, Fiscal & Strategic Asset Coordinator, DAS

Pamela Bryant, Capital Finance Manager, Comptroller's Office

Justin Rodriguez, Capital Finance Analyst, Comptroller's Office

Kelsey Evans, Committee Coordinator, Office of the County Clerk

Ciara Miller, Research & Policy Analyst, Office of the Comptroller

Anthony Rux, Budget & Management Analyst, DAS-PSB