

Dear Naperville Gardener,

The purpose of this email is to provide you with an update regarding recent discussions for the expansion of garden plots. Throughout this spring the Naperville Park District has tracked participation and waitlists within the garden plots program, and investigated costs associated with in-depth evaluations for potential expansion sites. This year 518 garden plots (464 full-size, 48 half-size, and 6 raised plots) are located at West Street. At this time 509 of the 518 plots have been rented and 38 people are waitlisted for the program. During the past month the Park District has contacted individuals on the waitlists in an effort to fill plots that remain open. In addition to the open plots, 13 garden plots are potentially abandoned. Park District staff is in the process of contacting renters of abandoned plots to determine their intentions for using the plots.

In May, the District identified three potential sites within our current land holdings for in-depth evaluation of garden plots expansion. This scope of work consists of a Traffic Impact Analysis, site survey, layout plan, and soil testing. Evaluations are estimated at approximately \$30,000 for each of the two potential expansion sites at Country Lakes Park and Southwest Community Park. A total of \$65,000 is projected to prepare a complete Garden Plots evaluation report featuring the three sites, incorporating \$5,000 to update the existing data and development cost estimate associated with DuPage River Park.

The participant, waitlist and cost estimate information was presented and discussed at a recent Park District Board workshop on June 24th. Based on 2010 Garden Plots registration and waitlist data, and the cost estimates associated with the evaluation of garden plots expansion, District staff made the recommendation to the Board to not move forward with the expansion of garden plots in 2011. Garden Plots participant data will continue to be collected each gardening season to track trends within the program. The addition of garden plots may also be considered during the development of larger park expansion projects in the future, such as the future Southwest Community Park.

At this time the Park District does not intend to expand garden plots to another park site in 2011, however, we will continue to evaluate the need for improvements at the West Street Garden Plots. Prior to the 2010 gardening season, considerable grading and drainage improvements were completed at the site. Additionally, the significant rains that we received over the past two months have helped us identify areas where additional drainage improvements are needed. We intend to continue improving drainage at the site during the off-season. Lastly, we will be conducting a survey of gardeners within the program to gather feedback on further improvements to the site; surveys will be mailed to each household within the program later this summer.

We hope that you enjoy the remainder of the gardening season. As new information becomes available we will continue to provide updates. Please share this information with gardeners who may not have access to email.

Sincerely,
Naperville Park District