

Duffer, Erin

From: Kari Bersagel Braley <karibraley@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 9, 2021 4:43 PM
To: Duffer, Erin; Acklin, Tim
Subject: Letter of Support for the ReNew the Block Project #758

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I am writing this Letter of Support on behalf of GROW (La Crosse) for the ReNew the Block Project being considered for funding in the final CIP Budget. GROW (La Crosse) a local non-profit organization working to "connect youth to healthy food and nature" through school gardens and farm experiences. We have been collaborating with schools in the area since 2012, helping to design, build, and maintain gardens while also providing programming. We have a long-standing relationship with Hamilton Elementary School and in recent years helped to develop the Edible Schoolyard that is in front of their building. We know the value of having students out in nature and experiencing hands-on learning and easy access to healthy food, but the Edible Schoolyard has taken this to the next level of being able to reach a community, particularly in a neighborhood that is federally recognized as a food desert. Anyone who walks by, can have an instant connection with the natural world and the beauty and nurturance that it can bring, particularly in a space that is lacking in green space and which is primarily an urban block of concrete.

The same can be said for the area around Lincoln Middle School where there is very little natural green space. GROW is excited for the possibility of having this natural infrastructure in place in order to provide meaningful and impactful programming for teachers and students within the Lincoln Middle School community, particularly in the areas of science and nutrition, while at the same time having a larger impact on the surrounding neighborhood. During a recent summer school class near Lincoln Middle School, the students, many of which currently go to Lincoln, expressed excitement when hearing the possibility of the project outside of Lincoln. The class was about sustainability and the students recognized the Edible Schoolyard project as a clear example of sustainability efforts in our community that they could see directly impacting them which brought them excitement and pride.

Thank you for your attention and for considering funding the ReNew the Block Project in the budget.

Sincerely,

Kari

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GROW employees work part-time. I will respond as soon as possible.

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