



## MEMORANDUM

---

Date: July 23, 2014

To: Parks & Community Services Board

From: Nancy Kartes, Bellevue Botanical Garden Manager  
Parks & Community Services

Subject: Bellevue Botanical Garden – Ravine access  
*(Informational – no Board action requested)*

At a recent meeting, Mr. Van Hollebeke asked why access to the Ravine Experience was not available through the service gate adjacent to the ball field in Wilburton Hill Park. There are two reasons that we decided not to allow public access through that gate when the project was built:

1. Joanne Nicolai, Risk Manager at the time, urged us not to allow access from the ball field. She was concerned about children wandering in unattended by an adult. Children who visit the Garden by coming in through our main entrance are almost always accompanied by an adult.
2. In keeping with best practices for public gardens with a high investment in plant collections, our Master Plan advises us on the issue of access: “The development of BBG is likely to follow the pattern common to many public gardens: investment in facilities and garden development increases, plant collections become more valuable and sensitive to disturbance and thus the need for control of access to the garden and control of activities within the garden increases. The need to provide security as a commitment to the Garden’s development partners is an added consideration at BBG. The presence of an access point to the site that cannot be observed by garden staff, and thus is uncontrolled, is a problem that is likely to increase rather than diminish.”

While we were under construction, all visitors entered BBG through the Yao Garden service gate, which had been previously closed to thru traffic. The neighborhood walkers enjoyed that route very much and have requested that we keep it open. Since Yao Garden is a well-monitored area of BBG, we have decided to keep this open as an alternate route to the garden from the Lake-to-Lake Trail.

Please feel free to call me at 452-2749 if you have further questions or would like to learn more about our Master Plan.

