



BUILDING

ORGANIZATIONAL

STRENGTH

# Fort Worth Botanic Garden

## Strategic Plan Review and Recommendations

Park Board, July 27, 2016



July, 2016

## Purposes of Planning Studies

- **Strategic Plan**
- **Benchmarking**
- **Financial Analysis and Recommendations**
- **Organizational Structure and Recommendations**
- **Review Site Master Plan and Recommendations**

## Process

- Meetings with FWBG Staff
- Meetings with FW Park and Recreation Leadership
- Meetings with Botanical Society and Garden Center Committee
- Meetings with BRIT, Texas Council of Garden Clubs
- Public Meetings
- Website Comments
- Individual Meetings with Members of the Public

# Strategic Plan



## **Mission:**

**Engage, inform and inspire with plants, landscapes,  
and nature**

## **Financial Strategy:**

- **Build on City operating support with greater private support through earned revenues, contributions, and endowments**
- **Restore greater City support for infrastructure repairs**
- **Build private fundraising for new capital improvements**

## Guiding Principles

- Create a culture of collaboration
- Create a culture of creativity and innovation
- Create a culture of accountability
- Reach our full potential as a botanic garden
- Be affordable to all FW residents

## Competitive Advantage – Differentiation Strategy

Combination of ornamental gardens, specialty collections, naturalistic landscapes complemented by education and cultural programs. Research and conservation programs in development and in cooperation with BRIT.

## Transformative Goals

1. Transform the guest experience
2. Establish FWBG as a leader in public programs
3. Implement key parts of the master plan
4. Repair, renovate and improve gardens, features and facilities
5. Reorganize support groups and increase private support

## Goal 1. Transform the visitor experience

- Develop better wayfinding
- Create single point of entry for orientation and information
- Improve entry experience from University Avenue
- Differentiate from nearby parks
- Relocate reception desk in Garden Center



## **Goal 2. Establish FWBG as leader in programs**

- Develop a comprehensive plan for education programs
- Expand collaborative programs with FW school system
- Develop more interactive programs for visitors

## **Goal 3. Implement key parts of master plan**

- Commission a parking and traffic study
- Move toward elimination of cars within the garden
- Establish path through Texas Garden Club leased property
- Continue fundraising for Children's Garden

## Goal 4. Repairs and renovations

- Complete a comprehensive assessment of capital repair needs and future deferred maintenance needs
- Expand CFW's in-kind support for infrastructure
- Renovate Fragrance Garden
- Relocate maintenance facility

## Goal 5. Reorganize support groups and increase private support

- Restructure support groups to increase efficiencies and effectiveness
- Create a systematic, on-going fundraising program for operations and capital projects
- Review and revise rental program based on cost/ benefit analysis
- Consider replacing current feature-specific admission fee with a general admission fee

# Discussion

# Financial Analysis and Benchmarking



## Financial Snapshot

Total Annual Operating Budget: **\$4.4 million**

**City** provides **\$2.5 million** directly + additional in-kind support

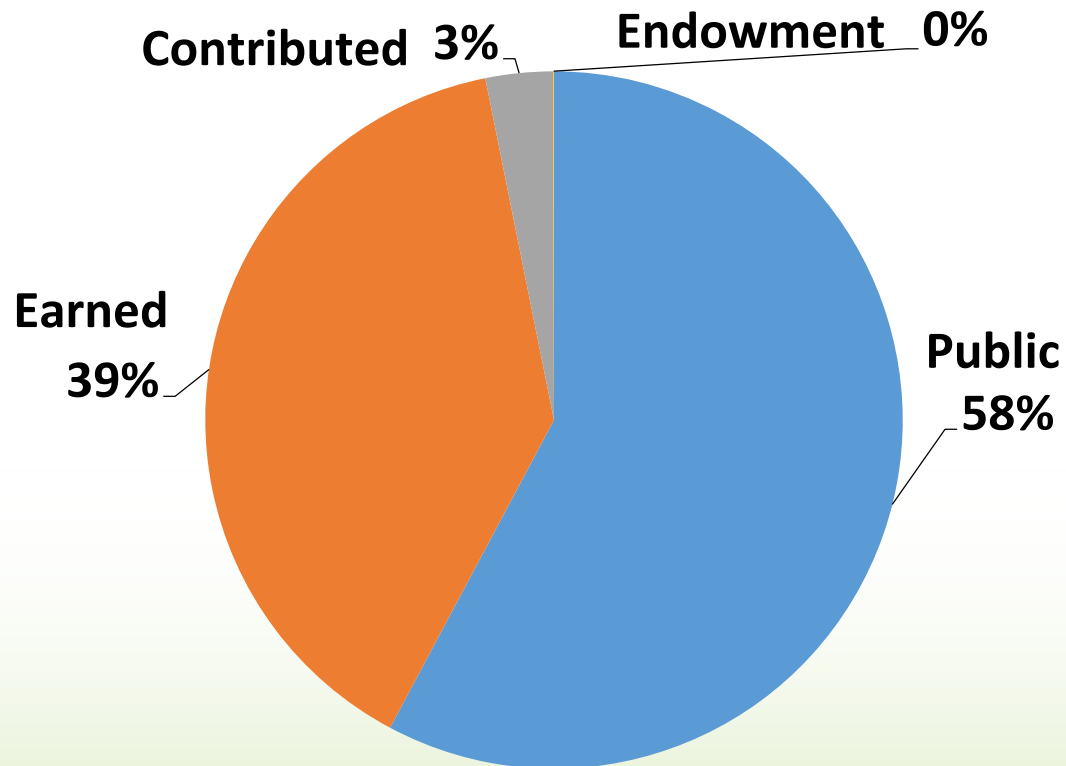
**Private support** (primarily earned revenue) is **\$1.8 million**

# Potential Sources of Revenue for Botanic Gardens

- Public Funds
- Contributed Funds
- Earned Revenues
- Endowment Income



# Fort Worth Botanic Garden Support



# Benchmarking

## Peer Group for Benchmarking:

Major Gardens: U.S. Botanic Gardens with budgets of \$3.0 million+ (“Directors of Large Gardens” institutions)

Major Gardens receiving at least 5% of revenues from local government

# FWBG Revenue Sources Compared

	<b>% Public</b>	<b>% Earned</b>	<b>% Contributed</b>	<b>% Endowment</b>
<b><i>Fort Worth BG</i></b>	58	39	3	0
<b>Comparables (means)</b>	24	48	17	8

# Gardens Receiving \$2.5 million+ in Local Public Support

## **% of Operating Budget from local government**

- Fort Worth 58%
- Brooklyn 32%
- Chicago 32%
- Denver 32%
- Missouri 33%
- New York 19%

## Leveraged Private Support

City of Fort Worth leverages **73 cents** per public dollar

(Most of this is earned revenue, almost none private philanthropy)

Peer cities leverage **\$2.42** per public dollar

(From a combination of earned and philanthropic support)

City of Fort Worth leverages only **30%** as much as peer gardens in private support

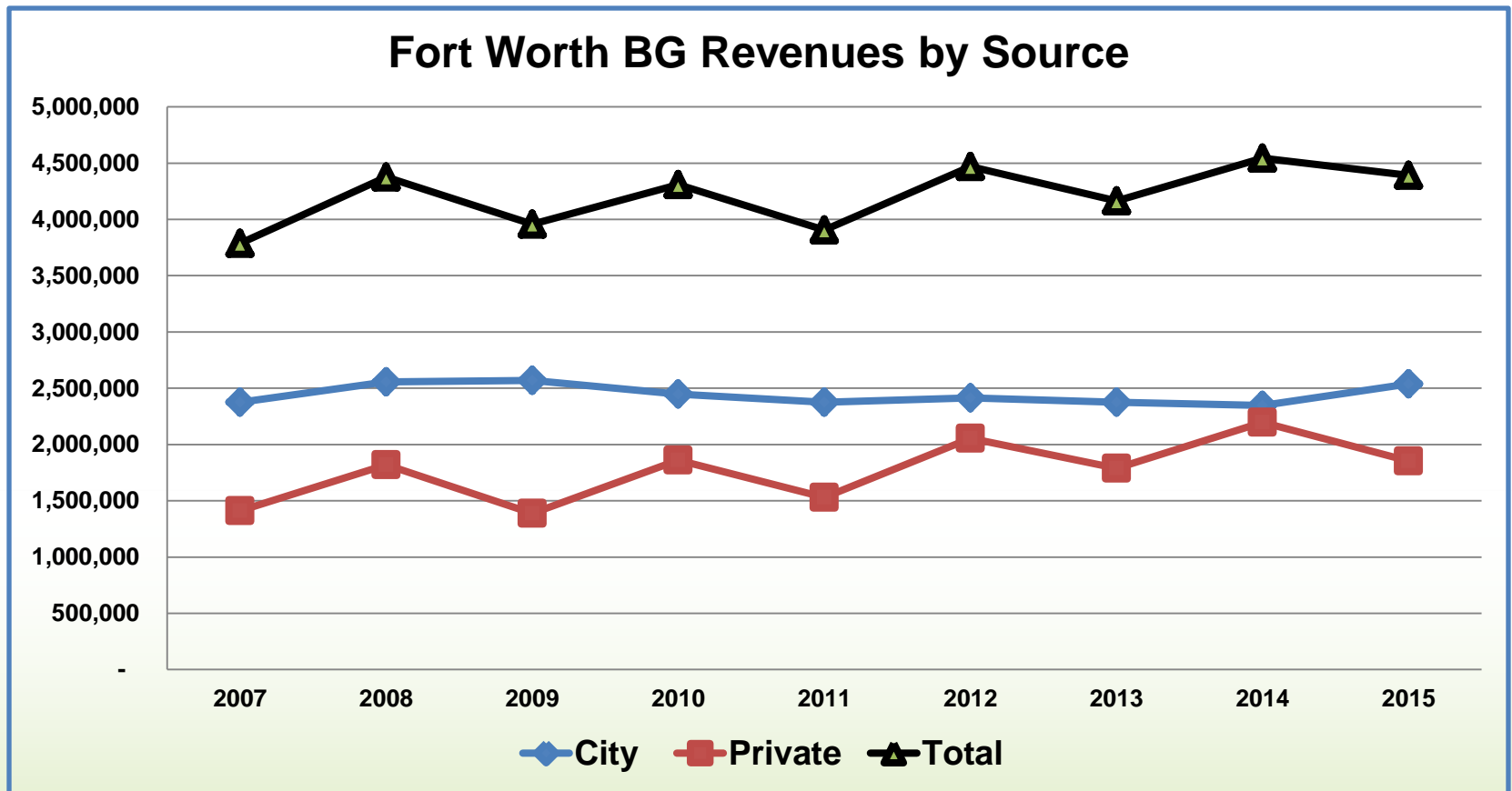
# Members and Donors

	<b>Memberships</b>	<b>Donors \$500+</b>
<i>Fort Worth BG</i>	<i>1,425</i>	<i>17</i>
<b>Comparables (mean)</b>	<b>17,000</b>	<b>390</b>

## Financial Analysis

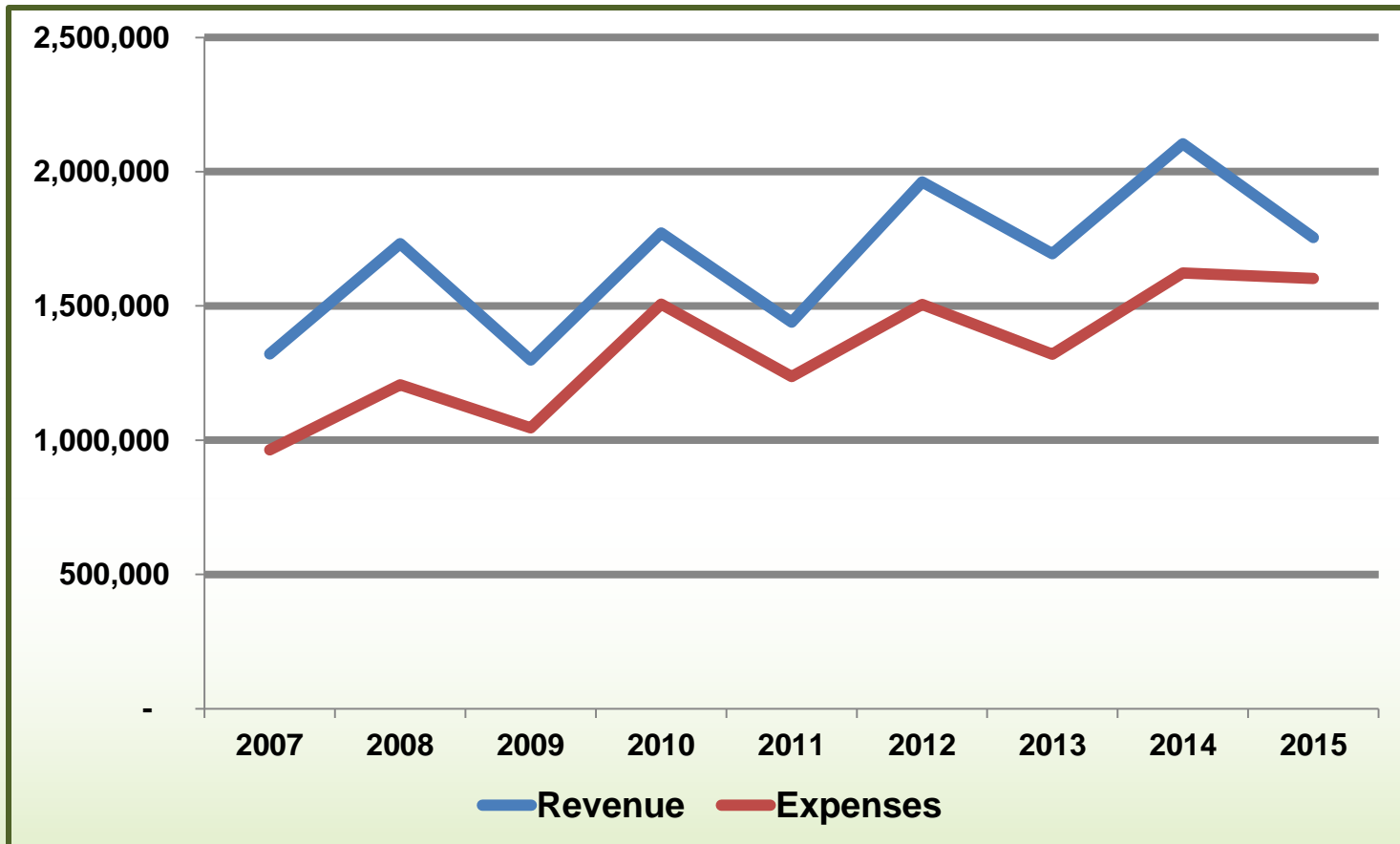
- 65% of operating funds from City (including in-kind)
- 35% is earned
  - Admission fees from Japanese Garden and Conservatory
  - Facility rentals
  - Restaurant
  - Gift Shop
- Almost no unrestricted contributions for operations and almost no endowment funds

# Trends in Sources of Revenue





# Private Support Revenue and Expense Trends



## Support

- Little growth in budget over 10 years
- No appreciable change in City support in actual dollars in 10 years
- Major loss in in-kind services from City (up to \$500K/year in previous years)
- Support comes only from two primary sources with little philanthropic support

# Functions

## **Major functions not staffed or minimally staffed:**

- Development and Membership
- Finance/Business Operations
- Curation
- Events

## **Other functions are understaffed:**

- Visitor Services
- Education/ Public Programs
- Horticulture
- Maintenance and Operations

## Total Operating Functions Unmet Needs

Estimated Cost: **\$1.5 million annually**

*Includes net loss of several positions of approximately \$250K since FY09*

## Infrastructure (Capital Repair) Needs

- Conservatory
- Garden Center
- Rock Springs Building
- Lighting (safety/ events)
- Greenhouses
- ADA
- Grading/ Drainage

## Total Infrastructure (Capital Repair) Needs

- Need full evaluation
- Estimate of **\$15 million**

## Key Findings

Overall support for FWBG is nearly unchanged in 10 years or more

City provides key foundational support for FWBG's operating expenses

Admissions fee is by feature

Contributions and endowment support is woefully low

Annual operating support is \$1.5 million low

Capital repairs needed are at least \$15 million

# Funding Unmet Needs

Options and key considerations for City:



# Options for Addressing Unmet Financial Needs

## 1. Increased City support

- City already generously supports Garden
- City support needed for infrastructure needs
- Does not diversify income
- Does not leverage increased contributions

# Options (cont'd)

## 2. Parking Fee

- **Would cut down on “free loading” parking**
- **Complications with BRIT, Texas Garden Clubs, restaurant and gift shop**
- **Not as effective for greeting/ visitor services**
- **Unlikely to bring in as much income as general admission**

## Options (cont'd)

### 3. Increased contributions

- **Would not bring in sufficient funds**
- **General admission fee needed as foundation for philanthropy**

## Options (cont'd)

### 4. Replace current feature-based admission fee with general admission fee

- Budget shortfall of \$1.5 million - change in admission fills gap
- City already provides about 2/3rds of budget
  - (Greater % than any other major garden)
- Rare at gardens or museums to charge for selected permanent exhibits
- All other major municipal or private gardens have a general admission or parking fee
- City leverages just 30% in private \$ compared to peers

## Options (cont'd)

- All visitors will have access to Japanese Garden and Conservatory
- Admission will not exclude low income residents
- Diversifies income and increases sustainability by building membership and private philanthropic support
- Increasing private support is fairer to taxpayers
- Lack of this general admission handcuffs the Garden as the City will always have more pressing needs
- Citizens pay for other Park and Rec services (swimming; Nature Center, Log Cabin Village, community centers, etc.)
- Visitors value and care more for what they pay for

# Potential Future, New Revenues

Source	Conservative	Optimistic
<b>Earned Revenue</b>		
Admission	\$ 686,649	\$ 1,311,649
Private Events (rentals)	\$ (10,697)	\$ 189,303
Public Events (e.g., light show)	\$ 73,081	\$ 148,081
Memberships	\$ 66,528	\$ 116,528
Retail (gift shop/plant sales)	\$ 8,341	\$ 108,341
<b>Total New Earned Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 823,902</b>	<b>\$ 1,873,902</b>
<b>Contributed Revenue</b>		
Contributions (unrestricted)	\$ 48,770	\$ 298,770
Gala Event	\$ 40,000	\$ 60,000
Sponsorships	\$ 15,000	\$ 25,000
<b>Total New Contributed Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 103,770</b>	<b>\$ 383,770</b>
<b>TOTAL Future New Earned/ Contributed Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 927,672</b>	<b>\$ 2,257,672</b>

All potential revenues are calculated above base of FY 2014 revenues

# Discussion

# Organizational Structure

Two key support organizations:

- Botanical Society
- Garden Center Committee (part of Fort Worth Garden Club)



## Values to FWBG

- Both groups have shown great dedication to FWBG
- Both groups have provided significant revenues for FWBG
- Both groups have supported certain capital projects
- Both groups have provided significant volunteer support

# Funding

1. The Botanical Society raises most of its funds from earned sources: Japanese Garden admission and rental fees, gift shop and restaurant income, plant sales, special events
2. Garden Center Committee raises most of its funds from earned sources: Garden Center rentals and Conservatory admission fees
3. Infrequently, contributions for capital projects have been given to FWBG
4. Neither has had any on-going, systematic fundraising program

## Future

Conceptual agreement:

Create new Friends group focused on membership and fundraising; Botanical Society operates selected major events; operating activities by groups transferred to City

Garden remains city-owned and operated as it is today

## Recommendations

City continue its level of support and increase at rate of city salary increases

Consider changing the admission fee from multiple fees for features to a general admission fee

- Suggested fee of \$7-\$9/ adult; children \$3-\$4
- Make adequate provision for low-income FW residents

City studies full infrastructure needs and fund on a priority basis

Implement reorganization plan for support groups to increase earned, contributed, and endowment funds

# Discussion

# Master Plan Review and Recommendations





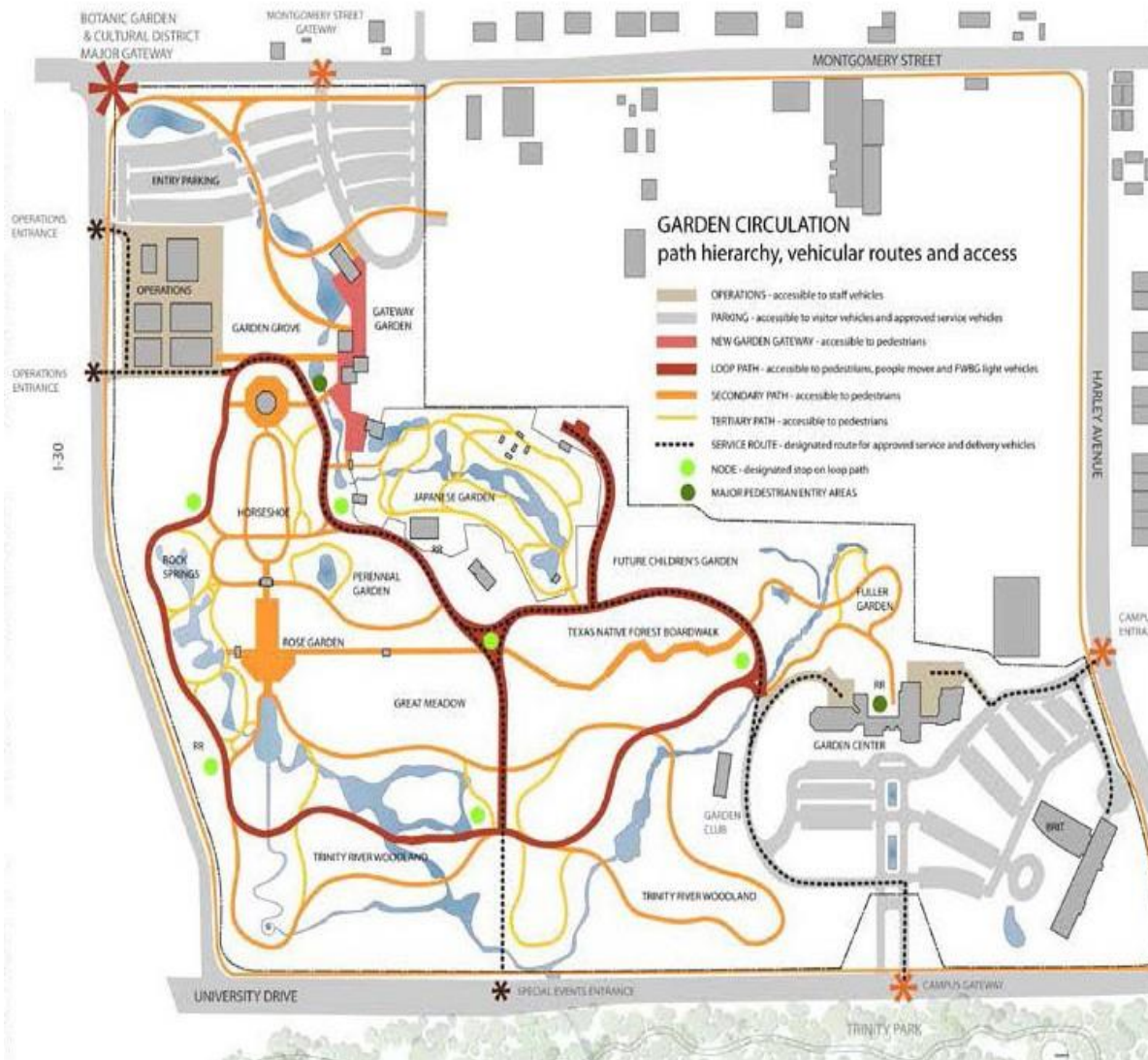
2010 Plan Proposal

Prepared

by: Andropogon Associates,

2016 dtz

studioOutside consulting



2010 Plan  
Proposal

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Andropogon Associates,  
2016.dztb

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landscape consulting



Proposed Circulation Refinements

Option 1: West

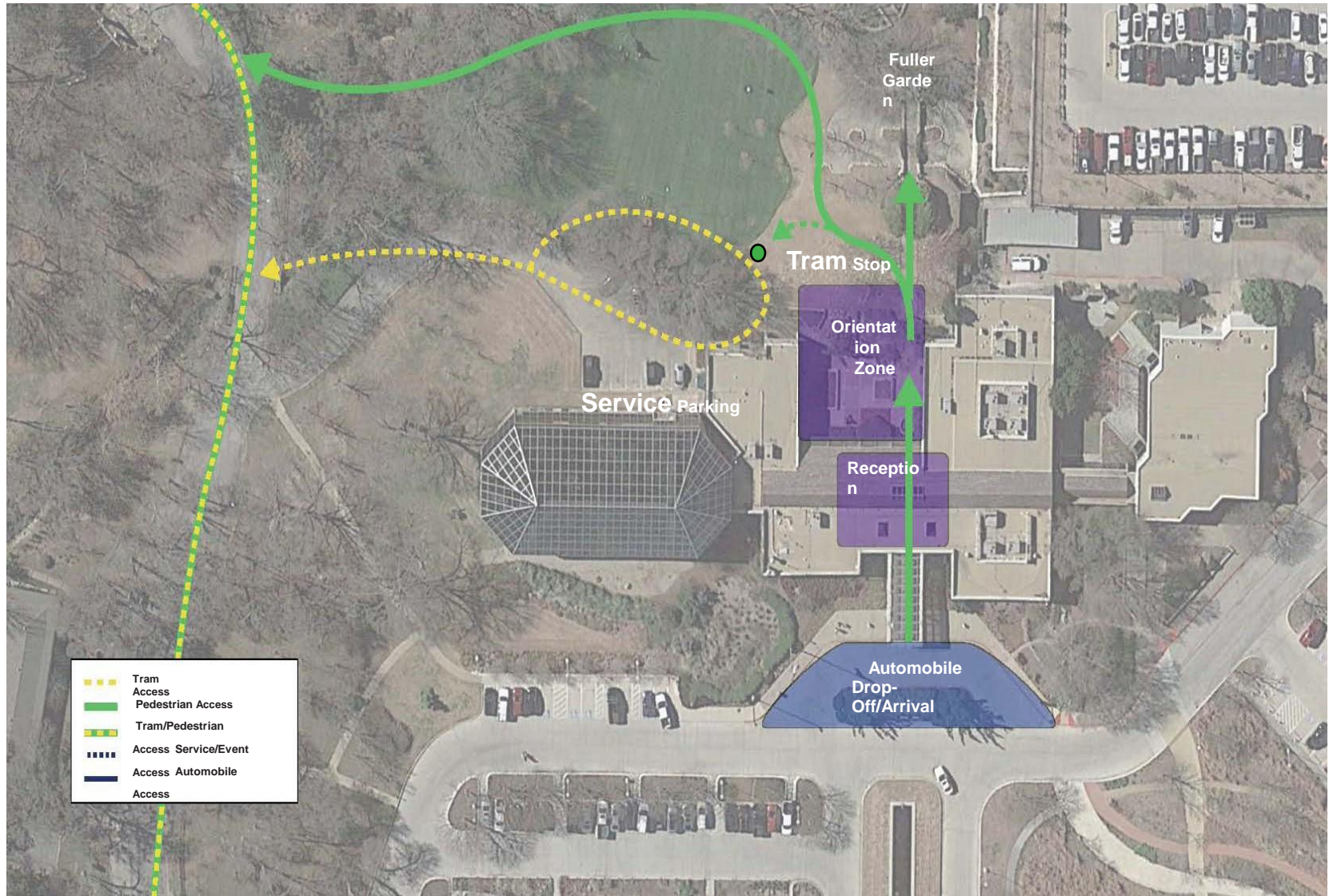


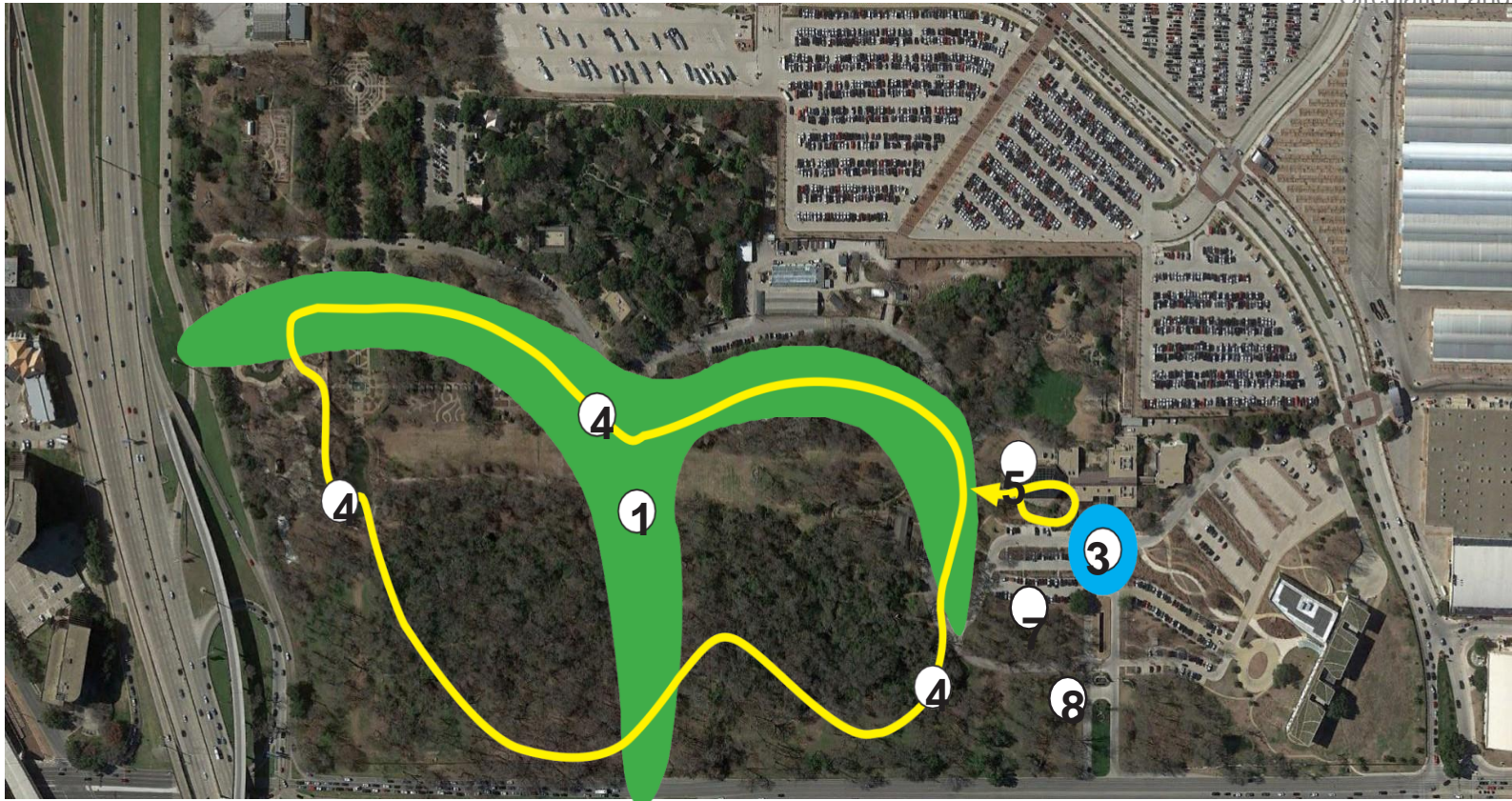
- - - Tram Access
- Pedestrian Access
- - - Access
- · · · · Tram/Pedestrian Access
- Access Service/Event
- Automobile Access

Proposed Circulation Refinements

Option 2: East

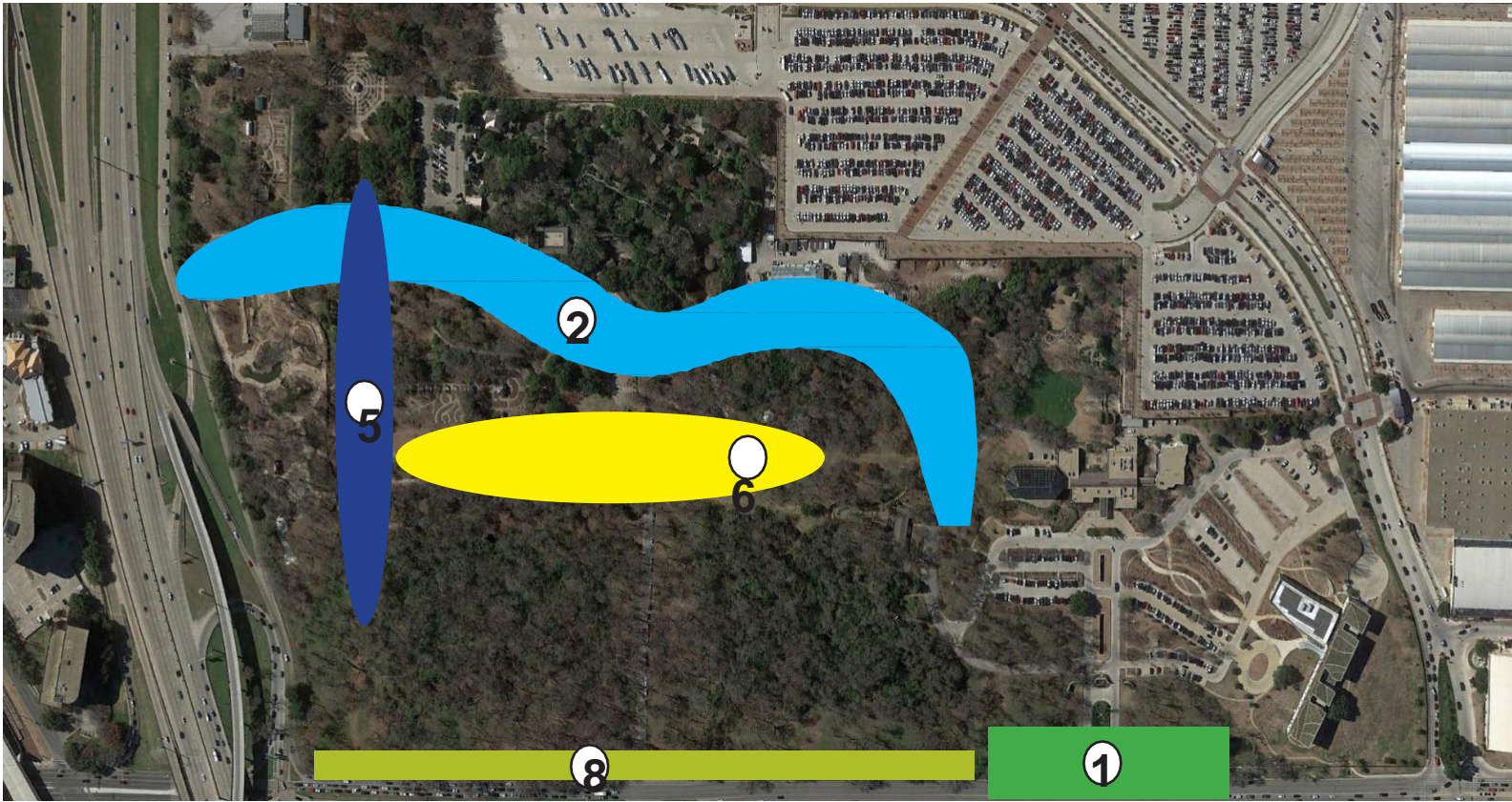




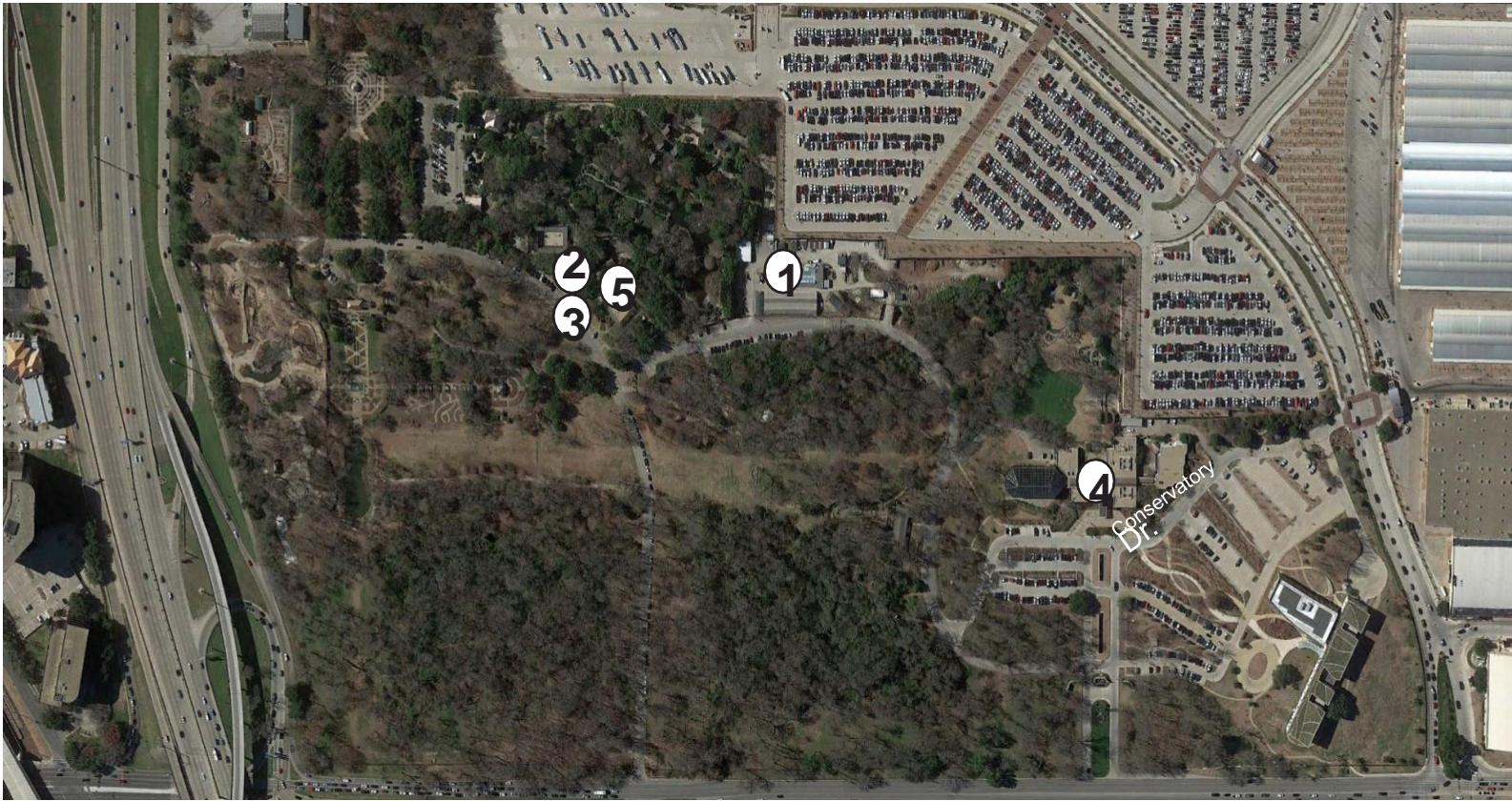


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1. Close Garden to all automobile traffic.
2. Initiate a single public entrance at the Visitor Center Drive.
3. Complete a strategy for welcoming Guests in Visitor Center to orient them; send Guests out the rear of visitor center and guide them to the Fuller Garden and the Pedestrian Loop.
4. Initiate a small tram system as soon as possible when vehicular access is closed. Study potential Tram Stop locations.
5. Develop a pedestrian spine between Garden Center and Rose Garden; expand to loop which connects back to Garden Center.
6. Install Garden wide orientation, guidance, interpretation graphics. Signage and information systems (2010 plan)
7. Consider School Drop off, bus parking, staging and possibly special entrance sequence.
8. Solve parking capacity.



1. Develop more Garden Presence on University Drive at Main Vehicular Entrance
2. Develop enhanced horticultural experience along new pedestrian spine from Visitor Center to Rose Garden.
3. Refine the great Garden experiences that FTWBG already has established.
4. Discuss with City the use of facilities for storage east of University Dr. towards the river in sync with proposed road way extension.
5. Develop east-west Vista
6. Refine and remove some trees from north-south Vista
7. Consider Home Idea Garden/Trial Gardens
8. Consider enhanced plantings to distinguish “garden” side of road from the “park” side of the road.



1. Include Operation Center relocation in the Children's Garden capital campaign.

2. Relocate Restaurant.

3. Repurpose and renovate current Restaurant for event space.

4. Study the feasibility and visibility of retail space in Garden Center.

5. Renovate and restore the historic Rock Springs Building as programmable space.



# Discussion



## THANKS !!!

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We also want to thank especially:

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Sandra Youngblood

Botanical Society Board and staff

Garden Center Committee leaders

Community members who provided input

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