

Fort Worth Botanic Garden Strategic Plan

Overview for Task Force

Presented March 19, 2018

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Key Takeaways from Meeting #1

- Strategic Plan identifies specific actions to make progress towards implementation of the 2010 Master Plan
- More than \$15M in capital repairs are required to maintain the status quo
- Two-thirds of the visitors are not residents of Fort Worth
- Do nothing is not an option or we risk the rest of the garden disappearing like the Fragrance Garden



Strategic Plan – Public Engagement

- Planning Committee Representatives:
 - 3 FWBS, Inc.; 3 FWGC, Inc.; 1 BRIT;
 - 1 Texas Garden Clubs;
 - 1 Park and Recreation Board; Botanic Garden and City staff
- Three public meetings
- Web comments, emails from the public, individual meetings with consultant team, all public documents posted on website
- Reports/Presentations
 - Park and Recreation Advisory Board: April 27, May 25, July 27, August 24
 - City Council: Informal Report No. 9880, May 3, “Report on the Fort Worth Botanic Garden Strategic Plan Process”

Strategic Plan Objectives

- Transform the **Guest Experience**
- Establish the Fort Worth Botanic Garden as a **leader in public programs**
- Implement key parts of the City Council adopted **2010 Master Plan**
- **Repair, renovate, and improve** gardens, features and facilities
- **Reorganize the Garden's support groups** to improve the Garden's management and to increase support

Clear conclusion: \$15M+ in needed capital maintenance and repairs before we can pursue larger aspirations.

Botanic Garden Mission Statement

“Enriching people’s lives through environmental stewardship and education.”

changed by Strategic Planning Committee to

“Engage, inform and inspire with plants, landscapes and nature.”

History of Garden Designation

- Established as “a garden” in December 1934 when Park Board approved creation of Garden Center operated by the FWGC
 - Name changed from Rock Springs Park to Fort Worth Botanic Garden
 - 37.5 acres
- Opened Japanese Garden in 1973

Definition of a Public Garden

In essence, a **public garden is a mission-based institution that maintains collections of plants for the purposes of education, research, conservation and/or public display.** This definition is useful in identifying what is *not* a public garden. A park may have beautiful ornamental plants and may be well cared for...amusement parks, shopping malls and even hotels can have lovely and diverse plantings...But such sites do not meet the **essential criteria of being public gardens unless there is a mission statement driving their efforts and their plants are actively curated, that is cared for objects that are part of the collections of a living museum.”**

[Donald A. Rakow and Sharon A. Lee (editors). 2011. Public Garden Management. Wiley: New Jersey]

Respite

- Staff believes the function of the Garden does not preclude the enjoyment as a **place of respite**---in fact it is likely encouraged in certain setting.
- Options regarding how a fee affects this use to be explored in revenue discussion.

Direction from City Council

- Realign governance and existing financial resources
- Identify capital infrastructure costs
- Assemble more visitor information
- Subsequent process to consider fees and non-profit status

Seized opportunity to develop **partnership with BRIT** starting with volunteer management and education programs along with collaboration for marketing.

Questions?

