

## MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE MISSION MEETING

Meeting Information:	
Title or Purpose:	Master Plan Committee – Consultant Mission Meeting #2
Date and Time:	11/18/2021 @ 8:00am to 12:00pm
Location:	Moncrief Garden Center, Redbud Conference Hall
Invitees/Attendees	<b>Dennis Shingleton, Bob Byers (BB), Ennis Anderson, John Avila, Ed Bass, William (Billy) Brentlinger, Steve Brauer, Dana Burghdoff, Ralph Emerson, Leticia Esparza, Tracy Friday (TF), Peter Fritsch, Craig Hamilton, Judy Koslow, L A Moncrief, Debbie Morrison, Patrick Newman (PN), Elaine Petrus, Debbie Reynolds, Terry Siegel, Dan Villegas, Harvey Yamagata, Jing Yang, Richard Zavala, Sandra Youngblood, Isaac Cohen, Tary Arterburn (TA), Andrew Duggan, Michael Bennett, Gwendolyn Cohen, Dan Murphy (DM), James Day, Marilyn Gilbert, Charles Denison, Nick Hartman, Lori Ticknor, Chris Smith (CS), Sara Richardson (SR)</b>
Notes Taken By:	Hannah Rodriguez
Meeting Agenda:	Name:
1. Introduction and Welcome	GC
2. Recap of Mission	DM
3. Goal: Create exceptional gardens and facilities to inspire and serve our guests	BB
4. Goal: Change Lives through our educational programs	TF
Break	
5. Goal: Build our human, financial, and infrastructure resources	CS, SR
6. Program Exercise	TA
7. Summary Conversation	GC
Meeting Notes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Welcome:</b> DM summarizes the strategic mission in terms of the feedback received from the last mission meeting (on 10/26/2021):               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Explore: imparting a sense of exploration to guests will keep them coming back to find the exceptional aspects of the garden. To infuse meaning into a place creates a depth of experience that will leave more to explore at every visit. Exploration cultivates a commitment to integrating the garden as a lifetime place.</li> <li>o Discover: We want to empower guests to learn independently without a guide. Integrating rotating cultural exhibits will allow people to discover community connections in addition to the plant world.</li> <li>o Engage: To motivate change by inspiring and supporting a sense of relevance—enabling personal buy-in to our mission. We want to sustain community relationships through membership and educational programs while cultivating advocates for conservation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <b>Transformative Goal Overview:</b> BB explains the research and initiatives involved in creating exceptional gardens and facilities to inspire and serve our guests.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Because influential gardens are policy driven and connected (to their guests, scientific communities, and larger organizations), we need to consider an organized conceptual back-bone as to what and how our horticultural displays and collections are communicating about our community and region.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

## MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE MISSION MEETING

- We have a notable and expansive collection, but it is not interpreted to (and therefore not celebrated by) guests. We need to be culturally conscious of our collection interpretation to make information accessible and to present a relevant community message that inspires change.
  - The garden needs to become more legible to keep people engaged. We need to fill in the visual gaps between signature gardens. Purposeful displays to guide learning and create engagement as a curated visual experience will impart a sense of place and direction with wayfinding and landmarks—creating a meaningful and intuitive awareness of notable garden features.
- Respectful spaces for staff engagement are needed. Office space and amenities are currently inadequate, leaving staff without places to fill out required forms or check their email.
- Sustainability needs to be a priority focus on our operations and practices. Locally adaptive and climate-appropriate collections can be both relevant and efficient. Infrastructure such as improved irrigation could also increase sustainable practices and significantly improve staff efficiency.
- **Initial Thoughts and Group Feedback (DM)**
  - DM returns to the concept of a shopping mall which BB presented, relating the garden needs to the mall's need for A) signature stores, B) boutiques, and C) areas of refreshment and delight for guest rejuvenation.
  - DM asks the group to provide ideas and highlights that will accomplish this goal with the following results:
    - Could provide an interpretive experience for children with highly tactile elements, fantastically-scale plantings, or fossil sandbox to pair with programming revolving around a children's garden.
    - Garden circulation and wayfinding could aid in accessibility. Path of travel should incorporate areas of respite with thoughtful seating in addition to a better travel system throughout the garden for mobility-challenged guests. Hospitality should be the focus with dining options focused on experience and variety.
    - Three additional signature gardens (perhaps a destination-themed garden to display native or culinary landscapes around the world, specialty collection greenhouses, or food gardens are ideas) in addition to intentional displays between each would increase guest engagement. New displays could include demonstrations of innovative gardening technology (such as vertical gardens and LEED building sustainability).
    - Botanical art, garden exhibits, docent program expansion, member open-houses, seasonal displays, and culturally appropriate programs should be supported to disperse guests across the garden and develop a relatable experience in the garden for all.
- **Transformative Goal Overview:** TF explains the initiatives needed to change lives through our education programs.
  - Teaching models need to recalibrate to changing patterns to set educational trends.
  - With greater program size, our facilities need to set a positive tone to prepare guests for learning. We need clearer directional signage, high-volume restrooms, hydration stations, family nature play stations, storage locations (sheds, closets, etc.), upgraded waste management, and innovative garden interpretation plan (i.e. kiosks, QR stations, etc.) throughout the garden.
  - Spaces to facilitate focused learning experiences (such as shaded pavilions, a state-of-the-art education building with indoor-outdoor interactive elements, and a garden-to-table dining venue for culinary learning) are needed to enhance and support new and existing educational opportunities.
- **Initial Thoughts and Group Feedback (DM)**
  - DM prompts the group to recalibrate the idea of informal education and provide feedback on education opportunities with the following results:
    - More centrally located classroom space with growth and field trip flows in mind...potentially multi-functional as rental space.
    - Programming could involve E-STEM in addition to other plans revolving around garden interpretation, project-based learning models, local business highlights, mobile outreach, teacher development, and other targets to reach AP students, high schoolers, Scouts, educators, and community sponsors.
    - Improve communication with educators by utilizing assessments for field-trip experience, education gaps, and gauge opportunities for partnership with other conservation organizations.
    - Increase interpretive accessibility with technology updates, signage, Wi-Fi access, and providing access for low-income districts to attend workshops.
- **Transformational Goal Overview:** SR and CS examine how to build our human, financial, and infrastructure needs

## MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE MISSION MEETING

- Storytelling is key to building our human, financial, and infrastructure needs. To efficiently and effectively tell the story we need:
  - Wow-factor visuals to connect with donors, reliable VIP-dedicated transit to host donors, project renderings to impart a tangible goal, non-distracting donor recognition monuments, members-exclusive visit experience benefits.
  - A robust and mission-minded staff to increase reach and capacity of initiatives.
  - Data collection and analysis to hone and grow our audience is instrumental. Making connection with tourism and local organizations will also play a large part in storytelling.
- **Initial Thoughts and Group Feedback (DM)**
  - DM Encourages group to provide feedback with operations and staffing concerns in mind.
    - Bolster staff with dedicate vehicular roads to provide access to work areas, promote career-mindedness with paid internships and apprenticeship programs, increase office space (perhaps within Texas Garden Club area) with consistent technology standards, upgrade customer service staff training in addition to implementing a cultural index (or other personality test) to determine candidate compatibility with the team.
    - Guest experience infrastructure needs updates to include evening/night lighting throughout the garden, parking solutions, new entry sequence and upgraded entrance visuals, iconic destination spots and programs to capture return guests and social media presence, and accommodations for visiting scholars or specialists.
    - City funding should be pursued for deferred maintenance in addition to establishing an emergency command center and better shelter in place locations. Enhanced viewing spots to capitalize on the vistas and watersheds. Horticulture and education compound is needed in the southwest quadrant (with I-30 visibility).
    - More professional and community relationships are needed to garner community support. Volunteer base is needed to supplement staff and grow partnerships.
- **Imagery exercise:** TA guides the group through various images to introduce tangible inspiration for potential garden amenities including: family garden experiences, elevated dining options, upgraded gift shop along the main entrance + hubs scattered around the garden, rental venues and pavilions for special events, multi-purpose meeting and event spaces, board/canopy walks, upgraded horticulture beds and displays, Instagrammable exhibits, concert and event lawns, seasonal botanic events to correlate with blooms and seasons, and a conservatory strategy that includes a grand conservatory for exhibition and experience in addition to smaller collection-specific conservatories throughout.

Action Items:	Name:	Due Date or Status: (e.g. Completed, WIP, Ongoing)
1. Consultant Team to compile feedback and develop initial concepts for next meeting.	SO Group	12/8/21
<b>Next Meeting: December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 8:00am</b>		