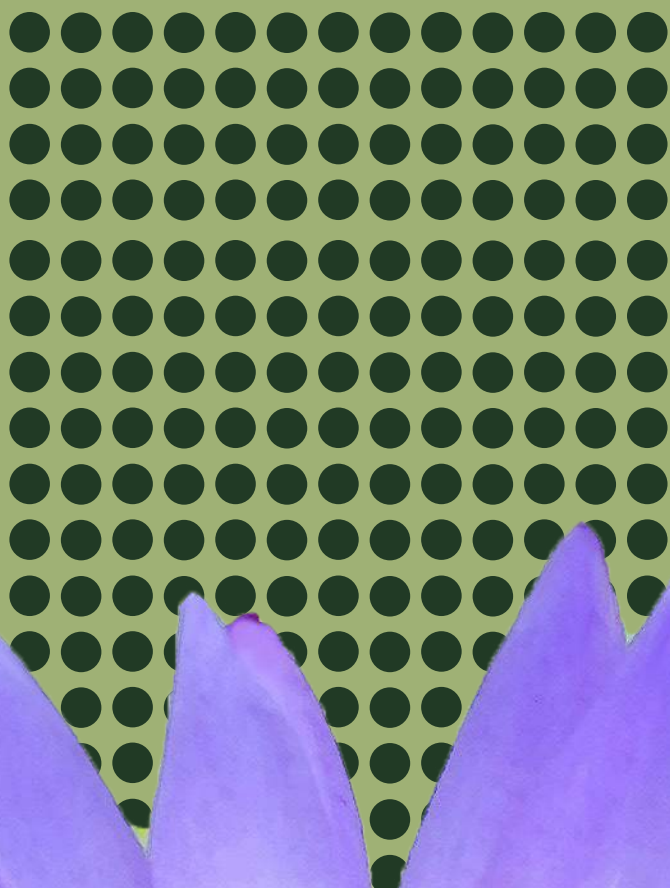




ZILKER BOTANICAL GARDEN

MASTER PLAN
PHASE 1

March 2019



Client



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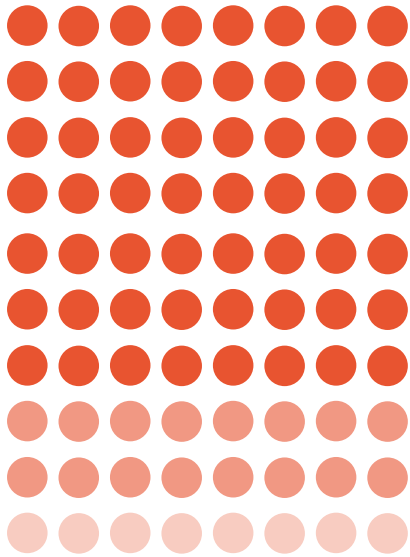


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Why Plan Now?

Tremendous opportunity exists to enhance the mission and capacity of the Zilker Botanical Garden through this Phase I Master Plan and subsequent master planning phases.

Since Zilker Botanical Garden's (ZBG) inception in 1964, there has not been a comprehensive master plan developed that considers current and future opportunities for all aspects of the Zilker Botanical Gardens as a city-wide, regional, and national asset. The City of Austin continues rapid population growth and its park assets are under increased demand to accommodate increasing visitation and increased maintenance pressure that accompanies that growth. Careful consideration must be afforded to maximize the value and maintenance of this historic and well-loved civic jewel. Areas for particular attention must include:

- ZBG's relationship to its context within Zilker Park
- Its proximity to adjacent and equally loved assets such as Barton Springs, the Lady Bird Lake waterfront, Butler Trails
- The increasing use of Zilker Park for locally and nationally recognized events such the Trail of Lights and Austin City Limits Music Festival.

This document provides a Phase I effort that lays the groundwork for a future, complete (Phase II) Master Plan for the ZBG Phase I comprises seven sections addressing an Executive Summary, Site History, Site Analysis, What We Heard, Recommendations, Next Steps, and an Appendix.

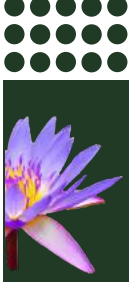
The analysis of the historic and existing conditions of the ZBG, as well as a robust public engagement process, gathered critical base knowledge and aspirations



Children enjoying Zilker Botanical Garden Faerie Trail craft activities.

from project partners, focus groups, community workshops, area teachers, and the general public. Based upon this basis of data and feedback, this document offers recommendations for programs, site operations and key opportunities which will inform a future Phase II Master Planning effort.

The History and Site Analysis sections document site assets, opportunities, constraints, site context and an assessment of current programming within the ZBG. This assessment includes comparisons of key Botanical Garden metrics with 12 other comparable gardens within the US.



The What we Heard section of this document summarizes a robust engagement process resulted in a wealth of feedback from multiple sources and culminated in a Planning Partner workshop which crafted draft Mission and Vision statements for the ZBG. Summaries of feedback from three Community Workshops are summarized in this section. Attendees responded to inquiries about special places, connectivity, identity, gardening, nature/conservation, and visitor experiences within Zilker Botanical Garden. A general written/online survey was also conducted to gauge general public feedback and received 1011 responses. A specific survey for area teachers was distributed and received a small sampling of 11 responses. Topic specific input from several focus groups provided invaluable feedback from the perspectives of nonprofit representatives, North Austin residents, horticulture professionals, arts and culture professionals, and other community stakeholders.

A presentation and workshop at the quarterly AAGC Board meeting in October 2017 was one of the first events attended by the planning team as part of its community engagement effort.

The Recommendations section addresses Phase I opportunities within the following sub-sections: Program, Environment, and Infrastructure, while the Next Steps Section looks to the future and outlines a Phase I Implementation strategy and recommendations for future (Phase II) Master Planning opportunities.

An Appendix includes the Internal Survey of AAGC and ZBGC with results, summaries of input from the Community Workshops, and Focus Group discussion notes.

HISTORY





HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Establishment of Zilker Botanical Garden

In the early twentieth century Andrew Jackson Zilker bought a 350-acre (140 ha) plot of land between the Colorado River and Barton Creek, including the springs, and used the on-site spring water in his ice-making business. Zilker sold his land to the City of Austin in a series of sales in 1917, 1923 and 1931, and donated the proceeds of the sale to a trust dedicated to funding Austin's public schools. The park was named Zilker Metropolitan Park in the 1930's.

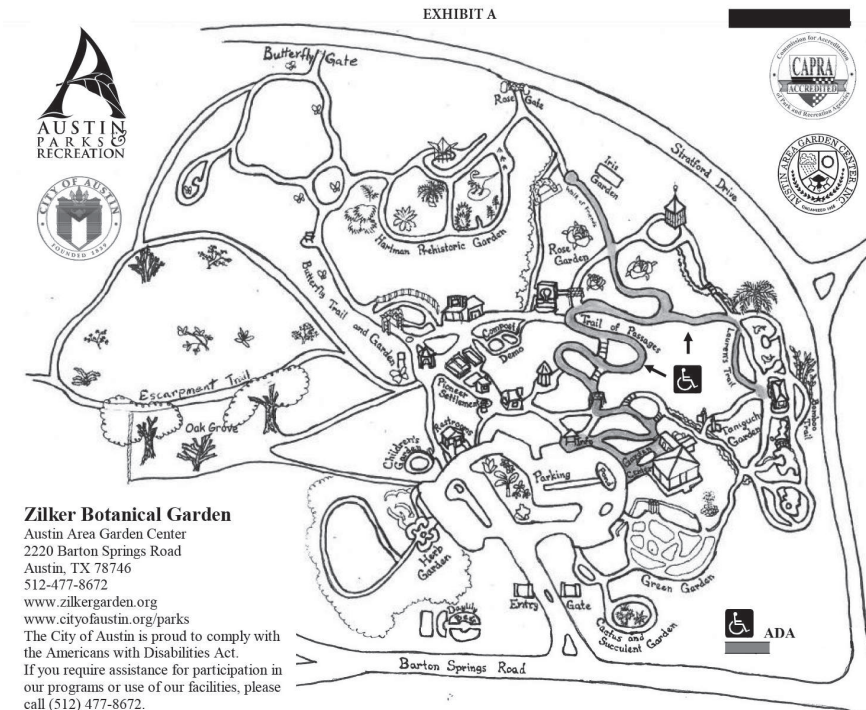
Zilker Botanical Garden (ZBG) at 2220 Barton Springs Road is located on 28 acres in the heart of Austin within the historic Zilker Park. Austin City Council approved construction of the Austin Area Garden Center Building in September of 1962. Building completion was in 1964. The construction was proposed and initiated by the Violet Crown Garden Club and subsequently by the Austin Area Garden Council. City Council made the commitment for maintenance and support of the ZBG at that time.

Today, the Austin Parks & Recreation Department (PARD) is responsible for the ZBG's development and maintenance, and is supported by partners, Austin Area Garden Center and the recently formed Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy.

The first garden constructed after the completion of the Garden Center Building was a "Biblical Garden" in 1965, later evolving into the present day Green Garden. Soon after, Isamu Taniguchi began the design and personal construction of the Taniguchi Japanese Garden which opened to the public in 1969 and remains one of the most visited gardens within the complex.

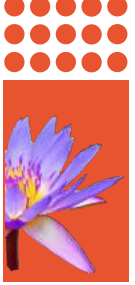
In 1989, construction of the Doug Blachly Butterfly Garden and Trail began. Dinosaur tracks were discovered in 1992 on the site of the current Hartman Prehistoric Garden, which was completed in 2002.

ZBG is home to numerous historic structures that were moved to the grounds from other areas of the city. These include the Mamie Wilson Rowe Summer House, the Swedish Log Cabin, the Esperanza Schoolhouse, the



Current Wayfinding Map for ZBG.

The current map provided to garden visitors is a good example of the potential that exists for improvements to ZBG's branding, facilities and services.



Wishing Well, the Blacksmith Shop, the Butler Keyhole Window, the Bickler Cupula, and the Congress Avenue Footbridge.

Other features of the ZBG include:

- The Taniguchi Japanese Garden, Tea House, the Mother Tree, numerous Japanese lanterns and the Oita Gate donated by Austin's Sister City Oita, Japan.
- The Butterfly Garden with gazebo and butterfly chairs, the Herb Garden, and the Doug Blachly Teaching Station.
- The Memorial Arch and The Walk of Friends.
- Kate's Arbor and Lauren's Trail.
- The Ornithomimus statue in the Hartman Prehistoric Garden.
- The petrified wood collection and the Hartman Overlook Pavillion.

The Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy was formed in 2015 shortly after ZBG celebrated its 50 year anniversary in 2014.

Austin Area Garden Center Building

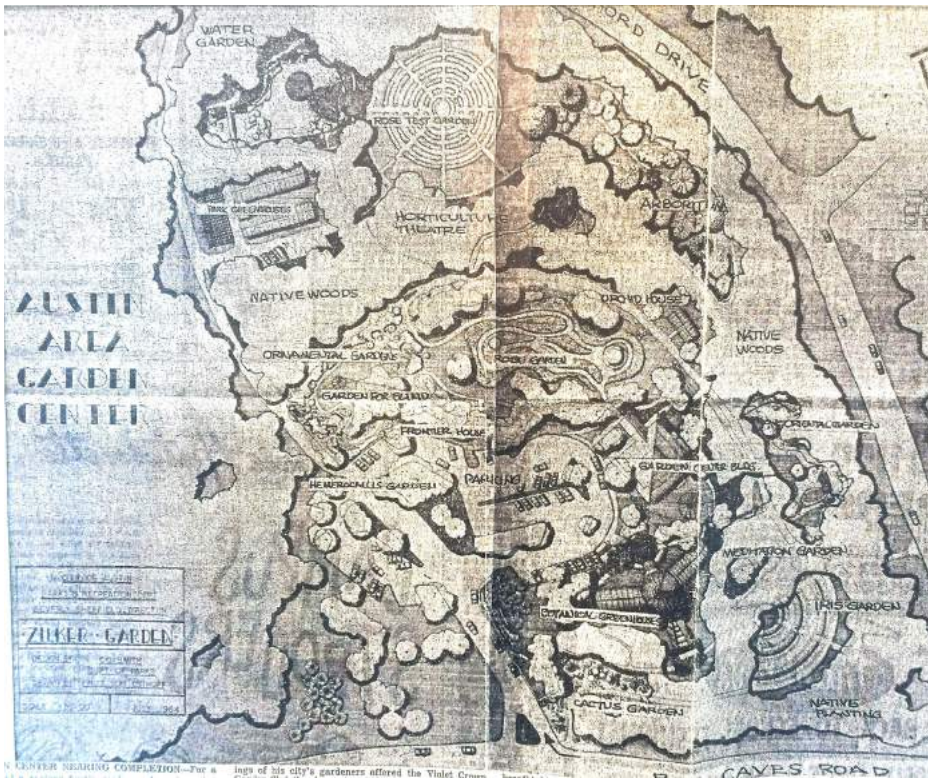
The 1964 Austin Area Garden Center Building currently serves as an administrative building that houses the following:

- Offices for a manager, education, and events staff
- Public restrooms
- Gift shop
- Auditorium
- The Magnolia Neighbors Greene Solarium (Greene Room)
- Library that functions mostly as storage for awards and as an informal meeting space
- Kitchen

The auditorium and Greene room are used for PARD and AAGC club meetings, as well as rentals to the public. The majority of room usage is from member clubs of Austin Area Garden Council. The Garden Center Building houses artifacts and artwork including: portraits of Col. and Mrs. Zilker; a bust of Mr. Taniguchi; a lithograph and sculpture of Treaty Oak; bulletin boards showcasing numerous prints and photographs; the original cast of the dinosaur footprint; and memorable historical pieces from ZBG.



Garden Center
The image shows the Austin Area Garden Center at its opening circa 1964.



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Van Osthoff Plan, 1964.

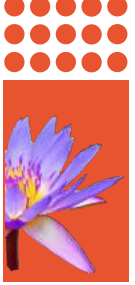
In coordination with the 1962 design of the Garden Center Building by Kuehne, Kuehne and Milburn, this plan by Van Osthoff was prepared to locate the building, entry drive and parking lot on site.



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Broussard Plan, 2013.

In 2011-2012, a volunteer group worked with the Broussard Group (TBG) and an engineer to create the group's vision of a master plan for ZBG. This effort was not conducted at the City's request or through City procedures and was never adopted for several reasons including a lack of stakeholder and community engagement.



Historical Remnants

Numerous historical gardens and architectural features are present throughout ZBG. Many of the historical features date back to the 1860s and 1880s. ZBG acquired many of these features through donations and through the work of City staff to relocate the City's valuable historic assets. The City, Austin Area Garden Council (AAGC), and ZBG docents' group have done an exceptional job documenting historical features for visitors to enjoy.



New Additions

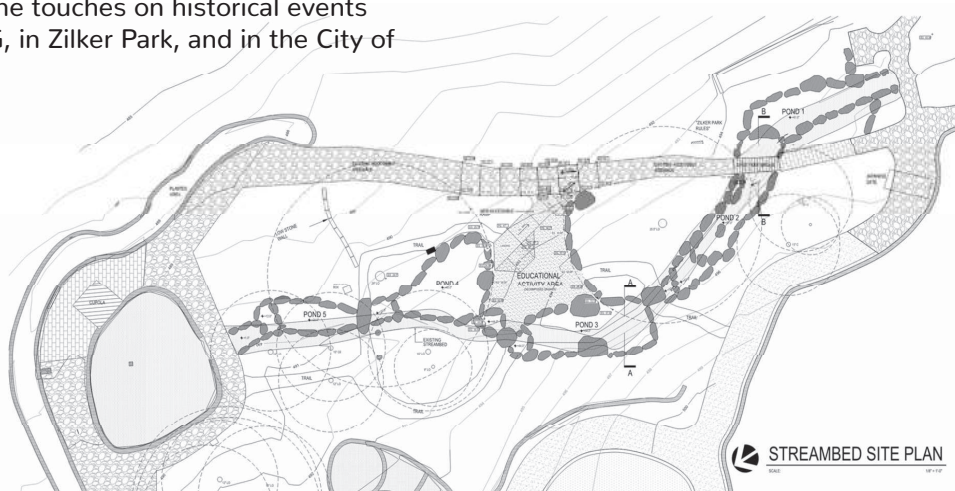
In recent years, the focus of the ZBG has been on expanding programming. Since the development of the Hartman Prehistoric Garden, only one major project has been completed, though landscape maintenance has ramped up in an effort to keep spaces more manicured. Recently, with some support from the Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy, the City completed the first major construction project in ZBG in 15 years — the development of the streambed and riparian garden. Other recent improvements include the expansion of the Oak Grove, shifting of the herb garden back into the sun, and the restoration of downtown views from the gardens.



Historical Remnants and New Additions
(from top) Esperanza School House built in 1866 in Spicewood Springs; Bickler Cupola donated in 1968 after the demolition of the Bickler Building in downtown Austin - one of the City's first public schools; (below) Streambed site plan created by Taniguchi Architects.

Zilker Botanical Garden Timeline

The AAGC has kept extensive notes on the history of the Botanical Gardens. On the following pages the graphic timeline of the ZBG recaps major events from 1917 to 2017. The timeline touches on historical events at the ZBG, in Zilker Park, and in the City of Austin.





TIMELINE

ZILKER BOTANICAL GARDEN

1946: Violet Crown Garden Club sets aside \$50 from firewood sales to start a campaign for a building project

1955: Five garden clubs organize as the Ausin Area Garden Council, City of Austin accept the idea for a garden center

1957: First annual Florarama garden festival

1958: Austin Area Garden Council begins annual flower shows to raise funds for the Garden Center

1962: Austin Area Garden Center Building approved by COA City Council; proposed and initiated by the Violet Crown Garden Club with significant help from Mabel Davis

1963: Botanical garden building groundbreaking, design by Kuehne, Kuehne, and Milburn

1965: "Biblical Garden" constructed, later changed to Xeriscape Garden in the 1990's, and later the Green Garden.

1969: Japanese Garden opens to public, designed and built by Isamu Taniguchi over 18 months.



1973: Mabel David Municipal Rose Garden Dedicated



1970s: Tea House dedicated to Isamu Taniguchi in Japanese Garden, providing expansive view of the Austin skyline

1988: Tours start

CITY OF AUSTIN

1917: Andrew Zilker gifts 350 acres to the City of Austin to establish Zilker Park



1969: Construction begins on the first section of the MOPAC Expressway, Texas State Highway Loop 1, from Bee Caves Road to 2222

1960: Dam built along Colorado River, creating what was then called Town Lake

1975: The first section of MOPAC Expressway (bisecting Zilker Park) from Bee Caves Road to 2222 opens



1982: Lady Bird Johnson and Helen H. Boylston found the National Wildflower Research Center in East Austin

ZILKER PARK

1920s: City of Austin enlarges Barton Springs Pool and constructs surrounding sidewalks

1936: Zilker's first annual Kite Festival

1946: Barton Springs Bathhouse constructed

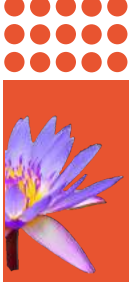
1961: Zilker Zephyr train completed

1959: Zilker Hillside Theatre created; First Zilker Summer Musical - Seventeen, was performed the same year


1967: The Zilker Tree was first lit using one of Austin's iconic moontowers draped in lights

1985: Historic on the Register Places






1989: construction of the Doug Blachly Butterfly Garden and Trail begins




1992: Orinthomimus dinosaur tracks discovered on site of current Hartman Prehistoric Garden

1995: Installation of the 'Rose Gate' by local firm Lars Stanley Metalworks at North entrance to the garden




1999: Master Gardener Greenhouse dedicated

2002: Hartman Prehistoric Garden and Hartman Pavillion completed at the site of the discovered dinosaur tracks



2008: 13 week Dinoland exhibit at ZBG

Early 2010s: Frist Faerie Garden Tea Parties



2014: Garden celebrates its 50th anniversary

2014: Virtual Garden Tours available in English and Spanish on the city's website

2015: Zilker Botanic Garden Conservancy formed

2010: ZBG begins charging admission

2011: TBG concept plan for garden

2017: 60th and last Zilker Garden Fest

1991: Umlauf Sculpture Garden and Museum opens.

1992: Save Our Springs (SOS) ordinance passes as a citizen-led water quality initiative protecting the Barton Springs Zone


1995: The National Wildflower Research Center relocates to its current campus in Southwest Austin

1997: The National Wildflower Research Center is renamed the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

1987: Zilker Park Disc Golf Course constructed

1997: National Register Historic District Nomination submitted for Zilker Park

2002: First ever Austin City Limits music festival held in Zilker Park.



2017: Zilker Park celebrates its 100th anniversary





NEW AND HISTORIC PARTNERSHIPS

Austin Area Garden Council

Austin Area Garden Council (AAGC) is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization comprising more than 30 affiliated garden clubs with over 1,300 members. AAGC's mission is to educate citizens about the art of gardening. Most of the affiliated clubs hold meetings that are open to the public. Some hold shows, sales, and workshops at ZBG in Austin, Texas.

The Austin Area Garden Council (AAGC) marks its beginnings many years ago with a desire and a need for a building to serve as a focal point for the several gardening organizations in the Austin area. Mrs. W. Bradfield is credited by many as being the first person to approach the city with the request for City-owned land to be designated as a building site. Mrs. Alden Davis continued the quest and in 1955, when the City of Austin accepted the idea, a governing group was needed for the entire project. Several different names were used, but the term "Austin Area Garden Council" was settled on, and on January 31, 1956, the group held its first meeting, represented by five clubs. The purpose of the organization was to "promote the education of citizens in the art of gardening for the beautification of homes and countryside".

<http://www.zilker garden.org/aagc/>



Mabel Davis

City of Austin

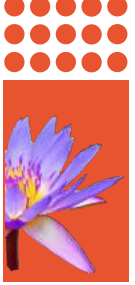
The City has been an active steward of Zilker Park since Andrew Jackson Zilker donated the land within Zilker Park to the Austin School District/City of Austin in 1917. Mr. Zilker mandated that his contribution remain a park and it has become one of the most iconic places in Austin. On November 15th, 1962, Austin City Council allocated space in Zilker Park to be designated as the site of ZBG after the AAGC requested it and raised money for the development of gardens and facilities.

In the 56 years that followed, the City of Austin has funded facilities and grounds maintenance for the site as well as support staff. The City has retained ownership of the land and has had a working relationship with the many volunteers who support the site.

Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy

Founded in 2015, Zilker Botanic Garden Conservancy is a 501c(3) non-profit organization (ZBGC) dedicated to restoring this gem of a botanical garden on the banks of Lady Bird Lake. The Conservancy has supported the City's efforts to improve the landscape and experience of the ZBG. Upcoming planned efforts include supporting Phase 2 of the master plan for this treasured city amenity as well as initializing a capital campaign.





The Conservancy is also partnering with the City increasingly (not sure where the word 'increasingly works best) on a variety of programming, and is taking the lead in the development of hands-on STEM field trips for K-12 school groups. This includes underwriting costs for transportation (scholarships for bus fees) and field trip fees for students from Title I schools in Austin.

<https://zbgconservancy.org/>

The Future of Partnerships

All partners view the gardens as a place for building community, not just for viewing plants. ZBG welcomes more than 125,000 visitors a year, hosts more than 30 active garden clubs.

All of the existing partners at the ZBG are passionately committed to crafting a vision in a way that protects and promotes the ZBG for generations to come. In the future, the Conservancy aims to increasingly transfer operational activities for ZBG to their staff and volunteers and has already begun to transition parts of the operations, such as gate operations. As these transitions occur, it is paramount that the ZBGC, AAGC, and the City of Austin converge around a shared vision. If each stakeholder asserts their strengths and institutional knowledge, they can ensure fundraising keeps up with this shared vision and greater plans to come.

Garden Management Transition

Phase I (2019-2020):

- ZBGC takes over management of Gift Shop
- ZBGC establishes and begins Membership program
- ZBGC takes over operation of Garden Admissions
- Entry fees are increased—ZBGC reimburses City portion and retains increase to support operations
- ZBGC fundraises for and conducts Garden Master Plan (design phase), with City serving as part of planning team
- City maintains Garden budget at substantively same level

Phase II (anticipated within a few years)

- ZBGC begins managing Garden rentals
- Rental fees increase to market rates
- ZBGC conducts Capital Campaign to begin implementing the Master Plan
- City begins to divest funding to Garden due to increased ZBGC investment

Phase III (long term)

- Grounds operations transitions to ZBGC (undetermined when, or if, this will occur)
- ZBGC completes implementation of Master Plan
- City continues to divest funding due to increased ZBGC investment



SITE ANALYSIS





SITE ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

The phase 1 site assessment of Zilker Botanical Garden focused specifically on the core issues of accessibility and circulation, parking, visitation, facility use, and programs.

In a later phase of the Master Plan, the City of Austin, in partnership with the Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy, anticipate undertaking a more focused assessment of the site’s ecological, hydrological, and horticultural features, as well as the long-term functionality of its outdoor spaces and facilities.

Site Analysis for this project was undertaken as a parallel effort with public and stakeholder engagement. In the next chapter, engagement results will be outlined in detail. However, one of the key items stakeholders identified in those efforts was the connectivity of Zilker Botanical Garden (ZBG) with its immediate environs, and with the broader city and region. This was an important item to note as the site analysis was developed and resulted in an analysis that examines not just the ZBG property – but also the broader Zilker Park area and immediate surroundings. To this end, this analysis included field documentation on foot, aerial drone photography, and GIS mapping using available data provided by the City of Austin. During the course of the project, the planning team made numerous site visits to observe the workings of ZBG during weekdays and weekends, special events and tours, and during multiple seasons.

Key Takeaways from the Site Analysis:

- ZBG will require significant improvements both within and around its property to achieve an acceptable level of accessibility.
- The accessibility improvements that will happen around the ZBG will require greater coordination with the spaces adjacent to ZBG and the agencies which oversee these spaces, notably Barton

Springs Road, Stratford Road, the Ann and Roy Butler Hike-and-Bike Trail, Zilker Park and the Polo Fields, and the large open space along Stratford Road that currently serves as overflow parking for the ZBG and staging space for Austin City Limits (ACL).

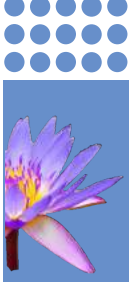
- ZBG's current parking strategy is inadequate to build visitation, and this should be prioritized given that most other improvements will hinge on this.
- ZBG suffers from limited infrastructure such as covered areas, outdoor event seating, and outdoor classrooms for both public and private events. The Garden Center facility is used heavily by Austin Area Garden Council garden clubs, which limits its ability to serve other events. The Rose Garden provides the only sunny area for events, and the Oak Grove provides the only shaded space for events.



Path Surfaces

ZBG has a wide array of path surfaces that allow varying degrees of mobility. Some trails and slopes in the existing botanical garden center are accessible but many are not ADA compliant, with loose materials or steep grade changes.





Site Opportunities

(Clockwise from top left) The Mabel Davis Rose Garden is the only unshaded space on site that serves as an event venue and could be designed to host more events; The maintenance facility occupies an area that could be consolidated to accommodate other critical infrastructure or program spaces; The main entrance lacks sufficient visibility and is located on a road that is highly unsafe for pedestrians wanting to access the site; The large shaded area near the main entrance is underutilized and essentially inaccessible in the site current design; The Oak Grove is a recently expanded flexible space with potential to become a more formalized space for education and events.



Site Assets

(Clockwise from top left) The Taniguchi Japanese Garden not only ranks as the most visited place in ZBG but represents an important story to preserve in the site history; The Hartmann Prehistoric Garden represents the only formalized garden space on site designed to modern standards; The Garden Center is heavily utilized and serves as an important historical anchor for the site; While views of downtown are often obstructed by canopy growth, further recovering those views could better highlight the site's magnificent location; The variety of remnant historical objects now located on site have in many cases become important moments within the garden experience.





Circulation and Accessibility

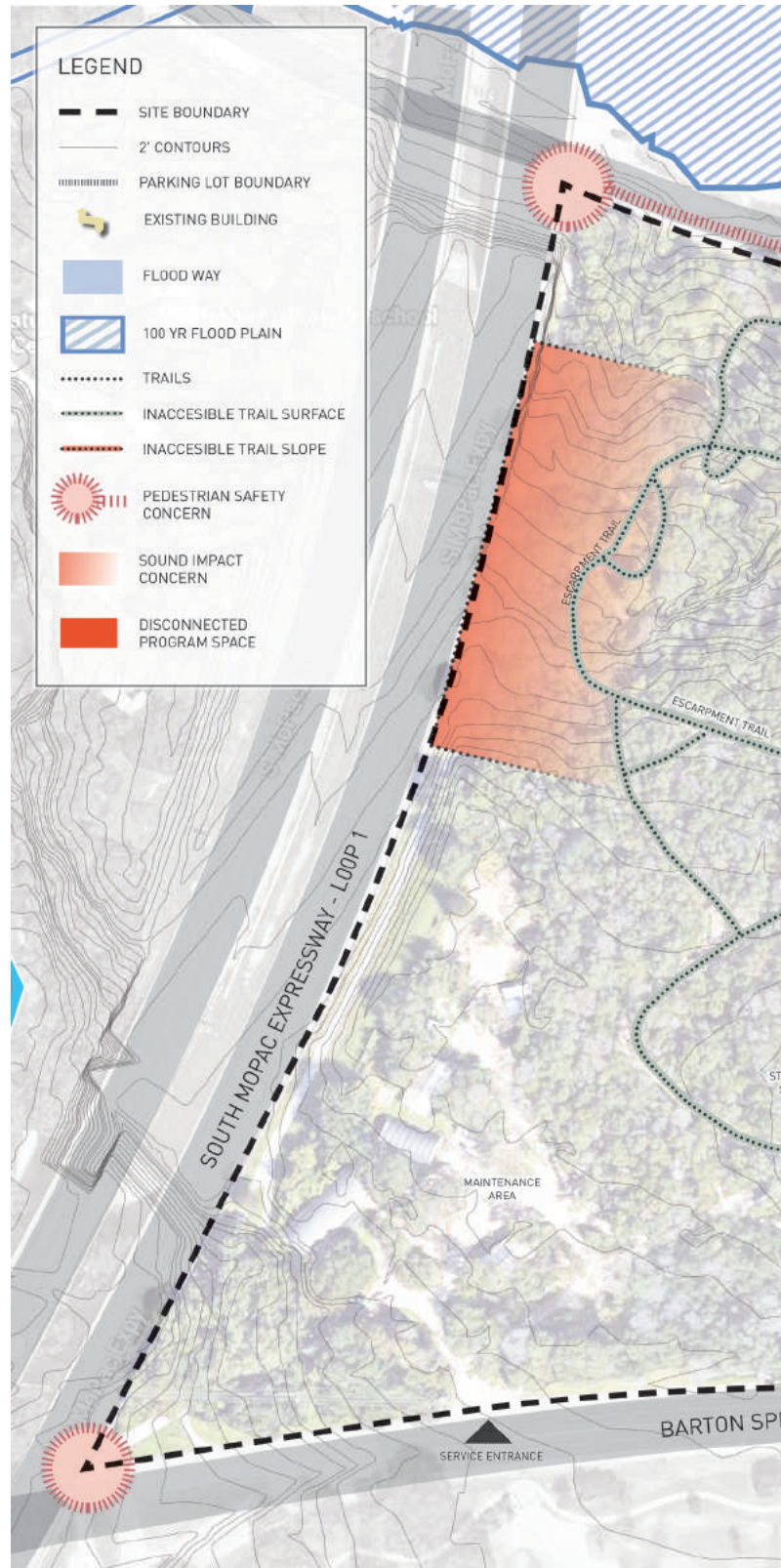
Within the ZBG, the investigation focused primarily on circulation and accessibility. Parking on site, though well landscaped and designed to be an integral part of the ZBG experience, provides space for only 80 vehicles, no space for school buses to park, and is currently inadequate to serve the visiting population.

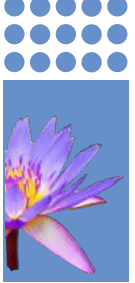
ZBG boasts an extensive network of circulation paths of very diverse character, yet only a small portion of these currently meet Texas Accessibility Standards. The site's topography provides the greatest challenge to improved accessibility, with an elevation change of nearly 60 feet from the main parking area to the secondary entrance along Stratford Drive. While some paths will be extremely difficult to update for improved accessibility, notably around the Taniguchi Japanese Garden, there are many other existing paths with low to moderate pitch that are only inaccessible because of their surface material. As part of this plan, all existing paths within the site were mapped according to accessibility to help illustrate the current condition and prioritize improvements.

The site's dramatic topography should also be seen as an opportunity. Given that it is well above the floodplain and has the potential to offer dramatic views of downtown Austin with selective canopy clearing, future program opportunities could in fact leverage the topography to greater effect. A natural amphitheater, interpretation related to the Balcones Escarpment, or an overlook are just a few of the possible ways to better take advantage of the site's existing form.

Site Context

The ZBG site was investigated from multiple perspectives, beginning with its edges and working inward. In its current condition, ZBG exists as a highly cloistered space within Zilker Park: It is surrounded by a metal picket fence, it is not well identified, it is hard to access, and its dense tree canopy and hilltop location make

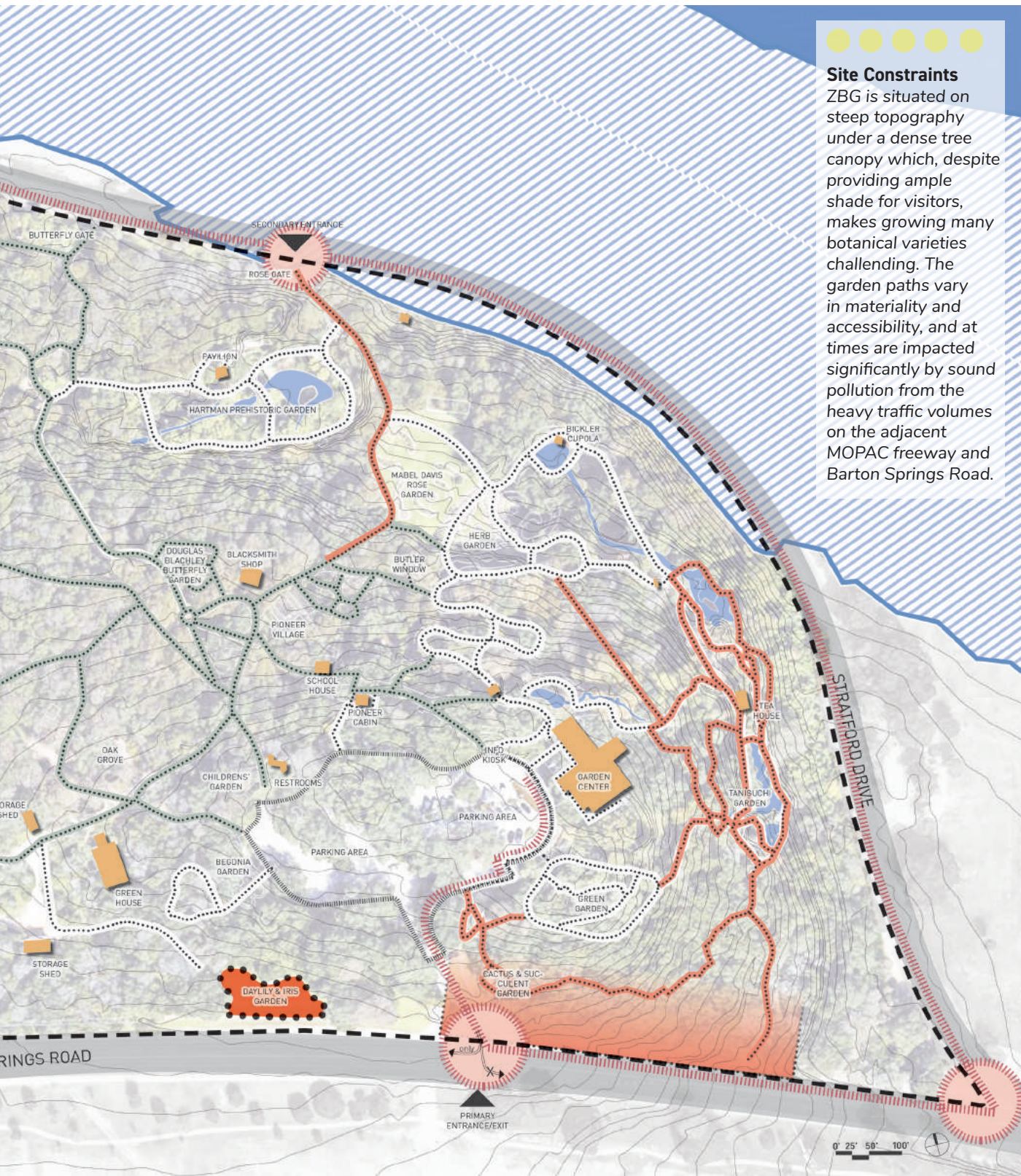




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Site Constraints

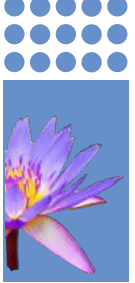
ZBG is situated on steep topography under a dense tree canopy which, despite providing ample shade for visitors, makes growing many botanical varieties challenging. The garden paths vary in materiality and accessibility, and at times are impacted significantly by sound pollution from the heavy traffic volumes on the adjacent MOPAC freeway and Barton Springs Road.











Site Context (East)

Situated on the western edge of Zilker Park, near Barton Springs, and east across MOPAC from Austin's Nature and Science Center, ZBG has potential to highlight Austin's botanical, ecological, and cultural heritage as well as serve as the connective node between all of these beloved natural resources. The Garden, adjacent Austin Nature and Science Center, and Zilker Preserve together create a large continuous ecologically protected zone within Zilker Park.



-  SAFE PEDESTRIAN CROSSING OPPORTUNITY
-  ACCESSIBLE SIDEWALK
-  MISSING CONNECTION OPPORTUNITY
-  TRAFFIC CALMING OPPORTUNITY
-  WAYFINDING OR IDENTITY SIGNAGE OPPORTUNITY
-  BICYCLE SAFETY OPPORTUNITY

it difficult for curious passersby to gain any understanding of what might lie beyond the gates.

What complicates access to ZBG most is the design of the existing roadways which bound the site. At the site's southern edge, Barton Springs Road serves as the primary gateway to ZBG, with the main entrance located on this roadway. As the main artery through Zilker Park and a connection to Texas State Highway Loop 1 (MOPAC), Barton Springs Road receives a high volume of vehicular traffic on both weekdays and weekends in addition to high volumes of pedestrians and cyclists. The most recent traffic counts recorded by the City of Austin in 2011 showed a total volume of 22,259 vehicles roughly evenly distributed in both directions on the stretch of Barton Springs Road near ZBG.

While provisions have been made along certain segments of this road to mitigate conflicts between motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists, no such provisions exist in the vicinity of ZBG. There are no sidewalks leading to the ZBG's main entrance and no pedestrian crossing, despite a CAPMetro bus stop located immediately across the street from the ZBG. An off-street path runs along the Polo Grounds across the road from the ZBG but this offers no clear connection to ZBG. Striped bike lanes do exist in both directions, but they offer a perilous route for intrepid cyclists as vehicles are traveling at high speeds in their approach to MOPAC with no traffic calming measures in place. Moreover, sound pollution from Barton Springs Road also permeates ZBG's boundaries within its southeastern corner, particularly along the trail leading from the Taniguchi Japanese Garden to the Cactus & Succulent Garden.

Along the northern edge of ZBG, Stratford Drive serves as a secondary gateway to ZBG with the secondary entrance at the Hartman Gate located along this roadway. Additionally, ZBG's current overflow parking area is also located on Stratford outside of the ZBG boundary. However, this roadway



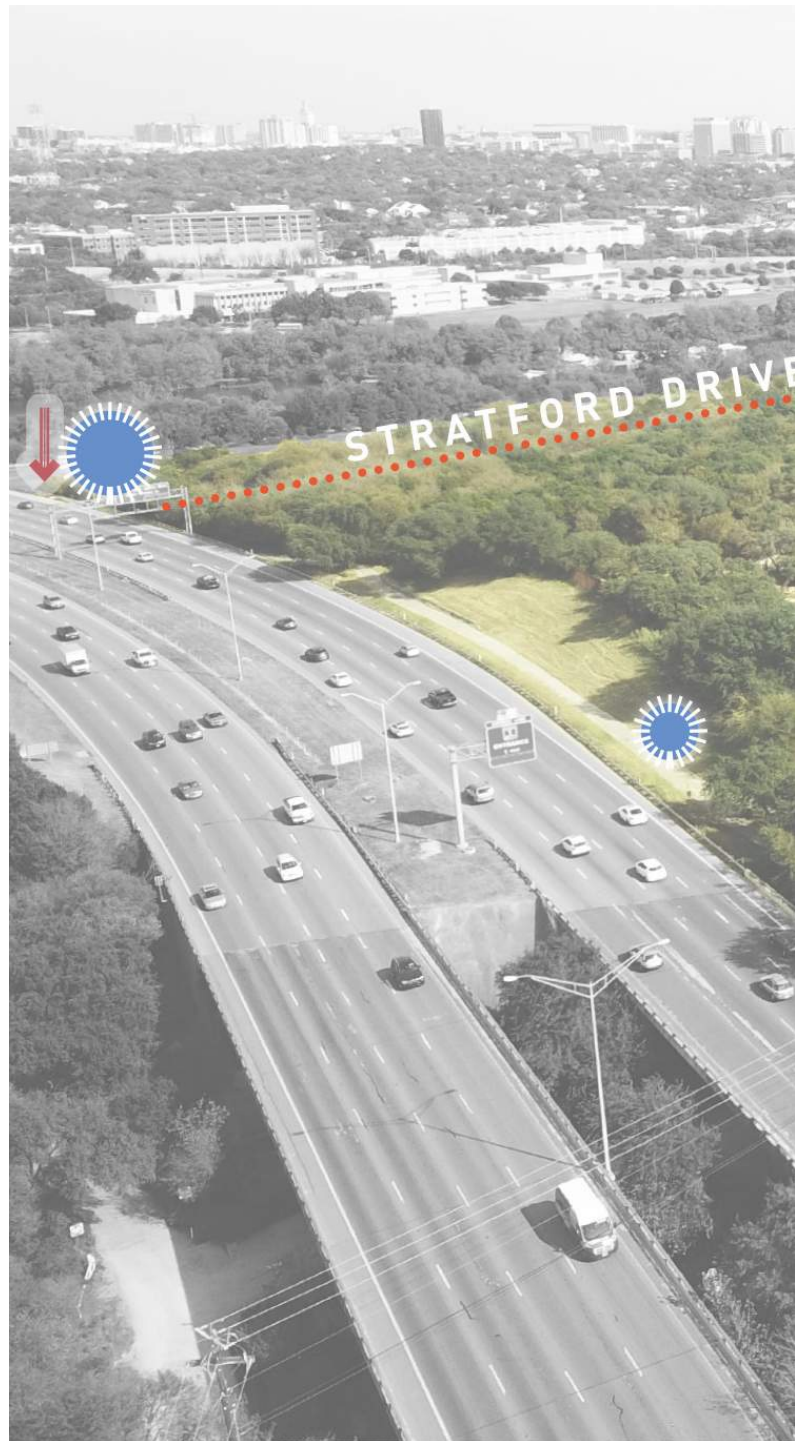
currently lacks adequate pedestrian facilities to enable visitors to circulate from the overflow parking to the main entrance and is not always available for use.







Texas State Highway Loop 1 (MOPAC) serves as an imposing boundary along the western edge of ZBG. The impacts from the highway are significant in regard to sound pollution which affects the garden experience as far into the site as the Butterfly Garden, and disconnects ZBG from the Zilker Preserve and Austin Nature & Science Center to which it could have much stronger connections. The highway's right-of-way currently provides sufficient area for an off-street trail along the western edge of the site and the elevated highways structure would allow for improved pedestrian and bike connections below.

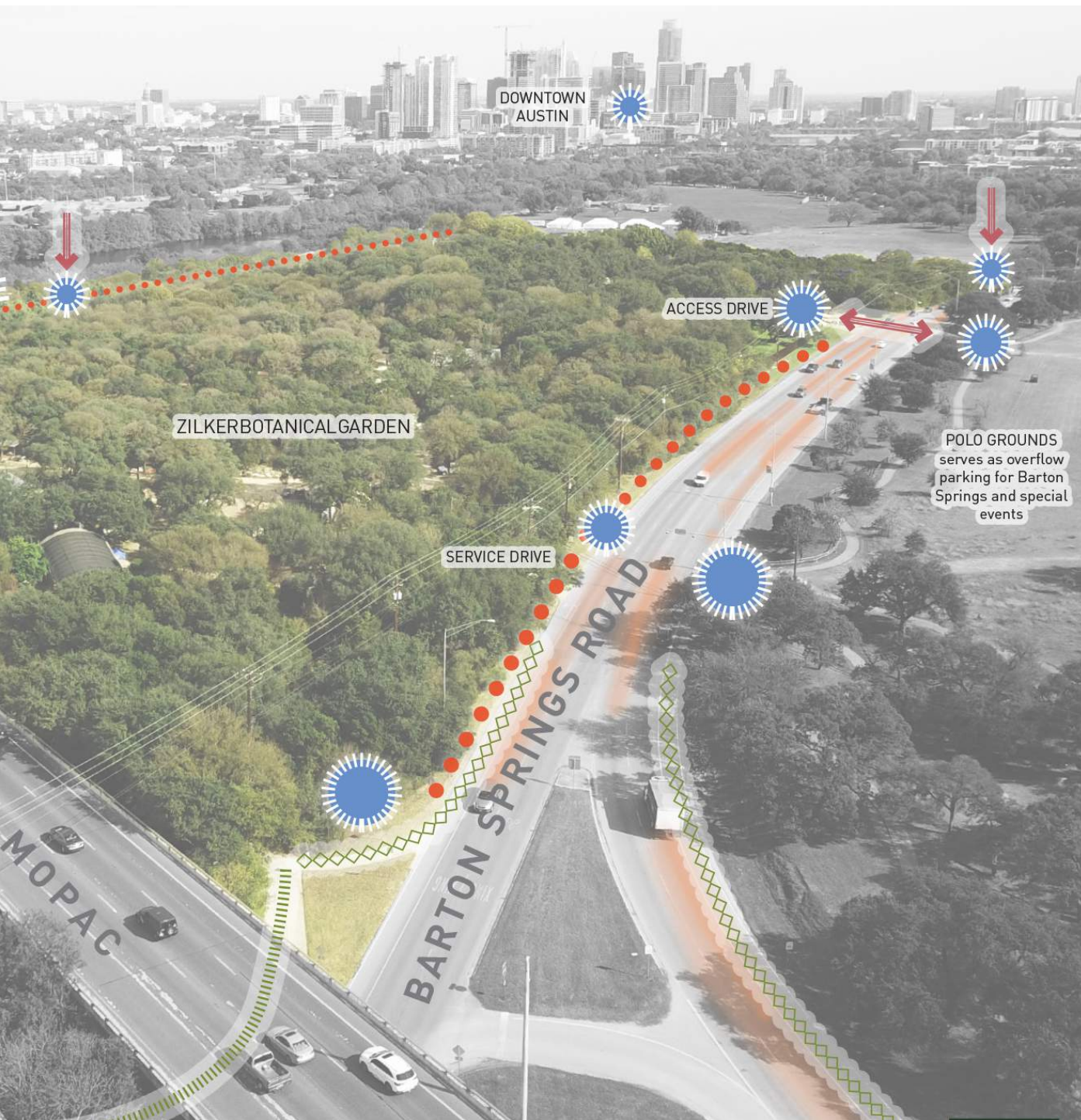
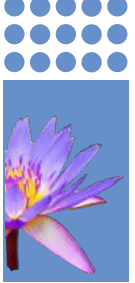
The future impact to the ZBG of the Texas Department of Transportation's MOPAC expansion remains unclear, but it is possible that a portion of the northwest corner of the ZBG may become a casualty of the mobility plan.

All of these adjacent roadways to ZBG lack sufficient wayfinding signage to effectively guide visitors to the site, whether by car, bike, or foot. The lack of visibility of the ZBG to passing motorists on MOPAC alone amounts to a huge missed opportunity for improved identity and wayfinding. Other key opportunities for wayfinding to ZBG exist along the Butler Trail, along the Zilker Park trail that follows Barton Springs Road, along the trail that follows the western edge of the site, and at the intersection of Barton Springs Road and Stratford Road.

Also shown in the image to the right is ZBG's proximity to downtown which, while proving to be a cause of traffic congestion, is also one of ZBG's biggest assets. Moving forward, ZBG must better leverage its location in Austin's most central and iconic park space.



-  SAFE PEDESTRIAN CROSSING OPPORTUNITY
-  ACCESSIBLE SIDEWALK
-  MISSING CONNECTION OPPORTUNITY
-  TRAFFIC CALMING OPPORTUNITY
-  WAYFINDING OR IDENTITY SIGNAGE OPPORTUNITY
-  BICYCLE SAFETY OPPORTUNITY



Site Context (West)

ZBG is hemmed in on all sides by busy roads that not only increase sound impact on the site, but also create many pedestrian safety concerns and limit access points into the garden and connections to adjacent sites. Specifically, the intersection of Stratford Drive and Barton Springs Road, on Barton Springs Road immediately in front of the ZBG entrance, and at the back entrance of ZBG on Stratford Drive are the most dangerous conditions for pedestrians despite being vital connections for ZBG.



Parking

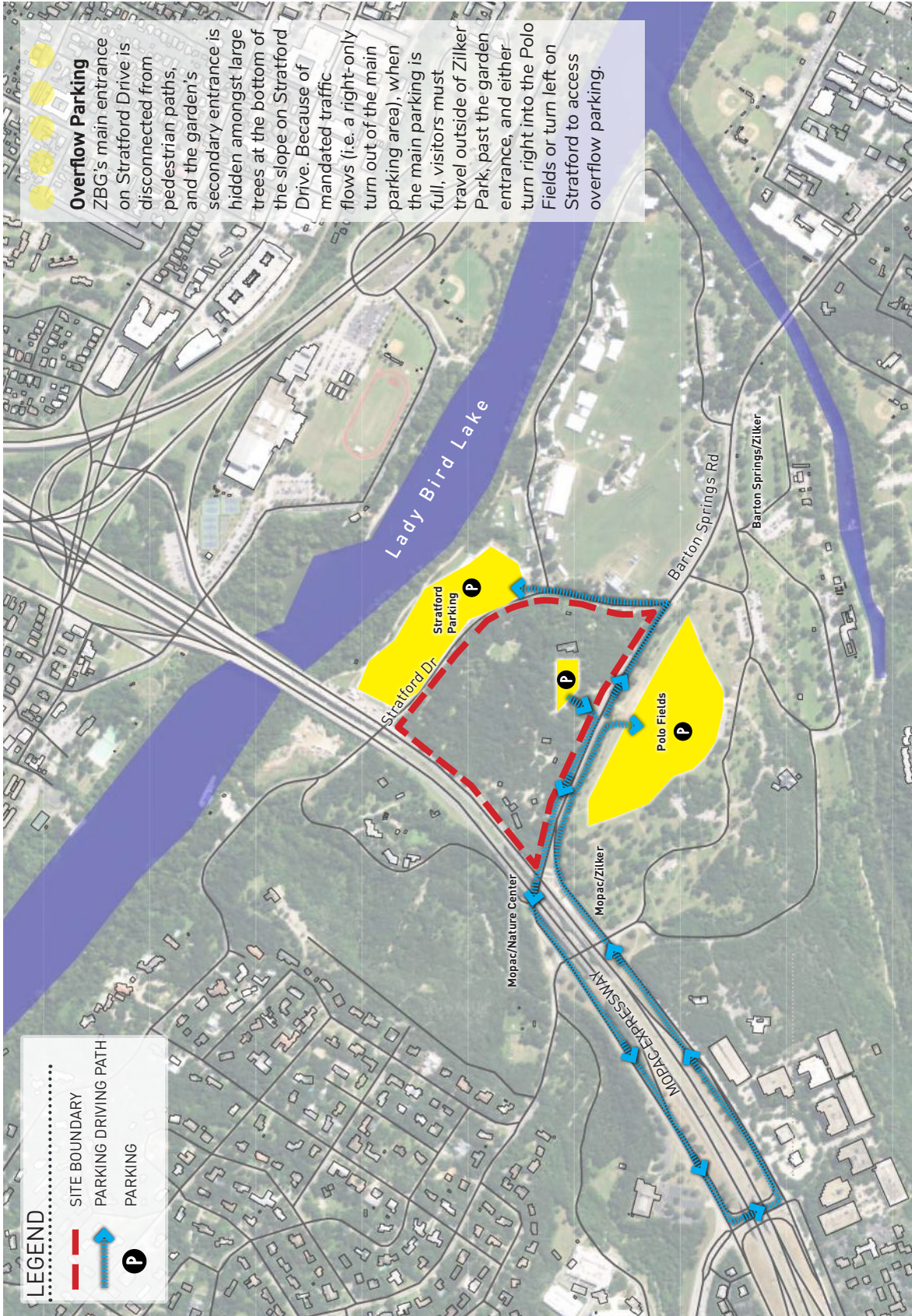
ZBG has struggled for much of its history to create a viable solution to the ever-present issue of visitor parking. In the ZBG's current arrangement, visitors who cannot be accommodated within the onsite parking must turn around, exit ZBG onto Barton Springs Road where they are required to turn right, continue under MOPAC and onto the service road for a quarter mile, make a U-turn under MOPAC, return to Zilker Park via Barton Springs Road and drive past ZBG, turn onto Stratford Drive, park in the overflow lot, and then walk to the main entrance along roadways with insufficient facilities for pedestrians. Visitors using the Stratford Drive entrance to ZBG on a busy weekend must also enter and pay admission at the back gate which does not provide

adequate connectivity, wayfinding, or visitor amenities. There exist several possible ways of improving the parking situation as outlined in Chapter 4 of this document.



Potential Parking

The former landfill site along Stratford Drive currently serves as overflow parking for ZBG. Plans are currently under debate regarding the best way to improve this site as a dedicated staging area for Austin City Limits Music Festival and as more formal overflow parking. City Council created a Task Force in the mid-2018 to address this site as well as larger traffic and environmental considerations. By early 2019, the Task Force is scheduled to report back to council with their findings about the future plans for Stratford Dr.



LEGEND

- SITE BOUNDARY
- PARKING DRIVING PATH
- ➔ PARKING

Overflow Parking
 ZBG's main entrance on Stratford Drive is disconnected from pedestrian paths, and the garden's secondary entrance is hidden amongst large trees at the bottom of the slope on Stratford Drive. Because of mandated traffic flows (i.e. a right-only turn out of the main parking area), when the main parking is full, visitors must travel outside of Zilker Park, past the garden entrance, and either turn right into the Polo Fields or turn left on Stratford to access overflow parking.





AREA CONTEXT

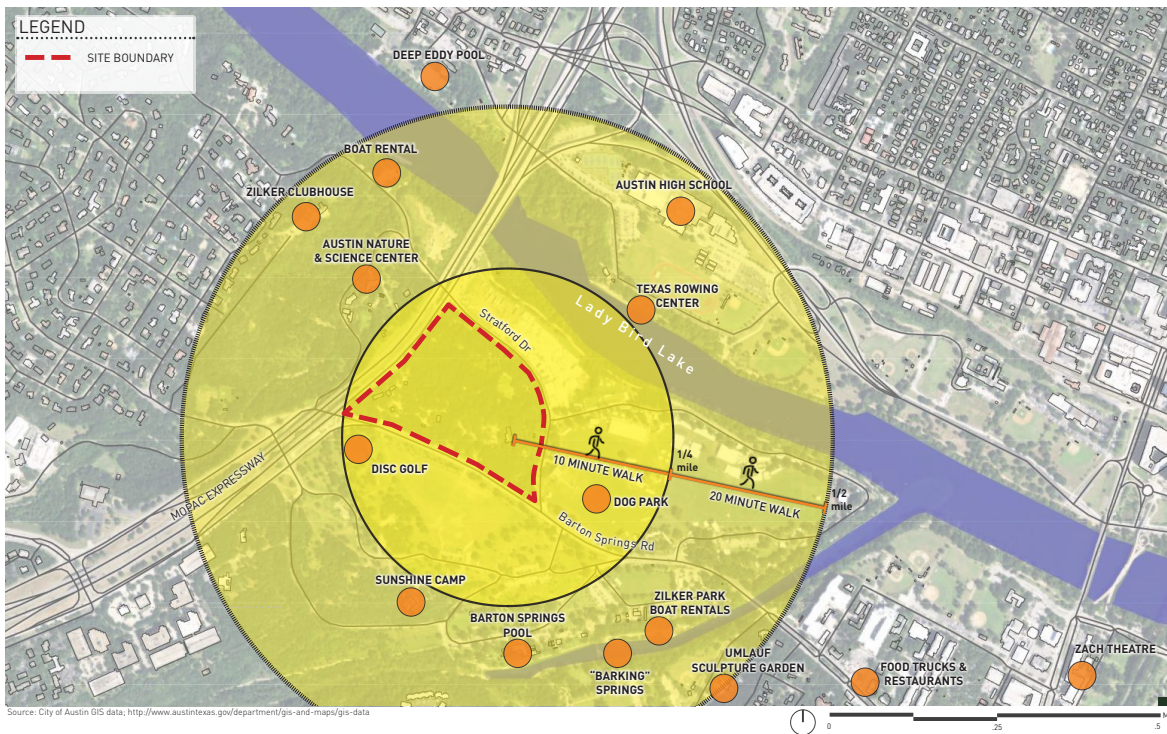
One of the ZBG's greatest assets is its location within Zilker Park - the jewel of the Austin park system and a magnet for hundreds of thousands of visitors throughout the year.

In one regard, this connectedness ensures that there is a built-in audience for ZBG if it can make itself sufficiently visible to these visitors. But it also means that the ZBG must coordinate far better with the spaces around it to leverage this location. Zilker Park is best understood by the many specific destinations that exist within it, as so many of them have specific identities and dedicated visitor populations. The ZBG is certainly one of these many spaces, which also includes Barton Springs, the playground and Zephyr Train, the soccer fields and off-

leash dog park, the volleyball courts, the Disk Golf course, the Sunshine Camp, the Zilker Preserve, the Austin Nature & Science Center, and the Umlauf Sculpture Park.

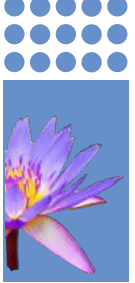
Mobility

ZBG is connected to numerous circulation routes by all modes of travel. It is located on the main artery through Zilker Park - Barton Springs Road, adjacent to MOPAC, the popular Roy and Ann Butler Hike and Bike Trail is within view of ZBG, and a bus stop lies just outside the ZBG main gates - yet access to ZBG remains precarious and hazardous. Simple 10-minute and 20-minute walk radii reveal that ZBG should be accessible on foot from at least a dozen other attractions within and around Zilker Park. Yet, in many cases the routes between these places either don't exist or are poorly indicated. Perhaps the most notable of



Walk Radius.

Many if not most visitors drive to ZBG currently and do not utilize other amenities in the nearby area during garden visits. Despite the current pattern of use, ZBG is within a 10-20 minute walk of so many of the area's beloved amenities including Barton Springs Pool, the Nature and Science Center, Zilker Clubhouse, the Umlauf Sculpture Garden, and more.



these cases is the lack of clear pedestrian connection between Barton Springs, the Zephyr, the playground, and the ZBG. The connection between the ZBG, Zilker Preserve, and the Austin Nature & Science Center is also inadequate in relation to the potential synergy between the sites. Since the three locations are adjacent to each other on the same side of Zilker Park, the lack of connectedness is a major missed opportunity.

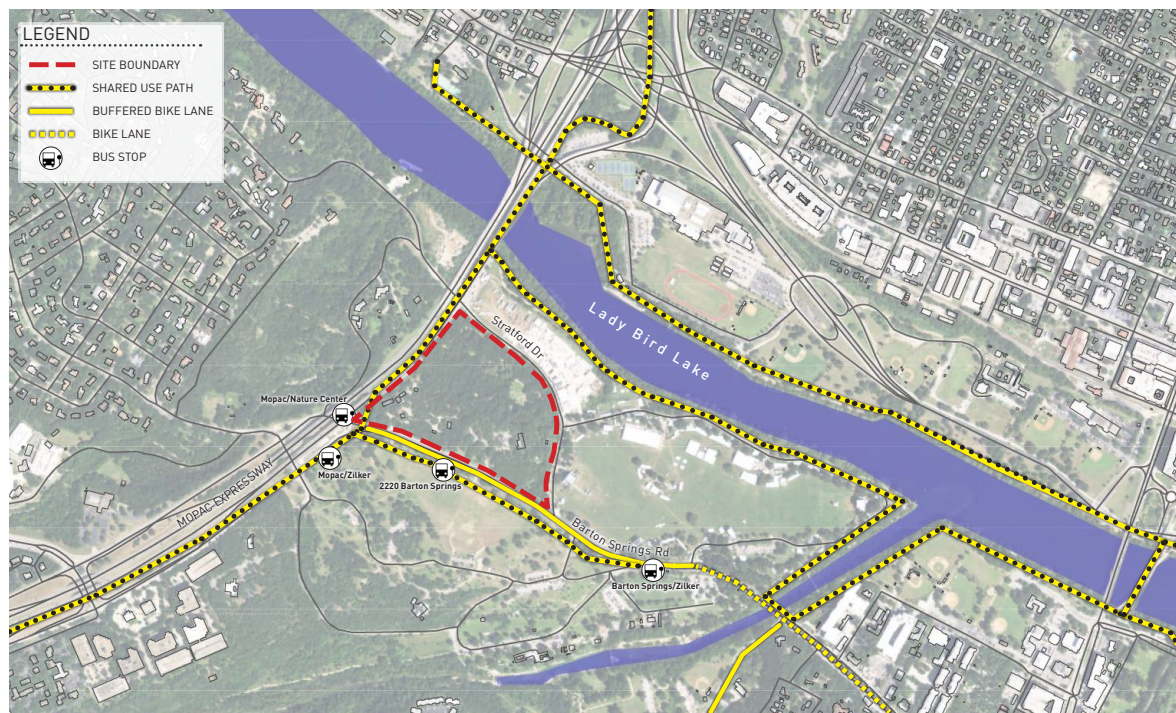
Viewsheds

With its hilltop location, ZBG has the potential to offer incredible views of downtown and is outside of the floodplain along Lady Bird Lake, which consumes large sections of Zilker Park. ZBG staff working with City of Austin Parks and Recreation staff is currently working to restore many of the significant and historic viewsheds.



Downtown Views

While sometimes obstructed by trees and other vegetation, the view from the highest points at the ZBG of downtown are stunning.

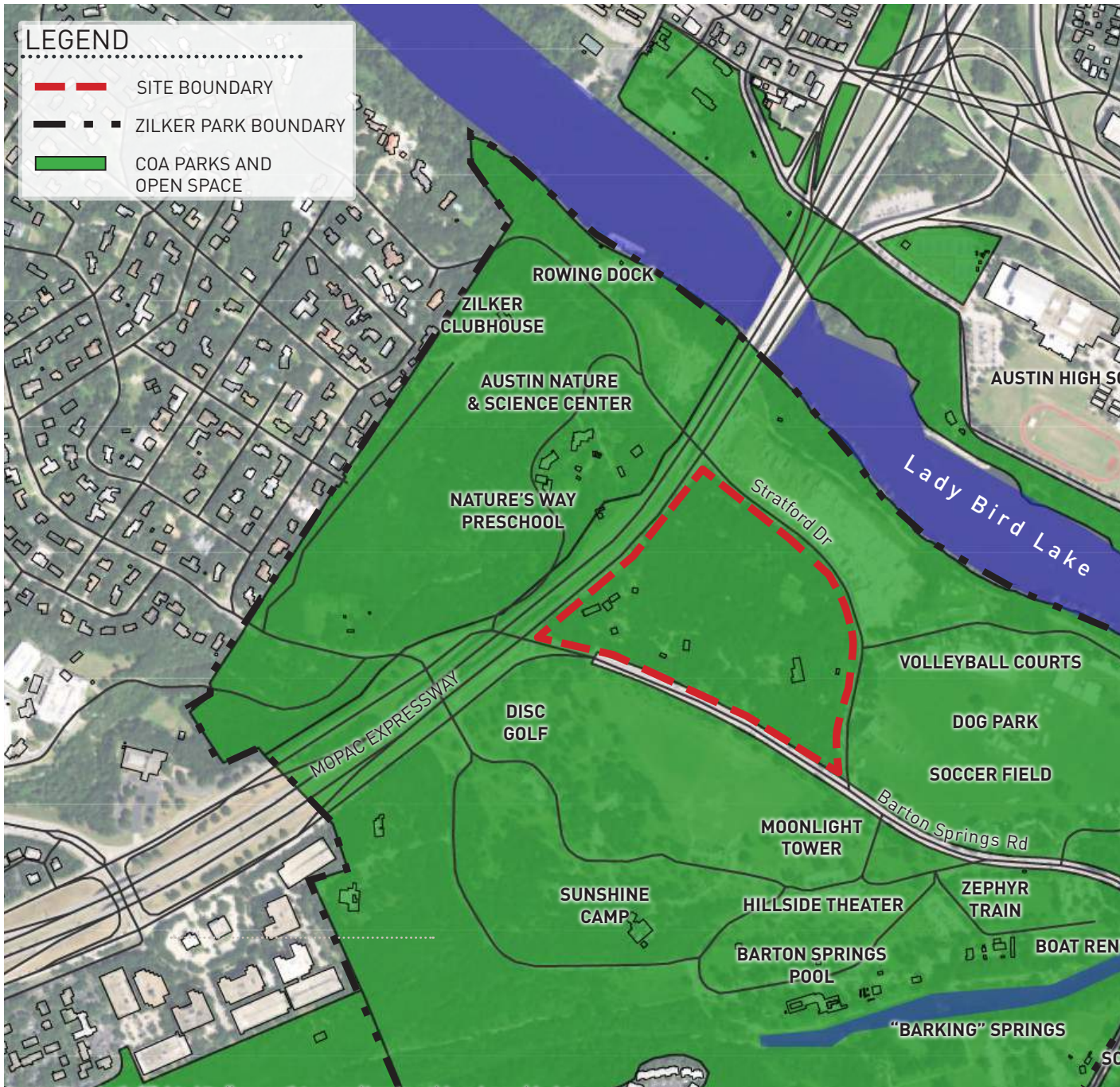


Source: City of Austin GIS data, <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/gis-and-maps/gis-data>, 2014 Bike Master

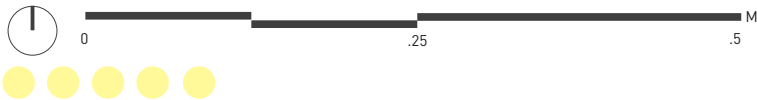


Equitable Access.

While ZBG is located on CapMetro's local bus route 30, many residents have expressed criticism of route 30's connection to underserved communities. The 30 travels into downtown to the north and southwest through the Barton Creek Mall with a terminus in Sunset Valley. Connections must be made either in downtown to access other central and eastern areas of south Austin, or to access areas north, west, and east of downtown north of Lady Bird Lake.

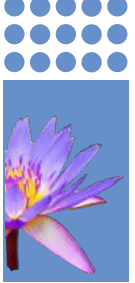


Source: City of Austin GIS data; <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/gis-and-maps/gis-data>



Parkland.

A look at the parkland surrounding the Garden shows it right in the heart of Austin's most beloved central parks. At the western edge of a chain of Lady Bird Lake park spaces, ZBG has a major opportunity to better connect itself to the surrounding areas. Currently, many perceive ZBG to be disconnected despite being central to many other amenities.



ZILKER PARK



Although the Cordova Limestone pillars which mark the eastern entrance to Zilker Park date from 1934, the park itself has a much deeper history rooted in Austin. The park celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2017 and was listed in 1996 on the National Register of Historic Places. The 350 acres donated by prominent Austin businessman Andrew Zilker, had been appreciated by local inhabitants for hundreds of years prior. Its location along Barton Creek near its outfall to the Colorado River and a high concentration of springs made the area an exceptional draw. Today, those springs have been protected in what has become the most popular attraction within Zilker Park – Barton Springs. Moreover, large scale events such as the Austin City Limits festival and the Trail of Lights draw enormous seasonal crowds to the park, all in close proximity to the Zilker Botanical Garden.



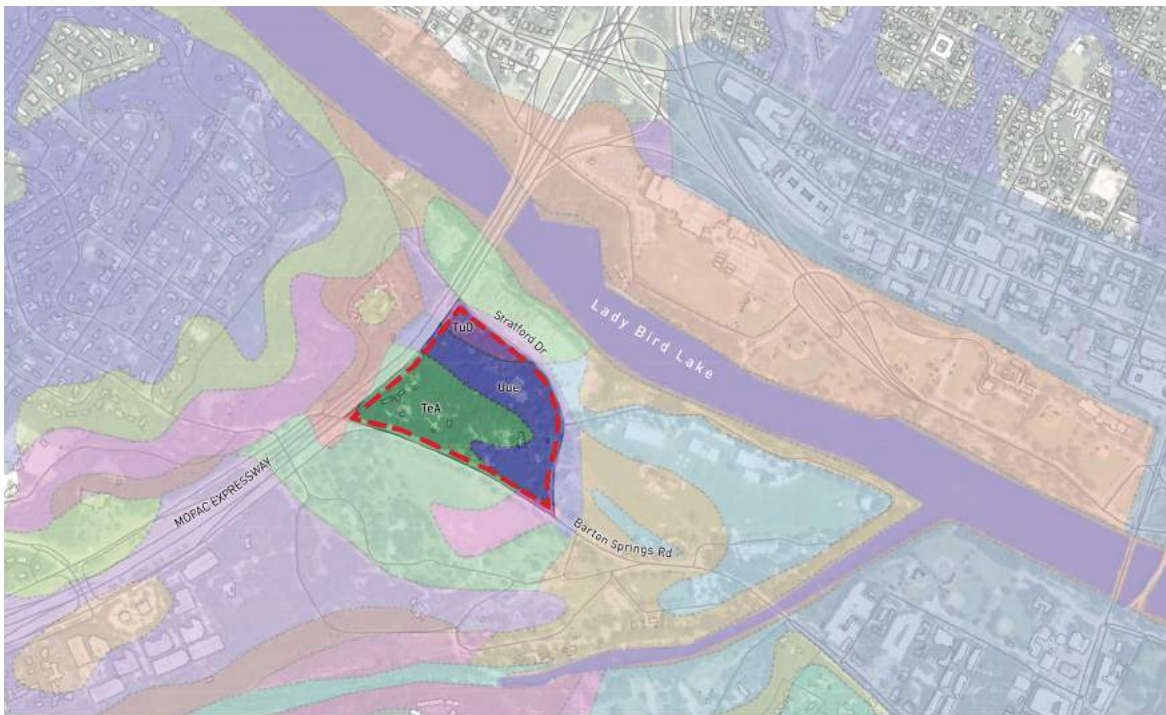
WATER AND SOILS

Within ZBG, three soil types exist shown in the table below. "Tarrant Soils and Urban Land, 0-2% slope" is the predominant classification of the flattest areas of the site. The other most prominent type is "Urban Land and Brackett soils, 1-12% slopes" which can be found along the downhill side of most of the site. Finally, "Travis Soils and Urban Land, 1-8% slope" makes up a minor portion of the site in the northernmost corner.

Much of ZBG drains into Lady Bird Lake; however, most of the maintenance area and some of the existing parking lot drains

into the Eanes Creek watershed. Though ZBG is not in serious risk of flooding as it is completely outside of both the 50- and 100-year floodplains, its proximity to the floodplain and the critical water quality zone of Lady Bird Lake mandate more thoughtful consideration of how water flows onsite and down ZBG's steep slopes toward the river. ZBG does shed a significant amount of water onto adjacent areas, and this will only increase with additional development on site. An integrated approach to managing stormwater will need to address minimizing adverse impacts to surrounding areas.

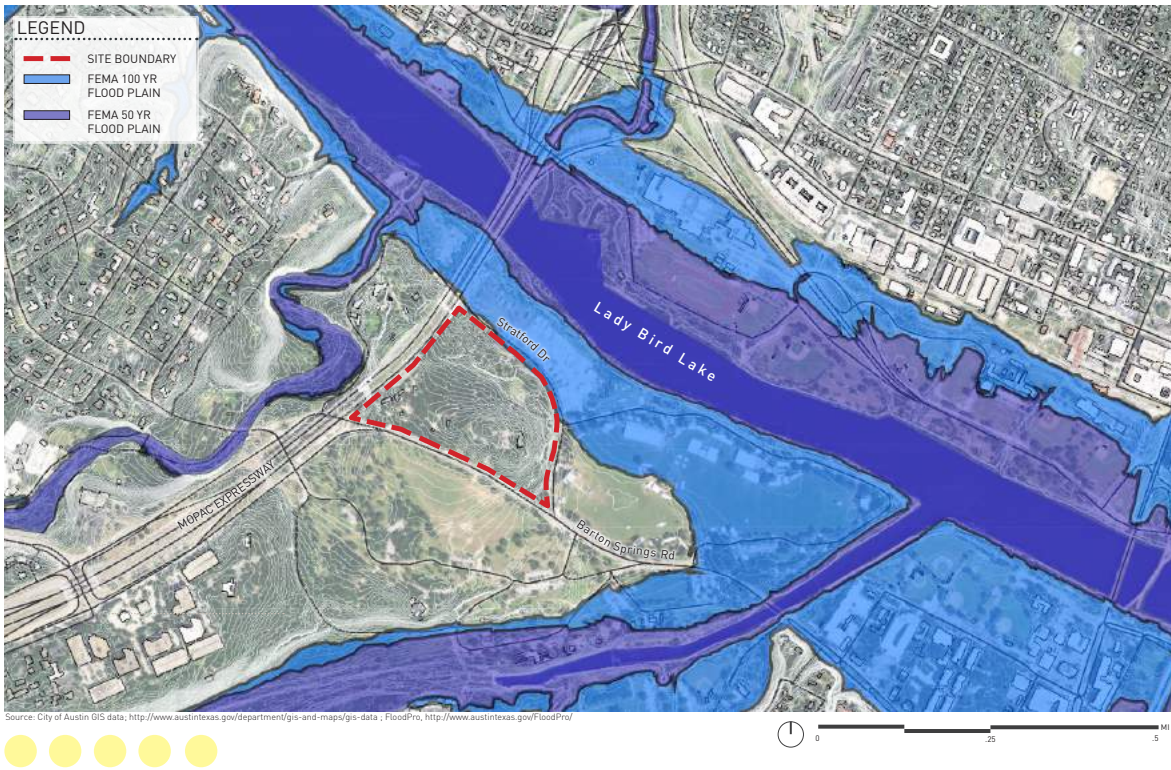
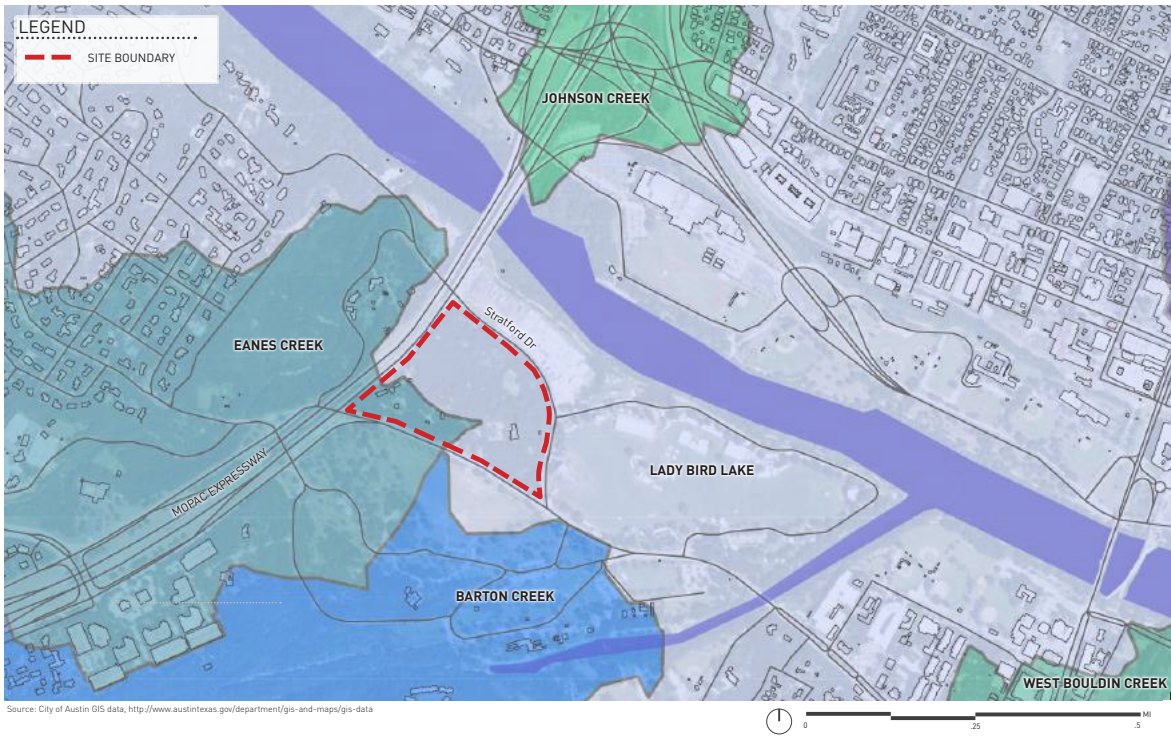
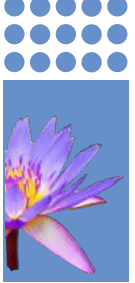
Map Unit Symbol	Description	Typical Profile	Drainage Class
TeA	Tarrant Soils and Urban Land, 0-2% slope	H1- 0 to 8 inches: very stony clay H2- 8 to 12 inches: bedrock	Well drained
Uue	Urban Land and Brackett soils, 1-12% slope	H1- 0 to 6 inches: clay loam H2- 6to 14 inches: clay loam H3- 14to 48inches: bedrock	Well drained
TuD	Travis Soils and Urban Land, 1-8% slope	H1- 0 to 8 inches: gravelly sandy loam H2- 18 to 50 inches: gravelly sandy clay H3- 50 to 75 inches: gravelly sandy clay loam	Well drained



Source: City of Austin GIS data, <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/gis-and-maps/gis-data>; NRCS Soils, <https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/>

Soils

An assessment of soil types on site shows the diversity of both soils and slopes in ZBG's boundary.



Watersheds and Floodplains

ZBG's watersheds (top); Area floodplain context (bottom).



PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

ZBG hosts a wide range of specialty programming for its visitors year-round.

The Program Assessment for the ZBG aims to determine the success of past and existing programming. More specifically, the assessment reviews the makeup of who is typically visiting ZBG and attending programs, who is hosting and organizing events, the frequency of ongoing programming, and the goal or intended outcome of the program or event. The Program Assessment examines a number of the staple garden programs such as the school garden tours and value-added events like Dino Day or Monarch Appreciation Day. Evaluating past and existing programming will help facilitate discussion and next steps to improve ZBG.

Who Visits ZBG?

ZBG is consistently visited throughout the year by both local residents and those visiting from afar. Local residents consistently visit ZBG to enjoy the diverse floral displays, school tours, and weekend programming. ZBG attracts a range of visitors including adults, children, elderly, school groups, and out-of-town visitors. Considering the diverse array of events and special services connected to ZBG, attendance tends to increase around special events such as plant sales, and special exhibits such as the Woodland Faerie Trail. Weddings held at ZBG tend to be small. Currently, annual ZBG visitation is approximately **125,000 regular visitors as well as 6,000 - 8,000 Garden Festival attendees**. Tourists (adult non resident visitors) make up approximately 25% of these annual attendees.

Participants in the Master Plan community workshops were asked about key characteristics of the existing ZBG visitors and who else they would like to attract to the ZBG. They noted that many existing visitors are seniors, couples on dates, families and students. Attendees would like to see more international visitors; professionals such as

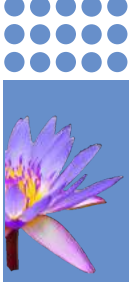
botanists and artists; and group tours or activities such as group therapeutic services in ZBG.

Garden Tours

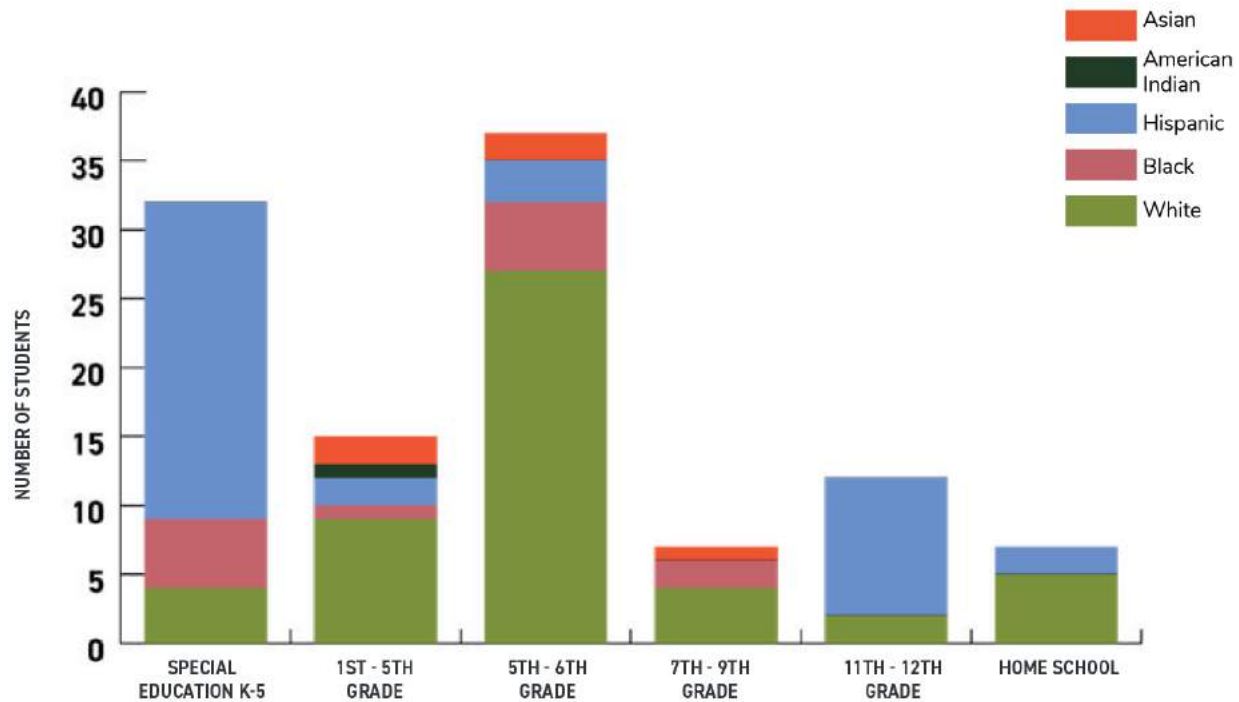
The Austin Area Garden Council offers garden tours, which are staffed by trained volunteer "Zilker Docents," in order to provide field trip options for local schools. The tours serve students of all ages; the primary audience to date has been elementary school-age student groups from first to fifth grades. The goal of these guided tours is to be linked to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and emphasize problem solving. ZBG staff and volunteers are working together to this more curriculum-based, experiential learning model. While docents work from a specific curriculum, each docent is encouraged to share special knowledge they have gleaned from past employment or their experience gardening as all docents are avid gardeners. Tours tend to start in the Taniguchi Japanese Garden and meander through the rest of the ZBG depending on which flowers are in bloom. Key stops throughout the tour include the Swedish Log Cabin, the Dinosaur Garden, the Blacksmith Shop and the Japanese Garden. The tours are open to all students and accommodations can be made for ESL students. For groups who wish to attend but are unable to schedule a tour, complete self-guided tour is available on the ZBG's website.

In 2017, the Zilker Docents led over 1,142 students on tours throughout the ZBG. With the addition of a part-time outreach staff person in early 2018 (funded by a \$5,000 grant from a Garden Council member), student tours have increased: 1,741 students took tours of ZBG in January - May 2018. In 2017, the racial and ethnic backgrounds of students attending tours were: Asian/Pacific Islander: 38, American Indian: 5, Hispanic: 461, Black: 98, and White: 538.

The paid staff outreach position has been highly successful; ZBG has seen 50% more student tours in Spring 2018 than in any other year. Though the overall number reached remains low, there is significant opportunity for program growth and expansion. The



2017 DOCENT TOURS



2017 Docent Tour

Racial and ethnic breakdown of Docent-led Student groups

Docents have seen an increase in volunteers interested in leading Docent tours and hope the increased capacity translates to more outreach and more school field trip visits to ZBG.

Garden Center

Meeting space at ZBG is often hard to come by. Meetings held indoors are limited to the Auditorium, Greene room or Library. With such limited space meetings are typically held back to back in the morning and evening with little or no time in-between to set up.

Accommodating meetings, board meetings, plant sales, and shows for 32 garden clubs within Austin Area Garden Council, along with a lack of space and limited set up time has proven to be a challenge. There is rarely space or time for other needs such as community/

public programming and rentals or City of Austin meetings or usage. The lack of revenue generated from use of Garden Center is also cause for concern. Some of the garden groups who utilize the indoor space include: Austin Bonsai Society, Austin Rose Society, Travis County Master Gardener Association, Austin Area Begonia Society, Barton Hills Garden Club, Travis County Beekeepers, Austin Herb Society, and Heart of Texas Orchid Society. In addition to community garden groups, space at the ZBG becomes more restricted during times when City-wide events limit access to ZBG's facilities.

Clubs with membership within the Austin Area Garden Council are listed below:

- Austin Area Begonia Society
- Austin Bonsai Society



- Austin Butterfly Forum
- Austin Cactus & Succulent Society
- Austin Daylily Society
- Austin Herb Society
- Austin Ikebana Study Group
- Austin Organic Gardeners
- Austin Pond Society
- Austin Rose Society
- Austin Woman's Federated Club (AWFC)
- Barton Hills Garden Club
- Capitol City Judges Council
- Docents of Zilker Botanical Garden
- East Austin Garden Club
- First Austin African Violet Society
- The Garden Club of Austin
- Heart of Texas Orchid Society
- Iris Society of Austin
- The Optimistic Garden Club
- Plein Air Austin
- Porcelain Art Club of Texas
- Texas Bamboo Society
- Travis County Beekeepers Association
- Travis County Master Gardeners
- Violet Crown Garden Club
- West Lake Hills Garden Club
- Western Trails Garden Club
- Yaupon Garden Club
- Zilker Garden Club

Outside of the Auditorium, Greene room, and Library there is very limited indoor gathering space, limited bathroom access, and limited room for school groups if weather is undesirable for a tour.

Events

Events at ZBG tend to range from plant sales, large scale programmed events, and extended exhibits. Plant sales occur

throughout the year. The Cactus and Succulent Show and Orchard Show are the largest, most popular plant sales at the ZBG.

Other Plant Sales include: Violet Crown Floral Show, Fall Plant Sale, and Spring Plant Sale, in addition to many other Plant Sales throughout the year. Value-added programmed events at the ZBG have included the Garden Festival which ended in 2017, Monarch Appreciation Day, and Dino Day. Programmed events are open to people of all ages; in order to serve local families, all events typically have a wide array of childrens' activities.

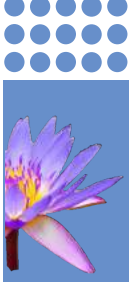
Extended exhibitions like The Woodland Faerie Trail Exhibit last for a longer time frame than the other large events at the ZBG. For example, the Woodland Faerie Trail Exhibit lasts from Memorial Day weekend in May to early August. Exhibits tend to have associated programming that changes throughout the time the exhibit is up and lasts for shorter timeframes like two weekends in a row. All events at the ZBG are free with admission (\$2 for adults, \$1 for children and seniors).

Event Criteria

To the right are the defining criteria used to evaluate the events profiled on the following pages. The events showcased are events that have had high attendance and have potential to expand. Of the events displayed, plant sales occur the most throughout the year and overall have the highest attendance. The Garden Festival will no longer occur at ZBG but was well attended and enjoyed by Austin residents. ZBG is currently brainstorming for possible events to replace the Garden Festival. The Faerie Trails event is growing in popularity and has potential to expand considering the cost to hold the event is low.

Program Limitations

Perhaps one of the biggest limitations of ZBG programming is the presence of only one programming staff at only 75% of full-time. Programming strategies have changed somewhat, from a prevalence on drop-in and fee-based experiences to more



MAY 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Pondain Art Club of Texas Wedding Travis County Beekeepers	2 Austin Herb Society AAGC Tour (1) PAR/D Heart of Texas Orchid Society	3 COA Leaps Master Gardeners	4 ZBGC Board Meeting Tour (1) Austin Derrity Society	5 Austin Rebekah Study Group Tour (1)	6 Austin Butterfly Forum Tour (1)
7 Faerie Landscaping Workshop	8 Austin Organic Gardeners Tour (1) Austin Pond Society Board Meeting	9 AAGC Board Meeting Tour (1) Iris Society of Austin	10 Certified Flower Show ZBG Staff Meeting PAR/D Austin Bonsai Society	11 Town Lake Garden Club AASD West Cave Tour (1) PAR/D (2) Austin Rebekah Study Group	12 Office Of Real Estate Services Dinner Party Wedding	13 AAGC Wedding (2)
14 MOTHER'S DAY	15 PAR/D Austin Butterfly Board Meeting Tour (4) Austin Organic Gardeners Austin Pond Society	16 PAR/D Stakeholder Meeting Heart of the Hills Club Tour (1) PAR/D Rose Society	17 COA Leaps ZBG Staff Meeting Tour (1)	18 PAR/D Herb Board Meeting Master Gardeners Austin Cactus & Succulent Society Tour (2)	19 PAR/D Austin Bonsai Society Show Tour (2) AAGC	20 Austin Bonsai Society Show Texas Bamboo Society Wedding
21 Austin Bonsai Society Show	22 Austin Butterfly Forum	23 Zilker Garden Club	24 ZBG Staff	25 Vicki Crown Garden Club Master Gardeners Board Meeting Garden Club of Austin Board Meeting	26 Derrity Conversation Wedding	27
28 Austin Area Organic Society Wedding Birthday Party	29 MEMORIAL DAY	30 PAR/D ZBG Staff	31			



Event Calendar (above)

- Auditorium
- On Grounds
- Greene Room
- Library



Events at ZBG (below)

(left to right) Plant sale in the Garden Center; Faerie Trails built Faerie house





event-based programming focused on family audiences. These events maintain their fee-based structure to aid in generating revenue. School programming is predominantly run by the Austin Area Garden Council Docents. Increasing quantity of programming and diversity is a primary goal of the Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy.

Additionally, the cancellation of Garden Fest as a signature event for ZBG, formerly put on by the Austin Area Garden Council with support and assistance from the City means that the ZBG is missing a value-added event which brings community members who may not usually visit ZBG to the garden and heightens the visibility of current and future efforts. Opportunities to expand programming while keeping in mind the efficiency of using staff for programming will be vital to the success of ZBG.

Signature Events

In the coming pages, ZBG's signature events are highlighted, including: event overviews, program goals, program attendees, program frequency, program finances, program organizer(s), and educational outcomes. Each of these categories also corresponds to an icon shown to the right.



PROGRAM GOALS



PROGRAM ATTENDEES



PROGRAM FREQUENCY



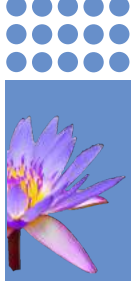
PROGRAM FINANCES



PROGRAM ORGANIZER



EDUCATION OUTCOMES



DINO DAY

Event Overview

At Dino Day attendees enjoy programming throughout the garden centered around dinosaurs. Winter 2018 marked the first Dino Day at ZBG. On the day of the event, the weather was cold and misty, but still attracted a large and enthusiastic audience of families. The successful attendance means that this event will become a ZBG staple.



Program Goals

Programming goals for the event are for attendees to enjoy the following:

- *Dinosaur Parade: Dress up in your favorite prehistoric costume or with a dinosaur toy to join the parade*
- Prehistoric scavenger hunt
- Paper plate dinosaur hats
- Prehistoric Planter: create a prehistoric terrarium with ferns and mosses



Program Attendees

Event attracted over 500 people, primarily families with children.



Program Frequency

Event occurs once a year.



Program Finances

The event was free to attend and all activities were free with paid admission.



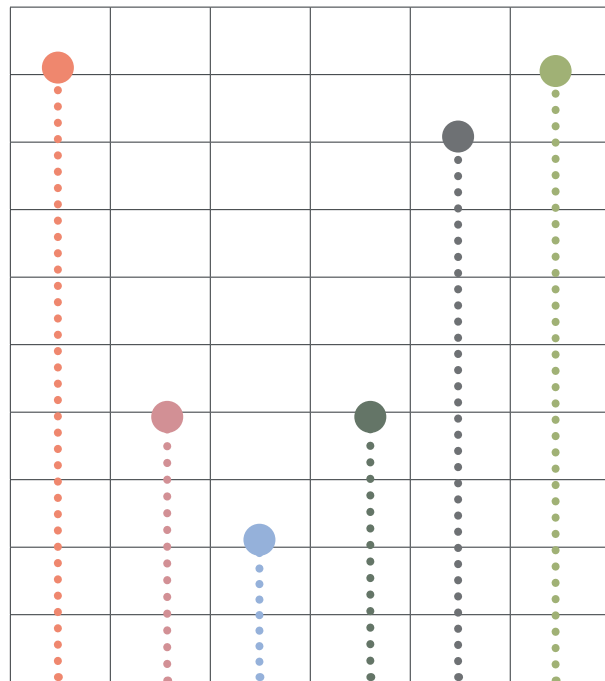
Program Organizer

The event was organized by the following organizations: ZBG, Austin Nature & Science Center and the Texas Memorial Museum. Throughout the day, attendees could visit all three sites to enjoy dinosaur programming. The City of Austin, Austin Area Garden Council, and Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy are co-hosts for this event.



Educational Outcomes

Attendees learned about the history of dinosaurs, prehistoric flora and fauna, about fossils, and what a paleontologist is. Attendees also learned how to make a terrarium.





WOODLAND FAERIE TRAILS

Event Overview

The Woodland Faerie Trails Exhibit encourages attendees to explore natural building techniques, local plant species and pollinator habitats. The structures are built throughout ZBG grounds and the exhibit stays up for two weeks. The exhibit has occurred for the past six years.



Program Goals

Programming goals for the event are for attendees to enjoy the following:

- *Build Faerie Habitat: Use whimsical design to highlight native materials and plants found in Texas, including: local seeds, tree bark, twigs, stumps, grasses & shells. Reservations are required to participate, 4' x 4' areas are assigned with option to decorate. 70 spaces available.*
- Woodland Faerie Trail by Moonlight
- Faerie Tea Party



Program Attendees

The exhibit is primarily geared toward families with children.



Program Frequency

Event occurs over the summer, starting on Memorial Day weekend in May into early August. The event has occurred for the past six years and is growing in popularity.



Program Finances

ZBG charges \$30 for family teams to build a faerie house and \$50 for a landscape architecture or architecture team.



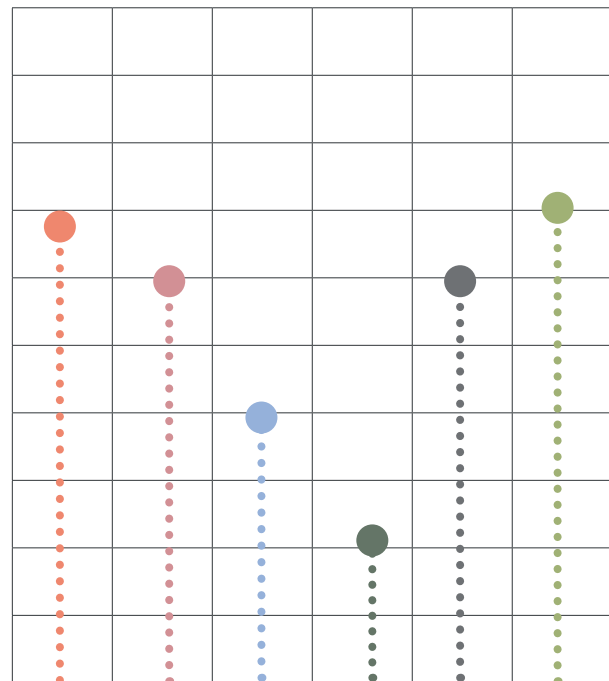
Program Organizer

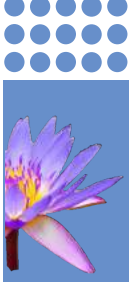
The event is organized by ZBG staff with help from volunteers.



Educational Outcomes

While building the faerie structure, the participants learn about natural building techniques, local plant species and pollinator habitat.





GARDEN FESTIVAL

Event Overview

The Garden Festival had been a yearly weekend event for the past 60 years at the ZBG. Because of the high expense and lack of revenue generation, this event was cancelled after 2017. The event was a fun event for people of all ages to enjoy ZBG and local vendors.



Program Goals

Programming goals for the event are for attendees to enjoy the following:

- Shopping with vendors selling: plants, garden-themed arts & crafts, ceramic pottery, custom jewelry, handmade artistic clothing, herbal products, garden hats.
- Flower Show in the Garden Center: judged floral designs and horticulture.
- Kids' Corner: birdhouse building, make butterfly wings, face painting, and nature rubbings.
- Relax in the Oak Grove with Live Music, Food Vendors, and the Craft Beer Garden.



Program Attendees

The event attracted residents and visitors of all ages.



Program Frequency

Previously the event had occurred once a year for over 60 years in early March.



Program Finances

The event was \$10 for Adults (age 13+), \$4 for Children (age 4-12) and Free for kids under age 4. Parking for the event was \$5. The event also provided half price admission on Sundays for all bicyclists.



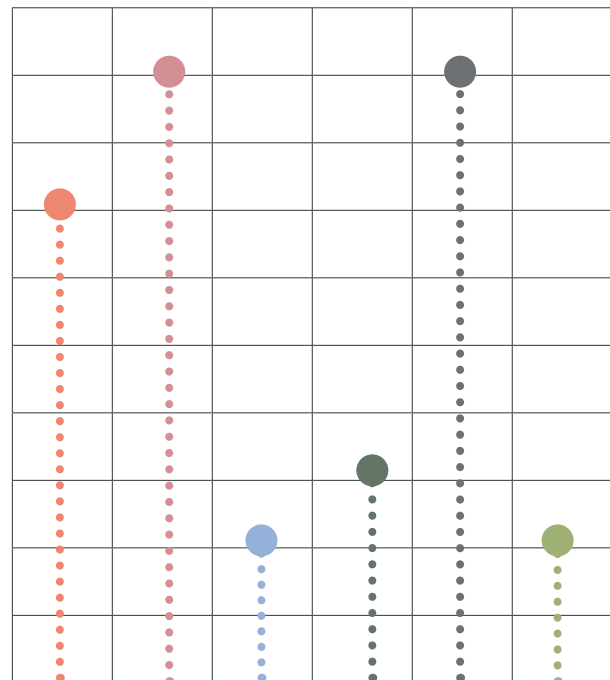
Program Organizer

The event was organized by the Austin Area Garden Council.



Educational Outcomes

Children who participated in the event programming could learn how to build a birdhouse or make nature rubbings.





ROOTS & WINGS

Event Overview

Formerly Monarch Appreciation Day, Roots & Wings is a fall event at ZBG for people of all ages that has occurred for the past 7 years. The event is well attended and has attracted over 1,200 people.



Program Goals

Programming goals for the event are for attendees to enjoy the following:

- Scavenger Hunt: Explore the incredible world of the Monarch life cycle in the Doug Blachly Butterfly Garden.
- Tabling of local organizations that embrace and support restoration and conservation of sustainable natural habitats for pollinators and wildlife.
- Walk-in butterfly tent and larval display
- Monarch tagging and releases
- Recognition of Arbor Day and tree education opportunities



Program Attendees

The event attracts residents and visitors of all ages.



Program Frequency

The event typically occurs annually in the fall.



Program Finances

The event is free with general garden admission charges: \$1 for children ages 3-12; \$2 for Austin-resident adults; \$3 for non-residents adults; and \$1 for seniors (age 62 and over).



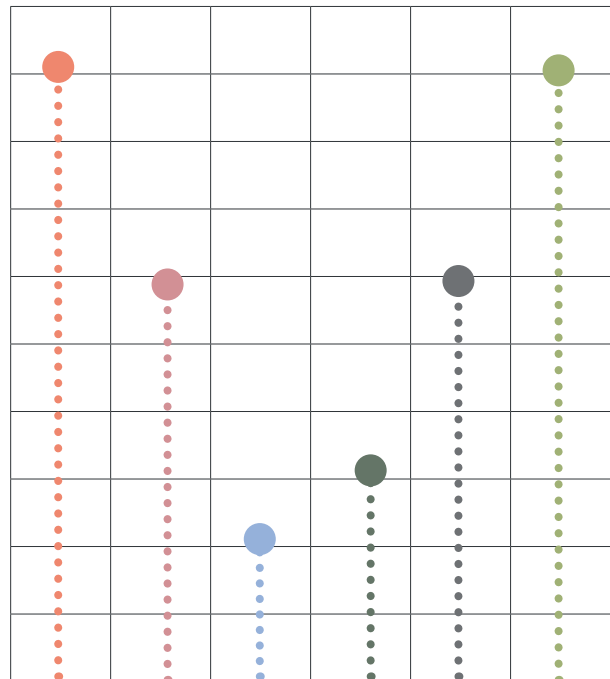
Program Organizer

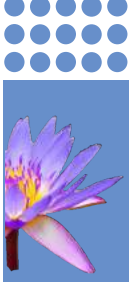
The event was jointly organized by ZBG, Travis County Master Gardens, and the Xerces Society.



Educational Outcomes

Attendees learn about bees, monarchs, organic gardening, and gardening for wildlife & pollinators.





PLANT SALES

Event Overview

Austin Area Garden Council member clubs offer a number of plant sales throughout the year. Plant sales typically have free admission and occur throughout the day.



Program Goals

Programming goals for the plant sales is for people to enjoy and purchase plants. Below is a list of some of the plant sales that occur at the garden:

- Cactus and Succulent Show and Sale: Largest plant sale held at the garden, held twice per year, and attracts a younger crowd.
- Orchid Show and Sale: Typically held once a year in April. This show is very popular.
- Violet Crown Garden Show: Held twice per year in October and Spring, but is not well attended.
- Fall Plant Sale: Tends to be a multi-club sale that is well attended.



Program Attendees

The event attracts residents and visitors of all ages.



Program Frequency

Each Plant Sale occurs at different times throughout the year.



Program Finances

All Plant Sales are free to attend with the price of general admission to ZBG.



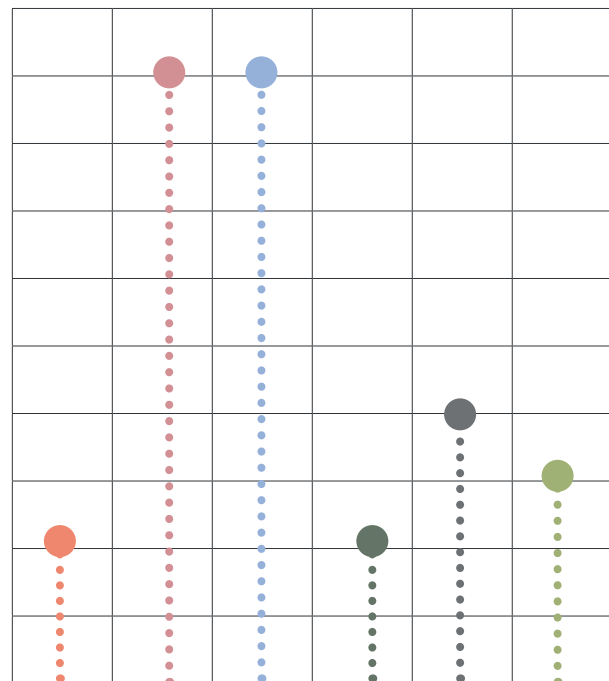
Program Organizer

The organizer of the sale is typically the society of that plant; for example the Austin Daylily Society hosts the Annual Daylily Show and Sale.



Educational Outcomes

Learn about plants being sold through garden care workshops and tutorials





BENCHMARKING

As part of the ZBG Master Plan Phase I study, a benchmarking study was developed to provide a market comparison to other public gardens with similarities in either size, budget, or municipal management arrangement.

These gardens were selected because of their comparability to ZBG. They are generally in small to mid-size cities and are considered important botanical gardens in their community.

Note: Because of the relatively small number of institutions in the study, for most comparisons, the average reported is the median value for the peer institutions rather than the mean since the mean is highly influenced by outlier numbers in small data sets.

Garden Size

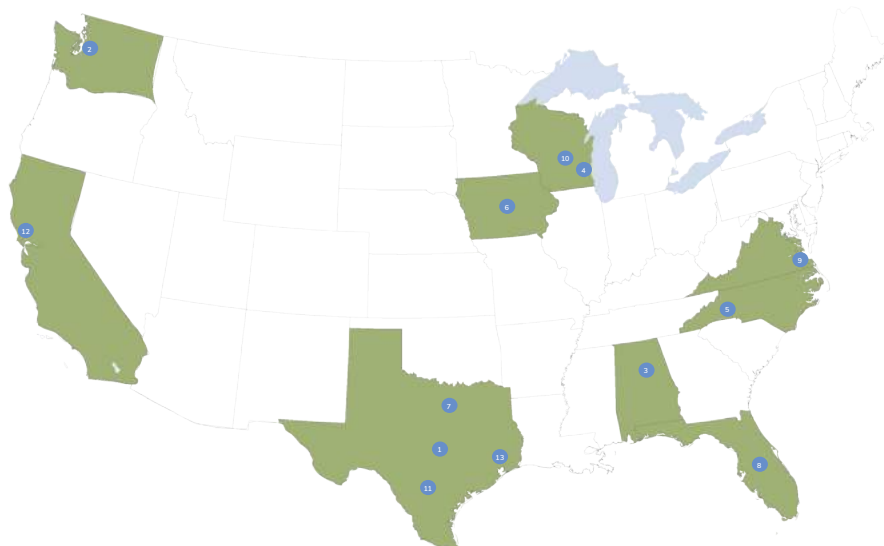
The median size of the peer gardens is 60 acres with a range from 14 to 254 acres. ZBG has 28 acres or 46% of the median. The average peer has 73% of their acreage in ornamental garden and 17% in natural areas. This compares to ZBG's estimated 50% in ornamental gardens and 39% in natural areas. The percentages are relevant because the staffing for the care of

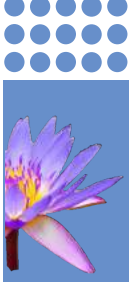
#	Botanical Garden	Location
1	Zilker Botanical Garden	Austin, TX
2	Bellevue Botanical Garden	Bellevue, WA
3	Birmingham Botanical Garden	Birmingham, AL
4	Boerner Botanical Garden	Milwaukee, WI
5	Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden	Charlotte, NC
6	Des Moines Botanical Garden	Des Moines, IA
7	Fort Worth Botanical Garden	Fort Worth, TX
8	Harry P. Leu Garden	Orlando, FL
9	Norfolk Botanical Garden	Norfolk, VA
10	Olbrich Botanical Garden	Madison, WI
11	San Antonio Botanical Garden	San Antonio, TX
12	San Francisco Botanical Garden	San Francisco, CA
13	Shangri-La Botanical Garden	Orange, TX



Botanical Gardens in Benchmarking Study

ZBG was benchmarked with twelve other U.S. botanical gardens.





ornamental gardens is much higher than it is for more natural areas. This also points to the potential for ZBG to engage in more garden development.

Attendance

ZBG has an estimated annual attendance of about 125,000 which is about 76% of the median attendance at the peer gardens. Attendance at the peer gardens ranged from 45,000 to 360,000, with a mean of 219,000.

Staffing and Volunteers

The paid staffing at ZBG is at the very low end with only 11 full-time staff along with some temporary staff cashiers and Austin Area Garden Council volunteers. In total, ZBG's total staff count is 32. Only two of the other gardens had a full-time staff of less than 30. No other garden was so dependent on part-time and seasonal staff so the total number of staff at ZBG suggests greater parity in staffing with the peer gardens than is accurate (gardens did not convert their part-time and seasonal staff to FTEs).

Volunteers are very important at most gardens. Only two other gardens besides ZBG reported under 7,500 volunteer hours and the median number was more than 11,000 hours or about four times more than at ZBG. The lack of a dedicated volunteer coordinator at ZBG represents a significant obstacle.

Members

The greatest discrepancy between ZBG compared to its peers is that there is no membership program at ZBG, whereas all the others (except one) have a membership program with a median of 3,900 household members. The other garden without a membership program is Shangri-la, which is 100% supported by a foundation. The City is in discussion with the Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy to allow the Conservancy to create a membership program for ZBG. Under the purview of the City of Austin, a membership program has never been tenable because, as a municipal agency, fundraising of that nature was disallowed.

Institution	Acreage			
	Ornamental	Natural	Built	Total
ZBG	14	11	3	28
Median of Peers	50	10	3	60
Mean of Peers	45	42	4	92



Acreage Comparison

ZBG Acreage compared to the other twelve gardens.

Institution	Annual Visitation
ZBG	125,000
Median of Peers	192,500
Mean of Peers	219,900



Visitation Comparison

ZBG Visitation compared to the other twelve gardens.

Institution	Full-Time Staff	Total Staff (head count)	Volunteer Hours
ZBG City	10.5	13	2,650
ZBG Conservancy	1	8	
Median of Peers	35	45	11,250
Mean of Peers	34	49	13,026



Staffing and Volunteer Comparison

ZBG Staffing compared to the other twelve gardens.

Institution	Members
ZBG	0
Median of Peers	3,886
Mean of Peers	4,770



Household Members Comparison

ZBG Membership compared to the other twelve gardens.



Admission Fees

Two municipal gardens - Bellevue Botanical Garden and Birmingham Botanical Garden, in addition to one privately funded garden - Shangri-la, do not charge admission. San Francisco only charges non-residents. All the others charge an admission fee with a median charge of \$9.00 per adult and \$5.50 for children. ZBG charges \$3.00 for adults (\$2.00 for Austin residents) and \$1.00 for children and seniors. The adult charge is equivalent to one-third the charge of the other gardens that charge admission and the child admission is one-fifth of that of the peers.

Institution	Admission	
	Adults	Children
ZBG	\$ 3.00 *	\$ 1.00
Median of Peers	\$ 9.00	\$ 5.50
Mean of Peers	\$ 8.81	\$ 5.93



Admission Fees

ZBG Admission compared to the other twelve gardens.

*Austin residents, adult admission is \$2.00

Institution	Budget		
	City	Private	Total
ZBG	\$1,010,306	\$268,940	\$1,279,246
Median of Peers	\$1,619,360	\$2,577,500	\$ 3,925,000
Mean of Peers	\$ 1,785,590	\$ 2,844,528	\$4,277,000

Institution	% City Support	% Private Support
ZBG	79%	21%
Median of Peers	33%	67%
Median of Peers	37%	63%



Budget and Municipal Support Comparison

The median budget of the peer gardens is nearly \$4 million or about three times that of ZBG's \$1.2 million.

Budget and Municipal Support

The median budget of the peer gardens is nearly \$4 million or about three times that of ZBG's almost \$1.3 million.

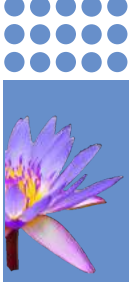
Most of the gardens (9 of the 11 peer gardens) have substantial support from their city. Two of the peer gardens (Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden and Shangri-la Botanical Garden) have no support from their city. They were included to provide some diversity in the analysis while keeping it heavily weighted to gardens with strong financial support from their city. Daniel Stowe receives all its funds from earned and contributed sources; Shangri-la is supported entirely by a foundation.

Of the gardens receiving support from their cities, the median total budget is \$4.5 million compared to the budget of ZBG's of \$1.279 million. The median amount of city support peers receive is 33% (range from 21% to 61%) compared to 79% at ZBG. This analysis into the budget and municipal support structures seems to indicate a large need and opportunity for a non-profit partner to take on more of a role at ZBG.

Programs

The gardens in the study offer a wide diversity of programs and many have a strong focus on children's programs and work closely with their local school systems that are matched to school STEM curricula. Some offer teacher training programs. Most offer adult education programs ranging from lectures to horticulture classes and workshops to art programs to health programs such as yoga and tai chi.

For the general public, nearly all of the gardens have major special events. Several have butterfly festivals, and several have Earth Day events, Japanese festivals, and similar cultural events. Many of the gardens have concerts. Holiday events, such as outdoor lights festivals, are widespread. ZBG has several special events including a Garden Festival, though this is being re-conceptualized due to heavy expenses and demands on an aging volunteer corps. Other events include Dinosaur Day and future events are planned, including Dog Day and Dr. Seuss Day.



Traveling exhibits are reported at some of the gardens. Other programs include youth camps, drop-in programs, wine and cooking events, night programs, and programs in conservatories,

The implications for the ZBG master plan are:

- The need for diverse spaces for programs including indoor classrooms and a variety of outdoor classroom spaces;
- The need for an outdoor great lawn, near parking and bathrooms, for festivals;
- The need for night lighting in some areas of ZBG for outdoor evening events.

Plant Sales

All the gardens have plant sales, most on special days once or twice each year. These range plant sales range from modest to quite large with sales of up to \$100,000 utilizing many volunteers. Some allow plant societies to sell plants. Some have plants for sale everyday through their gift shops. ZBG, through its private partners, offers multiple plant sales annually. Space could be more efficiently used with fewer plant sales that are larger.

Rentals

All of the gardens have facility rental programs with fees varying widely depending on the time of day, length, and which facility is being rented. One of the gardens, Bellevue Botanical Garden, rents space only to mission-related organizations and does not allow weddings. Rents can range from under \$100 for a small room during the day to \$6,500 or more. The institutions in this study did not provide total revenues from rentals, but past studies have shown that many gardens have annual rental revenues of \$200,000 to \$500,000.

Rentals at ZBG are limited due to lack of space/advertisement and the largest indoor space is used heavily by the Austin Area Garden Clubs under agreement with the City. Total rental revenue at ZBG is about \$8,000 for indoor space and \$20,000-\$25,000 for outdoor space.

Future planning of both indoor and outdoor spaces suitable for rentals should be one of the master planning priorities as rentals bring in not only important income, they add to the audience of the ZBG including introducing many people for the first time when they come for an event.

Equitable Admission Programs

Many gardens offer equitable admission programs, such as free admission on select days. Some of the gardens offer as few as one free day per year (in this case Thanksgiving Day at Ft. Worth Botanical Garden) with 14 being the maximum reported (in this case, first Monday of every month plus Mother's Day and Father's Day at Harry P Leu Gardens).

While there is no simple way to average the number of free days given all the restrictions (e.g., veteran's free on Veteran's Day, grounds free every day, but limited free days to venues that charge within the garden), the best estimate of an average is four to six days.

Several of the gardens are free to members of other botanical gardens that participate in the American Horticulture Society's reciprocal free admission program which the American Public Gardens Association provides a link to.

ZBG typically has no such program (one free day was held in 2017 as part of the Zilker Park Centennial). However, ZBG's admission fee is already very modest compared to peer gardens, and adding new admission fee waivers would require City Council approval.

Summary

ZBG was compared to 12 other botanical gardens from around the country. Most of these peers are supported in part by their city and in part privately (two are entirely privately supported). The peer gardens are all in small to mid-size markets.

ZBG is somewhat smaller in size than most of its peers, though certainly not the smallest. ZBG has the second- smallest annual budget of about \$1.4 million and receives the highest percentage of support



from its city (71% compared to 33% at the peer institutions). ZBG also has one of the smallest full-time staff sizes (only one other garden, Boerner Botanical Garden in Milwaukee has fewer full-time staff with one in charge Horticulturist and one Garden Director as full-time staff, an office assistant shared between the garden and the Nature Center, 3 seasonal Horticulturists (6-7 months out of the year), and part-time front desk/admissions staff and seasonal park workers).

The attendance at ZBG is about 70% of the median for peer gardens. Two of the peer gardens had fewer attendees and eight had more (one did not report total attendance). The number of major special events for the public and major exhibits at ZBG is far less than at most of the peer gardens. The education programs for both adults and children are more developed at most of the other gardens meaning that adult programs are better advertised at other gardens, and more diverse, while the children's programs are more curriculum-based.

ZBG stands out by having no membership program compared to all the other peers, except one, and that institution is entirely endowment supported. At the peer gardens, the number of member households range from about 1,000 to more than 10,000. Under the purview of the City of Austin, a membership program has never been tenable because, as a municipal agency, fundraising of that nature was disallowed. The City is currently in discussion with the Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy to allow the Conservancy to create a membership program for ZBG.

The admission fee at ZBG is only about one-third of that of the peer gardens and only one-fifth for Austin residents.

ZBG offers a variety of programs, though fewer education programs for children and adults than most of the peer gardens. The children's programs have not been highly correlated to the school curriculum in the past at ZBG, though there is an effort to change this. ZBG has some significant public events, notably the Garden Festival which draws 8,000-10,000 visitors annually. This

event s being re-conceptualized in 2018 to increase its financial viability and volunteer support. ZBG has only hosted one major traveling exhibit in its past, Dinoland in 2008, which was considered very successful. ZBG is initiating exhibits on a very modest scale with minimal budget and staffing.

Private rentals at ZBG are very modest compared to those at peer gardens. This is due to a combination of factors. Currently the Garden has limited spaces/options for indoor rentals, and the space it does have is quite dated and in need of updating. Further, the existing space is provided to AAGC member clubs at no cost as part of the agreement between the City and the Austin Area Garden Council. The number of clubs has grown markedly since this arrangement was first conceived, with the result that many dozens of meetings are annually and opportunities for rentals are further limited. Lastly, limited City staffing dedicated to rental sales further constrains rentals. Looking forward, these circumstances could be addressed in the future. The Garden could realize significant increases in rental revenue if these factors are addressed.

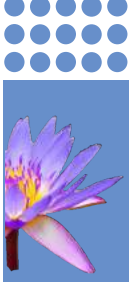
The results of any benchmarking depend on the selection of the peer group. The peer group for this study was selected by EMD Consulting Group in consultation with the City's Garden Manager. The goal was to select a reasonable group of gardens that we believed were in line with ZBG from our experience and also knowing this was a somewhat aspirational comparison so show what is reasonable for ZBG to achieve in the future.

There are significant opportunities for ZBG development and program growth that would continue to build visitation. An increased entry fee seems reasonable, and this, combined with fundraising and a membership program by a non-profit partner would generate increased revenues which would support increased operations.



Summary Comparison

Zilker Botanical Garden compared to the other ten gardens reviewed for benchmarking.



Botanical Garden	Acreage				Annual Visitation	Staff			
	Ornamental	Natural	Built	Total		FT	PT	Seasonal	Total
Bellevue BG	13	40		53	360,000	12			12
Birmingham BG	60	30	10	68	350,000	45	2		47
Boerner BG	50	10		60	200,000	5	5	3	13
Daniel Stowe BG	62	176		238	150,000	18	29		47
Des Moines BG	7	0	7	14	120,000	20	11		31
Fort Worth BG	57	34		111	265,000	58	6		64
Harry P. Leu BG	50	0	0	50	185,000	19	19		38
Norfolk BG	127	4	44	175	DNR	79	13	29	121
Olbrich BG	16	0		16	300,000	37			37
San Antonio BG	27	11		38	150,000	39	6		45
San Francisco BG	43	5	1	49	434,321	35	33		68
Shangri-La BG	23	228	3	254	45,000	22	8		30
ZBG	14	11	3	28	125,000	10	1		17.5
Mean of Peers	42	42	10	89	24110	31	13	15	45
Median of Peers	47	11	5	57	200,000	29	10	16	42

Botanical Garden	Budget			Volunteer Hours	Members	Admission	
	City	Private	Total			Adults	Children
Bellevue BG	\$690,000	\$500,000	\$1,190,000	21,000	1,595	free	free
Birmingham BG	\$2,100,000	\$2,360,000	\$4,500,000	25,000	2,200	free	free
Boerner BG	DNR	DNR	DNR	2,031	1,400	\$6.50	\$4.50
Daniel Stowe BG	none	\$2,700,000	\$2,700,000	7,500	5,500	\$12.95	\$6.95
Des Moines BG	\$645,000	\$2,455,000	\$3,100,000	DNR	2,049	\$8.00	\$6.00
Fort Worth BG	\$3,416,000	\$2,184,000	\$5,600,000	21,621	1,100	\$7.00	\$4.00
Harry P. Leu BG	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$3,000,000	11,000	5,500	\$10.00	\$5.00
Norfolk BG	\$1,538,720	\$4,981,280	\$6,520,000	9,000	11,584	\$12.00	\$10.00
Olbrich BG	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$3,000,000	27,100	10,595	\$2.00	\$2.00
San Antonio BG	\$1,700,000	\$2,800,000	\$4,500,000	24,000	5,000	\$12.00	\$9.00
San Francisco BG	\$188,500	\$2,860,000	\$ 6,500,000	46,680	2,772	\$9.00	\$2.00
Shangri-La BG	none	\$3,350,000	\$3,350,000	11,500	NA	free	free
ZBG	\$965,000	\$393,000	\$1,358,000	2,650	0	\$3.00	\$1.00
Mean of Peers	\$ 1,424,322	\$2,298,607	\$3,776,500	17,424	4108	\$8.00	\$5.00
Median of Peers	\$1,500,000	\$2,455,000	\$3,350,000	21,000	2772	\$9.00	\$5.00

DNR = Did not report



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

A primary goal of this phase of the Master Plan was to survey a wide spectrum of Austin residents and existing Garden stakeholders regarding their perspectives on Zilker Botanical Garden's current conditions, its needs, and what it can do better to become a destination for all Austinites and out of town visitors.

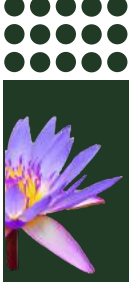
The project effectively began with the creation of a Public Engagement Plan (PEP) designed to achieve this ambitious outreach goal. The PEP identified the target groups for this outreach and then focused on developing a variety of engagement activities that could reach these audiences. Four primary target groups were identified (see the key graphic on the facing page): **Leaders** are those individuals who are currently active in ZBG's management and programming; **Involved** are those individuals who are currently participating in garden activities as a regular visitor or volunteer; **Aware** are those individuals who are already familiar with the ZBG whether they have visited or not; and **Unaware** are those individuals who have no prior knowledge of the Garden.

To reach these diverse audiences, several different engagement activities were developed and ranged significantly in regard to the level of engagement. At one end of the spectrum was the online survey which reached the largest amount of people and allowed Austin residents to participate with almost no contact to the planning team. At the other end of the spectrum was a series of stakeholder interviews that offered selected key stakeholders an intimate opportunity to share their perspectives directly with the planning team in-person. Between these activities were the public workshops, the intercept surveys, the focus groups, the school outreach, tabling at events, the social media, and the e-blasts. Although the range

of engagement activities was conceived to reach all four of the audiences, greater emphasis was placed on reaching the Involved and Aware audiences for the simple reason that with their active appreciation for the garden they are best positioned to offer informed perspectives about the Zilker Botanical Garden's (ZBG) current conditions and how to improve the visitor experience.



Northwest Recreation Center Public Workshop
March 21, 2018



**Northwest
Recreation Center
Public Workshop**
March 21, 2018



Engagement Activity	Leaders	Involved	Aware	Unaware
STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FOCUS GROUPS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
INTERCEPT SURVEYS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ONLINE SURVEY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SCHOOL OUTREACH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
TABLING AT EVENTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SOCIAL MEDIA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EMAIL BLASTS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PUBLIC EVENTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Target Groups

As part of the initial Public Engagement Plan (PEP) submitted to the City for approval, various types of target groups were identified to ensure engagement methods would reach both existing garden leaders and proponents, but also those who are not currently involved in the garden, regardless of whether they were aware of its existence. Below is the overall number of participants engaged over the course of the first phase.

Engagement Overview	Participants
ZBG	15
Community Workshops	26
Focus Groups	33
Stakeholder Meetings	10
General Survey	1011
Teacher Survey	11
Total	1106



MISSION AND VISION

The Mission and Vision of Zilker Botanical Garden reflect the driving forces behind its reason for existence and why it deserves increased support from the City of Austin.

In every meeting with stakeholders, with the City, with the ZBGC, and with AAGC the reasons for the importance of Zilker Botanical Garden were evident and passionately expressed. A special focus group of diverse stakeholders was convened to translate this community input into mission and vision statements that reflect Zilker's unique contribution in Austin and as a member of the national botanical garden community. This event was held on April 23, 2018, at the Garden Center.

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

CYNTHIA KLEMMER
City of Austin Parks & Recreation

JOHN NIXON
City of Austin Parks & Recreation

AMANDA ROSS
City of Austin Parks & Recreation

KIMBERLEYMCNEELEY
City of Austin Parks & Recreation

JONATHAN BUTZ
City of Austin Parks & Recreation

DENISE DELANEY
City of Austin Watershed Protection

CYNTHIA TRENKMANN
Visit Austin

ROBERTA SHERFY
Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy/ Austin Area Garden Council

JEFF PAVLAT
Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy/ Austin Area Garden Council

JEANNIE FERRIER
Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy/ Austin Area Garden Council

MARION ALSUP
Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy/ Austin Area Garden Council

EVAN TANIGUCHI
Taniguchi Architects

PATRICK NEWMAN
LBJ Wildflower Center

ADRIENNE BARNETT
The Thinkery

MATT STALBERGER
The Thinkery

JENNIFER ORR
Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy

Several themes emerged from all these conversations, the ones that particularly resonated were the importance of:

- Diversity in the horticultural offerings (using both native and non-native plants);
- Diversity in landscapes (manicured gardens to woodlands); and
- Diversity in programs and in the people served by Zilker Botanical Garden
- Education was an important theme and was seen as an area that needs increased attention.

There was recognition that ZBG serves people in many ways—from being a place of respite and rejuvenation in the middle of Austin, to being the horticultural center of Austin with information and programs for school children and “children of all ages,” ZBG is also recognized as a place for special events (e.g., flower shows, art shows, and festivals) as well as private special events (e.g., weddings, receptions, business meetings and retreats). Another theme heard involved sustainability and the importance of Zilker Botanical Garden in demonstrating and promoting landscapes and home gardening that espouses sound conservation practices.

Successful mission statements describe very succinctly the reason an institution exists and why it deserves support (philosophical, financial, volunteer). A successful mission statement is powerful, memorable, concise, and accurate.

The Vision Statement describes the aspirations for Zilker Botanical Garden.

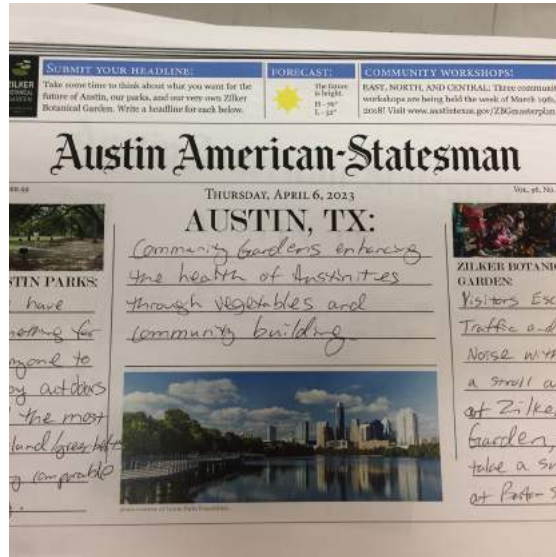
Draft versions of the Mission and Vision Statements were circulated to the focus group members after the April 23, 2018 event and their comments reflected on the following Mission and Vision Statements.

There was a lot of input and information that contributed to the development of draft mission and vision statements. More work will need to be completed in future phases alongside both the City and Conservancy group to finalize this work.



DRAFT MISSION STATEMENT:

- ZBG is a center for inspiration, learning, and demonstration of the beauty and importance of plants in the Austin region and in the broader world.

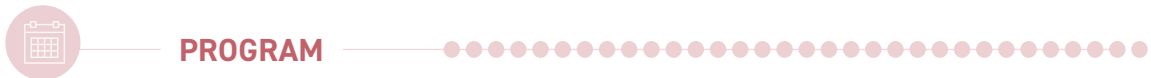


DRAFT VISION STATEMENT:

- ZBG will be a renowned botanical garden providing the public with diverse horticultural displays and collections, education and conservation programs, and be sustained through a model public-private partnership to benefit the Austin community for generations to come.



RESPONSES BY THEME



● Mention in theme area

SUGGESTED WORDS OR PHRASES

Immersive experiential learning

Place to teach / demonstrate

Gathering place

Celebration place

Create memories

Create community

Multicultural, multigenerational

Public green space

Urban respite

Inspiration to connect with nature

Happy place

Foster connection between humans and the natural world

Sustain wildlife

Inspire people of all ages to treasure, promote, and protect the botanical wonders of our world (Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy mission)

WHAT DIFFERENTIATES A BOTANICAL GARDEN FROM A PUBLIC PARK?

Education programs

More manicured / designed

A much higher level of maintenance

More attention to beauty

Much greater plant diversity / more genetic diversity

Plant collections

Demonstration of sustainable practices

Commitment to stewardship

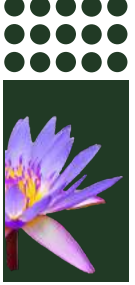
DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF ZILKER BOTANICAL GARDEN

It's in Austin — sense of place

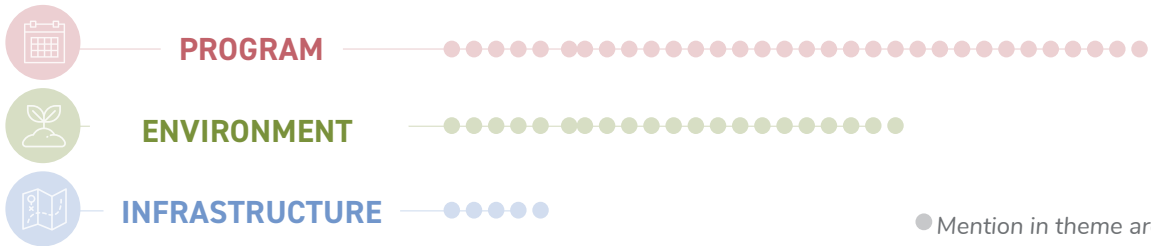
At nexus of cultural institutions in Austin

Proximity to MOPAC

Opportunities for continual learning



RESPONSES BY THEME



DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF ZILKER BOTANICAL GARDEN...CONTINUED

- Opportunities for volunteers
- Changing exhibits
- Rich history
- Affordable and accessible
- Plant sales
- Nice topography
- Lots of tree cover
- Views (some now obscured by overgrowth)
- Wide plant palette
- Contains some formal spaces / gardens
- Near downtown
- Within a major park
- Situated along existing bike and ped routes

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

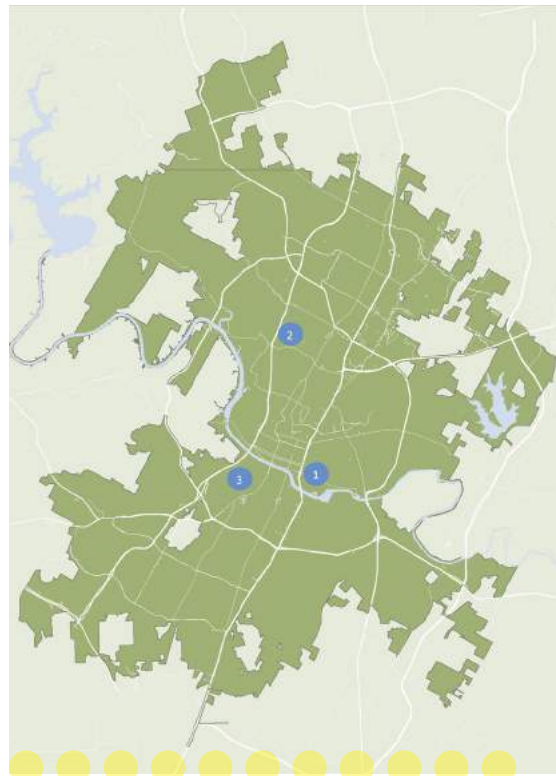
- Accessible and affordable
- Tie to history
- Education
- Demonstration of good gardening in Austin
- "Collections with a purpose"
- Health and wellness
- Educational potential
- Tourist attraction as well as locals
- Events — both community events (open to the public) and private events
- Destination
- "For children of all ages" or "For the child in all of us"
- Performing spaces
- Community engagement
- Art
- Diversity — people / plants / events / experiences
- Along existing bike and ped routes
- Comfortable — Austin's backyard



COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

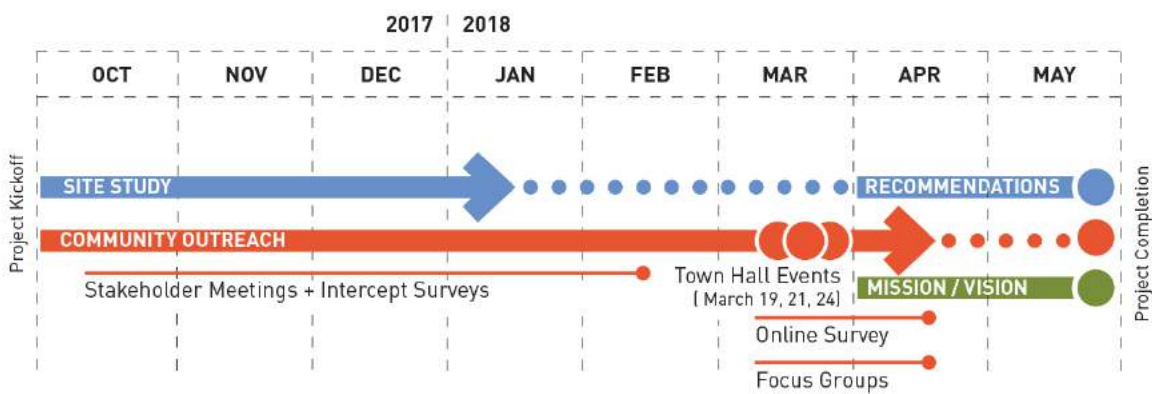
Three community workshops were completed to obtain feedback on the Zilker Botanical Garden.

The first workshop took place at Fiesta Gardens in the East region of Austin. The second workshop took place in North Austin at the Northwest Recreational Center and the last workshop took place at the Botanical Garden. At each of the workshops participants were invited to complete six different activities. The activities included: community program, special places, connectivity, identity, garden nature conservation, and a visitors station. Feedback from the community workshops was positive. Across the different workshops the Taniguchi Japanese Garden and the Hartman Prehistoric Garden were noted as the best features of the Garden. Overall attendees enjoyed the ZBG but felt the educational programming should be expanded. Attendees thought there could be an edible garden or hands on educational garden for kids. Attendees also desired more events, and places to have picnics with their families and loved ones. Attendees also desire more food-focused workshops, from learning how to grow food to cooking demonstrations.



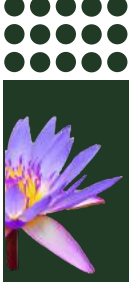
Workshop Locations

Workshops were spread throughout the city in East, North and Central Austin.



Project Timeline

Workshops throughout the City occurred in March of 2018.



Community Engagement
Above are images of Austin residents providing useful input on their experiences at ZBG



Community Workshop Key Topics

The Community workshops asked attendees to provide feedback on the following key topics: science and exploration, visual arts, food, history, performing arts, and health and fitness. Below are the key suggestions from workshop attendees. A consistent theme throughout the key topics was the importance of incorporating food-focused programming, such as edible gardening education and cooking classes.



SCIENCE/EXPLORATION

- Place making of a pavilion for science demonstration & presentations (perhaps in cooperation with Austin Nature Center)
- Better signage of plants. A database in the garden center where people can look up growing + other info about specimens they've seen
- Would like to see a relationship between ZBG and Capitol Area Master Naturalists. Would like to see more of the CAMN mission in the ZBG mission.
- STEM for all - bring cross-generational education events to garden
- Riparian restoration educational program + signage using the new stream restoration area
- Plant propagation + community outreach



PERFORMING ARTS

- I envision a stage where the now empty iris bed is near the Walk of Friends – I see music – dance – poetry with the audience seated on limestone walls up the hill
- Dance! – Children, butterflies, plants, flowers, demonstrations!
- Musical evenings in park, new local artists focus on Austin artists
- Outdoor concerts – bluegrass, rock & roll



VISUAL ARTS

- Wonderful, surprising sculptures, artists working in the garden
- No reason to not have temporary art exhibits in the garden
- Gift shop has the best Texas nature gifts! (yay to buyer!) Always go here to get gifts before heading out of town! Gifts are better than airport!



FOOD

- Demonstration orchard with harvest nights or food forest
- An outdoor kitchen to expand on the connection between plants and food
- A great culinary / edible garden with demonstrations for home gardening of all site, big and tiny



HISTORY

- Wayfinding system with a timeline + graphics relating to site history from pre-historic to modern times.
- Better signage in the prehistoric garden exploring history of the plants - parallels with earth's history



HEALTH / FITNESS

- How to grow your own fruit orchard to health for health or food forest
- Garden terraces that accommodate classes for yoga as well as seating for tour group to hold discussions / demonstrations.
- Meditation and mindfulness programs in the evenings, held outside in the gardens



Special Places

This workshop asked workshop attendees to vote on special places currently in the garden and new features that could be added to Zilker Botanical Garden. At the garden special places that ranked the highest were the Taniguchi Japanese Garden and the Hartman Prehistoric Garden. As in the community workshop, edible gardens ranked high for new garden features.



17 Votes



Canopy Walk
14 Votes



Arid Garden
12 Votes



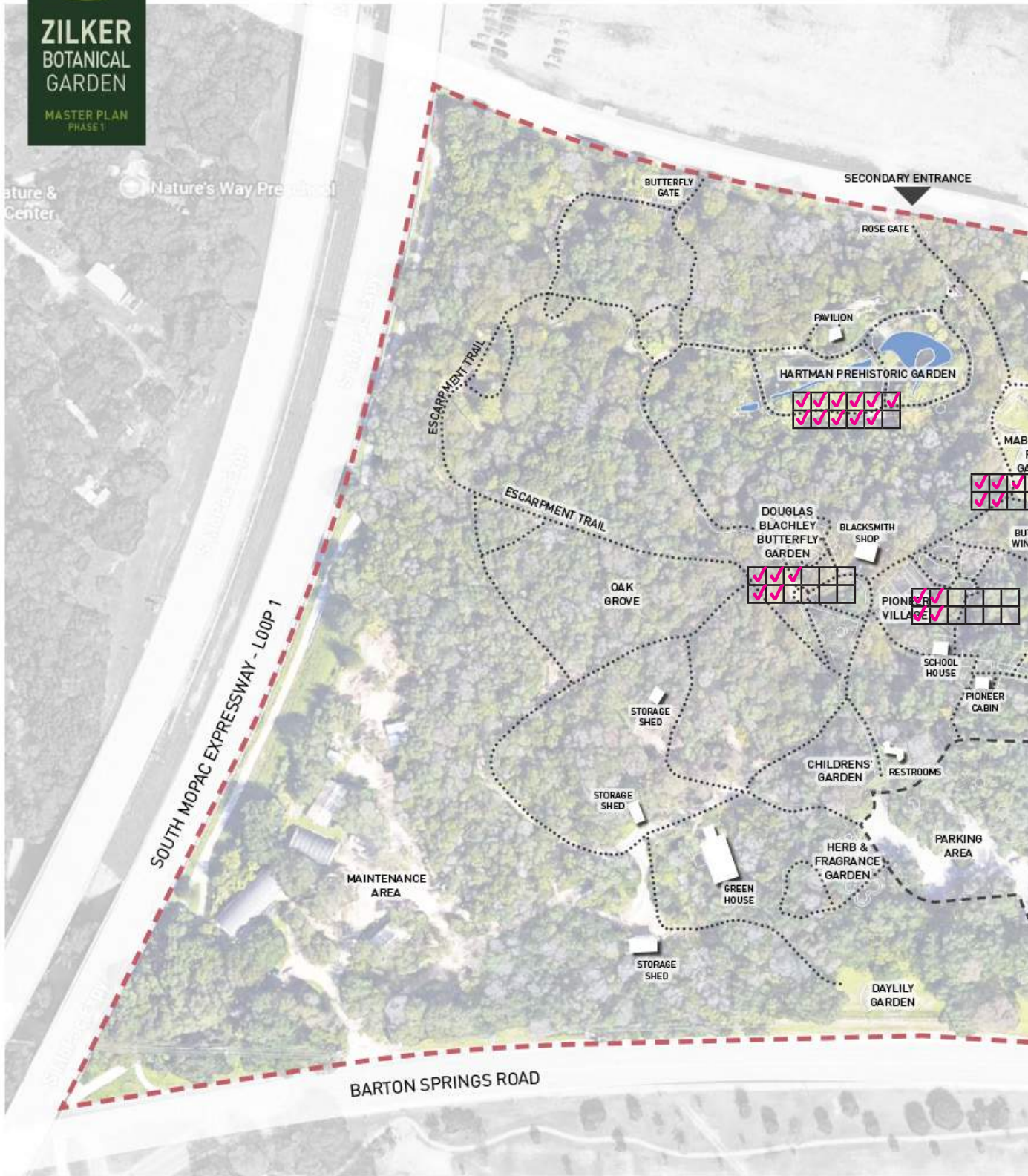
Children's
Play Space
10 Votes



Green Roof
9 Votes



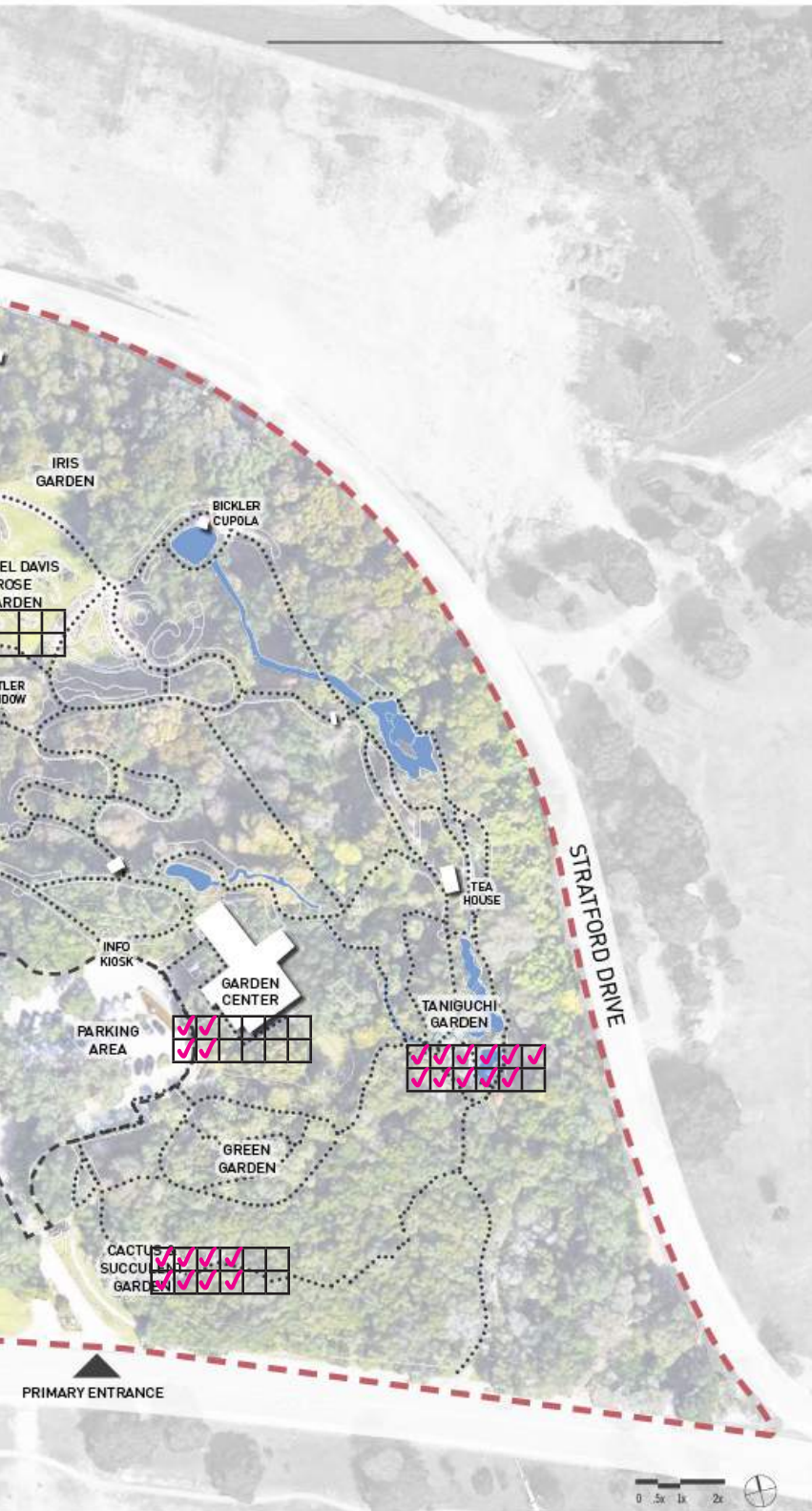
WHAT ARE ZILKER BOTANICAL





GARDEN'S SPECIAL PLACES?

Use the stickers to mark the map with places you believe are special to Zilker Park, and share any other thoughts below!



Special Places

Taniguchi Garden was rated the highest followed by the Hartman Prehistoric Garden, Cactus and Succulent Garden, Butterfly Garden, Rose Garden, Pioneer Village, and the Garden Center.



CONNECTIONS: Zilker Park

What are your favorite places in Zilker Park? How do you get from place to place?

HOW DO YOU USE ZILKER PARK CURRENTLY?
Do you visit multiple places in Zilker Park during one visit?

Use the stickers to mark your favorite places in and around Zilker Park.

HOW DO YOU GET AROUND ZILKER PARK?
Do you walk, bike, run, drive, take the bus?

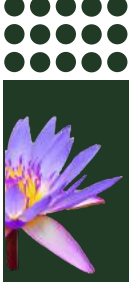
Use the color-coded markers to draw how you move in and around Zilker Park.



Connectivity

The Connectivity station asked attendees to provide feedback on how they travel through the garden. Compared to the other activities at the community events this activity did not obtain as many responses. Response rate could have been low due to wording or the nature of the question or because they visit singular destinations within the gardens. Perhaps attendees do not think about how they move through the garden and surrounding areas. Based on the results received, attendees utilized cars to travel within Zilker Park; however, active transportation methods were popular when moving to other features surrounding Zilker Botanical Garden. Due to the popularity of bike travel, more bike racks could be an important addition to the Garden.

Travel Path	Mode	Total Votes
Circulate within Zilker Park	Car	2
ZBG to Moonlight tower	Walk	1
Moonlight Tower to boat rentals and butler shores	Walk	1
Loop around Ladybird Lake	Walk	1
From boat rentals to Greenbelt	Walk	1
From South Austin via MOPAC to ZBG	Bike	1
From ZBG to Austin Nature and Science Center	Bike	1



Identity

The identity activity asked attendees to provide newspaper headlines in relation to the ZBG. Below are the creative options attendees came up with.

Zilker Botanical Garden:

- Community Gardens enhancing the health of Austenites Through Vegetables and Community Buildings
- **Visitors Escape Traffic and noise with a stroll outside at Zilker Botanical Garden, then take a swim at Barton Springs**
- Multi-Million Dollar Grant to ZBG Will Fund Education Building & ADA Trail & Master Plan & More!
- Environmental Education at ZBG
- Saving Rare Species of plants at ZBG
- Critters of ZBG
- Wealthy Donor Donates Funds to Connect Parking Area with Tram to the Visitor's Center
- Best Place to Take A Stroll
- Top Spot to "Pop the Question"
- Most Visited Destination
- Showcased New 'Tasting' Garden
- New Concert Series Debuts
- Yoga in the Garden – All Invited
- 'Please Touch' Family Event and Tour

- **ZBG Announces Summer Movie + Intimate Concert Series – Spend the Evenings in the Summer Among the Blossoms**

Austin Parks:

- PARD Announced Grand Opening of New Zilker Park / Downtown Metro Tram System - Move Around the Park with Ease and Safety!
- Flash! Wealthy Donor Digs Tunnel Connecting Austin Nature Center to Zilker Botanical Garden
- Hotel + Occupancy Tax Dedicated to Austin Parks for Maintenance + Improvements
- A Turning Point for Austin Parks
- We have something for everyone to enjoy outdoors and the most parkland/ greenbelts of any comparable city
- Ecological Restoration Starts in the Parks

City of Austin:

- **Riparian Restoration Makes a Significant Improvement in Austin Water Quality + Reduces Flood Hazards**
- Zilker Park / Downtown Connect Master Plan Completed... (And Fully Funded!)



Gardening, Nature, & Conservation

Due to the high dependence of the Garden on volunteers, this station asked attendees to share their gardening expertise and determine how the Garden could provide more specific garden, nature or conservation workshops. Many attendees asked for more organic gardening courses, sustainable gardening tips and how to "push the limits" of gardening in Austin.



What We Heard:

What kind of gardening do you do?

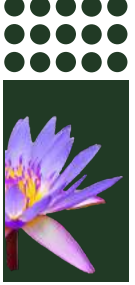
- Cycads palms cacti succulents rare plants bamboo
- Xeriscape and more and more succulents, cacti
- General home landscaping/gardening, special interest in food/veggies, herbs, vines + bulbs
- Butterfly gardening lavender garden herbs and veggie, succulents

What would you like to learn about gardening, nature or conservation?

- Ecology evolution changing climate resilience
- Sustainable practices for our lives: lawns, food, travel, air, etc. water
- Animals and gardening – how to coexist
- More information on native versus non-native, knowledge of which regions plants actually come from
- Organic agriculture, biodiversity (insect/wild plants), animal

How could ZBG support gardening, nature and conservation in Austin?

- Continue to expand and develop the existing 28 acres
- Public gardening events & demonstrations as a workshop of how to do specific gardens in Austin.
- Develop a strong relationship and interaction with CAMN (Capital Area Master Naturalists)
- Work with local nurseries to promote native species – propagation.
- Maintain a scientific collection of rare plants, keep data on plants (locally, etc.)
- Youth education then school field trips and tours
- Lecture/workshop series throughout the year. Bring in the best of the national and regional speakers, not just about gardening, but also about conservation / green issues
- Adult education through garden clubs and special events
- Demo gardens, before/after, partner with LBJ wildflower center



STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Garden staff participated in a SWOT brainstorm to aid in determining how the Garden could be improved.

Below are some of the main points staff brought up during the meeting. Transportation and mobility are a consistent problem at the Garden. Challenges range from a lack of parking to ADA issues due to steep slope and trail construction. The lack of meeting space both indoor and outdoors is a challenge due to consistent garden meetings and expanding programming.

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

CINDY KLEMMER Program Manager	JUAN DIAZ JONATHAN BUTZ
MERRIDETH JILES Horticulture Staff	DAVID TREVINO MATT GARDING
CHRISTOPHER SANCHEZ Programming or Events	ROBERT DEVICTORIA
FRAN LANG	
MATT MORRIS	

What We Heard:

STRENGTHS

- Great location
- Shade / tree canopy
- Great staff
- Few restrictions
- Space to develop, and expand
- Interconnected with water

WEAKNESSES

- Parking
- No bus loading zone
- Hard to maintain trails due to slope
- Aging infrastructure
- Lack of wayfinding signage
- Lack of outside events
- Communication resources
- Limited meeting or rental space

OPPORTUNITIES

- Outdoor classrooms
- Use slope for amphitheater
- Food options
- Extended hours, night events
- Demonstration gardens: mushrooms, kids corner, aquaponics, fruit trees, rain gardens
- Expand plant collection
- ADA trails

THREATS

- Overlap events with ACL (Monarch Appreciation Day)
- Drainage and erosion
- Heavy use of Garden Center
- Lack of staff in comparison to other parks



Visitors

Workshop attendees were asked to provide feedback on what they thought different visitor groups preferred about the garden and how the garden could be improved to better meet the needs of the visitor group. Different groups appreciated different aspects of the garden ranging from the Rose Garden to the Koi Pond. A number of groups also pointed out missing features including the

need for food options and places to picnic. Seating options was mentioned across groups in addition to an increase in specific programming. Programming suggestions ranged from garden parties to dance, art, and edible gardening classes. To increase visitation, special welcoming committees and lunch and learn programs were suggested.

What We Heard:

COUPLES GARDEN EXPERIENCE

What do you think couples like most about the garden? What is missing?



Like Most

- They come for intimate hand held walks and talks
- Celebrate marriage, anniversaries, engagements, special occasions
- Photos for these events
- A rose garden
- Social events
- Vegetable gardening demos
- Romantic spot – day dates

Missing

- Not a lot of events for couples – but would be good to add music and food events
- Dining options
- Garden parties
- Hammocks, places for a picnic
- Build something together activity: plant, hands on, visual encounter
- Places to sit
- Dog events

FAMILIES GARDEN EXPERIENCE

What do you think families like most about the garden? What is missing?

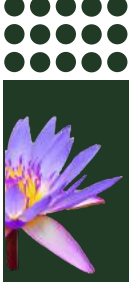


Like Most

- Taniguchi Japanese Garden
- Butler window for photos
- Dino trails + walks + water features
- Quiet place to teach children about nature
- Fairy homes
- Children's garden, blacksmith shop, butterfly garden

Missing

- Swings in the trees
- Picnics
- More music, dance, art
- Hands on gardening, play in the dirt station
- Food forest or orchard
- Tree house
- Stone skipping pond
- Hands-on nature play opportunities



SENIOR CITIZEN GARDEN EXPERIENCE

What do you think Seniors like most about the garden? What is missing?



Like Most

- Blooming plants
- The perfect Japanese Garden
- Garden Center Clubhouse, Garden club, social events at low cost
- Garden clubs, flower shows, plant sales

Missing

- We need boardwalk ADA trail east of the Koi pond for strollers & walkers wheelchairs, etc.
- I think seniors would love to see a patio with benches by the Koi pond to rest before climbing back up hill
- A small, quiet grove
- More benches for resting in scenic areas
- Accessibility

STUDENT/CHILDREN GARDEN EXPERIENCE

What do you think students like most about the garden? What is missing?



Like Most

- Taniguchi Japanese Garden and the staircases
- Fairy trails
- Historical sites/buildings
- Being out in nature
- Being able to feel lost
- Koi pond
- Dinosaur footprint and sculpture

Missing

- Orchard or food forest
- Art classes for drawing plants
- More education
- Hand-on digging
- Things to touch, dig and taste

WHO IS MISSING FROM THE GARDEN EXPERIENCE?

Who else would appreciate the Zilker Botanical Garden?



Who else would enjoy the garden

- Botanists
- Artists
- Gardeners
- Artists and art groups
- Painters during the blooms
- Photographers
- Out of town visitors & out of country folks as well enjoy ZBG

Ways to connect with new groups

- Go around to other groups + Organizations to do a lunch and learn with their constituencies (Like Festival Beach Food Forest, SFC & others)
- Pre-K schools, home school program, after-school program
- Special committees in charge of outreach to senior citizens



GENERAL SURVEY

A general survey was made available for members of the public in order to gauge their experiences at Zilker Botanical Garden, and to identify opportunities for improvement.

See the Appendix for survey and responses. What follows is a deeper review of survey content, methodology, distribution, and key findings.

Questions

Demographic questions sought to understand not only basic information such as respondents' age, race, gender identity, and zip code, but also characteristics that tie into their park experience, such as affiliation with any garden clubs, and whether they had children, and if so, what ages. To gain visibility into visitor preferences, questions focused on three levels of experiences: experiences in the garden; experiences in Austin; and experiences visiting other botanical gardens throughout the country and world.

To understand experiences in the garden, respondents were asked about: how they first heard about the garden; frequency of visits; first memories of the garden; mode of transit; who accompanies them on visits to the garden; favorite places in the garden; events attended at the garden; desired improvements to the garden visit experience; gardening experience level; and desired improvement in the gardening educational experience.

To understand broader experiences in Austin that may inform improvements, the survey asked respondents four key questions: other locations visited in or near Zilker Park; where respondents take out-of-town visitors; favorite weekend activity; and what makes Austin 'weird.' To understand experiences with other botanical gardens, respondents were asked to name others that they had visited, and the qualities they enjoyed about these destinations.

Methodology & Distribution

Survey Monkey, an online survey platform, was utilized to obtain feedback about the ZBG. A flyer, postcard, and outdoor sign were created with information on how to complete the survey. ZBG and affiliated Garden clubs distributed the survey to their networks to ensure a wide range of Austin residents were included.

Respondents

The survey gained 1,011 responses. Respondents were not required to respond to every question, so the demographic information that follows is reflective of those who replied to the respective questions.

The age range of respondents is very diverse, and is somewhat equitably distributed from the 25-65+ bracket. (Only those under the age of 24 were most notably underrepresented.) Most respondents also indicated they have no children, or that they have children beyond high school age. Respondents' zip codes also demonstrated that they lived in a variety of zip codes throughout the Austin metro area (save one Dallas-based respondent) — but the highest concentration of respondents (16 %) were based in the botanical garden's 78704 zip code.

Respondents were predominantly female (73.32 %) and white (70.00 %). Moreover, most respondents did not have children who would be the focus of youth programming — over two-thirds (68.39 %) had no children (38.83 % of all) or children beyond high school (29.56 %).

Other questions about the garden experience helped add complexity to this respondent profile. Respondents said they heard about the park through a variety of channels, from word of mouth to web search. They also represented a group of visitors to the garden; about two-thirds of respondents had only visited Zilker once before, visit once a year, or visit a few times a year. In terms of travel to the garden, an overwhelming portion of respondents said they get to Zilker by car (97.55 percent), with a comparative handful saying they may walk (11.60 %) or bike (9.78 %) to the garden; travel by bus comprised



a very small portion of responses (2.09 %). In terms of companions during visits to the garden, no group predominated significantly: respondents said they brought along a mix of children, other relatives, friends, and out-of-town visitors. As for favorite places within the garden, of the 13 provided for ranked response, no one space surpassed the others as a visitor favorite. In short, the park's diversity of spaces provide different levels of appeal for different people.

In terms of gardening experience, the majority of respondents also identified as amateur gardeners. They self-described as intermediate (44.25 %) or novice (28.55 % of all) gardeners, and most respondents (over 80 %) said they were not affiliated with any garden clubs or organizations.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

1,011

respondents in total

MOSTLY OCCASIONAL VISITORS

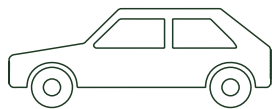
2/3

of respondents had only visited Zilker once before, go once a year, or go a few times a year



MANY FAN FAVORITES

Of the 13 places contained within the garden — from the Prehistoric Garden to Oak Grove — respondents did not rank one significantly higher



CAR-DEPENDENT

96% reported getting to Zilker by car



AMATEUR GARDENERS

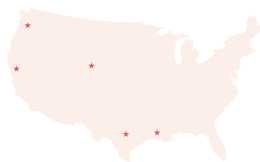
73%

of respondents self-described as intermediate (44.25% of all) or novice (28.55% of all) gardeners

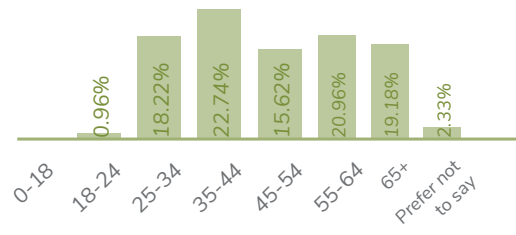
TRAVEL DESTINATIONS

Respondents cited a number of botanical gardens in other cities they had visited. Most mentioned were:

- 1 San Antonio (21%)
- 2 San Francisco (11%)
- 3 Houston (9%)
- 4 Portland (8%)
- 5 Denver (6%)



DIVERSE IN AGE



HEAVILY WHITE AND FEMALE

70%

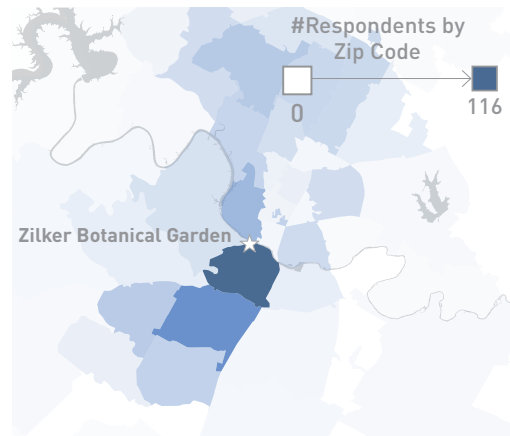
of respondents identified as white

73%

of respondents identified as female

GEOGRAPHICALLY DISPERSED

Respondents hailed from 69 zip codes, with the highest concentration (up to 16%) from nearby Zilker





SURVEY RESULTS KEY THEMES:



PEACEFUL ESCAPE

Improve the role of Zilker Botanical Garden as a retreat in the urban core

- Replacement of concrete and hardscape with natural materials
- Water features to insulate sound
- Yoga in the garden
- Multi-sensory experiences
- Meditation spaces and programming (e.g., crystal bowls)
- Drawing opportunities

Keep it quiet and peaceful — I like it that way



DIVERSE ENVIRONMENTS

Cultivate a variety of settings that highlight local and foreign ecosystems

- Demonstration gardens on the extreme Texas climate
- Conservatory with tropical plants
- Improved Japanese and Bonsai Gardens
- Improved "gravitas" to make it more of a destination — through a mix of built and natural features

Combinations of formal and natural spaces

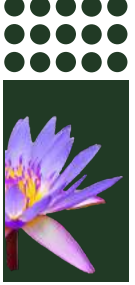


INTERACTIVE EDUCATION

Use the garden as a platform for learning about local horticulture

- Approachable — "foolproof" — education on local gardening techniques (e.g., raised bed gardening, soils and ecoregions, organic gardening, water harvesting, composting)
- Labeling plants with light, soil, and water requirements
- Teacher and youth events
- Historical tours
- Plant sales and/or swaps
- Email list and online programming

Teach me what grows in Austin



ACCESSIBLE **ENTRY**

Make the garden easier to get to, such as through improved parking or transit

- Expanded parking
- Greater transit connectivity
- Improved pedestrian access
- Welcome kiosk, wayfinding
- Improved pedestrian pathways for light strolling
- Connections to key adjacent sites (e.g., Austin Nature & Science Center)
- Safer entry at "dicey" points (e.g., Barton Springs Road)

Make visits easy with parking



LIVELY **ENTERTAINMENT**

Create a destination space through additional amenities and programming

- Restaurant, café, and/or tea room
- Live music
- Art installations
- Picnicking areas
- Seasonal festivals
- Expanded opening hours (e.g., nighttime programming with illumination)
- Children's play areas — tunnels, trails, nature area

A cafe to sit and have a cool drink



Opportunity Areas

To identify some key opportunities for the future of Zilker Botanical Garden, survey analysis focused on analyzing responses to the three categories of questions related to visitor preferences:

- Those related to the experience at Zilker Botanical Garden, to understand cherished memories and hopes for the future;
- Those related to other Austin experiences, to identify possible collaborations or new programming opportunities;
- Those related to experience at other botanical gardens, to suggest takeaways to bring back 'home.'

Analysis yielded a number of opportunity areas rooted in a core value: Zilker Botanical Garden is many different things for different people. As such, the opportunity areas reflect the different types of places the park could become in the future. Many of these opportunities are well-served by existing strengths in the park. But making them a reality may require testing and investing in some of the interventions that respondents recommended — from yoga in the gardens to transit connectivity to live music nights. The key opportunity areas are listed below and explored in further detail:

- *Peaceful Escape — Improve the role of Zilker Botanical Garden as a retreat in the urban core*
- *Diverse Environments — Cultivate a variety of settings that highlight local and global ecosystems*
- *Interactive Education — Use the garden as a platform for learning*
- *Accessible Entry — Make the garden easier to get to, such as through improved parking or transit*
- *Lively Entertainment — Create a destination space through additional amenities and programming*

Peaceful Escape

When asked about their first memories of Zilker Botanical Garden, many respondents recalled it feeling like an “oasis” in the middle of the city. For many, it seems the garden still successfully creates this environment, and they hope to preserve this element: “Keep it quiet and peaceful,” said one respondent. To build on this strength, respondents cited a number of ideas, pulled from their own experiences or visits to other botanical gardens. Replacement of concrete and hardscapes where possible would only add to the atmosphere. Improved and expanded water features may help to insulate sound from the city and nearby highway. Yoga and meditation programming in the gardens may create a ‘Zen’ atmosphere. Spaces for drawing or creating artwork may help individuals channel their creativity in this urban oasis.

Diverse Environments

Just as respondents didn’t rank one Zilker Botanical Garden space universally higher than the others, they called for improving on the mix of spaces within the garden to make it a space that is both world-class and hyper-local. Almost universally, there was a desire for more plantings reflective of the Austin area climate, such as through demonstration gardens. And when reflecting on other botanical gardens they had visited, many respondents said they craved a certain “gravitas” to make it more of a destination. In the words of one respondent, “They felt like true destinations. While many have the advantage of wetter climates and more interesting plants, they also just feel more grand.” For some, that meant improving on current strengths like the Japanese garden, and for others, that meant establishing a conservatory with tropical plants, as many botanical gardens have around the world. Regardless of the mix of local and non-local spaces, there was a desire for improved connectivity among them. In the words of one respondent, “Flow from one ecosystem to another, [create] space for imagination and possibility, [place] native space next to cultivated spaces, both sculpted over time,



each with its own language ... like an outdoor art experience with art ... Nourishing the sensory system."

Interactive Education

Participants were particularly eager to use the garden as a vehicle for learning about the keys to home gardening. Given that most of the respondents were not expert gardeners, any education would need to be approachable and accessible; "make it foolproof" and "Give me hope to one day have a beautiful garden," said two respondents. In terms of workshop content, proposed topics varied: from raised bed gardening to soils and ecoregions, from composting to water harvesting. Consultations with local landscape designers, students and hobbyists were also proposed as a way to provide hands-on advice for free, or with a nominal fee. Beyond education, many respondents called for plant sales or swaps as a way of gaining cuttings. Education for gardeners wasn't the only type proposed, of course — some respondents proposed the garden offer more self-guided tour options, plant labeling on soil / light / water requirements, historic tours, and youth programming, too.

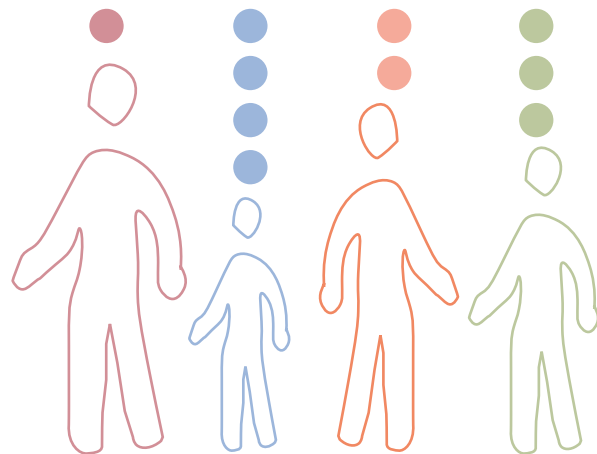
Accessible Entry

For many respondents, just getting to Zilker Botanical Garden is half the battle. For many respondents, their first memories of a visit was not just the peaceful retreat, but the parking struggle beforehand. ("Parking was a b*tch," one respondent said flatly.) The parking issue is nested within a broader challenge of accessibility, however. Other respondents cited the challenges of walking to the site or arriving via public transit.

Said one respondent, "It was lovely. But I am in walking distance and it took me 10 minutes to walk over and 30 minutes to cross the street to get into the entrance with all the traffic." Many respondents called for other improvements to the entry experience: improved public transportation access; greater connectivity to adjacent sites like the Austin Nature & Science Center; safer entrances at highly trafficked areas; and improved accessibility for all ability levels.

MY FIRST TIME AT ZILKER BOTANICAL GARDEN...

"It felt magical "	"That parking was scary "
"It felt like an oasis in the city"	"The fairy trail"
"The water features "	"The garden is exceptionally beautiful "
"It was a fun place for the kids"	"The variety of local flora"





Lively Entertainment

Beyond improving traditional elements of botanical gardens, many respondents saw an opportunity to think beyond the paradigm, expand operating hours, and embed more alternative programming. A consistent recommendation was the addition of a restaurant, café, or tearoom that visitors could stop by before or after walking through the gardens, or that could be a destination in its own right for a weekend brunch, for example. Food trucks or vendor carts were also cited as a possibility. Respondents also saw an opportunity to boost the presence of the arts in the botanical garden: live music, film screenings, poetry, and art installations among them, for free or at an affordable price point (“less than \$20,” recommended one respondent). Many respondents also called for an expansion of nighttime programming and festivals: couples nights, “party nights” or happy hours for adults, and most notably, festivals aligned to the growing season.

Moving Forward

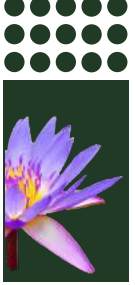
Given the large and relatively diverse set of survey respondents, these opportunity areas can serve as a valuable input into the master planning process. Of course, developing, prioritizing, and seizing these opportunities will not be possible without a set of implementation requirements. On that front, respondents seeded ideas for financing and maintaining these upgrades — calling for everything from increased entrance fees to higher parking fees, from plant adoptions to expanded personnel. Operational requirements aside, the master planning team will need to calibrate its approach to these opportunity areas. Over-programming the space could take away from its “oasis” feel, just as expanding parking could take away from surrounding green space. As such, it will be crucial to ensure pursuit of one opportunity area doesn’t compromise the integrity of another will be crucial.

TEACHER SURVEY

Teachers throughout Austin provided feedback on their experience at Zilker Botanical Garden and on opportunities they saw for improvement.

The findings are useful in considering how to improve educational programming, however, the low response rate suggests need to follow up with additional educators.

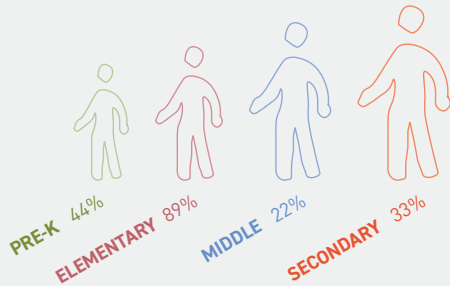
This survey received a small sample size and therefore results may not represent the population sampled and should be considered an indicator only. Further research with educators is warranted to expand teacher input.



TEACHER SURVEY FINDINGS

TEACHER PROFILE

The 11 respondents had a range of grade-level teaching experience, with most teachers focused on elementary.



FIELD TRIP MUST-DOS

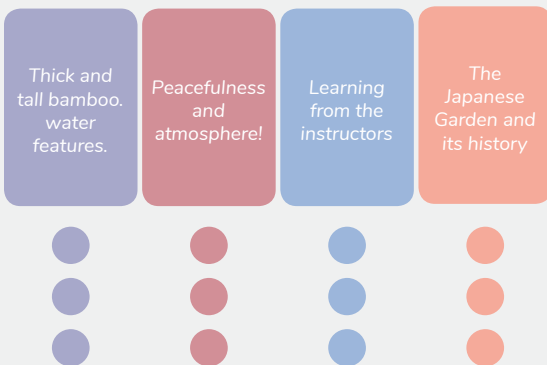
Respondents identified a number of best practices to ensure happy teachers and students alike

- ★ **LOW-COST** (on a budget!)
- ★ **ENGAGING** (hands-on!)
- ★ **SAFE** (no falls!)
- ★ **CLEAR** (set expectations!)

VISIT FREQUENCY

45% of respondents don't regularly visit the Garden with students

FIELD TRIP FUNDING

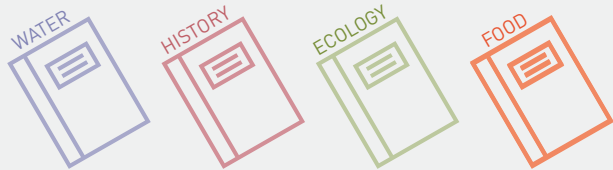


OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Respondents saw a range of opportunities for improvement, in both subjects covered and experiential elements.

SUBJECT AREAS

Respondents saw opportunities for curricula in four subjects



EXPERIENTIAL ELEMENTS

Respondents saw opportunities for improvement in three areas

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Easier bus unloading on narrow roads
- More Sidewalks or crushed granite trails along Barton Springs Road and Stratford Road leading to ZBG
- Improved pedestrian entrance
- More Parking
- Designated gathering / huddle spots

FACILITIES

- Install more water fountains
- Create more space to have picnic or sit-down lunches
- Install more bathrooms
- Include more informative signage on plants

PROGRAMMING

- Marketing: Customize marketing to ages / grade levels; Teacher visit events / marketing
- Booking: Online reservation; have a person answering the phone, not a recording to transfer to staff.
- Elements: Be deliberate in the programming that is possible, and the volume the ZBG can handle; Encourage applied learning ("have students doing 'real' things, not just a craft to take home" / "it would be wonderful if guides were available to have science hands-on experiments ready to go" / "chance to help with a project that students could go back and visit")
- Collateral: Pre-packet: one-pager with key info; detachable map for bus drivers; liability release form



FOCUS GROUPS

Thirty-three participants brainstormed opportunities to broaden the reach of the Garden in the Austin community through five different focus group meetings.

Specifically, the focus groups aimed: to learn about specific challenges faced by participants; to brainstorm ideas and opportunities for botanical garden mission growth; and to explore possible programmatic connections between the botanical garden and resident groups in far reaches of the city. Each conversation is summarized below, with the primary focus indicated by the icons.

What makes Zilker Botanical Garden special is that it is a large green space downtown, with tremendous unrealized potential.

—FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT



PROGRAM



ECOLOGY



INFRASTRUCTURE

FOCUS GROUP 1

NON-PROFIT REPRESENTATIVES



TANYA ZASTROW
Lady Bird Johnson
Wildflower Center

BETH CARROLL
The Trail Foundation

JOANNA WOLAVE
Shoal Creek
Conservancy

ERICA GORDON
Austin Sunshine Camps

HANNAH GLAW
Barton Springs
Conservancy

KATHLEEN MANNELLO
Austin Parks Foundation

SARAH ATHANS
Umlauf Sculpture
Garden

This group of non-profit representatives focused on a number of collaboration opportunities with ZBG — from scheduled walks between sites, to volunteer sharing. They also cited a number of issue areas for consideration: promoting accessibility (e.g., horticultural therapy); balancing programming with informal activity; creating programmatic alignments with different city departments (e.g., gardening info); reaching those who don't currently come to the park (e.g., free family days); and leveraging the site as part of a "cultural necklace" (e.g., Barton Springs, Umlauf, etc.)

Excerpts from participating non-profits :Ideas and possible alignments" include:

Lady Bird Wildflower Center: ZBG reflects Austin's uniqueness

Austin Parks Foundation: ZBG can help support goal to make parks more accessible to all Austin citizens.

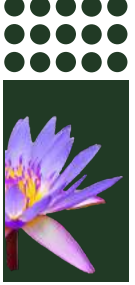
Shoal Park Conservancy: ZBG really can be an oasis for citizens

The Trail Foundation: Would be great to coordinate events

Umlauf Sculpture Garden: Would be great to have a scheduled walk between the two places

Sunshine Camp: Bring kids to the gardens when their parents don't bring them.

Barton Springs Conservancy: Want to explore ways to partner-short and long term



FOCUS GROUP 2 NORTH AUSTIN RESIDENTS



MARK SMOLEN
Patterson Park
Community Garden
CRAIG NAZOR
Austin Sierra Club
AMY VOORHEES
ZBGC
BILL GLASS

This group of North Austin residents focused on a variety of opportunities to realize the potential of the space to serve the community. Suggestions ranged widely, but centered primarily on issues of infrastructure accessibility and programming. On accessibility, participants cited the need to improve pedestrian-friendliness and connectivity (e.g., connecting the back of the garden to the main pedestrian thoroughfare, high school, and river). Though, participants agreed that a lot more needs to be done to make the Hartman Gate into a formal entrance.

On programming, the group suggested exhibits (e.g., area microclimates, sustainability), education on native food sources, and partnerships with local schools. Participants noted how important it will be in the future for ZBGC to combine efforts with the Austin Nature and Science Center both because of complimentary goals and because of the attention the Nature and Science Center has received.

Not surprisingly, the Japanese Garden was certainly most referenced as a part of ZBGC making the most impact on participants in the group: "When I first saw the Japanese gardens, I stood at the bottom of the garden and cried because it was so beautiful."

FOCUS GROUP 3 HORTICULTURE PROFESSIONALS



SAM PETERSON
Barton Springs Nursery
JUDITH CRAFT
Austin Herb Society,
ZBGC, TCMG, Garden
Docent, AAGC
D.M. JILES
City of Austin PARD
ZBGC Garden Center
Coordinator
TESSA COOPER
Landscape Designer,
Big Red Sun
JEANNIE FERRIER
ZBGC, AAGC, Pond
Society
JEFF PAVLAT
ZBGC, Austin Cactus
and Succulent Society
PATRICK BEYER
City of Austin PARD

This group discussed specific ideas for gardens, spatial issues related to the site, programming recommendations, and general reflections. Garden ideas ranged from international gardens, to aquatic gardens, to culinary gardens. Spatial priorities included a call for more paths and wayfinding, and more gathering areas for events. Programming recommendations ranged widely, from traveling exhibits to outreach to key demographics. General reflections included a call for more staff / volunteer / attendee diversity, and a more solid footing as the "headquarters" for gardening in Austin.

Specific programming notes by this focus group: traveling exhibits, seasonal layering of plantings, reaching out to Hispanic population, hold landscape contractor and homeowner trainings, consider joint advertising with other related facilities, improve connections to the Austin Nature and Science Center, connect with High Schools, create a ZBGC guide book, explore virtual reality opportunities to broaden the Garden's digital reach'

General reflections include: combat "plant blindness", Austin is a very green experience or travellers from west Texas, Travis County intersects three (3) ecoregions, ZBGC is moving into the future, should be the gardening headquarters of the city and is a jewel in the hear of Austin.



PROGRAM



ECOLOGY



INFRASTRUCTURE

FOCUS GROUP 4

ARTS & CULTURE PROFESSIONALS



HERLINDA ZAMORA
City of Austin PARD,
Emma S. Barrientos
Mexican American
Cultural Center

JONATHAN BARONA
Austin Community
Foundation

**CHRISTOPHER
SANCHEZ**
City of Austin PARD,
ZBG Culture and Arts
Education Specialist

KATHY PANAK
Sunshine Camps

LAURA MACLAY
Artist

SUZIE MACLAY
Gardener/Crestview
Resident

CHRISTI MOSELY
Landscape designer,
children's gardening
specialist

JENNA JASSO
Love ATX

This group dove into ZBG's potential to use of arts and culture as a gateway to nature. Treating the garden as a 'venue' in its own right can help shift the programming approach toward a number of opportunity areas: movement and physical activity (e.g., yoga, tai chi); cultural activities (e.g., culture-specific gardening); music nights; art installations; youth programming; or faith-based brunches after services. The group also explored ways to reduce barriers to garden access, whether through parking, ADA accessibility, or a switch from "botanical" to more approachable language.

How arts and culture can serve as a gateway to gardens/nature: temporary installations and performances, improve parking to draw more visitors, use art to draw in passersby, explore partnerships with TEMPO (Temporary Public Arts) and AIPP (Arts in Public Places), partner with fitness and wellness groups, allow places to site and perform.

How ZBG can improve outreach to a wider audience: utilize media like radio, video, TV, hire outreach dedicated staff, remove barriers to entry like insufficient parking, lack of ADA accessibility and event fees, mobile roadshows, host garden related city tours and DIY classes, add AIPP installations in outwardly visible locations, host Sunday afternoon events.



FOCUS GROUP 5 COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



MICHAEL VALESCU
Capital Area Master
Naturalists

DEENA DOSSEY
Violet Crown Garden
Club

CLARK HANCOCK
Save Barton Creek
Association

DARLENE STARR
American Herbalists Guild

CHERI LAMONTE
Divine Impressions

DAVE EDWARDS
Travis County Master
Gardener / ZBG Docent

ROBERTA SHERFY
Zilker Botanical
Garden Conservancy/
Travis County Master
Gardener/ ZBG Docent

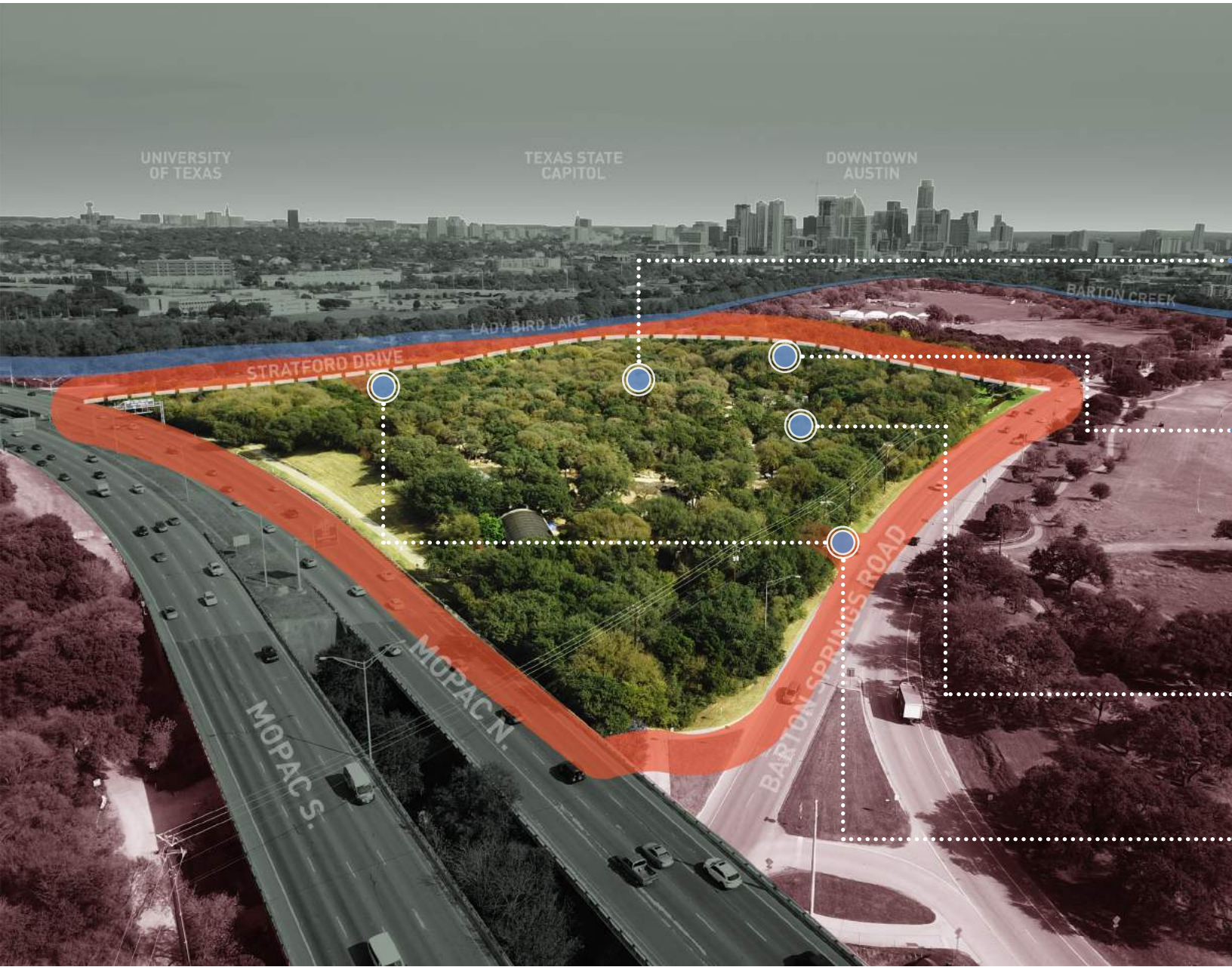
This group focused particularly on the role of the garden as a platform for education around native plants and ecosystems — for young and adult audiences alike. They discussed the danger of people being unfamiliar with nature, and thus avoiding venues like the garden that seem to cater to a more seasoned 'garden club' clientele. To educate more people about native plants, waterwise qualities, and wildlife, the group discussed tactics to broaden the garden's reach — from partnering with corporate volunteer groups to collaborating with other sites on joint programming.

Programming to create impactful experience: provide authentic experiences for younger visitors, use technology effectively, shift from passive to active experiences, Keep visitors coming back, cater to school groups, host more large events, extend outreach to those who are not yet aware of ZBG

Garden and programming ideas: provide programs for citizens with limited outdoor spaces like balconies and patios, appeal to new Austin residents, introduce Central Texas landscape, management and cultivation, waterwise and wildlife support, highlight confluence of natural and urban landscape, brand and market ZBG, honor the old and celebrate the future

RECOMMENDATIONS







CITY-WIDE + BEYOND
ZILKER PARK AREA
GARDEN EDGE
GARDEN-WIDE
SITE SPECIFIC

PHASE 1 RECOMMENDATIONS

PROGRAM

EDUCATION	
● ● ●	>> Build out youth program: public/private/homeschooled group rubrics; kids' garden; workshops
● ● ●	>> Expand adult education (e.g., native plants, local food systems, gardening 101, label plants)
● ● ●	>> Provide regular free family events (e.g., partner with local cultural groups)
REACH	
● ● ●	>> Expand program diversity (e.g., meditation, culture-specific, food-themed, wellness, DIY)
● ● ●	>> Design accessible tours for individuals with physical challenges and disabilities
● ● ●	>> Connect with groups for shared marketing/programming (e.g., Umlauf, Zac Theatre, ANSC)
● ● ●	>> Continue exploring and strengthening P3 partnerships similar to other major gardens
HISTORY & CULTURE	
● ● ●	>> Evaluate historic resources (e.g., identify tax credits for Garden Center in historic district)
● ● ●	>> Conduct cultural/ecological analysis to define role of ZBG in present-day city
ENVIRONMENT	
PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS	
● ● ●	>> Increase diversity of plant collections (e.g., unshaded spaces for plants requiring more sun)
● ● ●	>> Continue to provide downtown viewsheds by selectively clearing understory and tree canopy
● ● ●	>> Expand educational sites
ASSESSMENTS	
● ● ●	>> Conduct site surveys of: geology (escarpment); trees; connection to nearby habitats; watershed to inform future facilities
● ● ●	>> Collaborate with: Watershed Protection; sustainable SITES (stewardship standards)
INFRASTRUCTURE	
EVENT FACILITIES	
● ● ●	>> Add a new and expanded visitor's center building to accommodate increased educational programming, rentable event space, a café, a robust gift shop, and ample administrative space
● ● ●	>> Establish space mix: indoor-outdoor, shaded-unshaded, private-public (e.g., amphitheater)
● ● ●	>> Improve baseline supporting infrastructure (e.g., restrooms, open picnic areas)
ENTRANCE EXPERIENCE	
● ● ●	>> Redesign entry experience (e.g., visitor map, visitor data collection, orientation, special events)
● ● ●	>> Revamp entrance area (e.g., relocate maintenance, evaluate entry location, add café/gift shop)
WAYFINDING	
● ● ●	>> Deploy unified, brand-consistent signage with high pedestrian, cyclist, motorist visibility
● ● ●	>> Increase signage throughout and surrounding ZBG
MOBILITY & CIRCULATION	
● ● ●	>> Design multimodal site access strategy aligned with Zilker Park, adjacent sites (e.g., Preserve)
● ● ●	>> Provide adequate and safe parking; and, overflow shuttles at service entry and/or offsite
● ● ●	>> Improve ADA and pedestrian accessibility throughout site (connect to area trails, garden paths, back entrance, parking, entry)
DESIGN STANDARDS	
● ● ●	>> Define flexible, consistent, contextualized architectural guidelines for new facilities



PROGRAM

EDUCATION

Build out youth program

In order to impact a larger pool of students, ZBG tours offered by the Austin Area Garden Council Garden need to be expanded. First, ZBG should hire an Education Program Manager to organize educational programming on and off site. Next, Public, private, and homeschool rubrics need to be created for student groups ranging from age two to three, two to six, Pre-K through fifth grade, and sixth grade through ninth grade. Specialized rubrics should be created for high school and higher education groups.

ZBG can consult educators in the area throughout the development of the rubric so that educational programming can mirror course work. ZBG tours can be expanded to content specific, hands-on learning, and gardening experiences. The programs should be designed to foster excitement about planting, observing and learning about the natural environment. Workshops can take place on site at ZBG or on an outreach basis at nearby schools, events, and libraries. With an increase in funding, more staff can be hired to aid in expanding programming.

Expand formal adult education

Feedback from surveys and community workshops concluded adults desire more formal educational programming specifically for adults. ZBG can invite experts in the community to lead adult classes and workshops. Courses could touch on alternative gardening techniques such as aquaponics, hydroponics, how to address garden pests, and gardening in relation to climate change. Hands-on workshops could range from how to make floral arrangements to how to grow an herb garden, or gardening and the arts.

Provide regular free family events

ZBG does an impressive job hosting small and/or monthly events, but is lacking in large scale events. Other botanical gardens host weekly Farmer's Markets, botanical-themed arts and crafts, music in the garden, dance courses at the garden, yoga, and cocktail & craft nights, in addition to annual large-scale events. The lack of programming at ZBG is because of lack of staff and resources — not because of lack of knowledge.

REACH

Expand program diversity

At the community workshops, attendees mentioned the need to expand the diversity of programs and events at ZBG. Desired programs included food-themed programs, wellness programming and DIY events. Requests for food-themed programming included cooking demonstrations, how to grow an herb garden, and how to identify edible plants in the wild. Food-based programming could be tied to a new edible garden area but would require additional staff.

Wellness programming such as guided meditations could take place outside throughout ZBG. ZBG can hire local yoga instructors to lead the meditations and teach yoga. ZBG could also offer courses on how to make your own essential oils or potpourri.

Similar DIY programming could be hosted once a month or twice a month, outside or in the visitor center. The item created could be tied to what is growing in ZBG such as a flower press, a terrarium, or a Cyanotype (sun print).

Design accessible tours for individuals with disabilities

The existing trails and tours at ZBG are not ADA accessible. ZBG needs to prioritize opportunities to redevelop some key paths so that all visitors can access portions of ZBG regardless of their mobility. Ramps will need to be added in some scenarios. ZBG should also consider building and implementing



adapted gardening space, such as beds, that are elevated to the height of a wheelchair. The elevated beds in addition to being raised are open underneath the bed so that the person in the wheelchair can fit their legs under the bed and not have to garden from an uncomfortable angle.

Connect with groups for shared marketing and programming

ZBG should partner with similar environmental organizations to expand visitor attendance and involvement. ZBG can work with such organizations as Umlauf, Zac Theatre, and ANSC. The groups can work together on marketing for environmental events throughout Austin. The groups could provide incentive for obtaining group membership or reduced fare if visiting all of the sites. In addition to marketing the groups could work together to expand educational programming and events. ZBG as initiated work with Austin Nature and Science Center on events such as Dino Day, but there is room to expand. The groups could partner with conferences, or musical events in Austin and provide joint programming for attendees.

Explore and strengthen P3 partnerships

ZBG should consider P3 partnerships similar to other major gardens, and is, in fact, doing so already with the Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy. Potential partnerships would help with funding and expanding existing or future programming. Potential partners could include educational institutions, sustainable developers or the tech industry.

HISTORY & CULTURE

Evaluate historic resources

ZBG has an extensive log of its history. Considering the historical nature of ZBG, the administration should identify the possibility of obtaining tax credits for the Garden Center in Austin's Historic District. ZBG could apply to the City of Austin Local Historic District Nomination Application. Instructions for the

application is available on the City website: <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/local-historic-districts>.

Conduct cultural/ecological analysis

ZBG will need to hire outside consultants to perform tasks related to a cultural analysis and would require an in-depth study of the surrounding cultures and the cultural needs of visitors on site. Often-times this type of analysis would be considered interpretive planning. Ecological analysis might include conducting surveys of the geology of the site, tree condition, and analyzing the connection to nearby habitats or watersheds.

ENVIRONMENT

PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS

Increase diversity of plant collections

Throughout the Community Workshops, attendees mentioned the need to expand the existing plant collection at ZBG. Many attendees desire unshaded spaces for plants that require more sun. In this unshaded area attendees hope to see more edible plants, potentially a vegetable garden that could host hands-on programming on how to grow food.

Maintain downtown viewsheds

ZBG could expand viewsheds by selectively cleaning the understory and some tree canopy. ZBG staff has already begun this work. ZBG should consider also establishing better visibility of ZBG from the road, considering it is currently difficult to determine there is a garden adjacent to the roadside.

Expand educational sites

There is limited space for educational workshops or demonstrations throughout ZBG. In the second phase of the Master Plan, space should be allocated to a demonstration garden and edible garden.



ASSESSMENT

Conduct site surveys

As ZBG considers potential expansion on the site, the following surveys will need to be completed to ensure sustainable development: a geology (escarpment) survey, tree survey, analysis on how the site connects to nearby habitats, and a watershed survey. ZBG will need to hire a consultant team and arborist to conduct these surveys as part of the second phase of the Master Plan.

Collaborate with Watershed Protection and Sustainable SITES

In the second phase of the Master Plan, ZBG should seek out experts that understand the need to plan sustainably. ZBG should require all future development on site to take into account how to protect the surrounding watershed and consider Sustainable SITES certification protocols.

INFRASTRUCTURE

EVENT FACILITIES

New and Expanded visitor's center building

The existing visitors center at ZBG is no longer right-sized for existing and future visitors. Updates to the existing visitor's center for some specific programmed uses and consideration of a site for a new visitor center are two key components of the next phase of master planning at ZBG. There is also an opportunity to expand the amenities of ZBG by opening food concessions or a restaurant to provide additional support for visitors and increase their time spent on site. This amenity should be located near or attached to a robust gift shop.

Establish Space Mix

At ZBG there is a lack in diversity of usable space. There is a need to expand the types of space available at ZBG from indoor to outdoor space, shaded to unshaded space and private to public. Additionally, spaces that

can function seasonally as transition zones between indoor and outdoor spaces would serve the garden well. ZBG could also build an amphitheater to aid in the transition from steep terrain to the flatter surface.

Improve baseline infrastructure

ZBG needs to expand basic amenities. There is a need for more public restrooms, meeting space, classroom space, office space and open picnic areas. The Visitor Center does not have enough space for the current needs of ZBG, with the desire to increase programming, the building will be past capacity. As ZBG expands, expansion of indoor and outdoor amenities will aid in the public's overall enjoyment.

ENTRANCE EXPERIENCE

Redesign entry experience

ZBG can improve the entry experience by creating an easy-to-read visitor map available upon arrival. ZBG could also consider mobile app options to help visitors navigate the site. ZBG can work on improving visitor data collection by streamlining the way data is collected. Having a better understanding of who is coming to ZBG will help with future marketing and outreach efforts. ZBG should seek out general best practices in data collection and consult with other botanical gardens for how to improve current collection.

Revamp entrance

The entrance to ZBG needs to be more welcoming to visitors. ZBG could consider relocating the maintenance facilities and rethinking the main entrance location. All entrances should have notable signs designating where parking is and how to reach the visitors center. At the main entrance there should be a space to install a new café in close proximity to the robust gift shop.



WAYFINDING

Deploy unified signage

ZBG is currently situated in an area of the park with low foot traffic. Creating a unified, brand-consistent sign to be placed throughout Zilker Park and at the entrances of ZBG will help with visibility and wayfinding for visitors within the park and those wishing to visit ZBG.

Increase signage throughout and surrounding ZBG

Signs should be placed throughout Zilker Park to aid pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists in finding ZBG. New signs could be placed along trails throughout Zilker Park, along Butler Trail and farther afield at MOPAC. Consistent signage throughout the area surrounding ZBG might aid in increasing visitation to the park. Flyers can be made available at surrounding community assets to further improve visitation of ZBG, including area hotels.

MOBILITY & CIRCULATION

Design multimodal site

ZBG needs to design a multimodal site access strategy that aligns with Zilker Park and adjacent sites. Improving the access strategy to both Zilker Park and ZBG will help increase visitation year round. Currently visitors are challenged by the lack of parking on site and lack of accessible access roads.

Provide adequate and safe parking

There is a need to expand existing parking on site and consider the potential to provide overflow shuttles at various service entry points. ZBG should consider other locations within Zilker park including but not limited to Stratford Drive and the polo grounds. If alternative parking is made available at these locations, ZBG will need to provide a shuttle service to safely transport visitors from the parking area to ZBG due to the lack of safe

passageways or create safer pedestrian routes. ZBG needs to consider alternative parking for visitors using bikes at the main entrance points. ZBG could consider providing reduced fare to visitors who are utilizing alternative transit such as walking, biking, or scooter riding.

Improve ADA Accessibility

The entire ZBG site needs to be made ADA accessible. The current grade change at the back entrance does not allow for accessible entry. The areas within ZBG requiring improvements include the garden paths, back entrance, parking, and main entry points. ZBG needs to include stabilized paths with ramps as needed. ZBG should also provide wheelchairs for visitors who might not be able to move easily throughout the paths.

DESIGN STANDARDS

Define design guidelines

ZBG needs to define flexible but consistent architectural guidelines based in the Austin or Central Texas regional context for any future construction on site. The current architectural design of historic features on site, such as the Garden Center, should be referenced moving forward so that all structures and design on site can be appreciated.

NEXT STEPS





PHASE 1 IMPLEMENTATION

PROGRAM



EDUCATION

- >> Build out youth program: public/private/home-schooled group rubrics; kids' garden; workshops
- >> Expand adult education (e.g., native plants, local food systems, gardening 101, label plants)
- >> Provide regular free family events (e.g., partner with local cultural groups)

REACH

- >> Expand program diversity (e.g., meditation, culture-specific, food-themed, wellness, DIY)
- >> Design accessible tours for individuals with disabilities
- >> Connect with groups for shared marketing/programming (e.g., Umlauf, Zac Theatre, ANSC)
- >> Continue exploring P3 partnerships similar to other major gardens

HISTORY & CULTURE

- >> Evaluate historic resources (e.g., identify tax credits for Garden Center in historic district)
- >> Conduct cultural/environmental analysis to understand role of ZBG in present-day city

ENVIRONMENT



PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS

- >> Increase diversity of plant collections (e.g., unshaded spaces for plants requiring more sun)
- >> Establish downtown viewsheds by selectively clearing understory, some tree canopy
- >> Expand educational sites (e.g., demonstration garden, compost facility, edible garden, food forest, canopy walk, etc.)

ASSESSMENT

- >> Conduct surveys of: geology (escarpment); trees; connection to nearby habitats; watershed
- >> Collaborate with: Watershed Protection; Sustainable SITES (implement stewardship standards)

INFRASTRUCTURE



EVENT FACILITIES

- >> Establish space mix: indoor-outdoor, shaded-unshaded, private-public (e.g., amphitheater)
- >> Improve baseline supporting infrastructure (e.g., restrooms, open picnic areas, pavilions, cafe)
- >> Add cafe in close proximity to robust gift shop

ENTRANCE EXPERIENCE

- >> Redesign entry experience (e.g., visitor map, visitor data collection, orientation, special events)
- >> Revamp entrance area (e.g., relocate maintenance, rethink location, install café/gift shop)

WAYFINDING

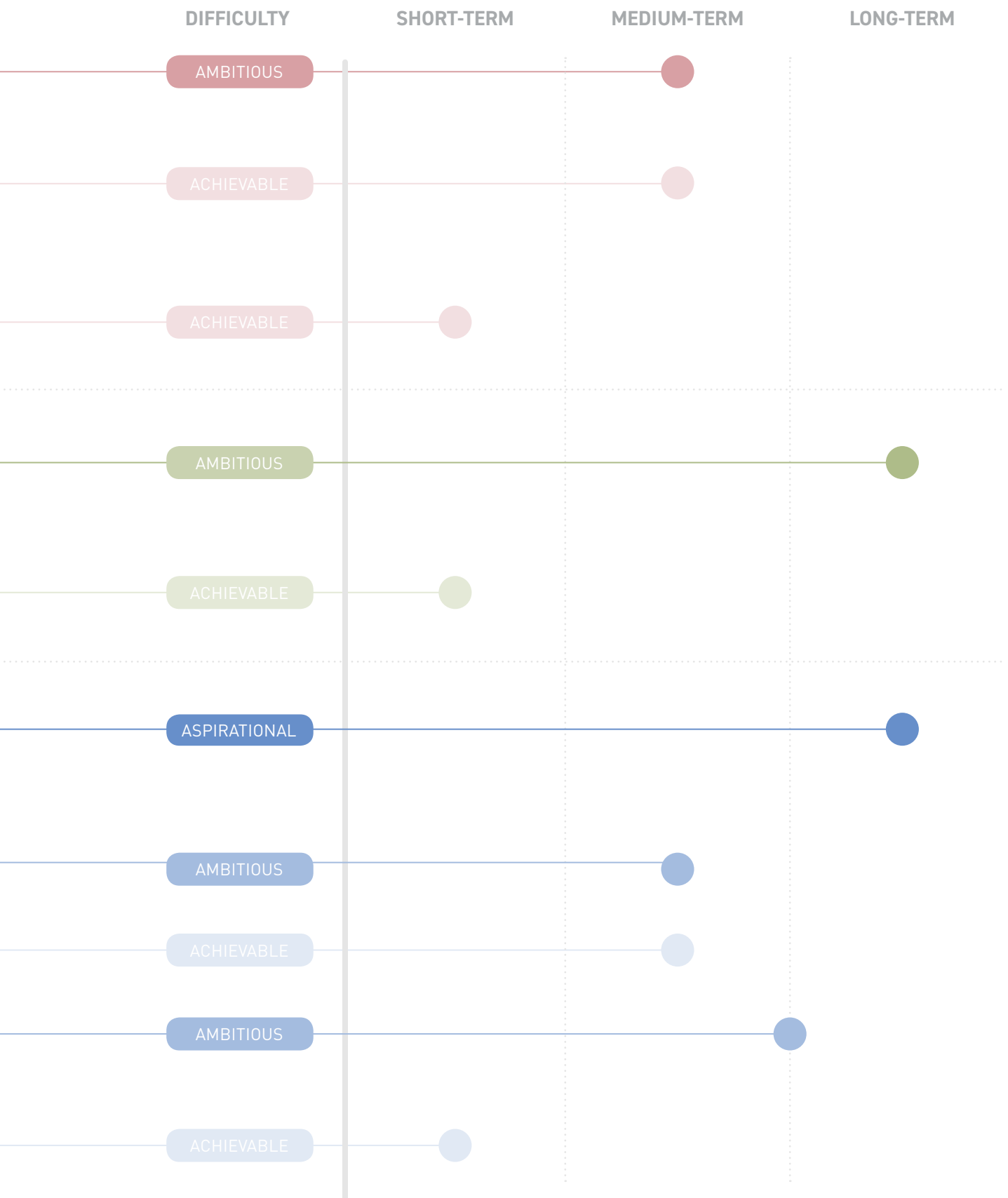
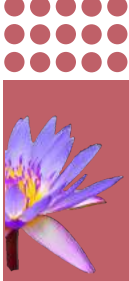
- >> Deploy unified, brand-consistent signage for high pedestrian, cyclist, motorist visibility
- >> Increase directional signage throughout and surrounding ZBG

MOBILITY & CIRCULATION

- >> Design multimodal site access strategy aligned with Zilker Park, adjacent sites (e.g., Preserve, ANSC)
- >> Expand parking and overflow shuttles at service entry and/or offsite (Stratford, Polo Grounds)
- >> Improve ADA accessibility throughout site (garden paths, back entrance, parking, entry)

DESIGN STANDARDS

- >> Define flexible, consistent, contextualized architectural guidelines for new construction



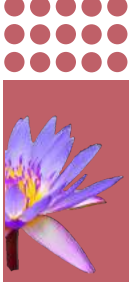


MASTER PLANNING NEXT STEPS

The next phase of the Master Plan should consider programmatic, environmental, and infrastructure interventions.

The consultant team should consider the following tasks to ensure a successful Master Plan.

1. Assemble a set of clear tenets for the master plan established with key stakeholders.
2. Establish a clear timeline for master plan implementation: 5-years or 20-years?
3. Consider transportation planning for Barton Springs Road.
4. Consider Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation - The city of Austin, Zilker Park and Zilker Botanical Garden should work in concert to create highly functional and legible pedestrian connections to the ZBG. These include:
 - Safe access to Zilker Park to the south (Polo Grounds), crossing Barton Springs Road and to Butler Trails to the north.
 - Connection to Zilker Nature Preserve and Austin Nature and Science Center underneath MOPAC Expressway to the west and to Barton Springs Pool to the east.
 - Connectivity of citizens and plant and wildlife communities through the ZBG to the Colorado River / Lady Bird Lake (and thus the city). This space is geographically important in its potential to stitch together riparian greenways and natural habitat.
 - Vehicular Circulation
 - Location of overflow parking, within and beyond the current constraints of the site
 - Efficient access to and from overflow parking
5. Improve connections to Zilker Park and the surrounding City trails and bus lines.
6. Coordinate with larger planning efforts for Zilker Park with particular focus on circulation, parking, ecology, and shared facilities such as maintenance yards and overflow parking.
7. Map short-term and long-term needs for the garden and surrounding site.
8. Prepare a cultural assessment to include:
 - An interpretive plan to complement site design and ensure the story and history of ZBG is encapsulated in future site changes
9. Prepare Site Surveys:
 - Geological survey with focus on site relationship to the escarpment
 - Comprehensive tree survey
 - General site access strategy
 - Ecological assessment that connects ZBG habitats to broader plant and animal communities in Zilker Park and the surrounding City
 - Sustainable SITES coordination or other standards for sustainable performance and stewardship
10. Define Horticultural opportunities
 - What can grow here?
 - What can ZBG do that is different than other public gardens?
 - Determine which collections to focus on like bonsai and where they could be best displayed



11. Define Architectural programming for new and existing facilities
12. Define the architectural vocabulary -- to ensure that new facilities compliment and coordinate with existing facilities
 - Design guidelines that present guiding principles for architectural character and allow flexibility for exact approaches in future designs, while creating a consistent language across the architectural fabric of the ZBG
 - Consideration of how the architectural character and typology of ZBG fits within the larger context of Zilker Park
13. Determine Watershed impacts
 - Water quality considerations
 - Demonstration rain gardens
 - Collaboration with Watershed Protection
14. Prepare a Signage/Wayfinding Plan:
 - Interior site wayfinding
 - Surrounding context wayfinding
 - Consistent guidelines for signage that are integrated with the branding of the garden and work to provide clear wayfinding and unified messaging throughout the garden, both internally and externally and coordinates with overall Zilker Park signage system.
15. Prepare Historic resources assessment
 - ZBG is part of the larger Zilker Park national historic district. Historic tax credits are currently available for buildings designated individually or as “contributing” within a historic district; these may be an opportunity for financial support in future improvement efforts
 - An examination of existing structures, primarily the Garden Center, may reveal opportunities for rehabilitation or re-purposing while setting a standard for the ZBG’s future attitude toward its existing structures
16. Prepare Staff Plan and Financial Plan
 - Support new vision for the master plan with planning for future capital improvements, operations and maintenance and staffing needs.
 - Coordinate major investments/ improvements with the upcoming ZBG Phase II Master Plan.

APPENDIX





Appendix A: Internal Survey of AAGC and ZBGC with Results Summary

Overview of Process, Survey Implementation and Response Rate:

In collaboration with the City of Austin staff, AAGC leadership and ZBGC Board, a set of 16 questions were created. These questions cover a variety of demographic categories, as required by the contract, and multiple choice and short answer questions regarding respondents' current usage and interest in future usage of the Garden. In addition, respondents were asked for input on areas of other gardens they've seen or considered that they would enjoy seeing in Zilker Botanical Garden.

An electronic version of the survey was created using Survey Monkey and deployed via email to all AAGC and ZBGC members. Printed versions of these surveys were made available upon request. Printed versions were inputted by the same data entry contractor for all surveys, numbered in order of manual entry and saved in hard copy.

Respondents were given over 2 months to complete and return the survey, or complete it online. Reminders and email links were sent out to the group 5 times. Multiple presentations were made at AAGC meetings and AAGC Club meetings.

716 responses representing 874 AAGC and ZBGC members (68.7% of total membership). Of those, 466 (65%) were print responses and another 250 (35%) were completed electronically.

Every one of the 32 member Clubs had at least 3 responses. Travis County Master Gardeners had the largest volume of responses, with 97 individual member surveys completed.

General Observations

Prior to the execution of this survey, the narrative around the AAGC membership was that it was mostly; affluent, white, 70+ year-old women who lived in one of 2-3 zip codes.

- Income and Zip Code, in particular were more diverse than anticipated.
- The large number of newer members was unexpected.
- Strong patterns of desire for current space usage to continue in the future was evident.
- Strong patterns of desire for new usage and development of the Garden was evident.
- Passion for the space was clear in the amount of input and quality of feedback.

Question by Question Analysis

1. Are you a member of an AAGC Club or on the ZBGC Board? (635 responses received)

- 98.25% of respondents were AAGC Club Members, including 2.5% who also serve on the ZBGC Board.
- 1.75% were solely ZBGC Board members.

2. If AAGC, what Club are you a member of? (656 responses received)

A full breakout of the Club memberships is in the attached Data file. Most of interest was the number of respondents who are Members of multiple Clubs. 705 AAGC respondents reported themselves to represent 863 Club memberships, showing that approximately 22% of Club members are in at least 2 clubs, with one reporting as high as 10 Club memberships.

3. What is your Club or Conservancy main function? (600 responses received)

- 73.5% respondents identified as Club members
- 19% identified as Club Officers
- 4.5% identified as an AAGC Club Rep
- An additional 3% identified as other with various responses that didn't clarify their role.

This question created some confusion and should be rewritten or listed as multiple choice to accommodate those respondents with multiple memberships, as their role in each different Club can be different.

4. How long have you been a member of an AAGC Club/Conservancy? (602 responses received)

The full breakdown is in the attached data.

While these answers varied greatly with the shortest being so new this was their first meeting and longest being 52 years, the vast majority of respondents fell into the range of 4-20 years. While that is a large category, it shows us that there is not a large amount of new membership and for most people, once they've joined, they stay involved and engaged for what can be lifelong membership.

Below is a chart showing more of the breakdown of membership tenure:

Tenure	#	%
First Day	6	1.0%
>1 year	47	7.9%
1 year	58	9.7%
2 years	59	9.9%
3-5 years	134	22.4%
6-10 years	122	20.4%
11-15 years	61	10.2%
16-20 years	45	7.5%
21-30 years	40	6.7%
31-40 years	15	2.5%
41-50 years	9	1.5%
52 years	1	0.2%

5. With what race(s) do you identify? (635 responses received)

Just under 90% of respondents (89.5%) identify as white. The remaining 10.5% identify as follows:

- Asian/Pacific Islander: 3.5%
- Black/African American: 1.9%
- Latino: .15%
- Native American: 1.6%
- Other: 4.9%

Respondents were able to report more than one race, explaining why the total is 101.5%

6. With what ethnicity do you identify? (619 responses received)

94% of respondents identify as non-hispanic; 6% identify as hispanic.

7. With what gender do you identify? (649 responses received)

- 76.2% Female
- 23.3% Male
- .4% Other

8. What is your age? (649 responses received)

When grouped together, patterns begin to emerge showing that over 60% of the AAGC membership that responded to this survey, and answered this question, are between 6-79 years of age. Another 20% are made up of 40-59 years old and only 8% of the membership base that responded to this survey and question are under the age of 40.

- Under 20 years of age: .3%
- 20-29 years of age: 2.5%
- 30-39 years of age: 5.1%
- 40-49 years of age: 5.6%
- 50-59 years of age: 16%
- 60-69 years of age: 34%
- 70-79 years of age: 27.7%
- 80-89 years of age: 8.6%
- Over 90 years of age: .2%

9. What is your annual income range? (514 responses received)

When these smaller categories are grouped together, some patterns begin to emerge, including that over 50% of the membership base who responded to this survey and answered this question report incomes of less than \$75,000 annually. This could be representative of active incomes greatly reduced because of retirement, or it could be showing data that is different from common knowledge about the membership base of AAGC member clubs.

- Less than \$50,000: 29.8%
- \$50,000-74,999: 23.5%
- \$75,000-99,999: 17.3%
- \$100,000-124,999: 11.9%
- \$125,000-149,999: 4.7%
- \$150,000-174,999: 3.5%
- \$175,000-199,999: 3.1%
- Over \$200,000: 6.2%

10. What is your home ZIP code? (681 responses received)

102 different zip codes were represented in the survey responses including:

- 46 of 71 City of Austin ZIP Codes
- 56 ZIP Codes outside of the City of Austin
- 2 states other than Texas:: Louisiana and New Mexico.

Below is the full breakdown:

ZIP CODE	#	LOCATION
71227	1	Monroe, LA
75117	1	DFW Metroplex

ZIP CODE	#	LOCATION
78641	4	Leander
78643	1	Llano

ZIP CODE	#	LOCATION
78730	7	Austin
78731	23	Austin

75228	1	DFW Metroplex
76140	1	Temple
76501	2	DFW Metroplex
76518	1	Jarrell
76528	1	Gatesville
76549	1	Killeen
76574	2	Taylor
77385	1	Woodlands
77632	1	Orange
77845	1	College Station
78023	1	San Antonio
78130	3	New Braunfels
78133	2	Canyon Lake
78211	1	San Antonio
78255	1	San Antonio
78310	1	San Antonio
78543	1	McAllen
78602	1	Bastrop
78610	7	Buda
78612	1	Cedar Creek
78613	9	Cedar Park
78615	1	Coupland
78616	2	Dale
78617	2	Del Valle
78619	2	Driftwood
78620	8	Dripping Springs
78621	4	Elgin
78628	11	Georgetown
78629	1	Gonzales
78633	3	Georgetown
78634	2	Hutto

78644	3	Lockhart
78645	2	Leander
78650	2	McDade
78652	2	Manchaca
78653	2	Manor
78659	2	Paige
78660	10	Pflugerville
78662	1	Red Rock
78664	11	Round Rock
78665	2	Round Rock
78666	5	San Marcos
78669	1	Spicewood
78676	1	Wimberly
78681	7	Round Rock
78701	3	Austin
78702	5	Austin
78703	16	Austin
78704	54	Austin
78705	3	Austin
78713	1	Austin
78714	1	Austin
78717	1	Austin
78720	1	Austin
78721	1	Austin
78722	6	Austin
78723	11	Austin
78724	1	Austin
78725	1	Austin
78726	5	Austin
78727	9	Austin
78728	4	Austin

78732	7	Austin
78733	7	Austin
78734	19	Austin
78735	16	Austin
78736	14	Austin
78737	27	Austin
78738	6	Austin
78739	18	Austin
78741	10	Austin
78744	5	Austin
78745	42	Austin
78746	41	Austin
78747	10	Austin
78748	19	Austin
78749	23	Austin
78750	19	Austin
78751	6	Austin
78752	1	Austin
78753	19	Austin
78754	3	Austin
78756	5	Austin
78757	11	Austin
78758	13	Austin
78759	23	Austin
78765	1	Austin
78778	1	Austin
78853	1	Eagle Pass
78945	2	La Grange
78957	2	Smithville
87015	1	Edgewood, NM
88061	1	Silver City, NM

78640	5	Kyle
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78729	15	Austin
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91549	1	Unknown
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11. How do you currently use the Garden? (661 responses received)

- Over 85% of respondents listed attending Garden Club Meetings as their major use of the Garden.
- 55% report event attendance as a way they use the Garden.
- 50% each reported attending the garden as a general visitor and/or bringing friends and family as a major use of the Garden.
- Just under 40% list volunteer work within Garden.

A variety of “Other” uses were listed, many of which could fall into the categories provided so that data was rolled into the larger, provided categories.

12. How do you currently use the Building? (655 responses received)

In a similar pattern to Q11, respondents reported their attendance of meetings as the largest usage of the building. 80% reported attending Garden Club meetings and 30% reported attending AAGC-wide meetings. 55%, 53% and 46% report usage of the building for Restrooms, Gift Shop and Special Events, respectively.

Interestingly, just under 2% of respondents reported that they do not use the Building at all.

Questions 13-16 were narrative, open ended questions. The full set of responses are available in the attached data file. The summary of most common and most unique responses is included here.

13. How would you like to use the Garden in the future? (410 responses received)

60% of respondents answered this question.

The most common input (218 responses) was that people want to be able to continue using the Garden in the ways they primarily use it now: meetings, visits, bringing family/friends and attending events.

The most common suggestions for additional use (made in 52 responses) were to provide or provide more/additional educational workshops and opportunities, and to increase the amount and variety of events offered.

Some of the more unique responses included:

- Concerts
- Conservatory
- Cafe/Food Space
- Meditation
- Certification Hours
- As a place to showcase Member skills (crafts, construction, design)

14. How would you like to use the Building in the future? (376 responses received)

55% of respondents answered this question.

As with Q13, the most common input (279 responses, or 75% of those who responded to this question) was an interest in continuing to use the Building as they are now: meetings, events, flower shows/sales, restrooms, gift shop.

The most common suggestions for additional use were: educational workshops and opportunities, the same things offered now - but more of them, and expansions/renovations of current space.

The more unique suggestions included:

- Networking events
- Social opportunities
- Coffee shop
- Art displays
- Movies
- Indoor gardening displays/expansion of Garden

15. What other programs/event/activities would you like to see provided? (293 responses received)
43% of respondents answered this question.

The full data for this is provided, as there were a wide number of responses.

The most common themes were around the addition/improvements to parking and accessibility; provision of food and coffee services; expansion of gardens; workshops and educational programming.

Some of the responses included:

- Greenhouses
- Performances
- Tree ID walks
- General gardens/Not plant specific gardens
- Historical perspectives/History of space
- Exhibits
- Art/Art in Public Places collaboration
- Classes for things that can happen in a garden but aren't gardening related (martial arts, crafts)

16. What features are important to you in a Botanical Garden? (424 responses received)
63% of respondents answered this question.

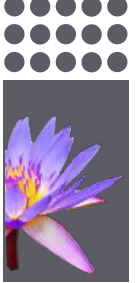
The full data for this is provided, as there were a wide number of responses.

The most common themes were around accessibility, variety, color, well-maintained collections and sustainability.

Some of the responses included:

- Adding diverse plants from different climates
- Plant identification/labeling
- Diversifying staff to include botanist, researcher, etc.
- Foot bridge over Barton Springs
- Specific species interest

- Water Features
- Butterfly garden
- Beauty
- Seasonal landscaping
- Japanese Garden
- Theme gardens
- [Larger] Cactus & Succulent Garden/Collection
- Lush Flowers
- Demonstration gardens
- Rare plant displays
- Benches
- Peace, quiet, serenity
- Better parking
- Tropical conservatory
- Veggie garden
- Organic gardening methods
- Space for large groups
- Good photo opportunities
- Maps & guided tours
- Rotating and seasonal exhibits
- Mixed plantings
- Single-species beds

















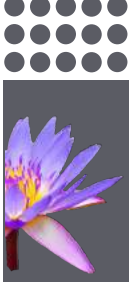
Appendix B: Additional Notes from Community Workshops Additional

Garden Programs

  HEALTH / FITNESS EXAMPLES    WHAT PROGRAMS OR FEATURES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE RELATED TO HEALTH AND FITNESS ?	 FOOD EXAMPLES    WHAT PROGRAMS OR FEATURES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE RELATED TO FOOD ?
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  PERFORMING ARTS EXAMPLES    WHAT PROGRAMS OR FEATURES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE RELATED TO PERFORMING ARTS ?	 VISUAL ARTS EXAMPLES    WHAT PROGRAMS OR FEATURES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE RELATED TO VISUAL ARTS ?
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  HISTORY EXAMPLES    WHAT PROGRAMS OR FEATURES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE RELATED TO HISTORY ?	 SCIENCE /EXPLORATION EXAMPLES    WHAT PROGRAMS OR FEATURES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE RELATED TO SCIENCE AND EXPLORATION ?
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Garden Programs



PERFORMING ARTS

- I envision a stage where the now empty iris bed is near the Walk of Friends – I see music – dance – poetry with the audience seated on limestone walls up the hill
- Dance! – Children, butterflies, plants, flowers, demonstrations!
- Theatre!!
- Maybe weekly concert nights?
- Musical evenings in park, new local artists focus on Austin artists
- Outdoor concerts – bluegrass, rock & roll
- Small music events for mother's day, and other holidays with picnics.



VISUAL ARTS

- More art and nature areas
- Wonderful, surprising sculptures, artists working in the garden
- Fountain (MIDI)
- No reason to not have temporary art exhibits in the garden
- Art hanging in the building too
- Exposition de land art, art nature!
- Performing arts connected with city activities
- Meaningful sculptures that have good signage
- Gift shop has the best Texas nature gifts! (yay to buyer!) Always go here to get gifts before heading out of town! Gifts are better than airport!
- Painting classes
- Art in Park seasonal installments that change
- Art in nature



Garden Programs



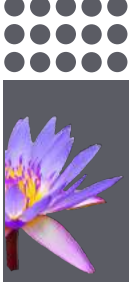
HISTORY

- Wayfinding system with a timeline + graphics relating to site history from pre-historic to modern times.
- Show the films on Isamu Tanaguchi
- Tanaguchi gardening, Japanese gate architectural features
- Dinosaurs! Anything related. Plants from that time!! Archeology - bones
- History tied to Austin's history
- Founders Day Events that the original community leaders to garden
- Better signage in the prehistoric garden exploring history of the plants - parallels with earth's history
- Quick video + history of gardens



SCIENCE/EXPLORATION

- Time Garden, Butterfly House, Biblical Garden (History)
- Place making of a pavilion for science demonstration & presentations (perhaps in cooperation with Austin Nature Center)
- Better signage of plants. A database in the garden center where people can look up growing + other info about specimens they've seen
- Would like to see a relationship between ZBG and Capitol Area Master Naturalists. Would like to see more of the CAMN mission in the ZBG mission.
- STEM for all - bring cross-generational education events to garden
- Interactive children's garden
- Riparian restoration educational program + signage using the new stream restoration area
- Bring a school program like Nature's Way here (pick programs)
- Full Sun for vegetable garden
- Plant propagation + community outreach
- Litter (plastic) and its effect on land and food and wildlife
- Natural elements – trees
- Human use – cooking, use of plants
- ***a drawing by a three year old of butterflies ***
- Hikers, learning about the stars
- Develop curriculum programs for elementary through high school students – how can you draw in university students?



Garden Programs



HEALTH / FITNESS

- Austin herb soc. Plans to have education programs in the herb garden
- How to grow your own fruit orchard to health for health or food forest
- Garden terraces that accommodate classes for yoga as well as seating for tour group to hold discussions / demonstrations.
- Dance !
- Tai-chi
- Yoga in the garden and fitness walks
- Yoga
- Yoga / pilates
- Hikes in the garden
- A better + more visible connection to paths + trails elsewhere in Zilker Park / Austin
- Meditation and mindfulness programs in the evenings, held outside in the gardens



FOOD

- Demonstration orchard with harvest nights or food forest
- The organic vegetable garden has a world of promise
- An outdoor kitchen to expand on the connection between plants and food
- Food trailer vendor parking rentals
- Love the herb garden, edible garden + teaching garden
- A great culinary / edible garden with demonstrations for home gardening of all site, big and tiny
- Have a small section dedicated to edible or medicinal plants
- Food, tacos
- Food trailer
- Herb garden cooking class



Special Places



SPECIAL PLACES

Which of these special places from other botanical gardens would you like to see at Zilker Botanical Garden?
Using the stickers provided, vote for your top 3!



SPECIAL PLACES

Which of these special places from other botanical gardens would you like to see at Zilker Botanical Garden?
Using the stickers provided, vote for your top 3!



WHAT ARE ZILKER BOTANICAL GARDEN'S SPECIAL PLACES?



Use the stickers to mark the map with places you believe are special to Zilker Park, and share any other thoughts below!



Canopy Walk
14 Votes



Arid Garden
12 Votes



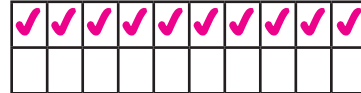
Green Roof
9 Votes



Ornamental Grass Garden
2 Votes



Children's Play Space
10 Votes



Edible Garden
17 Votes

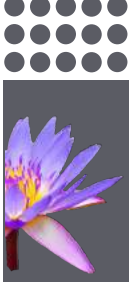




Gardening, Nature, & Conservation

What kind of gardening do you do?

- Organic vegetables flowers containers
- Cycads palms cacti succulents rare plants bamboo
- Organic vegetable flowers native plants enhance greenbelt plantings w/ native plants flower show through club
- I maintain the herb garden @ Zilker with help from other club members limited terraced native plants for birds and butterflies
- At home I have iris, herbs, cacti native & wildflower antique roses
- Herb Gardening
- Sustainability
- Vegetable gardening – raised beds
- Flowers and home gardening for enjoyment to eat
- Vegetable, fruit, native butterfly. Propagate natives at the vireo Preserve Nursery for out planting in the Vireo Preserve and other parcels of the BCP.
- Xeriscape and more and more succulents, cacti
- General home landscaping/gardening, special interest in food/veggies, herbs, vines + bulbs
- Native plants
- A garden is a place where we lean: biodiversity, art expression.
- Ecological restoration
- Things that grow well in Austin (especially if not from here)
- Nature's way school garden
- Vegetable and mixed landscaping
- Butterfly gardening lavender garden herbs and veggie, succulents
- Perennials, whatever is easy, drought tolerant and looks good + fruit trees
- Home butterfly gardens / courtyard beauty
- Butterfly garden / home garden / school garden (nature's way pre-k)



What would you like to learn about gardening, nature or conservation?

- Ecology evolution changing climate resilience
- Hot to say Latin plant names and enhance plant name and characteristics knowledge
- How to apply a strategy for a changing climate ex: Austin becoming more like the Trans Pecos region in terms of annual rainfall
- Gardening since I was a kid did not like housework
- Sustainable practices for our lives: lawns, food, travel, air, etc. water
- Annex Sustainable Food Center – cooking, eating, health, nature
- “How-To” classes – growing, using
- Walks with themes
- Animals and gardening – how to coexist
- Propagation of all types
- Learn plants aromatic
- More information on native versus nonnative, knowledge of which regions plants actually come from
- Gardening with wind
- Organic agriculture, biodiversity (insect/wild plants), animal
- Connections to the earth and food, life, inspiration
- Pre-k nature school
- Adapted plants that stretch the plant palette in Austin
- Everything!
- ***pre-schooler’s drawing of a butterfly***

How could ZBG support gardening, nature and conservation in Austin?

- Exist, promote awareness of garden, hands on workshops, support garden clubs, continue to have garden meetings + shows at garden
- Enhance accessibility – safer crossings of Barton Springs from rest of Zilker. Enhanced paths, still “natural” feel, for wheelchair, etc.
- Continue to expand and develop the existing 26 acres
- Public gardening events & demonstrations as a workshop of how to do specific gardens in Austin.
- Education esthetics new plants
- Presenting specific topic offerings – maybe in evenings?
- Develop a strong relationship and interaction with CAMN (Capital Area Master Naturalists)
- Work with local nurseries to promote native species – propagation.
- Garden events that teach and give hands-on learning
- Educational programming on conservation
- Maintain a scientific collection of rare plants, keep data on plants (locally, etc.)
- Speaking and sharing art and hands on projects, touch + feel
- Youth education then school field trips and tours
- Lecture/workshop series throughout the year. Bring in the best of the national and regional speakers, not just about gardening, but also about conservation / green issues
- Conduct programming surrounding these issues
- Adult education through garden clubs and special events
- Pre-k nature school or after school program (nature’s way pre-school
- Demo gardens, before/after, partner with LBJ wildflower center



Visitors



FAMILY GARDEN EXPERIENCE

WHAT DO YOU THINK FAMILIES LIKE MOST ABOUT THE GARDEN?

WHAT ELSE MIGHT A FAMILY LIKE TO SEE OR DO AT THE GARDEN ?
WHAT IS MISSING?



COUPLES GARDEN EXPERIENCE

WHAT DO YOU THINK COUPLES LIKE MOST AT ZILKER BOTANICAL GARDEN?

WHAT ELSE MIGHT A COUPLE LIKE TO SEE OR DO AT THE GARDEN ?
WHAT IS MISSING?



SENIOR CITIZEN GARDEN EXPERIENCE

WHAT DO YOU THINK SENIOR CITIZENS LIKE MOST ABOUT THE GARDEN?

WHAT ELSE MIGHT A SENIOR CITIZEN LIKE TO SEE OR DO AT THE GARDEN ?
WHAT IS MISSING?



STUDENT/CHILDEN GARDEN EXPERIENCE

WHAT DO YOU THINK STUDENTS/CHILDREN LIKE MOST ABOUT THE GARDEN?

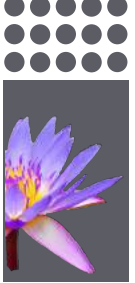
WHAT ELSE WOULD A STUDENT/CHILD LIKE TO SEE OR DO AT THE GARDEN ?
WHAT IS MISSING?



WHO IS MISSING?

WHO ELSE WOULD APPRECIATE THE ZILKER BOTANICAL GARDEN ?

WHAT CAN THE GARDEN DO TO REACH OUT TO THEM ?



FAMILY GARDEN EXPERIENCE

What do you think families like most about the garden?

- "Families LOVE the Taniguchi Japanese Garden"
- "Children explore in almost every area"
- "The Butler window for photos"
- "Children have responded well to the dino day this year"
- "A friend (male) of mine told me this week he came to ZBG for R+R + had lunch in the oak grove"
- "Quiet place to teach children about nature"
- "Fairy Homes"
- "Being together and sharing beauty"
- "Children's garden, blacksmith shop, butterfly garden"
- "Everything"
- "Interactive children's garden"
- "Dino trails"
- "Places to kinda run (written by a kid!)"
- "Dino trails + walks + water features"
- "Fairy, dino, ponds"



FAMILY GARDEN EXPERIENCE

What else might a family like to see or do at the garden? What is missing?

- "Expand prehistoric garden to include more educational info"
- "Bring DinoLand back soon! 2008 was last time"
- "We need a treehouse for temporary entry gate"
- "Hands on gardening "Play in the dirt""
- "More stroller friendly"
- "Watch film showing plants growing (sped up, of course!)"
- "Orchard or food forest"
- "We need a treehouse for temporary entry gate"
- "More about dinosaurs in Texas"
- "School program"
- "Classes, camp type program."
- "More classes even cooking with herbs class"
- "Family photo destination"
- "Splash pads"
- "Picnics"
- "Music, dance, art"
- "Dino Land and Water Ponds"
- "A field to run around in, surrounded by flower and things they can climb on (written by a kid!)"
- "Swings in trees good idea yes great idea!"
- "Stone skipping pond"
- "Tree house"
- "Area to climb and jump and run"
- "Music and other special events"



COUPLES GARDEN EXPERIENCE

What do you think couples like most about the garden?

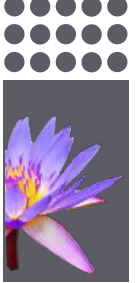
- *Tons of people get married or engaged in the garden*
- *Couples take photos for engagements weddings anniversaries pregnancies baby's birthdays and Christmas cards*
- *They come for hand held walks and talks*
- *Weddings! Photos hikes picnics*
- *Celebrate marriage, anniversaries, engagements, special occasions*
- *Photos for these events*
- *A rose garden*
- *Meditation, enjoy learning more about what each other likes*
- *Social events*
- *Vegetable gardening demos*
- *Romantic spot – day dates*
- *Not a lot of events for couples – but would be good to add music and food events*



COUPLES GARDEN EXPERIENCE

What else might a couple like to see or do at the garden? What is missing?

- *Hammocks have a picnic*
- *Ability to have a picnic (dog area w/ P/U's for poop)*
- *Private areas, so they can makeout*
- *A romantic dinner, a small intimate restaurant, tea room*
- *A better location for weddings*
- *A guide to best spots for your wedding photos (add to website)*
- *Build something together; plant/hands on/visual encounter activity*
- *Coffee shop or tea room*
- *Dining option or events*
- *Sustainability demos*
- *Garden parties with celebrities*
- *Dog events / partner events with non-profits*
- *A romantic lookout or special wishing tree / pond*



SENIOR CITIZEN GARDEN EXPERIENCE

What do you think families like most about the garden?

- Garden clubs, flower shows, plant sales
- Seniors stroll they share the garden with out of town friends
- Seniors revisit after living away for years
- I think seniors would love to see a patio with benches by the Koi pond to rest before climbing back up hill
- We need board walk ADA trail east of the Koi pond for strollers & walkers wheelchairs, etc.
- Blooming plants
- The perfect Japanese Garden
- Club house, Garden club, social events at low cost



SENIOR CITIZEN GARDEN EXPERIENCE

What else might a family like to see or do at the garden? What is missing?

- Maybe spritz area for cool off with city water not lake water
- More air conditioned space for the mid summer visitors
- Easy access paths to destinations that are shared with public and semi-public seating areas with views of children
- Accessibility
- Free admission for seniors (agree)
- Golf cart tours on an ADA trail that surrounds the garden
- Smoother, safer trails to access throughout the garden
- A tea room
- Golf cart rides / seated trams
- Energy status communication theme up (??)
- A small, quiet grove
- More benches for resting in scenic areas
- Accessibility



STUDENT/CHILDREN GARDEN EXPERIENCE

What do you think students or children like most about the garden?

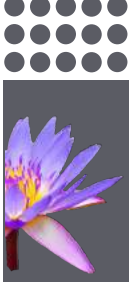
- Stepping stones in water garden
- Japanese Garden and all the staircases
- Turtles and frogs they spot in the pond
- Koi pond spotting snakes and lizards
- Dinosaur footprint and sculpture
- School tours are very popular – I often talk to visitors who have not come since they came as a kid
- Historical sites
- Fairy trails
- Tea parties
- Forts
- Party place – history of Austin
- Fairy tea house
- Interactive screens that take garden subject and allow for interaction. Education scenarios are multiple for last questions.
- Just being out in nature and getting excited about plants. So many kids are nature-deficient / deprived
- Being able to feel lost in nature; to feel, smell, hear, see and touch nature while nature touches your heart!
- Amateur photographer might like all the flowers + buildings + take pictures of them
- Student photo contexts
- Garden building
- Sustainability
- Teen-focus



STUDENT/CHILDREN GARDEN EXPERIENCE

What else might students or children like to see or do at the garden? What is missing?

- Orchard or food forest
- Art classes for drawing or painting plants in the garden
- Teach people about the native people who lived in Austin
- Make a ulikieup (sp?) that can be added on to by anyone attending
- Suggested events (this would be an extension of nature + naturalist workshops) – “I Spy with My Little Eye” for pre-school and elementary; Art shows featuring greatly enlarged macro images of flowers, plants or insects; community involvement – science teachers, UT science student volunteers providing guidance and answering questions; trails with magnifying glasses; electric cacti exhibit
- Education: dinosaurs, Jurassic Park, rocks!
- Hands on – dig, build, create, jump!
- Tear down ride (NOT necessarily big rides)
- Programs like Nature’s Way, great teachers!
- Activities to do
- Demos and interactive events or workshops
- Touch taste, dig, smell



WHO IS MISSING FROM THE GARDEN EXPERIENCE ?

Who else would appreciate the Zilker Botanical Garden?

- Botanists
- Artists
- Gardeners
- Artists and art groups
- Painters during the blooms
- Photographers
- Out of town visitors & out of country folks as well enjoy ZBG
- Hartmans (?)
- Millennials
- The elderly who can't get around but could come here with assistance, volunteer to serve them only in the garden
- Retirement communities and nursing homes
- International Visitors
- Hotels need to promote ZBG to their visitors
- Children!
- People who need emotional healing (AA); therapeutic seminars, people who need hope
- Runners – can connect w/ Barton springs for a cool dip after a long run?
- Almost everyone I know. Very low awareness. No reason to come other than curiosity or a garden show/event.



WHO IS MISSING FROM THE GARDEN EXPERIENCE ?

What can the garden do to reach out to them?

- Engage young adults and teens that are visual and tech users <> Garden experiences without noise and technology
- A botanically significant (accessioned) collection of plants
- Creative facilities particularly for music...AND ART!
- Concerts! Food events, sponsored events/partnerships
- Events centered around seasonal / bloom events, ie. Cherry Blossom festivals in Tokyo, D.C.
- Begin sift (?) shop
- A smelling garden
- Have outreach events utilizing "It's my Park Day" - thousands of participants
- Class in planting,, thinking, raising plants – walk around ¶ enjoying the beauty, physical interaction
- A garden of the senses (touch/smell/ taste/see/listen)
- Movies on certain plants growing
- Go around to other groups + Organizations to do a lunch and learn with their constituencies (Like Festival Beach Food Forest, SFC & others)
- Pre-K schools, home school program, after-school program
- Shuttle services
- Promote community gardens and demo of types of gardening
- Special committees in charge of outreach to senior citizens



Appendix C: Notes from Focus Group Meetings

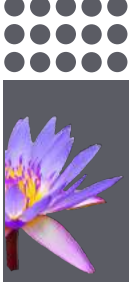
Focus Groups

Focus Group #1: Non-Profit Representatives

1. Tanya Zastrow,
Lady Bird Johnson
Wildflower Center
2. Beth Carroll,
The Trail Foundation
3. Joanna Wolaver,
Shoal Creek Conservancy
4. Erica Gordon,
Austin Sunshine Camps
5. Hannah Glaw,
Barton Springs Conservancy
6. Kathleen Mannello,
Austin Parks Foundation
7. Sarah Athans,
Umlauf Sculpture Garden

Non-Profits: Ideas and Possible Alignments

- WFC – ZBG can be unique
 - Reflects Austin’s uniqueness
 - Can represent different cultures – Mexico
- Austin Parks Foundation – people and parks
 - Can help with volunteers
 - Long term vision is to make parks more accessible
 - We try to figure out how folks in low-income areas use parks
 - How can we help bring that knowledge to the garden
- Shoal Creek Conservancy – champions of the creek – placemaking
 - Like ZBG we want to make it feel like a space for everyone.
 - Similar issues of needing to connect with the community and the trail
 - ZBG really can be like an oasis for folks
- The Trail Foundation – we bring in private \$ to help with Trail Resiliency
 - We know people on the trail have “their time” there—their daily/weekly routines. It might be hard to peel them off.
 - Would be great to coordinate events together
 - Make the trail a point of connections
- Umlauf – connecting to education about sculpture
 - Education about nature not enough – how can the garden really clarify it’s programs based on its mission - Should do things based on mission, not on #s
 - Would be great to have a scheduled walk between the two places – Even if we just started with pamphlets that showed an easy walking path
 - Could bring some Umlauf sculptures here or have a curated ZBG garden there.
 - Plug into Austin Museum Days
- Sunshine Camp – engage and empower youth through the outdoors (60% of each day spent outside)
 - Have a. Garden kids could help maintain
 - Bring in kids to the gardens when we know their parents won’t bring them.
- Barton Springs Conservancy – honor, preserve, enhance the experience
 - Could create joint programs / experiences to targeted audiences
 - BSG trying to raise funds for an educational center – how might this overlap
 - Want to explore ways to partner – short term and long term



Issues

- Issue: Accessibility
 - Can do horticultural therapy
 - Work with physically and mentally disabled
 - Not at WFC
 - Chicago has a program
 - Accessibility vs Approachability
- Issue: Program vs Being
 - Want to activate spaces but also want a place where people can just be.
- Issue: Need to connect and create message/programmatic alignment with different city departments
 - Grow Green
 - Gardening Info
 - Watershed
 - CCCN – PARD
 - CINCA
- Issue: Outreach to those who don't come to the garden now
 - Is a name change possible? "Botanical" is off-putting.
 - Can we have a First Nations garden? – there are so many stories to tell
 - Free Family Days in the garden?
 - Could partner with Housing Authority of Austin to create family days
- Issue: Zilker area as a Cultural Necklace
 - The city has a cultural necklace
 - Barton Springs
 - Umlauf
 - Zilker Botanical Garden
 - Trail

Focus Group #2: North Austin Residents

1. Mark Smolen, Patterson Park Community Garden

2. Craig Nazor, Austin Sierra Club
3. Amy Voorhees, ZBGC
4. Bill Glass

Katie What does a botanical garden of the future look like in Austin?

MS What is the motivation for changing the botanical gardens?

Katie I'll give 3 reasons – one, there is a new conservancy group to take over management. Two, the gardens need to be a resource for all city of Austin residents, but it doesn't do that currently. There has also never been a master plan for the botanical garden or for Zilker Park at all – this will be the first. The botanical gardens consist of 31 acres in the middle of a metropolitan park, but it feels very disconnected right now. We specifically want to know what would bring more people from north Austin to the gardens.

MS Is there funding that has already been made available? Is it a city-funded capital improvement project?

Katie The past changes have been funded by the city, but the goal is that future changes would be funded by the conservancy. Phase 1 would set the stage for future fundraising.

Lynn Generally the city won't allocate money for both planning and construction at the same time – we need to get through planning first. And we are in the very first stage of planning – we aren't yet talking about design, only the mission and values of the gardens. The city knows we need a public-private partnership with the conservancy in order for the new master plan to be successful.

Katie Some of the current issues that we see with the botanical gardens include pedestrian safety, lack of connection to bus routes, the disconnect from the hike and bike trail, the large gravel parking lot that could be leveraged in some way, and the secondary entrance that people don't use.



CN Yeah, Hartman Gate – it’s beautifully carved metal and stone, and the idea was to put a real entrance there – but a lot more needs to be done to make Hartman Gate into an entrance than just a gate.

Katie That’s great - we want to make sure these kinds of things that have been said over and over again for years get put in the plan. Some of the opportunities we are looking at for the master plan include creek buffers, erosion control, soil types, regional contexts, access and transportation, and connection to other parks in the area.

MS Is the wildlife center part of this plan?

Katie No, since it’s on the other side of MOPAC.

CN The wildlife center has gotten more attention in the past than the botanical garden - they would be really good working together.

Katie We want to pursue tying together programs with the wildlife center, since they work well together. The Zilker Botanical Gardens are different from most botanical gardens – there are a lot more trees, for instance. Botanical gardens are usually more formal, but we want it to be an Austin botanical garden - maybe that means more trees or more nature-oriented trail systems.

Lynn How often does everyone visit the botanical gardens?

BG I’m a native Austinite, but I don’t really visit it that much. But I teach people about raised-bed gardening and repair and restoration projects.

MS I’ve been to it but not in a while.

CN In 2007 I quit volunteering there, but before that I would be there 3-4 times a week - people saw me there a lot.

Lynn We’re in a unique position to be able to look at the mission and vision of the botanical gardens as a clean slate, and to make it really Austin by taking it out of the mold of traditional botanical gardens. What

makes the Zilker Botanical Gardens special in your memory? What are some things that make the gardens special to you?

MS The Japanese gardens have the biggest imprint in my memory.

CN The Japanese garden as well – in fact, it was the first thing I heard about Austin before moving here. The history of the garden is pretty amazing. A Japanese master gardener found himself here in Austin and built the whole thing himself. Those gardens take a lot of work to maintain, but the city has never hired someone specifically to take care of them. In the past volunteers would take care of them but they don’t anymore. When I first saw the Japanese gardens, I stood at the bottom of the garden and cried because it was so beautiful – I still remember seeing the water lilies in bloom. People talked about those gardens a lot but the city never put in money to maintain it so it has been deteriorating. The story of the Japanese gardens is truly Austin – it’s the story of how the gardener got here. ーー

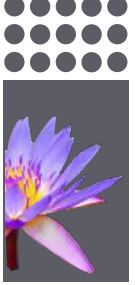
Lynn So it’s the authenticity there that makes it beautiful.

CN [agrees]

BG The Japanese gardens are beautiful – I went there for my brother’s wedding in the late 70s. Now I go there for the cactus and succulent show and sale to fill my greenhouse, and the prehistoric garden is a great place to take my grandkids.

Lynn Who is not visiting the botanical gardens that you would want to see there?

MS Some of the ideas that are beginning to grow in Austin are sustainability, resiliency, and growing one’s own plants. The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center (LBJWC) tends to use their demonstration gardens in that way – it’s a good model for programs. The Japanese garden is antithetical to sustainability because it’s so hard to maintain - maybe it could be managed on a smaller level? It’s still part of Austin’s history.



CN The Japanese gardens are inherently sustainable because the gardener died and it is still there. It's about the aesthetic – about how things are pruned or trimmed – and not as much about the species. The plants there can be xeric plants - I picked plants that could live in a harsh climate. The park used to be called Zilker Gardens, but there was a push by the garden council to call it Zilker Botanical Gardens – they added the botanical significance. This separates it from the LBJWC, which focuses on native plants. A botanical garden by origin is a different thing.

BG I'm not there enough to know who frequents it, but when I was a teacher's aide we took a lot of kids there. I go there to buy specimens, and for garden club meetings there.

CN Botanical gardens and arboretums usually host garden society meetings and other related group meetings to draw in visitors. There is currently no place in central Austin for these events.

Lynn So by using the botanical garden to host groups, the botanical garden gains the attraction of more people. Maybe we open it to groups unassociated with gardening, or to indirectly related groups like food groups.

MS The way it happens now, people go there with no specific plan in line - not to learn about a specific thing. We could have focused learning sessions or days, and have a focal point so people know they can go get educated about a certain thing, not just by passive means but also through demonstrations about care and planting.

Lynn I'm kind of hearing two different teams regarding how people use the gardens. One is about focusing on the educational and didactic aspects of the gardens, as a place to learn about nature and space. The other is to see the gardens as a place of beauty and attraction so people visit just to appreciate being there, and maybe learn something after being drawn there. We have this idea of botanical gardens as isolated things. By nature gardens can be insular, but that's not a civic place – it should be reaching out as far as it can. How could

botanical gardens in some way support what you already do? How can we transition the garden from isolated to reaching out into the community?

MS My focal point right now is community gardens, especially growing things you can eat that are not on normal vegetable garden menus. They don't have to be native but I am a native plant guy - I want to inform people about other things that can be grown as food sources.

BG The watershed might want to have an educational event – something to help encourage neighborhoods to accept changes. It could be used for demonstrations or examples of what projects will look like later – especially messy riparian buffer zones, since people are hesitant on what those edges will look like when you take away what they are used to.

CN There was always brainstorming going on while I was there – for example, adding a bonsai group, a butterfly house in the pollinators garden, or a greenhouse and cactus collection.

AV My concern about Zilker Park is that it was cobbled together by volunteers over years and it looks that way – homemade, rustic (like the zoo). It has suffered from inadequate funding and a failure of vision. A master plan is desperately needed – people desperately want to get to the nitty gritty at first (saying things like “the herb garden needs more sunshine”). This botanical garden has a lot of potential and we're nowhere near it. There is a deep resistance to new ideas, and people want the status quo.

Lynn How does the story of ZBG meet where Austin is now?

AV What makes ZBG special is that it is a large green space downtown, with tremendous unrealized potential. It is so close to things – it could be where people go for quick picnic or visit, but it isn't because no one knows where it is.

MS The main issue is accessibility.



AV Right now it has shade and green, but not beauty - but that is appealing in a place with hot summers. It could be something wonderful, it could have exhibits that reflect new Austinites.

Katie What would those new exhibits be?

AV About Asia, the Latino community, historic African American gardens, or settler gardens. It's really hard to be a gardener in Austin, and Zilker has tremendous potential to teach people about container gardens on patios, vegetables, or succulents, for example.

Katie Like how IKEA has displays that show different sizes of rooms – an exhibit could be: what does a garden look like in different forms and sizes?

MS Austin soils are very different, so there could be more information for people about that.

AV I want to see gardens interact with schools, like talking about landscape design with high schoolers, for example. ZBG is civic and more central than LBJWC. Citizens raised the money for it – it is civic driven. The city came back and backed them but it was led by people – its DNA is as a citizen-initiated garden. People think garden visitors are white ladies from Tarrytown, but visitors come from every zip code. It should be a people's garden (but a little bit better – what we aspire to).

MS Is there any demographic data on current ZBG visitors?

CN Yeah, they have been collecting demographics data for years. As far as interacting with schools – they have been visiting for years because tours are free, schools just have to get transportation to get the kids there. The idea behind the prehistoric garden was to teach history and evolution - that garden was designed to be educational. A beautiful garden like the botanical gardens takes a lot of work – a lot more work than the LBJWC. You need a staff big enough and funded enough, and it becomes a political problem of who takes over garden maintenance. PARD covers way too much

space so the money never got to the botanical gardens. One thing I want to see is money from the city of Austin's Hotel Occupancy Tax, which was enacted and okay-ed by the state, go to places in Austin that people actually visit, such as the botanical gardens. Very little of that money was ever used in the ZBG, and I want to see the city put money into the garden.

Lynn Yeah, the political-ness of the ZBG is also part of its story. How can we convince the city that it is the peoples' garden, and not just a garden used by a handful of people? What does a peoples' garden actually mean? There needs to be some sort of story or narrative.

MS Who are you trying to convince? Are you expecting there to be a bond issue?

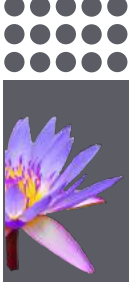
Lynn My guess is that funding would be a combination of both the conservancy and bonds.

Katie The focus is that this stage is currently funded, but it's hard to know where the rest of the funding will come from. The issue is that you all care enough about this garden to go to a focus group, but aren't really that personally engaged with the botanical garden. That's why we trying to determine what the vision of the garden could be, because even the most passionate people in the community are not engaged with it.

BG That's true, but we are engaged in community gardens closer to us.

CN I come from this differently because I was very involved. The reason I don't go there much anymore is because all the time and effort I put into the garden was not carried on. There are a lot of people who have put a lot of money and effort into the botanical garden, and there was supposed to be a handoff of responsibility but that didn't happen. We need to figure out how to honor people who put in their time and effort into the garden.

Lynn Maybe that's part of the story and DNA of the botanical gardens, and we need to honor that. If this is the peoples' garden, then these are the people.



AV I loved what B mentioned about the riparian garden; I would love to see exhibits about all the different microclimates in this area. The LBJWC does a little of that but we could really educate people on these microclimates.

Katie Especially because there are three ecoregions in Austin – the Blackland prairie, piney woods, and the escarpment, and it’s important to educate people about them.

AV And all of that is really within Austin, and our botanical garden should address that. Right now the garden turns its back onto the main pedestrian thoroughfare – that should be opened up and should connect to the bridge to the high school, and to the river. There should be stories about the people behind the exhibits, like Taniguchi’s Japanese garden - his grandson renovated the garden this year. These wonderful stories get lost because the garden is just within PARD.

Lynn To summarize, the ZBG is a peoples’ garden, and we need it to grow but to do what we can to make sure its story continues - stories about its history and where we are now. How then do we make this narrative happen? [closing remarks]

AV [via email] I would love for the new, improved garden to express Austin’s personality as a musical city. Are you familiar with Julia Moir Messervy’s work in Toronto? She collaborated with Yo Yo Ma to interpret Bach’s Suite No. 1 in G Major for unaccompanied cello as a waterfront park. I would love to see the garden express Austin’s homegrown musical vibe. Right now the garden is disjointed — could we use music as a tool to recast the space? Perhaps the park could literally sing with interactive materials. (See the interactive parking garage in Charlotte, NC <http://www.janneysound.com/project/touch-my-building-charlotte-nc/>). Austin shouldn’t aspire to have a botanical garden like Missouri or Denver or even San

Antonio. But I would love for ZBG to become an authentic Austin space, quirky, musical, sporty, welcoming, cool.

Focus Group #3: Horticulture Professionals

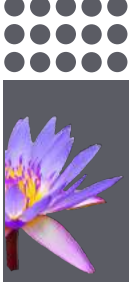
1. Sam Peterson,
Barton Springs Nursery
2. Judith Craft,
Austin Herb Society, ZBGC,
TCMG, Garden Docent
3. D.M. Jiles,
City of Austin PARD ZBG
Coordinator
4. Cindy Klemmer,
City of Austin PARD
Environmental Program
Manager
5. Tessa Cooper
6. Jeannie Ferrier,
ZBGC
7. Jeff Pavlat,
ZBGC, Austin Cactus and
Succulent Society
8. Patrick Beyer,
City of Austin PARD
Development

Ideas for Different Types of Gardens

- International Gardens
 - Australian Garden
 - South African / South American gardens
- Succulents – Cacti
 - They can be invisible
 - 2% of what could be grown here is grown here now
- Aquatic Gardens
 - More should be here
 - Taniguchi – lotus garden should be brought back
- Culinary / Kitchen
 - More interactive than herbal



- Let kids touch – all should feel free to touch
 - For Millennials
 - Cutting Garden
 - Cooking
 - Cocktails
 - Like Date Night at the Dougherty
 - Beer Tastings
 - Indoor plants
 - Container ponds
 - Herb Garden
 - Show how to landscape with herbs
 - Medicinal and culinary
 - Indoor/Outdoor Spaces
 - Orchids
 - Succulents
 - Keep Austin Weird Garden
 - Funky plants
 - Fun / engaging
 - Tropicals
 - Kid's Garden
 - with plants with animal names
 - Medicinal/Fragrance garden
 - Make it interactive
 - Think beyond herbs
 - But don't eat the digitalis
 - Important to tell stories – create attachment – show the personalities of the plants
 - Pioneer Garden
 - Add a Hispanic aspect to this garden
 - Make it a working garden
 - Show agriculture from across the state
 - Crops economy and change
 - Blacksmith place – want it open
 - Cotton, livestock, grain milling, corn, beans, rice(?)
 - Hartman Garden
 - Only 1 dinosaur – we have 22 others in Texas!
 - Bonsai
 - Have it more integrated into the Japanese Garden
 - Green Garden
 - Bio-swales
 - Rain Garden
 - Step by Step introductions
 - DIY constructions
 - Raised beds
 - Kits and “recipe” cards
 - Demo alternative lawns
 - Dogs – to bring in different groups
 - What's good and not good for pets
 - Mediterranean Garden
 - We have a parallel climate
 - Part of our own history too
 - Adaptive plants
 - Biblical Garden
 - Fruit Tree Garden
 - Food forest
 - Native American Garden
 - many different tribes
 - Topicals and a Butterfly Garden
- Spatial Issues
- Gathering area for
 - Seminars
 - Movies
 - Weddings
 - Events
 - Highlight Keep Austin Weird
 - Do something on the MOPAC side fence
 - Start the weirdness there



- There's more opportunity for display than at the WFC
 - What's the affinity with the skyline?
 - Atlanta BG has a skyline garden
 - Need a deck!
- Accessibility and Flow
 - Figuring out the highest point to the lowest
- Need to really highlight the sense of discovery
 - Paths
 - Wayfinding
- We need more color and cleaning – making things visible
 - Addition by subtraction

Specific Programming Items

- Traveling Exhibits
- Things should be layered seasonally
- Reaching out to Hispanic Families
 - Quinceañera photo op
 - Texas Agaves
 - Showcase Mexico
 - Fiesta Garde
 - Talk with curanderas for ideas
- Have landscape contractor trainings
 - With homeowners too
- Do joint advertising between ZBG and WFC
- Create connection to ANSC
- High School – culinary arts connection
- Need to create educational opportunities
 - Create a ZBG Guide Book
- Explore Virtual Reality to tie in Austin's tech sector
 - Perhaps to help to accessibility issue too

General Reflections

- There can be plant blindness – we just don't see them.
- For people traveling – from West Texas, Austin is a very green experience.
- Travis County is the intersection of 3 ecosystems
- Have representation like city hall does
- The Garden is now moving into the future
- ZBG should be the Gardening Info headquarters in town
- It's a Jewel in the heart of the city

Focus Group #4: Arts and Culture Professionals

1. Herlinda Zamora,
Emma S. Barrientos Mexican
American Cultural Center
2. Jonathan Barona,
Austin Community
Foundation
3. Christopher Sanchez, City of
Austin PARD
4. Kathy Panak
5. Laura Maclay
6. Suzie Maclay
7. Christi Mosely
8. Jenna Jasso,
Love ATX

What are some of your own memories of being at the Garden over the years?

- Working for Evan Taniguchi and hearing stories about how his grandfather designed and built the Japanese gardens himself
- Coming to the Zilker Botanical Gardens (ZBG) with my whole family in 1975 and watching my brother play in the water
- The Japanese gardens were my favorite,



especially the bridge and watching the fish

- The ZBG was one of the first places I visited when I moved here, and the Japanese gardens stand out in my mind
- Taking photos at ZBG – wedding photos, photos on the moon bridge, bringing my high school photography club on a trip here
- The ZBG was one of the first places I explored when I first moved to Austin, and I was excited to visit because I was already interested in gardening

What are some memories from special times at other gardens or experiential outdoor spaces?

- The San Antonio Zoo School – seeing the potential of outdoor children’s spaces for learning and playing
- The LCRA watershed garden (The Wilkerson Center for Colorado River Education at Redbud) is a space that is both educational and beautiful, and explains the Colorado river system very well
- The gardens in Seville because it feels like you are walking through the entire world. I enjoy finding gardens wherever I visit.
- The Huntington Botanical Gardens in Pasadena also feel like you are walking through many different parts of the world
- The Minneapolis Sculpture Garden and Guthrie Theater has a lot of the arts and culture (in both programming and the gardens) that ZBG doesn’t have

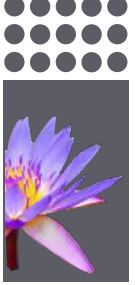
Dance performances in the Community First Village, or any art that pops out of unusual spaces because it brings in different audiences who wouldn’t otherwise interact with the art. How can arts and culture become a gateway to gardens and nature? What kind of gardens or programming would help to achieve this?

- Temporary installations such as dance performances using the space

- Spaces need to be usable and accessible to everyone
 - Parking is a huge barrier to accessibility
 - ZBG looks uninviting from the exterior, like a private residence
 - Art says public – using art to draw people in who pass by
- Exploration of different cultures through the arts – partnerships with TEMPO (Temporary Public Arts), AIPP (Arts in Public Places), or other galleries
- Regular partnerships with fitness and wellness groups, such as a yoga studio holding a class at ZBG every week
- The oak grove currently feels like a mechanical space, but it could be more like an amphitheater with places to sit and perform
- A soils and subterranean exploration area, since soil and aquifers are so important to the region and there are already hills on site to explore

What kinds of gardens or programming would help to represent all of Austin?

- The gardens should be representative of Austin’s energy and desire to be outside – how can we attract the thousands of people who are running by every day on Town Lake?
 - Attracting people who are already at Zilker or in the area would alleviate the parking problem as well
 - People in Austin like to move and be active
- When you think about spaces in Austin that you can “do” something in, ZBG doesn’t really come to mind. Treating it like a venue would change this mindset.
- Programming should be expanded to include many different cultures, particularly underserved communities



- For example, encouraging people to practice Tai Chi in the gardens – reaching out to the Asian American Resource Center (AARC) in the early stages of planning
- Programming should celebrate cultures and events
- The word “Botanical” might be a wall to some cultures and should be translated to attract more people
- Inviting cultural groups in to do a culturally-specific garden
- Focus on people who have been displaced to the edges or suburbs of Austin to bring them back into the city by creating spaces that invite them in
 - It’s amazing to see how many kids haven’t had the experience of interacting with nature
- A musical bridge (like a piano keyboard) is interactive, representative of the music capital, and engaging
- Free performances and special events bring in a wider audience and decrease barriers
 - Monthly family-friendly music night
 - Like the performances at Mueller Park – free, family friendly, food trucks

How can ZBG improve outreach to a wider audience?

- Utilize radio stations in Austin – holding family-friendly radio (or TV) events here is mutually beneficial
- Hire someone specifically for the role of event planning and outreach
- Decrease or remove barriers to entry (parking, ADA accessibility, free events, etc)
- Promotion through video, using the arts for promotion
- Need ways to take the garden on the road

and to showcase the garden to people who wouldn’t normally use it

- Visit innovation spaces in Austin with a plant-mobile or host plant DIY classes
- An AIPP installation beside MOPAC so traffic can see what’s happening at ZBG
- Hosting a gospel brunch to reach the after-church crowd on Sundays

Focus Group #5: Community Connections

1. Michael Valescu,
Capital Area Master
Naturalists
2. Deana Dossey,
Violet Crown Garden Club
3. Clark Hancock,
Save Barton Creek
Association
4. Darlene Starr,
American Herbalists Guild
5. Cheri Lamonte,
Divine Impressions
6. Dave Edwards,
Travis County Master
Gardeners/ ZBG Docent
7. R.W. Sherly,
Travis County Master
Gardeners/ ZBG Docent
8. Sharon White,
ZBG Gift Shop

What are some of your own memories of being at the Garden over the years?

- Taking pictures of kids overlooking the gardens from the Butler brick arch above the rose garden
- Taking kids on school tours of the gardens and walking hand-in-hand while teaching them about the gardens
- Telling kids to run through the grass to burn off energy on school trips



- Taking students to the meditative Japanese
- Gardens and watching them leave their bad thoughts behind. Enlightening students and sharing history with them.
- Growing up in Austin and living in Barton Hills – lots of memories of the park 30 years ago as a getaway or decompress space, especially the teahouse
- Walking along the trails after the Violet Crown Garden Club meetings and taking photos. ZBG is special because it's a very natural and safe outdoor space to walk around.
- Getting married in the Japanese gardens in 1998
- Doing investigation and feasibility studies for the escarpment trail
- Attending a plant sale at Zilker Botanical Gardens (ZBG) soon after moving to Austin from Midland, and feeling really excited about being able to grow things in Austin
- Getting to work at ZBG every day and spend so much time here, especially talking to visitors from all over the place who are very impressed by the Gardens

What kinds of gardens or programming would help to create impactful experiences?

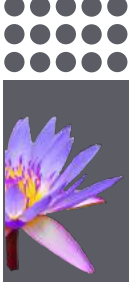
- Younger generations want authentic experiences and want to be actively involved but are lacking avenues for that energy. ZBG can provide those experiences.
 - Technology can be used as an entry point and a powerful tool, not a distraction
 - How can we shift from a passive consumer experience to an active participant experience?
- People are unfamiliar with nature so everything seems frightening and scary. How do we keep them coming back to

ZBG?

- Need better amenities for school groups, such as more bathrooms outdoors
- ZBG should be able to host several big events on a typical weekend. Parking is the biggest barrier to this.
- There are a lot of people in Austin who still don't even know about the botanical gardens

What kinds of gardens or programming would help to represent all of Austin?

- A lot of people in Austin live in condos or apartments without their own yard, so programming should include porch or balcony gardening
- For visitors or people who have recently moved to Austin, it takes time to appreciate the natural forms and to train the eye to natural landscapes
 - How do we present a landscape that introduces a naïve eye to central Texas landscapes?
 - How can we train people to actively manage native landscapes?
 - Educate new people about native plants, waterwise qualities and wildlife supporting qualities of different plants
 - How do we manage urban areas?
- Keep the city hidden behind the trees because the natural beauty is what's important
- Austin sits at the edge between the Edwards Plateau and Blackland Prairie, as well as between the civilized and natural landscapes. We are where things change and where things come together.
- Branding and marketing of ZBG within Austin culture will be important
- The gardens shouldn't just be about appreciation of someone's individual collection, but should be about its impact



on future generations

- How can we honor the old and sacred places while celebrating the future?
- Who decides what will be sacred for future generations?

How can ZBG improve outreach to a wider audience? What are some potential partner sites?

- Need a unifying message with all partner sites – a story of the region, change over time in central Texas
 - Partner with the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center (LBJWC), Gus Garcia, public parks, etc. to develop the same sorts of experiences and to work together
- The American Botanical Council is a potential partner site
- There are a lot of corporate volunteer groups in Austin that could be working at ZBG, just need to raise awareness
- We need to be constantly changing the message because populations change so frequently in the city
- The garden club culture and family are very unique in Austin, and the ZBG website should have more info about these groups
- A “Friends of Zilker Botanical Gardens” group (similar to at the LBJWC) because lots of big corporations are genuinely looking for environmental causes to give to and they might not know about ZBG

Appendix D: Online Survey Questions



SURVEY: Zilker Botanical Garden Master Plan

The City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PAR) recently launched Phase 1 of the Zilker Botanical Garden Master Plan, in collaboration with the Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy, Austin Area Garden Council, and a planning team led by the Austin-based firm Asakura Robinson. The scope of this timely project includes an assessment of the garden’s historical development and existing site features with an eye toward current and future needs, new programming opportunities and logistical challenges to address, a study of national precedent botanical gardens, development of a formal mission and vision statement for the garden, and a robust community engagement effort to gather the critical input needed to inform the master plan.

Thank you for taking the time to take our survey!

SURVEY: Zilker Botanical Garden Master Plan

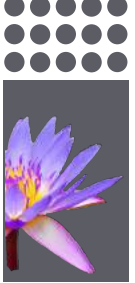
1. How did you first hear about Zilker Botanical Garden?

2. How often do you go to the Zilker Botanical Garden?

- I've never been
- I've only been once
- Once a year
- A few times a year
- Once a month
- Once a week or more

SURVEY: Zilker Botanical Garden Master Plan

3. What do you remember most about your first visit to Zilker Botanical Garden?



4. How do you get to Zilker Botanical Garden? (check all that apply)

- Car
- Bus
- Bike
- Walk

5. Who do you go to Zilker Botanical Garden with? (check all that apply)

- My children
- Out-of-town visitors
- Friends
- Family members
- Other (please specify)

6. Please rank your favorite places in the garden?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Hartman Prehistoric Garden	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pioneer Village	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Douglas Blachly Butterfly Trail and Garden	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Escarpment Trail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Oak Grove	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Children's Garden	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mable Davis Rose Garden	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Taniguchi Japanese Garden	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Riparian Streambed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Garden Center	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cactus and Succulent Garden	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Green Garden	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Herb Garden	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)



7. What events have you attended at the garden?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plant Sales | <input type="checkbox"/> Faerie Tea Parties |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monarch Appreciation Day | <input type="checkbox"/> Woodland Faerie Trail by Moonlight |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Zilker Garden Festival | <input type="checkbox"/> Dino Day |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Starlight Social | <input type="checkbox"/> Other drop-in family/children's programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

8. What program spaces, events, or attractions would encourage you to visit the garden more often?

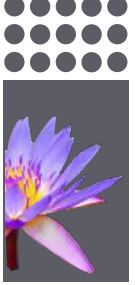
9. What kind of gardener are you?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> I've never gardened | <input type="radio"/> Advanced - I know a lot about gardening |
| <input type="radio"/> Novice - I'm learning but don't trust me with your plants | <input type="radio"/> Expert - I know a lot and can teach others |
| <input type="radio"/> Intermediate - I feel pretty confident in my growing abilities | |

10. What could the Zilker Botanical Garden do to help you with your home gardening?

11. What other botanical gardens have you visited?

12. What did you like about other botanical gardens?



13. What other locations in or near Zilker Park do you visit?

- Barton Pool
- Zilker Park Lawn
- Butler Hike and Bike Trail
- Downtown Austin
- Austin Nature & Science Center
- Barton Springs Road Restaurants
- Umlauf Sculpture Garden
- Zilker Zephyr Train
- Zilker Playground
- Other (please specify)

14. Where in Austin do you take friends or family visiting from out of town?

4

15. What is your favorite weekend activity in Austin?

16. What makes Austin "weird"?

SURVEY: Zilker Botanical Garden Master Plan

17. Are you a member of any garden clubs or other organizations relevant to the Zilker Botanical Garden Master Plan?

- Yes
- No

If yes, which one(s)?



18. How old are you?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Under 18 | <input type="radio"/> 45-54 |
| <input type="radio"/> 18-24 | <input type="radio"/> 55-64 |
| <input type="radio"/> 25-34 | <input type="radio"/> 65 and over |
| <input type="radio"/> 35-44 | <input type="radio"/> Prefer not to say |

19. How do you identify your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

20. What is your race/ethnicity?

5

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> White | <input type="radio"/> Native American or American Indian |
| <input type="radio"/> Hispanic or Latino | <input type="radio"/> Asian / Pacific Islander |
| <input type="radio"/> Black or African American | <input type="radio"/> Other |

21. Do you have children? If so, what are their ages?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> No children | <input type="radio"/> High School |
| <input type="radio"/> Pre-school | <input type="radio"/> Beyond High School |
| <input type="radio"/> Elementary School | <input type="radio"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="radio"/> Middle School | |

22. What is your zip code?



