

# Mayor and Council Communication

**DATE:** 02/14/23

**M&C FILE NUMBER:** M&C 23-0093

**LOG NAME:** 80FWBGMMASTERPLAN

## **SUBJECT**

(CD 7 / Future CD 7) Approve the Fort Worth Botanic Garden Master Plan and Adopt as an Amendment to the Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan and the City of Fort Worth's Comprehensive Plan

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Fort Worth City Council:

1. Approve the Fort Worth Botanic Garden Master Plan;
  2. Adopt the Fort Worth Botanic Garden Master Plan as an Amendment to the Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan; and
  3. Adopt the Fort Worth Botanic Garden Master Plan as an Amendment to the City of Fort Worth's Comprehensive Plan.
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## **DISCUSSION:**

The purpose of this Mayor and Council Communication (M&C) is to approve the Fort Worth Botanic Garden Master Plan and adopt as an Amendment to the Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan and the City of Fort Worth's Comprehensive Plan.

## **HISTORY**

In 2004, the Fort Worth Botanic Garden (Garden) received a grant from the American Alliance of Museums, through the Institute of Museum and Library Services, for a Museum Assessment Program Institutional Assessment. The final assessment report noted the Garden's need for a revised Master Plan and a Strategic Plan.

On June 22, 2010, the City Council approved M&C G-16963, adopting the Garden's Master Plan. On November 15, 2016, City Council approved M&C G-18885 to accept receipt of the Garden's Strategic Plan. On November 13, 2018, City Council approved M&C G-19422, adopting recommendations from the Garden Task Force Committee. On May 19, 2020, City Council approved M&C 20-0347, authorizing execution of a second amendment to a management services agreement with the Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Inc. (BRIT) for management of the Garden.

On June 23, 2021, Information Item VI.A., the Botanic Garden Master Plan was provided to the Park & Recreation Advisory Board, which provided an overview of the process and schedule for updating the Master Plan.

On January 18, 2022, Informal Report (IR) No. 22-006 Fort Worth Botanic Garden | Botanical Research Institute of Texas (FWBG|BRIT) Progress Report was provided to City Council. Included was information regarding the Master Plan and Strategic Plan. Questions were raised by City Councilmembers at this meeting resulting in IR No. 22-053 on March 22, 2022 which provided information on the robust, citywide public engagement process to inform the public on its long-term Master Plan update process, which included "a particular focus on Fort Worth's rich and growing diversity."

## **MASTER PLAN**

The Master Plan is the 20-year planning initiative to improve and optimize the FWBG|BRIT campus. The transition of Garden management from the City to BRIT as of October 1, 2020 necessitated an update of the Garden's current 11-year-old Master Plan. With the anticipation of public fund allocation for long-standing deferred maintenance and capital replacement of aging facilities throughout the Garden, FWBG|BRIT initiated a coordinated planning strategy for current and future structures across the campus.

A comprehensive Master Plan process was also initiated. The prime consultant, Studio Outside from Dallas, partnered with local architectural firm Bennett Partners, to lead the study of the joint campus and programs. Other contributing consultants included DEI Consultants (Diversity, Equality, Inclusion), EMD Consulting Group (Operations and Financial Strategy), Patrick Culina (Horticulture), Terra Design Studios (Family Garden), The PRD Group (Planning, Research, Design), and Dunaway Associates (Civil Engineer).

The Master Plan process was coordinated through a 24-member committee comprised of FWBG|BRIT organizational representatives and community stakeholders chaired by former City Councilmember Dennis Shingleton. Other key members included current City Councilmember Leonard Firestone and former Park & Recreation Advisory Board Chair Dan Villegas.

## **PRIORITIES OF THE MASTER PLAN**

1. An inclusive, clearly defined and easily shared vision and mission that fully embraces the strengths and assets of both parent institutions.
2. Sustainable buildings and resilient landscapes that demonstrate both the importance of locally adapted development and how to achieve it.
3. Design concepts and site elements that not only celebrate the individual histories and build environments of both institutions, but also brings them together into a unified, cohesive campus.

4. A strong foundation for programming that is complementary to the institutional mission and intentionally supports improved guest experience and growth in generated revenue.

## MASTER PLAN GOALS

1. Develop a unified vision and mission for FWBG|BRIT.
2. Conduct a thorough and comprehensive analysis of existing facilities, uses, programs, users, staff and other stakeholders, and projected future growth.
3. Objectively and creatively assess facility needs presented by staff and other stakeholders and identify other potential needs to provide the best facility possible within the parameters of the site and community means.
4. Generate a comprehensive Master Plan report.

## MASTER PLAN PROCESS

The Master Plan process aligned with the recently completed strategic plan to determine joint mission and vision, programmatic goals, feasibility, and physical facilities. During the discovery phase of the design process, FWBG|BRIT and consultant teams hosted seven public community forums at locations throughout Fort Worth, a virtual interactive hub/online survey, and a pop-up guest interaction station at the Garden in an attempt to gather perspectives and ideas from the community to inform the development of the next 20 years of infrastructure and facility improvement at the Garden and BRIT.

The Master Plan committee approved the final draft of the Master Plan at their August 31, 2022 meeting. The BRIT Board approved the final draft of the Master Plan at their September 22, 2022 meeting. The Park & Recreation Advisory Board was given a presentation at their September 28, 2022 Work Session. On October 26, 2022 the Park & Recreation Advisory Board endorsed the Fort Worth Botanic Garden Master Plan (Action Item VIII. A). On January 24, 2023, the City Council received a presentation during the Work Session on the proposed Fort Worth Botanic Garden Master Plan.

## KEY COMPONENTS OF THE MASTER PLAN

1. Family Garden
2. Garden Entrance
3. Garden Parking including Parking Garage
4. Moncrief Garden Center Renovation and Expansion
5. Arrival Plaza
6. Herbaceous Color Garden including Stage
7. Tram Loop Trail
8. Culinary Garden
9. Rock Springs Renovation
10. Education Hub
11. Conservatory Complex and Wetlands
12. BRIT Expansion

The Fort Worth Botanic Garden is located in COUNCIL DISTRICT 7 and is classified as a Special-Use Facility that serves on a City-wide and regional basis.

Approval of this M&C will approve the Fort Worth Botanic Garden Master Plan and adopt as an Amendment to the Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan and the City of Fort Worth's Comprehensive Plan.

A Form 1295 is not required because: This M&C does not request approval of a contract with a business entity.

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## FISCAL INFORMATION / CERTIFICATION:

The Director of Finance certifies that approval of these recommendations will have no material effect on City funds.

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