QUEENS BOTANICAL GARDEN MASTERPLAN

Update to 2002 Plan

Adopted by the QBG Board of Trustees, February 11, 2020
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QUEENS BOTANICAL GARDEN

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INTRODUCTION

This Master Plan is an update to the 2002 Master Plan developed by Conservation Design Forum and Atelier Dreiseitl in close collaboration with Queens Botanical Garden leadership, staff, and community. The 2002 plan has guided the ongoing evolution of the garden for the past 18 years, including the siting of the award-winning Visitor and Administration Building, the Maintenance facility, and their related landscapes.

The central tenet of the 2002 plan was the celebration of the connections between water, culture, and the environment, and an opportunity to inspire a new way of thinking about botanical gardens in an urban context. The updated plan stays true to this thinking, positioning proposed structures on the garden perimeter, and using them to inform garden expressions and expand the visitor experience, while celebrating the inherent landscape qualities (and challenges) of the 39 acre garden. The plan suggests garden typologies as a planning tool to allow for incremental growth in support of a holistic vision: Exhibition Gardens, Meadow and Wetland, Working Gardens, Education Gardens, Maintenance and Horticulture zones. Each of these typologies can be home to unique garden experiences that reinforce Queens Botanical Garden’s unique position as the place where people, plants, and cultures meet.

The 2002 plan identified a need for an Education Center. The current, proposed location differs from that plan, which in turn informs the siting of the Kids Culture Garden and subsequent gardens and structures. The phasing diagrams included with this master plan are a working tool, to gently guide future thinking and fundraising efforts. Decisions have ripple effects and our goal is to identify logical next steps and related projects—with the understanding that no plan is ever static. We expect the next 20 years of the Garden to be filled with new thoughts; every intervention inspires new possibilities.

A Master Plan is best seen as a living document to frame current thinking and serve as a vision of the future.
### PROPOSED PROGRAM ELEMENTS AND AREAS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUILDINGS</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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<th>Proposed Area (approximate)</th>
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<td>3,500 SF each for 7,000 SF total</td>
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<td>7,000 SF</td>
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<td>Pavilion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bridal Suites</td>
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<td>In the V&amp;A Center, varies</td>
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<table>
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<td>Sun and Moon Garden</td>
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<td>Wedding Garden</td>
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<td>Herb Garden</td>
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<td>3,700 SF</td>
<td>8,000 SF</td>
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<td>World Farm</td>
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<td>5,500 SF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children’s Garden</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10,000 SF</td>
<td>11,000 SF, with proximity to farms for additional space</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bee Garden</td>
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<th>BACK-OF-HOUSE AREAS</th>
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<td>Compost</td>
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<td>9,000 SF across multiple locations</td>
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<td>Additional Storage Sheds</td>
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EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS
EXISTING SITE PLAN
EXISTING PATHS, ROADS, AND ENTRANCES
EXISTING WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

KEY
- Wetland Gardens / Water Retention Features
- Constructed Water Features
- 100-Year Floodplain

WETLAND GARDEN WATER RETENTION
CONSTRUCTED WATER FEATURES
2050 100-YEAR FLOODPLAIN
PROPOSED MASTER PLAN
PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL GARDEN ZONES

- Exhibition Gardens
- Exhibition Wetland
- Meadow and Wetland
- Education Gardens
- Working Gardens
- Maintenance & Horticulture
- Drop-Off
PHASING DIAGRAMS
PHASE 1

- Build Education Building
PHASE 2

- Build Pavilion
- Build Kids Culture Garden
- Build Education Garden
- Build Sun & Moon Garden
PHASE 3

• Relocate Wedding Garden
• Relocate Bee Garden
• Build Children’s Garden and Back-of-House Area
• Build Compost Area
• Build Exhibition Wetland
• Construct Entry Curb Cuts
PHASE 4

- Demolish Education Center, Greenhouses, Offices, and Shed
- Relocate World Farm and remove former Children’s Garden
- Relocate Service Entrances and Shed
- Build Greenhouses
- Build Expanded Maintenance Equipment Storage Shed
- Pave Service Road to Compost
PHASE 5

• Build Welcome Garden and Temporary Welcome Garden
• Build Greenhouse Garden
PHASE 6

- Expand Parking Lot
- Build Berms along College Point Boulevard
PHASE 7

- Build Community Conservatory
- Build Conservatory Garden, Water Garden, and Herb Garden
- Widen main circulation paths towards a central Plaza
- Extend water elements into the Plaza
APPENDIX
SEWER LINES CROSSING THE SITE
SEWER LINE SECTION

The “Angle of Repose Limit” refers to the breadth of the surface area around a storm sewer that could be excavated in order to access the storm sewers / pipes below.
MAINTENANCE / SERVICE AREA PHOTOGRAPHS

Existing Maintenance and Horticulture Structures

Existing Compost Bays
PROPOSED PROGRAM SQUARE FOOTAGES
PROGRAM ELEMENT DESCRIPTIONS
PAVILION

A covered, unconditioned semi-outdoor event and gathering space to increase the garden’s capacity for events and public programming in all seasons.

Size

- Should accommodate: 300 people standing / seated auditorium-style, 135 people seated at tables. Could shrink if needed.
- Size requirements: approximately 3,200 SF minimum

Requirements

- Covered space for all-weather use, with the ability to temporarily close off sides
- Adequate restroom access for intended occupancy, preferably with composting toilets
- Power and lighting
- A/V hookups for concerts and presentations
- Entirely wheelchair accessible
- Back-of-house storage spaces for furniture and basic supplies

Considerations

- Program is intended to be primarily cultural events and programming hosted by QBG
- Initial visioning proposed that it is built of natural materials with a sense of being "cozy" while still connected to the outdoors

Opportunities

- Can act as an outpost for classes or programs on a currently unsheltered side of the site
- If sited near College Point Blvd, should employ one solid sound-canceling wall
- Potential to activate the QBG bridge during special events

Adjacencies

- Relatively accessible from parking
- Independently sited from the wedding garden and conservatory, with no need to have direct connections between the two
- Siting on the meadow side of the botanical garden means that it can be used for festivals and cultural events
COMMUNITY CONSERVATORY

An iconic indoor gathering space, with plants, to increase the garden’s capacity for events and programming in all seasons.

Size

• Should accommodate 250 people standing, 150 at tables
• Size requirements: 3,500 SF to contain minimum program needs, 5,000-6,000 SF for adequate event space
• Should be accompanied by an expansion of QBG’s parking lot to accommodate more vehicles

Requirements

• Adequate restrooms for up to 250 - potentially shared with the Wedding Garden
• Warming kitchen - for staging and catering prep
• Service entrance with delivery area
• Offices, closets, significant back-of-house or storage spaces for furniture and decor
• A/V resources
• Plant-filled space with water hookups for watering plants

Considerations

• How to frame the “Community Conservatory” as being always open to and for the community? Potential ideas: WiFi, Regular Cafe Service, Public Seating, etc.
• What role would the Conservatory play for day-to-day visitors as opposed to program attendees?
• Needs to have appropriate floor surfacing and drainage for a space that could contain many plants
• Metasequoia trees need to be protected
• Would this be a traditional conservatory, or more of an atrium space?

Opportunities

• Incorporate significant plants from around the world that thrive indoors (including but not limited to Asia, Caribbean, Europe, Africa, South and Central America, etc.).
• A beautiful, plant-filled indoor space increases prospects for programs, gatherings, receptions, graduations, proms, and more for the community.

Adjacencies

• Easy circulation from the wedding garden
• Near to and visually related to the future greenhouses
• Should be easily accessible from a drop-off point or visitor parking
COMPOST

A larger-scale compost facility situated near the farm for more functionality.

Size

• Proposed size: ~16,000 SF
• Current SF occupied by composting facilities on-site:
  ~4,000 SF within in maintenance area
  ~5,000 SF on eastern edge of the site
  ~7,500 additional SF of soil storage in the service area
• How many staff and volunteers could working within the compost area at one time?

Requirements

• Equipment shed
• Covered compost bays
• Interior conditioned space for staff
• Fencing

Considerations

• Roads to the compost corridor should be accessible for heavy machinery to shift compost
• Composting is “always a priority” at QBG, but requires significant staff and funding

Opportunities

• Opportunity to consolidate all composting in one corner of the site - currently it is split between far east edge and within the maintenance shed area
• Continue the partnership with Department of Sanitation that allows for expanded composting

Adjacencies

• Currently proposed to be sited near farm, along the access road parallel to College Point Boulevard
**FUTURE GREENHOUSES**

Expansion and improvement of the botanical gardens’ greenhouse facilities.

**Size**
- Ideal sizing: 1.5x existing working greenhouse spaces, plus .5x more to incorporate spaces for guided visitors or groups - overall 2x larger
- Current SF of greenhouse space: ~4,800 SF
- So, the ideal SF for future greenhouses: ~9,000 SF total, but as small as 6,000 SF total would be acceptable

**Requirements**
- Improved plant-growing and plant-storing resources
- Electricity
- Storage for gardening and planting equipment
- A visitor-friendly space that allows for views of or into the working greenhouses
- Outdoor space for plant hardening, large enough to fit a greenhouse worth of plants
- Additional resources required by Horticultural staff:
  - Automated ventilation (fans)
  - Tempered irrigation water
  - Fertilizer injection option
  - Drip irrigation option for benches
  - Bench heating option
  - Climate control isolation - rooms that can be made different temperatures and humidities

**Considerations**
- Should be part of the back-of-house complex, not for visitor access
- Current greenhouses are not accessible to the public, however, school and educational groups are sometimes taken through on tours

**Opportunities**
- Increase plant collections and improve resources for horticultural staff
- Access to greenhouses and conservatories are a big visitor draw

**Adjacencies**
- Needs to be easily accessible by staff from back-of-house spaces
- Ideal siting near the Community Conservatory, as an unconditioned “working side” to its conditioned atrium
COLLEGE POINT BRIDGE ENTRY KIOSK

Size

- Needs to hold 1-2 staff members
- Dimension of current parking entry kiosk: ~35 SF
- Minimum size of new kiosk: 4’ x 4’ x 8’

Requirements

- Sheltered fee station
- Electrical hookups, heat hookups, and data access
- Clear wayfinding materials

Considerations

- Would be beneficial to the garden to have an entry point along College Point Boulevard to activate the meadow side of the park, particularly during festivals and large events
- Might need to consider additional parking or road access on the east side if this is made into an entry point

Opportunities

- Bridging College Point Boulevard taps into the 3-mile-long green stretch between Flushing Meadows, QBG, and Kissena Park
- Could initially test exit turnstiles, allowing for guests to exit across the QBG bridge into Flushing Meadows Corona Park

Adjacencies

- A new entry kiosk would be sited at the usually-closed bridge from Flushing Meadows Corona Park into QBG
- Near the future Pavilion

A possible future event access point from Flushing Meadows Corona Park.
QBG FARM

A working farm run in partnership between QBG and the NYC Department of Sanitation’s Bureau of Recycling and Sustainability, highlighting sustainable farming techniques paired with on-site composting.

Size

- Current size of farm QBG plots: approximately 1 acre, ~40,000 SF
- Other built items include a well house, a ~1500 SF shed, and a pad area for canopies

Requirements

- Water/irrigation hookups
- Storage sheds for farming tools
- Access for machinery
- Educational signage

Considerations

- The farm has a well building and shed on the farm site - the well cannot be moved, the shed possibly can
- The farm is closed to regular visitor access, and is open only by reservation or for QBG programming / volunteering
- Farm programming is divided from educational and Children’s Garden programming
- Currently situated on a less-trafficked corner of the site, adjacent to the future Education Center
- Without funding from the Department of Sanitation connected to QBG’s significant composting initiatives, it would be very difficult to maintain the farm at its current production capacity

Opportunities

- Develop a programmatic and physical connection between Education Center, Kids’ Culture Garden, Education/Children’s Garden, and the Farm
- Use educational signage to make the farm an interest point for self-guided visitors to the park

Adjacencies

- Needs close proximity to compost and soil
- World Farm/Staff Garden could relocate to the “working gardens” section to share farm facilities and resources
KIDS CULTURE GARDEN

A series of outdoor educational exhibits featuring interactive visitor experiences that showcase planting and irrigation traditions of the many cultures that call New York home.

Size

- Approximately 1/2 acre, sited along the hillside adjacent to the future Education Building

Requirements

- Intended as an interactive and educational “discovery area”, a magnet for more family visitors to the park
- Small pavilion or covered lunch space to accommodate small groups
- Play elements integrated into the exhibits
- Storage structure
- Signage - both wayfinding and interpretive

Considerations

- Should not be a closed-off or exclusive space
- Aside from the shadoof, what other cultural/educational elements could be a good fit for the garden?
- Should have resources for multiple means of visiting the site, but primarily:
  - Self-guided visits
  - Guided and unguided school groups
- Could be arranged as a path or “series of moments” through the site, rather than one garden with divided plots

Opportunities

- Potential for terracing as an opportunity to segment the garden and show off global planting techniques
- “Living exhibits” containing culturally significant plants can act as teaching tools
- Could be a good work site for the teen docent “Explainers”

Adjacencies

- Companion design to the Education Building and its surrounding landscapes
- Engages the hill and landscape behind the education building and provides views of the green roofs
- Possibility of centering it around a “nature path” format, traversing the field across the arboretum to the education center
WELCOME GARDEN

A cultivated garden bridging the two entry points of the site, creating a more formal entry sequence and aiding in wayfinding from the parking garden.

Size

- Square footage of available space between road, parking, and encompassing the portables: ~46,000 SF
- Will encompass and preserve the parking garden bioswales and existing water management elements

Requirements

- Should have a map and signage easily accessed from the parking garden
- Simple screen for back-of-house spaces
- Vehicle entrance to the service area will need to cut through this garden - permeable paving can be used to mitigate stormwater in paved areas

Considerations

- Should have some eye-catching plantings to relate to the cultivated gardens of the other entrance
- Currently, the parking garden entrance feels like the “back entrance” - but is the primary entry point for school groups, visitors who arrive by car, and eventgoers.

Opportunities

- Screen remaining service spaces and staging areas from visitor view
- Use plantings and paths to create a consistent path between the east and west entrances of the garden

Adjacencies

- Occupies the space around the less-manicured parking entrance and the service areas
- Conceptually links the paths coming out of the parking lot and parking garden to the Gardens on Parade section of QBG
- Leads visitors to the Community Conservatory and Conservatory Garden
SUN AND MOON GARDEN

A garden, perhaps an extension of the Kids’ Culture Garden, situated at a high point on the site, allowing for views above the tree cover to the sky.

Size

- The current vacant playground space at the highest point on the site is approximately 16,000 SF

Requirements

- Located at a high point on the site, with terraces or stairs leading to a plaza for viewing the sky
- Small seating and gathering spaces for family-sized groups of visitors
- Screening from the potentially noisy road

Considerations

- Put a temporary lawn at this location when the Kids Culture Garden is installed
- A separate “moon viewing platform” is suggested in the original masterplan for this garden
- This element is representative of the need for more gardens with “aesthetic” components
- Intended to employ whimsical or playful elements related to the cultural theme

Opportunities

- Educational signage regarding the cultural significance of sun / moon / stars (etc) in local cultures
- Elements from the January 2019 Concept Document could be incorporated, such as sundials, a labyrinth, and art walls

Adjacencies

- As the highest point on the site is near the educational center, this garden would fit as the final destination at the “top” of the kids culture garden

Conceptual sketch of the Sun and Moon Garden from 2002 Masterplan by Conservation Design Forum and Atelier Dreisetl
**FUTURE WEDDING GARDEN**

Relocation of the iconic wedding garden to a more private and better-resourced location on the site.

**Size**
- Ideally could accommodate 250 people seated. The Current wedding garden has a capacity for 150 seated, but QBG regularly gets requests for 200+ people
- Current size: ~16,500 SF
- Proposed size: ~20,000 SF of fenced garden, with a small (~600 SF) “Bridal Suite”

**Requirements**
- Chair storage for ~200 chairs and other event furniture
- Central focal point (currently, this is the bridge and pergola)
- Space for flexible seating arrangements and paved paths to avoid waterlogged soil
- Back-of-house spaces for access to garbage collection and storage without interrupting ceremonies
- “Bridal suites” located within the garden itself

**Considerations**
- The proposed location removes the only pathway that large vehicles can use to access the rest of the Gardens on Parade section. Important to look at pathways that a track can access. Consider a wide path through the Wedding Garden that can function as an aisle of path for vehicles if needed.
- The current wedding garden is too far from the parking for some elderly guests and poses accessibility problems
- Current “bridal suite” spaces are the vacant room in the V&A Center
- Screening from street noise and from other events that may be underway at the same time around QBG
- Consider making the Wedding Garden less precious so that it can be opened/closed as needed for public access

**Opportunities**
- Relocating the Wedding Garden to a less central location opens the rest of the garden so that there can be a more visible connection between the Gardens on Parade and Arboretum sections.
- Wedding-related vehicles can use the special use gates at Peck and Booth for access

**Adjacencies**
- Should be separate from the Community Conservatory, but not so far that it can’t be reserved for a reception following the ceremony
HERB GARDEN

QBG’s most popular garden, showcasing herbs and culturally significant plantings in a “kitchen garden” format.

Size

- Current square footages: Approx. 3,700 SF
- Proposed square footages: Approx. 8,000 SF

Requirements

- Labels and educational signage
- More formalized divisions between Herb Garden, World Farm, and V&A Biotope Garden, allowing for more and differentiated programming

Considerations

- Perhaps combine the programmatic idea of the “Horticultural Heritage Garden” with the Herb Garden - interactive displays connected to the cultural significances of herbs
- A small but often-visited garden, part of both guided visits and individual visitors

Opportunities

- Successful because it’s “human-scaled” - people can touch, smell, and interact with the plants, many of which are familiar
- Visibility of changing seasons is a particular strength of this garden type

Adjacencies

- Currently located at the center of the site, near the V&A Building, with the World Farm adjacent to and visible from the herb garden
- Fits programmatically as an extension of the Kids’ Culture Garden
- Should have a larger, more visible place on the site

The existing Herb Garden, adjacent to the Visitor and Administration Center
WORLD FARM (STAFF GARDEN)

Closed to the public, the World Farm is a series of garden plots maintained by the staff for personal use, as well as occasionally by education groups.

Size

- How many staff currently maintain plots in the World Farm?
- Current square footage: ~5,500 SF - significantly larger than the neighboring herb garden
- Proposed square footage: 16,000 SF, with more space for educational programming

Requirements

- Adequate number of staff garden plots and space to work
- Easy access to tools, gardening materials, and compost
- Access to irrigation or hoses for watering

Considerations

- Aesthetically pleasing approaches for screening or fencing the world farm from visitor access
- There are currently no public-access gardens here, and opening the World Farm to the public is not a goal
- Access to free garden plots for food is a factor for employee retention
- Currently the site is not well-marked, divided with a gate and shrubbery from the Herb Gardens, which are popular with visitors

Opportunities

- Expand World Farm resources by putting it in closer proximity to the other farms and compost

Adjacencies

- “Very different” from the Herb Garden, so they don’t need to be adjacent
- Currently, the World Farm is quite centrally located by the V&A
- Relocating the World Farm to the “Working Gardens” zone of the site would allow for staff gardeners to share access to Farm resources while making more space for visitor gardens in the center of QBG
- There is concern about having the amateur gardeners who use the World Farm (as well as visiting educational groups) overlapping with the “production farm” - but having separated areas would alleviate that concern
CHILDREN’S GARDEN

A replacement for the reservation-only garden that is connected to the current education center.

Size

- Classes of children often use the garden at once (typically 20+ kids)
- Could be “up to 1/3 the size of the working farm”. The Farm is 35,000 SF - so a 10,000 SF children’s garden would be ideal
- Current Children’s Garden Size: The entire green space within the courtyard of the Education Center (not all used for plantings) is ~10,000 SF
- Planted plot spaces of Children’s Garden takes up ~4,000 SF, in addition to 10 beds in the World Farm used for educational programming

Requirements

- Seating/gathering space for groups
- Visual buffer between public circulation and Children’s Garden
- Means of gating off access to the garden for safety
- Storage for teaching tools and children’s gardening equipment
- Pick-up and drop-off area

Considerations

- Currently, the Children’s Garden operates on a tight schedule: gates open at 8:30-9 AM for arrival for programming, then are closed until the end of the session

Opportunities

- Improved indoor/outdoor education programming by being able to shift between classrooms, garden, and farm spaces
- Encourages learning through hands-on exploration

Adjacencies

- Access to bathrooms and washing-up facilities - likely in the Education Building
- Needs to be connected or related to the new education center: Placed between the farm and the Education Building, occupying the tent canopy pad area
- Bee Garden can move to relate to the Children’s Garden as well
- Opportunity to share plots, tools, and resources with the Farm and/or World Farm
- Should incorporate the well and abut the new Education Building
PARKING

Expansion of current parking facilities to provide more visitor access to future resources such as the Community Conservatory and the relocated Wedding Garden.

Current Parking Capacity

- Main Parking Lot: 99 spots
- Overflow to Main Lot: 19 spots
- Service Parking Behind Visitor’s Center: approx. 14 spots
- Proposed spots to be gained: ~55 spots

Parking Utilization

- The parking lot fills up regularly, particularly on event days.
- Challenges with service access to the Western corners of the site through the parking loop, particularly for heavy machinery and farm tools
- New buildings on the site would require an increase in parking

Expanded Parking

- To accommodate appropriately enough people to use the 250-person Community Conservatory and/or Wedding Garden, 50+ parking spots, 2+ bays of parking, should be added as “fingers” off of the existing parking lot
- Since this is also the main entrance for service vehicles to this portion of the site, a service road connector to the service area and the compost corridor should be added

Considerations

- Look closely at Haul Road and whether it should be phased out entirely
- The Parking Garden entrance is to be re designed to incorporate vehicle access into the Service Area from the parking entrance
SERVICE AREA

Behind-the-scenes workspace for Horticulture and Maintenance departments, integral to the Garden’s smooth and efficient operations.

Size

- Current service area: Approximately 20,000 SF, including the existing compost structures
- Proposed service area: Approximately 40,000 SF, with the compost area relocated to another portion of the site to allow for more working space

Requirements

- Parking for QBG vehicles (consider current vehicles with room to grow)
- Parking for Horticulture and Maintenance staff
- Materials storage: Piles of wood chips, soil, manure, etc.
- Space for a dumpster (30 yd minimum)
- Staging area for Maintenance (pallets, etc.)
- Vehicle access (semi-trailer trucks - with space to turn around)
- Delivery area for rentals
- Access roads connected to the rest of the Garden, including to the back-of-house of Visitor & Admin Building and Parking Garden
- Important to include a wide path to accommodate a pickup truck from the Service Area that exists between the Community Conservatory and Conservatory Garden

Considerations

- Should be screened so that the community does not see the worksite
- Needs a loading dock
- Keypad activated gate to keep the public out of the area

Opportunities

- A reorganization of this area will allow for improved service access around the Garden without interrupting the primary route of visitor circulation

Adjacencies

- Occupies the same general site as the current service area, but expanded
- Directly adjacent to service the Greenhouses and the Community Conservatory