

Task Force Offers Recommendations on Partnership between the University of Washington Botanic Gardens and Arboretum Foundation

The Washington Park Arboretum is a valued resource for education, conservation and recreation in Seattle, and houses a world-class collection of woody plants and trees. As our region confronts the great challenges of the 21st Century, the Arboretum, along with its partner resources at the Center for Urban Horticulture, will have an even more important role to play in ensuring the health and vitality of our community.

To ensure the Arboretum is positioned to thrive for generations, the University of Washington School of Environment and Forest Sciences (SEFS) and the Arboretum Foundation invited a group of highly respected community members with extensive experience in the management of public/private partnerships, including our partners at Seattle Parks and Recreation, to join a task force charged with making recommendations for changes to the Arboretum's governance model. The task force met seven times over the course of 2020, and delivered its report to SEFS and the Arboretum Foundation on Oct. 9. Their main findings can be summarized as follows:

- The current governance model limits the Arboretum's potential to meet its mission to the community.
- The primary goal of any changes that might be considered is an increase in equity and public access to the benefits of recreation, conservation, and education.
- A unified, streamlined, organizational structure would be better suited to meet these needs than the three-party management structure that exists today.
- An effective nonprofit, building from more than eighty years of experience of the Arboretum Foundation and with the UW and the Seattle Parks Department serving as primary strategic partners, could provide the best framework for this consolidation.
- The details of any future organizational structure would need to be examined through both a study of feasibility and a process of stakeholder engagement.

"This report is just one step in what we expect will be an on-going and productive conversation to help us better steward these resources," said Dan Brown, SEFS director.

The task force's recommendations are advisory and no action has been taken on them. These recommendations have not changed positions or employment for current employees or volunteers. Before any decisions are made by the University of Washington, the Arboretum Foundation, or Seattle Parks and Recreation, a feasibility study and examination of the financial, regulatory, and operational implications, and the resulting community benefits from the recommendations in the report will be reviewed.

Ensuring equitable access is front and center in our conversations on the future of the Arboretum. "The Washington Park Arboretum is one of the crown jewels in Seattle's park system. We are hopeful that working with our key partners on a sustainable future for this public park space now - will ensure public access for generations to come," said Christopher Williams, Deputy Superintendent of Parks and Recreation.

“In the coming months, we’ll provide ample opportunity for input and feedback as we dream about the future of the Arboretum and assess the feasibility of these recommendations,” said Jason Morse, vice president of the Arboretum Foundation. “In the meantime, you are welcome to reach out to us.”

Provide any input on your vision for the future of Washington Park Arboretum and/or the Center for Urban Horticulture, or about your hopes for the next steps in this process, here:

<https://forms.gle/8ZGQGmY1q9YBamND9>.

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON BOTANIC GARDENS - ARBORETUM FOUNDATION
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP TASK FORCE

THE TASK FORCE'S
REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A WORKING DOCUMENT

to guide future decision-making about the governance
of the Washington Park Arboretum, including related functions
of the UWBG and Seattle Japanese Garden

Approved by the Task Force on 9 October 2020

**UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON BOTANIC GARDENS - ARBORETUM FOUNDATION
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP TASK FORCE**

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UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON BOTANIC GARDENS - ARBORETUM FOUNDATION
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP TASK FORCE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of Washington Botanic Gardens - Arboretum Foundation Strategic Partnership Task Force (herein “the Task Force”), which includes a representative of the City of Seattle’s Parks and Recreation Department, recommends that a not-for-profit organization manage the Washington Park Arboretum, including related functions at the University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG) and Seattle Japanese Garden (SJG). The Task Force agrees a non-profit would be more successful than the current three-party governance structure in broadening public opportunities, attracting public support, and generating the level of funding critical to ensuring the gardens successfully serve the public well into the 21st Century.

The recommendations will continue to be refined and reviewed based on input from the parties that would be most interested in and affected by them. At a later stage of the process, a broader, more robust strategic public engagement process that includes the community’s diverse voices will be needed to agree on a final vision and build community ownership. (Recommendation #8 below more specifically defines this point.)

The Task Force’s guiding principles are: a) expand public access; b) increase public awareness and support; c) improve fundraising; d) enhance the voices and represent the vision and interests of our diverse community; and e) advance racial equity and social justice. Building on these principles, the Task Force members’ consensus recommendations are:

1. The three-partner governance model that currently manages the Arboretum limits the Arboretum’s potential in the community. The different missions and branding dilute fundraising, programming, and advocacy opportunities. Operationally, these different visions and missions cause duplication of effort resulting in inefficiencies and consumption of limited resources. As the Task Force envisions the long-term, through the end of the 21st Century, a more forward-thinking, streamlined, nimble, and cohesive governance model is needed to meet the interests and needs of current and future users and supporters.
2. In addition to the Case Statement that highlights the major arguments for a new governance model (see pages 10-11), a powerful, compelling vision needs to emerge that will: a) inspire the community; b) motivate people to support the organization, c) attract an influential group of “champions” to advocate for the Task Force’s recommended future governance structure; and d) persuade key decision-makers within the University of Washington, City of Seattle, Arboretum Foundation (AF), and community.

3. In recommending that the current three-party governance model be replaced by one that is more forward-thinking, streamlined, nimble, and cohesive, the Task Force envisions that the new model will be defined by these governance characteristics and qualities:
 - a. A single, clear mission;
 - b. One organizational culture;
 - c. Clear lines of authority and accountability;
 - d. A stable funding base;
 - e. One person who is primarily responsible and accountable (a director or executive director);
 - f. One board of directors;
 - g. One annual budget with metrics;
 - h. One brand with a single logo;
 - i. Consistent messaging with a variety of communications tools and techniques;
 - j. Strategic and business plans to guide the organization; and
 - k. The Master Implementation Plan to guide the physical development of the Arboretum.
4. A not-for-profit organization could effectively and sustainably manage the operations of the Washington Park Arboretum (WPA), other functions of the UWBG, including the Center for Urban Horticulture (CUH), Elisabeth C. Miller Library, Herbarium, Yesler Swamp, Union Bay Natural Area, and Farm, and aspects of the SJG.
5. The Task Force's recommendations should not result in two non-profits. The AF is likely to be the nucleus of the new non-profit so that it can build on the Foundation's more than eighty years of history and community support.
6. The ultimate goal of a new governance model is for the non-profit to manage the UWBG and aspects of the SJG with the University and Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) serving as primary strategic partners. In making this recommendation, the Task Force recognizes and respects the role of the Indigenous Peoples who first settled in the area, and the obligations of the University of Washington and City of Seattle for the properties, collections, and facilities they own in the UWBG and/or SJG.
7. Rely on the existing Master Plan to continue to guide the maintenance and physical development of the Arboretum. The Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG), or a to-be-defined successor group, should provide guidance regarding implementation of the Plan. With the addition of the SR 520 acreage to the Arboretum, MPIG or its successor group would be expected to conduct master site planning for these lands.
8. The parties who would be most interested in and affected by the recommendations need the opportunity to review and influence the Task Force's recommendations. The initial phase of review should engage: staff and Board members of the AF; staff, faculty, students, and advisory committee members at the UWBG and School of Environmental and Forest

Sciences; leadership and communications staff of SPR; the Arboretum and Botanic Gardens Committee (ABGC); and key stakeholders, including some donors, users, and volunteers. To ensure community ownership of the long-term vision, a broader, more robust strategic public engagement process that includes the community's diverse voices is needed to agree on a vision.

9. A feasibility study should analyze what amounts to the Task Force's preferred alternative. The study should also consider additional findings that could indicate alternative or additional options not identified by the Task Force that may be more feasible than the Task Force's recommendations. In addition, an important variable of the feasibility study should be the role of SPR. Its operational role might or might not evolve as part of the governance changes. The feasibility study also needs to address the following:
 - a. Governance;
 - b. The addition of the SR 520 lands;
 - c. Master site issues;
 - d. Financial needs; and
 - e. Sources of revenue.

The study should be informed and influenced by outreach to the: Board members and staff of the Arboretum Foundation; faculty, staff, students, and advisory committee members of the UWBG and School of Environmental and Forest Sciences; leadership and communications staff of SPR; and key stakeholders, including some donors, users, and volunteers.

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

TASK FORCE'S PRIMARY RECOMMENDATION IN BRIEF

An eleven-member Task Force convened by the leadership of the University of Washington's School of Environmental and Forest Sciences (SEFS) and the Arboretum Foundation (AF) recommends that a not-for-profit organization manage the Washington Park Arboretum (WPA), including related functions at the University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG) and the Seattle Japanese Garden (SJG). The Task Force agrees a non-profit would be more successful than the current three-party governance structure in broadening public opportunities, attracting public support, and generating the level of funding critical to ensuring the Botanic Gardens and Arboretum successfully serve the public well into the 21st Century.

In making this recommendation, the Task Force emphasizes:

1. Public access and benefits must be maintained and expanded. Making a non-profit organization responsible for managing the gardens and facilities is a move toward greater democratization of public space. All three partners in the current governance structure, the UW, AF, and Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR), are deeply committed to enhancing public value and access, racial equity, and social justice. Therefore, public benefit must remain the highest priority.
2. The University of Washington and City of Seattle should continue to be strategic partners. They would retain ownership of their respective properties and facilities, maintaining oversight of their legal obligations and liabilities. Even as a non-profit assumes greater managerial responsibilities, they should provide strategic support to the non-profit's Board of Directors and Executive Director.
3. A feasibility study is a necessary next step in the process. Task Force members are well aware of the complexities, opportunities, and challenges of this proposed transformation. The feasibility study should analyze what amounts to the Task Force's preferred alternative. In addition, an important variable of the feasibility study should be the role of SPR. Its operational role might or might not evolve as part of the governance changes.

TASK FORCE'S PURPOSE AND GOALS

In late 2019 Dan Brown, Director of the School of Environmental and Forest Sciences (SEFS) within the University of Washington's College of the Environment, and Jason Morse, then President of the Board of Directors of the Washington Park Arboretum (WPA) Foundation, appointed eleven people to serve on the UWBG–AF Strategic Partnership Task Force. Two Task Force members represented the College and UWBG, two represented the Foundation, and one represented the other partner in the three-party

governance structure at the Arboretum, Seattle’s Department of Parks and Recreation (SPR). Along with these Task Force members, the additional seven members represented lifetime commitments to civic engagement and public policy; love for public gardens; expertise in non-profit management; expertise at partnering with the University of Washington, the City of Seattle, or other large institutions; and experience leading the complex transformation of organizations from public to non-profit entities. (See list of Task Force Members, page 2.)

In a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) dated 25 October 2019, the representatives of the SEFS and AF agreed to “jointly consider potential changes to our respective roles in the governance structure, ranging from modest enhancements in workflow and coordination to governance structure.” They sought to “identify and evaluate ways to maximize the effectiveness of our planning, programming, and fundraising activities; align our interests and strengthen the three-way partnership at the WPA; and better coordinate the partners’ respective efforts.”

In defining the purpose and goals of the Task Force, the MOA stated: “The AF and the UWBG commit to seriously consider a range of potential changes to their respective roles in the WPA governance structure, including how they might interact with their additional responsibilities for the Center for Urban Horticulture and the Seattle Japanese Garden, ranging from modest enhancements in workflow and coordination to more substantial organizational revisions. The Task Force will be expected to identify and evaluate a variety of potential organizational, operational, and/or financial reorganization, coordination, and alignment opportunities that could lead to more effective and efficient delivery of programming, planning, and fundraising.”

TASK FORCE’S PROCESS

The Task Force convened seven times between 30 January and 26 June 2020. Before the first meeting, reference materials offered background and contextual information, which was summarized in the Executive Summary of the Reference Materials (20 January 2020). The summary contained: definitions of arboreta and botanical gardens; the current visions and mission statements of the three partners; an overview of the current management of the UWBG and Seattle Japanese Garden (SJG), including the unique and overlapping roles and responsibilities of the three partners; a brief outline of the history of the Arboretum, Center for Urban Horticulture (CUH), and SJG; a description of a few other governance models that the Task Force might learn from; a problem statement explaining why other governance models should be considered; and principles to guide the process that were suggested by the Arboretum and Botanic Gardens Committee (ABGC), which consists of representatives of the three partners and citizens appointed by the Mayor and City Council of Seattle.

During the meetings the Task Force discussed existing conditions in four arenas: governance, financial, operational workflows, and communications and marketing. These discussions led to the identification of the current model’s strengths and weaknesses. Once the fact-finding phase of the Task Force’s process concluded, Task Force members articulated mutual interests and guiding principles. They also identified seven governance models ranging from modest improvements in the existing structure to either the UW or non-profit management of the UWBG and SJG. Two of the seven models, both with an expanded role for the non-profit, were selected as the most promising options. In two meetings in late May and early June the Task Force considered these two variations of the non-profit management alternative; the first would establish the non-profit as manager of the UWBG and SJG while the second

would make the non-profit the manager of the Arboretum and aspects of the SJG but not of CUH and its related facilities.

At the Task Force's last meeting on 26 June the members unanimously endorsed the option for a non-profit to manage the UWBG and aspects of the SJG, citing the provisions and recommendation for a feasibility study that are listed on pages 6 and 16.

Looking to the next steps in this process, the Task Force suggests that a deeper examination of other governance models may be valuable. The Task Force considered the governance structures of these organizations: Henry Art Gallery and Burke Natural History Museum, both on the grounds of the University of Washington; Woodland Park Zoo; Seattle's Office of the Waterfront and its relationship to the non-profit Friends of the Seattle Waterfront; Brooklyn Botanic Gardens; Bellevue Botanical Garden; Matthaei Botanical Gardens-Nichols Arboretum at the University of Michigan; San Francisco Botanical Gardens at Golden Gate Park; and Sound Transit. These and other governance structures could provide lessons that would be helpful in defining the governance structure for the 21st Century for WPA, including related functions at the UWBG and SJG.

THE PROBLEM: WHY CONSIDER DIFFERENT GOVERNANCE MODELS?

For years questions have been asked about the three-party governance model that manages the Washington Park Arboretum, a model that is unique in the United States for arboreta and botanic gardens. The primary focus of these questions has been the relationship between the University of UWBG and AF.

The recurring theme has been that this governance model prevents the Arboretum from achieving its full potential. The Arboretum's potential has been limited by the parties' different visions and missions, and by duplication of effort that causes inefficiencies and consumes limited resources. More importantly, the Arboretum's potential in the community has been undermined by different brands, mixed messaging, and separate fundraising, which has resulted in the public's confusion, uncertainty, and lack of support.

Here are examples of arguments against the current governance model:

- In 2004 the Master Plan Implementation Plan's Other Considerations speculated that "each of the communications techniques used by the three parties probably reaches only a portion of the broader audience of people who are interested in staying informed about the impacts of the Master Plan." For the most part, each party separately communicates with the public. They each maintain a website, which includes links to those of the other two parties. But other communications tools, including newsletters, public forums, mailings, e-blasts, and annual meetings, are employed by the parties individually.
- In September 2018 a report by a task force of Arboretum Foundation Board and staff members concluded "there are overlaps and inefficiencies between the efforts of all three partners that affect operating costs and public perceptions."

- That task force also reported “the Arboretum Foundation and UWBG lack common vision, goals, and strategies. While the relationship has improved, the two parties do not have a joint vision or common goals for the future of the Arboretum.” They also have their own strategic plans.
- Each of the three partners maintains distinct branding, so there is not a single unified brand to graphically identify and promote the Arboretum.
- The University and Foundation have separate fundraising structures and mechanism, although their development teams meet regularly to share information and coordinate. In 2017-'18, for example, they collaborated to raise over \$300,000 for the pre-design of the Environmental Education Center. But they maintain separate donor lists and profiles, and sometimes compete for funding from the same donors. The College of the Environment’s development staff and the UWBG Director are primarily responsible for the University’s fundraising for the Arboretum. The Executive Director and Development Director lead the Arboretum Foundation’s fundraising with support from the Board’s Major Gifts Committee and the Board. Fundraising for both organizations includes grants; private donations from events, annual giving, and endowments; and other sources of support.
- The use of Foundation funding of the Arboretum has evolved. One of the findings of the September 2018 Foundation task force report was that “the original intent of Foundation financial support was to fund large projects rather than annual maintenance and operations. Reductions in funding by the State Legislature might be one reason why the Foundations’ funding has evolved to support operations and maintenance.”
- In addition, the report stated “the precursors of UWBG’s library and herbarium started on the grounds of the Arboretum. Today they are located at the Center for Urban Horticulture (CUH). The Foundation does not provide funding to support them.” To elaborate, when the Center for Urban Horticulture opened in 1984, its new library and herbarium used plant pressings and a book collection that were originally housed on the grounds of the Arboretum as the basis for their collections. While both are part of the UWBG, and the UWBG is the umbrella organization for the Arboretum and CUH, over time these functions, and new ones established at CUH since 1984, have been perceived to function independently of the Arboretum. This has led to the perception of not only geographic separation, but of programmatic separation.

THE CASE FOR A NEW GOVERNANCE MODEL

As both a city park and the state arboretum, the WPA is uniquely positioned as a portal for the community for some of the most important issues in our future: Pacific Northwest climate science, the link between health and nature, and providing broad and equitable access to nature-based learning and experiences. With a world-class collection of trees and woody plants as our canvas—as well as inspiring gardens and wild spaces—we can build on an eighty-five-year legacy of conservation, recreation, and education. We can reimagine these botanic gardens in ways that honor the diversity of our community and the vital biodiversity of our planet.

The completion of the SR 520 Replacement Project offers the return of twenty-eight acres of parkland and natural areas in the heart of the city, a rare and special opportunity. Deep connections to the University of Washington allow further exploration of the role of trees and plants relative to public

health, urban design, food systems, and other disciplines. The location on the traditional lands of Indigenous Peoples can be further observed and amplified in educational programs.

We are re-imagining the Arboretum and Botanic Gardens of the 21st century, and need a forward-thinking governance model that is nimble and creative and has an audacity of vision. We also need the governance model to provide greater financial sustainability and protection of this special resource for generations to come.

THE INSPIRATION

The three partners support an engagement process that includes their staffs, boards, volunteers, and donors, and diverse interest groups and parks users throughout the community, to jointly craft a long-term vision for the future. Throughout the process, Task Force members discussed the importance of a long-term vision to guide the future. Task Force member Marlon Herrera wrote the following statement as the initial inspiration that underscores many of the Task Force’s discussions and its consensus recommendations.

We are stewards of the land and flora. We care for a world-renowned collection of plants. We are a laboratory, a classroom, and a library. We are creators and disseminators of knowledge, scholars, and students. We are hosts to thousands of people looking for a chance to be in nature—searching for a moment of peace and serenity in these trying times.

In the climate crisis, every plant is now in our care: in and out of the Arboretum, today and for generations to come. We are curious minds seeking resilience and sustainability. We are on the front lines of fighting our ecological disaster. We inspire students and visitors from around the city, state, and world to reconnect with nature. Through lived experience, we remind them of what’s at stake. We are custodians of the Olmsted legacy, rooted in a vision of egalitarianism and the human connection to the Earth. We have an imperative to increase access to our beauty, our education, and our opportunities for renewal. We are part of the solution to environmental injustice and dismantling systemic racism.

We are on the cultural, ancestral, and unceded land of the Duwamish people. Chief Si’ahl once said that “we do not inherit the land from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.” We honor the First People’s wisdom by preserving this land for tomorrow.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND FRAMEWORK

Five guiding principles are the platform for the Task Force’s recommendations:

- a. Expand public access.
- b. Increase public awareness and support.
- c. Improve fundraising.
- d. Enhance the voices and represent the vision and interests of our diverse community.
- e. Advance racial equity and social justice.

NOTE: For more information on the specific initiatives of the University and City, please see:

- <https://www.washington.edu/raceequity/>
- <https://www.seattle.gov/rsji>

Building on these guiding principles, the following statements are the framework for the Task force's consensus agreements and recommendations.

▪ **PUBLIC ACCESS AND ENGAGEMENT**

1. Preserve and enhance the Washington Park Arboretum (WPA) as one of Seattle's iconic public parks.
2. Any changes in the governance structure of the University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG), including the WPA, and the Seattle Japanese Garden (SJG) should democratize the gardens by expanding public access and amplifying their public benefits.
3. Develop as routine business practices methods to identify why people are attracted to the grounds, gardens, and facilities and how they use them. Use this information to establish priorities, develop educational programming, provide a range of opportunities, tailor communications and marketing, and focus fundraising efforts.
4. Enhance the voice of the organization as it represents the vision and interests of the community as reflected in the lands, facilities, collections, and programs.

▪ **LAND OWNERSHIP/MANAGEMENT**

1. Indigenous Tribal lands are recognized and respected.
2. The underlining ownership of properties, facilities, and collections remains the same—with either the University of Washington or the City of Seattle. The legal obligations of the two landowners are recognized and respected.

▪ **THE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

1. The University and City should be primary partners of the non-profit by contributing, as needed, to the development of its strategic plan and providing support while the non-profit becomes increasingly responsible for management and operations.
2. Preserve the positive characteristics and qualities of the existing partnerships between the UWBG, Arboretum Foundation (AF), and SPR as potential new roles and responsibilities may be defined.
3. Preserve connections between the Center for Urban Horticulture (CUH) and the other facilities north of the Montlake Cut and the WPA and SJG to south of it.
4. Regarding the physical development of the Arboretum, the University, City, and non-profit recognize, respect, and will continue to be guided by the Master Implementation Plan.
5. The strategic partnership of the three parties should help advance existing and future social and environmental initiatives of any or all the parties.

▪ **GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

1. Simplify and streamline the organization and public perceptions of it.
2. The non-profit must have a single, unifying vision; a single, clear mission; one organizational culture; and clear lines of authority and accountability that are established by the Board of Directors in concert with the Executive Director.

- **GOVERNING BOARD**

1. Increase the public profile of the non-profit's leadership, including the Board of Directors and/or Advisory Committees, to broaden public support and improve fundraising.
2. Ensure that the leadership of the non-profit reflects the diversity, needs, and interests of users and the wider community.
3. Ensure that the non-profit's leadership possesses the talents, expertise, and skills needed to advance the organization's vision, mission, and goals, including building community. Recognize that over time the mix of talents, expertise, and skills represented by the Board, committees, Executive Director, and leadership team members (department heads) will change according to the organization's evolving needs.
 - At this time, that mixture should include: a) connections to a range of diverse communities, including the Tribes; b) connections to the region's major employers and institutions; c) connections to parks, recreation, education, environmental/conservation, and arts/cultural advocates; d) connections to volunteers; e) organizational development experience; f) financial experience; g) fundraising expertise; h) political acumen and connections, including to the Governor's Office and State Legislature; i) communications and marketing skills; and j) connections to faculty and researchers.
 - Appointing elected officials as ex-officio members of the Board of Directors or to an Advisory Committee could also contribute to raising the non-profit's leadership profile. The William D. Ruckelshaus Center, a joint venture of Washington State University and the UW, might serve as a model. Its Advisory Board includes a representative of the Governor's Office and each of the four caucuses of the Washington State Legislature, and the Presidents and other officials of the two universities.

- **BALANCE FUNDING**

1. Balance public and private funding. It is risky to rely too heavily on one or the other given that each is vulnerable to economic conditions and competing priorities. Philanthropy also takes time and dedication to build and maintain the donor base.

- **PUBLIC FUNDING**

1. Maintain the effort of the City and University to provide funding to ensure they do not abrogate their responsibilities and that private funding does not become necessary to backfill or supplant public funding.
2. Use public funds strategically to leverage future public funding, including from other sources, such as King County and the State of Washington,

- **PRIVATE FUNDING**

1. Ensure that the non-profit becomes the gateway for a dramatic increase in private funding.

- **EDUCATION/PROGRAMMING**

1. Ensure that programming reflects the unified vision and mission, and stimulates public curiosity, understanding, and support.

2. Provide a variety of educational opportunities that reflect and serve the needs and interests of the diversity of users and stakeholders. No matter who is involved in designing and providing programming, ensure that the offerings are complementary and part of a strategic, comprehensive package.

- **ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT**

1. Ensure that structures, strategies, and resources are available to attract faculty and researchers to the WPA, SJG, and UWBG, particularly from the University of Washington.
2. Through academic engagement, make the Arboretum, SJG, and Botanic Gardens leading locations in efforts to combat climate change, address other environmental and conservation issues, and provide and promote environmental education.

- **STAFFING**

1. Create a unified culture that is steeped in the employees' joint efforts to protect, preserve, and enhance the public value of the lands, facilities, and collections.
2. Although staff may be employed by different partners, they should all be accountable to the non-profit's Executive Director.

- **ACCOUNTABILITY**

1. Use objective criteria such as performance measures to demonstrate that the standards that were agreed to by the parties have been achieved.
2. On a regular basis, the non-profit should report to the University and City about its performance. Of particular interest would be the non-profit's progress in strengthening public benefits and equity, and expanding public access and opportunities.
3. Ensure that the Executive Director and employees are held accountable for advancing the vision, mission, goals, and priorities of the non-profit.

- **IMPLEMENTATION**

1. An influential group of citizens is needed to champion the Task Force's recommendations to ensure that the decision-makers at the University and City understand that there is broad public support for the proposed change in the governance model.

- **AGREEMENTS**

1. Consider agreements (A Memorandum of Agreement) that the City and University are currently using or have used in the past. Agreements between the City and Woodland Park Zoo, the City and Seattle Aquarium, the City, UWBG, and AF in the WPA, and the City and AF in the SJG might be models. Other examples could include the agreements between the University and The Henry Gallery and the City and Friends of Waterfront Park. Sound Transit's structure of relationships and agreements among a variety of local, regional, state, and private partners could also be illuminating.

TASK FORCE'S CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATIONS

Here are the Task Force members' consensus recommendations:

1. The three-partner governance model that currently manages the Arboretum limits the Arboretum's potential in the community. The different missions and branding dilute fundraising, programming, and advocacy opportunities. Operationally, these different visions and missions cause duplication of effort resulting in inefficiencies and consumption of limited resources. As the Task Force envisions the long-term, through the end of the 21st Century, a more forward-thinking, streamlined, nimble, and cohesive governance model is needed to meet the interests and needs of current and future users and supporters.
2. In addition to the Case Statement that highlights the major arguments for a new governance model (see pages 10-11), a powerful, compelling vision needs to emerge that will: a) inspire the community; b) motivate people to support the organization, c) attract an influential group of "champions" to advocate for the Task Force's recommended future governance structure; and d) persuade key decision-makers within the University of Washington, City of Seattle, Arboretum Foundation (AF), and community.
3. In recommending that the current three-party governance model be replaced by one that is more forward-thinking, streamlined, nimble, and cohesive, the Task Force envisions that the new model will be defined by these governance characteristics and qualities:
 - a. A single, clear mission;
 - b. One organizational culture;
 - c. Clear lines of authority and accountability;
 - d. A stable funding base;
 - e. One person who is primarily responsible and accountable (a director or executive director);
 - f. One board of directors;
 - g. One annual budget with metrics;
 - h. One brand with a single logo;
 - i. Consistent messaging with a variety of communications tools and techniques;
 - j. Strategic and business plans to guide the organization; and
 - k. The Master Implementation Plan to guide the physical development of the Arboretum.
4. A not-for-profit organization could effectively and sustainably manage the operations of the Washington Park Arboretum (WPA), other functions of the UWBG, including the Center for Urban Horticulture (CUH), Elisabeth C. Miller Library, Herbarium, Yesler Swamp, Union Bay Natural Area, and Farm, and aspects of the SJG.
5. The Task Force's recommendations should not result in two non-profits. The AF is likely to be the nucleus of the new non-profit so that it can build on the Foundation's more than eighty years of history and community support.
6. The ultimate goal of a new governance model is for the non-profit to manage the UWBG and aspects of the SJG with the University and Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) serving as primary strategic partners. In making this recommendation, the Task Force recognizes and respects the role of the Indigenous Peoples who first settled in the area, and the obligations of the University of

Washington and City of Seattle for the properties, collections, and facilities they own in the UWBG and/or SJG.

7. Rely on the existing Master Plan to continue to guide the maintenance and physical development of the Arboretum. The Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG), or a to-be-defined successor group, should provide guidance regarding implementation of the Plan. With the addition of the SR 520 acreage to the Arboretum, MPIG or its successor group would be expected to conduct master site planning for these lands.
8. The parties who would be most interested in and affected by the recommendations need the opportunity to review and influence the Task Force's recommendations. The initial phase of review should engage: staff and Board members of the AF; staff, faculty, students, and advisory committee members at the UWBG and School of Environmental and Forest Sciences; leadership and communications staff of SPR; the Arboretum and Botanic Gardens Committee (ABGC); and key stakeholders, including some donors, users, and volunteers. To ensure community ownership of the long-term vision, a broader, more robust strategic public engagement process that includes the community's diverse voices is needed to agree on a vision.
9. A feasibility study should analyze what amounts to the Task Force's preferred alternative. The study should also consider additional findings that could indicate alternative or additional options not identified by the Task Force that may be more feasible than the Task Force's recommendations. In addition, an important variable of the feasibility study should be the role of SPR. Its operational role might or might not evolve as part of the governance changes. The feasibility study also needs to address the following:
 - a. Governance;
 - b. The addition of the SR 520 lands;
 - c. Master site issues;
 - d. Financial needs; and
 - e. Sources of revenue.

The study should be informed and influenced by outreach to the: Board members and staff of the Arboretum Foundation; faculty, staff, students, and advisory committee members of the UWBG and School of Environmental and Forest Sciences; leadership and communications staff of SPR; and key stakeholders, including some donors, users, and volunteers.