# Arboretum Foundation 2010-2012 Strategic Plan

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The Strategic Planning Committee is pleased to share this final report of our 17-month long planning process. This report describes our process and assumptions. It also includes important products including:

- mission and vision statements
- a list of desired outcomes
- the goals and strategies comprising our three-year strategic plan
- governance principles that will enable us to implement the plan
- roles and responsibilities of the executive director, the board, and the board president.

We have also included appendixes that the board and staff may find helpful as we work together to implement this ambitious plan. While our formal committee work is now complete, as individuals we look forward to assisting staff as they develop an implementation plan and annual work plans, and helping the board track progress in achieving our goals.

We are extremely grateful for John Howell’s excellent leadership and for all the patience and insightful analysis provided by board members, staff, volunteers, partners, and other stakeholders. We learned a great deal from all of you. We hope that all of us will be able to look back proudly on hard work that propelled our organization to new levels of accomplishment.

Susan Black
Lynn Garvey
Jenefer Hutchins
Fred Isaac
Brice Maryman
Paige Miller
Kathleen Pierce (chair)
Michael Shiosaki
Craig Trueblood
Barbara Wright
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PLANNING PROCESS

The Arboretum Foundation Strategic Planning Committee was formed in September 2008, and consists of ten members: Susan Black, Lynn Garvey, Jenefer Hutchins, Fred Isaac, Brice Maryman, Paige Miller, Kathleen Pierce (chair), Michael Shiosaki, Craig Trueblood, and Barbara Wright.

John Howell was hired as a consultant to the committee in January 2009. We completed the first phase of our planning work in April 2009, with the adoption of governance principles for the Arboretum Foundation and descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of the executive director, board, and board president (see pages ). This early work set the stage for our organizational goal-setting work, and will enable our organization to utilize resources more effectively in the future.

Beginning in March 2009, the committee focused on developing a strategic plan to guide the foundation for the next three years. Our early scope of work included:

- Reviewing the draft mission statement adopted by the board in early 2007
- Drafting elements of a vision statement, desired outcomes, and an initial list of strategic issues
- Conducting interviews with key stakeholders and horticultural and environmental organizations (see list of interviewees in the appendix)
- Working with the board and others to define strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (see list in the appendix)
- Gathering and analyzing data about Foundation membership, fundraising events, and finances
- Reviewing options and drafting priority goals, strategies, and tactics for board review

In September 2009, the board adopted draft goals and strategies. During October, committee members reviewed those goals and strategies with partners, staff, volunteers, and other key stakeholders. (See list of interviewees in the appendix.) A number of tactics were suggested and several important themes emerged—which are summarized in the appendices. There was general agreement that the plan is clear, comprehensive, and points us in the right directions.

During a retreat on November 7, 2009, the board and staff revised the strategies and recommended priority strategies for 2010 and 2011. These were adopted by the board on November 18, 2009. Final mission and vision statements were drafted by the committee and adopted by the board on January 2010.

1 The draft mission statement was adopted by the board in April 2007 following a board retreat and work by another strategic planning committee that was formed in 2006 to prepare for the hiring of our new executive director. The board intended to review and amend the draft mission statement as the strategic plan was developed. Elements of a draft vision statement were discussed in 2007, and the board urged the committee to work with our partners to develop a joint vision statement. This joint planning work was begun but not completed in 2007-08.
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ASSUMPTIONS AND CONTEXT

Key themes:

Amid hundreds of great ideas, several key themes emerged from the committee’s research and conversations. These assumptions played a major role in our planning:

1. Stewardship in increasingly challenging times requires broad-based public support. We need diverse allies who care about and use the Arboretum and will speak out in support of the Arboretum, as well as contribute financial support.
2. The Arboretum and UWBG possess extraordinary assets that can engage diverse audiences and lifelong learners-- environmentalists, researchers, scientists interested in climate change and habitat preservation, birders, landscape and cultural historians, runners and walkers, nature lovers, and more-- as well as those interested in plants and horticulture.
3. As an independent, flexible organization focused exclusively on the Arboretum, the Foundation is in a strong position to advocate for the Arboretum and build a larger constituency of supporters.
4. Members and volunteers are a significant asset for the Foundation, providing networks, major gifts, and other resources. However, as the Arboretum Foundation is viewed by some as a club supported by a narrow constituency, we must work to expand our supporters and dispel this impression.
5. Dramatically increasing financial support in the next three years is likely to be tough. Now is a good time to invest in building the Foundation’s capacity so that we can seize current opportunities and become well positioned to compete when the economy rebounds.

New plans:

The guiding assumptions outlined above led us to suggest four areas for new or substantially enhanced Foundation work during the next 3 years:

1. Constituency building. Foster greater awareness, appreciation, and use of the Arboretum among a broader, more diverse audience.
2. Education. Capitalize on multiple education opportunities as a key strategy for building Foundation membership and a broad constituency of Arboretum supporters and volunteers.
3. Advocacy. Position the Foundation to communicate effectively on behalf of the Arboretum’s interests—in the community and among public officials.
4. Collaboration with the University. Explore the potential of a closer collaboration with UWBG and other University of Washington partners. In these tough economic times, it makes sense to investigate how assets on both sides of the Lake might be utilized more effectively to support mutual goals.
At the same time, we propose to continue our efforts to raise funds, improve and create new partnerships, and to become a more cost-effective organization, with enhanced capacity to raise both friends and funds.
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MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

These statements explain the Arboretum Foundation’s primary purpose and what we want to be better or different as a result of our work (much of which, of course, requires collaboration with our partners). These proposed mission and vision statements are not joint statements intended to encompass our partners’ purposes or desired results, although we will continue to work with ABGC to develop those statements.

**Arboretum Foundation Mission:**

The Arboretum Foundation promotes, protects and enhances the Washington Park Arboretum for current and future generations by strengthening and building a diverse and engaged community of donors, volunteers, and advocates.

**Arboretum Foundation Vision:**

The Arboretum is a highly-treasured, widely-used community asset and a horticultural, environmental, recreational, and cultural resource for the region.
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DESired OUTCOMES

The following outcomes more specifically describe what the Foundation wants to be better or different as a result of implementing our strategic plan. These outcomes are also summarized in the graphic below.

Arboretum outcomes:

- The Arboretum is healthy, well-maintained, and thriving, and provides a respite within our urban environment.
- Significant progress has been made in implementing the Master Plan: Pacific Connections is completed; the shoreline and creek are major assets; and Lake Washington Boulevard has less traffic.

Community and individual outcomes:

- The Arboretum is widely viewed as a major public asset and is well supported by government, individuals, nonprofit organizations, foundations, and business.
- The Arboretum appeals to people with diverse interests & backgrounds, has a strong base of volunteers, and overall use has increased significantly.
- Adults & youth have increased appreciation & knowledge of plants, horticulture, forests, climate change, environmental sustainability, and different cultures.

Foundation outcomes:

- The Arboretum Foundation is supported by a larger, more broadly-based membership.
- Our staff and board are diverse and reflect our community.
- We have strong partnerships, both existing and new.
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If we do these things:

- Increase financial resources and protect investments
- Strengthen the Foundation
- Be an effective advocate
- Foster greater appreciation & use of the Arboretum
- Strengthen & create partnerships

What will happen?

- People
  - More users
  - Diverse users
  - More volunteers
  - Broad support

- Environment
  - Ecologically healthy
  - Enhanced shoreline & creek
  - Less trash

- WPA
  - Thriving
  - Widely used
  - Highly valued

- Community
  - More knowledge about plants, environment
  - Supportive public policy

- Foundation
  - More & broader membership
  - Diverse staff & board
  - Strong partnerships
  - Cost-effective programs
On November 18, 2009, the Board approved the following goals and strategies to be implemented during the next three years. This plan reflects the work of the strategic planning committee, input from stakeholders, and suggestions by board members and staff at the Strategic Planning Retreat held on November 7, 2009. There is some overlap among the various strategies and tactics. The document attempts to cross-reference those that have the most overlap.

A number of tactics are included in this document as “examples” of how a strategy might get implemented. They are not meant to provide an exhaustive implementation plan, which will be developed by staff along with annual work plans. Many of the tactics emerged from strategic planning committee discussions and initial stakeholder interviews. Italicized tactics emerged from discussions at the November 7th retreat and November 18th board meeting. Additional tactics emerged from the October interviews with stakeholders, and they are included in the appendices.

**Goal 1: Increase the Arboretum Foundation’s Financial Resources and Protect Investments**

**Strategy 1a:** Ensure the efficient and effective use of existing fundraising resources, and maximize donor satisfaction and loyalty.

**Examples of Tactics**

- Evaluate the Foundation’s fundraising model (membership, event fundraisers, and private donors) considering costs and multiple benefits. Recommend changes as suggested by the evaluation.
- Involve volunteers in conducting the review and analysis of the fundraising model, and in discussions about recommendations. *(See also Strategy 2b.)*
- Evaluate level of organizational overhead. Make any adjustments, as suggested by the evaluation, and develop communication strategy about level of Foundation overhead.
- *Design and implement a donor-centric fundraising model.*

**Strategy 1b:** Enhance the fundraising capabilities of the Foundation for both operations and implementation of the master plan.
Examples of Tactics

- Ensure that the Capital Campaign Committee has developed an effective plan for securing resources to advance work on Pacific Connections.
- Pursue funding as compensation/mitigation for SR 520 impacts. Work with partners to identify potential capital and other projects that could be funded with 520 mitigation funds. (See also Strategy 3a.)
- Seek opportunities to leverage government and private funds.
- Explore partnerships with UW Advancement office for major capital fundraising.
- Develop partnerships with UW Advancement office for major capital fundraising.
- Develop board recruitment and training plan to help enhance fundraising capabilities.
- Develop a plan for the effective use of staff, board and volunteers in fundraising.

**Strategy 1c:** Increase and diversify the Foundation’s revenue base.

Examples of Tactics

- Increase the size of Arbor Circle membership.
- Evaluate and recommend a new planned giving program.
- Increase philanthropic foundation and business support for the Arboretum & the Foundation.

**Strategy 1d:** Ensure that the endowment, capital plan, and operating funds are invested and managed wisely.

Examples of Tactics

- Evaluate fund management against appropriate investment benchmarks on a quarterly basis.

**Strategy 1e:** Continue to work with our partners to implement the Master plan, specifically the next phase of Pacific Connections.

**Strategy 1f:** Support the City and University with funding and volunteer resources to assure that plantings and infrastructure are well-maintained. (See also Strategy 2b.)

**Strategy 1g:** Increase resources for education programs. (See strategy 4a.)
Goal 2: Strengthen the Foundation’s Human and Physical Resources

**Strategy 2a:** Aggressively increase membership in order to broaden our network of supporters. Strive to have membership reflect community demographics.

Examples of Tactics

- Conduct a member/volunteer survey to assess level of satisfaction, demographics, and desired benefits and supports. Develop a plan for recruiting and retaining members based on the survey results and other available information.
- Evaluate the categories and dues levels of Foundation memberships and recommend needed changes.
- Reduce membership costs and provide services and benefits to members in a cost-efficient manner – i.e. more use of electronic communications
- Engage members effectively by providing high-quality educational, volunteer and advocacy opportunities
- Conduct spot surveys of nonrenewing members.
- Research the best practices of similar membership organizations.
- Form a board/staff committee to evaluate membership costs, benefits, and tactics and make recommendations to the board.

**Strategy 2b:** Increase the number of volunteers and broaden the use of the Foundation’s volunteer base.

Examples of Tactics

- Identify a variety of activities for volunteers – matching volunteers with their interests
- Develop a volunteer group that will focus on maintenance and stewardship activities in the Arboretum (See also Strategy 1d.)
- Conduct additional outreach to recruit more volunteers, including younger volunteers.
- Explore recruitment of volunteers at the University of Washington and other colleges.
- Use volunteers as a “consultant corps”, assisting with the Foundation’s professional service needs
- Create opportunities for volunteers to serve as “docents” to educate members and the public about the Arboretum
- Ensure that all activities in which volunteers are engaged are well organized, with clear expectations for staff and volunteers
- Create a greater connection between the Units and the work of the Foundation in supporting the Arboretum. For example, provide quality educational programs for unit members, hold periodic meetings among unit leaders, and/or survey units regarding the support they would like from the Foundation.
- Offer free or reduced fee classes or tours, and/or reduced prices at gift shop for volunteers
- Establish a “bring a friend” day for existing volunteers to bring potential recruits to the Arboretum
- Continue regular meetings for the Volunteer Advisory Council

**Strategy 2c:** Continue to strengthen the recruitment and training of Board members to realize the goals of the Strategic Plan.

**Strategy 2d:** Engage the Board, staff, and volunteers in successfully implementing the strategic plan.

Examples of Tactics

- Annually review the Strategic Plan
- Establish progress reports on implementation of the strategic plan; make the strategic plan part of regular board/staff/volunteer discussions.
- Develop a plan and schedule for evaluation of key strategic plan objectives and selected Foundation programs and activities
- Base the Executive Director’s evaluation and board self-evaluation on annual goals related to the strategic plan
- Develop board and committee structure that supports the implementation of the strategic plan (See also Strategy 3a.)

**Strategy 2e:** Evaluate and develop a plan to address space, equipment, and technology needs for the Foundation.

Examples of Tactics

- Discuss space issues during conversations with UWBG about closer collaboration (See also strategy 5a.)
- Ensure that the Foundation has a regularly updated, well-managed, and well-used database.

**Strategy 2f:** Strengthen the Foundation’s human resource capacity to achieve the objectives of the strategic plan, and enhance job satisfaction and loyalty.

Examples of Tactics

- Analyze current staff capacity and recommend changes as necessary to implement the Strategic Plan
- Utilize University of Washington training opportunities for staff to enhance professional skills and remain current on best practices
Goal 3: Be an Effective Advocate for the Arboretum

**Strategy 3a**: Strengthen the Foundation to become a pro-active, effective advocate on behalf of the interests of the Arboretum.

Examples of Tactics

- Identify an annual policy agenda for both pro-active and reactive advocacy work
- Assess whether current committee structure supports the Foundation’s advocacy role and whether the structure addresses emerging issues *(See also Strategy 2d.)*
- For each advocacy project identify a plan for utilizing all of the Foundations assets – staff, board, members and volunteers
- Where appropriate, work with the City and University to identify opportunities for collaborative advocacy strategies, utilizing the Foundation’s flexibility to advocate on behalf of the Arboretum
- Advocate for the Arboretum publicly to ensure it remains an urban respite from noise, traffic intrusions, visual disruptions and is a safe place to be

**Strategy 3b**: Continue to advocate for reducing/mitigating the impacts of the SR 520 replacement project on the Arboretum.

**Strategy 3c**: Improve the Foundation’s strategic communications and outreach.

Examples of Tactics

- Develop and implement a strategic communications & outreach plan
- Develop a compelling brand and messaging for the Foundation. Create a clear articulation of why the Arboretum is important to broad community interests.
- Upgrade the web site to allow for easier and more frequent posting of information about events and activities
- *Work with our partners to coordinate communication tools, including websites.*

Goal 4: Foster Greater Awareness, Appreciation and Use of the Arboretum Among All Residents
Strategy 4a: Expand Educational program activities for both youth and adults as a means to: a) increase the use and appreciation of the Arboretum, b) engage a broader, more diverse audience, and c) provide a tangible benefit to members and volunteers.

Examples of Tactics

- Evaluate current educational programming, including contribution levels (monetary and volunteers), program focus, and benefits
- Create education program opportunities for both youth and adults
- Explore potential for partnerships with other non-profits, as well as expanding support for UWBG educational programming, to increase educational offerings at the Arboretum (potential partnerships with non-profits could include IslandWood, Seattle Schools, Tilth, Seattle Parks, local colleges, etc.) (See also Strategy 5g.)
- Encourage University faculty to participate in Foundation events
- Utilize volunteers to expand educational programming
- Create an organizational pathway that cultivates a progression from educational programming, to volunteer, to member, to donor
- Appoint a board VP or liaison for education programs.

Strategy 4b: Develop plans with the City and University to achieve goals for greater use of Arboretum

Strategy 4c: Actively reach out to communities and groups that reflect the diversity of regional populations and interests.

Examples of Tactics

- Establish relationships with a broader range of ethnic and interest groups
- Actively reach out to adjacent communities
- Define the region the Arboretum serves, and the populations and interests we seek to attract
- Provide more picnic tables and amenities that make people feel welcome.

Strategy 4d: Explore creation of cross-marketing opportunities with potential business partners.

Examples of Tactics

- Create a new brochure to market the Arboretum’s assets
- Work with tour companies and visitor bureaus to promote WPA.
Goal 5: Strengthen and Create Partnerships

**Strategy 5a:** Explore the potential for a closer collaboration with the University regarding the use, programming, and support for the Arboretum and the Union Bay area.

Examples of Tactics

- Develop a work plan for when/how the Foundation will explore this strategy.
- Have discussions with different interests within the University to explore potential collaboration, including the leadership at UWBG, the new College of the Environment, and the Advancement Office

**Strategy 5b:** Continue to clarify and strengthen individual and shared roles between the Foundation, the City and the University.

Examples of Tactics

- Clarify roles of partners in advocacy
- Ensure that Foundation Board and staff successfully implement new governance model
- Continue to support and implement the partners’ fundraising agreement
- Clarify roles of partners in using and managing the Graham Visitors Center

**Strategy 5c:** Advocate with the University administration and City officials when appropriate to understand the critical importance of the Arboretum plant collections and park space and to invest in its future.

Examples of Tactics

- Build strong relationships with leadership of the new College of the Environment
- Advocate for the Arboretum to be included in the College of the Environment’s strategic plan
- Build strong relationships with the University President and Provost
- Build strong relationships with the City Council and Mayor.
**Strategy 5d:** Create more effective working relationships with State legislators. *(See also Strategy 3a.)*

**Strategy 5e:** Establish partnerships with other horticultural organizations to share and learn information about best practices, to foster collaboration on shared goals, and to develop coalitions for advocacy activities. *(See also Strategy 3a.)*

Examples of Tactics

- Potential partnerships with local non-profits (such as Bloedel Reserve, Dunn Gardens, Bellevue Botanical Gardens, Master Gardeners) should be explored

**Strategy 5f:** Strengthen relationships with other related foundations.

Examples of Tactics

- Potential partnerships with local Foundations (such as the Seattle Parks Foundation and the Miller Foundation) should be explored

**Strategy 5g:** Seek new partnerships with non-profit organizations and community groups that will assist the Foundation in achieving its strategic objectives. *(See also Strategy 4a.)*
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RECOMMENDED PRIORITIES

On November 18, 2009, the board agreed on the following priorities for focusing our resources during the first two calendar years—2010 and 2011. Staff will consider these priorities as they develop an implementation plan and annual work plans, but how much we can accomplish will depend on available resources. Strategies not completed in year 1 would continue during year 2 and beyond, if necessary.

Year 1 Priorities (2010):

1. **Strategy 1a**: Ensure the efficient and effective use of existing fundraising resources and maximize donor satisfaction and loyalty.
2. **Strategy 2f**: Enhance job satisfaction and strengthen the Foundation’s human resource capacity to achieve the objectives of the strategic plan.
3. **Strategy 3b**: Continue to advocate for reducing/mitigating the impacts of the SR 520 replacement project on the Arboretum.
4. **Strategy 5a**: Explore the potential for a closer collaboration with the University regarding the use, programming, and support for the Arboretum and the Union Bay area.
5a. **Strategy 1b**: Enhance the fundraising capabilities of the Foundation for both operations and implementation of the master plan. (Tied with 5b)
5b. **Strategy 2e**: Evaluate and develop a plan to address space and equipment needs for the Foundation. (Tied with 5a)
6. **Strategy 2a**: Aggressively increase membership in order to broaden our network of supporters. Strive to have membership reflect community demographics.

Year 2 Priorities (2011):

1. **Strategy 2b**: Increase the number of volunteers and broaden the use of the Foundation’s volunteer base.
2. **Strategy 4c**: Actively reach out to communities and groups that reflect the diversity of regional populations and interests.
3. **Strategy 4a**: Expand educational program activities for both youth and adults.
4. **Strategy 5b**: Continue to clarify and strengthen individual and shared roles between the Foundation, the City and the University.
5. **Strategy 3c**: Improve the Foundation’s strategic communications and outreach.
Introduction

In April 2009, the Arboretum Foundation Board adopted principles regarding how board members, staff, and volunteers should work together. These principles are aligned with the CompassPoint Non-Profit Services model for board governance and support. They were used to develop new job descriptions for the Arboretum Foundation’s board, the executive director, and the board president, which were also adopted by the board and are included in this report. We anticipate that these principles will also be of use to the board as we develop a more complete board policy manual and implement those policies.

A basic tenet of the Foundation’s governance principles is that board members, the executive director, foundation staff, and volunteers can best achieve our mission and vision by working together as a team, in the spirit of collaboration and partnership. Effective teamwork requires that all parties understand their individual roles and responsibilities as well as their collaborative obligations and goals. To this end, the Arboretum Foundation will use the following principles to guide our work together:

Board Roles—Governing and Supporting

Board members serve two roles: (a) they act together to govern the organization’s affairs by setting direction, establishing priorities and protecting the organization’s assets; and (b) they act as individuals or through committees to support the organization by volunteering, raising money, advising, and promoting it in the community. On the one hand, the board, acting as a whole, is responsible for the overall health and direction of the organization. On the other hand, individual board members support the work of staff as volunteers and advisors. When there is confusion about the board’s role, it often relates to confusion about what the board should do as a group and what individual board members and committees should do.

Board Governing Role:

1. When acting in its governing role, the board represents the interests of the community. Board members work together to ensure that public and private resources are used to benefit the community and the public.

2. The board’s governance responsibilities include:
   - Direction—determine mission & purpose
   - Legal—ensure compliance with regulations & contractual obligations
   - Financial—safeguard assets
   - Executive director—select, support & evaluate performance
• Fundraising—approve strategy and monitor its effectiveness
• Planning—set policy directions; determine major strategies & overall priorities
• Programs—determine priorities, monitor implementation & measure impact
• Efficiency & impact—ensure a realistic budget that maximizes use of resources
• Board development—select and orient new board members; organize to operate efficiently; & assess own performance

3. The board may constitute board committees to help it fulfill its governance role.

4. When governing, the board acts as a whole and directs the work of the executive director.

Board Support Role:

5. When acting in their support role, individual board members represent the organization’s interests to the community. They promote the organization’s work to the community and build community support. They also support the executive director.

6. Board members and other volunteers, acting as individuals or through program committees, provide a variety of support:
   • Fundraising—contribute, raise funds, or assist staff in doing so
   • Public relations & community contacts—act as ambassador to community
   • Volunteerism—volunteer or recruit volunteers
   • Advisory—advise staff in areas of expertise or serve as sounding board
   • Reputation—lend name & credibility

7. When acting in their support role, individual board members may lend expertise and make suggestions to staff members, but they cannot direct them to do things.

Board President’s Role—Managing the Board

8. The president manages the work of the board, but does not supervise or direct staff.

9. The president maintains close communications with the executive director.

10. The president, or her delegate, is the official spokesperson for the board’s policies and positions.

Executive Director’s Role—Implementing Policy and Managing the Organization

11. The executive director manages the organization. The executive director and his/her staff are responsible for implementing the plans adopted by the board, aided and supported by individual board members and other volunteers.

12. The executive director’s roles include:
   • Program development, implementation, and evaluation
   • External relations
   • Managing staff, volunteers, and consultants
   • Budgeting and fundraising
13. The executive director also works in partnership with the board, assisting it in fulfilling its governance role.

14. The executive director may create program committees (and appoint committee chairs) to help her fulfill her management role.

15. The executive director is the primary spokesperson for the organization as a whole.

**Volunteers—Supporting the Foundation and the Executive Director**

16. Volunteers are critical to the successful operation of The Foundation. They play major roles in all areas of the organization’s work and are strongly valued and well utilized.

17. The primary role of non-board member volunteers is to support the Foundation by assisting the Executive Director in implementing the plans and program priorities adopted by the board.

18. Volunteers may lend expertise and make suggestions to the executive director and other staff, but they cannot direct them to do things.
The executive director is the chief executive officer of the Arboretum Foundation. He/she manages the work of staff, volunteers, and the organization’s operations. The executive director reports to the board of directors, provides overall leadership for the Foundation, and is responsible for the organization’s consistent achievement of its mission and goals. The executive director must manage the Foundation within a complex organizational structure, which includes the University of Washington and the City of Seattle.

The Executive Director’s Role in Program Development, Implementation, and Evaluation:

- Ensures that the organization has a long-range strategy that achieves its mission, and toward which it makes consistent and timely progress.
- Recommends and implements policies and strategies in support of the mission and vision while ensuring alignment with the values of the organization.
- Manages the day-to-day activities and operations of the Arboretum Foundation. Develops and implements operational policies.
- Develops and implements work plans that support the policies, strategies, and budgets adopted by the board.
- Conducts program evaluations using criteria that the board has reviewed and approved.
- Maintains official records and documents, and ensures compliance with federal, state, and local regulations.
- Maintains a working knowledge of significant developments and trends in the field.
- Attends selected committee meetings and makes monthly reports on the condition of the organization to the executive committee and board of directors.

The Executive Director’s Role in External Relations:

- Works in collaboration with the board to represent the programs, point of view, and public policy positions of the Foundation to agencies, organizations, public officials, and the general public. Generally serves as the spokesperson for the organization.
▪ Is an effective contributor to the collaborative partnership of the Arboretum to ensure that all three organizations positively impact the stewardship, maintenance, preservation, and development of the park. Respects and supports the different roles of the University and the City.

▪ Works with partner organizations (City and University) to plan strategically for the long-term success of the Arboretum.

▪ Plays an important role in increasing appreciation and support for the Arboretum within the entire Puget Sound region.

▪ Develops strong relationships with individuals, community groups, and organizations, including our Arboretum partners.

▪ Publicizes the activities, programs, and goals of the organization.

▪ Develops effective community outreach tactics to develop and manage the reputation, visibility, and messaging of the Foundation with diverse audiences.

The Executive Director’s Role in Relations with Staff, Volunteers, and Consultants:

▪ Creates and manages an effective staff team. Recruits, hires, oversees, mentors, coaches, and terminates, when appropriate, all personnel, both paid staff and volunteers.

▪ Promotes active and broad participation of volunteers in all areas of the organization’s work, and ensures that volunteers are strongly valued and well utilized.

▪ Ensures that job descriptions are developed, regular performance evaluations are held, and sound human resource practices are in place.

▪ Determines staff pay increases in accordance with the budget for staff compensation.

▪ Sees that an effective management team, with appropriate provision for succession, is in place.

▪ Encourages staff and volunteer development and education, and assists staff and volunteers in working as a team.

▪ Maintains a climate that attracts, keeps, and motivates a diverse staff of top quality people, both staff and volunteer.

▪ Builds organizational capacity to fulfill the present and growing demands on the Foundation and Arboretum.

▪ Hires and manages consultants and contractors, consistent with adopted annual budgets, and consults with the board as appropriate.

▪ Appoints chairs for program committees, in consultation with the board president, and develops job descriptions for program committees.

The Executive Director’s Role in Budgeting and Fundraising:

▪ Works collaboratively with the board, the Campaign Cabinet, staff, and partners to move the capital campaign and implementation of the Master Plan forward.

▪ Develops and maintains sound financial practices.

▪ Works with the staff, Finance Committee, and the board in preparing a budget; sees that the organization operates within budget guidelines.
• Works in partnership with the board to ensure that adequate funds are available to permit the organization to carry out its work.
• Conducts official correspondence and executes legal documents, working with the president, secretary of the board, or other designated officers, as appropriate.

The Executive Director’s Role in Helping the Board Govern Effectively:

• Works in partnership with the board to strengthen the governance of the organization.
• Prepares analyses of policy alternatives and makes recommendations to the board for consideration and adoption.
• Provides direct support for board governance committees and program committees or designates other staff to do so.
• Helps the board identify and comply with legal requirements.
Board members serve two roles: (a) they act together to govern the organization’s affairs, setting direction, establishing priorities and protecting the organization’s assets; and (b) they act as individuals or through committees to support the organization by volunteering, raising money, advising, and promoting it in the community. On the one hand, the board, acting as a whole, is responsible for the overall health and direction of the organization. On the other hand, individual board members support the work of staff as volunteers and advisors.

The Board’s Governing Role
Acting together as a whole body or in committees with delegated authority, board members ensure that public and private resources are used to benefit the community and the public. Specifically, board members fulfill these responsibilities:

- **Determine the mission and purpose of the Foundation**
  The board creates and periodically reviews a statement of mission, vision, and purpose for the organization. They also create overall organizational goals and identify primary constituents, consistent with the mission and vision. The Board should ensure that each board member fully understands and supports the mission.

- **Select the executive director**
  The board determines executive director responsibilities, and undertakes a thorough search and selection process to obtain the most qualified candidate for the job.

- **Provide resources to the executive director and evaluate his or her performance**
  The board ensures that the executive director has the support he or she needs to achieve the goals of the organization. The board annually performs a performance assessment of the executive director based upon mutually agreed upon annual goals. The board also determines the executive director’s salary and benefits.

- **Ensure effective organizational planning**
  The board works with staff to set policy directions and policy positions, and to determine major strategies and organizational priorities.

- **Approve and monitor fundraising strategies**
  The board works with staff to develop fundraising plans so that the Foundation has adequate resources to fulfill its mission, and monitors effective implementation of fundraising strategies.
- **Determine and assess program priorities**
  The board determines which programs are most consistent with the organization’s mission and goals, monitors their implementation, and measures their impact.

- **Safeguard assets**
  The board safeguards the Foundation’s assets and ensures that adequate investment goals and financial controls are in place.

- **Manage resources efficiently and effectively**
  The board ensures that the annual budget is realistic and maximizes the use of resources to reach goals, and the board reviews financial statements and monitors execution of the budget.

- **Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability**
  The board is ultimately responsible for seeing that legal requirements, contractual obligations, and ethical norms are adhered to. The board is also responsible for ensuring that the organization’s activities are transparent to its partners and to the community.

- **Ensure the board’s capacity to govern effectively**
  The board selects and orient new board members and organizes itself to operate effectively. It also periodically assesses its own performance in fulfilling its governance and support roles.

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**The Board’s Support Role**

Acting individually or in committees, board members are also responsible for promoting the organization’s work to the community, building community support, and supporting the executive director and staff in achieving Foundation goals. Board members provide a variety of support, including:

- **Fundraising**
  Board members contribute funds to the Foundation, raise funds from others, or assist staff in implementing the fundraising strategies.

- **Public and government relations & community contacts (*)**
  Board members act as ambassadors to the community, articulating the organization’s mission, accomplishments, and goals to the public. They also advocate for the Arboretum and in support of public policy positions, and encourage broad and influential community support for the Arboretum and the Foundation.

- **Partner relations (*)**
  Board members work in partnership with the executive director to develop and maintain strong and productive working relationships with the City of Seattle and University of Washington.

- **Volunteerism**
  Board members volunteer to support programs and events, recruit other volunteers, and encourage and support volunteer participation.

- **Advisory**
  Board members advise staff in their areas of expertise, and act as a sounding board for the executive director and staff. Board members may provide encouragement to staff. While they may
make suggestions to staff, individual board members may not direct them to do things. Only when board members act as a whole, in their governing role, do they direct the work of the executive director and his or her staff.

- **Reputation (*)**
  Board members lend their name and credibility to the Foundation when they serve on the board and advocate for the organization in the community.

(* Note: In several support roles, when individual board members are representing the interests of the organization to the community or partners, they are supporting the work of the whole board as well as the staff.)
The president of the board of directors manages the work of the board. The president ensures that the board is effective in governing and supporting the organization, and oversees board affairs. The president understands and respects the Arboretum Foundation’s history and relationship with our City and University partners. The president acts as the representative of the board as a whole on policy matters, rather than as an individual supervisor to staff. Specifically, the president has the following duties:

Working with the Board of Directors:

**Board Affairs**

Ensures that board matters are handled properly, being faithful to adopted processes and policies, and maintains the integrity of the board governance process in the following areas:

- Oversees committee functioning.
- Assures that all members of the board are informed about matters of concern to the full board.
- Makes decisions on behalf of the board that fall within and are consistent with a reasonable interpretation of board policies on governance process and on the board-executive director relationship. The president has no authority to make policy-related decisions beyond policies created by the board.
- Ensures all board members respect the roles and responsibilities of individual members and the board as a whole.
- Ensures all board members have been properly oriented on board matters.
- Ensures appropriate governing policies are in place.
- Assures that all board members are assigned to committees or are otherwise active in the organization.
- Establishes a process for the annual executive director performance evaluation, including mutually agreed upon goals that serve as the basis for the evaluation. Facilitates and summarizes (or delegates authority to do so) the board’s evaluation of the executive director.
- When necessary, establishes a search and selection committee when hiring an executive director and negotiates the compensation and benefits package.

**Meetings**

Develops agendas for meetings in concert with the executive director and ensures pre-meeting materials are accurate, timely, and helpful.
Monitors board behavior to ensure that it is consistent with its own rules and polices and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside the organization. Specifically, the president:

- Conducts and monitors board meeting deliberations to ensure that board discussion is focused on board governance issues.
- Ensures that board meeting deliberations are fair, open, and thorough, but also efficient, timely, orderly and to the point.
- Chairs board meetings with all the commonly accepted power of that position as described in Robert’s Rules of Order.
- Conducts timely board meeting debriefings and periodic self-assessments to ensure process improvement.

**Committees**

Establishes board governance committees as outlined in the organization’s by-laws and/or policy manual. Appoints governance committee chairs, in consultation with the executive director. Collaboratively prepares job descriptions for governance committees, with the advice and assistance of the committee chairs and executive director, and secures approval of overall committee job descriptions from the board. Ensures that work plans for governance committees are developed that clarify assignments, timelines and committee roles that differentiate between support and governance roles. Ensures that the work of the governance committees is carried out, and collaborates with committee chairs in bringing that work forward to the full board.

**Legal Activities**

Signs contracts approved by the board, consistent with the policy manual. All communications with legal counsel shall be with the executive director and/or the board president.

**Transition Planning**

Provides the incoming president with important documents and background materials (e.g., copies of historic documents, status and background materials relating to outstanding issues, suggested list of important work ahead, and past committee assignments).

**Working with the Executive Director:**

- Works in partnership with the executive director as a team member in a complex delivery system, helping to foster good relationships with the University and the City to enhance the Foundation’s ability to achieve its goals. Meets on a regular basis with the executive director to understand the organization’s challenges and to coordinate activities with executive director.
- Maintains close communication with the executive director and provides encouragement and feedback to the director and staff on behalf of the board.
- Provides confidential advice and assistance as appropriate to the executive director refraining from exercising any authority as an individual to supervise or direct the executive director.
Working with the Community:

- The president serves as the board’s official spokesperson, in coordination with the executive director. This role can be delegated to other board members when appropriate. (Note: the executive director will generally serve as the spokesperson for the Foundation.)

- The president represents the board on numerous external committees, including the Arboretum Botanical Committee, special partnership coordination committees, the University of Washington Forestry Visiting Committee (or subsequent College of the Environment Visiting Committee) and other external committees as appropriate. This role can be delegated to other board members when appropriate.

- The president serves as the representative of the Foundation at a variety of ceremonial events.
Appendix A: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

The following individuals and groups were interviewed by committee members and/or John Howell during the Strategic Planning Committee’s planning process. An asterisk indicates which stakeholders commented on the draft strategic plan in October 2009; several of these were also interviewed at the beginning of the planning process.

Arboretum Foundation staff *
Arboretum Foundation volunteers *
Arboretum Foundation unit leaders *
ABGC members *
Bloedel Reserve
Cascade Land Conservancy
Tim Gallagher, Superintendent, Seattle Parks & Recreation *
Jay Green
Donald Harris, Real Estate Manager, Seattle Parks & Recreation *
Dennis Hartmann, Interim Dean, College of the Environment *
Tom Hinckley, Interim Director, School of Forest Resources *
Fred Hoyt, Associate Director, UWBG *
Duane Kelly
Sandra Lier, Executive Director, UWBG *
Long Live the Kings
Mountain to Sound Greenway
Northwest Horticultural Society
Northwest Perennial Alliance
Judy Phillips, Arboretum Foundation volunteer *
Sarah Reichard, Associate Director, UWBG *
Rhododendron Species Foundation
Seattle Parks Foundation
Sierra Club
Dave Towne, Chair, UWBG *
The Nature Conservancy
Trust for Public Lands of Washington
Washington Trails
Phyllis Wise, Provost, University of Washington *
Appendix B: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS (SWOT) ANALYSIS

July 13, 2009

The following list of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats was created by John Howell. It merges comments contributed by the Arboretum Foundation Board, the Strategic Planning Committee, and various stakeholders who were interviewed in 2006 and 2009.

Strengths

- Independence and size create flexibility to do things that partners cannot accomplish on their own. Do not have to answer to another body.
- Serve as an advocate for the arboretum. The Foundation considers all needs within the Arboretum.
- A track record of success that includes some major accomplishments – master plan, Graham visitor Center, fundraising for master plan and Japanese Garden, and opening of Pacific Connections
- Longevity creates some credibility
- Connects the public with the Arboretum - Provides volunteer opportunities
- Advocates on behalf of the entire Arboretum, not just a portion (i.e. specific programming or certain physical features)
- Volunteer base and unit structure create opportunities for growth
- Volunteer and membership base increases organizational stability – i.e. ability to weather fluctuations in financial contributions. A strong membership base.
- Volunteer base provides clout for policy work
- Quality of professional staff
- Improved relationships with partners (City and UW); increased credibility with partners. Partnerships provide access to City and UW decisions makers.
- More clarity among partners regarding roles and responsibilities, particularly regarding fundraising
- Acknowledgement of need to adapt; an openness to change
- Foundation provides a strong vision for the Arboretum
- Name identifies purpose and place
- Talented Board with a variety of expertise
- Have been able to provide operational support for the Arboretum
- Good published materials – i.e. the Bulletin is a useful resource
- Earned income sources (e.g. plant sales, etc.)
- Endowment and significant reserve provide financial stability
Weakenes

- From time to time the three-party structure creates tension among the partners. Continue to have some tension with partners around operational issues (i.e. Graham Visitor Center). No formalized written agreements on use of facilities.
- Three-party structure is difficult to explain to the public and donors
- Independence from partner organizations can also result in lack of support
- Some partners don’t see the Foundation as an equal partner
- Is not perceived as an entity that can successfully complete a very large capital campaign (i.e. $60-$75 million for master plan). Perception that Foundation is fledgling fundraiser.
- Insufficient resources to support large enterprise
- Difficult to raise funds for operations and maintenance
- Small endowment
- Dependence on donor contributions, particularly in current economic climate, creates financial instability
- Insufficient attention paid to volunteer base (including units) and membership
- Declining membership.
- Need more money, allies and advocates to accomplish goals
- Units have a narrow focus on gardening
- Foundation perceived as exclusive/stodgy; broad audience may not feel welcome
- Weak messaging – Why is the arboretum relevant? Why is the Foundation relevant? There is a lack of consistent and compelling messaging
- Three-party structure makes decision making harder and more cumbersome
- Lack of strategic analysis about Foundation fundraising model
- No real property assets
- Lack of operational and institutional systems/policies
- Foundation members and Arboretum users not demographically diverse

Opportunities

- Increased communication with volunteer and membership base. As some are no longer able to do physical labor they may become, or continue, to be donors
- Use the Arboretum space (230 acres) more effectively for events, functions, etc
- Utilize/align use of Arboretum space along with use of UWBG space
- Take advantage of SR520 decision-making process to benefit Arboretum. Take advantage of SR520 mitigation funding. Good design of SR520 could improve Arboretum features.
- Diminished resources among partners creates opportunity for Foundation to play a leadership role in fundraising and building volunteer base
- In difficult economic times people are looking for other ways to contribute, other than financial contributions
- Create a more vibrant urban park/attraction woven into daily life – i.e. connected to public transit, bike, and pedestrian corridors
- Renewed interest in urban agriculture; support and/or create food gardens
- The new College of the Environment – the Arboretum can become an important location for research and education about environmental sustainability. The new College could provide active, well-funded support.
• Arboretum Creek restoration – connect the public with the Arboretum in a new ways
• Build new partnerships – with business community and UW students who are required to perform community service, and with other foundations (Seattle Park Foundation and Miller Foundation).
• Increasing public interest in urban forests and environmental issues – environmental awareness is growing. Interest/concern about climate change.
• Describe the importance of the Arboretum as an important scientific asset.
• The Arboretum can become part of the University’s outdoor classroom
• Location in the heart of the city
• Generate revenue by selling carbon credits
• Utilize the three-way partnership (with City and UW) in new ways
• Create new partnerships; potentially on issues such as environmental protection, education, or stewardship or urban agriculture (e.g. Seattle Tilth, IslandWood, Home Waters, etc.)
• Create stronger partnerships with other horticultural groups (e.g. Blodel, Dunn Gardens, Betty Miller Gardens, Rhododendren Species Society, etc.)
• Recruit a new generation of leaders for the Arboretum, serving as Foundation Board members
• Diversify the membership base and Arboretum users – younger and ethnically diverse
• Take advantage of new organizational model, i.e. defined roles for volunteers and staff
• Plan a new signature event if Flower Show is discontinued

Threats

• Aging volunteer and membership base
• Arboretum supporters and users do not reflect the demographics of city population
• Economic downturn
• Pubic apathy for traditional gardening; declining interest in ornamental gardening
• What happens with SR520
• Increased traffic on Montlake Boulevard
• Lack of alignment between the Foundation and contemporary interests and trends; e.g. climate change, environmental sustainability, urban agriculture, etc.
• New organizations created in the last two decades are competitors (also possibly partners) – i.e. IslandWood
• Lack of cache and visibility
• Climate change and its impact on the Arboretum
• College of the Environment may not support the Arboretum or UWBG.
• The community may hold the Arboretum Foundation responsible for outcome of SR520 design decisions, and resultant impacts on the Arboretum and the community
• The new organizational model is in its early stages of implementation
• Loss of the Flower Show
• Reduced State funding for the University

Italic text – From 2006 stakeholder interviews
Plain text – Strategic Planning Committee May 15
Bold text – Board Meeting May 20
Bold & Italic text – From 2009 stakeholder interviews
During October 2009, members of the strategic planning committee met with a number of Arboretum Foundation stakeholders to discuss our draft strategic plan (see Appendix A for a list of interviewees). A number of these stakeholders were also interviewed at the beginning of our strategic planning process. This document summarizes and analyzes several themes that emerged from those meetings and interviews.

1. All stakeholders agreed that the plan is very good and we are headed in the right directions. No one said that our draft goals and strategies were incomplete or inappropriate. Most praised our leadership role, and described the plan as “excellent, comprehensive, clear, and/or measurable.”

2. Several interviewees mentioned that the plan not only sets priorities for the Foundation, but it will also serve as a catalyst for future planning by UWBG, Parks & Recreation, and ABGC. As these plans are completed, it will be important to revisit our plan to make sure it synchronizes with our partners’ plans.

3. Several people said the plan is “very ambitious,” and we will need to set doable, near-term priorities (with metrics) so we don’t spread ourselves too thin. Our staff was particularly concerned about the demands of this draft plan. Many staff members are already feeling overwhelmed and “burnt out” from planning and delivering events. Many are working 55-60 hour weeks and have little time for the thinking and analysis this plan requires. Staff also stressed that we need to build on sound work that we are already doing, and that they would appreciate support to help them develop sound implementation/operating/work plans.

4. UW leaders we interviewed agreed that WPA, UWBG, and the Foundation are underutilized assets for the University, particularly the new College of the Environment. “WPA is a cheap avenue for connecting to the community; it reaches neighbors, alumni, and environmentalists, and offers multiple research and educational opportunities.” Our challenge is to “turn lots of positives into an integrated whole.” We also need to ensure that WPA is a priority use of 520 mitigation funding.

5. There is considerable interest among UW leaders in exploring a closer, and deeper relationship between the Foundation and UWBG, as well as enhancing the role of UWBG/WPA within the University and the community. Several mentioned that it is important that the Foundation and UWBG both see how their work is connected, how their organizations and assets are parts of a bigger whole. Changes in leadership and economic pressures have opened windows of opportunity for thinking outside the box about how to use our collective assets more strategically.
6. Volunteers, unit leaders, and staff all seek closer relationships with the Board and increased understanding about how their work connects to the Foundation’s goals and strategies. They also stressed the need for clarifying the roles of UWBG and the Foundation, especially in the areas of education and communication.

7. Priority work mentioned most frequently included:
   - Ensuring efficient and effective use of existing fundraising resources (Strategy 1a);
   - Supporting improved maintenance of WPA (Strategy 1f);
   - Increasing and broadening Foundation membership (Strategy 2a);
   - Improving the Foundation’s strategic communications and outreach (Strategy 3c);
   - Working with our partners to increase use of the Arboretum (Strategy 4b);
   - Exploring a closer collaboration among the Foundation, UWBG, and other UW leaders/groups regarding the Arboretum and Union Bay area (Strategy 5a).

8. Our partner UWBG is under considerable financial pressure to increase private revenue streams—from earned-income, individuals, and grants. This could lead to greater competition between UWBG and the Foundation, and increases the importance of finding new ways to work together more collaboratively.

9. All stakeholders suggested specific tactics for implementing our plan. A complete list of these tactics will be shared with our staff, but here are a few examples of the kinds of additional activities stakeholders suggested (cross referenced to strategy numbers):
   - Evaluate the roles of staff and volunteers in managing events, and recommend needed changes. (S1a)
   - Research fundraising models of other public gardens and support groups. (S1b)
   - Train volunteer coordinators to oversee maintenance work parties in the Arboretum. (S1f, S2b)
   - Evaluate offering discounted and temporary free memberships. (S2a)
   - Market volunteer opportunities to retiring business employees. (S2b)
   - Clarify who is responsible for strategic messaging about the Arboretum as a whole. (S3c)
   - Market educational opportunities provided by partners and other organizations. (S4a, S5e)
   - Increase use of GVC as a hub for horticultural and educational activities. (S4a)
   - Work with our partners to prioritize wayfinding as a strategy for increasing use of WPA. (S4b)
   - Work with UWBG to design and implement a survey of WPA/UWBG users. (S4b)
   - Work with the College of the Environment to convene UW faculty to discuss how UWBG/WPA could become more valued assets for UW and the community. (S5c, S4b)
   - Engage the Jackson School and trade and tourism groups in thinking about how to use the Pacific Connections gardens to advance their goals. (S5g, S4b, S4c)

10. Volunteers, unit leaders, and staff all seek closer relationships with the Board and increased understanding about how their work connects to the Foundation’s goals and strategies. They also stressed the need for clarifying the roles of UWBG and the Foundation, especially in the areas of education and communication.
11. Priority work mentioned most frequently included:
   • Ensuring efficient and effective use of existing fundraising resources (Strategy 1a);
   • Supporting improved maintenance of WPA (Strategy 1f);
   • Increasing and broadening Foundation membership (Strategy 2a);
   • Improving the Foundation’s strategic communications and outreach (Strategy 3c);
   • Working with our partners to increase use of the Arboretum (Strategy 4b);
   • Exploring a closer collaboration among the Foundation, UWBG, and other UW leaders/groups regarding the Arboretum and Union Bay area (Strategy 5a).

12. Our partner UWBG is under considerable financial pressure to increase private revenue streams—from earned-income, individuals, and grants. This could lead to greater competition between UWBG and the Foundation, and increases the importance of finding new ways to work together more collaboratively.

13. All stakeholders suggested specific tactics for implementing our plan. A complete list of these tactics will be shared with our staff, but here are a few examples of the kinds of additional activities stakeholders suggested (cross referenced to strategy numbers):

   o Evaluate the roles of staff and volunteers in managing events, and recommend needed changes. (S1a)
   o Research fundraising models of other public gardens and support groups. (S1b)
   o Train volunteer coordinators to oversee maintenance work parties in the Arboretum. (S1f, S2b)
   o Evaluate offering discounted and temporary free memberships. (S2a)
   o Market volunteer opportunities to retiring business employees. (S2b)
   o Clarify who is responsible for strategic messaging about the Arboretum as a whole. (S3c)
   o Market educational opportunities provided by partners and other organizations. (S4a, S5e)
   o Increase use of GVC as a hub for horticultural and educational activities. (S4a)
   o Work with our partners to prioritize wayfinding as a strategy for increasing use of WPA. (S4b)
   o Work with UWBG to design and implement a survey of WPA/UWBG users. (S4b)
   o Work with the College of the Environment to convene UW faculty to discuss how UWBG/WPA could become more valued assets for UW and the community. (S5c, S4b)
   o Engage the Jackson School and trade and tourism groups in thinking about how to use the Pacific Connections gardens to advance their goals. (S5g, S4b, S4c)
Arboretum Foundation 2010-2012 Strategic Plan

Appendix D: TACTICS SUGGESTED BY STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, PARTNERS
and OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

October 2009

Arboretum Foundation Staff:

S1a: Ensure effective use of fundraising resources
- Evaluate our event management model. When should staff lead; when should they follow volunteer leaders?

S1b: Enhance fundraising capabilities
- Improve Foundation capacity for receiving and acknowledging gifts.
- Ensure that staff has time to capitalize on events to build future donor relationships.

S2d: Ensure successful implementation of the strategic plan
- Provide support to staff to help them develop good implementation and operating plans.

S3c: Improve strategic communications
- Clarify who does strategic messaging about the Arboretum as a whole, rather than simply the Foundation.

S4a: Expand educational programs
- Couple social events with educational opportunities; e.g., offering WPA tours at the ice cream social.
- Market educational opportunities provided by partners and other organizations; e.g., Master Gardener programs at WPA and at UWBG.
- Offer regular, quarterly classes or other educational opportunities for staff, volunteers, and members.
- Use GVC conference room as a hub for horticultural activities.
- Work with UWBG to clarify responsibility for providing various educational programs.
- Research our past involvement with educational programs.

Volunteer Advisory Committee:

S2a: Increase membership
- Evaluate whether volunteers automatically become members.
- Evaluate whether unit members are automatically members when the unit pays dues.
- Use events to increase membership.
- Offer members the option of receiving the Bulletin electronically.
- Consider offering free memberships for a limited time (3 years?) but charging for the Bulletin.
- Offer hands-on and valued learning opportunities to members; consider charging for these as well as events.
- Offer discounted memberships to students in horticultural and related college programs.
- Develop a systematic plan for retaining as well as recruiting members.

S2b: Increase number and use of volunteers
• Support unit fundraising, including help with tax issues (e.g., acknowledging charitable gifts, auctions).
• Recruit new retirees in business settings.
• Recruit youth at schools that have volunteer/community service requirements.
• Provide opportunities to expand social networks and relationships.
• Understand and meet the interests of individual volunteers.
• Advertise unit opportunities to members.
• Inform volunteers on a regular basis about Foundation history, the Master Plan, and current goals.
• Ensure that Groundwork is published on a timely basis.

S2d: Ensure successful implementation of the strategic plan
• Involve the Volunteer Advisory Committee and unit leaders in implementation planning, and regularly report on progress toward meeting plan goals.
• Include metrics so success is measurable.
• Research other support organizations as we develop tactics for implementing the plan.

S3c: Improve communications and outreach
• Explain partner roles—who does what.

S4a: Expand educational programs
• Seek sponsors (possibly units) for K-12 field trips.
• Increase understanding of the Master Plan and Capital Campaign.

S4b: Develop plans with partners to increase use of the Arboretum
• Prioritize wayfinding as critical to increasing use.
• Assess the impact of Lake Washington Blvd, the closure of Arboretum Drive, and lack of parking (sometimes exacerbated by rental events) on use of WPA.
• Consider using the GVC conference room primarily as a meeting/learning space for potential users rather than as a rental facility.
• Develop an effective marketing plan for the Arboretum.

S4e: Reach out to new communities
• Market the Arboretum to Chambers of Commerce, tourism organizations, and new residents.
• Utilize state relationships to promote the Arboretum.

S5b: Clarify and strengthen partner roles
• Clarify who does what in education.

ABGC:

S 4b: Develop plans to increase use of WPA
• Work with UWBG to design & implement a survey of WPA/UWBG users.

Other Individual Stakeholders:

S 1b: Enhance fundraising capabilities
• Ensure that fundraising is “donor centric.”
• Review research on public garden support groups.

S1c: Increase and diversify the Foundation’s revenue base
• Tent the courtyard and rent it for events

S1f: Support maintenance of WPA
• Ensure that WPA is part of Green Seattle Partnership (a volunteer resource for removing invasives).
• Review and clarify the roles of Parks and UWBG in maintaining WPA.
• Design additive, “work party” volunteer programs that do not replace City unionized workers.
• Evaluate using interns linked to UW classes.
• Enlist UWBG grounds keepers to train volunteer coordinators, who in turn manage teams of volunteers during periodic work parties in WPA.
• Consider involving youth groups in helping to maintain WPA.

S2a: Increase membership
• Clearly communicate the benefits of membership, including nursery discounts.

S2b: Increase number & use of volunteers
• Give free or lower-cost memberships to volunteers.
• Give volunteers a one day pass to the Japanese Garden.

S3b: Advocate to reduce/mitigate the impacts of SR520
• Encourage UW to prioritize mitigation at WPA by reminding leaders how highly donors and alumni value WPA.

S3c: Improve strategic communications
• Capitalize on existing resources at UWBG, as well as the Foundation. (e.g., Jennifer Youngman, a resource to UWBG, is a social media expert).

S4b: Develop plans with partners to increase use of WPA
• Work with CoEnv to feature WPA on their website.
• Work with CoEnv to convene UW faculty to discuss how UWBG/WPA could become more valued assets for UW and the community.
• Periodically close Washington Park Blvd
• Address parking limitations in WPA.
• Develop WPA events that people look forward to (cg, the Japanese Garden).
• Develop a clear brand and messaging that all partners use to talk about WPA.
• Engage Dr. Emmert, his wife, and Connie Kravatz to help frame WPA as an important asset for connecting UW to the community.
• Engage the Jackson School and trade & tourism groups in thinking about how to use the Pacific Connections gardens to advance their goals.
• Ensure that the UW light rail stop features WPA and how to get there.
• Work with UWBG to provide more information to visitors about WPA.

S5a: Explore closer collaboration with UW
• Evaluate the Zoo and Aquarium as models of collaboration
• Start with small steps (e.g., more joint planning in education and communication) and build to a bigger picture.

S5b: Clarify and strengthen partner roles
• Research other similar models involving Arboretum connected with Universities and other partners.

S5e: Establish partnerships with other horticultural organizations
• Seek opportunities to bring horticultural groups together to work together more collaboratively.
• Research partnership opportunities with Master Gardeners.
• Ensure that horticultural organizations enjoy priority use of GVC.
• Capitalize on existing partnerships between horticultural organizations and UWBG (e.g., Bloedel donates plants to the herbarium).
Appendix E: SUMMARY of STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT

November 7, 2009

Present:
Board members--Della Balick, Susan Black, Sabra Contreras, Cheryl dos Remedios, Allan Ferrin, David Hervey, Brice Maryman, Elizabeth Moses, Kathleen Pierce, Michael Shiosaki, Craig Trueblood, Skip Vonckx, Iris Wagner, & Barbara Wright.
Staff members—Greg Cato, Eleanor Lien, Paige Miller, Suzanne Parker, & Julia Maywald.
Consultant --John Howell

Plan clarifications and additions:
Attendees discussed the continuing confusion about the relationships among entities related to the Arboretum, including Parks & Rec, UWBG, CUH, the Japanese Garden Advisory Council, and the Arboretum Foundation. While we often focus on differences among these groups, the public wants to see us as a whole. It is especially important to resolve “us” and “them” views of the Foundation and UWBG, and to market assets at both Washington Park Arboretum and Union Bay and make people feel welcome.

The following additions to the plan’s strategies were suggested:
1. Include in strategy 1a or 1b the idea of increasing satisfaction and loyalty among current and prospective donors, using a donor centric fundraising model.
2. Include general financial management and stewardship of operating funds, as well as endowment and capital funds, as part of strategy 1d.
3. Include investments in infrastructure as part of strategy 2e, and add tactics about improving data management systems and policies.
4. Include increasing job satisfaction and loyalty as part of strategy 2f.

Kathleen Pierce will revise the strategies to include these concepts and circulate them to all attendees for comment, with a final statement of goals and strategies to be presented to the Board for adoption on November 19th.

Attendees also mentioned several tactics:
1. Add a tactic to strategy 4c about defining our region and who we intend to serve.
2. Under strategy 5c, include tactics regarding advocating on behalf of the Arboretum with the City Council and the Mayor.
3. Under strategy 4d, add the tactic of creating a brochure about the Arboretum.

Implications of the draft strategic plan:
Working in small groups, attendees discussed whether the plan establishes new directions for the Foundation and what it will take to accomplish this plan. Reports included the following ideas:
The plan doesn’t cover much new ground, but Goal 4 (Foster greater awareness, appreciation, and use of the Arboretum) is a change of focus. This goal will require an investment in communications, which is not a current expertise of the Foundation.

The Foundation lacks infrastructure (including computers, phones, databases, and other systems) that will be needed to implement the plan and increase efficiency.

We will need to work with the City and UW to develop a common vision for the Arboretum. The plan puts us out front—in a proactive, rather than reactive, role.

Developing a different relationship with UWBG (including a potentially different fundraising role for us) is critical but will require lots of work. Things to think about: If we focus on WPA and Union Bay, will this dilute our focus on the Master Plan? What are the geographic boundaries of the Arboretum?

This plan provides a framework for implementing the Master Plan; it says how we will do that.

The plan ensures that we will be more business-like, with updated systems and attention to staff retention.

The plan marks our shift from being a primarily volunteer-run organization to a staffed organization, but we need to find new ways to tap into our volunteer resources, to encourage new roles. We also need to develop a sustainable staff plan.

A major challenge will be how to increase the diversity of those who use the Arboretum.

We need better coordination of communication tools, including partners’ websites.

The plan requires us to become intentional about education, with more collaboration between us and UWBG.

The plan allows staff to set priorities and not just react. It will also require a more engaged, policy-oriented board role. “The bar has been raised.”

It will be important to find leverage points—activities that yield multiple benefits.

John Howell highlighted the following common themes regarding plan implications:

- The plan represents a blend of continuity plus new directions
- We will need improvements in infrastructure & systems
- We will also need improved relationships with the UW
- We will need more attention to communications, outreach & marketing
- Fundraising is key to making all of this happen.

Plan priorities and phasing:

Board and staff members discussed which strategies should be prioritized given limits on staff capacity, and used a dot exercise to determine the following priorities:

**Year 1 Priorities:** [This ranking is based on the number of “1” dots, weighted for total dots earned. Strategies 1b & 2e tied for fifth place.]

1. **Strategy 1a:** Ensure the efficient and effective use of existing fundraising resources and maximize donor satisfaction and loyalty.
2. **Strategy 2f:** Enhance job satisfaction and strengthen the Foundation’s human resource capacity to achieve the objectives of the strategic plan.
3. **Strategy 3b:** Continue to advocate for reducing/mitigating the impacts of the SR 520 replacement project on the Arboretum.
4. **Strategy 5a:** Explore the potential for a closer collaboration with the University regarding the use, programming, and support for the Arboretum and the Union Bay area.
5a. **Strategy 1b**: Enhance the fundraising capabilities of the Foundation for both operations and implementation of the master plan.

5b. **Strategy 2e**: Evaluate and develop a plan to address space and equipment needs for the Foundation.

**Year 2 Priorities**: [This ranking is based on the total number of dots, weighted for year 1 dots earned.]

6. **Strategy 2b**: Increase the number of volunteers and broaden the use of the Foundation’s volunteer base.

7. **Strategy 4c**: Actively reach out to communities and groups that reflect the diversity of regional populations and interests.

8. **Strategy 4a**: Expand educational program activities for both youth and adults.

9. **Strategy 5b**: Continue to clarify and strengthen individual and shared roles between the Foundation, the City and the University.

10. **Strategy 3c**: Improve the Foundation’s strategic communications and outreach.

**Draft 2009-2010 Work Plan:**

Working in small groups, participants evaluated the preliminary draft 2009-2010 work plan to determine whether additional work is required to address the recommended priorities and if so, how we can do this given limited staff and board capacity. The following suggestions were made:

**Strategy 1a**: Balance social capital, revenue, and staff time as criteria for analyzing events; also think about event timing, so that we have “cushion time” to reflect. We also need to conduct the analysis, not just adopt criteria, and we need to evaluate our entire fundraising model, including events, membership, sales, bequests, etc. Think about enhancing efficiency.

**Strategy 1b & 1c**: Several activities may not be necessary this fiscal year. Questions were raised about the New Zealand campaign. We need a comprehensive development plan, and should do that before developing a planned giving program.

**Strategy 2e**: Consider space issues (including storage) in connections with discussions with UWBG about closer collaboration (Strategy 5a). Upgrading computers and phones should be a high priority.

**Strategy 2f**: Analyze human resource capacity in terms of our priority strategies, not the entire plan. Think about how improved infrastructure can add efficiencies. Consider multiple training opportunities, including using volunteers.

**Strategy 3b**: Think about our new goals as we advocate for reducing/mitigating SR 520 impacts.

**Strategy 5a**: We may not need a fully developed work plan to explore closer collaboration. Instead we should probably jump to working with the ABGC ad hoc committee and collaborating on the 75th anniversary event.

Paige highlighted the new work she thinks her draft work plan currently reflects, including developing a planned giving program (1c), implementing the strategic plan (2d), working with ABGC to explore closer links between Union Bay & the Arboretum (5a), and working with the state legislature (5d). Options for trimming work include slowing down work on planned giving and possibly not holding the bulb sale.

Paige and her staff will consider these suggestions and the results of the retreat in developing a revised work plan for the board to consider in December. Paige will also develop a rough implementation plan showing sequencing of all the strategies.