

# STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2029



DALLAS ARBORETUM  
AND BOTANICAL GARDEN



MARGARET AND  
JAY SIMMONS LAGOON

# LETTER FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE CHAIR AND PRESIDENT/CEO

It is a new day at the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden. We are thrilled to introduce our new strategic plan, a roadmap that will guide us for the next five years as we continue to bring people and plants together in inspiring, educational, and community-centered ways. We are dedicated to advancing our bold mission to be a garden for all that enriches lives through beauty, learning, and connection.

This strategic plan represents the culmination of months of thoughtful collaboration and input from a diverse array of voices. We deeply value the perspectives of our community, stakeholders, staff, and supporters who have all contributed to shaping our vision for the future.

Our plan outlines key priorities, including increasing access for all to our magnificent gardens, exciting events and festivals, meaningful educational activities for children, and new blockbuster exhibitions. We will also embark on the creation of a 20+ year Master Plan that will transform critical areas of the Arboretum, enhancing the visitor experience and expanding our capacity to serve everyone in the community in innovative ways.

Investing in people and facilities is a cornerstone of our new plan. We recognize that our greatest assets are the dedicated individuals who bring our mission to life every day. We are committed to fostering their growth, well-being, and success. Additionally, we will invest in our facilities to ensure that the Dallas Arboretum remains a vibrant, welcoming, and inspiring space for all.

Organizational, fiscal, and environmental sustainability are at the heart of our plan. We will promote conservation practices and educate our guests and the community about the importance of living in harmony with the natural world. We will also advance fiscal sustainability so that we are here for the region today, tomorrow, and in the long-term future.

This strategic plan is not just a document; it is a promise to our community. We are proud to present a plan that reflects the aspirations and values of those we serve. As we embark on this new chapter, we invite everyone to join us in creating a dynamic future at the Dallas Arboretum.

*Margot B. Murphy*  
**Margot Brito Murphy**  
Strategic Planning Committee Chair

*Sabina H. Carr*  
**Sabina Carr**  
President/CEO





A TASTEFUL PLACE



THE INCREDIBLE EDIBLE  
Rory Meyers Children's Adventure Garden

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# STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Gallagher Consulting Group led a highly inclusive and collaborative strategic planning process for the Dallas Arboretum, focusing on engaging stakeholders and the community. This initiative aimed to ensure that the Arboretum is well-prepared to meet the future needs of the region.

To gather comprehensive insights, the firm implemented a robust stakeholder research methodology that included: completion of 101 personal interviews with organizational leaders, supporters, and partners; an online bilingual survey with members, guests, staff, and volunteers, which yielded 1,046 responses; and four input focus groups with Arboretum staff.

The results of the research informed the rest of the process which included a workshop for all members of the Board, a retreat with the staff leadership team, and various working sessions and review activities with the Strategic Planning Committee. The process culminated in a review and refinement phase with the Strategic Planning Committee and the full Board, ensuring that all perspectives were integrated.

The Board ultimately voted to adopt the final strategic plan based on the recommendation of the Strategic Planning Committee. This plan will guide the Dallas Arboretum from 2025 to 2029, serving as a dynamic blueprint that is adaptable to significant changes in the environment. It exemplifies a strong commitment to inclusivity and responsiveness, ensuring that the Arboretum remains a cherished resource for Dallas and the community.





VENDOR MARKET  
BLACK HERITAGE CELEBRATION



WALNE FAMILY  
DISCOVERY LAB

# MISSION

The Dallas Arboretum is a garden for all that enriches lives through beauty, learning, and connection.

# VISION

A world-class sanctuary where people and plants flourish in the natural environment.

# CORE VALUES

Our values define who we are, what we believe in, and how we engage with the community and one another. They guide our actions and interactions.

## COMMUNITY

We cultivate connections with our community, embrace diverse perspectives, and foster a sense of belonging so that everyone feels valued and encouraged to connect with nature.

## LEARNING

We provide opportunities for lifelong learning that inspire individuals to appreciate nature and care for the environment.

## INNOVATION

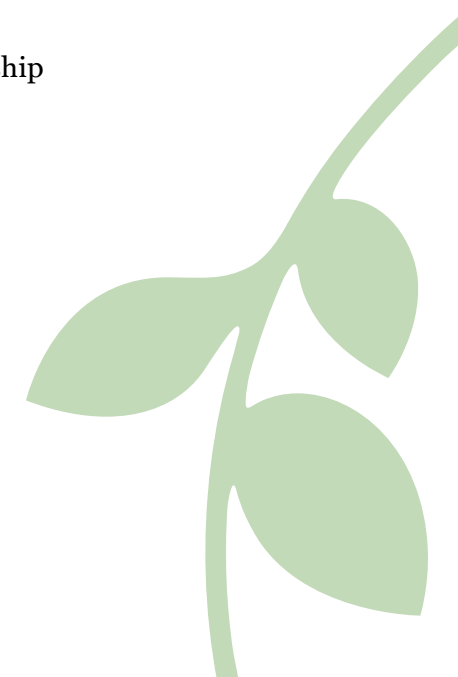
We foster a culture of creative thinking that drives problem-solving and inspires growth.

## SUSTAINABILITY

We are dedicated to climate adaptation and the responsible stewardship of natural and fiscal resources.

# EQUITY STATEMENT

The Dallas Arboretum & Botanical Garden supports diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility and promotes a safe and engaging experience that welcomes all to enjoy. We seek to inspire and engage people of all backgrounds by creating a positive and impactful experience.



# STRATEGIC PILLARS

## ENVIRONMENT

Showcase and preserve the beauty of horticulture through premier plant collections, inspiring garden designs, and welcoming spaces.

## EXCELLENCE

Achieve organizational excellence by modernizing operations and infrastructure, being a best place to work, and ensuring long-term fiscal sustainability.

## ENGAGEMENT

Expand community access and engagement through diverse offerings and communication that connect broad audiences and elevate the Arboretum’s brand.

## EXPERIENCE

Offer accessible and immersive guest experiences that evoke wonder, enjoyment, and discovery through teaching and learning, innovative exhibitions, meaningful programming, and Dallas’ welcoming hospitality.



STRATEGIC PILLAR

ONE

ENVIRONMENT

Showcase and preserve the beauty of horticulture through premier plant collections, inspiring garden designs, and welcoming spaces.

Objective A: Horticulture, Collections, and Gardens

Achieve horticultural excellence by enhancing plant collections, creating beautiful and inspiring garden designs, and obtaining industry accreditations that reflect our commitment to quality.

Objective B: Conservation and Research

Foster a deeper appreciation for and connection to the natural environment by promoting and demonstrating sustainable practices and advancing climate adaptation and research.

Objective C: Facilities

Maintain and upgrade facilities, including historic homes, educational spaces, and the children’s garden, enhancing accessibility and enriching visitor experiences.



DALLAS BLOOMS

Objective D: Master Plan

Create a long-range master plan to enhance facilities and gardens, optimize spaces, and enable growth, while preserving the landscape’s beauty and biodiversity.



## STRATEGIC PILLAR **TWO**

### EXCELLENCE

Achieve organizational excellence by modernizing operations and infrastructure, being a best place to work, and ensuring long-term fiscal sustainability.

#### Objective A: **Talent and Culture**

Be the best place to work by fostering a culture of inclusivity and growth that attracts, retains, and rewards top talent.

#### Objective B: **Financial Strength and Sustainability**

Strengthen financial stability and sustainability by building a robust endowment, increasing earned and contributed revenue, and maximizing efficiencies.

EXCELLENCE...

Objective C: **Process and Procedures**

Improve and modernize internal operations by evaluating, revising, and documenting policies, processes, and procedures for increased efficiency and scalability.

Objective D: **Technology and Data**

Enhance technology and data utilization by modernizing infrastructure and optimizing systems to enable customized communication and inform decision-making throughout the Arboretum.

Objective E: **Governance**

Follow best practices for Board governance to recruit, retain, and develop highly qualified, diverse, engaged Board members, and prepare future leaders of the Arboretum.



CRAPE MYRTLE ALLEE



PLANTS ARE ALIVE  
Rory Meyers Children's Adventure Garden

# STRATEGIC PILLAR

# THREE

## ENGAGEMENT

Expand community access and engagement through diverse offerings and communication that connect broad audiences and elevate the Arboretum’s brand.

**Objective A:** Access

Increase access to the Arboretum and ensure that it is a welcoming “Garden for All.”

**Objective B:** Marketing and Brand

Strengthen and modernize the Arboretum’s marketing and branding to connect with the Dallas community and to promote its unique offerings and mission impact, while elevating the brand as a world-class destination and the number one attraction in Dallas.



TRIAL GARDEN

**Objective C:** Strategic Partnerships

Establish and cultivate diverse strategic partnerships to expand the network of future influencers and supporters of the Arboretum.





## STRATEGIC PILLAR FOUR

### EXPERIENCE

Offer accessible and immersive guest experiences that evoke wonder, enjoyment, and discovery through teaching and learning, innovative exhibitions, meaningful programming, and Dallas' welcoming hospitality.

#### Objective A: Exhibitions

Attract and curate blockbuster visiting exhibitions while refreshing seasonal displays to captivate and educate guests.

#### Objective B: Programming

Create diverse and innovative events, educational programs, and activities, which showcase the gardens, grounds, and facilities, connecting both new and returning guests to the Arboretum.

#### Objective C: Guest Service and Amenities

Elevate services and amenities to enhance guest enjoyment and satisfaction.



# SPECIAL THANKS

## STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Margot Murphy, *Chair*  
Margaret Black  
Will McDaniel  
Regina Montoya  
David Sassano  
Charlie Shufeldt  
ZL Williams

## LEADERSHIP TEAM

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Gary Doubrava  
Christie Eckler  
Amber Slayton  
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Dave Forehand  
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Dustin Miller  
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Holly Mayer  
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Rosser Newton  
Brian Shivers  
Dr. Ann Stuart  
Bob Thornton  
Alan Walne  
Mark Wolf



**DallasArboretum.org**

8525 Garland Road • Dallas, Texas 75218 • 214-515-6515

The Dallas Arboretum is a nonprofit organization supported, in part, by funds from the Dallas Park and Recreation Department.