

Project at a Glance

- **Why is the project needed?**
 - The current Visitor Center opened in 1982, and much has changed at the Missouri Botanical Garden since that time. We now welcome nearly one million visitors each year, compared to 250,000 in 1982. We continue to look for opportunities to welcome more visitors and hold more classes, events, and private functions. The new building will accommodate these needs and improve the overall guest experience at the Missouri Botanical Garden.
- **What new amenities will the new building provide?**
 - The new Visitor Center will offer an enhanced experience for all our visitors. For example, the entrance will be more accessible and will have a new garden with a fountain, benches for gathering and resting, wide pathways, and additional drop-off areas. The shop will include an outdoor plant shop, and there will be more dining options for guests.
 - The new building will also provide more space for private meetings and events, including a separate area for large private events and additional space to gather for groups before entering the Garden.
 - Ticketing will also be streamlined, and a single desk will provide information, ticket sales, membership sales, and security.
 - One amenity we are most excited about is a permanent year-round conservatory, which will house a collection of Mediterranean plants.
- **What is the timeline for the project?**
 - Construction on the Visitor Center will begin in early 2020 and is projected to be completed in 2022. Although it's a two-year project, the Garden will be open throughout construction and visitors will always enter the Garden through a permanent structure.
- **What is the projected cost of the project?**
 - The total cost of the project is projected at \$92M and is privately funded.

Impact of Construction on Visitor Experience

- **Where will visitors enter the Garden during construction?**
 - Visitors to the Garden will always enter through a permanent structure. Throughout 2020, visitors will continue to enter through the current Visitor Center, just as they do now. Once construction is finished on our new event space to the east of the existing Visitor Center, we will temporarily move everyday operations to the new building while we shift construction to the new Visitor Center
- **Where will they buy tickets?**
 - Just as they do now, visitors can buy tickets on our website or at the front desk of the current Visitor Center throughout 2020. Once the new event space to the east of the current structure opens, visitors will be able to buy tickets in the new space. After the entire project is complete, visitors will buy tickets in the main lobby of the new Visitor Center.
- **Will the Garden Gate Shop remain open?**
 - Yes, throughout this project, the Garden Gate Shop will remain open and visitors will be able to purchase products.
- **How will this affect services at Sassafras Café?**
 - Food and beverage service will be provided throughout the duration of the project. The Sassafras Café will continue to operate in the current Visitor Center through 2020 and then relocate to Spink Pavilion for the remainder of the project. Once visitor operations are shifted to the new event space, food and beverage service will also be available at that location. Sassafras Café will resume operation in the new Visitor Center once construction is complete in 2022.
- **Will docents still offer tours?**
 - Yes, we will continue to offer tours.
- **Will trams be affected?**
 - We will continue to run trams throughout the project.
- **Will Café Flora continue to offer brunch?**
 - Yes, brunch will still be offered at Café Flora.

- **Will there still be special exhibits on display during the project?**
 - Yes, we will continue to display special exhibits and host weddings and other events during the project.
- **Where will classes previously held in Ridgway be held now?**
 - Classes will continue to be offered throughout the duration of the project. Classes in Ridgway Visitor Center will remain available through 2020. After that, classes will continue to be held throughout the Garden at various locations.

Impact of Construction on Parking and the Neighborhood

- **How will this affect parking at the Garden?**
 - A limited number of parking spaces will be impacted by the project. We will continue to offer parking and shuttles to our nearby overflow lots surrounding the Garden.
- **Will this affect parking in the neighborhood?**
 - We will use auxiliary parking lots for overflow visitor and staff parking, and we plan to add more signage directing visitors to the off-site parking lots. We will continue to do our best to be mindful of our neighbors.
- **Where will visitors park for special events and festivals?**
 - Visitors will park just as they do now – some on the main lot, others at our auxiliary lots. We will continue to run shuttles.
- **Will parking be an issue for private events?**
 - We don't foresee it being an issue, but we are committed to helping where we can.
- **How can you build a \$92M center with no additional parking?**
 - Within our limited physical space, we had to balance the need for on-site parking with the need for a new visitor center that enhances the guest experience. Parking spaces are about even with what was available in the previous center, and there are a variety of off-site parking options and shuttles, staffed by security personnel.

- **Why not build parking underground?**
 - In addition to being very disruptive to the environment, digging underground is cost prohibitive. It was important for us to create a visitor center to serve future generations of guests while not burdening the taxpayers and our neighbors. This plan is privately funded with no taxpayer support.

Impact of Construction on Garden Events

- **Will special events and festivals continue?**
 - We will still hold signature events and festivals, such as our Whitaker Music Festival, Japanese Festival, and Garden Glow throughout the project.
- **Will the construction change how those events look at all?**
 - Possibly, but if it does it will be to help everyone have an enjoyable experience.
- **Will you still be able to accommodate wedding ceremonies and wedding receptions?**
 - Yes, the Garden will still happily accommodate wedding ceremonies and wedding receptions.
- **Where will the Orchid Show be held?**
 - In 2020, the Orchid Show will still be held in the Ridgway Visitor Center.
- **Where will the Flower and Train Show be held?**
 - In 2019, the Gardenland Express Holiday Flower and Train Show will be held in the Ridgway Visitor Center.
- **Will there still be a holiday wreath auction? Where will it be displayed?**
 - Yes, it will continue throughout 2019 and 2020 in the current Visitor Center.

Impact of Construction on the Garden

- **How will the new Visitor's Center and construction affect the existing Garden grounds?**
 - We are working with the architect and construction manager to ensure there is minimal impact to the existing Garden grounds.

- **Are you removing any trees and plants?**
 - Some trees and shrubs will be removed to accommodate the new facility to the south. More trees, shrubs, flowers, and other plants will be planted north of the new Visitor Center, featuring plants from around the world.
- **Will Linnean House be affected?**
 - Linnean House will retain its historic designation. A door will be added to improve its functionality.
- **What will happen to the iconic glass sculpture at the front of Ridgway?**
 - We are working with the artist to determine where it will be placed in the new Visitor Center.
- **What will happen to the orchid display in Beaumont?**
 - It will be relocated; we are still determining that location.

Funding

- **How will this project be funded?**
 - The funding is coming entirely from private donations. The Garden has already raised nearly 90% of the \$92 million needed, but fundraising efforts will continue.
- **What will this project cost taxpayers?**
 - There is no cost to taxpayers. The project is privately funded.

More Details about the Project

- **What sustainability measures were put in place for the construction?**
 - The Missouri Botanical Garden is committed to accelerating our region's transition to a more sustainable future and will use the United States Green Building Council's LEED rating system to communicate the new visitor center's high-performance attributes. The project is pursuing certification under LEEDv4 and aims to achieve the highest level of certification feasible. The resulting green building and its components will be used as examples of sustainable solutions in educational classes, tours and interpretation.

- **Will the new building be more sustainable than the Ridgway center?**
 - We're excited to include several sustainability measures in the new construction. From start to end, we kept sustainability front and center.
 - The project is targeting reductions in carbon emissions for both construction and operations that will help improve local climate conditions. In addition to designing a building that makes efficient use of its square footage, the project's design team has incorporated biophilic design concepts so visitors will sense they are in a Garden even as they enter the building. The team has also analyzed the building envelope and structural system to enhance selections for steel, concrete, and façade elements to reduce the environmental impacts of construction.
 - When we open the new visitor's center, the optimized energy and water systems will reduce resource consumption during operations. The project features highly efficient mechanical systems that will reduce annual energy expenses by over 20% compared to standard technologies while maintaining comfortable temperature and humidity levels for visitors and plantings. The project will also feature a rooftop solar array that will further reduce energy consumption from fossil fuels. Below-grade cisterns will capture rainwater to irrigate indoor plantings and reduce demand on the municipal potable water system.
- **What is the size of the new building? Is it bigger than the current Visitor Center?**
 - The new visitor center will be 90,000 sf. The current visitor center is 67,000 sf.
- **How did you choose the architect?**
 - There was an extensive RFP process.
- **Why didn't you hire a local architecture firm?**
 - We are always supportive of our St. Louis community. We had St. Louis architecture firms submit as a part of the RFP process, and we chose the firm based on submissions and qualifications. The firm that we chose has a world-renowned reputation and has designed buildings for other St. Louis institutions, including the Danforth Plant Science Center, Washington University, and Cortex. St. Louis-based Tao and Lee Associates is part of the architectural team.

- **Will you use local construction companies?**
 - Yes, St. Louis-based Alberici is serving as the construction manager for the project.
- **What will the new name of the Visitor's Center be?**
 - The new visitor center will be named the Jack C. Taylor Visitor Center in honor of the significant contribution to this project as well as the enduring support of the Garden shown by the Taylor family over the years.
- **How will the new Visitor's Center address accessibility?**
 - Accessibility was a priority in the design of the new visitor's center. We engaged accessibility expert Gina Hillberry, of Cohen Hillberry Architects to ensure guests of all abilities were considered. Gina is working closely with the architecture and design teams to meet all accessibility standards and leverage best practices from previous projects like the Gateway Arch and Busch Stadium.
- **How are you supporting minority-owned and women-owned businesses and enterprises throughout construction?**
 - We are working with Alberici to foster diverse project participation via the inclusion of diverse business enterprises and a diverse workforce with an expectation that minority participation will be maximized within a competitive bid environment. Alberici Constructors will initiate Outreach Forums intended to identify and attract qualified and interested diverse subcontractors/suppliers and project partners.
 - It is our intent to increase the capacity of small, diverse, local firms by providing ample subcontracting opportunities and being a resource for firms throughout the duration of the project. We also will encourage our subcontractors to hire and retain a diverse workforce.