

2020 – 2023 STRATEGIC PLAN KEY GOALS

Be the Sparkling Jewel of the West Side (not the Hidden Gem)

- Generate a “must-visit” feeling and increase attendance from 245,000 to 350,000 visits
- Market and ensure a premier event space through facility upgrades
- Upgrade the physical appearance and merchandise of the gift shop and add food-service
- Play a contributing role in the revitalization of the Garfield Park community

Board Leads: Melvin Cox and Paul Levy

Be the most inclusive campus for nature education in the nation

- Complete the renovation or building of all components of the Children’s Nature Campus (Elizabeth Morse Genius Children’s Garden, Child Wild, Play & Grow)
- Develop plans for a new building – a Nature Education Center – for designated entry, orientation, classrooms, lunchrooms and bathrooms
- Increase accessibility and inclusion for the physical space and program offerings to ensure all audiences have an equitable experience
- Commit to diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion training to ensure we are ready and willing to work with all populations
- Focus on being a destination for teenagers, not just children – and learners of all ages

Board Leads: Vanessa Hall and Alan Bell

Change our name to “Garfield Park Conservatory & Gardens”

- Embrace our role as an urban botanic garden, not only a conservatory, and in so doing, focus on the design and management of the outdoor gardens and designed landscapes
- Be the “go-to” organization in Chicago for urban horticulture
- Rebrand with one Conservatory & Gardens logo, message, and website
- Launch the new logo and branded collateral during the 115th anniversary in 2023

Board Leads: Troy Baresel and Reggie Moore

Build Our Board

- Continue to recruit engaged and invested board members and operate as a high-performing board, that is attractive to civic leaders and philanthropists

- Attract leaders in the civic, corporate, and political life of Chicago who represent the diversity of Chicago and the Conservatory’s visitorship and who are, as a whole, able to support the financial ambitions of the Conservatory
- Perform an audit of Alliance governance documents to ensure top-quality professionalism

Board Leads: Alan Bell and Erika Summers

With all stakeholders, build a roadmap for 2024 and beyond

- Engage in an open discussion with the Chicago Park District to create a plan—over the next decade—to build a sustainable operating plan that defines a new partnership framework
- Together with the Chicago Park District, create an all-in budget for running the Conservatory—and its campus. This budget would clearly delineate all the current costs being borne separately by the Alliance and by the Park District and create a public document that could be used to determine the feasibility of the Alliance raising the funds to support the Conservatory’s total operations.
- Clarify staff (Alliance/Chicago Park District) organizational structure and conduct a staff succession planning exercise
- In collaboration with the Chicago Park District and its partners, revise and update the “Garfield Park Conservatory Campus Framework Plan” from 2004. Completion of a revised plan for the Campus’ original component parts and upgraded outdoor gardens is essential to guide further development and maintenance of the botanic garden campus, as well as to attract funding necessary to realize the campus plan goals.
 - Conservatory
 - City Garden
 - Garfield Market
 - Michaelsen & Rognstad Building
 - Powerhouse
 - Greenhouses
 - Service Road
 - New Nature Education Center

Board Leads: Paul Levy and Peter Schlossman

Mission, Vision, Values and Diversity

Mission

Revise from: “We inspire, educate, and provoke innovation through distinctive programs and experiences in one of the nation’s largest and finest historic conservatories”.

To: Garfield Park Conservatory changes lives through the power of nature.

Vision

Revise from: “Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance changes lives through the power of nature”.

To: Garfield Park Conservatory envisions a world where people embrace and honor the importance of nature.

Values

Garfield Park Conservatory brings together people, plants and culture in an urban oasis like no other in the world. The following values reflect an appreciation for our unique opportunities and guide the visitor experiences we offer and the choices we make.

1. **Community** – As a public garden in a vibrant urban setting, we host a myriad of people, attracted to different dimensions of the Conservatory. We provide a welcoming and nurturing environment to all visitors, as we seek to build “communities of purpose” at the Conservatory.
2. **Education** – We infuse everything we do with enlightening elements to create transformational learning experiences.
3. **Wonder** – Every visit to the Conservatory is surprising and different. We strive to provoke curiosity in every visitor through authentic, fun, and engaging experiences.
4. **Vitality** – As an institution committed to plants and people, we are devoted to promoting human well-being and environmental responsibility. This means embracing sustainable practices and recognizing the regenerative benefits that plants, gardening, and greening have on society.
5. **Performance** – We are accountable to our public, supporters, and partners. We are consistent, and aim for excellence and the highest quality in everything we do.

Commitment to Diversity

The Garfield Park Conservatory work is grounded in the belief that inspiring a love of nature, gardens and natural areas is fundamentally important to the well-being of everyone. We strive to make the Conservatory and all programs available and accessible to people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. We value diversity in all its forms and at every level of our organization – board, staff, volunteers, and vendors.

Through the diversity of backgrounds, perspectives and experience, the Conservatory is more effectively able to create extraordinary and welcoming experiences for our audiences. We are committed to ensuring a sense of belonging to every individual we encounter, regardless of age, race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, physical ability, intellectual ability, or economic status.