



DATE: November 21, 2022

TO: Mayor Robinson and City Councilmembers

FROM: Michael Shiosaki, Director, 452-5377  
*Parks & Community Services*

SUBJECT: Bellevue Botanical Garden Donation

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The City's Bellevue Botanical Garden is a beloved 53-acre site in the heart of Bellevue, visited by over 400,000 people each year. The mission of the garden is to display the best plants and gardening practices for healthy, beautiful Northwest gardens. The Garden curates a collection of 3,000 unique varieties of plants spread across 12 thematic garden spaces, as well as hosting educational programs for children and adults, and community events benefitting Bellevue and the horticulture community at large. Opened in 1992, Bellevue Botanical Garden is the successful outcome of a vibrant and diverse community, a collaboration between the City of Bellevue, the Bellevue Botanical Garden Society, and nine other Garden Partner organizations.

Terry Hayes, longtime garden supporter, has established an endowment through the Seattle Foundation to fund a full-time Curator position at the garden in perpetuity. This position, currently part of the City's 2023 -2024 proposed budget, plays an important role in achieving the garden's core goal of connecting people with plants.

The Curator oversees the garden collection. The garden is akin to a museum and the plants are its living collection. The Curator fosters this collection, accessioning and maintaining records of individual plants. These records have scientific value but are also approachable and usable by the public. The Curator has expertise in horticulture, taxonomy, and nomenclature as well as the skills for communication and education to enhance the garden's public benefit to the community. This position will play a unifying role at the garden for many key aspects including the garden's collection, conservation, and education.

Terry's support of and insight into the future needs of the garden has led to this unique and generous donation to the City of Bellevue. Terry's passion for the garden and her deep understanding of the garden's operational needs led her to establish the endowment. This gift will help ensure the viability of this Parks position in perpetuity.