



August 30,
2021

Carothers Coastal Gardens Task Force II Report: Findings and Recommendations

The Carothers Coastal Gardens Task Force II was established in August 2020 to evaluate and propose best future use, budget, funding sources and impact of the Carothers Coastal Gardens property. This report summarizes the task force's findings and recommendations.

CAROTHERS COASTAL GARDENS TASK FORCE II REPORT: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Carothers Coastal Gardens is a serene, bayfront garden retreat where families, nature enthusiasts, hikers and cyclists, artists and photographers can all find calm and connection. This distinctive park provides a unified experience where visitors encounter and enjoy six natural habitats: bay, beach, salt marsh, coastal prairie, woodland and creek with brackish marsh—a rich showcase on a single property.

Starting at the bay shore, visitors are provided many avenues to connect with nature and one another. East Tract features include: a waterfront trail loop with observation points; strolling gardens comprised of plants, shrubs and flowering trees and a learning center facility. The West Tract is home to a community garden and a woodland trail loop. These features are described on pages 5-6.

To create the most value for residents as soon as possible, the task force recommends three priority grounds improvement projects begin in fall 2021: 1) launch community gardens; 2) install East Tract infrastructure and trails; and 3) plant East Tract gardens. These three projects are targeted for completion during Phases 1 and 2 with available funding in hand. Future Phase 3 improvements, which require additional funding, are: a learning center, waterfront observation deck and woodland trail loop. These priorities and budget are detailed on pages 7 and 8.

There are many public and private grant and gift opportunities available that are well suited for the task force's vision for the property. Strategies and prospects to develop more robust external funding support are summarized on pages 9, 10 and 14.

Calm and **connection** are key visitor outcomes for Carothers Coastal Gardens. Intentionally designing Carothers as a quiet, mainly daytime-use park benefits everyone—both neighbors and visitors. Soon, with these proposed investments, the visitor experience will be greatly enhanced with working community gardens and a system of accessible trails passing through colorful landscapes. For examples of successful local parks and gardens with a similar focus, see page 15.

TASK FORCE CHARGE

The Seabrook City Council, with Resolution 2020-12, provided the following charge to the Carothers Coastal Gardens Task Force II (CCGTFFII):

1. To evaluate and propose the best future use and/or disposition of property (i.e., possible utilization or sale of property either in its entirety, or as a portion); and
2. To formulate a budget for proposed uses; and
3. To identify viable grant opportunities; and
4. To identify viable sustainable corporate sponsorships; and
5. To identify any other viable sustainable funding sources; and
6. To consider how the proposed uses may impact the neighboring residential properties; and
7. To provide any other information specifically requested by City Council; and
8. Take into consideration that recommendations will be evaluated by the City Council and administration for accountability to the voters and taxpayers of the City, the City resources and funds shall first and foremost serve the welfare of the citizens of the City of Seabrook.

This report answers this charge through the following sections: Best Future Use, Budget Priorities (item 2), Funding Sources (items 3-5) and Impact (items 6 and 8). The report concludes with a summary of recommendations for moving forward.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City Council appointed the seven-member Open Space and Trails Committee and four additional Seabrook citizens to serve on the CCGTFFII for a one-year term starting in August 2020. These Seabrook citizens served on the task force, contributing approximately 700 volunteer hours to the project:

Sally Antrobus	Heather Cable	Debra Harper	David Popken
Helen Burton	John Coggeshall	Nehemiah Jackson	Rhonda Thompson, chair
Greg Businelle	Monica Comeaux	Jesse Jones, Jr.	

CCGTFFII is grateful to Mayor Thom Kolupski and the Seabrook City Council for their clear direction, trust and thoughtful feedback throughout the process. Their input was instrumental to develop these recommendations to develop Carothers Coastal Gardens in ways that will serve the city well for years to come.

The task force was given a safe space to dream and develop consensus for a new vision for Carothers Coastal Gardens through the positive support, partnership and technical assistance provided by city staff: Gayle Cook, Brian Craig, Stephanie Guerrero, Sean Landis, Kevin Padgett and Natalie Stephens.

Thank you to all for promoting and supporting civic engagement to make Seabrook a better place to live for all citizens—with full access to the city’s amazing open space and trail system.

BEST FUTURE USE

VISION

CCGTFII developed this shared vision of the “best future use” to inform future improvements and programming at the 7.35 acre bayfront park:

Carothers Coastal Gardens is a serene garden retreat where Seabrook residents and visitors enjoy the bay view and stroll through prairie gardens from shore to woodland creek and marsh. These varied natural settings make up a conservancy emphasizing native plants and supporting many species of birds and other wildlife. Here, visitors—families, nature and garden enthusiasts, hikers and cyclists, artists and photographers alike—find calm and connection.

Calm and **connection** are key visitor outcomes for Carothers Coastal Gardens. Complementing the adjacent Pine Gully Park which provides ample provision for family picnics and playgrounds, visitors to this quiet park will experience a sense of calm. For many, this departure from the busyness and noise of modern times, will provide the backdrop to form meaningful connections with nature and one another.

Connecting with Nature

- Green boundaries and long sight lines give visitors a peaceful sense of seclusion and enticing views.
- Strolling gardens, accessible for all, create the perfect setting to observe coastal flora, fauna and wildlife.
- Restored prairie plantings and native flowering trees support resident and migrant birds and pollinators—a colorful palette for visitors to enjoy.

Connecting with Others

- A dedicated area for community gardens is maintained by Seabrook residents—from beginners to master gardeners.
- Beautiful outdoor spaces designed with a hacienda flair provide an inspiring venue for conversation and reflection.
- A learning center will provide a comfortable indoor space for learning and connection through workshops, community meetings and special cultural and nature exhibits.

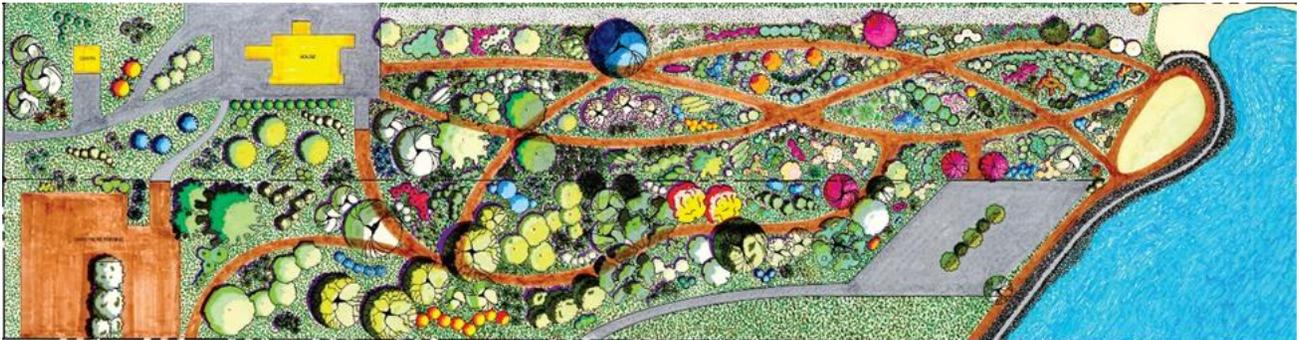
KEY FEATURES

Carothers Coastal Gardens is distinctive in providing a unified experience where visitors encounter and enjoy six natural habitats: bay, beach, salt marsh, coastal prairie, woodland and creek with brackish marsh—a rich showcase on a single property. The full visitor experience starting at the bay end of the East Tract, makes for a wonderfully varied walk or ride. The waterfront trail offers a prime view of the bay and beach. Park visitors then proceed through colorful plantings in the full-sun zone, restored coastal prairie habitat and beautiful flowering trees. These outdoor experiences will be complemented by indoor learning activities in the Carothers Learning Center. A west end boardwalk through coastal woodlands to

creek and brackish marsh will eventually complete the introduction to local habitats. Seven key features are described below, from east to west.

East Tract

The main section of Carothers Coastal Gardens, the East Tract has trail entrances from parking lots at the Pine Gully Park gate and at the waterfront next to the Pine Gully Park playground.



1. Waterfront Loop with Observation Points

Visitors enjoy a serene waterfront viewing experience at Carothers. The first point of interest along this loop is a Monarch Waystation, located at the waterfront trail entry. This pollinator garden along the Carothers boundary is registered in a national network supporting butterflies and other insects, which in turn support many songbirds. From there the trail leads east to the waterfront and curves alongside the bay to the beach. *Bay and beach* habitats are showcased here. Visitors can watch brown pelicans fishing and shorebirds foraging. To come: crushed granite trail development, shade trees and an observation deck. Attachment A shows different ideas to develop the Carothers shoreline into an attractive amenity.

2. Strolling Gardens



Visitors enjoy flowering plants in the full-sun zone of Carothers Coastal Gardens. A mix of nursery varieties and Texas native plants provides ongoing color. The site where the old tennis court is demolished is a good candidate for a limited area to be reseeded as a pocket coastal prairie (a habitat type not present, needing restoration). The full-sun zone is also a good candidate for a Monarch Watch grant for large-scale planting of milkweed and a water feature. To come: replanting of tennis court site, trail development and plantings for color.

3. Native and Flowering Trees

Visitors enjoy massed flowering trees for their dramatic seasonal color. Flowering trees are an easy way to achieve striking color displays with modest initial cost and very low maintenance expenses—just what is needed in a city of only 14,000, with limited staff and volunteer resources. Native trees are an easy way to support the native wildlife that park visitors love to see. A mix of nursery varieties and Texas native species serves well: for example, magnolia, redbud and hawthorn are native trees providing a fine floral show, while non-native crape myrtles (pink) and esperanza (yellow) have much longer blooming seasons. To come: tree planting in selected zones for dramatic color and for shade.



4. Carothers Learning Center

A key feature will be a community building where visitors can enjoy a range of informative activities, educational workshops and fitness classes. Comfortable indoor space expands park potential and would likely fit best where the old house is demolished (close to parking and already served by utilities). Uses that involve learning, for both adults and children, are most likely to be awarded grants and corporate funding. A full rethinking of options is needed for wise planning of a future facility. To come:

- Site treatment after demolition
- Community survey to determine community interest and anticipated uses of a new facility
- Exploration of external funding and partnership options for a new facility

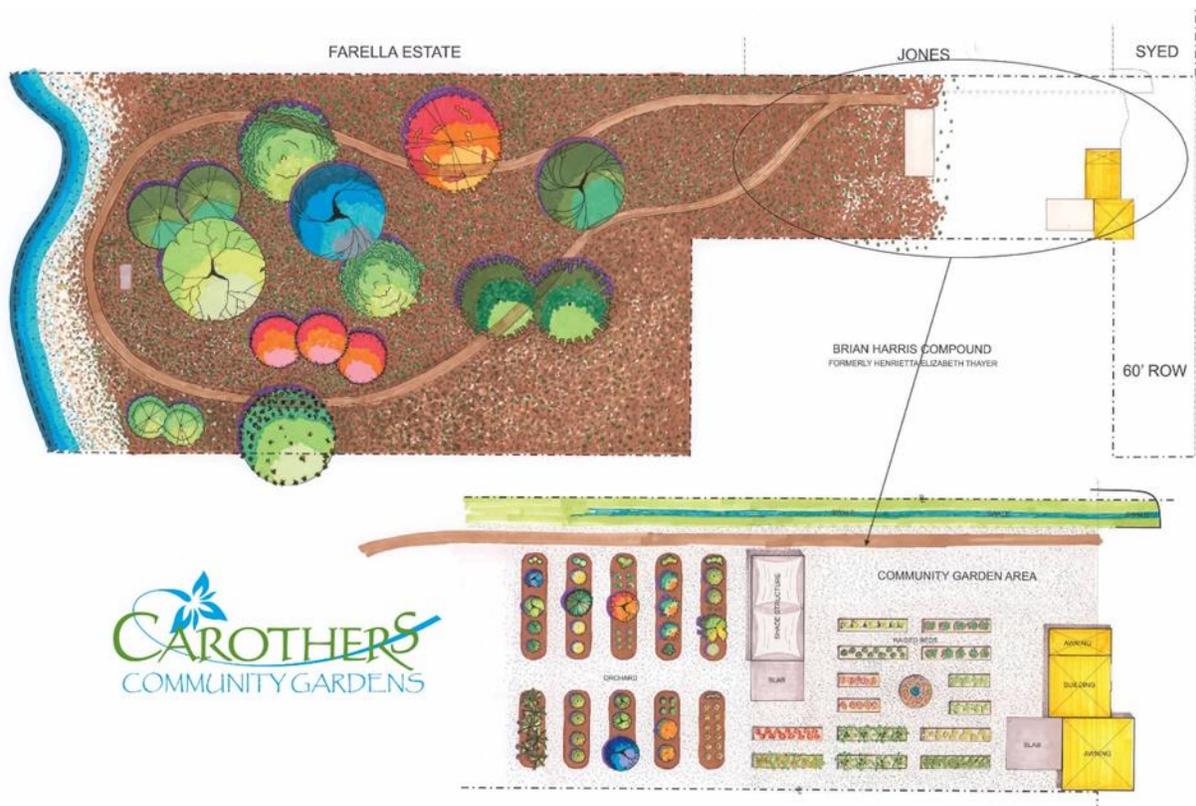
5. Casita



Being close to the West Tract, the casita provides a convenient “home base” for community garden participants, offering a bathroom and a place to meet or cool off; members may apply for a key. Alternatively, if a garden manager is retained, the casita can provide work or living space for someone on a short-term contract. To come: minor refurbishing to ready the facility for volunteers and garden manager use.

West Tract

The West Tract is accessible from the parking lot at Pine Gully Park gate. Planned features include a community garden and trail loop through woodlands, creek and marsh habitats.



6. Community Garden

A community garden, complete with barn and sheds, provides a setting for wholesome and productive family and communal activity. As many people have expressed interest in participating, a priority action item is the preparation of the Carothers rear work yard to start the garden soon. Consisting of bare gravel at present, it needs waterlines and irrigation infrastructure serving raised beds appropriate for annual vegetable and herb gardening; annual fruits like berries; and an orchard of perennial fruit trees such as citrus. The expectation is that community garden members will become the staunchest volunteer supporters and advocates for Carothers Coastal Gardens. To come: infrastructure work and fencing to keep deer out of the community garden, so that gardeners may begin planting for the Spring 2022 season.

7. West Tract Trail Loop

Visitors can enjoy a walk through the cool coastal woodland to the creek and marsh at the west end of the Carothers property. Adding a trail loop, boardwalk and viewing deck will provide access over very wet footing. Completing these enhancements is a lower priority because the western woodland is undeveloped and not currently visible to park visitors. To come: trails, boardwalk and viewing deck, swale area plants featuring native iris and other wetland plants.

PRIORITIES

The major priorities outlined below are based on the task force’s assessment of budget and timing phases to create the most value for Seabrook citizens.

PRIORITIES	PHASE 1 FY 21-22	PHASE 2 FY 22-23	PHASE 3 PENDING FUNDING
PRIORITY 1 Community Gardens	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Plumbing infrastructure 2) 30 raised beds 3) Fencing and gates 4) Casita improvements 5) Recruit gardeners 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Plant orchards 2) Expand/enhance raised garden beds and pathways as needed 	
PRIORITY 2 East Tract Infrastructure & Trails	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Demo tennis court 2) Water grid, electrical infrastructure 3) Mark trails & berms 4) Construct berms & trails 		
PRIORITY 3 East Tract Strolling Gardens	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) House, tennis court site reclamation (soil, plants) 2) Map out planting areas 3) Prepare soil 4) Initial planting (gardens, prairies, trees) 	Continue more intensive tree and garden plantings	
PRIORITY 4 Waterfront Observation Deck			Plan and construct observation deck and additional waterfront trails, as needed
PRIORITY 5 Carothers Learning Center		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Assess community needs 2) Explore partnerships 3) Raise funding 	Design and construct new facility
PRIORITY 6 West Tract Trail Loop			Extend trail system through West Tract with wetland boardwalk viewing and seating

Based on these priorities, the initial budget estimate for Phases 1 and 2 is outlined below. To create the most value for Seabrook citizens as soon as possible, the task force strongly recommends that cash on hand from the insurance claim settlement be put to work now to accomplish these major grounds improvements while planning and building capacity to secure external funding for Phase 3 facility and grounds improvements.

BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR PHASES 1 AND 2

SOURCES OF FUNDING	TOTAL	FY 21-22	FY 22-23	Notes
TMLIRP Insurance Proceeds	\$235,217	\$235,217		
City general funds	\$42,000	\$21,000	\$21,000	CIP budget for Community Gardens
Fees	\$2,100	\$1,050	\$1,050	30 Community Garden rentals @ \$35 (\$25-\$45)
Total Income	\$279,317	\$257,267	\$22,050	
EXPENDITURES				
Personnel				
Contract garden manager	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	part-time contract/stipend
Professional services	\$20,000	\$20,000		landscape design
Park Improvements				
Community gardens	\$21,000	\$21,000		30 raised beds, plumbing, fencing; orchards
House site reclamation	\$10,000	\$10,000		plants, soil
Water grid construction	\$2,400	\$2,400		3 days staff time
Survey to mark trails and berms	\$1,700	\$1,700		Daram Engineering quote
Berm & trail construction	\$48,000	\$48,000		decomp. granite ~3200 ft X \$15 sf, 3+ days staff time
Planting area/bed preparation	\$7,200	\$7,200		400 cu yards
Trees and plants	\$30,000	\$25,000	\$5,000	volunteer labor
Supplies and miscellaneous	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	
Facilities				
Demo house and tennis court	\$25,000	\$25,000		
Casita minor refurbishing	\$5,000	\$5,000		office, meeting space, restrooms for volunteers, staff
Future facility community survey	\$1,000		\$1,000	assess community needs for future facility
Total Expenditures	\$231,300	\$195,300	\$36,000	

Phase 1. Insurance proceeds are utilized in FY 21-22 to accomplish priority grounds improvements on the prime bayfront East Tract and to secure a part-time (contract and/or volunteer) professional to manage project activities, recruit and coordinate volunteers. The ideal candidate for this two-year commitment is a recent university graduate, early-career horticulturist or a seasoned, late-career professional with related project experience. The garden manager can also serve as a key resource to develop capacity for fundraising in partnership with city staff and volunteers. A sample garden manager job description is included in Attachment B.

Phase 2. While plantings continue, planning a new facility begins in FY 22-23 with a public opinion survey to assess community needs for a new facility.

Phase 3. Future proposed investments include: a new facility, waterfront observation deck and West Tract loop. These projects present strong potential to attract external funding support from corporate sponsorships and grants from governmental and foundation sources, as described in the next section.

FUNDING SOURCES

CCGTFII evaluated external funding sources to offset costs associated with the redevelopment of Carothers Coastal Gardens. There are many grant and other external funding opportunities that are well suited for the task force's vision for the property. The project also lends itself well to specific naming opportunities for individuals and corporations with a strong interest in partnering with Seabrook and aligning their name and giving interests with this excellent endeavor.

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS

There are a significant number of corporations that have ties to Seabrook:

- 16 underground pipelines run through Seabrook
- Port of Houston (while technically not a corporate entity, the Port is receptive to sponsorship opportunities and partnerships)
- Bayport Container Terminal (run by 8 companies)
- Industrial District of East Harris County (27 companies)
- Bayport Community Advisory Panel (BAYCAP) (24 companies)

The Open Space and Trails Committee has a track record of being awarded grants by these organizations in the past: Dow, Apache, TXU Energy and the Port of Houston. Gulf Winds, Celanese and Port of Houston have reached out to the city in the past to inquire about supporting park projects. A more complete list of local area corporate funding prospects is provided in Attachment C.

GRANT FUNDING SOURCES

There are multiple grant opportunities offered with state and federal funding that are well suited for the task force's vision. The following are key grant sources for Seabrook parks:

- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's National Recreational Trails Fund
- Keep Texas Beautiful
- Keep America Beautiful – Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund
- National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF)
- Texas General Land Office (TXGLO) Texas Coastal Management Program

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC) has developed a regional conservation framework to leverage, support and fund signature projects within the three counties in the region (<https://www.hgac.com/regional-conservation>). In addition to highlighting successful projects, the HGAC maintains a list of regional, state, federal and private funding sources for improving and maintaining parks.

PRIVATE FUNDING SOURCES

With emphasis on environmental conservancy, wildlife habitats, native plants and trails; private foundations are also a good match for the project—ideally in partnership with a nonprofit organization.

The following foundations have ties to Seabrook and/or the project aligns with their funding priorities:

- Harry S. and Isabel C. Cameron Foundation
- Fondren Foundation
- George and Mary Josephine Hamman Foundation
- Jacob and Terese Hershey Foundation
- Houston Endowment
- The Susan Vaughan Foundation

The Carothers project has the potential for several select naming opportunities—from the trails, waterfront observation deck and gardens to a learning center facility—especially with an emphasis on birding, nature conservancy and gardening. These naming opportunities will likely hold the strongest appeal for individual philanthropists and corporations with ties to Seabrook and an interest in demonstrating their support of environmental preservation—and their local community.

Nonprofit organizations are more adept at fundraising from private sources than cities and other public entities. To maximize fundraising potential and public benefits, most successful green space projects in the Houston-Galveston region involve a public-private partnership.¹

DEVELOPING CAPACITY FOR FUND DEVELOPMENT

Although city staff and volunteers have succeeded in achieving grant funding for parks projects in the past, the city lacks staff capacity to optimize grant and donor funding opportunities. The task force recommends these strategies to increase external funding for Carothers and other city projects:

1. Hire a dedicated staff person to seek grants and corporate sponsorships for Seabrook.
2. Develop a corporate sponsorship program for Carothers Coastal Gardens and Seabrook parks.
 - a. Identify specific corporate sponsorship opportunities such as trails, waterfront observation deck, community gardens and wildlife habitat restoration.
 - b. Launch a Seabrook Parks donation webpage and related corporate sponsorship packet outlining projects, impacts and sponsorship benefits.
 - c. Write and send a one-page letter of inquiry (LOI) to area companies, introducing the opportunities and beginning a conversation.
3. Explore mutually beneficial partnerships with mission-aligned nonprofit organizations to help in planning, funding and achieving optimal use of a new facility.



¹ Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC) Regional Conservation Framework list of model projects: <https://h-gac.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Shortlist/index.html?appid=17669084bc2d40ec9a7ad290940a1dc4>

COMMUNITY IMPACT

The community has consistently ranked parks and trails among Seabrook’s best assets (verified by numerous questionnaires, polls, surveys and social media comments). Likewise, the community’s reaction to the task force’s overall vision for Carothers Coastal Gardens as a secluded bayside park with peaceful trails has been overwhelmingly positive. City council and staff, neighbors and park patrons have all expressed support for preserving and enhancing the property as a serene garden retreat where citizens may come to connect with nature and one another.



Strong interest in a community garden is also evident from a social media query the task force conducted in spring 2020: If Seabrook created a community garden, would you be interested in reserving a garden plot? Within 24 hours, 150 potential community gardeners had signed up—including educators, scientists and naturalists who view the opportunity as an important way to educate children and adults about nature and gardening.

Calm and **connection** are key visitor outcomes for Carothers Coastal Gardens. Intentionally designing Carothers as a quiet, mainly daytime-use park benefits everyone—both neighbors and visitors. Rather than backing up to another subdivision, neighbors are within easy walking distance to splendid bay views, gardens, wildlife and trails. Seabrook visitors are already drawn to this distinctive place. Soon, with these proposed investments, the visitor experience will be greatly enhanced with working community gardens and a system of accessible trails passing through colorful plantings.

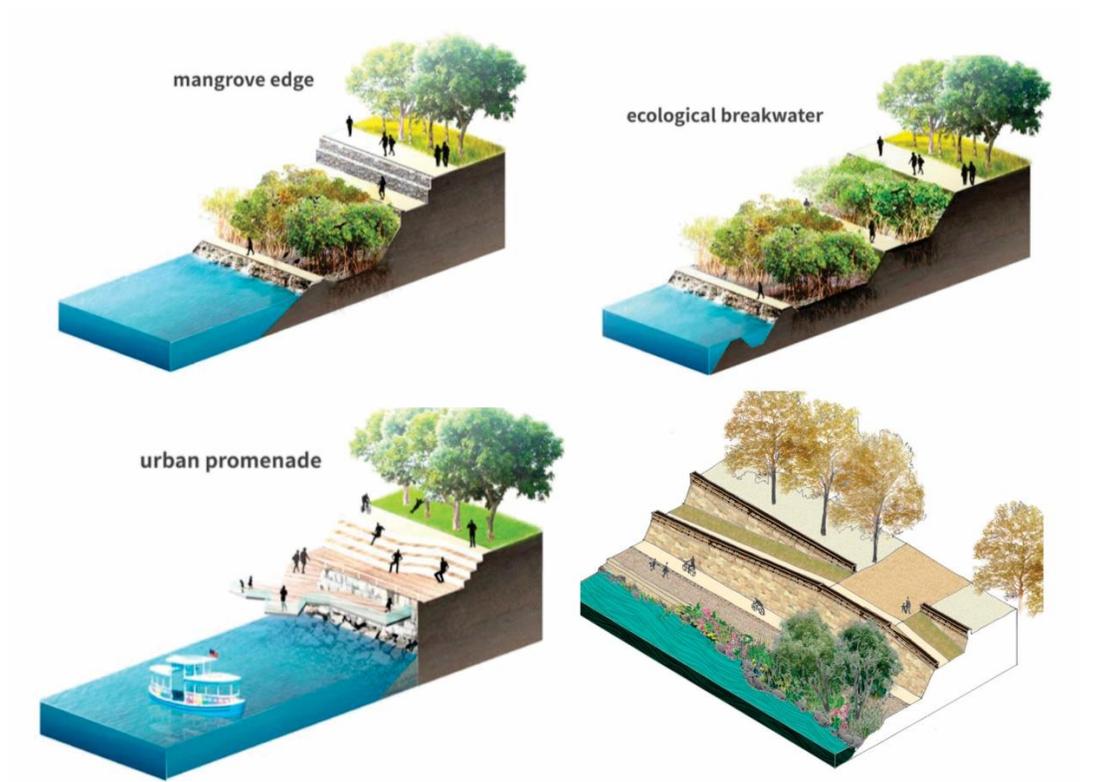
MOVING FORWARD

With this report, Carothers Coastal Gardens Task Force II has completed its defined volunteer assignment. Moving forward, the Open Space and Trails Committee and its volunteers stand ready to actively partner with city staff to accomplish this exciting vision for Carothers.

To accomplish Phase 1 improvements during FY 2021-22, these specific actions are the most critical to complete during Fall 2021:

1. House site reclamation (soil & plants)
2. Community gardens site preparation (infrastructure, fencing and raised bed construction)
3. Announce and enroll community garden participants to begin planting in early 2022

ATTACHMENT A. CAROTHERS WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT IDEAS



ATTACHMENT B. GARDEN MANAGER JOB DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY

This is professional work in the field of ornamental horticulture. Methods of performing tasks are usually left to the judgement of the employee with an administrative superior available for assistance if needed. Work is performed under general direction and is reviewed upon completion.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provides professional advice on the selection, ordering, planting, and maintenance of trees, shrubs, flowers, ground covers, ornamental grasses and turf grasses on the Carothers property
- Plans and designs perennial flower beds
- Grows potted plants and nursery stock and maintains records on the growing operation
- Trains and supervises subordinate personnel in greenhouse operations and in the proper methods and techniques of planting ornamental plants
- Trains ground personnel in the techniques of pruning, wound dressing, cavity repair, and the cabling and bracing of trees and shrubs
- Prepares orders for various types of plants and seeds
- Inventories, maps, and labels trees and shrubs on the grounds for instructional and maintenance purposes
- Assists in the preparation of maintenance programs for the control of plant diseases and insects
- Prepares fertilizer programs for various types of plants
- Confers with landscape architect and other personnel in the selection of plants
- Performs related duties as required

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Graduation from an accredited college or university in an appropriate curriculum and considerable experience related to this class of work, or any equivalent combination of training and experience.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Thorough knowledge of ornamental horticulture in all phases
- Thorough knowledge of plant propagation and culturation
- Knowledge of the principles of Nursery Management
- Knowledge of the principles of Landscape Design
- Knowledge of the principles of supervision
- Ability to supervise the work of others, particularly volunteers

ATTACHMENT C. CORPORATE FUNDING PROSPECTS

16 UNDERGROUND PIPELINES IN SEABROOK OWNED BY THE FOLLOWING COMPANIES

Celanese Chemical	Easton Energy Pipelines	Flint Hills	Marathon
Chevron	Enterprise Products	INEOS	Seadrift
DOW	ExxonMobil	Magellan	Ucar Pipeline

LOCAL COMPANIES IN THE BAYPORT COMMUNITY ADVISORY PANEL (BAYCAP) ASSOCIATION

Arkema	Dixie	Kaneka	NCTI
Carpenter	DuPont Bayport	Linde	Oxiten
Celanese	Gulf Coast Authority	Lummus Tech	Quala Rail & Specialty
ChemQuest	Haldor Topsoe	LyondellBasell	Reagens
Clariant	Hoyer	Underwood	SCTI
Dianal	Intergulf	Monument Chemical	Solvay Umicore

EAST HARRIS COUNTY MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION (EHCMA)

Afton Chemical/Ethyl Corporation	Clorox Products Mfg	Hexion Inc.	Reagens USA Inc.
Air Liquide Complex	Covestro	Houston Ammonia Terminal	Sekisui Specialty Chemicals
Air Products	DHL Supply Chain	Intercontinental Terminals	Shell
Albemarle Corp	Dianal America	INEOS	Stolthaven Houston
Altivia	Dixie Chemical	Intergulf/Circon	Southern Ionics Inc.
American Acryl	Dow Chemical	Kaneka N. America	Solvay Chemicals
AMPAC Fine Chemicals	DuPont de Nemours	Kuraray America	Texas Brine
Arkema	Eco Services Op.	LBC Houston L.P.	Underground Storage
Athlon Solutions	El Dorado Nitrogen	Lubrizol	Texas Molecular
Baker Hughes	Enterprise Products	Monument Chemical	TPC Group
BASF	Evonik	Noltex	TOTAL Petrochemicals & Refining, INC
Celanese Chemical	ExxonMobil	Odfjell Terminals Inc.	Trecora Chemicals
Chemours	GEO Specialty Chemicals	OxyVinyls	Valero Refining
Chevron Phillips Chemical	Goodyear Chemical	PCI Nitrogen, LLC	W.R. Grace
Chevron Refinery	Gulbrandsen Technologies Inc.	PeroxyChem	Zeon Chemicals L.P.
Clean Harbors	Haldor Topsoe Inc		

ATTACHMENT D. EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL LOCAL GARDENS AND NATURE CENTERS

HELEN'S GARDEN

Located in League City under the oaks on FM 518 at the corner of East Main Street and Kansas, Helen's Garden is a well-known hot spot for photographers from all over the Houston area.

www.leaguecity.com/1271/Helens-Garden

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Texas Agri-Life Extension Service, Galveston County has gardens in Dickinson that are the major point of engagement and training for local Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists.

<https://galveston.agrilife.org/>

Urban Harvest's Community Gardens program accounts for some seven acres of its own diversified, productive green space, and in various ways Urban Harvest also supports some 135 affiliated gardens spanning 100 miles across greater Houston.

<https://www.urbanharvest.org/gardens/>

NATURE CENTERS, LARGE AND SMALL

Small—Russ Pitman Park, Nature Discovery Center, Bellaire (4 acres)

This former family property features four habitat zones and is unfenced, physically open to the community 24/7 along two street frontages. The old frame house is in daily use for offices, environmental education, volunteer activities, and event rentals. Russ Pitman Park has numerous school visits, children's birthdays, outdoor art shows, etc.

<https://naturediscoverycenter.org/russ-pitman-park/>

Medium—Dr. Ned and Fay Dudney Clear Creek Nature Center, Egret Bay, League City, 148 acres

Developed trails meander through several habitats: fresh and brackish wetlands, coastal and riparian forest, and a native prairie zone. Conservation activity emphasizes restoration, and educational programs emphasize school children's exposure to various habitats. The only building is a restroom.

<https://www.leaguecity.com/Facilities/Facility/Details/Dr-Ned-amp-Fay-Dudney-Nature-Center-19>

Large—Armand Bayou Nature Center, Pasadena, 2,500 acres

Armand Bayou is among the largest urban nature centers anywhere, distinguished by having top predators like the alligator and bald eagle. On county-owned land, it has a million-dollar budget supported by grants, membership fees, volunteer hours, space rentals, and county support for facilities. Activities include boat tours, guided hikes, family days, and children's environmental programs.

<https://www.abnc.org/>