

It has been more than 40 years since the Botanic Garden's facilities were renovated. Our cramped quarters and outdated facilities, coupled with the extensive damage caused by the recent Jesusita fire, make it very difficult for us to remain sustainable.

We have been working on our Vital Mission Plan for more than 10 years. During this time, we have worked with the community to continually trim the plan to include only the basic facilities we need to serve our mission.

Our plan today contains no frills or excess. In fact, in addition to the basic facilities we propose, we are agreeing to limit visitation for the first time. Our current permit has no limits. In return for the Vital Mission Plan, we will cap visitation at no more than a two percent increase per year for the next decade.

We hope after reviewing the facts about our Vital Mission Plan, you will agree that our proposal is one that is reasonable and minimal, and that you will lend us your support.



Santa Barbara
Botanic Garden
Vital Mission Plan

More than a decade in the making, our Vital Mission Plan is a bare bones proposal to create the facilities we need to fulfill our historic mission of conservation, research, education, and display.

The Jesusita fire damage has made approval of the Vital Mission Plan even more essential to the future of the garden.

A legacy of preserving open space in Mission Canyon

The Botanic Garden began in 1926 with a simple mission:

"It is the aim of the Garden Committee to so unite the aesthetic, educational, and scientific that this Garden will hold a unique place in the horticultural world."

Since then, the 13-acre Garden has grown parcel-by-parcel into 78-acres of lush open space in Mission Canyon, while at the same time hundreds of homes have been built all around it.

Each parcel that has been added to the Garden's footprint over the decades has essentially been saved from development.

Although the Botanic Garden has grown, the facilities we need to maintain the garden have not kept pace. Today, our facilities are outdated and inadequate, and it is becoming more and more difficult for us to carry out our historic mission.

Maintaining 99% open space with our Vital Mission Plan

Our proposed plan will continue our legacy of preserving open space in Mission Canyon by maintaining almost 99% of the Botanic Garden's 78 acres as open space, adding only 25,800 net new square feet of facilities.

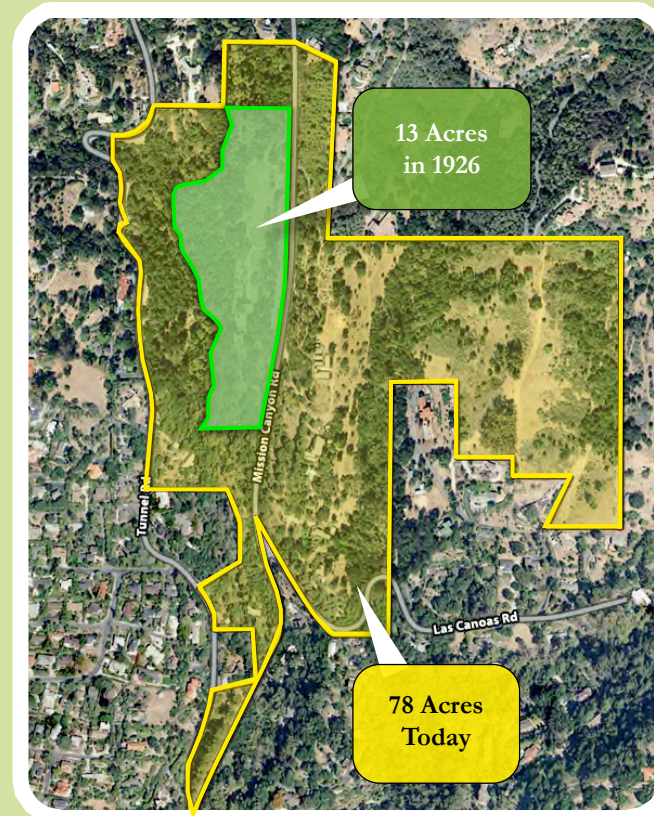
We have planned the location and layout of our facilities to create the smallest footprint possible.

We have achieved this by incorporating our existing facilities into the plan, renovating some, relocating others to more appropriate locations, and creating new facilities in the general envelope of where buildings already exist today.

Improved fire protection

In addition to providing us with the facilities we need, our plan includes fire safety improvements such as installing several commercial hydrants, a truck turnaround, sprinklers in all buildings, and other measures.

An independent EIR and the Santa Barbara County Fire Department have determined that the Vital Mission Plan will be an improvement to fire safety in Mission Canyon.



Since the Botanic Garden was founded in 1926, its displays have grown five fold, from 13 acres to 78 acres.

Although our display areas have grown, the facilities we need to maintain them have not kept pace.



The recent Jesusita fire severely damaged the Botanic Garden, torching 60 acres of our 78-acre property.



A Bare Bones Plan

Our plan groups facilities together based on their use, and locates each group of facilities in the most appropriate area. There are three general categories of facilities.

Our "Front of House" facilities (visitor kiosk, library, education center, and children's center) will be located west of Mission Canyon Road, adjacent to the Garden's public entrance.

Our "Back of House" facilities (horticulture center, conservation center, and administrative offices) will be located east of Mission Canyon Road and tucked away from public view.

Our plan also includes affordable residences for our gardeners and other staff.

All new facilities will be accessible to those with disabilities - a critical part of our plan.

"Front of House"



The existing administrative cottage will be relocated and the herbarium will be removed (outlines shown in red above, indicating the new structures will fit in the same area). In their place, a new library and classrooms will be built, providing us the facilities we need to display our books and deliver education.



A new children's education center adjacent to the Discovery Garden will allow young students to learn about native plants firsthand.

"Back of House"



A new horticultural center will serve as the center of operations for our gardening activities and will provide adequate storage for all our gardening equipment.

The red lines above show existing structures, indicating our proposed structures will fit in the same area.



The historic Gane House, which completely burned down during the recent Jesusita Fire, will be rebuilt.

Residential



The existing Caretaker's Cottage will be relocated, and three new staff residences will be added, providing the Garden with affordable homes for gardeners and other staff.



A new conservation center will feature laboratories and an herbarium that will allow us to properly store our collection of nearly 150,000 plant specimens.