Austin Gardens Master Plan Revisited

**Native Wildflower Garden**
- Goal: Strengthen native, and defend existing native wildflower planting. Expand planting to meet. Establish funding, management protocols to maintain quality of planting and interpretation.
- Requires a moderate level of informal maintenance during growing season: weed control, irrigation, selection, pruning, and harvesting.
- Professional oversight advised in the long term to ensure integrity of planting.
- Use prescribed burns to help manage invasives.
- Use understory planting according to master planting plan.
- Select plant species to support birds and other beneficial wildlife.

**Ornamental Woodland Planting**
- Goal: Create a native woodland edging plant. Manage planting to create a diverse, self-sustaining, “layered” planting - inventory, understory, shrub, and ground cover vegetation.
- Requires moderate maintenance during establishment; weed control, irrigation, selection, pruning, and harvesting.
- Professional oversight advised in the long term to ensure integrity of planting.
- Use a native plant palette, though selected adapted plants might be retained.
- Minimize invasive plant species, i.e., Non-native Maple, vandyke and hortensia weeds by digging and herbiciding.
- Use prescribed burns to help manage invasives.
- Add understory planting according to master planting plan.
- Select plant species to support birds and other beneficial wildlife.

**Open Green Space**
- Goal: Preserve large open space for events.
- Improve quality of turf to withstand heavy use during theater and arts events. Over look this low area as necessary to minimize turf density.
- Maintain shade under trees.
- Utilize low areas for ice skating.
- Requires moderate maintenance during growing season: mowing, fertilization, weed control, irrigation. Professional oversight advised in the long term to ensure integrity of turf.

**Buffer Planting**
- Goal: Buffer park from effects of adjacent roads, parking lots, new buildings, and street through mixed plantings of evergreens and flowering shrubs.
- Select understory and tree species for quality of bloom, fruit, fall color, and to create shade.
- Requires moderate maintenance during establishment; weed control, irrigation, selection, pruning, and harvesting. Professional oversight advised in the long term to ensure integrity of planting.

**Site Amenities & Features**
- Add understory planting along new park path. Change heads to LED fixtures on existing bulbs to reduce unpleasant glare and save energy.
- Enlarge fence openings at key entrances to create more welcoming environment.
- Staff to revisit removal of additional fencing two years after the entrance are widened.
- Open additional entrance on southwest, after further study of park usage.
- Maintain supplemental irrigation system to support native wildflower areas.
- Improve the park with permeable paving has been installed by V.O.P.
- Pedestrian lights in alley added by V.O.P.

**New Conditions since 2005**
- Shade is a major concern due to addition of 20-Story Apartment Building (Vantage Oak Park) at northeast corner of Forest Ave. and Lake St., and proposed building (60 to 120 Stories) planned for northeast corner of Forest Ave. and Lake St.

**Environmental Education Center Building**
- New multipurpose center to house interpretive elements related to the cultural and natural history of the park, public restrooms, and educational center.
- Extended hours and event-related concessions as well as shelter under building overhang.
- Buildings equipped with electrical, plumbing, and heating for year-round use.
- Center's outdoor terrace provide space for activities related to Park District programming.
- Sustainable design features throughout the new building and adjacent outdoor spaces.

**Learning Garden**
- Goal: Reconfigure pedestrian entrances to park, relate circulation patterns to new building, rehabilitate and enrich plantings.
- Diversify plantings with trees, shrubs, groundcovers, and flowers.
- Upgraded paving and site furnishings.
- Requires moderate maintenance during establishment and growing season: weed control, irrigation, selection, pruning, and harvesting. Limited professional oversight advised in the long term to ensure integrity of planting.
- Outdoor education space relates to programming for EEC.
- Shadow studies of new buildings show impact and may influence plant selection.