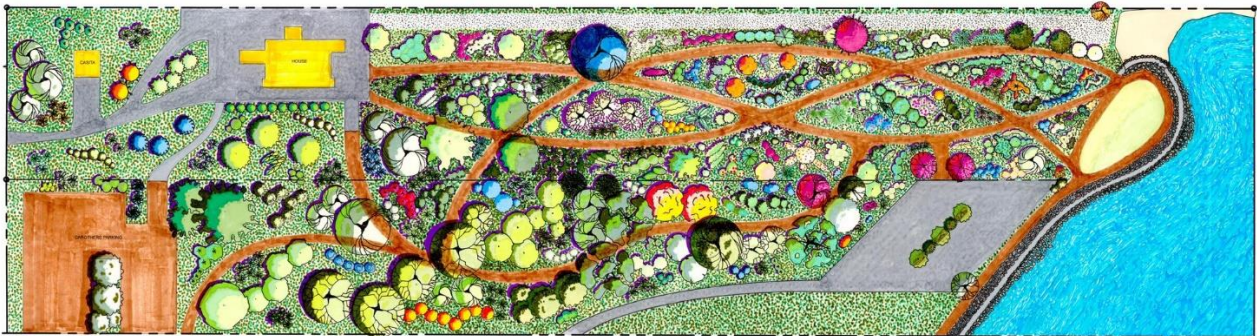




CAROTHERS

COASTAL GARDENS



PROPOSED MASTER PLAN
SEPTEMBER 2022

CAROTHERS COASTAL GARDENS... TASK FORCE II

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.

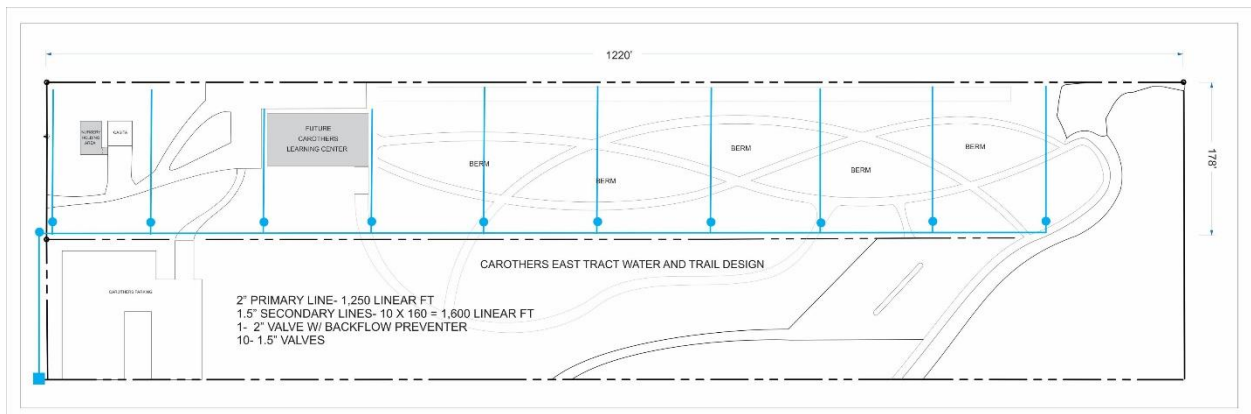
To create the most value for residents as soon as possible, the Task Force recommends three priority grounds improvement projects begin in fall 2021: 1) launch community gardens; 2) install East Tract infrastructure and trails; and 3) plant East Tract gardens. These three projects are targeted for completion 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 shoreline improvements.

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”.

SUGGESTED PHASES AND BUDGET

CAROTHERS COASTAL GARDENS BUDGET ESTIMATE

SOURCES OF FUNDING	TOTAL	PHASE I	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	Notes
TMLIRP Insurance Proceeds	\$244,000				
Total Income	\$244,000				
EXPENDITURES					
Park Improvements					
Property Line Fence/Gates		\$19,000			Sanchez Fence
Dead Tree Removal		\$11,800			City of Seabrook
Water Infrastructure		\$25,500			Outside Contractor
Electrical Infrastructure		\$6,500			Conduit- 1200' with 6 risers
Engineering- Berms and Trails		\$9,700			Daram Engineering quote
Berm & Trail Construction		\$35,000			Decomposed Granite Trails (3200 linear ft.)
Planting area/bed preparation		\$9,000			Cover berms w/ thick mulch
Nursery Corral by Casita		\$2,500			City of Seabrook
Casita minor refurbishing		\$5,000			Garden Office
Trees and plants			\$45,000		Volunteers will plant in stages
Contingency 10%			\$24,000		
Misc Infrastructure				\$30,000	Benches, Fountains, Artwork
Community Garden		\$21,000			Line Item Budget Listed Separately
Total Expenditures		\$145,000	\$69,000	\$30,000	\$244,000



CAROTHERS COASTAL GARDENS 501(C)3 NON-PROFIT

The creation of the Non-profit corporation will allow more expedient and efficient use of the currently available funding. As a 501(c)3, CCG is required to follow generally accepted accounting principles and to file annually with the IRS. We use Quickbooks accounting software and by law have a total transparency policy. Our records are open to any interested party.... most specifically the City of Seabrook.

CCG proposes a series of “draws” based on the attached phasing schedule. It is important that the currently available funds be encumbered and pre-approved by Council based on this schedule. In this way, staff can approve expenditures in a more timely manner. As all parties are aware, the clock is ticking and we all understand the need to accomplish these tasks in the next 24 months.

Moving forward, the Carothers Coastal Gardens Non-profit Corporation, the Open Space and Trails Committee and their volunteers stand ready to actively partner with city staff to accomplish this exciting vision for Carothers.

FUTURE FUNDING SOURCES

We have 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.

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 private and corporate funding prospects is contained in the CCGTFII Final Report.

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.

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/>