REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Development of a Master Plan for
Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden

PO Box 1518
5941 Mason Road,
Sechelt, B.C. V0N 3A0

Dear Distinguished Candidate:

The Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden Society (SCBG) invites you to submit a proposal as an experienced landscape design firm to undertake a comprehensive master plan that will guide the Garden’s development over the next fifteen years.

During the past 12 months, the SCBG’s Board of Directors, members, staff and volunteers have identified the need for a master plan that works with the Garden’s current features and provides a framework for future garden development, facility projects, programs and other improvements.

THE MISSION AND THE MASTER PLAN

It is important that the Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden continues to stay true to its mission:

“To create a Pacific Northwest Botanical Garden that inspires and engages the community in plant appreciation and acts as a catalyst for learning and research about horticulture, conservation and land stewardship.”

We believe this mission can be substantially realized through development
of various design elements in the Garden, improvements to current Garden areas/features, education and programming.

In 2015 the SCBG Strategy Team prioritized the following objective as part of the Strategy and Business Plan:

“To undertake a SCBG Master Planning Process which outlines the overall design intent for the garden, in line with our values and sustainable, economic, environmental and ethical practices and principles.”

We seek qualified, innovative landscape design firms to develop a master plan which will provide definitive recommendations and a specific implementation plan that addresses:

1. “Road map” (text and graphics) for development, of the 40- acre property over a 15-year period.

2. Phasing plans guiding garden development over a period of 15 years.

3. Prioritization of the staging and cost of the first priority area for development & market feasibility to fund it.

4. Unifying design elements throughout the Garden.

5. Illustrative plan of the future garden suitable for such uses as fundraising or inspiration for stake–holders.

6. Plans of the conceptual organization of garden features, collections & circulation systems.

7. Cost estimates for construction of Phase One.

8. An engaging educational and interconnected visitor experience

9. Description of Phase One features and collections.

10. Design signage template to be used throughout the Garden, identifying flow and connection through strategic placement.
History of the Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden Society

The Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden Society was formed in July 2002, receiving legal status as a registered charity, and non-profit society. A membership of 750 was established, numerous educational events, plant sales, garden tours and fundraising events were held.

In 2008, the Board viewed a 40-acre parcel of Agricultural Land Reserve land in the District of Sechelt that was ideally suited to establish a botanical garden. The Society, with the assistance of privately donated money and a mortgage, purchased the property in July 2009.

A Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden Feasibility Study was completed in October, 2008.

Basic infrastructure was built in 2009 – 2010 with help of government grants (Federal, Provincial, Municipal and Regional), many private donations from our members and others, as well as in-kind donations from many local businesses.

Infrastructure construction and rehabilitation resulted in a 2500 square foot Pavilion, as well as two buildings housing volunteer areas, a classroom, and a maintenance room.

Since the official opening of the Pavilion in 2011, both visitor numbers, children’s programming, educational workshops, rentals, celebrations and community events have steadily increased.

In our 2015 fiscal year (July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015), we welcomed over 9000 people to the Botanical Garden, up from 7000 the previous year. We are open year round, with reduced winter hours and 6 day a week operations during the summer months. Admission to the Garden is free for members and by donation for the general public.

A topographic survey of the 40 acre property has just recently been completed (April, 2016).

Over 5 acres of the Garden has been developed and maintained;

• the Veggie Garden
• Seniors Garden
• Pavilion Gardens
• Pathways
• Picnic ‘n’ Play area
• Native Plant Garden - Rainforest Grove, Rain Shadow area Pond & Wetland area including a bridge & boardwalk
• Rainforest Platform
• Rhododendron Garden

Future Areas of Interest
The following are particular areas of interest in the Garden:
• Entrance and welcome areas
• Botanical collections such as Northern Californian, Chilean or other Temperate Rainforests
• Outdoor Lighting
• Himalayan birch allée integration with entrance, Pavilion and Cook Rhododendron collection
• Remote indoor/outdoor classroom such as Long House, or re-use of existing hoop house
• Quiet Garden for meditation, celebrations of life etc.
• Interpretation and way finding
• Mixed Habitat Hedge with winter interest, bird habitat, plants to cut for wreath-making
• Turf area – expansive area for events
• Ways to experience ponds and pond edges for reflections, pond life study, etc. –reflective ponds
• Mix of treed and open areas
• Tree collection
• Varied Interpretative Program for children & families, adults, special needs or interests
• Informal play/learning areas such as walk-in nests, willow tunnel, etc. to encourage interactions with Nature
• Interpretative signage, trails, boardwalks
• Interconnected, flowing design with interpretive routes, signage, trails, boardwalks, transitions
• Maintaining integrity of areas of least disturbed, natural settings
• Multiple opportunities for teaching, research
**Key Principles Guiding Development**

- Demonstrate sustainable, organic horticultural practices
- Gain inspiration from the land itself, its history as a forest (logged about one hundred years ago), a food farm, and latterly as a tree farm
- Protect and enhance the biodiversity already present, including rare and familiar plants suitable to our changing climate
- Increase awareness of our richly varied and precious natural heritage, especially plant systems
- Ethnobotany and the importance of culture, people and plants and engagement of the local First Nations
- Feasibility in Sunshine Coast community with a population of approximately 30,000

**SCOPE OF WORK**

It is the goal of this planning effort to develop the story that this botanical garden will tell so that the theme of SCBG is clear and is represented by the gardens constructed and programs offered.

Once the Master Plan has been completed, a strategic planning process along with a fund development and overall marketing plan will be required prior to moving forward with the development of Phase One.

The final Scope of Work for the master plan will be determined in detail once a firm is selected. As such, the items to be achieved in the master planning of the SCBG are as follows:

1. Define the theme/story that the SCBG wants to tell at the botanical garden which will also tie to the education and research programs of SCBG.

2. Provide a conceptual master plan of the ultimate garden concept, presented in phases.

3. The site layout must consider the functional use of the gardens,
movements of people throughout the gardens as well as the movement of goods, materials, and machinery for maintenance, planting, programs and events that are hosted in the Botanical Garden.

4. Propose a series of individual garden–theme areas that will be part of telling the story desired by the SCBG.

5. Prepare renderings of the ultimate garden concept and the Phase one components for use in the fundraising efforts of the SCBG.

6. Develop a detailed master plan for Phase One incorporating existing gardens and defined physical areas determined next for development.

7. Define the elements of Phase One and their relevance to the education, research, and conservation mission of the SCBG.

8. Prepare conceptual design plans with relevant maps and renderings.

9. Provide for community outreach and engagement including members, donors, volunteers and the wider community.

10. Prepare Phase One cost estimates for design/construction and annual operations and maintenance.
11. Coordinate with the Master Planning Committee and the SCBG Board to define naming opportunities and values associated with these opportunities.

The final report shall be a 15 year, phased master plan that shall include a full analysis of existing conditions, constraints and opportunities and incorporate future planned improvements for the overall Garden.

The consultant shall meet with the SCBG Master Plan Committee, and Board President via scheduled meetings (no less than four) and adhere to a 6-month project schedule for completion of the master plan. At a minimum, the following meetings shall be conducted at the Garden with the consultant:


It is also anticipated that multiple teleconferences may be required in the course of completing the master plan for the Garden.

**BUDGET**

Submitted proposals need to include a detailed outline of the compensation/fee for the work to be performed.

An itemization of expenses such as consultant and management fees, materials, drawings, travel expenses and other incidental expenses must be included in the cost proposal.
PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND PREPARATION

To be considered for this opportunity, submit three (3) copies of a proposal on standard 8 1/2” x 11” paper.

In addition to the hard copy, an electronic copy must also be submitted to info@coastbotanicalgarden.org.

Hard copy proposals must be delivered to the address listed below by 5:00 p.m. PST on May 30th, 2016. No fax submissions will be accepted.

All submissions will become the property of Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden Society and will not be returned:

Gerry Latham, Master Plan Committee

Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden Society,

PO Box 1518, Sechelt, B.C., V0N 3A0

In order to facilitate evaluation of the proposals, firms are instructed to be concise and to follow the outline below in responding.

Proposals that do not follow the outline, or do not contain the required information, may be considered as unresponsive proposals.

Additional detailed information may be annexed to the proposal.

Proposals shall include, in order, the following:

1. A cover letter (maximum of two (2) pages) which articulates your firm’s desire to undertake this project, the names and positions of the members of your team working on this project, and a short summary of your credentials for successfully developing a master plan.

2. Responses to the points below regarding your firm’s approach. Please limit total response to a maximum of three (3) pages:
   • Describe your firm’s approach for the development of this master plan.
   • Discuss your firm’s creative principles, and how they would be applied to this project.
• Discuss your firm’s ability to create a master plan that considers the feasibility of proposed garden development in terms of both cost and programming.

3. A detailed outline of the proposed services and consultant deliverables for executing the requirements of the Proposed Scope of Work. An estimate of the number of hours, staff positions and their hourly rates and cost to provide the services and deliverables.

4. A complete work plan and schedule for the completion of this master plan. This schedule shall indicate meetings and milestones. The goal is to complete this project within 6 months.

5. An indication of whether the firm’s activities or representation of other clients could potentially pose a conflict of interest in its representation of Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden.

6. Three references including company name and address, contact person and phone number.

**SELECTION PROCESS AND CRITERIA**

Proposals will be evaluated by a team of individuals serving on the Master Planning Committee, staff and Board of Directors. This team will collaborate with the winning firm to design the master plan.

Proposals will be evaluated by the following criteria:

1. The proposal's responsiveness to the RFP (format, capabilities, work program, approach, clarity, ability to meet proposed schedule, etc.);

2. Specialized experience and technical competence of the firm
and its personnel in the required disciplines, including a thorough knowledge of the legal, federal, provincial and local land use statutes and regulations;

3. Organization, management and technical approach to the project;

4. Ability to develop recommendations, ideas and concepts through a combination of written and graphic means of expression;

5. The unique ideas or creativity conveyed in the proposal;

6. Proposed cost;

7. The qualifications and experience of personnel committed to the project;

8. Significant prior experience completing master plans for botanical gardens on time and within budget of similar or greater size and scope;

9. Review of three references.

PRE-PROPOSAL SITE MEETING

A mandatory tour of Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden is required for all proposers. Two identical tours will be offered on the following dates and times:

Tuesday, May 11th, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. (2 hours)

Wednesday, May 12th, 2016 at 10:00am (2 hours)

These tours will be the only opportunity to see and discuss the facility with committee members and staff prior to submitting your proposal.
A package of material (the 2008 Feasibility Study, 2016 Topographical Survey and any other items deemed relevant) will be made available at the time of the tour

Reservations for a tour are required.

Please contact Mary Blockberger, SCBG Manager, by emailing operations@coastbotanicalgarden.org to RSVP for a tour.

**SCHEDULE**

The schedule for selection of a master plan consultant is as follows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide Request for Proposals to potential candidates</td>
<td>April 29th, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 1: Mandatory Tour</td>
<td>May 11th, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 2: Mandatory Tour</td>
<td>May 12th, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal due from Applicant/s</td>
<td>May 30th, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Consultant Interviews</td>
<td>June 8 – 21st, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of Design Firm</td>
<td>June 29th, 2016</td>
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**QUESTIONS**

Questions regarding this RFP should be directed to our contact person:

**Gerry Latham  Chair, Master Planning Committee**
gerrygardens@gmail.com

All questions or inquiries about this RFP must be submitted in written or electronic form to Gerry Latham. No phone queries shall be taken.
If questions regarding this RFP should result in the modification of the RFP, the written modifications will be distributed to all recipients of the original RFP.

For additional information about the Garden, please visit our website: www.coastbotanicalgarden.org

- Late applications will not be considered and will be returned.

- While every effort will be made to carefully handle applications, Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden Society cannot be held responsible for lost or damaged materials.

- The Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden Society reserves the right to accept or reject any and all responses received, or commission a firm through another process.

- All firms who submit their materials for review will receive written notification of the results of the selection process, including identification of the selected firm.

- All information contained herein does not constitute either an expressed or implied contract.

- The Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden Society reserves the right to make alterations or additions to this RFP. Any changes will be provided to all candidates via email. We look forward to hearing from you and welcoming you to the Garden.

Sincerely,

Gerry Latham,

President, SCBG Board,

Chair, Master Planning Committee