



Publication of the Academic Senate, California State University, Fullerton  
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## **Master Plan Update – Please join us on April 10**

By: James E. Grant, Jr.

Strategic Communications and Brand  
Management

*Location & Time: Clayes Performing Arts Center  
Lobby between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.*

Cal State Fullerton is updating its Master Plan, which will provide a roadmap for supporting CSUF's mission of teaching, research, and public service into the future. The plan will help the university steward a sustainable, welcoming campus.

The Fullerton Arboretum is part of this comprehensive discussion. The creation of the new Master Plan is a public process, which includes soliciting opinion from our campus community as well as our neighbors.

Over the last year, architects and planners have been meeting with constituents across campus. As part of this process, they have reviewed the [Arboretum Strategic Plan](#) and continue to meet with arboretum leaders to explore all possible options for sustainable use of the arboretum to enhance its offerings for students, faculty members, staff and the community.

We are inviting campus stakeholders and the community to attend the April 10 [Campus Master Plan Open House](#) to provide feedback on this vital blueprint for providing a safe, sustainable and welcoming learning

environment that supports student success into the future.

We look forward to continuing our collaboration with the campus and community at the public event on Wednesday, April 10 in the Clayes Performing Arts Center Lobby between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Two brief presentations are scheduled, at 10 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., giving an overview of the Campus Master Plan and a status report on the next steps.

Guest parking will be available in the Nutwood Parking Structure, with details on the [Campus Master Plan website](#).

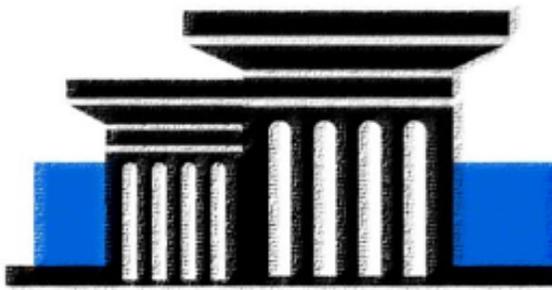
All are invited to share comments on the Campus Master Plan at [campusmasterplan@fullerton.edu](mailto:campusmasterplan@fullerton.edu)

## **A is for Arboretum, not Asphalt**

By: John Bock

Professor of Anthropology; Director,  
Center for Sustainability

Within the last month a great deal of attention has focused on the future of the Fullerton Arboretum as the university's Physical Master Plan is developed. Almost a year ago, the university's architectural and planning consultants held a public event and conducted an online survey to collect data regarding the



# Senate FORUM

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---

campus community's perceptions and opinions about the future configuration of the campus environment. The results of this exercise are available [here](#). A few findings stand out as especially relevant from my perspective. At the in-person event, the Arboretum was identified as the "most favorite spot" on campus (McCarthy Hall, my campus home, was least favorite) among students, staff, and faculty, and the report emphasizes that "a number of visitors to these posters expressed a strong interest in integrating the arboretum into the curriculum, in providing a more friendly and direct internal access for students, and to removing the perceived barrier between the arboretum and the campus." The two values that were most shared by both students, and faculty in the survey (nearly 3,000 responses) were "Sustainability" and "Socioeconomic Equality." Students also emphasized "health and wellness" as an important factor in campus design. These responses show that not only does the Arboretum occupy a special status for the CSUF campus community, the Arboretum's mission and activities exemplify values that are vitally important to its members.

The history of the Arboretum is well-documented . Although the Arboretum opened 40 years ago, planning began almost ten years prior, led by faculty members from the Department of Biological Science and their families, especially Eugene (Gene) and Teri Jones. As the idea gained traction, ASI and community members were instrumental in raising funds. The area that is now the Arboretum was a diseased orange grove that

was scheduled to be demolished for a parking lot, A group called "A is for Arboretum, not Asphalt" organized to promote the alternative, the CSU's first botanical garden on state land. As we know, eventually the CSU Board of Trustees set aside the 26 acres for the specific purpose of establishing a botanical garden at CSUF.

Over this past forty years, the campus and greater community have developed a deep attachment to the Fullerton Arboretum. The Arboretum is a welcoming environment for our diverse community, including people of all ages, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, financial situations, genders, sexual orientations, and identities formed on other dimensions. I have been able to see the benefits to those with disabilities, whether visible, invisible, developmental, and/or physical, who can visit and utilize the Arboretum as a safe, low stress, judgement-free setting. Over my nearly twenty years as a CSUF faculty member and Fullerton resident, I have had the privilege of seeing my children grow up in the Arboretum, and of being deeply involved in student learning and research there. The Arboretum has grown into a world-class research and educational institution in its own right, each year hosting thousands of local school children, providing support for dozens of research projects on its grounds by students and faculty from CSUF and many other institutions, and supporting many hundreds of CSUF students through service-learning and internship opportunities. One of three arboreta in California to have ArbNet's top level of accreditation (the others are the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanical Gardens and



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---

the UC Davis Arboretum), it joins 26 others in the United States and the world with this recognition. This includes national botanical gardens in the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom, as well as only a few other university arboreta at the University of Oxford, Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, the University of Massachusetts, the University of Washington, the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Hawaii. We should all be immensely proud of this accomplishment. CSUF has an opportunity to not only maintain the Arboretum at this level, but to bolster this level of excellence. And this, in particular, is why I, for one, find it befuddling that any reduction in the physical portion of the Arboretum directly devoted to green space and in-ground botanical exhibits and research could even be considered.

The Fullerton Arboretum costs approximately \$1.25 million per year to operate. The ending of the Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Fullerton in 2020 will result in a loss of about \$250,000 or twenty percent of the operating requirements. While a substantial amount of money, it is a small fraction, about six one-hundredths of one percent, or six ten-thousandths, of CSUF's \$437 million annual budget. Even within the budget environment we face I believe that, through concerted effort this budget shortfall could be recovered, and the Arboretum has indicated that they have plans to bridge this gap. Regardless, I find it difficult to accept the loss of the city funding as a compelling argument to do anything to the Arboretum. Changes that may be proposed would, in themselves, be far more expensive. This is not a question of cost but one of values.

In 2011, CSUF became a signatory to the Second Nature Presidents' Climate Commitment (then the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment) and the Talloires

Declaration, both of which signify the university's commitment to leadership in sustainability. In 2018, CSUF joined the Healthier Campus Initiative, which commits the university to action to improve the wellness of the campus community, including providing a wellness promoting physical environment. Do we represent values consistent with establishing a healthy living and learning environment for our students, being a leader in innovative solutions to transportation challenges, as preservers of the natural world, and being a committed member of the local community? At a time when we face an existential crisis in climate change, I believe it would be appropriate for the university to send a message by investing in this world-class botanical garden, instead of removing green space. With our students facing a mental health crisis of stress, we should be emphasizing the healing effects of experiencing the natural world at the Arboretum. With single occupancy vehicles contributing to most of CSUF's carbon footprint, perhaps we can invest in creative means to make public transit, bicycling, and walking the preferred options. With the growing recognition of the injustice and environmental costs of food waste, we should invest in expanding the Arboretum's composting capability. If we want to better integrate the Arboretum into campus, as I have repeatedly heard is a goal, let's do it by investing in the Arboretum's expertise and activities that are at the forefront of CSUF's committed values to sustainability, equality, social justice, and a

healthy campus. Let's not put buildings in areas that are sequestering carbon, preserving biodiversity in this urban environment by providing a home to plants and animals, improving the mental and physical well-being of our campus and greater community, and providing crucial venues for student learning and research. Back in the 1970's they chanted "A is for Arboretum, not Asphalt" while Joni Mitchell sang "you don't know what you've got till it's gone—they paved paradise and they put up a parking lot." As a campus and as a community, let's commit to and invest in the future of the Fullerton Arboretum.

## **The Fullerton Arboretum, A Treasure within Our Midst**

By: Scott Hewitt

Professor of Chemistry; Member, Friends of the Fullerton Arboretum Board

Can you see the treasure between the trees on the northeastern corner of our campus? Living laboratory, community jewel, educational resource, beautiful and serene, world-class botanical garden – this is what comes to my mind when I think of the Fullerton Arboretum. With the Campus Master Plan under consideration, it is time to take a closer look at the Arboretum, its achievements, and its importance to our university and community.

The 26-acre Arboretum contains a diversity of plant species grouped into four main collections: Mediterranean, Desert, Woodland, and Cultivated. The Arboretum collects and conserves plants from around the world to protect them against extinction. The plant collection contains many rare or threatened species, wild-collected specimens and cultivars of historical significance. The nursery propagates, distributes and safeguards rare and/or threatened species from the Arboretum collection. The Arboretum also houses the following sites of natural, cultural, historical, and research significance: the Orange County Agricultural & Nikkei Heritage Museum, Heritage House (a Victorian home that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places), national citrus collection (only public garden to hold citrus as an official collection), fruit orchard, farm, nursery and greenhouse, community gardens, children's garden, nature center, Bacon Pavilion and classrooms, drilling site and water quality monitoring wells, composting area, as well as a Bodhi tree, a sacred fig that was blessed by the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama of Tibet during his visit in 2000.

Our Arboretum is celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. Its creation was a visionary idea that was conceived in the 1970s by several CSUF faculty. Generations of campus and community members have worked to advance the original vision and make the Arboretum the jewel that it is today. It was accredited as a Level IV arboretum by ArbNet in 2017. This is the highest level of accreditation. Only 27 arboreta in the world



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Volume XXXI, Number 3, Spring 2019

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have this level of accreditation, and of those only 7 are university arboreta. The other two level IV arboreta in California are the Los Angeles County Arboretum & Botanic Garden and the UC Davis Arboretum. Level IV accreditation is based in part on the number of tree and woody plant species, the staff and volunteer support, interaction with the public, collaboration with other arboreta, collections data sharing with networked collections across different arboreta, and the level of on-site research and conservation. The Fullerton Arboretum is indeed an outstanding resource for our university and the surrounding communities.

Our faculty, staff, and students work and learn at the Arboretum. There are numerous opportunities for experiential learning and high-impact practices (HIPs). Faculty members do research at the Arboretum or bring their classes to show some of the concepts being covered in class, to test those concepts, or to help the Arboretum via class projects. Thirty-nine CSUF classes have collaborated with the Arboretum recently. Every college has activities within the Arboretum. Art students paint in the garden and host an exhibition at the Arboretum Museum. Business students work to develop better marketing strategies. Communications students develop and promote Arboretum membership campaigns. Education students develop K-12 science curriculum. Engineering students analyze stormwater runoff and diversion. Health and Human Development students do service-learning projects that are a collaboration between the Children's Center and the Arboretum. Humanities and Social Science students perform urban agriculture community research in collaboration with the non-profit

Monkey Business café, supported by \$1.4 M in grants from the USDA. Natural Science and Mathematics students perform research on how water is pushed or pulled from the roots of plants and trees to their crowns and into the air. The Arboretum also hires students for student assistant positions and internships.

Community and campus members come to the Arboretum to relax and learn. The Arboretum is a haven of respite and peace that helps to restore and refresh nature-deprived urban/suburban folks. It also offers a wide range of vibrant educational programs. You can take classes in cooking, photography, gardening, composting, and much more. You can explore native plants with an herbalist, learn about wolves or coyotes, or recharge yourself by taking yoga in the garden. All local third graders visit the Heritage House as part of their California history requirement. The desert collection supports 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade curricula where students study plant and animal life cycles. The ancient plant and chaparral collections are used by local 7<sup>th</sup> graders.

It is truly amazing what the Arboretum is able to accomplish with only eleven staff members. This is in part due to having wonderful staff, but also due to the large network of generous and capable community members and CSUF faculty, staff, and student volunteers and donors. The non-profit support group, Friends of the Fullerton Arboretum helps support the Arboretum with volunteer recruitment, membership and hosting all fundraising events. The Friends' fundraising efforts help to fund horticulture, development and administrative staff as well as equipment



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Volume XXXI, Number 3, Spring 2019

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purchases and maintenance, tree trimming, plant and seed purchases.

The Campus Master Plan process is a very important long-term planning process for CSUF. It is focused on the entire campus, not just the Arboretum. We all want the university to be the best it can be, but we all have different ideas about how to get there. I encourage everyone to look very carefully at the draft Master Plan on April 10 at the Spring Open House in the Clayes Performing Arts Center. We do need to find ways to become more efficient and more innovative, but not at the expense of the treasures we currently have on campus. Speaking of being innovative, wouldn't it be wonderful to have an integrated campus-wide arboretum, including native, drought tolerant plants with environmental and interpretation messaging throughout the campus, while maintaining the current Arboretum space? A new botanical research greenhouse at the Arboretum border to attract curious students into the facility and Arboretum, as well as to replace the aging CSUF Biology Greenhouse Complex located at the south end of campus near the Nutwood parking structure? A new Arboretum administrative facility, barn, and nature center to replace the current aging facilities – perhaps this space could also include space for the faculty, staff, and students who conduct research at the Arboretum, as well as space for the Center for Sustainability? A more welcoming north campus entrance that has a stronger CSUF and Arboretum identity and more prominent direction and information signage? These suggestions will strengthen the

Arboretum and strategically support the university's academic mission. I'm sure these and other creative ideas will guide us to help our university become a better institution for everyone.

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