



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Executive Action Summary

Budget & Finance – Attachment 4

Committee Name: Budget & Finance

Date: October 31, 2025

Agenda Item: MATERIAL CHANGE TO THE LANDSCAPE - Beal Botanical Garden and Campus Arboretum Phased Redesign

☐

Information

☐

Review

☒

Action

Resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Michigan State University hereby authorizes the Administration to approve a material change to the landscape for the project titled, “Beal Botanical Garden and Campus Arboretum Phased Redesign.”

Recommendation:

The Trustee Committee on Budget & Finance recommends that the Board of Trustees authorize a material change to the campus landscape for the Beal Botanical Garden and Campus Arboretum Phased Redesign.

Prior Action by BOT: Not applicable.

Responsible Officers:

Daniel Bollman, Vice President for Strategic Infrastructure Planning and Facilities
Barbara Kranz, Assistant Provost and Executive Director, Institutional Space
Planning and Management

Summary:

The Beal Botanical Garden and Campus Arboretum recently created a land use plan to align the goals of the gardens with strategic university arts collection plan goals. The pillars of the plan include:

- Maintain and activate a world class plant collection to enable teaching and research across disciplines
- Facilitate opportunities for transformative learning experiences for campus and community
- Support biodiversity and sustainability
- Foster community building, place awareness, and wellbeing on campus
- Maintain and strengthen organizational integrity for a sustainable future.

The garden's history spans over 150 years, during which it has continuously evolved. A key goal of the land use plan and phased renovations is to restore Beal to its wilder past by redesigning the landscape with a focus on biodiversity and native plants, aligning both ecological and educational priorities. The new garden design and phased renovations introduce a strategic reorganization of plant groupings to reduce water and greenhouse usage. It leverages the site's floodplain location by incorporating water collection systems and designated wetland study areas. The updated layout enhances support for teaching and research through clearly defined thematic and dedicated plant zones.

Accessibility improvements will include ramped entry points and accessible pathway surfaces, ensuring inclusive access for all visitors. Additionally, lawn maintenance demands will be reduced due to a reduction in turf grass areas.

Background Information:

Established in 1873, the W.J. Beal Botanical Garden is the oldest continuously operating university botanical garden in the United States and illuminates the interconnectedness between people, plants, and place. This living laboratory encourages learning and exploration of the natural world. With a collection of over 2,000 plants from around the globe situated in the heart of MSU's campus along the Red Cedar River, the natural landscape is well-suited for collaborative programming to advance research, teaching, wellbeing, and public engagement. It is listed on the Michigan State Register of Historic Places.

Source of Funds:

The plan will be carried out through a series of individual projects, each advancing as funding becomes available through targeted fundraising efforts. Individual project costs are estimated to range from \$20,000 to \$1,500,000, depending on their scope and complexity. The total cost to implement all projects is currently estimated to be as much as \$12,000,000, but the actual expenditure will align with available resources. Each project will proceed independently once adequate funding is secured, allowing for a phased and flexible execution strategy.

Resource Impact:

The redesigned garden will promote biodiversity and native plant species, integrate water collection systems, and establish designated wetland study areas. These features collectively enhance the garden's sustainability and ecological value.

MATERIAL CHANGE TO THE LANDSCAPE

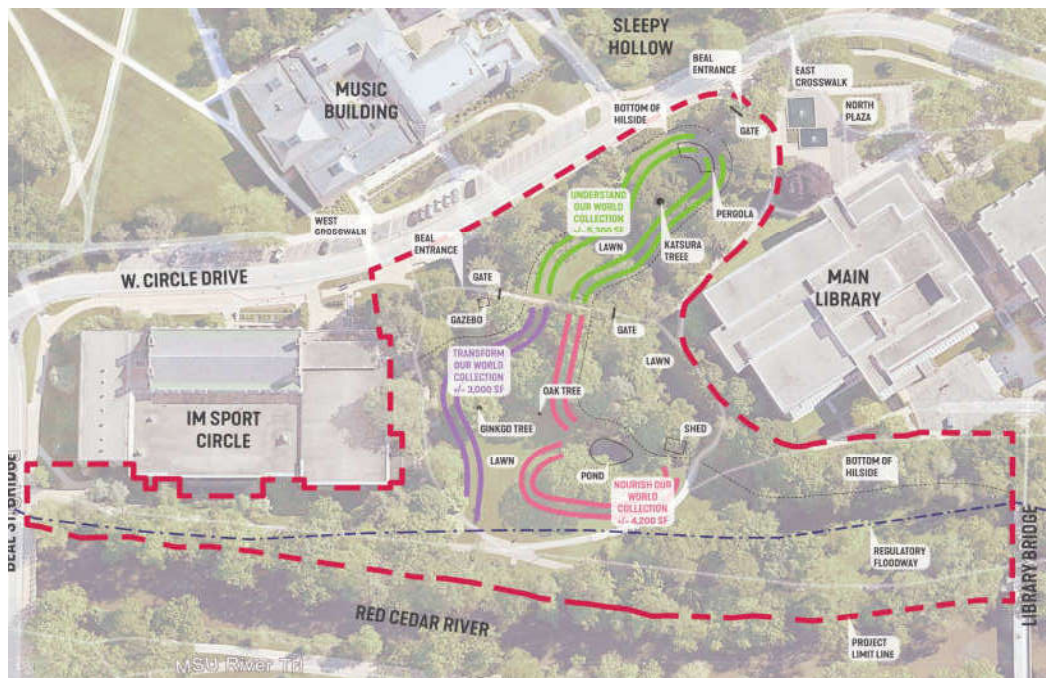
Beal Botanical Garden and Campus Arboretum Phased Redesign



October 31, 2025

MATERIAL CHANGE TO THE LANDSCAPE

Beal Botanical Garden and Campus Arboretum Phased Redesign



Existing Conditions



New Site Plan

October 31, 2025

MATERIAL CHANGE TO THE LANDSCAPE

Beal Botanical Garden and Campus Arboretum Phased Redesign



October 31, 2025