

Reiman Gardens

Strategic Plan | Executive Summary



Introduction

Reiman Gardens is a magnificent gateway to the City of Ames and the Iowa State University campus. Over the past 18 years Reiman Gardens has grown from a simple four-acre garden to a seventeen-acre, award winning, and multi-featured major botanical garden. The Gardens' mission, "to educate, enchant and inspire an appreciation of plants, butterflies and the beauty of the natural world," is rooted in all we do. Creating unique and exciting family experiences; providing educational workshops, lectures and programming for youth and adults; offering a living laboratory to ISU students, local schools and community organizations; hosting one-of-a-kind events; and demonstrating sustainable practices and principles throughout our facilities is the foundation on which we continually build upon.



Mission

The mission of Reiman Gardens is

“To educate, enchant, and inspire an appreciation of plants, butterflies, and the beauty of the natural world.”

Vision

The vision of Reiman Gardens is

“To become a premier university botanical garden”

As a botanical garden:

- To provide breathtaking horticulture and entomology displays
- To provide outstanding educational programming
- To become a major cultural resource for Iowa
- To be a leader in the conservation of native Midwestern butterflies



As a community resource:

- To provide inspiration and information about the natural world
- To play a leadership role in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) programs
- To provide exciting and important citizen science projects
- To serve an increasingly diverse audience



As a university garden:

- To collaborate with a wide range of Iowa State University departments in support of their teaching, research, and outreach activities
- To showcase research of Reiman Gardens and Iowa State University faculty and students
- To provide outstanding intern and employment opportunities for Iowa State University students



Transformative Goals

Reiman Gardens has established four institutional goals for its future:

Goal I. To attract and serve a large and broad audience through exceptional experiences.

Goal II. To operate and maintain Reiman Gardens' collections, gardens, and butterfly exhibits to the highest standards.

Goal III. To become an indispensable part of Iowa State University.

Goal IV. To develop the financial, human, and infrastructure resources to support the mission, vision, and goals at the highest level.



Operating Principles

Reiman Gardens is committed to practicing and demonstrating sustainable principles in its operations. This practice is encouraged in all areas of the Gardens wherever practical, including: garden maintenance, event planning, and office operations. The Gardens is also committed to the preservation of important plant collections and the protection, promotion and conservation of native Midwestern butterfly species.

Distinguishing Features

Reiman Gardens is clearly differentiated by being an attractive entryway to Iowa State University and the City of Ames. It is the only major university botanical garden in Iowa, one of the few in the Midwest. Among the top tier of university gardens in the U.S., Reiman Gardens creates and maintains diverse gardens and annual themes for the exhibits and programs to appeal to a broad audience, and has one of the most intense and diverse butterfly exhibits in the country.

Financial Strategy

Reiman Gardens, which is owned and operated by Iowa State University, relies on diverse funding streams to provide financial stability. Sixty percent of its operating support is from earned income, with the remaining 40 percent provided by Iowa State University. The future strategy requires that all income streams grow, with particular emphasis on increasing contributions from members and supporters, building the Gardens' endowment, and on sustained support from Iowa State University.

Highlights

Within each Transformative Goal, Reiman Gardens has established more than 60 specific, measurable objectives to be achieved within identified timelines over the next three years. Some of the highlights include:

Increasing and expanding audience (visitation) and revenue from earned income:

Reiman Gardens must develop and implement a comprehensive marketing and branding campaign. The Gardens is committed to serving a larger and more diverse audience. For Reiman Gardens to serve Iowa State University, and the broader community as well, the Gardens must become a regular “stop” on the bus system.

Providing high quality experiences:

Reiman Gardens is committed to the development of a new master site plan, new interpretation on the grounds, and a reassessment of its collections and the Conservatory displays. Upgrades will also be necessary in several individual gardens, along with ongoing upgrades to the Butterfly Wing and the Conservatory.

Becoming a vital part of Iowa State University:

Reiman Gardens must extend its reach to faculty and students by offering coordinated programs that will broaden the public face of Iowa State University, create new educational and research opportunities at the Gardens, and ensure that the Gardens is an exemplary entryway to ISU and Ames.

Extending Reiman Gardens’ role in conservation:

Reiman Gardens must enhance this role with the development of greater citizen science projects, the preservation of key plant collections, and by providing leadership in native butterfly conservation.

Enhancing Reiman Gardens’ educational focus:

Reiman Gardens will focus its children’s education programs on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) programs. The Gardens will also explore new methods to deliver adult programming, including the potential for a distance learning program.

Increasing revenues:

Reiman Gardens will focus on increasing revenues from admissions, rentals, and by aggressively building its membership and development programs.