

Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens
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10 April 2019

Mr Adrian Roth
Executive Officer Parks and City Amenities
City of Hobart
GPO Box 503
HOBART TAS 7001
Via Email: rotha@hobartcity.com.au

Dear Mr Roth,

RE: Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens Annual Grant 2019/20

I am writing in response to your letter dated 6 March 2019 regarding the City of Hobart Annual Grant for 2019/20 and I would again like to thank the City of Hobart for your ongoing support of the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens (RTBG).

Following a very busy and exciting Bicentenary year in 2018 the RTBG staff continue to work hard to maintain the profile of the Gardens and reinforce the important role that it plays within the Tasmanian landscape as a place where the Tasmanian Community and visitors can engage and experience Australia's premier cool climate botanic garden.

The RTBG is continuing to experience increased visitor numbers, with growth in line with broader tourism trends. It remains one of the key attractions in the state, enjoyed by international and domestic visitors, along with strong local visitation, resulting in record visitation of just over 500,000 in 2018.

The Gardens continues to be an important location for the Tasmanian community, with regular family and community events being held at the Gardens. The RTBG is supporting the inaugural City of Hobart initiative celebrating Japan's Children's Day on the 5th of May 2019.

The design and rollout of new wayfinding signage to replace all existing signage throughout the garden, major enhancements to the living collections and installation of new floral displays, and the construction of a new secure Tour Buggy storage facility has been made possible through the support of the City of Hobart. A full closure report of the previous grant is attached.

The RTBG would like to make a formal request for support of an Annual Grant in 2019/20 to the amount of \$20,000. These funds will assist in the implementation of some new developments which contribute to the visitor experience as well as supporting the expansion of facilities to the Tasmanian Seed Conservation Centre; the flagship of the RTBG's plant conservation work.

This grant would enable the following major projects:

- \$6,000 towards the development of a new entrance area to the Tasmanian Plant Collection. Following severe storms in May 2018, a major section of the Tasmanian Collection was destroyed by the falling of a 170-year old Ponderosa Pine. Although this was a significant loss, the event created an opportunity for us to progress the development, one that had been in the planning for some time. The new visitor entry area will provide an expansion of the cool temperate rainforest plantings, leading to an interpretation and gathering space that will provide an opportunity for visitors to learn more about this iconic Tasmanian flora and significantly enhance the visitor experience.
- \$7,000 towards the expansion of a new cool storage facility within the Tasmanian Seed Conservation Centre (TSCC). This facility will ensure the long-term security of conservation sized collections of the entire Tasmanian flora and will provide a secure future for the TSCC's work as it continues to play an important part in the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.
- \$7,000 to support new landscaping works to the entrance area to the multipurpose POD facility, which is our recently refurbished meeting, workshop and community event venue. The external space will be re-modelled to provide a contemporary, welcoming feel that provides gathering and seating areas for all visitors to the gardens. This work will link with the Tasmanian Community Food Garden and has been designed to provide a functional space that can be incorporated into larger community events.

The Board appreciates the support by the City of Hobart, and recognises that the additional assistance provided will enable the abovementioned projects to further improve the quality of the visitor experience.

Adrian, I would be happy to provide further detail on each of the projects outlined, or alternatively meet to discuss opportunities.

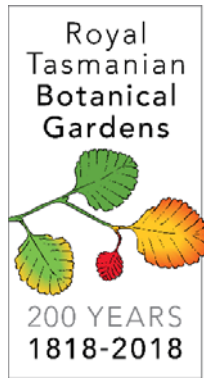
Yours sincerely,



Gary Davies

Director

Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens



City of Hobart Annual Grant Report April 2019

The generous annual grant in 2018/19 has again enabled us to undertake works at the RTBG that have resulted in improvements to our visitor services and community engagement units as well as the living collections of the gardens.

As outlined in the grant request, a number of small to medium projects were planned and implemented, resulting in important improvements to the gardens facilities and services, in-turn improving the visitor experience.

The agreed projects include:

1. New wayfinding signage (\$12,000)

As previously outlined, the RTBG has undertaken a review of it's brand (facilitated by Red Jelly), and the design, planning and implementation of the wayfinding signage is a significant component of the project and replaces very outdated and aged signage in the Gardens.

The design and planning phase is complete, with the first layer of interpretation signs completed in January 2019. The pilot wayfinding sign is constructed, with roll-out of all wayfinding to be completed by 30 June 2019. (see attached plan and images)



2. Floral displays and new plantings (\$6,000)

Major additions and improvements within the central heritage core of the gardens were carried out during winter 2018 in preparation for the Spring and Summer period

Two new large display beds were installed along the main pathway that leads down to conservatory. They are informally named the 'Helix Beds' due to the visual impression created by the curved lines of the beds. These two new installations provide strong visual impact flanking each side of the main path and anecdotal feedback from visitors has been very complimentary. The addition of these new garden beds has provided a strong element of colour and form to what were previously open lawn areas.

The installation work included removal of all existing turf and excavation of subsoil, installation of an automated irrigation system, importation of approximately 15 cubic metres of soil and plant material. These garden beds will have two major displays each year with advanced plants being 'grown-on' in the RTBG nursey to minimise the amount of down time between displays.

Following the installation of the new Visitor Services Hub at the main entrance, the garden beds that are located either side of the gates were replanted following the removal of some older, unthrifty plantings. This new planting scheme, which includes *Camellia sasanqua*, Waratahs and underplantings of *Helleborus*, provide a fresh evergreen backdrop to the heritage gates and a variety of seasonal colour for visitors throughout winter and spring months.





3. **Visitor Services tour vehicle storage (\$11,000).**

Planning and construction of a secure storage facility for the Visitor Services tour buggies is well underway and is due for completion in late May 2019. The City of Hobart funding is helping to provide a 6 x 6 metre secure storage shed for the three buggies that are used to provide transport around the gardens for visitors with limited mobility.

Additional works required for this project include widening of the access path leading to the new storage area and supply of mains power for recharging of the vehicles. The completion of the buggy store will provide secure storage for the vehicles, in a convenient location that will make them easily accessible for visitor services staff.



Proposed Buggy store



Buggy store site under construction

