



May 15, 2015

Senator Girod, Representative Read, and members of the Joint Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. I am Steve Bloom, CEO of the Portland Japanese Garden. I am proud to join my colleagues Steve Bass, President and CEO of OPB, Stephen Marc Beaudoin, Executive Director of PHAME Academy, and Cynthia Rider, Executive Director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival to advocate for funding to support critical capital infrastructure projects which will benefit citizens across the state.

The Portland Japanese Garden is requesting \$2,500,000 for its \$33,500,000 project to expand visitor and educational facilities at the 52-year old Garden. Today, the Garden serves 10 times more visitors than its original infrastructure was planned to accommodate – having grown from 30,000 visitors/year to over 300,000 visitors/year. By 2020, we expect to be serving 500,000 visitors/year.

The Garden serves visitors from near and far, from the Portland metropolitan area, from throughout Oregon, from all 50 states, and includes many international visitors to our state. It is known as the finest Japanese garden outside of Japan and that is quite something since there are over 300 public Japanese gardens just in North America and hundreds more around the world. The Portland Japanese Garden is the leader in the field of Japanese gardens in North America and the only Japanese garden in North America with high-level long-term relationships with business, financial, and cultural leaders in Japan.

For over 50 years, the Portland Japanese Garden has been a place of beauty and tranquility for the millions of visitors who have passed through its gates. The great State of Oregon offers Nature's beauty in a thousand ways but a Japanese garden is a different kind of beauty – Japanese gardens embody the art of human hands cooperating with nature and time to create beauty and meaning. For over 1,000 years, the Japanese perfected an art form that calms the mind, refreshes the body, and restores harmony to the soul. There is a reason this art form spread like wildfire around the world and consciously and unconsciously influences many of the homes and communities we live in today here in Oregon.

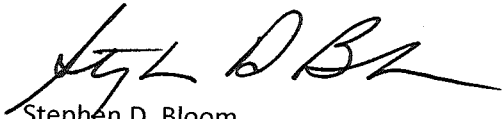
The fame of the Portland Japanese Garden has made it one of the top destinations for over 200,000 tourists to Oregon, generating over \$93,000,000 in economic impact for our state. 8,000 Oregon households subscribe to annual memberships at the Garden. The Garden is an important cultural bridge supporting our state's valuable trade with Japan. Although the size of the Garden has not changed since it opened, it now accommodates ten times more visitors than originally intended. Our expansion seeks to protect the visitor experience by providing additional space to accommodate this rapid visitor growth.

In addition, the Garden is now considered an international partner in safeguarding the preservation of Japanese garden arts and culture around the world. Current educational and event facilities need to be expanded in order to fulfill this key role and responsibility.

Carefully protecting the original garden, we have worked with world-renowned Japanese architect Kengo Kuma and several of Oregon's leading design firms to design three new LEED certified buildings, seven new garden areas, while re-purposing already-built over areas and restoring the ecosystem of surrounding native forest. The result will be a new architectural landmark for our state by one of the foremost architects working in the world today, more garden areas to refresh and restore visitors, and 21st century educational facilities to serve learners of all ages and backgrounds.

With \$2,500,000 from the legislature, we will be able to begin construction this year. We have already raised one-half of our \$33,500,000 goal - from private donors in Oregon, around the country, and over \$1,500,000 in contributions from donors in Japan. We expect more from Japan as the Japanese government, for only the 2nd time in history, has granted tax-deduction status for donations to a project outside of Japan. Donors in Japan and here in Oregon expect state financial support commensurate with this project's importance to our State. HB 5030 is the way to deliver that support and leverage the other 90% of private money that will support this important project.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.



Stephen D. Bloom
Chief Executive Officer
Portland Japanese Garden

Portland Japanese Garden

For over 50 years, the Portland Japanese Garden has served millions of visitors, Oregonians and tourists, as a place of exceptional beauty and tranquility. Designed for 30,000 visitor/year, the Garden today serves 300,000 visitors/year.



The 'sea of asphalt' at the Japanese Garden's front gate today:

300,000 visitors must cross the 'sea of asphalt' to begin their journey into the Garden's beauty and tranquility. Delivery trucks, the Garden's shuttle bus, and cars vie for space with visitors in the same area.



Portland Japanese Garden expansion

Cascading ponds will welcome 500,000 visitors/year and enhance Washington Park's beauty for 3,000,000 visitors



Pedestrian Courtyard replaces 'sea of asphalt'

A central pedestrian-only courtyard surrounded by three LEED certified buildings provides a buffer between City and Garden, with visitor amenities such as a Tea Café and Art Gallery and new classrooms for innovative educational programs.



Buildings designed by world renowned architect Kengo Kuma
Blending Japanese design with local craftsmanship and northwest materials, buildings are designed to exist harmoniously with surrounding native forest

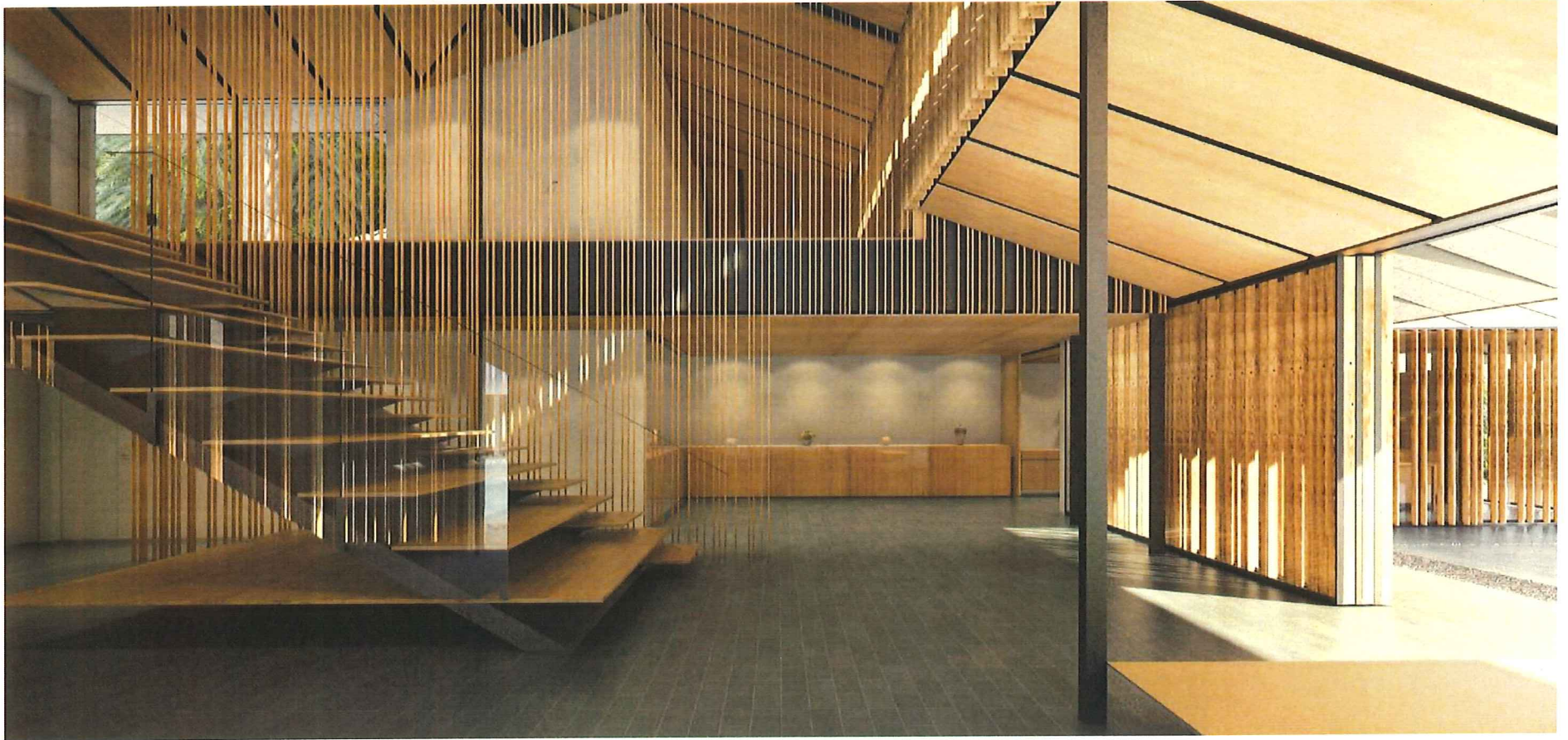


Designed for Oregon

The Portland Japanese Garden is a year-round destination. New buildings are ingeniously designed with sliding glass and wood walls that open in summer months or glow invitingly in Oregon's 'liquid sunshine.' Deep overhangs provide shelter from the weather.



Natural materials, Japanese traditions – 21st century design



Portland Japanese Garden

The best Japanese Garden outside of Japan. The leader in the field of Japanese gardens in North America. A cultural bridge supporting Oregon's trade relations with Japan. Producing \$93,000,000 in economic impact benefiting Oregonians. 300,000 visitors, 8,000 members, 600 volunteers. The expansion project will ensure that the Garden continues to serve Oregon and future generations.

