

Botanical Garden of the Piedmont (BGP)
Response to CCP Review of BGP Regarding Parking Concerns
December 18, 2022

Below is BGP's response to the concerns voiced by the transportation planner reviewing the CCP application.

The anticipated hours of operation on a Botanical Garden of the Piedmont typical day will be from 9:00 – 6:00 with hours extended at either end of the day to accommodate special classes or events. At this time, we anticipate four large Garden events annually – a fall festival, winter light display, spring celebration, and summer exhibition. However, we do plan to offer classes, performances, seasonal celebrations, and to rent our facilities for events throughout the year. These outdoor events will occur in either our proposed amphitheater which is being designed to accommodate approximately 500 – 600 and our proposed main event green which is being designed to accommodate approximately 150 – 200 people. There will also be inside events in our Garden Pavilion and Visitor's Center. Our buildings have not been designed yet, so event space sizes are not available at this point.

BGP is working to proactively address our future parking and traffic control needs. Our Schematic Plan currently provides parking for eighty-two vehicles, four handicapped parking spaces and three buses. There is also an area designated for over-flow parking under the Dominion Energy right-of way and we have already begun incorporating Dominion Energy criteria into the design of this area to fulfill their requirements. See image below for the area designated for overflow parking in red.



In addition, there are 30 on-street parking spaces along Melbourne Road adjacent to the Garden and 10 - 12 parking spaces along Melbourne Road across the John Warner Parkway. To accommodate cyclists, an area designated for bicycle parking will be included in the Design Development level of the Garden design. There will also be a special pedestrian entrance gate to welcome hikers from the Parkway trails and neighborhood sidewalks. A spur of the Rivanna Trail, connecting the John Warner Parkway with the McIntire Park skatepark, will also connect pedestrians to the Garden and additional gates into the Garden are being planned from this trail.

We started a conversation about a public bus stop near the Garden with Charlottesville Area Transit several years ago and are looking at ways to collaborate with JAUNT for other ways to provide transportation to the Garden for events. At past events we have shuttled guests to the Garden from Charlottesville High School, when it wasn't in session, and plan to use this strategy in the future. Additional satellite parking areas may include CATEC (outside of school hours), Albemarle Square, and other locations.

West Virginia Botanic Garden in Morgantown, West Virginia, is similar to BGP in that there is no admission fee to enter the Garden. They are also located in a city with a large university. They are open dawn to dusk, 365 days/year. They provided the following data of their Garden from May 12th – September 16th, 2022, their busiest time of the year:

Busiest times of the day: 9:00 am – 6:00 pm

Busiest days of the week – Saturday & Sunday, divided evenly and representing 37.4% of total weekly visitation

Average number of cars visiting site daily -202

Minimum number of cars visiting daily – 165 (Mondays and Tuesdays)

Maximum number of cars visiting daily – 229 (weekends)