



# Olbrich Botanical Gardens Comprehensive Master Plan & Interpretive Plan

Public Meeting 1  
January 22, 2026



REED-HILDERBRAND

DF/ DAMON FARBER



Krueck Sexton Partners



NATASHA WATERSON

Once-Future Office





Olbrich Botanical Gardens welcomes you to our first public workshop to help envision Olbrich's future!

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Ho-Chunk oral tradition states “we have always been here.” Despite colonial invasion, genocide, and forced removal, the Ho-Chunk have since time immemorial been the gardeners and protectors of this sacred land, Teejop (day-JOPE), on which Olbrich Botanical Gardens now resides. Olbrich acknowledges the sovereignty of all people who have a historic connection to this land, who have and will always be here, and honors their legacy of sustainably cultivating the land so that it can be enjoyed and gardened for generations to come.

# MICHAEL B. OLBRICH

*“...something of the grace and beauty that nature intended us all to share. For this park has not a passive, but an active function. It is not to stand aloof, a treasure of the city, beautiful, still, reserved. This park above all others, with a warmth and strength of love - of love of all the working world- should hold out its arms, should invite them to itself, until its naturalness and beauty enter into their lives.”*

From a speech proposing a garden site on Starkweather Creek near Lake Monona in 1921



# OLBRICH BOTANICAL GARDENS



## MISSION

Enrich lives and inspire people to live in harmony with the natural world.

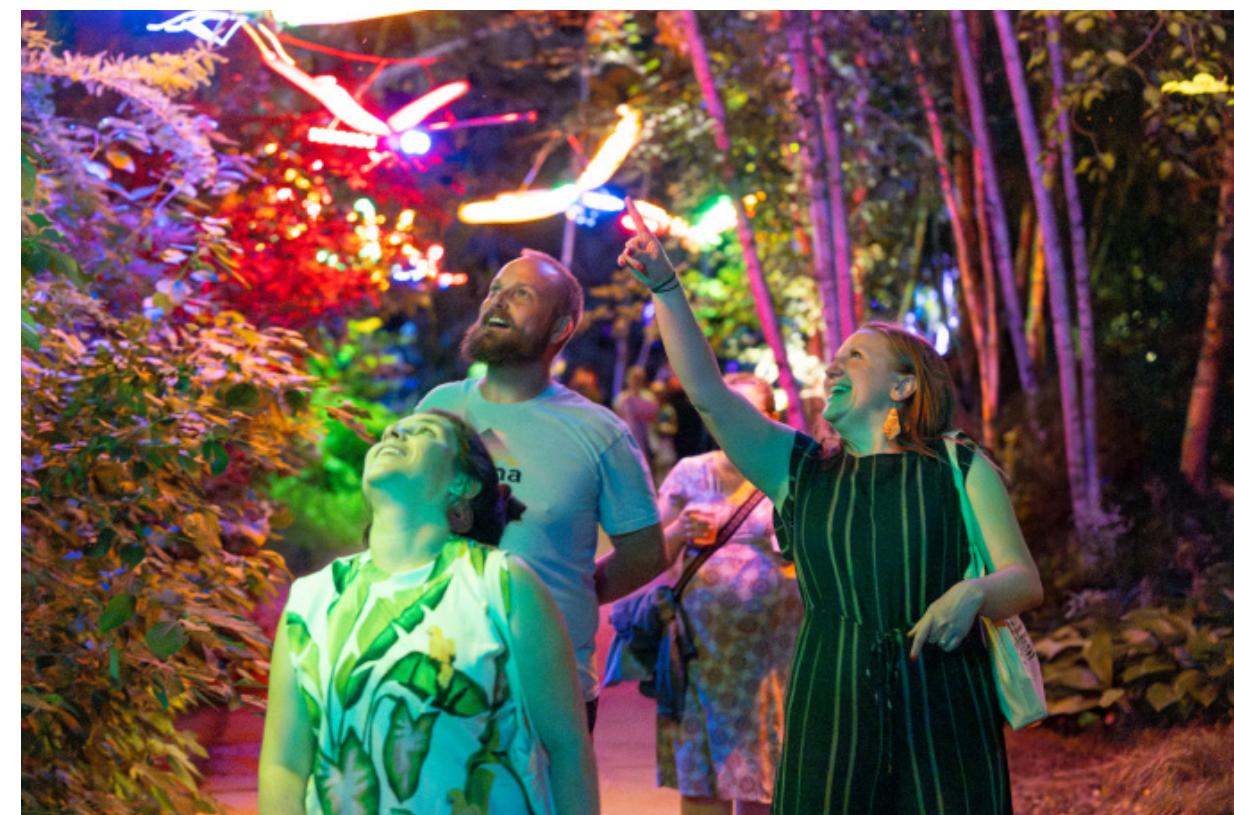
## VISION

Olbrich Botanical Gardens will be a locally treasured and globally renowned source of beauty and knowledge, celebrating the importance of plants to foster a sustainable world.

# A GROWING MADISON

Over the last 20 years, Olbrich Botanical Gardens has experienced significant growth!

With almost 400,000 visitors in 2025, our community has grown so much that we have nearly doubled the garden's designed capacity and need to plan for more space to accommodate all the wonderful programming and events you love.



# A GROWING MADISON

How can Olbrich Botanical  
Gardens better serve the  
Madison community and  
visitors to Madison?

We need a plan!



## COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

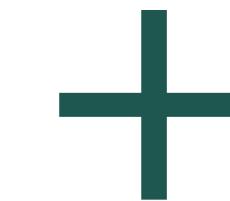
The main goals of this process are to address aging infrastructure, explore potential garden expansion, and envision Olbrich's future - while at the same time addressing the needs of both a growing local community and tourism audience.

The plan will undergo extensive financial analyses and will be presented as a phased development plan for implementation.

# COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A spatial framework to guide implementation of a vision for the future of the Gardens over the next 15 to 20 years.



## INTERPRETIVE PLAN

A guest engagement framework to tell the stories of the Garden, inspire diverse audiences, and meet our mission.

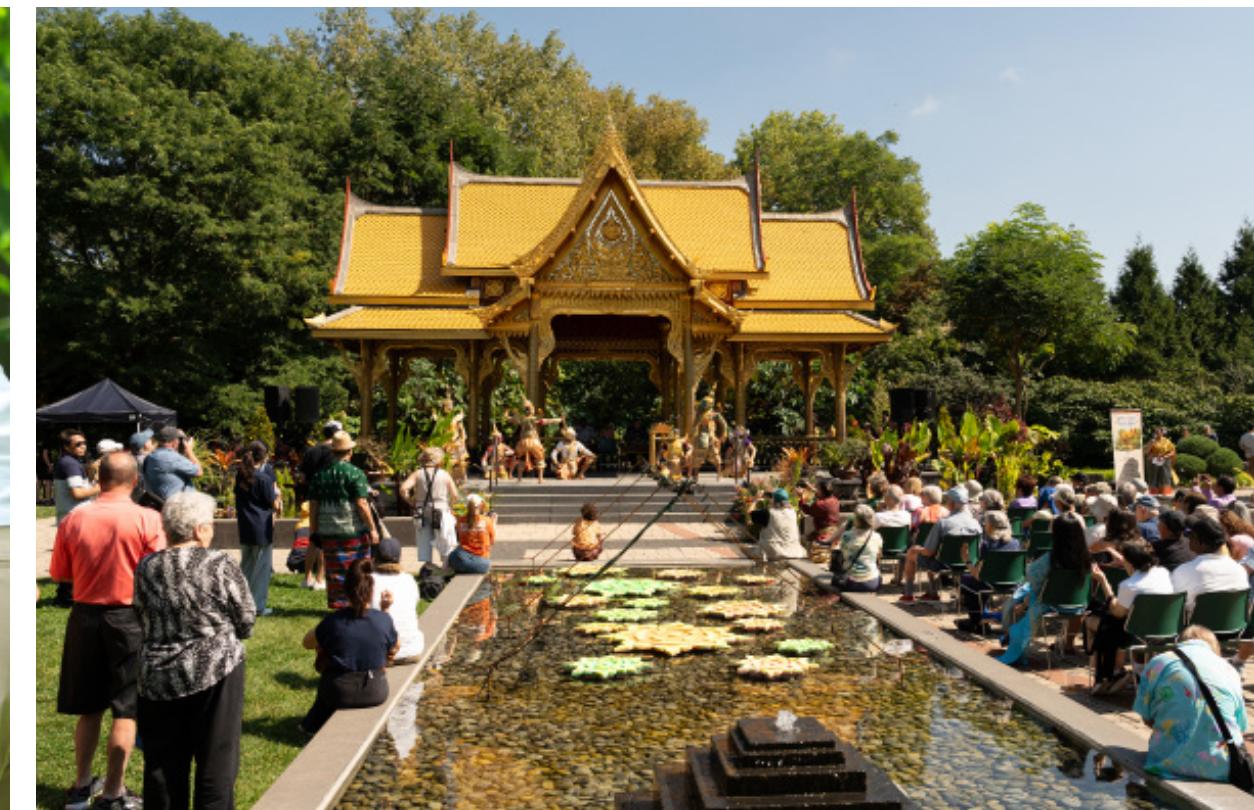


## ECONOMIC PLAN

A financial model that provides the analytical framework for smart decisions about the future of the Gardens.

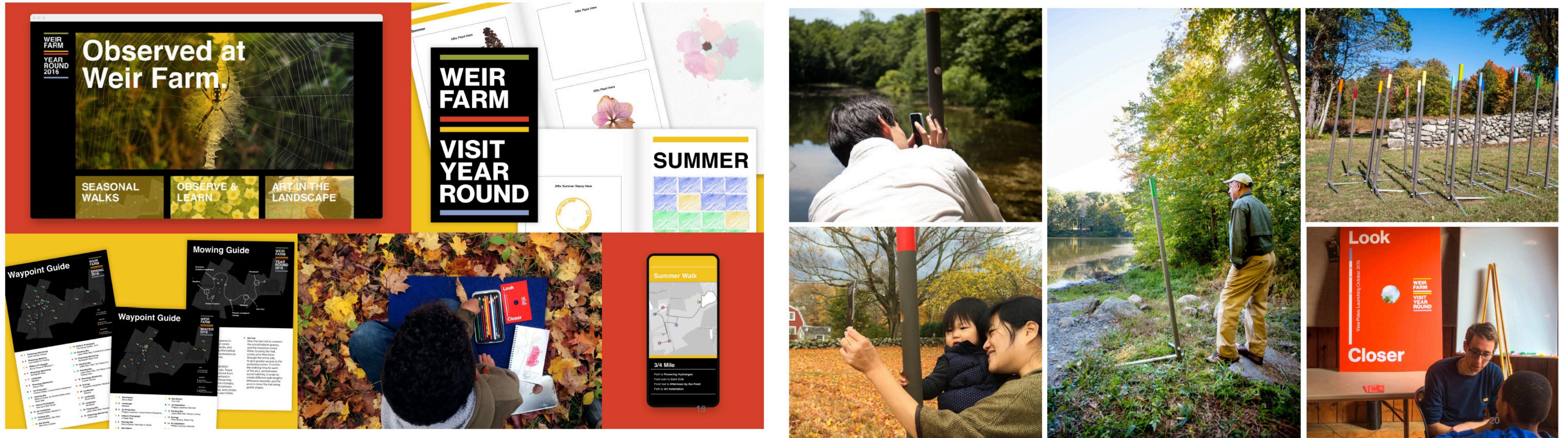
# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- Overarching goals, planning principles and priorities to direct expansion
- Planning for existing and new garden spaces and programming opportunities
- Evaluate spaces for multi-functional uses and conduct capacity review

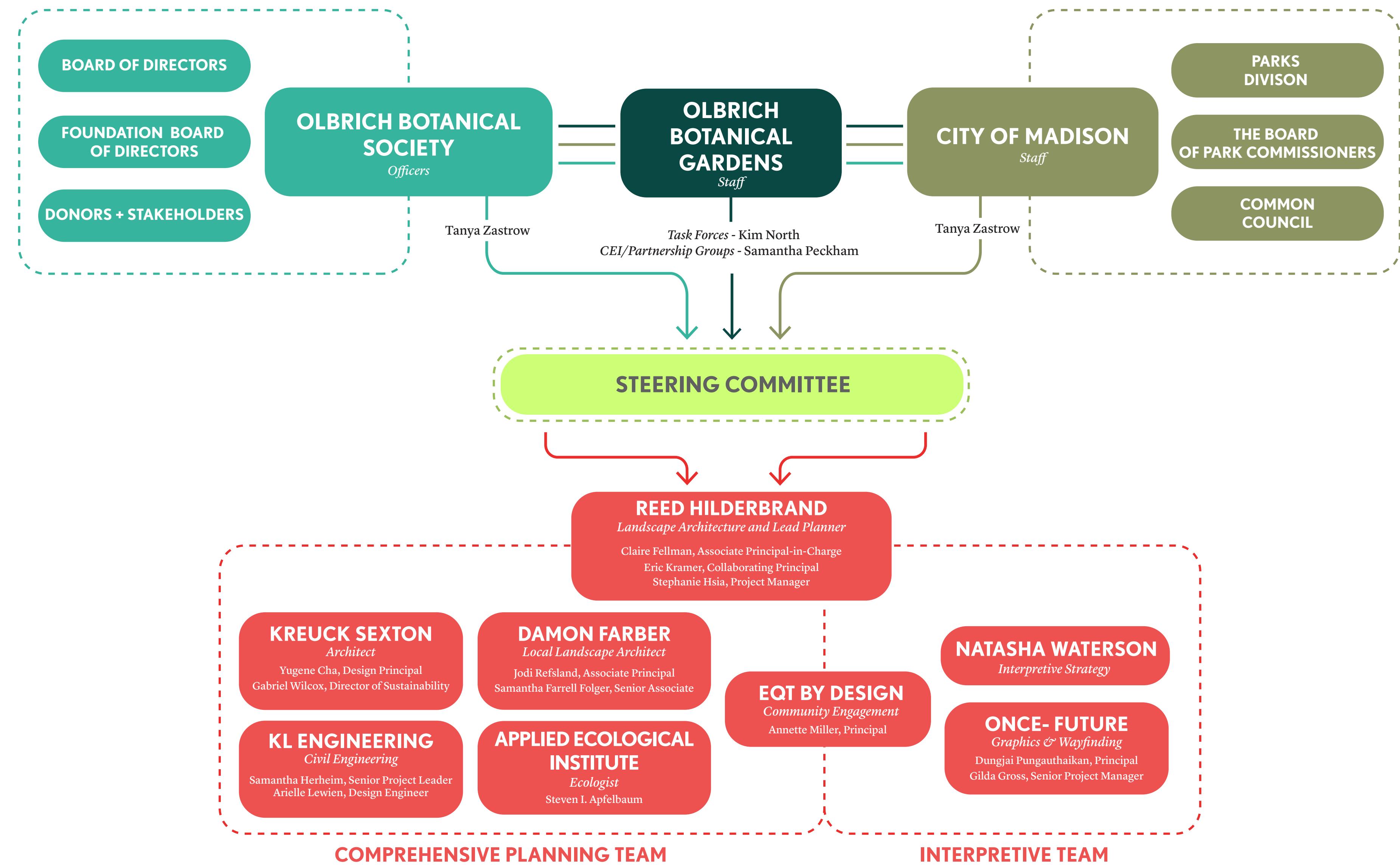


# INTERPRETIVE PLAN

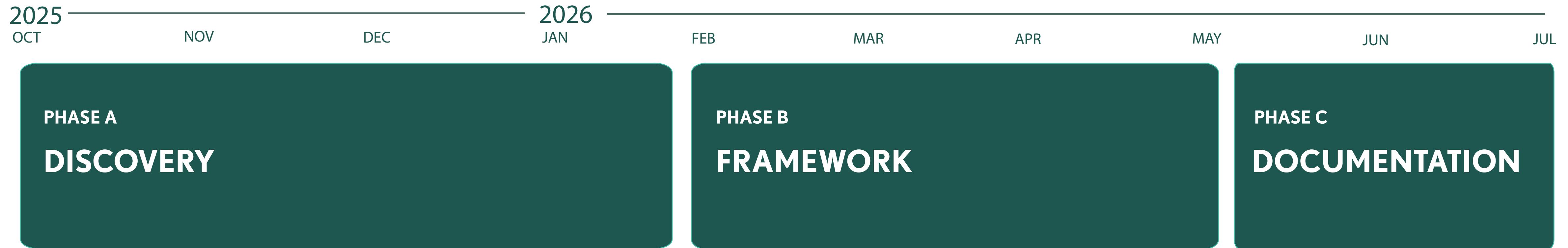
- Understand guest motivations and what draws them to the Gardens
- Develop interpretation values and design principles to set overall direction
- Develop interpretation toolkit and set priorities for current and future site plans



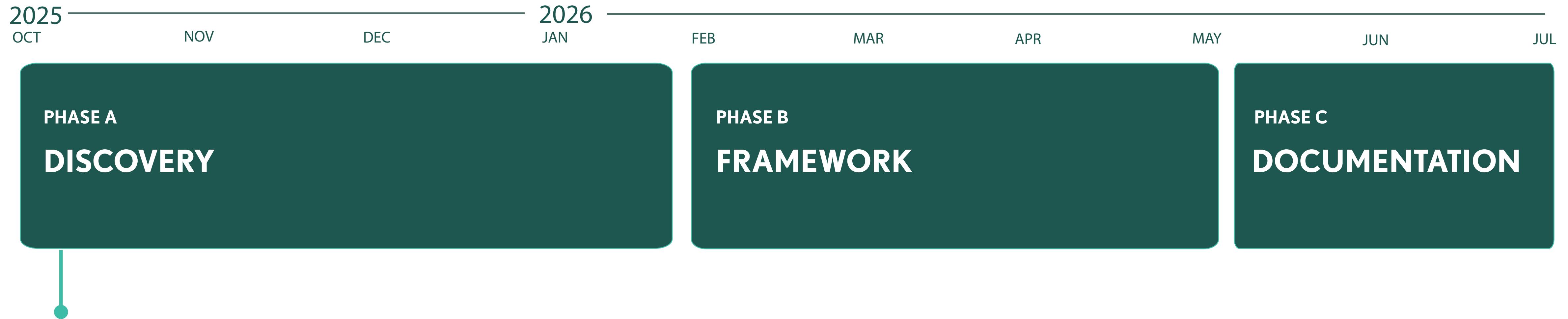
# PROJECT TEAM



# PROJECT PHASES



# PROJECT PHASES



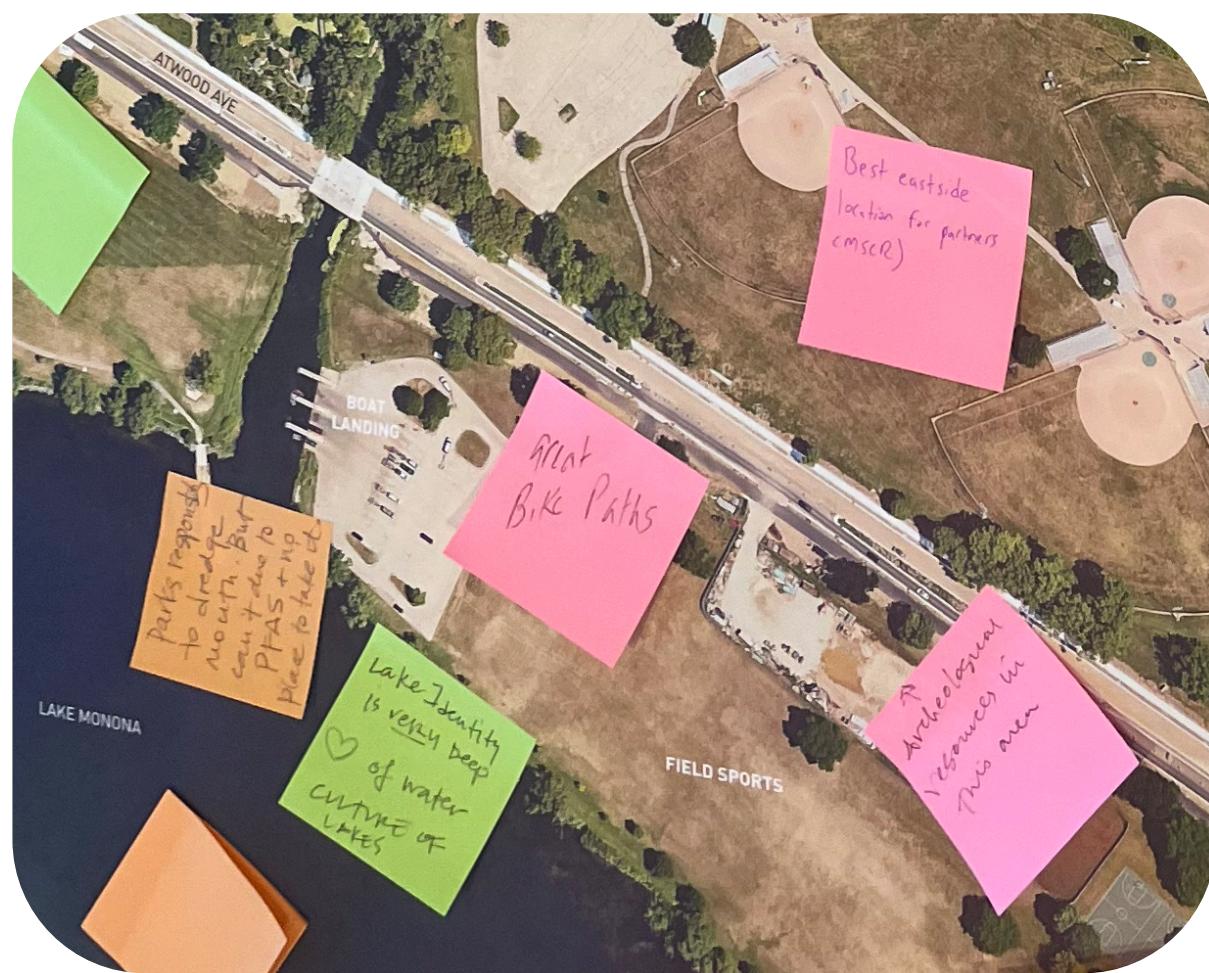
## Listen and Verify

Understand needs, challenges,  
and opportunities for growth

# DISCOVERY PHASE ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS



Virtual Listening Sessions



Parks Staff Meeting



Task Force Workshops



Garden Tour



Facilities Tour



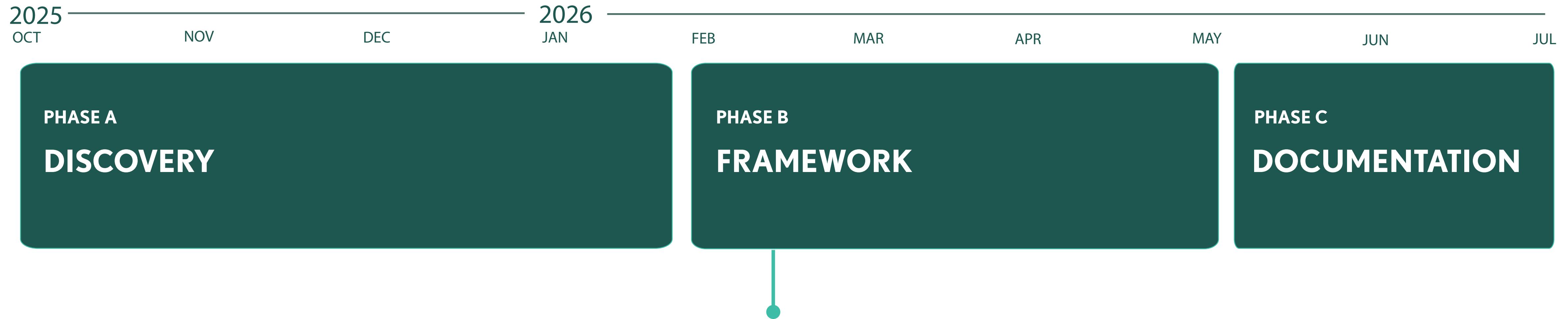
Board & Volunteers Meeting



Steering Committee Meetings

Public Meeting!  
January 22nd

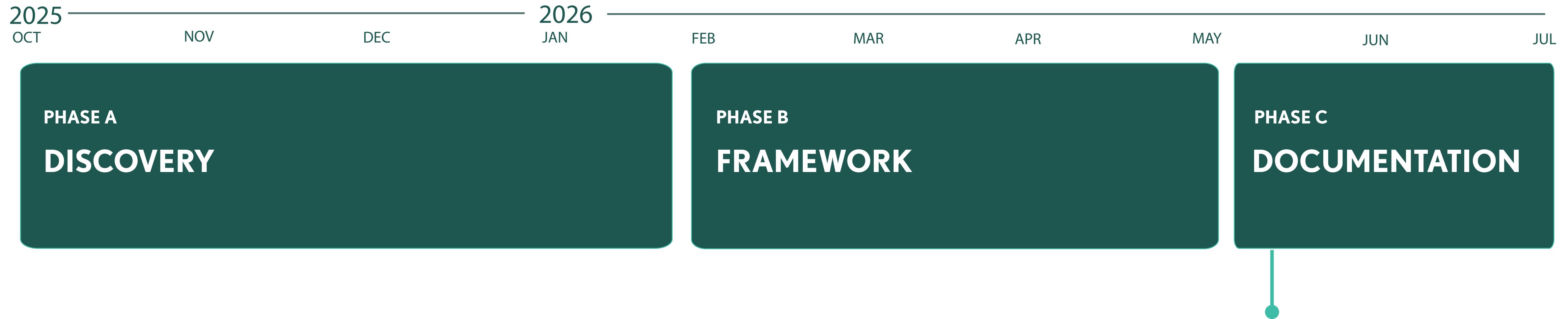
# PROJECT PHASES



## Imagine and Test

Develop design scenarios and design principles

# PROJECT PHASES



## Unify and Refine

Select and refine final framework plan

# PUBLIC MEETINGS



# YOUR INPUT MATTERS

Make your voice heard!  
Please explore the stations and  
add your input.

We are seeking additional input  
through an on-line questionnaire

