

Mr. Glenn Brown
Interim City Manager
City of College Station
1101 Texas Avenue
College Station, TX 77840

Dear Glenn:

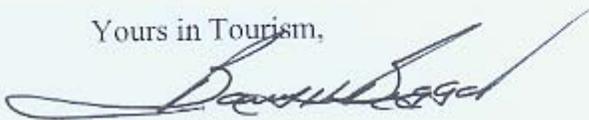
Over the past few months there has been considerable discussion and deliberation with regards to the possible closing of the Texas A&M University Horticultural Gardens. During this time substantial progress has been made to keep the gardens open over the next year while they focus on establishing solutions to their short and long term financial needs to support this valuable asset in our community for the benefit and enjoyment of both our residents and visitors for many years to come.

Over the past couple of years the Bryan-College Station Convention & Visitors Bureau has worked closely with Don Wilkerson and the staff of the gardens to capitalize on the value of it as one of our areas attractions. As a result we know the gardens have seen an increase in visitors and just this past spring a Tri-County Gardening Tour was coordinated through our office which includes the Texas A&M Horticultural Gardens. Included with this letter are copies of the brochure for your reference. Since we launched this tour we have accounted for at least eight groups representing 205 people that have taken it and we are confident that there have been others as well. The groups have included schools, senior gardening clubs from Houston, Temple and Kingwood as well as youth and YMCA clubs traveling here from as far away as Odessa. The potential to grow this niche market is great, however, without the gardens there is no potential.

As we consider the desire to become a true "Destination City" not only must we look to what we need in the way of attractions and infrastructure but we must also embrace what we currently have and do what we can to improve these assets and ensure their sustainability and growing contributions to our community both economically and socially. The Horticultural Gardens are indeed one of these assets and we would urge you and the City Council to approve the requested financial assistance to the gardens so they can develop the necessary means to ensure its long term viability over the next year.

Thank you very much for your attention and consideration of this important issue to our community. If we can provide any additional assistance or information please contact us. It will always be our pleasure.

Yours in Tourism,



Barry H. Biggar
President/CEO