



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

# **Kennedy, Peoples-Stokes Join Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens to Announce New State Investment in Expansion Project**

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BUFFALO, NY – Members of the Western New York State Delegation joined leadership from the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens this morning to announce \$500,000 in state funding for the Botanical Gardens’ expansion plans. Through the project, the Botanical Gardens will construct a 36,000 square foot addition, designed by architect Toshiko Mori, to complement the existing structure, and more closely align with Frederick Law Olmsted’s original concept design for South Park. The expansion will include educational and accessible classrooms, expanded exhibit spaces, visitor amenities, including a café, a larger more functional admissions area and main entrance, expanded and consolidated grow houses, a Butterfly Conservatory, a large event space, and more.

The Botanical Gardens has exceeded its capacity to accommodate current community needs and demands. When completed, the re-invented historic, architectural, and botanical jewel will enhance the overall visitor experience and create educational opportunities to achieve a sustainable future for the Botanical Gardens for generations to come.

“The Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens remains a historic and cultural fixture in our greater region, providing an outstanding educational experience for visitors, fueling tourism, and supporting our local economy,” said **Senator Tim Kennedy**. “Through this state funding, New York is continuing to invest in the mission and vision of Frederick Law Olmsted, the future of the Gardens, and the programming it provides to thousands of people every year.”

"The Botanical Gardens is a beautiful oasis that attracts more than a hundred thousand visitors to our region every year generating millions for the local economy," said **Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes**. "Thanks to this \$500,000 state grant this facility inches closer to getting a long overdue renovation and welcome expansion enhancing the original vision of Frederick Law Olmsted, guaranteed to attract even more visitors to this regional attraction."

"The historic Buffalo Botanical Gardens is a living museum with a mission to inspire curiosity and connect people to the natural world. We are very grateful to the New York State delegation for supporting our request for a \$500,000 Market New York Capital Construction Grant that will help create enriching educational programs, an enhanced visitor experience and provide a compelling interpretation of our horticulture collection. These funds will help to make our vision for the Botanical Gardens' future a reality," said **David Swarts, President and CEO of the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens**.

"This grant will help to support an important expansion project that will stimulate economic development, create hundreds of new jobs and provide a renewed vision for the future of this great facility," said **Assemblyman Sean Ryan**. "The Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens are an invaluable regional asset and one of the great cultural gems in Western New York. As a living museum, it offers a unique cultural experience that no other cultural organization provides and I'm excited to see the state make this investment in our community."

"I'm pleased to see New York State invest in this important project, which will revitalize one of our region's greatest cultural institutions," said **Assemblymember Monica Wallace**. "Over the past decade, we have seen incredible investment and resurgence in downtown Buffalo and our entire region. This expansion project is yet another opportunity to showcase all of the wonderful cultural assets that our community offers."

"The Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens is a jewel that has been a fixture in our community for more than a century," said **Assemblymember Karen McMahon**. "This expansion project will assist the Botanical Gardens in providing even better educational and cultural opportunities for many years to come. And, this commitment from New York State proves that Western New York is rich in economic development opportunities, and that creating jobs and boosting tourism in this region is a priority."

The Botanical Gardens estimates that the project will result in a 56% increase in visitation, bringing in over 220,000 visitors in 2023. Construction on the expansion is expected to begin in the fall of 2020 with completion expected in the fall of 2022.

The Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens first opened its doors in 1900, and was born out of the vision of Frederick Law Olmsted, David Day, John Cowell, Frederick Lord, and William Burnham. More than 147,000 people visit the national historic site annually to take in the extraordinary indoor and outdoor gardens, architecture, and education center and exhibits. Additionally, the Botanical Gardens seeks to connect people to the natural world through workshops, special events, and educational programming.

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