Step 3: Second Level Unit Review and Ranking (Deans/Directors/Department Heads)
Using the program review results posted on the Prioritization Process webpage, please complete the below information and submit to ovcafo@hawaii.edu as a word doc or pdf file by March 15, 2009. Please ensure the e-mail subject heading reflects the Department/School/College name followed by “Second Level Review.” For example: SOEST – Second Level Review.

Department/School/College: Lyon Arboretum

The department would fall under which of the following Vice Chancellor’s offices?

- [ ] Academic Affairs
- [x] Research and Graduate Education
- [ ] Student Services
- [ ] Administration, Finance, and Operations

Advisory Committee Members (list names and titles):

Dr. Christopher P. Dunn, Director, Lyon Arboretum
Mr. Ray Baker, Horticulture Manager, Lyon Arboretum
Ms. Nellie Sugii, Conservation Scientist, Lyon Arboretum
Ms. Jill Laughlin, Education Manager, Lyon Arboretum
**Administrative Unit (e.g. College) Prioritization Summary**

This form is to be used to provide a summary of program priorities within an administrative unit (e.g. college).

Please list each program identified in the Summary Matrix forms and Optional Guides in a priority category. This Prioritization Summary form should be forwarded, along with all self-review materials, to ovcafo@hawaii.edu for posting on the Prioritization Process webpage by March 15th for the next level of review to take place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New/In Transition</th>
<th>Target for Growth or Investment</th>
<th>Maintenance</th>
<th>Reorganize/Restructure/Merge/Consolidate</th>
<th>Reduce in Size or Scope</th>
<th>Phase Out Close Eliminate</th>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>Research</td>
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**Brief Summary (no more than 2 pages)**

Please include a brief narrative with an overview of the rationale for placement of the components on the Prioritization Summary form and any supportive or explanatory text or data that will assist higher levels of review in determining the relative priority of each program. You may wish to comment on the program self-reviews.

**SEE BELOW:**
The Arboretum's Past
The potential for the Lyon Arboretum to be a world-class center for research, education, and interpretation regarding the incredible biological diversity of the tropical rainforest and the cultural diversity of the Hawaiian Islands is enormous. The Arboretum is the only University affiliated rainforest public garden in the nation and is the most accessible rainforest on O'ahu, being only 5 miles from Waikīkī. Thus, the Arboretum represents a major asset and service to the mission of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

The road to achieving its potential was interrupted in 2004 when the Arboretum was closed for several months as a result of building code and health and safety violations. A resulting report by the State Auditor (2004) observed the need for the Lyon Arboretum to have good leadership, a mission statement, and a strategic plan. These are now in place. Yet the Audit referred regularly to the lack of commitment by the University, including “the university administration’s reluctance or refusal to financially support the facility” (p. 25). Reports by the Auditor (p. 30) and University of Hawai'i Task Force (p. 8) noted that it is essential that the University commit to the financial stability of the Arboretum. This is still a challenge and a hope; consequently, in the context of the current Prioritization Process, all programs of the Lyon Arboretum ought to be considered strongly as “Targets for Growth or Investment.”

The mission of the Arboretum relates directly to key elements of the University’s mission, particularly as it addresses areas such as sustainability, informal and experiential education, conservation of our natural resources, explicit links to the ahupua’a in which Mānoa sits, and strong community involvement. Furthermore, the Arboretum is expanding its influence in biocultural diversity; namely, the codependence of our biological and cultural heritage. Full implementation of the Arboretum’s mission will put the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and the state “on the map” as a world center for the study and celebration of the relationship between biological and cultural diversity and heritage.

For decades, the Lyon Arboretum has struggled to maintain excellence in its research, horticultural assets, educational programs, and community-based programs. The Lyon Arboretum will not attain the necessary level of importance and visibility in the scientific, educational, or recreational realms without a meaningful and significant investment by the University of Hawai'i and the community.

Current levels of support are inadequate to maintain even the status quo (as confirmed by the Auditor, State of Hawai'i, 2004). Thus “Maintenance” vis-à-vis the Prioritization Process is not a viable option. Any consolidation, reduction, or elimination would be catastrophic, as this major scientific and educational organization could not survive, much less achieve its mandate of attaining world-class status.

Staffing levels, for instance, are appallingly low. In the area of our living collections, any reasonably well-maintained garden should have about one gardener for every 5-10 acres. Thus, the Lyon Arboretum (193 acres) should have at least 20 gardeners. We have three. The Education program is stretched to meet its obligations to the community, schools, and the University. The national reputation earned by the Arboretum in plant conservation science has largely been a result of the initiative of a single person. Furthermore, the Arboretum has no custodial staff. Senior staff, including the Director, are forced to clean bathrooms on a daily basis.

Funding is meager for an institution with such a complex and multi-faceted mission. And the infrastructure continues to deteriorate, despite the appropriation of State-provided capital to renovate several key buildings.

Increasing the visibility and accomplishments of the Lyon Arboretum will require a renewed commitment by the University (and the State), private fundraising support from the UH Foundation, Lyon Arboretum Association, and dedicated efforts by the Director to ensure success in all mission areas. The State Auditor's report (2004, p. 14) describes a “record of General fund support to the arboretum [that] has been less than generous” (p. 14).

With respect to infrastructure and trails, much of the Arboretum is literally falling apart and inaccessible to staff, UH faculty, students, and visitors. Three buildings have been renovated or rebuilt with State funds appropriate several years ago. However, there continue to be major safety issues and additional buildings that are condemned. Many of the trails at the Arboretum are very difficult to negotiate, or impossible for those with disabilities. The access road is a significant safety hazard and a liability issue.
A Brighter Future
Despite this history and less than ideal current level of support, the Arboretum is a hugely successful unit of the University and one this is widely respected. Arboretum programs are regularly featured in local and state-wide media and in publications aimed at tourists and travelers.

The Education programs rely on contemporary standards and explicitly consider STEM priorities within the state. The relationship to public schools, the community, and the university is remarkable.

The Arboretum’s plant germplasm conservation program is without peer in the state. In fact, other organizations are using our program as a model to replicate on other islands. This is both necessary (redundancy adds to the security of the conservation “safety net”) and flattering. As testimony to the value placed in our program, the state DLNR and Hawaii Community Foundation have provided generous, and unsolicited funding, to strengthen this key program.

Our living collections is almost without peer in the tropical world. It is widely acknowledged that our palm collection is one of the best in the world. Similarly, collections of heliconias and gingers are of international significance. More recently, we have begun adding native Hawaiian collections, including a Hawaiian garden near the Visitor Center, a new Hawaiian Section along our main trail, and a fine Hawaiian ethnobotanical garden.

The arboretum’s facilities, however, are barely adequate to maintain the status quo, much less to grow in scope and significance. As much as has been accomplished, and continues to be so, the facilities are not those that a major Land-Sea-Grant university should find acceptable. Each of the three major mission programs (education, research, and collections) is treading water. However, with respect to accommodating visitors and guests, we have added ADA compliant facilities and renovated the gift shop. Since reopening the Visitor Center, we have added Saturday hours and have seen visitation increase by about 20%. Recent prominent notice in local tourist guides and in an airline in-flight magazine, resulted in a several-month two-fold increase in visitation. Thus, the potential to increase the Arboretum’s reach and influence is enormous. The limiting factor, however, is the lack of facilities, staff, and support to allow for significant growth and impact.

It is our hope (and that of all our stakeholders) that the growth potential of all aspects of the arboretum can be realized.