**DRAFT
Short-Term Goals of the Plants, Nature, and Health Initiative**

* Facilitate collaborative research and outreach efforts that advances the science regarding health and well-being benefits associated with human-plant interactions of all kinds.
* Serve as a short-term structure for collaboration among faculty in departments, centers, institutes, colleges, and agencies that are already doing work in this area.
* Develop a strategic roadmap in conjunction with external partners for expanding the awareness of and appreciation for the current and future research and outreach efforts with TAMU and agency collaborators being recognized as world-wide leaders in this area.
* Be a vehicle for initiating and fostering linkages between TAMU/Agencies and other universities and external partners.
* In the longer term, determine the best organizational structure for the initiative going forward that is compelling, encompasses the breadth of the work being done
* Aid in reducing any confusion that may be caused by differences in terminology among those working in this field of study (see below).

**Glossary of terms used in the literature, often interchangeably.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Nature | The natural physical world including plants and animals in [urban and wild] landscapes. |
| Urban ecology | The study of ecological processes in urban environments, including the relationships between humans and nonhuman organisms, and how these relationships affect the flow of energy, materials, and information. |
| Green Infrastructure  | A network of natural and semi-natural areas that use or replicate natural systems to achieve desired environmental and societal outcomes. |
| Sociohorticulture | An interdisciplinary field of horticulture which studies the relationship between horticulture and human beings (both individuals and groups) and applies the research results to enhance human life quality and to care for our nearby environment |
| Green spaces or greenspaces | Reserved or protected areas of open, undeveloped landscapes. |
| Greenscaping or greenscape | Landscaping practices that can improve the health and appearance of gardens and lawns while also protecting and preserving natural resources. |
| Biophilic design | An architectural approach that aims to connect people with nature in modern buildings and landscapes.  |
| Biophilic cities | A city that integrates nature into its planning, design, and management to support the needs of people and the environment. |
| Conservation ecology | A branch of ecology and evolutionary biology that studies and manages biodiversity and natural resources. |
| Nature-based solutions | Actions that use natural processes and features to manage, restore, protect, and sustainably use ecosystems. |
| Urban biodiversity | The variety and richness of living organisms, including genetic variation and habitat diversity, found in and around human settlements. |
| Improved landscapes (residential or commercial) | Trees and shrubs planted for the purpose of enhancing the aesthetic value or wildlife habitat of the land; can be organized or planned arrangements of living plants as well as naturally occurring or wild growth of living plants. |
| Health / well-being | Physical health means living in a body free of disease, while mental health refers to the strength and resilience of your mental functions. Well-being is the absence of “negative” things, like mental distress and physical illness, and can affect quality of life. |