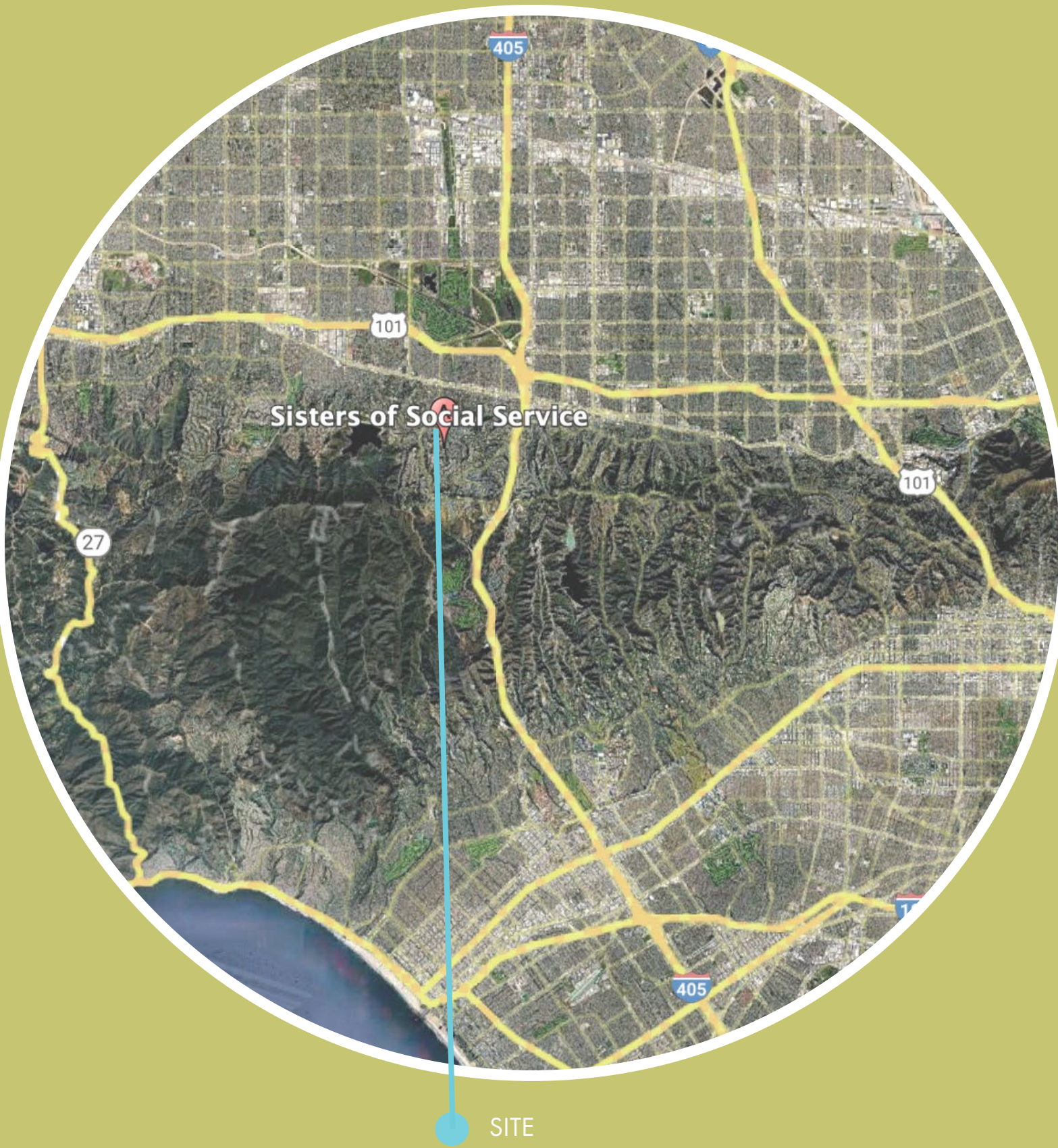


SISTERS OF SOCIAL SERVICES



LD5
PAMELA BRIEF
HEALING GARDEN
SPRING 2025
HOLLY CORY



View entering the courtyard from the parking area- facing west



View looking toward chapel- facing east

INSPIRATION FOR HEALING DESIGN

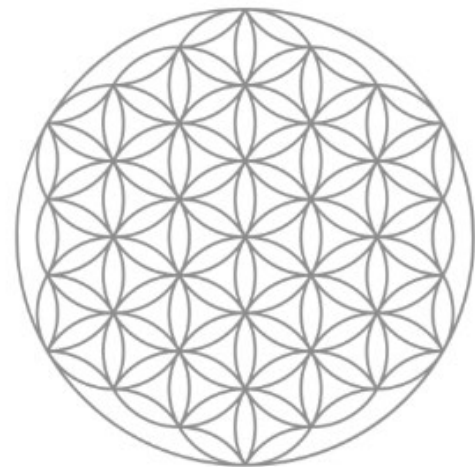
The healing garden at the Sisters of Social Service Retreat Center honors the site's legacy of compassion, justice, and care for women, children, and the greater community. Rooted in the Benedictine tradition and inspired by the Universal elements of AIR, WATER, EARTH, FIRE and SPACE, the design invites both public and private reflection through a series of interconnected spaces.

A welcoming entry beckons visitors into a nourishing food garden with fruit trees and seasonal vegetables, and an herb garden offering sustenance for body and spirit, and place to sit and enjoy. A meditation and healing garden provides quiet refuge, while the vibrant native pollinator garden buzzes with life, habitat, and renewal. Under the canopy of storied oak trees, a dry-shade understory of resilient California native plants reinforces the value of adaptation and longevity.

Each element of this landscape is a living metaphor — air in the wind-stirred grasses, water in the storm-harvested pools, earth in the deep-rooted sages, fire in the colorful seasonal blooms, and space in the open, contemplative paths — creating a sanctuary for healing, community, and spiritual connection.



ANCIENT WISDOM



PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL CONNECTION

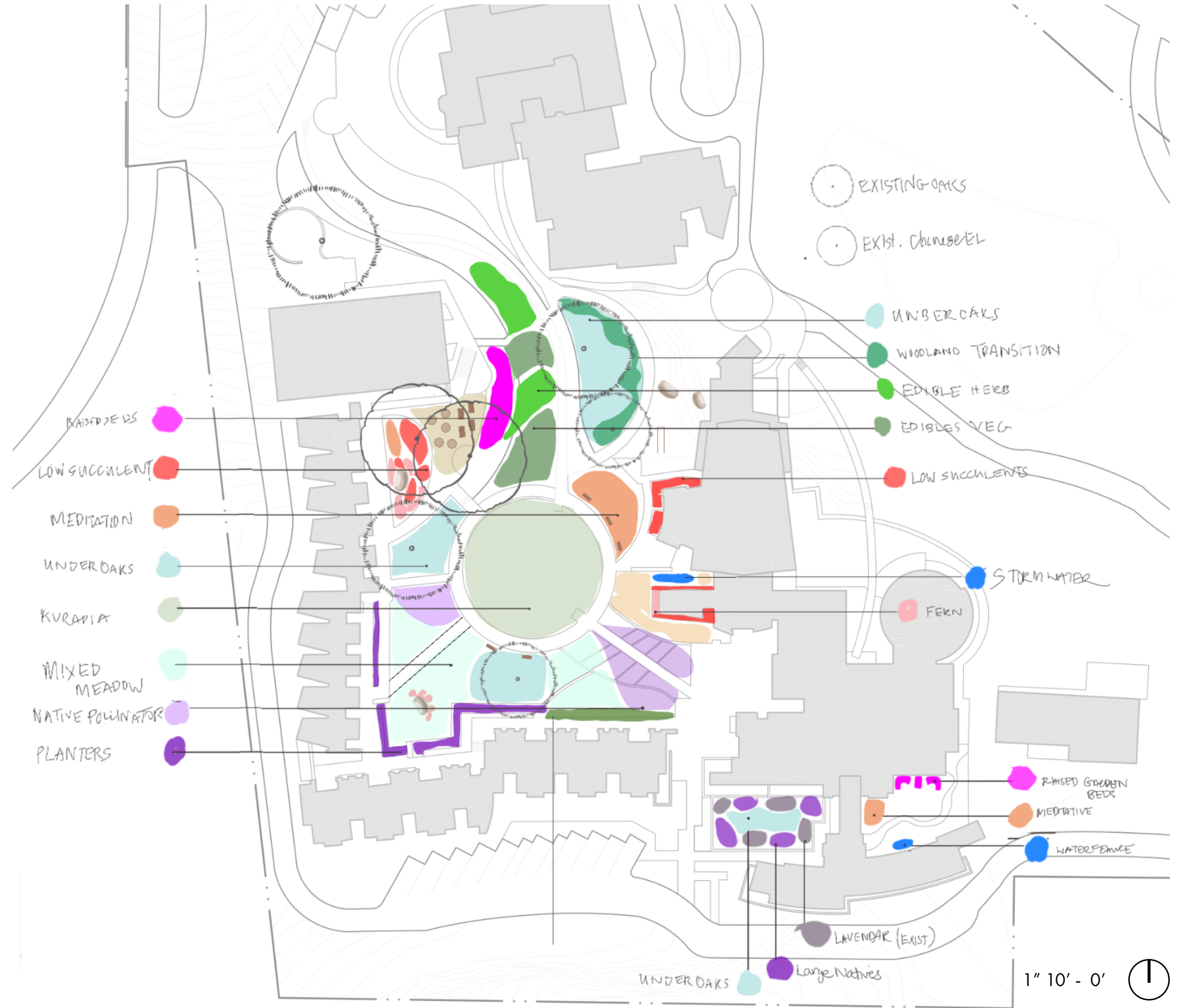


ABUNDANCE





CONCEPT



PRINCIPALS FOR HEALING DESIGN



NOURISH

PUBLIC ENTRANCE

RESTORE

MEDITATION/HEALING

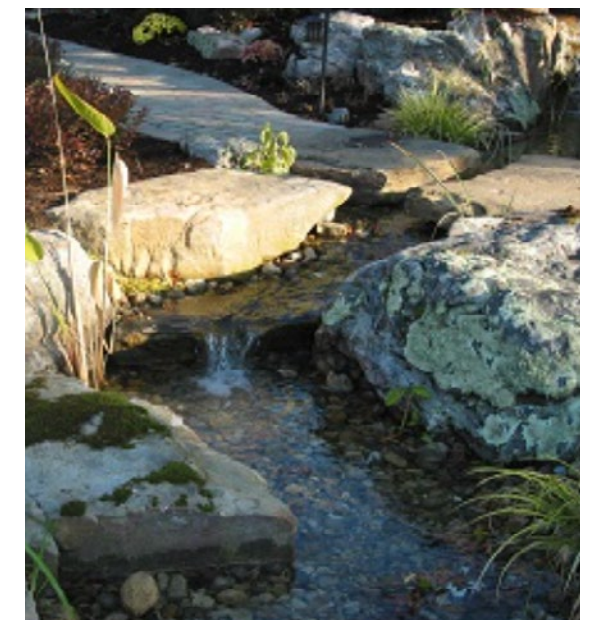
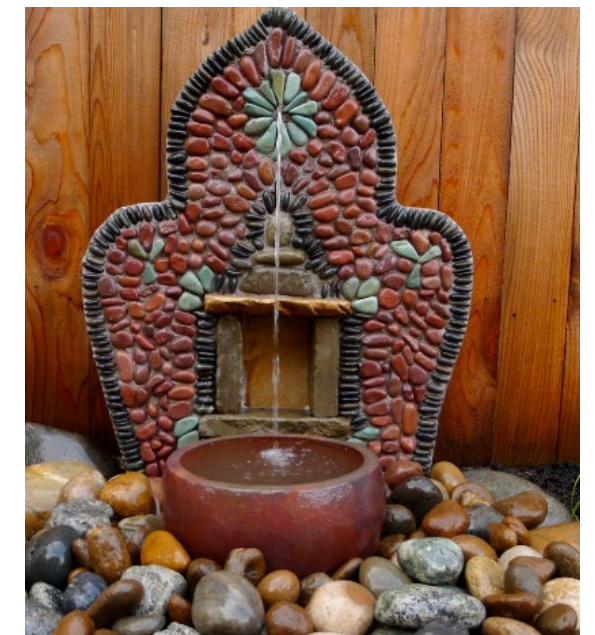
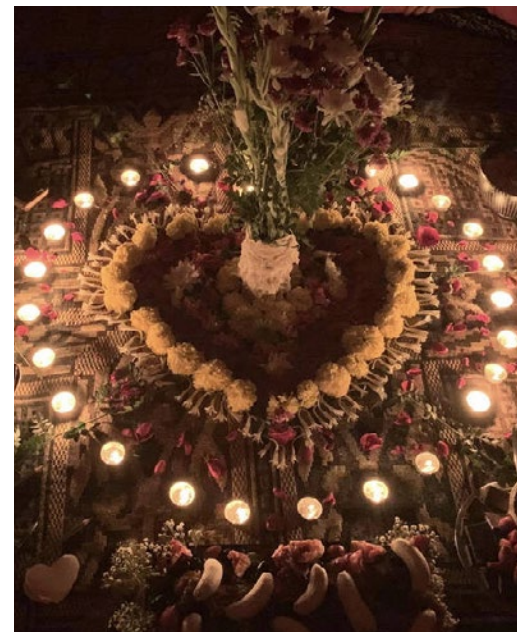
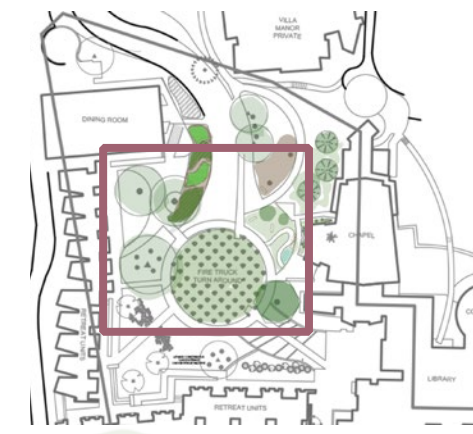
ACCESSIBLE PATHWAYS

NATIVE POLLINATOR GARDEN

1" 10' - 0'

ENLARGE SKETCH PLAN

- 1. Cactus and Succulents
- 2. Water capture
- 3. Prayer Altar
- 4. Pergola with seating
- 5. Informal sitting/ gathering space
- 6. Open ceremonial space
- 7. Manzanita boundary planting
- 8. Woodland transition
- 9. Nutrition/Edible Garden





AIR ELEMENT

In the garden, AIR brings movement, breath, and connection. It is the invisible life force that stirs the grasses, carries the scent of flowers, and supports the exchange of oxygen essential to all living things. AIR symbolizes communication and intellect — ideas flowing freely like a gentle breeze.

Plants that respond to and embody the qualities of AIR help express this theme: grasses such as purple needlegrass sway and shimmer with every shift in the wind, while the fine, lacy foliage of yarrow dances lightly, evoking a delicate conversation between earth and sky. Sages releases its aromatic oils into the air, inviting a sensory dialogue, and the Western redbud, marks the seasons with its graceful shedding of leaves — a quiet, visible exchange with the atmosphere.

Together, these plants create a garden that feels alive, thoughtful, and interconnected, celebrating the unseen energy that binds and inspires all life.



Achillea millefolium island pink
Island Pink Yarrow



Clarkia ampoena
Evening Primrose



Sporobolus airoides
Purple needlegrass 1



Sporobolus airoides
Alkali Sacaton 1



Carex Pansa
Dune Sedge



Carex praegracilis
Clustered Field Sedge



Leymus condensatus 'Canyon prince'
Canyon Prince Wild Rye



Bouteloua gracilis
Blue Grama



Acca sellowiana
Pinapple Guava



CLARITY

COMMUNICATION

PRESENCE



FIRE ELEMENT

The fire element brings energy, passion, and transformation to the garden. It flickers in golden sunlight on leaves, glows in warm-toned flowers, and crackles in the spirit of wildness and resilience. This is the realm of bold color and dry heat — where plants thrive on intensity. California poppies blaze across open spaces, while sticky monkey flower bursts with orange blooms and penstemon sends up fiery red spires. Even when the sun sets, fire lingers in the garden's warmth — flickering lanterns, or the ember-like glow of flowering buckwheat. Fire is the garden's pulse — vibrant, expressive, and alive with purpose. It celebrates joy, creativity, and the untamed beauty of wild California.



FIRE CIRCLE



Punica granatum "Wonderful"
Pomegranate 'Wonderful'



Malus domestica 'Anna'
"Anna Apple Tree"



ENCELIA CALIFORNICA
Alkali Sacaton



Passiflora coccinea
Red Passion Flower



Carex Pansa
Dune Sedge



Calycanthus occidentalis
Spice Bush



Eschscholzia californica
California Poppy



Bouteloua gracilis
MONELY FLOWER



Banksia caleyi
Red Lantern Banksia



Baccharis pullaris "Pidgeon Point"
Coyote Bush 'Pidgeon Point'



salvia microphylla
Hot Lips Sage



Achillea millefolim
Comon Yarrow

PASSION

SUN



EARTH ELEMENT

The earth element anchors the garden, offering a sense of stability, strength, and deep connection. It is the solid ground beneath our feet, the nourishing soil that supports life, and the ancient sandstone rocks that tell stories of endurance over time. In the garden, earth symbolizes rootedness and resilience. Storied existing oak trees, with their vast underground networks, embody this legacy of strength and longevity. Plants with deep roots like California sagebrush, manzanita, and California buckwheat reinforce the land, preventing erosion and tying the landscape together through hidden threads beneath the soil.

In shadier spaces, earth-loving plants like coralbells, white sage, and butterfly mint thrive, softening the ground with texture and color while honoring the protective shelter of the canopy. Together, these elements create a garden that feels firmly planted and whole — a living celebration of stability, history, and the quiet, enduring power of connection.



Arctostaphylos glauca
Big Berry Manzanita



Chilopsis linearis
Desert Willow



Sambucus nigra
Black Elderberry



Artemisia californica
California Sagebrush



Heuchera 'Coral bells'
Coral Bells



Erigonum grande var. *rubescens*
Red Flower Buckwheat



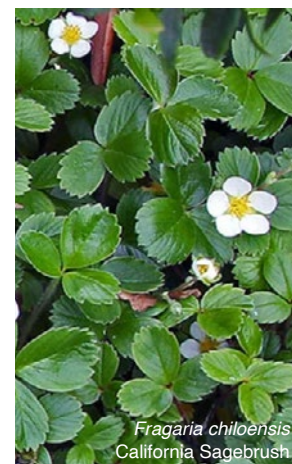
Ceanothus maritimus
'valley violet'
Valley Violet Martimus



Lippia nodiflora
Kurapia



Salvia apiana
White Sage



Fragaria chiloensis
California Sagebrush



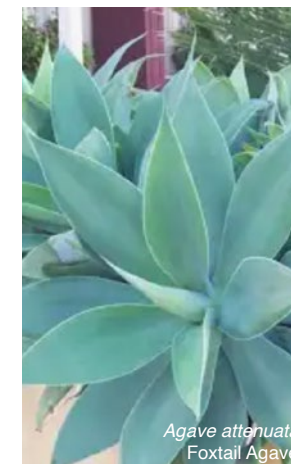
Thymus serpyllum
Creeping Thyme



Ribes speciosum
Fuchsia-flowered Gooseberry



Carpenteria californica
Bush Anemone



Agave attenuata
Foxtail Agave



Ribes speciosum
Fuchsia-flowered Gooseberry

STRENGTH



ROOTED

GROUNDENESS



WATER ELEMENT

Water brings flow, healing, and emotional depth to the garden. It sparkles in birdbaths and drips gently from leaves after rain and in pools reflects the sky above. In the quiet of a shaded corner, the sound of trickling water invites stillness, offering a moment to breathe and release. Water connects — from raindrop to root to bloom — nourishing life with each cycle.

Moisture-loving plants like juncus sway at the edge of a basin, while yerba mansa spreads in cool, sun-dappled swales, and California fuchsia, its bright blossoms quenching the thirst of hummingbirds. The water element invites emotion and movement — a cleansing, fluid presence that softens the garden's edges and reminds us of renewal.



Juncus inflexus
Blue Arrow Rush



Inspiration for Biolswale

RAIN GARDEN



Anemopsis californica
Yerba Mansa



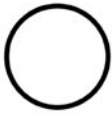
Achillea millefolium island pink
Island Pink Yarrow

FLOW

REFLECTION

RENEWAL





Lavendula provence



Grevillea 'Long John'



Salvia "Allen Chickering"



Tagetes Lemonii



Erigeron karvinskianus



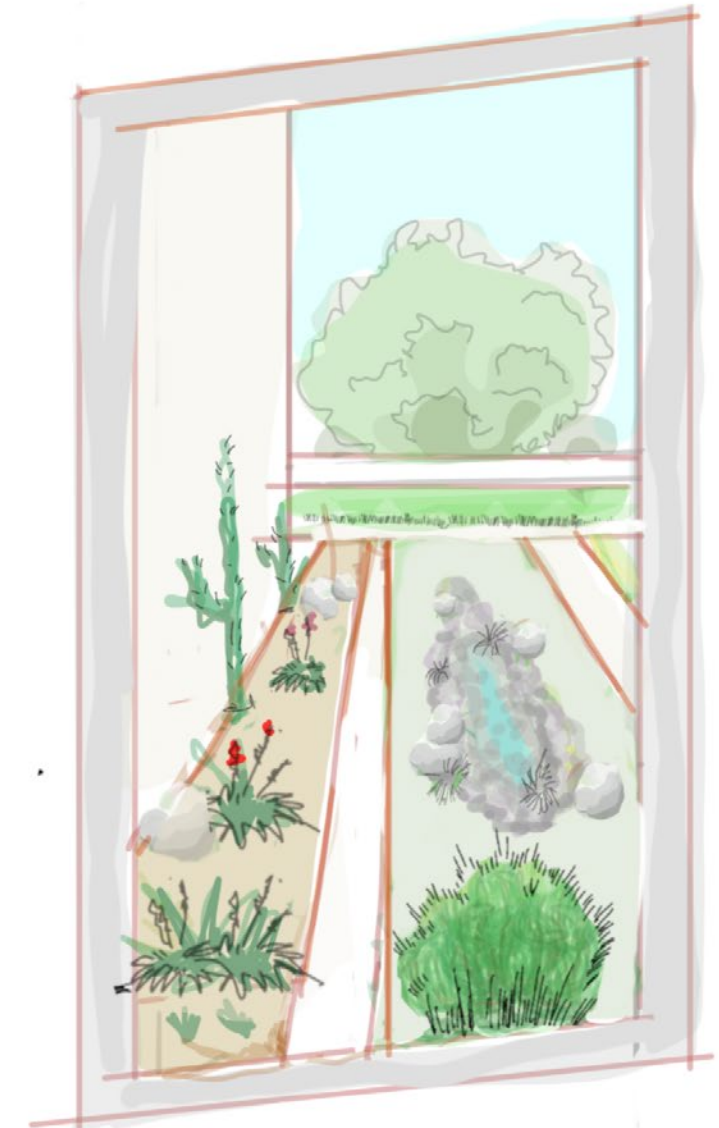
Agave vilmoriliana var.



Agave hybrid



Lophocereus Schotti



Botanical Name	Common Name	Family	WUCOLS (3)	SWR	MATURE HEIGHT	mature spread	LIGHT NEEDS	Soil requirements	Bloom season	Unique Features	water requirements	maintence
TREES												
<i>Arbutus marina</i>	Strawberry tree	Ericaceae	Low	Y	40'	30'	FS-PART SUN	Well drained		Evergreen	M	
<i>Arctostaphylos glauca</i>	Manzanita Big Berry	Ericaceae	very low	Y	3-20'	6-20'	FS	Well drained	Spring/Winter pink and white	Everygreen	M	low growing, columnar upright
<i>Olea europaea 'Swanhill'</i>	Olive	Oleaceae	Low	Y	15'-25'	15'-20'	Sun	Well drained				
<i>Sambucus cerulea</i>	Blue Elderberry	Adoxaceae	Low	Y	20-30'	20-30'	FS/PS/Deep shade	Adaptable	Summer, Spring Yellow, Purple, Cream	Winter Deciduous fountain form fast growing	Low-med 1x once establish	
<i>Acca sellowiana</i>	pineapple guava	myrtaceae	Low	Y	10-20'	10-15'	FS/PS	Well Drained	Spring/Summer Pink	Everygreen		
SHRUBS < 6'												
<i>Prunus illicifolia</i>	Hollyleaf cherry	Rosaceae	Low	Y	30'-40'	20'W	FS/PS	Well drained	Cream, white Spring Summer	Evergreen		easy care full sun , part shade
<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>	Toyon/ Christmas Holly	Rosaceae	Low	Y	6-12'	10-15'	FS/PS	Well drained	Summer, white	Red berries		full sun , part shade
<i>Tecoma stans</i>	Yellow Bells	Bignoniaceae	Low	Y	15-20'	6-12'	FS	Adaptable	Summer/Fall Yellow bloom	has pods, tube flowers		full sun
<i>Amorpha californica</i>	California False Indigo	Fabaceae	Low	N	10'	6'	FS/PS	well drained	Spring/ summer purple			Sun Partial Shade winter dec.
<i>Philadelphus lewisii</i>	Mock orange	Hydrangeaceae	med/low once est.	Y	8'	6'	sun-part shade	well drained	Summer Spring, white and yellow			
SHRUBS- MEDIUM - 3-6'												
<i>Ceanothus maritimus 'valley violet'</i>	California Lilac	Rhamnaceae	Low	Y	2'	3-5' W	FS/PS	Adaptable	Spring, Purple/Blue			
<i>Lavandula stoechas 'Anouk'</i>	Lavendar	Lamiaceae	Very Low	Y	2-3'	2-3'	FS/PS	Well drained	Lavendar-Purple Winter/Spring	FragrantSilver gray foliage	5	Summer semi-deciduous Prune summer or fall
<i>Salvia sonomensis 'Dara's Choice'</i>	Daras choice Sage	Lamiaceae	Low	Y	1-2'	3-4'	FS/PS	Well drained	Spring/Summer Blue/Lavendar			
<i>Albition palmeri</i>	Indian Mallow	Malvaceae	Low	Y	4-5'	4-5'	FS/PS	Adaptable	Summer/Spring Bright Gold bloom	Gray foliage		
<i>Monardella villosa ssp. franciscana 'Russian River'</i>	Coyote Mint	Lamiaceae	Very Low	Y	1-2'	2-3'	FS/PS	Well drained	Pink, Lavender Summer	FragrantSummer semi-deciduous		-
<i>Rhamnus californica 'Mound San Bruno'</i>	Mound San Bruno Coffeeberry	Chenopodiaceae	Low	Y	3-4'	4-6'	FS/PS	Well drained	Green Spring	Slow growing, green foliage, red bark		
<i>Salvia microphylla</i>	Hot lips Little sage	Lamiaceae	Low	Y	3-4'	2-3'	FS	Well drained	Late spring	Red showy fragrant, attracts wildlife		
<i>Carpenteria californica 'Elizabeth'</i>	Bush Anenoma Elizabeth	Hydrangeaceae	Low	Y	4'-6'	3'-5'	FS/PS	Well drained	White Spring	Evergreen Specimen		Prune floppy branches
<i>Lepechinia fragrans</i>	Fragrant Pitcher Sage	Lamiaceae	Low	Y	3-5'	3-5'	FS/PS	Adaptable	Lavender, Purple Spring/Summer	Fuzzy fragrant leaves Evergreen		May be pruned to shape, but use caution not to over-prune older woody growth
<i>Ribes viburnifolium</i>	Catalina Perfume	Grossulariaceae	Low	Y	3'	8'	sun or shade	Well drained	Purple, red, pink Spring, Winter	helps control erosion		Tends to sprawl, May be pruned
<i>Calycanthus occidentalis</i>	Spice Bush		Low	Y	3'13'	3-12'	FS/PS	adaptable	Sumer/Spring. Red, purple borwn	Winter deciduous- hedge		
<i>Agave attenuata</i>	Fox Tail Agave	Asparagaceae	Low	y	4'-5'	6-8'	sun or shade	Adaptable	Yellow green, infrequent bloom		15 gal	
<i>Grevillia long john</i>	Grevillia long john	Proteaceae	Low	y	13'	10'	FS'PS	Adaptable	Spring-Rose/Pink		5 gal	

Botanical Name	Common Name	Family	WUCOLS (3)	SWR	MATURE HEIGHT	mature spread	LIGHT NEEDS	Soil requirements	Bloom season	Unique Features	water requirements	maintenance
SHRUBS SMALL >3'												
<i>Salvia apiana x leucophylla 'Desperado'</i>	White sage	Lamiaceae	Very Low	Y	3-5'	3-8'	FS	Adaptable	White Winter-Summer	Fragrant Silver white leaves		Pruning keeps it neat and compact
<i>Fragaria chiloensis</i>	Strawberry			Y	1-4"	1-2'	FS/PS	Very Low	Summer-Spring. White			
<i>Baccharis pilularis 'Pidgeon Point'</i>	Pidgeon point Coyote bush	Asteraceae	Low	Y	1-2'	8'10'	FS	Adaptable	Cream Summer-Winter	Erosion control Evergreen		Plant 6-8' apart, shear in late winter for density
<i>Eschscholzia californica</i>	Cal poppy	Papaveraceae	Very Low	Y	0.2-2'	1-2'	FS	Very Low	Orange, Yellow Winter-Summer	perennial herb-Slight fragrance		Best to cut down to the ground after the plant goes summer deciduous
<i>Achillea millefolium 'Island Pink'</i>	Yarrow	Asteraceae	Low	Y	6-12"	2-3'	FS/PS/Deep shade	Well drained	White to Pink Spring/Summer	Fragrant, medicinal,] reseeds and spread quickly		Benefits from division every other year
<i>Clarkia amoena</i>	Evening Primrose	Onagraceae	Low	Y	2-3'	2-3'	FS/PS	Adaptable	Pink, lavender, Purple, red Spring/Summer	Self seeding		Sow seeds in fall and let the rain do the rest
<i>Dudleya britonii</i>	Live-forever	Crassulaceae	Very Low	Y	>1'	1-2'	FS/PS	Well drained	Yellow Spring/Summer	Wax-like coating		Plant on a slope or angle so water does not pool
<i>Aeonium 'Zwartkop'</i>	Black Rose			Y	3-4'	1-2'	PS	Well drained	Summer-Yellow			
<i>Verbena lilacina 'De La Mina'</i>	Verbena' de la Mina'	Verbenaceae	Low	Y	2-3'	3-4'	FS/PS	Moderate draining	Lavender, Purple Winter- Fall	Summer semiu deciduous		Sheer lightly in summer, remove spent flowers
<i>Heuchera 'Santa Ana Cardinal'</i>	Santa Ana Cardinal Coral Bells	Saxifragaceae	Low	Y	6-12"	1-2' w	PS/Deep shade	adaptable	Summer/Spring Red, Pink	clumping, also can be ground cover		
<i>Sisyrinchium bellum</i>	Blue-eyed Grass	Sisyrinchium	Low	Y	1-2'	.3-1.5'	PS	adaptable	Spring, Winter, Blue, Purple, Lavender	no scent		Containers, Deer resistant, Groundcover, Lawn alternative
<i>Calochortus albus</i>	White Globe Lily		Very Low	Y	1-2'	4-6'	FS/PS	adaptable	Pink white, spring winter	Summer Deciduous		
<i>Ribes speciosum</i>	Fuchsia flowered gooseberry		Low	Y	6-10	3 - 8	PS/Deep shade	adaptable	Winter, Spring Red Pink	Summer Deciduous, Summer Semi-deciduous		Handles light prunin
NOURISHING GARDEN												
	izu persimmon											
	Apple espalier											
	lemon											
<i>Citrus aurantifolia 'Mexcian Thornless'</i>	Baretenders Lime	Rutaceae	Moderate	N	6-8'	6-8'	FS	well draining	produces July-December	citrus	24"	mulch around base, good with
<i>Ficus carica 'Mission'</i>	Mission black fig	Moraceae	Moderate	N	16'	16'	FS	well draining	late	deciduous	24"	12-15 gal water may-nov
	lettuce											
	kale											
	parsley											
	basil											
	cilantro											
<i>Punica granatum</i>	Antique Pomegranate 'Wonderful'	Lythraceae	moderate	N	7-12	7-12	FS	well draining	light red skin, dark red fruit	low chill 100-200 hrs	24"	can espalier
GRASSES/ GROUND COVER												
<i>Sporobolus airoides</i>	alkali sacaton	Poaceae	Low	Y	3-4'	2'	FS	Adaptable	Yellow Summer	winter dormancy		
<i>Boutela gracilis</i>	Blue gamma	Poaceae	Low	Y	0.5-2'	2'	FS/PS	Well drained	Yellow Summer	Shortgrass prairie Green-gray		Roots extend 1.5' from edge and 3-6' deep
<i>Aristida purpurea</i>	purple three awn	Poaceae	Very Low	Y	2-3'	1-2'	FS	Adaptable	Brown, Purple Winter/Spring	Sharp awns not good for livestock grazing		Avoid cutting back can get smashed with too much foot traffic
<i>Thymus serpyllum</i>	Breckland thyme	Lamiaceae	low	Y	1-3"	1-3"	FS	Adaptable	late spring-early fall purple showy			
<i>Stipa pulchra</i>	Purple Needlegrass	Poaceae	Very Low	Y	3'	1.5'	FS	Adaptable	Cream, green, purple, red Spring	Erosion control		Awns can be prickly
<i>Carex pansa</i>	sand dune sedge	cyperaceae	moderate	Y	6'16"	1'	FS	well drained				
<i>Leymus condensatus 'Canyon Prince'</i>	Canyon Prince wild rye	Poaceae	moderate	Y	8-10"	1-2'	FS	well drained	Summer/Spring tan	Wimter deciduous		
<i>Phyla nodiflora</i>	Kurapia	Verbenaceae	low	Y	.2"	1-2'	FS	well drained	Spring/Summer/Fall	Evergreen	1 gal	

THANK YOU!