

seattle tilth. phase 1. conceptual plan.
garden renovation plan.



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acknowledgements.

This planning effort was made possible through the support of the City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods' Small and Simple Grant and the matching support of members, volunteers and friends of Seattle Tilth.

A special thanks to the following gardening experts, landscape architects and architects for their assistance and participation in planning efforts: Carolyn Alcorn, Walter Brodie, Daniel Corcoran, Nancy Evans, Willi Evans Galloway, Eric Higbee, Katrina Morgan, Joyce Moty, Debra Oliver, Cheryl Peterson, Alison Saperstein, Gil Schieber, Brian Shapley, Lisa Sidlauskas, Craig Skipton, Elaine Stannard, Howard Stenn, Jill Stenn, Bill Thorness, Cathy Tuttle, Faith VanDePull, Linda Versage, Lily Warner, Carl Woestwin and Livy Yueh.

Staff leadership provided by Kathy Dang, Karen Luetjen, Katie Pencke and Lisa Taylor.

Community partners: Historic Seattle, Wallingford Community Senior Center, Wallingford P-Patch, Meridian School, Wallingford Community Council and all of our great neighbors.

Many thanks to Peg Marckworth for advice on branding, Allison Orr for her illustrations and Heidi Smets for graphic design.

Photography by Seattle Tilth, Heidi Smets, Amy Stanton and Carl Woestwin.

We would like to thank the 2008 Architecture Design/Build Studio at the University of Washington for their design ideas and illustration.

We would like to thank Royal Alley-Barnes at the City of Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation for reviewing our grant application prior to submittal.

written by nicole kistler

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May 30, 2008

Seattle Tilth is a special place for me.

I moved to Seattle in 1995 from Tempe, Arizona after finishing college with a degree in environmental studies. The one person I knew in Seattle lived near 40th on Sunnyside, and I moved in with her for a few months until I could find my own apartment. One fall day I just happened to pass by the Good Shepherd Center. I walked through the front door and into the meeting room with all the announcements of community projects and events. I wandered by the Seattle Tilth office in the South Annex where the door was wide open and a lively group of people were inside—maybe Rob Petersen, Carl Elliott or Anne Peterson. They were laughing and having fun. I signed up to be a Children’s Garden volunteer on the spot.

I have always loved volunteering in the Children’s Garden. It’s a place that gives me great joy. There, I can be a child again, remembering sitting under the kitchen window eating carrots with the dirt still on them—oh how sweet and crunchy they were. It is such a treat to teach children how to pick carrots for themselves, and see their faces when they taste the sweetness. What memories will these children pass along?

I met some of my first Seattle friends at Tilth, and continue to meet thoughtful, like-minded people there. Whether those friends have been made through volunteering in the Children’s Garden, on Seattle Tilth’s Board of Directors, or now as a consultant, they are all exceptionally talented and dedicated people.

It is satisfying to be in any garden, to be close to nature in the city, to go back to our roots, but these gardens are particularly satisfying because they have been nurtured by so many loving hands. Created by idealists who want to see the world become a better place, these gardens are places where we help one another, grow food for each other, celebrate life and appreciate a slower pace.

I feel so honored that Seattle Tilth has entrusted me to lead this planning effort, and I hope you feel that this plan reflects your ideas, your desires, and captures the spirit you see in what has become Seattle Tilth. I appreciate all the time, effort, and ideas everyone has given to this conceptual plan.

In peace,
Nicole Kistler

**“It is satisfying
to be close to
nature in
the city.”**

“seattle tilth
is **stronger**
than ever.”



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one. introduction.

2008 is an exciting year for Seattle Tilth. The organization, now in its 30th year, is stronger than ever with a dynamic staff, dedicated board, and reinvigorated membership. The organization is growing, and has many new and wonderful opportunities on the horizon.

Seattle Tilth's Board of Directors and staff recently completed a strategic plan for the organization, providing a clear pathway for growth. With the increase in demand for Tilth's programs, the physical structure and layout of the gardens need improvement to adequately serve its teaching mission. This plan is the outcome of months of staff planning, public support through a Seattle Neighborhood Matching Grant, community input and design. Planning was initiated to better understand the scope of improvements needed, to engage members, board, staff and other community stakeholders in a dialogue about potential changes, and to make new dreams for improvements that reflect Seattle Tilth's ideals today. It's a plan for the next 30 years, meant to be general, to identify areas for further study and planning, to set priorities and identify layout changes and major projects. The plan is meant to be shaped and updated in the future.

values.

For an organization as beloved as Seattle Tilth, change can sometimes seem a little daunting. No one wants to lose the whimsical feel of these gardens that were built by hand, with the care and best ideals of each member. It is a special place, where each tree, bed, mosaic and trellis has meaning for those who added it to the garden. For that reason, Seattle Tilth “dug deep” during this process, seeking to maintain all of the gardens’ best elements, while enhancing the educational functionality of the spaces.

At an early staff and board workshop, participants identified the following values for renovation and work in Seattle Tilth’s Teaching Gardens:

- › The garden should demonstrate Seattle Tilth’s **values** and be an **educational tool** even when Tilth staff and volunteers are not present.
- › The garden should **delight the senses**, with elements that are **whimsically and artfully made**.
- › The garden should be developed by **community members** to serve all ages and people, reaching out to the neighborhood.
- › It should be a **living system**, fitting into the ecology of the site and made of sustainable and renewable materials.
- › Each element should be a conscious addition and must embody the **ideal of triple-use**: be functional, build community and have interconnectedness to the living system.

approach.

Over the last 30 years, Seattle Tilth has engaged in numerous garden planning efforts on the part of professionals, students and volunteers. A tremendous amount of thought and effort went into those plans, and much has been implemented. This current planning process needs to build on previous work. Seattle Tilth reviewed each plan and created a comparative analysis to help in understanding goals, issues and opportunities as seen by Tilth members over the last 30 years.

Early in the process, the consultant and staff **identified project stakeholders** including: Tilth staff, board, members, volunteers; Wallingford neighbors; Good Shepherd Center tenants; Historic Seattle; Seattle Parks; and Seattle Fleets and Facilities. Seattle Tilth created a **public involvement plan**, and added on to it considerably as the project progressed, providing stakeholders with opportunities to add their own ideas, see plans and make comments. Seattle Tilth held a **project orientation** to kick-off the project.

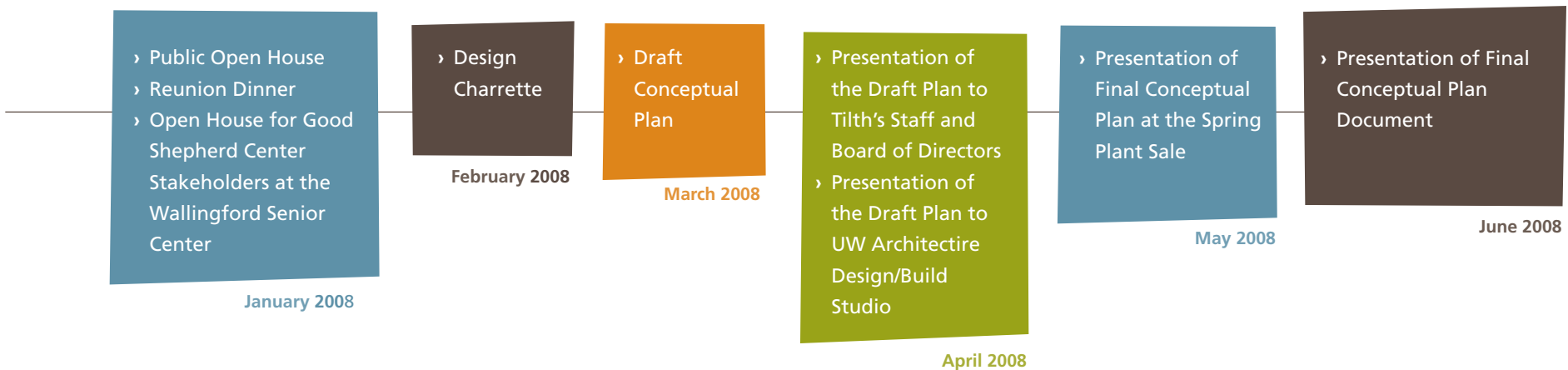
To best understand how the gardens are currently used in Seattle Tilth's educational programs, and to identify key features, issues and opportunities, the consultant conducted in-depth interviews with the Board President, Executive Director, Garden Coordinators, and Natural Soil Building Program Manager. After touring each garden, the consultant led a workshop with staff and board to establish values for the garden renovation, to brainstorm an enormous wish list, and set priorities for improvements and repairs. The consultant worked with staff to identify the best locations for elements and improvements, and to create a phased plan.

Seattle Tilth invited the public to an early project orientation so community members would be well informed of garden plans. The public was also invited to an open house where



architects and landscape architects staffed six design feature stations at which people offered their design input on specific elements and on the plan in general. Participants had the opportunity to work with a designer, give comments, think about how details of the elements work with the way the garden is used, and discuss these ideas with other Tilth members, volunteers and the public. The plans were also presented at Seattle Tilth's 30th Anniversary Reunion Dinner, and made available for comments during the day at the Wallingford Senior Center. A group of volunteer garden design experts including Tilth members, staff, educational exhibit designers, landscape architects, architects and gardening experts helped create a series of garden concepts that were incorporated into the conceptual plan.

The draft plan was presented to Seattle Tilth members, community groups and stakeholders both at regular community meetings, board meetings and at Tilth's largest event, the spring Edible Plant Sale. Feedback on the plan was incorporated into the final conceptual plan. The plan is meant to be flexible and identify opportunities and areas in need of further study, planning and detail design. It is by no means "final," but rather "agreed upon." It is designed to identify areas of need and provide direction for community led renovation projects.





two. site analysis.

When Historic Seattle took over the Good Shepherd Center property in 1977, the grounds were overgrown and in disrepair. They hired three groundskeepers to care for the property. Together with Wallingford neighbors, they had a vision to make the grounds into a community garden, park, and organic gardening demonstration area with their original inspiration coming from gardens in Eastern Washington and California.

analysis of previous planning and construction projects.

origins of seattle tilth. Carl Woestwin was one of the groundskeepers caring for the Good Shepherd Center (GSC) property. While studying Horticultural Science at Washington State University in 1977, he completed an independent study on urban organic gardening by going to the experts, including John Jeavons in California and Steve Solomon in Oregon. After graduation, Carl worked for a while with the founders of the Tilth movement at the Pragtree Farm in Arlington, Washington, and then traveled to Seattle when he learned of the caretaking position at the GSC. During a fall presentation to the Wallingford Community Council, he inspired them to include an Organic Urban Agriculture Center as part of the plans for the Good Shepherd Center.

After breaking up a rubble-filled tennis court, a number of composting and organic **gardening demonstrations** were established on the site. Early on, Seattle Tilth members wanted to turn the old caretaker's house into offices for the organization, but it was burned down by an arsonist before that could happen. In its place, they built the **greenhouse**.

Robin Rose (then Robin Stern) began the **Children's Garden** in 1988 with a series of work parties. By that time the old swimming pool had been filled in with sand. The remnants of the pool's edge and diving board mount can still be seen today.

BUILDING THE GREENHOUSE



FIRST DEMONSTRATION GARDENS



1986 CHILDREN'S GARDEN



1986 CHILDREN'S GARDEN

GOOD SHEPHERD CENTER HISTORY

During the 66 years between 1907 and 1973, the Good Shepherd Center was called the Home of the Good Shepherd, and was operated by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd to provide shelter and education to troubled girls, those who were orphaned, or who had trouble with the law or their guardians.

When the Home of the Good Shepherd was closed in 1973, the property was purchased by a developer who proposed demolishing the building to build condominiums. Neighbors formed the Wallingford Neighborhood Association to convince the City of Seattle to buy the property, and helped ensure that it would remain in public use by nominating it for landmark status in King County and for the National Register of Historic Places. In 1977, Historic Seattle formed a Public Development Authority to purchase the property from the City and convert it to a community center. By then, Seattle Tilth had formed and plans for Seattle Tilth's Organic Urban Agriculture Center were a part of the master plan for the Good Shepherd Center.

Today, the Good Shepherd Center houses the offices of numerous non-profit organizations, the Wallingford Community Senior Center and the private Meridian School. There are six artists-in-residence, live-in caretakers and the former chapel is used as a performing arts space.

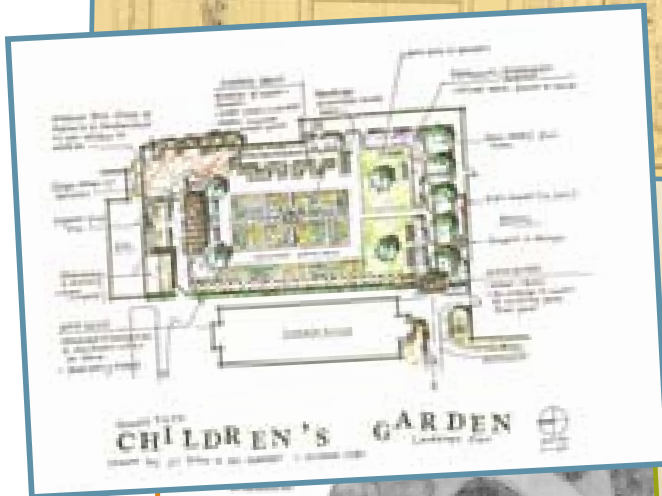
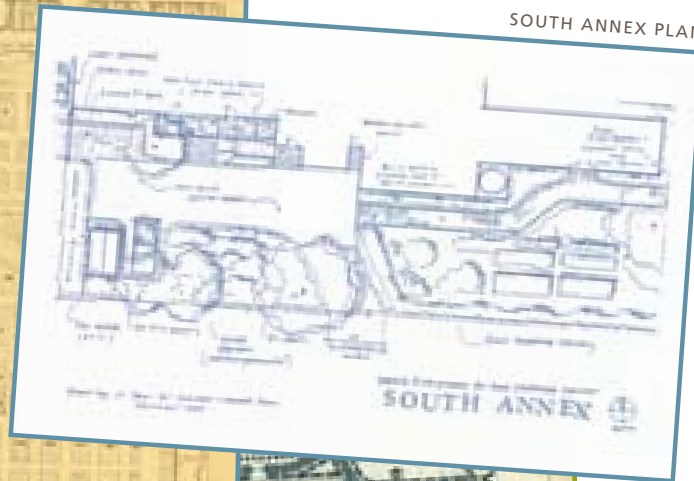
In 1989, Jil Stenn, Howard Stenn and Gil Sheiber created **three garden master plans:** the Seattle Tilth Agricultural Center plan (for the Demonstration Garden), the plan for the Children's Garden and a plan for the area around the South Annex. Several garden coordinators—including Carl Elliott, Rob Peterson and Joanne Jewell—attended and were inspired by the summer certificate program in Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems at the University of California, Santa Cruz. By 1991, many of the projects identified in these plans had been created, largely establishing the garden layout we see today.

In 1991, the Berger Partnership created a **master plan for the entire Good Shepherd Center site.** The plan notes the location of both the Children's Garden and "Tilth Garden" (Demonstration Garden) and makes three recommendations for the latter: "review Tilth's master plan for the gardens, recommend protection measures from impacts of adjacent uses (i.e. dogs), and make recommendations to create a more defined entry from the Meridian Playground into the garden." For the Children's Garden they had only two recommendations: "maintain existing use program and address potential use conflicts with pedestrian access at the hole-in-the-wall."

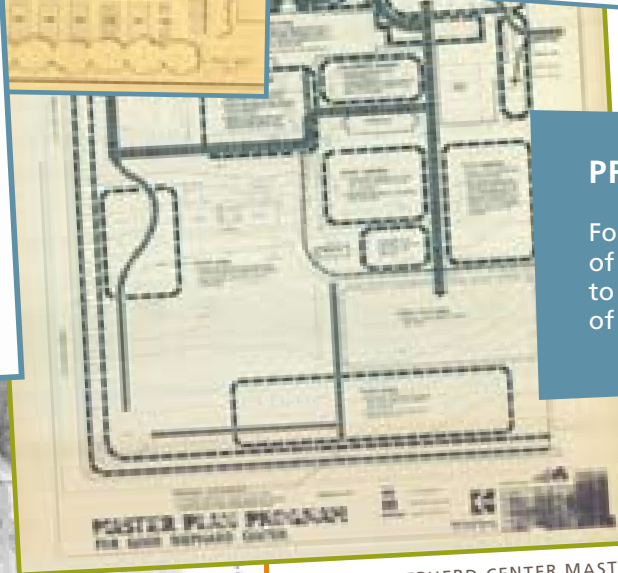
SEATTLE TILTH AGRICULTURAL CENTER PLAN



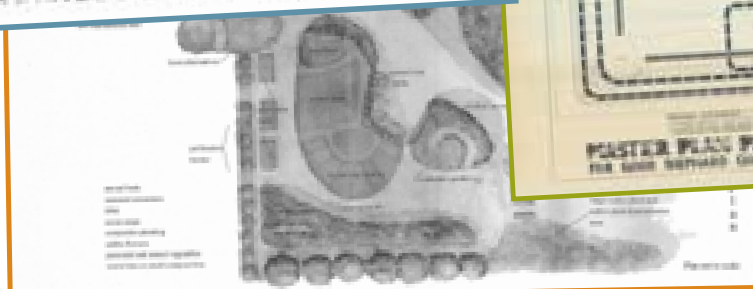
SOUTH ANNEX PLAN



CHILDREN'S GARDEN PLAN



GOOD SHEPHERD CENTER MASTER PLAN



UW DEMONSTRATION GARDEN PLAN

PREVIOUS PLANS

For a more detailed view of these plans, please go to pages 36-40 at the end of this chapter.

In 2002, Seattle Tilth engaged the Sustainable Community Landscapes Program at the University of Washington Center for Urban Horticulture to help create **a demonstration garden plan** addressing garden bed re-design and weed and soil structure issues. In 2002 a garden redesign committee formed, and in 2003 and 2004 volunteers engaged in additional garden planning work. These plans never gained footing because they were created without an extensive public involvement process at a time when Seattle Tilth was understaffed.

These plans were analyzed to identify needed improvements and the desirability of new physical elements. The matrix on the next page compares each plan, and reveals how some improvements have been needed for years.

Seattle Tilth has always been a place to try out new ideas and methods for organic gardening and sustainable living. In its early days it was thought of not only as a demonstration site, but also as an experiment station. It was essential to analyze earlier garden plans for the following reasons:

- › compare what was planned with what was built (or the intention).
- › maintain continuity with those ideas.
- › analyze the functionality of current built elements.
- › celebrate and honor what we have already achieved.
- › identify ongoing aspirations and problem areas.

**SEATTLE TILTH
DEMONSTRATION
GARDEN
IMPROVEMENTS**

PAST PLANNING WORK

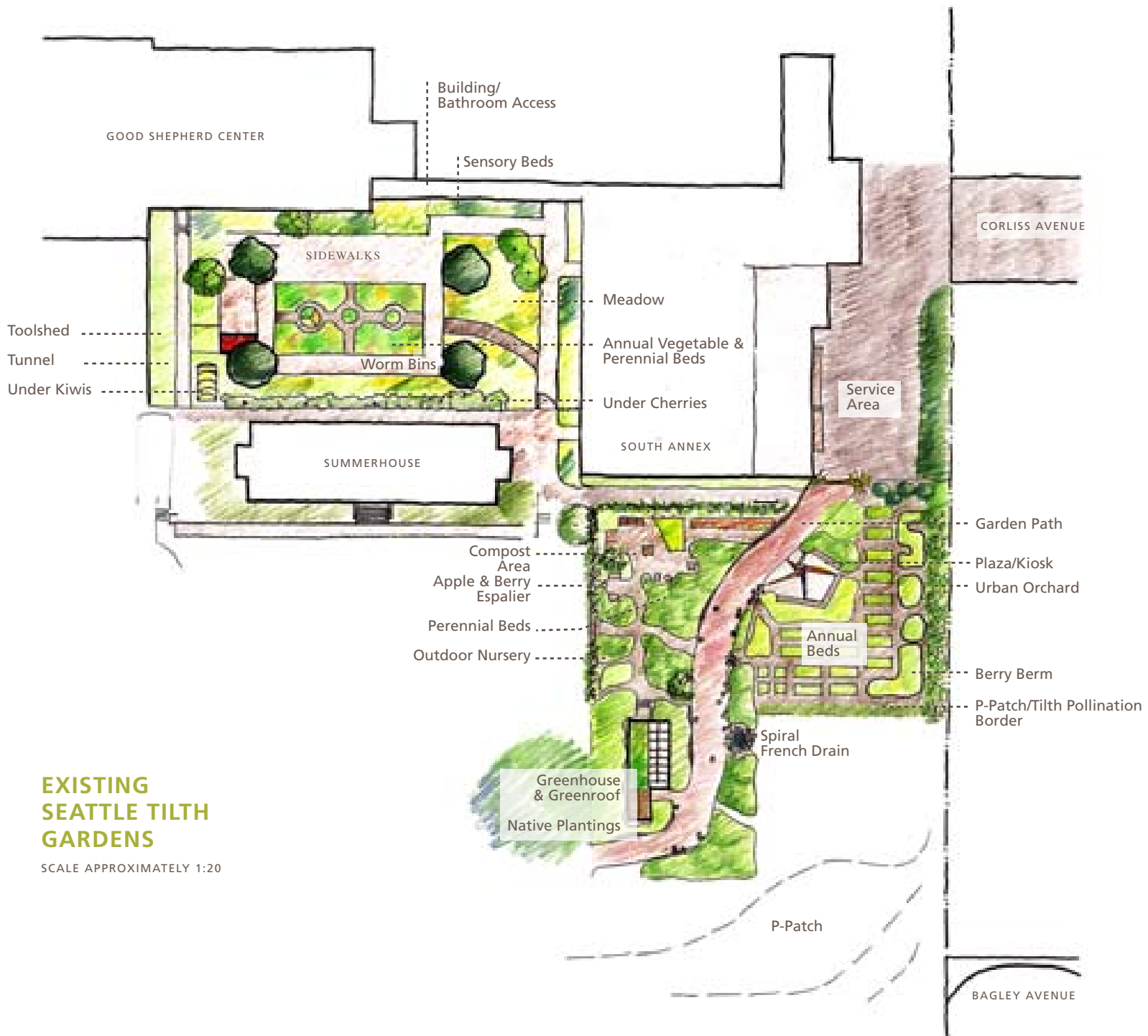
	Stenn Designs 1989	UW Sustainable Community Landscapes 2002	Redesign Committee 2002-2003	Garden Planning Work 2004
Outdoor nursery	■		■	■
Greenhouse				■
Teaching area		■	■	■
Service area	■	■	■	■
Storage/staging		■	■	■
Entryways	■	■	■	
Urban orchard	■	■	■	
Invasive weeds		■	■	■
Annual beds	■	■	■	■
Pathways	■	■	■	■
French Drain	■		■	
Signage			■	■
Past planning work			■	
Water conservation	■	■	■	
Toolshed	■			
Pollination border		■		
Reconfigure annual beds	■	■		
Greenroof			■	
Edible landscaping	■	■	■	
Outdoor kitchen		■	■	
Water feature			■	
Natives/habitat		■	■	
Fragrance garden			■	
Shade garden			■	
Wattle garden		■		
Container demo		■	■	■
Bins for bulk materials		■	■	
Arbor over garden office	■		■	■
Porous surface in service area			■	■
Covered teaching space		■	■	■

garden use, programming, issues and opportunities.

The gardens are currently used as an **outdoor classroom** to teach organic gardening and environmental programs to city dwellers. They also serve as an “off-the-clock” teacher, physically **representing the values and lessons** that Seattle Tilth promotes, and providing actual content through an informal sign program. Since the renovations are meant to help expand and promote Tilth’s programming, it is important to **understand** how the **existing space** is utilized.

Through individual interviews, a brainstorm session with staff and board, and ongoing meetings with garden coordinators and Tilth’s Executive Director, several issues related to how the garden currently functions were identified, and a plethora of new opportunities were dreamed up.

identity, signage and wayfinding. Identity, signage and wayfinding together were the main priorities that emerged from the staff and board workshop. It is difficult to tell where the Demonstration Garden starts and ends, what is “Tilth” and what is not. This is largely because of the success of Seattle Tilth’s programs: as P-Patchers, Good Shepherd Center groundskeepers and Wallingford neighbors have taken classes, the Tilth look—such as interspersing edibles with perennial flowers—has spread beyond the bounds of the gardens. Similarly, unless a class is in session, most passersby would not know that the Children’s Garden is an outdoor classroom, or that children work there.



**EXISTING
SEATTLE TILTH
GARDENS**

SCALE APPROXIMATELY 1:20

Wayfinding is an issue for several reasons: inadequate signage, physical separation between the Demonstration Garden and Children’s Garden and the slightly awkward circulation throughout the Good Shepherd Center site due to how the historic site has been adapted for reuse. People access the Good Shepherd Center site through the main entry, and a number of informal entries at street ends, corners and breaks in the wall around the property. It was not originally designed for public use, rather for internal circulation only.

Tilth has put up several temporary signs and banners to let people know that they have arrived in the gardens, but intentional, consistent and permanent signage is needed, including: directional signage, entryway signage and educational or curatorial signage within the gardens. A dilapidated kiosk was removed to facilitate teaching in the plaza, but that information-sharing function has not yet been re-established. There should be a place like the kiosk to post posters and dispense garden fact sheets, preferably in a covered area.

Seattle Tilth staff identified the existing **public art** as the main **features currently giving the garden its identity**.

There are three main features: the cobblestone **path** and stone swale, the metal birch entry **arbor**, and the **mosaics** in the plaza and next to the greenhouse. A detailed analysis of the path is found in the next section on the Demonstration Garden. The path serves as the main wayfinding element, but ends at the lawn, and does not connect to the Children’s Garden. The metal birch sculpture helps to make the entrance from the service area more prominent. It may seem strange that this entry is one of the primary entries to the garden, but it is the connection to the current garden coordinators’ offices, a way people access the gardens and playfield, and connects to a neighborhood street end.

The mosaic benches serve as a visual anchor and point of interest for the main central gathering space in the Demonstration Garden. The plaza is described in more detail below. It should be noted how important the space is, like the greenhouse, as a major focal point for the gardens.

Creating greater **definition of spaces**, and integrating additional **public art** features and **artistically created demonstrations** throughout the garden will help establish a **clear garden identity**. It is also an opportunity to **enrich the educational experience** of the gardens through juxtaposition, illustration (such as the lifecycle of a ladybug) or sensory stimulation.

Other elements central to creating an identity include a **signage program**, **defined borders**, **clear pathways** and **bold elements** within the gardens themselves. The intent is not to create a Tilth theme park, but rather to imbue each new element, planting and art feature with the playful, whimsical, handmade quality we know as **“Tilthiness.”**

METAL BIRCH ENTRY ARBOR



COBBLESTONE PATH



MOSAICS



demonstration garden. Now in its 30th year, the Demonstration Garden is in need of renovation. The path has subsided in places and needs to be repaired, as do trellises and structures, and the greenhouse was not designed to last as long as it has. When Tilth first began, the gardens were an experiment station, and classes were informal. **Today, Tilth teaches over 300 classes a year serving more than 15,000 people.**



GATHERED IN THE PLAZA

the path. The main garden path and stormwater swale were designed and built by artist Ted Jessen in 1986. Beloved by the neighborhood, it is **the garden feature most associated with Seattle Tilth**. The stone and brick path is the major walkway through the Demonstration Garden. The Children’s Garden uses it in a fun exercise called “where are your feet,” which helps kids practice gross motor skills and gain spatial awareness before transitioning to small group work in the Children’s Garden. It is also used as a sensory walk where children have their first opportunity to touch and taste edible plants. The path has subsided in places and is not ADA accessible, making it difficult for many people to access the gardens. The path should be reset in places of subsidence, and a secondary, ADA accessible path should be created through the garden. The stone swale and French drain comprise a valuable stormwater management demonstration and help form a border between Tilth and the P-Patch. Kids love the sunken spiral French drain, and play in it when dry. The

source of rainwater is a downspout from the roof of the GSC South Annex and a culvert under the main path, which clogs periodically. The culvert will be repaired at the same time that the subsided areas of the path are upgraded.

the plaza. The plaza and (former) kiosk area is a viewpoint for the entire garden and serves as **a teaching and gathering area**. The Children’s Garden meets for tours, conducts teacher training and rehearses skits and plays in the space. The mosaics in the benches are used in Children’s Garden programming as a way to introduce children to observing small details: colors, textures and shapes. Since the original keys to the Good Shepherd Center are incorporated into the mosaic, it is a great place to begin a conversation about the history of the gardens and how they used to be tennis courts and a pool. The plaza also features temporary vertical gardening infrastructure each summer and fall. The plaza’s openness can make it uncomfortable on days with rain and wind

or intense sunshine. A covered teaching area is needed for all seasons. As mentioned in the identity section, a kiosk in the plaza used to display posters, and this feature has not yet been relocated.

annual vegetable beds, perennial beds, permaculture and native plant demonstrations.

The annual vegetable beds **demonstrate a variety of in-city food production techniques showcasing different methods and crops** suited for Seattle’s soils and climate. Displays are dynamic and vary seasonally so that visitors can see something new each week. For example, one bed might feature a nitrogen-building cover crop while the adjacent bed might demonstrate the “Interbay Mulch” technique, which builds the soil while composting clean green garden waste. Strollers can learn about improving the performance of heat-loving crops such as melons by cultivating them in a cloche—a mini-greenhouse made of plastic sheeting—or growing them in a raised bed on top of bales of straw. Many displays

feature techniques for tight urban spaces, such as growing tomatoes, cucumbers and squash on vertical trellises or planting edibles in containers along with flowers. Perennial beds demonstrate low-maintenance, drought tolerant gardening with year-round interest. Perennials attract wildlife and beneficial insects. These beds are a place for volunteers and class students to learn about pruning, propagating, caring for and dividing of perennials

Seattle Tilth has been offering urban permaculture classes for several years and has incorporated elements into the Demonstration Garden. Permaculture is a garden and landscape management approach that mimics the successful interactions found in nature. There are several permaculture demonstrations in the garden including a keyhole garden, an herb spiral and a tire pond.

Certain classes that are taught often, such as the technique of double-digging to loosen compacted soil, have actually

HERB SPIRAL PERMACULTURE DEMONSTRATION



overworked the soil in some areas of the garden. As a result of years of adding organic material, some beds have an overabundance of nitrogen, and the bark paths require excessive volunteer hours for weeding.

Small bed sizes and layout do not meet Tilth's class needs today. In addition, Tilth's edible plant focus highlights the need to better integrate annual and perennial plants in residential gardens to maximize food production space within a small urban garden, while Tilth's demonstration beds currently separate annuals and perennials. Along with the renovation of plantings comes the opportunity to expand permaculture demonstrations, to incorporate native plants and to illustrate concepts such as gardening to support native birds and insects.

borders. There are several **garden spaces that form borders** between the Demonstration Garden and neighbors, Meridian Park, the P-Patch and walkways. The three main areas are the pollination border between the Demonstration Garden and the P-Patch, the espaliers separating the garden from the park, and the urban orchard separating the garden from neighboring houses to the south. The

urban orchard is a demonstration site for fruit tree growing and pruning. It provides fruit and screening for the neighbors. It shades some of the southern annual beds, so the plantings in those beds need revision (though the berry berm works well in this area). The trees need evaluation by an expert to enhance production.

The low-maintenance perennial pollination border helps to mark the grade change between the Demonstration Garden and the P-Patch. Planted with lavender to support bees and other pollinators, the border is nevertheless challenged by invasive morning glory. The railroad ties in this slope are in need of replacement, but the border between areas should be maintained.

The apple espalier creates a living fence demonstration, produces fruit, and is a fairly low-maintenance screen between Meridian Playfield and the garden. However, the trees have been unhealthy and do not fruit well due to the limited choice of grafting stock when the trees were planted. The trees should be replaced incrementally and Tilth can use the replacement process as a teaching opportunity.

compost area. This area is used to teach and demonstrate various compost systems for food and yard waste. It is the site of numerous workshops and the Master Composter/Soil Builder training program sponsored by Seattle Public Utilities. Bins are also used to store bulk materials (leaves, straw, burlap). The existing area functions well, but does not require as much space as it currently occupies. New, creative examples, demonstrations and exhibits would enrich teaching in this area.

service area. The service area is used for **storage** of pallets, compost, potting soil, woodchips, yard waste, tarps, cloche materials and compost bins. It is a **staging area for events** (tents, donation boxes, plants for plant sale) and a **loading zone** for class material pick-up, garden work-parties and hauling supplies. It currently functions as the **entrance** to the gardens and the present garden coordinator's office, and is a place to **post information** (i.e. posters to publicize programs and events). The shrubs and trees in this area provide a privacy screen for neighbors. The storage in this area is not currently secured, and an enclosed, secure storage area is needed. The 1989 design for this space by Jil Stenn, Howard Stenn and Gil Sheiber

holds promise for improving the appearance, functioning and educational value of this space.

greenhouse. The 1981 greenhouse is used to propagate **plant starts** and is **a small, indoor teaching and work space.** Tools and nursery **supplies are stored** in the greenhouse. It is also used as a **volunteer check-in space**, with clipboards for recording hours, storage for backpacks, and access to water and the refrigerator. The greenhouse was built with an earthen floor and rats have become an issue. They eat plant starts and supplies, making it difficult to dependably produce the starts needed for demonstrations, classes and succession planting in the gardens. In part, because the park is not lit at night, security is an issue. Hoses and other tools and supplies have been stolen. Greenhouse storage accommodates only garden tools, not plant racks, wheelbarrows, trellises and other items that have been stolen or vandalized. Although it is currently the only covered teaching space in the Wallingford teaching gardens, the space cannot be used for both teaching and plant propagation where plants cover all the table surfaces. The space is not ADA accessible and accommodates groups of only 10 adults or 15 children.



GREENHOUSE

The north side of the greenhouse has a greenroof. It is an excellent demonstration because the berm against the greenhouse puts it at adult eye level. Its innovative design by Hadj Design shows how greenroofs mitigate noise and temperature extremes, filter stormwater and grow to be beautiful. It is one of the few easily accessible planted roofs in a public space.

outdoor nursery. The outdoor nursery is used to pot up **small plant starts**, prick out starts and harden them off. Cold frames are used in this area to extend its use. The area is also used to **store trellising supplies and wheelbarrows.** Hoses and other materials were stored in this area before theft became a problem.

children's garden.

Once you experience the magic of the Children's Garden through Seattle Tilth's programs you will never see the garden in the same way again. The spaces, plantings and art have been created mainly by children and facilitated by staff who are experts in early childhood education, as well as in gardening and composting. The entire focus of the Children's Garden is **experiential learning in garden ecology**—including discoveries about soil science, plant life, insects, composting and the sources of our food.

The spaces of the Seattle Tilth Children's Garden resemble those of an **adventure playground** or a treehouse fort, where kids' imaginations combined with found materials lead to countless hours of satisfying and educational play. Like a secret garden enclosed by walls and undiscovered by many, the Children's Garden is a safe place where children can **explore** in groups or on their own.

Executive Director Karen Luetjen says, **"Parents tell us all the time how our programs help their children's curiosity to flourish and the programs expand their interest in the natural world—contributing to them being better stewards of the Earth later on."**

A major focus of this plan is to introduce a sign program and interactive elements so that the magic of the Children's Garden is

accessible to everyone, even to those not participating in a program.

One of the main goals in Children's Garden programming is that children do the planting and maintenance in the garden. With lots of little kids with short arms gathering around to plant, the beds need to be small and the pathways around them fairly large. New beds and bed shapes are often created during classes, allowing each student to feel ownership and pride in the gardens he or she creates. This approach allows children the opportunity to use tools, plant seeds, make compost and turn soil with no time wasted trying to make the beds look perfect or conventionally attractive.

The four *Thuja Occidentalis 'Pyramidalis'* (*Pyramidalis*) shrubs in the garden were never meant to be so tall. They overly shade the garden and dominate the space.



THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN IN FULL ACTION

In addition, they provide rat habitat. On the other hand, they provide a sense of great height within the space, soften the hard lines of the building, and provide shade when needed (though not all four need to be kept to achieve these benefits). If two of them were removed, it would provide numerous opportunities for the garden while maintaining the benefits. The two remaining shrubs can be pruned and limbed up to look better, and to make a clear space around the base. Removing the ones currently occupying the meadow area would provide space to build a multi-functional stage and seating area, which would help welcome guests to the garden.

planting beds. The Children's Garden is one of the first encounters many children have with plants. **The experience of seeing a whole plant grow from a seed is fundamental** in a child's development and perception of how the world works. Children learn how to differentiate one type of plant from another, and use their senses to experience how plants smell, taste, feel and look. This is the place where

kids often make the connection that their food comes from plants that grow in soil, and are empowered by the knowledge that they can grow their own food. Children learn important motor skills such as how to pick flowers or fruit without damaging the plant or pulling the plant out of the ground. They learn how to use tools and how to cooperate. They practice taking turns on projects that require specific steps. Adding to the value of the Children's Garden in early childhood education, the garden features unique plants that are used in teaching adult classes. Kiwi, figs, cherries and other fruit trees are used to teach pruning and identification, and bamboo is harvested for trellises.

sidewalks. Historically the location of the GSC swimming pool, the paved areas are important in the Children's Garden, particularly on wet rainy days. They allow for **circulation** of large groups around the garden and also provide **gathering space**. They are creative spaces for chalk drawings, seed saving, planting starts and art projects. The space is especially important during the

Harvest Fair where Tilth has a kid's art tent. Sidewalks are also workspaces for sweeping, cleaning tools, sifting and exploring worm bins.

meadow. Groups form a large circle in the meadow at the end of a garden tour, meet for small group break-outs and have sing-alongs with the ukulele. For some programs the space is used for snack time or for enjoying a story book. It's also an **active space** to dance, run through the sprinklers and roll around.

chill-out zone. On hot days, this is another place to have **quiet time** during camps and Harvest Fair, eat lunch on blankets, or read books.

under kiwis. The kiwis provide a heavily shaded, vine-covered world perfect as a **magic spot** or for making bughouses. Once children have learned about insects and their role in the garden, they are invited to use anything they can find to make a helpful home for the bugs, such as

a roof thatched with fennel and a dandelion chandelier. Since there is a hose bib nearby, it's also a place to dig, play in the mud and make trenches. One of the most popular summer programs is called Dirty Knees, Wet Feet.

worm bins. Exploring the worm bins is **one of the kids' favorite activities** in the garden. They get to pick up worms, worm eggs, centipedes and all sorts of other critters with an adult there to explain things. Worm composting is a great way to expose kids to food composting for the first time, and have a larger conversation about composting food waste. The bins also serve as benches.

tunnel. The tunnel is a greenhouse made from bent pvc piping and covered in plastic sheeting. The tunnel is a magic place where kids can go into a special kid-sized place for a nature walk. It's **a fun, special treat** to go through the tunnel.

storage. Adults use the toolshed to **store** tools and supplies. Volunteer nametags and sign-in clipboards are kept

there, so it also serves as an **impromptu office**. Kids see the toolshed as a magic place, where they get to hang up their digging fork after carefully cleaning off the soil. Compost bins are used for leaf storage and dry storage of soil and compost. The toolshed and compost bins can be relocated as needed to best suit the plan. Since GSC caretakers lock it at night, the Children's Garden also provides secure storage for the spring plant sale, and storage for Demonstration Garden wheelbarrows in the winter.

a restroom is needed. Children of all ages visit the garden and may need to use bathroom facilities during class sessions. Currently, staff need to leave the rest of the group to take children through a locked door to use the Good Shepherd Center bathroom or take them to the park bathroom. A trip to the bathroom can take ten or more minutes away from an hour-long program and reduces staffing in the garden. A composting toilet or more convenient bathroom location are two potential solutions to this issue.



DIGGIN' IT!



MUSIC AND FUN IN THE MEADOW

functionality.

The consultant led the Executive Director and Garden Coordinators through a **diagramming exercise** to determine how garden elements should ideally relate for maximum efficiency. All the spaces that each garden needs for its programming were considered. There was also a discussion about whether the Demonstration and Children's Gardens needed to be separate, how spaces could be shared, and what kinds of linkages could be made between the gardens.

In addition, while the garden staff currently have an office in the South Annex of the Good Shepherd Center, this is likely to change in the future as Meridian School makes plans to expand their facility. It is possible that all of Tilth's offices could be consolidated in the basement on the west side of the main Good Shepherd Center building. The diagramming exercise helped staff consider what the **ideal location** might be for the **offices** in relationship to the gardens.

Two similar diagrams were created. Each garden needed a place where the functions of an office, volunteer check-in area and teacher preparation area are located together, ideally right next to or in the garden.

For the **Demonstration Garden**, this trio of office/check-in/teacher preparation space would be located next to the greenhouse. The functions of the greenhouse, toolshed, storage and service area were all ideally

located together. It was also suggested that shady nooks would be a great feature to have near a volunteer check-in, where volunteers could have lunch in the shade. Worm bins should be located in this shady area and could serve as benches. The compost area needs to be adjacent to the garden, but all the compost demonstrations do not need to be located together, and could be distributed throughout the garden.

The **Children's Garden** needs sidewalk space, planting beds, a compost area, a shady spot and a sunny lawn within the garden, and the office/check-in/teacher preparation area adjacent to it. Both gardens need access to an enclosed classroom. In Diagram 1, the two gardens are joined by the enclosed classroom with offices and other functions to the side of each garden. In Diagram 2, the enclosed classroom has other indoor functions, the offices, check-in and prep areas are consolidated, with the gardens off to either side.

DIAGRAM 1

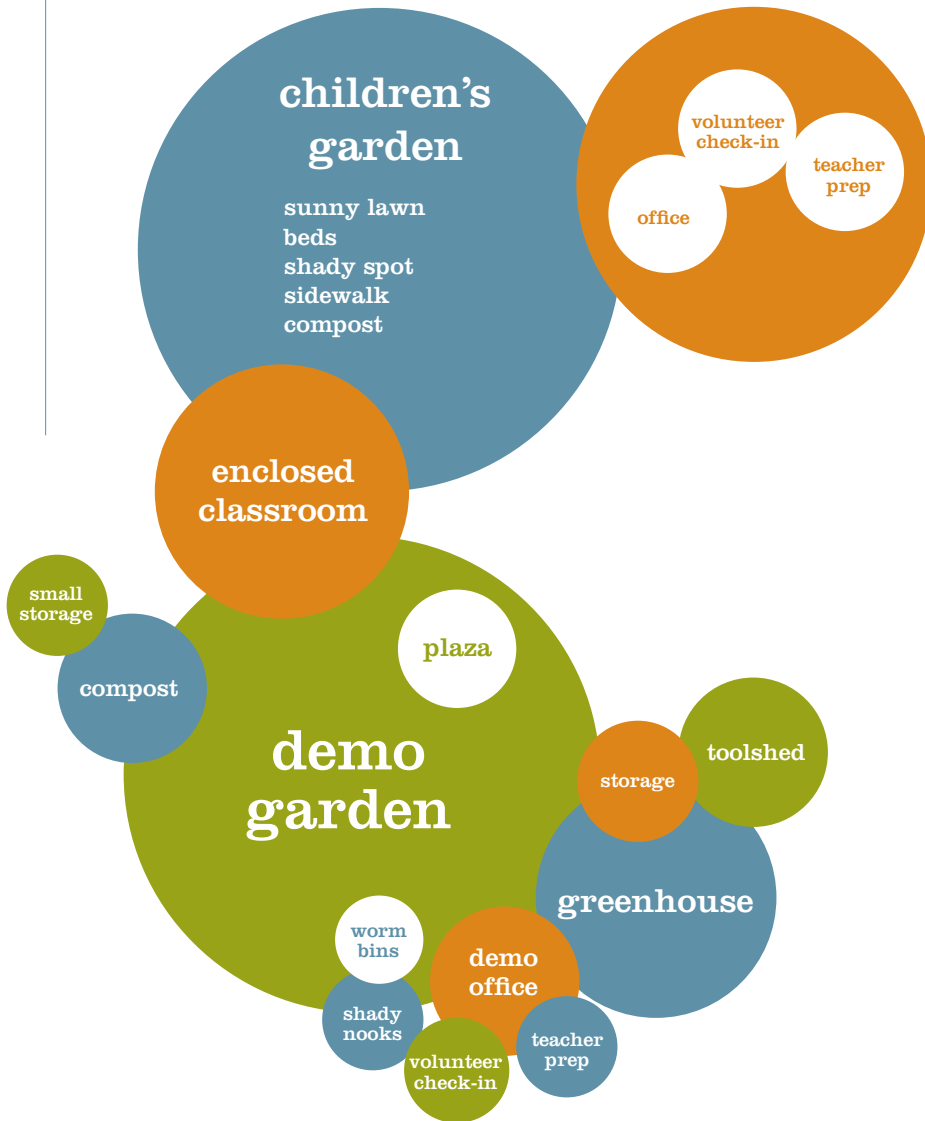
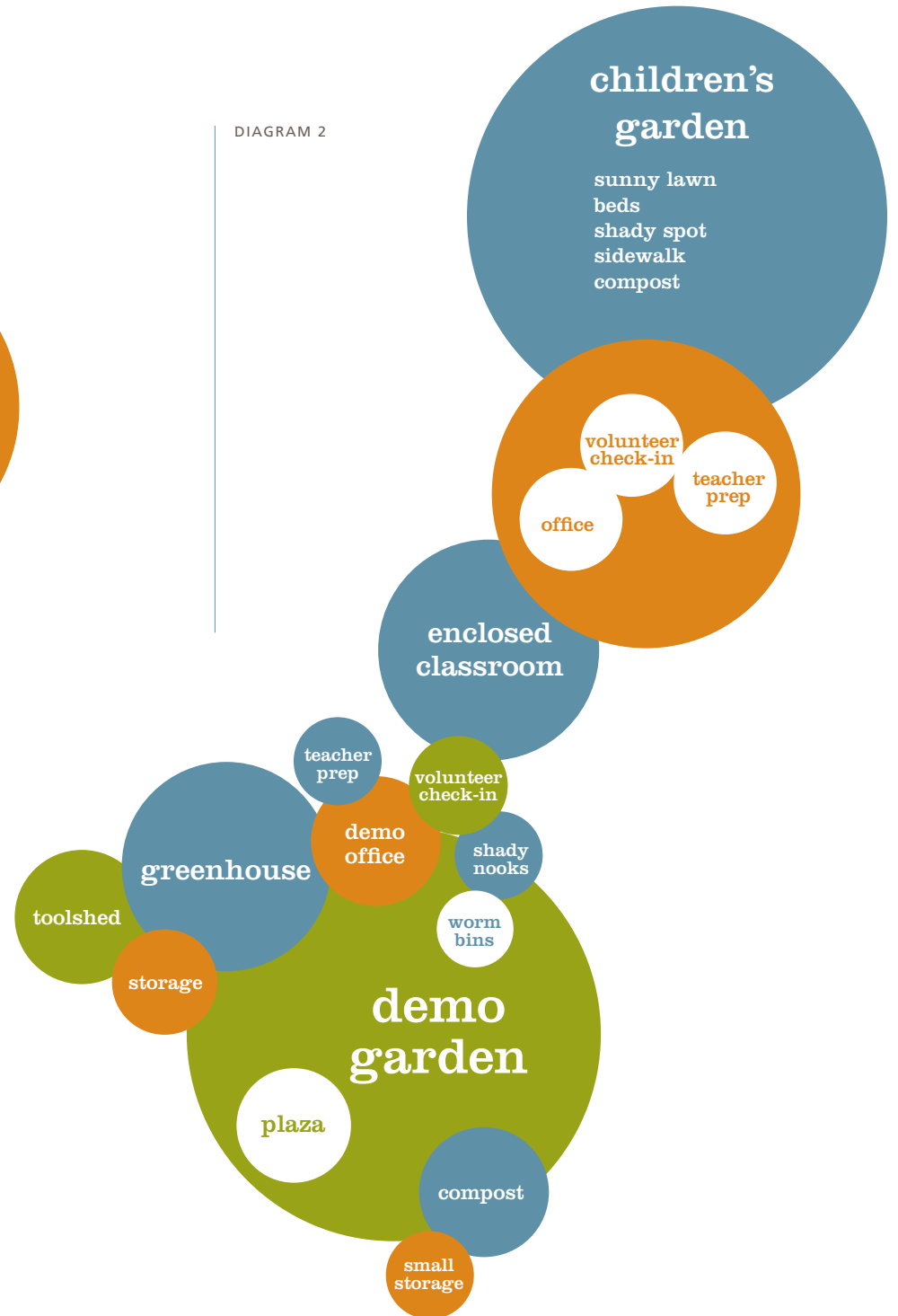
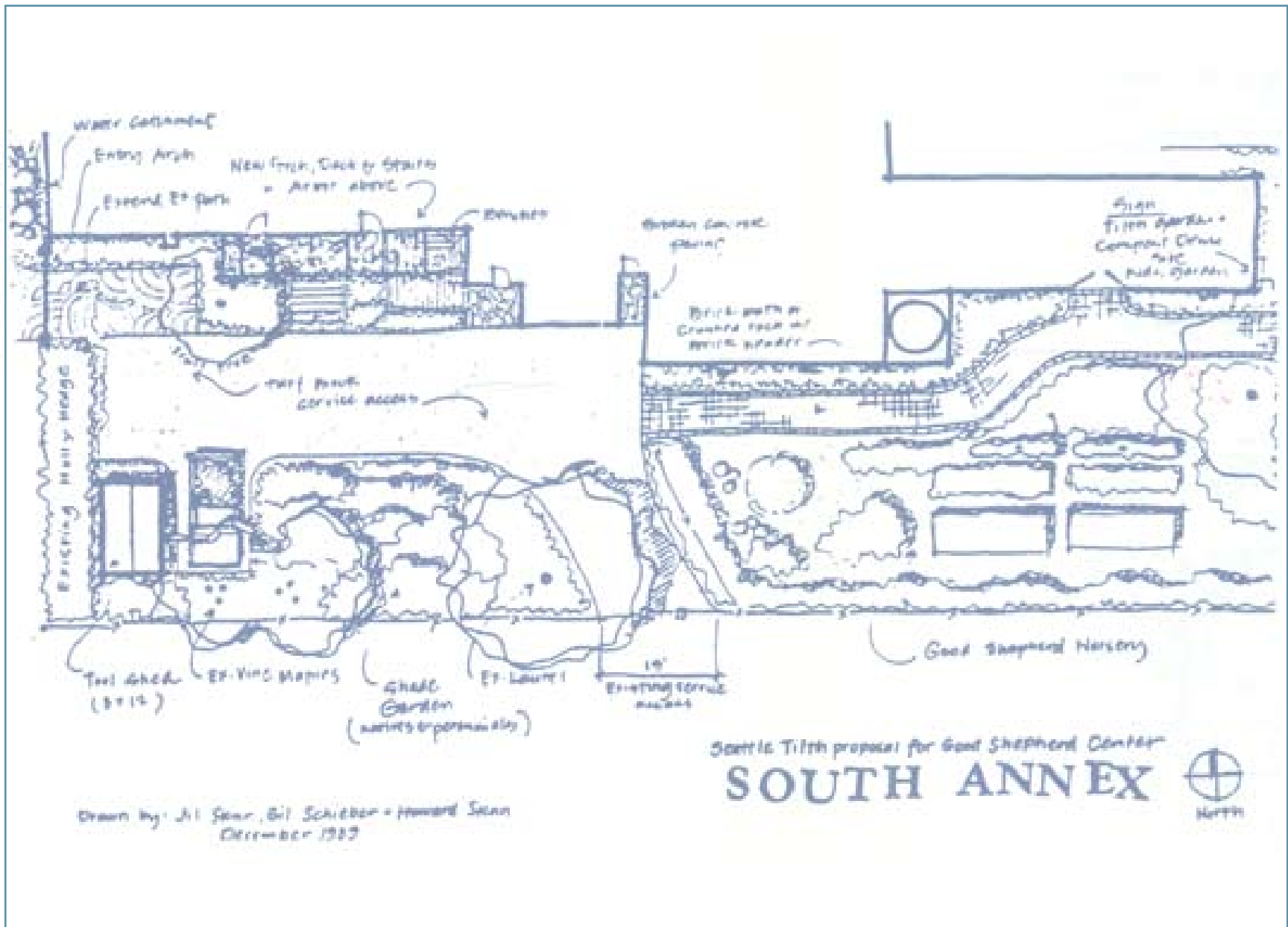
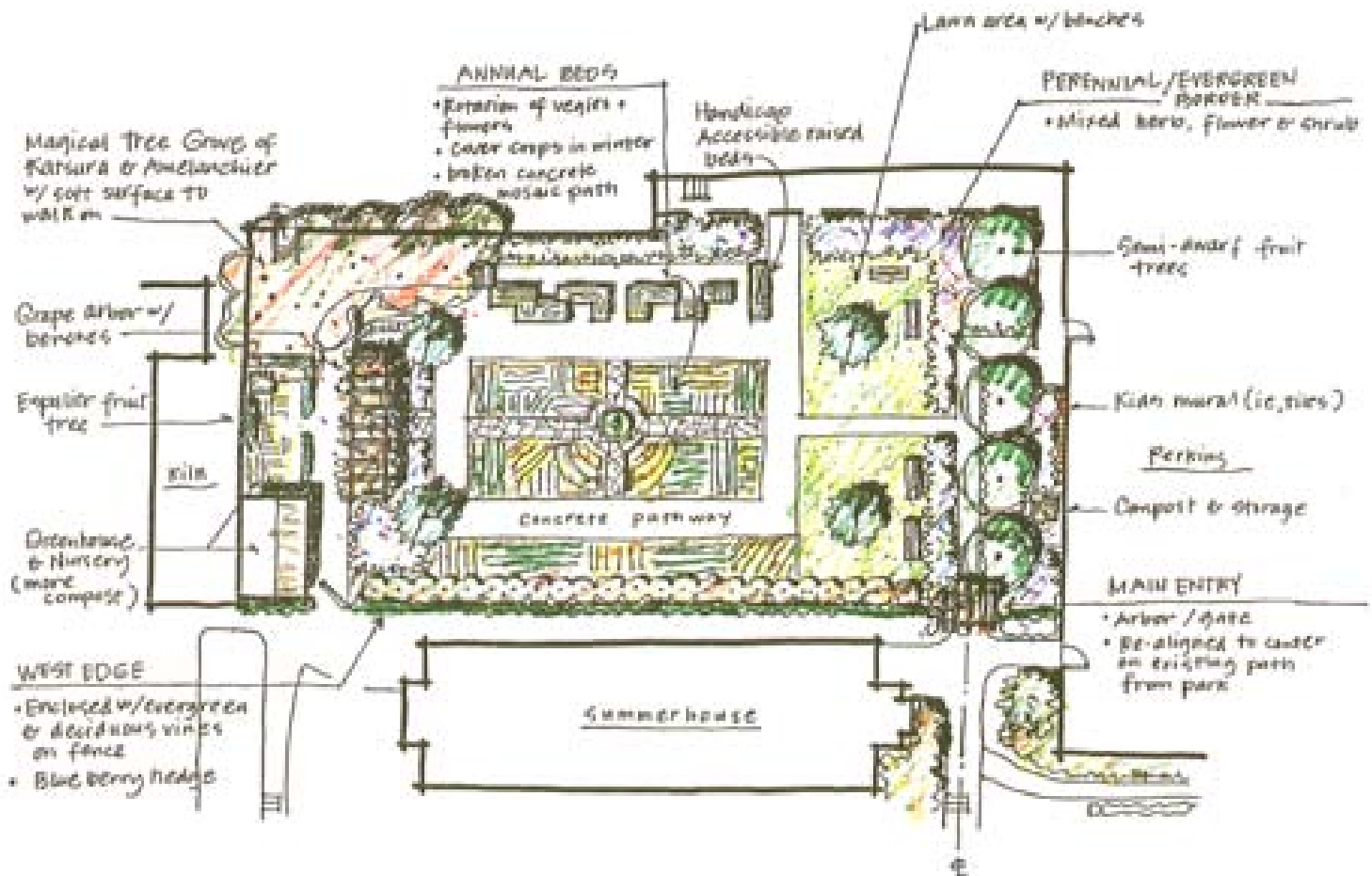


DIAGRAM 2

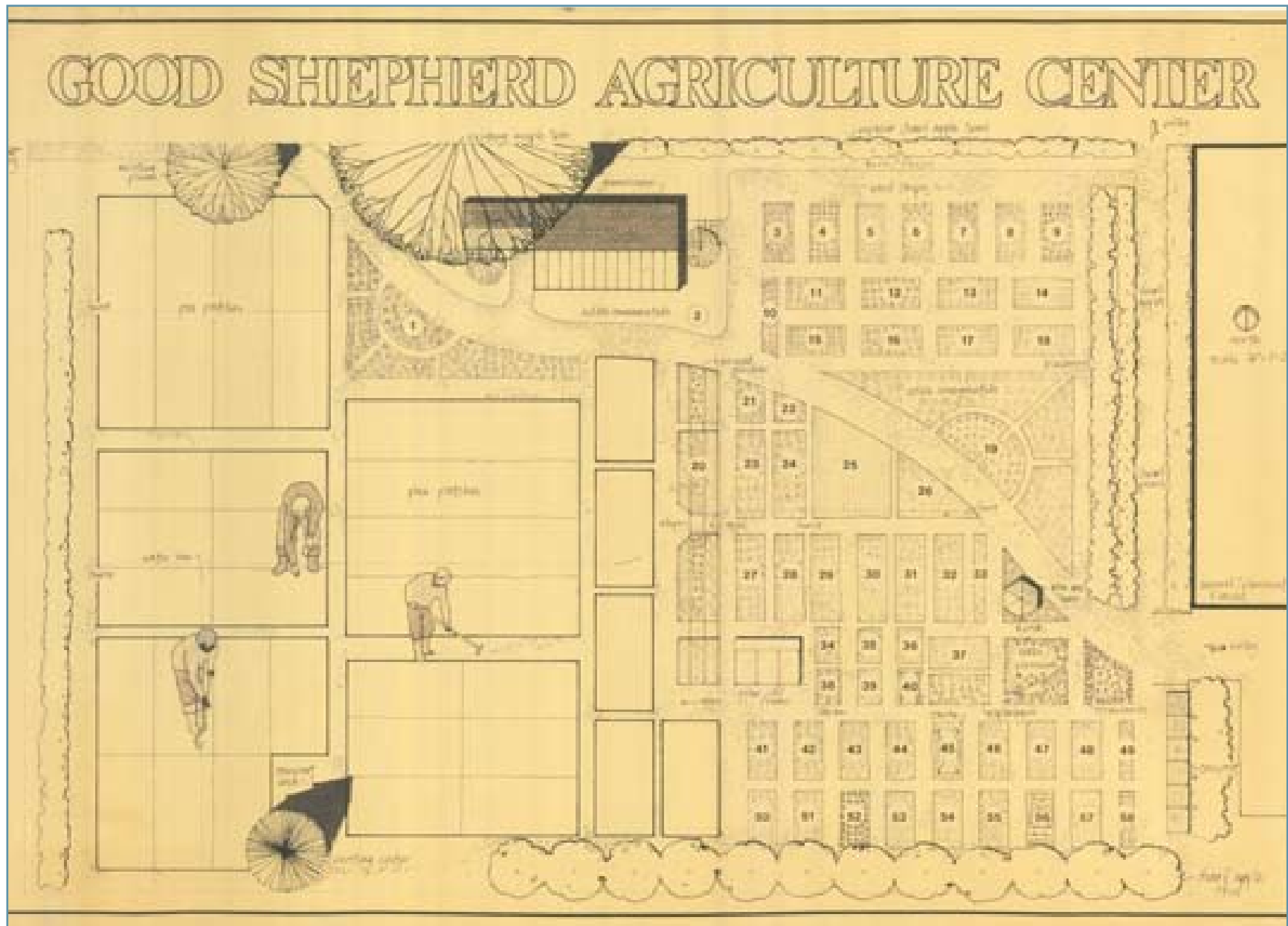






Seattle TILTth
CHILDREN'S GARDEN
 Landscape Plan
 Drawn by Jill Steen & Gil Scheiber • October 1989





**“The gardens physically
represent the
values and lessons
that Seattle Tilth promotes.”**



three. public involvement.

Tilth engaged its members, project stakeholders and the community in a thorough public involvement process. Aimed at generating project ideas and developing consensus on a renovation plan, Tilth designed the process to ensure stakeholders would be excited about, and proud of, the final result.

introduction.

Nearly a year has passed since planning began; the **public events themselves spanned an eight-month period**. Each public event was well advertised through flyers, community announcements, and event calendars in local papers. Seattle Tilth, of course, publicized each event through its own print and email newsletters, **reaching thousands of people**. Events and opportunities for public comment have included:

- › Survey of Desired Features at the Harvest Fair and other Public Programs
- › Community and Municipal Meetings
 - › Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation
 - › Historic Seattle
 - › Good Shepherd Center Advisory Board
 - › Wallingford Neighborhood Association
 - › Wallingford P-Patch
- › Project Orientation for the Public
- › One-on-One Interviews with Staff and Board
- › Staff and Board Workshop
- › Design-oriented Public Open House
- › Design Charrette

Additional opportunities for public comment included:

- › Reunion Dinner, Long-time Tilth Members (Open House)
- › Wallingford Community Senior Center, Good Shepherd Center Stakeholders (Open House)
- › Seattle Tilth Edible Plant Sale

The project began with **a survey designed to identify desired garden features**. Tilth also organized **a project orientation for the public to describe the project's purposes and needs**. The event included time for the group to brainstorm potential enhancements to the garden. **Interviews** with staff and Tilth's Board President ensured that Tilth stakeholders had one-on-one time with the design consultant to voice expectations, ideas and concerns. The **staff and board workshop** provided an opportunity to acknowledge values, brainstorm and set priorities. The **public open house** events gave participants an opportunity to work with design professionals to express ideas and give feedback on the plan. The design **charrette** generated project concepts and helped simplify and consolidate ideas. Finally, the numerous opportunities for **public comments** helped Tilth verify that plans were heading in the right direction.

Since the conceptual plan is an outcome of this public process, the following descriptions detail key outcomes of these meetings and events.

interviews.

The consultant conducted one-on-one interviews with Tilth's Board President, Executive Director, Garden Coordinators, and Natural Soil Building Program Director. Interviewees were invited to share their expectations and concerns, identify the garden's sacred spaces, and prioritize the improvements needed to support Tilth's programming.

Staff described **four main expectations** for the process. First, that this be a **phased renovation plan** that draws on the expertise developed over Tilth's first thirty years, and provides a long-term vision for the next thirty. Second, that the **garden design be related to Tilth's educational goals**. Third, that the **planning process includes time to explore**, with the City of Seattle, Tilth's need for a new long-term agreement to provide educational services on public land. And, finally, everyone agreed on the need to **make the gardens inspiring, accessible and educational**—even when staff are not present—by installing signs and interactive elements.

There were **three main areas of concern**. Garden coordinators wanted to make sure they had a **place to conduct their programs while improvements were being made**. Tilth wanted

staff and board workshop.

to ensure that the **improvements emanated from the organization and its members**. And, finally, the **planning process needed to be efficient, thoughtful and inclusive of diverse public input**. Interviewees identified a number of “**sacred spaces**” within the Demonstration Garden: the cobbled, main garden path; the metal birch entry; and the mosaic seat walls. Those features were not to be eliminated from the garden.

The two-hour workshop was attended by Tilth’s Board President, Executive Director, and eleven staff members. During the session the group **set the values for the project** (as described in the introduction), **brainstormed new garden elements**, and then **grouped and prioritized** them. Find a complete brainstorm list on page 47 and 48.

The group set **six major priorities**, emphasizing that art be incorporated in each element and throughout the garden. The priorities included:

1. Wayfinding elements (Signage, Entryways, Icon)
2. Covered teaching areas
3. Storage
 - a. Toolshed
 - b. Service Area
 - c. Greenhouse
 - d. Teacher Workspace
4. Bed Design
 - a. Water Feature
 - b. Soil Demo
 - c. Seating
5. Kitchen, bathrooms
6. Amenities—firepit, stage

BRAINSTORM FOR NEEDED GARDEN ELEMENTS.

icon for the gardens ART

- › Artistic treatment of common elements: worm bin, compost, raised beds
- › Mural on the wall of the Good Shepherd Center in the Children's Garden; could be a removable element freestanding of the building
- › More places in the Children's Garden for kids to create garden art
- › Art – sculpture, bones, playfulness, community made
- › Sculpture/Art
- › Garden "art" from local artist

ACCESSIBLE BEDS AND PATHWAYS

- › Senior garden, integrate building and grounds
- › Accessible beds
- › Pathways made accessible/improved

SIGNAGE

- › Map kiosk
- › Tilth mini-kiosk, place to hang posters and grab brochures
- › A place to post Tilth Harvest Fair/ Edible Plant Sale posters, event information in general
- › Donor recognition, naming opportunities
- › Definition of edge between P-Patch and Tilth Demonstration Garden
- › Self-guided tours
- › Entryways make it clear: "you are here"
- › Directional signage
- › "Today in the Garden" sign emphasizing daily noteworthy plants/happenings
- › Seasonal and descriptive signage
- › Map of the grounds including the orchard, ornamentals, and demonstration garden

temporary structures TEAHOUSE, FORT, SHED STORAGE

- › Storage/Staging
- › Bins for bulk materials
- › Teacher preparation room
- › Place to eat lunch
- › Arbor over garden office
- › Porous surface in service area
- › Service area help

SOIL DEMONSTRATIONS

- › Big tub grinder for compost
- › Elevation change/soil food web exhibit
- › Big soil aggregate demonstration walk through
- › Root view box
- › Soil ped maze on pavement
- › Root zone room

WATER

- › Cistern
- › Overhaul irrigation systems
- › Swales, rain gardens
- › French drain, make South Annex culvert functional
- › Rain garden or water catchment that illustrates the "trip of a drip" story
- › Children's Garden wash/drinking station that recycles H2O
- › Water conservation
- › Weather station
- › Water feature
- › System to clean and purify water from Meridian School roof for use in the garden
- › Creative water catchment and reuse
- › Water feature with catchment system

ANNUAL AND PERENNIAL BEDS/ WILDLIFE GARDENS

- › Pollination border
- › Shade garden
- › Natives/habitat
- › Reconfigure annual beds
- › Field guide identifying pictures of bugs
- › Planter strip demonstration gardens
- › Container garden demonstration
- › Drought tolerant plants
- › Interactive bugs-eye view of the world
- › Body beds: herbal garden for each area of the body
- › Perennial edible beds, layering of plants
- › Wildlife/bird/bug garden demonstration integrated throughout permanent plantings—a “life corridor”
- › Fragrance garden
- › Urban orchard
- › Annual beds – Demonstration Garden changed
- › Bug garden: beneficial insect plants
- › Wattle/trellis material garden
- › Edible landscaping
- › Permanent wildlife habitat

COVERED TEACHING SPACE (2) HARDSCAPE

- › Entryways
- › Rethink people flow/redesign pathways (pathways for public vs. pathways for gardeners)
- › Definition between Demonstration Garden and P-Patch
- › Flowing, graceful path from Demonstration Garden to Children's Garden and Park
- › Vertical hardscape
- › Smaller compost area
- › Soil pedestrian maze (art elements, subelements)
- › Earthworm tunnels
- › Toolshed expanded for Children's Garden
- › Greenhouse
- › Toolshed
- › Outdoor nursery
- › Greenroof

KITCHEN AND SOLAR

- › Solar power (2)
- › Night lighting for safety and plan for night uses (evening concert?)
- › Outdoor kitchen (2)
- › Bathrooms near the gardens
- › Convert summerhouse to kitchen/bathroom/meeting area/classroom

WEED AND PEST ISSUES/ BENEFICIAL ANIMALS

- › Rat issues
- › Remove *Pyramidalis*
- › Porous pathways in Demonstration Garden annual bed area
- › Chickens
- › Goat to eat bindweed and give milk
- › Invasive weeds

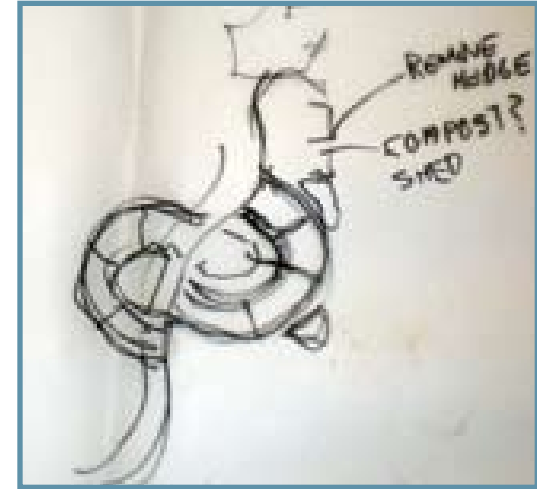
OTHER ELEMENTS

- › Firepit
- › Seating
- › Seating elements scattered about both the Children's Garden and Demonstration Garden (especially the latter)
- › Stage and espresso cart

design-oriented public open house.



OPEN HOUSE PARTICIPANTS



IDEA AT STATION 1

The public open house began with sign-in, refreshments, and a brief presentation on the site analysis, values, and priorities set during the staff and board workshop. Then, **participants visited several of the six stations where they worked directly with a design professional to express their ideas and feedback.** The open house concluded with an overview of the ideas collected and a discussion of next steps.

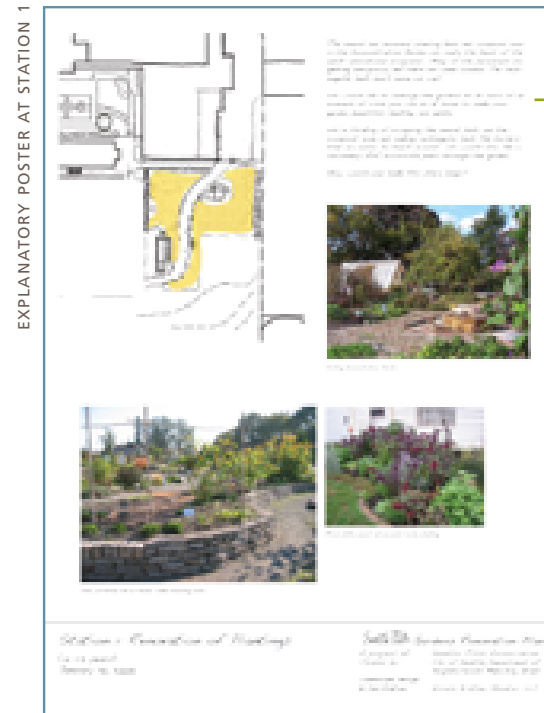
general comments. It was suggested that Tilth consult with the Tree Fruit Society on the health of the espaliers and urban orchard, and with Audubon about how to attract pest-eating birds. One participant suggested installing a weather station or windmill near the entrance to the Children's Garden. Several people suggested precedents for public composting toilets including the Picardo P-Patch, and an example of a cobb house at the Northgate Community Garden. The major findings and best ideas for each of the six stations presented at the workshop are summarized on the following pages.

station 1. renovation of plantings. major outcomes.

pathways and espalier. Create a clear welcome area or path that serves to join the Demonstration and Children’s Gardens, encouraging more flow between, and exploration of, the two sites. Create an ADA accessible secondary path through the garden. It would be nice to line pathways with fruit trees. Participants felt positive about incremental replacement of espalier trees and the fact that Tilth could use the process as an educational opportunity.

planting beds. Several participants suggested reserving one bed for double-digging, so the technique can be demonstrated repeatedly without damaging and overworking the soil structure in the entire garden. Participants want to see curvilinear beds and a loop trail to improve access to the Demonstration Garden. Others suggested installing raised beds to help control weeds; numerous recycled edging materials were also recommended. People also felt that raised beds would help delineate the paths and help with instructor visibility. As beds are created various organic weed control methods could be demonstrated. Participants also thought beds could be nested within beds including terraced areas. Participants suggested creating themed beds like a salad garden, herb garden, butterfly garden and rose garden. Throughout the garden rocks, stumps, low seating and retaining walls should provide comfortable places to sit; wildlife-friendly plantings and features like birdbaths should also be included.

compost demonstration. Composting sites should highlight a range of options including how to compost in relatively small spaces. Locate the compost station in areas with poor soil and adjacent to an area that can function as a mixing pad.





The plaza and kiosk area is the main gathering and teaching space in the Demonstration Garden. It provides a viewpoint to look out over the entire garden. It is also exposed to hot, direct sun, wind and rain. What if Tilth installed a temporary structure for this space to provide summer shade and protection from the wind and rain? The area could be integrated into the structure and offer educational brochures and materials.

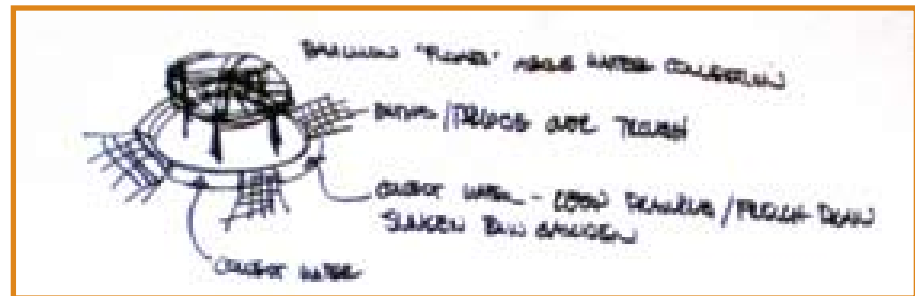
How would you make this feature magical?

station 2. temporary covered teaching area. major outcomes.

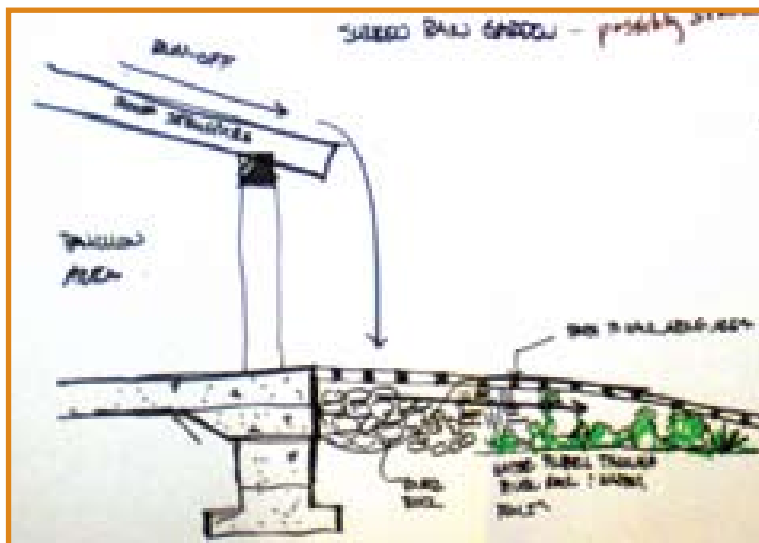
Several people thought the roof should be made of transparent materials, and Shoji screen-style sliding panels could be used to screen the area from sun, rain and wind. Others thought it should be yurt-like with roll-up canvas sides. Others suggested creating a trellis-like roof covered with clear material. People felt there should be a bulletin board inside, and a chalkboard. Several people thought this area should be round but with a square roof structure to simplify construction. Participants wanted to make sure the height of the structure wouldn't shade planting beds, or encroach on the overall plantable space in the garden. Several people recalled the styling of a Japanese teahouse or ornate structure full of light, perhaps with recycled material like the Portland City Repair teahouse. Lantern-like light fixtures inside could be solar-powered.

Rather than locate the structure in the existing plaza area, several suggested installing it over a pathway connecting the Demonstration and Children's Gardens. People also emphasized the importance of preserving the plaza mosaic.

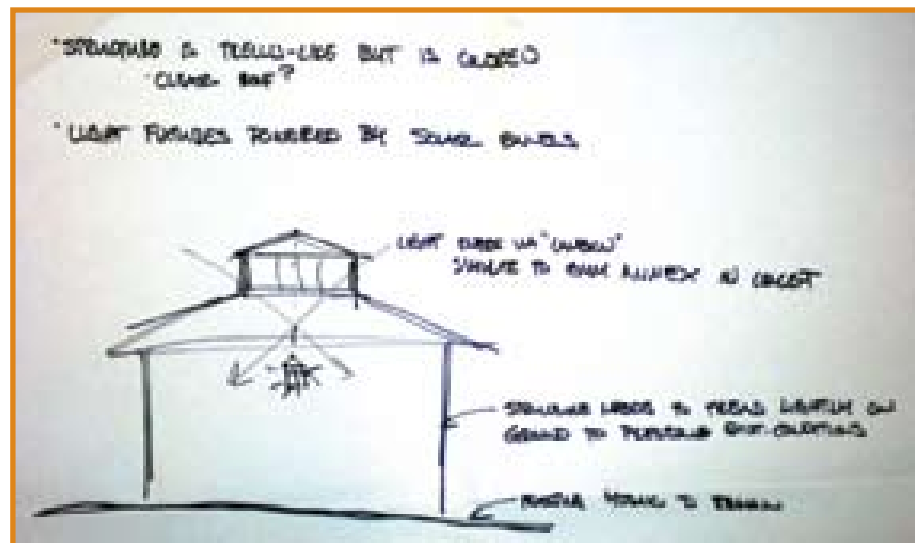
Many methods to collect rainwater from the roof were discussed including collecting it in a sunken rain garden or French drain, or funneling it into the river rock swale along the path. Some thought the water could drain from the roof in a spiral, like an orange being peeled. Others envisioned chains directing the water off the roof. One participant envisioned a pavilion that appeared to float above the water collection area.



IDEAS FOR TEMPORARY COVERED TEACHING AREA



IDEA FOR RAIN WATER COLLECTION



IDEAS FOR TEMPORARY COVERED TEACHING AREA



station 3. garden to table. major outcomes.

People generally liked the idea of installing an outdoor kitchen facility in the Summerhouse, or within a multipurpose outdoor classroom in order to minimize the number of structures in the garden.

Several suggested designing the outdoor kitchen like a movable espresso cart with a solar-powered refrigerator. Others suggested locating the kitchen in a portable Airstream trailer. Some pointed out that a cobb oven requires half a day to heat up, and would be less practical for the short classes in the Children’s Garden. There was general agreement that renewable energy be used to power the appliances.

From garden to table is what we teach. Wouldn’t it be nice if there were an indoor space in the garden—a place to teach on those windy, rainy days ... a place to keep our fingers warm? What about an outdoor kitchen—a spot to cook garden veggies and teach nutrition and seasonal eating, a place to cut and wash vegetables, lay out delicious food and make tea from the garden. Finally, imagine the wonderful goodies we could bake together in the cobb oven!

How would you make this feature magical?

station 4. signage. major outcomes.

Participants cited the following be kept in mind in the design of these elements: vandalism and graffiti, muddy walkways and creating delineation between the P-Patch and Demonstration Garden. Participants thought signage could help create congruency among Tilth garden spaces.

Overall, participants saw signage as an opportunity to include art in the garden, including children's art. One person thought signage should have a consistent aesthetic. Another suggested using high quality, durable materials that weather well, and perhaps take on a beautiful patina. Some suggested creative use of recycled materials, like old garden tools or signs. Several types of signage were imagined: educational signs with fun facts and riddles, directional signs and welcoming gateways. One person envisioned creating a living frame in the garden, and another an iconic art piece of a fantastic creature or avatar.



Educational signage is needed throughout the gardens; signs are also needed for wayfinding, and to mark garden entrances. Whimsical art could tell folks, "You have entered the Tilth Gardens, a rich, wonderful place; tread lightly."

How would you make this feature magical?



station 5. meadow stage. major outcomes.

Participants as a whole felt Tilth was justified in wanting to remove the *Pyramidalis*. One person suggested making the stage foundation and steps from rammed earth or strawbale, with the back of the stage used for seating or signage. While some people thought that an ivy- or vine-covered trellis would make a nice “stage curtain,” others felt that a canopy of annuals like beans and peas with a solid art structure underneath could hold it’s own aesthetically even when the annuals are gone in winter.

There were a few other ideas for garden seating. One person suggested, “A big, big chair used by adults and kids could be constructed out of a gnarly tree trunk and branches.” Another person suggested creating seats from big rocks—sculpted granite seats.

A number of suggestions related to the pool that used to be in the garden: one person thought a historical photo should be posted; another thought a diving board with a safe, cushioned landing site should be mounted where the old diving board was.

Removing the *Pyramidalis* from the Children’s Garden will provide space for a mini-stage and seating area in the sunny meadow.

What if we had a trellis that looked like a stage curtain framed by grape vines?

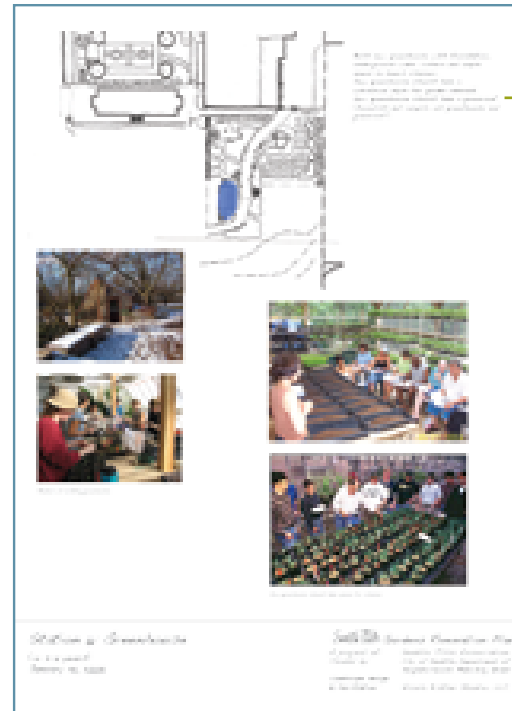
How would you make this feature magical?

station 6. greenhouse. major outcomes.

During the open house, many people questioned whether Tilth needed such a large greenhouse or whether it could get along with a backyard garden-size greenhouse. Tilth's staff felt that a more intensively used, smaller greenhouse could be acceptable—a portable greenhouse on wheels or one with intensive growing racks. People also suggested using the greenhouse for something else like a chicken coop, mushroom propagation area, or for mason bees. Others suggested it be a multi-purpose structure—for storage and meeting space—since plant propagation only occurs during part of the year.

Participants recommended that the new greenhouse include a solid, rat-proof foundation, not just a perimeter foundation under which rats can tunnel. The building should be made of sustainable materials like rammed earth and incorporate strategies like photovoltaic solar panels, a grey water system and a rainwater collection cistern. One person thought a power company might donate the photovoltaic panels as a demonstration. Another suggested that a drain be installed in the floor and the interior be waterproofed so it could be hosed down to keep it clean. Several people mentioned building a framework and then attaching old windows to it, similar to the greenhouse Seattle Tilth built for the Flower and Garden Show in 2005.

EXPLANATORY POSTER AT STATION 6



Build a new greenhouse with foundation, underground water cistern and ample space to teach classes. The new greenhouse should have a whimsical style and a greenroof. (Current greenhouse would be demolished and recycled.)

How would you make this feature magical?



PLANS ARE DRAWN DURING THE CHARRETTE

design charrette.

A design charrette is a design exercise aimed at generating the best ideas in a short amount of time. It originates from a student tradition at Paris's Sorbonne, where homework assignments were collected from each student's home by a charette, a horse drawn cart. Procrastinators would jump onboard the cart, and draw as fast as they could to finish their work before the cart arrived at the University.

In response to Seattle Tilth's stated value of having gardens designed by many, Seattle Tilth organized this design charrette—a collaborative effort where many designers contributed their ideas to the conceptual plan. Landscape architects, architects, garden experts and curators all came together to learn about the research, planning and feedback generated to that point, and to further refine and create plans for the gardens. **Several important concepts came out of this session.**

a multi-purpose greenhouse, covered teaching area, kitchen and toolshed.

Charrette participants keyed into feedback on the greenhouse at the open house. During the open house, the following conclusions were reached:

- › a smaller, backyard-sized greenhouse, rather than the larger greenhouse, could be adequate.
- › a covered teaching area serving thirty or more people, a toolshed and an expanded storage area are also needed.

As the number of outbuildings grew, the group wondered whether their functions could be combined in a multi-purpose building.

One idea was to house all these functions in a renovated Summerhouse. During the open house and subsequent public comment forums, however, it became clear that many Good Shepherd Center stakeholders would like to see the Summerhouse renovated for a wider variety of shared uses. Therefore, the group considered the possibility of demolishing the existing greenhouse and building a

new one. The new greenhouse would function as a multipurpose building, with a toolshed, kitchen, greenroof, and roll up door on its north side to better accommodate events like the Edible Plant Sale and Harvest Fair. The new building would feature a solid foundation; a 25,000+ gallon cistern could be installed beneath the greenhouse along with an adjacent rain garden to demonstrate water conservation techniques.

connecting the children's and demonstration gardens with a gathering space.

Building on the idea of connecting the Children's and Demonstration Gardens with a trellis or pergola, the group thought that a covered teaching area could be located along this path. Katrina Morgan made one possible drawing of the structure (shown on the next page). As ideas for the new greenhouse were discussed, it was decided that the teaching space only needed to be covered temporarily. Once the greenhouse was completed, the covering could be removed and the structure could function more as a vine trellis.

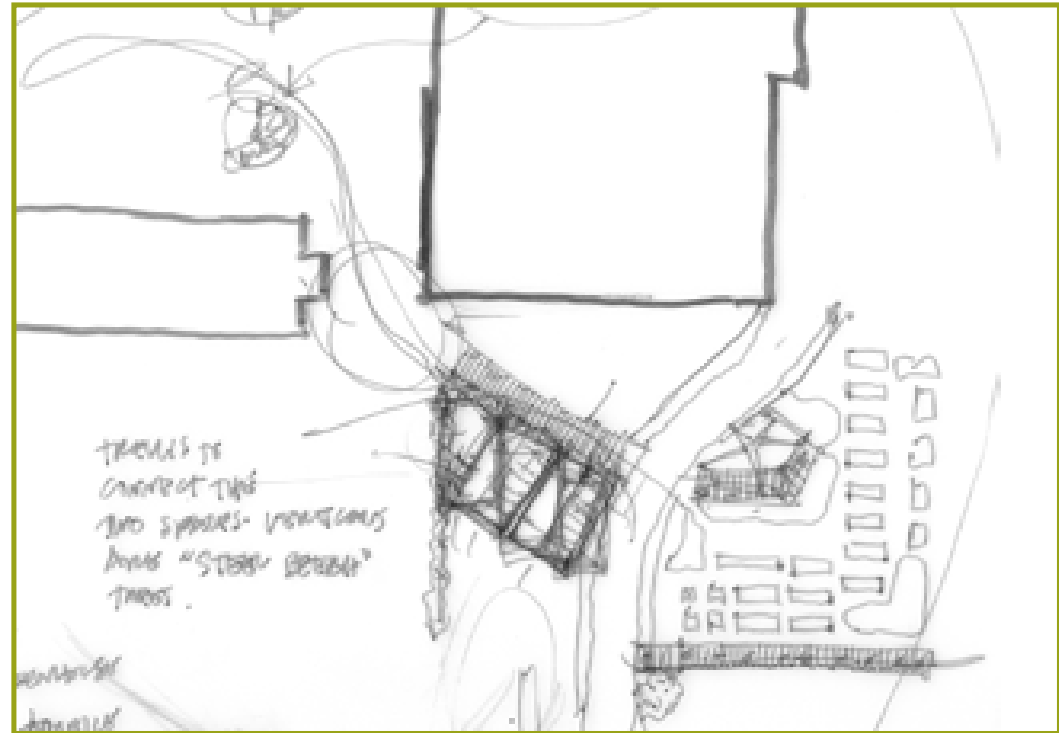
Currently, the compost area feels tucked away and a little neglected, so placing a new structure in that area will make it one of the garden's central rooms and will change the way people move through the space, strengthening the connection between the two gardens.

a giant earthworm for the children's garden.

Toward the end of the charrette, Landscape Architect Carolyn Alcorn drew an earthworm over the sidewalk on the Children's Garden plan. She thought it would be a fun visual addition and also break up the visual expanse of concrete.

pruning the *pyramidalis*.

While everyone agreed that the current state of the *Pyramidalis* detracts from the garden, the group thought that perhaps one or two could be saved. Architect Katrina Morgan said she had similar shrubs in front of her house as a child, and that they looked great pruned up. The group thought pruning them might be a good first step to try before cutting them all down, as everyone recognized their value in sequestering carbon and producing oxygen.



CONNECTING STRUCTURE IDEA BY KATRINA MORGAN

additional opportunities for public comment.

Numerous opportunities for public input have been provided throughout the planning process. Open houses were set up during the day at the Wallingford Senior Center and at Tilth's 30th Anniversary Dinner. Briefings to neighborhood groups, the Good Shepherd Center Advisory Board, and one-on-one briefings with numerous stakeholders and direct neighbors have been held. Leaflets were distributed to neighbors in January and April. Tilth also displayed posters, provided a fact sheet and answered questions about the plan during the annual Edible Plant Sale, attended by some 6,000 people from across the city. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and opportunities for future partnerships emerged from this work. Some fun ideas, which we have highlighted here, also came out of these events.

DAYTIME OPEN HOUSE AT THE WALLINGFORD SENIOR CENTER

- › Tilth could grow vines on an iron spiral staircase which would add a climbable, vertical element to the garden.
- › Design signage such that they can be changed and added to; for example, rotate kids' art monthly or provide a place to add comments, thoughts, or haikus. The more information signs the better.
- › Provide a covered area with a bench or two for eating outside.



four. plan elements and recommendations.

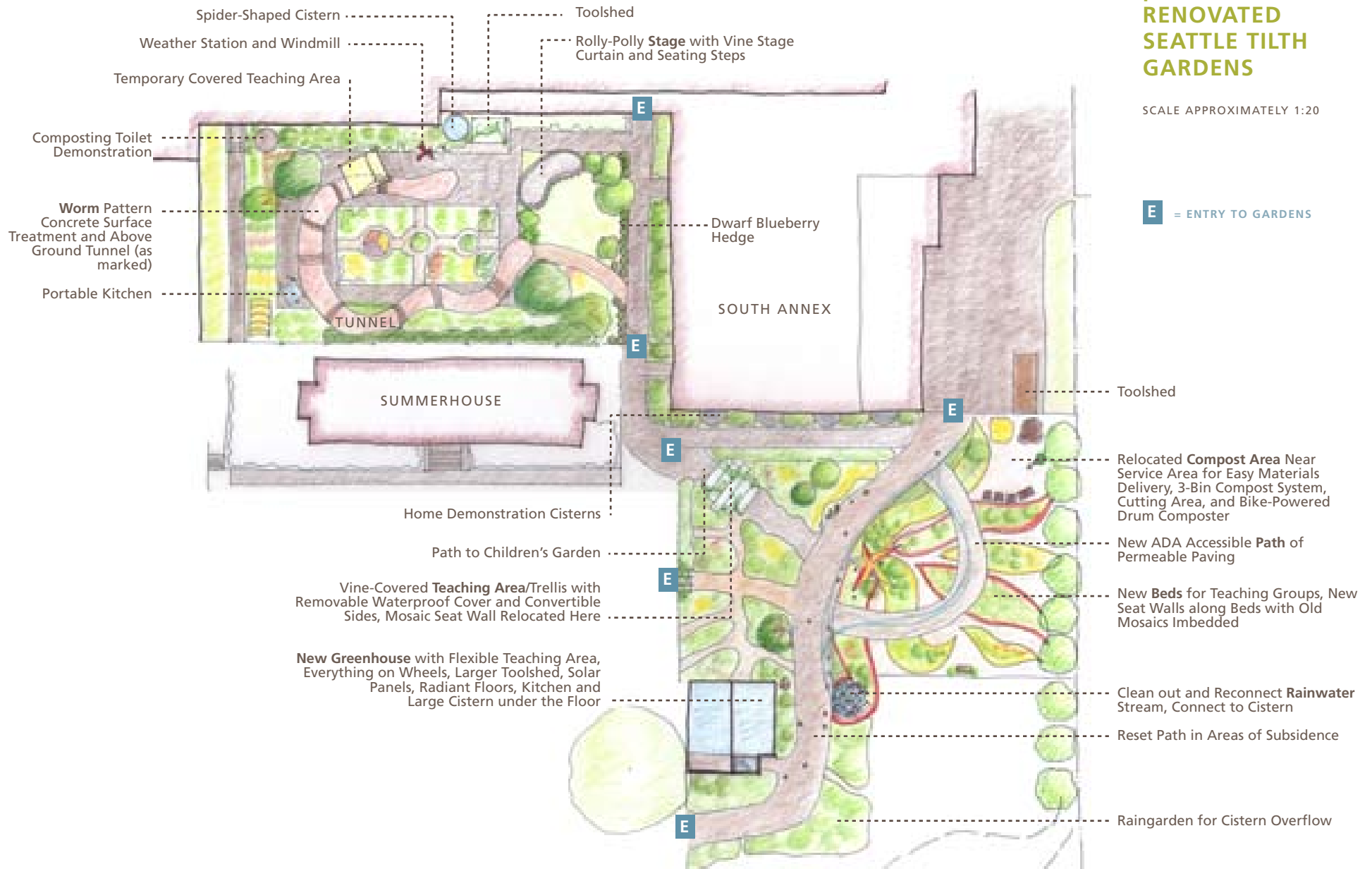
A new, bold identity for the garden is created through highlighting earth, air, water and sun—the four elements necessary to a garden’s growth. Garden renovations are organized around these four elements.

EARTH is expressed in the Children's Garden through an earthworm painted on the concrete path and featuring a three-dimensional tunnel. It is also evident in the roly-polly bug stage. **The two gardens are joined by an open trellis structure that highlights the quality of AIR.** The concept of **WATER** is best captured through extensive water conservation systems including cisterns found throughout the gardens, the existing stone streambed found next to the path and the spiral French drain/rain garden. References to water are included in the new permeable paving of the ADA accessible path. **Raised beds in the Demonstration Garden are shaped like rays of SUN, and emanate from the relocated sun from the plaza that features little stepping stone fingers leading to the beds. The new beds are larger, so that an entire class can gather around each one.**

plan for RENOVATED SEATTLE TILTH GARDENS

SCALE APPROXIMATELY 1:20

E = ENTRY TO GARDENS



demonstration garden.

sunray planting beds. Planting beds shaped like rays of **SUN** will emanate out from the center of the Demonstration Garden. These **new raised planting beds** will be edged with corten steel, and may include terraces. These longer, wider beds will be more appropriate for teaching large classes than the previous rectangular beds. **Annuals and perennials will be mixed** in some of the beds to show how herbs, annual food crops and edible flowers can be grown together, making an attractive feature bed or providing a border. **Seat walls** can be located on the down slope side of some beds where a retaining wall may be needed to make up the grade. A new retaining wall would be a great opportunity for a **sunshine-themed mosaic wall**. The center of the sun is an opportunity for an **iconic public art** piece that could include the relocated rays of sun from the plaza, a new sundial or other **SUN** inspired sculpture. **Pathways** between beds can be easily maintained with a flame-weeder, and materials for these paths could be made of multi-colored, recycled tumbled glass.

demonstrating home water conservation. King County is projected to grow to 2,075,000 people by 2020, an increase of 10% (8% growth projected in Seattle) putting higher demands on our water supply, and making water conservation essential (estimates from the Puget Sound Regional Council). **Seattle Tilth will be a leader in water conservation education** through a series of water collection demonstrations that convey the concept of **WATER**. The demonstrations will include four above-ground **cisterns** along the West wall of the South Annex. Each will be linked to the **garden irrigation system** and overflow into a rejuvenated stone stream along the main Demonstration Garden path. Finally, **the rain garden spiral** will be redesigned for proper drainage, and a 25,000+ gallon cistern installed under the new greenhouse.



SUNRAY PLANTING BEDS



THE GREENHOUSE



COVERED GATHERING AREA CONCEPT, UW DESIGN/BUILD STUDIO

pathways. A secondary **ADA accessible pathway** will run through the main garden bed area of the Demonstration Garden and will connect the gardens with the lawn to the north through Tilth's signature grape arbor. The pathway will highlight the concept of **WATER** through a **permeable paving demonstration** which will help stormwater infiltrate into the ground rather than the combined sewer/stormwater system. A tiny bridge will be built over the stone swale. The main garden path should be reset in areas where it has subsided. Tilth will ask Ted Jessen, the original artist, to oversee this work. Another new pathway will **connect the Children's Garden with the Demonstration Garden** via a diagonal path that will form an axis in the Demonstration Garden and will point directly at the center of the **SUN**.

plaza, trellis and temporary covered area. Through public process the plaza has been relocated to a more sheltered area that utilizes the garden more effectively. In what was the compost area, the **covered gathering area** is situated in a widened section of path connecting to the Children's Garden.

This new gathering area with a trellis-like covering will embody the concept of **AIR**. The light structure should be designed so that glass, Plexiglas or other clear material can be temporarily bolted to the structure to keep out rain, and can be unbolted and removed at a later time. Finally, the structure should have fabric or other flexible material sides that can be temporarily affixed to keep out wind and blowing rain, then removed and stored once classes are finished. The space should accommodate at least thirty people.

A **kiosk** for displaying Tilth posters and educational materials should be integrated into the structure. Seating should also be integrated into the structure. **Mosaics** from the seat wall in the plaza should be carefully relocated to the seats in this space.

Covered space at the Good Shepherd Center has traditionally attracted homeless people, posing a potential security risk to children and volunteers. Design work for this space should be responsive and sensitive to this issue.

multipurpose greenhouse. A new **multipurpose greenhouse** with a large roll-up door opening to the north will provide a flexible teaching space. With plant propagation trays and tables on wheels, the space can easily be transformed for a variety of teaching situations and events. A large, 25,000+ cistern under the floor, and viewable via a floor window, will demonstrate one way to incorporate water storage into new structures. The puddled earth floor (a rammed earth technique) will feature a radiant heating system powered by solar-evacuated tubes on the toolshed roof. The floor will be sealed and drained so it can be easily hosed down after use. There will be a kitchen inside along the east wall between the main space and a larger toolshed.

service area toolshed. Tilth's garden coordinators need **a secure location to store tools**, at least until a new toolshed is built within the new greenhouse. At the time the greenhouse is designed, the size and overall need for a toolshed within the greenhouse can be determined. The location in the service area is ideal in the near-term, as it is close to the well-lit South Annex building and makes for easy truck loading and unloading.

compost area. Since the plaza will be relocated to the former compost area, the latter will be relocated adjacent to the service area for easy delivery of composting material. The new location will also be convenient for compost demonstration classes which could expand into the service area to accommodate larger groups or to use as a hard mixing pad. A **three-bin compost system** with cutting area will be located here as well as a bike-powered drum composter. To better demonstrate that composting does not require a lot of space, compost sites will be located throughout the garden. A treasure map that challenges visitors to "find the compost" will be provided at the kiosk.

children's garden.

Healthy soil is the foundation of Tilth's educational program, so it is appropriate that **EARTH** be the main concept for the Children's Garden. Elements in the Children's Garden are **fun** and provide room for **exploration**, signaling to adults that the space is a children's garden.

sidewalk earthworm and tunnel. Exploring the worm bins is one of the most exciting parts of the Children's Garden. The Sidewalk Earthworm celebrates Tilth's worms, and the rich soil that they produce. The **giant worm** will be painted on the **sidewalk**, with one section expanded to 3-D as an above-ground **tunnel**. Initially, the tunnel could be a temporary structure, made with cloth and flexible pipe reused from a garden cloche. Later, it can be made from shotcrete or another more permanent material.

portable solar kitchen. Particularly during summer programming, kids make sun tea with herbs and flowers, "burritos" of sweet and sour edible leaves, and other concoctions. Helping children understand where food comes from, and that they can grow their own food, is an important aspect of Tilth's educational mission. The portable kitchen will help Tilth expand its educational programming **from garden to table**. It will consist of a hot plate, spice rack, and storage for dishes, cooking pans and utensils. The kitchen could include a sink and water source. A solar panel will provide energy for a battery which will power the hot plate. The kitchen will be a wheeled, completely portable handcart.



EARTH WORM SIDEWALK AND TUNNEL

composting toilet demonstration. On nearly every garden tour, a child needs to use the facilities. This requires a long trek with a chaperon either to the restroom in the Good Shepherd Center or in Meridian Park. Either way, the child generally misses anywhere from ten to fifteen minutes of programming and leaves the group understaffed. Having a composting toilet within the Children’s Garden would be much more **convenient** and also **model sustainability**. Contrary to popular misconceptions, modern composting toilets are clean, do not smell or represent a health hazard, and can be easily removed or relocated. A composting toilet demonstration site would help challenge misconceptions and help people further understand this important sustainable feature.

temporary covered teaching area. The Children’s Garden needs some sort of temporary covered area. While staff currently use 10’x10’ pop-up tents, this could be a real **opportunity** for original, whimsical design within the garden.

spider-shaped cistern, weather station and windmill. **Teaching water conservation** is increasingly important for city dwellers. Including a miniature version of an elevated cistern that recalls the shape of large “spider-shaped” water towers would also be a great opportunity to feature the work of a metal artist.

toolshed. **An expanded toolshed** with room for tools, supplies, and a place to hang wet children’s rain slickers is needed. It should provide a secure location for tools and be near a lit building. It should be rat and pest-proofed since seeds and other materials are stored there. Ideally, this structure would also be an office, a place to meet and greet volunteers, and provide shelter for a group of five or so.

rolly-polly stage with vine curtain and seating steps. Not only can children **perform** on this stage, but chaperons can **sit on the stage** and face out into the garden. The stage will only rise eighteen inches from the ground and will not require a railing.

framing the garden. Research by the landscape architect Joan Naussaur has shown that restoration sites perceived as unkempt can be **perceived by the same viewer as well-maintained if the edge of the project is kept up**, like a mowed lawn edge in a native grassland restoration. Similarly, in ancient Rome, the Italian Renaissance and French Baroque eras, parterre gardens of outrageous wildflower mixtures were contained by low, neatly clipped boxwood.

The Children’s Garden can be similarly wild; a neatly maintained edge and visual cues that this is a children’s space will help people view it in its proper context. Elements like the Sidewalk Earthworm, Spider-shaped Cistern, and Rolly-Polly Stage will provide bold visual cues that this is for children. Features like a dwarf blueberry hedge at the south side of the meadow and shady area will provide a clean edge and give a nod to the formal nature the site had when it was a pool at the Home of the Good Shepherd.



ROLLY-POLLY STAGE WITH SEATING STEPS

building identity.

The bold concept for the garden is itself the key method to build identity. A strong concept will help **tie the two gardens together as an identifiable, distinct space**. However, signage is needed throughout the gardens to provide passive education to people strolling through, and is needed for wayfinding and to mark entry points to the gardens. Whimsical art provides an opportunity to tell visitors, **“You have entered the Tilth Gardens, a rich, wonderful place; tread lightly.”**

A complete signage program will need to be established in the next phase of planning. Consistent signage marking all entryways to each garden should be developed along with internal **directional signs** pointing the way to the Children’s Garden from the Demonstration Garden and vice versa. Major gateways to the gardens should be marked with colorful, whimsical public art. These **entries** are marked on the plan (page 65) with a white “E” in a blue box. Directional signage for the entire Good Shepherd Center site should be developed in partnership with Historic Seattle and Seattle Parks and Recreation; such signage will need to be reviewed by the Landmarks Board.

Finally, **curatorial signs** telling visitors about different plants and gardening techniques should be placed throughout the gardens. These signs should be changed seasonally, and should be easily created and modified by Tilth staff. These signs could tell the story of how Tilth got its scarlet runner beans, describe how a plant tastes or how it grows, describe the history of the path or describe the reasons behind a certain demonstration.

weed and pest management plan.

A weed and pest management plan should be written by garden coordinators early on, so that weeds can be **addressed in each new renovation project**. Tilth teaches that weeds are merely plants that are unwanted in your garden. However, certain persistent weeds in the teaching gardens undermine the educational functioning of some areas and weeding takes up too much valuable volunteer time. Known weeds in the gardens include: morning glories, *Ranunculus*, sedge, nettles, quack grass, comfrey, *Anchusa*, bindweed, blackberry, fennel, lemon balm, sweet cicely and holly.

Tilth has partnered with the Parks Department and other Good Shepherd Center neighbors to control pests that frequent the gardens. Known pests include rats, rabbits, squirrels and crows. The gardens are also susceptible to vandalism and theft.

comprehensive arts plan.

Public art can be a key component of signage, but it is much more. During the brainstorm session staff cited art as one of the most important elements in the gardens at Seattle Tilth and at Bradner Gardens Park. A comprehensive arts plan should consider how the arts could be **integrated into garden features as permanent and temporary public art**. Art should be planned for and incorporated as a key element of each new feature that helps to strengthen the concepts of earth, water, air and sun. The plan should also study how the arts can be further integrated into Tilth's programming and the facilities needed to support these arts programs. It is essential as the organization grows that art play a major role in the development of Tilth's culture and education programs if the organization wishes to maintain the whimsical nature of **"Tilthiness."**



five. phased implementation plan.

This historical plan review, site analysis, and conceptual plan are the first phase in this planning process. Once a survey of the gardens is complete a schematic plan will be drawn.

planning next steps.

This conceptual plan is a communication tool for Seattle Tilth to gain feedback from the public and the City of Seattle to inform the schematic plan in the next phase. Seattle Tilth and the City of Seattle are working collaboratively to secure a shared-use-agreement that will allow Tilth to continue to operate its educational programs on public land. Once Seattle Tilth and the City establish a protocol for making improvements the next phase of planning will continue.

In conjunction with the schematic plan in phase two, a comprehensive arts plan, a weed and pest management plan and a comprehensive signage plan should all be completed. The comprehensive signage plan will inform the arts plan, and could potentially be part of the same study. A comprehensive arts plan will consider the appropriate incorporation of all the arts in the gardens as a complement to Tilth's educational programming. A weed and pest control plan must also be created, so that it can be implemented as renovations occur.

Once these pieces are in place, construction documents can be drawn and major improvements can occur. That said, there are several elements of the conceptual plan that can be implemented immediately without further study.

projects 1-3 years.

Projects that can be started immediately.

children's garden

- › Painting the Earthworm
- › Removal of *Pyramidalis* at southeast and northwest corners and pruning the other two (by Seattle Parks)
- › Planting of dwarf blueberries
- › Creation of a portable kitchen

demonstration garden

- › Plans for a new greenhouse
- › Compost area relocation
- › French drain repair
- › Pathway repair
- › Arbor repair
- › Have expert assess health of urban orchard and gradually replace trees if necessary
- › Gradually replant trees in espalier

Projects needing more planning, but can still be started in 1-3 year timeframe.

children's garden

- › Rolly-Polly stage with vine curtain and seating steps
- › Earthworm tunnel
- › Spider-shaped cistern
- › Weather station
- › Temporary covered area (tent-like)
- › Signage
- › Public art
- › New toolshed

demonstration garden

- › Trellis—covered teaching area
- › Home demonstration cisterns along South Annex west wall
- › Sunray-shaped raised garden beds
- › Signage
- › Public art
- › New toolshed and storage in service area

projects 3-5 years.

- › Create fun demonstrations for water, gardening and composting throughout the site
- › Create whimsical sculpture and other garden creations on an ongoing basis

children's garden

- › Composting toilet demonstration

demonstration garden

- › New greenhouse/multipurpose space

projects 5+ years.

- › In conjunction with the city of Seattle, Historic Seattle, Meridian School, Wallingford neighbors and other potential stakeholders, explore the idea of enclosing the Summerhouse as classrooms, kitchen, and event space

It is not so much for its beauty that the forest makes a claim upon men's hearts, as for that subtle something, that quality of air, that emanation from old trees, that so wonderfully changes and renews a weary spirit.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

“He thought his happiness was complete when, as he meandered aimlessly along, suddenly he stood by the edge of the full-fed river. Never in his life has he seen a river before—this sleek, sinuous, full-bodied animal, chasing and chuckling, gripping things with a gurgle and leaving them with a laugh, to fling itself on fresh playmates that shook themselves free, and were caught and held again. All was a-shake and a-shiver—glints and gleams and sparkles, rustle and swirl, chatter and bubble. The Mole was bewitched, entranced, fascinated.”

**KENNETH GRAHAME,
THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS**

“Land, then, is not merely soil; it is a fountain of energy flowing through a circuit of soils, plants, and animals.”

ALDO LEOPOLD

Love is like the sun: has its inner energy source that shines on you.”

HELENE LAGERBERG



A watercolor illustration of a garden scene. In the foreground, there are several raised garden beds with various plants, including purple flowers and green leafy vegetables. A path leads through the garden. In the middle ground, a group of about ten people are standing and looking towards the garden. The background shows more trees and a bright sky. The overall style is soft and artistic.

thank you.

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