

the LIVING apothecary:

a GARDEN of healing, ritual & nourishment



design concept



Inspired by medieval cloister gardens and the traditions of herbalism, this design reimagines the cultivated landscape as a place of healing, nourishment, contemplation, and connection to the natural world. Historically, cloister gardens were living repositories of knowledge, where plants were carefully cultivated for food, medicine, ritual, and daily use. This garden draws from that legacy, celebrating herbs not only as culinary and tea plants, but also as sources of healing, ceremony, fragrance, and sensory enrichment.

The planting design is organized into four themed garden guilds: Healing, Ritual, Culinary, and Fragrant. Each guild highlights a unique relationship between people and plants. Together, these collections showcase species valued not only for their beauty and fragrance, but also for their longstanding roles in wellness, nourishment, ritual practice, and everyday life.

Meandering pathways, meadow-inspired plantings, and restorative gathering spaces create opportunities for learning, reflection, and immersion in the landscape. The circulation paths are designed to support walking meditation and quiet contemplation, echoing the cloister walks historically used by monks and nuns for daily prayer and reflection. In this way, the garden becomes a living herbal sanctuary, one that honors the knowledge, utility, and experiential richness of plants while fostering a deeper relationship between people, place, and nature.



HEALING GUILD

Inspired by the healing traditions of historic herb gardens, the Healing Guild features plants long valued for their medicinal properties. This collection celebrates the relationship between people and plants, highlighting species traditionally used to support wellness and everyday healing.



RITUAL GUILD

The Ritual Guild explores the cultural and ceremonial significance of plants throughout history. From tea traditions to spiritual practices, these species invite reflection, mindfulness, and a deeper connection to the natural world.



CULINARY GUILD

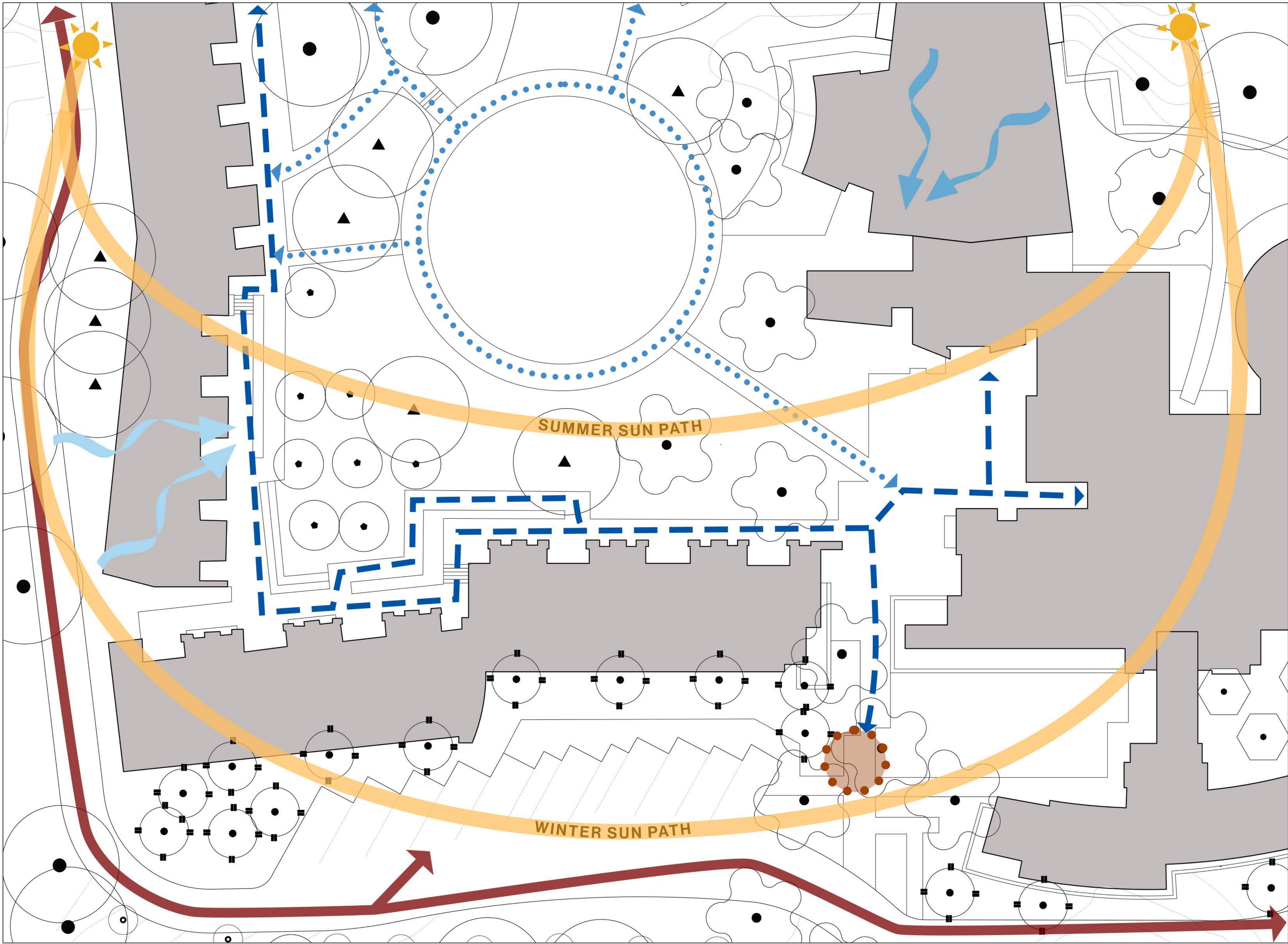
Rooted in the tradition of growing food close to home, the Culinary Guild showcases herbs and edible plants used to flavor, preserve, and enrich everyday meals. This collection emphasizes the connection between the garden and the table.



FRAGRANT GUILD

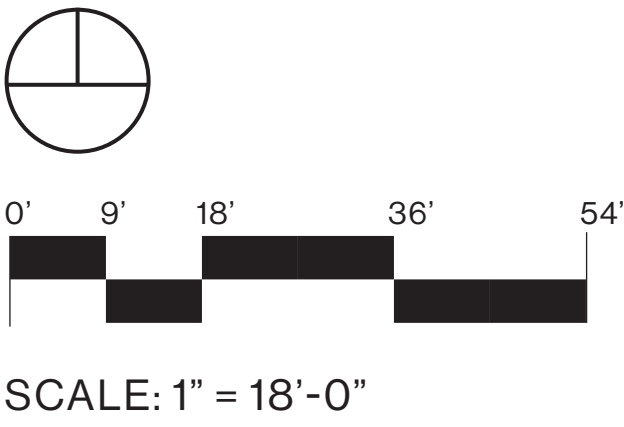
The Fragrant Guild engages the senses through aroma, texture, and seasonal bloom. Featuring highly aromatic California native plants, this collection encourages visitors to slow down, explore, and experience the garden through scent.

site analysis



LEGEND

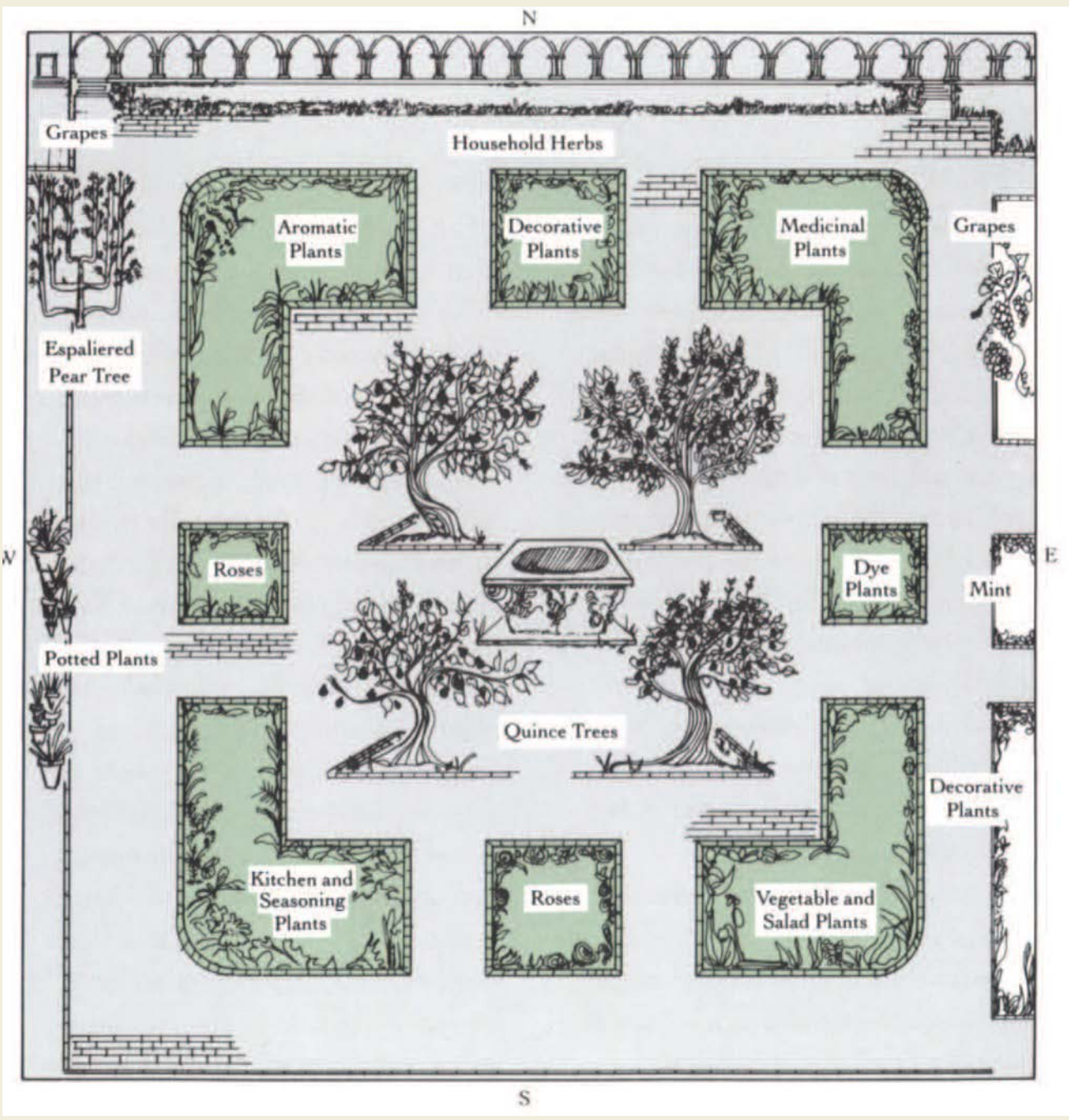
- PRIMARY CIRCULATION
- SECONDARY CIRCULATION
- VEHICULAR CIRCULATION
- MAIN ENTRANCE
- PREVAILING WINDS
- SEASONAL WINDS



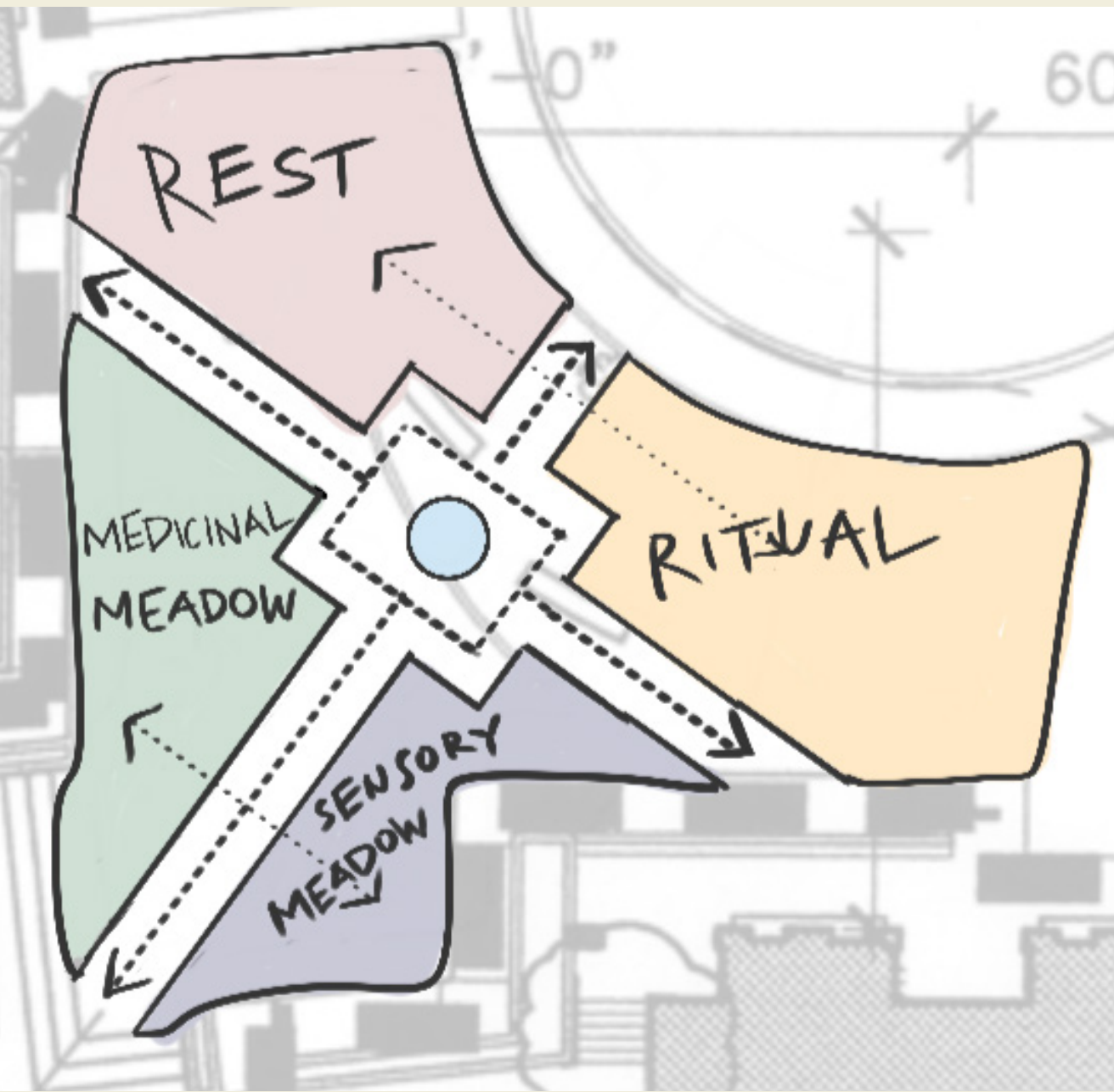
design evolution



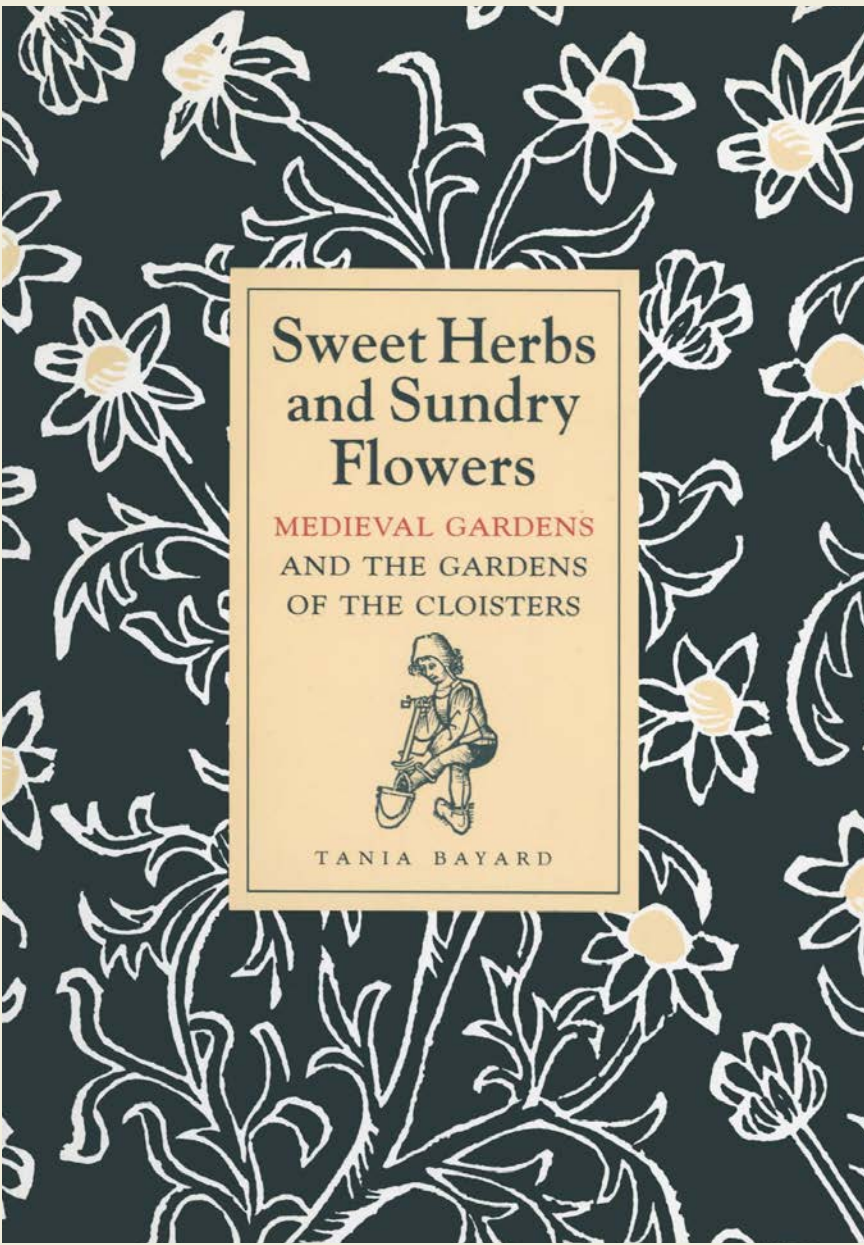
Initial Concept: Healing meadow tea garden with meandering pathways and a tea-focused plant palette.



Concept Expansion: Reframed as a contemporary interpretation of the medieval cloister garden, celebrating herbs for healing, ritual, nourishment, and sensory experience.



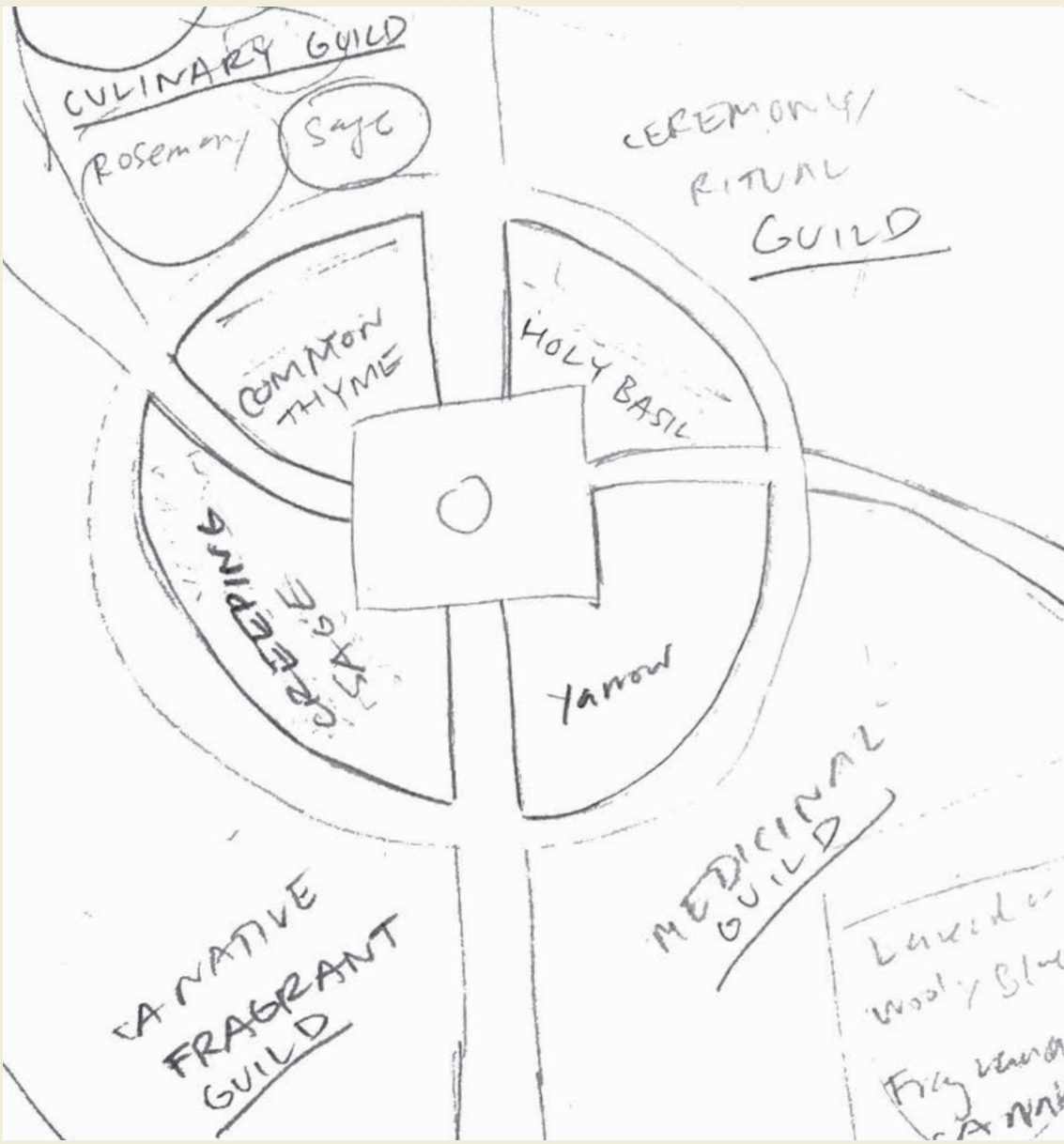
Bubble Diagram Draft: Traditional cloister organization with square shapes and uniform circulation.



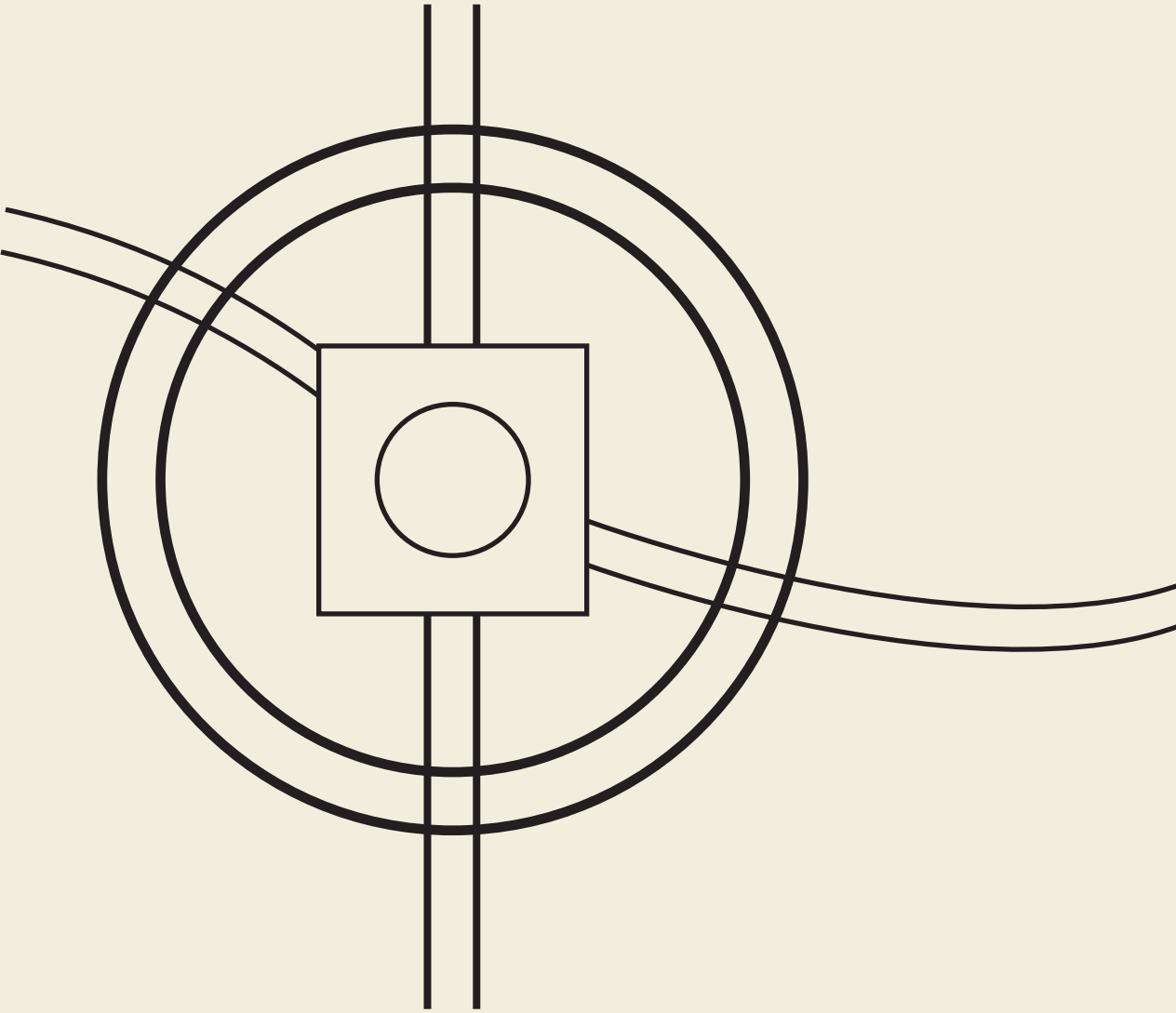
Historical Precedent: Research into cloister gardens informed the spatial organization, geometry, and circulation patterns.



Design Inspiration: A Centering Prayer symbol discovered at the Sisters of Social Service inspired the garden's underlying form and circulation.

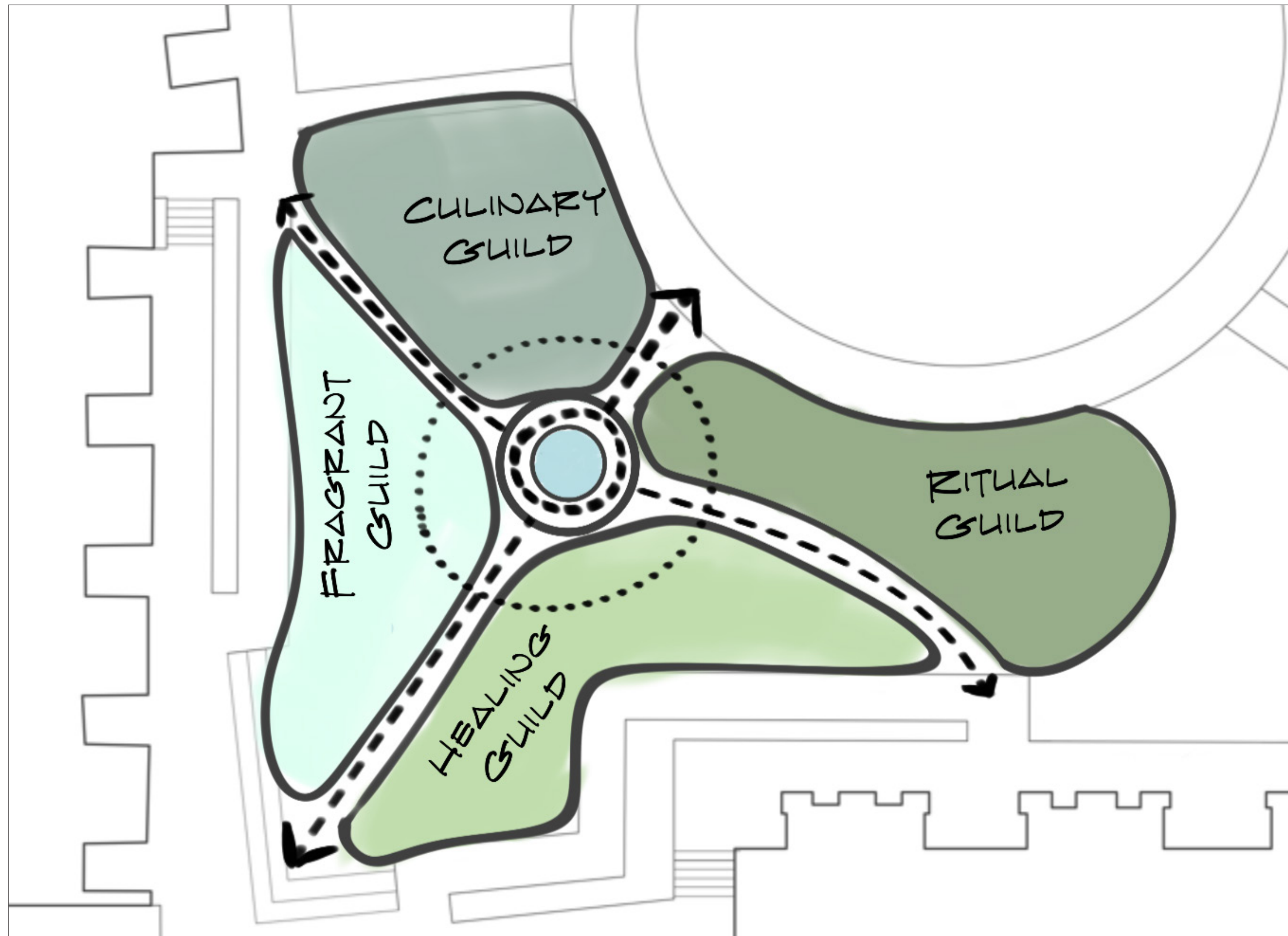


Symbol Integration: The design draws connections between contemplative prayer practices at the Sisters and the tradition of walking meditation in historic monastic gardens.



Final Refinement: Circulation and spatial organization were refined to strengthen the symbolic framework and historic references.

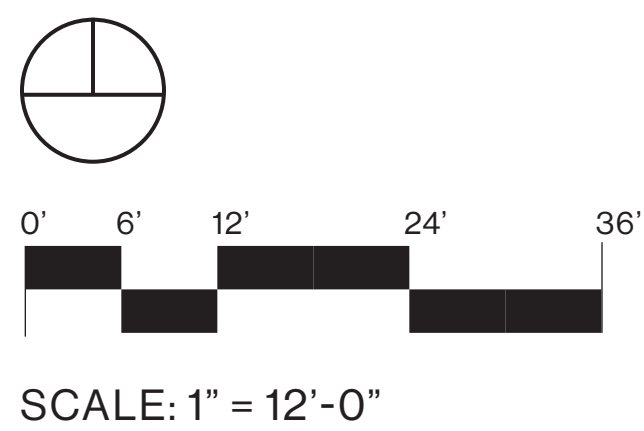
planting zones



BUBBLE DIAGRAM

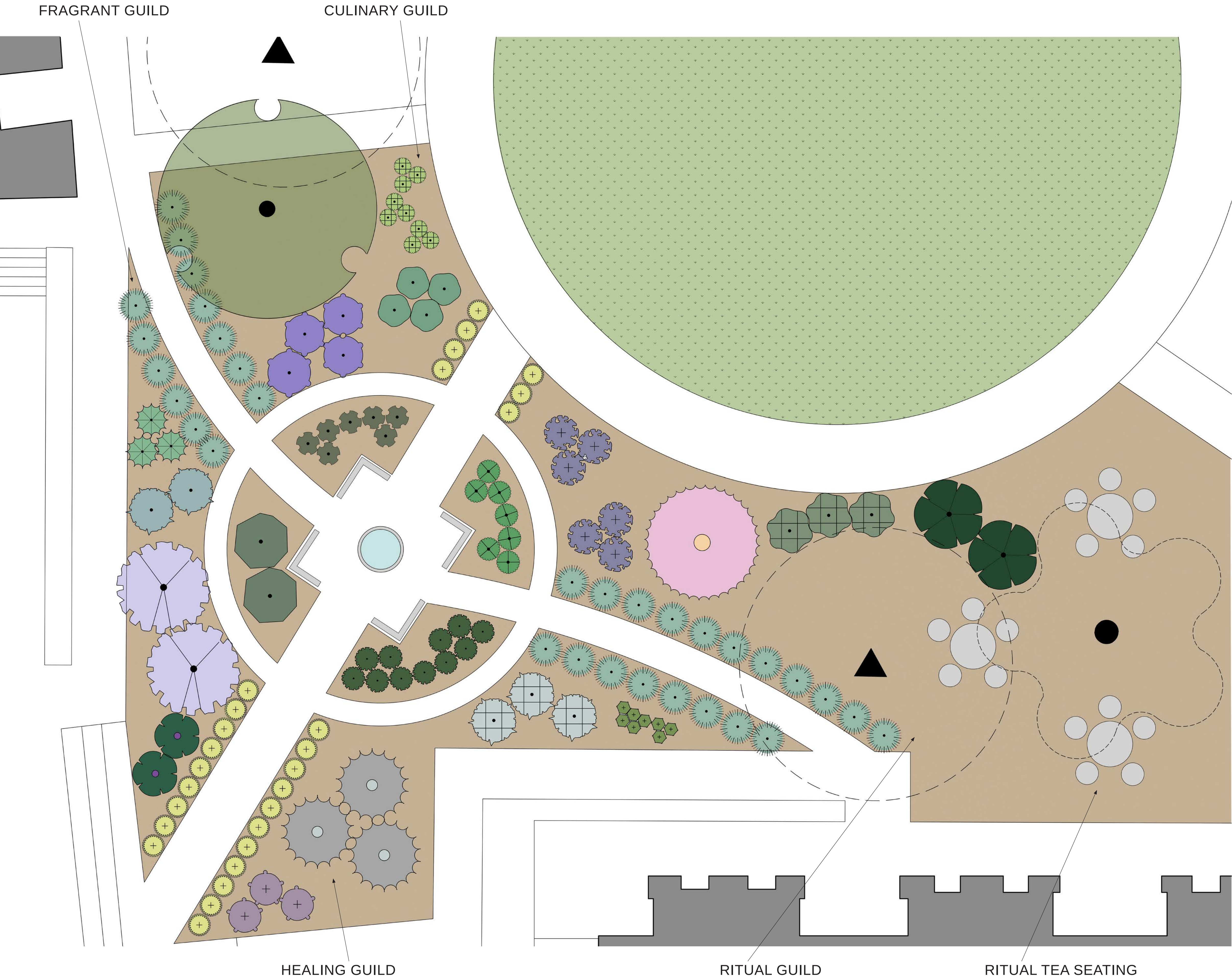


BUBBLES IN THE BUBBLE DIAGRAM



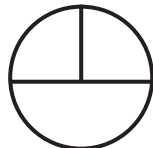
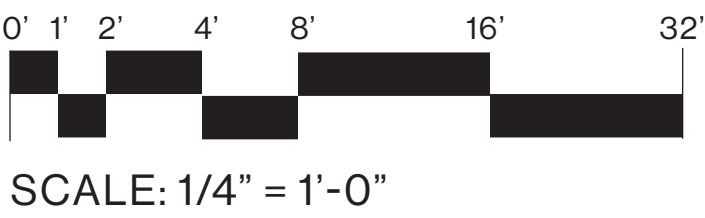
KEY MAP

illustrative plan



PLANT SCHEDULE

SYMBOL	CODE	BOTANICAL / COMMON NAME	SIZE	QTY
TREES				
	FIC KAD	<i>Ficus carica</i> 'Kadota' / Kadota Fig	24"	1
SHRUBS				
	ACH MIL	<i>Achillea millefolium</i> / Common Yarrow	1 gal.	11
	ART CAL	<i>Artemisia californica</i> / California Sagebrush	1 gal.	2
	ART DOU	<i>Artemisia douglasiana</i> / Mugwort	1 gal.	3
	BOU BLO	<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i> 'Blonde Ambition' / Blonde Ambition Blue Grama	1 gal.	27
	CAM SCH	<i>Camellia sinensis</i> 'Sochi' / Sochi Tea	1 gal.	2
	FES CA2	<i>Festuca californica</i> / California Fescue	1 gal.	32
	HYS OFF	<i>Hyssopus officinalis</i> / Hyssop	1 gal.	6
	LAV ANG	<i>Lavandula angustifolia</i> / English Lavender	1 gal.	3
	MAT GER	<i>Matricaria chamomilla</i> / German Chamomile	1 gal.	8
	MON VIL	<i>Monardella villosa</i> / Coyote Mint	1 gal.	3
	OCI TEN	<i>Ocimum tenuiflorum</i> / Holy Basil	1 gal.	7
	ORI ORE	<i>Origanum heracleoticum</i> / Oregano	1 gal.	9
	ROS CAL	<i>Rosa californica</i> / California Wild Rose	5 gal.	1
	ROS OFF	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> / Rosemary	5 gal.	4
	SAL API	<i>Salvia apiana</i> / White Sage	5 gal.	3
	SAL CLE	<i>Salvia clevelandii</i> / Cleveland Sage	1 gal.	2
	SAL GAR	<i>Salvia officinalis</i> / Garden Sage	1 gal.	4
	SAL SON	<i>Salvia sonomensis</i> / Creeping Sage	1 gal.	2
	SPH AM2	<i>Sphaeralcea ambigua</i> / Desert Globemallow	1 gal.	3
	THY CO2	<i>Thymus vulgaris</i> / Common Thyme	1 gal.	7
	TRI WOO	<i>Trichostema lanatum</i> / Woolly Blue Curls	1 gal.	2
GROUND COVERS				
	CAR PAN	<i>Carex pansa</i> / Meadow Sedge	flat	2,848 sf



healing guild

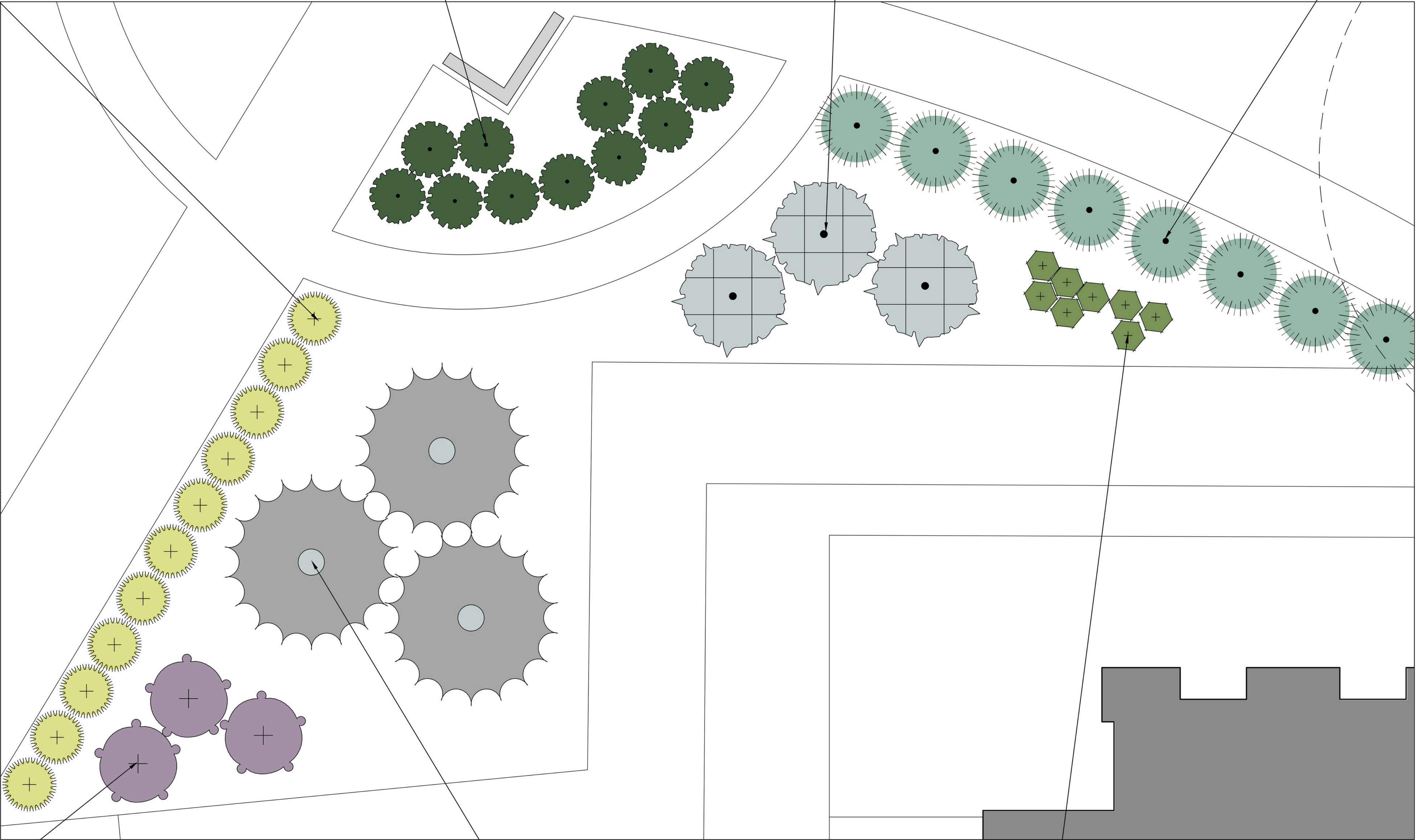
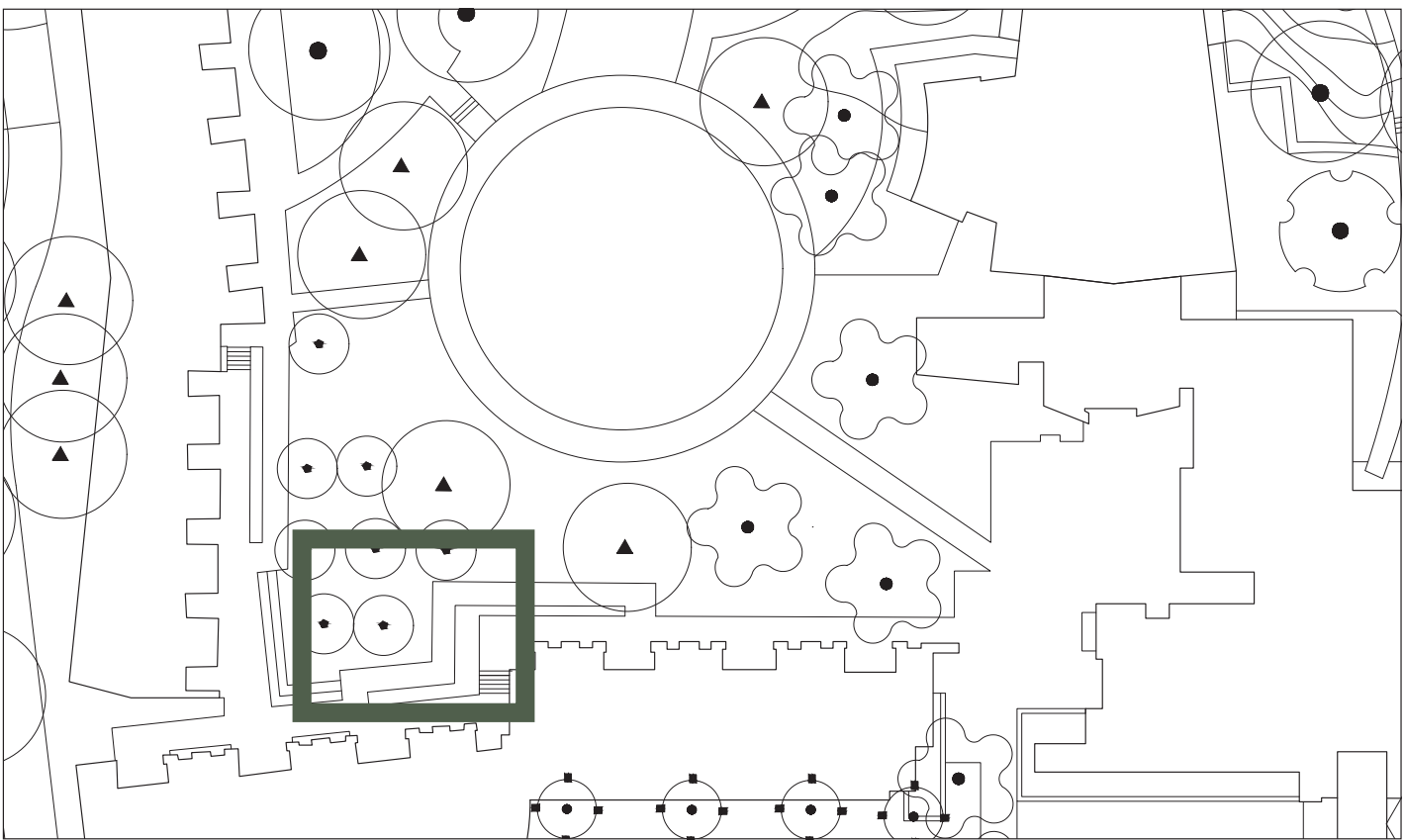
BOUTELOUA GRACILIS
'BLOND AMBITION'

ACHILLEA MILLEFOLIUM

SPHAERALCEA AMBIGUA

FESTUCA CALIFORNICA

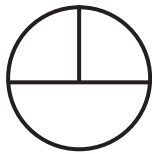
KEY MAP



LAVANDULA ANGUSTIFOLIA

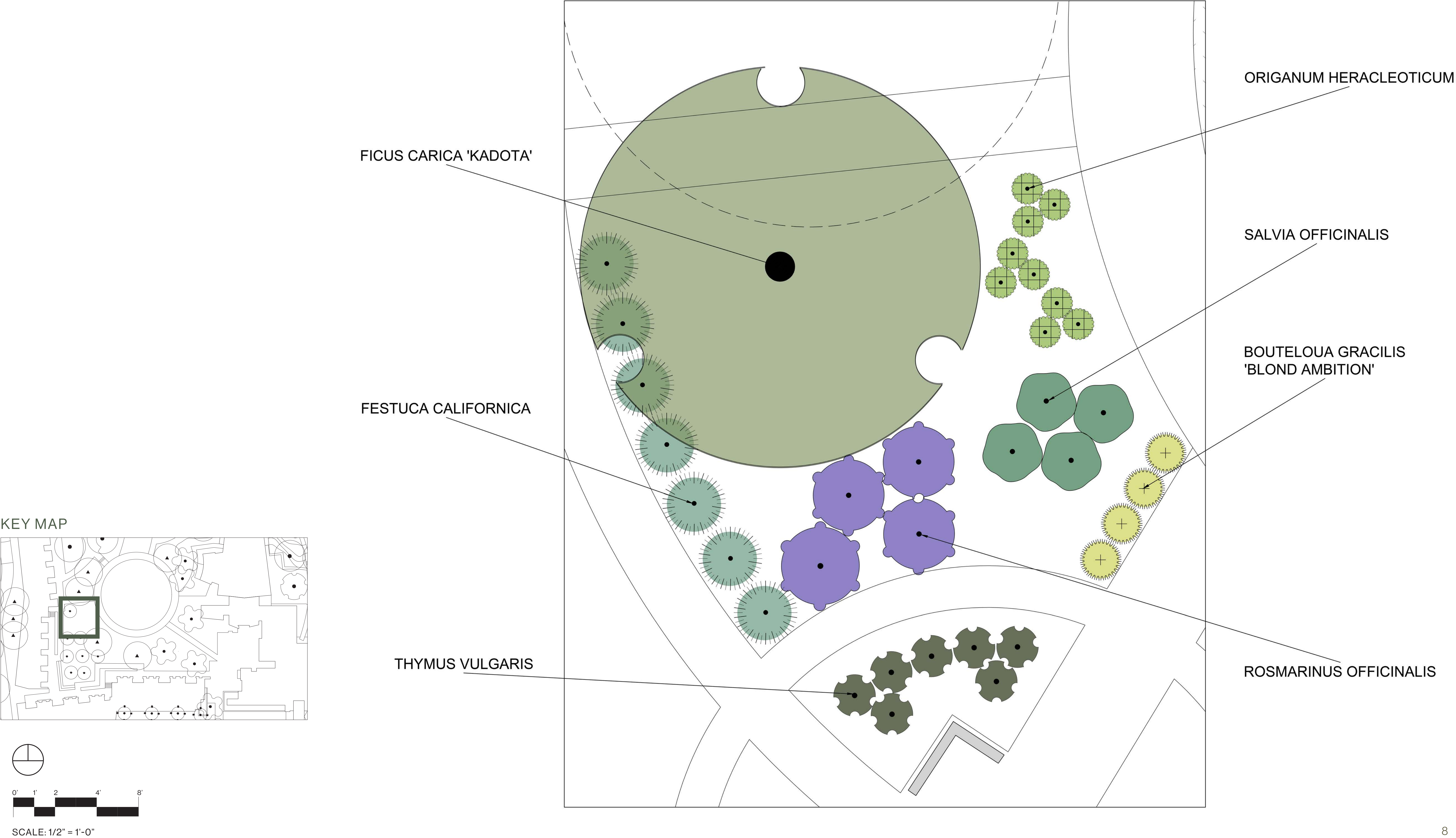
SALVIA APIANA

MATRICARIA CHAMOMILLA



SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"

culinary guild



fragrant guild

FESTUCA CALIFORNICA

MONARDELLA VILLOSA

ARTEMISIA CALIFORNICA

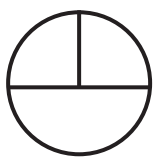
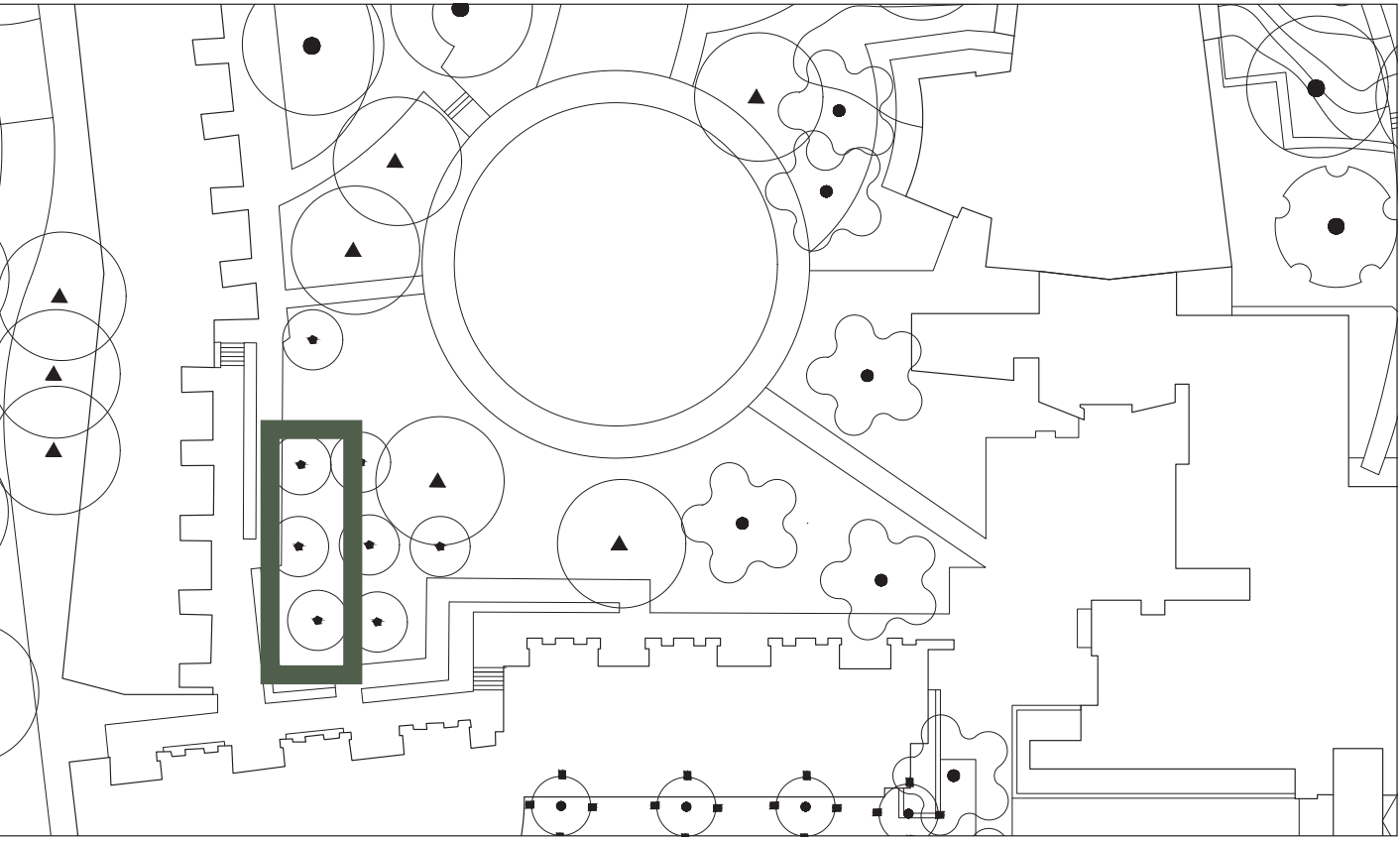
SALVIA SONOMENSIS

SALVIA CLEVELANDII

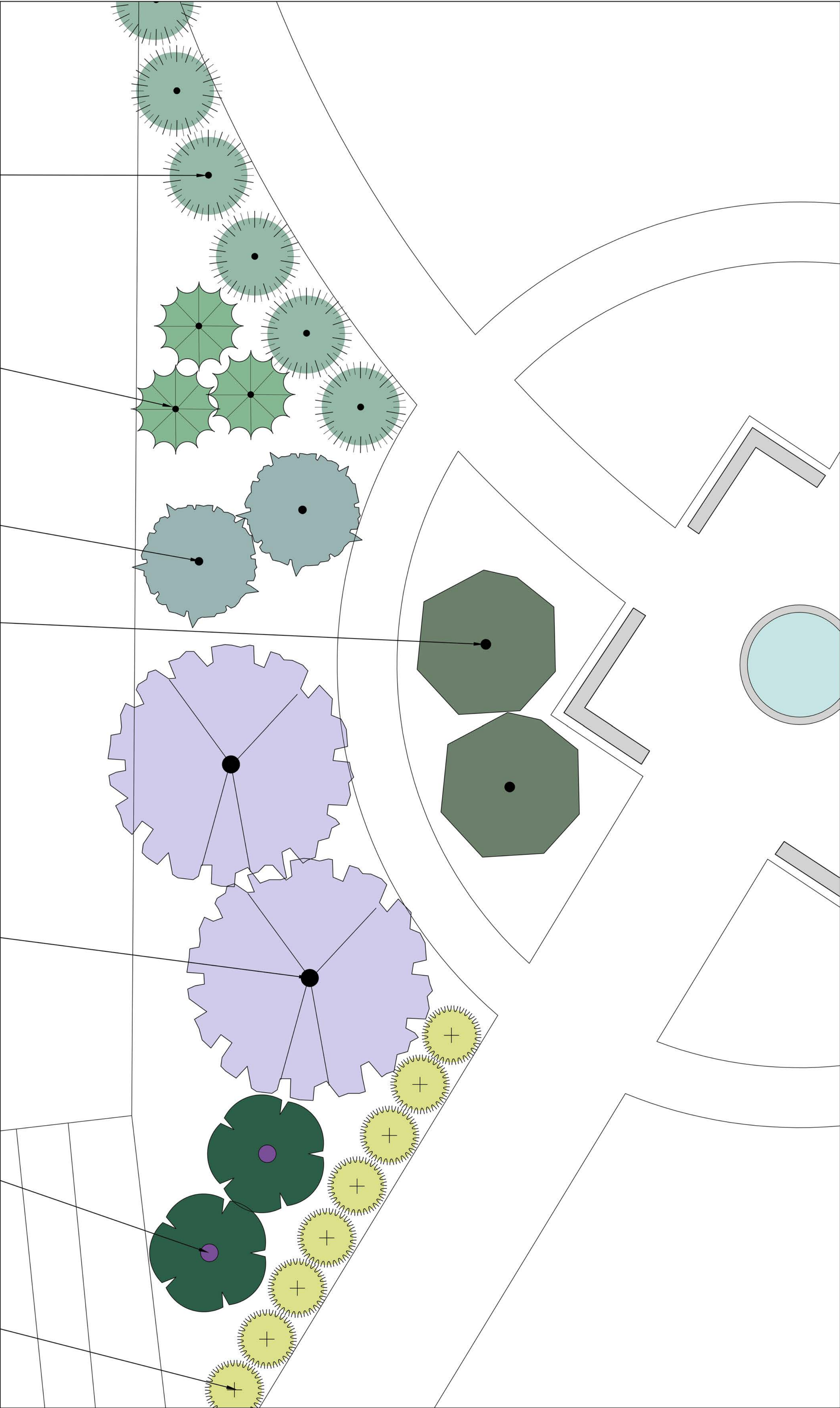
TRICHOSTEMA LANATUM

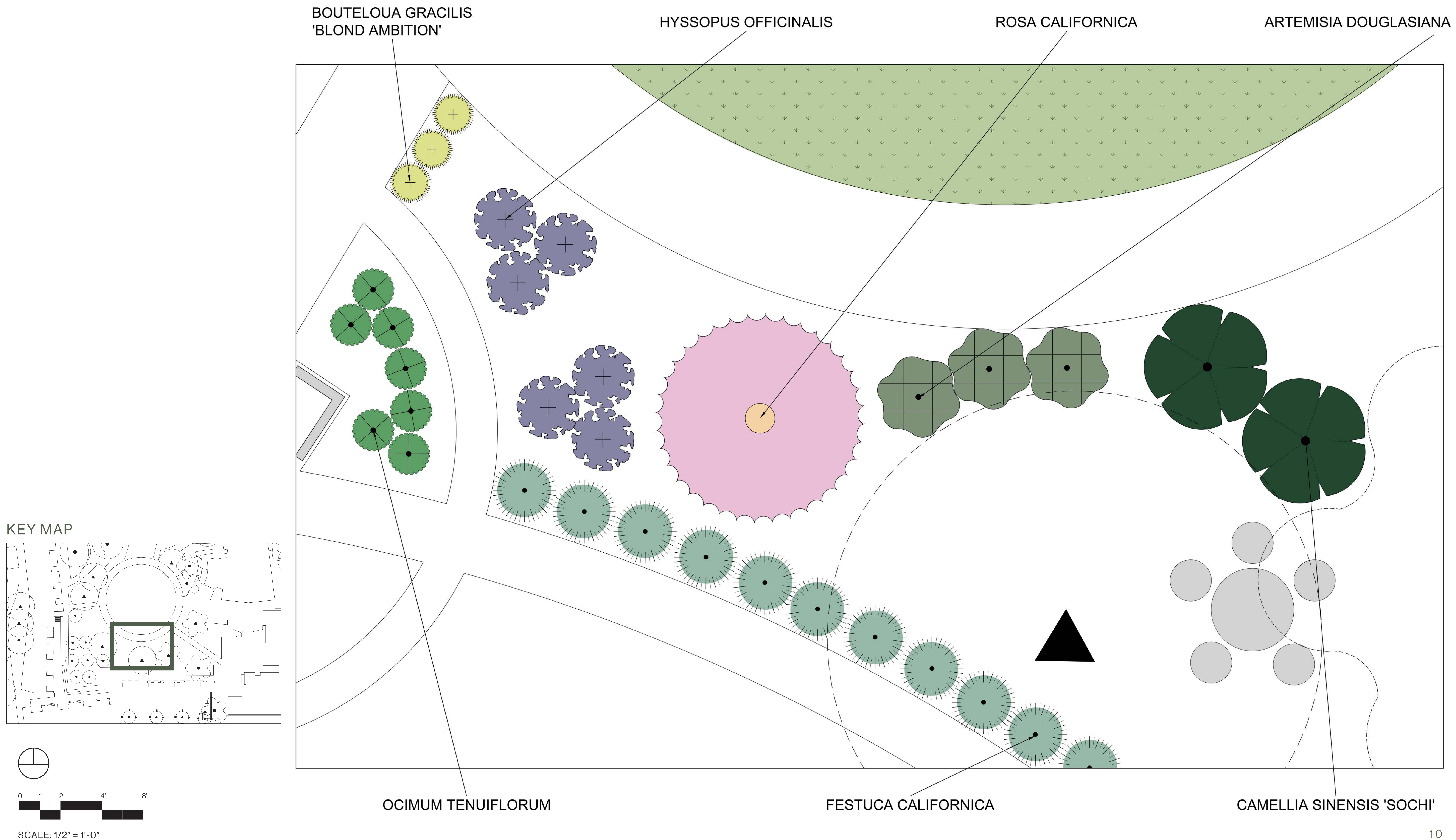
BOUTELOUA GRACILIS
'BLOND AMBITION'

KEY MAP



SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"





conceptual perspective



AI GENERATED

plant palette

HEALING GUILD (Hydrozone: Very Low-Low Water)



Achillea millefolium, Common Yarrow

MATERIA MEDICA

- Applied to minor cuts and wounds to help stop bleeding
- Brewed as a tea for colds, fevers, and digestive discomfort
- Traditionally used to reduce inflammation



Sphaeralcea ambigua, Desert Globemallow

MATERIA MEDICA

- Traditionally prepared as a poultice for skin irritations
- Used as a tea for coughs and respiratory discomfort
- Valued by Indigenous peoples as a general healing herb



Lavandula angustifolia, English Lavender

MATERIA MEDICA

- Used in sachets and teas to promote relaxation and sleep
- Aromatic flowers used to ease stress and nervous tension
- Applied in oils and baths for soothing headaches



Matricaria chamomilla, German Chamomile

MATERIA MEDICA

- Consumed as a calming tea before sleep
- Used to soothe upset stomachs and aid digestion
- Applied to help relieve minor skin irritations



Salvia apiana, White Sage

MATERIA MEDICA

- Burned in traditional purification and cleansing ceremonies by Indigenous peoples
- Leaves brewed as a tea for sore throats and respiratory support
- Used by Indigenous communities for cultural and medicinal purposes

CULINARY GUILD (Hydrozone: Low Water)



Ficus carica 'Kadota', Kadota Fig

MATERIA MEDICA

- Sweet fruit consumed to support digestive health
- Traditionally used as a gentle remedy for constipation
- Nutrient-rich fruit valued as both food and medicine



Origanum heracleoticum, Greek Oregano

MATERIA MEDICA

- Used in teas for coughs and respiratory congestion
- Traditionally taken to support digestion
- Valued for its antimicrobial properties



Rosmarinus officinalis, Rosemary

MATERIA MEDICA

- Associated with memory, concentration, and mental clarity
- Used to stimulate circulation
- Brewed as a tea to support digestion



Salvia officinalis, Common Sage

MATERIA MEDICA

- Gargled or brewed for sore throats and mouth irritation
- Used to aid digestion after meals
- Long associated with longevity and wellness



Thymus vulgaris, Common Thyme

MATERIA MEDICA

- Used in teas and syrups for coughs and sore throats
- Traditionally employed to support respiratory health
- Added to herbal preparations for its antimicrobial qualities

plant palette

FRAGRANT GUILD (Hydrozone: Very Low-Low Water)



Artemisia californica, California Sagebrush

MATERIA MEDICA

- Leaves used in liniments for sore muscles and joint pain
- Brewed as a tea for colds and respiratory ailments
- Burned in traditional ceremonial practices



Monardella villosa, Coyote Mint

MATERIA MEDICA

- Brewed as a tea to ease digestive discomfort
- Used for colds, congestion, and sore throats
- Aromatic foliage traditionally used as a refreshing herbal infusion



Salvia clevelandii, Cleveland Sage

MATERIA MEDICA

- Leaves steeped as an aromatic herbal tea
- Burned or gathered for ceremonial and cultural uses
- Valued for its calming fragrance



Salvia sonomensis, Sonoma/Creeping Sage

MATERIA MEDICA

- Traditionally used for respiratory ailments
- Employed in ceremonial and cultural practices
- Aromatic leaves used in herbal preparations



Trichostema lanatum, Woolly Bluecurls

MATERIA MEDICA

- Aromatic leaves brewed as a tea for colds and headaches
- Traditionally used by California Indigenous peoples
- Fragrant foliage valued for its calming scent

RITUAL GUILD (Hydrozone: Low-Moderate Water)



Artemisia douglasiana, California Mugwort

MATERIA MEDICA

- Dreamwork and divination
- Protection rituals
- Digestive support
- Traditional women's health herb



Camellia sinensis 'Sochi', Sochi Tea

MATERIA MEDICA

- Tea ceremonies and hospitality traditions
- Meditation and contemplation
- Focus and alertness
- Cultural and spiritual significance



Hyssopus officinalis, Hyssop

MATERIA MEDICA

- Purification rituals
- Spiritual cleansing
- Respiratory support
- Digestive aid



Ocimum tenuiflorum, Holy Basil/Tulsi

MATERIA MEDICA

- Sacred Hindu herb
- Devotional and prayer practices
- Stress resilience
- Respiratory support



Rosa californica, California Wild Rose

MATERIA MEDICA

- Love and remembrance symbolism
- Healing and comfort traditions
- Rosehip tea
- Vitamin C-rich herbal preparations

plant palette

GRASSES + GROUNDCOVERS *(Hydrozone: Very Low-Low Water)*



***Bouteloua gracilis* ‘Blond Ambition’, Blue Grama**

ECOLOGICAL & CULTURAL USES

- Cultivar of a grass historically used as forage for grazing animals
- Drought-tolerant species valued in grassland ecosystems
- Provides seed and habitat for birds and beneficial insects



***Festuca californica*, California Fescue**

ECOLOGICAL & CULTURAL USES

- Traditionally used by Indigenous peoples in basketry and weaving
- Provided habitat and forage for wildlife
- Helps stabilize soil and prevent erosion



***Carex pansa*, Meadow Sedge**

ECOLOGICAL & CULTURAL USES

- Traditionally used for weaving, cordage, and basket materials
- Helps stabilize soil in moist landscapes
- Provides habitat and cover for wildlife

plant details

Botanical Name	Common Name	Plant Family	Height	Spread	Wulcols	Bloom Color	Bloom Season	Soil Requirements	Summer Water Reduction	Maintenance Notes
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Common Yarrow	Asteraceae	2'	2'	Low	White	Spring, Summer	Well-drained soil; tolerates clay and sandy soils	Yes	Deadhead spent flowers to encourage rebloom; cut back in late winter
<i>Lavandula angustifolia</i>	English Lavender	Lamiaceae	1-3'	1-3'	Low	Purple	Summer	Well-drained, lean soil; avoid prolonged moisture	No, moderate summer water needed	Lightly shear after flowering to maintain a compact form
<i>Matricaria chamomilla</i>	German Chamomile	Asteraceae	1-2'	1'	Low	White	Spring, Summer	Well-drained soil with moderate fertility	No, keep soil consistently moist during summer	Allow to reseed or remove spent plants after flowering
<i>Salvia apiana</i>	White Sage	Lamiaceae	3-5'	3-8'	Very Low	White	Spring, Summer, Winter	Fast-draining soil; tolerates rocky and sandy conditions.	Yes	Requires little maintenance; remove spent flower stalks as needed
<i>Sphaeralcea ambigua</i>	Desert Globemallow	Malvaceae	3-5'	2-4'	Very Low	Orange, Pink	Spring, Winter	Well-drained sandy or rocky soil	Yes	Cut back after flowering to encourage fresh growth
<i>Artemisia californica</i>	California Sagebrush	Asteraceae	1-8'	4'	Very Low	Cream, Yellow	Spring, Summer, Fall	Dry, well-drained soil; tolerates poor soils	Yes	Prune lightly to maintain shape and prevent woody growth
<i>Trichostema lanatum</i>	Woolly Blue Curls	Lamiaceae	5'	4'	Very Low	Blue, Purple	Spring, Fall	Fast-draining soil; intolerant of poorly drained sites	Yes	Prune lightly after bloom to maintain a dense habit
<i>Salvia clevelandii</i>	Cleveland Sage	Lamiaceae	3-4'	8'	Very Low	Blue, Purple	Spring, Summer	Well-drained soil; tolerates rocky slopes and lean soils	Yes	Cut back spent flower stalks after bloom; avoid heavy pruning
<i>Monardella villosa</i>	Coyote Mint	Lamiaceae	2'	3'	Very Low	Purple, Pink	Spring, Summer	Well-drained soil with moderate organic matter	No, moderate summer water needed	Shear lightly after flowering to encourage new growth
<i>Salvia sonomensis</i>	Creeping Sage	Lamiaceae	1'	5-10'	Low	Purple, Blue, White	Spring, Summer	Well-drained soil; tolerates clay if drainage is adequate	Yes	Minimal maintenance; trim only to control spread if needed
<i>Ficus carica 'Kadota'</i>	Kadota Fig	Moraceae	15-25'	15-25'	Low	Green	Spring	Well-drained soil with moderate fertility	No, keep soil consistently moist during summer	Prune annually to maintain size, structure, and fruit production
<i>Origanum heracleoticum</i>	Greek Oregano	Lamiaceae	6-9"	1-16"	Low	White	Summer	Well-drained soil; performs well in lean conditions	No, moderate summer water needed	Harvest regularly and trim to prevent woody growth
<i>Thymus vulgaris</i>	Comon Thyme	Lamiaceae	6"-1'	1-2'	Low	Purple	Spring, Summer	Well-drained, sandy soil; avoid excessive moisture	No, moderate summer water needed	Trim after flowering to maintain a compact form
<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	Rosemary	Lamiaceae	2-6'	2-4'	Low	Blue, White	Summer	Well-drained soil; tolerates poor, rocky sites	No, moderate summer water needed	Prune lightly after flowering to maintain shape
<i>Salvia officinalis</i>	Common Sage	Lamiaceae	1-2'	2-3'	Low	Purple	Summer	Well-drained soil with moderate fertility	Yes	Clip back foliage in spring to promote fresh new leaves
<i>Camellia sinensis 'Sochi'</i>	Sochi Tea	Theaceae	10-15'	6-10'	Moderate	White, Pink	Fall, Winter	Moist, acidic, well-drained soil rich in organic matter	No, keep soil consistently moist during summer	Light prune after harvest to encourage new growth, Protect from hot afternoon sun and drying winds
<i>Ocimum tenuiflorum</i>	Holy Basil, Tulsi	Lamiaceae	1-2'	1-2'	Moderate	White, Purple, Pink	Summer, Fall	Well-drained soil with moderate fertility	No, keep soil consistently moist during summer	Pinch growing tips and flower spikes to encourage bushier growth
<i>Artemisia douglasiana</i>	Mugwort	Asteraceae	8'	4'	Low	Cream	Spring, Summer, Fall	Adaptable; prefers moist, moderately fertile soils	Yes	Monitor and manage spreading growth as needed
<i>Hyssopus officinalis</i>	Hyssop	Lamiaceae	1-2'	1-3'	Low	Blue, Purple	Summer, Fall	Well-drained soil; tolerates dry conditions	No, keep soil consistently moist during summer	Shear lightly after flowering to encourage fresh growth
<i>Rosa californica</i>	California Wild Rose	Rosaceae	8-10'	10'	Low	Red, Pink, White	Spring, Summer	Adaptable; prefers well-drained soils with moderate moisture	No, moderate summer water needed	Pruning periodically to keep from aggressive spreading
<i>Bouteloua gracilis 'Blond Ambition'</i>	Blond Ambition Blue Grama	Poaceae	6"-2'	2'	Very Low	Yellow	Summer	Well-drained soil; tolerates sandy and rocky conditions	Yes	Cut back ornamental seed heads in late winter before new growth emerges
<i>Carex Pansa</i>	Meadow Sedge	Cyperaceae	8-10"	3'	Low	Cream	Spring, Summer	Adaptable; tolerates clay and sandy soils with occasional moisture	No, moderate summer water needed	Comb or mow annually in late winter to refresh foliage
<i>Festuca californica</i>	CA Fescue	Poaceae	1-4'	3'	Low	Yellow, Green	Spring, Summer	Well-drained soil; tolerates clay and seasonal dryness	Yes	Comb or cut back old foliage in late winter

IRRIGATION & SOIL



SOIL PREPARATION

Existing site soils are compacted and should be loosened prior to planting to improve drainage, root penetration, and water infiltration.

Incorporate compost throughout planting areas to increase organic matter and introduce beneficial soil microorganisms. Apply a mycorrhizal inoculant at planting to support root establishment and long-term plant health. Additional organic amendments may be incorporated in areas containing higher-demand species such as fig and tea.

Deep-rooted plants including yarrow, California sagebrush, and desert globemallow will further improve soil structure and biological activity over time.



IRRIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The planting palette is organized around low- and very-low-water species adapted to Southern California's Mediterranean climate. Deep, infrequent irrigation is recommended during establishment, followed by reduced summer irrigation for drought-adapted California natives such as white sage, California sagebrush, Cleveland sage, woolly blue curls, and desert globemallow.

Moderate-water species, including tea, tulsi, fig, chamomile, mugwort, and coyote mint, should be grouped within dedicated hydrozones to support their moisture requirements while maximizing overall water efficiency. Camellia sinensis requires the most consistent irrigation in the palette and should not be allowed to dry completely during summer. Tulsi and chamomile benefit from regular moisture during the growing season, while fig trees require supplemental deep watering during fruit production. Once established, the majority of the garden can be maintained with minimal summer irrigation.