



**Santa Clara Valley Water District
2018 Landscape Summit
Event Report**

Thursday, February 1, 2018

8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Santa Clara Valley Water District



Event Summary

On February 1, 2018, ninety-two (92) landscape professionals and staff from Santa Clara Valley Water District (District) and local water retailers came together at the Santa Clara Valley Water District for the third annual Landscape Summit, hosted by the District's Landscape Committee.

The four-hour session consisted of:

- A status update of the current water supply conditions in the state and in the county from Garth Hall, Deputy Operating Officer for the Water Supply Division of the Santa Clara Valley Water District;
- A keynote address by Kevin Breen from La Rinconada Country Club, discussing the innovative use of drones for irrigation water management and the site's overall efforts to reduce water use on a large scale;
- Four case study presentations:
 - Samuel Anderson (Gachina Landscape Management) on water management for an apartment complex;
 - Sherry Bryan (Ecology Action) on TERRA (Teaching Environmentally Respectful and Responsible Actions), an outdoor landscaping project at Yerba Buena High School;
 - Sherri Osaka (Sustainable Landscape Design) on a residential sustainable landscape design;
 - Golden Love (Love's Garden) on a residential rainwater harvesting project;
- A small group breakout session to examine landscape scenarios and solutions (Attachment A);
- Lunch, networking and a self-guided tour of the District's demonstration garden and landscaping.

This year, the presentations for the Summit were all videotaped, and they have been posted to the Santa Clara Valley Water District's website: <https://www.valleywater.org/saving-water/landscaping/landscape-summit>. On this page, you can also find the agenda for the Summit, the presentations, and a short video that summarizes the proceedings. Additionally, you can find the agenda, reports and slides for the previous years' Summits. In order to promote the event, the Summit was simulcast on Facebook Live.

The goal of the small group breakout session was to have landscape professionals from all aspects of the industry (contractors, maintenance, designers, etc.) working together on a landscape design, problem solving and incorporating tools and techniques of water use efficiency (i.e. irrigation design, plant placement, rainwater capture, etc.). Themes common to each group were promoting native landscapes, permeable surfaces, rainwater and stormwater measures, efficient irrigation technology, and more effective collaboration from design through maintenance agreements. The complete results of this exercise are included as Attachment A.

One of the other features of this year's Summit was promoting the District's demonstration garden, and promoting other demonstration gardens in the community. The District introduced their new demonstration garden webpage, flyer and interactive map at the Summit: <https://www.valleywater.org/SCVWDSelfGuidedDemoGarden>

The District received 43 feedback forms from attendees, and the overall feedback was very positive (Attachment B). Attendees very much liked the case studies, the keynote speaker and the State of the Valley's Water address. They indicated that this event should be annual and be early in the year. Of the 43 feedback forms received, 33 rated it as Very Valuable. Detailed results from these forms are included

as Attachment B. In response to the feedback, the next Landscape Summit will be held at the Water District in early 2019. The District's Landscape Committee will meet in Fall 2018 to discuss topics and other logistics. Suggestions for speakers, topics, etc. may be sent to kkoppett@valleywater.org.

ATTACHMENT A

Small Group Breakout Exercise: working together to design a sustainable landscape. This exercise was intended to help facilitate dialog between all parties involved in creating and maintaining a sustainable landscape, including designers/architects, contractors, nursery/landscape/irrigation suppliers, and maintenance contractors. Participants were asked to work together to create a sustainable design while keeping in mind how and when each stakeholder in the process should be brought in to ensure the long-term success of a sustainable landscape. Participants were divided into groups that included representatives from different landscape sectors and were given an existing site plan of a traditional residential landscape to work off of. Participants were asked to redesign the landscape to make it more sustainable. A spokesperson from each group presented their ideas to the overall group in a roundtable discussion at the end of the exercise (summarized in the section below).

Overall feedback from the exercise:

1) What big changes to the existing traditional landscape would be recommended in order to make it more sustainable?

- Increase habitat by removing lawn in front yards and adding native plant species
- Collect water off downspouts and store in rain barrels or send to dry creek
- Install laundry to landscape greywater system for front yard to use during dry months
- Bio swale/dry creek drainage to keep more water on-site
- Driveway: install permeable pavers and/or plant strips
- Inventory plants, conduct grade assessment, sun exposure, etc.
- Add more permeable surfaces in backyard
- Add inline drip to areas
- Take out existing Redwood tree in front, chipped for on-site mulch source
- Convert existing pool into a reservoir for rainwater storage

2) Suggestions for improving Designer & Contractor Communications during the design/installation process:

- Important to meet early in the process to communicate on equipment selection and installation
- Use a file sharing system (Google Drive, Dropbox, Etc.)
- Importance of drawing plans being clear
- Create planting plans using plants that are in stock and available locally,
- Assess root conditions of nursery stock prior to planting
- Designers should provide plant alternatives in the case that something is not available
- Have a coordination plan, establish a meeting schedule

3) Incorporating Landscape Maintenance into initial design process:

- Designers, please, create a maintenance plan for the maintenance staff to use
- Share files, specify maintenance for the selected plants for the first 3 years

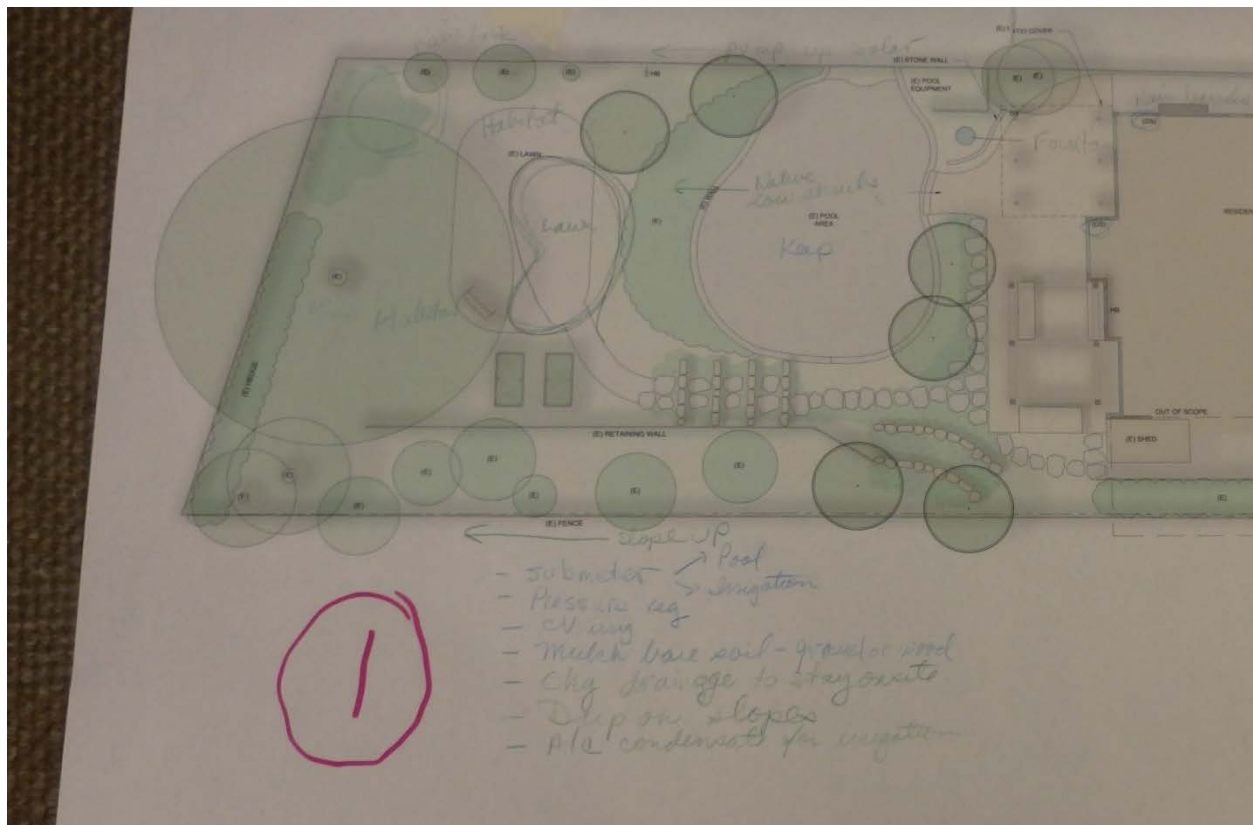
- Discuss plants that are “high maintenance” before installing (maintenance contractors know best sometimes)
- Don’t over plant, allow ample room for growth
- Keep invasive plants in mind and recommend clients against planting them even if pretty
- No plants/shrubs that overgrow other planted strips. (Plan for growth ahead of time)

4) Overall Group Suggestions

- Create ‘toolbox’ of shared files to help others not have to reinvent the process
- Yahoo Group “Sustainable Landscape” will have shared files posted
- Consider posting shared resources/files to South Bay Green Gardeners

The following section includes photographs of each of the groups redesigned landscape plans and a few highlights of the ideas they came up with that were not addressed in the overall summary above.

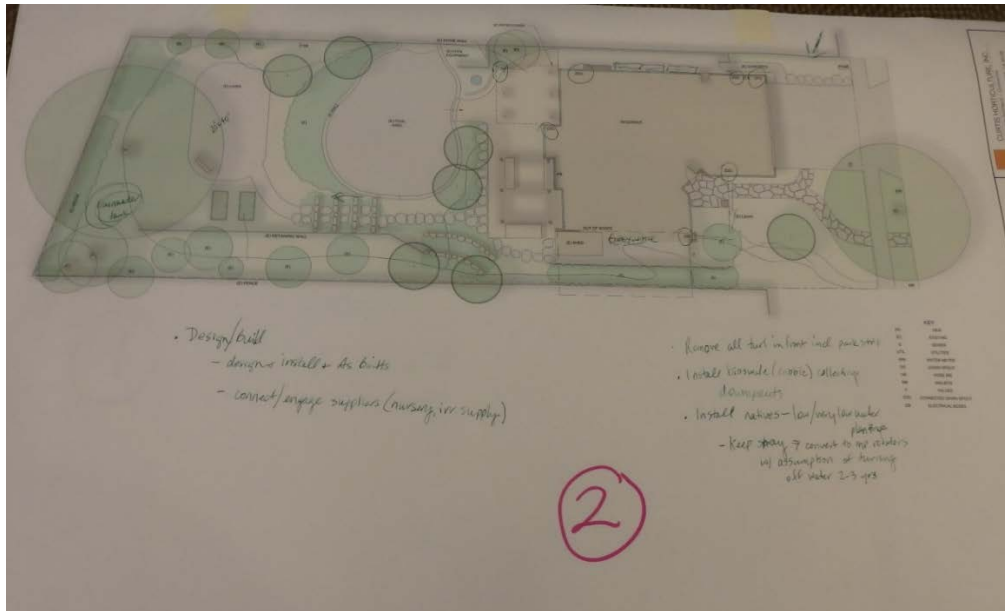
Group 1.



Design Highlights:

1. Add a submeter for the pool and irrigation water to monitor separately from indoor water use.
2. Use rain tanks, rain barrels, and regrade drainage to keep water onsite
3. Collect air conditioning condensate to use for supplemental irrigation

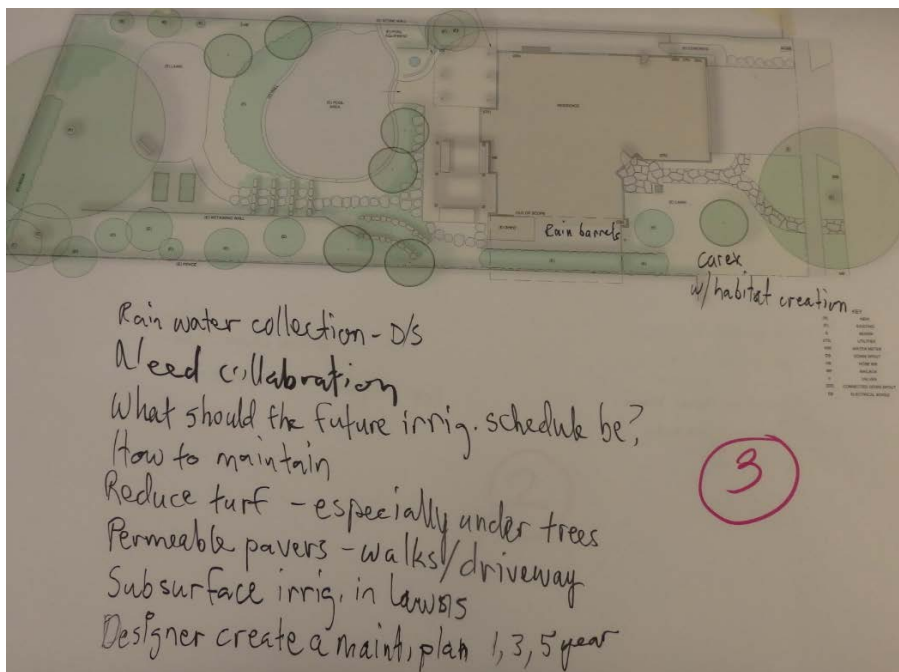
Group 2



Design Highlights:

1. Connect/ engage suppliers (nursery and irrigation supply) during the design process and draft as-built plans after installation.
2. Install bio swale (cobble) to collect water from downspouts
3. Keep existing spray but convert to MP rotators with assumption of turning off water in 2-3 years once plants are established.

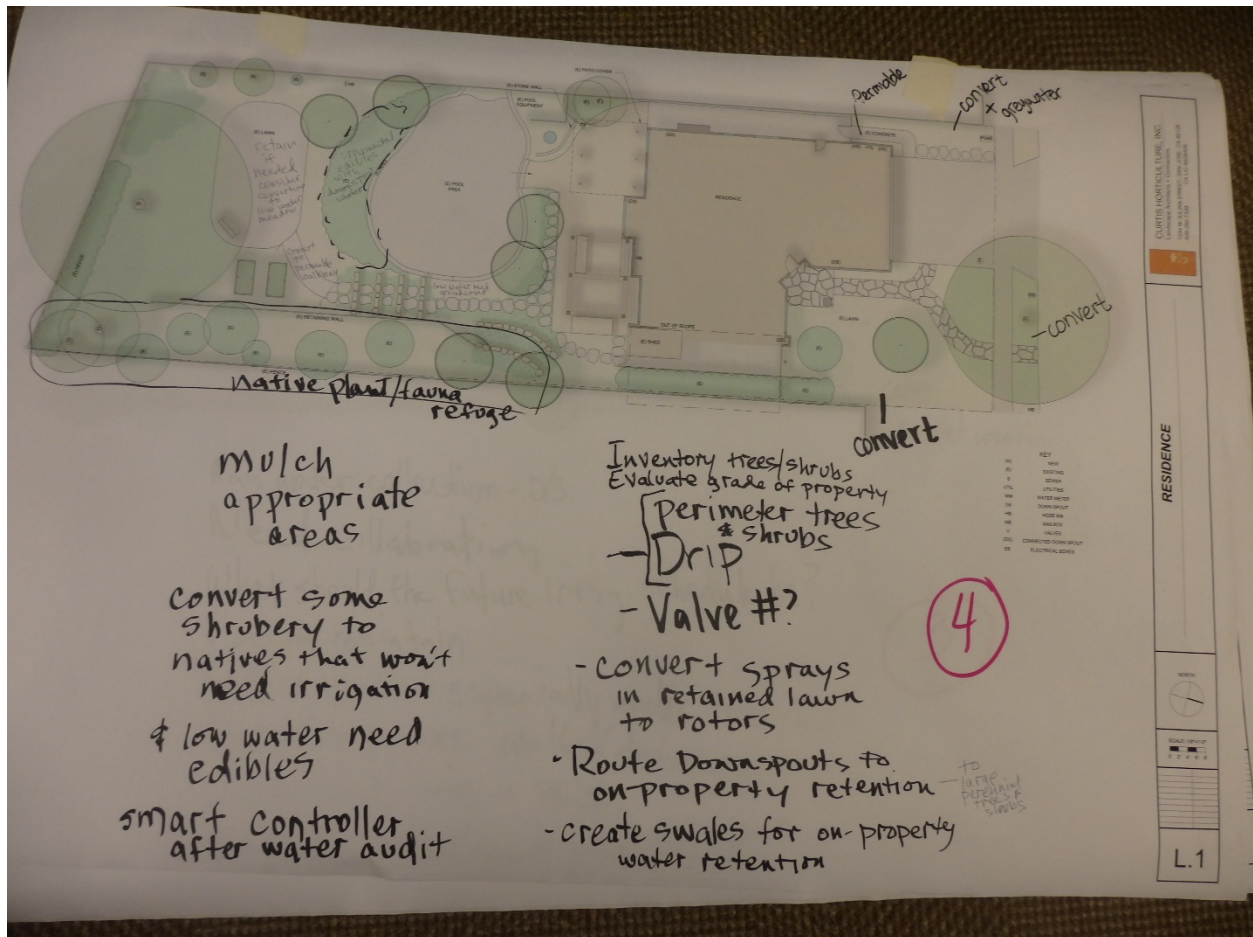
Group 3.



Design Highlights:

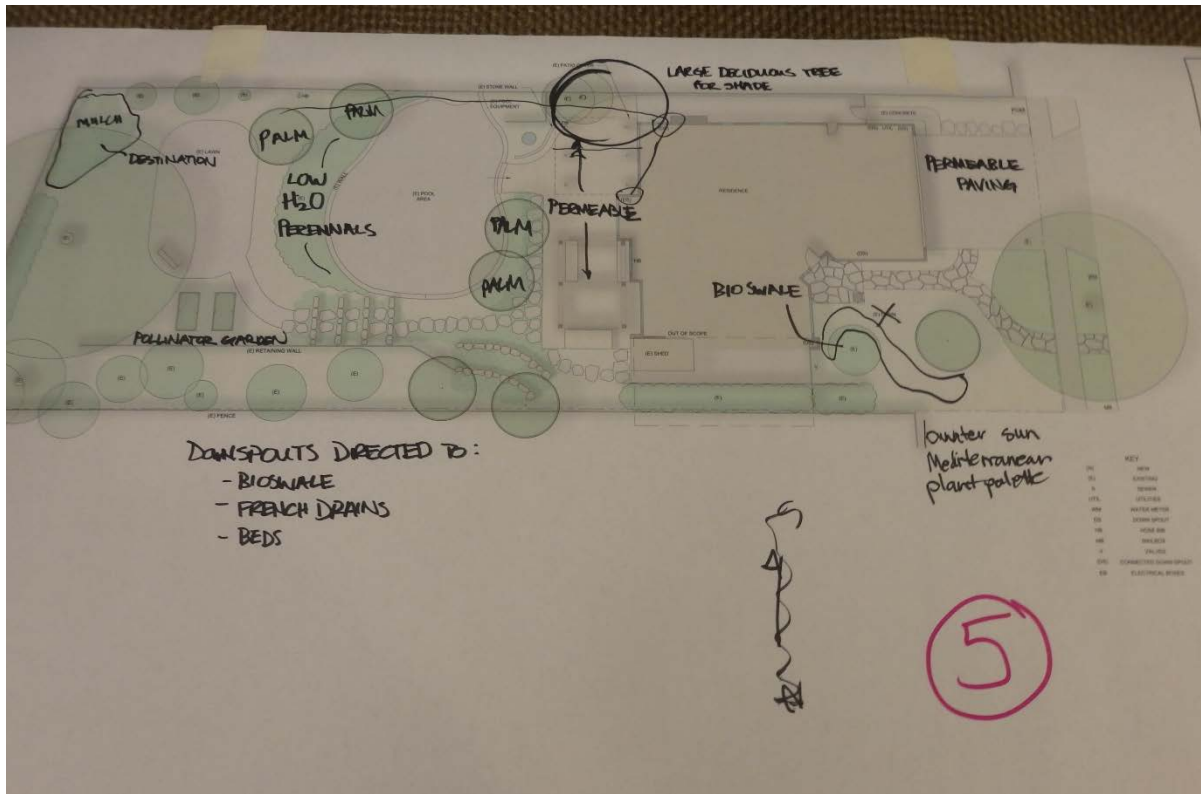
1. Design should specify what the future irrigation schedule should be
2. Install subsurface irrigation in lawns
3. Designer should create a maintenance plan for 1,3,5 years after installation

Group 4.



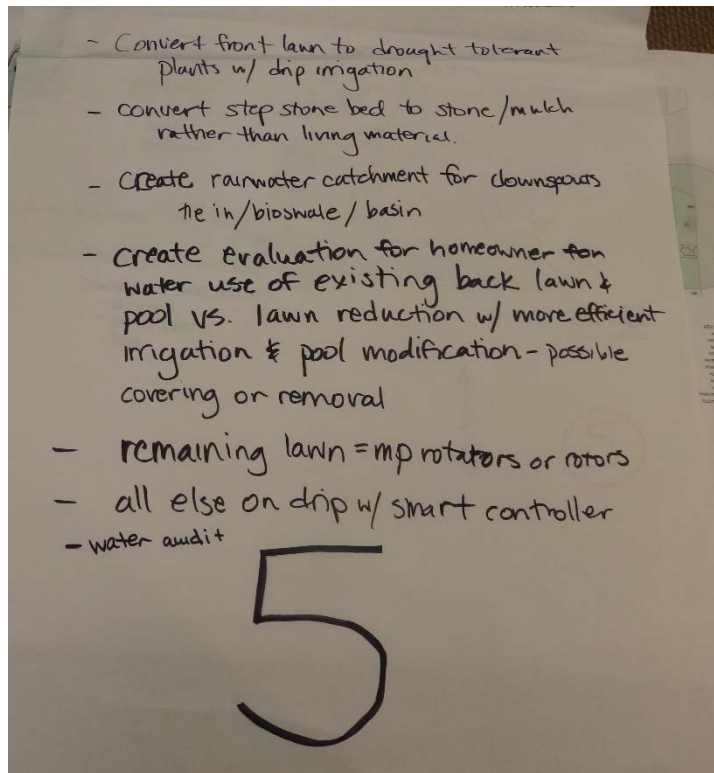
1. Create a native plant/ fauna refuge in part of the landscape
2. Create on-property water retention by installing permeable concrete, creating bioswales, routing downspouts into the landscape to irrigate large perennial trees and shrubs, and implementing a greywater system.
3. Consider converting lawn to low water use meadow

Group 5.

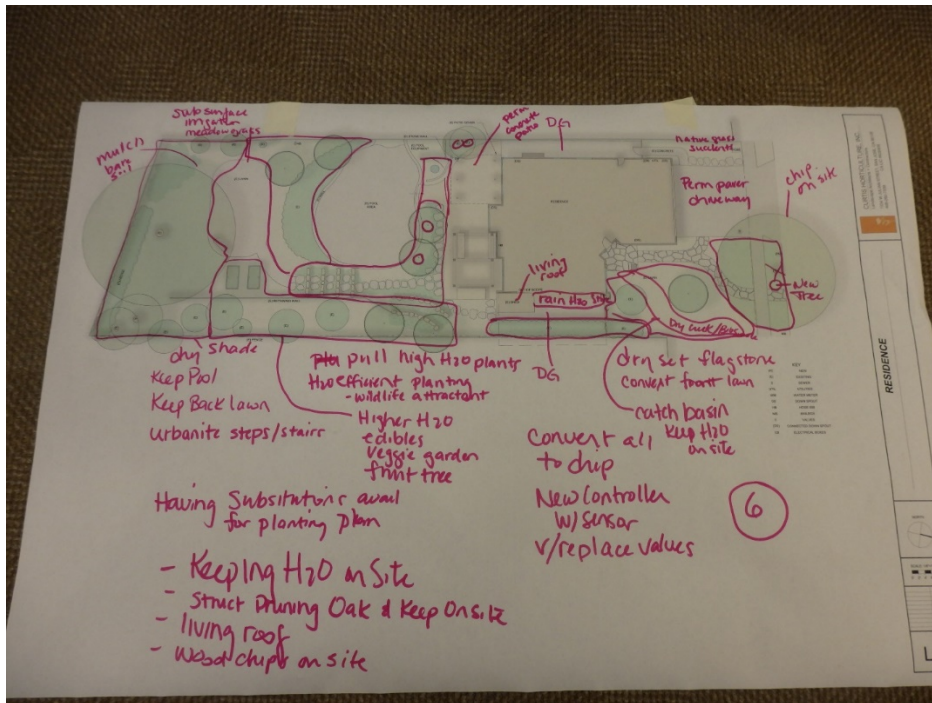


Design Highlights:

1. Create a pollinator garden
2. Direct downspouts into bioswales, French drains, and planting beds.
3. Create an evaluation for the homeowner comparing water use of the existing back lawn/pool vs. lawn reduction with more efficient irrigation and pool modifications (such as adding a pool cover or removal of the pool itself) to highlight water savings.



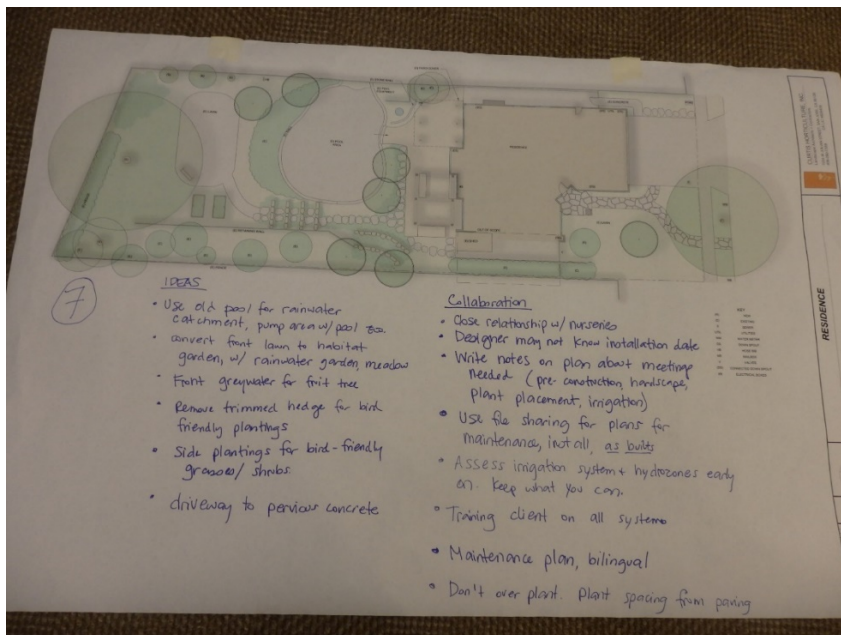
Group 6.



Design Highlights:

1. Install a Living roof and add rain water storage
2. Convert all overhead irrigation to drip and install a new controller with weather sensing capabilities
3. Create a designated area for higher water for edibles, veggie garden and fruit tree

Group 7.



Design Highlights:

1. Replace trimmed hedge and existing plantings for bird-friendly grasses/shrubs
2. Create a bilingual maintenance plan
3. Write notes on plan about meetings needed (pre-construction, hardscape, plant placement, irrigation)

ATTACHMENT B

Landscape Summit Attendee Feedback

Question 1: What aspects of the Summit did you enjoy?

State of the Valley's Water address	29
Keynote speaker	31
Case Studies	36
Small Group Feedback Session	25
Lunch	10
Other	1
Comments:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - So positive this year! - Kudos for fantastic, engaging and inspiring speakers! - I really enjoy & need the discussion with and between designers, maintenance and landscapers. - Golden needed to speak up - Vegan options would be great for lunch. 	

Question 2: Do you think the District should offer Landscape Summits in the future?

Answer: YES	42
Answer: NO	0
If YES - Every two years	1
If YES Annually	29
If YES - Twice per year	6
If YES – other: as needed;	0

Question 3: What time of the year should the workshop be held?

Winter	36
Spring	11
Summer	4
Fall	5
Other	1
Comments: Slowest time is January;	

Question 4: What changes, if any, would you suggest for a future Landscape Summit?

None, it is fine as it is	27
I would change the following:	(see answers below)
Allow a longer time	
Allow another 1/2 hour for time averages	
Start earlier say 8:45	
Practical workshops on harvesting rainwater, graywater, drip irrigation, selection of native plants. Sharing practical useful tips sharing environmental responsible landscape designers, contractors and maintenance crews that have passion for water conversation and pesticide free gardens.	
I would like more next time for designs/maintenance landscapers to interact	
Incorporate nursery professionals more.	
Booths for vendors; place to exchange business cards; maybe a take-away bag for attendees.	
We need more examples of success stories	
Education for maintenance crews to employ in the field	
How industrial facilities can integrate water management savings	
Add recycled water portion, potable water and graywater	
Applicable to parks and public sector	
More info about locally native plants	
Incorporating more of the landscape contractor and maintenance community.	
More time to mingle.	
More time for panel presentations.	
More allotted time for speakers – they always have great things to talk about but are rushed.	
Add bioswales	

Question 5: Overall, how valuable was this Landscape Summit to you?

Very valuable	33
Somewhat Valuable	16
Neutral	1
Not very valuable	0
Not valuable at all	0

Question 6: Is there anything else you'd like to share about the event? Please specify below.

I love being with everyone and learning new tips. It's inspiring! Thank you!
More info on water rebate and saving programs
Tremendous appreciation for the effort!
I appreciate updated being updated annually
This is wonderful to get collaborators at levels of design, planning, construction and maintenance.
I value feeling that the Water District draws us in as partners for water/sustainability issues. Thank you!
Supply sides via email

It was great, thanks!
More opportunities to network with attendees.
Good speakers, flowed well.
The quality and knowledge was very applicable – Excellent!
Excited to see the Maintenance reference info
Thanks for putting this together!