



## Steps to Creating a Successful Healing Garden

*Improving Quality of Life*

### Health And Wellness

We are all bombarded with notions of well-being but what does it mean for your healthcare facility? Roger S. Ulrich, an expert on human/landscape interaction at Texas A+M conducted a study of the effects of nature on post-operative patients. Patients with same surgeries were divided between rooms with a view of a landscape and a view of a brick wall. Recovery time and medications were greatly reduced for the patients with a landscape view.

### HOW CAN YOU INCORPORATE A GARDEN AT YOUR HEALTHCARE FACILITY?

#### Pre-design

The first step in the process is a meeting with concerned personnel to identify the unique culture, needs and objectives of the facility. A campus walk with the design professional uncovers potential and options. Gardens come in a variety of sizes. The programs at some facilities utilize an area as small as a planter box; other facilities have extensive healing gardens, courtyards, roof gardens and terraces. The garden can be active or passive, providing respite for staff and family as well as a place for active treatment modalities.

#### Advisory Team

Careful selection of a Garden Advisory Team is critical to the success of a Therapeutic Garden. Collaboration between the designer and healthcare professionals such as horticultural, occupational, physical, speech, recreational and mental health therapists as well as grounds persons, social workers, volunteers and foundation members is important.



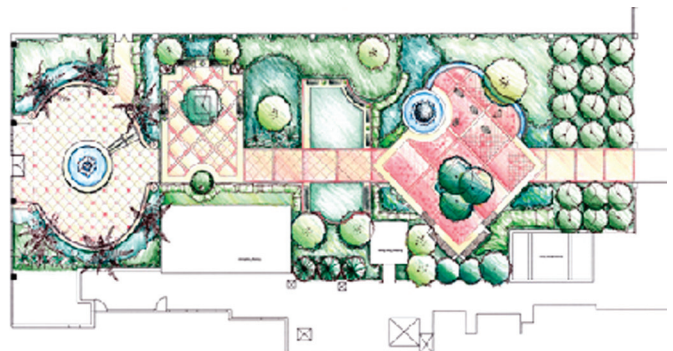
### Initial Approach

A “Three Meeting Design Process” has been used with great success (Hazen, Legacy Health). Each meeting is precisely one hour in duration and is intended to be highly informative and productive, respecting the busy schedule of all attendees.

The first meeting determines who the garden will serve, what elements are to be included and what potential programs could be developed in order to meet the needs of clinical programs, patients, family and staff.

The second meeting presents conceptual designs for discussion and evaluation.

The third meeting unveils the final design that has taken into consideration the selection and comments from the previous meeting. At this meeting, a budget and phasing (if necessary) will be developed and the next steps for funding the garden will be determined.



### Fundraising

Implementation of the garden and associated programs hinge on securing funds. There are many sources for funding such as donors, grants, naming opportunities and clever fundraising programs.

Attractive and descriptive illustratives are effective communication tools that generate donor interest. Hospital employees can be encouraged to be healing garden supporters through informational meetings and contributions through payroll deductions.

The designers can provide assistance with grant writing or presentations to potential donors as well as a variety of other fundraising programs.

## Construction Documents

Construction documents detail all the components of the design and call out materials, dimensions and finishes for bidding and construction of the garden. Timely preparation of accurate, detailed and comprehensive plans are key to flawless execution.

## Construction Monitoring

Through regular meetings with team members and scheduled job visits, surprises are avoided. Every effort should be made to minimize disturbance to patients, visitors and staff.

## Garden Use

Having a garden is wonderful but how does it become a valuable amenity? Program development should be considered as the design is being developed. Working with Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapists, and other healthcare professionals, specific programs can be developed that provide new modalities for treatment. Consider passive activities to get patients outdoors, fundraising activities and activities that bring in the community as well.

## Education and Awareness

Patients, their families, staff and caregivers all need to be educated as to the "what", "where" and "how" of the garden. The designer can give informational presentations, prepare graphics and/or conduct on site demonstrations as necessary. The garden and its programs can make your facility stand out from your competitors and improve the quality of life for patients and their families.

## Maintenance

It is of utmost importance that the garden appearance be impeccable at all times. When visitors can see that someone cares about the garden they will know intuitively that someone cares about them. The designer can prepare a maintenance manual that includes design intent descriptions, as-built drawings, a full list of involved sub-contractors and their contact information, and a list of monthly tasks for the various parties involved in the garden maintenance which can include grounds maintenance, horticultural therapy staff and patients, contractors and volunteers. It is a very useful tool for keeping all the activities organized among the various groups, securing maintenance bids, or as an aid to grounds maintenance and their crews.



## Philosophy

Careful dedication to planning, designing, budgeting, programming, and maintaining this proven amenity will ensure a return on your investment for years to come.



STUDIO SPROUT, INC.  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE & COMPLIMENTARY SERVICES

[www.studio-sprout.com](http://www.studio-sprout.com)  
561-747-3462