Welcome to the Claremont Branch Library Bay-Friendly Garden

The Bay-Friendly Landscaping & Gardening Program is a holistic approach to gardening and landscaping that works in harmony with the natural conditions of the San Francisco Bay Watershed. This approximately 4,000 square foot garden is small, but models many key Bay-Friendly practices. Below is a list of the 7 Bay-Friendly Landscaping Principles and some of Claremont Library's featured Bay-Friendly garden highlights.

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Landscape Locally

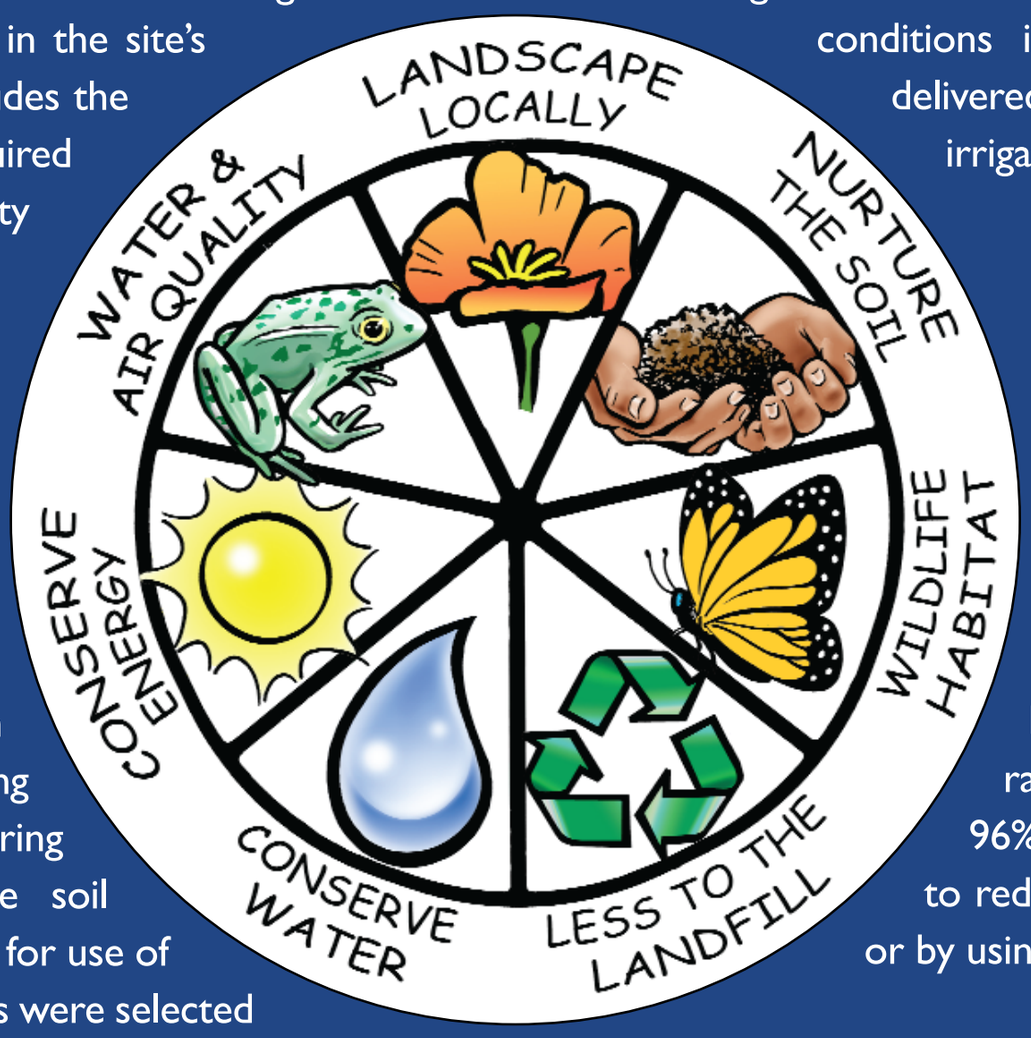
The garden is located in planting zone 17 of the Sunset Western Garden Book, with an average annual rainfall of 25.4 inches and the constant temperate marine influences of the Bay. The plant palette of 86% California Natives and 14% Mediterranean drought tolerant species was selected to thrive in the site's challenging urban conditions, which includes the nutrient-poor native site soil which required organic amendments to improve quality and plant viability, bioplanters which will capture all the water from the roof rain leaders, and the need for minimal irrigation water use.

Landscape for Less to the Landfill

The plant debris that was generated by the removal of trees and other green waste was chipped and used on site during the installation of the landscape, ensuring that nutrients were returned to the soil responsibly. Long-term maintenance calls for use of recycled mulch material to be used. Plants were selected to fit the space allowed without shearing or excessive pruning. Succession plantings were designed to allow for slower growing perennials to fill in the spaces left behind by faster maturing, shorter lived plants. Materials for the garden were selected and incorporated into the design to conserve resources: seat- and signage- walls made from recycled brick and caps made of redwood trees felled on-site, crushed recycled concrete used as base material, and fly-ash, a by-product of the coal industry, used to replace Portland cement in the site concrete.

Nurture the Soil

The site soil was aerated to a depth of 12 inches, then amended with compost and organic fertilizers. No chemical pesticides or fertilizers were used during construction. The 3" mulch layer protects the soil from compaction, controls weeds, helps keep the soil moist and provides nutrients and feeds the soil biota as it decomposes.



Conserve Water

Drought resistant soils were created by adding compost and mulch. The plants selected are all adapted to summer-dry climates - most would survive without irrigation once established. A weather-based irrigation controller will provide water according to site conditions instead of a schedule, and water is delivered to planting areas using an efficient drip irrigation system.

Conserve Energy

The existing large stature deciduous street trees provide shade to the building windows, shading and cooling the interior in summer and allowing sunlight into the building in winter. In order to encourage healthy growth of these trees, site concrete was replaced by permeable pavers to allow more rainfall to reach the roots. Additionally, 96% of the site employs cool site techniques to reduce heat island effect., either by shading or by using light colored paving materials.

Protect Water and Air Quality

Permeable unit pavers and decomposed granite paving were used throughout the site to minimize impervious surfaces, reducing runoff into the storm drains. All stormwater runoff is filtered through permeable paving, planting areas, or biofilters to clean the water on site before percolating into the soil. Integrated Pest Management was incorporated into construction through the use of sheet mulching to supress weed growth in new planting areas, and will continue during long term maintenance of the site.

Create Wildlife Habitat

The diverse plant palette (31 distinct species in the 4,000 square foot garden) of mostly native plants includes many large stature shrubs and trees which provide food and shelter for wildlife. Pesticides prohibited by the Organic Materials Research Institute's genetic material list were not used during installation of the landscape. Native plant materials were selected that encourage local and native wildlife species.

Landscape Design by Gates + Associates