

Indian Valley Organic Farm & Garden **at the Indian Valley Campus - College of Marin**



Site Plan & Project Tour

Primary Project Partners

Conservation Corps North Bay

College of Marin – Indian Valley Campus

UC Cooperative Extension – Marin Master Gardeners

Conceptual Site Plan: The Indian Valley Organic Farm & Garden



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PROJECT NAME
CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE HORTICULTURE GARDEN PROJECT
COLLEGE OF MARIN-INDIAN VALLEY CAMPUS
 1800 IGNACIO BLVD NOVATO CA 94949

CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN

SCALE
1" = 20'-0"
 0 10 20 40 80

DATE
01.26.08

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Welcome to the Indian Valley Organic Farm & Garden!
A trip to the future...

As a way to describe the various elements of the site plan, let us take a moment to imagine what it might look like as we approach the garden five years from now after the initial plantings have had a chance to get established...

You park your car near the Corporation Yard and begin walking west along a trail that takes you past the playing fields to the north. A jogger passes you, and two friends walking their dogs. On your left you see a greenhouse and shade structure full of nursery plants for sale to the public. You make a mental note to stop by on your way out and pick up some native ornamentals for your garden at home to replace the invasive scotch broom you recently removed.

Ahead you see a deer fence peeking out from behind a natural looking border of ornamental shrubs and native live oaks. The gate is open, and as you walk through it you read the hand painted sign hanging on the fence that says

Welcome to the Indian Valley Organic Farm & Garden!

Straight ahead you see four trellised benches in front of a colorful perennial border with a path in the center leading off into a lush production garden. The trellises are covered with thornless, pale yellow Banksia roses in profuse bloom, intermingled with deep purple clematis flowers. You pause to rest for a moment on one of the shady benches and catch the scent of jasmine in the air. As your gaze wanders toward the northeast you notice the climbing roses adorning the deer fence and providing a backdrop for another beautiful perennial border interplanted with several olive trees. A student gardener walks past with a cart full of seedlings, and you follow her down the central path into the main growing area. An instructor is working with a group of student gardeners to prepare a bed for transplanting the new lettuce crop while a tractor prepares additional beds nearby.

Looking toward the north, the slope rises behind the vegetable garden toward a gazebo just barely visible behind the regular pattern of fruit trees planted in informal terraces along the contour and accented by broad plantings of annual and perennial flowers and herbs that provide nectar and habitat for beneficial insects and birds.

Looking south you notice another group of students washing and packing the morning harvest of fresh veggies and flowers in the open sided processing shed to be loaded on the truck headed to the farmer's market in the afternoon. To the west of the packing shed you see three hoop houses covered with shade cloth and full of young native plants and trees in various types of containers.

You reach the end of the path and see the compost piles in front of you. You stop to pick a few mulberries off of the tree on your right. They dye your fingers purple before you can get the juicy berries into your mouth. Heading up the hill, you wander past the orchard full of apples, pears, plums and persimmons. At the top of the orchard are a few hardy citrus trees. Behind them you glimpse a beautiful rock wall terrace planted with drought tolerant perennials around the gazebo. Arriving at the gazebo you take in the 360 degree views over the orchard, gardens and playing fields, a feast of colors against the tree covered hills in the distance, already turning golden brown as the summer begins.

You notice a path winding away to the north and realize that there is more to the garden on this side of the knoll. As you weave your way through the native trees and plants you read instructional

signs describing how these plants have been used for food and medicine by the different local cultures that inhabited this land in the past. At the bottom of the hill you find yourself in a meadow of grasses and forbs that seem completely at home in this environment and yet look different than the typical grasslands around. A sign informs you that the plants in this meadow are all natives, some of them unique to this particular valley, and you imagine what the surrounding hills looked like before the non-native pasture grasses took over.

As you return to your car you stop in the plant nursery and find some of the same rare and native plants that you saw in the gardens available here for you to try in your garden at home. You buy a few things to experiment with, as well as a few familiar Mediterranean ornamentals. The student selling you the plants provides some helpful instructions for planting and care, and points out where you can see the same varieties grown to maturity in the garden. You feel good knowing that your purchase helps support this wonderful program.

On your way out, you grab a brochure on educational programs at the Organic Farm & Garden, including listings of sustainable horticulture classes at College of Marin, youth programs offered by Conservation Corps North Bay, seminars and workshops with the UC Cooperative Extension - Marin Master Gardeners, the Marin Municipal Water District, and a number of other community partners. It is clear the Organic Farm & Garden is a magnet for community organizations of all kinds, and people of all ages.

While driving home, you play with all of the great landscaping ideas you saw – and make a mental note to find a garden workshop that can help you re-create in your own garden what you have just seen today—or even how to bring some of this inspiration into your own landscape business. Speed-dialing your best friend on the cell phone, you burble, “Denise, you’ve got to see the Organic Farm & Garden I saw today... This is absolutely the hidden jewel of Marin!”



Section Elevation: The Indian Valley Organic Farm & Garden