

# SOW & SHARE

Research/Development

Designing for connection  
Community Garden and bi-weekly  
meal event in Detroit, MI



# 2NDARY RESEARCH

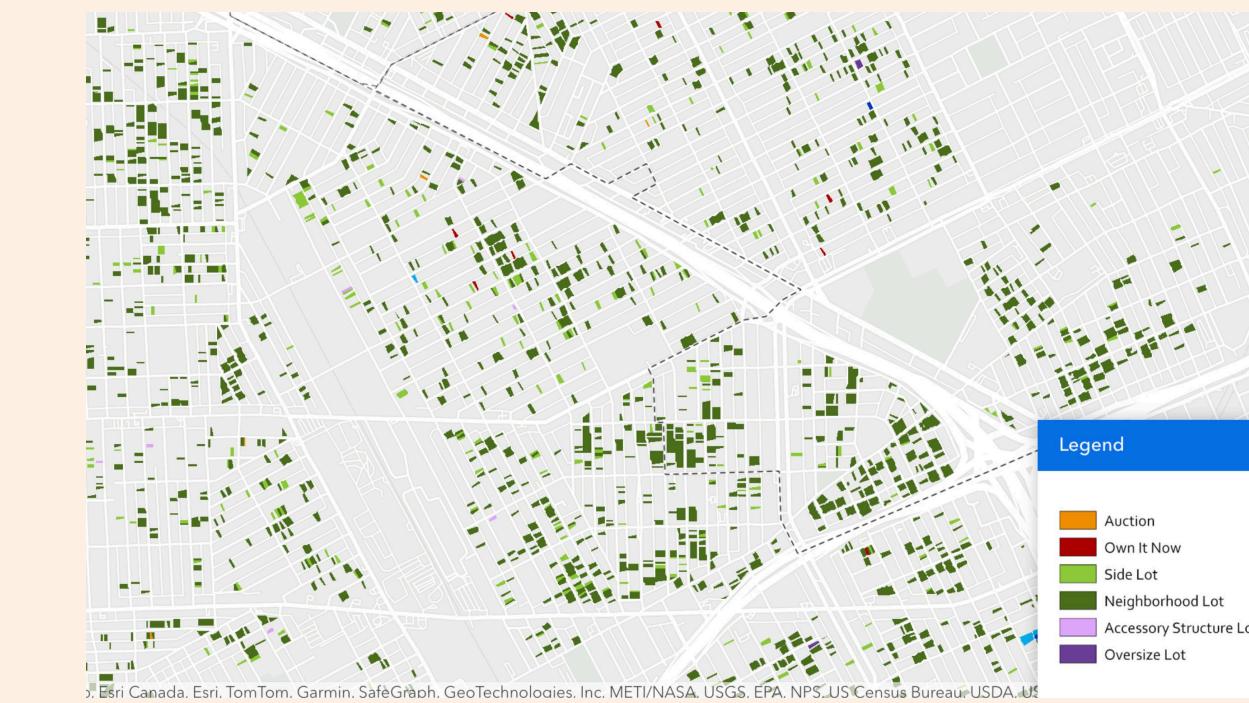


Articles pointed me towards themes of my design

**Food apartheid** informed me about people observing political resistance in growing their own food. Black Americans suffer from the food desert of Detroit

**'Parklets', snowpaths, Residential plots** made me think about repurposing neglected spaces

**Zoning laws** in Detroit



**Humanitas Deventer**, the living centre in Holland, got me thinking about the benefits of inter-age living and the opportunities of income based living situations.

# OBSERVATION



## Visiting Marylebone Farmers Market

### Insights

- Patrons needed ample area to gather after walking the market
- Prepared food was most interacted with
- Patrons disconnected with their phones
- merchants and patrons had relaxed and friendly interactions with one another

### Informs design

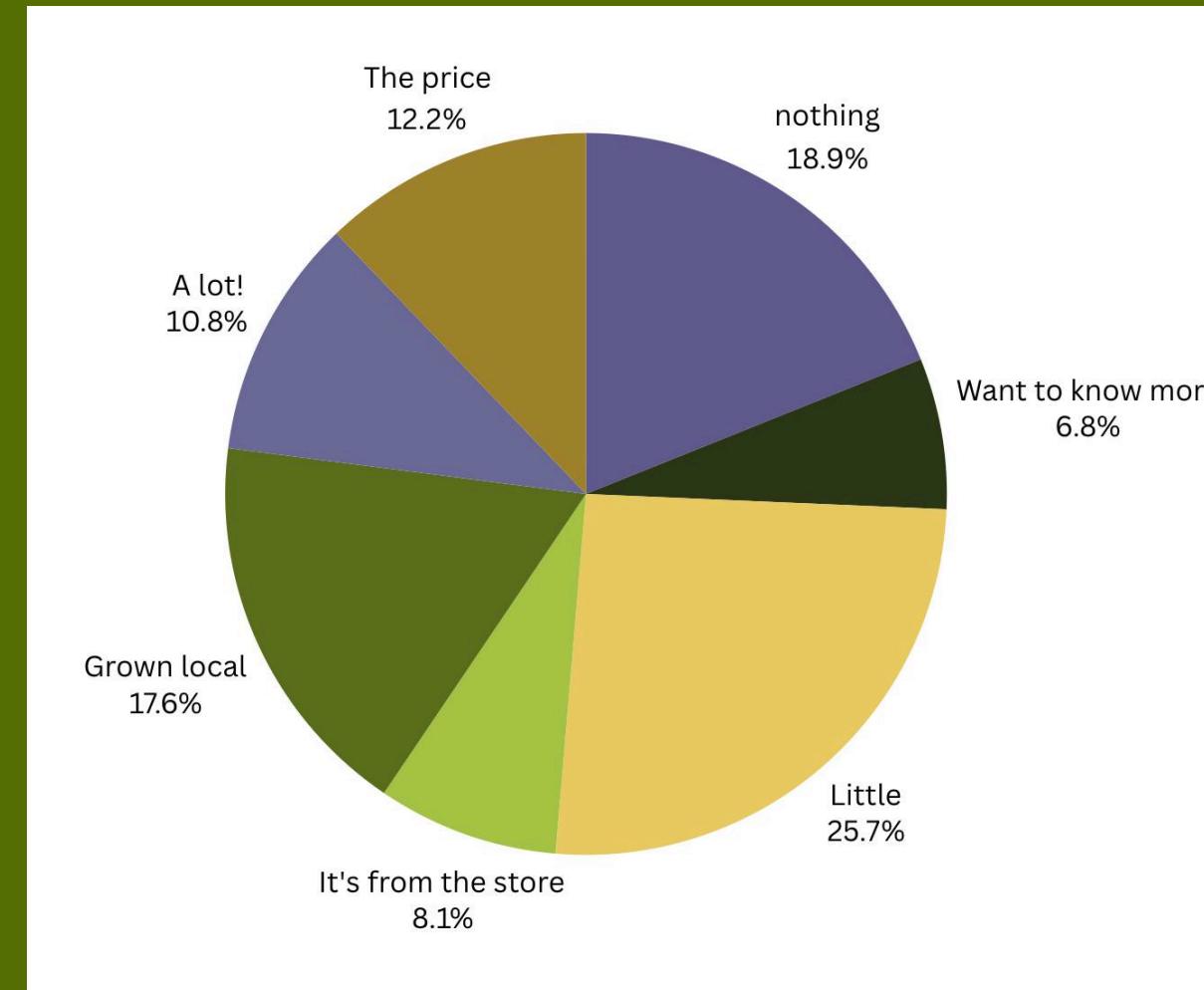
- Include **ample seating** area that flows with experience
- opportunity for target audience to interact with a **cooked meal** vs produce

Outside + large group + food = Little desire for phone stimuli

- Keep connection between facility workers and target audience level for easy communication

# SURVEYING

what do you know about the ingredients you cook with?



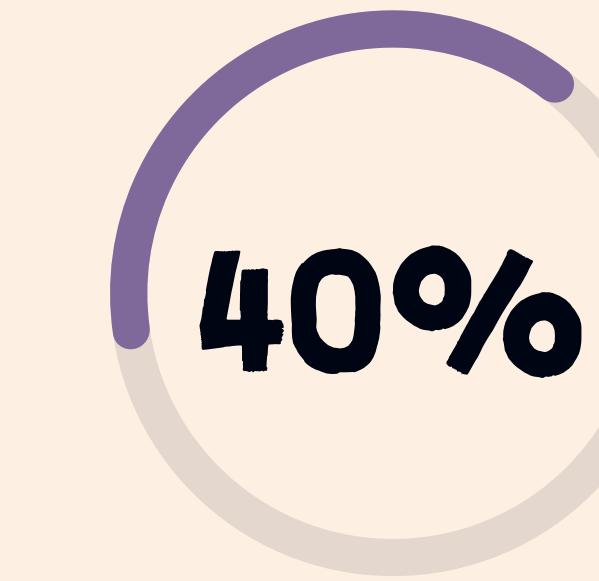
Data from 60 responses across 28 ages

**65% of respondents claimed to know little to nothing about the ingredients they purchased.**

**34% of Gen Z respondents said they didn't garden because of lack of resources and knowledge**

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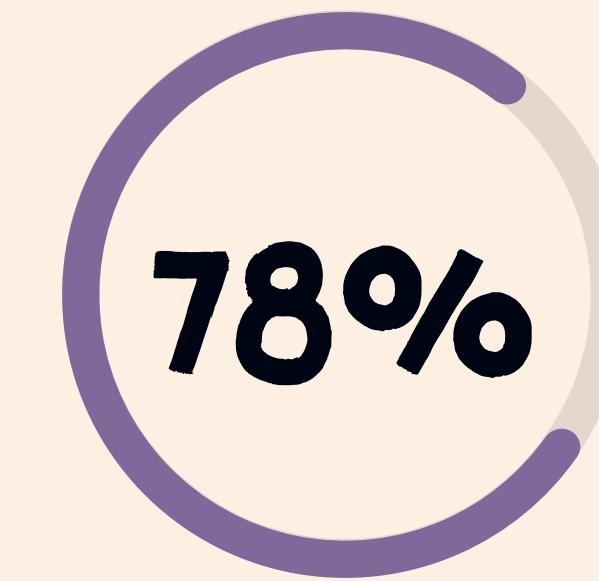
2 Google forms collected data from Detroiters' about their relationships with food, people, and Gardening.



said **lack of resources**  
stop them from  
gardening



Of practicing  
gardeners **learned**  
**from in person**  
**instruction**



Gen Z **expressed**  
**interest in a**  
community garden

## Informs Design

- Building Knowledge around food is needed
- Find a reason for Non-Gardeners to care
- Conscious of time commitment
- Most people live in apartments

# INTERVIEWS

Steve,  
Owner of The Potato Shop

“Talk to country people...  
talk, listen, don’t impose.”

“You need to get in the soil,  
you’ll never understand  
without it.”

“There is no leftover...  
Damaged goods go to animal  
feed or turned to vodka.”



“[gardening] It’s not all or  
nothing... The first step is keeping  
one plant. People have to  
experience it.”

“when someone is grieving or sick  
you bring them food! Food  
connects us deeper than just the  
day to day”

Megan,  
Community gardener  
CSA representative  
sustainability advocate

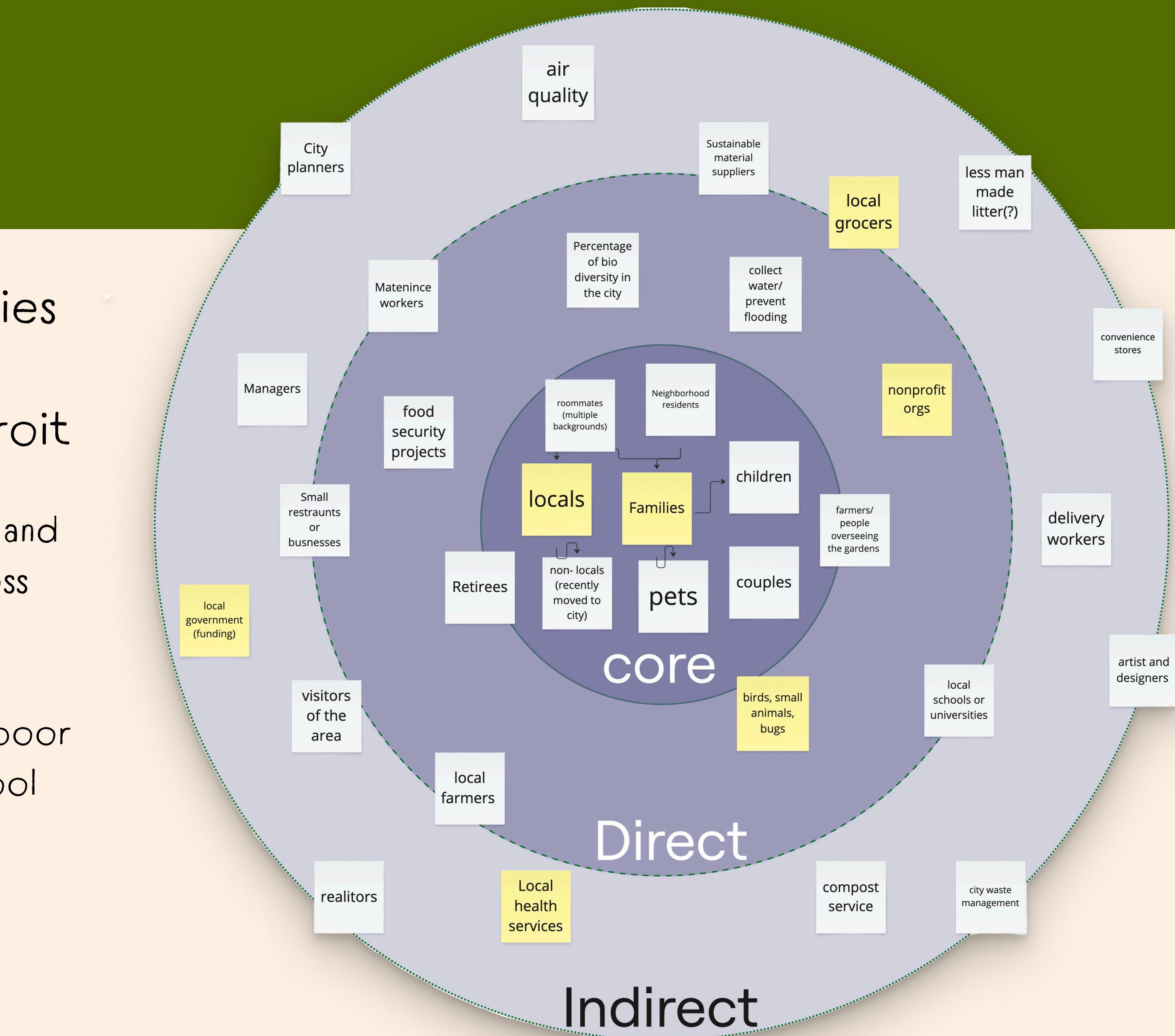


# STAKEHOLDER MAP

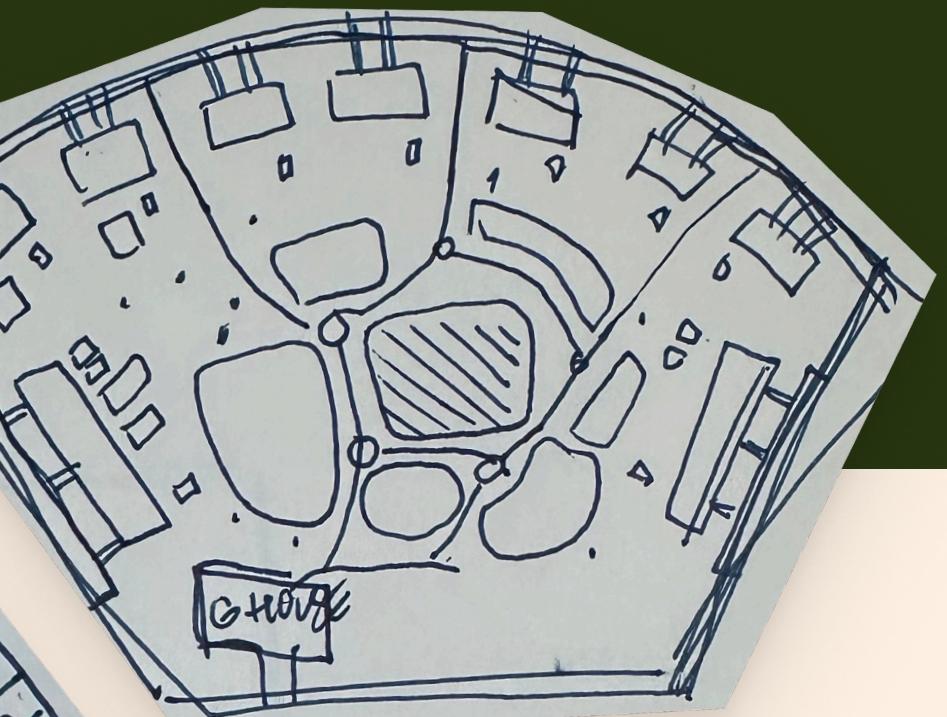
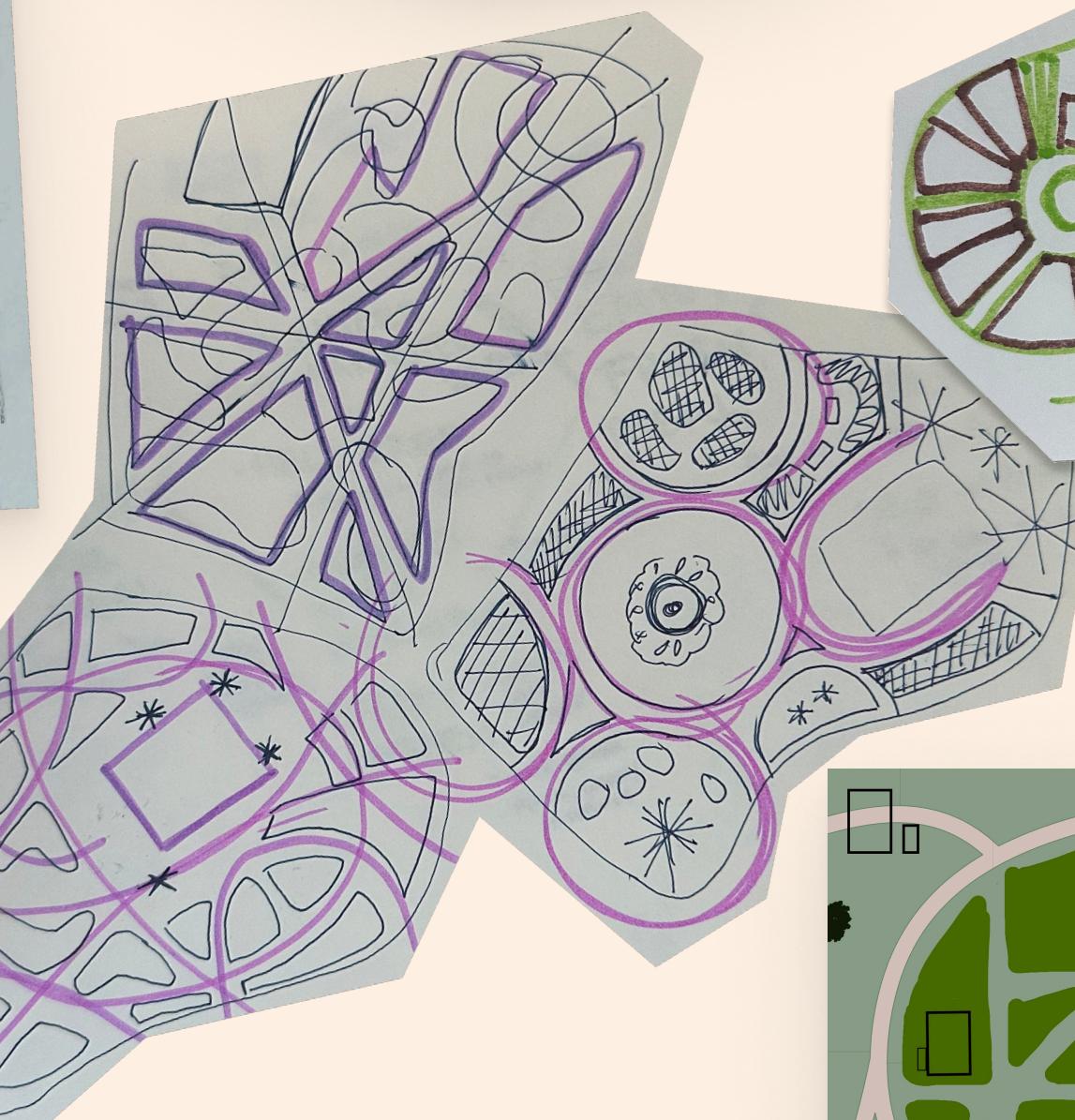
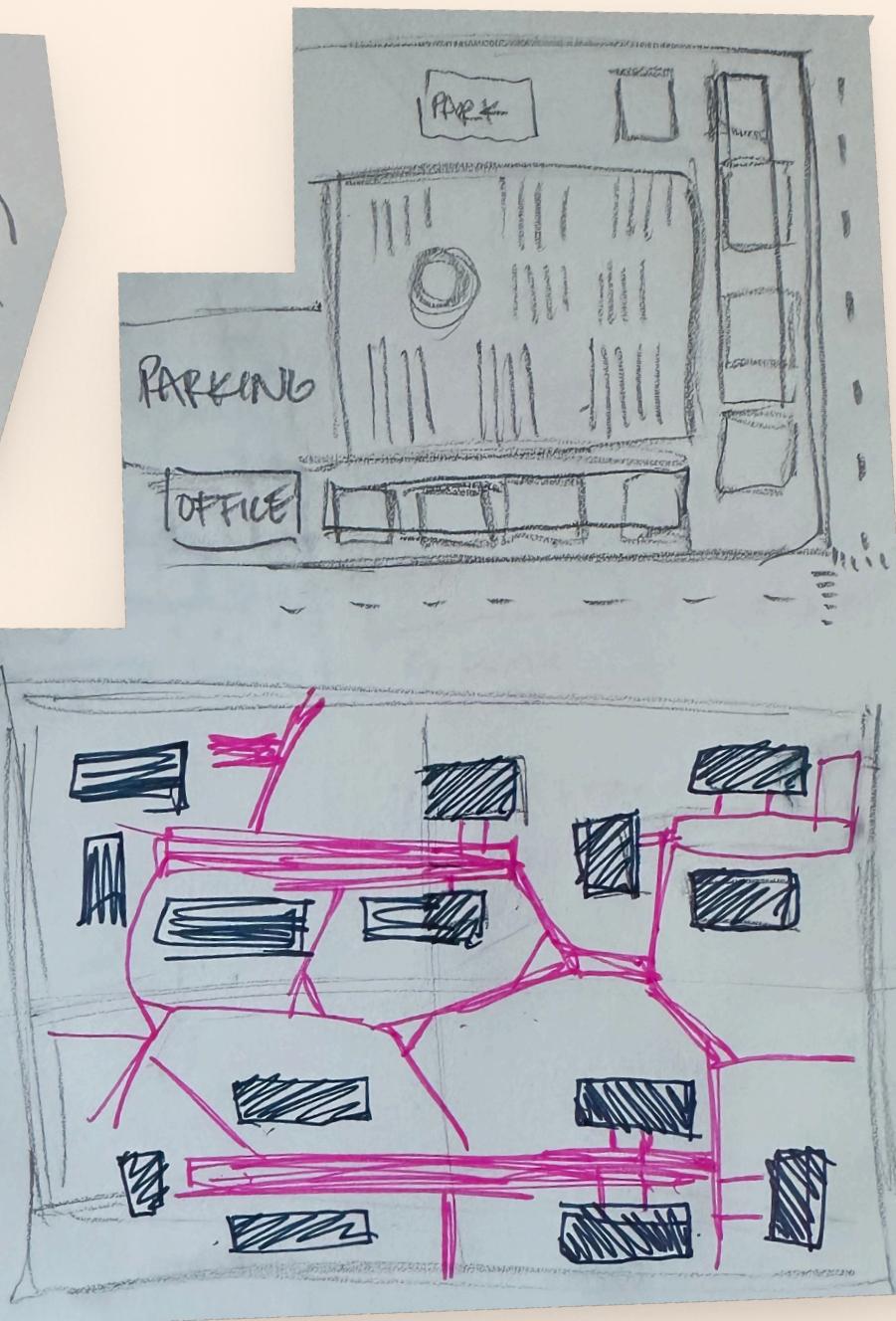
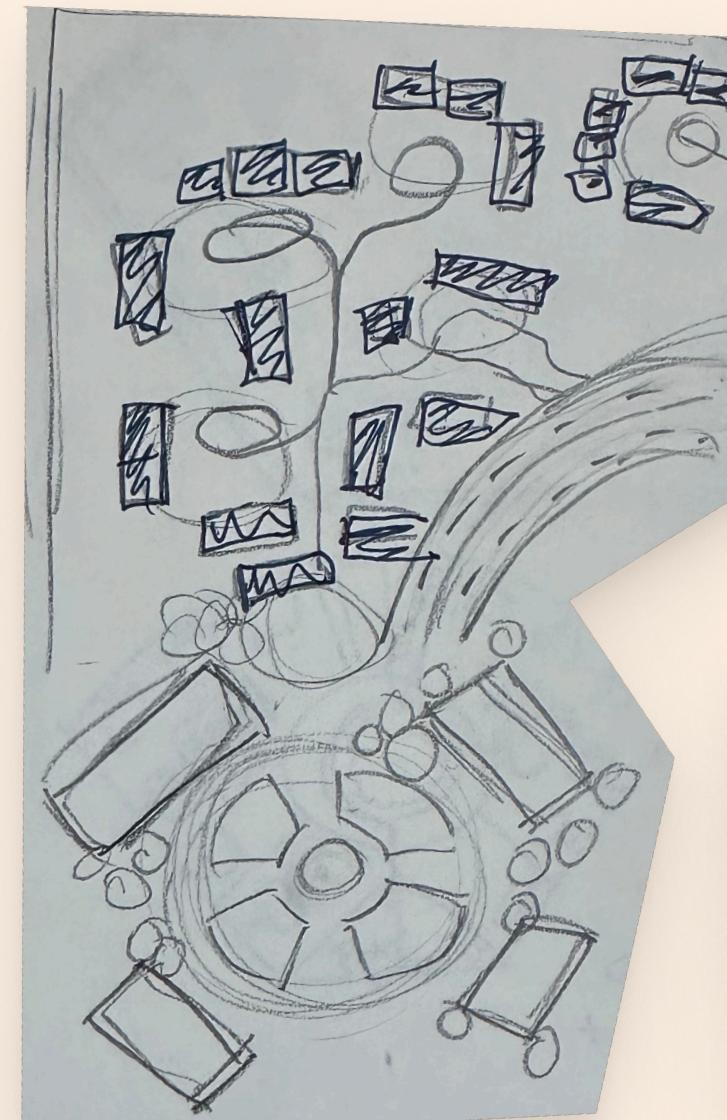
Target user: Lower Income Families  
Specifically: Suburban  
Neighborhoods in/outside Detroit

Detroit suffers from low health outcomes and food deserts as a result of migration across Detroit.

**Growing justice** brought insight to the poor food supplied in public services like school lunch and



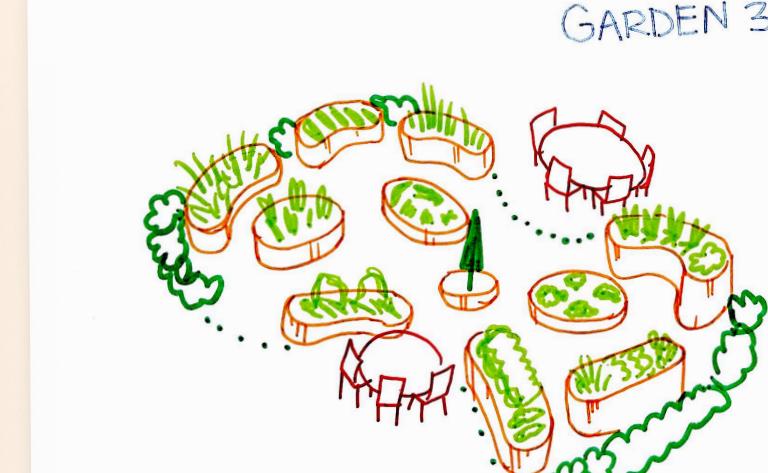
# SKETCHES



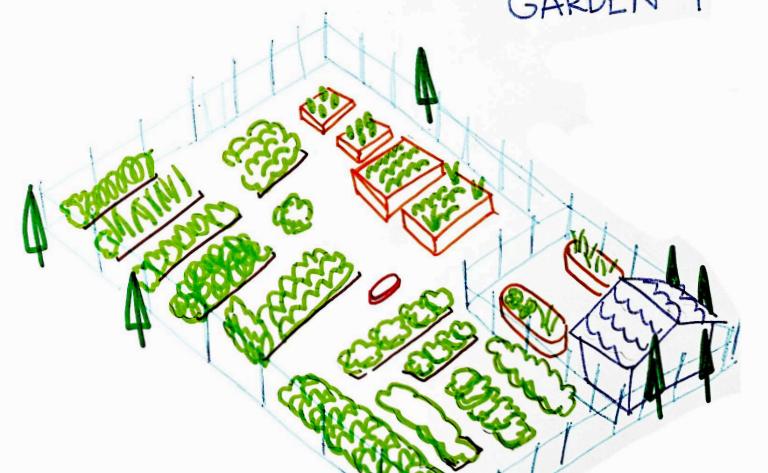
GARDEN 1.



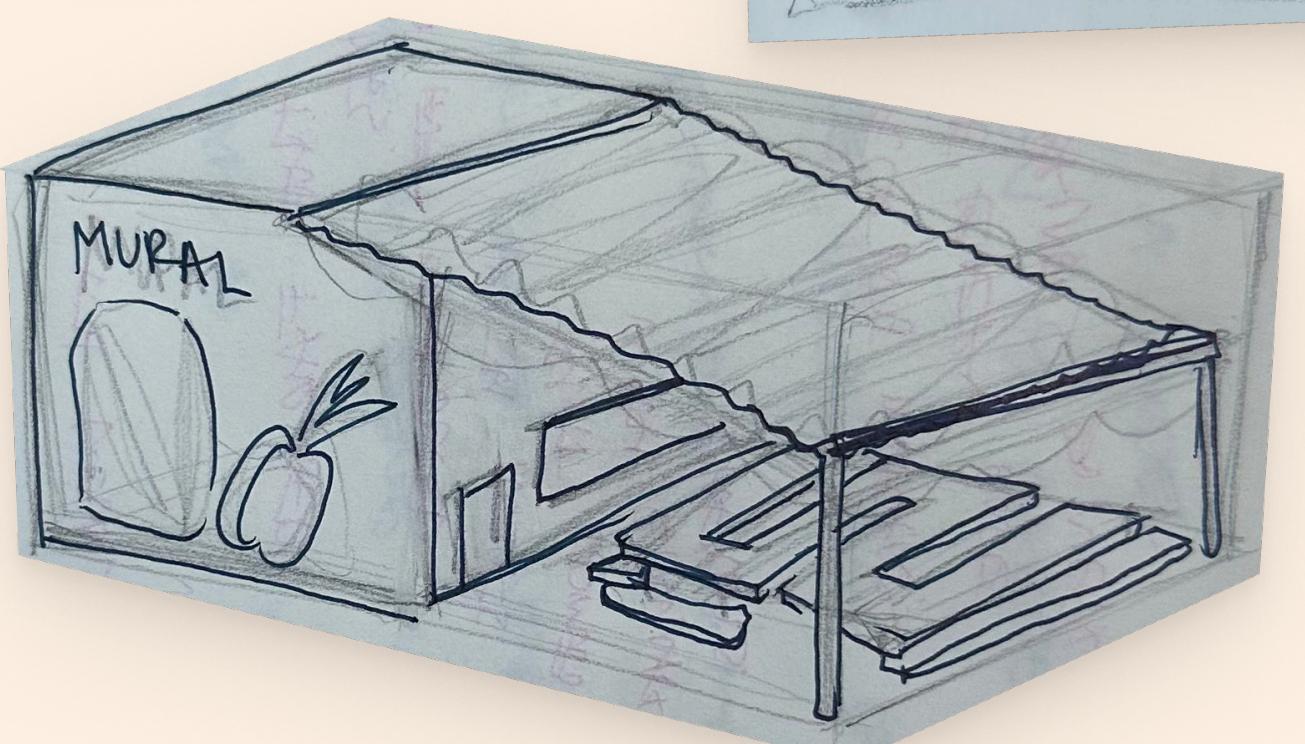
GARDEN 2.



GARDEN 3.

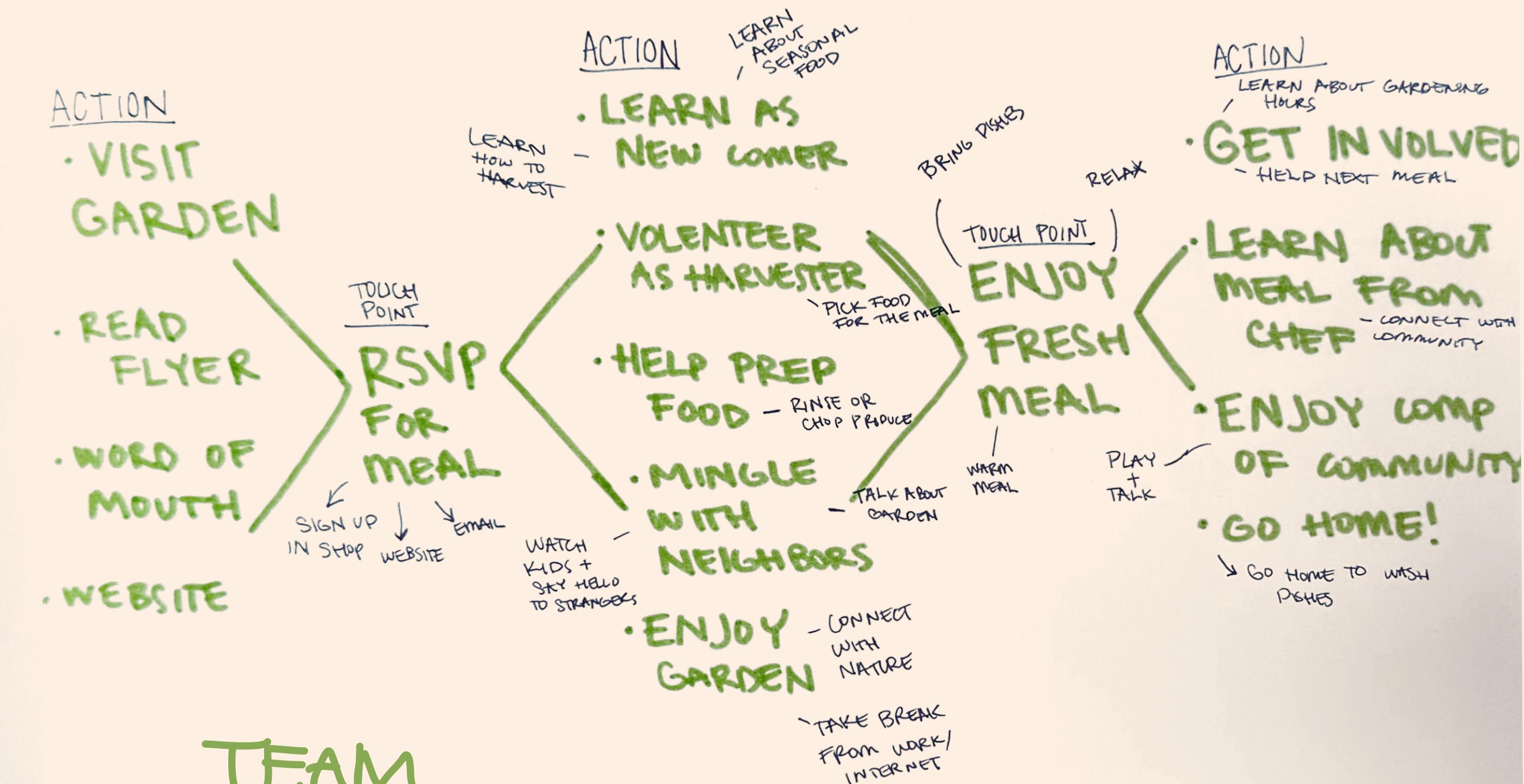
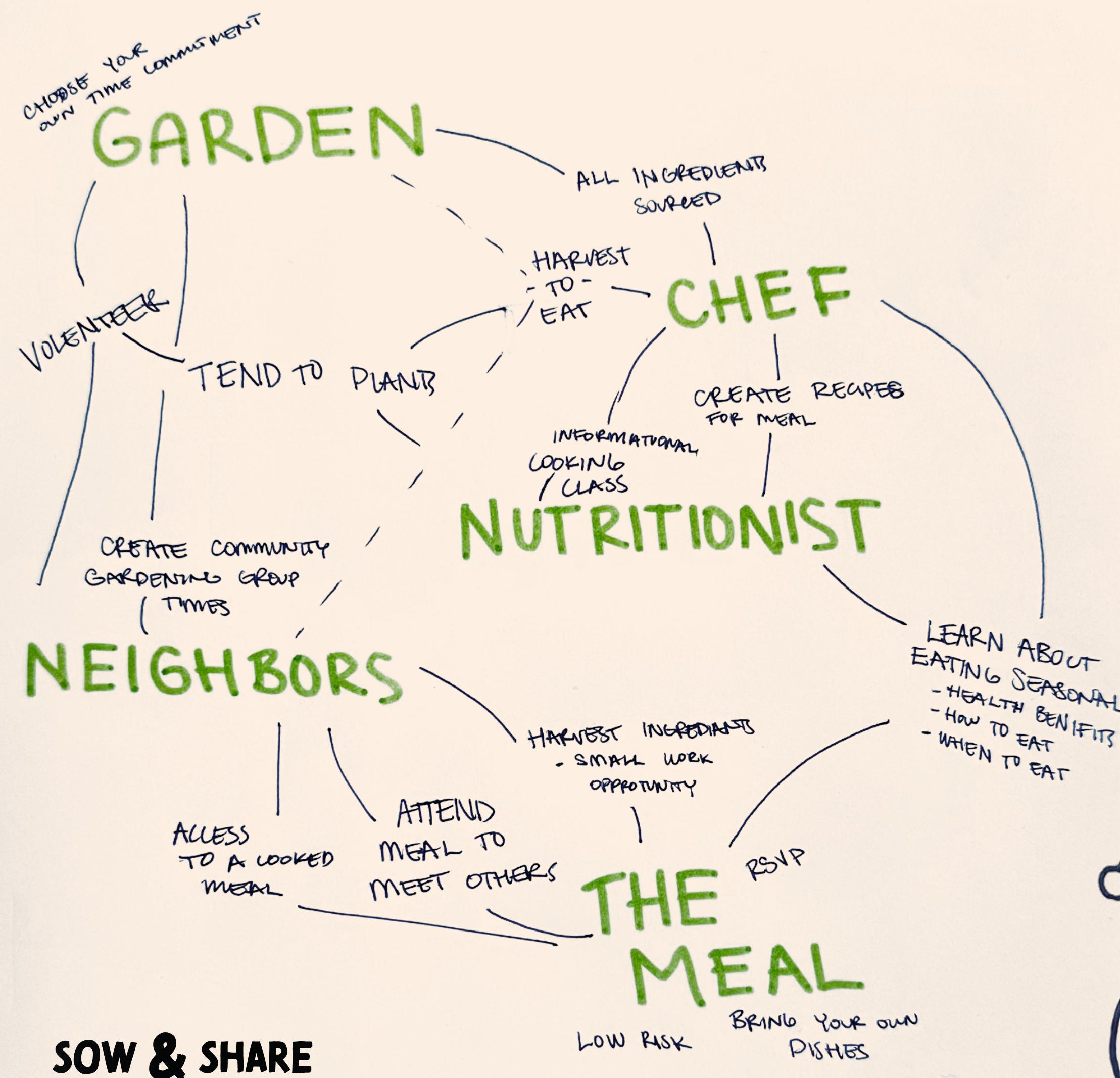


GARDEN 4.

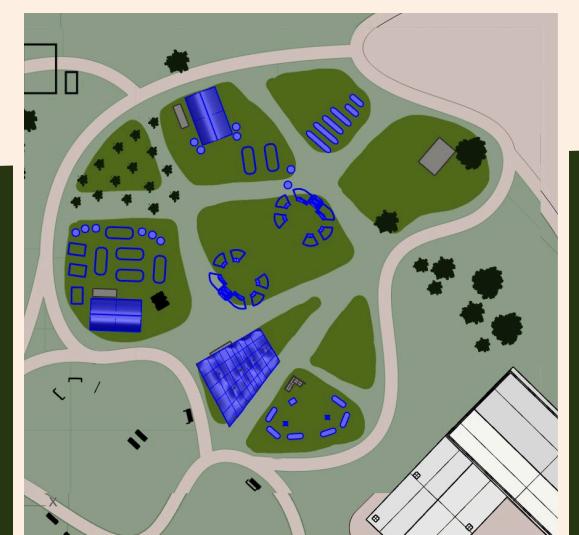
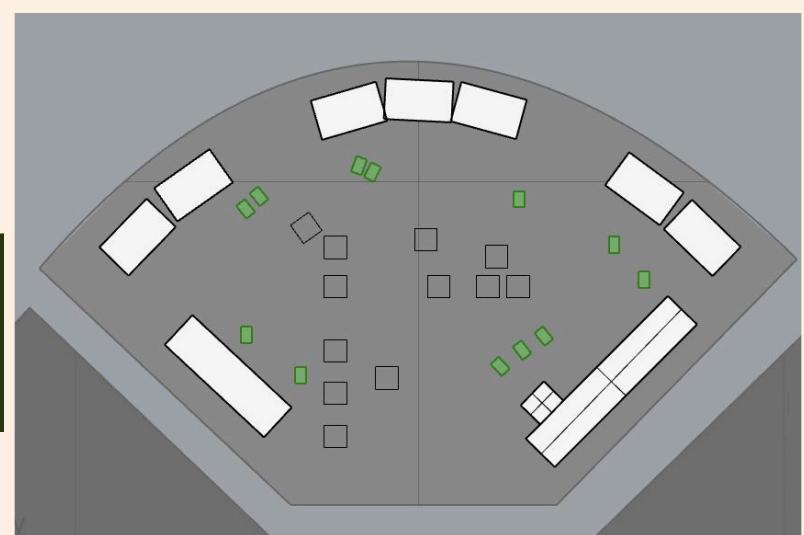
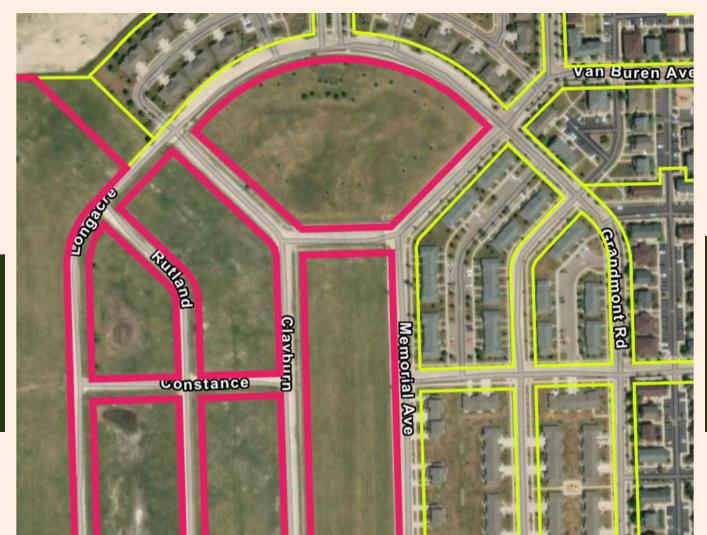


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# SERVICES AND GOALS

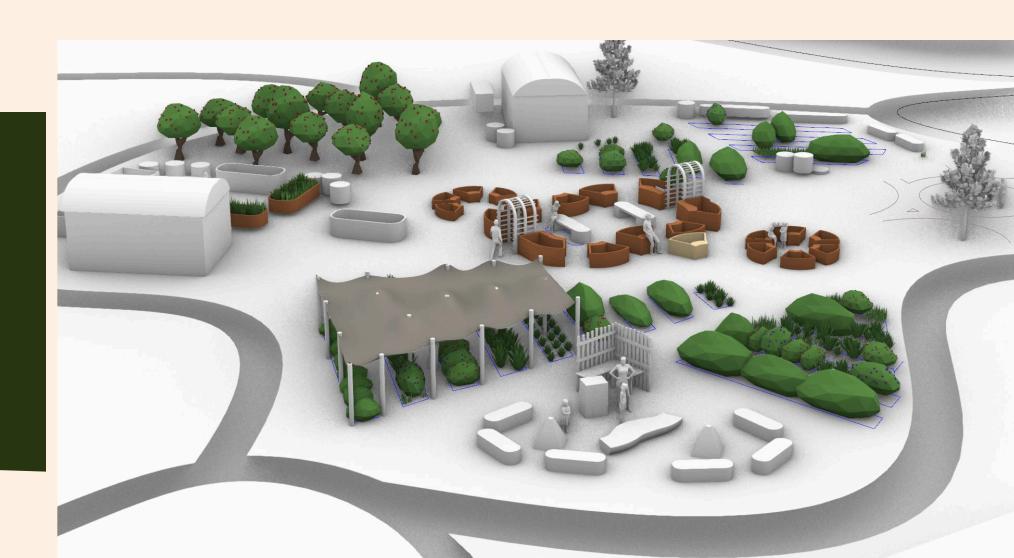
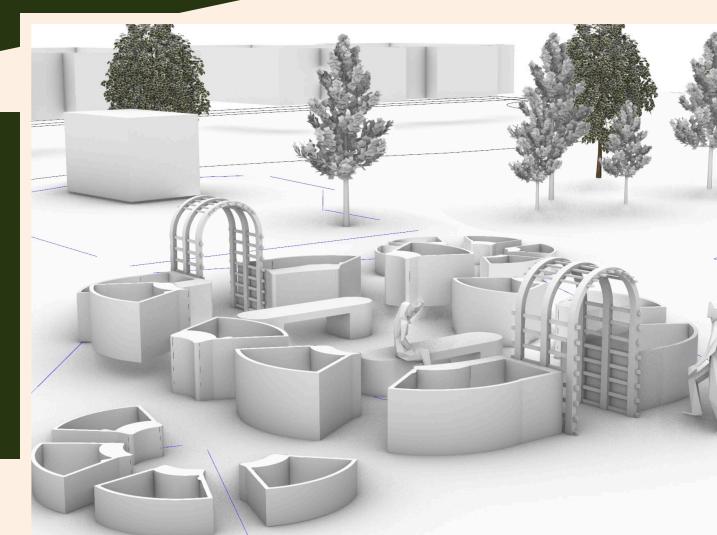


# 3D MODELING



Finding land/ making base

User tested



User tested

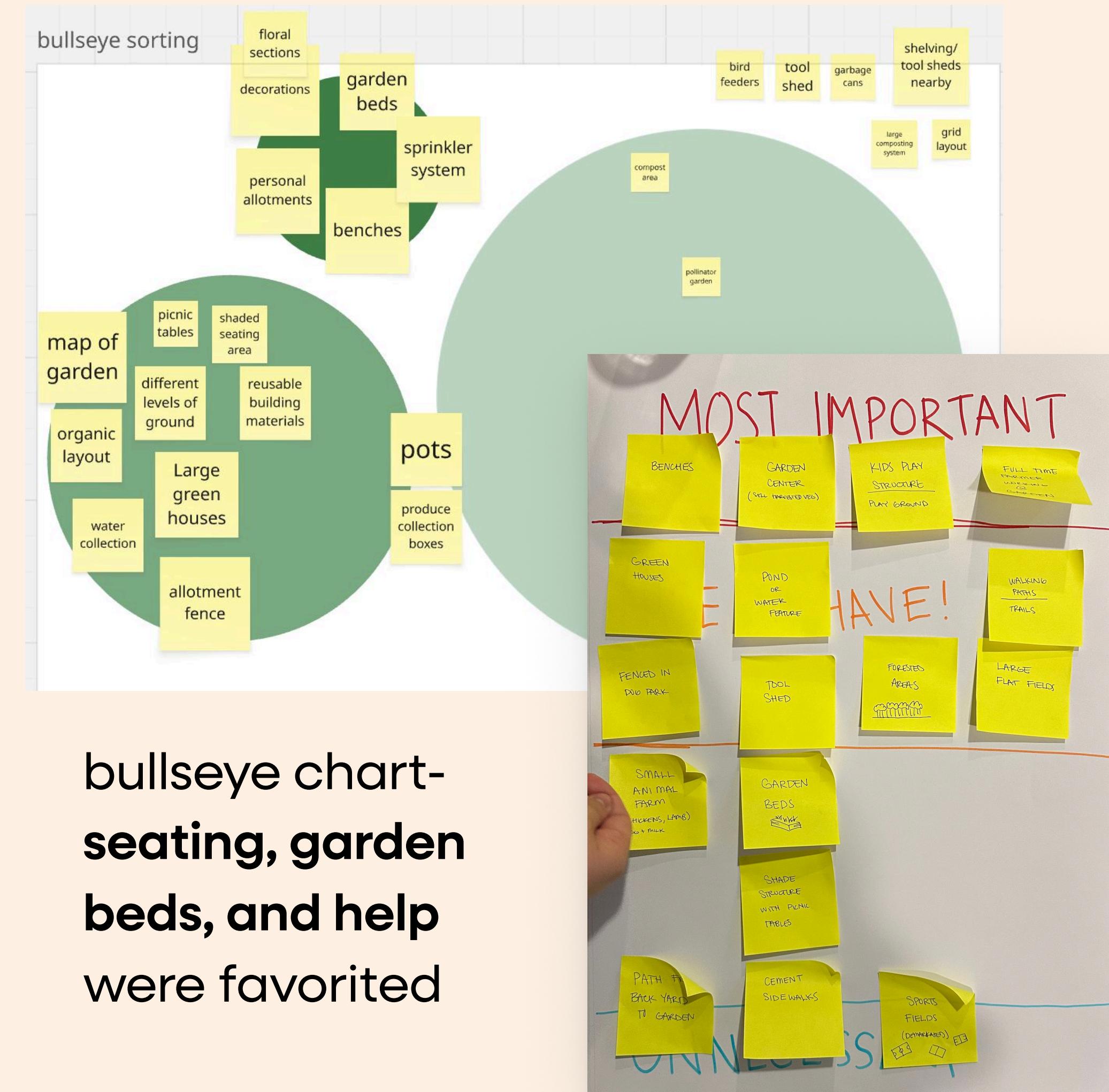
developing smaller  
interactions/sections

Adding plants to garden

Visualizing materials  
+  
user testing

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# USER TESTING



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## round 1 (blind testing)



- Understood it was to connect with nature but didn't read as a garden.
- Didn't understand the scale of objects

## round 2 (single feature)

- The organic shapes were more inviting
- Want different ways to introduce the garden
- Too many options in service



## round 3 (concept testing)

### City Break Project

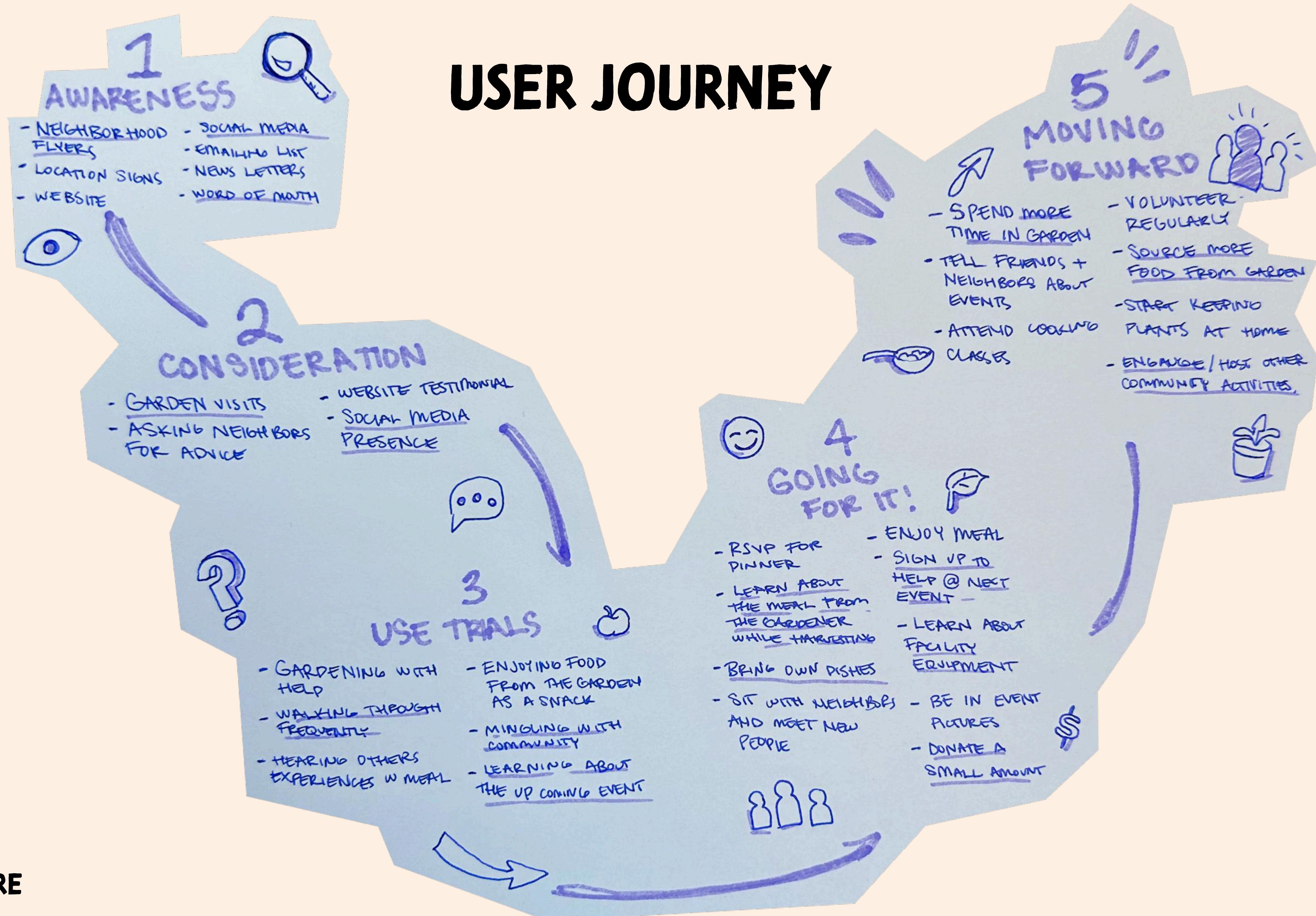
City break is a **food center and garden within a neighborhood** in Detroit Michigan (or other urban spaces). The large community garden is open to the area as well as sources the ingredients for a **large gathering held 2 times a month**. This gathering is put on for the neighboring families to enjoy a meal curated by the chefs working within the Center.

The gathering is intended to

- provide a low cost exposure of clean food to families,
- Introduce learning around agriculture and bio diversity
- Promote community bonding across the neighborhood.

- needs refinement of how it is facilitated.
- more ways to add sustainable behaviours
- engage community more, tailor experience

# USER JOURNEY





# ENVIRONMENTAL BENCHMARKS

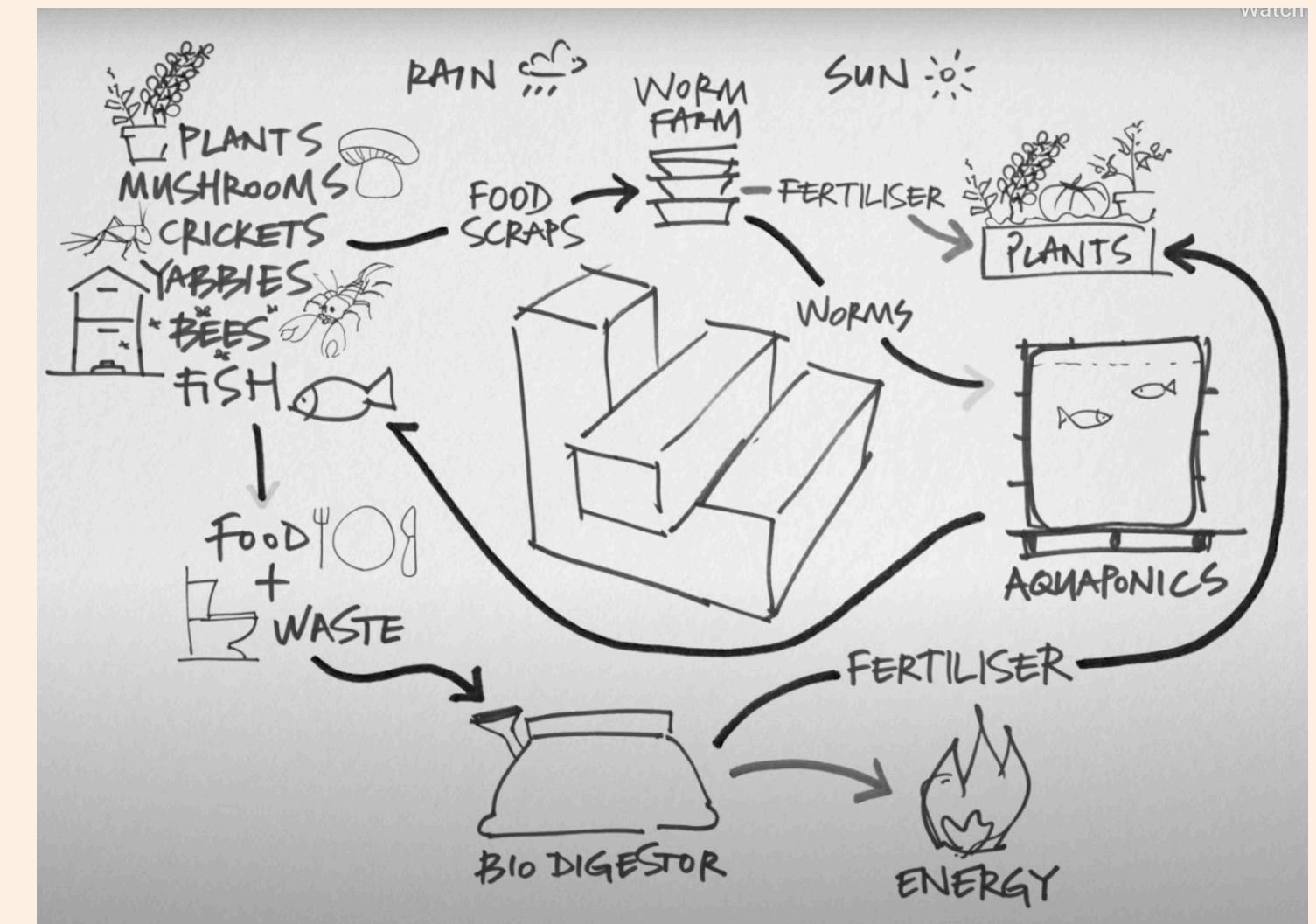
Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

**The Future Foods System** was a benchmark that James offered to me. They are a shining example of changing the idea of **excess or remnants from waste to fuel**. I am borrowing their building materials and closed eco system to influence users behaviours as well as keep the centre as close to zero waste as possible.

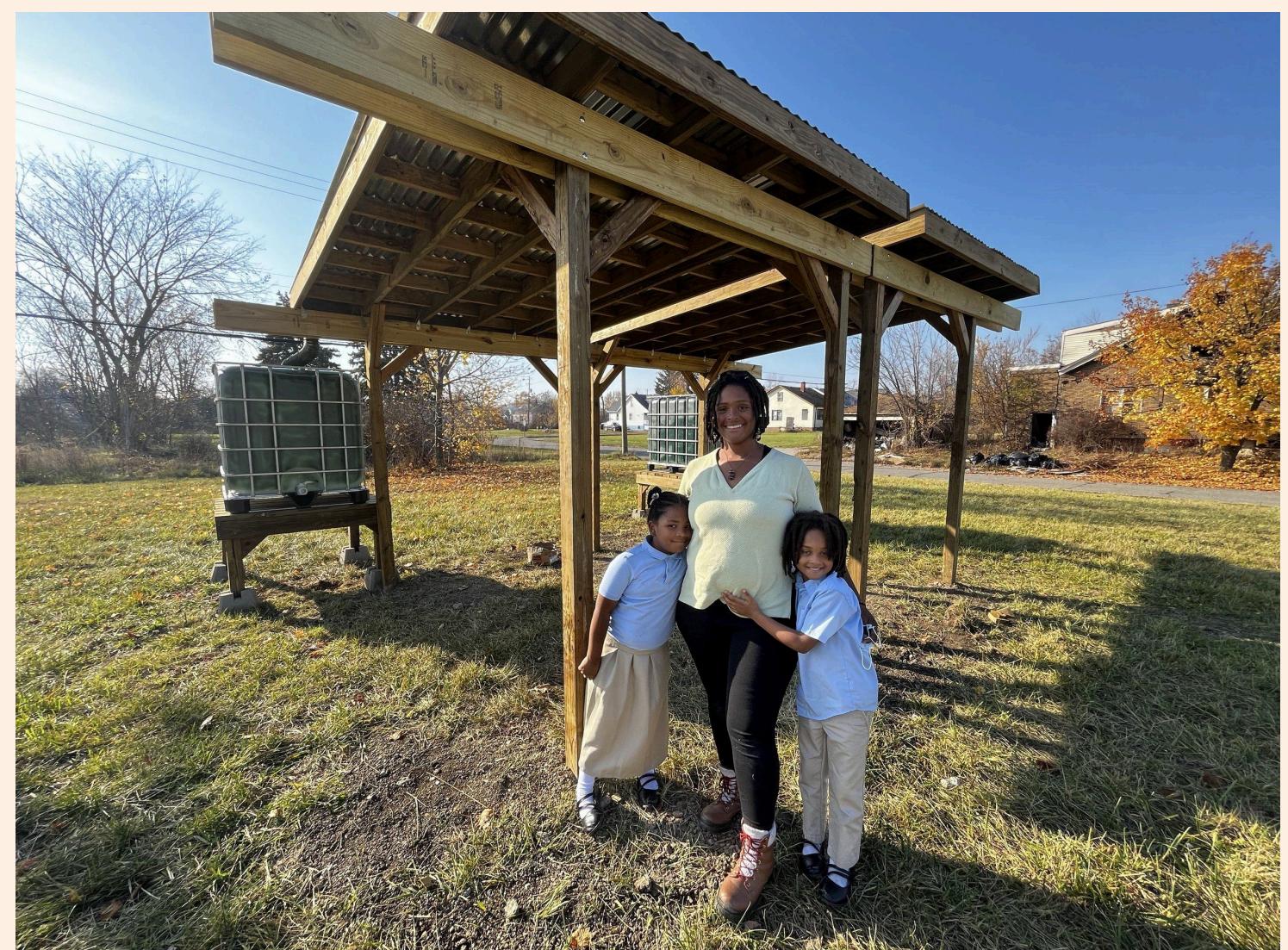
Joost Baker's drawing to outline his closed system

Additionally, **The water capture system** used by **Keep Growing Detroit** inspired me to think about utilising resources that are freely provided by the Earth. Doing this effectively cuts down the water bill, informs the local community of their agency, and provides clean water.

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KGD family in front of a newly installed water capture system





# ENVIRONMENTAL BENCHMARKS

Make cities and human settlements  
inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

I found this benchmark too late, I wish I considered the betterment of the land through a specific benchmark while ideating. I assumed that Gardening would by default improve the land.

My material choices within the garden were always going to be recycled materials. However, **Lafayette Greens** bought the land where an office building was being demolished. They **salvaged materials from the building to use in the garden**, adding meaning and circularity to the project.

I would invite residents of the neighbourhood to **donate decorations or materials** to make the garden theirs + reduce harm of building.



Lafayette Greens, Detroit, MI, USA

“Some 200 plants -- including vegetables, herbs, flowers, heirloom fruit trees, vines, and berries -- add biodiverse habitat for pollinators like bees and butterflies back into the urban environment.”



# POLITICAL BENCHMARKS

In 2021, 69% of households in Detroit were reported as food insecure. Alongside grocery stores going out of business, Detroit has been a food desert for too long. Sow & Share works towards equality of mental and physical wellness through the teaching of food growing. Bringing fresh produce to neighbourhoods that are in food deserts addresses the systemic racism within past American redlining. Satisfying the first tier of Maslow's pyramid elevates residents to focus on other aspects of life.

**Growing Justice** is an organisation that focuses on funding growing projects across Underdeveloped tribes and regions of the US. Their main focus is **equitable food procurement**.

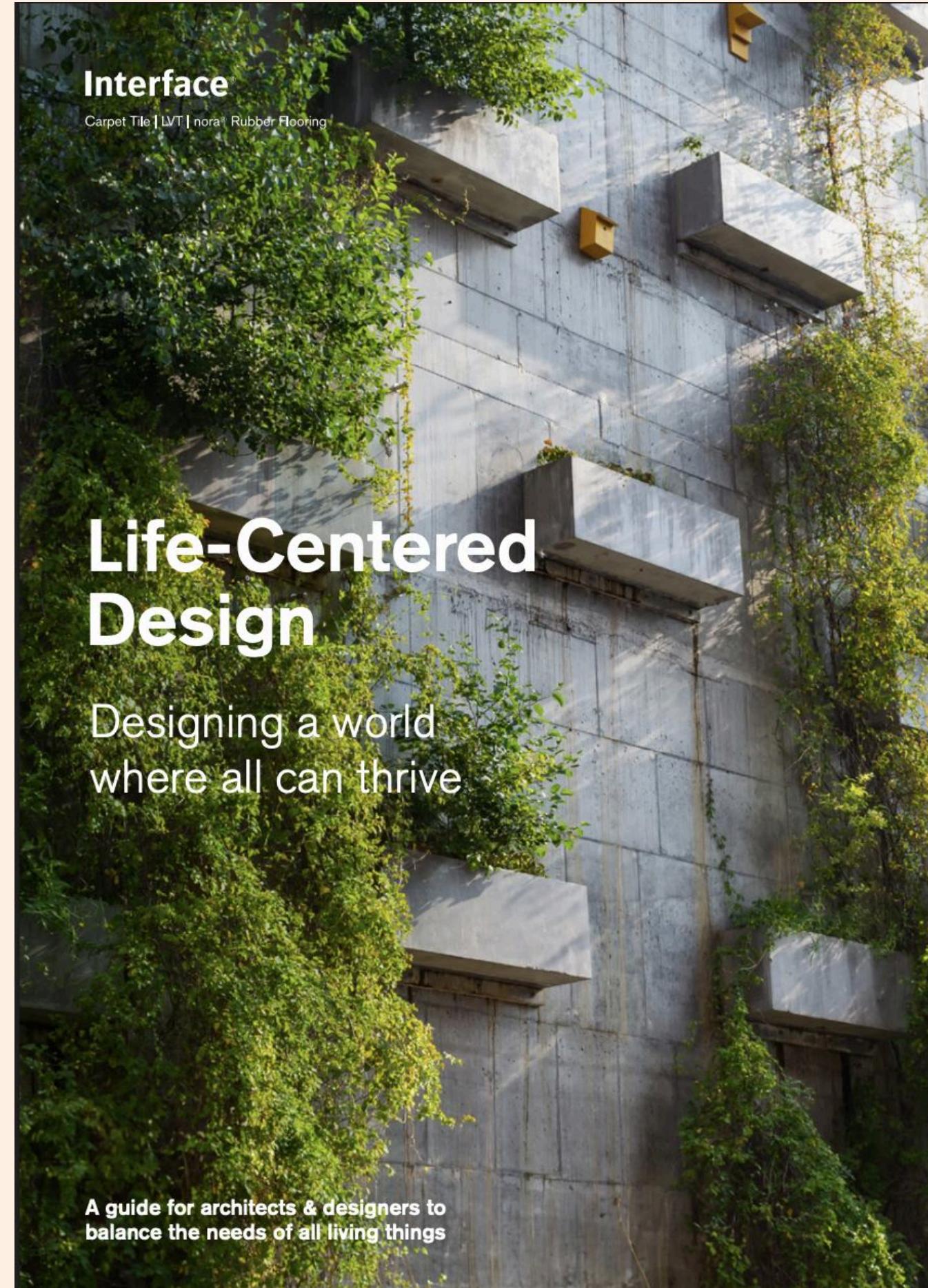


End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

**Ayurveda** is an Indigenous medicine practice from India. This practice focuses on holistic wellness and balancing the body, mind, and spirit. **Ritucharya** is the particular practice that narrows in on what bodies need to eat as the seasons change. Connecting back to indigenous practices provides links to culture and (in this case) increases Individual agency in health.



# POLITICAL BENCHMARKS



**SOW & SHARE**

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture





# SOCIAL/BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

**WEEKLY PROGRAMME**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
10:00-12:00 Composting	09:30-10:30 Tai Chi - Beginners Donation £10/month.	10:00-12:00 Composting
13:30-15:30 Sewing & Embroidery by WM College - FULLY BOOKED	10:30-11:30 Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00 Sewing & Embroidery by WM College - FULLY BOOKED
	11:00-13:00 Walking football for 50+	12:00-13:00 Chair Yoga
	14:30-16:30 Vegetarian cooking with Jacqui	12:00-13:00 Embroidery & Social support Collab with Mind in Camden
		12:00-13:00 Gardening session
		13:00 - 14:00 Community lunch
		14:00 - 15:30 Illustration Class

**calthorpe community garden**

[www.calthorpecommunitygarden.org.uk](http://www.calthorpecommunitygarden.org.uk)  
@calthorpecommunitygarden  
Tel.: 020 7837 8019  
258-274 Grays Inn Rd. London WC1X 8LH



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**36%**

reduction of risk factors of dementia through horticultural therapy



Improves motor skills  
Improves sleep  
Reduces agitation  
Improves self-esteem

I am taking inspiration from **Calthorpe Community Garden** in creating an activity based around the garden to bring people together. I am expanding on their practice by downsizing. Their Garden offers dozens of activities to participate in and it can be overwhelming for users to chose where to start. Additionally **Eldergrow** uses small doses of connection with nature to improve the mental wellbeing of elderly residents. I aim to improve physical and mental health by facilitating access to community centred around regenerative growing and eating.

Gardens belong to everyone.



# SOCIAL/BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

I am taking inspiration from **The Long Table** in creating an open opportunity for community members to gather and enjoy shared space/ shared experience. While the activity is extracting resources from the earth, it is more focused on hands on teaching. Sow & Share aims to regenerate knowledge as well as the local environment through practice.



**SOW & SHARE**

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

It takes further inspiration from Earth day parties that **Megan H.** Throws with her community. Guest bring home cooked food and their own dishes to the meal. No plastic and no water loss when cleaning up. Megan shares small ways in which people can add a more planet friendly approaches to their daily lives.



# REFLECTIONS

The biggest obstacle I faced in making my project sustainable was trying to cover all bases. I went to large scale with my project and that lead to things slipping through the cracks. I **wasn't very critical with material choices**, I thought repurposed was going to make up all the materials- but that is a half asses umbrella term. I paid much more attention to the sustainability of the Sow & Share system and life of the garden.

**I am most proud of how I stuck with the project. It was really difficult to see this through, 100% daunting to take on so much work.**

**I learned an immense amount about sustainability, product design methods, and most importantly how to user test!!**  
I was placed in a very uncomfortable position compared to home and **I can confidently say I did my absolute best.**

Now that I've completed the work...

I wish that I pushed further in learning about materials and sustainable fabrication.

Additionally, I would like to rework certain areas of the garden to reflect the specific needs of the environment im adding too. I don't know what plants are dying in the area, I didn't look into the wildlife I could encourage. I could have integrated more nature for natures sake rather than nature that humans directly benefit from.