

MAJOR REVISION TO ORIGINAL PROPOSAL

SUBMITTED TO SEATTLE GARDEN CLUB FOR A CENTENNIAL GARDEN AT OCCIDENTAL SQUARE

From a New Garden in an Existing Park to a New Town Square for Seattle

The original invitation to submit a proposal for to the Seattle Garden Club to fund a significant garden feature in Occidental Square triggered Seattle Parks Foundation to contract with Shannon Nichol at Gustafson Guthrie Nichol. We asked her to help us figure out what a garden element would look like and how it could be designed to work with other planned features such as the “Timber Family Pavilion” (by Olson-Kundig) and a children’s play-area (by the Berger Partnership).



From the start, however, it was clear to Shannon that her job was not to arrange these particular elements in a pleasing way but to think about the whole site in relation to the rest of the neighborhood, including the old and new architecture that encloses it as well as the new Central Waterfront (James Corner) to which site will be connected directly via Main Street.

What this means is that we are now looking at a far larger project with a timeline that extends well beyond 2017.

Although Shannon and her team have only worked up two very preliminary concepts for “Occidental Square” it is easy to see in her sketches something far more transformational than was envisioned when we first submitted a proposal for your consideration.

What this also means is that the original request to the Seattle Garden Club is moot. We cannot say what a garden element will look like or where it will go, or even how the idea of “a garden” will ultimately translated in the new vocabulary of Occidental Square. We can’t say when the Square will be complete, contingent as that is upon a whole matrix of public vetting processes as well as the successful completion of a multi-million dollar capital campaign.

In short, there is NOT—at this time—a specific garden project in Occidental Square for the Seattle Garden Club to support.

But while this much-expanded project may no longer qualify in your consideration for siting a Centennial Garden, we are excited to offer you a preview of what could very well be—as Shannon says—one of the great town squares in America.

