

**Proposal for the City of Hamilton**  
*New Commercial Development*  
118-128 Wilson St  
Riverview District



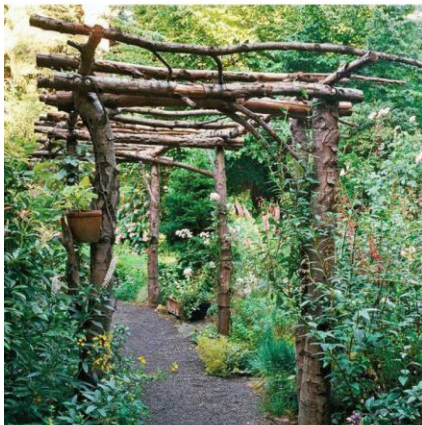
The following proposal is prepared by:

Laurana Wong  
222 High St, Apt 210  
Hamilton OH 45011  
[LauranaWong@gmail.com](mailto:LauranaWong@gmail.com)  
937-414-2413

## Introduction

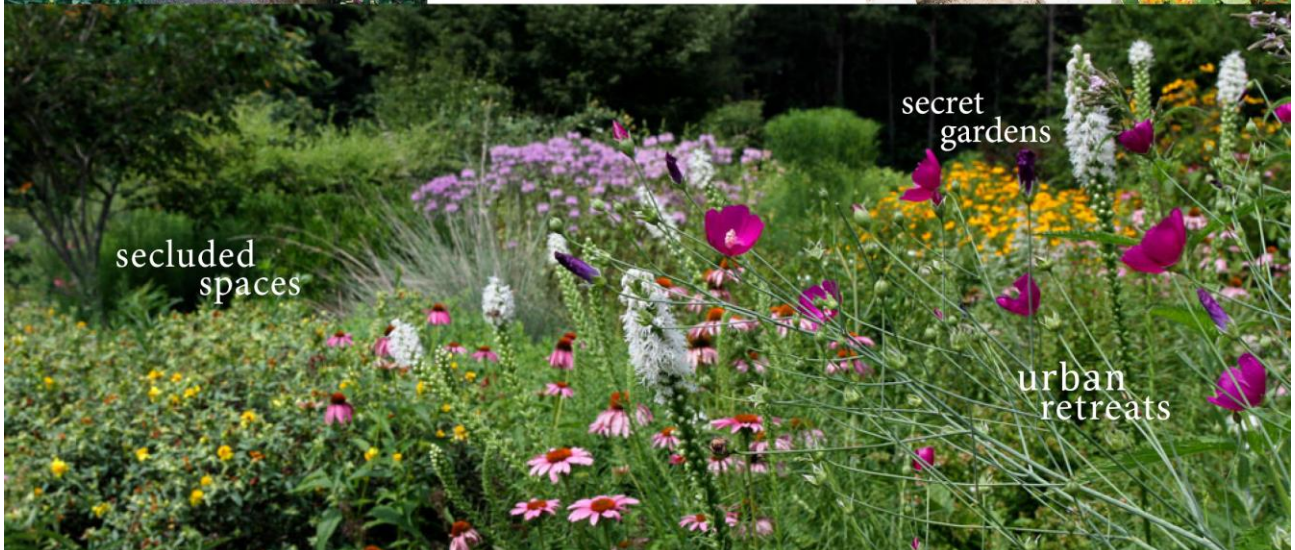
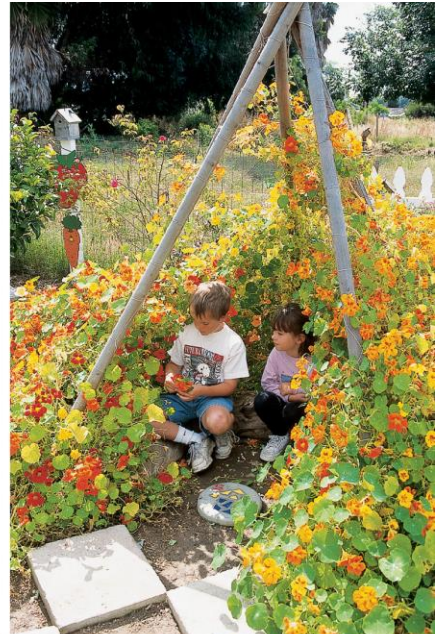
Nature engenders generosity, care, and compassion. Recent studies show that people surrounded by nature are better stewards of the future. They are more cooperative and more creative. Being in nature also increases vitality. Harvard Medical School reports that connecting with nature reduces stress, anxiety, and depression.

Downtown Hamilton is rich with public green spaces. These spaces are ideal for congregating, community, and inclusive activities. We would like to fill a niche and offer Hamilton *private green spaces*. These spaces would be ideal for seclusion, solitude, and exclusive activities. Each space would be reserved for patrons and rented at rates scaled for individuals and small groups.



Flora

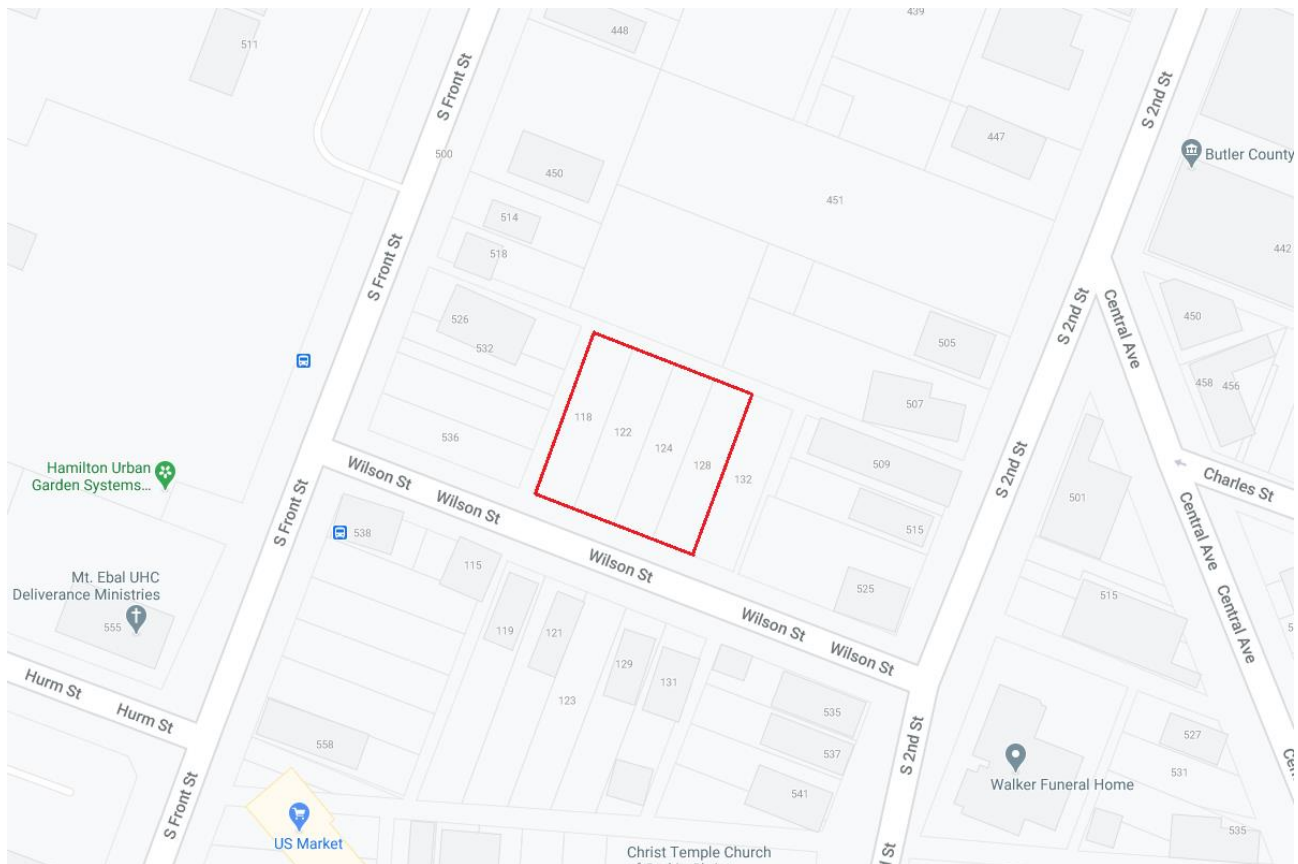
nature rooms



We would like to develop vacant land owned by the City of Hamilton to create private green spaces for public rental.

### **Property Overview**

118-128 Wilson Street is between Second and Front streets in the Riverview district, near Hamilton Urban Garden Systems (HUGS) and Walker Funeral Home. The property includes parcels P6421007000049, P6421007000050, P6421007000051, and P6421007000052.



The total area of the combined parcels is 0.32 acres (13,939 sqft). The land is currently zoned R-4 for multi-family residences, and it is adjacent to vacant, wooded, and commercial properties.

We propose a rezoning of the lots to B-1 (neighborhood business district) and a purchase price of \$2,000 for the land. A case for rezoning is provided under [Special Conditions/Assumptions](#).

## Project Narrative and Design Concept

The Wilson site would house an array of immersive gardens for patrons to rent by the hour. Each garden or “nature room” would offer different amenities and different environments. Each room would be private for the duration of a rental.

Uses for the gardens include self-care, photography, lounging, “mommy and me” outings, lunch breaks, special dates, marriage proposals, yoga, power napping, plein-air painting, and meditation.

Proposed nature rooms include:

1. **The Sun Room:** A living room of open grass surrounded by a thousand sunflowers. (A 1490 sqft installation.)



2. **The Wildflower Spiral:** A stroll through 7-foot tall native wildflowers, butterflies, and hummingbirds to a clearing in the center of a wild meadow. (A 1046 sqft installation.)
3. **The Patio:** A view of the season’s showiest flowers from a patio of woven willow trees. (A 365 sqft installation.)

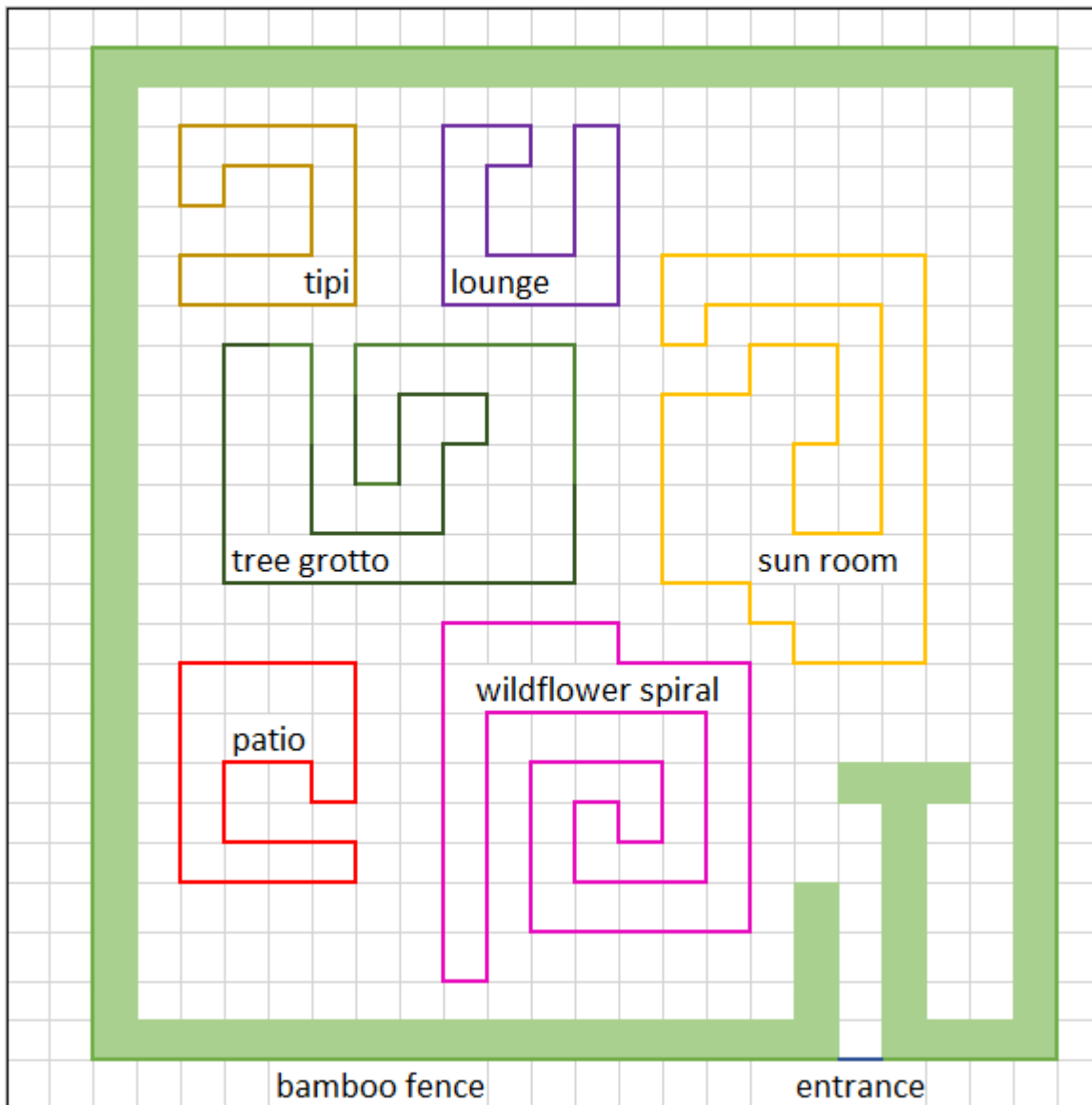
4. **The Tree Grotto:** A woodland refuge with forest flowers and water flowing inside a sculptural canopy. (A 1026 sqft installation.)
5. **The Tipi:** A rustic prairie hideaway adorned with flowering vines. (A 195 sqft installation.)



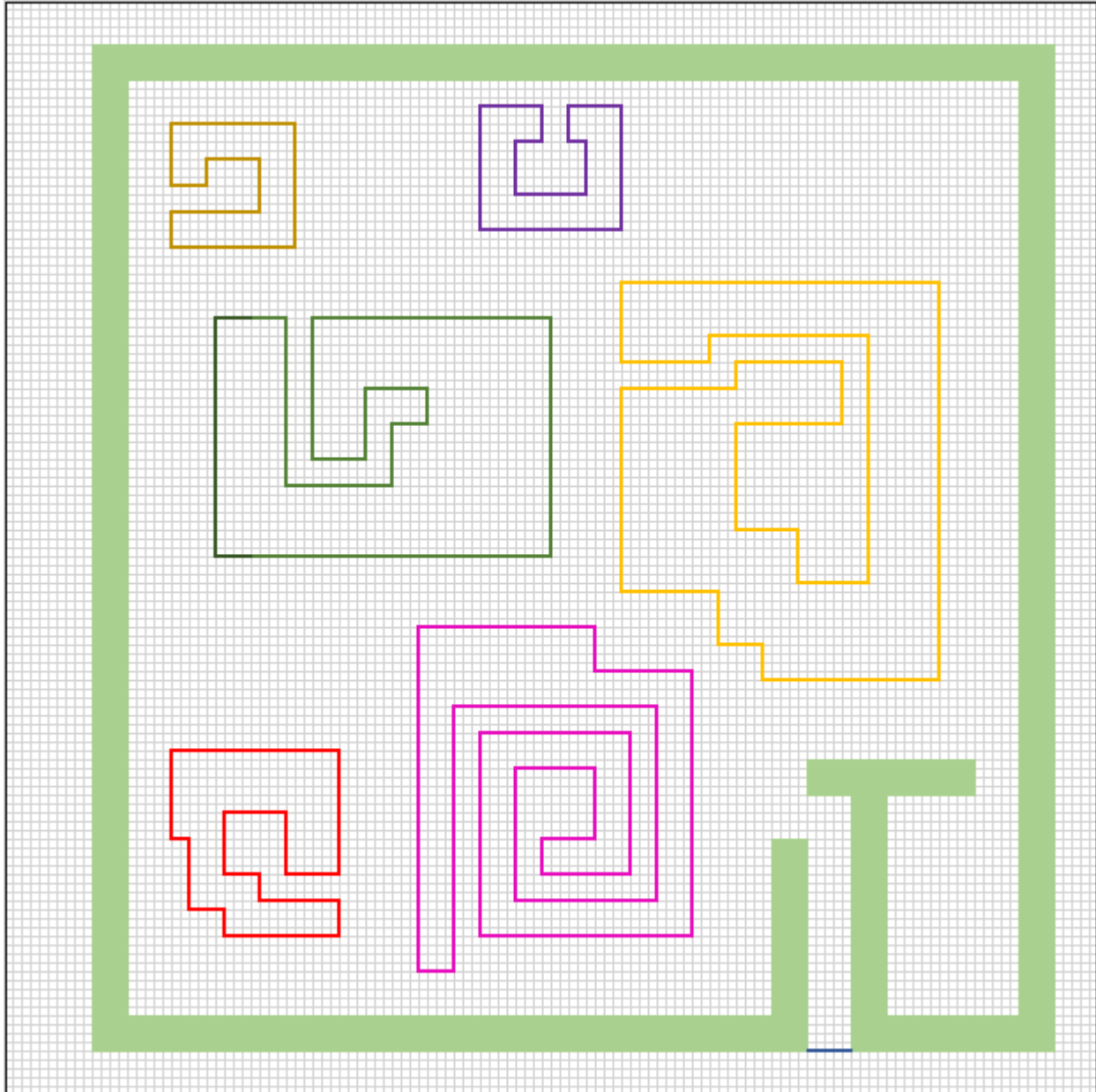
6. **The Lounge:** A chaise nestled among flowers, branches, and the scent of growing lavender. (A 224 sqft installation.)
7. **The Entrance:** A gate of pink and red roses flanked by a living fence of 9-foot bamboo.



A site layout of the proposed nature rooms:



A scaled layout (1 square = 1 foot):



## **Project Timeline**

### **Year 1 – Breaking ground**

During year 1, we would acquire city permits and begin establishing plant life. Notable planned activities include:

- Observing the site and gathering data
- Meeting the neighbors and working with the City of Hamilton
- Installing water and irrigation systems
- Refining the site design and preparing the site
- Installing and containing the living bamboo fence
- Establishing perennial beds and planting perennials
- Establishing annual beds and planting cover crops

### **Year 2 – Nurturing and establishing**

During year 2, we would expand plant life and establish the nature rooms. Notable planned activities include:

- Building organic matter and improving soil health
- Growing test annuals
- Nurturing perennial growth
- Creating nature room structures
- Building entrance gate

### **Year 3 – Opening for business**

By year 3, we would rent nature rooms and host events. The project would also receive press coverage. Notable planned activities include:

- Testing booking and payment systems
- Growing a full array of annuals
- Furnishing nature rooms
- Marketing and outreach via Facebook, website, and open-air markets

### **Year 4 – Refining and growing**

By year 4, we would increase nature room rentals and refine operations. Notable planned activities include:

- Replanting, maintaining, and enhancing nature rooms
- Refining operations to increase efficiency
- Expanding social media outreach to include Instagram

### **Year 6 – Updating and exploring**

By year 6, we would host a garden design competition, renovate nature rooms, explore cold-weather rentals, and begin educational outreach.

### **Year 7 – Covering costs**

By year 7, we would recoup startup and recurring costs.



## Financial Summary

Startup costs are estimated at \$25,963. Recurring yearly costs are estimated at \$4,506. These estimates do not include self-performed labor. Major line items include:

- Land, soil, and rock: \$4,075
- Seeds and plants: \$9,720
- Growing supplies: \$5,947

The source of project funding is personal savings. To see a spreadsheet of starting costs, [go to the startup budget](#). To see a spreadsheet of recurring costs, [go to the yearly budget](#). The minimum investment in the property would be \$52,999 in costs and \$280,000 in self-performed labor.

The base cost of renting a nature room would be \$23. A whole site rental would be \$138, and the entry fee for a basic event would be \$12.

Plant life would take at least 2 years to establish, and rental operations would start on year 3. We expect to recoup costs within the first 5 years of operations (by year 7). To see the financial analysis and a fifteen-year cash flow projection, [go to the project pro forma](#).

## Special Conditions/Assumptions

### A Case for rezoning 118-128 Wilson from residential to commercial

The proposed land is zoned residential, but it is adjacent to commercial, vacant, and wooded lots. To the west is Elk's Pure Gold Lodge. To the north are trees and vacant land. To the east is a fenced vacant lot. The properties on the south side of Wilson Street are residential.



We believe a commercial green space would be feasible on the Wilson site.

#### Plenty of street parking

The entire north side of Wilson is typically 83-94% car free, with space available for 13-17 parked cars.

#### Relatively low additional traffic

For the first three years of operations, we would expect traffic on Wilson to increase by an average of 1-2 cars per day with a peak of 10-12 cars for a monthly event. After six years of operations, average expected traffic would be 9-12 cars per day.

#### Low noise levels

Sounds generated from inside the site would be dampened and/or muted by the 4-foot thick living bamboo fence. Sounds from outside the fence would include car entries and exits, patrons coming and going, birdsong, and rustling bamboo.

#### Improved air quality

Bamboo produces 35% more oxygen than trees and consumes more carbon dioxide than any other plant. The living bamboo fence surrounding the property would help purify the neighborhood air.

#### Rezoning from R-4 to B-1

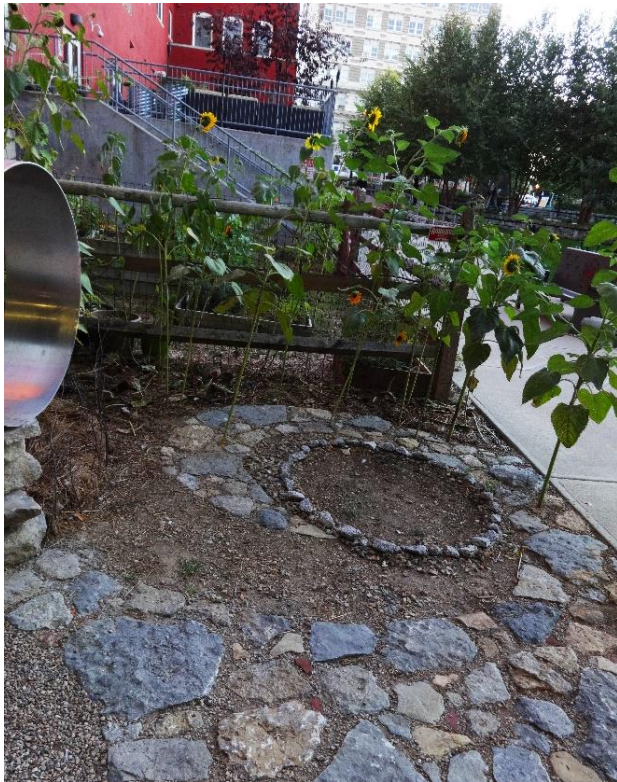
We propose a rezoning of the Wilson site from R-4 (multi-family residences) to B-1 (neighborhood business district).

## **Similar Completed Projects**

The developer has nearly 18 years' experience as a working artist (including installation art); 17 years as a developer, organizer, and entrepreneur; 14 years in event creation and hosting; 9 years in project planning and scheduling; 6 years in social media and web marketing; 4 years in outdoor flower production; 4 years in plant identification; and 3 years in ecology, plant health, and sustainable growing practices.

Completed development projects include [The Sideshow](#), an 8,000 sqft installation-based art show, and [Sing Dayton](#), a brand-building experiential outreach project. Last year with Artspace Lofts downtown, the developer created the [Art Garden](#), a public park grown from an abandoned gravel lot.

*Wildness*  
dwell in nature



## **Project Team**

Laurana Wong is the developer and owner of the project. She would complete much of the work and would hire labor, gather help, and engage with partners and sponsors.

The first supporting partner of the project is David Riggs, director of the Butler County Small Business Development Center. Mallory Greenham, small business specialist in Hamilton's Economic Development Department, has also been integral in bringing the project to light.

## **Compliance with Development Objectives & Competitive Requirements**

The developer has the experience, the financial capacity, and the organizational ability to successfully complete the project in a timely, sustainable, and achievable way.

A private green space on the Wilson site would offer invigoration, well-being, and recreation to visitors and downtown residents. We believe it could expand the range of downtown living and draw attention to the city. We also believe it would enhance the cultural landscape of Hamilton and provide a unique and valuable service.