

# SALT LAKE CITY CORPORATION

LYN CRESWELL  
DIRECTOR OF MANAGEMENT SERVICES

DIVISION OF SUSTAINABILITY  
OPEN SPACE LAND PROGRAM



## CITY COUNCIL TRANSMITTAL

  
David Everitt, Chief of Staff  
Ralph Becker, Mayor

Date Received: 1/16/2009  
Date sent to Council: 1/16/2009

**TO:** Salt Lake City Council

**DATE:** January 16, 2009

**FROM:** Lyn Creswell, Management Services Director

**SUBJECT:** Sugar House Draw Project Update

### STAFF CONTACT:

Emy Storheim 535-7730  
Open Space Lands Program Manager

Vicki Bennett 535-6540  
Director of Sustainability



**DOCUMENT TYPE:** Update

**RECOMMENDATION:** City Council should receive a project briefing by designers and city staff. The County should begin Development Review Team (DRT) process for project, interlocal agreements should be developed for all City property included in project and any press conferences should be scheduled after the acquisition of Draw site has been made.

**BUDGET IMPACT:** Salt Lake City Council has approved \$110,000 of Salt Lake City Open Space fund for this acquisition.

### BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:

#### ACQUISITION

Salt Lake County Open Space Trust and Salt Lake City Open Space Lands Program are partnering to purchase a parcel critical for the planned connection of the PRATT Trail under 1300 East. The site is located on the west side of 1300 East between 2100 South and Wilmington Ave. This acquisition will provide egress for the connection between Sugar House Park and Hidden Hollow Park

An additional appraisal has been ordered to determine the value of an access easements identified during title work for the acquisition. There is a perpetual easement on the acquisition site held by Craig Mecham, property owner to the south. Mecham has expressed concerns about the project and potential impacts to his building and financial interests. Because of strained relations between the City and Mecham Salt Lake County is taking the lead in negotiating the

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purchase of the access easement as well as a construction easements. The County Project Manager has verbally committed to absorbing potential additional expenses associated with securing Mecham's easements.

A final purchase price agreement with Woodbury is on hold until the value of access easements held by Mecham is determined. Woodbury has offered to participate in meeting with Mecham and County regarding access easement resolution and plans to send a second draft of the purchase agreement to City review on January 16, 2009.

### DESIGN

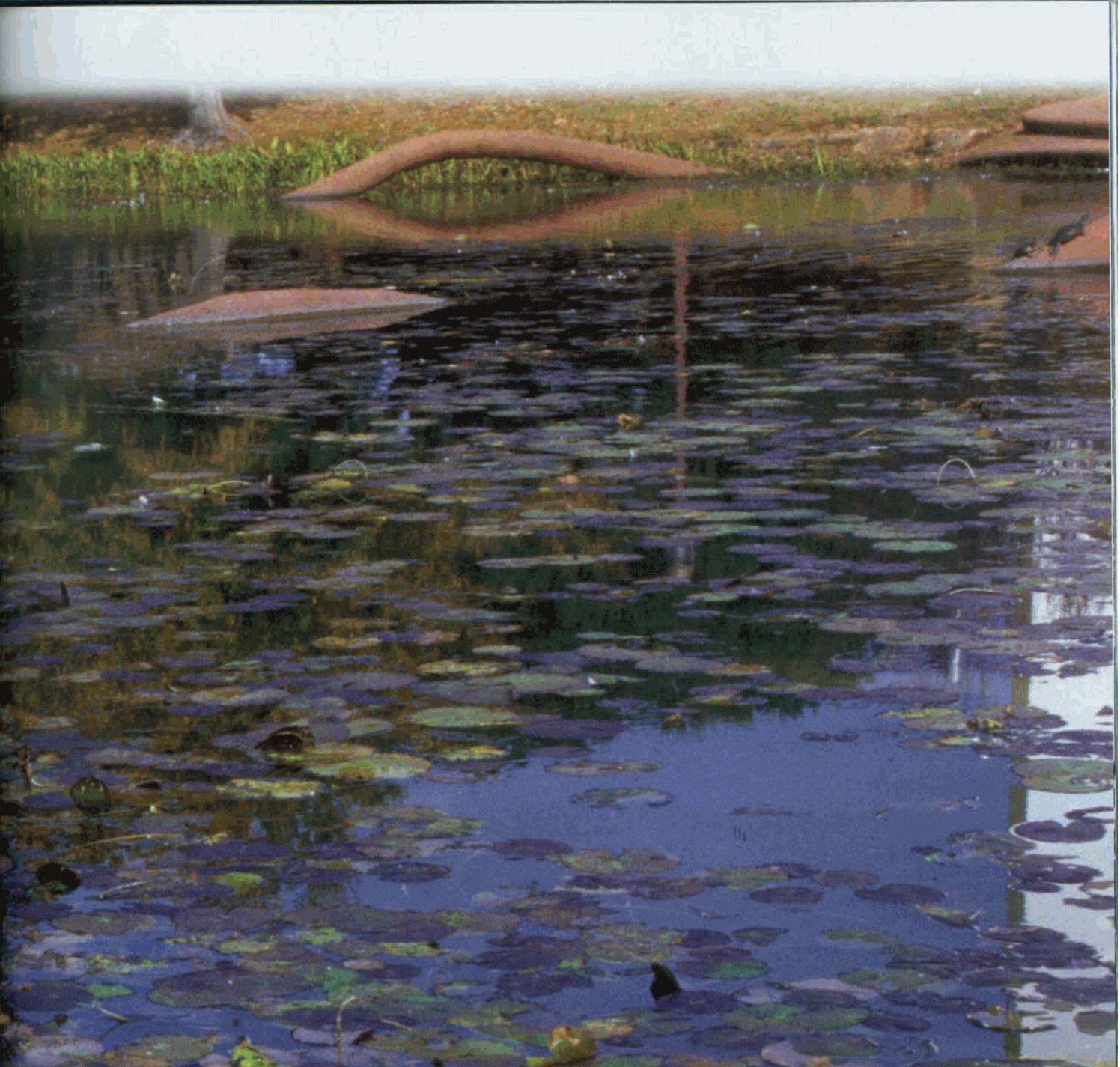
An initial review was conducted by an engineering review team of construction documents at 90% completion. A number of issues were identified by City engineering and landscape architecture staff. The project should begin Development Review Team (DRT) process to work through issues for a smooth permitting process and ensure a design that can be maintained to standards that reflect well on the City and County.

### CONSTRUCTION and MAINTENANCE

Interlocal agreements are needed between the County, City and UDOT for project development and long term maintenance on all City owned parcels. This will include Parleys Historic Nature Park, 13<sup>th</sup> East, a portion of Sugar House Park and others. An interlocal has been developed for the acquisition site which defines the County as responsible for maintenance for that site.

**PUBLIC PROCESS:** Benefits of this project include increased public access to open space as a direct result of the purchase and construction of the PRATT trail connection and 1300 East underpass. This trail will provide alternative transportation and recreational opportunities to pedestrian and cyclists seeking east-west routes through the city, connecting the Bonneville Shoreline Trail to the Jordan River Trail.

This acquisition supports the implementation of the PRATT Trail which has been developed and vetted by PRATT Board, Salt lake County Parks and Recreation and design consultants. Many presentations have been made to a number of groups including but not limited to: Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County Opens Space Boards, Sugar House Community Councils, Sugar House Park Authority Board.



# Nature

CHOREOGRAPHING

**Fair Park Lagoon:** Patricia Johanson's Thought Provoking Landscapes

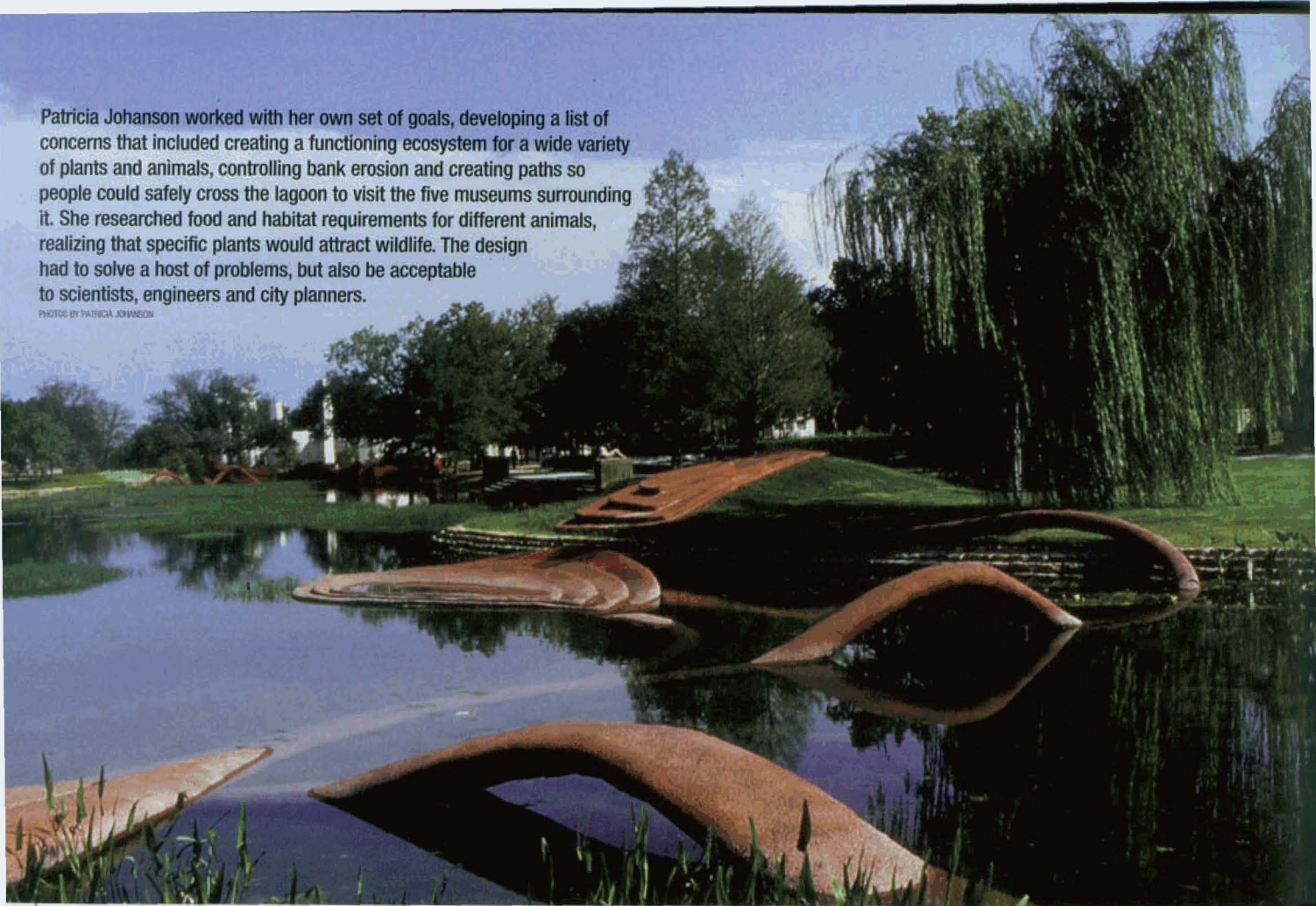
*An Interview by Leslie McGuire, managing editor*



**Above:** The unusual forms in Fair Park Lagoon and the vibrant terra cotta color of the paths are visible from a great distance, especially against the brighter green plants. The design may be too flashy for some tastes, but it arouses curiosity and performs its function of drawing visitors into a confrontation with nature. Over the water, the sculpture disappears from underfoot and visitors shift their focus to a dragonfly, fairy shrimp, turtles, spawning fish or a water lily.

Patricia Johanson worked with her own set of goals, developing a list of concerns that included creating a functioning ecosystem for a wide variety of plants and animals, controlling bank erosion and creating paths so people could safely cross the lagoon to visit the five museums surrounding it. She researched food and habitat requirements for different animals, realizing that specific plants would attract wildlife. The design had to solve a host of problems, but also be acceptable to scientists, engineers and city planners.

PHOTOS BY PATRICIA JOHANSON



**P**atricia Johanson's design for Fair Park Lagoon in Dallas, Texas recreated a freshwater swamp in the middle of the city's largest park. Previously known as Dallas's "old mud hole," the project was designed as a functional flood basin as well as home to plants, animals, including snails, clams, freshwater sponges and shrimp, fish, reptiles, waterfowl, birds and insects: all "decorative" members of the food chain. Landscaping was conceived of as "food."



**Above:** Ducks and turtles sun themselves on emergent parts of the sculpture, safe from predatory dogs and enthusiastic children. These animals are not captives held for the enjoyment of human spectators.

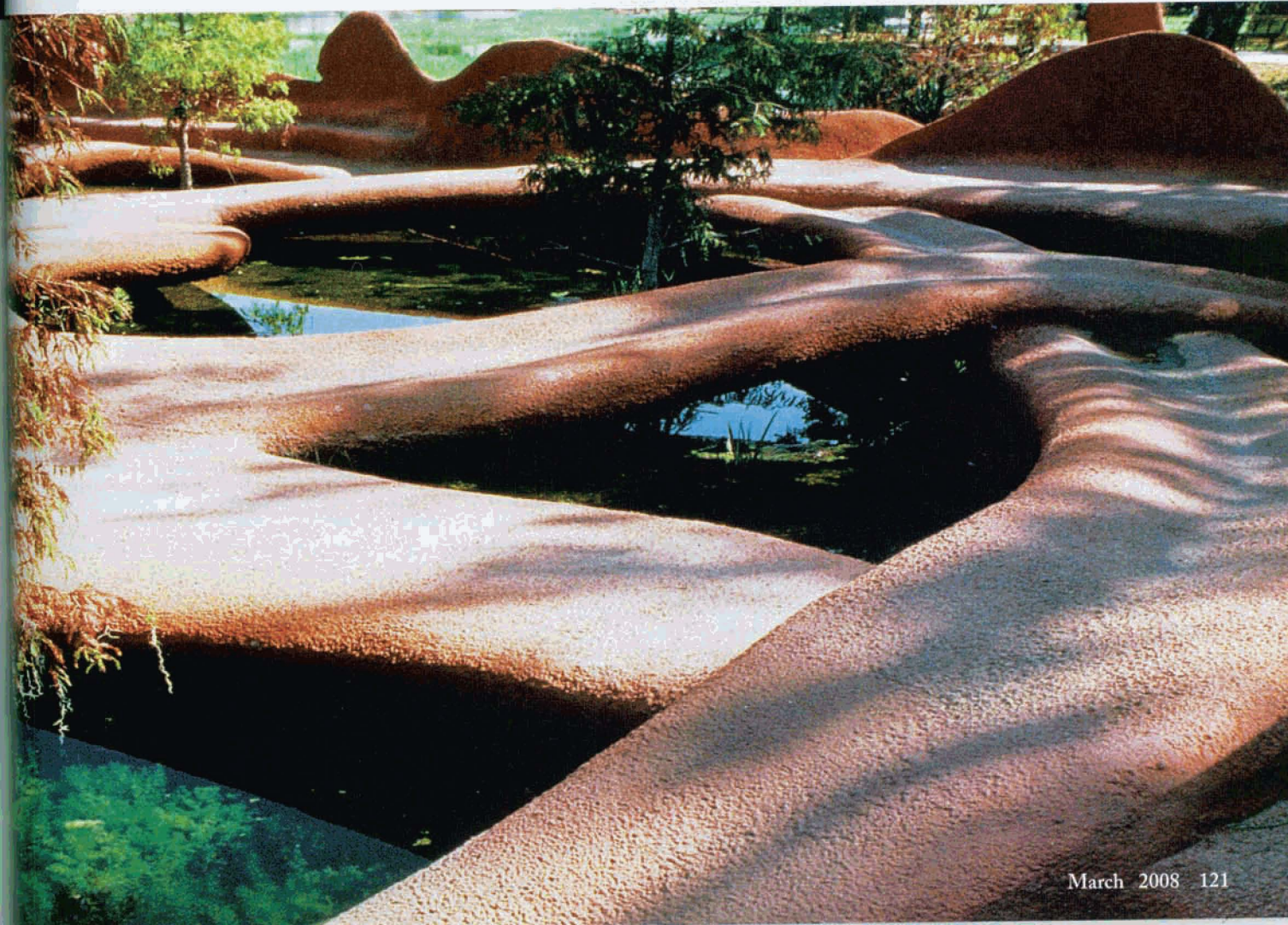
"The artist is the one who gives form, but it's not just about the optimal form. More importantly, it's about creating something that works." Patricia Johanson was hired to give form to Fair Park Lagoon, however she felt the design had to be about life not about art. She had no background as a landscape architect or as a landscape designer, but she started naturally designing landscapes. "You really have to understand what each aspect and part of the site wants. There doesn't need to be a concept of nature, necessarily. The idea, instead, is not just designing for visual effect, you want to design for the animals and what eats those animals," says Johanson, and it carries through to all the wastewater projects she does. "When you get down to this tiny level, once you

understand the life cycle, that's what keeps things in check. It is the golden mean. The harmony of the golden mean isn't just a visual harmony, it's a living harmony."

"For years I had tried to put my ideas forward by building my own projects, exhibiting drawings in art galleries and museums, and lecturing at universities. Multi-million dollar commissions usually don't appear out of nowhere, yet Fair Park Lagoon illustrates both the complexity and the casual beginnings of many public art projects. In 1981, when I was first asked to redesign the lagoon, there was neither money nor community interest. Harry Parker, then Director of the Dallas Museum of Art, had seen my "Plant Drawings" in a New York art gallery. He

**Right:** Children, tourists and first time visitors run up and down the bridges and all over the sculpture, but repeat visitors know which places interest them and understand that exploration and discovery can occur in moments of quiet stasis. Visitors become creative participants in the process and most discover a vision of the design intelligence of nature—of which they are a part.

**Below:** The sculptural, curvilinear forms at varying gradients and heights force pedestrians to watch their step, making them more attentive to their surroundings. Initially, the sense that these are illogical, unpredictable forms, and even dangerous configurations, causes a constant referencing of the body to the landscape and greater mental alertness lest a threat appear. Regular visitors, on the other hand, know this as a benign landscape and come seeking solace from the pressures of urban life.



reasoned that if I could produce a new design for the lagoon, the Dallas Museum could exhibit the drawings and raise the money. There was no program and no budget. He just said, "Do what you think needs to be done."

"On my first visit to Dallas it was clear that the lagoon was environmentally degraded. The shoreline was eroding, and the water was murky. The Parks Department had been fertilizing the lawn, and every time it rained fertilizer would wash into the lagoon, causing algal bloom. A green slime covered the water. There was no food chain; there were hardly any plants, animals, or fish. Basically the lagoon was dead.

"People had no experience of the water, except that a number of children had fallen in and drowned. The lagoon had become a danger and an obstruction. A five-block body of water surrounded by museums, people had to walk all the way around it to get from one side to the other.

"I began to develop my own list of concerns, which included creating a functioning ecosystem for a wide variety of plants and animals. I also wanted to control bank erosion, and create paths so that people could cut across the lagoon. I began to do research on what different animals eat,

**"Instead of the imposed vision of the artist, the lagoon allows for the development of a multitude of subjective situations."**

because I knew that the right plants would attract wildlife. The project evolved from many different perspectives at once. I knew that the structures had to not only solve a host of environmental problems, but also had to be acceptable to scientists, engineers and city planners.

"Eventually I chose two native Texas plants as models for the sculpture. The Delta Duck-Potato (*Sagittaria platyphylla*) had a mass of twisted roots that I arranged to prevent water from eroding the shoreline, while spaces between the roots became microhabitats for plants, fish, turtles and birds. The roots were built as five-foot wide paths that people could walk out on, while thinner stems rose out of the water and became perches for birds. Leaves

## The Choreography of FAIR PARK LAGOON

By Patricia Johanson

**G**ardens are choreographed with paths that establish a pattern of movement through space much like dance notation. While others have described my sculptures as "paths" with the implication that an "ideal" series of tableaux or experiences will unfold in time and space, this is not the case. What attracts me are complex landscapes that have a life of their own.

Their designed structures are meant to lure visitors, frame the flow of nature and bring them into contact with the profuse phenomena of the natural world. The most important aspects of my landscapes, and the key to their success lie in the parts I do not design. Photographs focus on objects, but the real content of a landscape is everything nature has to offer. I want visitors to consider the minutiae of nature as well as the grand sweep of the intricate network of living relationships, which includes themselves.



**Left: "Sagittaria Platyphylla- Planting Plan.**

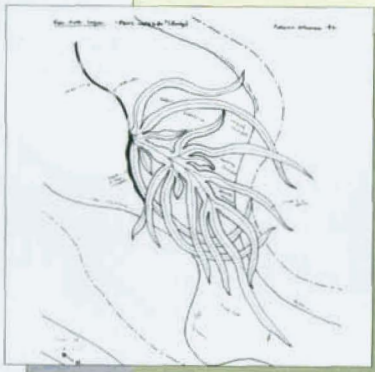
Since the north end of the lagoon was eroding at the rate of eight inches a year, this sculpture was placed so as to create a new protected shoreline. The leaf at the upper left acts as a bulwark. The sculpture is approximately 235 feet by 175 feet by 4 feet high. It mimics a plant known locally as "Delta Duck-potato because its fleshy root—used as a little bridge out to the existing island—is eaten by waterfowl. The tangled mass of walkable "paths" (the roots) moves through living organisms in natural aquatic communities.

**Right: Fair Park Lagoon: Site Location.**

(Lower left: Dallas Museum of Natural History; lower center: Dallas Museum of Fine Arts.) The



concept of "landscaping" has been translated into "biological restoration." By planting native emergents at both ends of the lagoon (establishing a littoral zone) and enlarging and balancing the food chain, plants and animals can be used not only aesthetically, as counterpoint to the sculpture, but also to create a functioning aquatic community that will clear up the water, reduce maintenance costs and provide an educational component for the museums.



**Left: Pteris Multifada (Bridge)—**The sculpture at the southern end of the lagoon is this Texas fern approximately 225 feet by 112 feet by 12 feet high. It becomes a "bridge" that creates its own landscape, with individual leaflets slightly arched or floating on the surface of the water and moving through different environments, so that colors, textures and the sense of the water are continuously changing.



**Above:** Because the structures are based on actual plants, pedestrians along the paths can follow the same curves and rhythms as the biological forms, repeating the pattern of the plants. This formal correspondence with biological structures provides an underlying order experienced first through the senses and the feet, and only later through the intellect.



**Right:** Fair Park Lagoon is really a swamp—a raw functioning ecology that people are normally afraid of. This art project affords people access to this environment so they can find out how wonderful a swamp really is. The lagoon is a living landscape that is always changing. It contains all the myriad details that allow such landscapes to evolve and survive.



**Left:** Paths, bridges, islands, overlooks and seating were incorporated into both monumental sculptures. Floating further out are the “leaves” which become islands for animals, thinner “stems” rising above the water form perches for birds, while other “roots” along the shore form step seating and overlooks for people.



further out in the lagoon became islands where animals could rest. Other leaves along the shore became step-seating and overlooks.

“The second sculpture at the opposite end of the lagoon was based on a Texas fern (*Pteris multifida*). The fern functions as a bridge — not a direct pathway over the water, but a network of crossovers, islands and stopping points. Individual leaflets are twisted to create the kinds of spaces I wanted, and the tip of the fern is a causeway surrounded by water lilies and irises. At one point I approached the staff of the Dallas Museum of Natural History with the idea of creating “living exhibits” in the lagoon itself, rather than having everything segregated in little glass cases. They were enthusiastic about the idea, and we began to work together.

“A letter from Walter R. Davis, Assistant Director of the Dallas Museum of Natural History, described the process. He wrote, ‘The weeks following your arrival were exciting for the scientific staff of the museum. There were lengthy discussions of the water quality of the Lagoon and the missing links in its deteriorating food chain. The environmental needs of turtles, fish, birds, and a host of native aquatic plants were outlined. Years of field work in Texas now paid off, as lists were compiled of the localities where native aquatic plants could be collected and transplanted into the refurbished lagoon.’

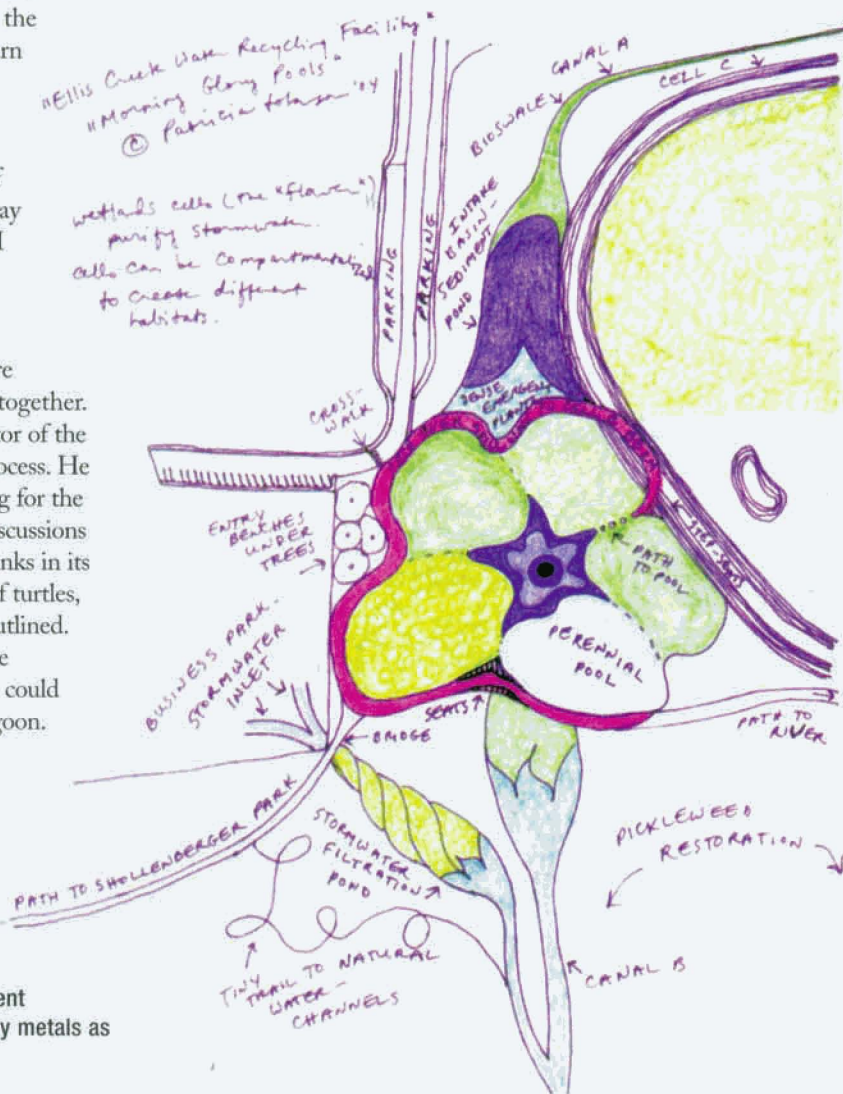
“The lagoon was planted with emergent vegetation that roots in shallow water and further

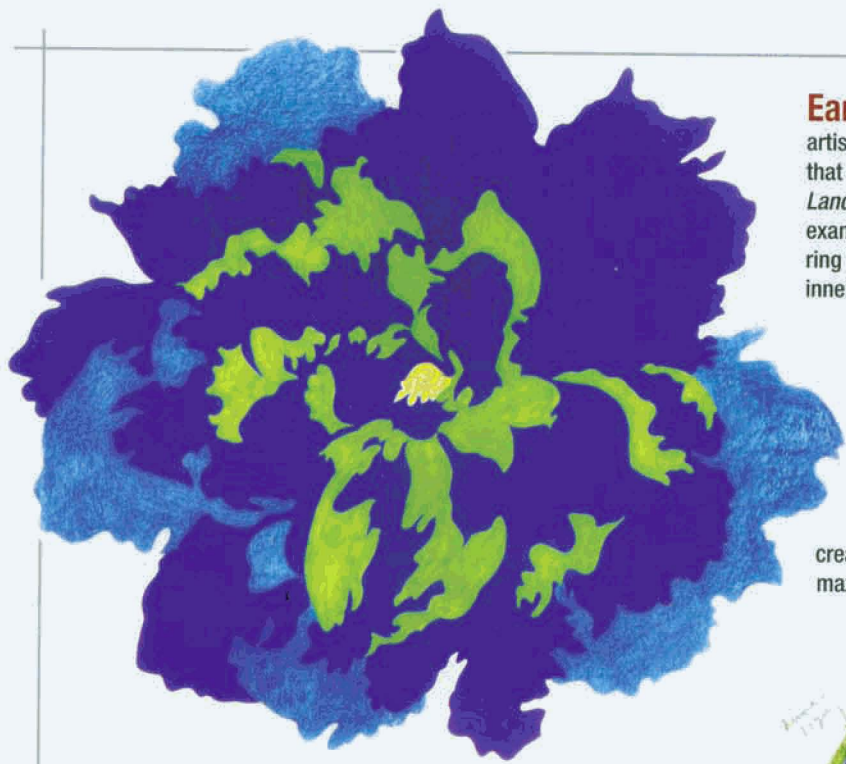
**Design Sketch:** Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility: *Morning Glory Pools*. Johanson’s recent design (2004) for the Petaluma Calif. project meshes human needs with the larger patterns and purposes of nature. It includes oxidation ponds, sewage treatment wetlands and polishing ponds for the removal of heavy metals as well as a new 272-acre tidal marsh and mudflat.

**Early Design:** Sketches for landscapes and parks such as this one are what attracted attention to Johanson’s concepts and led to the Fair Park Lagoon commission: *Vernal Pools (Catagramma mionina): Park/ Amphibian Breeding Grounds/Edible Landscaping, acrylic, gouache and ink on mylar (1992).*

out with floating plants. Along the shore we planted bulrushes and wild rice — tall grasses that provide shelter and food for small animals and birds. Just before the project was dedicated, flocks of wild birds arrived. Different species of fish were introduced into an environment that could nurture them.

“Walter Davis continued, ‘Today the Lagoon teems with life. Those who understand the intricacies of a functioning ecosystem find particular satisfaction here. A kingfisher visiting for the first time in decades, signals that the water is clear enough for this master fisherman to spot minnows swimming beneath the surface. A pair of least bitterns, secretive inhabitants of the vegetative shoreline, moved in the first year and has built a nest and raised a family each of the past five years. Ducks and turtles sun themselves on emergent parts of the sculpture, safe from predatory dogs and





**Early Design Concept:** Johanson's ability to apply visual artistry to her landscapes was, and still is, a defining characteristic that has informed her career. Her *Flower Fountain-Drowned Landscape, Pattern of Land and Water at High Tide (1974)* is a perfect example. "Order: ring of darkness (trees/shadows) surrounding inner ring of light (grassy "stepping stones" at center) surrounding innermost source of water (the rocky "fountain")."

**Early Design Concept:** Not only do her designs have a great deal of whimsy, they also often show a dedicated sense of humor, as is seen in *Line Gardens: The Secret Life of Paths, (1969)*. Johanson explores the possibility of secret gardens whose design can only be grasped by using the imagination. This design is composed of overlapping trails created through invisible marks—trail of pheromones, echolocation maze, human logic, etc.

Patricia Johanson (continued from page 124)

cats and enthusiastic children. These plants and animals are not captives held for the enjoyment of human spectators. Most have chosen to live in the Lagoon because it provides food and shelter for themselves and their offspring."

"Each project is different and there is always more to learn. Basically, the fast way to learn is go out to a similar site and then observe and talk to locals and see the larger cycles of what happens from year to year. It's about seeing what's there, because what is possible is already in place, ready to come back. You can't restore something that was never there. All the mitigation people made this mistake. They promise a landscape similar to one in the general vicinity even if there wasn't one already there. Restoration is simple. If it used to be a wetland and is now a parking lot—just pull up the asphalt. The wetland is already there. It will come back. You can't invent this stuff. You need to do the research—historical research as well as intensive research on that particular piece of land.

"I do what ever project I'm asked to do that interests me," says Johanson. "I'm interested in solving problems and you need to work with each particular piece of land." She's primarily interested in public lands, parks that are free to everyone.



Although she grew up in Olmsted's Parks, she didn't realize people had constructed them or the amount of effort and design that went into designing "wild places." "Creating a nurturing, living world doesn't mean it can't be a popular and entertaining place. People love Fair Park Lagoon. Children play alongside the insects, reptiles, birds and mammals that live there. Fair Park Lagoon is really a swamp — a raw functioning ecology that

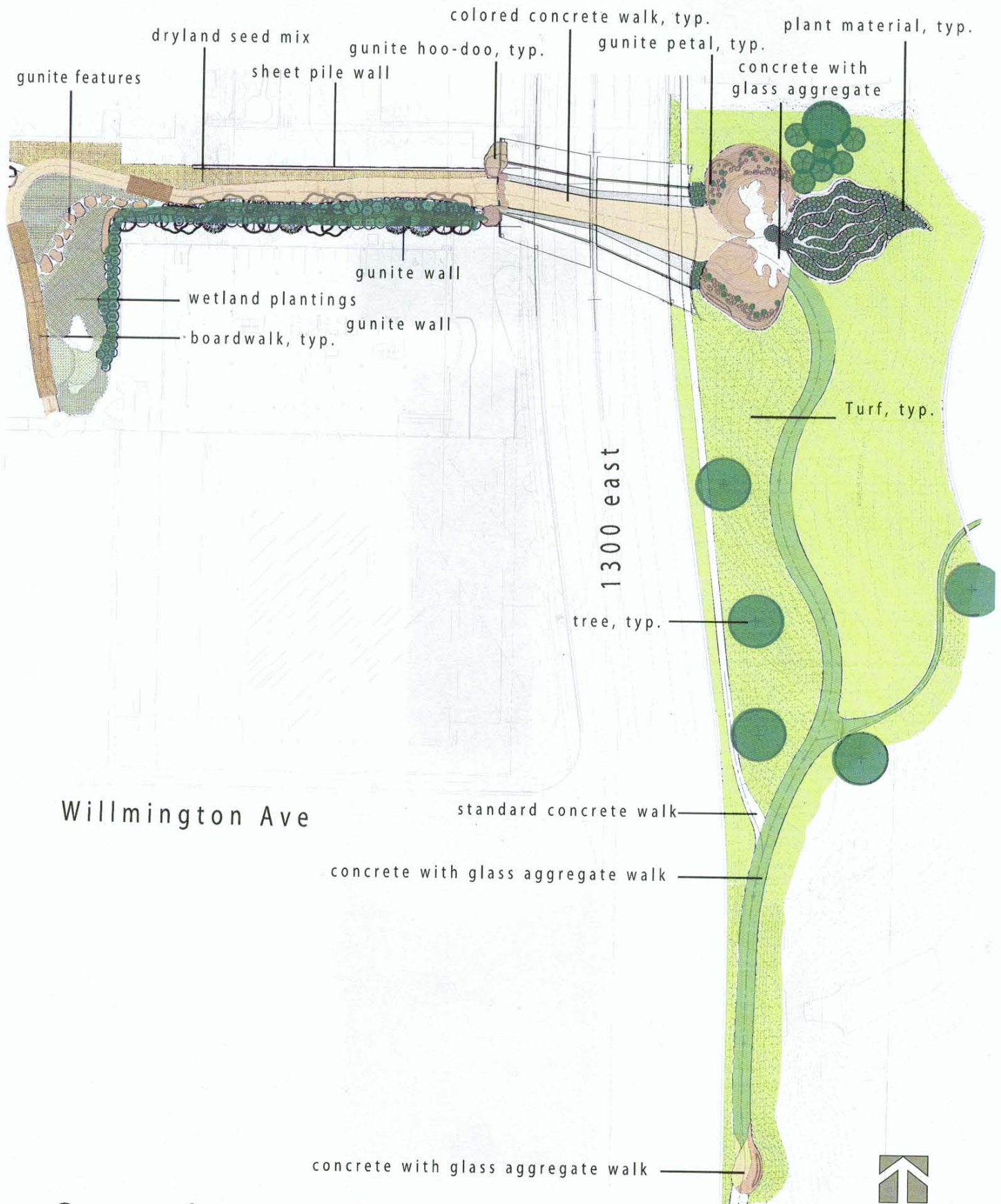
people are normally afraid of. The art project affords people access to this environment, so they find out how wonderful a swamp really is. It's popular, not because people are overwhelmed by my sculpture. They're discovering a marvelous new world. It is a many layered design that responds to "real" needs— aesthetic, ecological and functional and becomes an inclusive, life-supporting, open-ended framework that allows for dialogue between art, man and nature."

## About Patricia Johanson

Patricia Johanson grew up in New York City and the Long Island suburbs, although Olmsted parks and summers in the Catskill Mountains remain her most indelible memory. In 1958 she entered Bennington College in Vermont to study art and music. During this period she met and became friends with Helen Frankenthaler who introduced her to many of the art world luminaries of the day. She then got her masters degree at Hunter College in Art History. Johanson continued to design large outdoor sculptures while assembling credentials in engineering and architecture. She entered the Architecture Program at City College of New York, while working for Mitchell-Giurgola, the well known architectural firm. In 1976, she worked with and became great friends of Georgia O'Keefe. They began a lifelong friendship that still inspires Johanson.

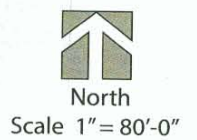
*Patricia Johanson's House and Garden Commission* by Xin Wu has just been released by Harvard University Press.





# Sugarhouse Pedestrian Crossing

## Salt Lake City, UT





## **PRATT PARTNERS**

### **Governmental Partners**

- Utah Department of Transportation
- Utah Transit Authority
- Salt Lake County
- Salt Lake City
- City of South Salt Lake

### **National Partners**

- American Trails
- National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program
- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

### **Trail Building Partners**

- Bonneville Shoreline Trail Committee
- Foundation for the Provo/Jordan River Parkway
- Kids Organized to Protect our Environment (KOPE)

### **Individual, Corporate and Governmental Funding Partners**

#### *Corporate*

- Negley Flinn Foundation
- REI
- Smith Food & Drug, Inc.
- The Semnani Foundation
- Trust for Public Lands for Ezekiel R. "Zeke" Dumke, Jr.
- Woodbury Corporation

#### *Governmental*

- United States Congress transportation earmark facilitated by Senator Robert F. Bennett and Representative Jim Matheson through the United States Department of Transportation
- Salt Lake County Zoo Arts & Parks Program
- Utah State Division of Parks and Recreation

### **Citizen Partners**

- Canyon Rim Citizen Association
- Mayor's Bicycle Advisory Committee
- Salt Lake City Transportation Advisory Board
- Sugar House Community Council
- Sugar House Merchants Association
- Sugar House Park Authority

### **Community Partners**

- AARP
- Brolly Arts
- Great Salt Lake Resource Conservation and Development Council
- Sugar House Kiwanis Club
- Sugar House Rotary Club

### **Education Partners**

- University of Utah, College of Engineering; College of Architecture + Planning; David Eccles School of Business
- Westminster College, Center for Civic Engagement

### **Health Partners**

- Salt Lake Valley Health Department
- State of Utah Department of Health

### **Professional Partners**

- American Institute of Architects, Utah Chapter
- American Society of Landscape Architects, Utah Chapter

### **Nonprofit Partners**

- Utah Nonprofits Association
- Utah Society for Environmental Education

**The PRATT Coalition sends monthly notices and updates to more than 1000 individual members and associations who support development of the Parley's Creek Corridor Trail.**



**PARLEY'S RAILS, TRAILS AND TUNNELS (PRATT) COALITION  
2008-09 BOARD MEMBERS**

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Salt Lake County Division of Parks & Recreation  
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## **Timeline for the Draw at Sugar House**

### **1992**

Salt Lake City adopts an Open Space Master Plan, with a conceptual alignment for Parley's Trail and the recommendation to "develop a connection from Hidden Hollow to Sugar House Park."

### **1998**

The Kids Organized to Protect the Environment (KOPE) of Salt Lake City School District Beacon Heights Elementary launches a problem-solving campaign to find a way for pedestrians to safely cross 1300 East Street between Sugar House Park and the Sugar House Business District by way of Hidden Hollow.

### **1999**

The University of Utah Department of Civil Engineering's Community Transportation Team completes a "Pedestrian Access to Sugar House Park Plan" for the KOPE Kids. Using the criteria of cost, safety, projected usage, and potential benefits, the Team concludes that a tunnel would provide the community with the safest and most direct access between Hidden Hollow Nature Park and Sugarhouse Park. They identified the location of the historic Central Utah Railway as a possible alignment for the Parley's Trail crossing.

### **2000**

May 31, 2000 First meeting of the Parleys Corridor/13<sup>th</sup> Street Tunnel committee was organized by PRATT co-founders, Lynne Olson, Helen Peters and Rita Lund. Senator Karen Hale facilitates a brainstorming session about the completion of the Parley's Trail Corridor, with a pedestrian/bicycle tunnel under 13<sup>th</sup> East.

### **2001**

The Sugar House Master Plan Update is adopted (Adopted 2001; updated 2005) by Salt Lake City Corporation, with recommendation to "link Hidden Hollow with the Parley's Creek Trail corridor and the Canal/McClelland corridor with safe, elegant and cost effective trailways."

## **2002**

October - The National Endowment for the Arts New Public Works Initiative awards Salt Lake City Planning \$50,000 to support a juried competition for the design of a pedestrian crossing at 1300 East to link Hidden Hollow Nature Park, the Sugar House residential area and Sugarhouse Park with the Sugar House Business District. The National Endowment for the Arts grant was matched by donations from the Redevelopment Agency of Salt Lake City, the Utah Department of Transportation and the Woodbury Corporation.

## **2003**

July – The National Endowment for the Arts Design Competition was won by Environmental Artist Patricia Johanson working with designers Steve and Richard Gilbert at Salt Lake City-based G. Brown Design. The project is named The Draw at Sugar House.

November - The Semnani Foundation contributes \$2,500 for the construction of the Draw at Sugar House.

2003-2004 Salt Lake City provides the first local funding match for the federal transportation earmark that was authorized by the Federal Transportation Bill of 2005 for Parley's Trail. PRATT receives Salt Lake City Capital Improvement Program funds to for the design of The Draw at Sugar House. Transmittal documents to the Salt Lake City Council include the notation: *"The Sugar House Pedestrian Crossing attracted a great deal of attention across the U.S. The project has the potential to generate widespread national notice, and has already been archived in the Contemporary Landscape Design Collection. A project of this caliber will become a Salt Lake City landmark and tourist attraction."*

## **2004**

PRATT receives an Envision Utah Governor's Quality Growth Grand Achievement Award for The Draw at Sugar House.

September - PRATT receives the National Rails-to-Trails and American Society for Landscape Architects Design Awards for The Draw at Sugar House.

## **2006**

Jeff Woodbury of Woodbury Corporation, sends a letter of intent to participate in planning and design of The Draw at Sugar House.

September - Salt Lake County Open Space Trust Fund committee recommends funding of The Draw at Sugar House to the Salt Lake County Council in the amount of \$275,000 for the acquisition of land for the PRATT Trail development in the Sugar House Business District.

December 5, 2006

## **2007**

Environmental study and preliminary plan for 1300 East crossing is completed by Michael Baker, Jr. Inc. and Stanley Consultants.

The PRATT Coalition enters into an agreement with environmental artist Patricia Johanson for a schematic design for The Draw at Sugar House, in coordination with Michael Baker Jr., and with Steven Gilbert of ArcSitio Design of Salt Lake City.

October - Salt Lake County Council approves ZAP Tier II funding in the amount of \$10,000 to underwrite the artistic design work for The Draw at Sugar House.

Salt Lake City approves a \$99,000 allocation from the Open Space Lands Program to acquire land for The Draw at Sugar House.

## **2008**

Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County and the Utah Department of Transportation sign an Interlocal Agreement for Trail segments in Parley's Historic Nature Park, the Trail from 1700 East to 1300 East, and for the 1300 East Crossing more commonly known as The Draw at Sugar House.

## **2009**

January – Consultants, Michael Baker, Jr., Arc Sitio Design and Patricia Johanson complete final design for The Draw at Sugar House

## **Goals for 2010**

Conclude land acquisition and easement negotiations for The Draw at Sugar House.

Construct Parley's Trail from 1700 East to 1300 East, skirting the south edge of Sugar House Park.

Construct The Draw at Sugar House, connecting Sugar House Park to Hidden Hollow Natural Area.