

Down 2 Earth Gardens

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Garden Design Notes

August 2, 2008

Based on a walk-through of your property on July 26, 2008 and the upcoming swimming pool installation, I recommend the following. Much of this can be done on phases and around the installation of the new pool.

NOW

- Adjust watering of all desert-adapted trees (Mesquite and Palo Verde) to once every two weeks when no monsoon rain in summer and monthly in winter. Water out at the drip line, moving around the trees to distribute water around entire canopy. Water to a level of three feet
- Water citrus tree as above but weekly and to 3ft.
- Only trim and thin out canopy of Mesquite and Palo Verde if necessary.
- Fertilize lawn with ammonia phosphate and water well
- Divide Agave pups and keep shaded for the next few months.

Raised Planter box in rear of lot

- Paint the retaining wall a bold accent color and hang masks.
- Lightly trimming red bird of paradise will encourage more blooms.
- Plant 3 hibiscus bushes "between" the pillars of the block wall. Red will look great with the other colors and create a more tropical feel.
- Plant a pomegranate bush (low water use, likes it hot) will get about 6 feet tall and 3-4 feet wide so give it plenty of room). It will have lovely orange flowers before it fruits. (south-east end of planter, but not corner)
- To cool the color palate, you can plant purple verbena (a ground cover) among some of the yellow lantana and along the edge of the box to softer the transition.

Around the pool (where waterfall will be) before construction

- Divide the pups from the larger agave and put into pots until pool is complete. Then you can fill in around the water fall (where no one will be walking or playing).
- Move and "re-plant" boulder so it doesn't get banged up by earth moving equipment. Might consider getting some wooden palates you can use as protective barriers to equipment.

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East side of back lot (near gate)

- FUTURE home for another citrus trees and herb garden
- Redirect rain run off from roof to the area. Create a mulch pit for the water to run into from the downspout and then a trench as overflow for the water to follow as it flows into another trench around the tree. You will need to expand the trench (make a new one, as the tree canopy gets bigger).
- Place the herb garden so it gets shade during the middle/late afternoon. Morning sun is good. Since herbs can be planted through the year, depending on which type, you can start the herb garden as soon as construction is done.
- You may need to amend the soil prior to planting since this has been a traffic area for all of the pool equipment. Adding several inches of organic material, such as mulch, compost, worm casting, kelp meal. Remember Citrus likes to be fertilized, but always follow directions carefully for newly planted trees. You can plant your citrus in March and April after risk of frost has passed.
- This is also a good corner for a meditation area. Consider making a place that is 'protected' by the wall (you can paint the wall a favorite color to distinguish it). Lovely bench in an arched trellis with scented vines, like jasmine growing up and over the trellis will wrap you in plants. Plant lavender and rosemary (both plants do not mind a little more dry soil and sun) for a sensory garden and ones you can plant near the pathway so you might rub up against them. Maybe some flagstone leading up to the bench. Hang a wind chime for a more lyrical reflection.

West wall between house and street

- While looking out from the inside to determine the vantage point and concentrate on that area. Look at the plant list provided for shade loving plants. Use color on the wall, perhaps mosaic part (a design) of the wall. Install lights to give it a light glow in the evening. Use an ornamental trellis on the wall with or without a vine. Let art be one of your major elements in the shade, and keep to lighter/brighter colors which will stand out more. Maybe add a fountain here as well so when you open the window in the cooler evenings, you can hear it.

Citrus tree watering and fertilizing

Irrigate a 36 inch wide shallow-trench around the tree with the drip line approximately in the middle of the trench. When the soil is dry about three inches beneath the surface. Put a garden hose in the trench at a fast dribble and shut it off when you can insert a soil probe to the level of three feet in several places in the trench.

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