

GOLD STAR MOTHERS MEMORIAL PARK

Community Meeting 4
SEPTEMBER 23, 2026

City of Cambridge

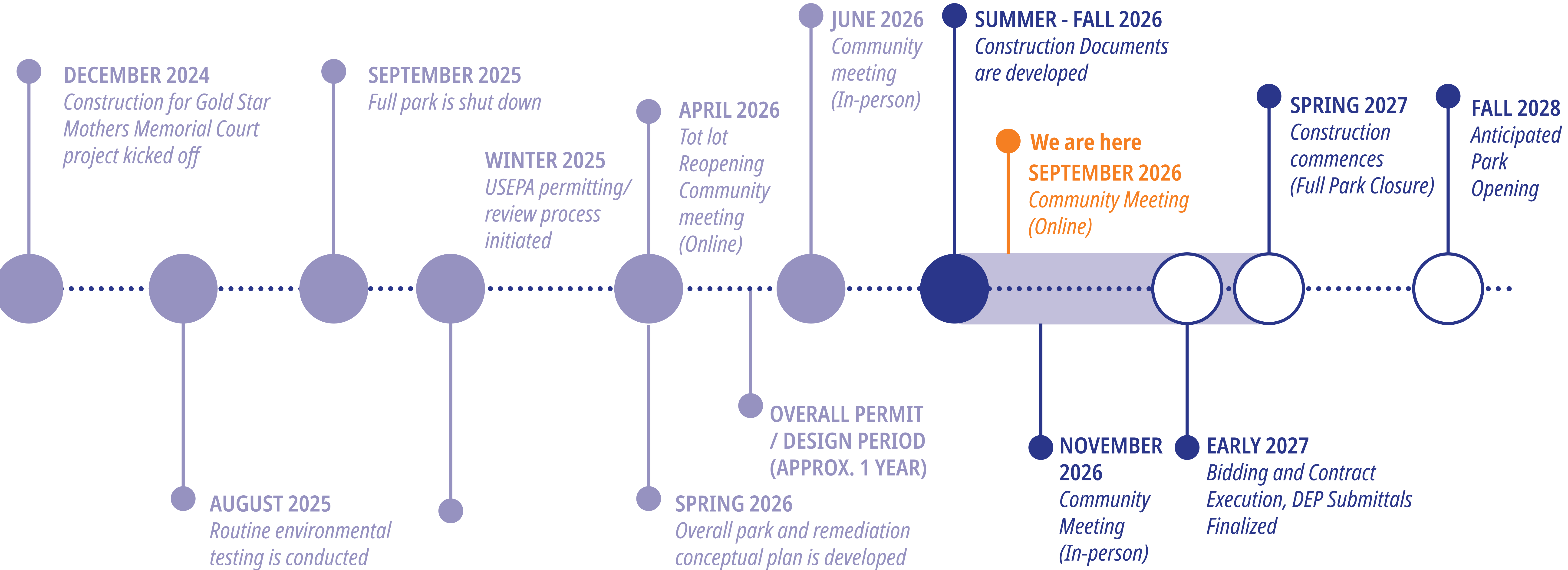
John Nardone	Public Works, Commissioner
Jim Wilcox	City Engineer
Jennifer Letourneau	Senior Engineer and Conservation Commission Director
Kristen Kelleher	Community Relations Manager
Sam Lipson	Senior Director of Environmental Health
Kevin Beuttell	Supervising Landscape Architect
Gary Chan	Neighborhood Planner
Cortney Kirk	Landscape Architect
Adam Corbeil	Division Head, Recreation
David Webster	Superintendent Of Parks
Dave Lefcourt	City Arborist
Lillian Hsu	Director of Public Art
Hilary Zelson	Public Art Administrator

Weston & Sampson

Cassie Bethoney	Practice Leader Landscape Architect
Amanda Gaal	Project Manager Landscape Architect
Lee Koska	Environmental Engineer
Anastasia Sotos	Landscape Designer

Project Timeline

Community Engagement has been and will be ongoing throughout this process

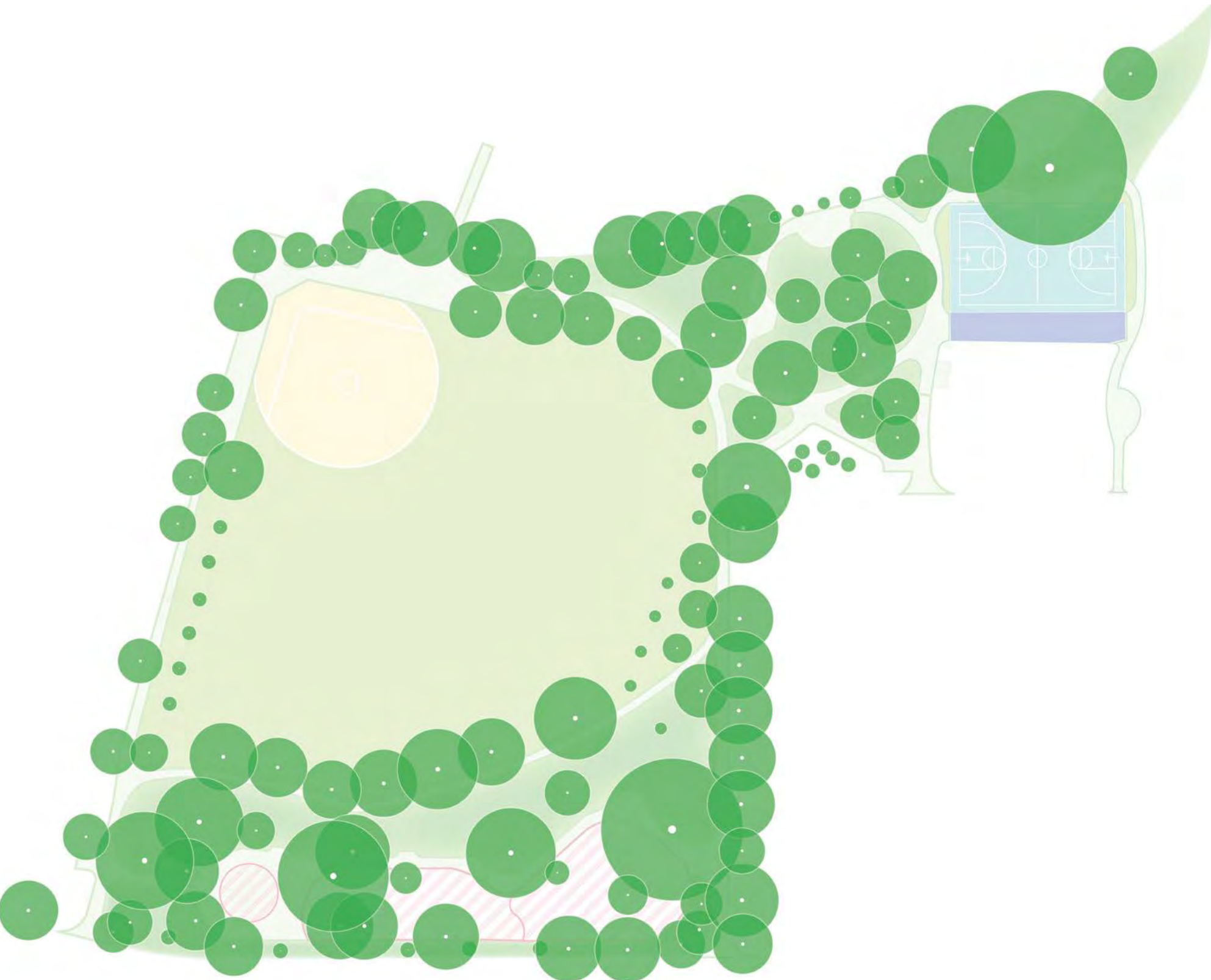


Environmental Overview

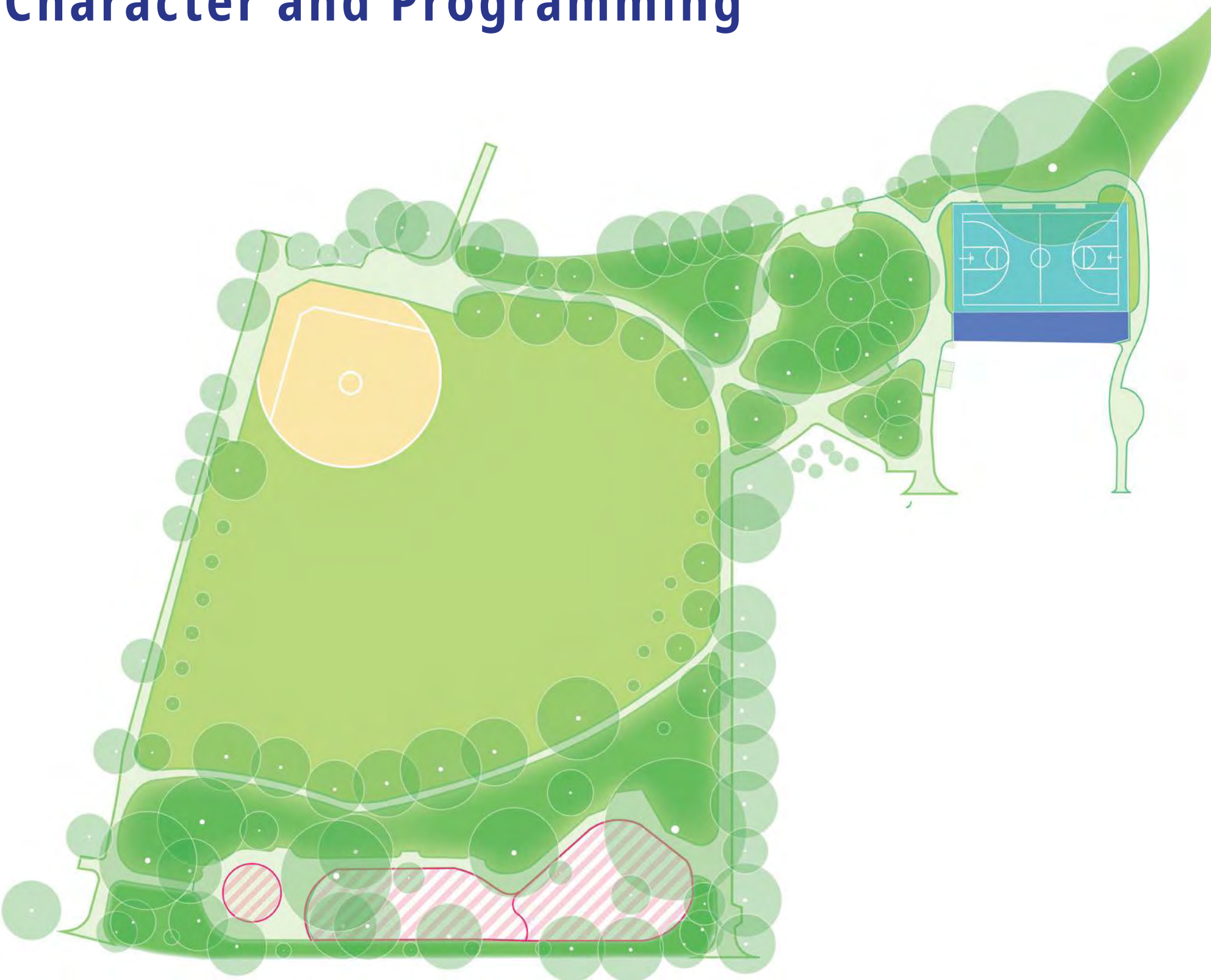
- Routine and targeted environmental testing identified impacts from heavy metals and PCBs, leading to the closure of Gold Star Mothers Park in September 2025.
- A remedial strategy was developed, with approximately 2 feet of soil removal and installation of a geotextile/clean soil cap selected as the preferred approach.
- Temporary Tot Lot improvements were completed to support reopening, including removal of existing wood fiber and sand and installation of a geosynthetic fabric barrier system over impacted soils.
- Additional soil sampling and disposal characterization are ongoing to refine areas of regulated PCB impacts and support off-site soil disposal. Preliminary data received to date has been consistent with previous sampling rounds.

Project Goals

Manage Urban Tree Canopy



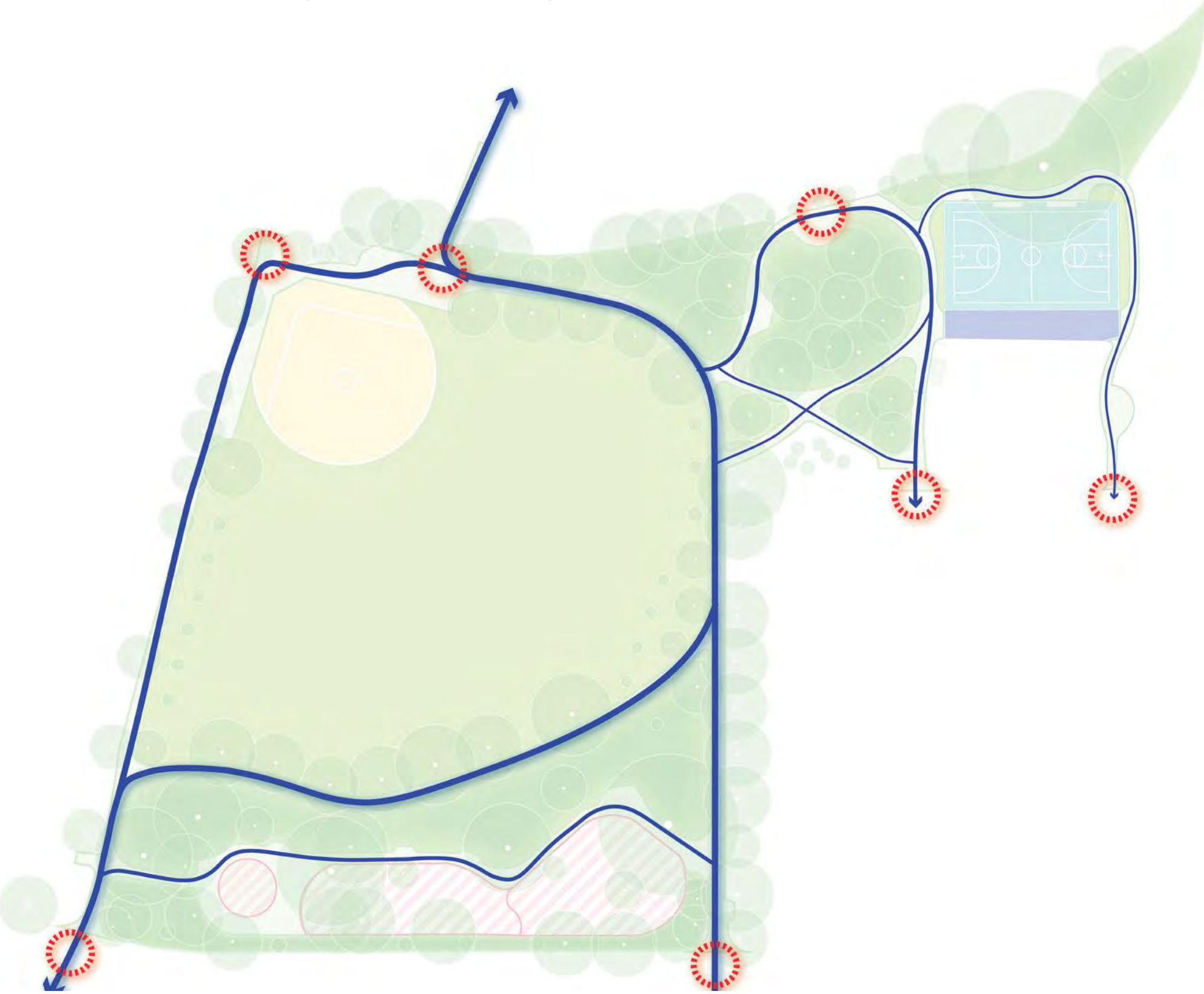
Maintain and Enhance the Overall Site Character and Programming



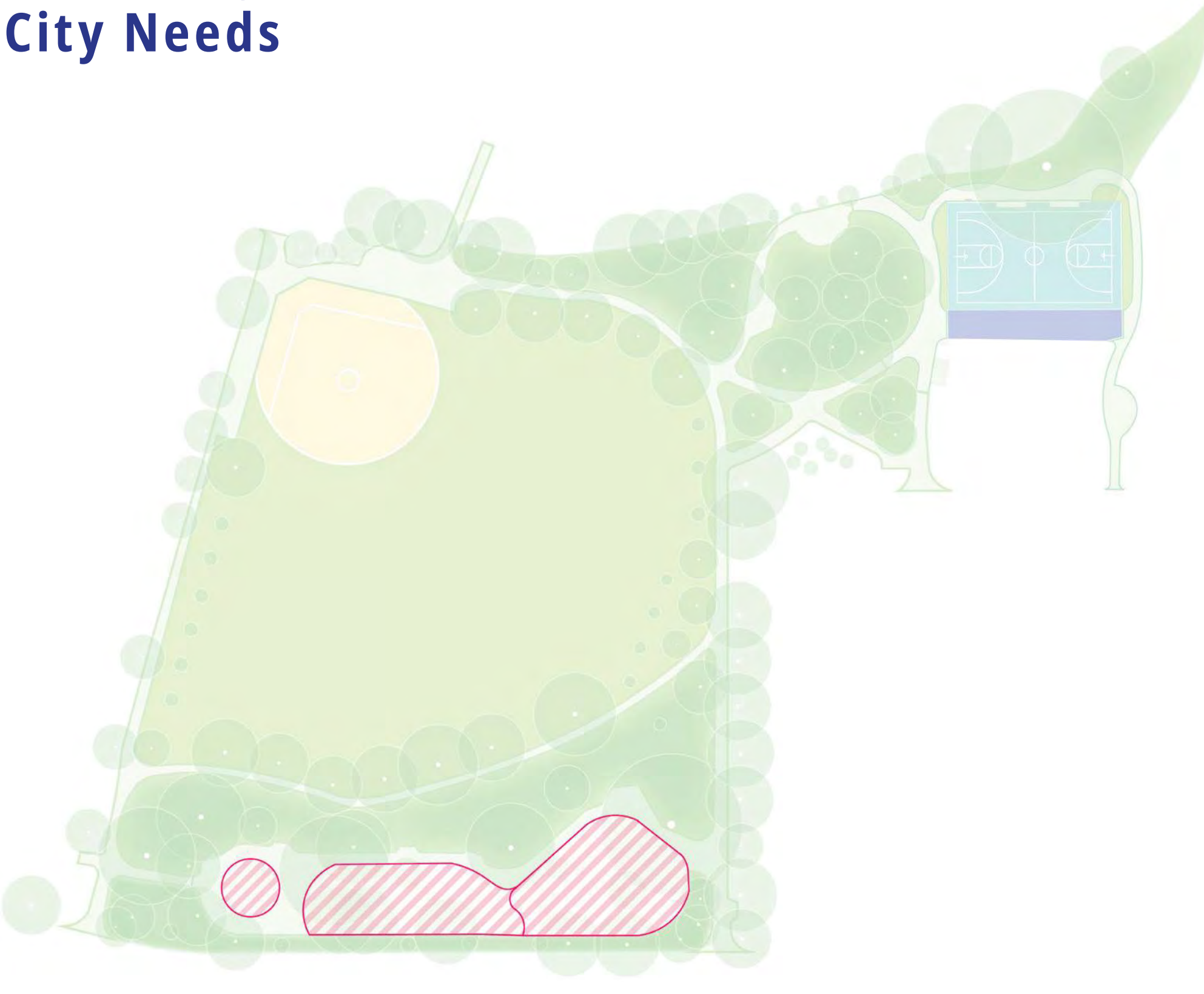
Increase Social Gathering Spaces to Address the Current Lack of Community Seating and Interaction Areas



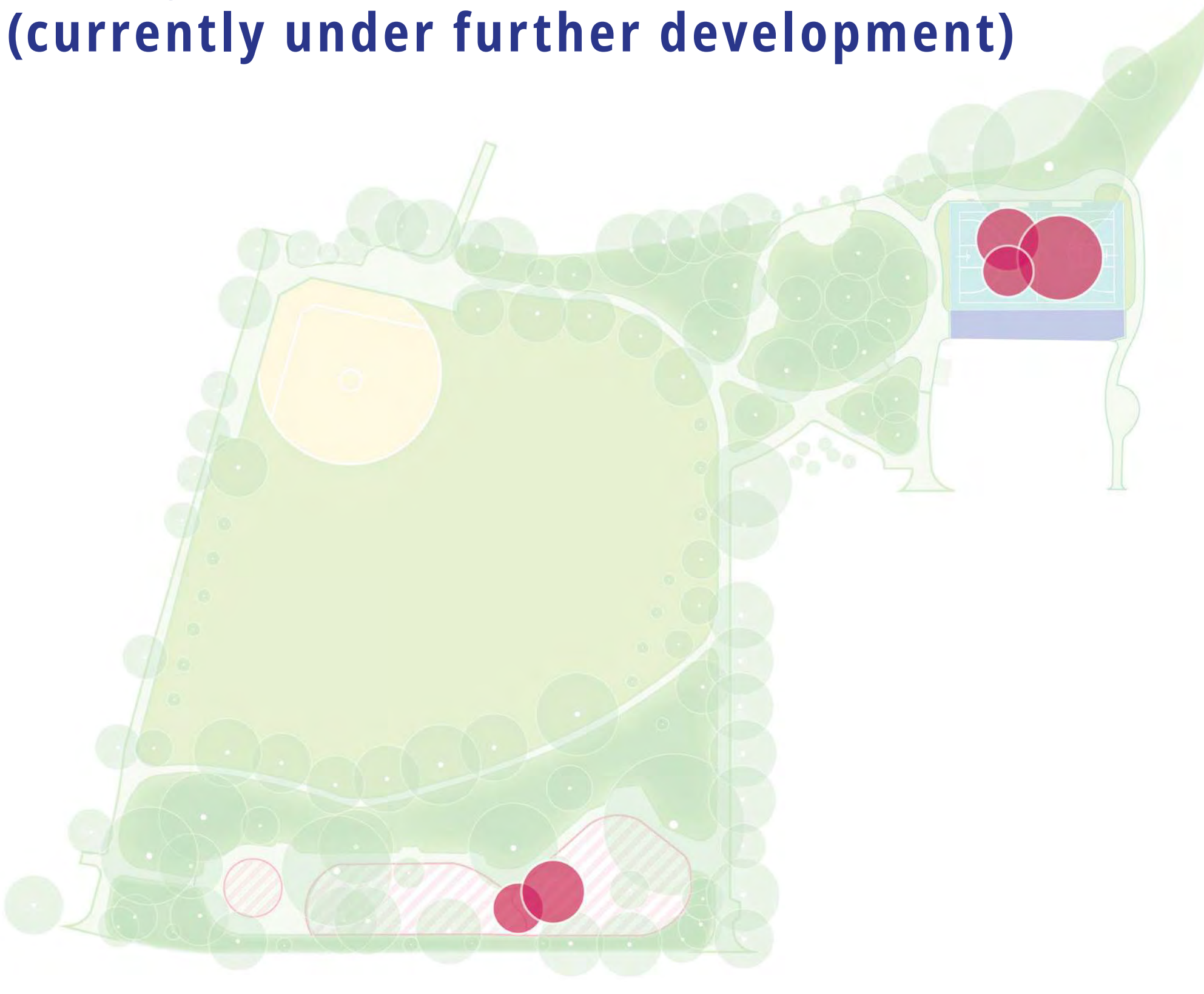
Strengthen the Site Circulation, Connectivity, and Edge Conditions



Develop a Play Strategy that Responds to Both Neighborhood Character and Broader City Needs



Explore Opportunities for Public Art Integration Throughout the Site (currently under further development)



Site History

Park Overview

The park is named for women whose children died in service during World War II. These women were called “Gold Star Mothers” because they received small flags with gold stars. In 1968 the city received a federal grant to purchase the land on this site and develop a park.



2003

Gold Star Park Concept Plan



2026

Overall park and remediation conceptual plan is developed.

Existing Park Memorials

Keep Existing Signs



5 black flag signs, located throughout the park, pay respect to the park's naming origin and those who have made an impact to the local community.



Memorial plaque at the basketball court, honoring Luke Agnetta



Memorial plaque located at the playground providing historical context to the park's naming origin

New Signs to Add



- (Pictured left): New dedication sign for Joe "Lefty" Pini, to be designed at Softball Field
- A new blue oval marker commemorating the John P. Squire's Co. will be installed
- Replacement of missing Private Robert Paine dedication Sign

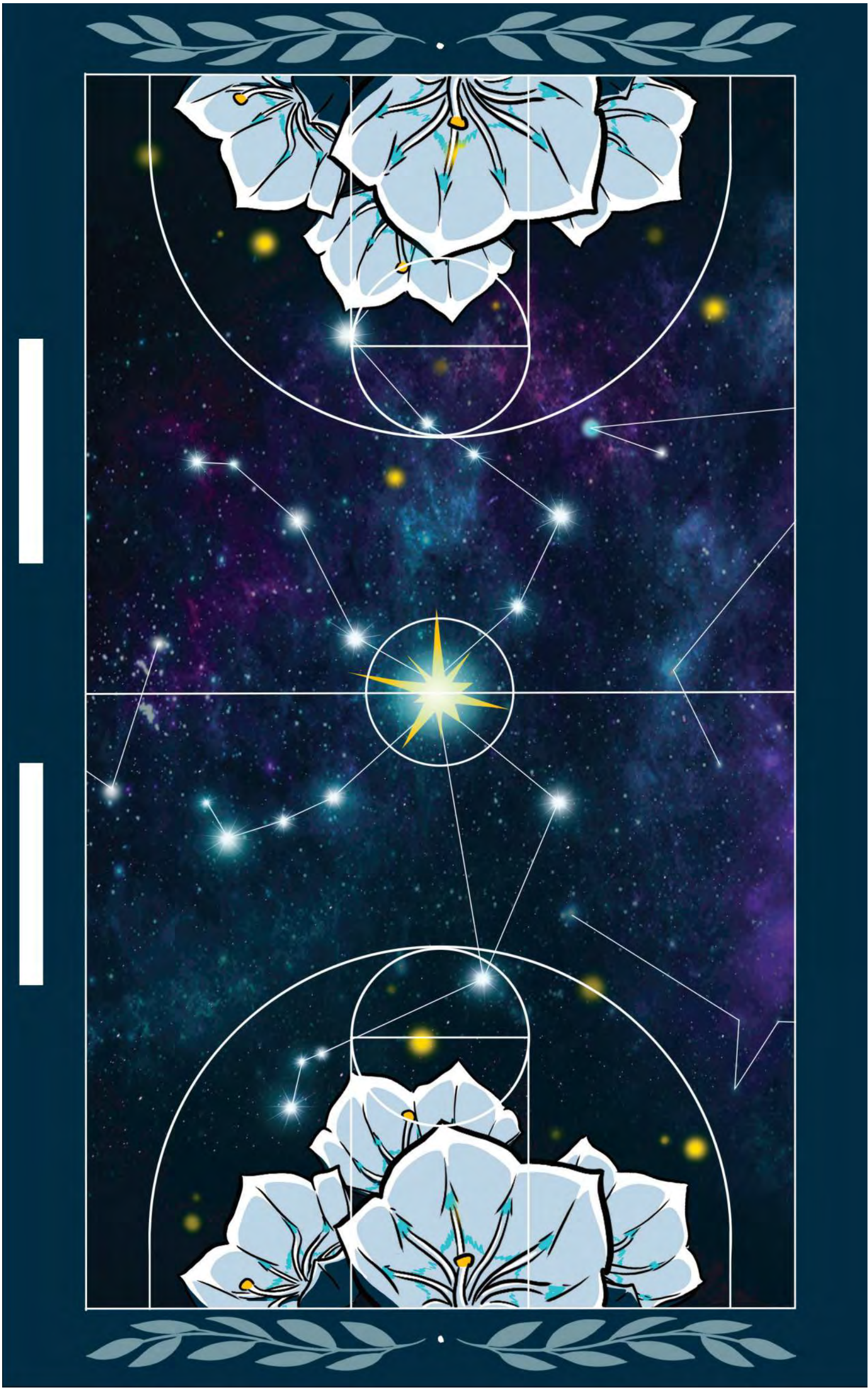
Public Art

7 Existing Robert Schelling Medallions

In the artist’s words, his sculptures “celebrate forms that accompany us in the moment, that we all share in nature, culture, sports, and our daily lives.”



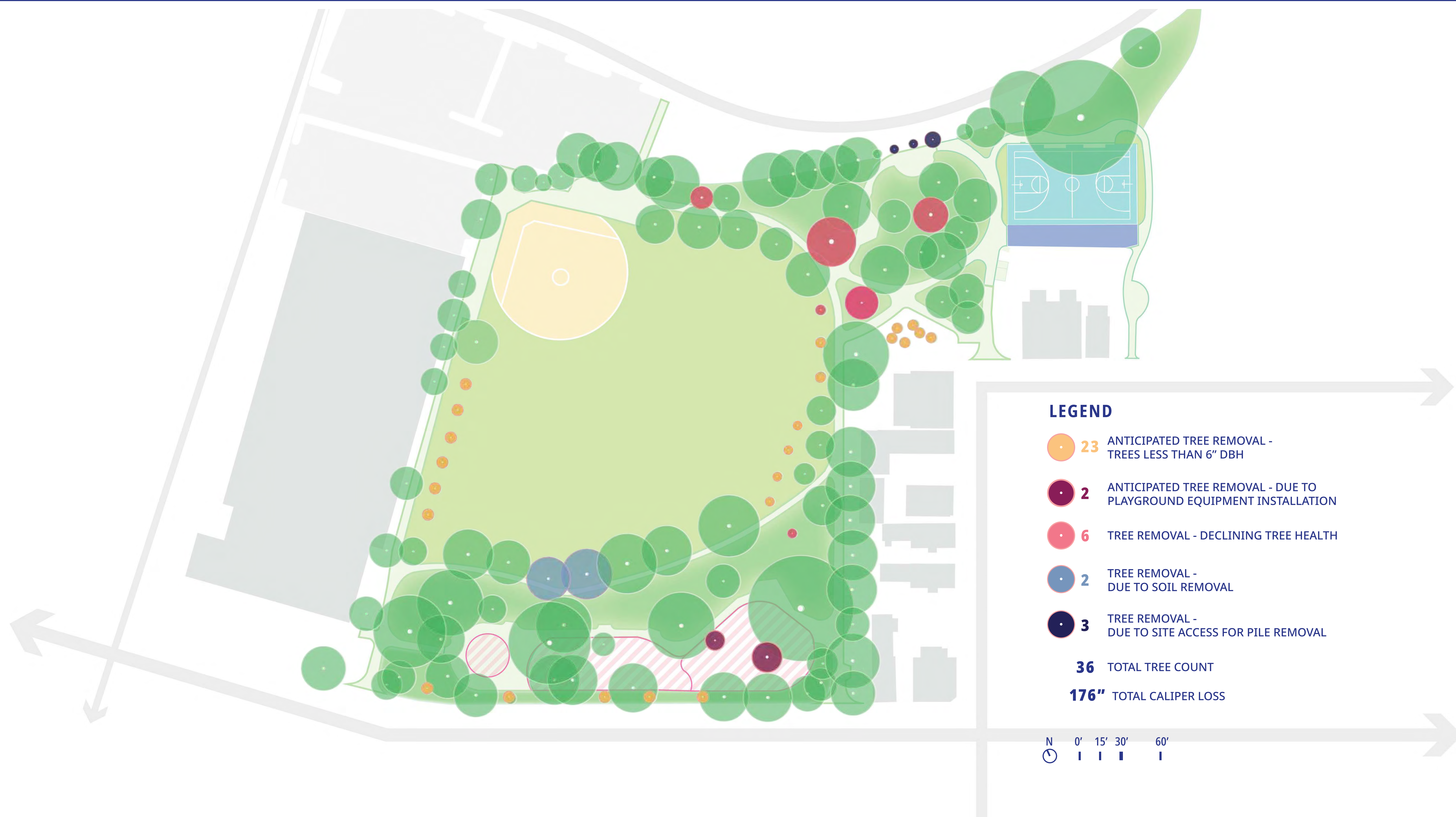
Proposed Basketball Court Mural Design by Michael Talbot



Court is located in the Northeast corner of the park

*An additional artwork will be commissioned to be integrated into the park

Tree Canopy Preservation & Anticipated Removal



What We Heard | Community Feedback

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

APRIL 15TH, 2026
TOT LOT REOPENING COMMUNITY MEETING
(ONLINE)

Introduced existing site conditions, project goals, preliminary design ideas for the playground and splash pad, environmental testing findings, and the project timeline.

JUNE 9, 2026
COMMUNITY MEETING
(IN-PERSON)

Presented project goals, proposed site layout, park entry and multi-use path improvements, material selections, and three playground and splash pad concept alternatives for community feedback.

SEPTEMBER 23, 2026
COMMUNITY MEETING
(ONLINE)

Review final design concept and project refinements, summarize how community input informed the design, and project timeline.

NOVEMBER 2026
COMMUNITY MEETING
(IN-PERSON)



JUNE 9, 2026 COMMUNITY MEETING

What We Heard | Community Feedback

FEEDBACK COMPILED FROM THE APRIL 15 AND JUNE 9, 2026 COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Overall Park



SHADE

- Add more shade, protect existing trees, plant new trees, and keep as much green space as possible



SAFETY

- Make it easier and safer to move through the park. Keep neighborhood entrances, clear views, accessible paths, and safe connections. Add bike parking and help control bicycle speeds on shared paths.



SITE

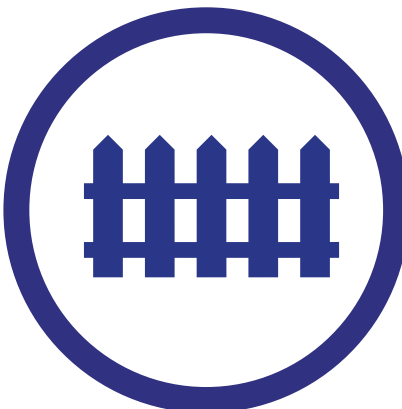
- Improve drainage, paths, court surfaces, lighting, trash cans, and general park maintenance. Keep the emergency call box. Include shared-use off-leash dog hours.



PROGRAM

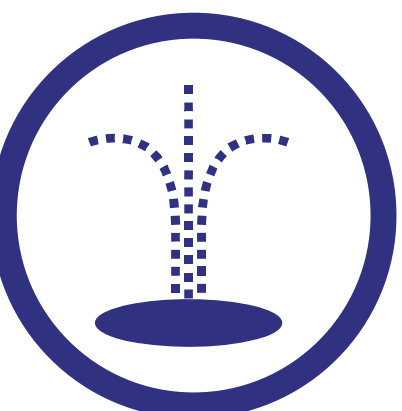
- Add features for adults and older residents, such as exercise equipment, hammocks, and swings. Keep these areas visible and limit noise at night.

Playground and Splash pad



FENCING

- Keep the playground and splash pad together in one fenced area.
- Add fencing and gates around the playground to improve safety.



SPLASH PAD

- Provide fun water features, such as fountains or aboveground water play. The community preferred these features over misting alone.



PLAY

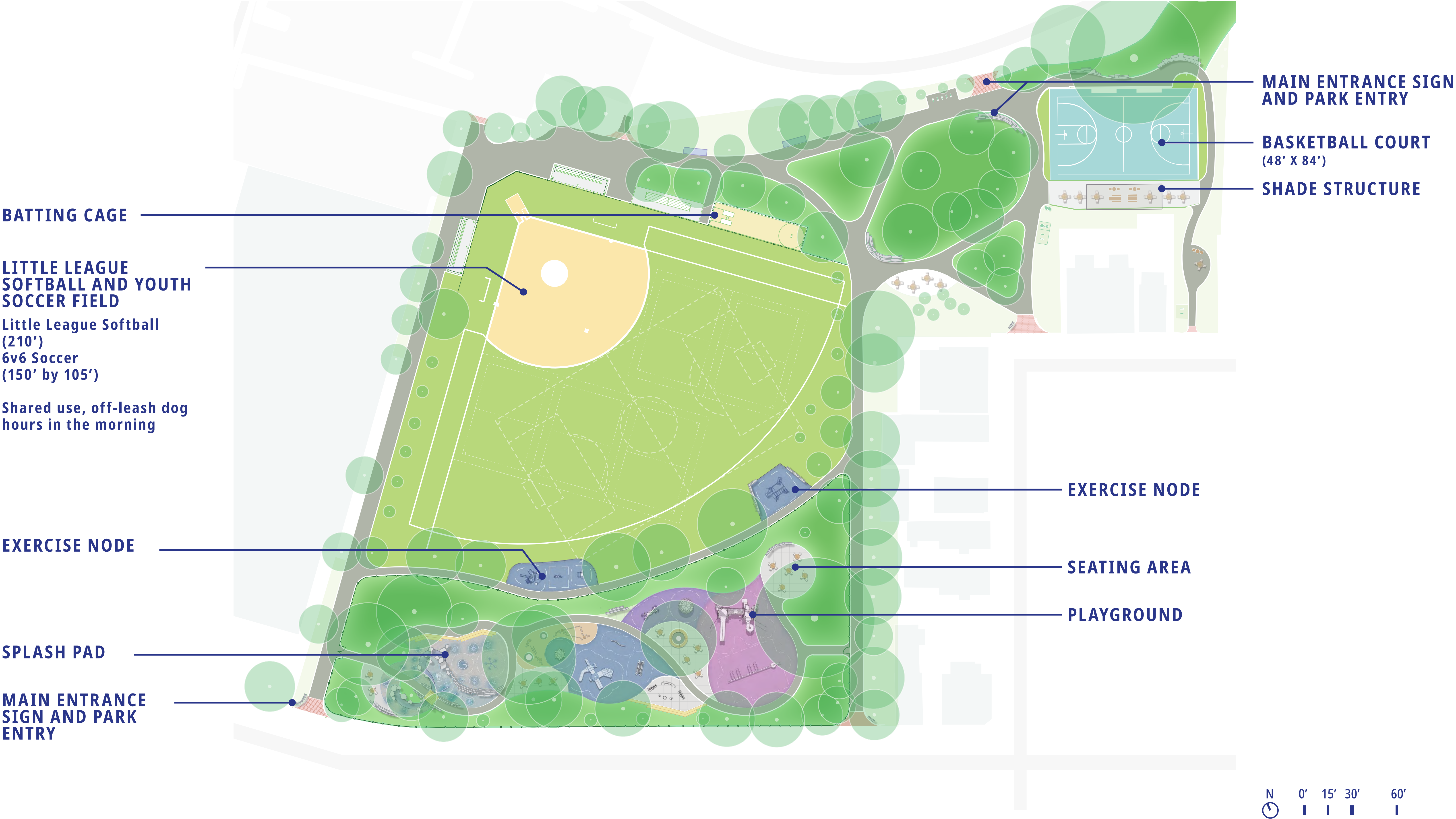
- Include play options for young children, older children, and teens. Provide traditional swings, adventurous play, and equipment for children with disabilities.



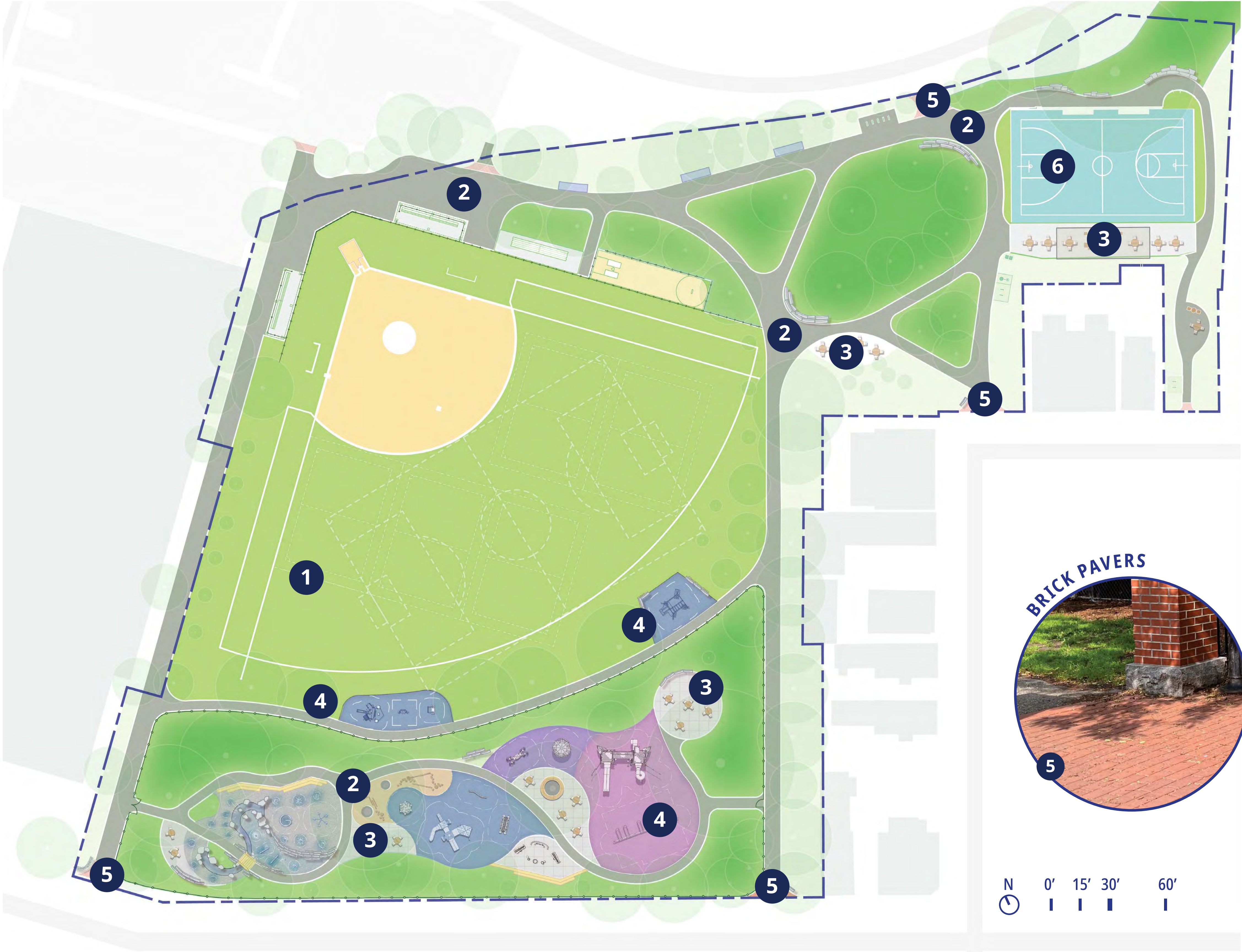
ACCESSIBILITY

- Make the playground accessible to everyone. Consider using a mix of cooler, more natural surface materials.

Updated Preferred Concept Design



Overall Site Materials



Trees have been scaled back for diagram legibility

Clarifications/Questions?

Additional project information can be found on the city's website. The website link and QR code can be found on the closing slide.



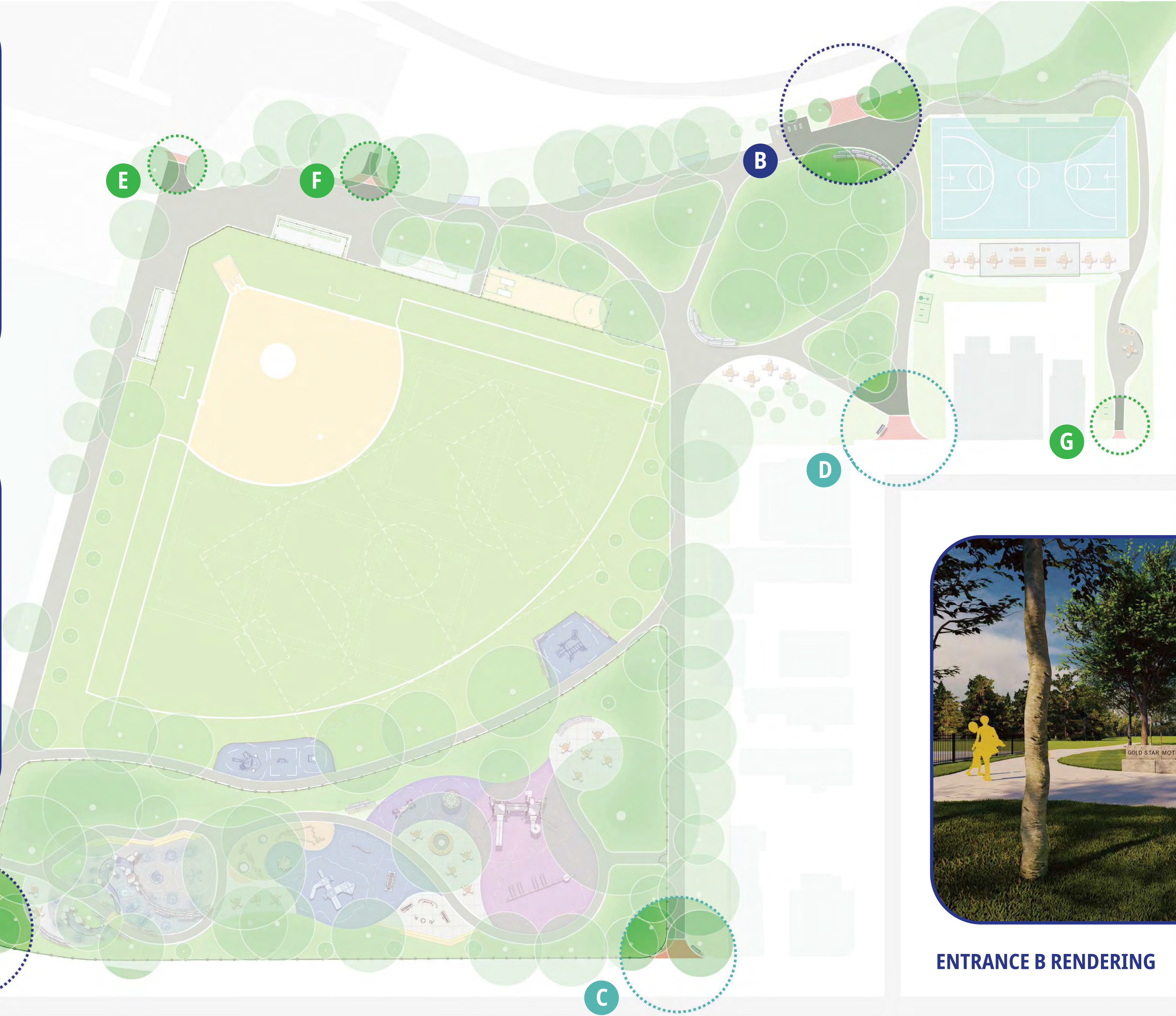
Park Entrances



ENTRANCE A RENDERING



ENTRANCE A (FROM SIMONI SKATING RINK)



MAIN ENTRANCES

A B

SECONDARY ENTRANCES

C D

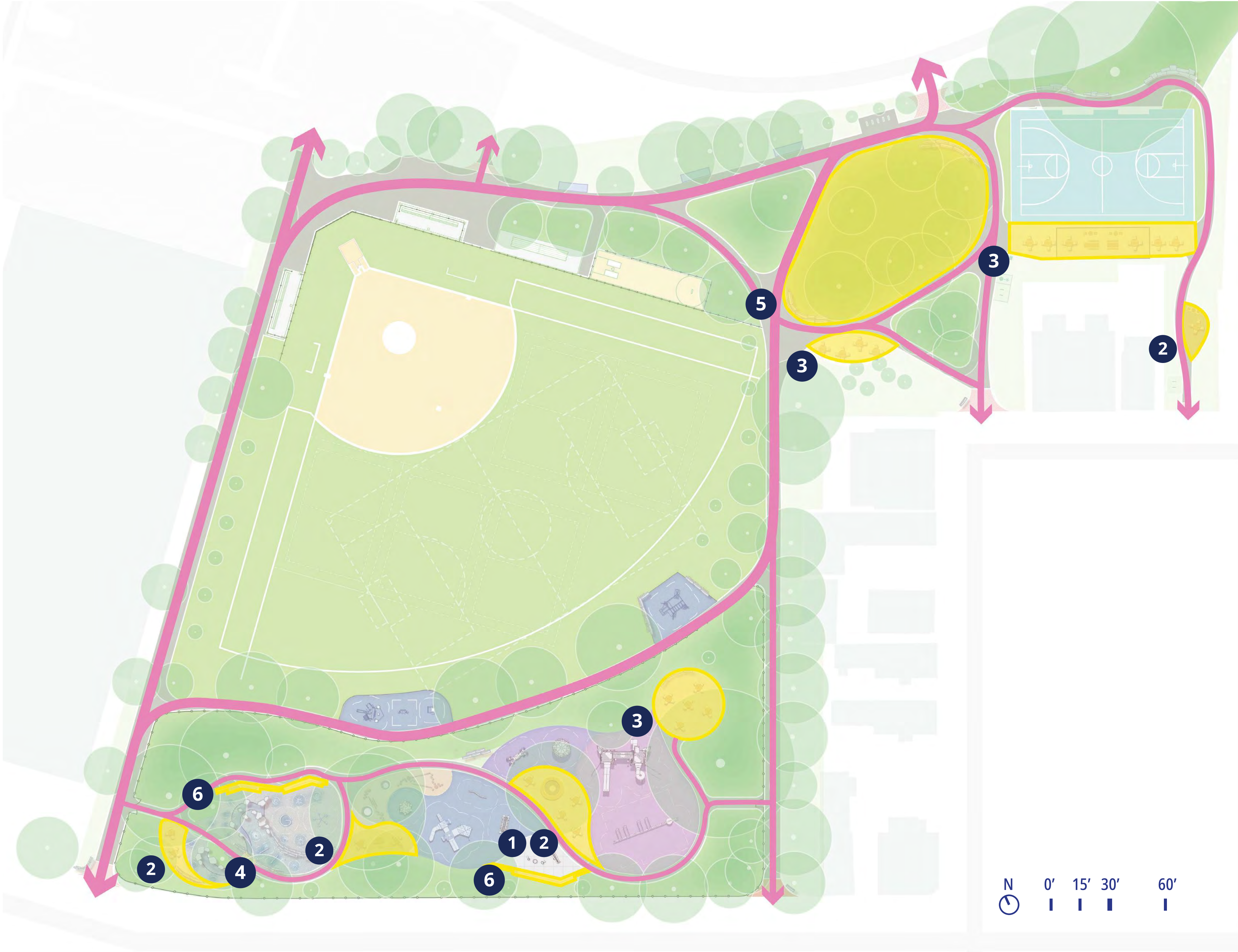
TERTIARY ENTRANCES

E F G



ENTRANCE B RENDERING

Site Circulation & Gathering Spaces



Sports & Recreation Amenities



1 DUGOUT



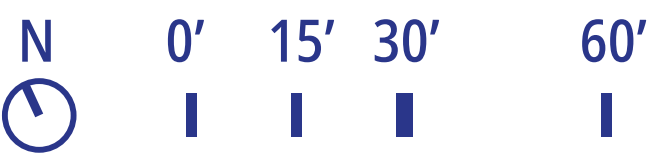
2 SPECTATOR SEATING



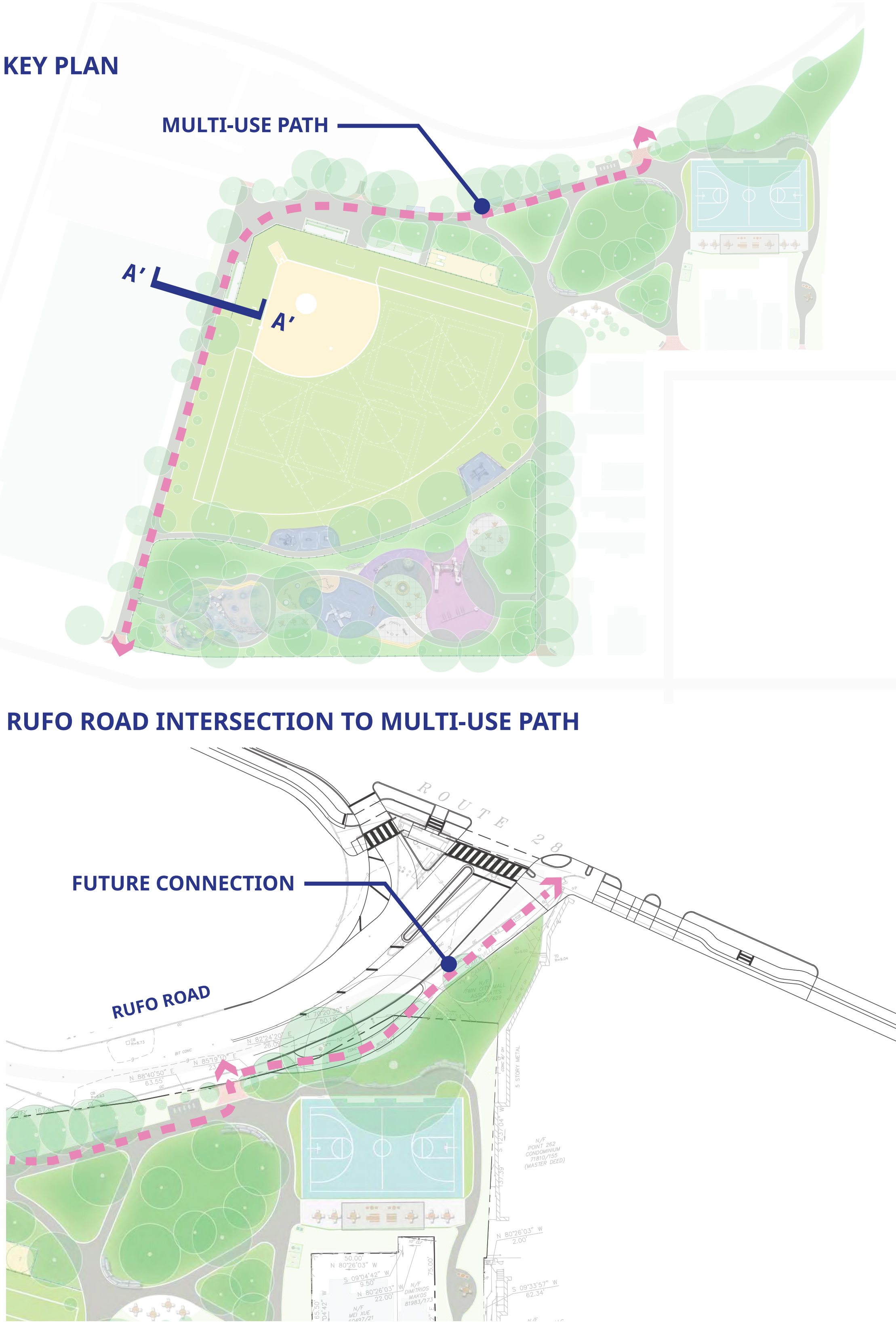
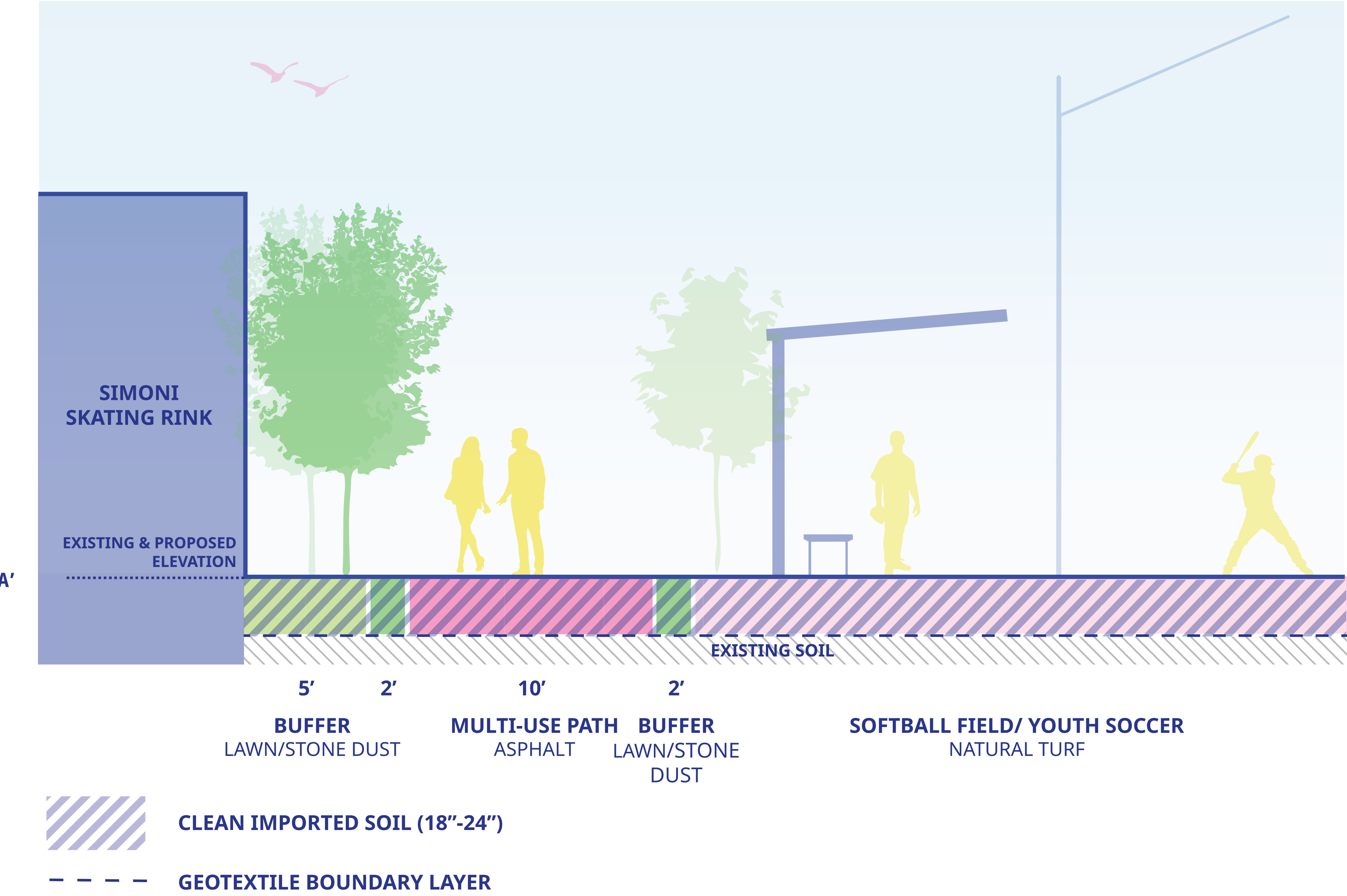
3 BATTING CAGE



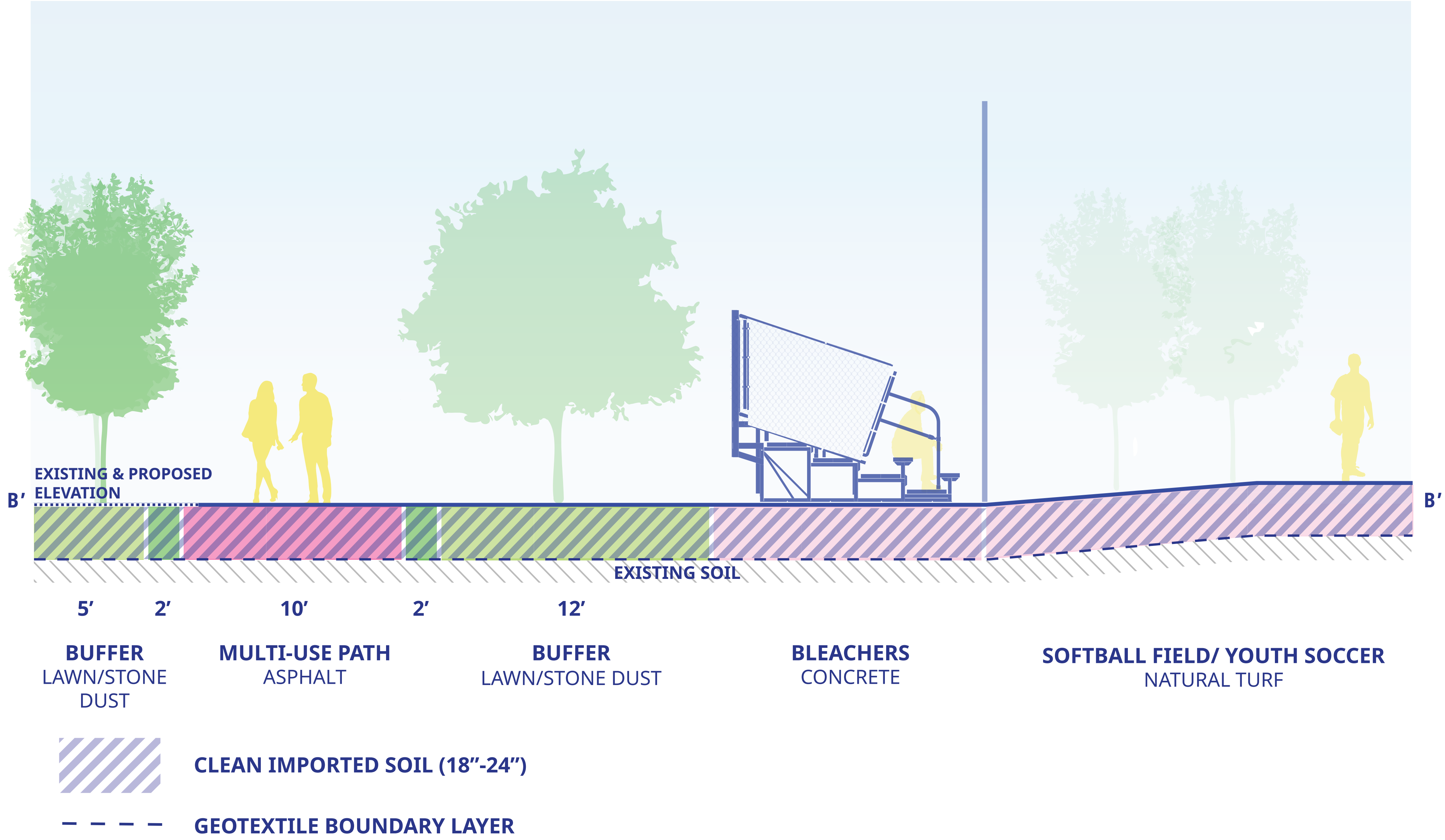
4 ADULT FITNESS EQUIPMENT



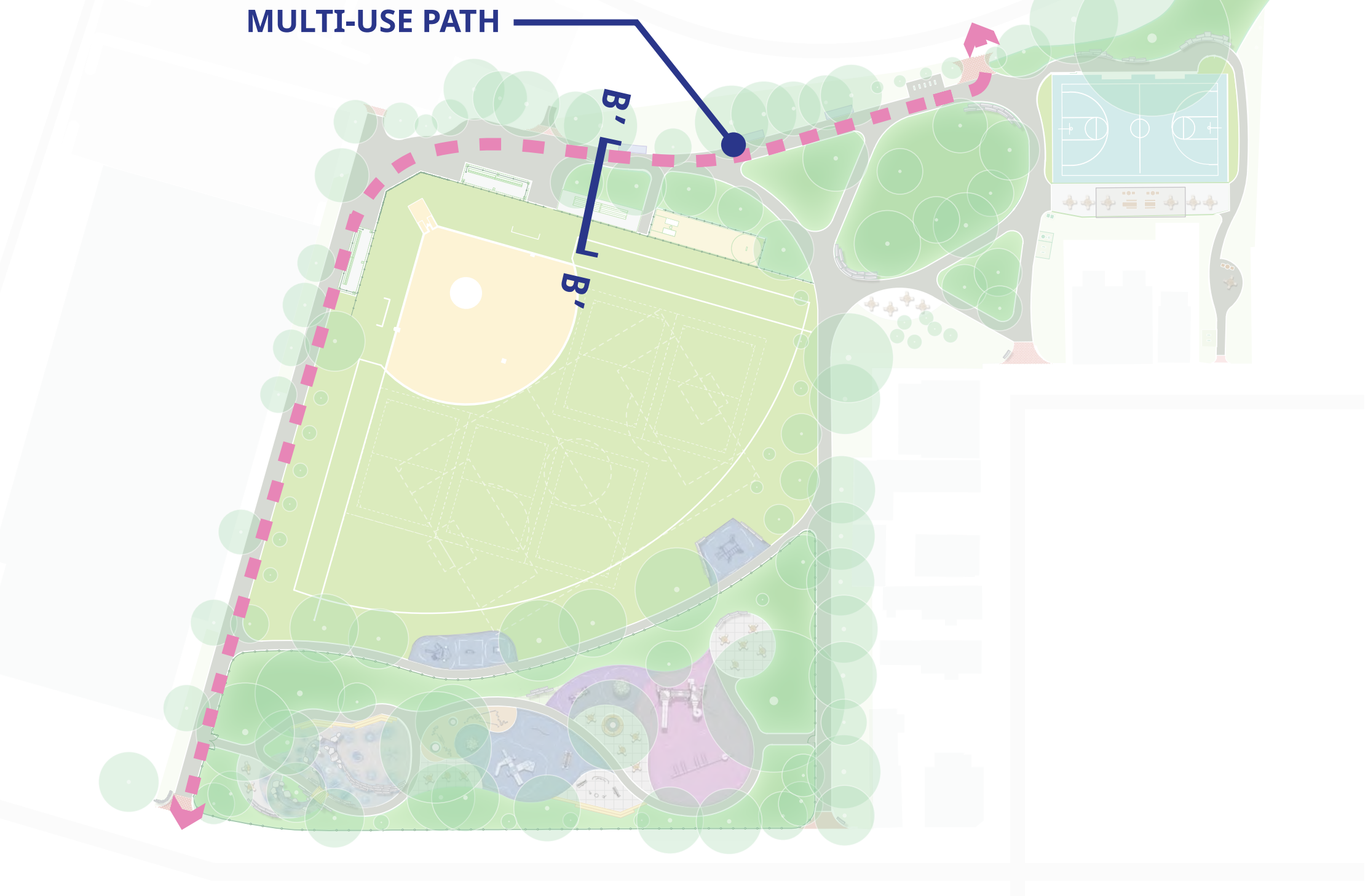
Multi-Use Path



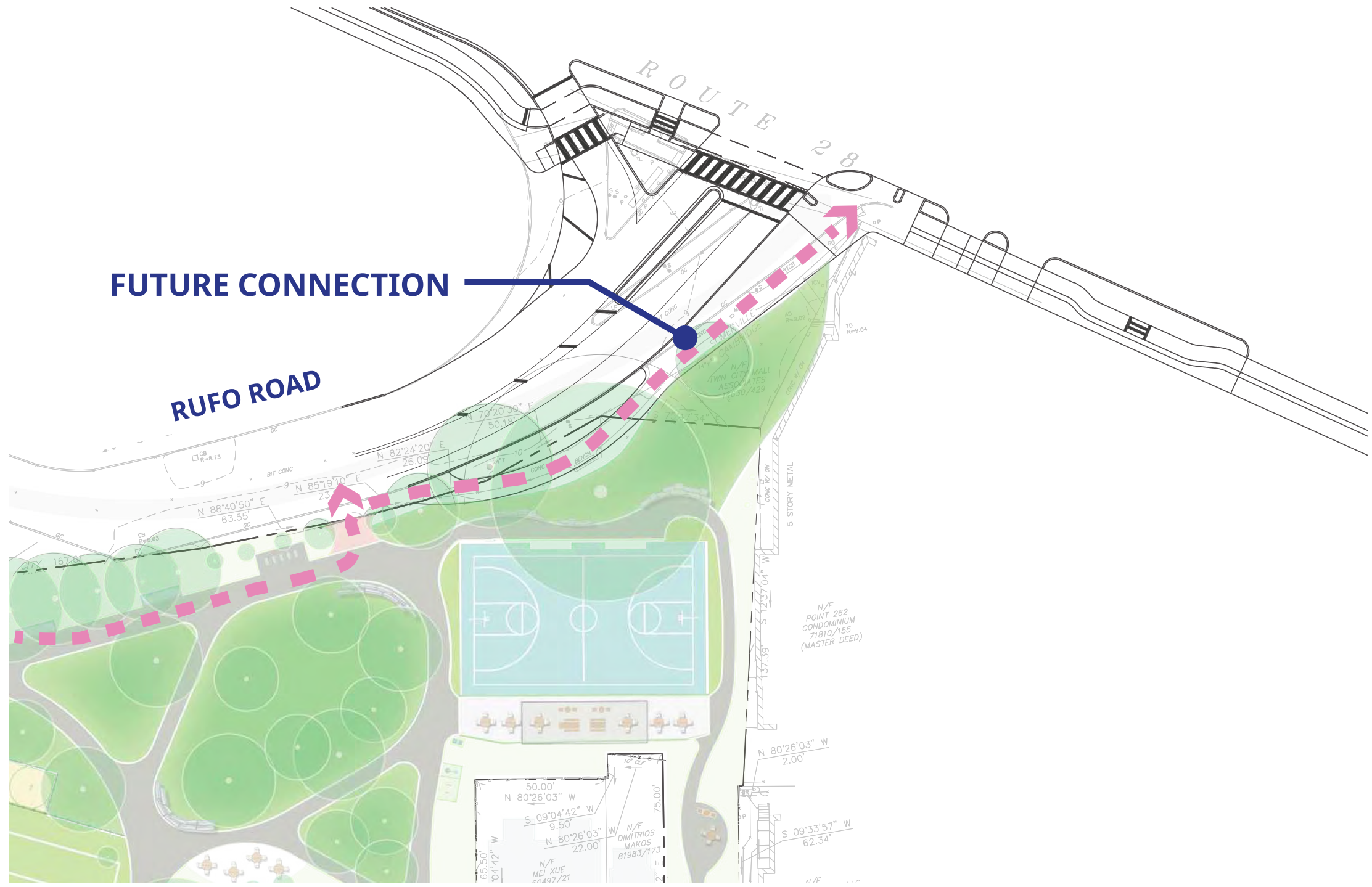
Multi-Use Path



KEY PLAN



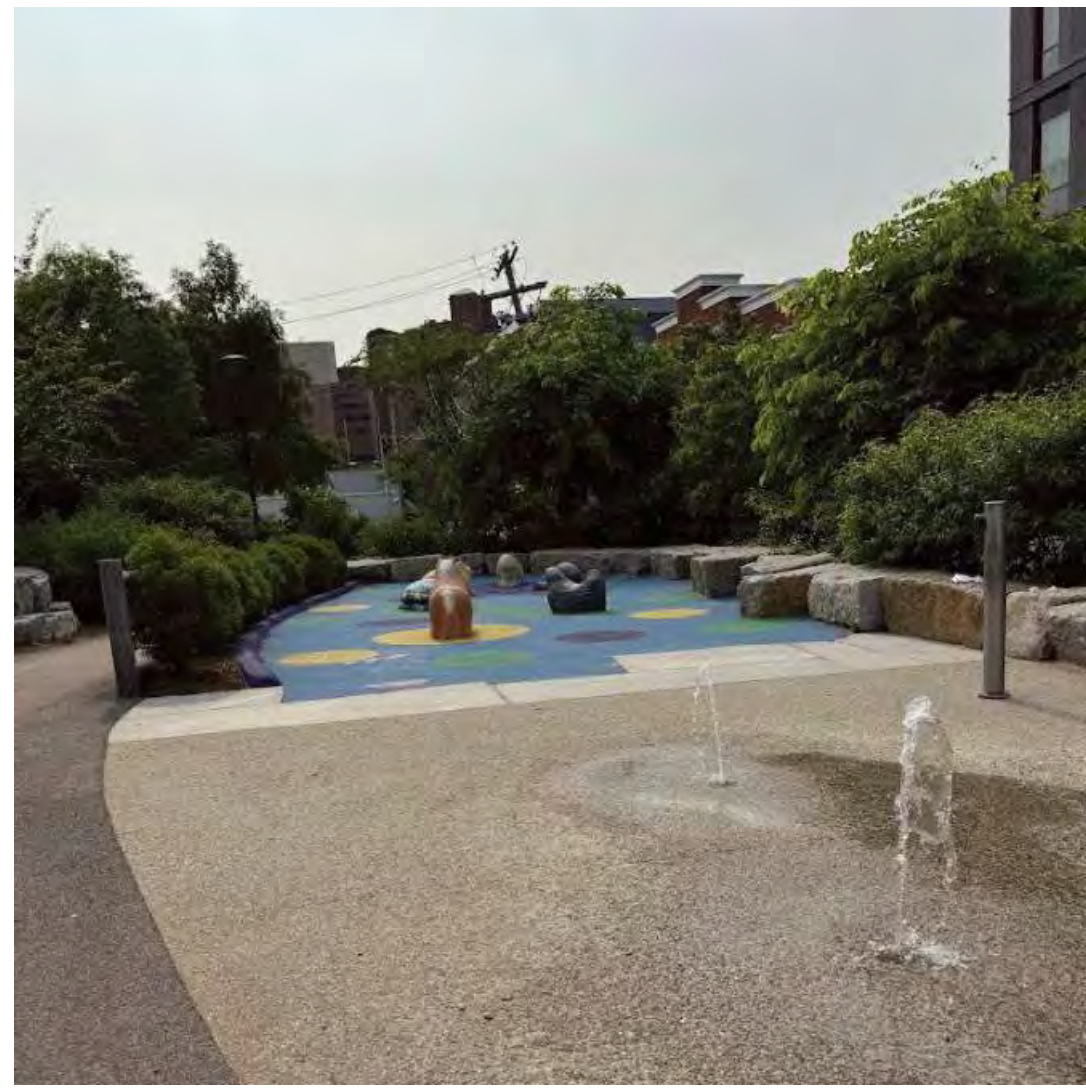
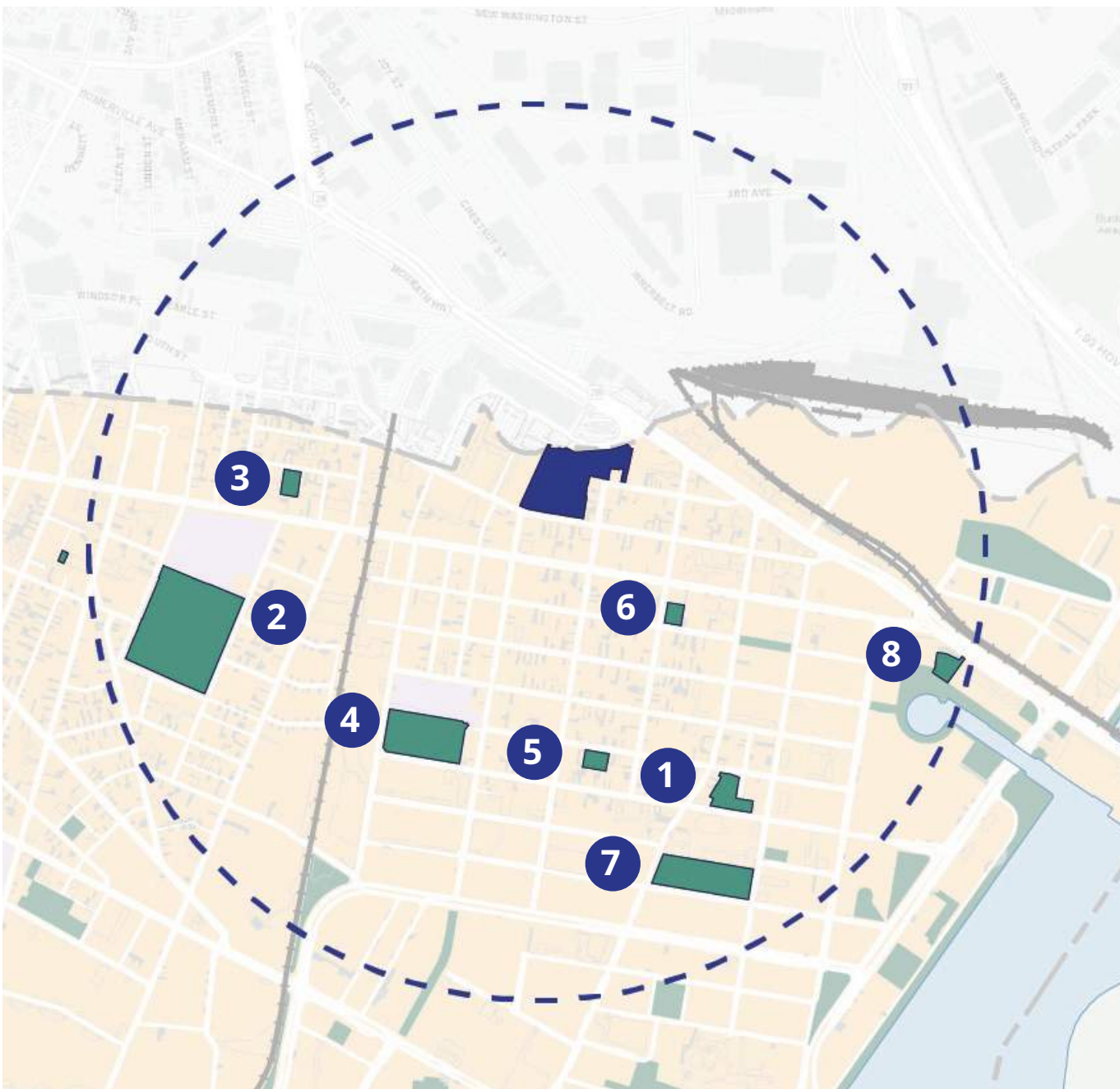
RUFO ROAD INTERSECTION TO MULTI-USE PATH



Playground and Splash Pad Neighborhood Context

Parks within 1/2 mile radius from Gold Star Mothers Park with Playgrounds / Splashpads / Exercise Equipment

	Swing	Play Hub	Slide	Rope Climbing	Springer	Nature Play	Exercise Equipment	Splash Pad
1 Costa Lopez Taylor Park								
2 Donnelly Field & Frisoli Youth Center								
3 Gannett-Warren Pals Park								
4 John A Ahern Field								
5 Hurley Park								
6 Silva Park								
7 Timothy J. Toomey Jr. Park								
8 Lechmere Canal Park								



2 Donnelly Field (Frisoli Youth Center)



7 Timothy J. Toomey Jr Park Playground

Existing Playground and Splash Pad Overview



Above Ground Water Feature



2-5 Yr. Structure



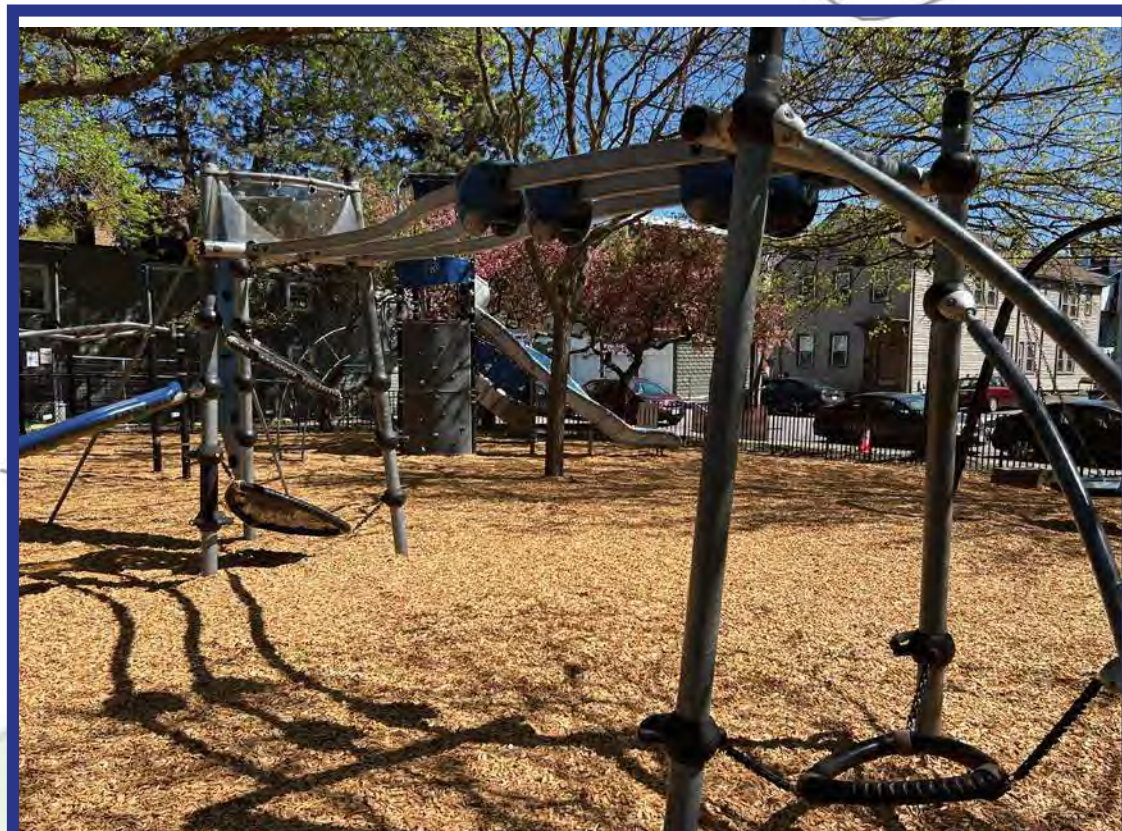
5-12 Yr. Structure



Swings



Climbing Structure

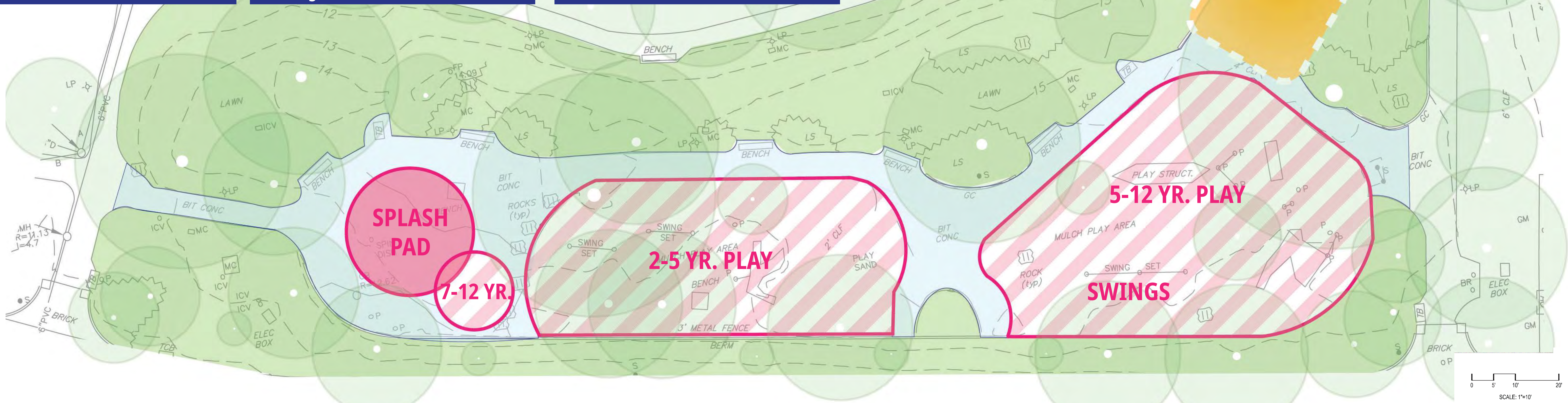


Overall 5-12 Yr. Structure

EXISTING PROGRAM FOOTPRINTS

OVERALL AREA

	PLAYGROUND	8,520 SF
	SPLASH PAD	560 SF
	SOCIAL	1,840 SF
	PLANTING BUFFER	18,890 SF
	PAVING	4,655 SF



Proposed Playground and Splash Pad

PROGRAM FOOTPRINTS

PROGRAM	EXISTING	PROPOSED	DIFFERENCE
<u>PLAYGROUND</u>	8,520 SF	8,575 SF	+55 SF
<u>SPLASH PAD</u>	560 SF	2,850 SF	+2,290 SF
<u>SOCIAL</u>	1,840 SF	2,865 SF	+1,025 SF
<u>PLANTING</u>	18,890 SF	16,335 SF	-2,555 SF
<u>PAVING</u>	4,655 SF	5,810 SF	+1,155 SF
<u>FENCED IN AREA</u>	15,895 SF	33,535 SF	+17,640 SF

PLAYGROUND SURFACING CONDITIONS



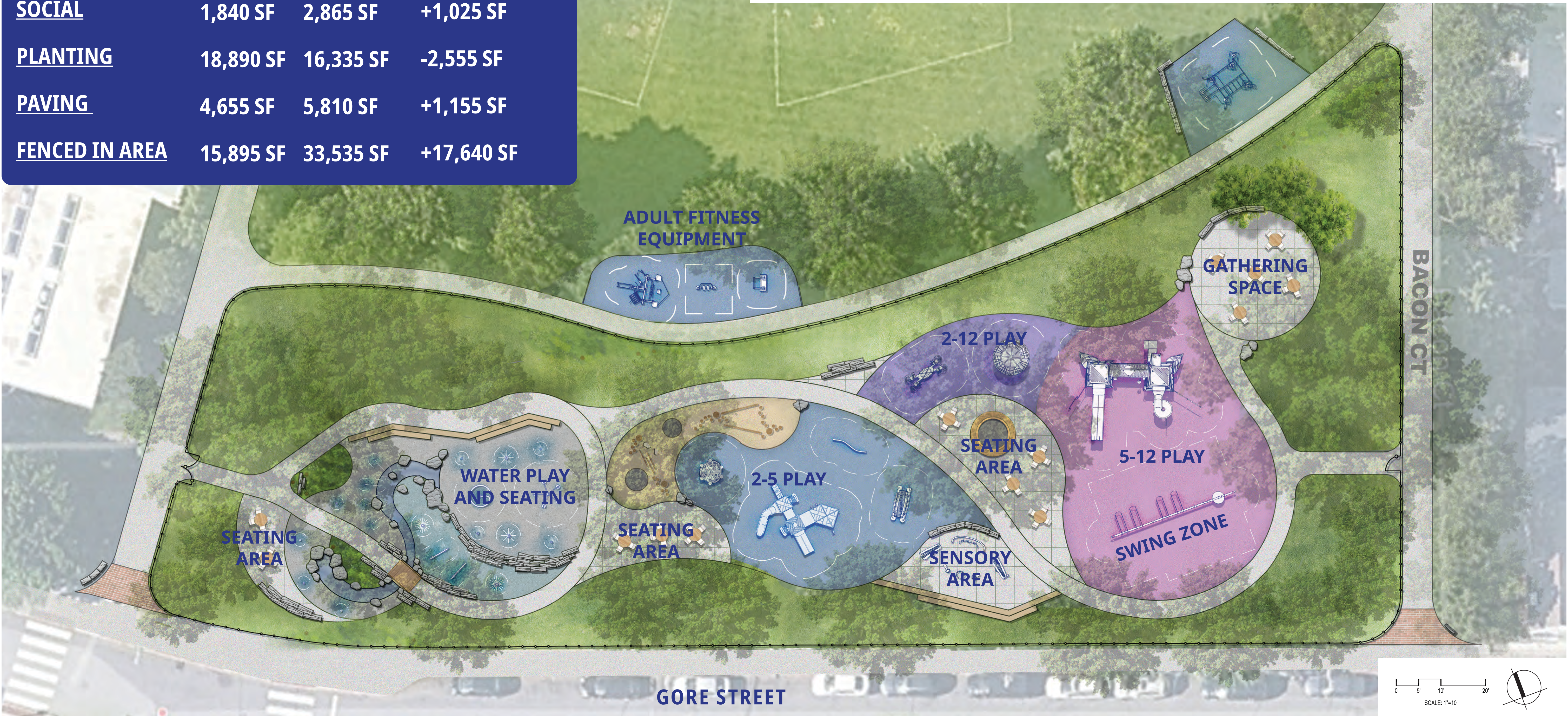
FLEXIPAVE



AROUND TREES



PIP RUBBER SAFETY SURFACING

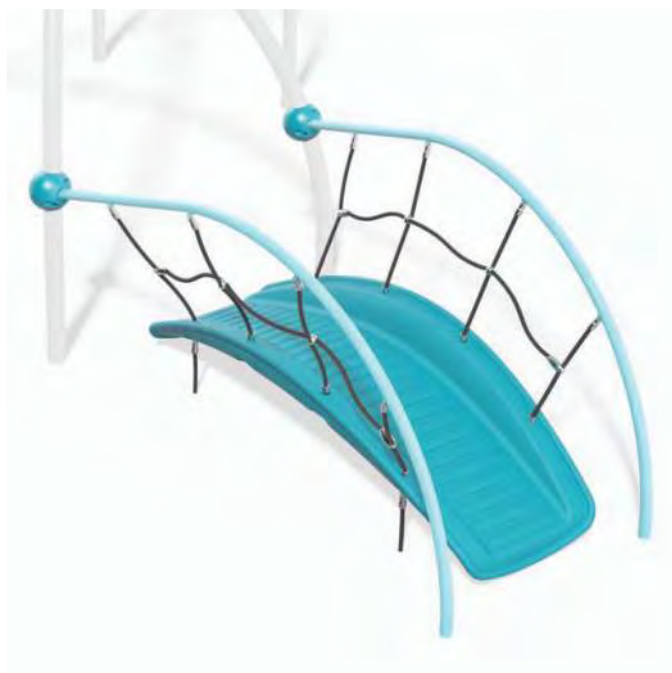


Proposed Playground Equipment

AGES 2-5



COZY DOME



BOPPITY BRIDGE



BALANCE BEAM



PLAY STRUCTURE TRADITIONAL POST AND PLATFORM



AGES 2-12



MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS



UNIVERSAL CAROUSEL



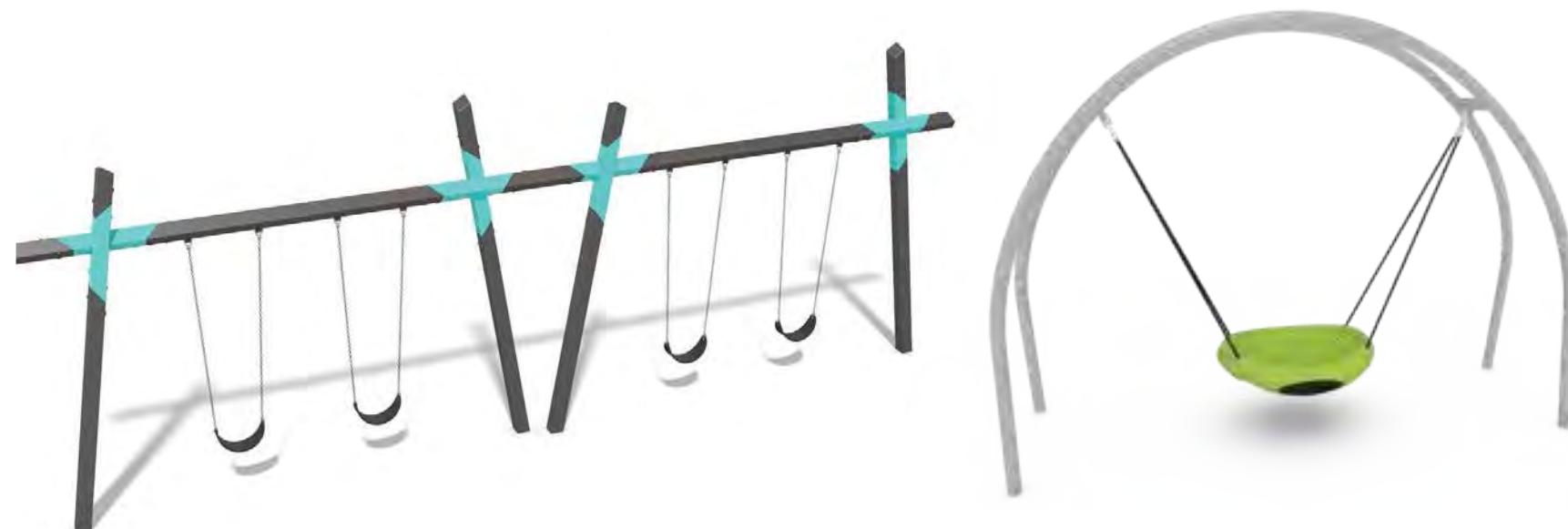
WE-SAW



AGES 5-12



PLAY STRUCTURE TRADITIONAL POST AND PLATFORM



SWINGS



DEVELOPMENTAL DOMAINS



PHYSICAL



SOCIAL / EMOTIONAL



COGNITIVE



SENSORY



IMAGINATION

PLAY TYPES



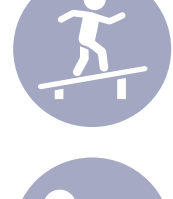
SWINGING



CLIMBING



SLIDING



BALANCING



CONSTRUCTING

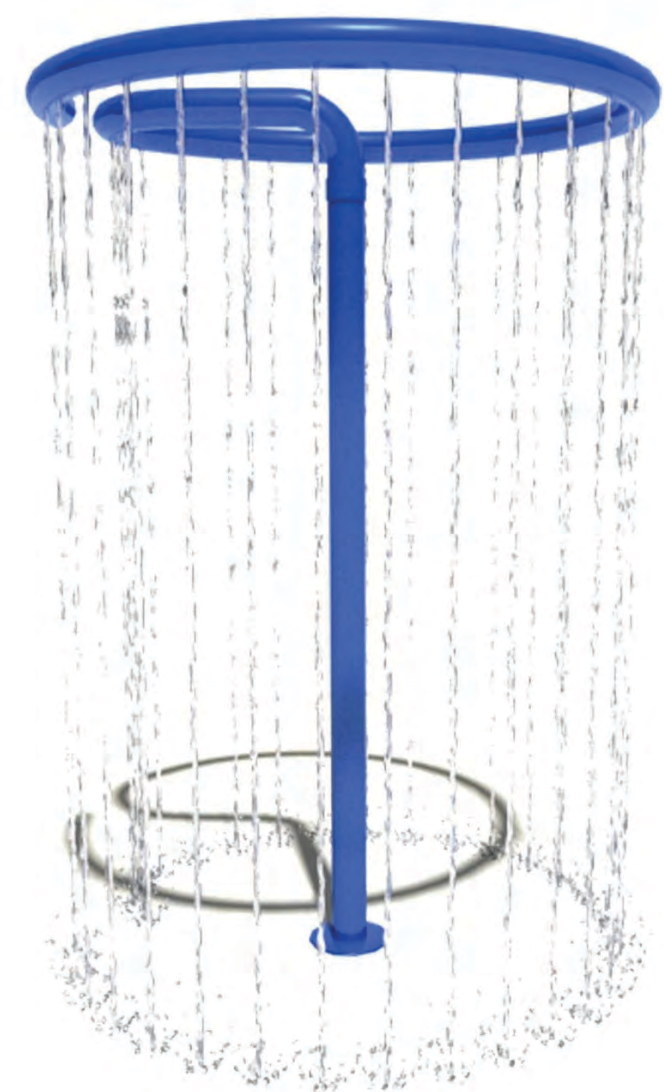


CRAWLING



SPINNING

Proposed Splash Pad Equipment



1 WEEPING WATER



2 FILL N SPILL - 5 ARM



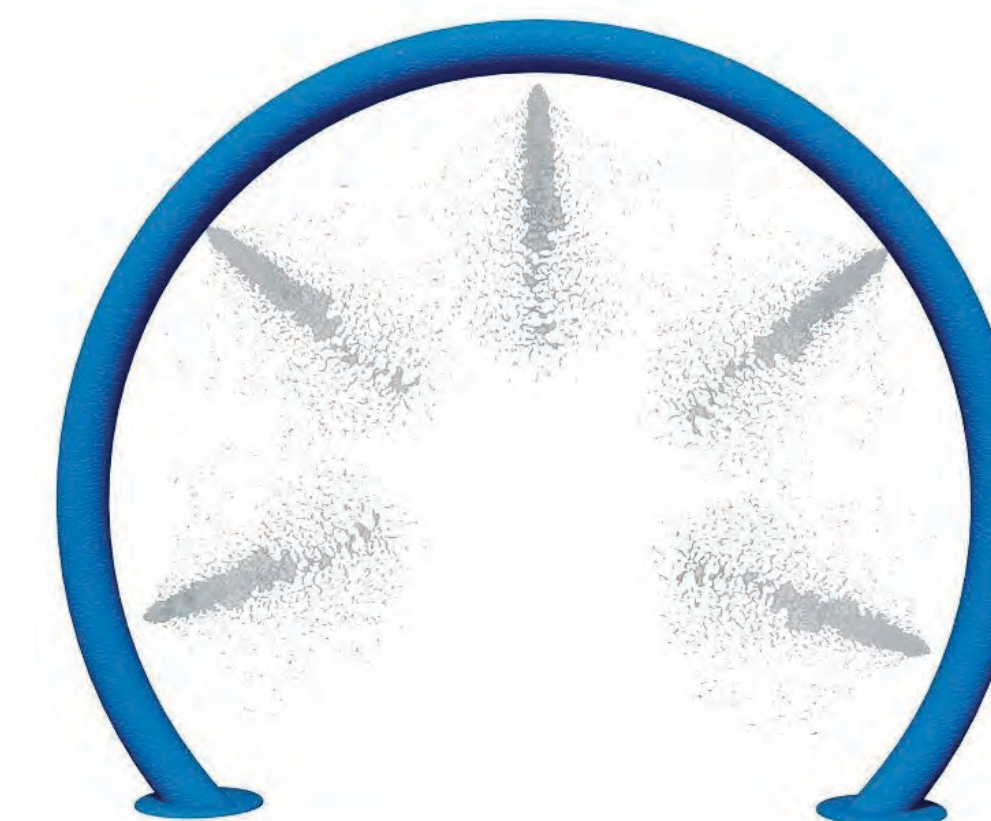
3 DIRECTIONAL EYEBALL



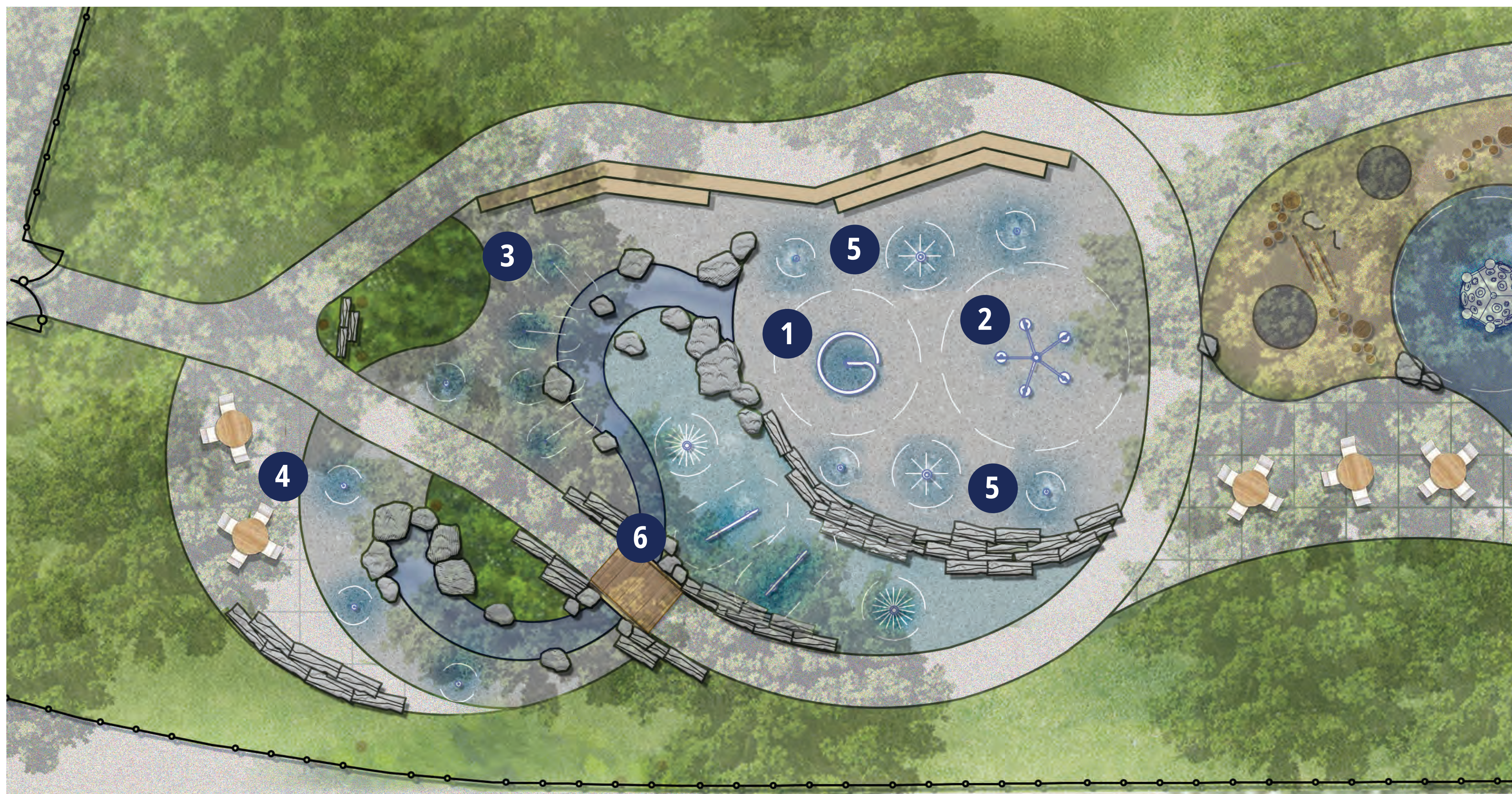
4 POPP DROPP



5 DADDY LONG LEGS



6 WATER RING



Fitness Equipment

LEGEND



STRENGTH



CARDIO



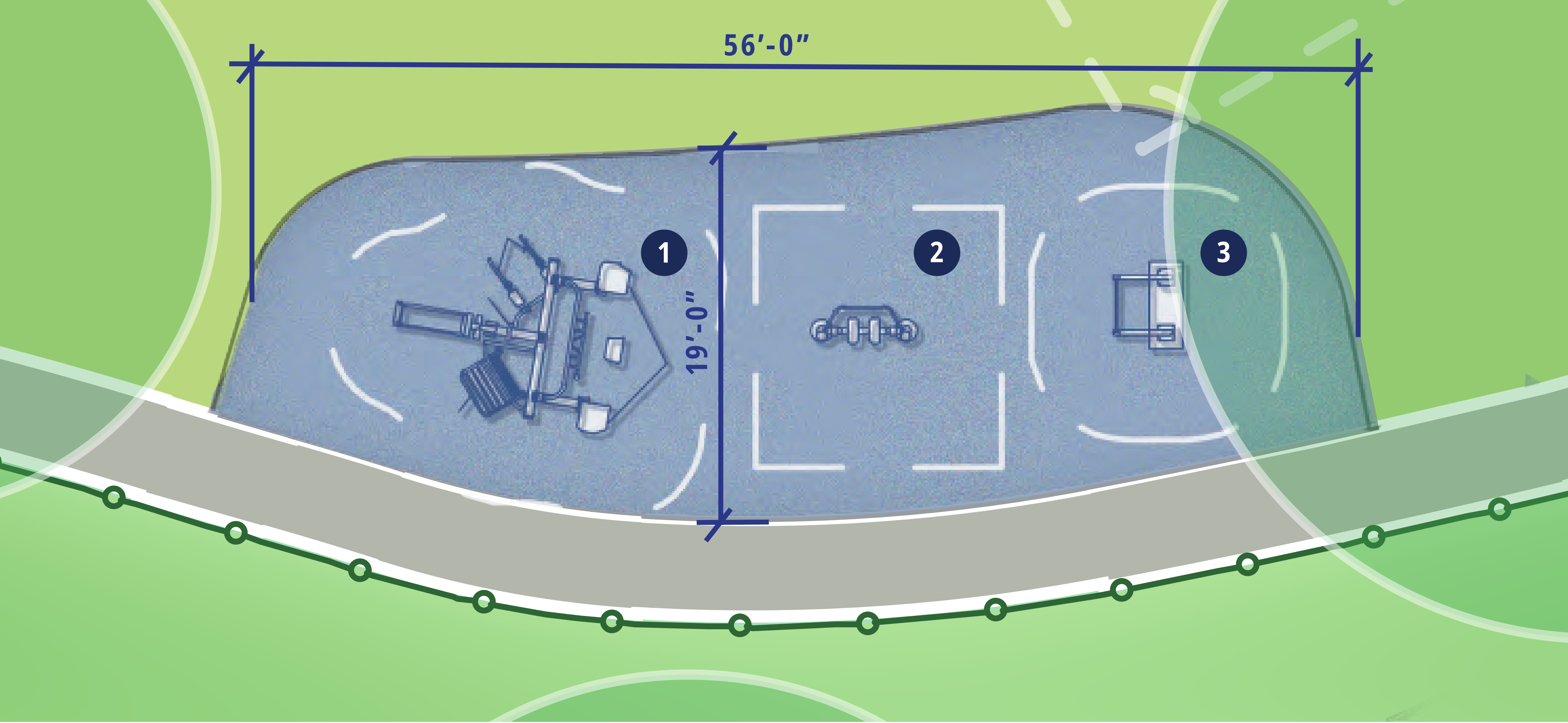
BALANCE



FLEXIBILITY



INCLUDED IN PLAN BELOW



Fitness Equipment

LEGEND



STRENGTH



CARDIO



BALANCE



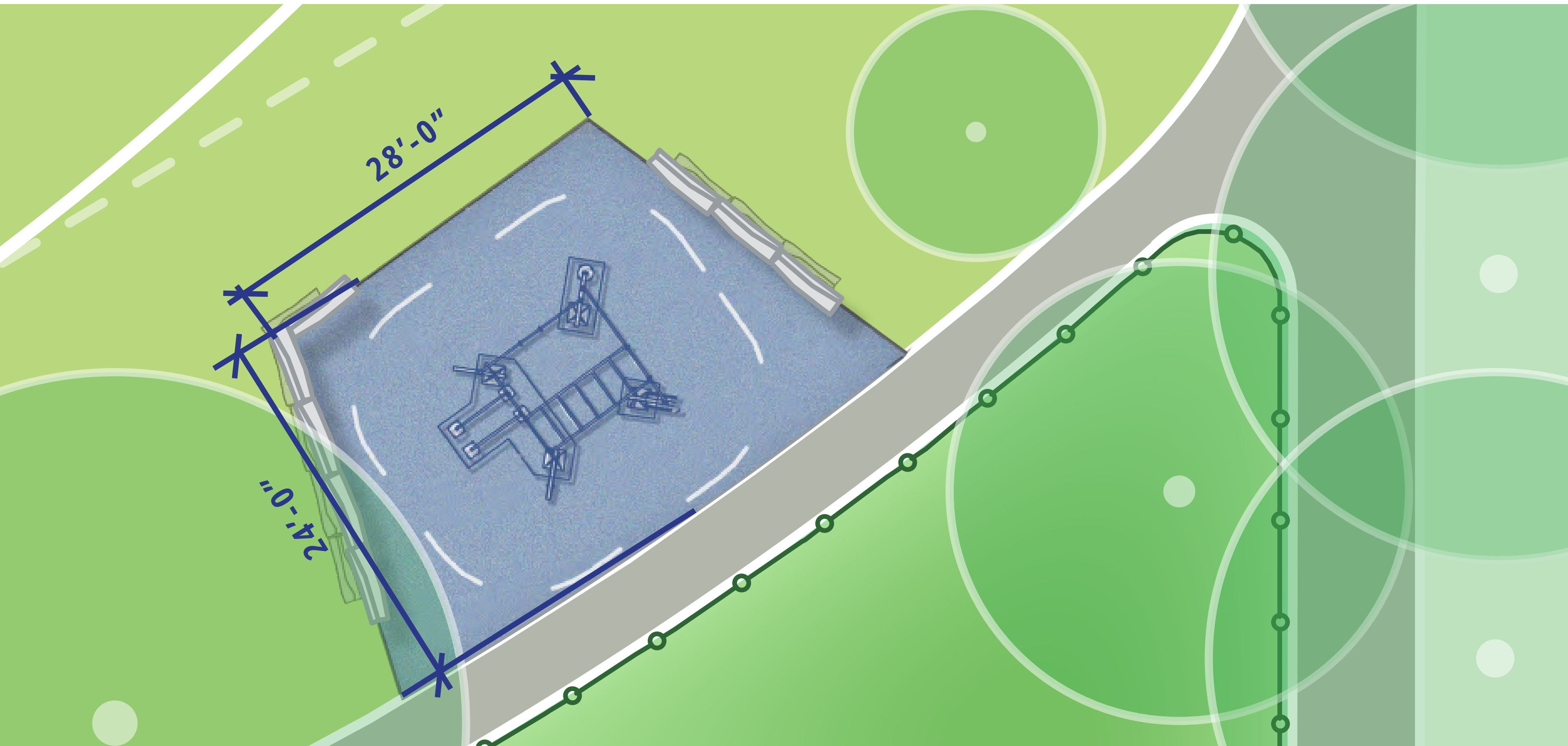
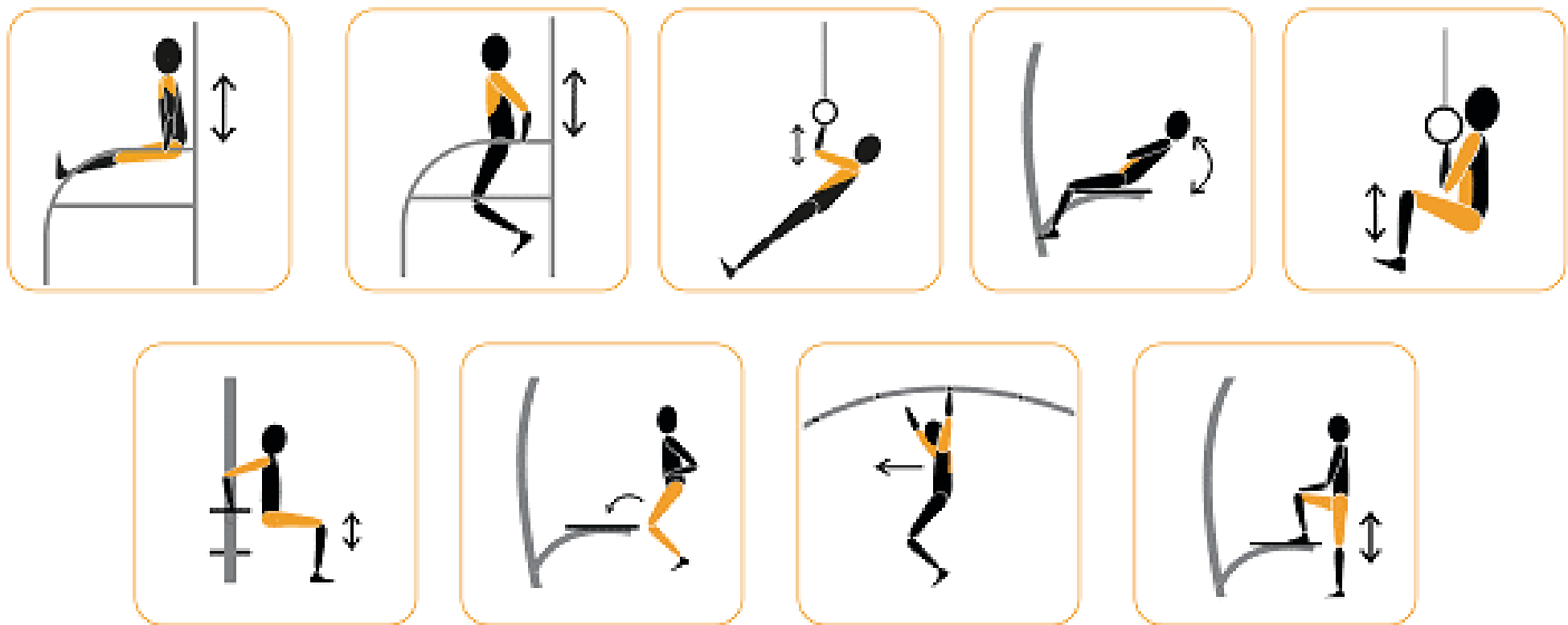
FLEXIBILITY



INCLUDED IN PLAN BELOW

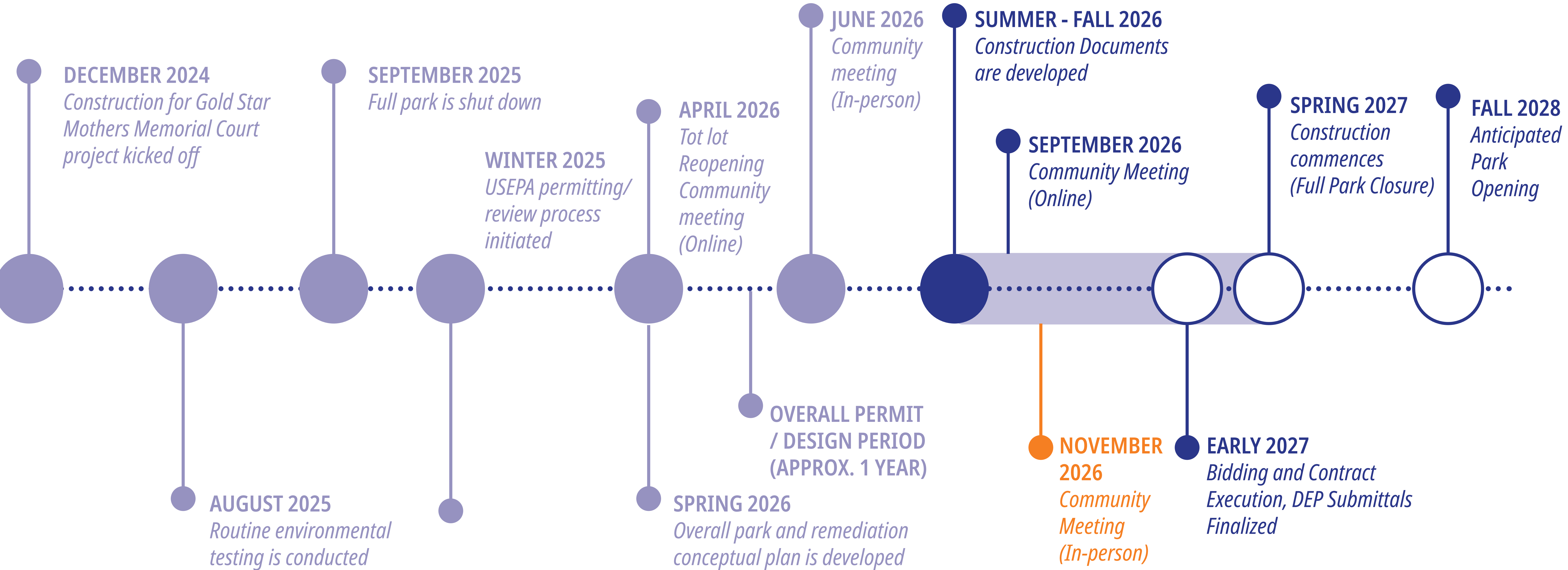


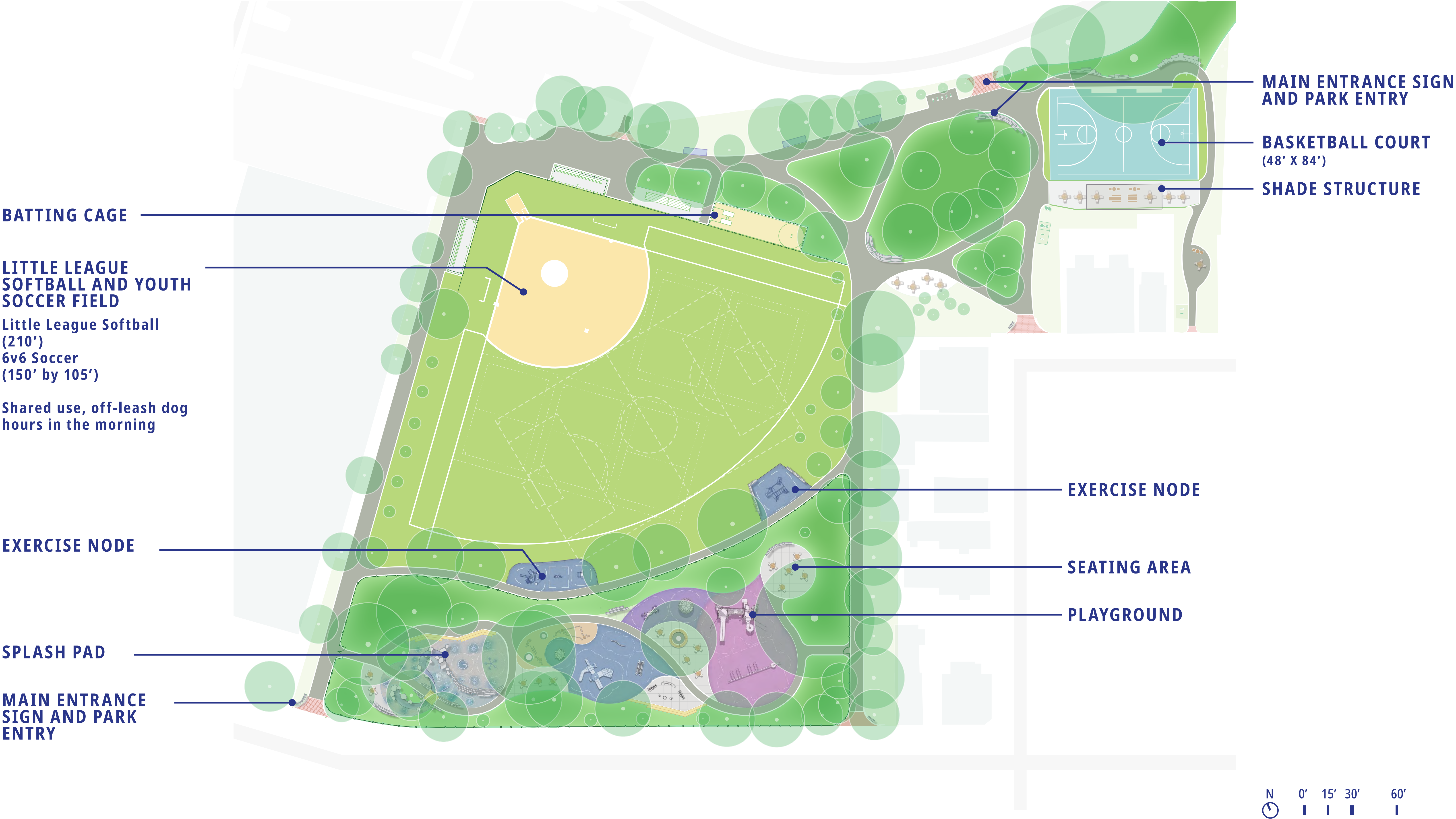
FUNCTIONAL TRAINING



Project Timeline

Community Engagement has been and will be ongoing throughout this process





Share Your Feedback

Project webpage:

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/goldstar>



If you have questions or would like additional information, contact:

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