

CENTER PLAZA DESIGN UPDATE

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Design Review Committee Discussion
August 19, 2025



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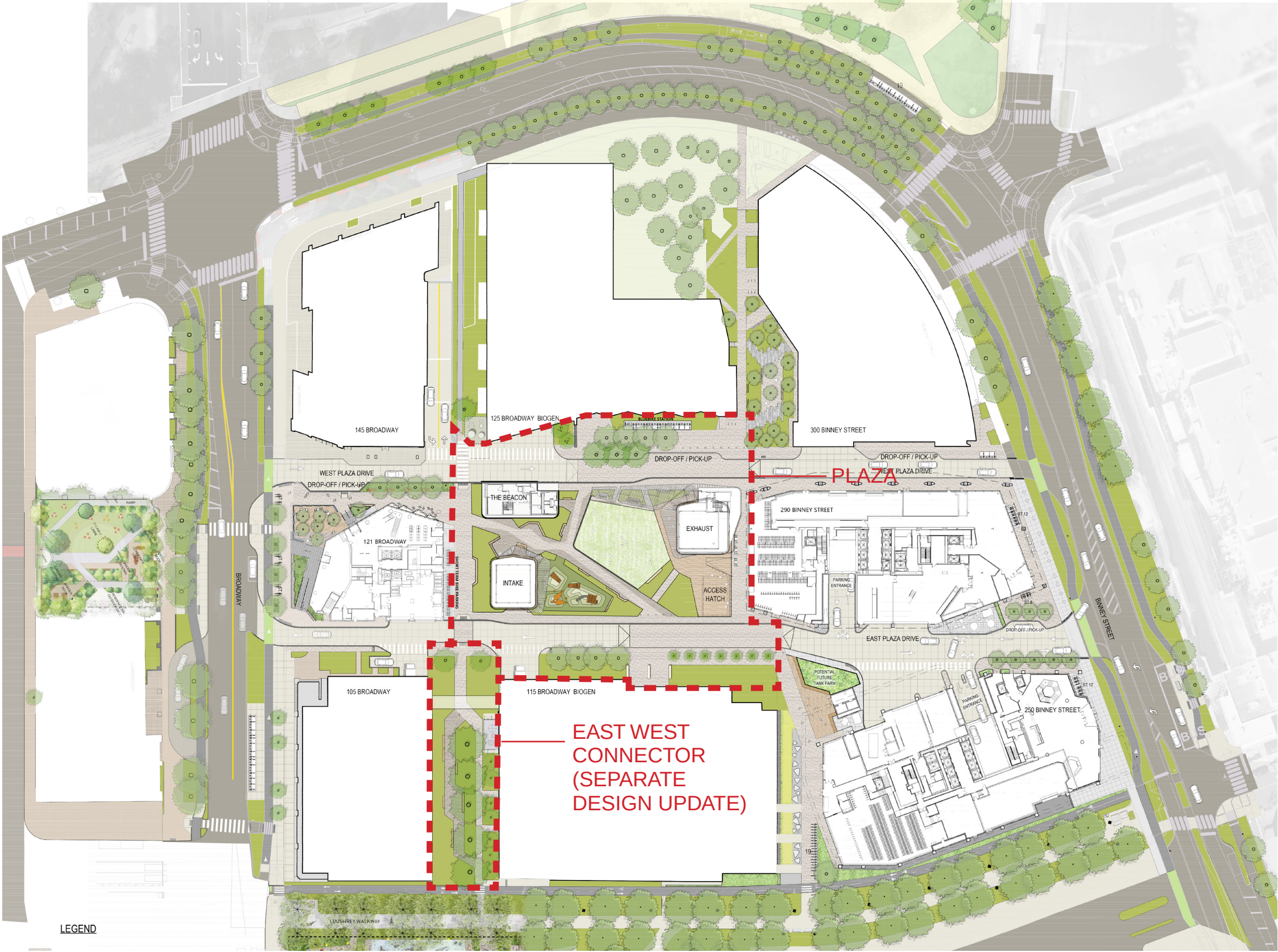
2. Play Area Updates

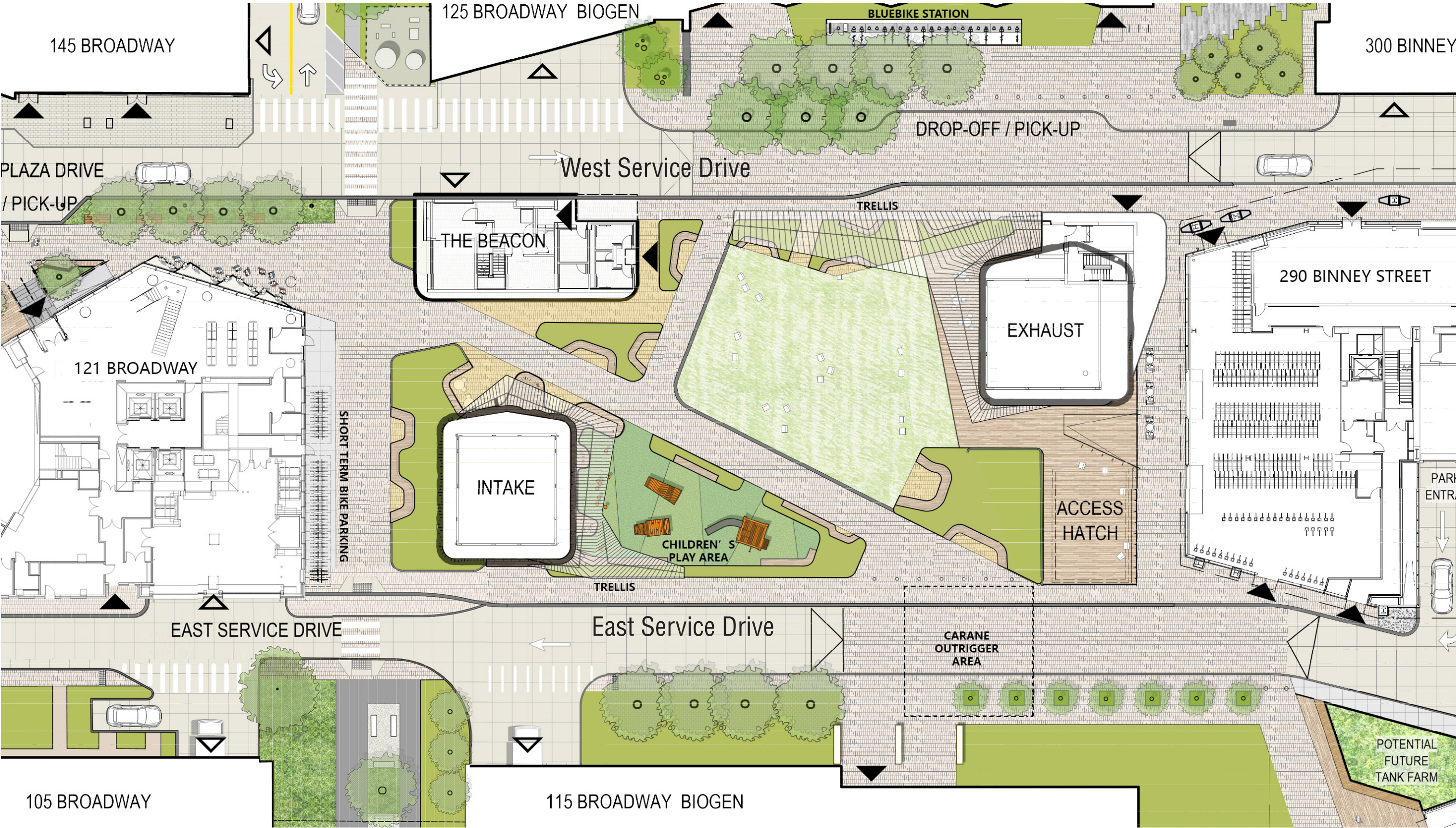
3. Appendix

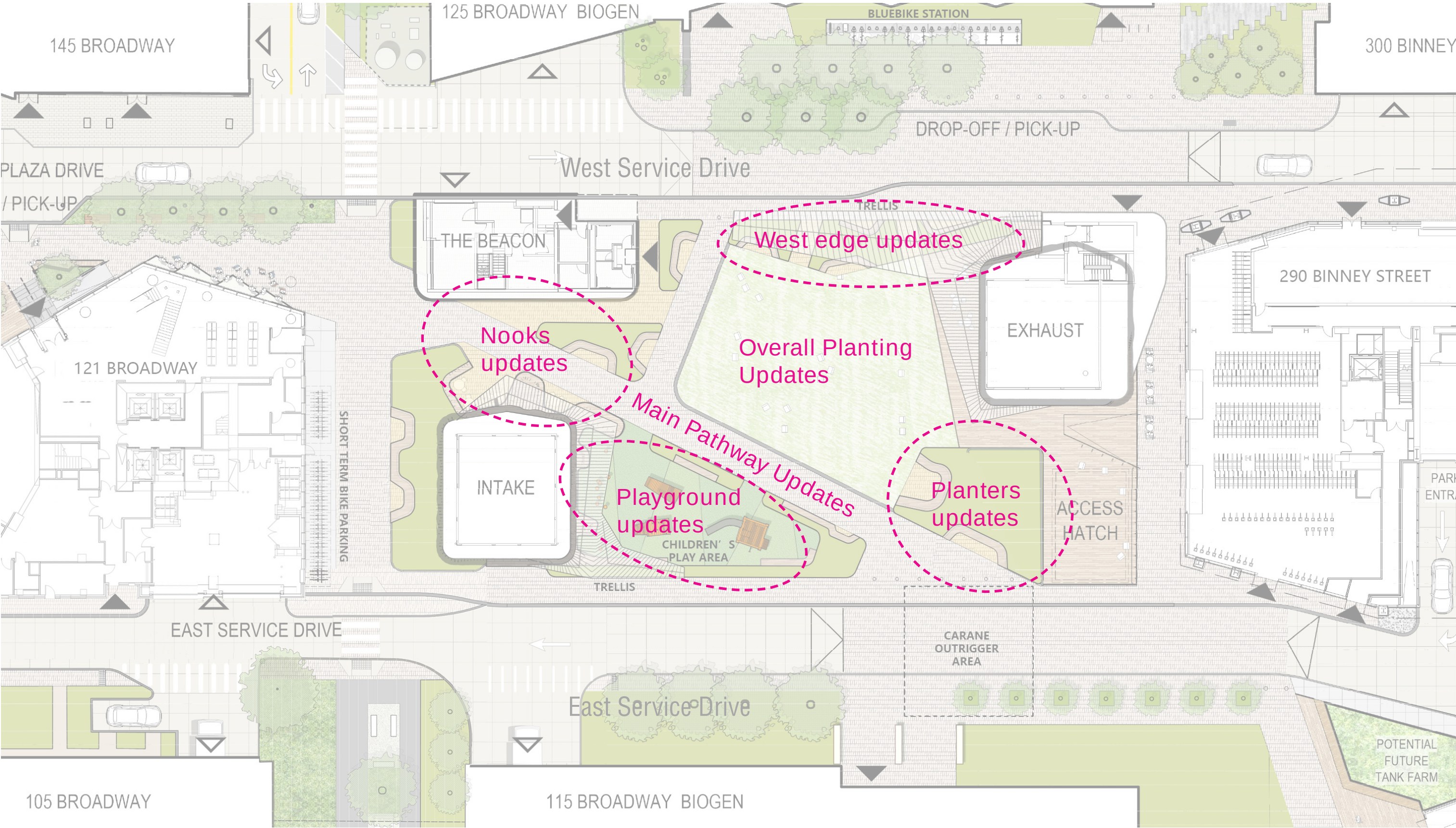
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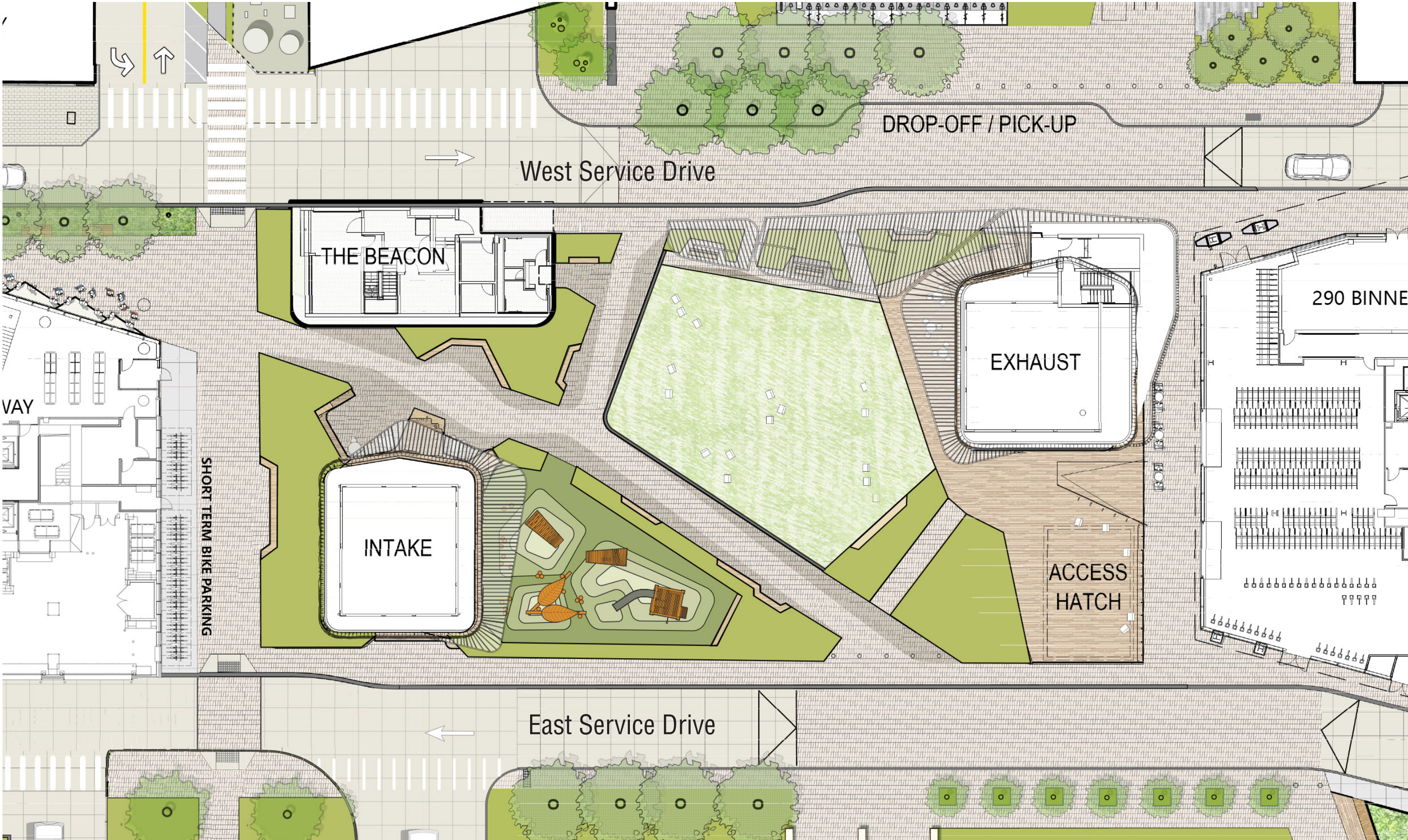
UPDATE ON DESIGN PROGRESS

Overall Illustrative Plan

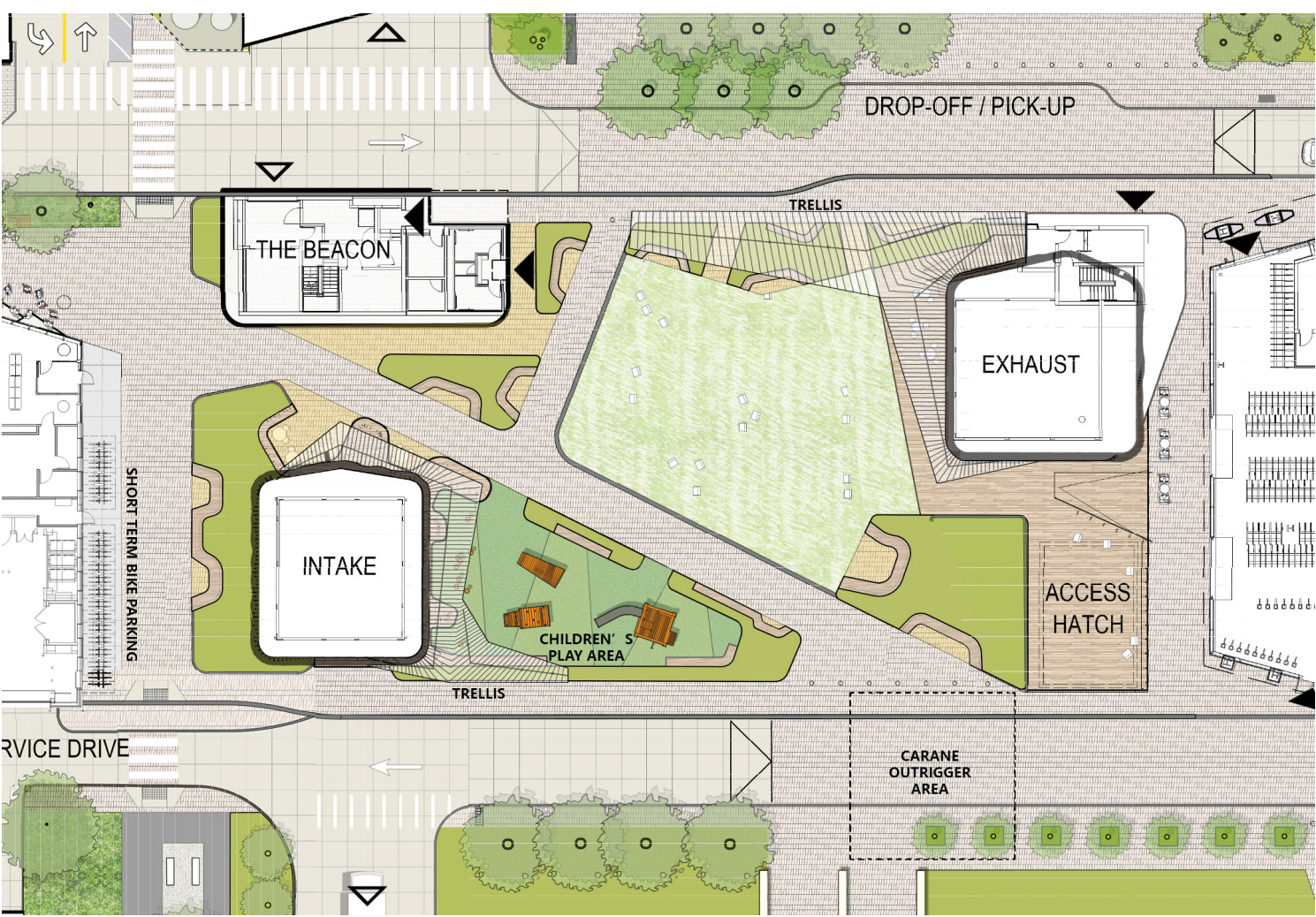




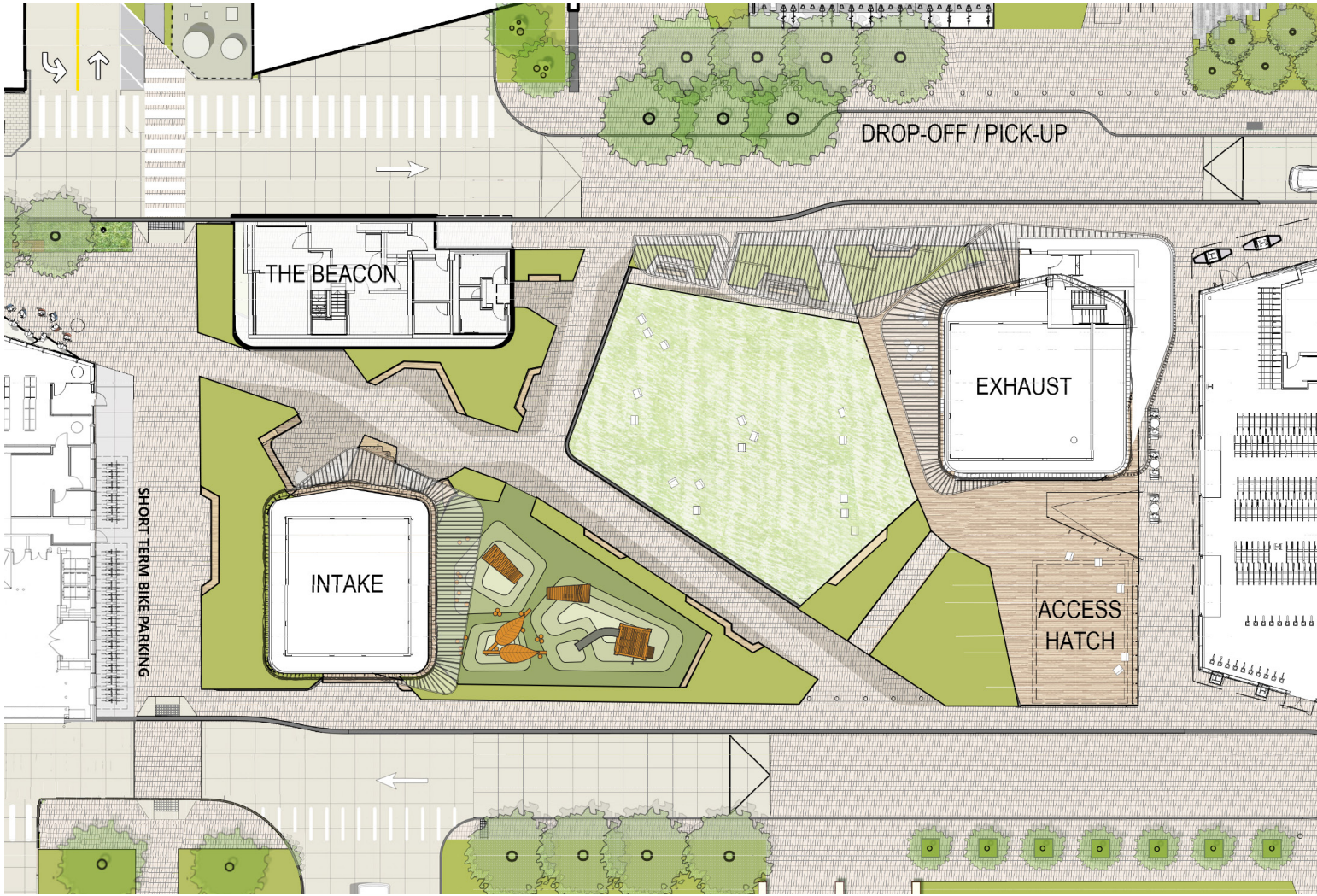




DESIGN PROGRESS OVERVIEW



Previous Site Plan 11/12/2024



Current Site Plan





















PLAY AREA UPDATES

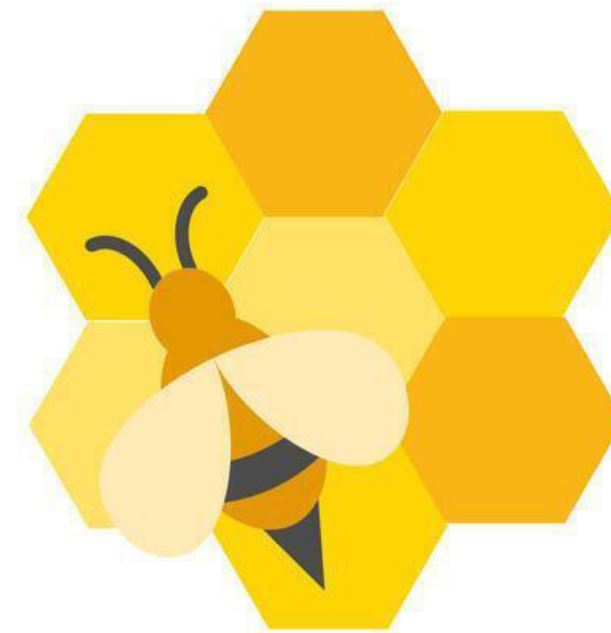
Comments We Received

- Refine play structure material; mixed preference between wood and colorful structures, with a general preference to avoid rustic aesthetic.
- Enhance planting along play area edges.
- Increase variety and engagement, create a more immersive experience.
- Ensure adequate lighting and long-term durability.

Refined Play Area Design



Option 1 - The Bird's Nest



Option 2 - The Beehive



Option 1 - The Bird's Nest



The Bird's Nest



The Bird's Nest



The Bird's Nest



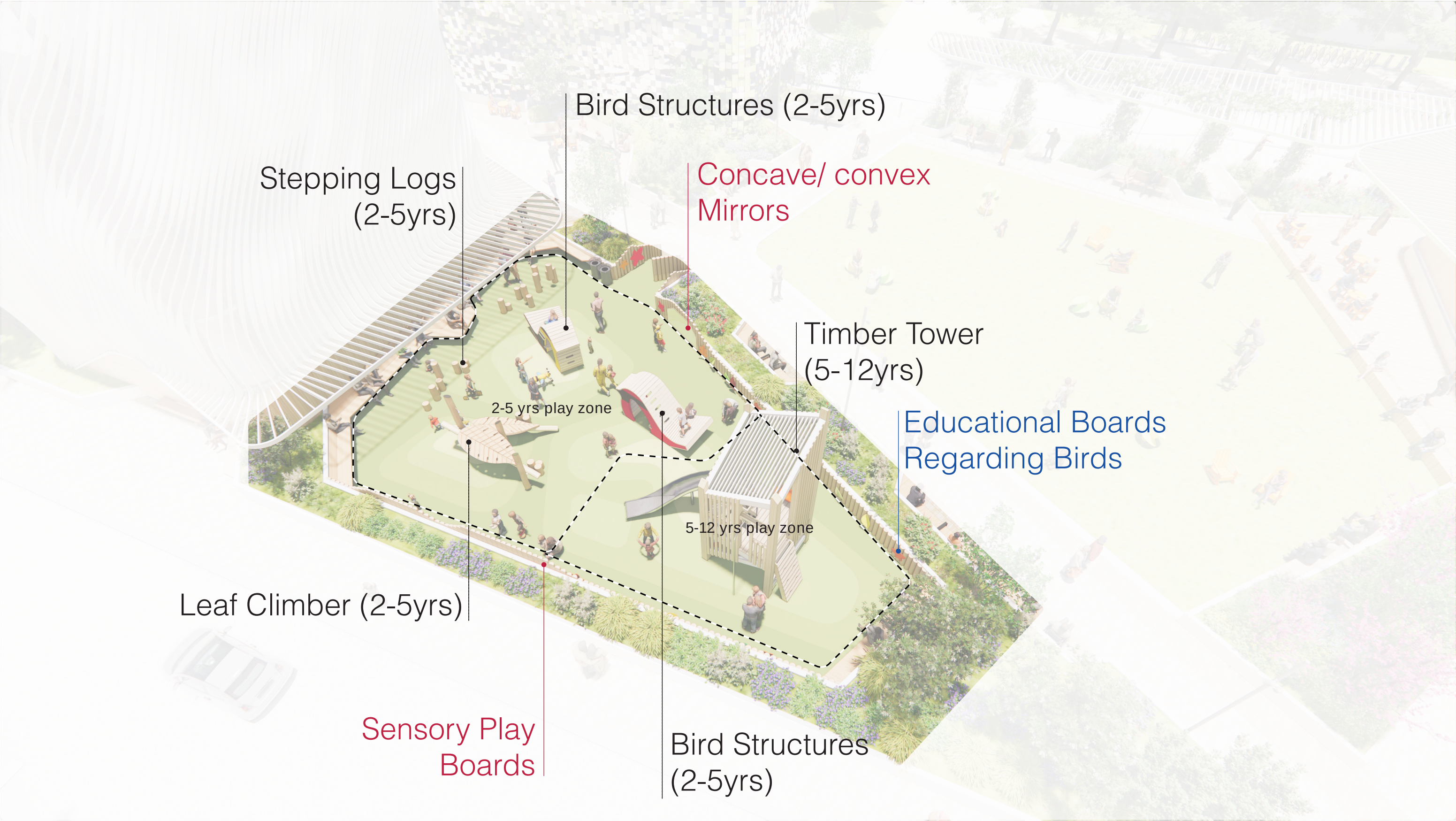
The Bird's Nest

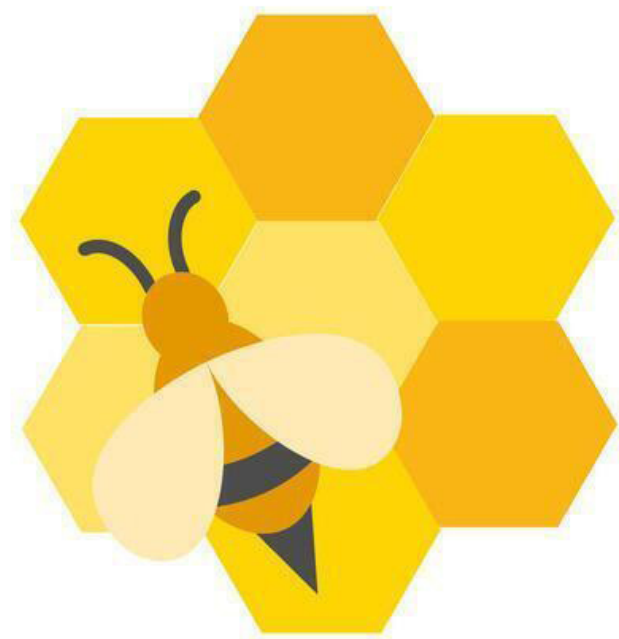


The Bird's Nest



The Bird's Nest





Option 2 - The Beehive



The Beehive



The Beehive



The Beehive



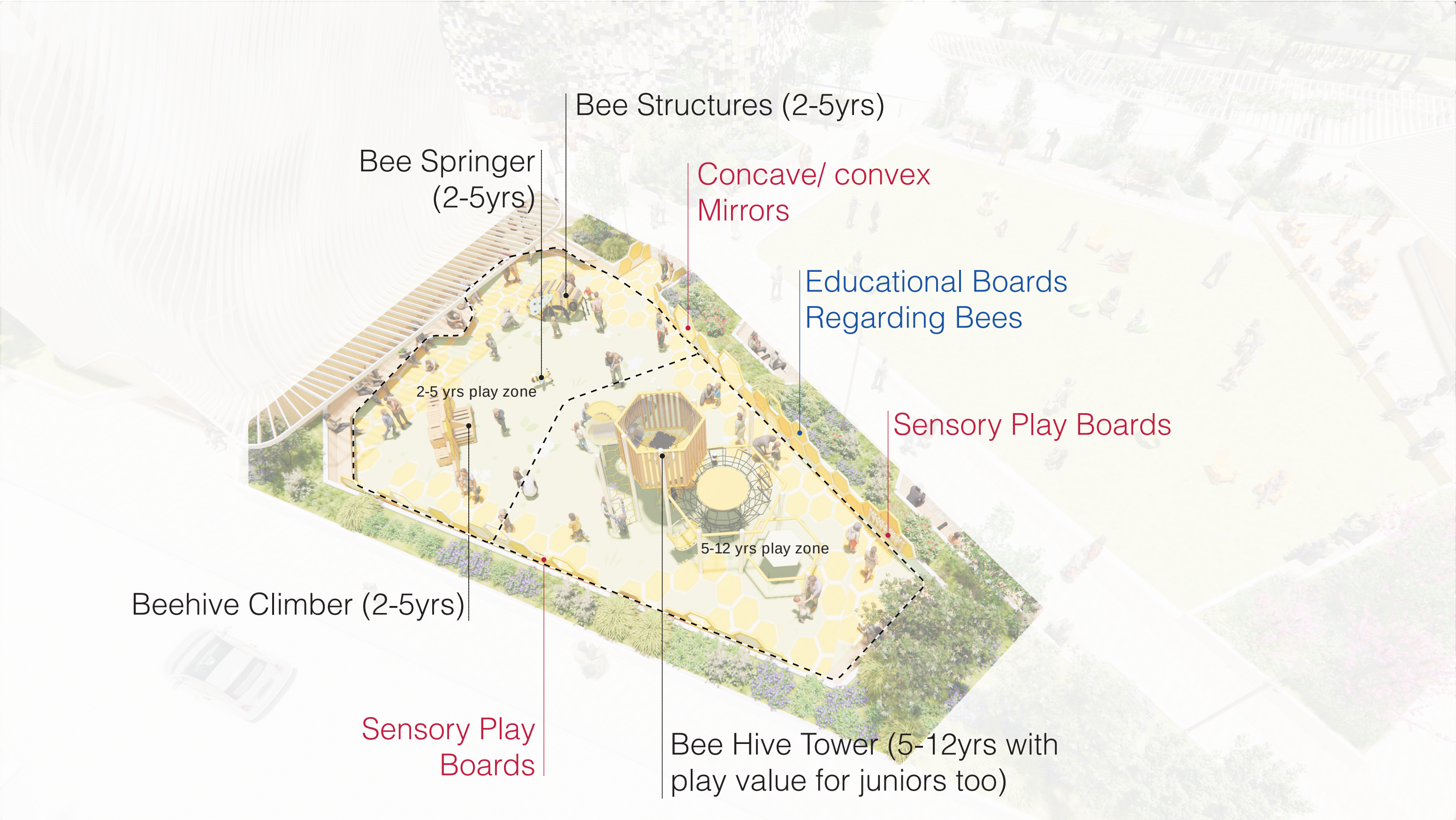
The Beehive



The Beehive



The Beehive



PLAY AREA OPTIONS



The Bird's Nest



The Beehive

APPENDIX

50% Design Review Cover Letter



800 Boylston Street, Suite 1900
Boston, MA 02199

617.236.3300
www.bxp.com

BXP, Inc.
(NYSE: BXP)

To: CRA and CDD Design Review Committee
Subject: Center Plaza 50% Design Development Review
Date: March 26th, 2025

Following the Schematic Design approval during the December 10th, 2024 meeting, we have been working diligently to address the feedback received. A summary of that feedback is included in Exhibit 1.

While most comments will be addressed during the meeting on April 2nd, there are a few items we would like to respond to in writing ahead of time:

Boston

Los Angeles

New York

San Francisco

Seattle

Washington, DC

- **Could we introduce green on the hatch to make it more compelling:** green elements can be introduced above the hatch using movable planters. However, we are unable to install anything permanent, as the hatch cover must remain removable to allow Eversource access to the vault below.
- **Ability for lighting to allow for playful moments:** This will be further explored during Design Development. The design and execution of lighting is dependent on the detailing of the structures and surrounding areas is finalized.
- **Provide on-site mock-ups:** BXP plans to provide on-site mock-ups ahead of the Plaza's construction. The design for these will be presented with the 100% Design Development Set.
- **Further development of branding and signage as it relates to broader Kendall:** This will be studied closer to the Plaza's opening, as Kendall and its surroundings continue to evolve. We aim to ensure the branding and wayfinding is responsive to that changing context.
- **Explore educational opportunities in the Plaza:** This will be considered in conjunction with the development of branding, signage, and art.
- **Clarify site programming intent:** BXP will program the Plaza to complement the broader Kendall area, with a focus on offering diverse and inclusive experiences. Programming will feature local vendors, wellness and exercise opportunities, art opportunities, and live music performances. The goal is to create an active, engaging public space that reflects and supports the Kendall community. BXP will leverage its experience programming multiple public spaces including Kendall Plaza and UP Park.
- **Maintenance plans for landscaping/structures:** BXP will be responsible for maintaining both the landscaping and the exterior cladding of the structures. The interiors of the structures will be maintained by Eversource. BXP has demonstrated a first quality maintenance of the public spaces it manages and will continue this expertise.
- **Food and beverage opportunities:** Two retail spaces—at 290 Binney and 121 Broadway—will flank the Plaza to the north and south. In addition, we plan to accommodate food vendors via food trucks along the West Service Drive.



We look forward to discussing these topics further during the April 2nd meeting.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Lowenberg', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jeff Lowenberg
Senior Vice President – Development, BXP

Exhibit 1
Comments Received Design Review Meeting 12/10/2024

Comment	Category	Theodore Cohen	Mary Lydecker	Ashley Tan	Diego Macias	Dan Anderson	Barry Zevin	Mary Flynn	Conrad Crawford	Erik Thorkildsen	John Hawkinson	Kathy Born	Cecilia Cobb	Public	Comment Count
Universal accessibility diagram needed, accessibility of all pathways	Accessibility		•												1
Add proximate wheelchair seating in nooks	Accessibility		•												1
Lawn accessibility for wheelchair access	Accessibility		•												1
Make the Beacon more dynamic, review design at datum level	Beacon Design	•					•	•		•					4
Integrate Beacon with landscaping	Beacon Design					•				•					2
Longevity and weathering of the Beacon, review material abrasiveness	Beacon Design						•	•							2
Ensure play area for all ages	Children's Play Area			•			•		•	•					4
Make play area artistic and engaging	Children's Play Area									•					3
Make the play area visually prominent	Children's Play Area		•	•											2
Extend trellis over play area and integrate better to play structures	Children's Play Area		•												2
Improve safety and fall zones	Children's Play Area		•	•											2
Swings as engaging feature for teens/young adults	Children's Play Area														1
Seating comfort and height variation to be studied	Seating and Nooks	•	•			•									3
Use different materials for paths	Pathways and Circulation														2
Make diagonal path pedestrian-only	Pathways and Circulation	•													1
Reconsider paths as negative space for unity	Pathways and Circulation														1
More variation in topography	Pathways and Circulation			•											1
Details on drainage and waterproofing	Pathways and Circulation														1
Study northern area further, more development of edges	Pathways and Circulation		•							•			•		3
Reduce hardscape and increase green areas	Landscaping and Green Space	•	•	•						•		•			5
Narrow pathways to allow more planting	Landscaping and Green Space	•		•											2
Diverse tree palette and planting plan appropriate to Kendall	Landscaping and Green Space		•												2
Could we introduce green in hatch or make it more compelling	Landscaping and Green Space	•													1
Could Trellis expand to be closer to Beacon	Design Other									•					1
Ability for lighting to allow for playful moments	Design Other												•		1
Address wind conditions with architecture and planting	Environmental Conditions									•					2
Interaction of architectural with wind	Environmental Conditions				•		•								2
Address resiliency and flood risks (2070 projections)	Environmental Conditions								•						1
Clarify site programming intent	Programming and Maintenance		•						•						2
Maintenance plans for landscaping/structures	Programming and Maintenance		•					•							2
Food and beverage opportunities	Programming and Maintenance		•	•	•										1
Provide on-site mock-ups (drawing of mock-up in DDs)	Next Steps								•	•		•			3
Work on Branding Further and Signage as it relates to broader Kendall	Next Steps								•			•			2
Explore educational opportunities in Plaza	Next Steps								•						1

50% DD Design Review Presentation

CENTER PLAZA DESIGN UPDATE

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Design Review Committee Presentation
April 2, 2025



COMMENTS RECEIVED

ACCESSIBILITY

- 1. Universal accessibility diagram needed, accesibility of all pathways
- 2. Add proximate wheelchair seating in nooks
- 3. Lawn accessibility for wheelchair access

BEACON DESIGN

- 1. Make the Beacon more dynamic, review design at datum level
- 2. Integrate Beacon with landscaping
- 3. Longevity and weathering of the Beacon, review material abraisivness

CHILDREN’S PLAY AREA

- 1. Ensure play area for all ages
- 2. Make play area artistic and engaging
- 3. Make the play area visually prominent
- 4. Extend trellis over play area and integrate better to play structures
- 5. Improve safety and fall zones
- 6. Swings as engaging feature for teens/young adults

SEATING AND NOOKS

- 1. Seating comfort and height variation to be studied

PATHWAYS AND CIRCULATION

- 1. Use different materials for paths
- 2. Make diagonal path pedestrian-only
- 3. Reconsider paths as negative space for unity
- 4. More variation in topography
- 5. Details on drainage and waterproofing
- 6. Study northern area further, more development of edges

LANDSCAPE AND GREEN SPACE

- 1. Reduce hardscape and increase green areas
- 2. Narrow pathways to allow more planting
- 3. Diverse tree palette and planting plan appropriate to Kendall
- 4. *Could we introduce green in hatch or make it more compelling (written reply)*

DESIGN OTHER

- 1. Could Trellis expand to be closer to Beacon
- 2. *Ability for lighting to allow for playful moments (written reply)*

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

- 1. Address wind conditions with architecture and planting
- 2. Interaction of architectural with wind
- 3. Address resiliency and flood risks (2070 projections)

COMMENTS RECEIVED

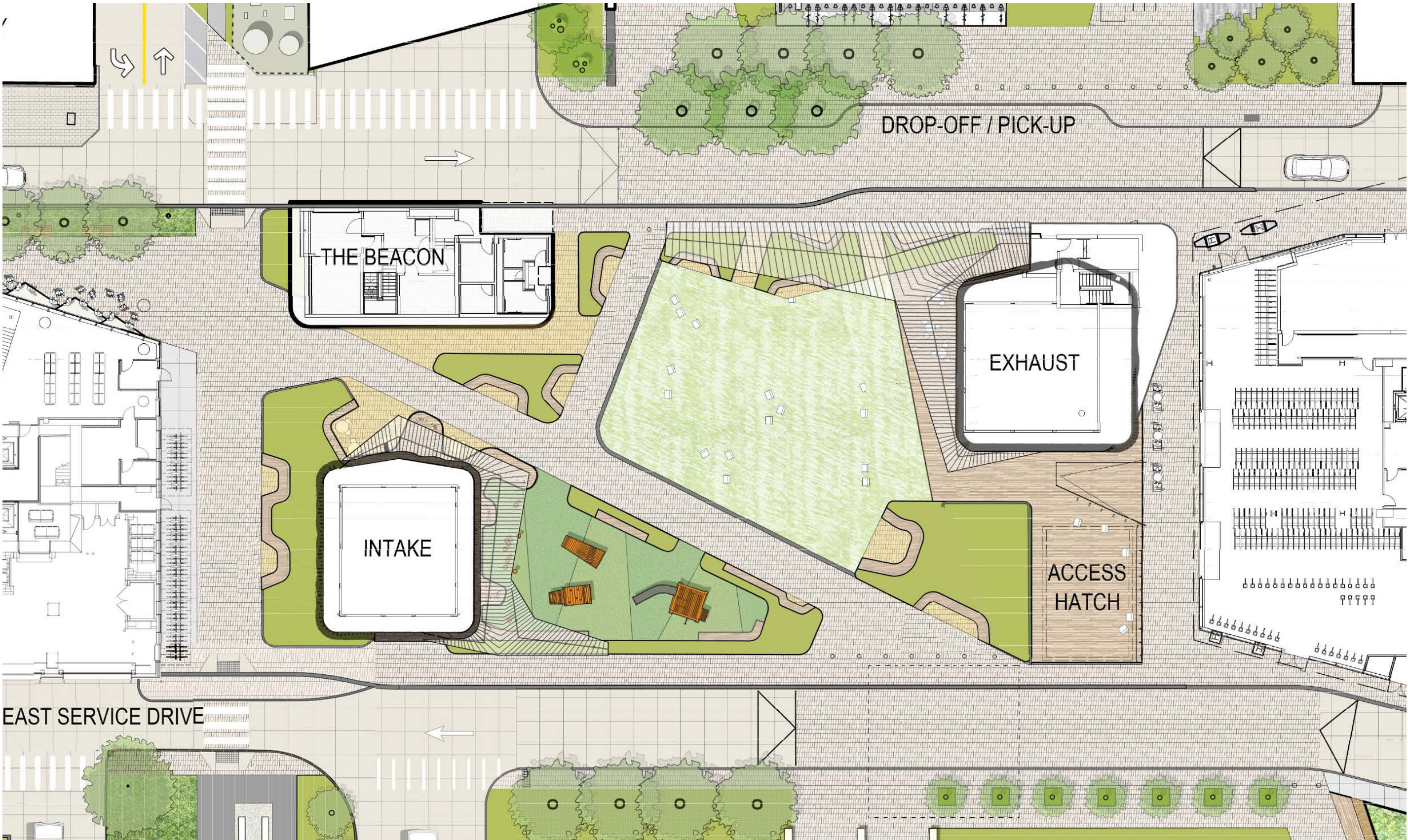
PROGRAMMING AND MAINTENANCE

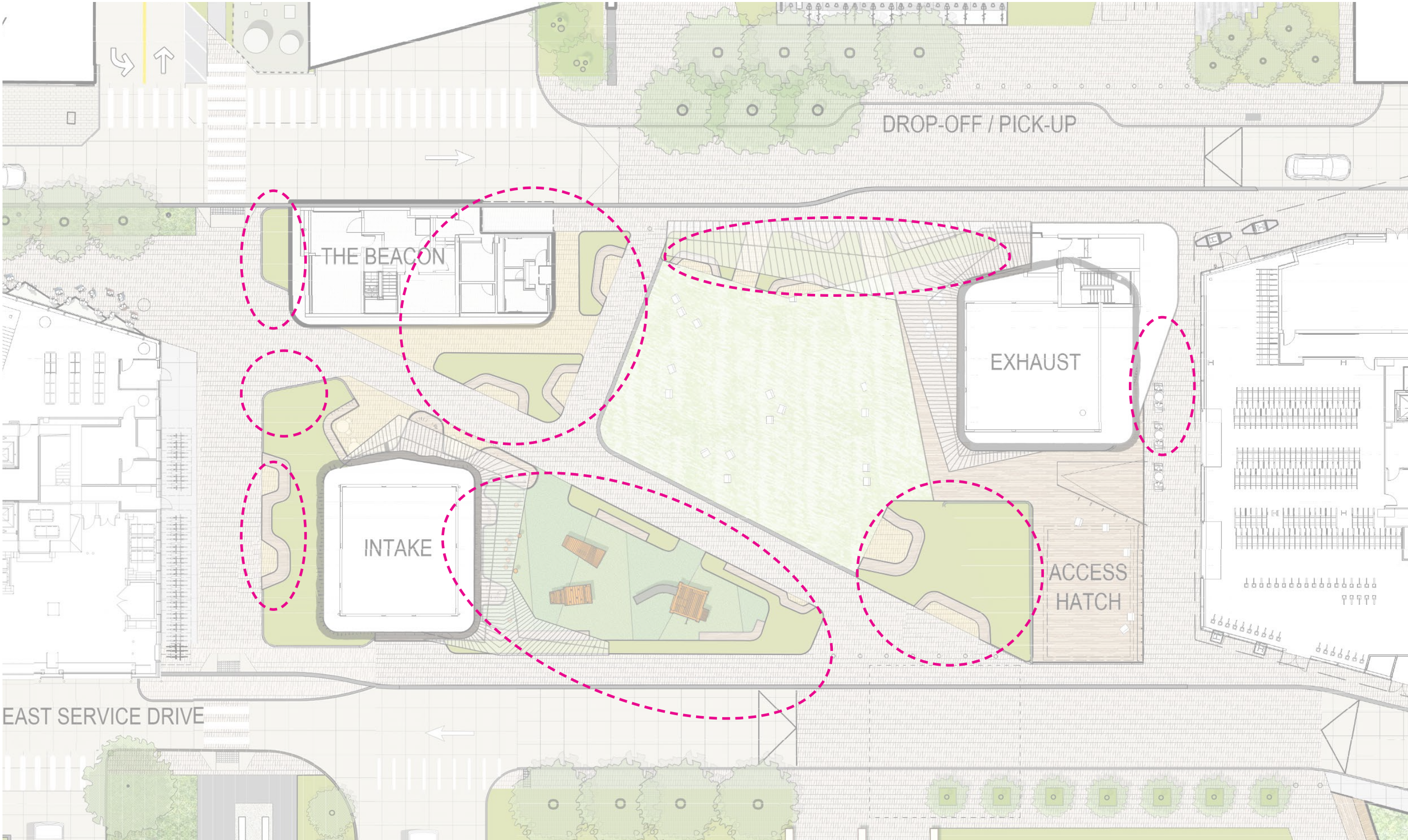
- 1. Clarify site programming intent (written reply)
- 2. Maintenance plans for landscaping/structures (written reply)
- 3. Food and beverage opportunities (written reply)

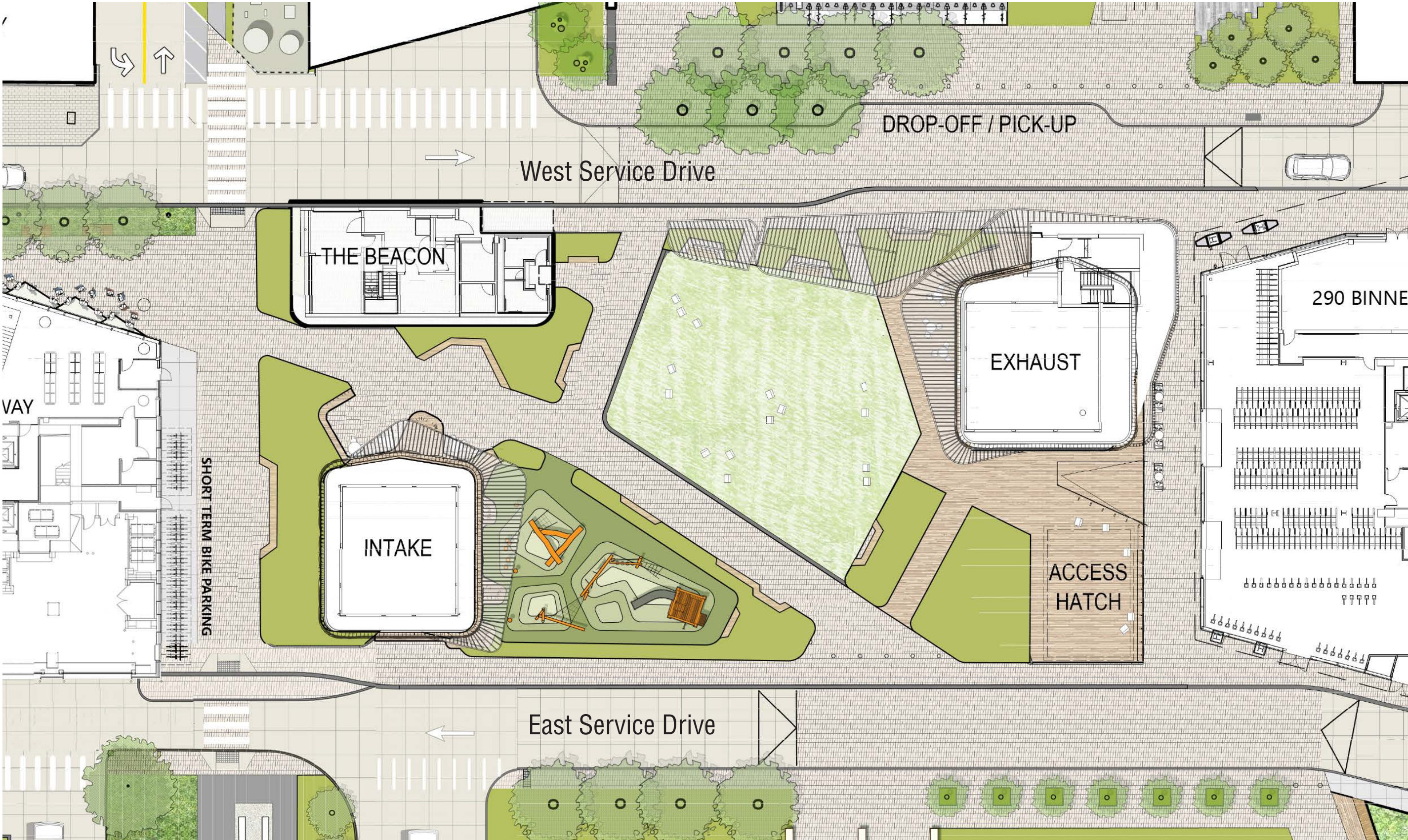
NEXT STEPS

- 1. Completion of Design Development (written reply)
- 2. Provide on-site mock-ups (drawing of mock-up in DDs) (written reply)
- 3. Work on Branding and Signage as it relates to broader Kendall (written reply)
- 4. Explore educational opportunities in Plaza (written reply)

UPDATE ON DESIGN PROGRESS



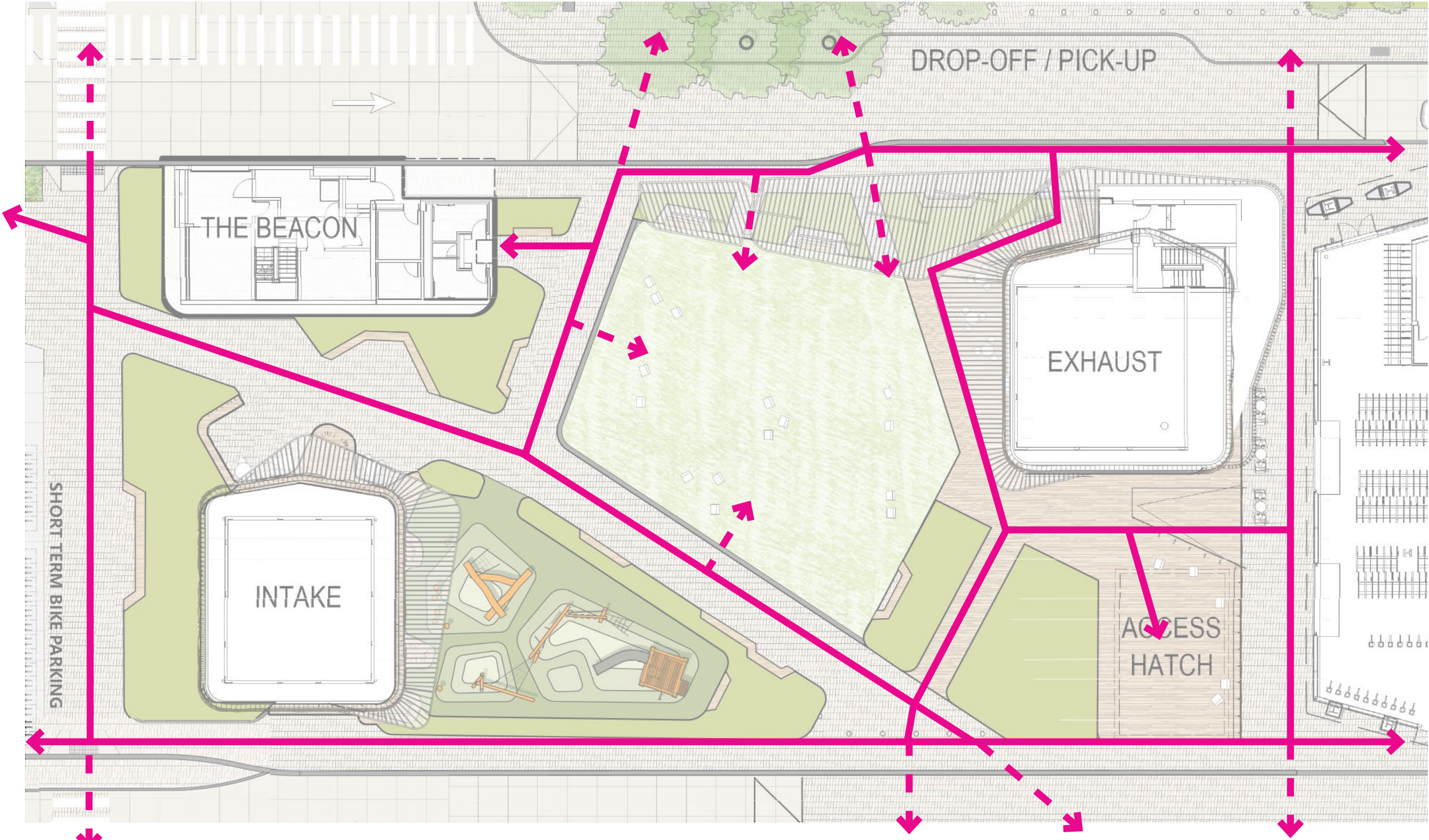




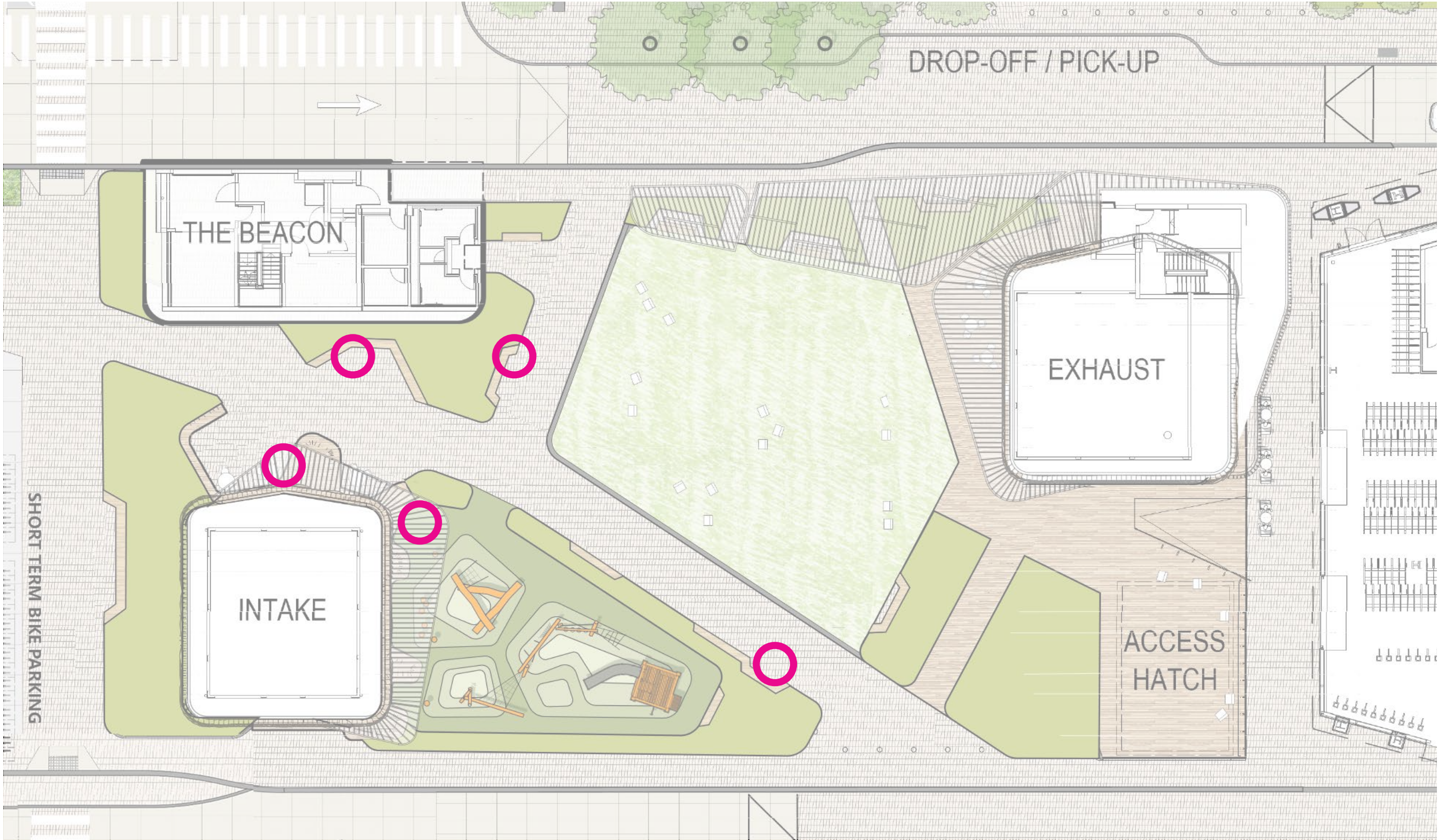
RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

ACCESSIBILITY

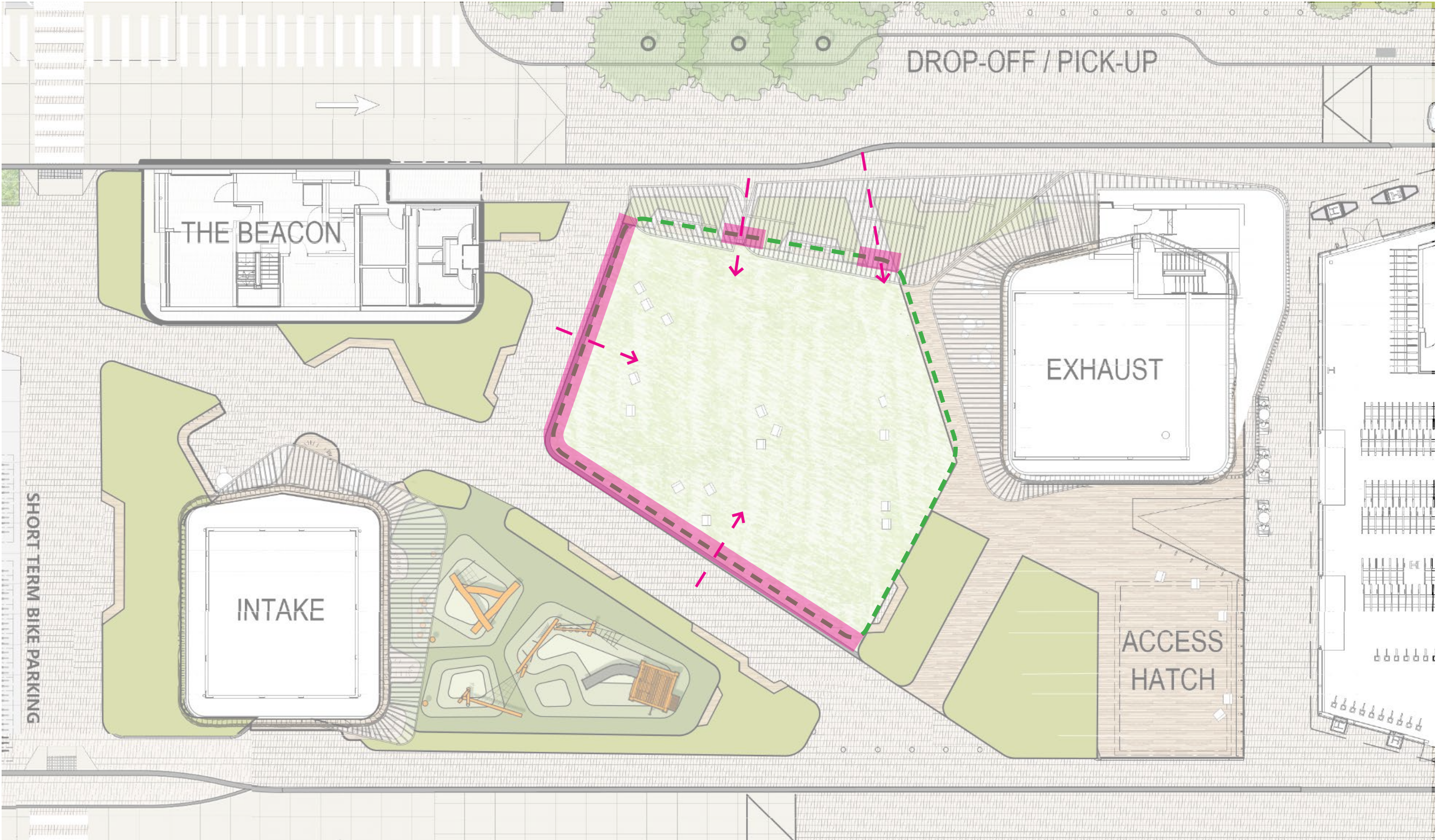
1. Universal accessibility diagram needed, accesibility of all pathways



↔ Accessible Connection



 Companion Seating / Stroller Locations



- Lawn Outline
- Accessible Lawn Edge



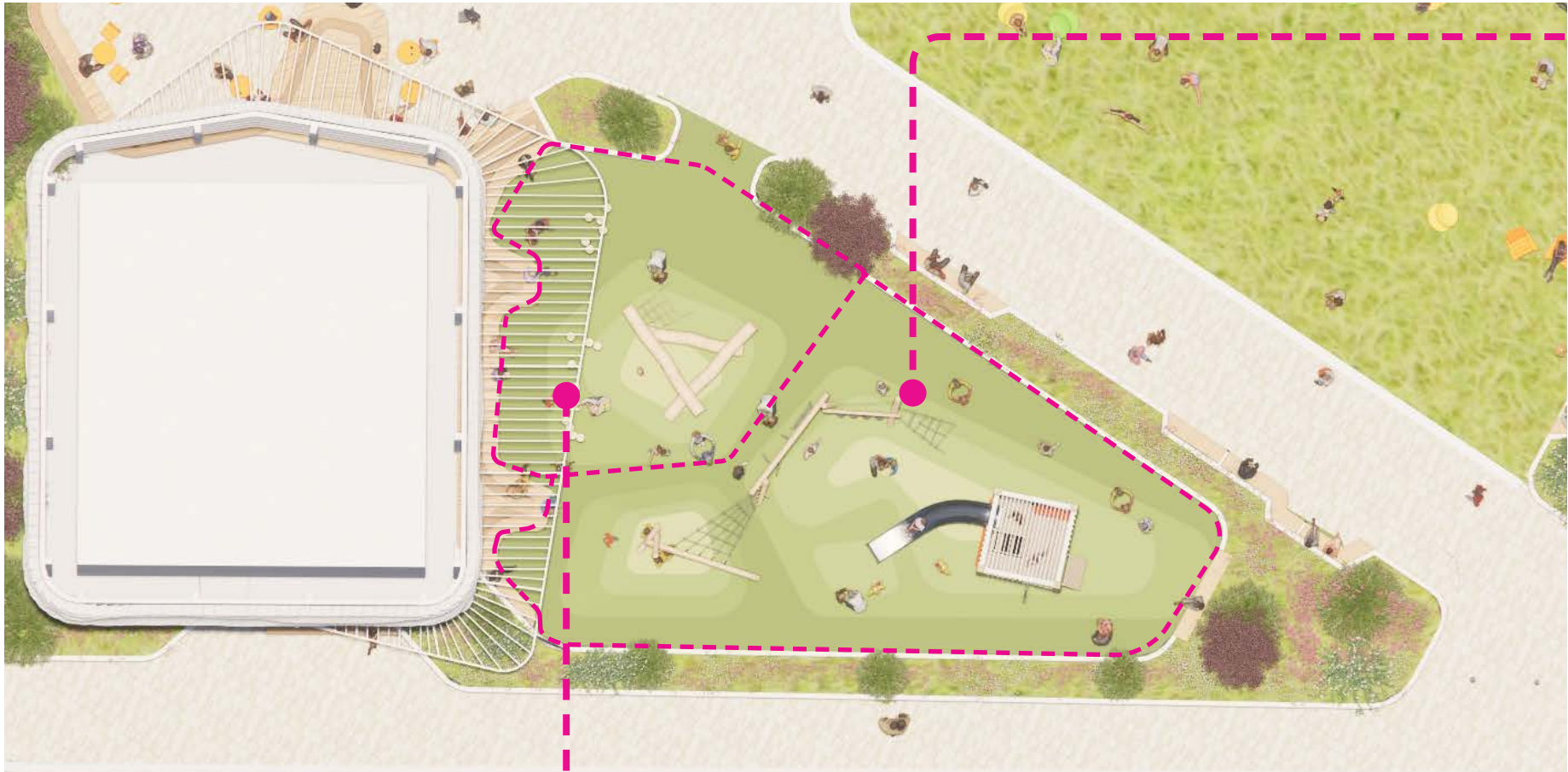




- We will provide a general regular maintance program and a periodic deep cleanings to deal with normal weathering conditions.
- Generally rinsing the facade with water works to remove loose dirt
- To remove fingerprints use soapy water or a mild detergent such as window or glass cleaner (windex) with a Soft towel.
- We will have more information and will work closely with our fabricators throughout the Design Development process to ensure we choose the right steel or aluminum that most effective for this application in regards to maintance and longevity.

CHILDREN’S PLAY AREA

1. Ensure play area for all ages



5-12 yrs : Play products



Parkour 4

2-5 yrs: Play products



Log Piles



Log Steppers



Timber Tower 1

CHILDREN’S PLAY AREA

2. Make play area artistic and engaging



CHILDREN’S PLAY AREA

3. Make the play area visually prominent

View From East Service Drive



View From 250 Binney



Aerial View

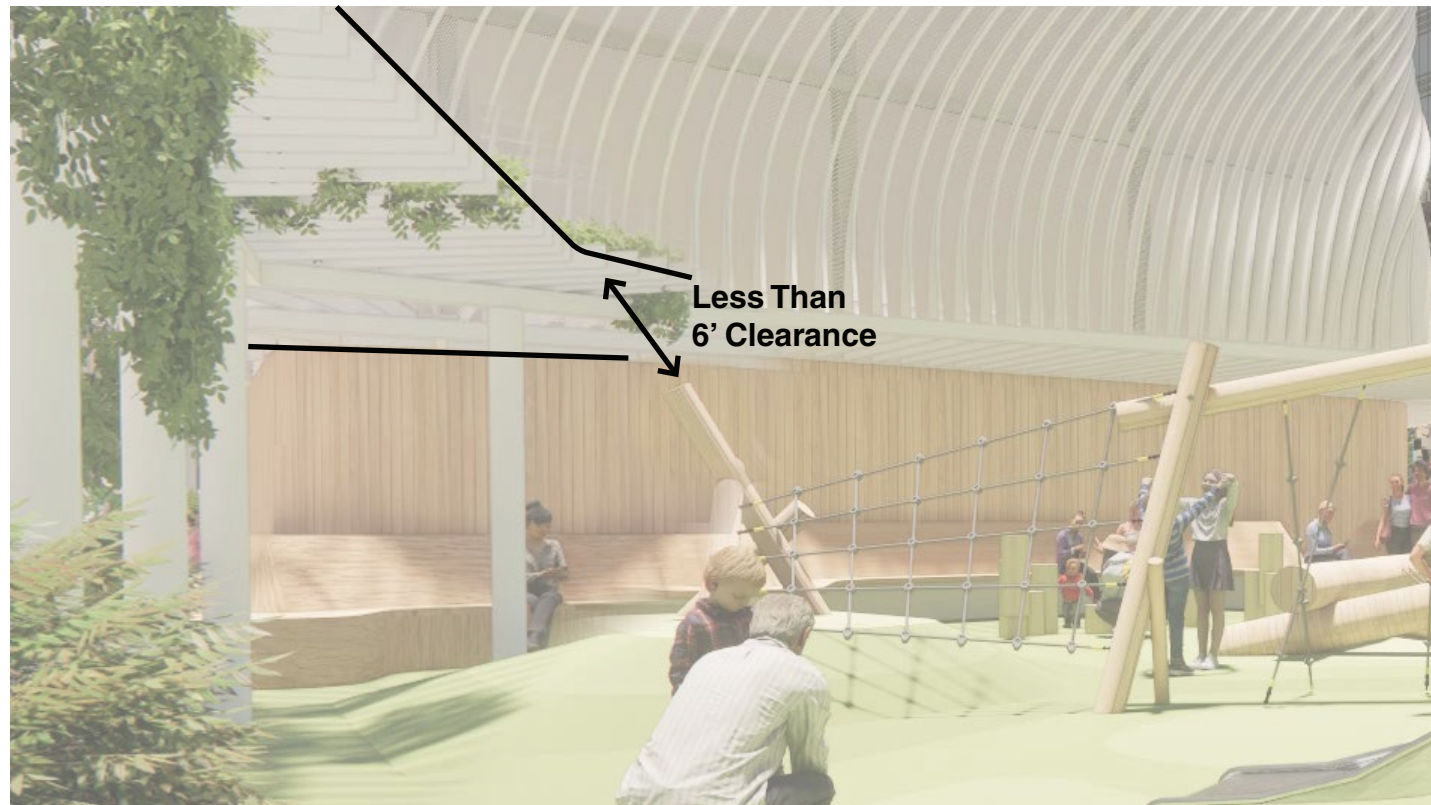


View From Deck

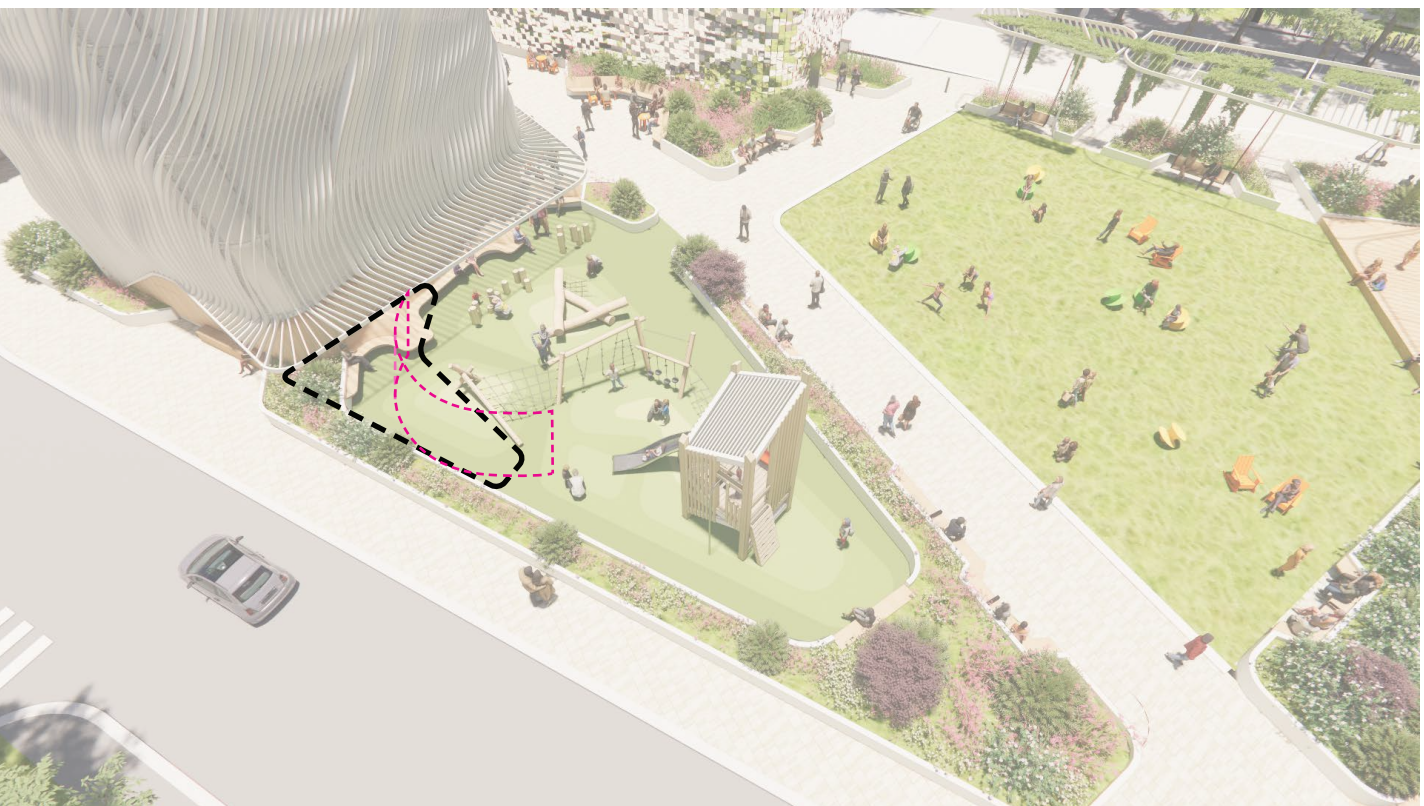
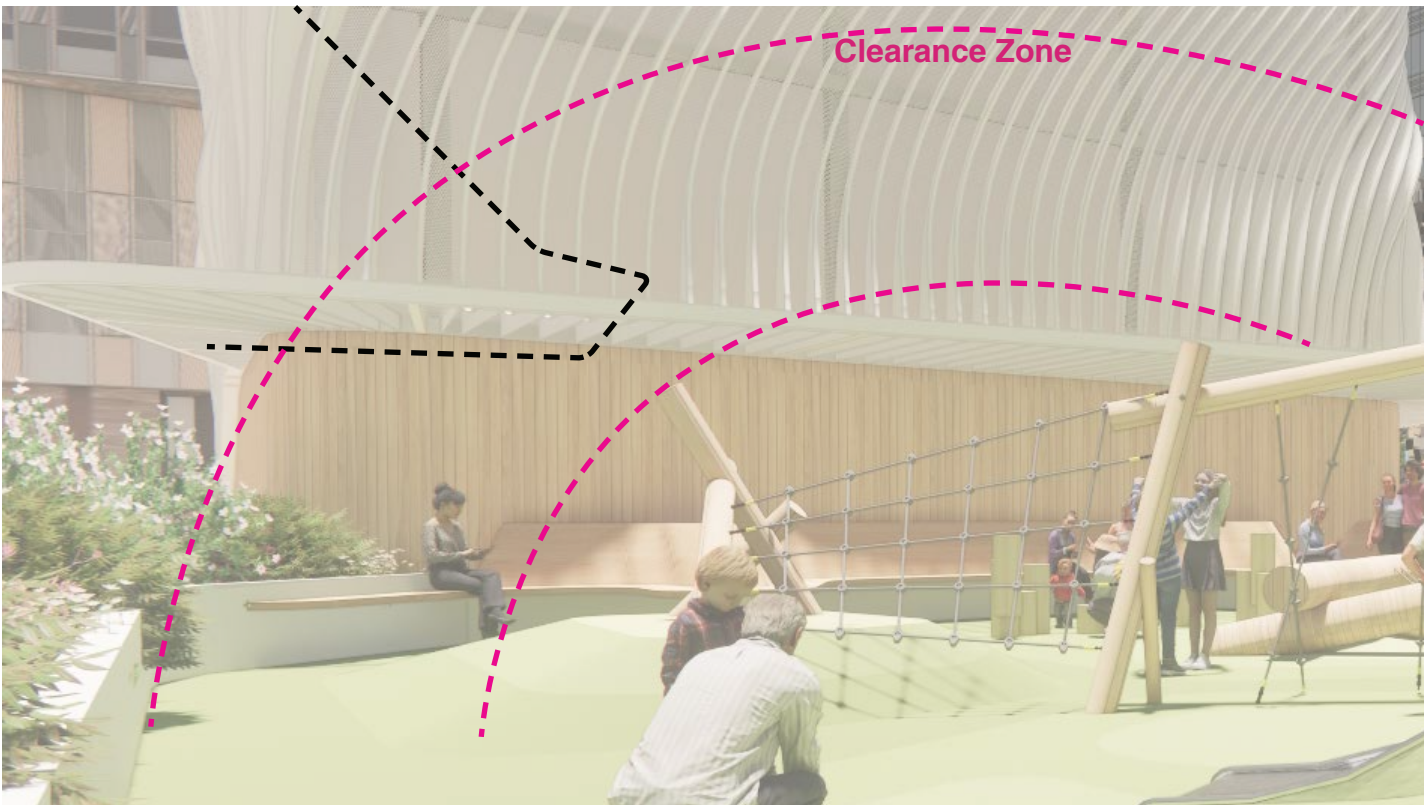


CHILDREN’S PLAY AREA

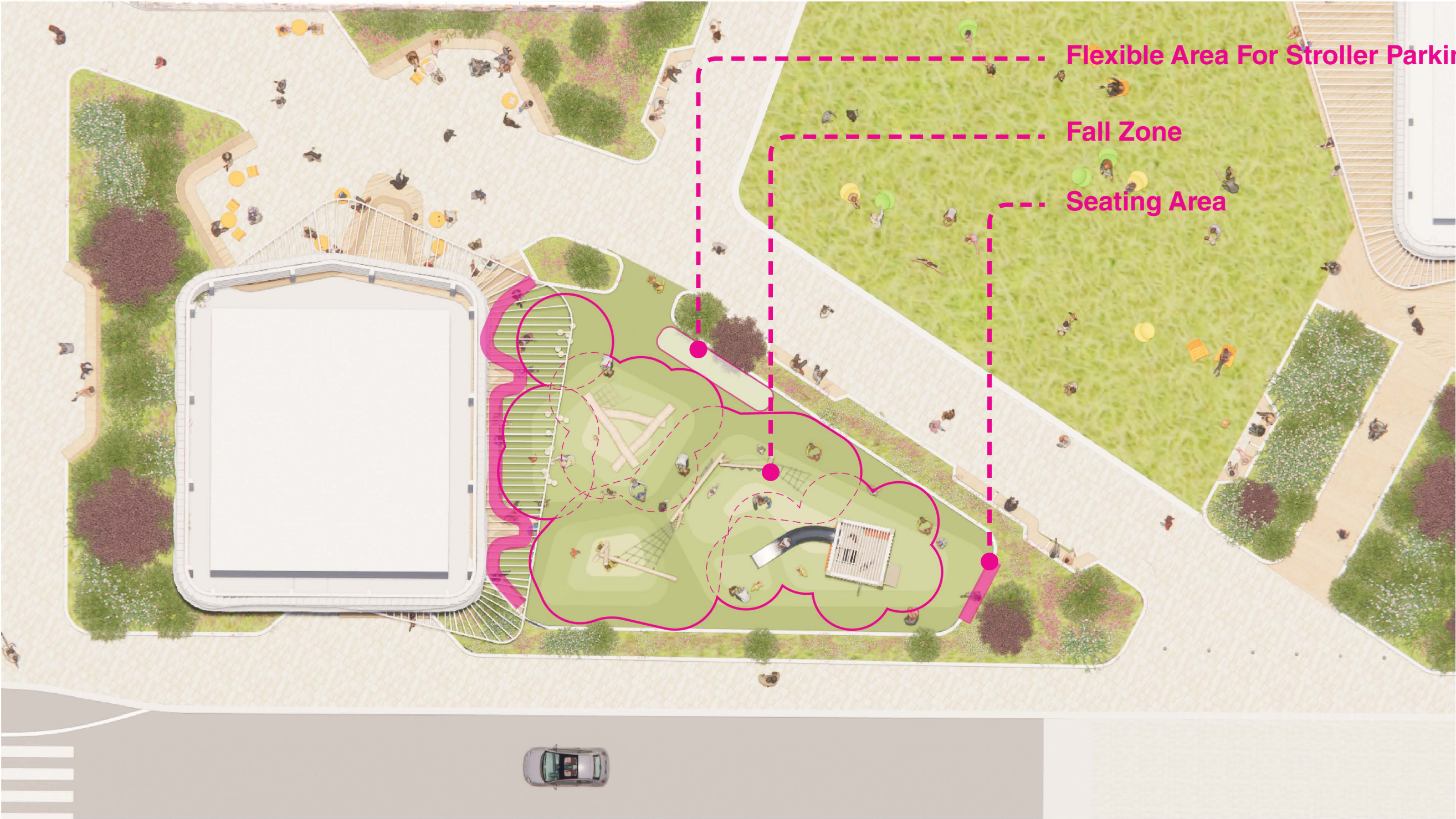
With Trellis - Within Play Structure Fall Zone



Without Trellis - Better and Safer Playground

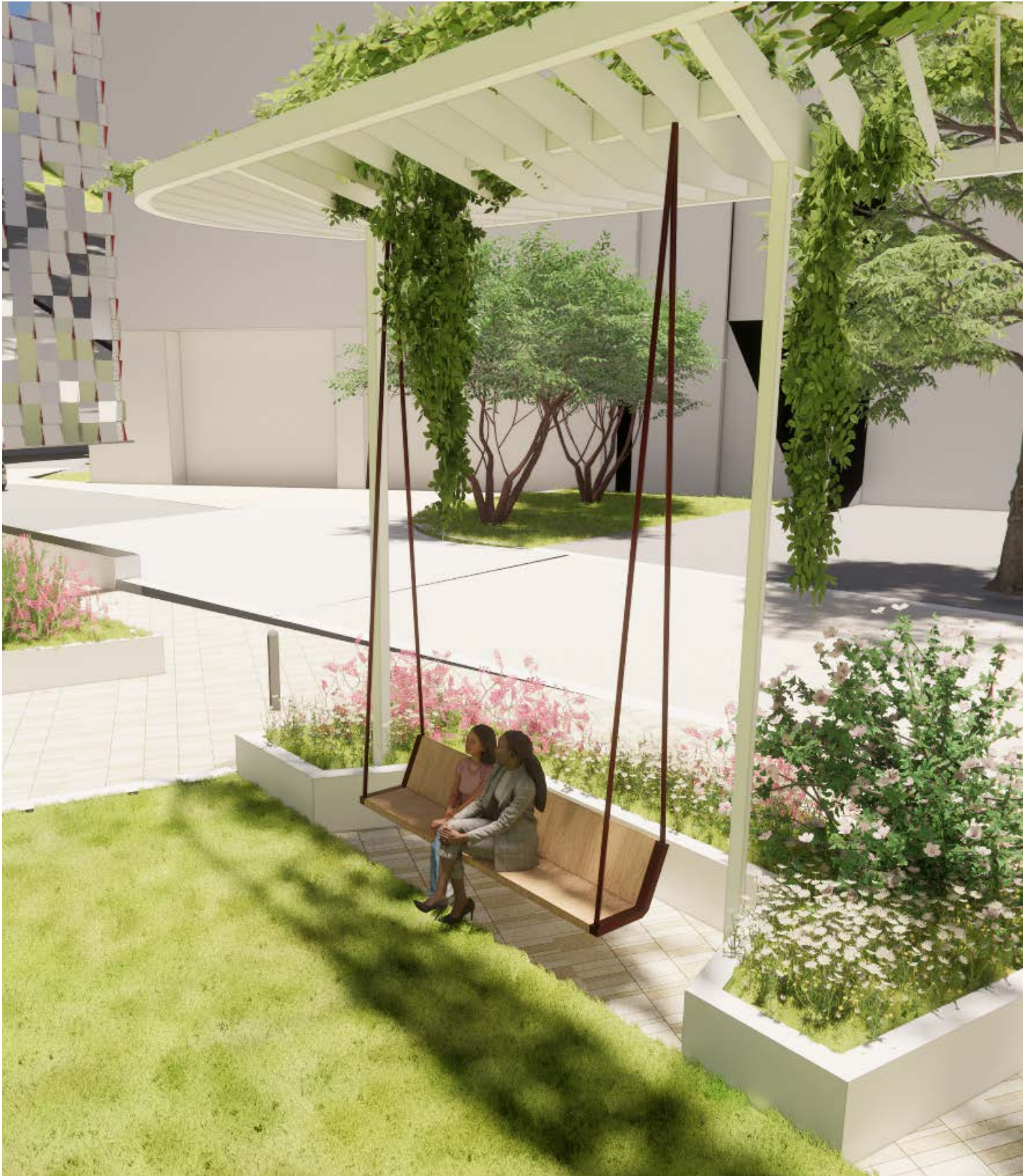


4. Extend trellis over play area and integrate better to play structures



SWINGS AT THE LAWN

6. Swings as engaging feature for teens/young adults



Swing Locations



SEATING AND NOOKS

1. Seating comfort and height variation to be studied

Companion and Stroller Seating Study



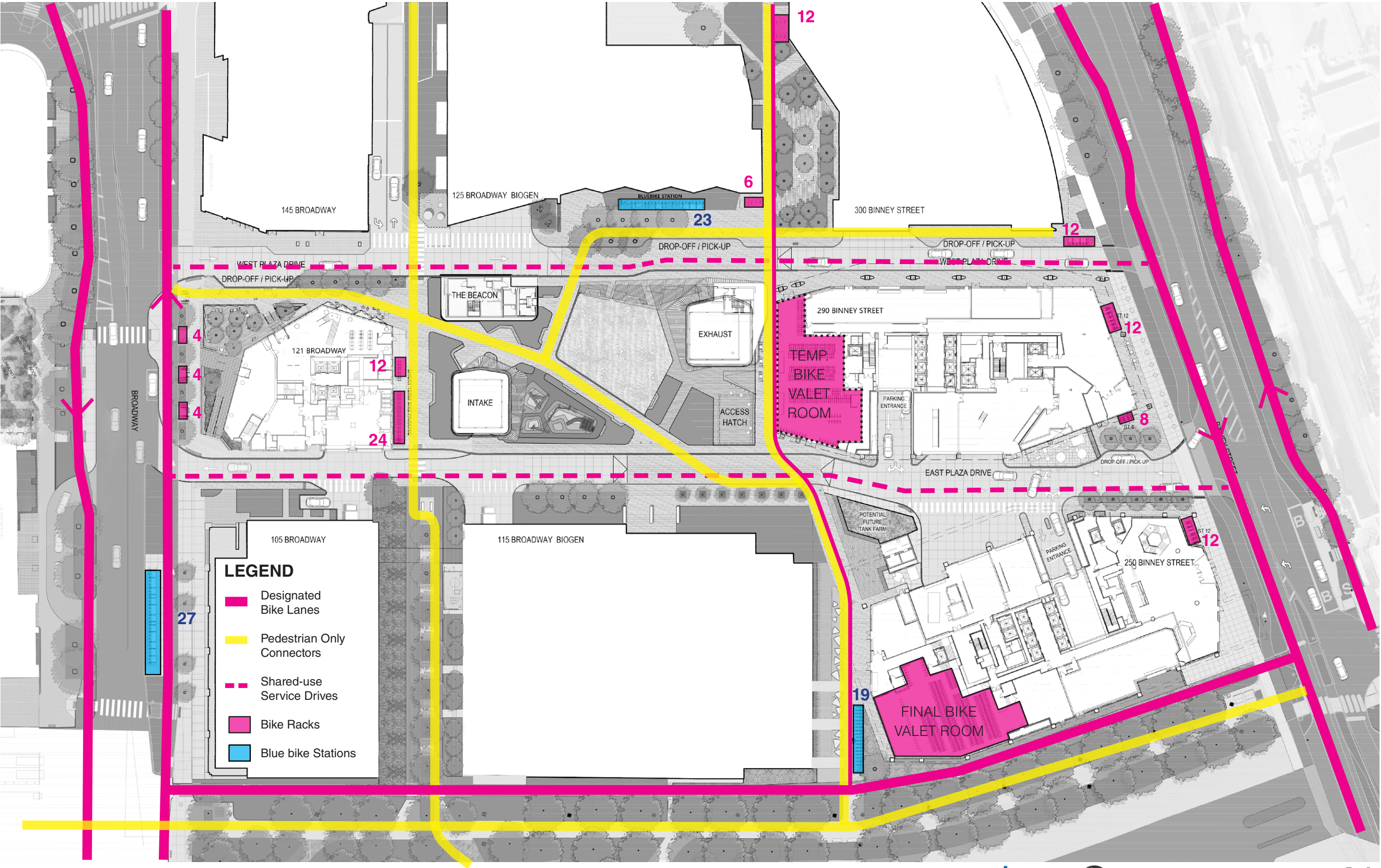
Seating Back Study

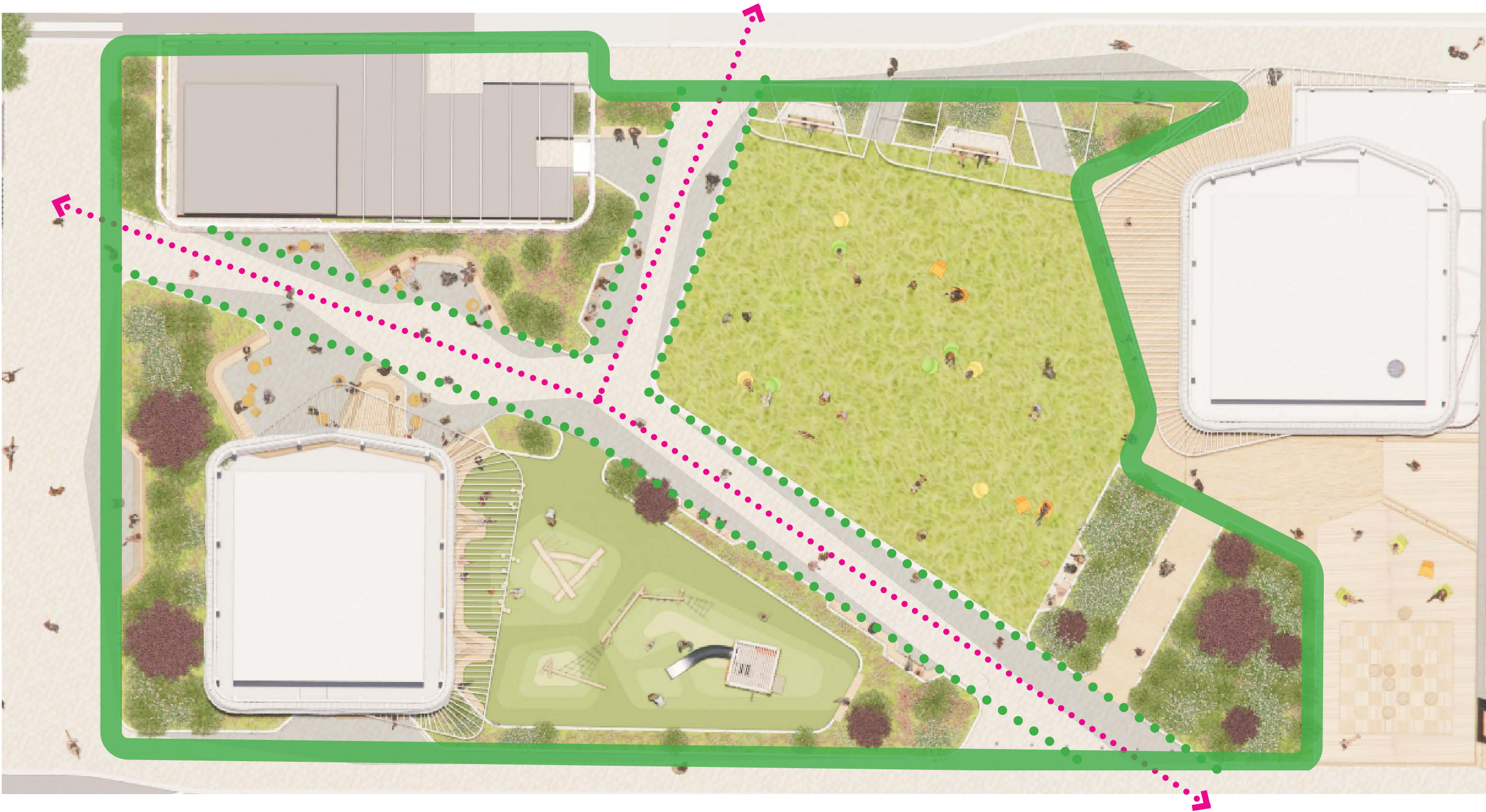


PATHWAYS AND CIRCULATION

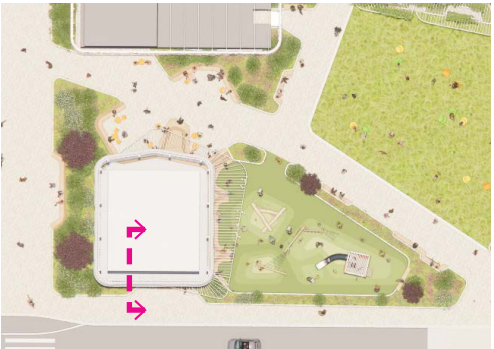
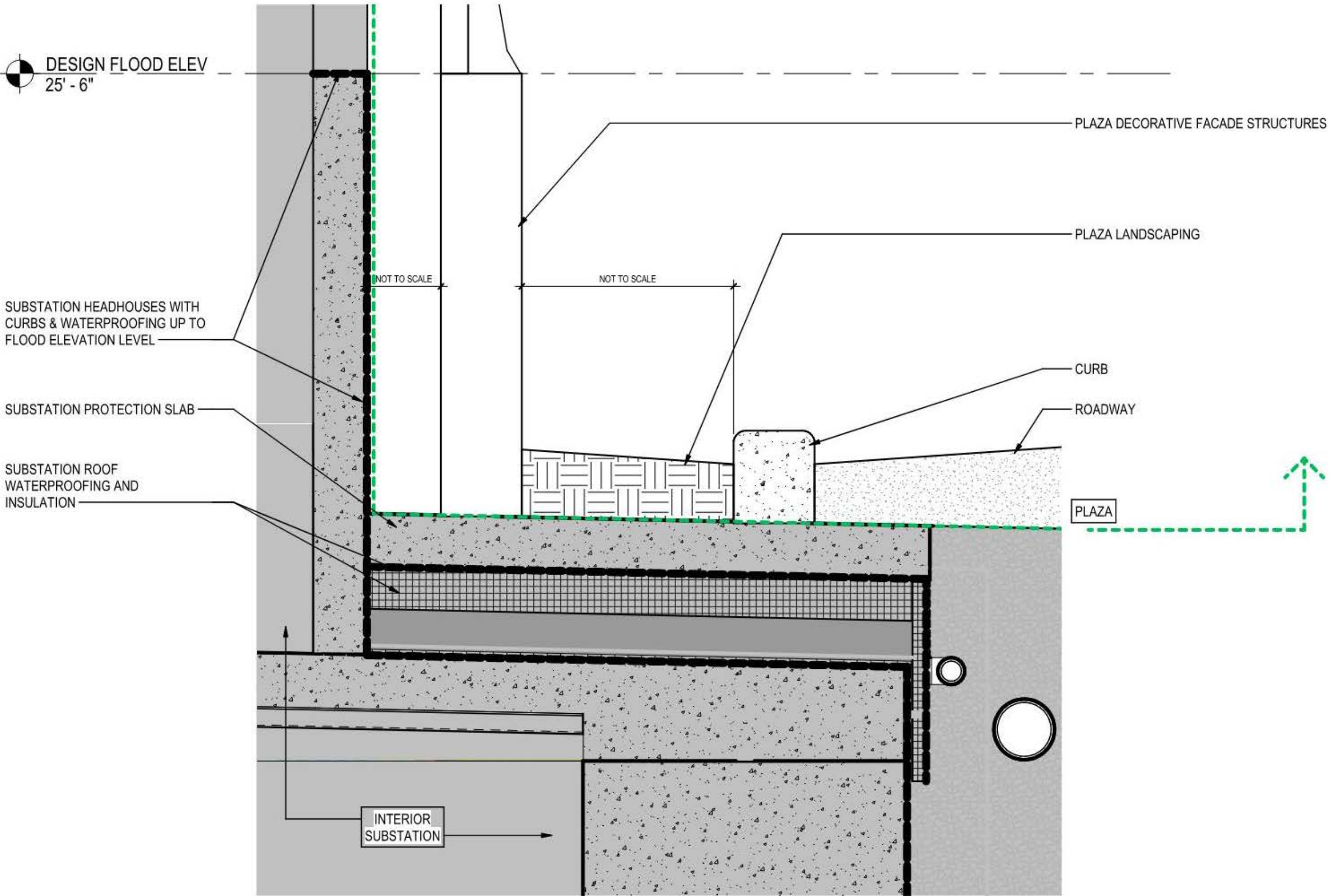
1. Use different materials for paths







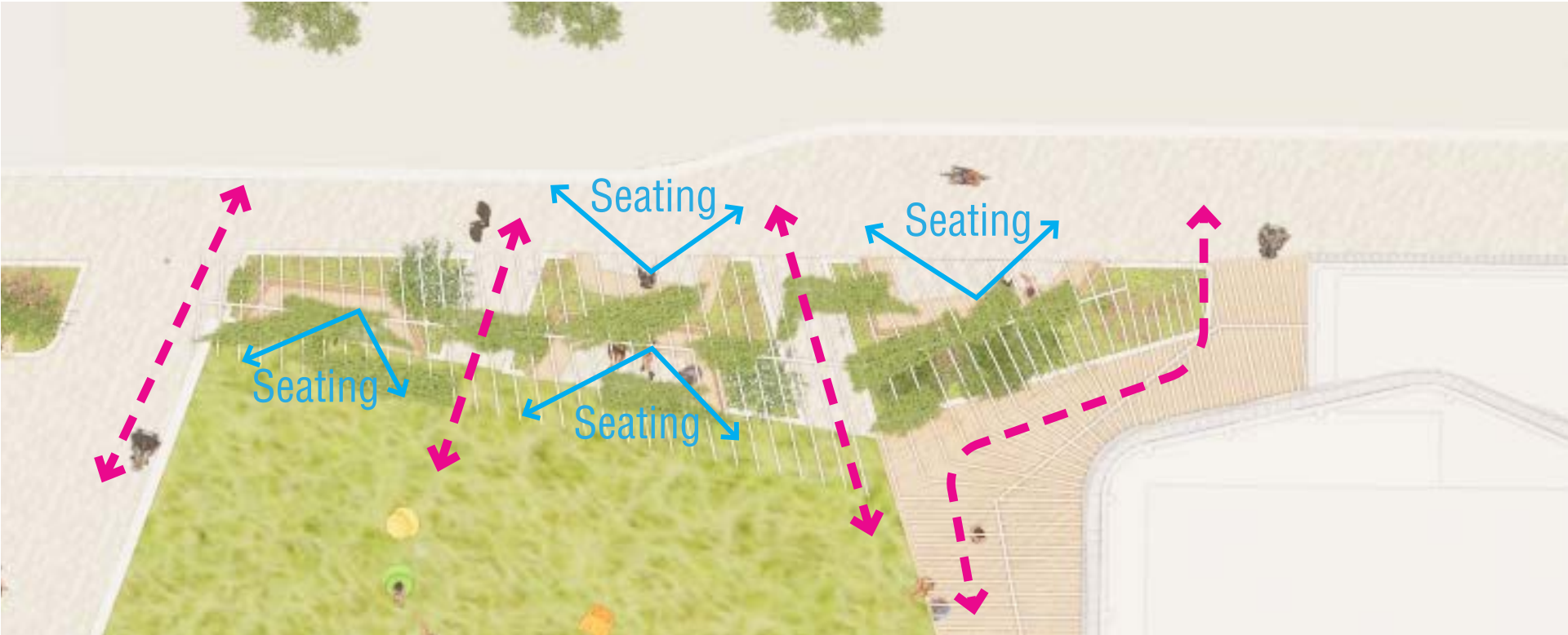




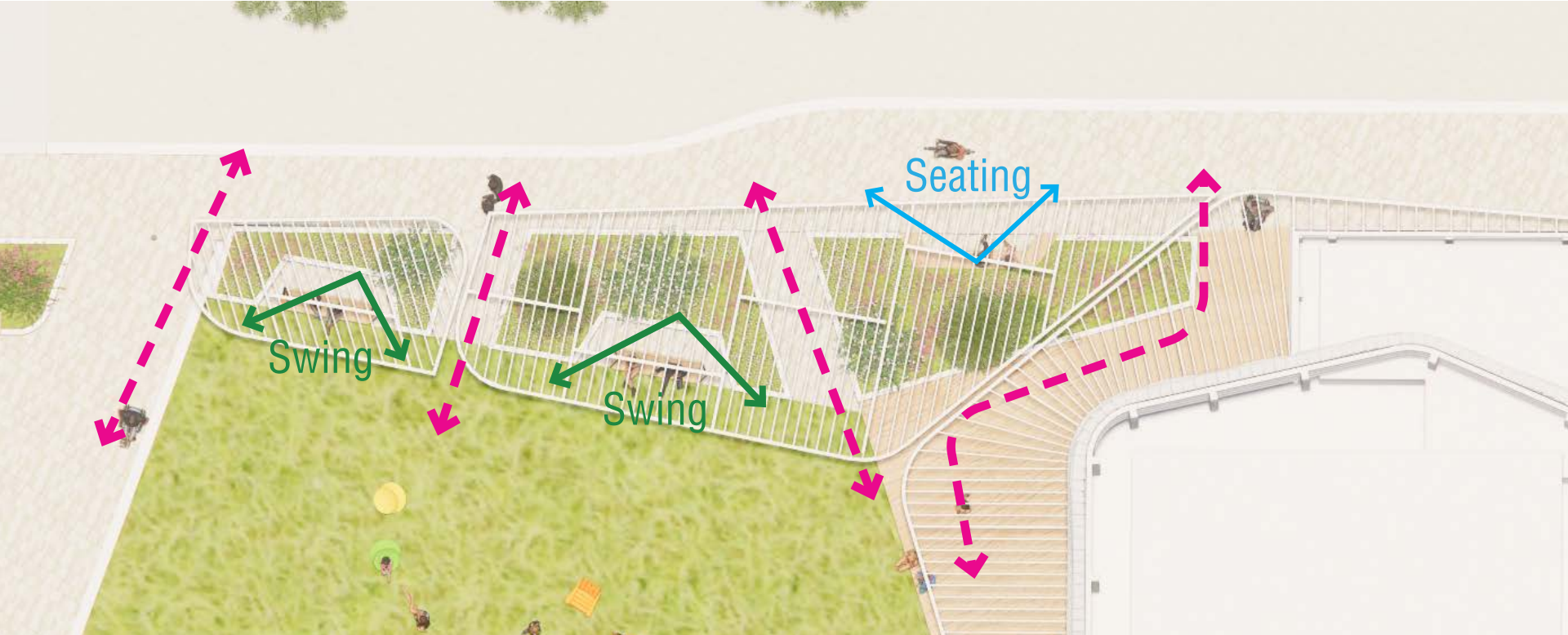
PATHWAYS AND CIRCULATION

6. Study northern area further, more development of edges

Previous Design



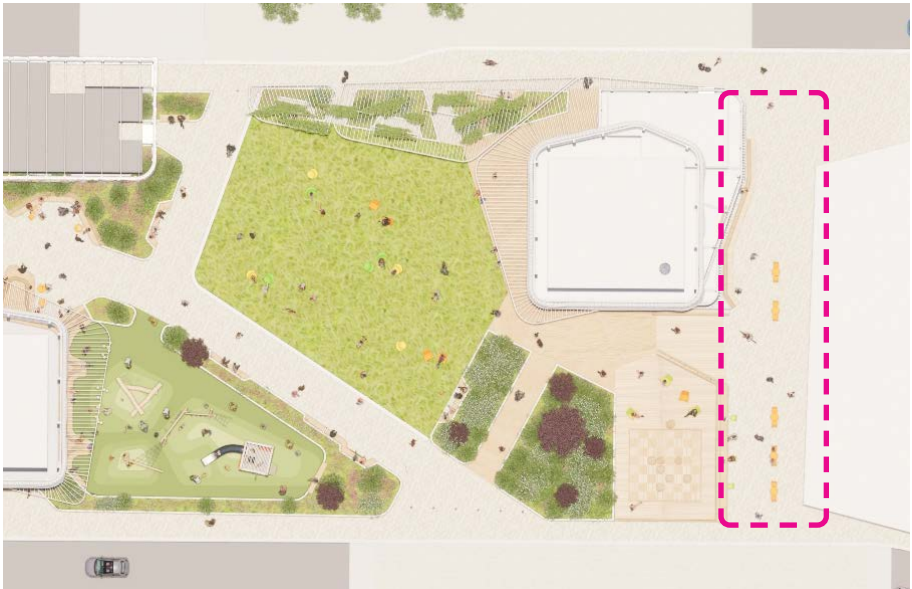
Current Design



PATHWAYS AND CIRCULATION



6. Study northern area further, more development of edges

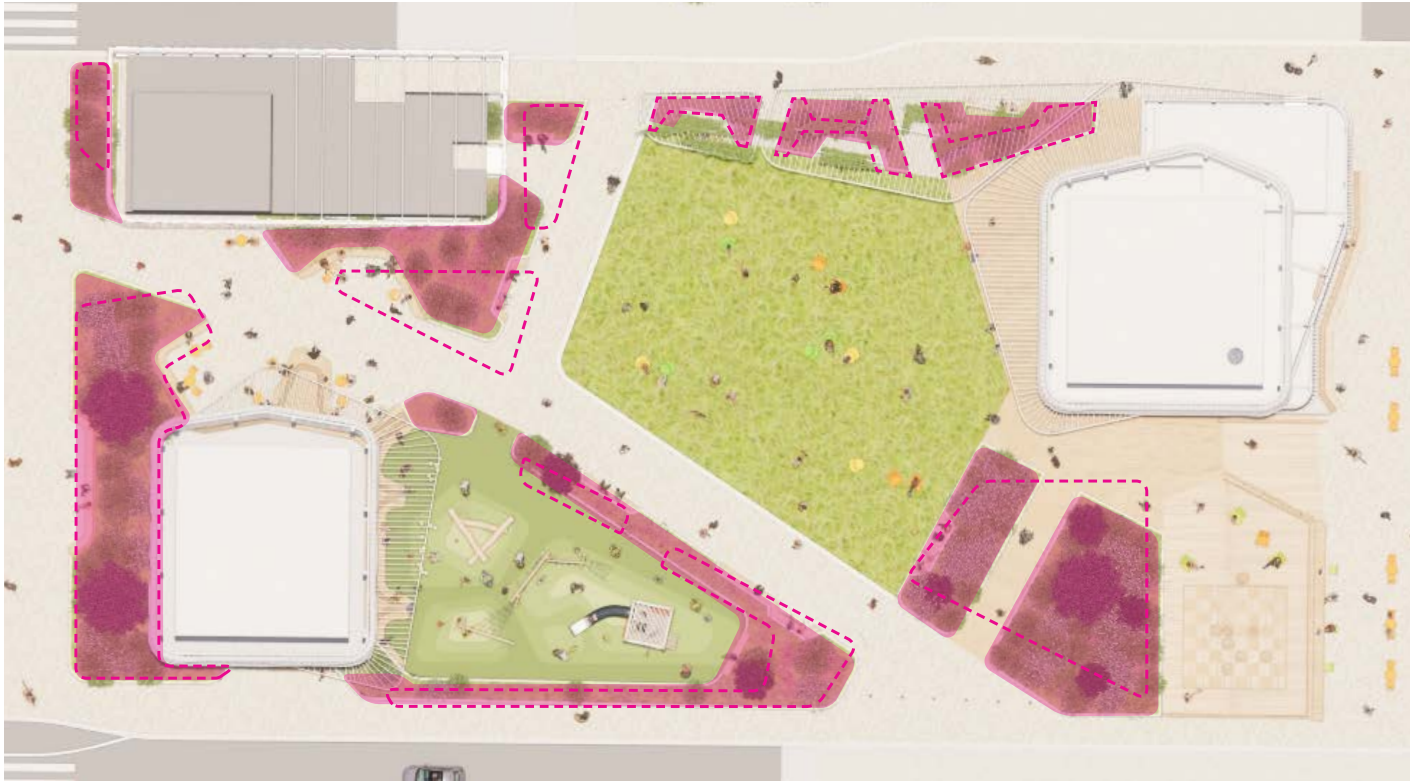


Previous Design



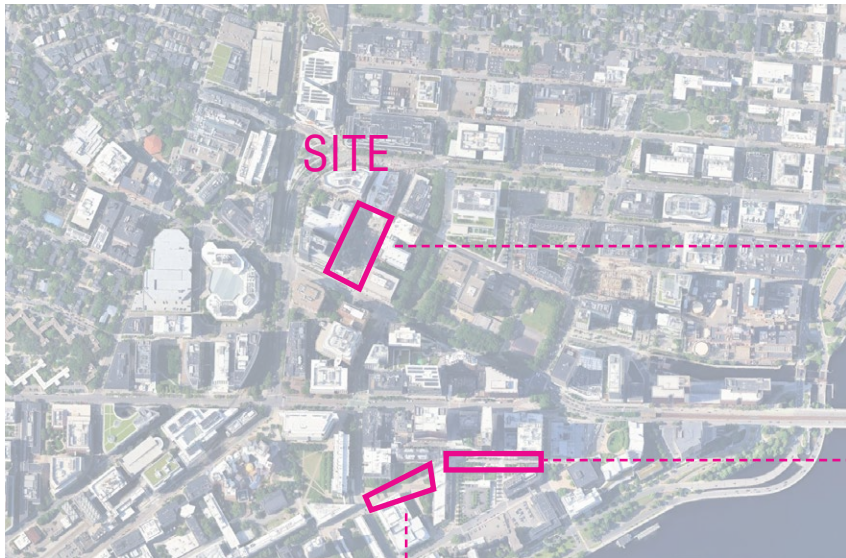
Total Area: ~4060 sq ft

Revised Design

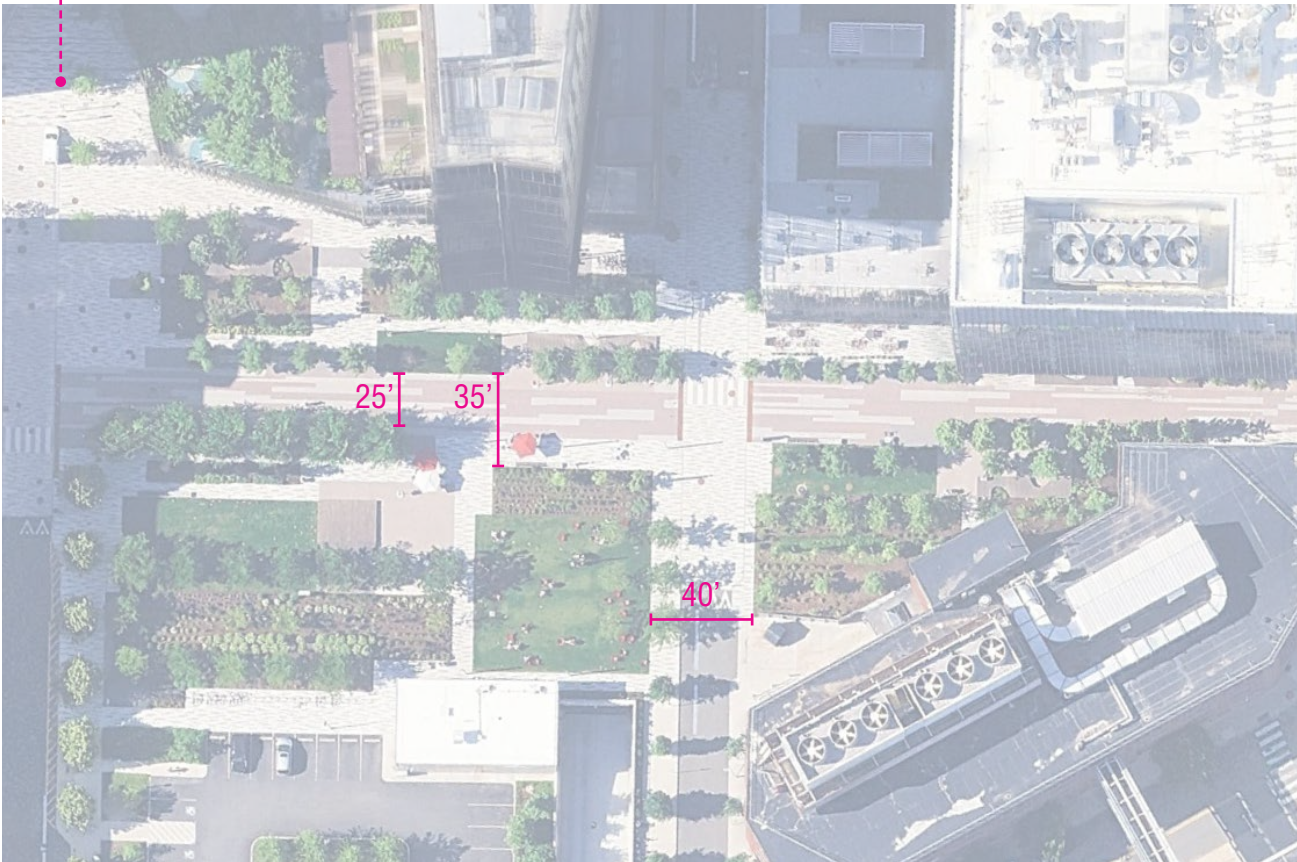
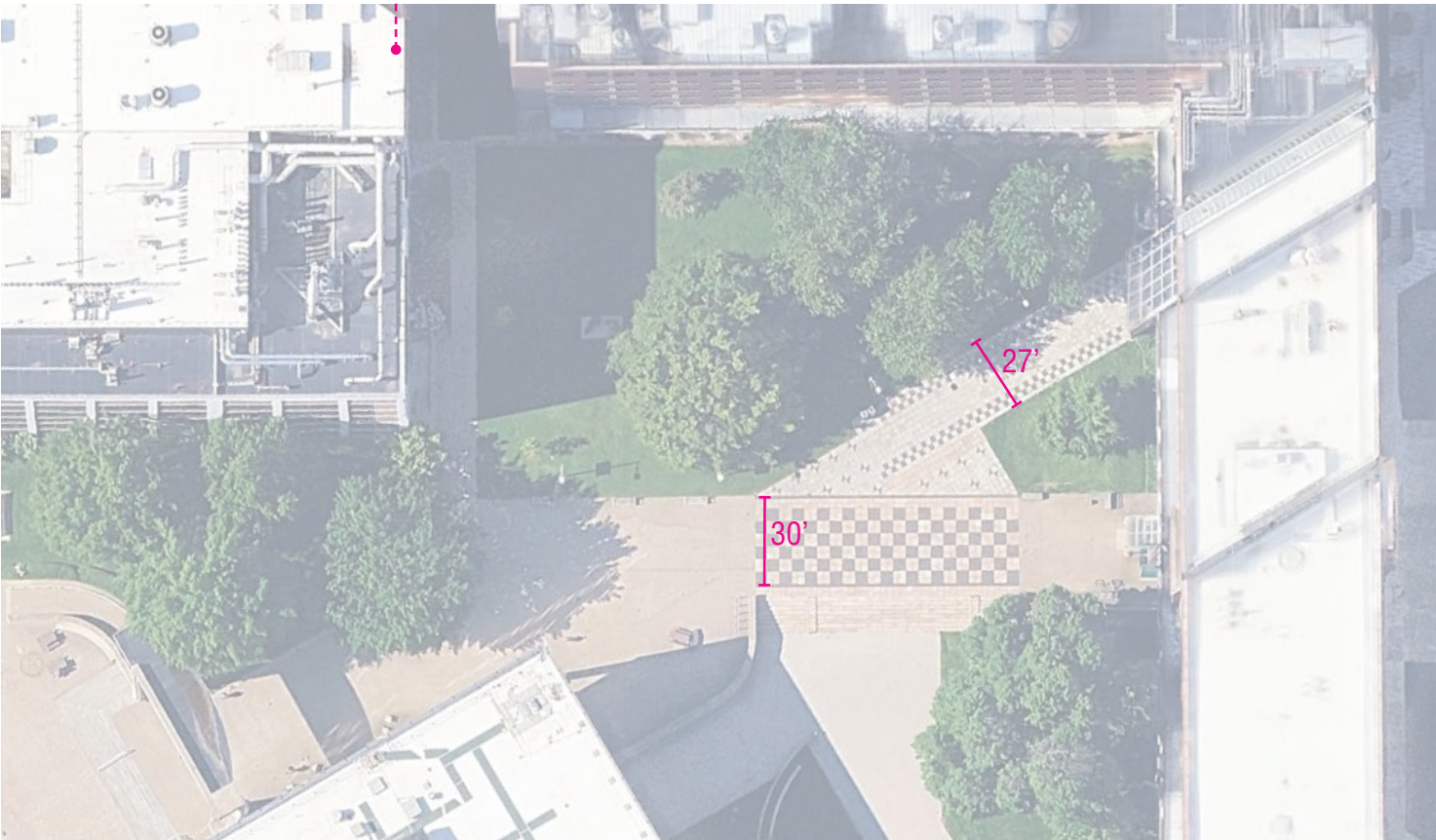
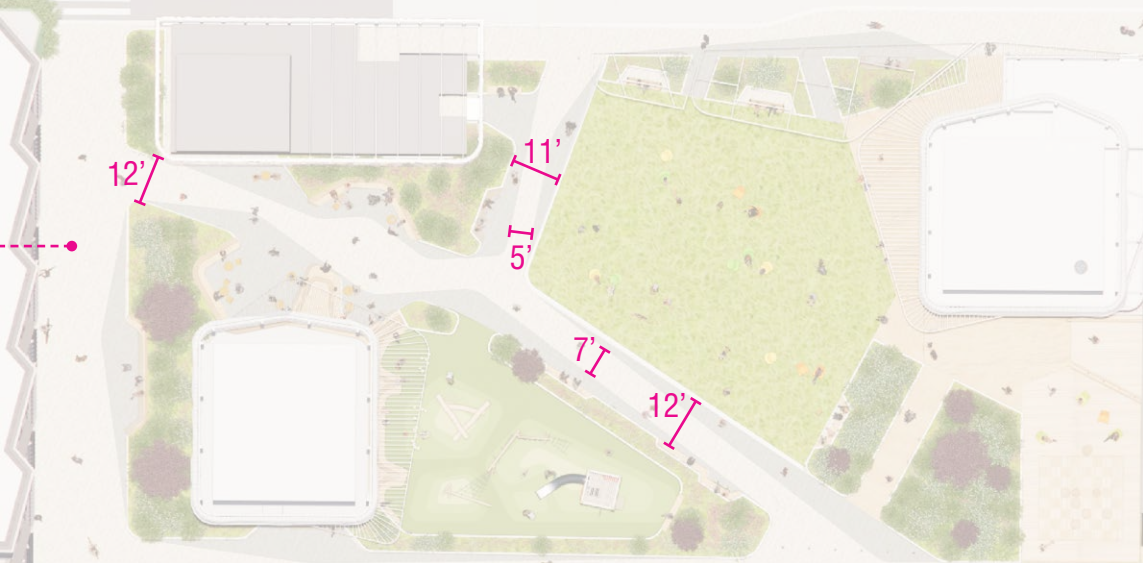


Total Area: ~5050 sq ft

Adjacent plaza pathway dimension study

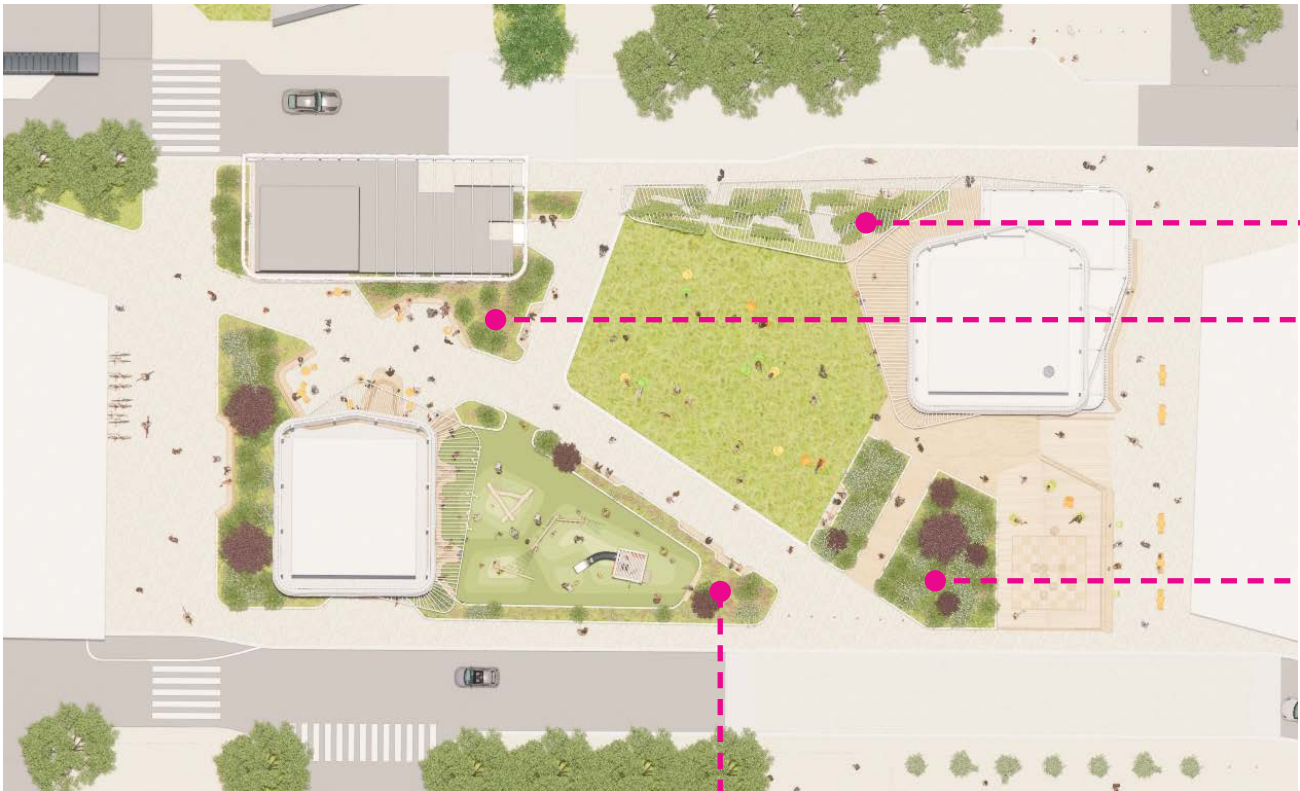


MXD Plaza main pathway dimension is 12ft



LANDSCAPE AND GREEN SPACE

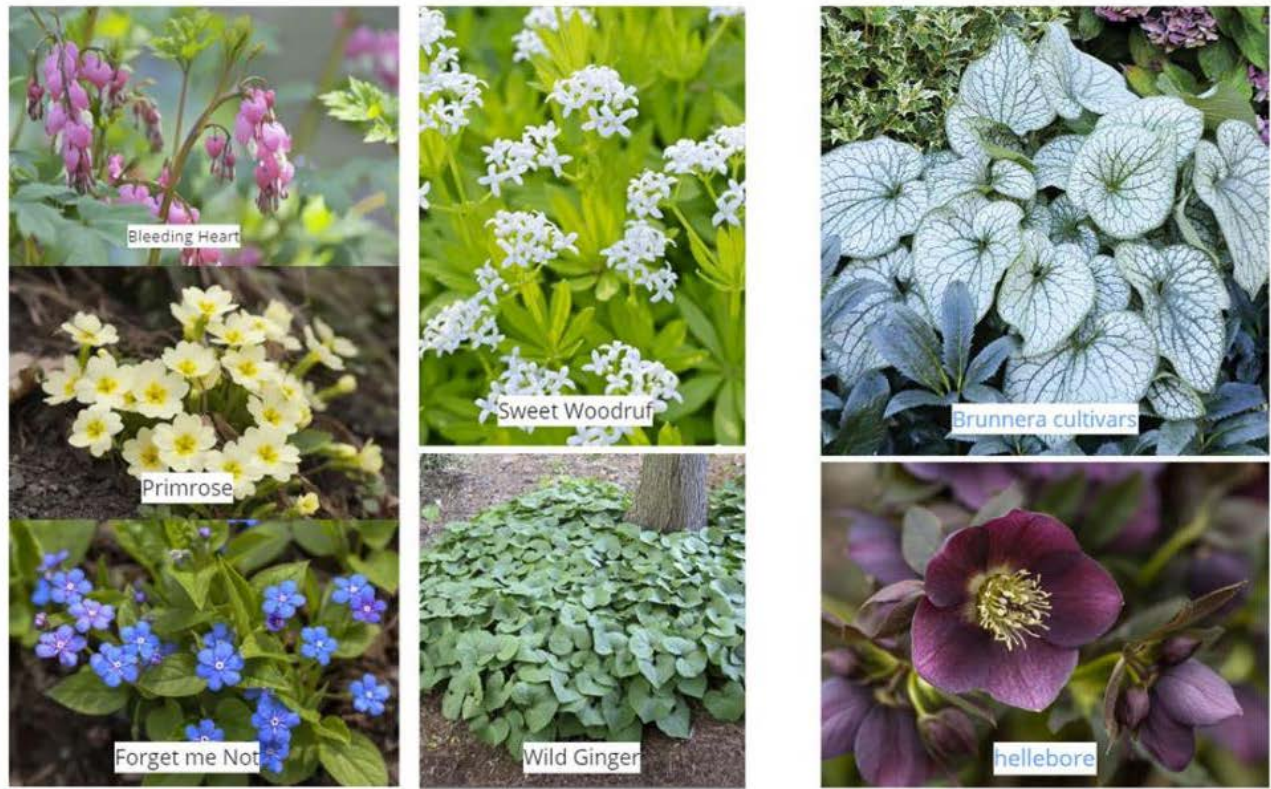
3. Diverse tree palette and planting plan appropriate to Kendall



common lady fern Ostrich Fern Northern Maidenhair



long beaked sedge carex appalachia
carex pennsylvanica carex morrowii





ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

- 1. Address wind conditions with architecture and planting
- 2. Interaction of architectural with wind

Summer

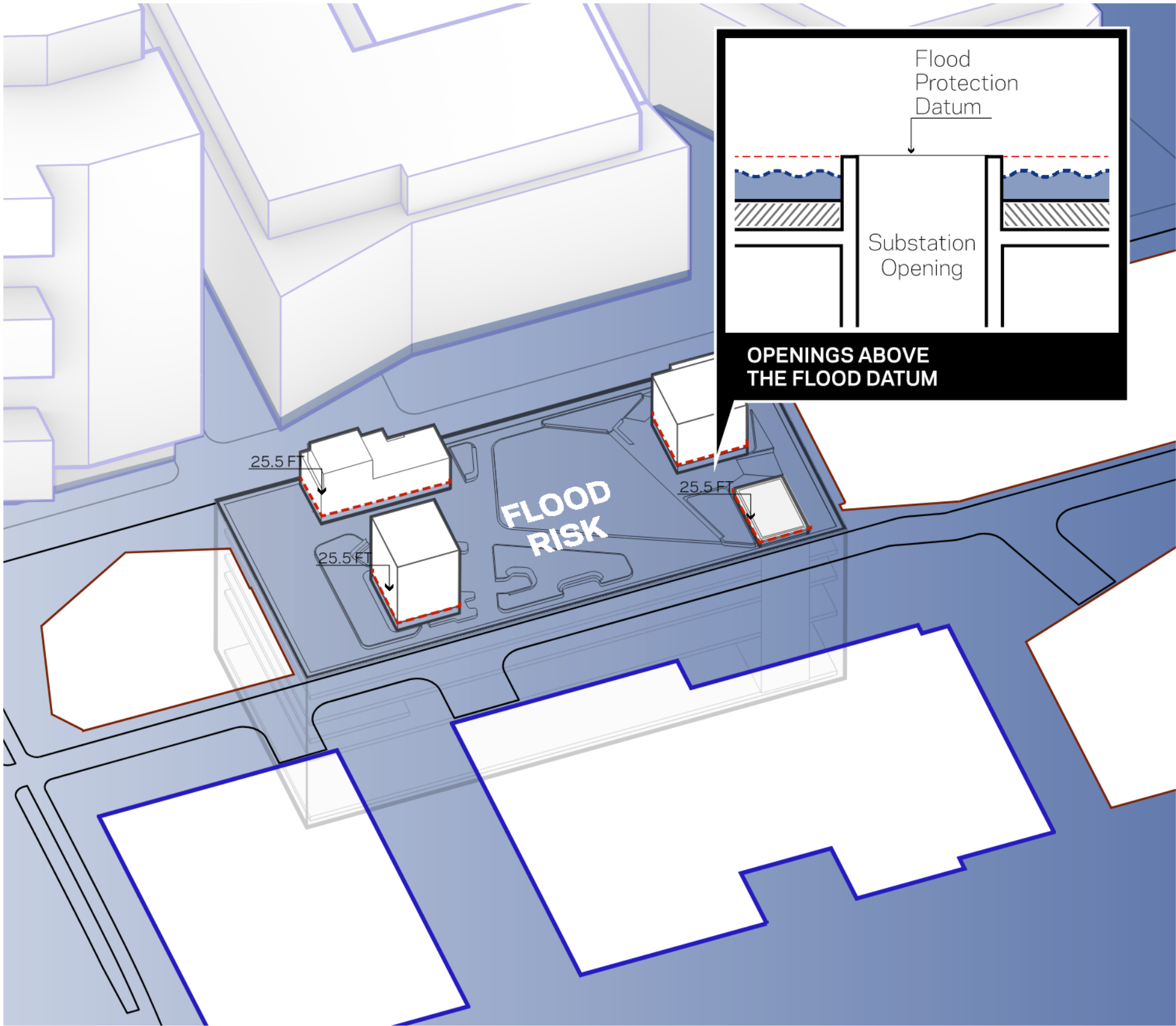


Winter



LEGEND:
COMFORT CATEGORIES:

Sitting	Blue circle
Standing	Light blue circle
Strolling	Green circle
Walking	Yellow circle
Uncomfortable	Orange circle



All openings to the below grade substation are designed at the required Flood Protection Datum of 25.5' which is approximately two feet higher than anticipated flood levels for the 500 year storm for 2070.

100% DD Design Review Presentation

CENTER PLAZA DESIGN UPDATE

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Design Review Committee Discussion
June 4, 2025



50% DESIGN DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

APRIL 2, 2025

PLAY

1. Make play more interesting
2. Add more play equipment to make it feel like a place to explore
3. Can fitness equipment be added? Incorporate fitness play structures into the design
4. Look at materiality of play structure - consider something other than wood. Ensure materials fit the context, explore materials such as metal and rope with pops of color

DESIGN

1. Extend north end of play area triangle more to reduce pavement
2. Add more vertical elements on East Service Drive side of plaza, such as play structures or trellis

PLANTING

1. Add taller shrubs at east edge of plaza like vines on trellis at west side.
2. Provide more developed planting palette considering shade, wind, and rodent browsing. Will vines on trellis survive?
3. Consider lawn options (natural vs. synthetic)

SUN/SHADE

1. How will proposed project at 105 Broadway affect shadows and wind?

SWINGS

1. Add hardscape in front of swings
2. Make swings more contemporary and match more with trellis

SAFETY

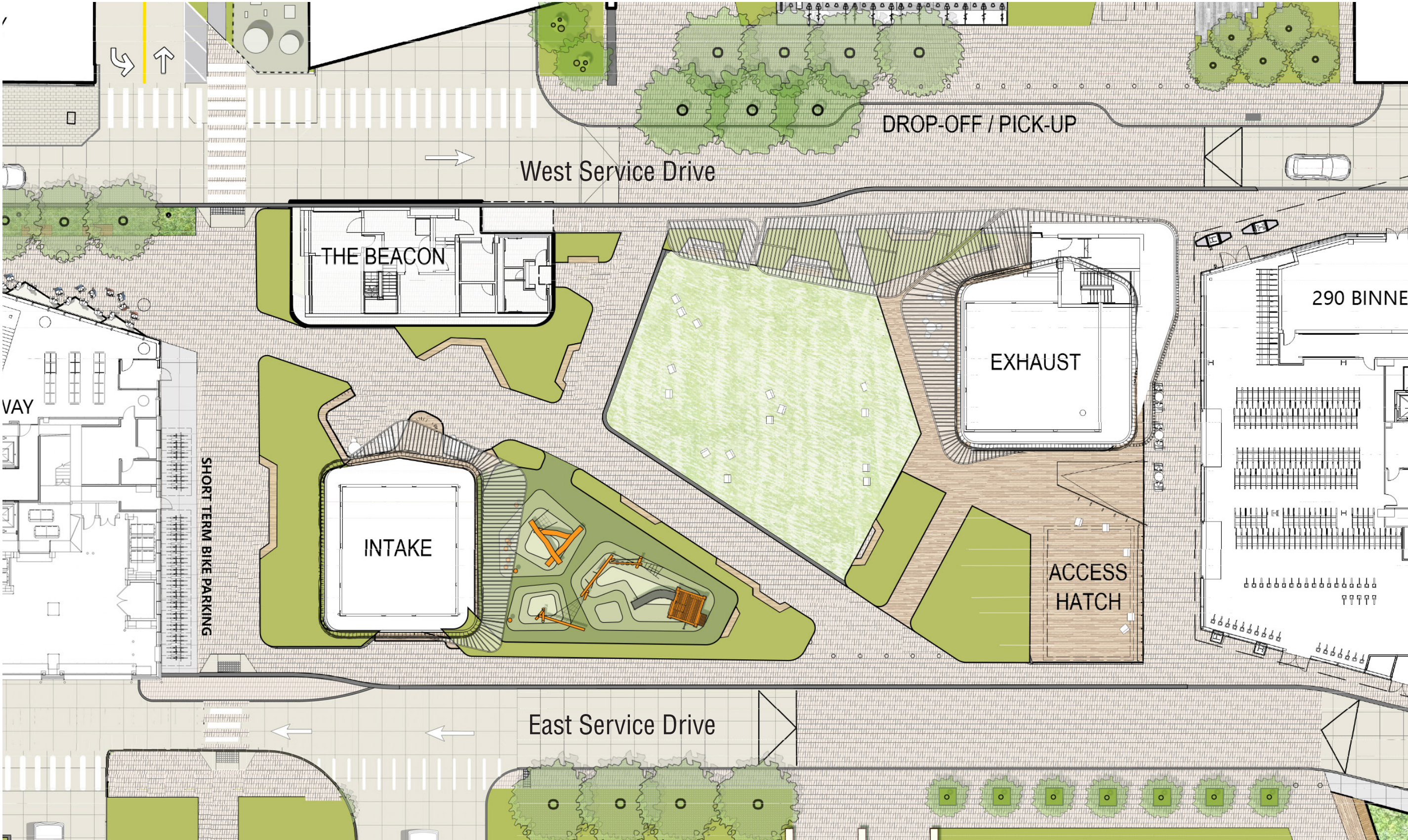
1. Add signage and bollards for safety, particularly for bikers and pedestrians
2. Consider safety of angular surfaces of the Beacon building. Could make lower panels smoother
3. Consider safety of snow and ice buildup and UV radiation and glare from reflective surfaces

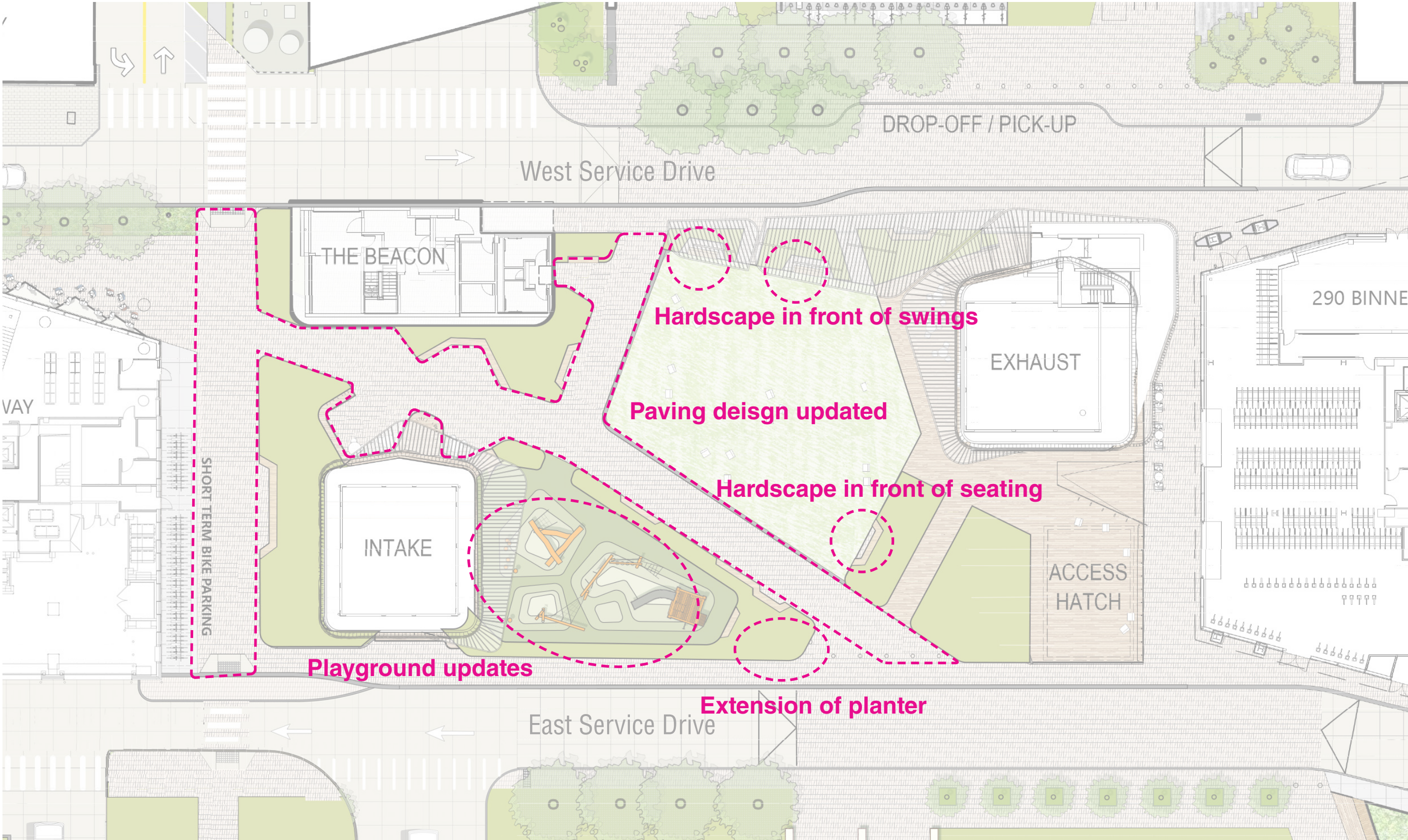
MATERIALS

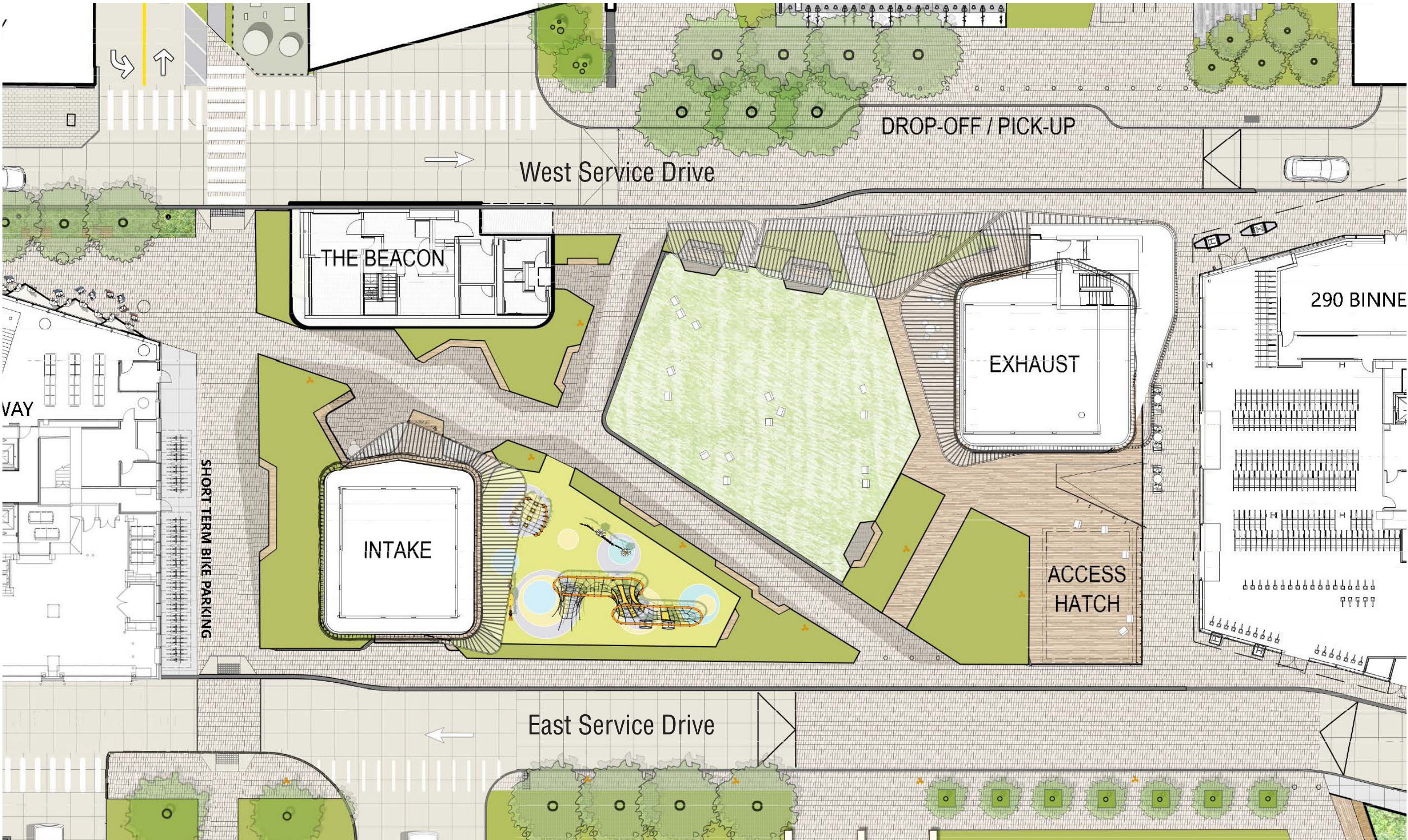
1. Provide mockups for structures (Beacon, Intake, Exhaust, and Trellis)

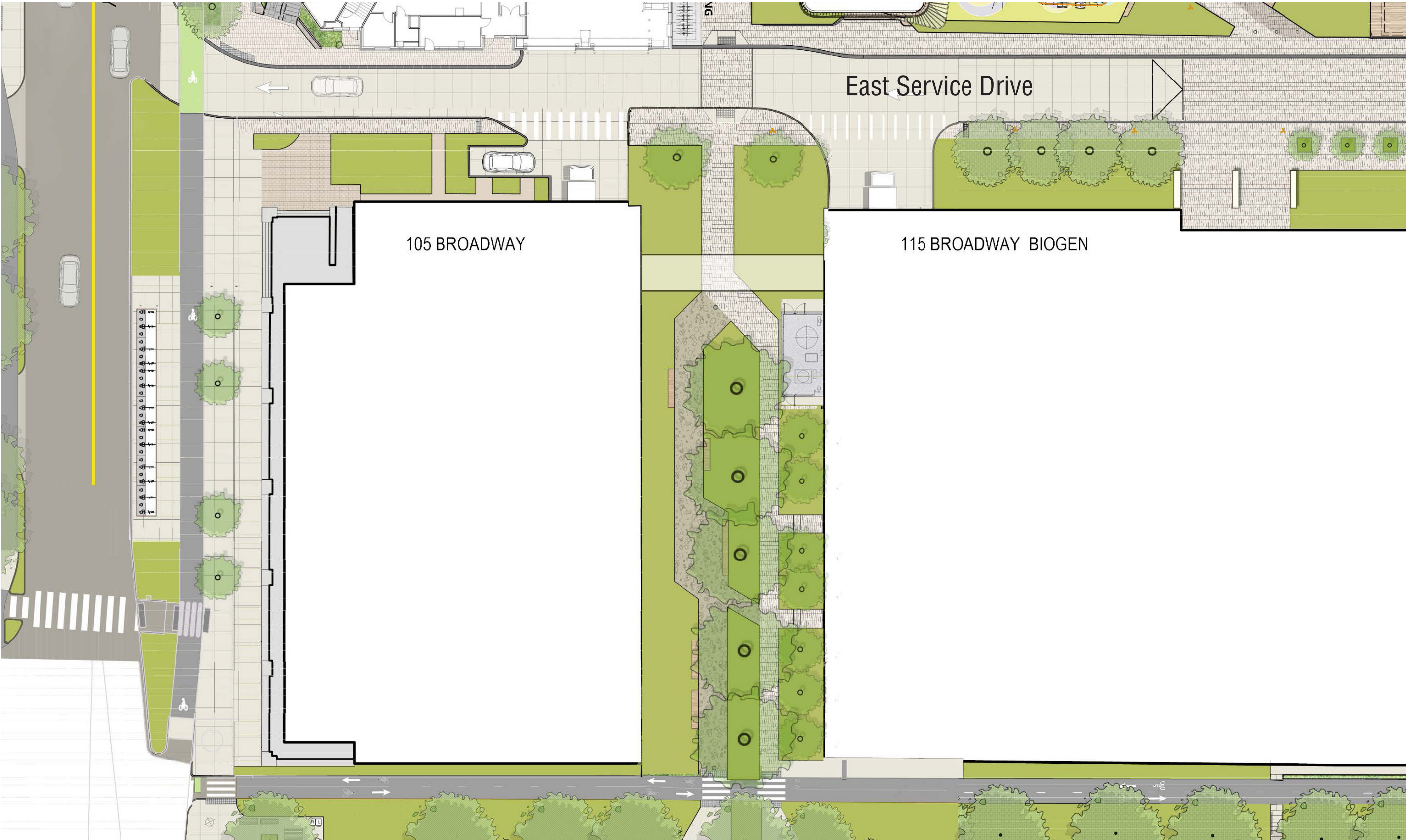
LIGHTING

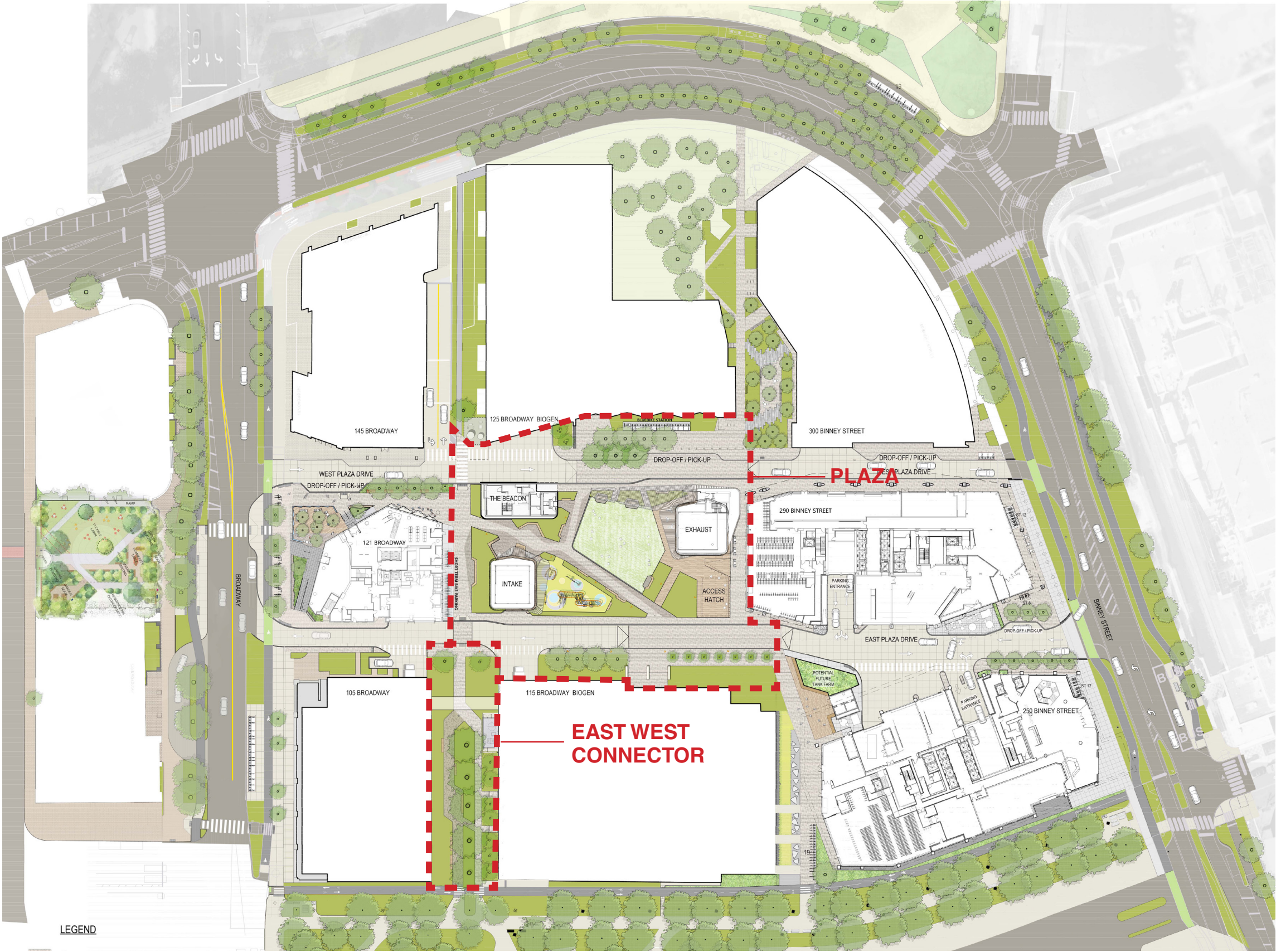
UPDATE ON DESIGN PROGRESS





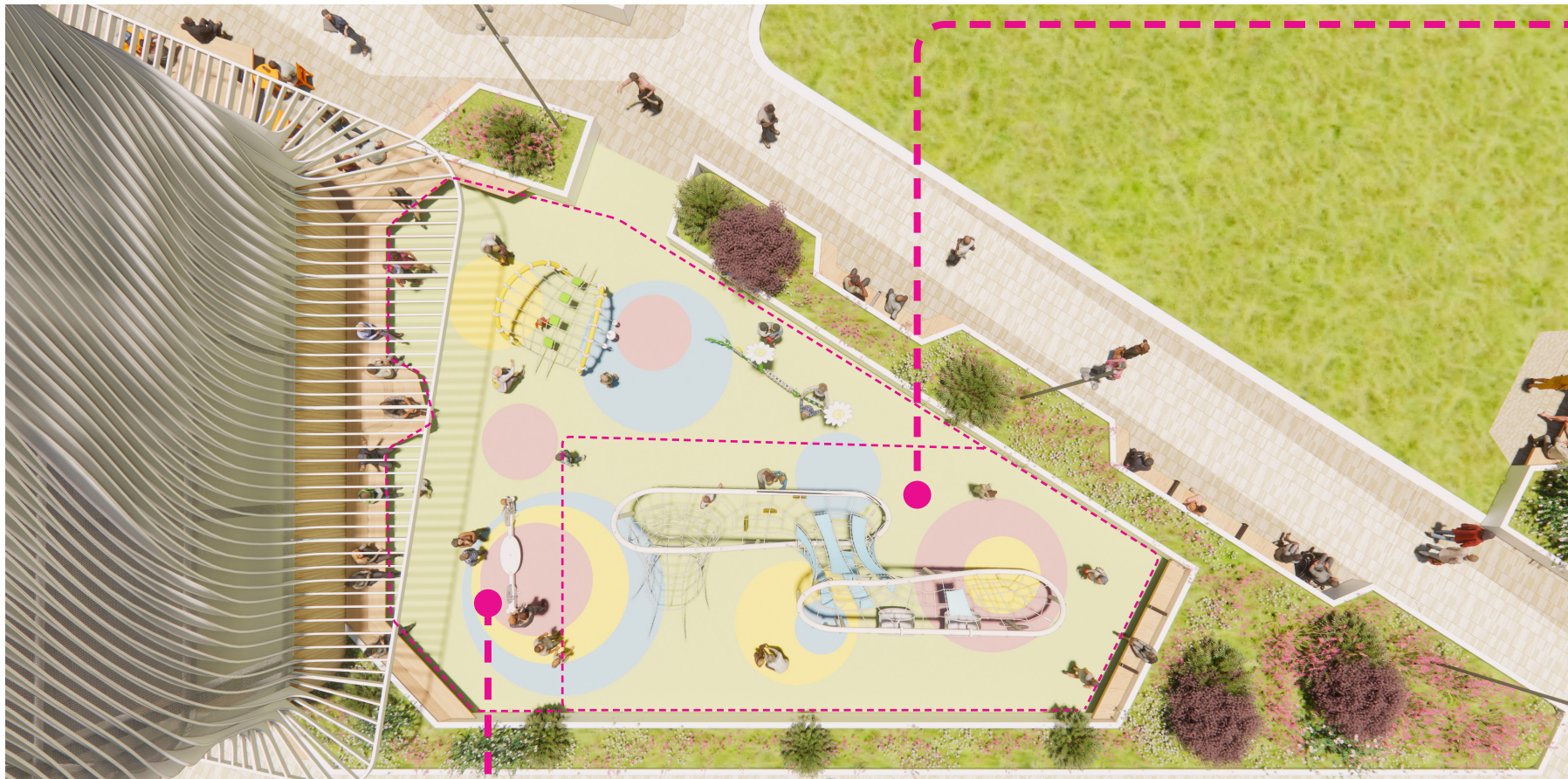






RESPONSE TO COMMENTS





5-12 yrs : Play products

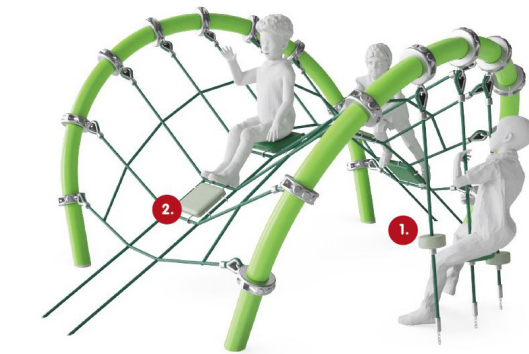


Double Butterfly

2-5 yrs: Play products



Interactive Panel (Substitutue to Butterfly theme available)



Arch Butterfly



Seasaw (Substitutue to Butterfly theme available)



Rather than having permanent equipment that limits the flexibility of the lawn space, we will provide fitness options via programing.

This is an example of accomodating group yoga on the lawn.



PLAY

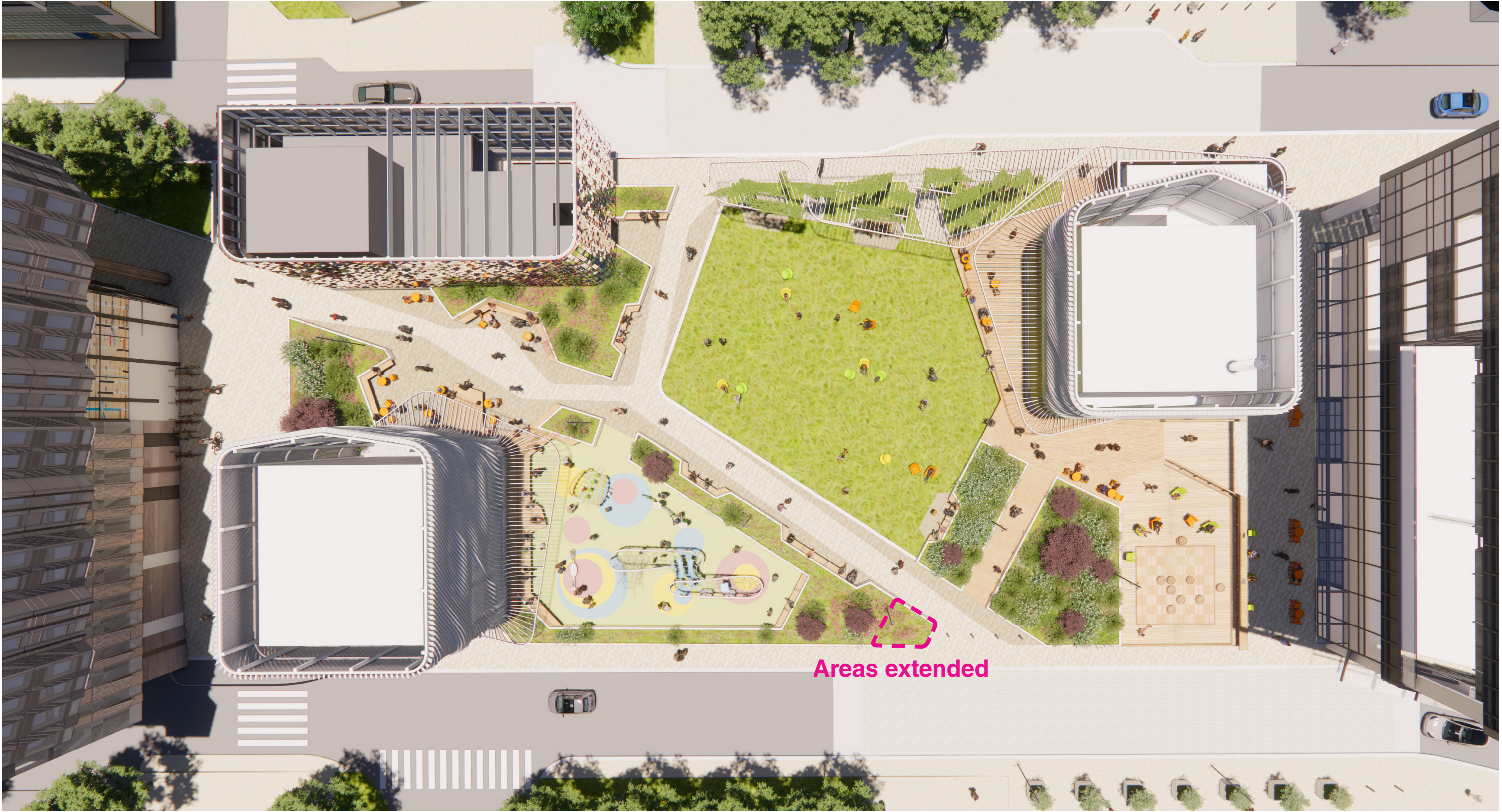
4. Ensure materials fit the context, explore materials such as metal and rope with pops of color

Previous Design



Current Design





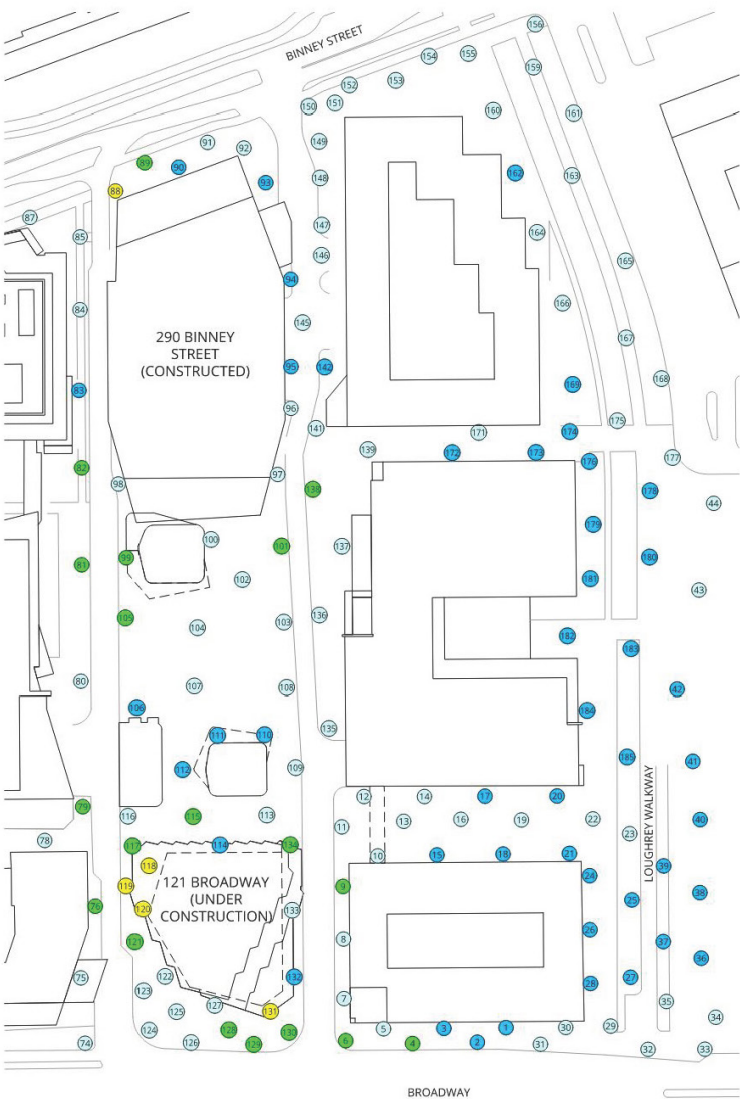


Taller shrubs added on East Service Drive side of plaza. (See Planting chapter for detailed information.)

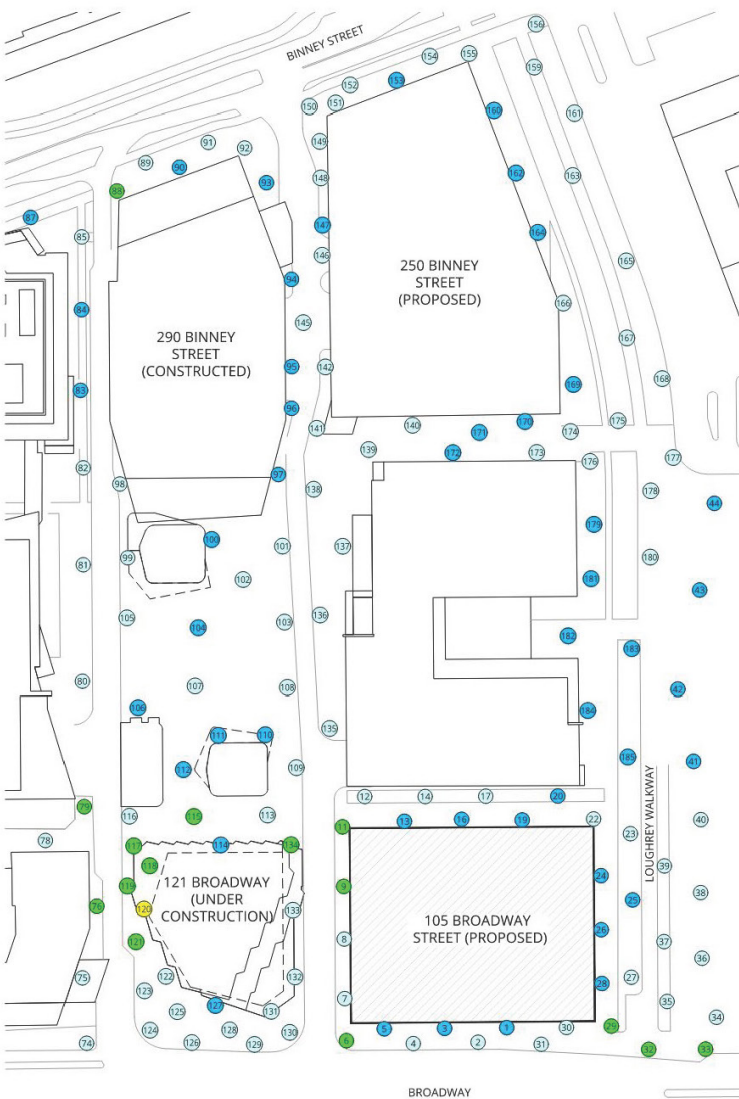
Due to the narrow width of the sidewalk in this location, the light poles for this area will be located on the opposite side of the East Service Drive. Wall lights will be included to provide low level pedestrian lighting for this area (see Lighting chapter for more information).

PEDESTRIAN WIND COMFORT CONDITIONS (SUMMER)

7.1A NO BUILD

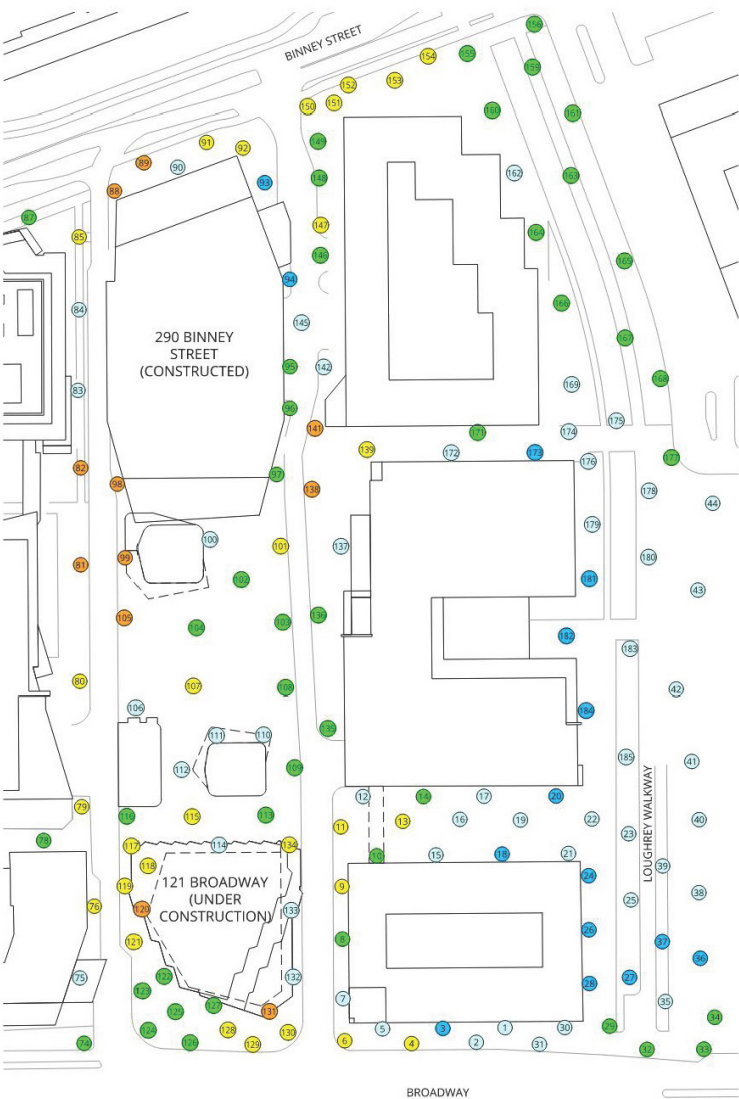


7.1B BUILD

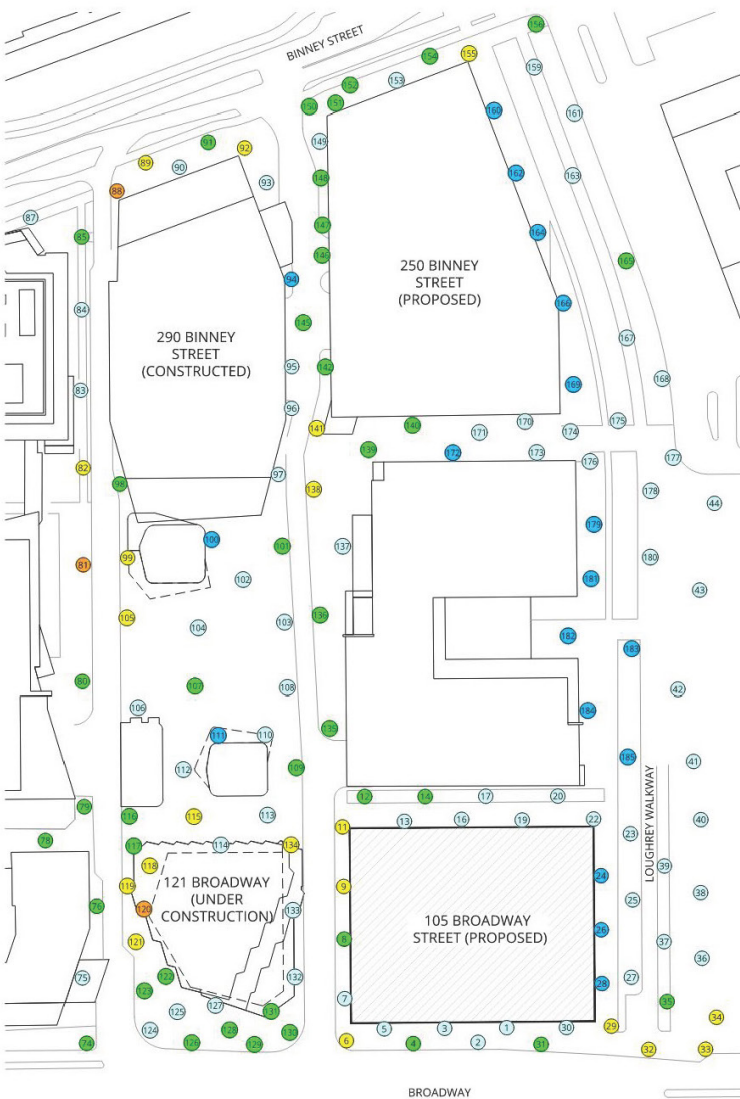


PEDESTRIAN WIND COMFORT CONDITIONS (WINTER)

7.2A NO BUILD



7.2B BUILD



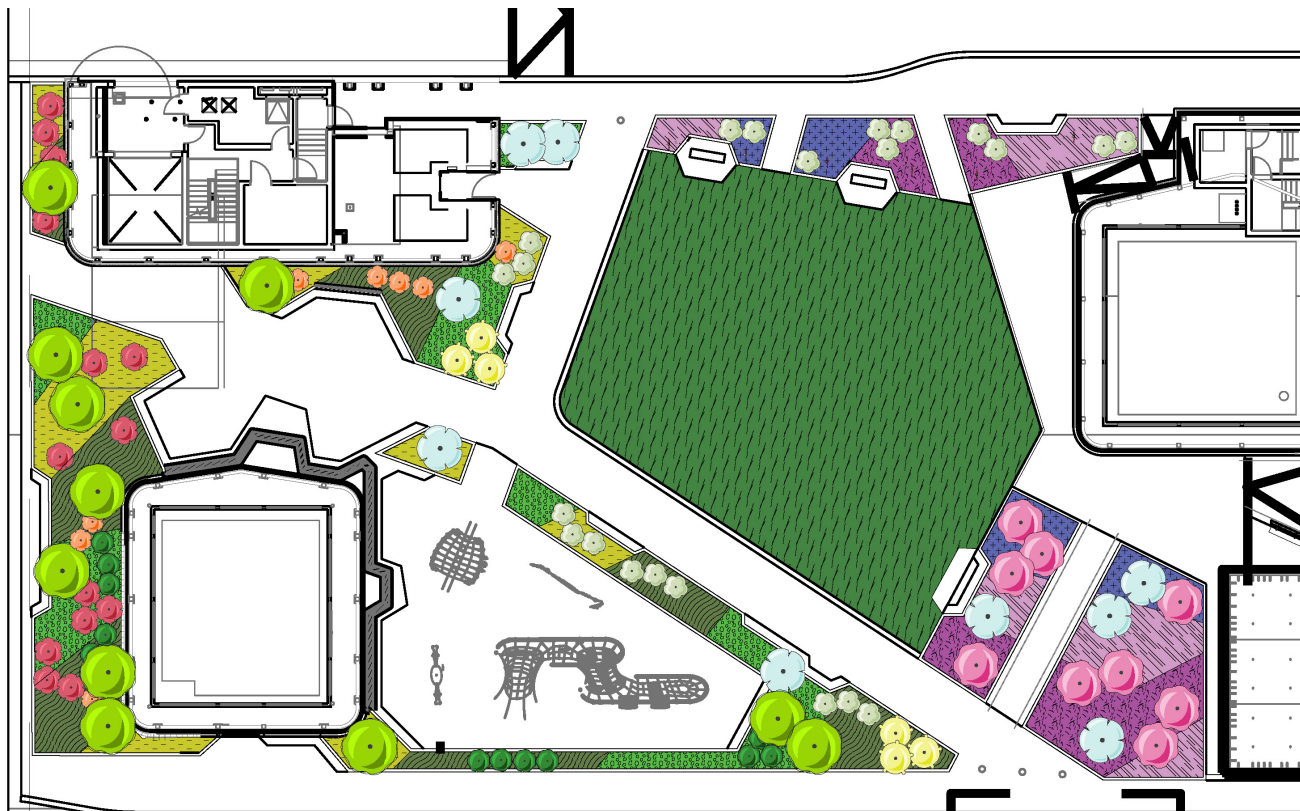
Comfort Categories

- Sitting
- Standing
- Strolling
- Walking
- Uncomfortable

SUN STUDY 11:00AM TO 1:30PM - Video



PLANTING



- Legend
- Striped Maple
 - Downy Serviceberry
 - Eastern Redbud
 - Chinese Witch Hazel
 - Flame Azalea
 - Rosebay Rhododendron
 - Dwarf Sweetbox
 - Summersweet

1. Add taller shrubs at east edge of plaza

Medium Size Shrubs



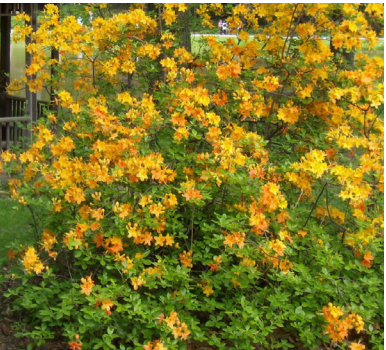
Clethra alnifolia
'Hummingbird'
Summersweet



Rhododendron maximum
Rosebay Rhododendron



Sarcocca hookeriana var.
humilis
Dwarf Sweetbox



Rhododendron calendulaceum
Flame Azalea

Tall, Multistem Shrubs



Cercis canadensis
Eastern Redbud
to 20'



Hamamelis mollis
Chinese Witch Hazel
to 15'



Amelanchier arborea
Downy Serviceberry
to 20'

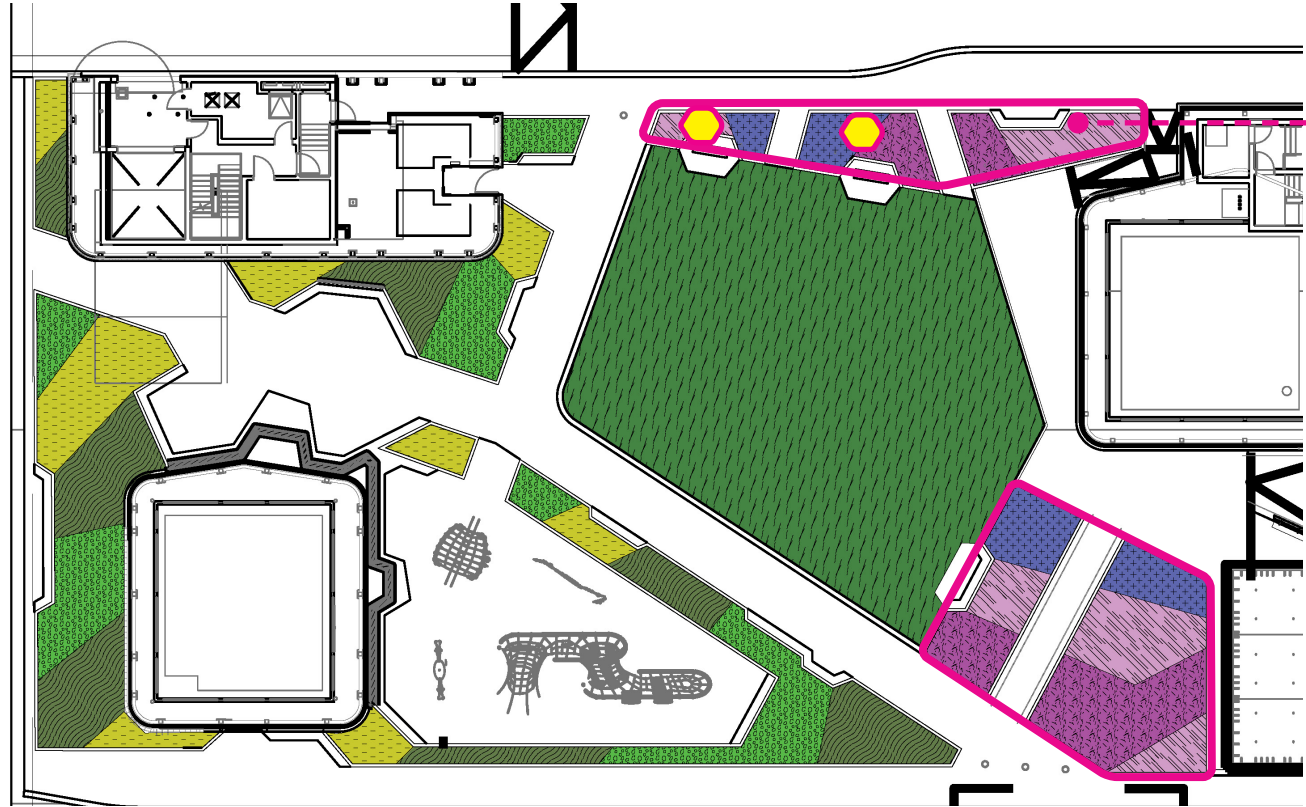


Acer pensylvanicum
Striped Maple
to 30'

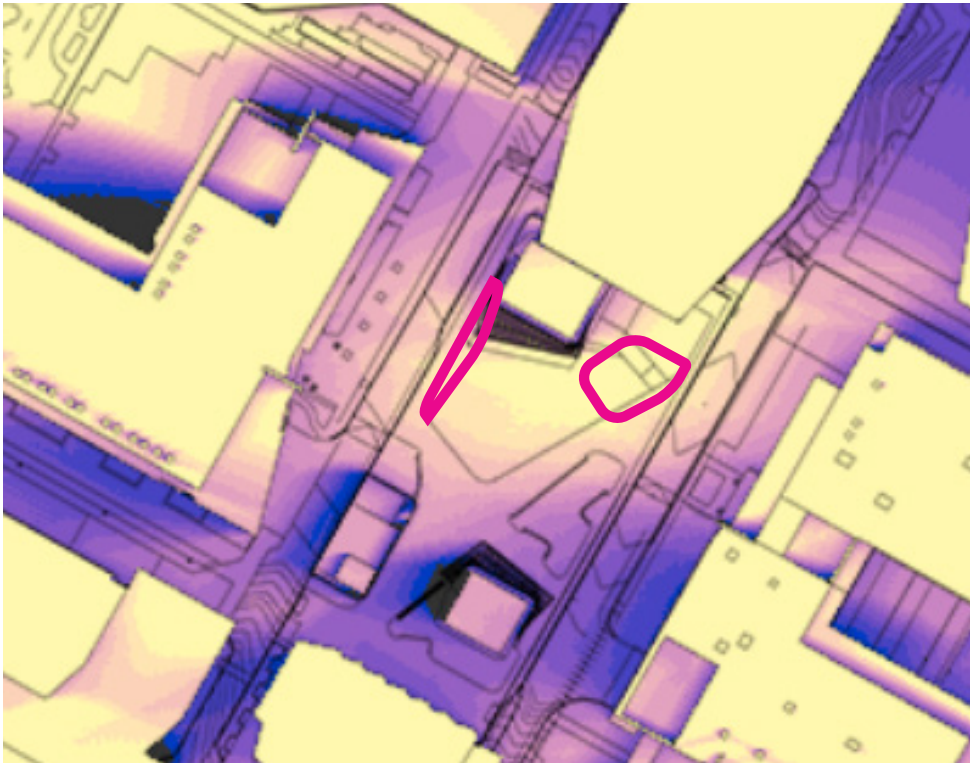
Tall, multistem shrubs provide veritcality, seasonal interest, and some shade, while allowing users to see underneath between park areas.

PLANTING

2. Provide more developed planting palette considering shade, wind, and rodent browsing.



Location with higher anticipated winter winds



June 21



Clematis virginiana
Virgin's Bower
Trellis climber

A palette that tolerates both part shade and full sun to be used towards the sunnier northeastern side of the site. These plants are selected to be rabbit-resistant. Wind studies reveal these garden locations to be relatively sheltered during the summer, and plants will be dormant during the winter.



Deschampsia cespitosa
Tufted Hair Grass



Actaea racemosa
Black Snakeroot



Laprocarnos spectabilis
Bleeding Heart



Chrysogonum virginianum
Green-and-Gold



Agastache foeniculum
Anise Hyssop



Aquilegia canadensis
Red Columbine

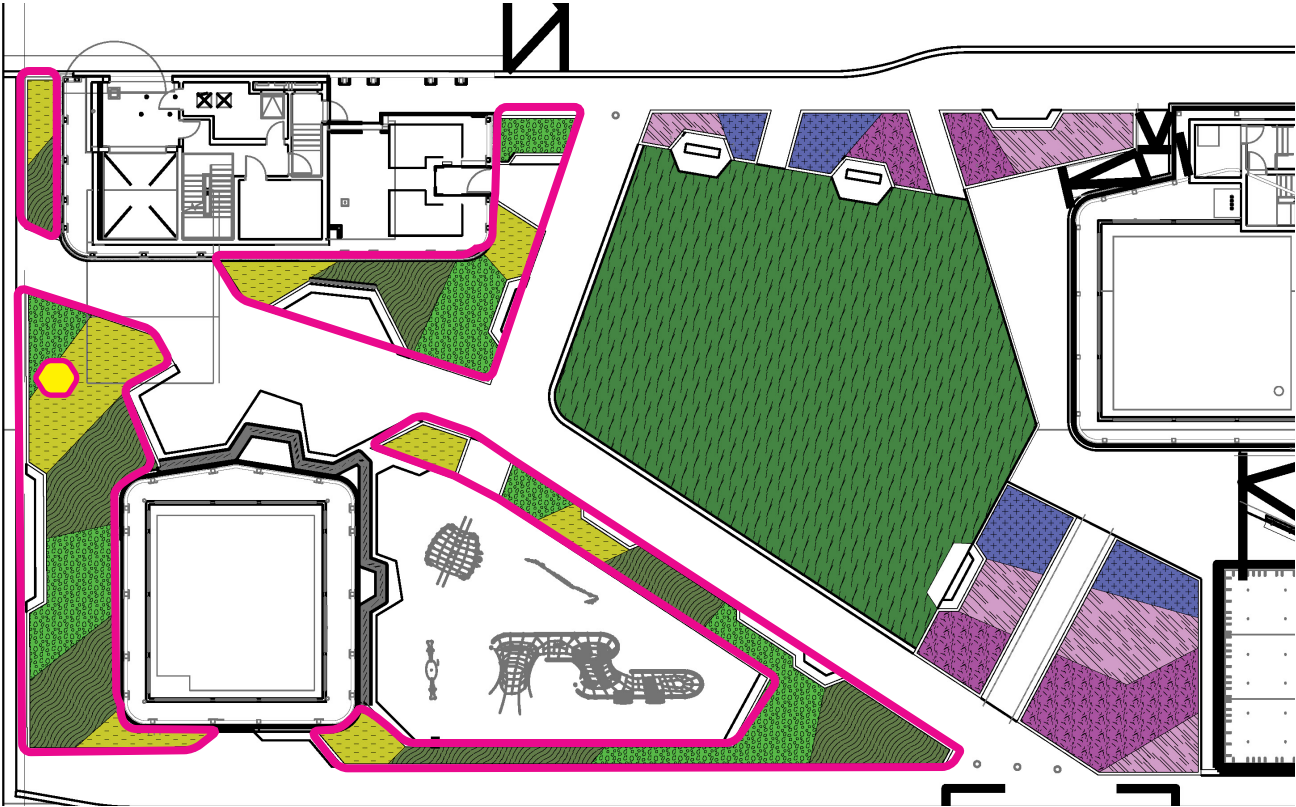


Penstemon digitalis
Beardtongue

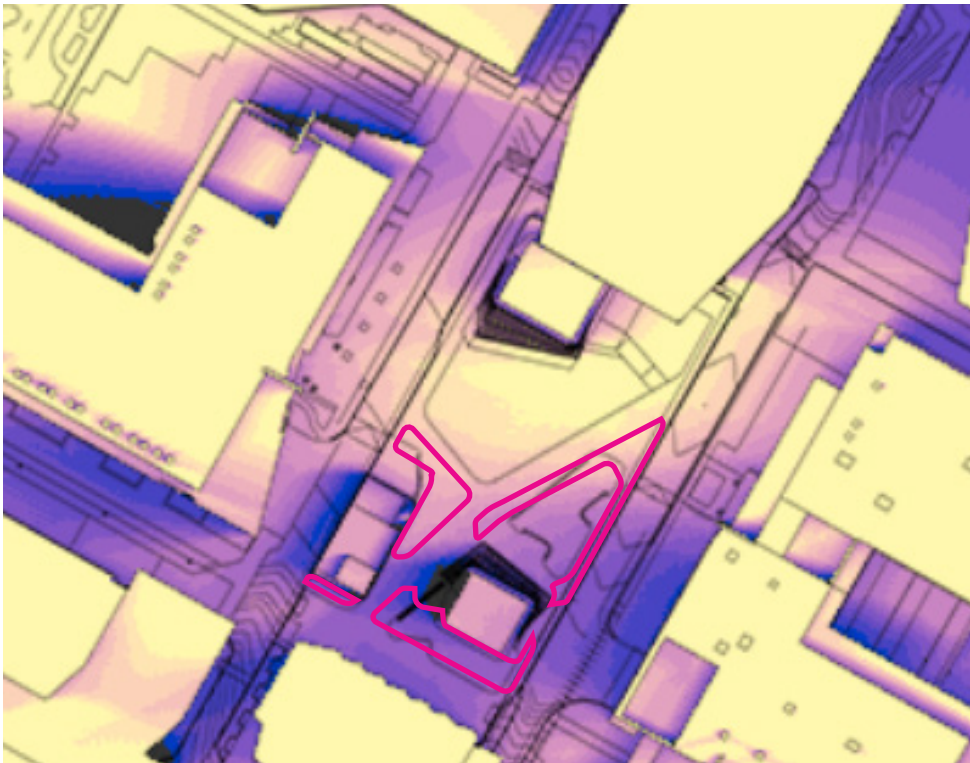
PLANTING

2. Provide more developed planting palette considering shade, wind, and rodent browsing.

A palette that tolerates full shade. These plants are selected to be rabbit-resistant. Wind studies reveal these garden locations to be relatively sheltered. Broadleaf evergreens, which would be most sensitive to wind, will be located outside of locations with higher winter winds.



Location with higher anticipated winter winds



June 21



Polygonatum biflorum
Solomon's Seal



Actaea racemosa
Black Snakeroot



Asarum canadense
Wild Ginger



Hakonechloa macra
Japanese Forest Grass



Dryopteris marginalis
Marginal Shield Fern

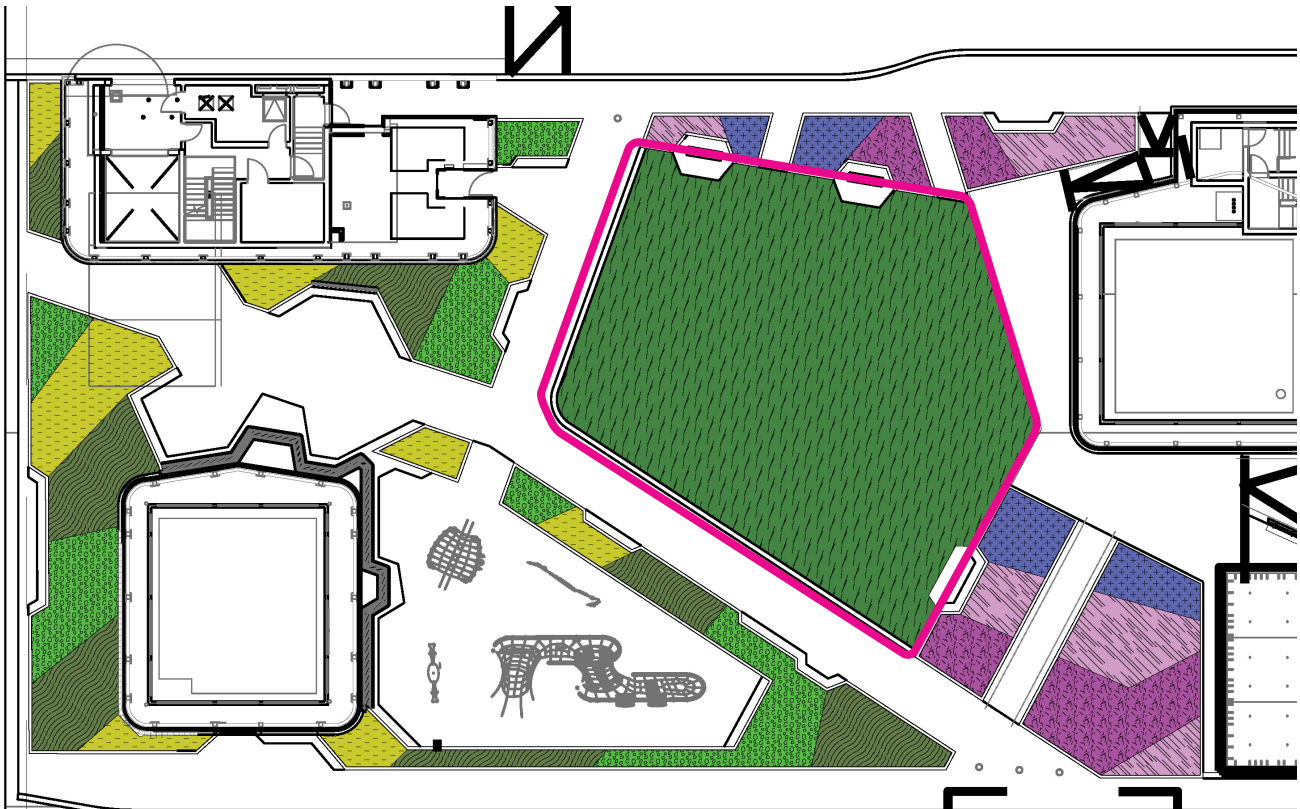


Tiarella cordifolia
Foamflower

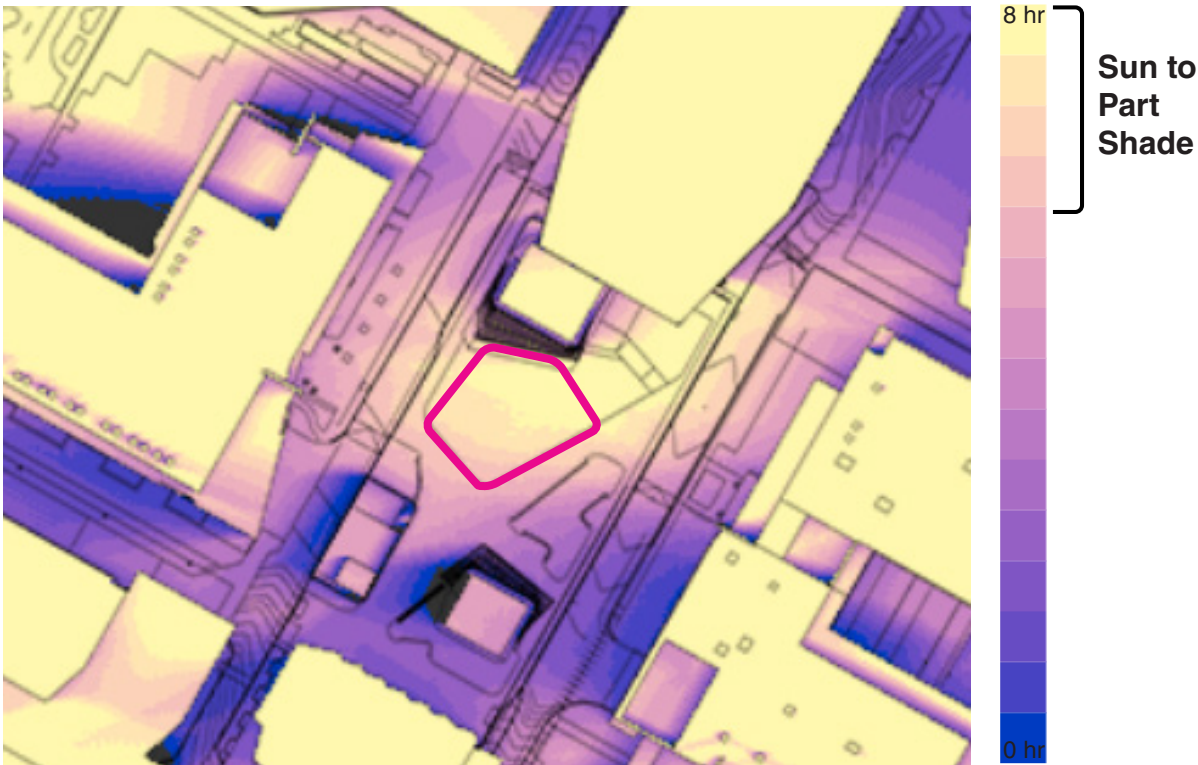
PLANTING

3. Consider lawn options (natural vs. synthetic)

The lawn area will receive part shade to full sun through the growing season. Fescues tolerant of part shade will be selected. Incorporating low-growing, mowing-tolerant clover and yarrow can introduce seasonal interest and diversity while buffering against varying sun conditions through the lawn.



Location with higher anticipated winter winds



June 21



Fescue microclover blend



Fescue, yarrow, and microclover blend - texture



Fescue microclover blend - texture

SWINGS

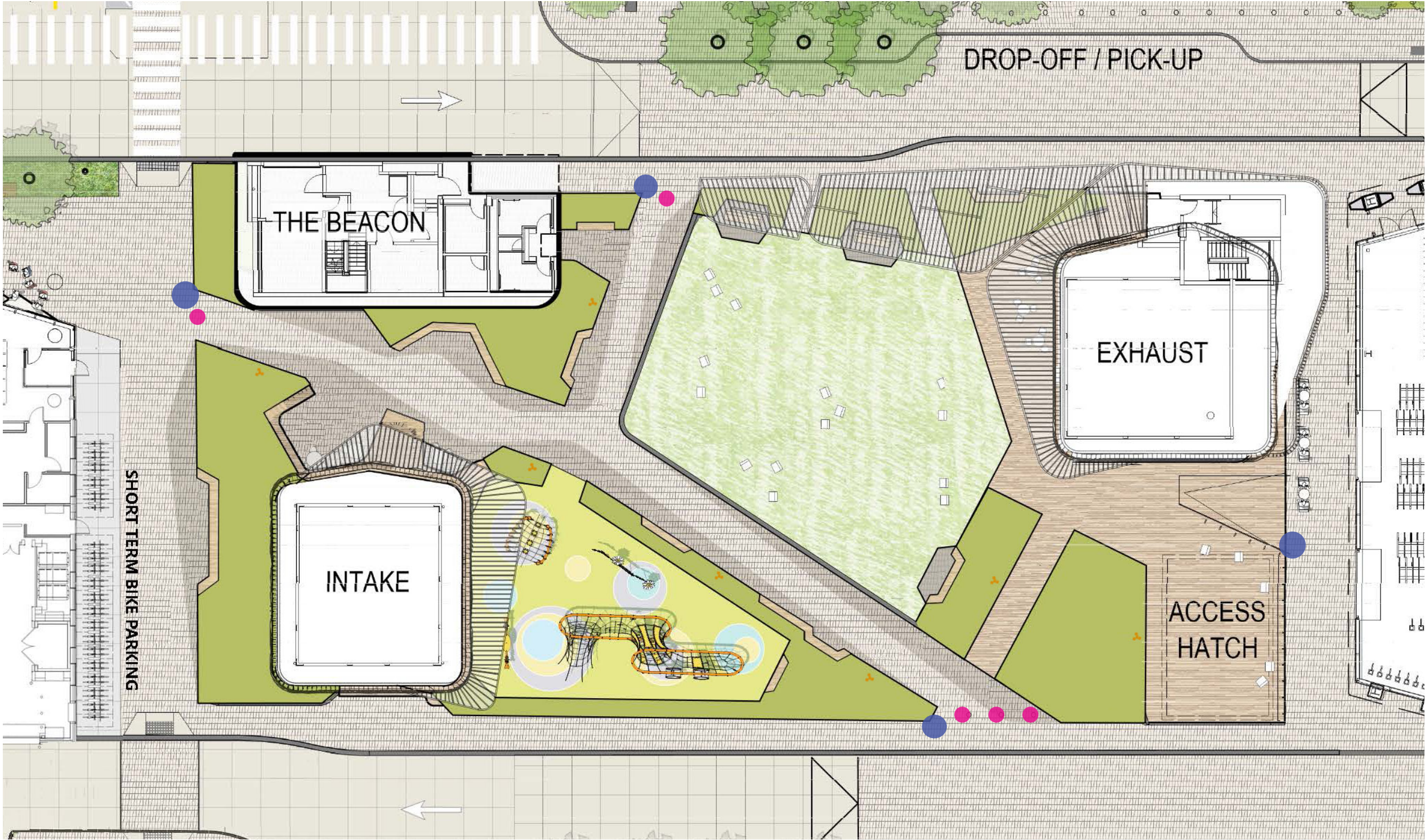
1. Add hardscape in front of swings



Hardscape Added Locations





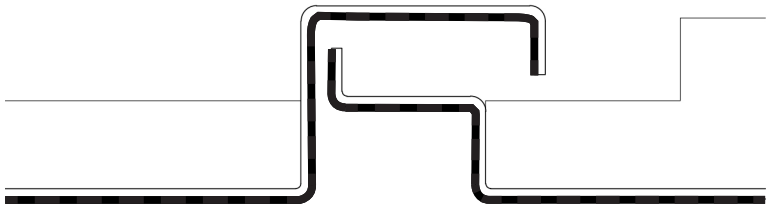
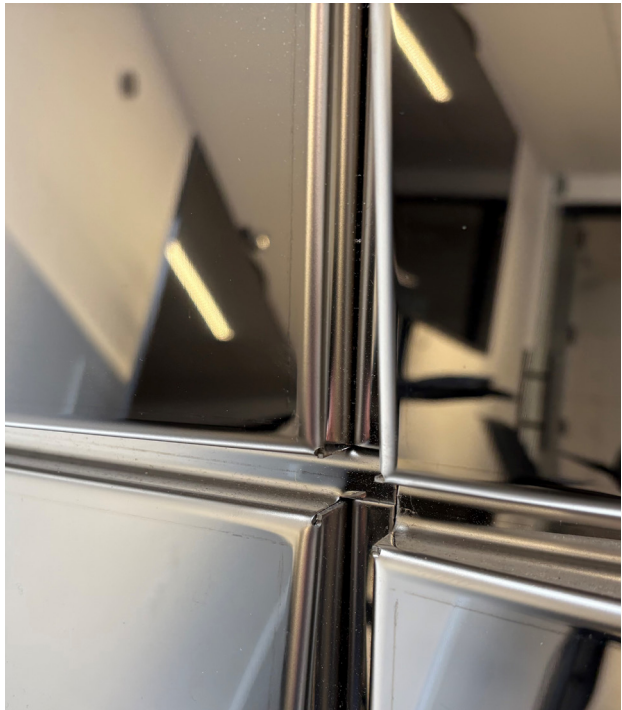
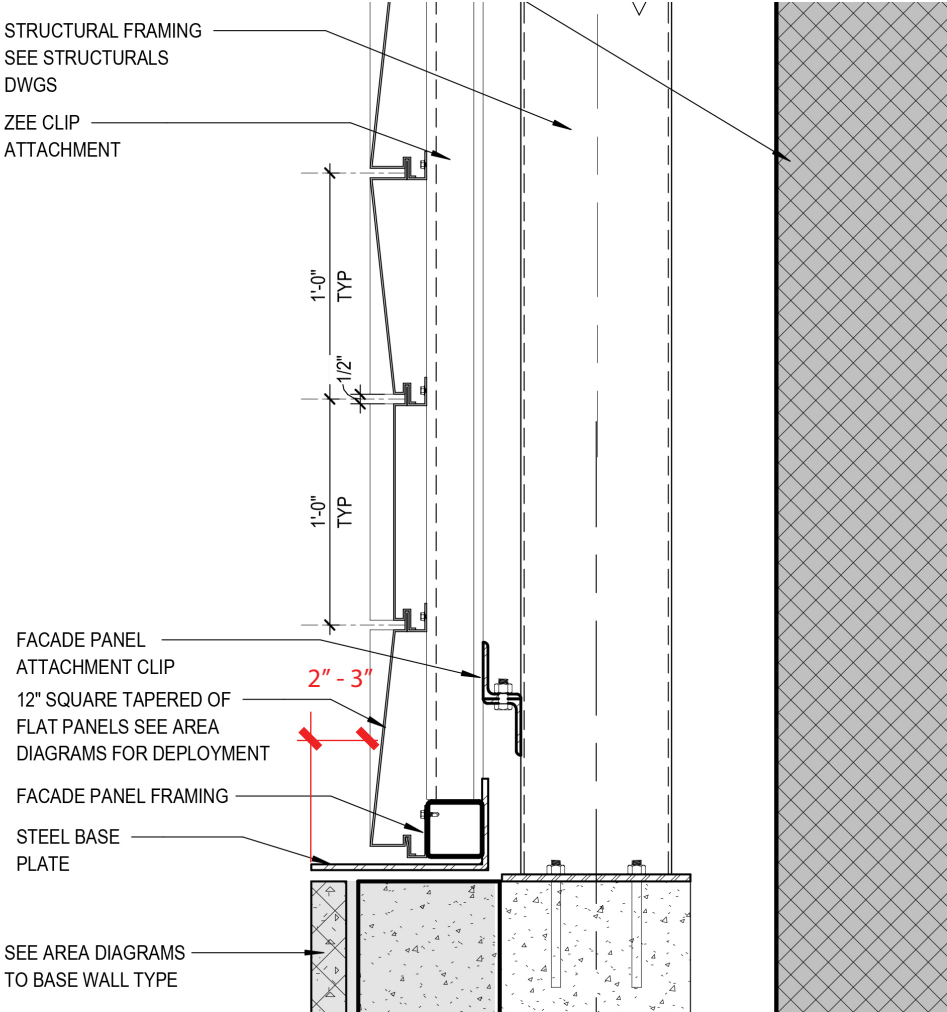


- Bollards
- Signs to deter bikes

*Signs will be further defined as the signage design progresses

SAFETY - SHARPNESS AND PROJECTION

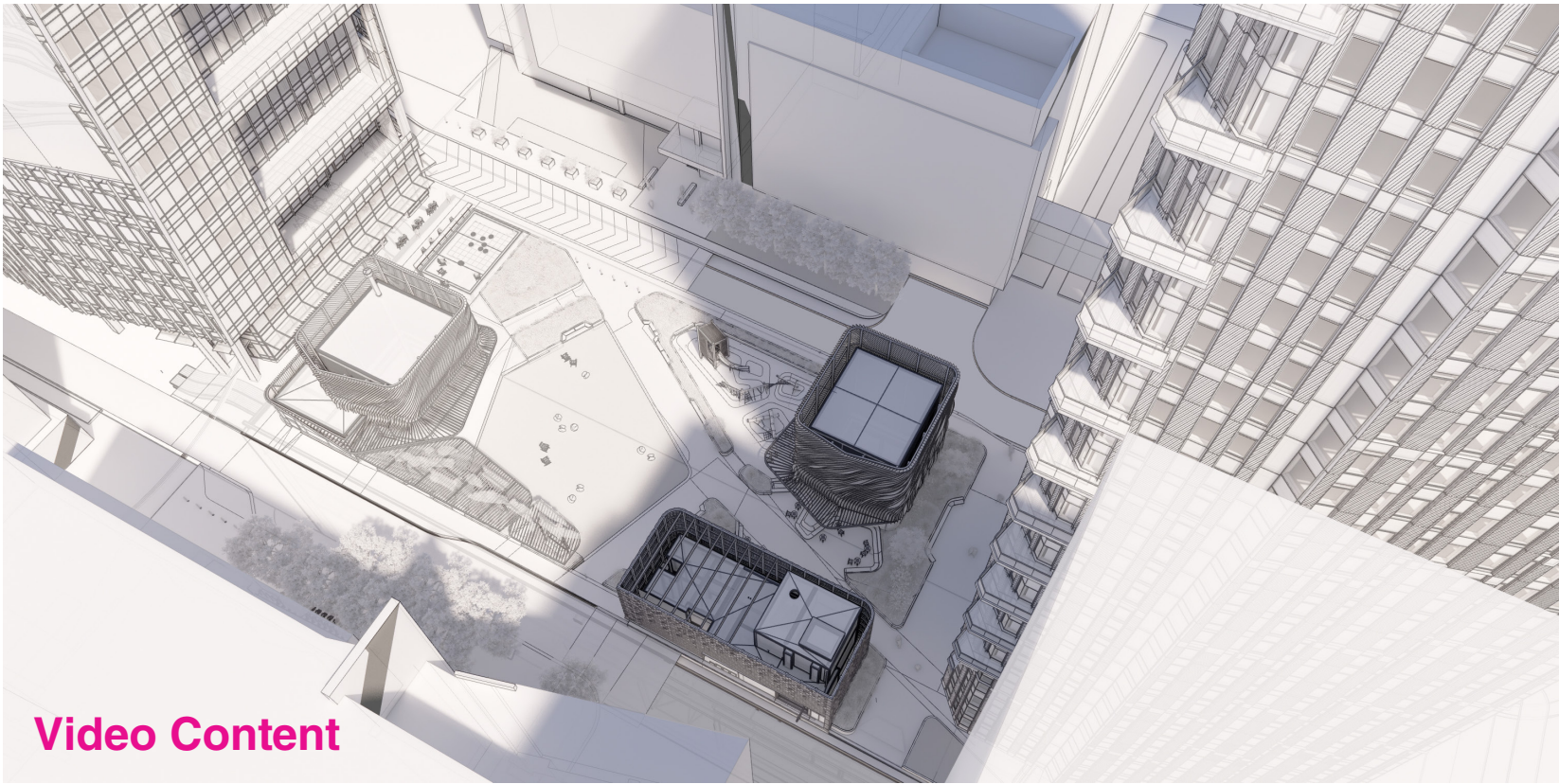
2. Consider safety of angular surfaces of the Beacon building



Edge detail from a panel joint.

Cassettes are formed from a single piece of folded metal creating smooth rolled corners and preventing sharp edges.

SAFETY - GLARE AND REFLECTION



3. Consider safety of snow and ice buildup and UV radiation and glare from reflective surfaces



JUNE 21 7AM - 1PM
GLARE MAPPING FOR THE MOST EXTREME DAY OF THE YEAR

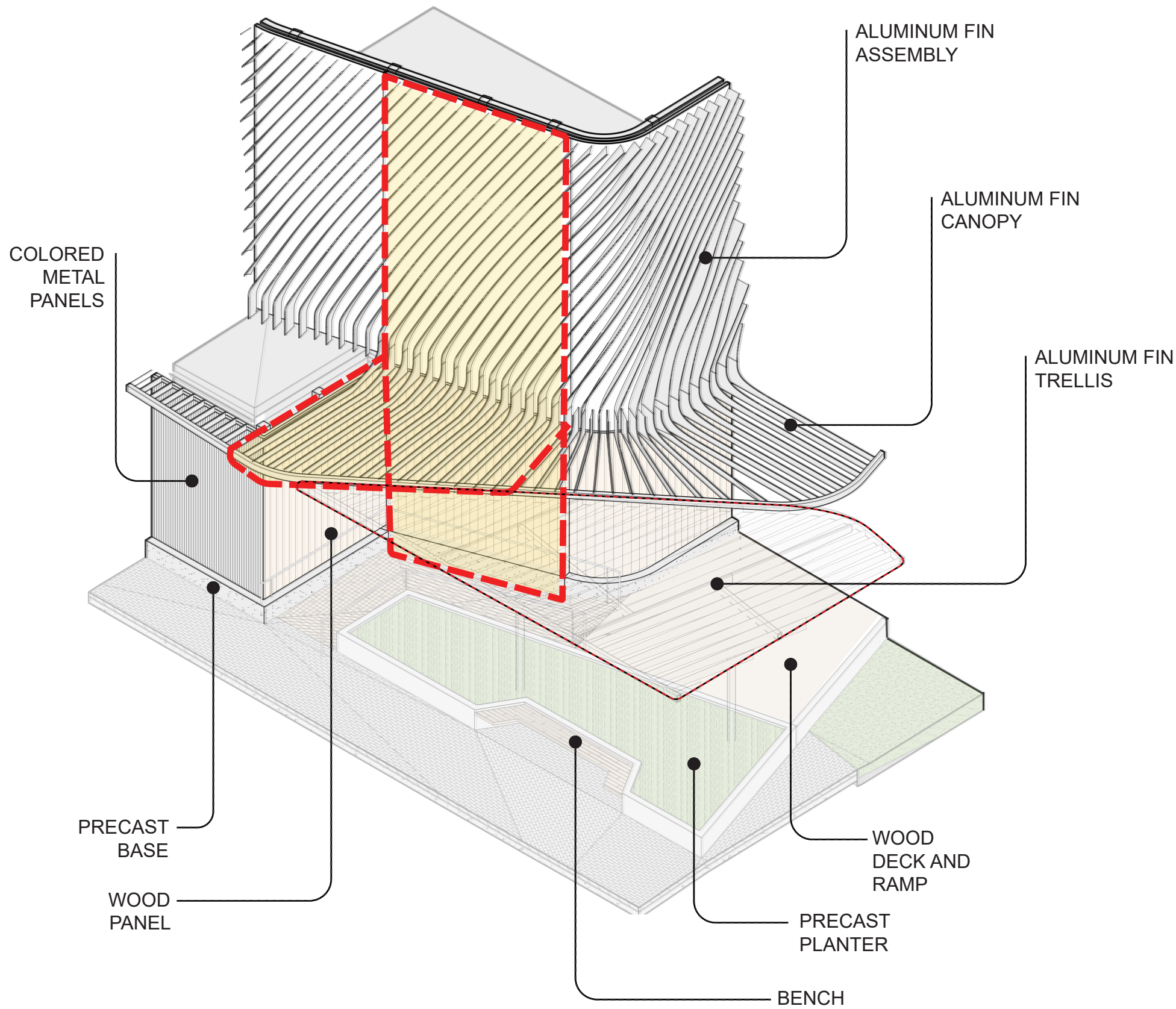
STRATEGY:

- IDENTIFY THE “HOT-SPOTS”.
- ADJUST SPECIFIC TILE ORIENTATIONS TO MITIGATE ANY ISSUES

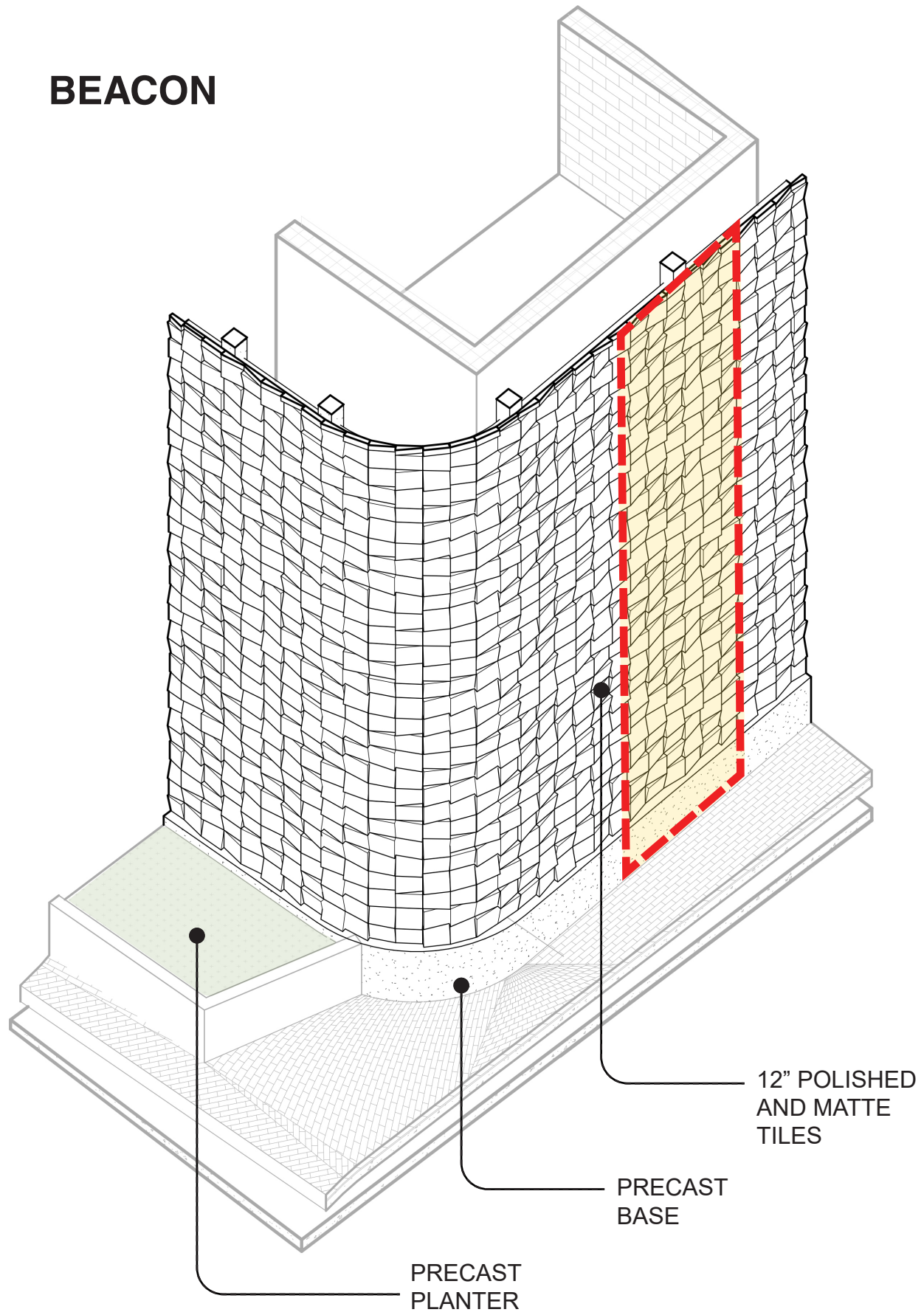
MATERIALS

1. Provide mockups for structures (Beacon, Intake, Exhaust, and Trellis)

EXHAUST/INTAKE



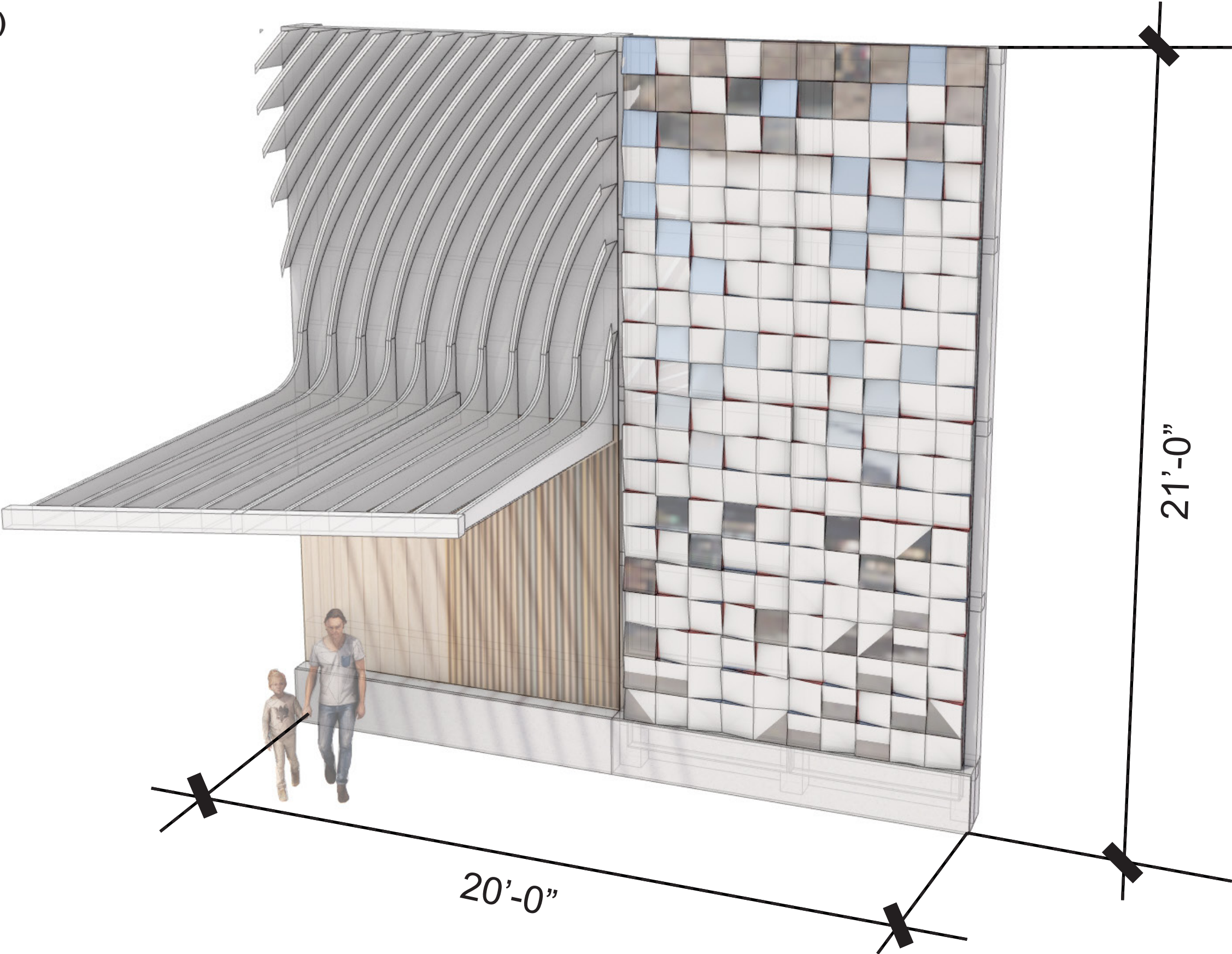
BEACON



MATERIALS

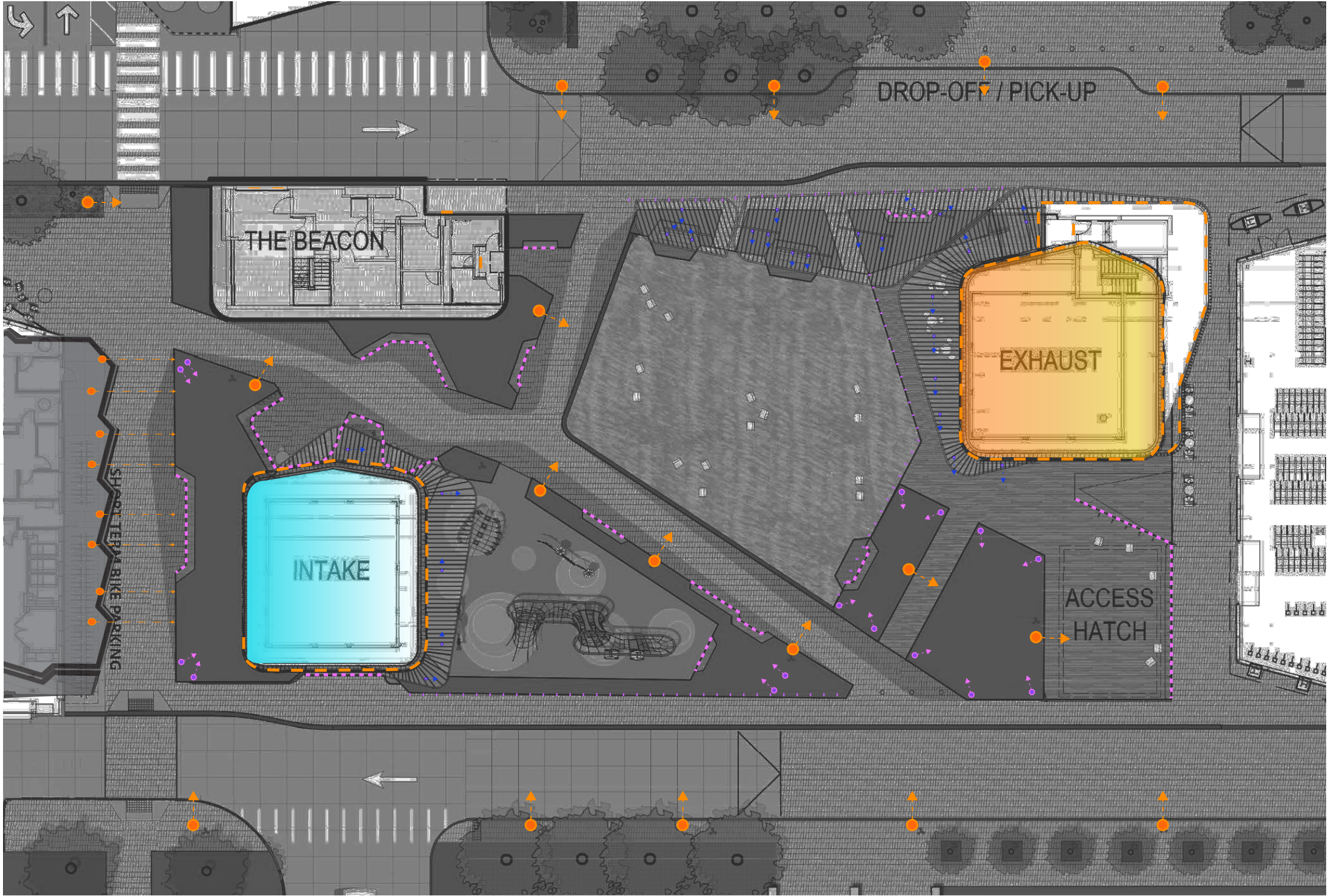
(VISUAL MOCKUP)

1. Provide mockups for structures (Beacon, Intake, Exhaust, and Trellis)



SITE BOUNDARY AND CONTEXT

OVERALL LIGHTING STRATEGIES



General Illumination



An active nighttime experience benefits from a primary layer of general illumination to create a “base coat” of light that other layers are applied on top of. This is achieved in the plaza by the use of pole-mounted fixtures strategically placed along the walkways and roadways. Important intersections and crosswalks are targeted for safety and wayfinding.

Adjustable downlights from the canopy of 121 Broadway Reinforces the passage behind the intake.

Lights integrated under the canopies of the Intake and the Exhaust structures provides functional lighting for people to gather.

Low Level Highlighting



In order for the public to feel welcome, it’s important to provide a layer of light feels intimate and at a human scale

The benches that snake around the structures and through the plaza have an integrated lighting that brings down the visual scale and creates inviting gathering moments

Select trees are carefully up-lighted for visual interest and wayfinding

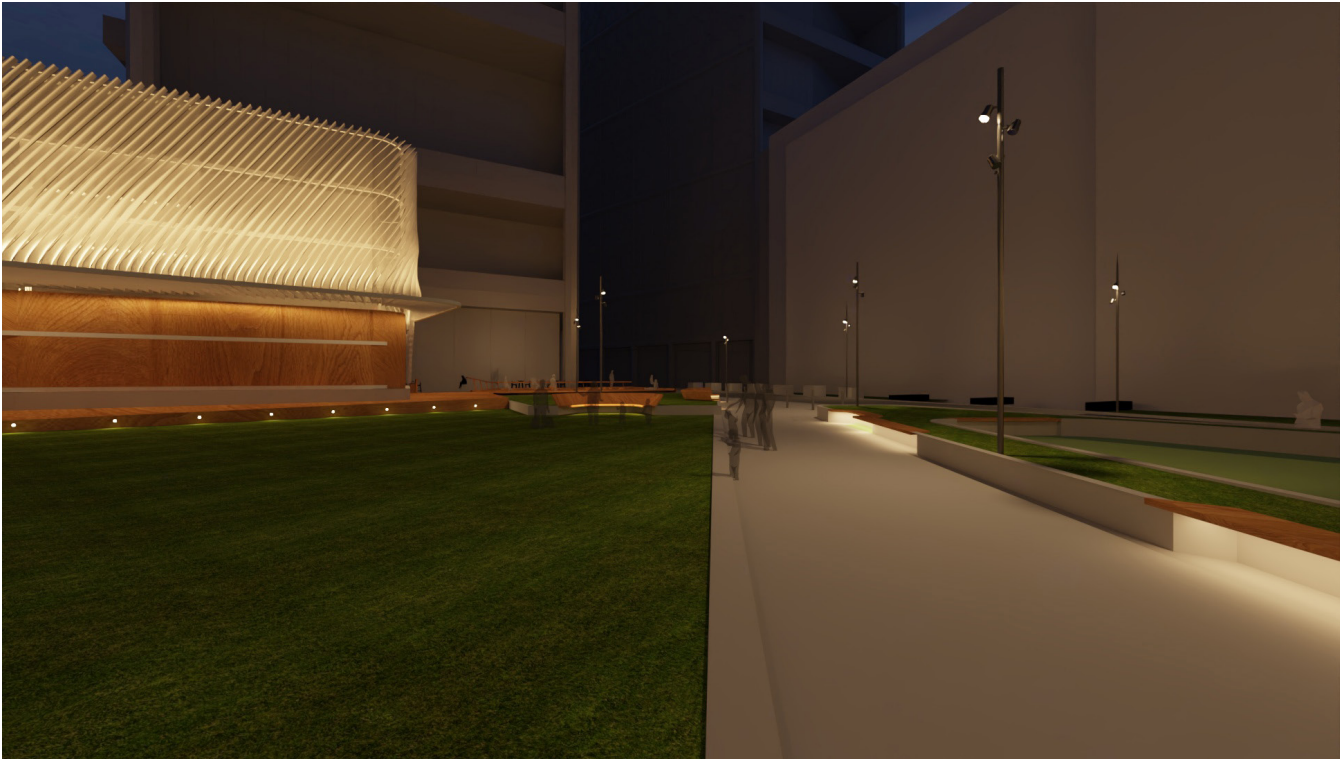
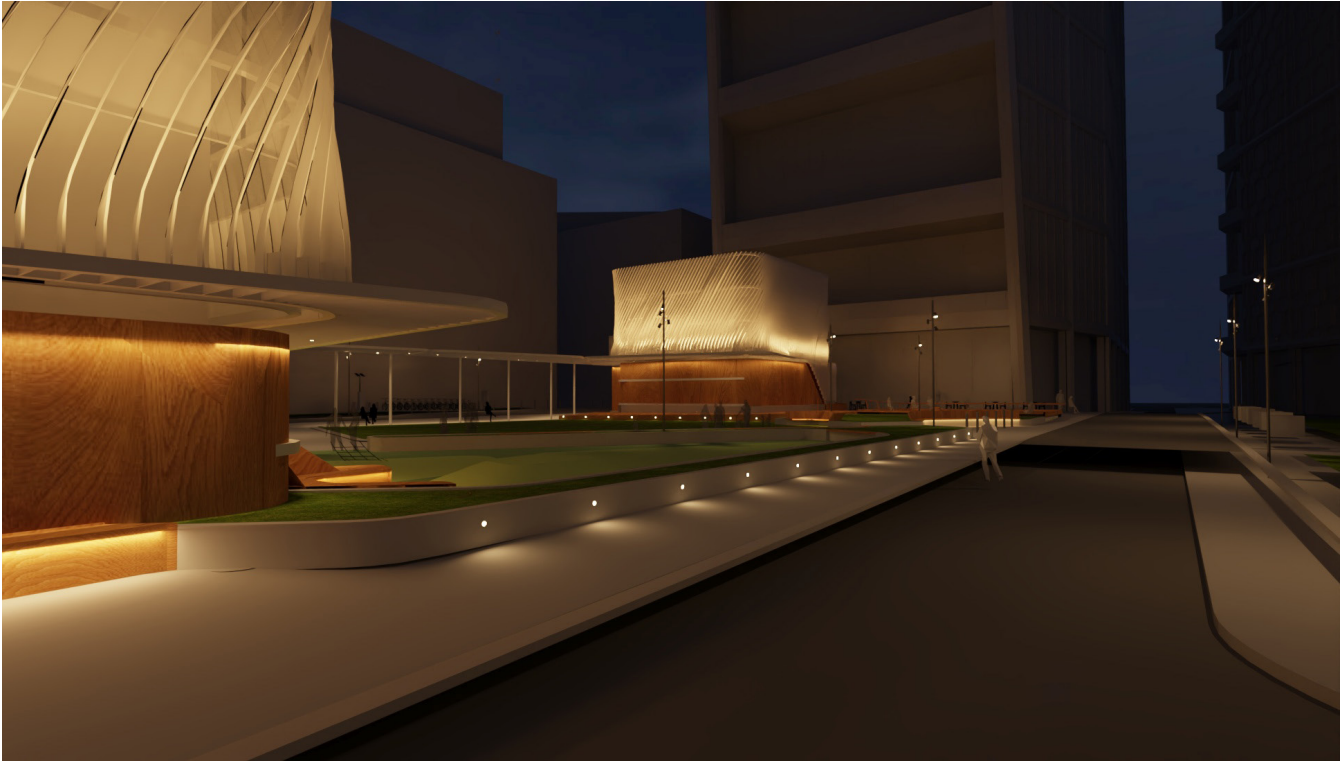
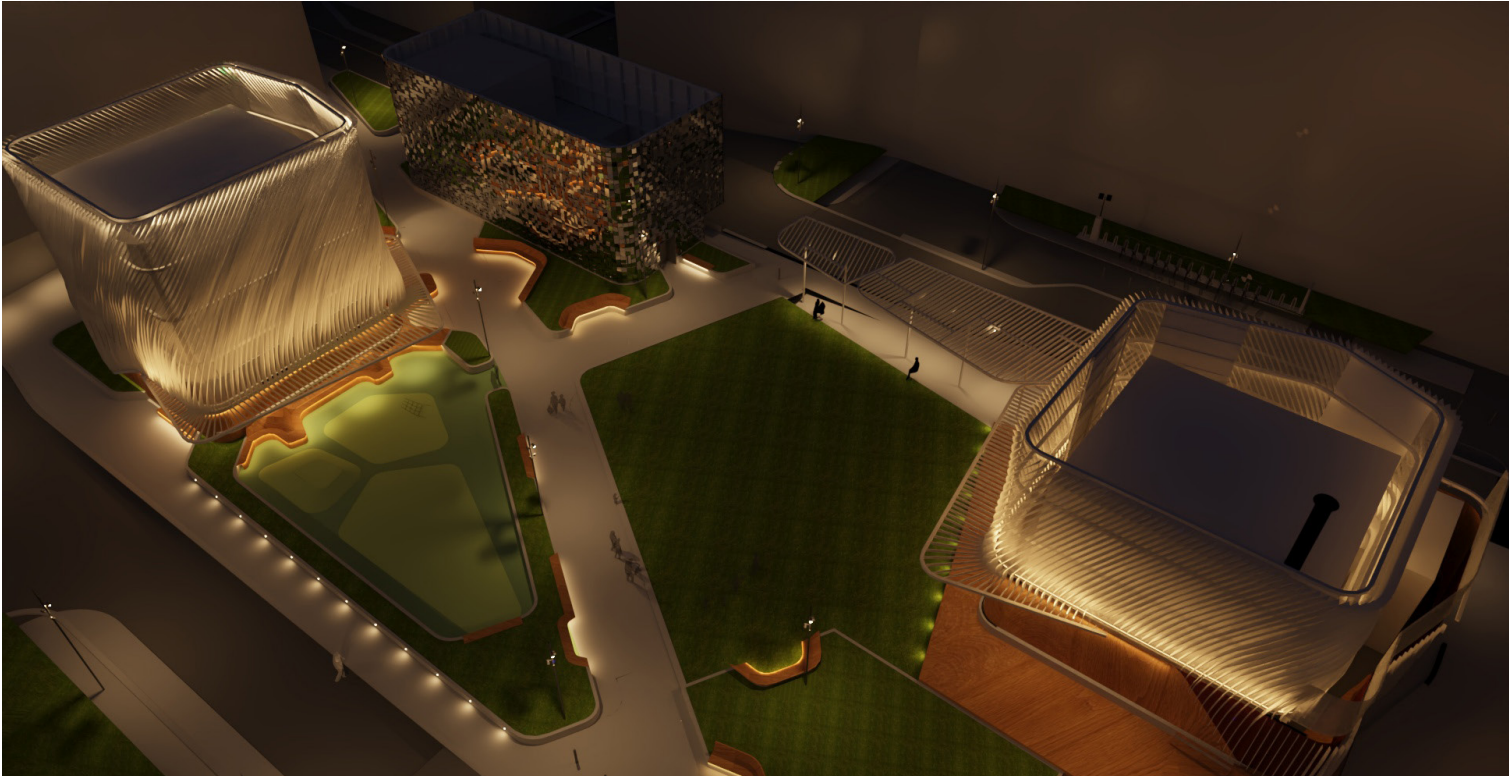
Small profile spotlights are integrated into the trellis to provide low-level downlighting at specific areas

Feature Lighting



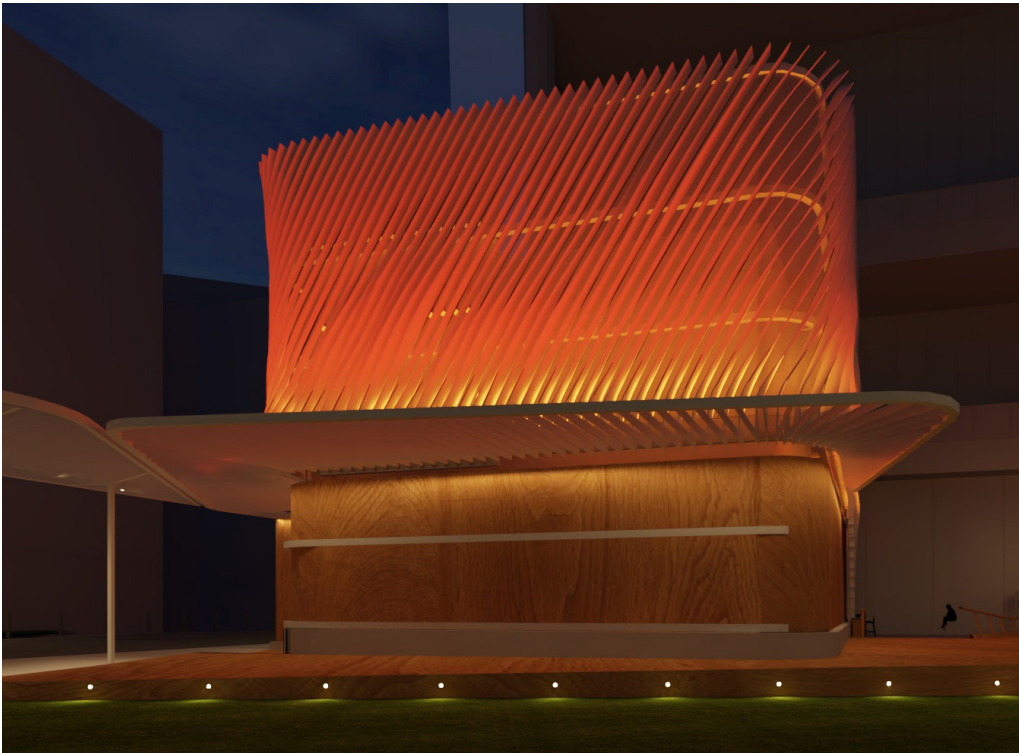
The Intake and Exhaust structures are linked by their sculptural outer skins, but differ in their functions which would otherwise be invisible to the public. Integrated, dynamic color-changing lighting will be used to periodically mimic the movement of air in through the Intake structure and out through the Exhaust structure as a means to create a visual connection to the sub station below for those in the plaza at night.

SITE LIGHTING
OVERALL LIGHTING STRATEGIES



SITE LIGHTING

DYNAMIC LIGHTING



Dynamic Lighting

The center plaza, once completed, is set to be a destination for various activities from holiday markets to small concerts. The Intake and Exhaust structures mark either end of the plaza and maintain a permanent visual connection from a materials standpoint but at night, also develop an ephemeral visual dialog regarding their airflow functions.

The fixtures used to make these structures glow are highly programmable and possess color changing capabilities. This lends itself to infinite opportunities to bring an element of play into the plaza.

For instance, the programming can be used to enhance special events, mark the changing seasons, or indicate the passage of time. The design will be such that dynamic movement will be slow, illumination will be reasonable, and turned off in time to comply with the Draft Cambridge Lighting Ordinance.

The lighting will be controlled by a comprehensive DMX system that will be located in a suitable area to facilitate convenient access.

Lighting Design Strategies

There are two layers of light integrated into the louver structure. The first layer is sandwiched between the louvers and the back of the louvers and the inner paneling for a glare-free, back-lighting effect.

The second layer of light is wallwashers that are mounted on the trellis and uplighting the face of the louvers

