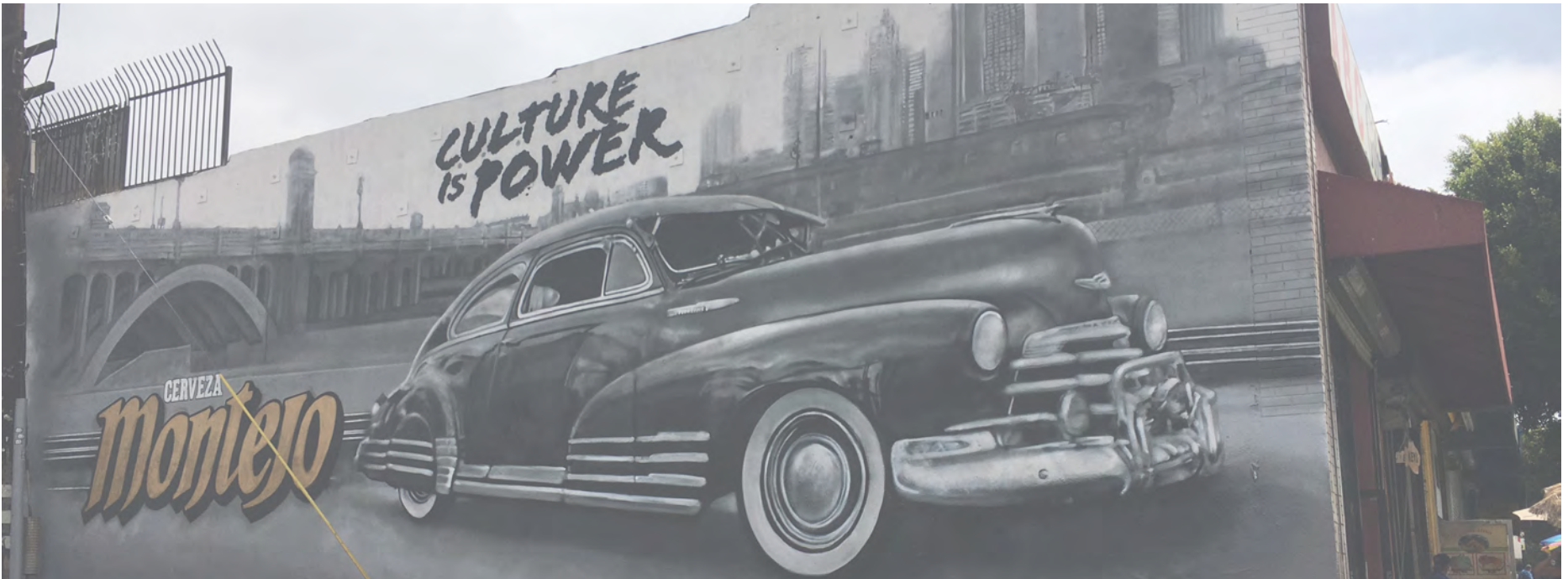


A Community Park In Boyle Heights:
Integrating **Equity** And **Diversity** By Paying **Homage To Its Past**

rivkah spolin | ucla capstone project | spring/summer 2021
instructors | meg rushing coffee | jim pickel | pamela brief



personal statement

As a member of the Modern-Orthodox Jewish community, community has always been an important cultural value and factor in my upbringing.

When conceiving of my Capstone project, I began to think about how my own Jewish community - located in the Pico-Robertson area - didn't always exist. In the city of Los Angeles, the Jewish community moved from neighborhood to neighborhood: Boyle Heights (where my grandfather grew up) to La Brea and Pico-Robertson. This, of course, excludes countless Jewish communities in the valley and greater Los Angeles area.

This awareness of my community's history led me to my Capstone project, which is sited in Boyle Heights and revolves around the ideas of community and culture.

That is what public parks should do at their best: revolve around the community and its cultures. It should bring people together and create spaces to bridge connections.

Looking back, this passion for creating connections between people is what drew me to landscape architecture; going back even further, it drew me to my previous career as a costume designer.

I feel that storytelling is an inherent part of bringing people together in both fields, for when people feel heard, they feel they can listen too.

With current movements surrounding race such as "Black Lives Matter" and "Stop Asian Hate," the recent rise of white supremacy, and the underlying COVID-19 pandemic being reflective of racial and economic divisions in society, it became clear to me that now more than ever did we need a space to bring people together.

Bringing people together is the design intent of this Capstone project, by embracing both what makes us different and what we share in common.

This project is in honor of the many communities I am humbled to be a part of.





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project statement & justification



“A majority of the city’s parks are in movie-star habitat, the verdant Santa Monica Mountains. The city’s west side, which includes Bel Air and Beverly Hills, has 13,310 acres of public open space, compared with 75 acres for the southeastern section.”

- Patricia Leigh Brown, “A Park Offers Nature, Not Just Hoops,”
The New York Times, 2000

“Freeway construction and urban renewal, which were favored city-design strategies, destroyed neighborhoods and uprooted primarily black and poor people.”

- Randolph T. Hester, Design for Ecological Democracy, p. 78,
2006, referencing Herbert J. Gans, Urban Villagers: Group and
Class in the Life of Italian-Americans, 1982

“COVID is a funhouse mirror that is amplifying issues that have existed forever. People are not dying of COVID. They are dying of racism, of economic inequality and it is not going to stop with COVID.”

- Shreya Kangovi, M.D., M.S.H.P., associate professor of
medicine at the Perelman School of Medicine at the University
of Pennsylvania, April 10, 2020 virtual seminar

project statement

By recognizing the historic Boyle Heights communities, issues of equity & diversity are addressed in a culturally-rich community park design that connects past to present.

project justification

Why: Boyle Heights, like much of East LA, is park poor. The community also suffers from poorly maintained open spaces and high pollution rates due to its proximity to the East LA Interchange. Due to its minority and low-income demographic, Boyle Heights has historically been riddled with systemic racism and discrimination in many forms, not least of which is access to public open space.

What: Although Boyle Heights is currently 93% Hispanic, that was not always the case. It has an “impressive history of diversity” (1) as one of the only communities that did not have restricted housing covenants that discriminated against people of color. There is an opportunity - and a need - to create a culturally and historically reflective and resilient open space within the community.

Where: Along “Angel’s Walk Boyle Heights” - a self-guided trail that marks the neighborhood’s cultural and historic monuments - are a series of vacant or underutilized lots, adjacent to the historic Breed Street Shul and the National Hispanic Vietnam Veterans Memorial. A park in this location would tap into the community’s existing diverse narrative and signify the merging of Boyle Heights’s past and present.

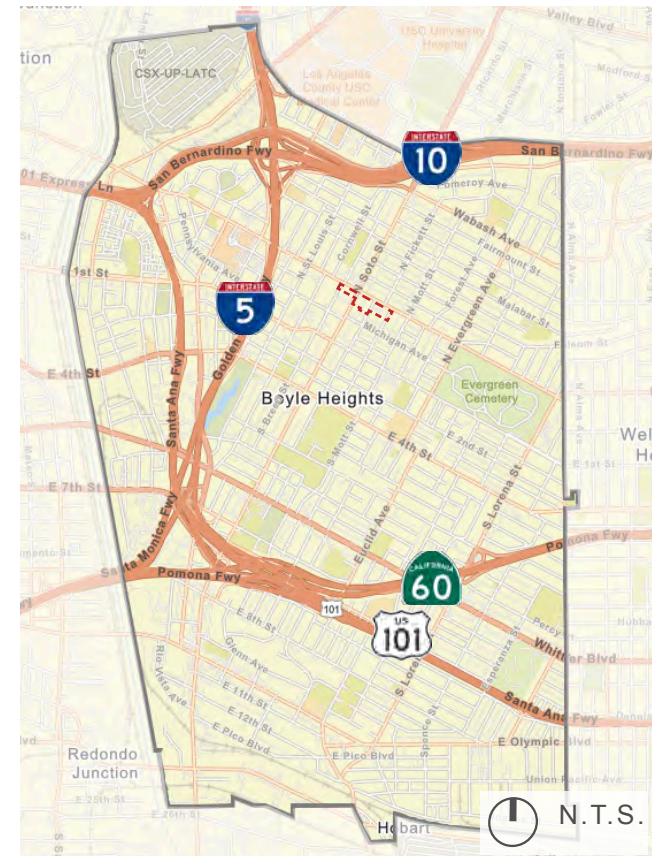
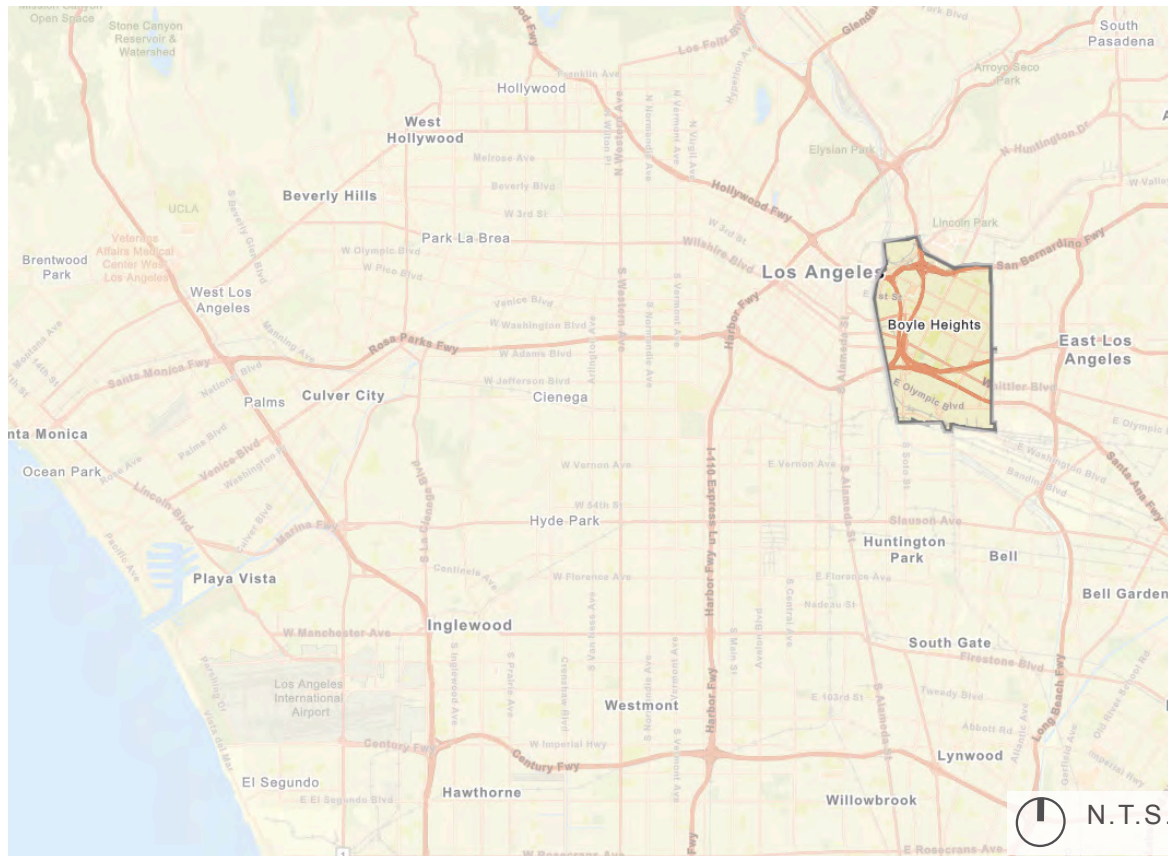
How: Therefore, a Boyle Heights community park is proposed that:

- addresses “fairness in city design” - [namely]
 - accessibility,
 - inclusion, and
 - equal distribution of resources and amenities,” (2)
- celebrates and connects the multicultural communities of Boyle Heights’s past and present, and
- acknowledges the neighborhood’s rich, yet broken history.



context

site location



The proposed site is composed of 3 city blocks in Boyle Heights, in East LA. These lots have the potential to address the needs of this underserved community in desperate need of public open space.

The site location was specifically chosen due to its close proximity to some of the neighborhood's historic and cultural sites, such as the Breed Street Shul and the National Hispanic Vietnam Veteran's Memorial, and also because a large portion of these sites are currently vacant and government-owned. They are also along Cesar Chavez Avenue (formerly Brooklyn Avenue), which is deemed a historic monument in this area.

By recognizing the historic Boyle Heights communities, issues of equity and diversity will be addressed in a culturally-rich community park design that connects past to present.



- ① **location:** 2300 - 2330 East Cesar E Chavez Ave.
owner: Commercial landlords leasing to retail stores
zoning: Regional center commercial
- ② **location:** 1. 228 - 230 N Soto St.
2. 234 - 236 N Soto St.
3. 242 N Soto St.
4. 323 N Matthews St.
5. 2432 East Cesar E Chavez Ave.
6. 2420 East Cesar E Chavez Ave.
7. 2400 - 2416 East Cesar E Chavez Ave.
owner: 1. Currently for sale, owned by Saini Kulwinder, Saini Hazur
2 - 6. LACMTA, vacant

- zoning:** 7. King taco restaurant
1 - 3. Low Medium II Residential (R4)
4 - 6. Community commercial
7. Regional center commercial
- ③ **location:** 1. 334 - 344 N Matthews St.
2. 2500 - 2536 East Cesar E Chavez Ave.
3. 335 - 349 N Fickett St.
owner: 1. Commercial landlords leasing to retail stores
2 - 3. LACMTA (LA County, MTA), vacant
zoning: 1. Medium Residential (R3)
2. Community commercial
3. Low Medium II Residential (R4)

site photos & sketches

When visiting the proposed site, one of my first impressions of the community was that of a hostile interaction with a community member. I had taken a photo of the house adjacent to the Breed Street Shul because it had an interesting cultural symbol at its pediment. The owner of the house promptly came outside and hounded me in Spanish as to why I was taking a photo of her house. It then became even more clear that the community members of Boyle Heights are wary of outsiders, and rightly so. History has proven time and again that they are not on their side.

The proposed site is on the Angel's Walk Boyle Heights, a cultural and historic walk through the neighborhood, with important sites such as Mariachi Plaza along the way. Cultural murals are visible throughout the neighborhood, and other artistic representations of the community's history are even found on planters on Cesar Chavez Blvd., where a mosaic shows a picture of an origami figure and another picture of the Breed Street Shul.

The National Hispanic Veteran's Memorial Building seems to also serve as a veteran's services building, although the entrance was uninviting (perhaps due to COVID-19). The Breed Street Shul is also unwelcoming, being closed for renovations. It is my hope, however, that a series of public open spaces throughout the proposed site will reinvigorate life into these important community and cultural sites.

Street vendors sell goods along the sidewalk against the fences of the vacant lots, and this clearly represents a desire for the community to have an informal market of some kind, which informed my program element choices for the proposed project space. Nearby, gentrification is visible; a few trendy cafes seem to be poking through the cracks of the community, just across from the vacant lots of the proposed site.



Breed Street Shul/Synagogue and adjacent home



An early learning center is located on Breed Street near the synagogue



A tree planter on Cesar Chavez Blvd shows a "cultural mosaic"



National Hispanic Vietnam Veteran's Memorial and veteran's services



The proposed site is on "Angel's Walk Boyle Heights"



Neighborhood murals are everywhere



A view of the vacant lots (a large portion of the proposed site)



Street vendors selling goods along the edges of the vacant lots

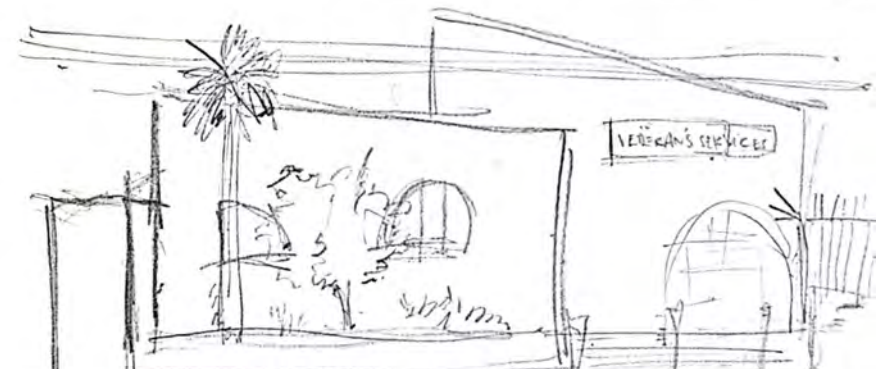


A mural capturing the project essence in a nutshell: "Culture is Power"

Bred A. Shul & Veterans Building



observation: took photo of house next to the shul, and was asked why taking photo in Spanish & that I need permission. Community very wary of outsiders due to history?

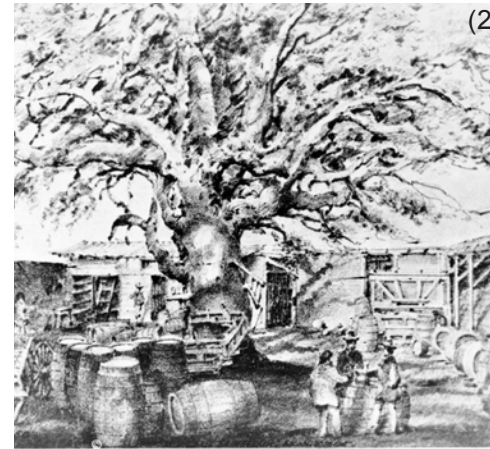


boyle heights: history

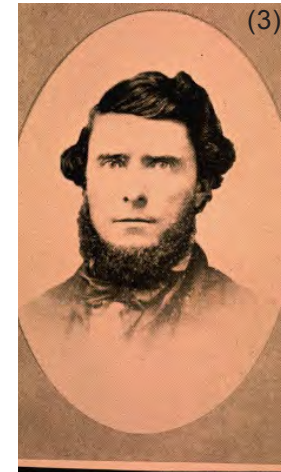
“Boyle Heights initially developed as one of Los Angeles’ first residential suburbs. The arrival of the railroads in the 1880s brought industrial development to the area just west of the Los Angeles River in downtown. Immigrants and residents employed in this industrial sector settled on the “mesa” on the east-side of the Los Angeles River in what today is the inner-city community of Boyle Heights. The community served as the initial point of settlement for many European immigrants.

Los Angeles’ expansion westward in the 1930s and 1940s was accompanied by demographic shifts in the composition of Boyle Heights. With the industrial development of Los Angeles, Mexican labor was recruited and eventually succeeded the European immigrants of Boyle Heights. By the 1920’s, the land in Boyle Heights had been almost totally subdivided and some of Los Angeles’ first public institutions and public buildings were built at this time, along with many private schools, sanitariums, religious facilities and other institutions. Consequently, much of the community’s infrastructure and housing stock is very old. During this same period, the physical environment of Boyle Heights evolved as the industries located on the west side of the Los Angeles River expanded into the northern, western and southern edges of the Boyle Heights Community.

During the 1950s, four public housing projects were constructed in Boyle Heights, two of which were subsequently enlarged. Subsequently, (and probably the most significant factor to alter the environment) the construction of four major freeways took place. Two freeways were built in the 1940’s and two more in the early 1960’s. As a result, Boyle Heights was segmented into four smaller areas and one large area. This segmentation has resulted in inadequate services to some of the neighborhoods in Boyle Heights. The community of Boyle Heights is currently the target for several projects and studies that will ultimately have a significant impact on the land-use patterns and economic activity of the community.” (1)



Drawing of a large sycamore tree called El Aliso, that stood at the center of the Yaanga **Tongva** village



Andrew Boyle

1847

Tongva Pueblito site was razed to the ground under American occupation, and the villagers displaced

1813 - 1847

Tongva refugees from the village of Yaanga settle in the area after having been forcibly relocated several times

1858

Andrew Boyle purchased the 22 acres of land for \$4,000 and established his home on this land (henceforth known as Boyle Heights) (4)



A **Jewish** cafe named Fleishman's Cafe, Brooklyn Ave. at Soto, 1920s



Opening day of the Japanese Hospital in Boyle Heights, 1929



Roosevelt High School in the 1940s

1910s

Boyle Heights was one of the only communities that did not have restricted housing covenants that discriminated against **Japanese, Black, Jewish, Latino, Eastern European** (6) communities of color; becomes LA's largest residential communities of **Japanese** immigrants and Americans outside of Little Tokyo

1920s and 1930s

Boyle Heights churches, temples, hospitals, and schools built for the **Japanese American** community

1940s

Forced **Japanese American** internment and incarceration meant mass removal of the Japanese American community from Boyle Heights; for a figure, 1/3 of Roosevelt High School's population suddenly disappeared (9)

boyle heights: history



Edward Roybal being sworn in as an LA City Council member, 1949



Brooklyn Theatre in Boyle Heights



Construction of the East LA Freeway Interchange

1949

Voters of various ethnic stripes rallied in 1949 to elect a **Mexican American** (Edward R. Roybal.) to integrate the all-white Los Angeles City Council (2)

1950s - 1960s

Post-war “white flight” came out of “redlining,” the banking practice of not granting home loans in certain ZIP Codes, thus encouraging the **Jewish** population of Boyle Heights to move to “less dangerous” communities (4)

Political activism as part of the **Chicano** Civil Rights Movement that include: Walkouts of 1968, the Brown Berets, United Farm Workers Union, and the Immigrant Rights Movement (5)

1961

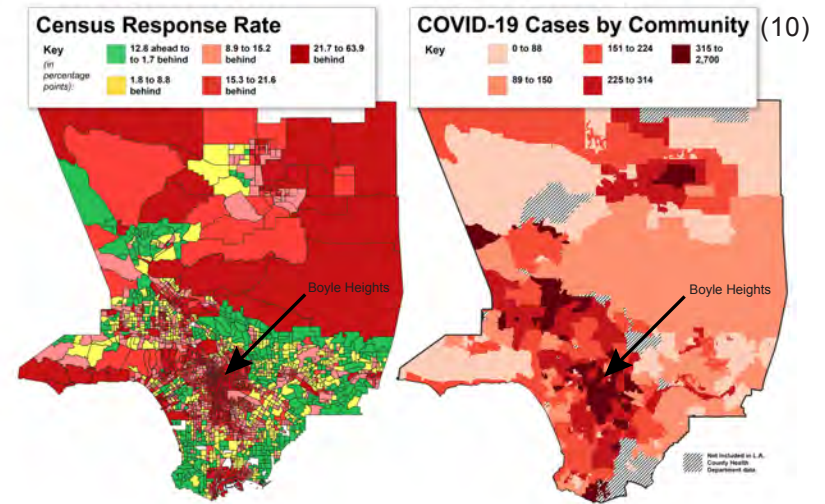
East LA Freeway Interchange built, destroying many houses in Boyle Heights and displacing many in the community (7)



Mariachi Plaza in Boyle Heights, built in 1998

today

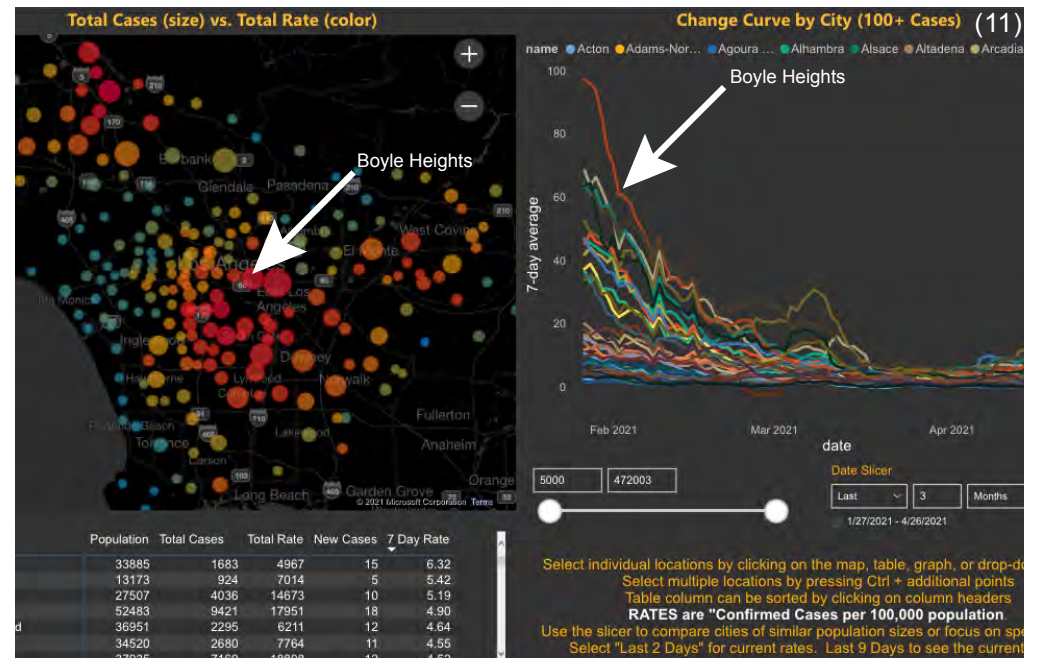
Systemic racism and economic/social class discrimination still exists, here in the form of COVID-19 cases per community, as recorded in Los Angeles County



Census Response Rate vs. Covid-19 Cases by Community

2011

Census reveals 95% of the community is **Latino** (9)



Total Cases vs. Total Rate & Change Curve

the site: particular history



Brooklyn Theater, the corner of Cesar Chavez (formerly Brooklyn Ave.) & Fickett St. (site lot 3) in 1926 after a mysterious bombing



Hadda Brooks, here aged 15 in 1931, lived in Boyle Heights and was a prominent **black** pianist, who frequented Canter's Deli (across from Site 1) with her **Jewish** and **Hispanic** friends

notes

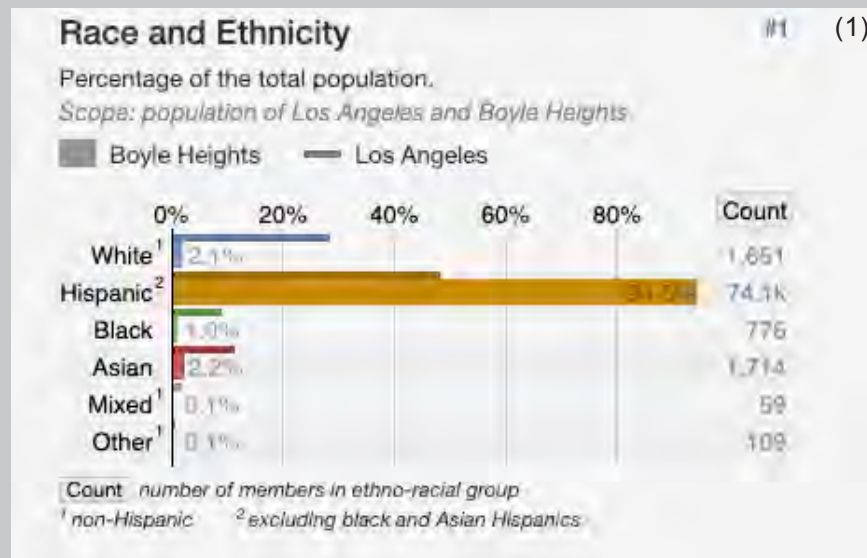
Much of the site's history is erased; the Brooklyn Theater no longer stands. Historic satellite images from Google Earth show that the property was demolished somewhere between 1994 and 2003. Other historic buildings were also destroyed, as the majority of properties on Sites 2 and 3, now owned by LACMTA, were razed to the ground and paved over with concrete.

demographics

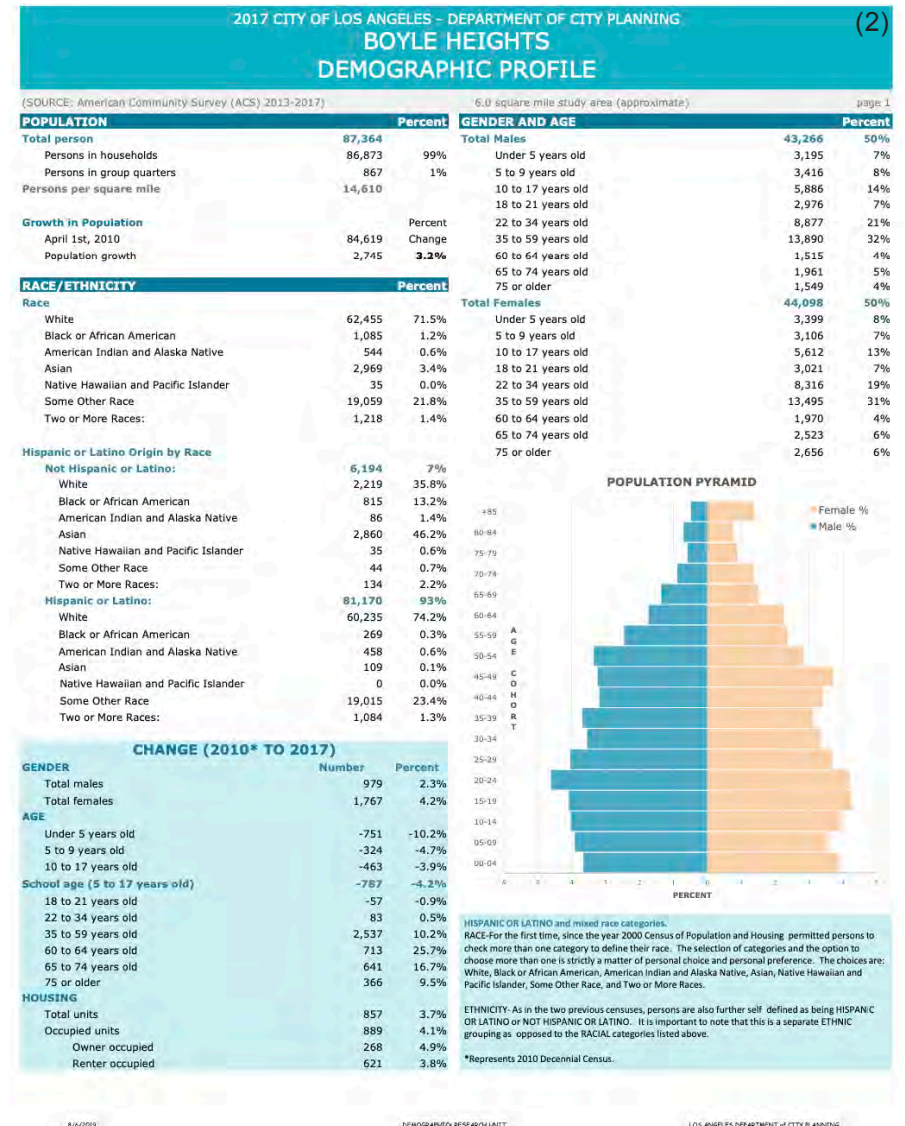
findings

- The community of Boyle Heights is currently 93% Hispanic or Latino
- About 1/2 of the community is under the age of 30
- Only 10% of the population is age 65+
- The majority of the community is Spanish-speaking, at 86%
- 55% of Boyle Heights is U.S. born, another 31% is foreign born, non-citizen
- 31% of the population is below poverty level
- Nearly 1/2 of the buildings in Boyle Heights are historic, built in 1939 or earlier

compared to LA



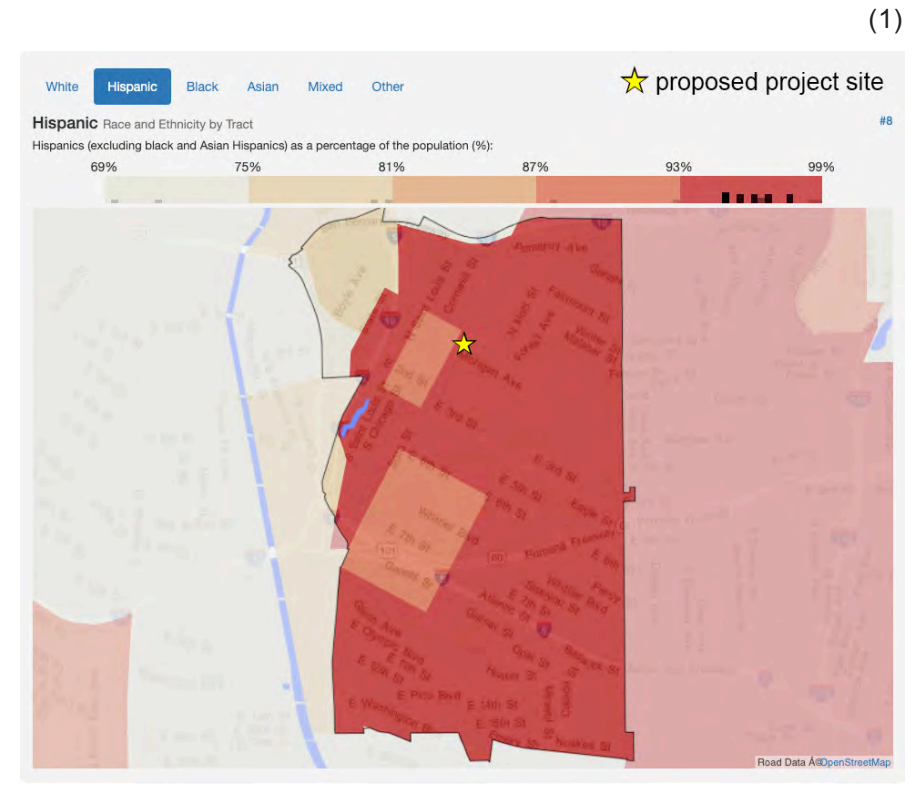
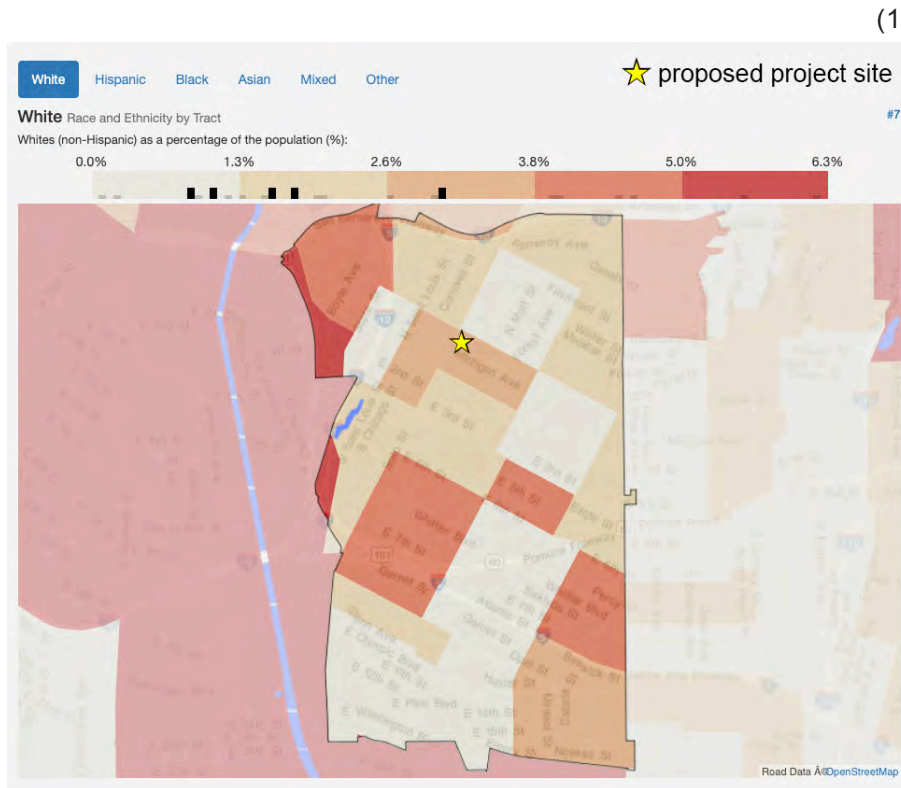
2017 city of los angeles survey



concentration areas near the site

white

hispanic



N.T.S.

N.T.S.

the site

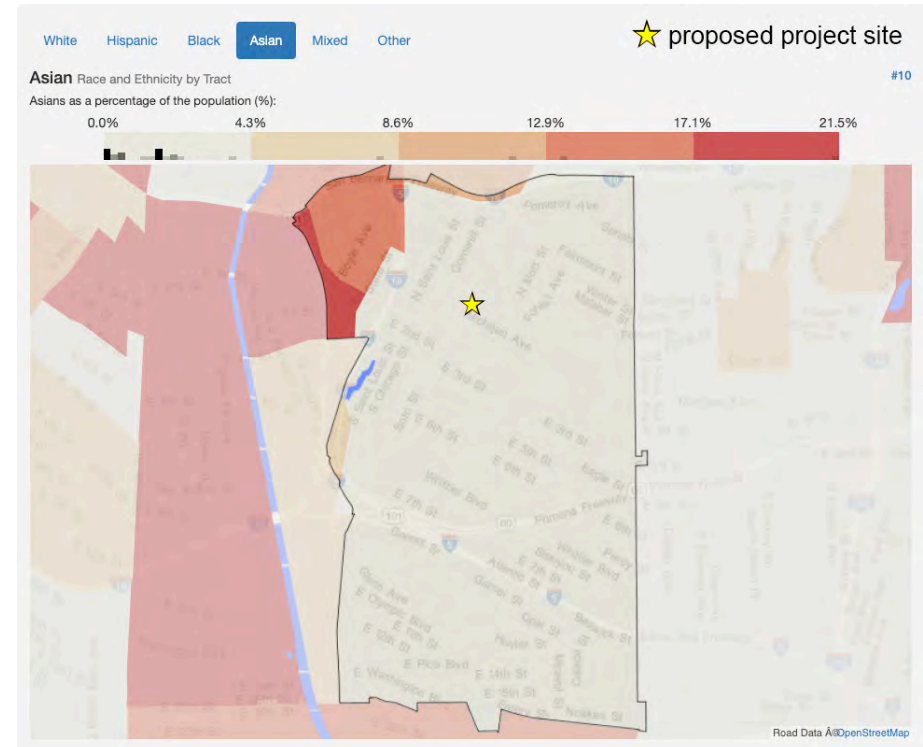
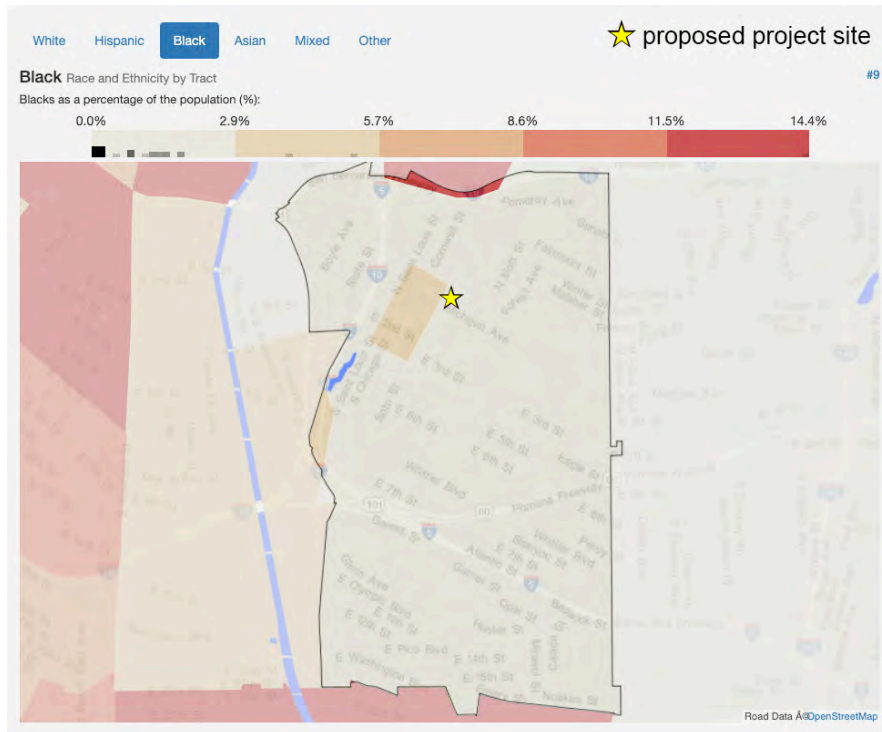
The site is within close proximity of the highest concentration zones of the top four ethnicities: White, Hispanic, Black, and Asian Americans.

black

asian

(1)

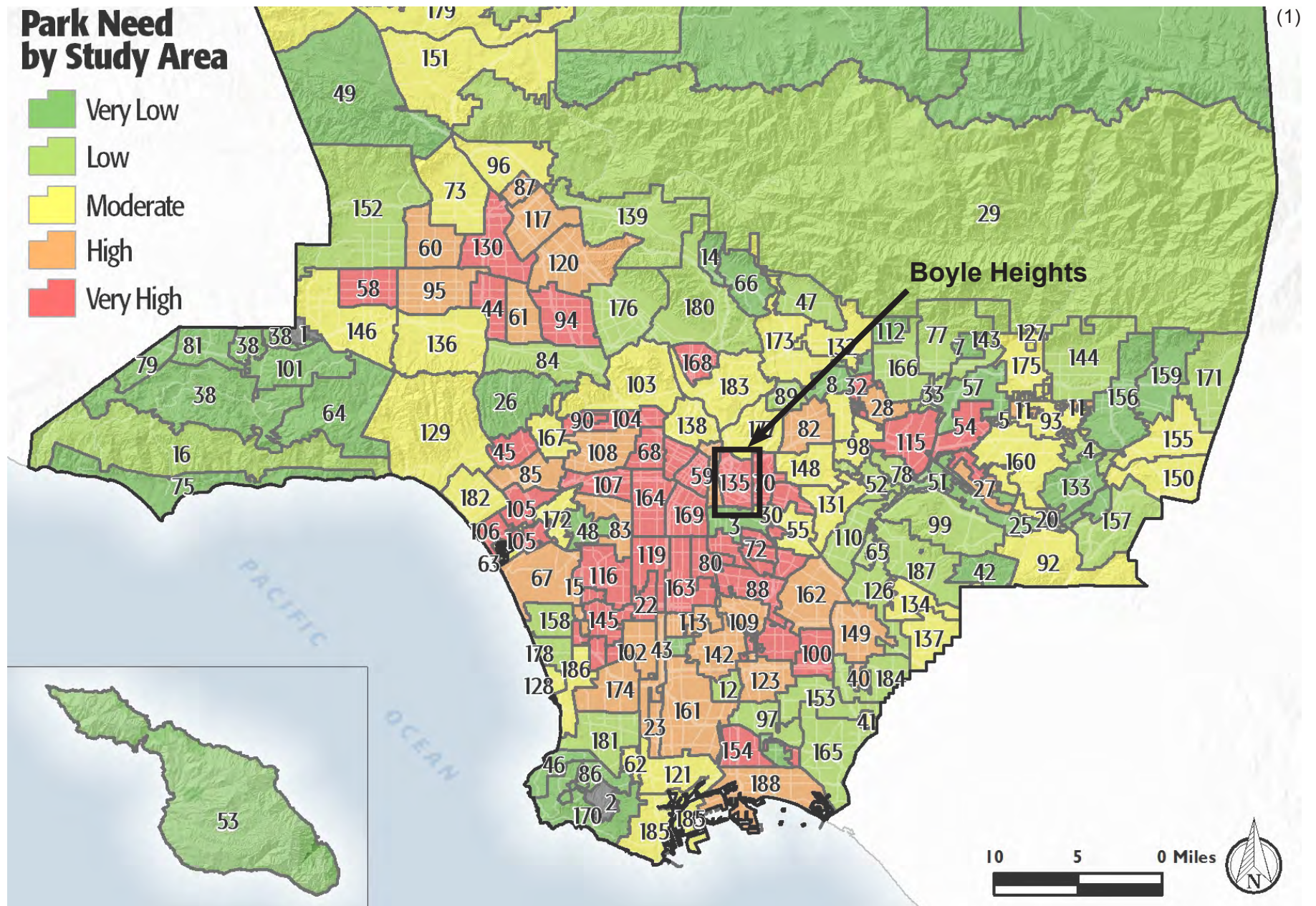
(1)



① N.T.S.

① N.T.S.

park need



The neighborhood of Boyle Heights has very high park need. Boyle Heights also has the highest pollution burden score according to CalEnviroScreen.

The proposed project site is located where park need is highest within Boyle Heights. Currently, there is only 0.6 park acres per 1,000 people. Additionally, a large portion of the amenity spaces within Boyle Heights' existing parks are either in fair or poor condition. Hollenbeck Park, the community's largest public park, is in overwhelmingly poor condition (2).

PARK LAND: Is there enough park land for the population? (3)

53.8 PARK ACRES
within study area

85,937
POPULATION

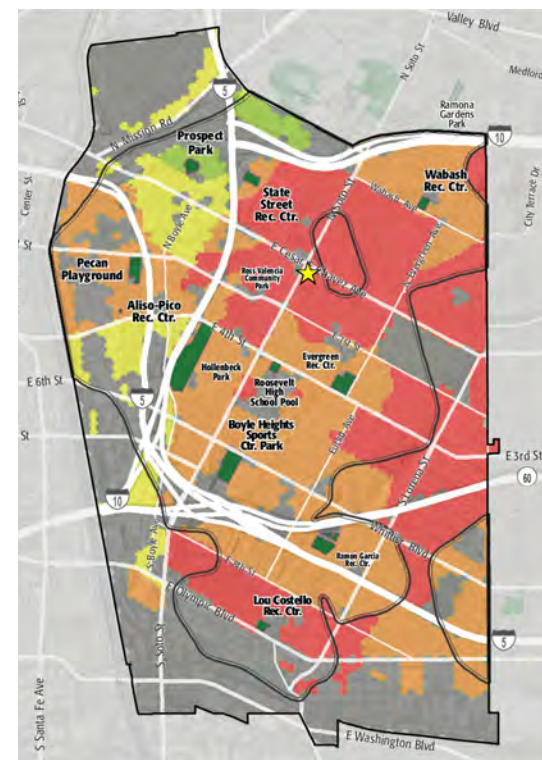
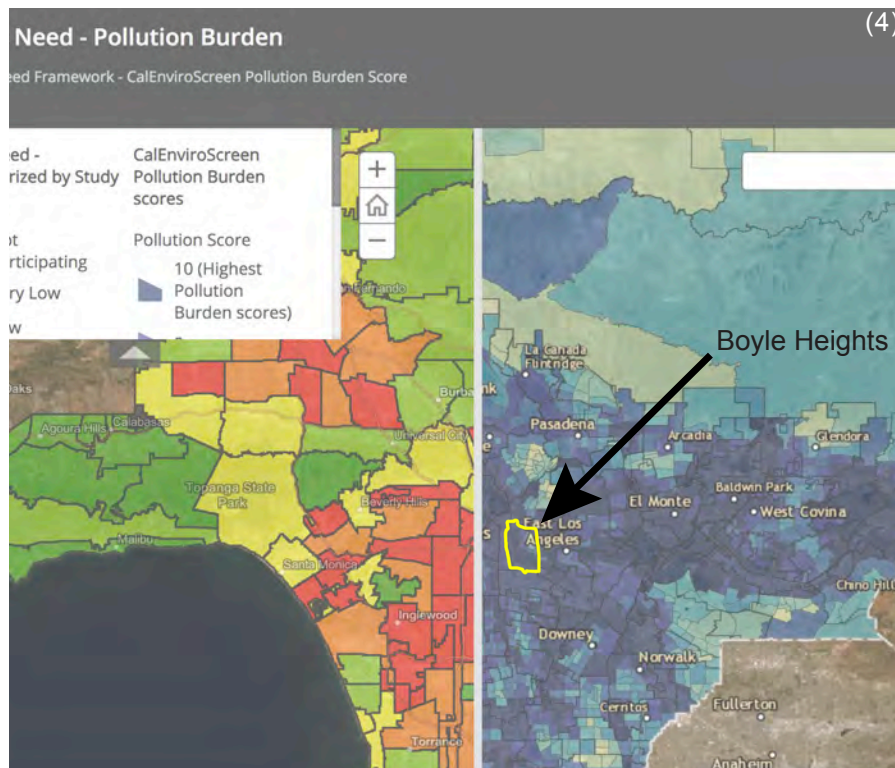
0.6 PARK ACRES
PER 1,000

The county average is 3.3 park acres per 1,000

PARK ACCESSIBILITY: Is park land located where everyone can access it?

75% of population living
WITHIN 1/2 MILE
of a park

The county average is 49% of the population living
within 1/2 mile of a park



PARK NEED CATEGORY (5)

- Very High
- High
- Moderate
- Low
- Very Low
- No Population
- Area within 1/2 mile walk of a park

★ proposed project site
HOW MANY PEOPLE NEED
PARKS?



redevelopment in the works

The following mixed-use developments are located on the vacant land in sites 2 and 3 and are owned by LACMTA (LA County Metropolitan Transportation Authority). Not yet constructed, these developments focus on the retail and housing goals highlighted within LA Dept. of City Planning's 2017 Draft Boyle Heights Community Plan.

The Capstone project serves as an alternate idea for what to do with these vacant or underutilized lots. The community goals and LACMTA's development plans were taken into consideration for this Capstone project, and therefore, a mixed-use building is incorporated, although much smaller in scale. More emphasis is placed on the park needs of the community as well as historic/cultural factors, which was determined through the site analysis.

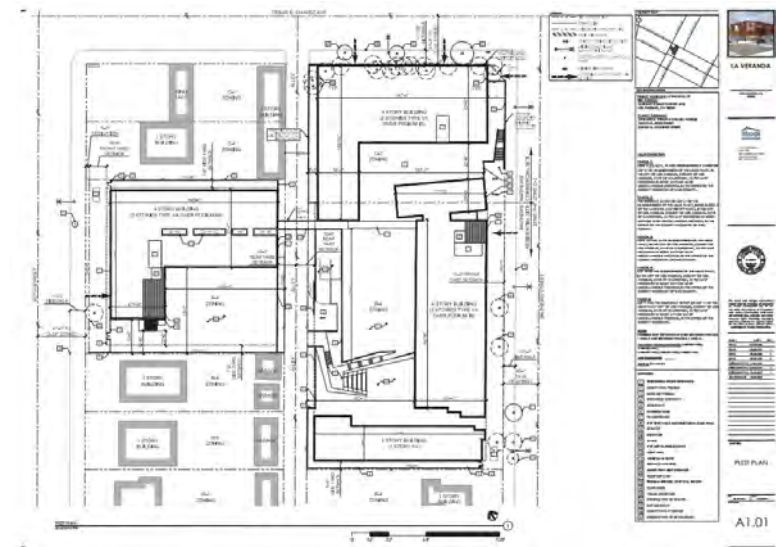
chavez/soto (site lot 2)

- Acres: 1.96
- Location: Cesar E. Chavez Ave/Soto St, Boyle Heights
- Proposed Project (La Veranda):
 - 77 apartments, 76 of which will target families earning between 30 - 50% of the Area Median Income, and one of which will be a market-rate manager's unit
 - 8,000 square feet of ground floor retail
- Metro and Abode Communities, the developer, are now parties to a Joint Development Agreement (JDA), which was approved by the Metro Board in late November 2017
- Under the JDA, the parties have continued to refine the project's design, seeking stakeholder input along the way, and Abode has worked to secure project financing. Once the design has been finalized and project financing is in place, Metro and Abode will enter into the construction and operation of the project. Metro anticipates that the ground lease will be executed in late 2019 or early 2020.

(1)



(1)



(1)

chavez/fickett (site lot 3)

- Acres: 1.56
- Location: Cesar E. Chavez Ave/Fickett St, Boyle Heights
- Proposed Project (Chavez Gardens):
 - 60 apartments: 30 units of permanent supportive housing, 29 units for individuals and families earning 20-50% of the Area Median Income and 1 unit for manager
 - 25,000 square foot grocery store
 - 6,500 square foot open space, such as a community park
- On June 25, 2020, the Metro Board authorized extending the term of an Exclusive Negotiation Agreement (ENA) with developer Abode Communities for one year plus an option to extend for an additional year. The ENA was entered into in 2018 for the joint development of the Chavez/Fickett site.
- Abode Communities was selected to develop the site from a group of proposers responding to a March 2017 Request for Proposals (RFP) for joint development of the site.
- The ENA has allowed Metro and Abode to further refine the proposed project and advance the development process. Since execution of the ENA, the developer has been discussing the grocery store space with interested operators and has been reviewing available affordable housing funding sources. Community outreach regarding the project's scope and design will commence in the Summer of 2020.

(1)



(1)

Conceptual Site Plan and Renderings



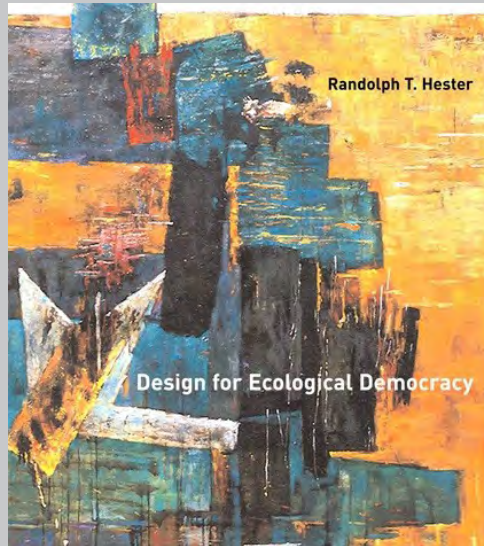
(1)



design methodology & goals

design methodology

sacredness



(1)

- How to make “sacred” places:
 - community engagement reveals sacred spaces that aren’t necessarily listed in historic architectural registry
 - find the **recurring center (focal point)**, frequently as a source of shared experience, personal orientation, and identity
 - find “particularness,” or the formal expression of the unique characteristics of a community
- How to make “democratic” spaces:
 - **Accessibility**
 - Inclusion
 - Equal distribution of resources and amenities

placemaking



(2)

- Involve the community in the “making” of a place, thus empowering them (community engagement) “while the place is important, the “making builds **connections**, creates civic engagement, and empowers citizens - in short, it builds social capital” (p. 9)
- **Flexibility** and impermanence to spaces
- Tactical urbanism (low-cost, unsanctioned, and temporary additions to the built environment; ex: yarn bombing, parking day)

cultural diversity



(3)

- **Representation in historical national parks** and monuments is key to usership
- Income and visitation patterns must be taken into consideration when **providing access** for all groups.
- The social interaction of diverse groups can be maintained and enhanced by providing **safe**, spatially adequate **territories** for everyone within the larger space of the overall site. (reflect difference in use and values)
- **Reflect difference** in use of public sites and **reflect values** among social class and ethnic groups
- **Communicating cultural meaning symbolically** is an important dimension of place attachment

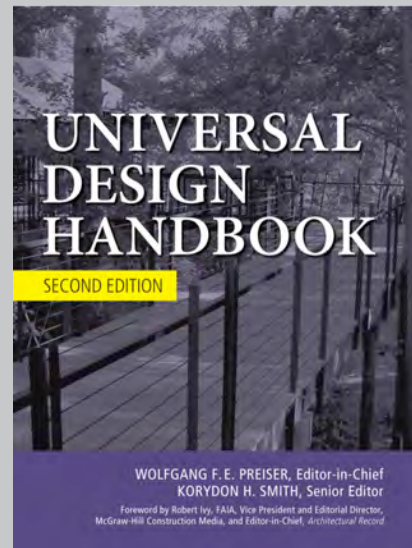
multicultural use



(4)

- Salad bowl vs. melting pot approach to design
- Not just places to co-exist, but to gather and share the experience of their presence in the place
- Good urban design is also sustainable, which itself comprises the concepts of equability and inclusiveness
- Take into account different patterns of use and landscape appreciations amongst the ethnic groups
- **Visual cues and symbols** as cultural objects
- **Provide facilities and environments (access)** that can accommodate as many cultures and communities as possible
- Community gardens and markets are often multicultural

universality



(5)

- Principle 1: Equitable Use
- Principle 2: **Flexibility in Use**
- Principle 3: Simple and Intuitive Use
- Principle 6: Low Physical Effort (**safe**)
- Principle 7: Size and Space for Approach and Use
- Create clear environmental way finding features
- Creating equitable and inclusive play areas:
 - free play and developmental opportunities
 - social interaction across all ability levels
 - **variety of uses (flexibility)** for each item in the design (ex: bench)
 - a portion of these should be universally accessible

intersectionality



(6)

- Plan for movement of gay space (think of larger urban plan)
- Commemorate gay spaces
- Need queer **focal points**
- Plan for LGBTQ communities even when economics are not at stake
- Plan for intersectionality of identities (living within multiple categories of identities)
- Provide municipal recognition and possible financial support for LGBTQ community centers, which **connect** diverse groups of people to each other
- Public spaces with outdoor seating, gathering spaces, easy transit **accessibility**, and smaller alleyways for more intimate encounters

supportive literature goals: research

focal points



(1)

subcultures



(2)

safety



(3)

“Boyle Heights community plan” summer 2020 draft

- Community centers are mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly
 - Local businesses and neighborhood serving uses on the ground floor; housing and offices on the upper floors

- Parking supports walkable streets and of public transit

- Historic character should be preserved

- Art enriches and reflects the cultural, historic, and social context of the community

- Commercial places have a strong cultural identity

- Residents access, grow, and eat healthy food provided locally

- LID development (low-impact development)

- Parks and green spaces for scenic natural settings for recreation, relaxation, and social gathering

- Plazas are used as places for socializing and gathering



(4)

N.T.S. (4)

project goals & objectives

1. address equity

- Economic and environmental sustainability
- Outdoor learning and engagement with nature
- Wildlife habitat
- Passive and active recreation space
- Educational programming
- Safety
- Mixed-use building with residential and retail space

2. reflect cultural richness

- Social interaction between ethnic groups
- Flexible spaces for gathering and events
- Tie into Angel's Walk Boyle Heights

3. link past & present

- Educate visitors about the history and diversity
- Connect to nearby important sites and alleyways
- Local art that is reflective of the history and cultures
- Tie into Angel's Walk Boyle Heights



program elements

1. address equity

mixed-use building (1 acre)

- multi-story
- retail & residential
- transportation hub: drop off zones, bike racks, sidewalk expansions

community center (0.5 acres)

- children's daycare
- vocational classes
- restrooms
- low-income resources (e.g. food bank)
- cafes

playground (0.5 acres)

- rock wall, "beach"
- restrooms
- interactive historic elements
- interactive splash pad fountain

picnic area (0.5 acres)

- barbecues, picnic benches, restrooms

recreation area (1.75 acres)

- active recreation:
 - tennis, exercise, dog park
- passive recreation
 - open lawn
 - flexible gathering space

outdoor classrooms (0.5 acres)

- learning in pods w/ wildlife habitat
- restrooms



2. reflect cultural richness

plazas (1.5 acres)

- large central plaza:
 - venue space
 - street vendors
 - farmer's market
 - food trucks
 - central sculpture/fountain

sculpture garden (0.75 acres)

- local art installations
- intimate spaces with seating

amphitheater (0.5 acres)

- venue for cultural events
- people watching



3. link past & present

museum (0.5 acres)

- venue space for events
- historical information on Boyle Heights

history walk (0.25 acres)

- storytelling corridor
- interactive (precedents: Ookwe Park, Vietnam Memorial DC, Rome cobblestones, Belmar Park)
- audio & visual components
- "green"
- intertwining pathways
- framed views of historical/cultural sites



site users



stakeholders

- City of Los Angeles
- City Council District 14
- LA Department of Recreation and Parks
- LA Police Department
- LA Fire Department
- LA Cultural Affairs Department
- LA City Planning
- Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council (BHNC)
- LA County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA)

conclusion: site efficacy

The 3 proposed site parcels are therefore the best location for a park that will:

- address "fairness in city design" (7)
- celebrate and connect the multicultural communities of Boyle Heights's past and present, and
- acknowledge the neighborhood's rich, yet broken history.

1. It is located within the highest concentration zone of park need, and most of site lots 2 & 3 are vacant.

2. The parcels are near the highest concentration zones of all four of the top historic ethnicities, making it ideal for reflecting the neighborhood's culturally-rich history.

3. The proposed site is near Angel's Walk Boyle Heights, a historic walk within Boyle Heights, and along historic Cesar Chavez Blvd.

- Current community members
 - Low-income, mostly under age 65
 - Spanish-speaking
 - Single and dual parent families
 - Schoolchildren and their teachers (often not from the community)
 - Residents without cars
 - Residents in the proposed mixed-use bldg

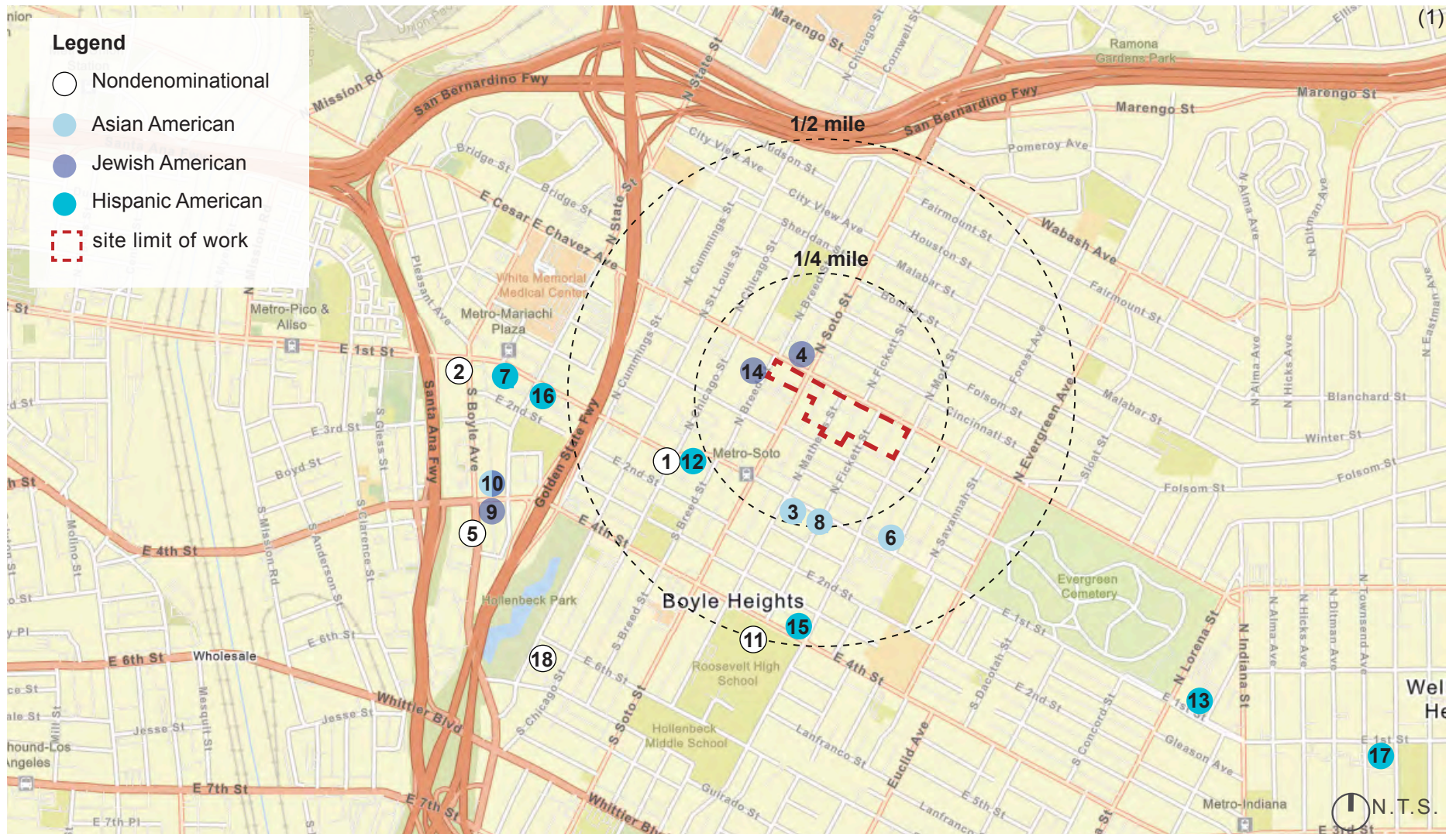
- Past community members
 - Multiracial, mixed age and income levels

- LGBTQ+
 - Mostly under age 30, low-income, activist
- Differently abled - Physical and mental
 - Mixed ages, low-income, multi-ethnic
- On-site staff members: mixed ethnicities, age, income level
- People from nearby communities
 - Low-income, single and dual parent families



site analysis

historic preservation monuments



re-telling & re-claiming cultural history

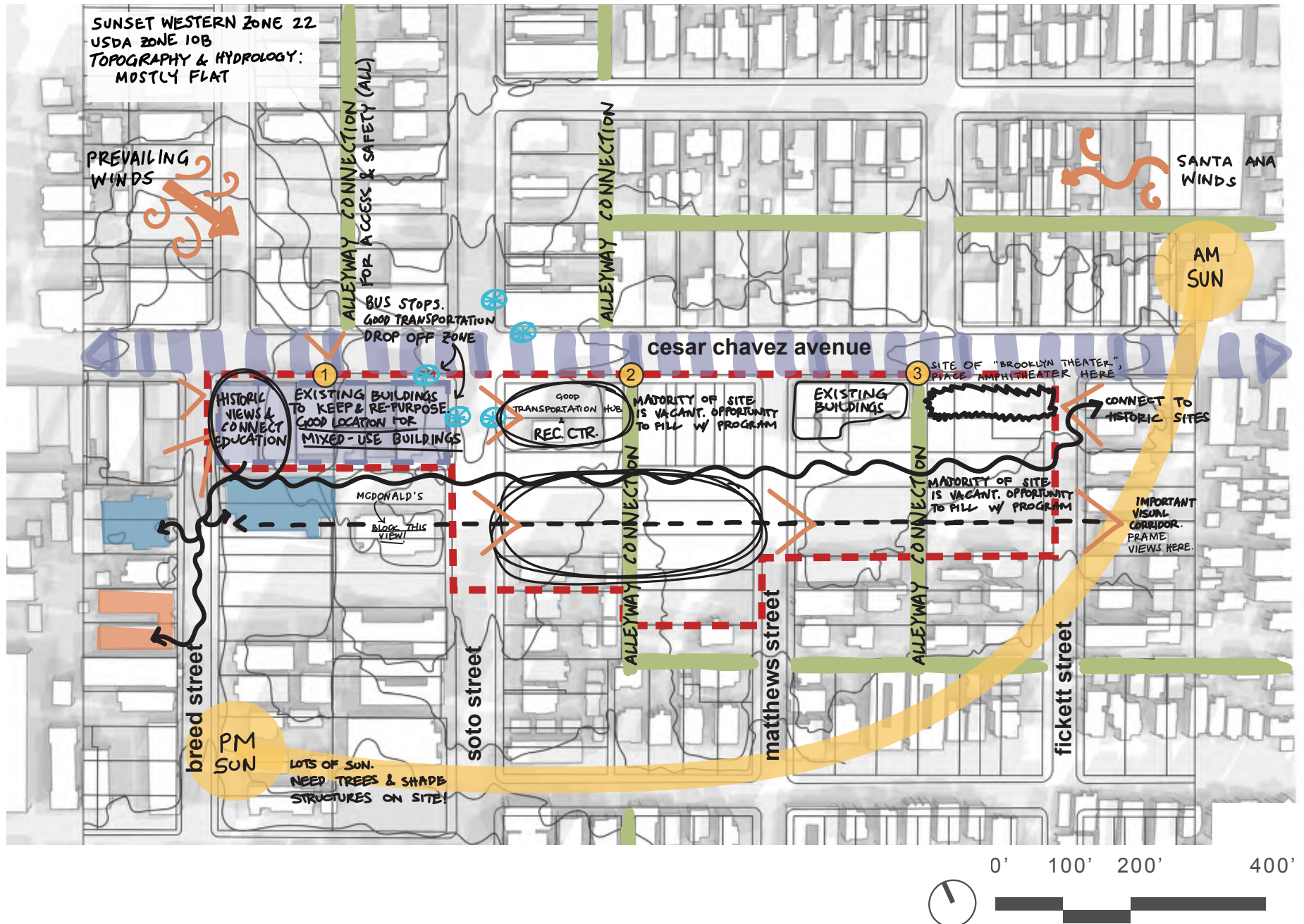
Jewish American “historic monuments” are closest to the site, but there are more Hispanic American historic sites in Boyle Heights than any other denomination. On the other hand, there are no historic places attributed to the African American community, according to the Los Angeles Conservancy. Therefore, it is crucial that the proposed design connect the cultures furthest away from the site to the site itself, but also reclaim and connect the history of the African American community to the site - and Boyle Heights.

The selected site is not listed as a National Historic Landmark according to the National Archives Catalog. However, it is located near a few historic places according to the Los Angeles Conservancy:

1. Boyle Heights City Hall
2. Boyle Hotel
3. Nishiyama Residence/Otomisan Japanese Restaurant
4. Former Canter's Delicatessen
5. International Institute of Los Angeles
6. Tenrikyo Church
7. La Casa del Mariachi
8. Japanese Hospital
9. Max Factor House
10. Keiro Retirement Home
11. Roosevelt High School
12. Redz (former) - one of the few Lesbian bars to cater to Latinas, 1950s
13. El Mercado
14. Breed Street Shul
15. Brown Beret Headquarters
16. La Casa del Musico
17. Pan American Bank
18. Hollenbeck Terrace



field notes summary



opportunities



(1) possible connections to historical/cultural sites



(2) possible connections to educational facilities

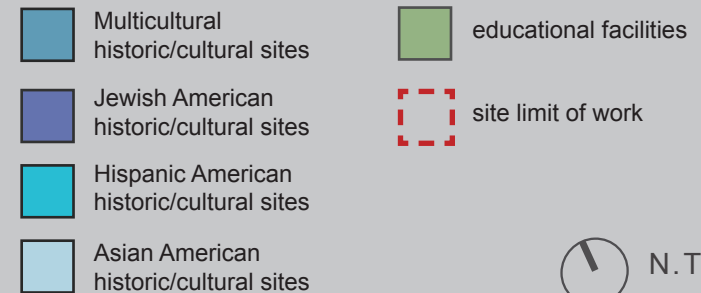


Site analysis revealed possible connections to nearby historical, cultural, and educational facilities within reach. As a result, the project goals and program elements reflect these adjacencies.

Other opportunities are views to nearby art murals, which have ties to the Chicano Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, when Chicano artists sought to utilize their work to communicate issues of racial discrimination and social justice.

Additionally, existing buildings on sites 1 and 3, alleyways connecting the separate lots together and to the neighborhood, transportation corridors, and vacant space all played roles on program elements and placement.

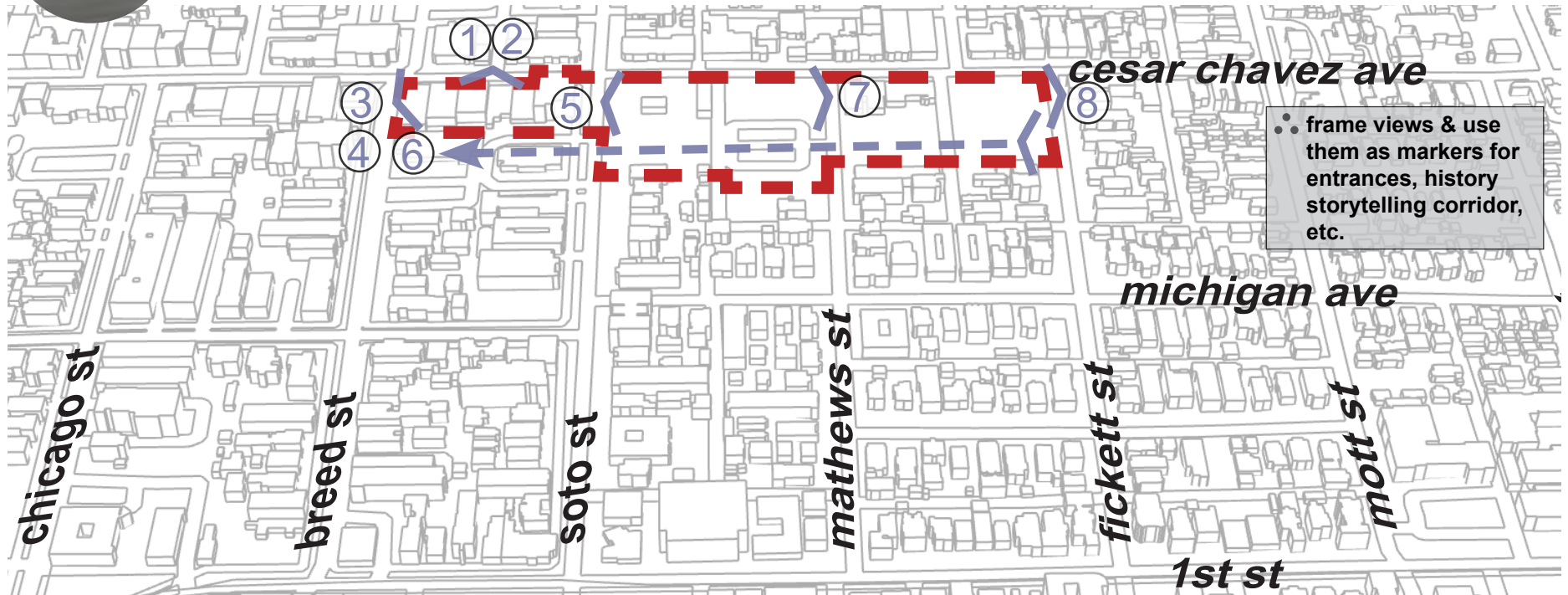
legend



opportunities

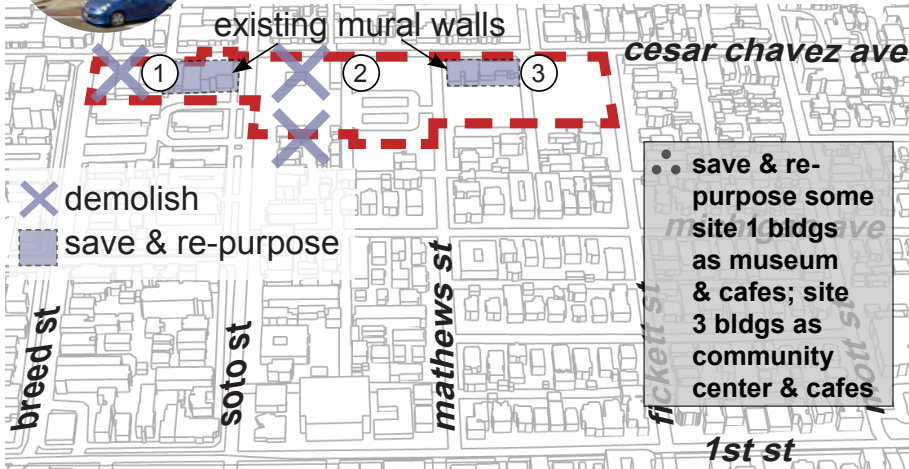


(1) views to art murals & historical/cultural sites





(1) save & re-purpose buildings with murals



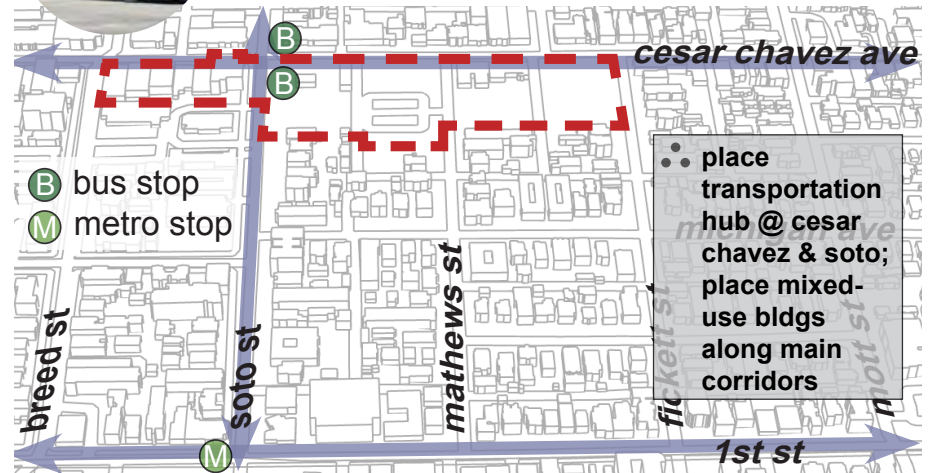
(2) possible alleyway connections



(3) vacant space on the site is a blank slate



(4) main transportation corridor access

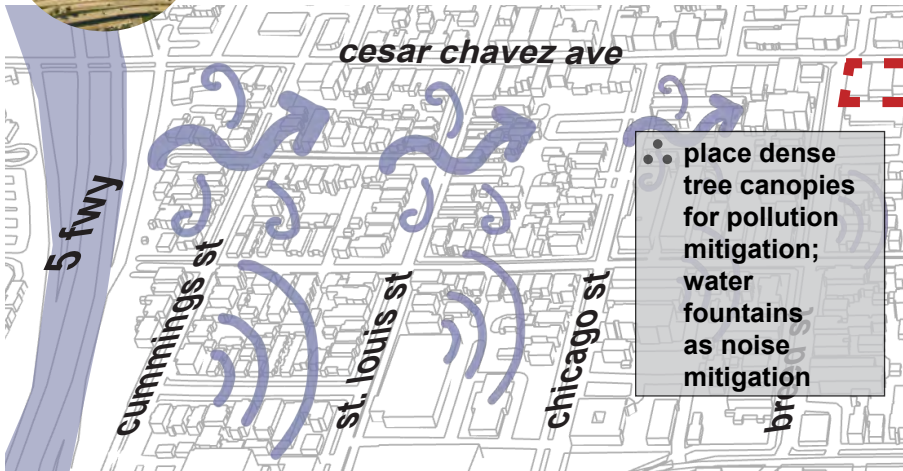


N.T.S.

constraints



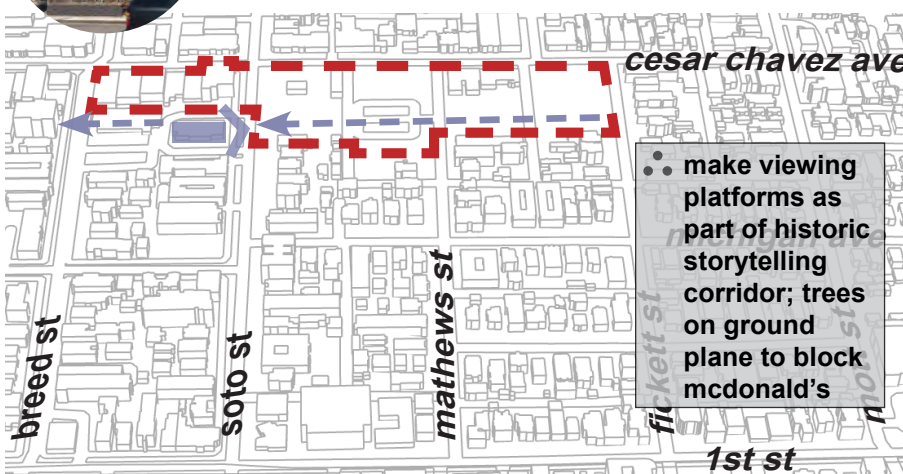
(1) air & noise pollution from nearby freeways



(2) vacant lots lack shade



(3) mcdonald's is blocking view to breed st. shul



(4) site divided by streets





(1) gentrification concerns from residential area



(2) “residential” zones within the site



solutions

- **Noise & air pollution:** sound of water as white noise; dense tree canopies for air pollution
- **Shade:** pergolas/arbors & trees
- **Blocked views:** vegetated buffer; mounding/raised viewing platform for less obstructed view
- **Street crossings:** wider sidewalks, signage, and clear pathways at distinct locations
- **Gentrification:** save & re-purpose some buildings on site 1 and 3; will also save character, history, and existing murals
- **“Residential” zones:** higher density mixed-use building placed in vacant “residential” zones



precedents

yanaguana garden, san antonio, tx

location: **San Antonio, TX**

designer: **MIG**

year: **2015**

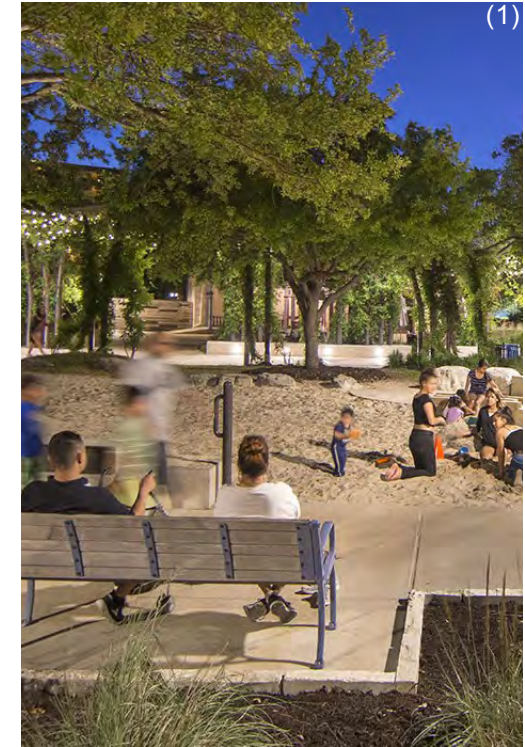
size: **4.1 acres**

precedent value:

- art tells site's history and culture
- encourages interaction between visitors
- flexible spaces for play & socialization amongst diverse groups
- local, interactive art that ties into design
- sustainable, and layout for both programmed and impromptu activities (e.g. River Promenade, central courtyard, lawn)

lessons learned:

- cultural expression and art should be pieces that integrate with the design and be highly visible and interacted with
- mature trees on site don't always cut it
- parent visibility into the play areas is crucial; in providing vantage points along the main promenade, parents can activate the space while watching kids



belmar park, santa monica, ca

location: Santa Monica, CA
designer: artist April Banks, historian Dr. Alison Rose Jefferson
year: 2021
size: 3.5 acres (much of that is sports fields)
precedent value:

- honors and commemorates Santa Monica's African American community, which was burned down and displaced due to gentrification (1900s-1950s)
- **History + Art project and the process started conversations** with people about history
- **public engagement inspired the artwork and content**

lessons learned:

- historic element should be experiential
- community engagement is key



se to Live In (RIGHT)
 and Vernon Brunson pose at their adjacent home around 1930. Homes in the area were long buildings called shotgun houses. ively built, they were easy to ... and even easier to burn.



g Down Homes
 ers watch as a shotgun home the ground in July 1953. They tographs like this to the local ers to build support for tearing Belmar Triangle.



Monica Civic Auditorium
 arrive at the Santa Monica itorium for the 1961 Academy Since it opened in 1958, the m at 1855 Main Street has been numerous events, including Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1964.

(2)



A NEIGHBORHOOD ERASED

BY THE 1950s MANY RESIDENTS OF THE BELMAR TRIANGLE WERE AFRICAN AMERICANS.

At that time, city leaders decided to modernize South Santa Monica through urban renewal projects. They chose to replace neighborhoods whose residents were mostly lower income African Americans, other people of color, and Whites. Targeted neighborhoods in the city's redevelopment plan were torn down in their entirety, including the Belmar Triangle.

Under the laws of eminent domain, the city forced Belmar residents to leave their homes and close their businesses in order to build a new civic auditorium and courthouse grounds. To further justify their actions, officials took pictures of some of Belmar's old and worn buildings and claimed they were no longer safe. Then they burned the neighborhood down. Before the decade ended, the Belmar Triangle had completely disappeared.

Mientras recorre el sitio, tenga en cuenta que podrá leer la traducción en español de los paneles de la exposición en www.santamonica.gov/art/belmar.

A Resurrection in Four Stanzas
 by April Banks



**BELMAR
 HISTORY
 +ART**



san pedro creek culture park, san antonio, tx

location: San Antonio, TX
designer: Henry R. Muñoz III

year: 2018 (phase I)

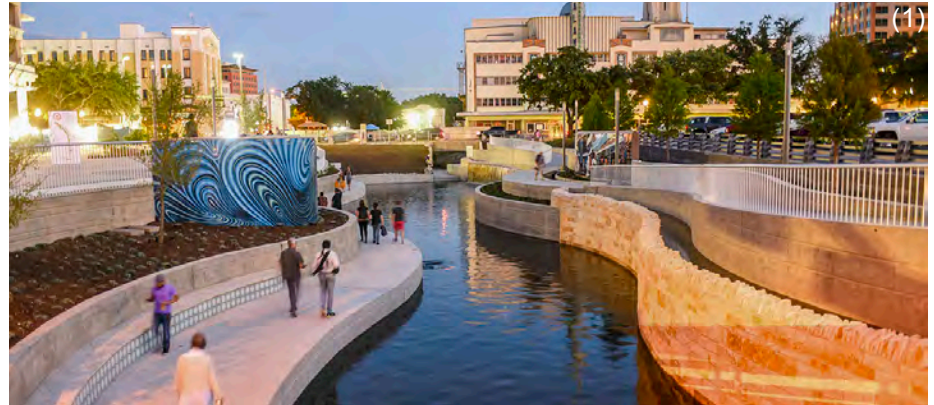
size: 1.5 linear miles

precedent value:

- sustainably deals with stormwater in the 100 year floodplain
- **variety of artwork installations convey the city's history and culture**
- **community gathering place** (Plaza de Fundación)
- 1,800 linear feet of historic wall preserved and integrated
- mobile app brings history and culture to life
- interactive water feature meshes past and present; covers freeway noise
- variety of programming

lessons learned:

- historical art pieces could be more **experiential and sensory**
- **street connections** help bring people in
- **series of different spaces with different moods and functions** (e.g. plaza vs. boardwalk) allow for variety of uses & spaces



san jacinto plaza, el paso, tx

location: El Paso, TX

designer: SWA

year: 2016

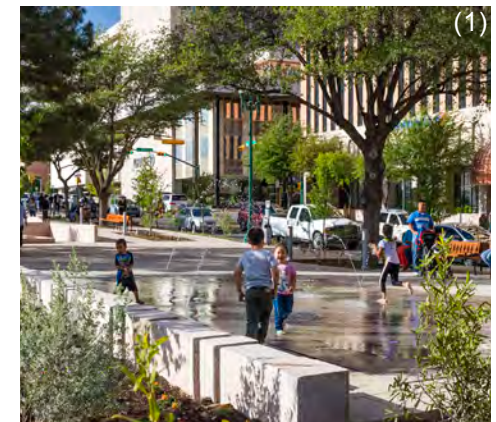
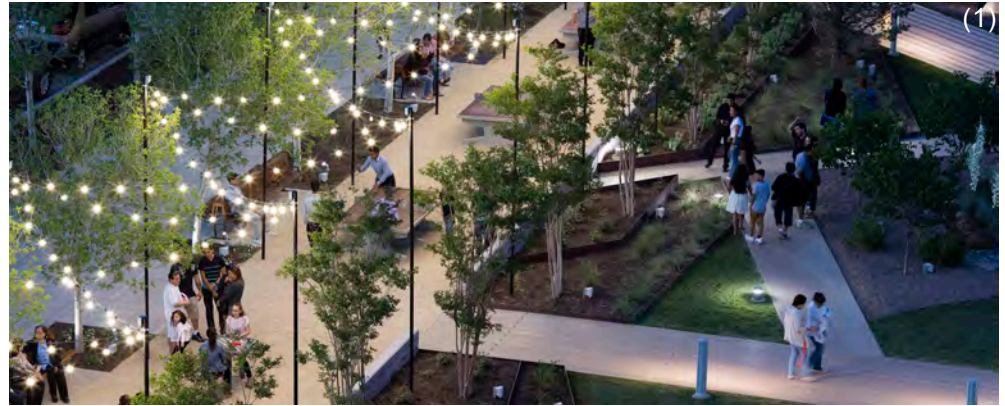
size: 1.73 acres

precedent value:

- redesign protects and celebrates the 100-year-old+ park's history, culture, and identity
- utilized intensive community process for input
- integrates formal, old pathways with new, informal ones that take visitors to different active spaces on the site
- details in the floor patterns and other creative spaces (ping pong tables, benches, etc.) enhance the feeling of particularness

lessons learned:

- programming along the edges (e.g. water feature) helps draw users
- since it is located in the downtown business district, there is a missed opportunity of using food to increase user-ship





design development

design metaphor



interlocking hands

At the end of the day, what brings our cultures together is love. The design metaphor I propose is of interlocking hands, which symbolizes the love and connection between people. More than that, it signifies the intertwining of history and culture in Boyle Heights. Boyle Heights's past and present are interlocking and inseparable.

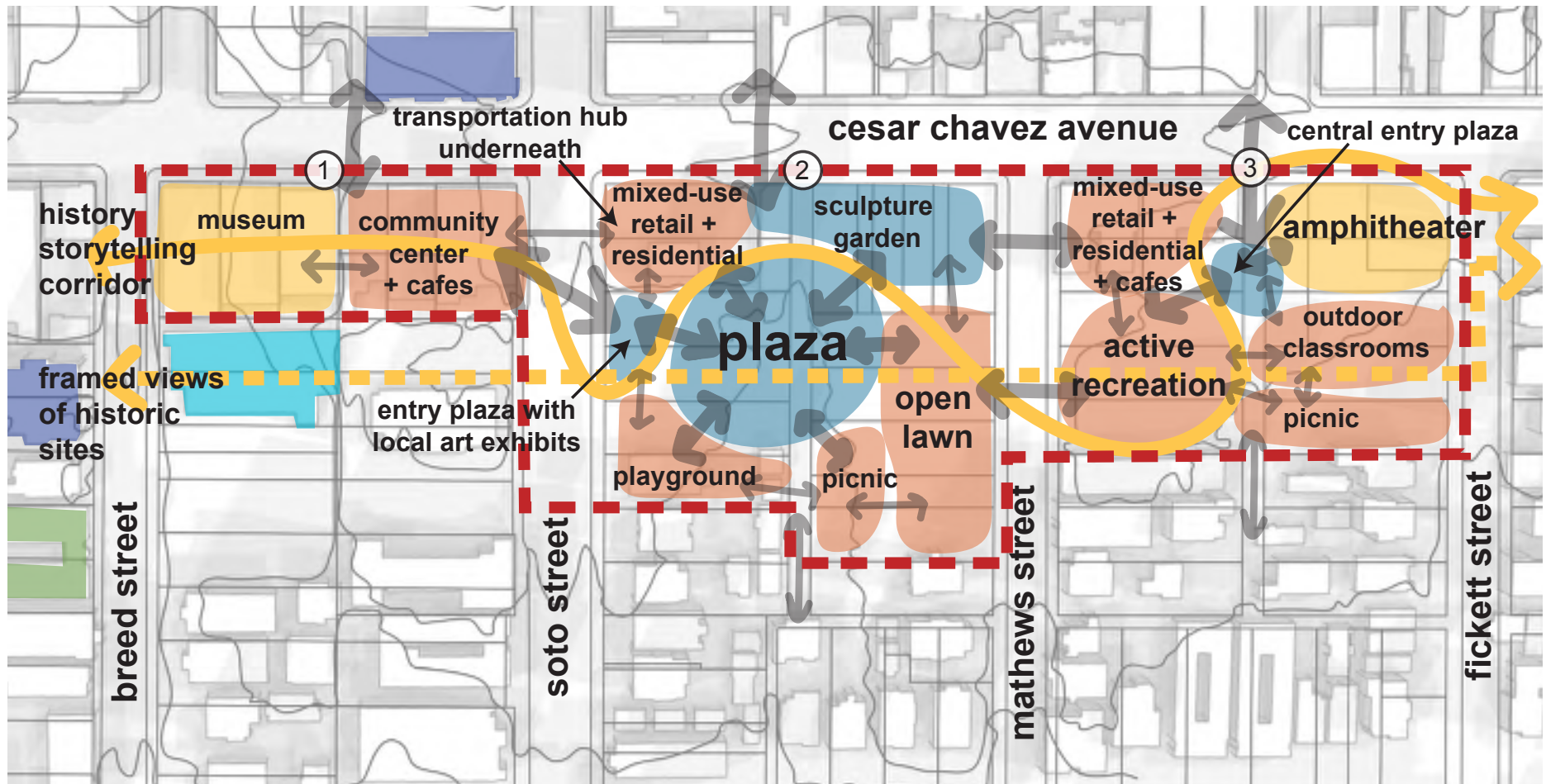
Over the subsequent pages, 3 different concepts were explored for the site, in which a history storytelling corridor interlocks and interweaves with the program elements.

concept 1

1.address equity

2. reflect cultural richness

3. link past & present



main ideas

- Central multicultural “El Aliso” plaza anchors the 3 lots
- Re-purposed buildings are museum and community center
- Amphitheater is placed at the historic site of Brooklyn Theater, bombed in 1926
- Framed views of historic sites are subtle and slightly obstructed by the McDonald’s

legend

Multicultural	Hispanic American
Asian American	African American
Jewish American	

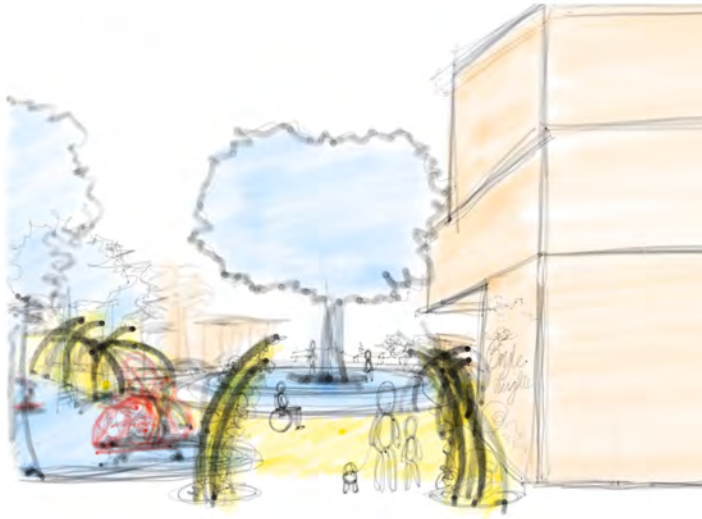


concept 1

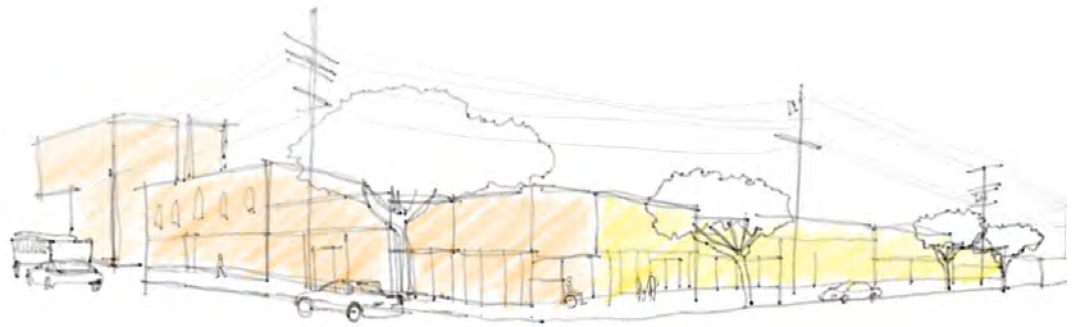
1.address equity

2. reflect cultural richness

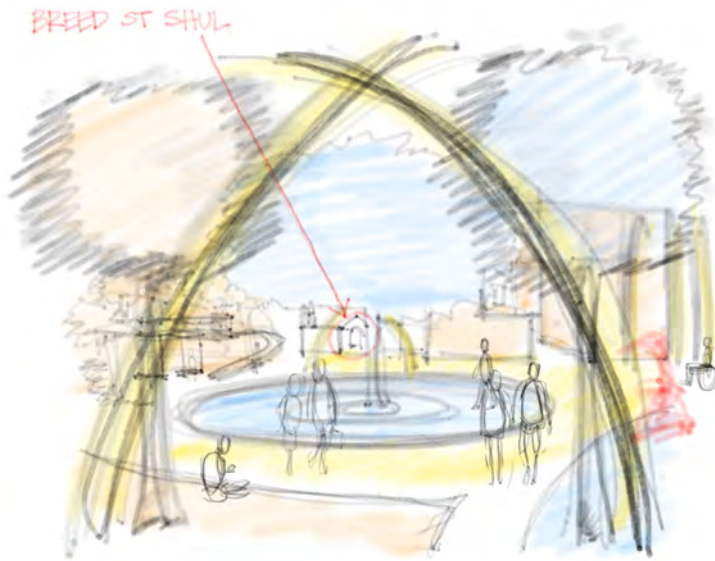
3. link past & present



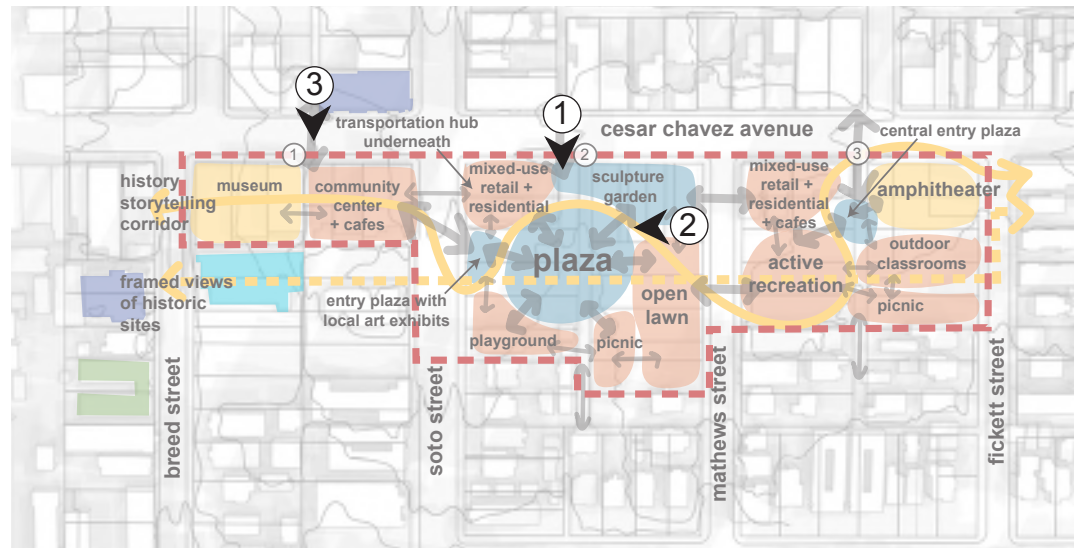
① View south: central “El Aliso” plaza, mixed-use building, & sculpture garden



③ View south: re-purposing existing buildings as museum & community center



② View west: intersection of “history storytelling corridor” & “framed views”



N.T.S.

1.address equity

2. reflect cultural richness

3. link past & present



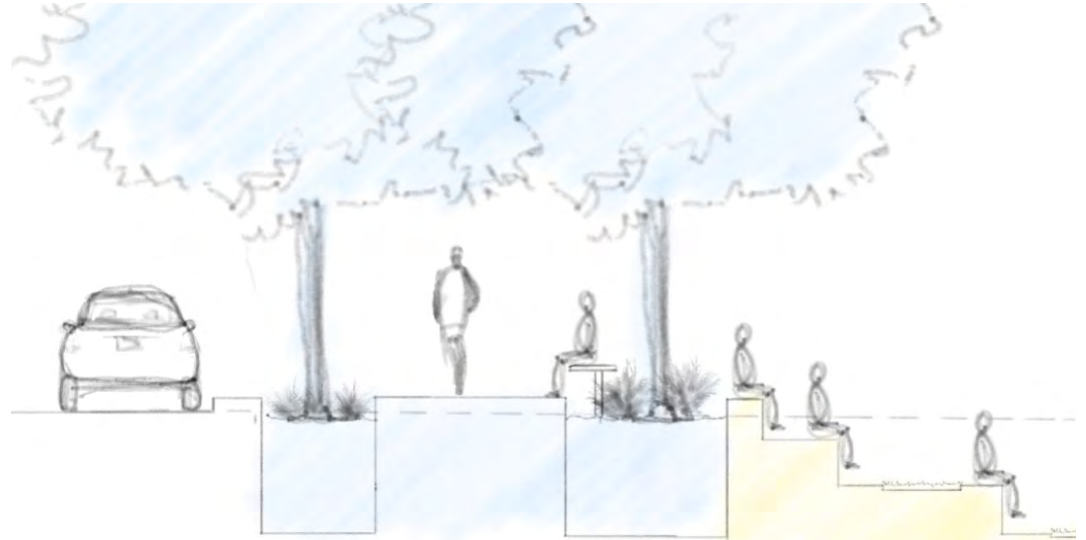
"El Aliso" tree at the center of the plaza



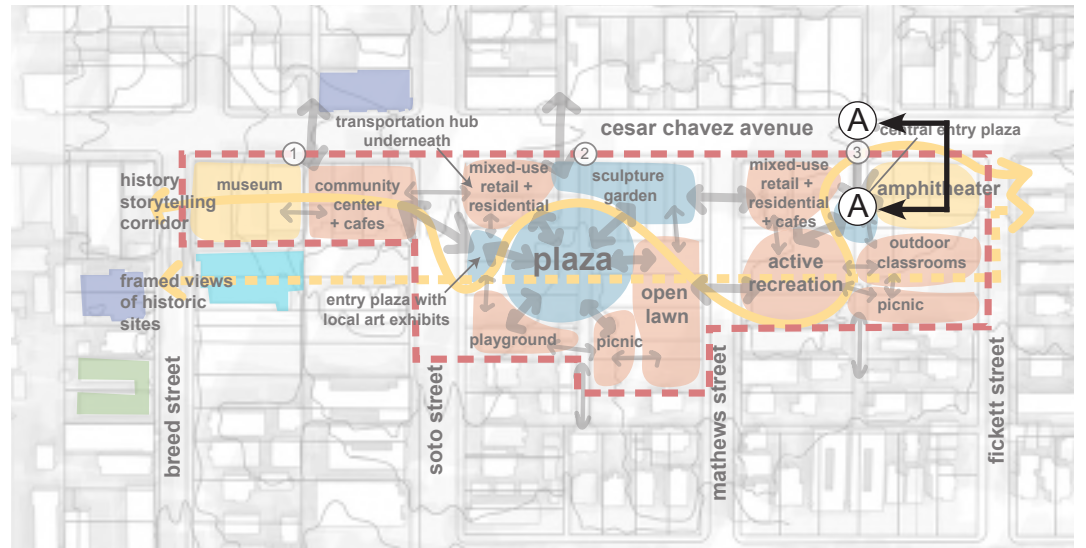
Amphitheater: lawn & concrete edging



Arbors along history storytelling corridor



Ⓐ Ⓐ Section looking west: edge promenade plaza & amphitheater

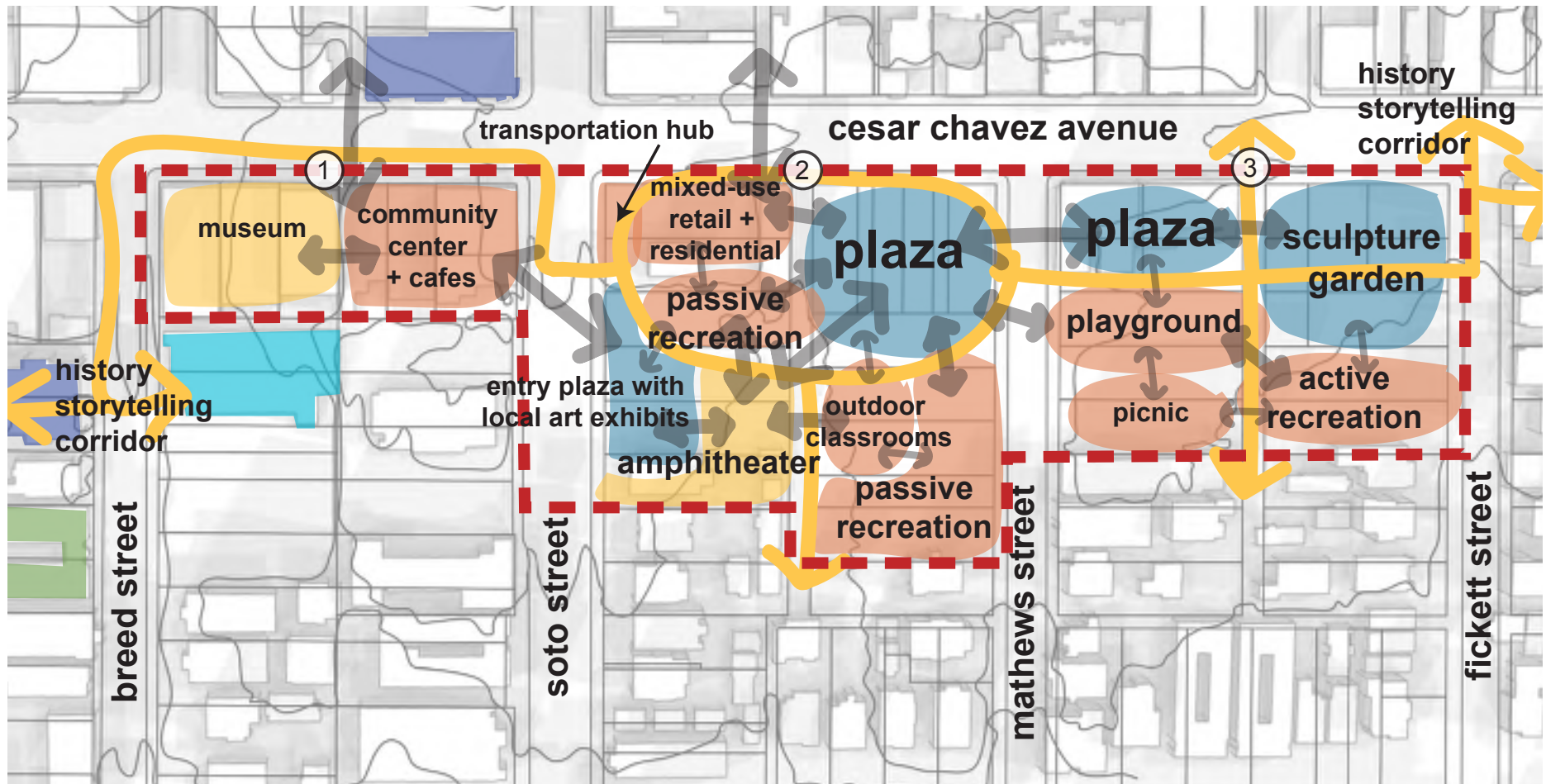


concept 2

1.address equity

2. reflect cultural richness

3. link past & present



main ideas

- History storytelling corridor is up against Cesar Chavez Avenue
- 2 main multicultural plazas against Cesar Chavez Avenue
- Amphitheater has the best views (toward downtown LA and Breed Street Shul)
- Museum and community center are close to the Breed Street Shul, but not all murals are saved

legend

Multicultural	Hispanic American
Asian American	African American
Jewish American	



1.address equity

2. reflect cultural richness

3. link past & present



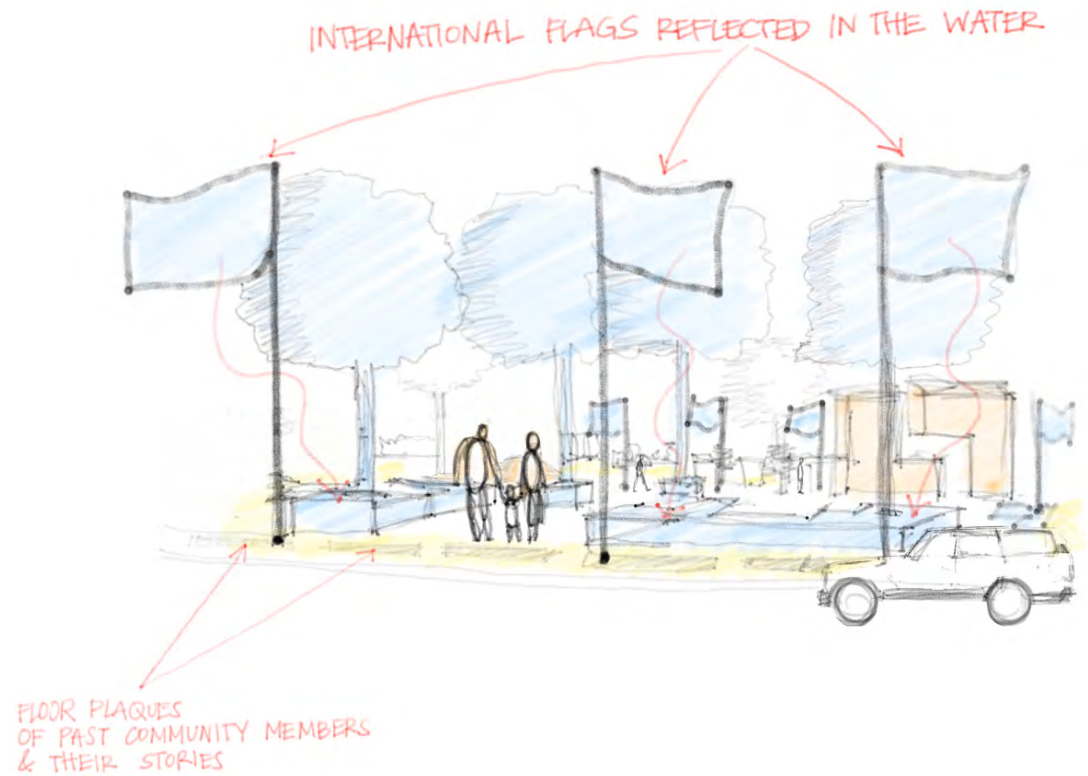
Plaza reflecting pools & gathering space



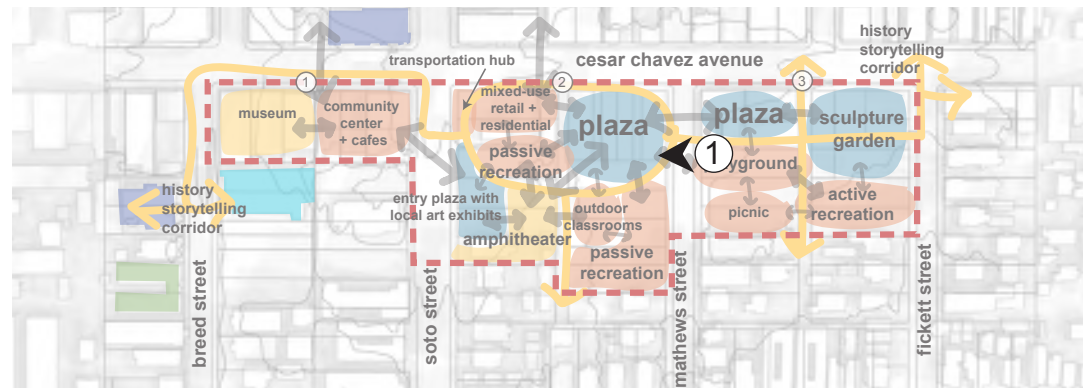
Mixed-use buildings: interlocking forms



History plaques along the history storytelling corridor



① View west: plaza entrance with flags & history plaques



N.T.S.

concept 2

1.address equity

2. reflect cultural richness

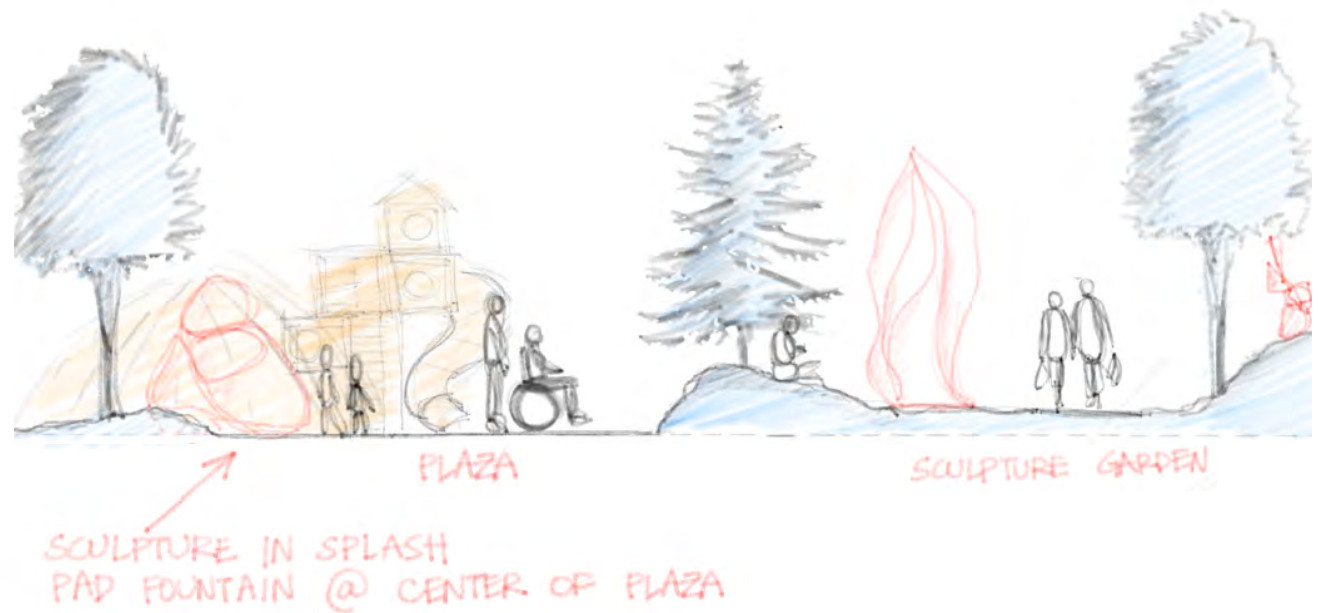
3. link past & present



Immersive playground



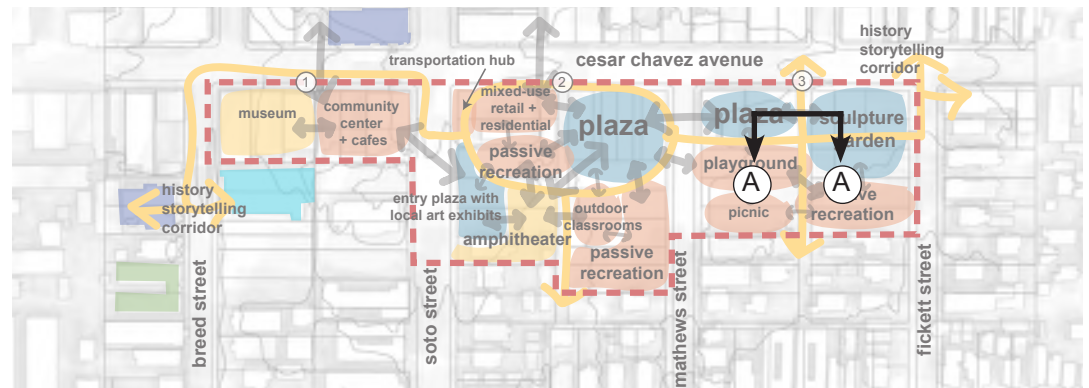
Picnic & passive recreation areas



(A) (A) Section looking south: plaza & sculpture garden



Plaza on site 3 interlocks with sculpture garden



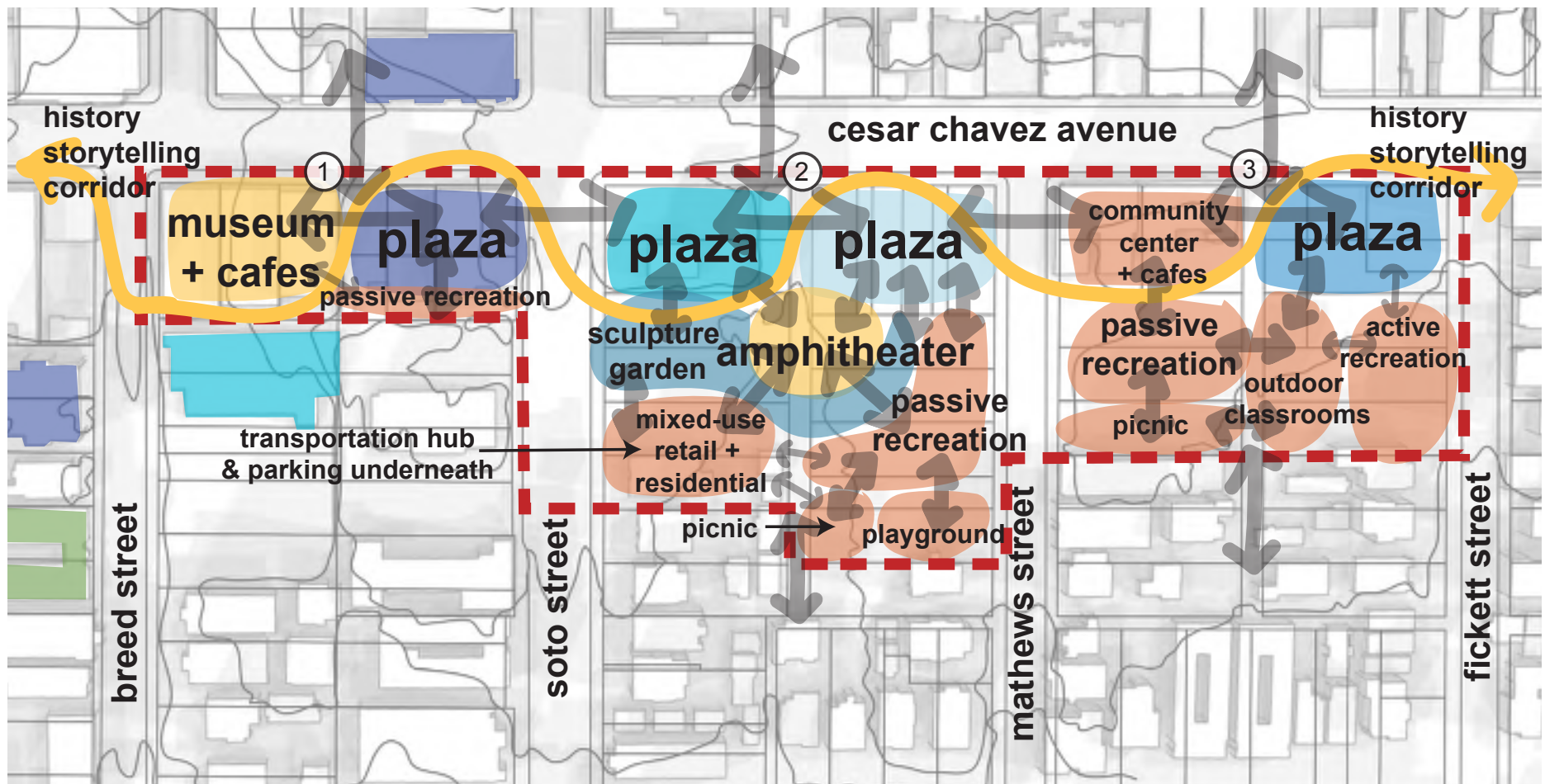
N.T.S.

concept 3

1.address equity

2. reflect cultural richness

3. link past & present



main ideas

- 4 edge plazas activate Cesar Chavez Avenue and reflect each historical minority culture that lived in Boyle Heights
- Museum has adjacent outdoor space
- Amphitheater is more central to the lots
- Site 3 buildings are saved and re-purposed, and the existing mural on it saved

legend

Multicultural	Hispanic American
Asian American	African American
Jewish American	

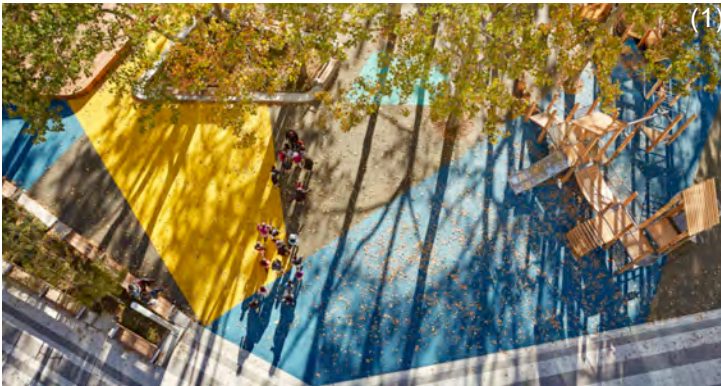


concept 3

1.address equity

2. reflect cultural richness

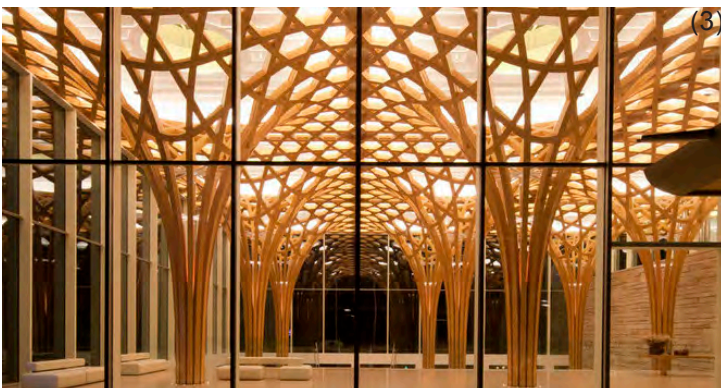
3. link past & present



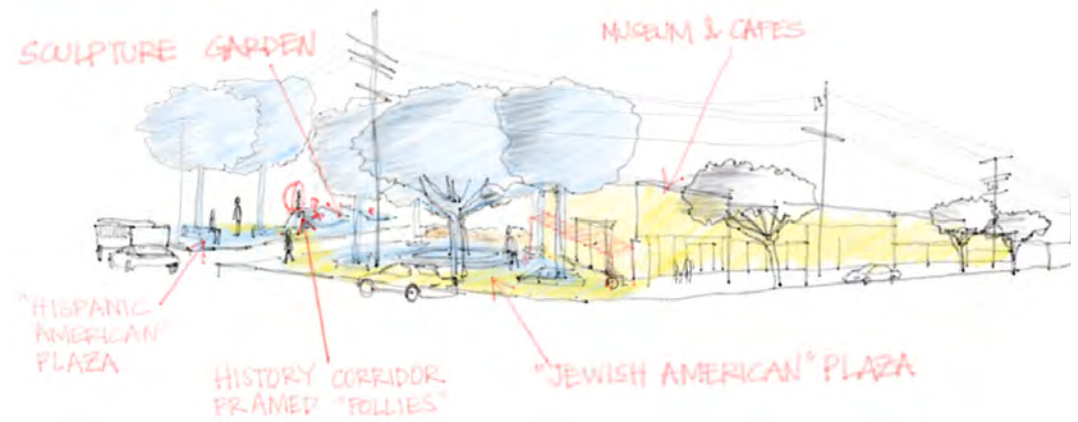
Plaza planters; materials showing “zones”



History corridor framed “follies”



Interlocking cultural symbols in the details: shade structures in amphitheater & plazas



① View south: re-purposing some of the existing buildings as museum & cafes, while removing some for an entry plaza

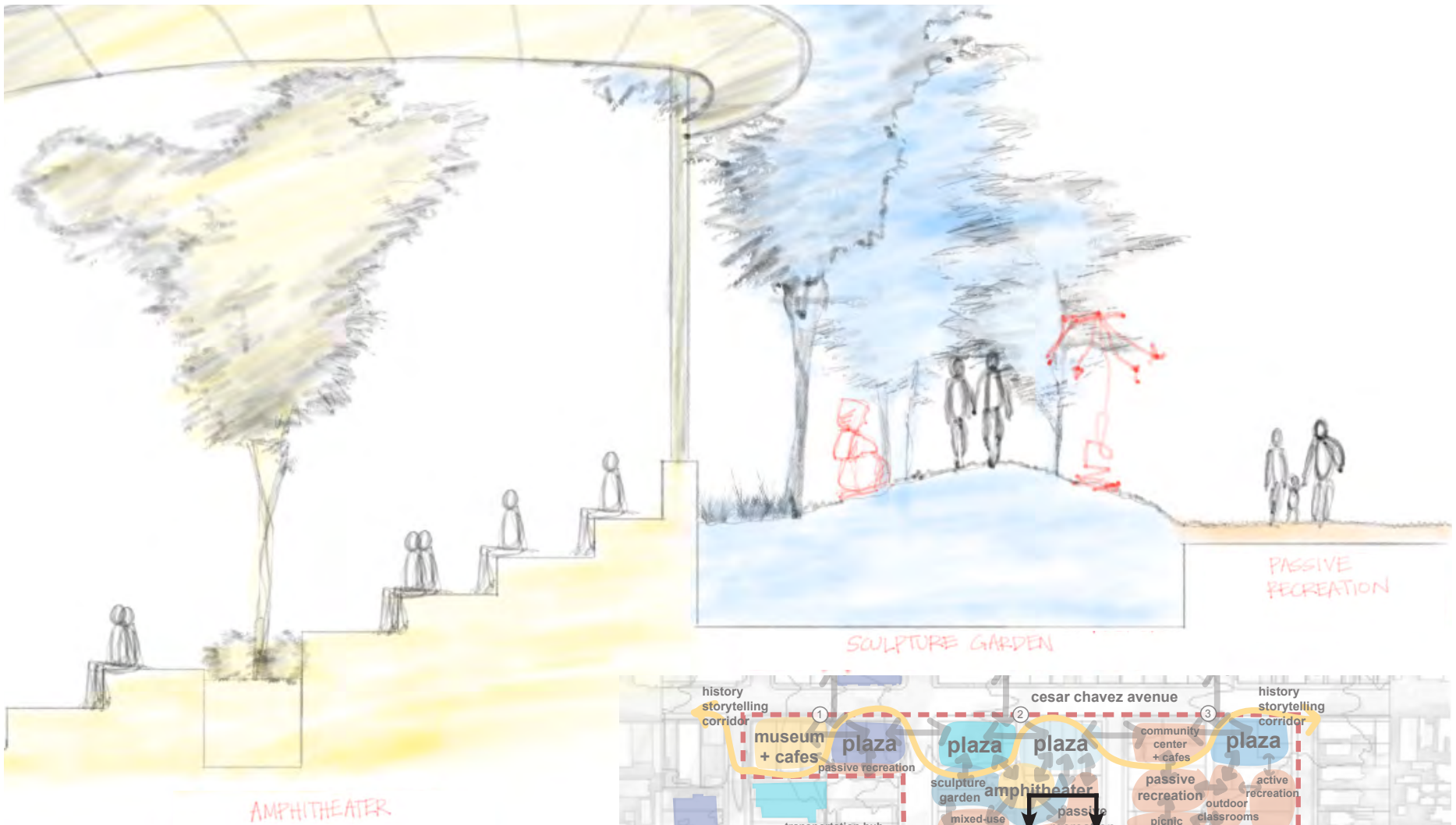


N.T.S.

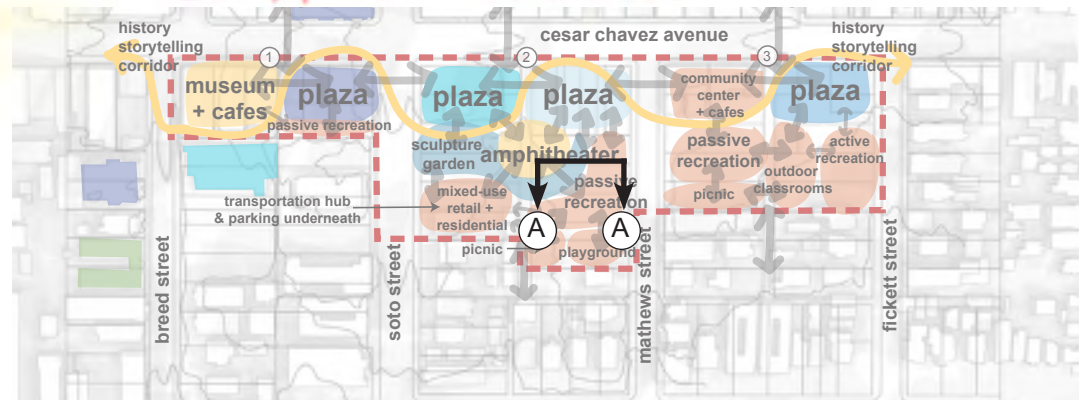
1.address equity

2. reflect cultural richness

3. link past & present



(A) (A) Section looking south: amphitheater, sculpture garden, & passive recreation



N.T.S.



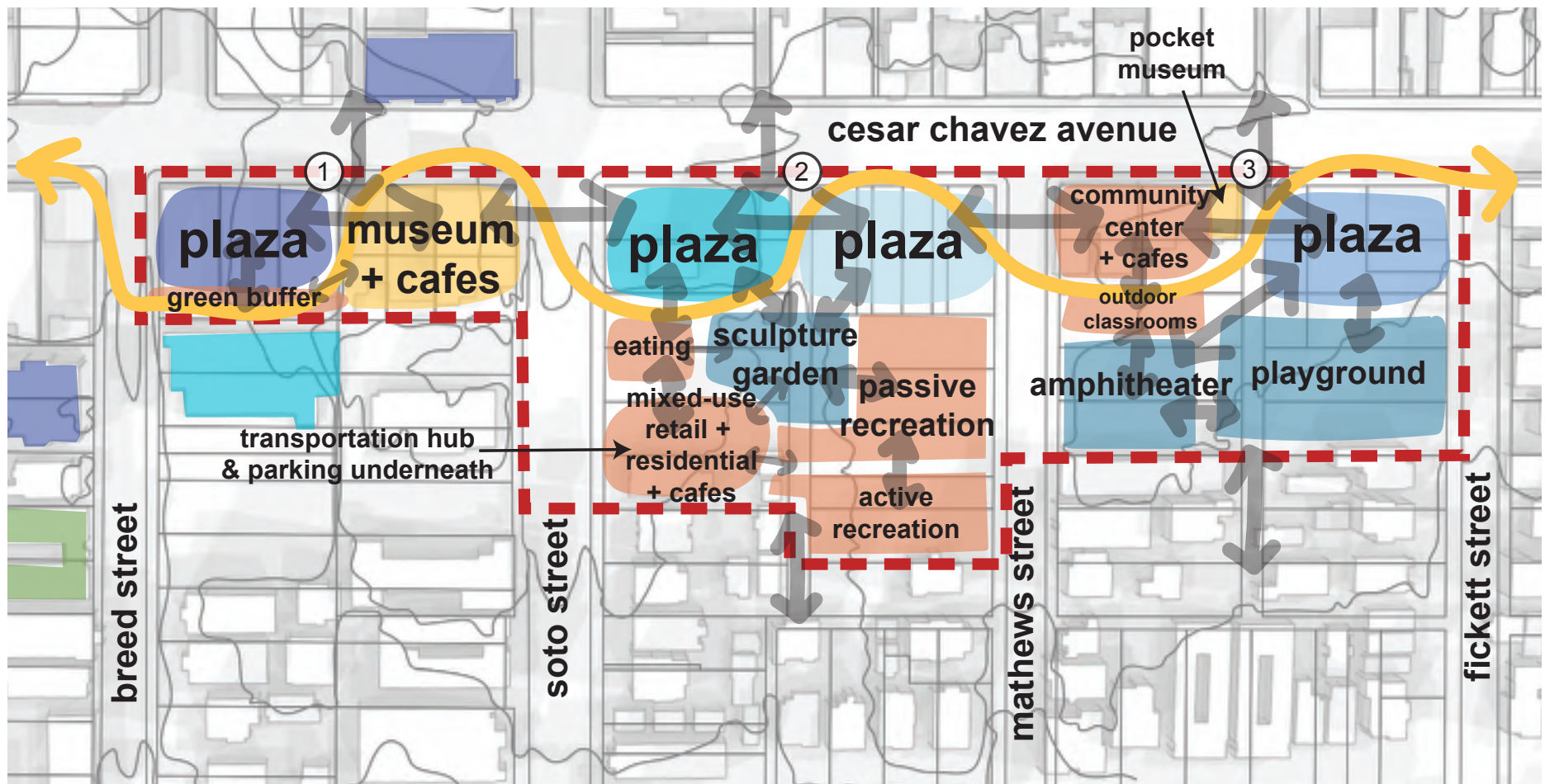
the final concept

cultural plazas

1.address equity

2. reflect cultural richness

3. link past & present



The overall concept for the site is 4 main plazas, each one representing a different minority culture that historically lived in Boyle Heights. These plazas interlock, as if the cultures they represent are holding hands. Their placement was determined by their connections to historic sites. Underneath the park, the history of the indigenous Tongva people is revealed in the form of sidewalk patterning.

Each cultural plaza has a different manifestation of interlocking forms. “Hadda Brooks Plaza” aims to reclaim the Black community’s lost history by basing its design on interlocking piano keys. Boyle Heights-born Hadda Brooks was a prominent black pianist and singer in the ‘30s and ‘40s.

A local art sculpture garden is a multicultural space that is at the heart of the site. The museum and community center are saved and re-purposed, more valuable due to the murals on them.

legend

Multicultural	Hispanic American
Asian American	African American
Jewish American	



concept development

1.address equity

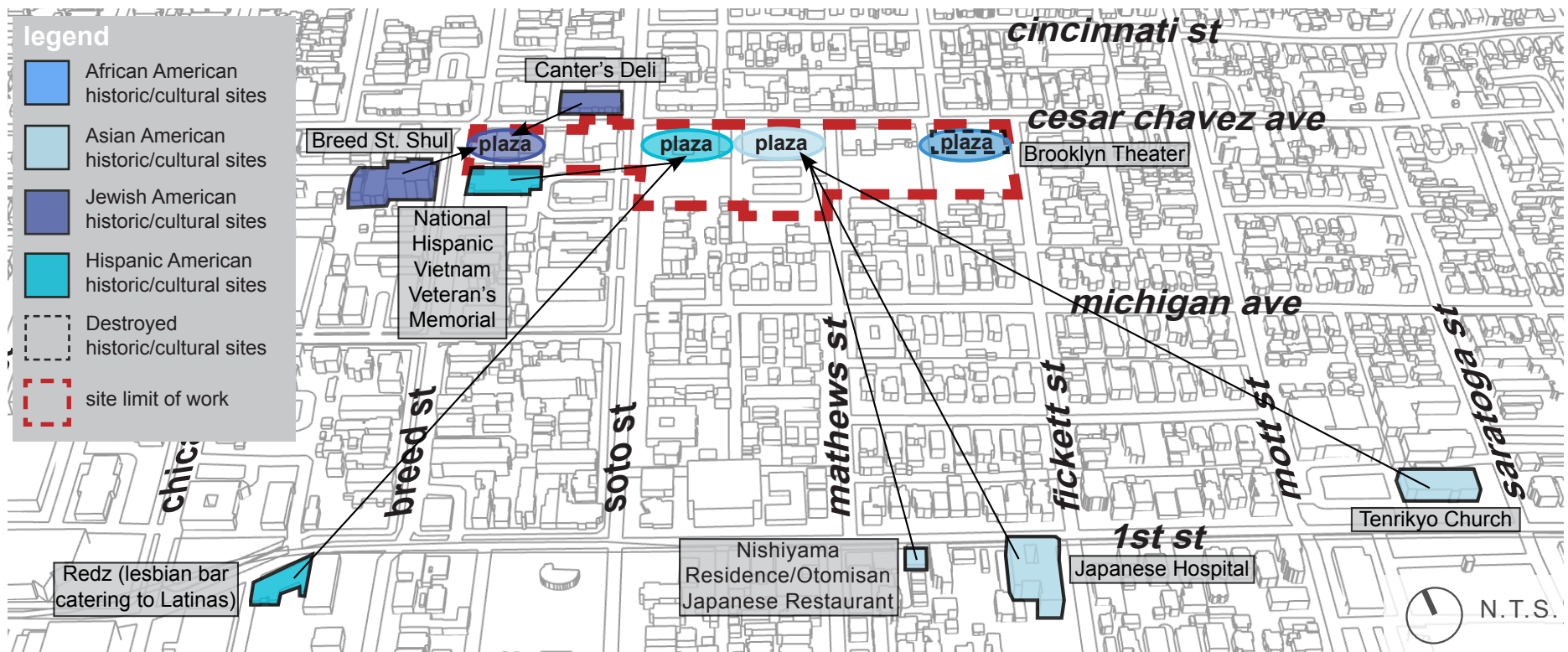
2. reflect cultural richness

3. link past & present

cultural plazas: design metaphor



cultural plazas: placement



concept development

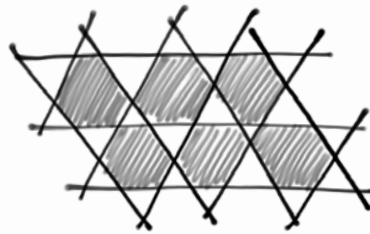
1.address equity

2. reflect cultural richness

3. link past & present

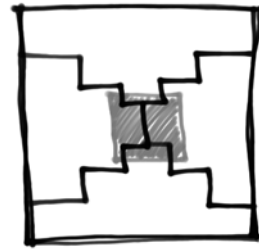
cultural plazas: individual “interlocking” forms

Jewish American plaza



JEWISH ICONOGRAPHY

Hispanic American plaza



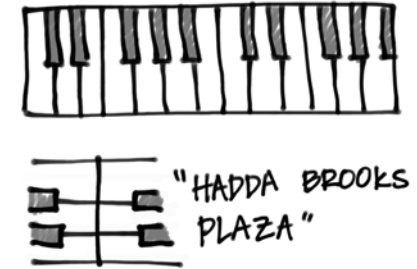
MESO-AMERICAN STEPPED PYRAMID

Asian American plaza



YIN-YANG

African American plaza



"HADDA BROOKS PLAZA"

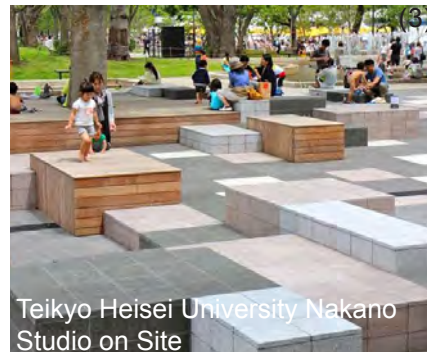
cultural plazas: inspiration

Jewish American plaza



Public Plaza
MODE Design Company

Hispanic American plaza



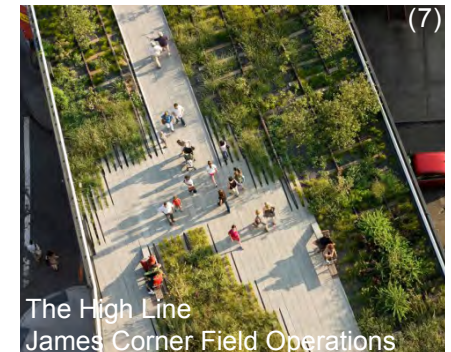
Teikyo Heisei University Nakano
Studio on Site

Asian American plaza



HyperLane
ASPECT Studios

African American plaza



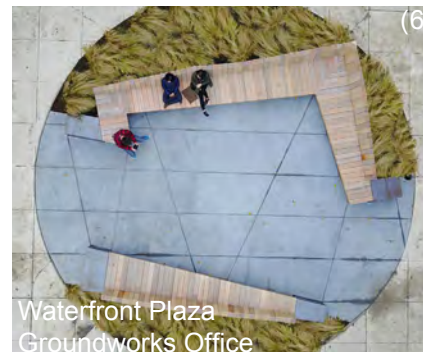
The High Line
James Corner Field Operations



Nine Bridges Country Club
Shigeru Ban Architects



Sunbow Financial Center
ASPECT Studios



Waterfront Plaza
Groundworks Office



Beiqijia Technology Business District
Martha Schwartz Partners

process drawings

1.address equity

2. reflect cultural richness

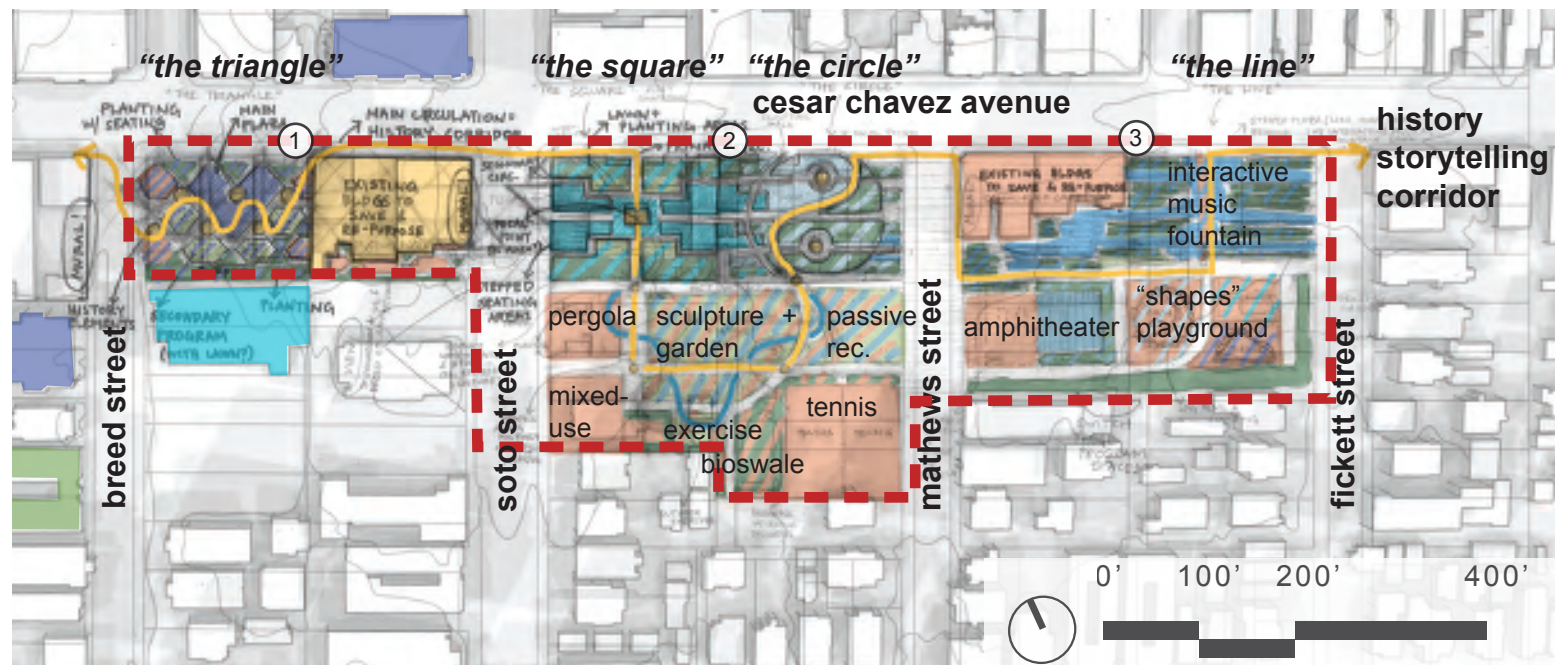
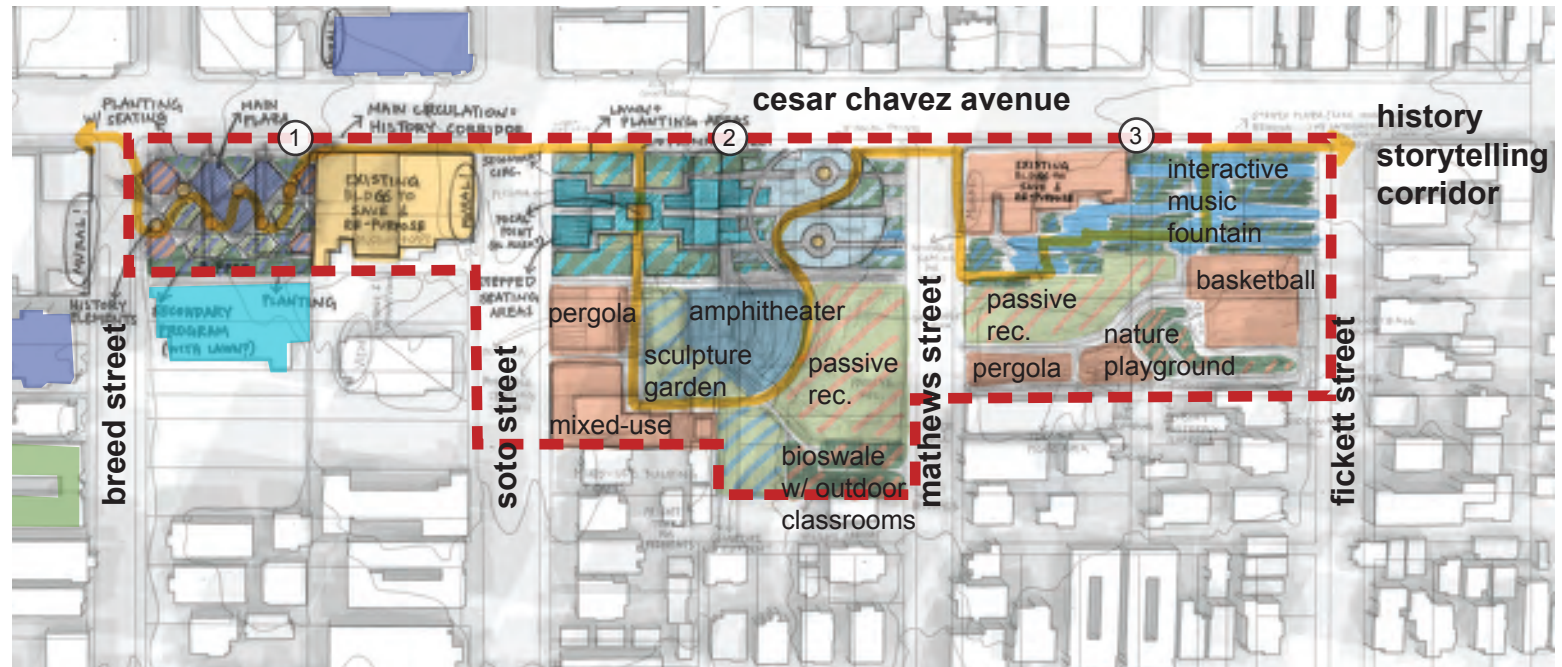
3. link past & present

learning outcomes

- History storytelling corridor can be intertwined with the art walk
- Amphitheater and sculpture garden should be more meaningful in their adjacencies
- Wider pathways should encircle the central lawn to allow for street vendors and food trucks
- Each cultural plaza is made up of a different geometric shape, and the playground should incorporate "all shapes" as a reflection of it being a multicultural space

legend

- Multicultural
- Asian American
- Jewish American
- Hispanic American
- African American





the master plan

site plan

1.address equity

2. reflect cultural richness

3. link past & present



program elements

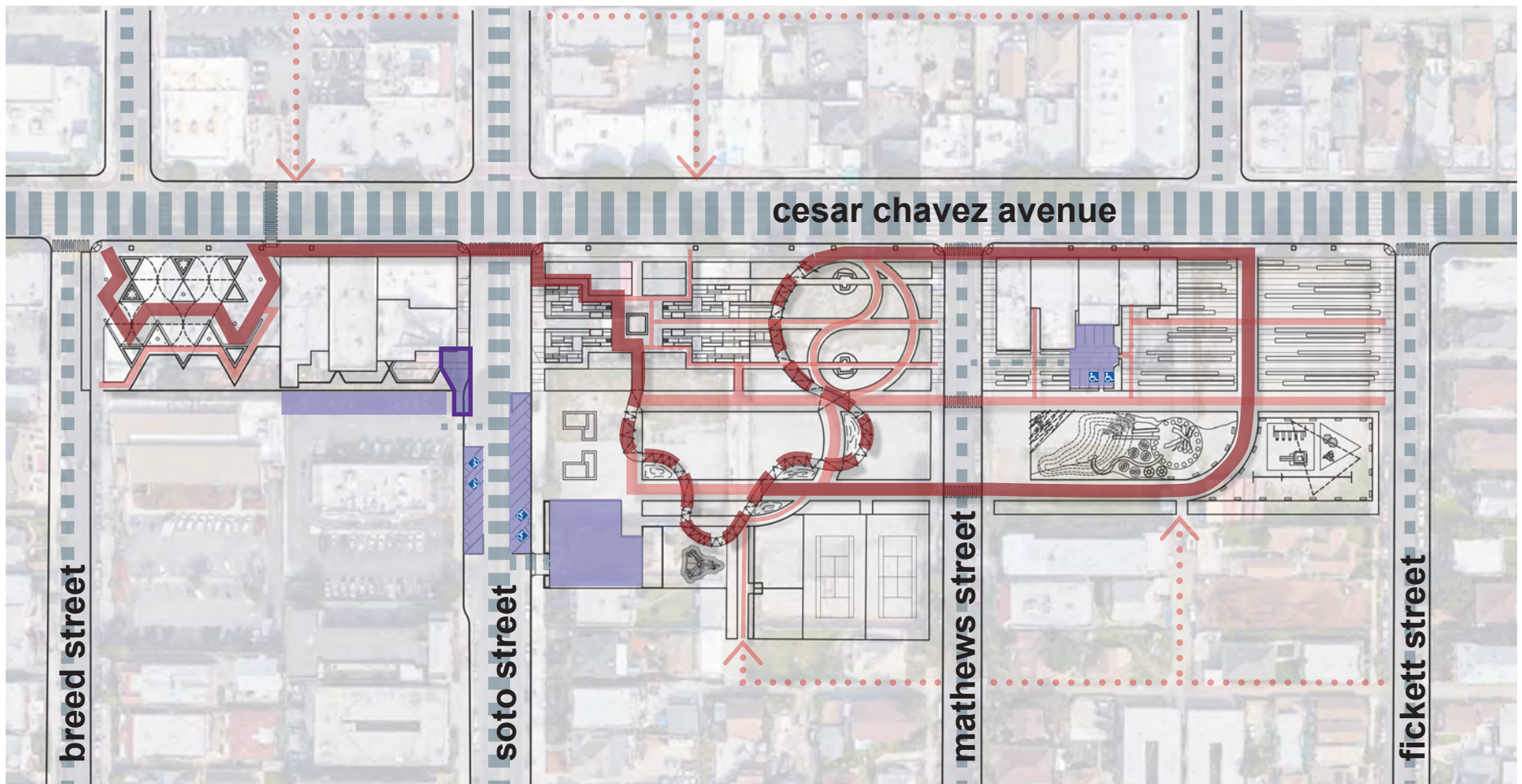
- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Jewish American plaza: "the triangle" | 7 Sculpture garden | 14 History & art walk |
| 2 Hispanic American plaza: "the square" | 8 Outdoor exercise area | 15 Re-purposed parking lot |
| 3 Asian American plaza: "the circle" | 9 Dog parks | 16 Drop-off zone |
| 4 African American plaza: "the line" | 10 Tennis courts | 17 Improved street parking |
| 5 Museum & cafes | 11 Community center & cafes | 18 New parking lot |
| 6 Mixed-use building (parking below) | 12 Amphitheater | 19 Bioswale |
| | 13 Playground: "all shapes" | 20 Curb cuts for storm water |

legend

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Multicultural | Hispanic American |
| Asian American | African American |
| Jewish American | |



circulation



The final site plan shows how the program elements intertwine and embody the 3 project goals. The community park-type amenities address equity, cultural plazas and sculpture garden reflect cultural richness, and a history & art walk intertwine the pieces, while linking past to present.

In the Jewish American plaza, history monuments move visitors through the space. At the heart of the site, the history & art walk interlocks with the primary circulation corridor, emphasizing its importance. To the east, the primary pedestrian corridor connects that site to the project.

vehicles

-  Vehicular circulation
-  Parking
-  Handicap parking
-  Drop-off zone

pedestrians

-  Primary circulation
-  Primary circulation, "history & art walk"
-  Secondary circulation
-  Alleyway entrance points

0' 75' 150' 300'

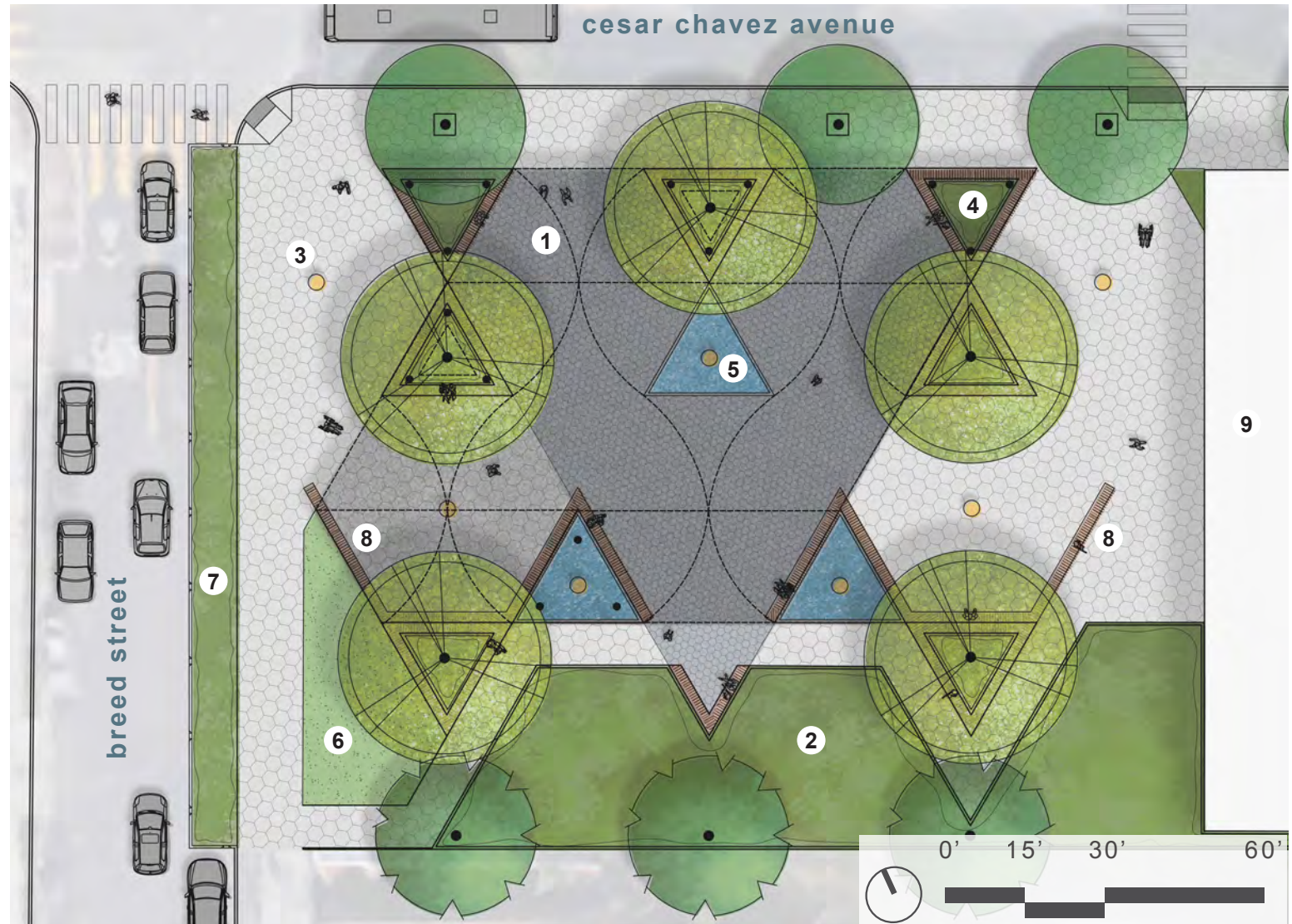


jewish american plaza: “the triangle”



- 4 Raised planter
- 5 Reflecting pool
- 6 Lawn
- 7 Curb cuts for stormwater
- 8 Floating benches
- 9 Museum & cafes (existing buildings re-purposed)

The Jewish American Plaza is designed after interlocking Jewish stars. A pergola covers the plaza, allowing it to serve as a flex space for the adjacent museum. History monuments, shown in yellow, are placed throughout the plaza so that the visitor's circulation pattern intertwines and interweaves with them.



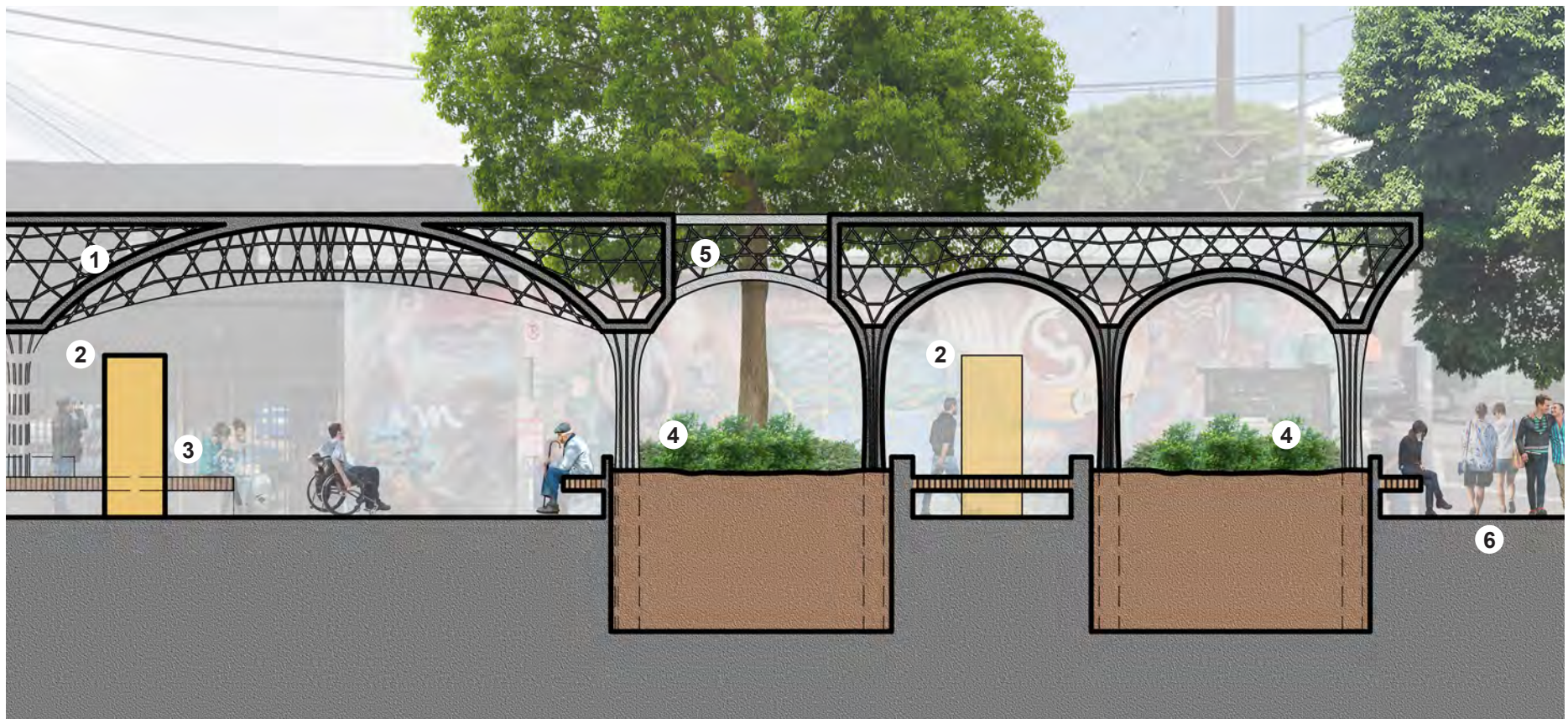
framing existing murals

legend

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Pergola | 4 Raised planters with seating |
| 2 History monument | 5 Tree cut-out in pergola |
| 3 Raised reflecting pool with history monument | 6 Entrance from sidewalk (Cesar Chavez Avenue) |



section A: jewish american plaza



A section of the Jewish American Plaza shows how the plaza takes advantage of the site's rich history by framing it and putting it on display. History monuments are dotted throughout the space, while tree planters with cantilevered seating give the space a bosque-like feel.



history monuments



History monuments (1)



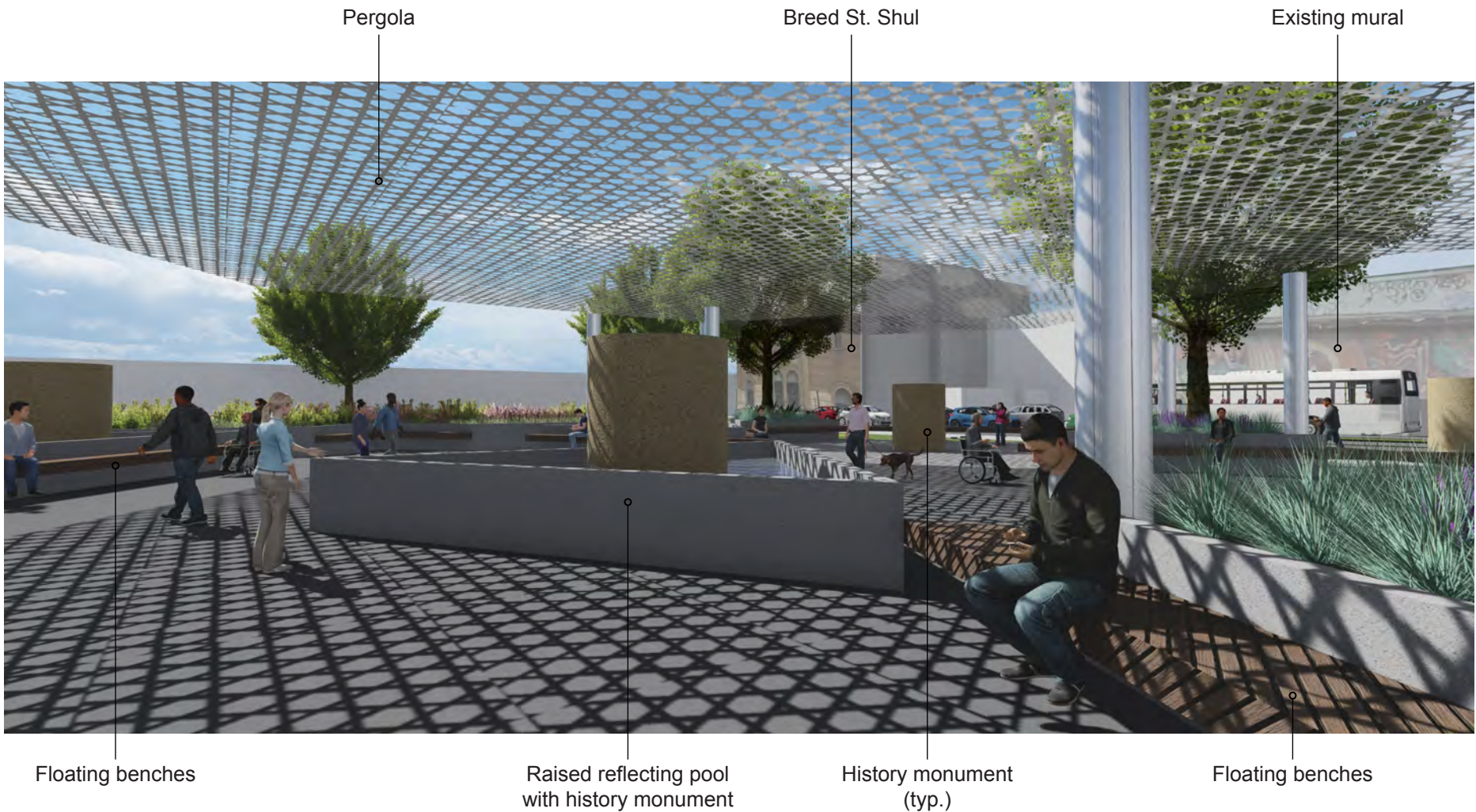
Pergola



Hexagon Pavers



perspective 1: jewish american plaza



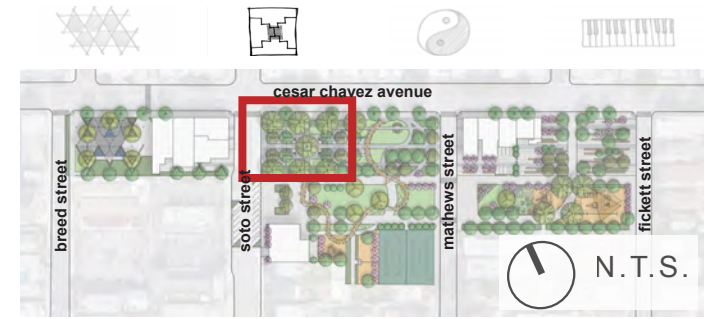
hispanic american plaza: “the square”



1 Stepped seating

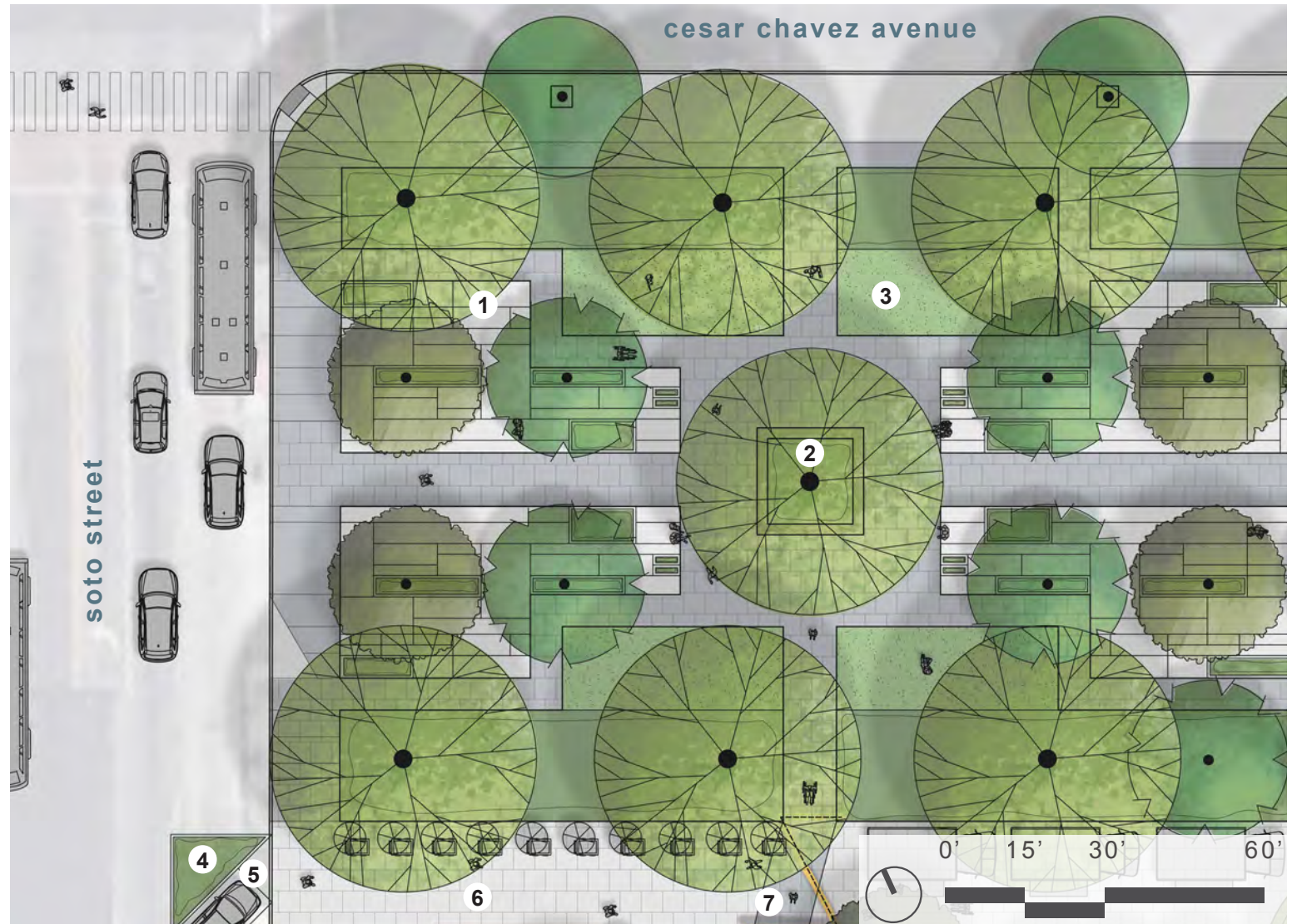


2 “El Aliso” as focal point



- 3 Lawn
- 4 Storm water planters
- 5 Improved street parking
- 6 Entry plaza
- 7 History & art walk

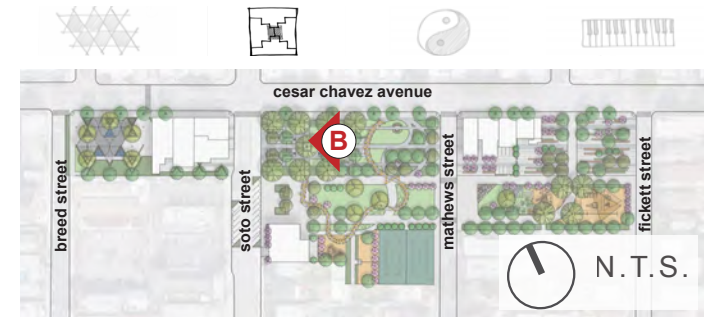
The Hispanic American Plaza represents an interlocking stepped pyramid that is centered around a symbolic “El Aliso”, a sycamore tree that has historic significance as the center of LA. Stepped seating with planting cutouts allow visitors to sit at various levels and view the existing mural across the street. Street vendors and food trucks line the pathway to the south, which leads into the sculpture garden.



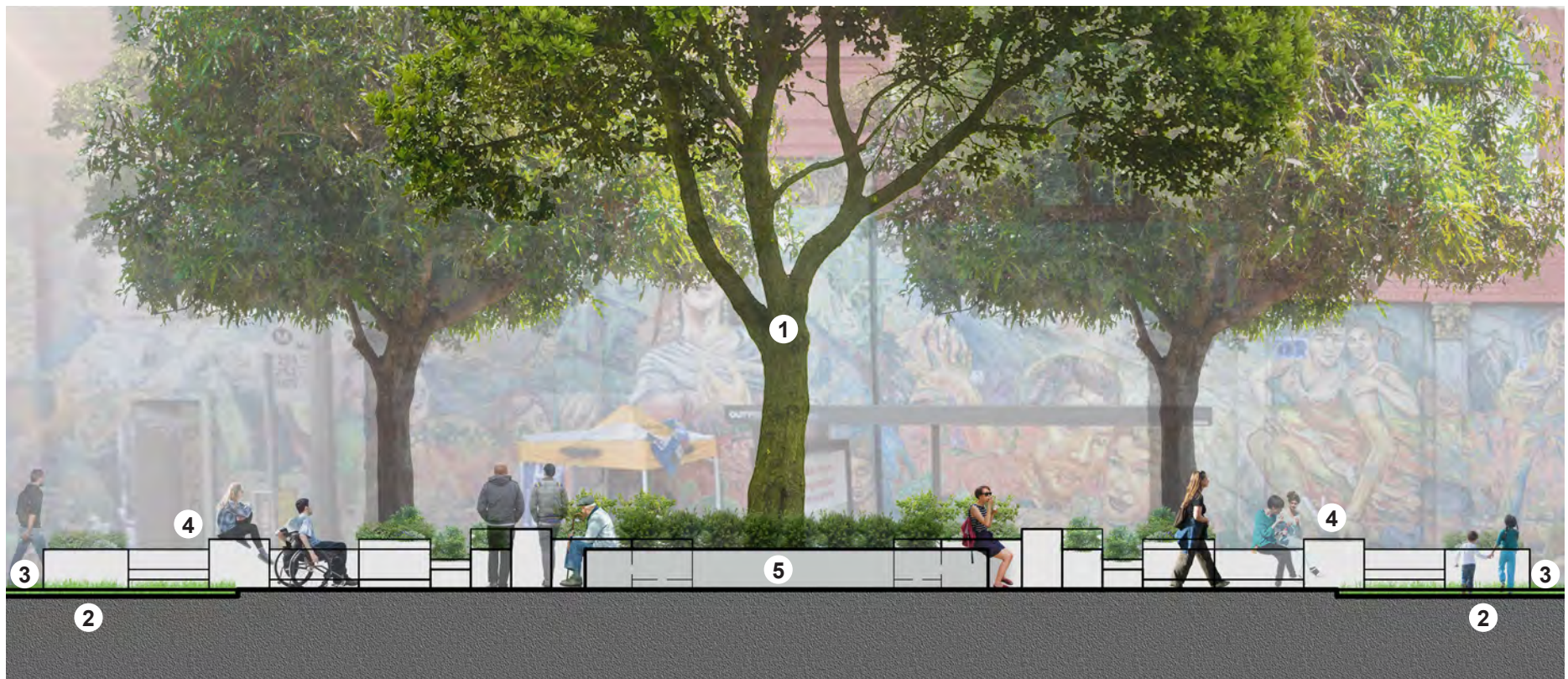
framing existing murals

legend

- 1 "El Aliso" (historic & symbolic Sycamore)
- 2 Lawn area
- 3 Pathway
- 4 Stepped seating with planting cut-outs
- 5 Raised planter with seating around "El Aliso"



elevation B: hispanic american plaza



The Hispanic American Plaza frames the existing mural across the street, and the stepped seating areas allow park-users to enjoy the history-rich view. The symbolic Sycamore is at the center.



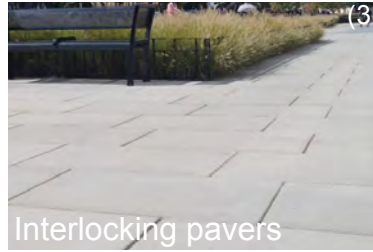
interlocking past & present



History timeline arches



"El Aliso" as focal point



Interlocking pavers

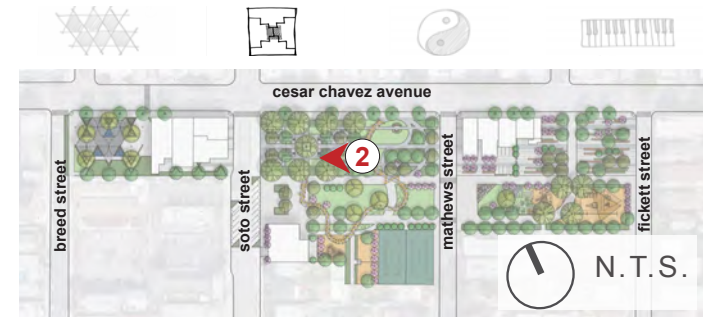
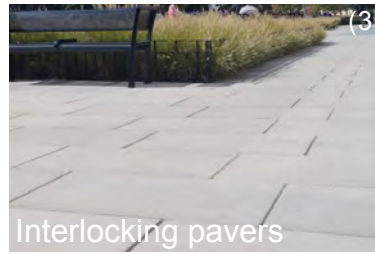


perspective 3: hispanic american plaza

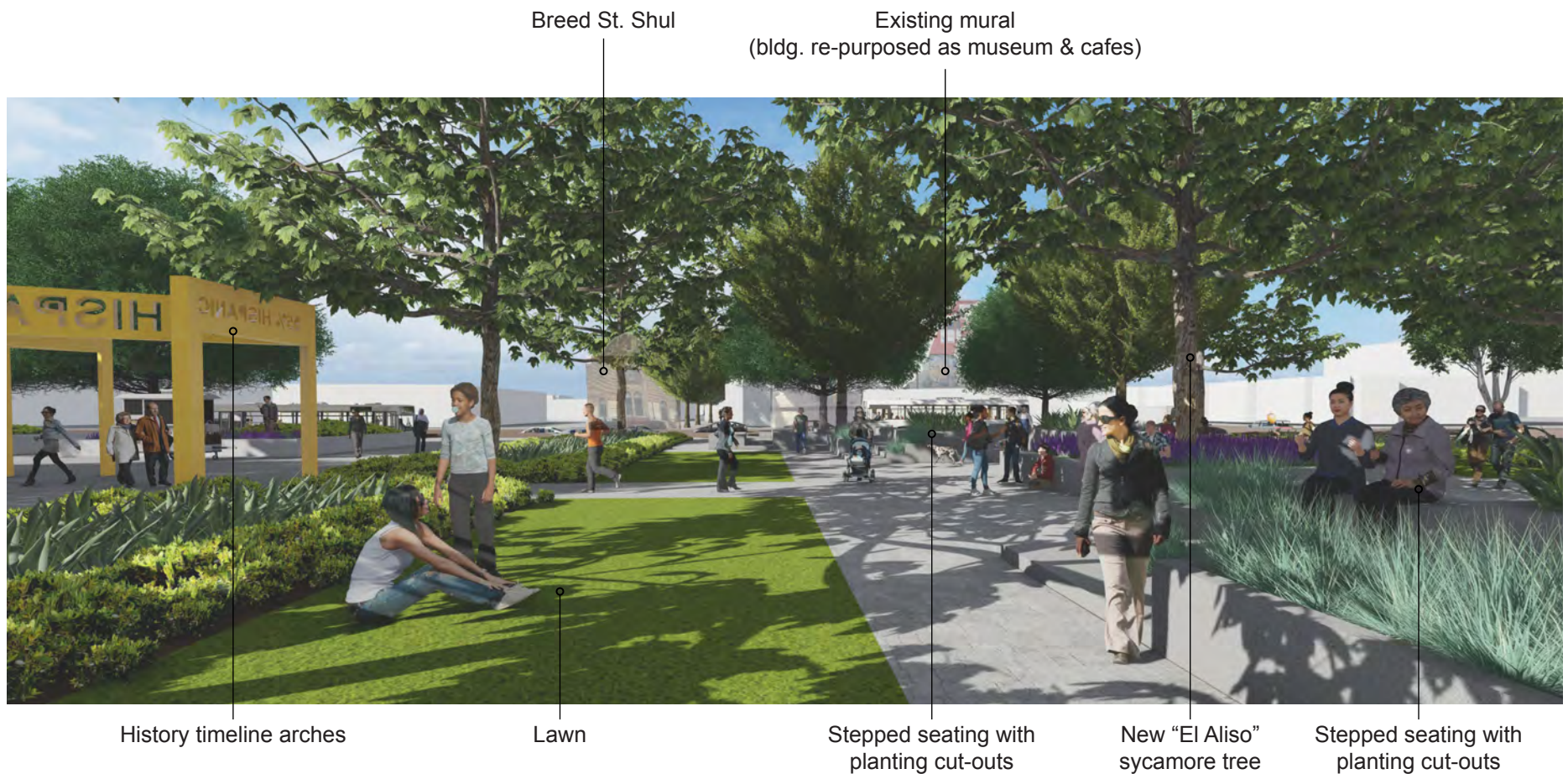


The entrance from Cesar Chavez Avenue shows the modern-day "El Aliso" is at the center of the Hispanic American plaza, with stepped seating areas surrounding it, leading visitors into the history & art walk - the yellow arches in the background.

interlocking past & present

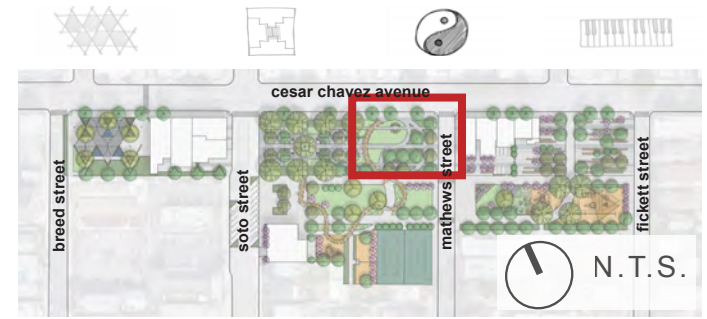


perspective 2: hispanic american plaza



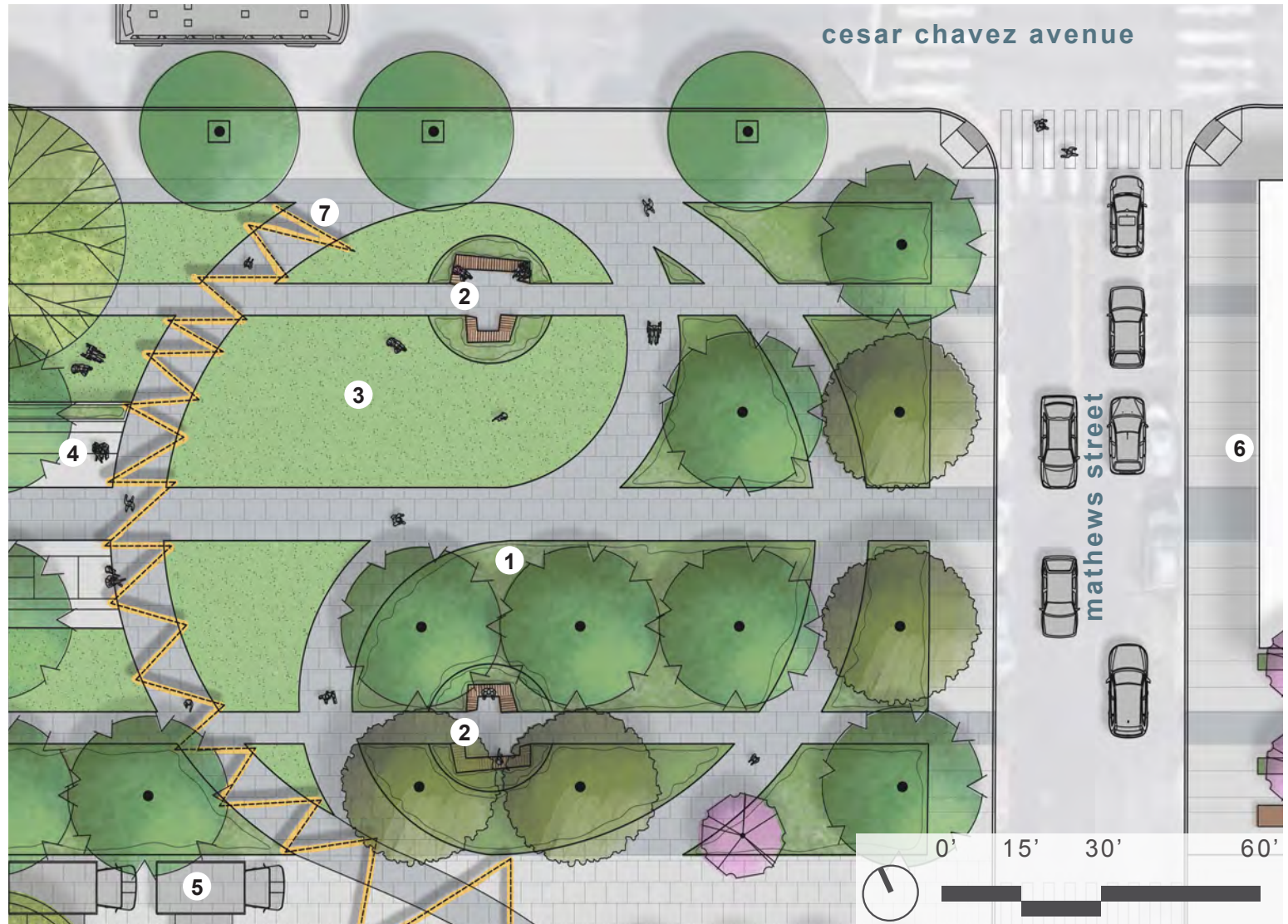
Past and present are layered in the site, but specifically, in the Hispanic American plaza. The Breed Street Shul in the distance, history timeline arches, and an existing mural are all juxtaposed with a modern-day "El Aliso," representing how Boyle Heights's past is reflected in its present.

asian american plaza: “the circle”



- 3 Lawn
- 4 Stepped seating from Hispanic American plaza
- 5 Food trucks & street vendors around sculpture garden
- 6 Community center & cafes (existing buildings re-purposed)
- 7 History & art walk

Just to the east of the Hispanic American plaza is the Asian American Plaza. Its design represents a yin-yang circle, where the “light” space of the symbol is an open lawn space, whereas the “dark” space is a densely planted area. Negative space circles are the absence of focal points and serve as moments for reflection and meditation.



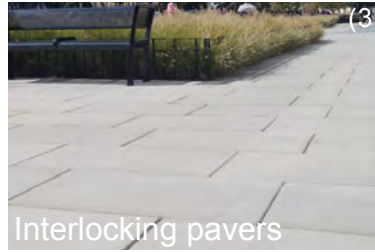
history & art walk



History timeline arches



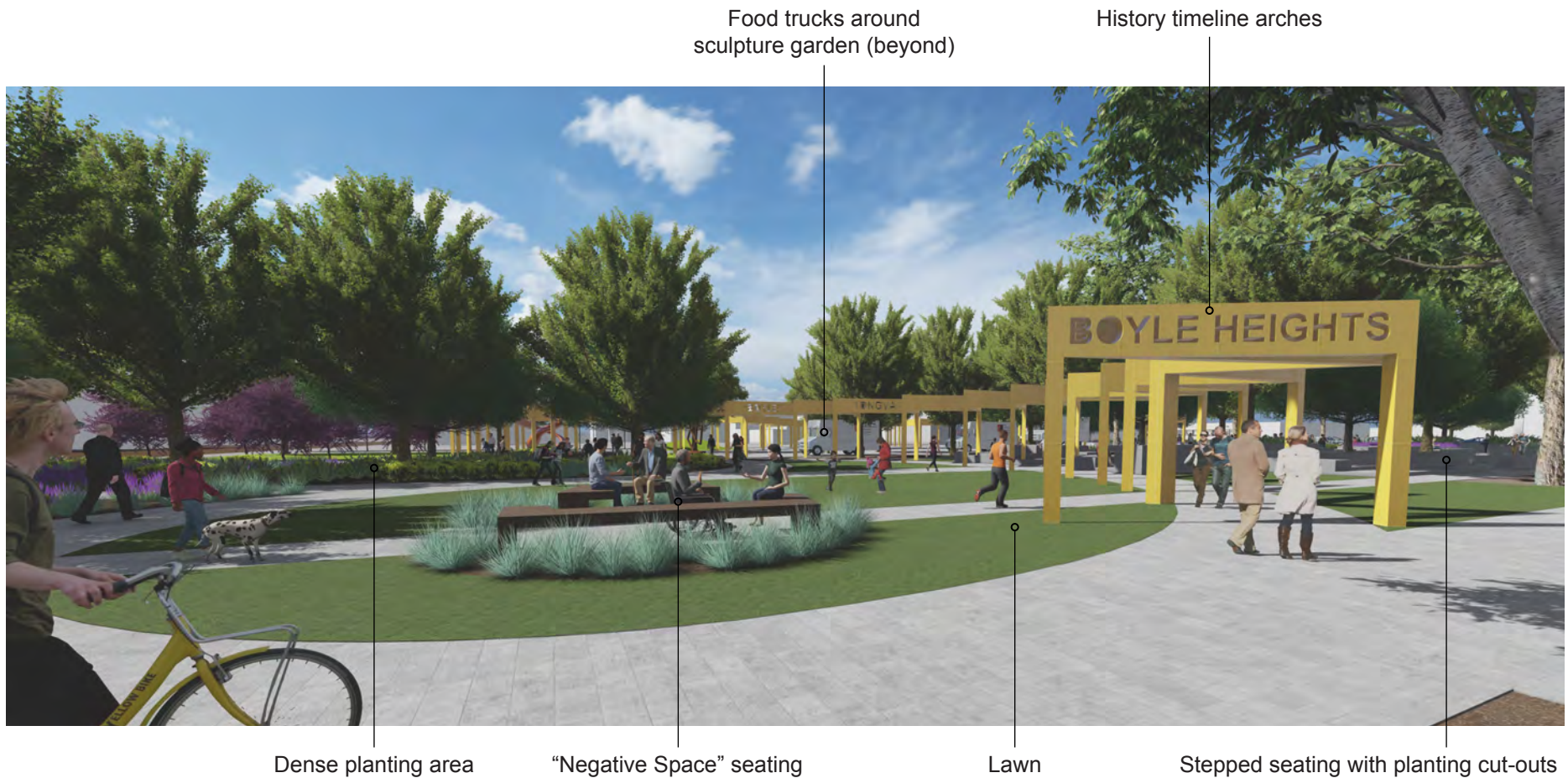
Path timeline & photos



Interlocking pavers



perspective 4: asian american plaza



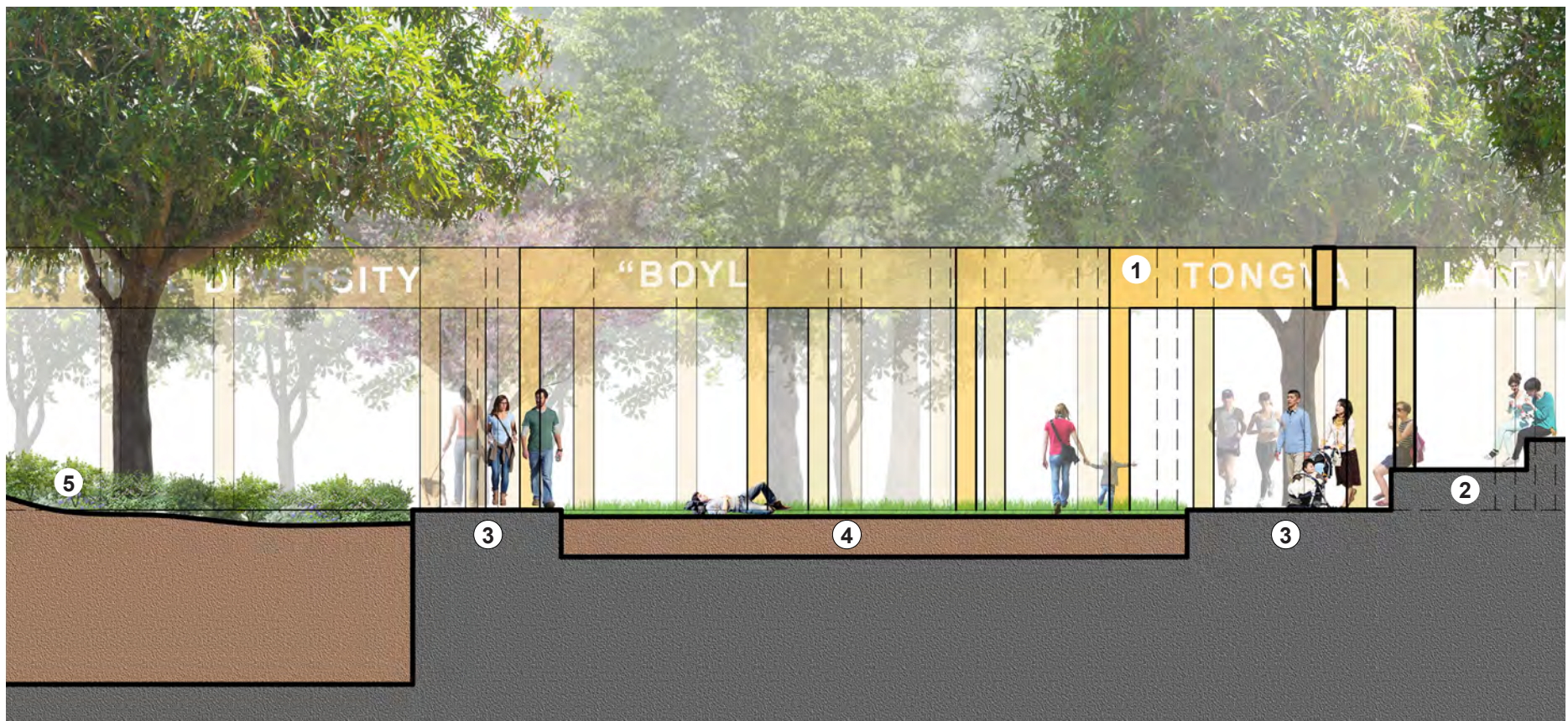
The history & art walk is central to the project, and physically and metaphorically intertwines the project goals together. Laser cut arches create a history timeline walkway that interweaves with the sculpture garden, with a timeline and historical photos embedded in the pathway.



legend

- 1 History timeline arches
- 2 Hispanic American plaza stepped seating
- 3 Pathway
- 4 Asian American plaza lawn area
- 5 Asian American plaza dense planting area

section C: asian american plaza --> hispanic american plaza



This section cuts across the transition zone between the Hispanic American and Asian American plazas. The history & art walk bridges the connection, as does the stepped seating areas.



all cultures: sculpture garden



perspective 5: sculpture garden

Local art sculptures/
art installations

History timeline arches

Food trucks around
sculpture garden

Stepped seating with planting cut-outs
(Hispanic American plaza)



Sculpture garden
central lawn

Dense planting area
(Asian American plaza)

"Negative Space" seating
(Asian American plaza)

Just like the history & art walk, the sculpture garden is a multicultural space, representing all cultures. The sculpture garden features art from local artists, and is surrounded by the history & art walk.

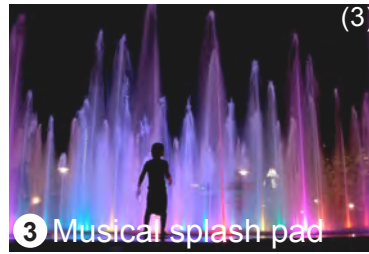
african american plaza: “the line”



1 Striated hardscape



2 Planting --> bench



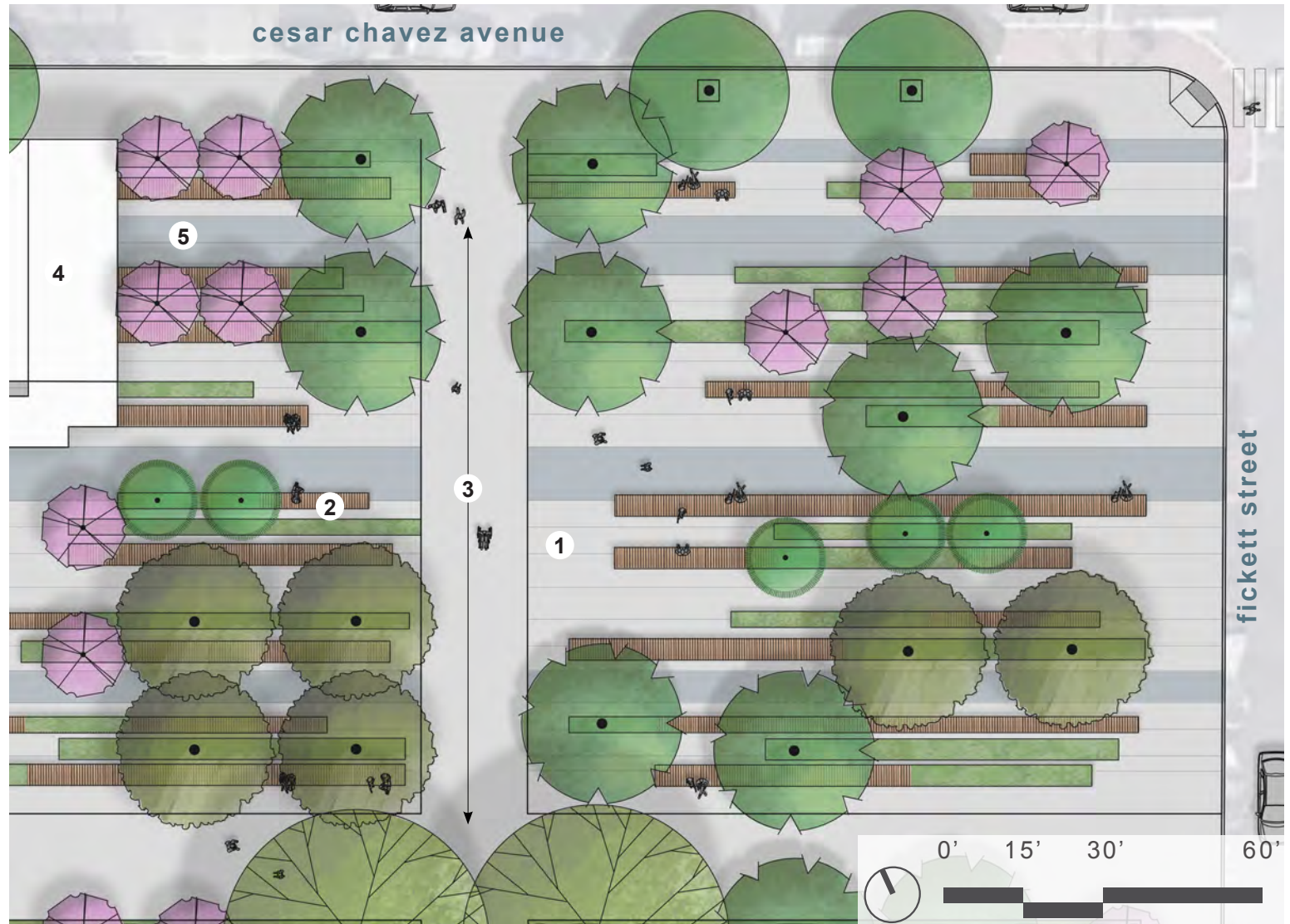
3 Musical splash pad



4 Community center & cafes (existing buildings re-purposed)

5 Outdoor “classrooms”

The African American cultural plaza is the last of the 4 cultural plazas. Designed after piano keys, where the white keys are the hardscape and the black keys are the planting and seating areas. Down the center of the plaza is the “line”, a main circulation pathway that is also a timed musical splash pad that leads into the adjacent playground.



creating new murals: reclaiming history

legend

- 1 New mural on community center & cafes
- 2 Planting area
- 3 Benches coming out of planting areas
- 4 Sidewalk (Cesar Chavez Avenue)

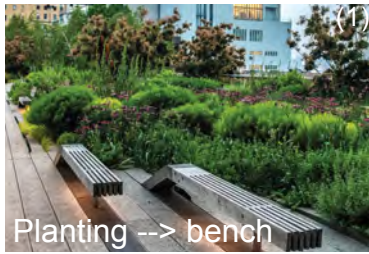


section D: african american plaza

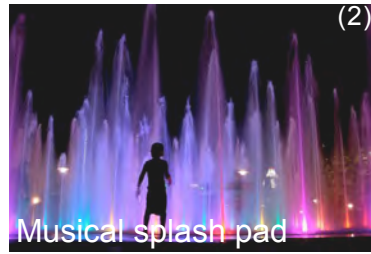


One way in which history is reclaimed for the Black community is through the creation of a mural that celebrates African American members of the community, past and present. Some seating areas face each other, creating “outdoor classrooms”, even more important due to the pandemic.





Planting --> bench



Musical splash pad



Striped concrete



perspective 6: african american plaza

Amphitheater stage
(beyond)

Community center & cafes
(re-purposed bldg.)

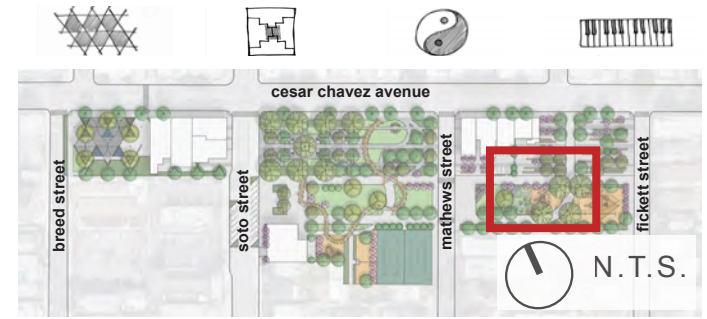


Benches

New mural celebrating African
American history in Boyle Heights

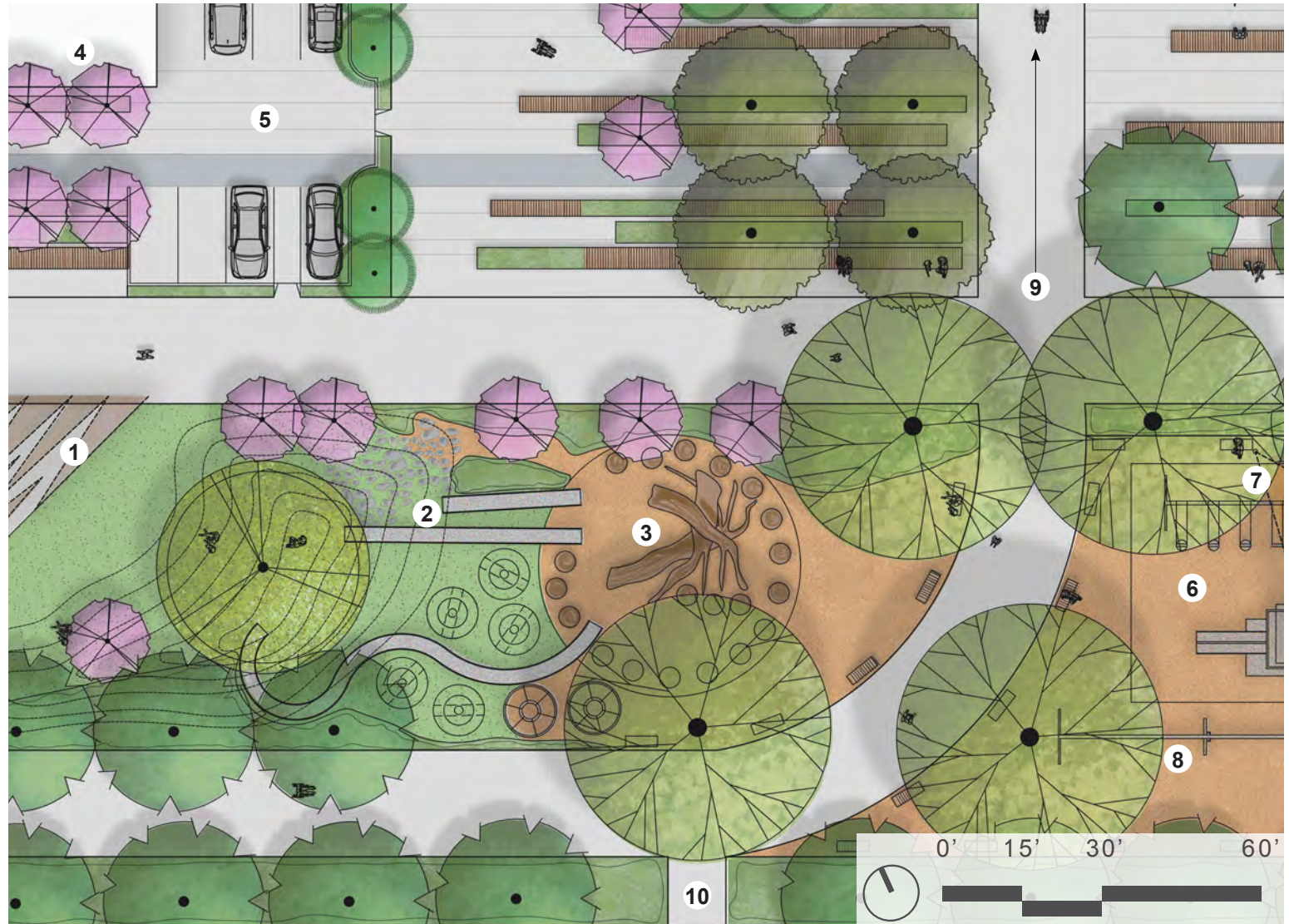
Planting strips

all cultures: amphitheater & playground

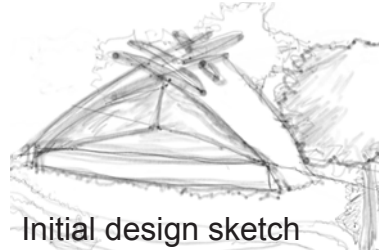
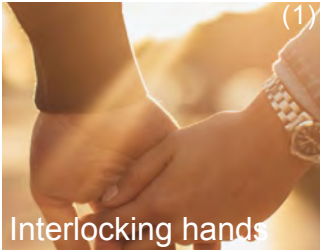


- 4 Community center & cafes (existing buildings re-purposed)
- 5 New parking lot
- 6 "Square" play area
- 7 "Triangle" shade sail & play area (beyond)
- 8 Zip "line"
- 9 Musical "line" water feature & splash pad
- 10 Alleyway entrance

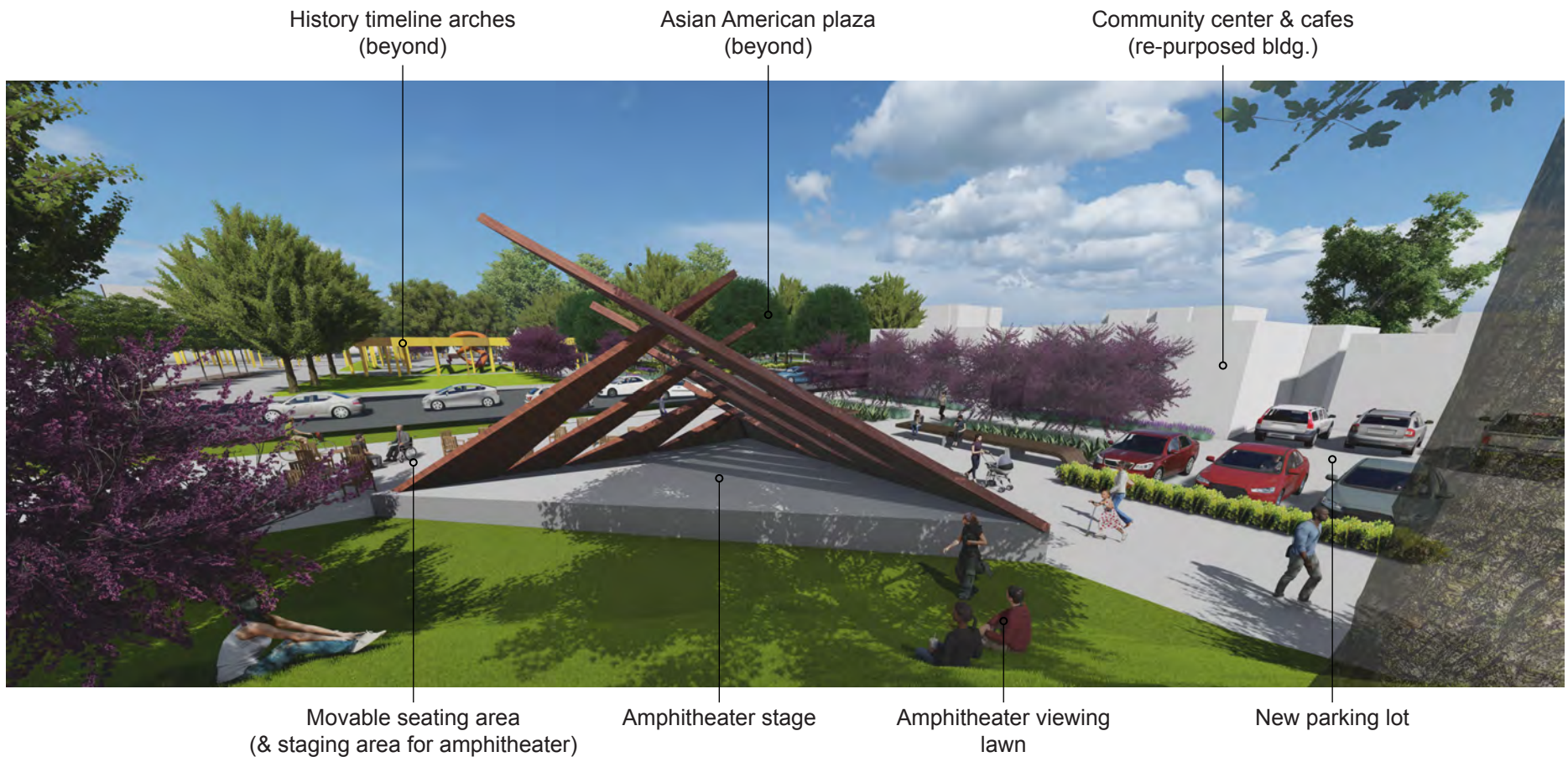
Finally, the amphitheater and playground represent all cultures. A 4:1 viewing-lawn slope allows slides to come off the other side of the slope and lead into the playground, intertwining the amphitheater and the playground spaces together.



amphitheater: a multicultural space



perspective 7: interlocking hands over the stage



The awning over the amphitheater is probably the most obvious reference to interlocking hands. As a multicultural space that is meant to reclaim the site's and community's lost history, it is no coincidence.

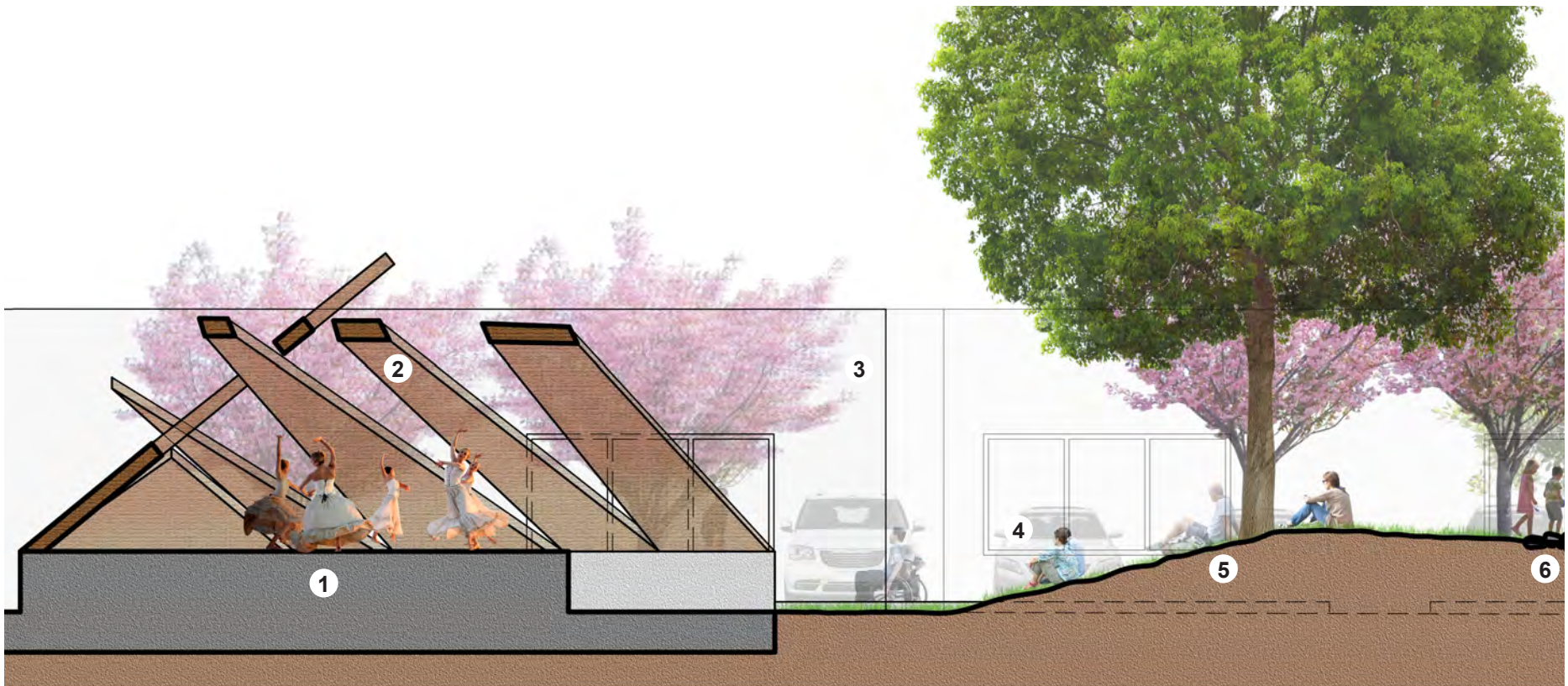
amphitheater: a multicultural space

legend

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1 Amphitheater stage | 4 New parking lot |
| 2 Amphitheater awning: interlocking hands | 5 Lawn |
| 3 Community center & cafes | 6 Rock climbing (to playground) |



section E: stage & lawn --> playground



The stage, viewing lawn, and climbing rocks work together to create a seamless connection between the amphitheater and playground spaces. This is a space that would unite the community, in performance and play.



underlying tongva history



cesar chavez avenue & residential sidewalks



Along Cesar Chavez, wood-stamped concrete will give the sidewalk a unique feel and pay homage to Tongva boat-making techniques



Ground art installations along Cesar Chavez Ave. would display traditional Tongva basket-weaving patterns and involve community efforts

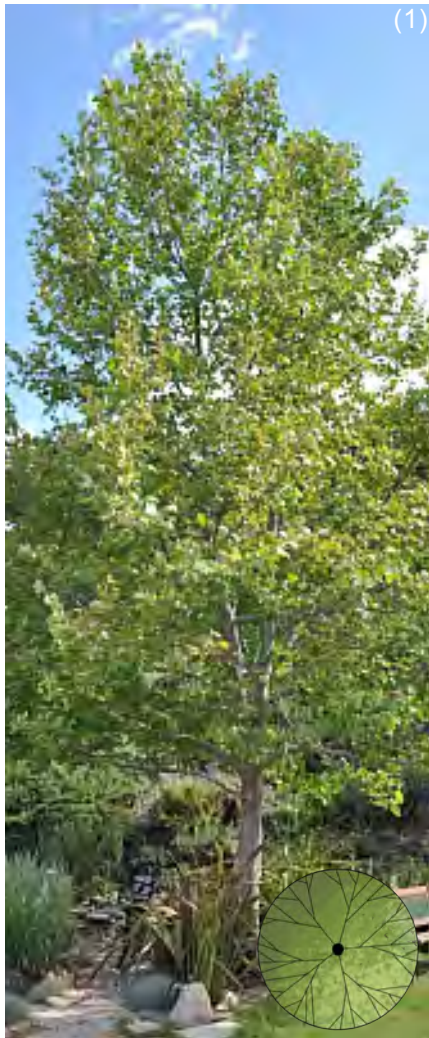


For Breed, Soto, Mathews, and Fickett Streets, the sidewalk will take a more subtle approach: leaf stamping using leaves from plants within the Tongva's food culture, such as salvias

By using paver patterns, art installations, and textures on the sidewalks along Cesar Chavez Avenue and the residential streets that lead into the project site, the project will represent the historic underlying culture of Boyle Heights: that of the indigenous Tongva people. In this way, the Boyle Heights community park can be inclusive of all peoples and truly layer Boyle Heights's past in its present.

materials

california native trees: a unifying element



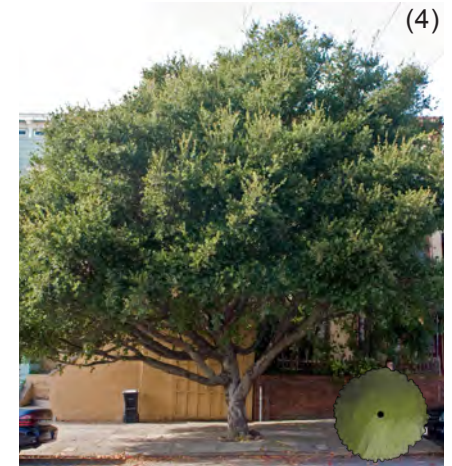
***Platanus racemosa* / Sycamore**
California native



***Acer negundo* / Box Elder**
California native



***Umbellularia californica* / California Bay Laurel**
California native



***Quercus agrifolia* / Coast Live Oak**
California native



***Cercis occidentalis* / Western Redbud**
California native



***Morella californica* / California Wax Myrtle**
California native

The trees introduced to the site are all California natives, which is symbolic of one of the things the historic cultures of Boyle Heights have in common: California. The chosen trees also provide wildlife habitat and seasonal interest. Shrubs and groundcover also serve as a unifying element throughout the site, interlocking the historic and current cultures of Boyle Heights – and their respective plazas – with one another. On the other hand, the hardscape materials create individual identities for program spaces within the site.

shrubs & groundcover: a unifying element



**Arctostaphylos 'Sunset' /
Sunset Manzanita**
California native



**Malacothamnus densiflorus /
Bush Mallow**
California native



**Salvia clevelandii 'Allen Chickering' /
Allen Chickering Sage**
California native



Agave attenuata / Fox Tail Agave



**Artemisia californica 'Montara' /
Montara Sagebrush**
California native



**Leymus condensatus 'Canyon
Prince' / Canyon Prince Wild Rye**
California native



Muhlenbergia rigens / Deer Grass
California native



Wisteria sinensis / Chinese Wisteria

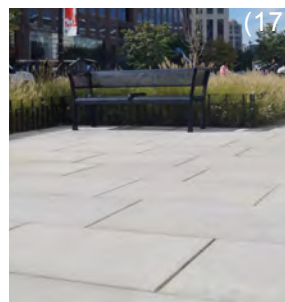
hardscape: individual identities



Ipe Floating Benches
Jewish & Asian American
Plazas



Hexagon Pavers
Jewish American Plaza



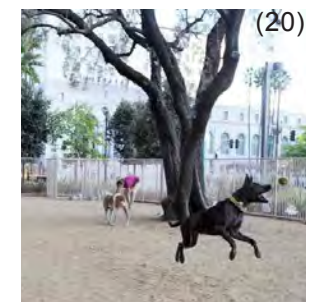
Interlocking Pavers
Hispanic & Asian American
Plaza, Sculpture garden



**Striped / Striated
Concrete**
African American Plaza



Bonded Rubber Mulch
Playground



Decomposed Granite
Dog Parks



conclusion

conclusion

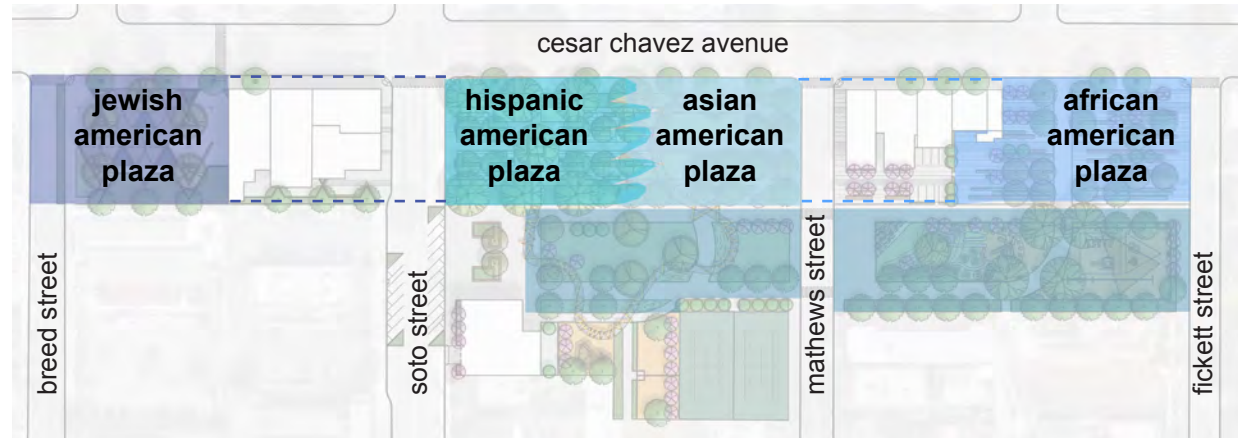
1. address equity

- Stormwater bioswales
- Transportation hubs
- Mixed-use building
- Active & passive recreation
- Community center & cafes
- Amphitheater
- Playground



2. reflect cultural richness

- Jewish American plaza
- Hispanic American plaza
- Asian American plaza
- African American plaza
- Sculpture garden
- Amphitheater
- Playground



3. link past & present

- Museums & cafes
- History (& art) walk
- History monuments



project summary

The project's initial goals were: to address equity, reflect cultural richness, and link Boyle Heights's past and present. Through the design metaphor of interlocking hands, the project successfully met these goals and created spaces rich with history and culture for a community that is in desperate need of public open space.

By creating 4 main cultural plazas up against Cesar Chavez Avenue, formerly Brooklyn Avenue, the historic street is activated and re-claimed as a culturally-vibrant and reflective open space for Boyle Heights. Framing existing murals and creating new ones, celebrating local art in the form of a multicultural sculpture garden, and history timeline arches and walkway all speak to and embrace the rich and diverse history of Boyle Heights.

Underneath it all is the underlying fabric of Los Angeles and the history that the city carries with it. The Tongva people who once occupied this area of Los Angeles are commemorated through the sidewalk patterns along Cesar Chavez Avenue, as well as Breed, Soto, Mathews, and Fickett Streets.

While landscape materials serve as a unifying element throughout the site, hardscape materials embrace the individual identities of the cultures. By embracing both what makes us different and what we share in common, this Capstone project brings communities of Boyle Heights's past and present together.

acknowledgments

Thank you to my Capstone instructors Meg Coffee, Jim Pickel, Pamela Brief, and Eileen Alduenda for their tireless mentorship and guidance. Their enthusiasm for each individual project, encouragement, and belief in each of our abilities as designers kept pushing me to do better.

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Thank you to UCLA Extension Landscape Architecture Program Director Stephanie Landregan for her vision and constant devotion to the students.

A special thank you also to my fellow student cohort; I've learned so much from you, and I have appreciated your encouragement and friendship throughout this program.

Finally, thank you to my family, whose unconditional love and support means the world to me.

This project is dedicated to Aaron, Akiva, Meir, and Lyla, whose love inspired my design metaphor.



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Rivkah Spolin, taken April 12, 2021.

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Rivkah Spolin, taken July 7, 2021.

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