

The current proposal is:

Preservation Department – Item 1, LPC-25-12960

**St. Mark's Playground – Crown Heights North III Historic District
Borough of Brooklyn**

Note: this is a Public Meeting item. No public testimony will be received today as the hearing on this item is closed.



Parks

St. Mark's Playground

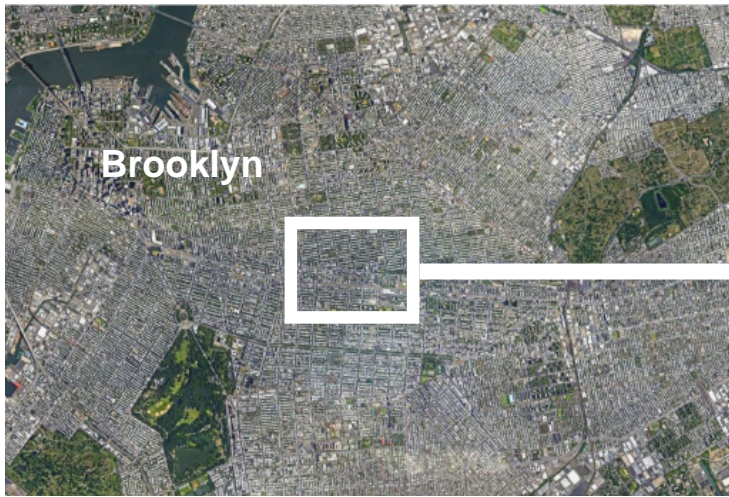
Community Parks Initiative

Located on St. Mark's Avenue between Kingston and Albany Avenues in the Borough of Brooklyn.

Landmarks Preservation Commission
December 16, 2025

Total Budget: \$2.83m
Mayor, Eric Adams - \$ 2.83m

Project Size: 0.263 ac



City



Neighborhood

- NYC Parks is reconstructing St. Mark's Playground and adjacent sidewalks
- This Park is on NYC DOT Property
- St. Mark's Ave is one of two Superblocks from the 1960s
- The sidewalk treatment adjacent to the playground will set a precedent for how the sidewalk should be treated on the rest of the block.

St. Mark's Playground Project Boundary
-Managed by NYC Parks



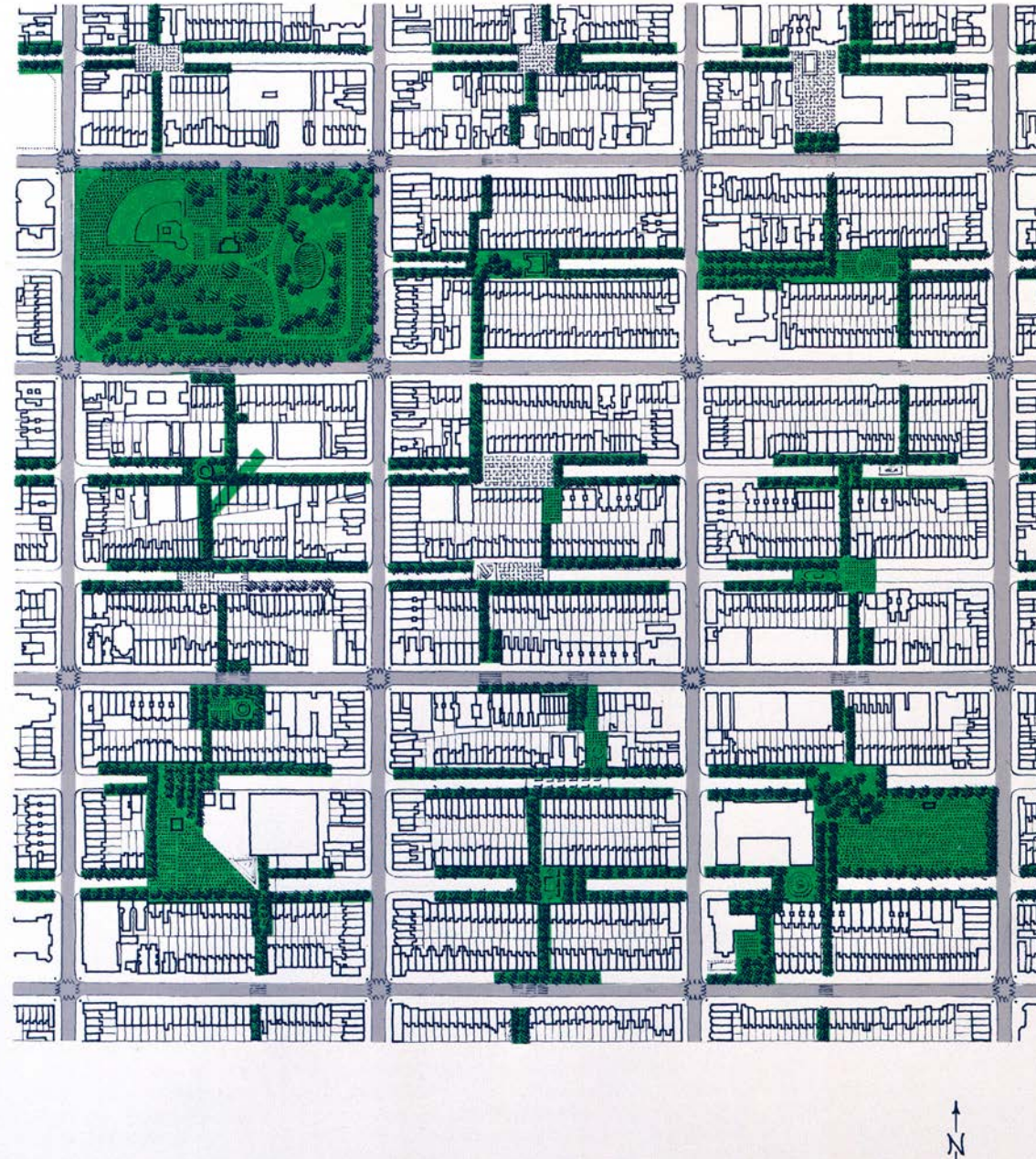
← St. Mark's Avenue →



NYC Parks

Community Parks Initiative

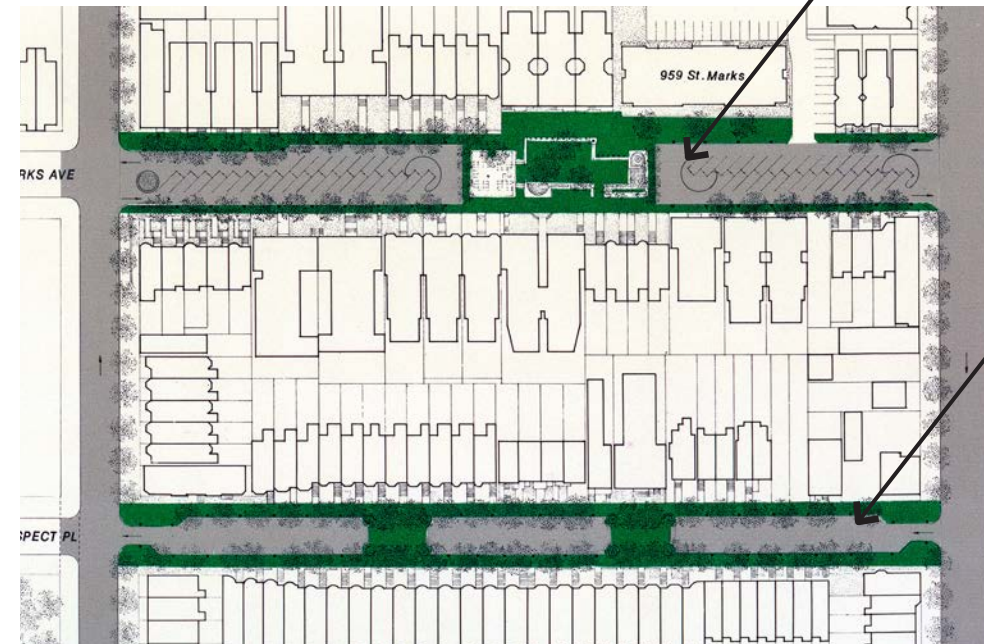
St. Mark's Playground | St. Mark's Avenue - Project Location & Background



I.M. Pei Master Plan - Not implemented

Courtesy of Pei Cobb Freed & Partners. Not for publication without prior authorization

- **Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corp (BSRC)**
- Formed during the 1960s as the country's first federally funded community development corporation
- **Architect I.M. Pei created a master plan for the neighborhood including the Superblock concept**
- **Landscape Architect, M. Paul Friedberg designed St. Mark's Playground Features (1969)**
- **NYC Parks Fully Reconstructed the Park in 2002**



Constructed Pilot Superblocks

Courtesy of Pei Cobb Freed & Partners. Not for publication without prior authorization

St. Mark's Superblock
-Includes Mid-Block Park



-Bird's Eye of park circa 1970s
Photo courtesy of Gil Amiaga - Not for publication without prior authorization

Prospect Place Superblock



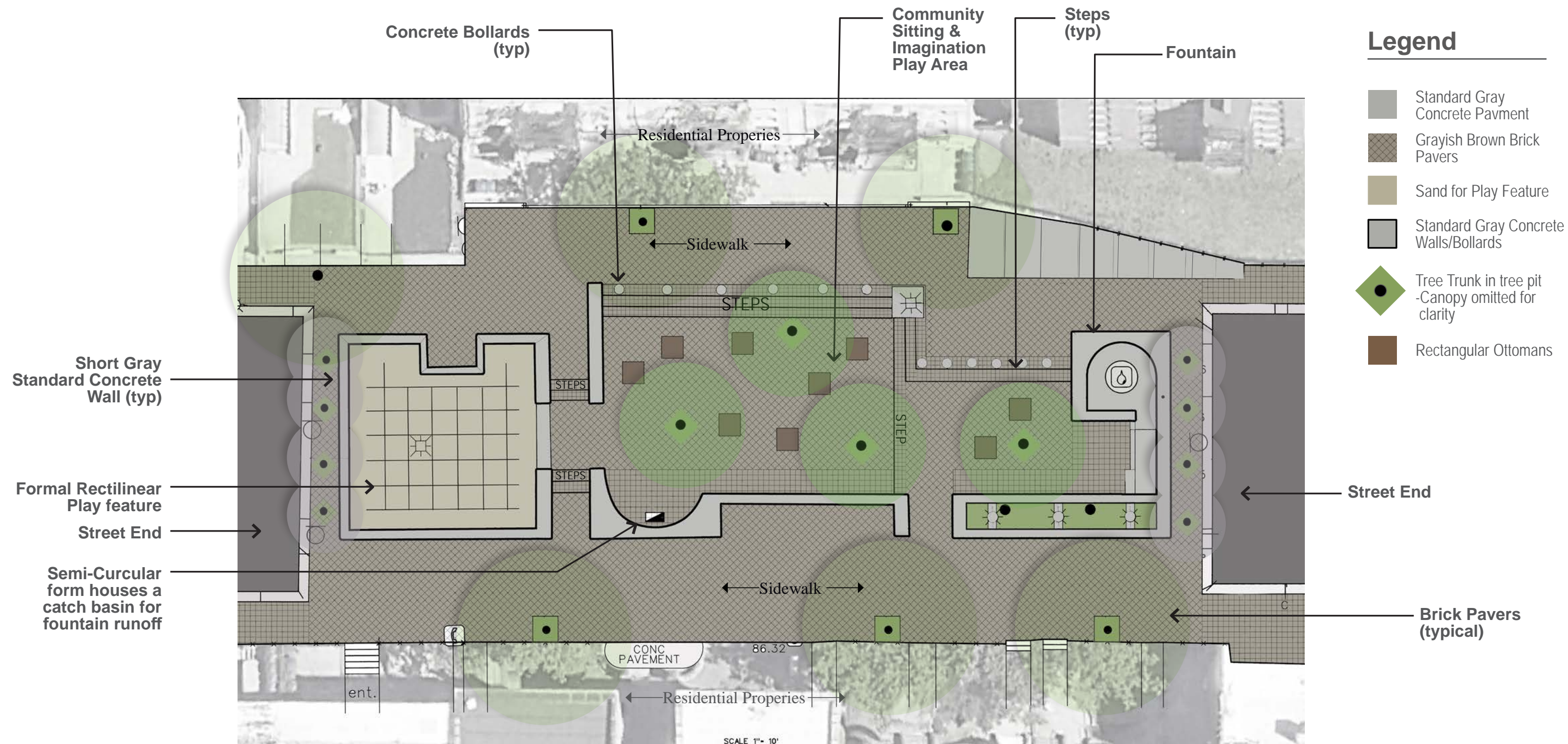
-Mid Block traffic calming circa 1970s
Photo courtesy of Gil Amiaga - Not for publication without prior authorization



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St. Mark's Playground | History - 1960's Conceptual Neighborhood Redevelopment & Pilot Superblocks



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St. Mark's Playground | Playground History - Pei/Friedberg Plan (1969)

N



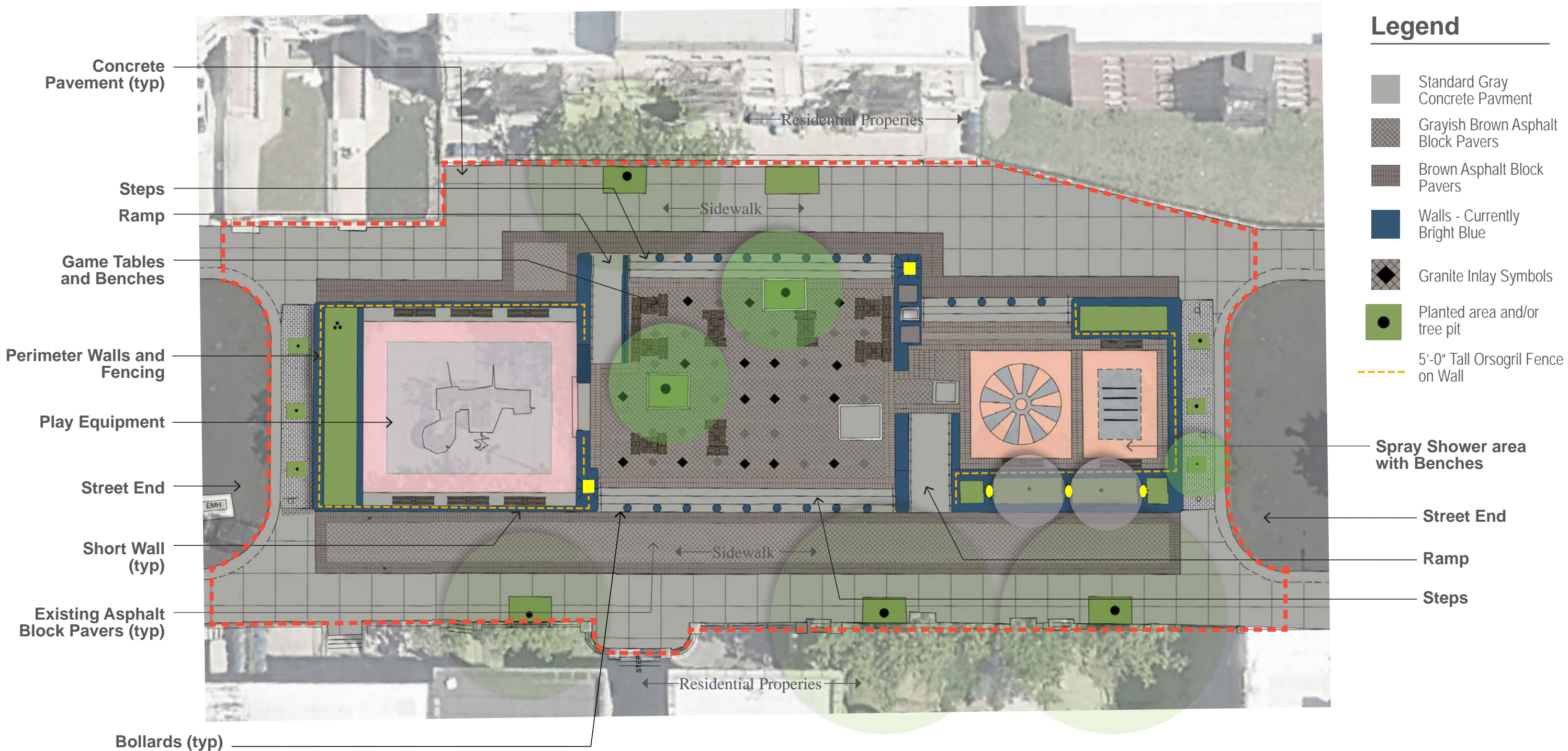
Photo courtesy of Gil Amiaga - Not for publication without prior authorization



Photo courtesy of George Cserna - Not for publication without prior authorization



Photo courtesy of Gil Amiaga - Not for publication without prior authorization

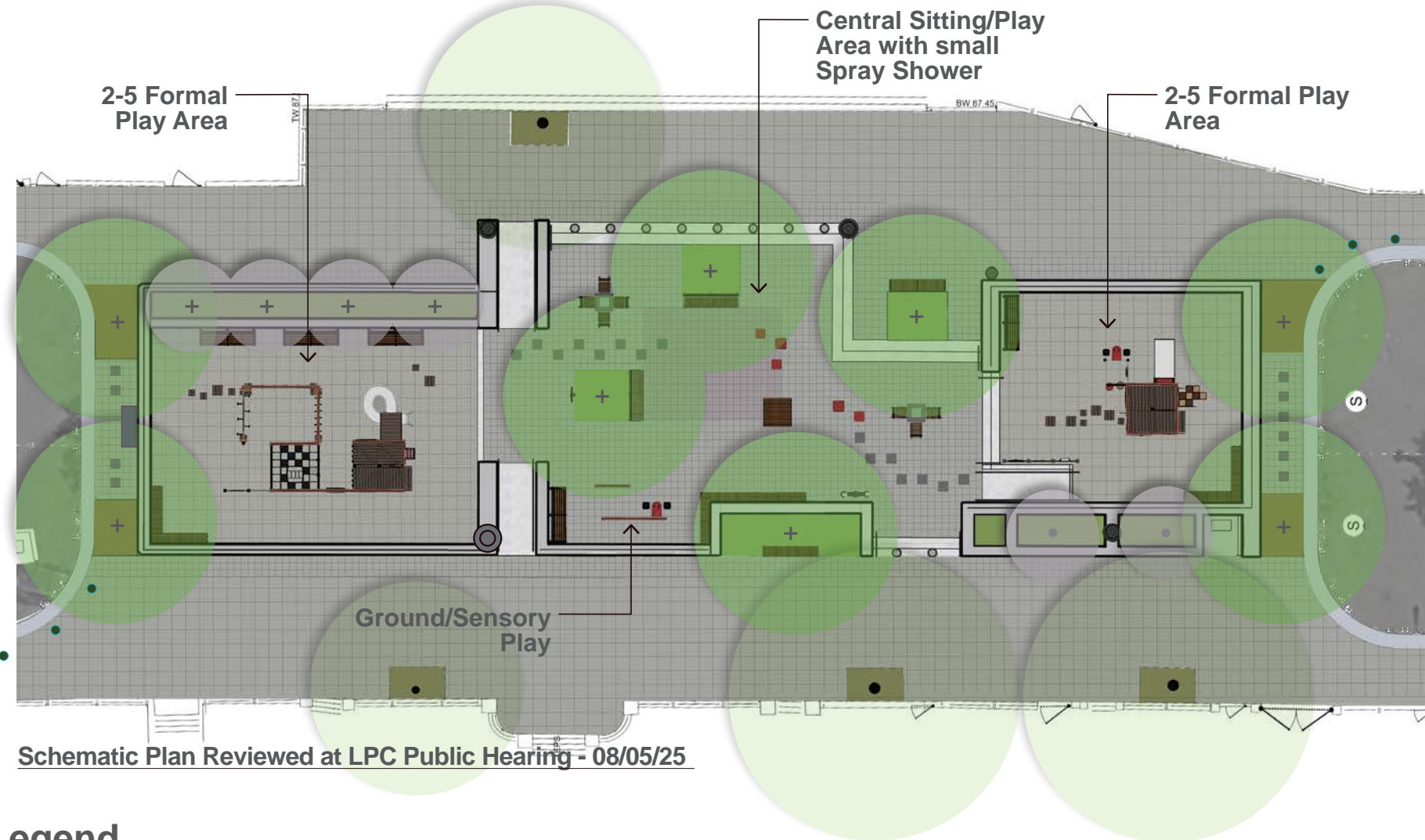


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St. Mark's Playground | Existing Playground Condition - 2002 DPR Design

N





Commissioners' Feedback

1. Further Information on Community Input
2. Include more Playfulness & Whimsy (circular elements)
3. Cohesion of Furnishings
4. Pavement Color & Integration
-Brown vs. Gray
5. Fencing Design: Pickets, Spacing & Color

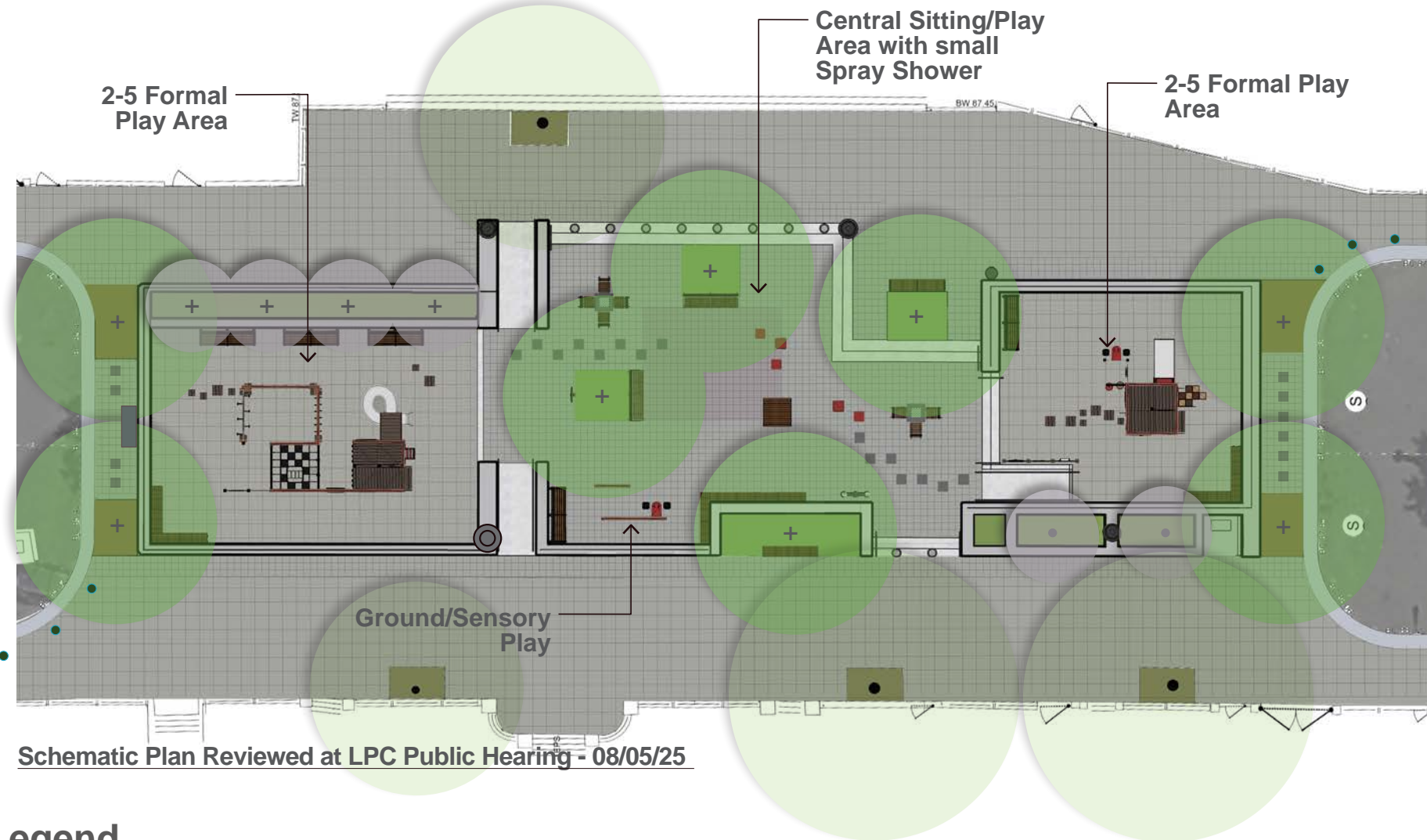
Legend

	Concrete Walls - Parks Gray		12"x12" Gray Concrete Pavers		1964 World's Fair Bench - Types Vary		Proposed Shade Trees
	Sidewalk Pavement - Landmarks Gray Concrete with 24"sq scoring pattern		12" x 12" 'Quarry Red' Concrete Pavers for Spray Shower		Sitting/Play Cubes		Proposed Ornamental Trees
	Reclaimed Granite Symbol Inlays		Concrete and RPL Ottoman for sitting and play		Game Table w/ 1964 WF chairs		Security Lighting







Community Parks Initiative

St. Mark's Playground | Design Reviewed at LPC Public Hearing - Schematic - 08/05/25 - Commissioner's Feedback



Schematic Plan Reviewed at LPC Public Hearing - 08/05/25

Legend

	Concrete Walls - Parks Gray		12"x12" Gray Concrete Pavers		1964 World's Fair Bench - Types Vary		Proposed Shade Trees
	Sidewalk Pavement - Landmarks Gray Concrete with 24"sq scoring pattern		12" x 12" 'Quarry Red' Concrete Pavers for Spray Shower		Sitting/Play Cubes		Proposed Ornamental Trees
	Reclaimed Granite Symbol Inlays		Concrete and RPL Ottoman for sitting and play		Game Table w/ 1964 WF chairs		Security Lighting

1. Community Input and Playground Design:

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES:

- Noise & Nighttime Activity Concerns
- Expand Formal Playground & Play
- Seating Amenities
 - Benches w/ Backs
 - Game Tables (provide 3rd table if possible)
- Playground should Accommodate all ages and abilities
- Vehicular Conflict & Safety - Vehicular Conflict & Safety
- Accessibility

2. Include more Playfulness & Whimsy (circular elements)

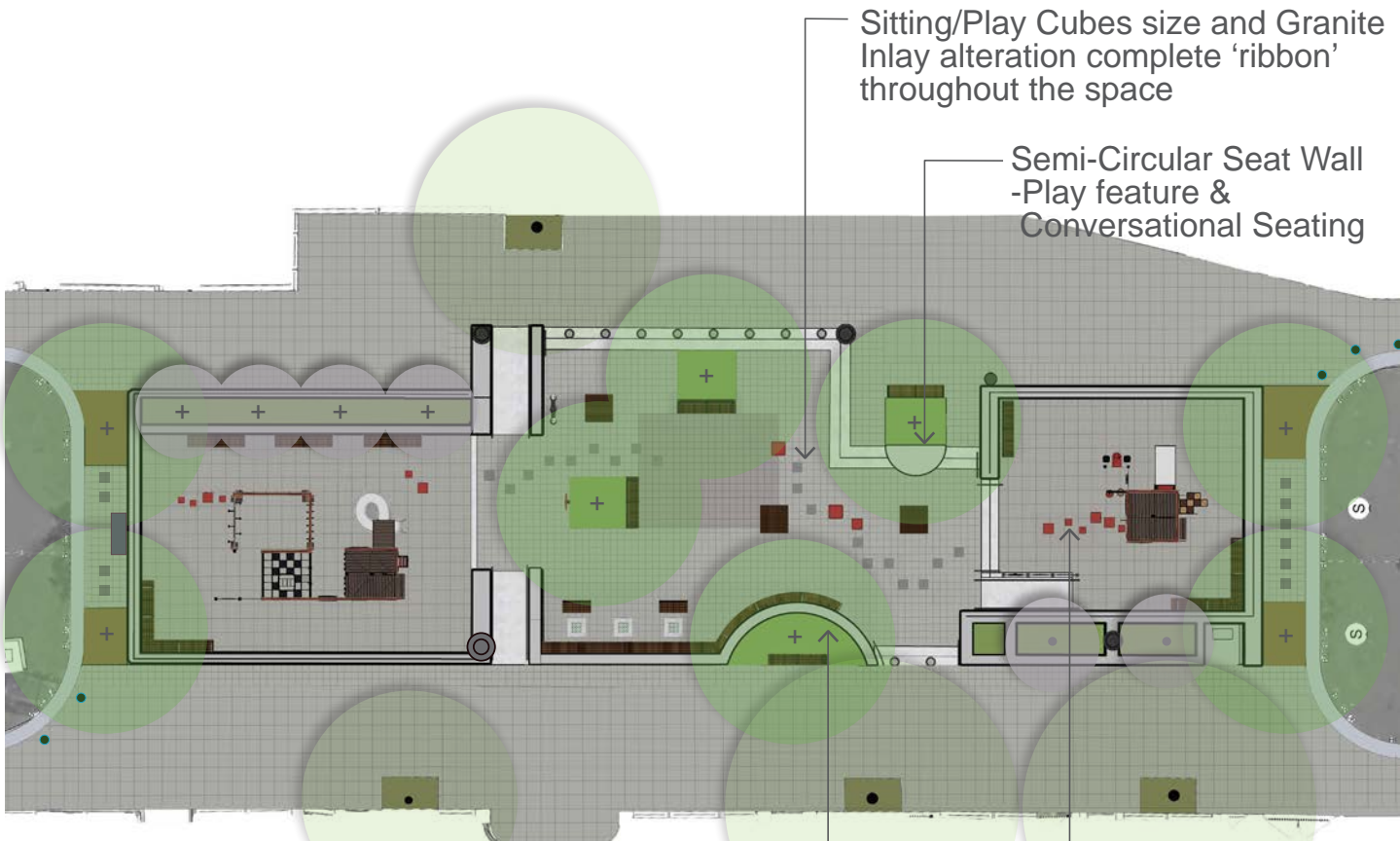
- Circular features included
- The 'Ribbon' of granite inlays and play/sitting cubes completed through the central space
- Cubes within Playground changed to Red

Commissioner's expressed concerns about purely rectilinear forms in plan



Schematic Plan Reviewed at LPC Public Hearing - 08/05/25

Rectangular Wall w/ Floating Bench on Park side



Revised Schematic Plan

Circular form w/ Interior Floating Bench allows for different views

Playground cubes changed to red



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Community Parks Initiative

St. Mark's Playground | 2 - Comparison Slide - Previously Reviewed vs. Revised Plan



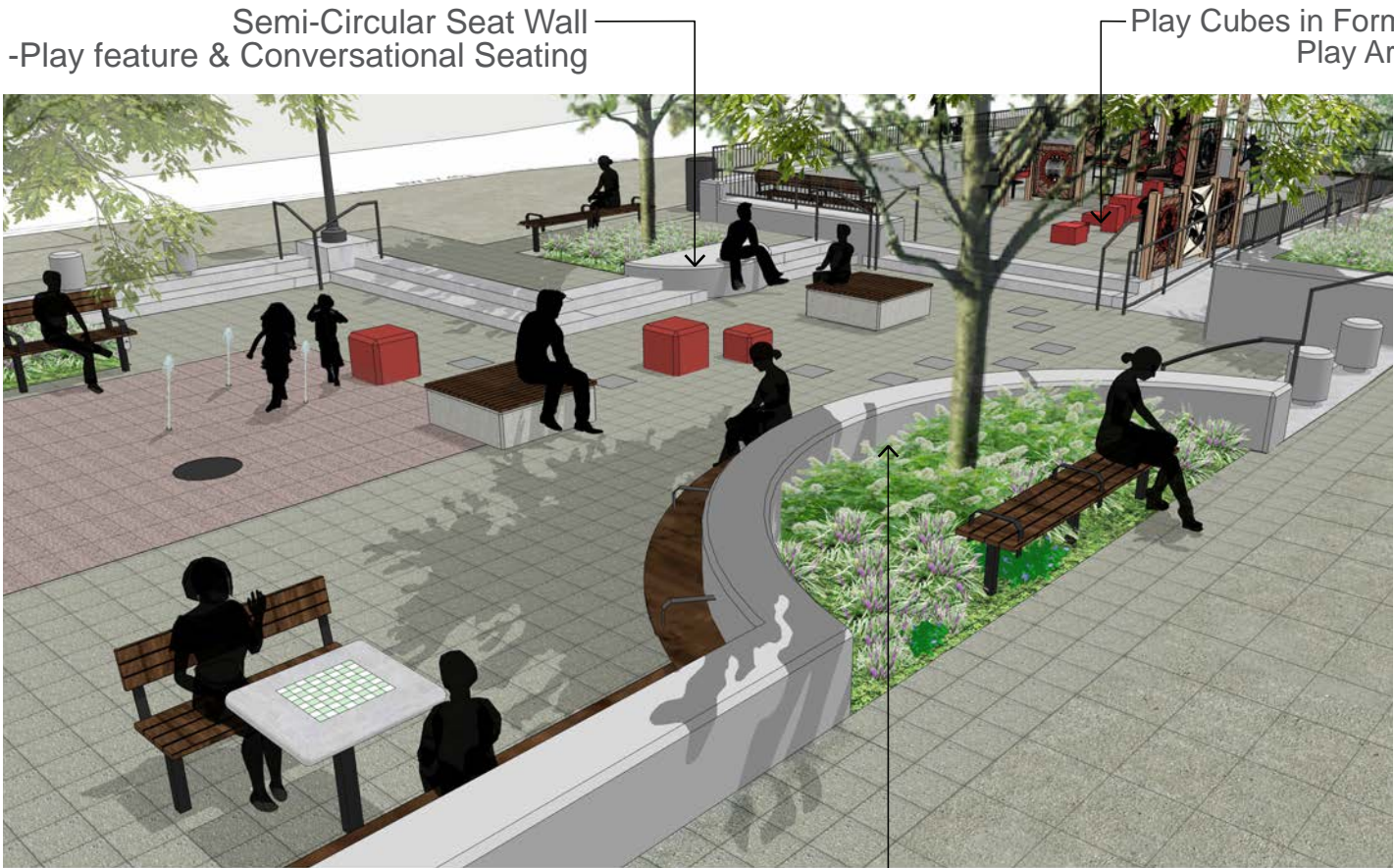
2. Include more Playfulness & Whimsy (circular elements)

- Circular features included creating movement and other sitting opportunities.
- The ‘Ribbon’ of granite inlays and play/sitting cubes completed through the central space
- Cubes within Playground changed to Red



3D of Central Space Reviewed at LPC Public Hearing - 08/05/25

Rectangular Wall w/
Floating Bench on Park
side



Proposed 3D of Central Space

Semi-Circular form w/
Interior Floating Bench
allows for different views



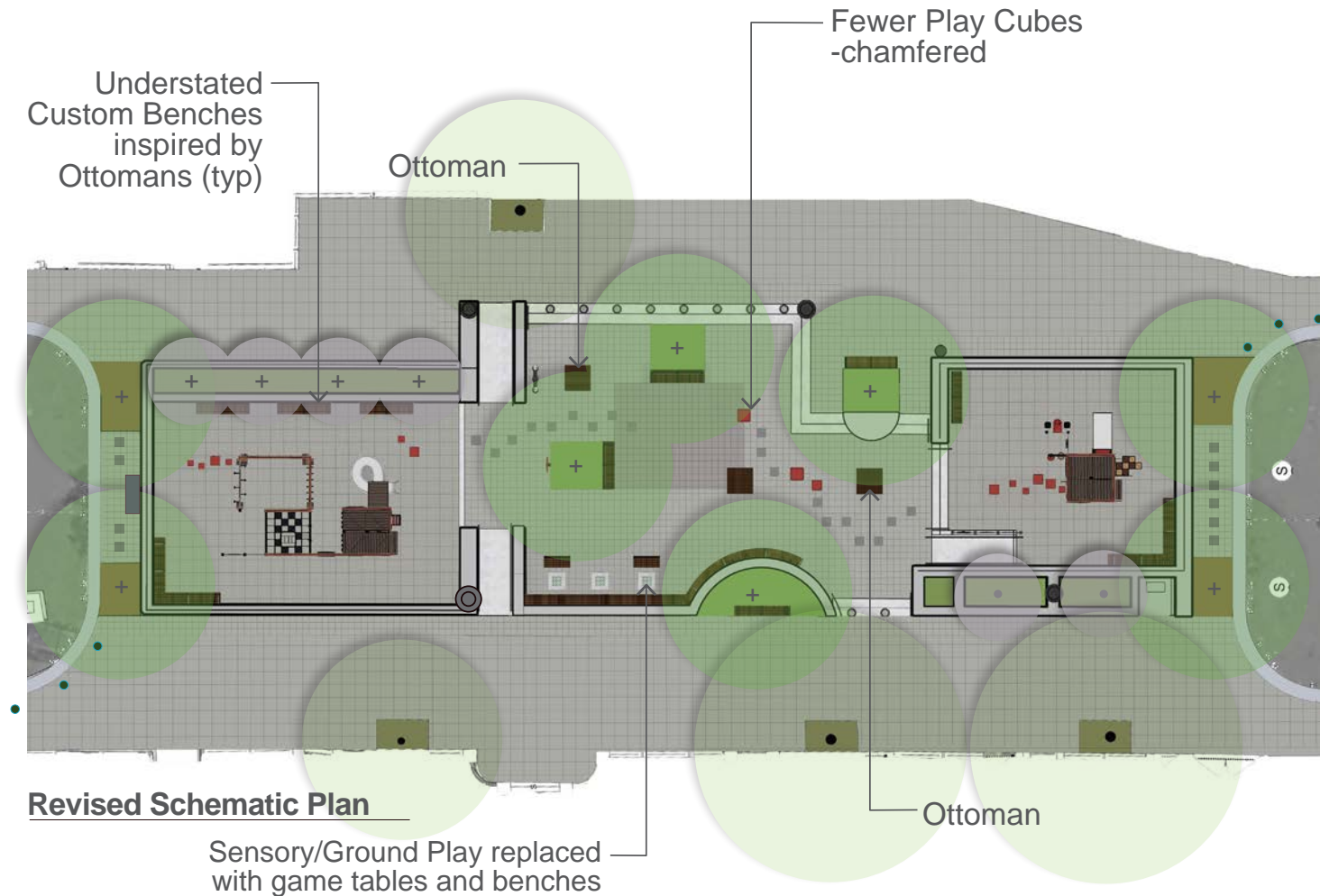
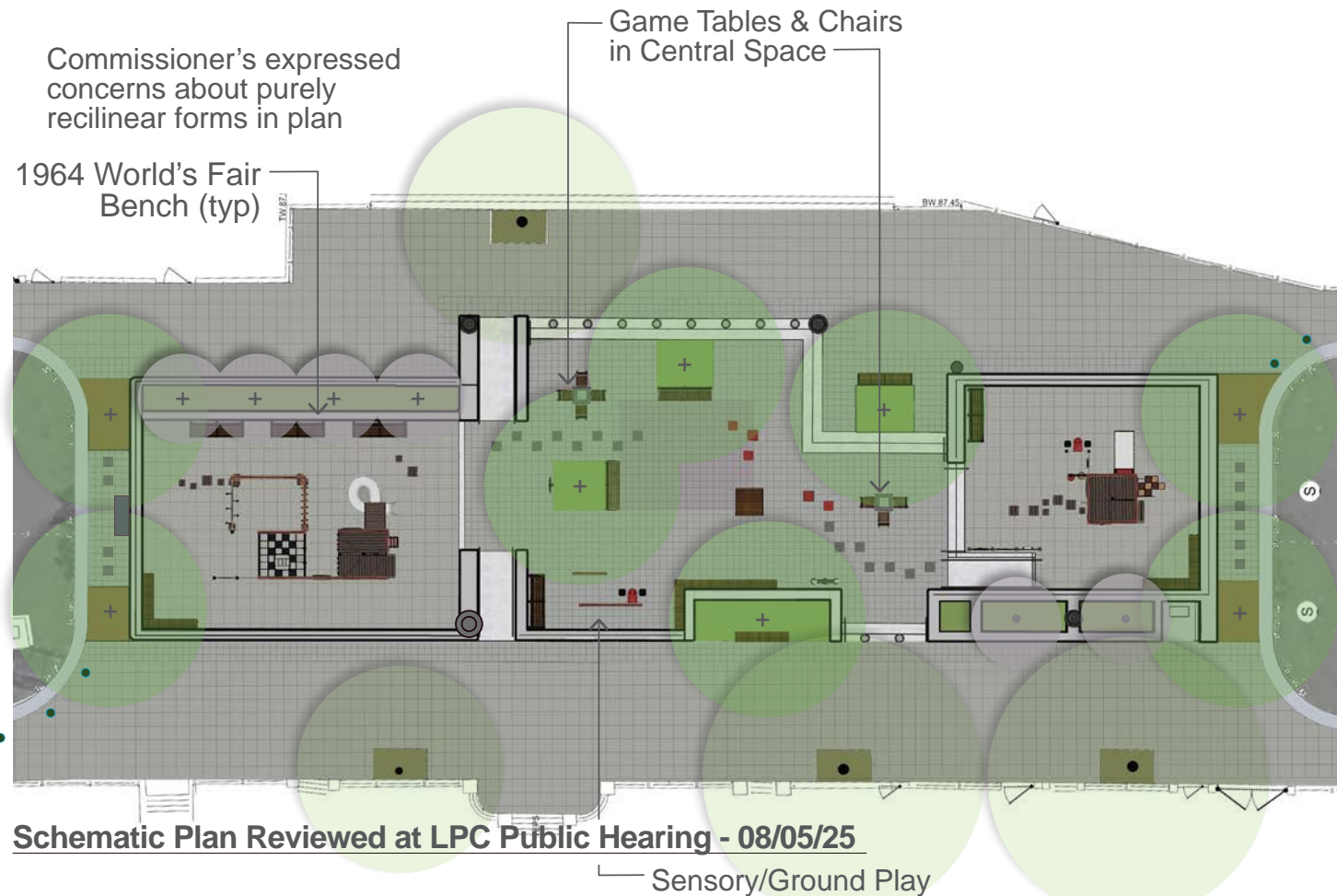
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St. Mark's Playground | 2 - Comparison Slide - Previously Reviewed vs. Revised 3D

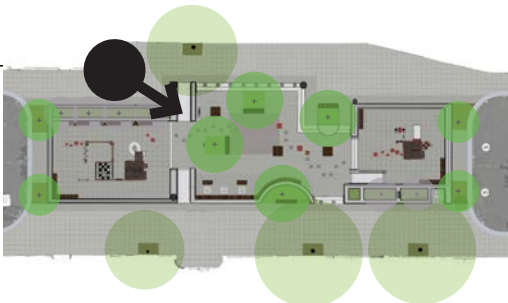
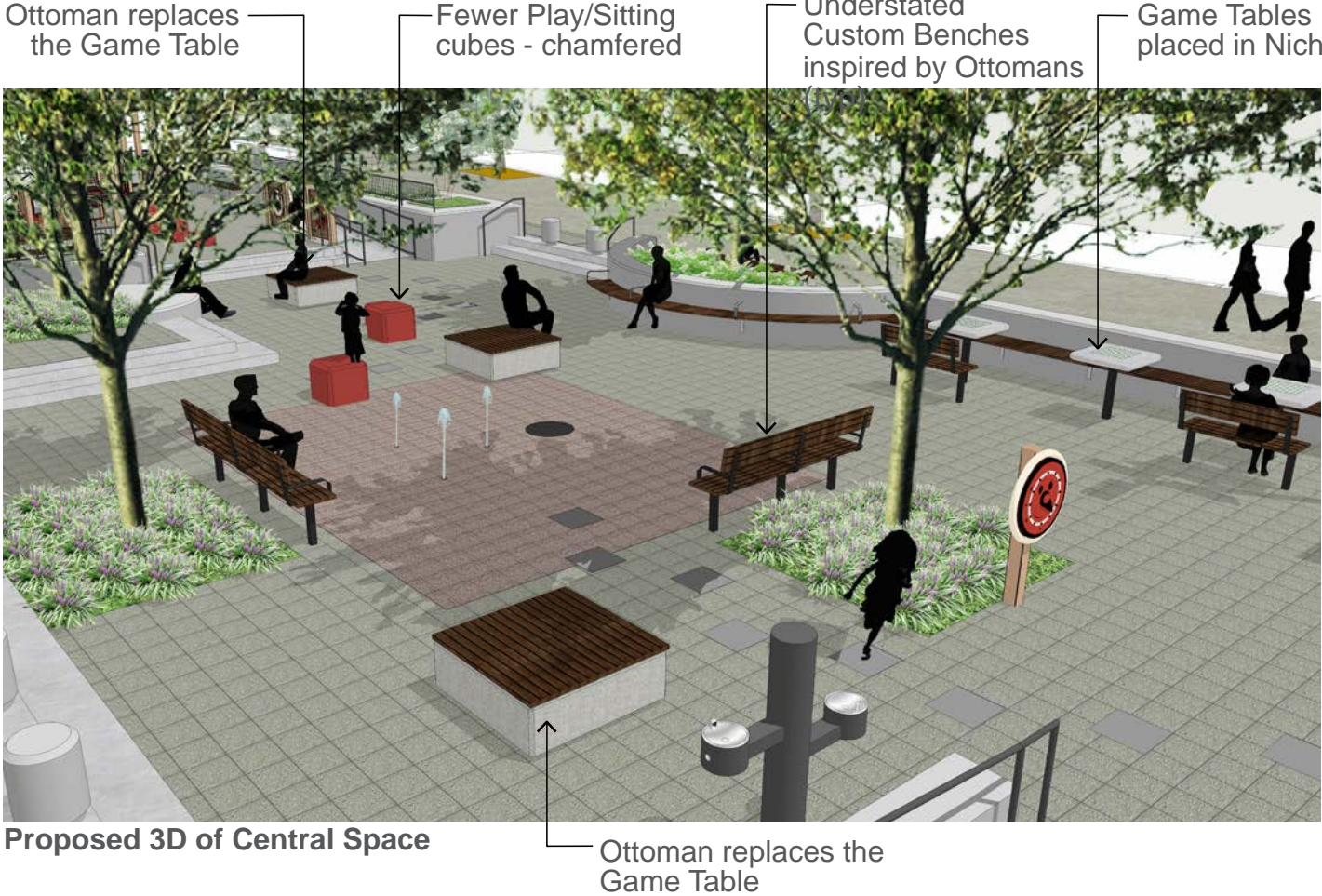
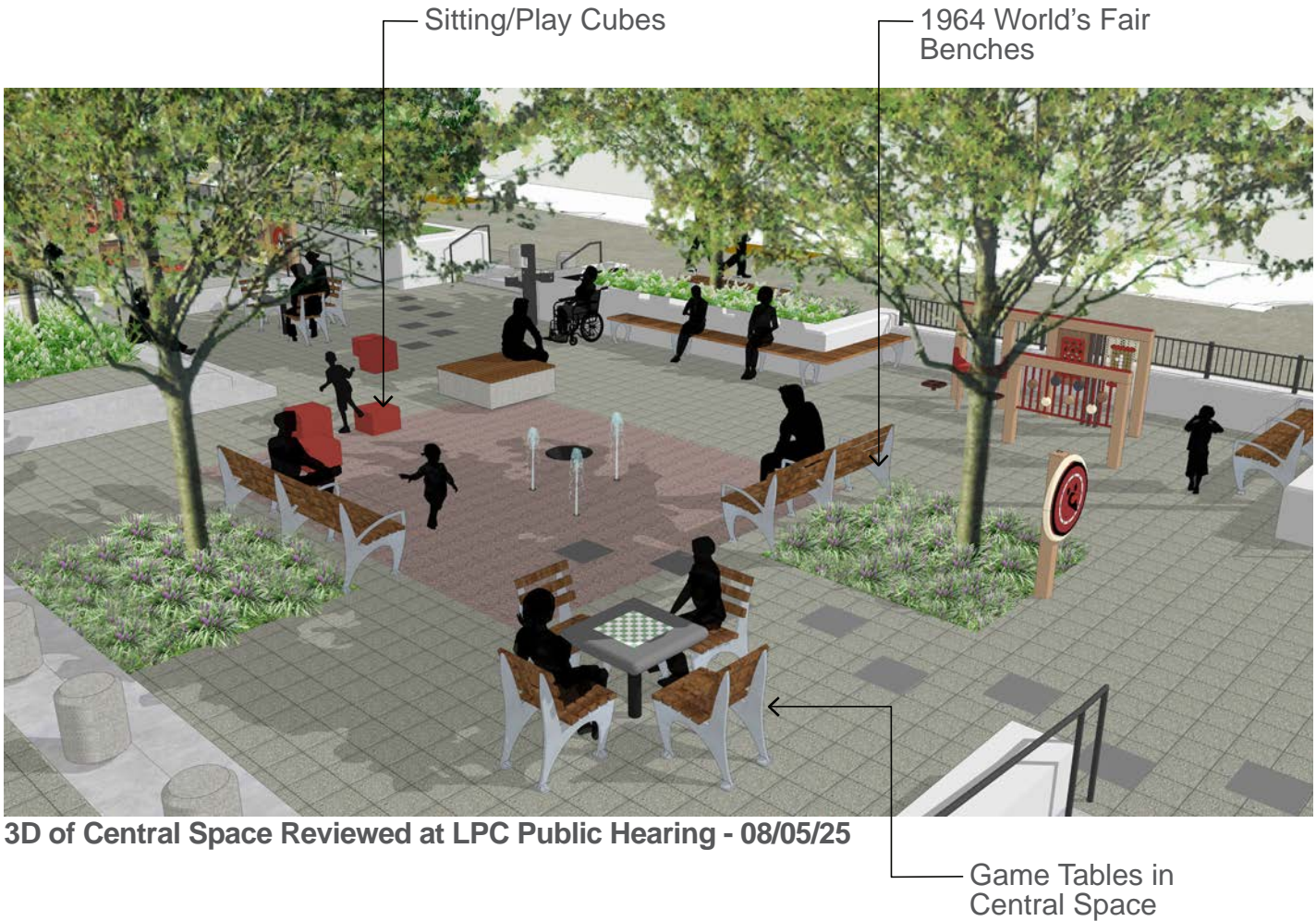
3. Cohesion of Furnishings

- Understated Custom Benches inspired by the Ottoman replaces the 1964 World's Fair Benches
- Game Tables Moved to the Niche
- Two ottomans added in the previous location of Game Tables
- Fewer Play/Sitting Cubes - chamfered
- Brown RPL to be used for all seating and Play equipment decking



3. Simplicity & Cohesion of Furnishings

- Understated Custom Benches inspired by the Ottoman replaces the 1964 World's Fair Benches
- Game Tables Moved to the Niche
- Two ottomans added in the previous location of Game Tables
- Fewer Play/Sitting Cubes - chamfered
- Brown RPL to be used for all seating and Play equipment decking

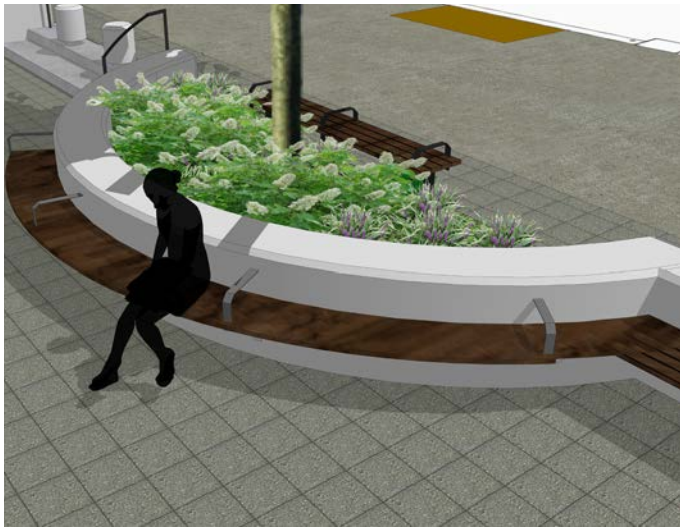




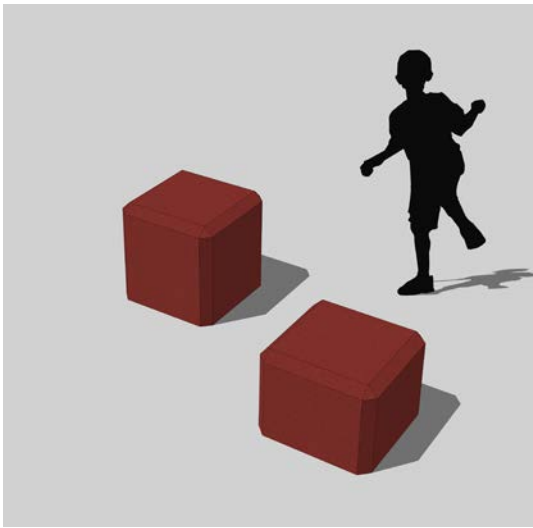
4'x4' Chamfered Concrete and RPL Ottoman



Backless Bench



Chamfered Semi-circular Concrete Wall Floating Bench



Chamfered Colored Concrete Cubes



Custom Bench - 8'-0" w/ Arm Rests



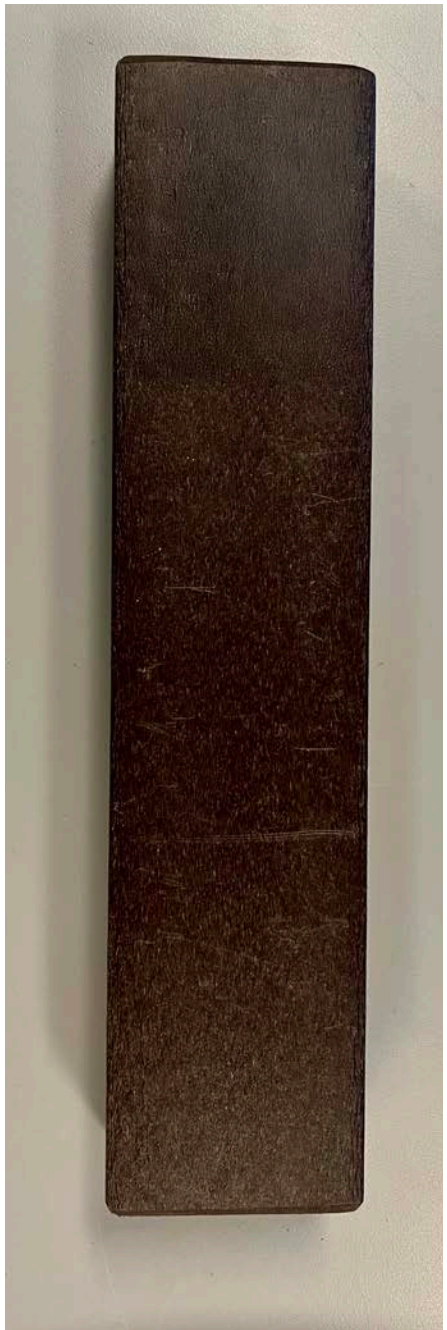
Custom Bench - 4'-0" - Armless



L-Shaped Floating Bench w/ Wall Back



Game Tables w/ 1964 4'-0" Armless Benches



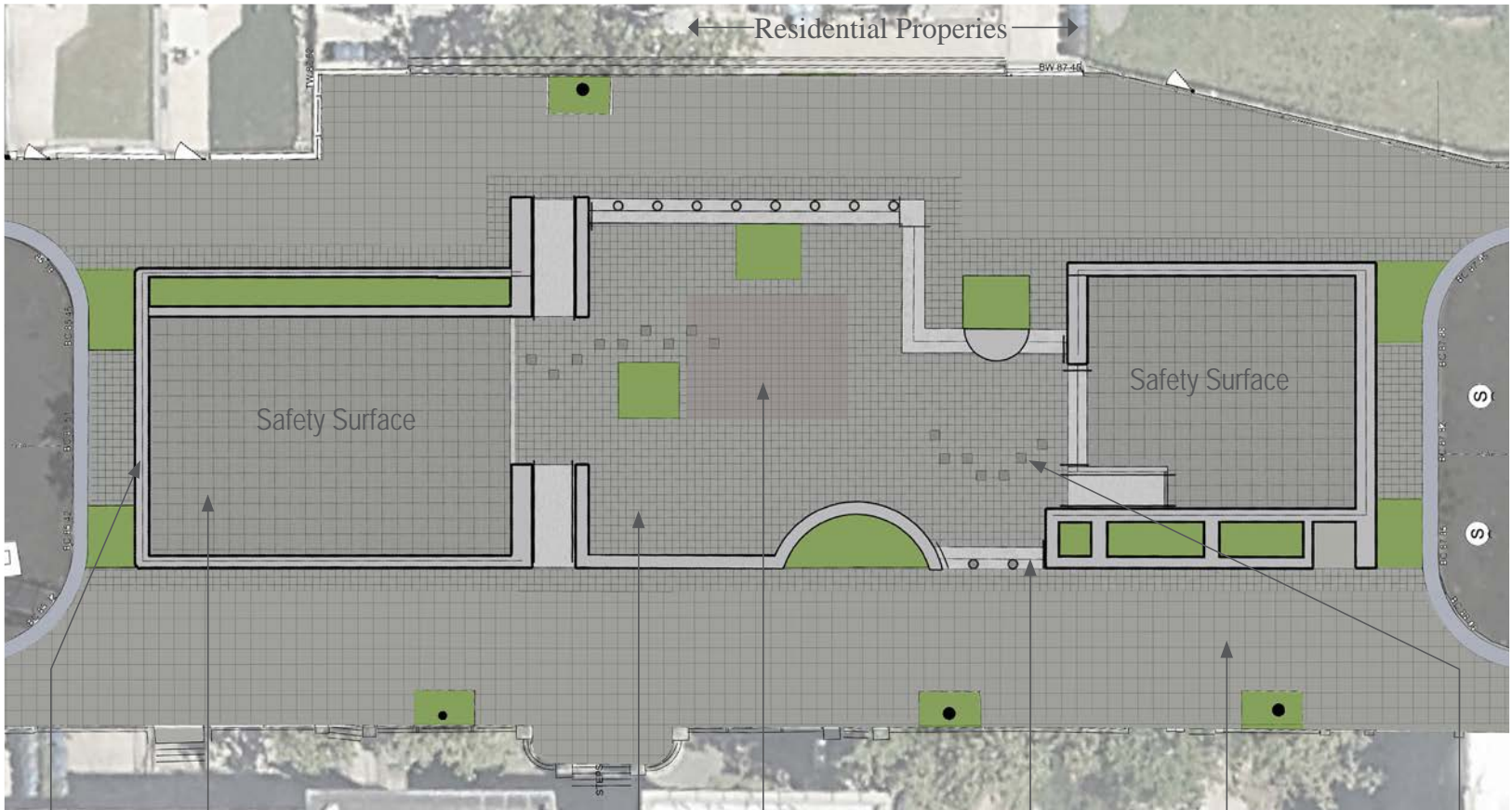
Recycled Plastic Lumber for Benches, Ottomans & Play Equipment Decking - Brown
Similar to Pei/Friedberg wood slats on original ottomans



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St. Mark's Playground | 3 - Unified Furnishings



Examples of Similar Saw Cut Concrete Pavement for Sidewalk



4. Pavement Color & Integration

-Brown vs. Gray

- The intent of the Pei/Friedberg plan was to unify the playground and streetscape by using the same pavement color.
- Poured 'Landmarks Gray' concrete with 24" square scoring echoes historic pavers while offering greater durability.
- 'Landmarks Gray' is a known 'standard' mix more easily duplicated.
- A coordinating gray concrete paver proposed for the border and interior
- Coordinating Safety Surface is used for further unification
- A non-standard concrete color mix for the sidewalk would be difficult to duplicate by homeowners



Paint Color for Walls - 'Parks Gray'
-Warm Gray/Beige Concrete color



Rubber Crumb Safety Surface



Gray 12" Sq. Pavers

Quarry Red 12" Sq. Pavers



Natural Gray Concrete for Stairs and Ramps

Landmarks Gray Concrete w/ 24" Sq Sawn Joints -Sidewalk

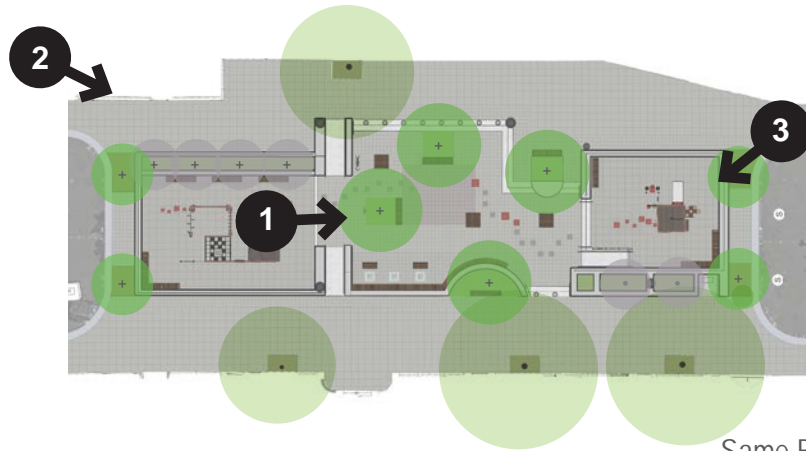


Reclaimed Granite Inlays

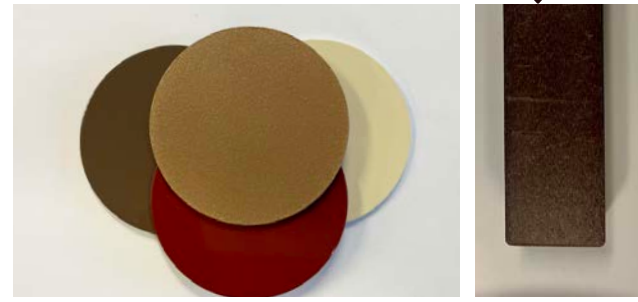
Legend

- Sidewalk Pavement -Landmarks Gray Concrete with 24"sq scoring pattern
- 12"x12" Gray Concrete Pavers
- 24" x 24" Gray Rubber Crumb Safety Surface
- Concrete Walls -'Parks Gray'
- Reclaimed Granite Symbol Inlays



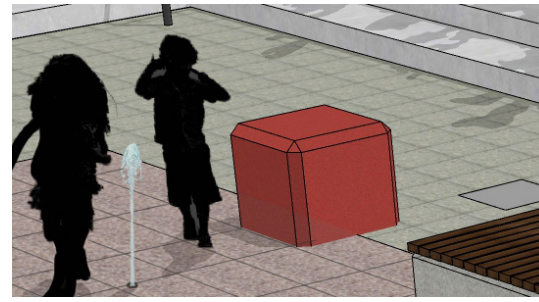


1 - Stand Alone Ground Play Feature



Play Equipment Colors

Same Brown RPL as other site furnishings



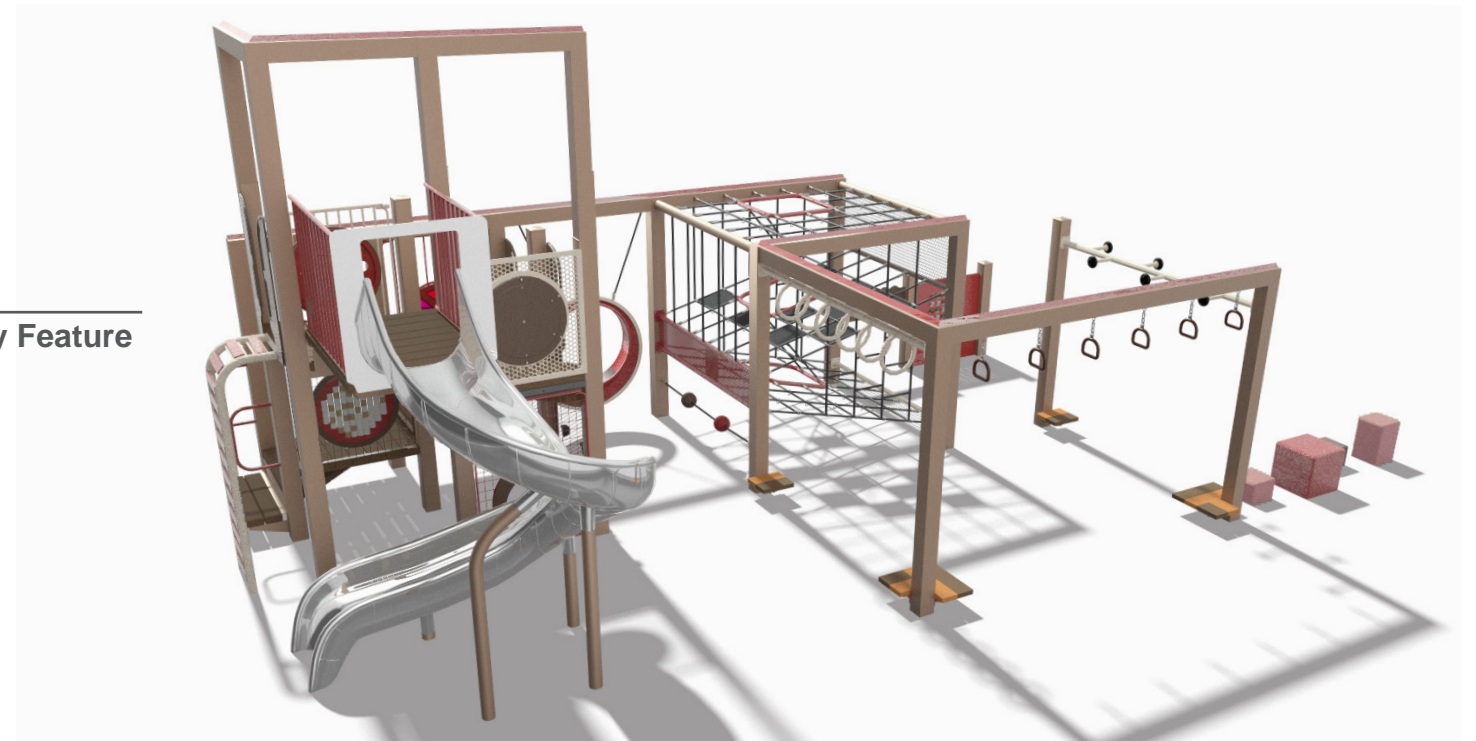
Sitting/Play Cubes in Central Space



Play Equipment Inspiration from Pei/Friedberg Design



Cubic/Rectilinear Play Equipment and Red Color



2 - Larger Play Unit - 5-12 years old



3 - Smaller Unit - 2-5 years old

Red Color only used for play features inspired by Pei/Friedberg's Red Motif

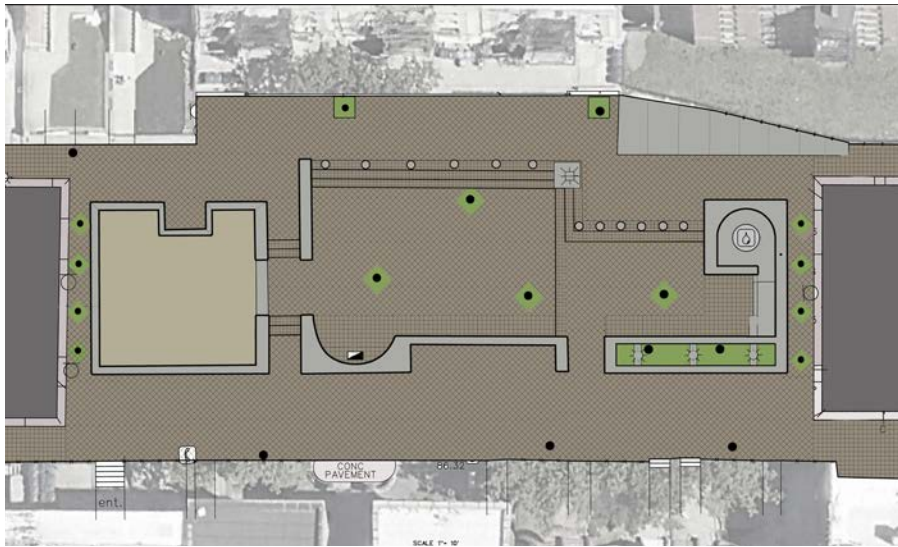
Additional warmth is brought into the space using the following:

- 'Parks Gray' Wall Color
- 'Quarry Red' Pavers for Spray Shower
- Play Equipment Tan, Beige & Red
- Brown RPL for seating and Play Equipment Decking

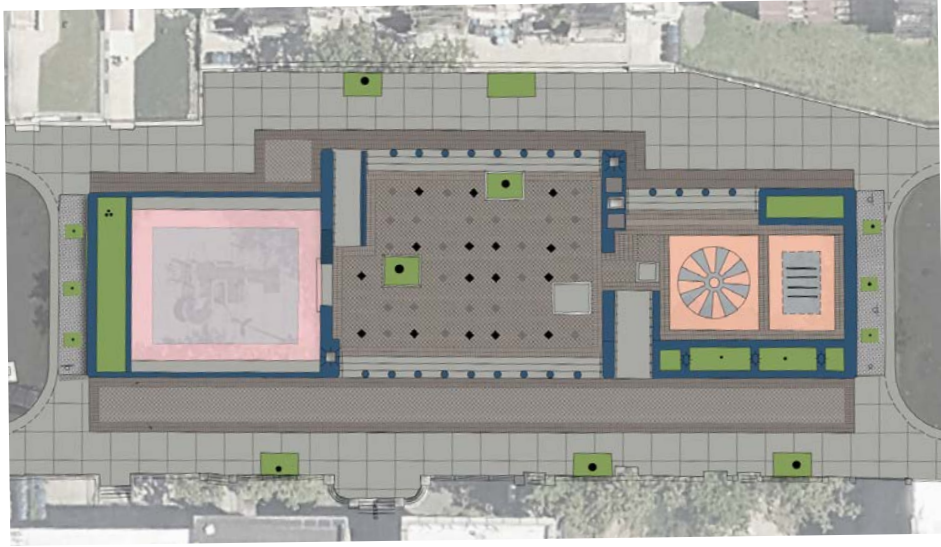


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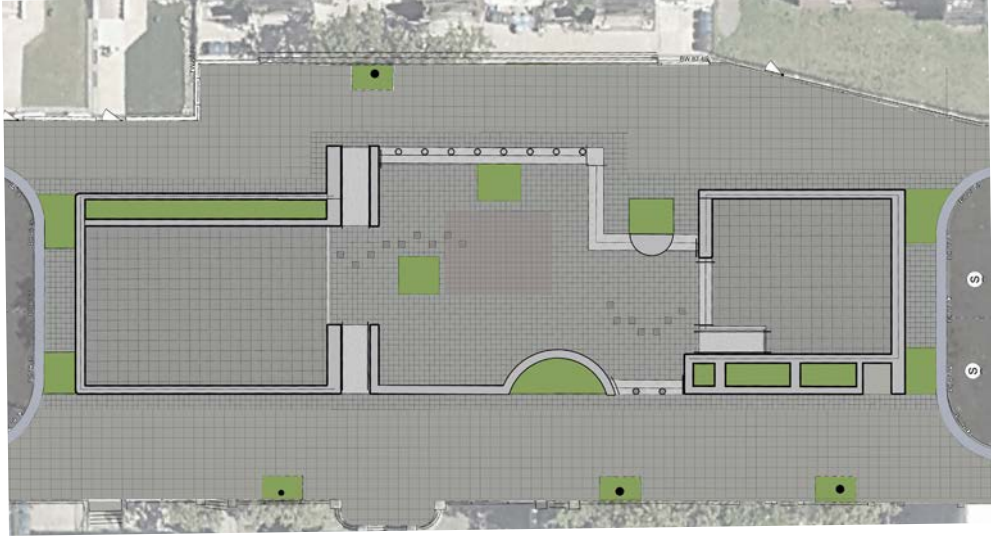
St. Mark's Playground | 4 - Proposed Play Equipment & Color



1 - 1969 Pei/Friedberg Design - Pavement
Paving Material Unifies the Playground and Sidewalk



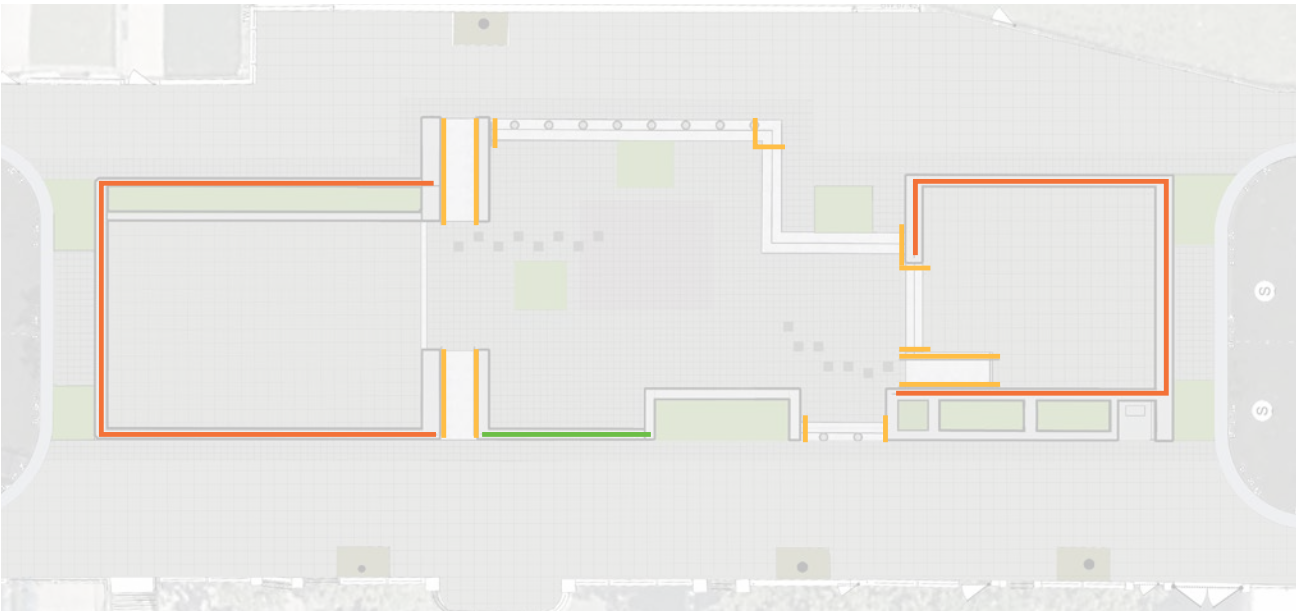
2 - 2002/Existing Condition Playground Pavement



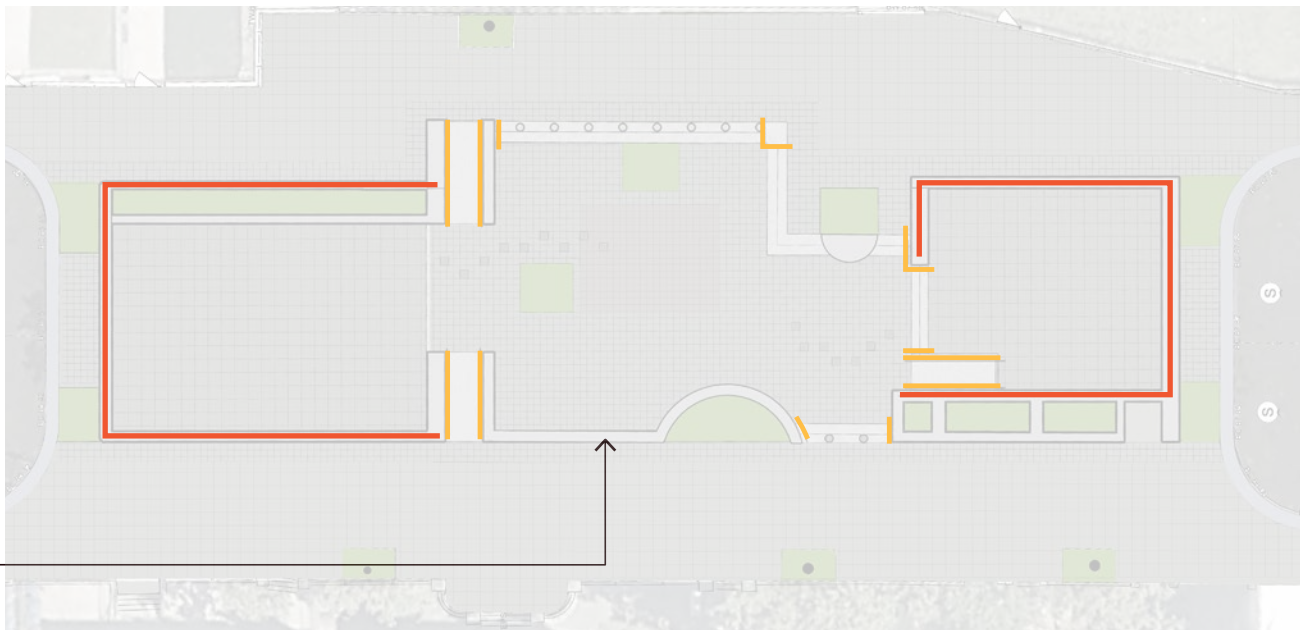
3 - Proposed Playground - Pavement
Paving Material Unifies the Playground and Sidewalk as per the intent of the Pei/Friedberg Plan

Legend

- 1'-6" STEEL PICKET FENCE ON 1'-6" WALL
- 2'-0" STEEL PICKET FENCE ON 1'-0" WALL
- HANDRAIL



Fencing Diagram Reviewed at LPC Public Hearing - 08/05/25



Fence Removed on this wall from Previous Design

Revised Fencing Diagram

5. Fencing Design:

Pickets, Spacing, Placement, & Color

- Fence Removed from Central Space
- A thinner picket than NYC Parks standard will be used for more transparency
- Fencing required with vertical pickets in formal play areas for safety as per ASTM and CPSC guidelines.
- Head entrapment is between 3.5" and 9"
- Black recedes and minimizes the fence's profile



Proposed Steel Picket Fence on Wall
Pickets thinner than DPR standard for more transparency



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View of Central Space from Southern Sidewalk



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St. Mark's Playground | Thank You



The current proposal is:

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**St. Mark's Playground – Crown Heights North III Historic District
Borough of Brooklyn**

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APPENDIX



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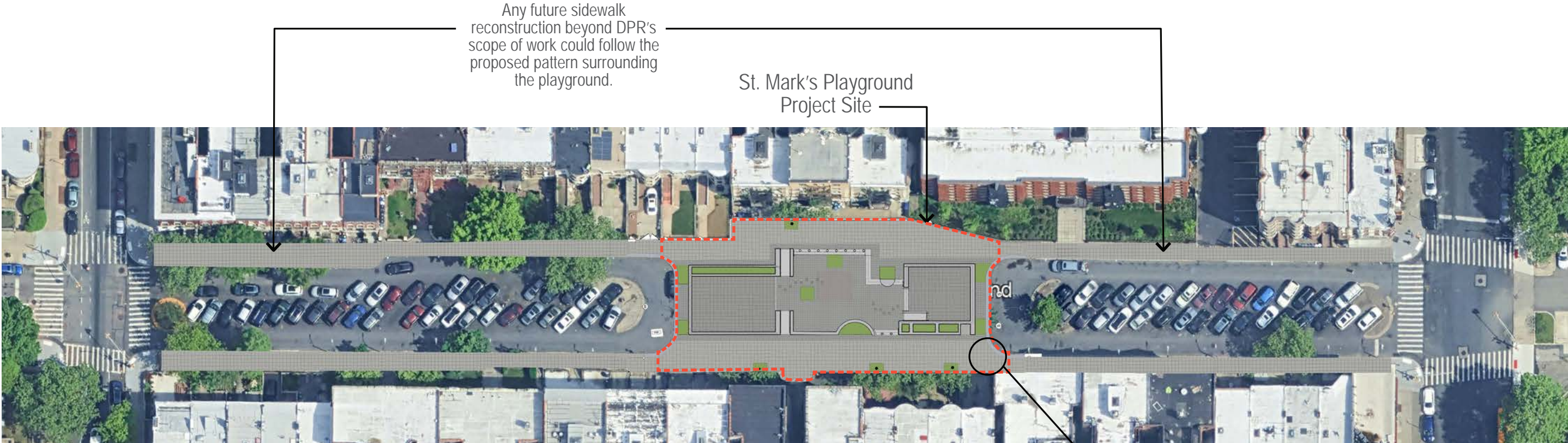
Community Parks Initiative
St. Mark's Playground | Appendix

Project Goals:

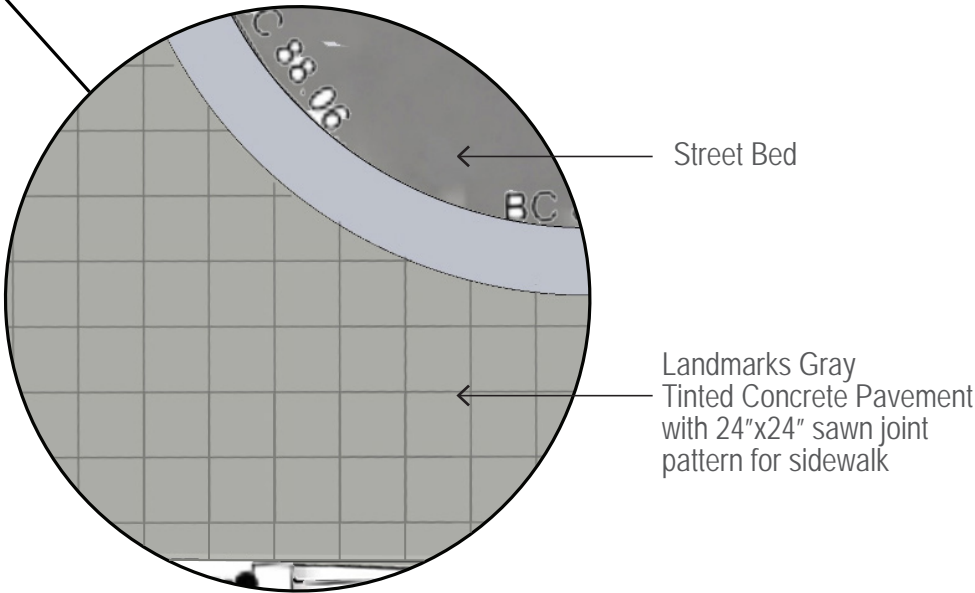
- Increase amenities for children
- Create a design complementary to its history
- Integrate the park into the streetscape
- Maintain and improve sight lines and safety
- Modify sidewalks to recall the historic paving



4. Pavement Color & Integration



St. Mark's Avenue



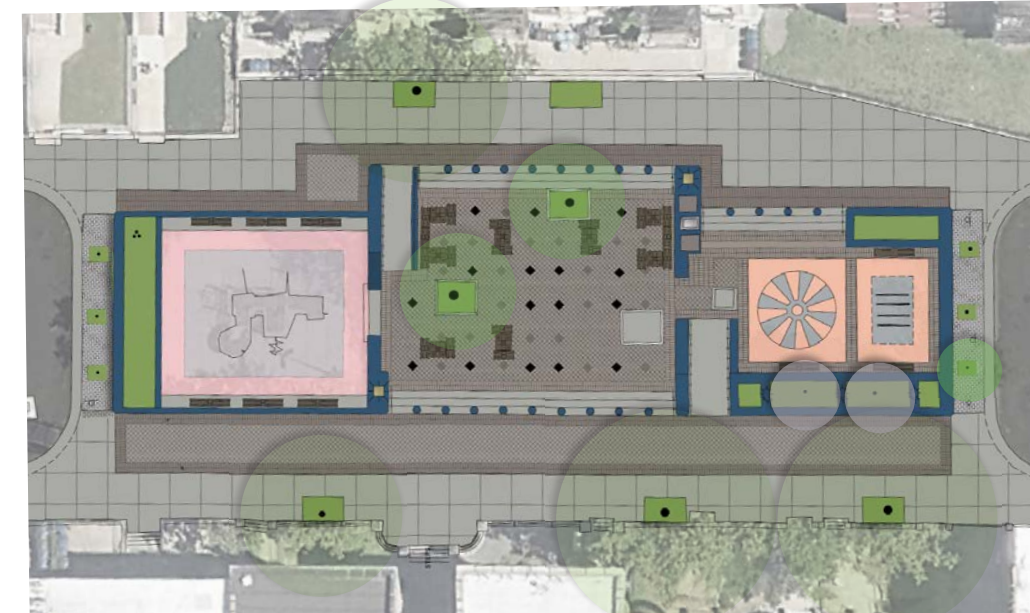
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St. Mark's Playground | 4 - Proposed Sidewalk - Landmarks Gray Concrete Pavement w/ Sawn Joints - 2'x2'



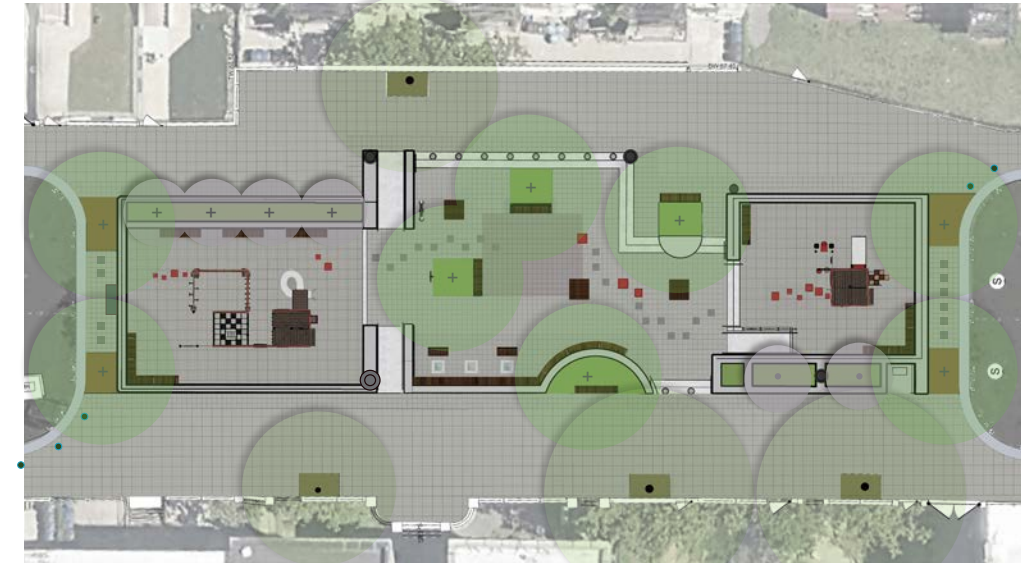
1 - 1969 Playground - Full Design



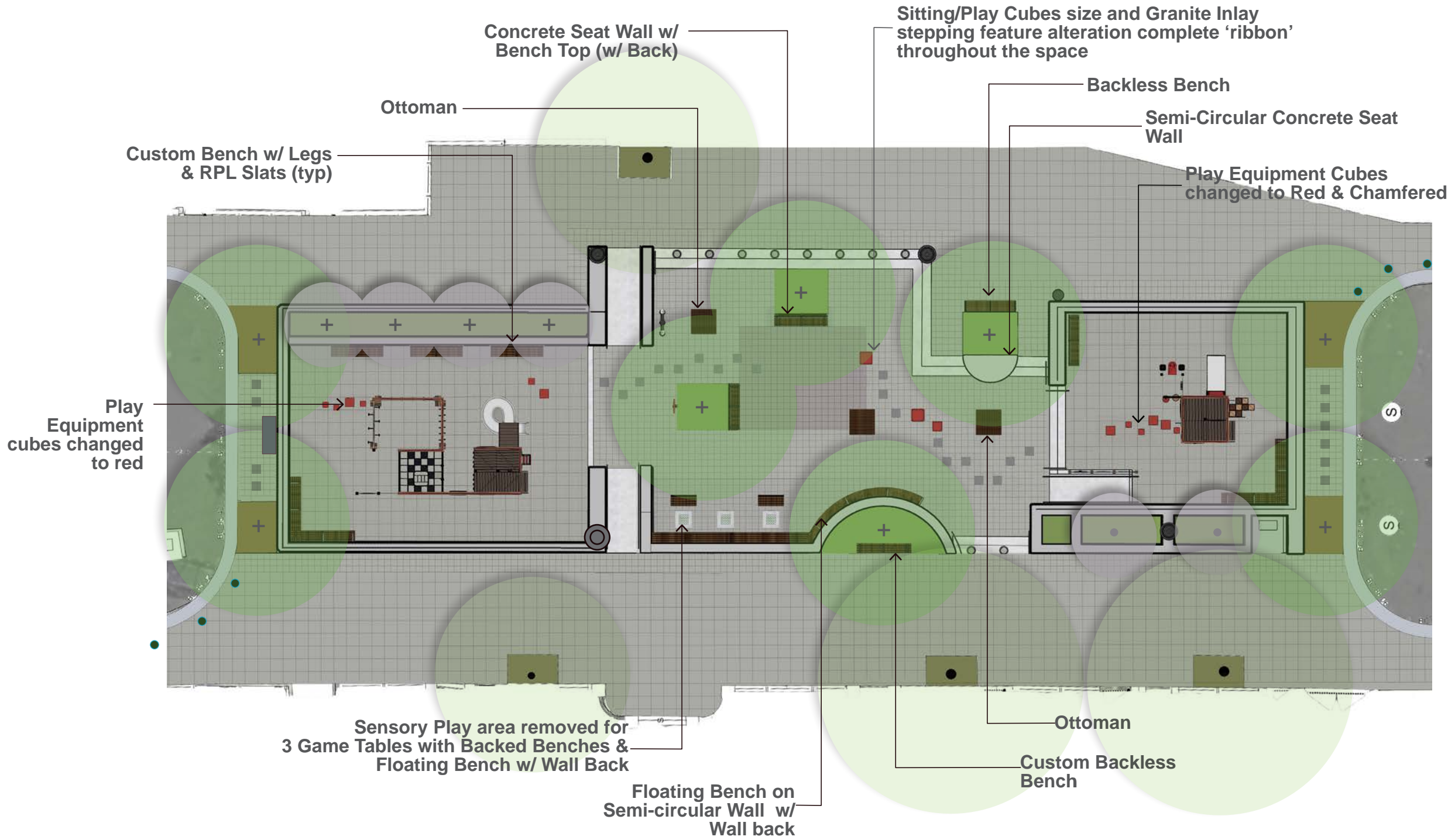
2 - 2002/Existing Condition Playground - Full Design



3 - Schematic Plan Reviewed at LPC Public Hearing - 08/05/25



4 - Revised Schematic Plan



DESIGN ALTERATIONS:

- Unified Furnishings
-Replaced 1964 WF benches with custom benches
- Game Tables Removed from Center and replaced with 2 additional Ottomans
- Sensory Play Removed
- Game Tables moved to that location (3rd added as per community request)
- Semi-Circular wall with floating bench added on South Side
- Semi-Circular seat wall at Northern Steps added
- Play Cubes in formal Playground areas changed to Red and Chamfered to match those in the central space
- Along with the Play Cubes granite inlays complete the "ribbon" and link play
- Fence Removed from the Southern Wall by Game Tables





Central Sitting, Play, & Spray Shower Area



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St. Mark's Playground | Proposed Revised Schematic Design - 3D Render

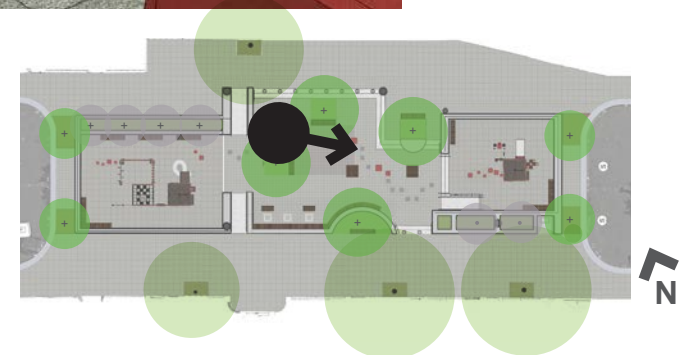




View of Semi-Circular Conversational Seating with Children Playing



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St. Mark's Playground | Proposed Revised Design - 3D Render





View of 5-12 Play Area looking Southwest



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St. Mark's Playground | Proposed Revised Design - 3D Render

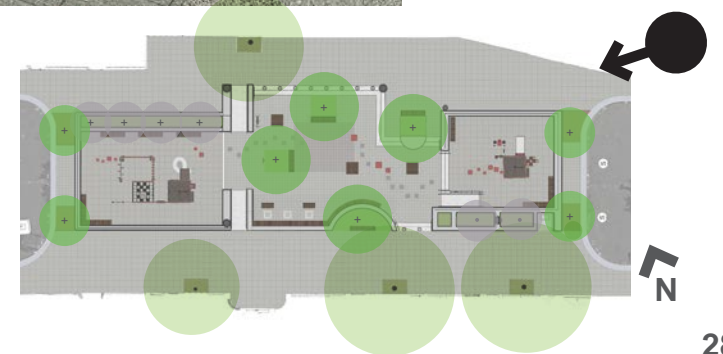


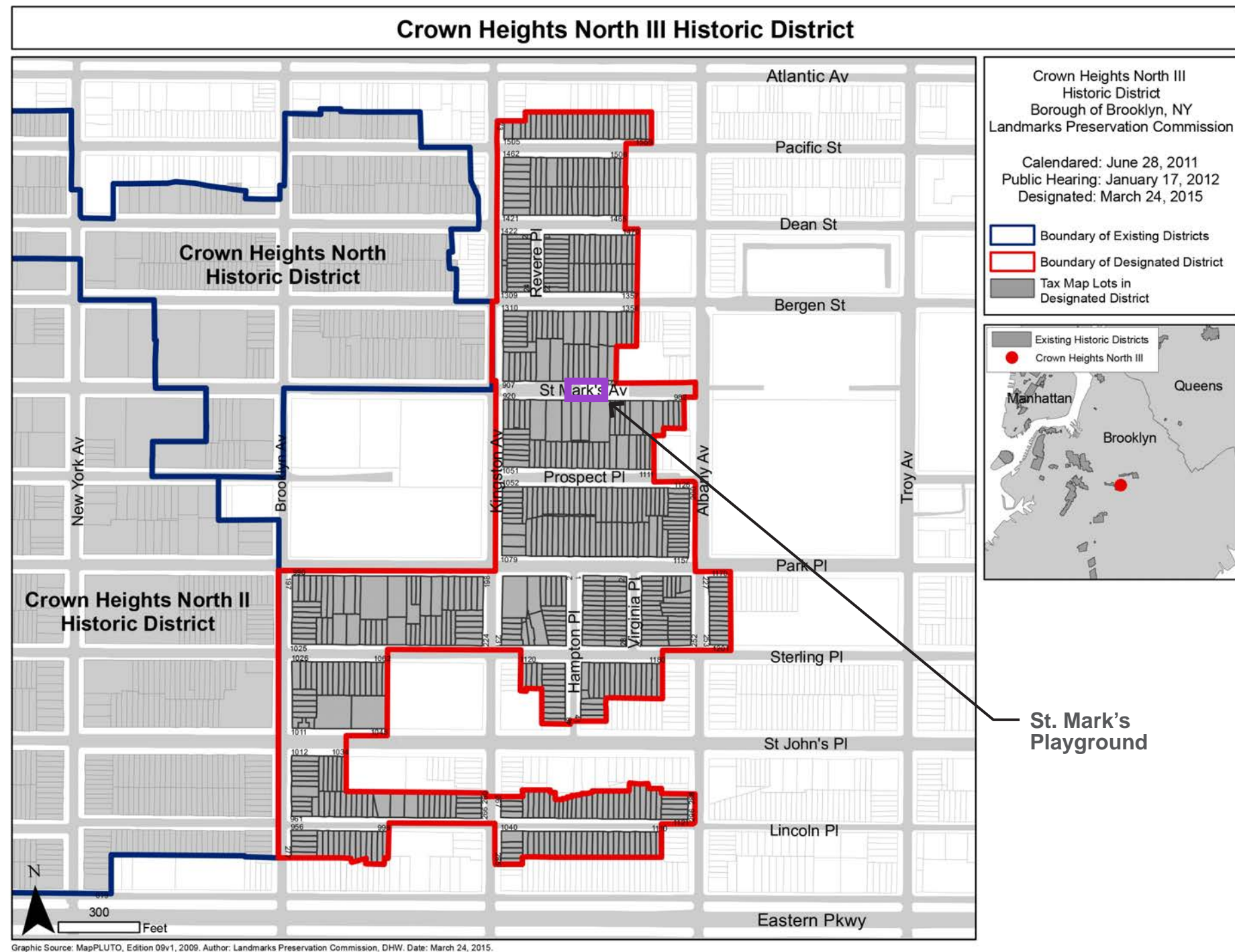


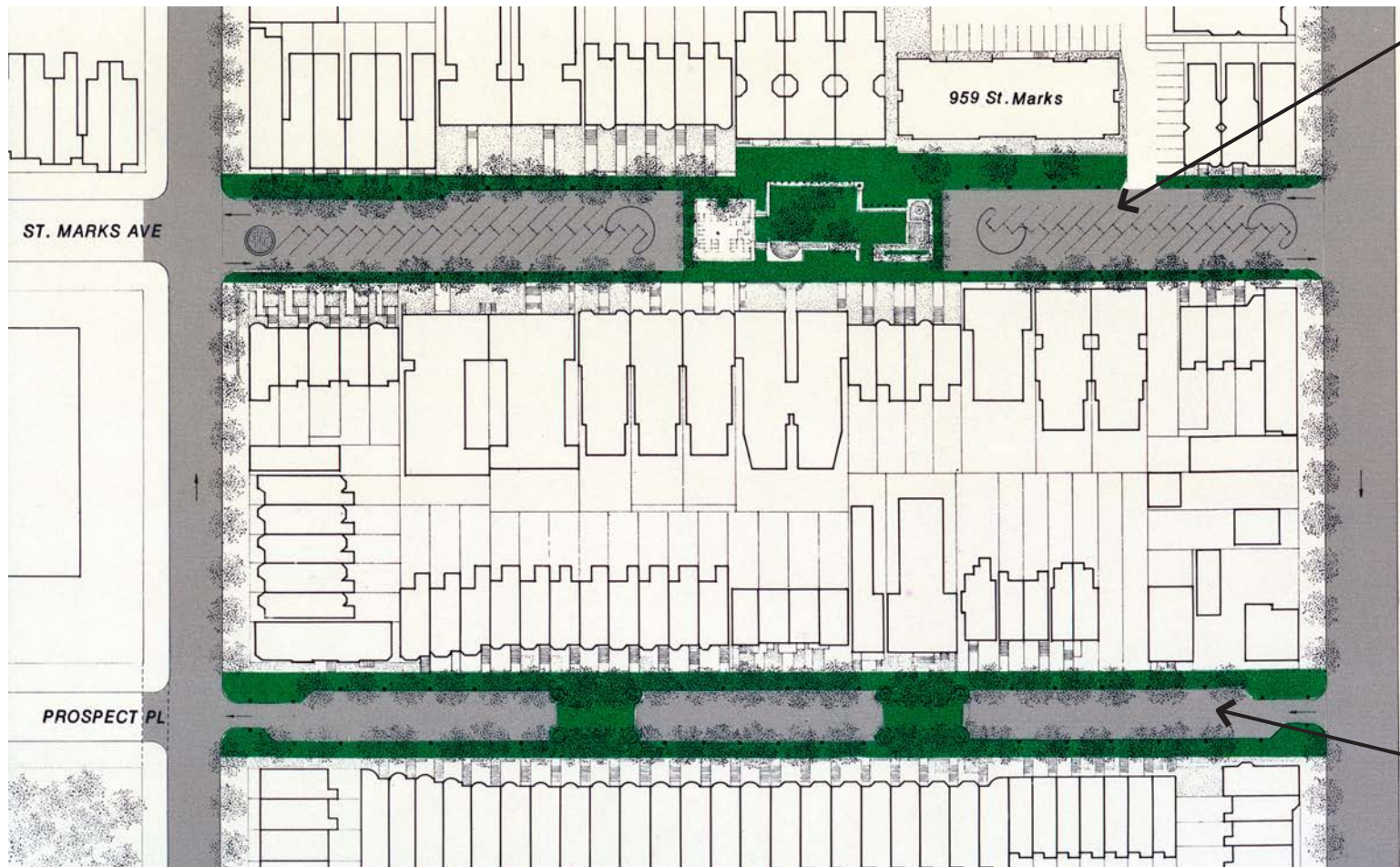
View of 2-5 Play Area Looking Southwest from Northern Sidewalk



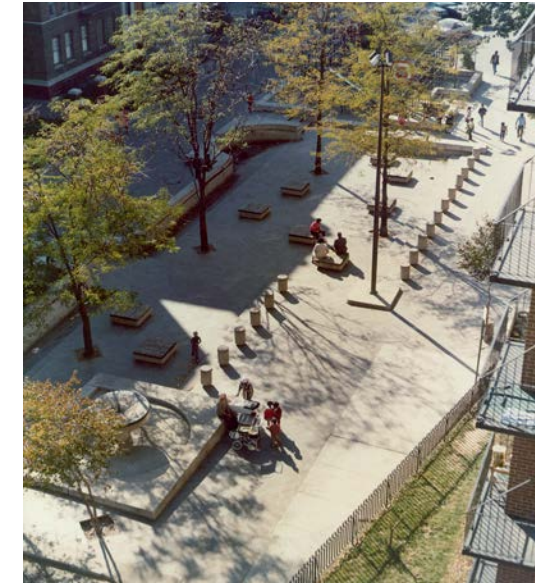
Community Parks Initiative
St. Mark's Playground | Proposed Revised Design - 3D Render



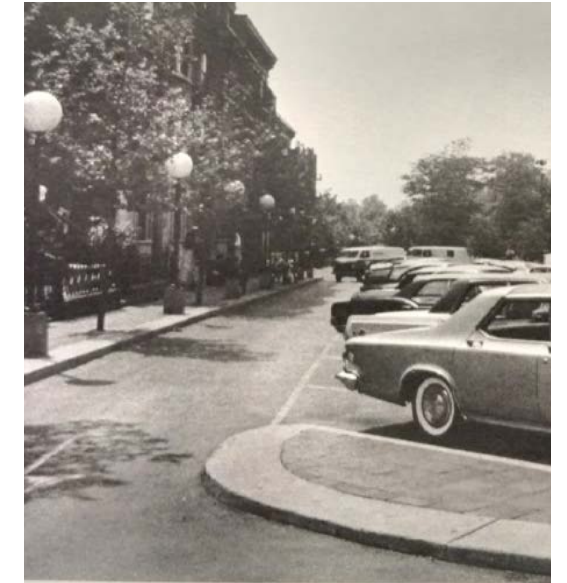




St. Mark's Superblock
-Includes Mid-Block Park



-Bird's Eye of park circa 1970s
Photo courtesy of Gil Amiaga - Not for publication without prior authorization



-Streetscape circa 1970s

Prospect Place Superblock



-Mid Block traffic calming circa 1970s
Photo courtesy of Gil Amiaga - Not for publication without prior authorization



-Streetscape circa 1970s
Photo courtesy of Gil Amiaga - Not for publication without prior authorization

Constructed Superblocks

Courtesy of Pei Cobb Freed & Partners. Not for publication without prior authorization

This is an early conceptual/schematic representation of the two superblocks

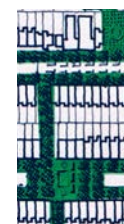
St. Mark's Avenue:

Playground in the center. Street dead-ends on either side of the park.
Parking in the center. Distinctive brick pavement for sidewalk.

Prospect Place:

Designed as a street for vehicles. Curb Extensions and wide speed bumps, bollards, raised planters

Legend



Green colored areas indicate the types of interventions.

Green does not necessarily indicate areas of vegetation



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St. Mark's Playground | History - 1960's Superblock Plans



1 - Play Equipment

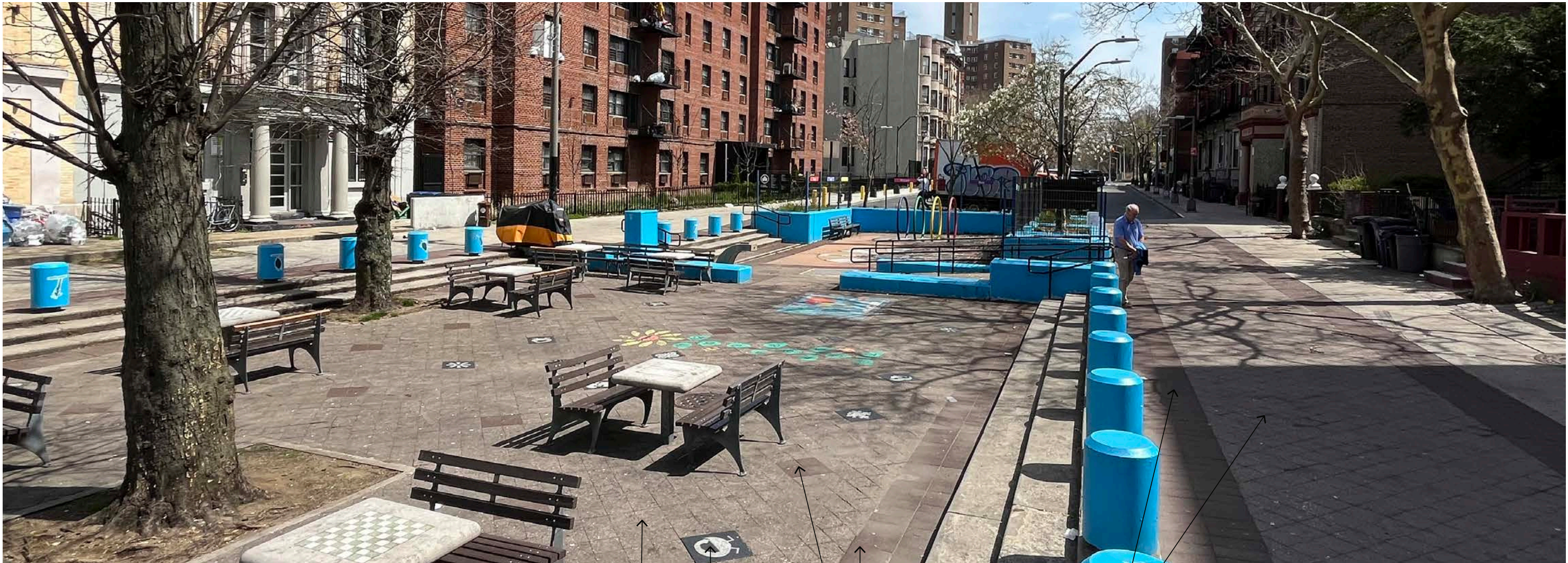


2 - Spray Shower Area



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St. Mark's Playground | Existing Playground Condition - Site Photo



1 - Central Sitting Area w/ Game Tables

8" x 8" Light Gray/Brown
Asphalt Block Pavers

Granite Inlay Symbols

Brown & Light Gray/Brown
Asphalt Block Pavers

Brown & Light Gray
Asphalt Block Pavers
on Sidewalk adjacent to
Playground



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St. Mark's Playground | Existing Playground Condition - Site Photo



1 - Northern Sidewalk

Standard Gray Concrete
Pavement

Brown Asphalt Block
Pavers



2 - Southern Sidewalk

Standard Gray Concrete
Pavement

Brown Asphalt Block
Pavers













Light Gray/Brown Asphalt Block
Pavers on Sidewalk



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St. Mark's Playground | Existing Playground Condition - Site Photo

Proposed Legend

-  Concrete Walls - Light Gray
-  Sidewalk Pavement - Landmarks Gray Concrete with 24" sq scoring pattern
-  Reclaimed Granite Symbol Inlays
-  12"x12" Gray Concrete Pavers
-  12" x 12" 'Quarry Red' Concrete Pavers for Spray Shower
-  Concrete and RPL Ottoman
-  1964 World's Fair Bench - Types Vary
-  Children's Sitting Cubes
-  Proposed Shade Trees
-  Proposed Ornamental Trees
-  Security Lighting
-  Game Table w/ 1964 WF chairs



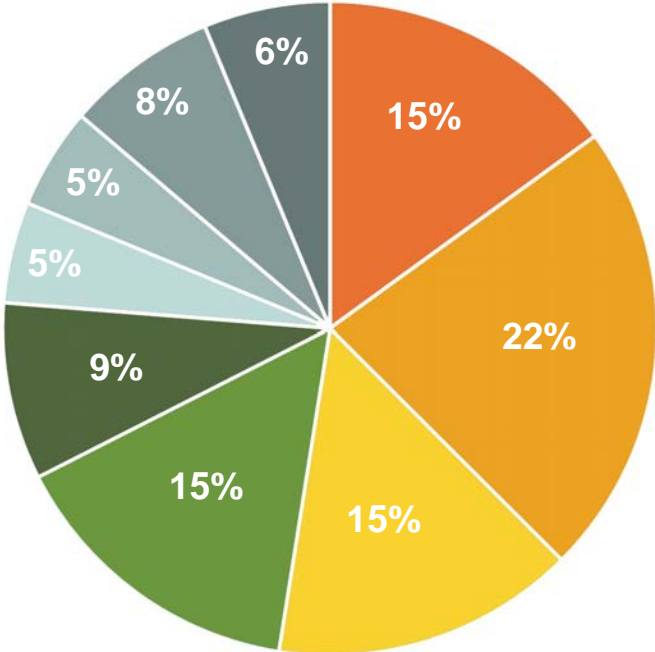
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St. Mark's Playground | Design Reviewed at LPC Public Hearing - Schematic - 08/05/25



Community Priorities



Vehicular Conflicts

Vehicles drive on the sidewalk
Emergency Vehicles ROW
Delivery Trucks
Scooter Parking in planting beds

Children's Playground

Expand playground
Park should be mainly for children
Play for all age groups
Water Play

Noise/Nighttime Activity

Adults use the park at night
Alcohol and Parties
Noise is an issue

Green Space

More Trees and plantings
Shade

History, Culture & Community

Space used by whole community
Reference the original design
Design influence culture
Park should reflect street culture

Other

Security Lighting
Adult/Family Activities
Fencing areas for children
Signage
Universal Access
Seating with Backs



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Community Parks Initiative
St. Mark's Playground | Community Priorities

Shifting ground planes, steps, and perimeter walls are included in the design.

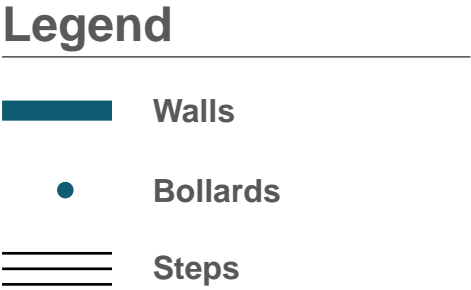
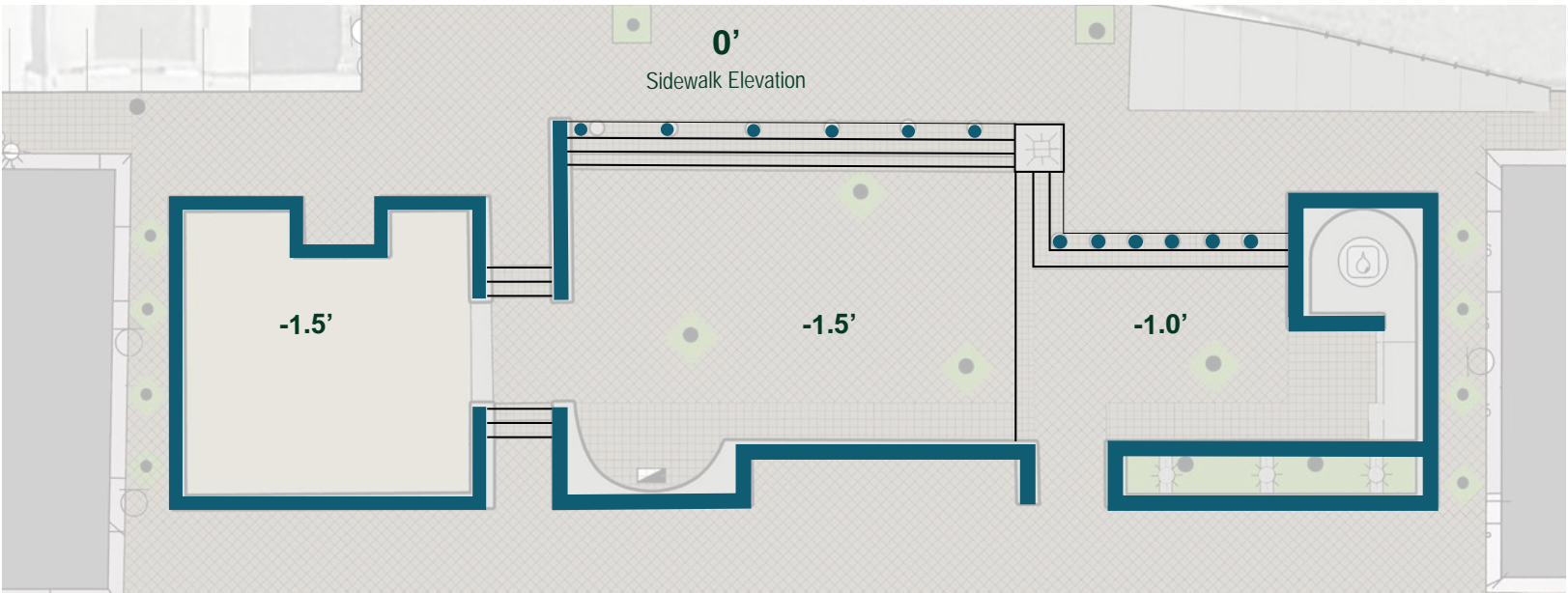
Opportunity to combine updated requirements and community needs with these original design concepts in the proposed plan

Paul Friedberg: Play and Interplay

Connected elements create a continuous play experience instead of isolated play spaces.

Design for social interaction, encouraging individual, group, or multi-generational participation.

Promotes imagination to engage in self-directed, creative interaction with their environment

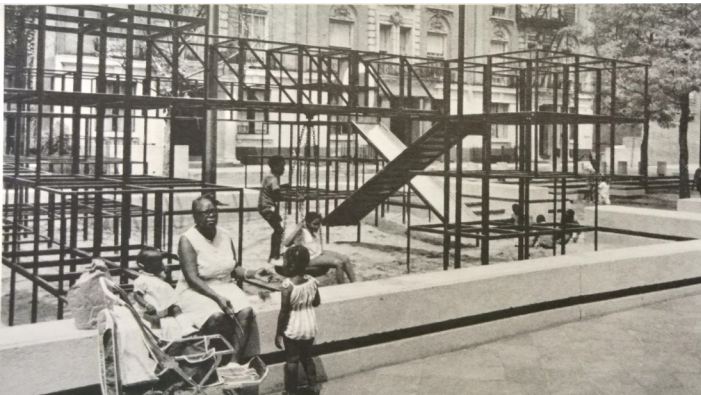


1969 Friedberg Plan - Forms and Planes Analysis

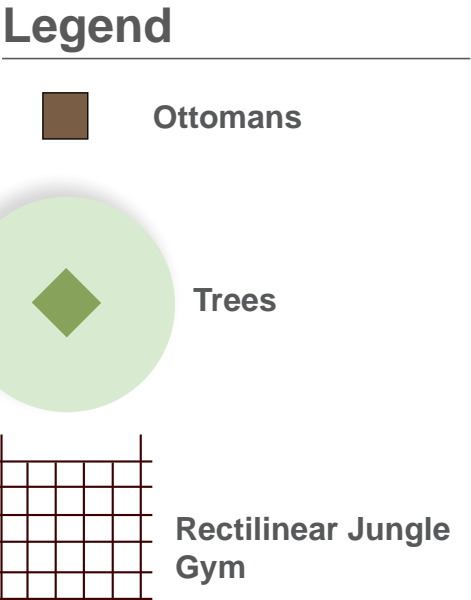
Note the 'random' arrangement of the trees and ottomans in the Friedberg design.

The formal play feature is orthogonal

Opportunity to incorporate into the proposed design

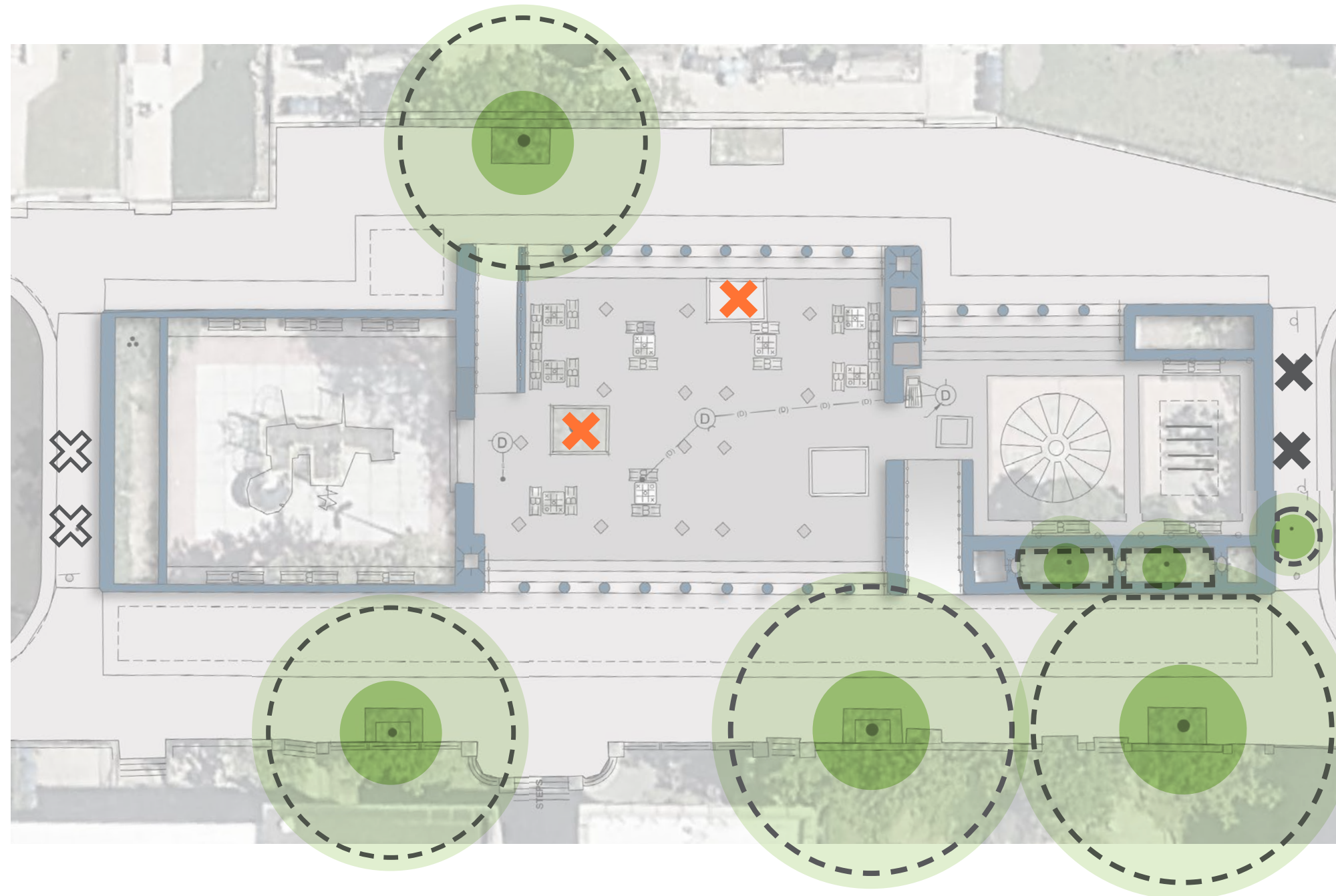


Pei/Friedberg Play Equipment

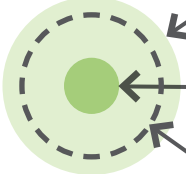







1969 Pei/Friedberg Plan - Site Furnishing Arrangement





Legend

-  Canopy
-  Structural Root Zone
-  Critical Root Zone
-  Stump Removal
-  Tree Removal due to poor condition
-  Tree Removal for Safety Reasons
-Honey Locusts w/ Thorns

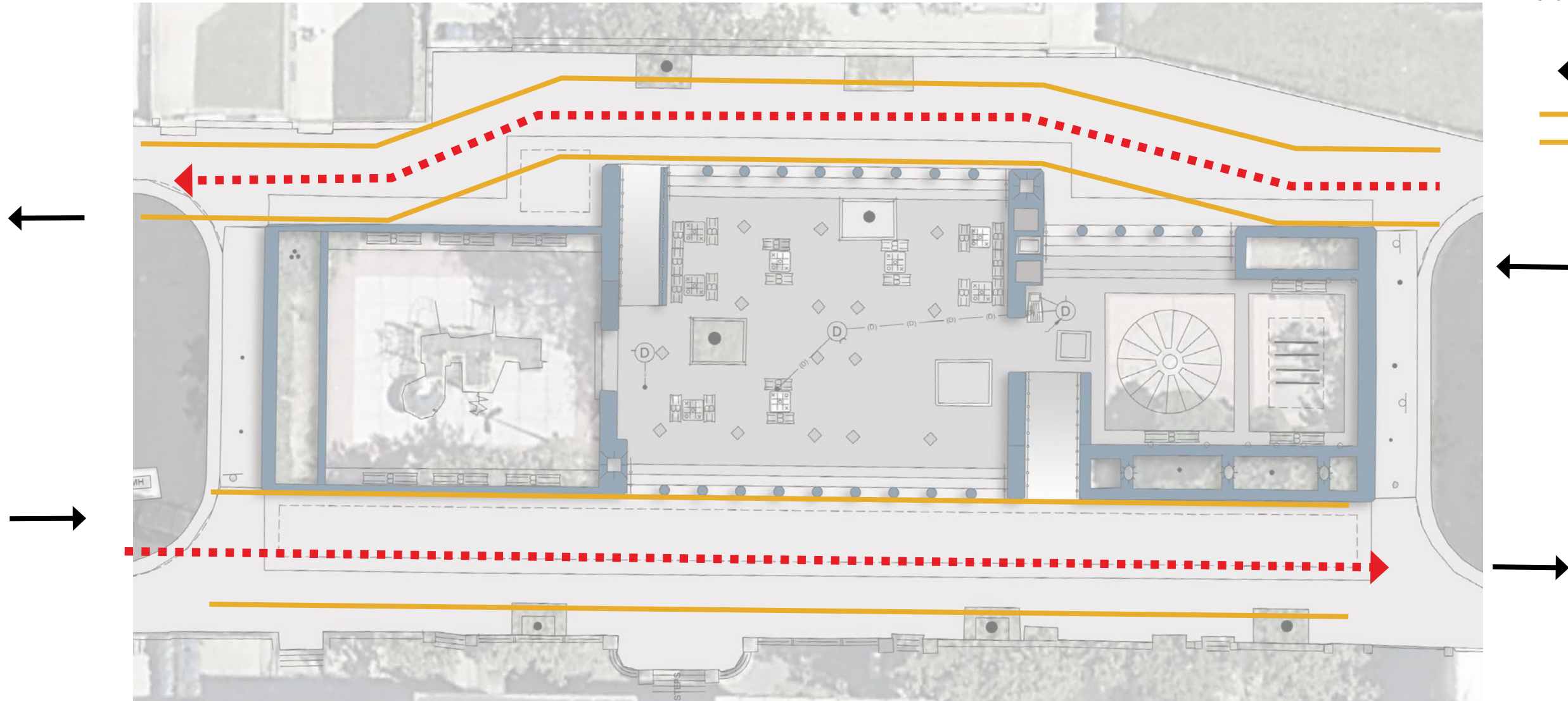


The 2 Honey Locusts have thorns. They will be replaced with thornless variety



Legend

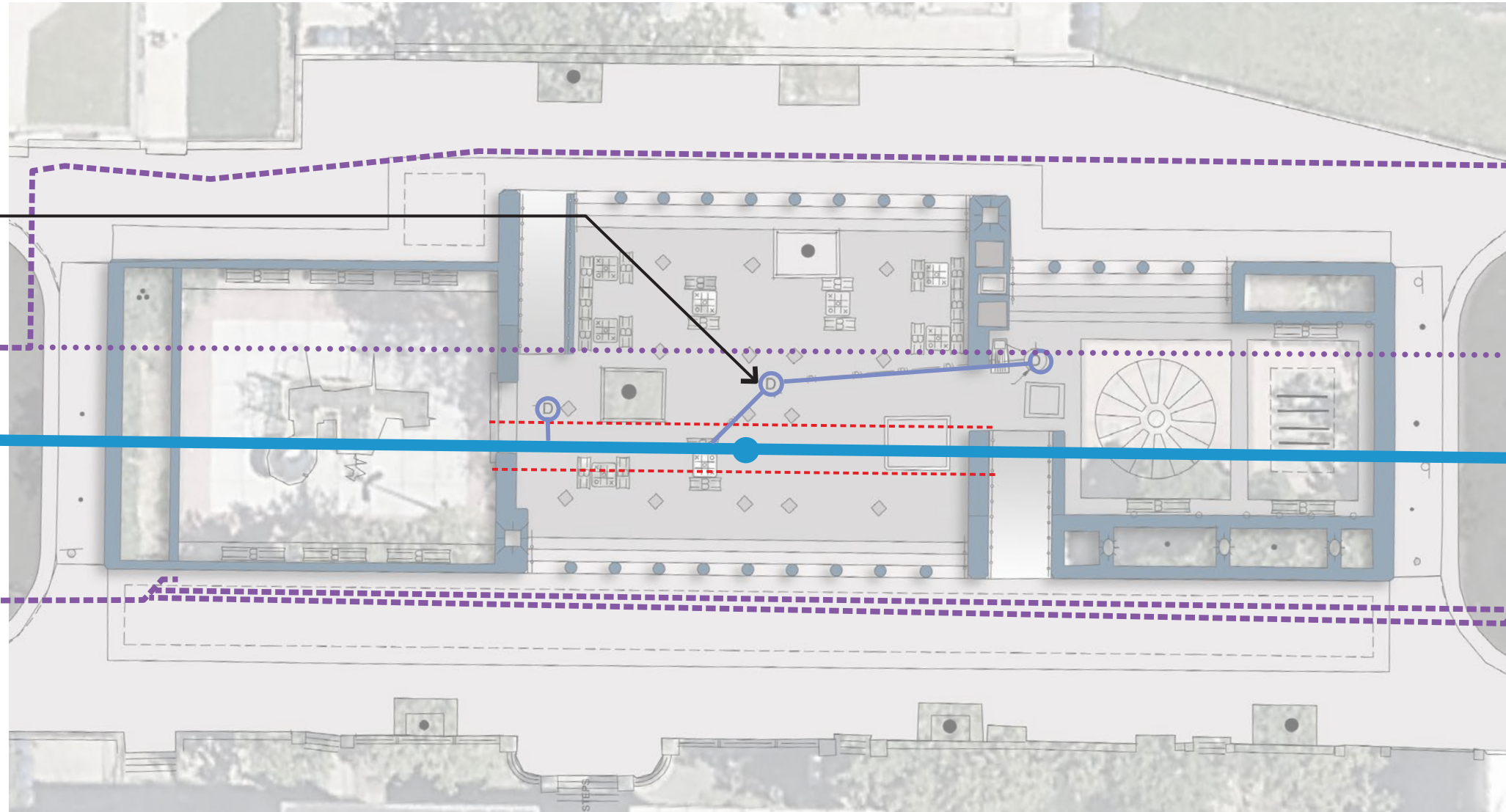
- ... ▶ Occasional vehicular Traffic on Sidewalk
- ← Street Traffic
- FDNY/Emergency Vehicle Easement



Legend

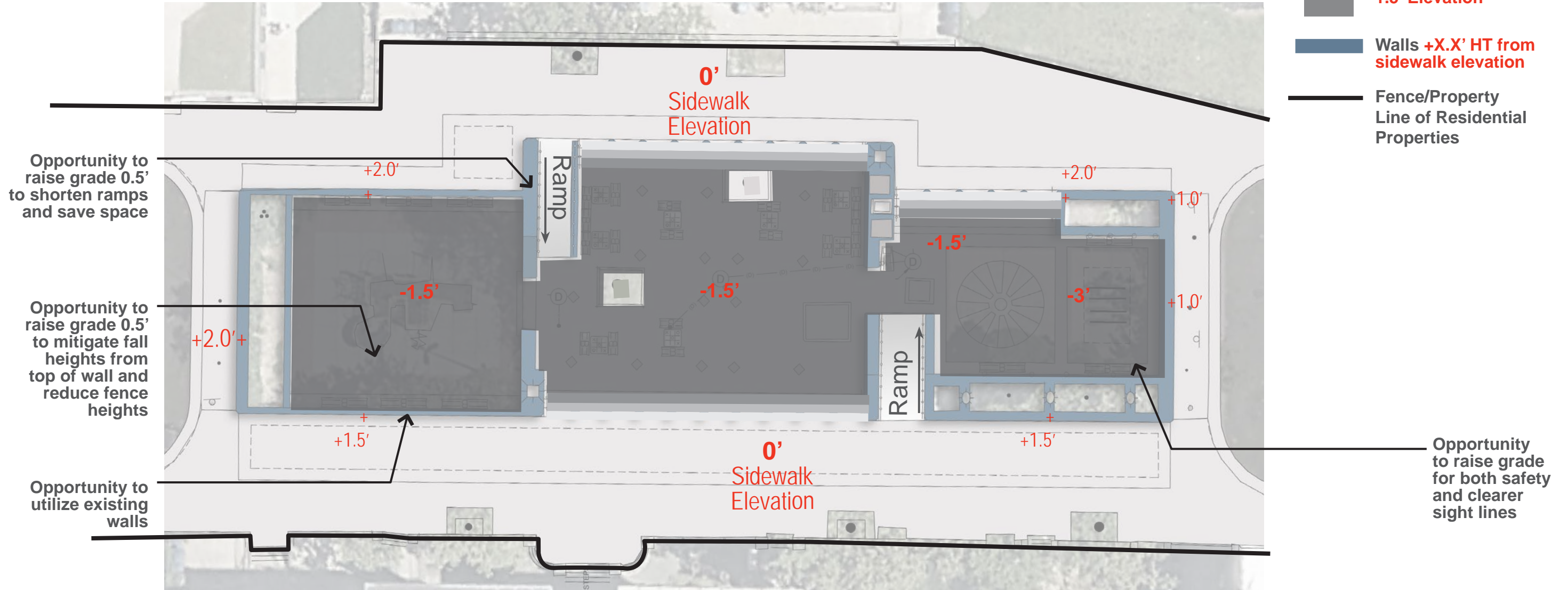
- Sewer Line
- Corridor
- Gas Lines
- Interior Drainage Infrastructure

Opportunity to
utilize existing
drainage
infrastructure
for central spray
shower



Legend

- 1.5' Elevation
- Walls +X.X' HT from sidewalk elevation
- Fence/Property Line of Residential Properties

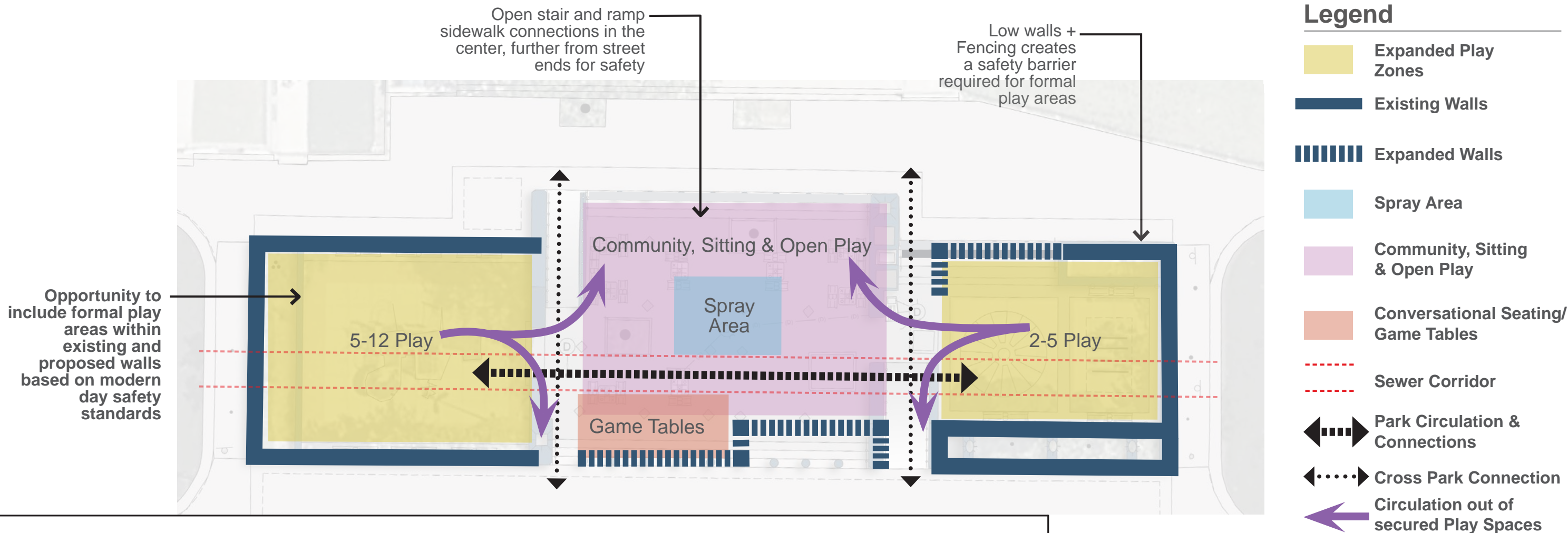


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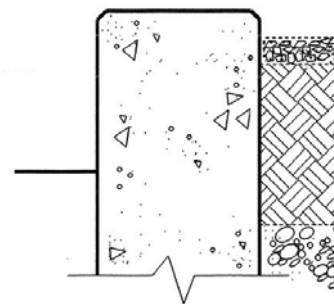
Community Parks Initiative

St. Mark's Playground | Site Analysis - Existing Walls & Elevation Change





Existing Walls










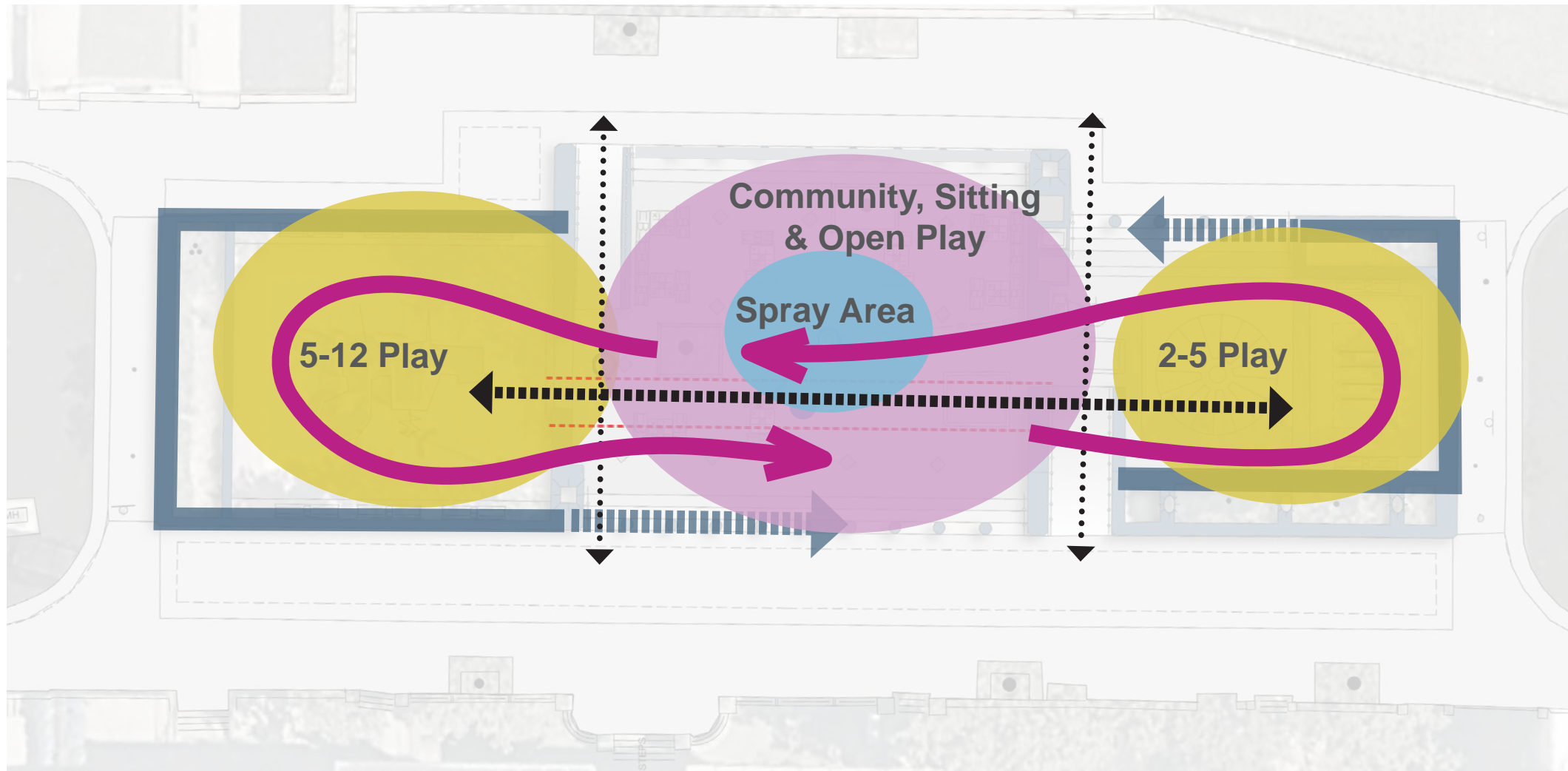
Profile of Walls - 1-1/2" Chamfer



Proposed Paint Color for Walls - 'Parks Gray'

Legend

-  Program - Modify Existing Spaces for increased Play
-  Play Circuit
-  Circulation/Connection
-  Cross-Park Circulation
-  Spray Feature
-  Community, Sitting and Open Play
-  Existing wall and fencing alteration



DESIGN FOR PLAY:

The Concept promotes Friedberg's 'Play and Interplay' by linking spaces together.

Creates a versatile space in the center that is both sitting and play.

Non descript objects used to promote children's imagination and multi-generational interaction.

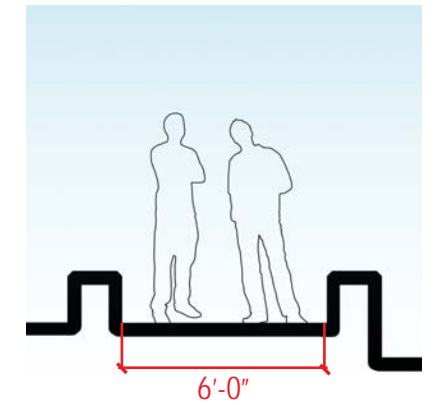
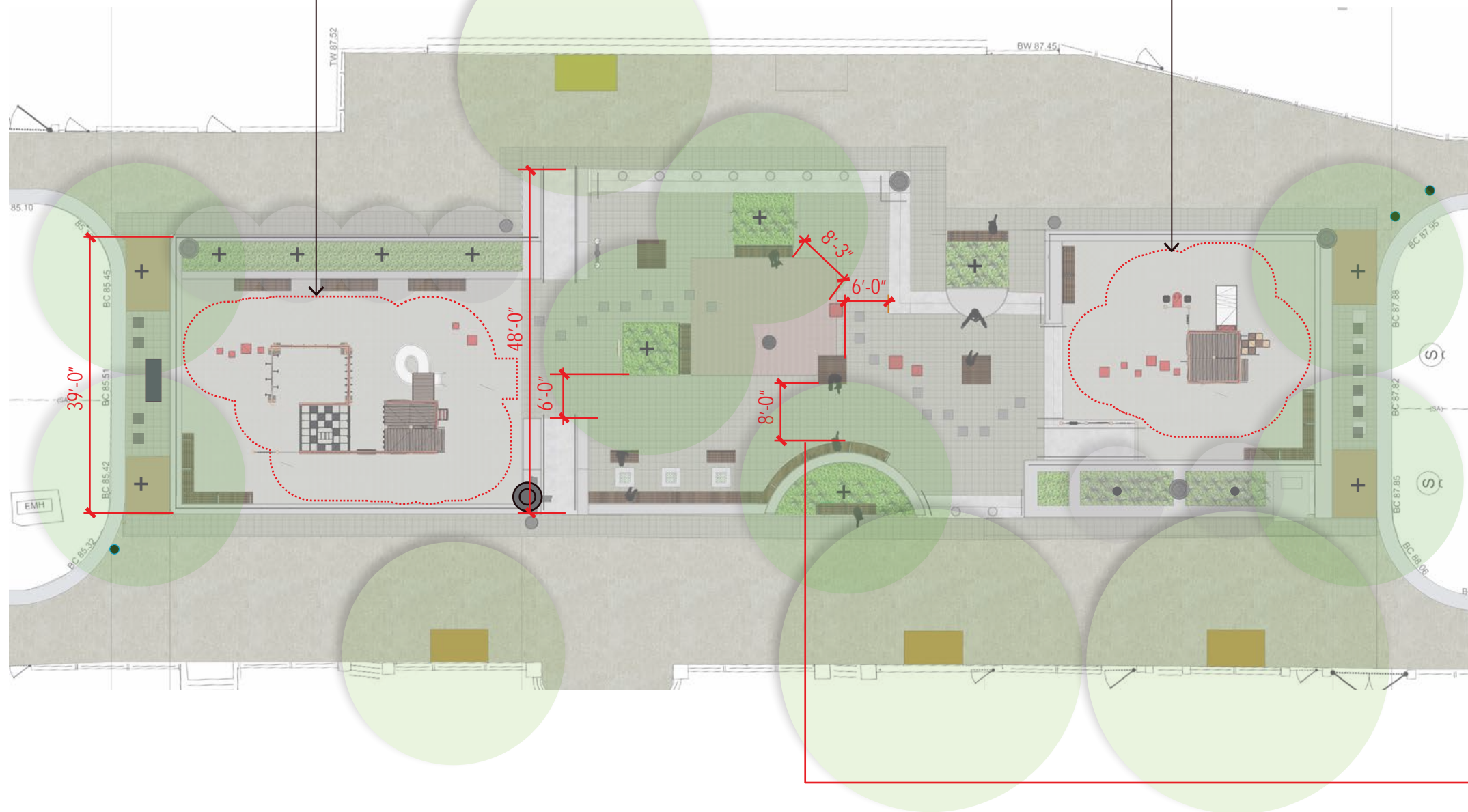


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St. Mark's Playground | Concept Diagram

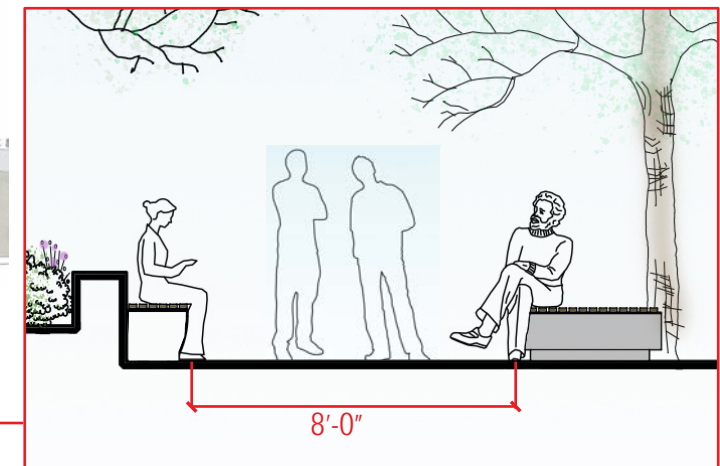


Required Safety Zone for
Play Equipment

Required Safety Zone for
Play Equipment



Comfortable size for 2
people to walk together



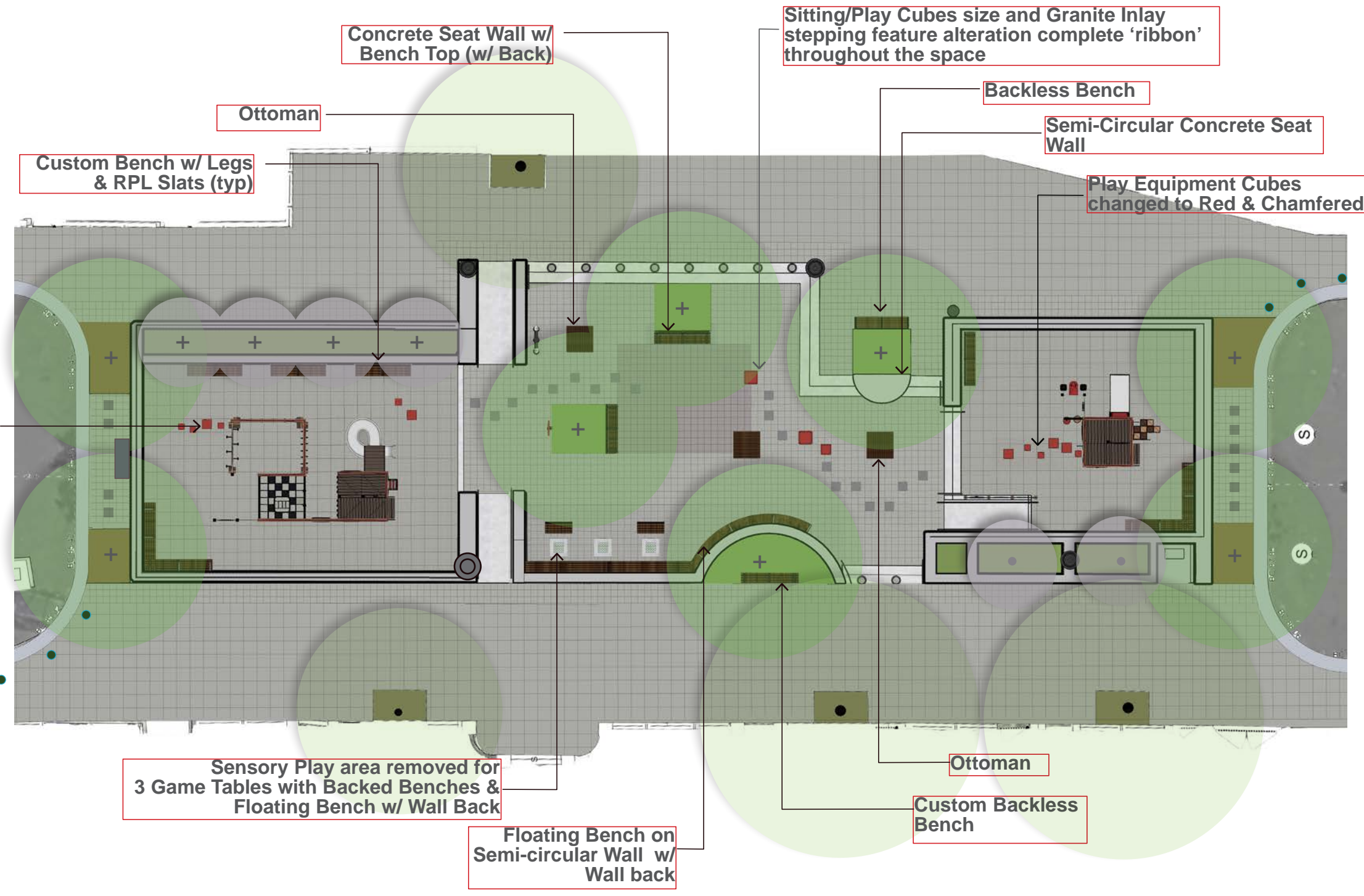
Distance between Ottoman and
Floating Bench















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St. Mark's Playground | 1 - Community Input & Playground Design - Scale of Space





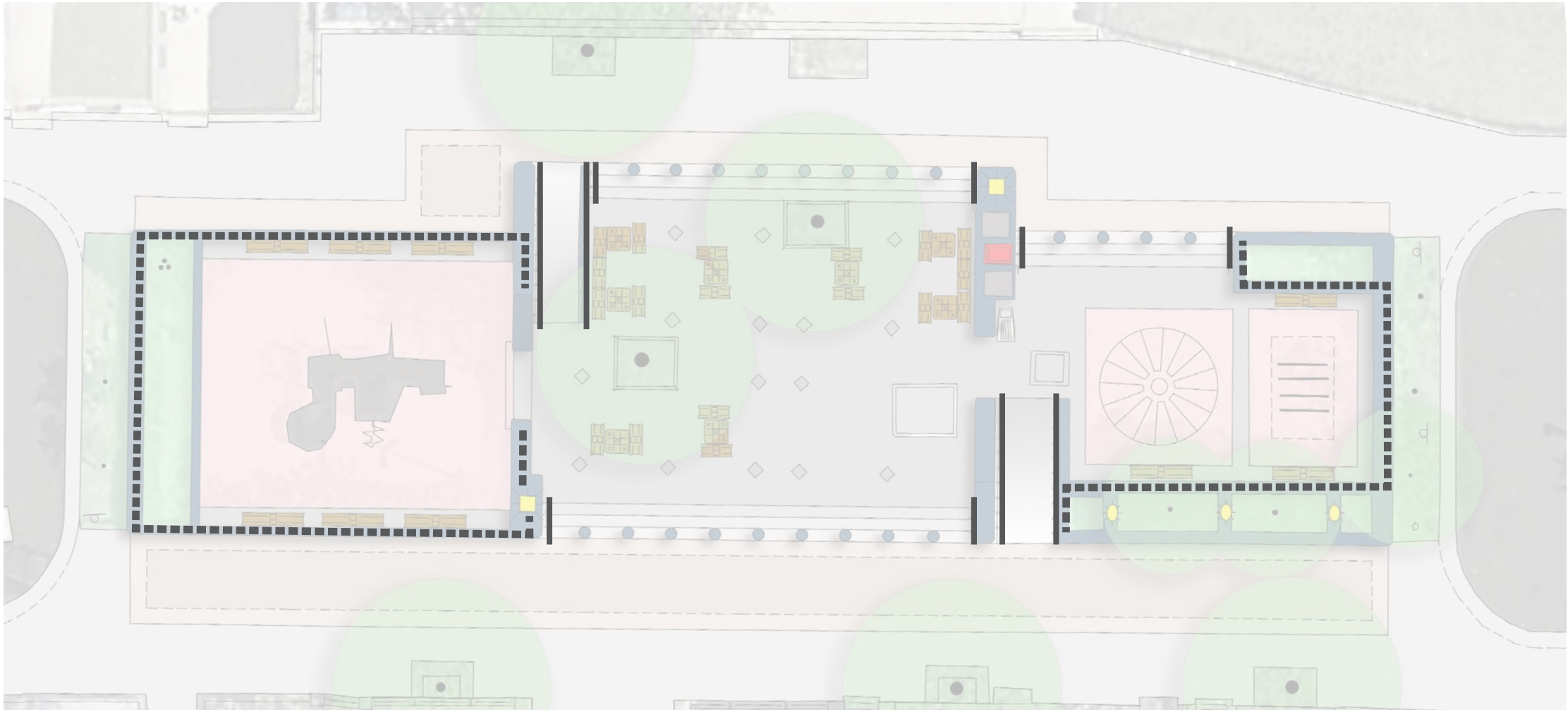
Proposed Legend

-  Concrete Walls - Light Gray
-  Sidewalk Pavement - Landmarks Gray Concrete with 24"sq scoring pattern
-  Reclaimed Granite Symbol Inlays
-  12"x12" Gray Concrete Pavers
-  24" sq Gray Rubber Crumb Safety Surface
-  12" x 12" 'Quarry Red' Concrete Pavers for Spray Shower
-  Concrete and RPL Ottoman for sitting and play
-  Benches - Freestanding or Floating
-  Game Table w/ Bench
-  Children's Sitting/Play Cubes - Chamfered
-  Proposed Shade Trees
-  Proposed Ornamental Trees
-  Security Lighting



Legend

- EXISTING 5'-0" ORSOGRIL FENCE ON WALLS
- EXISTING HANDRAILS



Existing Orsogrill Fence on Wall





Reclaimed Granite West African Symbols



Sidewalk Pavement: Landmarks Gray Concrete w/ 24" Square Sawn Joints



12" sq. Concrete Paver Similar to Landmarks Gray Concrete Pavement

12" sq 'Quarry Red Concrete Paver for Spray Shower



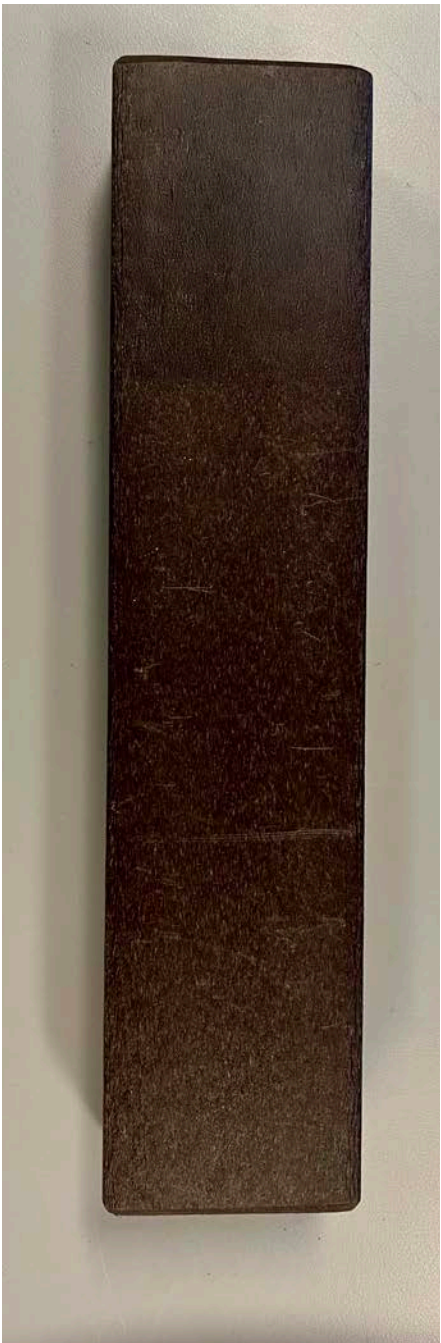
Paint Color for Walls - 'Parks Gray'



Natural Concrete for Steps, ramps, and Curbs



Rubber Crumb Safety Surface



Recycled Plastic Lumber for Benches, Ottomans & Play Equipment Decking



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St. Mark's Playground | Paving, Walls, & Play Equipment Materials



Public Space Trash Receptacle



Bottle Filler With Hi-Lo Drinking Fountain



Bollards at Steps



Game Tables



Removable Bollards on Sidewalk



1'-6" Steel Fence on Wall
Thinner pickets than DPR Standard for a more transparent appearance



Security Light - Candela



TREES



Honey Locust



Red Oak



Star Magnolia

SHRUBS & PERENNIALS



Sarcococca



Day Lily



Hydrangea Quercifolia 'pee wee'



Gray Tinted Concrete



Gray Tinted Concrete



All 4 corners on St. Mark's Avenue have been reconstructed with tinted 'Landmarks Gray' concrete pavement with sawn joints



Gray Tinted Concrete



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St. Mark's Playground | Existing Sidewalk Condition - Corners



Original Brick Pavers



Original Brick Pavers



Original Brick Pavers



Original Brick Pavers



Original Brick Pavers



Original Brick Pavers



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St. Mark's Playground | Existing Sidewalk Condition - Sections of block with remaining 1969 Brick Pavers



Natural Gray Concrete Pavement



Natural Gray Concrete Pavement



Natural Gray Concrete Pavement



Natural Gray or White Concrete Pavement



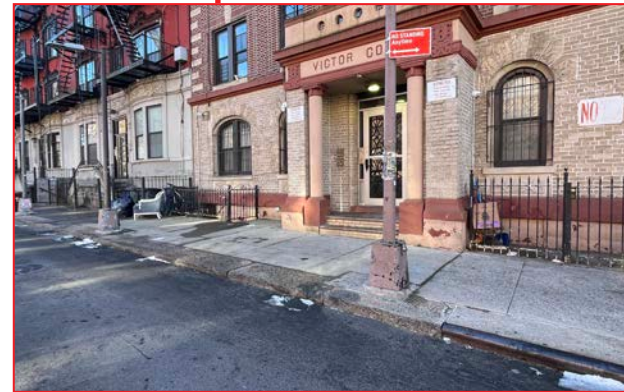
Natural Gray Concrete Pavement



Natural Gray & White Concrete Pavement



Natural Gray Concrete Pavement



Natural Gray Concrete Pavement

Definitions:

Natural Gray Concrete Pavement
- Un-tinted concrete Pavement that appears gray in color

White Concrete Pavement:
- Un-tinted concrete pavement that appears more white in color



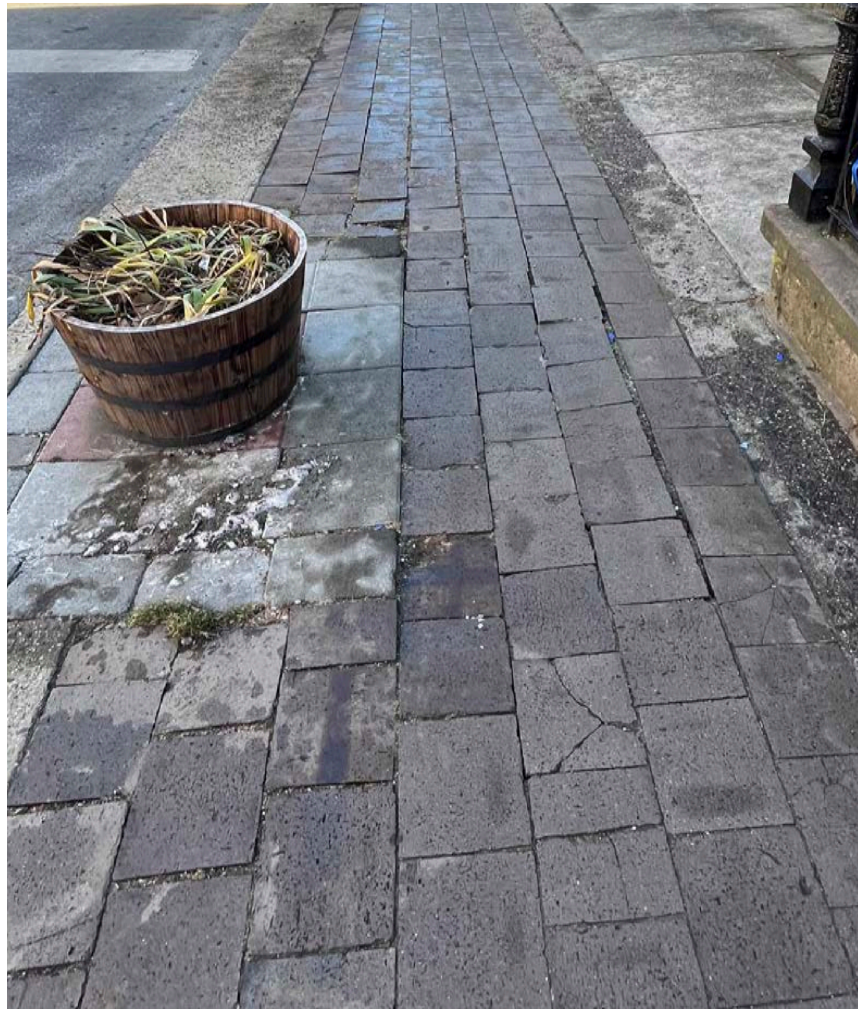
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St. Mark's Playground | Existing Sidewalk Condition - Sections w/ Natural Gray or "White" Concrete Pavement



1 - St. Marks - Original, Uneven, Cracked, Broken, Existing Pavers on St. Mark's (2025)



2 - St. Mark's - Original, Uneven, Cracked, Broken, Existing Pavers on St. Mark's (2025)



3 - St. Mark's - Original Patched Pavers abutting Redone, Natural Gray Concrete





1 - Prospect Place - Example of Uneven and Damaged Brick Pavers



2 - Prospect Place - Example of Uneven and Damaged Brick Pavers



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St. Mark's Playground | Existing Sidewalk Condition - Examples of Uneven & Damaged Brick Pavers on Prospect Place



1 - St. Mark's - Example of Existing Concrete Sidewalk

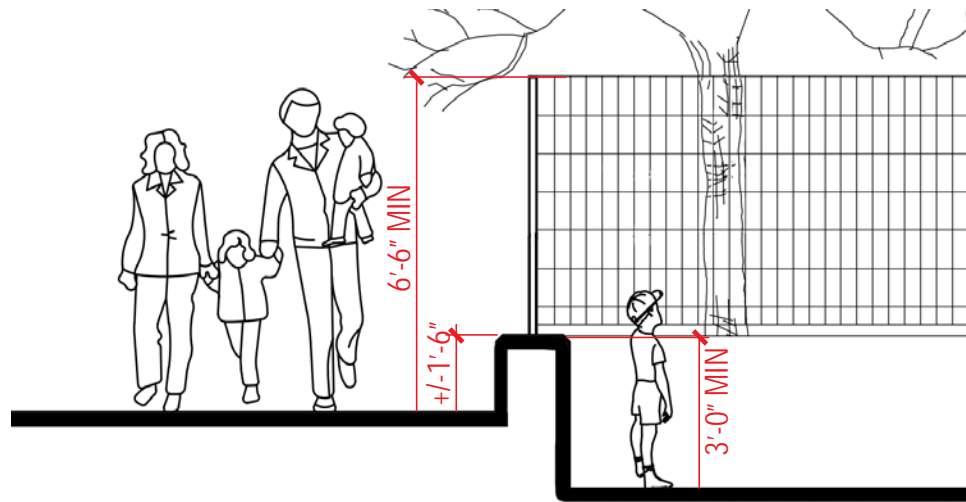


2 - St. Mark's - Example of Existing Concrete Sidewalk

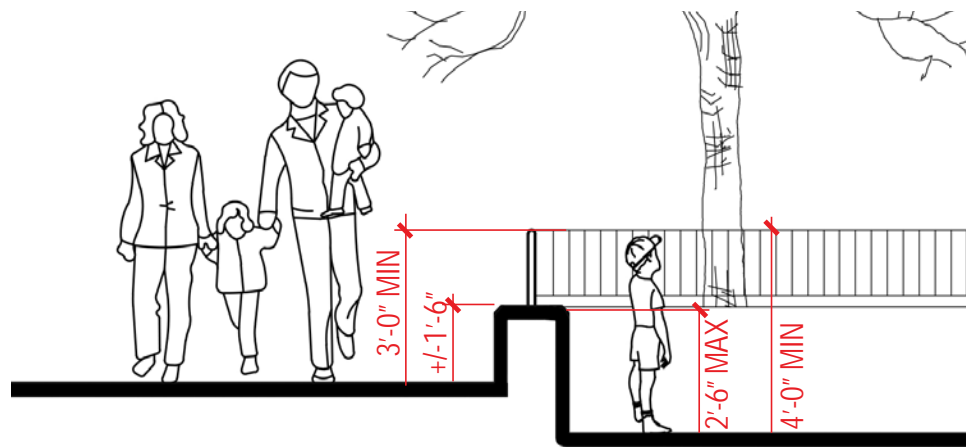


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St. Mark's Playground | Existing Sidewalk Condition - Examples of Concrete Replacement on St. Mark's Avenue



Elevation Change - Before



Elevation Change - After

APPROXIMATE HEIGHT
OF PROPOSED FENCE



1 - Northern Sidewalk

The current proposal is:

Preservation Department – Item 1, LPC-25-12960

**St. Mark's Playground – Crown Heights North III Historic District
Borough of Brooklyn**

Note: this is a Public Meeting item. No public testimony will be received today as the hearing on this item is closed.