



Park Avenue Vision - Project Introduction

CB5 Briefing

January 26, 2026



Agenda

- Introductions *(5 min)*
- Project Overview *(5 min)*
- Site Overview *(5 min)*
- Design Opportunities *(5 min)*
- Discussion *(35 min)*
- Next Steps

Introductions



Project Overview

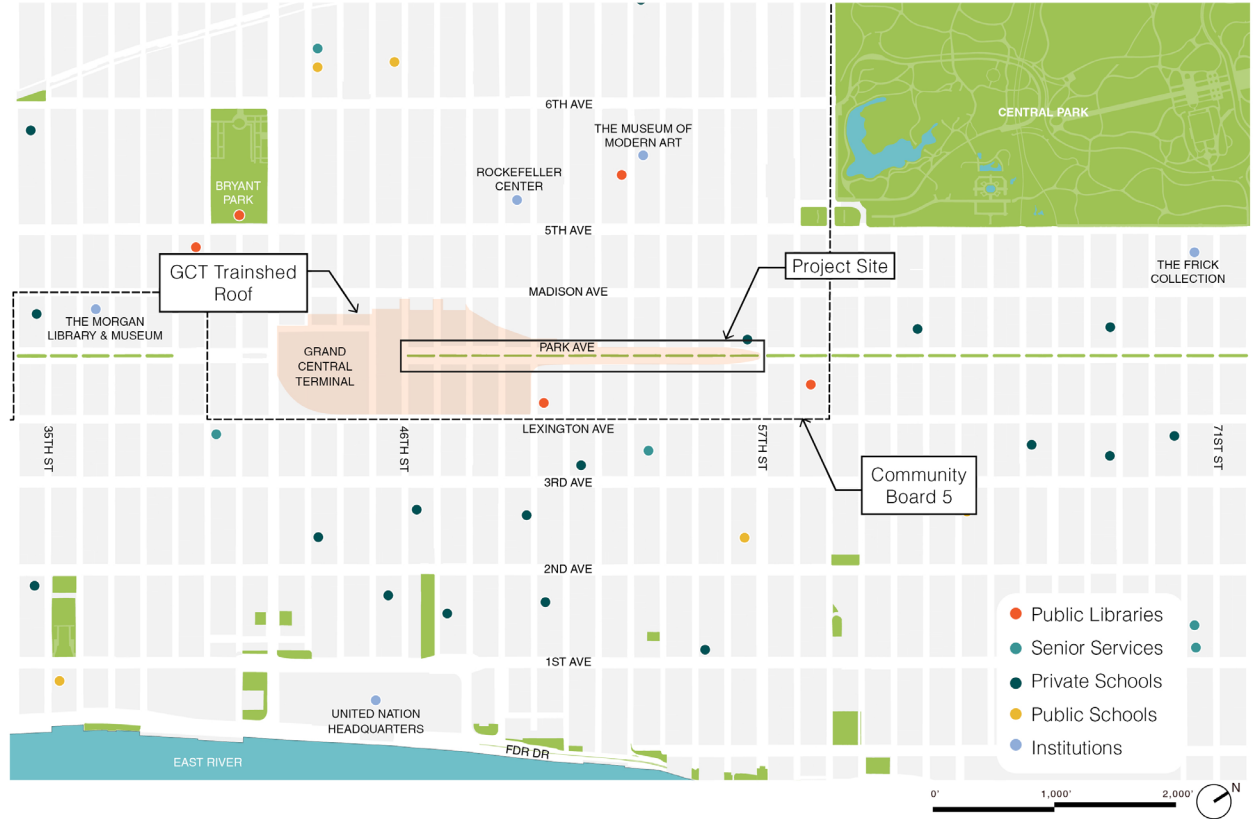
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PROJECT SITE

Project Overview

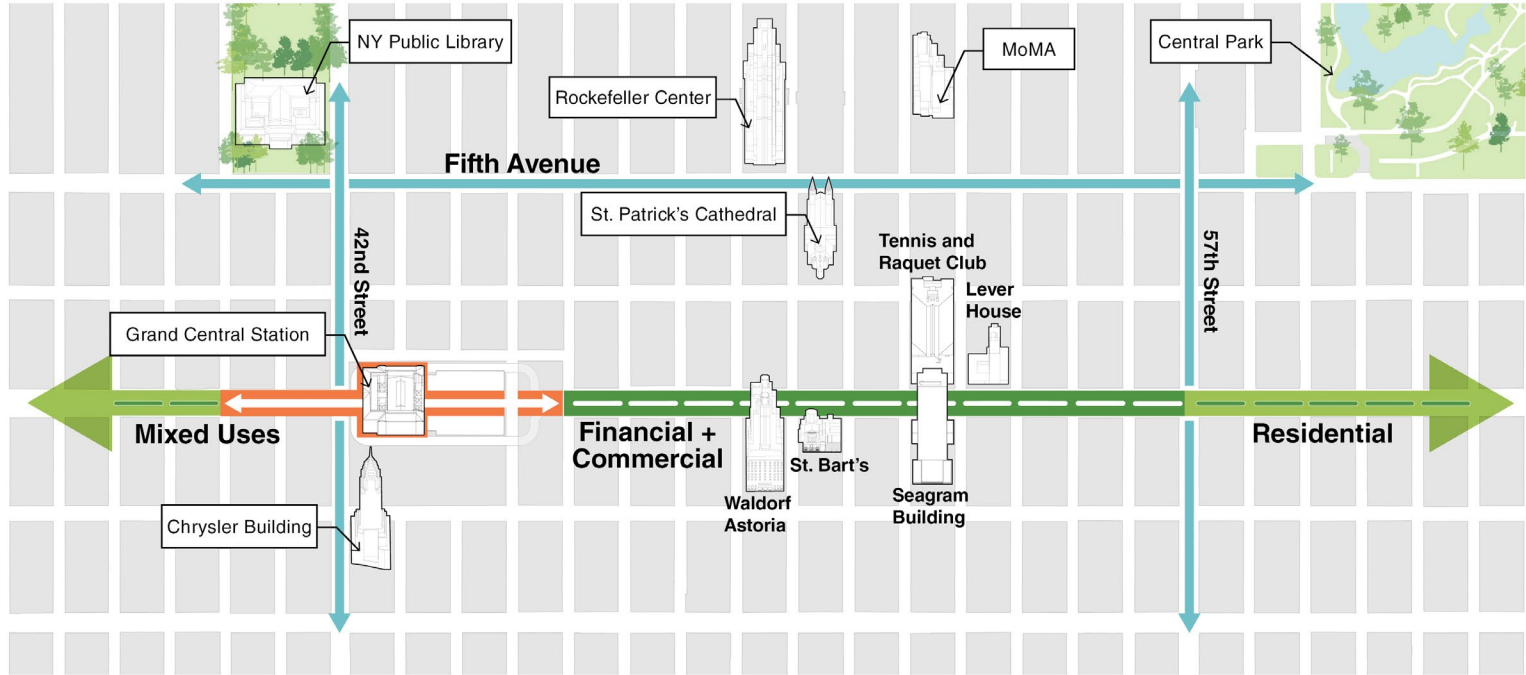


- The project is in East Midtown, Manhattan.
- The site includes the assessment area of two Business Improvement Districts (BIDs,) the Grand Central Partnership (GCP) and the East Midtown Partnership (EMP).



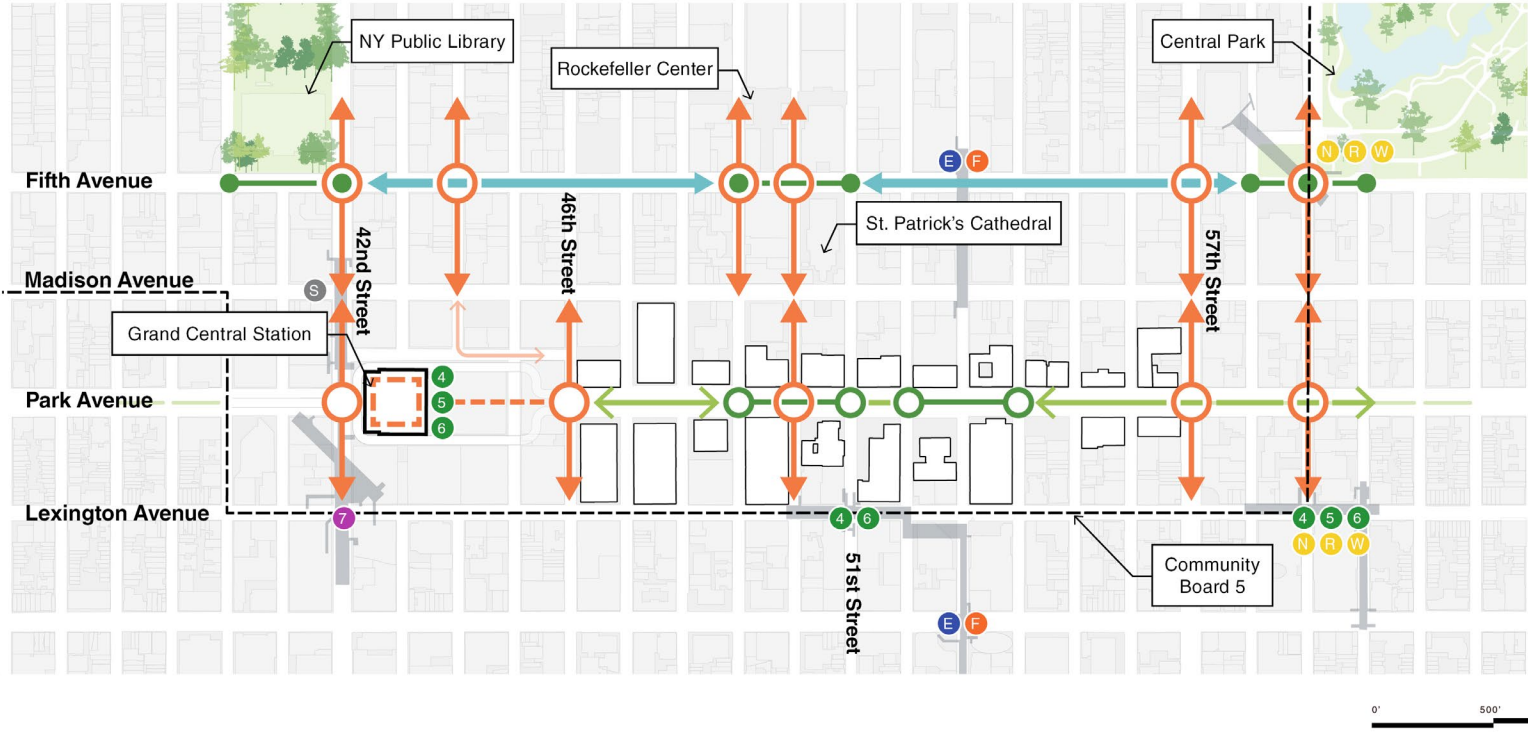
OPEN SPACE + DESTINATIONS

Project Overview



URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Site Context + Future of 5th



PROJECT SITE

Project Area



currently vacant lot. The project area is from 46th Street to 57th Street.

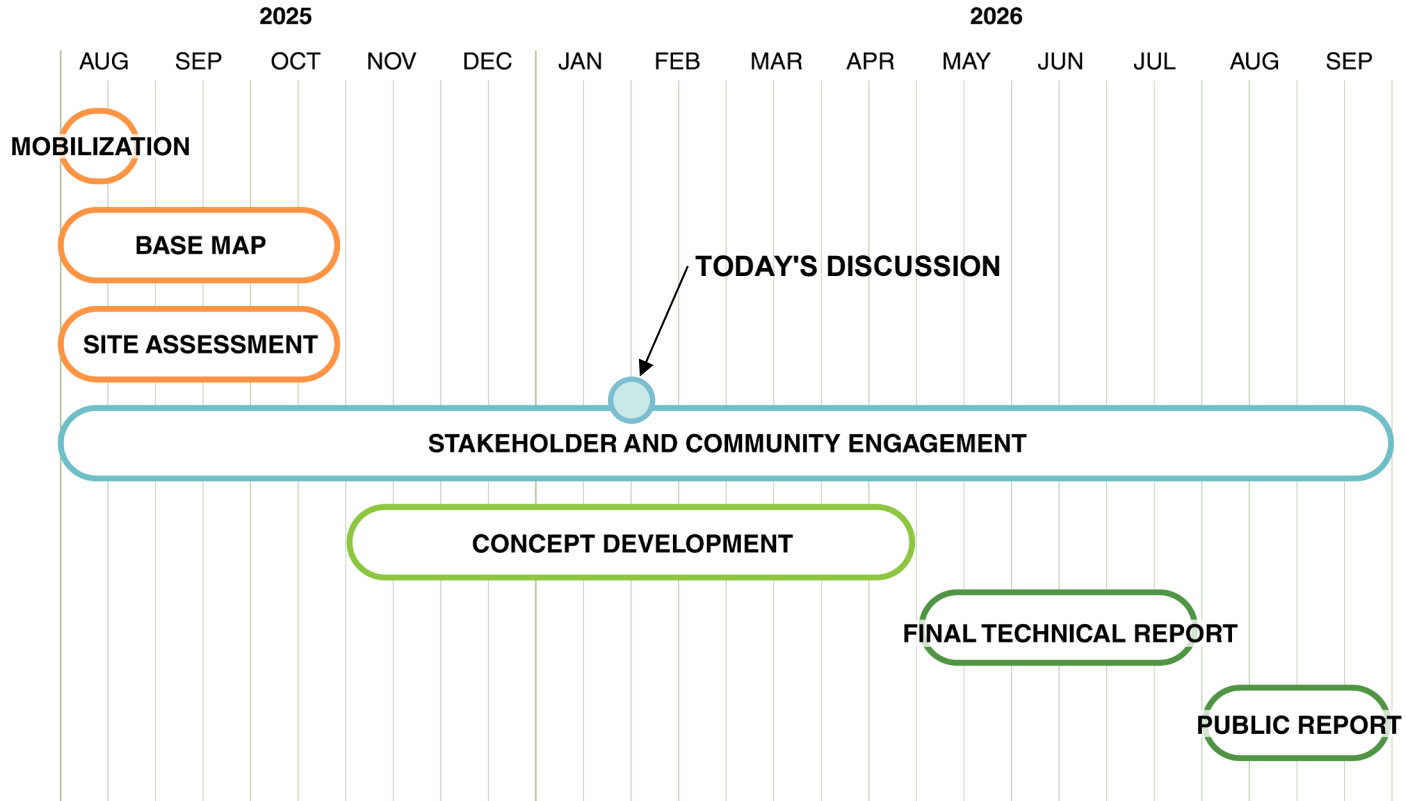
PROJECT GOALS

Project Overview

- Affirm Park Avenue's role as New York's global corridor.
- Create a linear oasis in the heart of Midtown.
- Coordinate with MTA and other agencies to marry surface treatments with the construction, maintenance, and operations for the train shed roof.

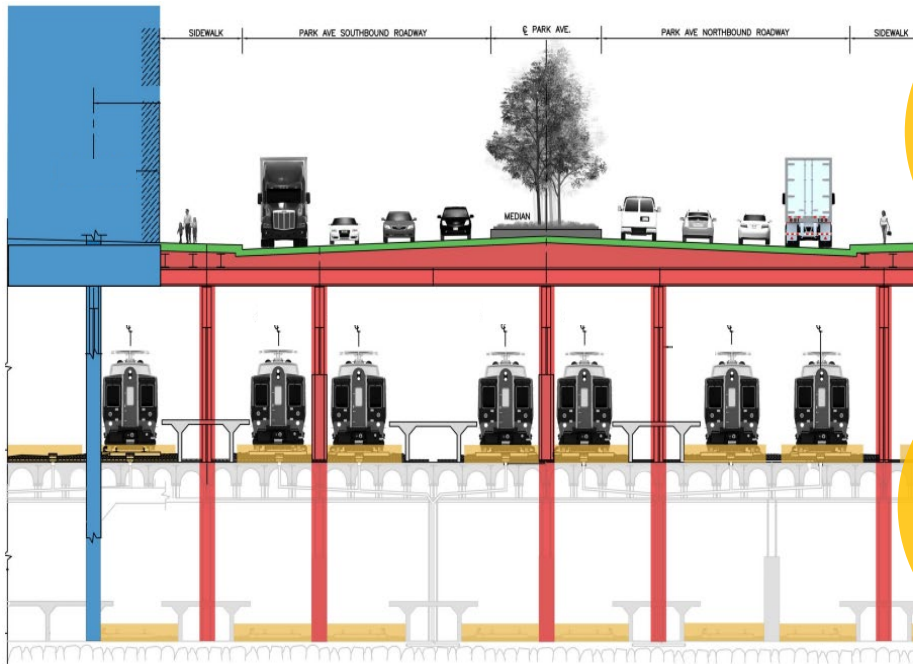
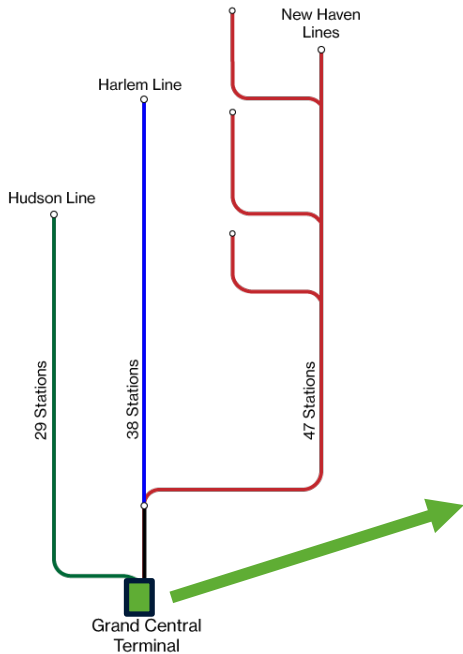
PROJECT SCHEDULE

Project Overview



The Grand Central Terminal train shed is vital for regional access to Manhattan

Approximately 200,000 Metro-North weekday riders rely on the over 100+ year-old Grand Central Artery for Manhattan service



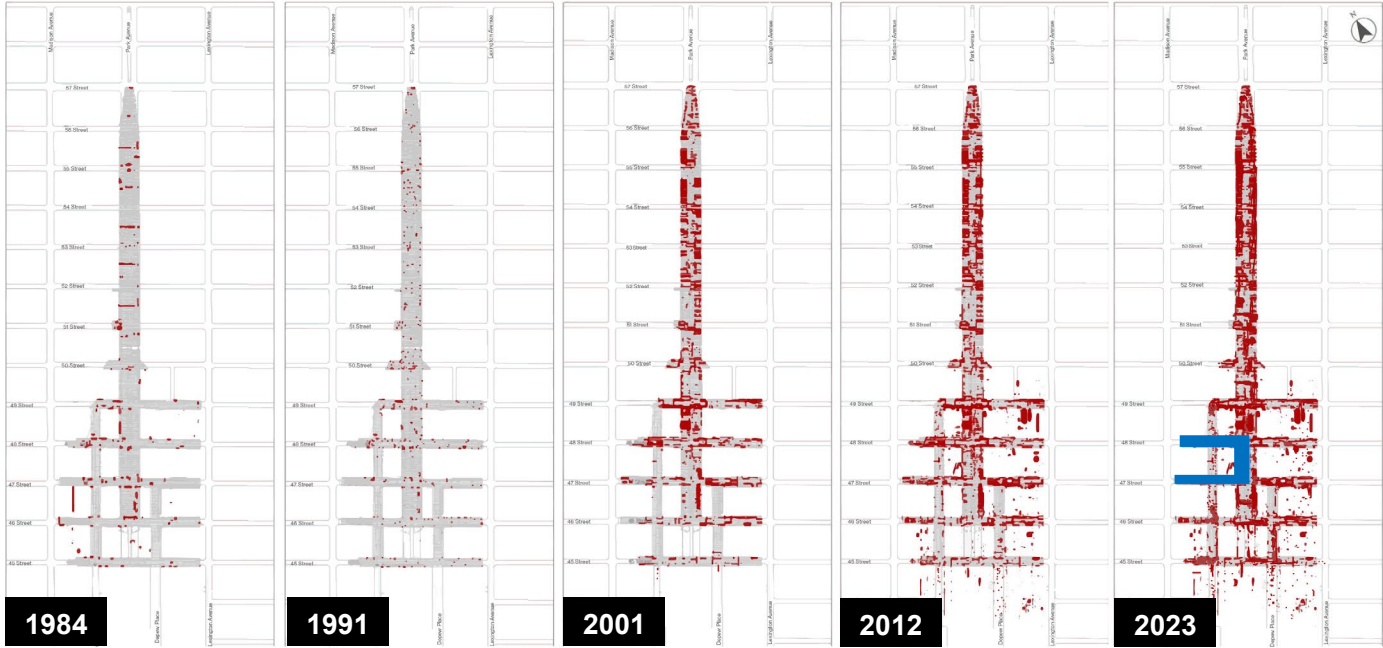
98% of Metro-North riders use the Grand Central Artery

750 daily GCT trains are sorted on a two-level track layout

*cross section is taken approx. at 48th street where the trainshed has two levels of track

Repairs not keeping up with deterioration rates

Train shed structural framing requires various levels of repair or replacement work to meet State of Good Repair.



- Deficiencies requiring repair
- Current work

Comprehensive Train Shed Roof Replacement

Park Avenue reconstruction requires work-zone phasing and traffic re-routing

- MTA installing a new, 100-year service life trapezoidal roof structure with state-of-the-art waterproofing membrane to protect the underlying structure from water infiltration.
- Complete full deck and stringer replacement within roadway and sidewalks.
- Coordinating with NYC DOT on installation of new Park Ave medians once streets are reconstructed.



Grand Central Terminal Train Shed – Status of Sector by Sector Roof Replacement



Site Overview

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PARK AVENUE MEDIANS | 1920-1930

Site Overview



For 10 years, the Park Avenue medians were spacious open spaces where users could sit and enjoy the landscape.

LEFT: Park Avenue Medians Looking North, Bettman Archives (1927).

RIGHT: Aerial View of the Park Avenue Medians, Bettman Archives (1924).

PARK AVENUE MEDIANS | TODAY

Site Overview

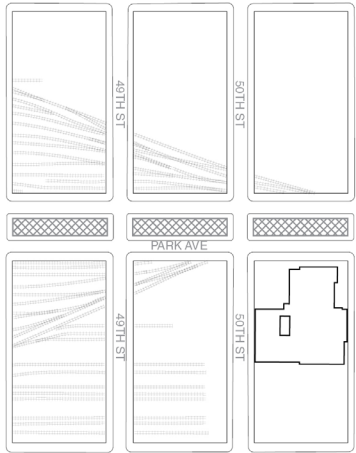


Today, the median features a unique combination of planting and design elements.

EVOLUTION OF MEDIAN DIMENSIONS

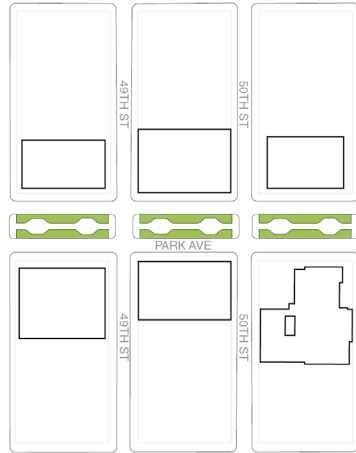
Site Overview

1910s – 1920s



Trainshed roof had yet to be completed where today's buildings along Park Avenue now exist. During this period, train tracks were exposed as construction continued. Medians were striped and unused.

1920s – 1927



For a short period of time, the medians were converted into a linear park for pedestrians to walk through and enjoy.

1927 – Present

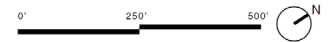


In 1927, the linear park was reduced to a planted area, expanding the street from three to four lanes.

Future Condition

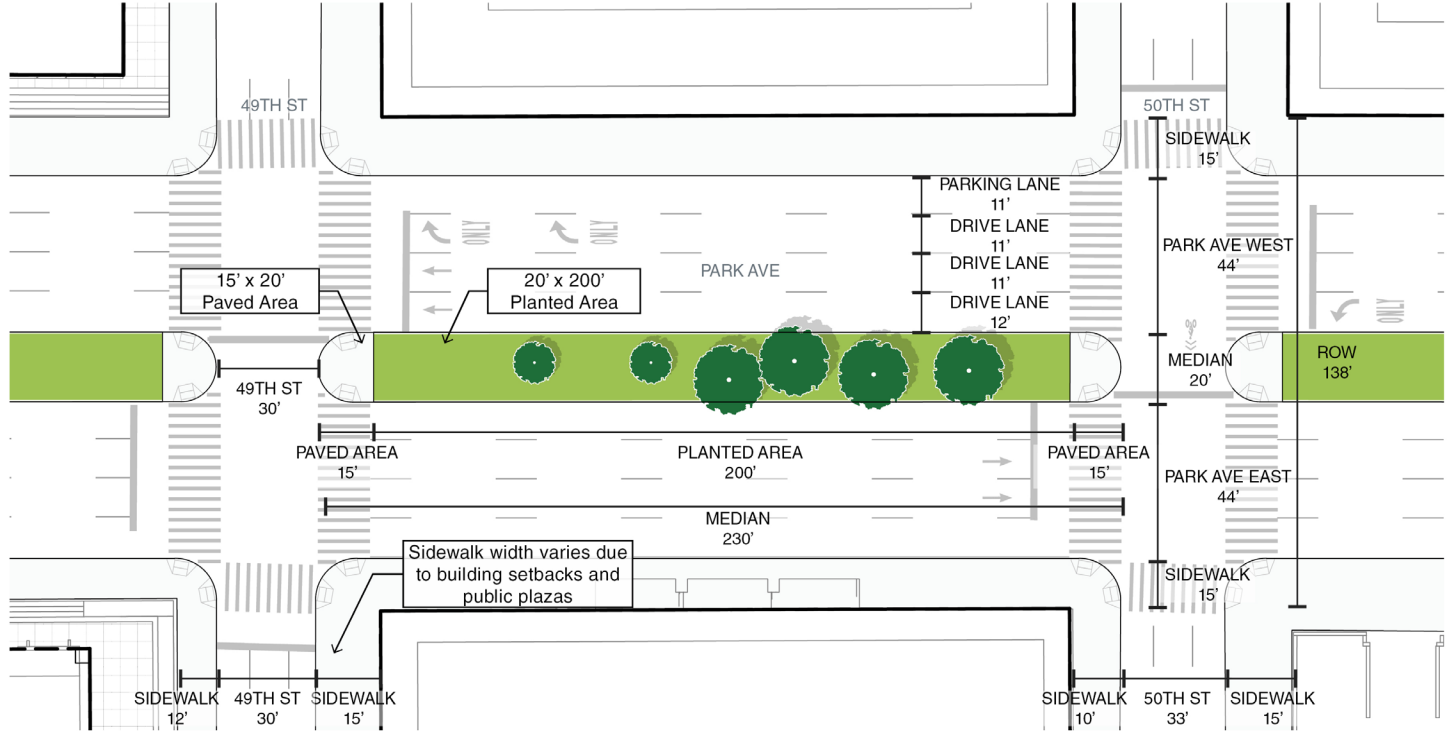
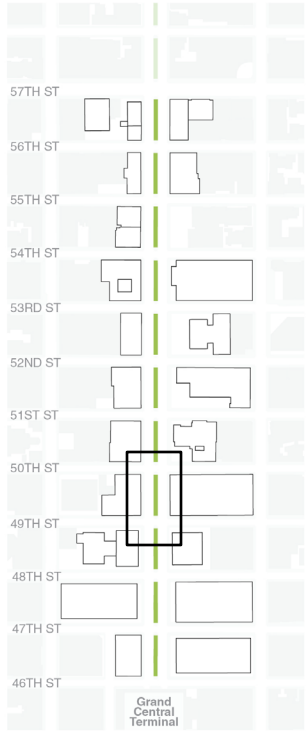


Future designs for Park Avenue will reintroduce pedestrian access to the medians.



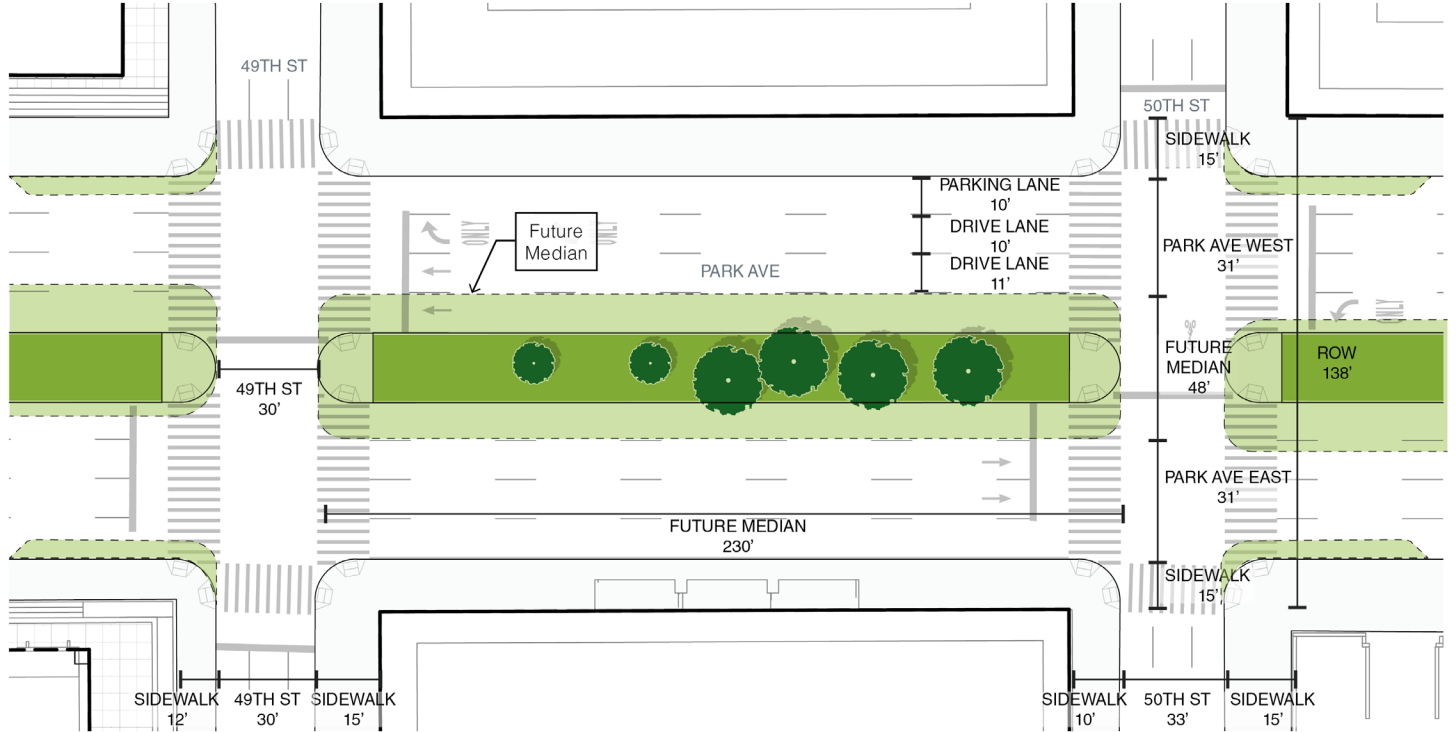
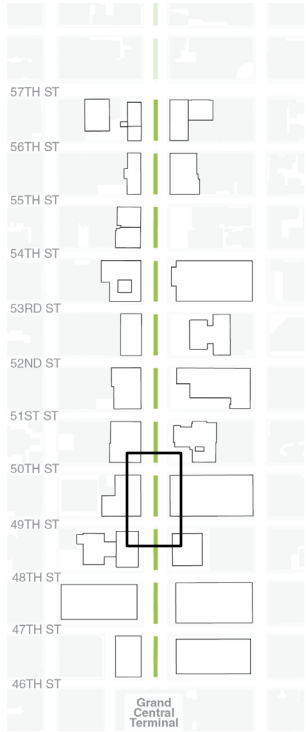
EXISTING TYPICAL MEDIAN DIMENSIONS

Site Overview



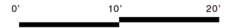
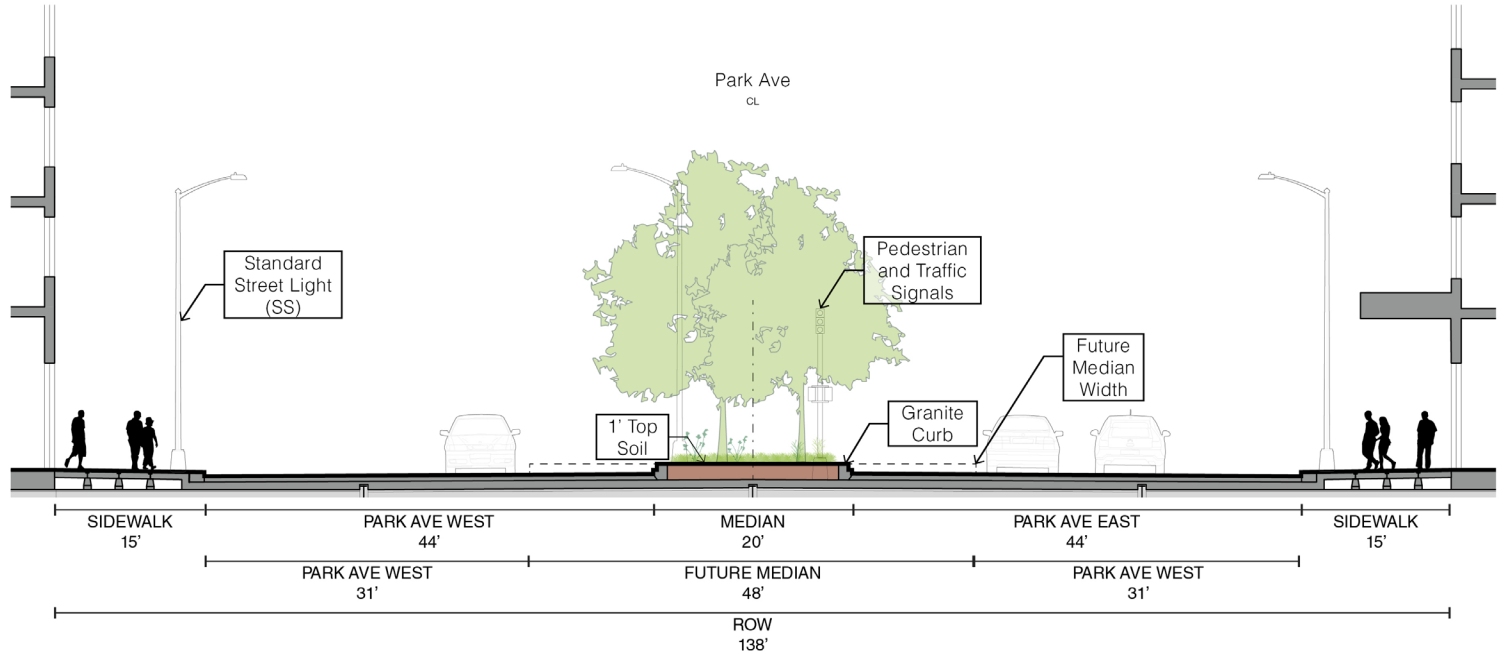
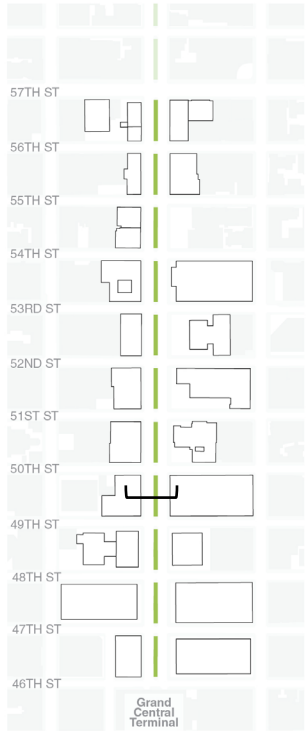
FUTURE TYPICAL MEDIAN DIMENSIONS

Site Overview



EXISTING TYPICAL MEDIAN DIMENSIONS

Site Overview



PUBLIC + PRIVATE SPACES

Site Overview



GARDENS + LANDSCAPES | STREET LEVEL OVERVIEW

Site Overview



SITE PLANTING | MEDIANS

Site Overview

- The diversity of existing trees on Park Avenue is limited by pollution tolerance, light availability, soil conditions, and wind tunneling in the corridor.
- Trees appear limited in size and age due to limited available soil volume and urban conditions.
- Trees planted in a single-file pattern perform better due to reduced competition of sunlight compared to trees planted in groupings.
- Trees appear to require replacement after approximately 10 to 15 years.



Trees, lawn, and groundcover on the medians.

EXISTING TYPICAL MEDIAN TREES

Site Overview



● Callery Pear | *Pyrus calleryana*

● Japanese Flowering Cherry | *Prunus serrulata* 'Green Leaf'

● American Basswood | *Tilia americana*

● River Birch | *Betula nigra*

● Colorado Blue Spruce | *Picea pungens*

● Flowering Dogwood | *Cornus florida*

● Hawthorn | *Crataegus spp.*

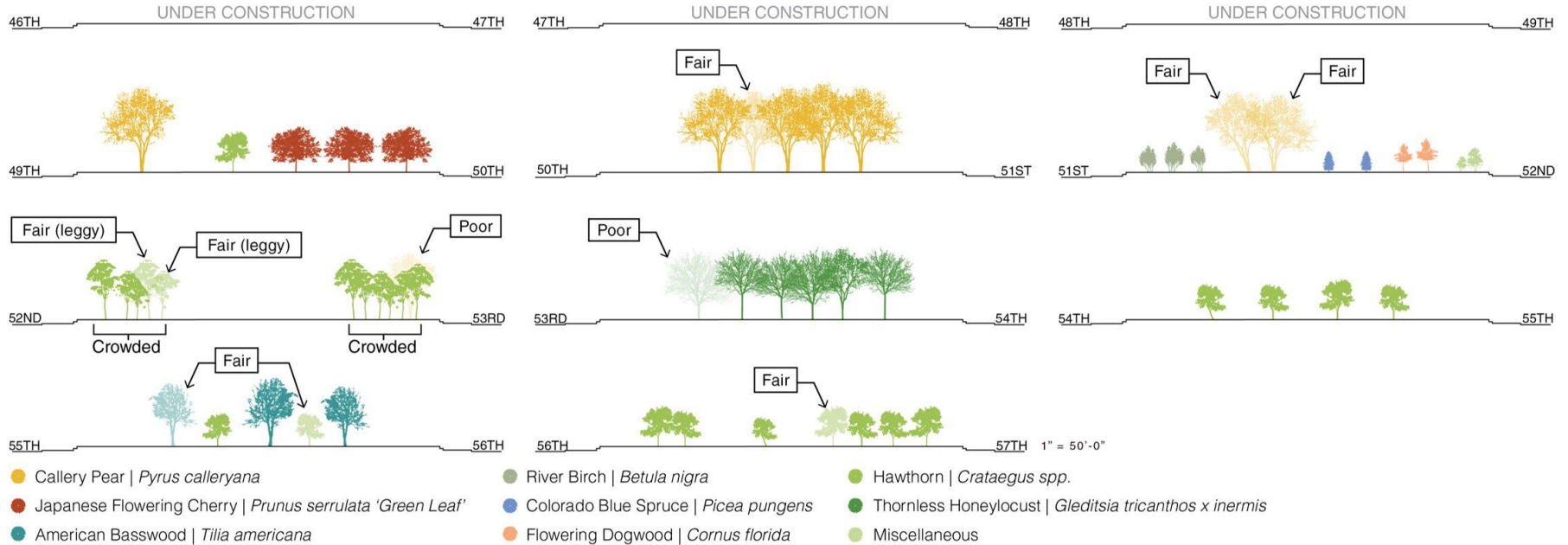
● Thornless Honeylocust | *Gleditsia tricanthos x inermis*

● Miscellaneous



EXISTING TYPICAL MEDIAN TREES

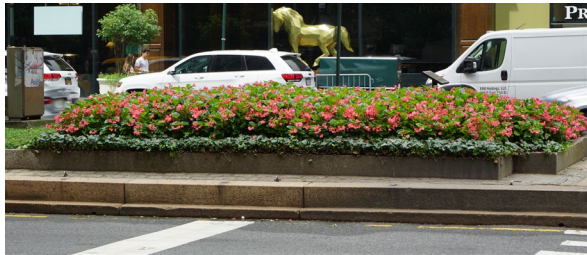
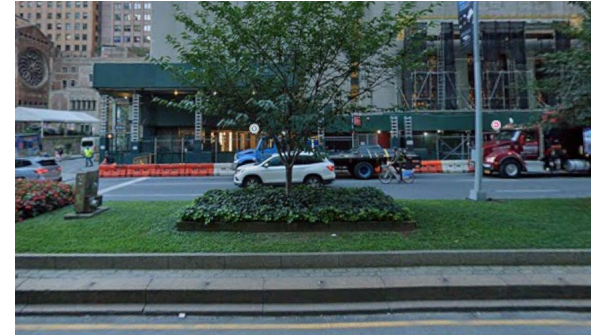
Site Overview



SITE PLANTING | MEDIANS

Site Overview

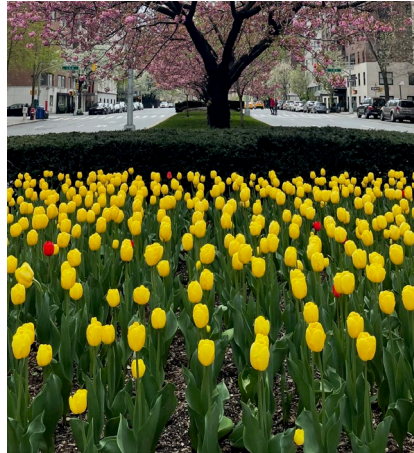
- Each median features a unique combination of planting and design elements.
- The understory planting includes shrubs and groundcovers, such as *Taxus spp.*, *Liriope spp.*, and *Vinca minor*, complemented by areas of lawn and seasonal planting.



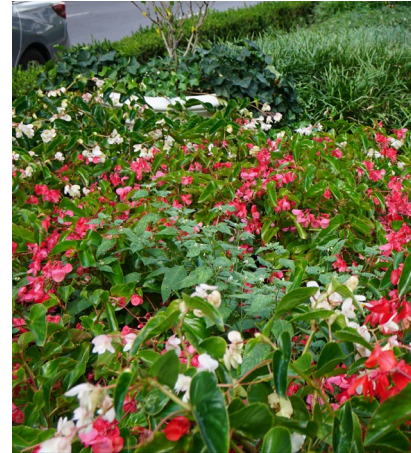
SITE PLANTING | MEDIANS

Site Overview

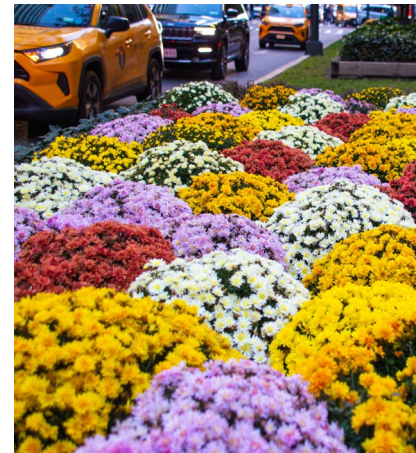
- Seasonal planting is provided and maintained by the Fund for Park Avenue.
- Seasonal plants include tulips, begonias, and chrysanthemums.
- These flowering annuals are typically found at the median ends and in raised pots.



Spring: Tulips



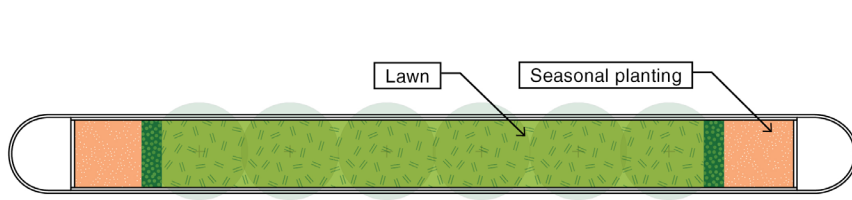
Summer: Begonias



Fall: Chrysanthemum

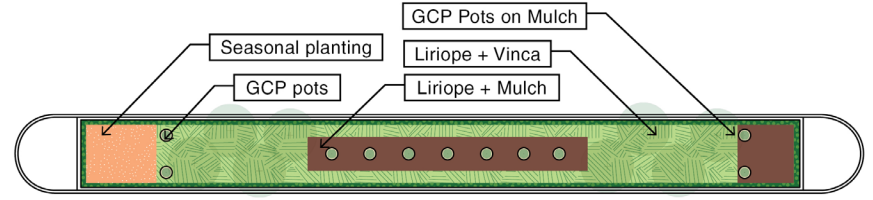
EXISTING TYPICAL MEDIAN GROUNDCOVER

Site Overview



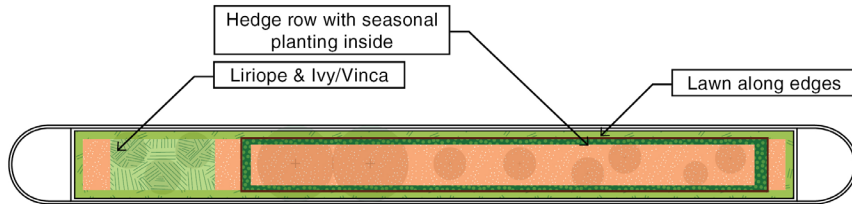
Type 1

- Lawn in center
- Seasonal planting at ends flanked by *Taxus* hedges



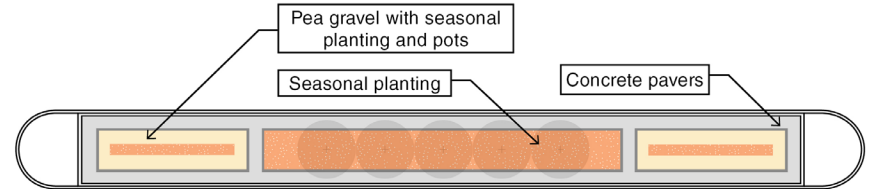
Type 2

- *Taxus* hedge encompassing the median with pots along the center



Type 3

- Lawn edge with a mix of seasonal planting, groundcover, and row of hedges.



Type 4

- Concrete paver border with seasonal planting and pea gravel.

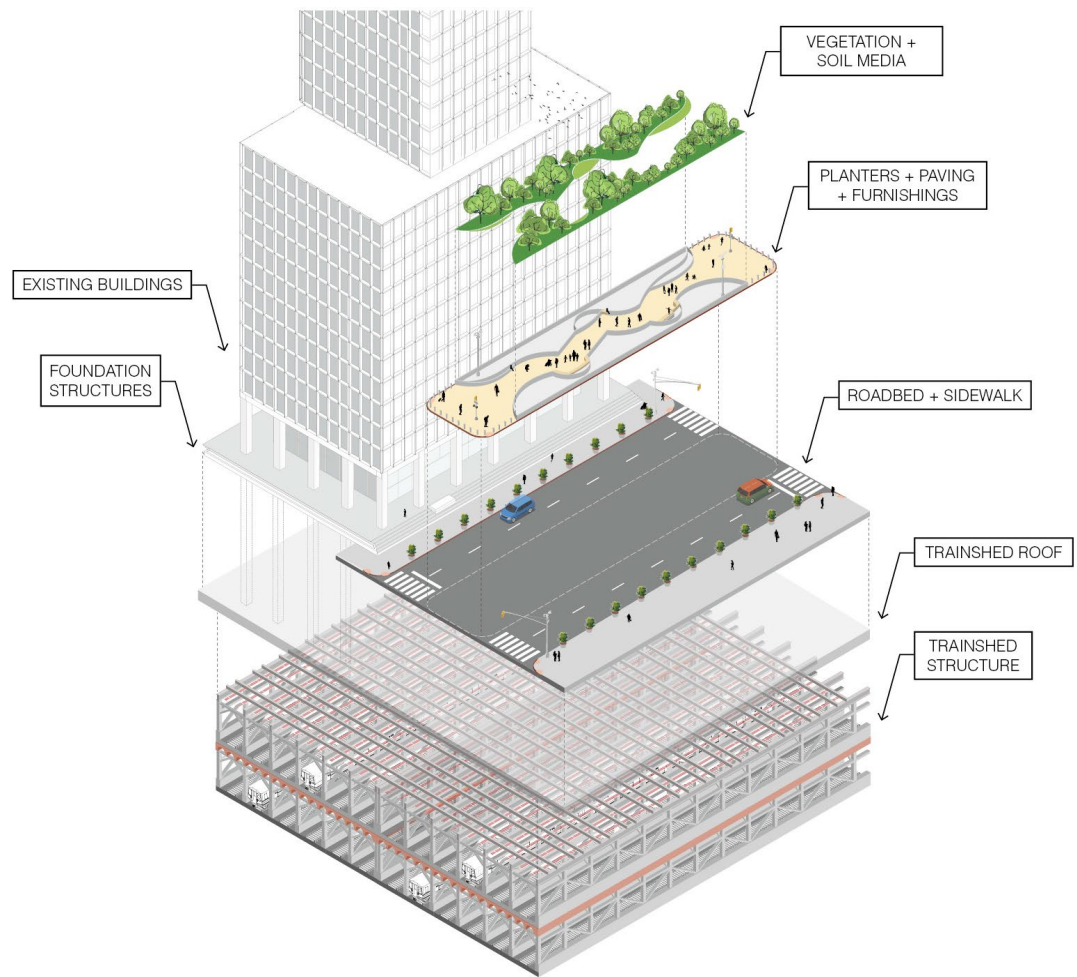
Design Opportunities

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PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS

Infrastructure

- Design will need to coordinate the complex layers which make up Park Avenue.
- Phasing and coordination of the trainshed reconstruction and Park Avenue restoration will be a major consideration.
- Other considerations include MTA subsurface + surface infrastructure, circulation needs, adjacent building requirements, and overall design vision.



PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS

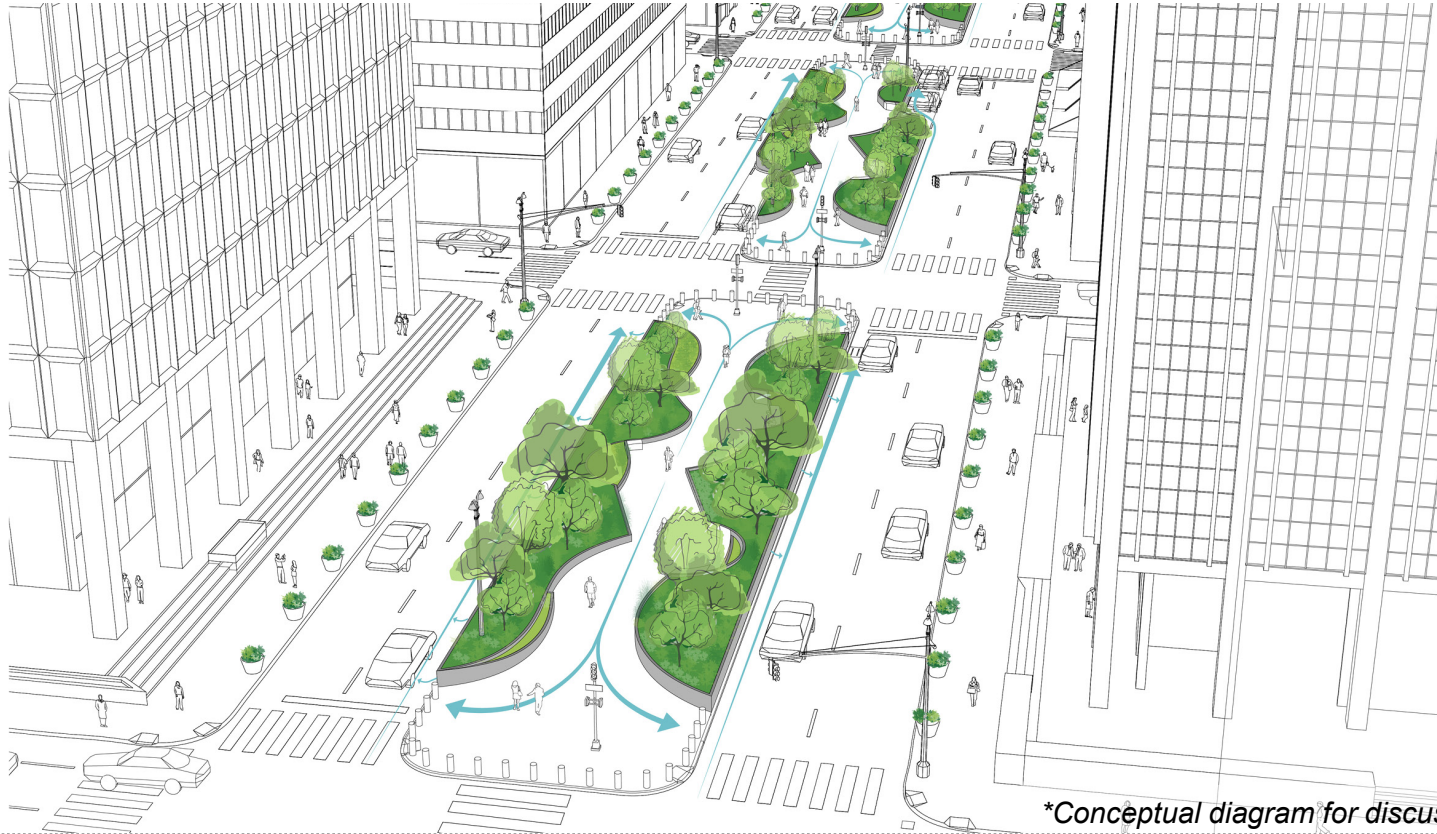
Design Approach

- Bespoke block by block design vs. corridor wide vision.
- Interim design conditions for long term train shed reconstruction project.



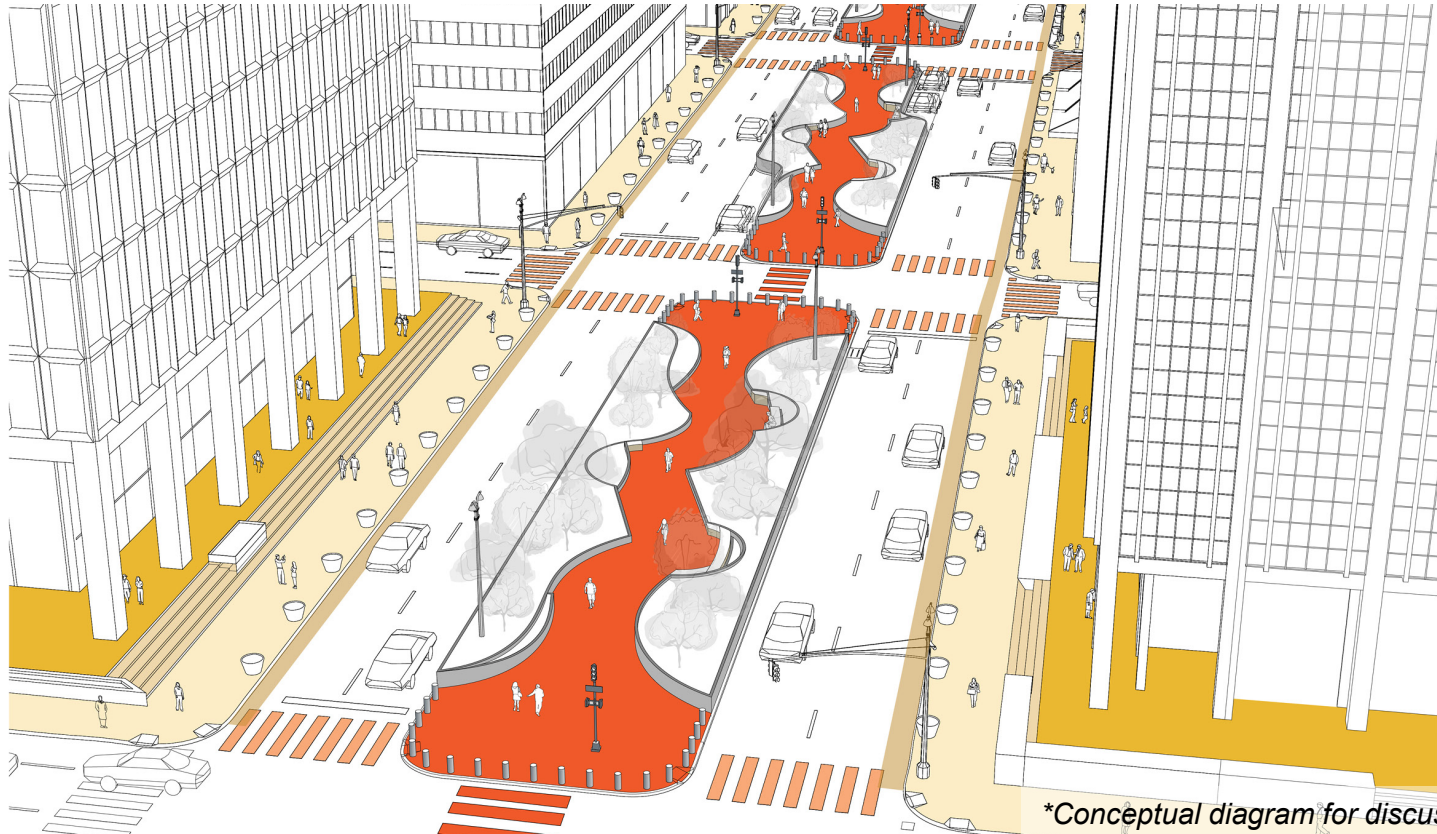
PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS

Landscape Maintenance, Seating + Dwelling Space



PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS

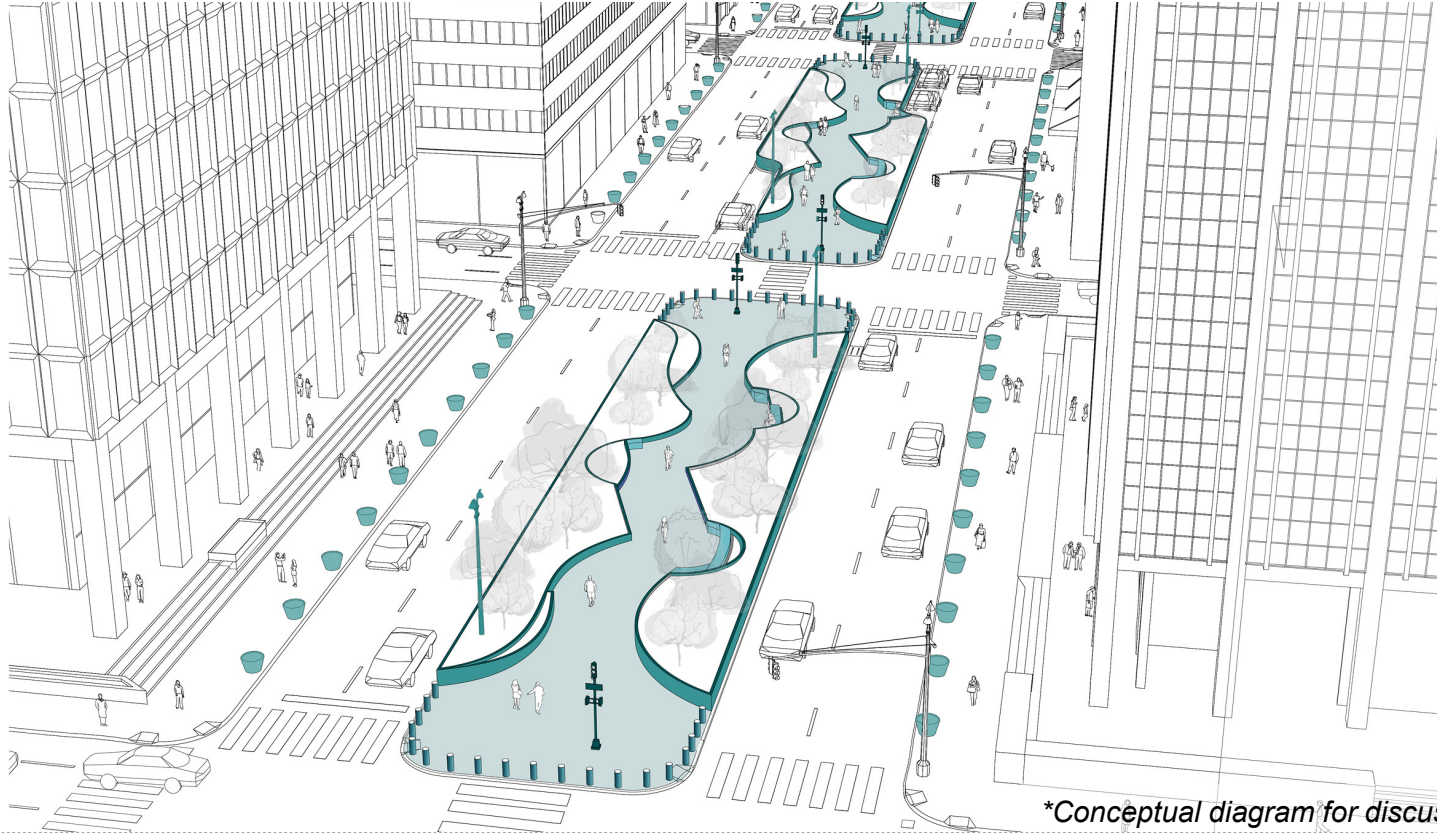
Materials, Programming + Concessions



**Conceptual diagram for discussion purposes*

PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS

Security, Lighting + Utilities



**Conceptual diagram for discussion purposes*

EXISTING WORK

Sector 1 Design: Ken Smith Workshop



*Ken Smith Workshop – Park Avenue Median for 270 Park *Image from January 21, 2022 PDC Submission*

Discussion

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DISCUSSION



Next Steps

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Park Avenue Vision Plan

We want to hear from you!



Scan the QR code or visit
bit.ly/ParkAveSurvey to
take the digital survey.



To learn more about the project, visit the project website: nyc.gov/parkavenue

Thank You!

Questions?



NYCDOT



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