



Public Open House

Waawaatesi Concept Design Refinement
New Park at 229 Richmond Street

December 9th 2024

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the land we are meeting on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit.

Source: City of Toronto

African Ancestral Acknowledgement

Though I am not a person of African descent, I am committed to continually acting in support of and in solidarity with Black communities seeking freedom and reparative justice in light of the history and ongoing legacy of slavery that continues to impact Black communities in Canada. As part of this commitment, I would also like to acknowledge that not all people came to these lands as migrants and settlers. Specifically, I wish to acknowledge those of us who came here involuntarily, particularly those brought to these lands as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and Slavery. In support of the City of Toronto's ongoing efforts to confront anti-Black racism, I pay tribute to those ancestors of African origin and descent.

Source: City of Toronto

Design Presentation

West 8 landscape architects

A New Park at 229 Richmond St W

Current RendezViews Site



Our Team

West 8 - Landscape Architect & lead consultant

hcma - architect

Minokamik - Indigenous advisor

ARUP - engineering

ERA Architects - engagement support & heritage

AW Hooker - cost consulting

Artist's rendering; does not represent final installation



Project Overview

Timeline to completion

Brief definition: 2022

Park design selected via international design competition: December 2023

Concept refinement & public engagement phase: June - December 2024

- Pop up event September 2024
- Public survey August - September 2024
- Public open house with refined concept design - December 2024

***WE ARE
HERE!***

Design Development & Construction Documentation: January 2025 - April 2026

Construction starts Summer 2026

New park open to public end of 2027

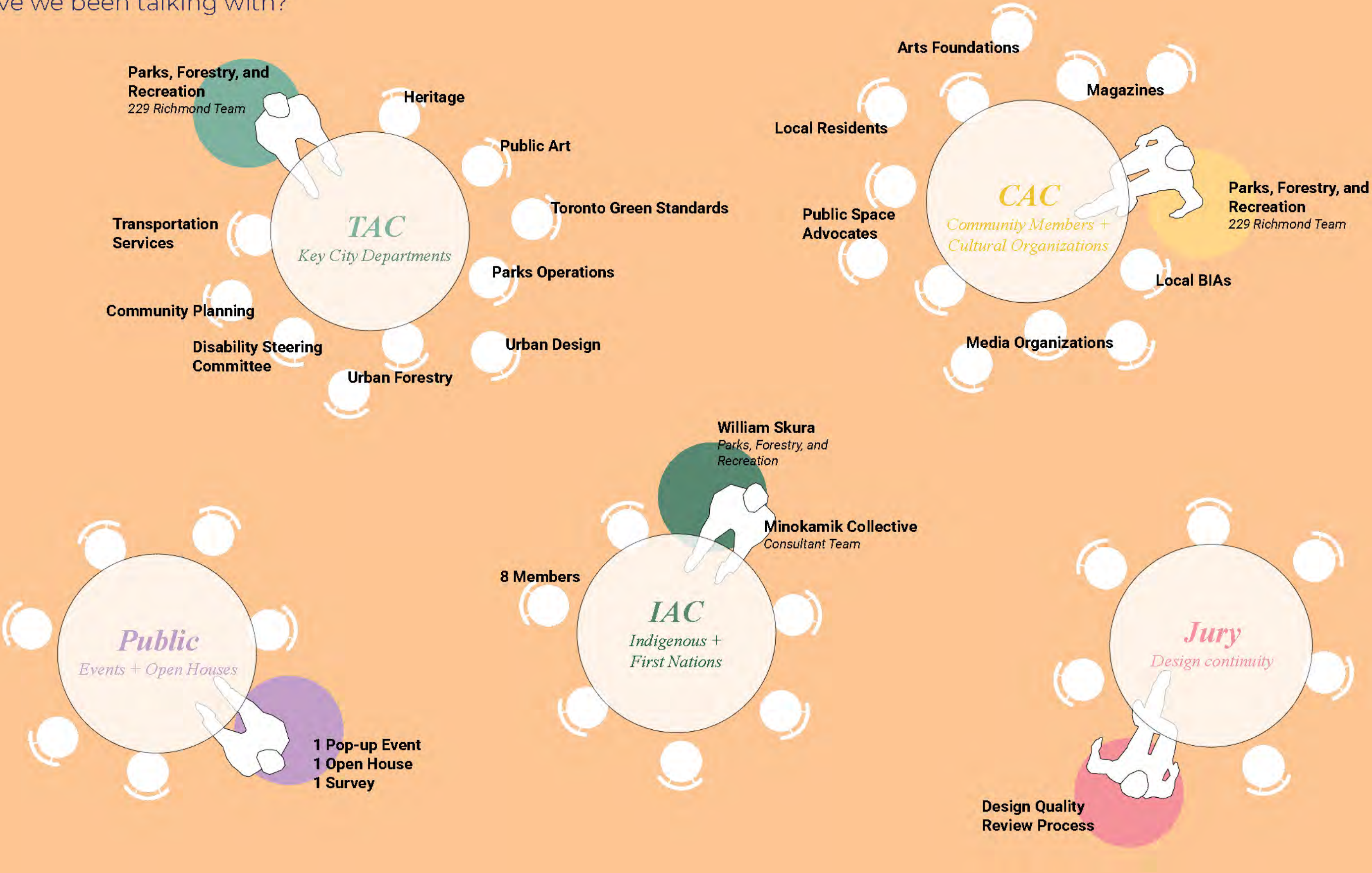
Public Engagement Timeline

Full Engagement Strategy



Outreach Groups

Who have we been talking with?



Waawaatesi

Concept Design Overview

Waawaatesi - Firefly in Anishinaabemowin

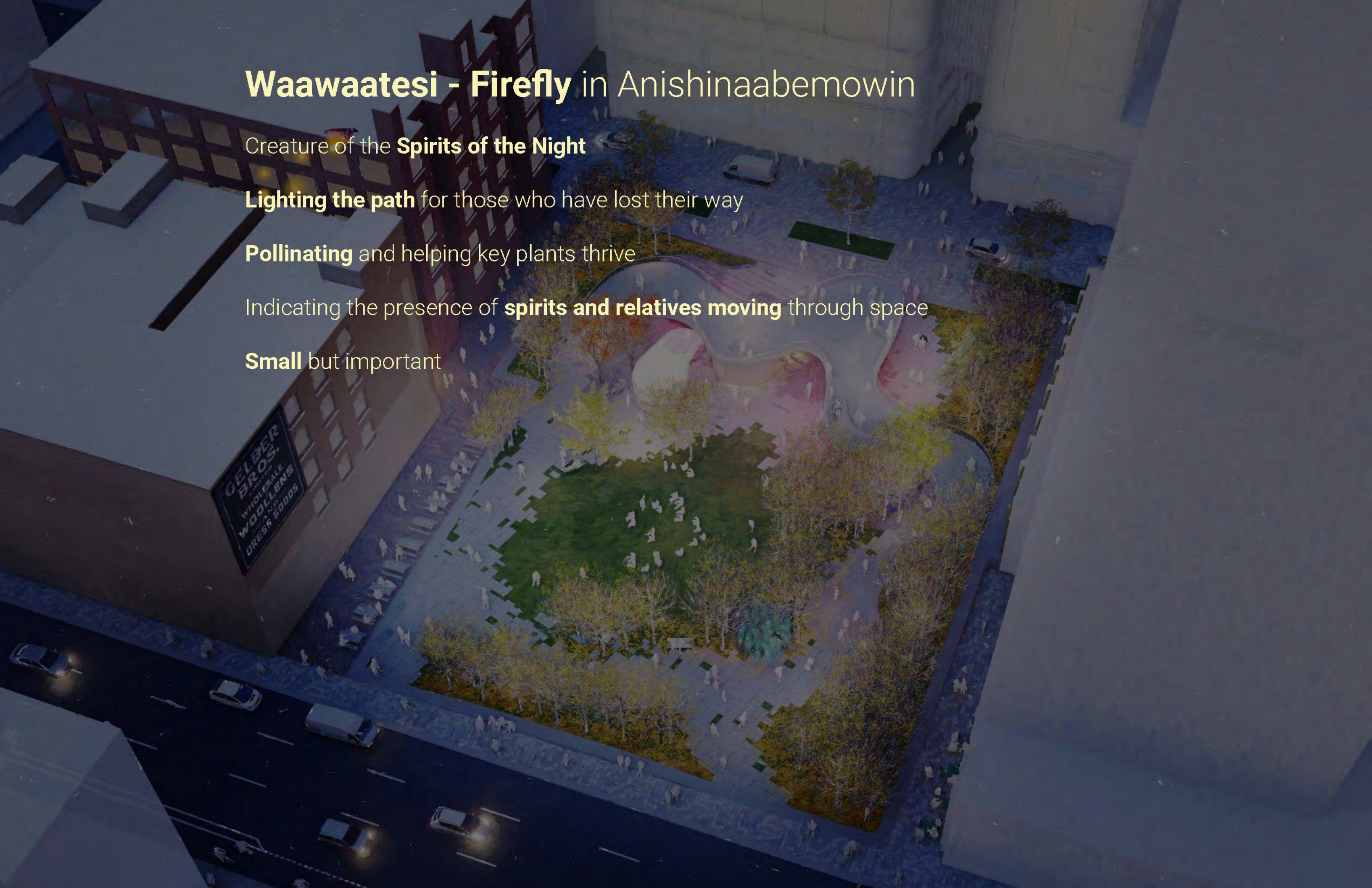
Creature of the **Spirits of the Night**

Lighting the path for those who have lost their way

Pollinating and helping key plants thrive

Indicating the presence of **spirits and relatives moving** through space

Small but important



Waawaatesi - Firefly in Anishinaabemowin

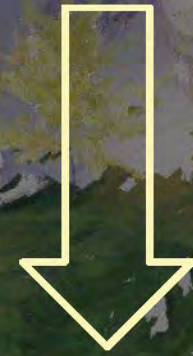
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Small but important



Abundance for all inhabitants of Toronto, human, plant, animal, insect...

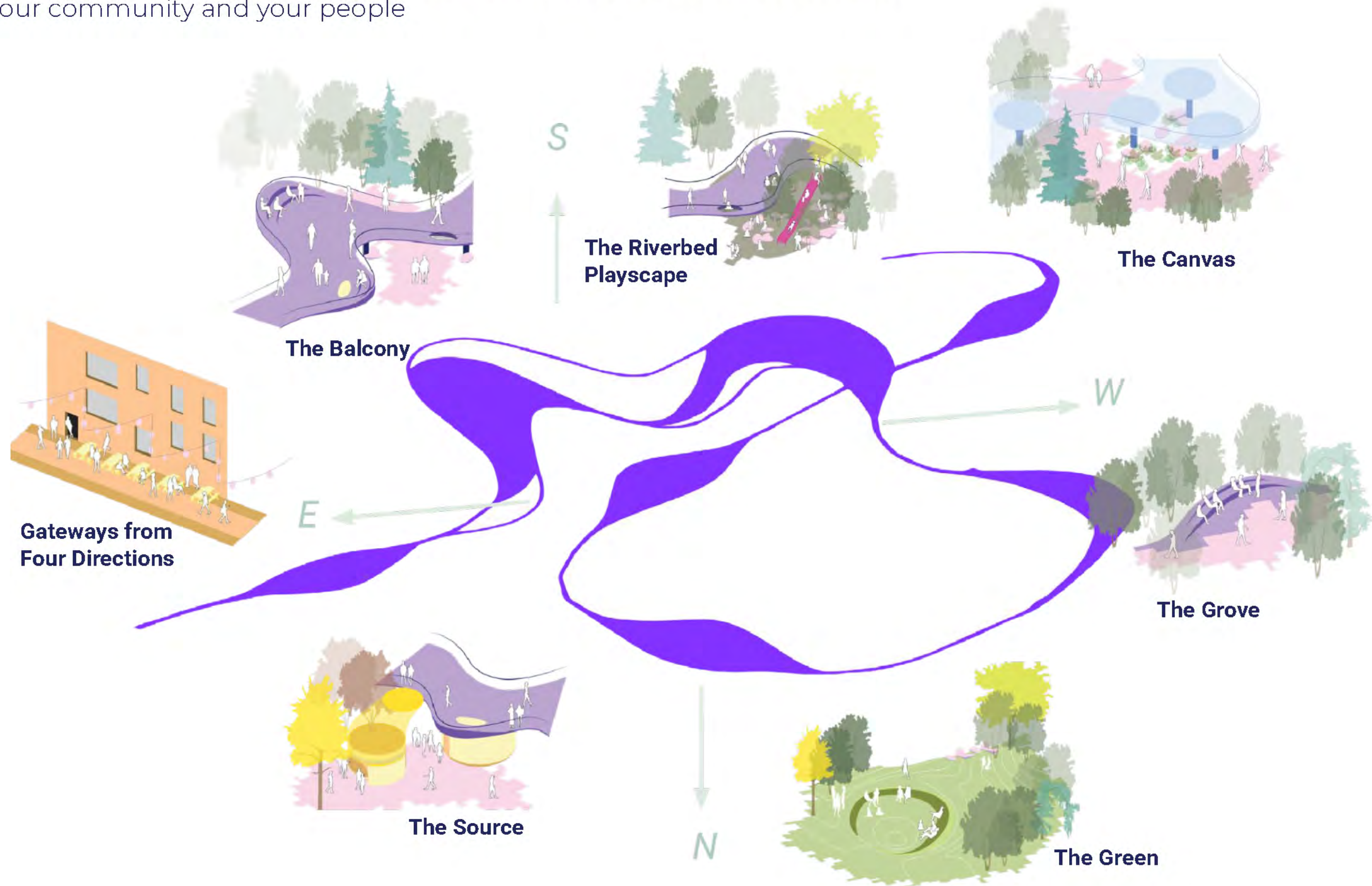
A rich and **cultivated atmosphere**, open to **diverse and differing** points of view

Small project with big impact on wider **cultural transformation and stewardship**
relevant across seven generations (Indigenous IP rights, naming, programming)

Passage of time is reflected in landscape and art

Journey of the Seven Stepping Stones

When you are lost along the water, look for the seven stepping stones to bring you back to your community and your people



What We Heard and What We've Changed

Engagement feedback and outcomes

Accessibility and Circulation

- More accessible entries
- Stronger arrival at John St. midblock connection

Furnishing

- More benches and more variety in seating
- Ensure safety and year-round comfort in the play area

Lighting + Art

- Brightly lit, without sacrificing atmosphere
- Use the Canvas as a platform for more art
- Have ongoing community and Indigenous programming and events

Safety

- Ensure that sightlines through the park are clear and unobstructed
- Ensure visibility from Richmond St as the busiest street bordering the park
- Clarify approach to crime prevention

Maintenance

- Plan for vehicular access in the park to meet key maintenance requirements
- Ensure that the park can be maintained and kept in good condition for decades to come



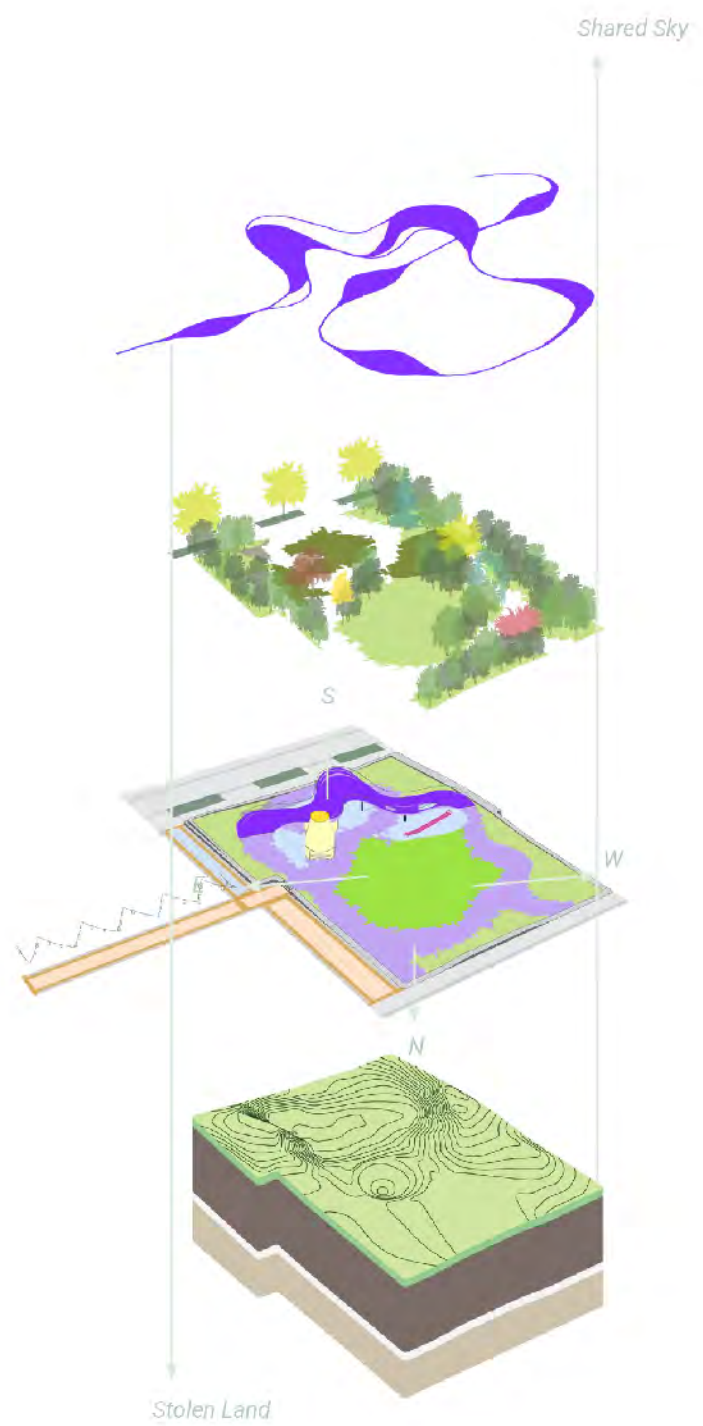
Gateways

Welcome and accessibility in the park



Concept: A river of stepping stones

Continuous primary path loop stands out in the hierarchy of movement





Artist's rendering; does not represent final installation



Artist's rendering; does not represent final installation

Accessibility to the Park

Step-free access on all four sides of park, with laneway connections to John and Queen

- Primary Accessible Route
- Secondary Accessible Route
- Tertiary Route



The Source

Universal washrooms with radical appeal



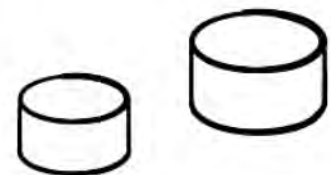


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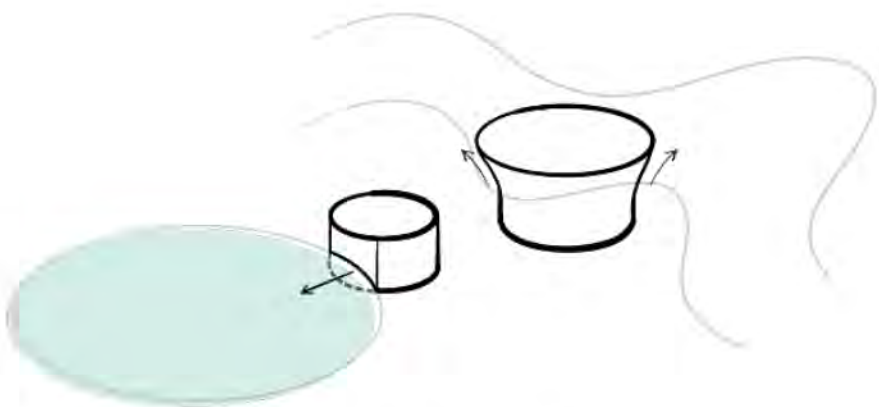


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Designing the Washrooms for Safety and Appeal



Two volumes



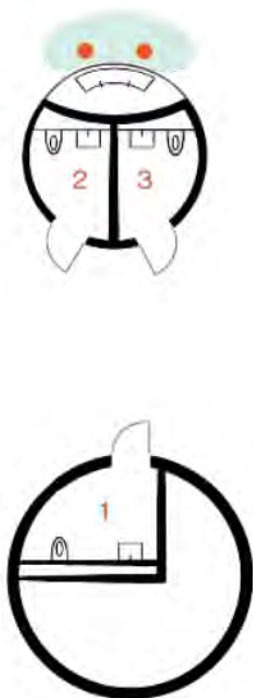
Embrace the plaza + walkway



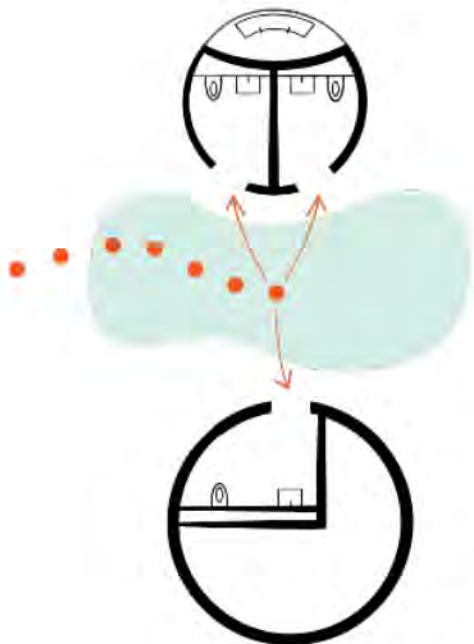
Provide water + cover



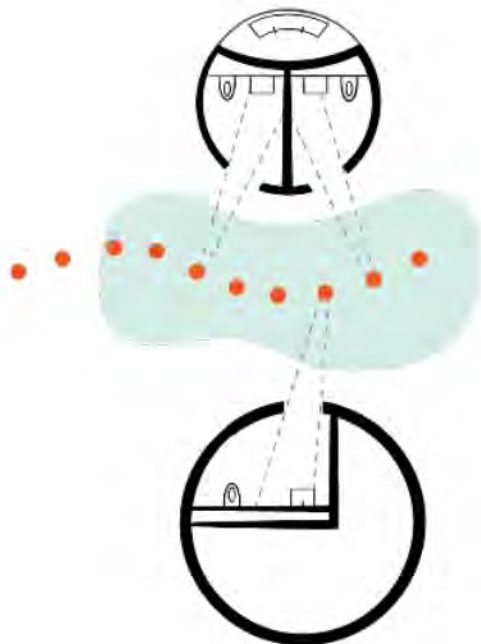
Light!



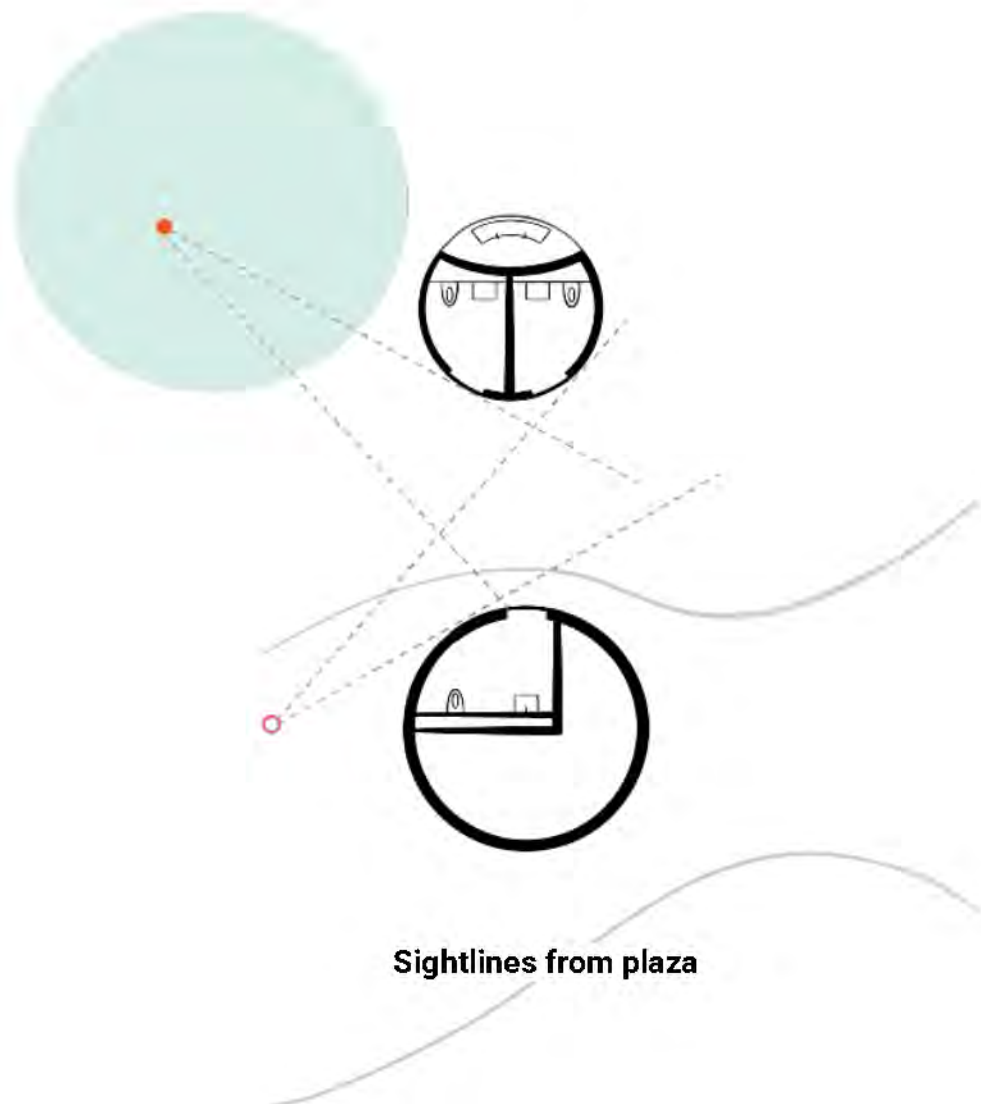
Three washrooms + outdoor water source



Common waiting area



Sightlines from waiting area



Sightlines from plaza

Richmond Street

Duncan Street

Nelson Street

- Two washrooms
- External water source

- One universal washroom
- Maintenance storage room

Additional storage room
underneath balcony



The Green

An oasis for gathering



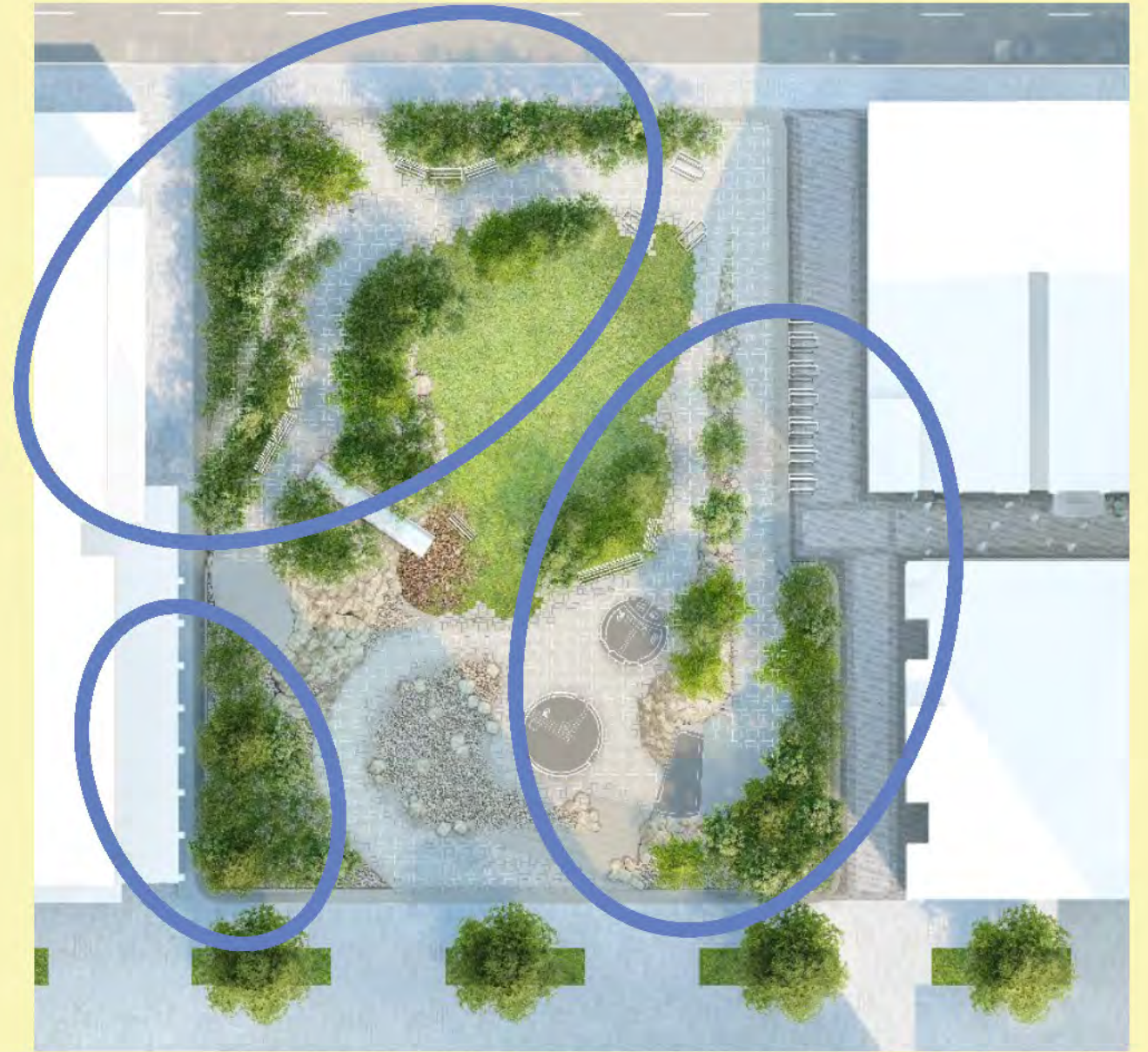


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The Grove

An immersive forest feeling that starts with great soil





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Sun exposure for planting success

Final solar condition averages 2.5 - 4 hours of sun during growing season

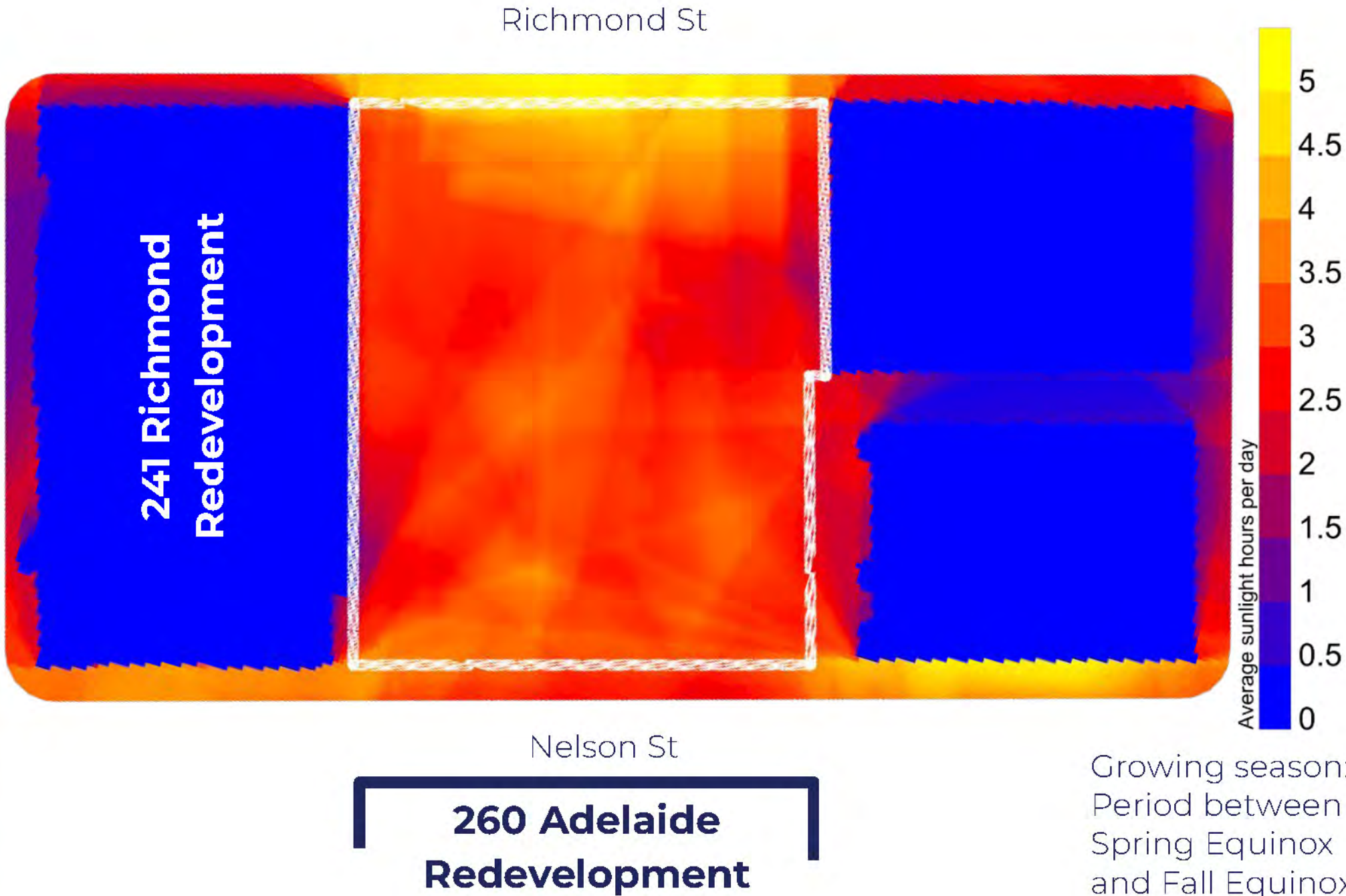


241 Richmond Redevelopment



260 Adelaide Redevelopment

Solar study based on surrounding buildings only; site features not captured



Growing season:
Period between
Spring Equinox
and Fall Equinox

Mixed woodland grove + 6 “performer” trees

Legend

Woodland Grove - fast growing pioneer species



Betula nigra

Betula populifolia

Populus tremuloides

Seven Specimen Trees with Performer Attitude

Mark the arrival of spring

Weeping evergreens - symbols of tragedy



Cercis canadensis

Picea abies pendula

Chamaecyparis nootkatensi

Ancient wisdom and urban warriors



Ginkgo biloba

Gelditsia triacanthos

Ulmus parvifolia

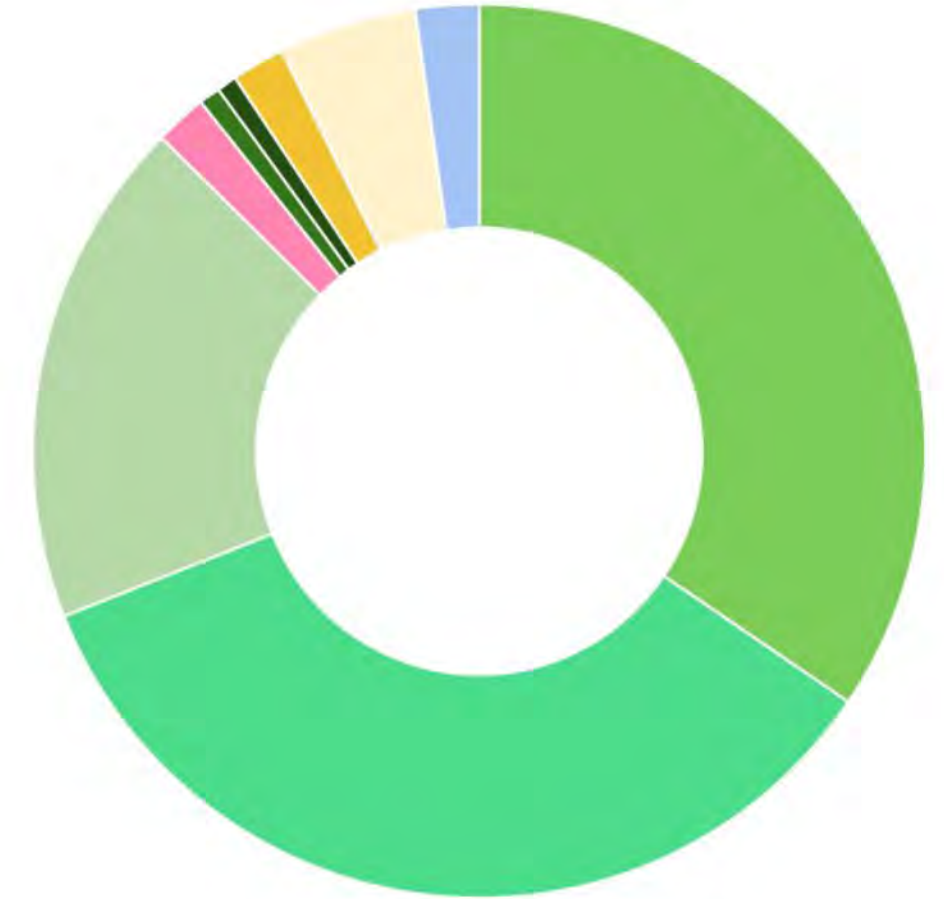
Nelson Street



Gelditsia triacanthos



Biodiversity from the soil up





- Betula nigra
- Betula populifolia - Yellow Birch
- Populus tremuloides - Quaking Aspen
- Cercis canadensis - Eastern Redbud
- Picea abies - Weeping Spruce
- Chamaecyparis nootkatensis - Nootka Cypress
- Ginkgo biloba
- Gleditsia triacanthos - Honey Locust
- Ulmus parvifolia - Lacebark Elm

Three native-species planting characters

Woodland Grove, Fern/Rock Garden, The Green

Legend

Woodland grove, general



Cornus canadensis

Kinnikinnick

Gaultheria procumbens

Woodland grove, Firefly habitat




Carex crinita

Anthoxanthum hirtum

Leaves left in place


Fern and Rock Garden



Polypodium virginianum

Polystichum acrostichoides

The Green: hardy, shade tolerant turf mix



Rough Bluegrass
Poa trivialis

Micro clover
Trifolium repens var.
'pipolina' or *'pirouette'*



Creating an authentic ecological community

Bringing the fireflies (back?) to Waawaatesi



Ontario has **29 native species of firefly**, 3 of which have been found in nearby Nathan Phillips Square

Landscape requirements for firefly habitats:

- Vernal pools from depressions in landscape and adequately saturated soils
- Leaf litter, long grasses, and vegetative cover to host slugs, insects, and snails (prey)

Maintenance requirements:

- Minimal raking and mulch use
- Little to no pesticide use
- Minimal disturbance and prevention of foot traffic

The Riverbed Playscape

Opportunities for intergenerational connection and play for all ages





Artist's rendering; does not represent final installation

Mix of formal and informal seating

Wide range of accessible seating options to suit all needs

Park Benches with armrests and backrests



x 10

Seating Edge



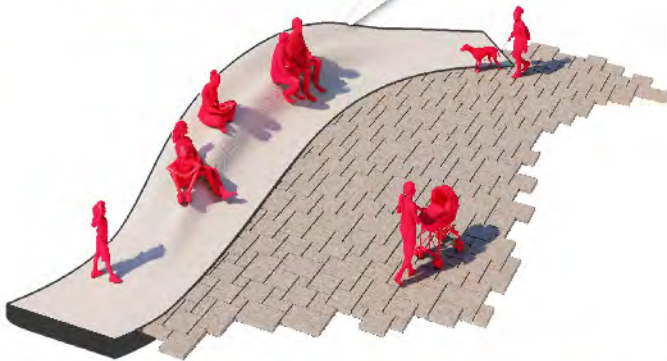
approx. 50 standard CoT benches

CoT Accessible Picnic Tables



X 10

Wave Benches



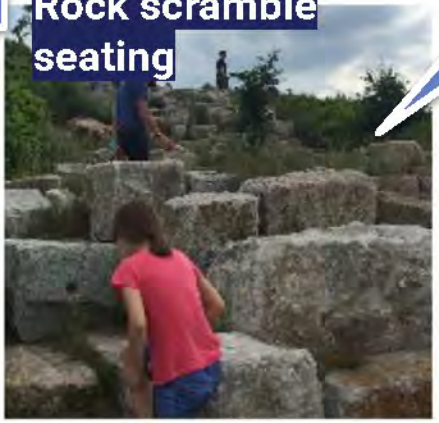
approx. 20 standard CoT benches

Hammocks inset into Balcony



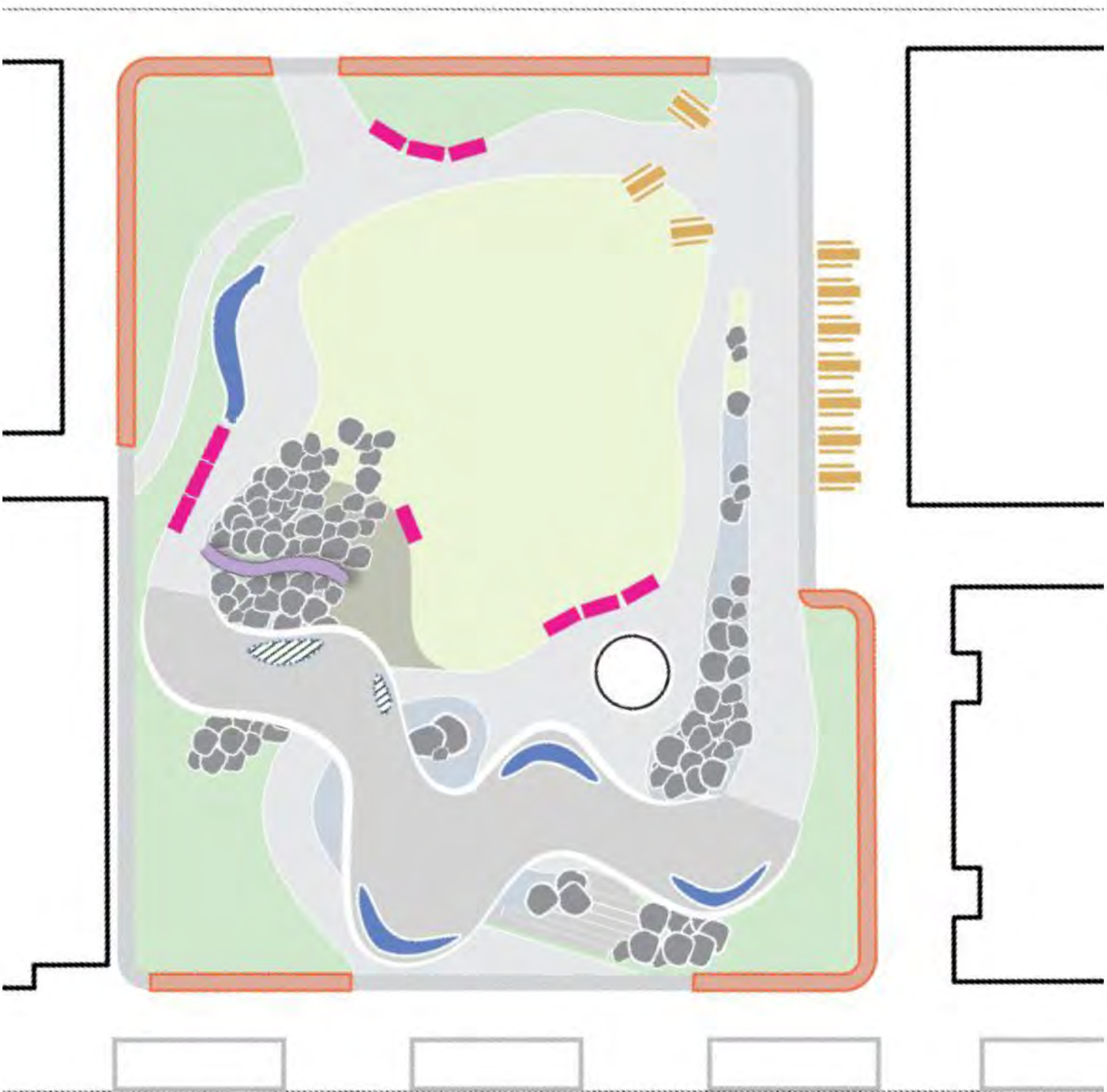
x 2

Rock scramble seating



approx. 20 standard CoT benches

Formal
Informal



The Balcony

An urban stage with sweeping views over and into the park





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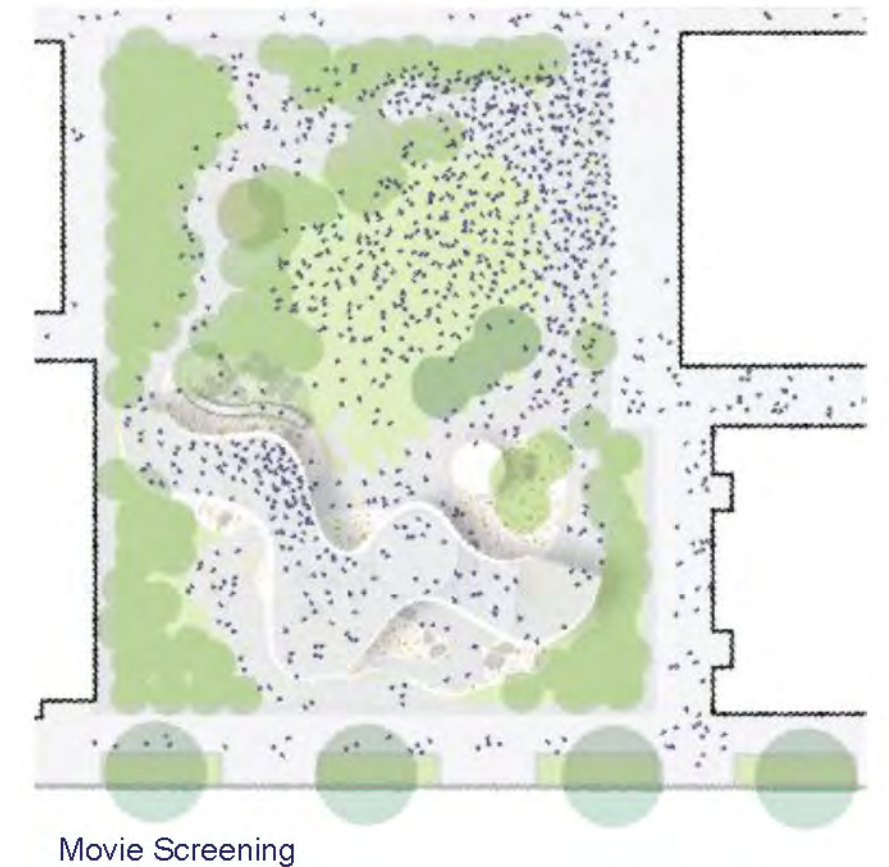
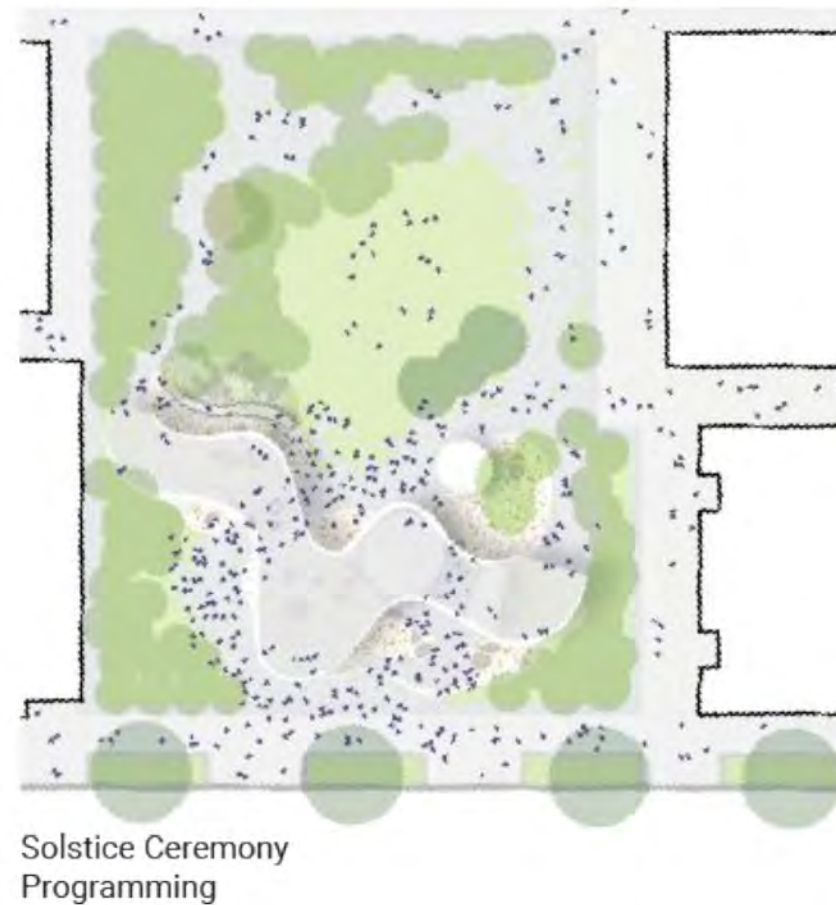
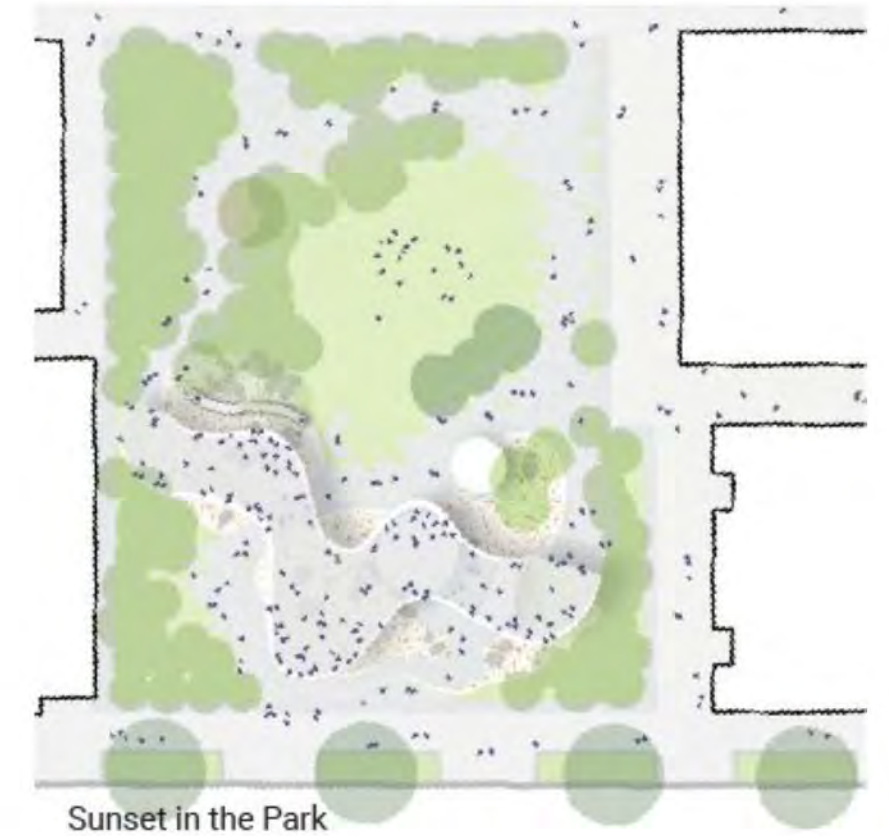
More Park in a Small Footprint

Program demand:
2600 people

Park size:
2600m²

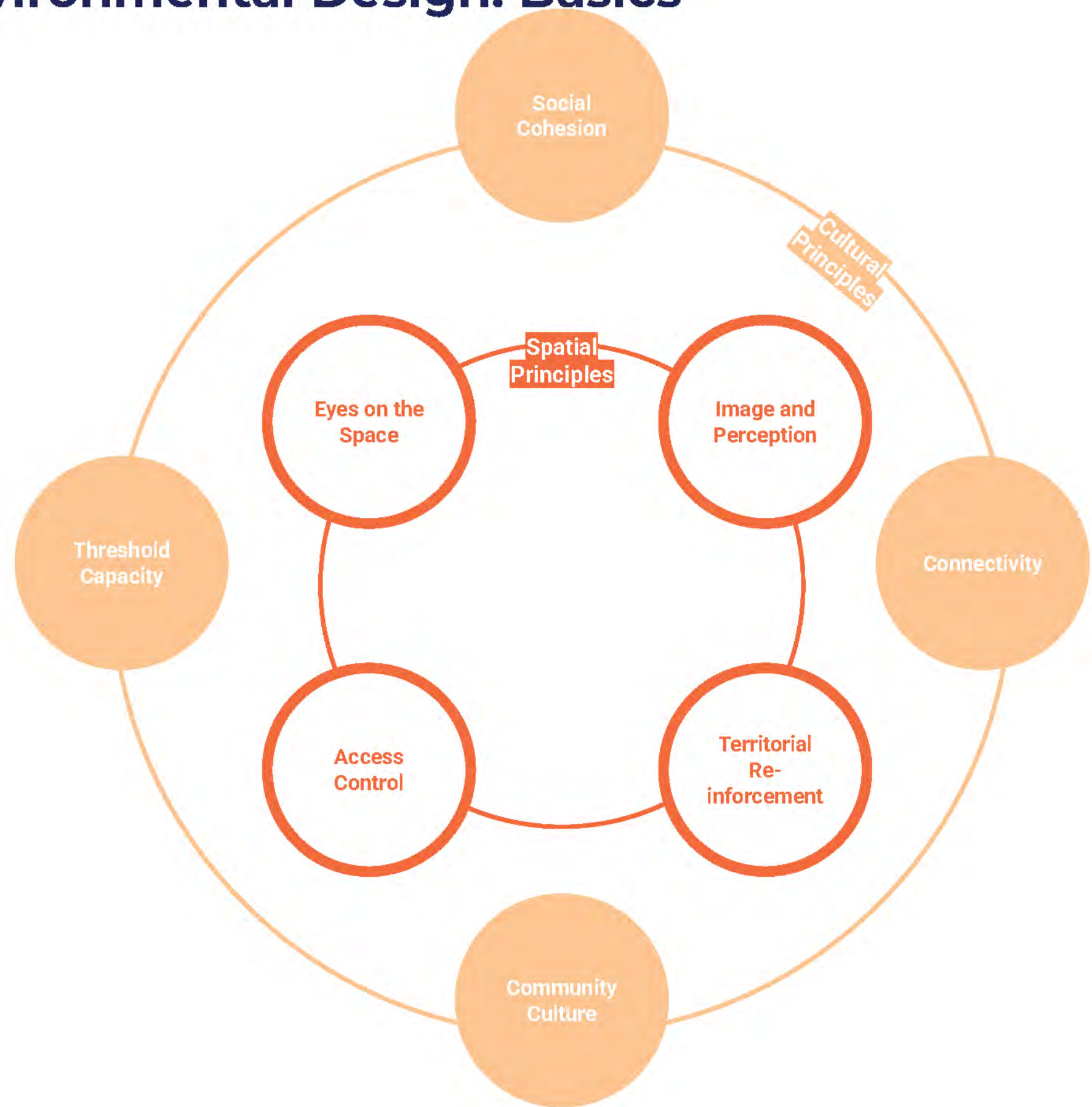
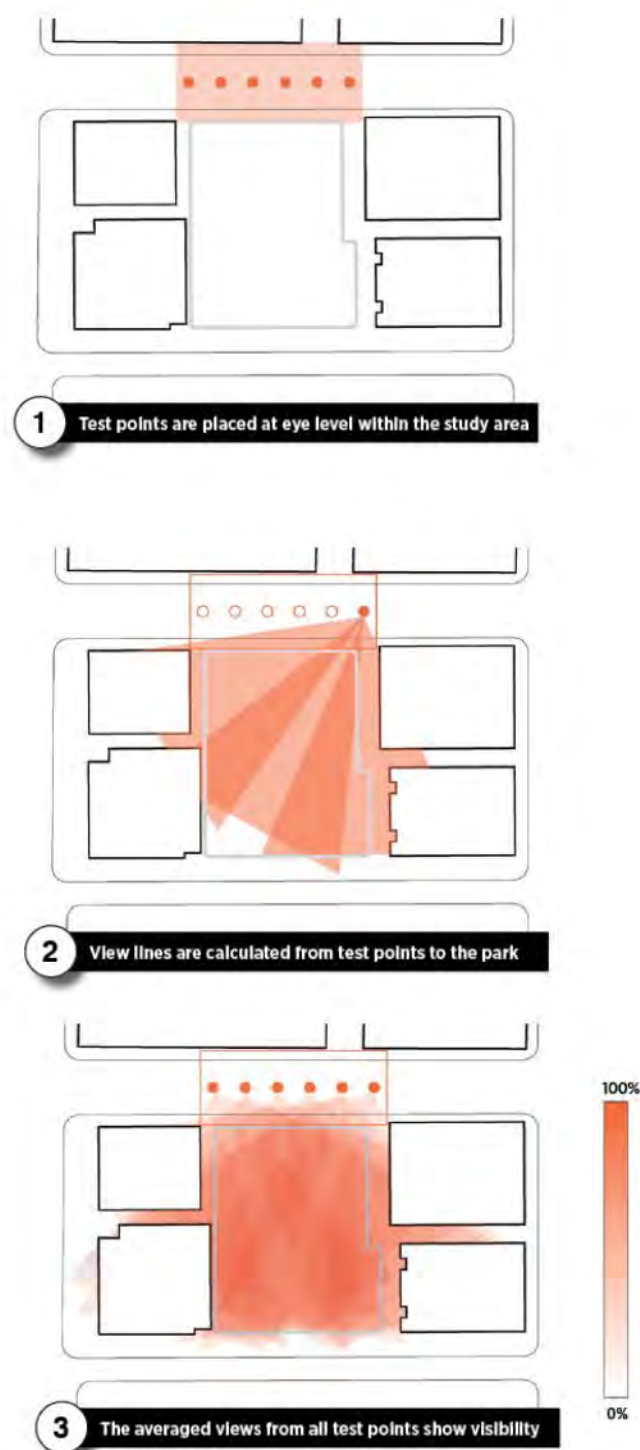
Design intent:
Green Oasis

Solution:
The Balcony for
more park!



Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design: Basics

Public safety at core of design approach



CPTED: Spatial Strategies

Public Safety at core of design approach

CPTED Principles:

- **Eyes on the Space:** Ensuring visibility, especially in vulnerable areas, and creating opportunities for people to linger and provide “natural surveillance”
- **Territorial Re-inforcement:** Giving spaces clear purposes and encouraging active, ongoing public use of space
- **Access Control:** Providing clear border definitions that signal controlled spaces, whether hard (gates, barriers) or soft (low walls, edges)
- **Image and Perception:** Boosting a sense of safety through beautiful, well-cared for spaces



How we addressed this:

Designed with visibility in mind: Technical visibility studies, variety of seating options, well-lit spaces

Clear activity zones: Seven stepping stones with clear functions, multiple functional areas, design for 24/7/365 activation

Strong sense of arrival and presence in the park: Park “threshold” and active seating edges, strategically placed entrances

A beautiful space that people can be proud of: High standard of visual design and maintenance; active use

CPTED: Social and Cultural Strategies

Public safety at core of design approach

CPTED Principles:

- **Social Cohesion:** Design that accommodates workshops, festivals, and opportunities to build local relationships
- **Connectivity:** Design that strengthens relationships and access, physically and emotionally
- **Threshold Capacity:** Diversified design that supports multiple community interests and interactions
- **Community Culture:** Design that reinforces placemaking, shared history, and cultural meaning-making

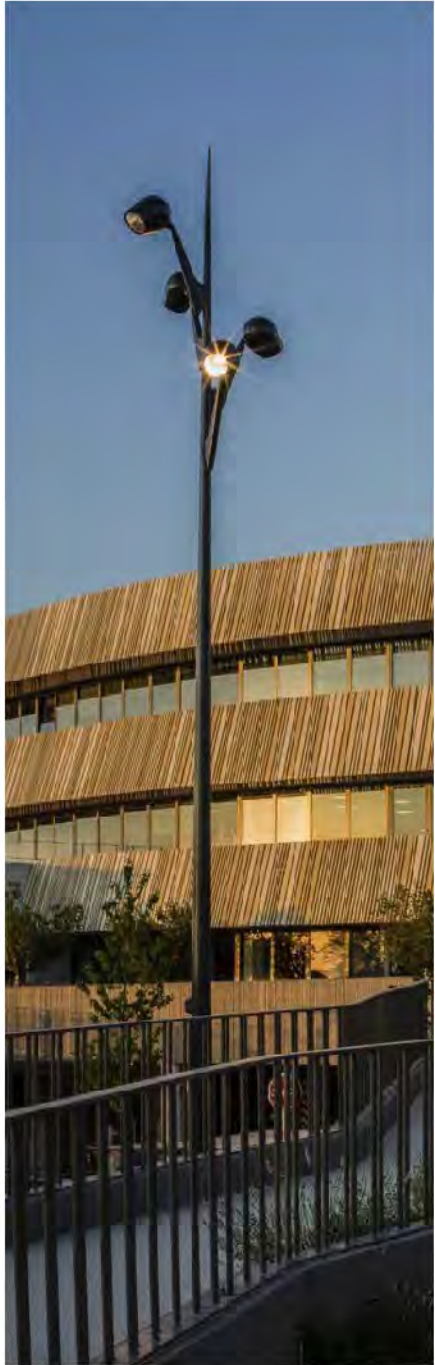


How we addressed this:

- **Waawaatesi as a place of performance** could be integrated with a calendar of cultural events, festivals, and activities organized in collaboration with local groups
- **Integrated formal and informal seating, playful elements, and primary circulation circuit** encourage and facilitate connection and serendipitous encounter in the community, and facilitate a diversity of day to day use as well as events for all users
- **A strong sense of place an identity through design language and narrative:** the integration of Indigenous placekeeping, site history, and active culture making in the entertainment district

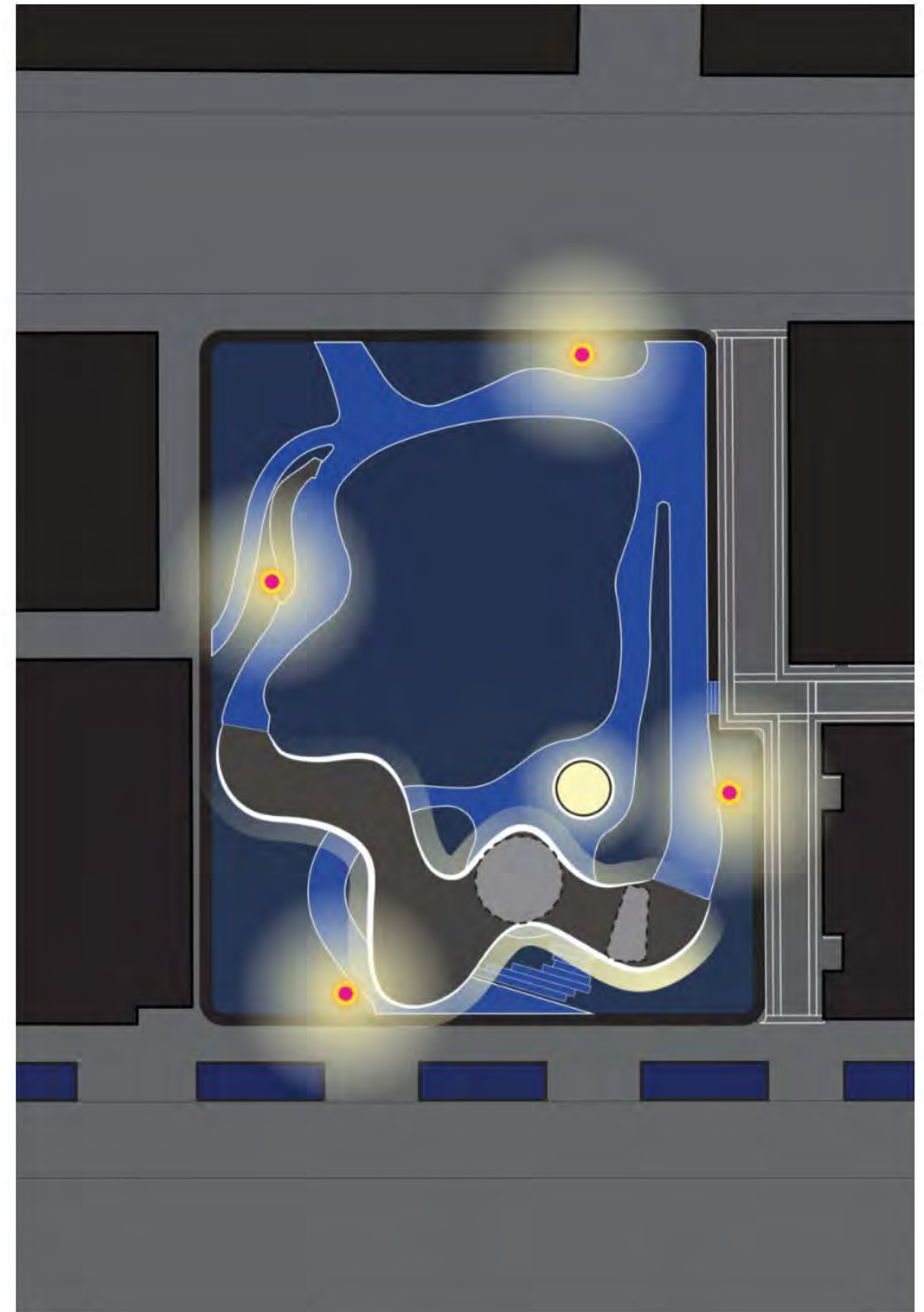
Well-lit from a range of sources

Park's downtown location + design features = a range of complex lighting interactions



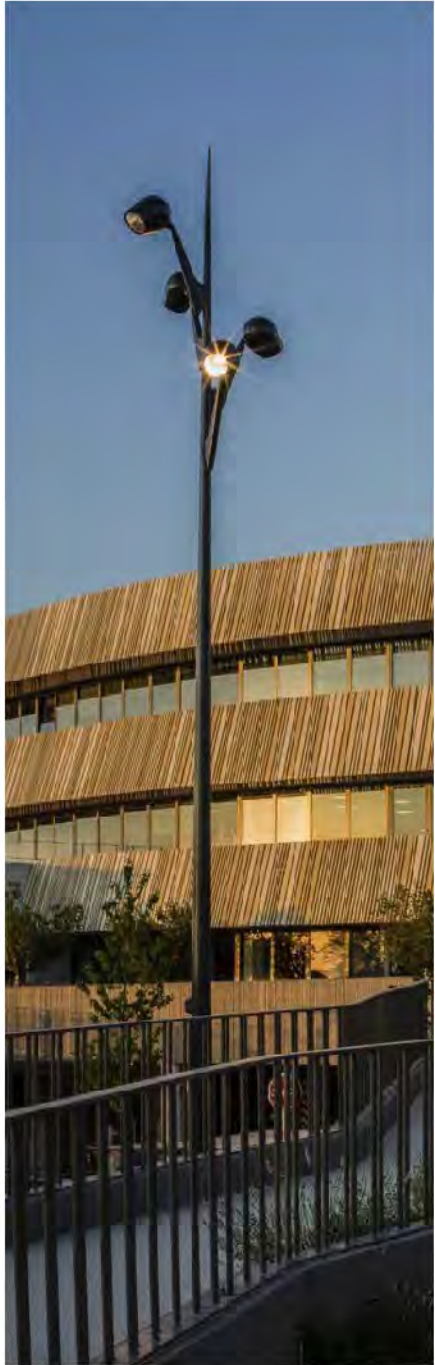
- **Site Lighting** via masts with four angled spotlights
- **Lantern Washroom** with spillout into park TBC
- **Balcony Lighting** and projection with spillout into park TBC
- **Surrounding Lighting** from downtown and adjacent streets and buildings

Best practices for effective lighting and Dark Sky compliance will be taken into consideration for development of the final lighting plan.



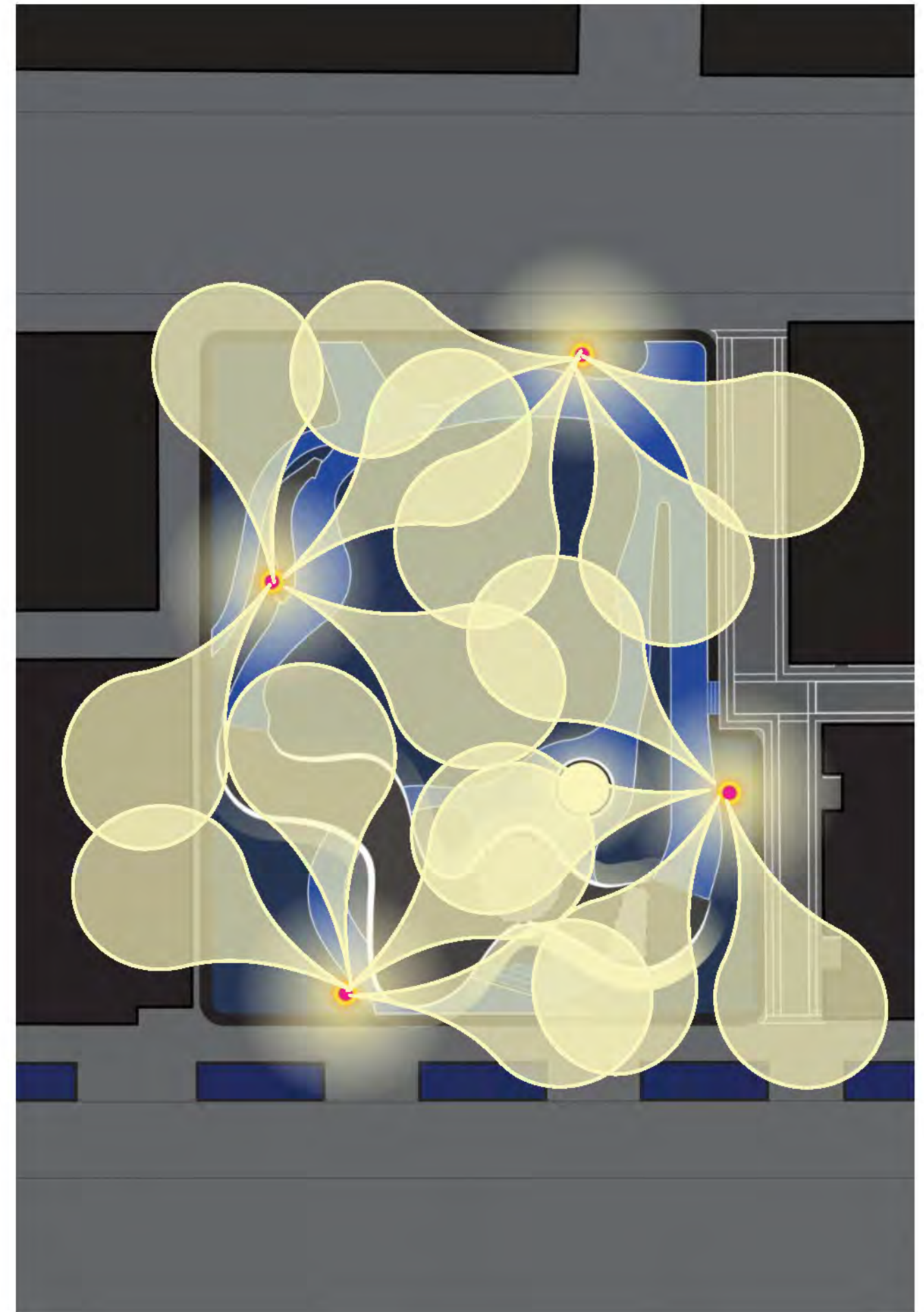
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The Canvas

An integrated, seasonal art experience





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Achieving the Vision Realistically

Hybrid approach combining colored lights and projection mapping



Sculptural balcony

Structural canvas for projection and light art

Colored base lighting

Year-round base experience

Digital projection mapping

Aki Illuminations (solstices + equinoxes) - **2 weeks per piece, 8 weeks per year total**

Potential other programmable uses

Reference: Digital Media Projection Mapping

Pipilotti Rist x Depot Boijmans

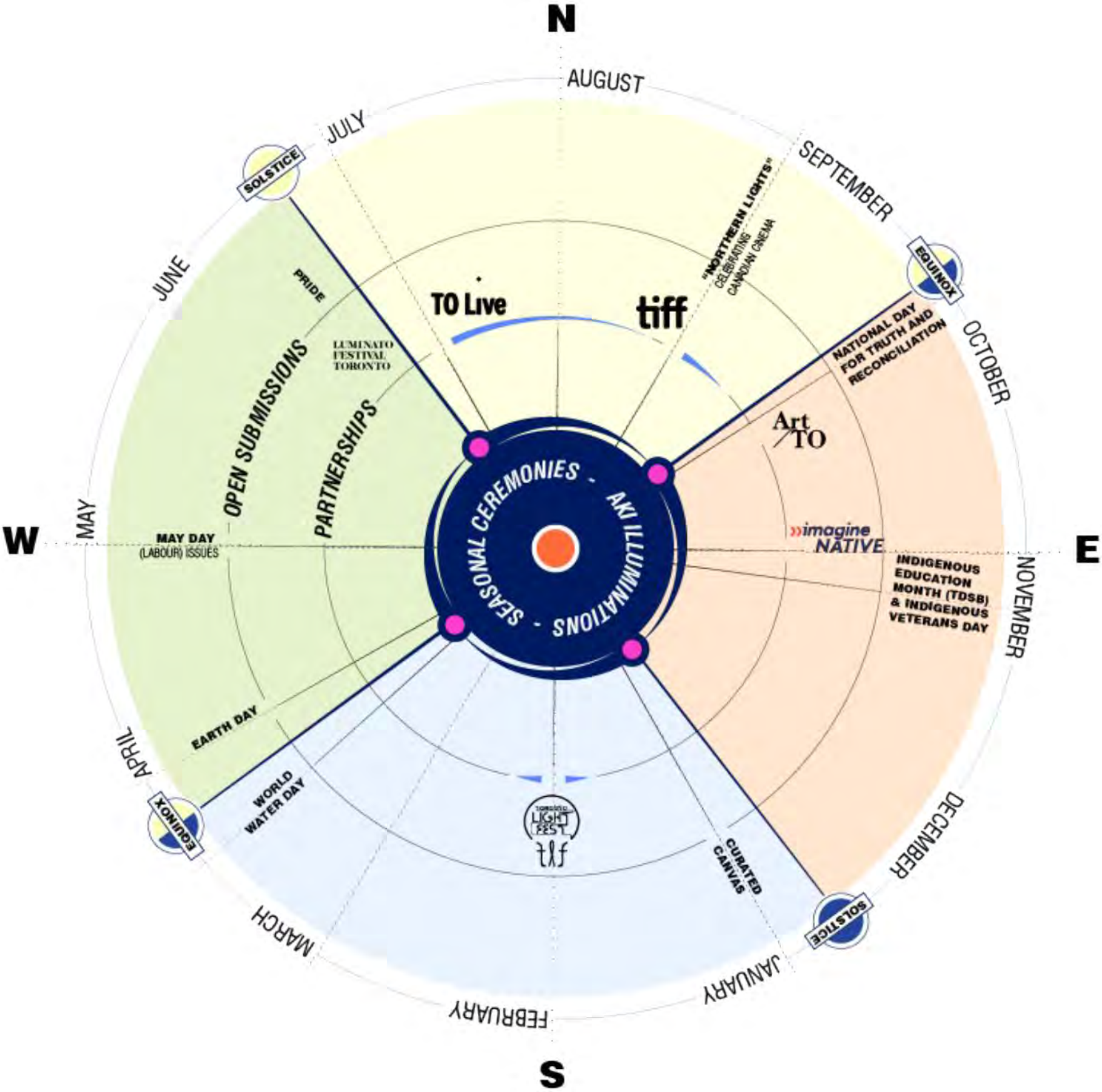


Public Art + Program

Future opportunity: 10-year curated program of art installations and events, making use of temporary media projectors or other lighting changes



Long-term Indigenous Placekeeping and a broad range of experiences, atmospheres, and culture making



Core contribution to public art collection

Four seasonal expressions of Aki Illuminations



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