

Rees Street Park  
Innovative Design Competition

# REES RIDGE

**wHY**

BrookMcIlroy

ARUP

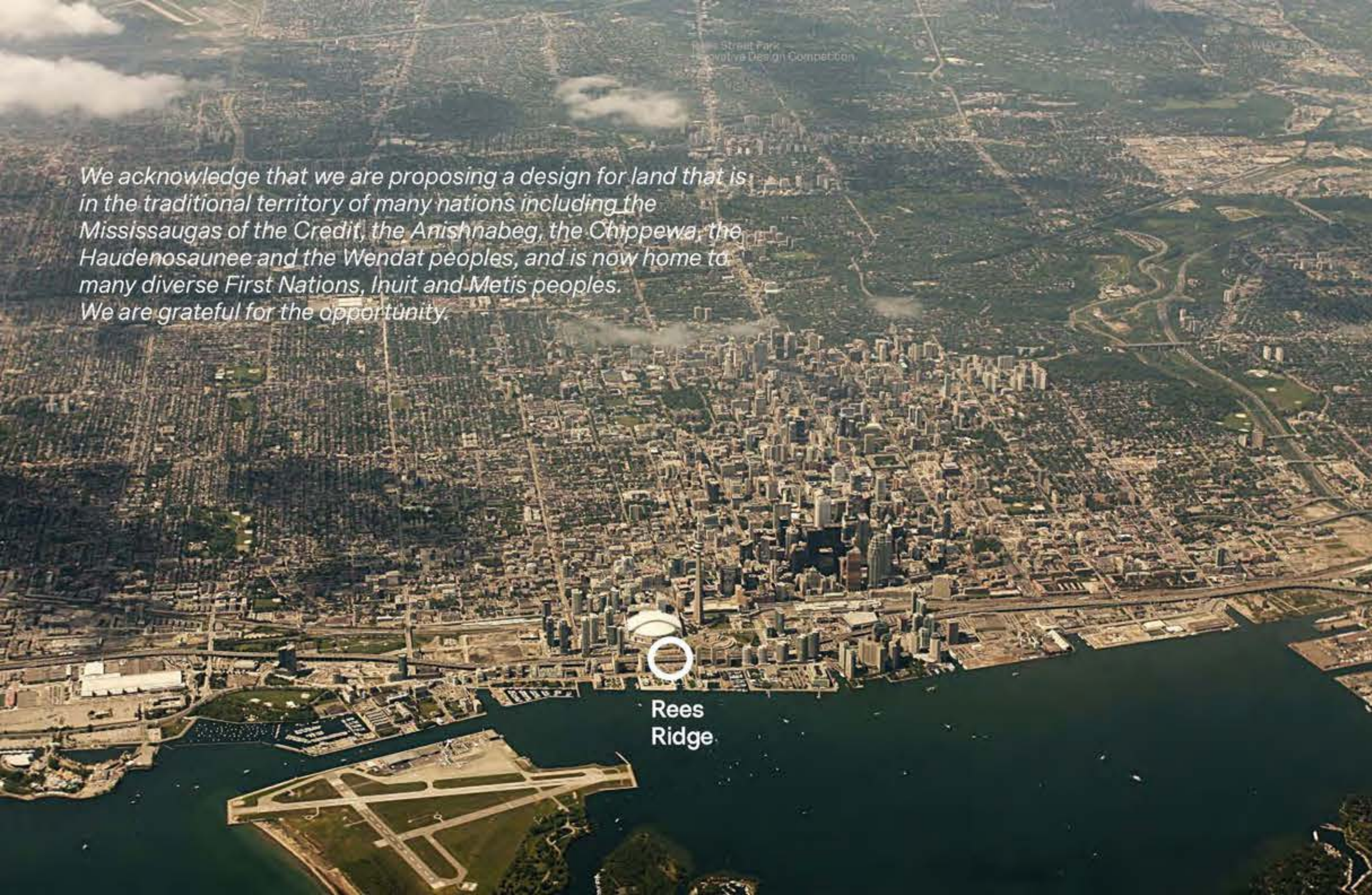
phyto  
STUDIO

MTWTF

Blackwell  
STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS

FLY  
AILEY

BRAD GOLDEN + Co



*We acknowledge that we are proposing a design for land that is in 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 Metis peoples. We are grateful for the opportunity.*

Rees  
Ridge

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## General Design Approach

*When you think of the city of Toronto, the first thing that usually comes to mind are enormous buildings and a vast urban landscape crowded with humanity. But this massive Canadian metropolis is blessed with some beautiful green space as well.*

*Terry Belke*

*"My dream of a wilderness at Toronto's doorstep was not practical, although some of it came true."*

*Charles Sauriol*

*"City dwellers are conditioned to look for "Nature" outside the city: at the cottage, at summer camp, up north. Somewhere else."*

*Wayne Grady, Toronto the Wild*



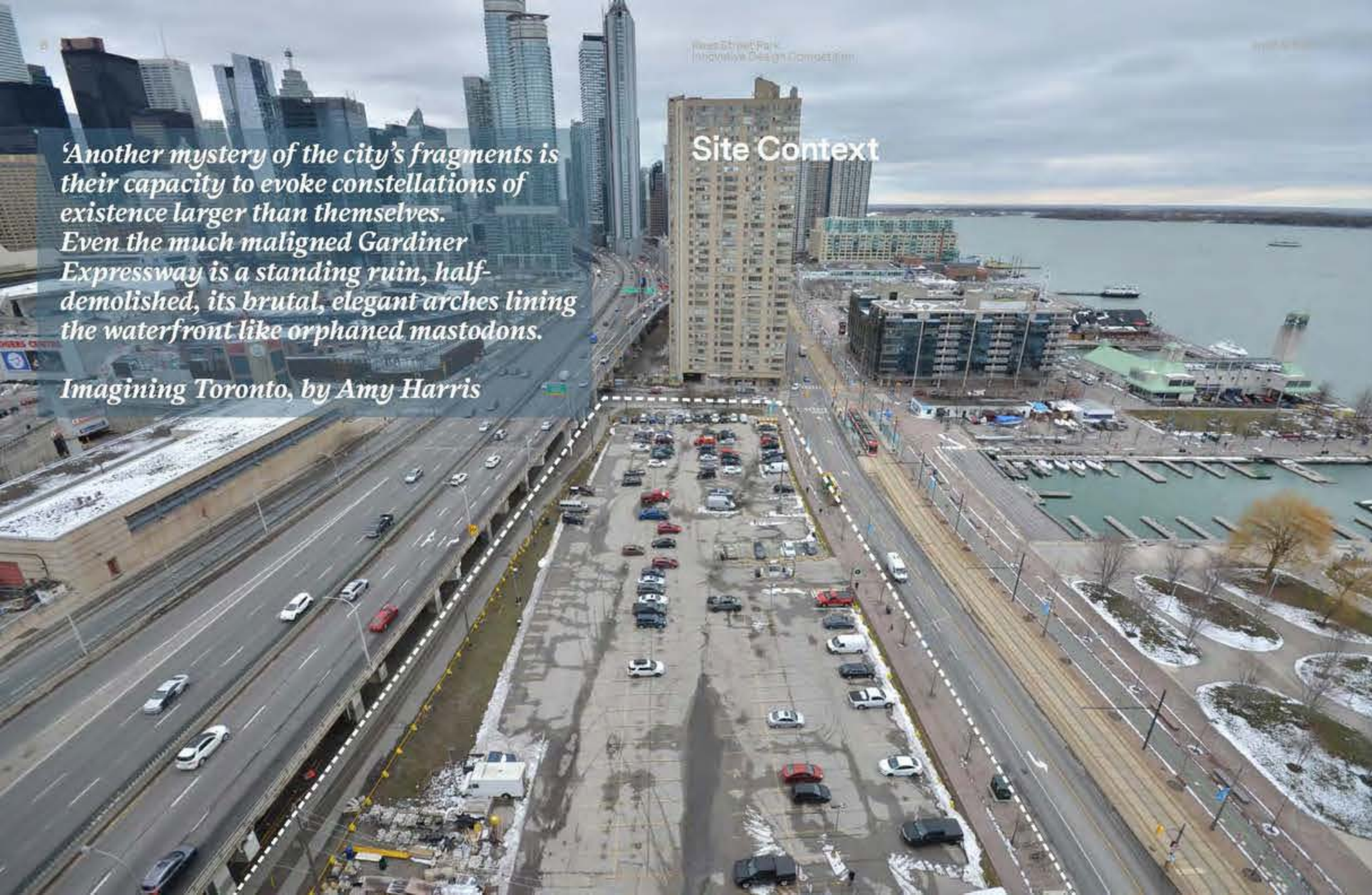
## Rees Ridge

*Inspired by one of Southern Ontario's signature geological formations, the bluff, Rees Ridge inserts an dramatic vertical landscape programmed with activities into Toronto's waterfront district.*

It celebrates the dramatic scale of infrastructure, while the programming and planting transform it into an imaginable and iconic park.

Rees Ridge is as much an extension of the city as it is an extension of the lake. In nature, the bluff is the interface where water and land meet—a liminal space where a gradient of activities, natural communities and features coexist.

In Rees Ridge, the introduction of a large-scale landform creates similar opportunities for a unique diversity of program and experience. Like a bluff, Rees Ridge is both something to look at and something to look from. It is new vantage point from which to view Lake Ontario and a backdrop for the lively activity of the park flatlands.



*'Another mystery of the city's fragments is their capacity to evoke constellations of existence larger than themselves. Even the much maligned Gardiner Expressway is a standing ruin, half-demolished, its brutal, elegant arches lining the waterfront like orphaned mastodons.'*  
*Imagining Toronto, by Amy Harris*

**Site Context**



Visual and Physical Connection

Both water and city sides of the ridge offer signature, three-dimensional visitor programming- elevated views of the lake and city, seating, sliding, climbing, and dramatic interactive waterfall.

*These unique programs are facilitated by the ridge features: ramps, stairs, slides, hills, and slopes. Native vegetation, sound mitigation and*

*additional park features such as café, community room and restrooms at ground level add to the dynamism of this charismatic feature.*

The density of program on the ridge frees a substantial portion of the park to operate as passive open space and host flatland activities such as the marketplace and outdoor café seating.

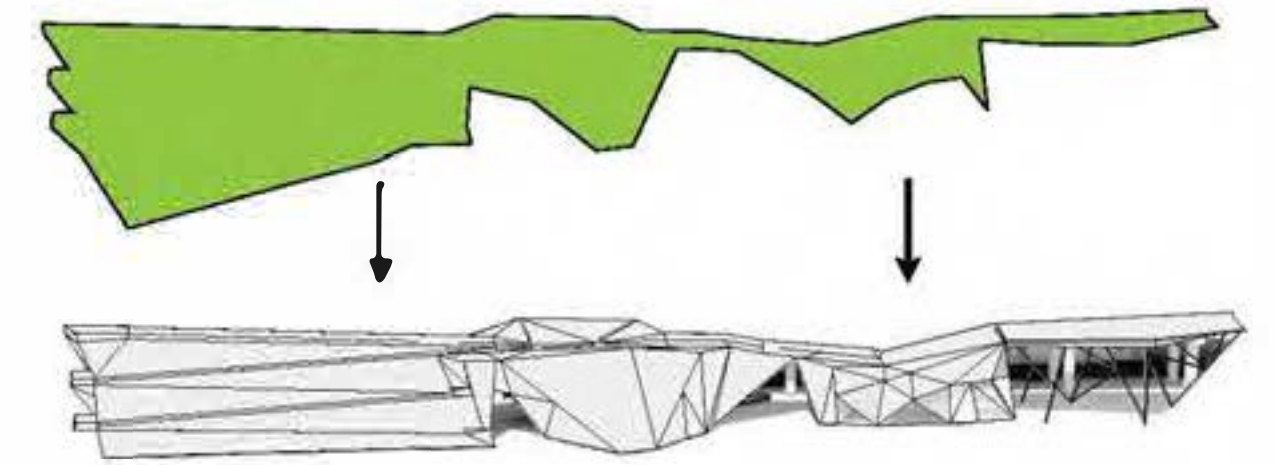
Rees Ridge is visually and physically porous. The East to West dematerialization of the ridge ensures connection between Lake Shore Boulevard and the park.

The height of Rees Ridge creates a room within the city. It buffers the ever-present noise of the Gardner Express-way while the plantings filter pollution from the air. The interpretation of the bluff plant communities onto Rees Ridge maximizes biodiversity in the park and creates a new botanical edge and experience.

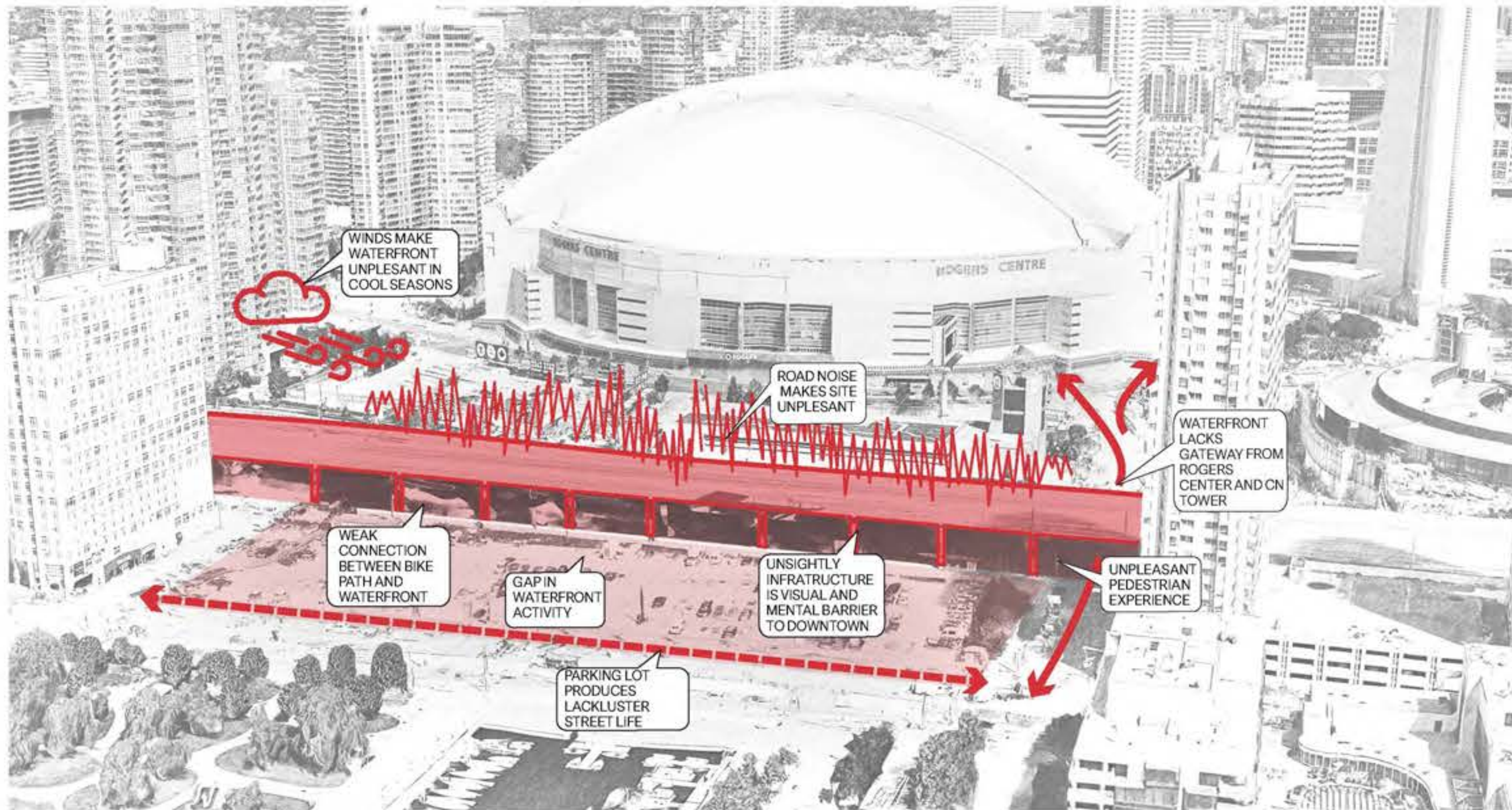
Finally, Rees Ridge is a foreground to the dynamic Toronto skyline. Filling a gap in the skyline with a distinctly unique new profile

*Rees Ridge will be singular icon and experience on the Toronto Waterfront.*

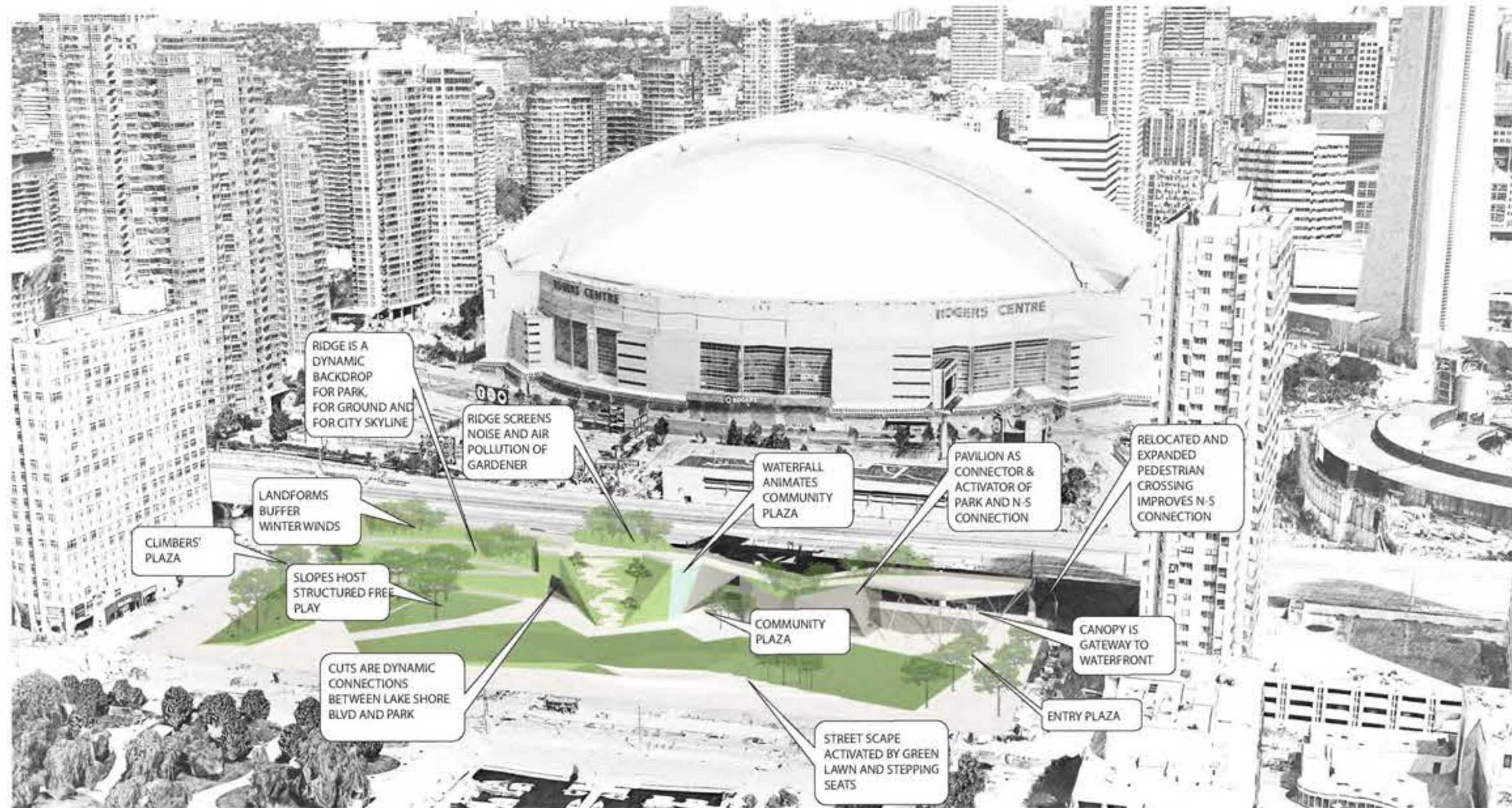
*With pragmatic three dimensionalality that hosts a dynamic range of programs and amenities, this innovative interpretation of the Scarborough Bluffs, connects visitors to city and lake, and through a rich botanical and programmatic experience, to a vibrant new urban park experience that will activate the adjacent waterfront.*



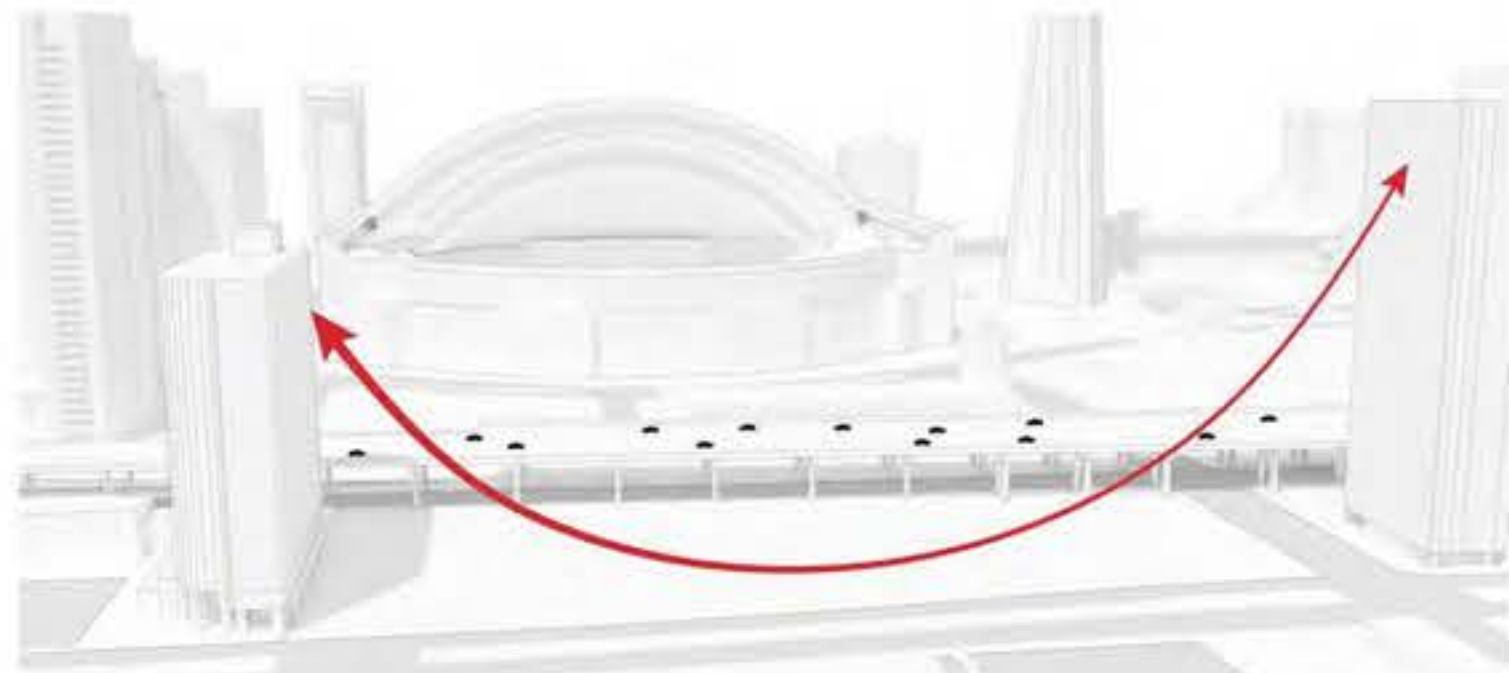
### Pinpointing Existing Issues



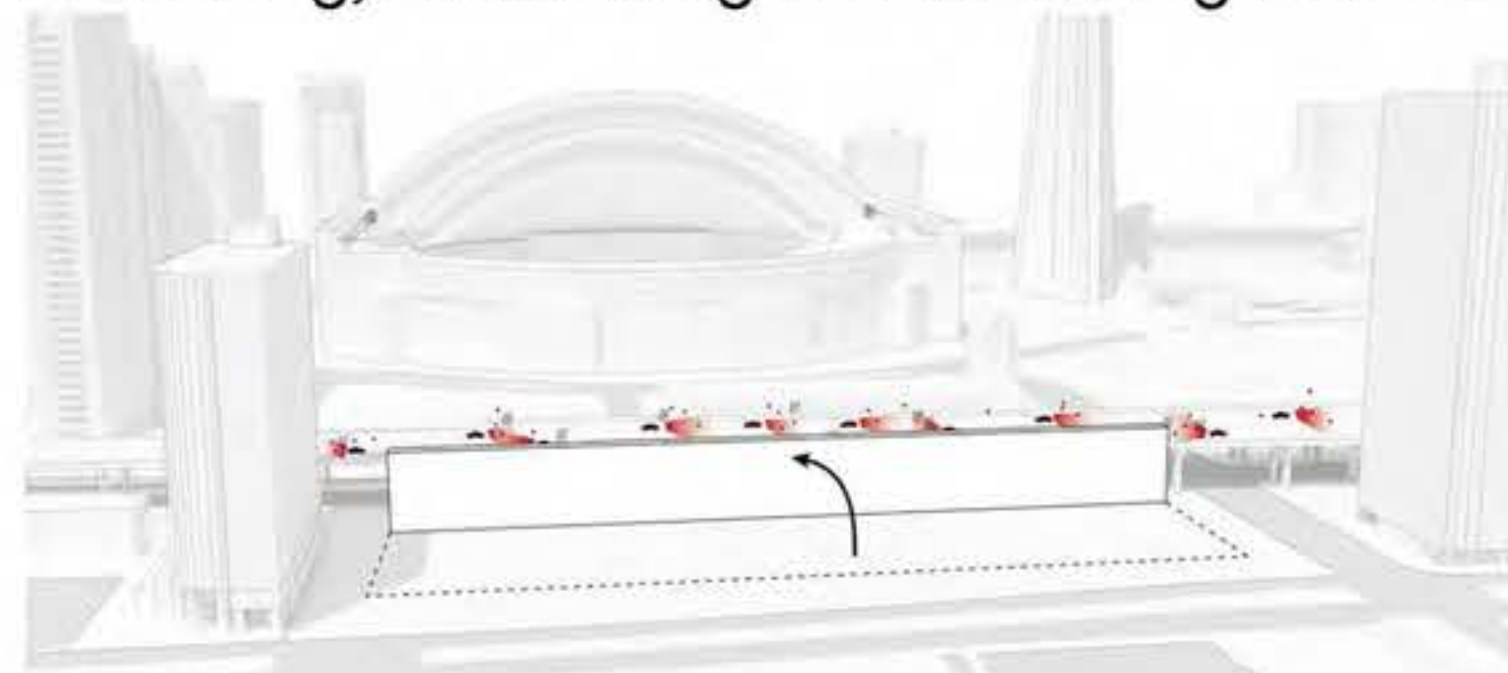
### Design Transformation: from Parking Lot to Iconic Park



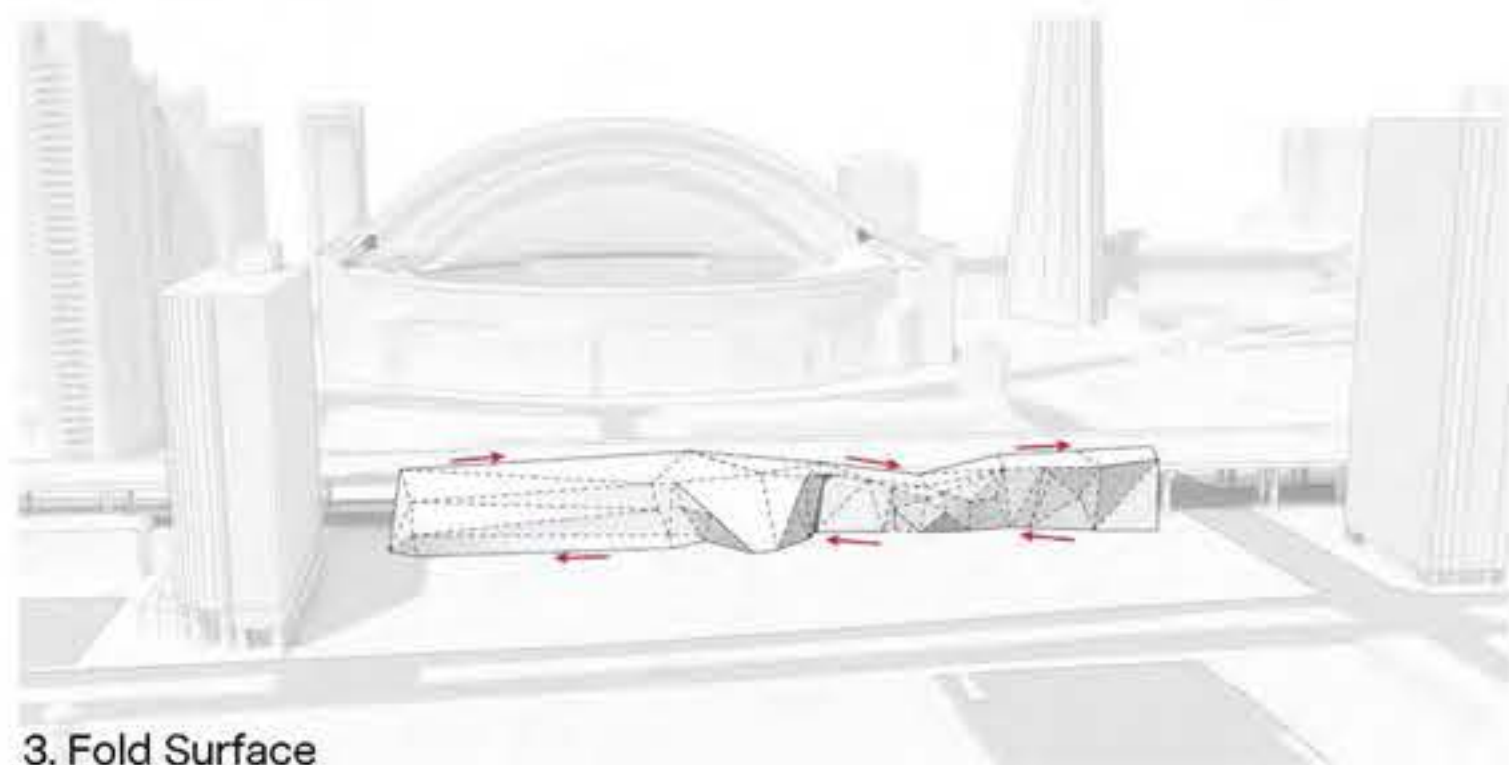
### Topography: Screening, Connecting and Activating the Park



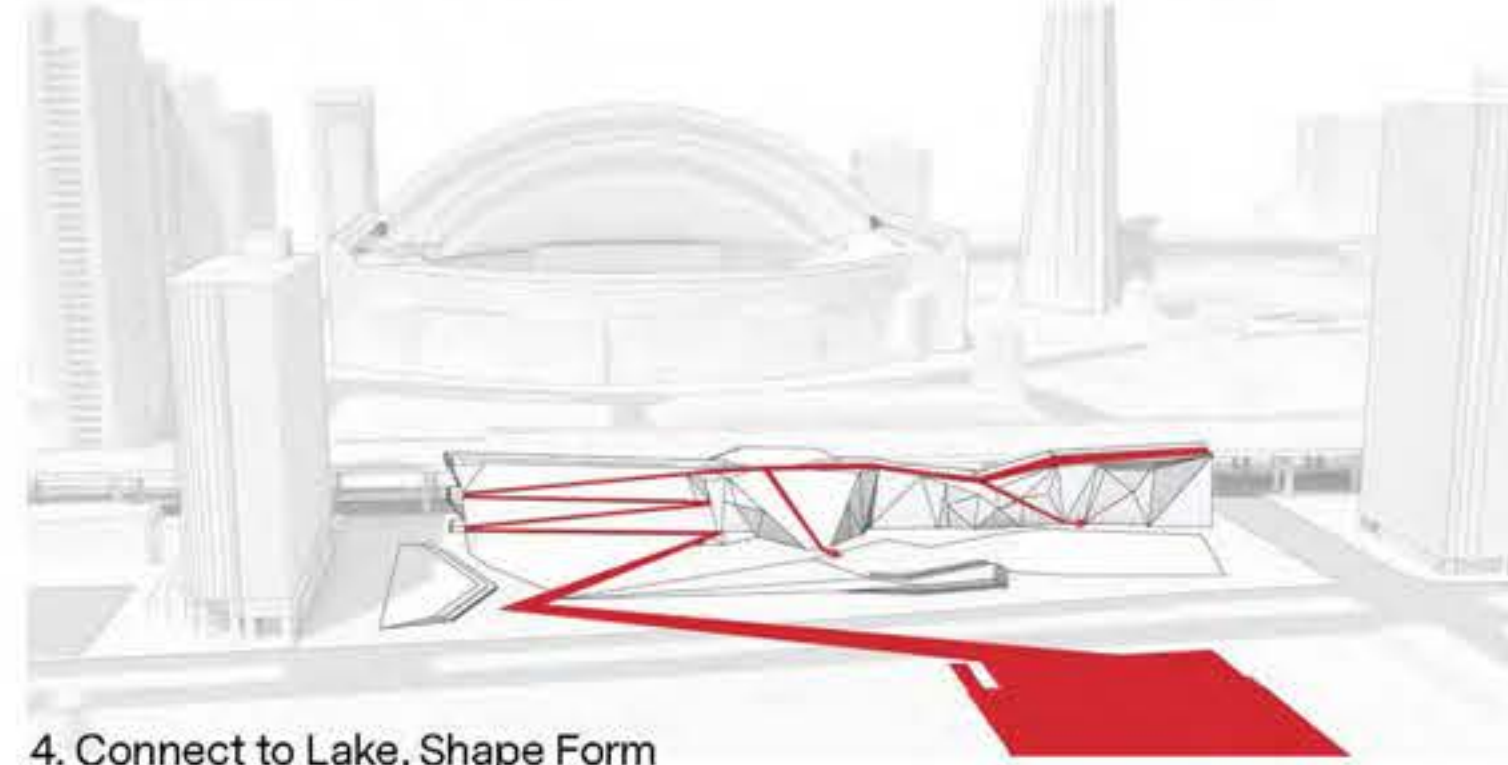
1. Frame Skyline



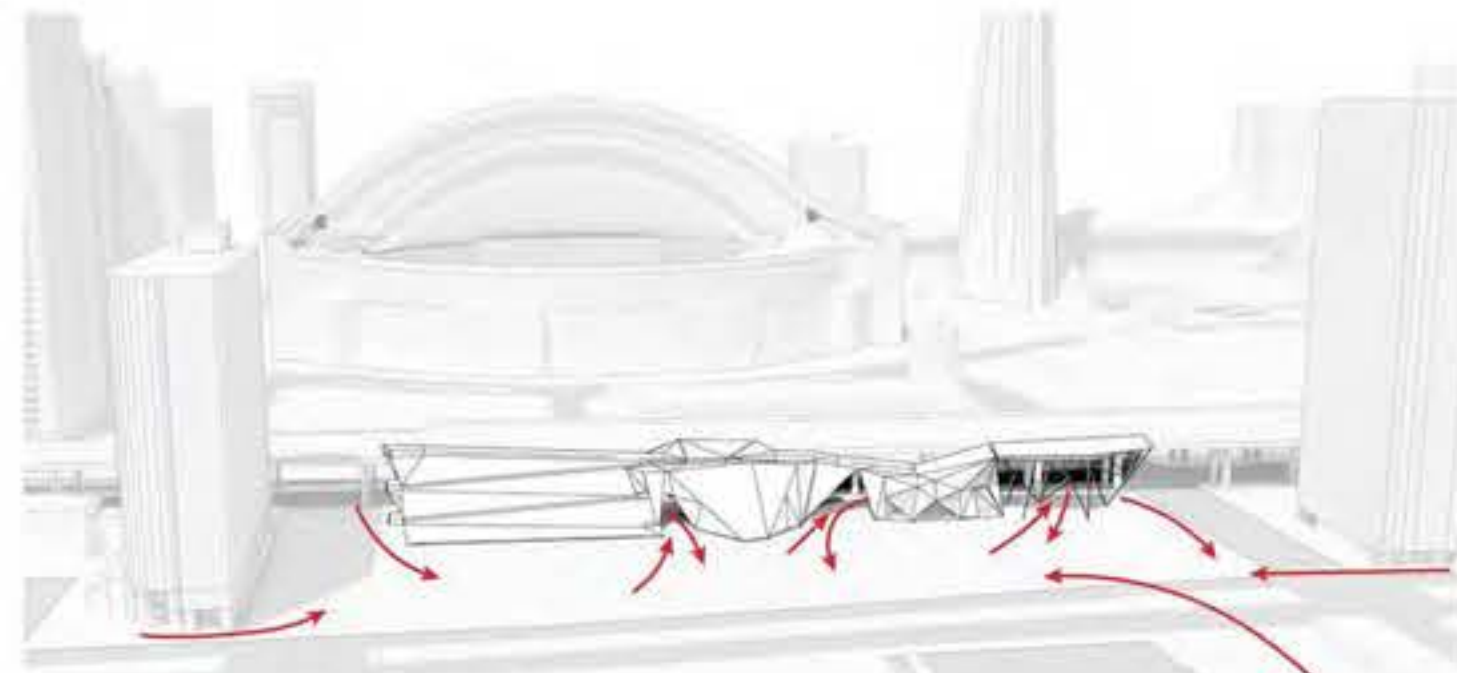
2. Create Room and Screen



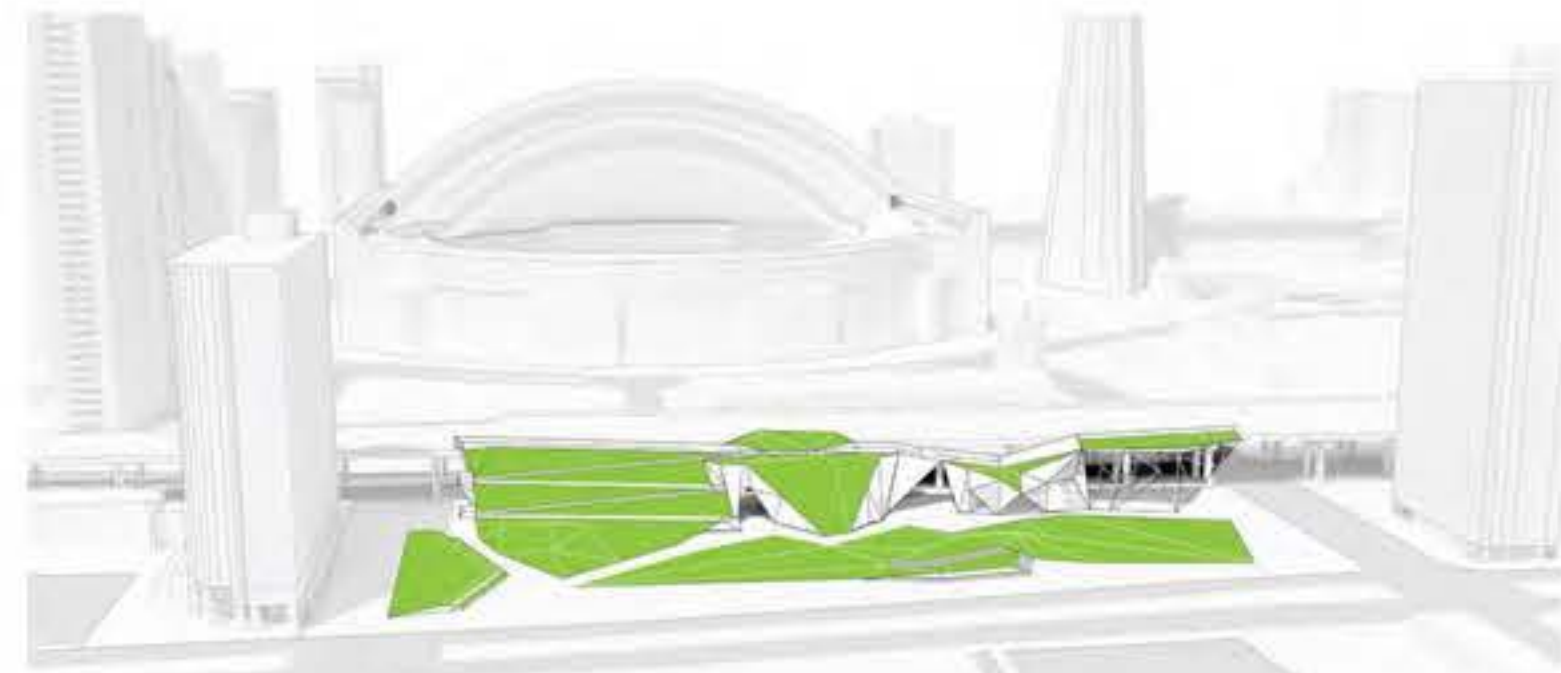
3. Fold Surface



4. Connect to Lake, Shape Form



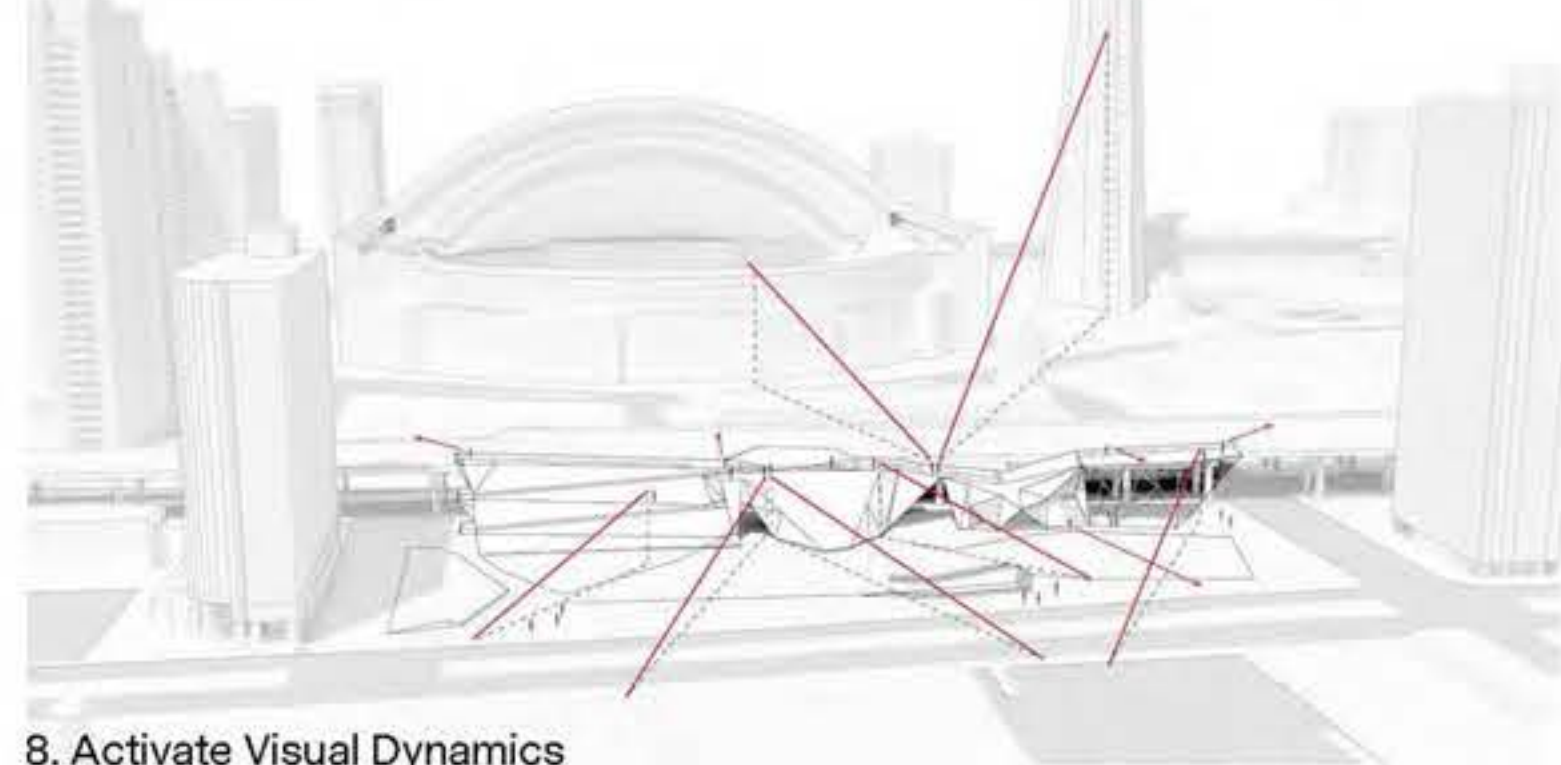
5. Carve Access, Bring City Back



6. Insert Landscape



7. Activate Park



8. Activate Visual Dynamics

Entry Plaza 1 & Play

Play & Garden Slopes

Entry Plaza 2

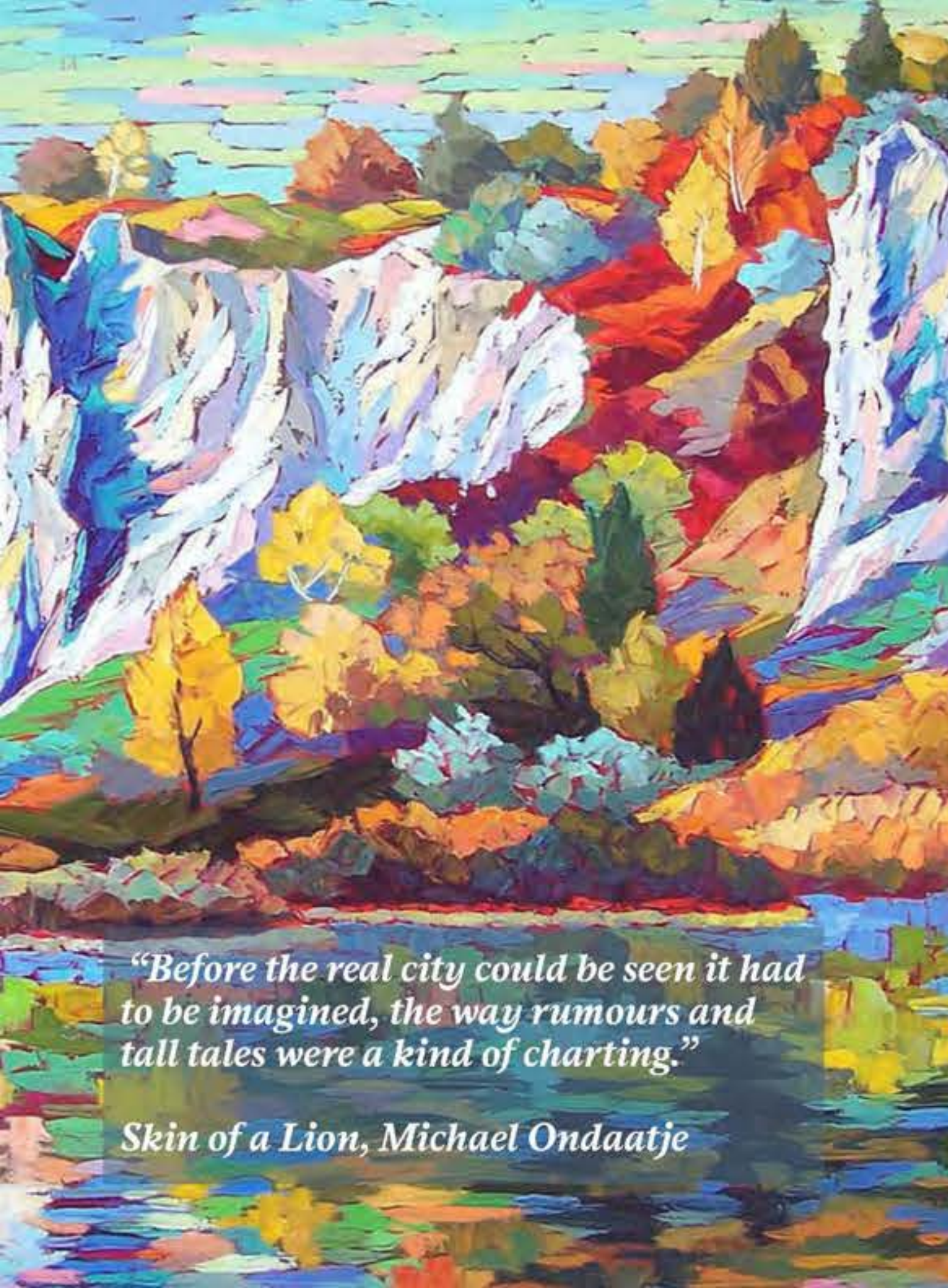
Landslide

Community Plaza & Waterfall

Pavilion

Overlook





*“Before the real city could be seen it had to be imagined, the way rumours and tall tales were a kind of charting.”*

*Skin of a Lion, Michael Ondaatje*

## Landscape Narrative

Rees Ridge provides experiences that are unparalleled on the waterfront by affording dramatic and unimpeded views to the lake while providing a truly unique botanical experience along the waterfront.

The face of the landform is inhabited by herbaceous material and gnarled woodland species that emerge from gullies and deep crevasses formed by the facets of the bluff. At its western edge, the bluff provides the setting for a dramatic path that scales the cliff face through a grassland landscape and leads visitors to a walk along the crest. At the top of the ridge, seats, patches of immersive planting and views animate the walk which ends at a outlook with spectacular views to Lake Ontario and downtown.

Slopes of varying steepness along the ridge provide opportunities for active and passive recreation. Theatrical, immersive planting, giant slides and children’s botanical play spaces enliven the eastern slopes of the ridge. A landslide of stairs cascade down the central slope. With unimpeded views of the lake and park lawn, this slope is perfect for lunching, relaxing and free play for children.

Adjacent to these slopes, the ridge face serves as a backdrop to a theatrical waterfall that sets the stage for an interactive water play zone at its base while the north face provides the perfect

aspect for a spectacular climbing wall.

At street level, the landform creates a room-like refuge for community gathering and recreational activities. These activities are supported by a café and community hub incorporated into the eastern section of the ridge. At the Rees Street edge, the landform dematerializes into a sweeping overhang that shelters year-round activities including oversized swings, outdoor café seating and outdoor market areas. This grand, iconic space also acts as a gateway into the waterfront district for visitors arriving from the North.

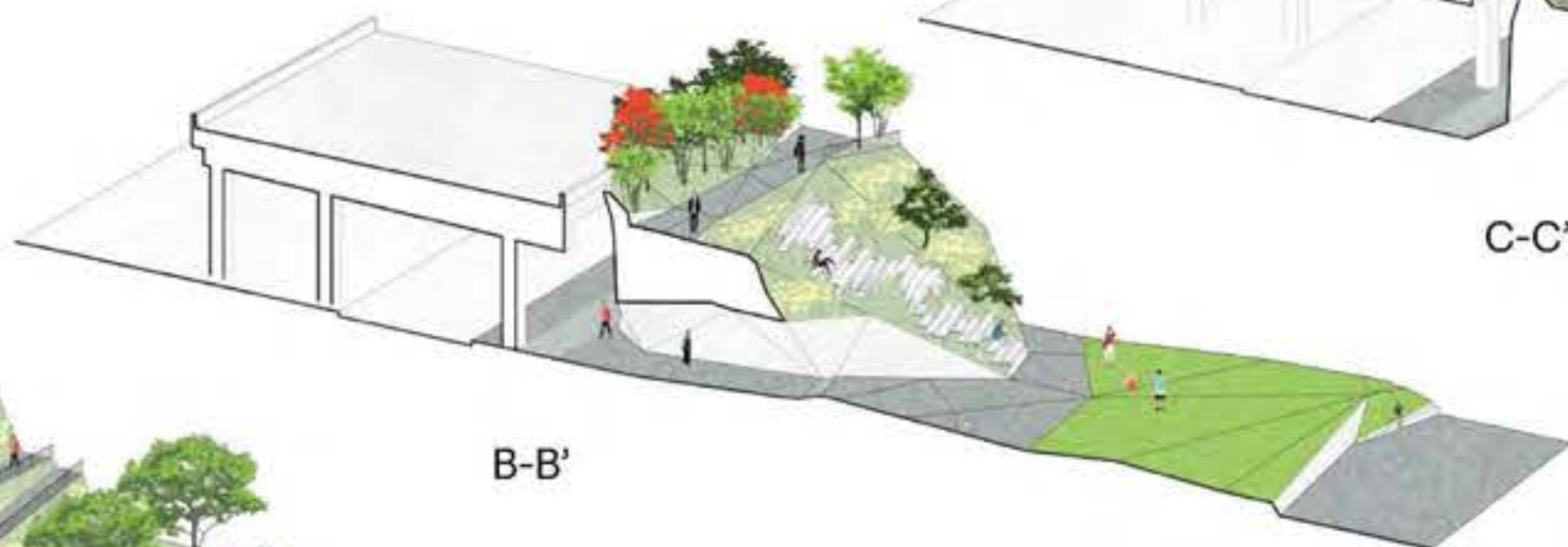
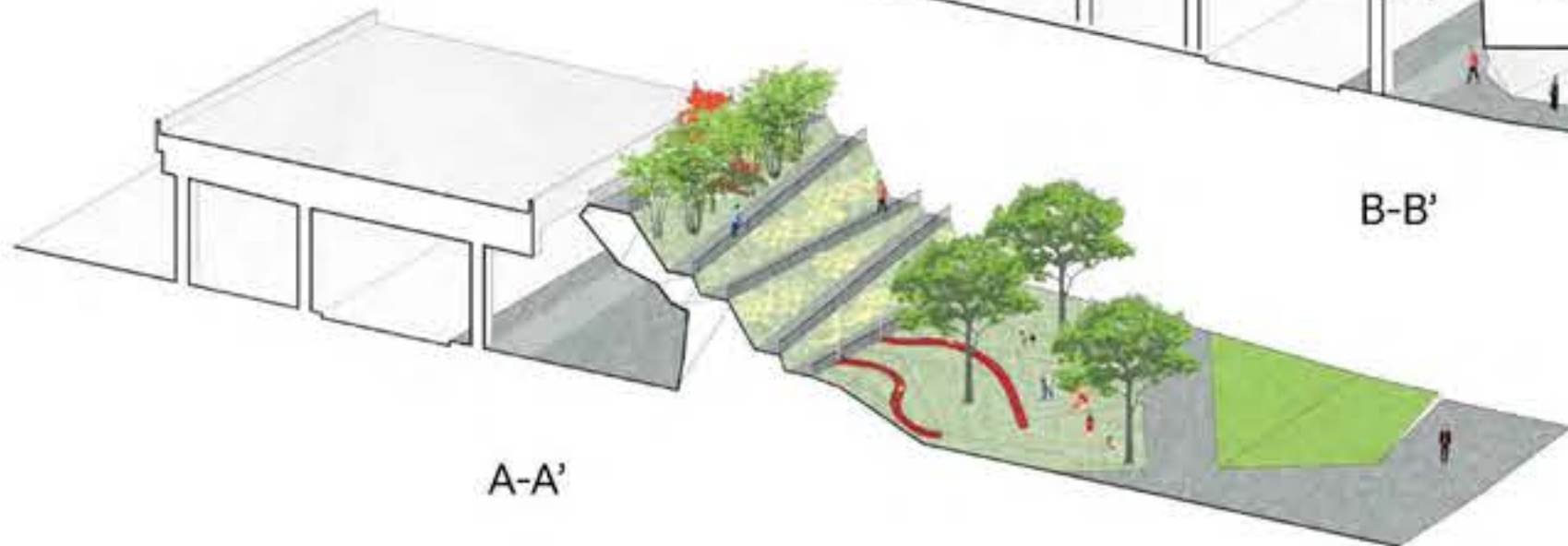
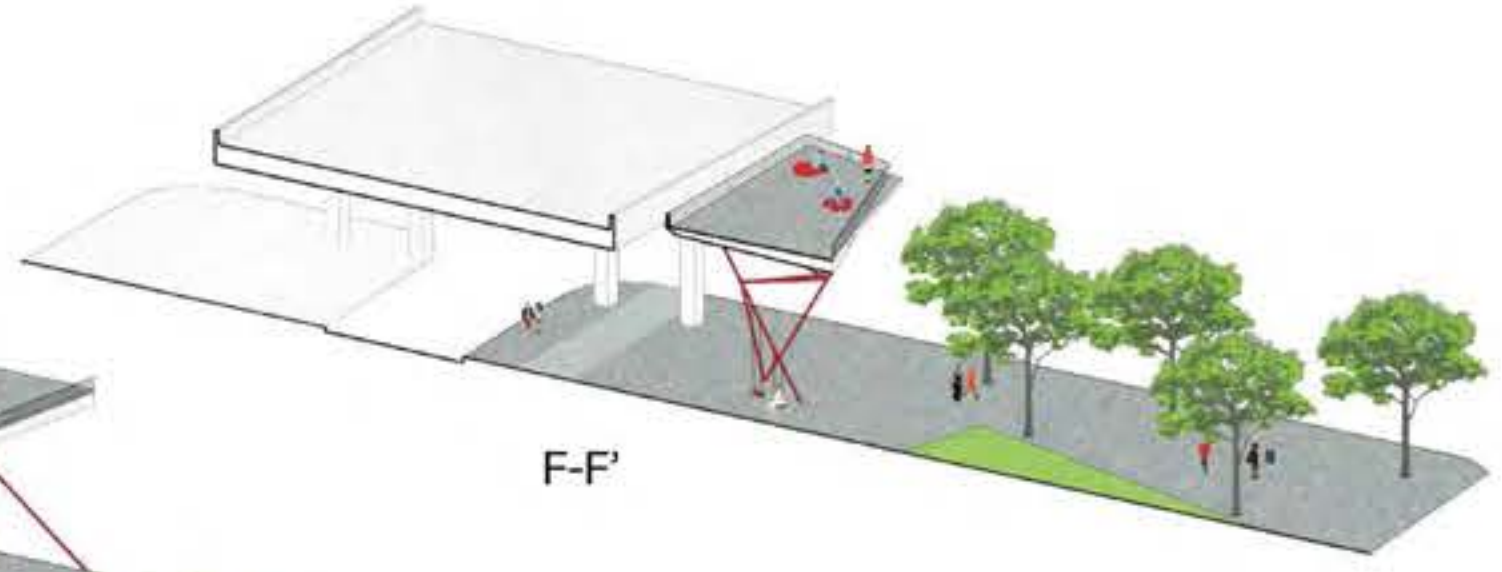
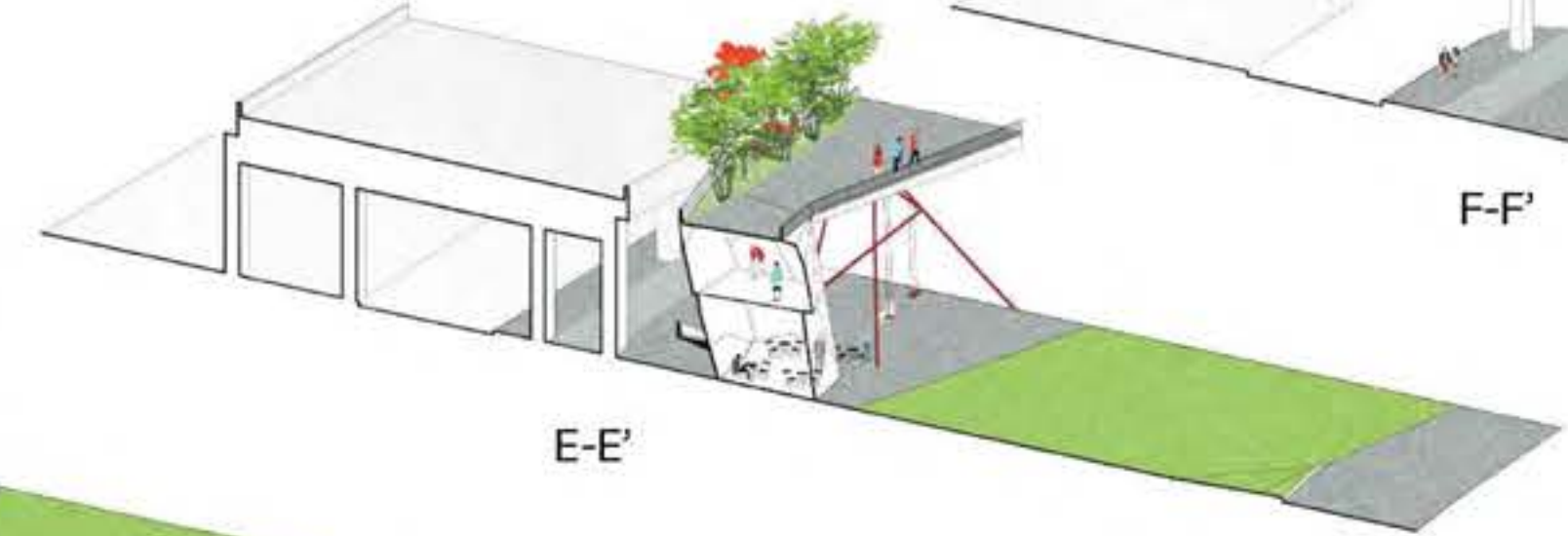
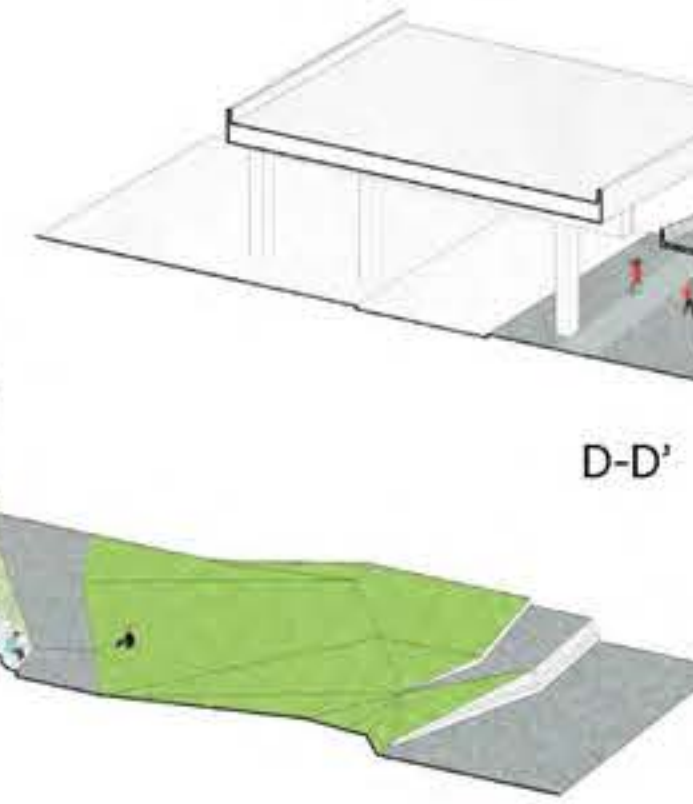
Buffered from westerly winds by a low vegetated slope, the flatlands are a protected microclimate and is occupied by a great lawn for flexible, unprogrammed activities in the summer and shoulders seasons. An ice wall and firepits provide a seasonal backdrop for winter programming and events. Dogs are accommodated in a generous space at the Northwest corner of the site while oversized freestanding swings activate the southeast corner.

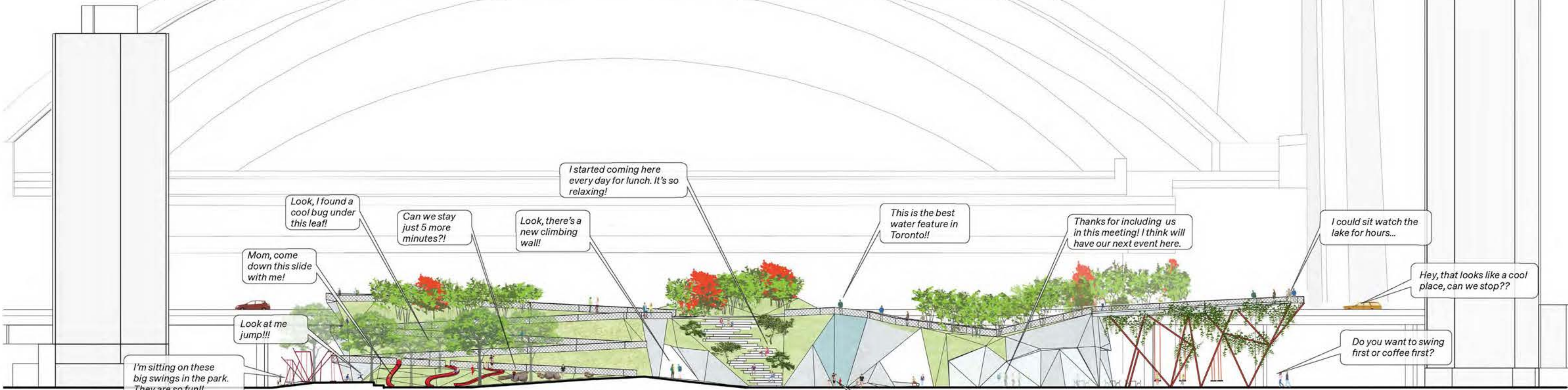
The design of Rees Ridge within the Toronto Waterfront precinct presents a unique opportunity to create a vital community space that provides a range of recreational and play opportunities, while creating a destination that attracts visitors year-round. With Rees Ridge, we propose an extraordinary and iconic park that is at once a place of celebration



Scale 1:500







I'm sitting on these big swings in the park. They are so fun!!

Look at me jump!!!

Mom, come down this slide with me!

Look, I found a cool bug under this leaf!

Can we stay just 5 more minutes?!

Look, there's a new climbing wall!

I started coming here every day for lunch. It's so relaxing!

This is the best water feature in Toronto!!

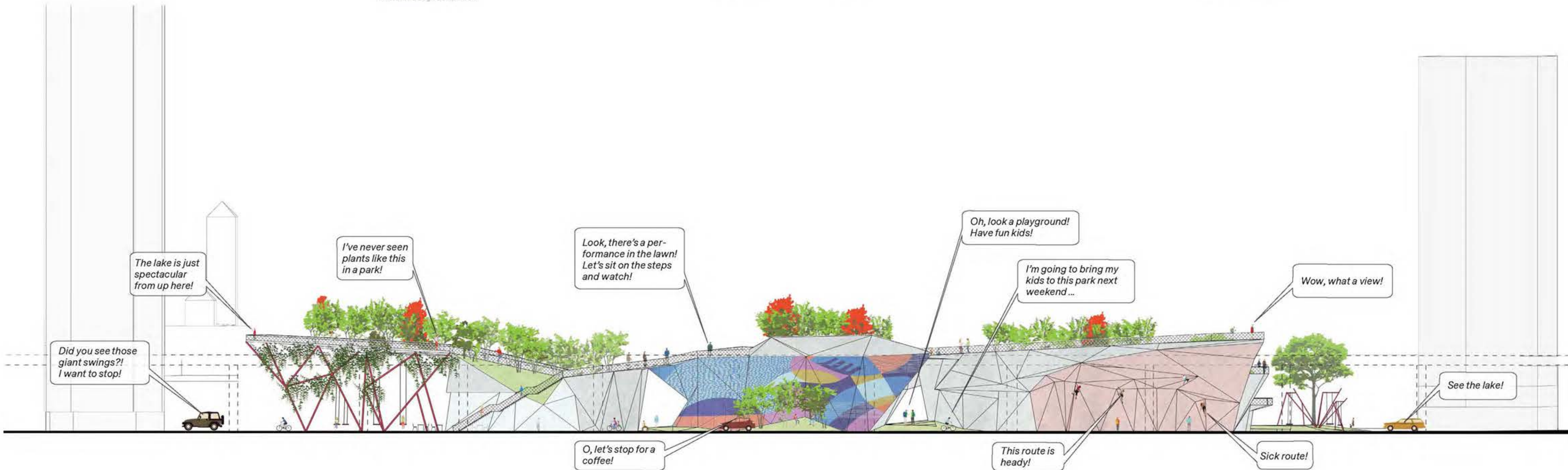
Thanks for including us in this meeting! I think will have our next event here.

I could sit watch the lake for hours...

Hey, that looks like a cool place, can we stop??

Do you want to swing first or coffee first?

I feel so refreshed after splashing around in the waterfall!



*Did you see those giant swings?! I want to stop!*

*The lake is just spectacular from up here!*

*I've never seen plants like this in a park!*

*Look, there's a performance in the lawn! Let's sit on the steps and watch!*

*O, let's stop for a coffee!*

*Oh, look a playground! Have fun kids!*

*I'm going to bring my kids to this park next weekend ...*

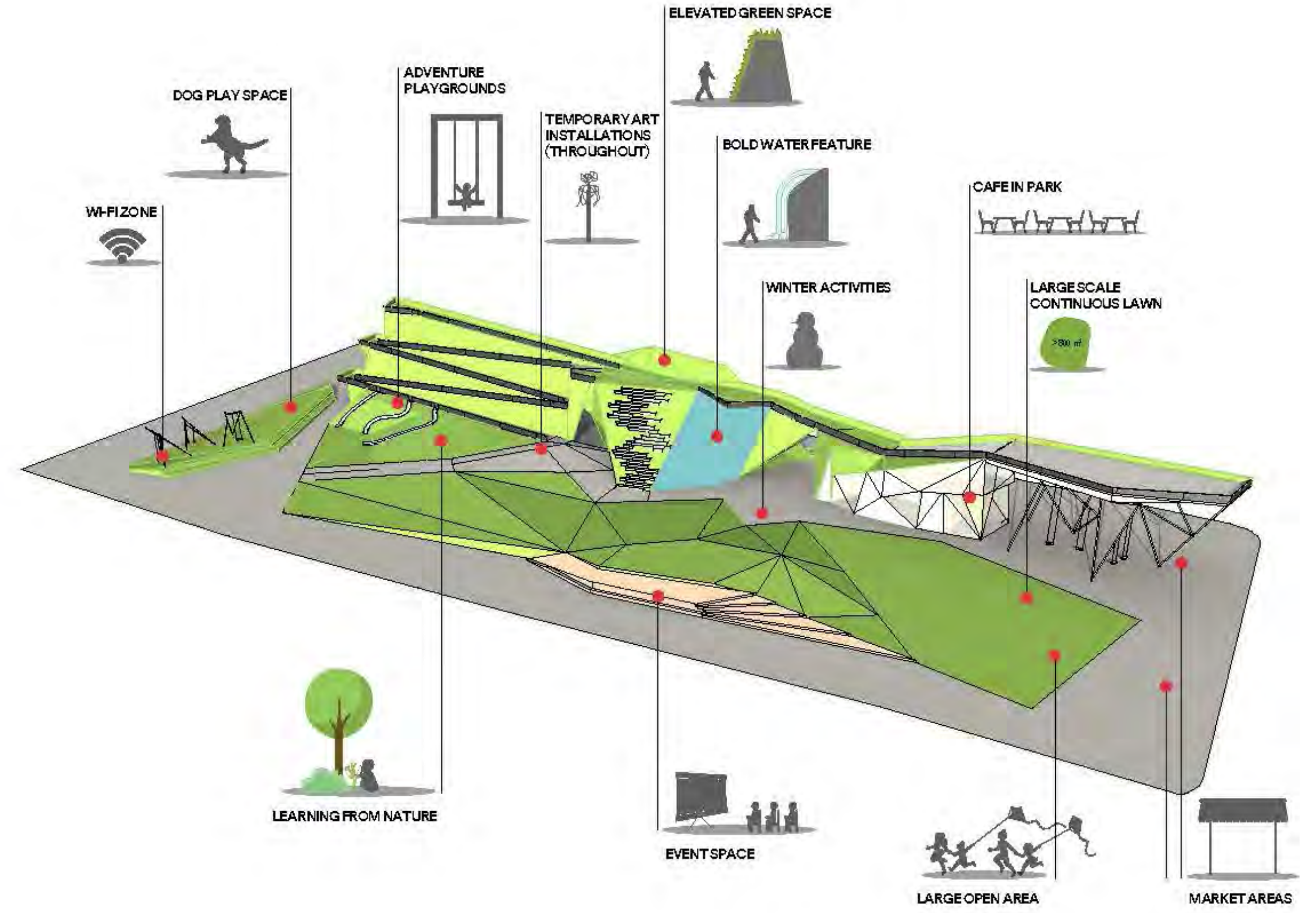
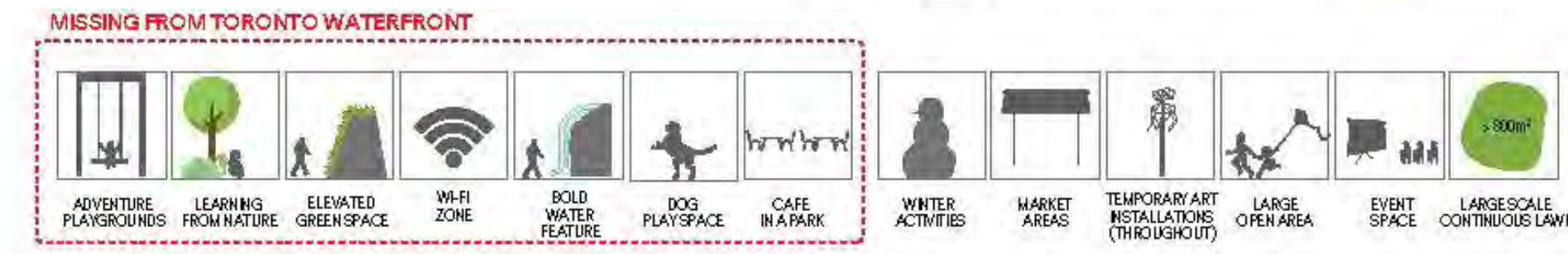
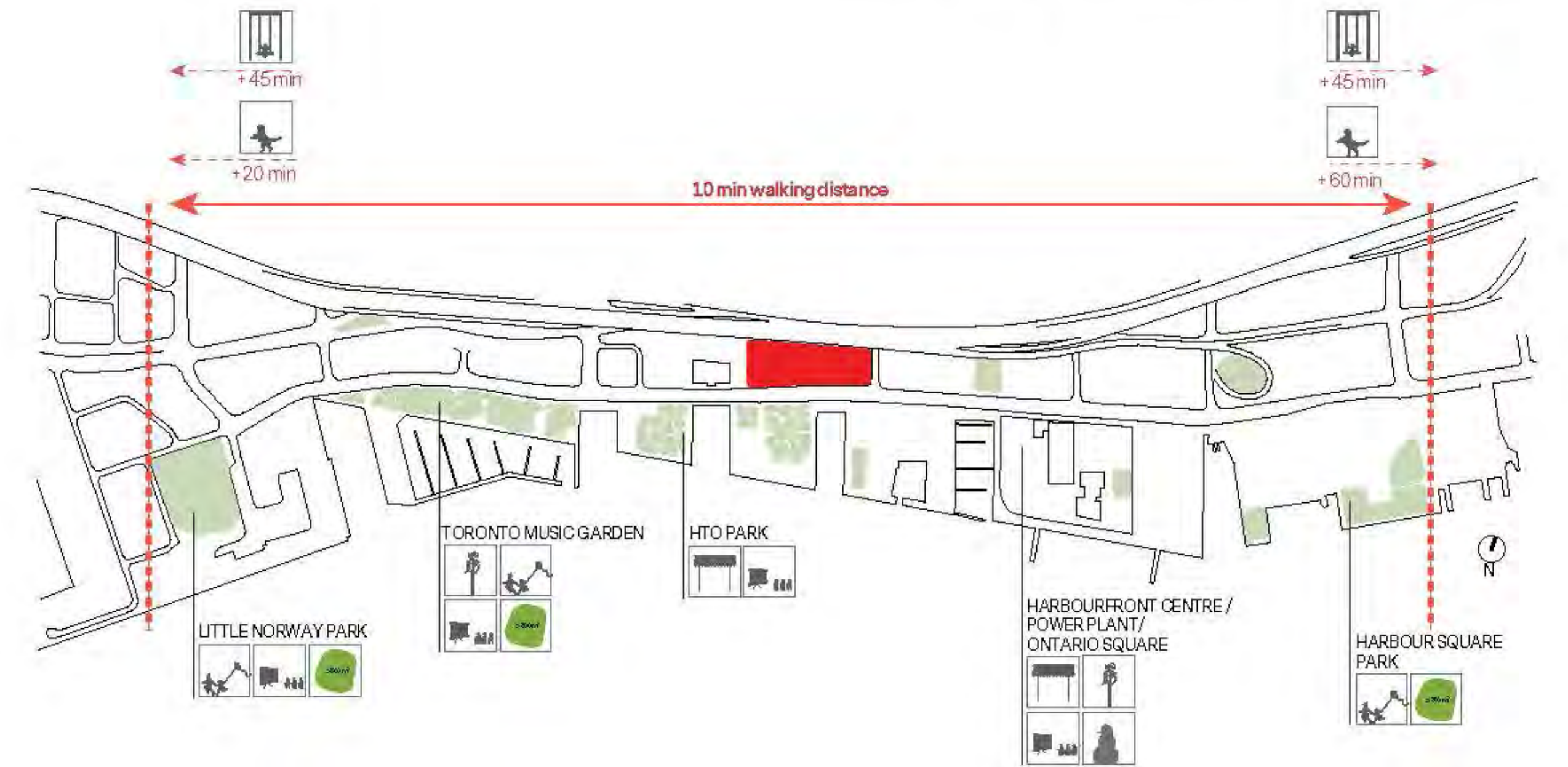
*This route is heady!*

*Sick route!*

*Wow, what a view!*

*See the lake!*

# Waterfront Missed Opportunities



## Program Narrative

*Rees Ridge is designed to be a playground for people of all ages and abilities.*

It is a place for everyday activity as well as a place for celebration; a park that appeals to residents and tourists alike. The three-dimensionality of the park provides opportunities for dramatic and exhilarating play while also creating quieter moments of gathering and refuge. Park elements are designed to encourage all users to actively engage with the landscape. Each element defined by the different users encountering them in the moment.

In a hyper-charged city such as Toronto, the opportunities for escape are not a part of everyday life. Health and wellness, improved by active interaction with the vertical elements of the park, will inspire a more vigorous engagement.

Wellness is not always a function of physical activity. For Toronto inhabitants, opportunities for a respite from noise and people can be as important as exercise. Swings, ridge seats and slope steps provide opportunities for people to be alone in quiet beauty in the midst of the city.

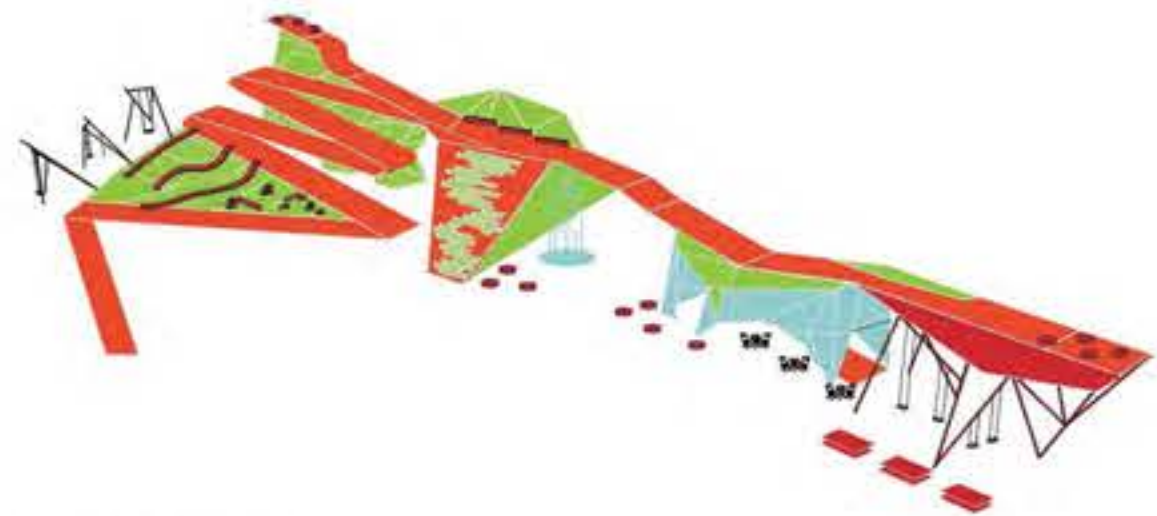
While the park encourages all visitors to play, the botanical playground is particularly focused on giving children

control of their play. It is a space, of stumps and logs, boulders and twigs where kids can explore, pick up bits of nature and build tiny creations. Where they can learn from the natural environment and from each other.

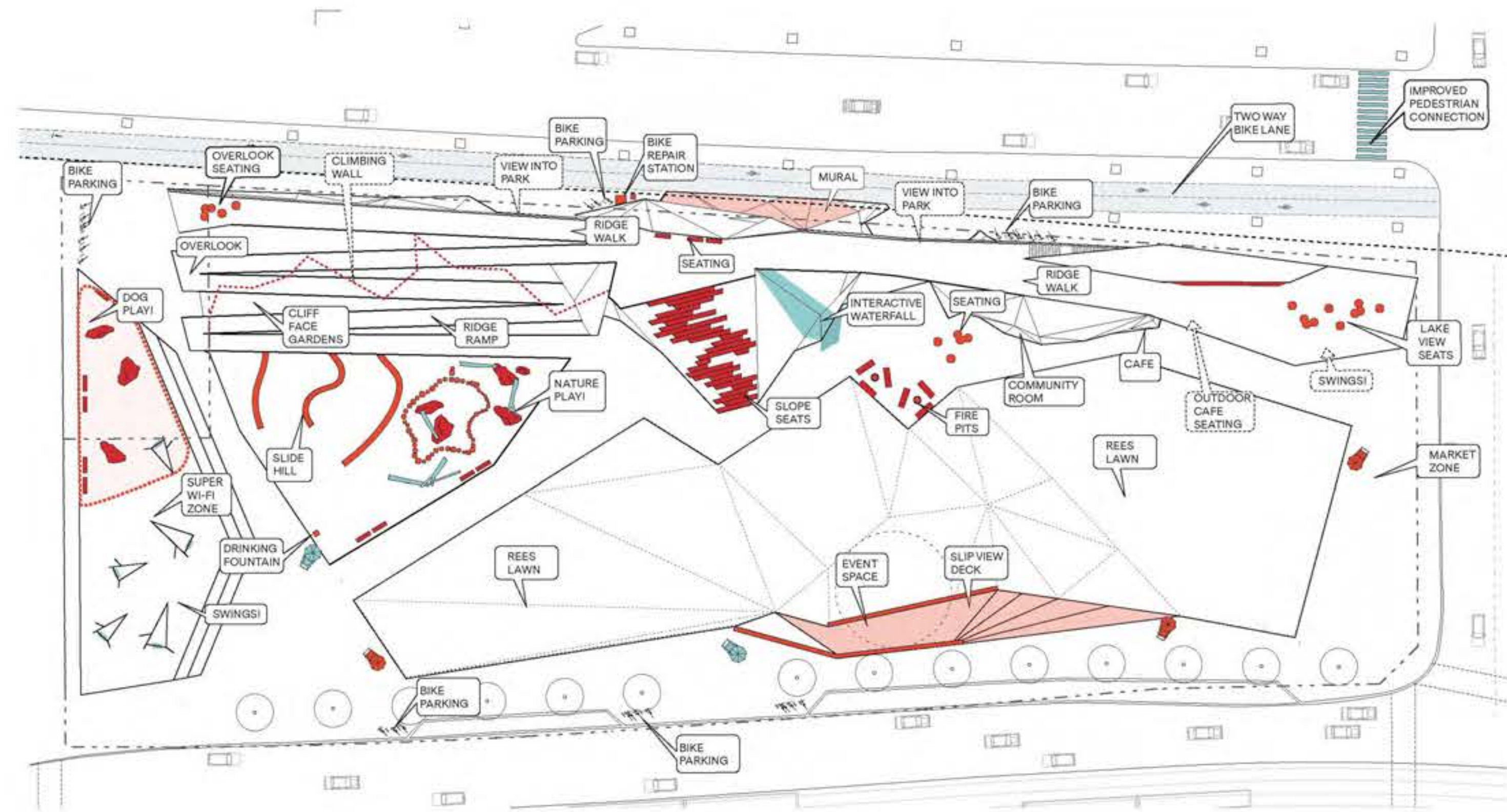
A dedicated market zone is located on the east side of the park in an area of peak pedestrian traffic but there is ample opportunity for the market to spread throughout the park, into the interior plazas and streetscape.

On the north side of Rees Ridge, bike parking, bike repair station and multiple points connection draw cyclists into the park. This space is further activated by an enormous climbing wall, mural, and café.

The streetscape of Rees Ridge is a welcome break in the unyielding urbanity of Queens Quay. At the street edge, the sidewalk is expanded to ease pedestrian congestion and invite passersby into the park. In phase 2, Slip View Deck creates an opportunity to rest and people watch. The direct connection to the Rees Lawn also encourages people to inhabit with the park.



Circulation and Program



Scale 1:500





## Horticultural Narrative

*Create immersive plantings by amplifying and interpreting an iconic Ontario landscape.*

### The problem:

Small urban parks do not have the scale or context to create truly immersive plantings.

### Approach:

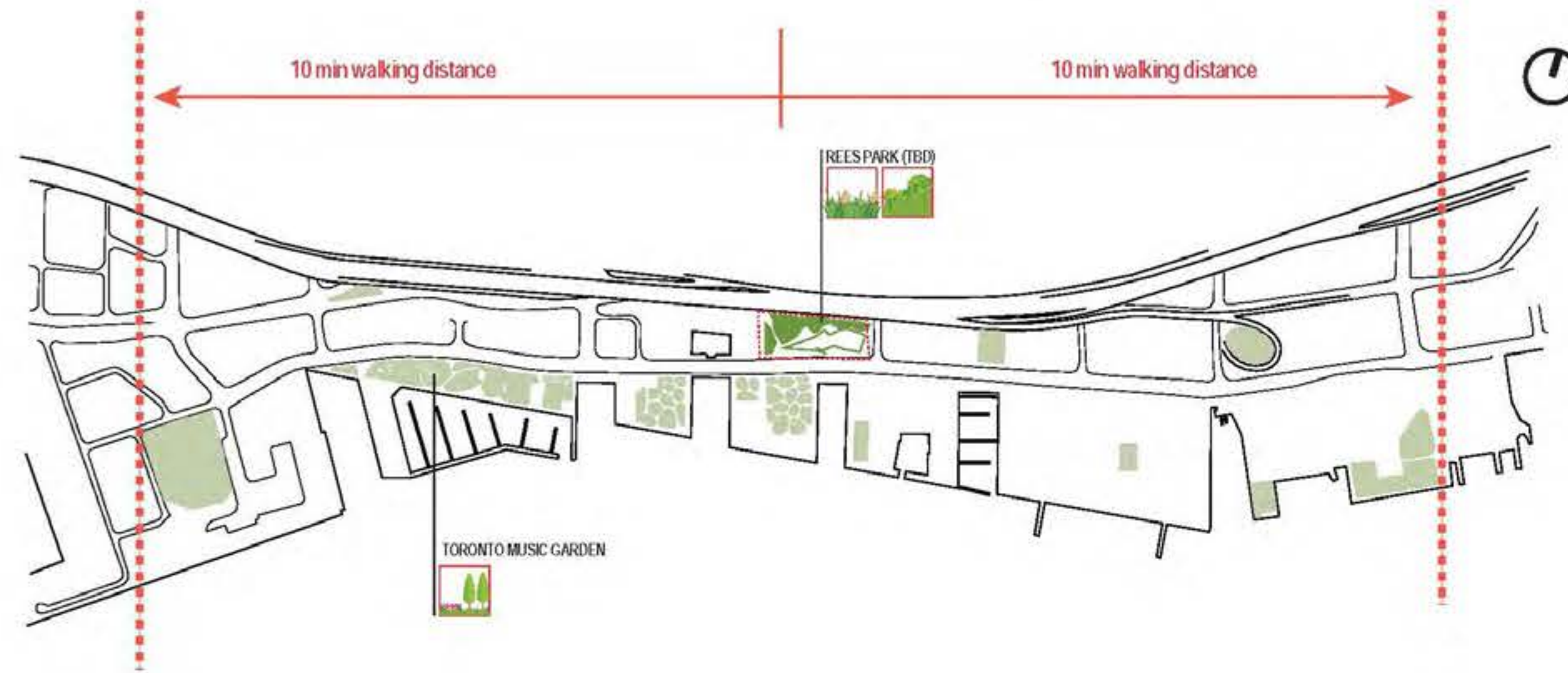
With sensitivity and focus, we can create immersive plantings that evoke and amplify the special qualities of Ontario's bluff landscapes.

### Inspiration:

We take inspiration from the iconic bluff and cliff landscapes of southern Ontario. This includes not just the Scarborough Bluffs, but also landscapes like the Niagara Escarpment just west of Toronto. These dramatic vertical landscapes possess distinct geomorphic zones—each with its own

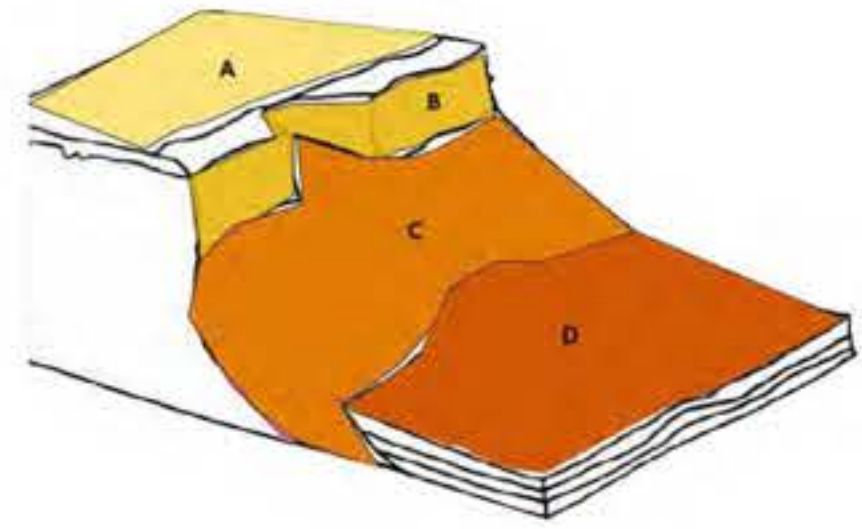
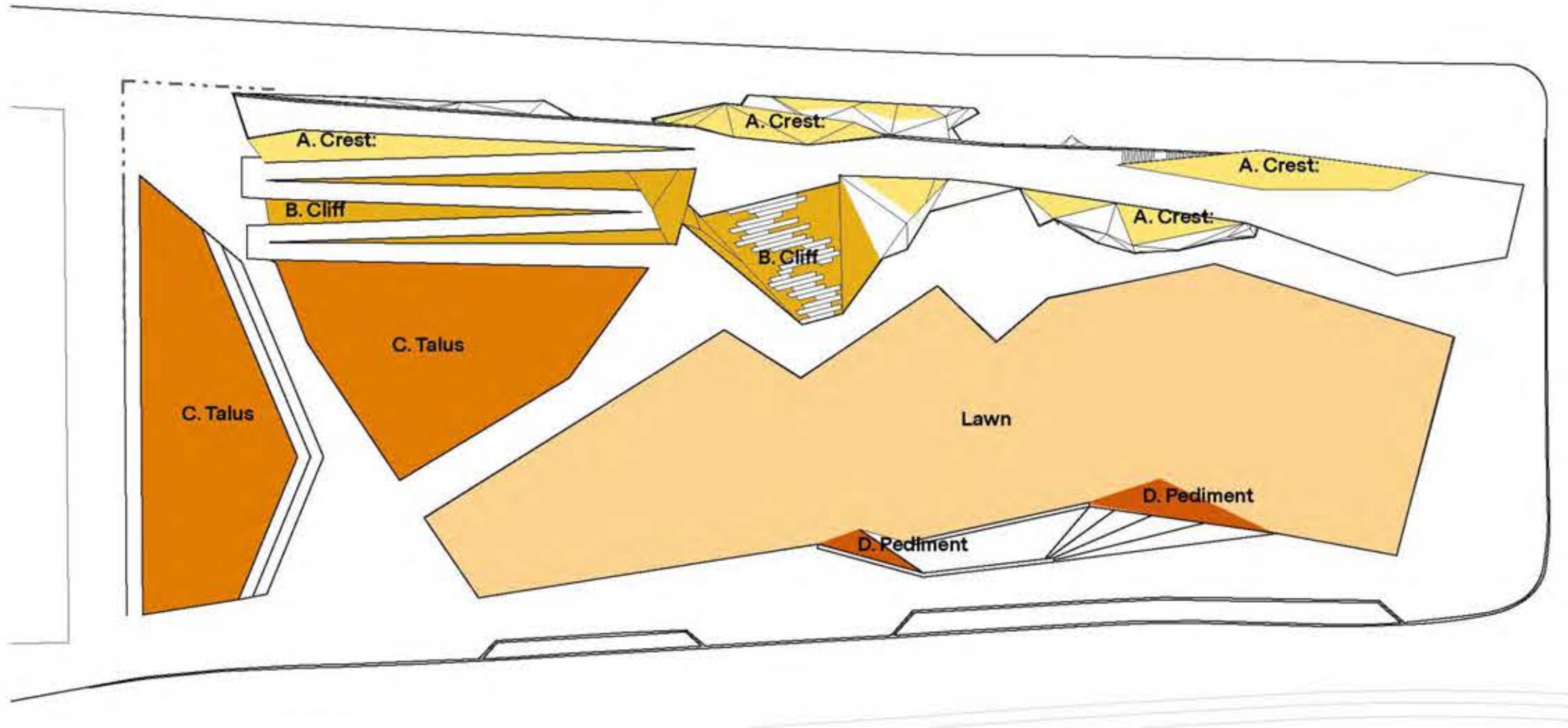
distinct plant community. For example, we love the way a thick carpet of deciduous trees blankets the top of cliffs. Below these ridges, the faces of cliffs feature rare, conservative species that cannot compete on the ground. Bonsai-like White Cedars, gnarled Sassafras, weathered pines, and pockets of Dutchman's breeches all show a remarkable fitness of plant to place. The lower base of these cliffs is formed by landslides of eroded gravel and limestone, creating a lush mixed forest that emerges from deeper soil profiles.

Our goal is to interpret and amplify each of these zones to give a deep sense of place and ecology to the manufactured topography of the park's cliffs.



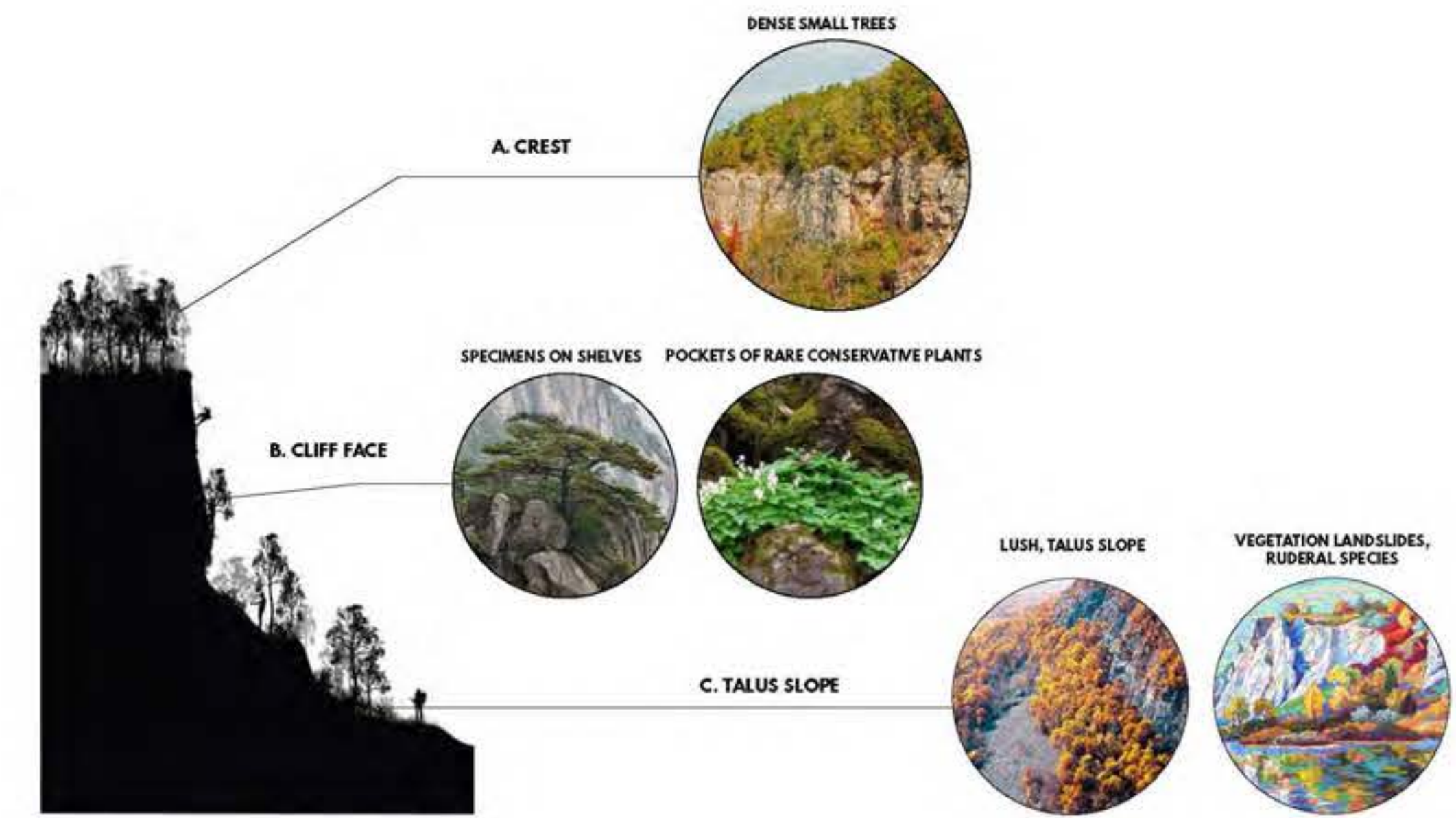
Lots of Parks, Little Botanical Diversity





- A. Crest:**  
Convex shape where weathered material falls over the cliff. soil creep occurs
- B. Free face / Cliff:**  
Bare rock, vertical, formed when cap rock collapses due to scarp recession, rock falls occur
- C. Talus slope:**  
Boulders and stones from collapsed cliff collect here, constant angle of 35 to 37, finer materials washed out into pediment
- D. Pediment slope:**  
Gentle slope, covered with fine sediment from talus slope, useful from human activity

### Planting Zones and Cliff Geomorphology





**A. Crest:**  
Dense, Ridge-Like, Vegetation



**Stunted, Suckering Tree Copses:**

We see dense beds full of suckering trees like *Sassafras albidum*, *Rhus typhina*, *Betula populifolia*, and *Amelanchier arborea* whose multiple trunks amplify a feeling of depth and weathering.

**Carpeting Cascaders:**

Thick carpeting groundcovers like *Vaccinium*, *Aster ericoides*, *Juniperus communis*, *Comptonia peregrina*, and *Arctostaphylos* creep over edges and drape the structure with vegetation.

**Glowing Silhouettes:**

While the ground-plane will be dominated with thick, rich textural carpets, the repetition of certain light-catching grasses and emergent flowers will give the ground plane more lightness and seasonal dynamism. Grasses like *Deschampsia*, sedges like *Carex pensylvanica*, dynamic flowers like *Erigeron*, *Aster ericoides*, *Thalictrum*, and *Aquilegia* will make the ground sparkle during the growing season.



**B. Cliff Face:**  
Gnarled Specimens & Herbaceous Pockets



**Specimens on Shelves:**

Featuring a handful of gnarled, evergreen specimens to recall the iconic White Cedars of the Niagra Escarpment, or the pines of the Yellow Mountains can create an evocative centerpiece for the project. *Thuja occidentalis*, *Pinus virginiana*, or *Kalmia latifolia* could be good candidates for these plants.

**Pockets of Conservative Plants:**

In addition to the trees, we see incorporating a wide range of conservative species associated with cliff faces and rock outcroppings. These include plants like *Dicentra*, *Carex eburnea*, *Eriogonum*, *Deschampsia*, *Arctostaphylos*, *Aster ericoides*, *Actaea pachypoda*, *Athyrium*, *Woodwardia*, and *Polypodium*.



### C. Talus Slope: Lush Mixed Forest



#### Exaggerated Layering of Trees:

To amplify the feeling of trees growing through eroded bedrock on talus slopes, we proposed creating two layers of trees. First, an overstory of big canopy trees like *Acer saccharum* and *Liriodendron tulipifera* will anchor the bottom of the slope. Underneath that, airy, luminous understory of *Ostrya virginiana*, *Amelanchier arborea*, and *Cornus rugosa* will weave underneath the larger trunks.

#### Scattered Boulders (or Concrete Logs?):

Talus slopes often have large boulders or cobbles scattered randomly along slopes. We think these might be fun play-spaces for teenagers as well as an evocative association with the planting.

#### Lush Herbaceous Layer:

The herbaceous layer should be quite diverse including species lady fern (*Athyrium filix femina*), bottlebrush grass (*Elymus hystrix*), Geranium (*Geranium maculatum*), Solomon's-seal (*Polygonatum*), early meadow-rue (*Thalictrum dioicum*), wreath goldenrod *Solidago caesia*, and white wood aster (*Eurybia divaricata*).



### D. Piedmont Slope: Urban Edge



#### Thick, Low Shrubs to Frame Lawn:

We like the way that low vegetation can frame big open lawns. We're envisioning a matrix of low woody plants to create a dense carpet that pulls the planting out to the street edge without blocking views. Plants like *Rhus aromatica*, *Cornus sericea*, *Diervilla sessiliflora*, *Arctostaphyllum*, *Amsonia* sp. and *Xanthorhiza simplicissima*.





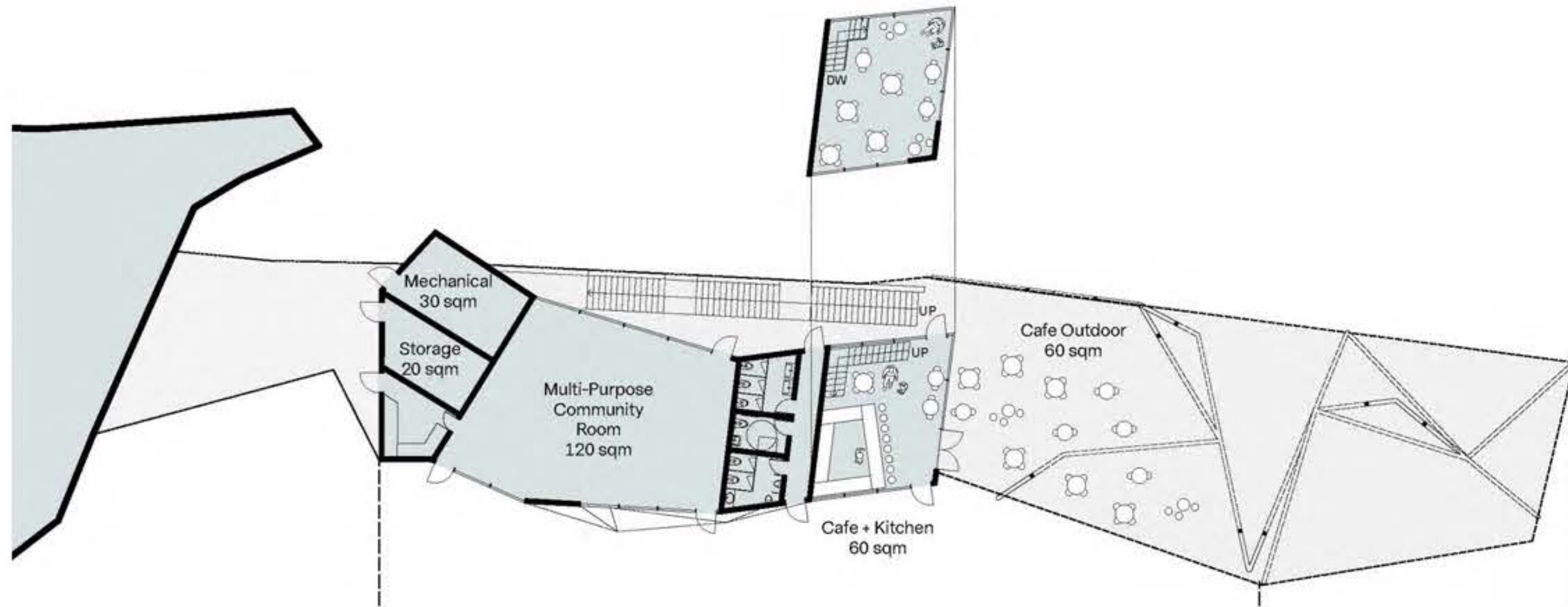


## Architecture Narrative

*A true hybrid of architecture and landscape, the Rees Pavilion is incorporated into the eastern edge of Rees Ridge.*

The Pavilion, with café, community space, restrooms creates a welcoming beacon for those entering the park from the North. Connected to the exterior on three sides, the maximizes connectivity to the park and provides a lively storefront the Lake Shore Blvd side. A second level in provides additional opportunity for people watching and lake views. The community room opens on to a large plaza allowing for fluid expansion of events into the park. Large glass windows ensure visual connection with the park and lake even when activities are held indoors. Finished with a mix of warm wood and concrete, both café and community room are warm and welcoming spaces. Pockets of interior

planting turn the two spaces into cozy winter gardens in the cold seasons. Expanded restrooms provide ample facilities for the new park program of the site. Mechanical and storage spaces are located next to hardscape areas to ensure ease of access for vehicles. At its eastern edge, the pavilion is an expansive canopy that provides a covered are for outdoor café seating, oversized swings and lush hanging gardens. Finished on the underside with the same warm wood as the café, the canopy creates a dramatic entry point into the park and sets the tone for a lively waterfront experience.





## Lighting Narrative

*The lighting design aims to reinforce the architectural concept of carving into materials, creating new spaces and revealing new surfaces and textures.*

The lighting approach is inspired by the organic nature of the landscape, and also by the way artists deal with materials, how they give potency to them, and how space and light are explored in varying ways.

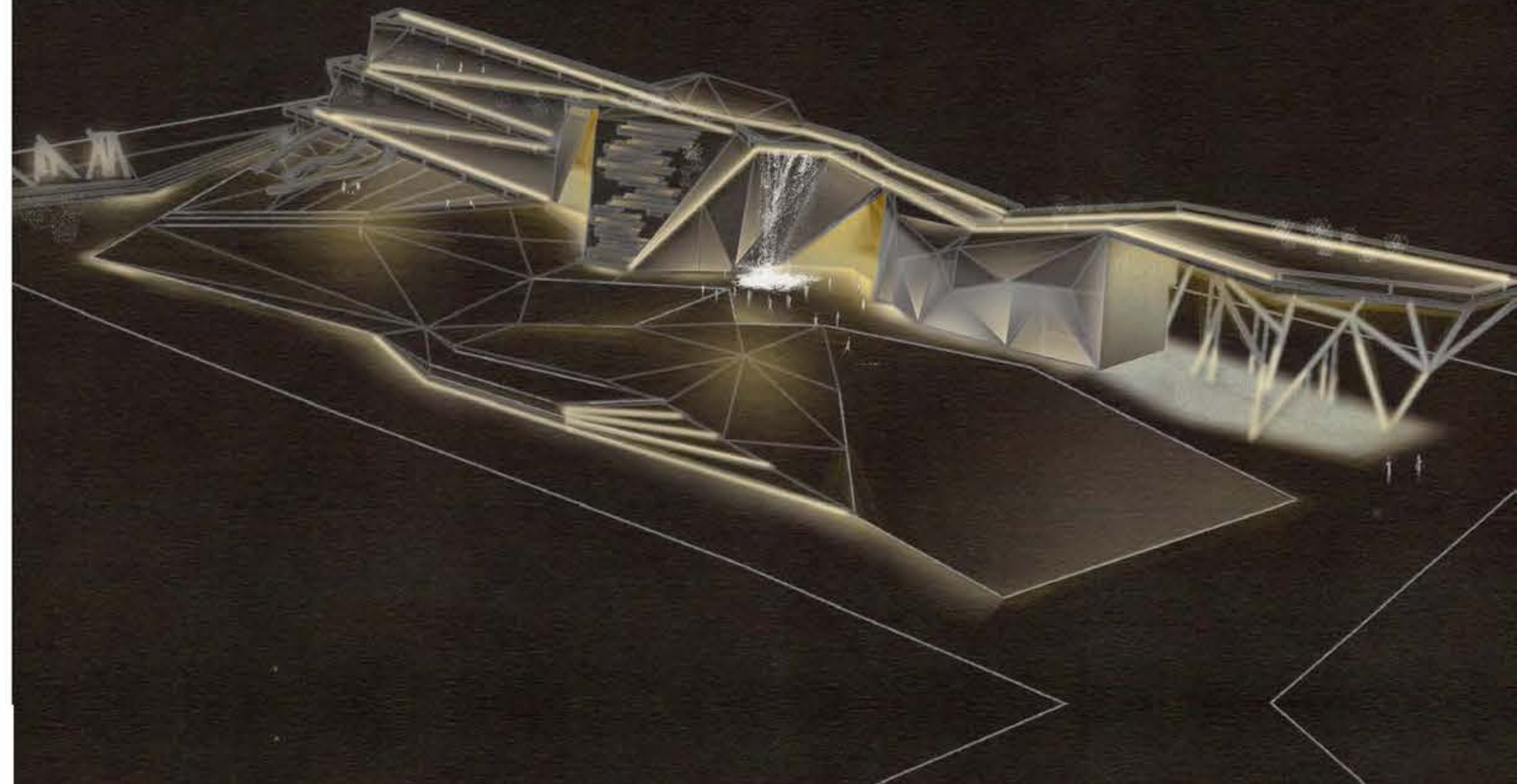
The sculptures by Eduardo Chillida and Barbara Hepworth show sculptural forms with captured internal and external spaces. A language of an external shell or material and the relationship to the interior is evident and is explored.

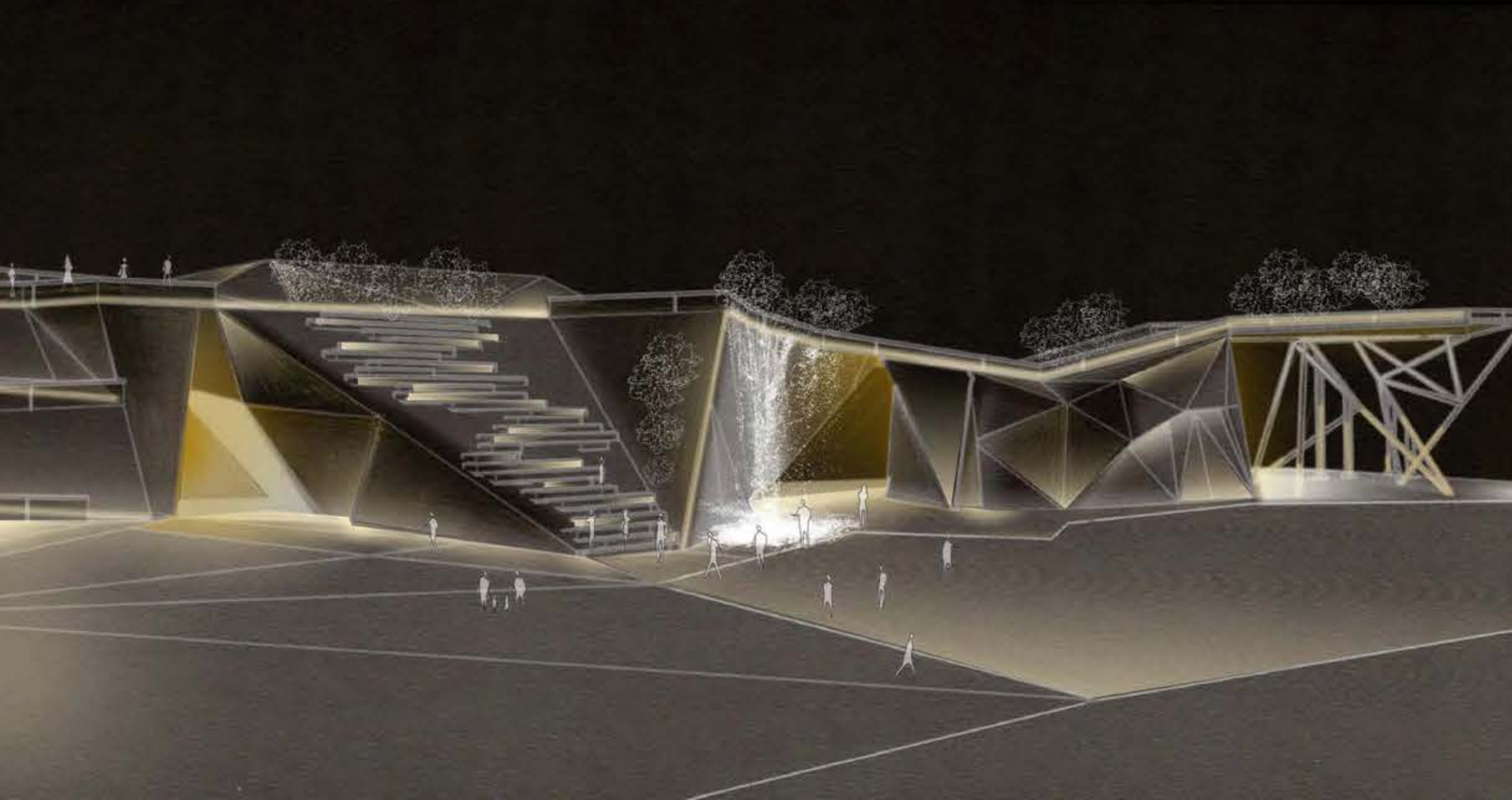
The 'carved' openings create spaces and have varying relationships with the

surrounding environment depending on their location. It is these forms and expressions that have inspired the development and thinking of our approach on Rees Park.

Lighting should always have a dialogue with the landscape and architecture, complimenting the forms expressed and the materials used.

We envisage all the lighting emanating from within the landscape, deep from within the carvings, as if all the light comes from a single source.





### Layers



Natural



Ambient



Operational

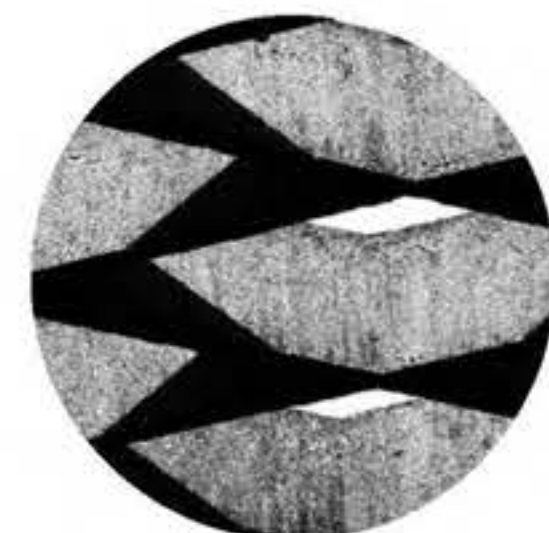


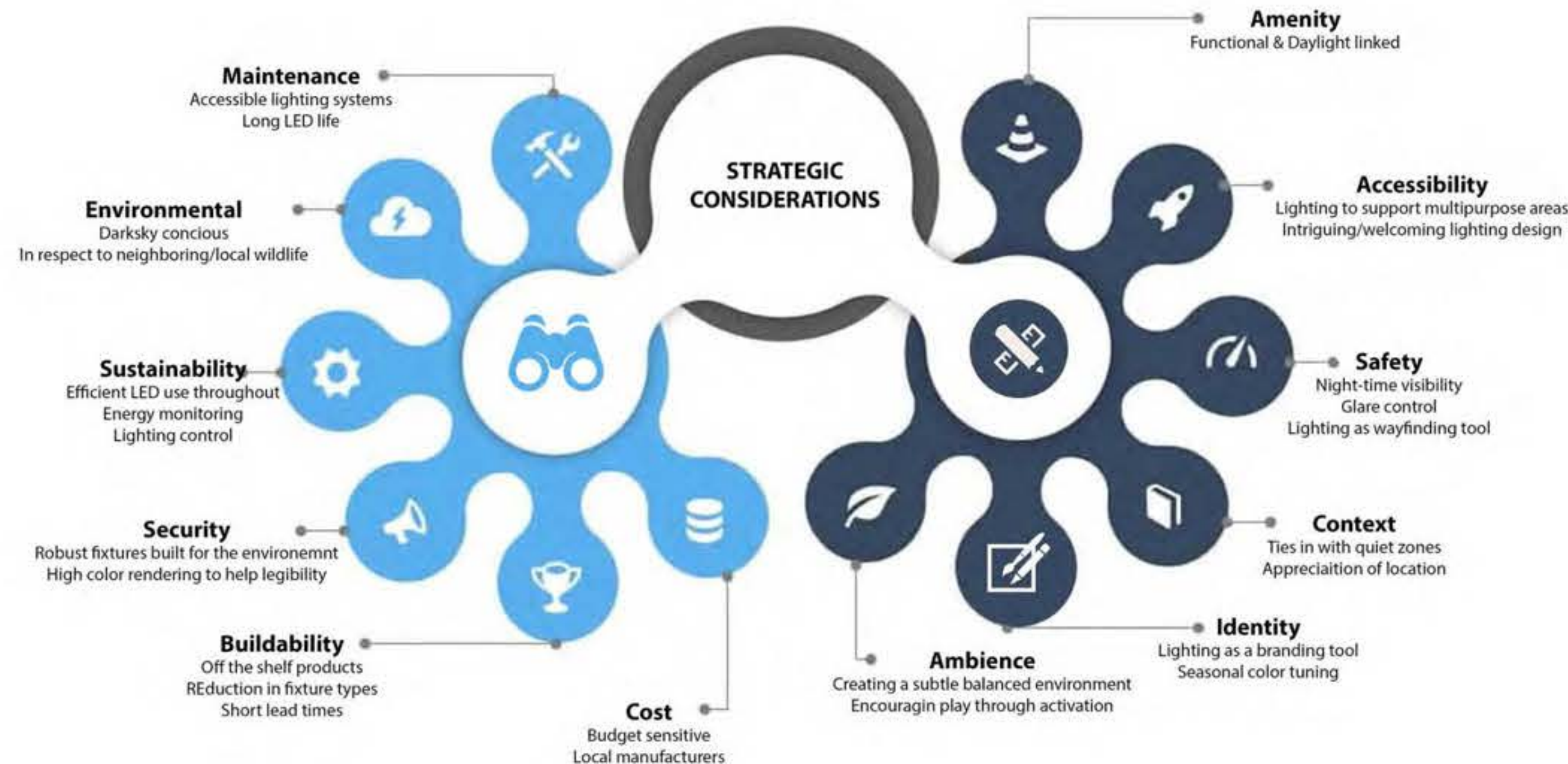
Performance

### Textures



Light on Faceted Architecture





## Water Narrative

*In the cold season the waters will freeze into heroic icicles. This monumental frozen sculpture will be illuminated in dramatic, theatrical quality changing colored light.*

The water feature design concept is inspired by the Toronto area's many waterfalls, including Tiffany's Falls, the Elora Gorge, Tews Falls and Balls Falls. These falls operate year-round, liquidly exciting in the warm months, and making ice sculptures in winter—as will this.

A V-shaped notched ravine is cut into the artificial landscape. The ravine is finished in blocky, modular, Rhino-cut concrete blocks, arrhythmically assembled.

The water flow is heavy and frothy, like its turbulent mountain cascade cousins. In the winter, the water freezes into urban scaled icicles. At night and in the winter months, the water feature is illuminated in beautiful, theatrical-quality changing color.

At the base, the water feature offers immersive, interactive play experiences.

The park's signature, monumental waterfall are distinguished by its exciting white-water flows, its steep incline, its state-of-the-art, rhino-developed modular precast concrete finishes system, and its year-round operation.

In the warmer months, the cascades fall in richly foamy white-water, ultimately creating a waterfall within which visitors may play. Participants immersed in the waterfall will enjoy its extreme and primal, natural experience—while deep in the city.

At night the waterfall is illuminated in theatrical quality, changing color lighting exploring beautiful, dramatic, artful expressions in light.

The concept is seen as a major element in Toronto's suite of identity markers, a 'must-see' for visitors to the city, and a terrific Instagram scenic backdrop.

### Toronto Area Waterfalls



Tews Falls



Tiffany's Falls



### Water Action



### Tiffany's Falls in Winter



### Finishes



Elora Gorge



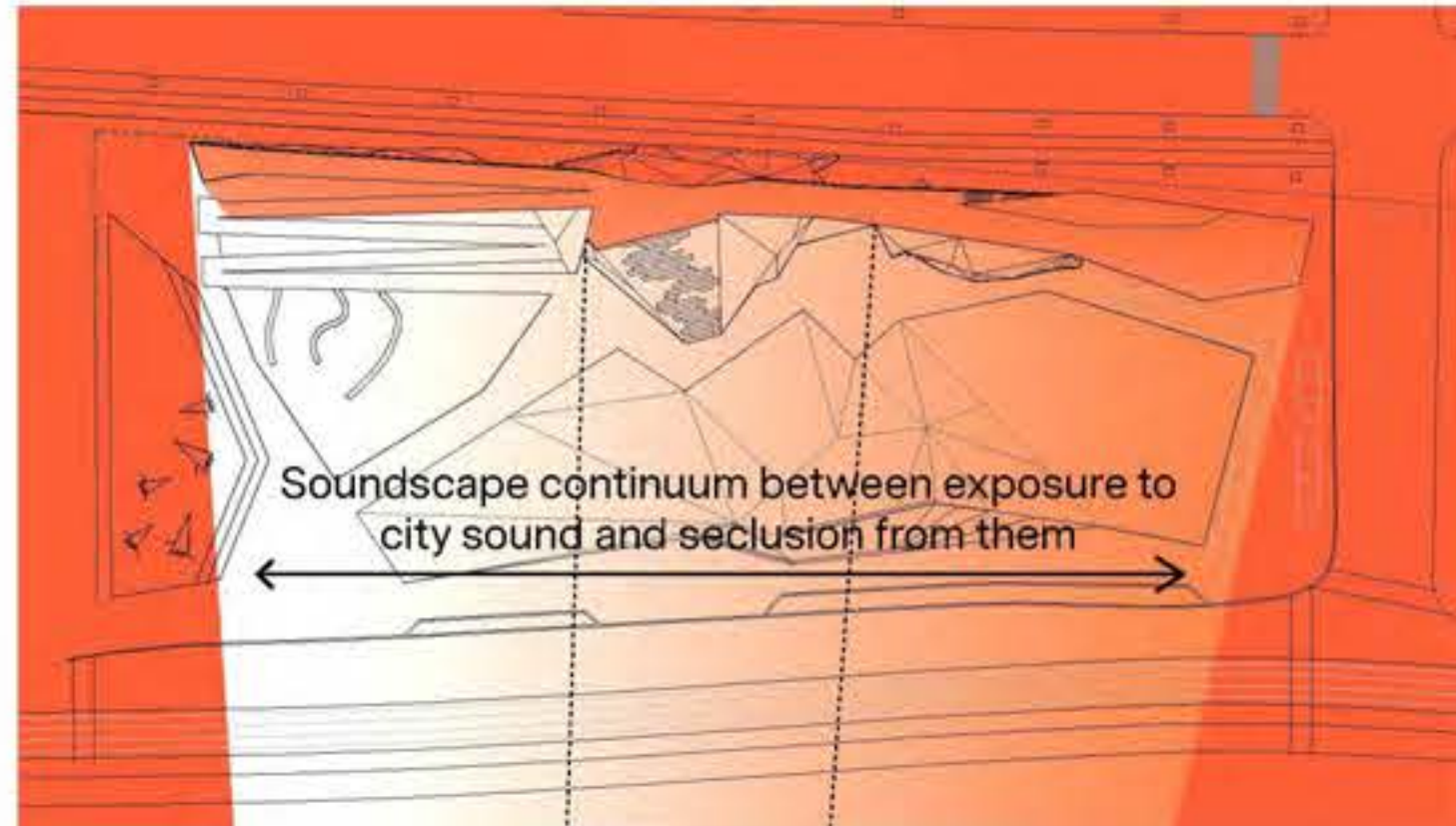
Balls Falls





## Acoustic Narrative

*The design of Rees Park offers an opportunity to actively compose the park's soundscape rather than to passively accept the alternative.*



Max dB

Min dB

The park's location between the Gardiner Expressway and the waterfront, as it exists, is subject throughout to noise from the viaduct. This design for the park considers this uniform exposure and opts to provide an alternate range of experiences throughout the park.

The north edge of the park features elevated massing that will act as a barrier to the most pernicious noise from the viaduct. The massing, however, has a varying porosity at lower elevations along its length. Towards the east end of the park, which will feature the highest degree of porosity, patrons will feel more enmeshed into the sounds of the city. Towards the west end of the park the more opaque design of the garden and ramps will provide greater refuge and respite. This will provide a continuum of experience, allowing the park's patrons to find their own "just right."

The sounds of a city are not, however, something merely to be subtracted from an experience. Rather than attempt to fully excise the sounds, we propose to beneficially augment the city sounds. The design proposes to accomplish this through the inclusion of a water feature which, with careful design, can be tuned to mix with the sounds of the city. City noise can be masked by some types of water noise and mellowed by other types. The design will exploit interplay of the human-made city sound and organic water movement to further augment patron experience.

The soundscape of the park can be further augmented through the audiovisual design described in the following section.

## Audiovisual Narrative

*The audiovisual strategy for the park can be broken into two components: Soundscape augmentation and special events support.*

To augment the sound scape of the park, permanent loudspeakers can be incorporated into plantings and lighting. The loudspeakers can be used to reproduce composed soundscape works intended to interplay with the city and water sounds. Like the water feature, the compositions can be varied by time of day and time of year. The composition can also be responsive to the environment and the people.

As part of the café's ambience and to support operations, a background audio system that is focused around the order area, will also serve as a local voice announcement. The sonic impact on the overall sound scape will be minimal, and more to fill the potential site leakage from the northeast corner.

The Garden Seating provide an opportunity for the park to host special events. For when this occurs, the design

of the park should include the infrastructure needed to support special events. Temporary power connections, temporary cable pathways, and other connectivity can be permanently deployed to provide this support.

## IT Narrative

*To support Waterfront Toronto's Innovation and Intelligent Communities, connectivity will be allowed to neighbourhood WiFi access through integration with the existing fibre-optic backbone.*

The design will include IT networks to support the operations of the park and to provide patrons with the opportunity remain on-the-grid while still getting away from it all. The design will be incorporated in a visually transparent manner.

Part of the IT network's operational focus will include support for security systems. Camera surveillance and "blue light" emergency communications systems are expected to be implemented as part of the security systems. Beyond the security systems, though, safety can be incorporated inherently into the design.

By providing clear sightlines, providing adequate lighting, avoiding concealed/isolated routes and entrapment areas, safety can be "built in." The design is further improved by the inclusion of activity generators like community center, café, and the garden seating which can host events.



## Pedestrian Experience

*This proposal suggests a broad, clearly signed and illuminated pedestrian crossing set back to the west of the current pedestrian crossing, threading between the Gardiner columns.*

For many years there have been calls to either remove the Gardiner Expressway, reconfigure Lake Shore Boulevard, or both. The pretext for any of these initiatives has always been that there is a barrier between the waterfront and the

City and that the paucity of north-south movements at many locations – particularly along the central waterfront – is detrimental to the enjoyment and experience of this pivotal area of the city.

The rejuvenation of the Central Waterfront, through the Queens Quay Revitalization EA, has done much to provide a more equitable use of space and quality of place along the Queens Quay corridor, and the resultant emergence of numerous public spaces along the corridor is testament to the catalytic effects that this work has had.

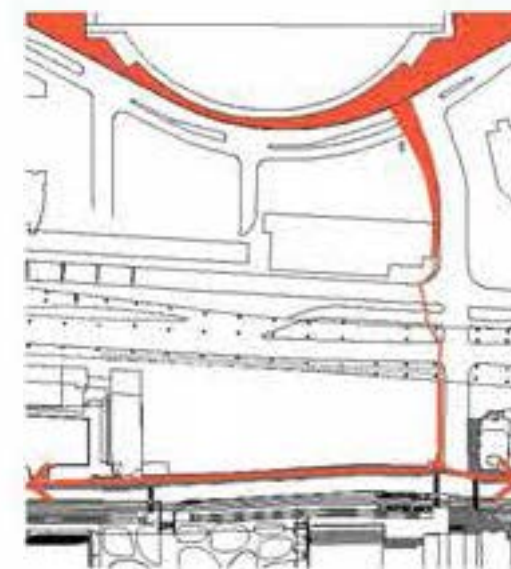
However, Queens Quay operates as an east-west corridor and the links across the Gardiner / Lake Shore Boulevard are still intermittent, and often of poor quality. Rees Park, like many other areas, is well served by Queens Quay, but is bounded by the hard barrier of the expressway corridor to the north. The

area to the north of this corridor contains some of the biggest attractions in Toronto; the Rogers Center, CN Tower, Ripley's Aquarium, and the Metro Toronto Convention Centre are all immediately to the north of Rees Park, but are directly accessible only via a hostile and constrained pedestrian connection along Rees Street.

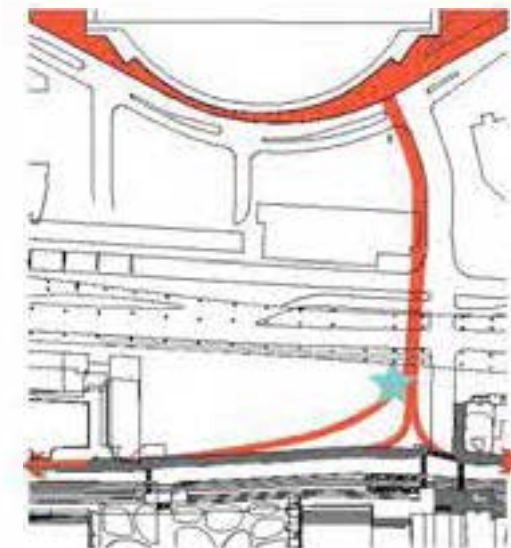
The provision of a high quality, safe, well-lit and well-connected conduit for pedestrian movement from the north side of the expressway corridor to Rees Park is critical to its success.

The provision of this crossing will require the setting back of the eastbound stop-bars on Lake Shore Boulevard and some adjustments to the signal timing at the intersection with Rees Street. Consistent with the City's goals for #VisionZero, this will provide an attractive, and safe, crossing point for north-south movements that will draw visitors from the attractions to the north, through the park, where they can pause and enjoy the amenities, or to continue on to the waterfront.

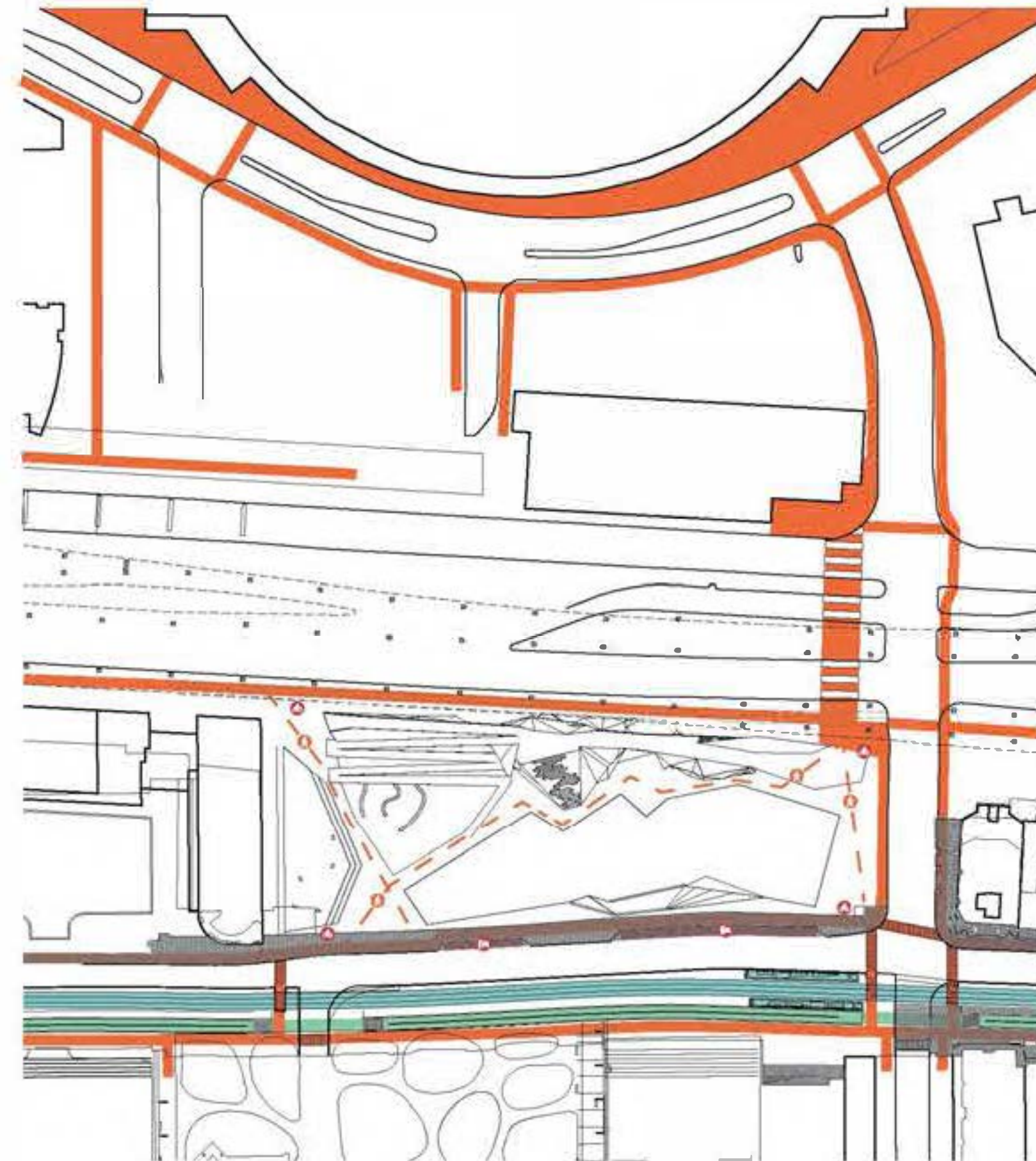
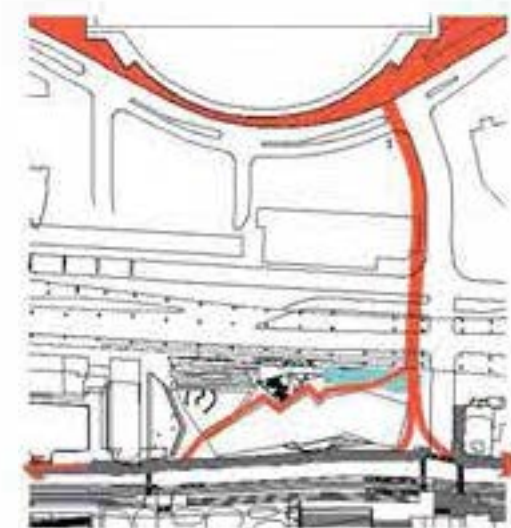
**Existing Pedestrian Traffic**  
Thin and treacherous feeling existing crosswalk



**Potential Pedestrian Traffic**  
Relocate and enlarge crosswalk, add anchor on northeast corner



**Planned Pedestrian Traffic**  
New gateway to the waterfront

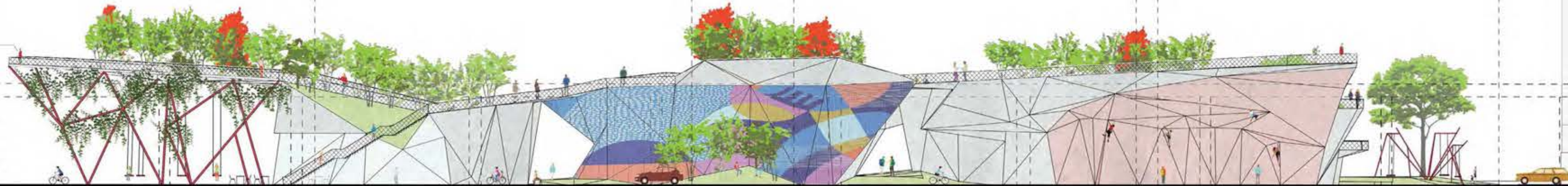


# Lake Shore Boulevard Activation

*The north side of Rees Ridge creates a unique micro-climate of activity and botanical excitement in the otherwise hyper-infrastructural space.*

At the western edge a dramatic climbing wall curves up from the sidewalk. The overhang ensures that climbers can use the space even in stormy weather. The middle portion features a huge mural reaching up into the sky. This bright flash of color is further enhanced with pockets of shade loving plants found in Toronto's ravines. The eastern edge is activated by café, community space and canopy which create a lively streetscape. Multiple

passages into the park visually connect Lake Shore Boulevard to the park and waterfront as well as provide connection with the bike path. The Gardiner itself is improved columns and beams are painted green on the North side, extending the green into the city. The south facing columns are clad with reflective metal further animating this new community space.





Rees Street Park  
Innovative Design Competition

WHY & Team

WHY & Team

Public Art at Rees Ridge

## Public Art at Rees Ridge

*Art will bring the gardens to life at Rees Ridge and is imagined as a cultural layer in combination with the botanical experience.*

A curated visual art program similar to the Don River Valley Park and the Toronto Sculpture Garden, Rees Ridge will present a rotating roster of commissioned sculpture that will engage with local neighbours, the broader Toronto community and visitors to the city. While the installations will generally be fixed pieces, they may sometimes be interdisciplinary.

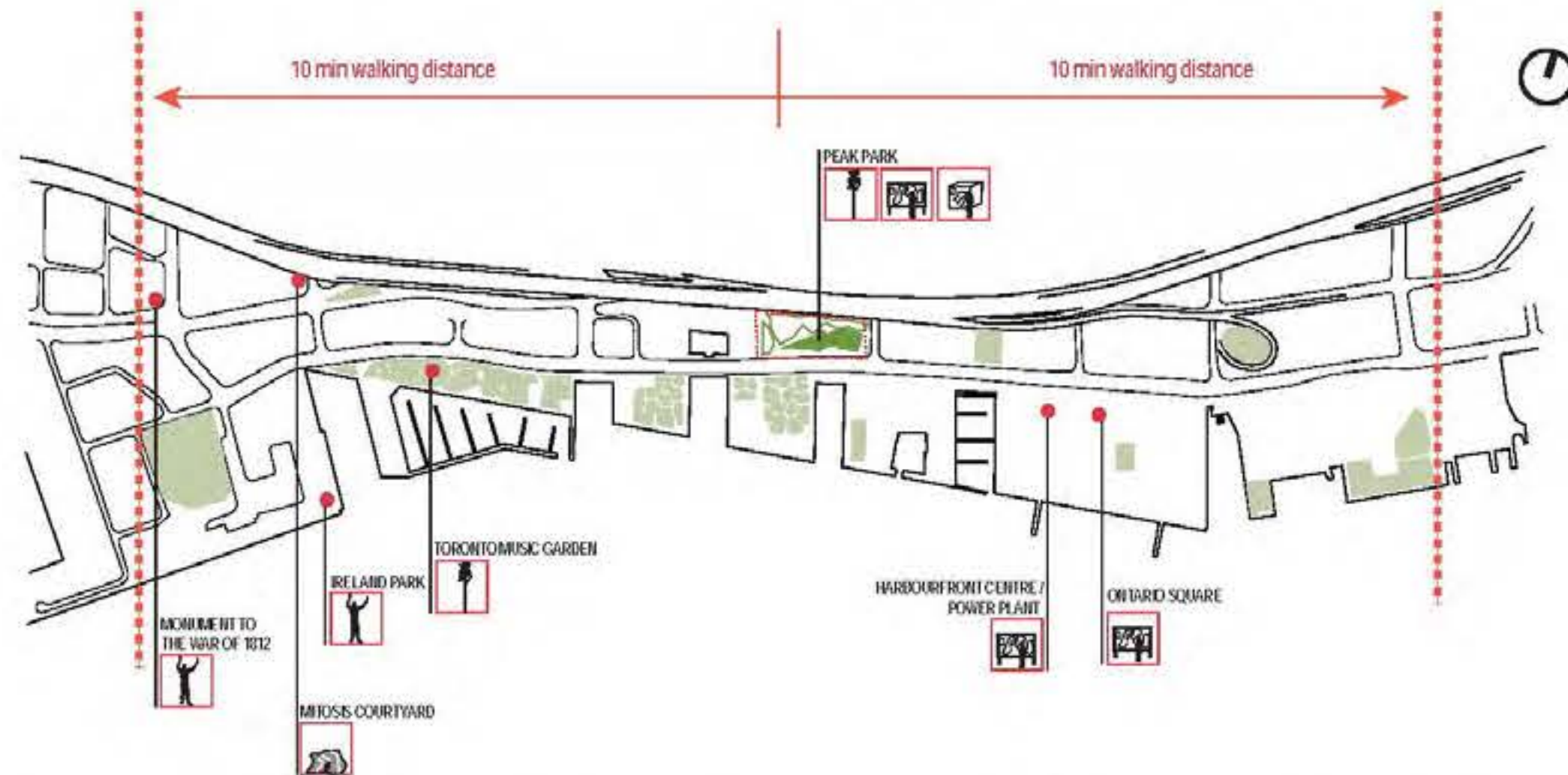
Collaborating with local institutions, including Waterfront Toronto, The Power Plant, the Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery; Artscape Gibraltar Point, the National Ballet, the Music Garden, The Bentway, and Fort York, Rees Ridge will join the family of cultural and recreational experiences at the west waterfront. We imagine a program like the Public Art Fund's temporary art series in Madison Square Park or the commissioned works at the Serpentine and Fourth Plinth: Trafalgar Square in London. The Power Plant is committed as art partner for this series with the understanding that they would administer the program with financial support provided by outside sources.

Community is at the heart of the proposal. Rees Ridge will be the place the community goes to see a changing and evolving art experience on the waterfront. The unveiling of each new art work will become a community event. Rees Ridge installations will be the spark for the community to gather and interact. It's impact growing as people say to each other "Did you see the new work by—so and so."

The public art series at Rees Ridge will create ideas while leaving room to talk to community. We will find a place for all of Toronto and, in the process, create a vibrant destination and a sense of place.

A Budget for a Curated Commission Program: \$175,000 CAN

- Material \$100K
- Site repair 20% = \$20K
- Artists fee 20% = \$20K
- Managing and coordination fee 20% = \$20k
- promotion and website and unveiling of the project \$15K





## Structure

West to east, the major structural elements shift from heavy to light.

The western-most portion of the structure (Zone A) will be comprised of concealed, large, reinforced concrete ribs supporting the switch-back pathway and extensive landscaping. The pathway surface and risers between will span between the ribs by making use of its folded plate configuration to achieve the spans and carry the significant loads of the landscaping. Precast panels will be used to efficiently facilitate construction of the climbing wall on the backside of this feature.

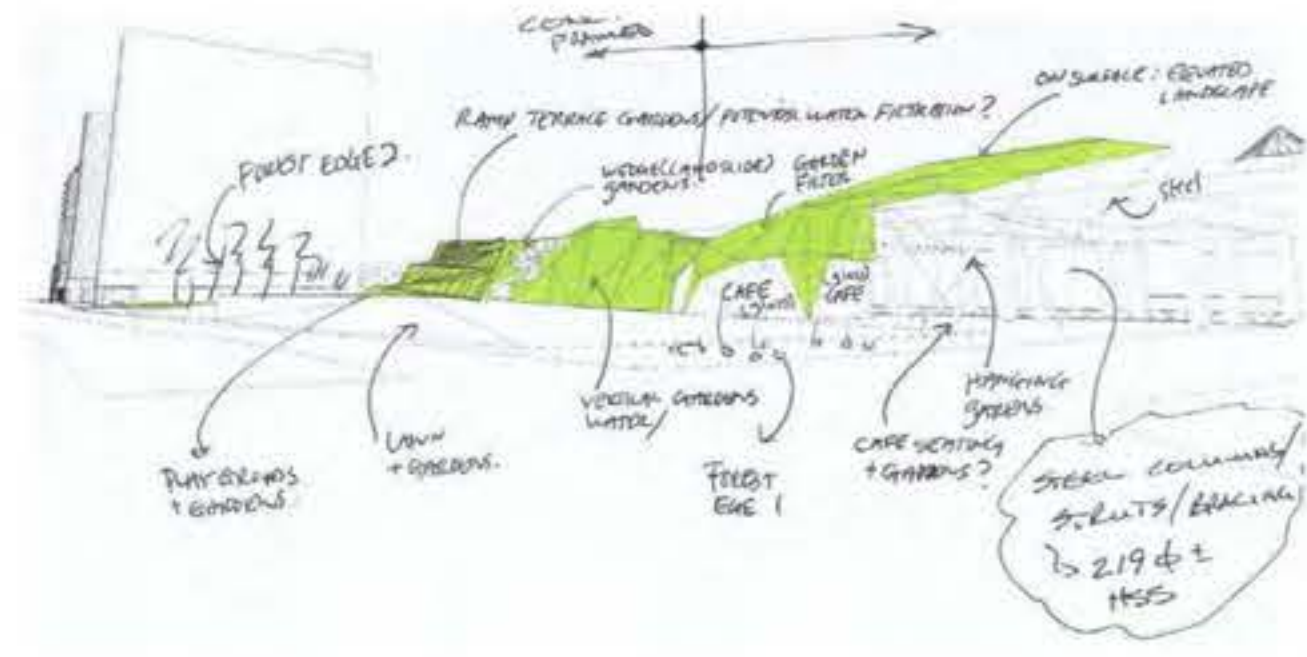
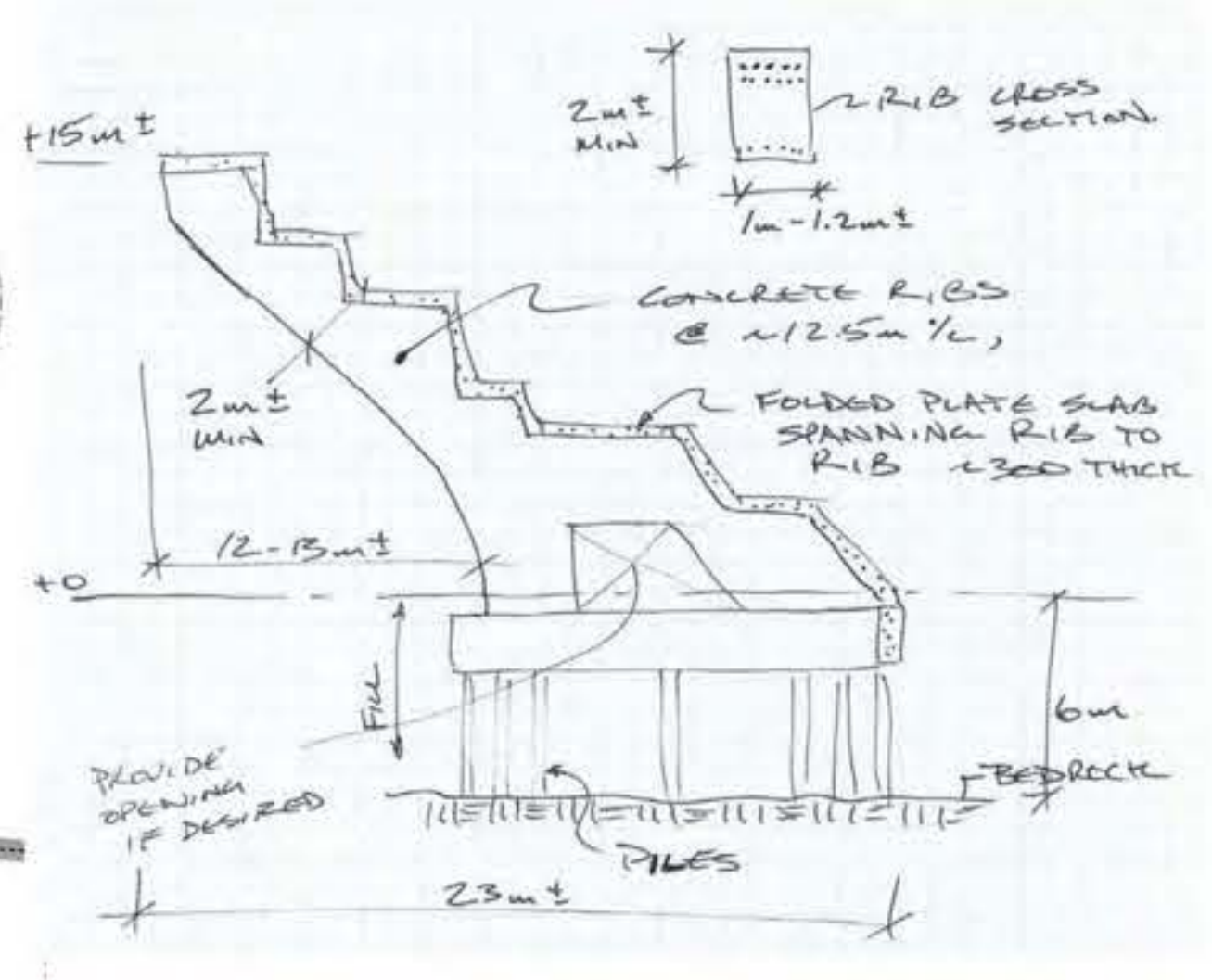
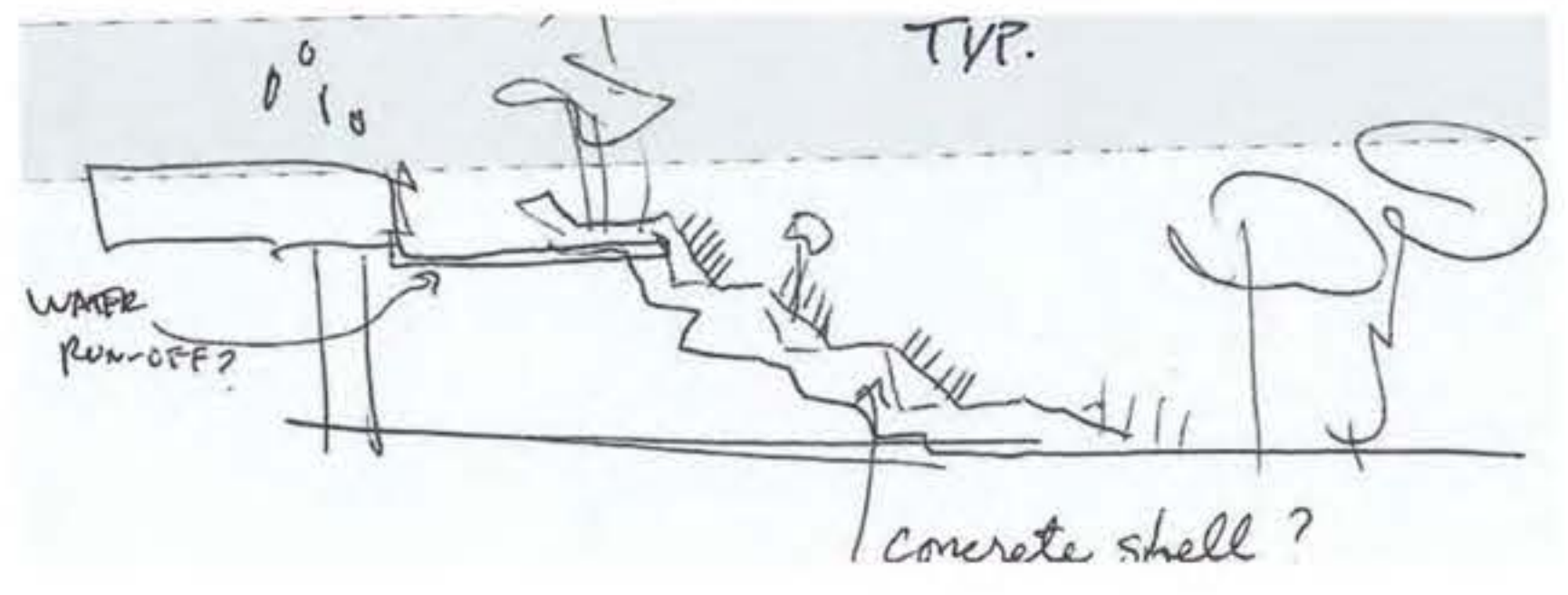
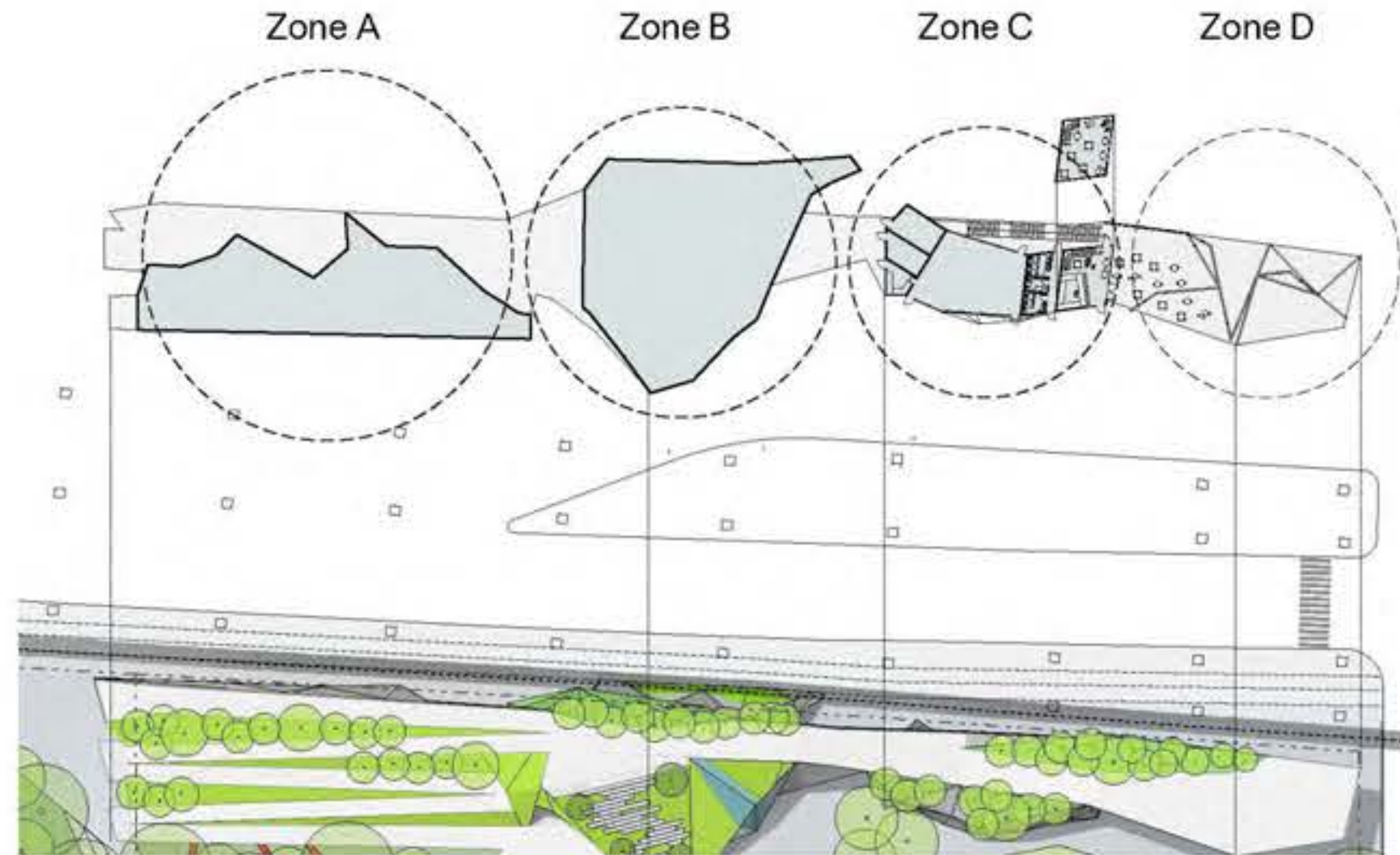
The central portion (Zone B) will entail concrete walls, folded where possible to mutually support themselves, efficiently using relatively thin sections to realize a tall structure and support the plantings. The exterior walls will be supplemented by interior columns and beams to minimize concrete use.

The structure of the café/community space (Zone C) is planned to bring the

outside in, using structural timber to create a modern, yet warmly inviting, interior space for occupants.

The lookout platform at the eastern end (Zone D) is proposed to be supported by a somewhat random arrangement of steel columns, forming outlines of geometric volumes and introducing a contrasting visual lightness in the structural efficiency of the slender steel sections.

As the site was once lake, all of the major structural elements are expected to be supported by deep foundations extending down to competent soils or bedrock below.



# Landscape Performance / Sustainability

Rees Ridge integrates many features to promote environmental sustainability and to provide social benefits for park users. We believe that practices assuring the well-being of our natural and social environments should be incorporated into all decisions made in the design and execution of the park.

In measuring landscape performance, Rees Ridge employs best practices in sustainability and strives for excellence and innovation in green infrastructure and site design. The proposed park balances design objectives and the site's natural drainage patterns to retain stormwater on-site, thereby minimizing the need for expensive infrastructure to capture or convey runoff. A carefully planned mix of hard surfaces and

plantings will allow storm water to be captured and reused on site. Large canopy trees will provide shade, improved air quality and reduce heat island effect. A robust planting palette will promote biodiversity with each plant carefully selected to be drought tolerant, low maintenance and well suited to harsh urban conditions.

High albedo materials like concrete and light-coloured paving will be prioritized to minimize sun absorption and control temperature while the procurement of local materials will decrease the overall carbon footprint of the park. The use of CarbonCure concrete technologies and dramatically increased vegetation will enable significant carbon sequestering on site.

Innovative LED technologies are employed in the lighting strategies throughout, while water-saving practices are firmly integrated into the design of the water feature. Water captured from Lake Ontario provides irrigation for vegetation and at the north edge of the site, an elevated landform decreases auditory pollution by providing a physical barrier to noise from the Gardiner Expressway.

Considering the on-going maintenance and operations obligations, including future costs, also informed the design process. All materials and site furnishings will be high quality yet simple and robust, resilient and timeless.

Rees Ridge also strives to promote social benefits for its diverse community of

users by providing a safe and inclusive space for all. The key is to create an extraordinary park for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. Rees Ridge is designed to accommodate anyone who seeks to enjoy it and will serve as a neighbourhood hub for local users while being a "must-go" destination for all Torontonians and visitors to the city. The park will promote health and well-being by providing active and passive recreational activities that appeal to all ages. Naturalized planting and greenspaces will reduce the effect of Nature Deficit and inspire natural play and learning opportunities for children and families. Last, but not least, a play space is provided for our canine friends and their favourite people.



NEIGHBOURHOOD HUB

Serves as a neighbourhood amenity with 10 000+ users living within 1km of the park.

Will serve the families with children that make up at least 20% of local park users.



INCLUSIVE SPACE

Creates an inclusive park serving users of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

Assures that 99% of the park meets or exceeds AODA standards.



ACTIVE PLAY & EDUCATIONAL SPACES

Creates 5400m2 of dynamic play space that provides learning and recreational opportunities for all ages.

Provides 3000m2 of open space for spontaneous activities.



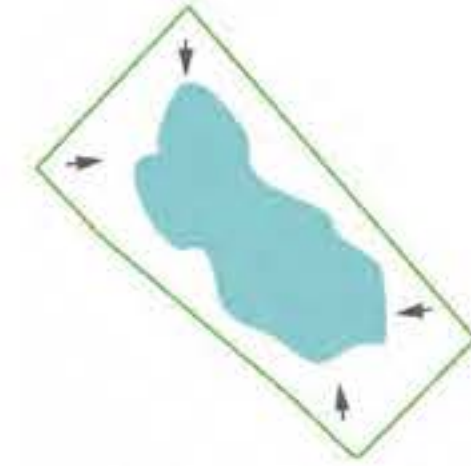
DOG & PEOPLE PLACES

Provides 320 m2 active play space for local dogs.

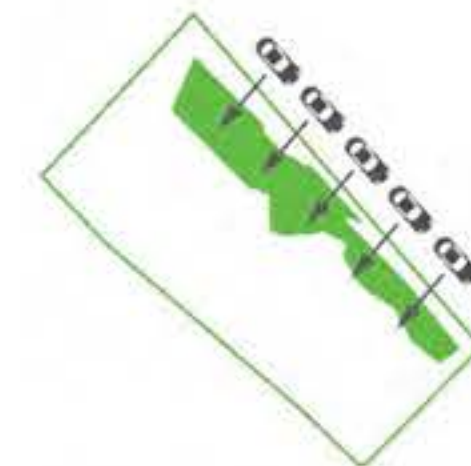


REDUCE NATURE DEFICIT

Counters nature-deficit disorder by providing recreational opportunities in a naturalized setting for an estimated 100 000 visitor per year.



RETAIN WATER ON SITE



FILTER CAR POLLUTION

**Water Use**

Water is conserved by its high-capture re-circulation system. Water losses to evaporation and splash are reduced by 1) skillful edge detailing, 2) a custom grating at the base, 3) varying water flow rates, 4) and an automatic wind response system. Energy use is reduced by programming the flows to vary through the course of the day and week to peak in energy during those times when visitor counts are high, and using alternative, mellower flows when fewer guests are near.



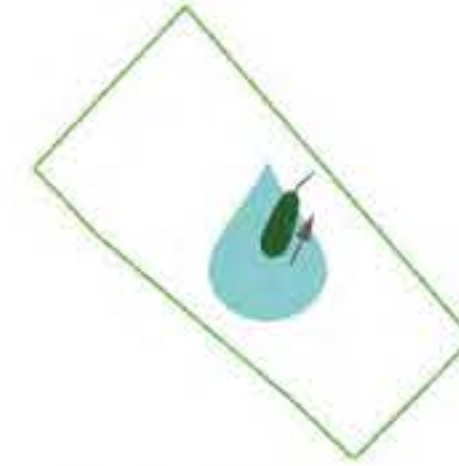
REDUCE POTABLE WATER USE



ABATE NOISE

**Noise Reduction**

Our proposed vertical structure has the potential to undertake an 8 to 15 decibel reduction of noise from vehicular traffic from the Gardiner Expressway.



ELIMINATE ECOLI



REDUCE WIND ON SITE

**Carbon Sequestering**

We propose to use CarbonCure technologies for all structural concrete. Through this technology carbon dioxide is injected into the concrete mix and sequestered in the hardened concrete. This process also yields higher compressive strength in the finished concrete and benefits the structural performance. Approximately 15kg/m3 of CO2 is sequestered or avoided using CarbonCure.



SEQUESTER CARBON



CAP CONTAMINATED SOILS

**Horticultural Benefits**

Our strategies for planting focuses on exaggerated layering of canopy, subcanopy, and ground plane to maximize carbon sequestration and ecosystem services. We feature 3210 square meters of densely planted native vegetation.
 

- A total vegetative coverage of 6417 square meters (1.58 acres) including lawn and trees in paving.
- Approximately 10-15 tons of carbon sequestered per year based on averages for urban forests, possibly more based on our strategy for dense, diverse plant layering.



INCREASE BIODIVERSITY



REDUCE HARD SURFACES

**Biodiversity**

Biodiversity is achieved through the proposed planting of:
 

- Dozen native tree species
- Over 70 native shrub and herbaceous species planned.
- Use of designed mixes to balance biodiversity and legibility.
- Creation of habitat niches for rare conservative species not usually found in public parks.
- A focus on strategies for the establishment of self-sustaining populations, not life-support dependent horticultural planting.



## Phasing

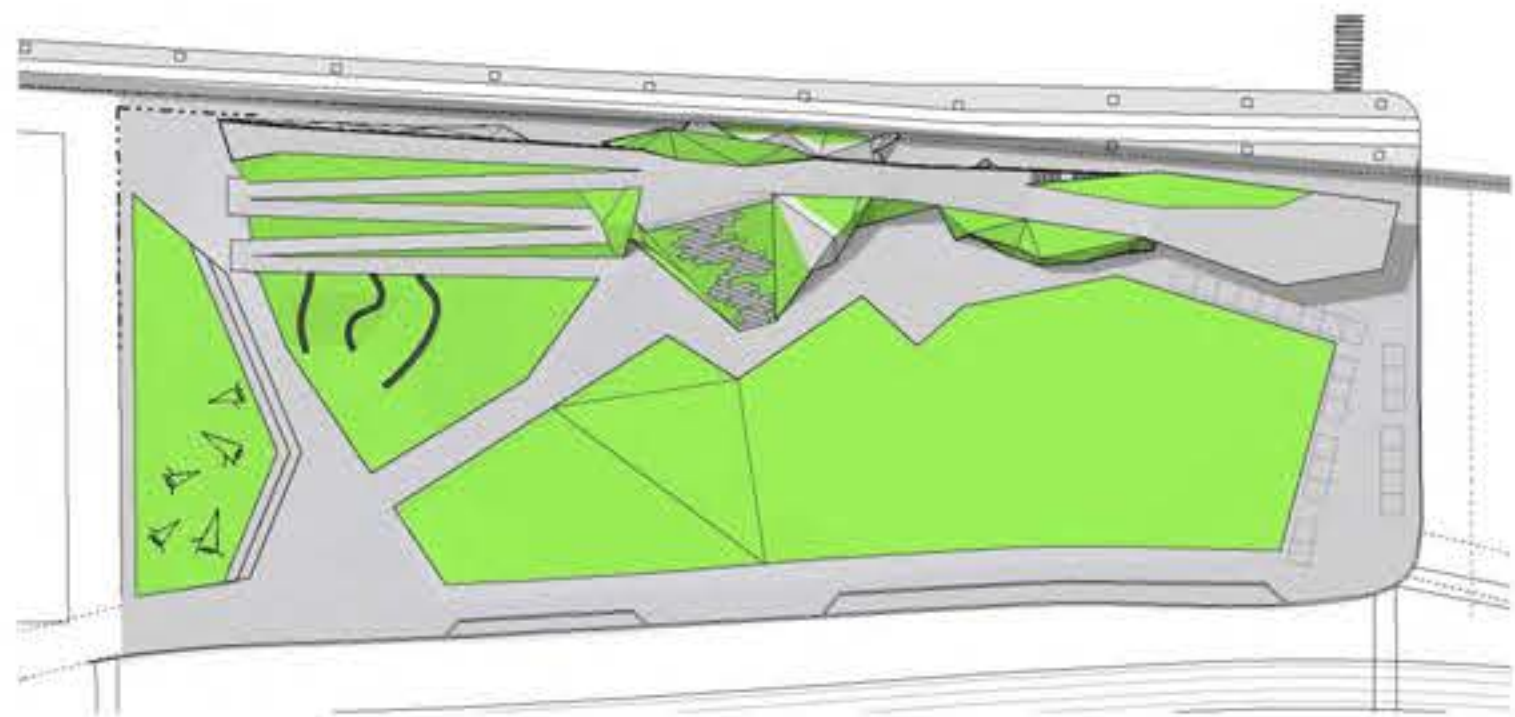
*The design of Rees Ridge took the constraint of future construction as an opportunity instead of constraint.*

The design is such that the park will continue to be a lively active destination while the stormwater shaft is under construction. We can imagine children and adults sitting on the Landslide Steps and standing on the Ridge to watch construction machines at work. The

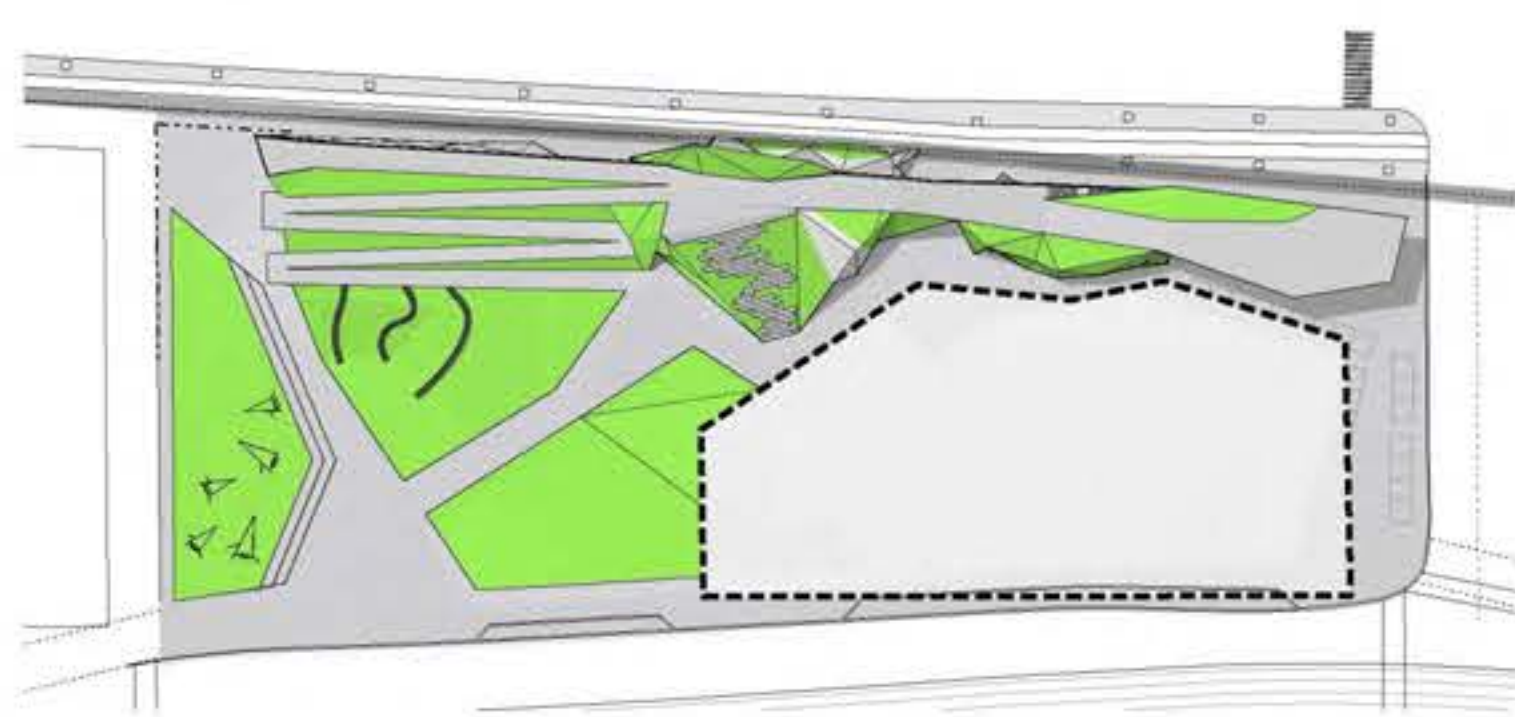
construction fence is seen as an opportunity for additional park activation—through art installations—rather than as an unsightly nuisance.



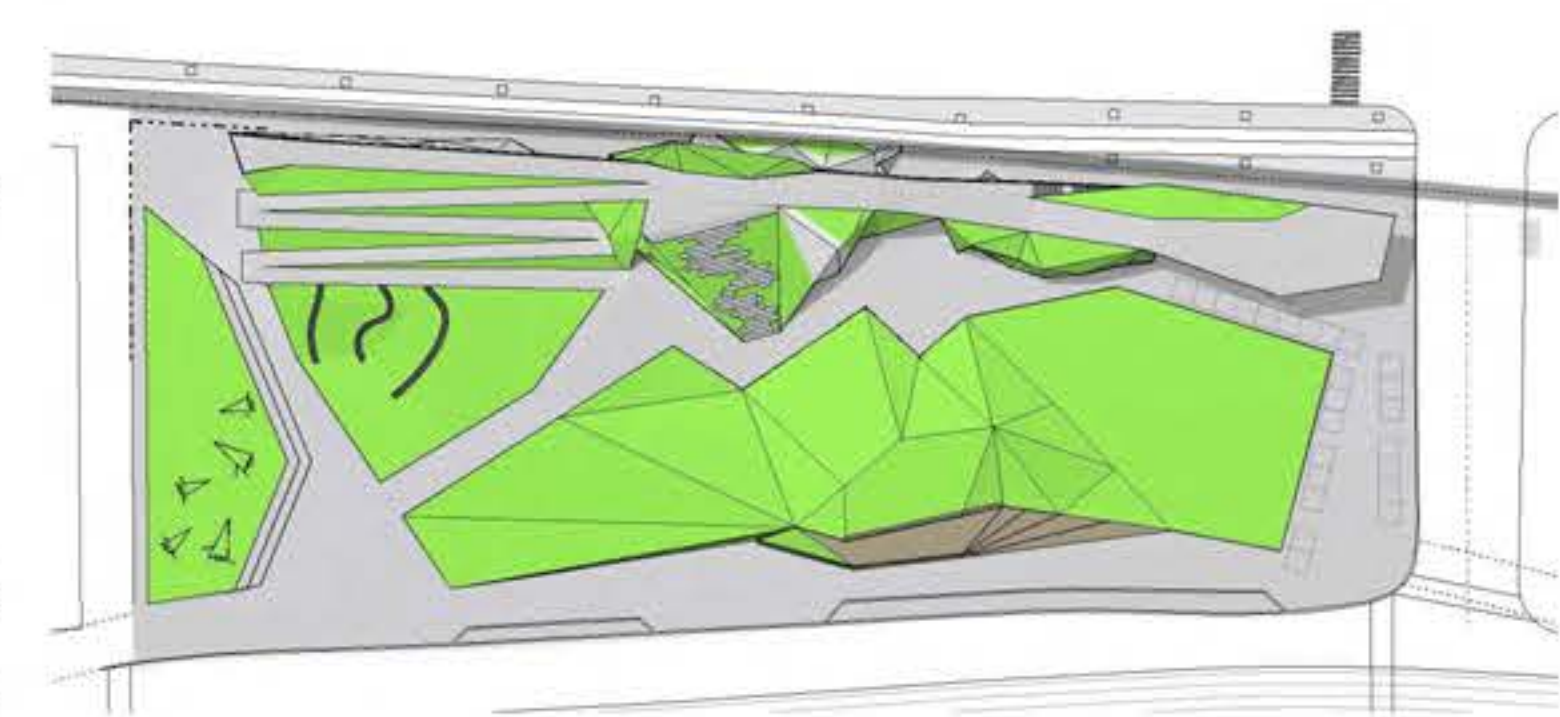
Phase 1A

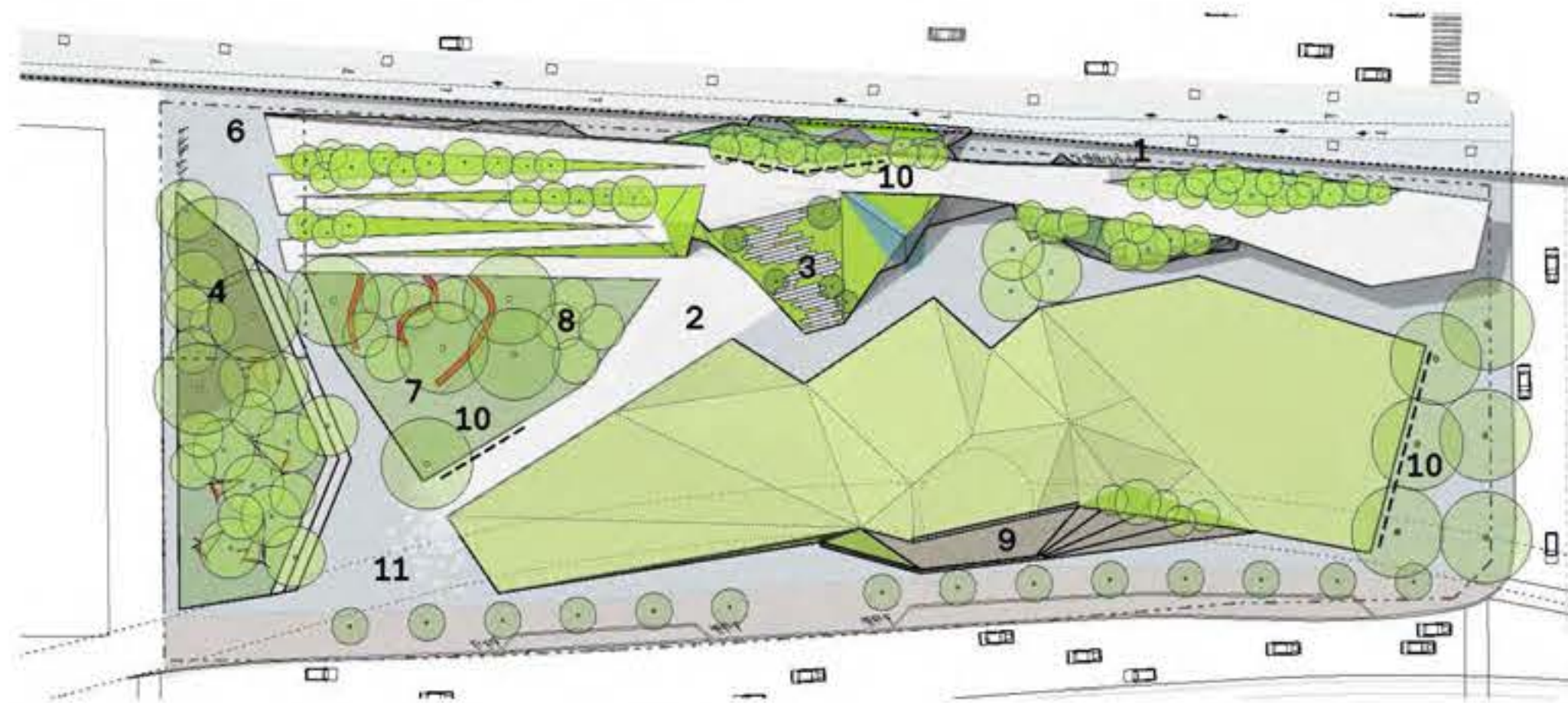


Phase 1B



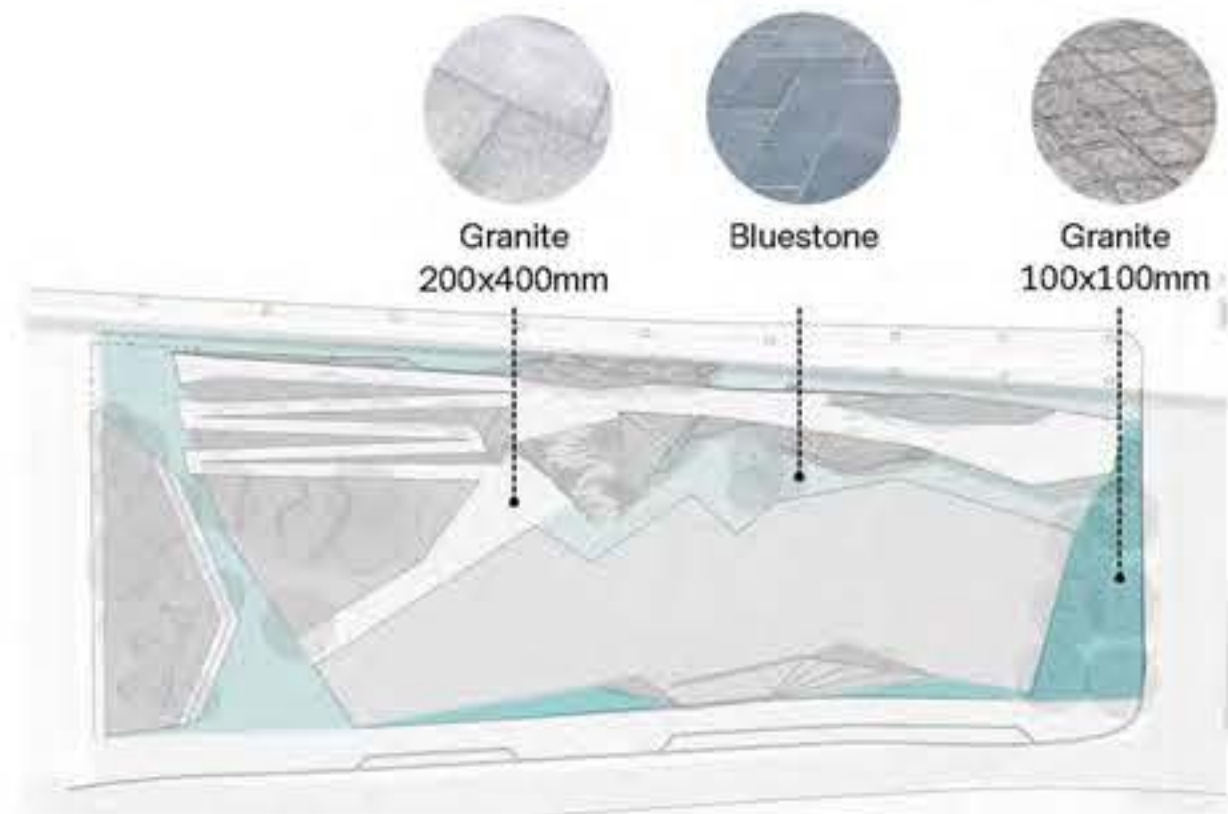
Phase 3





### Finishes and Fixtures Exploration

*A simple, refined material palette showcases the dramatic forms of the Ridge and simultaneously acts as a backdrop and architectural contrast to the rich botanical and programmatic elements of the design. We will strive to source a majority of our materials locally including stone, wood, plants and furniture.*



1. Carbon Care  
Architectural Concrete  
Carbon Sequestering



2. Artic Grey Ontario Granite  
Unit Paving  
High Albedo



3. Algonquin Fleuri  
Owen Sound Ledgerrock  
High Albedo



6. Recycled EPDM  
Safety Surfacing Climbing Wall



7. Natural Mulch  
Safety Surfacing  
Nature Play



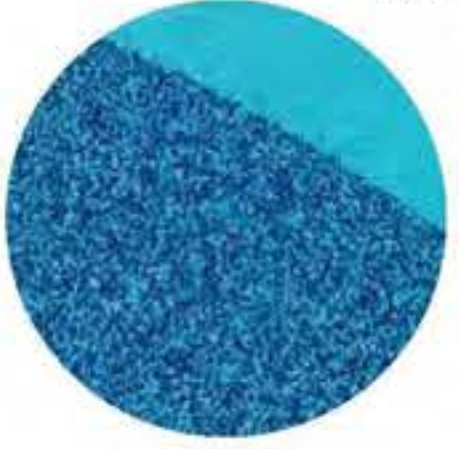
4. Pea Gravel  
Dog Play Area  
Porous



5. Stabilized Decomposed  
Granite Phase 1 Paving  
Porous, Accessible



9. Decks and Seating  
Custom Salvaged Toronto Ash



10. Bench Seating  
MMCite Illuminated/WIFI



11. Bluestone Paving



8. Log Seating  
Natural Play Salvaged Toronto Ash

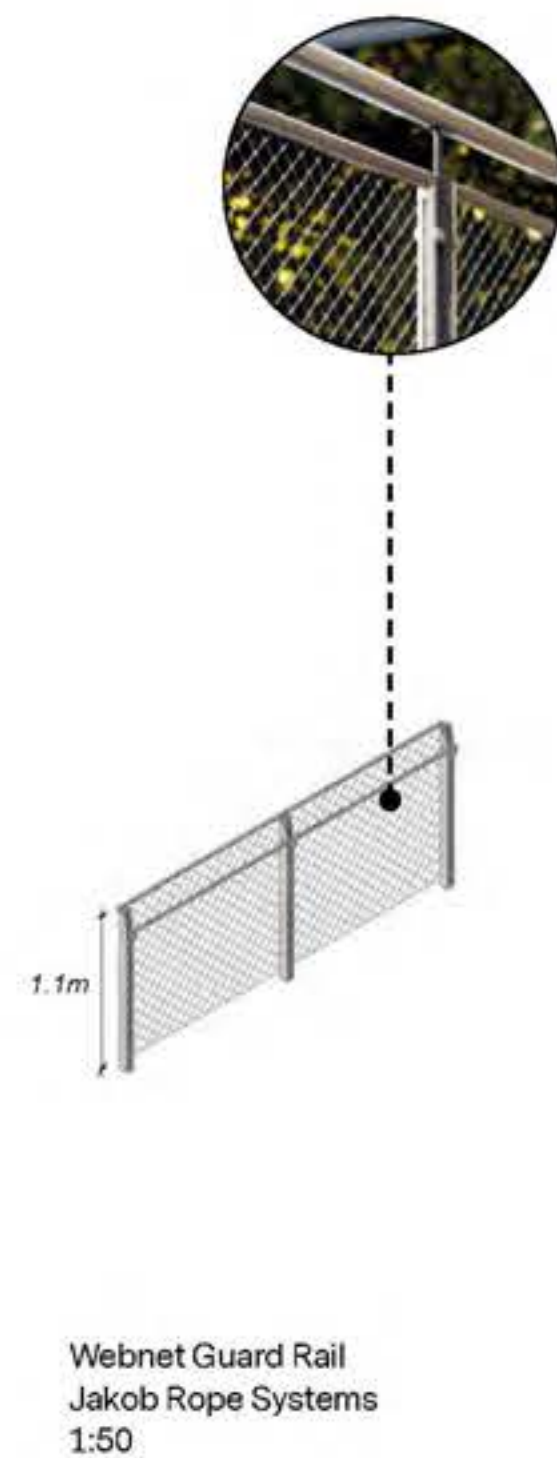
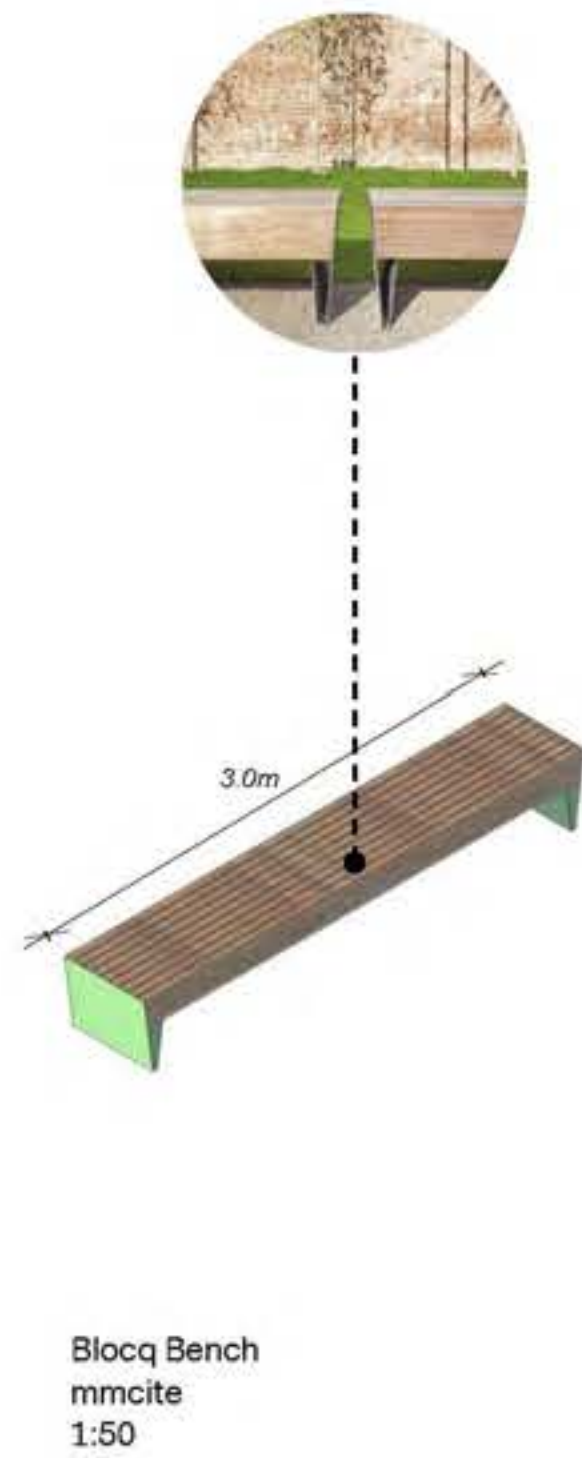
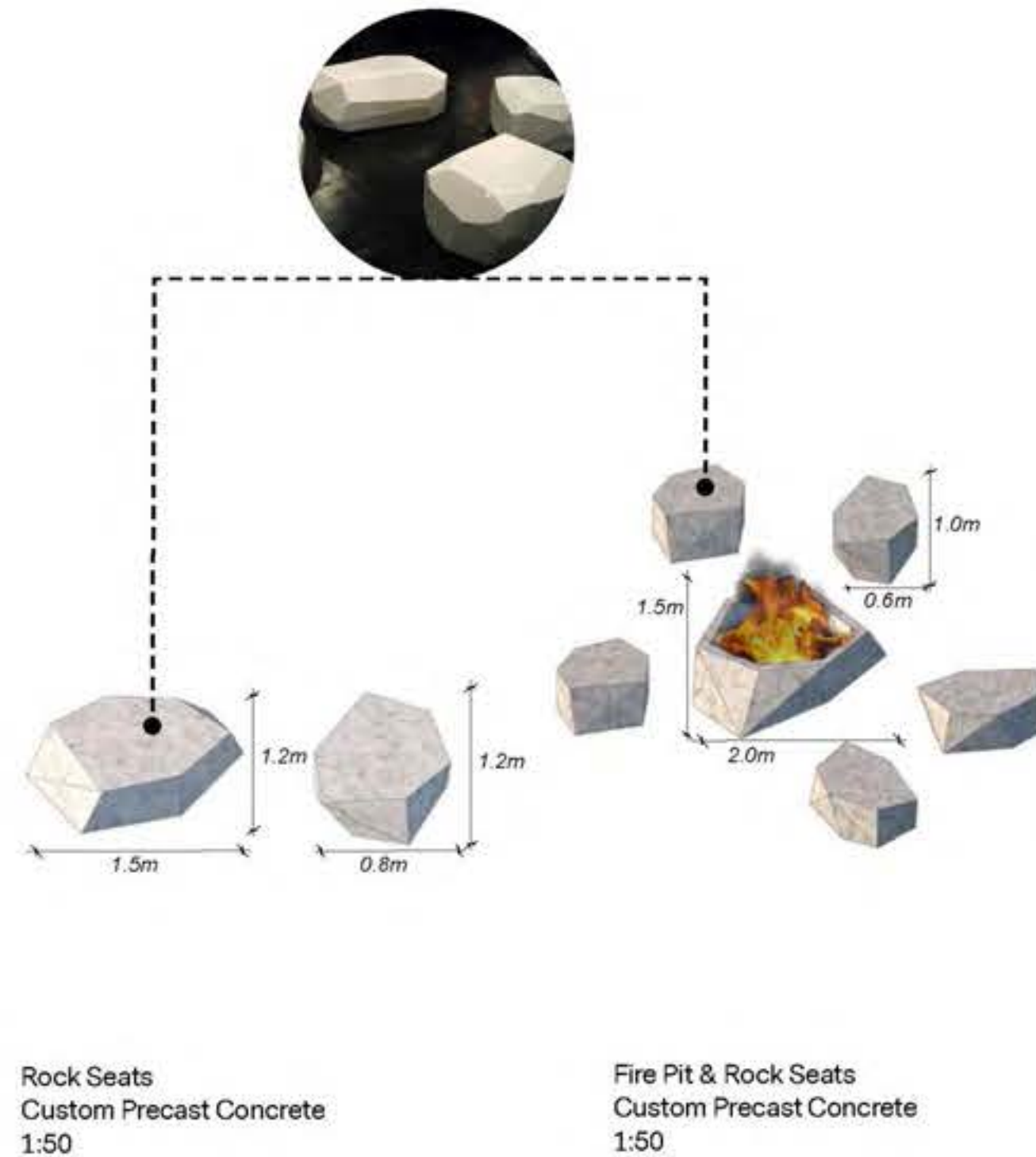
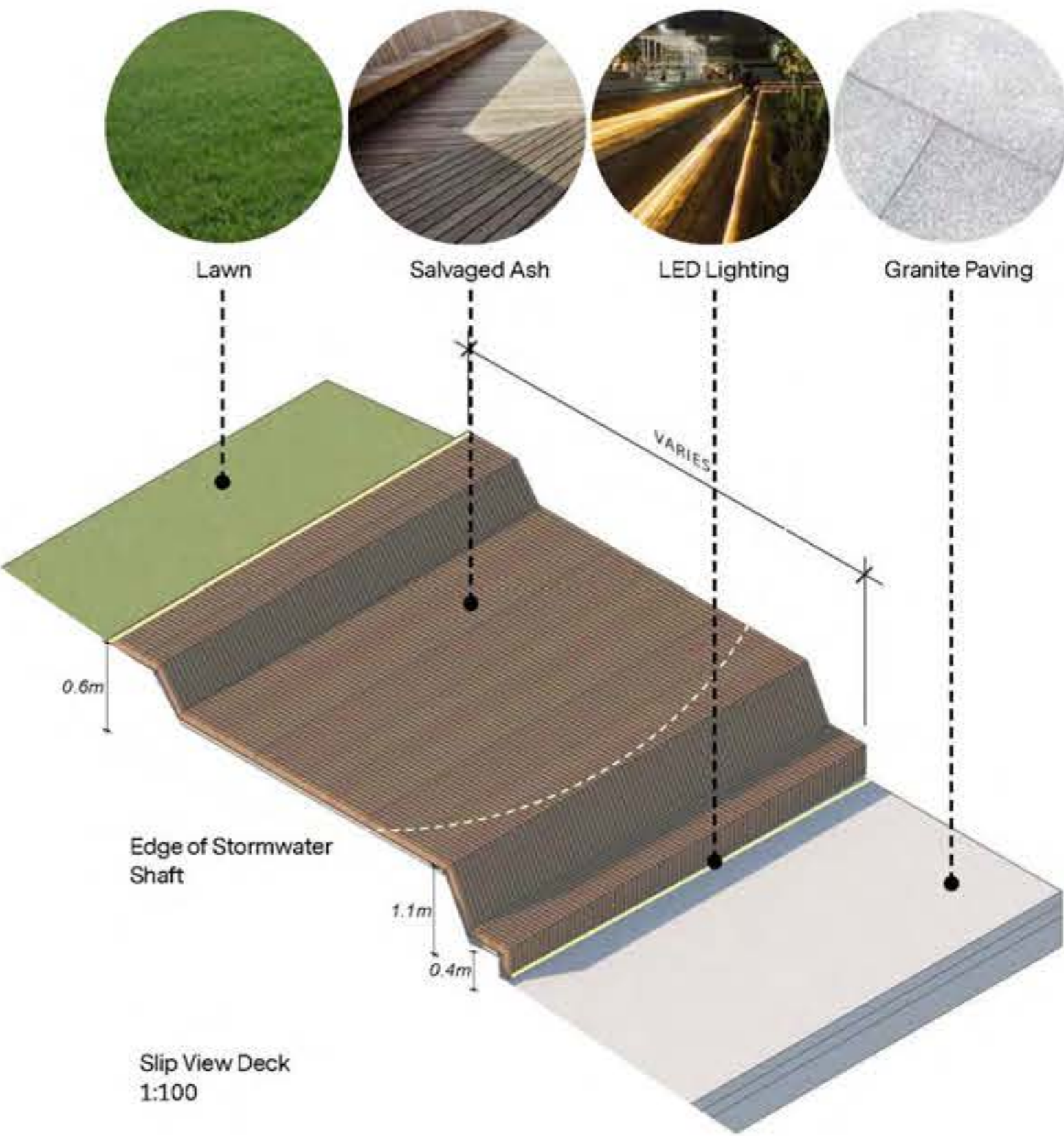
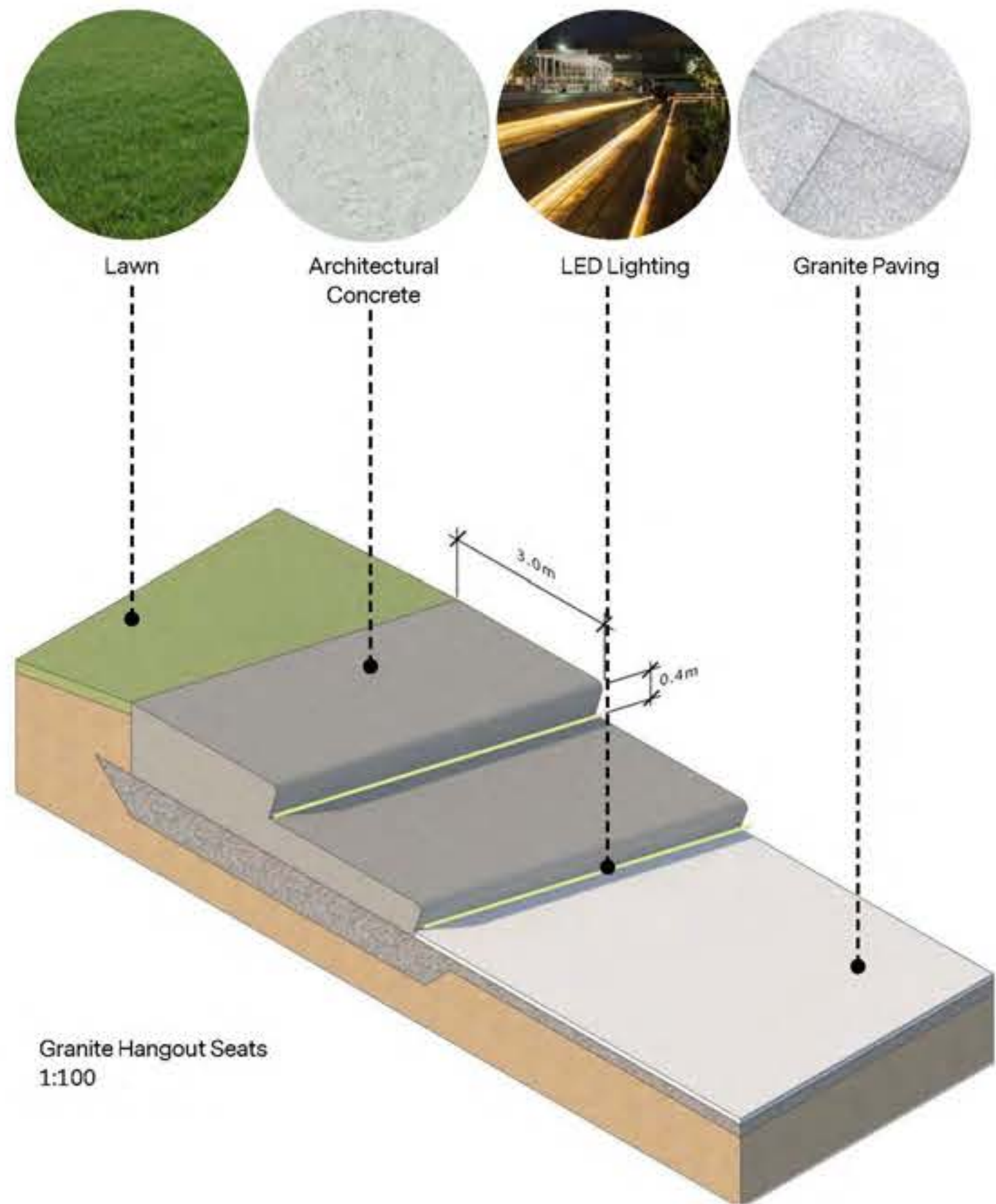


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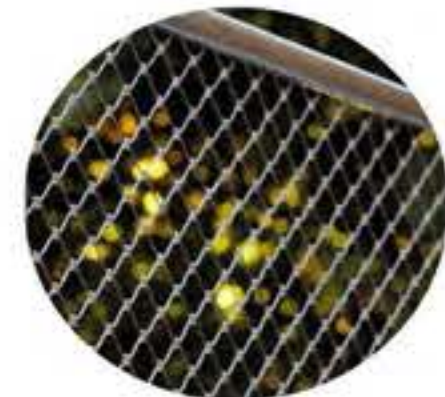
9. Decks and Seating  
Custom Salvaged Toronto Ash







Finishes on the South Side



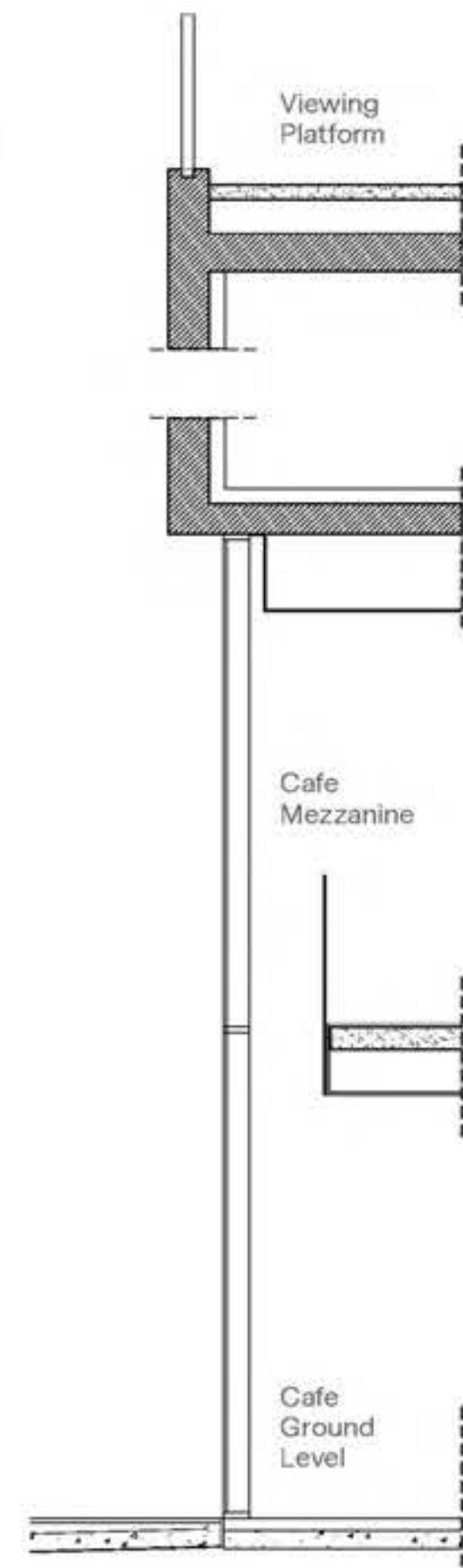
Mesh Balustrade



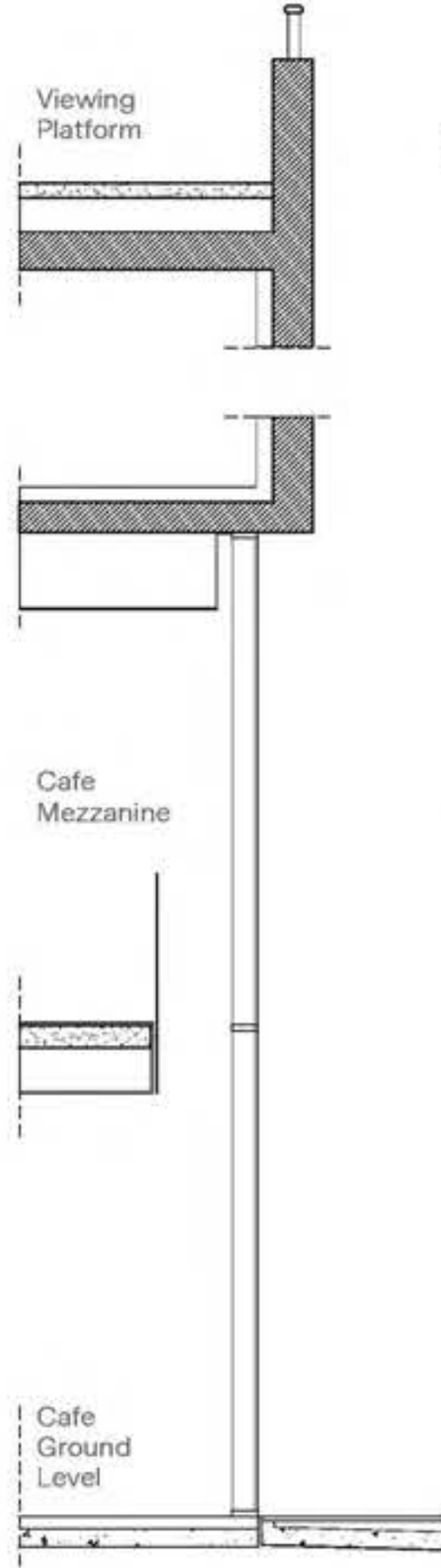
Glass Facade



Granite Paving



Interior Finishes Exploration  
Warm Materials / Wood



Finishes on the North Side



Concrete Balustrade



Faceted Concrete



Granite Paving



## Indigenous Place Making

*Indigenous place-making at this site should include a significant co-design process with the region's Indigenous communities in effort to create spaces that welcome all, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.*

Reaching beyond Duty to Consult includes the creation of spaces that respect and celebrate Indigenous Culture - especially the special relationship First Peoples have with the surrounding natural environment. Many traditional tenets related to environmental design are in fact mirrored by First Peoples philosophy of interdependence with nature. The transformative process of creating these spaces invites us to celebrate the people, energy and resources already present within the City of Toronto or Tkaronta, as the city was traditionally known.

- Create opportunities throughout the site to celebrate the land, demonstrating appreciation of the traditional Indigenous culture and highlight traditional knowledge.
- Design community spaces that create positive places for learning, teaching, exchange and celebration.
- Integrate native Ontario planting with an emphasis on medicinal and healing plants.
- Provides spaces to engage with the work of contemporary Indigenous artists.

Through a meaningful engagement and inclusive process, we will:



Richael Laking



Nadia Myre



Randy & Roy Thomas /  
Brook McIlroy



Chief Lady



Alnus Incana



Hierochloa Odorata



Betula Papyrifera



Brook McIlroy

*"My dream of a wilderness at Toronto's  
doorstep was not practical, although  
some of it came true."  
-Charles Sauriol*



