

# LOWVE PARK

**ORIGINAL**  
RFP #2018-18  
YORK STREET PARK  
June 26, 2018

**TORONTO**



# [vimeo.com/lovepark/toronto](https://vimeo.com/lovepark/toronto)

PASSWORD: amour





VIEW ON QUEENS QUAY LOOKING EAST

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# INTRODUCING LOVE PARK

## A Space of Green with a Pinch of Whimsy

Skylines of sameness are mushrooming around the world. Love Park in Toronto is a deliberate effort to break from the grid and assert an open space character that reinforces Toronto's evolving landscape specificity, while introducing a unique signature that expresses the spirit of the city. A new metropolitan icon to capture the Toronto brand, Love Park will equally fulfill its role as a local park for the diverse mix of residents, workers, visitors and tourists in the burgeoning Waterfront Neighbourhood.

A space of simplicity and grandeur, Love Park will accommodate a myriad of flexible and open-ended uses, responding to continually emerging community needs, while sustaining its own conceptual integrity and personality over time.

The interplay between clearing and tree cover, sun and shade, as well as watching and revealing all combine to make a green oasis of quiet yet stimulating repose. Open-ended possibilities for program across the year can range from passive uses like dog walking, lunch eating, and taking selfies, to more organized happenings like Christmas markets, art fairs, community gatherings, outdoor cinema and shows. This breathing room in the city is qualified by a looseness in layout that promotes freshness and flexibility. Unobstructed sight lines through clearings and trees across the park, to the surrounding towers, as well as the harbour to the south promote safety without imposing an overly rigid structure of occupancy. Comfortable for the body and invigorating for the mind, Love Park will become another urban catalyst, similar to our other Toronto projects - Sugar Beach and Berczy Park - that playfully compel people to give in to their heart's wish to just let themselves feel good.

# A NEW PARK IN THE HEART

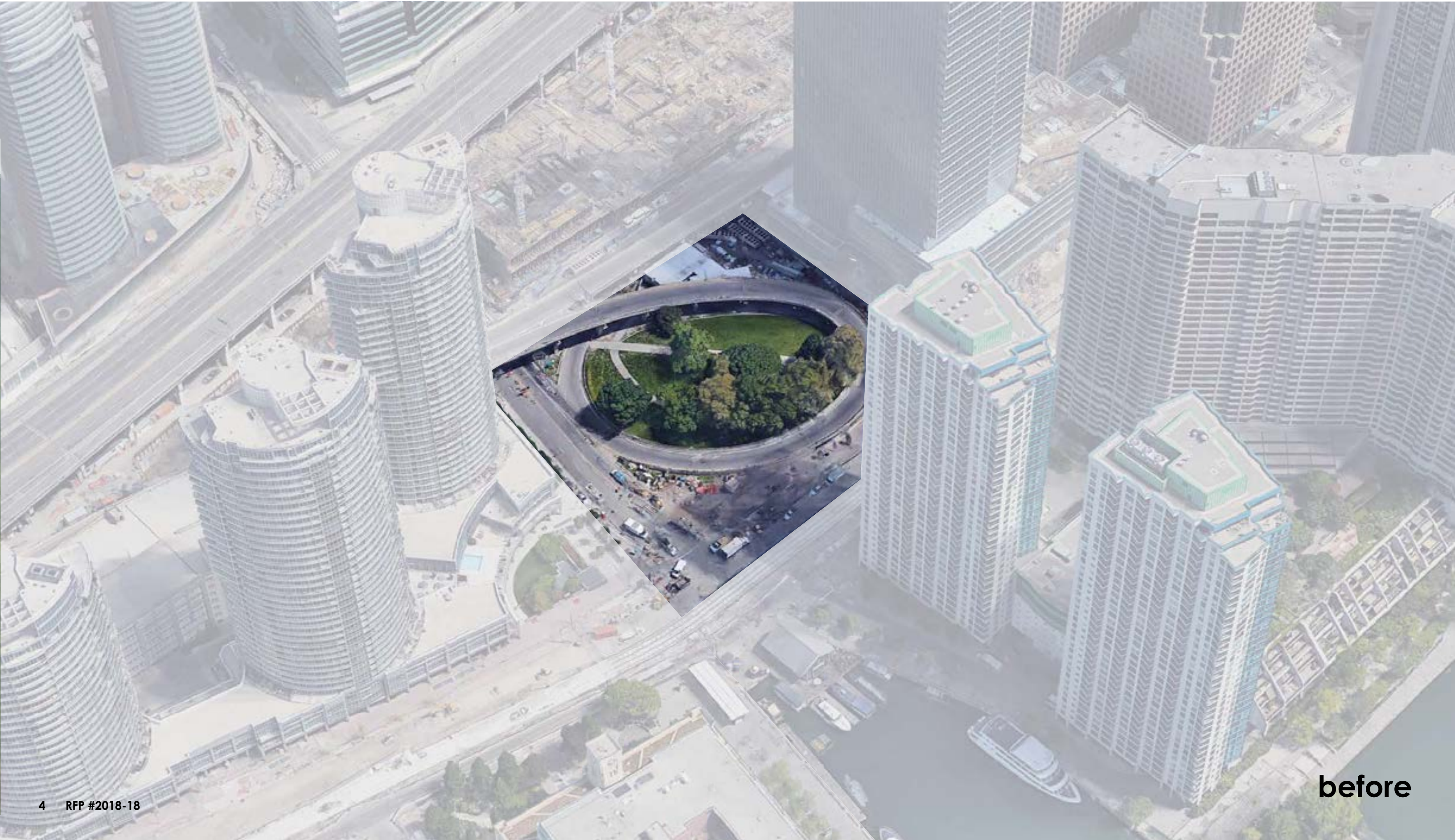
## Reinforcing the Existing Park Network

The small and medium-sized parks along the new waterfront and in the downtown work in tandem to perform like a single large park, interconnected by a weave of pedestrian routes. Together they shape the emerging identity of Toronto's new waterfront public realm. We envision that the addition of Love Park will reinforce this park network, and fulfill community needs not currently addressed by other parks in the vicinity, while having a distinct identity of its own.

A Queens Quay address brings added distinction to Love Park, and as one of the first new parks built on the north side of the boulevard, it is positioned to become as much a gateway into the Financial District and city to the north as it will be a threshold to the waterfront and Lake Ontario to the south.



# TAKE OUT THE CAR...





# ...AND BRING IN TREES AND PEOPLE



# LOVE PARK AS AN ICON

## Familiar and New, Enduring and Timeless

Love Park is a bosk of trees around a clearing with a basin in the shape of a heart. Large enough to be seen from skyscrapers over the park and airplanes landing at Billy Bishop Airport, the semiotic universality of the heart will become a familiar and meaningful icon that will stand out for its contrast against the unbroken urban fabric of towers and structures that extend from the surrounding neighbourhood to the horizon beyond.

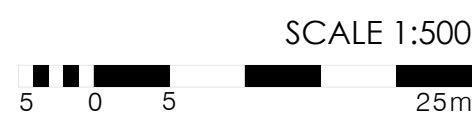
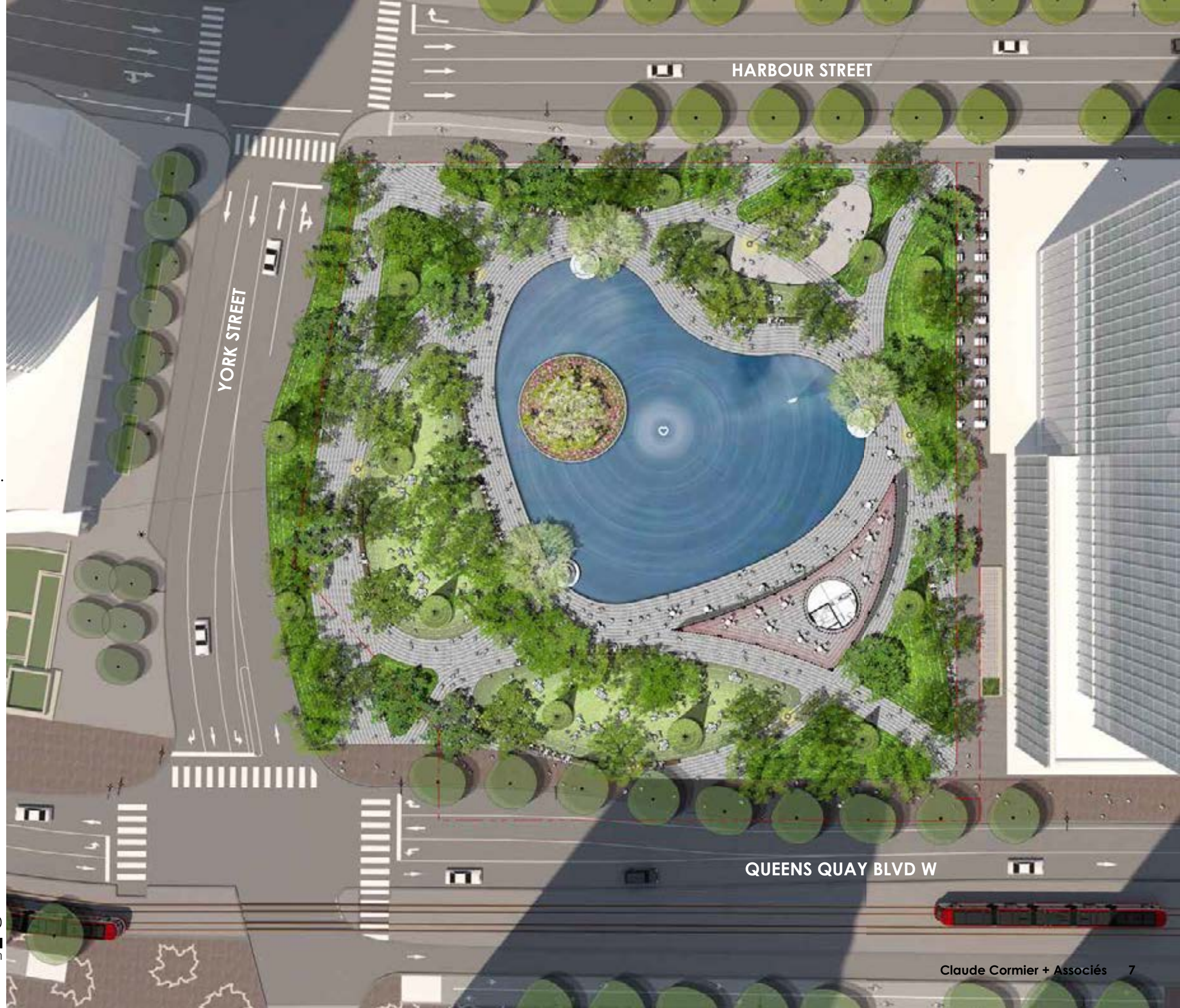
'Love Lakes' are natural phenomena found throughout the world. They are immediately recognizable when viewed amongst other typical water bodies. This is the kind of visual clarity and iconography that Love Park aspires to bring to the Toronto central waterfront.

### INSPIRATION

Love Lake' Lake Toyoni  
Hokkaido, Japan

# A GREEN OASIS

Love Park begins by inverting the fabric and function of its immediate context to become a much-needed alter ego to the neighbouring glass and concrete towers, vehicle-dominated streets and freeways, as well as dearth of places close by to escape for relief and refreshment. The current scales of velocity and the propensity for hard surfaces in the surrounding context are turned on their side to create a block distinguished as an oasis of slowness and delight, a counterpoint to the urban intensity of the surrounding mixed-use neighbourhood.



SCALE 1:500

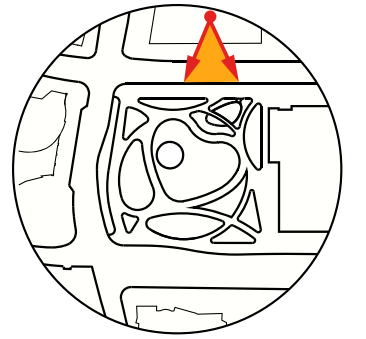
# FROM FREEWAY OFF-RAMP ...

Most of the building edges flanking the current York Street Park were designed to turn eyes away from the freeway off-ramp that used to occupy the site. Scales of movement were dominated solely by high-speed automobiles, matched by an oversized infrastructure which dwarfed human scale and the alternative modes of transportation that people are increasingly using to get around the city. Love Park is designed to manifest this shift in civic values, leaping away from the freeway paradigm that prevailed for over half a century to reinforce the pedestrian aspirations of the district.



# ...TO LOVE PARK

As a deliberate departure from York Street Park's previous incarnation, the thresholds to Love Park mark a transition into an oasis of calm, where sidewalks transform into promenades, streets become a lake, and rows of street trees stand at ease to become forests. The swirling geometry of the pathways, the heart-shaped basin, and the circling path around it are trace reminders of the freeway geometry that once overlaid the site, with the movement of decelerating vehicles replaced by an unhurried space for pedestrians.



# LOVE PARK AS URBAN REFUGE

## A Soft Heart in the Hard Core

Taking cues from the quintessential Madison Square Park in midtown Manhattan, Love Park will prioritize the cultivation of a high tree canopy to establish a leafy veil that will screen out the surrounding towers overhead. The public gaze will be lured inward towards the heart-shaped basin in the park's central clearing, putting the bustling context and city streets into the background. The spatial arrangement, manipulation of mounds and topography, and an emphasis on subtle yet crafted details compose this refuge away from the city replete with urban *savoir faire*.



INSPIRATION  
Madison Square Park,  
NYC, USA

# UNIVERSAL APPEAL SPECIFIC TO EVERYONE

## The Social Life of Love Park

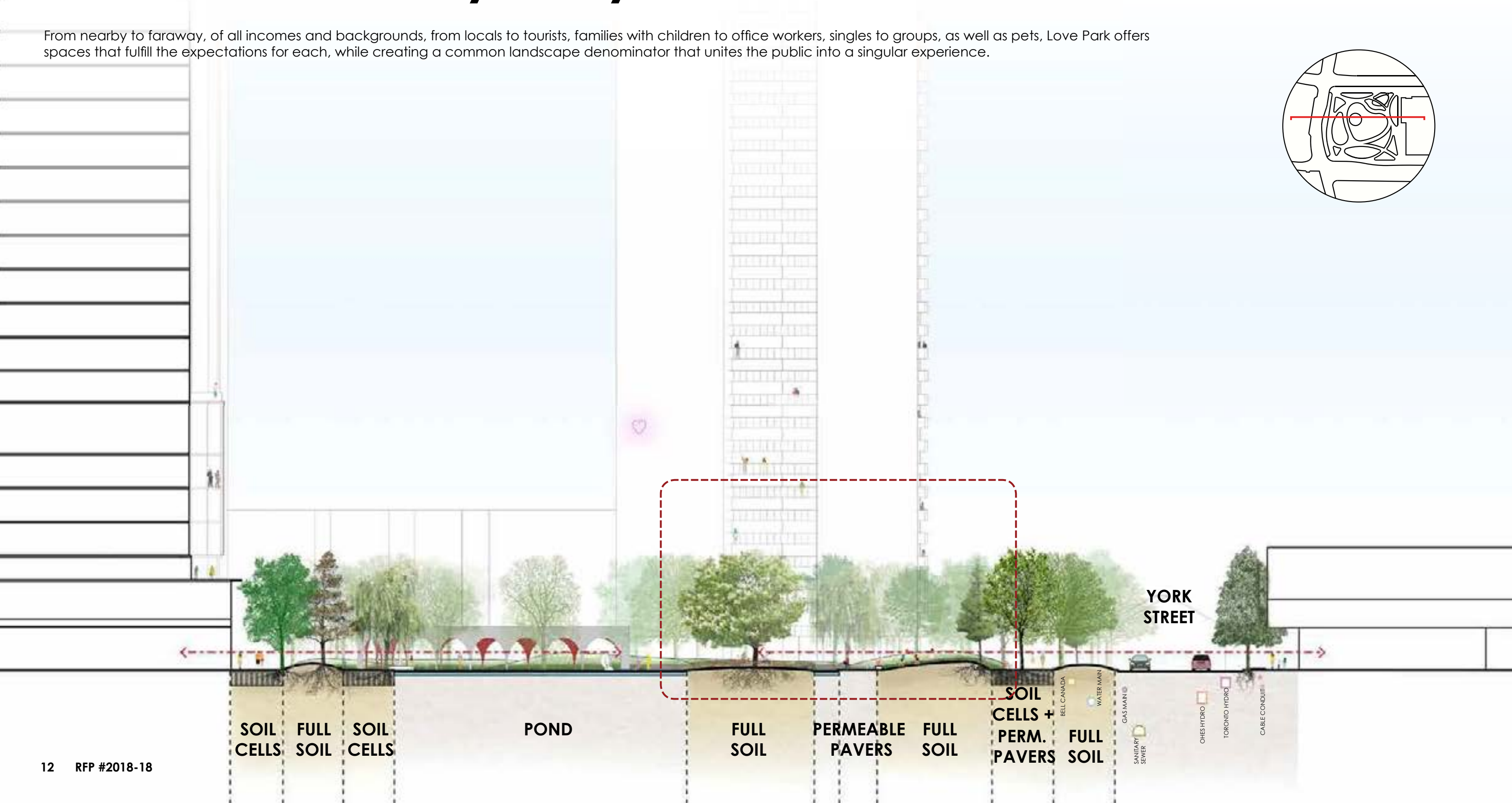
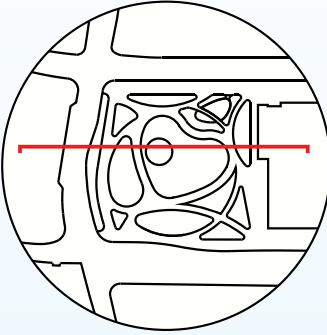
The *Social Life of Small Urban Spaces* by sociologist, urbanist, and people-watcher William H. Whyte, summarizes seven principles that contribute to a great public space: 1) sitting where you want; 2) connection to the street; 3) sunlight; 4) food; 5) water; 6) trees; and 7) an object of triangulation. Love Park aims to go beyond William Whyte's hierarchy of needs to include a transcendent element that is universally appreciated while being specific to everyone at the same time. Stakeholders, community members, and the general public will all bring their inventory of needs and wishes throughout the design and consultation processes. Love Park will artfully integrate public expectations with the realities and constraints of the site, as well as the vision of the concept. All these ingredients will be worked and distilled to achieve a rich synchronicity that goes beyond only function or beauty, to create a place that inspires joy, hope, optimism, and a relaxing of personal space across all seasons. Our imperative aspires to give everybody what they want, and more.



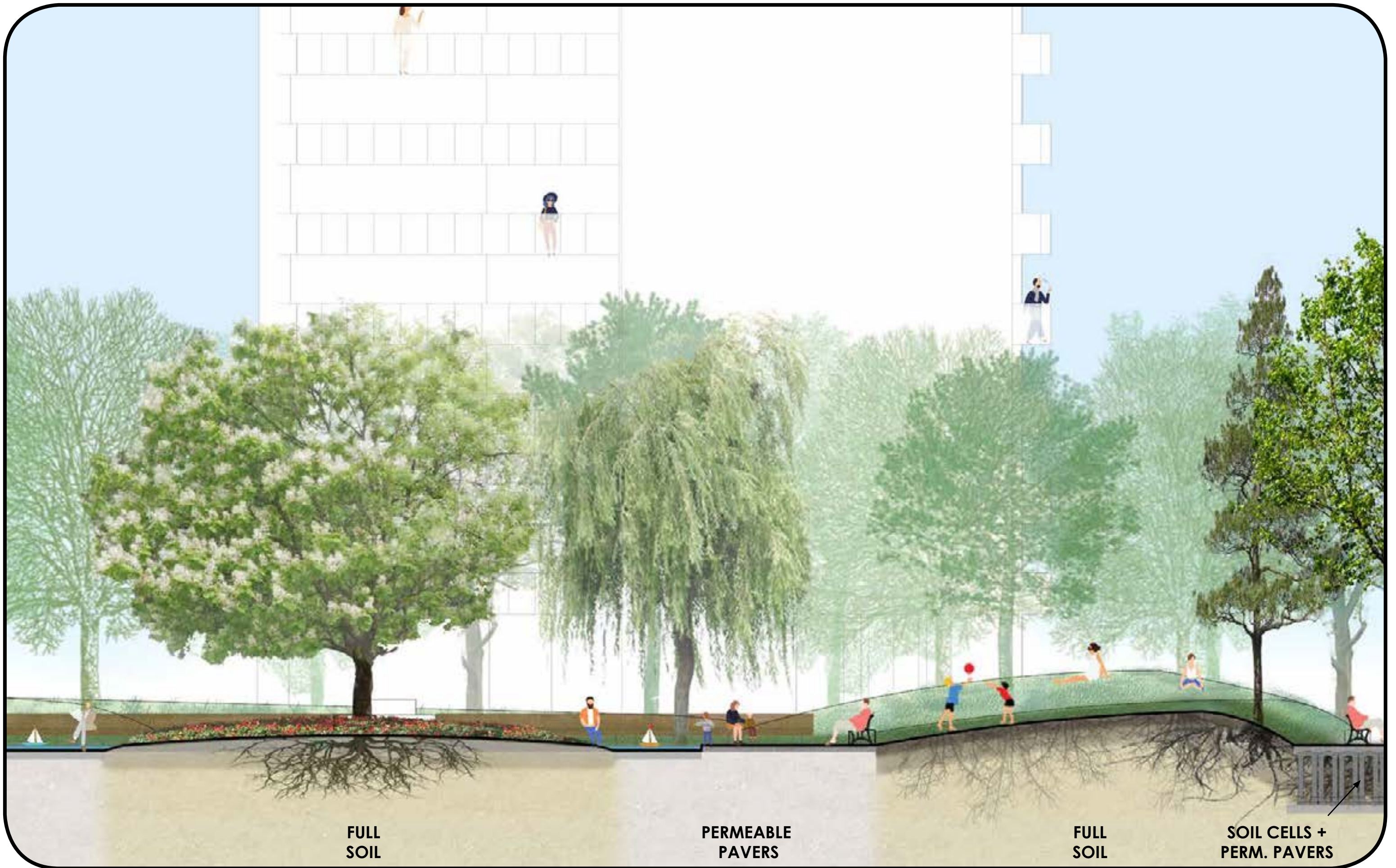
# CROSS SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY

## A Place for Everybody

From nearby to faraway, of all incomes and backgrounds, from locals to tourists, families with children to office workers, singles to groups, as well as pets, Love Park offers spaces that fulfill the expectations for each, while creating a common landscape denominator that unites the public into a singular experience.







FULL  
SOIL

PERMEABLE  
PAVERS

FULL  
SOIL

SOIL CELLS +  
PERM. PAVERS

# ...Responding to Future Community Desires

## COMMUNITY

Love Park addresses the community needs of local residents by offering a green backyard that accommodates get-togethers for groups, while also providing spaces for individuals to spend some time alone with their thoughts as well. Lawn surfaces are sloped for perched views over the lake and park. Children have green spaces on which to run and play, along with a lake of their own to run, splash, or just float an origami boat. Pet owners also have a dedicated location for the twice-daily relief of their dogs, disguised as a garden to appeal to those who don't need a four-legged reason to enjoy the space.

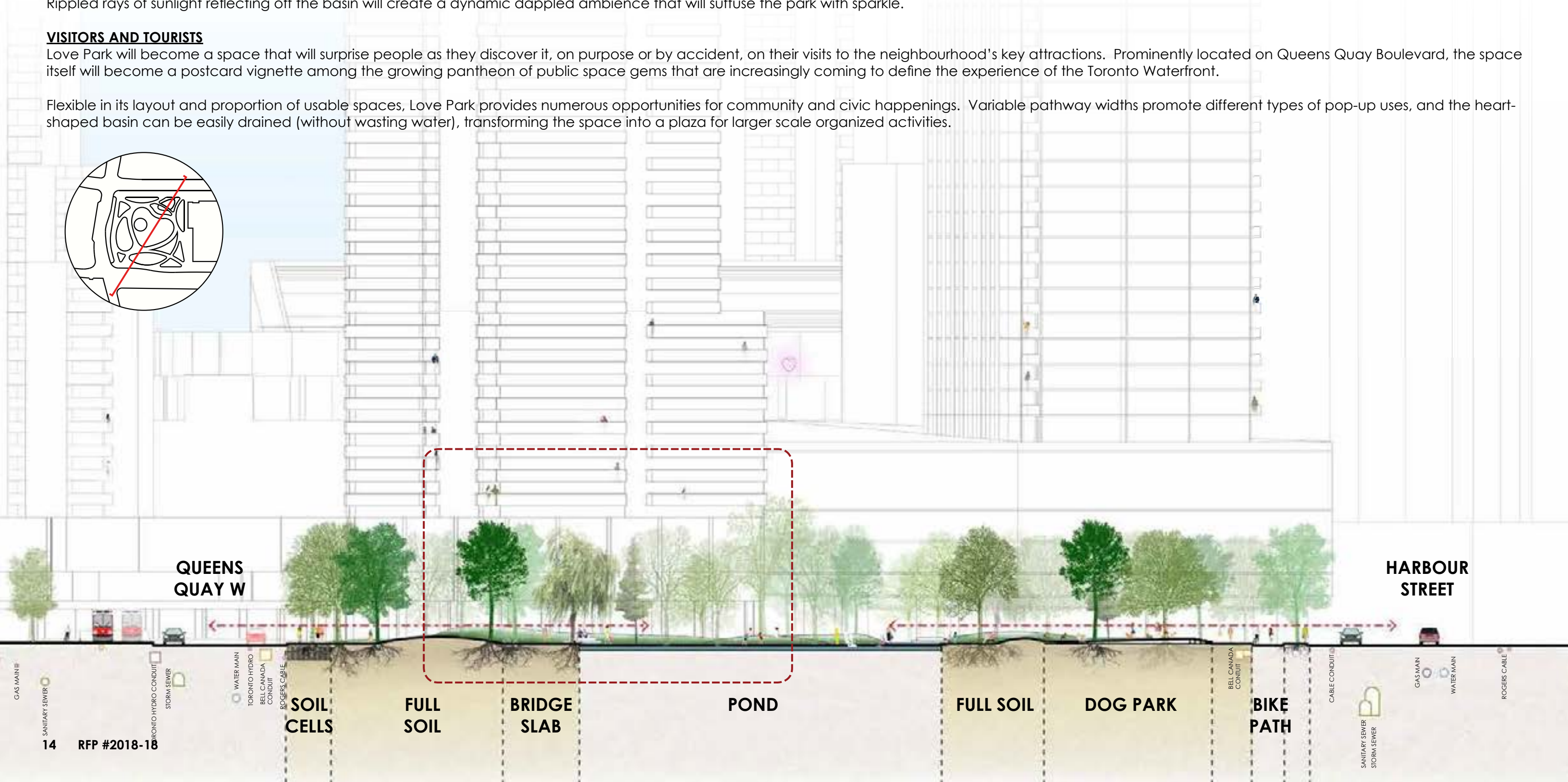
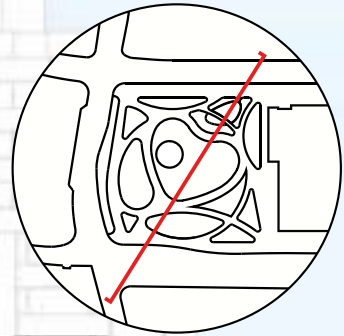
## OFFICE WORKERS

The gap in the skyline over the Queens Quay Terminal due south of the heart means the park will be sunniest at around noon-hour, providing a light-filled oasis in which office workers can take a break for lunch. Rippled rays of sunlight reflecting off the basin will create a dynamic dappled ambience that will suffuse the park with sparkle.

## VISITORS AND TOURISTS

Love Park will become a space that will surprise people as they discover it, on purpose or by accident, on their visits to the neighbourhood's key attractions. Prominently located on Queens Quay Boulevard, the space itself will become a postcard vignette among the growing pantheon of public space gems that are increasingly coming to define the experience of the Toronto Waterfront.

Flexible in its layout and proportion of usable spaces, Love Park provides numerous opportunities for community and civic happenings. Variable pathway widths promote different types of pop-up uses, and the heart-shaped basin can be easily drained (without wasting water), transforming the space into a plaza for larger scale organized activities.





# FOLLIES AS PICTURESQUE TOOLS

## To Make a Small Park Feel Big

York Street Park is not a large space, with block dimensions of less than 100m x 100m. However Love Park, within the confines of this same space, aims to feel big by creating an impression of infinity and vastness through classic technics that manipulate the landscape to achieve a contemporary expression of the picturesque. A composition of foreground, middle ground, and background, along with an integration of a 'ha-ha' effect, with its overlapping horizons, as well as layered frames of tree trunks and boughs, sinuous paths and basin edges, scale-strategic park follies and a pavilion of skewed arcs and arches, various tools will be deployed that stretch perspectives and exaggerate depth to tangibly optimize and privilege the human scale.



INSPIRATION

*Water at Wentworth, Yorkshire*

Reference to Red Book Technique of Renowned Picturesque  
Landscape Gardener Humphry Repton (1752-1818)





# Collection of Objects and Follies

The kinds of follies that are proposed to reinforce the place-making strategy for Love Park include the heart-shaped basin, the arcade pavilion, the on-leash dog garden, a floating heart above the water, and the three tiered marble platforms that offer concentrated nodes of activity at the edge of the water. The public art strategy would also play its part by inviting artists to expand upon the folly theme, contributing works that amplify the classic notion of picturesque placemaking through a contemporary attitude relevant to a 21st century audience.

**REFLECTIVE WATER POND (p20)**

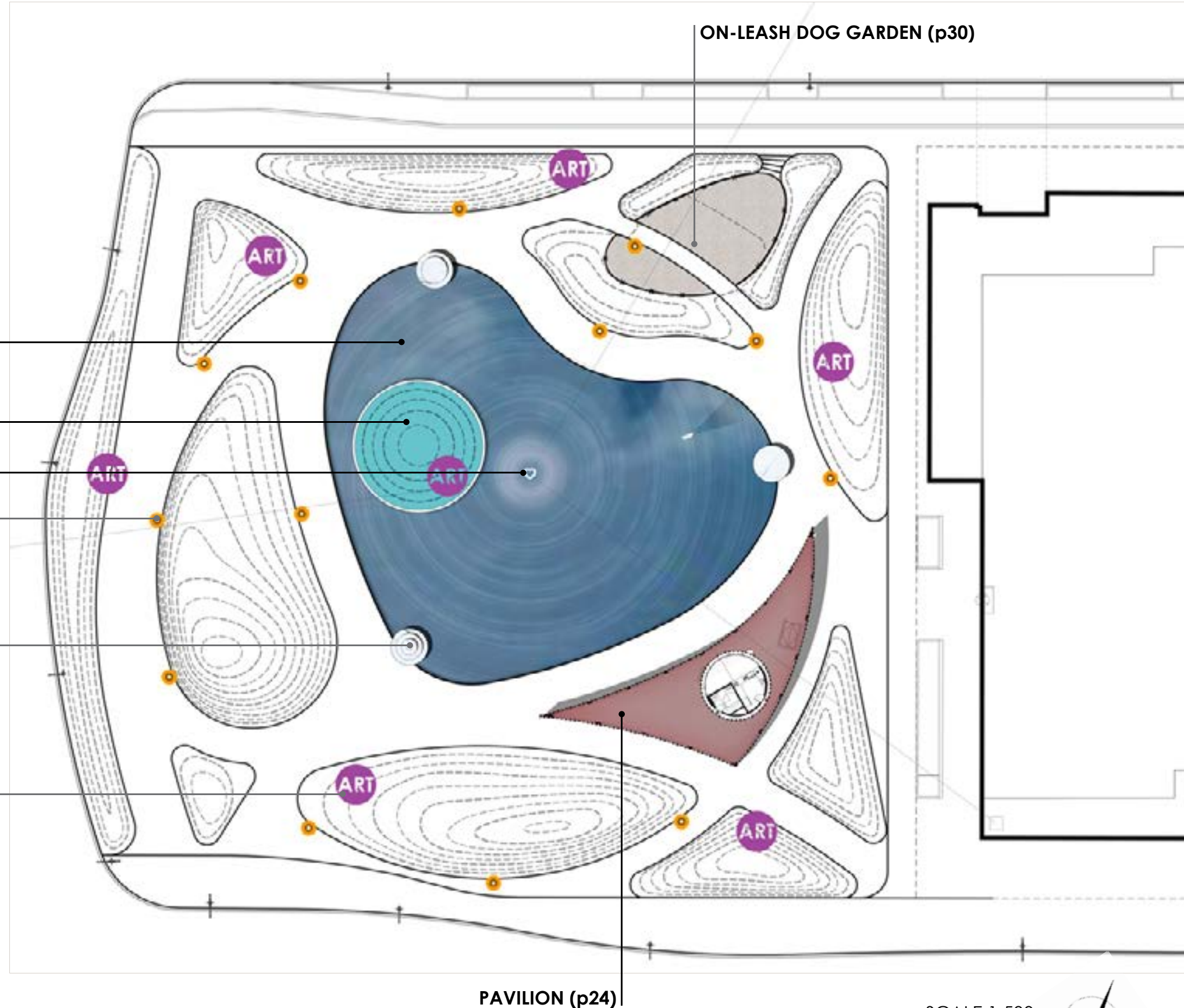
**CATALPA ISLAND (p22)**

**SUSPENDED ILLUMINATED HEART (p32)**

**PARK LIGHTING**

**MULTI USE "WEDDING CAKE" STACKED PLATFORMS (p34)**

**NUMEROUS POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO POSITION FOLLIES AS PUBLIC ART THROUGH THE PARK (p36)**



# BASIN IN THE SHAPE OF A HEART

A heart aligned with true north manifests the tilted grid of Toronto into the layout of the park. A universal symbol of love when viewed from above, the sinuous edge of the heart-shaped basin at eye-level traces a shoreline to an implied horizon, rendering an experience of vastness despite the compact area of the site.

In width and length, the **basin measures approximately 40m x 50m**, creating a water surface that is about **1.3 times larger than an Olympic-sized swimming pool**. The water works for the basin - such as pumps, filters, and reservoir - are located in a basement pump room below the adjacent park pavilion. The basin is circumscribed by a cantilevered edge that drops 10cm to the level of the water, which itself is 5cm deep.

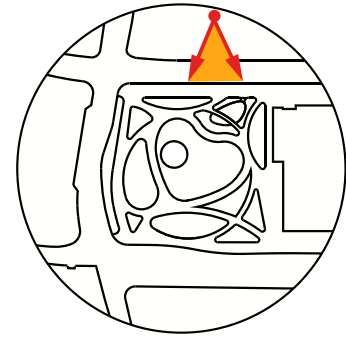
Water in the basin will be treated with a dual UV and chlorinated system. It will be designed for heavy interaction with the public - from splashing, dancing, and performing, to just cooling off. The design of the water works will anticipate future public health requirements for interactive water, to ensure it remains operational as a fully accessible public amenity into the future.





# Water Reflection Effect

The bottom of the shallow basin is to be finished with a dark coloured material that will optimize the reflection of the sky to mirror the built context surrounding the park.



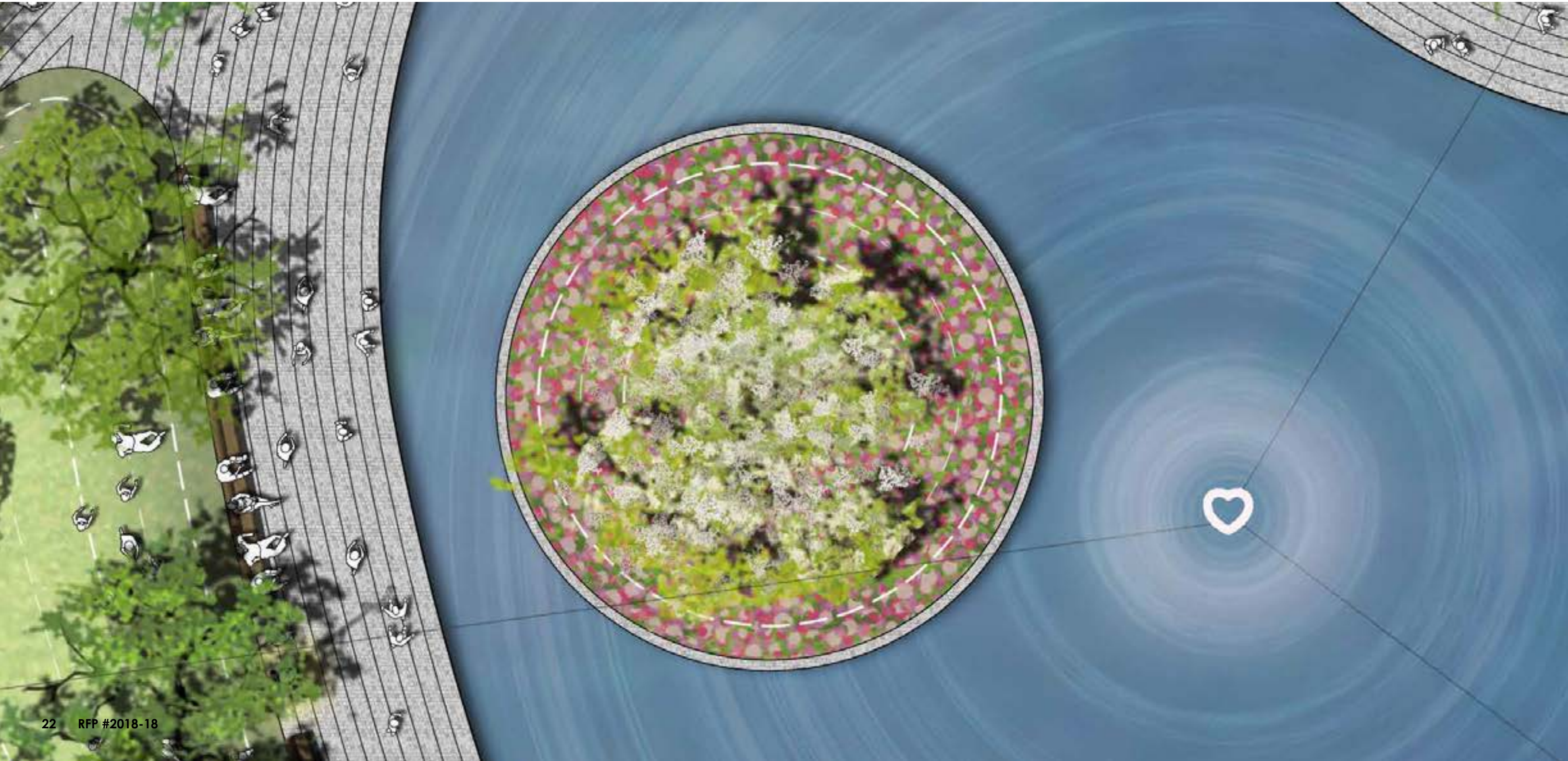
INSPIRATION  
The Clark Art Institute,  
Williamstown, Mass, USA  
(Reed Hilderbrand, with DEW)



# CATALPA ISLAND

One remnant flowering Northern Catalpa (*Catalpa speciosa*) located near the centre of the park will be preserved in a highly visible location on an island in the basin. A spectacular tree, it is the last to bloom in the spring succession of blossoming trees, formally marking the beginning of summer. It is showcased off shore in the sunny central clearing, distinguished as a surreal and timeless living folly and signature of the park. Planting under the tree will be composed of a groundcover of Bleeding Heart (*Lamprocapnos spectabilis*).

The perimeter of the island will be defined by a bevelled curb sloped to be tangent with the toe of the mound, meeting the water as a shore transition to reinforce its separation from the functional surfaces elsewhere in the park

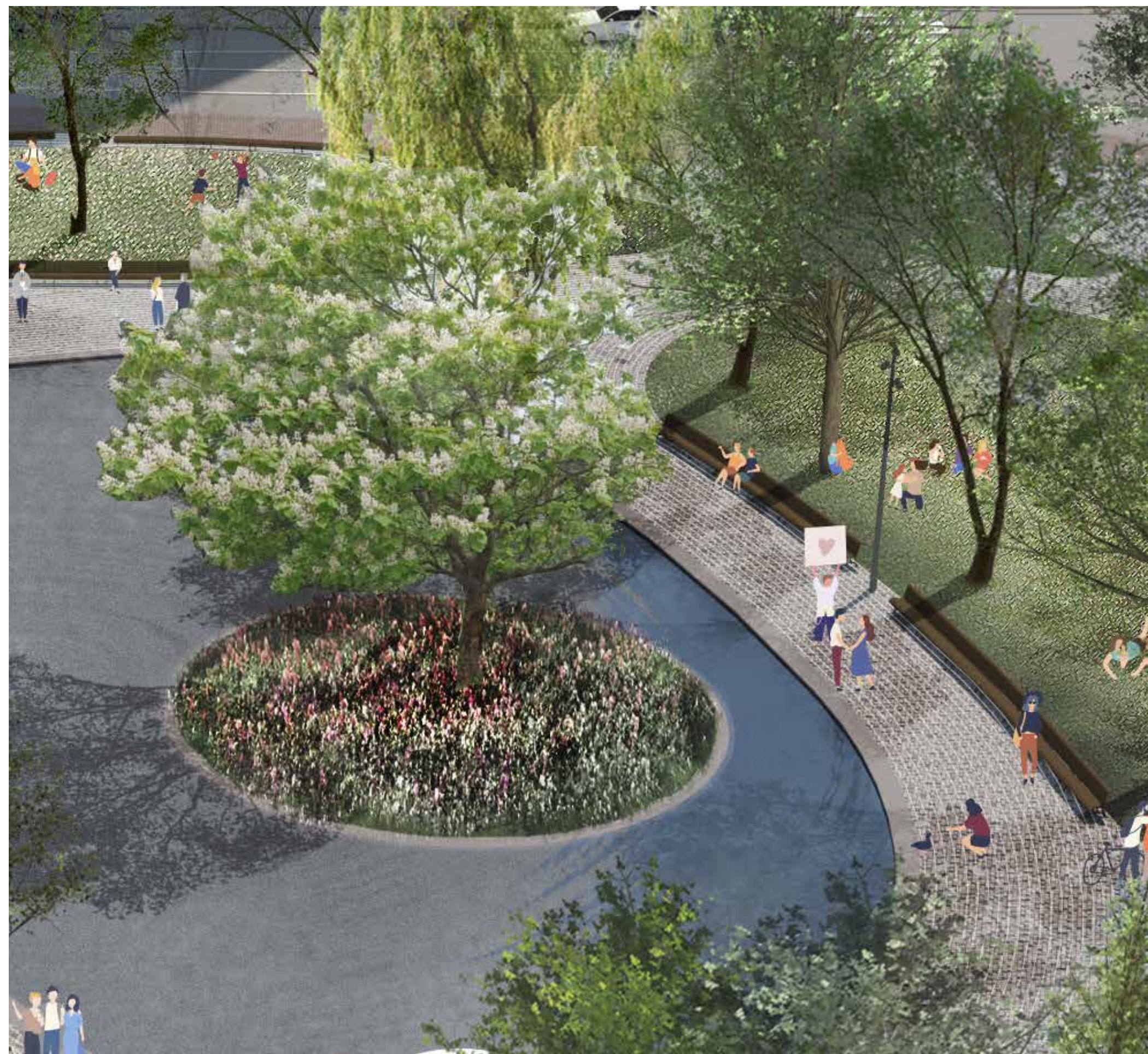




Northern Catalpa (*Catalpa speciosa*)



Bleeding Heart (*Lamprocapnos spectabilis*)



# MIRRORED ARCADE OF CURVED ARCS

The confluence of pathways establishes the plan for the Love Park pavilion. Arched sides converge to three infinite corners, stretching perspectives and creating an illusion of impossible lightness. Wide arches along the curved walls create a porous perimeter on all sides of this 5m high structure.

Finished on the outside with mirror-finish stainless steel and lined on the inside with a warm-hued crimson, the pavilion mimics the park's transition between city and park by asserting a threshold between ephemeral exterior and bold interior. The structure reflects the park and disappears like a mirage, its physical tangibility expressed by the strong hues of the interior.

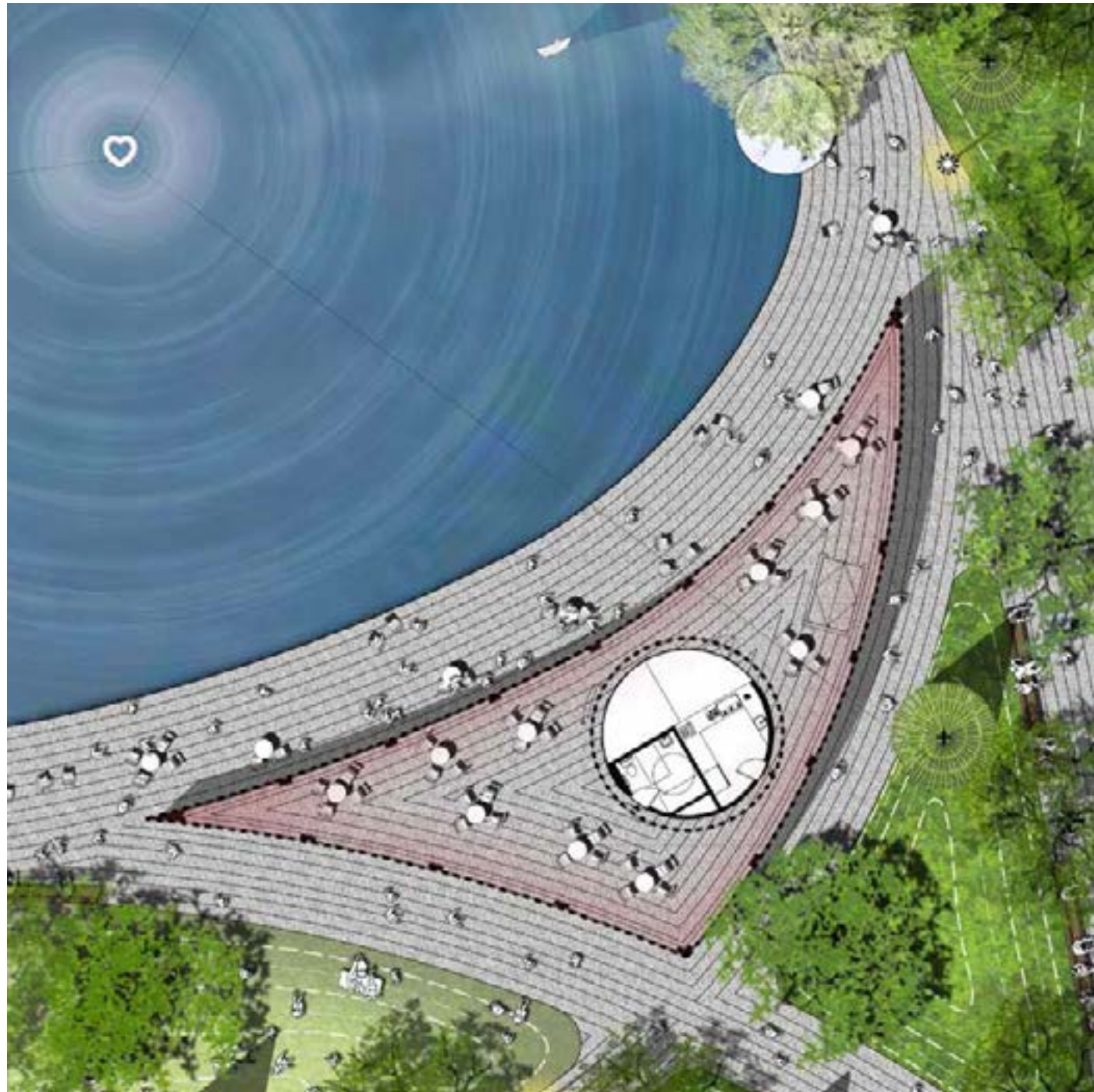
A circular enclosure winterized for all seasons is placed within the curved walls of the arches, hosting a single occupancy washroom as well as a pocket café kiosk.



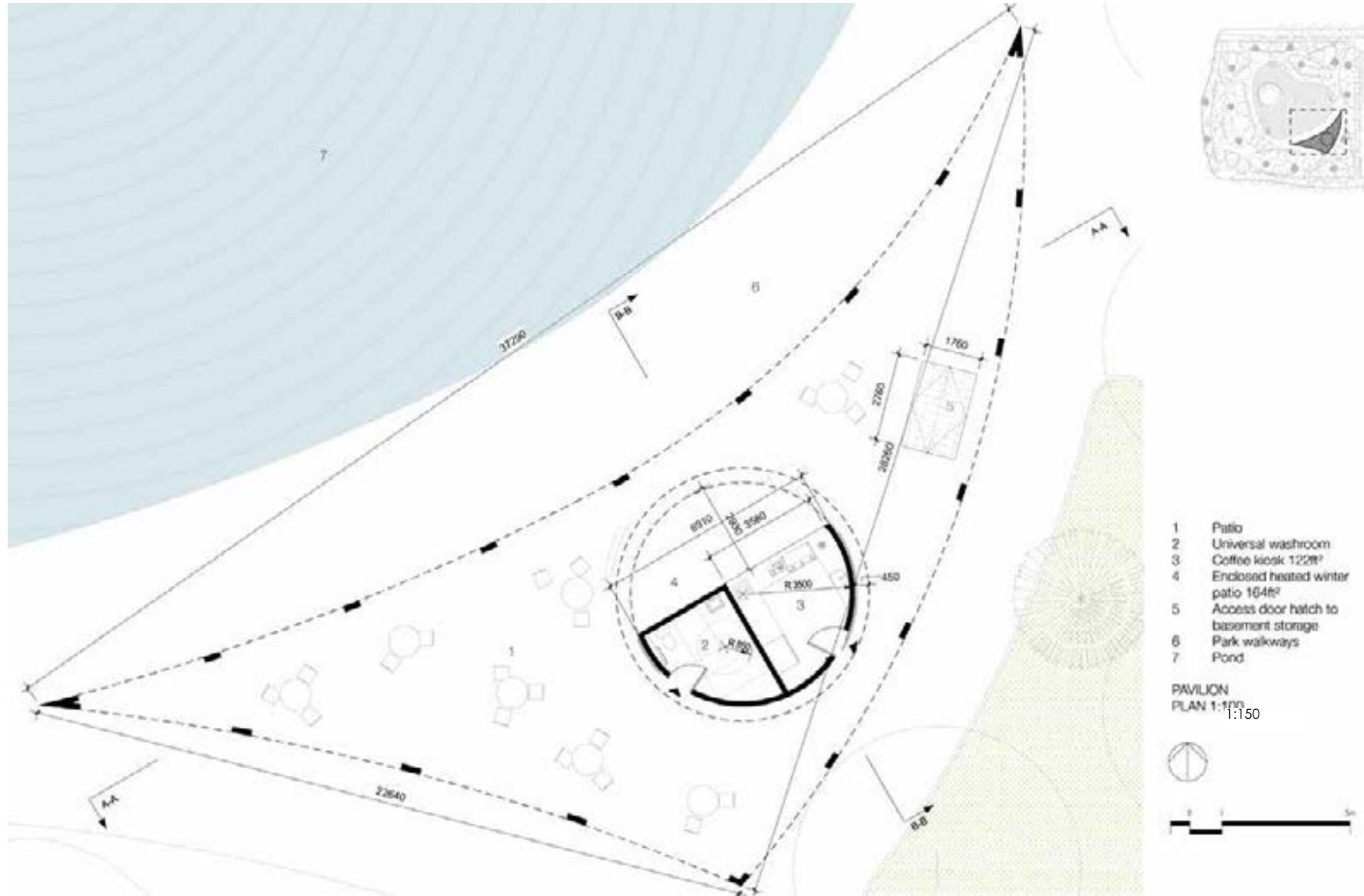
# Coffee Pocket + Washroom + Storage + Pump Room

Each of the three curved arch walls rests upon concrete foundation walls that enclose a full heated basement. The basement will house the mechanical room for the reservoir and water works affiliated with the heart-shaped basin. It will also be large enough for storage of park elements and some maintenance equipment. Captured rainwater from the building roof will be captured for re-use within the park, with a backup connected to potable water if needed.

Electrical panels and the BIA power controls are also proposed to be located in this basement space, designed with provisions to ensure that the space remains dry and warm during rain and cold weather events.



# Plan



# Sections



PAVILION  
SECTION B-B



PUMP ROOM + STORAGE + STORM CISTERN + ELECTRICAL PANELS

PAVILION  
SECTION A-A







# A GARDEN FOR DOGS ON-LEASH

Discretely perched IN the north east corner of the park is an on-leash garden for dogs. The **garden measures 12 x 20m**, and has a **pea-gravel surface area of about 200m<sup>2</sup>**. Connected by two accessible hard surfaced walkways that slope up from the park path network, the garden is also reached by a quick stair short cut from Harbour Street. The on-leash dog garden at Love Park is designed to be a first stop for those residents who frequent the park daily to relieve their pets. This aims to keep pup business discrete, and to help protect soft landscape surfaces elsewhere in the park from damage by dog waste. A pop-up irrigation system is to be included that will rinse and keep the pea-gravel surface clean.

The perimeter of the dog garden is defined by a **short 60cm high fence that protects the planted areas** around the dog garden. A segment of the park's signature bench as well as a specimen deciduous canopy tree will be included to help compose this space into more garden and less dog toilet. The slight elevation difference sets the dog garden apart from the rest of the park to become a quiet room distinguished from busier areas elsewhere.

## PRECEDENT:

On-leash Dog Garden at Berczy Park, Toronto, Canada  
(Claude Cormier + Associés)





# Slightly Raised from the Street and Overlooking the Basin



# LOVE IS IN THE AIR

## The Floating Heart Over Love Park

Subtle yet omnipresent, a small illuminated heart is proposed to be suspended above the centre of the lake, ethereally supported by three tension cables attached to the podia of the adjacent buildings.

Almost invisible during the day, the heart becomes a beacon at night, a quiet guardian with the potential to become a potent symbol for the park, the waterfront, and even the city. Visible from the ground as well as the surrounding buildings, this illuminated feature will assert a silent presence to become a substantial landmark. As a tool for wayfinding or an object of contemplation, the suspended heart becomes a jewel that reinforces the unique qualities and conceptual foundation for Love Park.



# TIERED PLATFORMS

## A Wedding Cake for Everyone

The perimeter of the heart-shaped basin is interrupted in three spots by a family of tiered white 'wedding cake' marble platforms that provide a perch for seating, standing, performing, and picture taking with the suspended heart in the background. The silky marble of the platforms offer a comfortable surface to touch, and their scale is compact to accommodate singles, pairs or small groups. They provide a locus of opportunity for park visitors to sit back and take in the scene, or alternatively to be the star of the show.

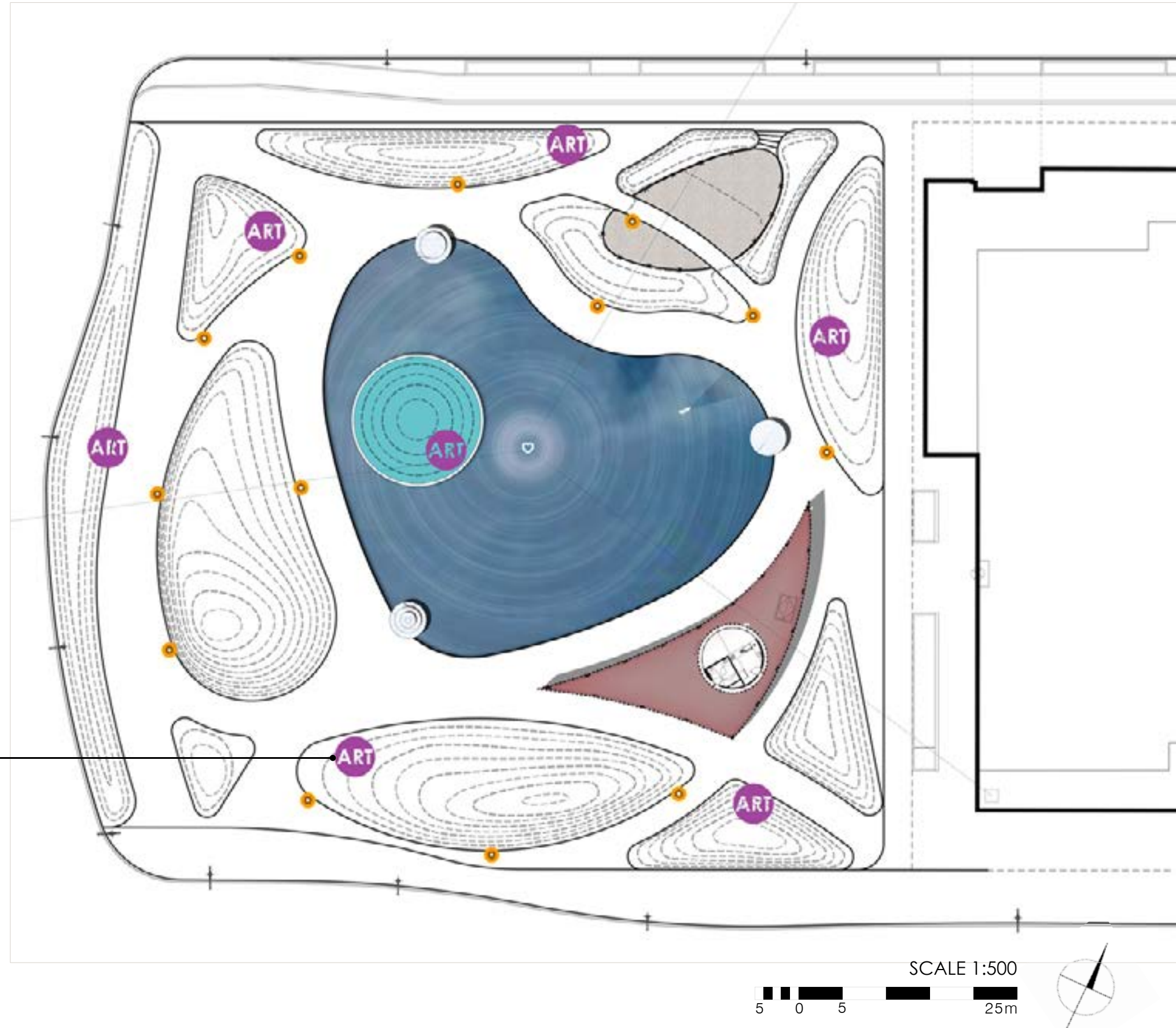


# A STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC ART

In keeping with the proposal for Love Park, the strategy for the public art would aim to highlight the romantic fabric of the space and the somewhat anachronistic ideas at its heart. Artists would be invited to investigate the notion of the garden folly, creating contemporary interpretations of a somewhat dated idea. Originating in 16th century English gardens, a folly is an architectural structure conceived primarily as a decoration, but which through its appearance suggested a purpose and a sense of extravagance. Follies may be playful or disquieting, the idea of the ruin is inscribed into its conception.

Artists will be invited to propose contemporary follies taking into account the design of the park and the mirrored pavilion, another structure often found in historical gardens. These would suggest pathways to discover the space, and may potentially incite conversation between strangers. Artists that could be considered include Nadia Belerique, Geoffrey Farmer, Brian Jungen, Gareth Moore, and Valérie Blass, among many others.

## POSSIBLE LOCATIONS FOR PUBLIC ART







INSPIRATION  
Former headquarters - Bank of Ozymandias,  
Auckland, New Zealand

# LOTS OF PLACES TO SIT

## 175m of Linear Bench + Movable Chairs and Tables

The curves of the pathways are accentuated by long stretched benches that frame the park's undulating mounds and green areas. Some with backs, others without, the park's stretched benches **in total have a length of about 175m**. Benches are positioned to be safe and comfortable, and to invite visitors to partake in the park's shared features. Positioned to be in both sun and shade, the stretched uninterrupted benches encourage spontaneous exchanges between strangers while creating a space of closeness for friends and loved ones.

Movable chairs and tables are also proposed near the pavillion as part of the park's café program, as well as for the park terrace outside the west facade of the RBC Tower.

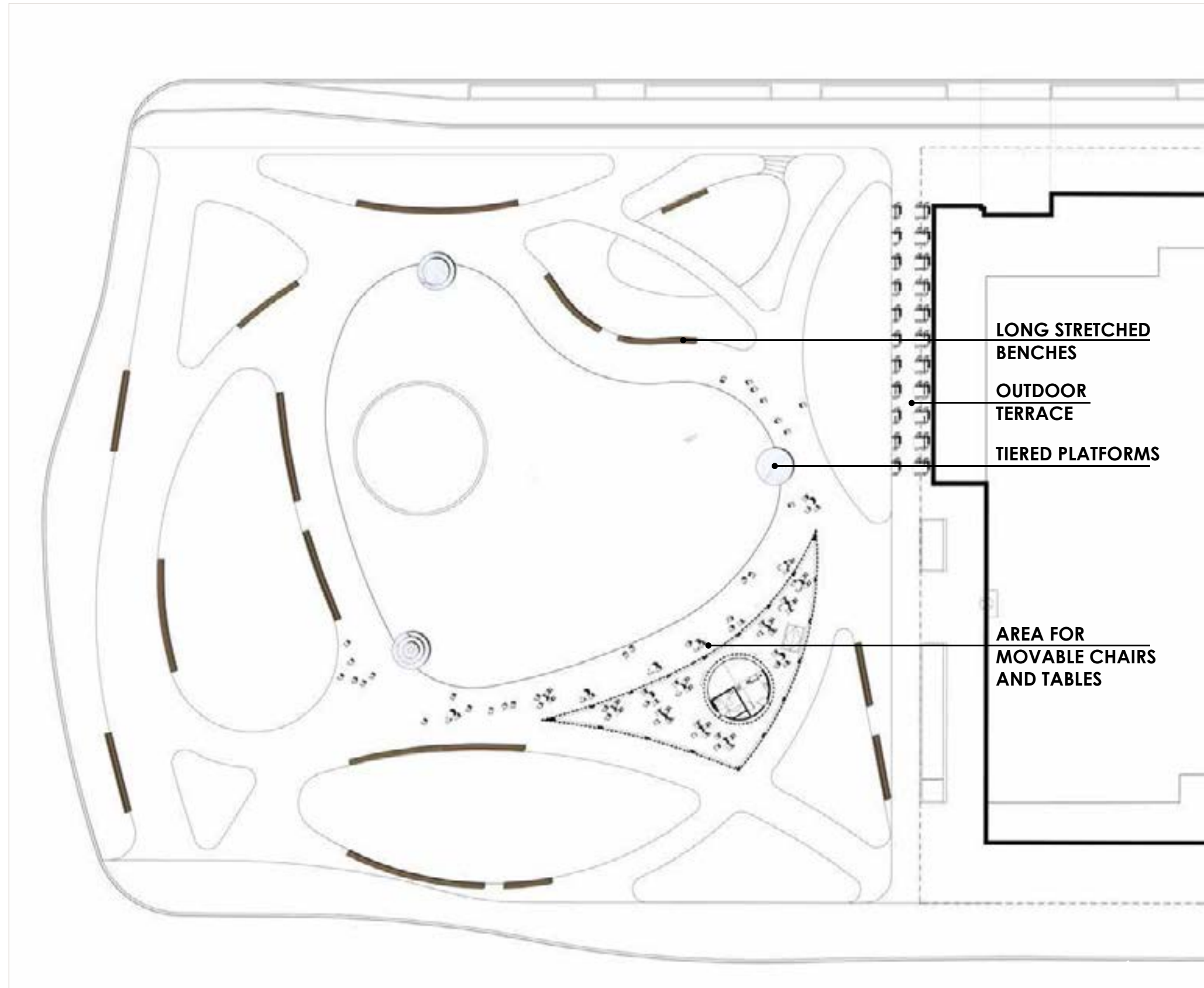




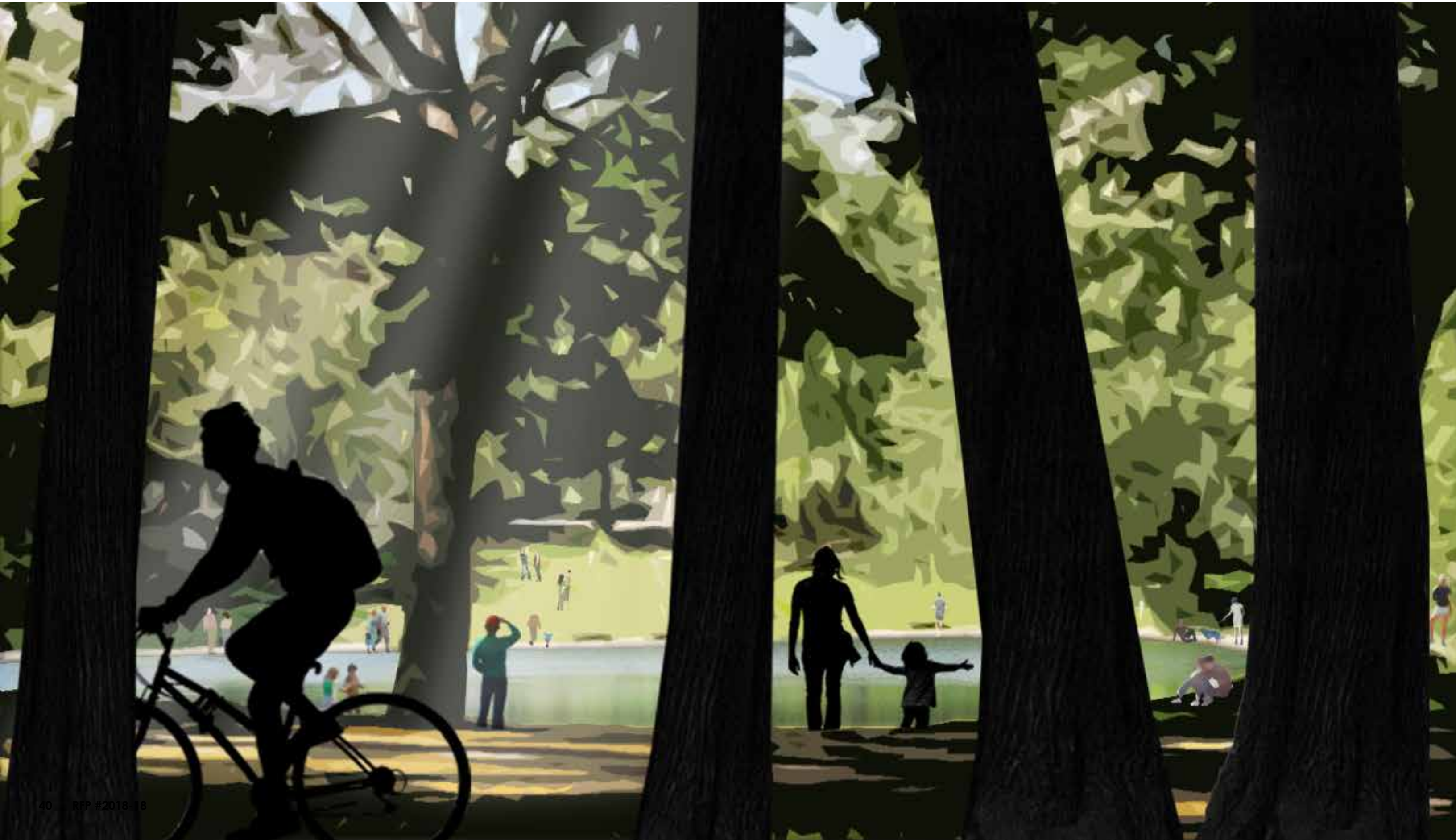
PRECEDENT:  
Madison Square Park, NYC, USA



PRECEDENT:  
Berczy Park, Toronto, Canada  
(Claude Cormier + Associés)



# A LEGACY OF TREES

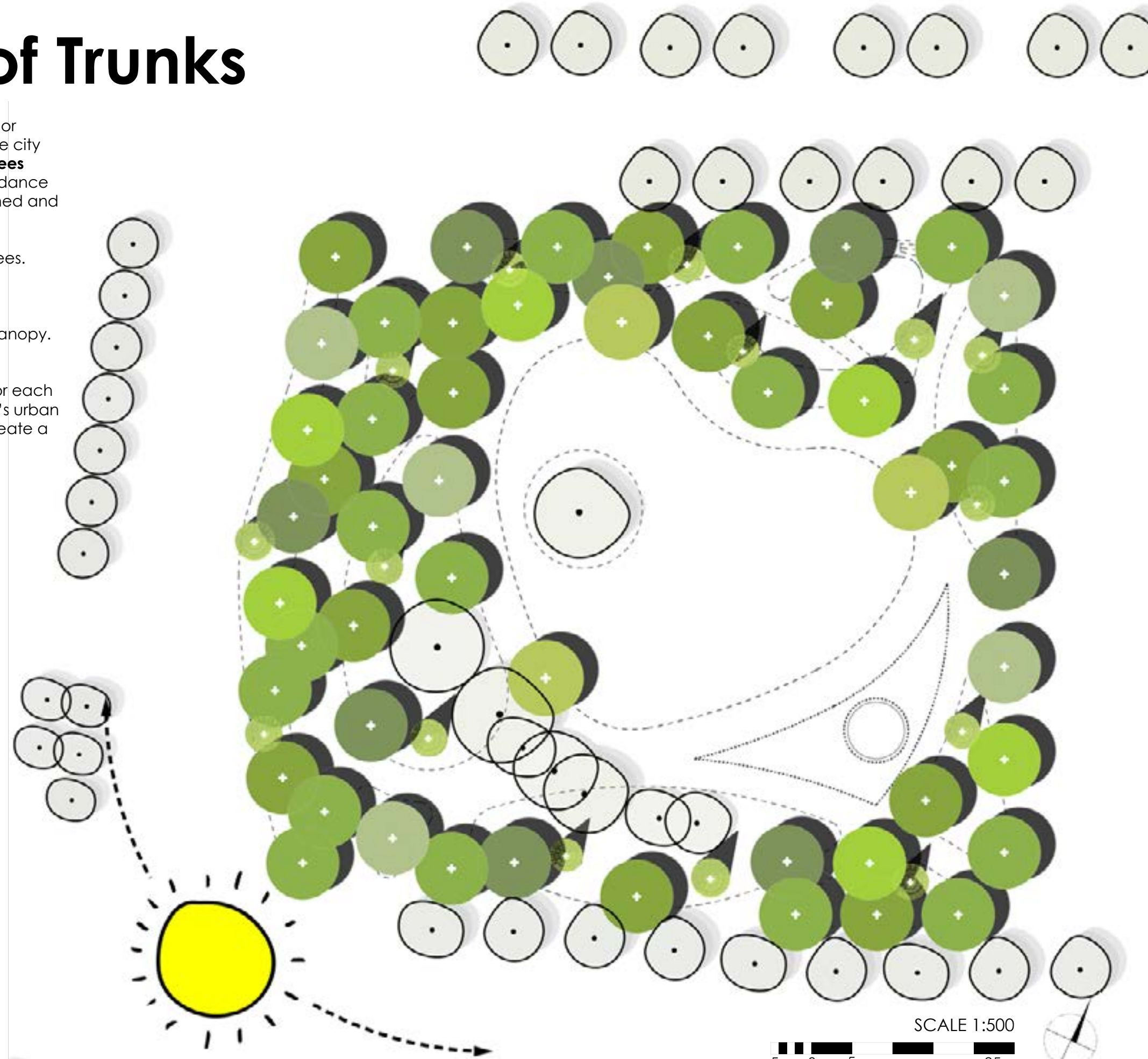


# A Treasure Trove of Trunks

Love Park is unencumbered neither by underground parking structures nor slabs. The design takes advantage of this unique privilege (unusual in the city centre) to maximize the needs of the **68 new and 8 preserved existing trees** proposed for the park. Intelligent tree systems will be designed in accordance with the following **six fundamentals towards successful trees**, as researched and published by renowned tree expert James Urban:

1. Prioritize design detailing for sufficient soil volumes to promote large trees.
2. Provide enough room for expanding trunk flares.
3. Build-in provisions for water infiltration and distribution through the soil.
4. Include sub-drainage to prevent saturation of soil and roots.
5. Space trees apart as needed to promote a wide spreading branch canopy.
6. Be diligent and discerning in selecting quality nursery stock.

With proposed tree species between 8 to 12m apart, and soil volumes for each in excess of 30m<sup>3</sup>, the goal for the forest at Love Park is to boost Toronto's urban forest with a continuous canopy of trees that will mature to ultimately create a park of large trunks!



**TREE CANOPY DIVERSITY**  
SUN AND SHADE IN THE PARK !

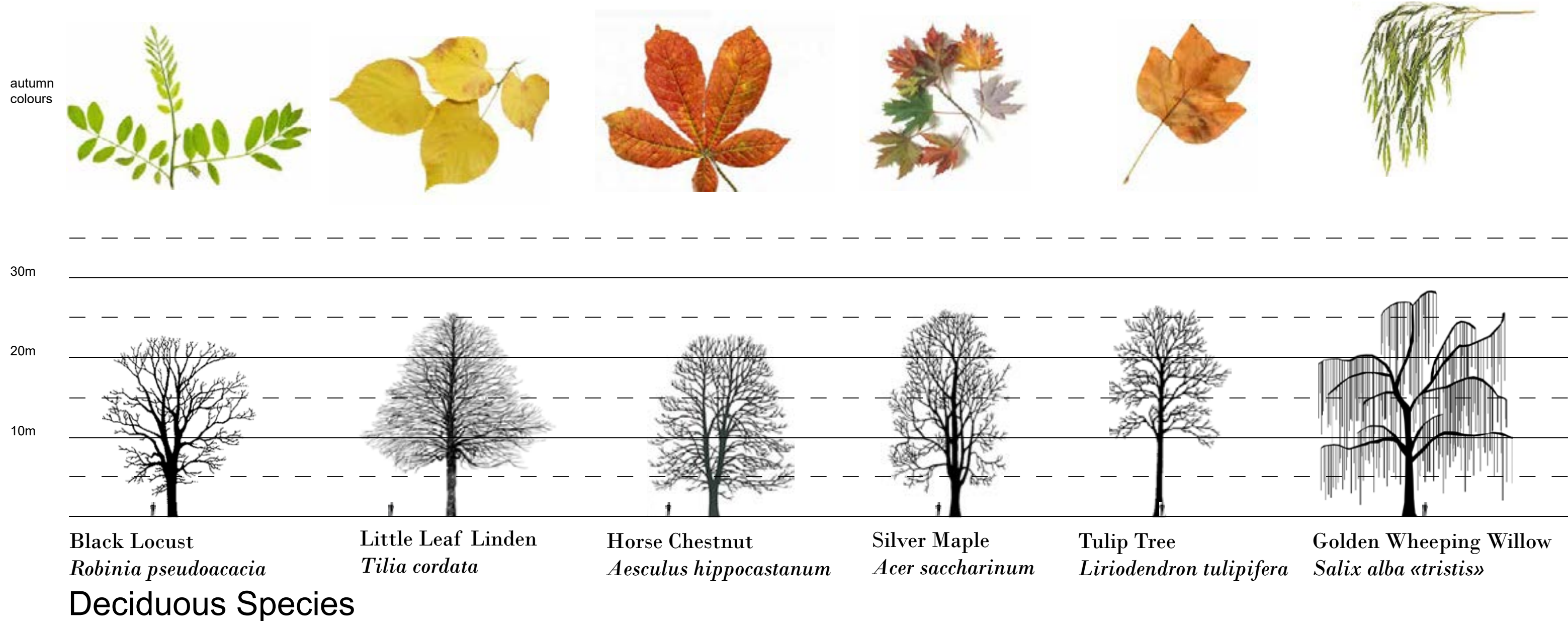
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5 0 5 25m

# A FOREST OF MANY TYPES

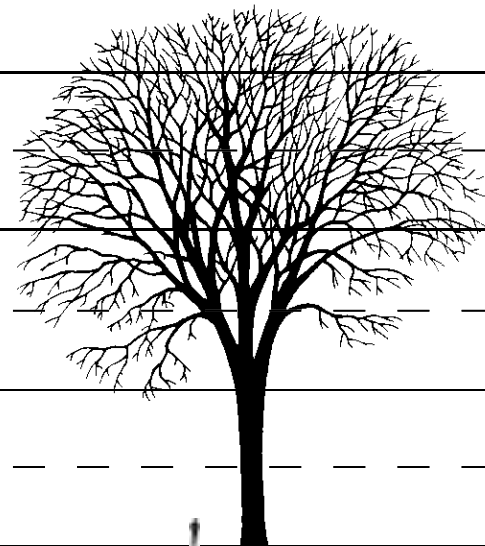
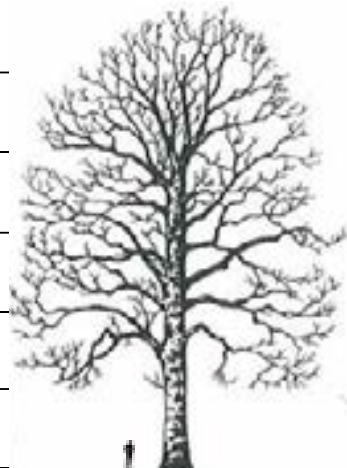
## A Mix of Large Canopy Trees (8 Species)...

Metropolitan Toronto straddles the line that separates the Carolinian and Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Forest types. The proximity of these two life zones allows us to compose a forest using species from both, to build a resilient forest adapted to the vicissitudes of the local climate. Tree choices will give priority towards establishing a continuous deciduous canopy around the heart-shaped clearing, punctuated by conifers for accent and contrast. The tree distribution across the park will aim to create a robust urban forest experience, with planting locations based on a considered response to sun and shade, topography, as well as soil moisture gradients related to points of storm water capture and passive redistribution.

Combined with sodded mound surfaces for public use, and groundcover areas to boost the vegetal richness of the design, Love Park will incorporate principles of urban ecology to boost the park's resilience through connections to other nearby living systems, such as the tree allées and continuous soil volumes along Queens Quay Boulevard, as well as habitat opportunities, particularly for birds, arising from the park's proximity to Toronto harbour and Lake Ontario beyond.



# ...And an Accent of Conifers (3 Species)



London Plane Tree  
*Platanus occidentalis*

Accolade Elm  
*Ulmus americana «accolade»*

Scots Pine  
*Pinus sylvestris*

White Pine  
*Pinus strobus*

Fastigate European Larch  
*Larix decidua 'Fastigiata'*

Coniferous Species

30m

20m

10m

# AN OASIS OF SOIL

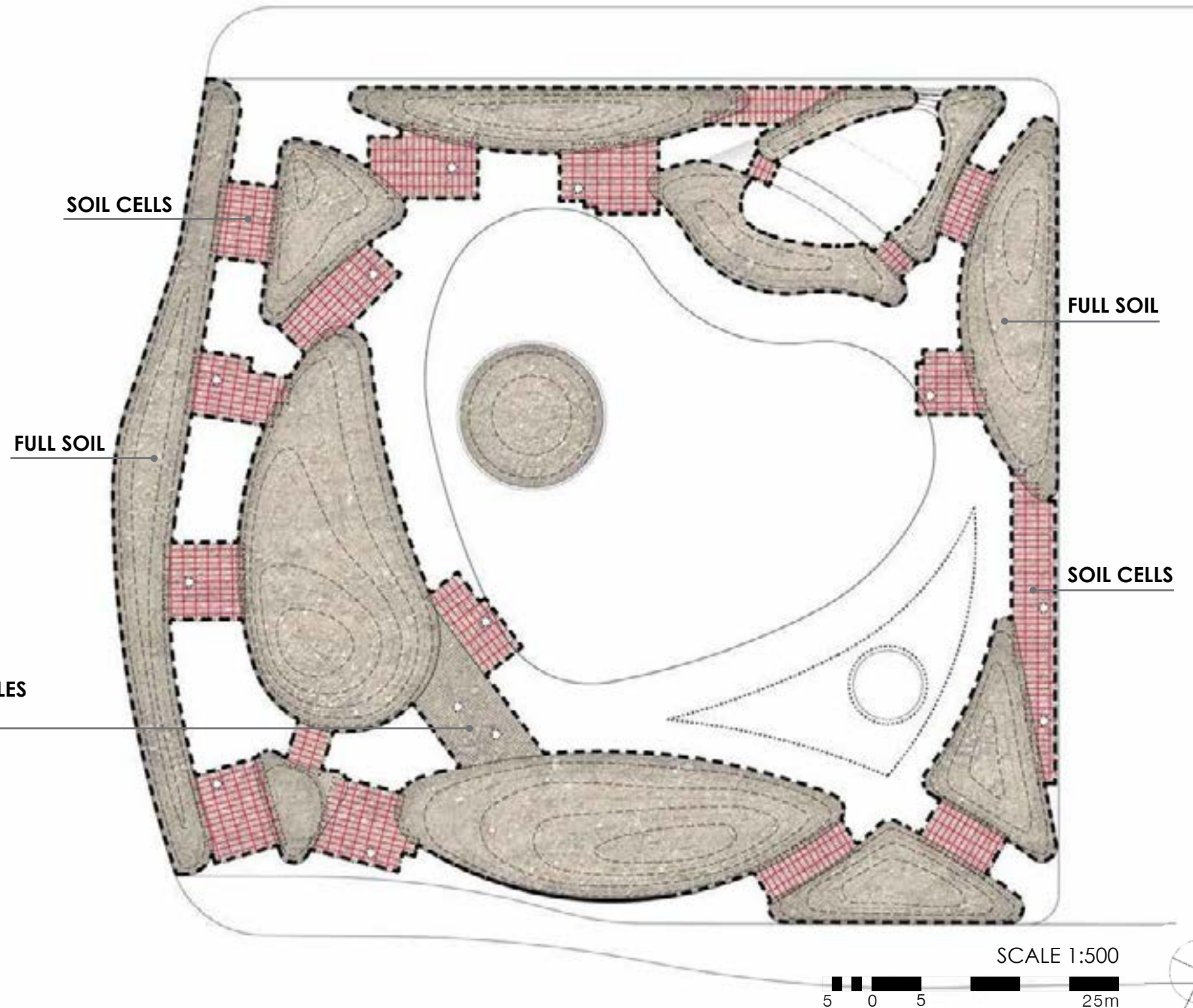
## Root Zone Connectivity Below the Park Surface

Trees communicate with each other through their roots. It is important that we create an interconnected space below ground where they can be in touch with each other. Every effort will be made to bridge all soil mounds throughout Love Park to create a continuous unbroken soil volume that also integrates those trees planted in hardscape. Soil cell technology allows for an optimization of soil connectivity below, protecting soil under the park's hard surfaces from compaction forces that are typical to the urban condition, and that are detrimental to tree roots.

The tree strategy will be designed to produce an enduring legacy for the future of Love Park, and every effort will be made to ensure trees have what they need to become giants.

A smart automatic irrigation system is essential to achieve a robust establishment period for all tree and groundcover planting throughout the park. For long term watering requirements, a passive irrigation strategy will be deployed to capture hard surface runoff flows within the park and to redistribute them into adjacent underground soil zones for the park's trees. This strategy aims to fulfill commitments of retaining all site runoff and minimizing flows into the city's storm water system. This approach will significantly reduce potable water requirements towards sustainably maintaining the park's living layer.

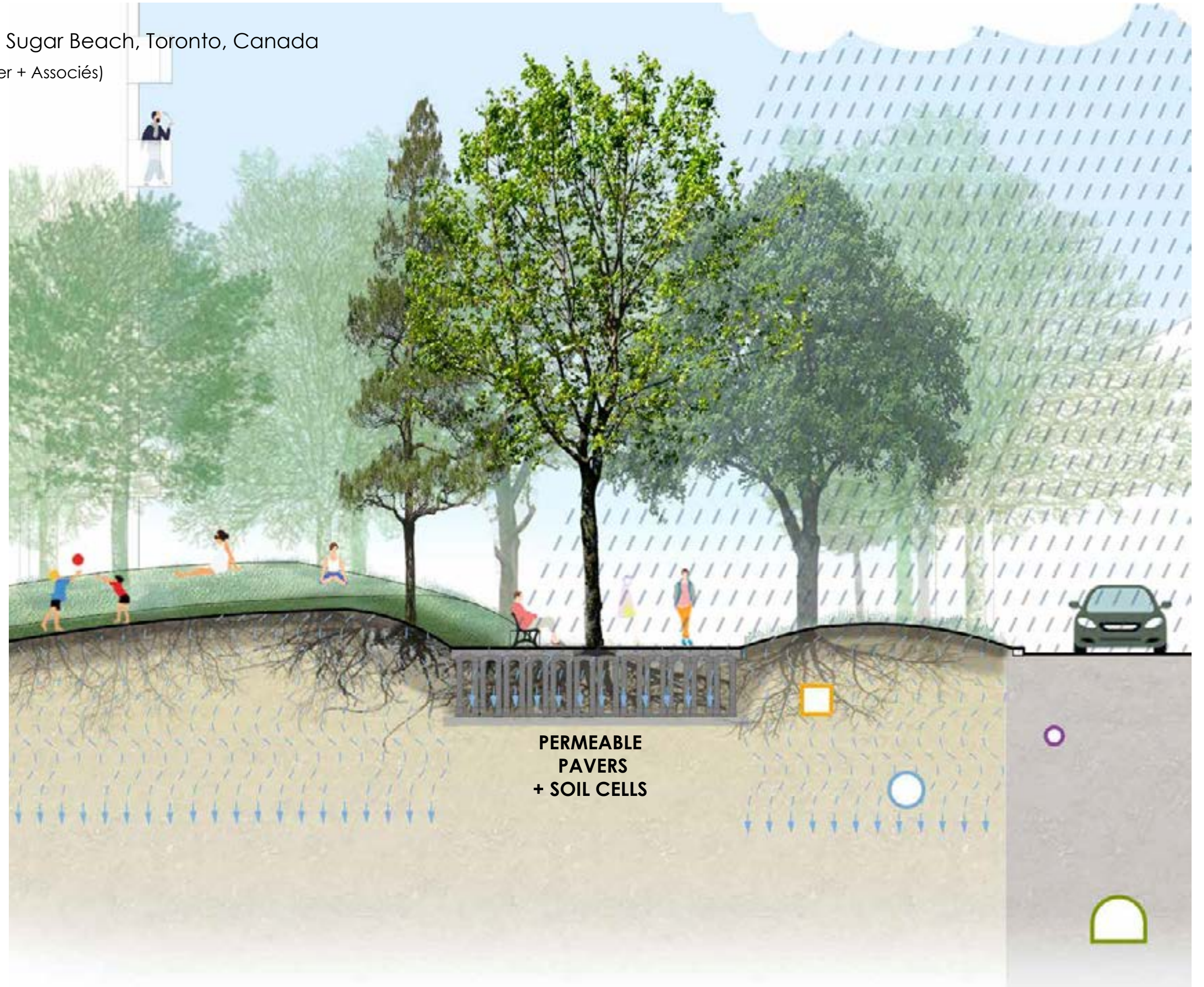
**BRIDGE SLAB ON HELICAL PILES  
TO PROTECT EXISTING TREES**







PRECEDENT:  
Silva Cells at Sugar Beach, Toronto, Canada  
(Claude Cormier + Associés)



# SURFACES AND TOPOGRAPHY

## 60% Soft + 40% Hard

### HARDSCAPE

Forty percent of the park surface area will be made up of hard surfaced pathways. **The widths of all pathways vary between 3m and 6m**, providing fluid variations in space to subtly accommodate large numbers of people and various program options.

### SOFTSCAPE = GREEN SCAPE + BLUE SCAPE

Sixty percent of the park is comprised of planted areas (green) and the surface of the water basin (blue).

The base of the pond is proposed to be constructed of dark concrete to maximize reflectivity on the water surface at a cost that can meet the limited budget. The hard surfaced basin bottom will also allow for the lake to be easily drained for winterization as well as potential events. Even when filled with water, the hard surface under the basin can permit large numbers of people to walk and splash for fun, entertainment, or relief from the heat during summer.

**40% HARDSCAPE**  
(GRANITE PAVERS  
'PERMEABLE')

**60% SOFTSCAPE**  
(GREEN AND BLUE  
INCLUDING POND  
SPACE)

**REFLECTIVE WATER POND**

**GRASS MOUND**

LOW SHRUBS  
AND GROUND  
COVER MOUND



**SURFACE MATERIALITY**

# PLAGE EN VERT

## Green Dunes and Beaches

PRECEDENT:  
Parc Lafontaine, Montreal, Canada

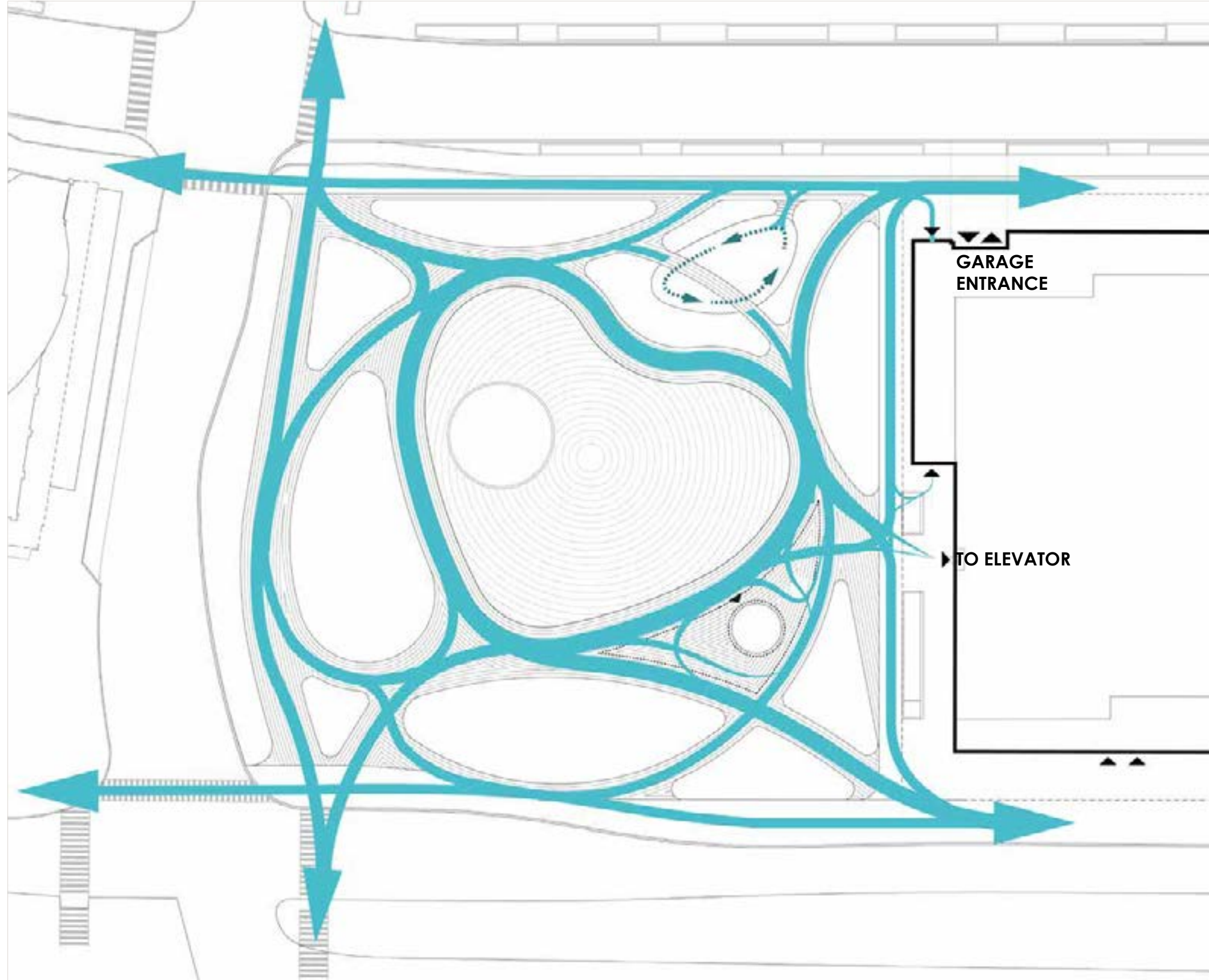


The topography of the soft surfaces is raised to just below eye level to buffer the park from the surrounding streets, while providing opportunities for long views (and safety) across the space. The overlap of horizons conceals pathways to give the illusion of a contiguous large green space. The mounds are designed to recreate the gesture of a 'bowl' sloped towards the basin, inviting people to sit or lie on grass with a view over the water and the action of the park. In effect this slope is poised to become a type of 'green beach'.

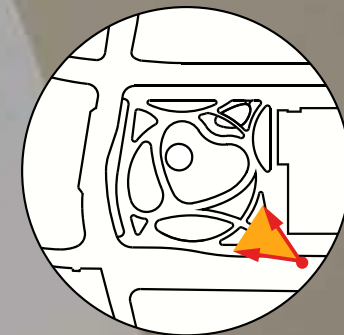


# THRESHOLDS AND CONNECTIVITY

Thresholds are positioned along the park perimeter to create a porous edge from the surrounding sidewalks, converging at the north and south crosswalks on York Street, and linking as a tangent to the pedestrian realms along Queens Quay Blvd and Harbour Street. Once inside the park, pathways arc away from the surrounding streets and buildings, spiraling into a weave around the heart-shaped basin, to provide **a total integrated route length of approximately 700m.**



**CONNECTIVITY,  
CIRCULATION FLUIDITY,  
THRESHOLDS AND EDGES**



# PAVING MOTIF

## Concentric Offsets Rebouncing From the Edges

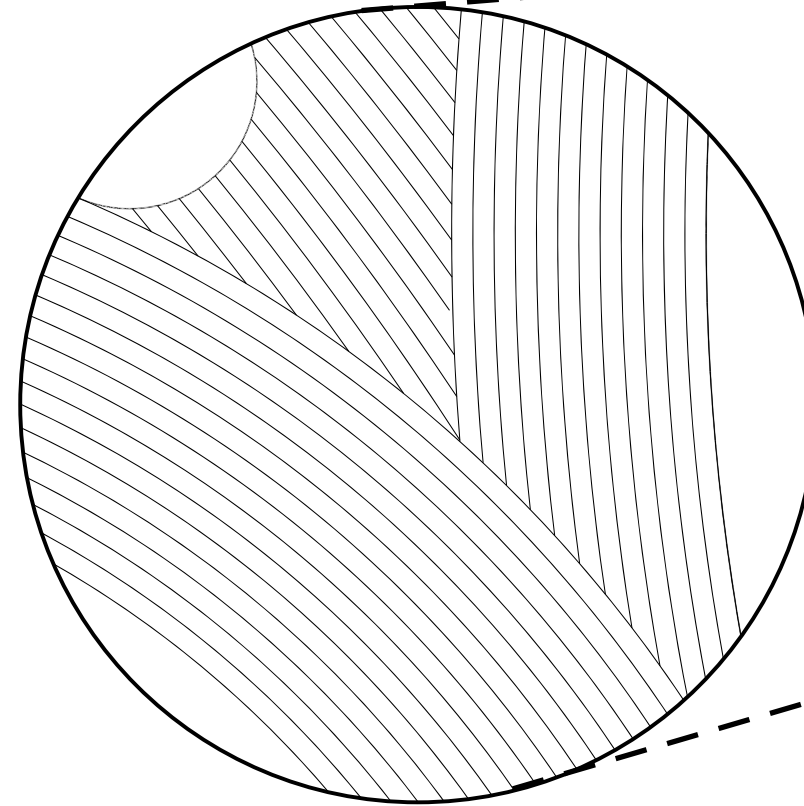
Pathways in the park are proposed to be constructed from three shades of warm grey granite cobbles, similar in dimension to the square pavers used along the Water's Edge Promenade and Queens Quay pedestrian realm. The juxtaposition of waterjet and flamed finishes will create variations in hue, reinforced by the addition of a third matte-polish finish cobble randomly disseminated across the overall field of cobbles. This will create a sun-sparkle beyond the pond with points of light shining across the hard surfaces of the park. The interplay between the hues of these three finishes will produce a dynamic surface activated as one moves through the space. Cobbles are laid out in overlapping offsets of the path edges, reverberating off softscape edges like ripples or waves.



MATTE POLISH

WATERJET

FLAMED

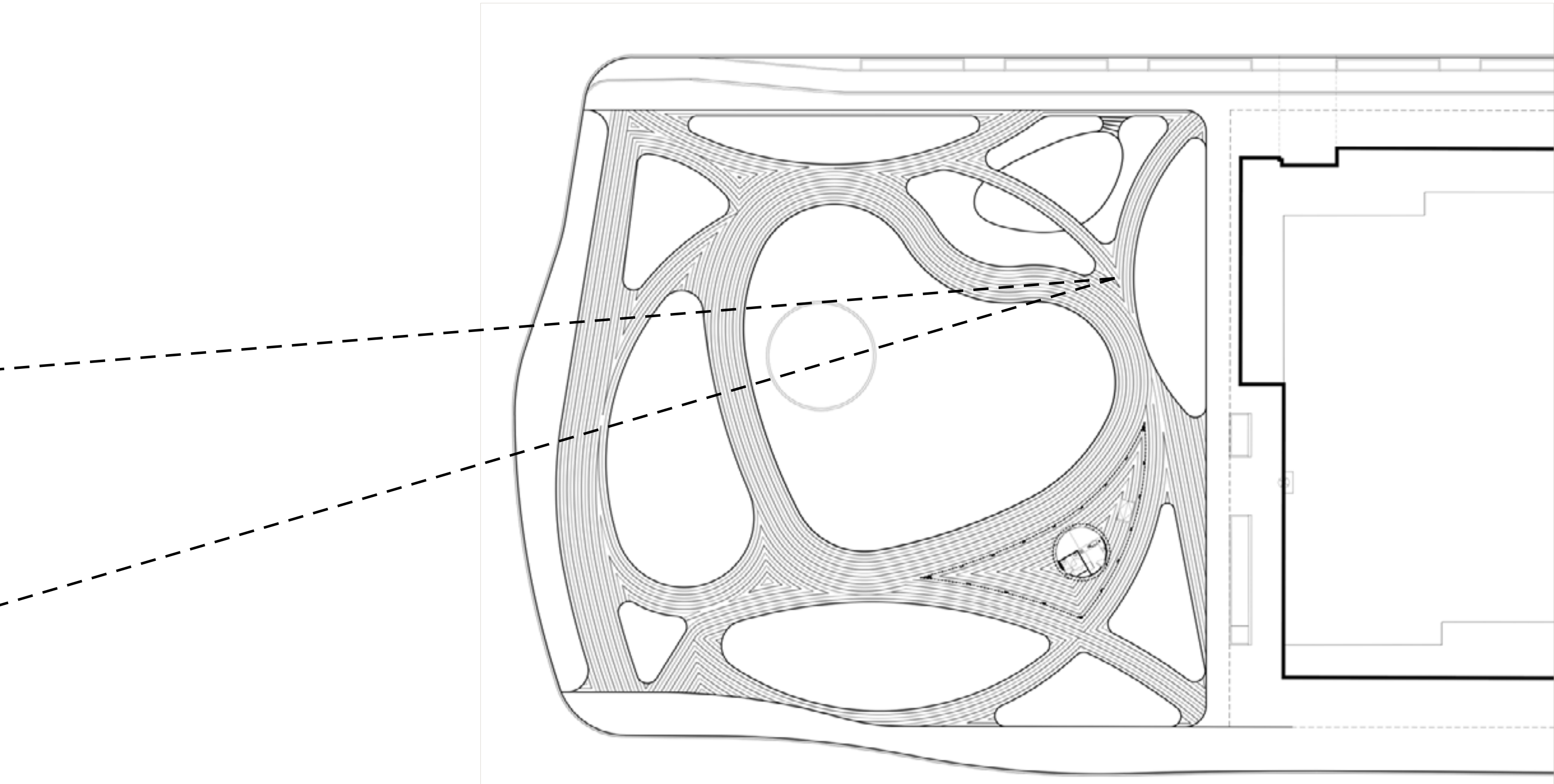


PRECEDENT:

Square Dorchester,

Montreal, Canada

(Claude Cormier + Associés)



SCALE 1:500  
5 0 5 25m



# THINGS TO DO IN LOVE PARK TORONTO

...people watching / meetups / taking photos / picnicking + lunch-eating / walking + relieving your dog / childrens play / reading / site seeing / relaxing / lying on the grass / strolling + jogging / cooling off + water splash play / café / buskers and shows / pre-game gatherings / community events + block parties / flea + farmers markets / concerts and shows / civic happenings / festival venue for Nuit Blanche + Luminato...





# OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTIVE PROGRAM

Opportunities for active programming appear latent in the day to day life of Love Park. These can be activated to allow for a wide variety of surprisingly larger-scaled organized activities. On days without active programming, the park invites passive uses across a network of wide pathways and sculpted soft surfaces.

Multi-purpose spatial options in the park are perfect for seasonal pop-ups, like Christmas markets and festivals. The superfluous overlap of pathways ensures that circulation is never stymied for those passing through the park during larger events that may attract crowds of people.

## PRECEDENT:

Market Square, Guelph, Canada

(Janet Rosenberg and Studio, photo by Lynn Broughton)



**EVENT OPPORTUNITIES**

**OUTDOOR CONCERT / OUTDOOR CINEMA**



# A LAKE THAT TURNS INTO A PLAZA

## Water Can Come and Go for Flexible Programming

When filled with water, the heart-shaped basin creates a lake-like clearing in the centre of the park to attract views inwards and away from the park's bustling context. The shallow basin also permits an interactive quality for those who want to get wet, cool down, or make a splash. When the basin is filled, the park is a peaceful oasis for contemplation and passive activities like hanging out, eating lunch, and walking your pet.

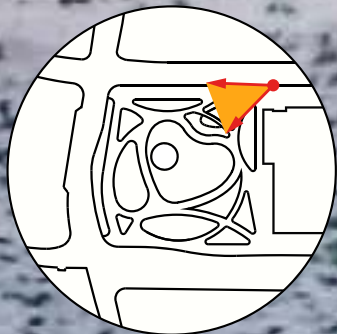
The passive program of the park can be switched, however, into something more active and larger-scaled by emptying the basin and transforming it into a plaza for larger more organized events like markets and fairs. Drained water will be stored, not wasted, providing a reasonable and uncomplicated manner for expanding the programmatic possibilities of the space.

PRECEDENT:  
Madison Square Park, NYC, USA



**EVENT OPPORTUNITIES**  
**ART FAIR / WINTER MARKET**





VIEW ON HARBOUR STREET LOOKING SOUTH/WEST – WINTER MARKET

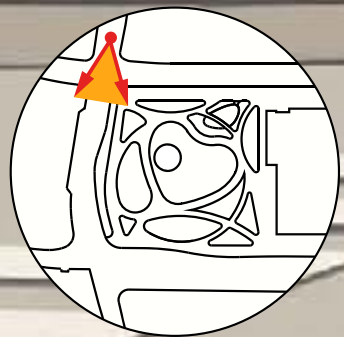


# GREENING YORK STREET

## Mirroring the Lindens West Side of York Street

The successful row of Lindens on the west side of York Street across from Love Park will be mimicked along the east side of the street running along the park edge. This boost to the Linden allée will create a green tunnel gateway at the foot of York Street, expanding the canopy expression of the park to reinforce the priority for a park that feels big.





# A PARK WITH A SOUL

## Love Park will be Someplace Special

A successful park is one that is adopted into the hearts of those who use it. A place that people love will be one they take care of and stand up for. They choose to make it a part of their lives - the stage for their memory-making, witness to the key moments in their stories. Love Park will be one of these places, because it is designed with the express purpose of making them feel good, for reasons beyond the checklist of features and qualities that define a successful park.

Love Park may be small, but its potential as a symbol for the Toronto Waterfront is enormous. Copenhagen has its Little Mermaid, Brussels has its Manneken Pis, and Toronto would have its valiant heart to embody the spirit of the city, and attest to the generosity and openness of its citizens. Quietly yet curiously positioned above the park, its symbolic power will assert a unique and contextually meaningful site specificity with the potential of becoming recognized worldwide.









# **APPENDIX**

## **Feasibility + Technical Considerations + Value Engineering + Maintenance**

# VALUE ENGINEERING

## Design Flexibility to Keep the Concept In-tact

Our approach to park making is to build flexibility into the design so it can withstand the gauntlet of changes arising from budget constraints, political decisions, and site conditions, without compromising the conceptual integrity of the project. In the face of currently unforeseen budget challenges, some early responses to tame costs could be to adjust the path layouts and the distribution of hard (more expensive) and soft (less expensive) surfaces, substitute higher cost materials with those that are more cost effective, and revise key features of the design while still upholding the spatial relationships envisioned for the park. Some options to address any immediate cost issues in the near term could include replacing the heart-shaped basin and affiliated mechanical and electrical requirements with a heart-shape lawn designed to withstand the heavy foot traffic of various activities and events. We also propose to separate the pavilion from the principle park budget at this first stage. If the pavilion cannot be included within the current budget, a feasible park could still proceed with a lawn-surfaced placeholder that could be replaced with the pavilion at a later date when additional funding could be available.

In the event the basin is built but not ultimately the pavilion, the proposed pavilion basement would still be required for the mechanical room with a full hatch access staircase. The surface at grade would be constructed as an additional lawn surface for the park.

**LAWN**  
REPLACING REFLECTIVE WATER POND

**GRASS MOUND**  
REPLACING ARCHITECTURAL PAVILION

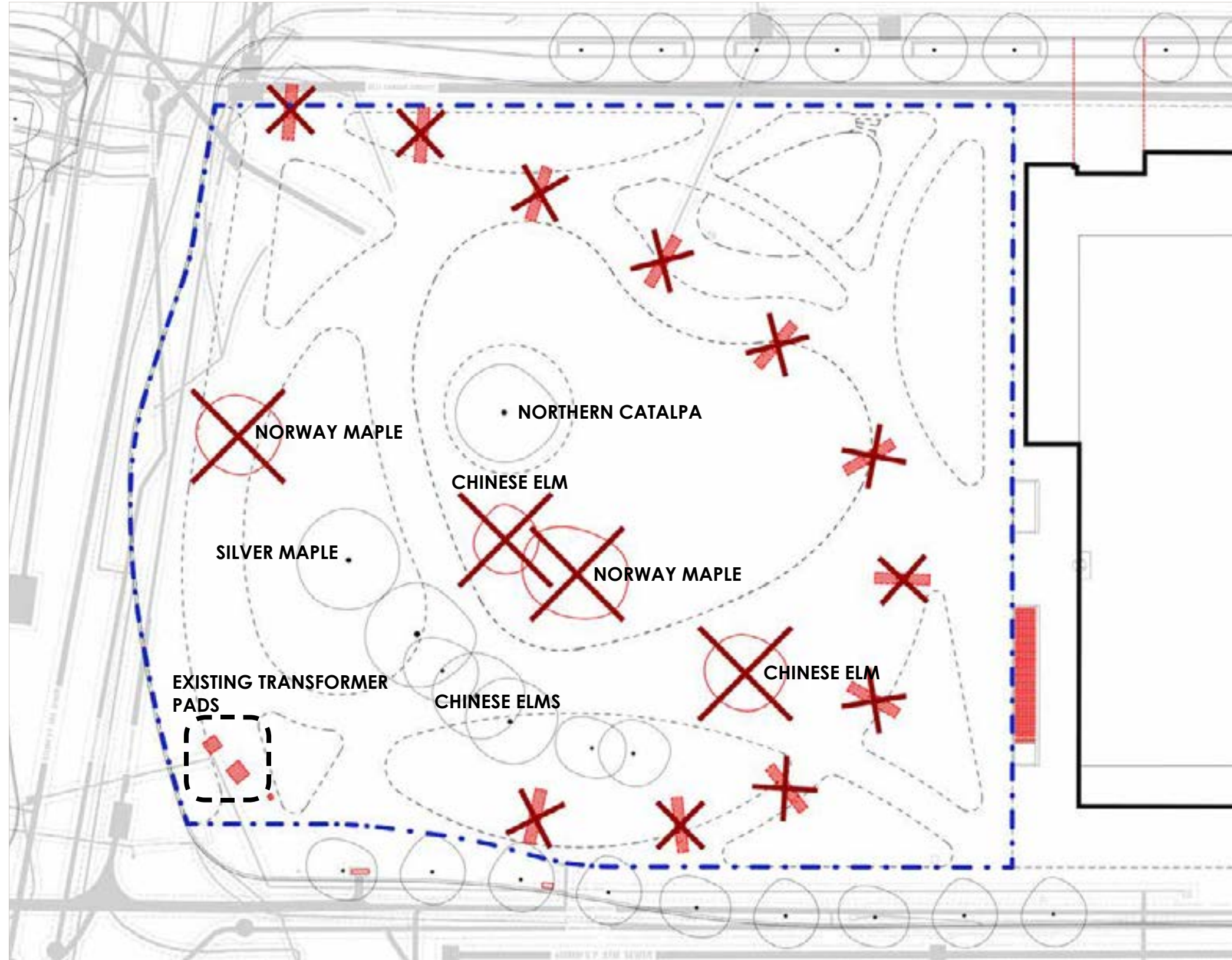
**VALUE ENGINEERING OPTIONS**  
DESIGN STRATEGY ALLOWING FLEXIBILITY FOR BUDGET COMPLIANCE



# EXISTING TREES

## A Site Already Endowed with Some Majestic Trees

Eight of the twelve trees currently on the site will be preserved. Five sizable Chinese Elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*) and one Silver Maple (*Acer saccharinum*), their layout mimicking the former outer circumference of the previous York Street off-ramp, trace a curved row of 'columns' to frame views to the basin from the south west threshold of the park. Where the proposed hard surfaces encroach within the driplines of these preserved trees, every effort will be made to minimize root disturbance, while also maintaining the formal integrity of the park. As already discussed, the Northern Catalpa (*Catalpa speciosa*) is also to be preserved and distinguished as a specimen tree on Catalpa Island.



# Not All Trees are Appropriate

The three Norway Maples (*Acer platanoides*) on the site will be removed. This species is a significant invasive that is particularly troublesome in Toronto for its adverse effect on the understory of the city's ravines, consequently undermining the stability of the slopes. The dense canopies of these trees prevent sun from reaching the ground, to the detriment of the grass underneath. For these reasons, the three Norway Maples on the site will be removed and replaced with indigenous species that grow in synergy with the park's proposed groundcovers.

The development of the spatial layout for Love Park has made a considered effort to preserve as many trees as possible, while creating a singular and easily recognizable formal language. To achieve this, two of the Chinese Elms have been removed for aesthetic reasons. They will be replaced by a significantly larger number of trees proposed for the final park overall.



# INTEGRATING EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

## With New Park Services

The Love Park block is surrounded by a complex weave of underground infrastructural constraints. Wherever there is overlap between the park and existing underground utilities, park features such as trees are positioned to minimize disruptions to existing systems and functions. Decisions about where to tie park services in to existing utilities take advantage of opportunities to minimize costs as well as disruptions to the surrounding public right-of-way.

The existing bents of the previous York Street off-ramp structure are to be demolished. They embody an infrastructure scale that does not conform to the scale vision of the park, and will be removed completely.

Most underground infrastructure along Queens Quay Blvd and Harbour Street is situated outside the park scope except for a few utilities such as a storm sewer, transportation control cabinet conduit, Rogers and Bell cable conduits, and some underground Toronto Hydro cables. Other than these, most of the park is free of underground encumbrances.

Irregularities in the west curb alignment along York Street offer some opportunities where the park extends over the water and a gas main, and gets near to the existing sanitary line. The strategy for planting at the west edge is to dodge these utilities in conformance with their respective clearances. This provides opportunities to hook up park connections for water and sanitary with little or no interruptions to surface traffic.



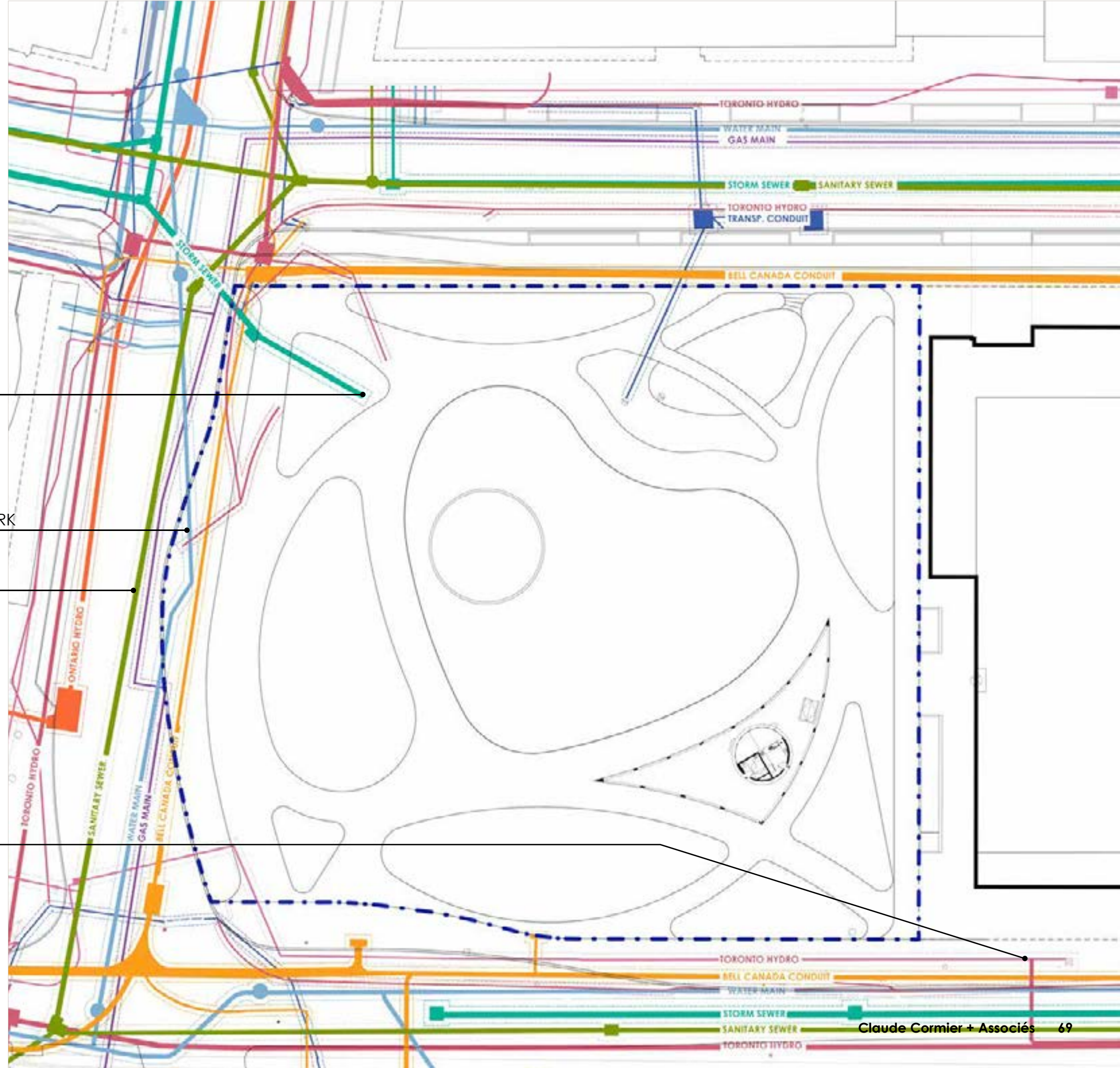


**STORM SEWER**  
CONNECT TO EXISTING TRUNK EXTENDING INTO PARK

**WATER MAIN**  
IRREGULAR CURB ALIGNMENT BRINGS WATER MAIN UNDER PARK

**SANITARY SEWER**  
CONNECT AT SHORTEST DISTANCE INTO ROW

**T.H.E.S.**  
CLOSEST CONNECTION POINT TO PAVILLION



# Toronto Hydro

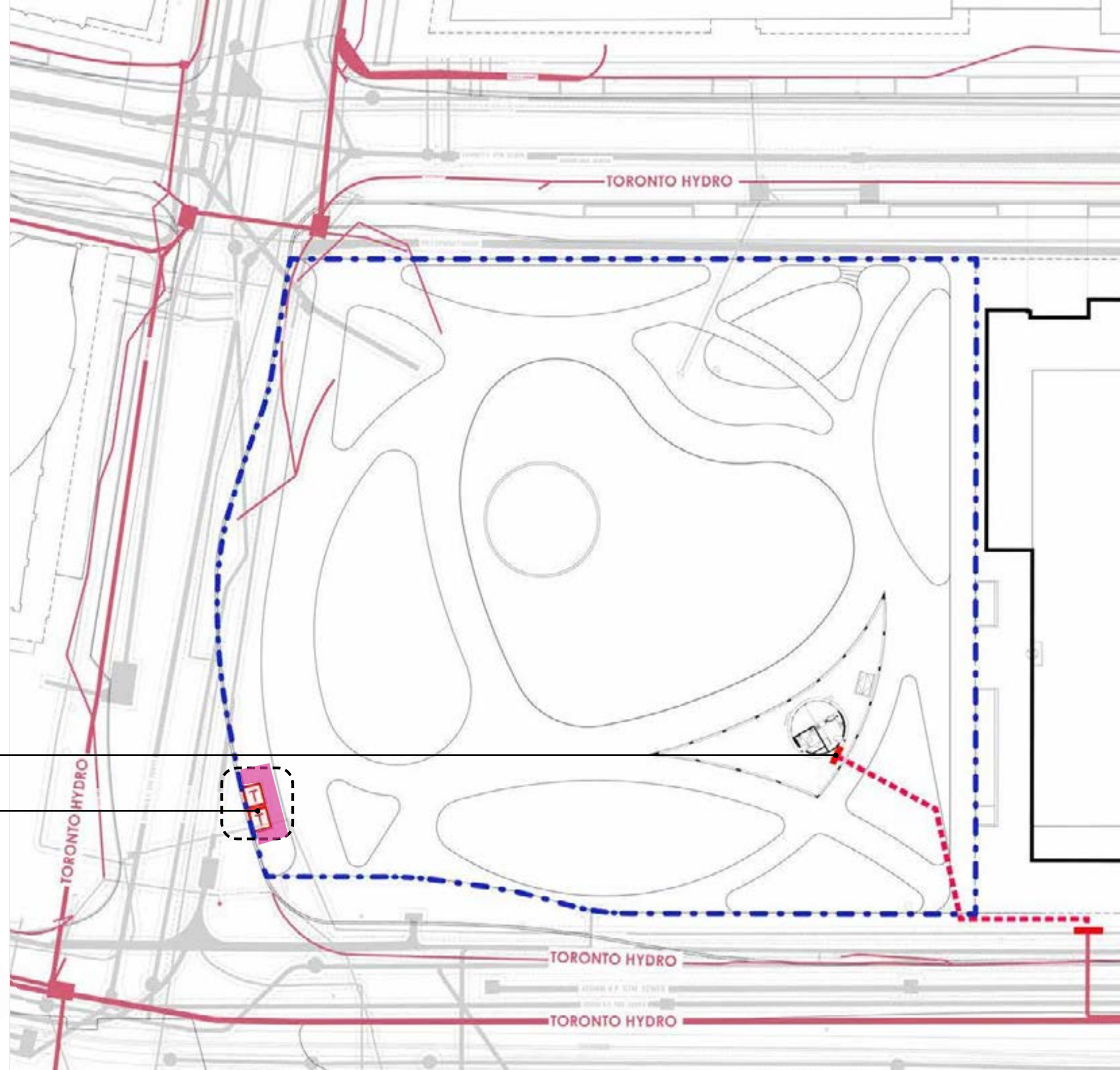
The park connection to the municipal power supply is proposed to branch from the south east corner near the line connecting to RBC Waterpark Place III. It will connect to the electrical panel in the mechanical room in the basement of the pavilion. The current BIA electrical panel box near the corner of York Street and Queens Quay West will also be relocated into the basement of the pavillion. A full hatch staircase built to code will facilitate easy access for regular operations and maintenance of these panels.

The two existing transformer pads also near the corner of York and Queens Quay West are proposed to be relocated further west near the bulge in the York Street curb alignment. Camouflaged amongst planting and out of view from any of the park's features, this relocation will maintain a clear sight line and opening at the park's south west corner, which is expected to be the most prominent gateway into Love Park.

Climbing roses on an independent support structure are an option to help camouflage the transformers from view when seen from the park or streetscape.



- POWER SUPPLY TO PARK
- BIA ELECTRICAL RELOCATED TO BASEMENT
- RELOCATED TRANSFORMER PADS



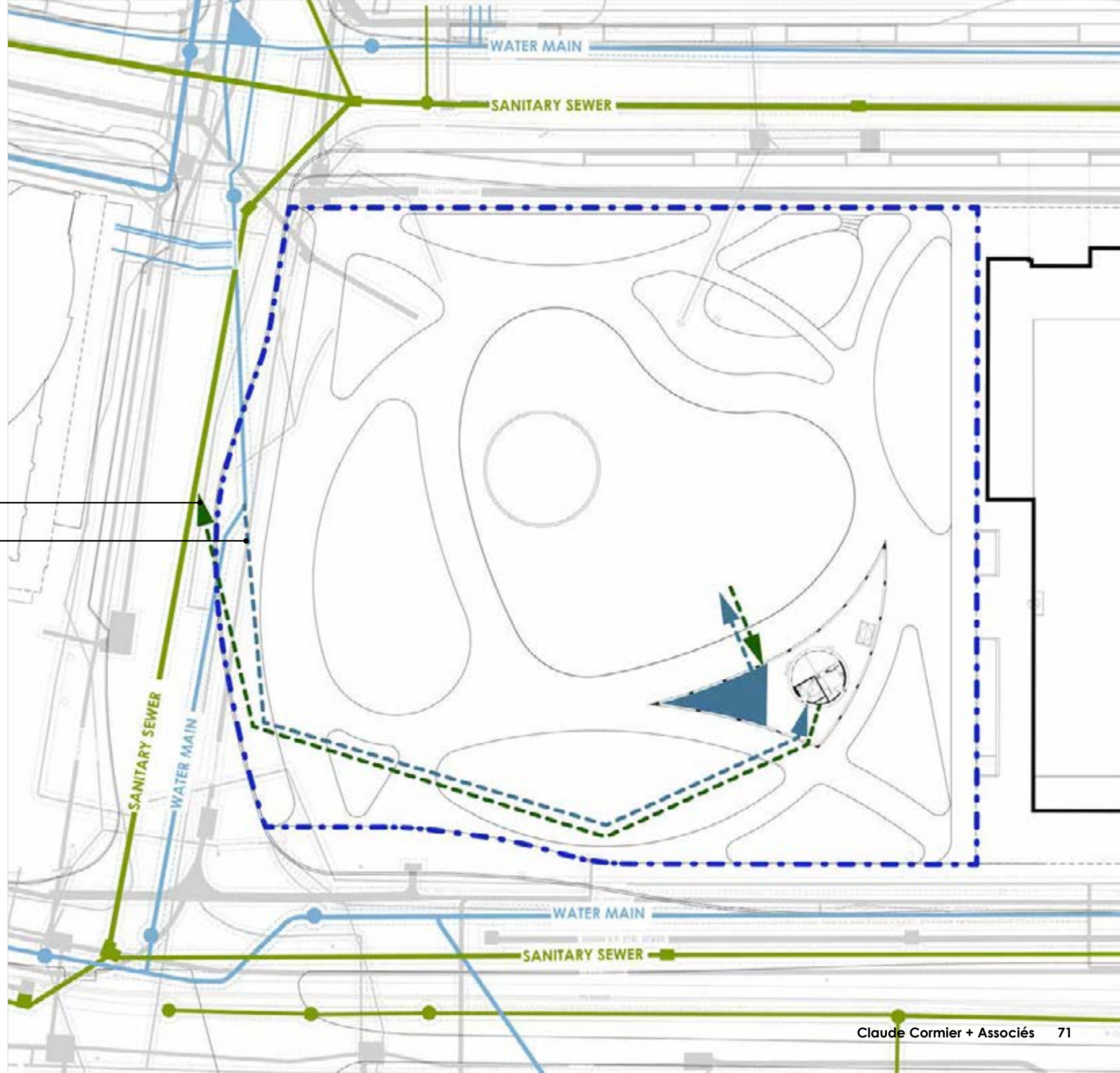
# Water and Sanitary

As previously described, the water service to the park will connect where the curb alignment extends over the York Street watermain, to eliminate the need for interruptions in the street during construction. The water line will connect to the mechanical room of the basement under the pavilion, supplying makeup water for the basin, as well as water requirements for the café kiosk, washroom, and drinking fountains. It will also provide a backup for the cistern of harvested runoff used for automatic irrigation.

Similar to the watermain strategy, the sanitary connection is proposed to link into the York Street sewer at the shortest distance from the park, minimizing disturbances to the street. The sanitary link will also connect to the mechanical room under the pavilion, evacuating wastewater from the kiosk, washroom, and discharges from the basin that cannot be reused in the park.

**SANITARY CONNECTION**

**WATER CONNECTION**



# Surface Drainage Strategy

Once accurate grades are known after the site survey is released, the vision for grading will divert hard-surface runoff to maximize on-site detention while sculpting a topography of pathways that is both functional and aesthetically considered. Surface drains (instead of catch basins) are positioned along two inverted ridges, establishing low lying isolines along the York Street east curb alignment, as well on the outside offset of the heart.

Area drains are proposed to be evenly spaced at about 10m apart. They will each be used as a point source to redistribute captured storm flows into the soil zones under the trees, in both the mounds and the silva cells. Surplus rainwater, including inputs from the roof of the pavilion, is diverted into a cistern below the pavilion. This will feed the primary water source for automatic irrigation, and possibly the washroom in the pavilion, and will be backed up by a connection to the city's potable water supply. When the capacity of this cistern has been topped during high volume precipitation events, excess water will overflow to the reservoir for the mechanical system of the heart-shaped basin.

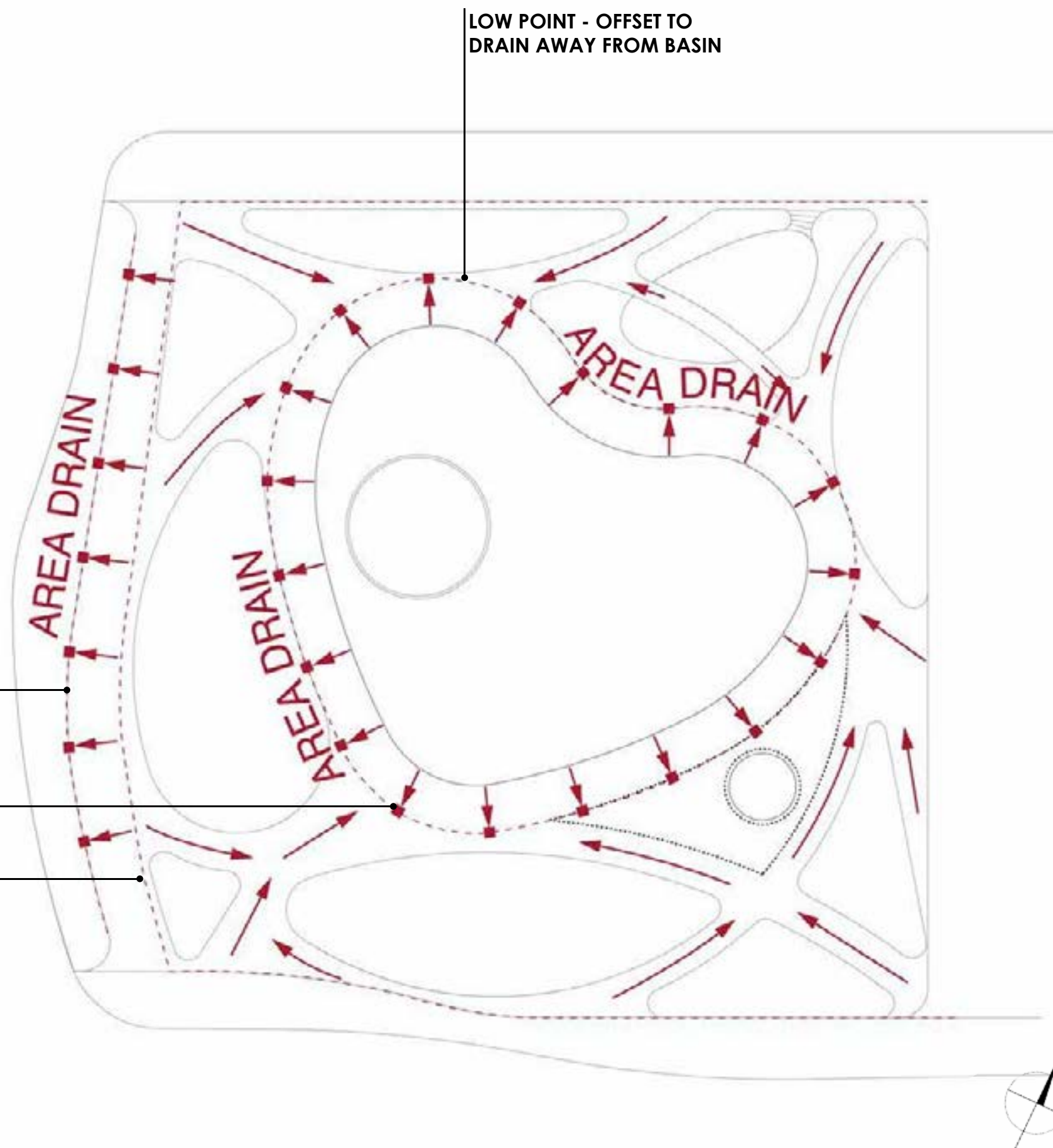
During extreme storms, the park topography and grading of the basin will be able to provide additional storage to promote a slow release of runoff after peak flows to the municipal system have subsided. The park mounds also augment a resilience strategy by providing high points of refuge in the event of extreme storms and inundations.

**LOW POINT - TO DRAIN TOWARDS PLANTING ZONE ALONG YORK STREET**

**SPACING BETWEEN AREA DRAINS 10m TO DIVERT WATER TO ROOT ZONES UNDERGROUND**

**HIGH POINT RIDGE ON YORK STREET PROMENADE**

**LOW POINT - OFFSET TO DRAIN AWAY FROM BASIN**



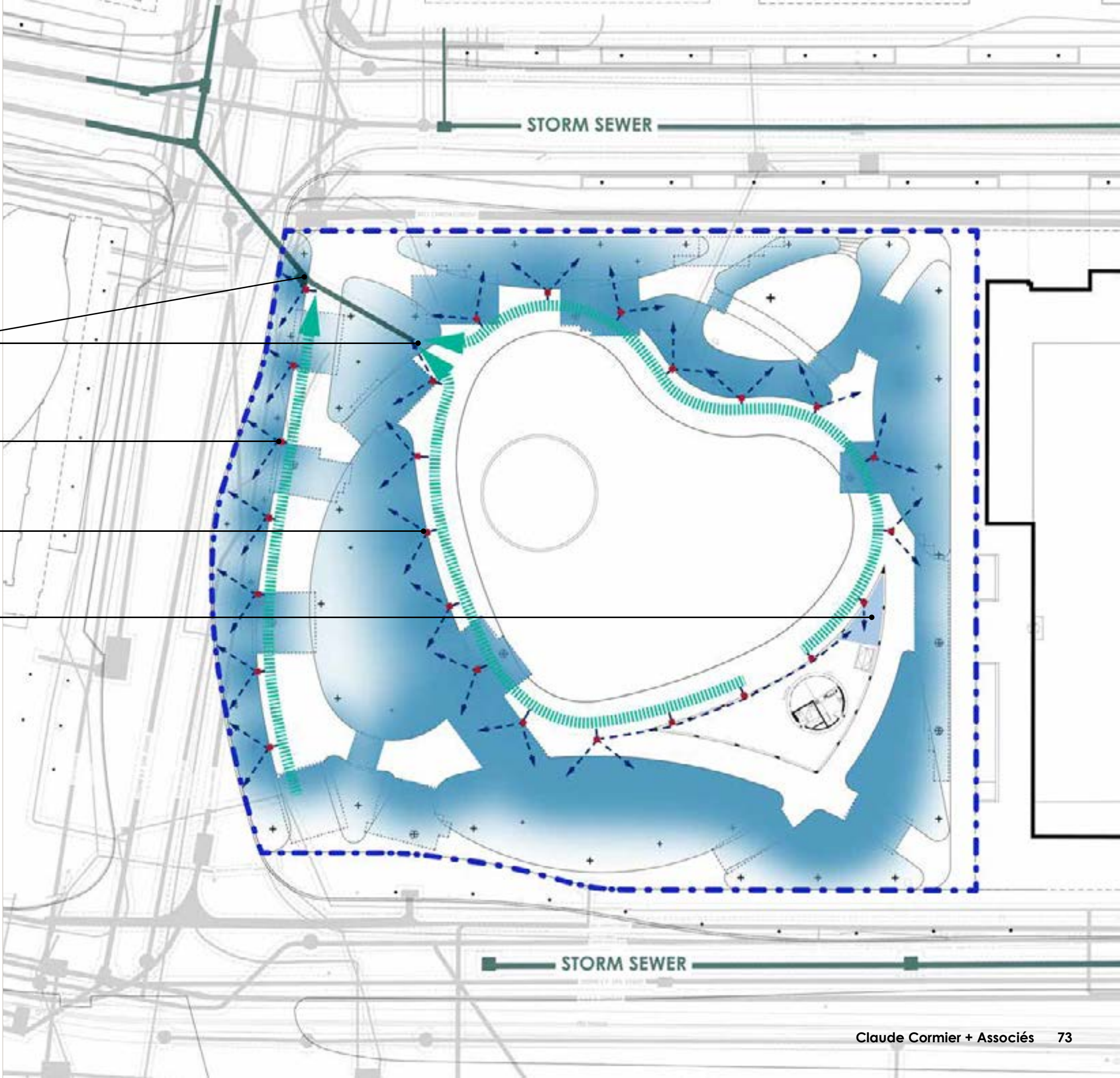
# Stormwater Management + Soil Recharge

CONNECTION TO EXISTING STORM SEWER

LOW POINT - TO DRAIN TOWARDS PLANTING ZONE ALONG YORK STREET

LOW POINT - TO DRAIN TOWARDS PLANTING ZONE ALONG HEART-SHAPED OFFSET

CISTERN IN PAVILLION BASEMENT



Love Park is designed to maximize the capture, retention, and reuse of storm runoff, and minimize volumes released to the municipal storm sewer. Any surplus water beyond the use and storage capacity of the park will be released, along with all sub-drain flows from under the trees. Existing storm connection already extend into the park site, with the benefit of reducing the surface interruptions during construction.

# Microclimate

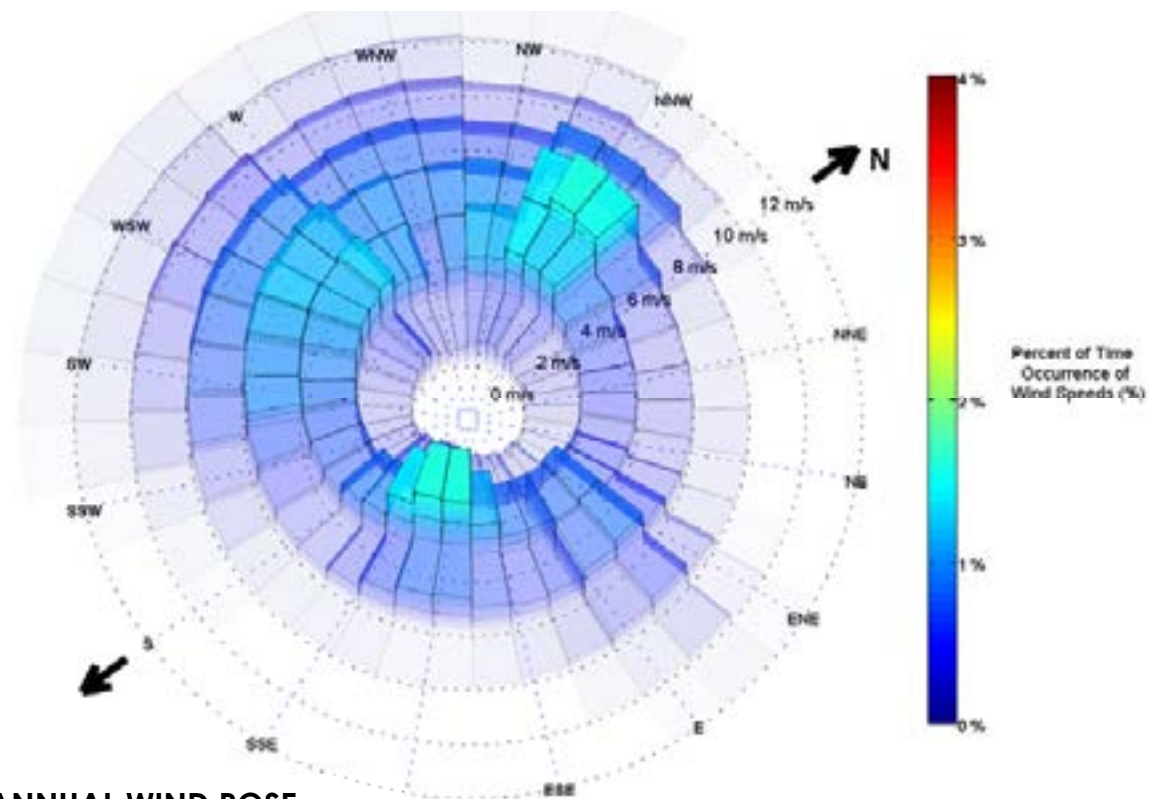
Temperatures in Toronto are such that naturally comfortable conditions prevail in the shoulder seasons when the ambient temperature is around 15 – 25 degrees Celsius.

Options to locally ameliorate climate will aim to extend comfort periods for longer periods of time throughout the year. This will be achieved, as a start, through planting as well as the design of the park pavilion. These features will provide shaded shelter to users in the hot summer months.

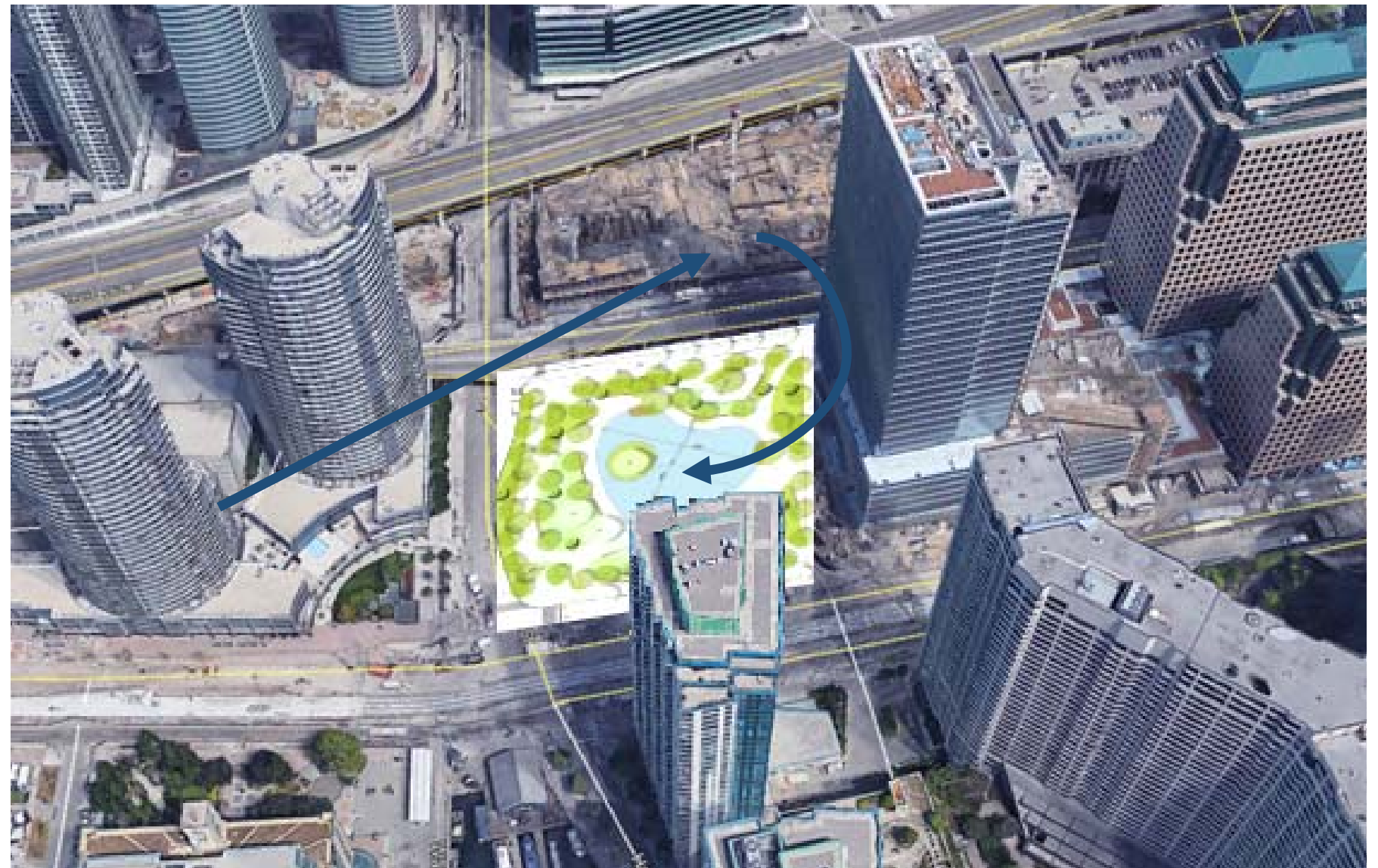
During winter, stronger westerly winds down washed into the park from the surrounding buildings will be buffered through landscape features in the park such as mounded topography and ground level planting.

The ultimate microclimate objective is to prolong comfortable conditions into the shoulder seasons through the design and layout of the park.

## STRONG WINTER WESTERLY WINDS TO BE MITIGATED AT THE PARK LEVEL



ANNUAL WIND ROSE





# EASY TO LOVE AND MAINTAIN

## Resilience, Self-sufficiency, and Long-term Durability

Sustainability based on fundamental landscape principles, common sense, and consideration to minimize the burden of long term maintenance will underlie the creation of the park. In addition to integrating robust materials that will weather generations of wear and tear, and optimizing the balance between user impacts and living systems, attention has been given to other issues as well to make life easier for Parks Operations, and spare Love Park from creeping into disrepair over time.





## Easy Access Mechanical Room

The mechanical room in the basement of the pavillion will house the mechanical and electrical system for the water used in the heart-shaped basin. The basement will also host the electrical panels for the park (as well as the one relocated for the BIA), the pump and cistern for the automatic irrigation system, and provide additional space for storage or park-related objects and maintenance items. This space will come with a full access code-compliant staircase and access hatch, to eliminate the exigencies that come with confined space entry protocol.

## Pathways Wide Enough for Maintenance Vehicles

All pathways vary in width between 3m and 6m, allowing sufficient space to accommodate Operations maintenance vehicles passing through the park.

## Avoiding Non-standard Elements

Park benches, light standards, garbage and recycling bins, as well as bike racks will be specified from typical catalogue items available from standard manufacturers. Consideration will be made to specify products that are familiar to Parks Operations and backed up by parts available within the city's inventory. Product sourcing priorities will be given to local suppliers and manufacturers for furniture as well as miscellaneous parts and surface materials in general.

## Fences: Protecting Plants, Preserving Lawns

All groundcover planting areas will be protected with a low fence (60cm) that enhances the visual appeal of the park, while subtly keep people and their pets out of sensitive planting areas.

Sodded areas throughout the park will consider ways to simplify sod restoration in what promises to be a heavily used surface. To aid with lawn maintenance and preservation, Love Park proposes to integrate a system of temporary fencing that will allow Parks Operations to discretely close off sodded areas for seasonal aeration, reseeding, and occasionally re-sodding. After a few weeks for repaired lawns to become established, the temporary fencing can be removed to restore for full access to grassed areas.

## Easy Access Cleanouts

Accumulated debris in drains and sumps will be designed for easy access and cleanout, to prevent unwanted buildup and eventual clogging systems. Debris accumulation and cleanouts will be considered for all passive irrigation as well as the water circulation system for the basin.

## Startup + Shutdown of the Water Works

Design work for the basin will be carried out in consultation with Parks Operations to ensure their specific needs are incorporated into the design of the basin. Startup and shutdown manuals will also be provided to guide staff on the seamless operation of the basin system at the start and end of each season, as well as during times when the basin will be emptied to become a heart-shaped plaza for activities and events.

## Love Park Maintenance Manual

A detailed description and schedule of on-going maintenance will be prepared at the end of the project to give direction for the long term sustainability of Love Park and its features. This manual will outline routine maintenance items such as winterization of the irrigation system, training of trees, repairs of planting and lawns, and clean out of drains.

## We Don't Go Away

After Love Park is built, we will continue to keep an eye out to monitor its well-being over time. We will monitor the space for signs of creep, and keep following up on specific issues that need to be addressed.

# TEAM

## Brought to you By...

### **PROJECT LEAD LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE:**

Claude Cormier + Associés  
[www.claudecormier.com](http://www.claudecormier.com)

### **ARCHITECTURE:**

gh3  
[www.gh3.ca](http://www.gh3.ca)

### **WATER FEATURE DESIGN:**

Dan Euser Water Architecture Inc.  
[www.dewinc.biz](http://www.dewinc.biz)

### **ENGINEERING + SUSTAINABILITY:**

Arup  
[www.arup.com](http://www.arup.com)

### **LIGHTING DESIGN:**

Ombrages / Éclairage Public  
[ombrages.com](http://ombrages.com)

### **PUBLIC ART CURATOR:**

Lesley Johnstone  
Montreal Museum of Contemporary Art



