

# TONGVA PARK

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DESIGN GRAPHICS III  
SPRING 2022



# TONGVA PARK STUDY

*“...landscape is so much more... it encapsulates society, politics and our own existence on a planet where we’re bound by natural forces. It’s how we give form to our land and cities. Ultimately it’s how we identify with places.”*

— James Corner

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MAP OF GREATER  
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



CLOSE UP OF  
SANTA MONICA

NOT TO SCALE

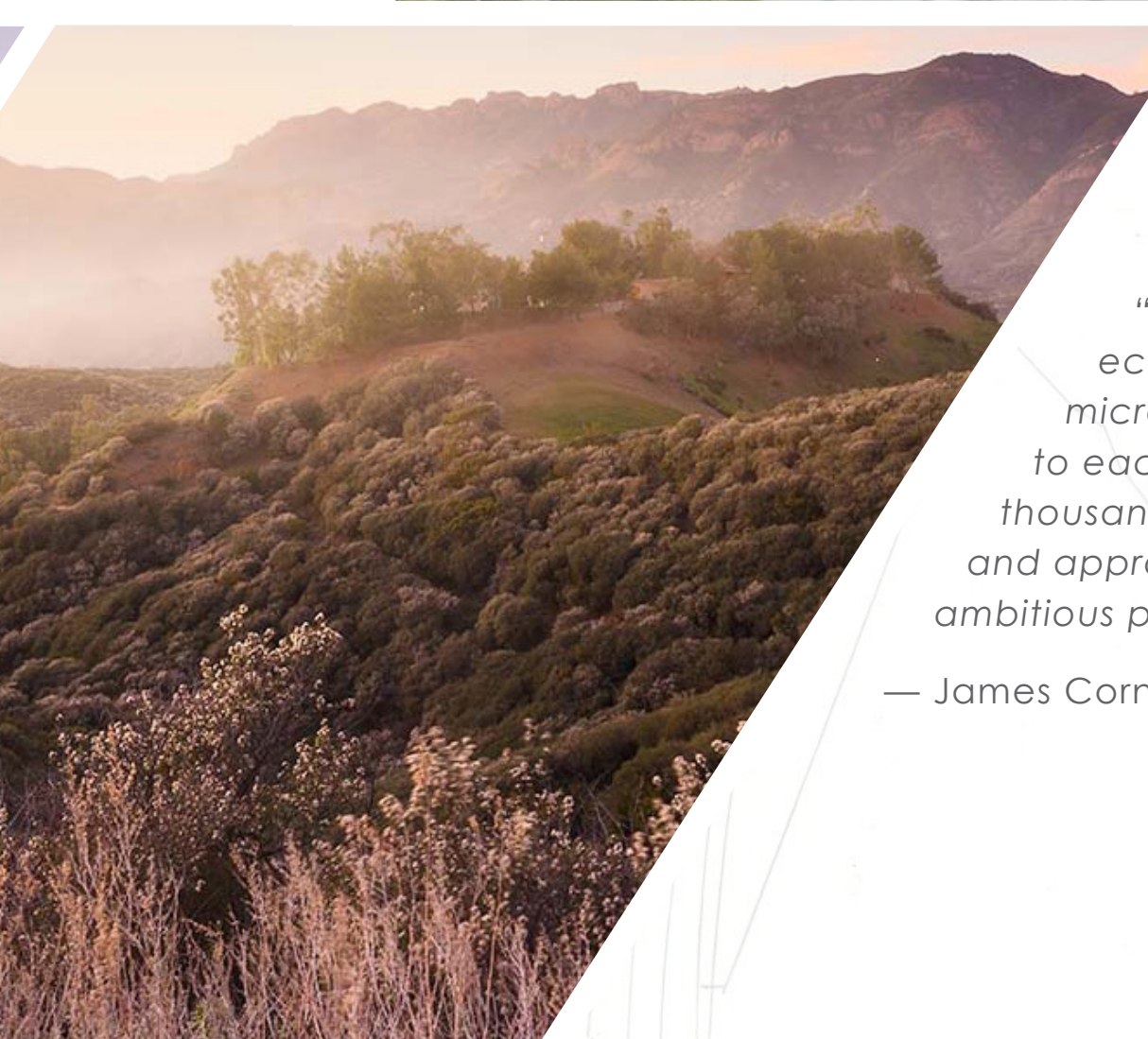


## SITE HISTORY + DESIGN

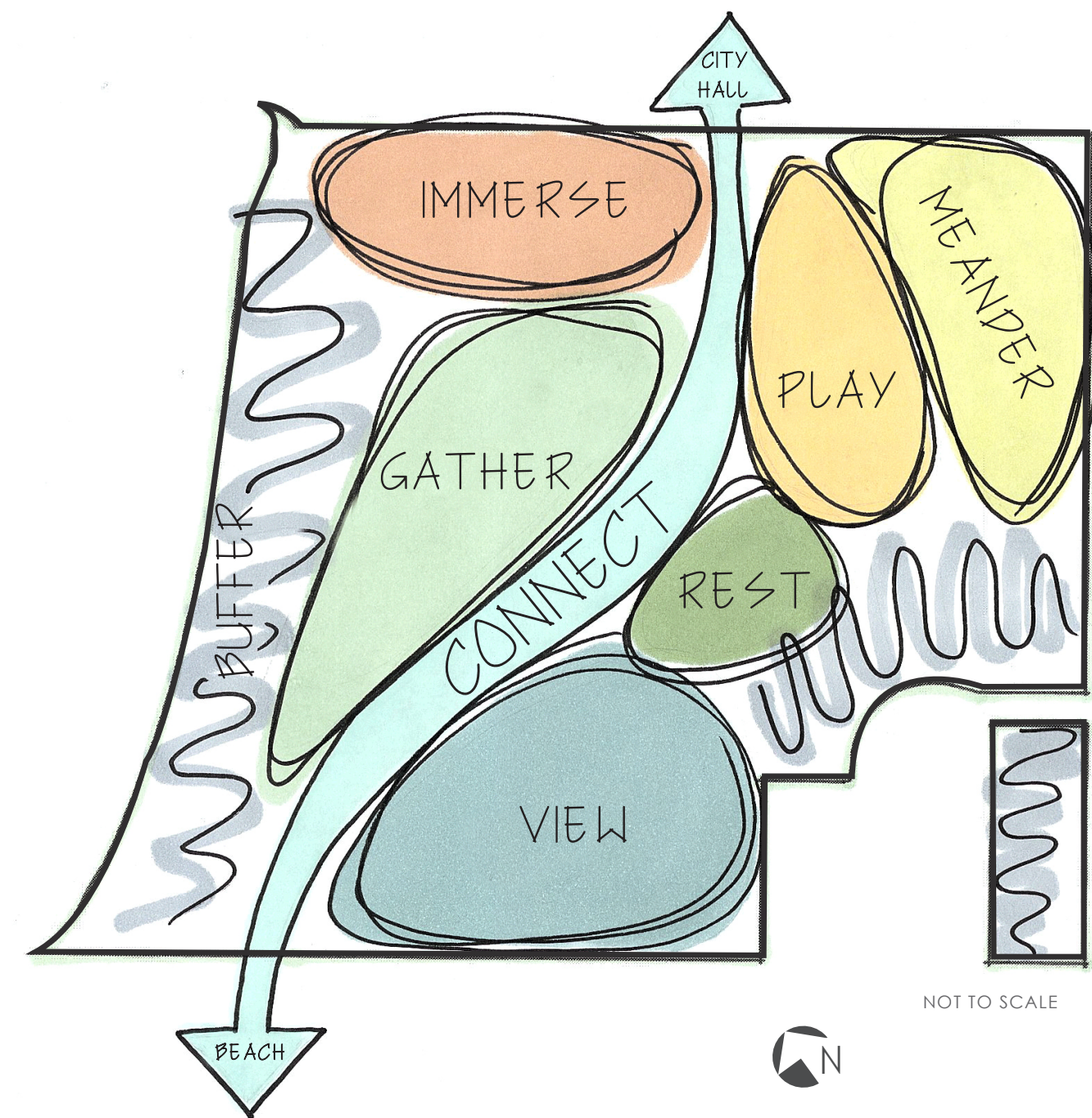
In partnership with the City of Santa Monica and community members, landscape architect James Corner transformed a barren parking lot into over six acres of meadows, textured hills, winding paths, lush gardens, and playgrounds, creating an urban destination within the heart of the city. Situated between the civic center and the Santa Monica Pier, Tongva Park serves to connect these two parts of the city and provides a buffer between the busy freeway and nearby multi-family residential complexes. The park's intertwining paths and mounds are modeled after California's arroyo riverbeds which bring water from the mountain ranges to the valleys and out to the ocean. Tongva Park is divided into four main sections: Observation Hill, Discovery Hill, Garden Hill, and Gathering Hill.

*"The most dramatic aspect of the site transformation has been the restoration of its ecosystem - new forest types and amended soils respond to the design's microclimates and showcase a diversity of species specifically suited to each area. Over three hundred carefully selected new trees, thousands of new plants, and hundreds of California native and appropriately adapted species are part of the ambitious planting scheme."*

— James Corner Field Operations







## THE CONCEPT

When the community was asked what they wanted from a new park they ranked places to rest, play, and views high on the list. The park's four distinct sections offer exactly that, all connected by a central pathway with smaller paths branching out like streams from a river, much like the arroyo that inspired the design.



WATER BAY  
GARDEN HILL  
GATHERING HILL  
OCEAN GATEWAY WATER FEATURE

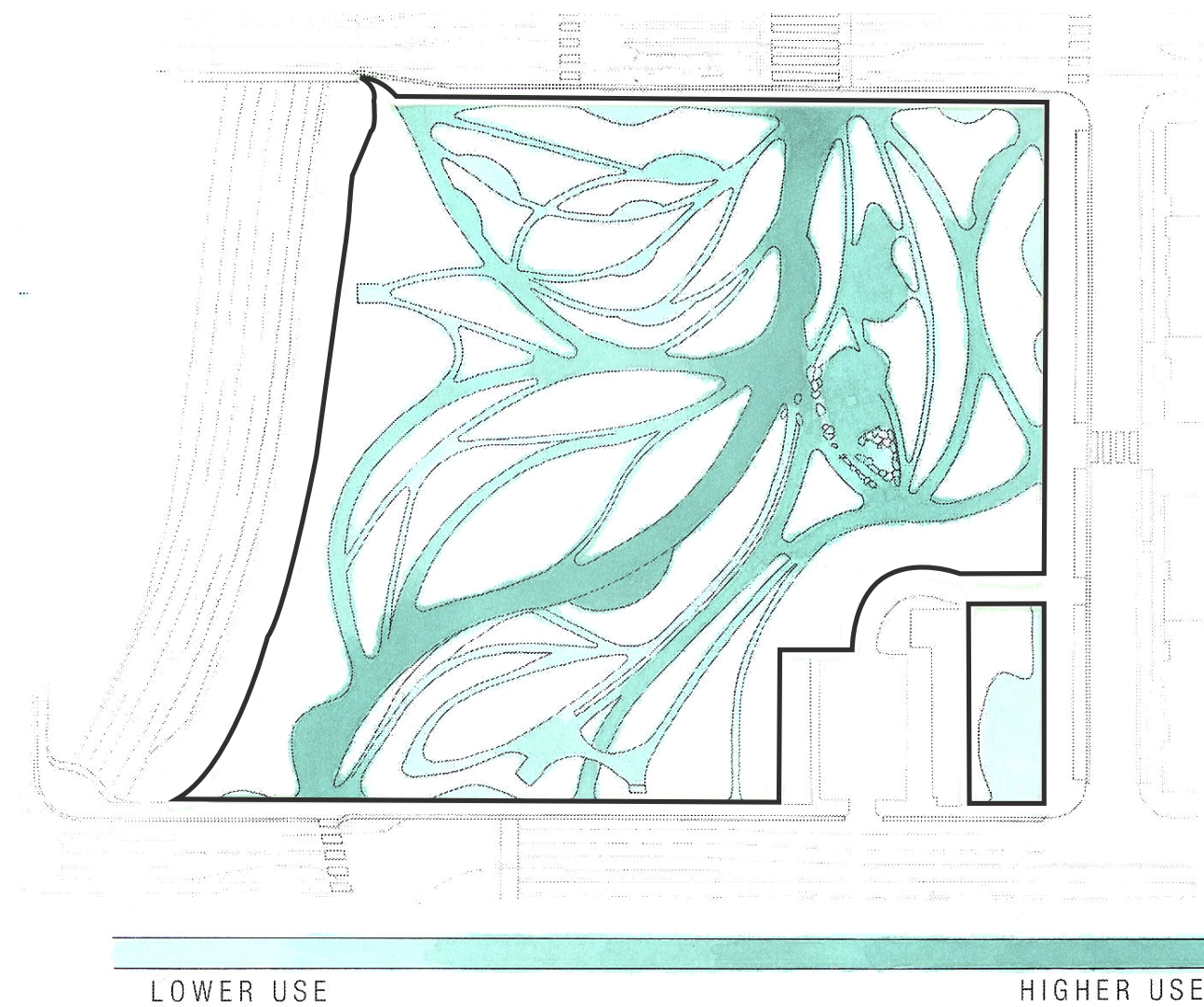


## THE PLAN









PATHWAY CIRCULATION



WATER STORY



## GROUND + WATER

The concept behind the main path becomes obvious when compared with the water features in the park. A waterfall and pool (Water Bay) closest to City Hall is connected by a subtle stream to another waterfall and pool (Ocean Gateway water feature). A simple indentation creates the stream and runs from City Hall to Ocean Avenue, mimicking the arroyos once present in this region and follows the main artery for pedestrian travel.

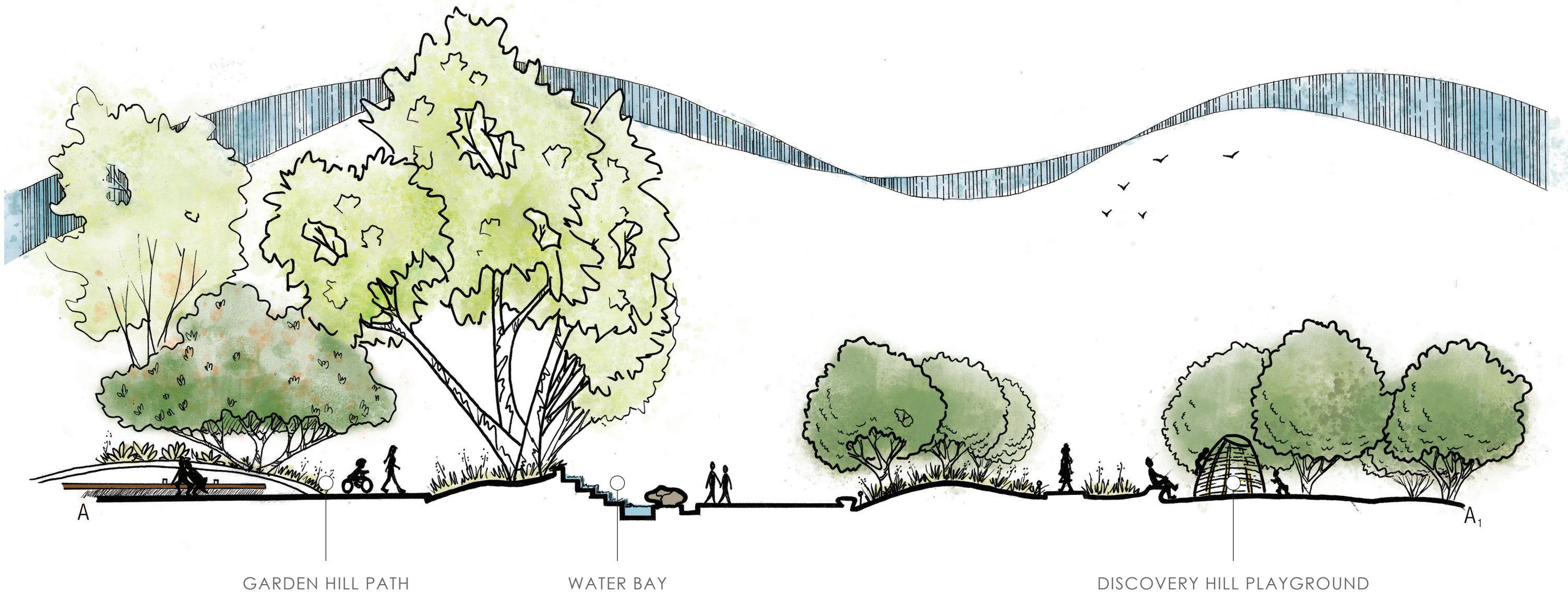
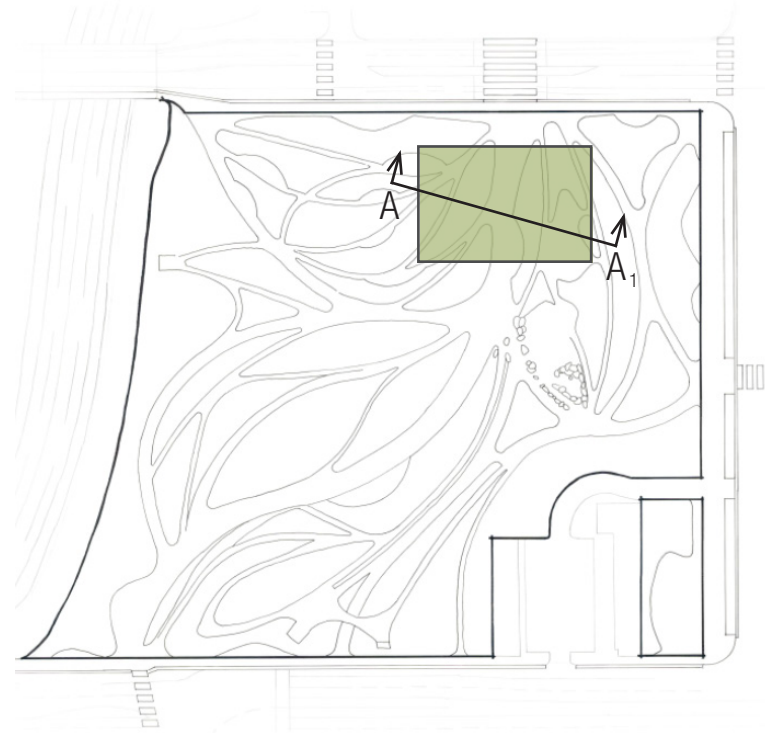
Smaller paths curve and branch into the park, bringing visitors to each section—around, over, and through the mounds—creating a sense that the park is more than its six acres, allowing for surprises and unique vistas.





# FOCUS ON: GARDEN HILL + DISCOVERY HILL

Garden Hill contains a series of seating alcoves and intimate display gardens that showcase native drought tolerant plants. Discovery Hill is a play space for children, offering a range of experiences and settings with hill slides, a music wall, water play, and custom play structures embedded into shaded landscape.



SECTION ELEVATION  
NOT TO SCALE





GARDEN HILL  
PATH ①



WATER BAY ②



DISCOVERY HILL  
PLAYGROUND ③



NOT TO SCALE





## THANK YOU'S

Thank you to my instructors, David Squires, Rebecca Schwaner, and Laura Razo. You have given me tools that I will use for the rest of my life, both in landscape architecture and out. Details matter. So does hierarchy. Yellow draws the eye. Try *literally* connecting the dots. Set yourself up for success with systems and structure... but don't be afraid to jump off blindly and go for it!

To my cohort—without your constant support and inspiring work I know my motivation and designs would have suffered.  
Thank you for pushing me to be better!

And, to Clayton Daily, thank you for sharing your photography skills with all of us! You captured the park's lush texture and beauty.



## BIO

Jen Moody is a California native with aspirations to create public and private environments that support local ecology and infuse beauty into our surroundings. For the last decade Jen has been an event planner and looks forward to a career designing lasting spaces. She lives in Long Beach with her husband, son, an old gentleman cat, and scruffy nerfherder of a dog.



## THOUGHTS

Tongva was a challenging and valuable introduction into the field of landscape architecture. While training my hand how to draw correct line weights I many times cursed the varied topography and constantly curving lines. It wasn't until second quarter, during site inventory, that I really looked at the park and considered not just the lines on the paper but also what they physically translated into and why the design was what it was. I came to appreciate the significance of the concept and its place in Santa Monica. It is inspiring to see such a high profile example of repurposing underutilized land to make something beautiful and lasting for the community.

I hope my designs can someday contribute to this movement of reclaiming public space.

*"Once there were parking lots,  
now it's a peaceful oasis"*

— Talking Heads

TONGVA  
PARK

Image: Clatyon Daily

## CREDITS

Information, photos,  
and artwork not original  
to Jen Moody or otherwise  
credited within can be found  
at the following websites:

- [asla.org](http://asla.org)
- [fieldoperations.net](http://fieldoperations.net)
- [latimes.com](http://latimes.com)
- [rwongphoto.com](http://rwongphoto.com)
- [santamonica.gov](http://santamonica.gov)
- [santamonicapier.org](http://santamonicapier.org)
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