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SANTA MONICA: ECHOES OF AN ANCIENT LAND

Santa Monica, with its famous palm-lined streets, stunning beaches, and charming pier, represents the essence of California coastal living. Beyond its natural beauty and lively urban scene, Santa Monica is a center of creativity and innovation. Housing tech startups, art studios, and well-known cultural spots like the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium and the Bergamot Station Arts Center, the city encourages a lively atmosphere of exploration and learning.

In landscape design, a meticulous and insightful analysis of the city, its inhabitants, history, and overall context is essential. Understanding the intricacies of the cityscape, including its cultural heritage, demographic makeup, and social dynamics, provides essential insights for crafting meaningful and effective designs. By exploring the city's history, one can uncover valuable narratives and symbols that can be integrated into the landscape, creating a sense of place and identity. Moreover, a comprehensive understanding of the local community's needs and preferences, ensures that the design resonates with its users, fostering a sense of ownership and pride. Ultimately, every element of the landscape design should be purposeful and interconnected, serving not only aesthetic goals but also functional, social, and environmental objectives.



Santa Monica has a rich history deeply intertwined with the Tongva people, the indigenous inhabitants of the Los Angeles Basin and the Southern Channel Islands. Also known as the Gabrieleño-Tongva, they were the original inhabitants of this diverse landscape, which included coastal plains, rolling hills, lush river valleys, and rugged island terrain.

The Tongva, known for their sophisticated maritime culture and vibrant community, lived in the region for thousands of years before Spanish colonization. Santa Monica itself derives its name from Saint Monica, but its land and resources were integral to the Tongva way of life.

Tongva Park in Santa Monica stands as a tribute to the enduring legacy of the Tongva people. The park serves as a living homage, featuring elements that reflect their cultural heritage and connection to the natural environment. Through its design elements, Tongva Park honors the profound influence of the Tongva people on the region's history.





Tongva Park draws inspiration from the rugged and dynamic landscapes of Southern California, particularly the arroyos, washes, and ravines that are characteristic of the region. These natural features, shaped by the flow of water over millennia, create a unique topography that is both beautiful and ecologically rich.

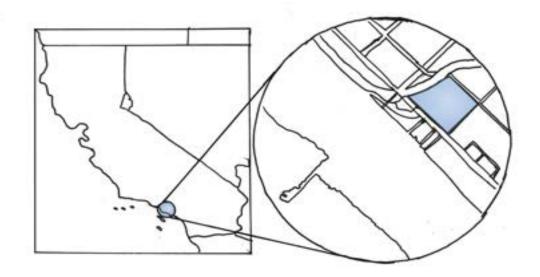
The design incorporates meandering pathways, undulating terrain, and sculptural elements that mimic the contours of arroyos and ravines. The park's landscape features rolling hills, elevated overlooks, and sunken gardens, creating a sense of depth and movement reminiscent of these geological formations.



By integrating these elements into the park's design, Tongva Park not only celebrates the beauty of Southern California's natural landscapes but also highlights the importance of preserving and protecting these fragile ecosystems. Through its thoughtful interpretation of arroyos, washes, and ravines, the park invites visitors to explore and appreciate the rich biodiversity and geological diversity of the region, while also fostering a deeper connection to the land and its cultural heritage.

SITE ANALYSIS

LOCATION



Situated along the scenic coastline of Southern California, Tongva Park in Santa Monica serves as an oasis surrounded by the busy urban landscape. Its strategic location adjacent to Santa Monica City Hall, places it at the heart of the city's cultural and administrative hub. Moreover, with its proximity to Los Angeles International Airport and convenient access to major highways, Santa Monica serves as a gateway to the diverse attractions of the Greater Los Angeles area. This central and convenient location not only enhances the accessibility of Tongva Park for visitors from near and far but also underscores its significance as a focal point for community gatherings and cultural events. From its gardens to its stunning vistas of the Pacific Ocean, Tongva Park stands as a testament to Santa Monica's commitment to preserving its natural beauty and enriching the lives of residents and tourists alike.

ARCHITECTURAL BLEND

Santa Monica's architectural style goes from early Spanish colonial influences to its mid-century modern aesthetic, the city boasts a diverse array of architectural gems. Throughout the city, charming bungalows and Craftsman-style homes pay homage to its early 20th-century roots, while Mediterranean-inspired villas scattered upscale neighborhoods along the coast. The colorful buildings lining the beachfront evoke a more vibrand and youthful atmosphere. These charming structures, painted in hues of blue, yellow, and pink, add a touch of character to Santa Monica's iconic shoreline.







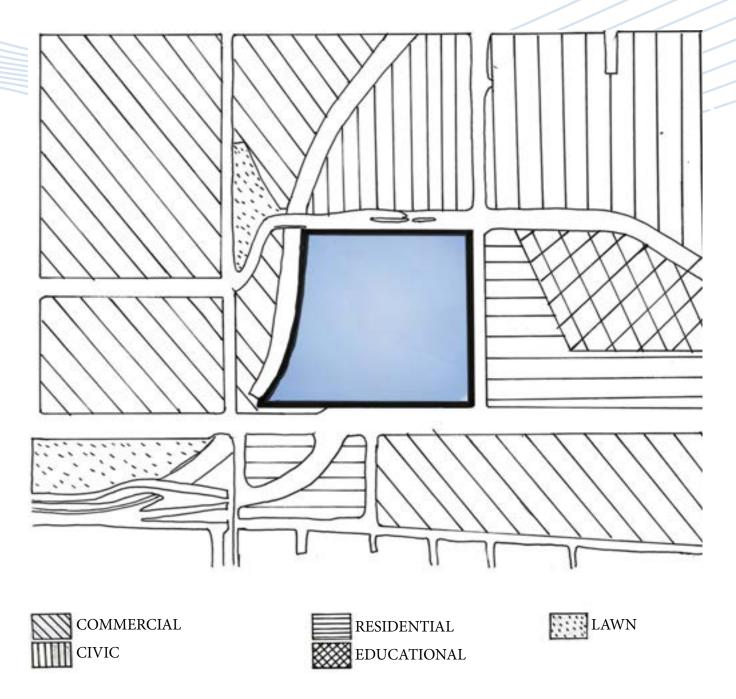
This aerial image showcases the iconic Santa Monica City Hall and the adjacent Tongva Park. The City Hall stands prominently with its historic architecture, serving as a central administrative building.



The image above captures a vibrant section of Ocean Avenue, renowned for its array of popular restaurants and bustling atmosphere. Below, View of Palisades Park and Santa Monica Beach, with its golden sands, rose skies and vibrant coastal scenery.



CONTEXT



Situated adjacent to the Santa Monica City Hall, the park is at the core of the city's civic activities, providing a green space for public events and gatherings. The nearby residential neighborhoods, characterized by a mix of historic homes and modern apartments, contribute to a diverse community that visits the park. The commercial district, offers a variety of shops, restaurants, and entertainment options, drawing both locals and tourists. Additionally, educational institutions such as Santa Monica College and various public schools are in close proximity, enhancing the park's role as an educational resource and outdoor classroom.



Santa Monica City Hall: This historic Art building, constructed in the 1930s, features a stunning fountain at its entrance, providing a inspiring setting for the city's administrative center.



Aerial view of the residential area in front of Tongva Park. This proximity to homes underscores the park's importance in enhancing the quality of life for the local community. The image below is a view of Palisades Park, one of the lawn areas indicated in the diagram.



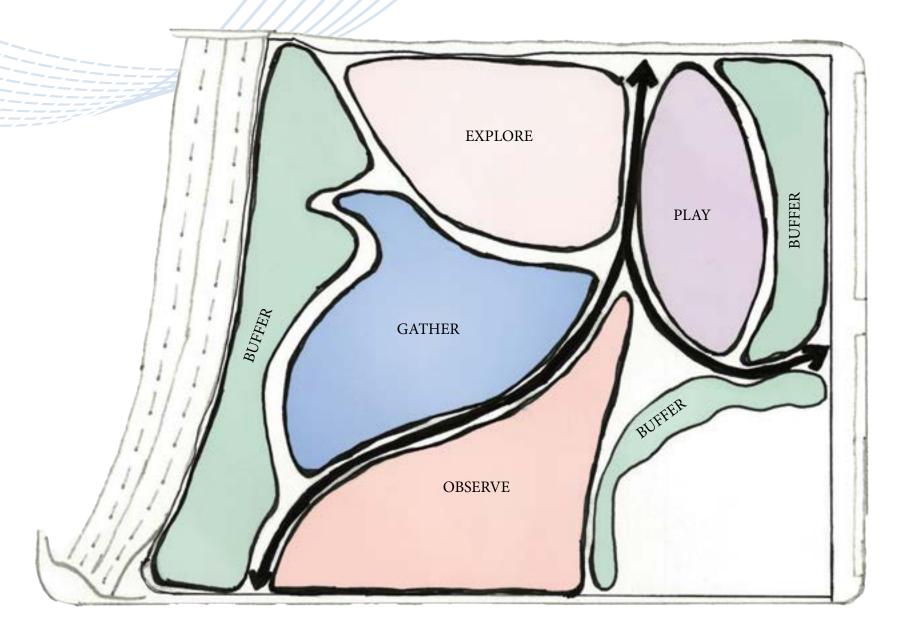
EXPLORE: A path in the north corner of the park, designed for exploration, features native plants, a proeminet Naked Coral Tree, and intimate seating spaces.



GATHER: Surrounded by gently sloping hills and lush vegetation, the Tongva amphitheater provides a harmonious blend of natural beauty and functional design. Below are Seaside Daisies, a California native flower, flourishing around the Park during spring.



CONCEPT



Tongva Park embodies four core concepts: explore, play, gather, and observe, each thoughtfully integrated into its design. Visitors are invited to explore the park's winding pathways and discover its diverse landscapes, from rolling hills to beautiful water features. The play areas, equipped with imaginative structures and natural elements, provide children with dynamic spaces to engage and have fun. Central gathering spots, such as open lawns and shaded seating areas, encourage people to gather for picnics, community events, and social interaction. Finally, strategically placed benches and viewing platforms offer spots to observe the ocean, the Ocean Avenue and the vibrant life of the park, fostering a deeper connection with the environment.



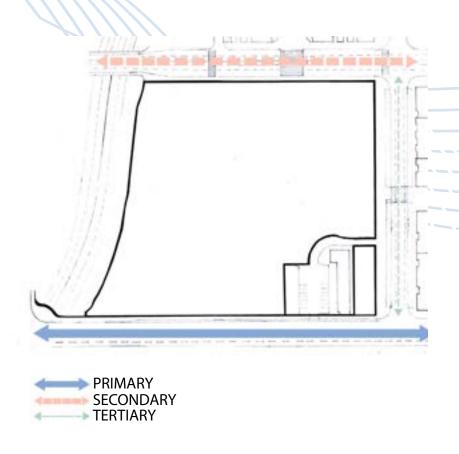
PLAY: Playground displaying Native American-inspired structures. These features are designed to mimic the architectural style of the traditional homes historically used by the Tongva people.



OBSERVE: View from the observation basket, capturing Ocean Avenue and the beach. Below is an example of a BUF-FER, where dense vegetation and shrubs serve as a barrier, reducing noise and preventing kids from venturing onto the streets.

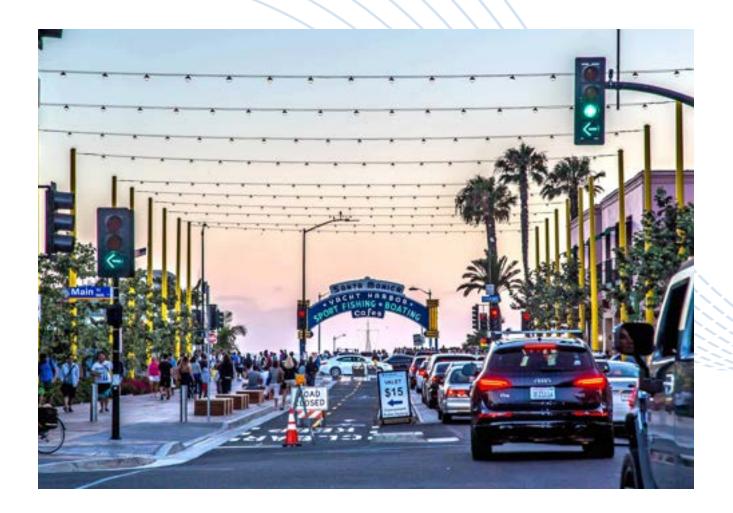


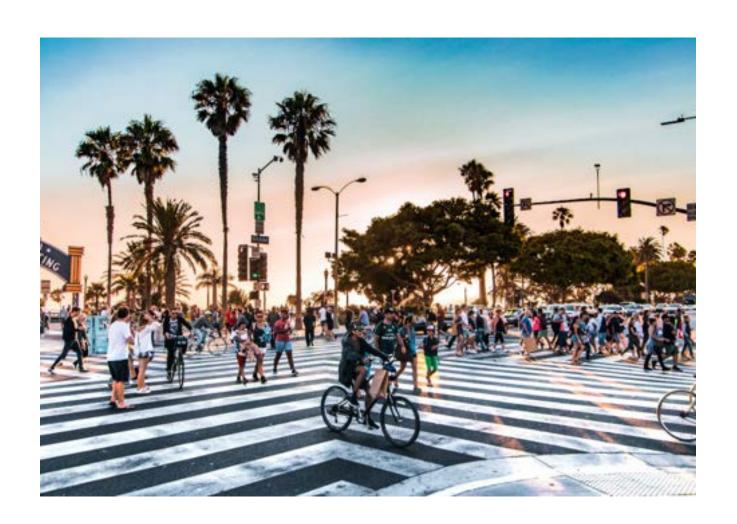
VEHICULAR



Vehicular circulation around Tongva Park is defined by a hierarchical system of roads that significantly affect the park's accessibility and atmosphere. Ocean Avenue, the primary circulation, runs along the park's western edge and serves as a major route for both local and tourist traffic. This bustling avenue ensures easy access to the park but also introduces noise that the park's design mitigates through strategic plantings and landscape buffers. Main Street, a secondary road, borders the park to the east, providing a slightly quieter but still vital connection to Santa Monica's commercial and residential areas. Olympic Drive, the tertiary route, runs adjacent to the southern boundary of the park, facilitating local traffic and access to nearby civic institutions, including Santa Monica City Hall. This well-structured circulation network ensures that Tongva Park is both accessible and insulated from the urban hustle, maintaining its role as a urban retreat.

Vehicular circulation diagrams are crucial tools for landscape architects in the design process as they provide a comprehensive understanding of traffic flow and its impact on a site. These diagrams help architects visualize how vehicles will move around and through a landscape, enabling them to make informed decisions about access points, parking areas, and drop-off zones. By analyzing vehicular circulation, landscape architects can design spaces that are safe, efficient, and harmonious with their surroundings. They can identify potential congestion points, mitigate noise and pollution, and ensure that pedestrian pathways are safe and pleasant.

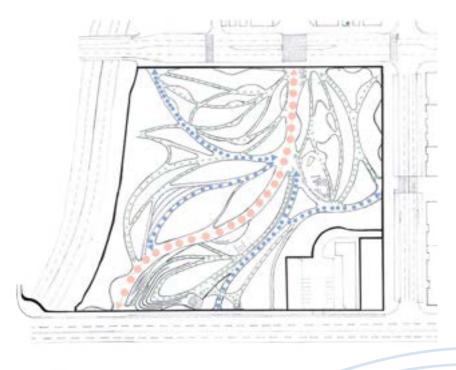




A pedestrian circulation diagram plays a vital role in both the site analysis and design process, providing a visual representation of how people will move through and interact with a space. By mapping out pathways, connections, and destinations, landscape architects can gain valuable insights into circulation patterns and user flow, informing decisions about layout, access points, and amenities. Moreover, design elements such as the width of pathways can significantly influence how visitors perceive and navigate a space. Narrow pathways may encourage a slower pace and a more intimate experience, while wider paths can accommodate higher volumes of foot traffic and convey a sense of openness and activity.

PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

Pedestrian circulation at Tongva Park is thoughtfully designed with primary, secondary, and tertiary pathways that seamlessly connect visitors with the park's core concepts: explore, play, observe, and gather. The primary pathway, broad and easily navigable, guide visitors through the park's main areas, inviting them to explore the diverse landscapes and discover key features. This path lead to secondary pathways that branch off into the core concept areas. Tertiary pathways, narrower and more intimate, wind through gardens and quiet corners, providing spots for observation and reflection. In gathering spaces, such as open lawns and shaded seating areas, the circulation design ensures easy access and flow, facilitating social interaction and community events. This hierarchical circulation system enhances the visitor experience by creating a dynamic and interconnected environment.





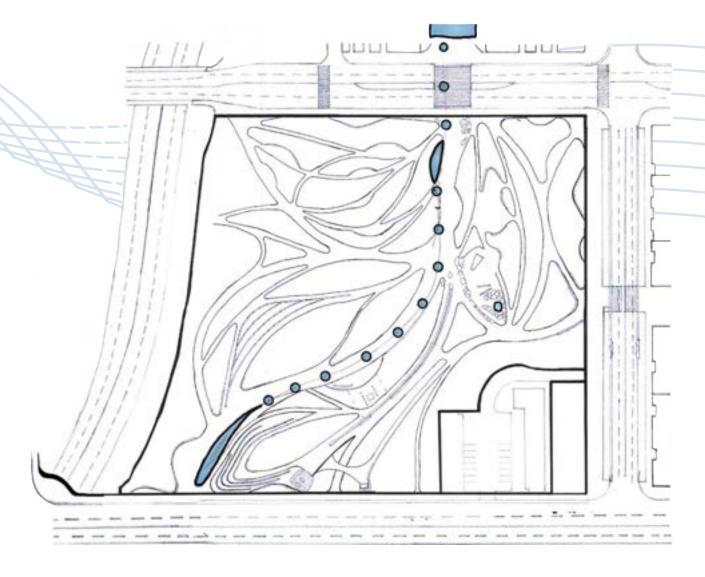
The fountain in front of Santa Monica City Hall stands as a centerpiece, radiating elegance and grandeur. Its design boasts intricate patterns and graceful arcs, with water gracefully cascading down multiple tiers.



The splash pads in Tongva Playground offer interactive water play experience for children. Below is the main fountain at Tongva Park near Ocean Avenue is a captivating centerpiece amid lush greenery.



WATER FEATURES



At Tongva Park, water features serve as dynamic elements that symbolize the natural flow of a river. Mimicking the meandering path of a river, these features wind gracefully through the park's landscape, creating a sense of movement and continuity. Beginning near the iconic Santa Monica City Hall, where the flow originates, the water features meander gently through lush gardens and gathering spaces, offering moments of rest and reflection. As visitors follow the path of the water, they are led towards Ocean Avenue, where the flow culminates in a spectacular cascade or reflecting pool, symbolizing the river's journey's end as it merges with the vastness of the ocean. This symbolic representation of water flowing from the heart of the city to the coastline not only celebrates Santa Monica's natural beauty but also reinforces the park's connection to its surrounding urban context. Through its carefully choreographed water features, Tongva Park invites visitors to embark on a metaphorical journey.



The water fountain in front of Main Street appears as a seamless continuation of the fountain in front of City Hall, creating a unified and harmonious water feature sequence that flows to the ocean.



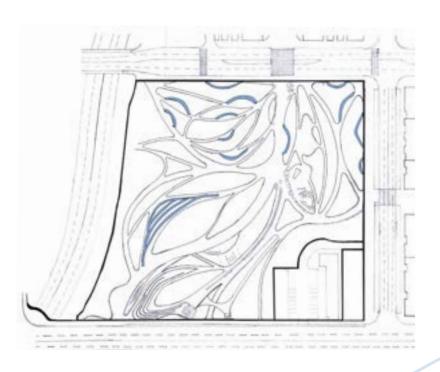
The main water fountain is also surrounded by seating areas and vibrant plantings, this fountain serves as an oasis where people can gather, relax, and enjoy the sounds of flowing water.



RECREATION

PASSIVE

RETAINING WALLS



The recreation diagram of Tongva Park emphasizes a balance between passive and active recreational opportunities, with the majority of the park designated for passive activities and a smaller area dedicated to active play. The passive areas, comprising expansive lawns,gardens, and seating areas. These spaces are designed to encourage leisurely strolls, picnics, and quiet moments of reflection.

ACTIVE

In contrast, a compact active play area, featuring creative structures and interactive elements, offers opportunities for more dynamic and energetic play. Here, children can engage in imaginative play, climb, and explore. Creating a playground Attracts families and school groups, ensuring that the park becomes a cherished destination for both leisurely outings and educational adventures.

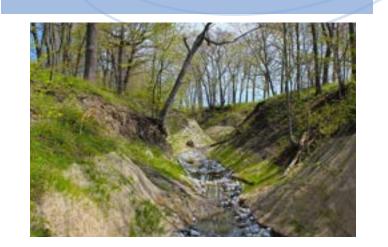
The diagram representing all the retaining walls at Tongva Park intricately weaves together shapes and inspirations reminiscent of a system of arroyos and meanders, evoking a natural landscape. These retaining walls, strategically placed throughout the park, mimic the sinuous curves and rugged contours of arroyos, creating dynamic visual interest while serving practical purposes.

Their organic forms and textured surfaces pay homage to the natural beauty of the surrounding environment, blurring the lines between man-made structure and natural landscape.

The image below illustrates how closely the shape, form and colors of the retaining walls mimic a ravine, creating the sensation of actually walking throught it









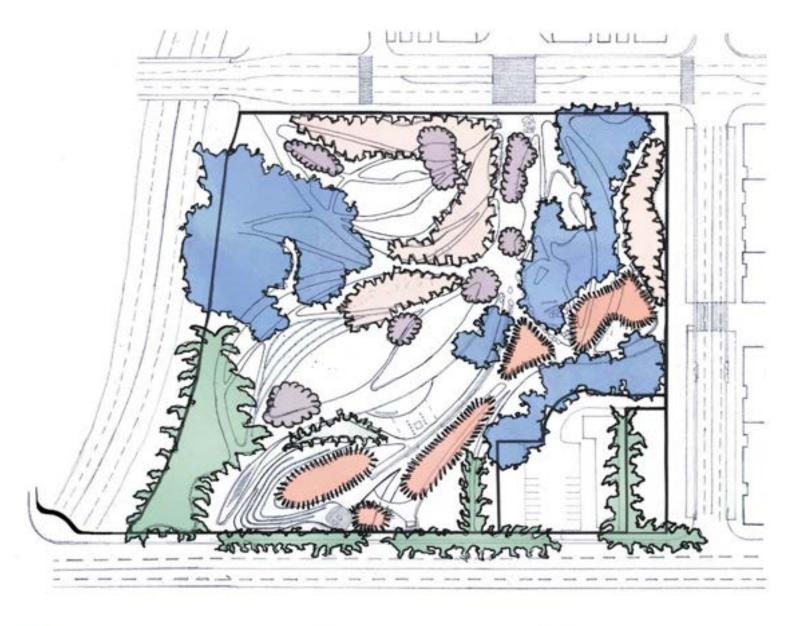
View of the north corner of the park showing the sycamore and specimen tree mix. The northern area is characterized by its vast and open space with numerous shrubs and California native plants.

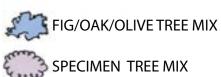


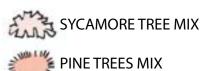
The pink trumpet tree, is a deciduous tree renowned for its stunning display of vibrant pink flowers. The picture below features a Naked Coral Tree, a striking deciduous tree known for its stunning display of bright coral-colored flowers.



TREE CANOPIES

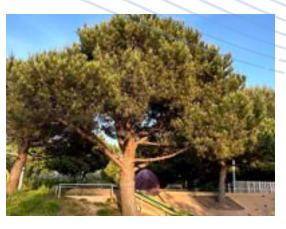








Tongva Park features a diverse mix of tree species, each contributing to its unique atmosphere. Palm trees evoke a tropical feel, while pines add height and texture. Mediterranean charm is brought by oaks, olives, and figs, offering shade and visual interest. Majestic sycamores provide focal points, while feature trees add unique character. Together, these species create a lush and inviting environment for visitors to explore and enjoy.



Pinus pinea, commonly known as the Stone Pine or Umbrella Pine, is a majestic evergreen tree native to the Mediterranean region. It is characterized by its distinctive umbrella-like canopy, composed of long, dark green needles arranged in clusters of two.

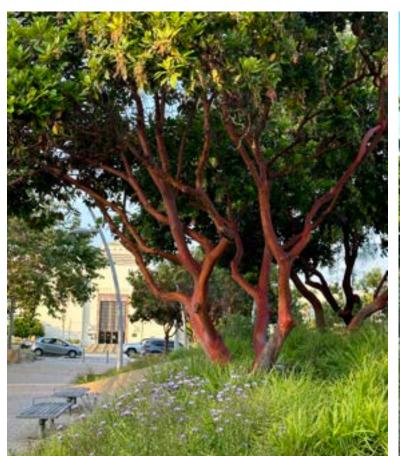


Olea europaea, commonly known as the olive tree, is a species native to the Mediterranean region. Below is a front view of the park, displaying its palm tree mix. In the picture, it is possible to see Senegal Date palms and windmill palms.











DRAWINGS AND PERSPECTIVES





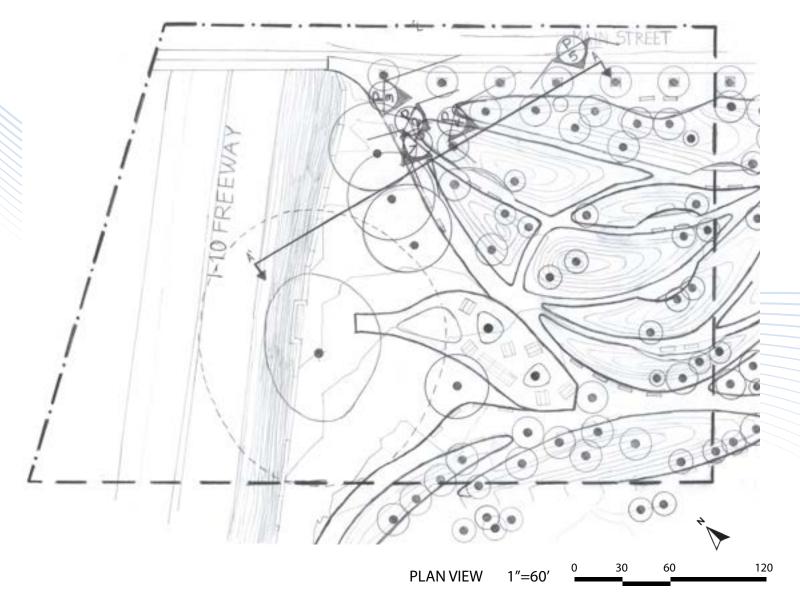
Hand-rendered color plans offers a dynamic and expressive means of communicating design concepts and capturing the essence of a proposed space. Color brings life to the plan, allowing designers to convey the mood, atmosphere, and character of the landscape. Additionally, color helps differentiate between various landscape features, such as vegetation, water bodies, hardscape elements, and built structures, making the plan more readable and informative.

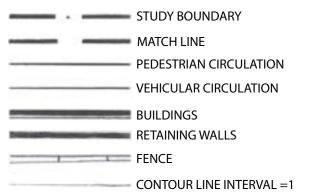
Shadows are strategically added to delineate built structures and natural elements, creating a sense of realism and dimension.

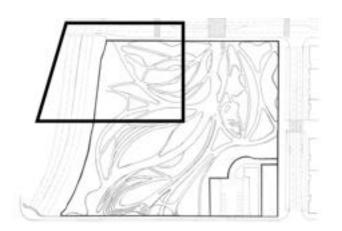
Through this thoughtful process of color selection, shadowing, and depth rendering, the hand-rendered illustrative plan of Tongva Park becomes more than just a visual representation — it becomes a narrative of the park's design intent and vision.



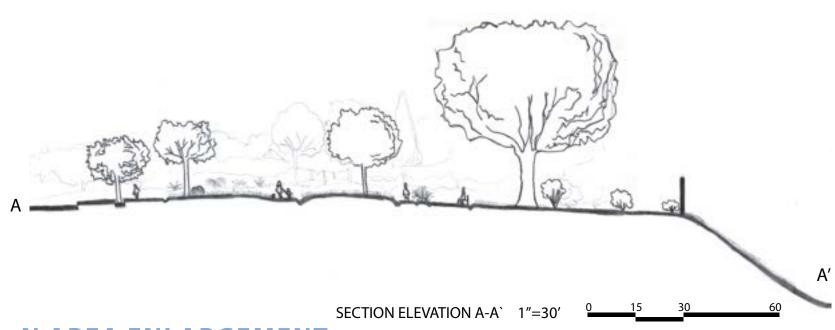
Digital rendering for landscape architecture significantly enhances handdrawn plans by adding precision, depth, and versatility to the design process. Digital tools enable designers to experiment with endless possibilities, from simulating shadows in different times of day, changing the color palette or shapes. These enhancements not only make the plans more visually appealing but also more informative, helping clients and stakeholders to better understand and engage with the proposed design. The ability to easily modify and update digital renders ensures that the communication of the plan remains accurate and up-todate throughout the project's development. In essence, digital rendering bridges the gap between traditional hand drawings and modern visualization techniques, providing a comprehensive toolset for effective communication and presentation in landscape architecture.







Selecting areas of the site to create enlargements and section elevations is vital for highlighting and displaying specific characteristics of the landscape design. These detailed views allow designers to focus on crucial elements such as planting schemes, hardscape features, and topographical changes, offering a closer look at the intricate details that might be overlooked in the broader site plan. Understanding and accurately depicting scale in these enlargements is essential, as it ensures that all elements are represented proportionally and realistically, facilitating a clearer comprehension of the design's spatial relationships. The ability to convert and transition smoothly between different scales enhances the communication of the design intent.



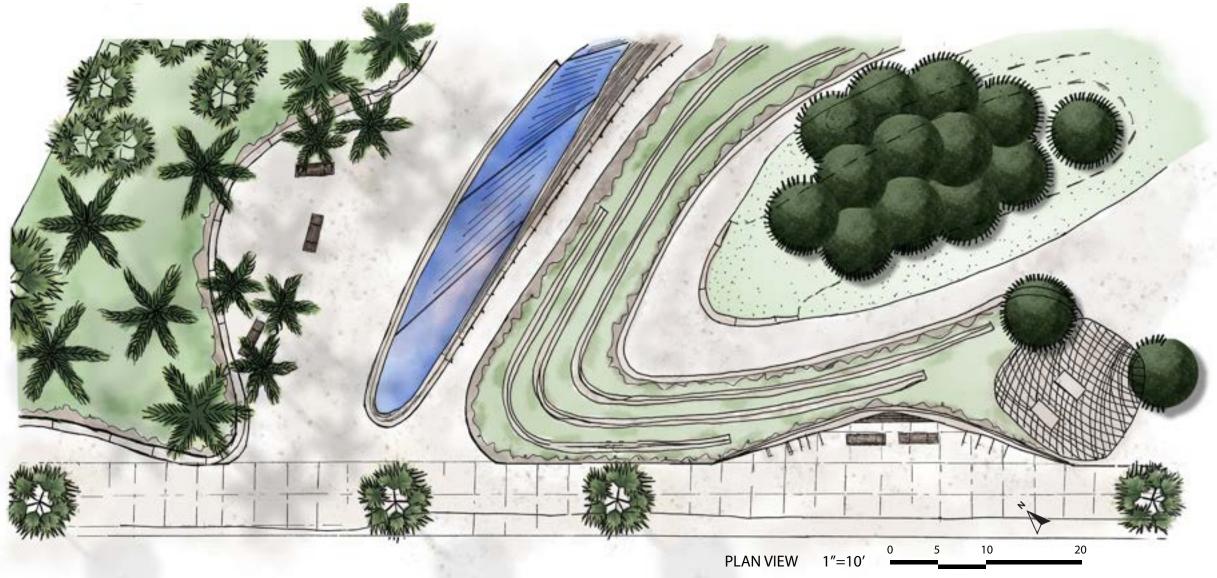


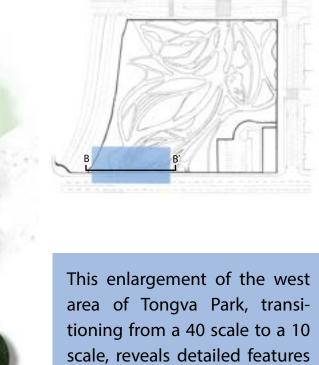








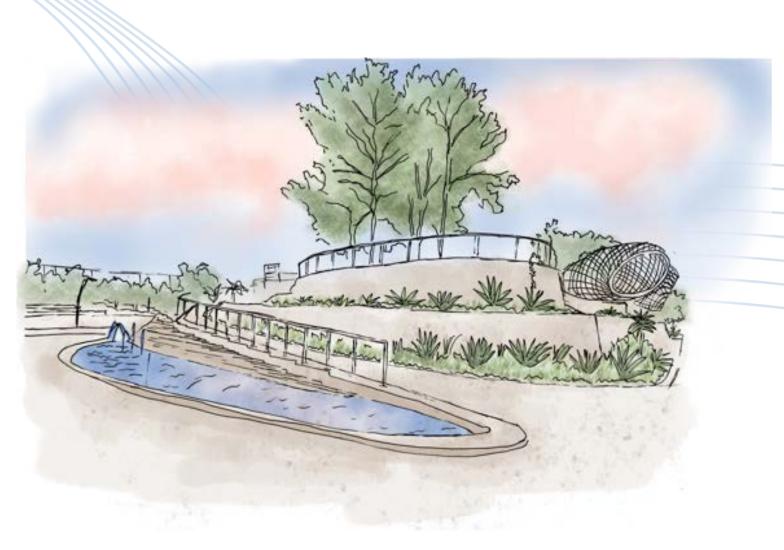




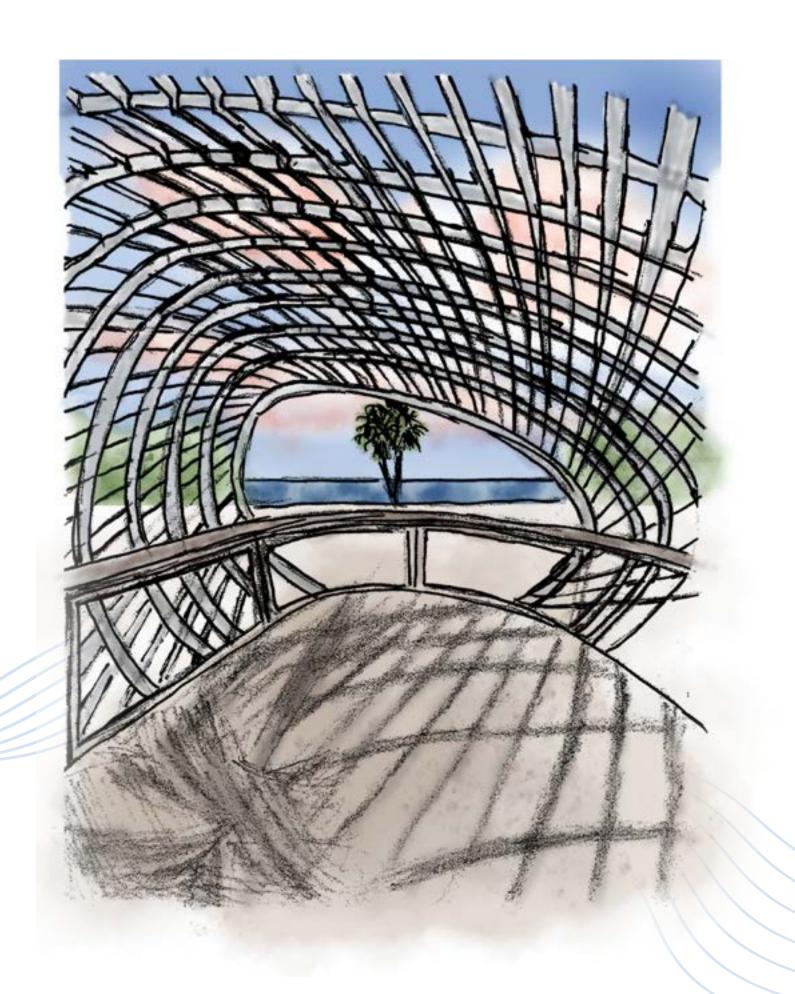
area of Tongva Park, transitioning from a 40 scale to a 10 scale, reveals detailed features that illustrate the finer details and their functional and aesthetic contributions to the project. This dual approach not only enriches the presentation but also ensures the feasibility and precision of the design during implementation. Additionally, the section elevation B-B' provides a cross-sectional view, emphasizing the relationship between different park elements such as paths, trees, planting beds, ramps, water feature, seating areas and how they interact with the park's topography.



SECTION ELEVATION 1"=10' 0 5 10 20









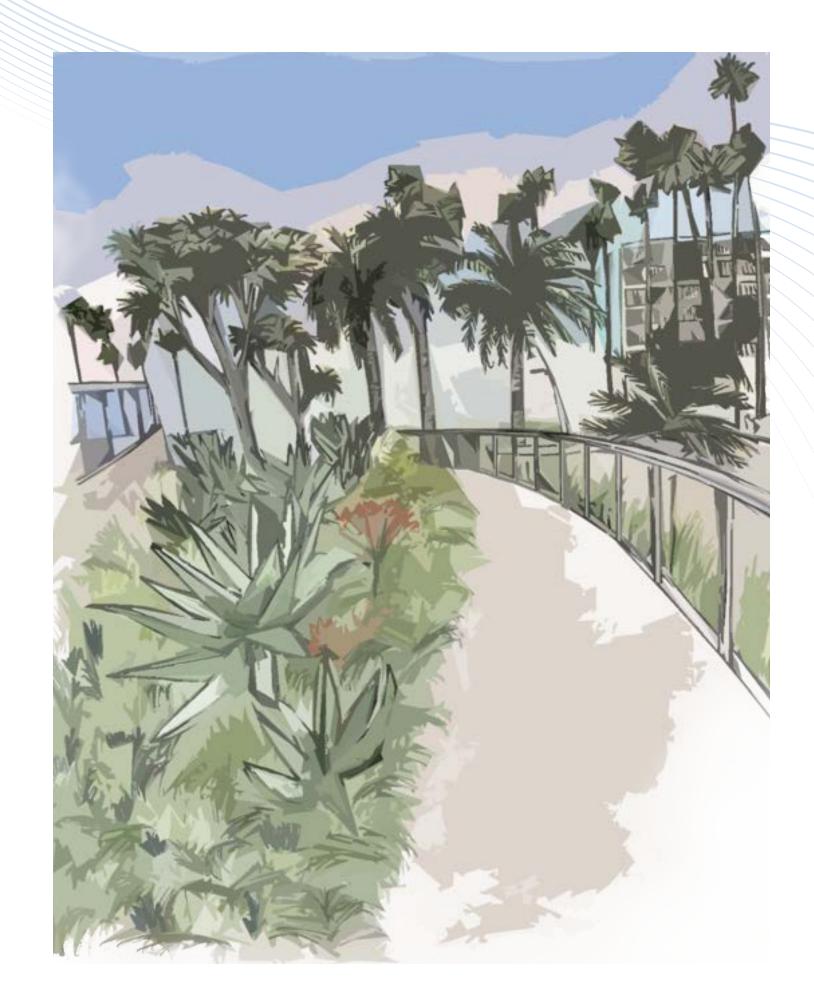
SUMMARY

Embarking on my journey through the landscape architecture program was an entirely new and challenging experience for me.

Design Graphics 1 served as a cornerstone, laying the groundwork for my future pursuits in the field. This foundational course delved into the essentials of architectural drafting, covering practical aspects such as using drafting tools and preparing architectural documents. It equipped me with vital skills such as understanding line weight intricacies, mastering scales, interpreting topography, producing section elevations and perspective drawings. With each lesson, I gained a deeper appreciation for the intricate balance between precision and creativity required in landscape architecture.

In Design Graphics 2, I was introduced to site analysis and the production of analytical diagrams, including vehicular and pedestrian circulation, plant material, and limits of work. We also expanded our knowledge of drawing techniques, such as how to accurately depict shrubs, trees, and other park features. By reverse-engineering the design process of Tongva Park, we gained a deeper understanding of how successful landscape architectural projects are developed and how they can serve as blueprints for future endeavors. Additionally, I was introduced to color rendering and shadow casting techniques to breathe life and depth into my site plans. Enlargements and section elevations were explored in detail, complemented by color rendering and numerous perspective drawings.

Moving on to Design Graphics 3, it was time to consolidate all the work developed in the past two quarters and convert it into digital presentations. I learned how to use Photoshop to refine and enhance my drawings, rectify mistakes, and create layouts in a more controlled and precise manner. I was finally introduced to digital color rendering, which was both powerful and captivating. The countless possibilities offered by Photoshop had the potential to elevate my work to the next level. With files corrected, enhanced, and colored, it was time to transition to InDesign and learn how to lay out all the work into a final presentation. This involved incorporating all the essential information to complement the drawings, along with images and inspiring layouts.



ABOUT ME



Hello, my name is Danielle. I'am originally from Brazil but currently living in Santa Monica. Growing up on a farm, I learned from a very young age to observe and understand nature. My passion for further understanding and protecting the environment led me to pursue a degree in geology. During my studies, I was fascinated by sedimentary rocks, exploring their processes, materials, and the dynamic systems that shape our planet. However, despite my enthusiasm for geology, I felt like something was missing. Though I couldn't quite identify what it was, I often found myself captivated by the diverse plants I encountered on field trips and enchanted by how harmonious and artistic the shapes created by nature can be. With time I realized that what I was missing was art, and specifically the possibility of being creative.

When I moved to the US, I started gardening again and fell in love with houseplants. This rekindled passion inspired me to open an online plant store. I found in entrepreneurship the possibility to express my creativity, but I knew that to succeed in any profession, I had to pursue education and constantly renew my knowledge.

I chose landscape architecture because it allows me to integrate my background in geology with my love for plants and art. It offers the opportunity to create beautiful, sustainable spaces that harmonize with the natural environment. As I continue my education and work, I am excited to bring my unique perspective and skills to the world of landscape architecture, contributing to the creation of functional and aesthetically pleasing outdoor spaces.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

REFERENCES

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the three professors who guided me throughout the last three quarters of the landscape architecture program.

To David Squires, who taught Design Graphics 1, your guidance gave me the foundational skills of architectural drafting. Your emphasis on adhering to established standards and practices not only enhanced the clarity and professionalism of my designs but also instilled in me a sense of discipline and attention to detail. Your teachings deepened my appreciation for the balance between precision and creativity in landscape architecture.

To Rebecca Schwaner, instructor of Design Graphics 2, I am indebted for imparting upon me the power of consistency. Your mantra of "practice, practice, practice" resonated deeply with me and reminded me of the importance of perseverance and dedication. Thanks for instilling in me the importance of meticulousness while also emphasizing the significance of the design process itself.

To Laura Razo, who led Design Graphics 3, I am grateful for illustrating the importance of softwares in enhancing design work. Your teachings showed me the transformative impact that digital tools can have on the presentation and communication of design ideas. Moreover, thanks for your encouraging to review my work from the past 3 quarters to build this booklet. This process allowed me to see my evolution and realize how much I learned with Tongva Park.

Additionally, I would like to acknowledge the creators of Tongva Park, James Corner Field Operations, and their team. Their innovative vision and dedication brought Tongva Park to life, creating a space that seamlessly integrates nature and urban design. Their work serves as an inspiration to landscape architects and designers worldwide, showcasing the potential of thoughtful and sustainable design in shaping our environments for the better.

INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES

SECOND PAGE

"Every single thing in this universe was first a seed in someone's mind garden" -Unknown author https://br.pinterest.com/pin/207728601551151014/

BACK COVER PAGE

"I'm fascinated by the interplays between city and nature, between the garden and geography, between small scale and large scale, between art, imagination and something more tangible."

- James Corner

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PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

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IMAGE 1: https://www.kindtraveler.com/content/santa-monica-travel-tourism IMAGE 2: Photographer: Spencer Weiner/Los Angeles Times via Getty Images

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IMAGE 3: Tongva (Gabrielino) House

Recreated Tongva tribal house at the LA Arboretum

https://www.flickr.com/photos/anne_bonney/745101178/

IMAGE 4 : All photos credit: ShoreZone.

https://www.amusingplanet.com/2015/09/alaska-magnificent-coastline.html

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IMAGE 1 : Getty images IMAGE 2 : iStock_Pgiam

IMAGE 3: photographer Joakim Lloyd Raboff

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IMAGE 1: https://metropolismag.com/projects/santa-monica-city-hall/

IMAGE 2: https://www.commercialsearch.com/commercial-property/us/ca/santa-monica/1541-ocean-ave-

nue/

IMAGE 3: https://listingzen.com/property/7298

IMAGE 4: http://www.historicresourcesgroup.com/projects/santa-monica-survey

IMAGE 5: https://www.compass.com/listing/1755-ocean-avenue-unit-512-santa-monica-

ca-90401/1558814882178043601/

IMAGE 6: https://www.viator.com/Los-Angeles-attractions/Palisades-Park/overview/d645-a10340

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IMAGE 2 : Angie Smith Photography www.angiesmithphotography.com

IMAGE 4: https://www.santamonica.gov/places/parks/tongva-park

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IMAGE 1: https://www.notboredny.com/2017/02/20/not-bored-santa-monica-california/

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https://www.bigdeansoceanfrontcafe.com/must-see-public-art-in-santa-monica/

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IMAGE 1: https://br.pinterest.com/pin/380554237255740115/

IMAGE 2: https://dealswelike.com/5-things-to-do-in-santa-monica-with-kids/

IMAGE 3: http://www.santamonicaimages.com/tongva-park/

IMAGE 4: https://lamag.com/news/park-it-tongva-park-celebrates-its-grand-opening-this-saturday

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IMAGE 1 : roslyn m wilkins

https://onegoodlife.wordpress.com/2013/10/27/tongva-park-santa-monica-part-one/

IMAGE 2: Santa Monica Next

https://x.com/SaMoNext/status/377968761061388289

IMAGE 3: https://openlands.org/2017/09/05/olp-ravine-restoration/

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IMAGE 1: https://www.fast-growing-trees.com/products/pink-trumpet-tree?variant=39482213826622

IMAGE 2: https://westcentric.wordpress.com/tag/parks/

COVER AND BACK COVER

Artistic filter applied to the picture below

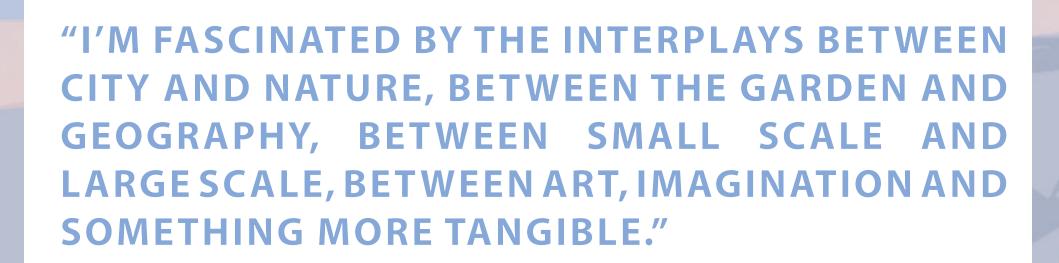
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IMAGE: iStock Pgiam

INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE IMAGE

THIRD PAGE

IMAGE 1: https://www.californiabeaches.com/attraction/tongva-park/



- JAMES CORNER

