



TONGVA PARK

BRIAN BAUTISTA

DESIGN GRAPHICS 3—SPRING 2025
INSTRUCTOR—LAURA RAZO

Hello!

My name is Brian. I worked in Visual Effects, Film and Television editing for twenty years. I got into California Native Plants and Gardening five years ago and have slowly been consumed by plants ever since.

My life used to be all about pixels— my work existed only as photons transmitted from the TV to your eye. Plants became more appealing, and were healthier, than the grind of Visual Effects.

I left my film career behind, got my Certificate in Horticulture, realized I was in the wrong program and jumped into the Landscape Architecture program.

Currently I work as a gardener, caring for native plant landscapes. Design Graphics 2 taught me that maintenance is critical towards keeping the original design intent, regardless of whether it's a large park like Tongva or a small yard like mine.

To me, the pruning shears I work with can be just as important as the pens I draw with.

Cheers,

**BRIAN
BAUTISTA**



“IT WAS IN THAT MOMENT’S FLIGHT BETWEEN THE PICTURE AND HER CANVAS THAT THE DEMONS SET ON HER WHO OFTEN BROUGHT HER TO VERGE OF TEARS AND MADE THIS PASSAGE FROM CONCEPTION TO WORK AS DREADFUL AS ANY DOWN A DARK PASSAGE FOR A CHILD.”

—FROM VIRGINIA WOOLF’S ‘TO THE LIGHTHOUSE’

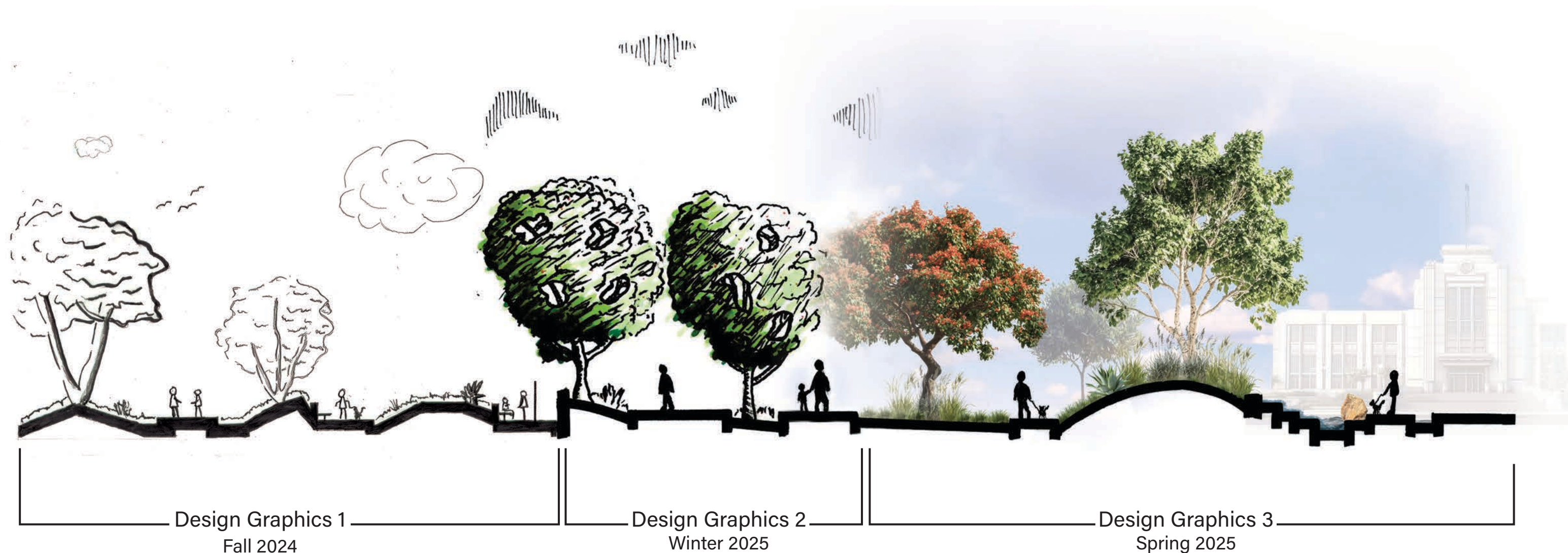


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Making anything is hard. Making a park that is 6.2 acres and caters to the wants and needs of an influential city of almost 90,000 people should be impossible.

And yet Tongva Park exists, right at the intersection of Colorado Avenue and Ocean Avenue, along one of the most famous highways in the world.

When I first started studying this park in the Horticulture Program, we universally panned the park.

“What happened here, why would they plant this, why no native plants? What does this have to do with the Tongva people?” were our complaints.

A year later I began to study Tongva Park in the Landscape Architecture Program.

Little by little, I began to respect the park. Not because I liked it; I still don't. But it had a vision, and it executed that vision from the broadest of strokes to the smallest of details. It must have been a monumental amount of work.

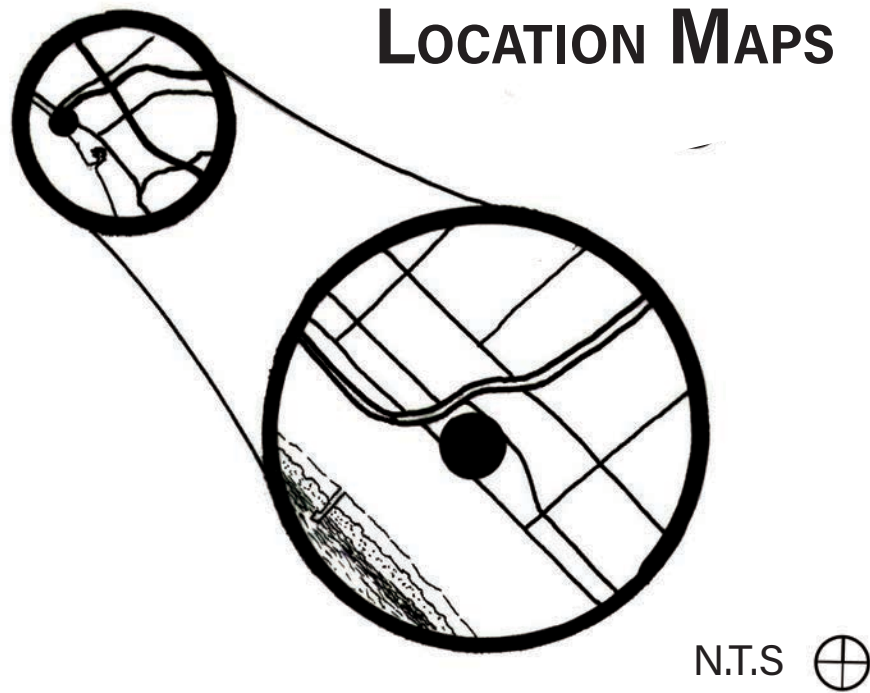
The park, to me, is a fulcrum for my education; and for that, I thank it.

Art is hard. Landscape architecture doubly so.

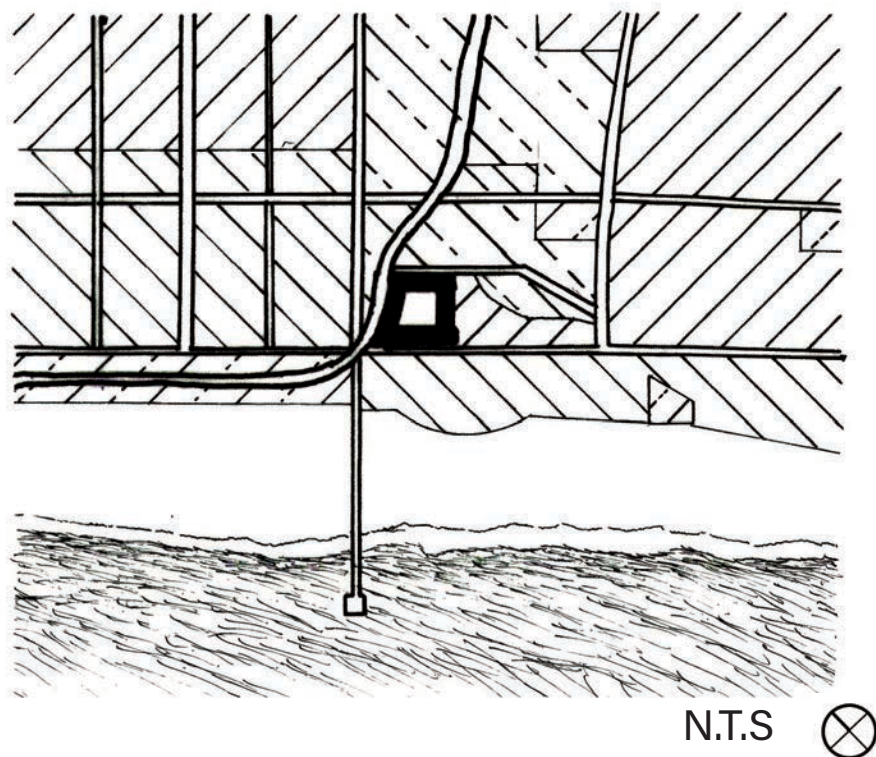


Location & Concept

LOCATION MAPS

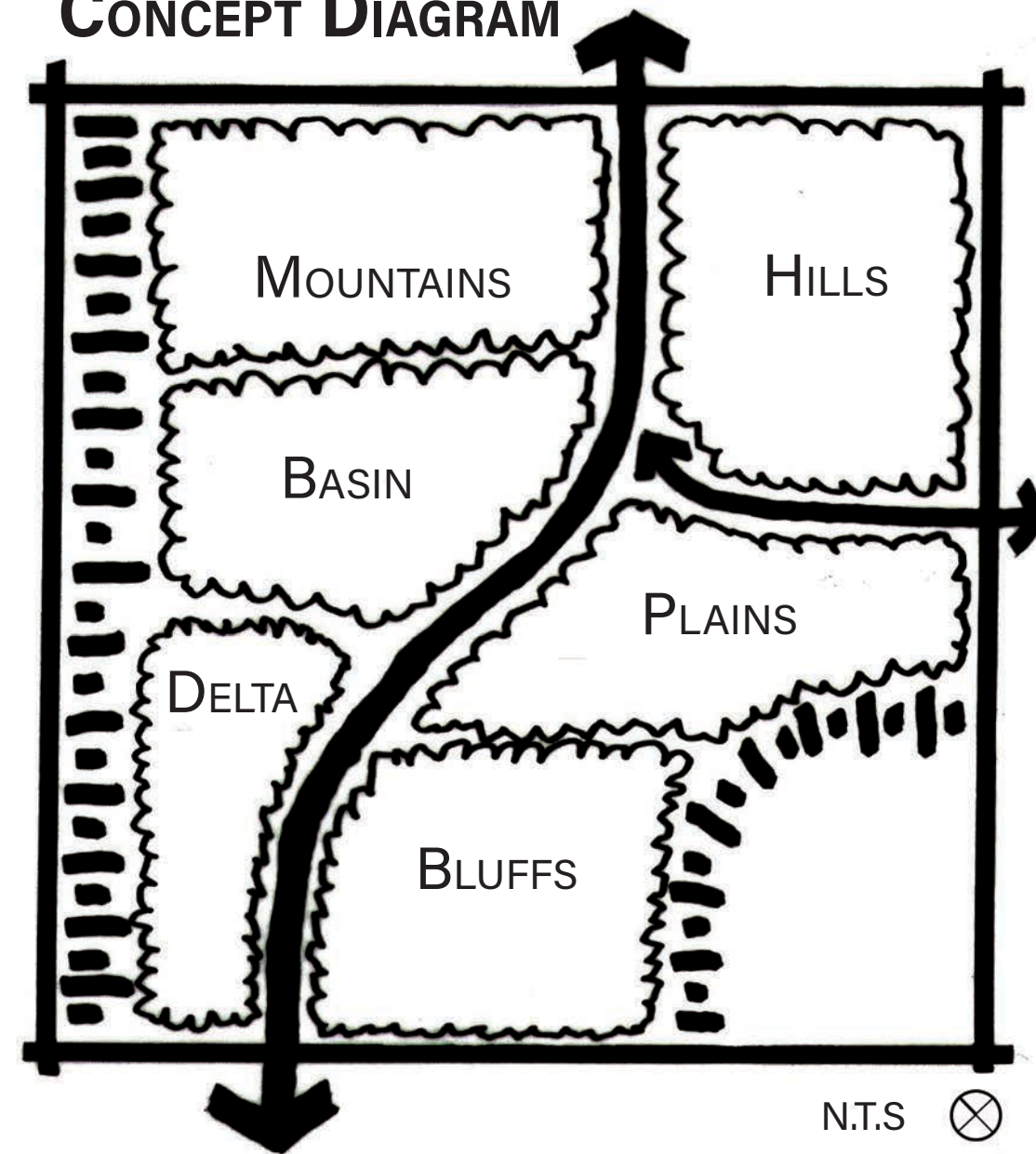


CONTEXT DIAGRAM



- Residential
- Commercial
- Governmental
- Parks

CONCEPT DIAGRAM



I struggled a fair bit on the Concept Diagram— there were so many things it could be! My research of the park revealed that it's inspiration came from an arroyo. The park to me is inspired by California's watershed, starting in the San Gabriel Mountains, winding through the foothills, washing down the Los Angeles Basin, through the Ballona Wetland, watched by the bluffs of Santa Monica.



Aerial Photo, January 1st, 1928. Tongva Park location approximately in green square.



Aerial Photo, June 1st, 2001. Tongva Park location approximately in green square.

In the early days of Santa Monica, Tongva Park was an arroyo, as we can clearly see in top left aerial photograph from 1928. Fast forward roughly 75 years and Tongva Park was a parking lot across the street from city hall. Then in 2013, the parking lot was demolished and Tongva Park was built.

It's easy to say Tongva Park was an arroyo or a parking lot because we have historical photos from the 1920s and satellite photos from the 2000s.

However, before it was a parking lot, before the city of Santa Monica, it was a piece of land that belonged to the Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe, a people who tended and stewarded the land for thousands of years before photography was ever invented.

We are so desperate in this day and age for green space and parks because all we know of Los Angeles is pavement and parking lots.

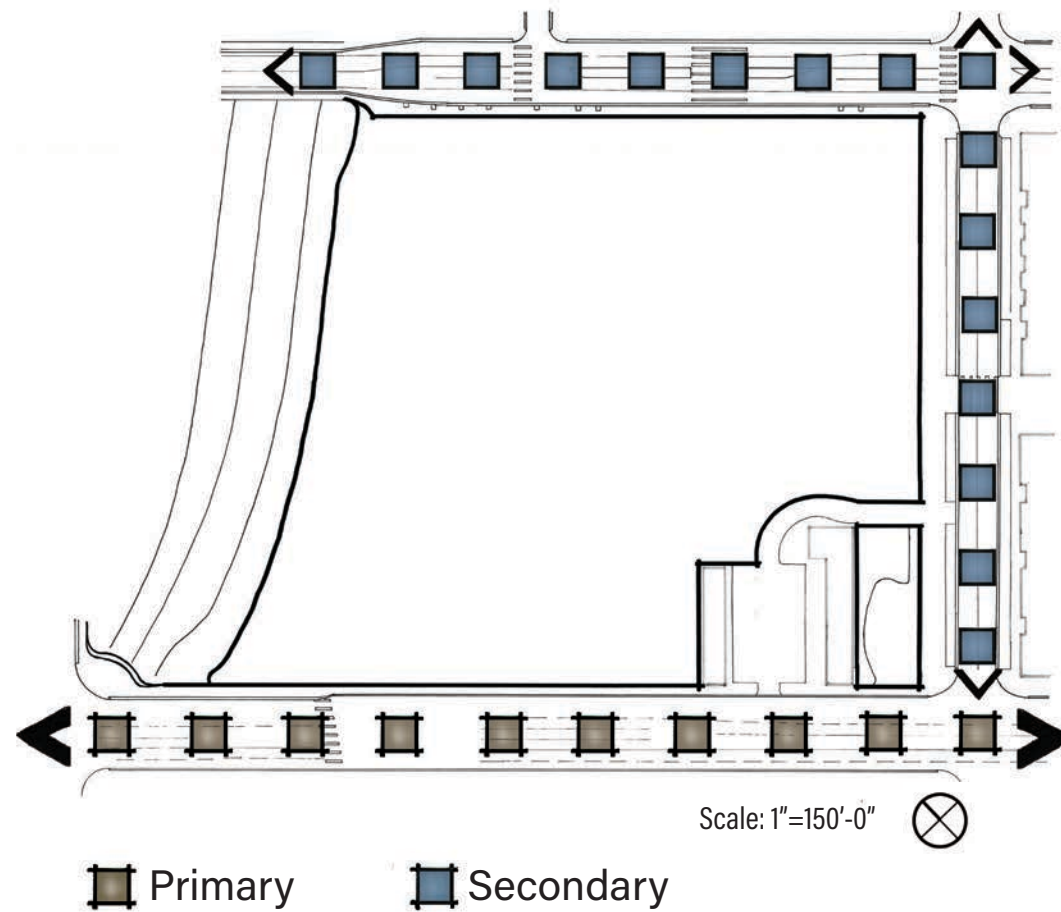
We have forgotten that the original Los Angeles was a green carpet of Sages, Buckwheats and Sagebrush, beautiful and fragrant.

I hope to someday change this sad lack of memory.

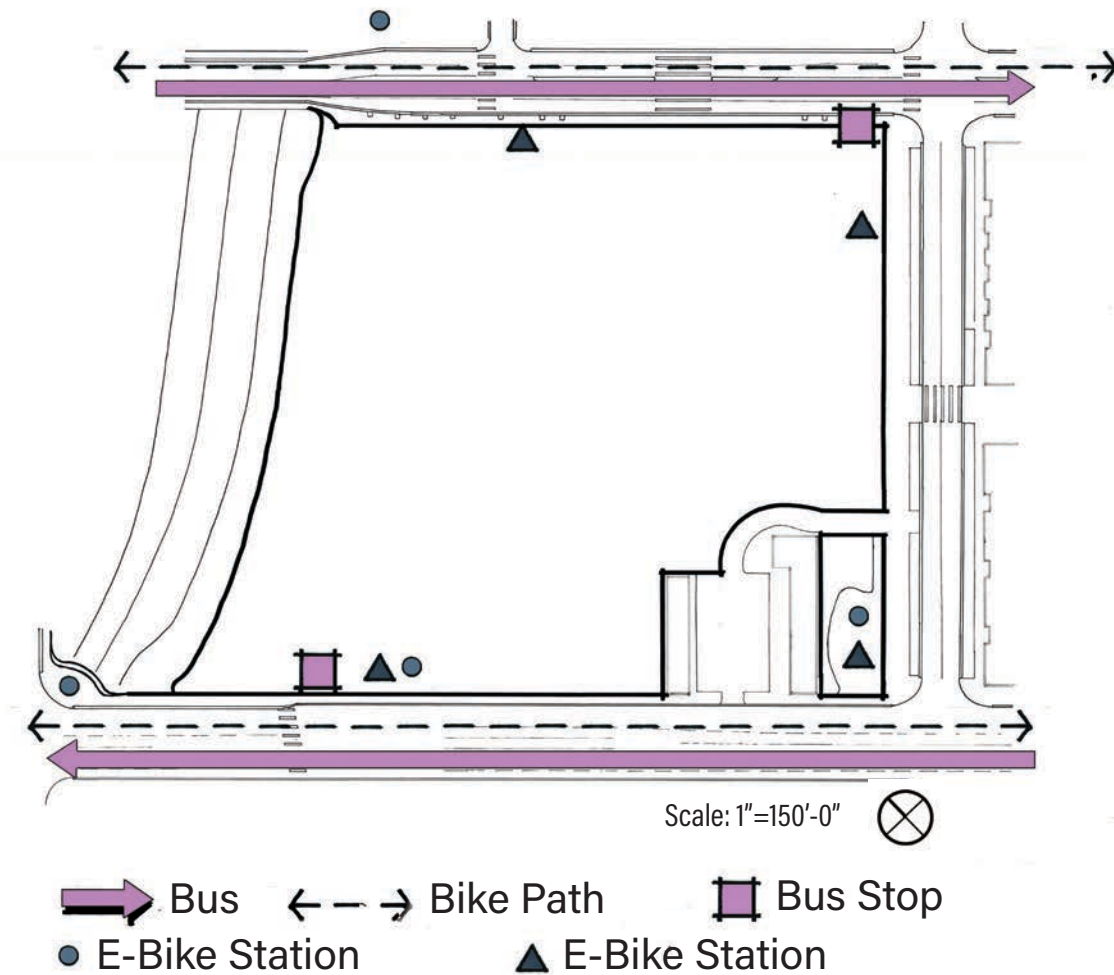


Satellite Photo, Present Day. No green square necessary.

VEHICULAR CIRCULATION



ALTERNATE TRANSIT CIRCULATION

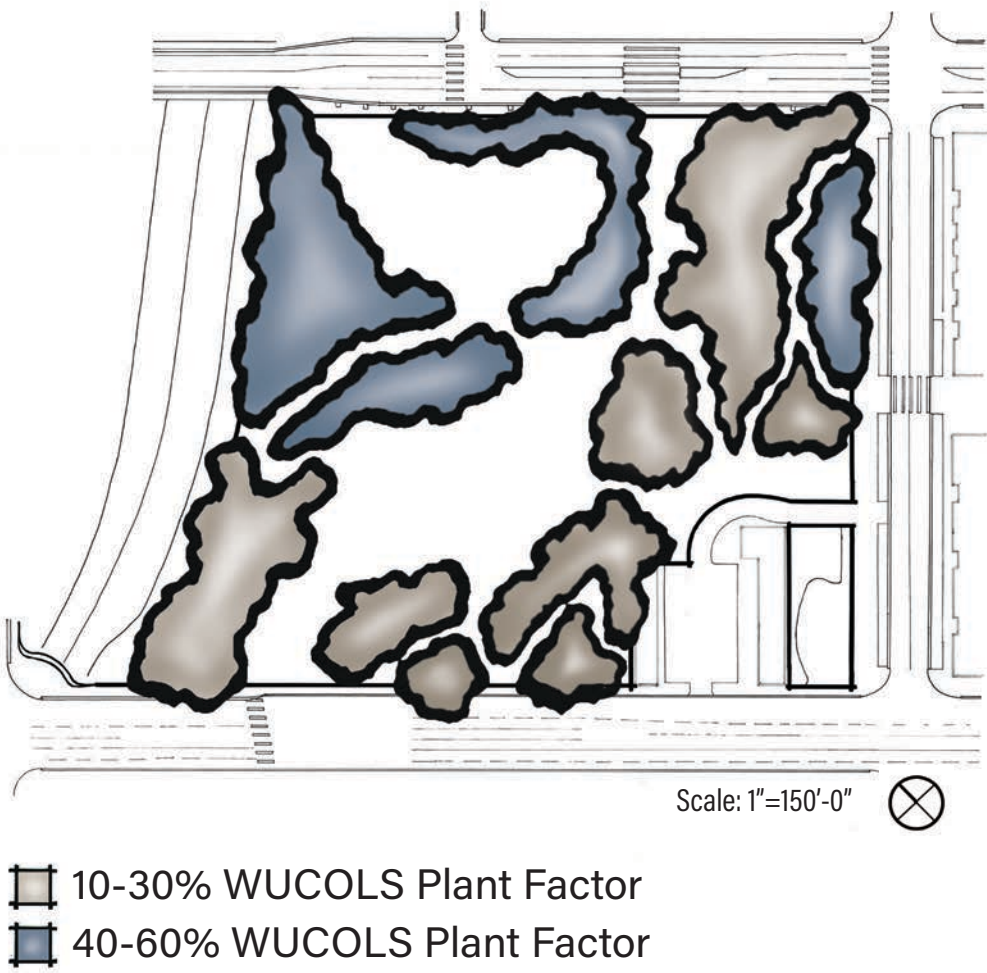


These are the first two Analytical Diagrams that I ever drew. I found them boring. Everyone did these diagrams. Circulation is important, but I felt like I learned nothing about myself or the site from these two diagrams. I dreaded doing the next four analytical diagrams. Even worse I didn't know what else to diagram.

NATIVE VS. NON-NATIVE TREE CANOPY

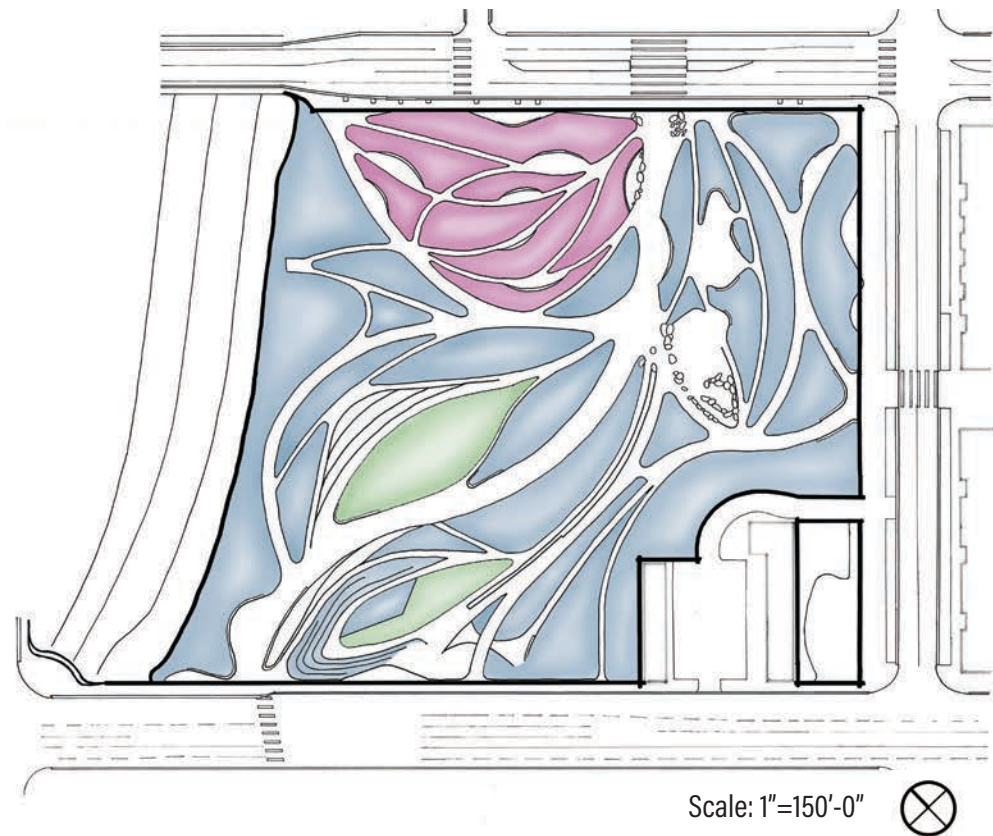


TREES BY WUCOLS PLANT FACTOR



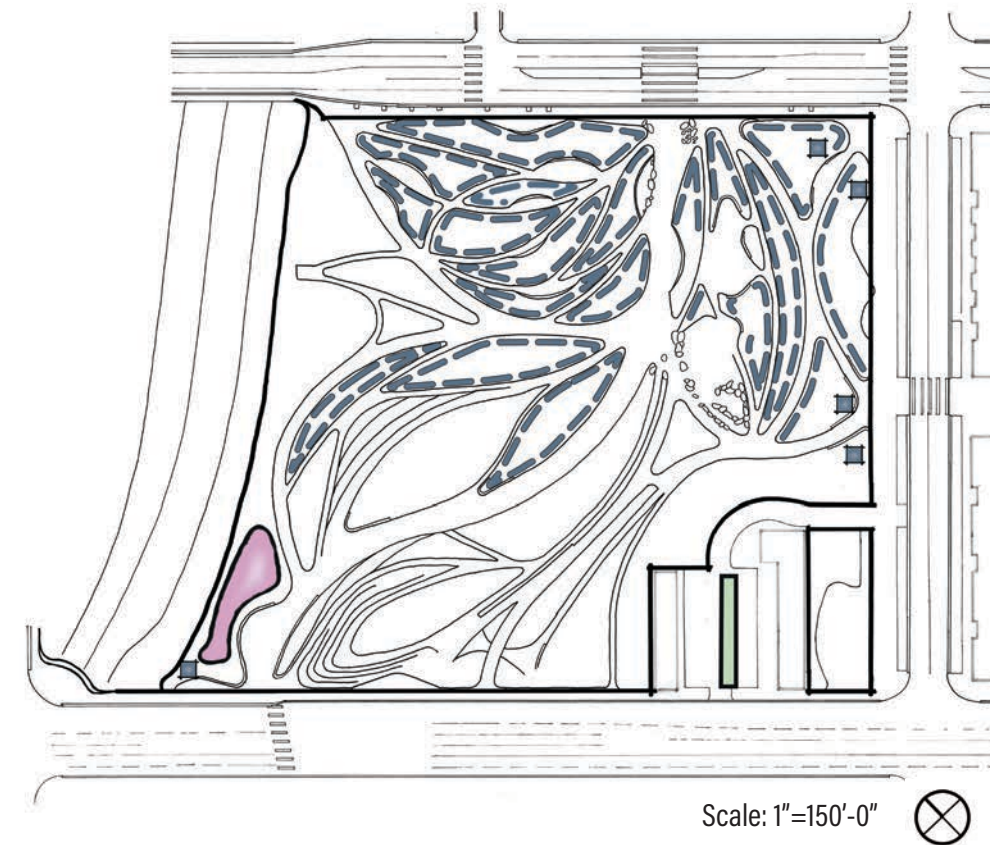
I decided to indulge myself and look at the tree species on site to see what native trees were planted. There were a fair amount thanks to the groves of Western Sycamores sprinkled across the site. There were not a lot of native oak trees though, which made me sad. Not knowing what else to diagram, I looked into how much water the trees needed. These two diagrams reveal something very interesting though— the native tree species require more water than many of the other, non-native trees on the site. I found this to be ironic, though the ecological and functional value of Western Sycamores is hard to argue with.

IRRIGATION METHOD



- In-Line Drip
- Pop Up Spray and Rotors
- Pop-up Sprays & In-Line Drip

RAINWATER CAPTURE



- Swale
- Infiltration Trench
- Bio-Retention Basin
- Dry Well

I continued digging into the water requirements of the park. I unearthed pages of irrigation designs and found that the park majority of the park is actually irrigated with two different methods; pop up spray heads and drip irrigation. That was odd, but I realized that young plants may have trouble receiving irrigation from drip if they aren't planted close enough to a drip emitter. My respect for the park grew— they installed *two* irrigation systems for two different age groups; young ones, and established plants.



Not a sewer. A dry well!

I went to Tongva Park in January to start my Site Inventory and start studying the park for Site Analysis. I took these photos not knowing what they were of. Through my site analysis, I discovered what I thought was a sewer grate was actually a dry well, a feature that helps sequester rainwater into the ground instead of running off to the storm drain.

I also discovered that the solid concrete beneath my feet was actually quite hollow. While there, a worker opened up a concrete panel in the middle of a walkway. It swung open on a hinge, revealing a shaft 10 feet deep and at least equally long. I asked him what it was for.

“Fountain pump service room.” he said, descending into the dark pit.

In retrospect, I realize that Site Analysis is quite powerful. Much like the hatch to the fountain pump service room, it makes things that were once invisible, *very* visible.



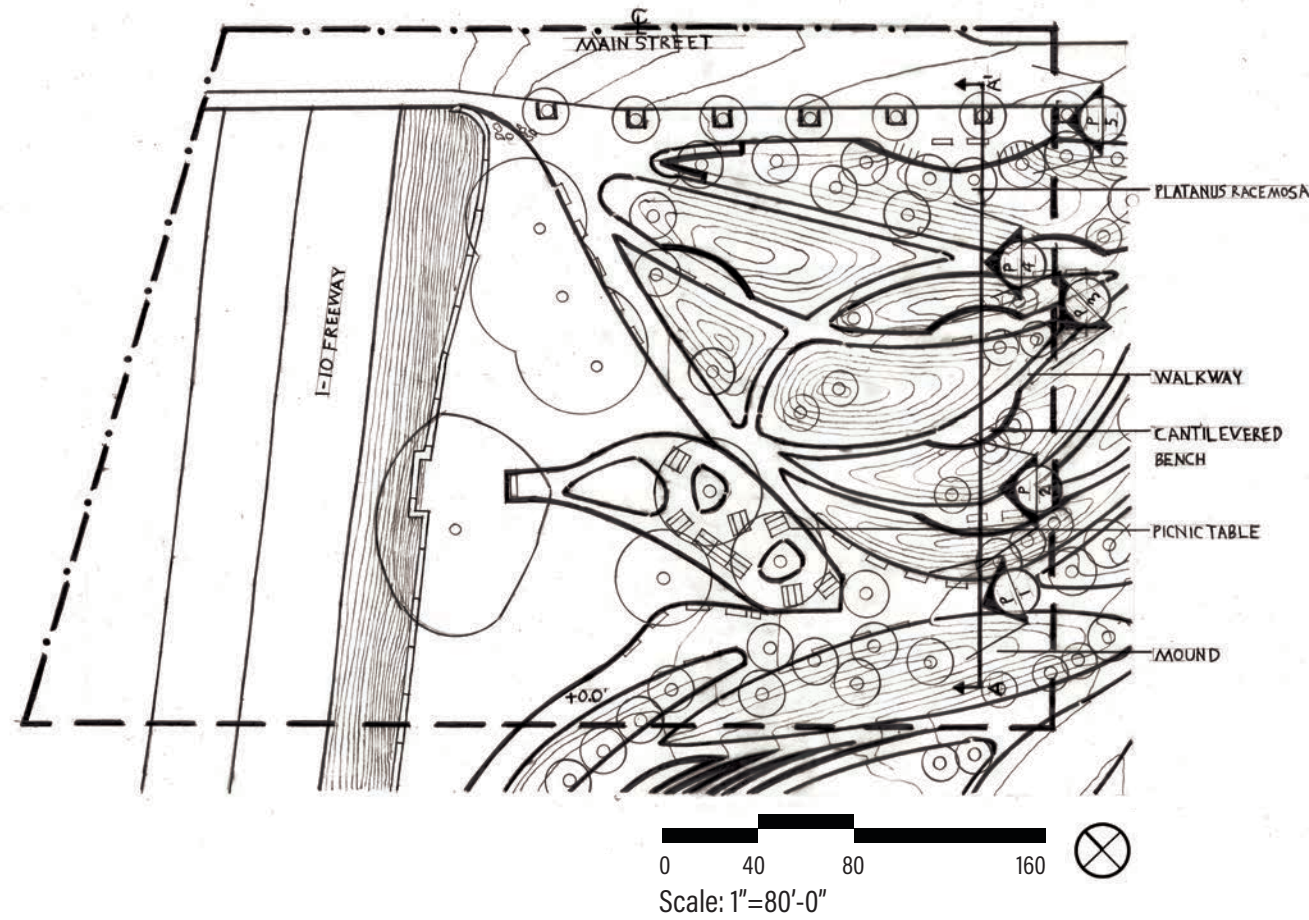
A fountain. But for every fountain you have, you need a...



... super secret hidden Fountain Pump Service Room concealed under your feet.

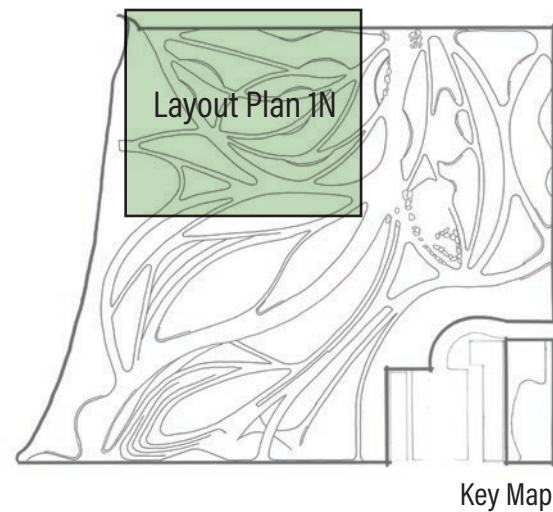
LAYOUT PLAN 1N

HAND RENDERED WITH PENCIL (DG1)



SITE PLAN

HAND RENDERED WITH PEN AND MARKER (DG2)



When I was 10 I asked my Mom to stop sending me to after-school art classes because I thought they were boring. At the time, I was enamored with the very first release of Adobe Photoshop. That decision to learn Photoshop at 10 served me well for 29 years until Design Graphics 1.

Nothing has been so hard to learn in recent memory than learning how to pick up the pencil and pen after a childhood lost to Photoshop.

COLOR ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

DIGITALLY RENDERED WITH PHOTOSHOP (DG3)

Erythrina coralloides
WUCOLS P.F. 10-30%

Ficus macrophylla
WUCOLS P.F. 40-60%

Cool Season Grass
WUCOLS P.F. 80-100%

Raveana glauca
WUCOLS P.F. 40-60%

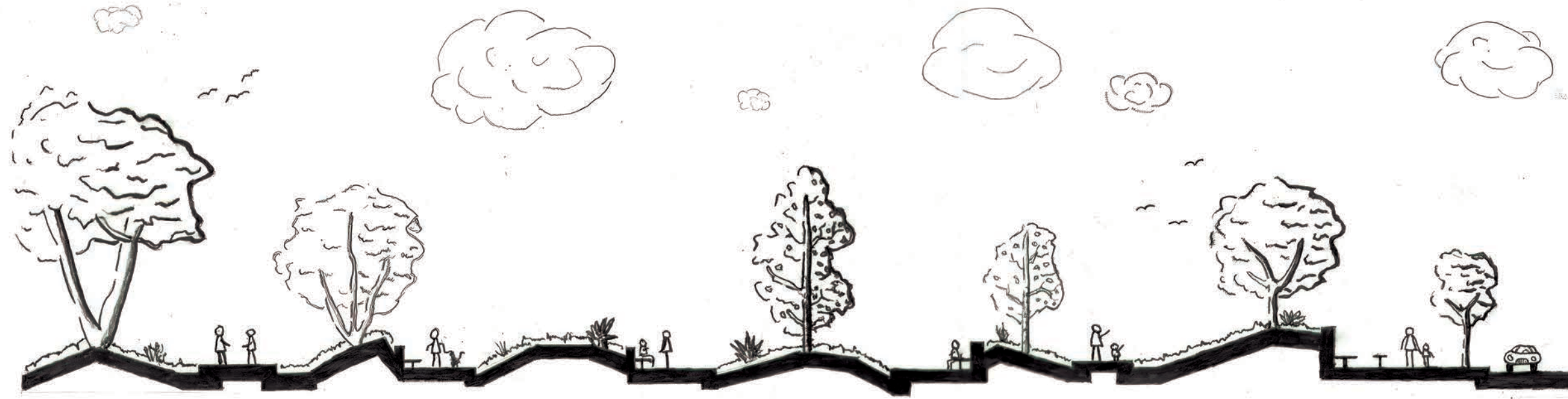
Quercus tomentella
WUCOLS P.F. 10-30%

Platanus racemosa
WUCOLS P.F. 40-60%

Pinus torreyana
WUCOLS P.F. 10-30%



Sections Elevations

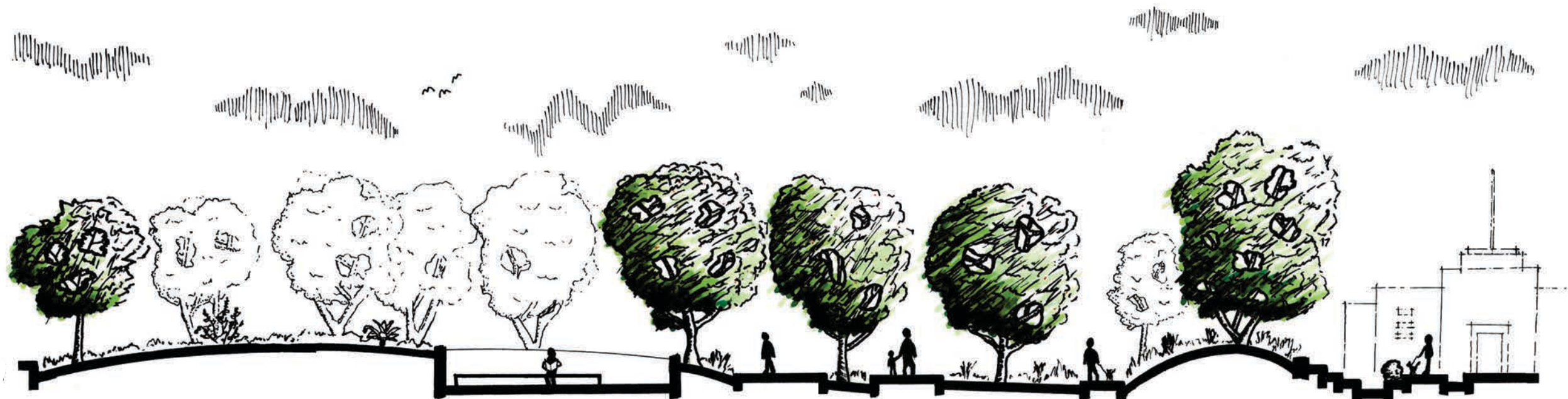
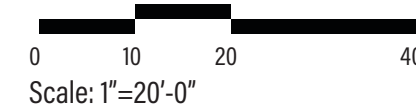


A

A1

SECTION ELEVATION LOOKING WEST

HAND RENDERED WITH PENCIL (DG1)



B

B1

SECTION ELEVATION LOOKING NORTH

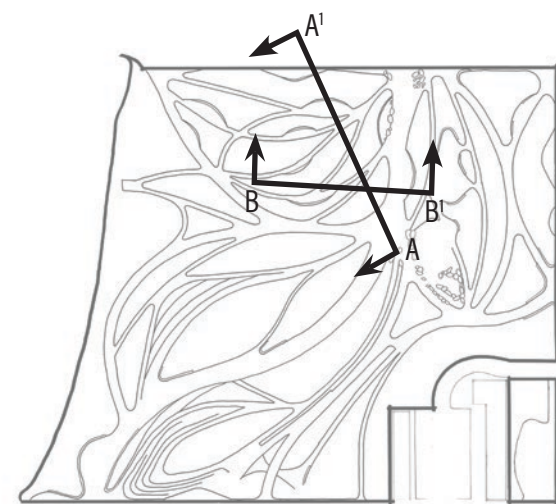
HAND RENDERED WITH PEN AND MARKER (DG2)





SECTION ELEVATION LOOKING NORTH

DIGITALLY RENDERED WITH PHOTOSHOP (DG3)



Key Map

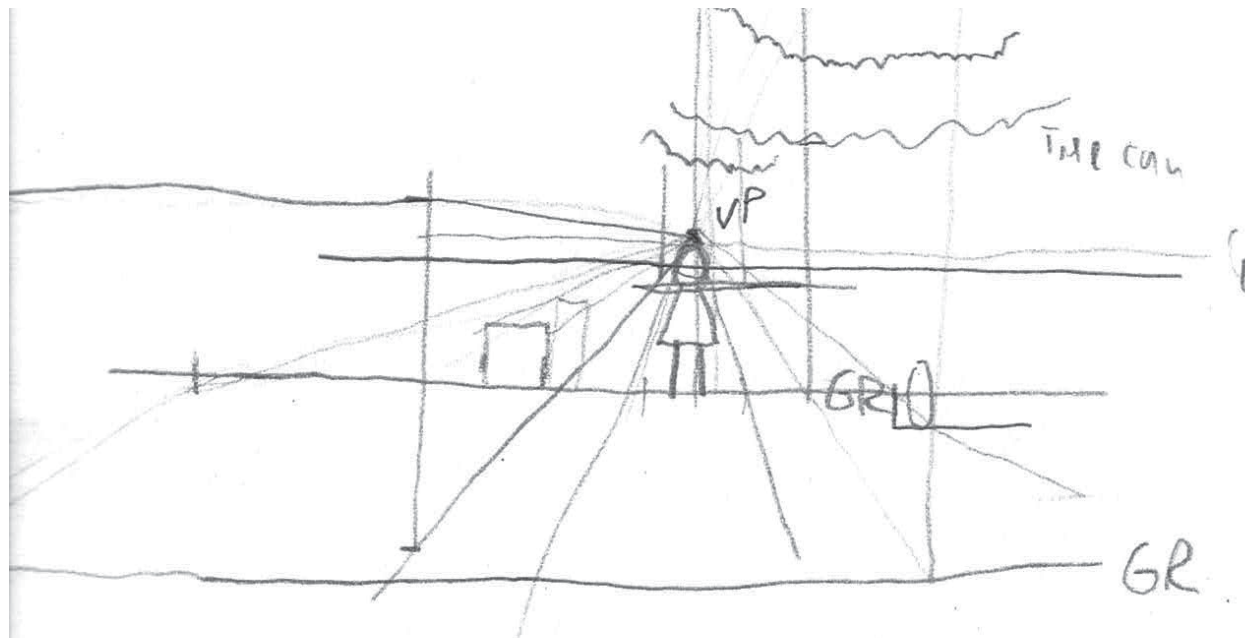


As I went from Design Graphics to Design Graphics 2, I slowly began to improve my drawing skills. After 20 weeks of drawing by hand and covertly envying all my classmates' amazing art, I made it to Design Graphics 3 where I could (finally!) put my background in visual effects and Photoshop to good use. Now was my time to shine!

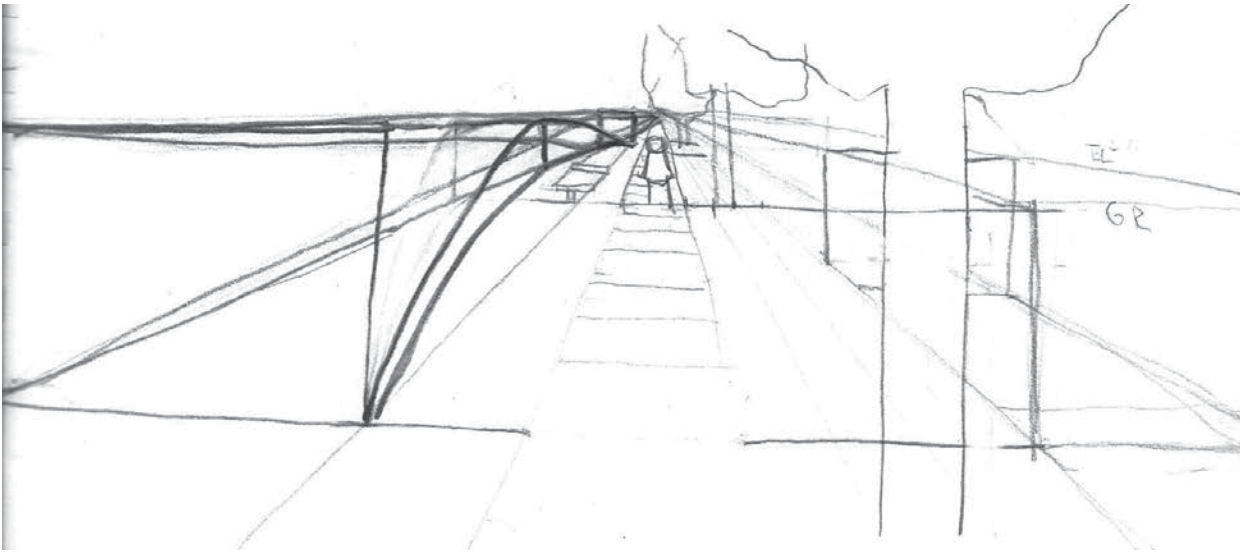
I erased my hand-lettering from all my drawings. I had always hated it; even when I wrote carefully, it looked messy. I replaced my lettering with clean, legible type.

And as I looked at the pages of slick graphics, I looked at my ugly hand lettering, and felt sad that I had to erase it "for consistency".

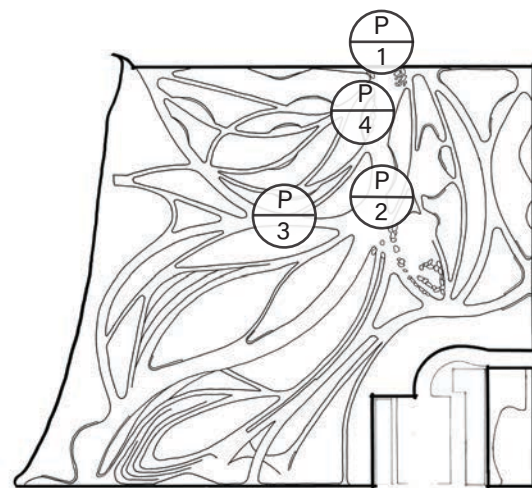
I had worked so hard at it, and now it's replaced by just a few keystrokes.



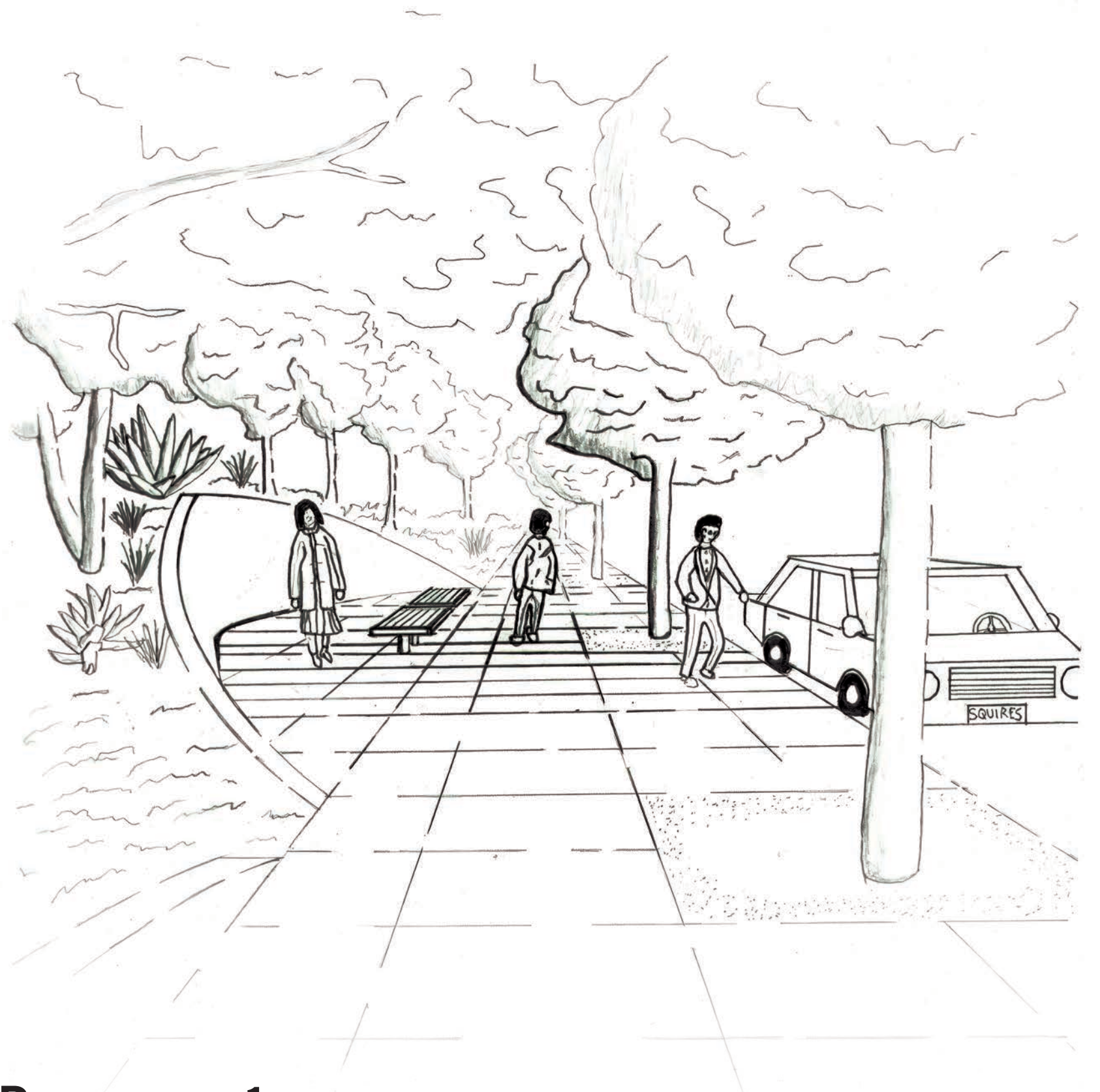
STUDY SKETCH ATTEMPT 1



STUDY SKETCH ATTEMPT 12

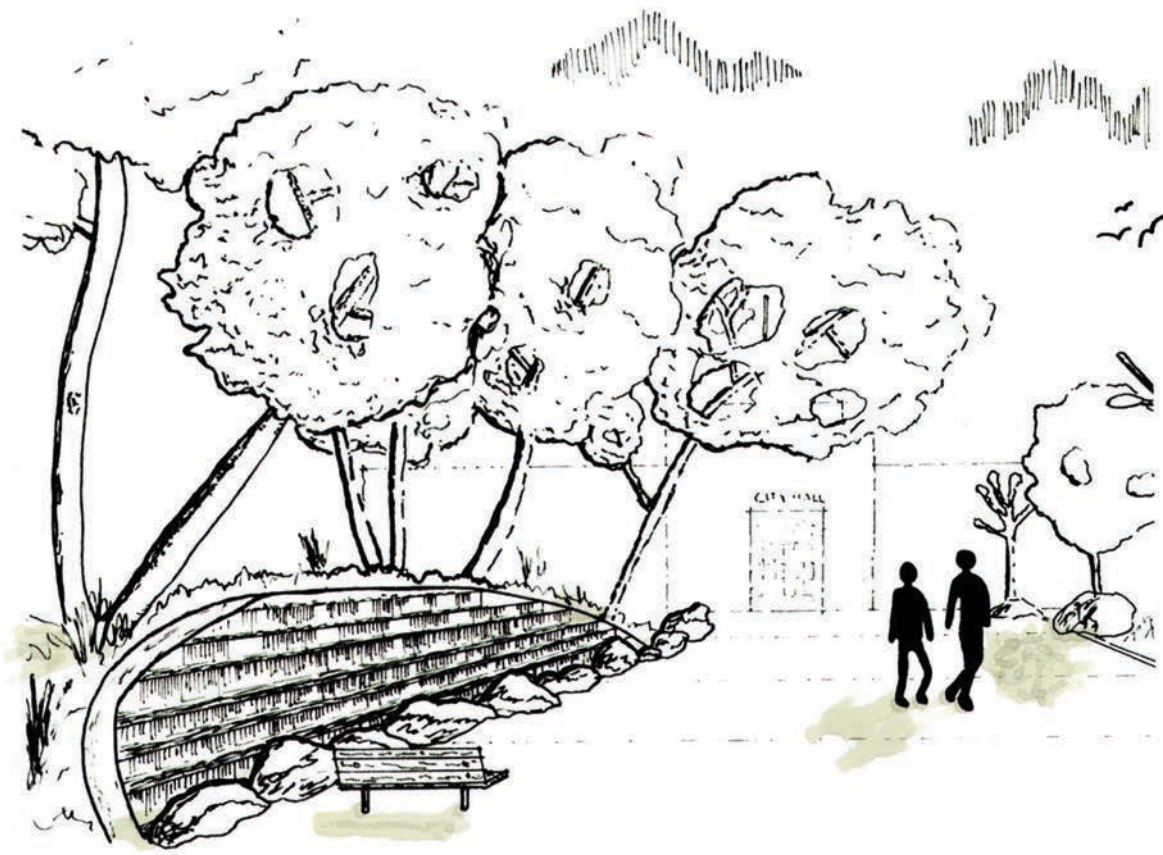


Key Map



PERSPECTIVE 1 LOOKING NORTHWEST UP MAIN ST

HAND RENDERED WITH PENCIL (DG1)



PERSPECTIVE 2 LOOKING NORTH TOWARDS CITY HALL

HAND RENDERED WITH PEN (DG2)



PERSPECTIVE 4 LOOKING WEST AT *ERYTHRINA CORALLOIDES*

HAND RENDERED WITH PEN (DG2)



PERSPECTIVE 3 LOOKING NORTH AT *FURCRAEA MACDOUGALII*

HAND RENDERED WITH PEN (DG2)

It took me more than twelve tries to get my first ever perspective correct, as you can see on the far left. Six of them were done at Tongva Park with David gently coaching me. When I left that park at the end of the day, I was utterly defeated— I didn't have a single study sketch that correctly represented the scene after eight hours of trying. I thought I would fail the class, wash out of the program and go back to VFX.

Fast forward 20 weeks and I still struggle to make decent perspectives, but the fear of them, the timidness of putting pen to paper has vanished. Thankfully.

Perspectives & Elevations



PERSPECTIVE 2 LOOKING NORTH TOWARDS CITY HALL

DIGITALLY RENDERED WITH PHOTOSHOP (DG3)

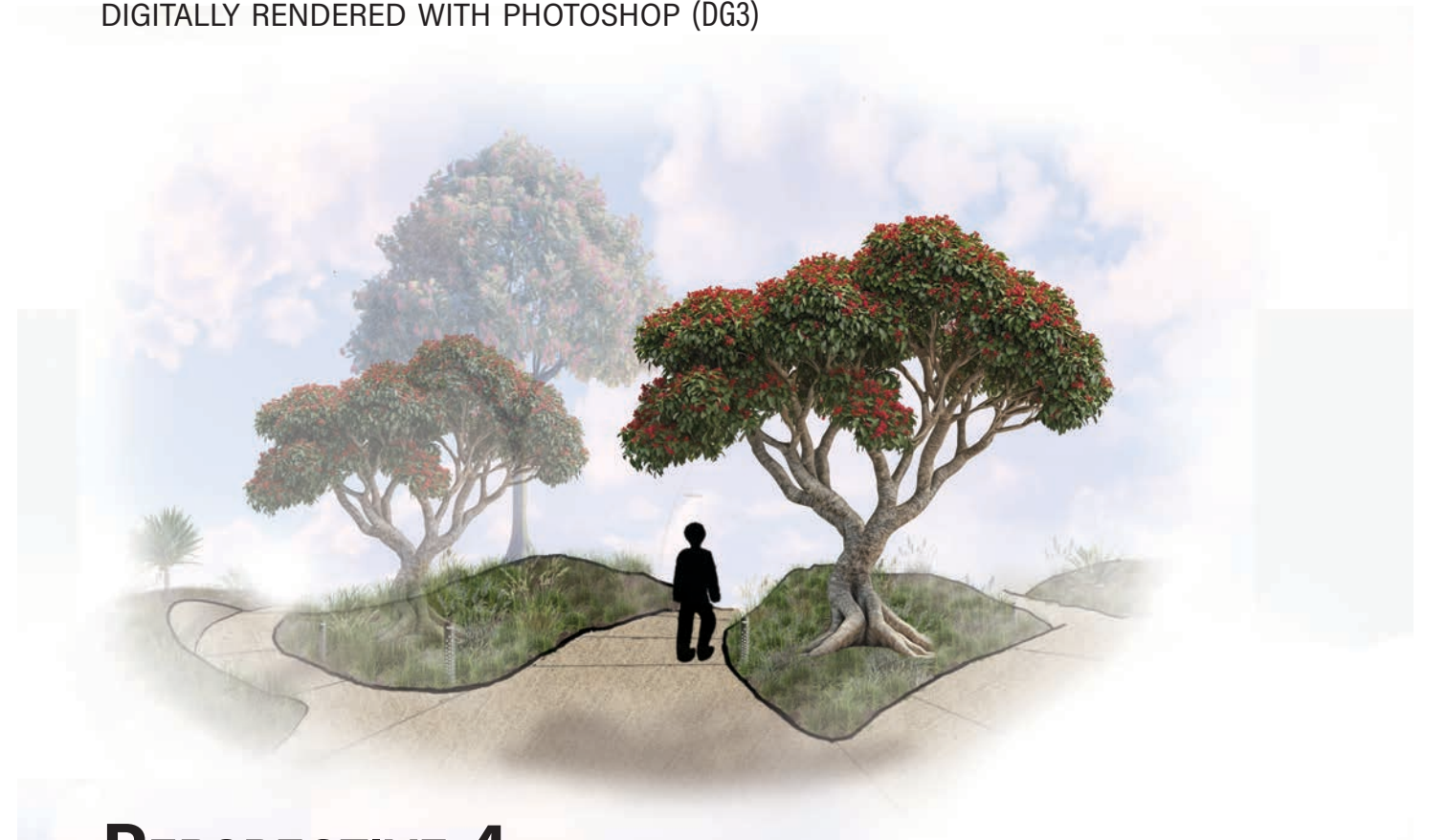


Key Map



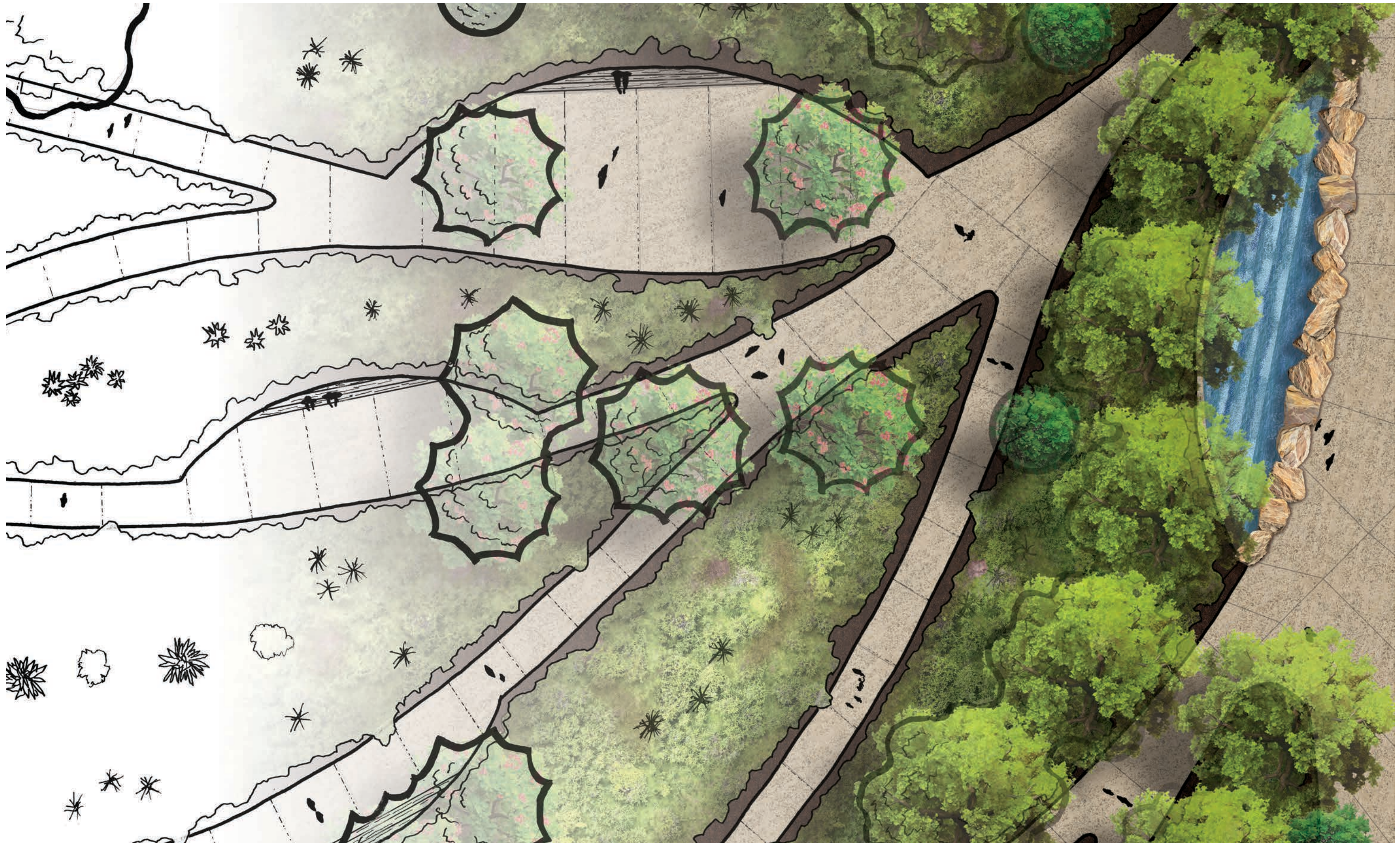
PERSPECTIVE 3 LOOKING NORTH AT *FURCRAEA MACDOUGALII*

DIGITALLY RENDERED WITH PHOTOSHOP (DG3)

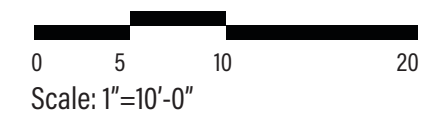


PERSPECTIVE 4 LOOKING WEST AT *ERYTHRINA CORALLOIDES*

DIGITALLY RENDERED WITH PHOTOSHOP (DG3)



ENLARGEMENT HAND RENDERED WITH PEN AND THEN DIGITALLY RENDERED WITH PHOTOSHOP (DG2 & DG3)



Inspiration Photos

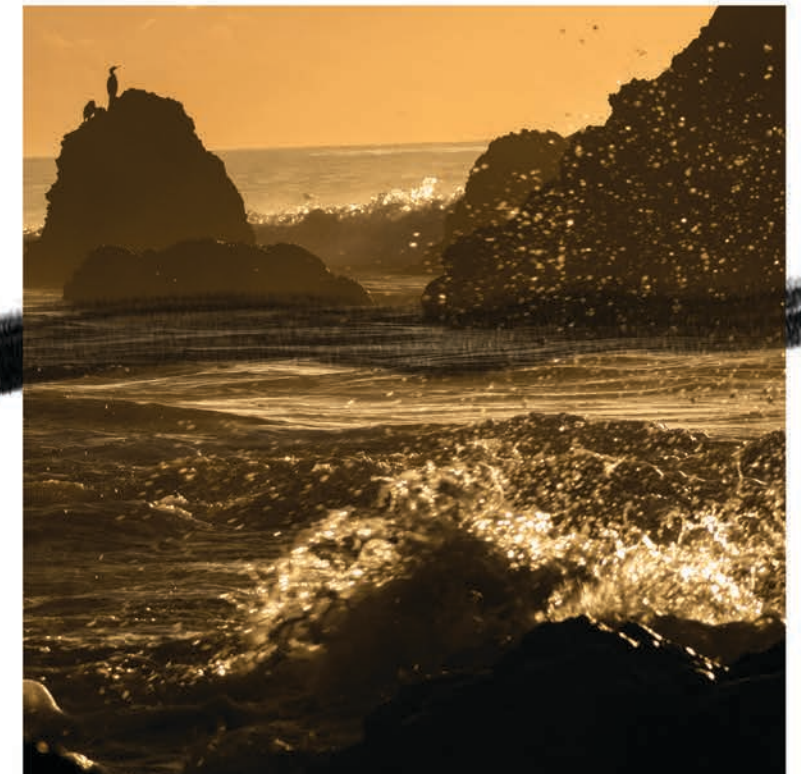
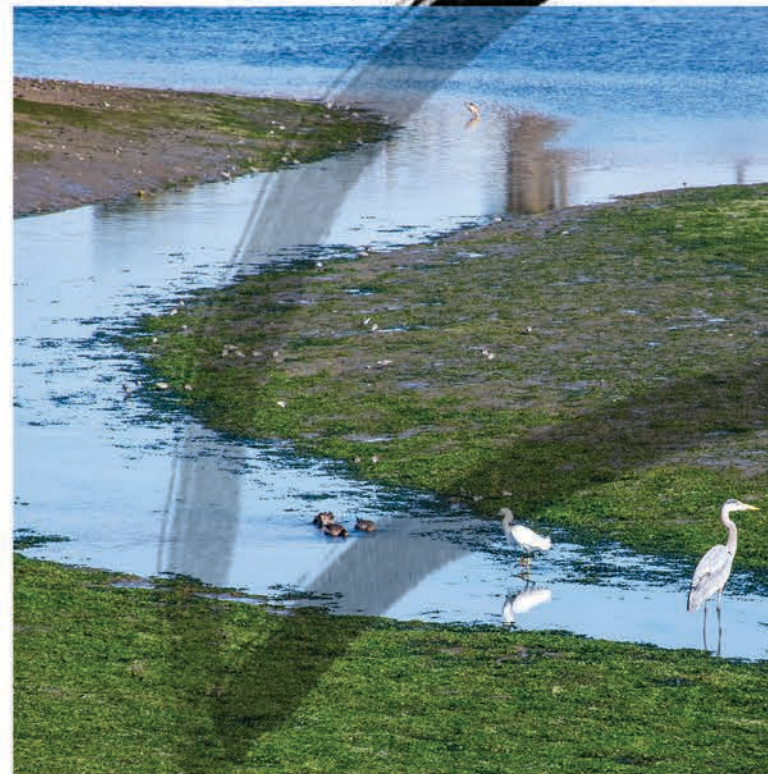
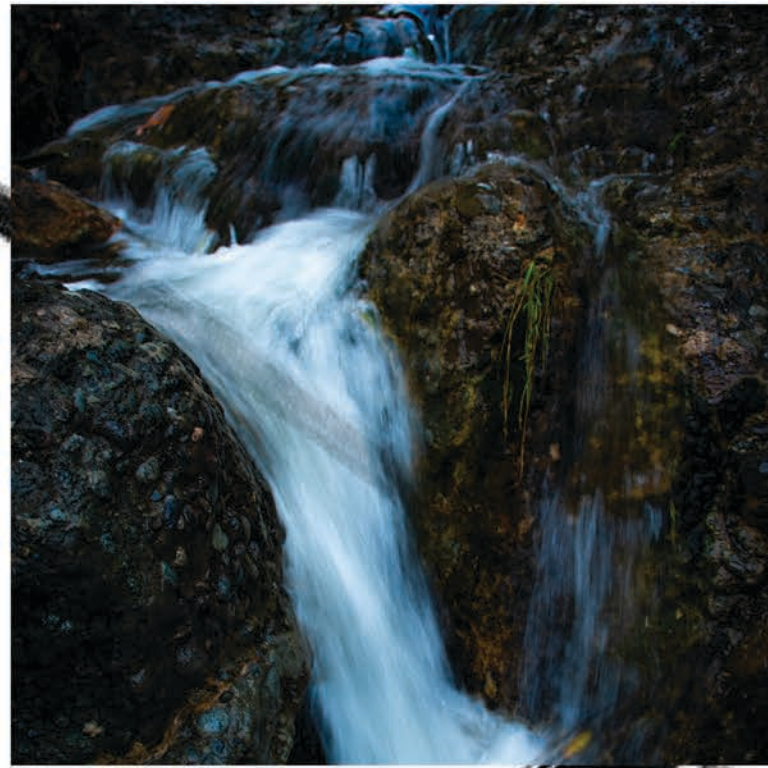
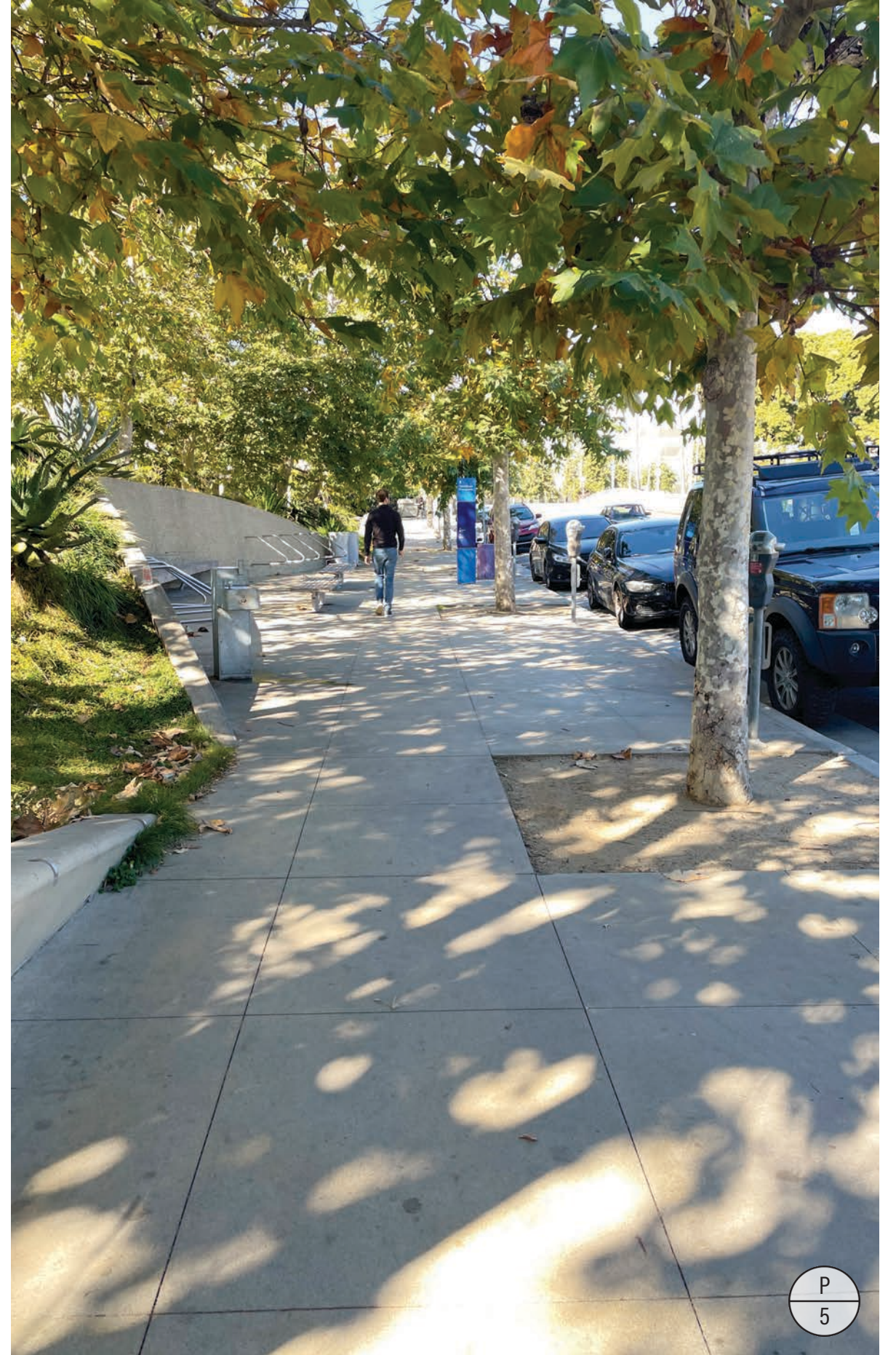


Photo Gallery



Key Map 



Selected Plant Material



White Sage
Salvia Apiana



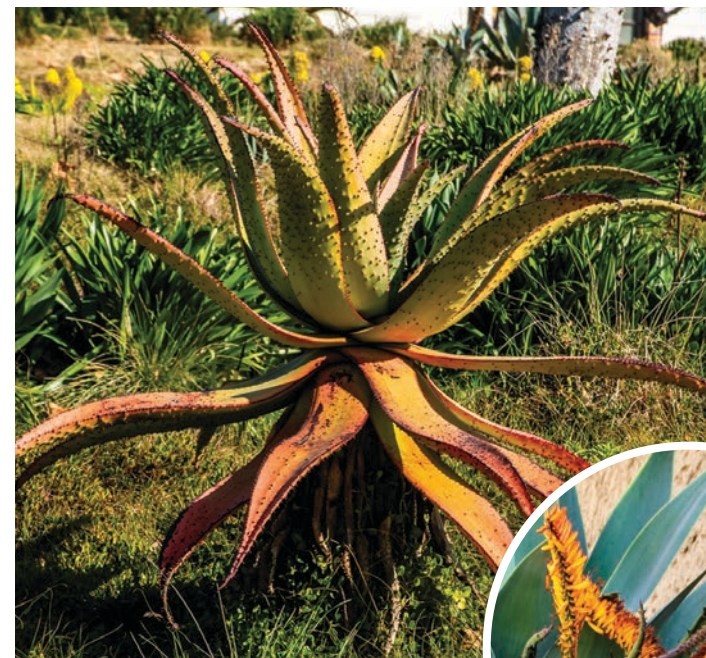
California Aster
Symphyotrichum chilense



Clustered Field Sedge
Carex praegracilis



MacDougall's Century Plant
Furcraea macdougallii



Mountain Aloe
Aloe marlothii



Western Sycamore
Platanus racemosa





Selected Materials & Amenities



Large Aggregate Concrete Mix



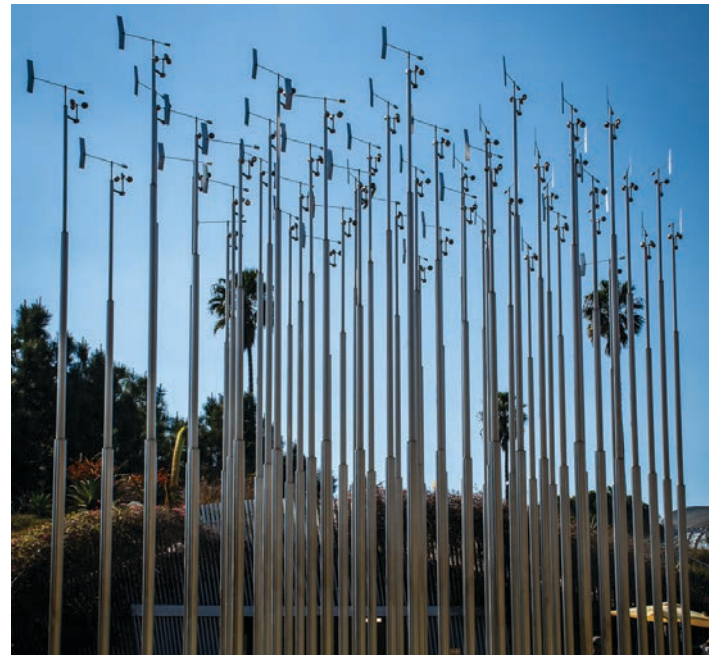
Medium Aggregate Concrete Mix



Small Aggregate Concrete Mix



Typical Bike Rack



"Weather Field" by Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle's



Typical Seat Wall



Acknowledgments

To my wife, Debora, who always believes in me, even when I don't.

To David, Rebecca and Laura. Thank you for *everything*.

To my classmates and friends. Keep going.



Citations

Woolf, Virginia, and Susan Dick. *To the Lighthouse*. Published for the Shakespeare Head Press by Blackwell Publishers, 1992.

C-164, 55-27, January 1, 1928. Courtesy of UCSB Library Geospatial Collection.

CCC-BQK-C, 5, May 30, 2001. Courtesy of UCSB Library Geospatial Collection.

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2025