



CIVIC ARTS PLAZA

THOUSAND OAKS

SITE REDEVELOPMENT  
& STRATEGY

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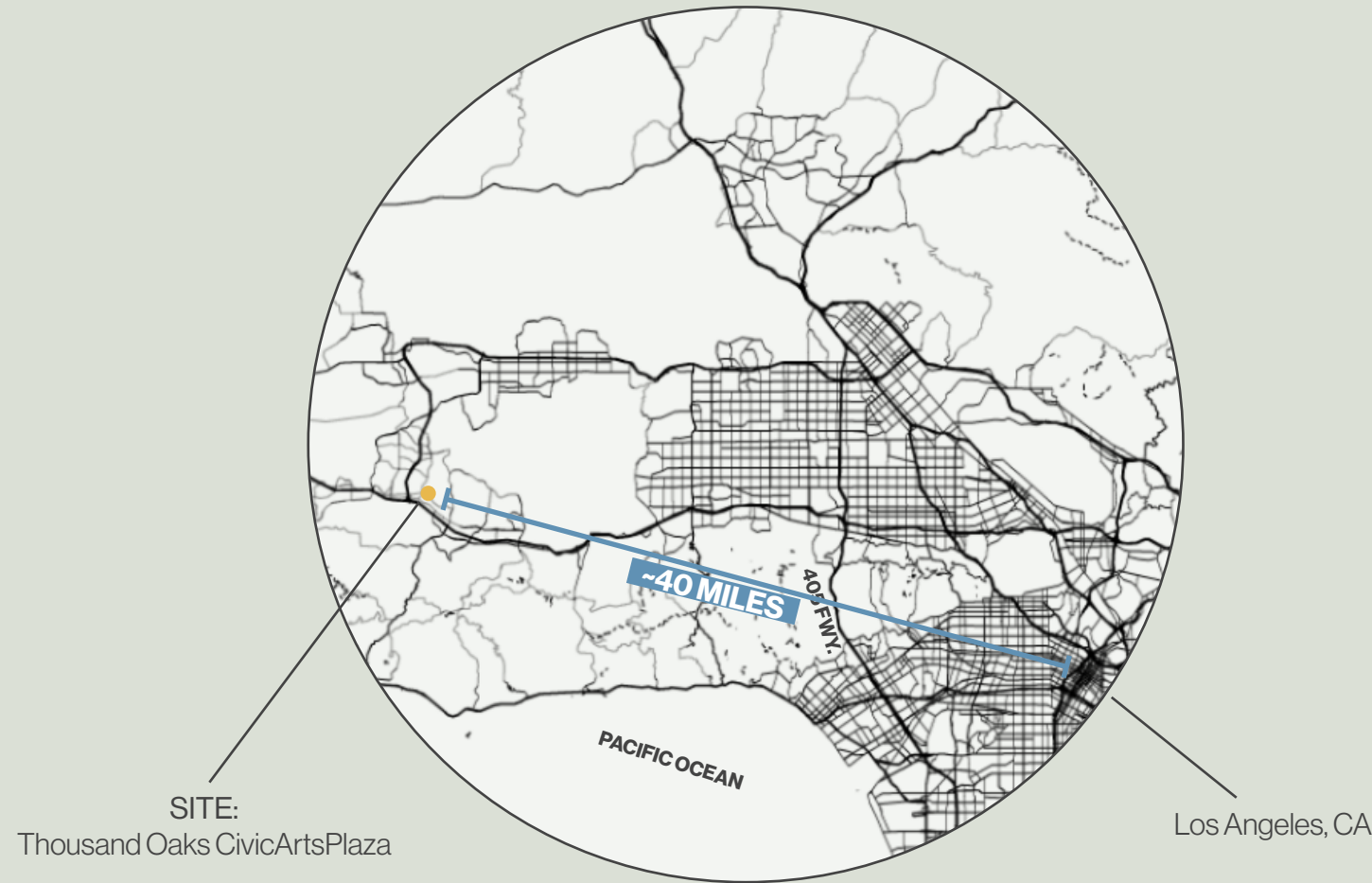
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# OVERVIEW

*"If there wasn't [controversy], I wouldn't feel I was pushing the boundaries of my art."*

*-Antoine Predock,  
architect of the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza*

# LOCATION *Thousand Oaks, CA*



**Population:** ~125,000 (as of 2024 estimate)

**Area:** 55.2 square miles

**Elevation:** Ranges from ~500 ft to over 2,000 ft (152–610 m) above sea level

**Temperature Ranges:** Summer Highs: 85–95°F / Winter Lows: 40–50°F

**Time Zone:** Pacific Standard Time (PST) / Pacific Daylight Time (PDT in summer)

**Precipitation Annual Averages:** ~16–18 inches, mostly in winter

**USDA Hardiness Zone:** 10a

**Sunset Climate Zone:** 23 (coastal-influenced inland valleys)

**CEC Climate Zone:** Zone 9 (inland, warm summers, mild winters)

**Bioregion:** California Floristic Province (a global biodiversity hotspot)

**Vegetation Type:** California Chaparral and Oak Woodland

**Natural Hazards:** Drought-prone, high wildfire risk, periodic flooding in low-lying zones



# HISTORY & INTRODUCTION

## Pre-1542 AD

The Chumash establish thriving villages for over 13,000 years, utilizing the abundant **oak trees** for acorns (a staple food) and the natural resources of the valley. Evidence of their presence, including ancient pictographs, exists throughout the area.

(Photo: Chumash cave paintings)



Source: Santa Barbara Museum of National History



Source: Museum of Ventura County

## 1803

Rancho El Conejo, a massive 48,572-acre land grant encompassing what is now Thousand Oaks, is granted to Jose Polanco and Ygnacio Rodriguez. The name "Conejo" (Spanish for "rabbit") refers to the abundant rabbits in the region.

(Photo: Plat map of Rancho El Conejo, 1861, US Surveyor General, Bureau of Land Management.)

## 1923

The name "Thousand Oaks" is chosen in a contest for a new subdivision, reflecting the abundance of oak trees. This area is known today as "Old Town Thousand Oaks."

(Photo: Thousand Oaks area Russell Ranch)



Source: City of Thousand Oaks Library



Source: City of Thousand Oaks Library



Source: City of Thousand Oaks Library

## 1964

For decades, the Conejo Valley maintained its rural character with ranches and farms. However, the mid-20th century brought significant change. The community, recognizing the need for a unified vision and local control, voted overwhelmingly to incorporate as the City of Thousand Oaks on September 29, 1964. This act was a deliberate expression of community intention – to guide development, preserve its unique character, and create a high quality of life for its residents.

(Photo: L-Aerial view of the Banyan school at Knollwood and Erinlea, 1968 R-Conejo grade along the 101 freeway, 1967)

## 1542

Spanish explorer Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo lands at Point Mugu and claims the land for Spain, marking the first European contact with the area.

(Painting: Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo landing in what is now California)



Source: Santa Barbara Museum of National History



Source: City of Thousand Oaks Library

## 1874

Egbert Starr Newbury purchases 2,259 acres of Rancho El Conejo, including the site of today's Civic Arts Plaza.

(Photo: Egbert Starr Newbury Home)

## 1927

Louis Goebel opens his Lion Farm, later known as Jungleland, attracting tourists and becoming a popular filming location for movies like "Tarzan" and "The Adventures of Robin Hood."

(Photo: This was first fire truck in the Conejo Valley area, which Louis Goebel purchased after a devastating fire at the Lion Farm in 1942. Casey Roper (left) and Roderick Billion are seated in the truck. Entrance to Goebel's Lion farm is in the background.)



Source: City of Thousand Oaks Library



Source: City of Thousand Oaks Library

## 1994

The Civic Arts Plaza opens on land once home to Chumash villages, rancho outposts, and even a Hollywood-era animal park. It marked a turning point, transforming Thousand Oaks from a quiet suburb into a city with a civic heart. Designed by architect Antoine Predock, the center drew from the strength and the symbolism of the oak tree: resilient, grounded, and deeply local. Just as oaks shape the region's identity, this building aimed to anchor community life with culture, civic presence, and pride.

(Photo: Civic Arts Plaza shortly after opening in 1994)

# SITE ANALYSIS









*A close look at the Thousand Oaks Civic Center site—its physical structure, patterns of use, and latent potential. These layered observations ground the design in real conditions, highlighting both challenges and opportunities for shaping a more connected, inviting, and adaptable civic landscape.*

# CONTEXT

Set within a growing downtown core, the site's surrounding area includes parks, commercial zones, and a mix of residential densities—ranging from lower-scale housing to medium-high residential, which typically includes townhomes and low-rise apartments at 20–30 units per acre. A 10-minute walk radius helps frame the site's potential to serve as a local hub within the emerging downtown core.

Understanding these relationships reveals both the pressures and potentials of the area—from walkable access to nearby parks and retail, to the evolving needs of adjacent housing and civic uses which shapes how the site can better connect, support, and serve the broader community.

## LAND USE LEGEND

-  Civic Arts Plaza Site Boundary
-  Core Downtown Area
-  Institutional
-  Park / Open Green Space
-  Commercial
-  Mixed-Use Residential
-  Medium-High Vol. Residential
-  10-minute Walk Radius

## CIVIC CORE LEGEND

-  Civic Arts Plaza
-  Civic Arts Plaza Park
-  Senior Living Facility
-  Oakwood Plaza Mall
-  Parking Structure
-  Gardens of the World
-  On The Boulevard
-  Oak Leaf Square Mall
-  Future Museum
-  Future Apartment Building
-  The Lakes Shopping Center
-  The Lakes Parking Lot



# FIGURE-GROUND

This diagram highlights the building footprint within and around the site, revealing patterns of density, scale, and spatial organization. By focusing on built form alone, it draws attention to gaps, edges, and relationships between structures—offering insight into how the Civic Arts Plaza fits into the surrounding urban fabric.

## LEGEND

----- Civic Arts Plaza Site Boundary



# STUDY AREAS

## ZONE 1 — CITY HALL + PARKING LOT

This area is mostly parking right now, sitting directly in front of City Hall. It's the main arrival point for people doing business, as well as for loading and service access. There's a clear view to the building, but not much to engage someone on foot. It could be a much more welcoming and public-facing space.

## ZONE 2 — CIVIC LAWN

This zone stretches from Thousand Oaks Boulevard to the theater courtyards, acting as the site's front edge. It sees regular foot and bike traffic, but feels disconnected—more like a pass-through than a place to arrive. Despite bordering the library and Civic Arts Plaza, it lacks a strong identity. It wants to be the front lawn of the site, but doesn't quite invite you in—yet.

## ZONE 3 — THE OAKS

Down in this corner, the oaks take over—it's quiet and shaded. It's also the buffer area between the Civic Center and a soon to be built residential complex with adjacent parking. There's a sloped hill and pedestrian bridge access.

## ZONE 4 — STREETScape

This is the front face of the site. There's a sidewalk but little foot traffic. A ton of visibility from the street, but not much that says "this is a place." There's a bus stop that is linked to Metro Los Angeles. Further east is the new 'The Lakes' commercial complex.

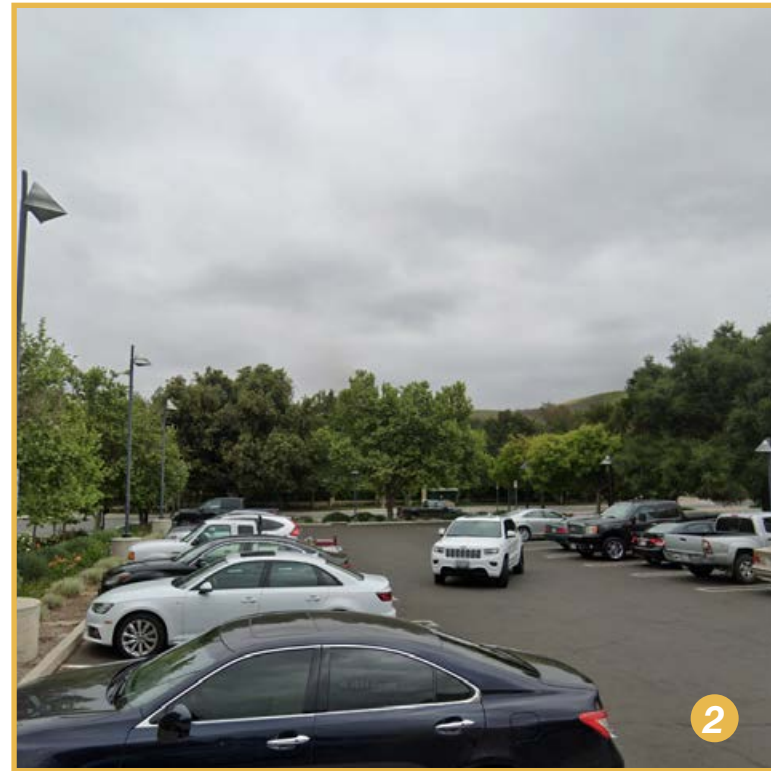
# LEGEND

- (A)** City Hall Offices
- (B)** Forum Theater
- (C)** Kavli Theater
- (D)** Rooftop Terrace
- (E)** Parking Structure
- (F)** Second Level Entrance
- (G)** Pedestrian Bridge
- (H)** Third Level Entrance
- (I)** Future Museum
- (J)** Future Apartment Building
- (K)** The Lakes Shopping Center
- (L)** Loading Dock





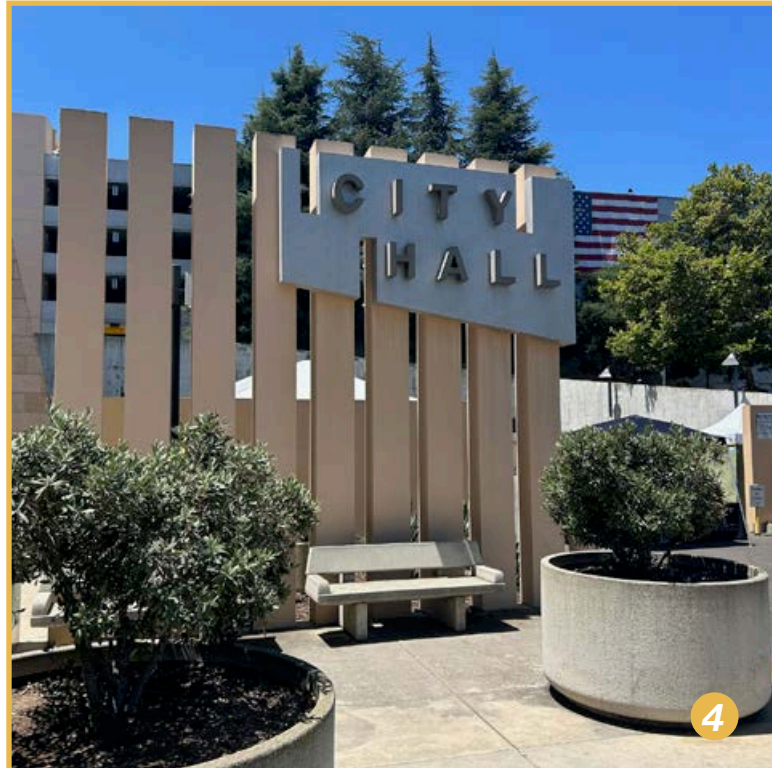
**City Hall Parking Lot** — primary arrival point dominated by vehicles.



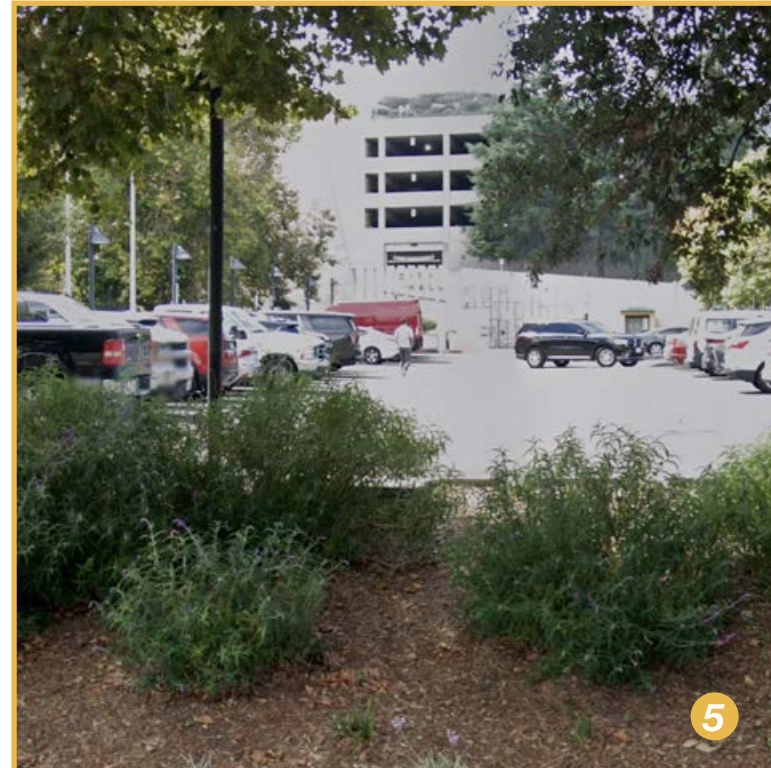
**Reverse view of City Hall parking lot** — reveals lack of defined pedestrian circulation.



**Walkway leading to second-level City Hall entrance** — limited arrival experience.



**City Hall Signage** — modest presence with limited visual impact.

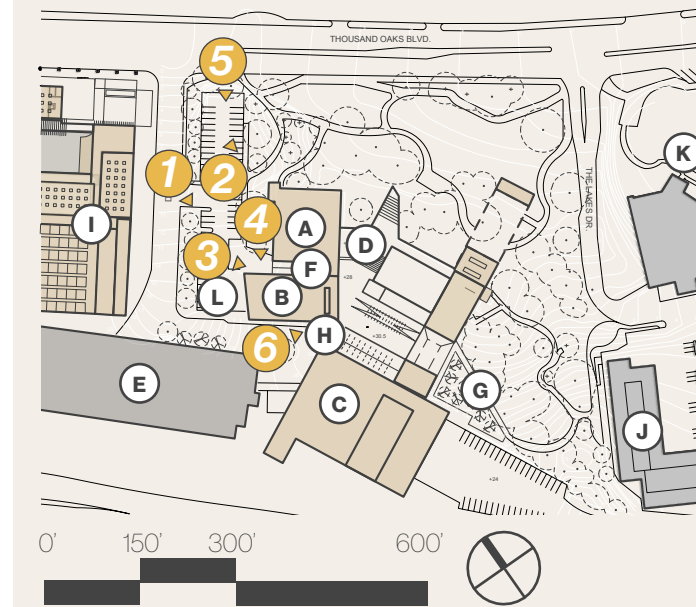


**Looking into the Civic Center from the sidewalk** — minimal threshold or invitation into the site.



**Kavli Theater third-level entrance** — sense of formality, yet no connection to street level.

## ZONE 1 — CITY HALL + PARKING LOT



### LEGEND

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**Civic Center signage and bus stop — modest arrival moment with minimal draw into the site.**



**Rock Swale - visible drainage feature adds texture but lacks connection to the site.**



**Outdoor theater — flexible open space lacking defined edges or everyday programming.**



**Main pedestrian path — doesn't guide or frame the experience.**

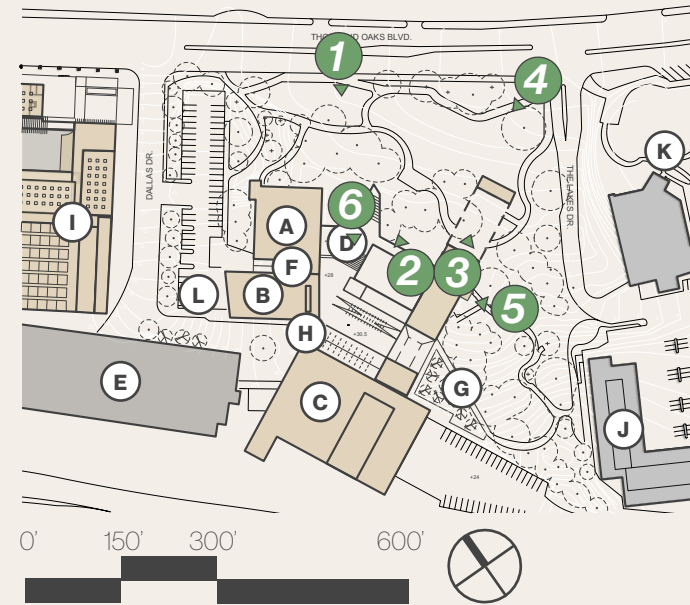


**Backside tunnel — underlit passage that interrupts flow and feels uninviting.**



**Tiered planters — structured green space underutilized as part of the public realm.**

**ZONE 2 — CIVIC LAWN**



**LEGEND**

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**Dense oak canopy** — natural buffer creating a sense of enclosure and shade.



**Picnic tables in a clearing** — informal gathering space nestled within the oak grove.



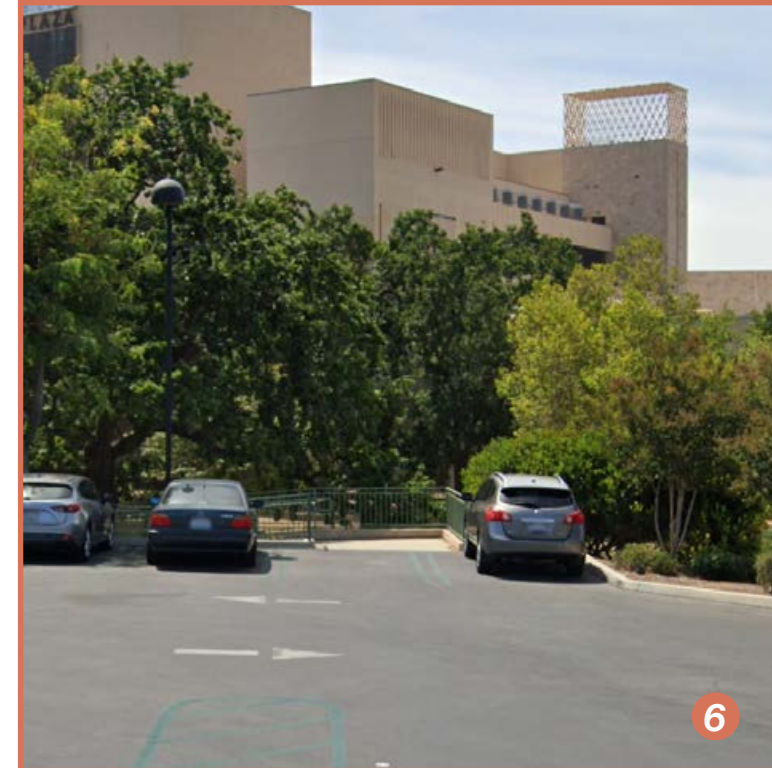
**Walkway ramp** — accessible route connecting lower and upper site levels through wooded areas.



**Elevated ramp** — frames picnic area and integrates circulation with green space.

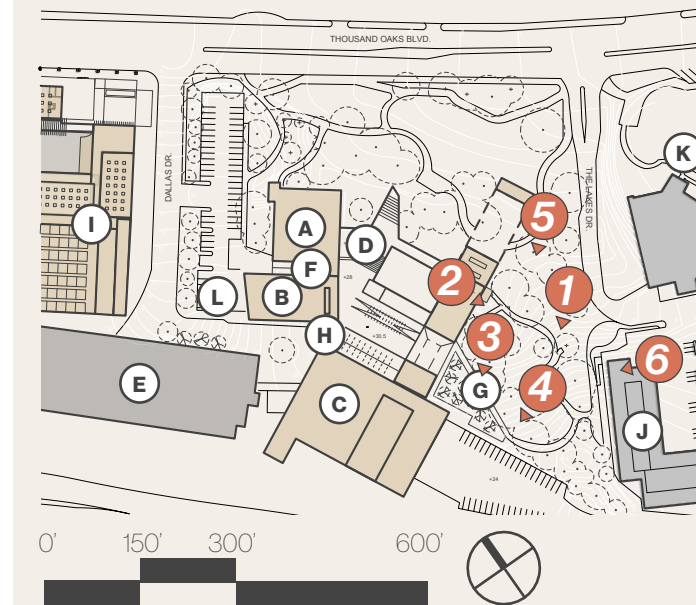


**Tree buffer** — thick vegetation screening the theater and providing spatial separation.



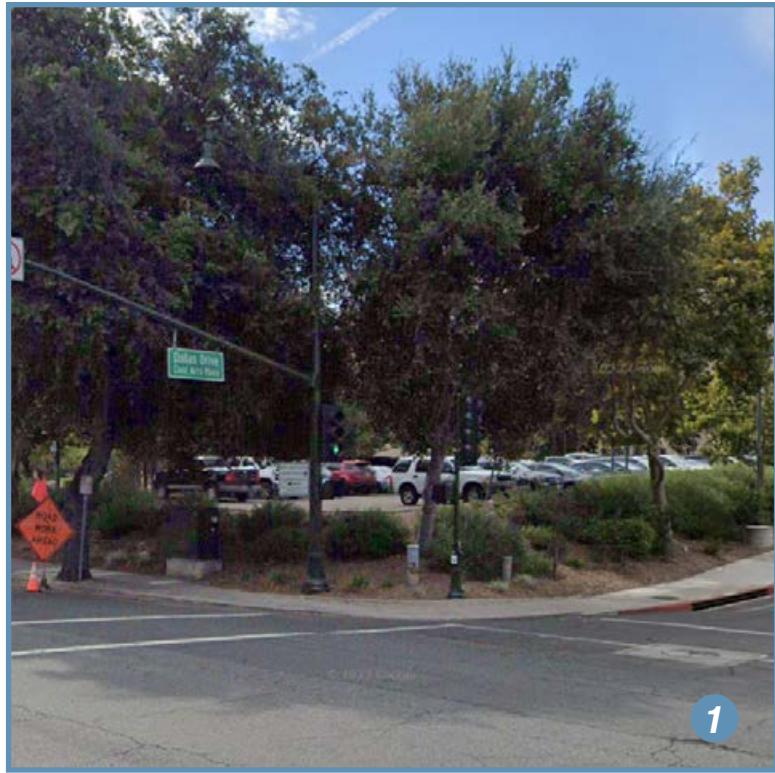
**Future apartment site view** — clear access into oak grove offering connection to nature.

## ZONE 3 — THE OAKS



## LEGEND

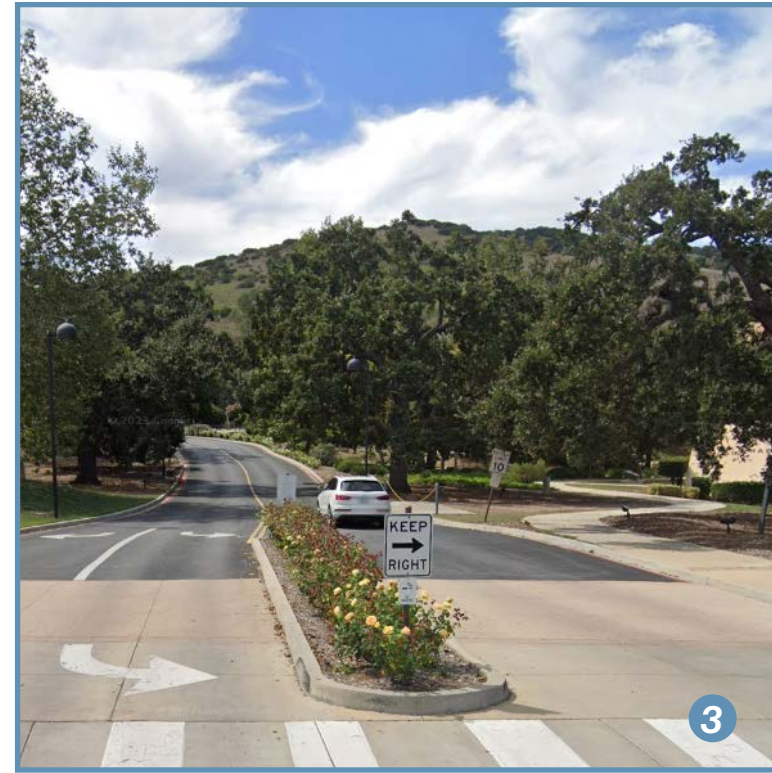
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**Corner of Thousand Oaks Blvd. and Dallas Drive — views into City Hall parking highlight lack of active frontage.**



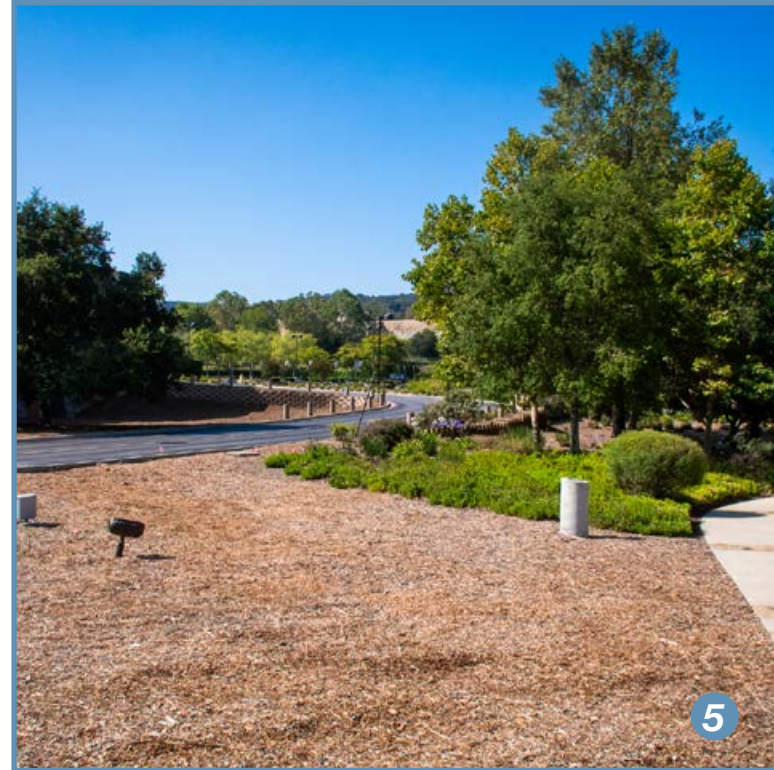
**Civic Center signage and bus stop — modest gateway with limited pedestrian engagement.**



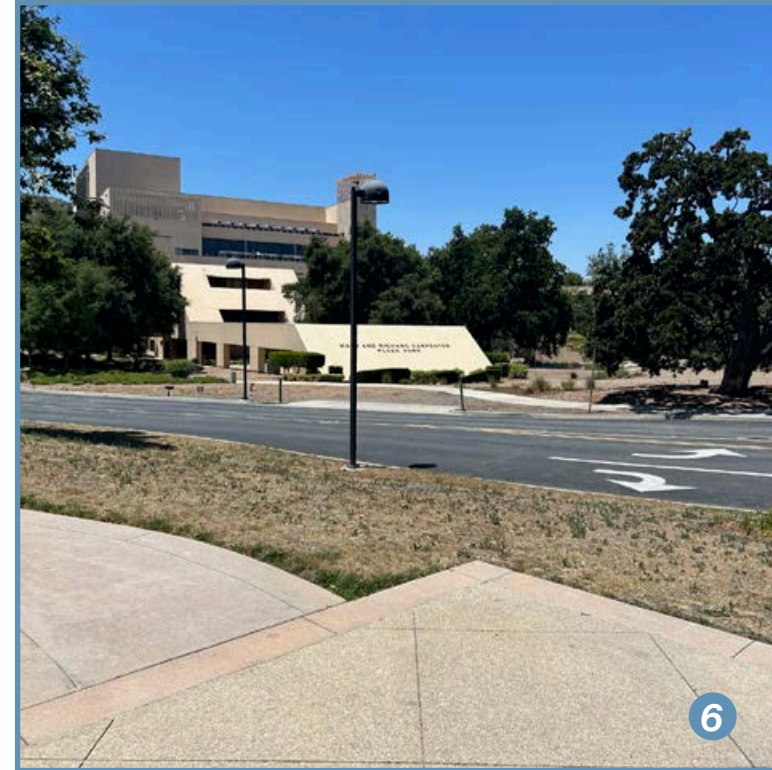
**Crosswalk at The Lakes — pedestrian link feels disconnected between sites.**



**Corner of Thousand Oaks Blvd. and The Lakes Drive — a key corner with weak pedestrian engagement.**

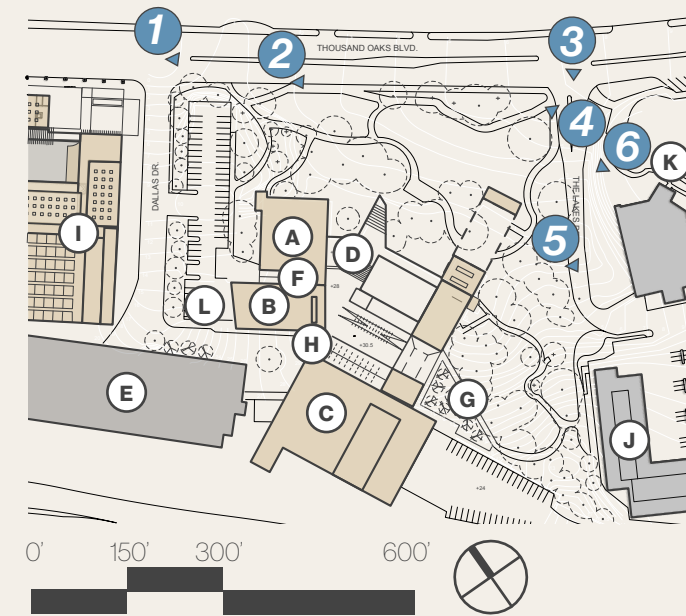


**The Lakes Drive — vehicular corridor with limited pedestrian amenities.**



**Opposite street view — building presence is strong but site edge lacks welcoming character.**

## ZONE 4 —STREETSCAPE



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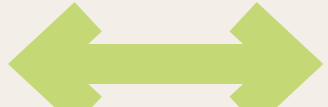







# CIRCULATION

Circulation across the site is defined by uncomfortable intersections between cars and people. Vehicular access dominates primary entry points, creating **conflict zones** with minimal separation.

While pedestrian routes exist, they feel secondary—access points are underdefined and wayfinding is limited. Despite the site's proximity to bus lines, public arrival feels like an afterthought.

These overlaps point to a need for a clearer hierarchy that prioritizes safety, visibility, and a more welcoming civic presence.

## LEGEND

-  Primary Vehicular Circulation
-  Secondary Vehicular Circulation
-  Tertiary Vehicular Circulation
-  Primary Pedestrian Circulation
-  Secondary Pedestrian Circulation
-  Pedestrian Access Point
-  Metro Bus Stop
-  Conflict Zone

## SITE LEGEND

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# TREE CANOPY

The site's tree canopy is dominated by oaks, with scattered sycamores, flowering trees, and pines filling in around edges and entrances. While the presence of so many mature oaks gives the site a distinct identity, it also limits flexibility.

Tree protection laws mean much of the canopy must remain, shaping what can be placed and where. But with future residential development planned nearby, the oak grove also offers a chance to create a quieter, more buffered zone—something that could evolve into a meaningful interface between civic life and neighborhood space.

## LEGEND

-  Oak Tree
-  Pine Tree
-  Sycamore Tree
-  Flowering Tree

## SITE LEGEND

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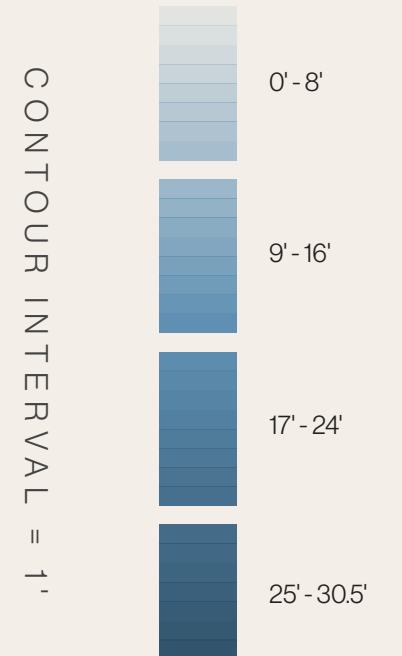


# TOPOGRAPHY

Subtle shifts in elevation shape where water flows, trees thrive, and people move. These flows run through root zones of protected oaks—especially near the pedestrian bridge—raising questions about long-term tree health. A flat clearing at the base of that slope, currently used as a picnic area, suggests potential for a shared gathering space that responds to the site's topography.

Elsewhere, a shallow basin sits beneath the oak canopy—a natural depression that, with care, could support seasonal capture or infiltration without compromising root integrity. Understanding these conditions is a first step toward working with, not against, the land.

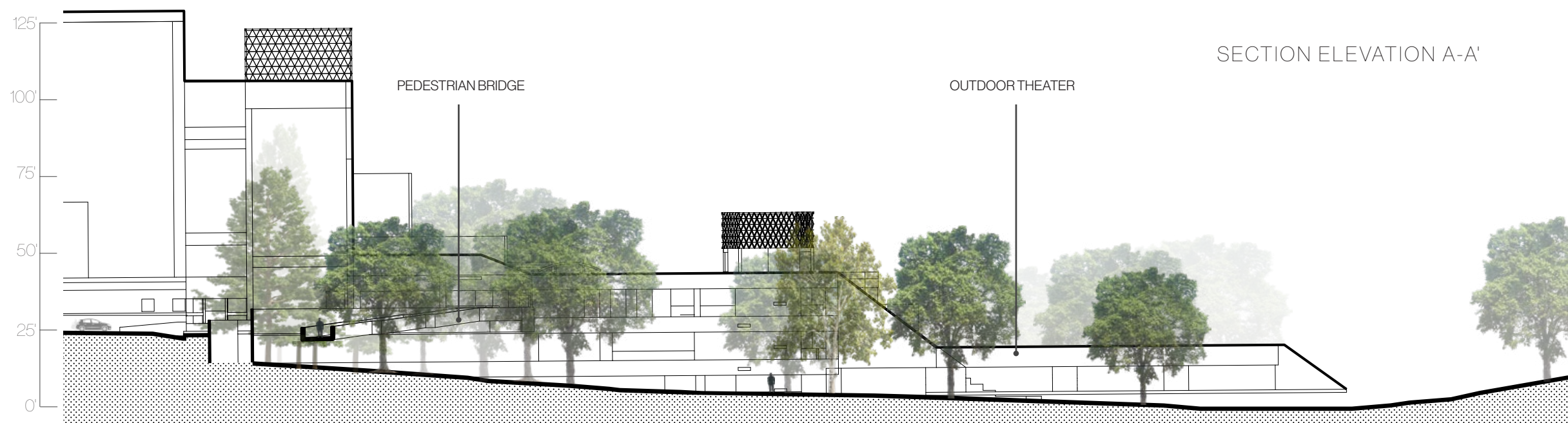
## LEGEND



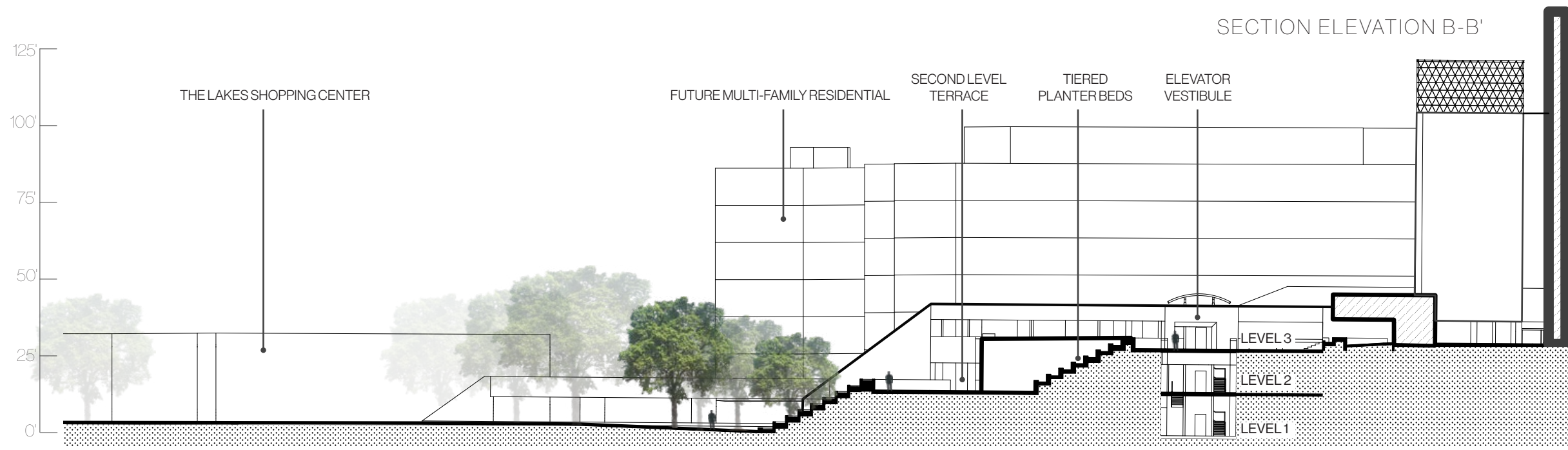
## SITE LEGEND

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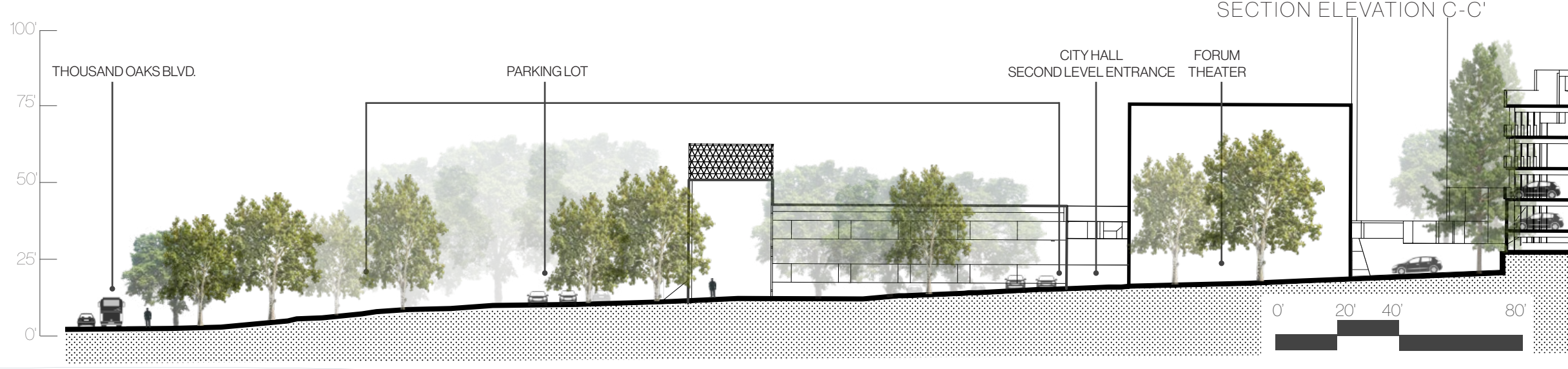




SECTION ELEVATION A-A'



SECTION ELEVATION B-B'



SECTION ELEVATION C-C'

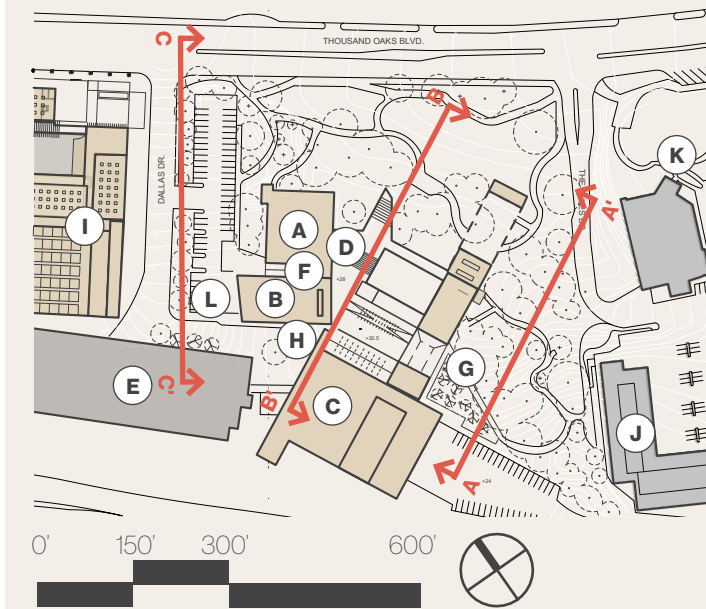
# TOPOGRAPHY

## SECTION ELEVATIONS

Cut through the site, and the terrain tells its own story. These sectional views through key zones reveal the rise and fall of the land, further helping visualize terrain and tree scale.

Each sectional cut traces a different experience of the land: from the oak-covered hill rising toward the pedestrian bridge, to the stepped incline of the tiered planters climbing up to the Kavli Theatre, to the sloped transition from the City Hall parking lot up to the garage edge. These profiles help to visualize how the site might better support how people move through and experience the space.

## KEY MAP



## LEGEND

- (A) City Hall Offices
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# CONSTRAINTS

- 1 Arrival experience is **vehicle-dominated**, lacks character and identity
- 2 **Pedestrian and vehicle conflicts** at turnaround and drop-off areas
- 3 Limited **weather protection** between garage and entrance area
- 4 **City Hall signage** is underwhelming and poorly integrated to the space
- 5 **Views from sidewalk** into parking are uninspiring and barren, lack of wayfinding
- 6 **Loading dock** needs to remain visible and serviceable at City Hall and theater entrance
- 7 **Tunnel below fitness center** feels sketchy, limiting circulation and creating safety concern
- 8 **Lawn** is **underutilized** and lacks infrastructure for events
- 9 **Rock swale** feels disconnected and not integrated as usable space
- 10 **Picnic area** and **ramp** lack programmatic structure
- 11 **Tiered planter areas** feel underused and disconnected
- 12 Site edges near **future development** lack a defined and desired gateway
- 13 Civic center feels **inward-facing**, disconnected from surrounding uses. No connection to the surroundings.
- 14 **Bus stop** is minimal and lacks comfort or integration into streetscape
- 15 Lack of **buffer between street and site** reduces sense of arrival
- 16 **The Lakes** feels disconnected, despite being directly across the street

# LEGEND

- |                           |                               |
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# OPPORTUNITIES

- 1 Reclaim **parking lot** as a plaza or flexible community space
- 2 Create a stronger public **arrival sequence at City Hall**
- 3 Introduce **shade, planting, and surface upgrades** to soften the hardscape
- 4 Potential for clearer **signage** and more inviting front entrance
- 5 Improve **pedestrian pathways through parking** to provide a safer access
- 6 Improve **tiered planters** and entry leading up and **into the Kavli Theater**
- 7 Potential to better connect the **outdoor theater** area to the rest of the site
- 8 Convert **front lawn** into a flexible civic **"town square"**
- 9 Integrate **bicycle infrastructure**, including bike racks and potential bike lanes as an offset to parking concerns
- 10 Potential for **programmatic activity** that appeals to future **multi-family residents** moving in
- 11 Redesign **plaza edges** for seating with views of the hills
- 12 Provide clear access from **new residential development** to this zone
- 13 Frame **main pathway** into the site
- 14 Develop stronger transit interface at **bus stop** (seating, signage, shelter)
- 15 Create **buffer from noisy street** to enhance safety and calm while providing access points that better engage pedestrians
- 16 Connect **The Lakes** with the site to further enhance, integrate and expand the downtown center

# LEGEND

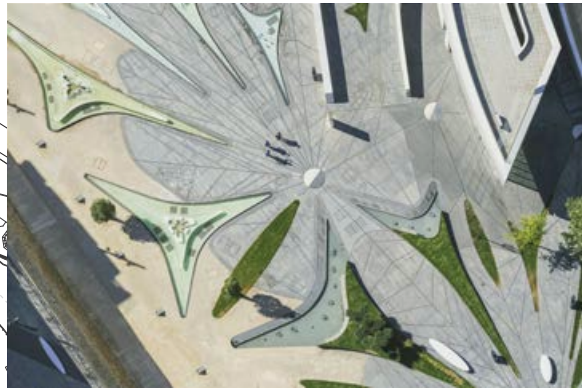
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# CASE STUDIES

*An exploration of civic landscapes that offer relevant models for Thousand Oaks as it grows and changes. While drawn from larger urban contexts, each case speaks to similar design challenges: connecting civic centers to surrounding neighborhoods and shaping flexible public spaces within comparable site scales. These examples provide insight into how landscape can support community, identity, and civic life—now and into the future.*

# ELEFThERIA SQUARE *Nicosia, Cyprus*



Geometry defines movement through the space.



Landscape bridges historic and modern layers.



Connecting the old city to the new city.



Open flexible space for multi-purpose use.

Zaha Hadid Architects | Completed 2021

**PROJECT TYPE:** Urban civic landscape and plaza redevelopment

**SITE SIZE:** 27,000 sq meters (~6.7 acres)

**NICOSIA POPULATION:** 256,119

**CONTEXT:** Historic city core meets modern urban expansion; adjacent to 16th-century Venetian walls

**PROJECT SUMMARY:** Eleftheria Square reimagines a complex civic threshold where centuries-old fortifications meet the fabric of a contemporary city. Carving into the terrain around Nicosia's Venetian walls, the design transforms former dividing lines into connective tissue—bridging past and present through sculpted landforms, integrated plazas, and layered circulation. What emerges is a civic platform that accommodates daily life, civic gathering, and cultural identity—without relying on decorative or literal gestures.

## DESIGN HIGHLIGHTS

- Reframing Historic Edges  
*The Venetian wall becomes an organizing element rather than a barrier.*
- Connecting Disparate Zones  
*Elevated walkways and terraced plazas stitch together divided urban areas—linking old and new.*
- Landform as Social Infrastructure  
*Graded surfaces define informal play zones, bike paths, and rest areas—supporting a wide range of users.*
- Flexible Hardscape  
*Open, durable surfaces host events and civic life without prescribing a fixed use.*
- Civic Identity Through Geometry  
*Bold, continuous forms unify the space and invite movement across thresholds.*

All images on Page: <https://www.zaha-hadid.com/masterplans/eleftheria-square/>



# CIVIC PARK AT HEMISFAIR *San Antonio, TX*



**GGN / Alamo Architects | Phase 2 Completed 2023**

**PROJECT TYPE:** Urban park and civic plaza redevelopment

**SITE SIZE:** 5.6 acres (Phase 2); part of a larger 19-acre civic park system

**SAN ANTONIO POPULATION:** 1.5 million

**CONTEXT:** Historic urban park embedded in downtown San Antonio; reconnects neighborhoods severed by past development and infrastructure

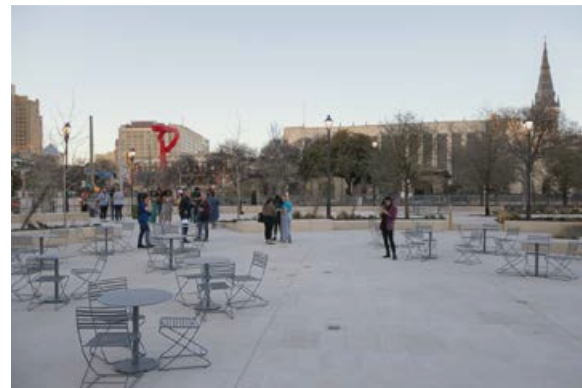
**PROJECT SUMMARY:** Hemisfair Civic Park reclaims a central downtown site through a sequence of civic spaces—transforming former roadway and parking areas into a flexible public landscape. Once fragmented by traffic and underutilized edges, the site now acts as a connective hinge between the historic core, residential neighborhoods, and the River Walk district. With a focus on pedestrian access, shade, and program adaptability, the design welcomes both everyday use and large-scale civic events while honoring the site's cultural legacy.

**DESIGN HIGHLIGHTS**

- Invitational Intersection  
*Source Plaza replaces former sidewalk edges, creating public thresholds into the park.*
- Shaded Civic Spine  
*A tree-lined promenade links park zones and defines a comfortable, walkable public realm.*
- Flexible Event Infrastructure  
*The Great Lawn and surrounding plazas support everything from casual use to events.*
- Civic Continuity  
*Hardscape, planting, and furnishings balance cultural memory with modern use.*



*Multi-functional green space.*



*Plaza replaces former street corner.*



*Tree lined path replaces sidewalk.*



*Shallow pools lead to spontaneous interaction.*



*All images on Page: <https://www.ggnltd.com/civic-park-at-hemisfair>*

# GRAND GREEN OSAKA & UMEKITA PARK *Osaka, Japan*

GGN / Mitsubishi Estate | Phase I opened 2024

**PROJECT TYPE:** Transit-adjacent civic landscape & mixed-use redevelopment

**SITE SIZE:** 4.5 ha public park within a 9.1 ha mixed-use campus

**OSAKA POPULATION:** 2.7 million

**CONTEXT:** Integrated into a major rail terminal, forming a new green gateway and urban hub for Osaka

**PROJECT SUMMARY:** A bold civic landscape woven into a transit hub, Grand Green Osaka reconnects neighborhood, station, and public life through a curving promenade, event pavilion, and seasonal greenery. It transforms underused rail-adjacent land into a layered landscape of daily comfort, seasonal interest, and programmed civic use.

**DESIGN HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Elevated Bridge Linkage  
*Pedestrian bridge creates civic entry and visibility across traffic and ground level circulation.*
- Curved Public Spine  
*Promenade shapes movement and connects park zones.*
- Programmed Pavilion  
*Covered event plaza adjacent to lawn for markets, performances, gatherings.*
- Naturalistic Gardens  
*Reflective plantings echo cultural identity and offer respite.*
- Transit Connection  
*Park links directly to station, enabling seamless civic entry and extension.*



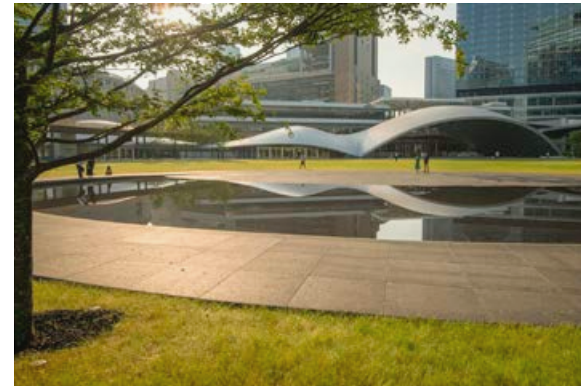
Elevated pathway connects two parks over a road.



Multi-layered park usage.



Curved amphitheatre reflecting landscape form.



Sky and structure meet.



0' 60' 120' 240'

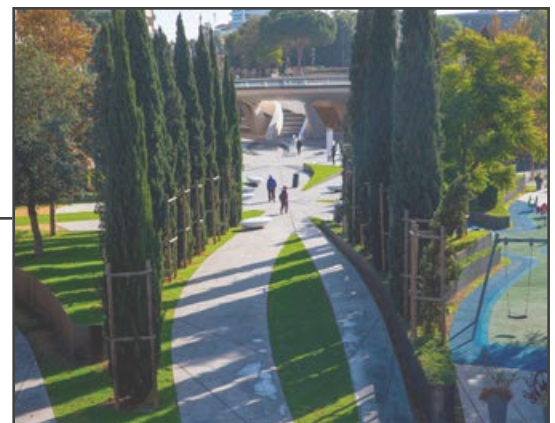


All images on Page: <https://www.ggnltd.com/grand-green-osaka-umekita-park>

# ELEFThERIA SQUARE

What this overlay starts to reveal:

- Eleftheria's central entry axis aligns with the City Hall parking lot suggesting how arrival flow could be clarified and celebrated. (See Photo)
- Programmed edges like a playground and flexible plaza space nest comfortably within the current parking footprint, offering activation without crowding. (See Photo)<sup>1</sup>
- The outdoor cinema tucks seamlessly into the shaded oak grove, showing potential for quiet, community-oriented use that respects the trees and topography.



# CIVIC PARK AT HEMISFAIR

Hemisfair's Civic Park layers in seamlessly:

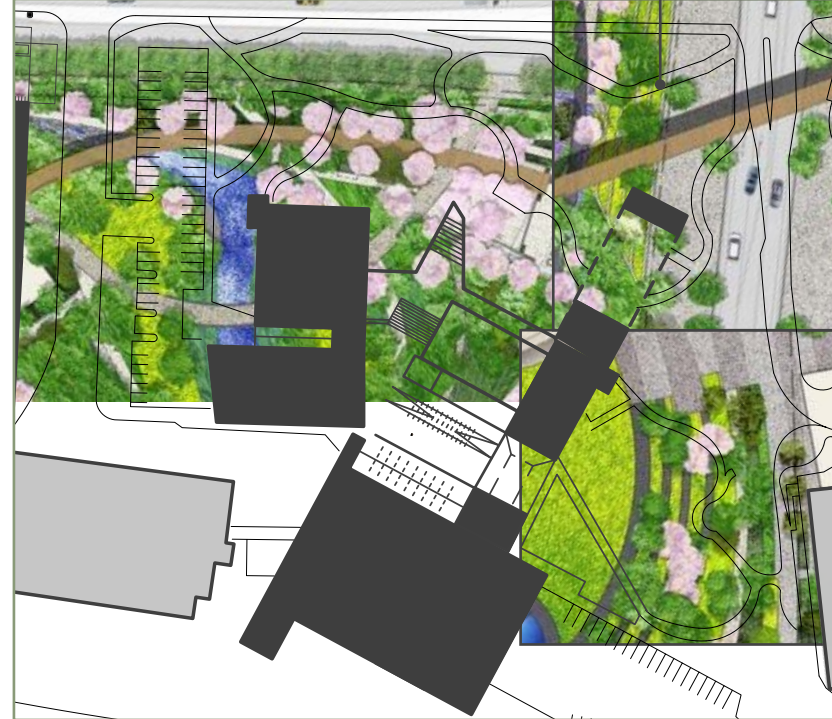
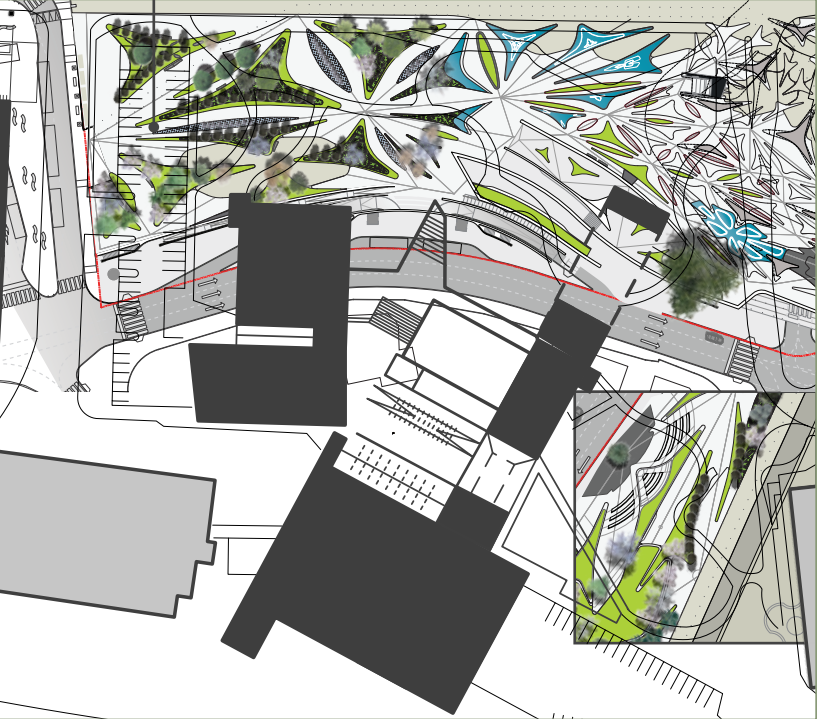
- The corner entry plaza aligns well with Thousand Oaks and Dallas Drive, showing how a bold gateway moment could anchor this edge.
- The expansive great lawn overlays cleanly onto the central site, offering spatial proof that a generous, flexible open space could thrive here.
- The meeting of the lawn and shallow water feature in the reference photo<sup>2</sup> points to how multi-use programming can coexist without crowding.



# GRAND GREEN OSAKA & UMEKITA PARK

Grand Green Osaka reveals new possibilities:

- The bridge connection overlays clearly, showing how a continuous pedestrian route could link both sides of the site with a buffer from the noise on Thousand Oaks Blvd..
- The stepped amphitheater fits within the slope near the Civic Arts Plaza, suggesting how topography can support large-scale gathering without major grading.
- The edge boardwalk and adjacent street frontage align with the site's perimeter, demonstrating how active edges can feel open, accessible, and inviting. (See Photo)<sup>3</sup>



# STUDY COMPARISON

These overlays take key spatial moments from the case studies and scale them directly onto the Thousand Oaks site. By testing alignments, programs, and forms, they reveal how generous, welcoming civic spaces — like those seen in celebrated global parks — aren't out of reach here.

They're **spatially possible**.

This is where precedent meets potential. These diagrams shift the conversation from "what if" to "why not here?" — setting the stage for design ideas grounded in both inspiration and feasibility.

### KEY PROGRAMMATIC TAKEAWAYS:

- Clear Central Gathering Space  
*Each site features an open, flexible area (lawn, plaza, or amphitheater) that becomes the social and spatial anchor.*
- Edges Activate the Interior  
*Programmatic elements like cafés, playgrounds, and shaded seating are placed along the periphery, drawing people in and keeping activity flowing inward.*
- Multiple Entry Points with Purpose  
*Entrances are clearly marked and intentionally designed to guide movement, often paired with signage, thresholds, or visual cues.*
- Integrated Play and Performance  
*Sites combine playful features (playgrounds, swings, water elements) with civic-scale programming (stages, outdoor cinema) to serve varied age groups and event types.*
- Layered Shade Strategies  
*Trees, pergolas, and built shade structures are not just aesthetic — they shape how long people stay and where gatherings happen.*
- Topography as Experience  
*Elevation changes are embraced, not flattened — used to create views, seating, separation of spaces, and opportunities for play.*
- Water as Invitation  
*Water features act as attractors — calming, interactive, and often subtly integrated into circulation or seating zones.*

<sup>1</sup><https://www.zaha-hadid.com/masterplans/eleftheria-square/>  
<sup>2</sup><https://www.ggnltd.com/civic-park-at-hemisfair>  
<sup>3</sup><https://www.ggnltd.com/grand-green-osaka-umekita-park>

# CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

*Through mood boards, goals and objectives, and early sketches, this next chapter defines the guiding principles that shape the project. At this stage, ideas are tested, opportunities identified, and a direction set that synthesizes precedent study, site analysis, and design intent into an initial vision.*

# GOALS & OBJECTIVES

## Reclaim arrival — as a meaningful first impression, not just to pass through.



Establish a clear pedestrian entry that not only welcomes but cues where to go, something visible, direct, and easy to follow without second guessing.  
Make room for transit and bike access in an easy, visible way for people to arrive without a car and start using the site.

## Make room to stay — with spaces that draw people into a more integrated landscape.



Create shared space with flexible open spaces suitable for events like the arts and crafts fair, Conejo Valley festival and Scandinavian festivals.  
Shift vehicle-dominated edges as pedestrian-first space with buffer from the road and utilizing shade structures.  
Utilize the magnitude of the site to create spaces where multiple events could take place on a given day without having to turn over or flip a space during the day.

## Connect the pieces — so the site works as one, and feels like it belongs together.

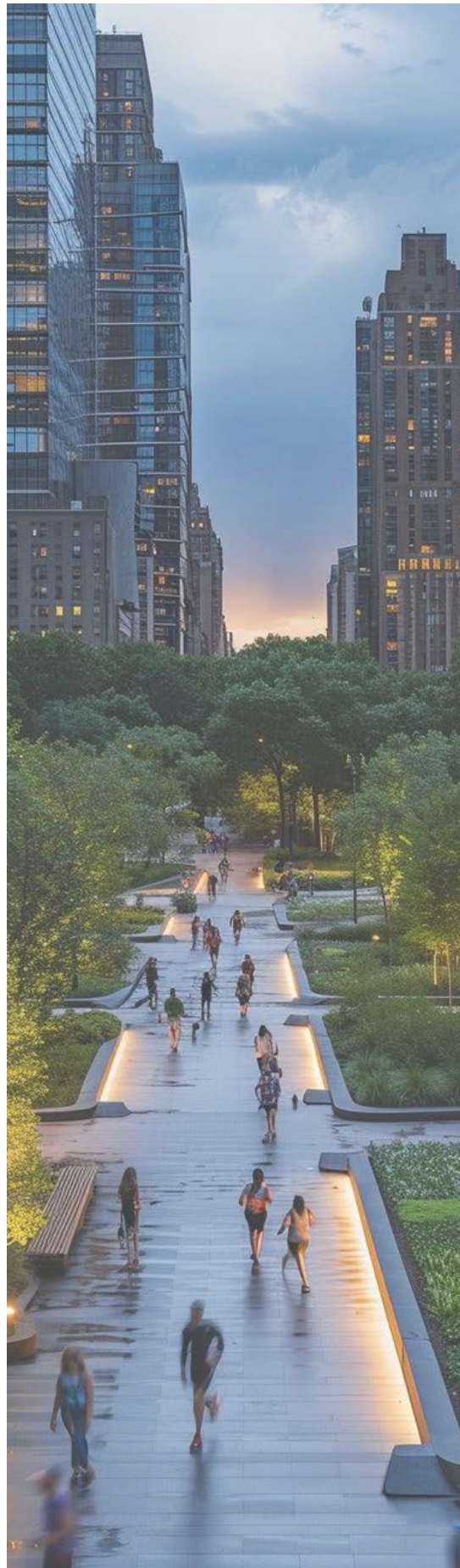


Create a direct pedestrian connection to The Lakes — something visible, safe, and worth crossing for.  
Improve the eastside access to link future housing with the site's civic engagement core.  
Unify the site's entrances so they feel like part of one connected place with the built environment at its heart.

## Signal where to go — with building entries that are intentional and subtle cues that guide movement.



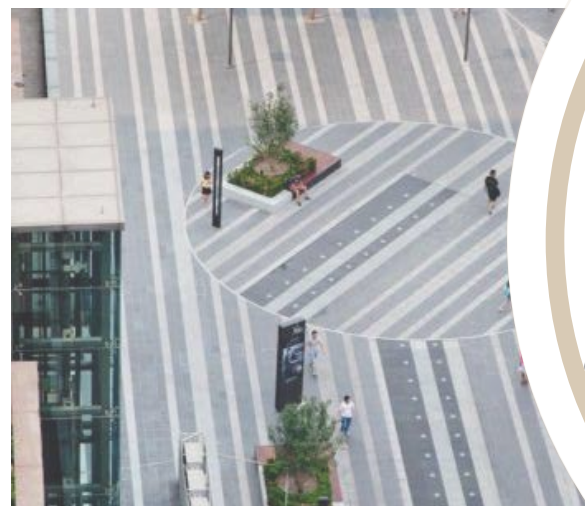
Create a true arrival for the theater — one that brings people in, feels intentional, and signals something memorable.  
Clarify secondary entries with a shared visual language — simple but consistent, so no one's left guessing.  
Use paving, planting, and subtle cues to lead the way — so movement feels natural, not navigated.



A spine that channels movement and anchors the space.



Above: A subtle rise—where elevation shifts without announcement  
Alongside: Reflected in water, a threshold that frames movement.



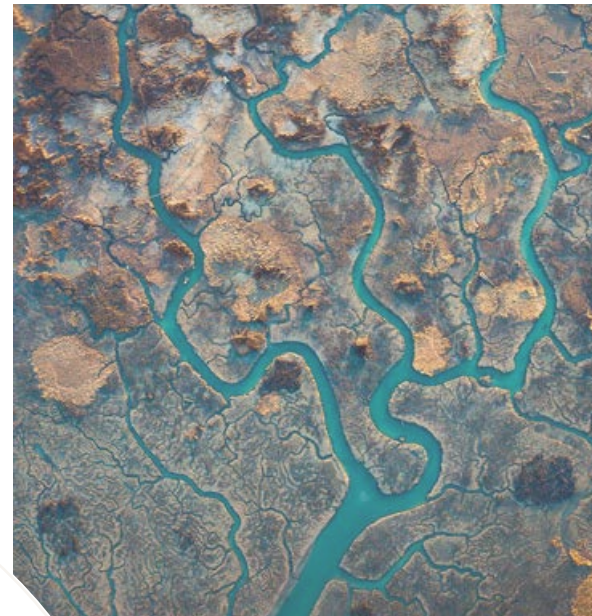
A subtle pivot around form without breaking stride.



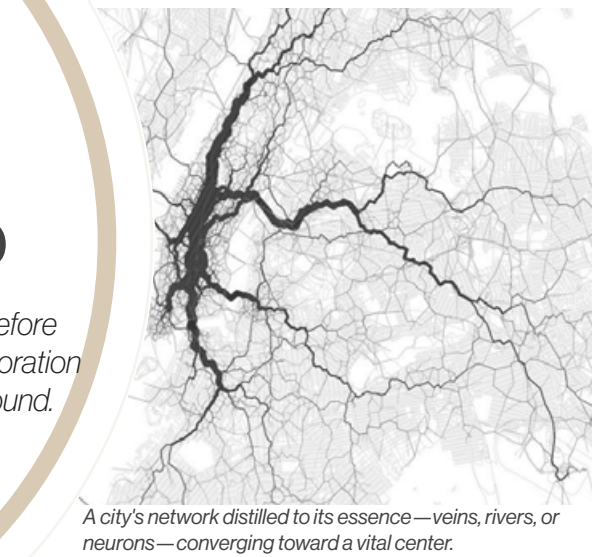
Cutouts scatter sunlight, softening movement.



Angular trellises and towering frames create a bold, directional rhythm.



A river delta—fluid lines but at a distance, unexpected angles take shape



A city's network distilled to its essence—veins, rivers, or neurons—converging toward a vital center.



Light paths hover above the landscape, drawing movement toward a shared center.



Geometries converge—straight paths meet sculpted curves in a moment of tension and balance.



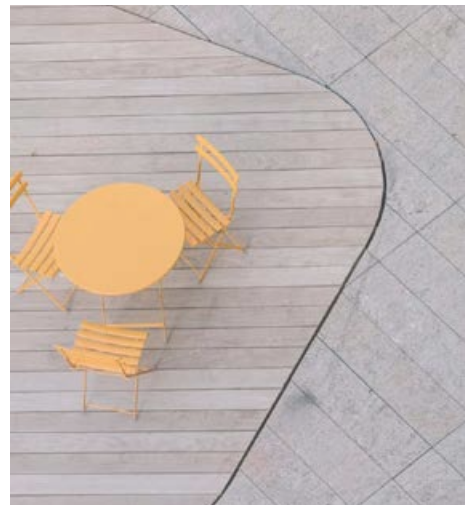
Contoured layers echo topography, design guided by the land, not imposed upon it.

## CONCEPTUAL MOOD

*Ideas that guide the spirit of the space—before materials, before decisions, just the mood that moves design forward. This exploration points to a goal: strong linear forms that sit easily on fluid ground.*



A bold frame meets soft terrain—structured, but in tune with the land it opens onto.



A playful meeting of materials—bright, linear, and curved—yet creating subtle boundaries.



Planters and stairs work together to guide arrival.



A steel-framed swing merges industrial structure with gentle motion—adding softness without losing the geometry.



A classic stone bench, pared down to simple geometry—quietly reinforcing the site's recurring linear language



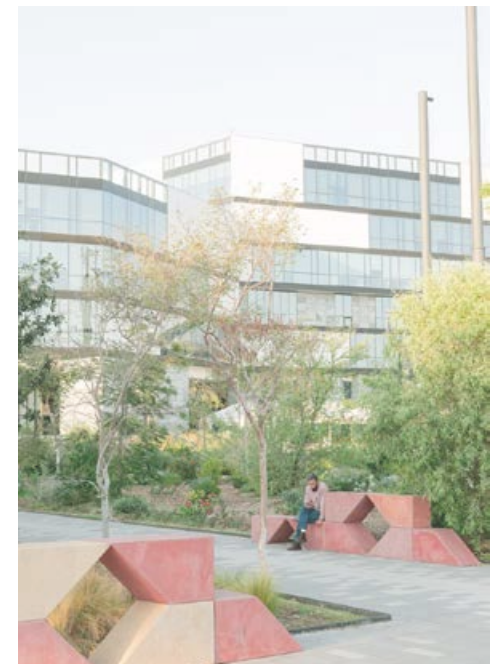
Angled steel frames and loose gravel offer a quiet response to elevation—firm edges guiding through soft terrain.

## GROUNDING INSPIRATION

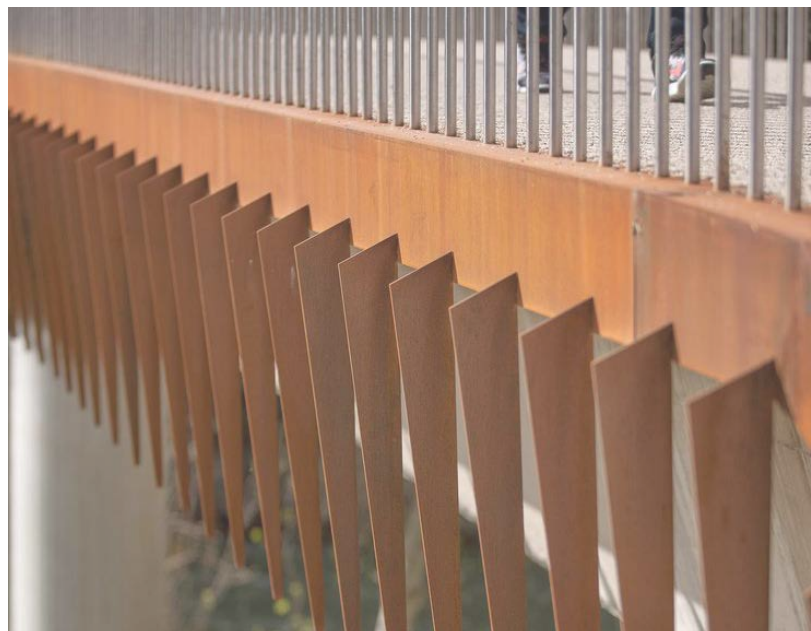
Elements that start to take shape—material ideas, forms, and spatial cues that begin to define the site ahead.



A gentle waterfall emerges from a clean rectangular spout—soft moments follow the site's geometric logic.



Playful and geometric—stacked forms offer seating with rhythm and personality.



A bridge defined by details—forms that show how design precision can carry through every edge of the design.



Stairs echo the civic center's bold cutouts—rectilinear patterns carried through retaining walls and pathways.



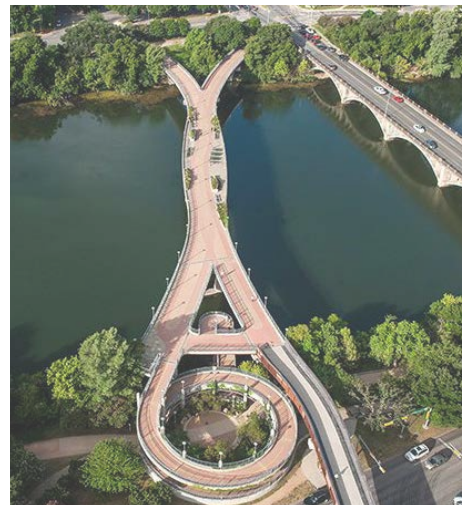
A vibrant crosswalk that doubles as a traffic-calming device—inviting drivers to slow down, signaling that something worth noticing is just ahead.



A bold, open entry draws people in—signaling arrival and activity ahead.



Railing form



Playful ways of a ramp descending down within a relatively small space. Alternative to stairs.



Planters and stairs work together to guide arrival.



Truss formation



Truss formation



Ramp elevation leveling down to a lookout



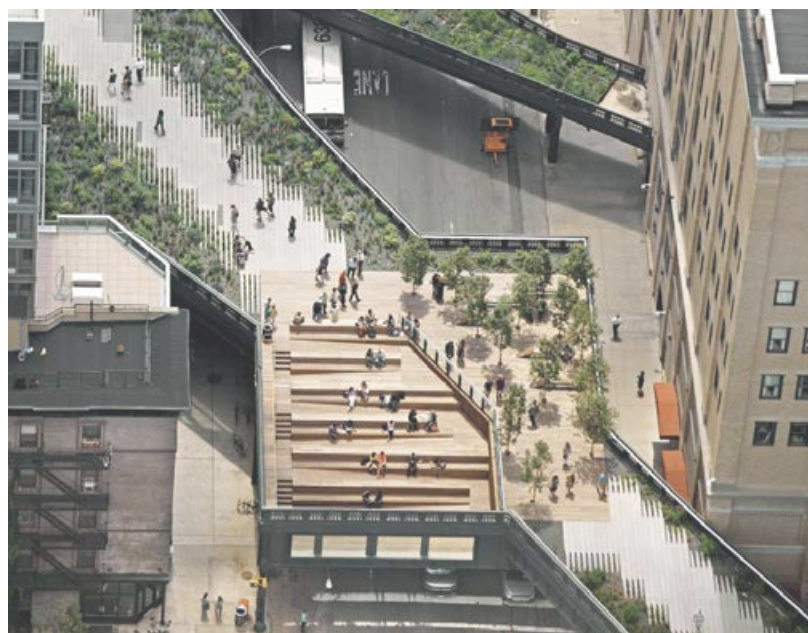
# BRIDGES



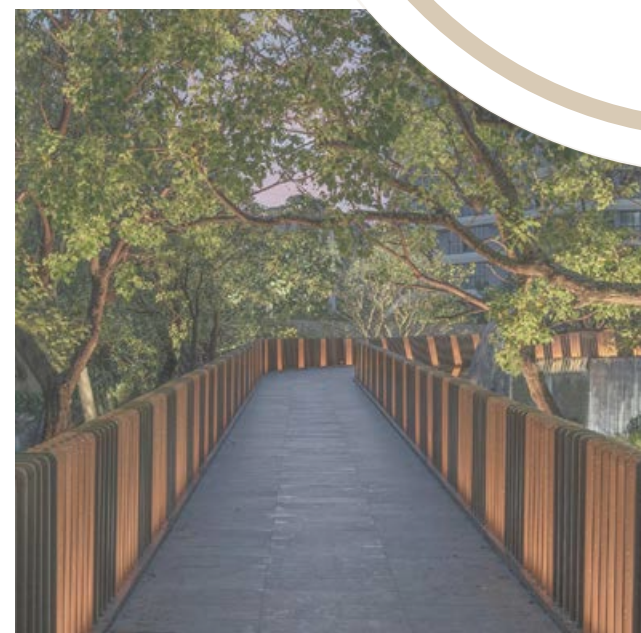
Clean lines wrapped around a pedestrian bridge



Portal structures offset. Corten steel and reclaimed wood.



Corresponding to the regulation lines coming off the building to create a deck that feels like it has always belonged to the site.



Elegant approach with the tree lined bridge



Truss and joiner form



Truss formation



*Alcove seating that is diverse along a strong axial path, softness in planting, covered spaces mixed in*



*Corten steel, concrete juxtaposed with soft plantings*



*Terraced amphitheater*



*Strong geometric space*



*Blending of stairs and ramps that is fluid*

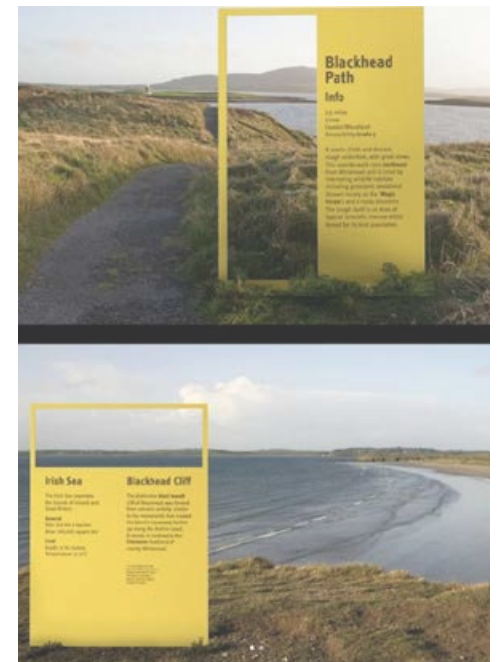


*Strong geometric formed bench seating and paving*

## SEATING, SIGNS & STAIRS



*Triangular beds that slope down, mix of rectangular boxes keeps both forms alive. Use of seat walls along the path.*



*Playful signage framing views and providing info*



*Gradual elevation in open civic space, gentle ramping down*



*Great place to hang, alcove intimate seating, social spaces, table tennis*

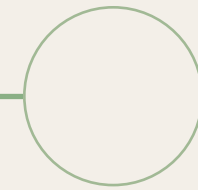


*Strong signage that feels connected to site and not a deterrent. Nice integration into the space*



*Blending of portal structures with signage, framing the space and inviting user experience*

# PLANT PALETTE *Trees*



**QA**  
*Quercus agrifolia*, Coast Live Oak



**PR**  
*Platanus racemosa*, California Sycamore



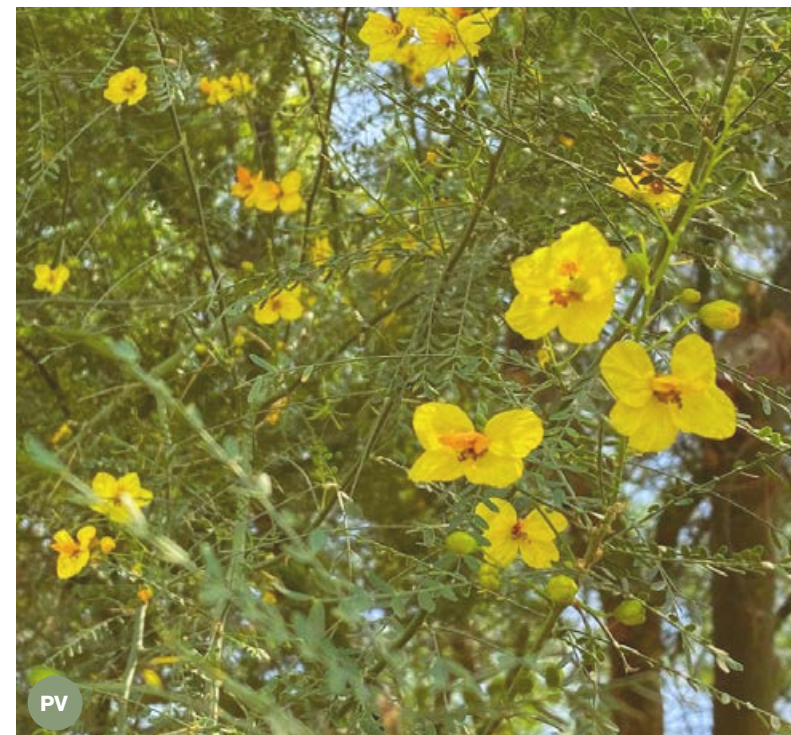
**OE**  
*Olea europaea*, Olive Tree



**QL**  
*Quercus lobata*, Valley Oak



**CO**  
*Cercis occidentalis*, Western Redbud



**PV**  
*Parkinsonia* spp., Palo Verde

**QA** *Quercus agrifolia*, Coast Live Oak  
**Form/Size:** Evergreen oak; broad, dense, rounded canopy; 30–70 ft tall and wide.

**Notes:** Native keystone species in Thousand Oaks; highly drought-tolerant; protected locally (heritage tree status); provides significant wildlife habitat.

**PR** *Platanus racemosa*, California Sycamore  
**Form/Size:** Large, fast-growing deciduous tree; broad, irregular crown; 40–80 ft tall, 40–70 ft wide.

**Notes:** Native riparian species; mottled, peeling bark for strong visual character; excellent shade tree; needs access to seasonal water or supplemental irrigation in drier sites.

**OE** *Olea europaea*, Olive Tree  
**Form/Size:** Medium evergreen; rounded crown; 25–40 ft tall, 25–30 ft wide.

**Notes:** Mediterranean species well suited to SoCal; silvery-green foliage; drought-tolerant; long-lived; some fruitless cultivars used in civic landscapes to reduce mess.

**QL** *Quercus lobata*, Coast Live Oak  
**Form/Size:** Large, deciduous oak; massive spreading crown; 50–80 ft tall, 60–100+ ft wide.

**Notes:** Native to California valleys; deeply lobed leaves; prefers deeper soils and seasonal water access; iconic savanna tree with great shade value.

**CO** *Cercis occidentalis*, Western Redbud  
**Form/Size:** Small deciduous tree/shrub; multi-stemmed, rounded form; 10–20 ft tall and wide.

**Notes:** Native to California foothills; showy magenta-pink blooms in early spring before leaves; heart-shaped foliage with good fall color; drought-tolerant once established.

**PV** *Parkinsonia* spp. (*P. florida*, *P. aculeata*, hybrids often used), Palo Verde  
**Form/Size:** Small desert tree; airy branching; 20–30 ft tall, 20–30 ft wide.

**Notes:** Distinctive green bark; yellow spring blooms; adapted to arid climates, provides filtered shade; low water requirement, excellent for xeriscapes.

# PLANT PALETTE *Shrubs + Groundcover*



Salvia clevelandii, Cleveland Sage



Muhlenbergia rigens, Deergrass



Carex pansa, California Meadow Sedge



Eriogonum grande var. rubescens, Red Buckwheat



Heteromeles arbutifolia, Toyon



Epilobium canum (syn. Zauschneria californica), California Fuschia



Salvia apiana, White Sage



Diplacus aurantiacus, Monkeyflower

**SC** *Salvia clevelandii*, Cleveland Sage

**Form/Size:** Evergreen aromatic shrub; rounded, mounding; 3–5 ft tall and wide.

**Notes:** Native to Southern California; gray-green foliage; showy purple-blue flower whorls in late spring–summer; very drought-tolerant; excellent pollinator plant.

**MR** *Muhlenbergia rigens*, Deergrass

**Form/Size:** Perennial bunchgrass; upright, fountain-like; 3–4 ft tall, 4–5 ft wide.

**Notes:** Native warm-season grass; highly adaptable; tolerates heat, drought, and some moisture; provides texture and movement; great for bioswales or accents.

**CP** *Carex Pansa*, California Meadow Sedge

**Form/Size:** Low perennial sedge; spreading groundcover; 6–12 in tall.

**Notes:** Native grasslike plant; often used as a lawn substitute; tolerates light foot traffic; drought-tolerant but benefits from occasional summer water; works well in mass plantings.

**ER** *Eriogonum grande ver. rubescens*, Red Buckwheat

**Form/Size:** Low mound; 1–2 ft tall, 3–4 ft wide.

**Notes:** Native Channel Islands species; silvery-green foliage; clusters of red to pink flowers spring–fall; attracts butterflies and pollinators; thrives in dry rocky soils.

**HA** *Heteromeles arbutifolia*, Toyon

**Form/Size:** Evergreen shrub/small tree; 6–15 ft tall, 6–10 ft wide.

**Notes:** Iconic SoCal native (“California Holly”); glossy leaves; clusters of white summer flowers; red berries in winter; supports birds and pollinators; drought-tolerant.

**EC** *Epilobium canum* (syn. *Zauschneria californica*), California Fuschia

**Form/Size:** Spreading perennial groundcover; 1–2 ft tall, 2–4 ft wide.

**Notes:** Native to California; striking red-orange tubular flowers summer–fall; hummingbird magnet; low-water; thrives on slopes and in hot exposures.

**SA** *Salvia apiana*, White Sage

**Form/Size:** Evergreen shrub; upright and airy; 3–5 ft tall, 4–6 ft wide.

**Notes:** Iconic California native; silver-gray foliage; white to pale lavender flowers; sacred in Indigenous traditions; highly drought-tolerant; provides contrast against darker greens.

**DA** *Diplacus aurantiacus*, Monkeyflower

**Form/Size:** Evergreen subshrub; rounded, compact; 2–4 ft tall, 2–4 ft wide.

**Notes:** Native chaparral species; long bloom season with orange/yellow/red tubular flowers; attracts hummingbirds and pollinators; thrives on dry slopes and rocky soils.

# SPACE SEEKING

This diagram reveals the potential of key areas on the site, such as a large open room in Zone 2, which could become the central hub. It identifies opportunities for connecting the ground level to upper levels and suggests areas where the topography of the woody oaks area in Zone 3 can be integrated. Arrival points are taking shape at the intersections of Dallas and the Lakes. The regulating lines projected from the Civic Arts Plaza and surrounding buildings have helped define these spaces, with oak trees boxed out for protection and areas numbered by elevation to better understand connections and transitions. On the following page, these spaces begin to take shape drawing from visual ideas in the mood and inspiration boards, as well as key takeaways from the case studies.

## LEGEND

- # Spaces Available for Design  
# - Topographic Grade (in feet)
- Protected Oak Tree Zones
- Regulating Lines - Civic Arts Plaza
- Regulating Lines - Structural Context

## BUILDING LEGEND

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">A</span> City Hall Offices     | <span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">G</span> Pedestrian Bridge         |
| <span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">B</span> Forum Theater         | <span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">H</span> Third Level Entrance      |
| <span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">C</span> Kavli Theater         | <span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">I</span> Future Museum             |
| <span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">D</span> Rooftop Terrace       | <span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">J</span> Future Apartment Building |
| <span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">E</span> Parking Structure     | <span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">K</span> The Lakes Shopping Center |
| <span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">F</span> Second Level Entrance | <span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">L</span> Loading Dock              |



# CONCEPT BUBBLE

## ZONE 1 — CITY HALL + PARKING LOT

- 1 **WELCOMING PEDESTRIAN GATEWAYS** - Defined, visible pedestrian access for a welcoming entry.
- 2 **VIBRANT EVENT AND GATHERING SPACE** - Space for art, food trucks, coffee carts, and events — a vibrant visitor hub
- 3 **INFORMAL CONNECTION AND INTERACTION ZONE** - Quick employee access for coffee breaks and impromptu meetings
- 4 **ICONIC CIVIC ENTRANCE** - Bold entryway with enhanced signage for clear wayfinding

## ZONE 2 — CIVIC LAWN

- 5 **CENRAL GATHERING AND EVENT PLAZA** - Space for events like Conejo Valley Days, Summer Concerts, and Scandinavian Festival
- 6 **TRANQUIL PATHWAY FOR CIVIC CONNECTION** - Serene pathway linking the civic space to the arts hub
- 7 **SEAMLESS TRANSITION FROM PLAZA TO CITY HALL** - Connecting the plaza to the oaks with seating and clear access to City Hall
- 8 **DYNAMIC EVENT AND DROP-OFF SPACE** - Bold grand staircase connecting the ground level to the Theater.
- 9 **RELAXED CAFÉ AND LEISURE SPACE** - Café seating, ideal for casual meetings or relaxation post or pre-theater show

## ZONE 3 — THE OAKS

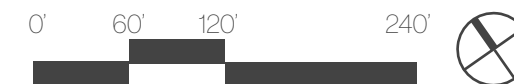
- 10 **CULTURAL PERFORMANCE AND ACTIVITY ZONE** - Amphitheater for performances, outdoor movies, live music, and seasonal events, with space for food trucks and pop-ups
- 11 **SECLUDED REFLECTION AND NATURE RETREAT** - Quiet, tucked-away retreat accessed via a gravel stair path, offering peaceful reflection
- 12 **CONNECTING PERFORMANCE, PLAY AND REFLECTION** - Linking the amphitheater, social decks and secret garden

## ZONE 4 — STREETSCAPE

- 13 **BRIDGING THE LAKES AND CIVIC ARTS PLAZA** - Guiding visitors, connecting spaces, and enhancing civic flow
- 14 **EFFICIENT TRANSIT AND SAFE PEDESTRIAN FLOW** - Bus stop and bike lock ups immersed in the civic space

## BUILDING LEGEND

- |                           |                               |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| (A) City Hall Offices     | (G) Pedestrian Bridge         |
| (B) Forum Theater         | (H) Third Level Entrance      |
| (C) Kavli Theater         | (I) Future Museum             |
| (D) Rooftop Terrace       | (J) Future Apartment Building |
| (E) Parking Structure     | (K) The Lakes Shopping Center |
| (F) Second Level Entrance | (L) Loading Dock              |

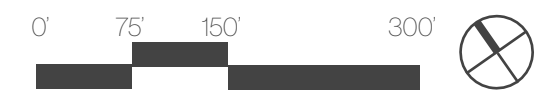


# SITE DEVELOPMENT

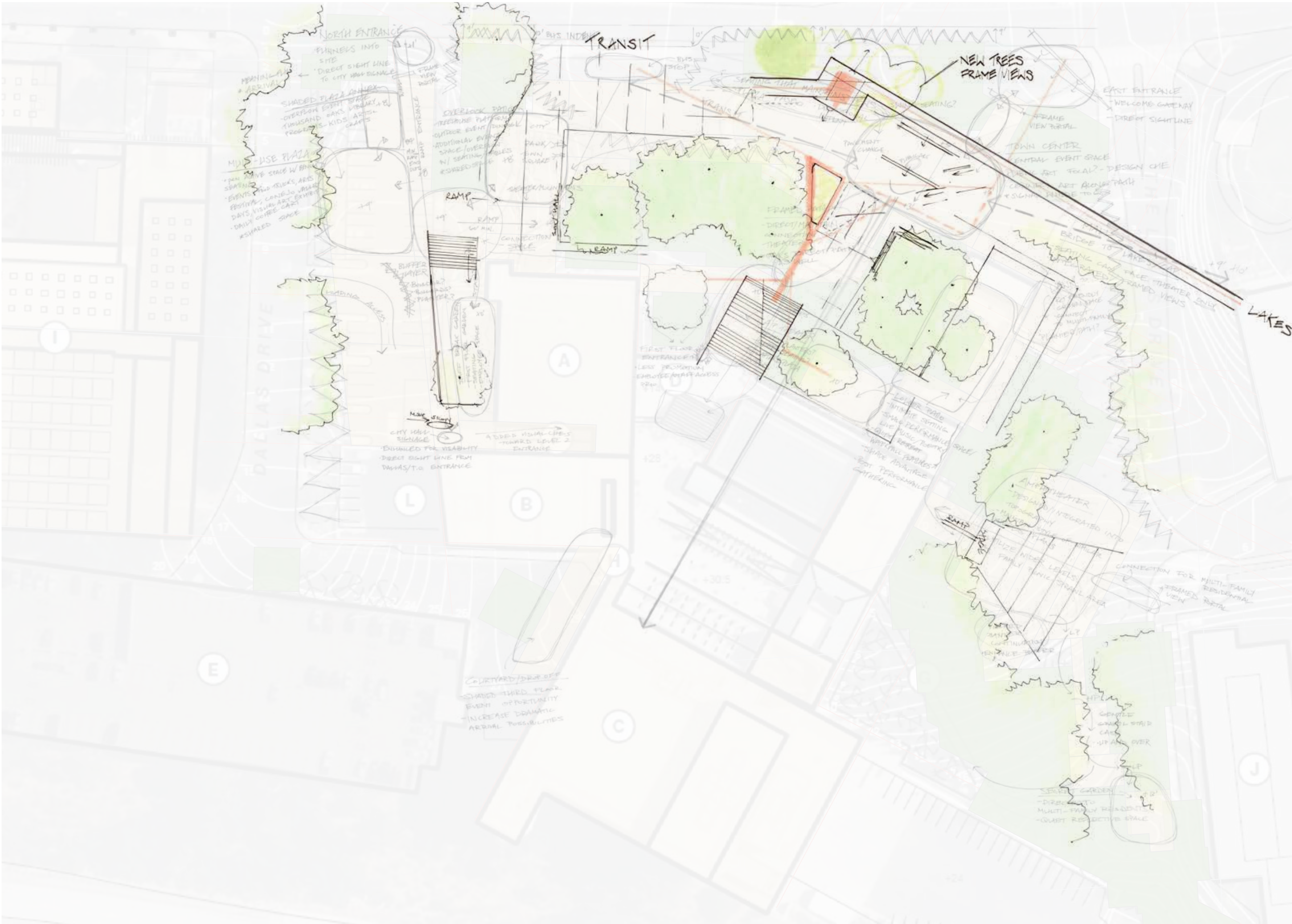


## BUILDING LEGEND

- (A)** City Hall Offices
- (B)** Forum Theater
- (C)** Kavli Theater
- (D)** Rooftop Terrace
- (E)** Parking Structure
- (F)** Second Level Entrance
- (G)** Pedestrian Bridge
- (H)** Third Level Entrance
- (I)** Future Museum
- (J)** Future Apartment Building
- (K)** The Lakes Shopping Center
- (L)** Loading Dock

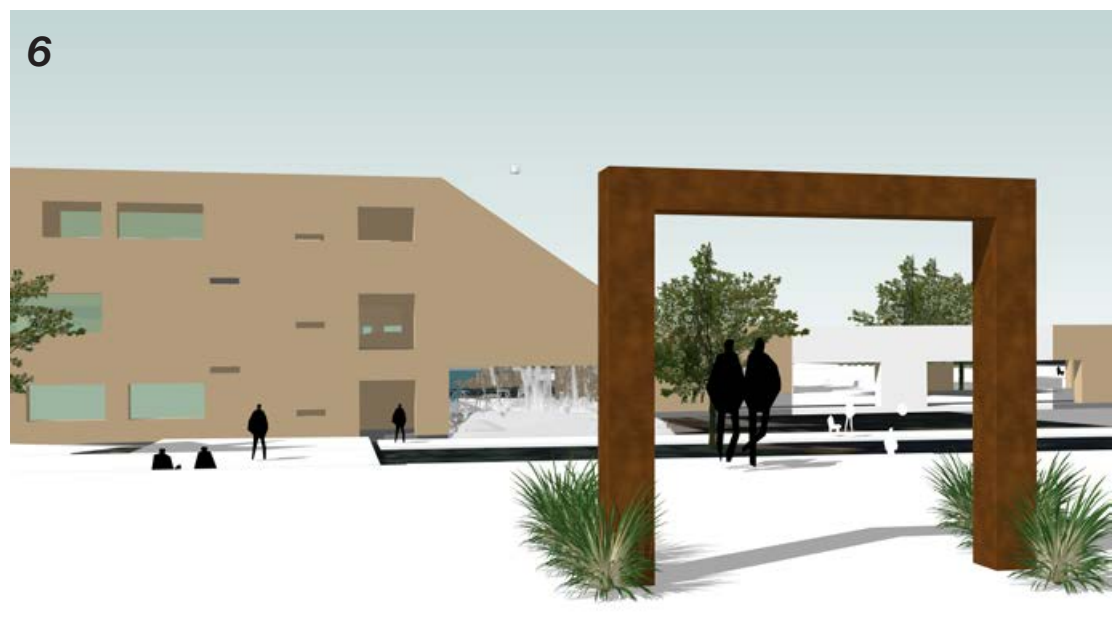


# DESIGN PROCESS



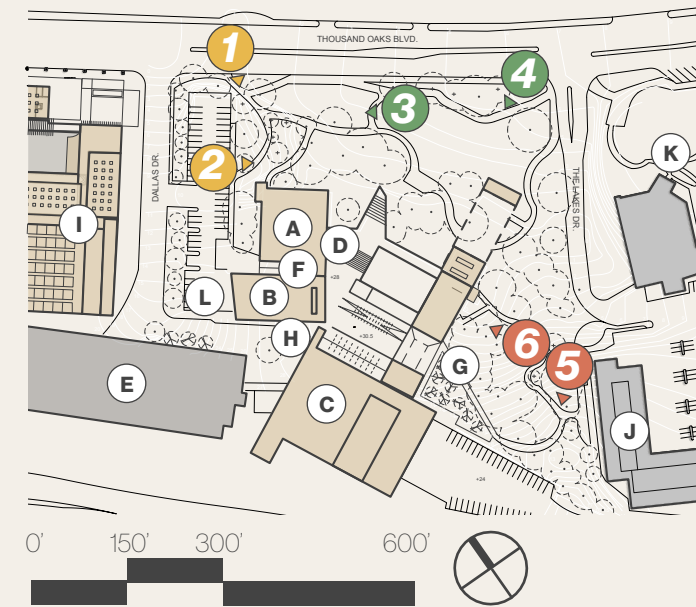
## BUILDING LEGEND

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- (L)** Loading Dock



# STUDY SKETCHES

## KEY MAP



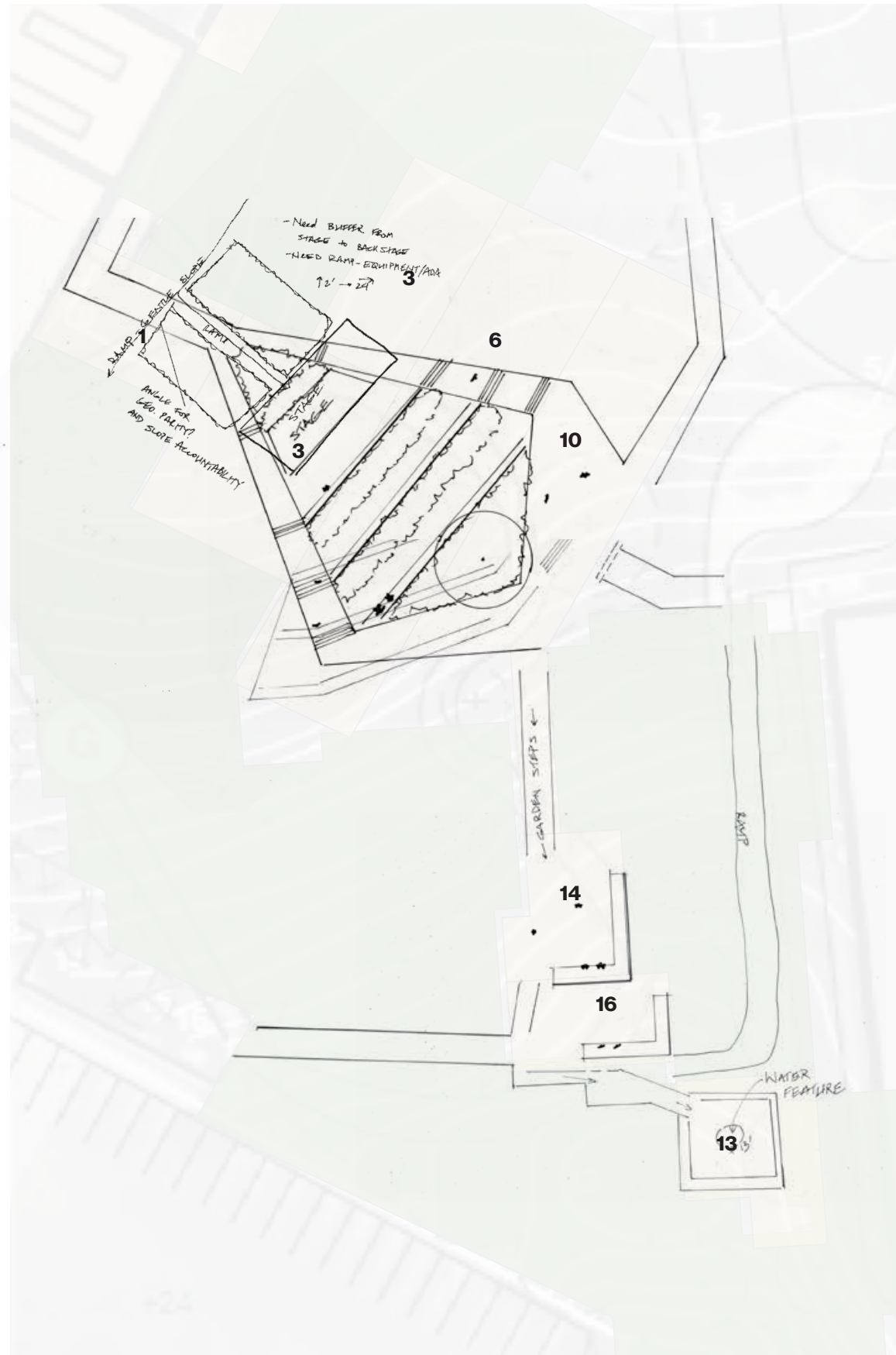
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**ZONE 1**

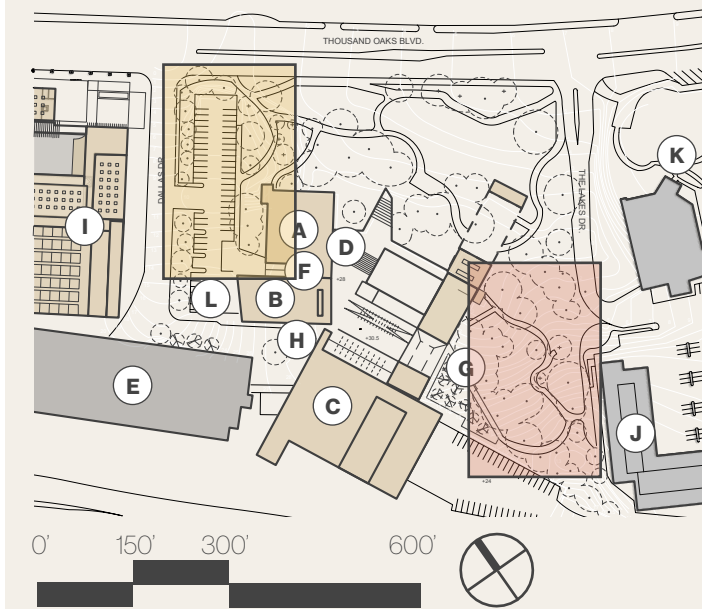


**ZONE 3**



**ENLARGEMENT STUDY**

**KEY MAP**

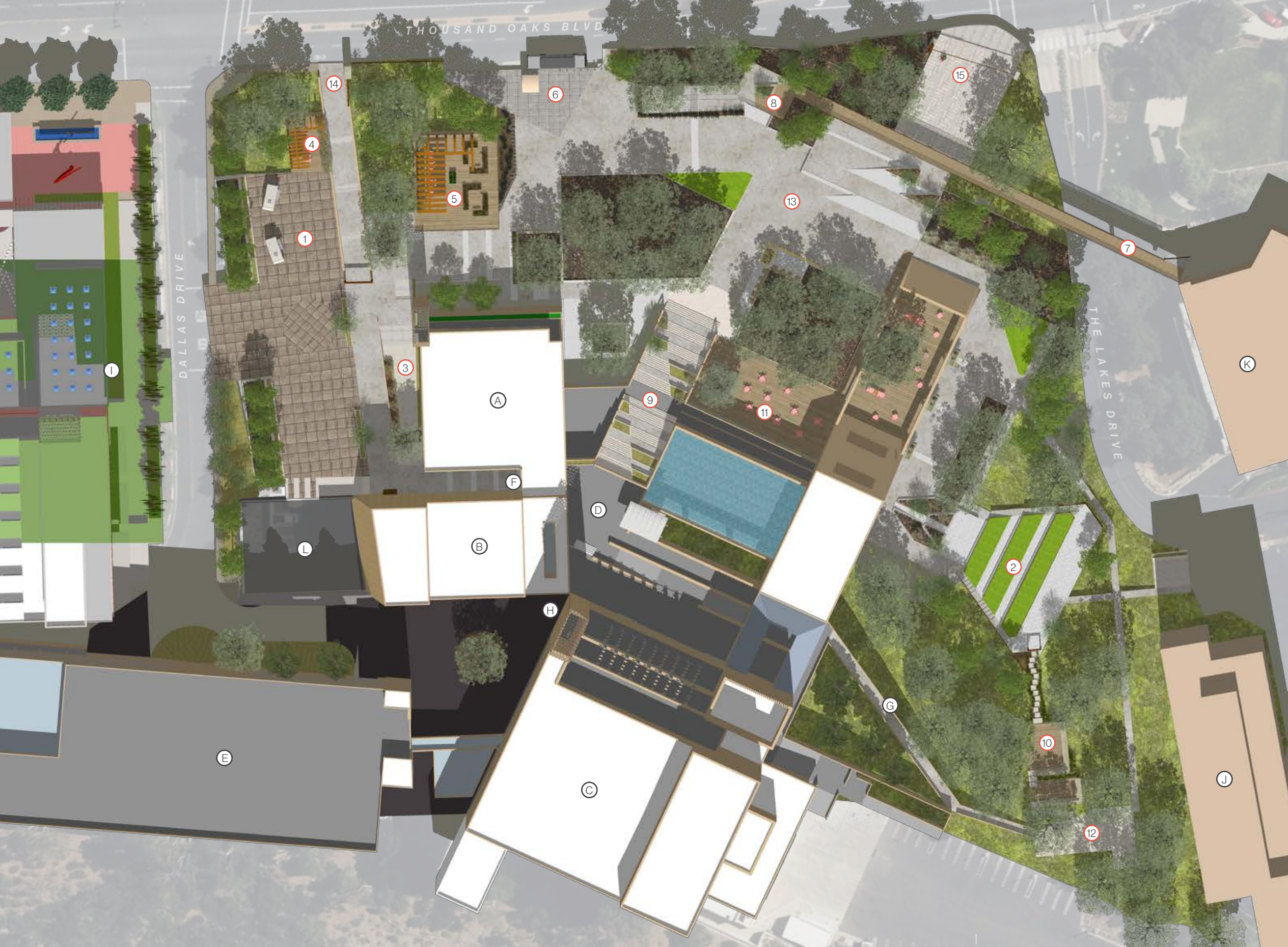


**BUILDING LEGEND**

- (A)** City Hall Offices
- (B)** Forum Theater
- (C)** Kavli Theater
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- (L)** Loading Dock

# SITE DESIGN

*This section translates conceptual intentions into a resolved design proposal. The site plan, sections, perspectives, and enlargements reveal how programmatic strategies, circulation systems, and spatial organization are formalized into a cohesive landscape framework. Whereas concept development explored possibilities, site design demonstrates resolution: articulating scale, hierarchy, and materiality in ways that respond directly to site conditions and community needs.*



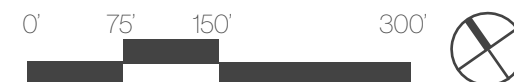
# ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

## LEGEND

- ① Festival Court
- ② Amphitheater Lawn
- ③ Lower Courtyard
- ④ Maker's Pavilion
- ⑤ Vista Deck
- ⑥ Transit Porch
- ⑦ Lakes Link
- ⑧ Overlook Balcony
- ⑨ Grand Stair
- ⑩ Retreat Decks
- ⑪ Cafe Promenade
- ⑫ Secret Patio
- ⑬ Grand Plaza
- ⑭ Civic Gateway
- ⑮ Main Promenade

## BUILDING LEGEND

- |                         |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Ⓐ City Hall Offices     | Ⓖ Pedestrian Bridge         |
| Ⓑ Forum Theater         | Ⓗ Third Level Entrance      |
| Ⓒ Kavli Theater         | Ⓘ Future Museum             |
| Ⓓ Rooftop Terrace       | Ⓙ Future Apartment Building |
| Ⓔ Parking Structure     | Ⓚ The Lakes Shopping Center |
| Ⓕ Second Level Entrance | Ⓛ Loading Dock              |

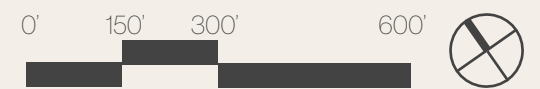
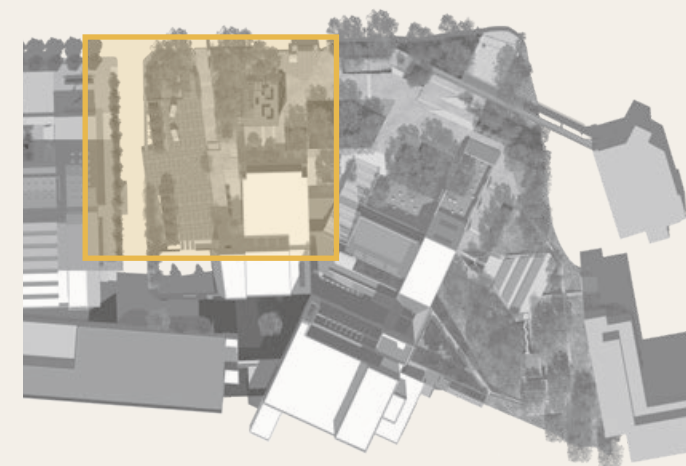




# ENLARGEMENT ZONE 1

## LEGEND

- ① **Festival Court** - A permeable-paved plaza flexes from food truck destination to a blank canvas for large pop up events
- ② **Maker's Pavilion** - A shaded corner patio set up for arts and crafts or casual sit-down dining
- ③ **Lower Courtyard** - A sunken courtyard adjacent to the City Hall offices, offering a quieter and more intimate gathering spot
- ④ **Civic Gateway** - Pedestrian entry from Dallas Blvd./Thousand Oaks Blvd. leading directly into the heart of the campus
- ⑤ **Hall Signage** - A new City Hall marker and identity feature located near the second-level entrance.



## BUILDING LEGEND

- Ⓐ City Hall Offices
- Ⓑ Second Level Entrance
- Ⓒ Forum Theater
- Ⓓ Loading Dock
- Ⓔ Main Level Entrance
- Ⓕ Future Museum



SECTION - ELEVATION A - A'

**SECTION ELEVATION**  
ZONE 1



**BUILDING LEGEND**

- (A) City Hall Offices      (C) Loading Dock
- (B) Second Level Entrance      (D) Forum Theater



## ZONE 1

Clear sightlines on arrival

BEFORE





## ZONE 1

Parking lot becomes flex space

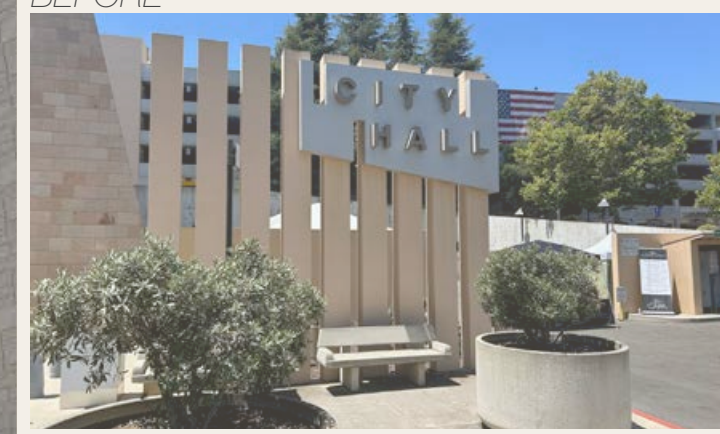
BEFORE

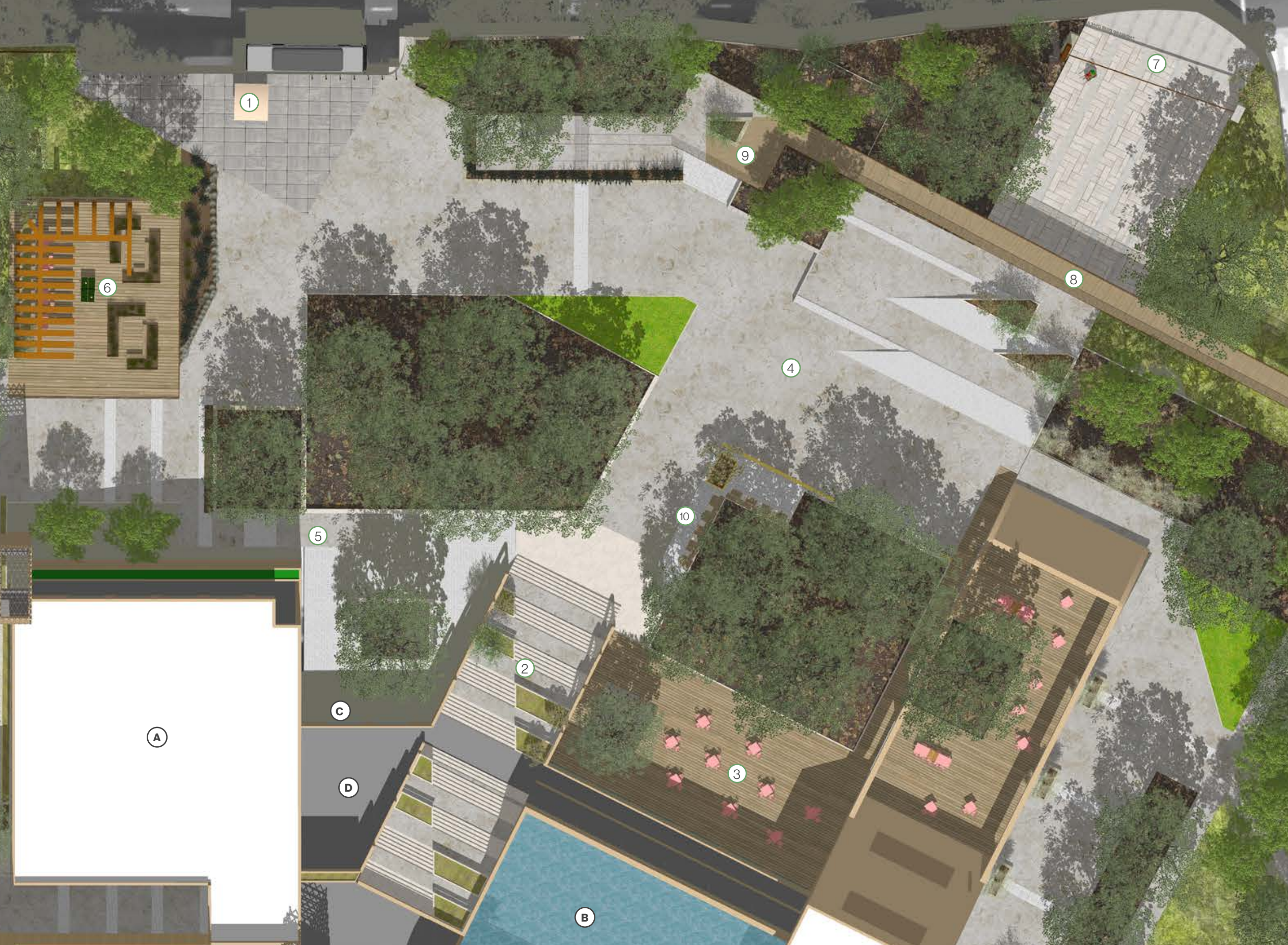




**ZONE 1**  
Wayfinding modernized

BEFORE

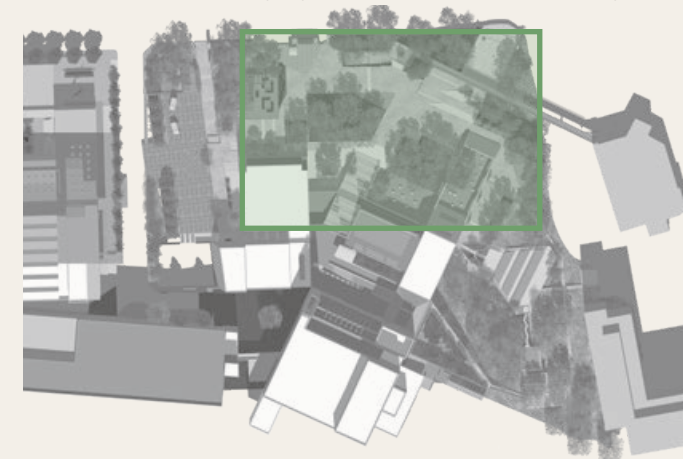




# ENLARGEMENT ZONE 2

## LEGEND

- ① **Transit Bench** - A shaded bus stop integrated into the civic landscape, making bus arrival feel part of the site
- ② **Grand Stair** - Connects the ground level directly to the theater above
- ③ **Café Grove** - Moveable rose-quartz café tables, offering a relaxed spot for pre- and post-show meet-ups
- ④ **Plaza Flex** - The central hardscape designed for Thousand Oaks' biggest moments from art fairs to civic celebrations.
- ⑤ **City Walk** - A direct pedestrian route into the City Hall first floor, anchoring the civic heart of the plaza
- ⑥ **Entertainment Deck** - An elevated terrace hangout with alcove seating, table tennis, dining tables, optional event venue.
- ⑦ **Grand Entry** - The main arrival plaza off Lakes Drive, serving as the campus gateway and welcoming forecourt.
- ⑧ **Lakes Bridge** - A pedestrian link from The Lakes shopping center, tying downtown amenities into the civic core.
- ⑨ **Lookout Deck** - A bridge-side balcony with framed views toward the theater and Thousand Oaks Boulevard.
- ⑩ **Seat Wall Promenade** - Shaded seat walls right at the plaza's center, informal, everyday social space at the hub of activity.

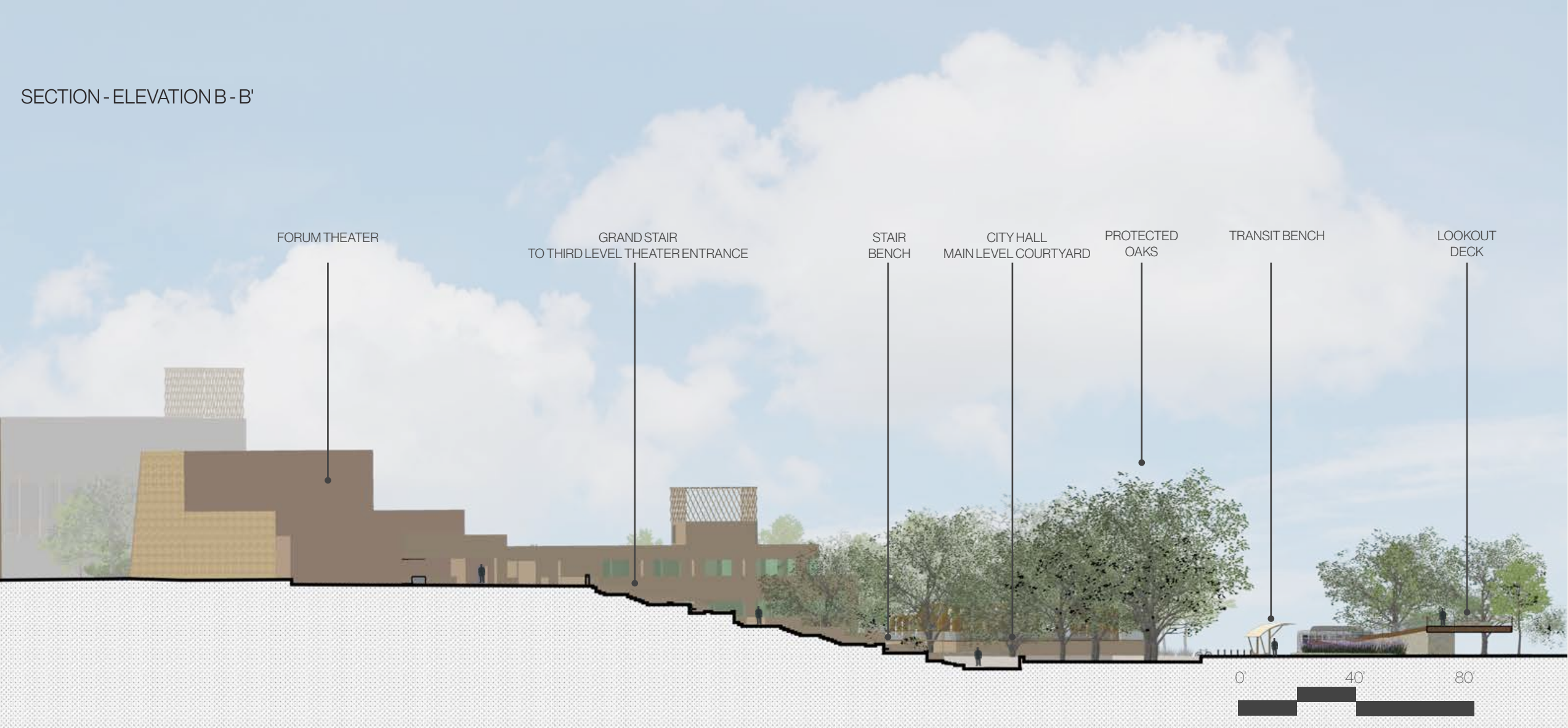


## BUILDING LEGEND

- ① City Hall Offices
- ② Main Building Entrance
- ③ Reflection Pool
- ④ Second Floor Terrace



SECTION - ELEVATION B - B'



**SECTION ELEVATION**  
ZONE 2



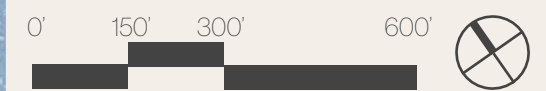
**BUILDING LEGEND**

- (A) City Hall Offices
- (B) Second Level Entrance
- (C) Forum Theater
- (D) Kavli Theater
- (E) Main Level Entrance
- (F) Rooftop Terrace



**ZONE 2**  
Event-ready plaza

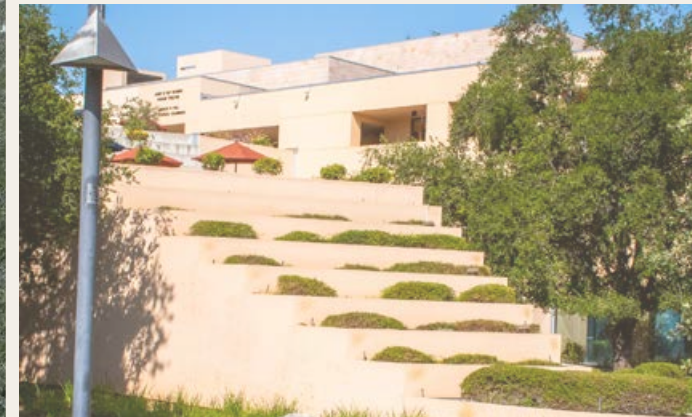
BEFORE





**ZONE 2**  
Gateway to Theater, Space for Community

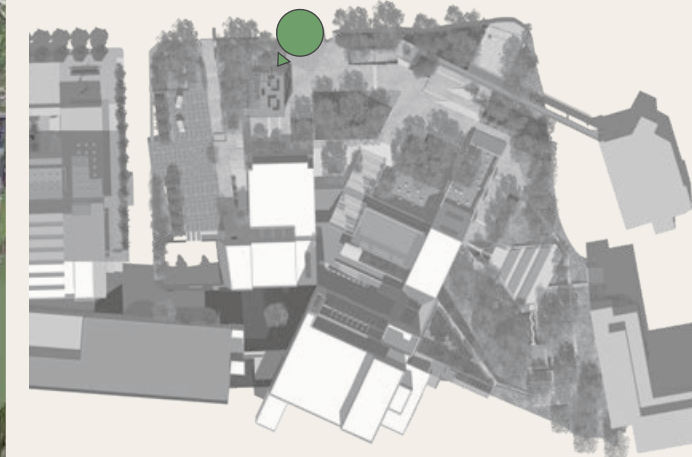
BEFORE





**ZONE 2**  
Entertainment deck

BEFORE

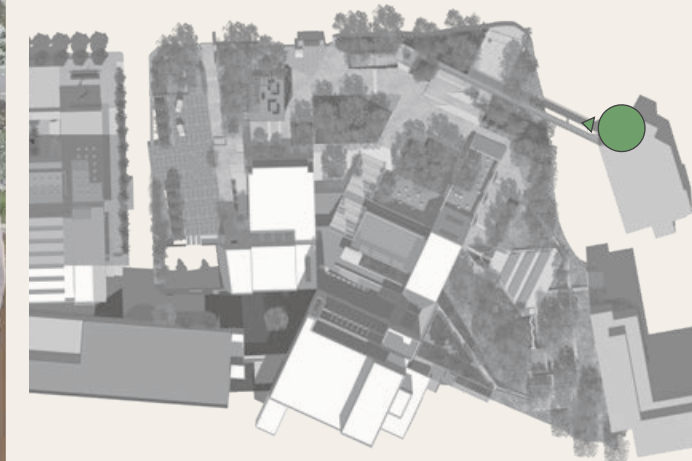


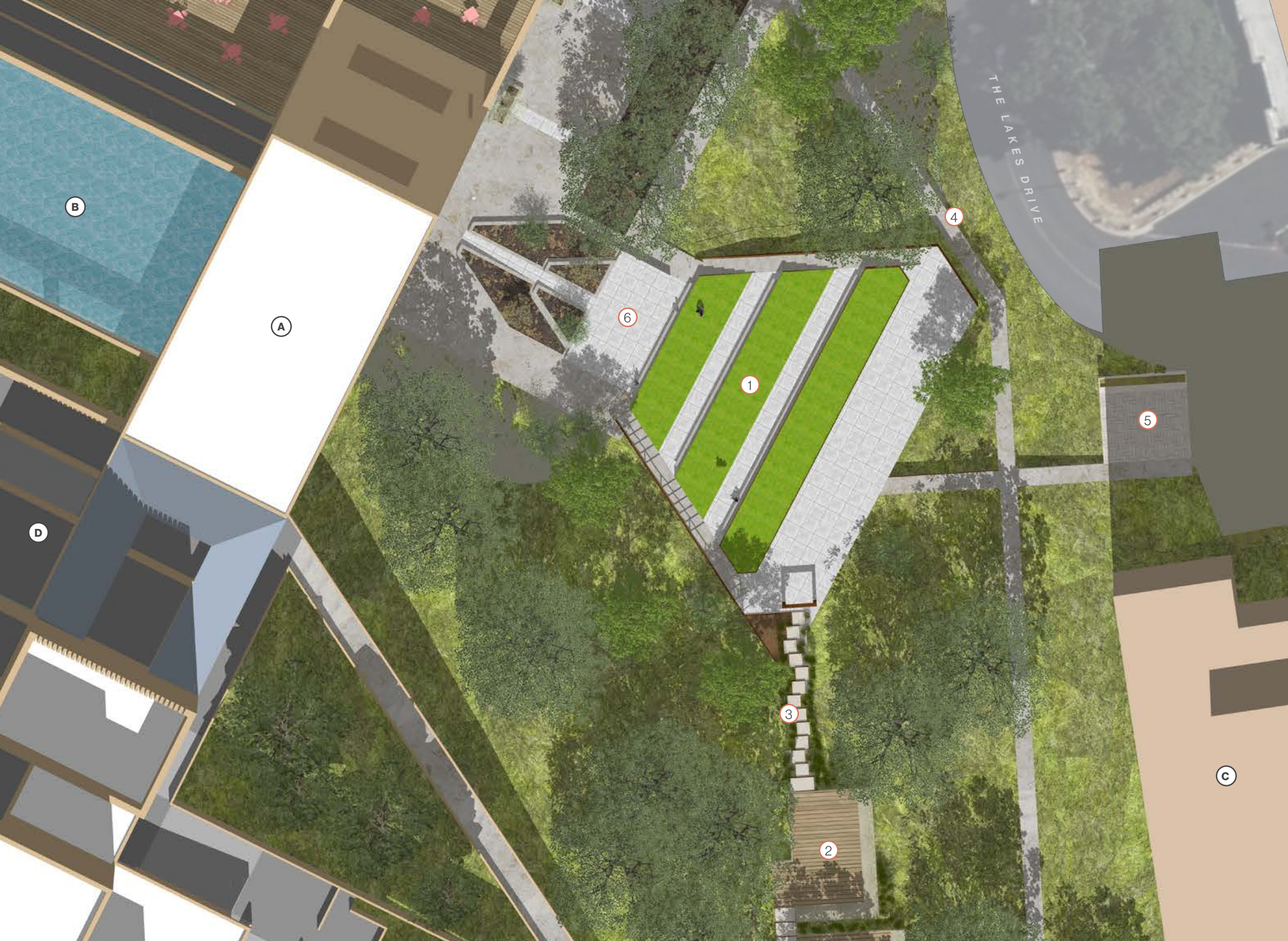


## ZONE 2

Bridge Connecting Downtown to Civic Life

BEFORE





# ENLARGEMENT ZONE 3

## LEGEND

- ① **Amphitheater Lawn** - Terraced seating nestled into the slope for performance and community events
- ② **Retreat Deck** - One in a series of stepped wooden decks tucked into the trees, designed for informal gathering
- ③ **Garden Steps** - Oversized, square landings that serpentine up from the amphitheater to the retreat decks
- ④ **Woodland Walk** - Shaded path weaving through the oak grove, offering a calm pedestrian connection
- ⑤ **Residential Gateway** - Connector space between the future residential and the Civic Arts Plaza
- ⑥ **Woodland Stage** - A performance platform at the base of the amphitheater lawn, designed for concerts/community events

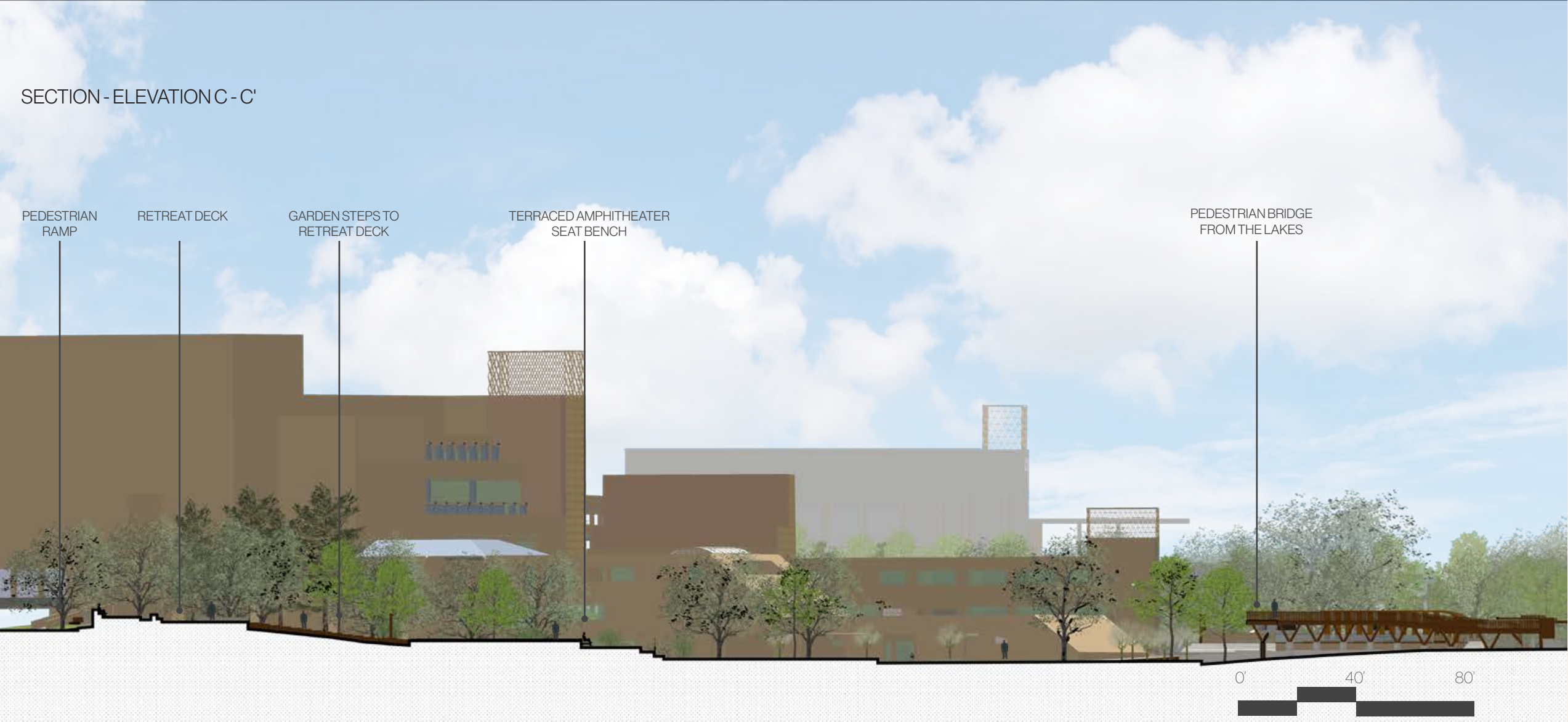


## BUILDING LEGEND

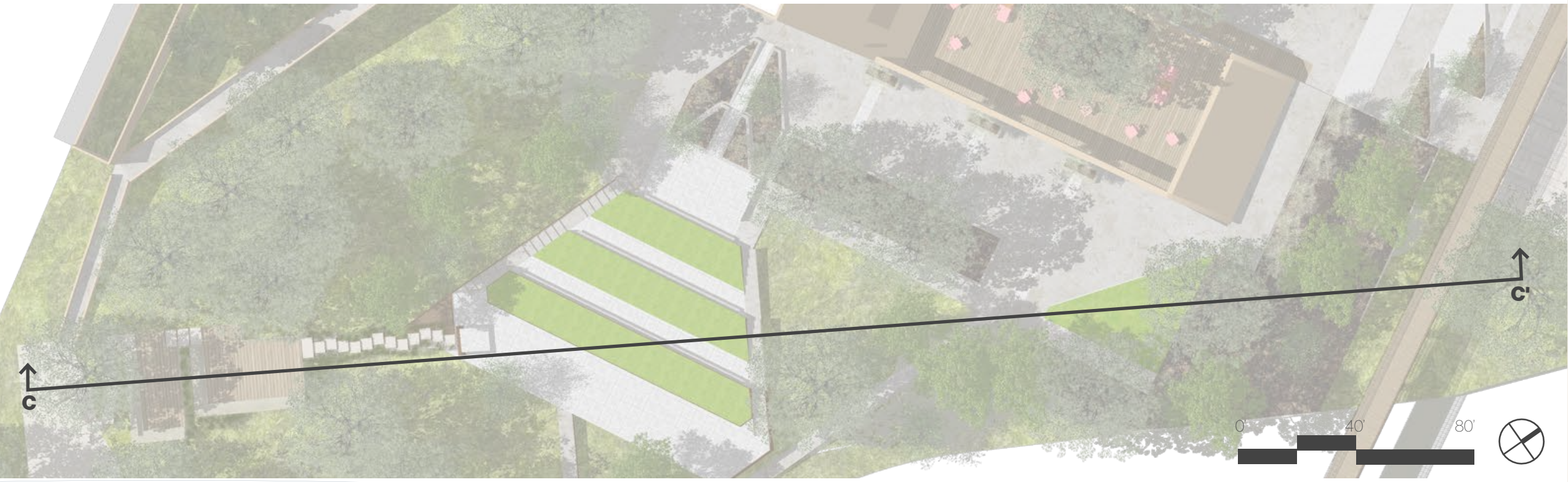
- ① City Hall/Theater Offices
- ② Future Residential
- ③ Reflection Pool
- ④ Rooftop Terrace



SECTION - ELEVATION C - C'



**SECTION ELEVATION**  
ZONE 3



**BUILDING LEGEND**

- (A) City Hall Offices
- (B) Second Level Entrance
- (C) Forum Theater
- (D) Loading Dock
- (E) Main Level Entrance
- (F) Future Museum



**ZONE 3**  
Retreat in the Oaks

BEFORE





**ZONE 3**  
Parallel Programs / Spaces in Sync

BEFORE





**ZONE 3**  
Amphitheater Approach

BEFORE





## ZONE 4

Street level entrance from The Lakes

BEFORE





## ZONE 4

Welcoming Transit point

BEFORE





## ZONE 4

Friendlier pedestrian entry at Dallas & Thousand Oaks

BEFORE



# ASSESSMENT

## Reclaim arrival — as a meaningful first impression, not just to pass through.

– Established three clear pedestrian entries: from Dallas Drive, Thousand Oaks Boulevard at The Lakes corner, and from the future Mixed-Use Residential.

– At the Thousand Oaks / The Lakes corner, a new beam-mounted sign marks the site as Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza, creating a visible civic gateway.

– Added an integrated bus stop by extending the park edge into the street: the sidewalk was replaced with a landscaped inlet that both slows traffic and provides shaded waiting space.

– The Dallas entry includes signage and a directional cue that orients visitors toward City Hall.

## Make room to stay — with spaces that draw people into a more integrated landscape.

– Introduced a Makers Pavilion and Entertainment Deck with shade structures to support workshops, performances, and daily community use.

– Added a series of decks beneath the oaks, providing shaded respites that encourage casual gatherings and moments of pause.

– Planted ~100 new trees, strengthening canopy coverage and comfort while complementing the preserved oaks.

– Designed the site so multiple events can occur simultaneously, a festival in the morning, afternoon outdoor concert at the amphitheater, a pre-concert cocktail hour in the evening—while daily life continues in between.

– Integrated rose quartz café tables with movable seating for adaptable day-to-day use.

## Connect the pieces — so the site works as one, and feels like it belongs together.

– Linked The Lakes, the Civic Arts Plaza, and future housing with continuous pedestrian circulation and consistent materials.

– Replaced the tiered planters with direct steps up to the theater, making a more intuitive, unified arrival sequence.

– Clarified multiple entries with shared design cues—signage, planting, paving—that knit them together as parts of a single site.

– Positioned terraced amphitheater lawns in the oak woodland, tying new programmatic elements back to the landform while creating natural gathering points.

## Signal where to go — with building entries that are intentional and subtle cues that guide movement.

– Established a clear main entrance to the theater as the focal civic destination of this revitalized space.

– Clarified secondary entrances to City Hall and office spaces through signage and visual hierarchy, so they are legible and visible without competing.

– Used paving patterns and planting edges to guide circulation naturally across the site.

– Integrated entertainment and social spaces like the amphitheater, pavilion, and community decks into a fluid moving network, so wayfinding leads not just to destinations but through activated places.

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Site photos of the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza, courtesy of Brian Bautista, Lauren Rupp and myself.

All other images and photographs unless otherwise noted are my own.





CIVIC ARTS PLAZA

THOUSAND OAKS

Thank you for your time!