

# THE GREAT WALL OF LOS ANGELES

## MASTER PLAN

UCLAx LD6 Concept Development

TERM Summer 2025

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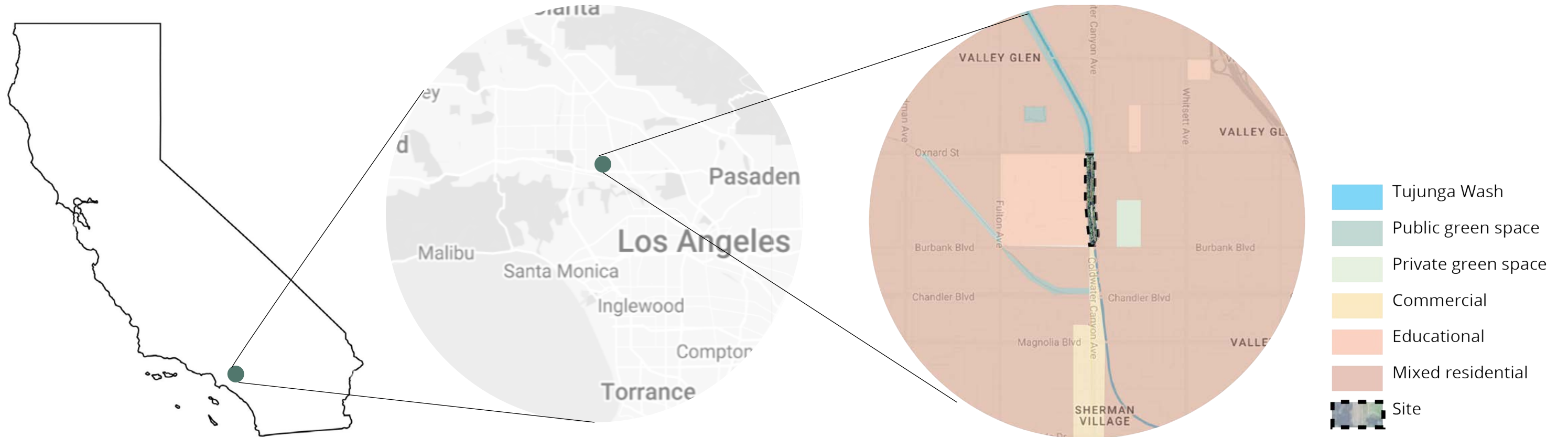
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# SITE OVERVIEW



## THE TUJUNGA GREENBELT

The Tujunga Greenbelt, nestled along a mile section of the Tujunga Wash, is a beloved recreational space central to the lives of the residents of Valley Glen. Valley Glen is in the San Fernando Valley, a region of Los Angeles County that is North West of Downtown Los Angeles with a barrier of the Santa Monica Mountains between. This linear park offers a rare respite for the residents of the dense urban fabric, offering a space for passive recreation, gathering, and historical reflection. Mature trees provide generous shade, inviting visitors to linger, walk and connect.

## GREATER VALLEY GLEN

The urban fabric of Valley Glen and surrounding areas near Tujunga Greenbelt is primarily Mixed residential with a few educational facilities and green spaces nearby. The demographics of the Greater Valley Glen Area (neighborhoods of the San Fernando Valley including but not limited to Valley Village, Sherman Oaks, Studio City, Toluca Lake, North Hollywood) residents are White (42.8%), Hispanic (41.9%), Asian (5.1%), African American (4.1%), Native American (0.2%), Pacific Islander (0.1%), and other race (0.4%) (US Census 2000 Data). Los Angeles Valley College is located next to the site and has an enrollment of 16,000 students. It is considered the center of influence for education, cultural activities, and life enrichment of the San Fernando Valley.

## THE GREAT WALL OF LOS ANGELES

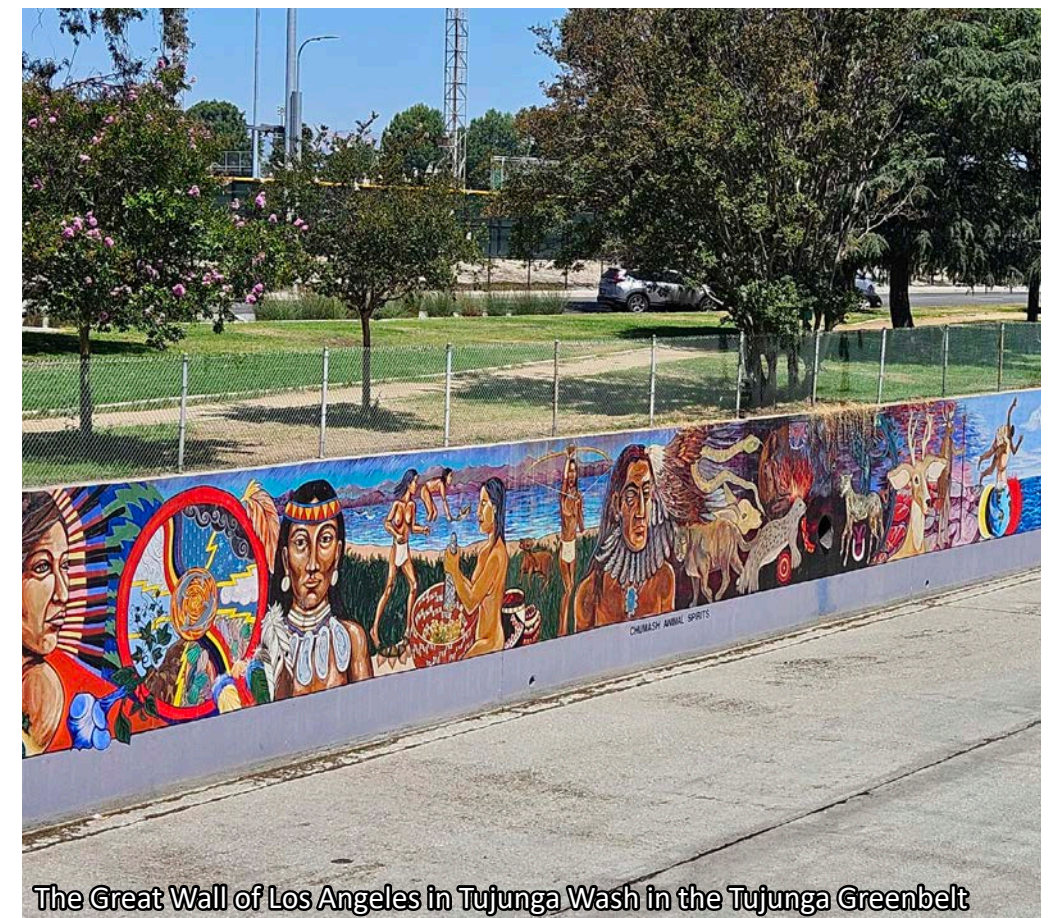
The site is home to the 2754 feet long mural called The Great Wall of Los Angeles. This is the worlds longest mural. Judith Baca led a team of at risk youth who painted the mural over a 5-year timespan. This mural has been a part of the community since the 1970s and is celebrated and cherished today as a historic landmark that preserves the American history that many attempt to bury. This artwork anchors the space with vibrant colors and weaves our vibrant history into the visitors experience. The location of this mural is on the wall below grade in the Tujunga Wash, posing challenges for visitor viewing.

## HISTORY

The site has a rich natural and cultural history and tells a complex story. The site was once a biodiverse, thriving ecosystem and integral to the Tongva people's culture and traditional lifestyle. It has transformed drastically with the developments brought along with colonization and urbanization. The Tujunga Wash is now channelized in a sea of dense urban environment. The Tujunga Greenbelt hints at what once was and what could be again.

## REIMAGINED

The Tujunga Greenbelt now has the opportunity to be reimagined celebrate it's significant cultural and ecological history.

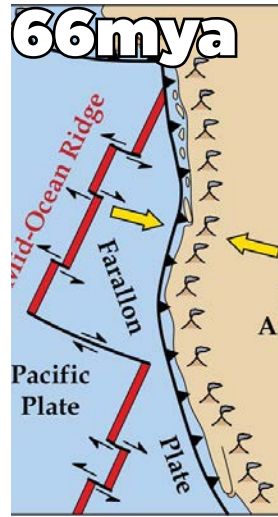


# SITE HISTORY TIMELINE



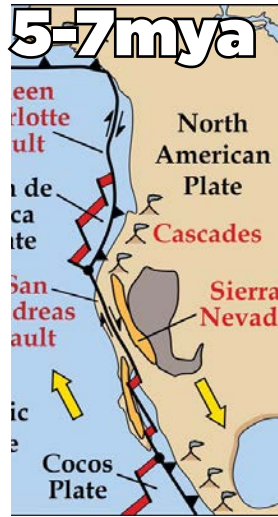
**100mya**

Tectonic plate convergence (Pacific and American Plates) began shaping the area, in the Mesozoic. Blueschist facies rocks form in high pressure



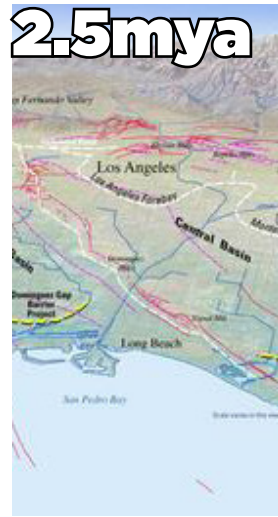
**66mya**

The Los Angeles region was submerged in the Pacific Ocean during the era of dinosaurs, in the Mesozoic.



**5-7mya**

The San Gabriel Mountains were uplifted along fault lines in the late Tertiary



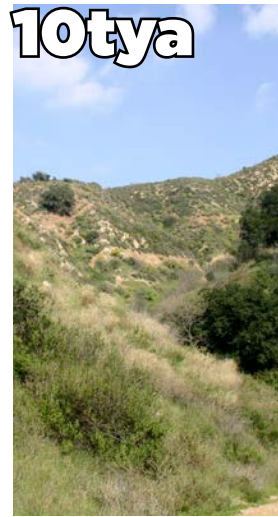
**2.5mya**

Significant geological activity included marine transgression and regression and the formation of the Los Angeles basin in the Pliocene.



**12tya**

The most recent Ice Age in the Pleistocene, the region supported megafauna like Shasta ground sloth, Columbian mammoth, and western camel



**10tya**

The chaparral and coastal sage scrub ecosystems developed after the Pleistocene ice age ended.



**10tya**

San Fernando Valley prairie was habitat to a great deal of wildlife diversity with many black-tailed hares, cottontail rabbits, and CA ground squirrels



**7tya**

Tongva people are indigenous to the Los Angeles basin and are integral to the lands stewardship



**1700s**

European settlement drastically changed Southern California natural systems by introducing agriculture and invasive species



**1771**

San Gabriel Mission brought enslavement, force-relocation, and devastating disease to Tongva indigenous people of the Los Angeles Basin



**1931**

Big Tujunga Dam was built, holding 5,960 acre-feet of water in the reservoir (roughly 22 miles upstream from site)



**1938**

The LA River Flood overwhelmed Tujunga Wash leading to severe flooding and destruction



**1940**

The Hansen Dam was built, holding 74,100 acre-feet (roughly 7 miles upstream from site)



**1950s**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers channelized the Tujunga Wash for flood control



**1974**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers decides to transform the Tujunga Wash Channel into a mini-park with a bike path and mural by Judy Baca



**1978**

The Great Wall of Los Angeles began to be painted on the concrete sides of the Tujunga Wash



**2007**

2.5 mile greenbelt began being built from Oxnard St to Vanowen St (directly upstream of the site)



**2011**

Restoration of the mural was completed by artists and some of the youth painters from the original painting of the mural



**2023**

Judy Baca began painting the expansion of The Great Wall of Los Angeles on canvas at LACMA



**2024**

A pedestrian bridge and lighting were installed to help improve the view of The Great Wall of Los Angeles

# SITE INVENTORY



Eucalyptus globulus – Tasmanian blue gum – invasive



Schinus terebinthifolia – Brazilian pepper – invasive



Plumbago auriculata - blue plumbago - non native



Delairea odorata - Cape ivy – invasive



Nassella tenuissima - Mexican feathergrass – invasive



Bougainvillea spectabilis - great bouganvillea - non native

## NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL TREE SPECIES

- Platanus racemosa - western sycamore – native
- Quercus agrifolia – coast live oak – native
- Ligustrum lucidum – tree privet – invasive
- Ulmus parvifolia – Chinese elm – non native
- Schinus terebinthifolia – Brazilian pepper – invasive
- Eucalyptus globulus – Tasmanian blue gum – invasive
- Erythrina afra – South African coral tree – non native
- Koelreuteria bipinnata – Chinese flame tree – non native
- Pinus halepensis - aleppo pine - non native
- Washingtonia robusta - Mexican fan palm - invasive

## OTHER FLORA SPECIES

- Delairea odorata - Cape ivy – invasive
- Nassella tenuissima - Mexican feathergrass – invasive
- Hordeum murinum – wall barley - invasive
- Helianthus annuus – Common Sunflower – native
- Epilobium canum – California fuchsia – native
- Pluteus cervinus – deer mushroom - native
- Plumbago auriculata - blue plumbago - non native
- Bougainvillea spectabilis - great bouganvillea - non native

## FAUNA

- Sciurus niger - Eastern fox squirrel – invasive
- Canis latrans – Coyote - native
- Zenaida macroura – mourning dove- native
- Jadera haematoloma – red-shouldered bug – native
- Corvus americanus – American crow - native
- Sayornis nigricans – black phoebe – native
- Tyrannus vociferans - Cassin’s kingbird – native
- Passer domesticus – house sparrow – non native
- Sayornis saya Say’s phoebe – native
- Petrochelidon pyrrhonota – cliff swallow – native
- Calypte anna – Anna’s Hummingbird – native
- Selasphorus sasin – Allen’s Hummingbird
- Stelgidopteryx serripennis - Northern rough-winged swallow - native



Pedestrian bridge under construction



Floodlights pointed at mural



Paved path



6ft Chain link fence bordering Tujunga Wash



Reclined seating



The Great Wall of Los Angeles Mural

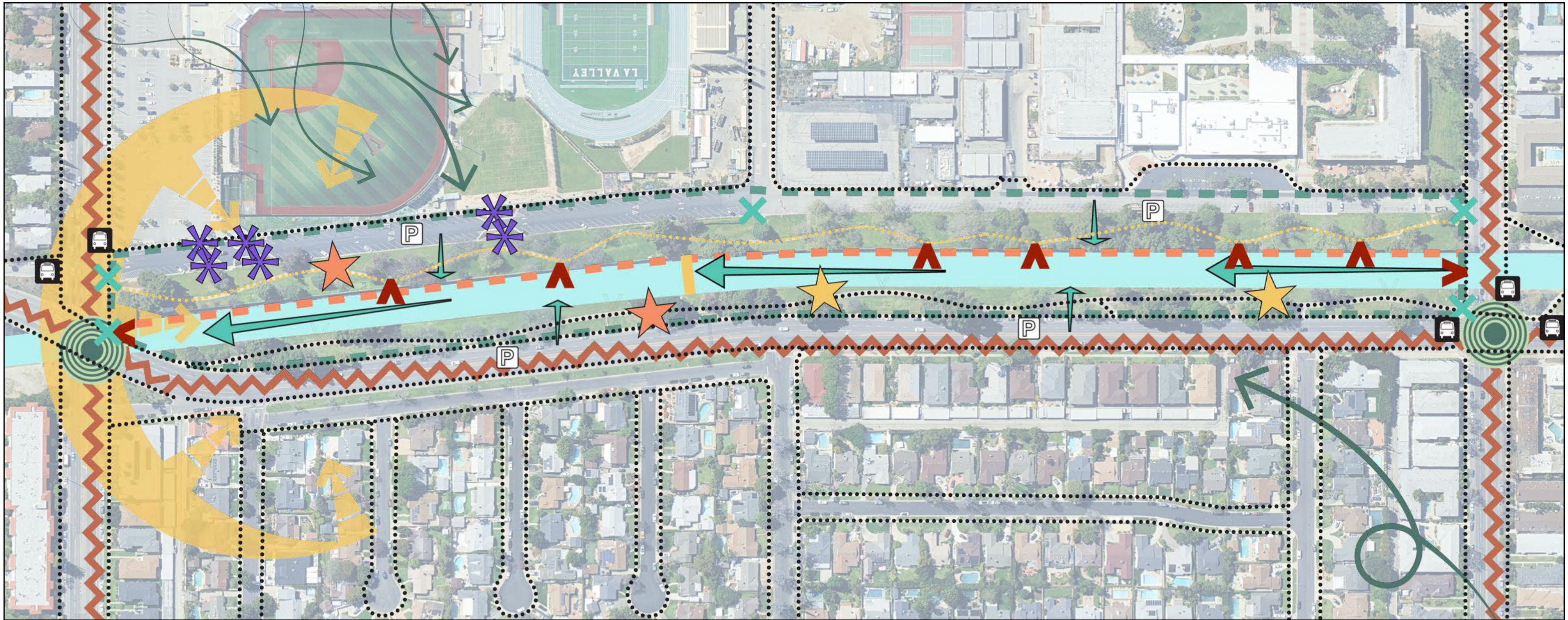
## CULTURAL AND BUILT ADJACENT TO SITE

- Busy streets
- Busy intersections
- Loud noise
- Parking
- Paved pedestrian paths
- LAVC Community Services Center
- Stadium
- Jack London High School
- Ulysses S. Grant High School
- Housing tract
- Restored water infiltration greenbelt
- Trail network
- Bike path

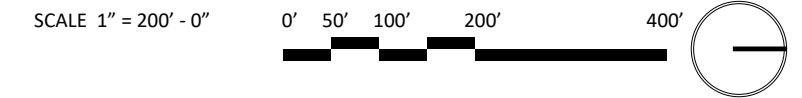
## ON-SITE

- Tujunga Wash
- The Great Wall of Los Angeles Mural
- Floodlights pointed at mural
- 6ft Chain link fence bordering Tujunga Wash
- Large concrete walls and ground plain of Tujunga Wash
- Pedestrian bridge under construction
- Tujunga Greenbelt
- Lawn groundcover
- Large mature trees
- Sloping grade toward Tujunga Wash
- Pedestrian and bike path circuit
- Paved path
- Decomposed granite path
- Parking lot
- Stormwater infiltration basins
- Reclined seating
- Picnic tables
- Large irrigation infrastructure

# SITE ANALYSIS



- |  |   |  |                               |  |                   |
|--|---|--|-------------------------------|--|-------------------|
|  | PREVAILING WINDS                          |  | BUSY AND NOISY INTERSECTION   |  | PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE |
|  | SANTA ANA WINDS                           |  | SEATING                       |  | SITE BOUNDARY     |
|  | WATER FLOW DIRECTION                      |  | TABLE AND SEATING             |  | BUS STOP          |
|  | BUSY AND NOISY STREETS                    |  | SUN PATH                      |  | VIEWS             |
|  | PAVED PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION              |  | STORMWATER INFILTRATION BASIN |  |                   |
|  | DECOMPOSED GRANITE PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION |  | PARKING                       |  |                   |
|  | HISTORIC MURAL                            |  | CONCRETE STORMWATER CHANNEL   |  |                   |



## NOTES

USDA Hardiness Zone: 10B  
 Sunset Zone: 20  
 Public Transportation Access: 154 and 167 bus lines @ Coldwater Canyon/Oxnard and Coldwater Canyon/ Ventura  
 Historic Ecology of the area: Riparian, Coastal Sage Brush, California Grasslands and Flowerfields (Ethington, 2020)

# TREE ANALYSIS



Invasive and Naturalized Species for Removal		
Koelreuteria bipinnata	Chinese flame tree	12
Koelreuteria paniculata	goldenrain tree	25
Ligustrum lucidum	glossy privet	9
Schinus terebinthefolia	brazilian pepper	1
Washingtonia robusta	Mexican fan palm	4
Ornamentals to Keep		
Cedrus deodar	deodar cedar	4
Erythrina humeana	natal coral tree	2
Eucalytus sideroxylon	red ironbark	14
Fraxinus pennsylvatica	green ash	1
Fraxinus uhdei	evergreen ash	9
Liriodendron tulipifera	tulip tree	1
Pinus canariensis	Canary Island pine	1
Pinus halepensis	Aleppo pine	42
Pistacia chinensis	Chinese pistache	1
Quercus virginiana	southern live oak	1
Ulmus parvifolia	Chinese elm	3
Protected Native Species		
Platanus racinosa	California sycamore	29

## LEGEND

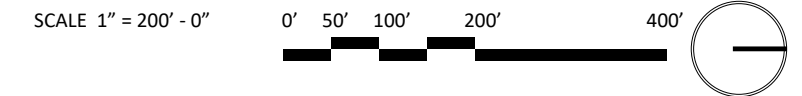
- Invasive and naturalized trees to be removed
- Ornamental trees to keep
- Native trees to be protected

SCALE 1" = 200' - 0"



Source: Tree Inventory <https://streetsla.lacity.org/tree-inventory>

# SITE CONSTRAINTS



## SITE WIDTH

The width of the two green belts on site are narrow and spans .5 miles. It limits the design to the space.



## MATURE TREES

Mature trees are important to cooling effect of local climate. Design will need to keep as many non invasive trees to maximize cooling. Large invasive trees are harmful to the ecosystem and will need to be removed.



## MUNICIPAL WATER PIPES

The water pipes cross the tujunga wash in two places and are visually unappealing



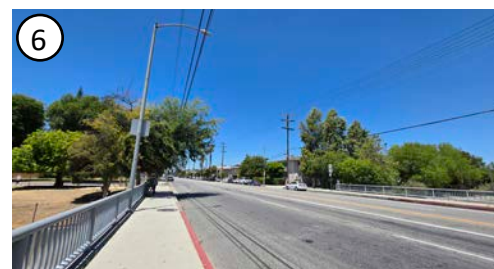
## PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

The bridge is located towards middle southern location of the site with no direct visual connections to the rest of the size or adjacencies



## PARKING AREAS

The site has parking areas bordering the west and east sides of the site. This creates a visual and physical barrier to pedestrians and bicyclists, while vehicular visitors access site at all points along these borders



## BUSY STREETS

The site is bordered by busy streets, acting as a source of loud noises and as a safety hazard for visitors of the site



## STORMWATER FLOWS RATES

The Tujunga Wash has seasonal flows with high volume rain events that can pose as a danger to those in the wash. It is currently not accessible to visitors.



## THE GREAT WALL OF LOS ANGELES

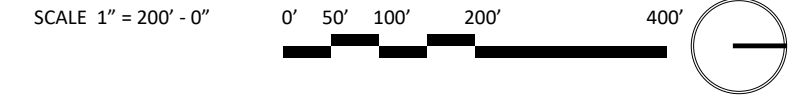
The painted mural spans the western wall of the Tujunga Wash with plans to expand with canvas mural on to the eastern wall. It is a historic landmark that cannot be disturbed or moved. It is difficult to view as is.



## TUJUNGA WASH

The Tujunga Wash is 70' wide and 13' deep and spans the entirety of the site and continues from the mountains to the ocean. It is lined by 6ft chainlink fence. It constrains pedestrian access throughout site.

# SITE OPPORTUNITIES



**1 SITE WIDTH**  
 Intimate gathering areas  
 Outlooks for viewing the mural  
 Guide visitors through space



**4 PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE**  
 The bridge can be connected to site and adjacencies with paths or can be moved to be aligned with the adjacencies



**7 STORMWATER FLOWS RATES**  
 The Tujunga Wash has seasonal flows that can be utilized for water retention and infiltration.



**2 MATURE TREES**  
 Keep mature non-invasive, healthy trees to maximize climate cooling  
 -Remove invasive, hazardous, or unhealthy trees to make room for habitat supporting trees and site amenities



**5 PARKING AREAS**  
 The parking areas can act as a welcoming entrance since many people access site by vehicle. It can be better incorporated into the site design.



**8 THE GREAT WALL OF LOS ANGELES**  
 There can be more accessible viewing locations added to create moments of appreciation for the mural in the design. The theme and contents of the great wall can be a source of inspiration for design elements.



**3 MUNICIPAL WATER PIPES**  
 The water pipes can be incorporated into design by disguising it as a platform or walkway



**6 BUSY STREETS**  
 The vehicular traffic can be an audience of the park from a distance if visual design for them is provided such as sculptures, large trees and other design elements. Road diet and traffic calming elements are needed.



**9 TUJUNGA WASH**  
 The fence could be replaced to increase visibility and connection to mural and the wash. The Tujunga Wash can be utilized for water infiltration and education for visitors to reconnect people to water systems.

# PRECEDENT CASE STUDY 1

## MEDELLÍN RIVER PARKS MASTER PLAN (STAGES A & B)

**FIRM:** Sebastian Monsalve Gomez & Juan David Hoyos

**LOCATION:** Medellín, Colombia

**CLIENT:** Alcaldía de Medellín

**DESIGN YEAR:** 2013-2014 Stage A 2015-2016 Stage B

**YEAR BUILT:** 2014-2016 Stage A 2016-2020 Stage B

### SUCCESSSES

#### Support the ecosystem in the urban environment

- Connects fragmented green spaces to create biotic network
- Restore habitat with native plants
- Has over 1000 trees and 20.0000 square meters of small plants

#### Increase environmental awareness of citizens

- Evokes nature in the urban context

#### Increase connectivity for all inhabitants

- Bridges for pedestrians, bikes and wildlife cross the river
- Underground infrastructure for cars, leaving first level free for boulevards and connections to both banks of river.

#### Create quality public spaces

- Elements support gatherings of all sizes and in varying weather conditions

- At night, the river has special Christmas light display from November to January and is a world-class attraction
- Allows people to connect with their vital water source, the Medellín river and to connect with nature

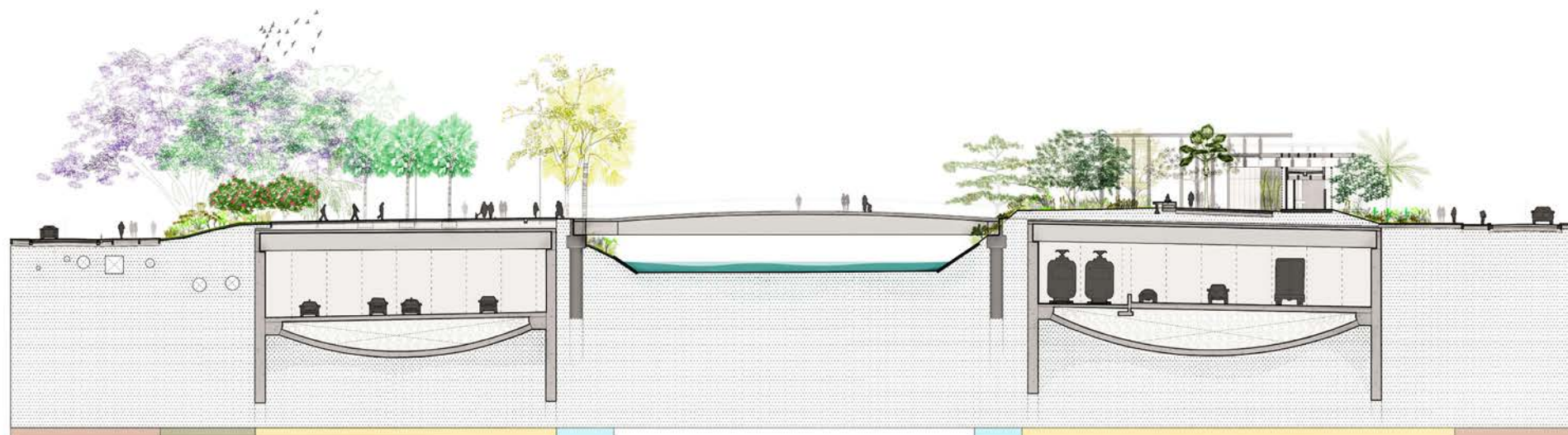
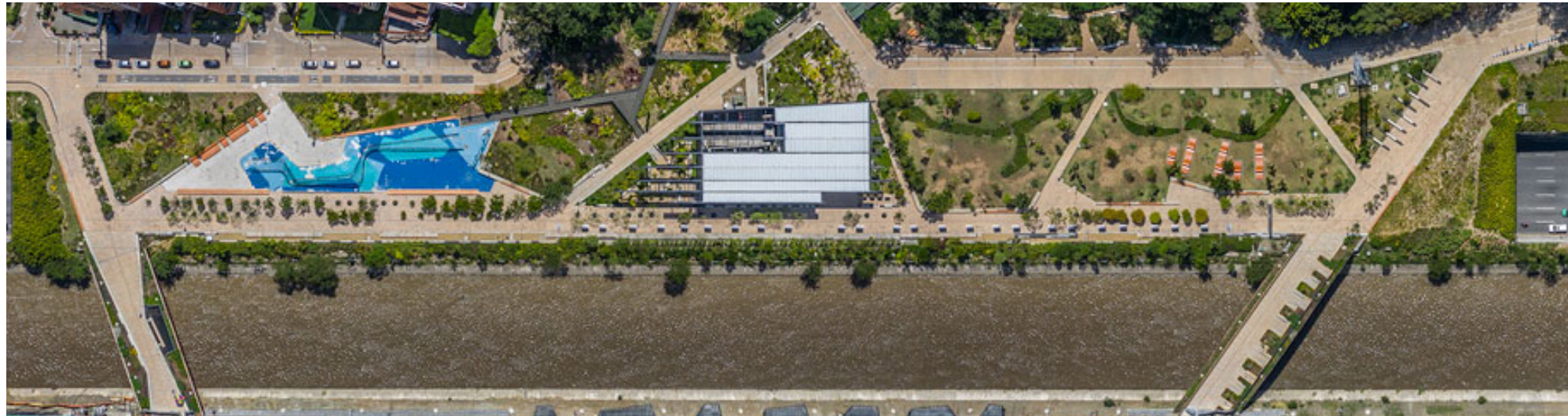
### IMPROVEMENTS

#### Support the ecosystem in the urban environment

- Opportunities to integrate wetlands for phytoremediation to help further clean the water from city runoff
- Opportunities to create islands of soft bottom riverbed
- Opportunities to make river water accessible to wildlife
- Ensure the lighting is safe for wildlife/pollinators and supports dark sky

#### Increase environmental awareness of citizens

- Educational signs, nature center, activities can be expanded



# PRECEDENT CASE STUDY 2

## SHANGHAI HOUTAN PARK

**FIRM:** Turenscape, led by Kongjian Yu

**LOCATION:** Shanghai, China

**CLIENT:** 2010 Shanghai Expo Bureau

**DESIGN YEAR:** 2007

**YEAR BUILT:** 2009

## SUCCESSES

### Use of nature as a living machine to clean water

-Huangpu River water is pumped and flows over a cascading wall which adds oxygen to the water and through a series of terraced fields to each remove specific pollutants

-634,00 gallons of polluted river water flows through 1 mile long and 16.5-100 feet wide wetland every day to be cleaned

-Water quality improves from grade V (unsuitable for human contact) to grade II (suitable for landscape irrigation) using only biological phytoremediation processes

-Sequesters 242 tons of carbon annually via wetlands and plants

### Function as ecological infrastructure

-93 species of plants and 200 species of animals have been observed on site

-Design has resulted in 8 design patents and inspired 20-30 subsequent ecological water purification systems utilizing the same techniques

### Create pleasant experience for visitors

-Provides recreation and education opportunities for visitors  
-590,500 people visited the park during the Shanghai World Expo  
-Accessible paths throughout for pedestrians to enjoy wetlands

## IMPROVEMENTS

### Create pleasant experience for visitors

-Educational signs, nature center, activities can be expanded  
-Opportunity to integrate connectivity bridges over the Huangpu River

### Function as ecological infrastructure

-Ensure that species used are not invasive to the area



# PRECEDENT CASE STUDY 3

## LEWIS MACADAMS RIVERFRONT PARK

**FIRM:** ERW Design

**LOCATION:** Elysian Valley, Los Angeles, California

**CLIENT:** City of Los Angeles

**DESIGN YEAR:** 2011

**YEAR BUILT:** 2014

## SUCCESSSES

### Restoring ecological function and habitat

-The park helps support wildlife that utilize the adjacent Glendale Narrows, the nine-mile section of the 51-mile Los Angeles River

-Planting design is composed of native wetland and upland plants to support biodiversity

-Over 100 native trees shade the park

-Rainwater infiltration basin for recharging aquifer

### Improving water quality

-Utilizes bioswales to filter stormwater runoff from city streets before entering the river

### Providing public access and recreation

-The park is a key feature in the LARiver Greenway and access point to the

LA River Bike Path and the LA River Recreation Zone

-The Park includes nature play, exercise equipment, picnic areas

### Fostering community engagement and education

-Outdoor classrooms support education programs about watershed ecology

## IMPROVEMENTS

### Restoring ecological function and habitat

-Size of lawn area and/or composition could be reevaluated

### Providing public access and recreation

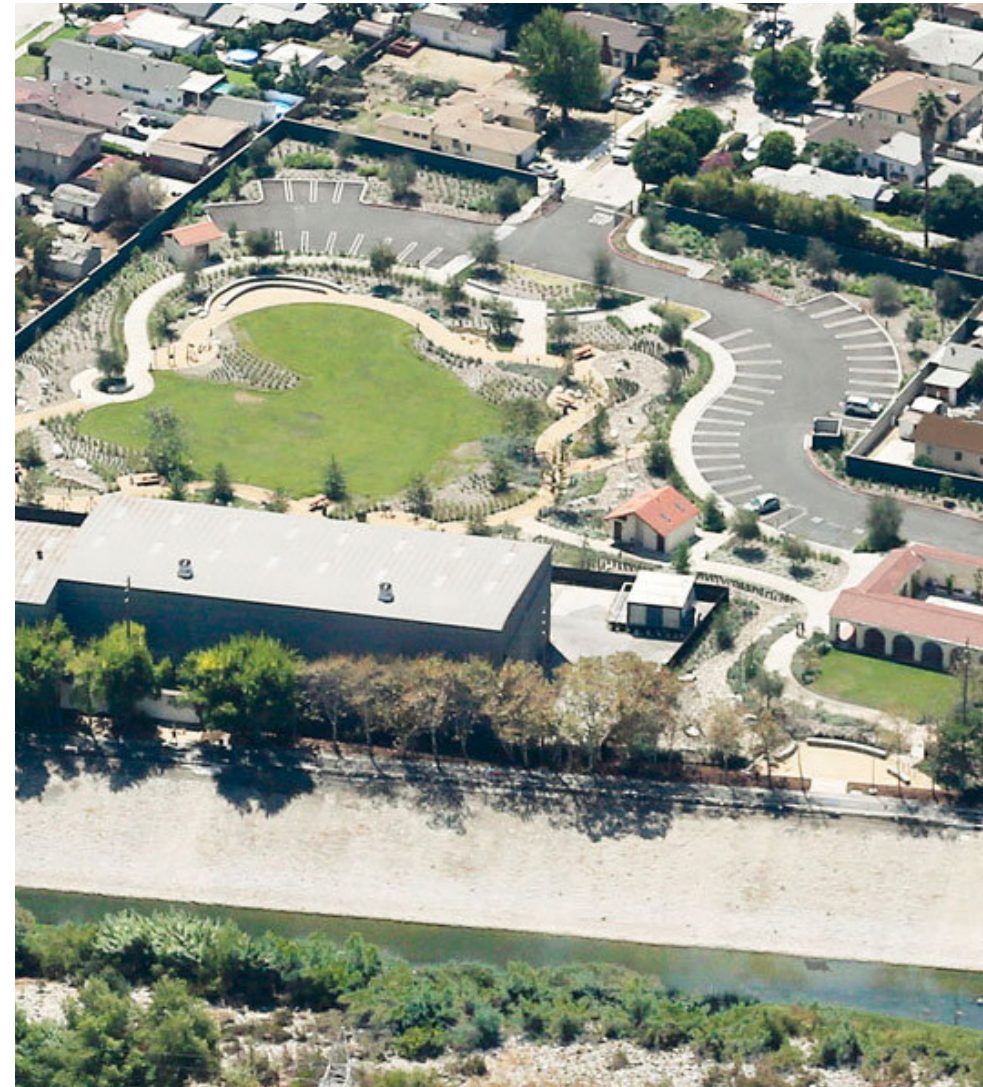
-Needs more bike racks/lockers to support non-vehicular access

### Fostering community engagement and education

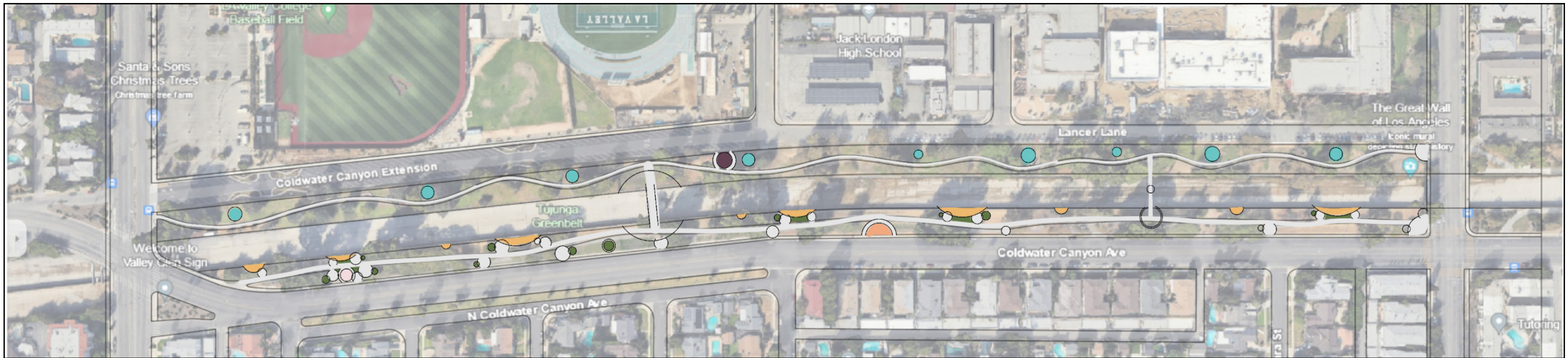
-Educational signs, nature center, activities can be expanded

### Location

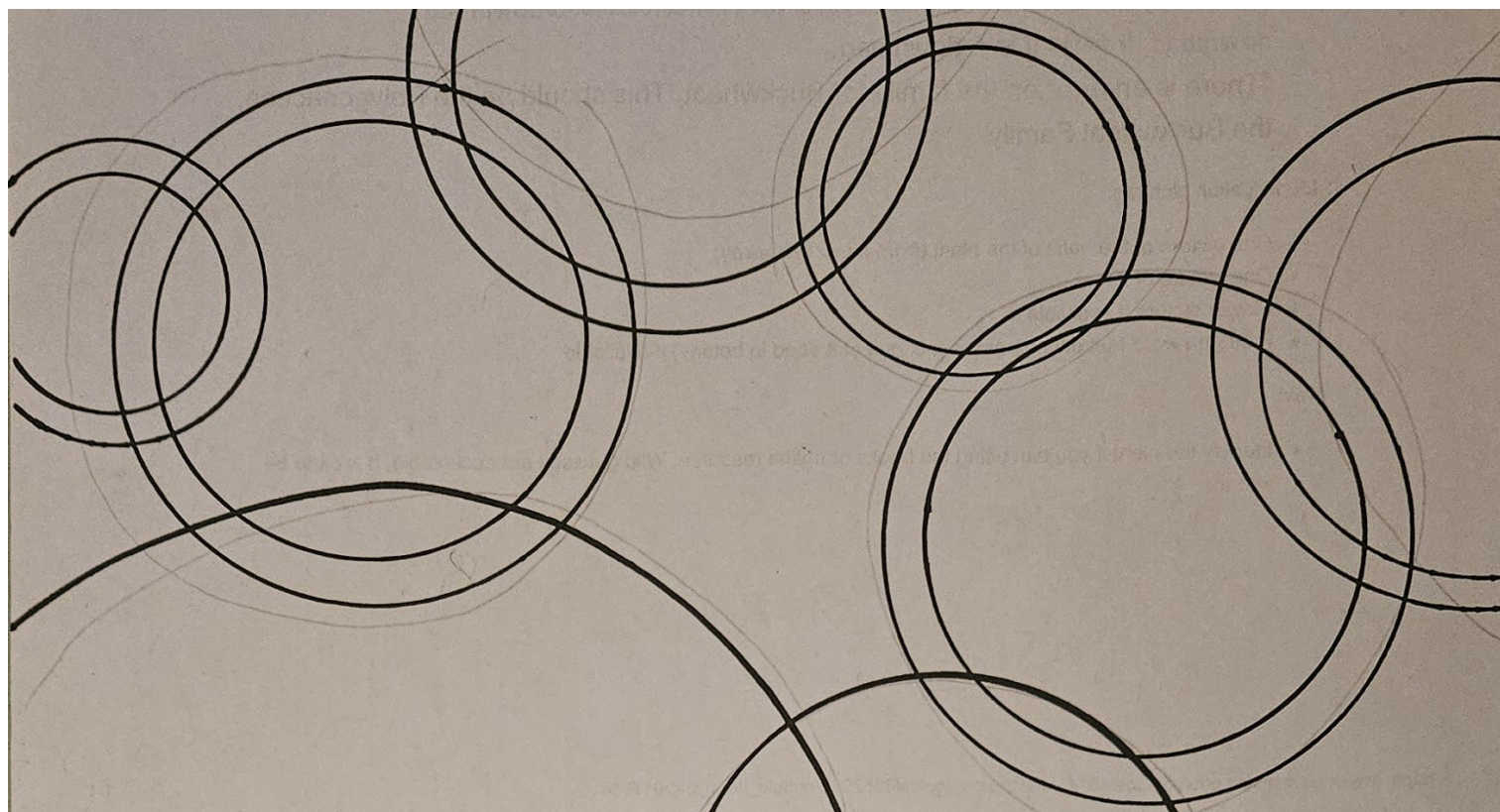
-The park could expand to property next to river to increase river access



# DESIGN ALTERNATIVE 1: RAIN DROPS



## CONCEPT DIAGRAM



## LEGEND

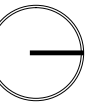
- Stormwater basin
- Terraced seating
- Walking path/plaza
- Native plants
- Cafe
- Restroom
- Community center

# DESIGN ALTERNATIVE 2: TULE REEDS

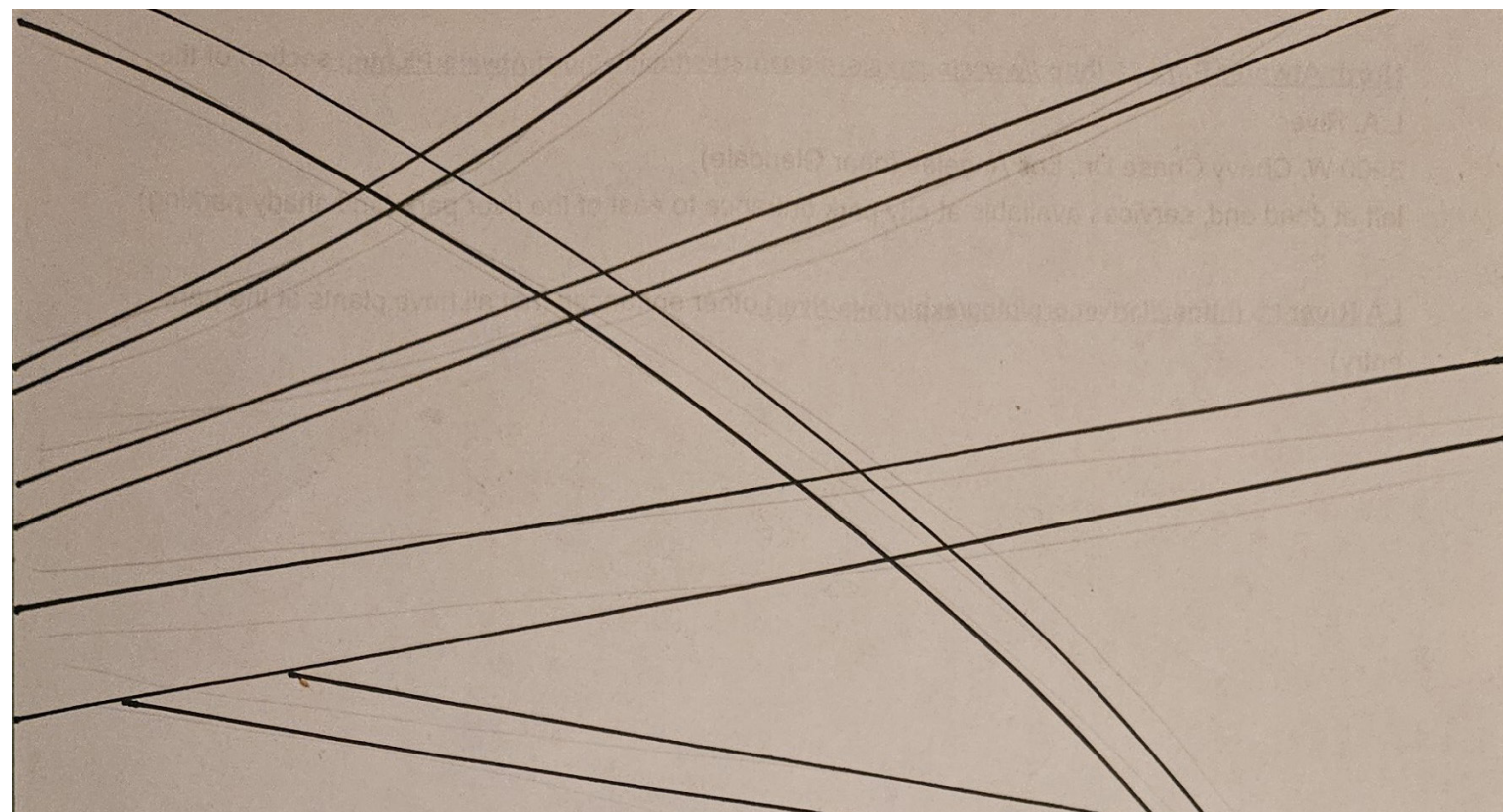


SCALE 1" = 200' - 0"

0' 50' 100' 200' 400'



## CONCEPT DIAGRAM



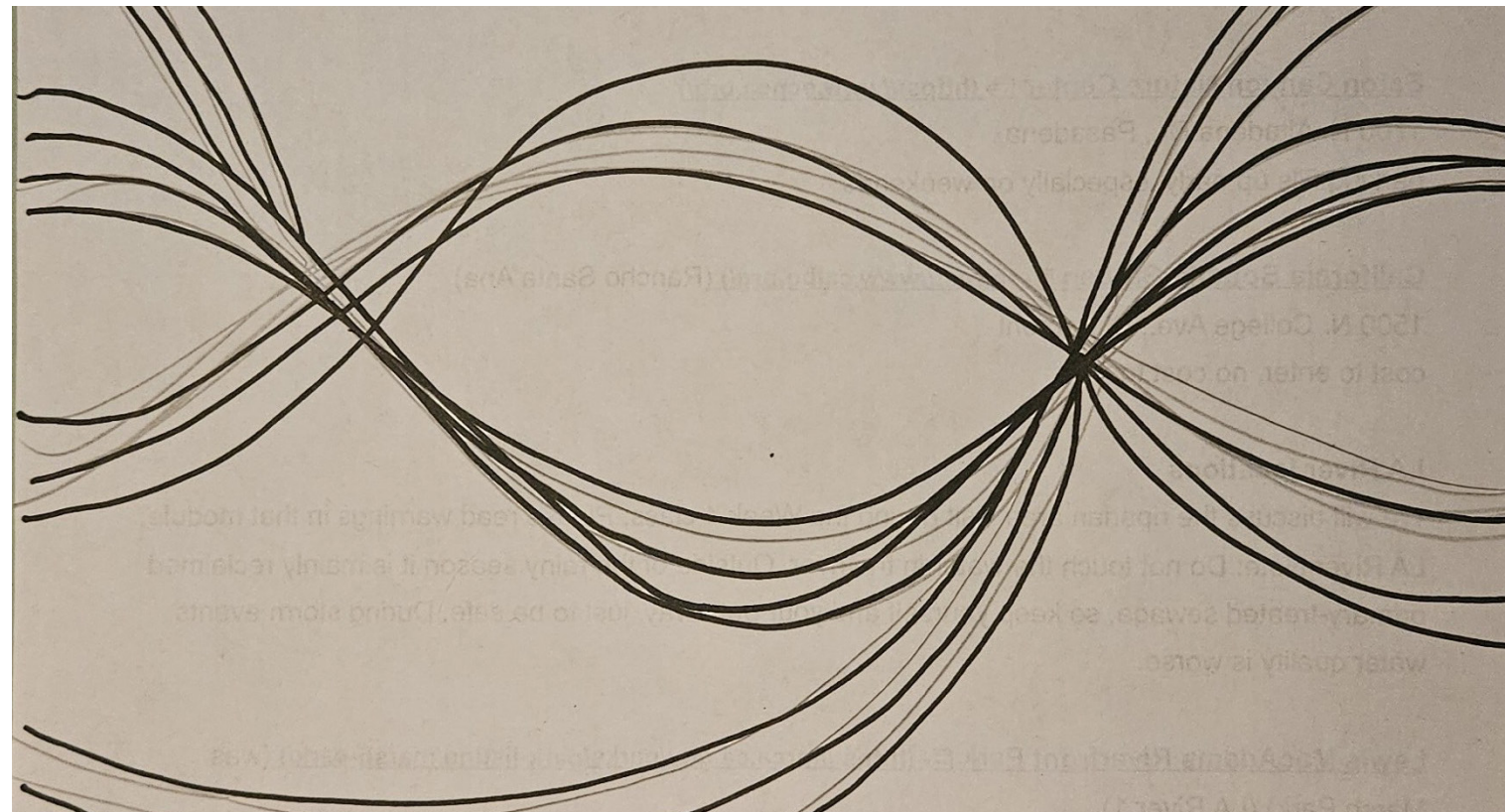
## LEGEND

- Stormwater basin
- Terraced seating
- Walking path/plaza
- Native plants
- Cafe
- Restroom
- Community center
- Performing art space
- Shaded tables

# DESIGN ALTERNATIVE 3: BRAIDED PATH



## CONCEPT DIAGRAM



## LEGEND

- Stormwater basin
- Terraced seating
- Walking path/plaza
- Native plants
- Cafe
- Restroom
- Community center

# MASTER PLAN CONCEPT: THE STORY WITHIN THE TULE REEDS

## THE STORY

The Tujunga Wash has its own story to tell. It has seen many changes throughout the years.

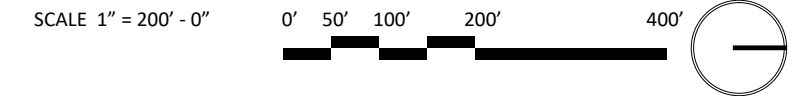
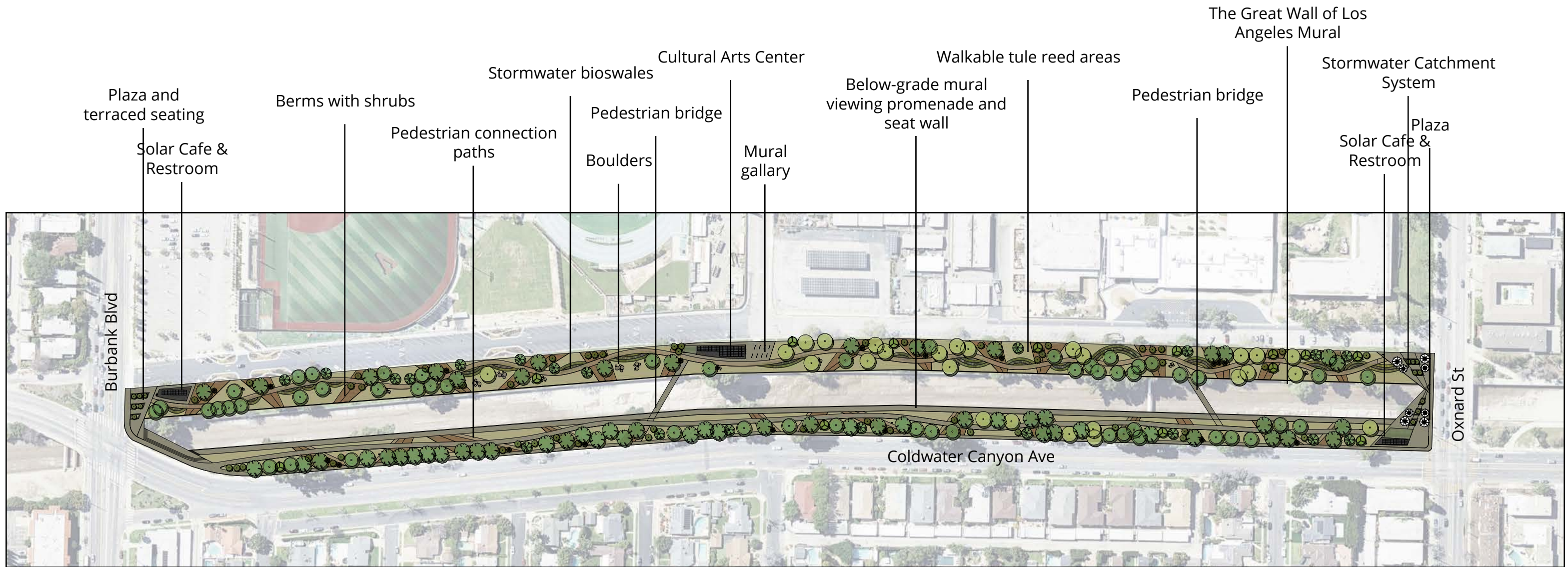
This design aims to tell this site's story, amplifying local Native Americans' story, Native Americans' connection to the land, and the rich ecology that once thrived here.

The tule reeds are symbol of deep human connection to riparian ecosystems, and inspire how we can still mend this connection amidst the increasing devastation brought on by urban environments.

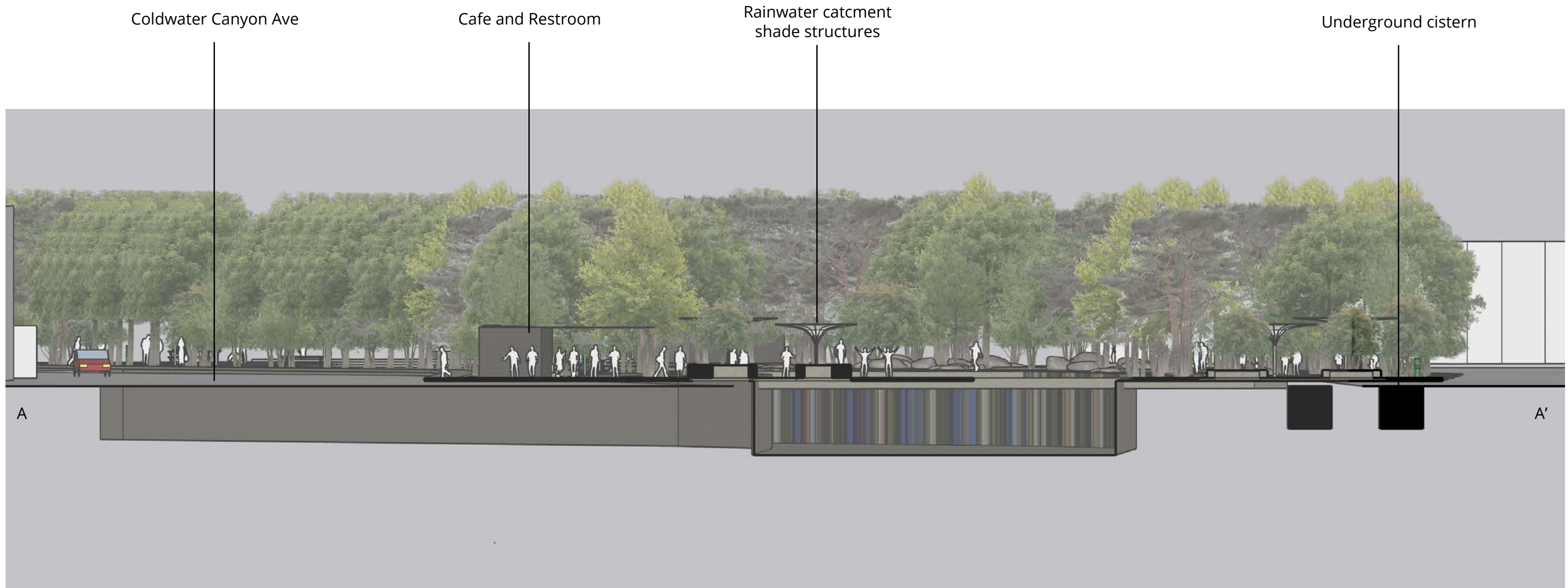
The story is inspired by and embraces the vision of The Great Wall of Los Angeles by inviting visitors to learn the buried history of the communities of this space.



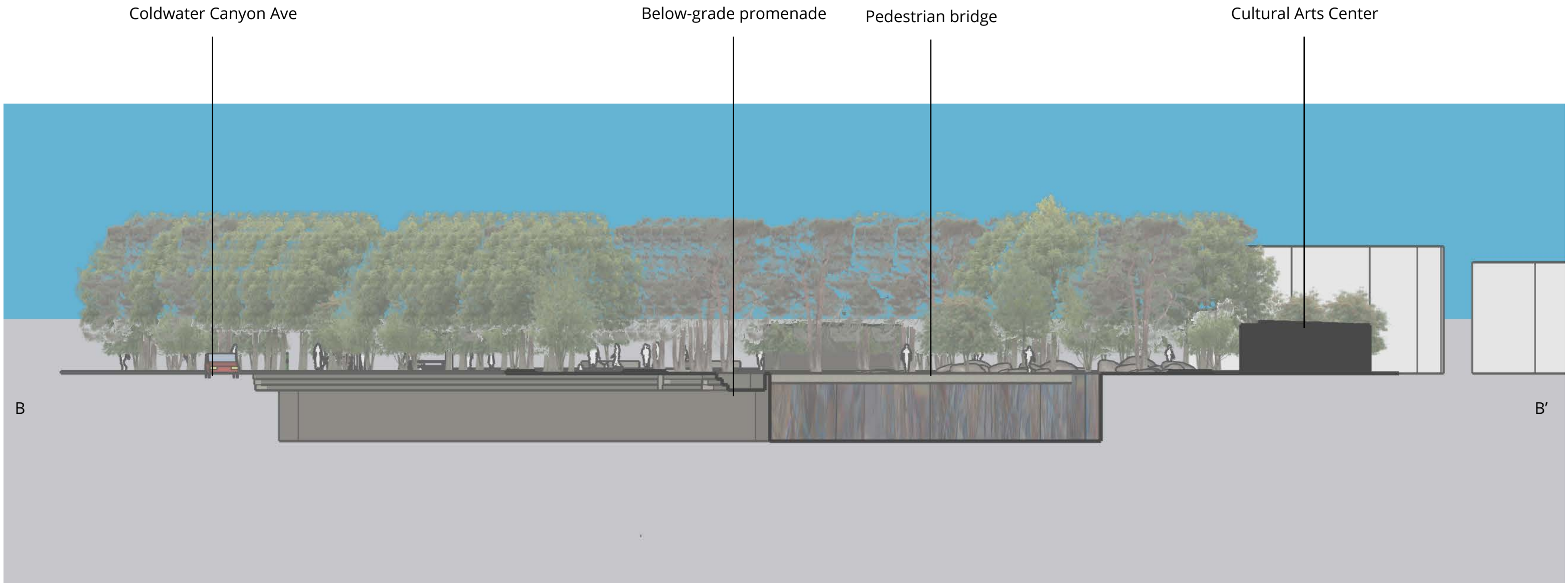
# MASTER PLAN



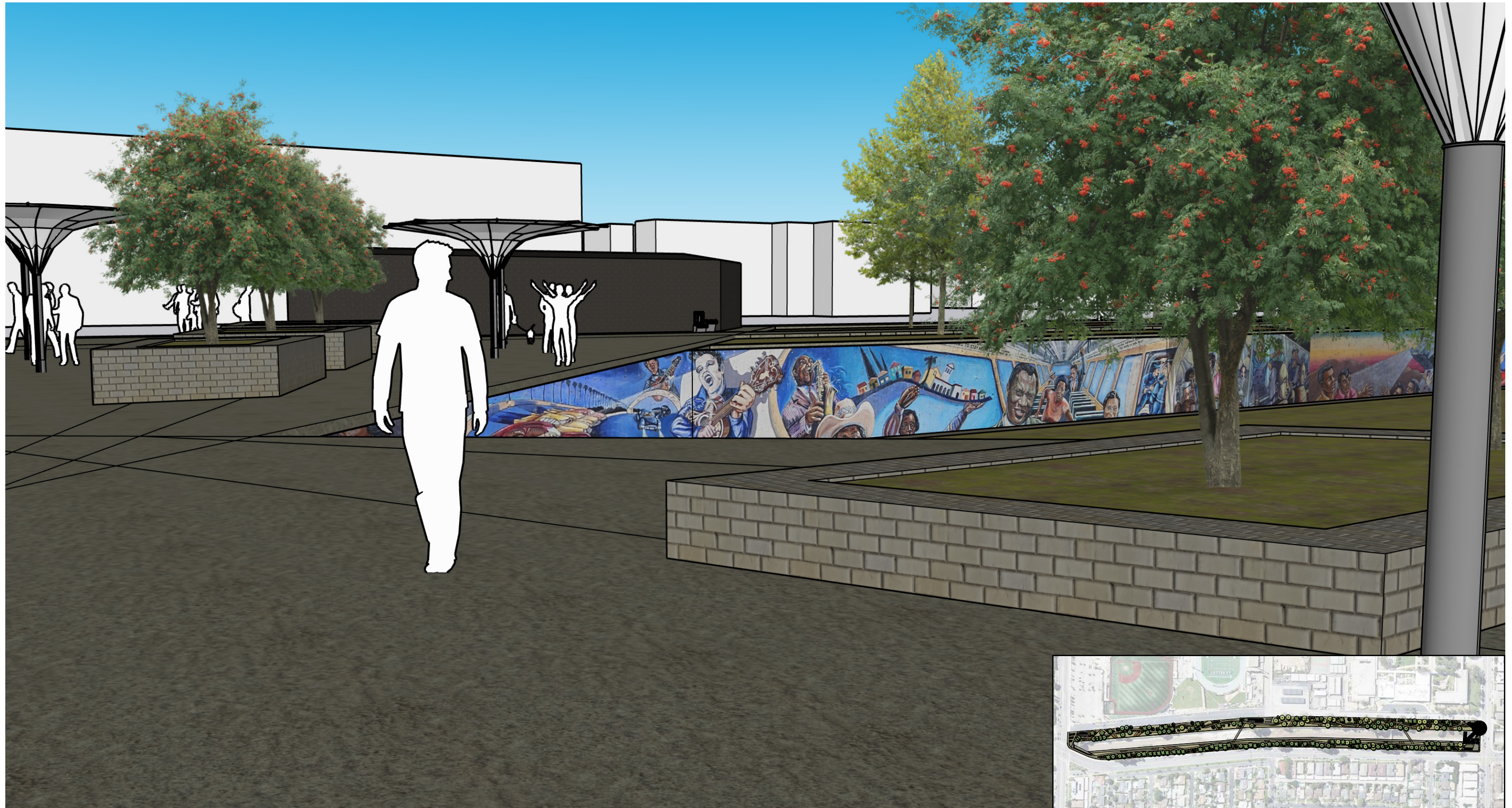
# SITE SECTION 1



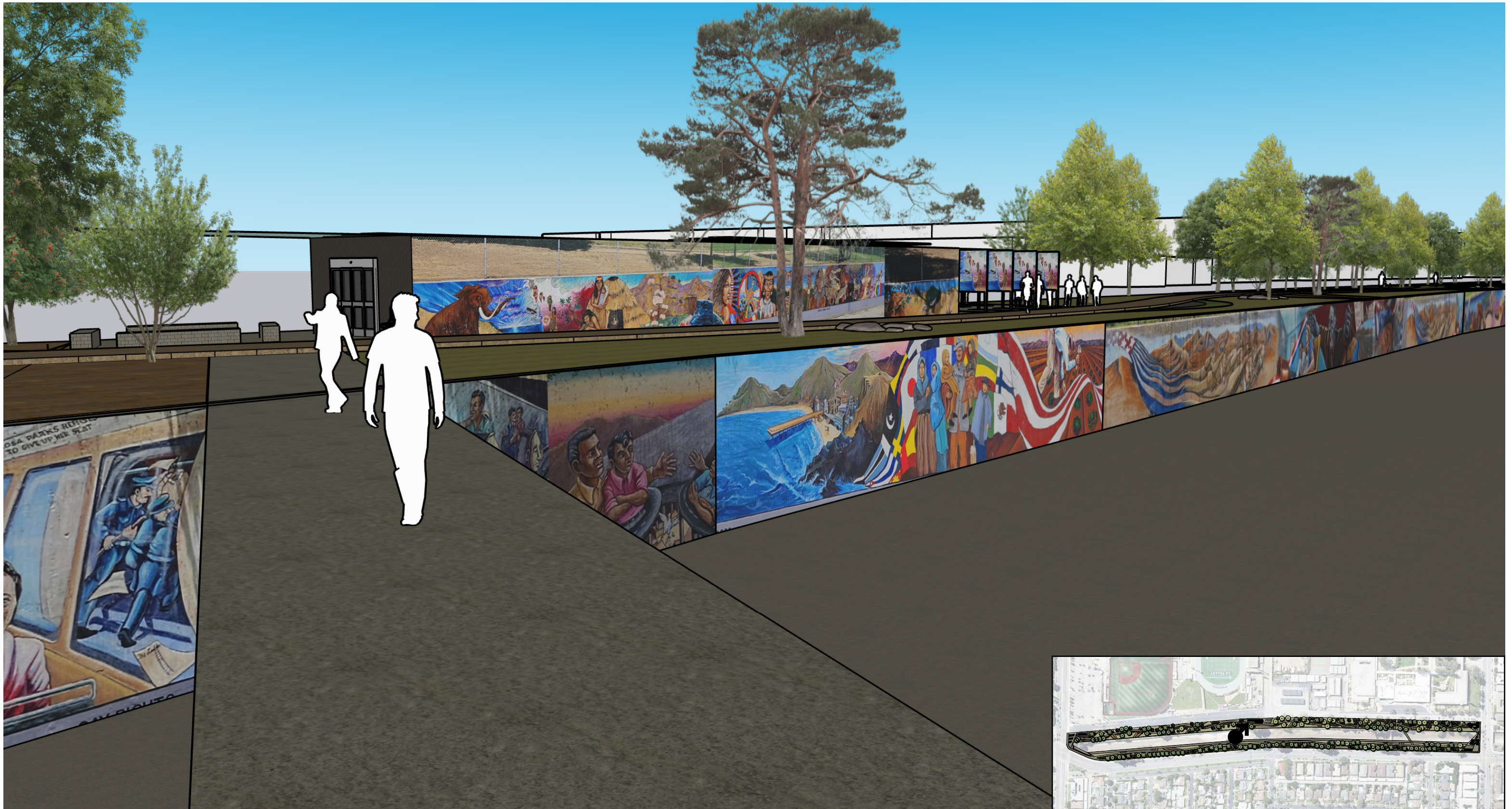
# SITE SECTION 2



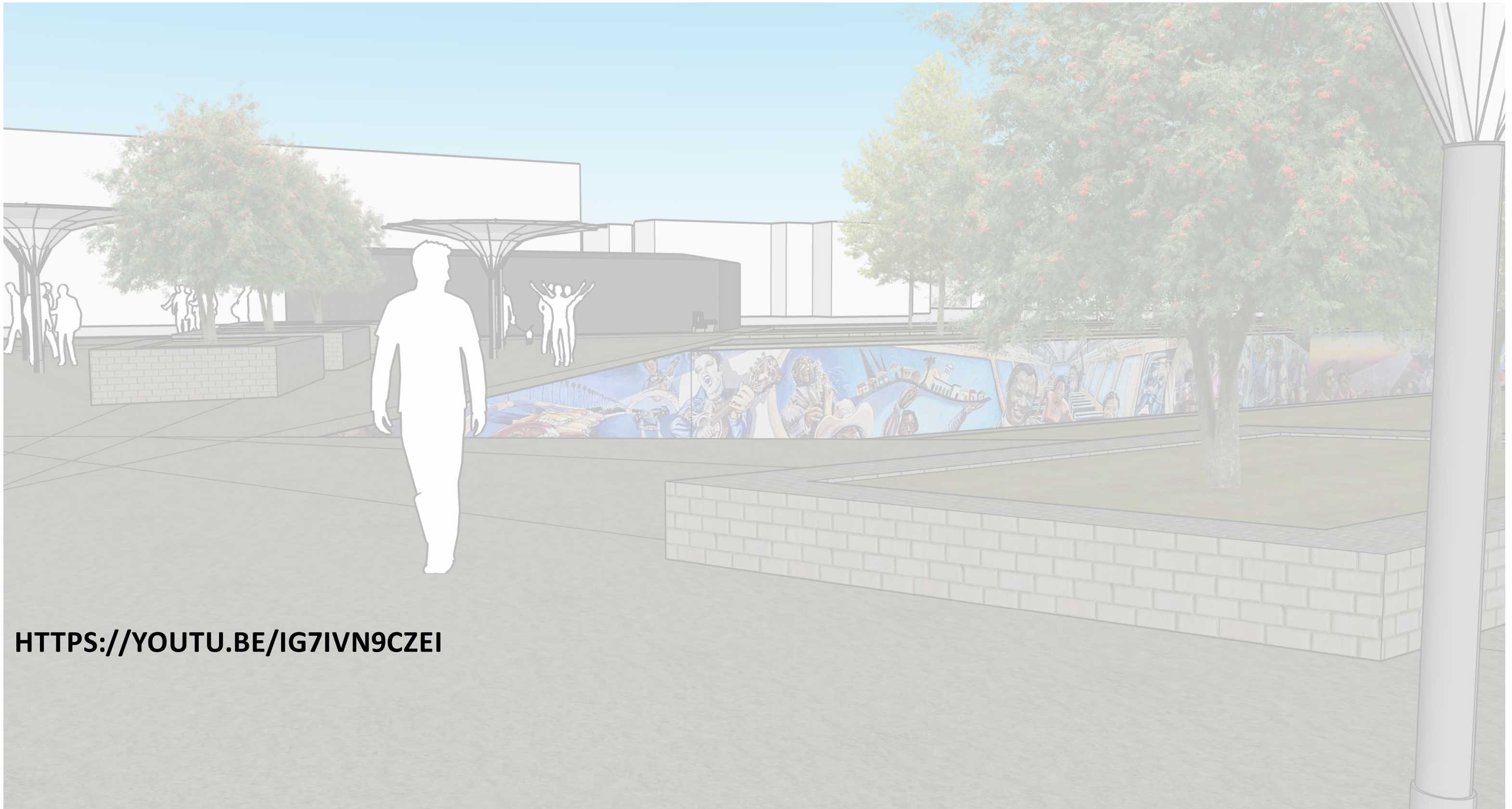
# PERSPECTIVE 1



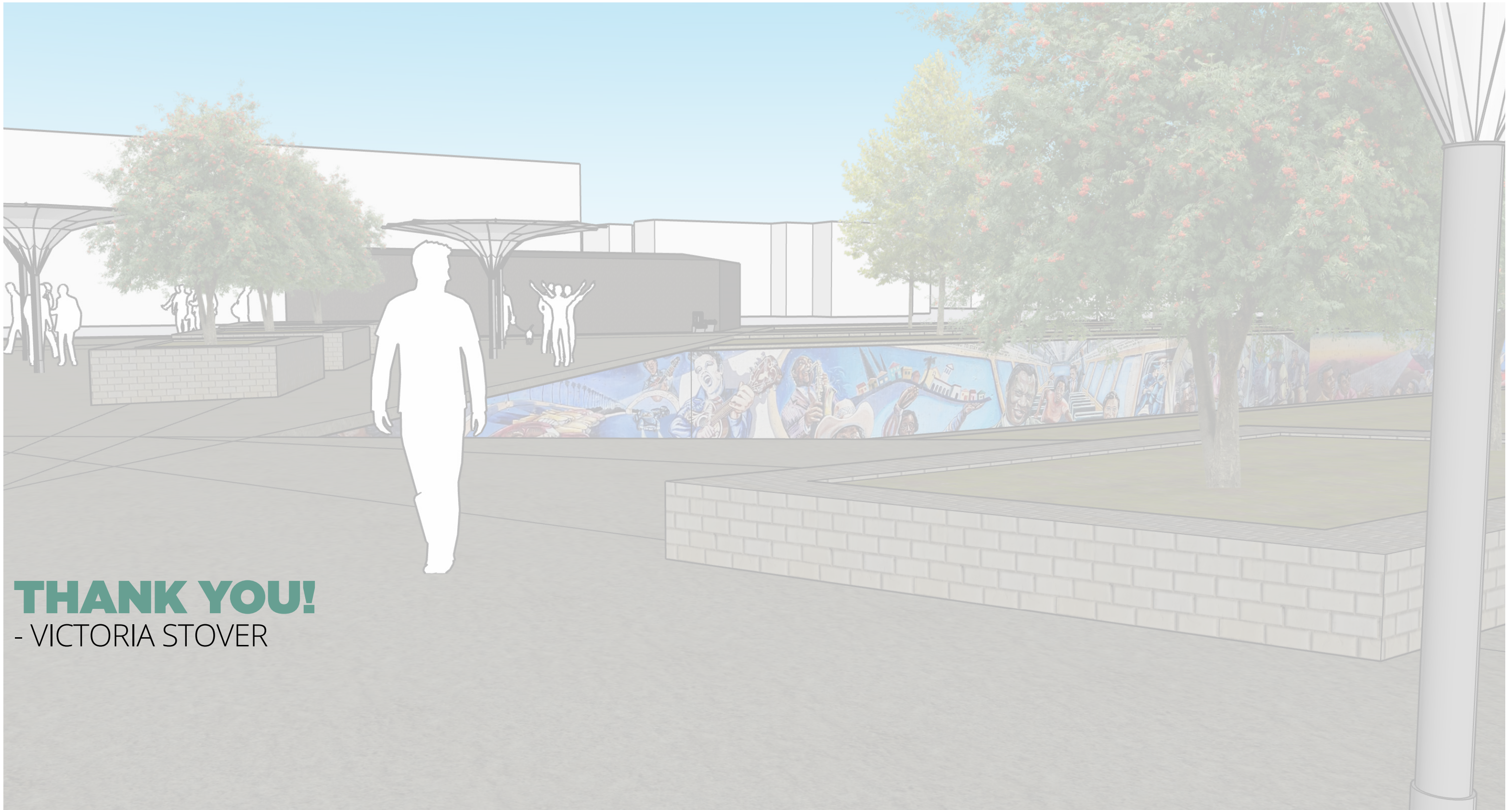
# PERSPECTIVE 2



# WALKTHROUGH VIDEO



[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/IG7IVN9CZEI](https://youtu.be/IG7IVN9CZEI)



**THANK YOU!**  
- VICTORIA STOVER