

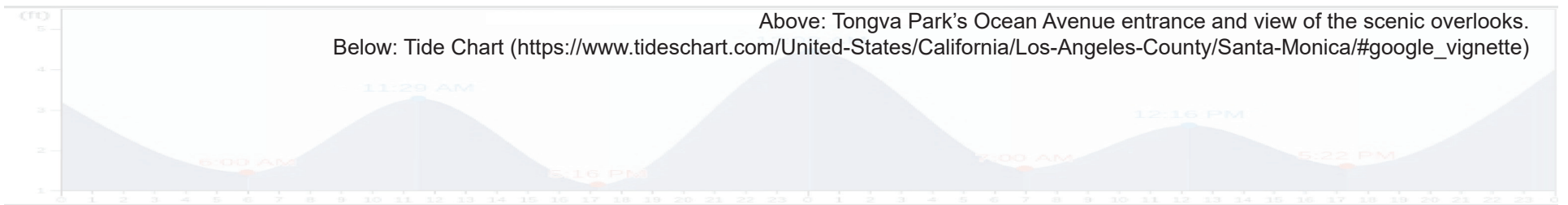
TONGVA PARK

A STUDY

Design Graphics 3
Laura Razo, Instructor
Spring 2025
Ashley Van Pelt

Above: Tongva Park's Ocean Avenue entrance and view of the scenic overlooks.

Below: Tide Chart (https://www.tideschart.com/United-States/California/Los-Angeles-County/Santa-Monica/#google_vignette)





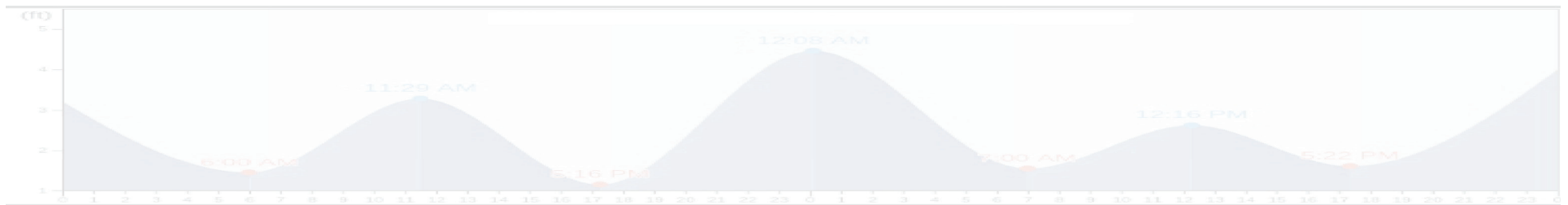
**“THE BEST WAY TO
PREDICT THE FUTURE IS TO
CREATE IT”**

—anonymous



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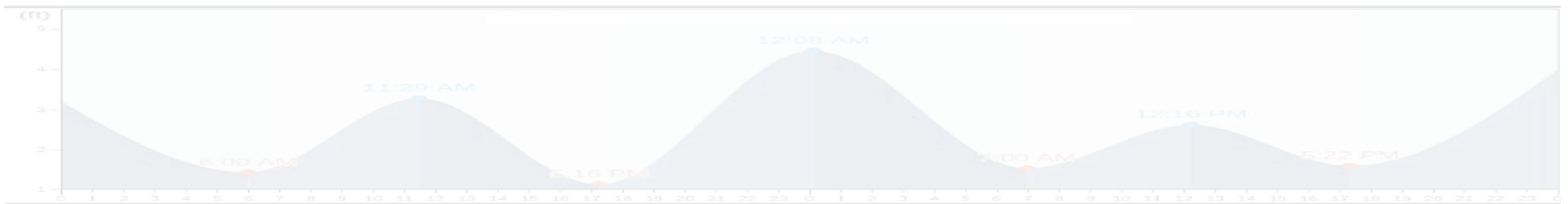




PRE-CONSTRUCTION SITE FOR TONGVA PARK
<https://inhabitat.com/high-line-park-designer-completes-new-tongva-park-in-santa-monica/tongva-park-james-corner-field-operations-5/>



POST CONSTRUCTION TONGVA PARK
<https://www.archpaper.com/2019/11/tongva-park-feature/>



SECTION 1: ABOUT THE STUDENT

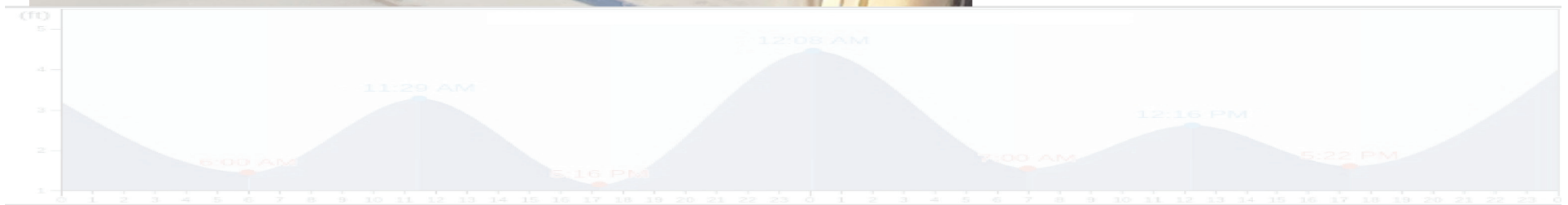


CONTENTS OF THIS SECTION INCLUDE

- STUDENT BIOGRAPHY
- SELF PORTRAIT

A **PIVOT** is a change in direction.

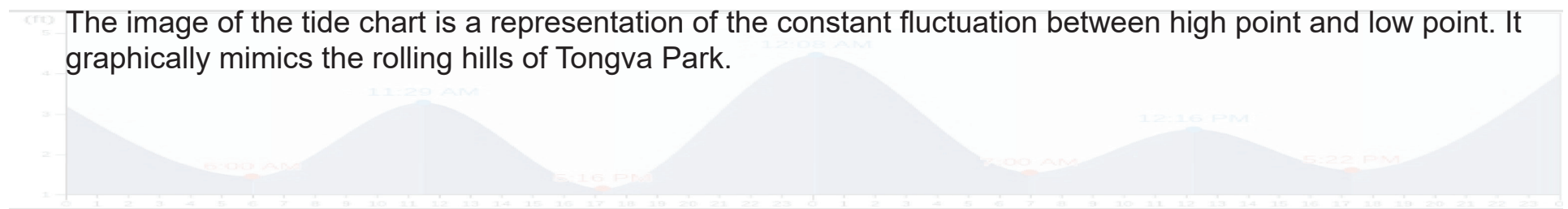
- It is sometimes subtle, sometimes dramatic.
- It leads a person toward a new role, industry, or way of working.
- It's not necessarily a complete career change
- It's often about using existing skills in a fresh way or adapting to emerging opportunities.



STUDENT BIO

My career journey began working as an early-childhood public-school teacher in both regular and special education classrooms. In 2003 I pivoted and created a career as President of NativeTerrain Restoration Services, Inc., a woman-owned ecological landscape construction firm headquartered in Fallston, Maryland.

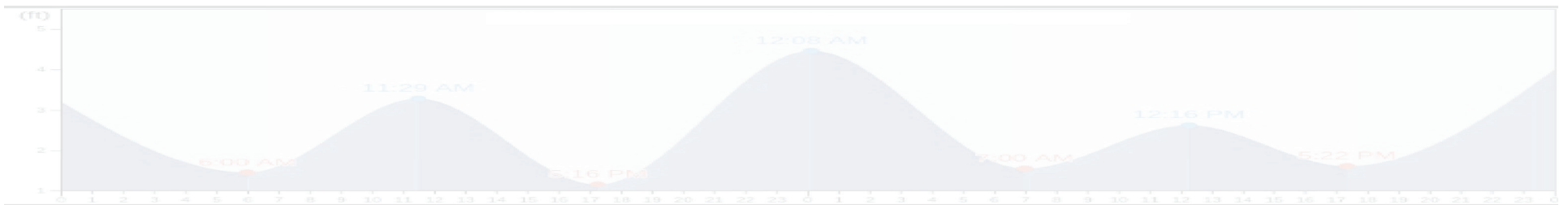
Recently, I was faced with a career choice – stay the course running my small business or challenge myself to grow professionally and enroll in the UCLA Extension landscape architecture program. While knowledgeable about landscape construction, I chose to pursue the challenge and opportunity to develop my skills in landscape project design. Living on the east coast while participating in the UCLA Extension program has its challenges for me (such as the time difference and a different ecology), but without enrolling in this program, I most likely would not have experienced Tongva Park. As I engaged in the assignments through Design Graphics 1, 2, and 3, my view of Tongva Park transitioned. I began my coursework seeing the park with a pragmatic view, studying the construction elements. Over time, I developed the realization that within the landscape design of Tongva Park is a personal metaphor about the cycles of life; a navigation of career dips and climbs, choosing between easier and more challenging paths, and the opportunity to make a change.



SELF PORTRAIT



Tongva Park stairs to the overlook and path to an exit.



SECTION 2: DESIGN GRAPHICS 1

AN INTRODUCTION TO TONGVA PARK

- IN THIS SECTION -
- INTRODUCTION
 - QUADRANT STUDY
 - PERSPECTIVE



Boulder wall and path to the top of the playground.



Curving paths and vegetated mounds.



Weather field sculpture.



INTRODUCTION

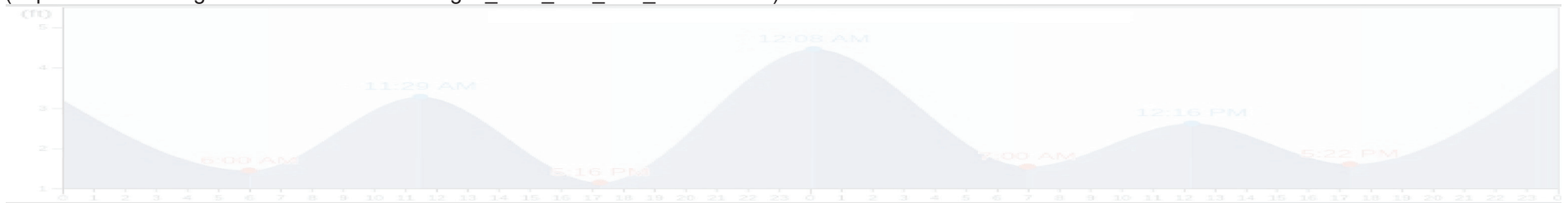
Tongva Park, located in the heart of Santa Monica, is more than just an urban retreat. Designed by James Corner Field Operations, the landscape embodies the essence of life's ups and downs through its carefully curated design elements. For this student, Tongva Park's landscape serves as a powerful metaphor for a career journey—marked by challenges, achievements, and moments of transition. The rolling topography mirrors the unpredictable nature of professional life, each hill represents milestones and successes, and each dip symbolizes setbacks and learning experiences. The winding paths encourage exploration, much like the choices and opportunities that shape one's career trajectory.

Observation Hill, an elevated platform offering expansive ocean views represents moments of clarity and accomplishment—those times when hard work pays off, and one gains a broader perspective on their professional journey. In contrast, Gathering Hill embodies collaboration and networking, highlighting the importance of relationships, mentorship, and shared experiences in career development.

The Weather Field sculpture, a dynamic installation that shifts with the wind, reflects the ever-changing nature of industries and job markets. Just as professionals must adapt to new trends, technologies, and challenges, the sculpture responds to external forces, emphasizing resilience and flexibility. Similarly, the water features symbolize the fluidity of career progression—constantly evolving, reflecting past experiences, and shaping future aspirations.

Through these interconnected elements, Tongva Park becomes more than just an urban retreat—it transforms into a living metaphor for career growth, reminding us that success is not a straight path but a journey of adaptation, perseverance, and transformation.

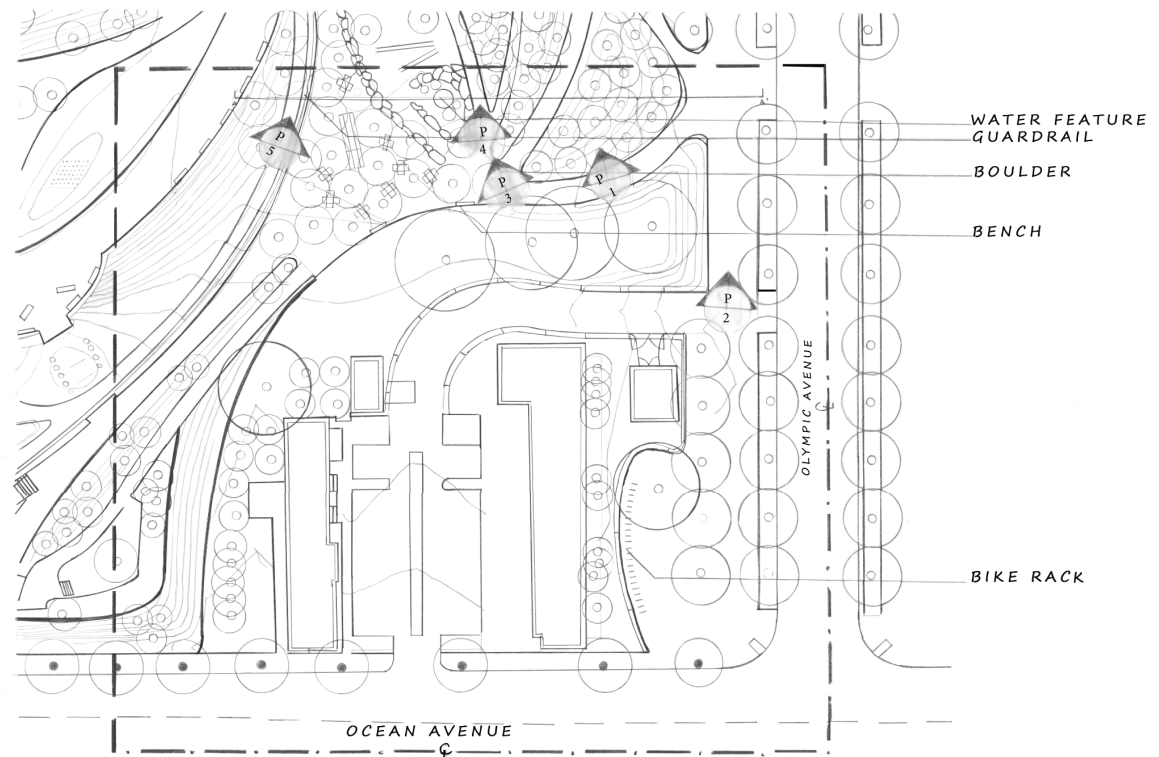
(https://www.asla.org/2018awards/455654-Tongva_Park_And_Ken_Genser.html)



QUADRANT STUDY

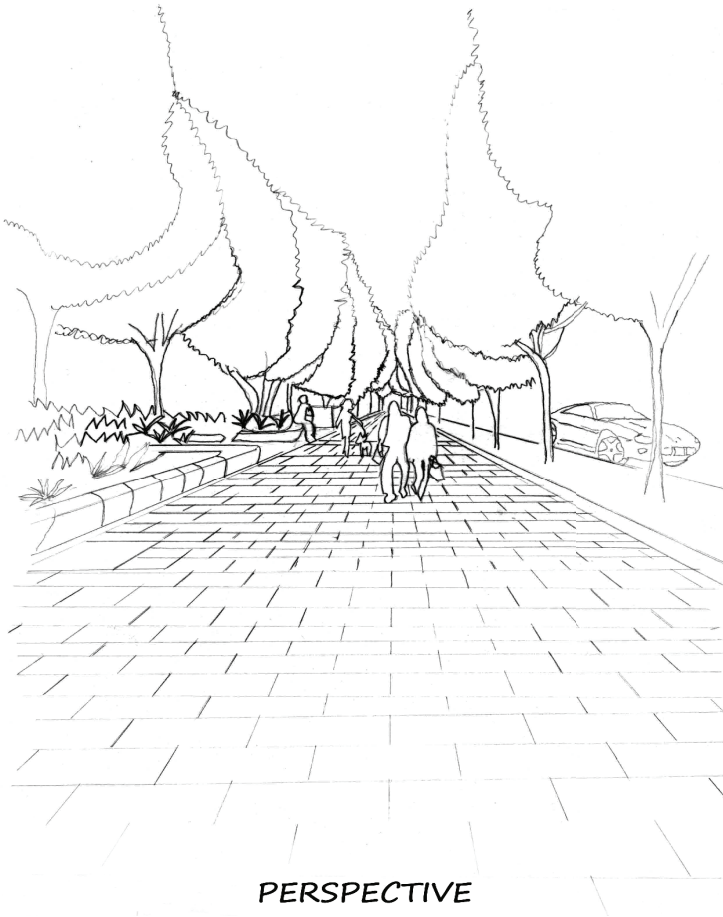


The quadrant study is a tool for assessing different aspects of the landscape, such as vegetation, topography, drainage, and human activity, in a systematic way. The contour lines delineate the change in grade. They show where the peaks and valleys are.



PERSPECTIVE AND COMPOSITION...

instruction provides an understanding of spatial relationships and how to represent depth in drawings.



PERSPECTIVE

Hand drafting and technical drawing instruction includes precise line work, scale and proportion for landscape design.



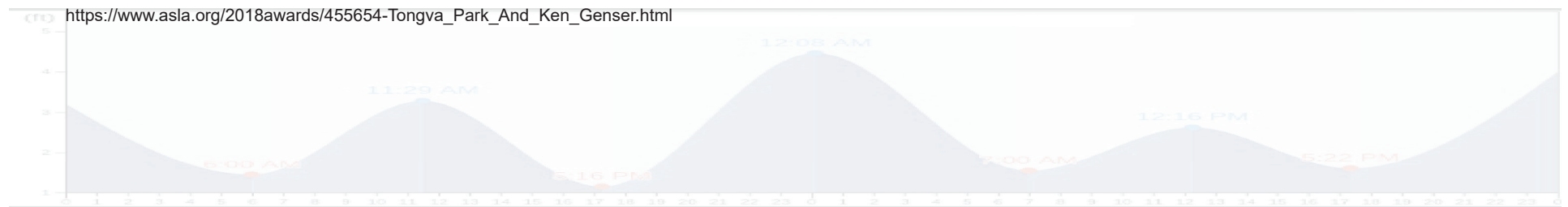
View looking east along Olympic Boulevard.

Perspective is a valuable tool in both landscape architecture and in life. It can be the key to making informed decisions and staying resilient.

SECTION 3: PLANNING FOR DESIGN

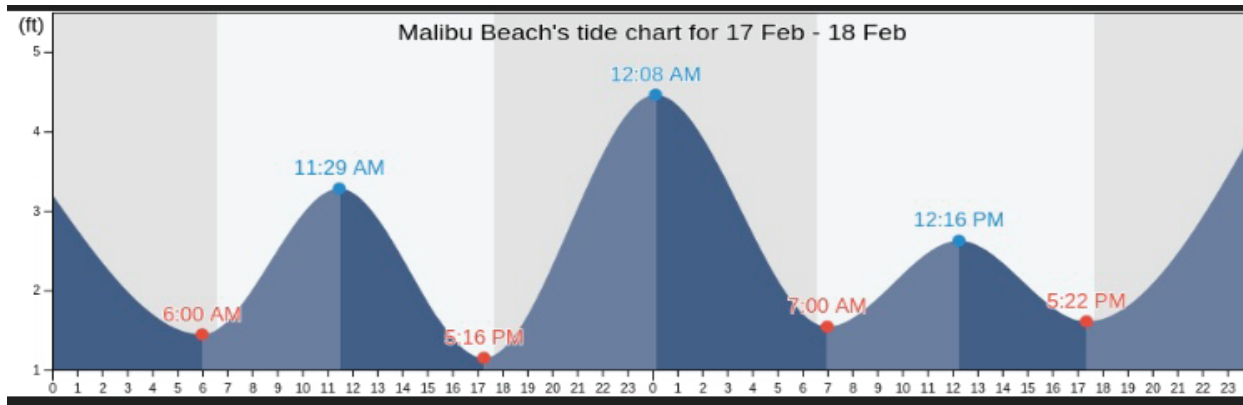
IN THIS SECTION -

- INSPIRATION IMAGES
- SITE LOCATION
- CONTEXT DIAGRAM
- CONCEPT DIAGRAM
- LIMIT OF WORK

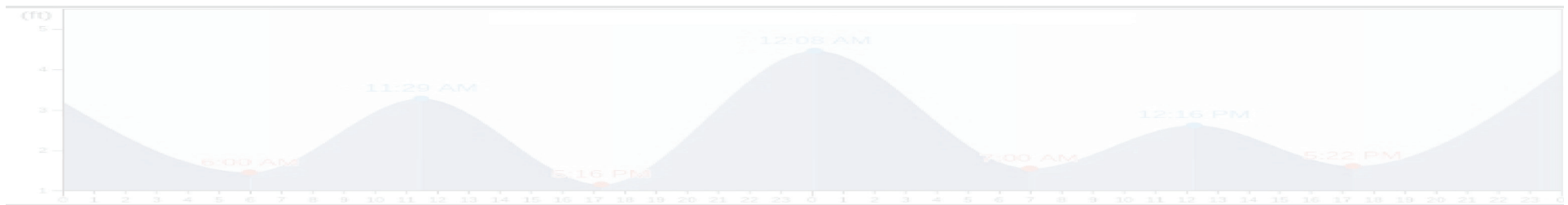


INSPIRATION IMAGES ...

are the visual references that help designers conceptualize, communicate, and refine their ideas. Tongva Park was designed with rolling hills and slopes.

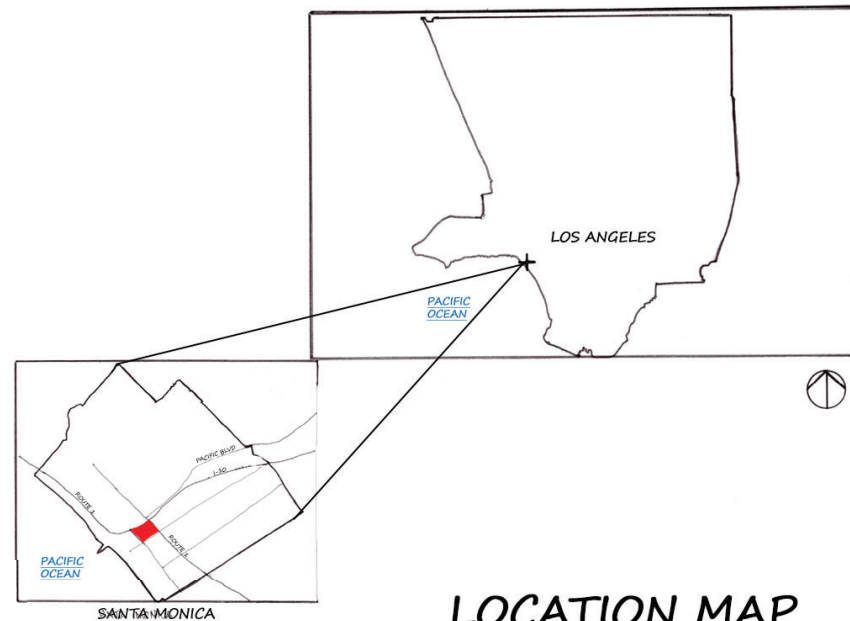


Highs and lows, peaks and valleys, ups and downs, and cycles. These are found in tides, natural features shaped by coastal winds, and natural shapes. These are what I observed as the inspiration for the design of Tongva Park.

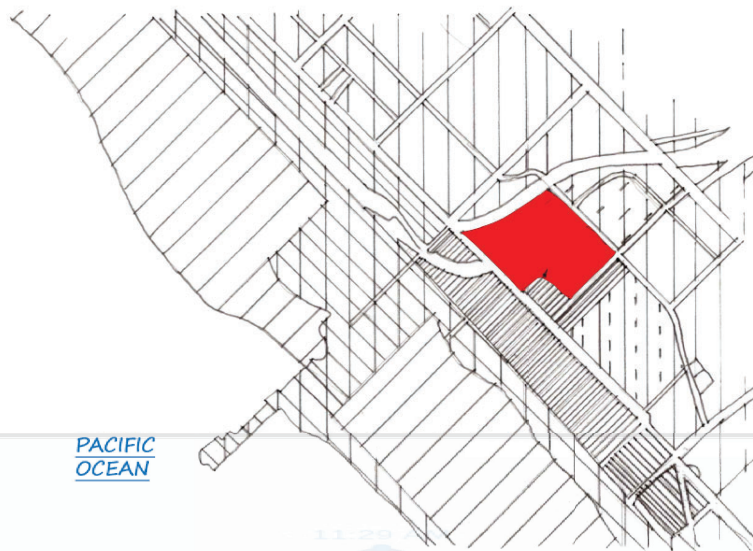


TONGVA PARK

located in
Santa Monica,
California.



LOCATION MAP



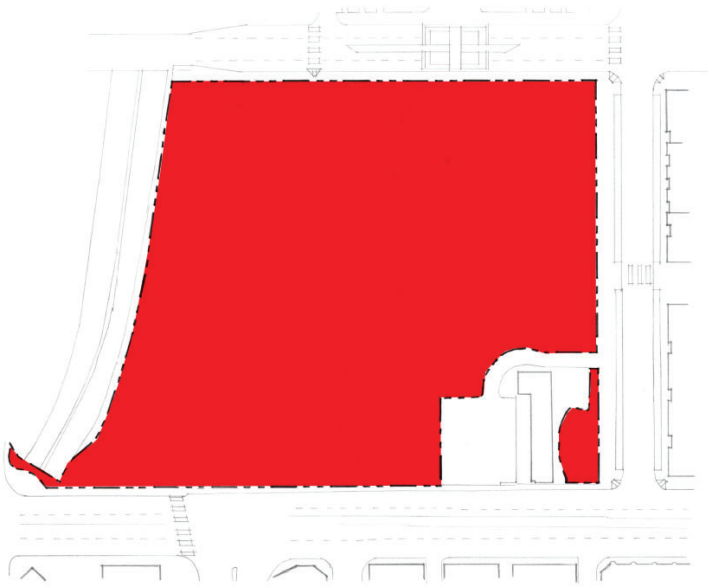
CONTEXT DIAGRAM

There are a variety of land use contexts around Tongva Park. To the west are the beach and recreational sites. Commercial sites are on both the west and the north side. Government buildings are located on the east end. Mixed-use, civic, and residential sites are located on the south side of the park.



EXPLORE! GATHER! OBSERVE! PLAY!

As a central feature for the community of Santa Monica, Tongva Park was designed to offer users a variety of experiences.

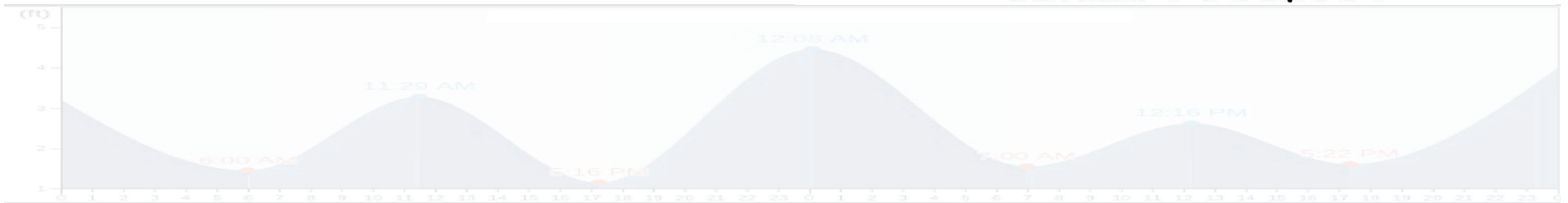


LIMIT OF WORK

This study of Tongva Park focuses on the area of the park contained within the 6.2 acre site bordered by Ocean Boulevard, Main Street, I-10 and Olympic Boulevard.



CONCEPT DIAGRAM





SECTION 4: INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

- IN THIS SECTION -
- SITE INVENTORY
 - MATERIALS PALETTE



Design Graphics 2 builds upon the foundational skills learned in Design Graphics 1, focusing on techniques for site analysis, conceptual design, and advanced graphic communication.

The process of inventory and analysis in landscape architecture mirrors the way we assess and plan our careers. Both involve evaluating existing conditions, identifying opportunities and constraints, and making strategic decisions for future growth.



PAVING SURFACES DIAGRAM

Exposed Aggregate



Finished Concrete



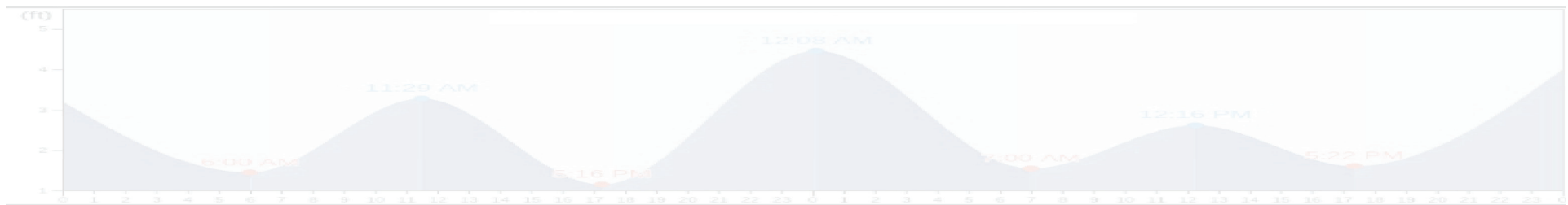
Compacted Sand



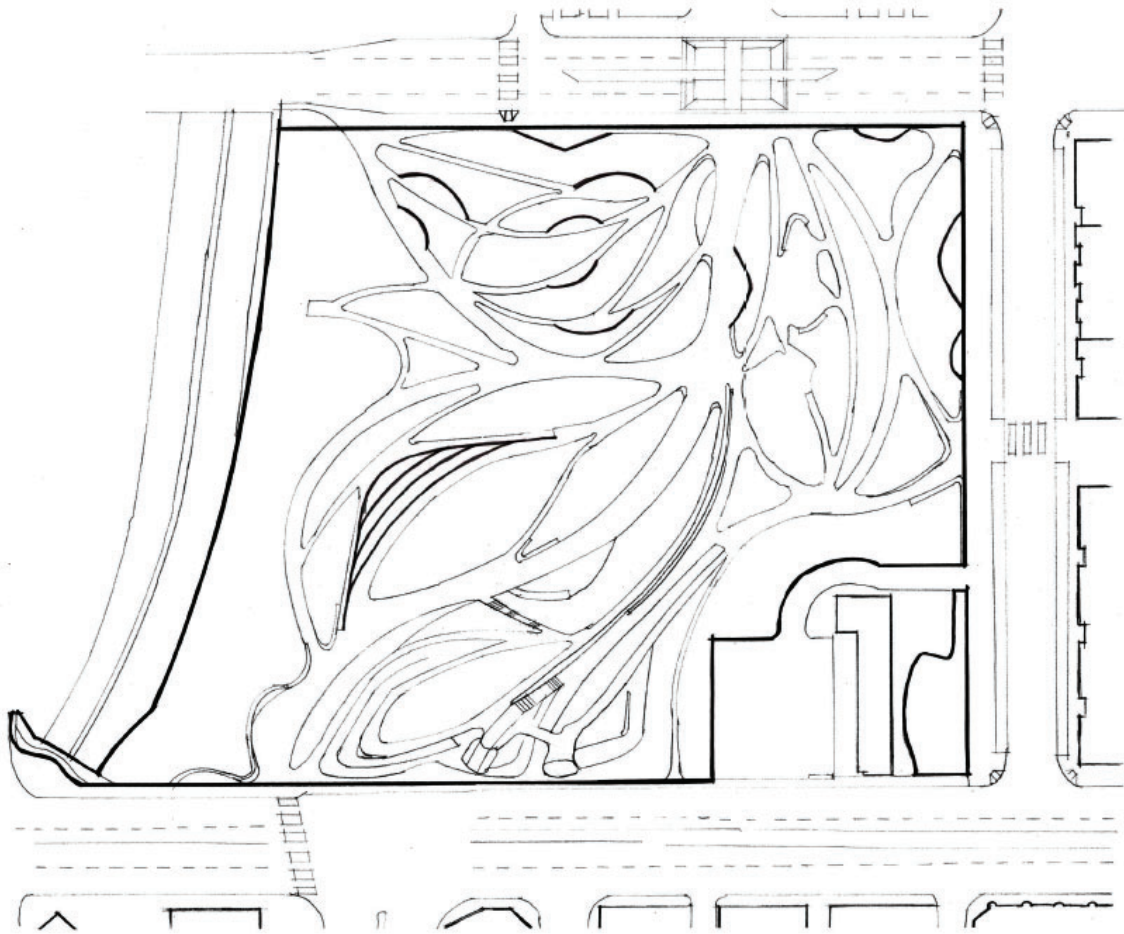
Rubberized Playground Surface



Concrete Pavers



CONSTRUCTED SEATING DIAGRAM



BOULDERS



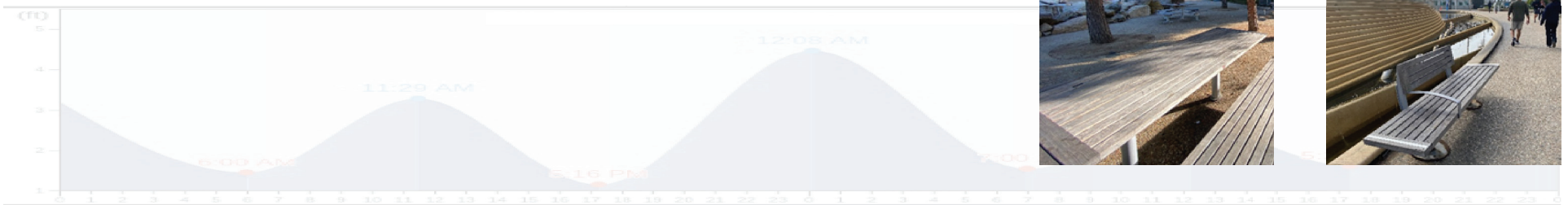
TERRACED SEATING



CONSTRUCTED CONCRETE SEAT-WALLS



WOODEN SEATING



TREE CANOPY DIAGRAM

FEATURE TREES
EXAMPLE



Arbutus marina

PINE TREE
EXAMPLE



Pinus pinea

OAK & OLIVE TREE MIX



Olea europaea "Swan Hill"

PALM TREE
EXAMPLE



Ravenea glauca

SYCAMORE
TREE EXAMPLE



Platanus racemosa

FICUS TREE EXAMPLE



Ficus nitida (Wikipedia)



SHRUBS, PERENNIALS AND GRASSES

SHRUB: *Callistemon citrinus*



SHRUB: *Grevillea "Canberra Gem"*



MEADOW: *Calamagrostis foliosa*



LEGEND

-  FEATURE GARDEN
-  MEADOW
-  SHRUB
-  PERIMETER MIX
-  TURF

MEADOW: *Bouteloua gracilis*



FEATURE:

Agave attenuata "Boutin Blue" (Blue Foxtail Agave)



FEATURE: *Dyckia*



PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION DIAGRAM

LEGEND

PRIMARY PEDESTRIAN
CIRCULATION

SECONDARY PEDESTRIAN
CIRCULATION

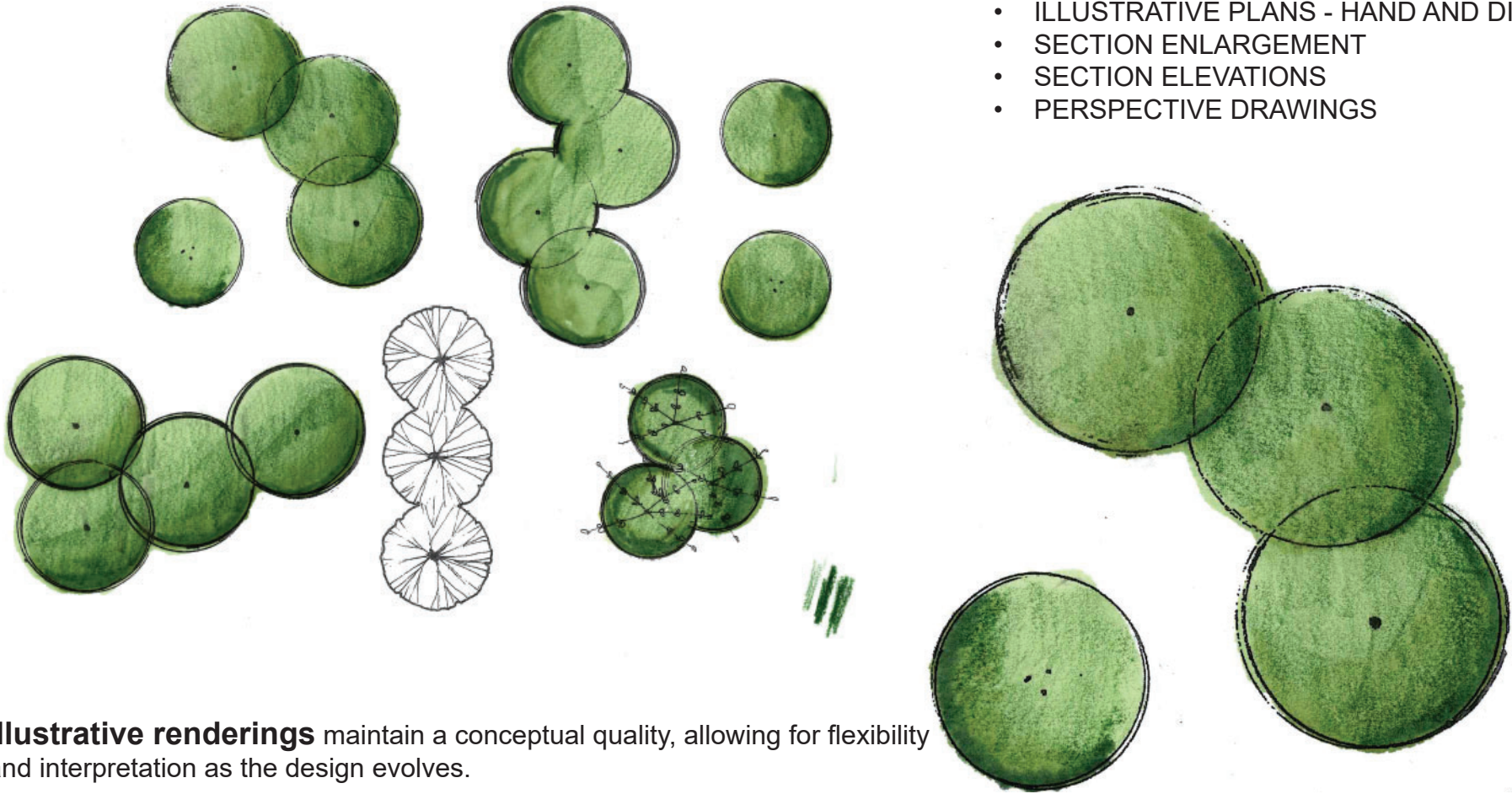
TERTIARY PEDESTRIAN
CIRCULATION



SECTION 5: ILLUSTRATIONS

IN THIS SECTION -

- ILLUSTRATIVE PLANS - HAND AND DIGITAL
- SECTION ENLARGEMENT
- SECTION ELEVATIONS
- PERSPECTIVE DRAWINGS



Illustrative renderings maintain a conceptual quality, allowing for flexibility and interpretation as the design evolves.

(<https://www.incontour.com/master-plans-and-renderings-landscape-architecture>)

The journey toward the finished product is just as important as the destination.



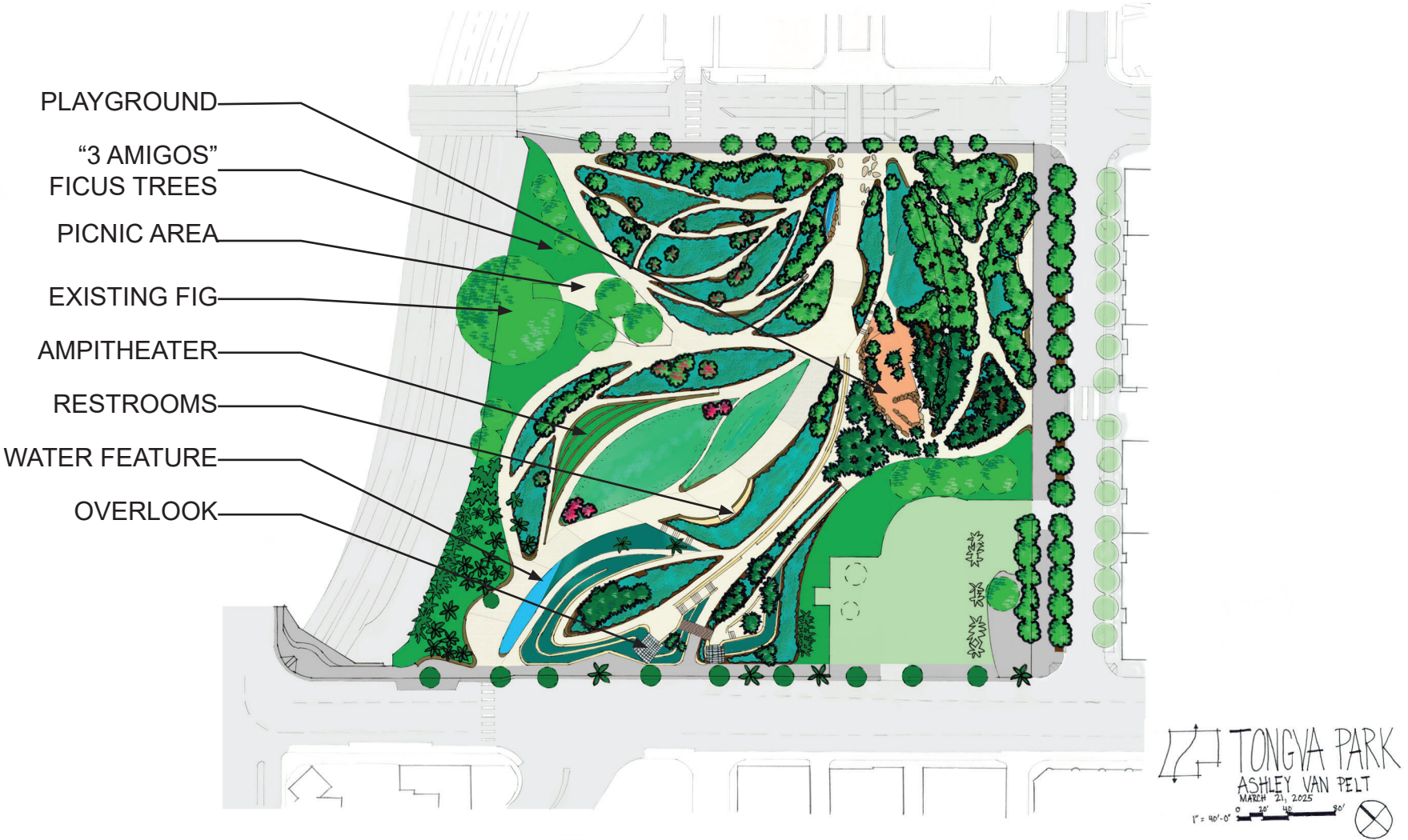
An **illustrative plan** in landscape architecture is a visually detailed representation of a design concept, often used to communicate ideas to clients, stakeholders, or the public.



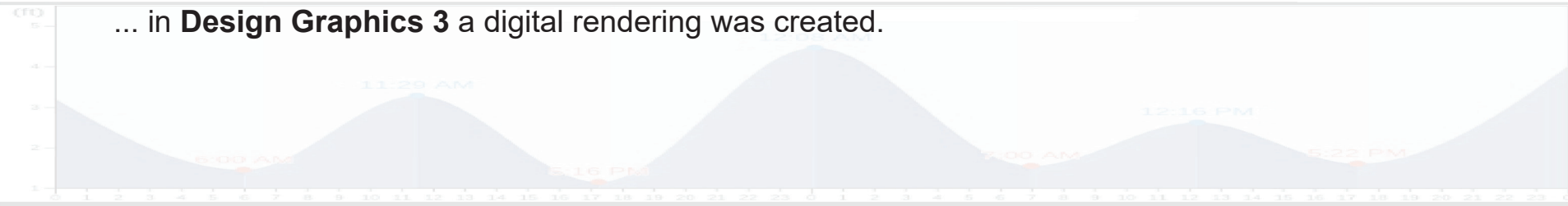
Tongva Park was illustrated in a progressive series - a hand drawing in ink, a hand-rendered plan, and ...



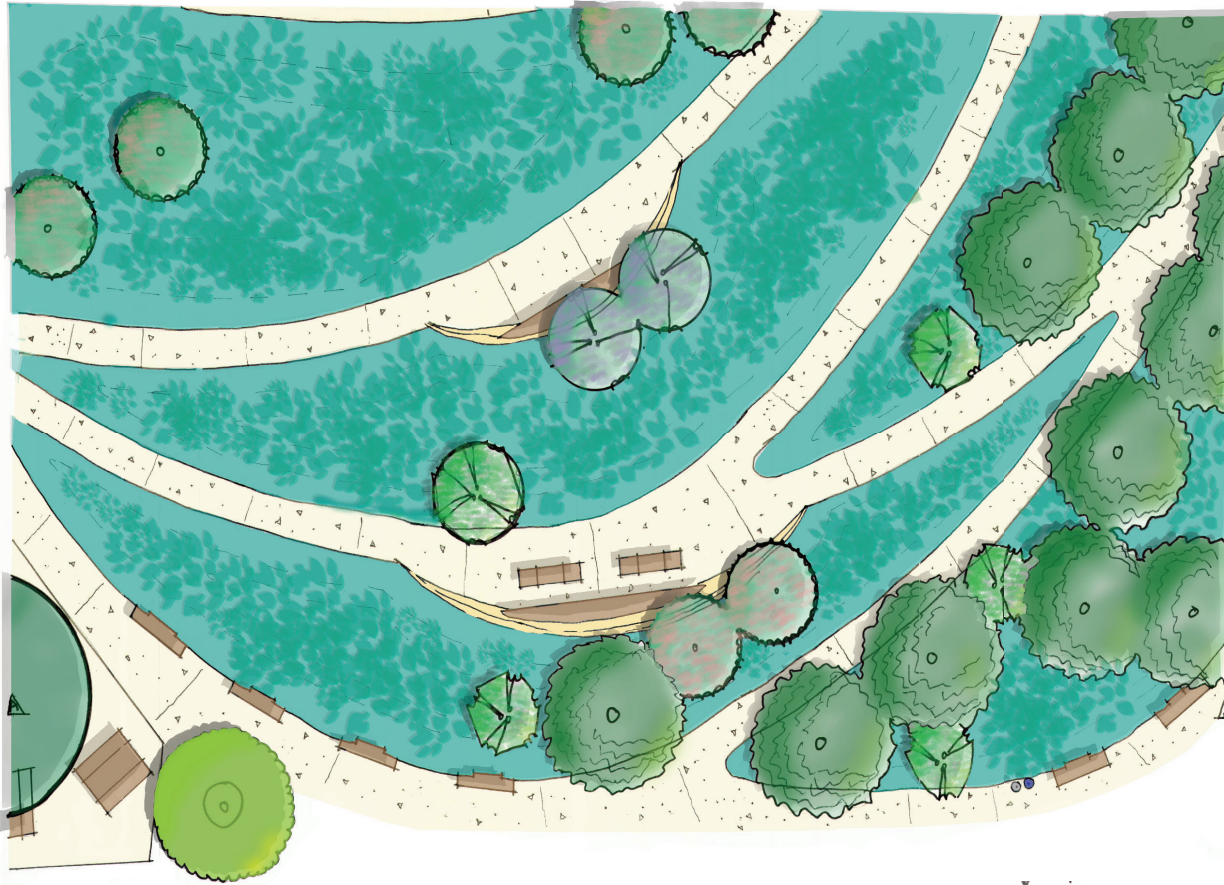
Illustrative plans emphasize aesthetic appeal, spatial relationships, and overall design intent. They help viewers understand the vision behind a landscape project.



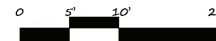
... in **Design Graphics 3** a digital rendering was created.



ENLARGEMENT



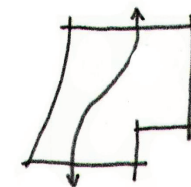
1" = 10' 0"



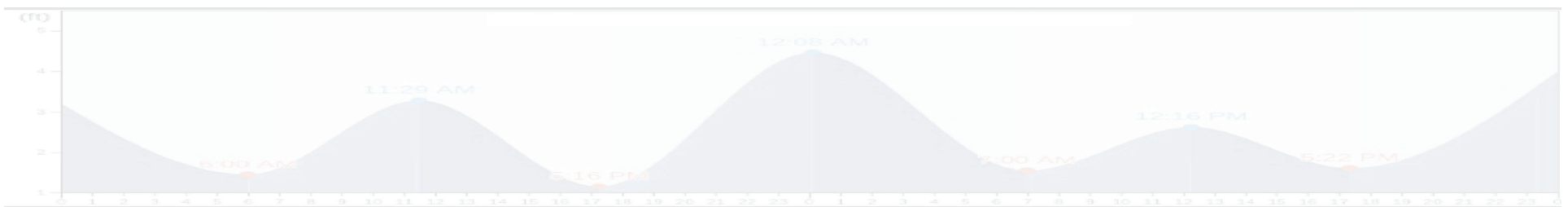
TREE LEGEND

	CALIFORNIA BAY		FLOSS SILK TREE
	CAPE CHESTNUT		STRAWBERRY TREE
	RUSTYLEAF FIG		WESTERN SYCAMORE

The enlargement section is located in the northwest corner of the park,



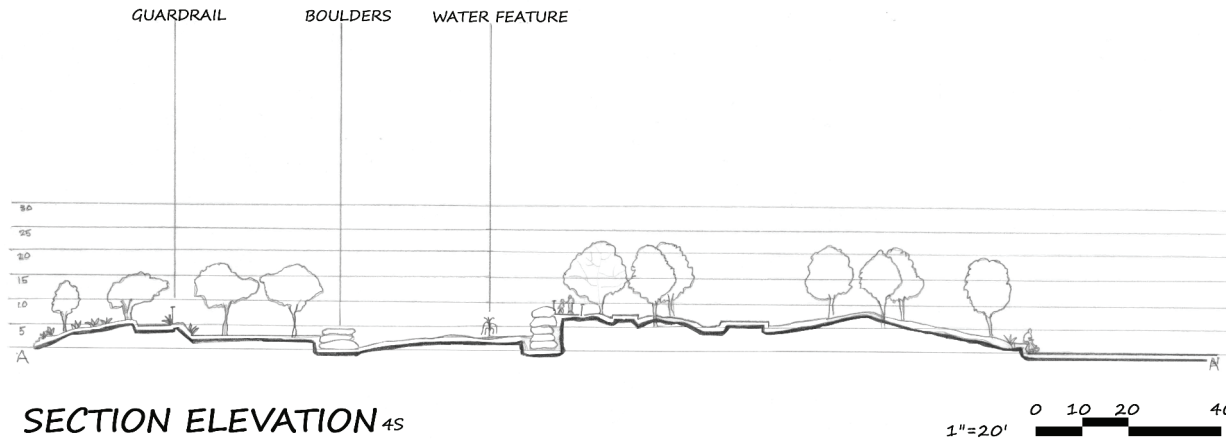
TONGVA PARK
ASHLEY VAN PELT



SECTION ELEVATIONS

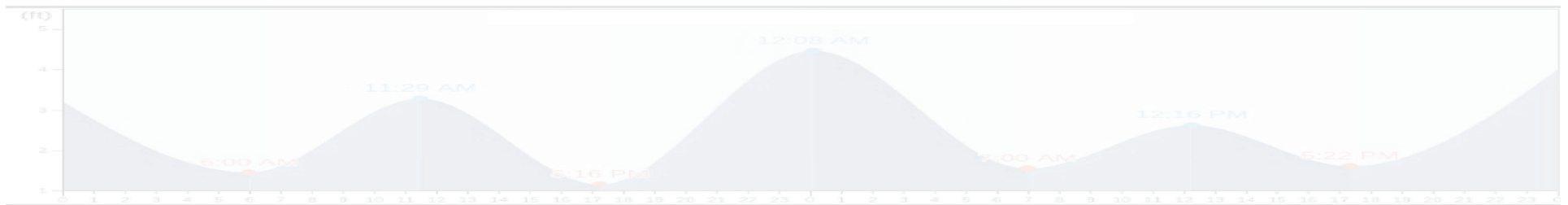
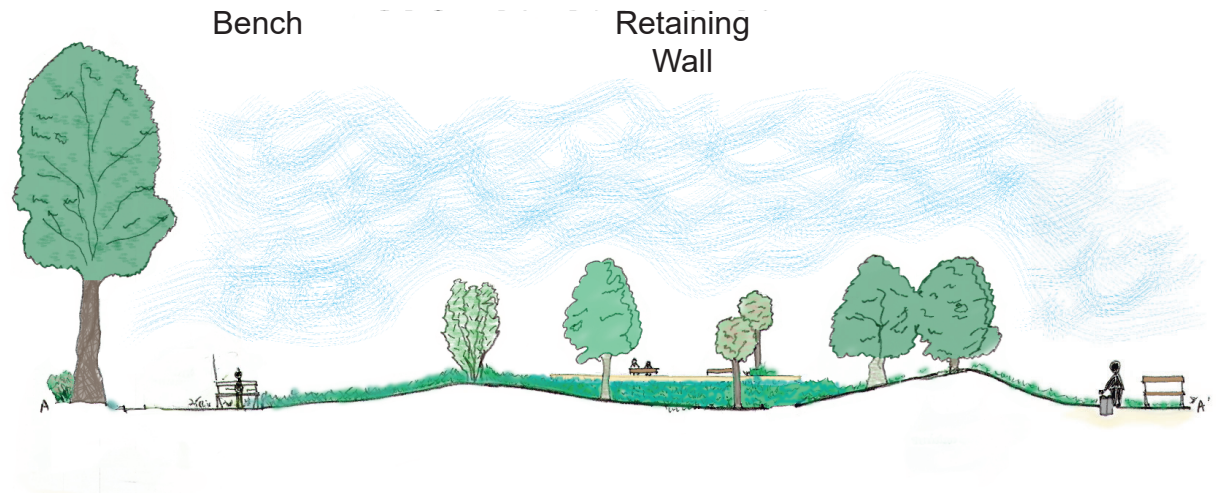
DG1 SECTION ELEVATION

This section elevation is located in the southwest quadrant of Tongva Park, looking eastward.

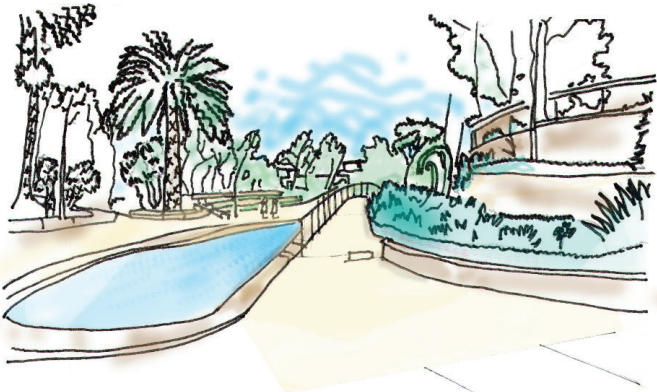


DG2 SECTION ELEVATION

The section elevation A to A' in the plan enlargement. The view is looking eastward.



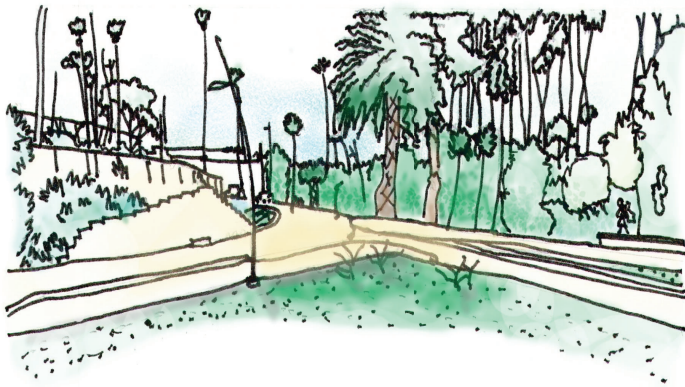
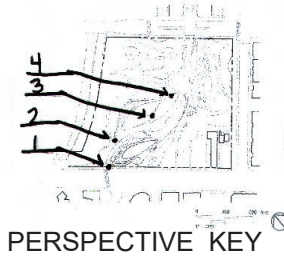
PERSPECTIVE DRAWINGS



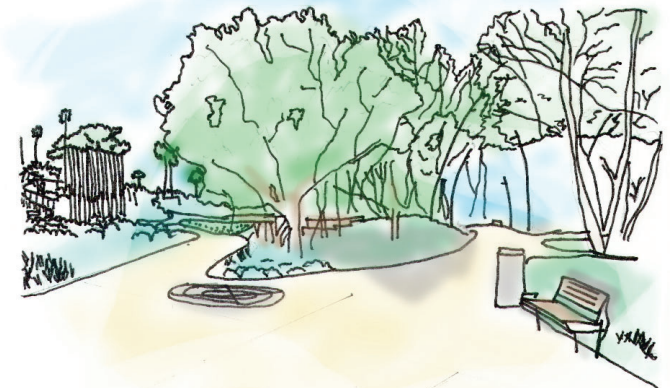
PERSPECTIVE 1: View from Ocean Avenue looking into the park.



PERSPECTIVE 2: Pathway behind the amphitheater, looking east.



PERSPECTIVE 3: View to Ocean Avenue.



PERSPECTIVE 4: View from main pathway looking north.



PERSPECTIVE PHOTOS



PERSPECTIVE 1: View from Ocean Avenue looking into the park.



PERSPECTIVE 2: Pathway behind the amphitheater, looking east.



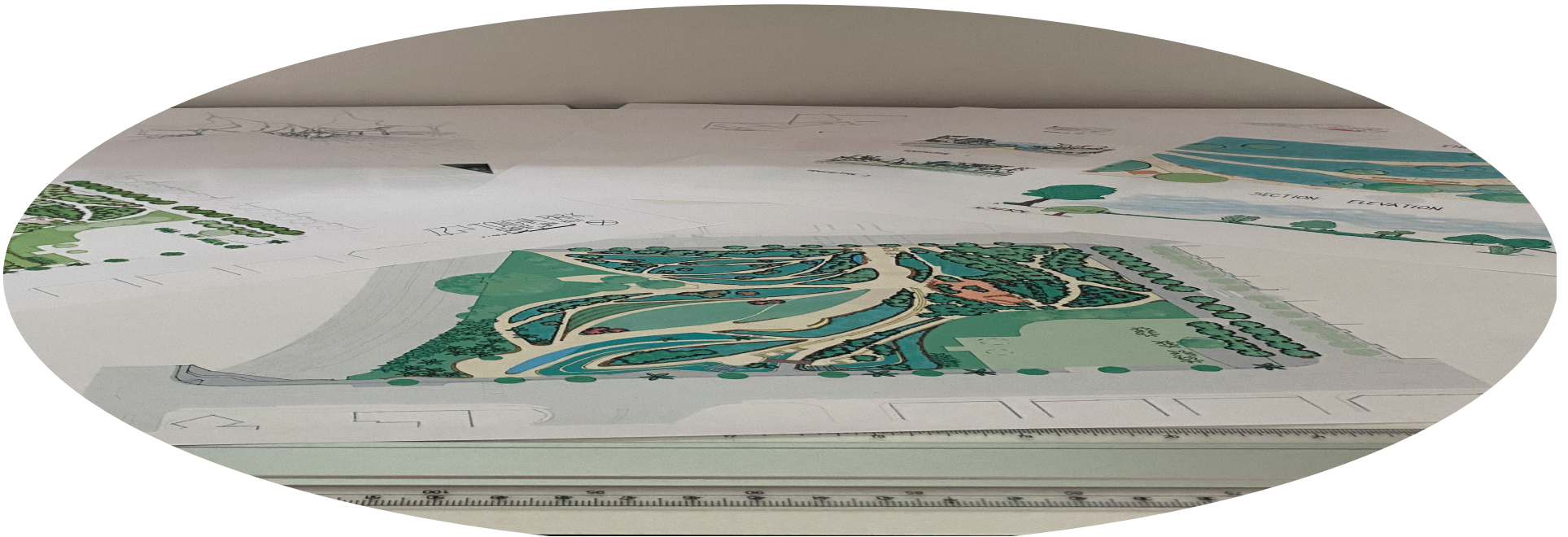
PERSPECTIVE 3: View to Ocean Avenue.



PERSPECTIVE 4: View from main pathway looking north.



SECTION 6: PROJECT SUMMARY



Together, the three design graphics courses intentionally provided a comprehensive study of Tongva Park's landscape, emphasizing observation, technical drawing, and presentation. The in depth studies put into perspective how much information is communicated through drawings in order to facilitate the creation of sites such as this. Additionally, these classes taught me to just draw and color to get my own style, even though I am not an artist.

Whether intentional or not, the classes also helped me adjust my viewpoint to see that landscape designs, and specifically Tongva Park's landscape design, are more than a combination of grades and materials. Tongva Park's design transformed a parking lot into a dynamic space with rolling hills, winding paths, and layered environments-just as life evolves through unexpected changes and personal growth. It offers opportunities for navigating undulating terrain and meandering pathways that have a natural flow, with observation points to available for users to pause and gain perspective. Much like life itself, landscape architecture involves layers of thought, intention, and adaptation. You start with a vision, refine it with careful planning, and then let purpose and creativity shape the final outcome.

THE INFORMATION IN PLANS IS AN INTEGRAL COMMUNICATION DEVICE...

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my incredible husband for his steadfast support of my participating in the landscape architecture program. He cheerfully assumes the extra responsibility of “holding down the fort” while I sit at my computer, stand at the drafting table, make last minute trips to Blick or travel to LA. The coffee in bed on mornings after zoom classes is amazing!

I’m grateful to my friends from the MSU Landscape Architecture program who gave their time to helping me figure out how to use these programs.

Thank you to my classmates who have made me feel included even though I am across the country.

Thank you to UCLA Extension and its instructors for creating a program that is accessible, relevant and flexible enough for adult learners.

MY NEXT STEP IS TO APPLY THE INSIGHTS LEARNED FROM THIS EXPERIENCE TO INFORM MY FUTURE DECISIONS.

