

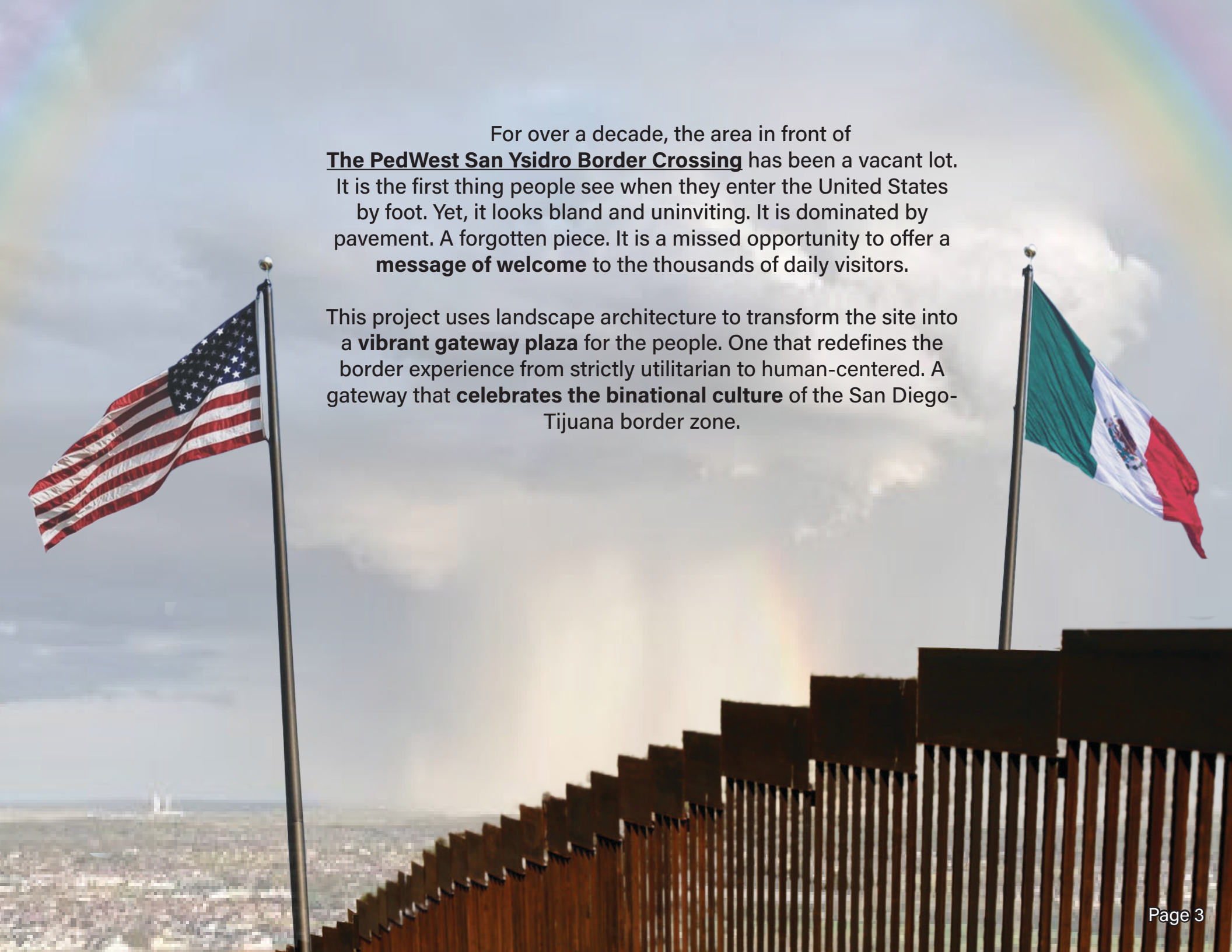
Reimagining Border Crossings

Mitch Miller



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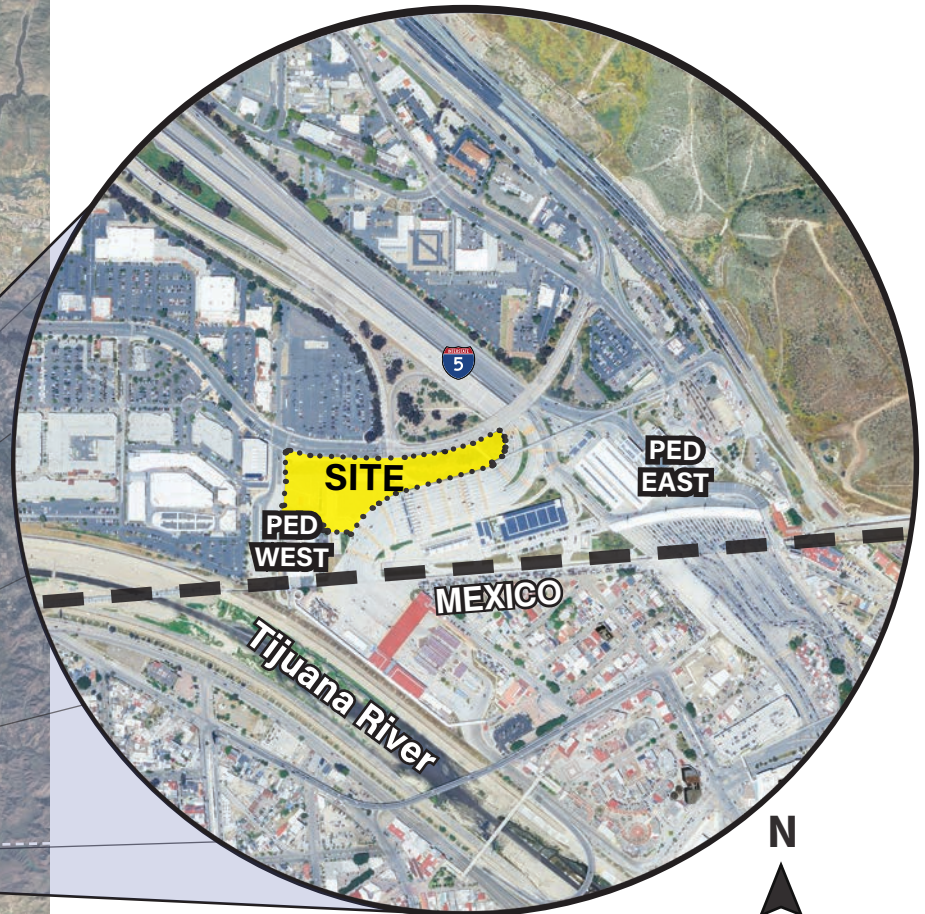
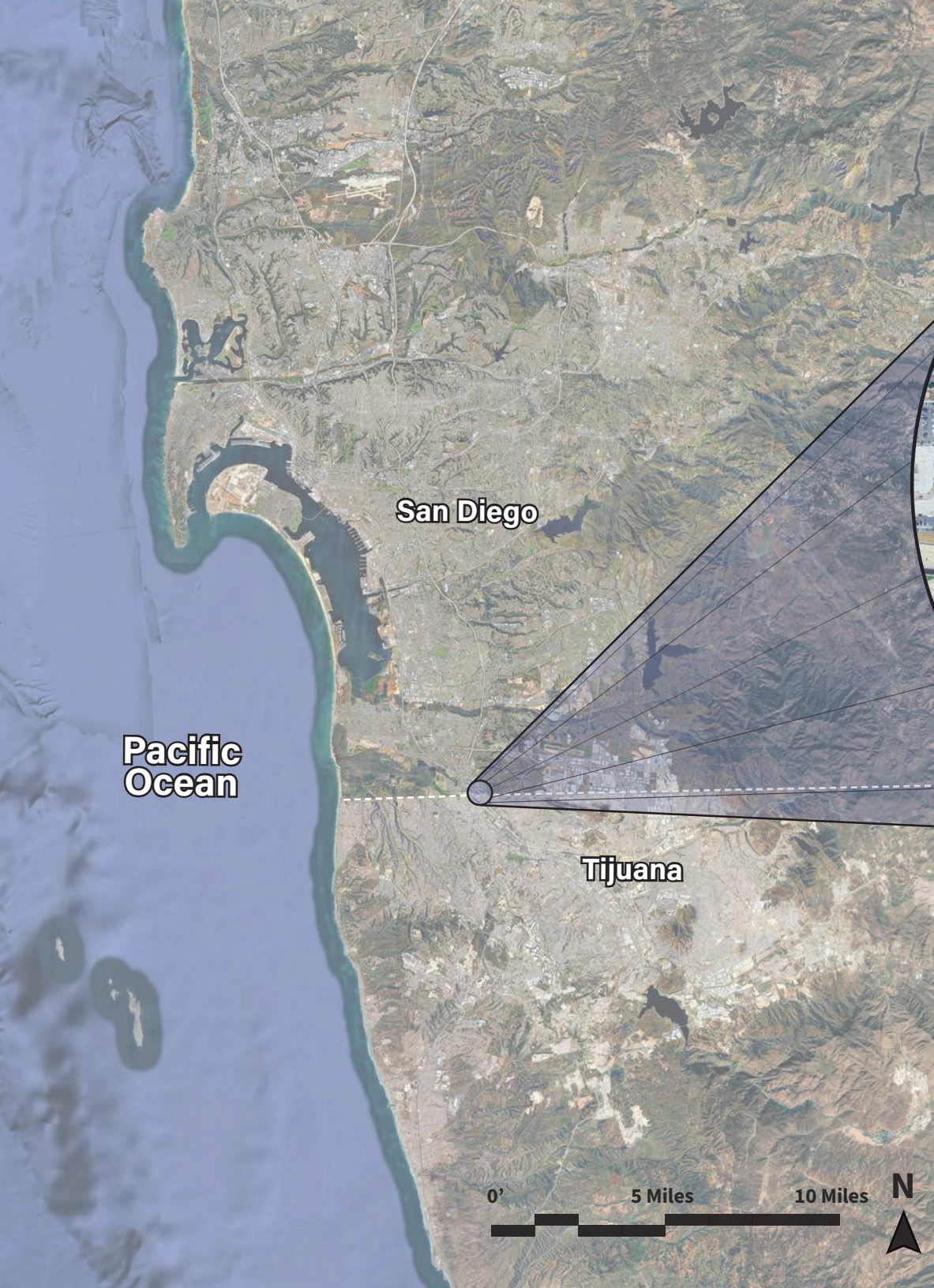
A photograph of the San Ysidro Border Crossing. In the foreground, a wooden border wall with vertical slats runs across the bottom. To the left, the United States flag flies on a tall pole. To the right, the Mexican flag flies on a tall pole. In the background, a rainbow is visible in a cloudy sky. The text is overlaid on the upper part of the image.

For over a decade, the area in front of
The PedWest San Ysidro Border Crossing has been a vacant lot.
It is the first thing people see when they enter the United States
by foot. Yet, it looks bland and uninviting. It is dominated by
pavement. A forgotten piece. It is a missed opportunity to offer a
message of welcome to the thousands of daily visitors.

This project uses landscape architecture to transform the site into
a **vibrant gateway plaza** for the people. One that redefines the
border experience from strictly utilitarian to human-centered. A
gateway that **celebrates the binational culture** of the San Diego-
Tijuana border zone.

SITE LOCATION

San Diego, CA



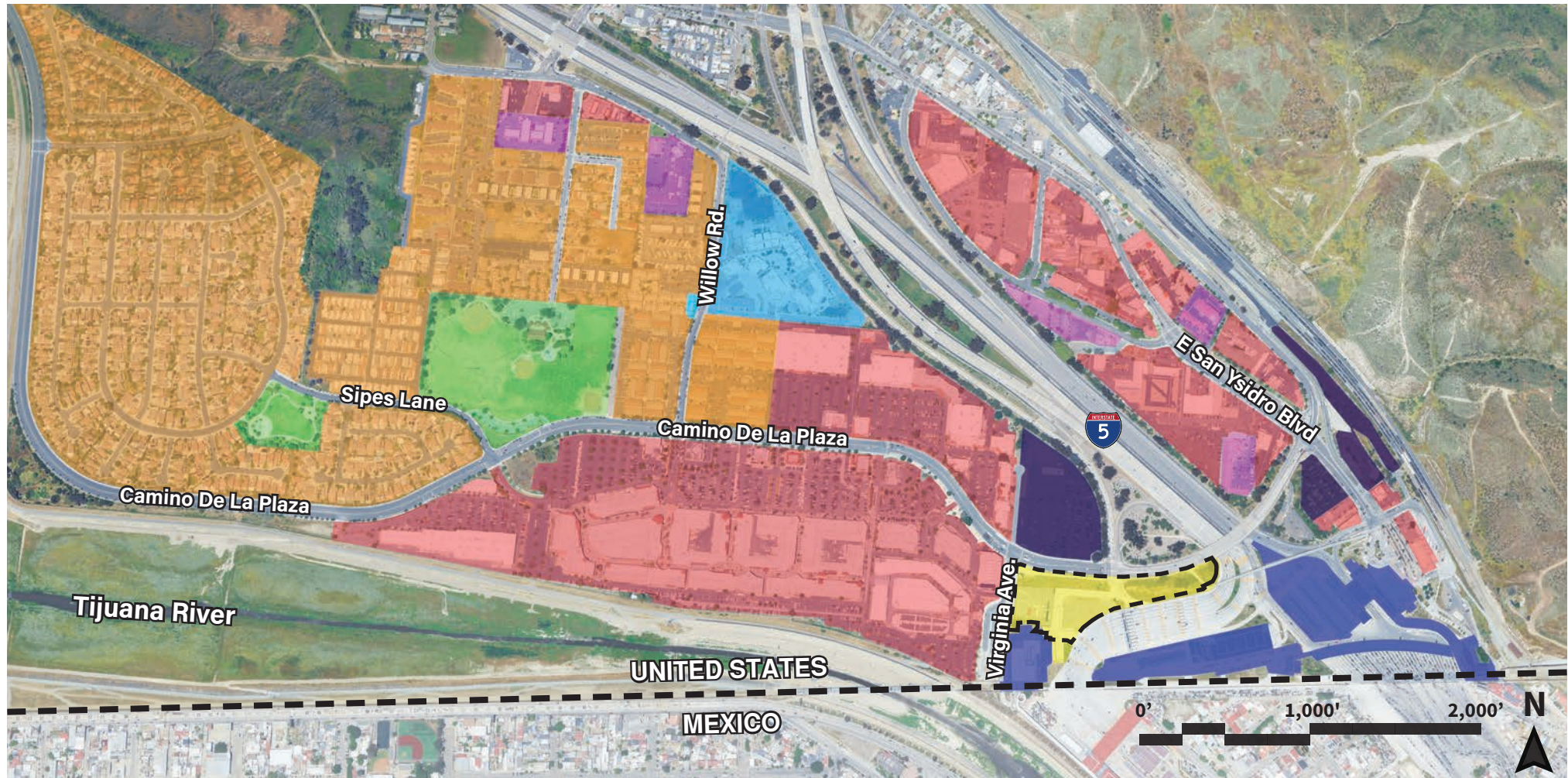
San Ysidro Border Crossing:

- Busiest land border crossing in The Western Hemisphere
- 25,000 pedestrians cross every day
 - Split between PedEast & PedWest

Site Size: 5 Acres

Owner: Government Services Administration (GSA)

CONTEXT DIAGRAM



The San Diego - Tijuana Binational Conurbation:

- Greater San Diego - Tijuana Region population is 5.5 million people.
- Large outlet mall to the west is Las Americas Premium Outlets.
- Just north of the site, in purple is a long-term parking lot. Many US citizens do not have Mexican car insurance and choose to park here and cross by foot.
- In orange is the small Residential community of San Ysidro.

LEGEND:

Site		Long-Term Parking	
Residential		School	
Commercial		Government	
Hotel/Motel		Park	

SITE HISTORY

Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo,
End of the Mexican-American War



Maquilladora Industry: US-owned
manufacturing facilities opened in Tijuana



Craft Beer Industry in Tijuana



California Independence



Prohibition in US



Bracero Program:
Permitted Mexican agricultural
workers to work legally in US



"Operation Gatekeeper":
Heavy militarization & fortification
of border wall region



1846

1848

1920-1933

1942-1964

1965

1994

2010

Pre-1800s

1910-1920

1940s

1950

1970s

1998



The Kumeyaay People
Inhabited the land for
thousands of years



Post-WWII Navy Nightlife
in Tijuana



Mexican Revolution



Hollywood Celebrities
Retreat in Tijuana



Chicano Civil Rights
Movement



Kumeyaay Border Task
Force - Allows Native
People to cross freely

HISTORICAL PHOTOS



Greater Site is a Parking Lot



Pedestrian Bridge to PedEast is Built



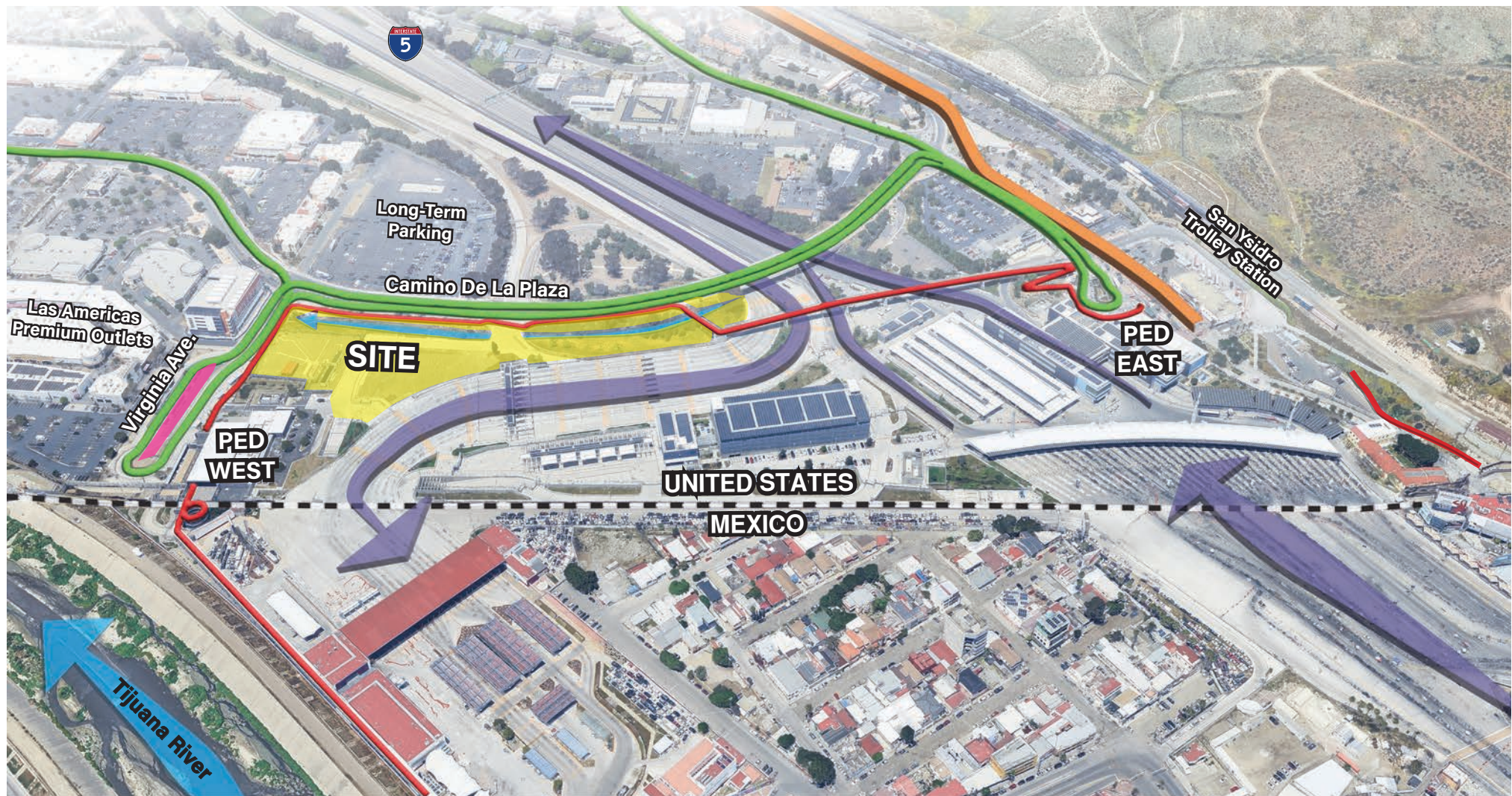
Las Americas Premium Outlets + PedWest is Built



Modern Vehicular Lanes are Complete

Additional Info: The site has had a border crossing facility since 1873

EXISTING CIRCULATION



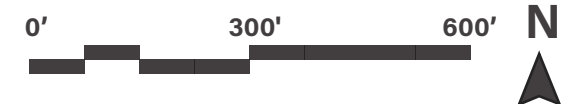
LEGEND:

Pedestrian*		Vehicular	
Bus (Route 906/907)		Water	
Rideshare Pickup/Dropoff		Trolley	

PedWest Hours:

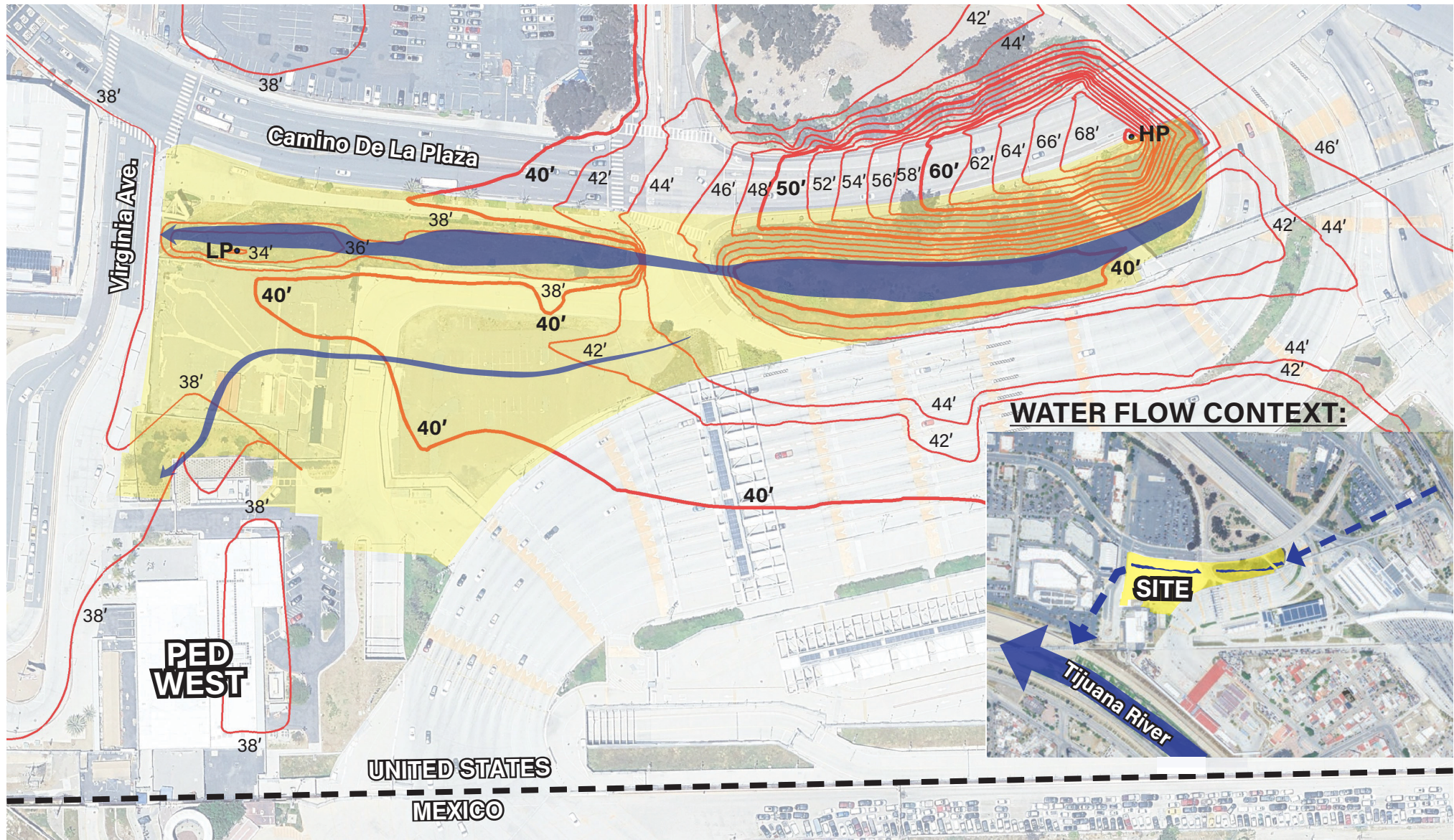
- 6:00 AM - 2:00 PM Daily
- 3:00 PM - 11:00 PM Daily

PedEast is Open 24/7



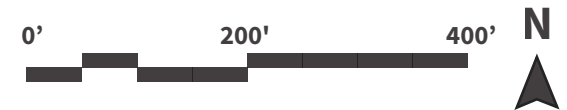
* Notice the pedestrian route between PedWest & PedEast is forced around the site. The distance is 1/2 mile between PedEast & PedWest. Foot traffic happens in waves. People cross into the US mostly in the morning and back into Mexico in the afternoon.

SITE TOPOGRAPHY

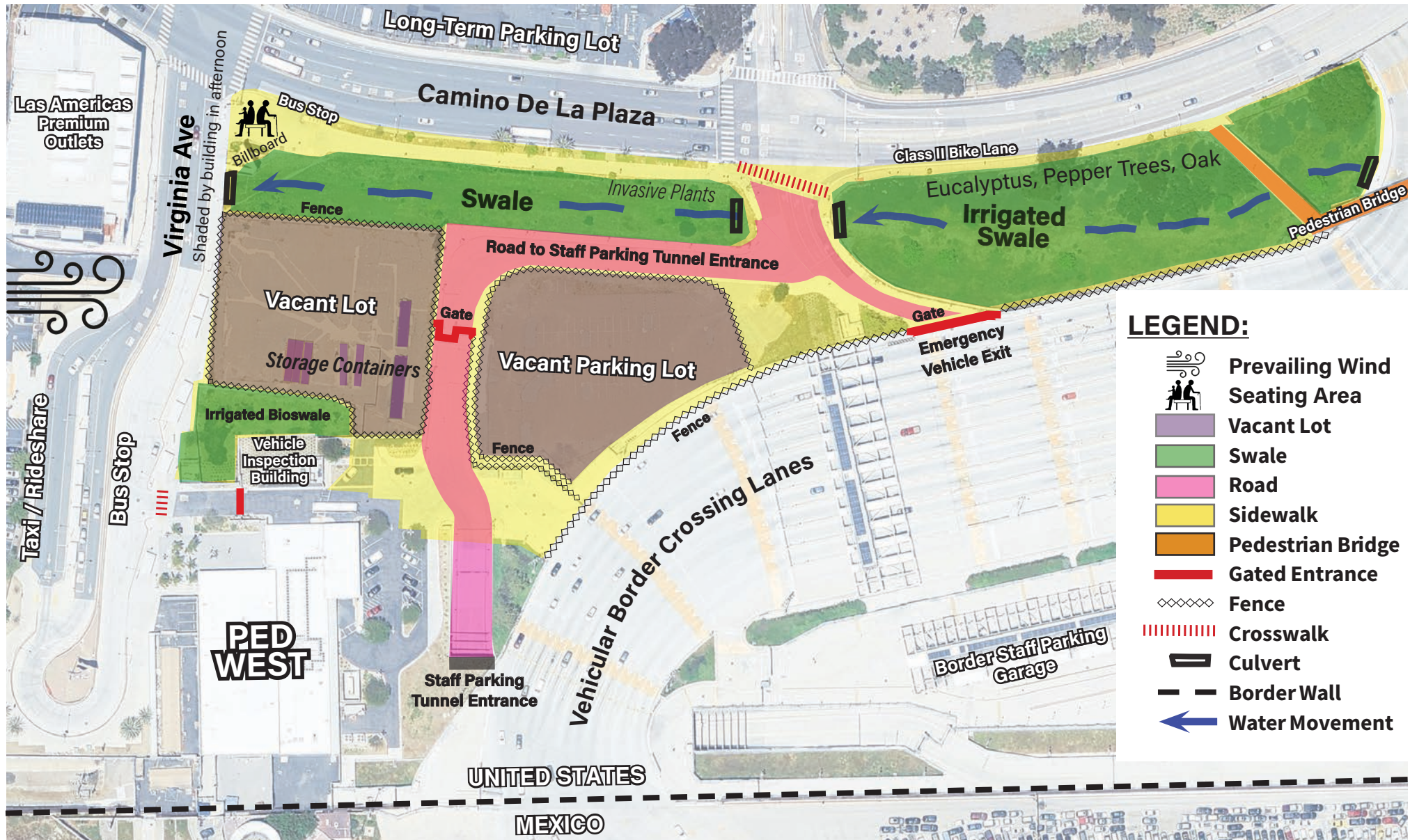


— 2' Contours
← Water Flow

Water drains from east to west. The existing swale is dry almost all year. Water flows through culverts onto the site. That water originates in the nearby hills to the east. During winter storm events, a rushing creek forms and flows into the Tijuana River, a large concrete-lined channel.



SITE INVENTORY



Additional Observations and Intel:

- Homeless people sleep in the culverts. Criminals are hiding stolen goods from the premium outlets.
- The storage containers on the lot were once used for construction staging. Now, they are unused.
- Cars are going about 5 mph in the adjacent vehicular crossing lanes.
- San Ysidro has mild temps and an ocean breeze. Almost always 75 degrees (F) and sunny year round.

Why does this project need to be done & why this site?

Identity



The area is seen by thousands and can make a more powerful and welcoming impression, celebrating binational culture.



Photo is the vacant parking lot on site. Vacant since 2019

Unfinished

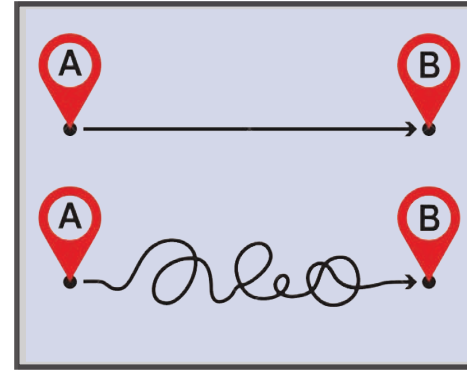


The Final Puzzle Piece. This is a crucial and central parcel that can unite all surrounding areas, in a community in need of public space.



Entrance to PedWest, built in 2016, designed by Miller Hull

Connectivity



Pedestrians have to walk around this site along a narrow contiguous sidewalk. This adds minutes to the walk to PedEast.



The circulation is circuitous, unshaded, and narrow

Stormwater Runoff



Highly paved, very little infiltration into the groundwater, right next to the Tijuana River. Depaving some areas will help reduce runoff. Also, improving swales & basin.



This drain on SW part of site leads to a bioretention basin

- Lack of Shade & Seating
- Emergency Exit & Staff Road Bisects The Site
 - Federal Border Regulations
 - Invasive Plant Materials
 - Crime & Loitering

- Breezy and Quiet with Nice Views
 - Shade & Seating
 - Mature Trees & Large Swale
- Connection to Existing Pedestrian Bridge
 - Recycled Water
- Consistent foot traffic - eyes on the space



REASONS FOR CROSSING

*Data is projected from surveys taken in 2016

Shopping:

Las Americas Premium Outlets, San Ysidro Commercial Center, Big Box Retailers.

Family:

Split households, childcare assistance, holiday traditions, milestones and celebrations.

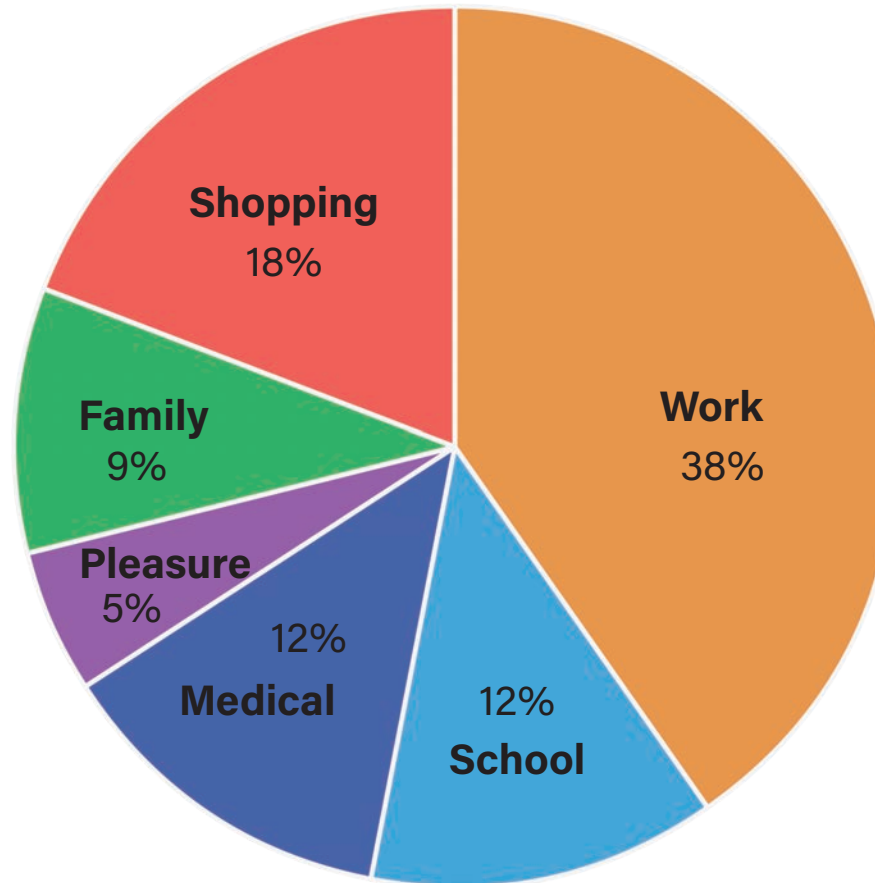
Pleasure:

Tourism, SeaWorld, San Diego Zoo, Beaches, Hiking, Restaurants, Craft Beer, Gambling, Concerts, Art, Sports.

Medical:

Mexico has more affordable and less restrictive healthcare. Includes dental and veterinarian reasons. Cosmetic surgery. US-Born citizens qualify for Medi-Cal.

Why Do People Cross By Foot at The San Ysidro Border Crossing?



Work:

San Diego housing prices and high rent causes many people to live in TJ. US currency is stronger. San Diego has a more diverse job market.

School:

US-born Mexican residents have right to free public education (K-12). San Diego has more prestigious Universities. Some San Diego colleges offer 'borderlander' tuition rates.

25,000 people cross by foot per day, split between PedEast and PedWest. PedWest was designed to operate 24/7 like PedEast, but COVID shortened hours and they have remained abbreviated ever since.

Work/School Commuters



- Most workers are residents of Tijuana and were born in Mexico
- Most are walking to PedEast to catch trolley
- Many Mexican people crossing work at Las Americas Premium Outlets

Needs:

Direct Walking Route

Neighboring Outlet Mall Shoppers



- The United States has a wider variety of stores and merchandise. Stores not present in Tijuana: Bath & Body Works, J Crew, Nordstrom Rack, Disney Outlet, Target, TJ Maxx

Needs:

Places To Sit In Shade

Border Facilities Staff



- 1,500 Total Staff
- Private Security
- U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP)
- U.S. Border Patrol
- Federal Contractors

Needs:

A Safe & Open Space

San Ysidro Community Members



- 27,000 Residents
- 93% Latino, 2% Asian, 2% Black, 3% White
- Median Age: 36
- Median Household Income: \$69,000/year
- Median Home Price: \$600,000
- 50% of households use CALFRESH

Needs:

A Gathering Space

Mostly Mexican residents crossing. Majority are solo young adults. Few children.

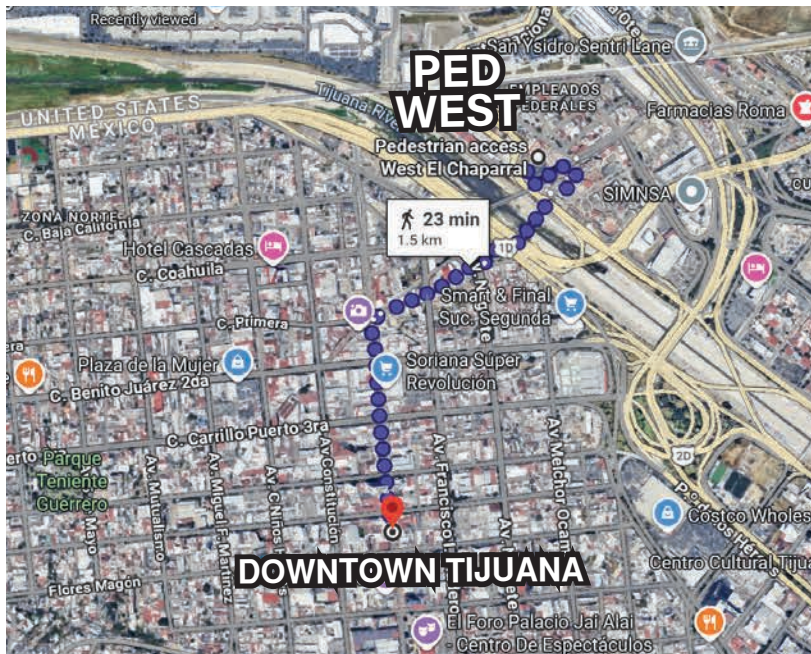
WHY USE PEDWEST?

A dozen people were asked why they prefer to use PedWest. This was on a Friday afternoon. Here is what they answered:

- Closer to Downtown Tijuana: 23-minute walk
- Less Busy Than PedEast - Shorter Lines
- Next to Las Americas Premium Outlets
- Easier Car and Rideshare Dropoff/Pickup
- Less Questions, Less Papers
- Long Term Parking Lot
- Mexican Teacher Protest at PedEast
- A 'Shortcut'
- Border staff are less strict, ask less questions



PedWest Main Entrance



Only a 23-minute walk from Pedwest to
Downtown Tijuana



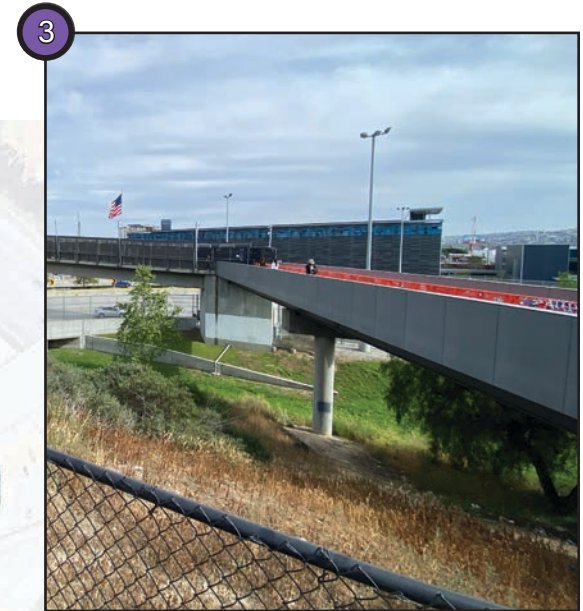
Las Americas Premium Outlets



View of Las Americas Premium Outlets



Dry creek bed culvert with litter



Pedestrian bridge connecting to PedEast



Shipping containers in empty lot

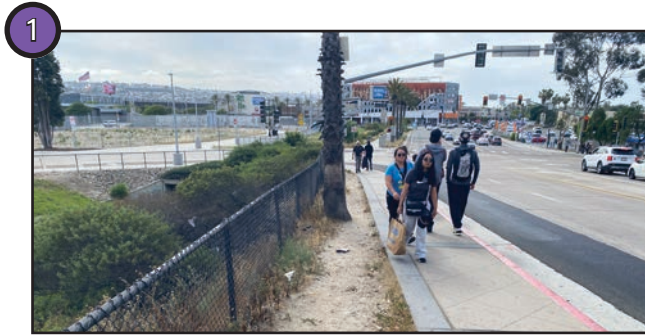


Vacant parking lot at the center of the site

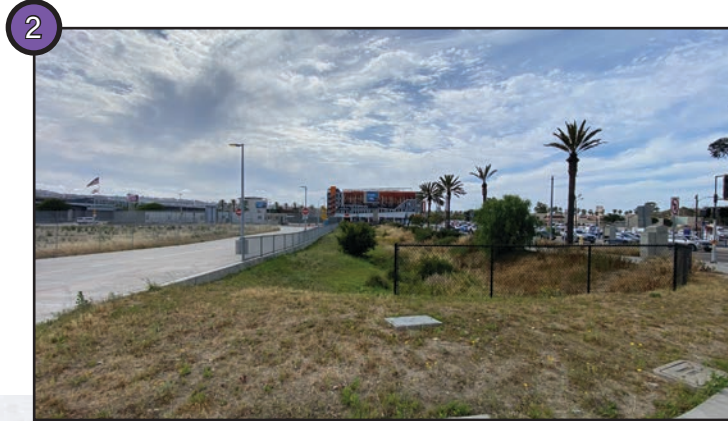


View of vehicular border crossing lanes over irrigated swale

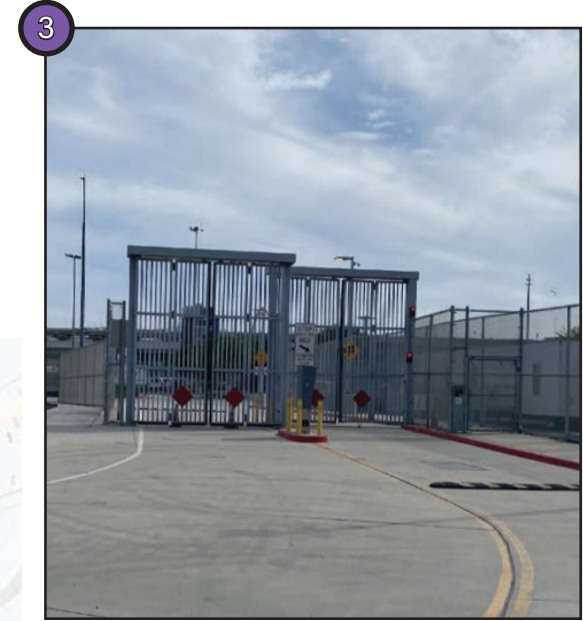
SITE PHOTOS CONTINUED



People walking to PedEast along Camino de La Plaza



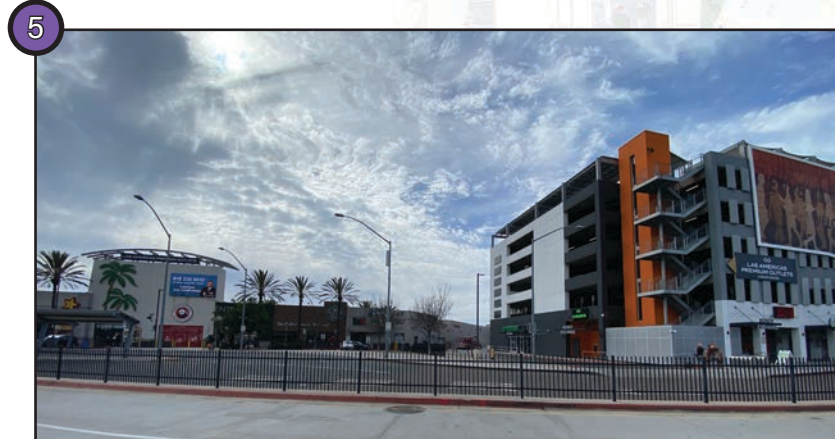
Dry creek bed running through the site



Entrance to tunnel leading to staff parking lot



Long-term parking lot across the street



Rideshare pickup spot & Las Americas Premium Outlets



View of the southbound vehicular awning/stalls

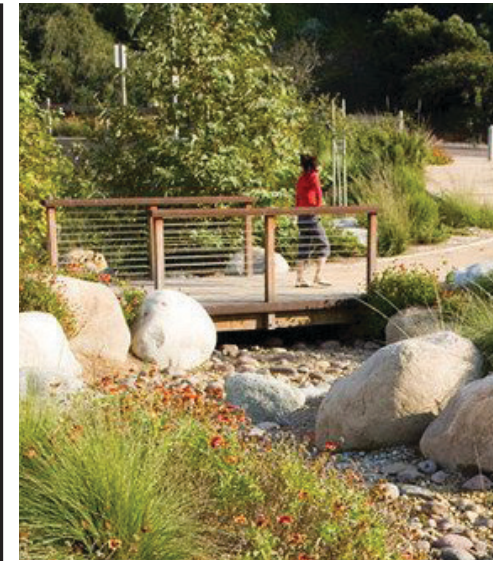
Create a Welcoming Space

- Using interactive art, materials, plants, and animal symbolism
- Bring joy and inspire curiosity
- Include local artists



Improve & Beautify Connectivity

- Provide a safe, efficient, and scenic path of travel for people crossing to and from PedEast
- Incorporate places for rest, shade, and wonder



Rehabilitate The Land

- Manage stormwater by planting natives with deep roots & redirecting water towards the dry creek bed
- Depave portions of the site to reduce the Urban Heat Island Effect
- Add trees and planters to allow for infiltration



1. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

- Explores architectural and urban design methods to deter criminal behavior
Examples: Low-profile landscaping, strategic lighting, and placing high-activity zones near vulnerable areas to ensure natural surveillance occurs through normal daily routines

2. "Borderwall as Architecture: A Manifesto for the U.S.-Mexico Boundary" by Ronald Rael

- Proposes shifting the perception of the border from a "scar" in the landscape to a shared place of dialogue
Example: "Counterproposals" that use the wall as a site for social and economic development such as binational libraries, cross-border play structures (teeter-totters), or shared water collection systems

3. "Transcultural Cities: Border-Crossing and Placemaking" by Jeffrey Hou

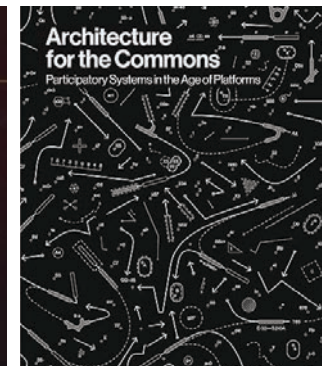
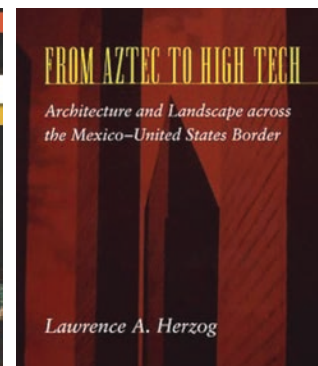
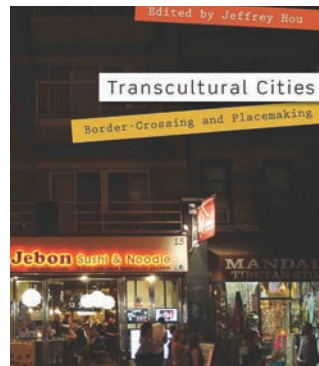
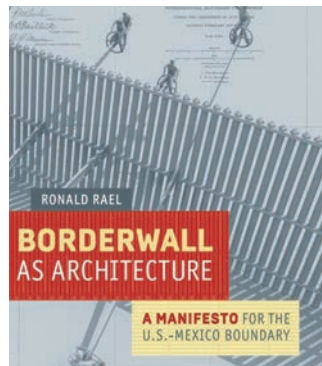
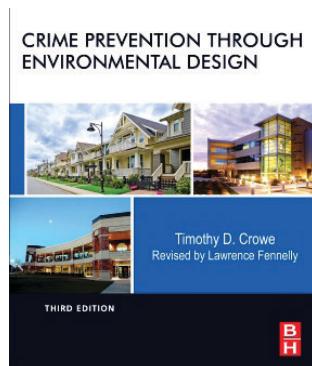
- Examines how immigrant communities and transcultural practices reshape urban spaces through "insurgent" placemaking
Example: Strategies for empowering cross-border pedestrians to reclaim paved "voids" through community-led interventions

4. "From Aztec to High Tech: Architecture & Landscape Across the Mexico-US Border" by Lawrence A. Herzog

- Explores how digital platforms and gaming can democratize architectural design and foster community-owned "commons"
Example: Combat the "place-lessness" and homogenization typical of post-industrial high-tech styles

5. "Architecture for the Commons: Participatory Systems in the Age of Platforms" by Jose Sanchez

- Explores techniques that make high-traffic spaces safe, comfortable, and equitable
Example: Physical elements like seating and landscaping paired with "management" changes to pedestrian circulation patterns, Widening Pavements & Pedestrian Zones



Additional Considerations: Federal guidelines regarding access, fences, trees, sight lines, and materials



Shared Future

Conceptualizing the border as an integrated landscape reflecting a binational destiny. Planning ahead for a space that is used by both nations.



Activity Support

Promoting use of a public space to increase the number of "eyes on the street". Providing a variety of program elements to attract users of all ages and backgrounds.



Transcultural

Facilitating intercultural exchange and cultural transformation. Providing a space for cultural expression.



Participatory

Designing frameworks where the community can actively share resources & self-organize the space. Using locals artists from Tijuana and San Diego to create a sense of ownership.



Style Blending

Integrating multiple cultures through materials, colors, art, architecture, and imagery. These blended themes will show up in special details.



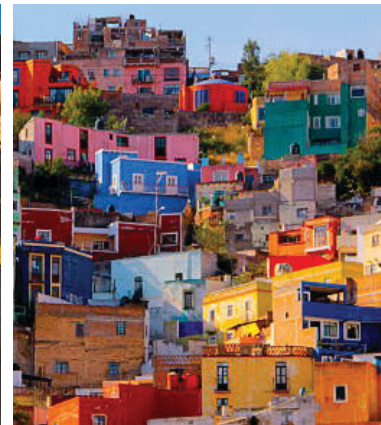
Borderwall as Architecture: A Manifesto for the U.S.-Mexico Boundary
by Ronald Rael



Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)
by Timothy Crowe



From Aztec to High Tech: Architecture & Landscape Across the Mexico-US Border
by Lawrence A. Herzog



Architecture for the Commons: Participatory Systems in the Age of Platforms
by Jose Sanchez



Transcultural Cities: Border-Crossing and Placemaking
by Jeffrey Hou

STYLE BLENDING: MEXICO & USA



Kumeyaay Carvings (California)



Mayan Pyramids (Mexico)



Traditional Mexican Hacienda



Mexican Tile Stairs



Mexican Plaza Gazebo (Kiosko)



California Surf Culture



Mid Century Modern Architecture (USA)



United States Federal Buildings -
Neoclassical Style



Eagle Symbol - MEX flag &
USA coins

(Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design)

Natural Surveillance:

- Maximizes visibility
 - Clear sight lines
 - Ample lighting
- Trimming tree canopies to 6'
 - Shrubs to 3' max
- Wide, straight walkways are safer and easier to patrol
 - Few visual obstructions



Main walkway, Mogosoia Park in Romania

Natural Access Control:

- Strategically and subtly denies access to criminals using bollards, walls, fences, and landscaping
- Low stone retaining walls and designated entry gates to guide visitors away from sensitive zones



Bollards placed in a residential park

Territorial Reinforcement:

- Uses physical design elements to define property lines and easements
- Placing park welcome signs at every entrance to delineate the space
- Wire fences as landscape protection and crowd control



Short steel fences in Central Park in NYC

Activity Support:

- Encourages regular use of public spaces via community programming
- Elements like music station or fitness zone to ensure steady foot traffic
- Foot traffic creates self-policing eyes on the space



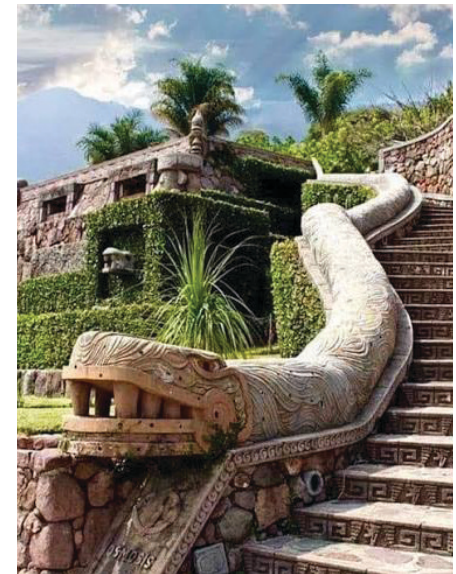
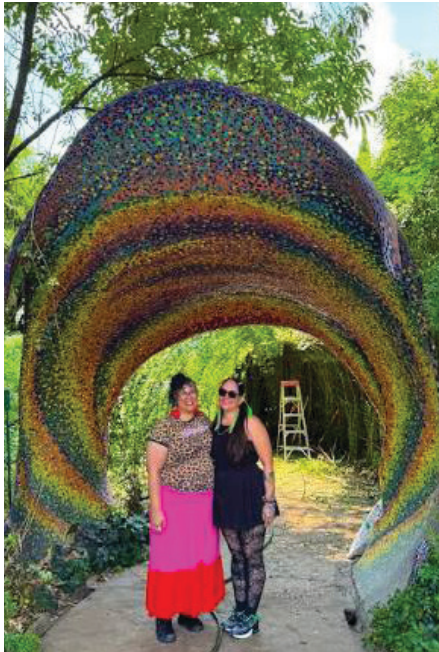
Public mobile magazine stand at Plaza 33 in NYC

CASE STUDY: QUETZALCOATL PARK

Mexico City, MX

"A Masterpiece of Organic Architecture & Ecological Preservation"

- Opened in 2008
- Project visionary: Javier Senosiain
- Restored a damaged 20-hectare ravine into a park & eco-sanctuary
- Very popular on social media
- Partly functions as an Airbnb
- Partially built inside a prehistoric cave
- Virtually no corners or straight lines



How This Informs Project Design:

Design Methodology Used: "Style Blending"

- Integrating multiple cultures through materials, colors, art, architecture, and imagery
- The walls are the art - they create inviting spaces and help guide users. A whimsical example of using art as the structural elements of a landscape. That help create 'outdoor rooms.'

CASE STUDY: JARDÍN PRINCIPAL

"A Celebration of Historical Heritage & Pedestrian-Centric Public Space"

San Miguel de Allende, MX



- Transformed in 1800s by Mexican urban planners, creating a shaded microclimate
- Central wrought-iron Kiosko and deep, covered stone portales along perimeter
- Transformed from a colonial marketplace into an ongoing cultural hub and central civic gathering space
- Features manicured laurel trees (Ficus nitida) that form a shaded canopy roof
- Space itself functions as a porous, multi-directional crossroads rather than an enclosed courtyard
- A gathering space for people to rest, eat, dance, listen to music, and converse under plenty of shade



How This Informs Project Design:

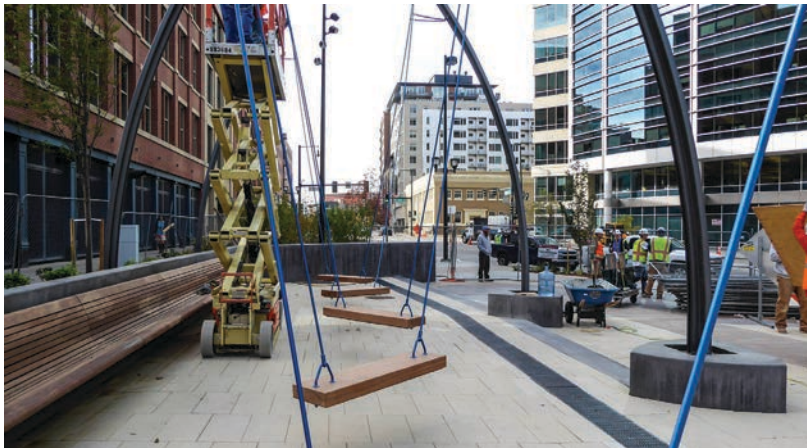
- Quintessential Mexican plaza
- Great use of trees for shade
- Flexible programming
- Central gazebo (Kiosko)

CASE STUDY: DENVER UNION STATION PLAZA

Denver, CO

"A Celebration of Transit-Oriented Urban Infill Development"

- Opened in 2012
- Features a large light rail plaza and linear gardens
- Project Developer / Contractor: Kiewit
- Built in collaboration with public officials like Councilwoman Judy Montero
- A former rail yard & ongoing transportation hub
- Uses custom pavers and specialized lighting to guide pedestrian flow
- Features distinct teardrop planters filled with Kentucky Bluegrass and ornamental tall-grass varieties
- Uses the modern "Chestnut Pavilion" structure to let travelers access the subterranean bus box transit complex



Design Methodology Used:

"Participatory Systems"

- Designated areas for the community to use the space as they see fit. Whether that be for classes, live performance, meetups, or vending.

CASE STUDY: FRIENDSHIP PARK

Tijuana, MX / San Diego, CA

"A powerful space that allows people from two nations to interact through a border wall"

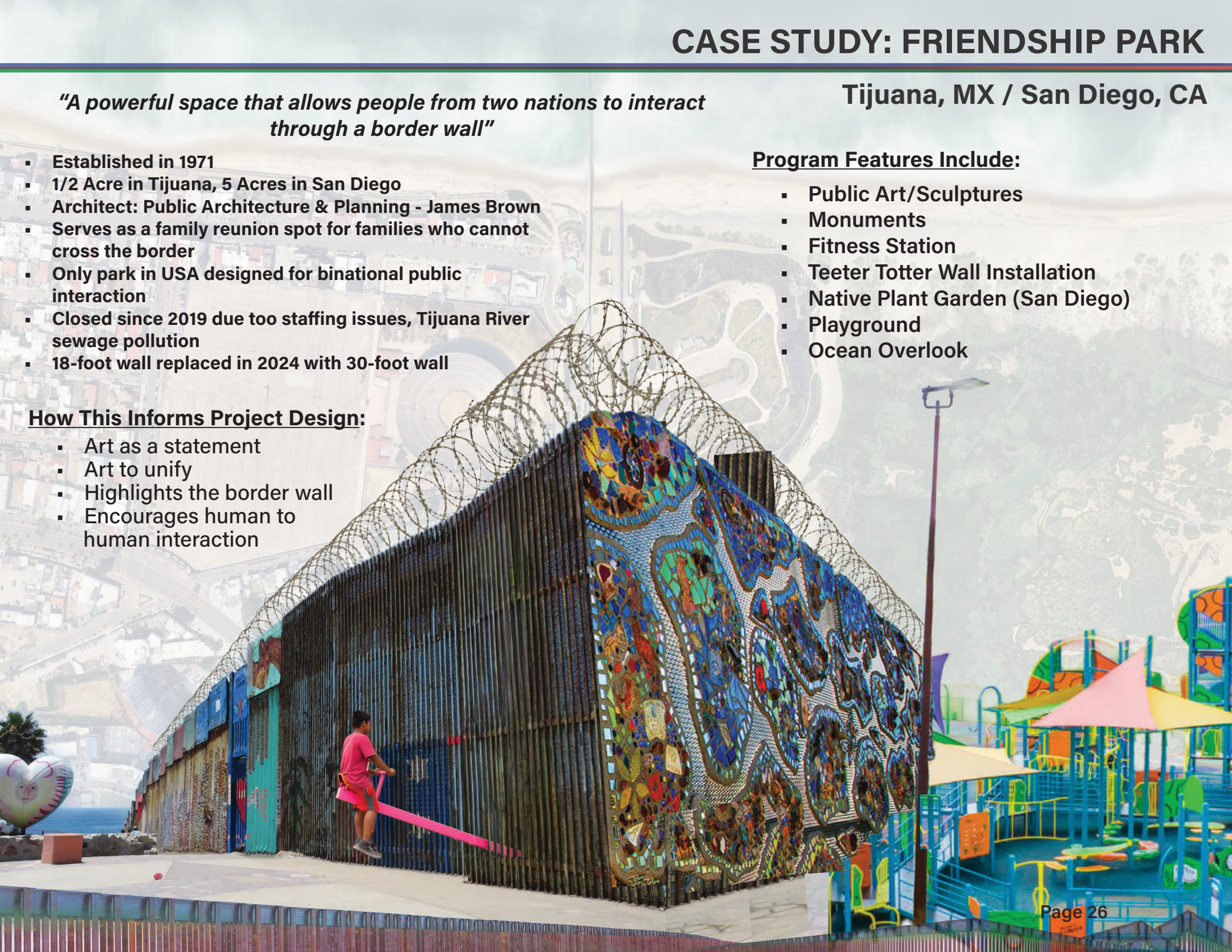
- Established in 1971
- 1/2 Acre in Tijuana, 5 Acres in San Diego
- Architect: Public Architecture & Planning - James Brown
- Serves as a family reunion spot for families who cannot cross the border
- Only park in USA designed for binational public interaction
- Closed since 2019 due too staffing issues, Tijuana River sewage pollution
- 18-foot wall replaced in 2024 with 30-foot wall

Program Features Include:

- Public Art/Sculptures
- Monuments
- Fitness Station
- Teeter Totter Wall Installation
- Native Plant Garden (San Diego)
- Playground
- Ocean Overlook

How This Informs Project Design:

- Art as a statement
- Art to unify
- Highlights the border wall
- Encourages human to human interaction



CASE STUDY: SUPERKILEN PARK

Copenhagen, Denmark

"A Surrealist Collection of Global Urban Diversity"

- Established in 2012
- 7 Acres, Spans 3 City Blocks
- Architects: BIG (Bjarke Ingels Group) & w1
- Built in collaboration with an artist collective called 'Superflex'
- A former rail yard
- Uses intense colors to guide movement through complex pedestrian processing areas
- Features 108 objects from over 60 countries
- Uses "extreme participation" to let immigrants select objects from their home countries

Design Methodology Used:

"Activity Support"

- Perfect example of offering various program elements for a variety of users: Outdoor fitness stations, interactive sculptures, and the Superflex swinging benches. These elements bring people together in play.

Program Features Include:

- Gymnastics Rings
- Fitness Station
- Ping Pong Tables
- Skate Park/Basketball Court
- Boxing Ring
- Bike Ramps
- Play Area
- Fountain
- Large Sculptures
- Swing Benches



SCULPTURE INSPIRATION

Special attention was paid to sculptures representing the concept of breaking borders. Pavilions were another focus due to their dual purpose of providing shade while acting as art. Lastly, interactive sculptures were chosen to highlight movement and evoke a sense of playfulness.



"Wings of Mexico" - Jorge Marin - Chicago



LOOP NOLA Pavilion - Tulane Arch Students - New Orleans



"Freedom" by Zenos Frudakis - Philadelphia



"Breaking Barriers" - Ivan Toth Depena - Iowa



Kugel Fountain - Florida



Ventricular Sculpture of Nelson Mandela called "Release" by Marco Cianfanelli - South Africa



Shhh Pavilion - gt2P - San Diego



AI-Generated concrete shade structure

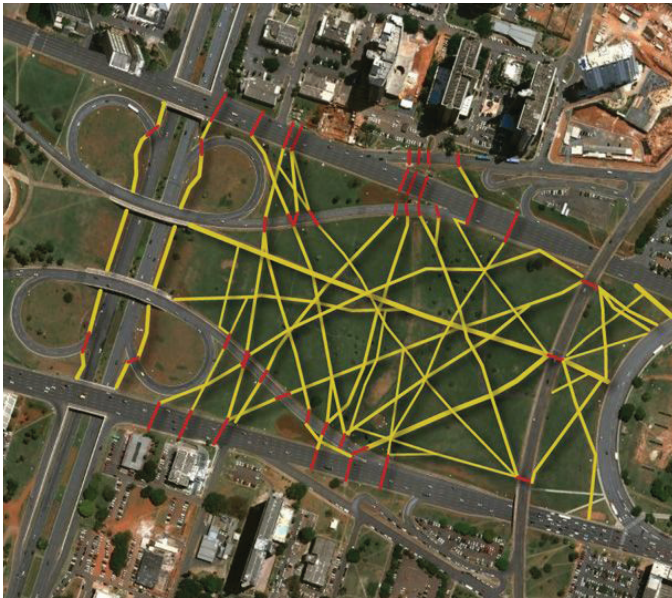


**“ An unplanned trail created by the erosion of foot or animal traffic ”
(AKA Social Trails / Elephant Paths)**

- Symbolizes Migration, Organic Efficiency, Rebelliousness

Represents movement. A perfect concept for this site. Notice the curvilinear triangles formed by the desire paths in each photo. A motif that will be used throughout the design process.

Before the border wall, many animals created desire paths on this same land...



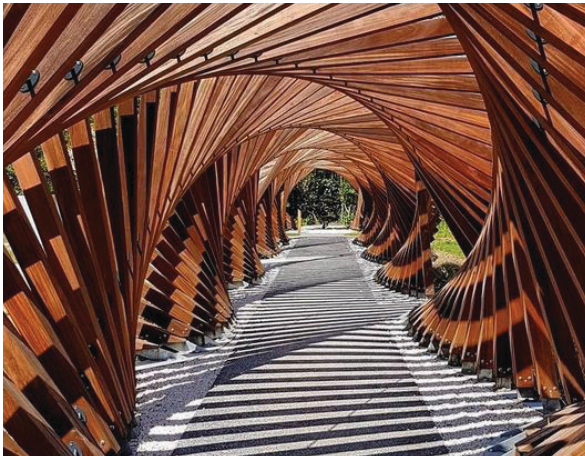
Animal Migratory Routes Disrupted By Border:

- Mule Deer, Coyote, Bobcat, Badger, Rosy Boa, Peninsular Bighorn Sheep, Mountain Lion



Improve & Beautify Connectivity

- Main Pedestrian Walkway - 5,000 sqft
- Beautified Bridge - 10,000 sqft
- Shade Arches / Tunnel - 1,800 sqft
- Pavilion - 2,000 sqft
- Bus Bay/Pullout - 600 sqft
- Viewing Platform - 1,000 sqft
- Secondary DG Paths - 4,000 sqft



Create a Welcoming Space

Flex Plaza Area - 15,000 sqft

- Performance Area
- Farmers Market Area
- Festival & Celebration Area
- Art Exhibition Space
- Vendor Area - 3,000 sqft
- Eating Bosque - 3,000 sqft
- Tiered Seating/Gathering Steps - 4,000 sqft
- Sculptures and Art - 3,000 sqft
- Mural/Mosaic - 50 linear feet
- Artful Shade Structure - 300 sqft
- Feature - 500 sqft



Rehabilitate the Land

- Improved Bioswale - 1 acre
- Microforest - 1 acre
- Native Plant Area (CA & MX) - 1/2 acre
- Planters & Tree Wells - 5,000 sqft
- Nature Nooks - 3,000 sqft
- Educational Signage



PROPOSED CIRCULATION

- The current walk is 1/2 mile plus another 1/2 mile on the TJ side
- Currently there is a busy crosswalk along Camino de La Plaza
- To make it more direct and safe, the road will be moved and the pedestrian bridge will be extended over it



- 15'6" Min Bridge Clearance Over Emergency Exit Road
- 216' Long Ramp To be ADA Compliant (Includes 5 Landings)

● ● ● ● ● Existing Pedestrian Circulation

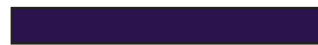
● ● ● ● ● Proposed Pedestrian Circulation

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Existing Vehicular Circulation

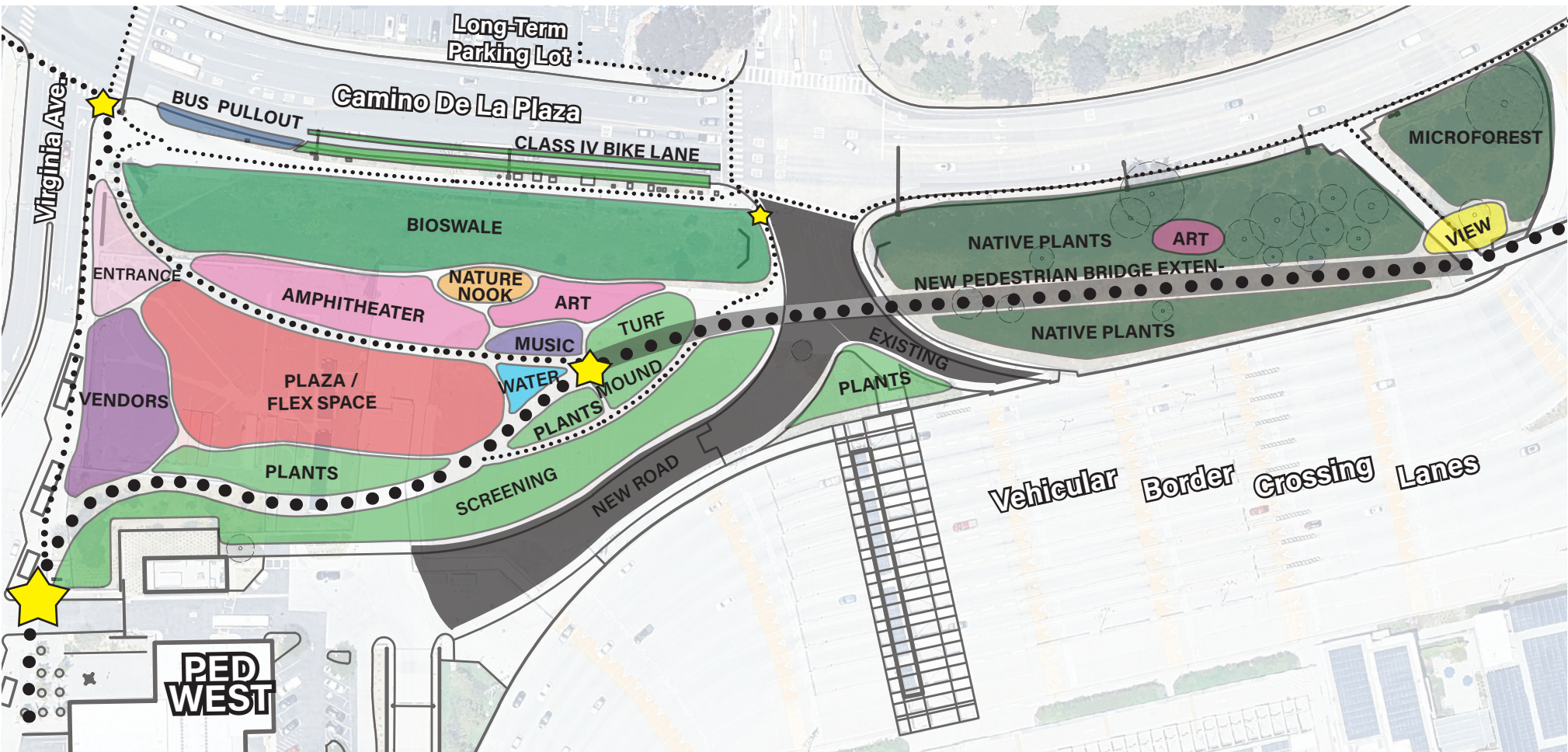
■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Proposed Vehicular Circulation



Proposed Road



Proposed Pedestrian Bridge Extension



LEGEND:

- Proposed Pedestrian Circulation
- ★ Pedestrian Access Point



The main paths are smooth, curvilinear lines, meant to be predicted desire paths between access points. This allows for seamless travel for commuters. Most of the programming is concentrated in the center near the entrance to the pedestrian bridge. This central area is also quieter and removed from vehicular traffic. This is meant to be the most activated and vibrant portion of the plaza.

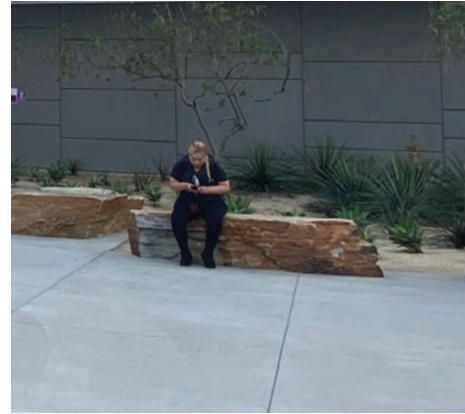
MATERIALS PALETTE



Triangular Light Post



Papel Picado



Stone Seating from PedEast



Acrylic Light Panels



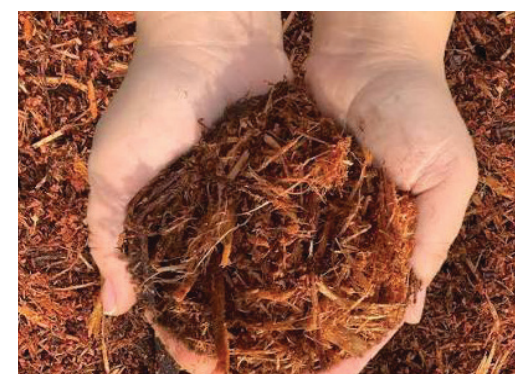
Colored Concrete



Animal Footprints



Concrete Pavilion



Shredded Fir Mulch



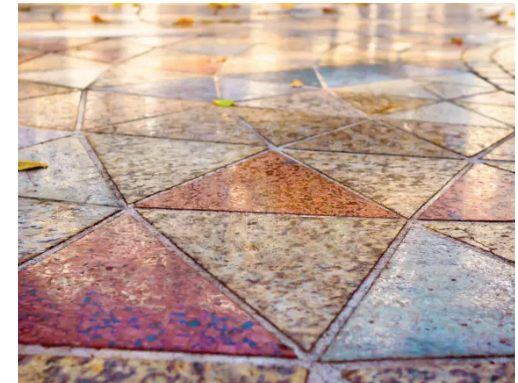
Colorful Mosaic



Wooden Benches

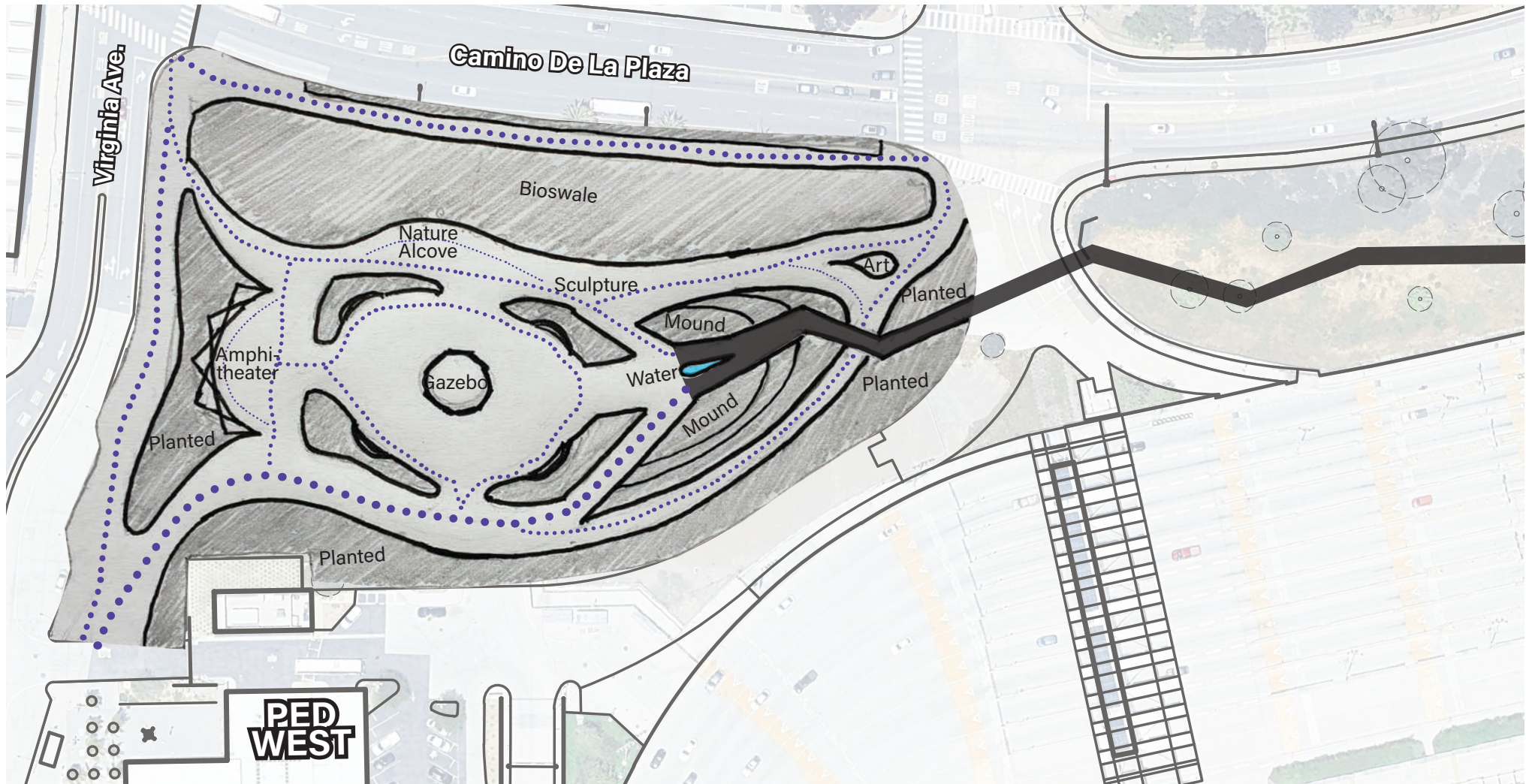


Cast Iron Slat Fence



Colored Triangular Tiles

CONCEPT 1: TOWN SQUARE



A more curvilinear concept that incorporates the traditional Mexican plaza layout in its center



LEGEND:

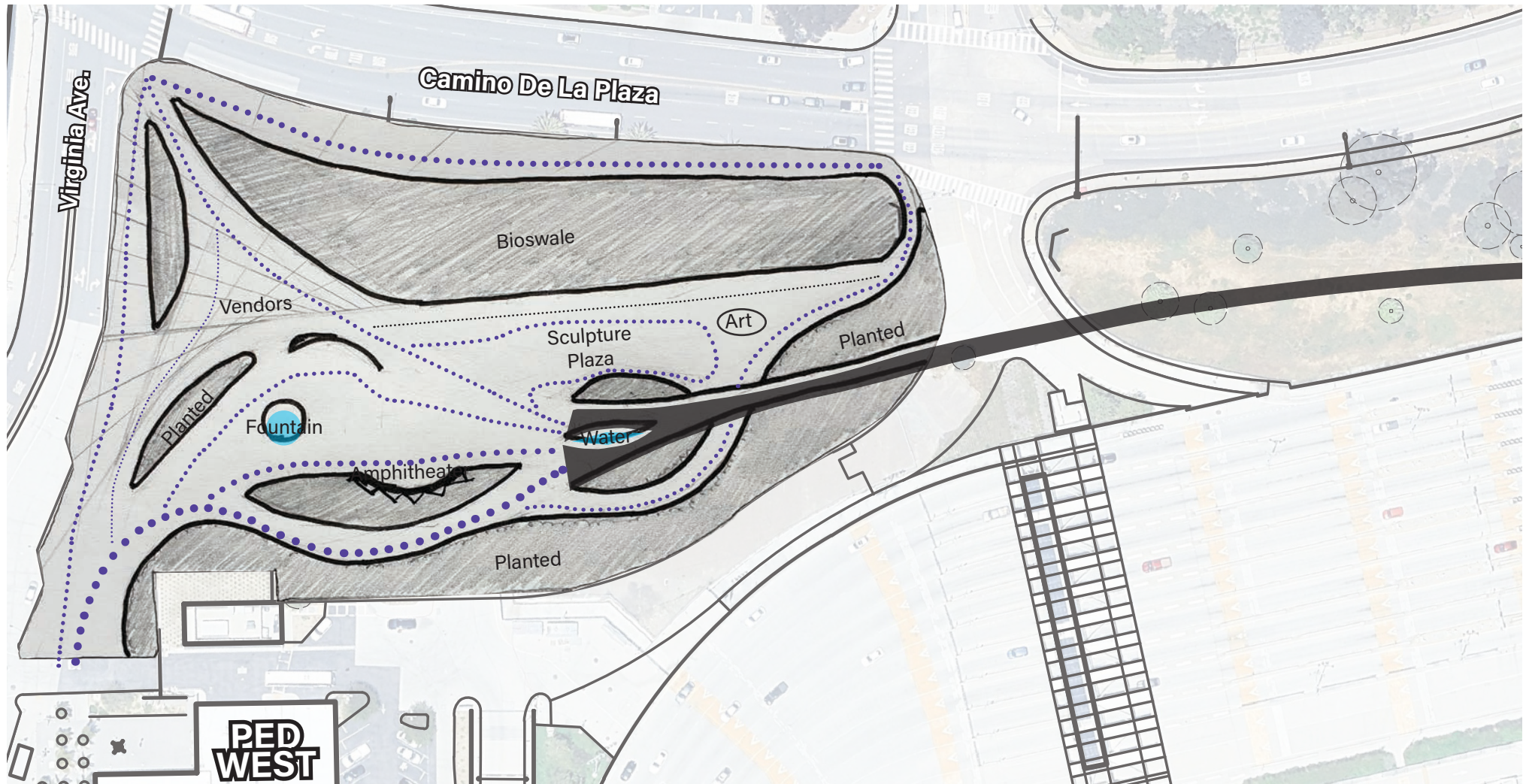
- Pedestrian Bridge
- Pedestrian Circulation

FEATURES:

- Zig zag pedestrian bridge
- East-facing amphitheater
- Two separate plazas
- Mound at base of bridge
- Central Mexican 'Kiosko' (Gazebo)

WEAKNESSES:

- Disjointed
- Some sightlines obstructed
- Too open



An open concept with a forked pedestrian bridge entrance.

LEGEND:

- Pedestrian Bridge**
- Pedestrian Circulation**

FEATURES:

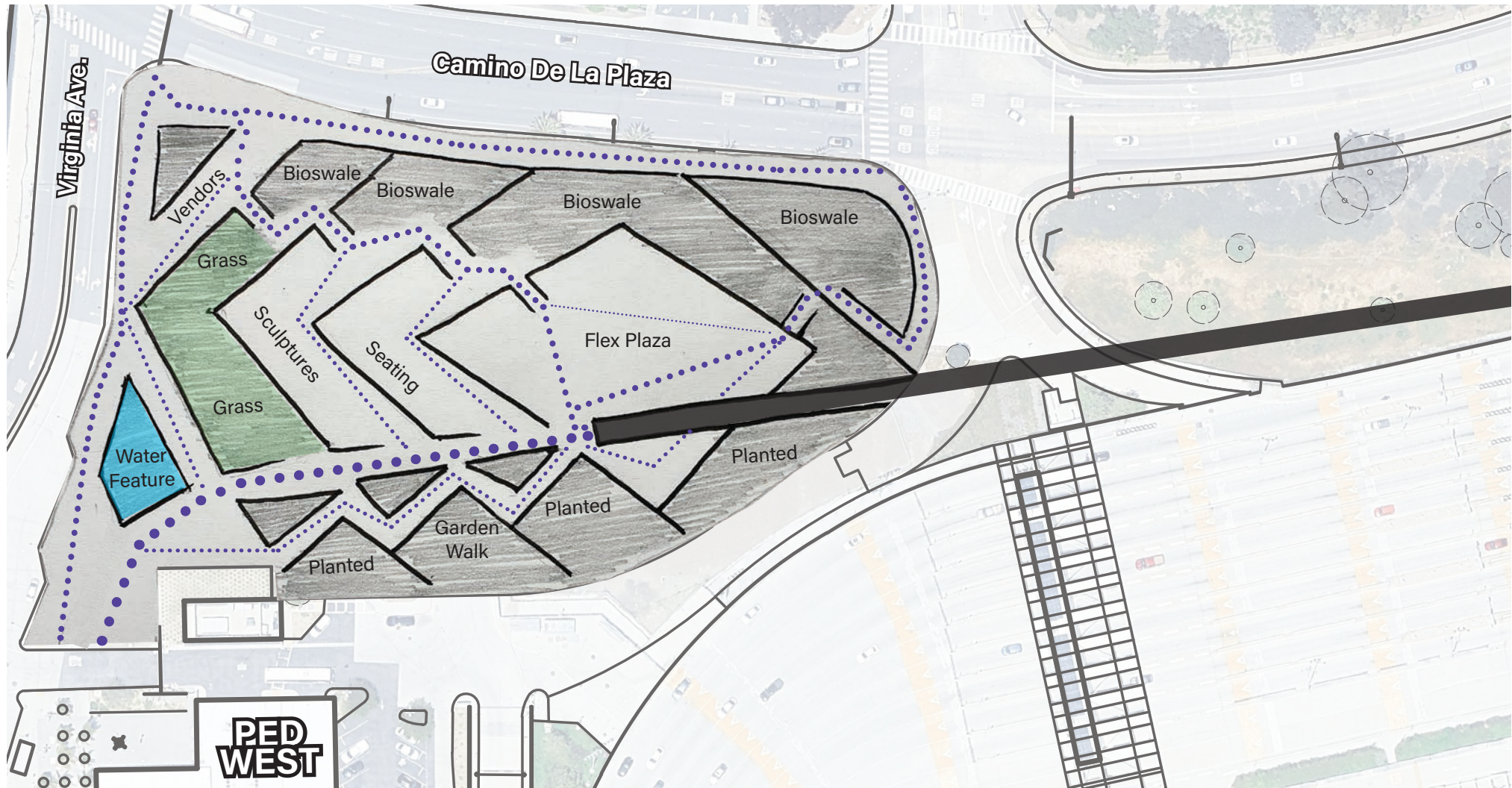
- Forked and curved pedestrian bridge
- North-facing amphitheater
- Large plaza flex space
- Grand entryway to bridge + 2 water features

WEAKNESSES:

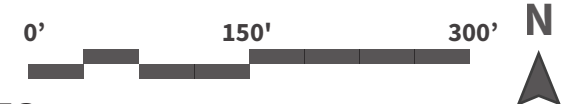
- Too open
- Placeless
- Hiding places



CONCEPT 3: BRUTALIST



A concept with clean lines and hard edges, featuring a series of cascading 'shelves'



LEGEND:

- Pedestrian Bridge
- Pedestrian Circulation

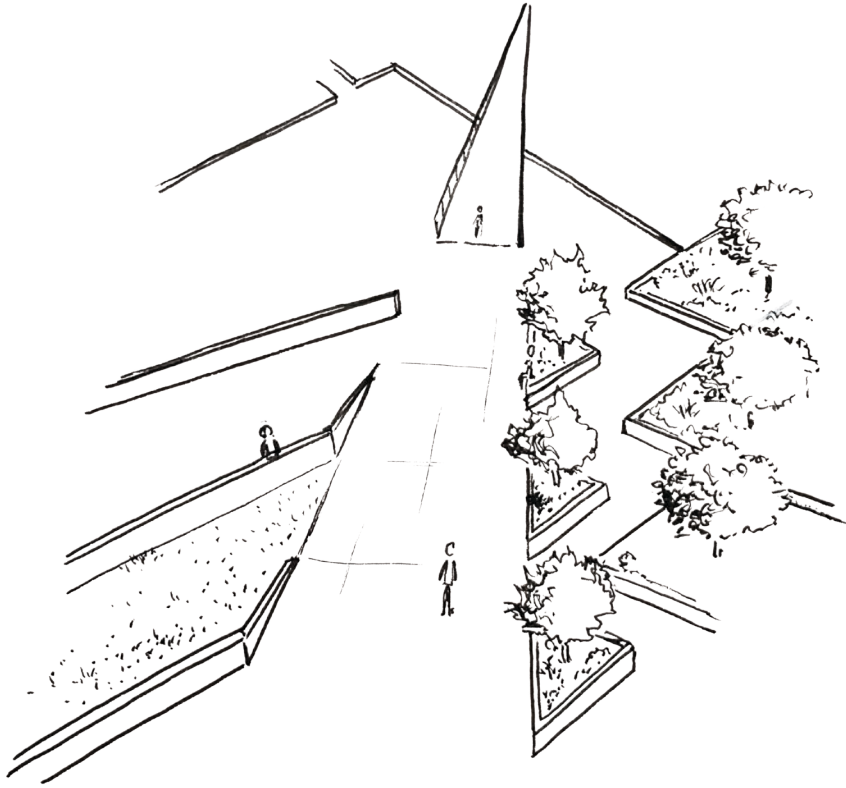
FEATURES:

- Topographically Interesting
- Different 'outdoor rooms'
- Simple/cost effective
- Bioswale with weir walls

WEAKNESSES:

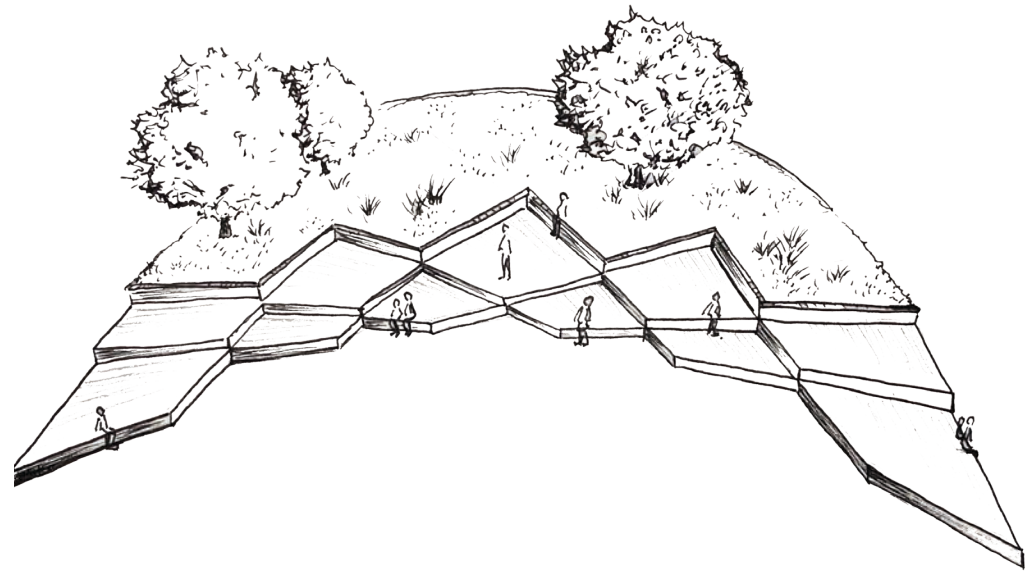
- Brutalism can feel unwelcoming
- Difficult to navigate
- Possible hiding places behind walls

Brutalist Concept Perspective



Amphitheater Perspective

- One-of-a-kind amphitheater seating
- Each level can also act as a 'stage'
- Large planter built into that back with shade trees



Brutalist Concept Section Sketch: Central Axis



- Brutalist style with clean lines
- Central axis is emphasized by planters and bridge
- Topography of the site used to create terrace levels with seat walls
- A grassy level to soften the aesthetic can be used for relaxation

Nature Nook

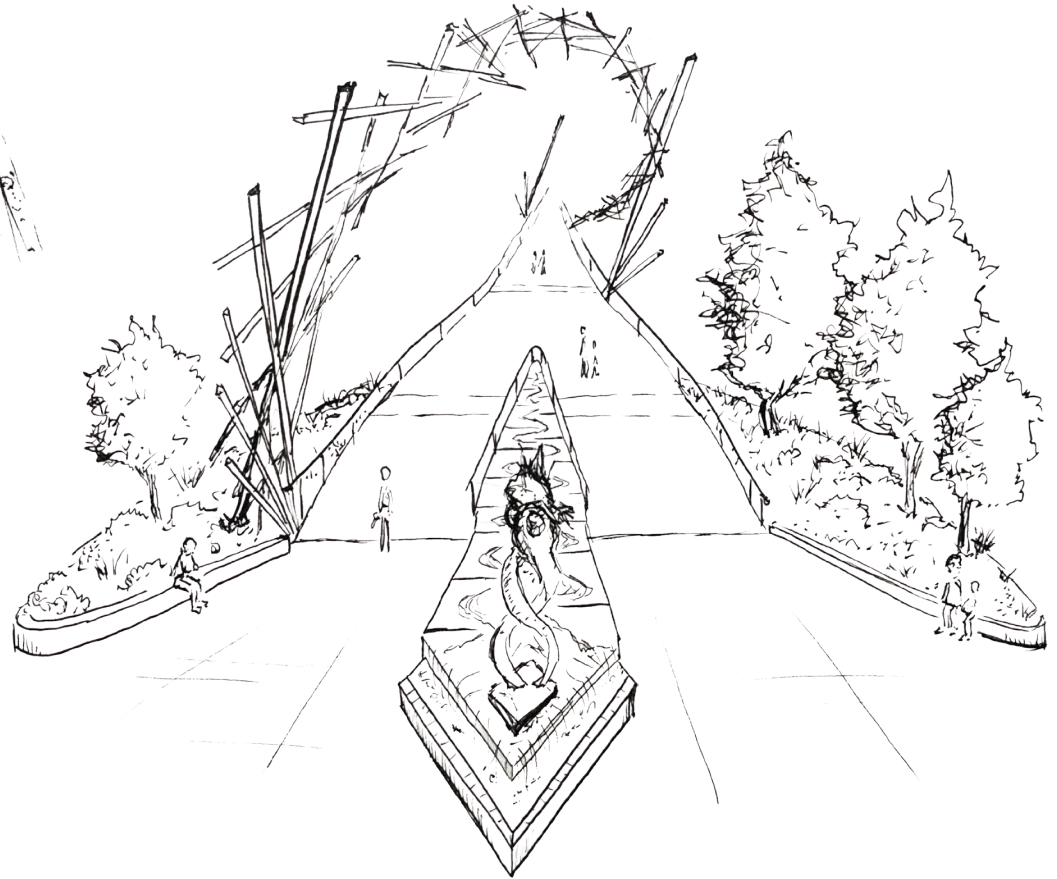


- A small alcove for people to feel like they are in nature
- Boulders and logs as seating, surrounded by trees
- Provides opportunity to engage with the swale edge
- Possible educational signage on stormwater capture



- The beginning stages of the central pavilion design

Pedestrian Bridge Entrance



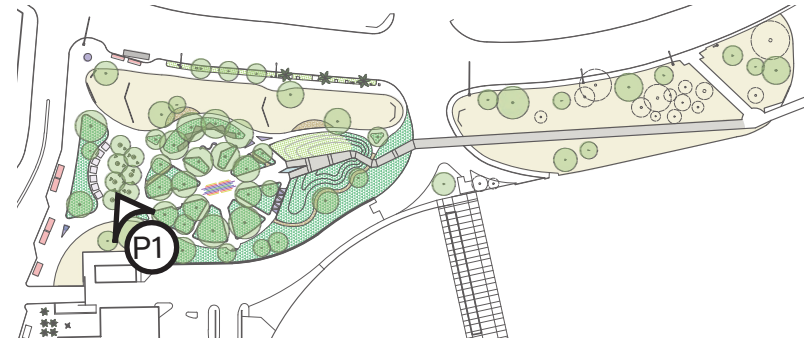
- Grand entrance with symmetry and asymmetry
- Spiraling overhead installation provides some shade
- Fountain with seats creates pleasant sound
- Sculpture in center of fountain represents the merging of two cultures

Typical Seat Wall



The curved wall under some planter seat walls will be colorful mosaic

KEY MAP:



Whimsical Benches



Peninsular Bighorn Sheep-inspired bench
(This animal used to roam freely across the border)

Vendor Area + Eating Bosque



A bosque with movable tables and chairs adjacent to the vendors

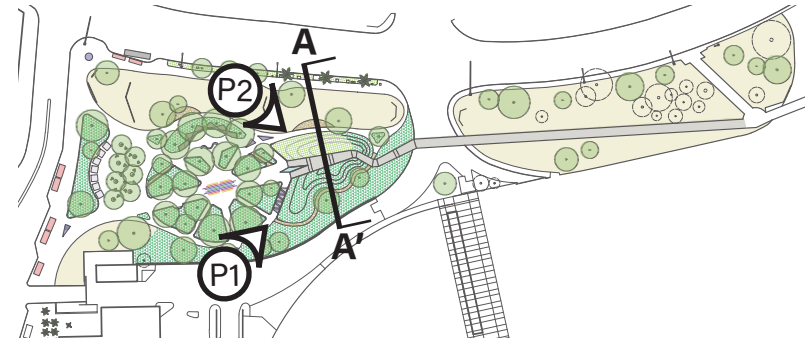
P1

Shade Tunnel

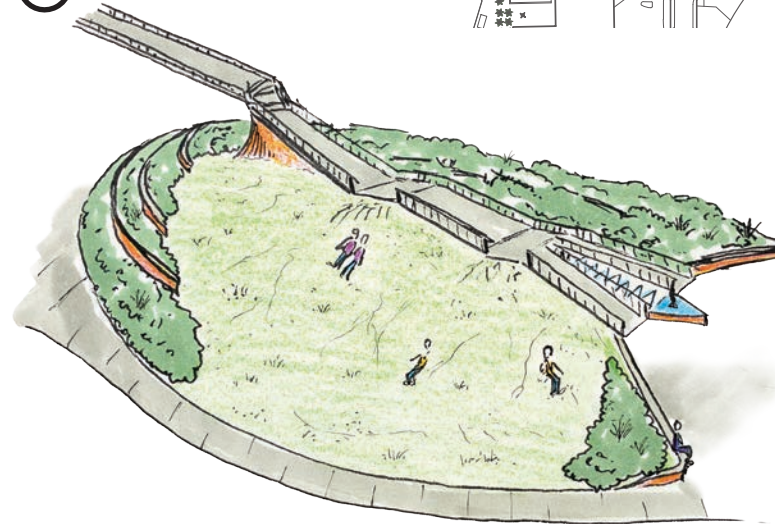
- Mosaic folded triangles, blue concrete in hardscape to symbolize historic flow to Tijuana River, imprints of mountain lion footprints to represent its historic migratory path



KEY MAP:

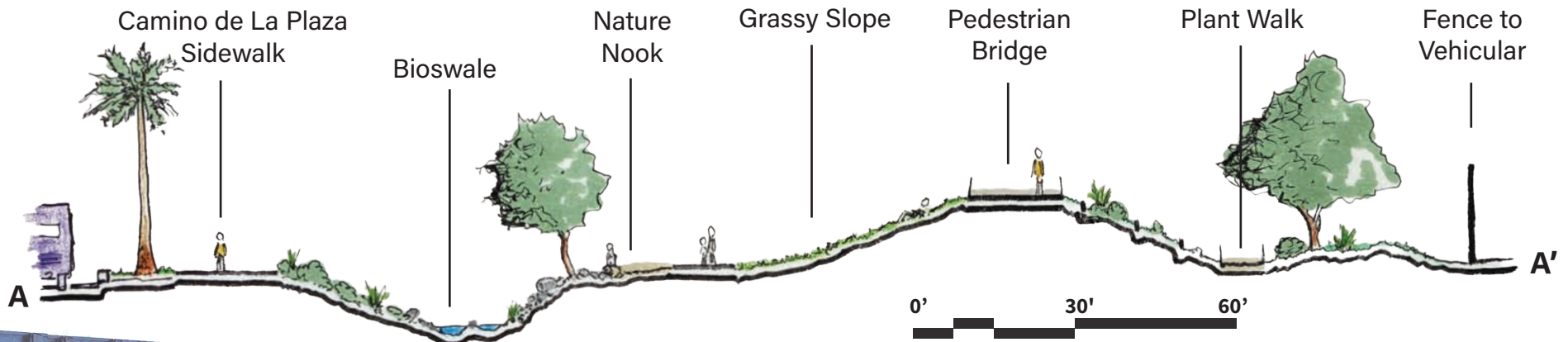


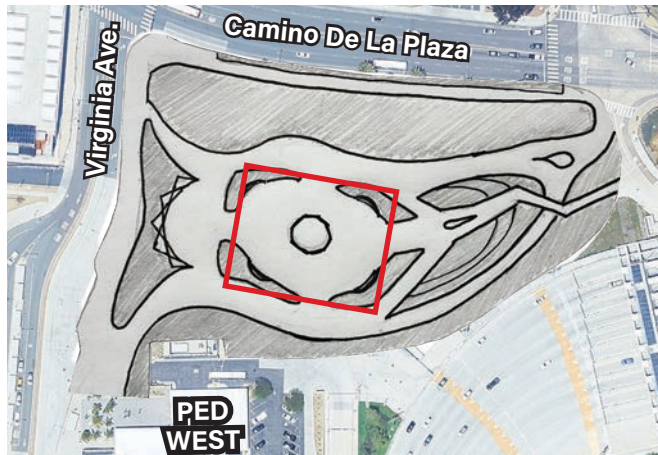
P2



Central Mound

- Mound adds visual interest
- Central fountain creates pleasant noise for walkers
- A seat wall with plenty of seating
- One side of the mound is planted with grass, offering additional resting spots with views (north-facing)





"Town Square" Concept



Axes Form



Combined Flex Plaza



Bioretention Basin Added



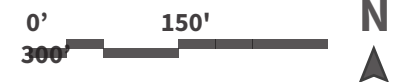
DG Paths



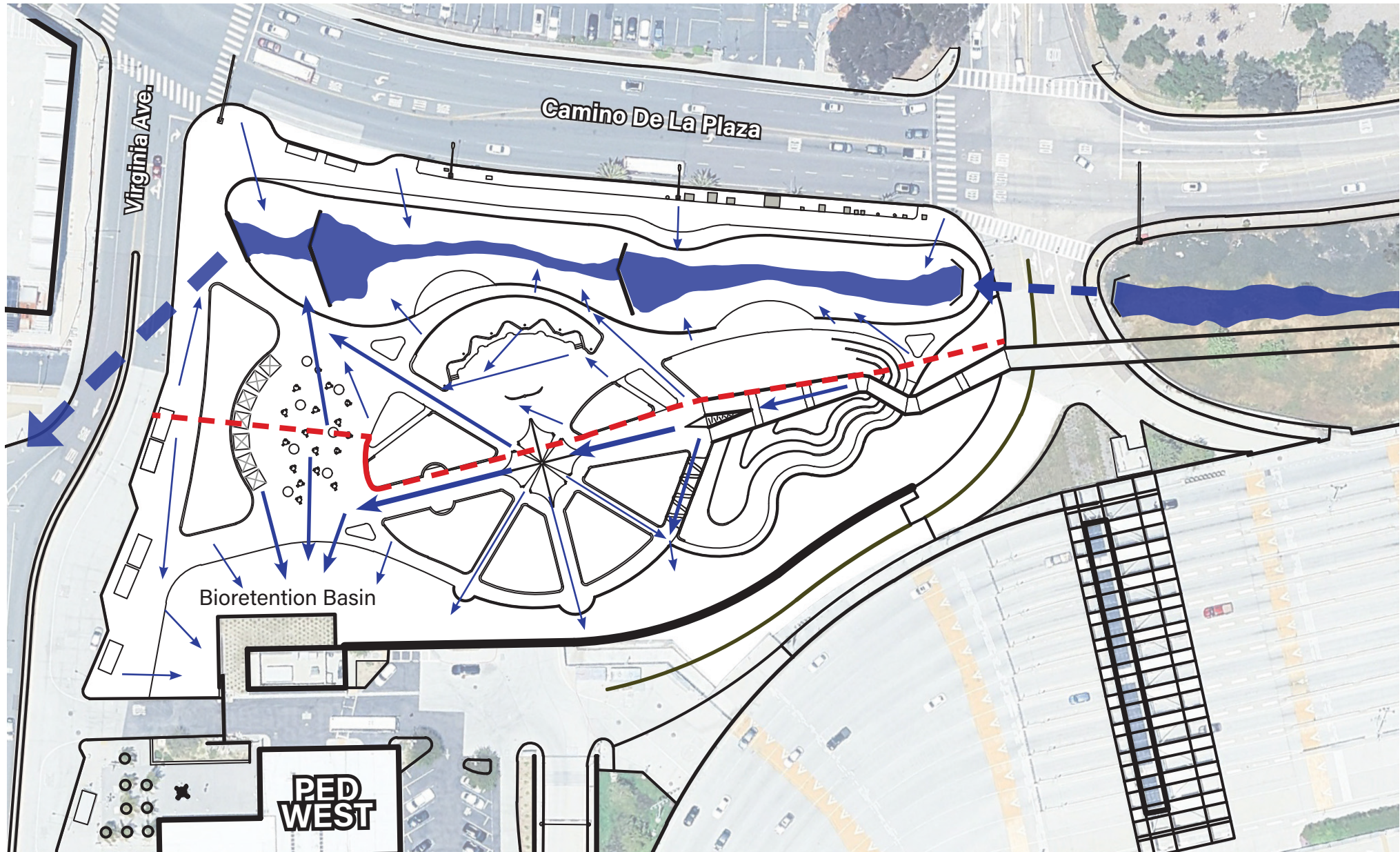
Pavilion + Papel Picado

KEY CHANGES:

- Curvilinear and geometric forms converge. Curves are more welcoming. Straight, wide paths allow for sight lines & easier wayfinding
- Axes were established. They create focal points at their ends. Secondary DG paths were added according to predicted desire paths
- Weir Walls are added to help infiltrate more water into the earth
- Plant walk made more organic
- Vendors was positioned next to the eating bosque
- Amphitheater was redesigned to be part of a larger flex plaza
- The central feature started off as a fountain and was converted to a pavilion to provide shade



FINAL CONCEPT: WATER FLOW



-  **Proposed Water Flow**
-  **Proposed High Line**

A subtle ridge line divides the site down the center running east - west. This follows the existing topography of the site. A bioretention basin is placed strategically at the southwest corner.

0' 150' 300'



ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN



Additions: Hardscape Hierarchy, Overlook Shade Structure, Class IV Bike Lane, Altered Southern Bioswale Shape, Converted NE Path to DG

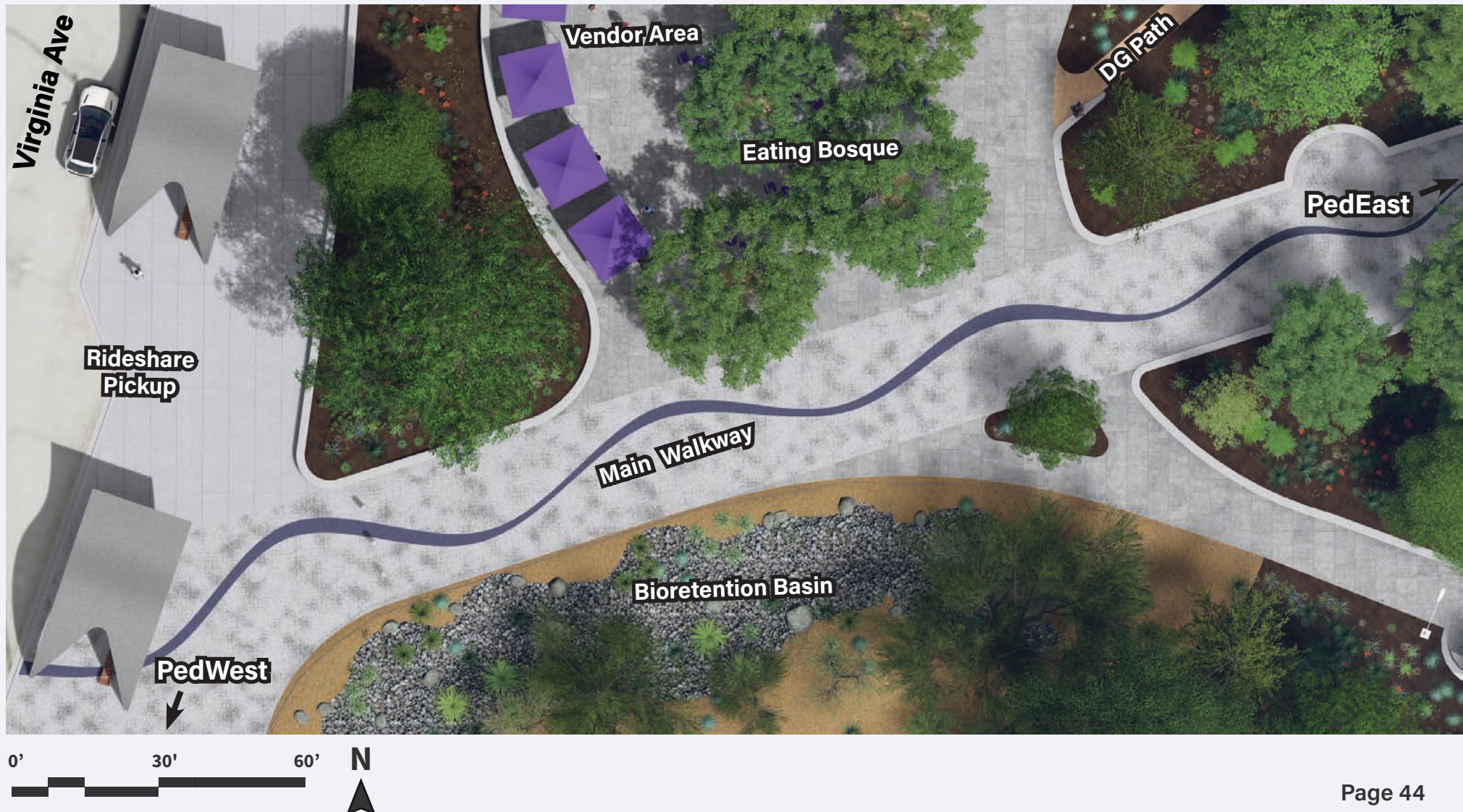


This illustrative site plan shows the space transformed with lots of greenery and trees. Planters were designed and placed strategically to allow for ease of movement. All path widths were intentional in their hierarchy. Each tree was placed with purpose and art was placed throughout the plaza to create a sense of joy. The ground surfacing is made of different materials such as pavers, concrete, colored concrete, and DG. This is meant to define different spaces and delineate pedestrian flow.

ENLARGEMENT: SOUTHWEST ENTRANCE

Notice the undulating blue water etched into the hardscape, representing the ancient desire path of the creek that once flowed freely through this site. The southern half of the site drains into the bioswale shown at the bottom of this enlargement. The vendor area is placed so that it is in public sight, but slightly tucked away. There is a DG path that allows users to be closer to the plants. It connects the vendor area to the music area directly.

KEY MAP:



PERSPECTIVE: SOUTHWEST ENTRANCE

The old bus stop on Virginia Avenue has been converted to a rideshare pickup. New awnings have been added. They are curvilinear magic carpet looking sculptures. To the right, the bioretention basin is fenced off for safety reasons and to protect the plants.

Hardscape materials change according to hierarchy of circulation. Bollards are placed here to protect pedestrians by preventing vehicles from entering. The vendor tents are off in the distance. The user can clearly see straight through the plaza. These clear sight lines help make for a safer space.

KEY MAP:



PERSPECTIVE: VENDOR AREA

Vendors can use the seat walls along the planters to rest. There is plenty of open space, allowing for up to 20 separate vendors to sell food, art, and goods.

San Diego recently relaxed it's street vendor regulations and restrictions. Local markets, like the monthly DAYGO night market, can safely and comfortably set up here. Vendors can load and unload from their vehicles using the designated maintenance path. The bosque provides ample shade.

The seats and tables are removable, allowing for flexible programming. This area is placed along the two main pathways of the site. An area that is easily seen and accessed by the main walking route, but removed enough for pathways to remain clear and open.

KEY MAP:



PERSPECTIVE: MAIN WALKWAY

As the user approaches the central pavilion, there are seat wall alcoves on either side of the main walkway. This area has a lot of trees and shade.

The underside of these seat walls is covered with mosaic. Laid by local artists and inspired by Quetzalcoatl Park in Mexico City. This brings a pop of color, in an effort to uplift people's spirits and invite them to sit and take a breather.

Notice all planters have low plantings. Shrubs are meant to grow no more than 3 feet tall throughout the site to allow for clear sight lines.

KEY MAP:

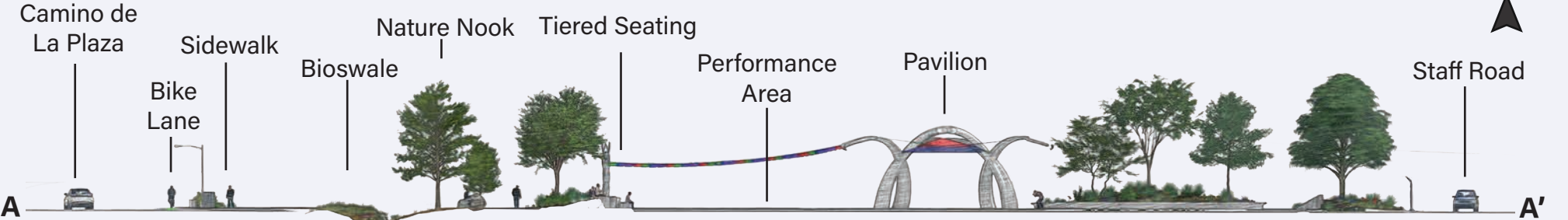
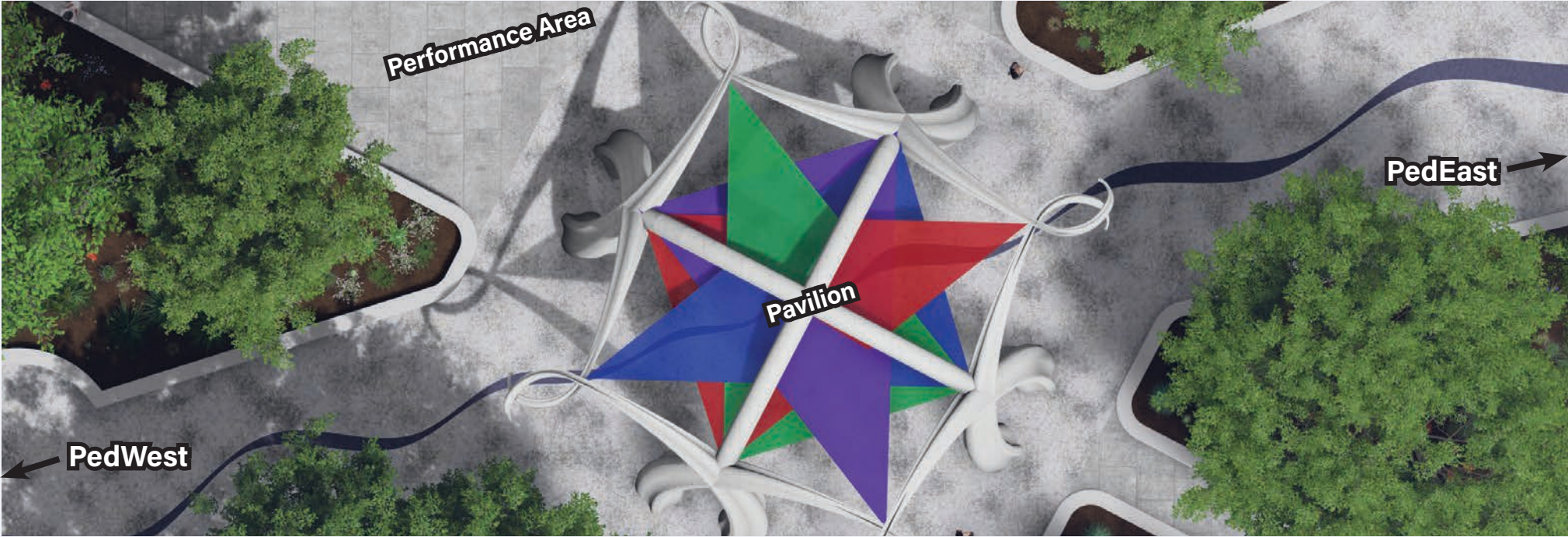
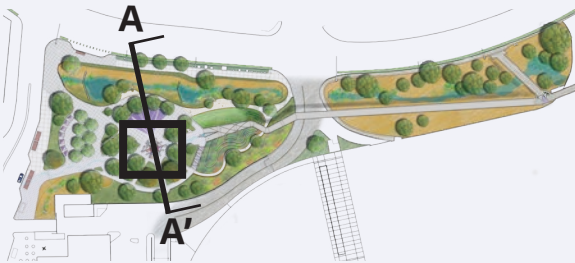


ENLARGEMENT: PAVILION

The central pavilion's footprint was designed to compliment the predicted desire paths of the plaza. Users can pass under any of the eight arches forms by the structure. The structure itself is a piece of art, but also provides shade uses colorful shade sails.

The structure is made from poured concrete. This material is strong and forbidding, just like Bighorn Sheep horns. There is a delicate nature to the ends of the twisting horns as well. This, along with the surrounding trees, softens the aesthetic of the structure.

KEY MAP:

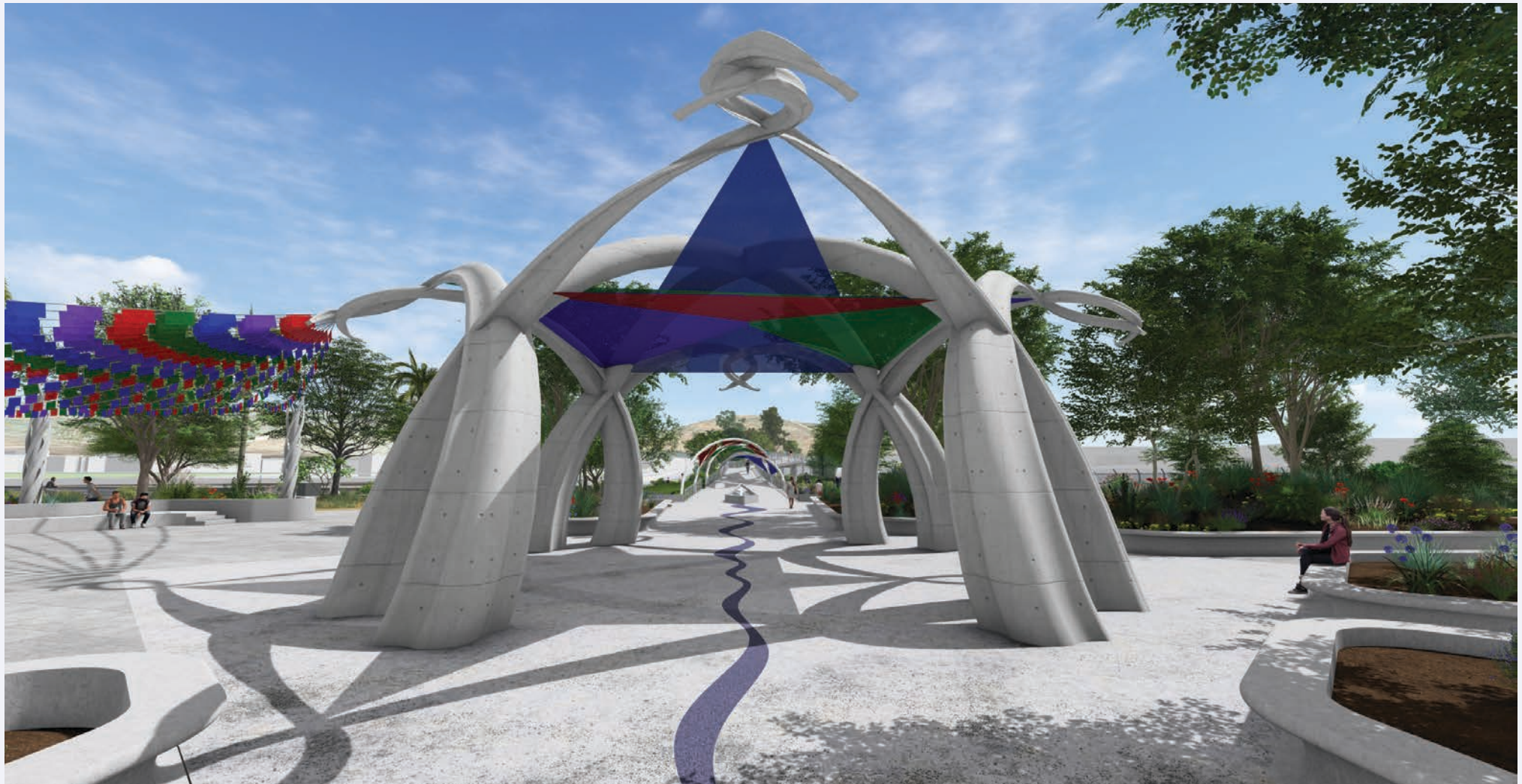


PERSPECTIVE: PAVILION

The pavilion was inspired by the horns of the Peninsular Bighorn Sheep. This animal's desire paths once blanketed this land. Unfortunately, the construction of the border wall disrupted their range. They can still be found in the nearby hills just to the east of the site.

The Bighorn Sheep also represents strength and resilience. Concepts that are key to any migration. The structure creates unique shadows. It uses vibrant shade sails to balance the formidable concrete pillars.

KEY MAP:

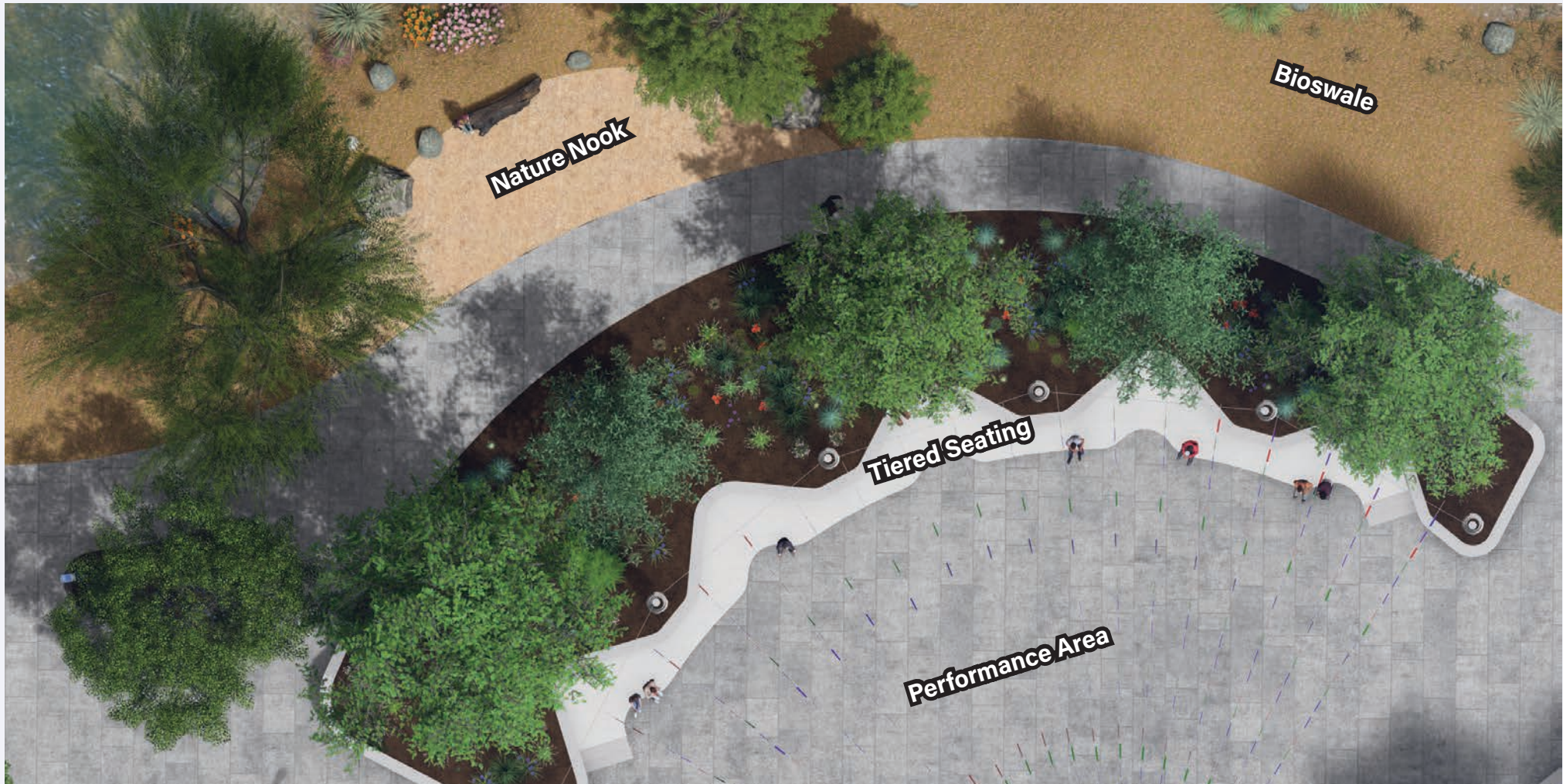


ENLARGEMENT: TIERED SEATING + NATURE NOOK

The tiered seating was carefully designed to be used while performances are not happening. Alcoves create small 'rooms' where families and friends can socialize. The planter island is planted with two species of trees along with colorful shrubs that are low growing.

The surface of the nature nook is DG and there are several trees surrounding it to create another 'outdoor room.' In the wet season, water flows just feet away from the nook. This areas is important for allowing users to step away from the busy areas and calm their sensee.

KEY MAP:



PERSPECTIVE: PERFORMANCE AREA

Possibly the most striking feature of this plaza is the canopy made from papel picado. A simple, yet impactful touch that alludes to Mexican culture while creating some shade.

There are two levels of seating. The entire seating mound is only three feet tall to allow for clear sight lines. The planter wall doubles as the top row of seating.

Two Mexican folk dancers are busking in this rendering. This type of dance is called baile folklórico (traditional Mexican folk dancing)

KEY MAP:



PERSPECTIVE: NATURE NOOK

Tucked away, this nook offers a quieter place for users to sit on boulders or logs and be close to the new and improved bioswale. This swale will have flowing water during and shortly after storm events in the winter months.

The tiered seating mound blocks some of the noise from the main plaza. Native willows are planted and users can feel like they are in nature for a moment. Plenty of trees are planted to the south, providing natural shade.

KEY MAP:



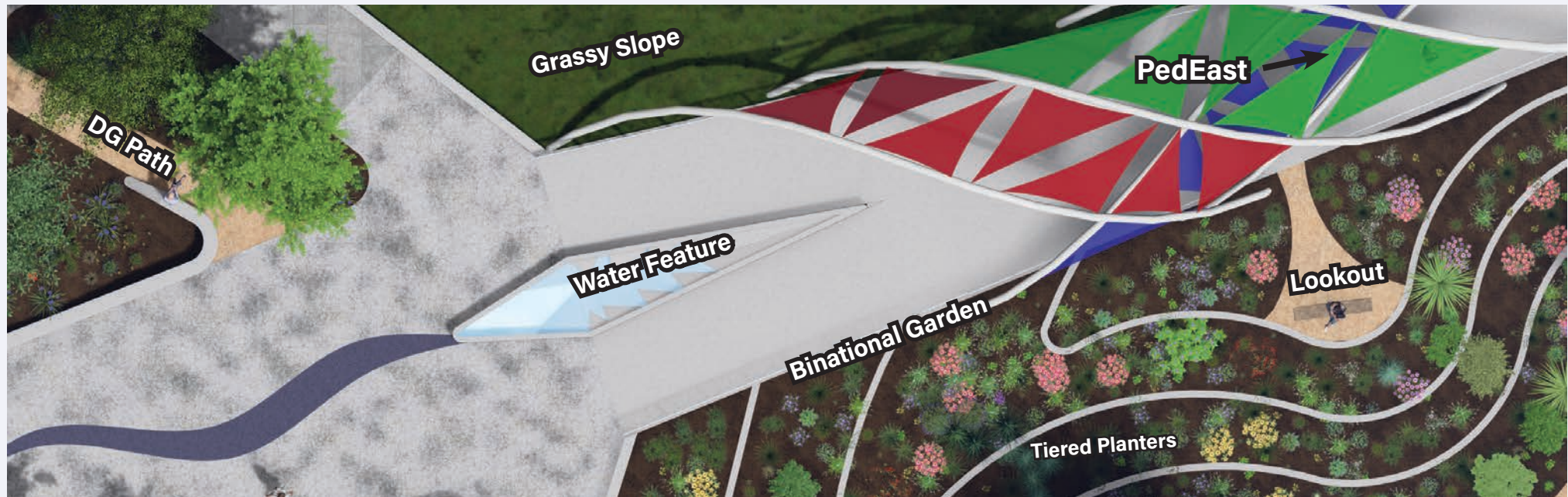
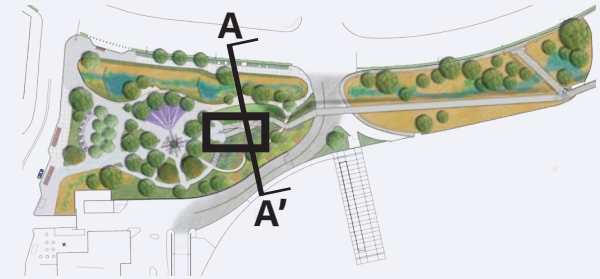
ENLARGEMENT: BRIDGE ENTRANCE

The entrance to the new pedestrian bridge is the main focal point of the plaza. A small water features mimics the triangular motif of the desire paths while also resembling the footprints of the Bighorn Sheep.

The helix structure has colorful shade sails, providing a shaded walking journey for users. A lookout area branches out to the south from one of the ramp landings.

Tiered retaining walls physically separate the main pathway from the Binational Garden.

KEY MAP:



Notice mounds are added between the Binational garden and the busy vehicular lanes

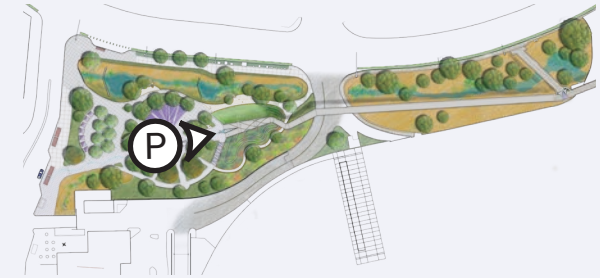
PERSPECTIVE: BRIDGE

A small water feature creates an illusion that it is spilling out and creating the creek in the hardscape. It creates a soothing sound of flowing water as well.

The metal helix structure over the bridge entrance is blanketed with colorful shade sails. It gives the illusion of entering a sort of vortex.

The grassy slope, to the left, is an opportunity to sit or lay on the ground. The first two landings of the ramp lead to this slope. Custom fences contain the triangle motif.

KEY MAP:



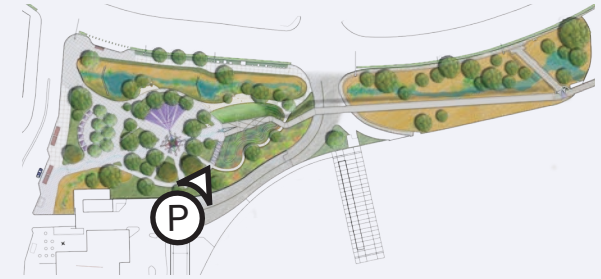
PERSPECTIVE: ARCHWAY

This one-of-a-kind shade archway tunnel was inspired by Quetzalcoatl Park in Mexico City. It compliments the vortex shape of the bridge structure.

It is made of concrete. Intricate mosaic fills the interior. Users can sit between each folded triangle in deep shade.

The entrance to the Binational garden is to the right. Delineated by a change in ground surface materials.

KEY MAP:

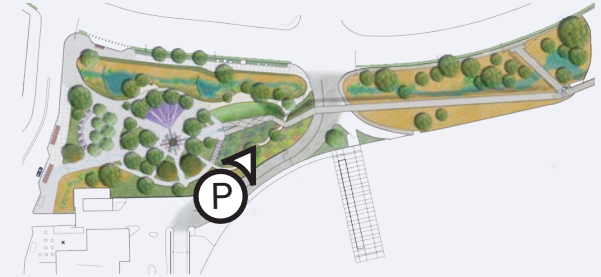


PERSPECTIVE: BINATIONAL GARDEN

The Binational Garden has undulating and tiered retaining walls to create visual interest. The right side is mounded and planted densely to help block noise and screen the adjacent vehicular border crossing lanes.

The garden is watered with recycled water. All plant species are either native to California or Mexico. Interpretive panels educate users on the plants and their origin as well as the migratory pollinators that visit them. Species like the endangered Quino Checkerspot Butterfly.

KEY MAP:



PLANT PALETTE: BINATIONAL GARDEN

Species Native to Mexico:



Bougainvillea
Bougainvillea 'Oo-La-La'



Peacock Flower
Caesalpinia pulcherrima



Mexican Grass Tree
Dasylirion longissimum



Mexican Bush Sage
Salvia leucantha



Mexican Fleabone
Erigeron karvinskianus

Species Native to California:



Cleveland Sage
Salvia clevelandii



California Lilac
Ceanothus 'Centennial'



Island Snapdragon
Gambelia speciosa



Dwarf Coyote Bush
Baccharis 'Pigeon Point'

These plants were chosen for their drought tolerance and hardiness. Sweet scents will emanate from the California Lilac and Cleveland Sage.

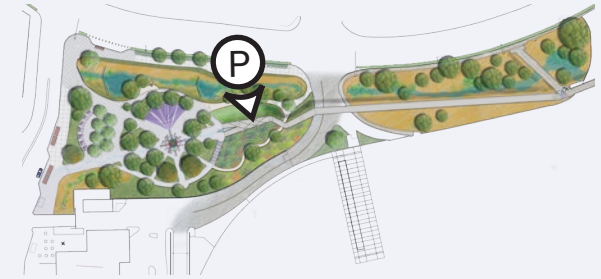
PERSPECTIVE: BINATIONAL GARDEN

This outlook is possibly the most scenic spot in the plaza. It provides views of the Binational Garden, downtown Tijuana, and the mosaic archway.

The tiered, curvilinear retaining walls create a beautiful wavy landscape with pops of color from the various flowering shrub species.

Migratory birds pass over. Species such as the Wilson's Warbler. Native pollinators also fly above. Like the Pipevine Swallowtail.

KEY MAP:



PERSPECTIVE: NORTHWEST ENTRANCE

The bioswale's infiltration capabilities are improved with two added weir walls. They are designed to pool water during rain events. These particular weir walls are called V-notch weir walls and have an overflow V-shaped notch in the center.

California native riparian plant species and boulders are added to increase infiltration, provide habitat, deter loiterers, and add beauty. These species were chosen for their deep roots and ability to tolerate standing water.

KEY MAP:

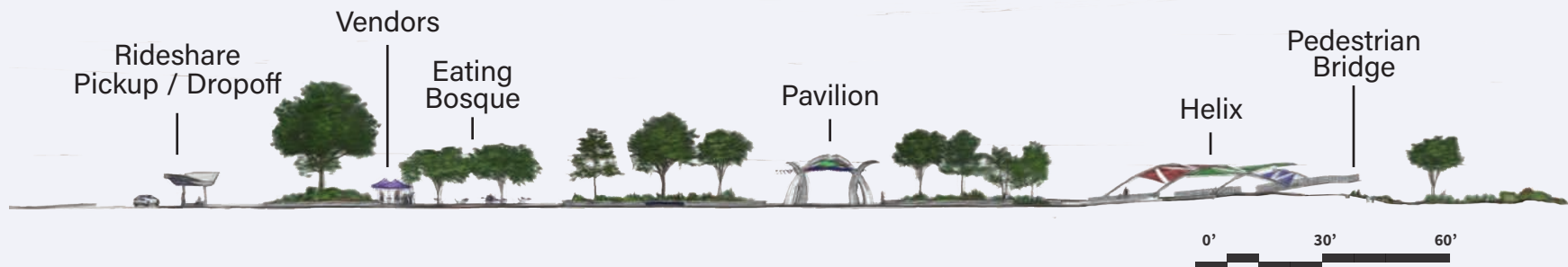
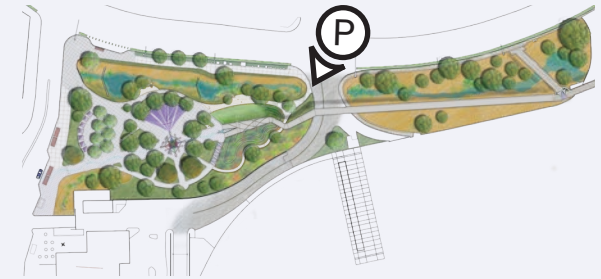


PERSPECTIVE: NORTHEAST ENTRANCE

The pathway at this entrance is wide enough for maintenance vehicles. Ample lighting is provided. The support pillars of the new bridge match the helix theme of the plaza.

This is the view border staff (those who drive to work) will have as they enter every day to start their work shift. The bioswale is to the right. A variety of native grasses and shrubs make the swale a habitat while also deterring loiterers or the establishment of encampments.

KEY MAP:



PERSPECTIVE: SCULPTURE NOOK

The seat alcove to the right is inspired by the seating in Tongva Park in Santa Monica. It is the ideal seat design for thermal comfort. It is built into the berm and is made of concrete, so it sinks heat into the earth. It is also north facing and shaded by trees.

On the left is an empty alcove. This is one of the spots in the park meant for a sculpture to rest, created by a local artist. This art can be rotating on a yearly basis.

KEY MAP:

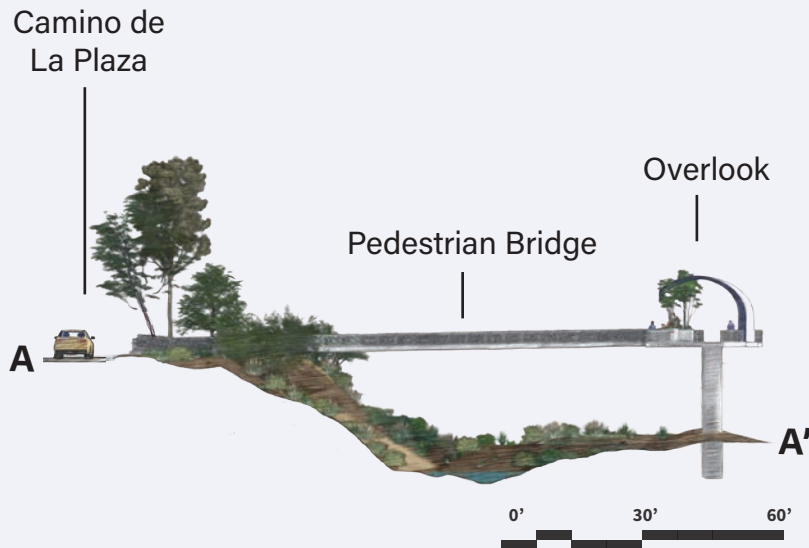


PERSPECTIVE: PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

The walk between PedWest and PedEast is 1/2 mile. This landing offers a place to sit and rest in the shade while enjoying some wonderful views. The shade structures mimics the archway found in the main plaza. Two planters with incorporated seating are designed here, with large shrubs to add more shade.

The swale below has been cleared of invasive shrubs. Eucalyptus remain but oaks are added. Many native riparian grasses and shrubs are planted as well.

KEY MAP:





Create a Welcoming Space

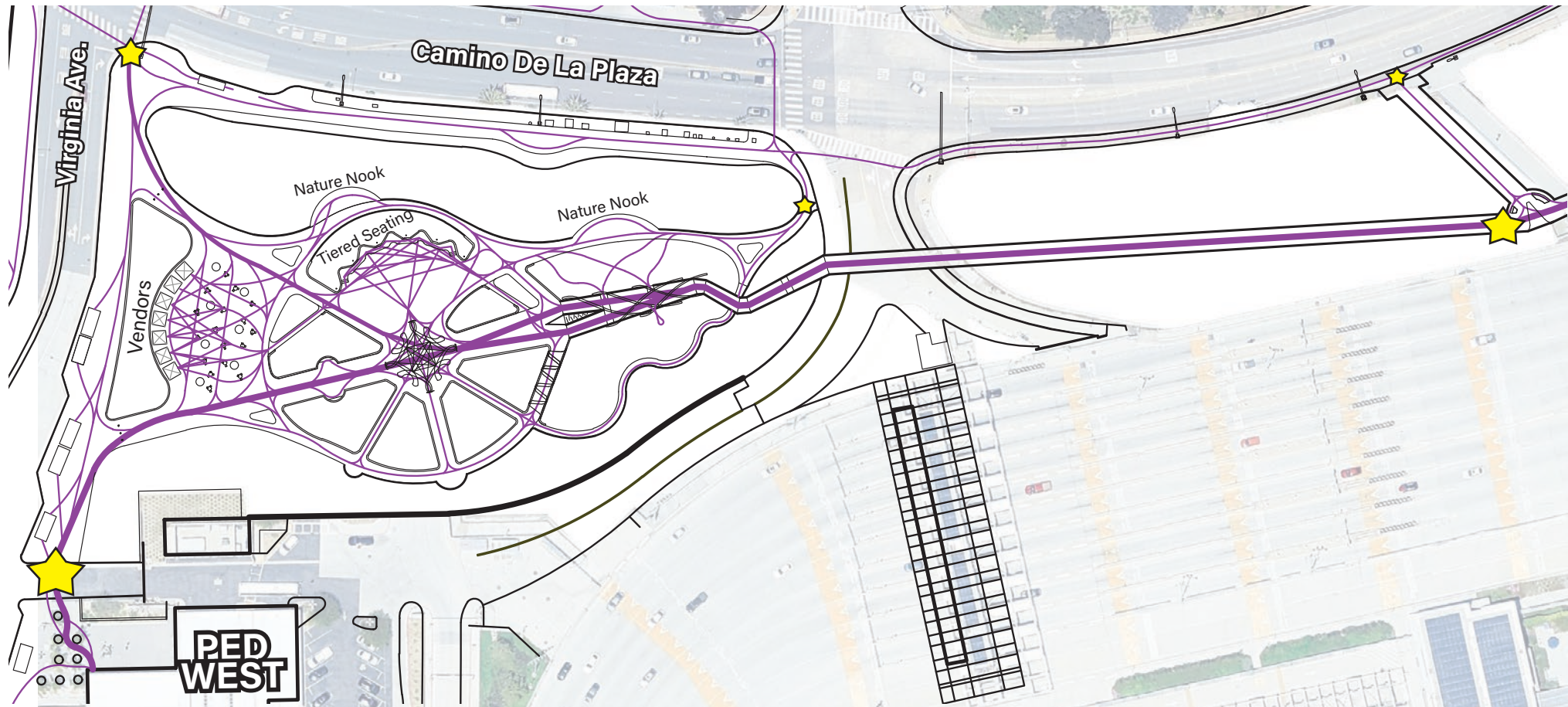
- Pavilion
- Vendor Area
- Dining Bosque
- Performance Area
- Sculptures and Mosaics

Improve & Beautify Connectivity

- New Staff Access Road
- New Pedestrian Bridge
- Water Feature
- Overlook
- Archway
- Added Bus Stop Pullout
- Class IV Bike Lane

Rehabilitate The Land

- Enlarged Bioswale
- Weir Walls
- Binational Garden
- Planter Islands
- Added 78 Trees



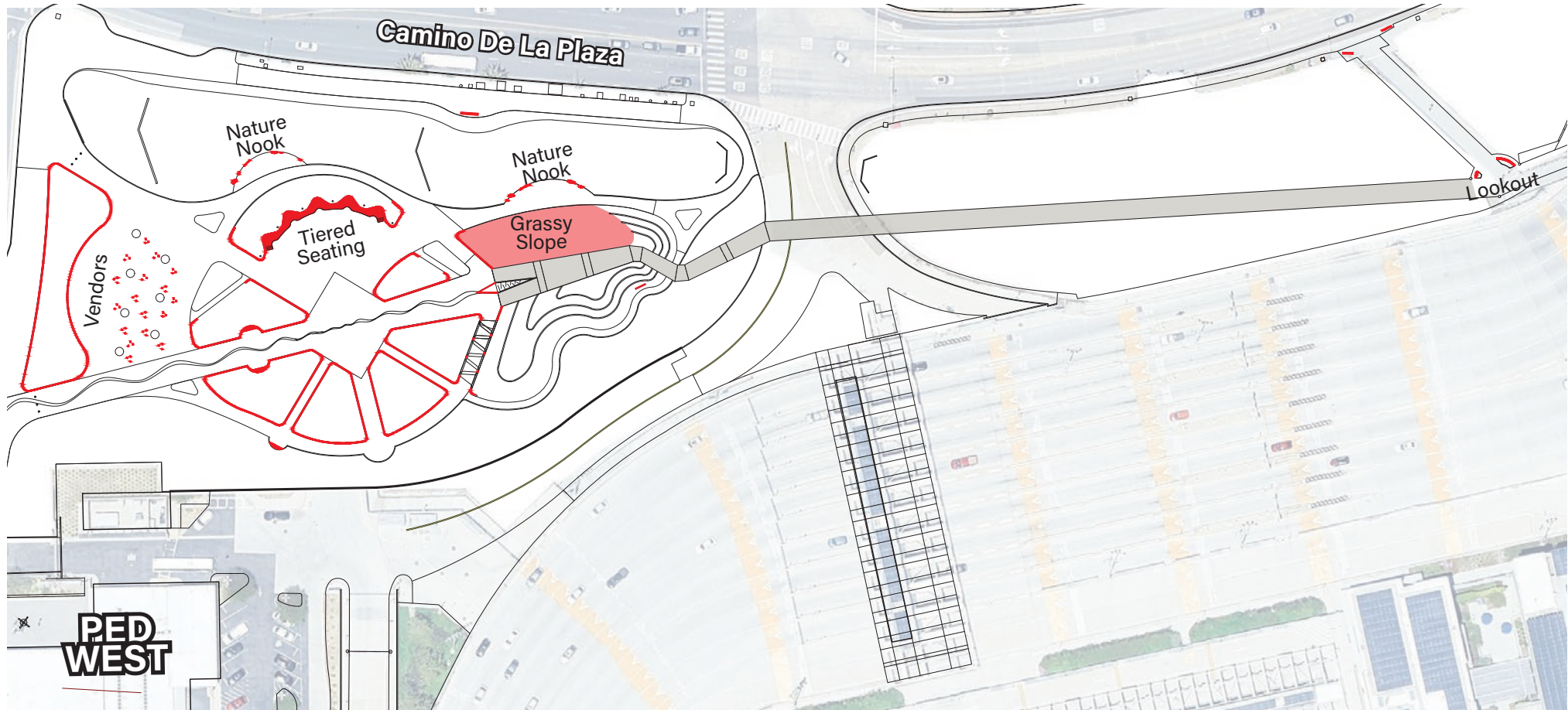
LEGEND:

-  Pedestrian Circulation
-  Access Point



This diagram shows the new, proposed desire paths of the plaza. The dangerous crosswalk was eliminated and the new pedestrian bridge creates a safer walking route for the thousands of daily visitors.

Thicker lines show more utilized routes. The pathway widths are to match these predicted flow patterns. Secondary paths connect busy program elements like the performance area to the vendors.



LEGEND:

— Seating

The site went from having a single seat wall to having enough seating to accommodate over 800 people. A variety of seating, including seat walls, cafe tables, a grassy hill, amphitheater-style seating, and nature nooks with logs and boulders.

Seating is included on the bridge as well to provide a place to rest halfway. This is important for senior citizens and people with disabilities.

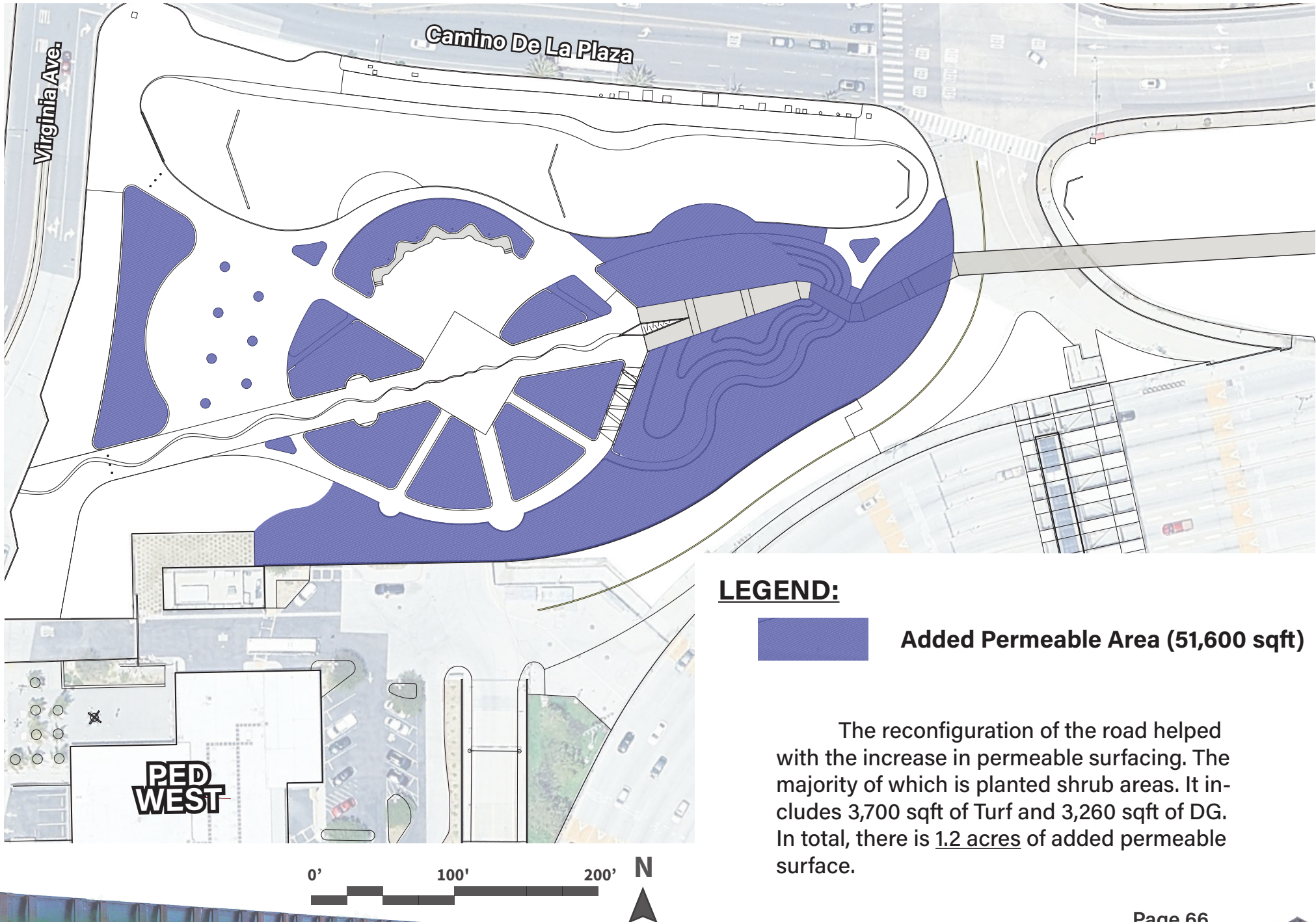


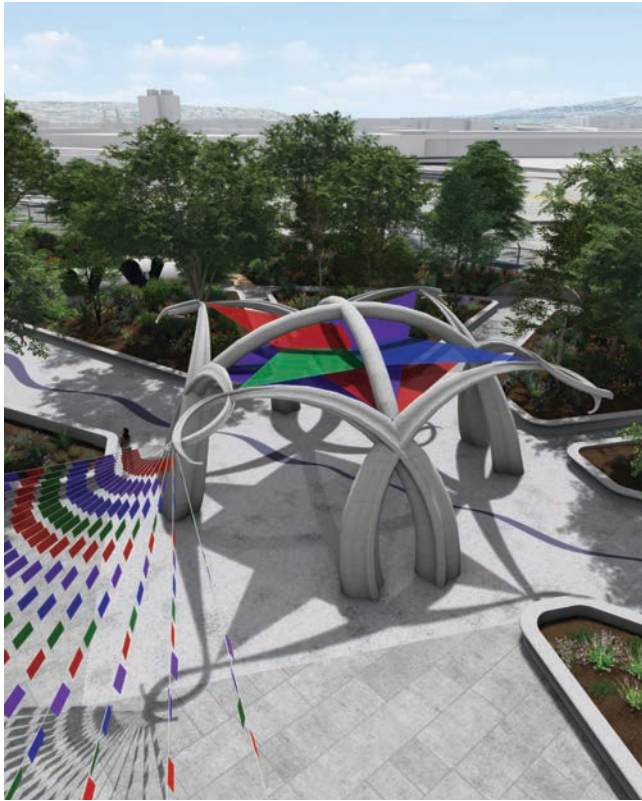
Existing Seating Capacity: 20 People

Proposed Seating Capacity: 800+ People

- Seat Walls
- Cafe Tables
- Grassy Slope
- Tiered Seating
- Logs & Boulders
- Benches

INCREASED PERMEABILITY





Bighorn Pavilion



Mosaic Archway



Fountain + Helix

Art pieces were designed to compliment each other, creating a cohesive them. All art alludes to the big idea of desire paths. Pedestrians pass under or through all of these pieces. The same color palette is used for all, using the colors of the Mexican and American flags plus the color purple to add a fun, youthful element.

The design process included hand sketching, drafting in AutoCAD, 3D modeling with Sketchup, and rendering with Lumion.

These art pieces add perspective, they invite users to move through them. They ignite joy and help sooth the senses of travelers and commuters. Overall, they help create a more welcoming space.

THANK YOU!



Historical Photos

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Justification

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Style Blending: Mexico & USA

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