



# Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)

## Agenda

**August 23, 2023 @ 2:00 pm**

City-Hall - Commission Chambers  
401 S. Park Avenue

### welcome

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"If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Board with respect to any matter considered at this hearing, a record of the proceedings is needed to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based." (F.S. 286.0105).

### please note

Times are projected and subject to change.

- 
1. **Called to Order**
  2. **Public Comments (for items not on the agenda): Three minutes allowed for each speaker**
  3. **Consent Agenda**
    - a. Approve the minutes of January 11, 2023. 1 minute
    - b. CRA Agency meeting dates FY2024 1 minute
  4. **Action Items**
    - a. FY23-24 budget 60 minutes
  5. **Staff Updates**
  6. **Board Comments**
  7. **Adjournment**





Community  
Redevelopment  
Agency (CRA)

# agenda item

item type	Consent Agenda	meeting date	August 23, 2023
prepared by	Rene Cranis	approved by	Michelle del Valle, Randy Knight
board approval	Completed		
strategic objective			

## subject

Approve the minutes of January 11, 2023.

## motion / recommendation

Approve.

## background

## alternatives / other considerations

## fiscal impact

## ATTACHMENTS:

[CRA-min-2023-01-11.pdf](#)



# Community Redevelopment Agency Regular Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.

City Hall, Commission Chambers  
401 S. Park Avenue | Winter Park, Florida

## Present

Mayor Phil Anderson; Commissioners Marty Sullivan, Sheila DeCiccio, Kris Cruzada and Todd Weaver; Orange County Representative Hal George; City Manager Randy Knight, Assistant City Manager Michelle del Valle; City Clerk Rene Cranis

### 1) Called to Order

Mayor Anderson called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

### 2) Public Comments (for items not on the agenda)

### 3) Consent Agenda

- a. Approve the minutes of November 9, 2022

**Motion made by Commissioner Weaver to approve the Consent Agenda; seconded by Hal George. Motion carried unanimously with a 6-0 vote.**

### 4) Action Items

- a. Request for Funding - Park Avenue District Main Street Program

Assistant Division Director of Economic Development and CRA Kyle Dudgeon provided the background of this request and reviewed the provisions of the agreement.

**Motion made by Commissioner DeCiccio to approve the agreement as recommended; seconded by Commissioner Weaver.** There were no public comments.  
**Motion carried unanimously with a 6-0 vote.**

### 5) Staff Updates

Mr. Dudgeon advised that the RFP for the CRA extension and expansion has been released.

Mayor Anderson the Economic Development Advisory Board has been working on a review of the uniqueness of Park Avenue and how to extend it to other corridors. Mr. Dudgeon said EDAB is trying to discern retail make up and successes that may extend beyond Park Avenue and looking at ways to extend successes beyond Park Avenue. A report will be presented in near future. Mayor Anderson provided information of the components of the study and plans for next phase/implementation.

**6) Board Comments**

**7) Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:11 p.m.

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Mayor Phillip M. Anderson

ATTEST:

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City Clerk Rene Cranis



Community  
Redevelopment  
Agency (CRA)

# agenda item

item type Consent Agenda	meeting date August 23, 2023
prepared by Kyle Dudgeon	approved by Peter Moore, Michelle del Valle, Randy Knight
board approval Completed	
strategic objective	

## subject

CRA Agency meeting dates FY2024

## motion / recommendation

Approve as presented.

## background

As a best practice and consistent with Florida Statute, staff is proposing a calendar for CRA meetings for FY24. Meetings may be added, cancelled, or modified as necessary, but this allows the Agency the opportunity to communicate with the public regarding future meetings. Proposed dates are as follows:

November 8, 2024

February 28, 2024

July 25, 2024 (work session)

August 28, 2024

## alternatives / other considerations

Amend calendar dates

## fiscal impact

N/A



Community  
Redevelopment  
Agency (CRA)

# agenda item

item type Action Items	meeting date August 23, 2023
prepared by Kyle Dudgeon	approved by Peter Moore, Michelle del Valle, Randy Knight
board approval Completed	
strategic objective	

## subject

FY23-24 budget

## motion / recommendation

Approve as presented

## background

CRA budget highlights:

### *Revenue:*

Budget estimates suggest increment revenue will increase 10%. With added interest earnings and revenue totals are projected at \$8.44 million. Contributions from Orange County over \$2 million in increment revenue are met with a 30% rebate and a 50% rebate of contributions over \$3 million. The CRA will rebate \$1,300,000 to the County as part of this agreement. This will be the fifth-year increment revenue contributions to the trust fund by the City exceed that of the County.

### *Expenses:*

Through August 2023, actual expenditures of the CRA are expected to be in-line with budgeted estimates by fiscal year-end. As a result, staff has proposed a budget that maintains all debt service payments, supports operations, fulfills all contracts, provides funding for existing programs and includes capital improvement projects. For FY23-24, general personnel and indirect costs are expected to each stay at ten percent or below of total expenditures. Debt Service shows no significant change. The table below demonstrates budget expense categories consistent with the proforma for FY23-24.

### **FY23-24 CRA Budget Expenses**

**%**

Personnel & Indirect Costs	\$660,177	9%
General Operating	\$523,833	7%
Community Initiatives	\$932,500	13%
Capital Maintenance	\$130,000	2%
Debt Service	\$1,071,284	15%
Proposed Additional Projects	\$3,950,000	54%

*Personnel & Indirect Costs:* Identified as any cost related to salaries, wages, and benefits.

*General Operating:* Costs associated with operating supplies, memberships, books, periodicals, equipment, promotional activities, travel and training, and contractual services.

*Community Initiatives:* Includes CRA resident and business programs, support funding for the Winter Park Community Center and other nonprofits. Staff has added, at minimum, an additional 10% to support funding to combat inflation.

*Capital Maintenance:* Funding for parking agreements within the CRA district.

*Debt Service:* Approved bonds through the CRA. Bonds are expected through the existing life of the district.

*Capital Projects:* Projects included as part of the capital improvement plan (e.g. FY23-24 proforma). This also includes miscellaneous enhancement projects such as past examples of weekend Sunrail, the moonlight garden project, downtown sidewalk repair, parking sensors, and pedestrian safety improvements such as rapid rectangular flashing beacons (RRFBs). The intention is to provide opportunities within the budget for the CRA to respond quickly to requests and immediate concerns.

## **Capital Improvement Plan**

The proposed capital improvement plan estimates future increment revenue growth, project costs, and Agency direction into the remaining life of the CRA. At this time, conservative growth (roughly 4.0% average) is presumed through 2027. For reference, the attached CRA pro forma sheet hypothesizes potential future increment growth yet to be determined.

## **Funding Highlights**

The chart below represents highlights of new funding for the upcoming fiscal year divided by project, program, and social and event:

*Budget Highlights:*

<b><i>Project Funding</i></b>	<b><i>Cost</i></b>	<b><i>Budget Category</i></b>
MLK Park Enhancements	\$2,000,000	Capital Projects
17-92 Streetscape	\$1,000,000	Capital Projects
Central Park Area Improvements (Public Facility Enhancements)	\$750,000	Capital Projects
Small Scale CRA Projects Fund	\$140,000	Misc. Capital Enhancement
<b><i>Program Funding</i></b>		
Affordable Housing (Housing Rehab Program)	\$200,000	Community Initiatives
Business Façade Program	\$100,000	Community Initiatives
Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)	\$30,000	Community Initiatives
Residential Driveway Program	\$9,000	Community Initiatives
Residential Paint Program	\$9,000	Community Initiatives
<b><i>Social &amp; Event Funding</i></b>		
Winter Park Library	\$350,000	Community Initiatives
Community Center Programming	\$60,000	Community Initiatives
Heritage Center Operations	\$50,000	Community Initiatives
Winter Park Playhouse	\$44,000	Community Initiatives
Welbourne Nursery Program	\$38,500	Community Initiatives
Snow in the Park	\$35,000	General Operating
Depugh Nursing Home	\$22,000	Community Initiatives
Organizational Support Grant	\$10,000	Community Initiatives
Popcorn Flicks	\$10,000	Community Initiatives
<b><i>Total:</i></b>	<b><i>\$4,835,500</i></b>	

The table highlights over \$4.8 million of new investment by the CRA to the district in project, program, and social & event funding. Included for discussion are the MLK Park Enhancement project, 17-92 Streetscape, Central Park Area Improvements (Public Facility), Small Scale CRA Projects, and program updates.

### **MLK Park Enhancement**

Under redevelopment goals and objectives sections 1.8, 1.9, and 6.5 of the 1999 CRA plan highlights the need to beautify the corridor including "to augment and improve open space", "to showcase Lake Island (MLK) Park", and "to resolve stormwater pollution issues." To that end, the CRA budget includes \$2.0 million to continue the improvements to MLK Park that began in FY22 with replacement of the fields and funding of the MLK Memorial Corner. Remaining enhancements include cultural and historical signage, improved lighting and sidewalks, parking improvements, restroom & playground area enhancements, and funding contingency for stormwater upgrades. Over the past year,

City staff along with consultant Dix-Hite, held meetings with the Parks and Recreation board (PRAB), Community Redevelopment board (CRA), and community input meetings related to the Community Playground at MLK Park. The attached conceptual design was brought forward at a joint PRAB/CRA meeting that ensures preservation of key structures and identity of the current playground. The intent is to keep with the desire of residents that value the legacy of the area, while also accommodating aspirational new elements to the park. These include better visibility, water features (spray play), accessibility, line of sight adjustments, inclusiveness, and modern safety standards.

Staff's intent is to move forward with the project in phases. This provides continual usage of the park while improvement are made. Given the uncertain nature of material and labor costs, staff is continuing to hone in on a final price, but feel this allocation largely gets the entirety of the project funded.

### **17-92 Streetscape**

The \$1,000,000 for improvements to U.S. 17-92, or Orlando Avenue, is the first of a three year allocation consistent with the local match required by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). While this \$5.2 million dollar improvement may adjust given the rise in material in labor costs, it accounts for the pre-existing estimates for intersection improvements at Orlando Avenue and Fairbanks, Morse, and Webster Avenue including mast arms, landscaping, pedestrian curbing, and utility improvements including stormwater. In addition, the CRA's local contribution will provide for sidewalk improvements in excess of six feet where applicable and additional landscaping. Staff is currently working with FDOT and consultants on new valuations for the proposed work.

### **Central Park Area Improvements: Public Facility**

The CRA plan Policy 7.3A, directs that where possible, the Agency shall enhance public spaces and facilities with land purchases, park improvements, and facility upgrades. In addition, Policy 8.6D states open spaces shall be coordinated to provide a cohesive neighborhood. Further, table 6-1 of the 1994 plan illustrates Central Park as an eligible funding area for increment financing. As a framework, staff has engaged with a consultant on a concept for Central Park restrooms. The proposal took into consideration location, efficiency of storage to staff, and public park amenity improvements. Staff is working with the consultant on providing adjustments based on Agency direction at the August 10th work session. To that end, staff is recommending moving forward with a budget allocation that will be revised, along with the concept through the FY24 year that will be brought back as early as the November meeting. If there is consensus to move forward at that point, the board may move to design, or design and build as part of its currently allocated budget. The concept has been vetted and will continue to be coordinated and communicated among staff, the CRA/Parks Advisory board, Park Avenue merchants, and users of the park (Farmer's Market patrons and vendors, stakeholders, and the public at large).



### **Small Scale CRA Projects Fund:**

The purpose of this line item is to be responsive to needs and concerns not considered as part of the city's budget within a given year. Put differently, it provides a financial opportunity to elevate the city's level of service not considered in the city's budget. For example, the Parks Department has requested assistance with a project to improve sightlines in the Central Park area. The refuse staging area, located at the southern end of Central Park is an unattractive but necessary component of the park facility. A screen could be utilized to block the area the view and improve the overall area appearance and experience. Screening the waste staging would be an improvement to the area and would serve to benefit the CRA.

The CRA plan has the ability through the contributive programs mechanism, to assist in accomplishing specific objectives, in the case to improve the overall appeal and appearance of the public area, and to meet and exceed accepted landscape requirements to screen a waste/refuse staging area from public view. The CRA plan addresses small scale projects such as this through objectives and policies specifically Objective 3.4: Landscaping - To emphasize and reinforce the "Park-Like" feeling within the CRA.

Similarly, this line item also accounts for continual improvements on Center Street, such as the previously approved condensate disposal improvement program currently underway. Staff is currently putting together a list of interested businesses so contracted vendors have the opportunity to address collectively.

### **Program Updates**

The budget provides for updates to both the CRA's business façade and housing rehabilitation program. Changes from last year include a new time certain before reapplication by business façade property owners/lessees and an updated cap of \$30,000 for eligible rehabilitation improvements including emergency provisions for natural disasters such as hurricanes.

### **Support Funding**

Funding for supporting partners has increased by 10% at minimum to account for inflation. The budget also accounts for Agency direction to include an allocation for the Winter Park library of \$350,000.

### **alternatives / other considerations**

Amend the budget

Do not approve the budget

### **fiscal impact**

Impacts have been provided for in the budget

ATTACHMENTS:

[Ten Year Pro-Forma - FY 2024\\_rev.pdf](#)

ATTACHMENTS:

[Insights\\_for\\_Community\\_Playground\\_Press\\_Release.pdf](#)

ATTACHMENTS:

[Schematic\\_Playground\\_Rev\\_1\\_\\_1\\_.pdf](#)

ATTACHMENTS:

[17-92-2019-01-22 Public Info Open House Information.pdf](#)

ATTACHMENTS:

[SITE PLAN-34x22\\_DEMO.pdf](#)

ATTACHMENTS:

[SITE PLAN-34x22\\_SITE PLAN.pdf](#)

ATTACHMENTS:

[Park\\_Avenue\\_Gateway\\_Entrance\\_Sign.pdf](#)

**Community Redevelopment Agency 10-Year Proforma**

	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031	FY 2032	FY 2033	
ESTIMATED REVENUES											
TIF Revenue - City	4,523,207	4,794,599	4,986,383	5,086,111							
TIF Revenue - County	3,650,830	3,869,880	4,024,675	4,105,168							
Investment Earnings	269,332	30,000	30,000	30,000							
Misc. Revenues	-	-	-	-							
CRA Revenues	8,443,369	8,694,479	9,041,058	9,221,280							
Fund Balance	-	-	-	-							
Total Revenues	8,443,369	8,694,479	9,041,058	9,221,280							
ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES											
Personnel & Indirect Costs	660,177	696,156	725,333	751,712							
General Operating	523,833	543,429	561,217	576,998							
Community Initiatives	932,500	938,100	943,196	947,717							
Capital Maintenance	130,000	135,200	139,932	144,130							
Misc. Capital Enhancements	140,000	140,000	140,000	140,000							
Debt Service & Transfers	1,071,284	1,066,442	710,568	-							
Total Expenditures	3,457,794	3,519,327	3,220,246	2,560,556							
Annual Surplus/Deficit (Funding Available for Additional Projects and Programs)	4,985,575	5,175,152	5,820,812	6,660,723							
Proposed Project Addl. Funding	Est. Totals	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031	FY 2032	FY 2033
17/92 Streetscape	5,185,228	1,000,000	2,000,000	2,185,228	-						
MLK Park Improvements	2,000,000	2,000,000	-	-	-						
Post Office Purchase	7,075,000	-	4,500,000	2,575,000	-						
Parking Improvements	7,000,000	-	-	-	7,000,000						
Infrastructure Improvements (Placeholder e.g. stormwater)	-	-	-	-	-						
Central Park Stage Area Improvements	750,000	750,000	-	-	-						
Proposed CRA Project Funding Total	22,010,228	3,750,000	6,500,000	4,760,228	7,000,000						
Fund Surplus/Deficit		1,235,575	(1,324,848)	1,060,584	(339,277)						
Cumulative Fund Balance (Reserves)	279,970	1,515,545	190,697	1,251,282	912,005						



401 South Park Avenue • Winter Park, Florida 32789

Communications

**Media Inquiries: Clarissa Howard**  
407-599-3428 • 407-948-2044 cell

## PRESS RELEASE

### Public meeting scheduled to review concepts for Community Playground at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park

**WINTER PARK, FL, an internationally recognized, award winning city with multiple accredited agencies (January 31, 2023)** The [City of Winter Park](#) and its [Community Redevelopment Agency](#) (CRA) will host a community meeting on **Tuesday, February 7, at 6 p.m.**, in the Winter Park Community Center located at 721 West New England Avenue. The purpose of this meeting is to review concepts developed from the public and stakeholder input received regarding enhancements to the Community Playground and surrounding area in [Martin Luther King, Jr. Park](#).



During the summer 2022, the city held public meetings to receive feedback on necessary renovation and upgrades of the [Community Playground](#), also known as Castle Park. After decades of wear and tear, the playground is in need of enhancements including improvements to bring the playground into compliance with today's safety standards.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park has become enlivened and engaged with the opening of the new [Winter Park Library & Events Center](#) in 2021, which overlooks Lake Mendsen and the 23-acre park. In recent years, the CRA has worked to establish parameters for public investment into the park, including a memorial corner near the intersection of South Denning Drive and West Morse Boulevard, and an overall park concepts package.

For additional information regarding the community meeting, please contact the Parks & Recreation Department at [407-599-3357](#) or [MLKParkReno@cityofwinterpark.org](mailto:MLKParkReno@cityofwinterpark.org).

###

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Certified WCAG 2.1 Level AA compliant and usable with JAWS and NVDA by SWH

# Community Playground At Martin Luther King, Jr. Park

**Sent**

Tue, Jan 31, 2023 3:08 pm

Community Playground at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park

Sent 1/31/23 3:08PM

Overview

1,268 Recipients

Audience: citEnews Winter Park (Segment: City News)

Delivered: Tue, Jan 31, 2023 3:08 pm

Subject: Martin Luther King, Jr. Park Community Playground Community Meeting

759 Opened	12 Clicked	3 Bounced	1 Unsubscribed
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Successful deliveries	1,265	99.8%	Clicks per unique opens	1.6%
Total opens	1,197		Total clicks	27
Last opened	3/22/23 12:15PM		Last clicked	2/11/23 9:02AM
Forwarded	0		Abuse reports	0

0 Orders	\$0.00 <u>Average order revenue</u>	\$0.00 <u>Total revenue</u>
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Community Playground at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park

Opens by location

Sent 1/31/23 3:08PM

Country	Opens	Percent
 USA	642	91.2%
 Sweden	54	7.7%
 Canada	2	0.3%
 Romania	2	0.3%
 Brazil	1	0.1%
 Costa Rica	1	0.1%
 France	1	0.1%
	1	0.1%

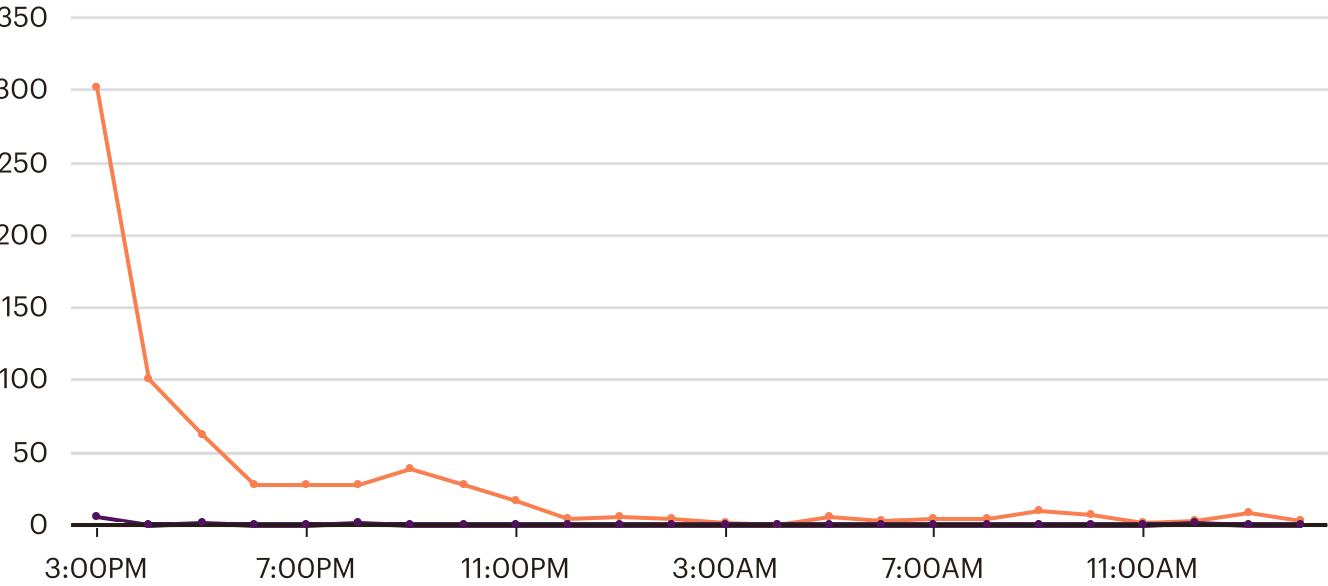
Community Playground at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park

# Subscriber activity

Sent 1/31/23 3:08PM

## 24-hour performance

Opens Clicks



## Subscribers with most opens

bunks02.carbons@icloud.com	6
fountainrx16@gmail.com	6
ledarcey@gmail.com	5
chughes@epochresidential.com	6
mikeadloo@gmail.com	7



## Community Playground at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park

Sent 1/31/23 3:08PM

## Click performance

URL	Total	Unique
<a href="https://cityofwinterpark.org/departments/parks-recrea...">https://cityofwinterpark.org/departments/parks-recrea...</a>	8 (29.6%)	6 (35.3%)
<a href="https://cityofwinterpark.org/departments/parks-recrea...">https://cityofwinterpark.org/departments/parks-recrea...</a>	4 (14.8%)	4 (23.5%)
<a href="https://cityofwinterpark.org/facebook/">https://cityofwinterpark.org/facebook/</a>	4 (14.8%)	1 (5.9%)
<a href="https://cityofwinterpark.org/twitter/">https://cityofwinterpark.org/twitter/</a>	4 (14.8%)	1 (5.9%)
<a href="https://cityofwinterpark.org/instagram/">https://cityofwinterpark.org/instagram/</a>	3 (11.1%)	1 (5.9%)
<a href="https://cityofwinterpark.org/departments/parks-recrea...">https://cityofwinterpark.org/departments/parks-recrea...</a>	2 (7.4%)	2 (11.8%)
<a href="https://cityofwinterpark.org/departments/administrati...">https://cityofwinterpark.org/departments/administrati...</a>	1 (3.7%)	1 (5.9%)
<a href="https://cityofwinterpark.org/events/">https://cityofwinterpark.org/events/</a>	1 (3.7%)	1 (5.9%)
<a href="https://cityofwinterpark.org/">https://cityofwinterpark.org/</a>	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
<a href="https://cityofwinterpark.org/citenews/">https://cityofwinterpark.org/citenews/</a>	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
<a href="https://cityofwinterpark.org/vimeo/">https://cityofwinterpark.org/vimeo/</a>	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
<a href="https://cityofwinterpark.org/youtube/">https://cityofwinterpark.org/youtube/</a>	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
<a href="https://goo.gl/maps/cMXU6">https://goo.gl/maps/cMXU6</a>	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)

Community Playground at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park

Sent 1/31/23 3:08PM

Advanced reports

Email Domain Performance

Domain	Email	Bounces	Opens	Clicks	Unsubs
gmail.com	463 (37%)	1 (0%)	318 (69%)	6 (1%)	0 (0%)
yahoo.com	150 (12%)	0 (0%)	89 (59%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)
aol.com	117 (9%)	0 (0%)	81 (69%)	2 (2%)	1 (1%)
cfl.rr.com	89 (7%)	0 (0%)	56 (63%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
hotmail.com	79 (6%)	1 (1%)	28 (36%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Other	370 (29%)	1 (0%)	187 (51%)	3 (1%)	0 (0%)

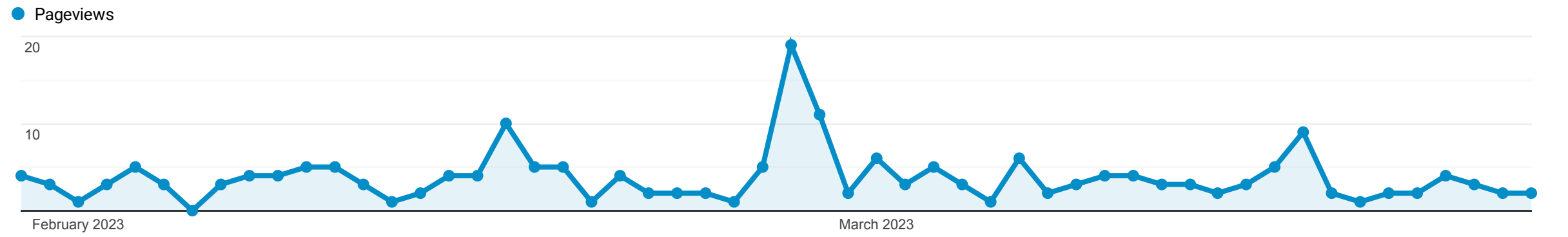
Pages

All Users

100.00% Pageviews

Jan 30, 2023 - Mar 24, 2023

Explorer



This data was filtered with the following filter expression: `/government/projects/mlk-jr-park-renovations-project/`

Page	Pageviews	Unique Pageviews	Avg. Time on Page	Entrances	Bounce Rate	% Exit	Page Value
	203 % of Total: 0.07% (284,312)	185 % of Total: 0.08% (242,668)	00:03:12 Avg for View: 00:01:53 (69.63%)	65 % of Total: 0.04% (157,593)	44.62% Avg for View: 50.08% (-10.92%)	53.69% Avg for View: 55.43% (-3.13%)	\$0.00 % of Total: 0.00% (\$0.00)
1. /government/projects/mlk-jr-park-renovations-project/	203 (100.00%)	185 (100.00%)	00:03:12	65 (100.00%)	44.62%	53.69%	\$0.00 (0.00%)

Rows 1 - 1 of 1

<https://cityofwinterpark.org/government/projects/mlk-jr-park-renovations-project/>

City of Winter Park

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MLK, Jr. Park Renovations Project

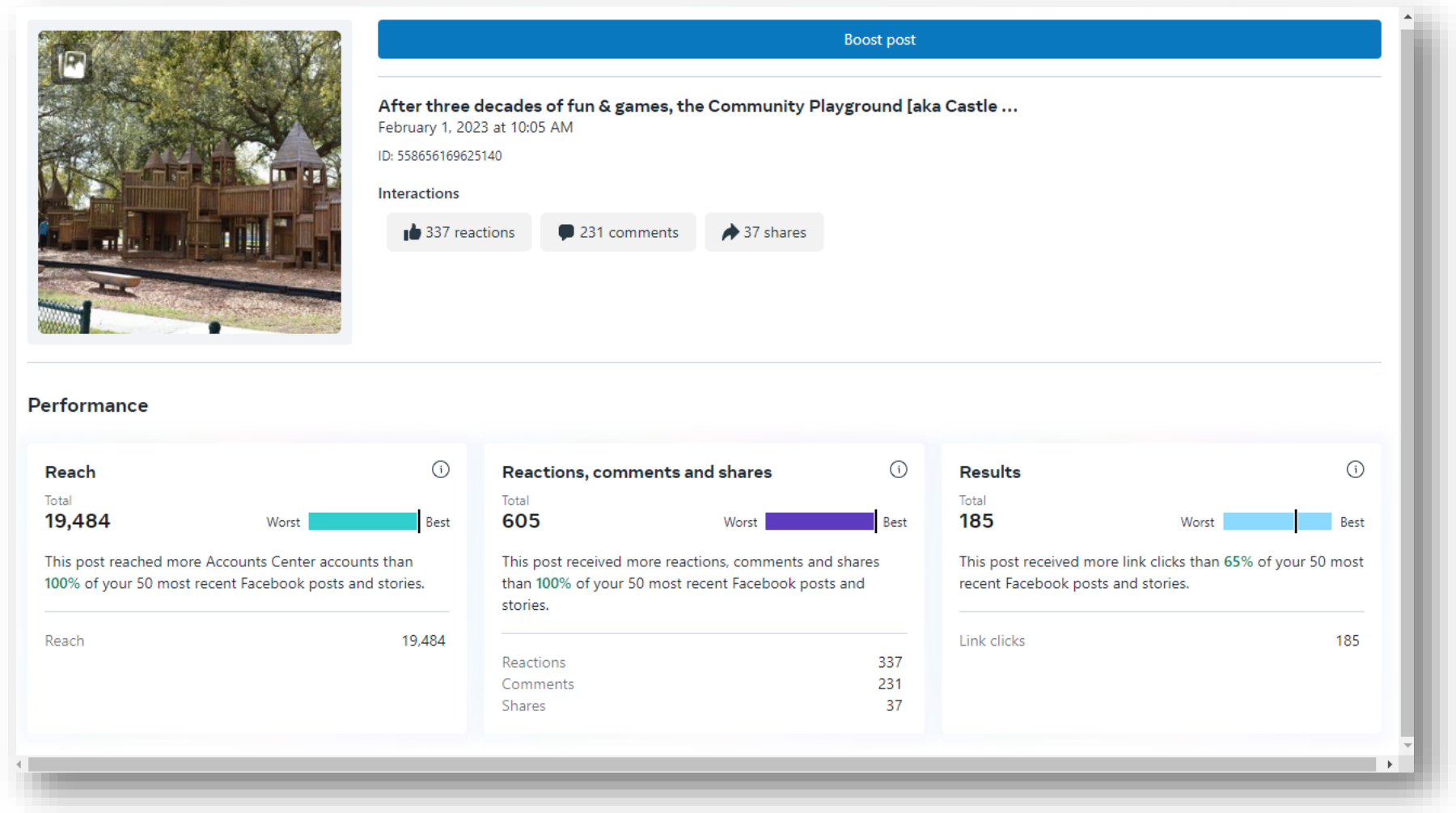
[City of Winter Park](#) > [Government](#) > [Projects](#) > MLK, Jr. Park Renovations Project

Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Park is anchored by a tranquil lake featuring a relaxing fountain and a community-built Unity Bridge. This peaceful setting encompasses 23-acres of beautiful scenery, sports and recreation facilities, and the popular Community Playground. The park is perfect for family picnics, fishing from the bridge, sports outings, or just walking along the half-mile mile trail surrounding the lake.

To further enhance MLK Park while honoring the legacy of Dr. King and the historic Hannibal Square neighborhood, this project is focusing on better neighborhood and internal connections, integrating recreational and cultural programming, and strengthening environmental sustainability.

# Social Media Insights

## Facebook post





Nextdoor



City of Winter Park ✓

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Public meeting scheduled to review concepts for Community Playground at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park . The City of Winter Park and its Community Redevelopment  
See more...

Posted to **Subscribers of City of Winter Park**

401 Impressions

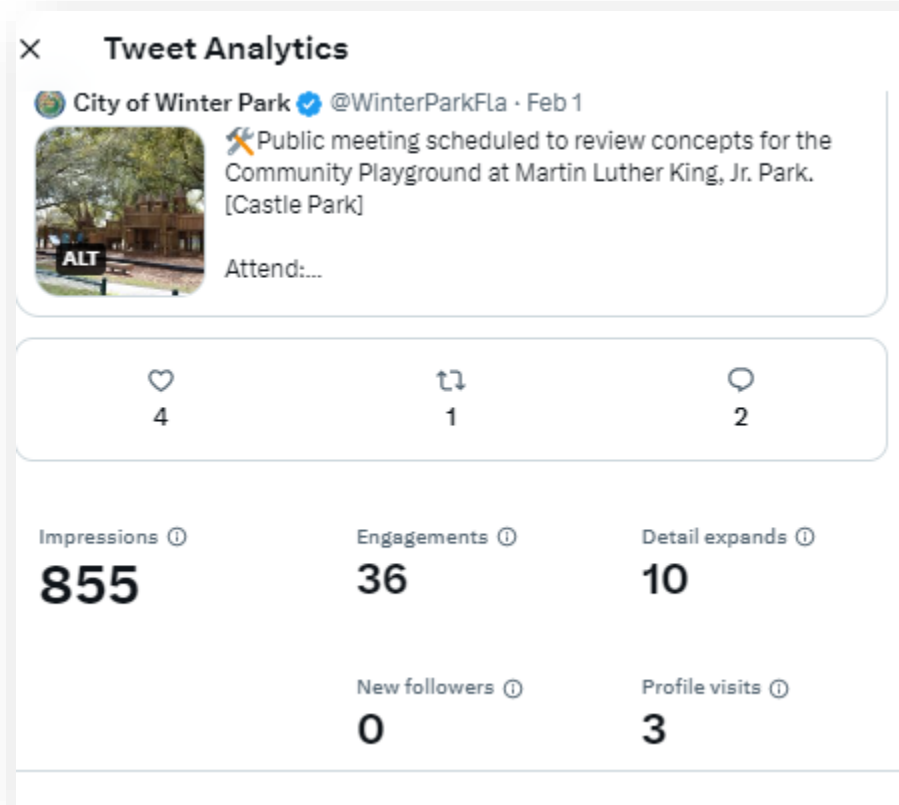
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ARCHITECTURE, ART AND CULTURE, CIVICS AND PARTICIPATION, PARKS, PETITION, QUALITY OF LIFE, WINTER PARK

## "Castle Park" playground facing some big changes/upgrades



by **BRENDAN O'CONNOR**  
FEBRUARY 6, 2023



PHOTO VIA CITY OF WINTER PARK

A 35-year-old wooden playground in Winter Park could see some big upgrades and possibly even a complete overhaul in the near future.





“Castle Park,” a wooden jungle gym in Martin Luther King Jr. Park has been one of the most beloved public play areas in Winter Park since it was built in 1987 and is one of the last remaining wooden playgrounds in the area. The structure features a series of turret-like towers that helped to give it its nickname and was originally built by volunteers using donated materials and equipment and designed by **Robert Leathers** ([Website](#)).

The City of Winter Park has been mulling over an update for the structure since 2022 when we shared a public meeting notice [HERE](#), saying the city felt that the years of wear and tear had necessitated bringing it up to code.

A public meeting is currently scheduled for Tuesday, February 7 at 6 p.m. at the Winter Park Community Center where city staff will review concepts and renderings that they’ve developed using public input since a series of meetings held last summer. **Click [HERE](#)** for more information.

A petition has been launched on [Change.org](#) in the hopes of convincing the City of Winter Park to repair the current structure and keep it as-is and retain its original character.

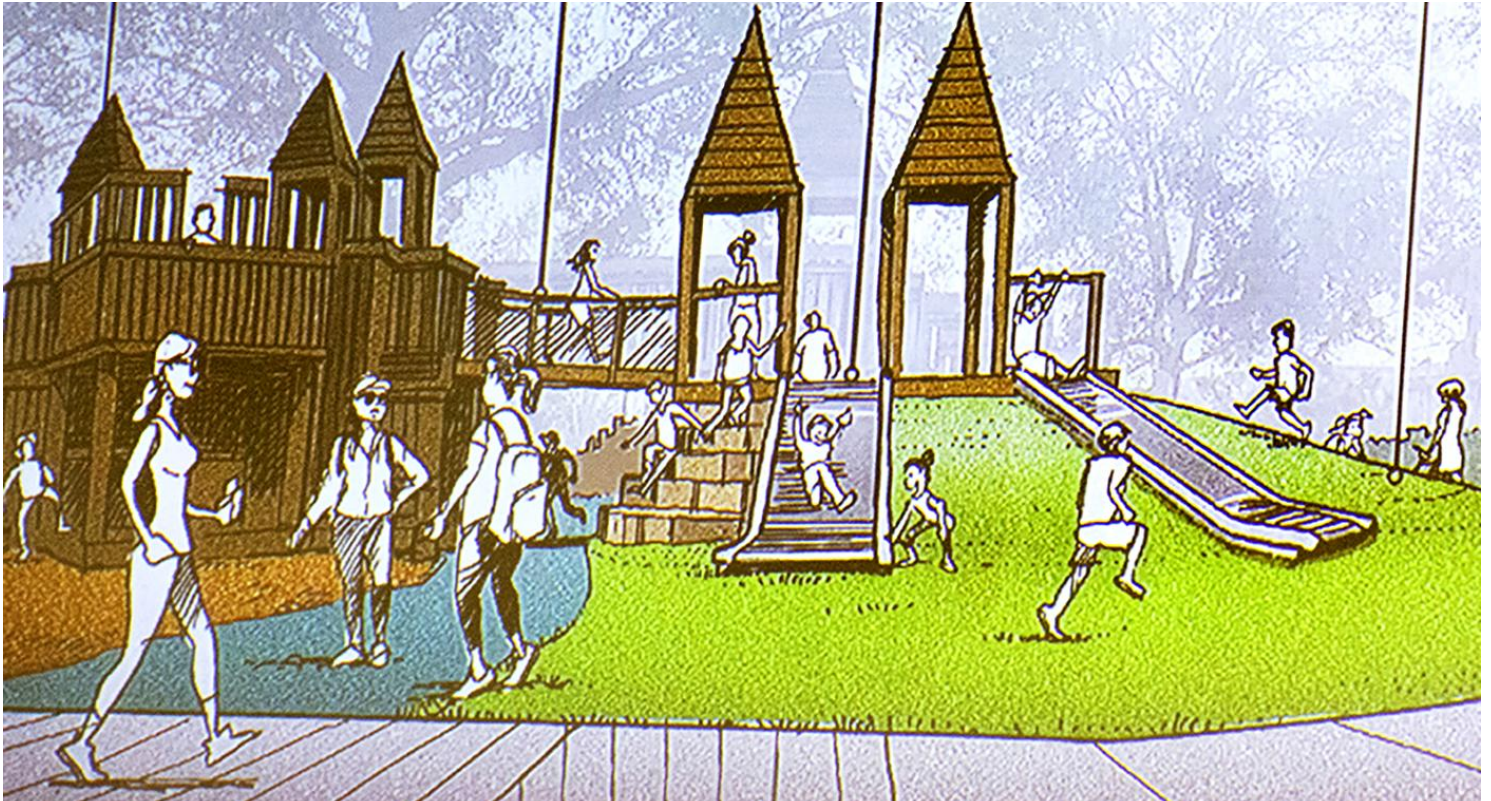
We’ve assembled a Pinterest Board of fun, innovative playgrounds that we’d love to see in Winter Park, that at least have some elements that could be replicated at the Castle.





**In Our Eyes: Women's,  
Nonbinary, and Transgender  
Perspectives from the Collection**  
January 14 – May 14, 2023

Rollins  
Museum  
of Art



Concepts for the Community Playground redesign were presented at a Feb. 7 meeting. Feedback will guide the design process. Designs created by: Dix Hite + Partners

## Playground Upgrades Presented at Community Meeting

By Jim Carchidi | February 13, 2023

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The enhancement of Community Playground at Martin Luther King Jr. Park took another step toward construction as Winter Park's Community Redevelopment Agency and design contractor [Dix Hite + Partners, Inc.](#) revealed a new design concept during a Feb. 7 meeting at Winter Park Community Center.



The playground, also known as Castle Park, was built in 1987 using donated materials and equipment. Renovations will remedy years of wear, meet current playground safety standards, and create new play areas.

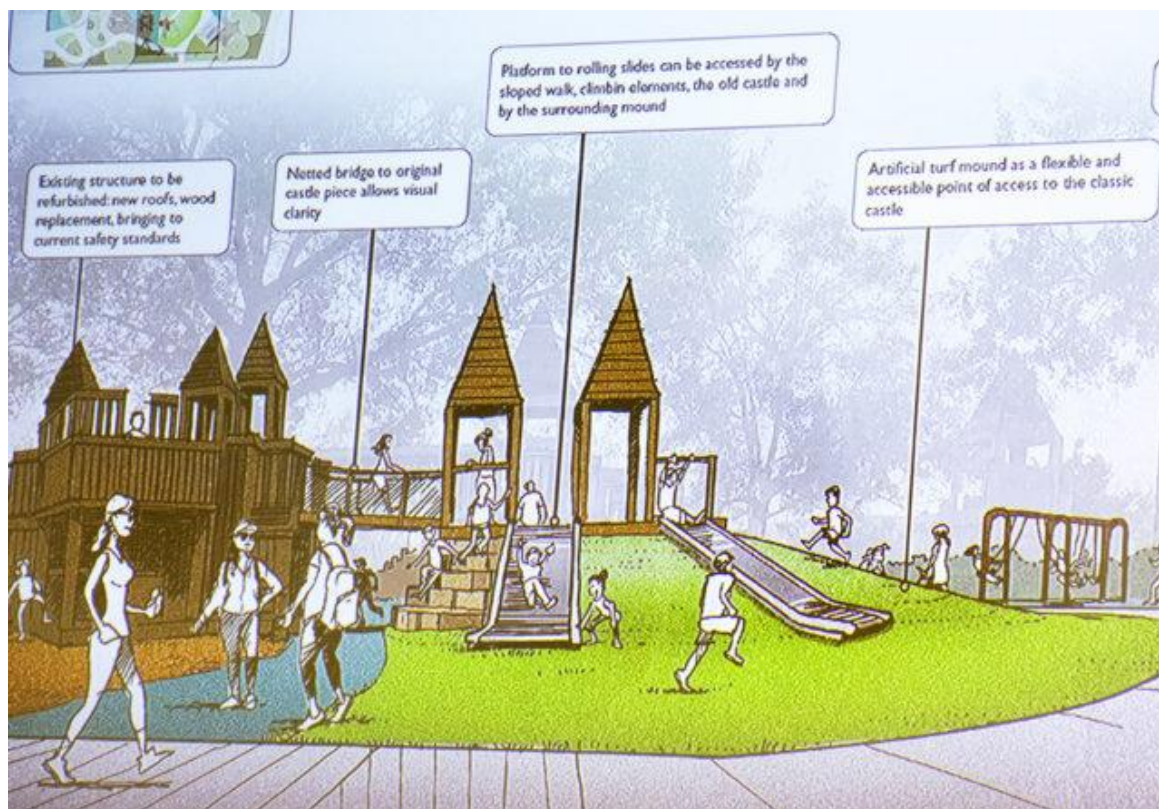
Renderings presented at the Feb. 7 meeting were the product of input collected at previous meetings, and focused on the castle redesign and a proposed splash pad. Workshops and meetings will continue until a final design is agreed upon.



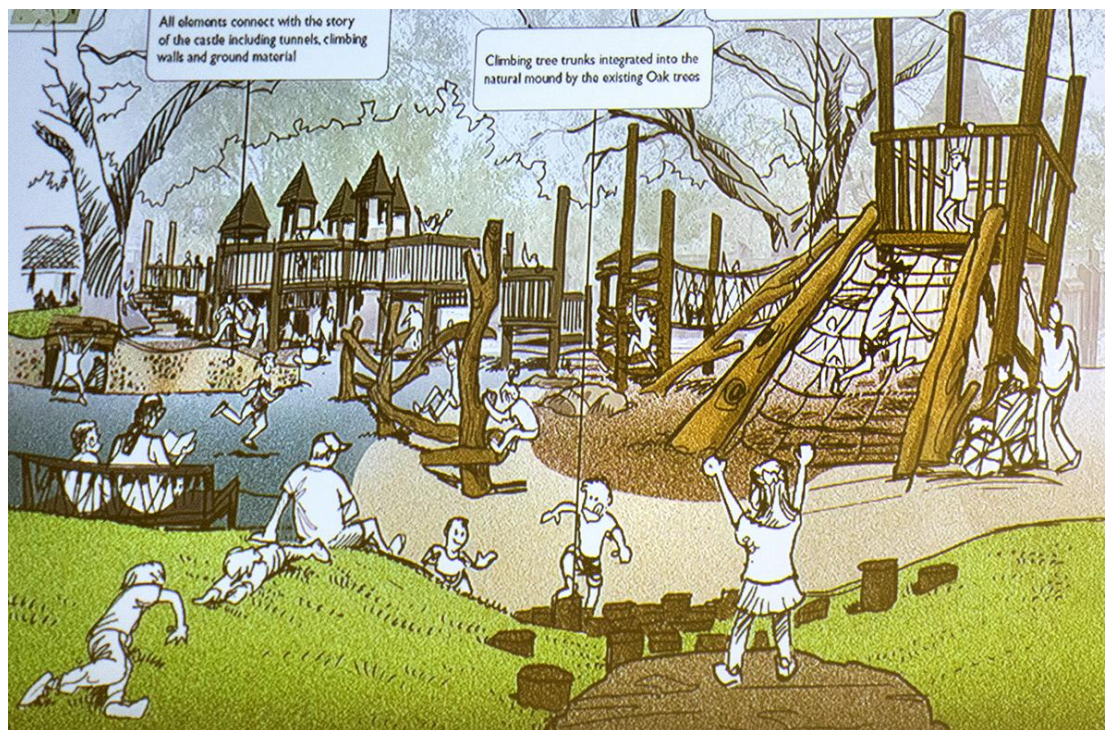
New playground features (illustrated above) incorporate climbing areas, tunnels, slides, and sensory play areas with textured walls and sounds.

While the original structure is at the center of the project renderings, designers suggested an abbreviated version. “The main castle is what’s so special about this place,” said Dix Hite Landscape Architect Viviana Castro, adding that it, “would require a lot of maintenance, a lot of upkeep to follow today’s standards.”



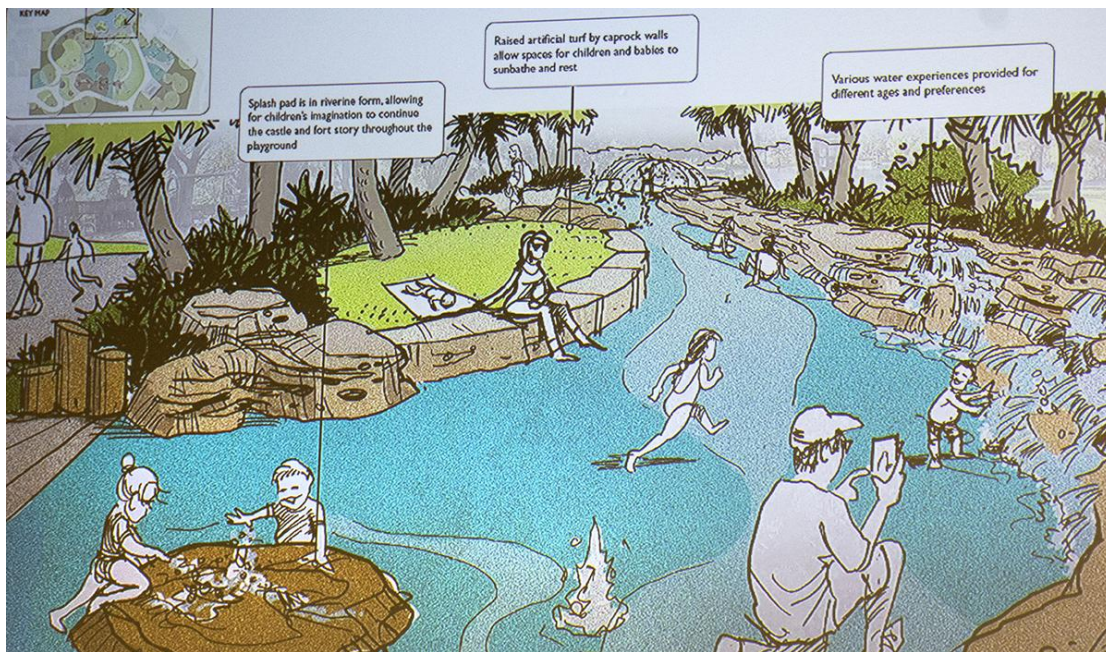


A reinforced, streamlined castle/fort design would include wheelchair-accessible inclines and roller slides on one side (above); climbing features would be positioned on the opposite side (below).





The splash pad is designed for a range of age groups with fountains, waterfalls and quiet spaces. Additional climbing areas exist within the rock formations and water would continuously move throughout the area.



Attendees had the opportunity to review the designs and offer feedback. Suggested additions included:

- Attendants posted throughout the new playground
- More visibility in the tunnels and climbing areas
- Incorporating more of the original castle
- Additional water fountains and bathrooms
- Replace mulch with more soft surfacing

Designers and city staff will take the feedback from the Feb. 7 meeting into consideration and additional meetings will be scheduled to review changes, and discuss other areas of the new playground design.

Aside from the Community Park redesign, the area by the corner of Denning Drive and Morse Boulevard will receive a Martin Luther King Jr. memorial and community space, called Unity Corner, that will host Winter Park's annual Unity

Heritage Festival. Community meetings will be scheduled as part of the design process.

Future meetings will be posted on the City of Winter Park website. For more information, contact [MLKParkReno@cityofwinterpark.org](mailto:MLKParkReno@cityofwinterpark.org) or call 407-599-3357.

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*This story was written by Jim Carchidi, one of our collection of writers covering news in Winter Park, Florida. Our staff writers can be reached at [news@the32789.com](mailto:news@the32789.com).*

## RELATED STORIES

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# DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, Jr. PARK COMMUNITY PLAYGROUND + SPLASH PAD

## SCHEMATIC PACKAGE

Prepared for the City of Winter Park

January 6, 2023

Revised: April 7, 2023





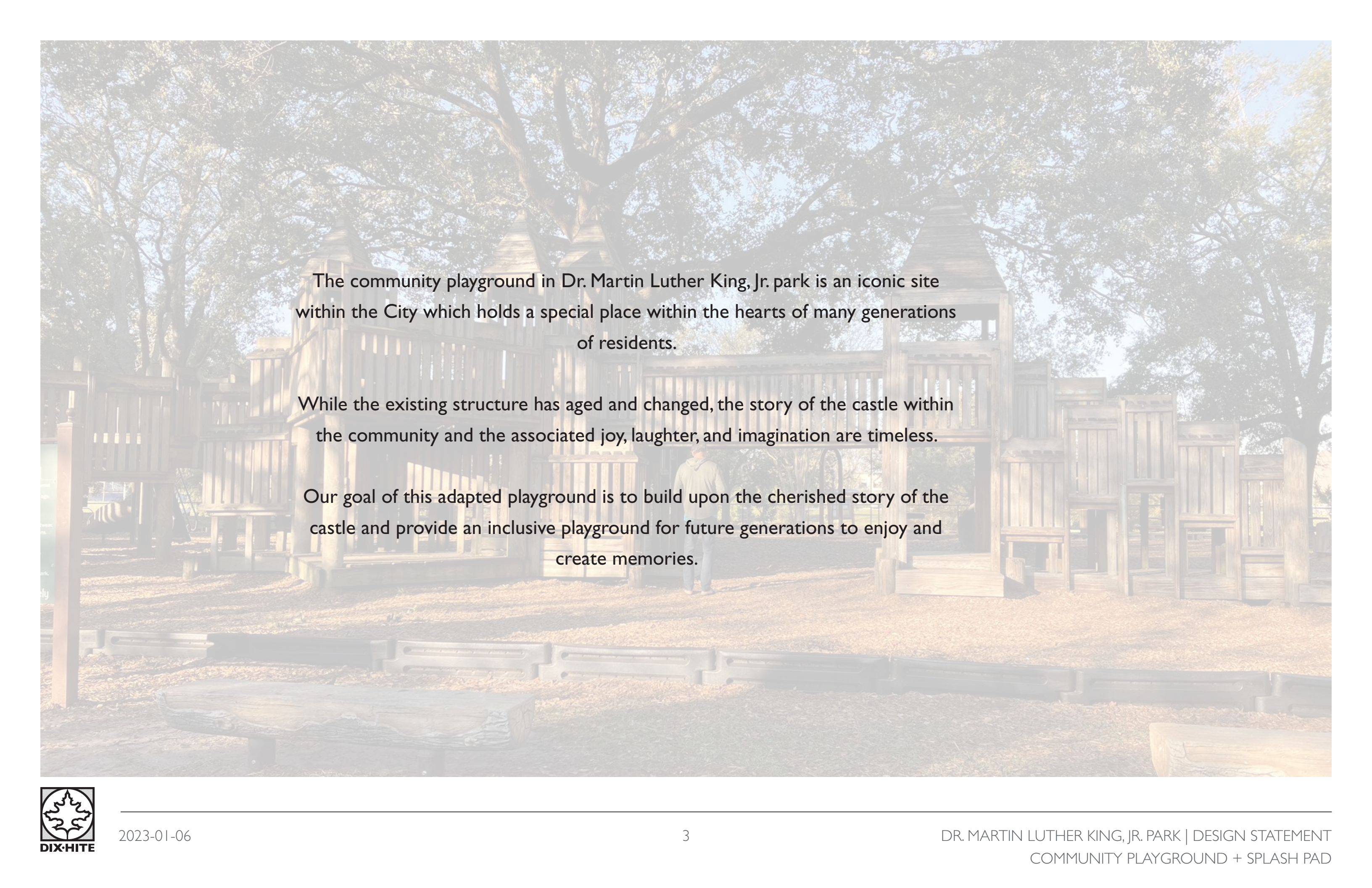
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The community playground in Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. park is an iconic site within the City which holds a special place within the hearts of many generations of residents.

While the existing structure has aged and changed, the story of the castle within the community and the associated joy, laughter, and imagination are timeless.

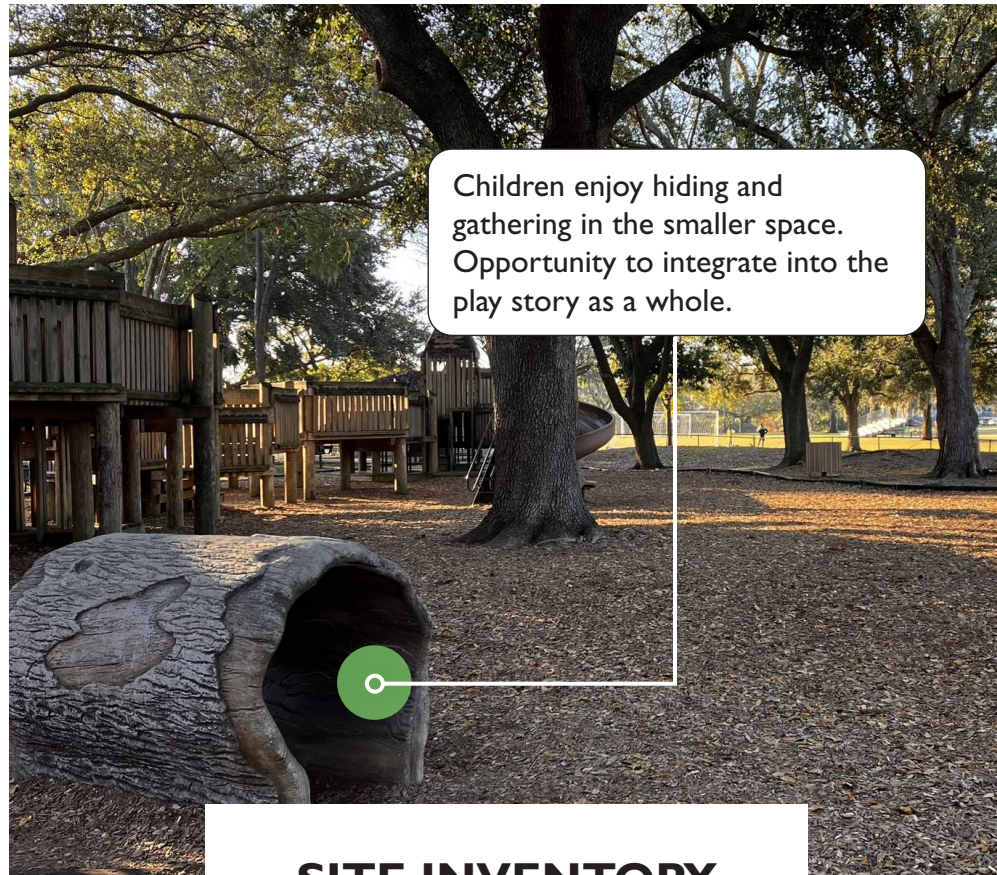
Our goal of this adapted playground is to build upon the cherished story of the castle and provide an inclusive playground for future generations to enjoy and create memories.





The tower has lost purpose and connection after years of modifications.

Children enjoy the various heights. Opportunity to expand this play element on site.



Children enjoy hiding and gathering in the smaller space. Opportunity to integrate into the play story as a whole.



Existing benches are highly used and can be relocated along the playground for better visibility.



Children enjoy the spiral slide but it is not fully connected with the playground. Opportunity to better integrate the slide experience2.



Access to and from the playground is not safe as one enters from the parking area. Playground lacks safe walks to reach parked cars.



Existing picnic tables throughout the playground are highly used. The shade from existing trees creates comfortable seating opportunities.

## SITE INVENTORY + ANALYSIS



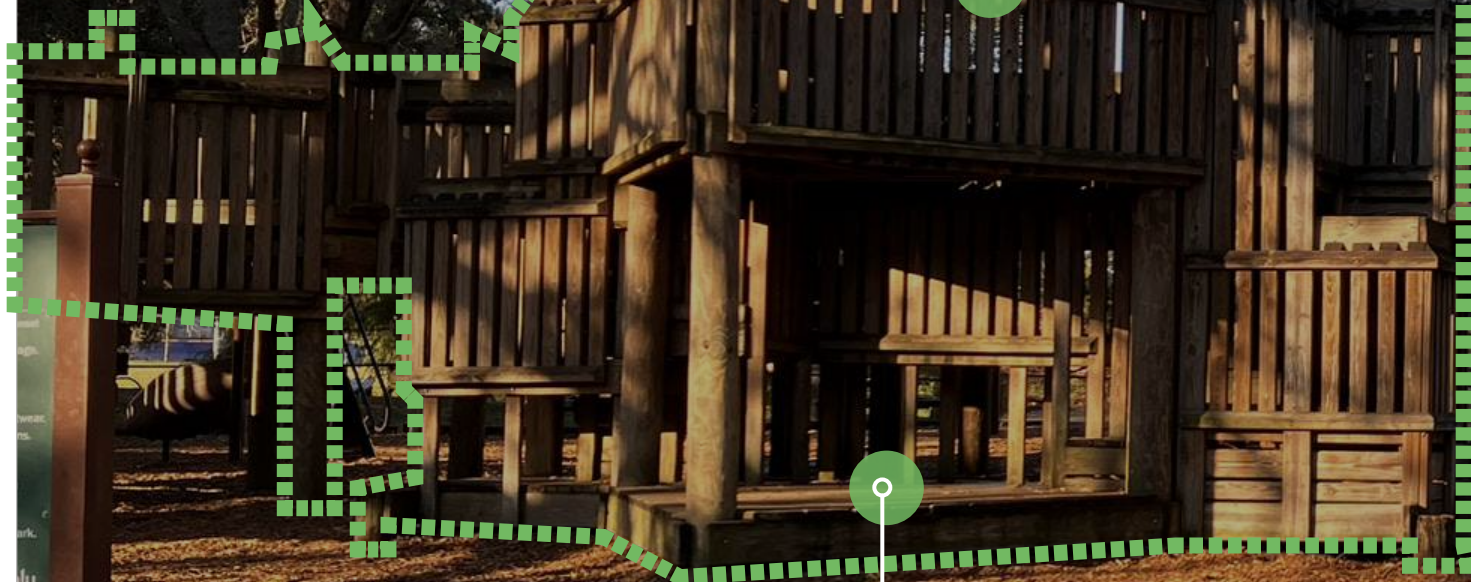
2023-01-06





The center pathways of the castle are a unique and a key part of the playground.

Some areas of the castle are in need of substantial maintenance for safety and stability.

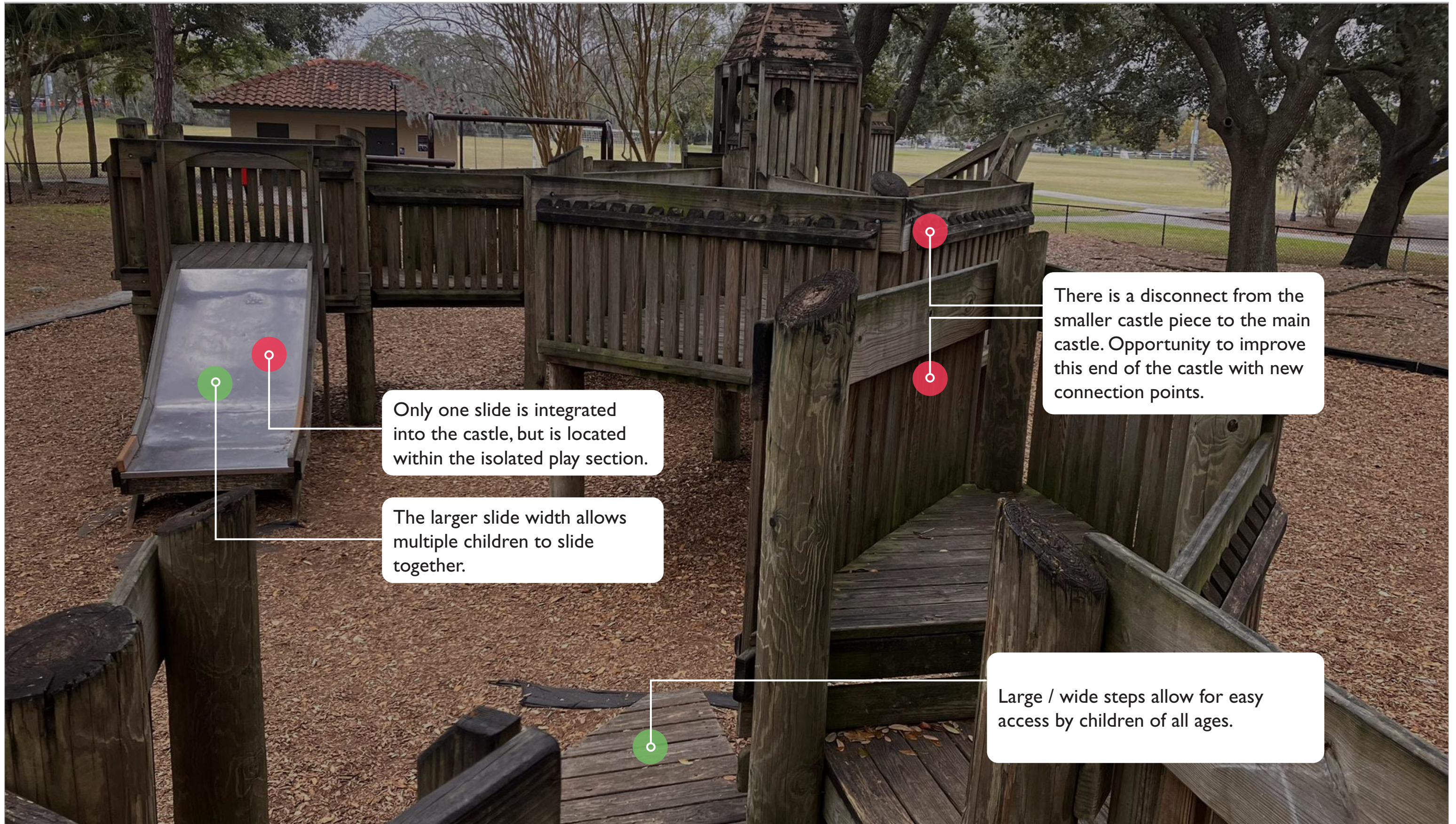


Children enjoy the various entry and exit points on the castle.



Overall transitions to the playground and play structures are not accessible to all abilities.





Only one slide is integrated into the castle, but is located within the isolated play section.

The larger slide width allows multiple children to slide together.

There is a disconnect from the smaller castle piece to the main castle. Opportunity to improve this end of the castle with new connection points.

Large / wide steps allow for easy access by children of all ages.





All the swings in the playground provide a variety of experiences in the current playground. There is an opportunity to relocate these swings with the expansion of the play space.



The existing pavilion is highly used for events. Opportunity to better integrate the pavilion with the park and to transitional activity areas.



Existing playground memorial gets lost in the playground. Opportunity to relocate to more prominent location



# INVENTORY + ANALYSIS

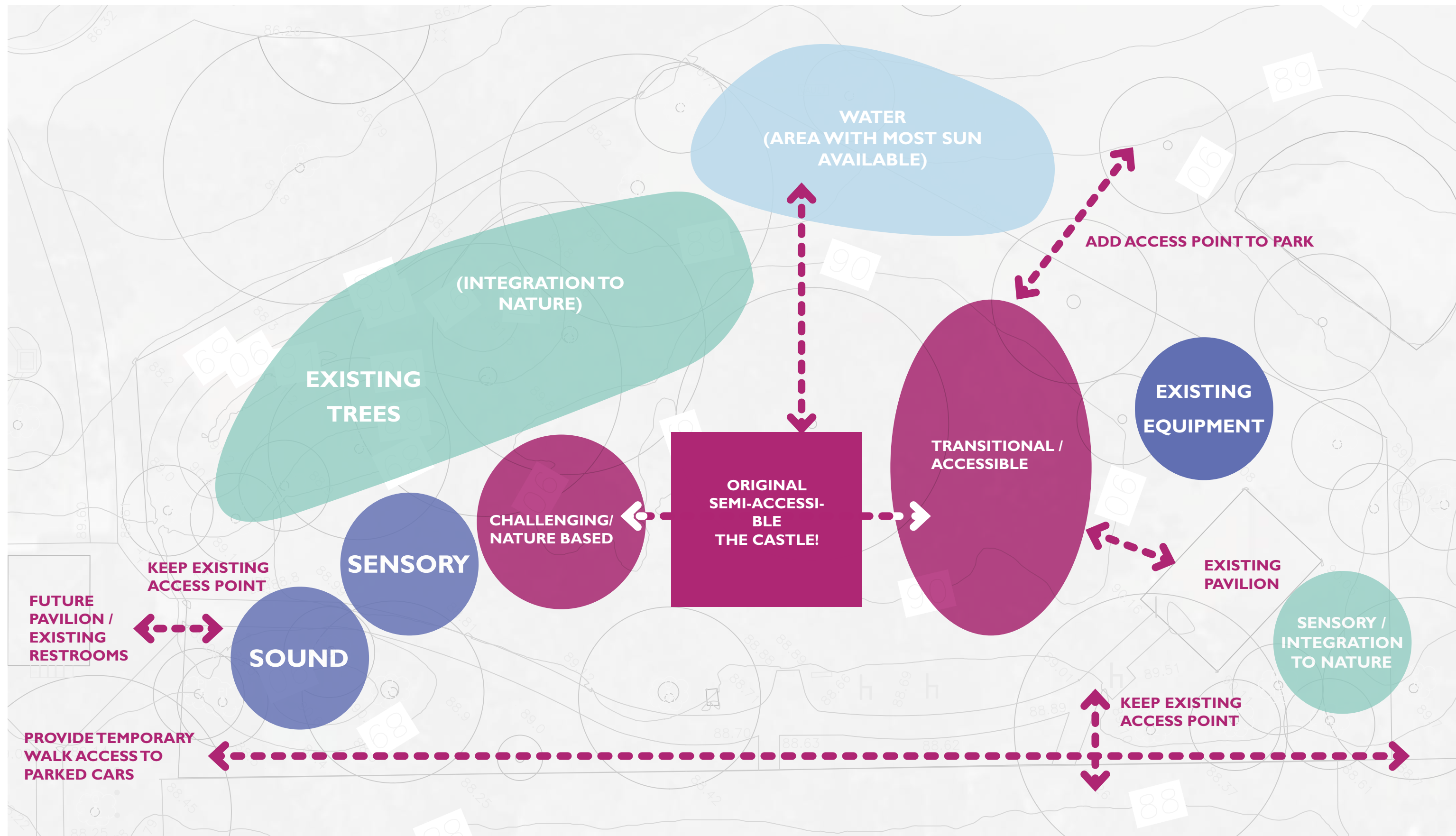
## KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Need for accessible paths and play for children of all abilities
- Opportunity to integrate a splash play in the open/ sunny space
- Need for challenging / climbing opportunities within the park
- Need for additional access points from the northern side of the park into the playground
- Opportunity to integrate part of the existing castle with new, innovative and accessible play systems
- Opportunity to reuse existing play elements
- Opportunity to keep natural play as part of the playground's feature

(For additional takeaways based on workshop feedback, see Appendix A of overall park schematic package)







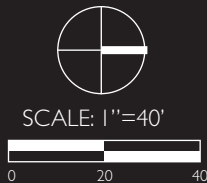


DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. PARK:  
PLAYGROUND + SPLASH PAD

- 1 ENTRY FROM PARKING LOT
- 2 EXISTING PAVILION
- 3 NATURE SENSORY STATION
- 4 RECOLATED SINGLE AND GROUP SWINGS
- 5 CASTLE PLATFORM OVER 5' ARTIFICIAL TURF MOUND
- 6 CONCRETE WALK ACCESS TO CASTLE PLATFORM
- 7 ROLLER SLIDES OVER TURF MOUND
- 8 OPEN TUBE SLIDE OVER MOUND
- 9 CLIMBING ROCKS
- 10 BRIDGE CONNECTION TO EXISTING CASTLE
- 11 EXISTING CASTLE PORTION TO REMAIN
- 12 CLIMBING TOWER
- 13 TUNNEL ENTRIES ON SENSORY WALL
- 14 POURED IN PLACE RUBBER PATH
- 15 PLAYGROUND MULCH
- 16 ROPE SWING
- 17 TRUNK STEPS TO SODDED EXISTING MOUND
- 18 SPLASH PAD / RIVERINE
- 19 RELOCATED PICNIC TABLES OVER MULCH
- 20 RELOCATED TODDLER SWINGS
- 21 ARTIFICIAL TURF MOUND WITH SENSORY "ROOMS" AND TUNNEL
- 22 SOUND EQUIPMENT ON ARTIFICIAL TURF
- 23 ENTRY FROM EXISTING RESTROOM
- 24 ENTRY FROM NORTH OF PARK
- 25 PLAYGROUND FENCE
- 26 EXISTING TREES, TYP.
- 27 PLAYGROUND SEATING ,TYP.
- 28 PROPOSED PALM TREES
- 29 SPLASH PAD EQUIPMENT



2022-05-10







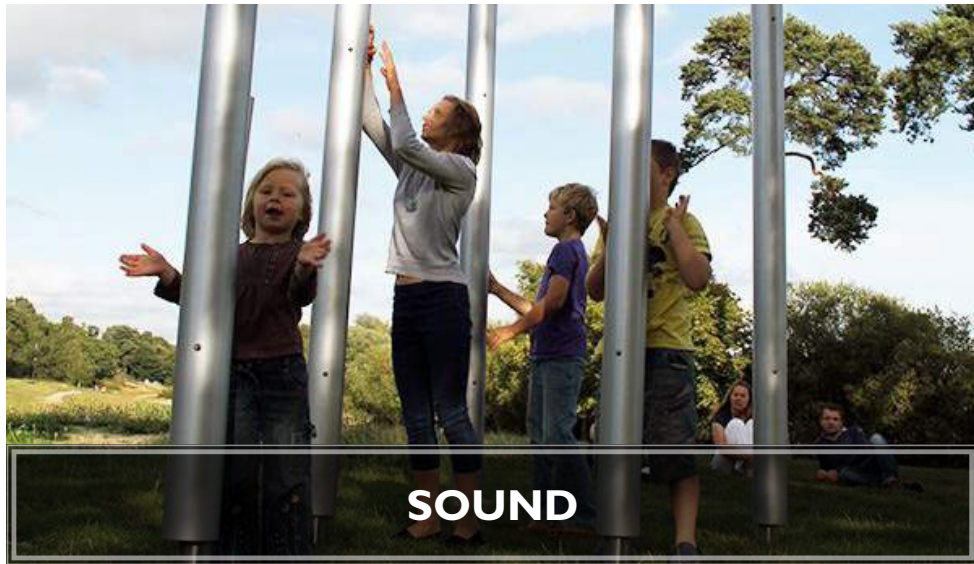
**COMPOSITE WOOD + CARGO NET**



**CASTLE CHARACTER**



**SENSORY WALLS**



**SOUND**



**ROLLING SLIDE ON LAND MOUND**



**SPLASH PAD / RIVERINE**



**CLIMBING ROCKS ON LAND MOUND**

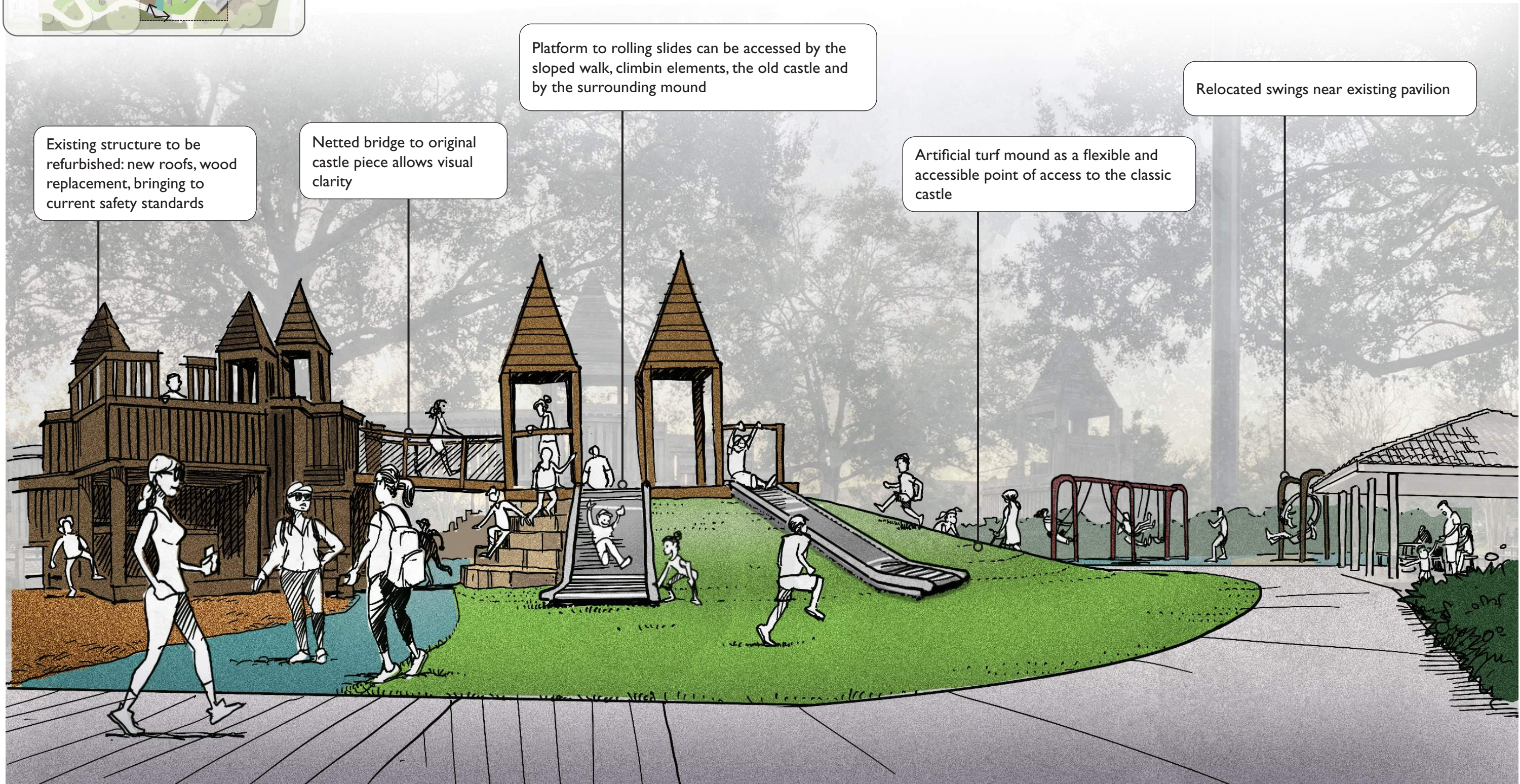


**LEVELED TRUNKS**



**INTEGRATED TUNNELS**







All elements connect with the story of the castle including tunnels, climbing walls and ground material

Climbing tree trunks integrated into the natural mound by the existing Oak trees

Climbing tower connects to the south point of the castle, with sensory elements at various levels







Splash pad is in riverine form, allowing for children's imagination to continue the castle and fort story throughout the playground

Raised artificial turf by caprock walls allow spaces for children and babies to sunbathe and rest

Various water experiences provided for different ages and preferences





SITE FURNISHINGS

PICNIC TABLE



EXISTING TABLES TO BE RELOCATED IF IN GOOD CONDITION



IF TABLES ARE TO BE REPLACED, USE MONOLINE CAROUSEL TABLE  
MANUFACTURER: SITE PIECES  
COLOR: TBD

SEATING



EXISTING LOG BENCHES TO BE RELOCATED IF IN GOOD CONDITION



ALL OTHER BENCHES TO FOLLOW EXISTING CITY STANDARD

TRASH RECEPTACLE



EXISTING TRASH RECEPTACLES TO BE RELOCATED IF IN GOOD CONDITION

BIKE RACK



ROUND RACK  
MANUFACTURER: DERO  
COLOR: TBD

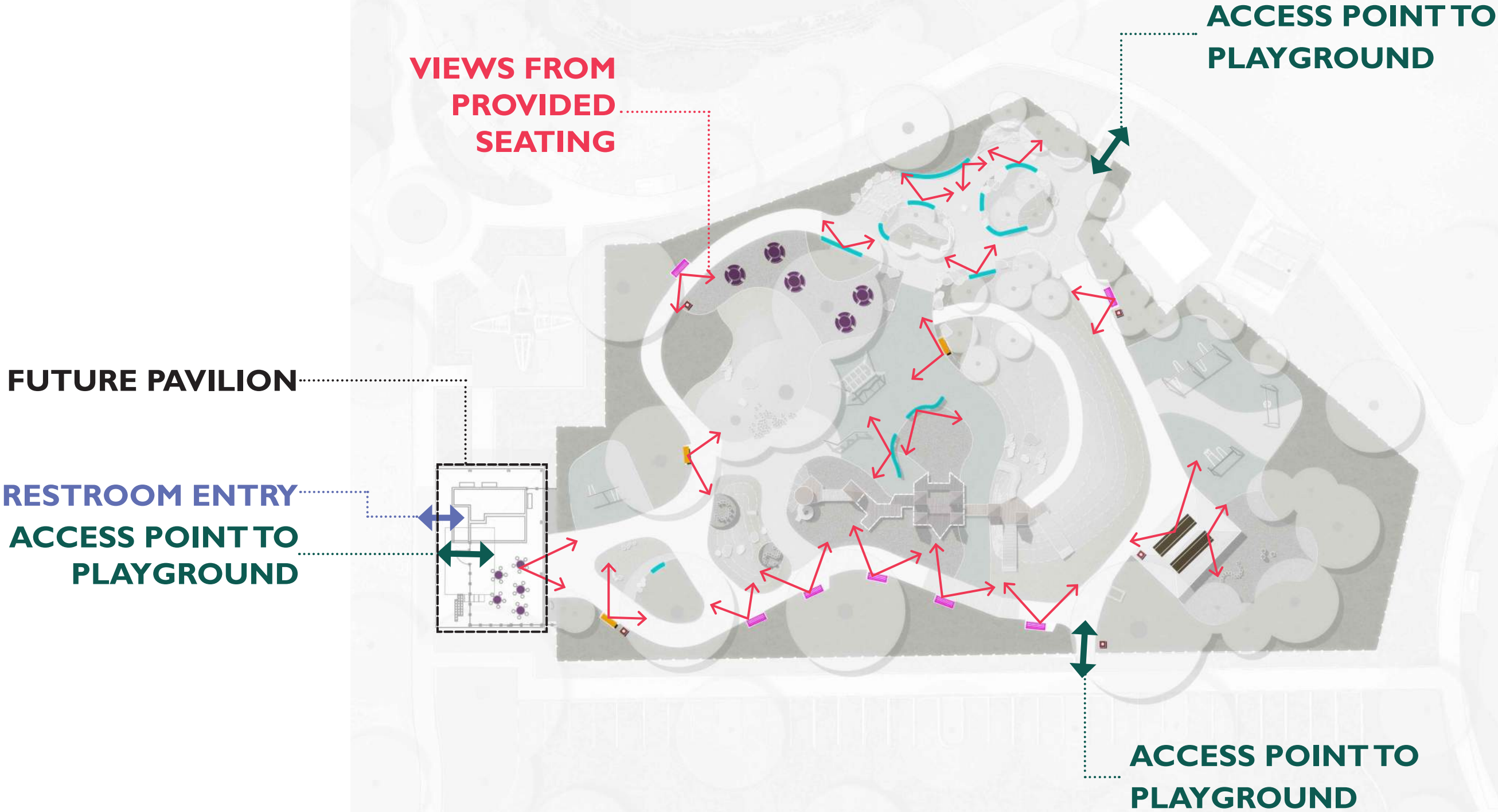
**LEGEND**

- PICNIC TABLES
- STANDARD CITY BENCH
- LOG BENCH
- CAPROCK SEAT WALL
- EXISTING PICNIC TABLE
- TRASH RECEPTACLES
- BIKE RACK





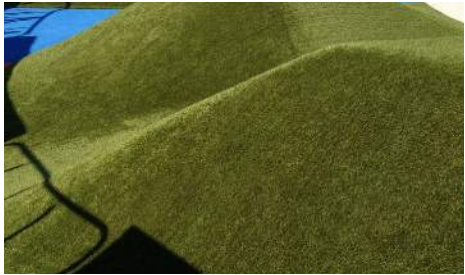
ACCESS AND VIEWS



MATERIALS PALETTE



POURED IN PLACE RUBBER



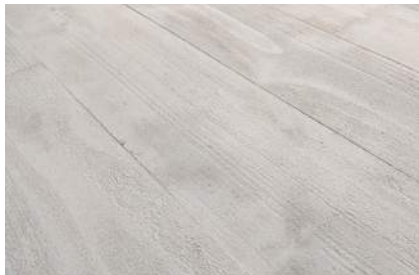
ARTIFICIAL TURF



FLORIDA STONE WALLS



CONCRETE ROCK FORMATION



BOARD FORMED / STAMPED CONCRETE



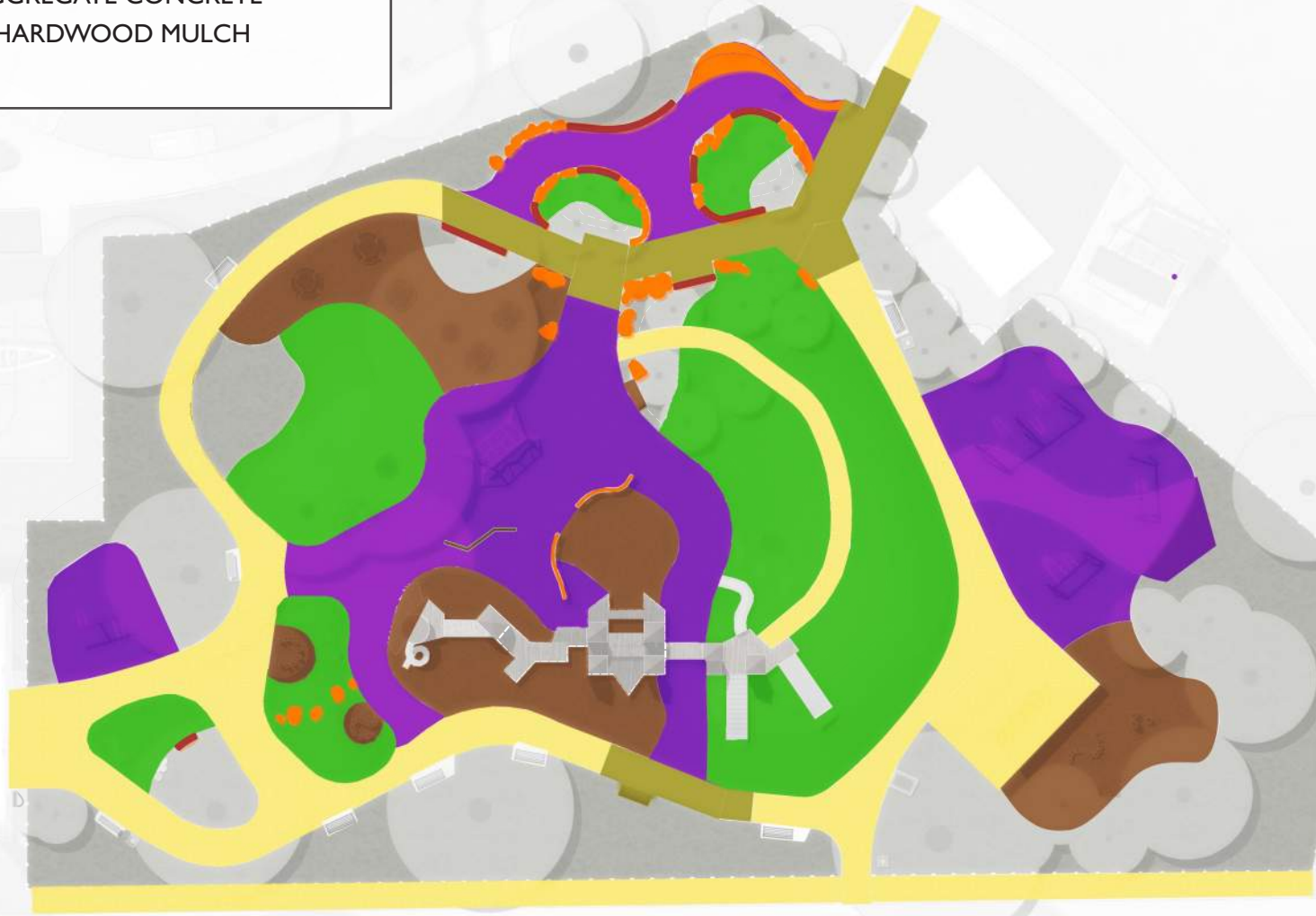
EXPOSED AGGREGATE CONCRETE



SHREDDED HARDWOOD MULCH

LEGEND

- POURED IN PLACE RUBBER
- ARTIFICIAL TURF
- FLORIDA STONE WALLS
- CONCRETE ROCK FORMATION
- BOARD FORMED / STAMPED CONCRETE
- EXPOSED AGGREGATE CONCRETE
- SHREDDED HARDWOOD MULCH





LANDSCAPE MATERIAL



SABAL MINOR  
DWARF PALMETTO



MUHLENBERGIA CAPILLARIS  
MUHLY GRASS



NEPHROLEPIS BISERRATA  
MACHO FERN



VIBURNUM OBOVATUM Densa  
DWARF WALTER'S VIBURNUM



ILEX VOMITORIA  
DWARF YAUPON



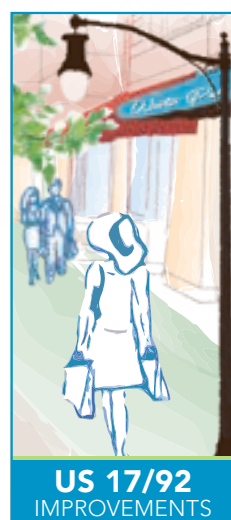
TRIPSACUM DACTYLOIDES  
FAKAHATCHEE GRASS



HAMELIA PATENS  
FIREBUSH







# US 17/92 IMPROVEMENTS

U.S. 17/92 (ORLANDO AVENUE) (ALSO KNOWN AS STATE ROAD (S.R.) 15/S.R. 600) FROM SOUTH OF NOTTINGHAM STREET TO SOUTH OF MONROE AVENUE | ORANGE COUNTY, FL  
FPID: 408429-2

## Project Location Map







# US 17/92 IMPROVEMENTS

U.S. 17/92 (ORLANDO AVENUE) (ALSO KNOWN AS STATE ROAD (S.R.) 15/S.R. 600) FROM  
SOUTH OF NOTTINGHAM STREET TO SOUTH OF MONROE AVENUE | ORANGE COUNTY, FL

FPID: 408429-2

# Typical Sections

## U.S. 17/92 from Nottingham Street to Orange Avenue

### Proposed



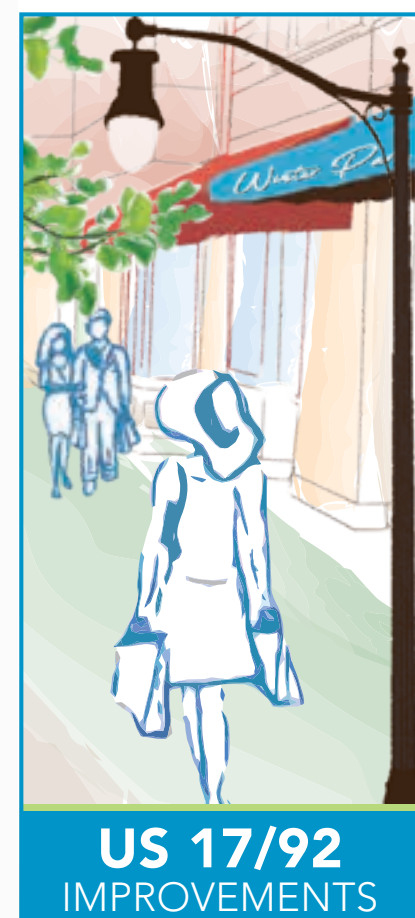
### Proposed Improvements:

- Existing roadway footprint and sidewalks to remain the same
- Rehabilitate roadway pavement
- Implement Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) upgrades
- Install pedestrian gates and raised curbed island at SunRail crossing



PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE  
January 22, 2019





# US 17/92 IMPROVEMENTS

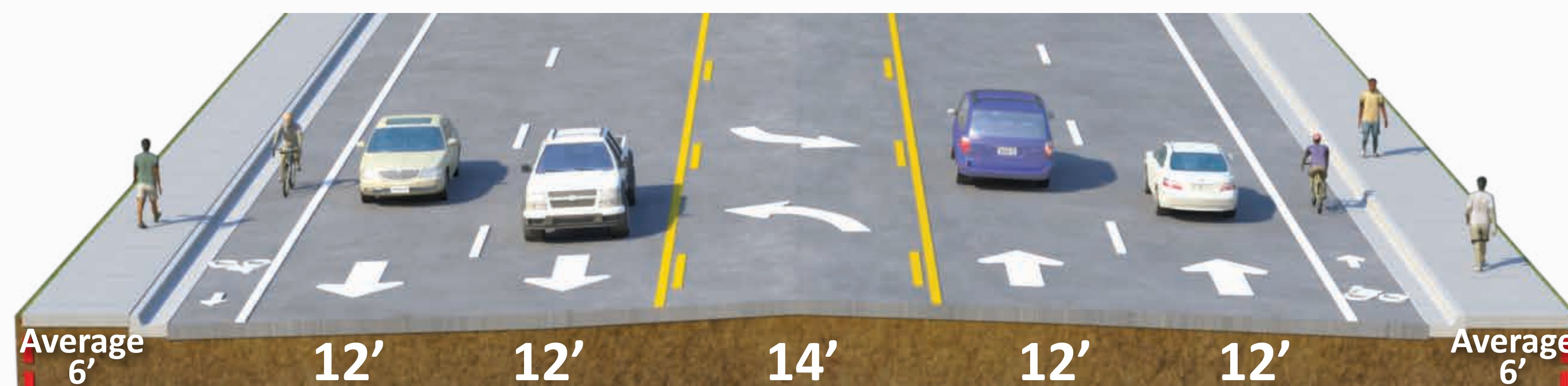
U.S. 17/92 (ORLANDO AVENUE) (ALSO KNOWN AS STATE ROAD (S.R.) 15/S.R. 600) FROM  
SOUTH OF NOTTINGHAM STREET TO SOUTH OF MONROE AVENUE | ORANGE COUNTY, FL

FPID: 408429-2

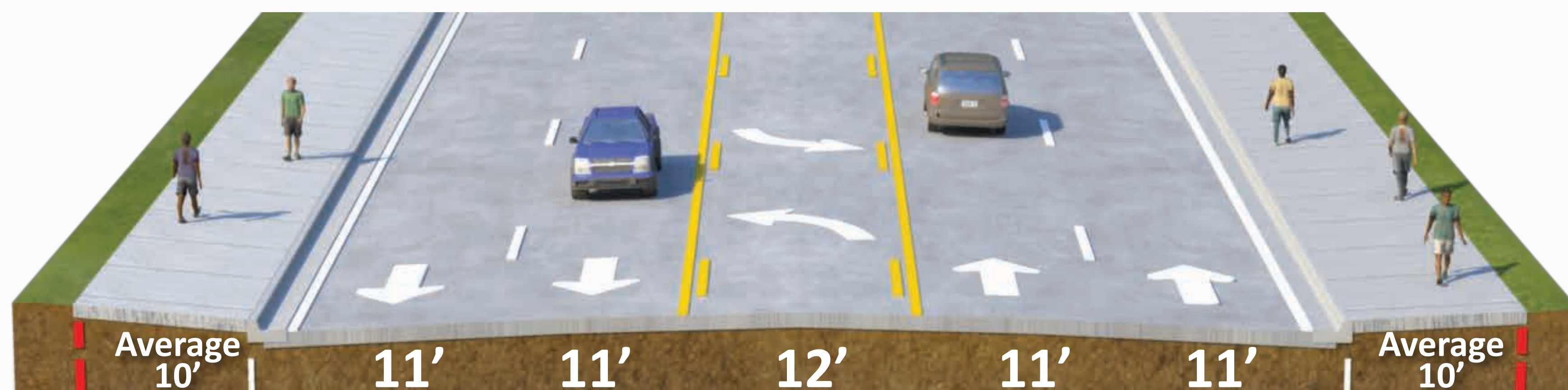
# Typical Sections

## U.S. 17/92 from Orange Avenue to Gay Road

### Existing



### Proposed



### Proposed Improvements:

- Reduce roadway footprint and rehabilitate pavement
- Implement Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) upgrades
- Widen sidewalks
- Encourage bicycle traffic to take Denning Drive
- Upgrade signals
- Reconstruct Fairbanks Avenue, Morse Boulevard, and Webster Avenue intersections
- Upgrade storm sewer drainage system



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January 22, 2019





# US 17/92 IMPROVEMENTS

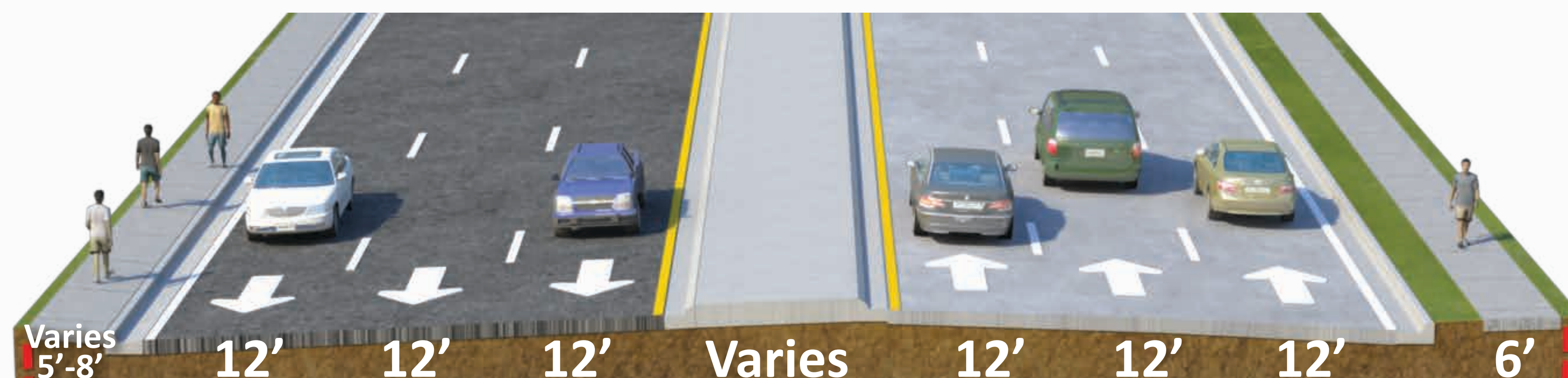
U.S. 17/92 (ORLANDO AVENUE) (ALSO KNOWN AS STATE ROAD (S.R.) 15/S.R. 600) FROM  
SOUTH OF NOTTINGHAM STREET TO SOUTH OF MONROE AVENUE | ORANGE COUNTY, FL

FPID: 408429-2

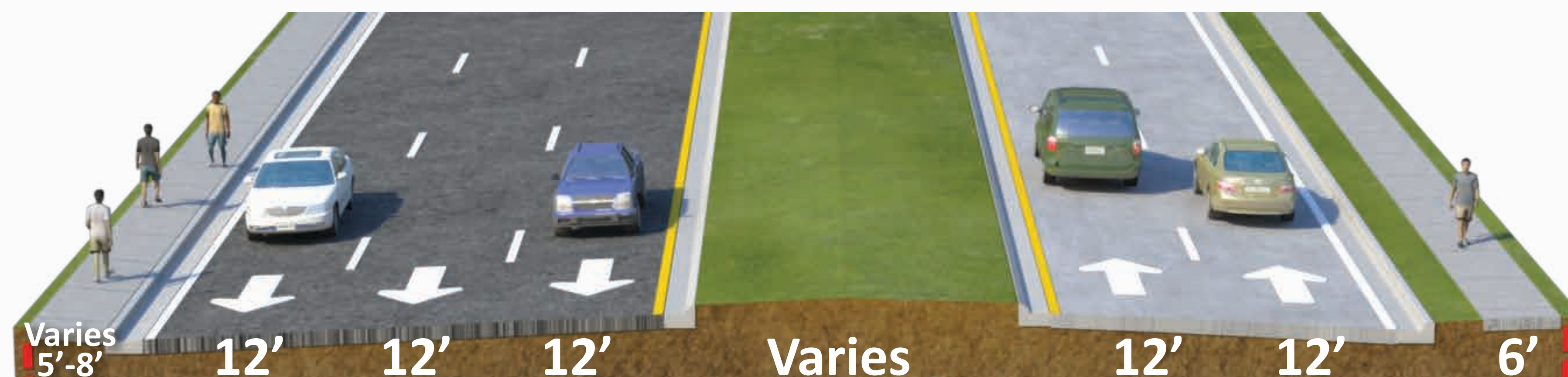
# Typical Sections

## U.S. 17/92 from Lee Road to Monroe Avenue

### Existing



### Proposed



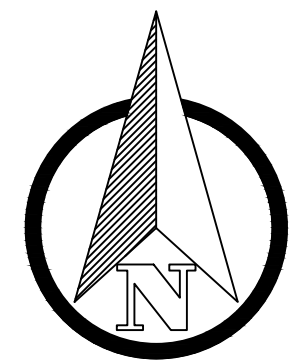
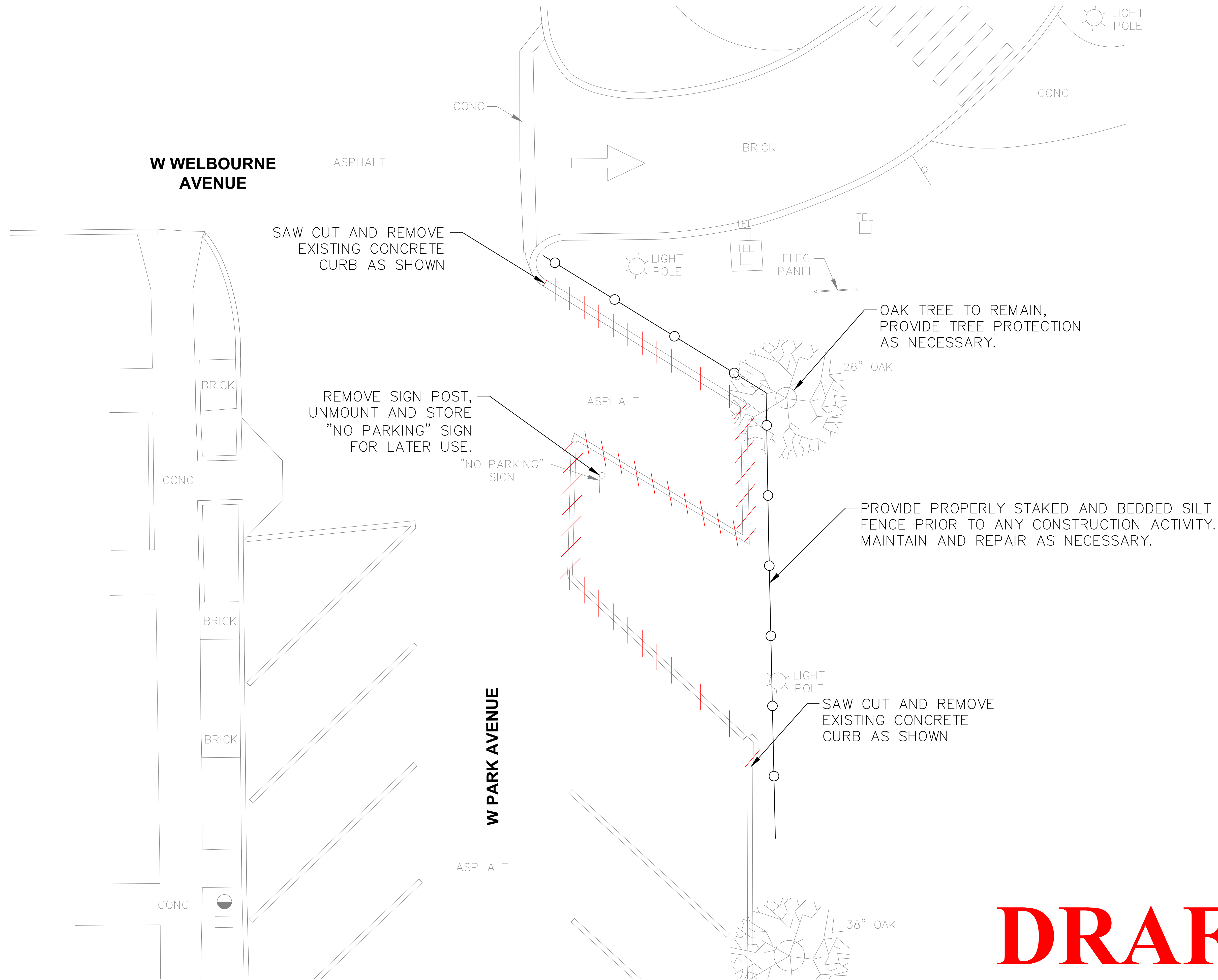
### Proposed Improvements:


- Rehabilitate roadway travel lanes
- Evaluate modifications to existing median openings
- Upgrade storm sewer drainage system

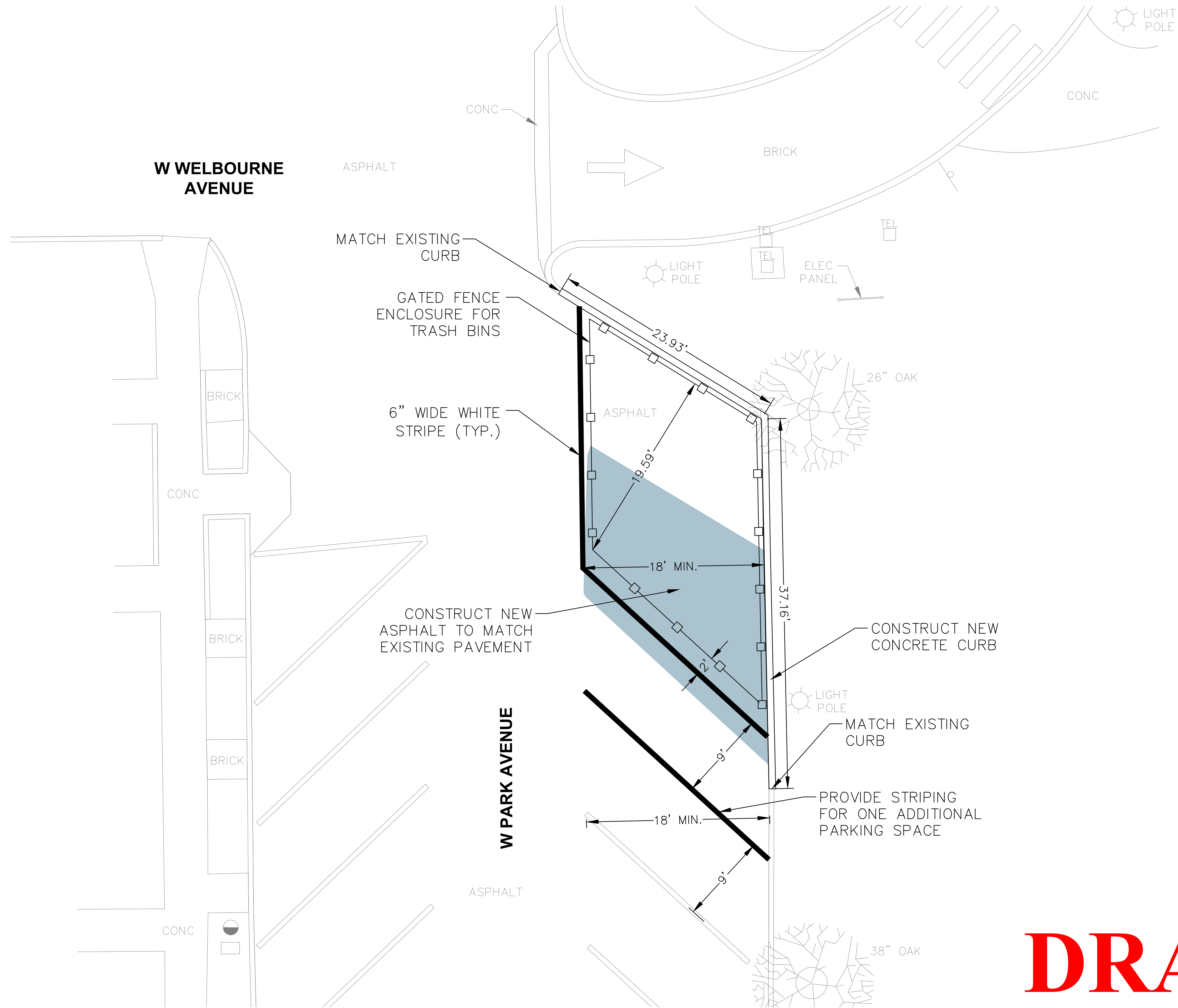


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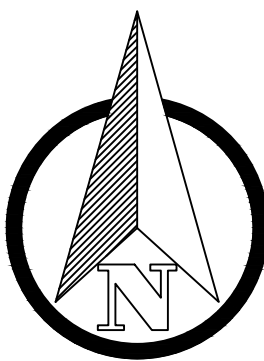





FILE NAME SITE PLAN.DWG PLOT CODE CAD Plot.CTB	DATE		REVISIONS		REVISED BY		CHKD. BY									
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EROSION CONTROL & DEMOLITION PLAN									PROJECT NUMBER 00-00-00							
TRAIN STATION WASTE BIN ENCLOSURE									DATE 06-14-23							
148 WEST MORSE BOULEVARD									SHEET NO. 1 of 2							
Winter Park, Florida																



**DRAFT**



FILE NAME SITE PLAN.DWG PLOT CODE CAD Plot.CTB	DATE		REVISIONS		REVISED BY		CHD. BY	
PROJECT NUMBER 00-00-00		DATE 06-14-23		1 INCH = 5 FEET		SHEET NO. 2 of 2		
SITE PLAN		TRAIN STATION WASTE BIN ENCLOSURE 148 WEST MORSE BOULEVARD Winter Park, Florida						
		City of Winter Park 401 Park Avenue South Winter Park, Florida 32789 Telephone (407) 599-3399		DESIGNED BY: BLP		DRAWN BY: BLP		
				CHECKED BY: HL		APPROVED BY: HL		



