

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

May 17, 2023

HDRC CASE NO: 2023-173
ADDRESS: 300 ALAMO PLAZA
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 115 BLK LOT ALL OF BLK & P-100(.209AC)
ZONING: D, H, RIO-3, Public Property
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
DISTRICT: Alamo Plaza Historic District
APPLICANT: Kate Rogers, Alamo Trust, Inc.
OWNER: City of San Antonio
TYPE OF WORK: Site work, Construction of Plaza de Valero
APPLICATION RECEIVED: April 28, 2023
60-DAY REVIEW: Not applicable due to City Council Emergency Orders
CASE MANAGER: Edward Hall

REQUEST:

The applicant, Alamo Trust, Inc., is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to construct Plaza de Valero within the Alamo Plaza Historic District. The proposed scope of work includes the installation of new paving, the relocation of existing trees, the installation of planting beds, landscaping element and trees, the construction of a pavilion, and the site utility work.

This scope of work is Phase 2B of the Alamo Plan and has been developed in partnership with the Texas General Land Office and the City of San Antonio.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Historic Design Guidelines: Chapter 4, Guidelines for New Construction

4. Architectural Details

A. GENERAL

- i. *Historic context*—Design new buildings to reflect their time while respecting the historic context. While new construction should not attempt to mirror or replicate historic features, new structures should not be so dissimilar as to distract from or diminish the historic interpretation of the district.
- ii. *Architectural details*—Incorporate architectural details that are in keeping with the predominant architectural style along the block face or within the district when one exists. Details should be simple in design and should complement, but not visually compete with, the character of the adjacent historic structures or other historic structures within the district. Architectural details that are more ornate or elaborate than those found within the district are inappropriate.
- iii. *Contemporary interpretations*—Consider integrating contemporary interpretations of traditional designs and details for new construction. Use of contemporary window moldings and door surroundings, for example, can provide visual interest while helping to convey the fact that the structure is new. Modern materials should be implemented in a way that does not distract from the historic structure.

Unified Development Code, Section 35-642 – New Construction of Buildings and Facilities

In considering whether to recommend approval or disapproval of a certificate, the historic and design review commission shall be guided by the following design considerations. These are not intended to restrict imagination, innovation or variety, but rather to assist in focusing on design principles, which can result in creative solutions that will enhance the city and its neighborhoods. Good and original design solutions that meet the individual requirements of a specific site or neighborhood are encouraged and welcomed.

- (a) Site and Setting.

(1) Building sites should be planned to take into consideration existing natural climatic and topographical features. The intrusive leveling of the site should be avoided. Climatic factors such as sun, wind, and temperature should become an integral part of the design to encourage design of site-specific facilities which reinforces the individual identity of a neighborhood and promotes energy efficient facilities.

(2) Special consideration should be given to maintain existing urban design characteristics, such as setbacks, building heights, streetscapes, pedestrian movement, and traffic flow. Building placement should enhance or create focal points and views. Continuity of scale and orientation shall be emphasized.

(3) Accessibility from streets should be designed to accommodate safe pedestrian movement as well as vehicular traffic. Where possible, parking areas should be screened from view from the public right-of-way by attractive fences, berms, plantings or other means.

(4) Historically significant aspects of the site shall be identified and if possible incorporated into the site design. Historic relationships between buildings, such as plazas or open spaces, boulevards or axial relationships should be maintained.

(b) Building Design.

(1) Buildings for the public should maintain the highest quality standards of design integrity. They should elicit a pride of ownership for all citizens. Public buildings should reflect the unique and diverse character of San Antonio and should be responsive to the time and place in which they were constructed.

(2) Buildings shall be in scale with their adjoining surroundings and shall be in harmonious conformance to the identifying quality and characteristics of the neighborhood. They shall be compatible in design, style and materials. Reproductions of styles and designs from a different time period are not encouraged, consistent with the secretary of the interior's standards. Major horizontal and vertical elements in adjoining sites should be respected.

(3) Materials shall be suitable to the type of building and design in which they are used. They shall be durable and easily maintained. Materials and designs at pedestrian level shall be at human scale, that is they shall be designed to be understood and appreciated by someone on foot. Materials should be selected that respect the historic character of the surrounding area in texture, size and color.

(4) Building components such as doors, windows, overhangs, awnings, roof shapes and decorative elements shall all be designed to contribute to the proportions and scale of their surrounding context. Established mass/void relationships shall be maintained. Patterns and rhythms in the streetscape shall be continued.

(5) Colors shall be harmonious with the surrounding environment, but should not be dull. Choice of color should reflect the local and regional character. Nearby historic colors shall be respected.

(6) Mechanical equipment or other utility hardware should be screened from public view with materials compatible with the building design. Where possible, rooftop mechanical equipment should be screened, even from above. Where feasible, overhead utilities should also be underground or attractively screened. Exterior lighting shall be an integral part of the design. Interior lighting shall be controlled so that the spillover lighting onto public walkways is not annoying to pedestrians.

(7) Signs which are out of keeping with the character of the environment in question should not be used. Excessive size and inappropriate placement on buildings results in visual clutter. Signs should be designed to relate harmoniously to exterior building materials and colors. Signs should express a simple clear message with wording kept to a minimum.

(8) Auxiliary design. The site should take into account the compatibility of landscaping, parking facilities, utility and service areas, walkways and appurtenances. These should be designed with the overall environment in mind and should be in visual keeping with related buildings, structures and places.

(c) Multiple Facades. In making recommendations affecting new buildings or structures which will have more than one (1) important facade, such as those which will face two (2) streets or a street and the San Antonio River, the historic and design review commission shall consider the above visual compatibility standards with respect to each important facade.

FINDINGS:

- a. The applicant, Alamo Trust, Inc., is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to construct Plaza de Valero within the Alamo Plaza Historic District. This scope of work includes modifications to existing site paving, plantings beds and landscaping. The proposed scope of work includes the installation of new paving, the relocation of existing trees, the installation of planting beds, landscaping element and trees, the construction of a pavilion, and the site utility work. This scope of work is Phase 2B of the Alamo Plan and has been developed in partnership with the Texas General Land Office and the City of San Antonio.
- b. MASTER PLAN/PREVIOUS REVIEW – The current scope of work, the construction of Plaza de Valero, has been designed in coordination with the overall Alamo Plaza Master Plan. Phase 1, the improvements to Bonham and E Crockett Streets, landscaping within Alamo Plaza and repair to the Cenotaph were approved by the Historic and Design review Commission on December 18, 2019. Phase 2A, the construction of the permanent Mission Gate and temporary Lunette interpretations was approved by the Historic and Design Review Commission on October 5, 2022. That previously approved scope of work as well as the current proposed scope have been developed in unison with the overall Alamo Plan.
- c. SITE DESIGN – The applicant has proposed site and landscaping modifications to accommodate the construction of Plaza de Valero, located to the south of the Mission Gate and Lunette, in Alamo Plaza. The applicant has proposed for the site and landscaping modifications to facilitate the installation of various paving elements, planting beds, the relocation of existing trees, the planting of new trees, and various seating elements. Plaza de Valero will be located at the center of the proposed modifications. Additionally, to create a plaza that is universally accessible, existing street elevations will be raised to create a uniform elevation across the site. Uniform site paving will be installed throughout the site.
- d. SITE PAVING – The applicant has proposed site paving materials that include granite pavers and vehicular limestone pavers. The proposed site paving has been proposed in
- e. PAVILION (Primary Materials) – The applicant has proposed to construct an open-air pavilion to be located between the previously approved Mission Gate & Lunette. The pavilion will feature a raised deck to protect the root zones of existing trees. The proposed pavilion will feature primary materials that feature steel columns, wood soffits and aluminum roofing and fascias. The proposed steel and aluminum elements will feature an architectural finish. Generally, staff finds these materials to be appropriate; however, the design team is responsible for submitting final materials and finish specifications to OHP staff for review and approval.
- f. PAVILION (Paving and Secondary Materials) – The applicant has proposed for the pavilion to feature a raised, wood platform deck and stone steps. Staff finds these materials to be appropriate. Stone steps should be complementary of stone found historically within the district.
- g. LIGHTING (Site & Architectural) – The applicant has proposed both site and architectural lighting. The proposed site lighting will be installed in a manner that illuminates existing trees and to illuminate lawn and green space. Architectural lighting will be installed at the proposed pavilion to create spot lighting beneath the pavilion's canopy. Staff finds the proposed lighting to be appropriate.
- h. SITE FURNISHINGS – The applicant has noted the installation various site furnishings, including tables, chairs, benches, and outdoor games. Staff finds that all outdoor furniture should be of high-quality wood or metal materials. Plastic, vinyl, or other composite materials should not be installed within the plaza.
- i. SIGNAGE – The applicant has not provided information regarding directional or informational signage. Staff finds that all signage should be developed in line with the Alamo Citizen Advisory Committee's Vision and Guiding Principles for the Alamo Plan.
- j. ARCHAEOLOGY – The project area is located within the Alamo Plaza Local Historic District, Alamo Plaza National Register of Historic Places District, and is partially within a River Improvement Overlay District. In addition, the designated boundary for The Alamo State Antiquities Landmark, and previously recorded archaeological site 41BX6, extends into the project area. The submitted Limits of Work partially overlap the boundary of the Cemetery on the Grounds of the Alamo Historic Texas Cemetery, as identified on the publicly accessible Texas Historic Sites Atlas. Furthermore, the project area is within or adjacent to the Acequia del Alamo, a Spanish Colonial water feature and designated National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark. Therefore, an archaeological investigation is required. The project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology, as applicable. In addition, the project shall comply with the Texas Antiquities Code and Health and Safety Code of Texas. The archaeology consultant shall submit the scope of work to the Office of Historic Preservation for review and approval prior to beginning field efforts. Archaeological

investigations on City of San Antonio property and right-of-way shall be coordinated with the OHP throughout construction of the project.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval based on findings a through i with the following stipulations:

- i. That the design team submit final materials and finish specifications for the proposed pavilion to OHP staff for review and approval, as noted in finding e.
- ii. That the design team submit final materials and specifications for the proposed pavilion steps to OHP staff for review and approval, as noted in finding f.
- iii. That all site furnishings, including tables, chairs, and other outdoor, relocatable items be made of wood or metal, as noted in finding h.
- iv. That all signage elements be developed in line with the Alamo Citizen Advisory Committee's Vision and Guiding Principles for the Alamo Plan based on finding i.
- v. ARCHEOLOGY – Archaeological investigations are required. The project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology, as applicable. Moreover, the project shall comply with the Texas Antiquities Code and Health and Safety Code of Texas. The archaeology consultant shall submit the scope of work to the Office of Historic Preservation for review and approval prior to beginning field efforts. Archaeological investigations on City of San Antonio property and right-of-way shall be coordinated with the OHP throughout construction of the project.

Plaza de Valero, San Antonio, Texas

Site Photos

April 27, 2023



Camera Position: Alamo Plaza looking South

Mission Gate and Lunette construction underway behind construction fence.



Camera Position: N. Alamo Street looking Northeast

Mission Gate and Lunette construction underway behind construction fence, temporary decomposed granite paving in roadway to create accessible continuation of the plaza.



Camera Position: N. Alamo Street looking Southeast
Construction of planter walls around existing trees underway behind construction fence within accessible plaza with temporary decomposed granite paving in roadway.



Camera Position: N. Alamo Street & Crockett St. looking East
Construction of planter walls around existing trees underway behind construction fence.



Camera Position: N. Alamo Street & Crockett St. looking Southeast

Temporary lawn being prepared in lowered plaza behind construction fence. Relocated heritage tree in temporary containment until permanent planting undertaken for the full construction of Plaza de Valero.



Camera Position: N. Alamo Street & Blum St. looking North

Temporary lawn being prepared in lowered plaza behind construction fence. Relocated heritage tree in temporary containment until permanent planting undertaken for the full construction of Plaza de Valero.

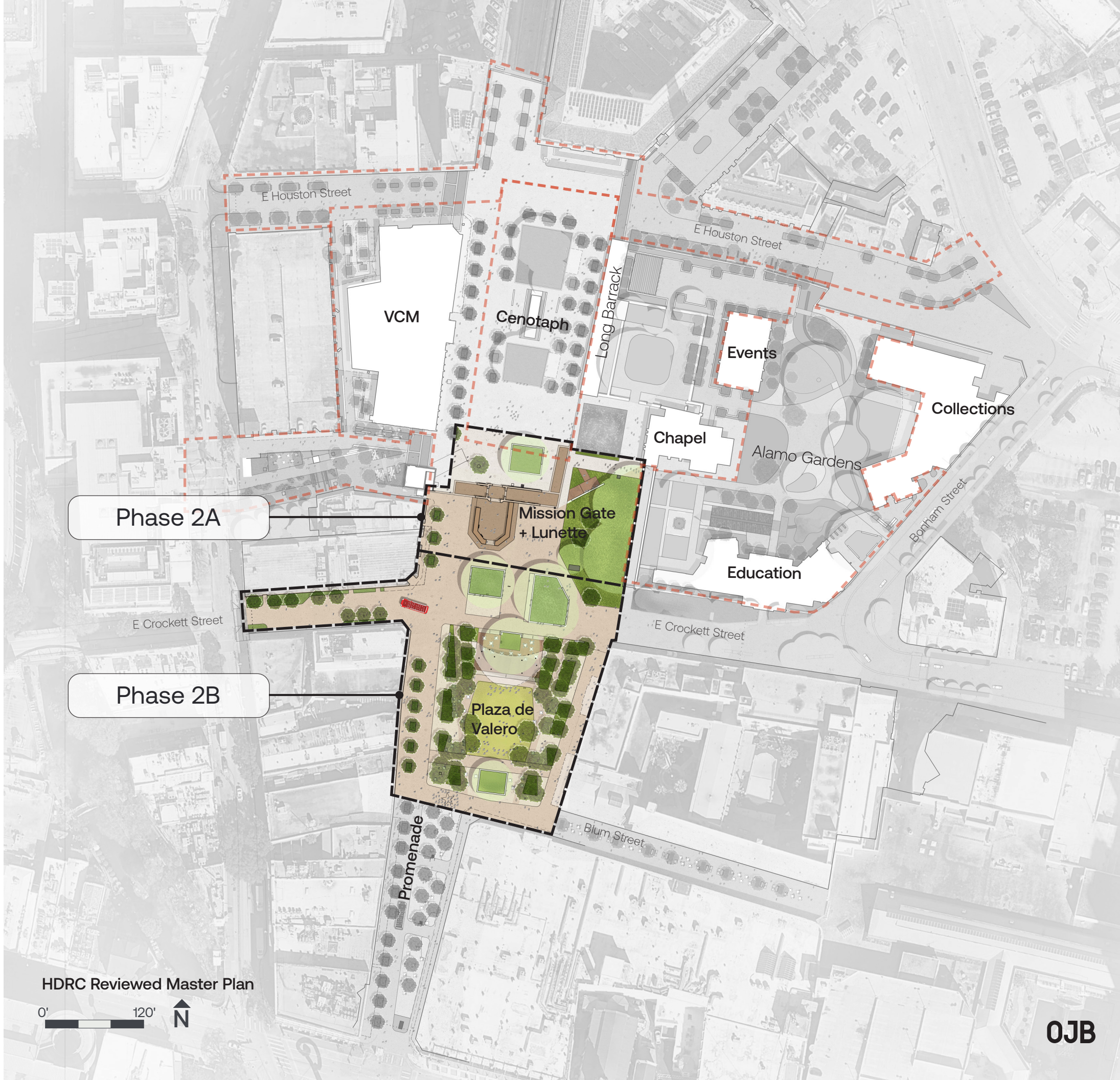
An aerial photograph of the Alamo mission building in San Antonio, Texas. The building is a large, light-colored stone structure with a prominent central archway and a smaller archway to the right. It is surrounded by lush green trees and a paved plaza. A large, rectangular green lawn is visible in the foreground. The text "The Alamo District" is overlaid on the right side of the image, underlined.

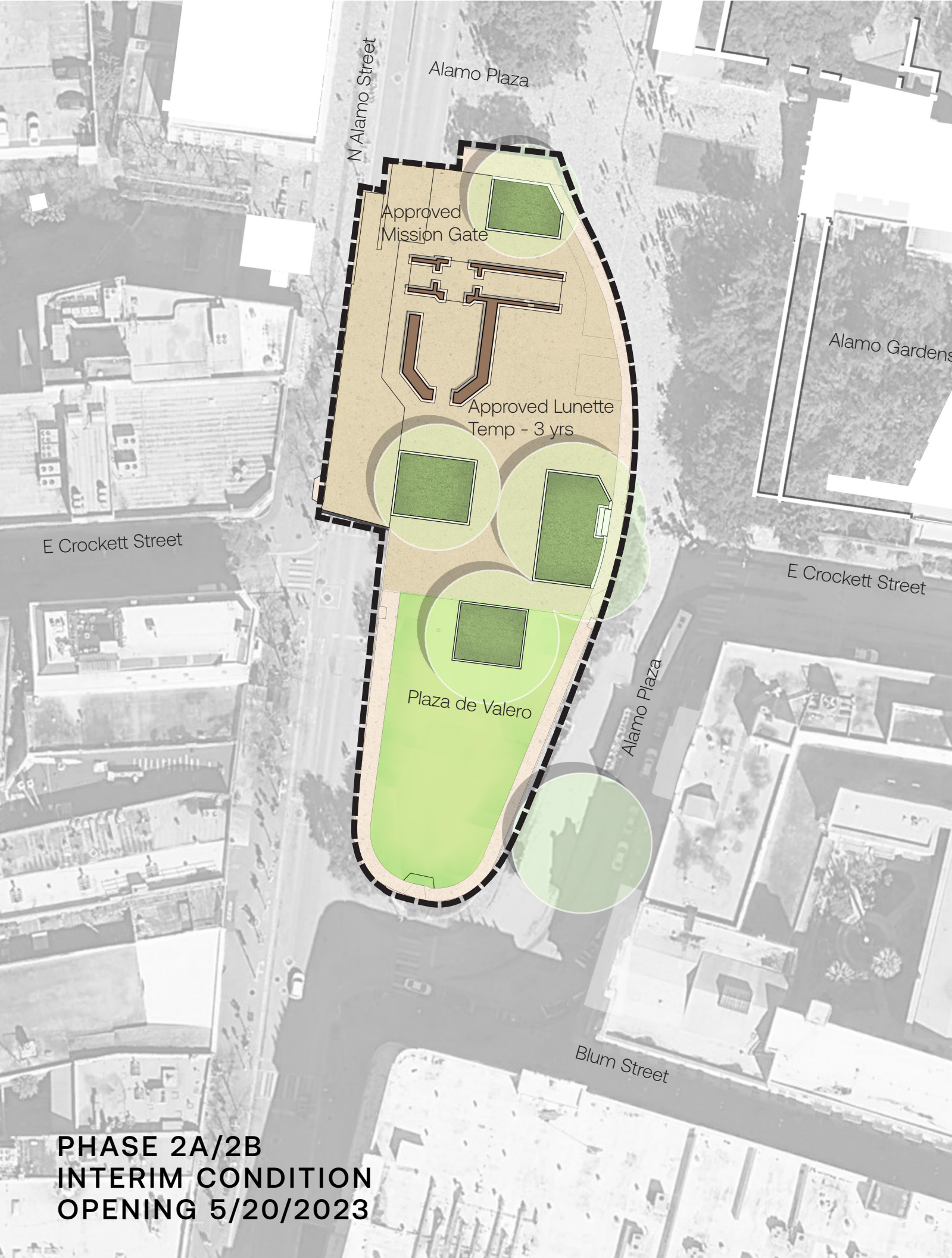
The Alamo District

PHASE 2A/2B
MISSION GATE AND PLAZA DE VALERO
HDRC APPLICATION

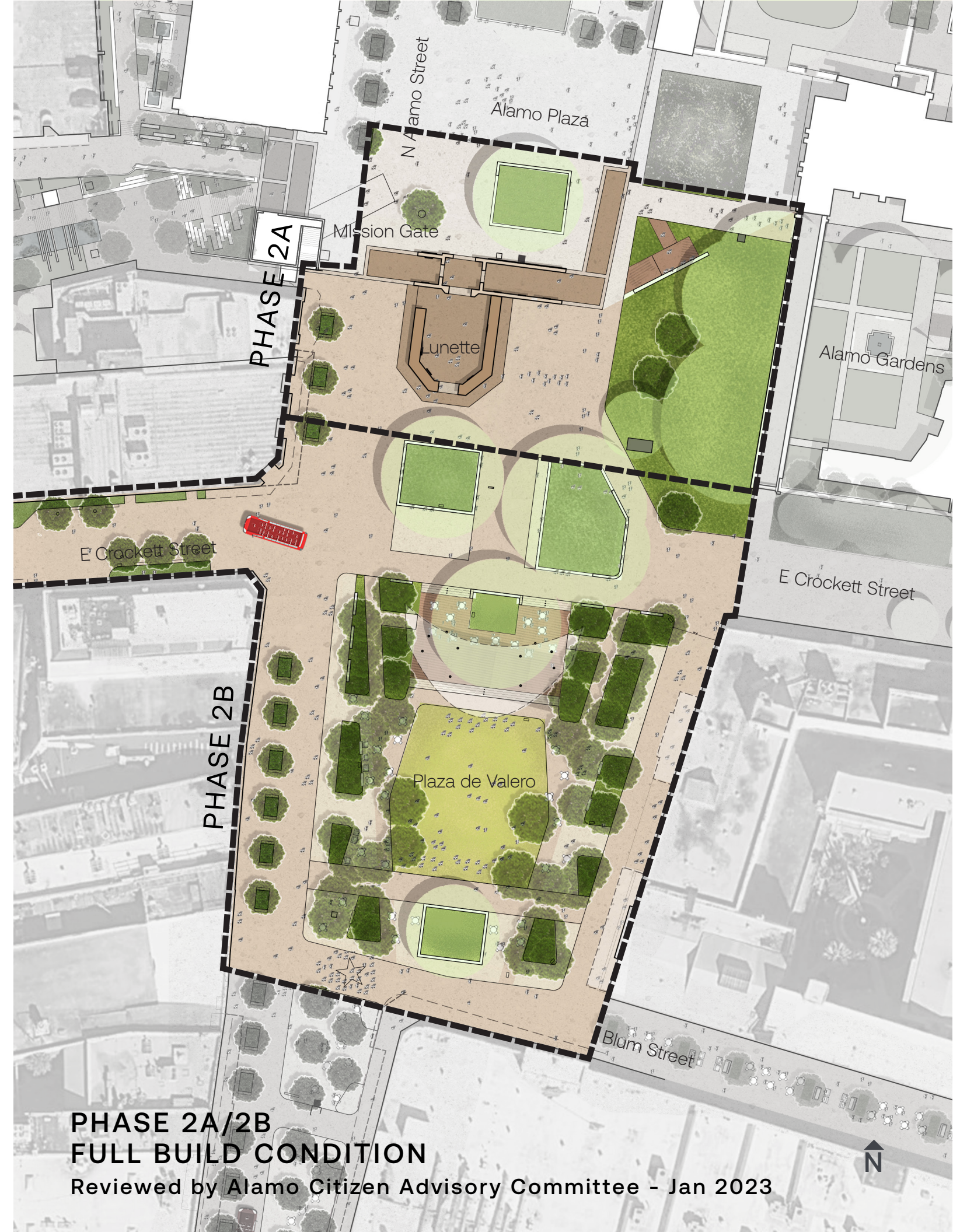
SAN ANTONIO, TX

SITE PLAN | PHASE 2A/2B





**PHASE 2A/2B
INTERIM CONDITION
OPENING 5/20/2023**



**PHASE 2A/2B
FULL BUILD CONDITION**
Reviewed by Alamo Citizen Advisory Committee - Jan 2023

PHASE 2A/2B + PLAZA DE VALERO

design goals

Create a fully-accessible community-focused space that balances historic and civic features

Create a strong sense of entry into the Alamo district with a continuous progression of historic signage and art

Provide an event space including a two-sided stage, pavilion, and large flexible lawn

Maintain a clear path for parades and emergency vehicles

Support existing and new commercial spaces with group seating spaces, ornamental plantings, and visibility to entrances.



SITE PLAN | PHASE 2A/2B



EXISTING TREE
WITH NEW
SEAT WALLS

MISSION GATE
& TEMPORARY
LUNETTE

PALISADE

TRANSPLANTED
TREE

PASSAGE TO
LUNETTE

EXISTING TREES
WITH NEW
SEAT WALLS

DECK AND
SHADE
STRUCTURE

BOTANIC
PLANTINGS

PROMENADE
TREES WITH
SEATING

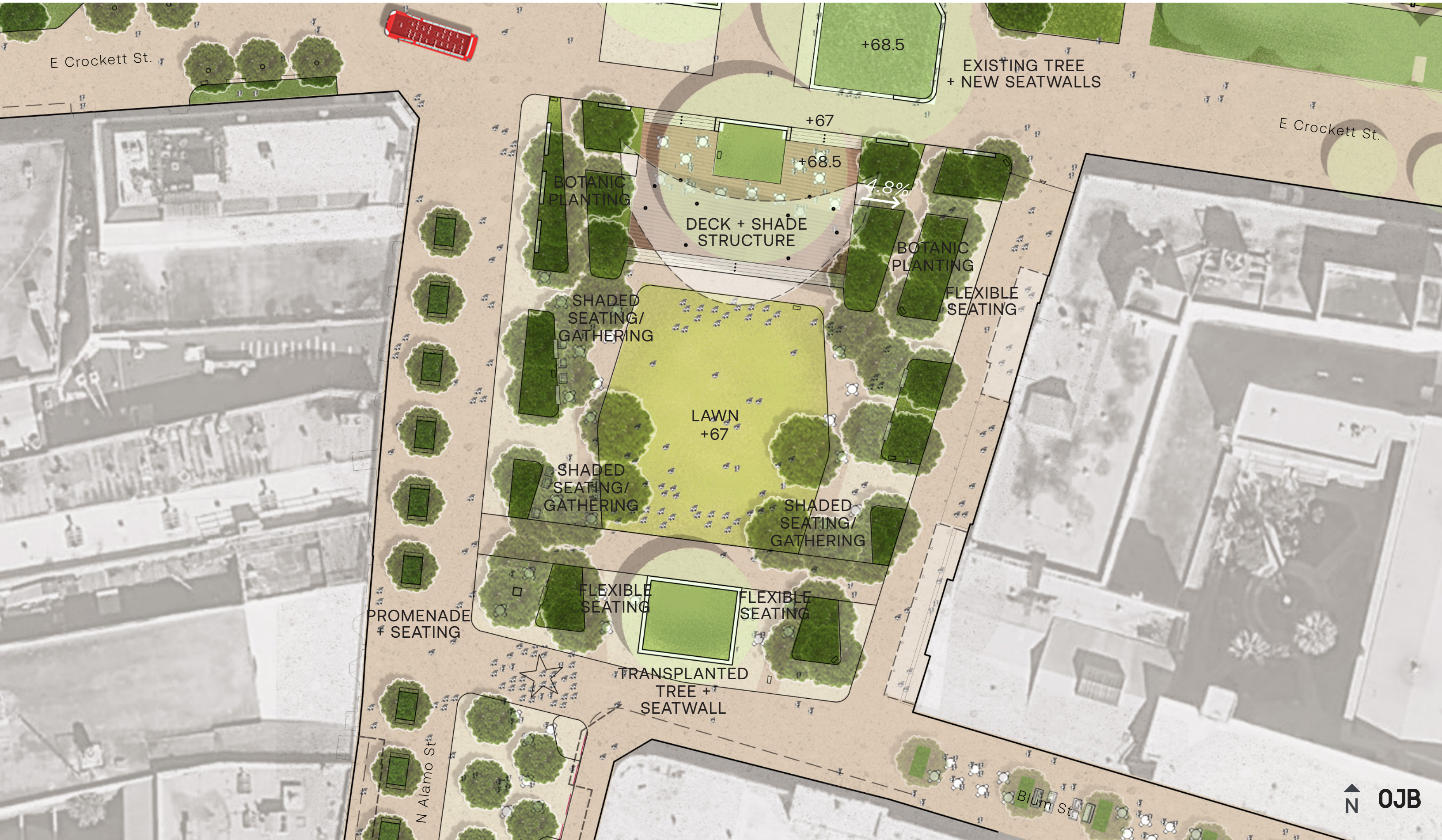
SHADED
SEATING/
GATHERING

LAWN

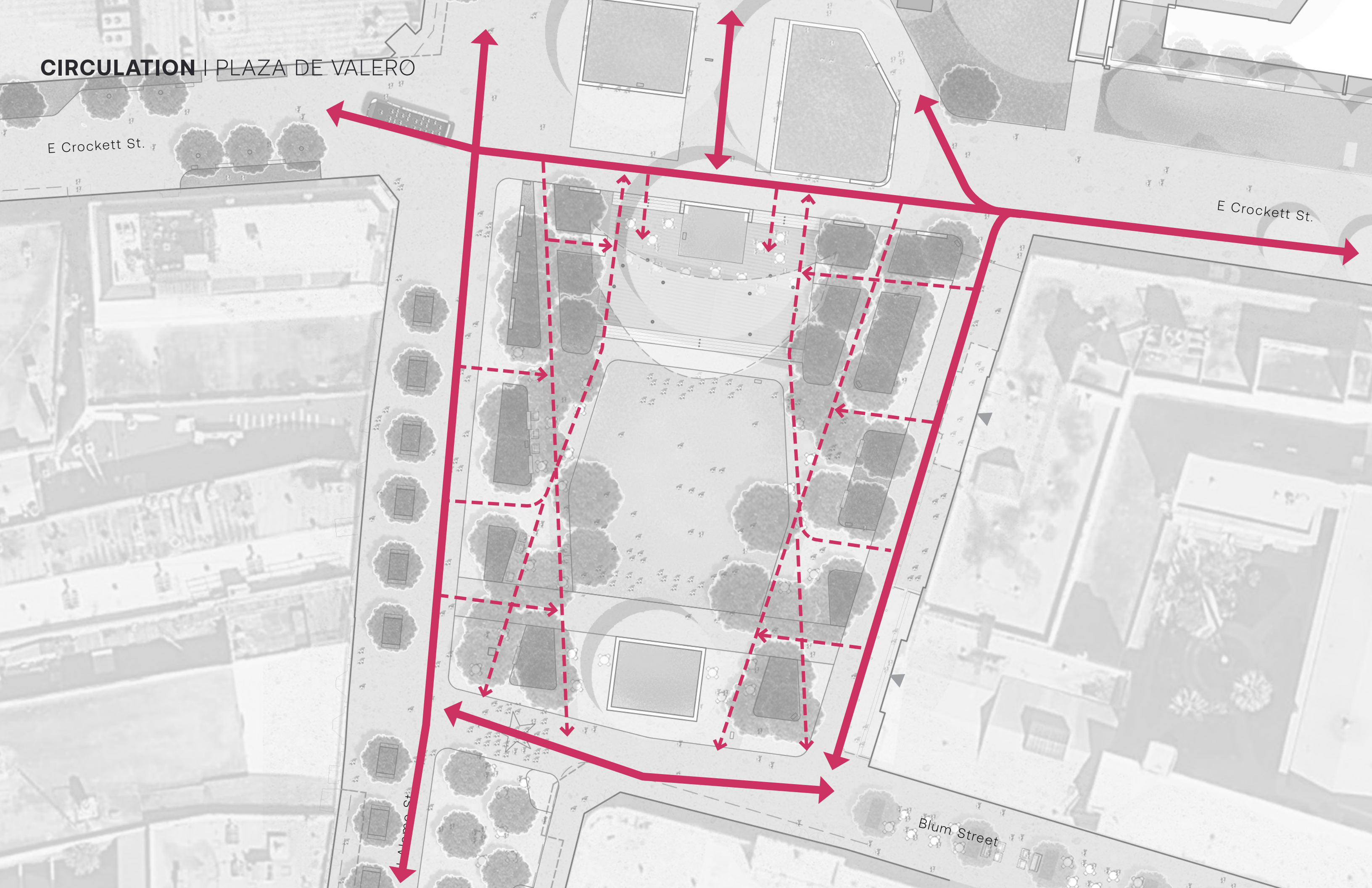
SHADED
SEATING/
GATHERING

TRANSPLANTED
TREE WITH NEW
SEATWALL

PROGRAMMING | PLAZA DE VALERO ENLARGEMENT



CIRCULATION | PLAZA DE VALERO



SEATING | PLAZA DE VALERO

E Crockett St.

E Crockett St.

EXISTING LIVE OAK
GATHERING AREA

INFORMAL SEATING: STEPS

SHADED PATHS

EVENT PAVILION & DECK

POROUS ENTRY
ON ALL SIDES

SHADED EVENT LAWN

BENCH ZONES

SECONDARY PATH

TRANSPLANTED LIVE OAK

DECK CAPACITY
350 - 500 PPL.

LAWN CAPACITY
800 - 1,000 PPL.

50 PPL.
SEATED

60 PPL.
SEATED

40 PPL.
SEATED

40 PPL.
SEATED

20 PPL.
SEATED

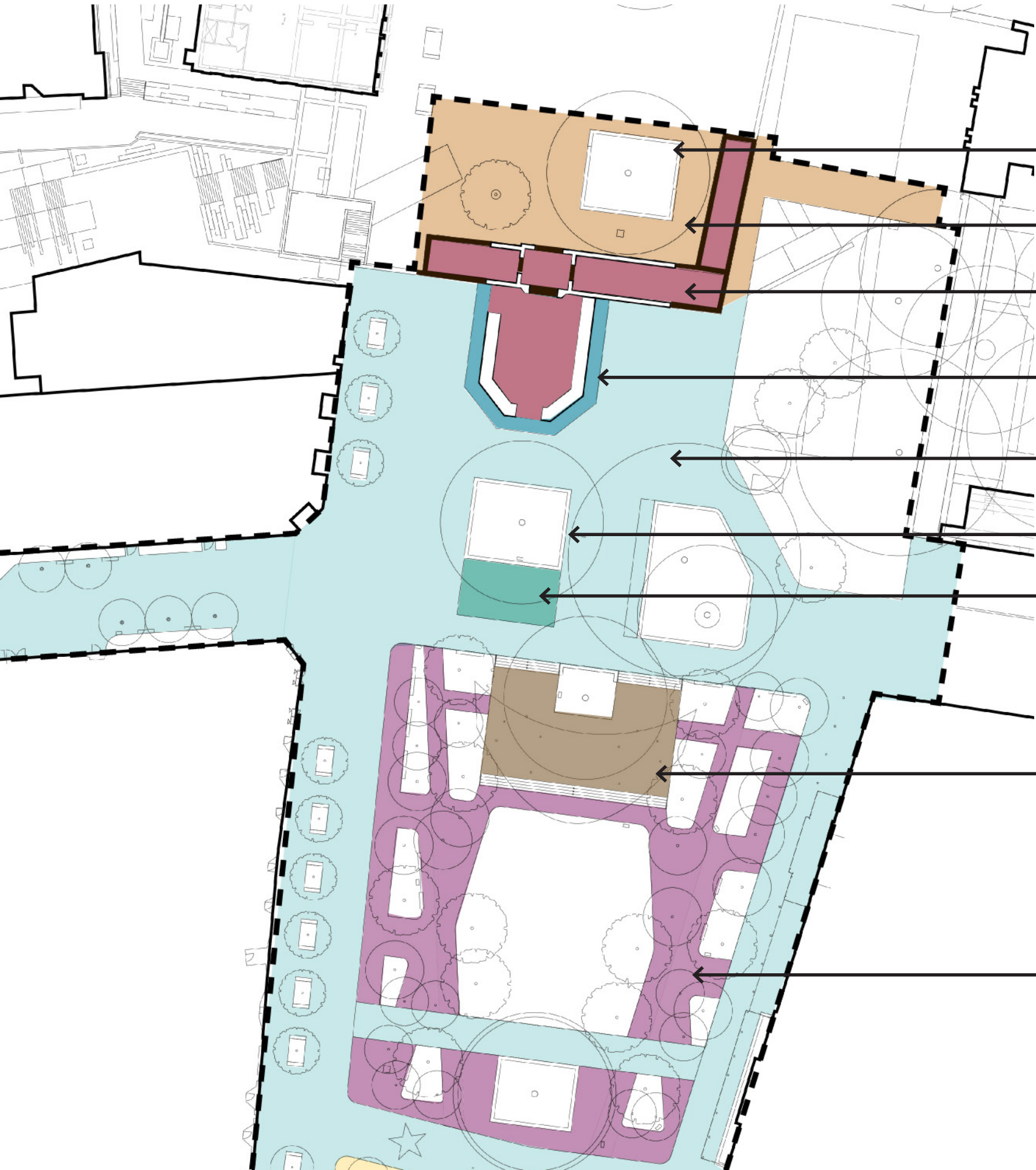
20 PPL.
SEATED

N Alamo St.

Blum St.



HARDSCAPE | PHASE 2A/2B



Historic Plaza - Planter Walls
Limestone

Historic Plaza - Paving
Rusticated Granite

Historic Fort - Paving Band & Infill
Rusticated Limestone

Historic Fort Ditch - Paving Band
Seeded Concrete

District - Paving
Concrete Unit Paver

District - Planter Walls, Steps, Benches
Limestone

District - Seating Area
Concrete Unit Paver

Plaza de Valero - Decking
Thermally Modified Wood

Plaza de Valero - Primary Paving
Limestone

Plaza de Valero - Seating Areas
Resin Bonded Aggregate

The hardscape strategy prioritizes a generational installation.

Performance

- Durability
- Longevity
- Maintenance
- Aging/Repairability

Qualitative

- Welcoming
- Accessible
- High Quality
- Support Interpretation
- Distinct from Historic Materials
- Backdrop to Historic Architecture

PROGRAMMING | PLAZA DE VALERO



PROGRAMMING | PLAZA DE VALERO



Shade Structure
and Decking

Botanic
Plantings

Hotel
Entrance

Integrated
Benches

Diagonal
Walks

Flexible
Seating

Flexible
Lawn

PROGRAMMING | PLAZA DE VALERO



Shade Structure

Flexible Lawn

Seating Along Sidewalk

Sloped Walk to Deck

Raised Deck

Botanic Plantings

Diagonal Walk

OJB

PROGRAMMING | PLAZA DE VALERO



Canopy
Trees

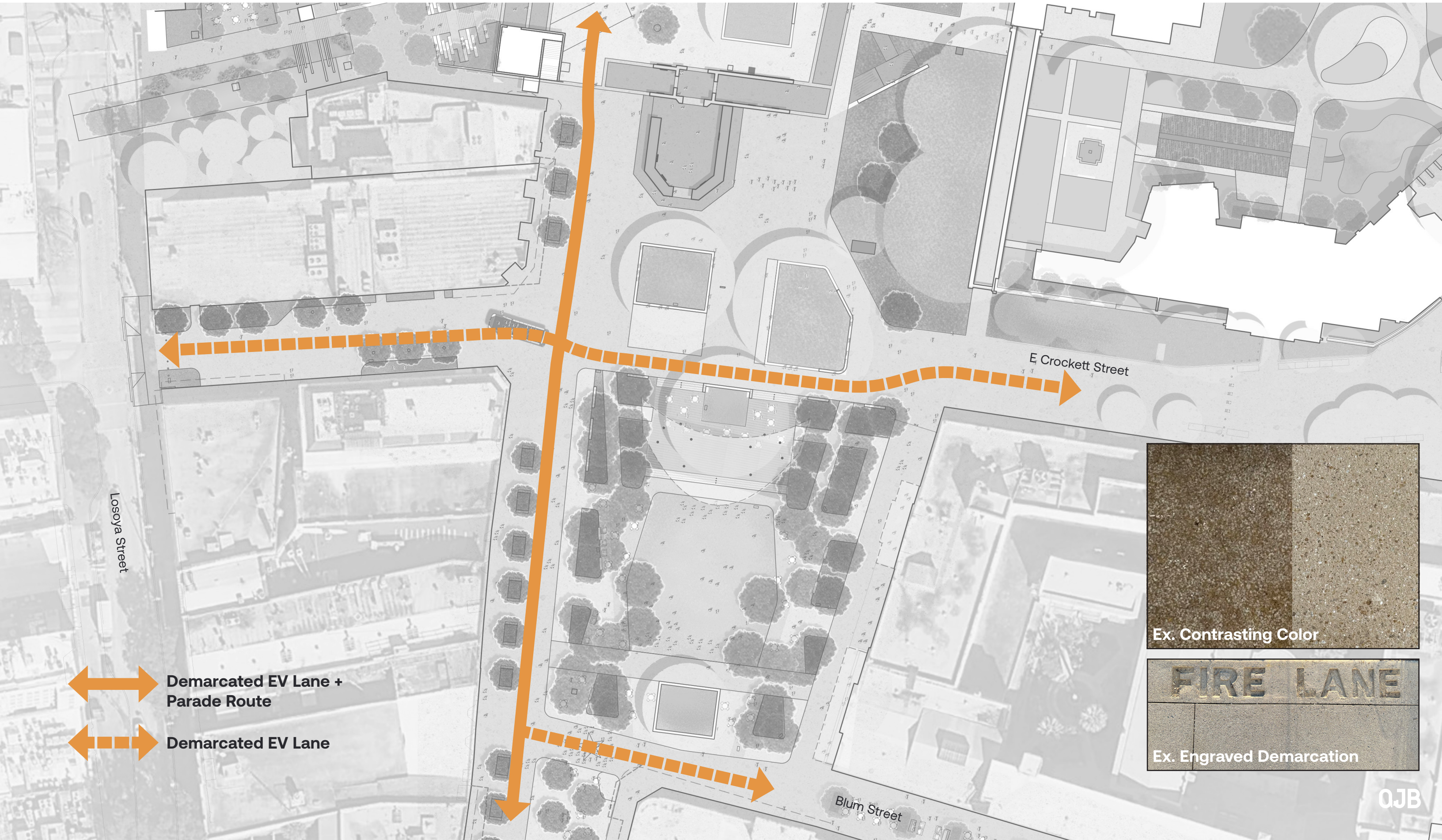
Enhanced Landscape
Along Retail

Promenade &
EV Lane

Fire Lane
Demarcation

District Benches

EV ACCESS / FIRE LANES | PHASE 2A/2B



Losoya Street

E Crockett Street

Blum Street



**Demarcated EV Lane +
Parade Route**



Demarcated EV Lane



Ex. Contrasting Color



Ex. Engraved Demarcation

PROGRAMMING | PLAZA DE VALERO



Existing Tree

Stone Seatwalls
with expanded
soil pits

Existing Tree

Deck

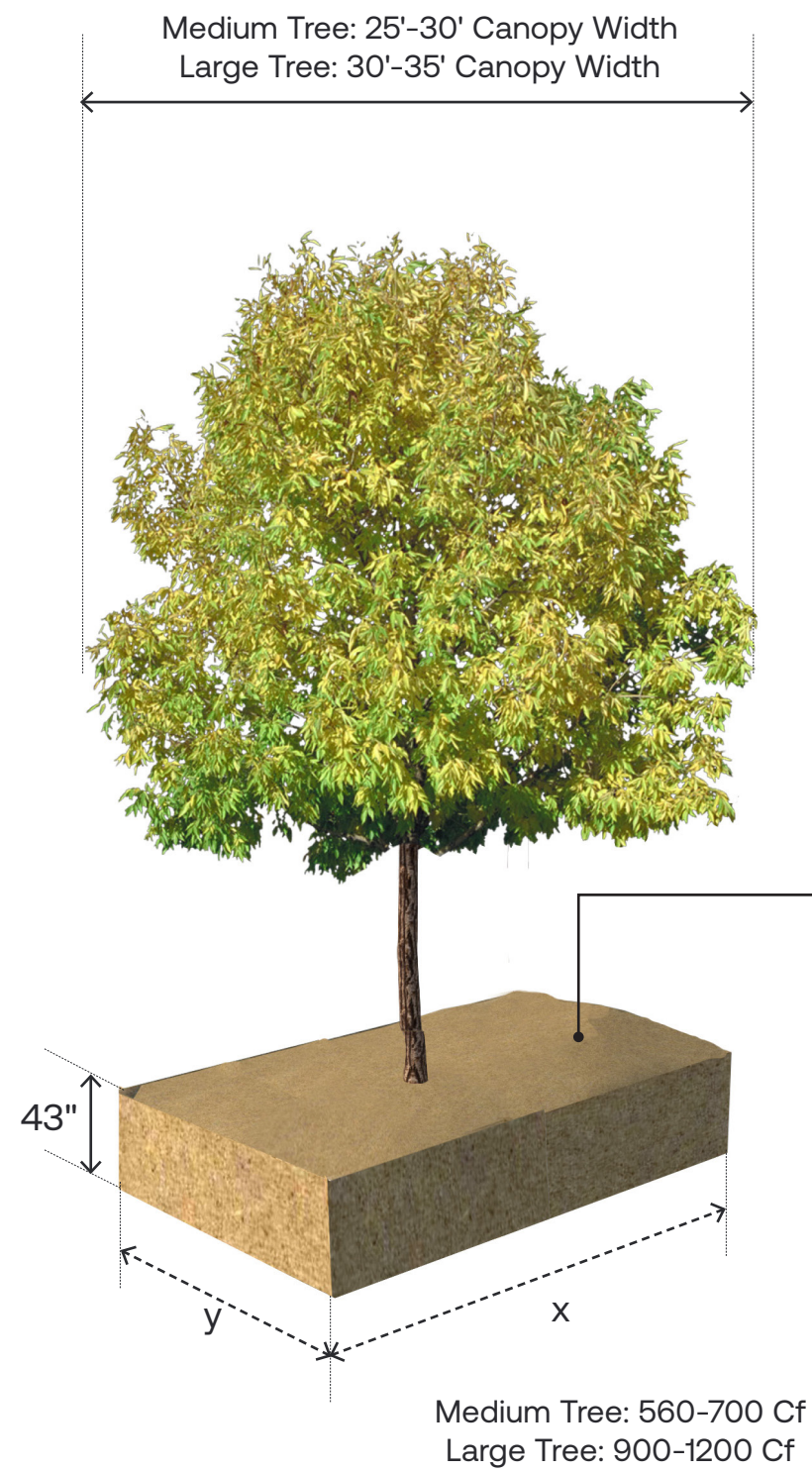
E. Crockett
Fire Lane

Flexible Gathering
Spaces

Flexible Gathering
Spaces

Stone Seatwalls
at Existing Trees

PROPOSED TREE PLAN | PHASE 2A/2B

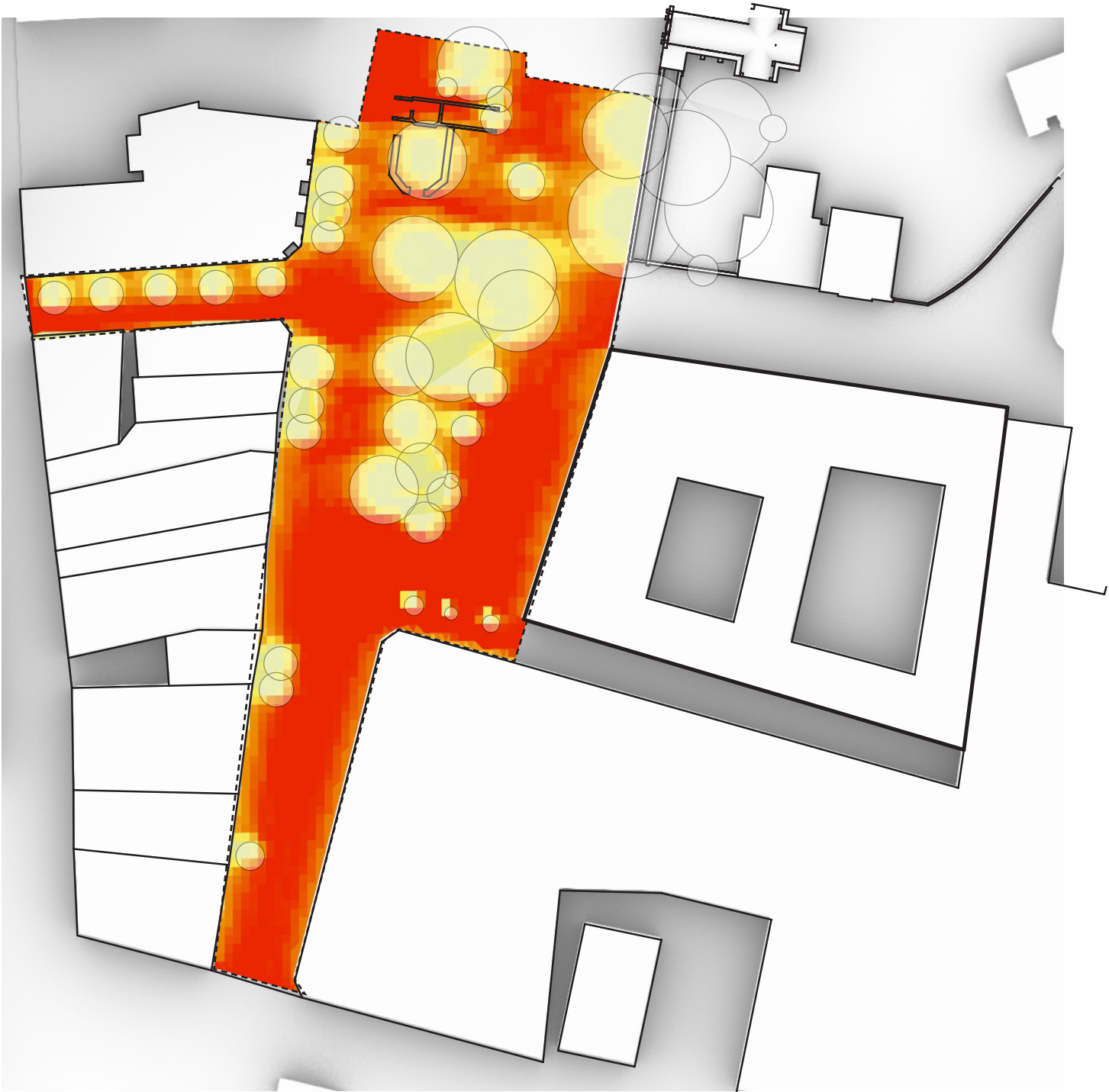


The tree pit design is intended to provide the right amount of soil for trees to thrive and stay healthy into maturity.

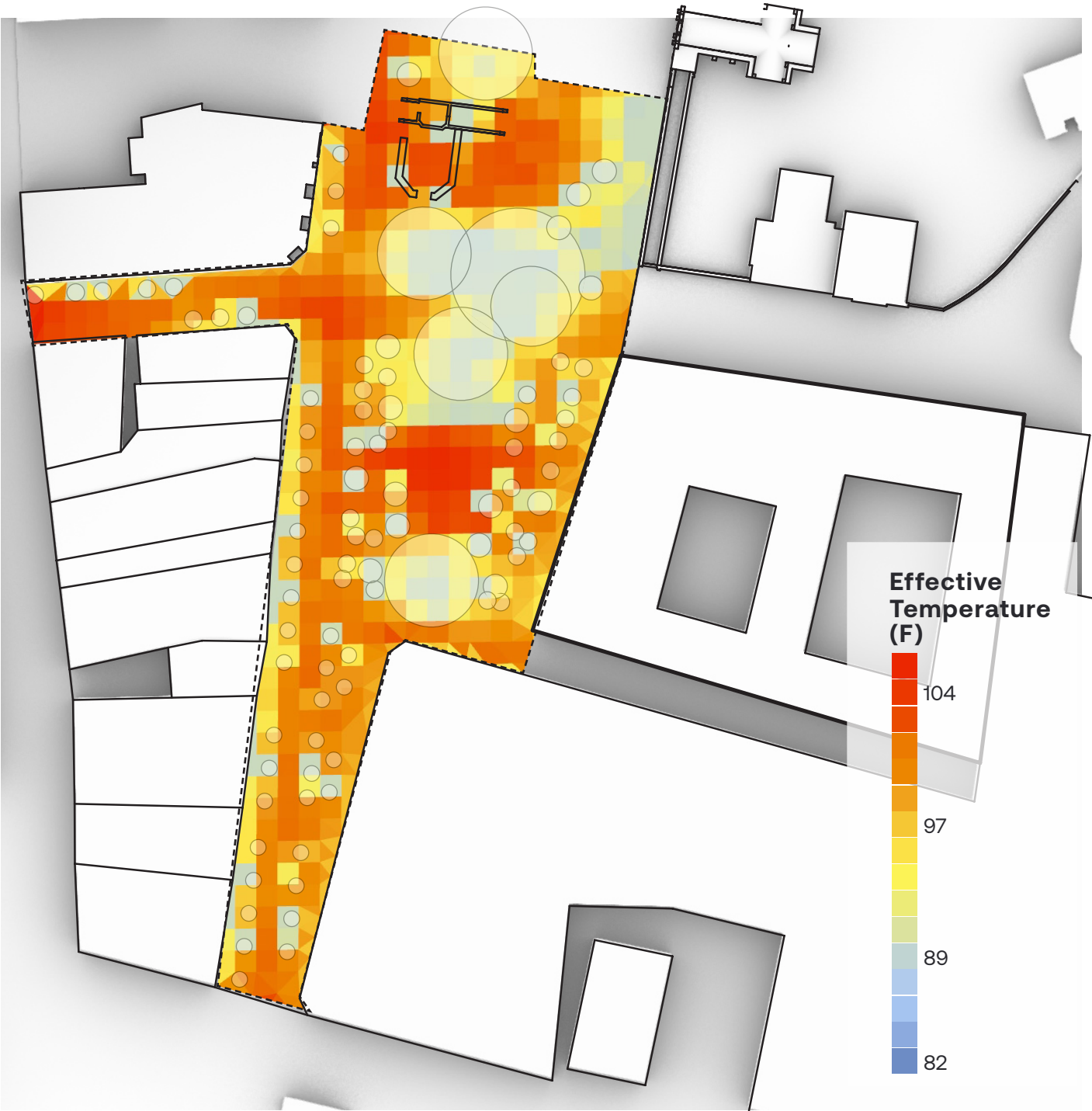
STREET TREES PLANTED AT 25' ON CENTER



SUSTAINABILITY | HUMAN COMFORT (UTCI - JULY)



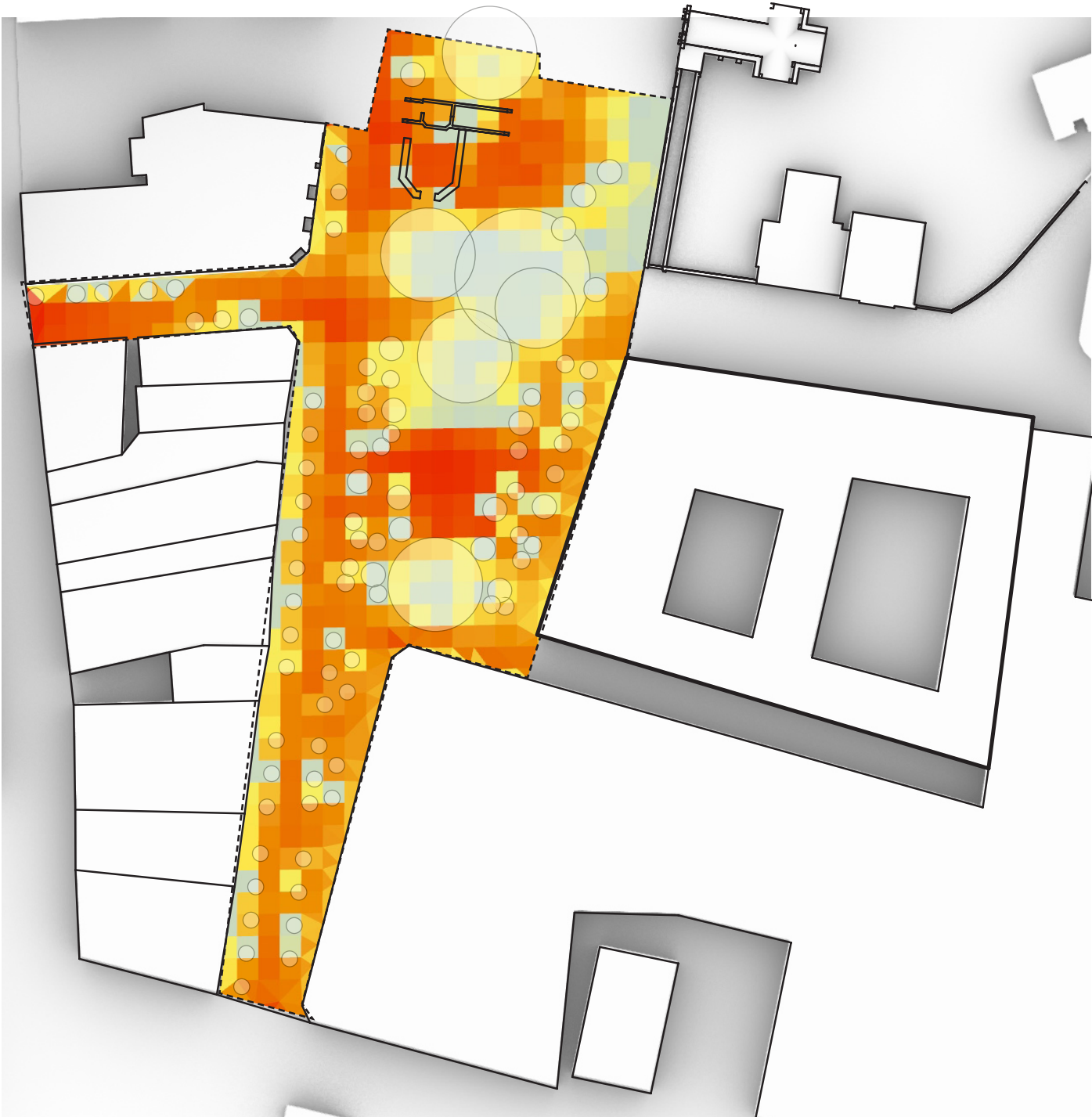
Existing Plaza



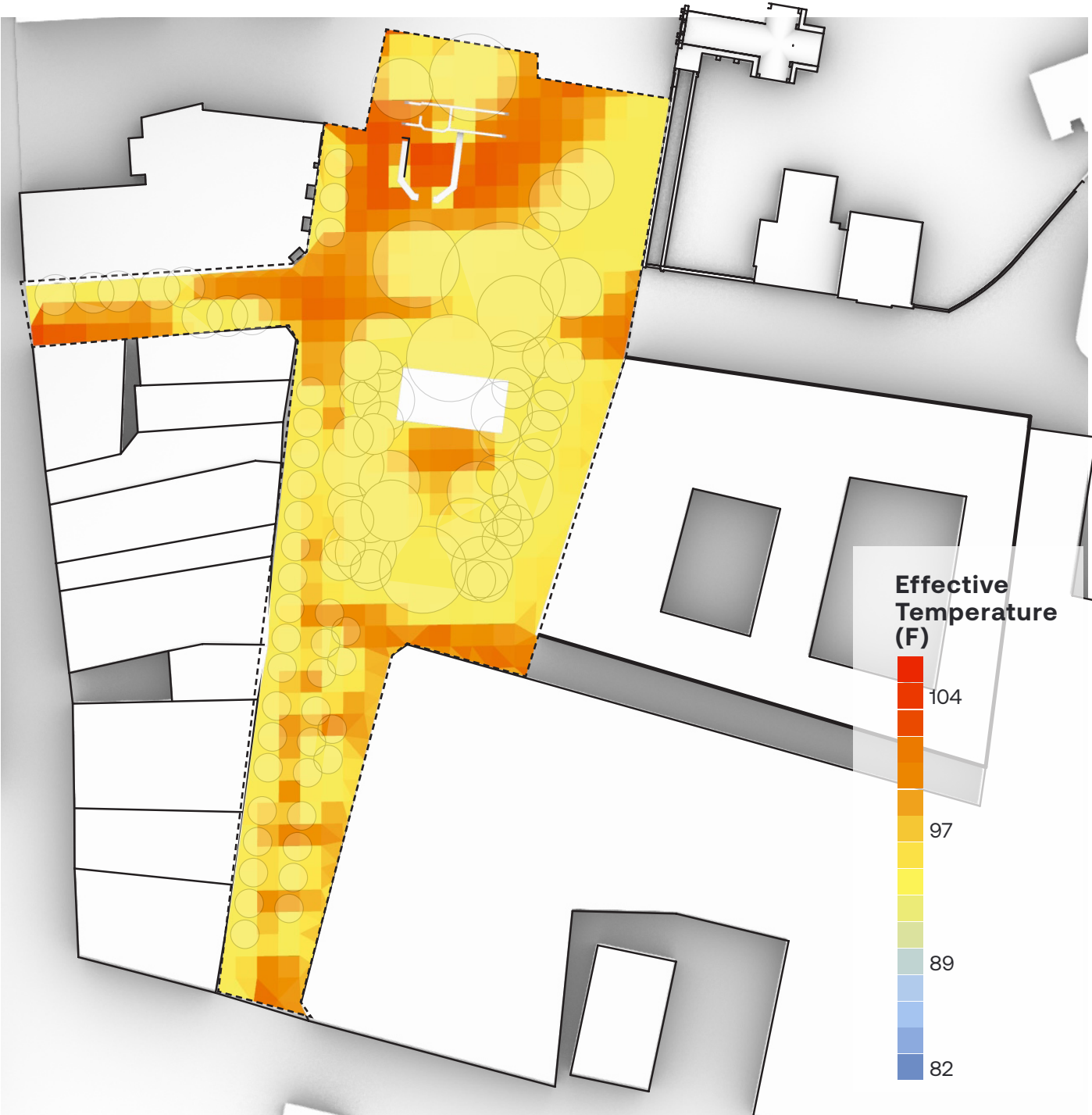
Proposed Design -UTCI anticipated 5 years after Installation

SUSTAINABILITY | HUMAN COMFORT (UTCI - JULY)

Climate models predict up to another 100 days over 100F Heat Index by 2070-2100

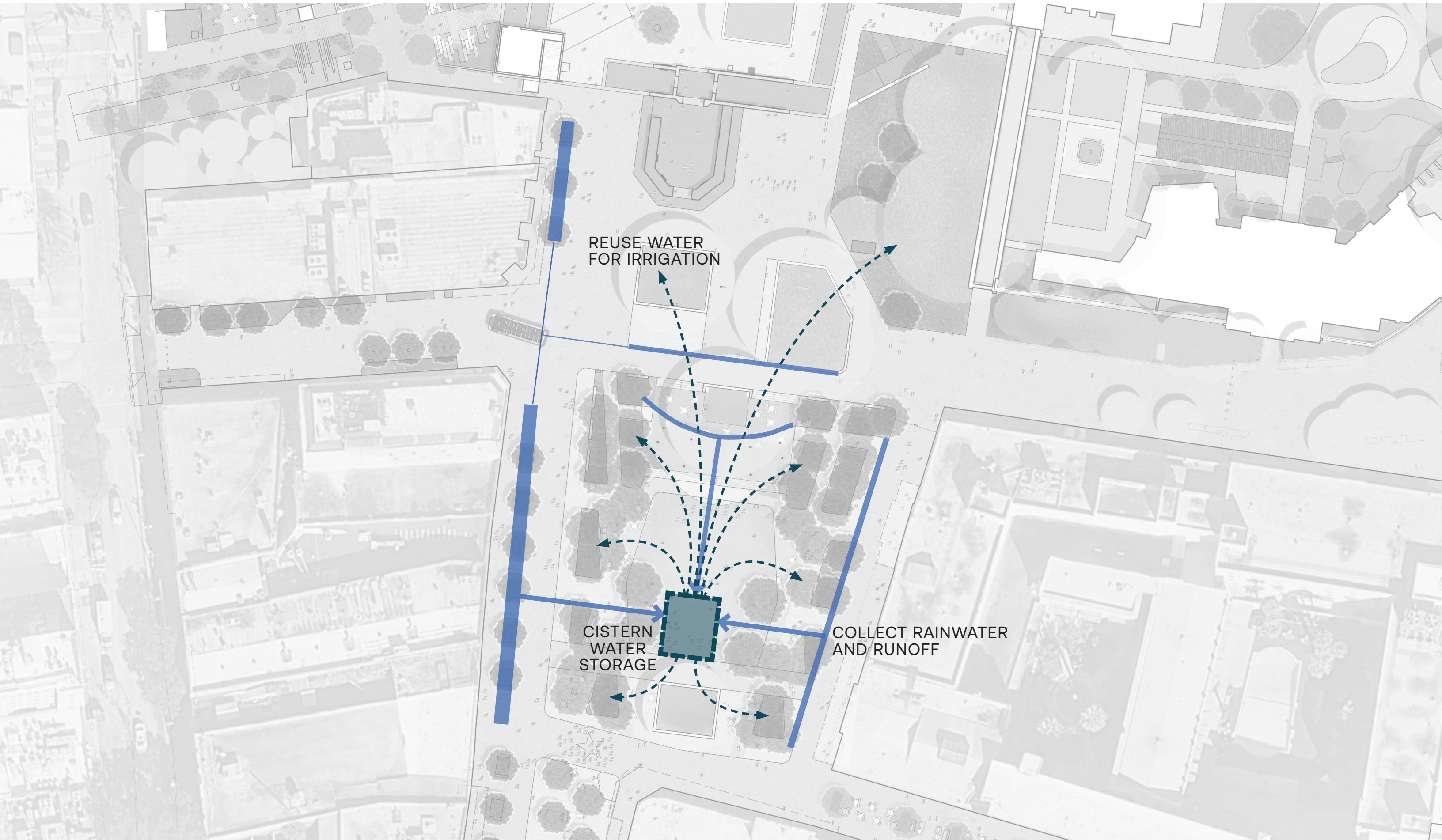


Proposed Design - UTCI anticipated 5 years after Installation



Proposed Design -UTCi at Maturity (anticipated 40 years after Installation)

SUSTAINABILITY | STORMWATER COLLECTION + IRRIGATION





Thank you

SITE PLAN | PHASE 2A/2B



EXISTING TREE
WITH NEW
SEAT WALLS

MISSION GATE
& TEMPORARY
LUNETTE

PALISADE

TRANSPLANTED
TREE

PASSAGE TO
LUNETTE

EXISTING TREES
WITH NEW
SEAT WALLS

DECK AND
SHADE
STRUCTURE

BOTANIC
PLANTINGS

PROMENADE
TREES WITH
SEATING

SHADED
SEATING/
GATHERING

LAWN

SHADED
SEATING/
GATHERING

TRANSPLANTED
TREE WITH NEW
SEATWALL