The Philippine Center:

Shaping a Community through Cultural Integration

Capstone Project
April 21, 2017

Jo Therese Tolentino

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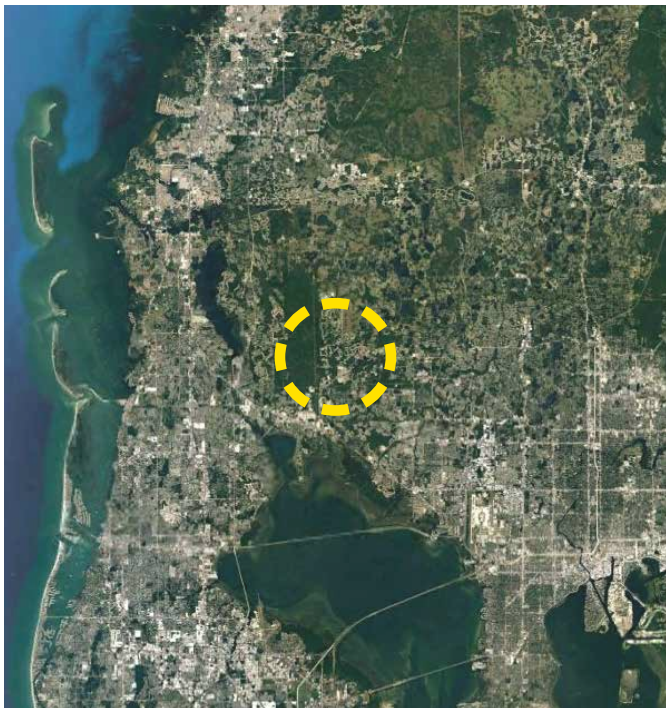
Advised by
Konstantinos “Costis” Alexakis

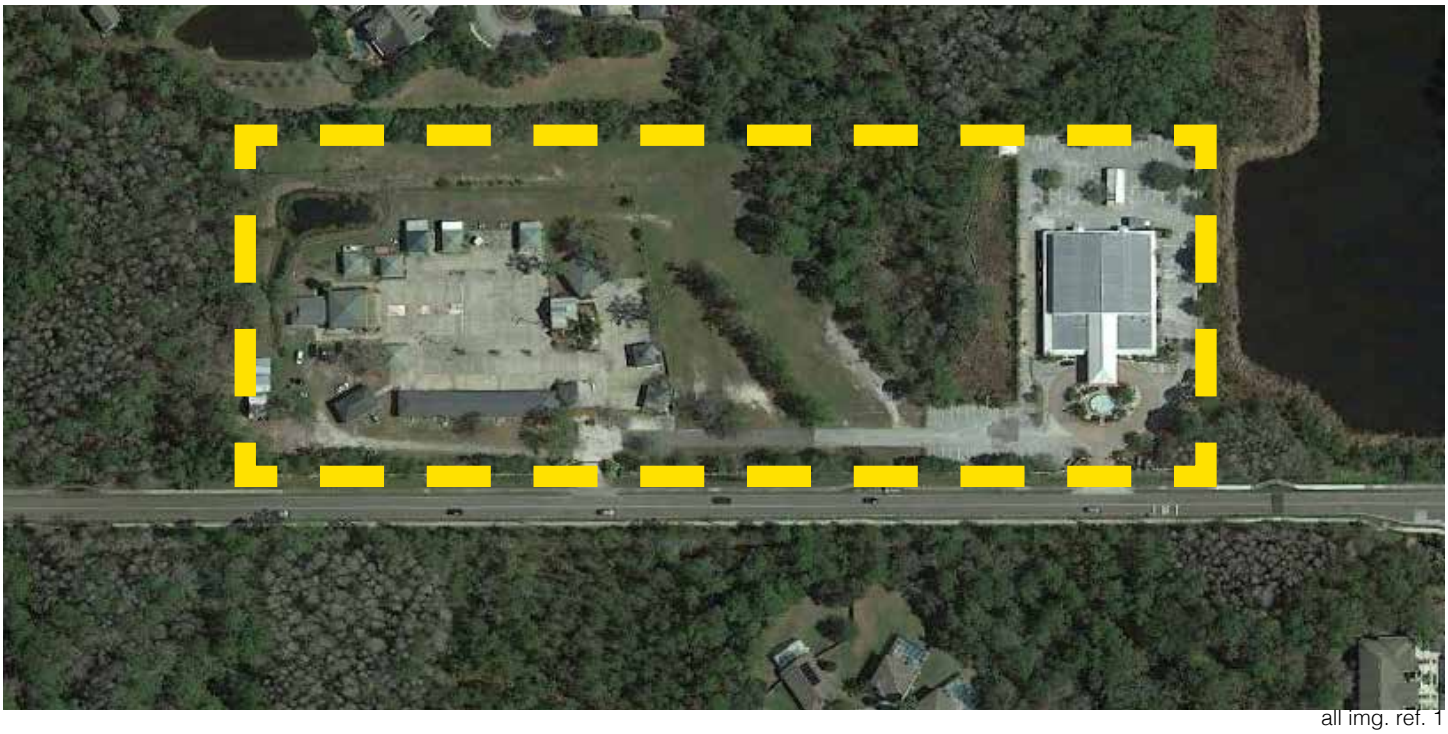
I would like to thank all the people that have shaped my experience at UF, especially the friends I've met through studio.

Introduction

The Philippine Center is located sits between Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties in Florida, a central location for the Filipino community within the Tampa Bay area. Ethnic businesses sprinkled throughout emphasize the presence of Filipino and other minority groups. The Philippine Center is a place where people can congregate and celebrate their culture. The Center is quite successful, and holds weekly cultural events and classes, special occasions and annual festivals that are open to everyone.

However, the Philippine Center lacks identity, unity and character as a whole. The revitalization of the Center aims to reflect the enthusiasm and success of the community, and memorialize Philippine heritage. The project will unify the site through a pedestrian-first approach. It will activate underdeveloped areas, educate through culturally inspired spaces and utilize sustainable practices. The Philippine Center will be a place where everyone feels welcome and become a part of the community.





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CONTENTS

Research	**2**
Map Analysis	**14**
Synthesis + Goals	**34**
Case Studies	**40**
Conceptual Design	**46**
Final Design	**68**
References	**88**

RESEARCH

Theory

How can we design to reflect a culture? How do different people interact with the built environment? How can culture interact with the environment?

It is challenging to design to a cultural community. A people understand the organic form in which all they know and find familiar exists. People are attracted to spaces that are the way they've always used them. Designers must understand what a space means to the people, how they see and use it. This is important for three types of user groups, the first-generation minorities whom have found a home away from home, second-generation ethnic-American children whom may or may not have an idea of what the heritage they come from encompasses, and American people that chose to experience a culture that is often different from theirs in many ways.

"**Human truth** lies only in the process in which civilizations confront each other more and more **with what is most living and creative in them**.... The process of understanding one's own culture is **essential to understanding others**."

- Paul Ricoeur

"A **recognizable impression**… helps register a place both in terms of physical environment as well as our mental construct of all that associates with it. It touches on the **collective cultural consciousness**."

- Maki Fumihiko

“Tradition can no longer be thought of as the **static legacy of a past**…. It must be understood as a **dynamic project for the reinterpretation** of this past in light of the needs of the present and a future.”

- Nezar AlSayyad

Philippine Culture

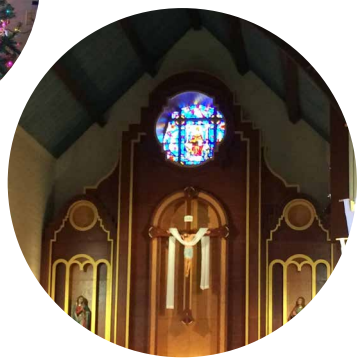
To capture the Philippine culture I focused on the country's Motto, focusing on uses of various spaces and elements of familiarity.
Maka-Diyos, Maka-Tao, Makakalikasan at Makabansa.
For God, People, Nature and Country.

For God refers to the Spanish Influence brought to the Philippines, and with it the dances, fashion, design and the Catholic religion. Today, Filipinos celebrate religious and non-religious holidays with great energy and joy.

For the People. One of the spaces in the Center is named after "Bayanihan," a derivative from the word "bayan," meaning community. It refers to the spirit of common solidarity and service taken upon to accomplish a particular goal.

For Nature. A main economic driver for the Philippines is Agriculture. This also transfers into more developed areas through Filipinos' love for gardening. As a country near the equator, we consider plants native to the Philippines as Tropical. A well-known botanist, David Fairchild, explored the Philippines in pursuit of plants that now survive in Florida. You may see his accomplishments in the Fairchild Botanic Garden in Miami. Additionally, the Philippines has many unique landforms, including mountains, forests and coastal beaches.

For the Country. Filipinos place great importance on tradition and culture. Many important factors include the Arts (music, storytelling and dancing) and daily activities (sports, fishing and children's games).



people

nature

country

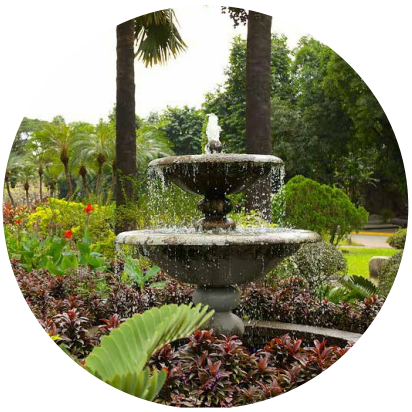
Philippine Gardens

Ayala Triangle Gardens
Manila (north central)

Hidden Garden
Vigan (north)

Malagos Garden Resort
Davao del Sur (south)

Fort Santiago Memorial
Manila (north central)



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Philippine Center Background

In the 1990's, Filipinos in the Tampa Bay area came together through various affiliated organizations. In 1995, a few members established the Philippine Cultural Foundation, Inc. (PCFI), a non-profit, and bought what is now known as the Philippine Cultural Center, a 5-acre property on the border of Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties. The PCFI rushed to finish construction in time for the first annual PhilFest (Philippine Festival) in mid-1996. The event was a success and attracted visitors statewide. The PCFI finally had a permanent space, ingraining a sense of pride in the Filipino community. The State of Florida Division of Cultural Affairs eventually granted funds for the purchase of an additional 5-acres and construction of the Bayanihan Arts and Events Center (BAC) in 2001. The Philippine Cultural Enrichment Complex continues to be successful, with the BAC holding weekly indoors events, which, along with PhilFest, generates most of the PCFI's income. In May 2015, PCFI members built the Bahay Kubo, a traditional bamboo hut found in rural areas and an icon of the Philippines. The PCEC's Bahay Kubo is used as an informal museum with Philippine artifacts.

The success of the PCEC can only be attributed to the hard working volunteers at the PCFI. It was community-oriented from the beginning, with members working to clear and construct the first 5-acre property, to the fundraising efforts that supported it all. Members donated furniture and personal items for decoration. The PCEC has since hosted events for other minority groups. Many consider the PCEC an irreplaceable amenity.

PhilFest

Education outreach

Bayanihan Arts Center

all img ref. 2

Philippine Center Events

The Philippine Center accommodates many cultural activities.

Events:

- Weekly Classes/Programs
  - Fine arts
  - Performing arts
  - Music + Instrumental
  - Language (Tagalog/Filipino)
  - Get togethers: cook outs, basketball, tabletop games
  - Weddings, baptisms, etc.
- Monthly/Occasional
  - Art, Music and Theater Shows
  - Competitions: Vocal, Performance, Fashion, Painting
  - Religious celebrations (Christmas, Patron Saint festival)
- Annual
  - Festivals: PhilFest, Barrio Fiesta
  - Educational outreach: Philippine Cultural Experience
- Ongoing: Green Revolution initiative

Groups:

- Musikong Kawayan Bamboo Ensemble
- The Philippine Performing Arts Company
- Philippine Choral Group
- The Filipino American Theater Company of Tampa

casional

annual

on-going

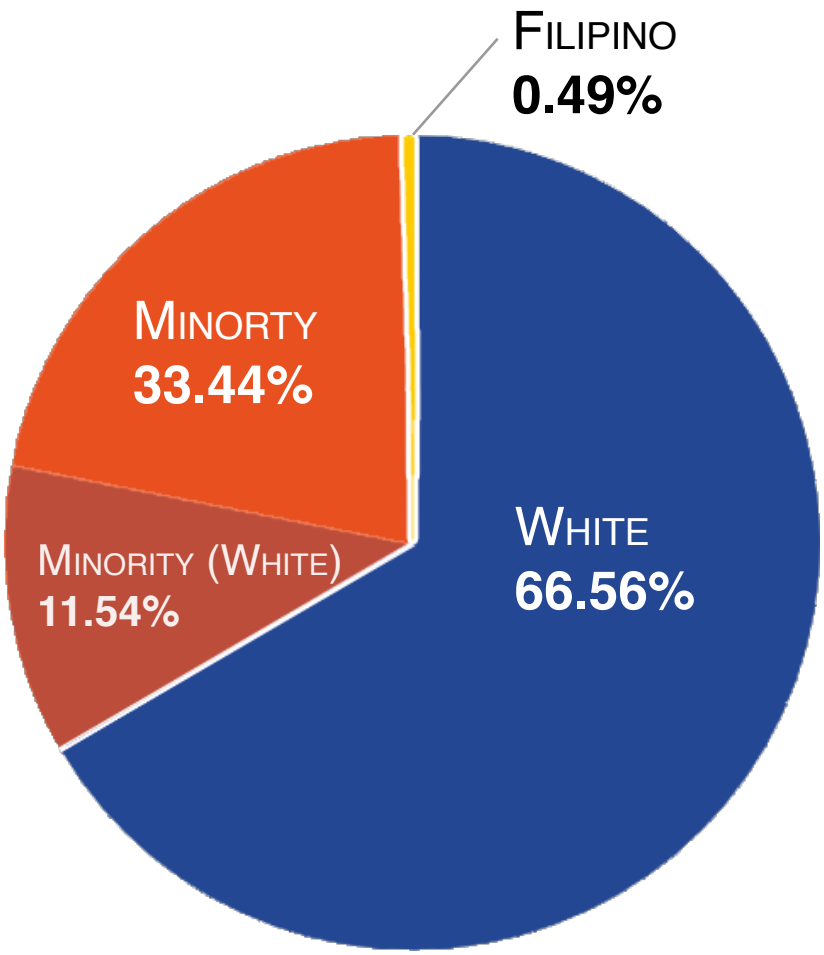
Map Analyses

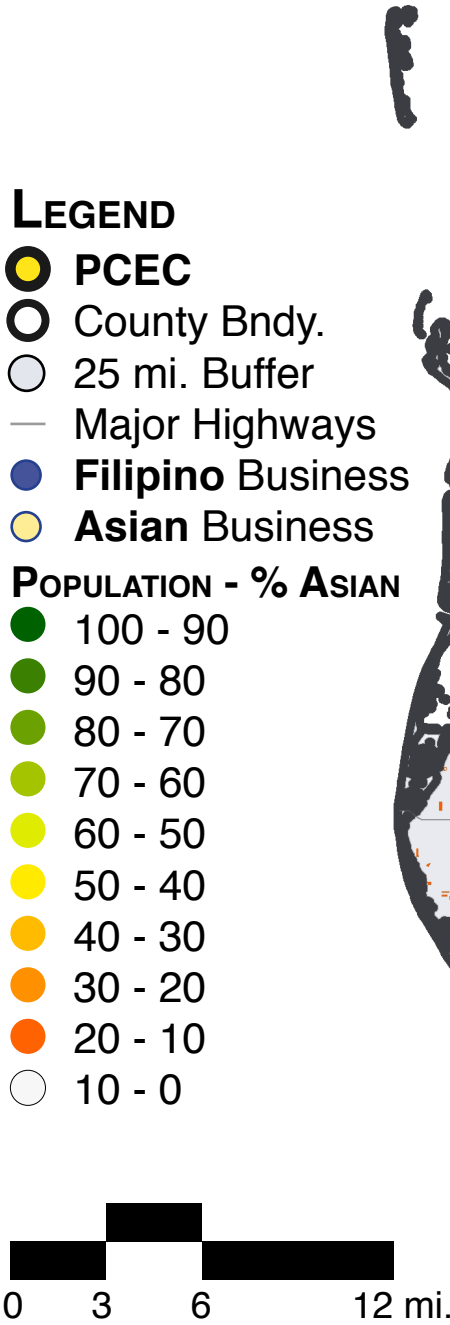
Context: Regional

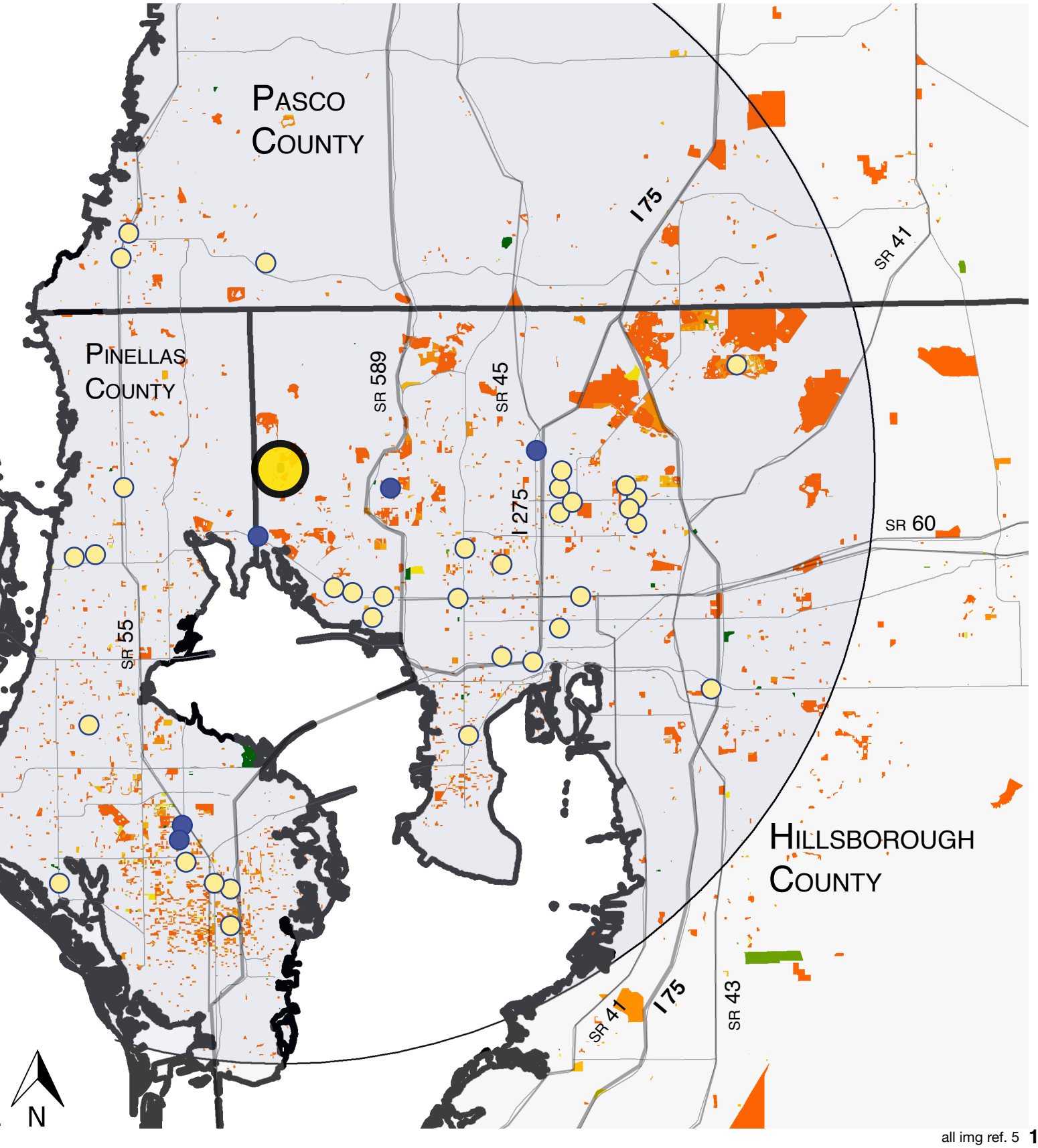
- **0.49% Filipino pop**. in Study Area.
- Filipinos make up 20% of Asian pop. (distribution shown in Map).

Population Distribution

Minority vs. Filipino






Pasco County
Pinellas County
Hillsborough County
I 75
SR 41
SR 589
SR 45
I 275
SR 60
SR 55
SR 41
I 75
SR 43
N

all img ref. 5

Context: Surrounding Area

Legend

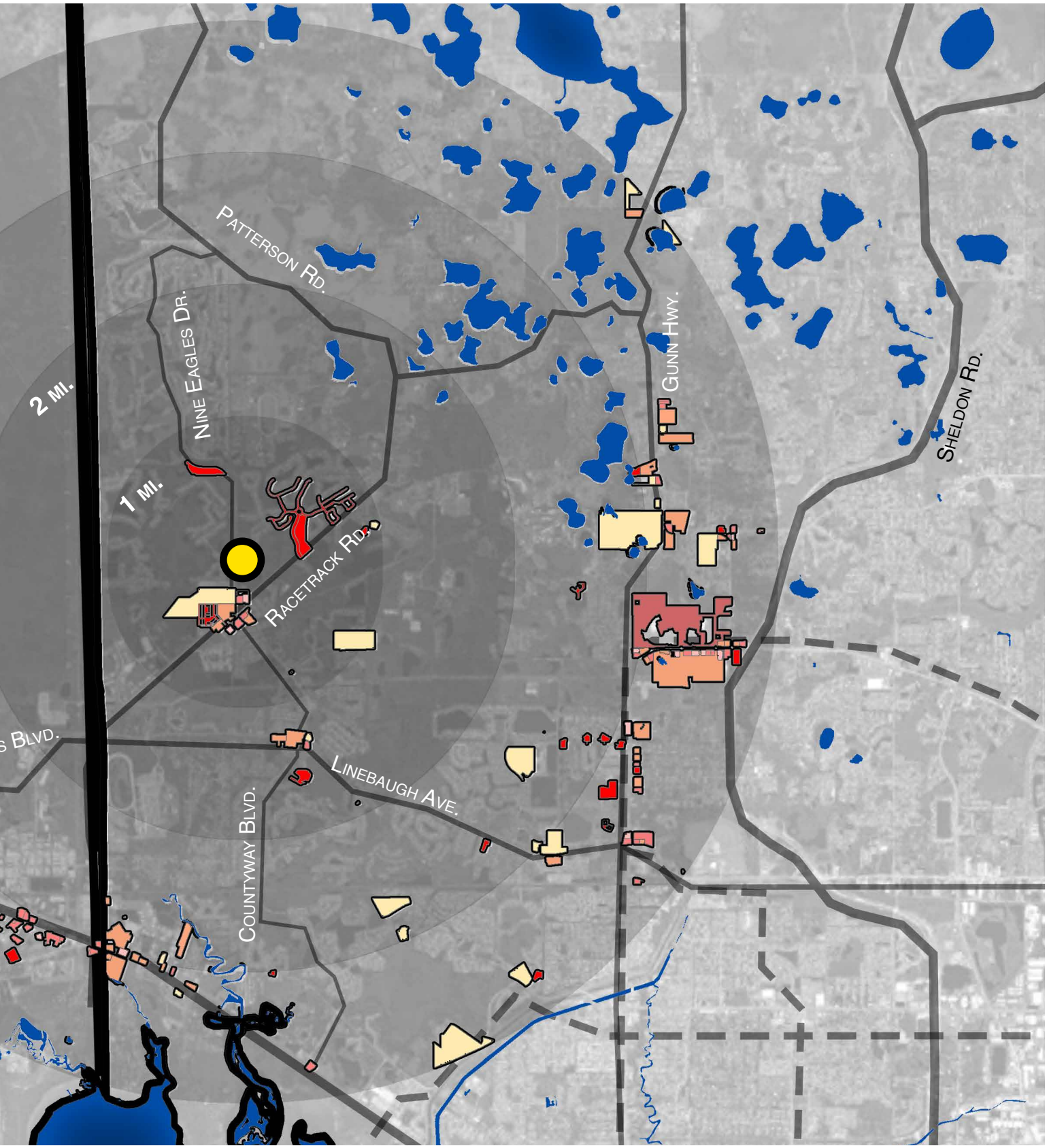
- Site Location
- Waterbodies
- Mile (unit) Radius
- County Boundaries
- Roadway
- Mass Transit Routes

Institutional + Commercial

- Educational
- Clubs, Lodges and Halls
- Restaurants
- Stores (One-story)
- Mixed-Use Stores
- Supermarket
- Comm. Shopping Cent.
- Reg. Shopping Malls

- Somewhat proximal to **commercial uses**
- Disconnected from **Mass Transit**

0 0.5 1 2 mi. N


2 MI.
1 MI.
PATTERSON RD.
NINE EAGLES DR.
RACETRACK RD.
GUNN HWY.
SHELDON RD.
LINEBAUGH AVE.
COUNTYWAY BLVD.
S BLVD.

Context: Immediate

Legend

- Site Location
- 1/4 mi. Buffer
- Roadway
- Bike path

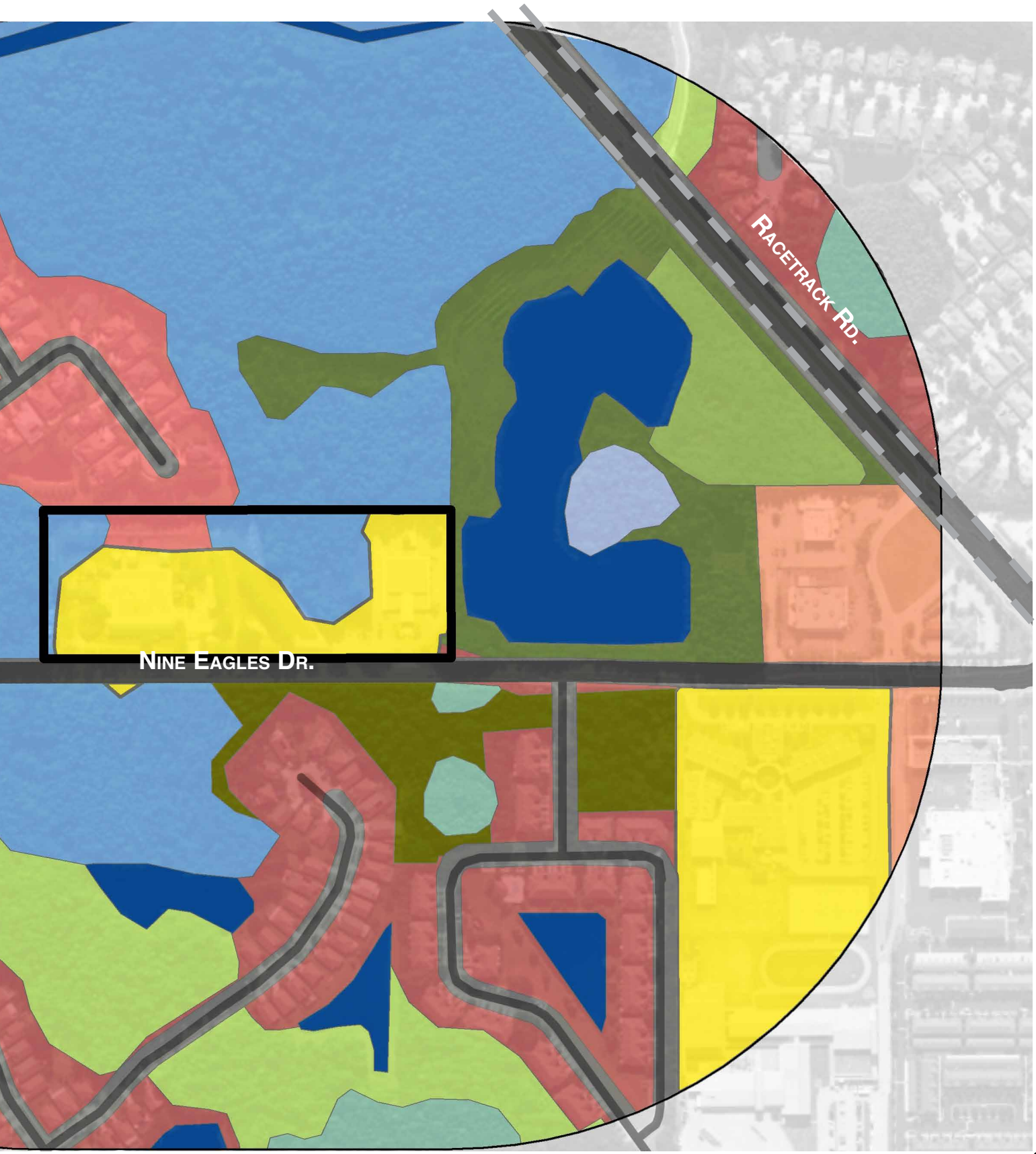
Landuse + Natural Sys.

- Institutional
- Res., Medium Density
- Res., High Density
- High Intensity Urban
- Reservoir
- Stormwater Trmt.
- Aquatic Vegetation
- Cypress
- Wetland Hardwoods
- Coniferous Wetlands
- Hardwood-Coniferous
- Coniferous Plantations
- Urban Open Land
- Urban Open Forested

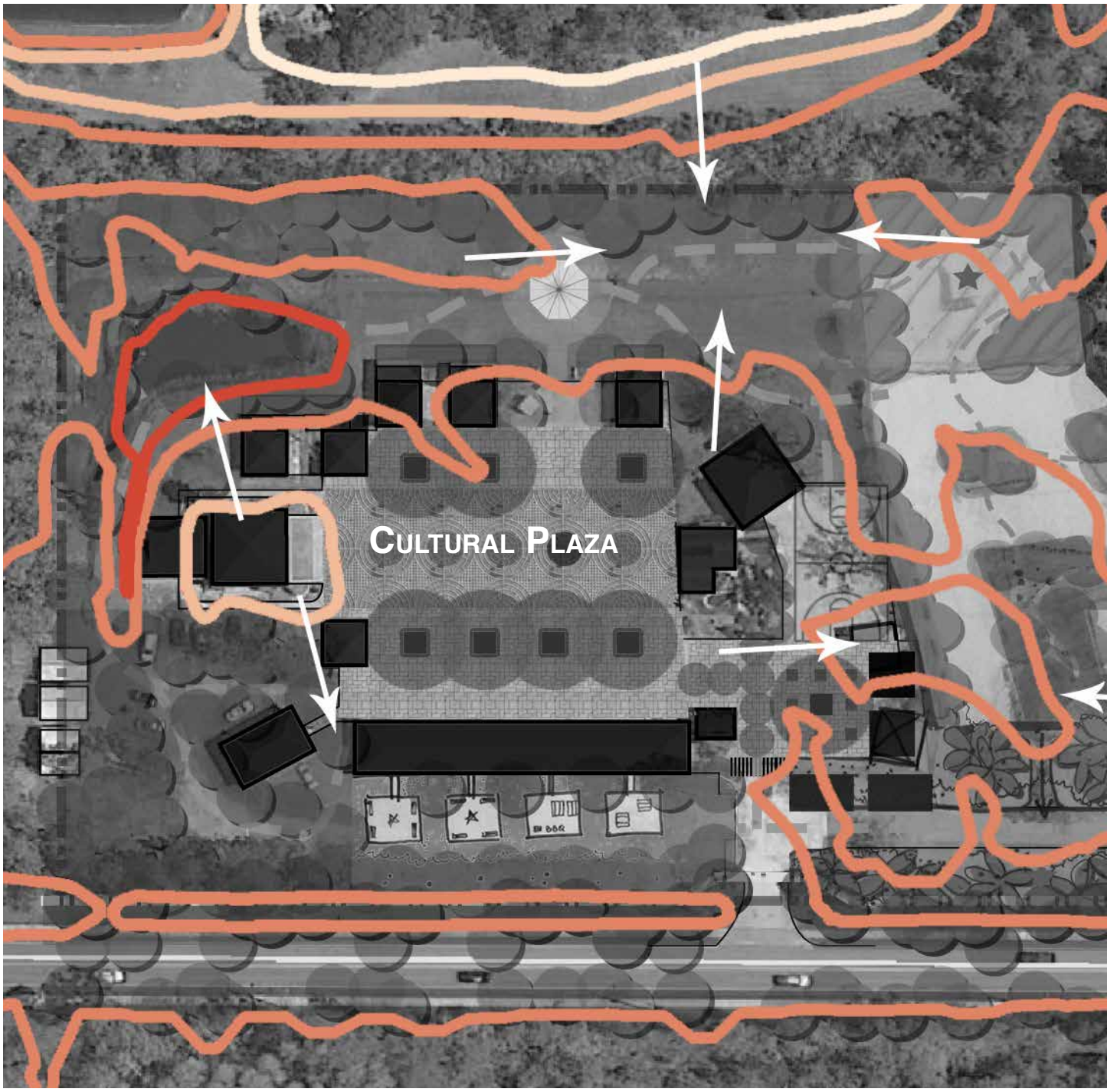
- Site is 1/4 **wetlands** and partly **Medium Den. Res.**
- Pre-development, most likely **Urban Open Forested** land

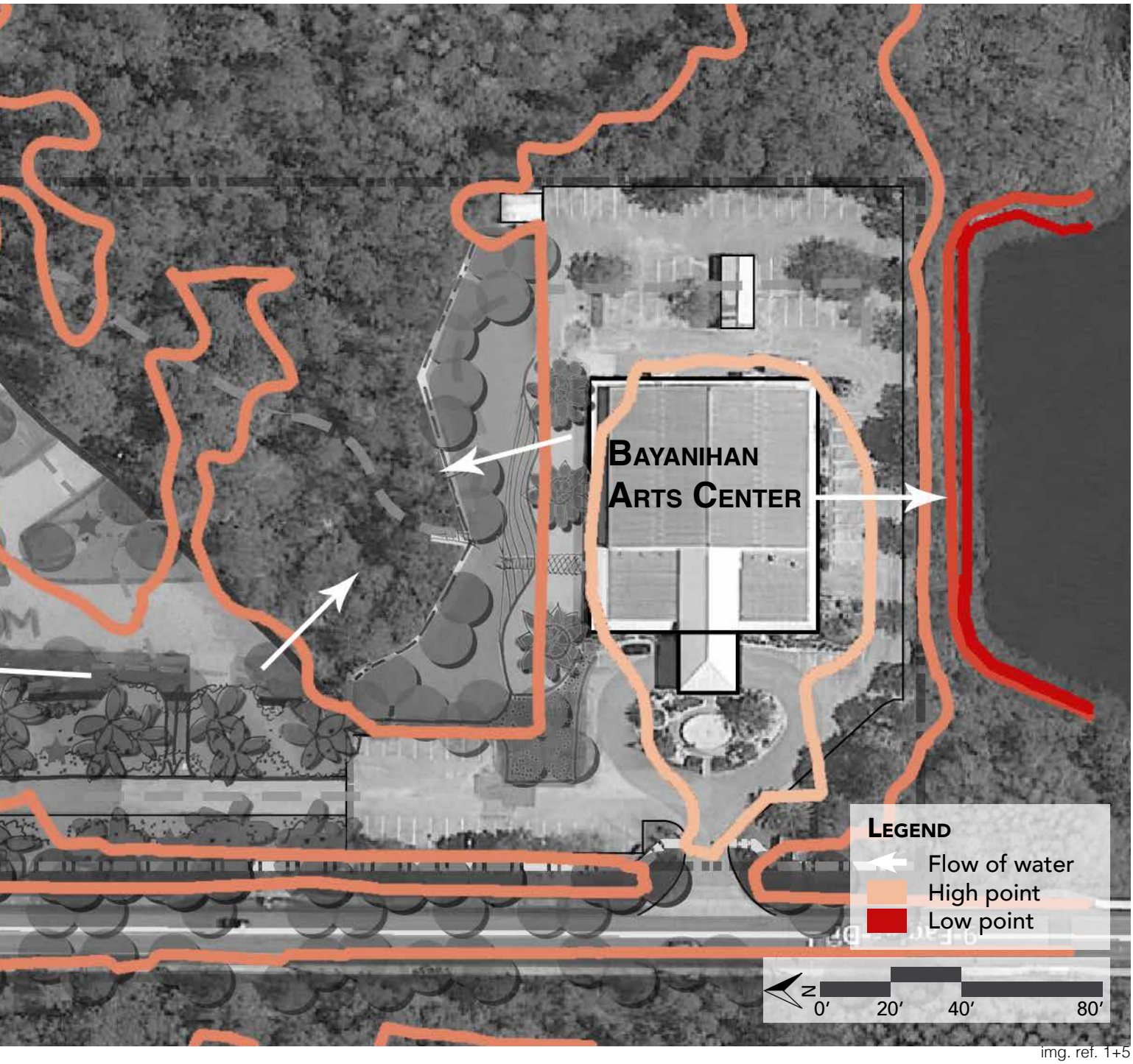
0 175 350 700 ft.

N


Racetrack Rd.
Nine Eagles Dr.

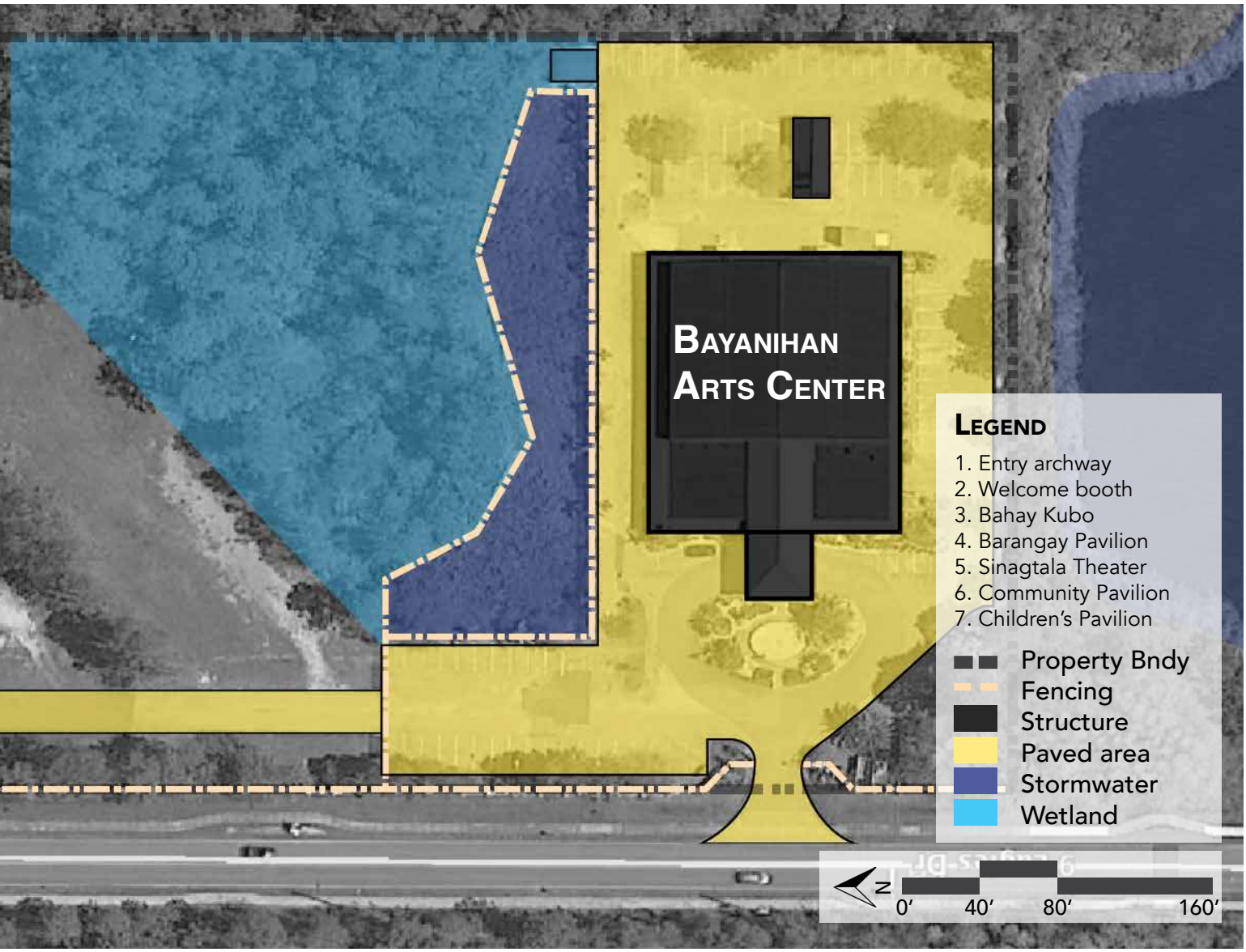
Site: Developed areas




BAYANIHAN
ARTS CENTER
LEGEND
Flow of water
High point
Low point
N
0′
20′
40′
80′

img. ref. 1+5

Site: Developed areas


Bayanihan
Arts Center
Legend
1. Entry archway
2. Welcome booth
3. Bahay Kubo
4. Barangay Pavilion
5. Sinagtala Theater
6. Community Pavilion
7. Children's Pavilion
Property Bndy
Fencing
Structure
Paved area
Stormwater
Wetland
N
0'
40'
80'
160'

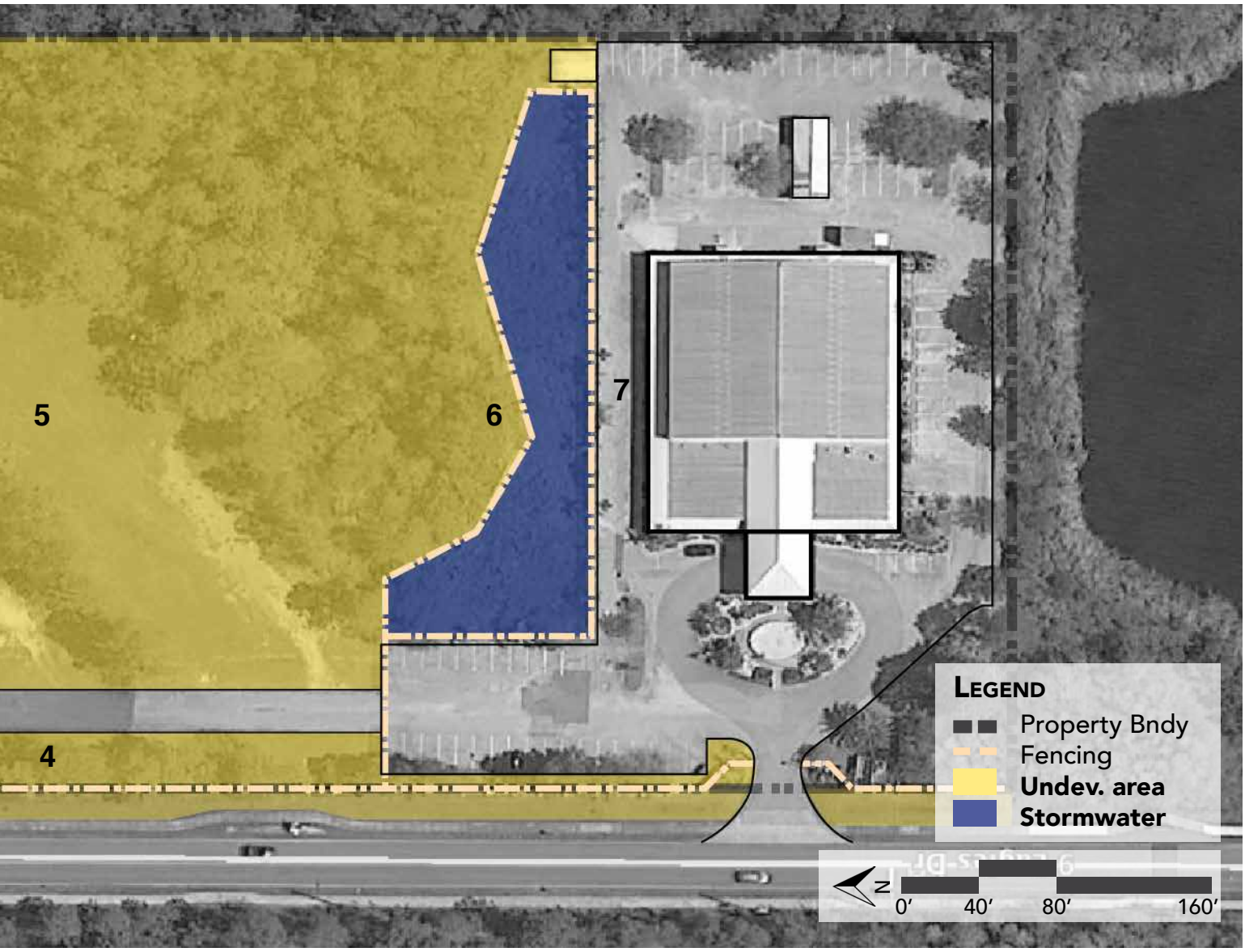
iimg ref. 1

5

6

Cultural Plaza

Site: Undeveloped areas


5
6
7
4
LEGEND
Property Bndy
Fencing
Undev. area
Stormwater
N
0′
40′
80′
160′

iimg ref. 1

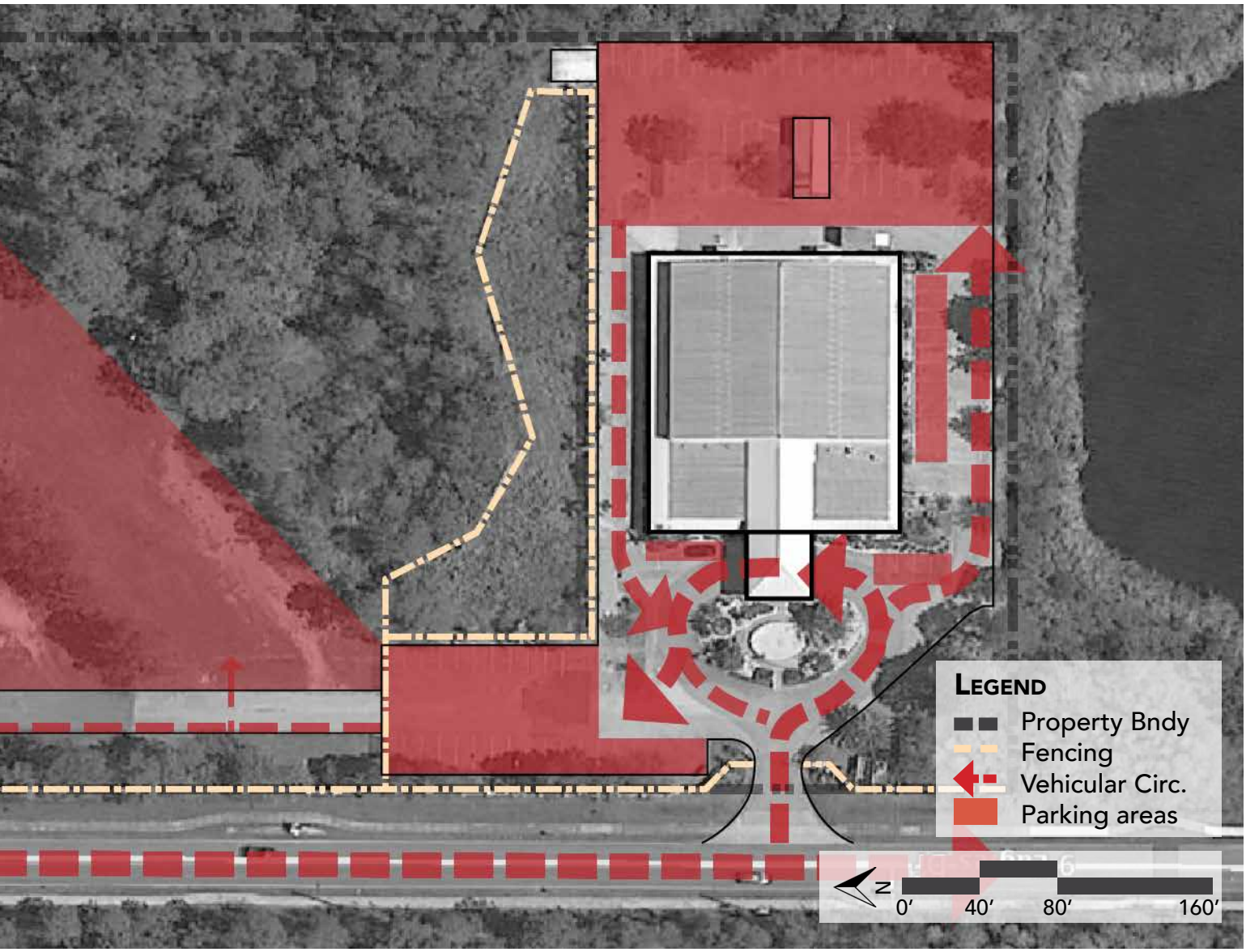
5

6

7

Site: Vehicular Circulation

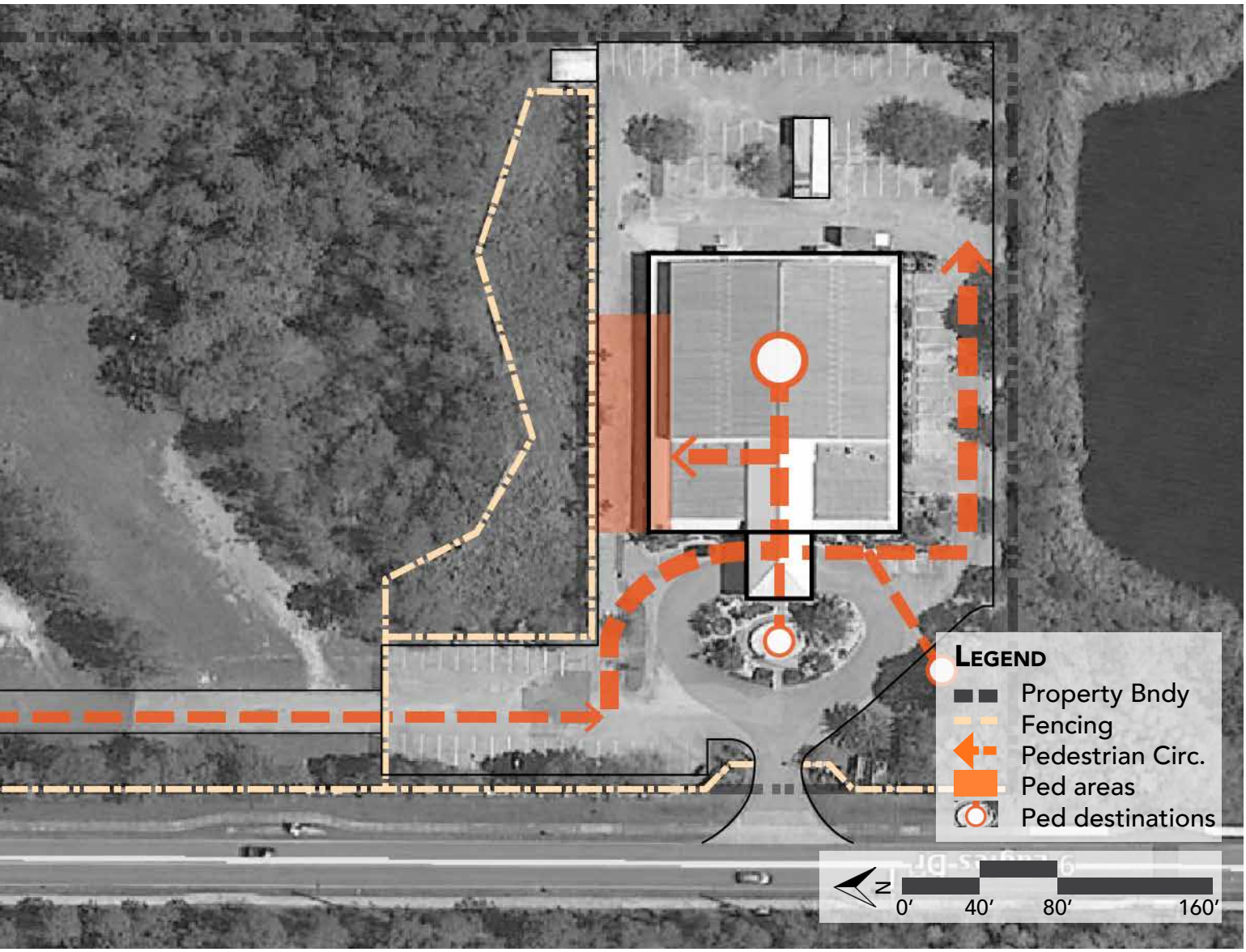
One great weakness of the site is that it's not an ideal walk to get there. There is no public transportation nearby. It's walkable from nearby businesses and schools, but lacks shade. All other visitors must drive to visit the site. The vehicle dominates the original design, from a large entry driveway to the many possible interior routes and parking spaces.


Legend
Property Bndy
Fencing
Vehicular Circ.
Parking areas
N
0'
40'
80'
160'

iimg ref. 1

Site: Pedestrian Circulation

The pedestrian circulation analysis shows the paths one can take within the site. The pedestrian is ushered into one of the two main areas, the Cultural Plaza or BAC. This contributes to the site's disunity. The pedestrian paths and spaces, other than the BAC, are unfriendly, lacking shade, appeal and programming.


Legend
Property Bndy
Fencing
Pedestrian Circ.
Ped areas
Ped destinations
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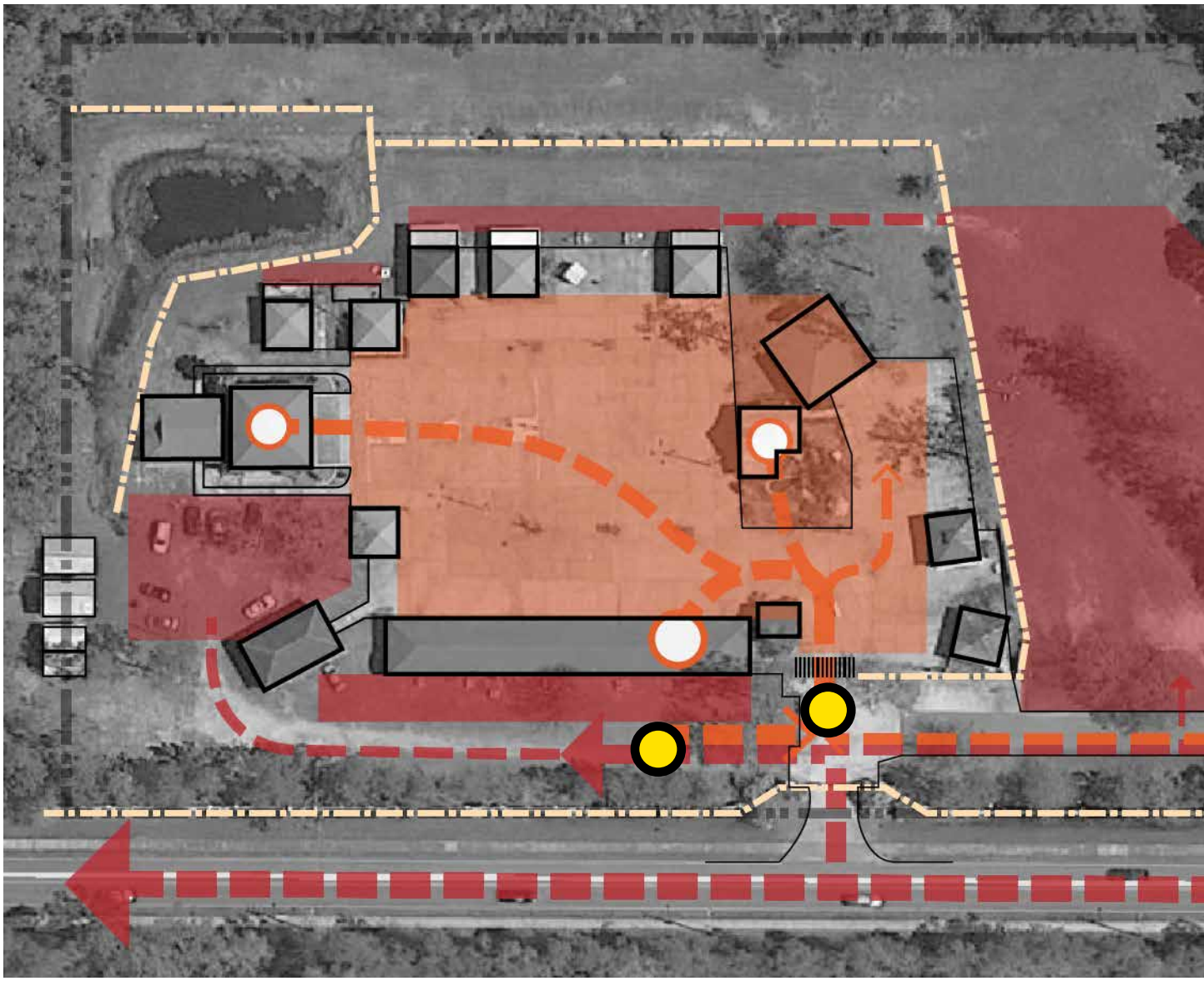
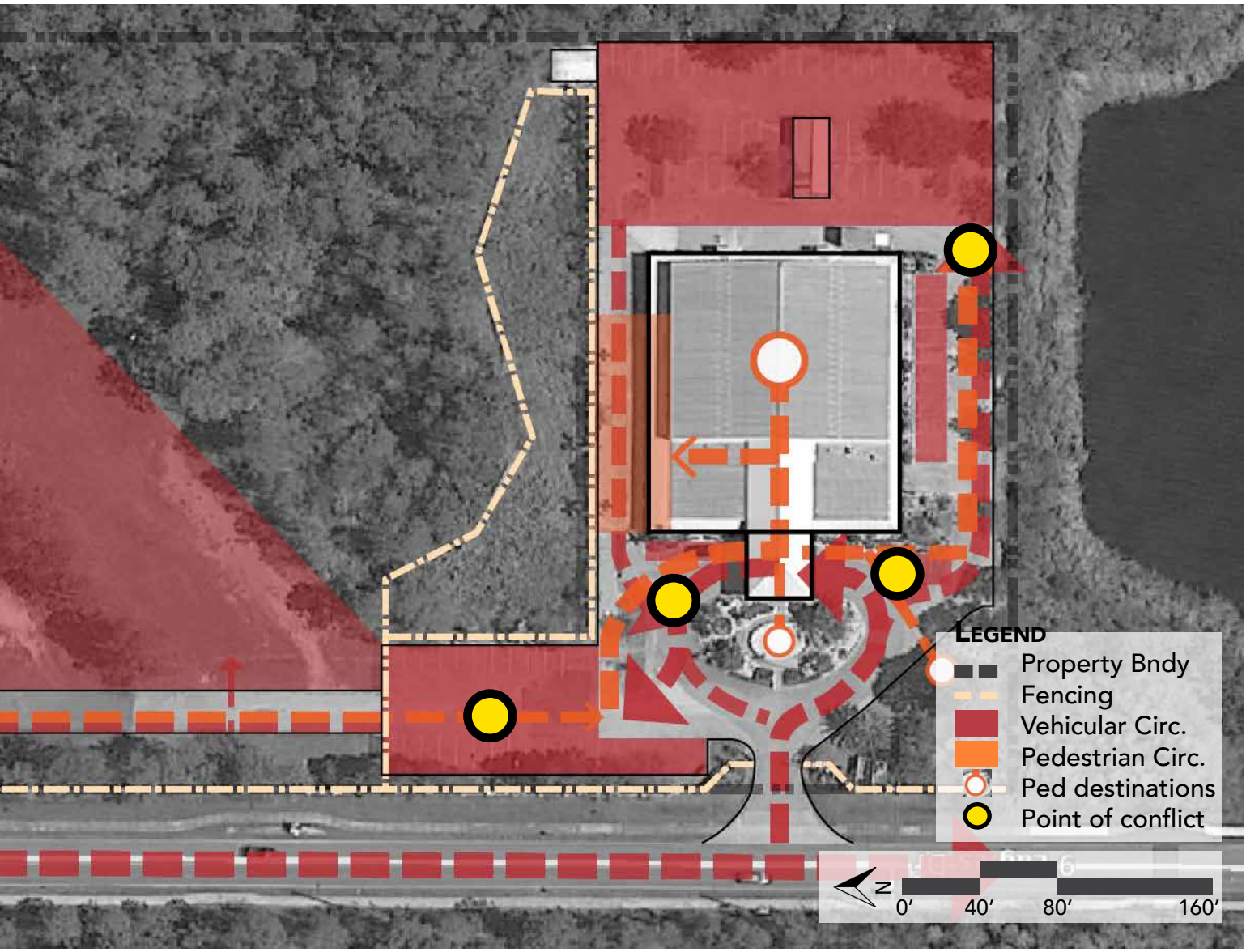
0′
40′
80′
160′

iimg ref. 1

Site: Circulation Conflict




LEGEND
Property Bndy
Fencing
Vehicular Circ.
Pedestrian Circ.
Ped destinations
Point of conflict
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0'
40'
80'
160'

iimg ref. 1

SYNTHESIS + G

OALS

Overall Analysis: **Strenghts + We**

Strengths

- Strong and successful community
- Frequent events and special occasions
- Get-togethers: Basketball and table top games
- Private community experience
- Proximity to wetland
- Existing structures (stage, traditional hut)

Weaknesses (Major Issues)

- Lack of identity
- Generic outdoor plaza space
- Private community experience
- Adjacent to wetlands
- Short distance from commercial businesses
- Far from public transportation
- Must drive to visit site
- Minimal stormwater treatment

aknesses

Opportunities

- Utilize culture-inspired design to create unity with the Complex
- Connect to those driving by and the surrounding area
- Create an inviting atmosphere to learn about and celebrate culture
- Provide multi-functional spaces for year-round activities
- Inegrate culture and sustainable design methods through furnishings, hardscape materials and planting design

Threats (Constraints)

- May not have enough support from community to jump-start programs
- Limitations on development due to environmentally sensitive area codes

all iimg ref. 2

Goals + Objectives

Unify
- Create unity and a sense of place.
- Rebranding, signage and planting design

Activate
- Amenitize underdeveloped areas
- pedestrian-first approach
- This will create more functional spaces that can either be dynamic, passive
- While increasing comfort through planting and hardscape design
- Encourage people to visit daily or for a special occasion

Educate
- implement culturally inspired spaces
  - furnishings, hardscape materials and planting design
- Providing spaces for certain uses
- Provide experiences relating to history and culture (art, music)

Sustain
- Utilize sustainable practices through green infrastructure
- Consider impact on wetlands

MABUHAY PAAT
FILIPINO-AMERICAN SOCIAL CLUB, INC.
FASC
FLORIDA

iimg ref. 1

educate

sustain

CASE STUDIES

Lake Worth Plaza

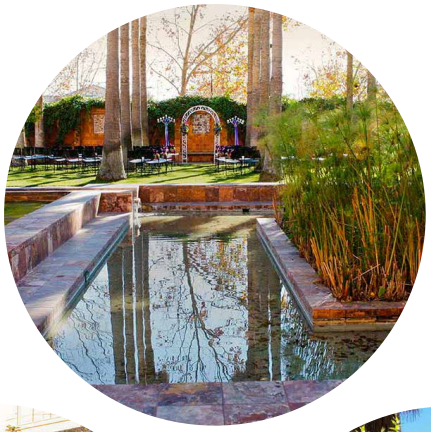
Location: Lake Worth, FL.

- Plaza space for special occasions
- Includes an outdoor stage, lawn area
- Festivals and farmers market

Mexican Heritage Plaza

Location: San Jose, CA

- Multiple areas separated by paving, elevation and structures
- Large group and private areas
- Includes pavilion, trellis, reflection pond
- Its formal design is great for any event



see case study ref.

Plaza de la Raza Center

Location: Lake Worth, FL.

- Plaza space for special occasions
- Includes an outdoor stage, lawn area
- Festivals and farmers market

Chinatown Market Fair

Location: San Francisco, CA

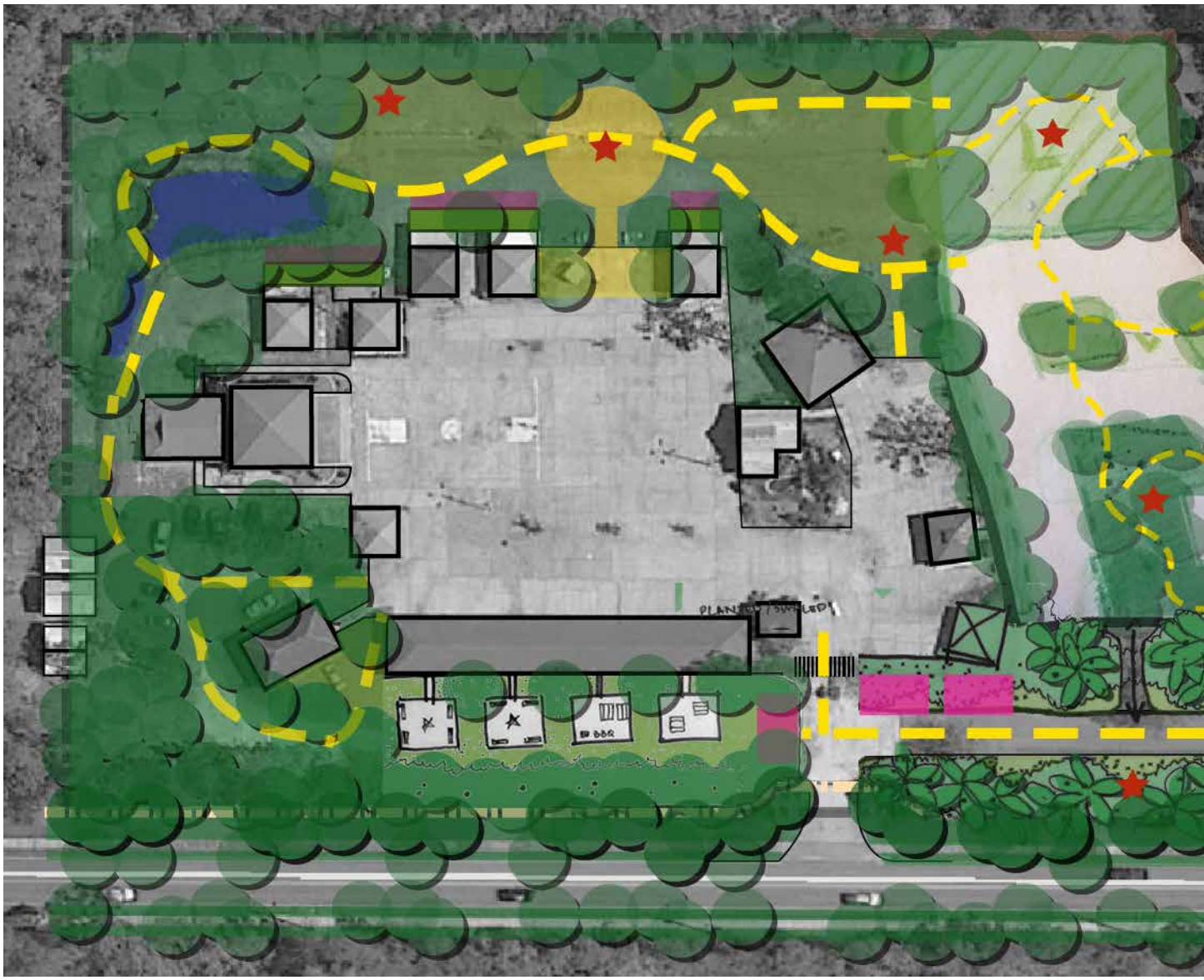
- Inspired by tradiational night markets
- Live entertainment, dancing, contests
- Showcase of Chinese culturev
- Increase in business revenue

see case study ref.

CONCEPTUAL D

ESIGN

Conceptual Master Plan



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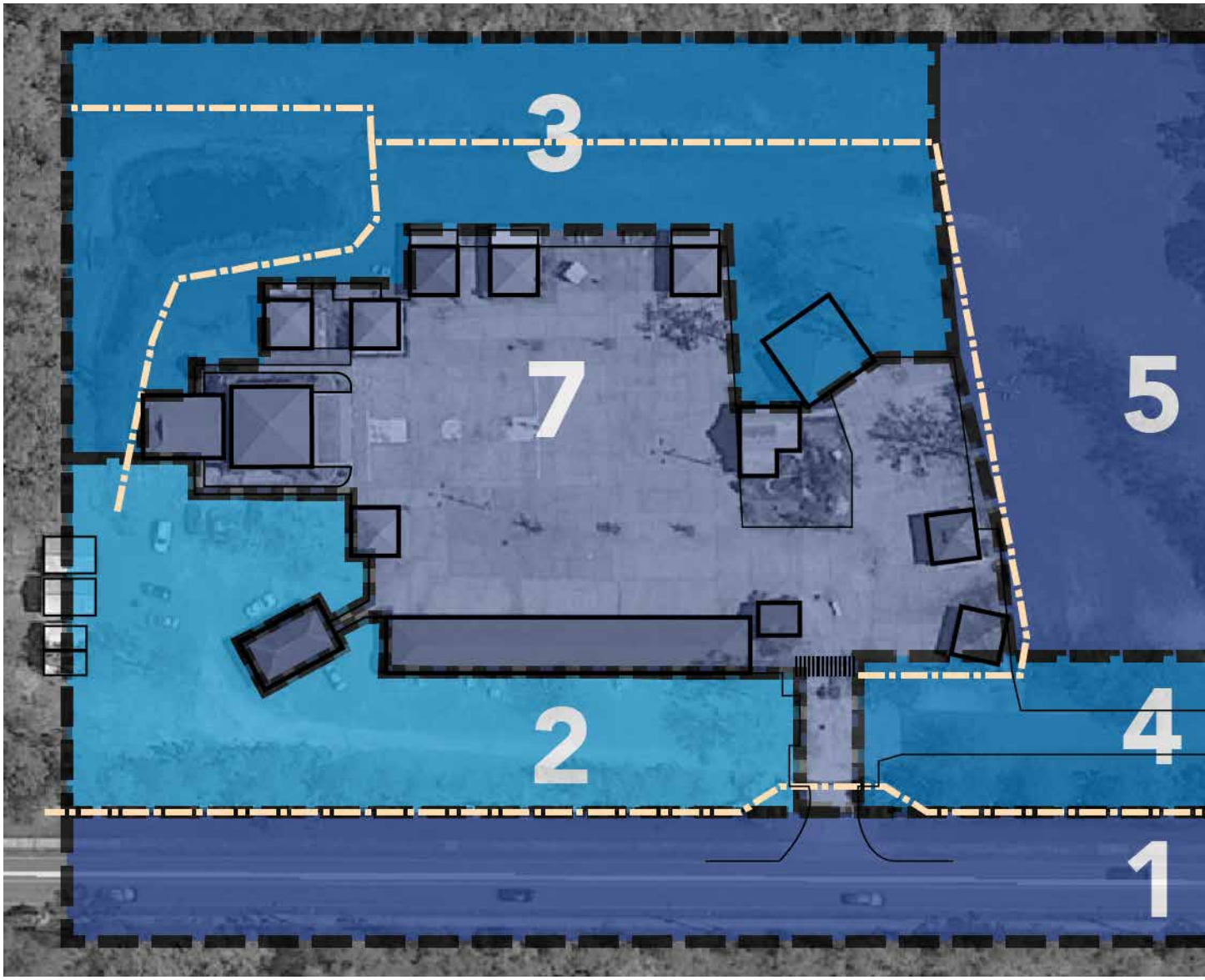
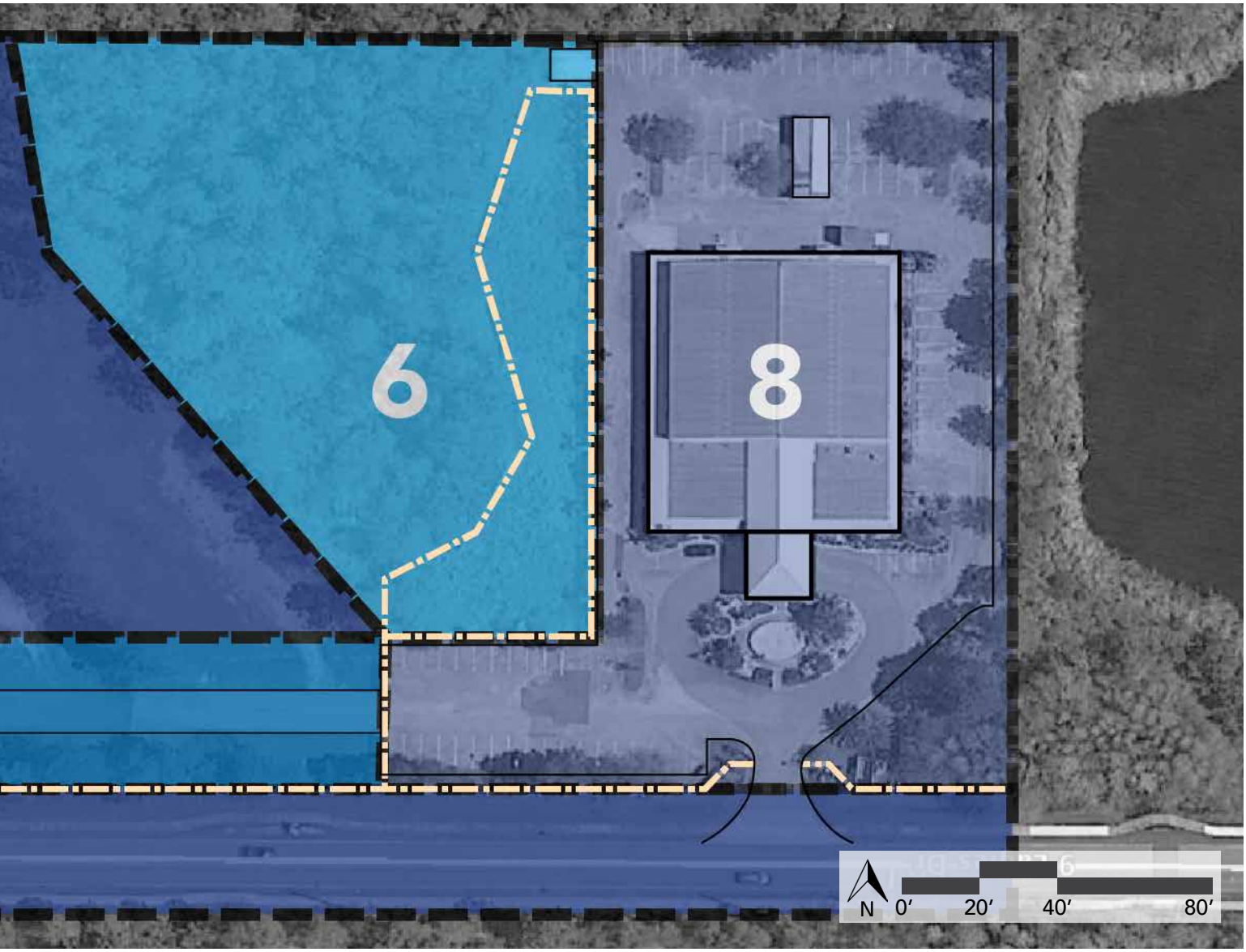
Conceptual Plan Divisions

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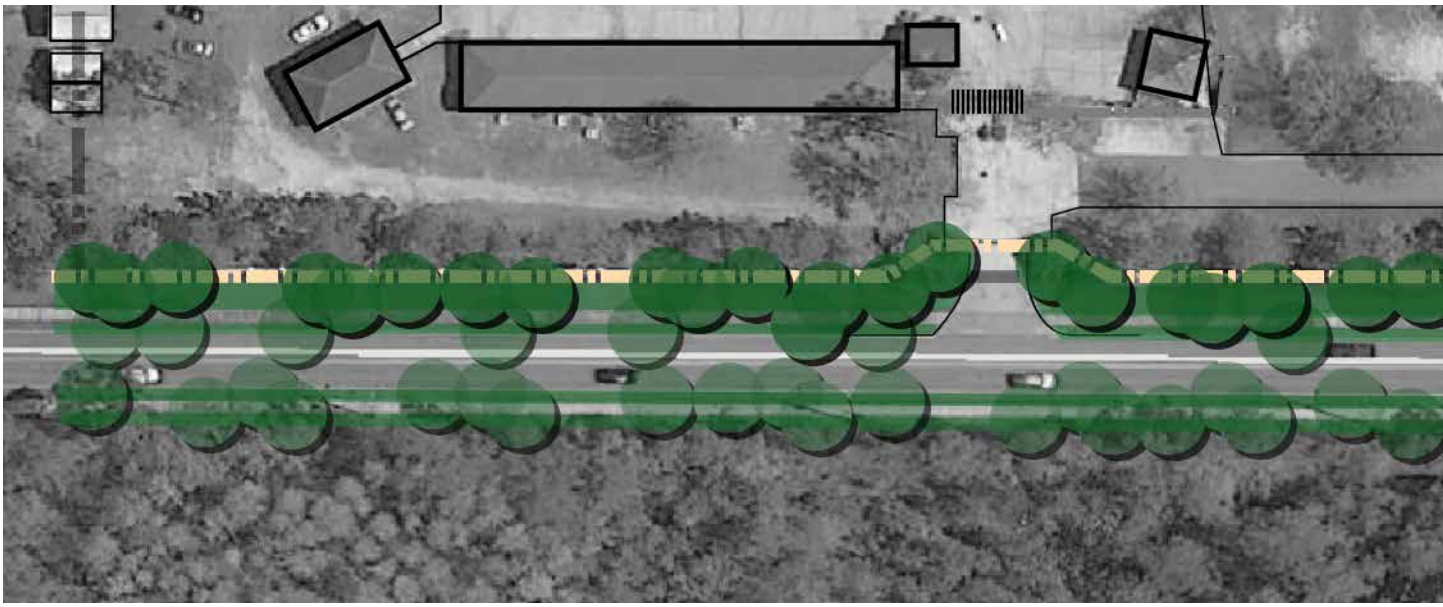
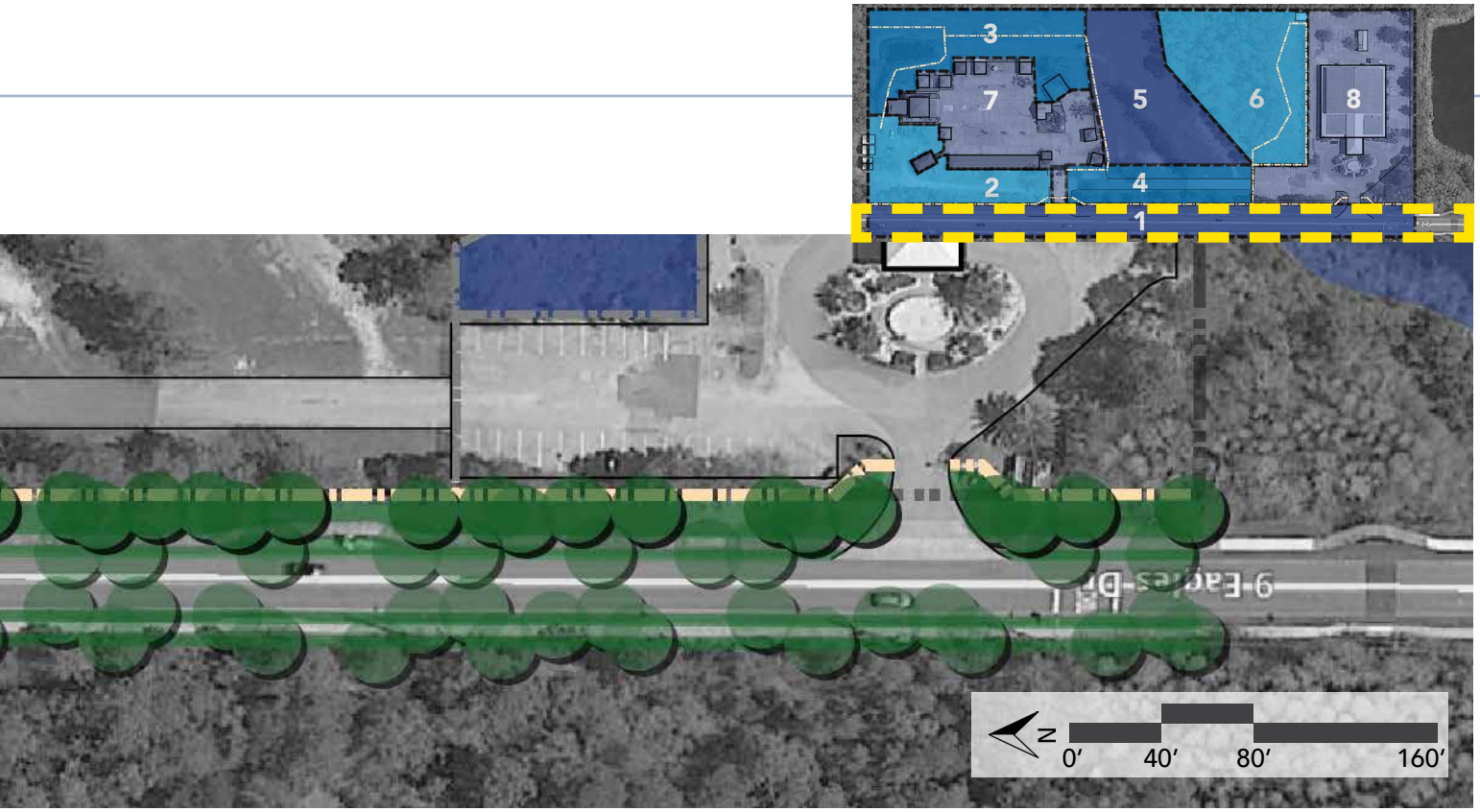
Area 1 - Streetscape + Entry

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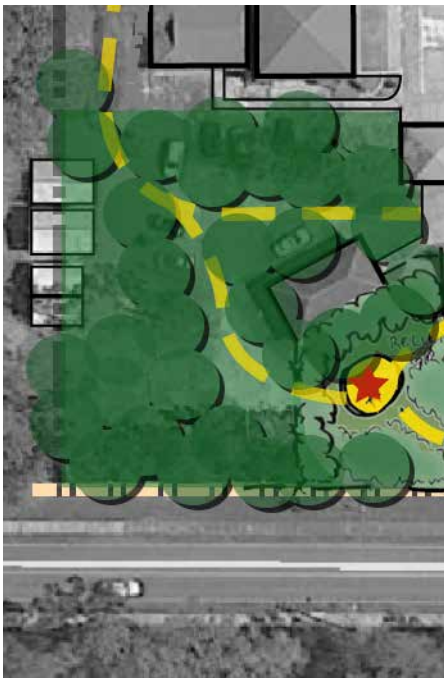
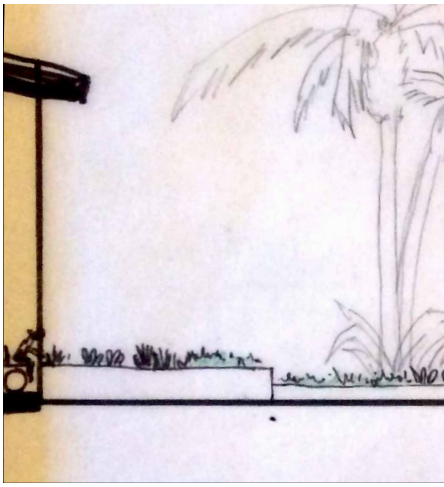
160′

Area 2 - Community area





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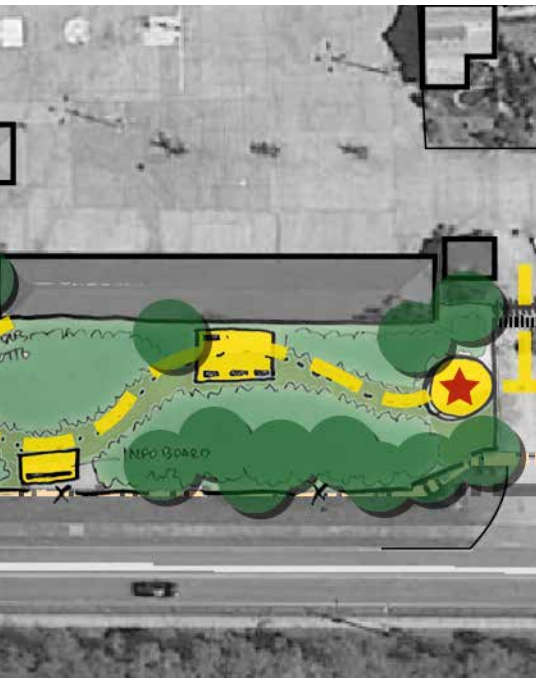
INFO BOARD

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0'
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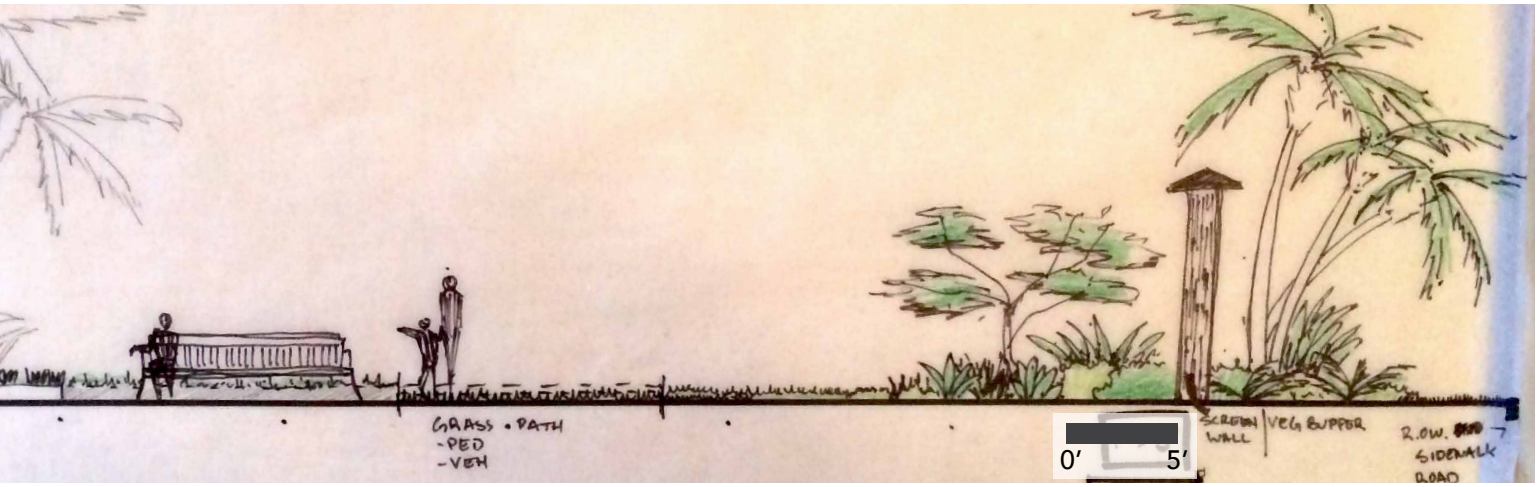
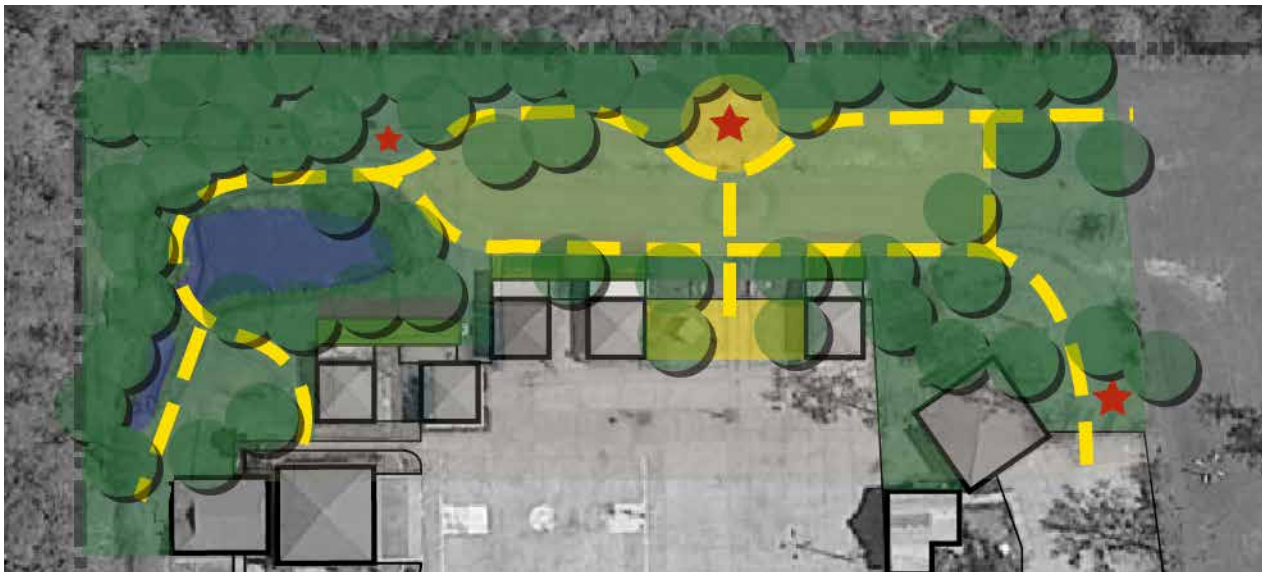
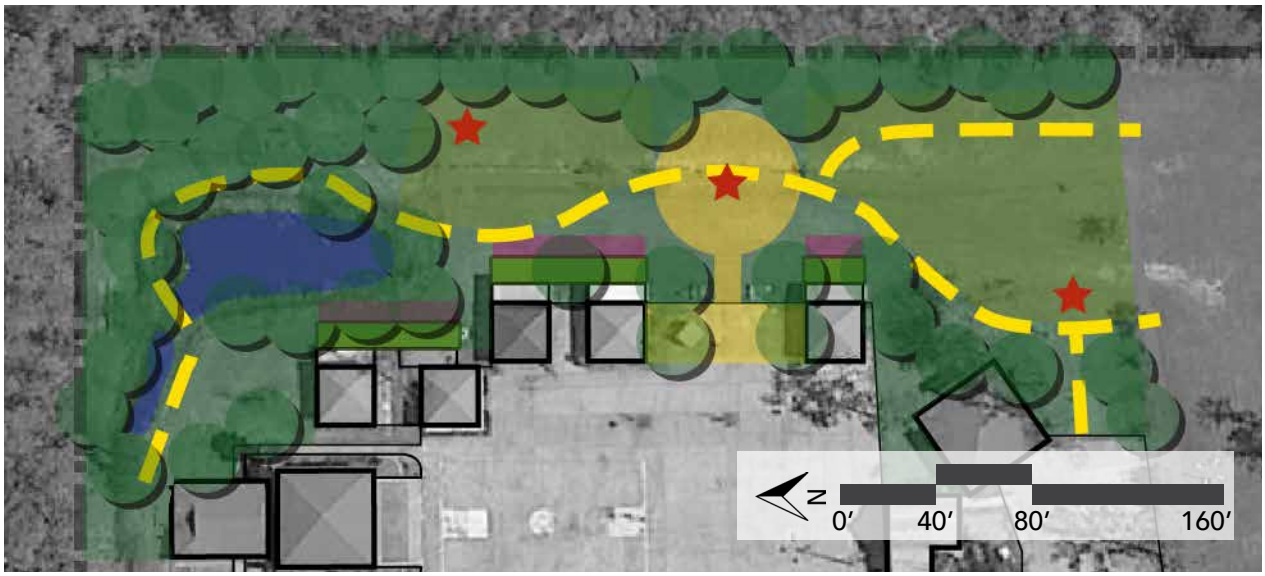
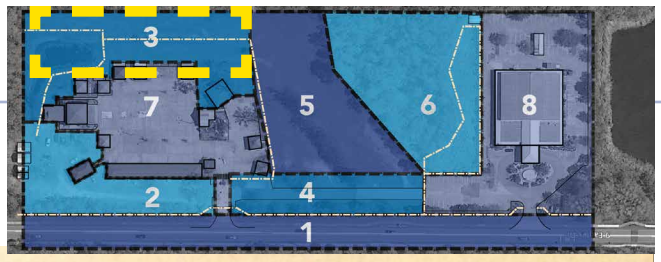

GRASS • PATH
-PED
-VEH
0'
5'
SCREEN WALL
VEG BUFFER
R.O.W.
SIDEWALK
ROAD

Area 3 - Organization Pavilions area



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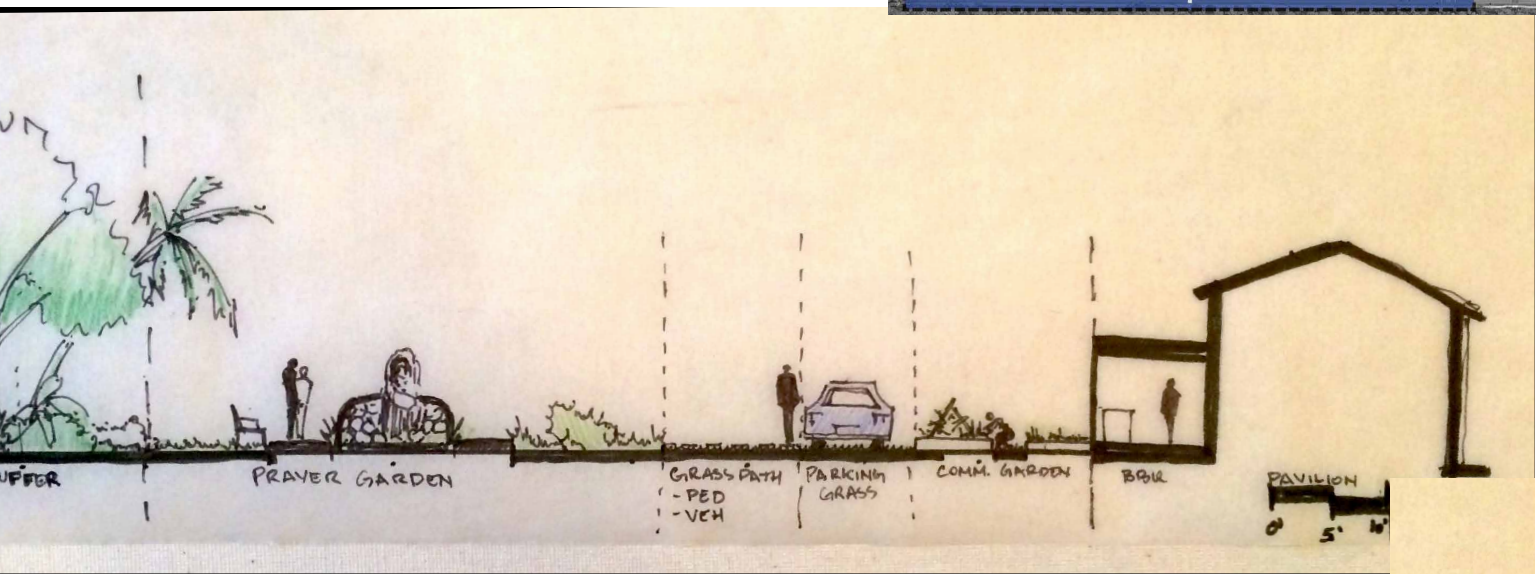
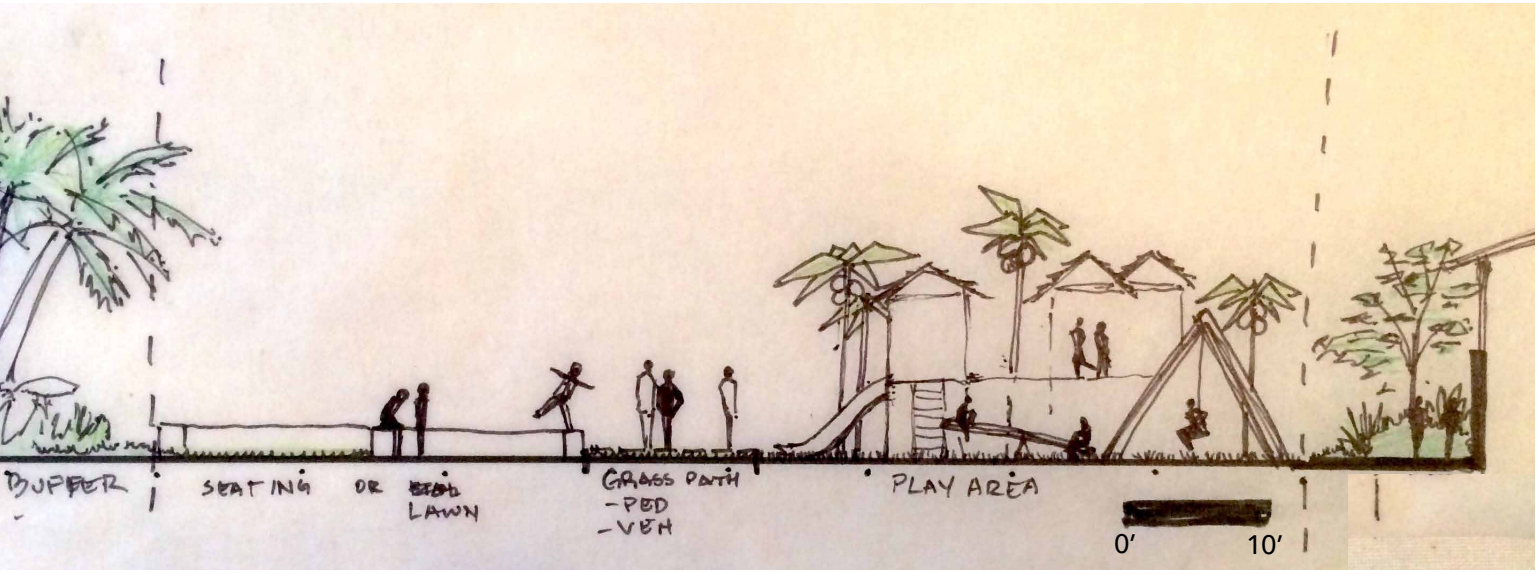
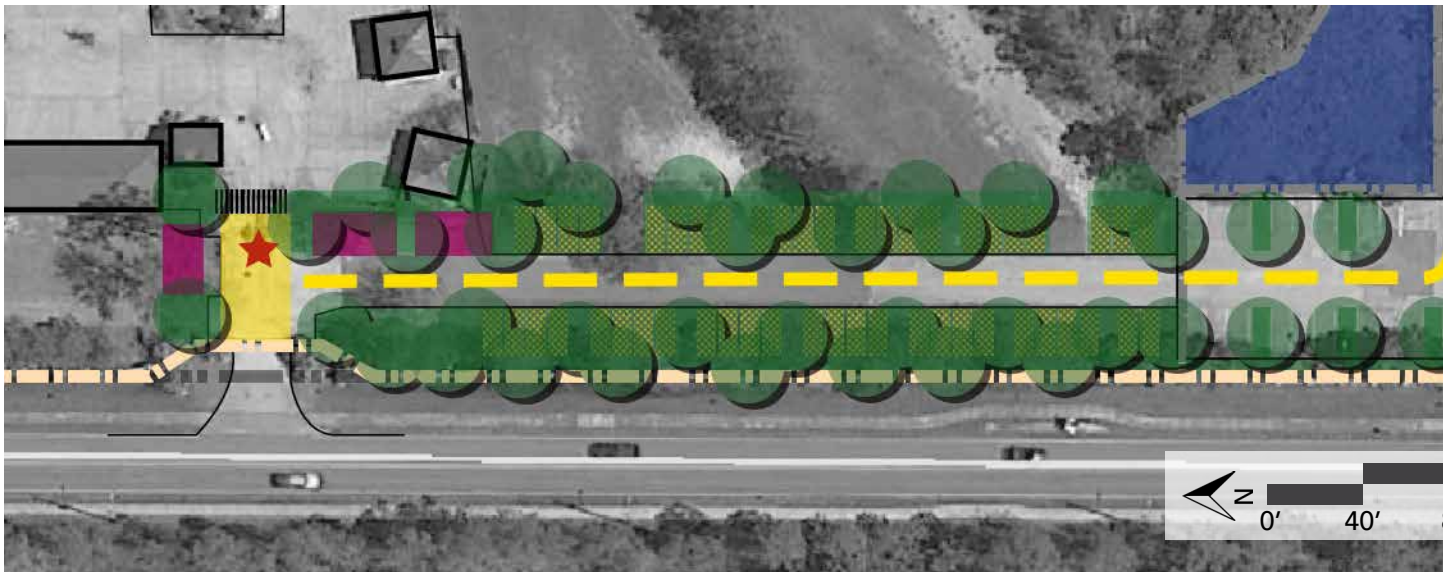
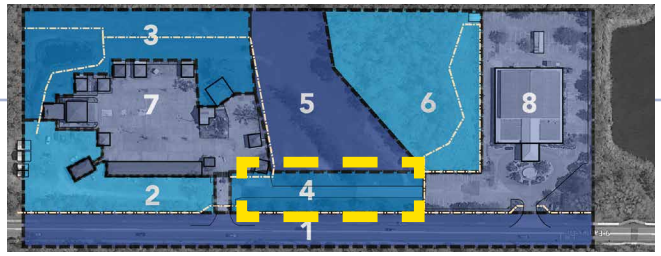

PRAYER GARDEN
GRASS PATH
- PED
- VEH
PARKING
GRASS
COMM. GARDEN
BBQ
PAVILION
0'
5'
10'


SEATING
OR
LAWN
GRASS PATH
- PED
- VEH
PLAY AREA
0'
10'

Area 4 - Connection

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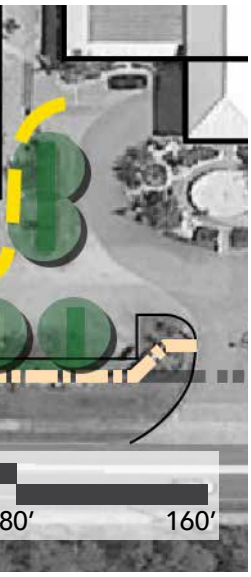
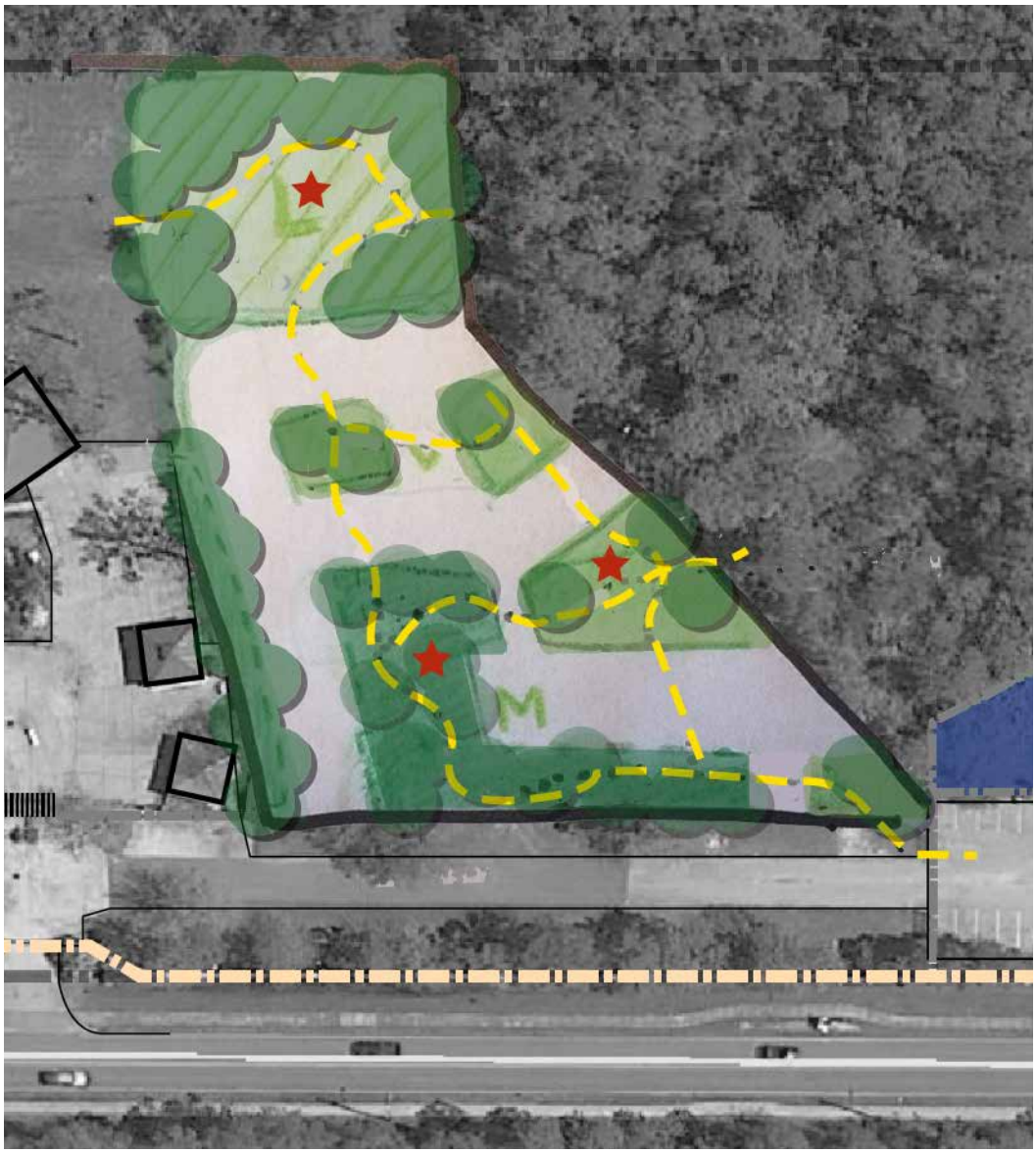
7
5
6
8
2
4
1

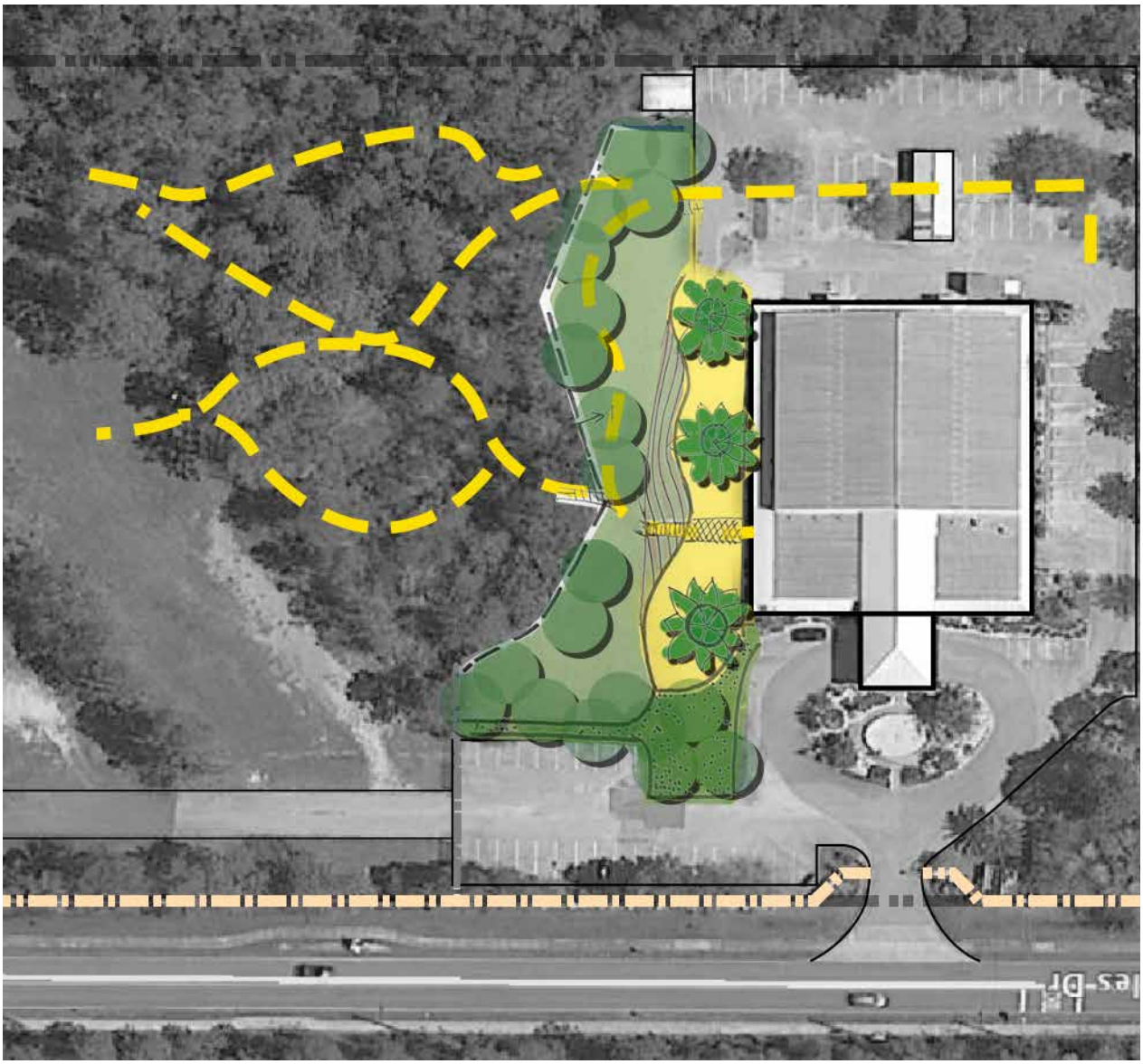

80'
160'

Area 5 - Overflow Parking area



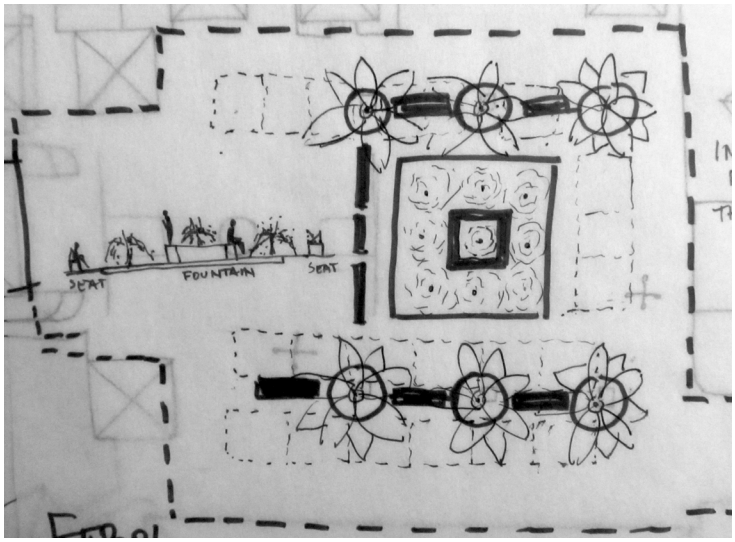
N
0’
40’
80’
160’

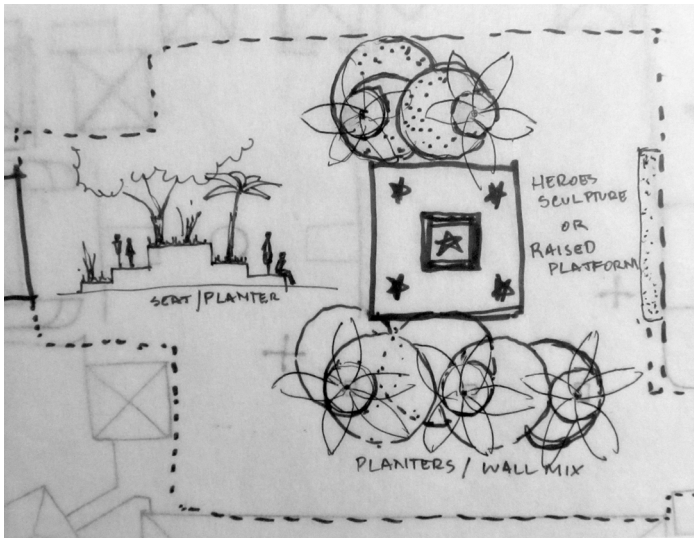
Area 6 - Events Center stormwater are

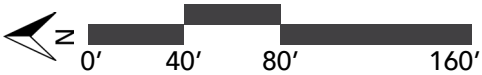


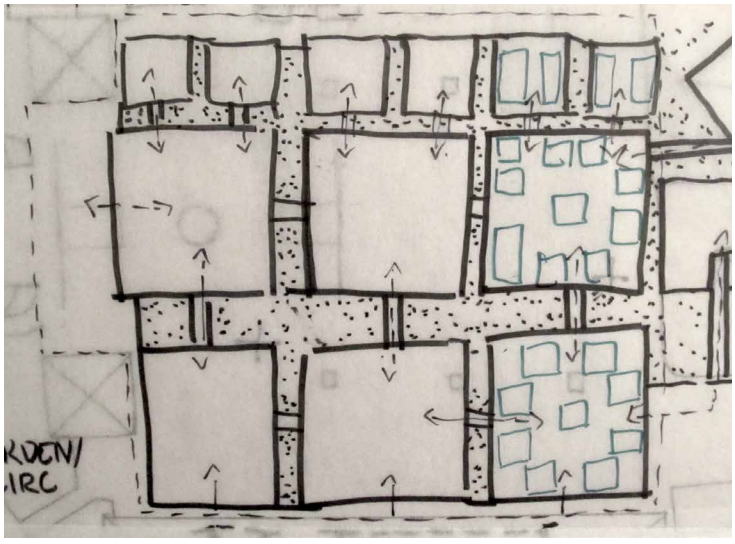
ea

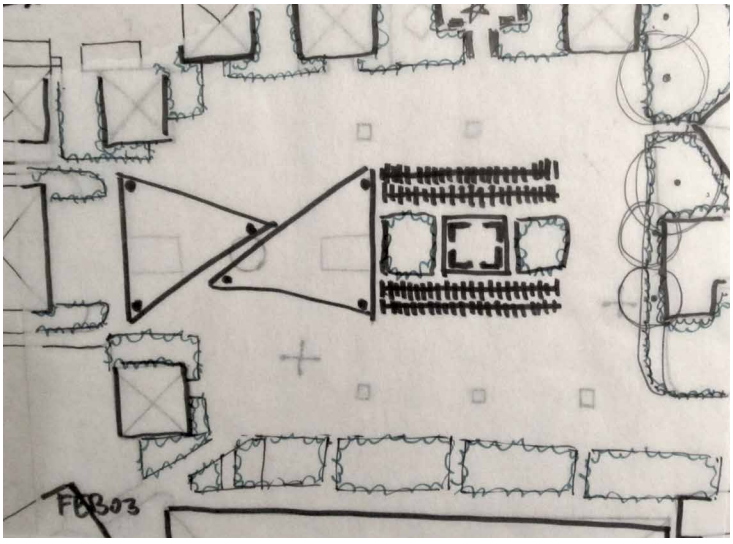
Area 7 - Cultural Plaza



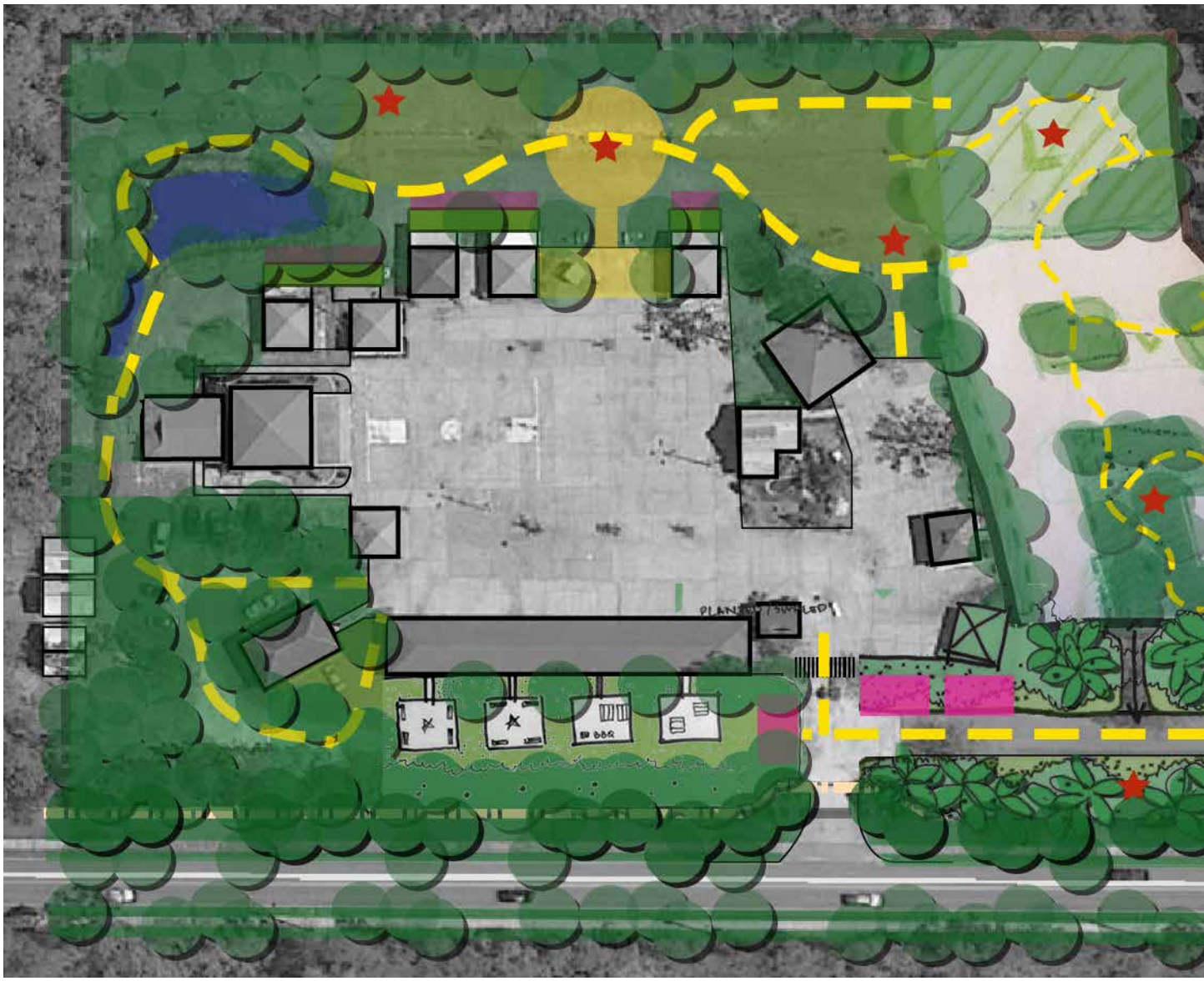



N
0’
40’
80’
160’





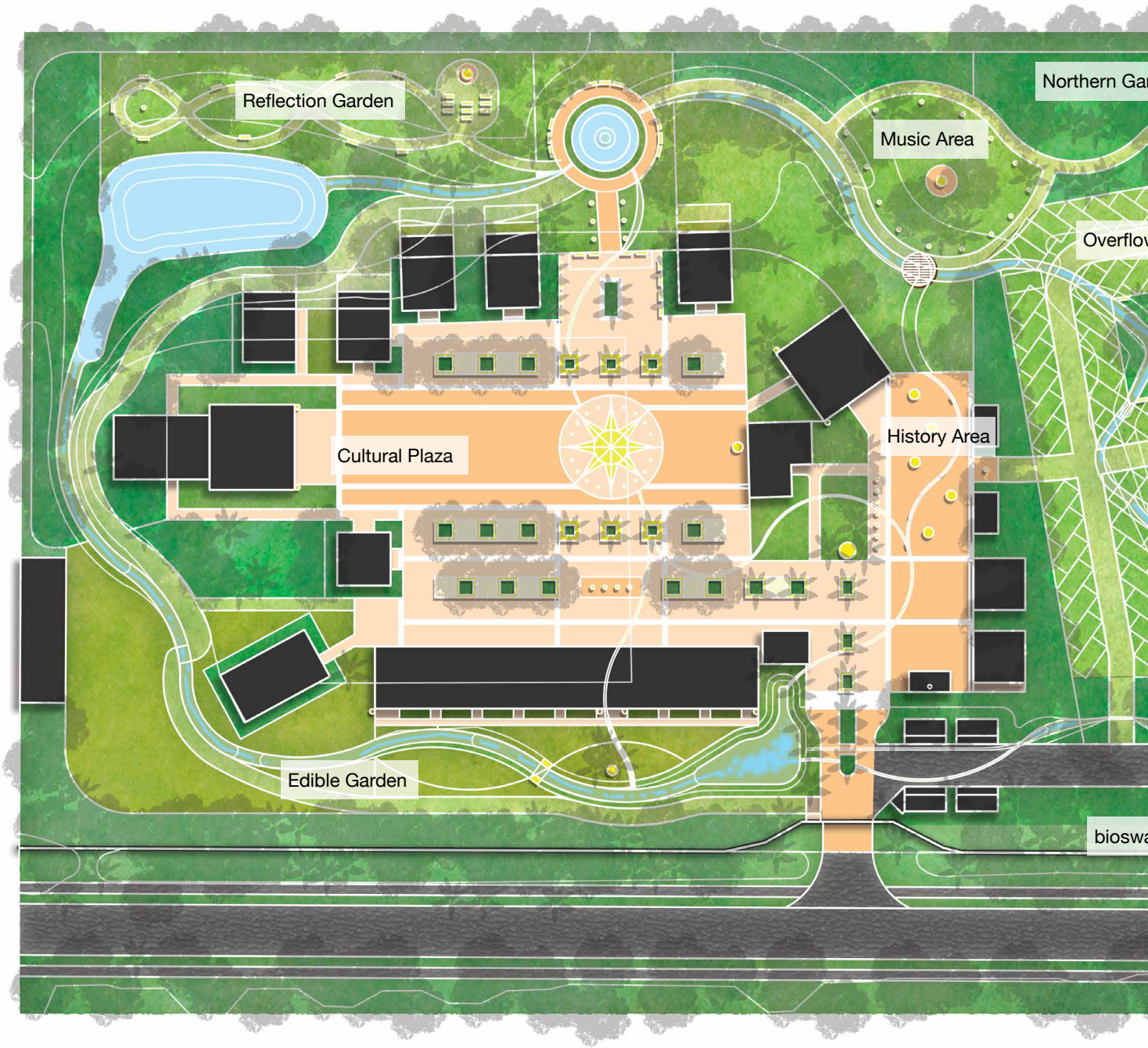
Master Plan

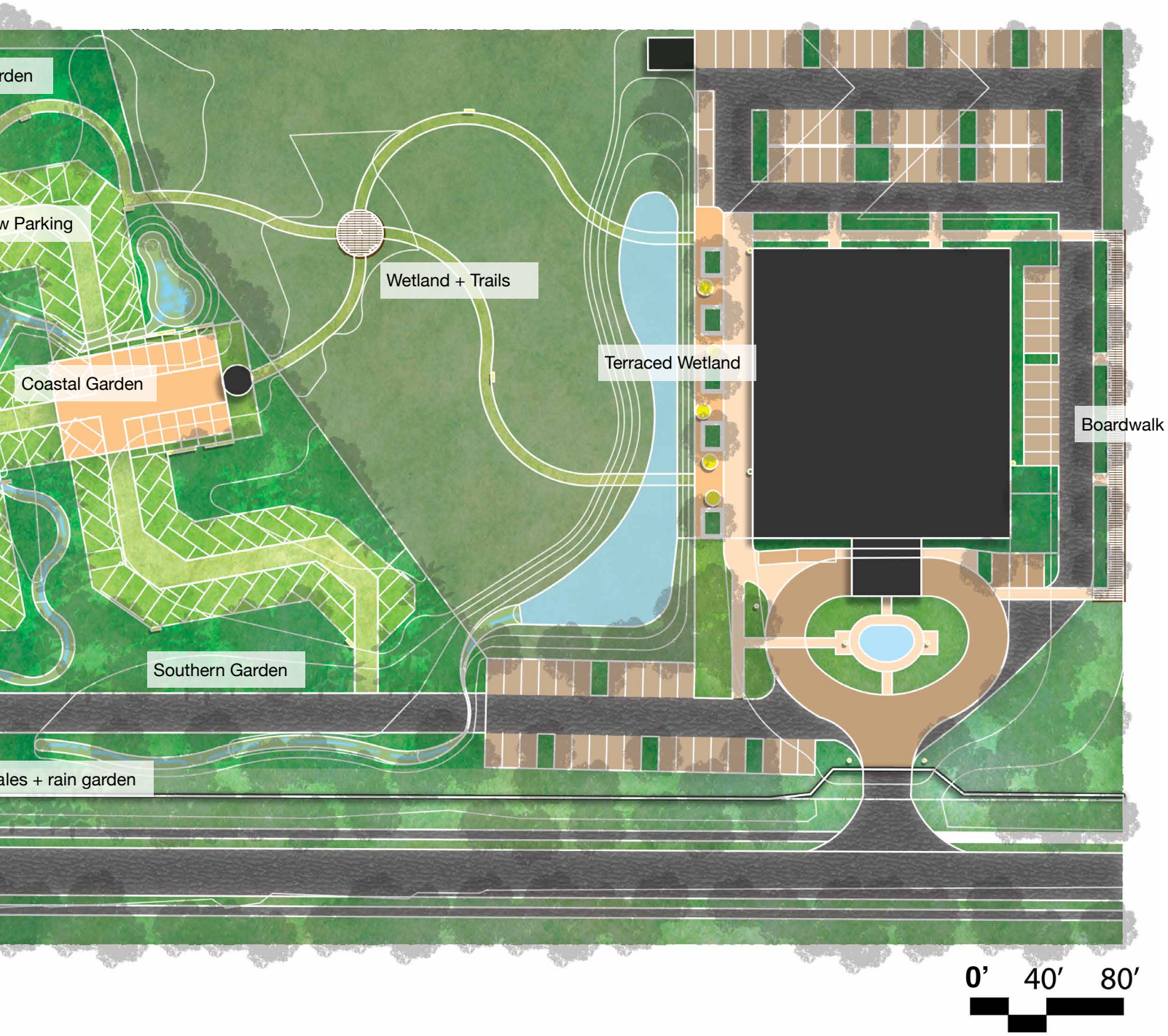


N
0′
40′
80′
160′

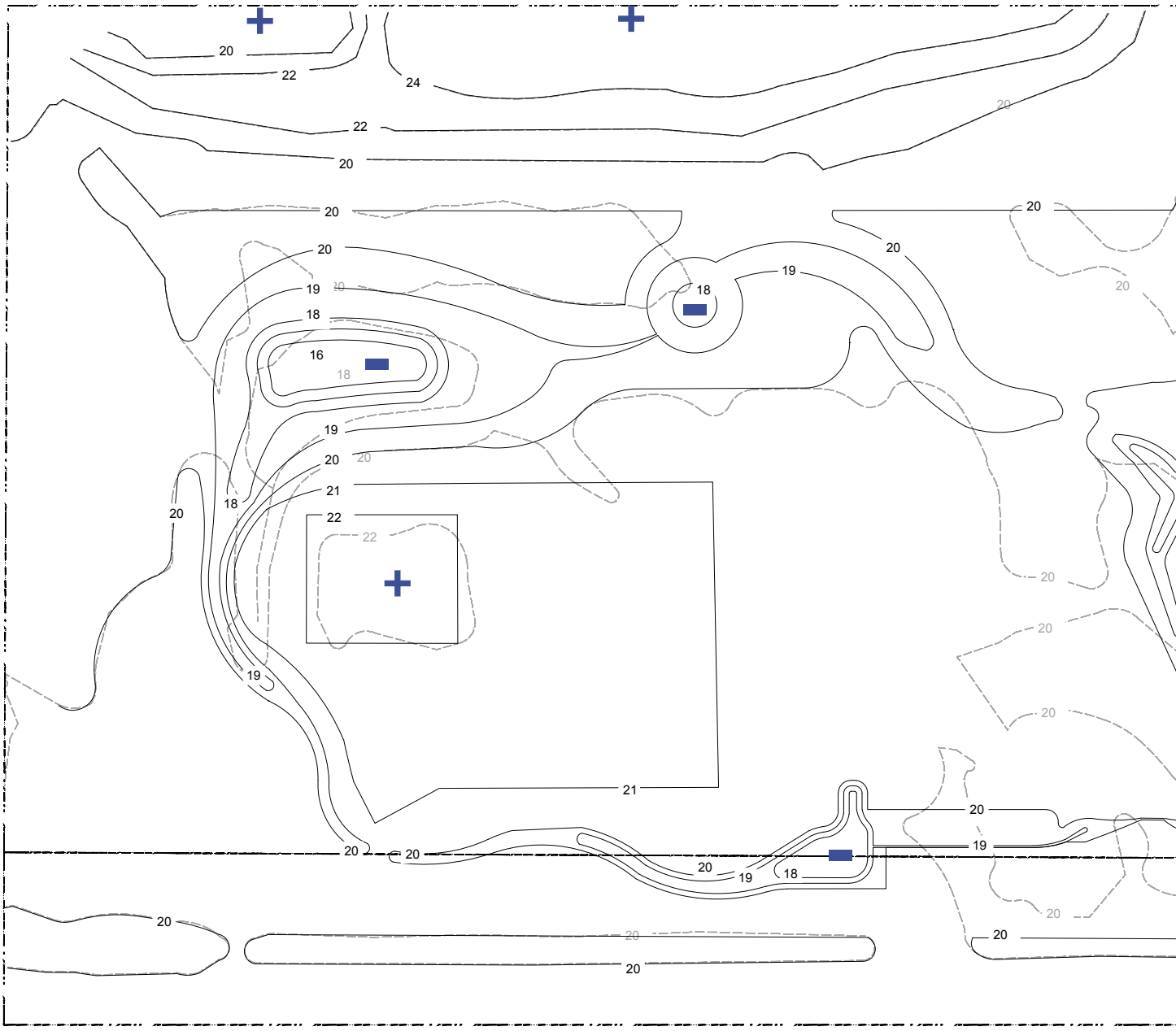
Final Design

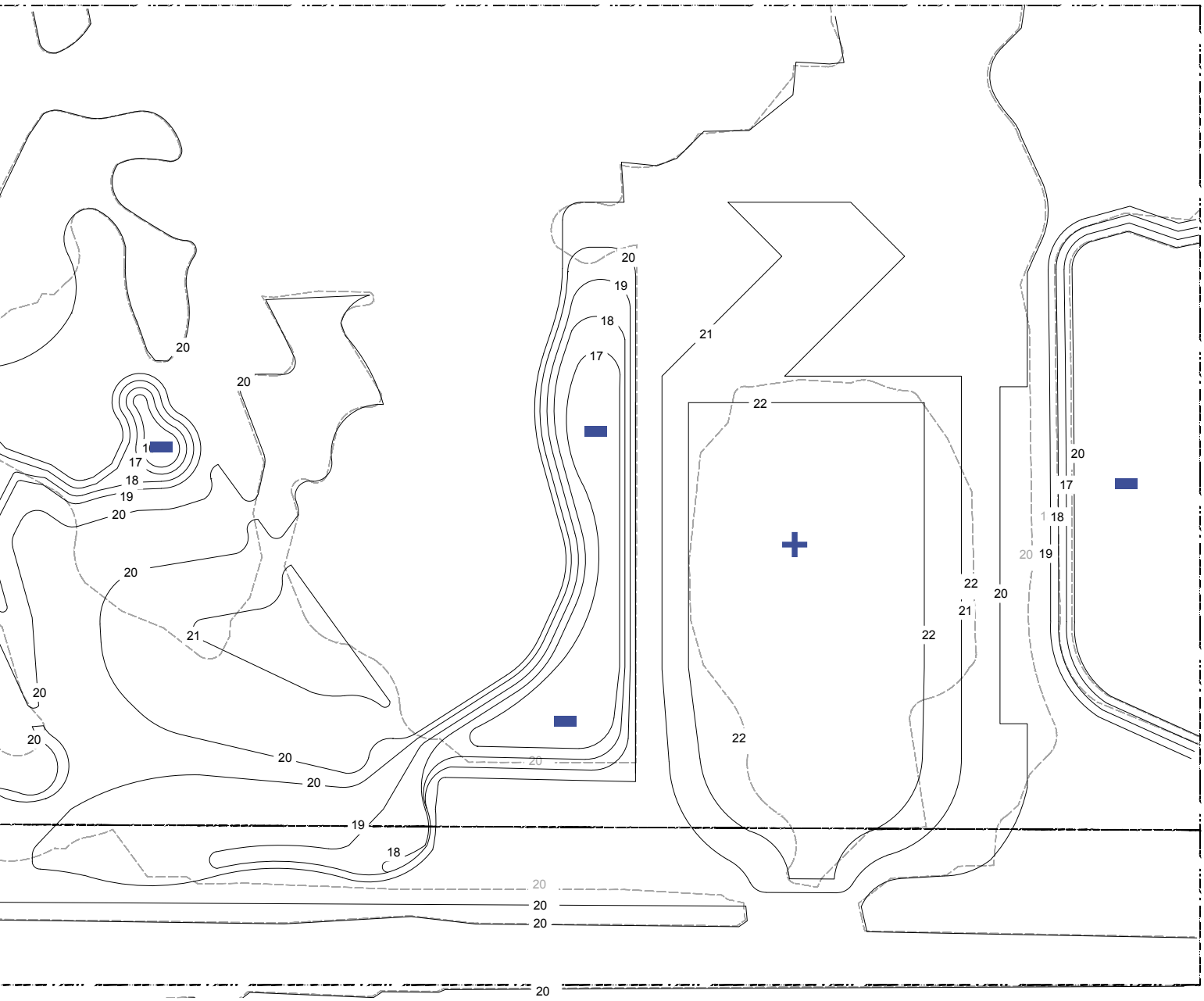
Master Plan


Reflection Garden
Northern Ga
Music Area
Overflo
Cultural Plaza
History Area
Edible Garden
biosw


rden
w Parking
Wetland + Trails
Terraced Wetland
Coastal Garden
Boardwalk
Southern Garden
ales + rain garden
0’
40’
80’

Grading Plan

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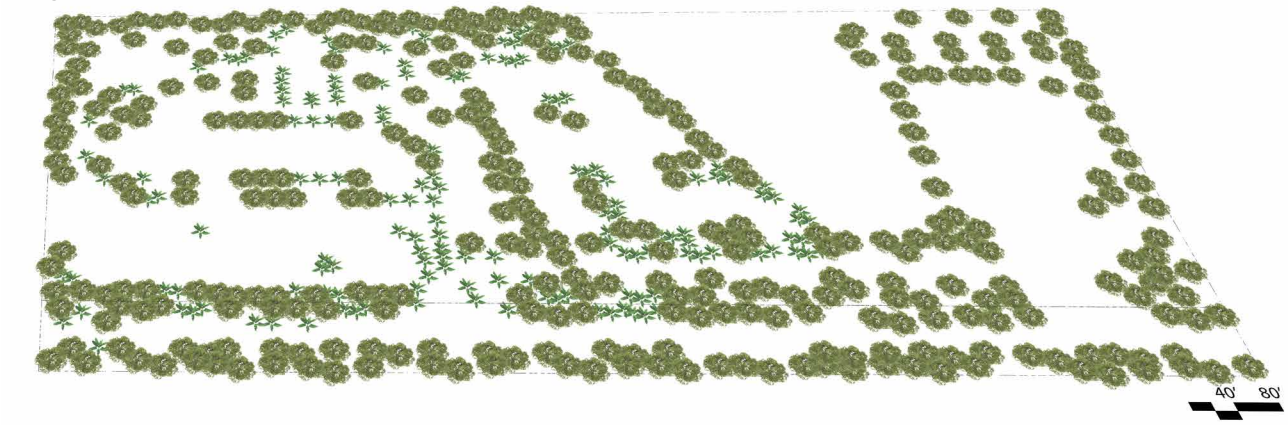
Pedestrian-first atmosphere through:
- shade implementation via canopy trees
- open seating at key areas
- “hidden” and aesthetically pleasing paved vehicular parking

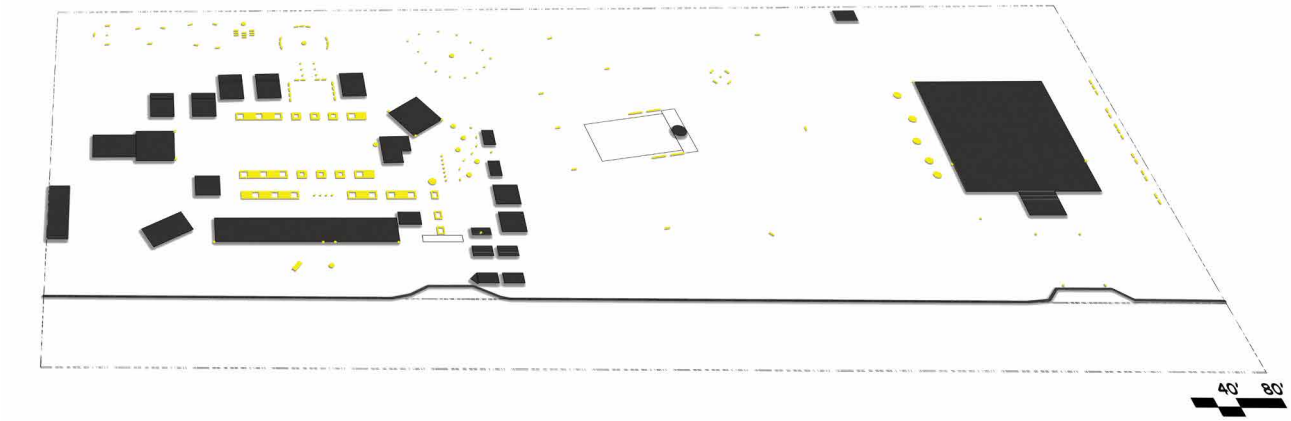
Softscape integration
- stormwater practices and trails
- trail through on-site wetland
- boardwalk overlooking adjacent lake

Culture-inspired spaces
- branded redesign with sun-shaped ground fountain
- interactive displays of history, art and music
- Reflective gardens, including self-reflection and prayer area
- Community garden spaces, edible plants and fruit bearing trees
- terraced seating adjacent to wetland

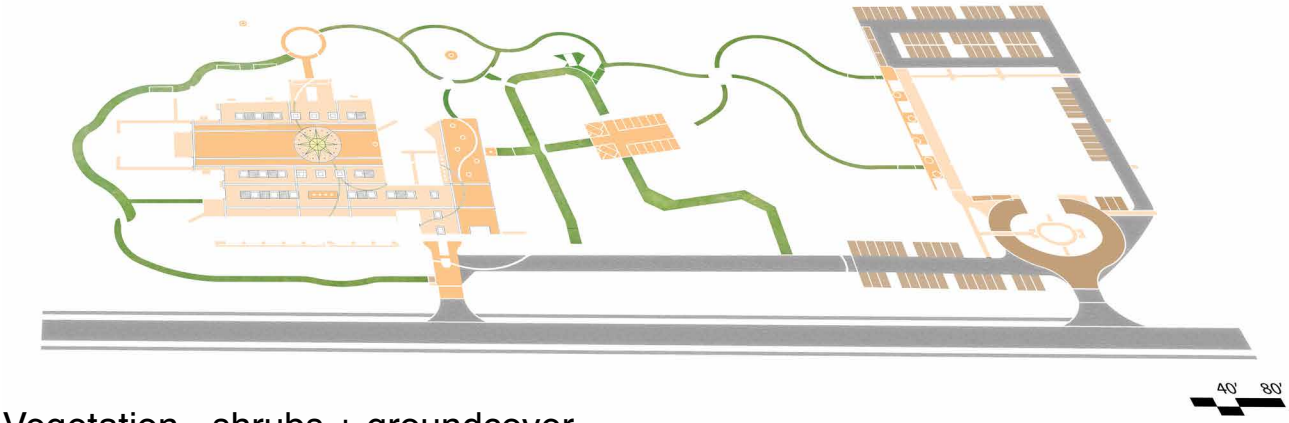
Vegetation - canopy



Structures

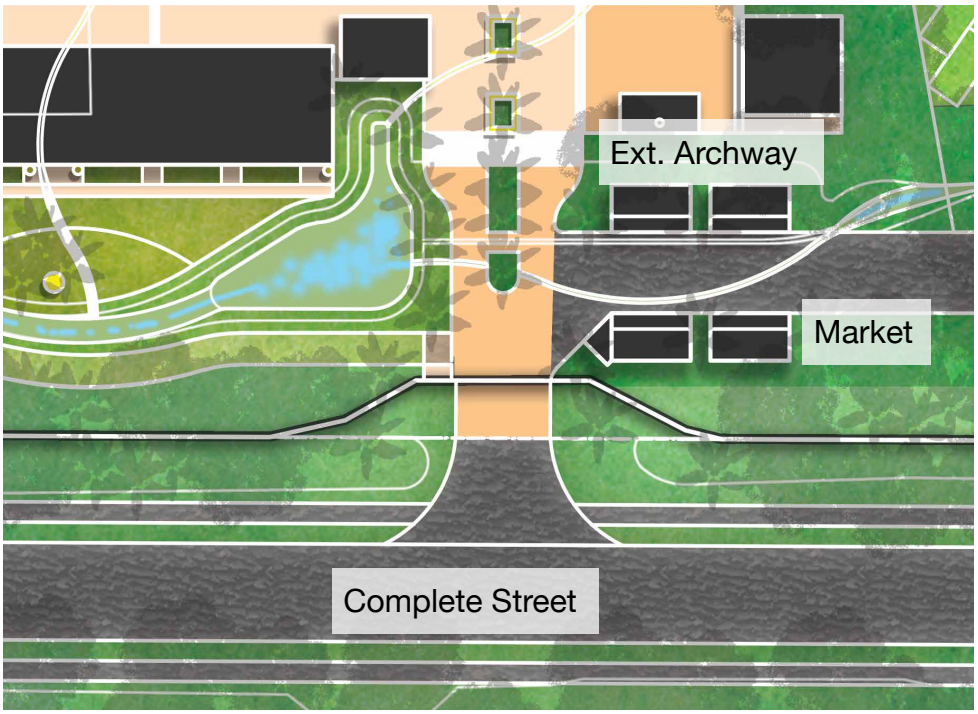


Connections

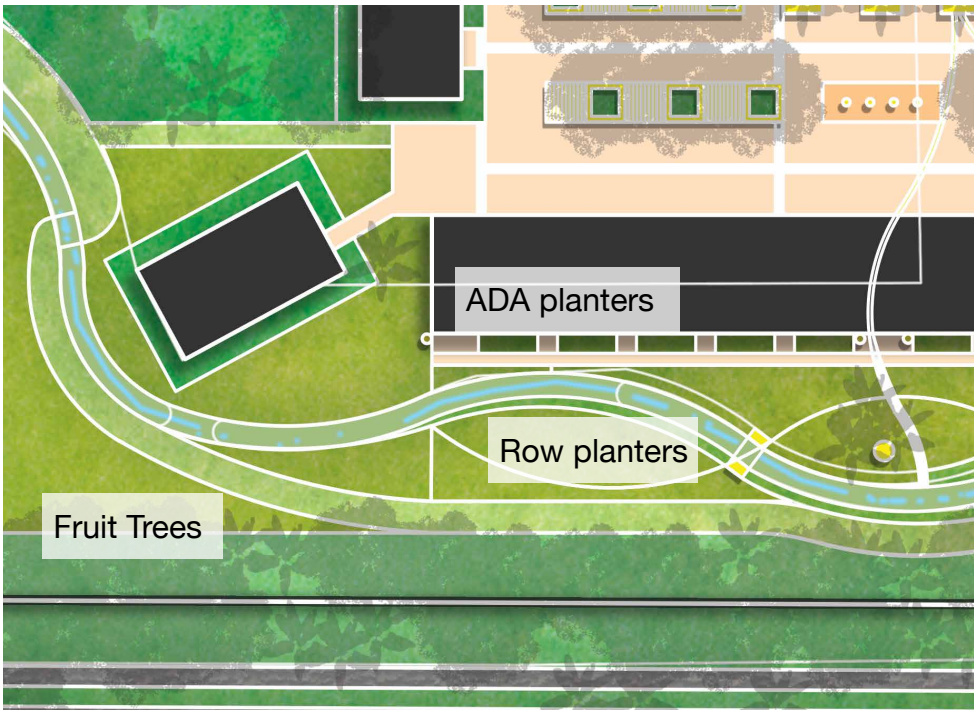


Vegetation - shrubs + groundcover

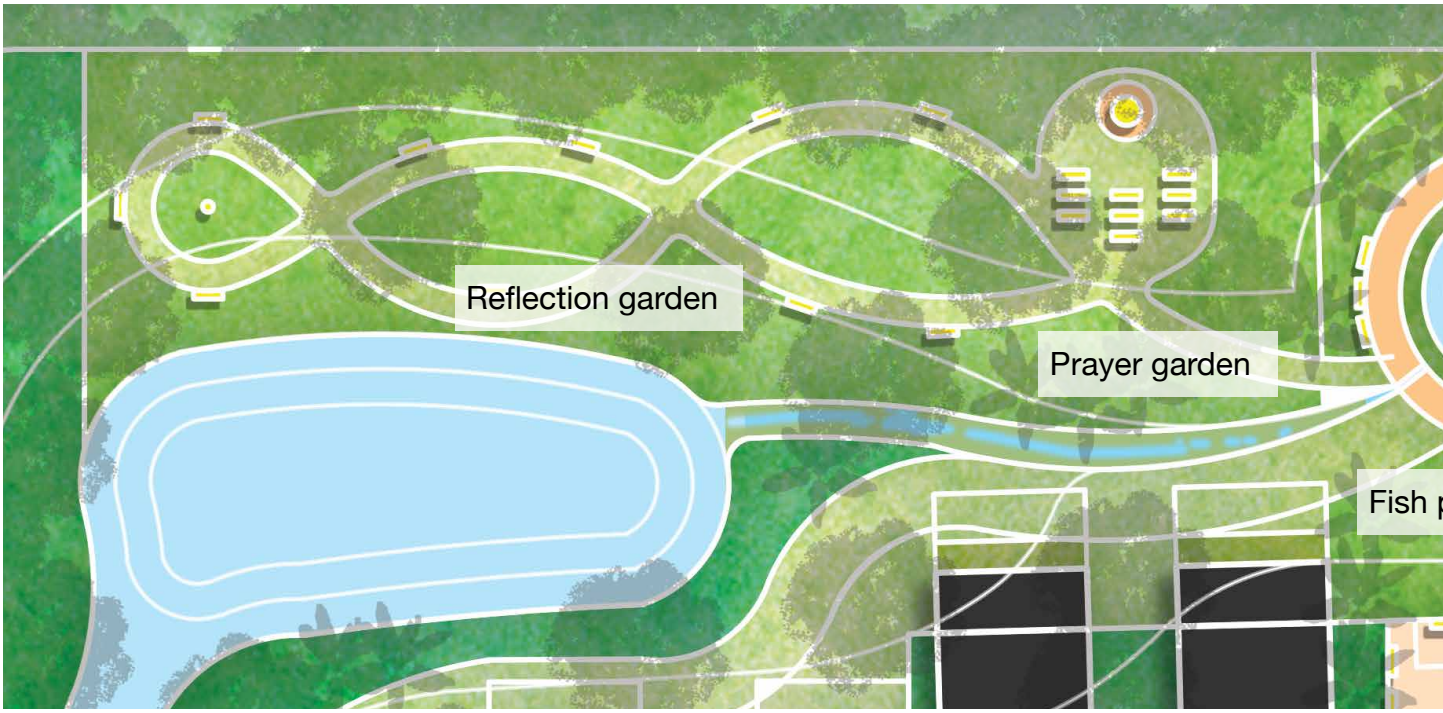
Area 1 - Welcoming Entry



Area 2 - Edible Gardens



Area 3 - Places of Reflection



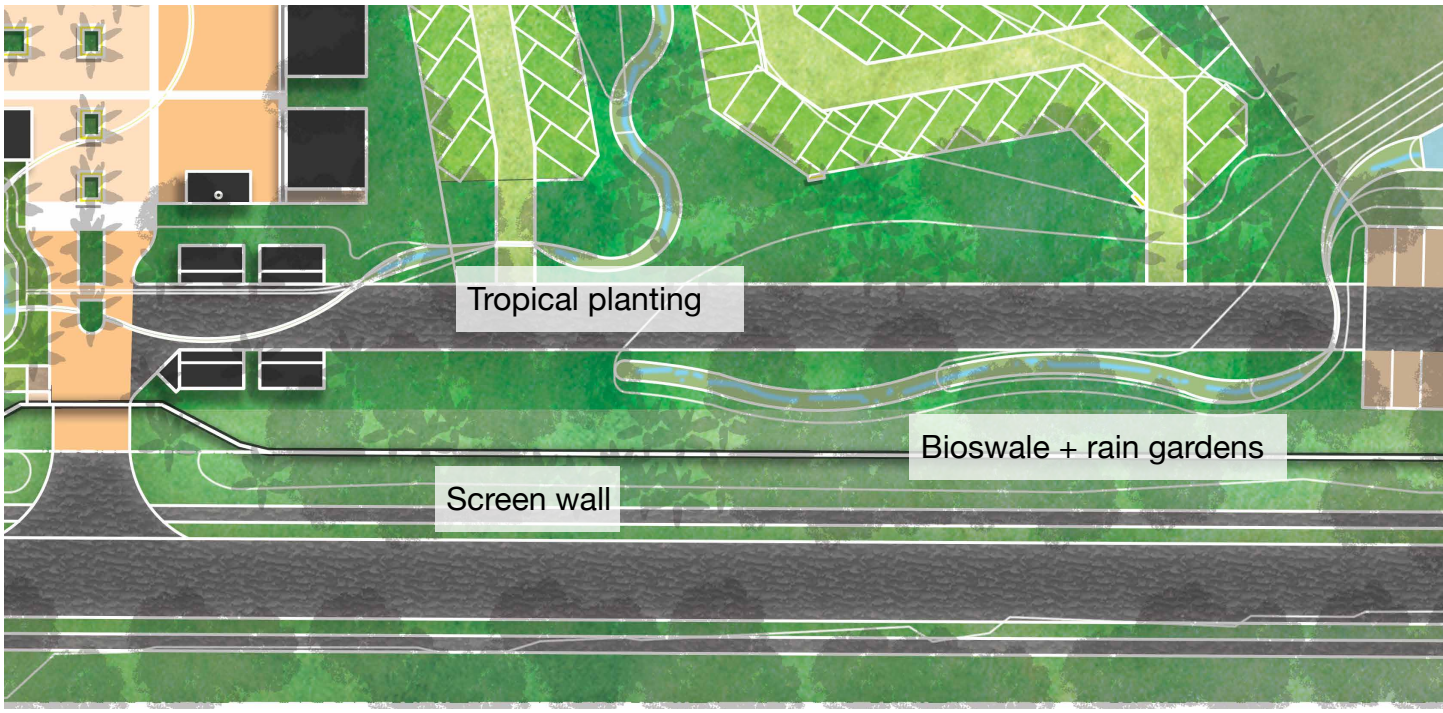
pond

img. ref. 12

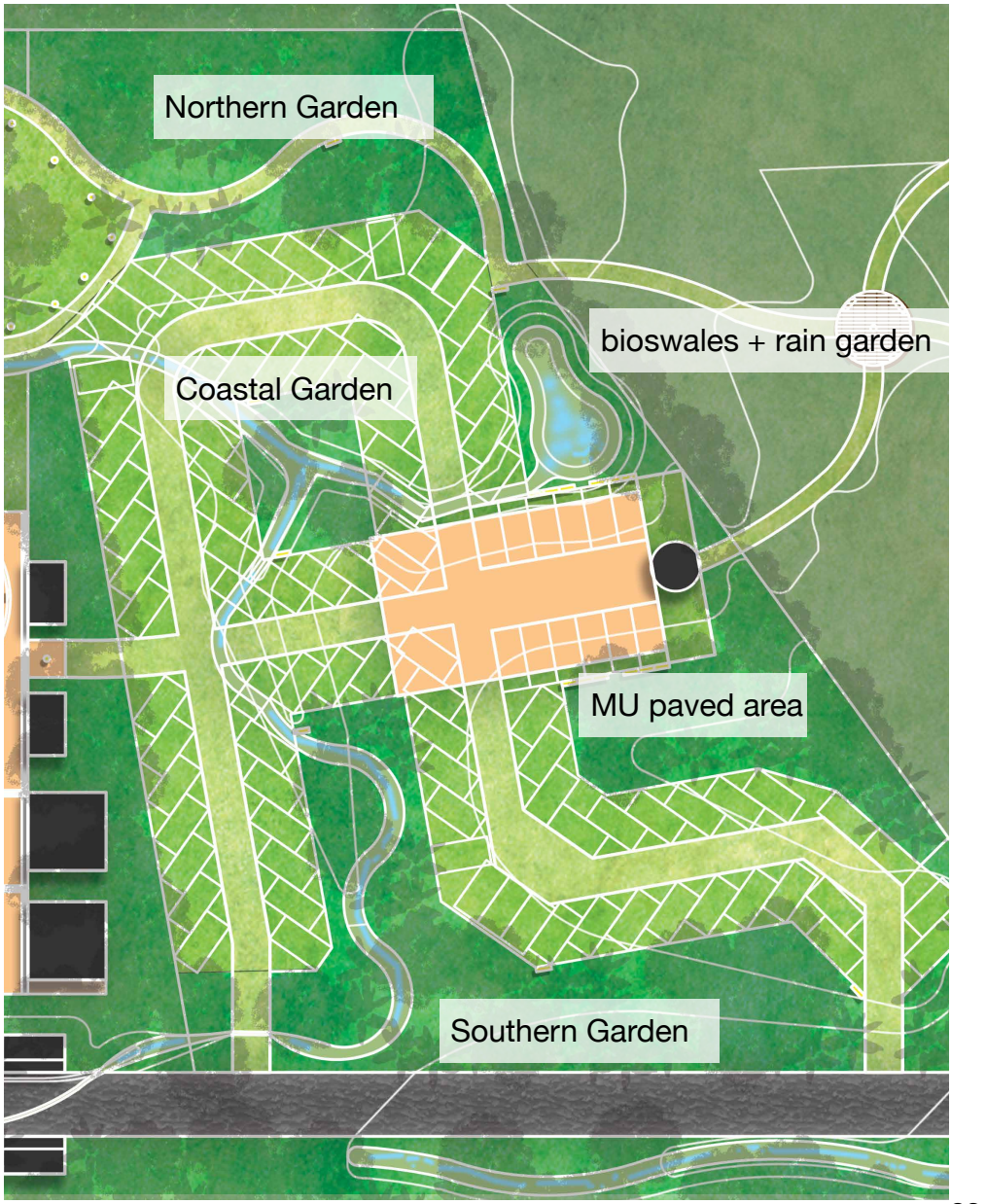
img. ref. 10

img. ref. 12

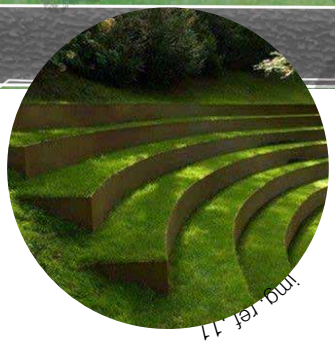
Area 4 - Connection

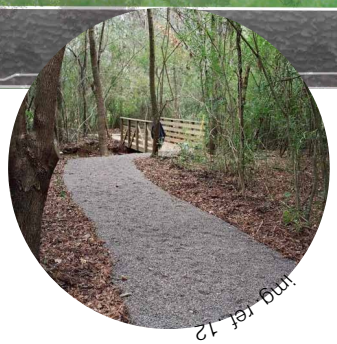


Area 5 - Garden Islands

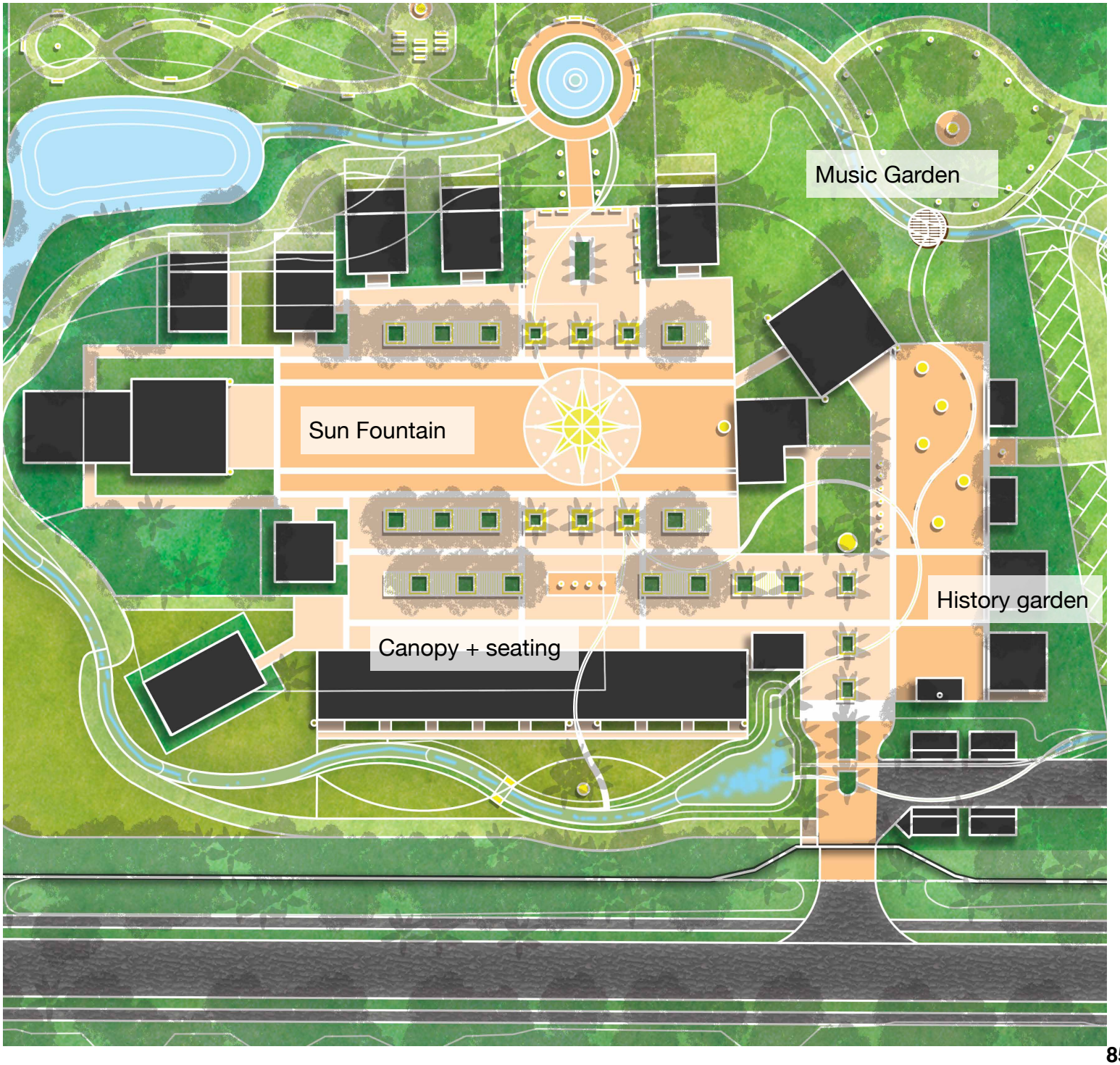

Northern Garden
bioswales + rain garden
Coastal Garden
MU paved area
Southern Garden

Area 6 - Wetland Trails

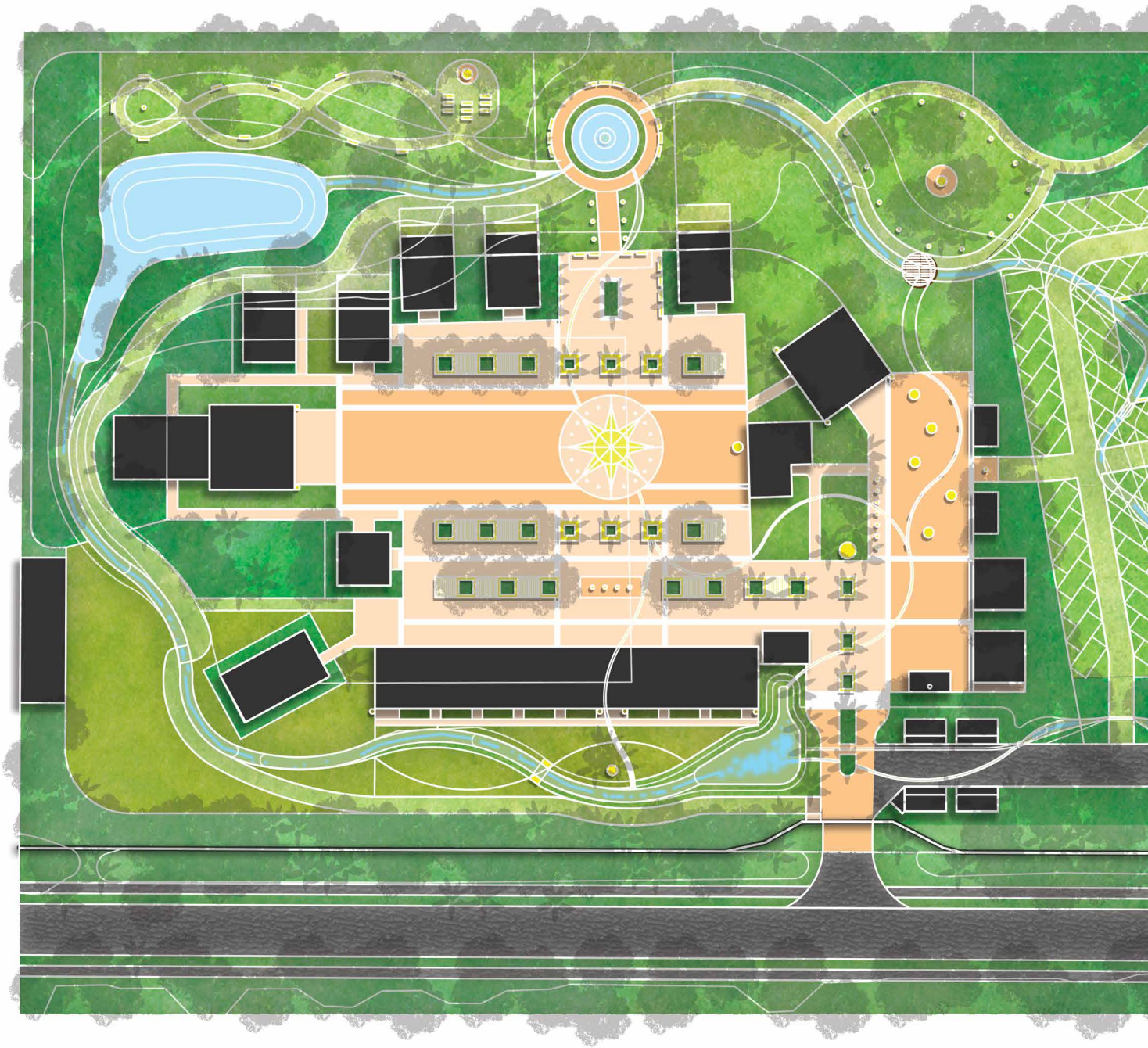


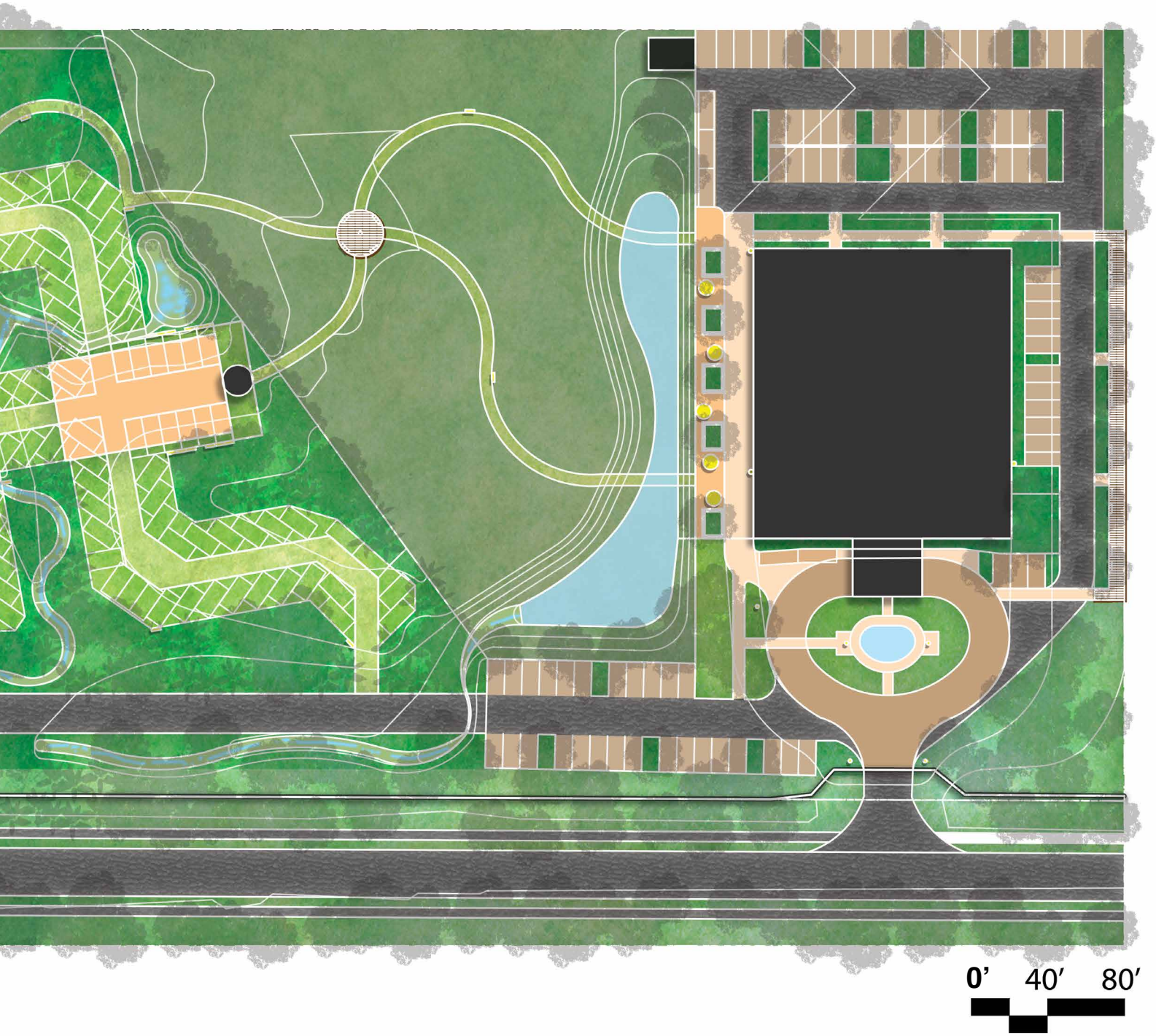


Area 7 - Cultural Plaza



Thank You.




0’
40’
80’

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CAPSTONE PROJECT

APRIL 21, 2017

JO THERESE TOLENTINO