

June 25, 2025

Philadelphia Art Commission
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Re: Application for the *Nicetown Sports Courts / Low Line* Site Improvement Project for Construction Approval

Dear Commissioners,

SALT Design Studio (SALT) is pleased to submit the enclosed package for proposed site improvements for the *Nicetown Sports Courts / Low Line* project, located at 4300-4400 Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19140 in the Nicetown-Tioga neighborhood.

The proposed *Nicetown Sports Courts / Low Line* is a public park comprised of sports courts, a skate park, an intergenerational fitness area, vendor spaces, and a plaza for gathering & events. The project site is located underneath an elevated section of Route 1 that has been largely unprogrammed and vacant for decades. Historically, the site was home to several residential blocks prior to demolition during the construction of Route 1. The concept of the *Nicetown Sports Courts / Low Line* is to take this underutilized space and transform the area underneath the highway into a vibrant community amenity. The idea for the project has been circulating for over a decade, and the Nicetown Community Development Corporation (NTCDC) has recently secured multiple grants to design & construct the project.

The project site is bisected diagonally by Germantown Avenue. On the East side of Germantown Avenue, the project features the following:

- **Multi-Purpose Plaza** for community gatherings and events. This space is designed to be open and flexible to accommodate outdoor performances, markets, and general gatherings. Custom tiered benches frame the open plaza to provide a variety of seating for socializing.
- **Skate Features** are designed to accommodate skaters at a variety of skill levels. The skate area is largely located underneath Route 1 with zones dedicated to transition skate, plaza skate, and beginner skate. Skateable ledges and seating elements frame the site to provide spectator opportunities.
- An **Entry Plaza** with branded signage that doubles as **bicycle parking**. This feature welcomes visitors to the site while also functioning as a physical and visual buffer between skateboarders and traffic along Germantown Ave.
- **Greening/planting**, which includes trees, shrubs, herbaceous perennials and grasses that help clean the air, manage stormwater, provide shade, reduce urban heat island, and create native habitat, and screen community spaces from Germantown Avenue.

On the West side of Germantown Avenue, the project features the following:

- Four (4) full-sized **Basketball Courts** with dimensions of 94' x 50'.
- One (1) **Futsal Court** with dimensions of 110' x 67.5' that can accommodate a 5 v 5 game.
- Two (2) **Pickleball Courts** with dimensions of 44' x 20'.
- Two (2) **Table Tennis Courts** with dimensions of 9' x 5'.
- One (1) **Bocce Court** with dimensions of 60' x 10'.

SALT

DESIGN STUDIO

161 LEVERINGTON AVENUE
SUITE 1005
PHILADELPHIA PA 19127
T: 215.621.7600
www.saltdesignstudio.com

- **½-Mile Running Track** which encompasses three of the basketball courts.
- **Fitness Area** with a focus on calisthenics & cross-training for all ages. The Fitness Area includes ADA accessible picnic tables and other seating elements.
- **Parking Area** near the Wayne Avenue entrance, which accommodates up to 8 cars, including ADA spaces.
- **Planted Buffers** on the north and south edges of the site comprise native trees, shrubs, herbaceous perennials and grasses that help clean the air, manage stormwater, provide shade, reduce urban heat island, create native habitat, and screen the sports courts from residential properties. Planted areas will also include bioswales to help convey stormwater to new inlets.
- **Subsurface Stormwater Management System** that will collect and infiltrate all stormwater runoff from the project site.

SALT and NTCDC engaged with the community on site to collect their feedback on the plan early on in the initial Schematic Design phase. Feedback shared by the community during these events focused on 1) reducing noise intrusion on the neighboring residential properties, 2) ensuring the site is safe by providing adequate lighting and traffic-calming measures along Germantown Avenue and 3) expressing widespread support for a diversity of sports & programming for all ages. These comments were taken into consideration, and the plans have since been further developed to accommodate the community's needs and desires.

Our team is requesting concept approval from the Philadelphia Art Commission to proceed with the project as shown.

For questions or comments, please contact SALT Design Studio using the following information:

Katrina Rogus, RLA
Studio Director
SALT DESIGN STUDIO
161 Leverington Avenue, Suite 1005
Philadelphia, PA 19127
E: katrina@saltdesigns.com
T: (215) 621-7600

Sincerely,



Katrina Rogus, RLA

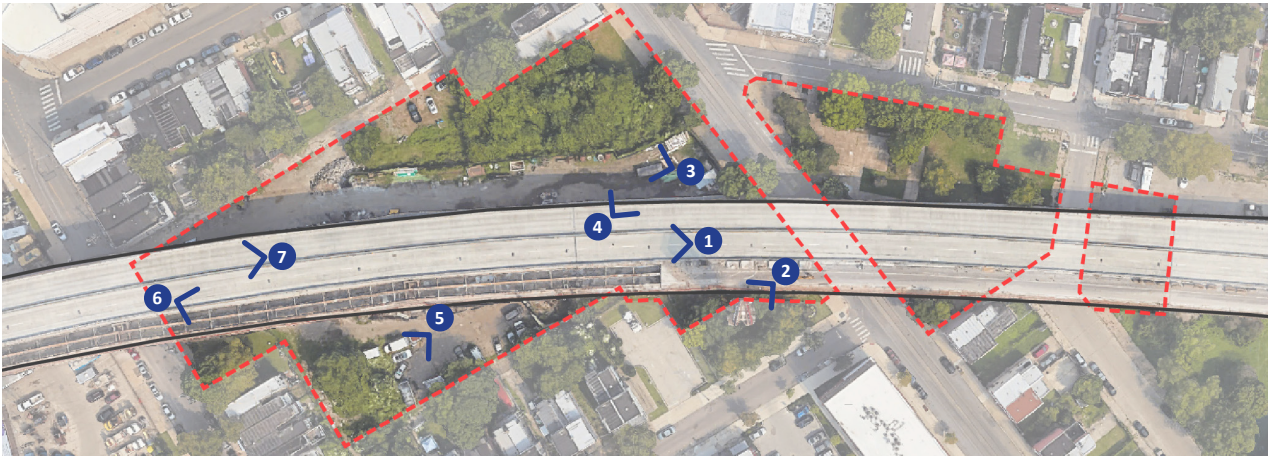
EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN



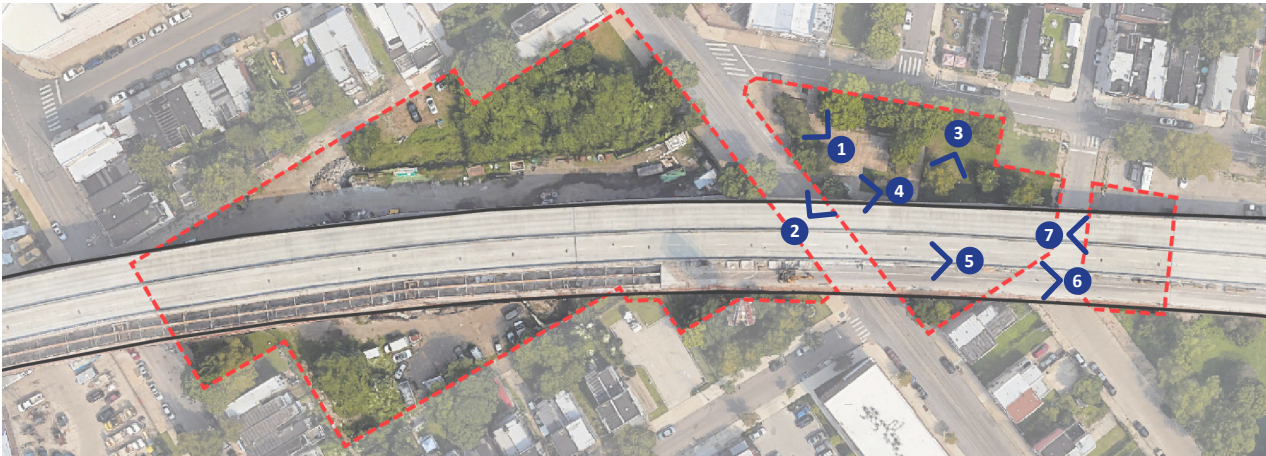
Map Not to Scale

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EXISTING CONDITIONS PHOTOS: WEST SIDE



EXISTING CONDITIONS PHOTOS: EAST SIDE



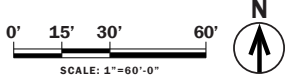
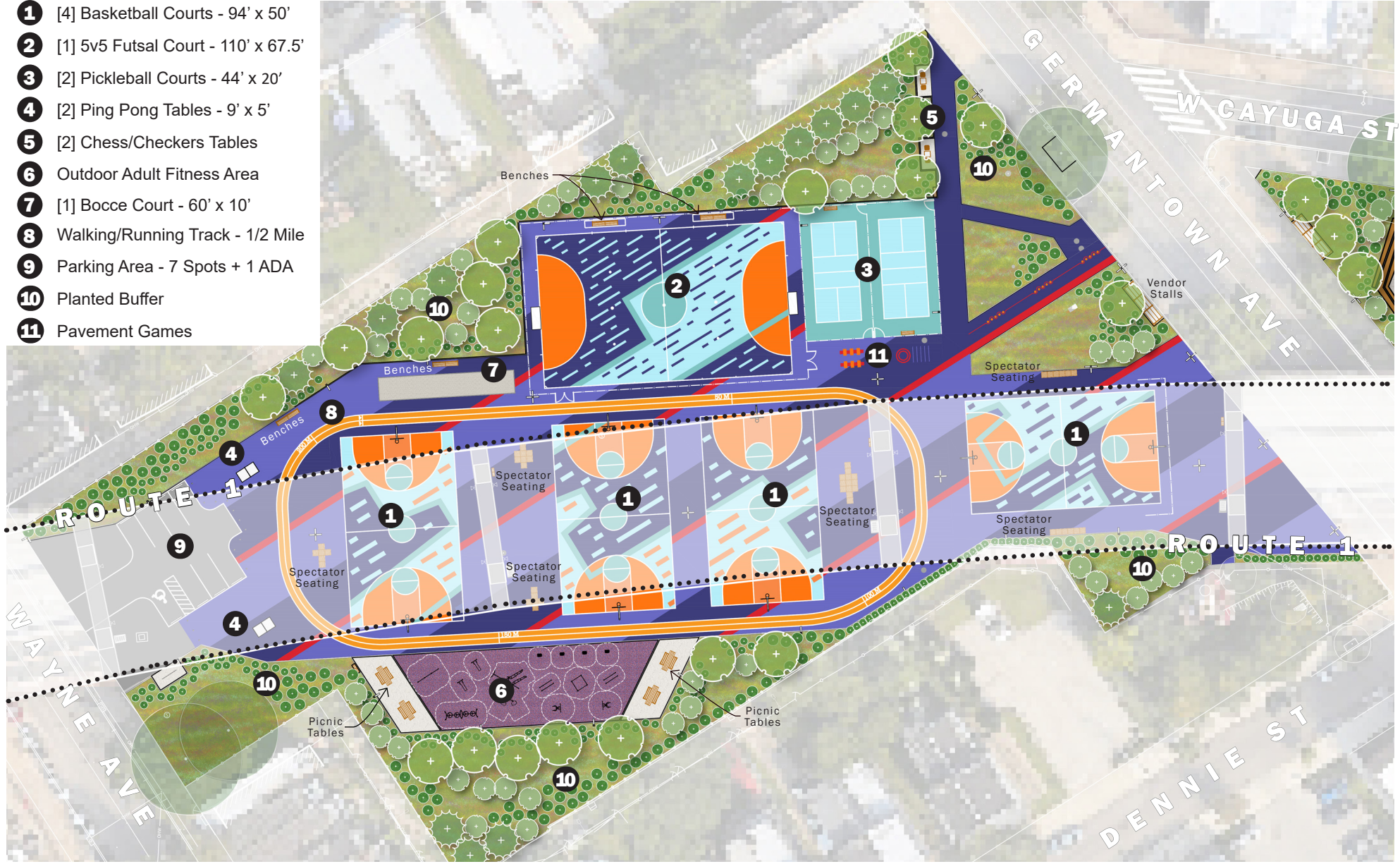
PROPOSED SITE PLAN: OVERALL



PROPOSED SITE PLAN: WEST SIDE

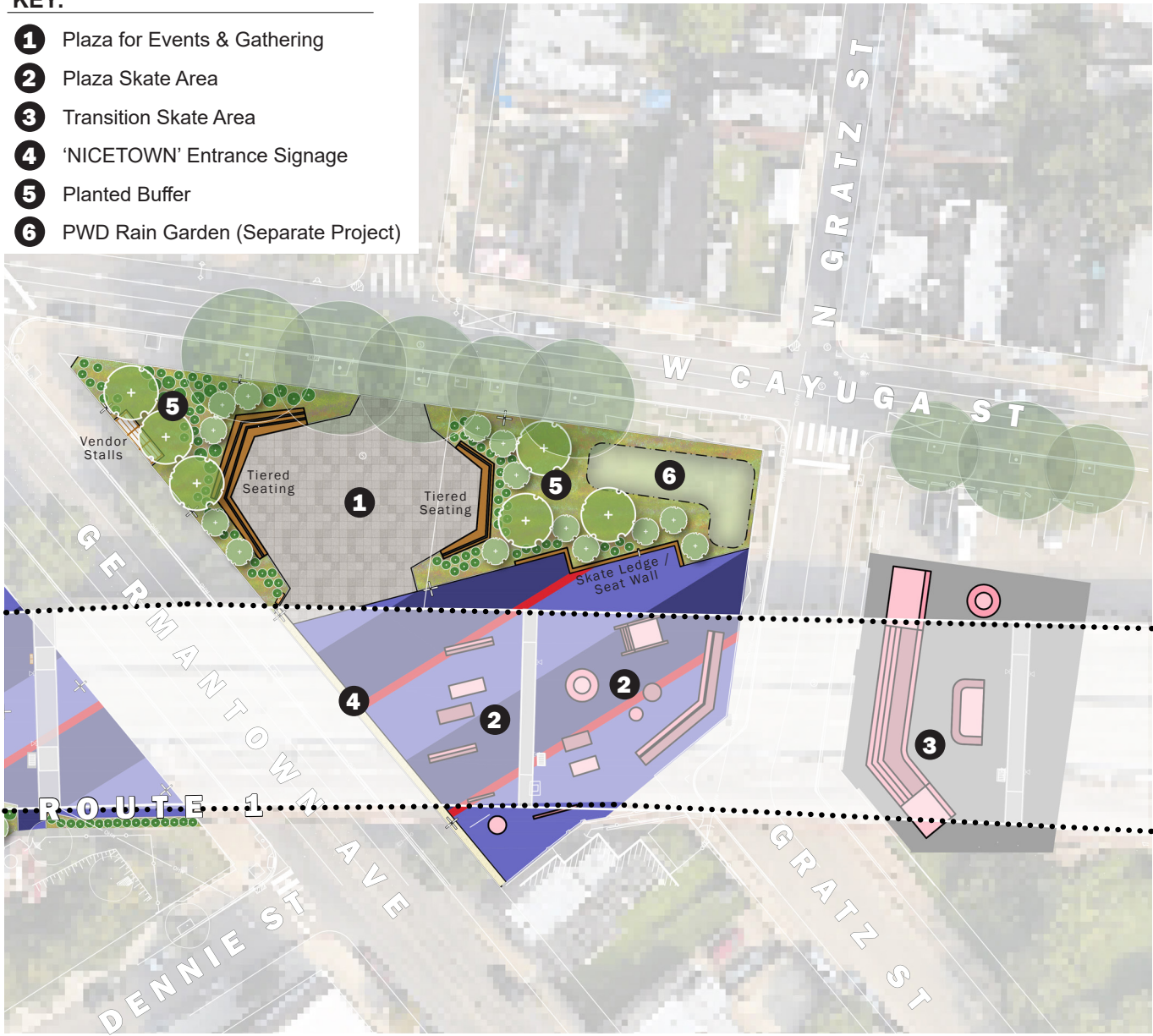
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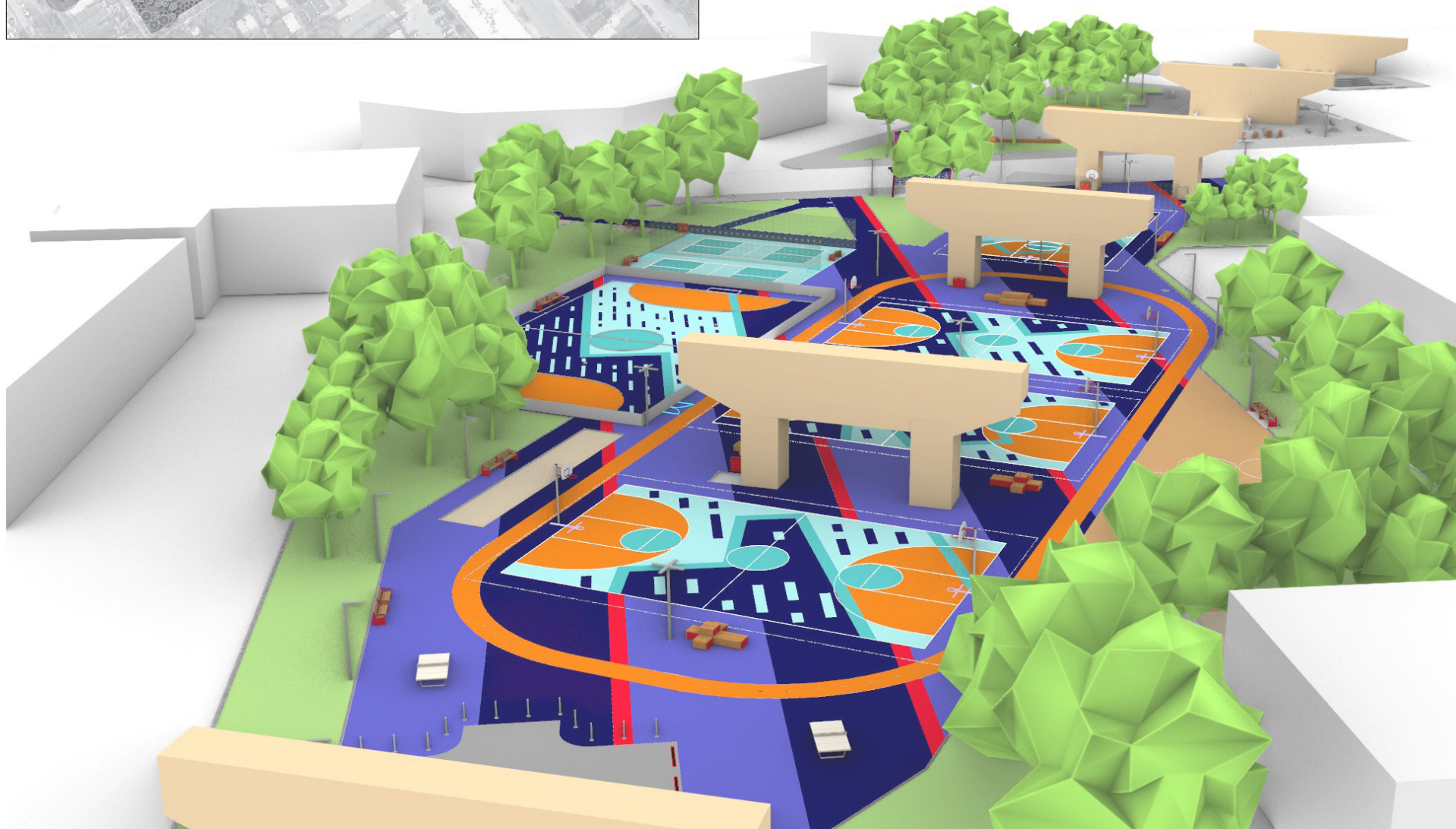
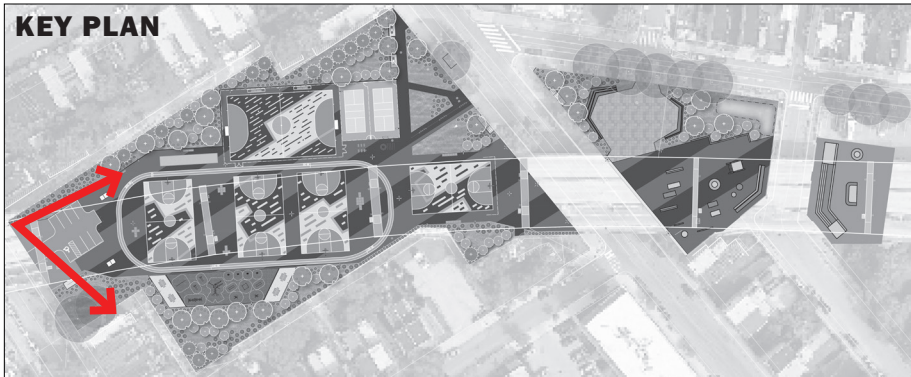
- 1 [4] Basketball Courts - 94' x 50'
- 2 [1] 5v5 Futsal Court - 110' x 67.5'
- 3 [2] Pickleball Courts - 44' x 20'
- 4 [2] Ping Pong Tables - 9' x 5'
- 5 [2] Chess/Checkers Tables
- 6 Outdoor Adult Fitness Area
- 7 [1] Bocce Court - 60' x 10'
- 8 Walking/Running Track - 1/2 Mile
- 9 Parking Area - 7 Spots + 1 ADA
- 10 Planted Buffer
- 11 Pavement Games

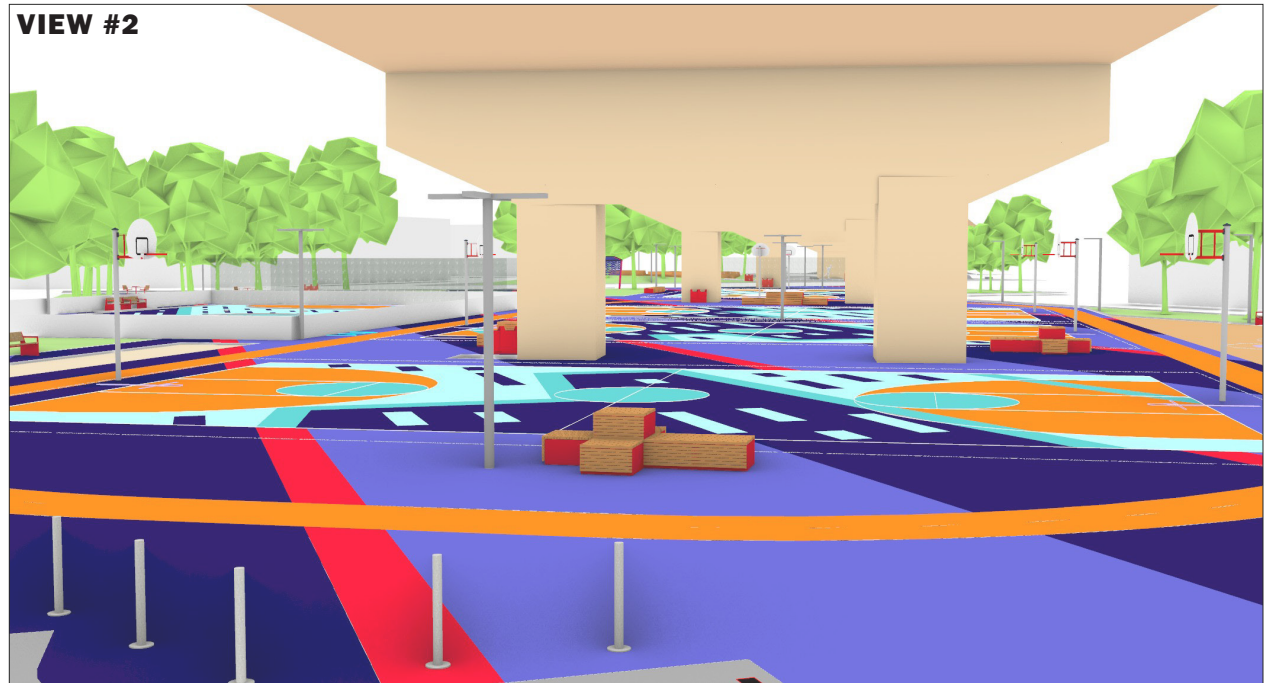
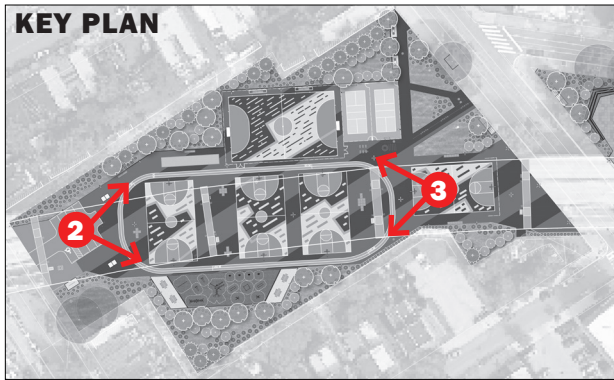


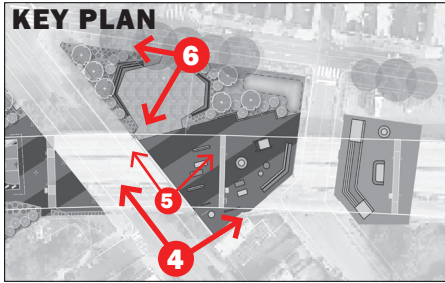
PROPOSED SITE PLAN: EAST SIDE

- KEY:**
- 1 Plaza for Events & Gathering
 - 2 Plaza Skate Area
 - 3 Transition Skate Area
 - 4 'NICETOWN' Entrance Signage
 - 5 Planted Buffer
 - 6 PWD Rain Garden (Separate Project)

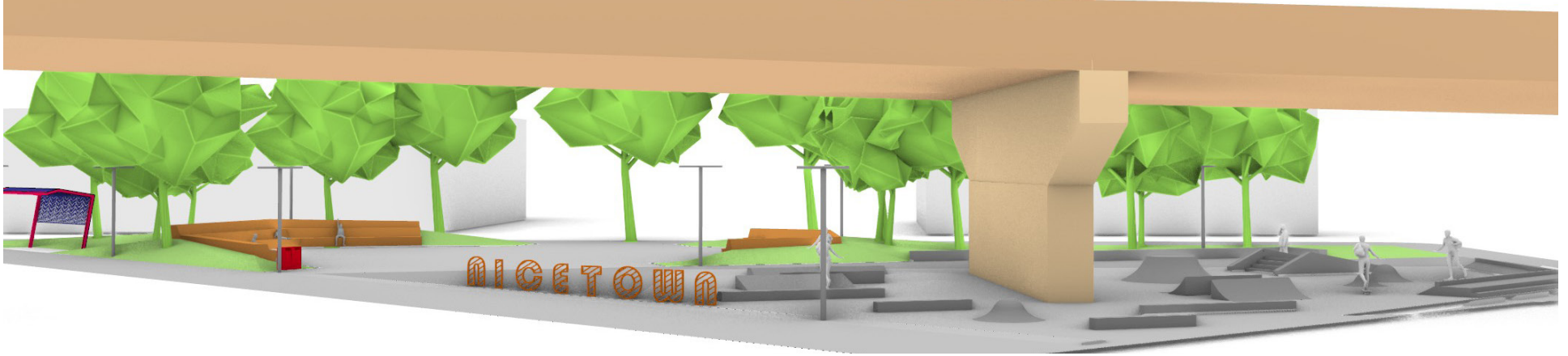




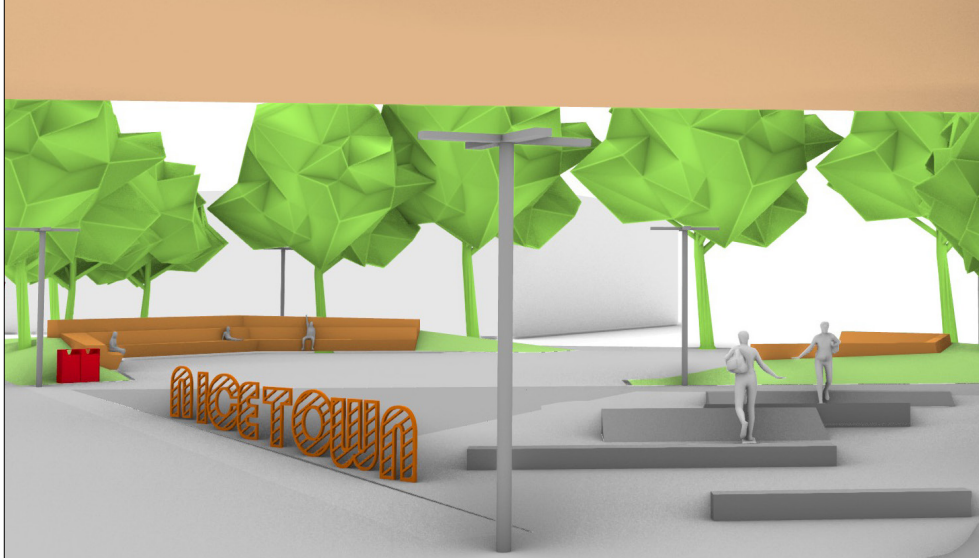




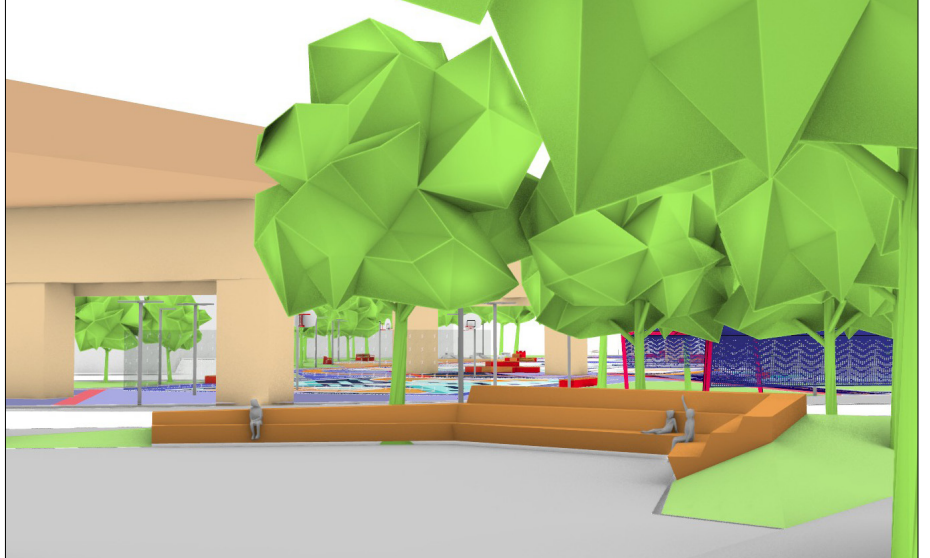
VIEW #4

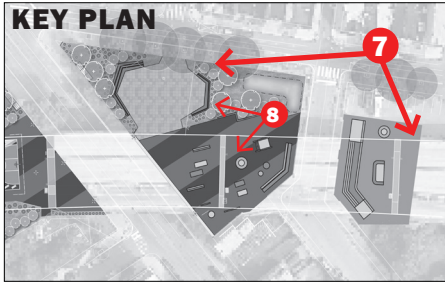


VIEW #5

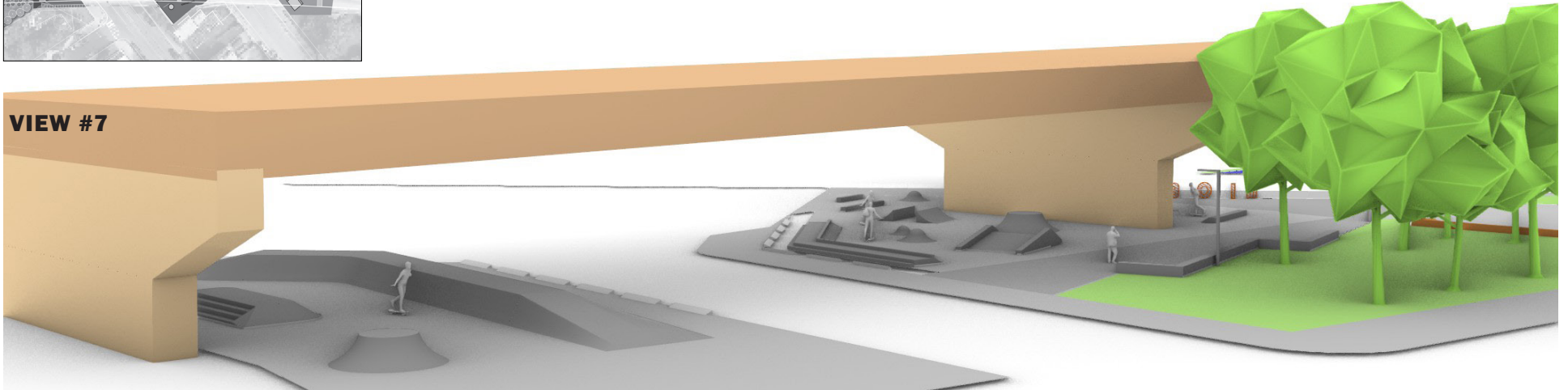


VIEW #6





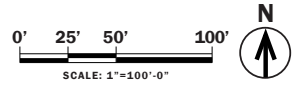
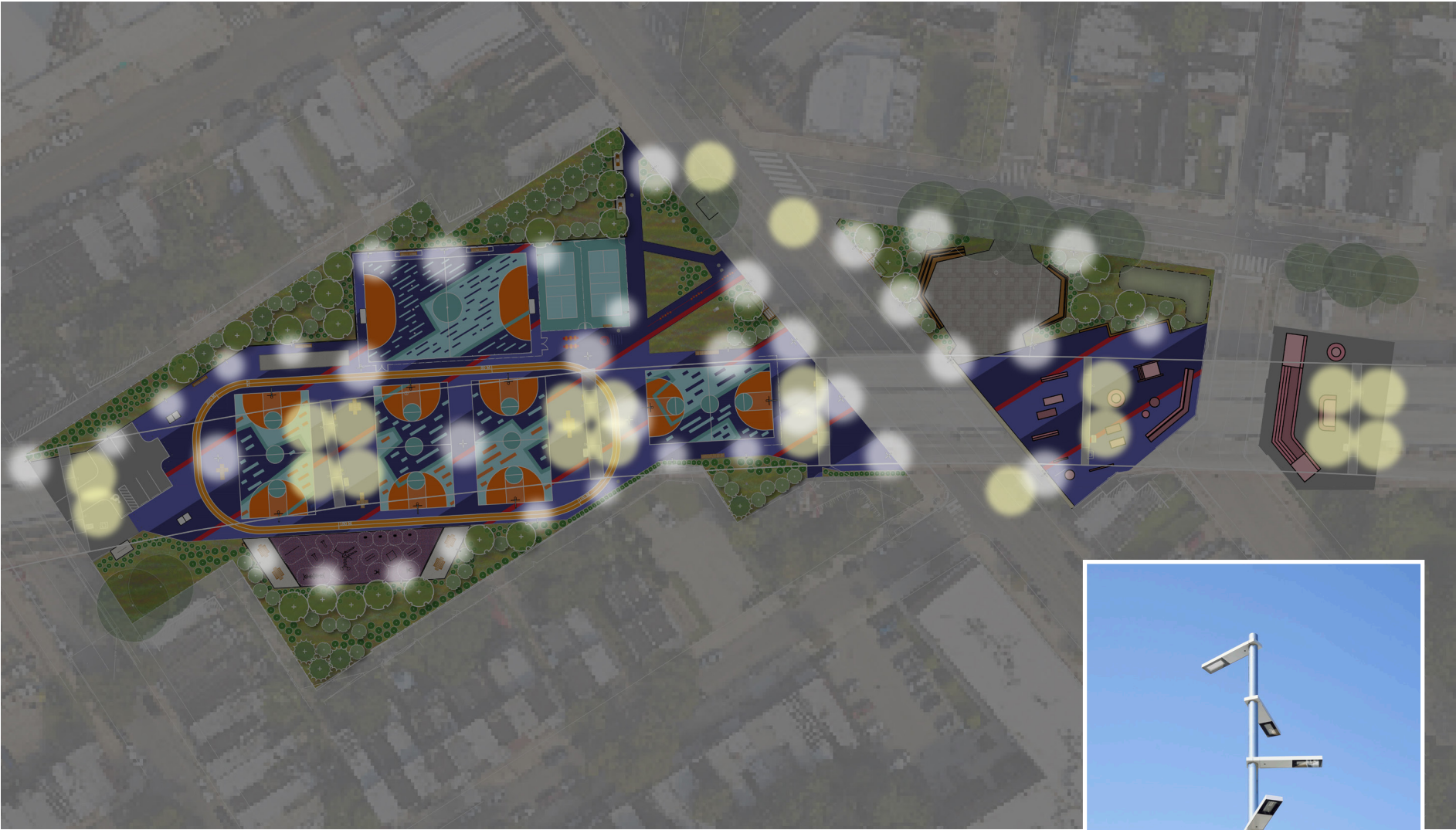
VIEW #7



VIEW #8



PROPOSED SITE LIGHTING DIAGRAM



PROPOSED STANDARD FURNISHINGS*

**Note: Colors shown on these images do not designate final color selections for site furnishings.*



FIXED GAME TABLE & CHAIRS



SPECTATOR SEATING



BENCH



BIKE RACK



PICNIC TABLE (ADA-ACCESSIBLE)



TRASH & RECYCLING RECEPTACLES

PROPOSED TREE SPECIES



Acer rubrum
Red Maple



Celtis occidentalis
Hackberry



Cercis canadensis
Eastern Redbud



Cotinus obovatus
American Smoketree



Chionanthus virginicus
Fringe Tree



Ilex opaca
American Holly



Juniperus virginiana
Eastern Red Cedar



Liquidambar styraciflua
Sweetgum



Magnolia virginiana
Sweetbay Magnolia



Platanus occidentalis
American Sycamore



Prunus serotina
Black Cherry



Quercus palustris
Pin Oak



Quercus phellos
Willow Oak



Ulmus americana
'New Harmony'
American Elm

PROPOSED SHRUB SPECIES



Aesculus parviflora
Bottlebrush Buckeye



Ceanothus americanus
New Jersey Tea



Diervilla lonicera 'Kodak Orange'
Bush Honeysuckle



Hydrangea quercifolia
Oakleaf Hydrangea



Ilex glabra
Inkberry Holly



Ilex verticillata 'Jim Dandy' & 'Nana'
Red Sprite
Winterberry



Myrica cerifera
Southern Bayberry



Rhus aromatica 'Gro Low'
Fragrant Sumac

PROPOSED PERENNIAL & GRASS SPECIES



Amsonia hubrichtii
Threadleaf Bluestar



Asclepias incarnata
Swamp Milkweed



Aster oblongifolius 'Raydon's Favorite'
Aromatic Aster



Baptisia australis
False Blue Indigo



Carex pensylvanica
Pennsylvania Sedge



Chasmanthium latifolium
Northern Sea Oats



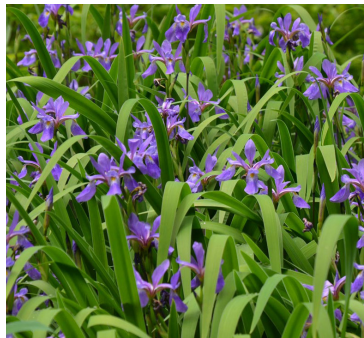
Echinacea pallida
Pale Coneflower



Eragrostis spectabilis
Purple Lovegrass



Eupatorium coelestinum
Mistflower



Iris versicolor
Blue Flag



Juncus tenuis
Path Rush



Panicum virgatum
'Heavy Metal'
Switchgrass



Schizachyrium scoparium
'Standing Ovation'
Little Bluestem

PROJECT BUDGET

**ESTIMATED BUDGET FOR TOTAL DEVELOPMENT =
\$9,300,000.00**

SOURCES OF FUNDS:

- UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD)
- CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
- LOCAL INITIATIVES SUPPORT CORPORATION (LISC) /DICKS
- PENNSYLVANIA LOCAL SHARE ACCOUNT (LSA)
- PENNSYLVANIA REDEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE CAPITAL PROGRAM (RACP)

PENDING SOURCES OF FUNDS:

- UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - RECONNECTING NEIGHBORHOODS
- UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA) - CHANGING COMMUNITIES