

DHDC 23-8288

APPROVAL DOCUMENT – POST AT WORK LOCATION

CITY OF DETROIT
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

2 WOODWARD, SUITE 808
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48226

4/18/23

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Robert Gregory
Detroit 300 Conservancy
1 Campus Martius, Suite 380
Detroit, MI 48226

RE: Application Number 23-8288; 1600, 1883 Woodward; Grand Circus Park Historic District

Dear Applicant,

At the Regular Meeting that was held on April 12, 2023, the Detroit Historic District Commission (“DHDC”) reviewed the above-referenced application. Pursuant to Section 5(1) of the Michigan Local Historic District Act, as amended, being MCL 399.205 (1) and Sections 21-2-73/21-2-78 of the 2019 Detroit City Code; the DHDC hereby issues a Certificate of Appropriateness (“COA”) for the following work, effective on April 18, 2023, as it meets the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and the district’s Elements of Design:

- ***Approval of the Grand Circus Park Master Plan and grant HDC staff authority to approve construction drawings of the phases as they are implemented.***

The Certificate of Appropriateness is issued with the following conditions:

- ***The applicant shall present an application for the cafe to the Commission for review and approval at a regular meeting once they have more detailed documentation of the building, prior to the issuance of the project’s permit, and that review shall be subject to Public Hearing under Section 21-2-77.***
- ***Staff shall have the authority to review and approve the final design of all aspects of the work outlined in the Master Plan document (outside of the proposed new building) prior to their implementation.***

Please retain this COA for your files and post it at the subject property until work is complete. It is important to note that approval by the DHDC does not waive the applicant's responsibility to comply with any other applicable ordinances or statutes. If you have any questions regarding the foregoing, please contact staff at 313-224-1762 or hdc@detroitmi.gov.

For the Commission:



Daniel Rieden, Detroit Historic District Commission

SUMMARY

The Grand Circus Park Conservancy and Downtown Detroit Partnership have spent the last two years developing a new master plan for Grand Circus Park in the Grand Circus Historic District. Jeff Klein and Maria Galarza of the City of Detroit General Services Department – Parks and Recreation Division have been involved with the entire design process. The team has engaged Smithgroup for the project and has had three stakeholder and two public engagement meetings between September 2021 and September 2022 in order to develop a plan for the future of the park. Enough money has been raised in order to implement Phase 1 of the Master Plan. The project team reviewed the plan with HDC staff in November 2022 and is now seeking the Historic District Commission approval of the Master Plan and Phase 1 work.

HISTORY OF THE PARK

The park has been in use as a public space since 1807 when executed as part of Judge Augustus Woodward’s plan for Detroit. Initially an informal public ground, in 1843-44 it became an official city park and the city authorized funds to be spent regrading and planting trees. By the late 1860s the park was used for as a public space for concerts, meetings, and other public events. The park continued to evolve, the Mayor Hazen Pingree statue on the west side of the park was erected in 1904, the Mayor William Cotter Maybury Monument on the east side was constructed in 1912. The east side Alger fountain was added in 1921, and the west side Edison Memorial fountain was constructed in 1929.

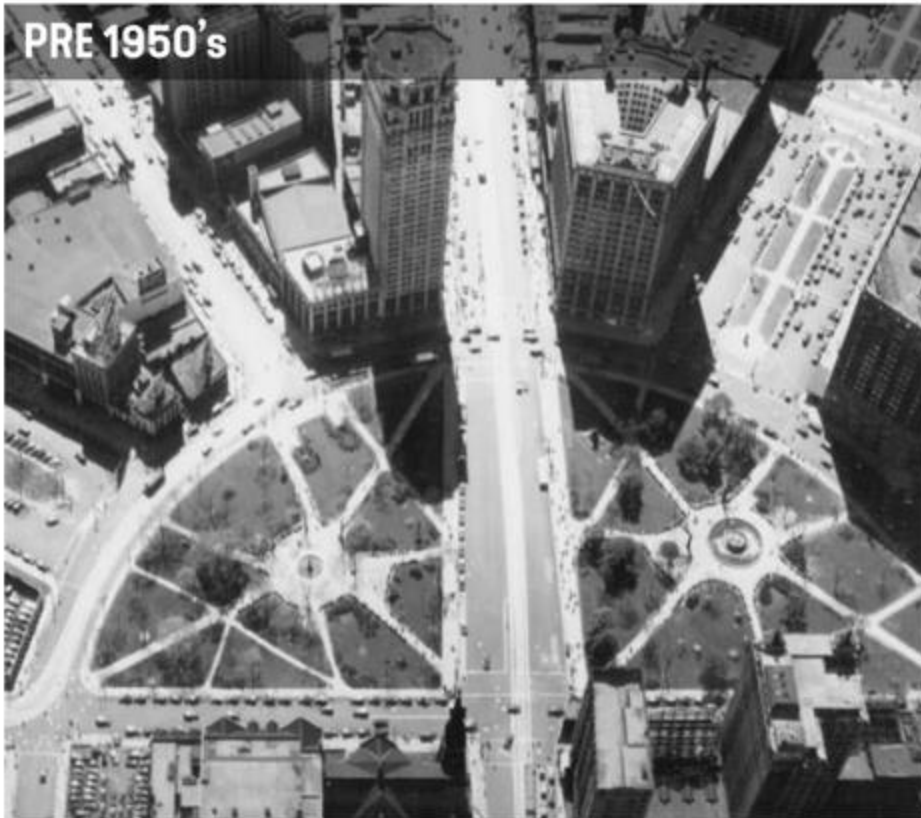


1915



1942





In 1957 the entire park was removed in order to construct the underground parking garage. Once the garage was complete the park was reconstructed and the parking garage ramps, stair and elevator access buildings were added. The park reconstruction retained the spatial organization of the central fountains and pathways radiating to the corners. Since the 1958-59 reconstruction the park has been further altered, including moving the Pingree and Maybury statues, and the addition of the Millennium Bell in 1999.



Looking east, circa 1957



Looking west, c. 1957



West half of the park after reconstruction, 1959



Looking southeast after reconstruction, 1959

CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES OF THE PARK

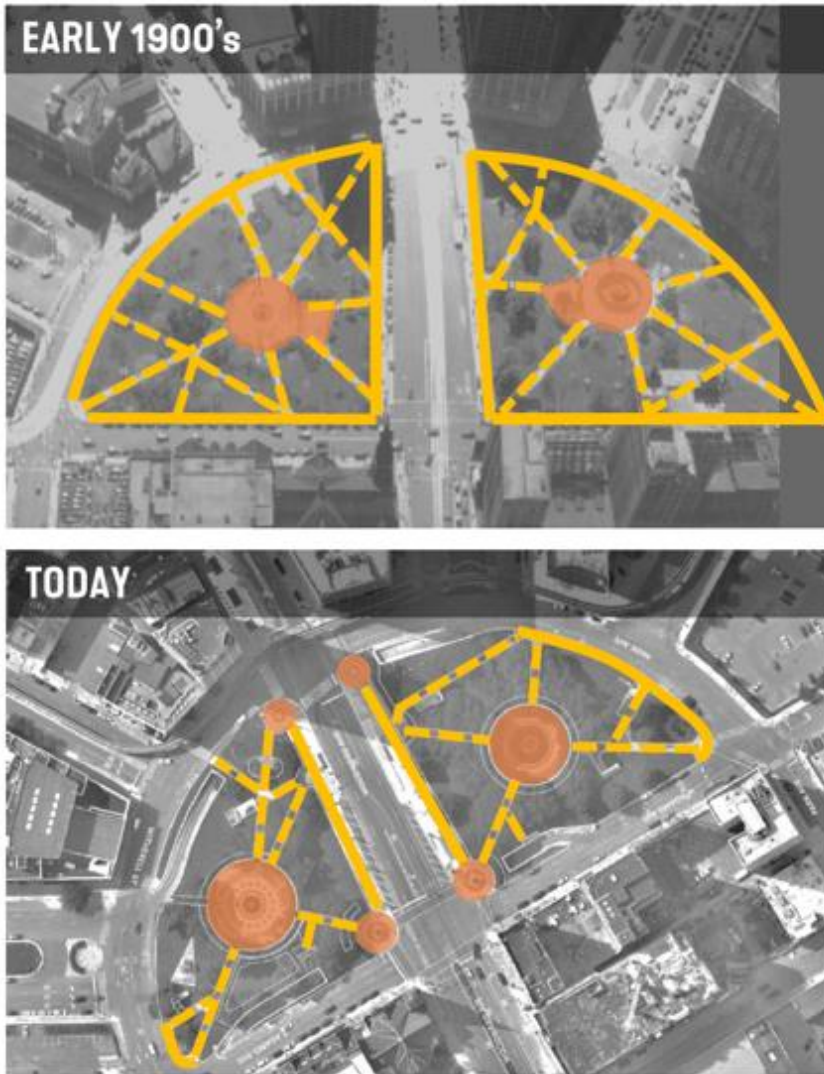
The two fountains, including their central location are important focal points of the park.

The radiating walkways as a spatial concept, but not the walkway exact locations or materials. The walkways have moved a number of times, the sidewalks originally around the perimeter of the park were partially removed in the 1959 reconstruction.

The two mayoral statues, but NOT their locations, are important elements. The movement of statuary within a park is generally part of the natural progression of a city park over its evolution. The statues were added in 1904 and 1912, were moved at least once about 1989 to their present locations. In the 1959 photo the Maybury statue is on the west side of the park and it is presently on the east side.

The trees, grass, and other landscaping are from the 1959 reconstruction or later and are NOT contributing elements to the park.

NEW MASTER PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



Three concepts were presented to the public and stakeholders for feedback. Concept 3, Pathways achieved the most goals of the end users. This option restores the pathway network of the park before 1959.

CONCEPT 1 - BUTTERFLY	CONCEPT 2 - CENTRAL GREEN	CONCEPT 3 - PATHWAYS
<p>Please click or touch comments with sticky notes on below map.</p> <p>Love it! <input type="checkbox"/> I don't like it <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Please click or touch comments with sticky notes on below map.</p> <p>Love it! <input type="checkbox"/> I don't like it <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Please click or touch comments with sticky notes on below map.</p> <p>Love it! <input type="checkbox"/> I don't like it <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>SMITHGROUP</p>	<p>SMITHGROUP</p>	<p>SMITHGROUP</p>

The proposed Master Plan includes the following changes, three of which are proposed for the first implementation phase:

- PHASE 1 - A landscaped median in Woodward Avenue to better and more safely connect the two halves and provide traffic calming – the obelisks currently at the southeast corner of the west half and southwest corner of the east half are proposed to be relocated into the Woodward median.
- PHASE 1 – Adding a sidewalk and street landscaping along both sides of Woodward, this will necessitate expanding into the street, bringing the park closer to its historic size
- PHASE 1 - Moving the mayoral monuments slightly back further from Woodward and surrounding them with planting beds instead of concrete sidewalk which will better protect the statues
- PHASE 1 - Constructing a food and beverage café on the east side, the exact materials and design to be determined but it will be one-story tall and designed to blend in with the park
- Retaining the central fountains
- Retaining and enhancing the walkways radiating from the centers to better connect them to the corners
- Adding sidewalk and street landscaping to the outer perimeters of both halves, this will necessitate going into the street, bringing the park back closer to its original size
- Creating a civic plaza around the west fountain
- Creating a smaller more intimate plaza around the east fountain
- Creating outdoor “rooms” with the use of grass, trees, and other landscaping
- Re-grading the pathways and lawns in the east half to be barrier free
- Retaining mature trees throughout the park

See attached plans for graphics explaining the above. Specific materials and designs for future phases can be brought back for review by the Commission or staff when they are decided.

REQUEST OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

It is requested that the Historic District Commission approve the overall master plan and authorize staff to give final approval of construction drawings of phases as they are implemented.

The master plan meets *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation*. The proposed master plan preserves the historic features and characteristics of the park. The proposed changing of walkway locations, the addition of a perimeter walkway, and reconfiguring the plazas around the fountains retain the historic spatial organization of the park. The addition of the food and beverage café and the Woodward median are compatible with the park. Moving the mayor statues slightly and placing them in a landscaped bed is compatible with the historic character of the park. The re-grading of the landscaping to accommodate universal access and creation of outdoor “rooms” using trees and landscaping are compatible with the historic appearance of the park.

PARK MASTER PLAN

- The master plan creates direct physical and visual connections across the park
- Park edges are buffered by street landscaping
- Open spaces are improved for events and programming
- Diversity of outdoor spaces allow for very daily experience
- Traffic is calmed by a new median in Woodward Ave, road diet in Adams, widening crosswalks, and street trees



GRAND CIRCUS PARK MASTER PLAN

SMITHGROUP

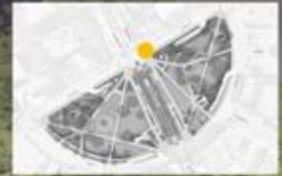
VIEW SOUTH EAST

PARK IS UNIFIED BY A NEW MEDIAN AND REDUCED ROAD WIDTHS IN WOODWARD AVENUE



VIEW SOUTHWEST

CORNERS ARE WELCOMING, WITH WOODWARD MEDIAN AND WIDE CROSSINGS

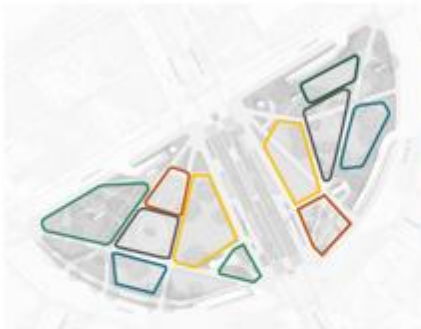


VIEW SOUTHWEST

PATHS LEAD TO SURROUNDING DESTINATIONS AND FORM THE EDGES OF USABLE SPACES



DAILY EXPERIENCES



VIEW NORTHEAST

A CAFÉ SERVES AS THE FRONT PORCH, EXTENDING VIBRANCY TO THE PARK'S EDGES



16

VIEW WEST

LAWNS ARE LIFTED UP TO PROVIDE FLAT, USABLE, CONNECTED SPACES



17

VIEW NORTHEAST

PEDESTRIAN GATEWAYS ALONG PERIMETER PATH



18

VIEW SOUTHEAST

WALKABLE, BUFFERED STREET EDGE



VIEW SOUTH

FLEXIBLE LAWNS AND OPEN SPACES FOSTER COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING



PARK MASTER PLAN

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GRAND CIRCUS PARK MASTER PLAN

SMITHGROUP

GRAND CIRCUS PARK MASTER PLAN

NOVEMBER 2022

AGENDA

NOVEMBER 30, 2022

- Grand Circus Park background
- Previous project engagement feedback
- Preliminary concepts
- Park Master Plan

A PUBLIC PARK AT THE CENTER OF THE CITY

A PLACE OF ORIENTATION & CIVIC PRIDE, A RESPITE FROM THE BUSY CITY

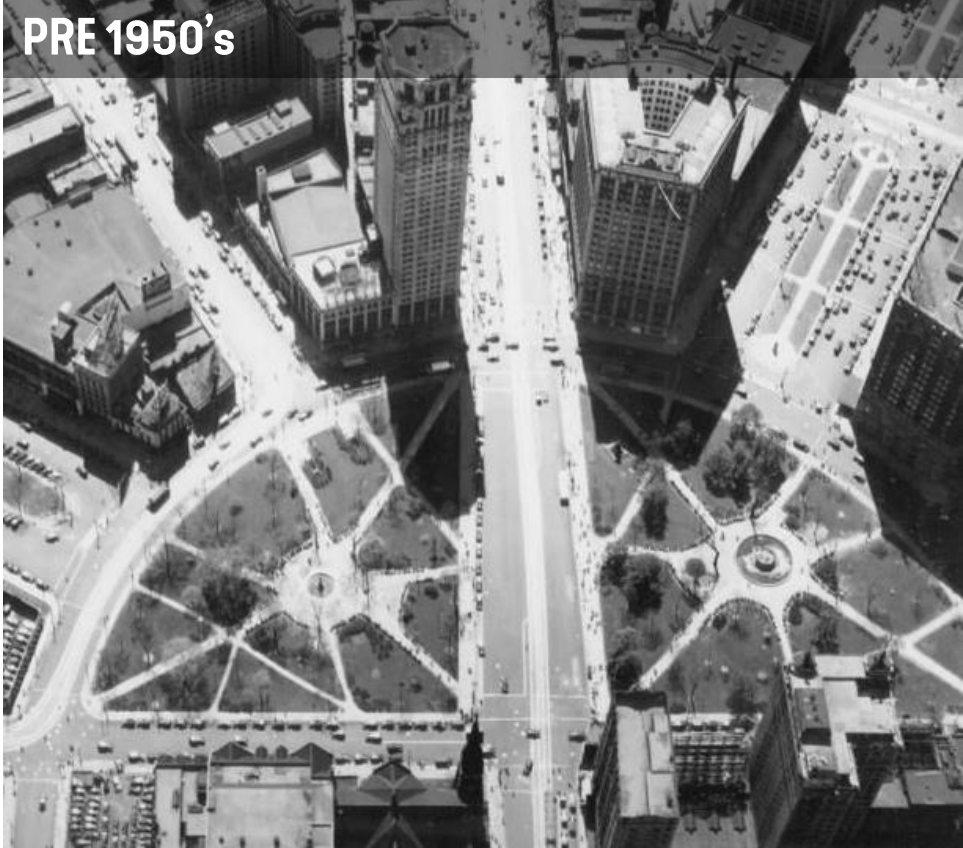
- Envisioned by Judge Augustus Woodward in 1805
- Established after 1850 as quiet, green respite
- Demolished for underground parking in 1957 and recreated
- Parking deck ramps and access points fragmented plan with fewer entrance points and pathways
- 1990's park improvements placed monuments at the Woodward Corners, further blocking clear access into the park
- The district around the park was added to the National Register of Historic Places 1983



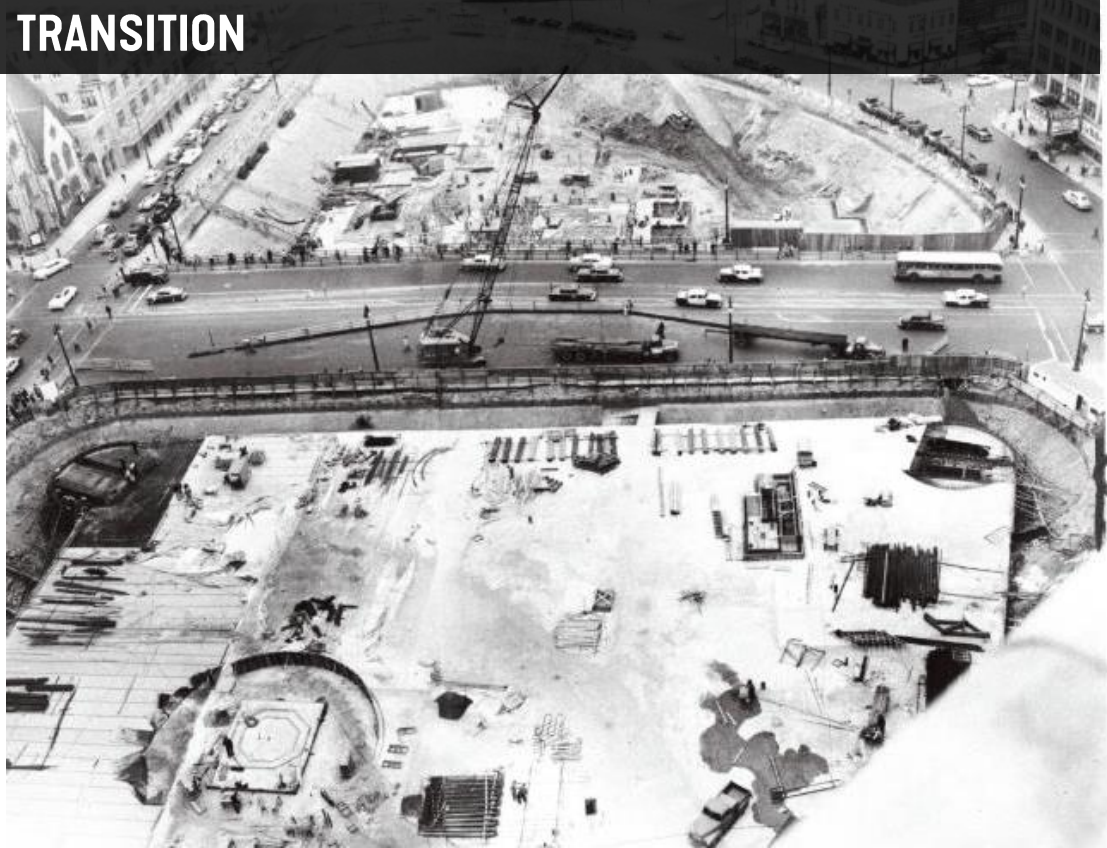
HISTORIC TRANSITION

OVER TIME, THE PARK HAS BECOME FRAGMENTED AND DISCONNECTED

PRE 1950's

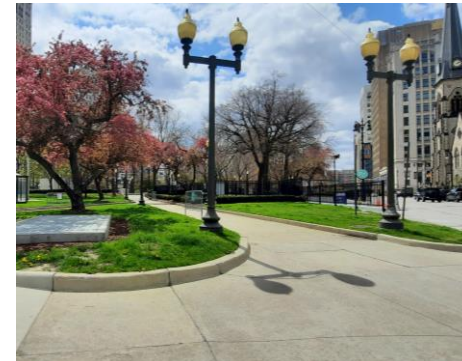
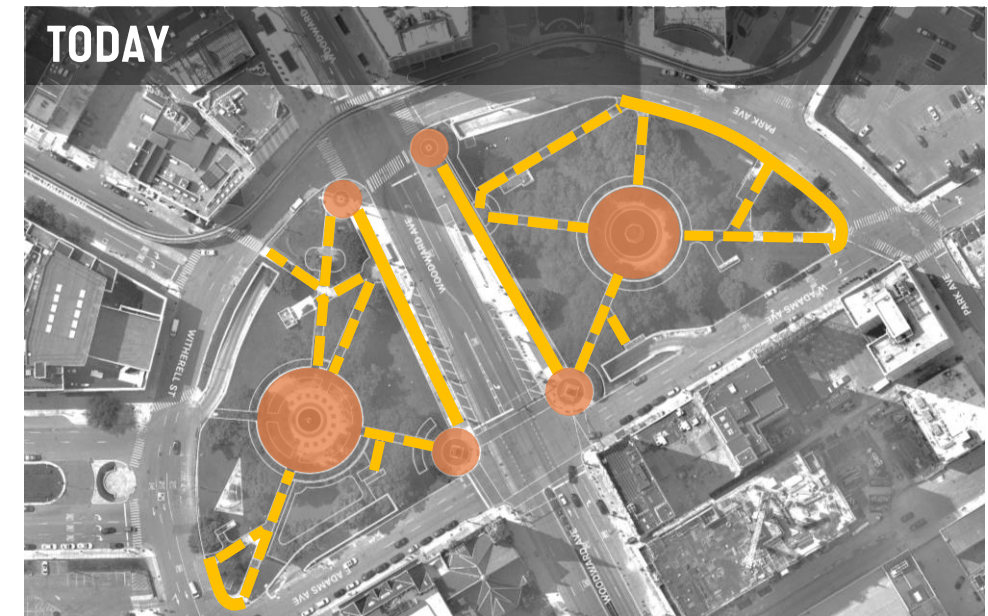
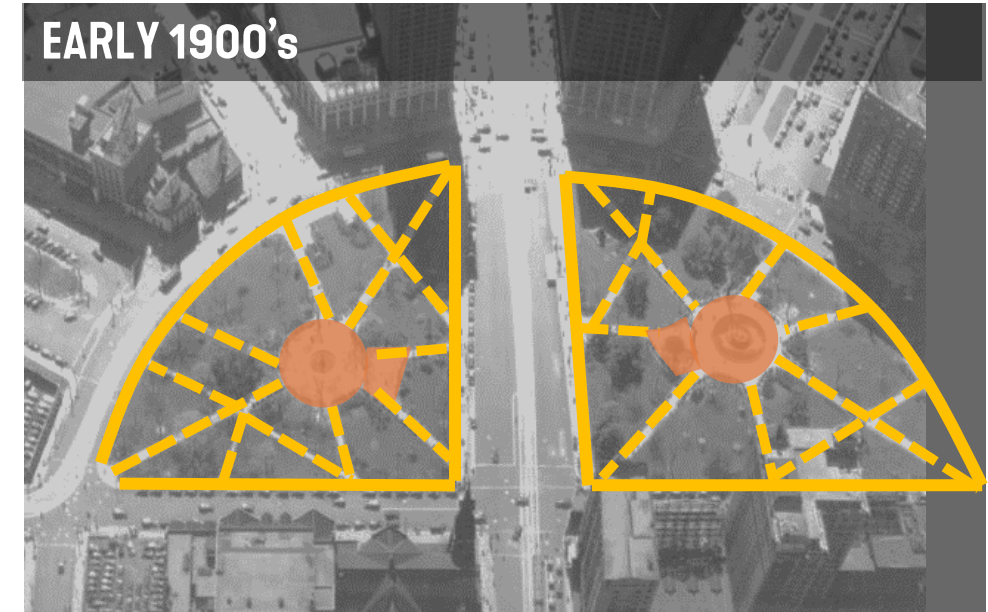


TRANSITION



HISTORIC TRANSITION

OVER TIME, THE PARK HAS BECOME FRAGMENTED AND DISCONNECTED



GUIDING PRINCIPLES



CIRCULATION + SAFETY

- Create a sense of arrival and entry at key crossing points
- Facilitate ease of movement to and through the park, supporting pedestrian desire lines for a better experience moving through and around the park
- Improve edges for pedestrians with perimeter walks
- Calm traffic on Woodward and reduce road width dedicated to vehicles

FUNCTION

- Support downtown's most significant and growing residential district creating a park environment that can support an ever-evolving set of everyday experiences
- Ensure flexibility of the spaces in the design
- Provide inclusive space for all users, engaging a full spectrum of users from young to old
- Support activity active year-round
- Design for programming and events that are smaller scale for residents and downtown visitors, but also support the special gatherings of Detroit's theatre and entertainment/sports district
- Create a network of intimate daily use spaces and larger event spaces to support small performances, informal socializing, and enjoying the outdoors

- Support the role of food and beverage cafes as a strong community desire, a way to activate the park year-round and a key park revenue source
- Ensure there is adequate, well-designed and maintainable infrastructure for including park and event power, lighting, audio, water, waste management, snow removal etc.

HISTORY + CHARACTER

- Reflect and celebrate the unique history of Grand Circus Park and the Grand Circus Park district in the park's design and incorporate the historic fountains and statues
- Continue to include a significant presence of green spaces and trees, with some hardscape/plaza areas for small gatherings, and spaces to sit in both sun and shade
- Enhance and support connections and key views of both the west side and east sides of the park, district storefronts, Grand Circus Park architecture and the Detroit skyline
- Respect the historic framework - multiple points of entry and clear paths through the park
- Make it a comfortable place where people want to visit often, including café areas, improved seating and landscape

RECAP - ENGAGEMENT MEETING 1

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What do you like most about the park?
What do you dislike?

Place dots or leave comments with sticky notes on below map.

I love it! It bothers me. I have a comment.

GRAND CIRCUS PARK

PARK OVER TIME

What should we keep, restore, or remove?

1920s

1950s (After Underground Parking Construction)

Current

WHAT MATTERS MOST TODAY?

Place dots on what you think matters most to the park. This matters to me!

History + Identity

- Respect historic character
- Restore as a neighborhood park
- Maintain existing sculptures
- Introduce new sculptures/art

Form + Function

- Install new sidewalks around the park perimeter
- Install additional sidewalks through the park
- Unify the park as one
- Create spaces for small events
- Provide additional recreational amenities
- Modify the dog park
- Provide additional seating options

Infrastructure

- Improve lighting and security
- Manage traffic between the two parks
- Manage traffic around the two parks

HOW SHOULD THE PARK LOOK?

Place dots on images of features you like. I love it!

WHAT NEEDS TO BE CONSIDERED?

Place sticky notes with your responses below. I think we should consider...

- Install new perimeter walks and multiple entries
- Unify the park as one / reduce Woodward impact
- Respect historic character
- Improve lighting and security
- Calm and manage traffic
- Create spaces for small events

PARK CONCEPTS

CONCEPT 1 - BUTTERFLY

Place dots or leave comments with sticky notes on below map.

😊 I love it! 😞 It bothers me. 📌 I have a comment



CONCEPT 2 - CENTRAL GREEN

Place dots or leave comments with sticky notes on below map.

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CONCEPT 3 - PATHWAYS

Place dots or leave comments with sticky notes on below map.

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RECAP – ENGAGEMENT MEETING 2

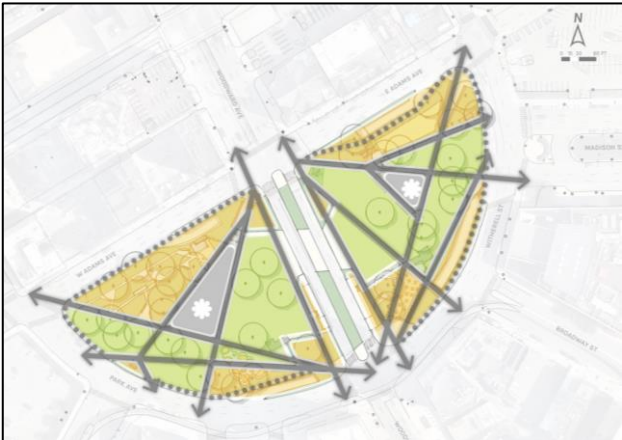
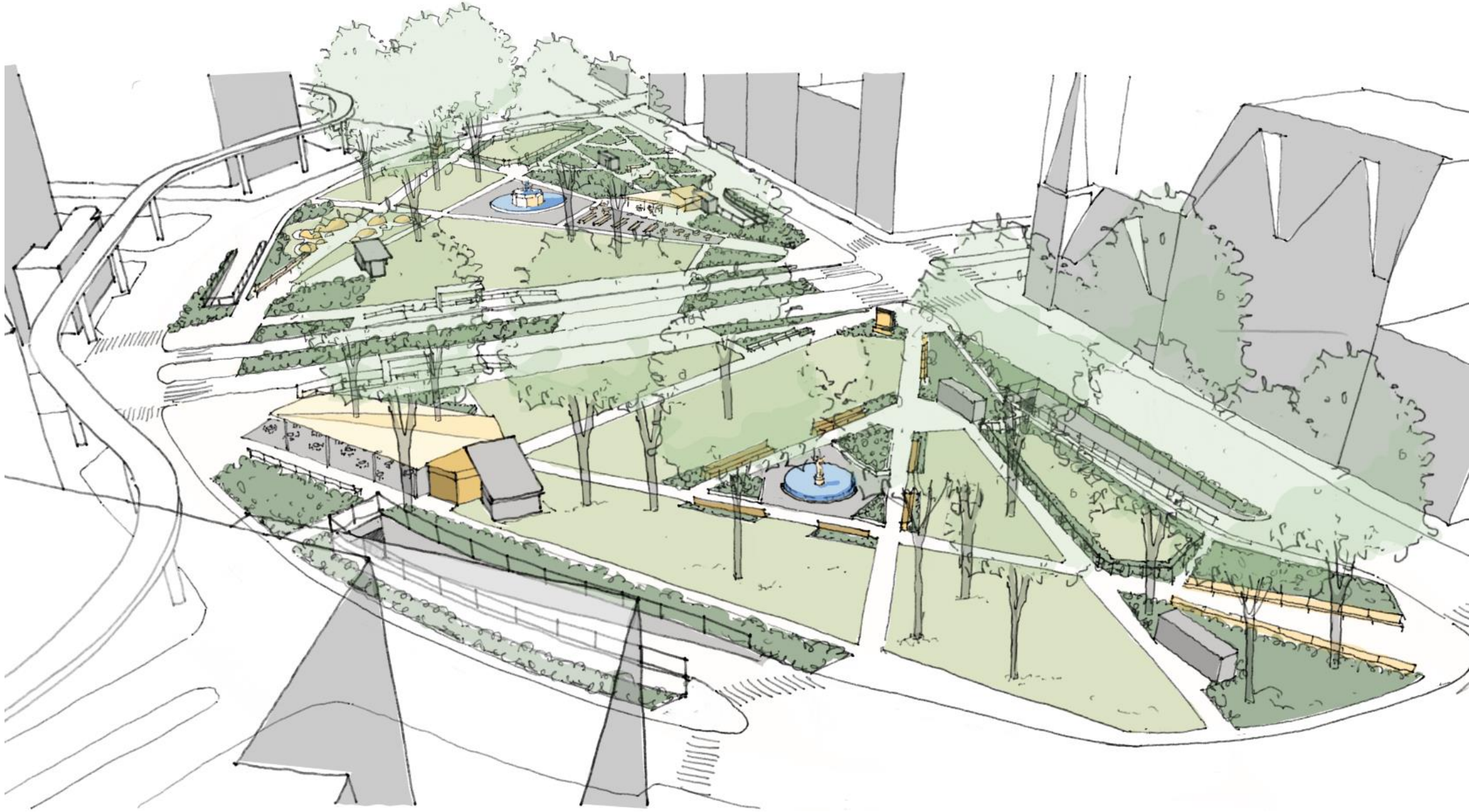
HANDOUT SURVEY SUMMARY

- Consider design with **multiple entries and path options** for everyday users passing through the park
- **Clean, simple, and practical design** to activate the park in the most immediate sense
- Provide **perimeter sidewalk** to improve access
- Park programming and informal daily uses attract frequent use
- Night lighting enhances safety and security

Grand Circus Park Guiding Design Principles	Butterfly	Central Green	Pathways
Circulation + Safety	3.3	3.5	4.7
• Create a sense of arrival and entry at key crossing points	3.2	3.3	4.7
• Enhance key connections and views within and surrounding the park	2.8	3.5	4.8
• Facilitate ease of movement with multiple entries and clear paths through and around the park	3.3	3.4	4.9
• Calm traffic on Woodward and reduce road width dedicated to vehicles	3.8	3.8	4.4
Function	3.8	3.9	4.0
• Prioritize park function for surrounding residents by supporting daily needs	3.7	3.8	3.8
• Provide inclusive opportunities for all ages and abilities	3.9	3.8	3.8
• Ensure flexibility for smaller daily events and special district gatherings, year-round	3.9	4.1	3.7
• Accommodate cafés for year-round activity and a key source of revenue	4.1	3.9	4.4
• Accommodate the needs of dogs and their owners by maintaining or improving infrastructure.	3.9	4.0	4.3
• Incorporate event infrastructure to facilitate maintenance and event operations	3.6	4.0	4.0
• Improve lighting and security	3.5	4.0	4.5
History + Character	3.7	4.0	4.2
• Reflect and celebrate the history of the park and surrounding district	3.2	3.4	4.4
• Incorporate historic fountains and statues	4.0	4.0	4.5
• Maintain significant green space and trees as well as plazas for small gatherings	4.0	4.3	3.9
• Visually unify the park across Woodward and improve connections between each side	3.2	4.5	3.7
• Provide seating in sun, shade, and a variety of environments	4.1	4.0	4.3
• Create an environment that supports an ever-evolving set of everyday experiences	3.8	3.8	4.2
Total Scoring	3.6	3.9	4.3

PRELIMINARY PARK CONCEPT

- Direct paths of travel from crossings and entry points
- Draws users into and through the park from all directions.
- Paths skirt past fountains, creating plazas and outdoor rooms
- Street corners open for clear sight lines to destinations within and across the park
- Daily park programming activates more areas of the park
- Design clarity creates a sense of unity
- Path views to surrounding buildings anchor them to the park experience



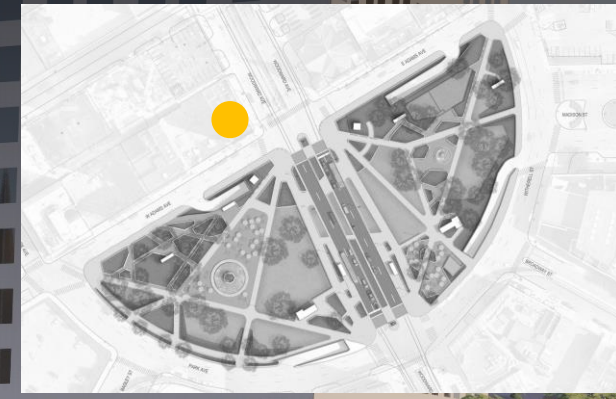
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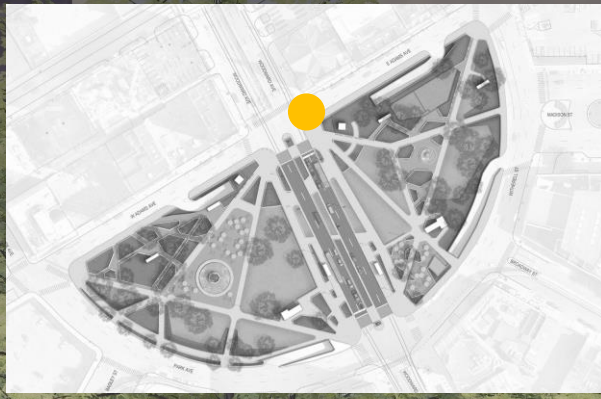
VIEW SOUTH EAST

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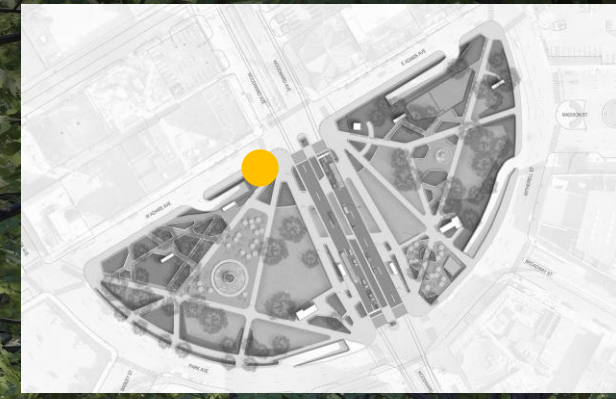
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CORNERS ARE WELCOMING, WITH WOODWARD MEDIAN AND WIDE CROSSINGS

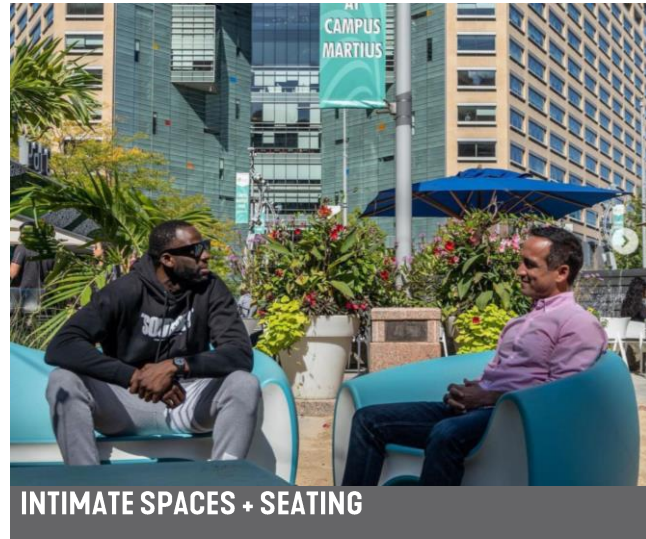
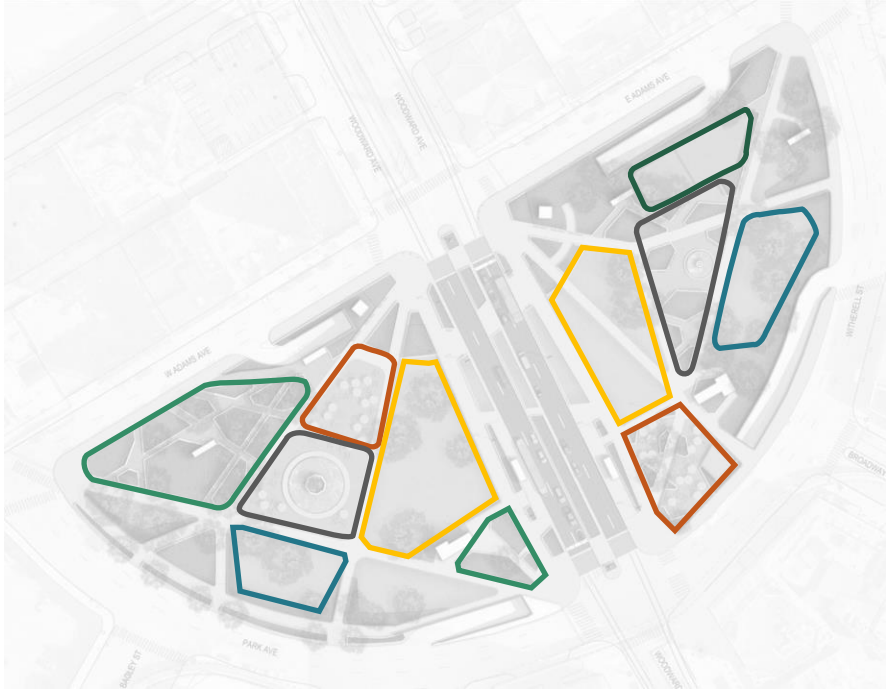


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DAILY EXPERIENCES



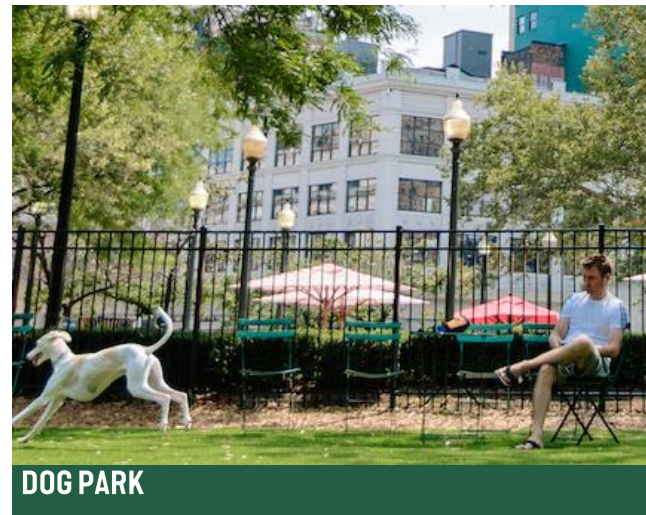
INTIMATE SPACES + SEATING



NATURE + GARDENS



ORGANIZED ACTIVITIES



DOG PARK



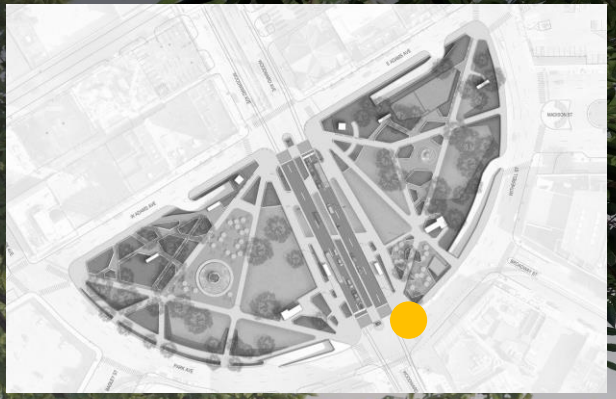
FAMILY-FRIENDLY SPACES



OUTDOOR CAFE

VIEW NORTHEAST

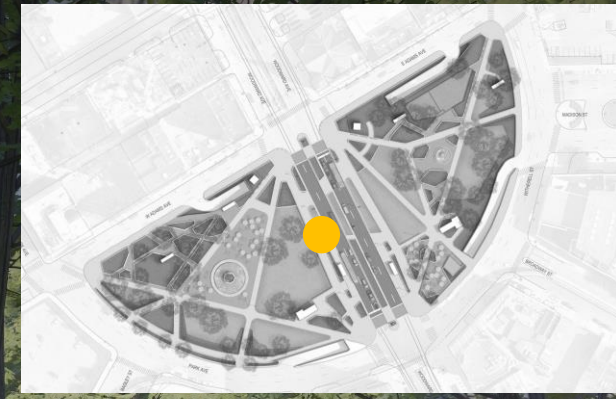
A CAFÉ SERVES AS THE FRONT PORCH, EXTENDING VIBRANCY TO THE PARK'S EDGES



GRAND CIRCUS PARK BUILT 1867

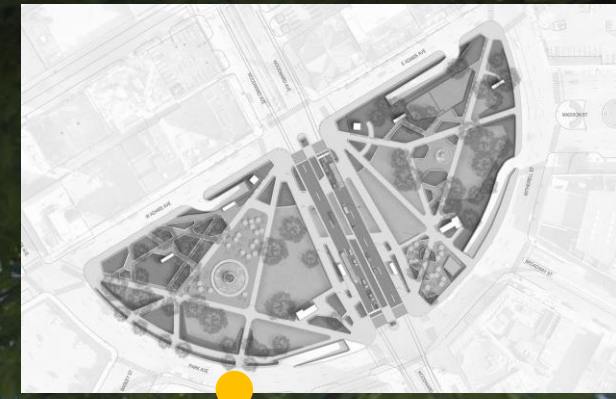
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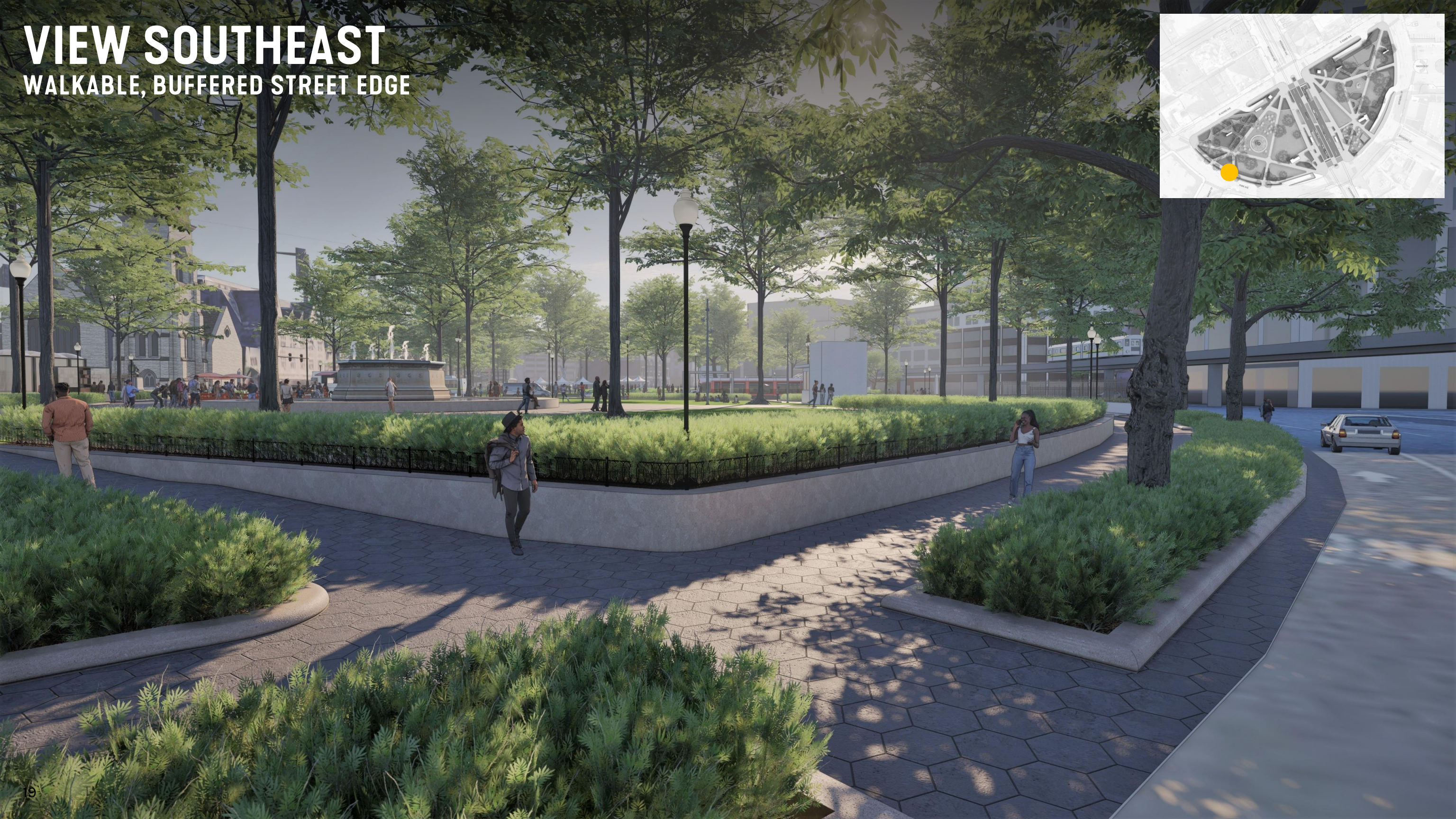
VIEW NORTHEAST

PEDESTRIAN GATEWAYS ALONG PERIMETER PATH



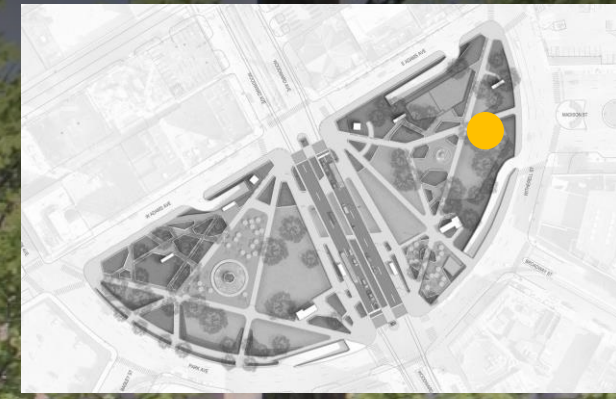
VIEW SOUTHEAST

WALKABLE, BUFFERED STREET EDGE



VIEW SOUTH

FLEXIBLE LAWNS AND OPEN SPACES FOSTER COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING



GRAND CIRCUS PARK

PHASE 1 PLAN

PARK MASTER PLAN

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Comerica
PARK

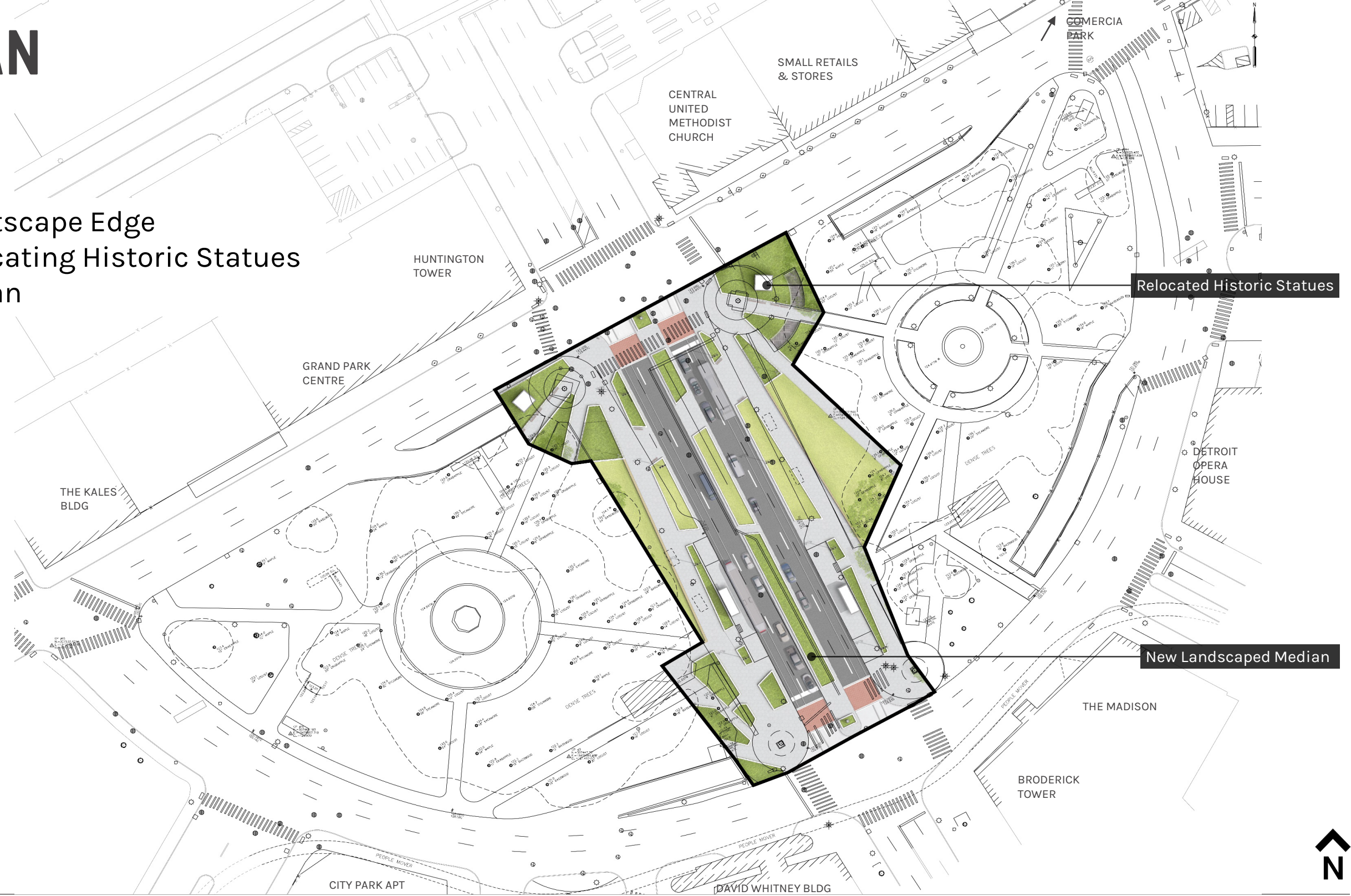
GRAND CIRCUS CAFE

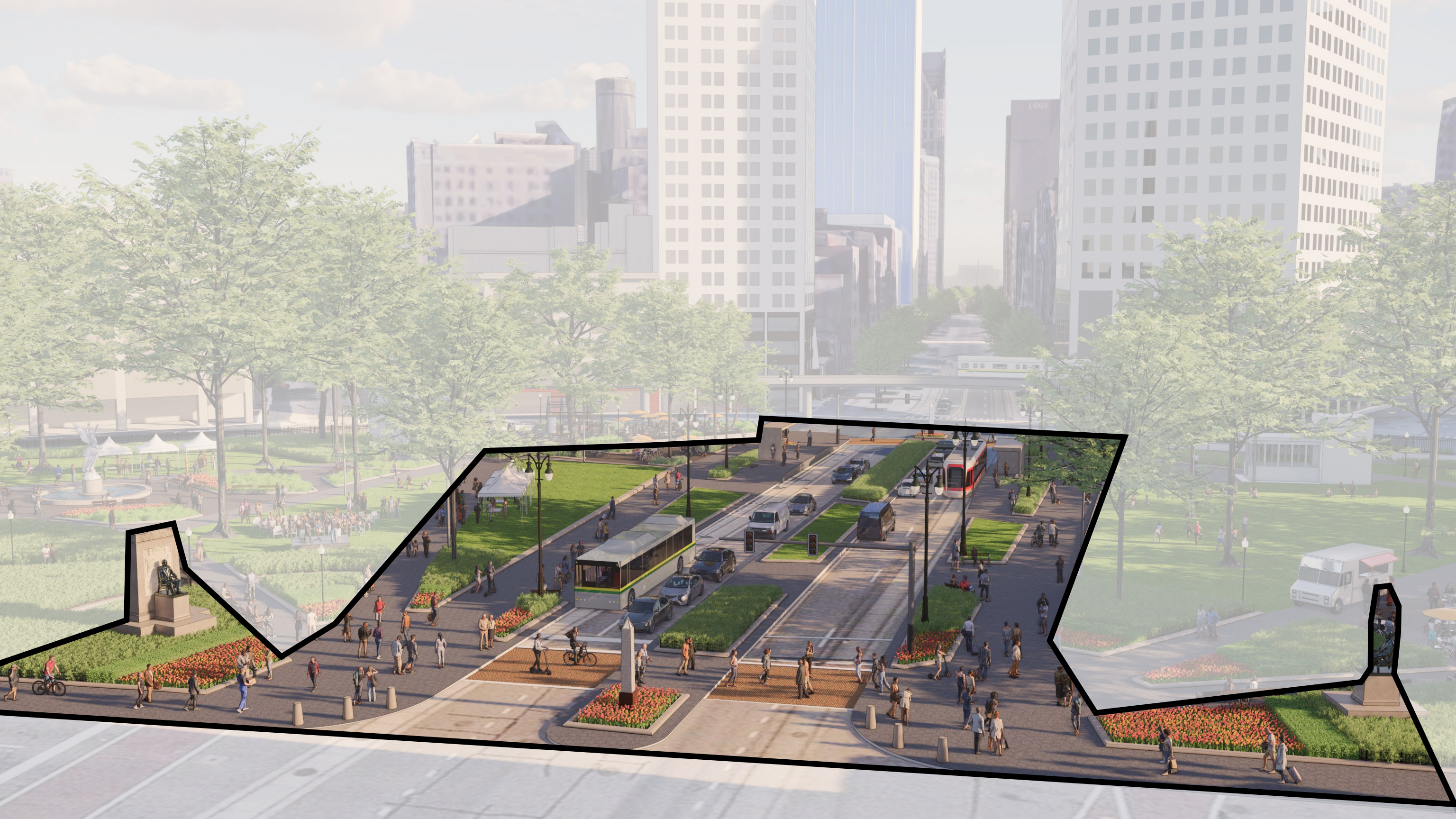
GRAND CIRCUS PARK BUILT 1867



PHASE 1 PLAN

- A. Woodward Streetscape Edge
 - Include Relocating Historic Statues
- B. Woodward Median





CONSTRUCTION PACKAGES

PRELIMINARY

