

Improvements to
COPLEY SQUARE PARK

DESIGN UPDATE
APRIL, 2022

BOSTON PARKS AND RECREATION

SASAKI



OUTLINE

Project Context + Overview

Principles and Details

- **An Iconic Landmark** Fountain + Park Materials
- **An Inclusive Gathering Place** Seating, Circulation + Spaces
- **A Vibrant Destination** Events Large + Small
- **A Durable + Sustainable Landscape** Tree Stewardship + Plantings

Project Schedule

We are here

Fall 2020

Winter 2020

Spring 2021

Summer 2021

Fall + Winter 2021

Spring 2022

Summer 2022

Groundbreaking
Spring 2023

Opening
2024

SITE ANALYSIS

PROGRAM + SCHEMATIC DESIGN

DEFINITIVE DESIGN

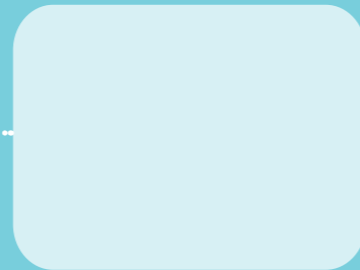
CONSTRUCTION

- Understand the Square's past and present
- Understand community perspective and vision for the future

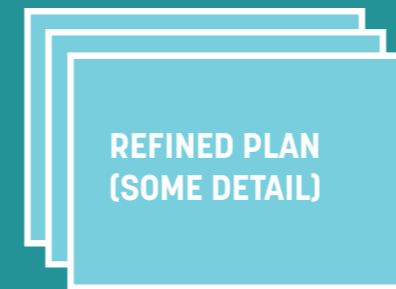
Concept Options



Refined Conceptual Plan



Design Development



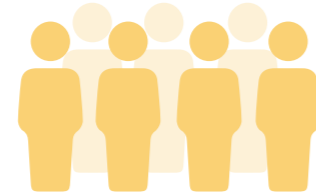
REFINED PLAN
(SOME DETAIL)

Construction Documentation



ENOUGH DETAIL
TO BUILD THE
PROJECT

Public +
Stakeholder
Meetings



GOAL:

LISTEN

**TEST CONCEPTUAL
IDEAS**

**CONFIRM REFINED
CONCEPT**

REFINE DESIGN



ONGOING COORDINATION WITH BPL, BPDA

2,500+

touchpoints with the community, and counting



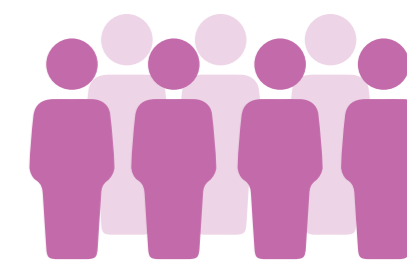
1,890

Online Survey Responses
over Phases 1, 2 & 3



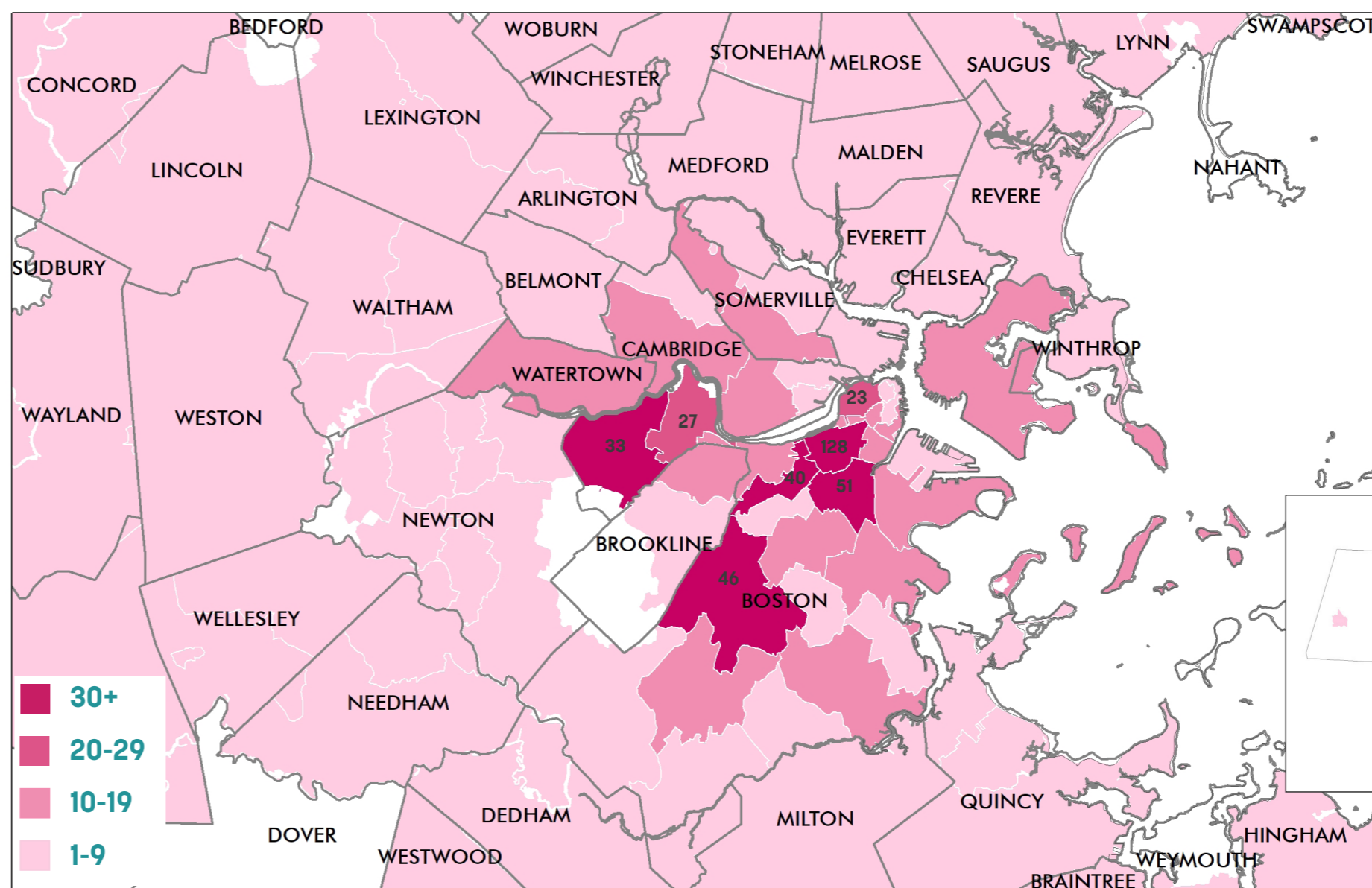
40+

Meetings with Parks,
Stakeholders and
Steering Committee



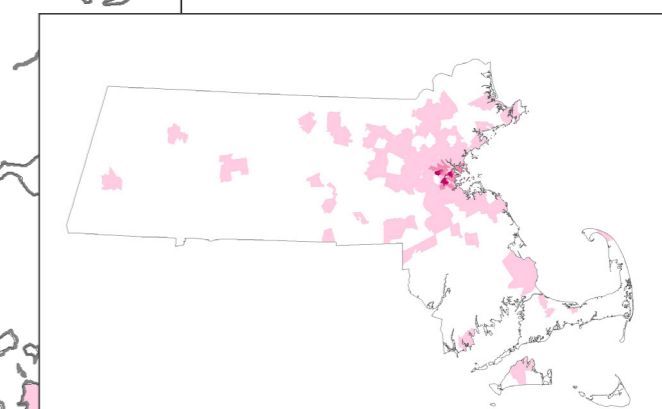
268

Attendees at
Community Meetings
1, 2 & 3



Voices from all over the city and region**

** Data from zipcodes
gathered in Phase 1 survey,
over 1,300 responses



Building on the Best of Copley

Update a much-loved urban square to 21st Century standards

TREES

Expand soil, plant new trees, protect roots

CONTEXT

Align physical and visual connections to architecture

FOUNTAIN

Carry forward experience, bring up to code

PLAZA & SIDEWALK

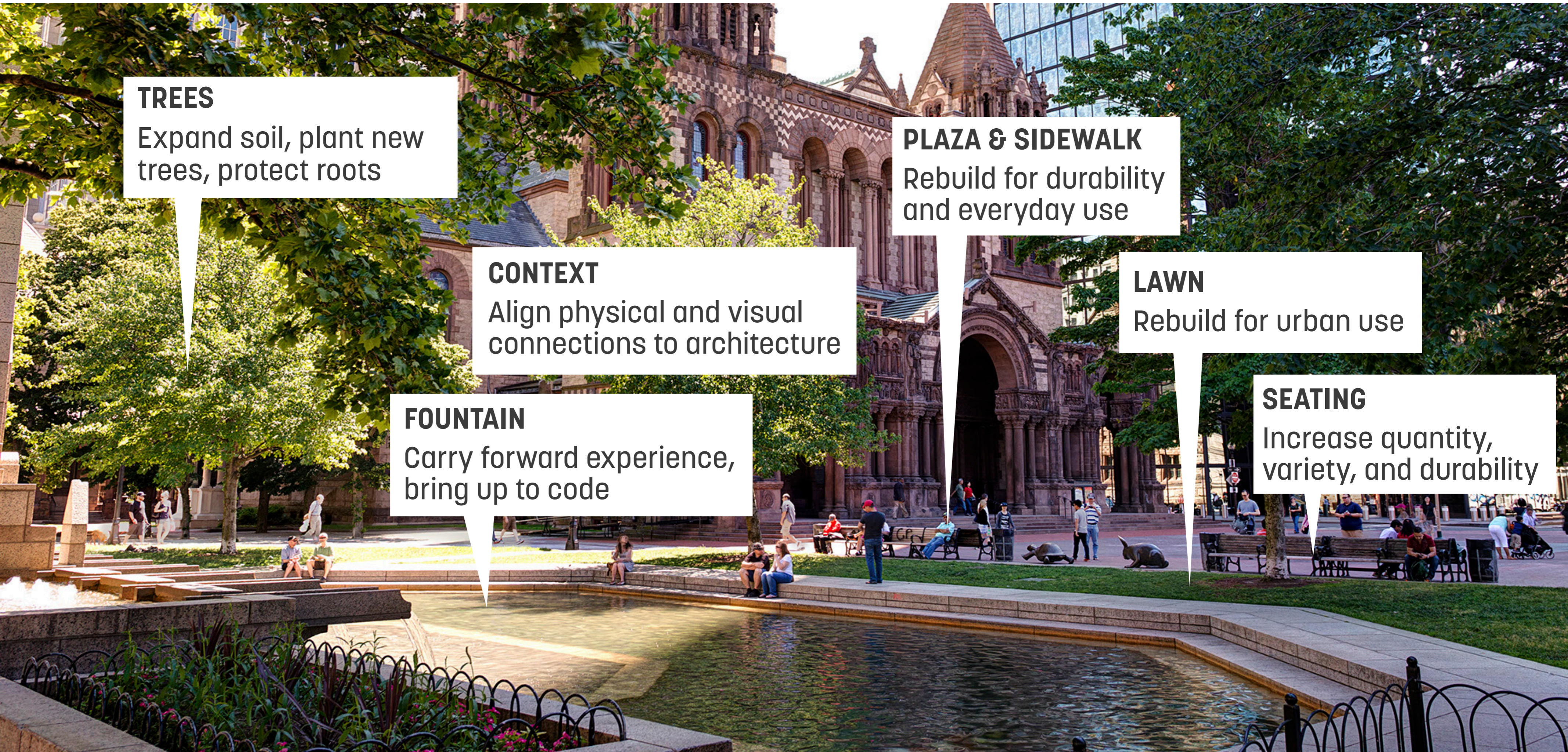
Rebuild for durability and everyday use

LAWN

Rebuild for urban use

SEATING

Increase quantity, variety, and durability



Why renovate today?

Challenges for park users and maintenance...

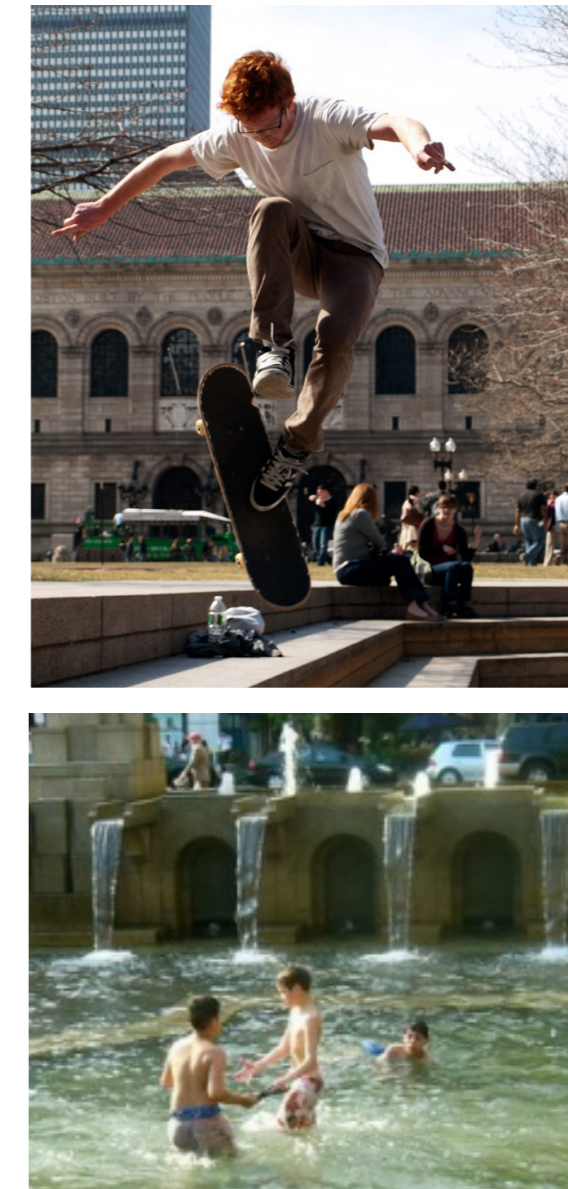
Lawn requires a high level of care



Pavements are uneven



Fountain needs repair/ unintended uses



Trees are stressed



The challenges run deeper than Copley's surface...

WHAT WE SEE

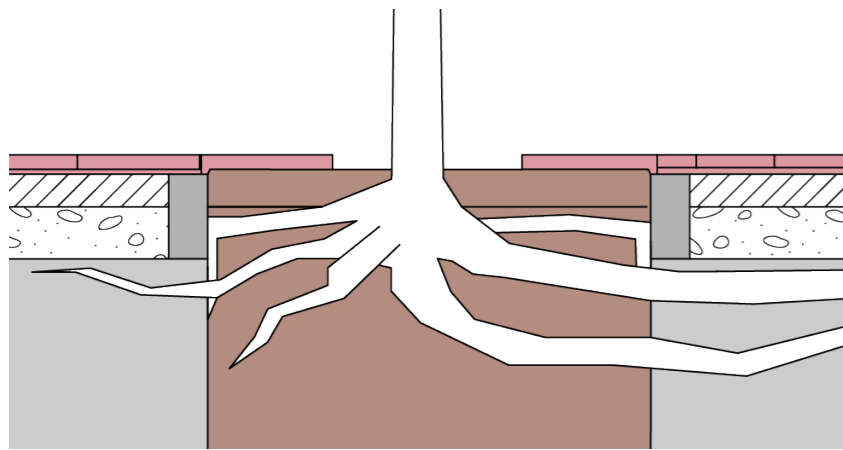
Trees are stressed

Pavement uneven and lawn in disrepair

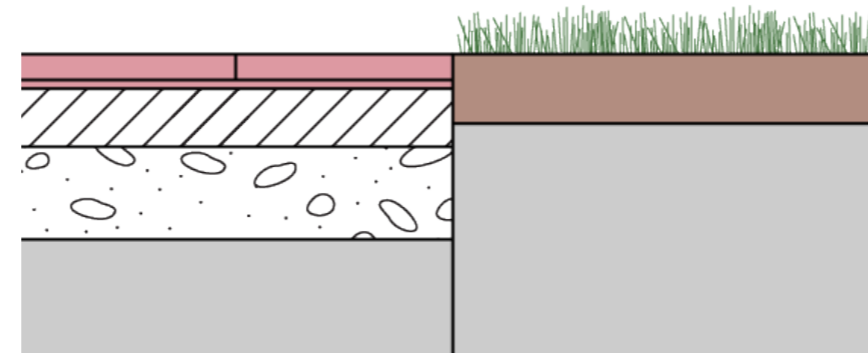
Fountain needs repairs / updates

Daily/Weekly Programming

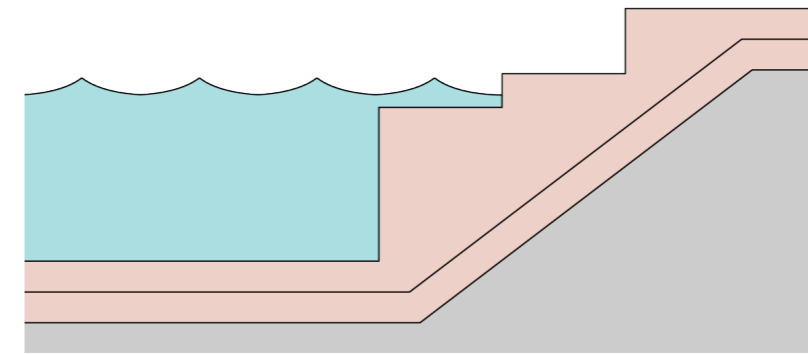
UNDERLYING CHALLENGE



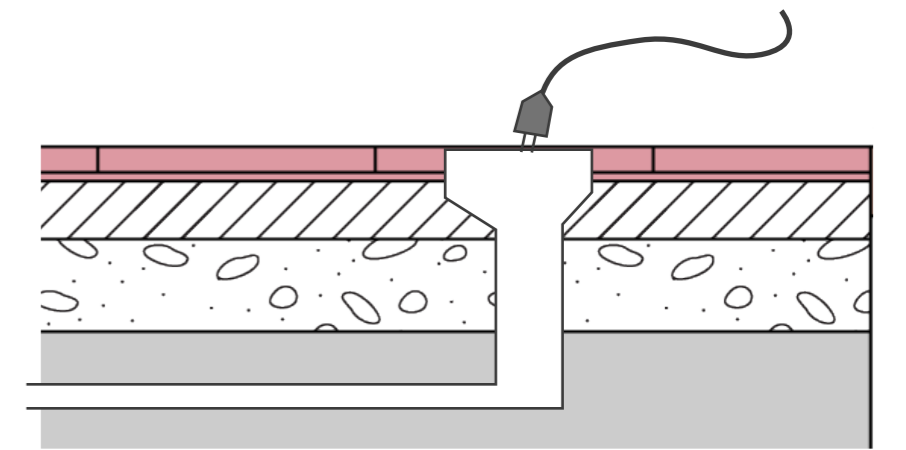
Compacted soils and limited soil volume prevent trees from thriving



Not designed for heavy vehicular use or modern ADA standards and needs additional structural support



Mechanical equipment needs to be replaced and brought to modern standards

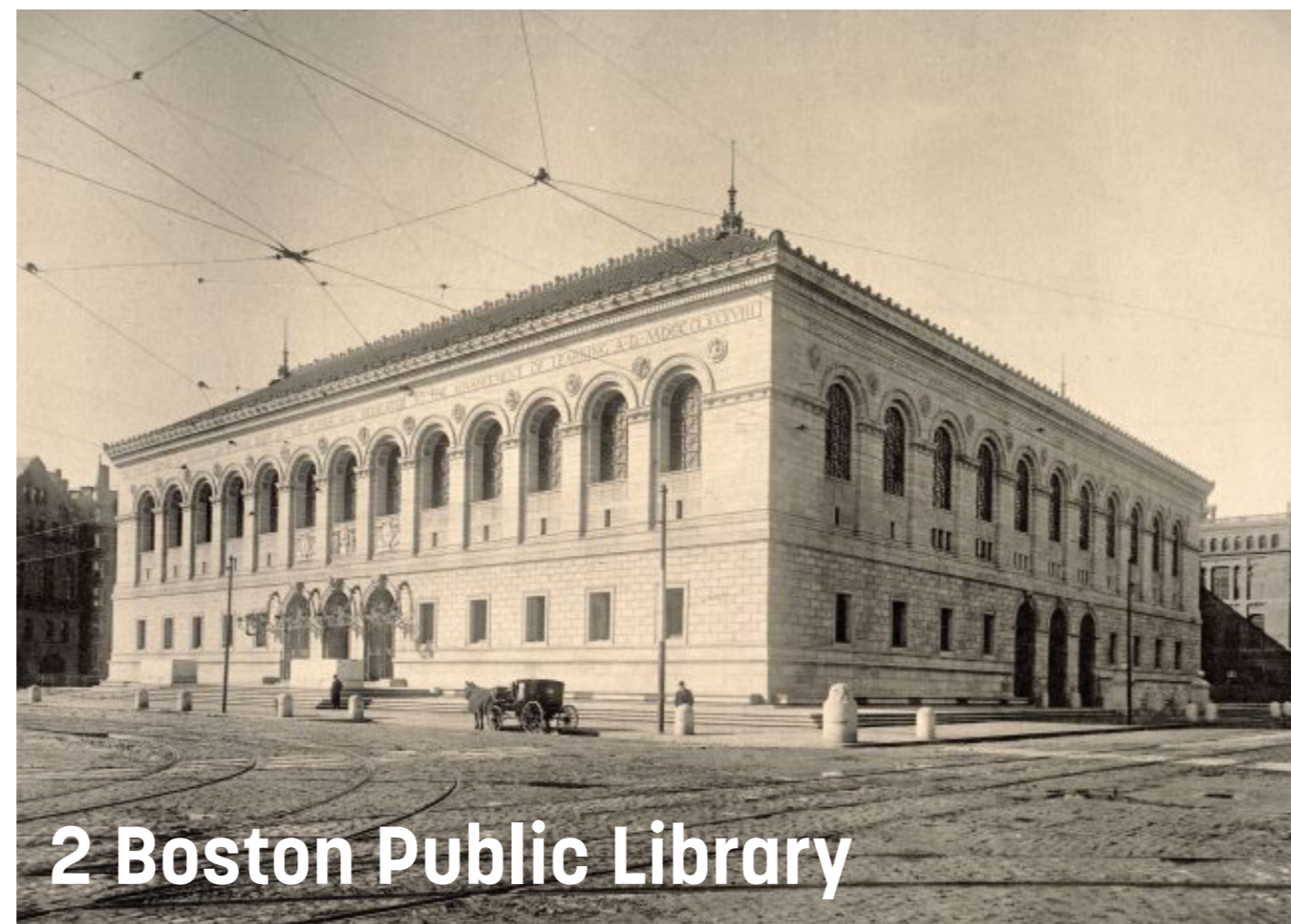
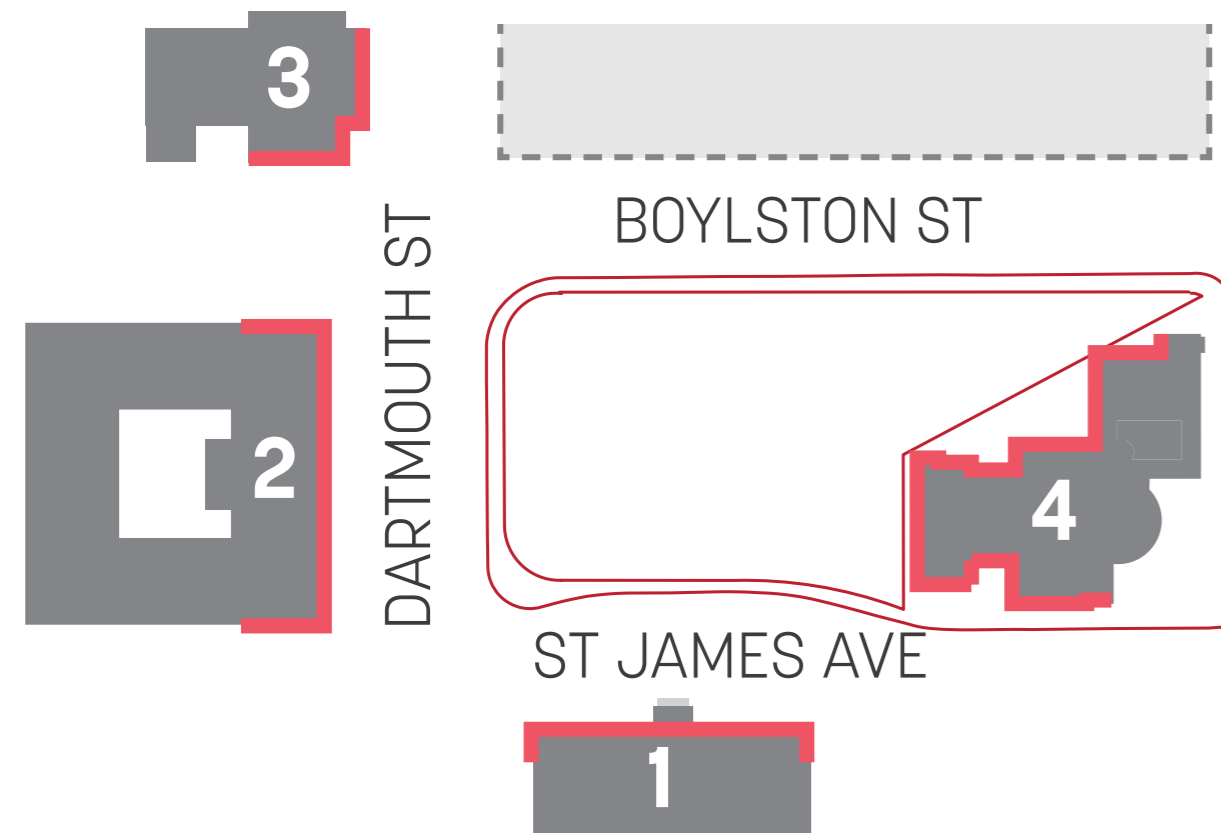


Need to update utilities, infrastructure and vehicular service for farmer's market, maintenance and events

An Original Vision for an "Art Square" at the Nexus of Cultural Institutions

An expanding Victorian Boston imagined a cultural hub to anchor Back Bay.

Four institutions framed and defined the Square.



Copley Square has evolved over time

1860 -1960s

Roadway and Lawn with Street Cars and Parking



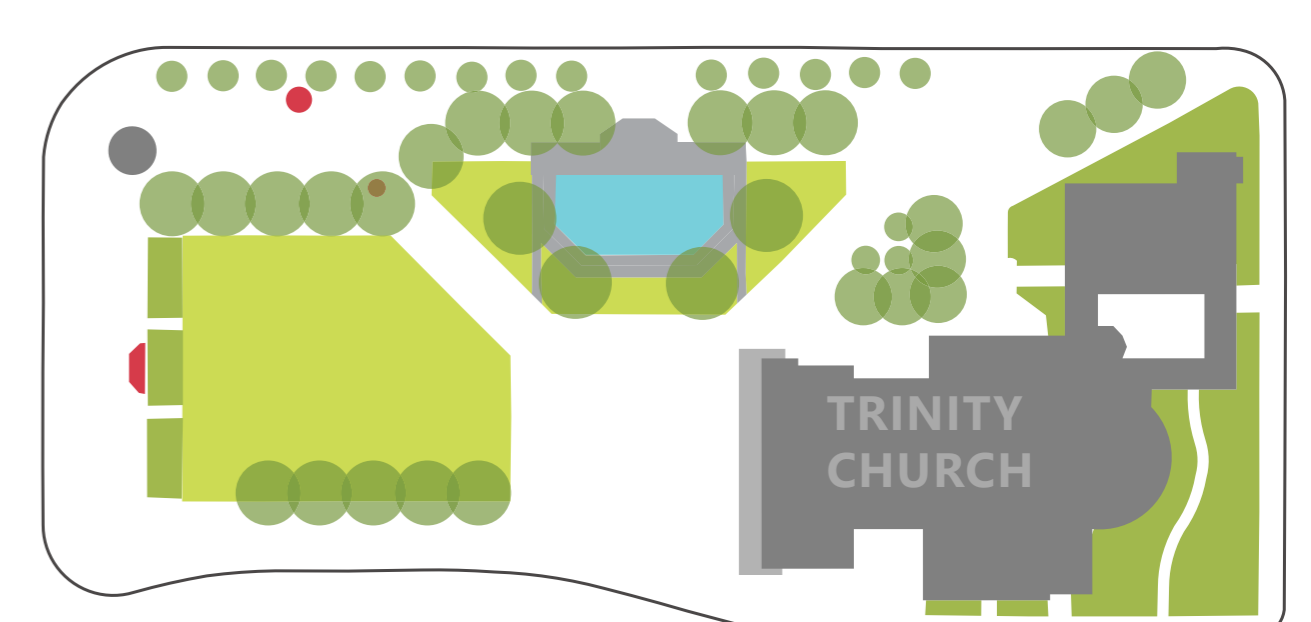
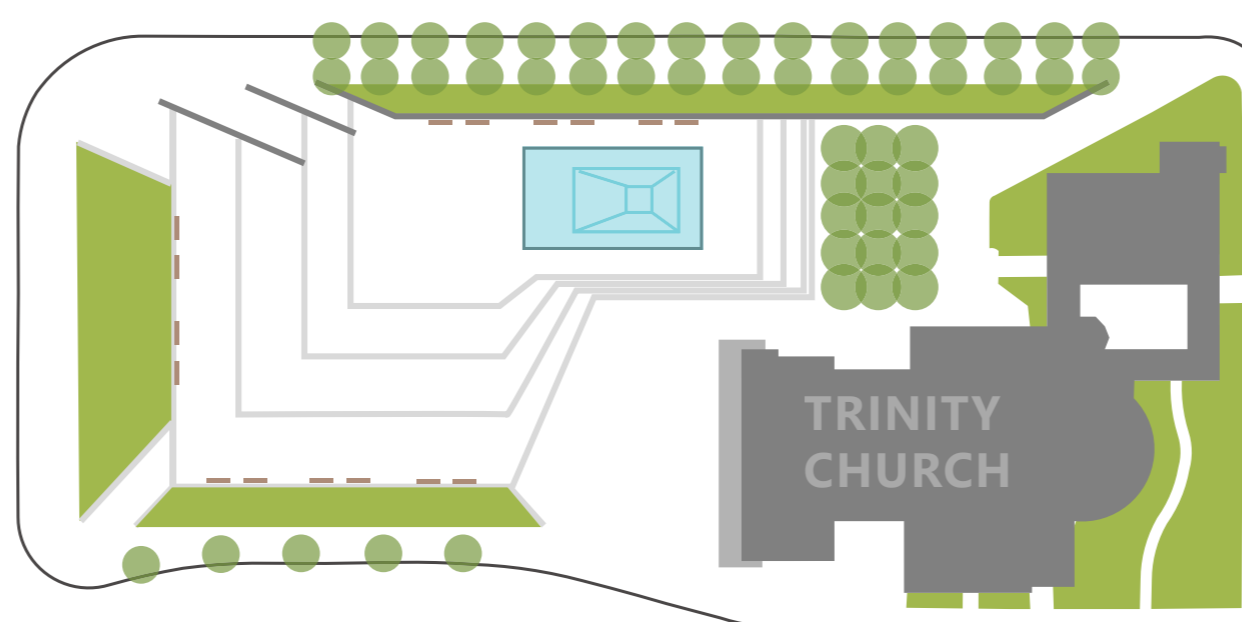
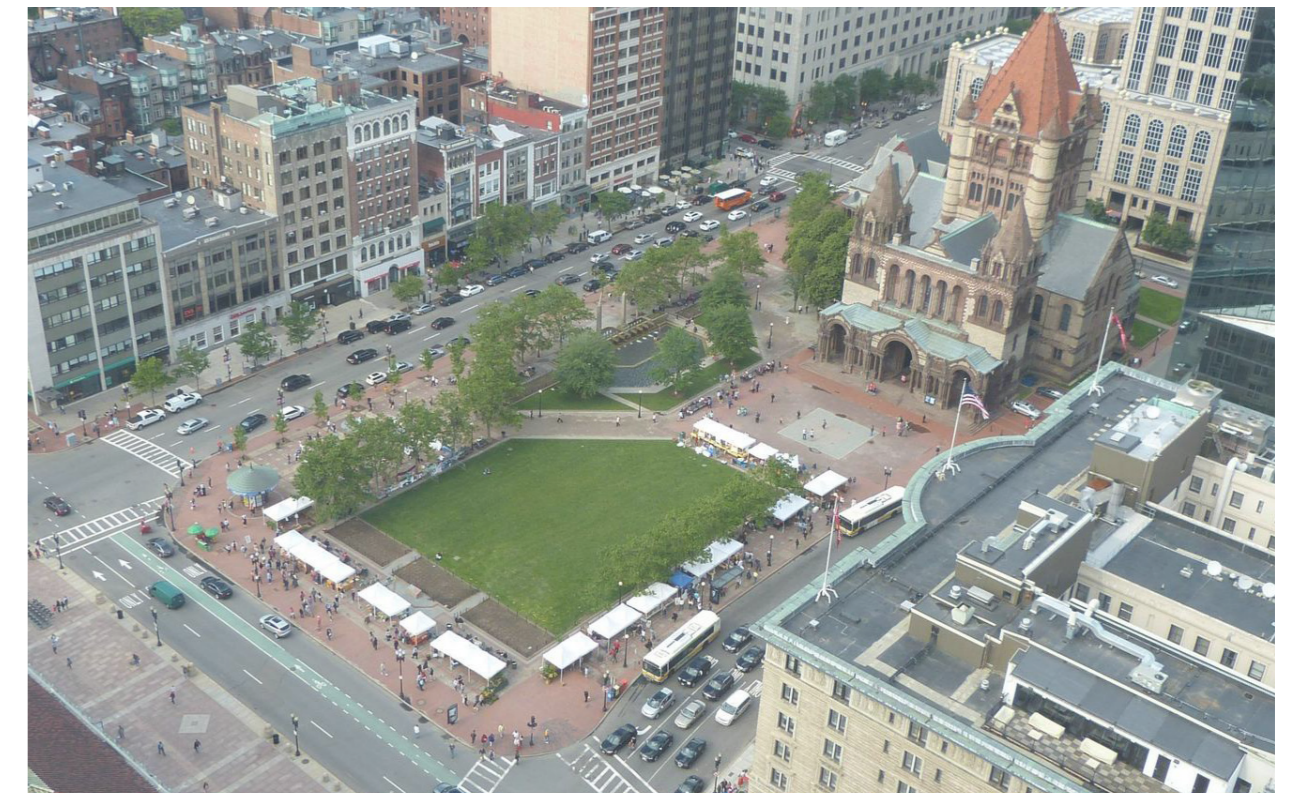
1960s - 1980s

Mid-Century Style Sunken Piazza with Fountain



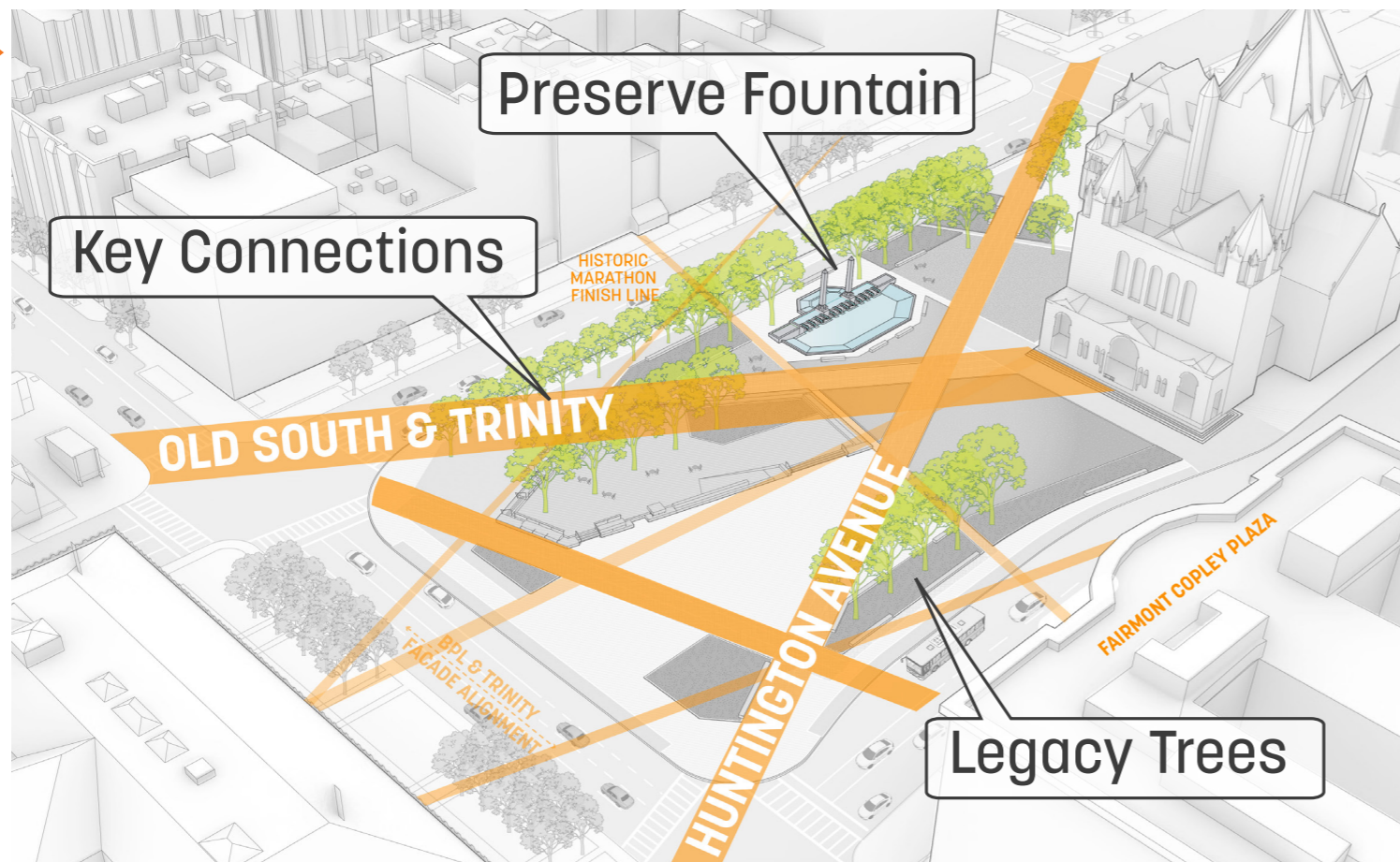
1980s - PRESENT

Level Plaza with Lawn and Fountain with a Classic Feel

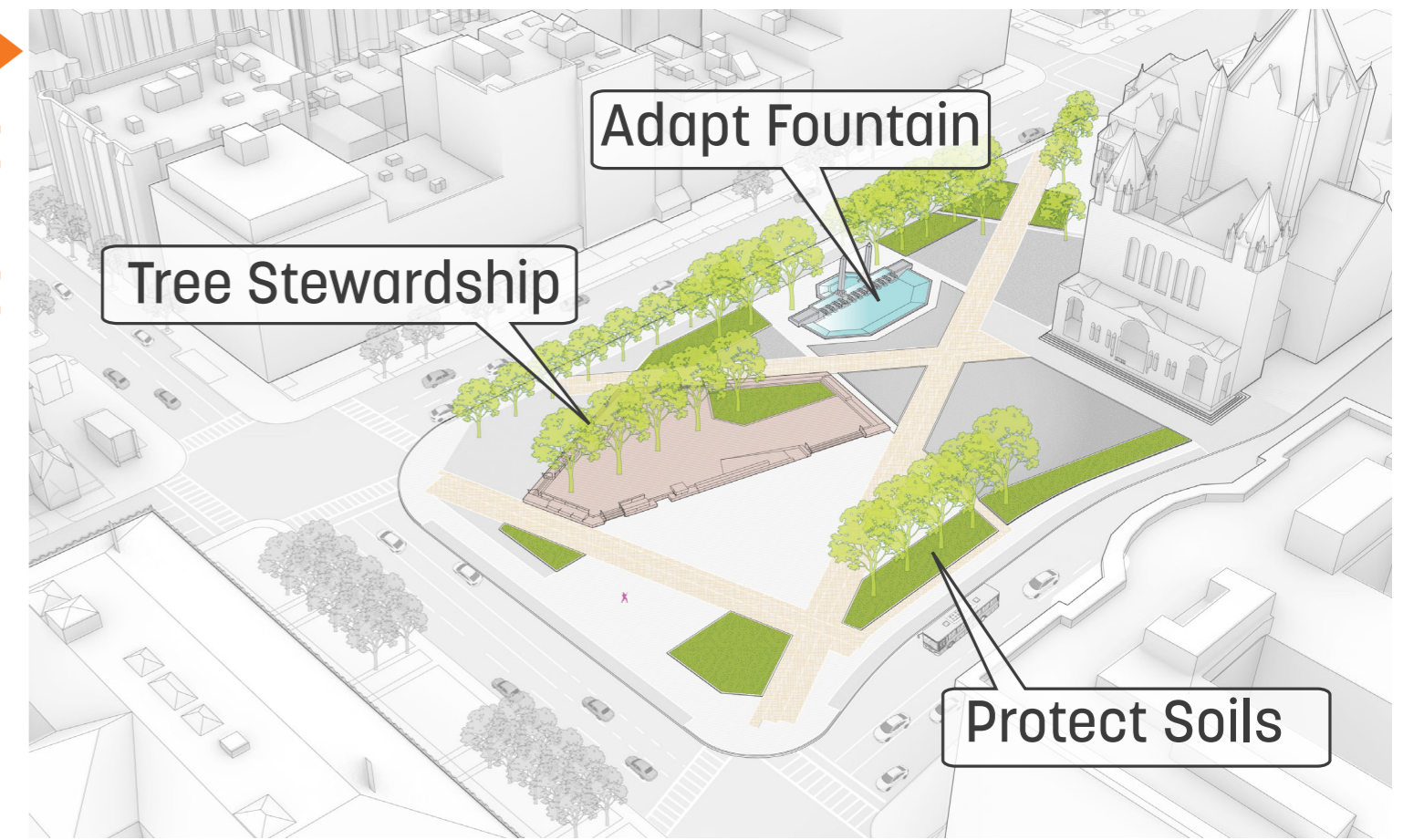


Historic structures and principles as the foundation for a renewed vision

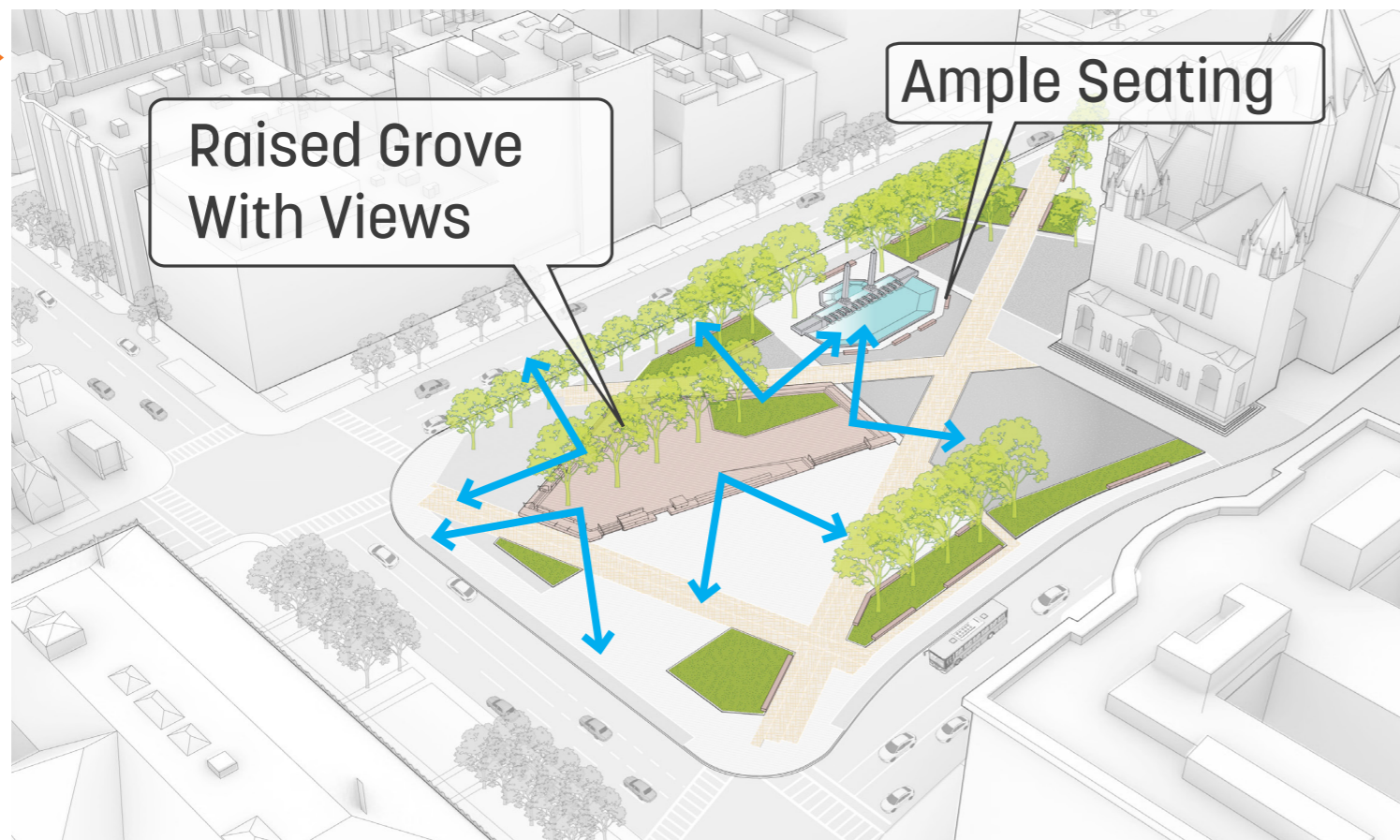
1 ▶
**PRESERVE &
CELEBRATE**



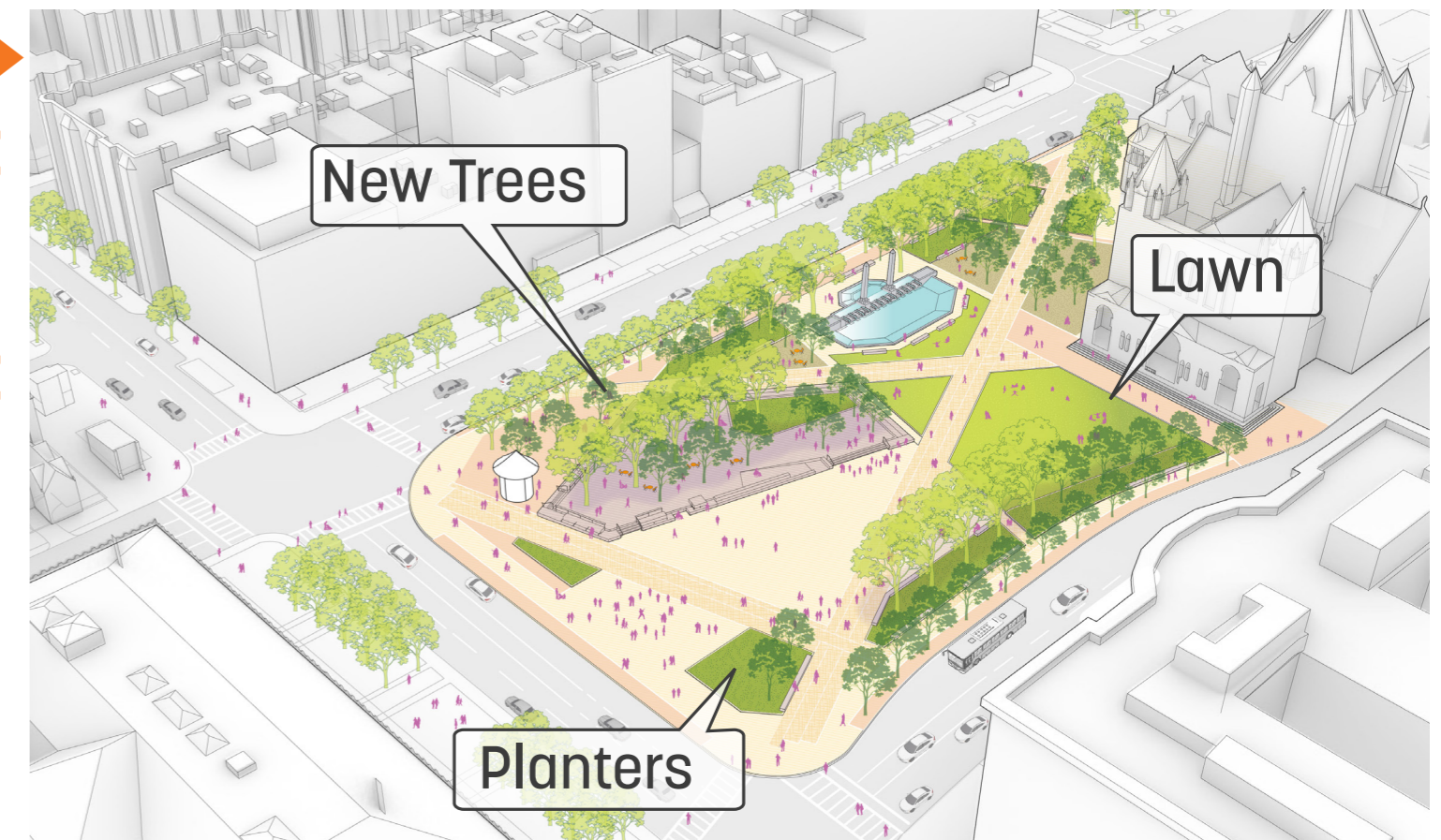
2 ▶
**RESTORE
AND
IMPROVE**



3 ▶
**CREATE
GREAT
SPACES &
VIEWS**



4 ▶
**ADD AMPLE
GREEN
SPACE AND
SHADE**



A Renewed Copley Square Park

Celebrating, Stewarding and Reinvigorating a Beloved Community Gathering Space



Boylston St

GROVE

FOUNTAIN

GROVE

RAISED GROVE

PLAZA

LAWN

Trinity Church

Dartmouth st

Clarendon St

St James Ave

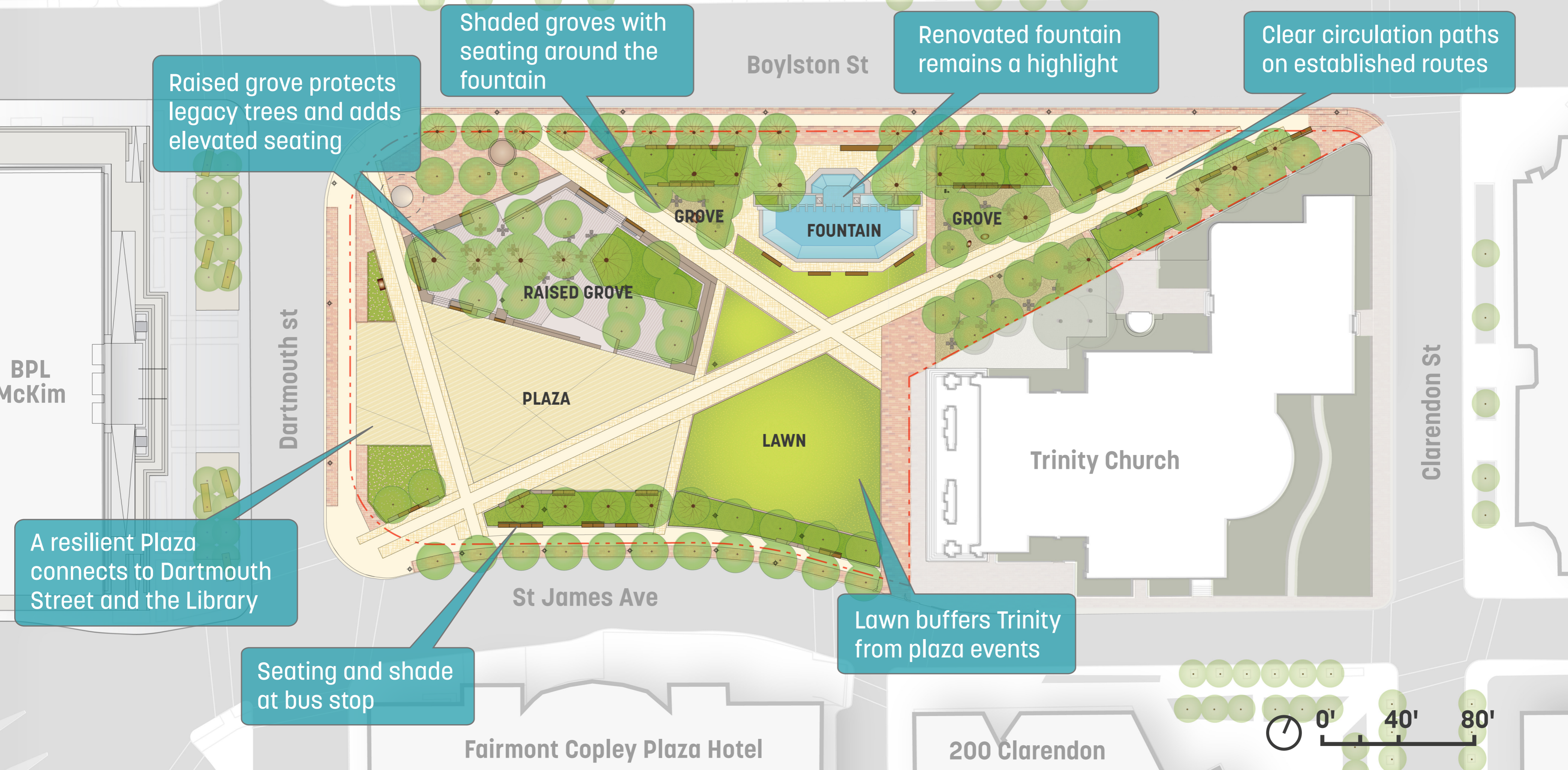
BPL
McKim

Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel

200 Clarendon

0' 40' 80'

A Plan that Grounds the Community's Goals



Raised grove protects legacy trees and adds elevated seating

Shaded groves with seating around the fountain

Renovated fountain remains a highlight

Clear circulation paths on established routes

A resilient Plaza connects to Dartmouth Street and the Library

Seating and shade at bus stop

Lawn buffers Trinity from plaza events



**An Iconic Landmark at
the Heart of Back Bay**

**An Inclusive Bostonian
Gathering Place**

CHARACTER

PEOPLE

**CORNERSTONES
OF A SUCCESSFUL
COPLEY SQUARE**

Project Guiding Principles

PROGRAM

ENVIRONMENT

**A Vibrant Destination
within the Hub**

**A Durable and
Sustainable New
England Landscape**

NOTE: More detail on the project guiding principles, including detailed goals, can be found on the project website.

Project Guiding Principles

Developed through community process

CHARACTER

An Iconic Landmark at the Heart of Back Bay

- Celebrate the surrounding historic architecture
- Balance modern amenities and styles with the historic charm of Back Bay
- Maintain the existing balance of paved to green space

PROGRAM

A Vibrant Destination within the Hub

- Improve accommodations for regular events like the First Night, the Marathon and the Farmers Market
- Provide engaging spaces for daily activation
- Be flexible for future event and activation types

PEOPLE


An Inclusive Bostonian Gathering Place

- Balance the needs of diverse constituent groups
- Provide universal access to all spaces
- Employ landscape details, signage and other amenities to ensure that all cultures feel welcome

ENVIRONMENT

A Durable and Sustainable New England Landscape

- Sustain and enhance the existing tree canopy
- Showcase sustainability through materials and strategies
- Prioritize ease of maintenance, inspiring stewardship

The background features a light blue monochromatic illustration. On the left, there are several trees of varying sizes. In the center and right, a large, detailed building with Gothic-style architecture is shown, including a prominent spire with a cross. The overall scene is a park-like setting with a significant landmark building.

An Iconic Landmark at The Heart of Back Bay

The Fountain & Park Materials

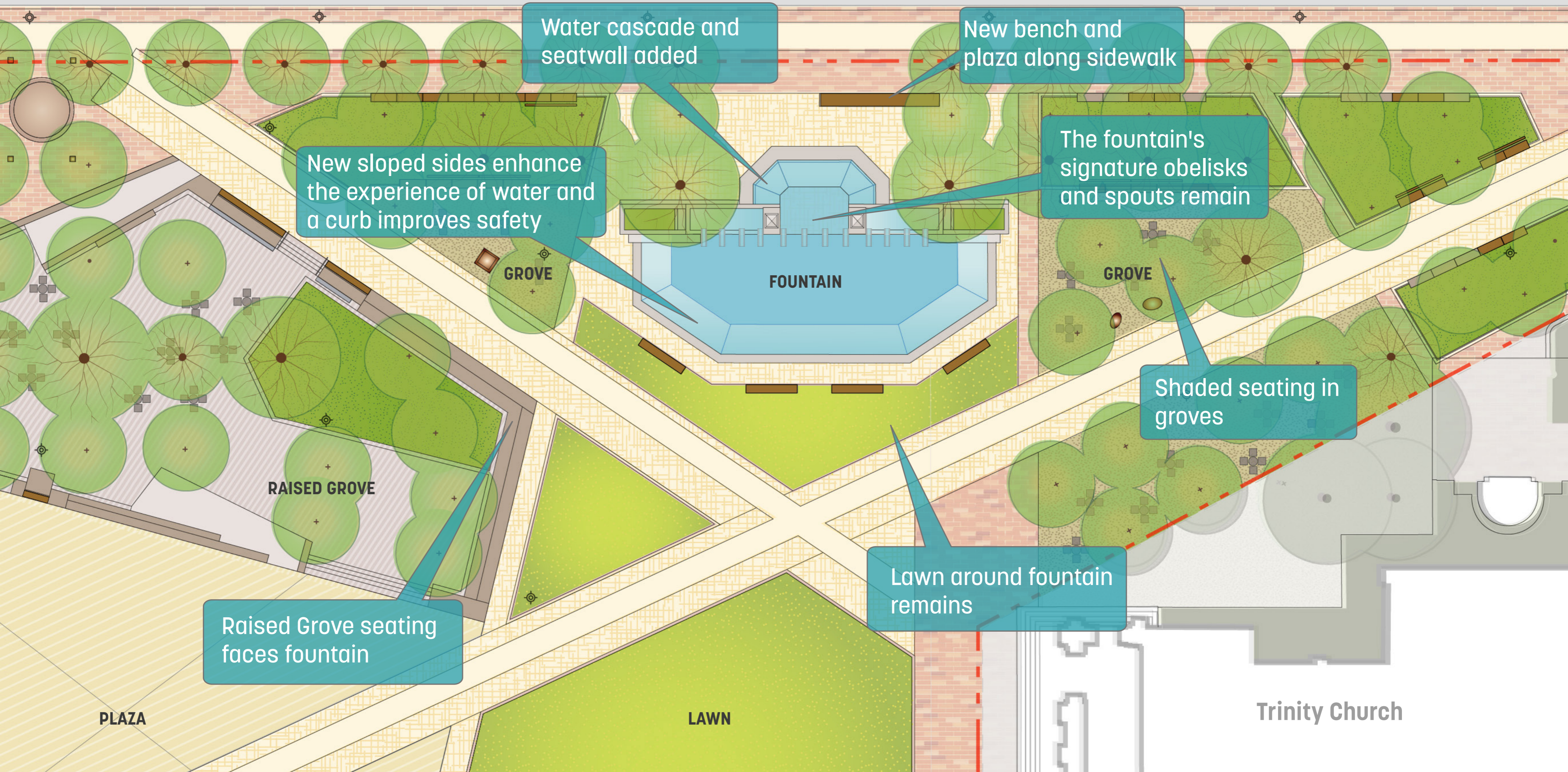
A Much Beloved Fountain, Revived for the 21st Century

The Fountain will be renovated to improve safety and enhance the experience with water. The key architectural features comprising of the obelisks, upper pools, and spouts will remain in place; while the lower pool on the Park and Boylston Street sides will be renovated with cascading water slopes and curbs.



Highlights of the Renovated Fountain

Boylston St



Water cascade and seatwall added

New bench and plaza along sidewalk

New sloped sides enhance the experience of water and a curb improves safety

The fountain's signature obelisks and spouts remain

Shaded seating in groves

Lawn around fountain remains

Raised Grove seating faces fountain

PLAZA

LAWN

Trinity Church

Classic Views of Copley's Fountain



The Fountain and Spouts, Seen Through the Grove

The fountain's iconic obelisks and twelve spouts shine in the mid-day sun, while the trees and seating in the adjacent grove provide comfortable shade.



The Fountain and Trinity, Seen from Boylston St

The iconic view of the fountain, Trinity Church, and the 200 Clarendon Street building is maintained. The new water cascades add sparkle and interest to the fountain foreground.

Materials That Speak to Boston

Inspired by the surrounding context...



Proposed Materials



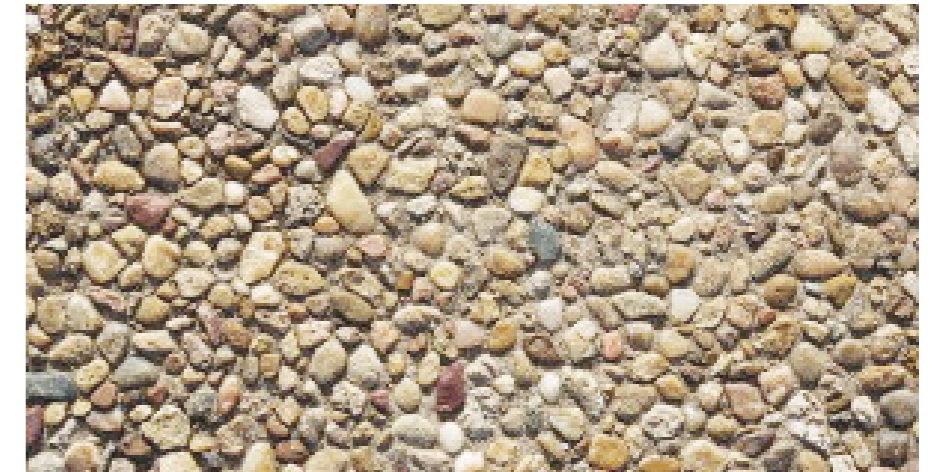
City Standard Wire Cut Brick



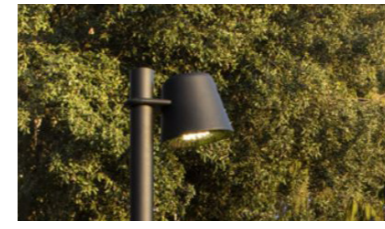
Milford Pink Granite for Fountain



Concrete Unit Pavers



Exposed Aggregate Concrete



New and Existing Lights



Warm-toned Concrete Paving

Materials that Speak to Boston

+ EXISTING FOUNTAIN AND CHURCH

+ WOOD BENCH

+ MATCH EXISTING GRANITE

+ CLASSIC BRICK SIDEWALKS

+ PLAZA PAVERS



A Comfortably-Lit Park, Vibrant at Dusk

+EXISTING STREET LIGHTS

+FOUNTAIN ACCENT LIGHTS

+PEDESTRIAN LIGHTS



The background features a stylized illustration of a park with several trees on the left and a large, multi-story church building with a steeple on the right. The entire scene is rendered in a monochromatic red color scheme.

An Inclusive Bostonian Gathering Space

Seating, Circulation, and Spaces

A Place for All

The renovated square has a variety of spaces and seating types, so everyone can find a comfortable spot.

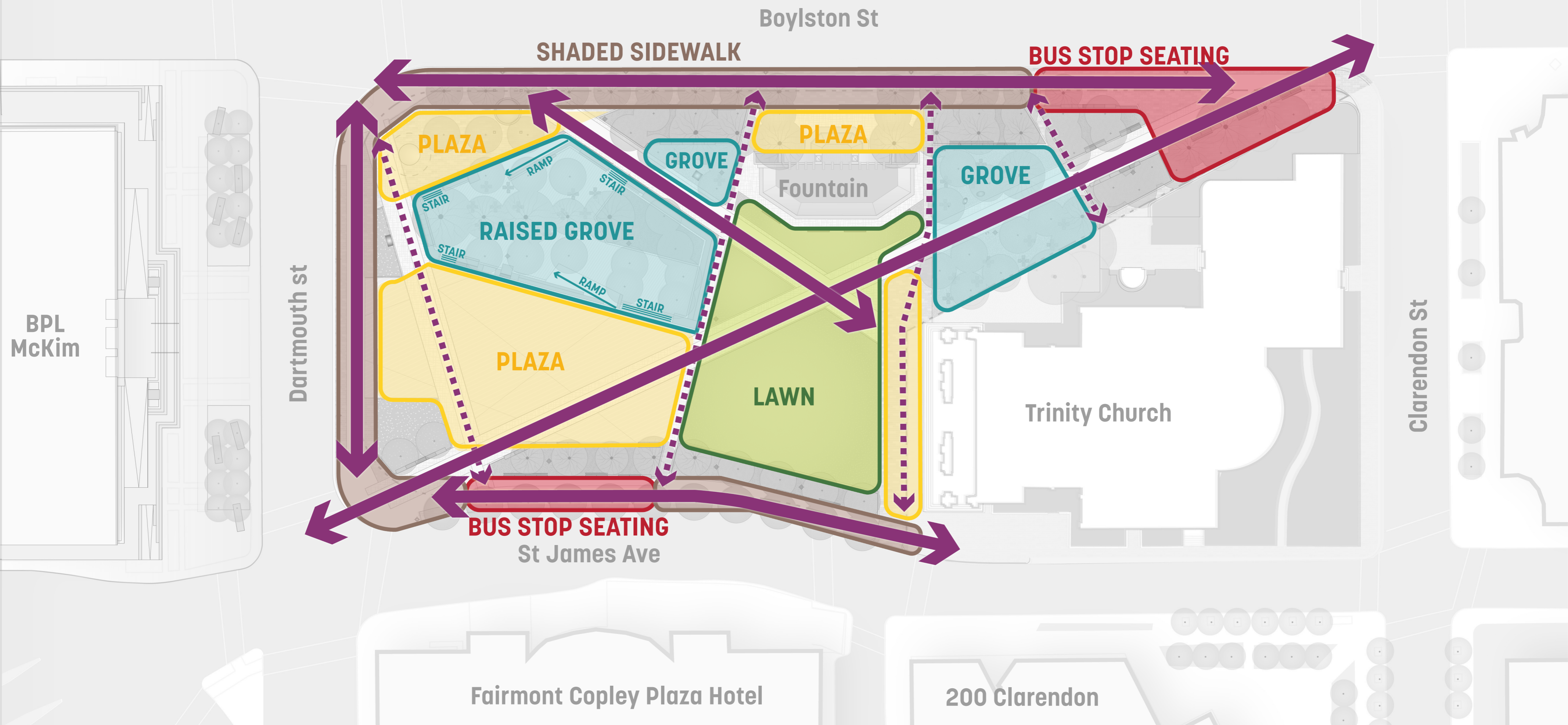
+ SEATING AROUND
FOUNTAIN

+ SEATING ON
BOYLSTON

+ FLEXIBLE FURNISHINGS

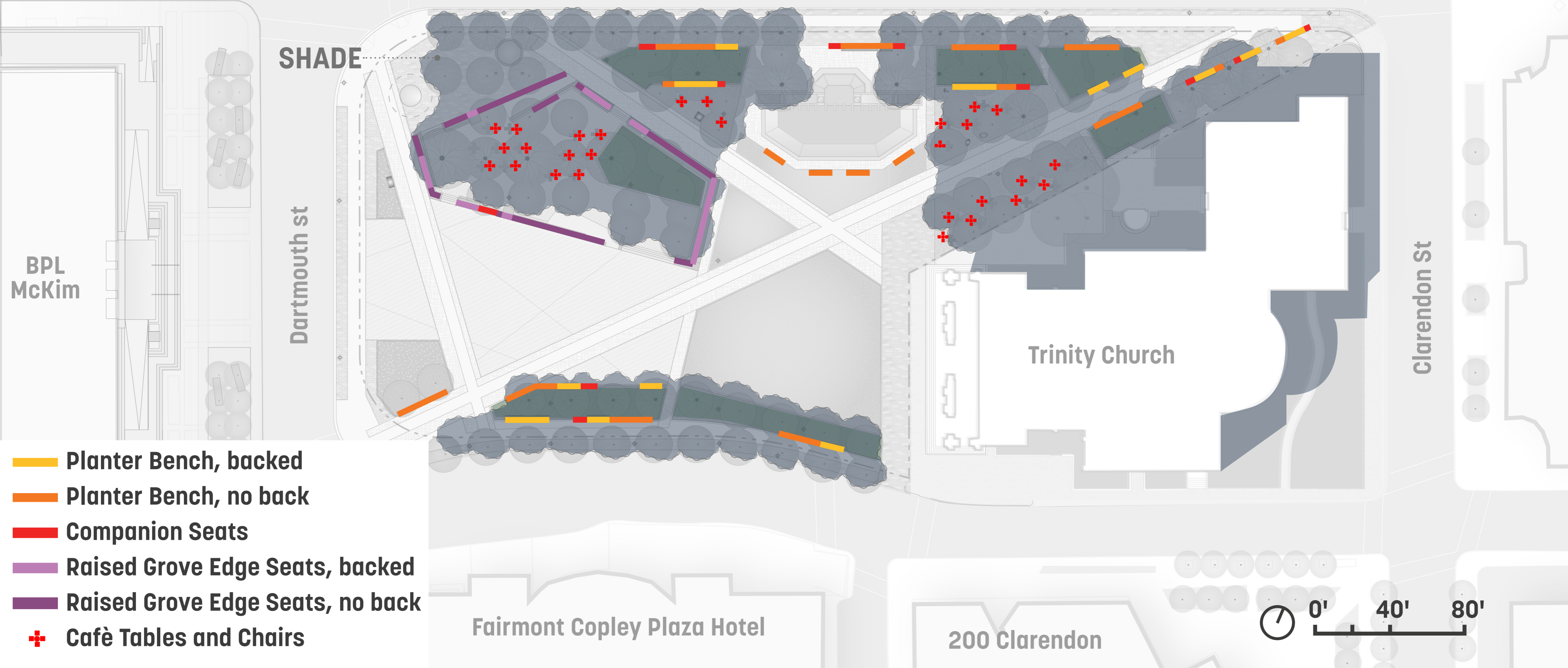
+ BUILT-IN BENCHES WITH
BACKS AND ARM-RESTS

Intuitive Circulation and a Variety of Welcoming Spaces



A Variety of Seating in the Sun and Shade

- Over three times more seating is provided than currently exists.
- Over a third of proposed seating is age-friendly, with backs, wood tops, and arm rests.
- Companion seating is provided throughout.



A Variety of Seating Options for Every Body

Cafè Tables and Chairs



Traditional Park Benches

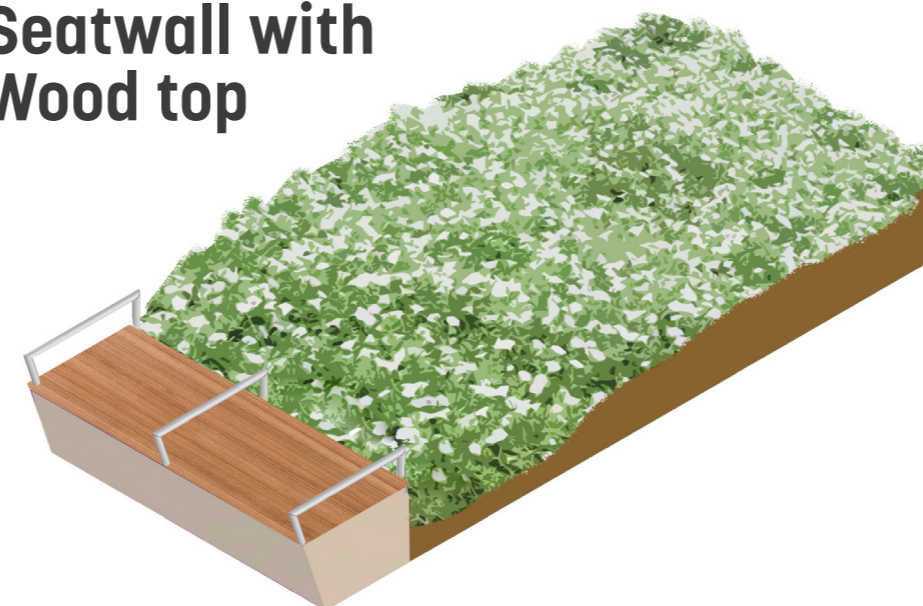


A Variety of Seatwalls

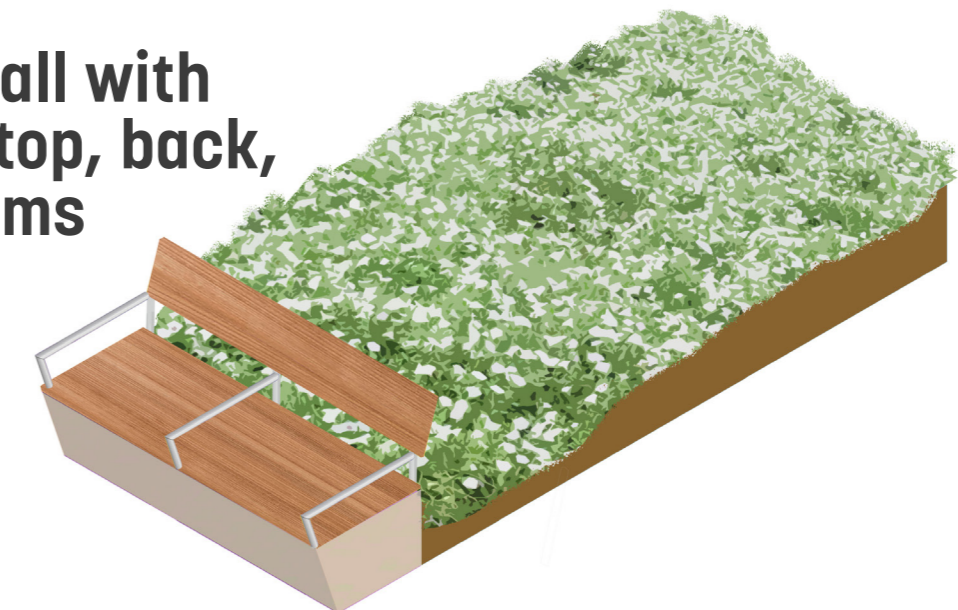
Granite Seatwall



Seatwall with Wood top



Seatwall with Wood top, back, and arms



A Place for All, Everyday

+RAISED GROVE

**+ DYNAMIC
FOUNTAIN**

+SHADED GROVE

+DURABLE LAWN

+CLEAR CONNECTIONS

+FLEXIBLE PLAZA



The background features a stylized illustration of a university campus. On the left, there are several trees of varying sizes. In the center and right, there is a large, multi-story building with a prominent central tower and a cross on top, resembling a cathedral or a university hall. The entire scene is rendered in a light purple color against a darker purple background.

A Vibrant Destination within the Hub

Events, Large and Small

Improvements for Daily and Weekly Events

The renovated square has the built-in durability and infrastructure to host the daily, weekly, and annual events that people love.

+BUILT-IN STAGE

+DURABLE EVENT PLAZA

**+ BUILT-IN POWER
FOR VENDORS**



Improvements for Cultural Events

+ EVENT HOOK-UPS

+ CONNECTS TO
DARTMOUTH

+ BUILT-IN SEATING

+ PLANTERS
BUFFER
STREET

+ PLAZA

+ DURABLE LAWN



Public Art



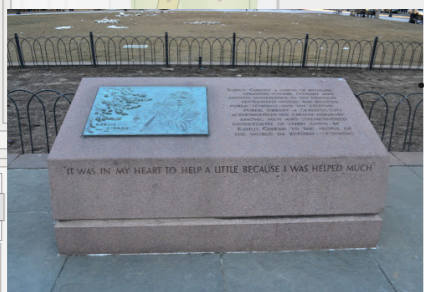
John Singleton Copley Statue



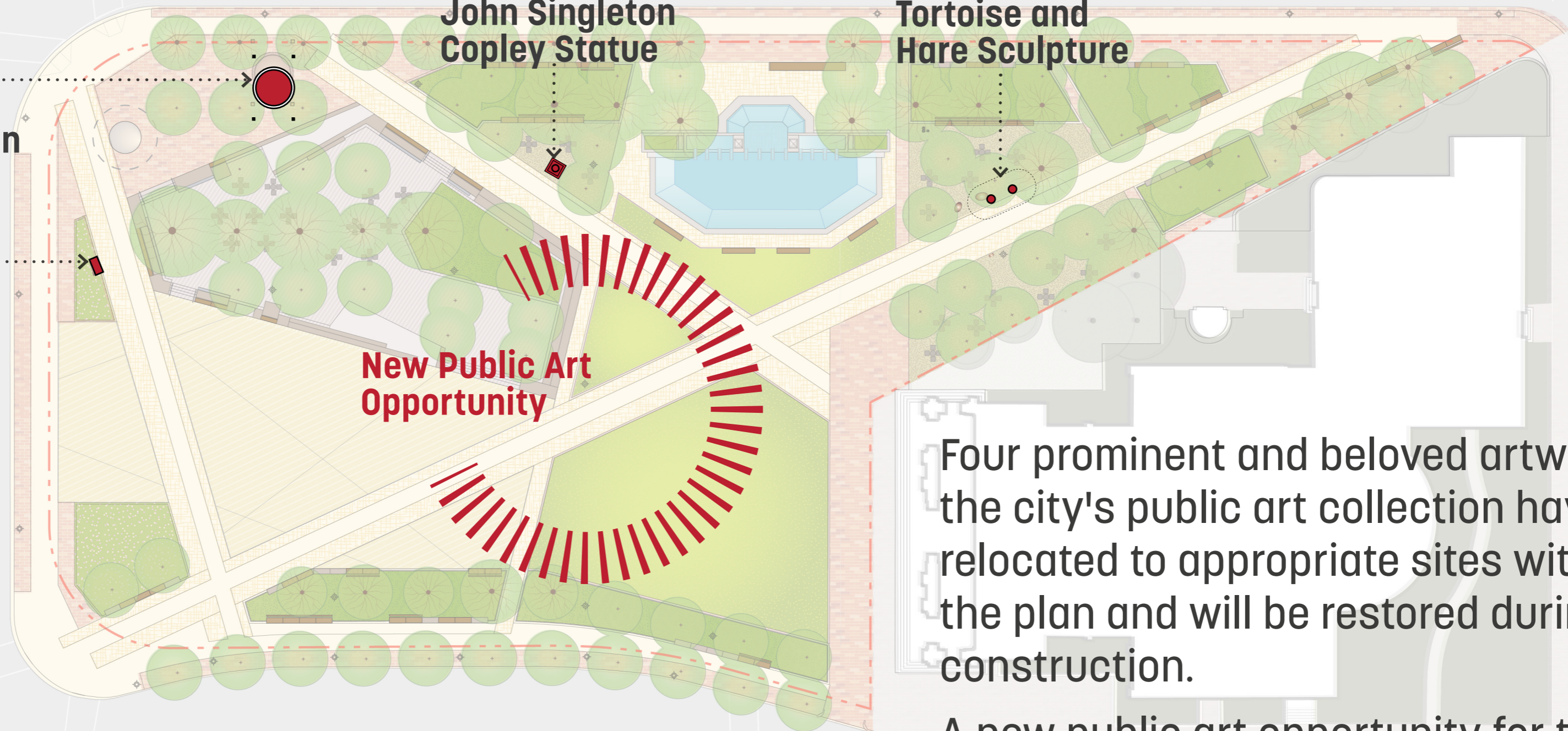
Tortoise and Hare Sculpture



Boston Marathon Memorial



Kahlil Gibran Memorial



New Public Art Opportunity

Four prominent and beloved artworks in the city's public art collection have been relocated to appropriate sites within the plan and will be restored during construction.

A new public art opportunity for the square is underway in collaboration with the Boston Arts Commission and the One Boston Memorial Project.

A Durable and Sustainable New England Landscape

—
Tree Stewardship and Planting

Preserving Legacy Trees is a Top Priority

Preserving Copley's healthy, mature trees is important because they are one of the things people love most about the Square. Trees also cool the Square in the summer and provide shade.

Preserving Legacy Trees is a Top Priority



36 Preserved Trees
62 New Trees

98 Total Trees

The Raised Grove Protects Tree Roots

Elevated pavers make a space for tree roots and allow people walk under the canopy without stressing the tree roots.

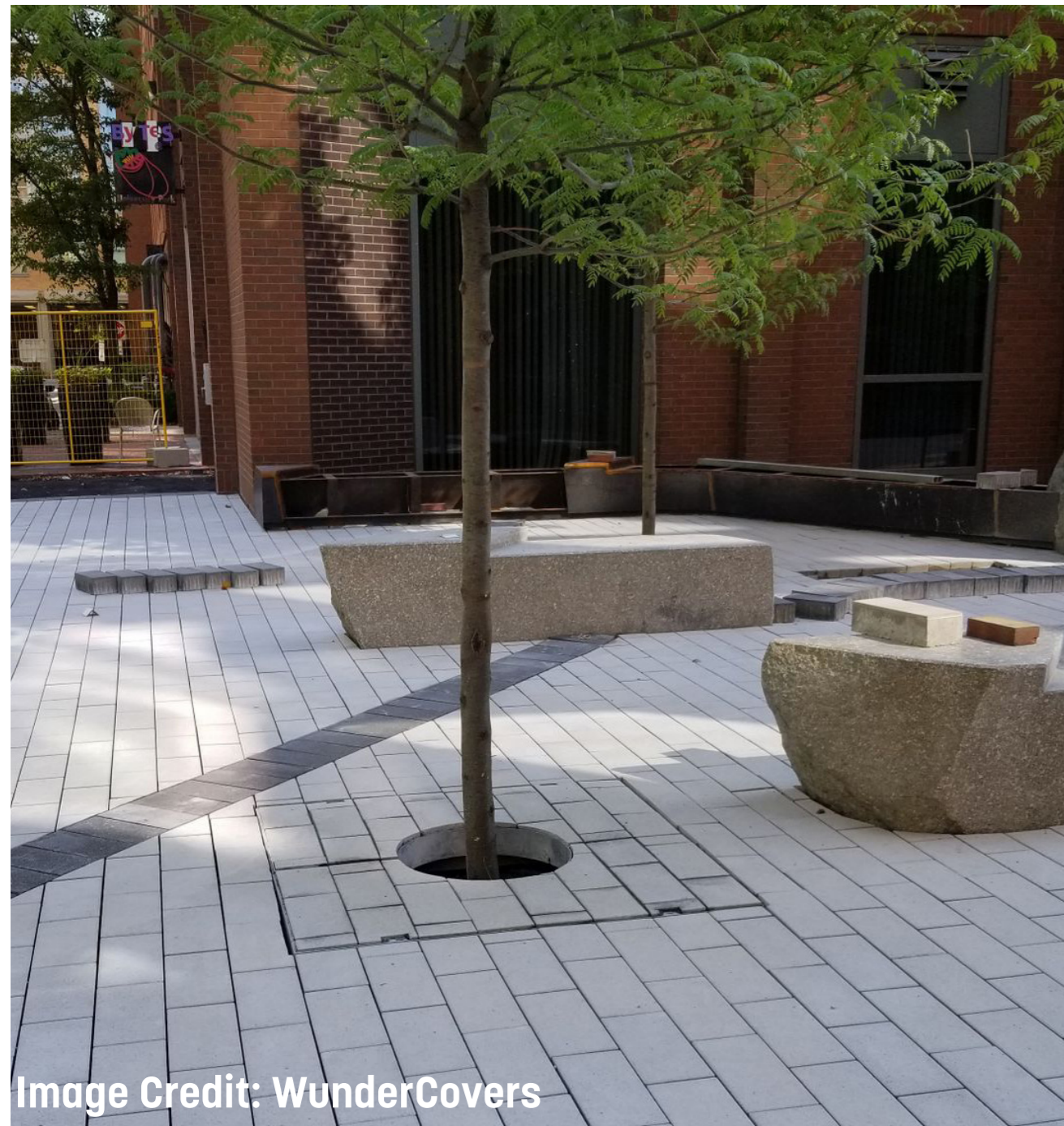
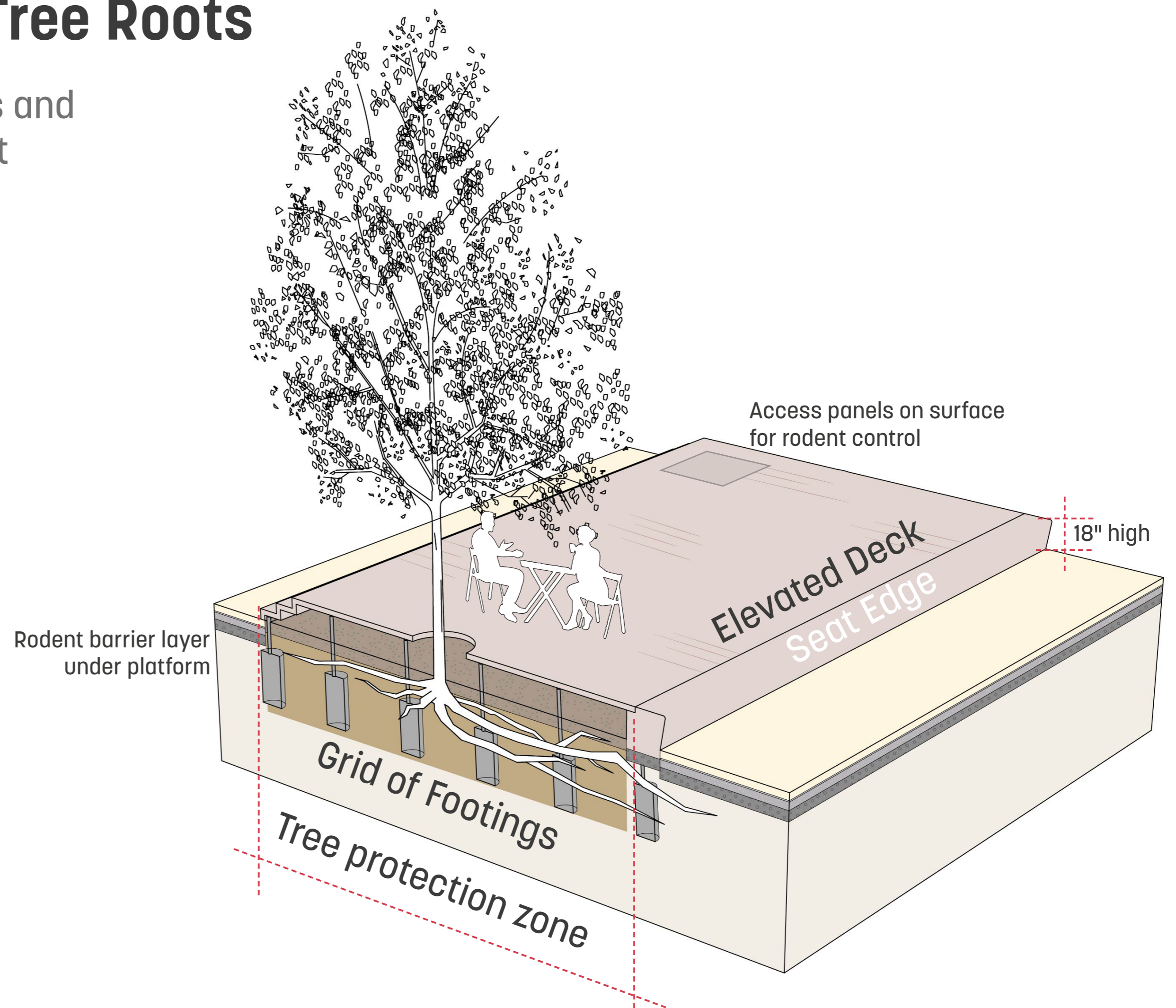


Image Credit: WunderCovers



Rodent barrier layer
under platform

Access panels on surface
for rodent control

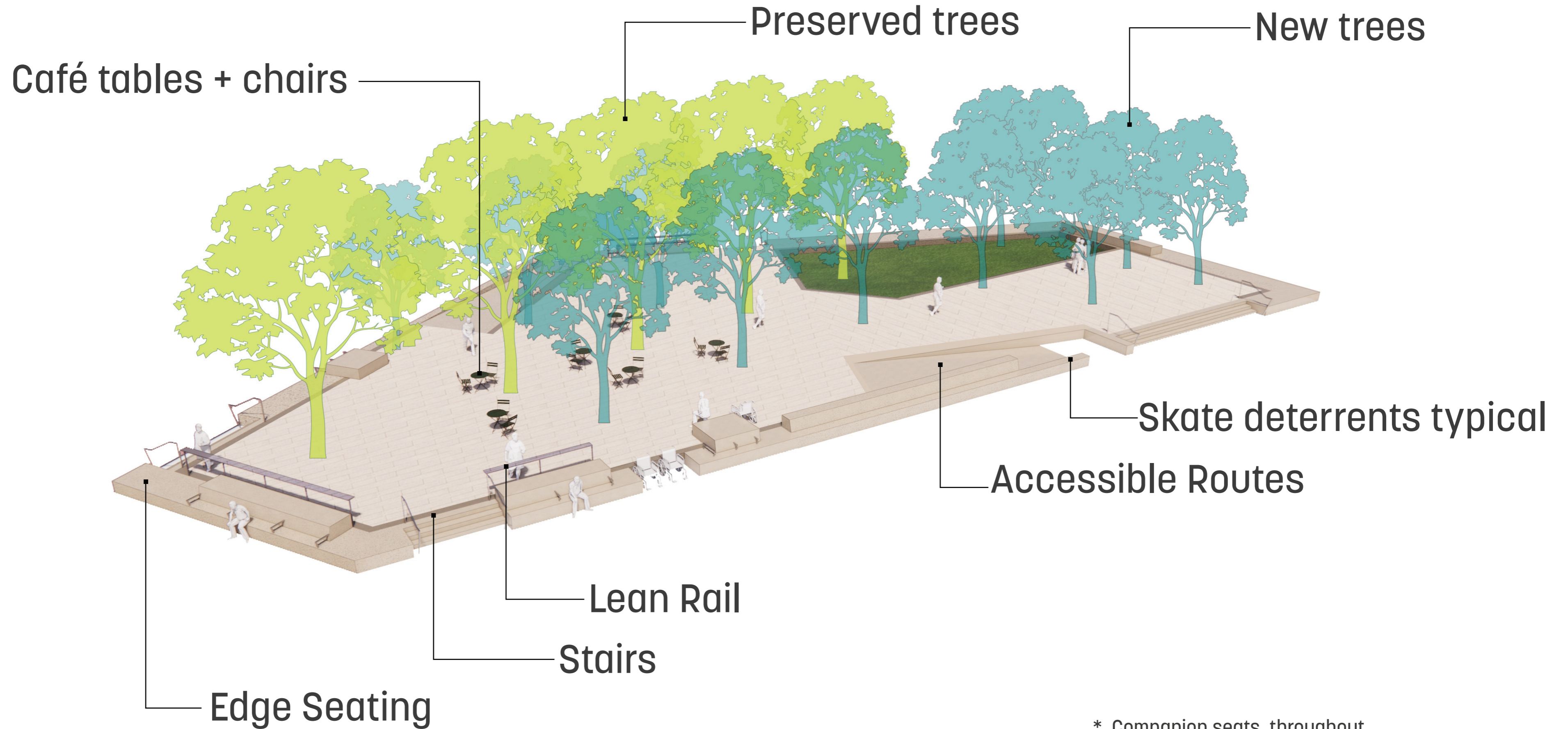
18" high

Elevated Deck
Seat Edge

Grid of Footings

Tree protection zone

The Raised Grove Creates Great Spaces for People



* Companion seats, throughout

**Integrated access panels on surface for rodent control

The Raised Grove: A Great Space for People and Trees

+ PRESERVED TREES

+ INTEGRATED SEATING

+ SMALL STAGE

+ FLEXIBLE FURNISHINGS

+ SMOOTH PAVERS

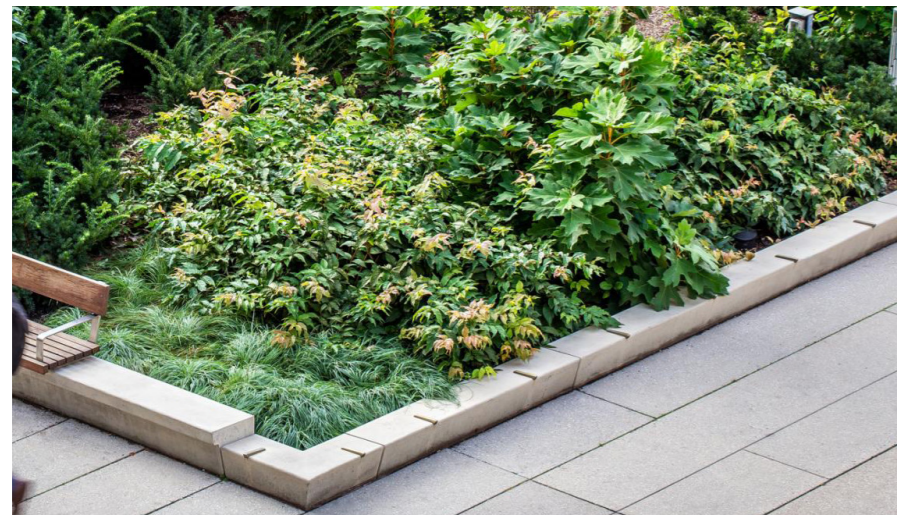


Planting Types

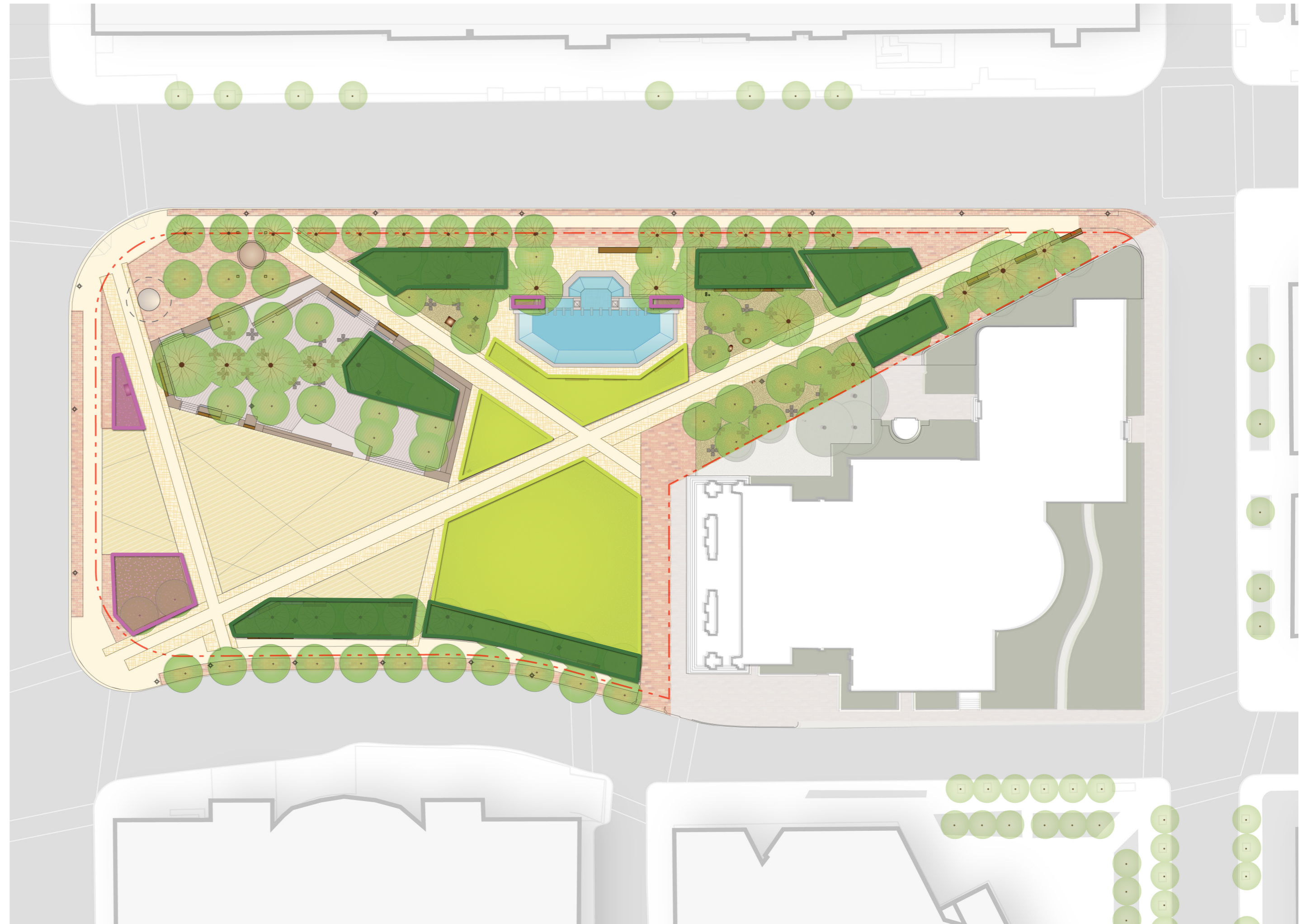
 **ANNUAL PLANTERS**



 **Perennials & Shrub Planters**



 **Lawn**



Perennial & Shrub Benefits

- Protect existing trees and support new tree planting
- Create gardens for seasonal enjoyment
- Food & habitat for birds
- Capture & infiltrate rainwater
- Combat urban heat island making the Square more comfortable in summer
- Year-round interest with flowers, evergreens, berries, leaves, and bark
- Frame the Square and buffer the Street



'Arctic Fire' Dogwood



Dwarf Fothergilla



Bush Honeysuckle



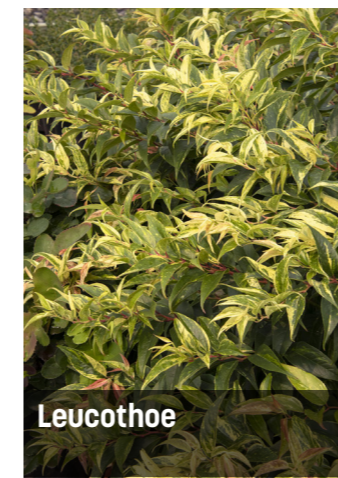
Clethra 'Hummingbird'



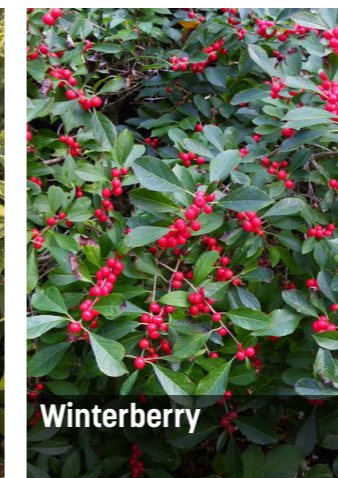
Nordic Inkberry



Baptisia



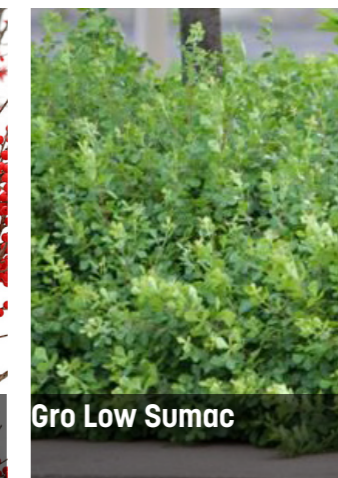
Leucothoe



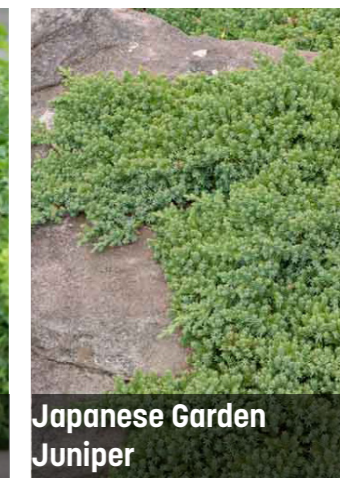
Winterberry



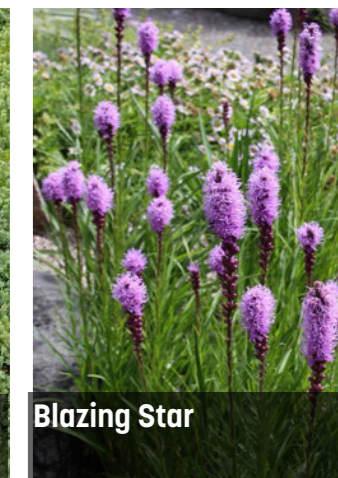
Winterberry



Gro Low Sumac



Japanese Garden Juniper



Blazing Star



Liriope



Epimedium



Foam Flower



Geranium



Pennsylvania Sedge



Amsonia



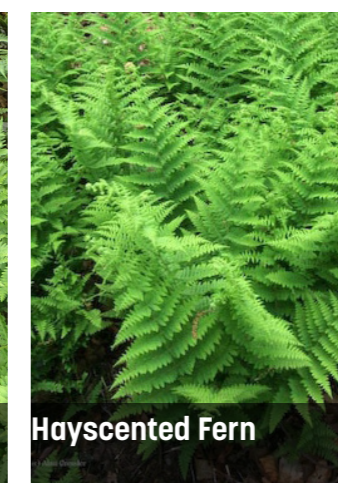
Royal Fern



Cinnamon Fern



Marginal Wood Fern



Hayscented Fern



Sweetfern



Sweet Bay Magnolia 'Henry Hicks'

Sample Plant Species



“ Copley will continue to be a space that unites us, that invigorates us, and that brings us joy. ”

Rev. Mariama White-Hammond
Chief of Environment, Energy, and Open
Space for the City of Boston

Ground Breaking in Spring 2023!

Copley Square Park Design Updates

Visit the project website
for more information

bit.ly/copley-square

