

# **Designing Public Spaces**

## Energized Public Spaces Design Guidelines

**Working Draft December 2018**

THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS  
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION



# Abstract

The *Designing Public Spaces: Energized Public Spaces Design Guidelines* should be used in conjunction with Sector Plan Design Guidelines. This document will be used to guide the design of public spaces within the *Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan (EPS Plan)* Study Area as outlined in more detail in these guidelines. The guidelines are based on existing conditions analysis, stakeholder input and current best practices in public space design from the region and beyond. Design guidelines help provide information about how plan recommendations and zoning code requirements can be met, and the overall context for the different types of spaces within an integrated system of public spaces in the County. Design guidelines are approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board for use by public entities and developers in preparing design proposals, and planners and the Board in reviewing them. These guidelines may need to be reviewed and updated by the Planning Board as best practices and conditions in the *EPS Plan* Study Area evolve overtime.

# Sources of Copies

Montgomery County Department of Parks  
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
9500 Brunett Ave.  
Silver Spring, MD 20901

Online at [www.montgomeryparks.org](http://www.montgomeryparks.org)

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**CHELSEA MARKET**

*Illustration by Atul Sharma*

# 1

# INTRODUCTION

*“The way we build cities, the way we make places, can have a profound effect on what kinds of lives are lived within those spaces.”*

*William H. Whyte*

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# Delivering Energized Public Spaces

## Integrating a system of public spaces where the County is growing

The need to provide adequate public spaces within the most densely populated areas of Montgomery County is critical and challenging. Our region continues to grow and diversify towards these centers. *Designing Public Spaces: Energized Public Spaces Design Guidelines* is a companion to the *Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan (EPS Plan)*. The scope of these guidelines addresses the network of public spaces within the adopted *EPS Plan* Study Area - refer to Figure 1.2. For the criteria used to select the study area, refer to *Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan*, March 2018.

The role of public spaces must adapt to a community's evolving social, recreational and environmental needs. The terminology "public spaces" includes "urban parks" and "non-urban parks". The terminology "urban parks" allows the M-NCPPC to apply for different public or private grants.

In Chapter 2, the document provides areawide design guidelines that are applicable to all public spaces

within the EPS Study Area. The network of public spaces within the EPS Study Area will be inviting, easily accessible, attractive, comfortable and safe, and provide a range of experiences.

The *Vision 2030 Plan* and the *2017 Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan* recognize the need to focus on urban parks in the County's growing urban centers and lay the groundwork for a new urban park typology that will require partnerships, grants, creative funding and comprehensive and sustainable approaches to their planning, design, construction, maintenance and programming.

Urban parks offer a larger design challenge due to their location within expensive and scarce land: they necessitate more condensed, efficient and multi-use public spaces. Chapter 3 focuses on the urban park typology established in the *2017 PROS Plan*, and provides specific key elements based on the main function of each park type. All public spaces that fit in the description of one or more urban park types,

or were identified as such in master or sector plans, should follow the guidelines in both Chapters 2 and 3.

Depending on the property ownership, public spaces could be privately- or publicly-owned. These spaces are accessible to the public within a larger network owned by:

- M-NCPPC
- Montgomery County
- Public Schools
- Other Municipalities bounding the EPS Study Area
- Private Owners (POPS - Privately-Owned Public Spaces)

The Appendix of this document provides links to our upcoming online library showing detailed examples and Case Studies of Urban Park and Public Space Types for additional guidance on open space design.

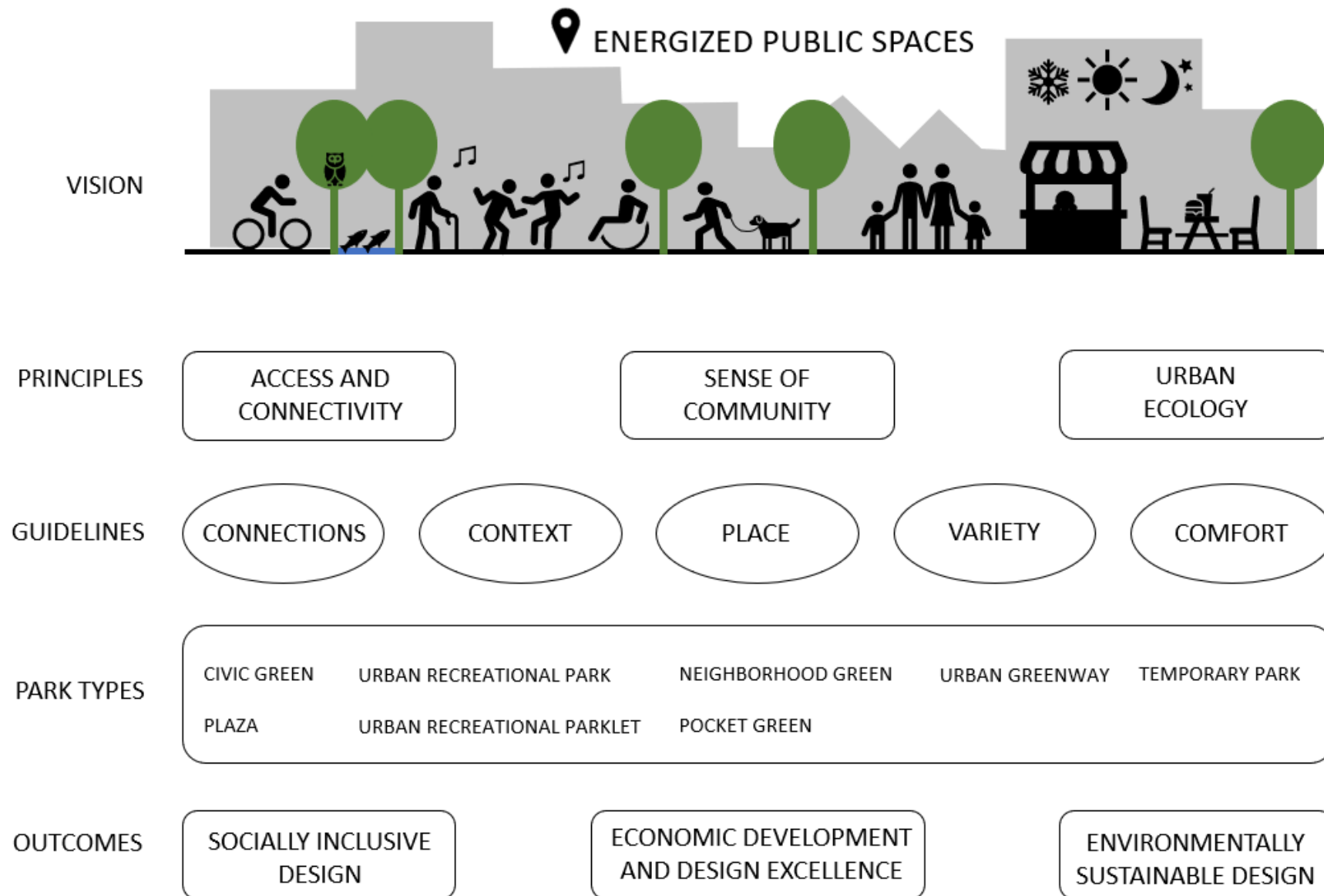


Figure 1.1 - Energized Public Spaces Design Framework

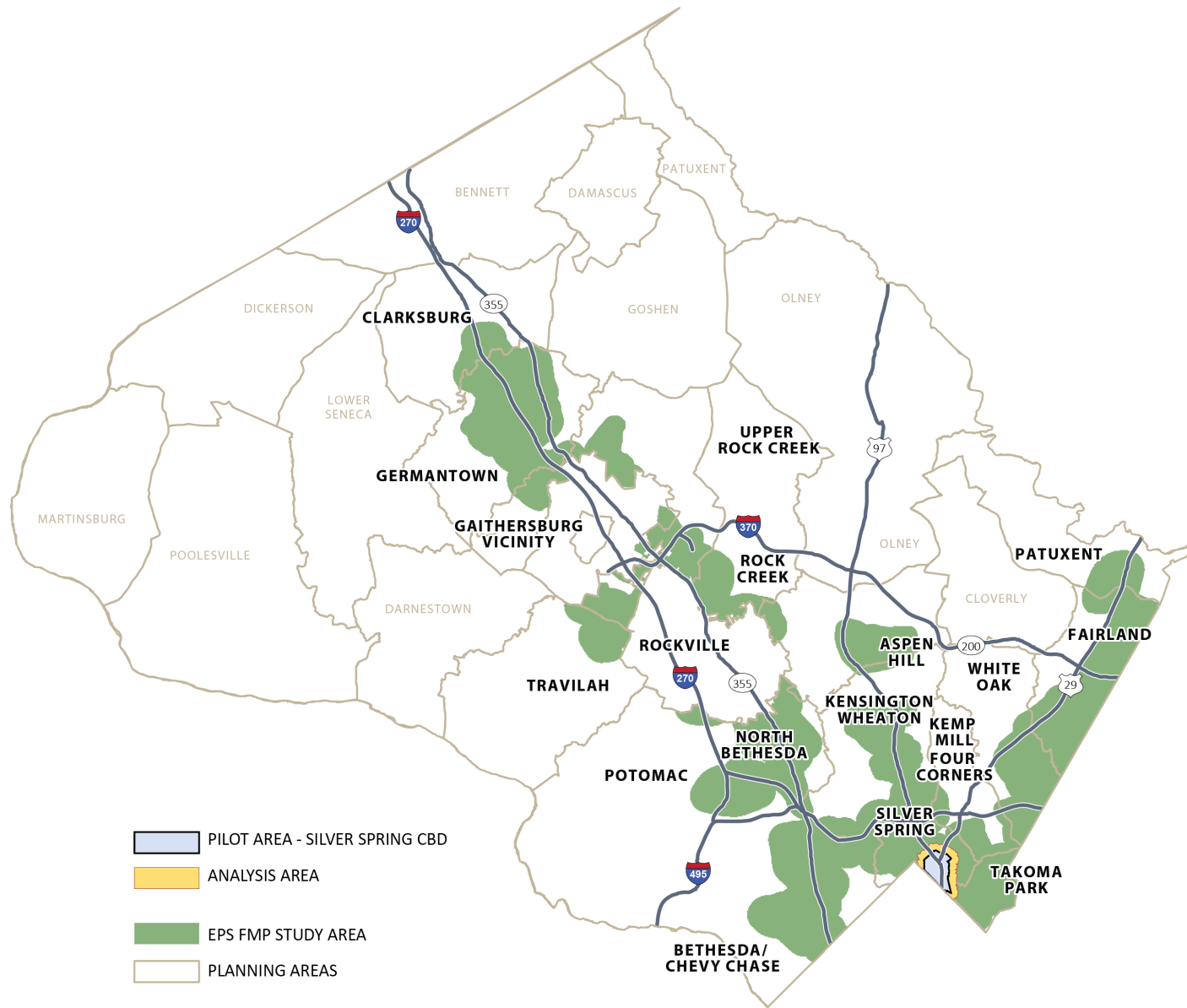


Figure 1.2 - Energized Public Spaces Plan Study Area and Pilot Area Map

# 1.1 Vision and Purpose

**“Provide stronger, healthier and happier communities in the County. In the places where we have the most people, everyone can walk to a public space to enjoy the outdoors.”** *Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan*



*Klyde Warren Park, Dallas Art District, TX. Source: Pinterest*

## Vision and Purpose

The *EPS Plan*'s vision is to provide access to a network of public spaces within a 10-minute walking distance for a resident or worker in our denser urban areas. The *EPS Plan* was created to provide a comprehensive approach to define and locate different park types within the EPS Study Area. This document, *Designing Public Spaces: Energized Public Spaces Design Guidelines*, provides overall design guidance for all existing and proposed public spaces within the EPS Study Area. This document aligns with and supports the policies included in the *2017 PROS Plan*, the *EPS Plan*, and the *2017 Recreational Guidelines for Private Residential Development (Recreation Guidelines)*.

This document will provide overall design guidance to all stakeholders including planners, designers, decision-makers, developers, land owners and citizens during master and sector plan processes. It will also be used in the development review process by the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) staff.

## How to Use these Guidelines

### A. Master and Sector Plans, Associated Design Guidelines and Streetscape Standards:

For Master and Sector Plans and associated documents within the larger EPS Study Area, this document should be used to assist in the development of recommendations for park and public space design. For Plan areas not covered within the EPS Study Area, these guidelines will serve as an available resource for the same purpose.

### B. Development Review:

For Development Review applications within Master and Sector Plans within the larger EPS Study Area, this document will provide guidance on the design of privately-owned Public Open Space. Specific site recommendations in the Master or Sector Plan and the associated Plan Design Guidelines relating to the design of Public Open Space will take precedence. However, in the absence of specific language for designing public spaces in Master and Sector Plans, these guidelines should inform the design of Public Space.

For Development Review applications in Master and Sector Plans outside of the EPS Study Area, these guidelines will serve as an available resource to help achieve excellence in the design of the space.

## Guidelines Flexibility

The Planning Board may approve alternative design approaches that better meet the intent of the design guidelines. This review flexibility will allow room for truly exceptional and unexpected creative solutions to improve public spaces. The guidelines described in this document are intended to provide applicants with an understanding of what will be expected of the public spaces within their proposed developments. They will provide M-NCPPC staff and the Planning Board with a framework to guide the development review process.

In addition to compliance with the guidelines, design proposals and alternative solutions will be evaluated based on the surrounding context, site conditions, and how the project meets the *EPS Plan*, master/sector plan goals, design principles and design guidelines intent, and other studies and policies affecting the specific development site.

# 1.2 Goals

## Develop Flexible Design Guidelines...

- That are adaptable, supportive of the existing network of public spaces, and are responsive to diverse, changing demographics and needs within the County (Refer to Chapter 2).
- That offer a flexible menu of options within different contexts and settings for each urban park type identified in the *2017 PROS Plan* and in master or sector plans as they are created and adopted (Refer to Chapter 3).

## Create a Common Language for Urban Parks and Public Spaces...

- That allows alignment of input from County officials, staff, the development community and citizens on the types of amenities and/or programming they can expect in a particular type of park or public space.
- That clarifies the roles and expectations from developers and landowners when zoning requires publicly accessible spaces.
- That guides M-NCPPC staff in the planning, design, and development review processes.

## Provide Examples...

- That illustrate the design intent proposed in this document through photographs with explanatory captions in Chapter 3 and additional case studies in upcoming online library.

# 1.3 Integrated Public Process

This document was created through a public process that provided input and information from different groups. Specifically, these groups included:

## Urban Parks Advisory Group

Formed with volunteers representing the following three major stakeholder groups:

- Citizen or Community Group Representatives
- Property Owners, Developers, Designers
- Montgomery County Government Staff

The goals of this group were to help staff analyze and develop overall design guidelines for a diverse network of parks and public spaces within the *EPS Plan* Study Area.

## Core Team and Designers Groups

An internal core team of designers and planners from the Montgomery County Departments of Parks and Planning met throughout the process to create, write and coordinate the written and graphic content of these guidelines.

## Operations Framework Document

Following the adoption of these guidelines, an Operations Framework - another companion document to the *EPS Plan* - will be created. This document will align the programming, policing, maintenance and operations of new and existing public spaces with the principles and design guidelines discussed in this document.

The integration of these two documents will help in the delivery of successful public spaces through partnerships that will maximize use and programming, offset costs and help serve a more inclusive and larger public.

# 1.4 Outcomes

*“City parks play a vital role in the social, economic and physical well-being of America’s cities and their residents. Parks are now recognized as powerful tools for urban communities and local economies.” City Parks Alliance*

Well-designed parks and public spaces, particularly within our populated centers, promote social interaction, provide a respite with nature for citizens, create economic value for surrounding neighborhoods and property owners, and help relieve and mitigate heat island effects and storm water runoff. They also provide natural habitat and views of nature. They are a platform for many community experiences that have direct and indirect benefits to the lifestyle and health of residents, employees, and visitors.

Parks and public spaces have always played an important role in the quality of life in Montgomery County. They support mental and physical health for all of us. Our parks are inclusive and enjoyed by all county residents and visitors, no matter one’s economic standing, ethnicity or physical ability. They have been the places where our natural environment and cultural attractions are emphasized and preserved, where we

learn about and enjoy nature, where we recreate, and where we can just relax.

In the past, County parks were used to frame neighborhoods and preserve natural features and corridors. As the County continues to grow and densify, a greater emphasis on parks as central focal points and points of refuge for neighborhoods and communities needs to be realized.

**Socially Inclusive Design** - An integrated, welcoming, safe, comfortable, inviting and easily-accessible network of parks and public spaces promotes community-building and encourages stewardship of our cultural and natural resources. Well-designed parks and public spaces generate community identity, pride, and advocacy as well as champion and promote physical and mental health.

**Economic Development and Design Excellence** - Well-designed parks and public spaces increase surrounding property values and become the “postcards” of communities by promoting their livability and attractiveness. As economic drivers,

they increase the desire to live, work and visit these communities.

**Environmentally Sustainable Design** - The implementation of sustainable design practices in parks and public spaces will continue to support the County’s desire to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2027 (*Resolution 18-794*) and promote community resilience to climate change. Offsetting urban heat island effects, reducing stormwater runoff, connecting wildlife corridors, and absorbing more carbon, parks and public spaces protect our limited natural resources while promoting human and habitat health.





People **EXERCISE MORE** if they have access to **PARKS** and other safe outdoor places. **Physical activity can reduce or prevent serious health problems.**

## PARKS KEEP CITIES COOLER

Parks help to cool cities by reducing the heat island effect.



## PARKS INCREASE PROPERTY VALUES



Houses near parks or trails have **5-20% higher property values** than those in the surrounding community.

## PARKS ATTRACT RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES



## PARKS SAVE MONEY ON INFRASTRUCTURE

Cities are creating and using parks as a green infrastructure approach to **managing stormwater and preventing flooding.**



Using just one park and investing in green infrastructure instead of gray infrastructure, the **City of Atlanta is saving at least**

**\$16 MILLION**

Infographics in this page illustrate the series of benefits associated to an integrated network of parks and public spaces within urban areas. Source: City Parks Alliance

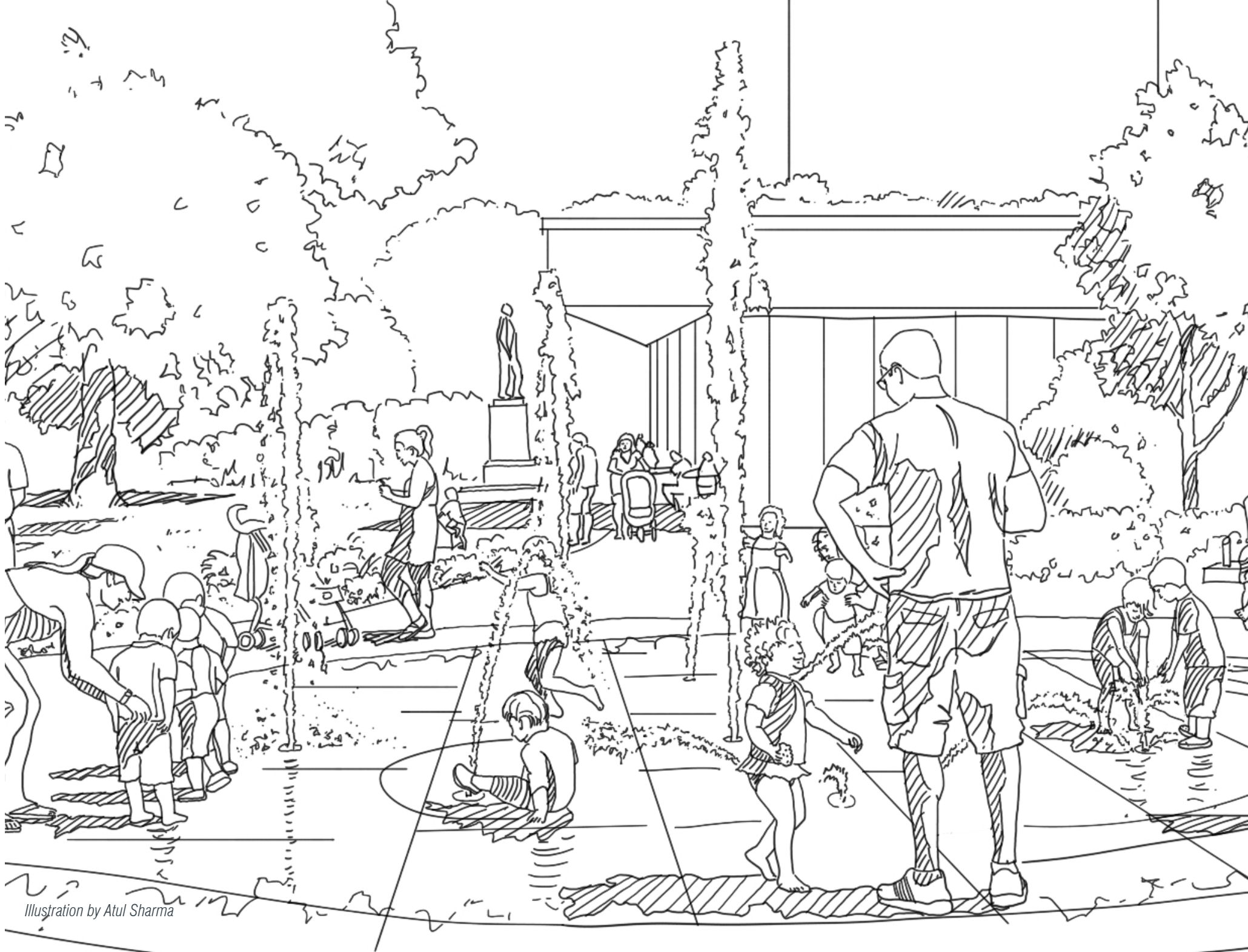


Illustration by Atul Sharma

# 2

# AREAWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINES

*“The measure of any great civilization is in its cities, and the measure of a city’s greatness is to be found in the quality of its public spaces, its parks and squares.”*

*John Ruskin*

# 2.1 Design Principles

Three design principles support the goals of *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan*, the *2017 PROS Plan* and the *EPS Plan*, and provide the foundation for the guidelines that will steer the design of all publicly accessible parks and public spaces within the EPS Study Area, and throughout Montgomery County.



## ACCESS & CONNECTIVITY

Public spaces must be open and inviting to everyone. They should be centrally located and easily accessible - within a 10-minute walking distance - and link street and open spaces networks. Urban public spaces are well-defined and framed with fronting streets and buildings providing synergy of uses and making the space a focal point of a larger area or neighborhood.



## SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Public spaces are the physical, social, cultural and environmental “heart” of communities. They are the places of community identity, value, pride and social interaction. They must be attractive, safe and engaging with a range of experiences for gathering, relaxation and recreation.



## URBAN ECOLOGY

Public spaces must support the social and environmental well-being of the greater community. They inherently promote health and habitat by helping clean and filter the air and water, keep places cooler, and contribute to community resilience by acting as green infrastructure. In addition, public spaces encourage greater environmental stewardship, education and responsible interaction with natural habitat.

## 2.2 Design Guidelines

While the three design principles are at the core of all public spaces in Montgomery County, public space design should be considered through the lens of the following five design guidelines that shape the public realm framework of parks, streets and other public spaces within the EPS Study Area. Each guideline contains a series of topics to be considered and addressed during the design process. Table 2.1 summarizes the design intent of each design guideline, and its associated topics.

|           | <b>Guideline</b>   | <b>Design Intent</b>   | <b>Topic</b>   |
|-----------|--------------------|--|--|
| <b>A.</b> | <b>CONTEXT</b>     | <b>Incorporate Site Context in the Design of Public Spaces</b>               | Adjacencies<br>Existing Conditions<br>Planned Conditions |
| <b>B.</b> | <b>PLACE</b>       | <b>Celebrate and Incorporate Community Identity</b>                          | Identity<br>Features<br>Community-Driven Process         |
| <b>C.</b> | <b>COMFORT</b>     | <b>Make Public Spaces Comfortable and Inviting</b>                           | Enclosure<br>Amenity Design and Location<br>Safety       |
| <b>D.</b> | <b>VARIETY</b>     | <b>Provide Flexible Spaces for a Diversity of Activities and Experiences</b> | Space Flexibility<br>Diverse Programming                 |
| <b>E.</b> | <b>CONNECTIONS</b> | <b>Enhance Community Connections</b>   | Access<br>Multiple Choices<br>Wayfinding                 |

Table 2.1 - Matrix illustrating Design Guidelines, their Design Intent, and Topics

# A.

## CONTEXT

### Intent: Incorporate Site Context in the Design of Public Spaces

To create vibrant public spaces that are distinctive to the location, a site's topography and unique traits, and its surrounding community's existing and planned physical form and architecture should be considered in the design of the public spaces.

1. **ADJACENCIES:** Ensure public spaces relate to adjacent streets, open spaces, architecture and landscape.
  - a. **Public Realm:** Reinforce and integrate new parks and public space into the public realm of adjacent streets, trails and parks networks.
  - b. **Architecture/Landscape:** Respond to adjacent building entrances, unique building forms and/or landscape masses.
  - c. **Defined Space:** Design urban parks and open spaces as “living rooms” of our neighborhoods, towns and cities by including streets and walls that define the space.
  - d. **Views:** Capitalize on views and important axes to and from the site - design places to see and be seen. Frame important signature elements of the public space with landscape, trees and/or topography. Frame views out from the park towards landmark buildings, building entrances, and/or major view axes with pathways, landscapes, rows or bosques of trees or topography.

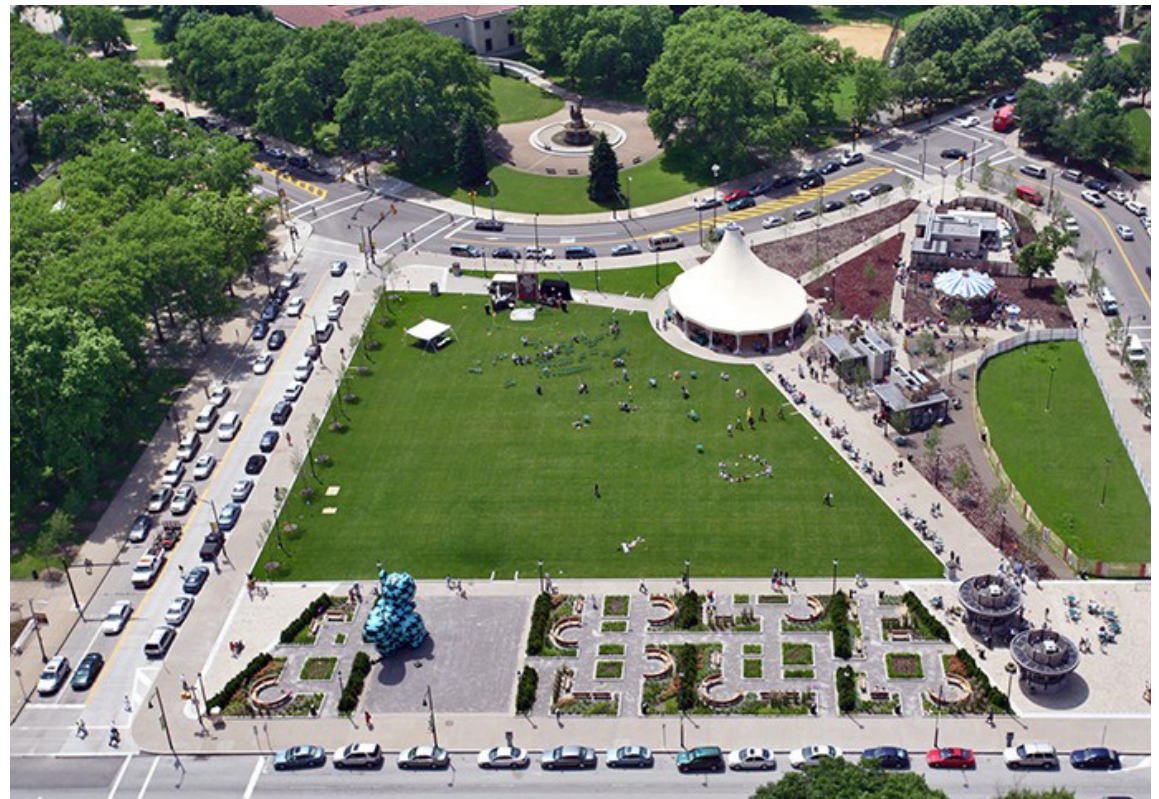


*Pentagon Row Plaza, Arlington, VA. The centrally located plaza is a public space framed by buildings and landscape features. The central green space allows visual connections to and from the park, and also from the surrounding ground floor retail and residential units. The space caters to the needs of the visitors and residents. Source: Federal Realty Investment Trust*

*“A sustainable park is a park that’s made to preserve natural resources and promote quality of life for the people around it. It uses existing native plants and geographic features to be more efficient, while also enjoyable.” - Meeting of the Minds*

*“Streets and their sidewalks, and the main public places of a city, are its most vital organs.” – Jane Jacobs*

2. **EXISTING CONDITIONS:** Take advantage of existing geography, landscapes, topography and microclimate. Use existing topography to inform park design and to minimize extreme excavation or grading. Consider balanced terracing to accommodate major grade changes and to enhance important views.
3. **PLANNED CONDITIONS:** Consider nearby planned development and infrastructure improvements to design with the flexibility to integrate those assets and constraints into a cohesive neighborhood plan. Within all existing or new neighborhood or site plans, the park or public space should be considered a central “room” within the larger mass of building frontages and blocks.



*Schenley Plaza, Pittsburgh, PA. This is an example that takes advantage of existing adjacent institutional buildings facing the central lawn area by creating visual and physical connections, making it a central focal point for the surrounding development. Source: Sasaki*

# B.

## PLACE

### Intent: Celebrate and Incorporate Community Identity

Public spaces are places that bring economic and social value to their surrounding communities through social interactions. Linking physical, historic, cultural, and natural features together creates a unique sense of place. Each public space should celebrate the special features that provide its unique identity and help the community engage and learn.

1. **IDENTITY:** Incorporate physical, social, cultural and natural features of the site into the design of the park or public space.
2. **FEATURES:** Design features that will attract people to the public space and make it a destination, or community focal point. Make special features visible to invite people to use the space and, when appropriate, tell a story. All features should be designed as an integrated system with clear circulation connecting to defined spaces and physically or visually featuring artistic, historic and/or programmed components.
  - a. **Signage:** Where appropriate, consider special signage or branding that reflects the historic, cultural or natural character of the community. Provide opportunities for interpretation of unique community features such as wetlands, tree groves, or historic elements.
  - b. **Public Art:** Integrate public art into the designs of parks or public spaces. Art can be a featured piece, or part of the architectural elements of the

spaces such as the paving or a paving feature, the light poles, an interactive water feature, furnishings, signage and/or an element of the landscape. Artwork should be designed by an artist, who engages the community in the design process. Interactive art features are preferred to non-interactive art features.

- c. **Historic Features:** Reuse or renovate existing historic or cultural features where feasible in or adjacent to parks and public spaces.
- d. **Natural Features** - Incorporate and/or create settings and resources that bring nature into the design of the public space.
  - i. To the greatest extent possible, use native plants and tree species that thrive in our climate. Native plants are typically drought tolerant, are hospitable to native fauna and help to create a natural link between our parks, open spaces and natural resources.
  - ii. Consider the use of a diverse palette of plant and tree species that provide different colors,



*Indianapolis Cultural Trail, IN. This is an 8-mile linear park and trail that connects six cultural districts. New features incorporate public art and lighting, allowing use of the space at night. Source: visitindiana.com*



*“By turning ‘spaces’ into ‘places’ we can take a step towards providing inhabitants with access to interesting, equitable and attractive settings to meet various needs and facilitate more interaction in the urban life.” Source: Global Public Space Toolkit: From Global Principles to Local Policies and Practice (2016), UN-HABITAT*

forms and textures throughout all the seasons. Diverse plant types also minimize potential expansive destruction from pests or harsh climate conditions.

- iii. Consider annual plantings to heighten spring, summer and fall experiences in important focal areas within parks.
- iv. Bio-swales, rain gardens, conservation landscapes and porous pavers, as well as green roofs on buildings, should be incorporated into park and open space designs to mitigate stormwater runoff. Provide a design solution that balances both recreation space and habitat restoration/conservation.
- v. Where possible, use recycled or recyclable materials and materials with low environmental impacts.
- vi. Consider interactive design solutions to enhance the relationship between people and elements of the natural environment.



*Riverfront Park, Newark, NJ. The park was created by transforming the previously contaminated industrial land adjacent to the city’s Passaic River. It consists of various waterfront recreational amenities for citizens to enjoy. Interpretive signage and a variety of event venues support community demographics and creates a sense of belonging, pride and ownership. Source: Newark Riverfront (top); City Village News (bottom left); Inhabitat (bottom right)*

3. **COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PROCESS:** Engage the community early in the design process to ensure the design is meaningful and reflective of community identity. Engage stakeholders such as property owners, developers, non-profit groups, community members, artists, and public agencies to collaborate in delivering creative design solutions and development strategies.
  - a. **Temporary Places:** Consider short-term/ temporary design solutions that reflect community identity where possible as pilot public spaces before long-term development occurs.
  - b. **Performance Surveys:** Consider ways to gather information on the use of the public space. Data-driven analysis provides information on the use of facilities and can help improve future design solutions for the space.
  - c. **Environmental Stewardship:** Work with the community and schools to develop early advocacy for programs and activities to encourage nature appreciation, education, and stewardship.

*“Cultural representation and diversity in neighborhoods are determinants of community resilience. Preservation of cultural diversity helps social systems better adapt to and cope with change. Consequently, integrating local input into decision making is essential to preserving cultural assets.”*

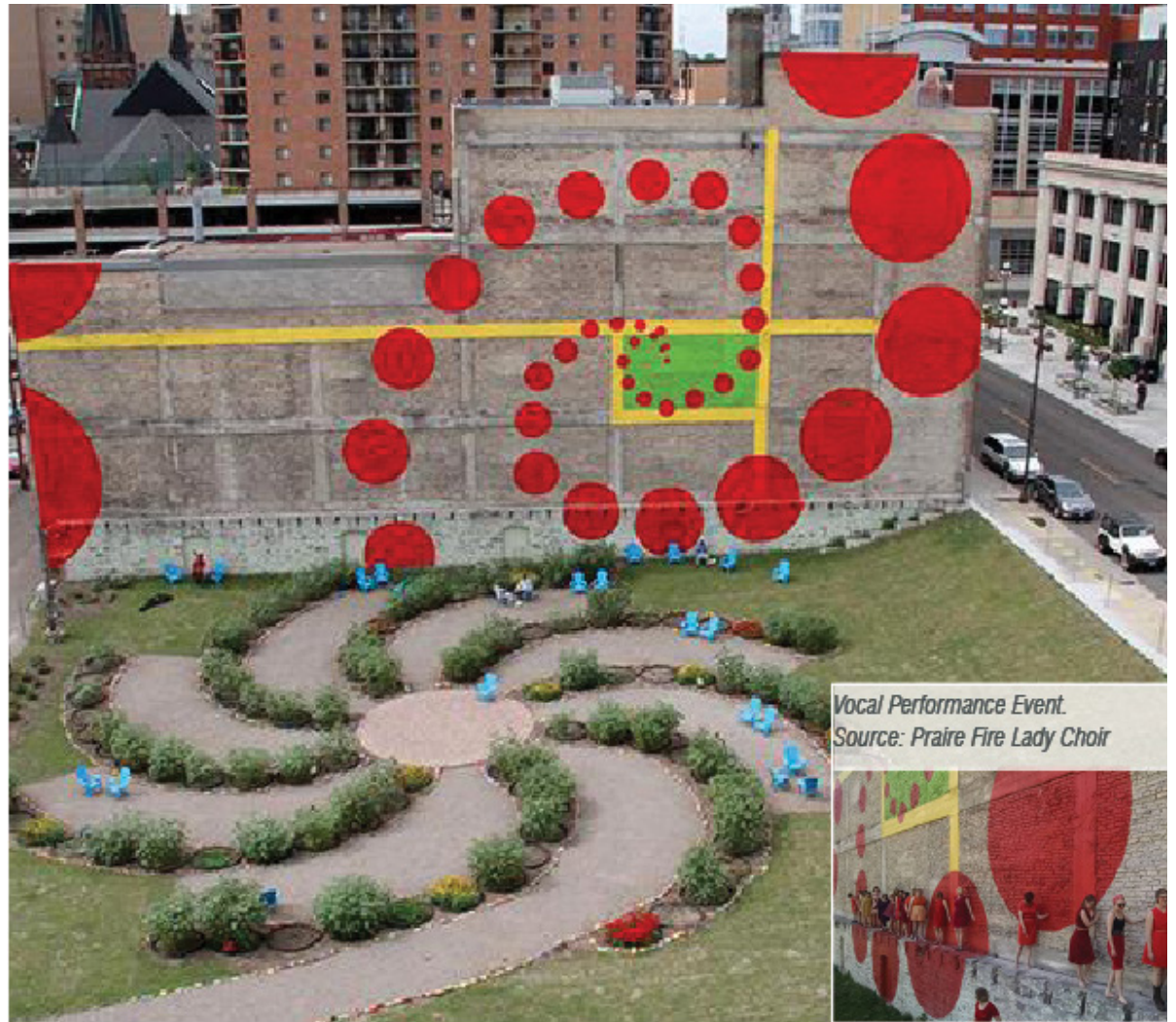
*Source: Inclusive Healthy Places,  
Gehl Institute*



*Benito Juarez Park, City of Maywood, CA. This 40-foot-long mosaic dragon is a popular centerpiece that animates the park. It was inspired from traditional Oaxacan art and created by local artist Jolino Beserra. Located in the most crowded and park-poor community of Los Angeles County, the park is “a neighborhood icon created in the cultural vocabulary of its largely Mexican-American residents” - Trust for Public Land. Source: Trust for Public Land*



(Top and bottom) Wunder Garten in the NoMa BID, Washington DC, is an example of adding a variety of pop up events and program elements to serve the community's need for parks and public spaces. Source: Top: optoro.com; Bottom: Wundergarten DC



Vocal Performance Event.  
Source: Praire Fire Lady Choir

Urban Flower Field, St. Paul, MN. This interim park and mural was created through collaboration between the City of St. Paul Parks and Recreation, Public Art Saint Paul, the University of St. Thomas, Minneapolis College of Art and Design and Neighborhood Volunteers. This temporary space will remain in place while a permanent park is planned and designed. Source: City of St. Paul

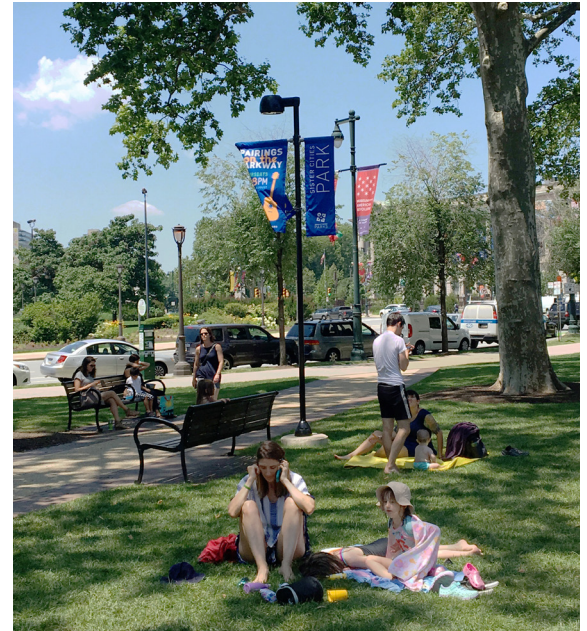
# C.

## COMFORT

### Intent: Make Public Spaces Comfortable and Inviting

Great parks are comfortable to people of all ages, ethnicities and economic backgrounds. Parks and public space design should address the elements of human scale, enclosure and scenery by providing desirable amenities. People need to feel attracted to the space, welcomed in, feel comfortable to stay, and delighted to come back.

1. **ENCLOSURE** - Frame spaces and/or pathways within parks with landscape, trees and/or light fixtures to define the spaces, create edges or to establish a transition from space to space. In parks over ½ acre, provide different spaces and experiences that encourage multiple park uses and users through the creation of different spaces, landscapes, park edges, programs or furnishings.
  - a. **Adequate Building Frontages:** Make sure buildings surrounding the central public space have frontage and publicly accessible areas that face the space to encourage human interaction and activity at the street level. Provide visible access to building entries. Refrain from creating separate “back door” entrances for persons with mobility limitations.
  - b. **Streets:** Ensure that public spaces are bordered by at least one street and that adjacent streets have sidewalks to promote access and circulation from its other edges.
  - c. **Space Hierarchy:** Provide a sense of hierarchy through parks. All parks and open space should have at least one primary space with smaller spaces, pathways and alcoves feeding off them. This hierarchy should encourage greater circulation through the parks and provide multiple experiences such as places to gather as a group, throw a frisbee with friends, take a leisurely walk or jog, and/or to read a book alone.
  - d. **Surroundings:** Integrate public spaces with sidewalks, streets and alleys, circulation routes, recessed entries, courtyards, plazas, through-block connections, and weekend street closures.
  - e. **Scale:** Create opportunities for lively, pedestrian-oriented open spaces to attract interest and encourage interaction with the site, adjacent buildings, and street grid. Provide human-scale places to pause and contemplate views, to play and be active, and to gather with friends, family and community.
  - f. **Microclimate:** Take advantage of microclimate elements to make the best use of the site and bring comfort to pedestrians.
  - i. Wherever possible in parks and open spaces, plant large native tree species with expansive canopies as iconic objects in the space. Large trees maximize evapotranspiration of rain and runoff, minimize heat island effects in the summer and provide shade for park users and adjacent buildings. Provide a balance of shaded and sunny areas.
  - ii. Consider solar exposure and natural ventilation in the placement of park spaces, paths and amenities. These elements are important in promoting park activities throughout different seasons.
  - iii. Add features to mitigate undesirable microclimatic conditions, such as structures to provide shade, and screening to buffer wind and noise.
2. **AMENITY DESIGN AND LOCATION:** Amenities should be located in places that maximize use. Furniture, sports amenities and special features should all support the overall park or open space concept and design.



*Sister Cities Park, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Areas of respite created through tree shade and strategic placement of seating and other features under the shade provide relief from weather and also let visitors stay outdoors and enjoy the public space longer. Source: M-NCPPC*

*(Top left) Ellsworth Plaza, Silver Spring, Maryland. Retail frontage surrounding the plaza provides eyes on the space, promoting a safe and comfortable space for users. Source: M-NCPPC; (Top right) Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The trees, benches, and shrubs provide well defined boundaries, and separation from the hustle and bustle of the adjacent streets and shopping area, while also allowing visibility of the space. Source: PlanPhilly.com; (Bottom) Spruce Street Harbor Park, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Visitors take a break on hammocks during a hot summer afternoon. Source: M-NCPPC*

a. **Furnishings:**

i. **Seating and Tables:** provide a variety of arrangements using comfortable and durable materials that are accessible to all ages and abilities. Permanent seating should be located at the edge of spaces and along connecting pathways where desired. Locate seating to promote views and lines of sight across spaces. Consider movable furniture that allows visitors to make choices and to gather in smaller or larger groups when desired.

ii. **Trash and Recycle Bins:** Place in strategic locations with convenient access for collection and maintenance.

iii. **Bike Racks:** locate near transit stops, adjacent to building entries, near shared parking areas and/or next to play areas. Design bike racks to be attractive, playful and functional.

iv. **Drinking Fountains:** Provide drinking fountains near areas near areas of physical activity that are accessible to all such as playgrounds, multi-use courts, trail heads, and exercise equipment. Design drinking fountains to be attractive, playful and functional.

b. **Visitor Facilities:** In larger parks or open spaces that allow for additional park facilities such as bathrooms or concession stands, design them to be adjacent to primary circulation routes and to maximize safe use.

i. **Restrooms** - consider providing public

restrooms, especially if the public space is a regional destination and cannot rely on surrounding uses to provide service.

ii. **Concession/ kiosk** - should be located in a way that maximizes use yet minimizes interruption of primary park spaces.

iii. **Wi-Fi** - wherever possible, consider providing Wi-Fi access in public spaces.

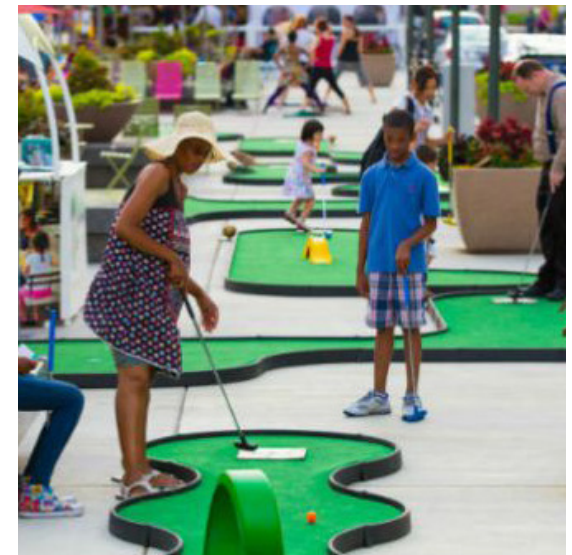
3. **SAFETY:** Provide programming, visibility and active uses to encourage human interaction and promote a sense of personal safety.

a. **Crime Prevention Through Environmental**

**Design (CPTED):** Apply principles of CPTED by providing open lines of sight throughout parks and public spaces. Encourage natural surveillance through strategic placement of trees, shrubs and furniture.

b. **Lighting:** Provide adequate lighting to highlight the public space as community focal points and to highlight special buildings and features throughout the day and evening. Consider seasonal lighting and provide adequate light levels to support pedestrian safety and security at central spaces and pathways at night. Light levels and the direction of lighting should maximize safety yet minimize night sky light pollution in the surrounding neighborhood.

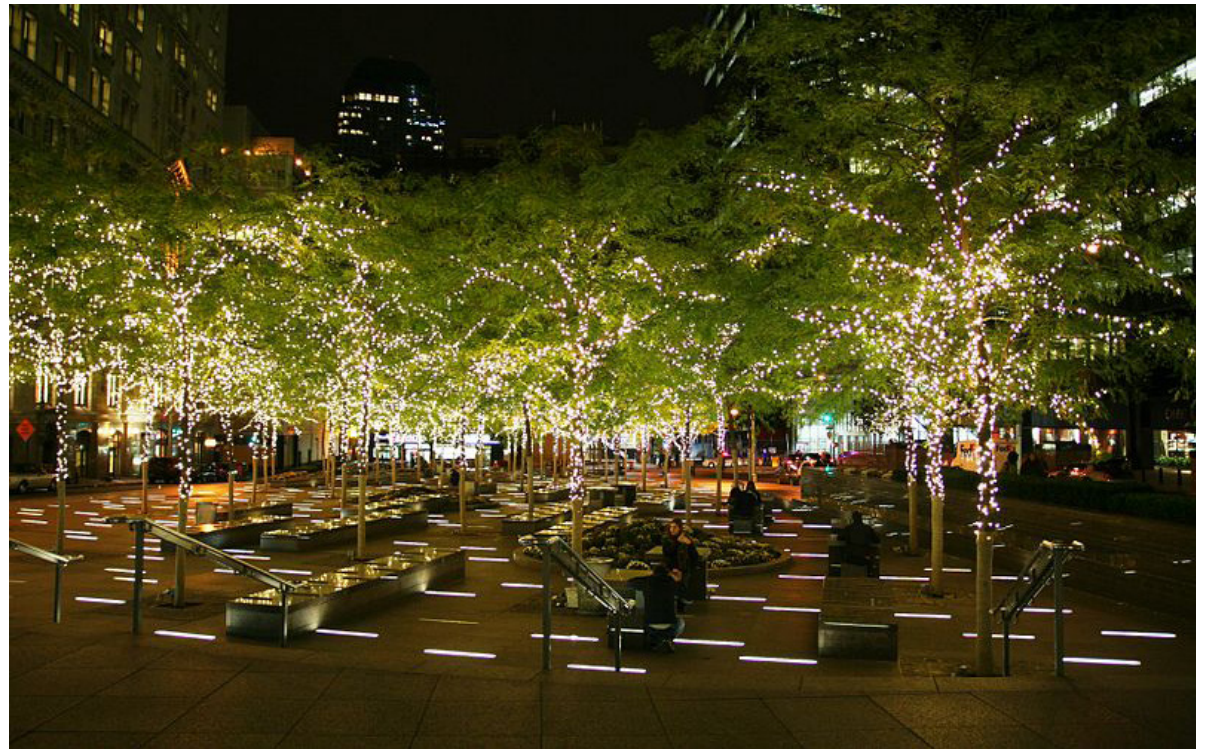
c. **Ground Floor Transparency:** Provide adequate transparency at the ground level, especially at gathering areas and building entries and view corridors. Transparency provides the pedestrian



(Top and bottom) The Porch at 30th Street Station, Philadelphia, PA. Through creative seating with swing seats and shade canopies, as well as pop up events, visitors enjoy the space and socialize in a comfortable setting. Source: [universitycity.org](http://universitycity.org)

the ability to see or perceive certain activities and spaces in and around the public spaces.

- d. **Landscape:** Along walkways and more isolated play areas, provide appropriate native tree species with high canopies and low shrub species to maximize sight lines and minimize places to hide. Maintain landscape so that there is permanent visibility across open spaces.
- e. **Maintenance:** Design the spaces to allow efficient access for operations and maintenance with support facilities (if needed) integral to the overall design. Incorporate maintenance needs from the beginning of the park design process. Provide access to water, maintenance vehicles where needed and appropriate infrastructure year-round.



*Christmas lights at Zuccotti Park, New York City, NY. Lighting allows activity within public spaces beyond daylight hours. This also helps to activate spaces where people feel safe and comfortable. Source: Wikipedia*

*“Many successful plazas have one common element: a sense of continuous enclosure. Think of it as an outdoor living room with the surrounding buildings as walls. You’re walking down the street and you suddenly enter this large open gathering space bordered by buildings. Without this sense of enclosure, you feel exposed to traffic and other flows of the city. An enclosed plaza feels more like a space to stay than a wide corridor to walk through.” Source: Projexity Blog (2015)*

# D.

## VARIETY

### Intent: Provide Flexible Spaces for a Diversity of Activities and Experiences

Parks and public spaces allow people to gather in a common place and share a range of activities and physical experiences that can be either active or contemplative. Urban parks and public spaces should encourage a diversity of uses by delivering unique spaces and features that accommodate social interaction. A variety of programming options should be employed at these spaces to serve different audiences.

#### 1. FLEXIBILITY:

a. **Design:** Spaces should be designed to be flexible to accommodate multiple types of programs and events. These programs should be able to celebrate the physical, social, cultural, and natural features of the site and respond to the diversity within communities.

i. **Street Closure:** Design the edges of public spaces to incorporate temporary street closures, where feasible, to provide additional space for activities and events, especially during the weekends.

ii. **All weather/season:** In parks and open spaces large and small, consider how events such as food festivals, markets, games, movies, music, art and/or sports etc. can be accommodated over different times of the year. Consider integrating seasonal planting and appropriate infrastructure for these events.

b. **Multiple and Simultaneous Uses:** In parks and open spaces large and small, consider how events such as food festivals, markets, games, movies, concerts, art shows and/or sports etc. can be accommodated simultaneously when desired. Foster interaction opportunities.

i. **All ages:** Provide activity areas for all ages, interests and backgrounds. Multi-generational facilities are encouraged.

ii. **All Experiences:** Provide spaces for active recreation, contemplation and social gathering.

iii. **Multi-Use Spaces/Facilities/Furnishings:** Give preference to multi-use spaces, play fields and courts instead of specialized uses. Buildings located inside public spaces should be designed for flexible uses to accommodate changes in the program and demographics. Consider movable seating to allow flexibility in accommodating

different spatial configurations and numbers of users. Consider including space for informal community-scale events such as performances, farmer's markets, kiosks and community bulletin boards, cafes, or street vendors.

iv. **Community Open Space:** Create versatile spaces by providing continuous areas of lawn or pavement surrounded by paths.

v. **Diverse users:** Consider female and male, kids and seniors, people walking through or lingering.

2. **DIVERSE PROGRAMMING:** Design spaces that allow a diversity of programs in public spaces.

a. **Promote Placemaking:** "Placemaking is a people-centered approach to the planning process, design and management of public spaces. Put simply, it makes people feel good about where they live, work or play. It involves the action of looking at, listening to, and asking questions of the people who live, work and play in a particular space, When



the people come together, they experience and discover the community's needs and aspirations. A community's vision is then derived through their interactions with each other within the place." Refer to the M-NCPPC effort and approach to placemaking: <http://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/placemaking/>

- b. **Diverse Schedule of Operations:** Design flexible public spaces to host different activities throughout the course of the day, week or year. Design spaces for evening activity to give those who work and/or study during the day an opportunity to enjoy public spaces.
- c. **Diverse Scale of Events:** Consider space for programming and events at different scales to attract diverse users.

*"A space performs well when people use it—especially when those people come from diverse groups and interact with each other, which promotes inclusion. Numerous studies have suggested that exposure to people who are different from one's self—including differences in race, sexual preference, or religion—increases tolerance and empathy toward others. Creating spaces that invite a diversity of users helps build a more inclusive and equitable community for all." Source: Inclusive Healthy Places, Gehl Institute*



(Top and bottom left) Bryant Park, New York City, NY. Bryant Park is a great example of flexible furnishings, diverse programming, and supporting amenities that allows all-season use. Source: Wikimedia. (Bottom right) Mission Dolores Park, San Francisco, has a large unprogrammed lawn area that accommodates small to large scale events. This is used for picnics and active recreation at other times. Source: SF.Curbed.com

# E.

## CONNECTIONS

### Intent: Enhance Community Connections

Successful public spaces are connected to their surrounding neighborhoods and easily accessible to all - including children, seniors and individuals with disabilities. Connections should prioritize the pedestrian experience: the arrival, the navigation of the space, and the selection of different clusters of activities and destinations, and then departure. Public spaces should be integrated to the network of existing parks, other public spaces, ecological and historic/cultural areas and community destination areas.

#### 1. ACCESS:

##### a. Prioritize Pedestrian Circulation:

- i. Pedestrian circulation should be prioritized over other transportation uses (bicycles, motorized vehicles)
- ii. Provide direct pedestrian connections through the space to public transit and to adjacent public and private pedestrian infrastructure.
- iii. Provide ample space for pedestrian flow and circulation, especially in areas where there is already heavy pedestrian traffic or where the project is expected to increase pedestrian traffic.
- iv. Locate activity areas and programming in spaces that are centrally located in relation to view corridors, entries, public transit and the street grid.
- v. Add features to assist pedestrians in navigating sloped sites, long blocks, or other site challenges. Include exterior stairs and landings, escalators, elevators, non-

slip ground surfaces, seating at key resting points, through-block connections and ramps for wheeled devices to areas for recreation, education, and habitat preservation.

- vi. Consider implementing “woonerf:” roadways shared by pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles where appropriate.

b. **Access to All:** Make the public space feel welcoming to all. Meet the needs of diverse communities to promote equitable access. Integrate universal access into site design. Consider children, seniors and individuals with disabilities.

c. **Connect with Nature:** Provide opportunities to connect to off-site natural areas to promote a continuous habitat and increase migration corridors wherever possible. Promote watershed connectivity through education and best stormwater management practices. Where possible, daylight and/or restore existing waterways.

d. **Gateways:** Design access points with distinguished features so all visitors can be greeted and welcomed through the front door.

e. **Loading/Service Areas:** Place loading/service areas away from main entries and storefronts surrounding the public space, when possible. Provide vegetated buffers to loading/service areas surrounding the public space.

#### 2. MULTIPLE CHOICES:

a. **Integrate Mobility:** Locate public spaces in proximity and accessible to transportation options and connected to a network of streets and sidewalks, trails and mid-block connections that offer safe pedestrian access and crossings to areas for recreation, education, and habitat preservation.

b. **Parking:** Where multiple transportation options such as walking, biking and transit are readily available, public spaces should not contain dedicated parking lots. Provide shared parking

*“One study found that people living within a half-mile of a park participate in 38 percent more exercise sessions per week than people who live further away.”*  
Source: *Inclusive Healthy Places*, Gehl Institute

on streets and at nearby surface parking lots or garages where possible.

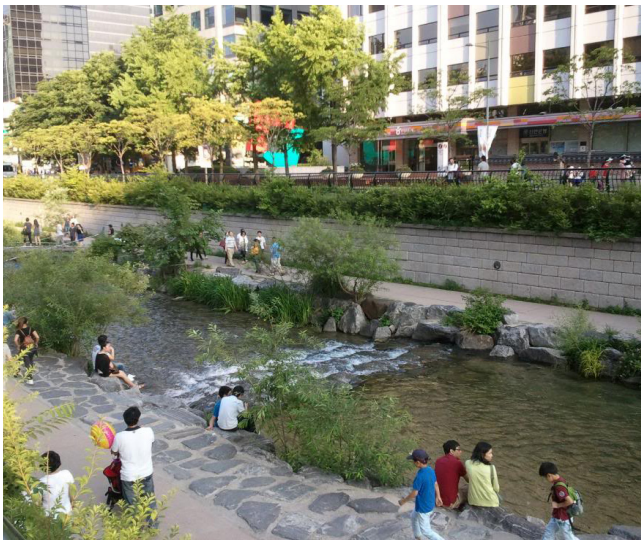
3. **WAYFINDING:** Provide clear and creative wayfinding to connect different spaces.

a. **Hours of Operations:** Provide clear and visible

signage for park operations hours and closures, a map of the park, and educational information, where appropriate.

b. **Signage:** Consider graphic and visual language to connect a network of public spaces within the

same neighborhood/district. Consider the use of public art and community engagement to create signage and make people feel welcomed.



*Cheonggyecheon Stream, Seoul. The Cheonggyecheon Stream Restoration project brought a dramatic transformation to an industrial eyesore by demolishing an elevated freeway and uncovering a section of the historic Cheonggyecheon Stream that was restored as an ecological and recreational asset for citizens to enjoy. The transformation also spurred economic growth bringing in growth and investment to the area. Source: M-NCPPC*



*University of Washington, Seattle, WA. Wider sidewalks allow comfortable pedestrian connections. Benches, trees and bike racks create socially inviting space and provide safe connections for pedestrians and commuters. Source: GGN (Gustafson Guthrie Nichol) Landscape Architects*



*“Safe Routes to Parks is NRPA’s campaign to implement environmental, policy, and program strategies that create safe and equitable access to parks for all people. These strategies align with the goals of the 10-Minute Walk campaign and are great tools and resources to increase access and safe walking connections to parks.” - National Recreation and Park Association. Source: NRPA*



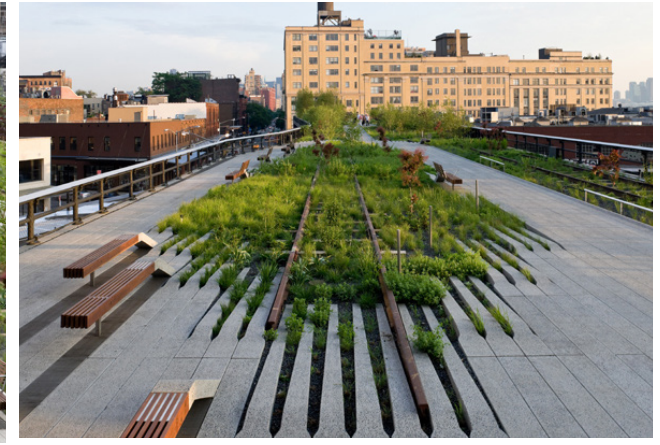
*Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston, MA. This is a linear series of parks and gardens that re-connect many of Boston’s neighborhoods. Well-connected to the street grid and transit lines, the park is easily accessible by public transportation, walking and biking. Source: Nancy Lane/Boston Herald*



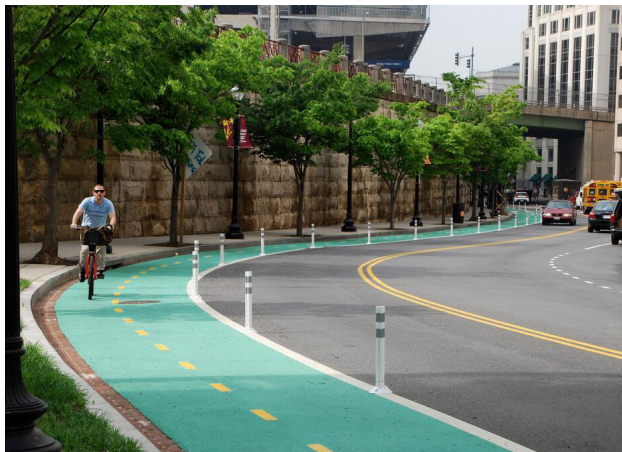
*Clear and strategic placement of wayfinding and signage assist navigation to and within a public space. Creative and inclusive designs that are accessible and representative of the users, such as tactile or multilingual signs, can provide diverse and safe connections for all. Source: Calgary Riverwalk*



*Designing safe connections to public spaces for all ages and abilities enables parks to function as multi-generational and inclusive spaces. Source: Indyculturaltrail.org*



*High Line Park, New York, NY. The High Line is a successful example of reimagining an abandoned transportation infrastructure into an innovative and integrated system - a linear public park. Running along 20 blocks, this new space delivers an urban corridor connecting habitat, wildlife and people. A design of a new paving and planting system allowing varying ratios of hard to soft surface accommodates high pedestrian traffic flow and allows planting along its path. Each element in the design considered sustainable principles such as: material selection keeping low life-cycle costs of selected materials; native, drought-resistant plant species to fit the High Line's micro-climates; and water recirculation for some parts of the park. Source: ASLA*



*Separated bike paths provide safe connections for bikers, allowing multi-modal connections to parks and public spaces. Source: M-NCPPC*



*Yanweizhou Park, Jinhua City, China. The park designers delivered a bridge and path system withing this park that connects the city with nature and accounts for the dynamic water currents and pedestrian traffic flow. Source: [www.landezine.com](http://www.landezine.com); M-NCPPC*



*Downtown East Commons, Minneapolis, MN. Sidewalks with food truck parking bring enclosure and activity for safe pedestrian circulation around the edges of the park. Creative landscaping and seating options also create a human scale for pedestrians. Source: Hargreaves Associates*

## 2.3 Checklist

### CONTEXT: Incorporate Site Context in the Placement of Public Spaces

- 1. **ADJACENCIES:** Ensure public spaces relate to adjacent streets, open spaces, architecture and landscape.
  - a. **Public Realm**
  - b. **Architecture/Landscape**
  - c. **Defined Space**
  - d. **Views**
- 2. **EXISTING CONDITIONS:** Take advantage of existing geography, landscapes, topography and microclimate. Use existing topography to inform park design and to minimize extreme excavation or grading. Consider balanced terracing to accommodate major grade changes and to enhance important views.
- 3. **PLANNED CONDITIONS:** Consider nearby planned development and infrastructure improvements to design with the flexibility to integrate those assets and constraints into a cohesive neighborhood plan.

### PLACE: Celebrate and Incorporate Community Identity

- 1. **IDENTITY:** Incorporate physical, social, cultural and natural features of the site into the design of the park or public space.
- 2. **FEATURES:** Design features that will attract people to the public space and make it a destination, or community focal point.
  - a. **Signage**
  - b. **Public Art**
  - c. **Historic Features**
  - d. **Natural Features**
- 3. **COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PROCESS:** Engage the community early in the design process to ensure the design is meaningful and reflective of community identity. Engage stakeholders such as property owners, developers, non-profit groups, community members, artists, and public agencies to collaborate in delivering creative design solutions and development strategies.
  - a. **Temporary Places**
  - b. **Performance Surveys**
  - c. **Environmental Stewardship**

## COMFORT: Make Public Spaces Comfortable and Inviting

- 1. **ENCLOSURE** - Frame spaces and/or pathways within parks with landscape, trees and/or light fixtures to define the spaces, create edges or to establish a transition from space to space.
  - a. **Adequate Building Frontages**
  - b. **Streets**
  - c. **Space Hierarchy**
  - d. **Surroundings**
  - e. **Scale**
  - f. **Microclimate**
  
- 2. **AMENITY DESIGN AND LOCATION:** Amenities should be located in places that maximize use.
  - a. **Furnishings**
  - b. **Visitor Facilities**

- 3. **SAFETY:** Provide programming, visibility and active uses to encourage human interaction and promote a sense of personal safety.
  - a. **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**
  - b. **Lighting**
  - c. **Ground Floor Transparency**
  - d. **Landscape**
  - e. **Maintenance**

## VARIETY: Provide Flexible Spaces for a Diversity of Activities and Experiences

- 1. **FLEXIBILITY:**
  - a. **Design:** Spaces should be designed to be flexible to accommodate multiple types of programs and events.
  - b. **Multiple and Simultaneous Uses**
- 2. **DIVERSE PROGRAMMING:** Design spaces that allow a diversity of programs in public spaces.
  - a. **Promote Placemaking**
  - b. **Diverse Schedule of Operations**
  - c. **Diverse Scale of Events**

## CONNECTIONS: Enhance Community Connections

- 1. **ACCESS**
  - a. **Prioritize Pedestrian Circulation**
  - b. **Access to All**
  - c. **Connect with Nature**
  - d. **Gateways**
  - e. **Loading/Service Areas**
- 2. **MULTIPLE CHOICES**
  - a. **Integrate Mobility**
  - b. **Parking**
- 3. **WAYFINDING:** Provide clear and creative wayfinding to connect different spaces.
  - a. **Hours of Operations**
  - b. **Signage**



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Illustration by Atul Sharma

# 3

## URBAN PARK TYPES DESIGN ELEMENTS

*“...public spaces matter, that people can be mobilized to save and expand them, and that there is always hope for the future...especially when people learn to cherish and work to preserve the rich variety of public spaces in their own often rapidly-changing, modernizing, noisy, tumultuous and colourful city.”*

*From the book: “Public Spaces: How They Humanize Cities”.*

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# 3.1 Urban Park Types

Montgomery County parks are classified into two broad categories - Countywide Parks and Community Use Parks, with several park types in each category. The urban park typology was identified in the *2017 PROS Plan* with a park hierarchy based on each park's major function, service area, programs and key community features. These parks should be incorporated into the County's street and public open space.

The *2017 PROS Plan* recommends that for each urban area, a unique open space system be planned to serve the projected demographics of residents, workers, and visitors. The urban design vision developed in future master plan or sector plans will help guide the service area, program, key features, size and design of these open spaces. If an urban park accommodates the functions of one or more park types, the predominant function, program, features and context will determine the park type within the hierarchy of open spaces.

## COUNTYWIDE

The *2017 PROS Plan* defines four types of Countywide Urban Parks. These park types serve residents, visitors, and workers in a larger urban high-density transit-oriented development area. They are programmed with numerous activities to have a regional draw within the County. Parking should be located within structures, underground or in nearby public parking lots, or along adjoining streets, rather than on-site. Parks may be lighted at night along major circulation routes, event venues and/or at sports courts.

### 3.1.1 Civic Green

These spaces are formally planned, flexible, programmable open spaces that serve as places for informal gathering, quiet contemplation, or large special events. Depending on size, they may support open air markets, concerts, festivals, and/or special events but are not often used for programmed recreational purposes. A large central lawn is often the main focus, with adjacent spaces providing complementary uses such as gardens, water features and/or shade structures.

### 3.1.2 Plaza

Plazas align with and complement the Civic Green park type. Plazas are formally planned, predominantly hardscaped open spaces for pedestrian traffic near transit stops and/or commercial and higher density residential uses. Depending on size, plazas may support activities including open air markets, concerts, festivals, and special events, but are not often used for active recreational purposes. They should face streets and building frontages to maximize pedestrian use and exposure and have access to sunlight.

### 3.1.3 Urban Recreational Park

Oriented to the recreational needs of densely populated neighborhoods and districts, this type of park provides space for many activities. Athletic fields, playing courts, picnic areas, dog parks, sitting areas and flexible grassy open space are all common in this park type. Programming can include farmer's markets, outdoor exercise classes, and/or community yard sales, etc. There should be space for safe drop-offs and accessible parking for those who cannot walk to the park.

### 3.1.4 Urban Greenway

This is a linear park that provides trails or wide landscaped walkways and bikeways that may include other recreational and natural amenities such as playgrounds, seating and other furnishings, fitness stations and large trees. This type should specifically link to other green spaces, trails, natural systems, walkways, and bikeways, with extra space for vegetative ground cover and trees. Amenities may occur along road rights-of-way or “paper” streets.

## COMMUNITY USE

Many of the County’s developed Community Use Urban Parks are in the down-County with concentrations in the Bethesda and Silver Spring areas. They serve an important role as gathering places for the community and accommodate activities such as concerts and performances, celebrations, fairs, and outdoor places for area employees to have lunch. These parks may be programmed for more localized events and parking should not be provided on park property.

### 3.1.5 Neighborhood Green

Neighborhood Greens serve residents and workers from the surrounding neighborhood. This park type

is formally planned, yet flexible to serve informal gatherings, lunchtime relaxation, or small special event gatherings. A major lawn area, shaded seating and pathways are typical facilities, with additional play areas, skating and/or community gardens also encouraged.

### 3.1.6 Urban Recreational Parklet

These park types serve residents and workers from the immediate neighborhood and are designed for active recreation. Typical facilities include sport courts, skating areas, and may include lawns, playgrounds or similar neighborhood recreation facilities.

### 3.1.7 Pocket Green

Also typically referred to as Pocket Park, the Pocket Green will play an important role in the formation of a public space network through higher density areas. These smaller park types will allow for “pauses” in a landscaped setting along the route between major and larger open spaces within the network.

Pocket Greens are particularly important in areas where commercial activities are taking place. They are highly visible and allow workers to take a lunch or coffee

break while enjoying a contemplative environment with pedestrians strolling by. They can provide seating, areas to eat, and small play areas or game areas. This park type will serve residents, workers and visitors from the nearby blocks.

Research has suggested that smaller breaks during the work schedule increases productivity and health, especially mental health. Due to its small scale, the space should be highly visible from the street, and connect to the public space network and include access to sunlight, important view corridors, connection to the network of public spaces, and protection from the wind, traffic and noise.

### 3.1.8 Temporary/Interim Park

Parks and public spaces sometimes take a long time to be constructed due to the significant amount of investment and resources required. Temporary/Interim Parks can be implemented faster and at a lower cost as a temporary commitment to respond to the community’s current needs. Owners and/or county staff can use these temporary facilities to collect information on the potential programming and functions that might occur in a future permanent park or public space. The term temporary is used for spaces that are not currently planned for parks or public space,

but can accommodate the function for a certain period of time. The term interim is used for spaces that will become a park or public space in the future, but likely cannot be implemented in the short-term.

## Urban Park Matrix

Table 3.1 consolidates the main unique elements of each urban park type, side-by-side to better understand the different roles that each urban park plays within the network of public and privately-owned public spaces.

Unless stated, there is no hierarchy to these elements, and compliance with the guidelines does not guarantee approval from staff or the Planning Board. Design proposals will be evaluated based on a combination of factors, including these guidelines. The Planning Board may suggest and approve alternative design approaches that deliver truly exceptional solutions.



*White Flint Placemaking Festival, Montgomery County, MD. Community-led event at the Randolph Hills Shopping Center parking lot turned into a buzzing hub of activities. Events included: music by local performers, food booths by vendors and restaurants from the area, lots of games and recreational activities for young and old, and even s'mores made over the fire pits. This community-led event was organized by M-NCPPC together with the Better Block Foundation. The sector plan identifies a park within this site if redevelopment occurs. Source: M-NCPPC.*

|                            |                                   | CIVIC GREEN   | PLAZA  | URBAN GREENWAY  |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <b>KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS</b> | <b>FUNCTION/<br/>SERVICE AREA</b> | COMMUNITY GATHERING OPEN SPACE<br>REGIONAL DESTINATION<br>SERVES SECTOR PLAN AREAS<br>ACCOMMODATES LOCAL DAILY USES   | COMMUNITY GATHERING PLACE<br>REGIONAL DESTINATION<br>SERVES SECTOR PLAN AREAS IN HIGH PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC ZONES<br>ACCOMMODATES LOCAL DAILY USES  | NETWORK CONNECTOR<br>REGIONAL DESTINATION<br>SERVES SECTOR PLAN AREAS<br>OPEN SPACES NETWORK CONNECTOR: LINEAR AND CONTINUOUS PARKS AND OPEN SPACES<br>ACCOMMODATES LOCAL DAILY USES  |
|                            | <b>MAIN PROGRAM</b>               | FOCUS ON SOCIAL GATHERING<br>FLEXIBLE PROGRAM<br>INFORMAL GATHERING<br>PLACES FOR QUIET CONTEMPLATION<br>UNSTRUCTURED RECREATION<br>LARGE COMMUNITY GATHERINGS  |  | ACTIVE PROGRAMMING AND EXPOSURE TO NATURE<br>ALONG WIDE LANDSCAPED WALKWAYS AND BIKEWAYS, COMMUTING, RECREATIONAL TRAVEL (BIKING, WALKING, JOGGING, ETC.)   |
|                            | <b>KEY FEATURES</b>               | LARGE CENTRAL LAWN AS FOCAL POINT<br>ABUNDANCE OF SEATING OPTIONS (SUNNY AND SHADED OPTIONS)<br>PUBLIC ART: EXPLORE INTERACTIVE INSTALLATIONS WITH EDUCATION COMPONENT<br>VISITOR AMENITIES   | LARGE CENTRAL HARDSCAPE AS FOCAL POINT<br>ABUNDANCE OF SEATING OPTIONS (SUNNY AND SHADED OPTIONS)<br>PUBLIC ART: EXPLORE INTERACTIVE INSTALLATIONS WITH EDUCATION COMPONENT<br>VISITOR AMENITIES | TRAILS WITH WALKWAYS AND BIKEWAYS<br>LINED BY VEGETATIVE GROUND COVER AND TREES<br>GOOD WAYFINDING SIGNAGE WITH CLEAR ENTRIES TO TRAILHEADS   |
|                            | <b>SITE PLACEMENT</b>             | AT THE CENTER OF MIXED USE AREAS<br>CLEAR DELINEATION BETWEEN THE PUBLIC SPACE AND ADJACENT PRIVATE REALM<br>MAXIMIZE BUILDING ENTRANCES AND WINDOWS FACING ONTO THE PARK: STOREFRONTS, MULTIPLE TOWNHOUSE OR APARTMENT STOOPS AND PORCHES, PRIMARY BUILDING ENTRANCES<br>SEAMLESS TRANSITION BETWEEN THE PARK AND THE STREET SIDEWALK SURROUNDED BY MINIMUM OF TWO STREETS, IDEALLY FOUR STREETS SURROUNDED BY ACTIVATING USES<br>SHOULD NOT BE LOCATED BEHIND USES<br>MUST NEVER BE LOCATED IN RESIDUAL/SURPLUS/LEFT-OVER SPACE |  | CONNECTOR TO OTHER PUBLIC SPACES AND NATURAL AREAS<br>MAY FOLLOW NATURAL RESOURCES & RECREATIONAL AREAS ALONG ROAD ROWS ENOUGH SETBACK FROM BUILDINGS TO PRESERVE CONTINUITY OF PATH/TRAIL AS PUBLIC ACCESSIBLE SPACE<br>TRAIL ENTRANCES SHOULD BE VISIBLE AND ACCESSIBLE |
|                            | <b>SIZE</b>                       | ½ ACRE MINIMUM; 1 ½ ACRE IDEAL  | ½ ACRE MINIMUM; 1 ACRE IDEAL   | WIDTH = MINIMUM 10-FT TRAIL PLUS BUFFER VEGETATION (AASHTO)<br>ENOUGH SETBACK FROM BUILDINGS TO PRESERVE CONTINUITY OF PATH/TRAIL AS A LINEAR PUBLIC SPACE  |

Table 3.1 - Urban Parks Types Matrix: Comparison on Key Design Elements



| URBAN RECREATIONAL PARK   | URBAN RECREATIONAL PARKLET  | NEIGHBORHOOD GREEN  | POCKET GREEN  | TEMPORARY/ INTERIM PARK  |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <p>FOCUS ON ACTIVE PLAY REGIONAL DESTINATION<br/>SERVES SECTOR PLAN AREAS ACCOMMODATES LOCAL DAILY USES ACCOMMODATES LARGER GROUP RECREATION (TEAM SPORTS)</p>  | <p>PLACE FOCUS ON ACTIVE PLAY LOCAL DESTINATION<br/>SERVES NEIGHBORHOOD/DISTRICT CONNECTED TO PUBLIC SPACES NETWORK</p> | <p>NEIGHBORHOOD GATHERING PLACE LOCAL DESTINATION<br/>SERVES NEIGHBORHOOD/DISTRICT</p>  | <p>PLACE FOR PAUSE LOCAL DESTINATION<br/>SERVES NEIGHBORHOOD/DISTRICT CONNECTED TO PUBLIC SPACES NETWORK</p>  | <p>EXPERIMENTAL PLACE REGIONAL &amp; LOCAL DESTINATION ASSOCIATED TO THE FUNCTION OF ONE OF THE URBAN PARK TYPES DEFINED IN COLLABORATION WITH THE COMMUNITY</p> |
| <p>PRIMARILY RECREATIONAL PROGRAM FOCUSED ON ACTIVE RECREATION SUPPORTED BY CONTEMPLATIVE SETTING AND SOCIAL GATHERING SPACES ACTIVITIES TO ACCOMMODATE ALL AGE GROUPS</p>  |   | <p>MIX OF SOCIAL GATHERING, ACTIVE RECREATION &amp; CONTEMPLATIVE AREAS<br/>FLEXIBLE PROGRAM<br/>INFORMAL GATHERING<br/>PLACES FOR QUIET CONTEMPLATION<br/>UNSTRUCTURED RECREATION<br/>LOCAL COMMUNITY GATHERINGS</p> | <p>CONTEMPLATIVE AREAS SUPPORTED BY SOCIAL GATHERING AND ACTIVE RECREATION IN SMALLER SCALE FLEXIBLE PROGRAM<br/>PLACES FOR QUIET CONTEMPLATION<br/>UNSTRUCTURED RECREATION<br/>CONTACT WITH NATURE</p> | <p>VARIES<br/>FLEXIBLE PROGRAM BASED ON SELECTED URBAN PARK TYPE</p>   |
| <p>PLAYING COURTS AND FIELDS<br/>MIX OF HARDSCAPE AND GRASSY OPEN SPACES<br/>MIX OF RESERVED AND UNRESERVED RECREATION SPACES<br/>CONSIDER CENTRAL LAWN AS THE FOCAL POINT WITH SUNNY AND SHADED AREAS AND SURROUNDED BY ACTIVATING USES<br/>MULTI-FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURES, INCLUDING PARK FURNITURE</p>            |   | <p>LAWN AREA SURROUNDED BY COMPLEMENTARY USES<br/>SHADED SEATING AND SUNNY AREAS<br/>FLEXIBLE PLAY AREAS<br/>CONSIDER PUBLIC ART</p>  | <p>SUNLIT SMALL GATHERING AREAS WITH A MIX OF SHADED AND SUNNY SEATING<br/>SMALL SCALE GREEN AREAS<br/>SMALL PLAY AREAS</p>   | <p>PILOT ACTIVITIES FOR FUTURE PARK/PUBLIC SPACE<br/>ACTIVITIES/STRUCTURES= INCLUSIVE AND EASY TO PARTICIPATE</p>  |
| <p>WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE OF HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL AREAS<br/>PLACEMENT FACING ADJACENT COMMUNITY-ORIENTED USES: RECREATION CENTERS, LIBRARIES, ETC.<br/>BUILDING ENTRANCES FACING THE PARK - VISUALLY AND PHYSICALLY ACCESSIBLE<br/>FOR PARKLET: FACE MAJOR SIDEWALK ALONGSIDE STOREFRONTS</p> |   | <p>CENTER OF HIGH RESIDENTIAL USE<br/>PLACEMENT FACING ADJACENT COMMUNITY-ORIENTED USES: RECREATION CENTERS, LIBRARIES, ETC.<br/>BUILDING ENTRANCES FACING THE PARK - VISUALLY AND PHYSICALLY ACCESSIBLE</p>          | <p>MAXIMIZE SUN EXPOSURE IN LOCATIONS IN-BETWEEN TALL BUILDINGS<br/>PROVIDE CONNECTIVITY TO OTHER PUBLIC SPACES AND TRANSIT</p>   | <p>VARIES<br/>BASED ON SELECTED URBAN PARK TYPE<br/>PROVIDE ADA ACCESS<br/>SHOULD BE PLACED IN A VISIBLE LOCATION</p>  |
| <p>VARIES<br/>BASED ON COMMUNITY SERVED</p>   | <p>1/10 ACRE MINIMUM</p>  | <p>1/4 ACRE MINIMUM</p>   | <p>1/10 - 1/4 ACRE AVERAGE SIZE</p>   | <p>VARIES<br/>BASED ON AVAILABLE LAND</p>  |

# 3.1.1 Civic Green



**Crown Park, Gaithersburg, MD.**

Source: [smarturbanliving.com](http://smarturbanliving.com)

Centrally located common green within active, mixed-use community. The public space is framed by two streets, mixed-use buildings, retail stores and townhomes, all facing towards the green space. Restaurants offer outdoor seating integrated with the public realm and community-focused events, festivals and public markets.

Size: 0.68 acres; lawn area: ~0.23 acres.

## FUNCTION/SERVICE AREA

- Community gathering open space
- Regional destination
- Serves sector plan areas
- Accommodates local daily uses

## MAIN PROGRAM

- Focus on social gathering
- Flexible program
- Informal gathering
- Places for quiet contemplation
- Unstructured recreation
- Large community gatherings
- Can also accommodate places for quiet contemplation

## KEY FEATURES

- Large central lawn as focal point with sunny & shaded areas & seating
- Abundance of seating options (sunny and shaded options)
- Public art: explore interactive installations with education component
- Visitor amenities

## SITE PLACEMENT

- Clear delineation between the public space and adjacent private realm
- Maximize building entrances and windows facing onto the park: storefronts, multiple townhouse or apartment stoops and porches, primary building entrances

- Seamless transitions between the park and the street sidewalk
- Surrounded by minimum of two streets, ideally four streets
- Surrounded by activating uses
- Should not be located behind uses
- Must never be located in residual/surplus/left-over space

## SIZE

- ½ acre minimum; 1 ½ acres ideal



**Schenley Plaza, Pittsburgh, PA.** Source: Sasaki  
 Former parking lot transformed into a gateway and green heart of the city. Key features: central lawn area surrounded by institutional buildings facing the space and streets on four sides. The introduction of food kiosks and a restaurant makes the space a destination even without a major event. The seasonal shade structure and trees along major circulation routes provide shade for those who want to escape the sunny areas. The adjacent bosque area in front of one of the institutional buildings offers a great extension of shaded area to the place. Road closure for special events like the one shown in this picture, integrates the plaza with its neighboring public spaces. The presence of smaller courtyards and formal gardens along the main street helps the transition from busy traffic to an inviting green lawn and provides a buffer during events.  
 Size: 3.4 acres; lawn area: ~1.0 acre

**Bryant Park, New York.**

Source: Bryant Park Corporation, Wikipedia

Right: Southwest Terrace Cafe - food kiosks make Bryant Park a daily destination for workers while also serving visitors during major holidays and the vacation season.

Further right: The Lawn - this central open space offers a variety of uses from people watching to group conversations to major events such as movie nights and concerts. Movable seating provides flexibility to accommodate different types of gatherings.

Size: ~5.6 acres; lawn area: ~ 1.0 acre.



# 3.1.2 Plaza



**Union Square, San Francisco.** Source: [resaconvention.com](http://resaconvention.com)

Left: Main plaza overview with large central hardscape as focal point & surrounded by activating uses: hotel, commercial and retail buildings facing the space. In addition, the plaza paving eases congestion on sidewalks from surrounding commercial uses, transit stops and parking garage located at the plaza. Center: edge of the plaza faces storefronts across the streets and offer seating options for pausing and people watching. Right: flexible central hardscape offers opportunities for large community events such as movie nights. Size: 2.6 acres.

## FUNCTION/ SERVICE AREA:

- Community gathering place
- Regional destination
- Serves sector plan areas in high pedestrian traffic zones
- Accommodates local daily uses

## MAIN PROGRAM:

- Focus on social gathering
- Flexible program
- Informal gathering
- Places for quiet contemplation
- Unstructured recreation
- Large community gatherings

## KEY FEATURES

- Large central hardscape as focal point
- Abundance of seating options (sunny and shaded options)
- Public art: explore interactive installations with education component
- Visitor amenities

## SITE PLACEMENT

- Clear delineation between the public space and adjacent private realm
- Maximize building entrances and windows facing onto the park: storefronts, multiple townhouse or apartment stoops and porches, primary building entrances
- Seamless between the park and the street sidewalk

- Surrounded by minimum of two streets, ideally four streets
- Surrounded by activating uses
- Should not be located behind uses
- Must never be located in residual/surplus/left-over space

## SIZE

- ½ acre minimum; 1 acre ideal



**Sundance Square Plaza, Fort Worth, TX.** Source: [sundancesquare.com](http://sundancesquare.com); [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org), [landscapeperformance.org](http://landscapeperformance.org)

*Left: This plaza is framed by two streets (3rd and 4th streets) with Main St. visually passing through its center. The unified hardscape pavement features a pavilion at one end and a dynamic, interactive spray fountain and permanent stage at the other. Public art installations create a spectacular display both day and night. The umbrellas offer shade in the summer. Center: To accommodate a variety of uses, the interactive fountains can be deactivated so the plaza can be used for other activities such as yoga, outdoor movies, seasonal festivals, or a weekend farmer's market. Right: before picture - former parking lot. Size: 1.26 acres*



**Veterans Plaza, Silver Spring, MD.** Source: [Silver Spring Civic Building](http://Silver Spring Civic Building)

*Left: the large open hardscape and covered structure offer flexibility to host events such as Jazz festivals. The Civic Building structure and facade are designed to accommodate a temporary stage and related infrastructure. Center: on regular days, the plaza lighting, its permanent seating and adjacent commercial uses invite the community to use the space during the night. Right: an Ice-rink brings a seasonal use for the covered area. Solar panels on top of the Civic Center Building provide energy for the ice rink chillers.*

# 3.1.3 Urban Greenway



**Swamp Rabbit Trail, Greenville, SC.** Source: 10best.com. (left), visitgreenvillesc.com (middle), spicysouthernkitchen.com (right).

Left: The trail is integrated into the existing urban fabric, creating an amenity for residents and providing commuters with an alternative way to get to and from work. Middle and Right: The trail brings users through a variety of natural and urban settings, even creating opportunities for views of nature within urban settings. Additionally, the trail's alignment connects several urban areas and educational campuses to one another, providing alternative commuting opportunities and fostering development partnerships where none previously existed. Length: 20 miles point-to-point

## FUNCTION/ SERVICE AREA:

- Network connector
- Regional destination
- Serves sector plan areas
- Open spaces network connector: linear and continuous parks and open spaces
- Accommodates local daily uses

## MAIN PROGRAM

- Active programming and exposure to nature along wide landscaped walkways and bikeways, commuting, recreational travel (biking, walking, jogging, etc.)

## KEY FEATURES

- Trails with walkways and bikeways
- Lined by vegetative ground cover and trees
- Good wayfinding signage with clear entries to trailheads

## SITE PLACEMENT

- Connector to other public spaces and natural areas
- May follow natural resources & recreational areas along road R.O.W.s
- Enough setback from buildings to preserve continuity of path/trail as public accessible space
- Trail entrances should be visible and accessible

## SIZE

- Width = minimum 10-ft trail plus buffer vegetation (AASHTO)
- Enough setback from buildings to preserve continuity of path/trail as a linear public space
- Buffer vegetation



**Crescent Park Trail, New Orleans, LA.** Source: Hargreaves Associates (left), Hargreaves Associates (middle), moveyabrass.com (right).  
 Left: The conversion of this disused railroad into a park opened expansive views of the Mississippi River and New Orleans skyline. Middle: Furnishings recall the site's former industrial and shipping uses and provide individual contemplative areas throughout the park. Right: Former warehouse spaces along the linear park were restored and converted into event spaces that open up to views of the river and skyline. Size: 1.4 miles point-to-point, 20 acres



**Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel, Seattle, WA.** Source: Walsh Construction Co. (left), M-NCPPC (top-middle), SvR (top-right)  
 Left: The design and grading of this narrow site addresses significant topographic changes between the channel and street. Overlooks and bridges allow pedestrians to enjoy the channel habitat and wildlife. Middle: Sculptures serve as markers for the public entry to the water channel. Right: Bridges, trails and walkways provide connections through this large block, as well as spaces to stroll, bike and skate. Size: 2.7 acres

## 3.1.4 Urban Recreational Park



**Joe DiMaggio North Beach Playground, San Francisco, CA.** Source: San Francisco Public Works (left), baumanland.com (top-middle), baumanland.com (top-right).

Left: The park's interior is visible from surrounding streets with adjacent public transit opportunities easily accessible. Perimeter fencing provides site security while visitors are directed to clearly marked entrances. Top Middle: Open court areas provide opportunities for a variety of recreation types and flexibility in use. Top Right: Site topography is used as an opportunity for amenities. Size: 2.5 acres

### FUNCTION/ SERVICE AREA:

- Focus on active play
- Regional destination
- Serves sector plan areas
- Accommodates local daily uses
- Accommodates larger group recreation (team sports)

### MAIN PROGRAM

- Primarily recreational program focused on active recreation
- Supported by contemplative setting and social gathering spaces
- Activities to accommodate all age groups

### KEY FEATURES

- Playing courts and fields
- Mix of hardscape and grassy open spaces
- Mix of reserved and unreserved recreation spaces
- Consider central lawn as the focal point with sunny and shaded areas and surrounded by activating uses
- Multi-functional structures, including park furniture

### SITE PLACEMENT

- Placement facing adjacent community-oriented uses: recreation centers, libraries, etc.
- Building entrances facing the park - visually and physically accessible

### SIZE

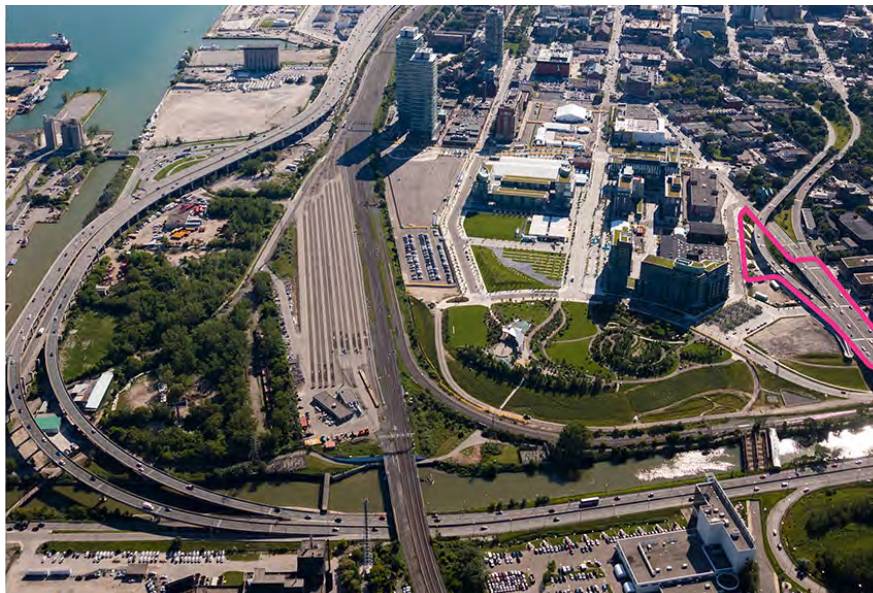
- Varies - based on community served





**Soma West Dog Park and Skate Park, San Francisco, CA.** Source: [wesclover.com](http://wesclover.com) (left), San Francisco Department of Public Works (top-middle), [yelp.com](http://yelp.com) (top-right).

Left: The skate park was built on a former surface parking lot beneath US-101, activating an otherwise neglected space. Top Middle: The dog park utilizes adjacent building walls and guardrails to create part of its enclosure. Artificial turf is a low-maintenance surfacing solution for a dog park. Top Right: Site lighting allows for safe night time use. Size: 1 acre



**Underpass Park, Toronto, Canada.** Source: [asla.org](http://asla.org) (left), [asla.org/TomArban](http://asla.org/TomArban) (top-middle), [asla.org/TomArban](http://asla.org/TomArban) (top-right).

Left: The park knits together surrounding neighborhoods making the underpass a connector and not a barrier. Top Middle: Underutilized space converts to valuable recreation areas where land is limited. Top Right: Children's play structures serve as both functional equipment and sculptural objects in the park. Plants were selected for their ability to withstand harsh urban conditions while providing a layer of fine texture and ephemerality to the site. Size: 2.5 acres

# 3.1.5 Neighborhood Green



**Lakelands Clubhouse Park**, Lakelands, MD. Source: M-NCPPC

*Left: Large lawn area with flexible uses central to the community. The park is surrounded by townhomes on three sides and a clubhouse building.*

*Size: 1 acre; lawn area: ~1/4 acre*

## FUNCTION/ SERVICE AREA:

- Neighborhood gathering place
- Local destination
- Serves neighborhood/district

## MAIN PROGRAM:

- Mix of social gathering, active recreation & contemplative areas
- Flexible program
- Informal gathering
- Places for quiet contemplation
- Unstructured recreation
- Local community gatherings

## KEY FEATURES

- Lawn area surrounded by complementary uses
- Shaded seating and sunny areas
- Flexible play areas
- Consider public art

## SITE PLACEMENT

- Placement facing adjacent community-oriented uses: recreation centers, libraries, etc.
- Building entrances facing the park - visually and physically accessible

## SIZE

- 1/4 acre minimum



**Teardrop Park, New York, NY.** Source: Michael van Valkenburgh, Inc.  
 Left: Central lawn provides a space for small community gatherings. Top Middle: Nature play opportunities for children. Top Right: Public art appears to be a rock wall in summer, but creates an ice sculpture in winter. Size: 2 acres



**Canal Park, Washington D.C.** Source: Olin (left), Capitol Riverfront (top-middle), Olin (top-right).  
 Left: A movie in the park is one of many seasonal events to activate the park. Top Middle: Grassy areas provide space for informal play and relaxation. Top Right: Shaded benches create comfortable spaces for rest and contemplation. Size: 3 acres

# 3.1.6 Pocket Green



**John F. Collins Park, Philadelphia, PA.** Source: [centercityphila.org](http://centercityphila.org) & [www.phillymag.com](http://www.phillymag.com)

*Left: This privately-owned public space is a mid-block pocket park in the heart of Center City inspired by the design of Paley Park in NYC. The cascade fountain is the focal point of this linear park framed by vine-covered walls with mature, native shade trees dispersed throughout the space. The enclosed nature of the space allows it to be reserved for private events such as weddings or wine tastings.*

*Right: This park is a popular lunch and meeting spot. In the winter, the colorful movable chairs and tables make the space more inviting and attractive.*

*This park is located near bus and transit stops.*

*Size: 0.09 acres*

## FUNCTION/ SERVICE AREA:

- Place for pause
- Local destination
- Serves neighborhood/district
- Connected to public spaces network

## MAIN PROGRAM:

- Contemplative areas supported by social gathering and active recreation in smaller scale
- Flexible program  
Places for quiet contemplation
- Unstructured recreation
- Contact with nature

## KEY FEATURES

- Sunlit small gathering areas with a mix of shaded and sunny seating
- Small scale green areas
- Small play areas

## SITE PLACEMENT

- Maximize sun exposure in locations in-between tall buildings
- Provide connectivity to other public spaces and transit

## SIZE

- 1/10 - 1/4 acre average size



**Paley Park, New York, NY.** Source: M-NCPPC.

*Left: One of the most well-known and successful pocket parks, this space is an inviting mid-block privately-owned public space framed by walls on three sides with a gate and a food kiosk at the front. Two of the walls are covered with vine and the third features a 20-ft tall backlit waterfall. The sculptural waterfall creates a visual focal point and helps insulate the space from the traffic and street noises. The tree canopy offers a balance of shade and light to this peaceful oasis in the dense environment of Midtown Manhattan - making a very popular lunch spot for the busy New Yorkers. This park is located adjacent to a subway station and bus stops. Size: 1/10 acre*



**685 Third Avenue Pocket Park, Manhattan, NY.** Source: Gensler.com

*Pocket park with food and beverage offering. This Park features a 30-foot living wall and a water wall that echoes New York City's renowned Paley Park; wood and concrete paver decking; infinity pools; seasonal trees and a bistro. Movable seating allows users to interact with the space. An underutilized entrance turned into a unique asset for the building owner and a vibrant place for the public in the heart of Manhattan.*

*Size: ~1/10 acre*

# 3.1.7 Urban Recreational Parklet



**76th Street Park, Los Angeles, CA.** Source: [www.laparks.org](http://www.laparks.org); City Parks Alliance

Left: This park achieves better access to open space and fitness facilities within a densely populated and park-poor setting. The site was a previous foreclosed property. The park includes a playground and outdoor fitness equipment.

Size: ~1/8 acres

## FUNCTION/ SERVICE AREA:

- Place focus on active play
- Local destination
- Serves neighborhood/district
- Connected to public spaces network
- Accommodates smaller groups/ individual recreation

## MAIN PROGRAM

- Primarily recreational program focused on active recreation
- Supported by contemplative setting and social gathering spaces
- Activities to accommodate all age groups

## KEY FEATURES

- Playing courts and fields
- Mix of hardscape and grassy open spaces
- Mix of reserved and unreserved recreation spaces
- Consider central lawn as the focal point with sunny and shaded areas and surrounded by activating uses
- Multi-functional structures, including park furniture

## SITE PLACEMENT

- Placement facing adjacent community-oriented uses: recreation centers, libraries, etc.
- Building entrances facing the park - visually and physically accessible
- Face major sidewalk alongside storefronts

## SIZE

- 1/10 acre minimum



**Climbmax Climbing Center, Asheville, NC.** Source: Google Street View, & Climbmaxnc.com

Left and above: An outdoor climbing wall like this could allow both activation and recreation opportunities in the public spaces adjacent to the business.



**Ping Pong Table and Half-Basketball Court** Source: M-NCPPC; sportcourt.squarehook.com

Left: A ping pong table feature at the Market Square Park, Pittsburgh, PA. Above: Backyard half basketball court design. Features such as a ping pong table and backyard half-basketball court could create opportunities for active recreation within the constrained available space in parklets.

# 3.1.8 Temporary/ Interim Park



**Wunder Garten, Washington, D.C.** Source: [wundergardenc.com](http://wundergardenc.com)

*Temporary Park - use of current vacant lots that will be developed in a later phase - visible location at the heart of NOMA neighborhood and one block away from the NOMA Gallaudet University Metro Station. When the site is ultimately developed, the current uses and program will shift to an adjacent plaza constructed concurrently with the building.*

*Program: Year-round beer garden with movable seating, picnic tables, yard games, restrooms, and food and drink sales - family and dog friendly place. As a model for an urban park, Wunder Garten operates in conjunction with partners to furnish, maintain and program the space.*

*Size: 1 acre*

## FUNCTION/ SERVICE AREA:

- Experimental place
- Regional & local destination
- Associated to the function of one of the urban park types
- Defined in collaboration with the community

## MAIN PROGRAM:

- Varies
- Flexible program based on selected urban park type

## KEY FEATURES

- Pilot activities for future park/public space
- Activities/structures= inclusive and easy to participate

## SITE PLACEMENT

- Based on selected urban park type
- Provide ADA access
- Should be placed in a visible location

## SIZE

- Varies
- Based on available land

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Great venue to create and/or consolidate partnerships with adjacent business and non-profit organizations to engage with the community in creative ways to deliver places for social gathering, active and contemplative recreation while building a sense of community and belonging.

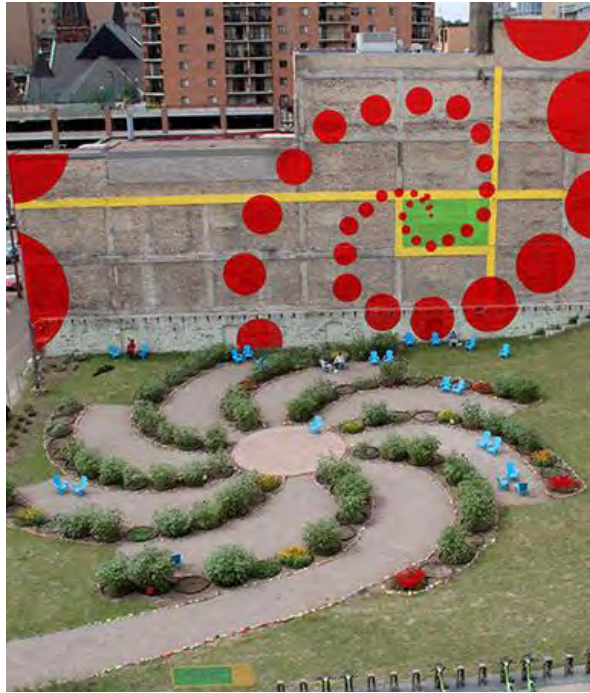




**Quicken Loans Sport Zone, Cadillac Square- Detroit.**

Source: [jessekassel.com](http://jessekassel.com)

Temporary Park - basketball and volleyball courts are temporarily built along streets adjacent to Cadillac Square in downtown Detroit during the summer. Hosted by Downtown Detroit Partnership, it involves local artists, non-profits, and private sponsors. Expansion of active recreation into areas that lack that type of recreation. Temporary seating furniture and basketball/volleyball courts transform this space and offer the community of residents and workers a way to interact with each other in a central location. Near established retail and commercial uses also benefit from the extra hours of additional activities during the night.



**Urban Flower Field, St.Paul. Source: City of St.Paul**

Interim Park - location of future Pedro Park in downtown St.Paul. This project combined art and science by installing 96 flower pots containing wildflowers planted in various types of urban soils (monitoring the performance of the plants in taking up heavy metals), and a mural echoing the pattern of the flower pots. This combination creates a community focal point where learning and events establish this location as a social gathering place for the future park. Movable furniture allows flexibility in events layout: movie nights, concerts and other community gatherings. Size: 0.5 acres



**The Porch at 30th Street Station, Philadelphia, PA**

Source: [universitycity.org](http://universitycity.org)

Interim Park - the site was once a congested parking lane and barren sidewalk. As an interim park, it tested experiments throughout the first few years of use to see what would and wouldn't work for the space, hosting an array of programming from yoga classes to flea markets to food trucks. Temporary and movable furnishings, including different tiered platforms with decking, turf, planters, chairs and swings help to create unique, individual spaces throughout the Porch. A permanent plaza design with elevated planters, integrated skylights, a panoramic pavilion, and food truck areas is under development for the site. Size: 0.68 acres

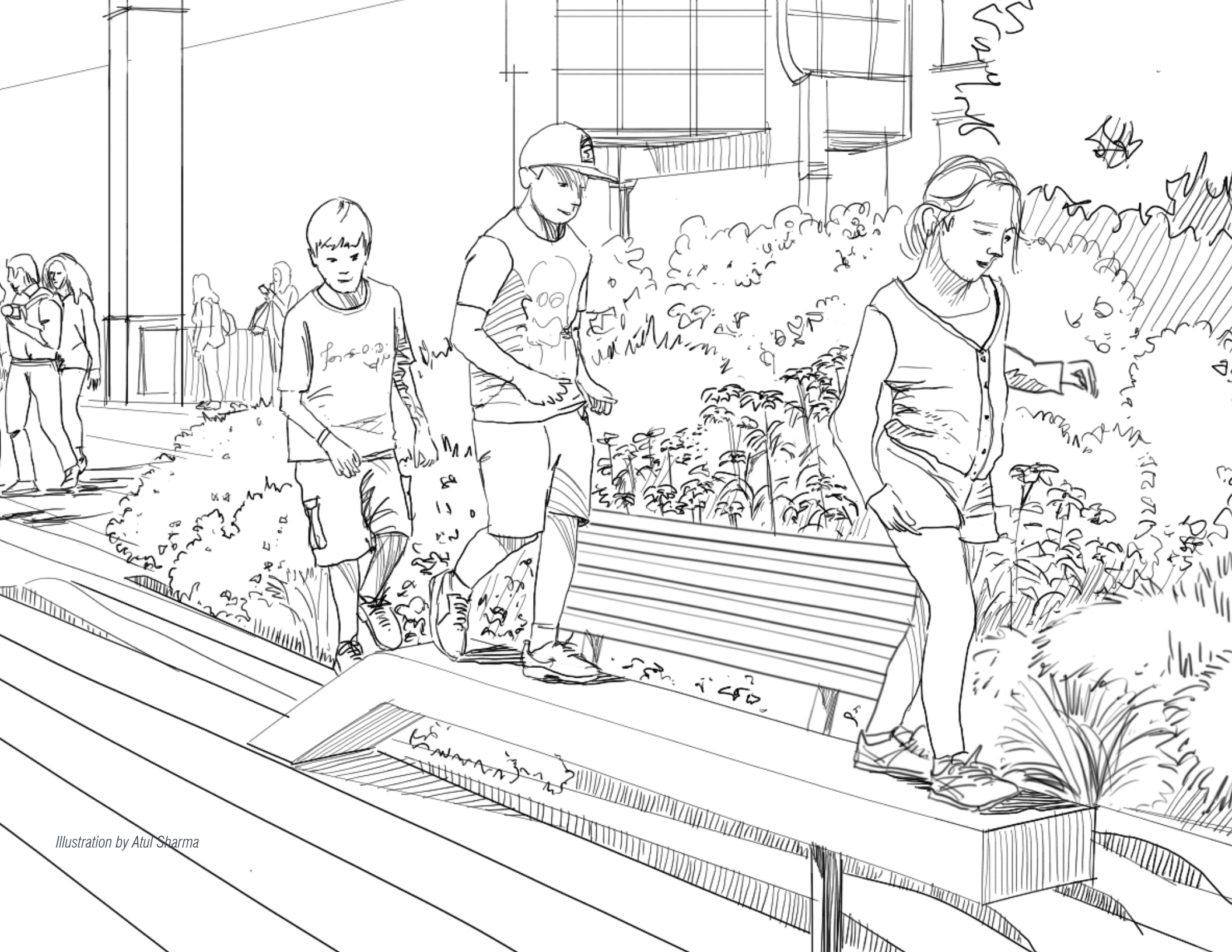


Illustration by Atul Sharma

# APPENDICES

# App.1 Case Studies by Park Types

The upcoming (in-progress) online library will house several case studies illustrating the urban parks types.

**CIVIC GREEN**

**PLAZA**

**URBAN  
GREENWAY**

**URBAN  
RECREATIONAL  
PARK**

**NEIGHBORHOOD  
GREEN**

**POCKET  
GREEN**

**URBAN  
RECREATIONAL  
PARKLET**

**TEMPORARY/  
INTERIM PARK**

# App.2 Public Spaces System and Hierarchy

## App 2.1 System

The 2017 PROS Plan recommended that for each urban area, a unique open space system should be planned to serve the projected demographics of residents, workers, and visitors. The urban design vision developed during the master plan or sector plan process for the area will help guide the amount, pattern, location, siting, and design of open spaces.

The type and pattern of parks and open spaces best suited to urban populations is different from the suburban model of large tracts of land filled with fixed, single-use facilities. The 2017 PROS Plan recognized that urban areas change the way in which we provide, build, and manage park and recreation resources in those areas. There are distinct challenges, such as the potential to provide park and recreation resources in different ways and create different opportunities to incorporate those resources as urbanizing areas redevelop. The 2017 PROS Plan recommended a system of parks and open spaces at the core of every urban area, provided through a combination of public and private efforts. The new open space system

should support a vibrant and sustainable urban center by including open spaces that will be comfortable, attractive, easily accessible, safe, and provide a range of experiences, up to and including festival and outdoor event spaces. Those open spaces that rise to the level of serving as a focal point of community life for the planning area are typically recommended to be publicly owned and managed parks, while those open spaces serving a smaller district, neighborhood, or block are often recommended as public use spaces owned or managed by the private sector.

The 2017 PROS Plan recommended that every urban area should have a system of parks and open spaces that include the following attributes:

- **Active recreation** - places to exercise outdoors, alone or in groups
- **Social interaction** - comfortable seating areas, large public spaces for formal or informal gathering, community gardens
- **Access to green space** - ample areas of grass, trees, and other landscaping
- **Relaxation and stress relief** - areas away from traffic and urban noise
- **Public accessibility** - where anyone can gather or sit or talk
- **Educational experiences** - programs to learn from natural or cultural/historic resources
- **Walkability** - every residence should have a park or open space within 1/2 mile. Major roads can be barriers that add to the walking time and must be calculated into the minimum distance formula
- **Connectivity** - walking and biking systems to link all proposed urban open spaces, and to provide pleasant walking routes from residences and businesses to open space destinations throughout the planning area, and to connect to regional trail and bikeway systems
- **Flexibility** - space that can be used for a variety of spontaneous activities and gatherings, and to respond to the changing needs of urban populations
- **Activating Uses** - nearby shops, restaurants, and residences, attractions, entertainment, as well as places within the park for relaxation, getting work done (Wi-Fi), spontaneous play, education, recreation, etc.

## App 2.2 Park Types Hierarchy

The *2017 PROS Plan* recommends that each area master/sector plan include a system of public spaces based on the different roles of each type of space. The amount and size of open spaces may vary from plan to plan but should be directly proportional to the projected density. Each park and public space should respond to the character of existing public spaces and other neighborhood needs. The following hierarchy should be applied to the Energized Public Spaces Plan Study Area:

### Within the Sector Plan:

- Social gathering spaces
- Active recreation destinations
- Contemplative places
- An interconnected network of sidewalks, trails, parks and public spaces
- Civic Green, Plaza, Urban Greenway, Urban Recreational Park

### Within Neighborhoods:

- Neighborhood Parks or Neighborhood Greens

### Within Blocks:

- Pocket Greens, or Urban Recreational Parklets

### For Buildings and Residences

- Private or communal outdoor spaces

Figure App.1 illustrates a hierarchy for parks and public spaces from the approved Greater *Lyttonsville Sector Plan*.



Figure App.1 - Park Hierarchy example - Lyttonsville Sector Plan

## App 2.3 Public Space Site Selection

The public spaces site selection guidelines will be applied in the absence of a sector plan, or the existence of an older sector plan which did not designate public spaces locations. Coordination with the M-NCPPC Planning and Parks Departments will be required. These guidelines are just the initial reference for the process.

### Site Selection Guidelines

- **Central Location/Focal Point:** Place public spaces in central and/or strategic locations to the community and/or neighborhood terminating a vista, on axis to a primary building, street, trail, and/or on a prominent corner.
- **Mixed Use:** Provide complementary and mixed land uses surrounding the central public space to make it a destination. Concentrating the location of complementary land uses encourages walking, increases opportunities for human interaction, and encourages synergy and livability of the public realm.
- **Minimize Development in Greenfields:** Locate projects within developed areas, if possible, where infrastructure already is in place.
- **Enclosure:** Public spaces should be framed and linked to open spaces and primary street networks and must be lined on two sides or more by a public street. Ideally, public spaces in urban areas are best located surrounded on four sides by streets, street trees and sidewalks with high intensity uses and at least one public building facing onto the park.



*Union Square, SF - centrally located plaza surrounded by shopping, hotels and theater district. The public plaza provides underground parking and it is located near public transit capturing workers, residents in nearby areas and tourists with its several events throughout the year. The ice rink and holiday market are examples of seasonal events hosted by both commercial and nonprofit entities. Source: unionsquareicerink.com*

# Designing Public Spaces

## Energized Public Spaces Design Guidelines

**Working Draft December 2018**



THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS  
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION