



# HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

## NOTICE OF DENIAL

City of Detroit - Planning & Development Department  
2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 808  
Detroit, Michigan 48226

**Notification Date:** 08/25/25

**Application Number:** HDC2025-00489

### APPLICANT & PROPERTY INFORMATION

**NAME:** Rayshaun Landrum

**COMPANY NAME:** General Services Dept, City of Detroit

**ADDRESS:** 115 Erskine St

**CITY:** Detroit

**STATE:** MI

**ZIP:** 48201

**PROJECT ADDRESS:** 2733 2nd Ave

**HISTORIC DISTRICT:** Cass Park

#### SCOPE:

Rehabilitation of park and revision of internal path layout.

At the Regular Meeting that was held on 08/13/25, the Detroit Historic District Commission ("DHDC") reviewed the above-referenced application. Pursuant to Section 5(1) and 9(1) of the Michigan Local Historic District Act, as amended, being MCL 399.205 (1), MCL 399.209 (9) and Sections 21-2-78 and 21-2-80 of the 2019 Detroit City Code; the DHDC hereby issues a Denial for the following work, effective on 08/25/25, as it will be inappropriate according to the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the district's Elements of Design:

### REASON FOR DENIAL:

- ☐ The new design will remove the historic circulation patterns, including the central axis and placement of the historic paths and their relationship to the central open space, thus altering the features and spaces that characterize the property.
- ☐ The applicant has not demonstrated that a park design that is compatible with the existing circulation pattern cannot meet the interests and potential uses listed within the public engagement document.

## FAILURE TO MEET STANDARDS:

**The Standards for Rehabilitation** (codified in 36 CFR 67 for use in the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program) address the most prevalent treatment. "Rehabilitation" is defined as "the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values."

As stated in the definition, the treatment "rehabilitation" assumes that at least some repair or alteration of the historic building will be needed in order to provide for an efficient contemporary use; however, these repairs and alterations must not damage or destroy materials, features or finishes that are important in defining the building's historic character.

The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

**Failure to meet standards:** 1, 2

**Corresponding Standard numbered below:**

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

## FAILURE TO MEET ELEMENTS OF DESIGN:

**Failure to meet Elements of Design:** 20, 21

**Corresponding design element numbered below:**

1. Height.	12. Walls of continuity.
2. Proportion of building's front façades.	13. Relationship of significant landscape features and surface treatments.
3. Proportion of openings within the façade.	14. Relationship of open space to structures.
4. Rhythm of solids to voids in front façade.	15. Scale of façade and façade elements.
5. Rhythm of spacing of buildings on streets.	16. Directional expression of front elevations.
6. Rhythm of entrance and/or porch projections.	17. Rhythm of building setbacks.
7. Relationship of materials.	18. Relationship of lot coverages.
8. Relationship of textures.	19. Degree of complexity within the façade.
9. Relationship of colors.	20. Orientation, vistas, overviews.
10. Relationship of architectural details.	21. Symmetric or asymmetric appearance.
11. Relationship of roof shapes.	22. General environmental character.

If you have any questions regarding the above, please contact staff at 313-224-1762 or [hdc@detroitmi.gov](mailto:hdc@detroitmi.gov).

For the Commission:



Garrick Landsberg  
Director of Staff, Historic District Commission

PSR:Audra

250825AD

## APPEALS PROCESS

The application may be resubmitted for the Historic District Commission's review when suggested changes have been made that address the cited reasons for denial, if applicable. Please be advised that, in accordance with MCL 399. 211 and Section 21-2-81 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, an applicant aggrieved by a decision of the DHDC may file an appeal with the State Historic Preservation Review Board. Within sixty (60) days of your receipt of this notice, an appeal may be filed with:

Jon Stuckey, Michigan Department of Attorney General  
2nd Floor, G. Mennen Williams Building  
525 West Ottawa Street, P.O. Box 30754, Lansing, MI 48909  
Phone: 517-335-0665 E-mail: [stuckeyj@michigan.gov](mailto:stuckeyj@michigan.gov)



# HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION APPLICATION FOR WORK APPROVAL

City of Detroit - Planning & Development Department  
2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 808  
Detroit, Michigan 48226

## APPLICATION ID

HDC2025-00489

## PROPERTY INFORMATION

**ADDRESS(ES):** 2733 2nd Ave

**HISTORIC DISTRICT:** Cass Park

## SCOPE OF WORK: (Check ALL that apply)

- |  |   |  |   |  |                                |
|--|---|--|---|--|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Windows/<br>Doors | <input type="checkbox"/> Walls/<br>Siding | <input type="checkbox"/> Painting        | <input type="checkbox"/> Roof/Gutters/<br>Chimney | <input type="checkbox"/> Porch/Deck/Balcony  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demolition        | <input type="checkbox"/> Signage          | <input type="checkbox"/> New<br>Building | <input type="checkbox"/> Addition                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site Improvements<br>(landscape, trees, fences,<br>patios, etc.) |                                |

## BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The proposed improvements to Cass Park are intended to enhance the existing use of the park and provide more opportunities for play, enjoyment, and social interaction in the park. These improvements include replacing the old deteriorated walks, removal of invasive trees and planting additional trees, reintroducing play elements, benches and picnic tables that historically were in the park and replacing the old fitness equipment. The redesign of Cass Park involved extensive community engagement. Stakeholders and residents expressed what they would like to see in the park and the proposed design reflects that input as well as ensuring it meets modern needs, while respecting the history of the park.

## APPLICANT IDENTIFICATION

**TYPE OF APPLICANT:** Property Owner/Homeowner

**NAME:** Rayshaun Landrum

**COMPANY NAME:** General Services Dept, City of Detroit

**ADDRESS:** 115 Erskine St

**CITY:** Detroit

**STATE:** MI

**ZIP:** 48201

**PHONE:** +1 (313) 236-6150

**EMAIL:** landrumr@detroitmi.gov

## I AGREE TO AND AFFIRM THE FOLLOWING:

- ☒ I understand that the failure to upload all required documentation may result in extended review times for my project and/or a denied application.
- ☒ I understand that the review of this application by the Historic District Commission does not waive my responsibility to comply with any other applicable ordinances including obtaining appropriate permits (building, sign, etc.) or other department approvals prior to beginning the work.
- ☒ I hereby certify that I am the legal owner and/or occupant of the subject property and that the information on this application is true and correct.

DocuSigned by:

Rayshaun Landrum

General Services Dept, City of Detroit

*Rayshaun Landrum*

07/21/2025

SIGNATURE

115 Erskine St

DATE

Detroit

MI

48201

+1 (313) 236-6150

landrumr@detroitmi.gov

Questions? Contact us at [hdc@detroitmi.gov](mailto:hdc@detroitmi.gov) or (313)224-1762

**NOTE: Based on the scope of work, additional documentation may be required. See [www.detroitmi.gov/hdc](http://www.detroitmi.gov/hdc) for scope-specific requirements.**

## PROJECT DETAILS – TELL US ABOUT YOUR PROJECT

**Instructions: Add project details using the text box in each section. If your details exceed the space provided, attach the details via the attachment icon for that section.**

### ePLANS PERMIT NUMBER:

(only applicable if you've already applied for permits through ePLANS)

N/A

## GENERAL

### 1. DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING CONDITION

*Please tell us about the current appearance and conditions of the areas you want to change. You may use a few sentences or attach a separate prepared document on the right. (For example, "existing roof on my garage is covered in gray asphalt shingles in poor condition.")*

See attached Package (PDF), uploaded under Site Improvements.

### 2. PHOTOGRAPHS

*Help us understand your project. Please attach photographs of all areas where work is proposed.*



### 3. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

*In this box, tell us about what you want to do at the areas described above in box #1. (For example, "Install new asphalt shingle roofing at garage.")*

See attached Package (PDF), uploaded under Site Improvements.

### 4. DETAILED SCOPE OF WORK

*In this box, please describe all steps necessary to complete the work described in box #3. (For example, "remove existing shingles, replace wood deck as necessary, replace wood eaves, install roof vents, replace rotted fascia boards, paint, clean worksite.")*

See attached Package (PDF), uploaded under Site Improvements.


### 5. BROCHURES/CUT SHEETS

*Please provide information on the products or materials you are proposing to install. For example, a brochure on the brand and color of the shingles proposed.*





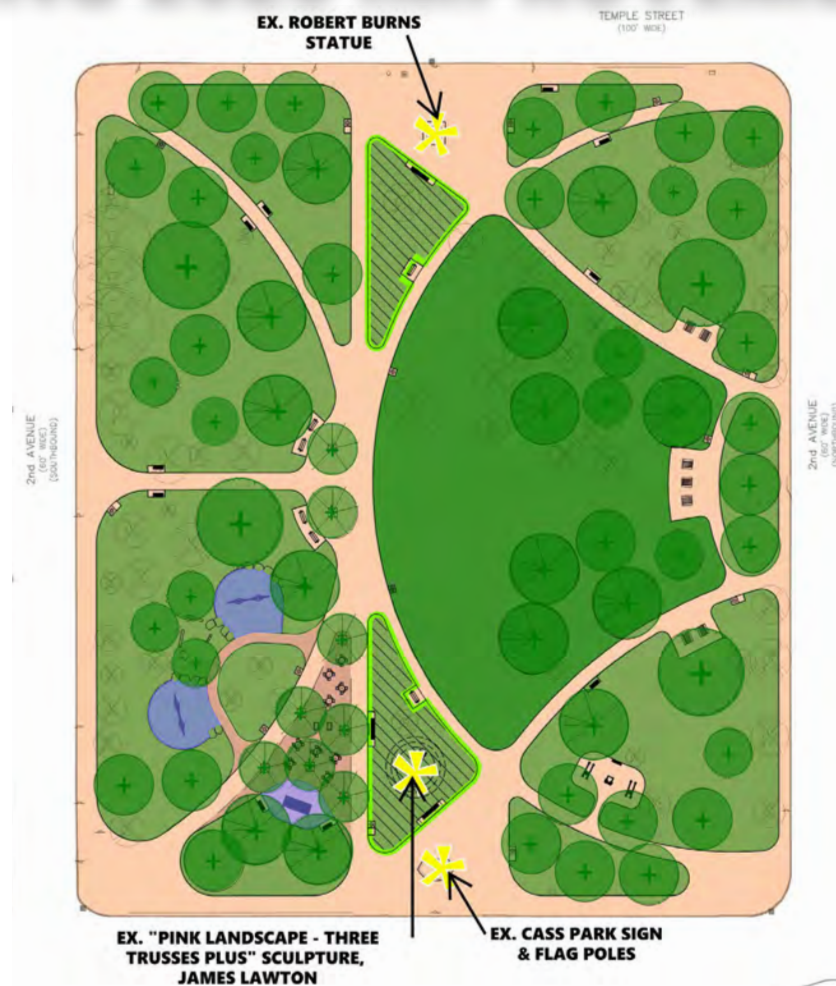
ADDITIONAL DETAILS

<div>8. SITE IMPROVEMENTS</div> <div><i>If site improvements are proposed, please provide any relevant site improvement plans pertaining to your project.</i></div>	<div></div>

# CASS PARK

## (2733 2ND AVE)

### SPRING 2026 IMPROVEMENTS



**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**AUGUST 13, 2025**



GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
**Parks & Recreation**  
Division

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## HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE CONSIDERATIONS

### Cass Park Local Historic District (Sec. 21-2-233.)

"Cass Park bisects Second Avenue and provides a vista that is visible from a great distance to the north."

*In this plan the vista along Second Avenue through the park retained with walkway and landscaping.*

"Cass Park is highly symmetrical in nature with eight entries converging on the center of the park from each corner and from the center of each of its four sides: this relationship is considered a significant feature of the park."

*The symmetry is retained along one axis, as well as retaining eight entrances that converge in the center of the park, although slightly shifted to the west to allow for larger green space to improve park usability. This is in keeping with the incremental movements away from perfect symmetry started in 1934 and continued into the 1970s.*

"Mature trees along the perimeter of Cass Park that provide a sense of enclosure within the park."

*This plan replaces damaged/unhealthy/invasive trees along the perimeter and throughout the park.*

"Buildings flanking Cass Park create a sense of enclosure and contribute greatly to the integrity of feeling and setting within the park."

*No longer applicable.*

"The statue of Robert Burns sits on the northern edge of Cass Park, centered on its block face, and faces north along Second Avenue."

*The statue of Robert Burns remains in the same prominent location in the northern edge of the park, with minor repairs to the base.*

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The land now known as Cass Park was deeded to the City of Detroit by General Lewis Cass in 1860 while Michigan was still a US Territory; designated as “forever parkland” the property was intended to remain for the use and enjoyment of the public in perpetuity.

Cass Park was lighted in 1896, enhancing its appeal as a community place. In 1921, a statue honoring the Scottish poet Robert Burns was installed, adding a cultural landmark to the park. Significant renovations occurred in the 1960s using Urban Beatification funding. Additional art was added in the 1970s such as the James Lawon Sculpture that remains today.

The proposed improvements to Cass Park are intended to enhance the existing use of the park and provide more opportunities for play, enjoyment, and social interaction in the park. These improvements include replacing the old deteriorated walks, removal of invasive trees and planting additional trees, reintroducing play elements, benches and picnic tables that historically were in the park and replacing the old fitness equipment.

The redesign of Cass Park involved extensive community engagement. Stakeholders and residents expressed what they would like to see in the park and the proposed design reflects that input as well as ensuring it meets modern needs, while respecting the history of the park.

## CASS PARK COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH SCHEDULE**

- General Stakeholder Meeting - October 18, 2024
- Community Meeting #1 - November 14, 2024
- Stakeholder Meeting with Robert Burns Club - January 29, 2025
- Student Survey - March through April 2025
- Stakeholder Meeting with Food Distribution Group - March 17, 2025
- Stakeholder Meeting with Cass Tech PTSA - March 20, 2025
- Community Meeting #2 - March 26, 2025

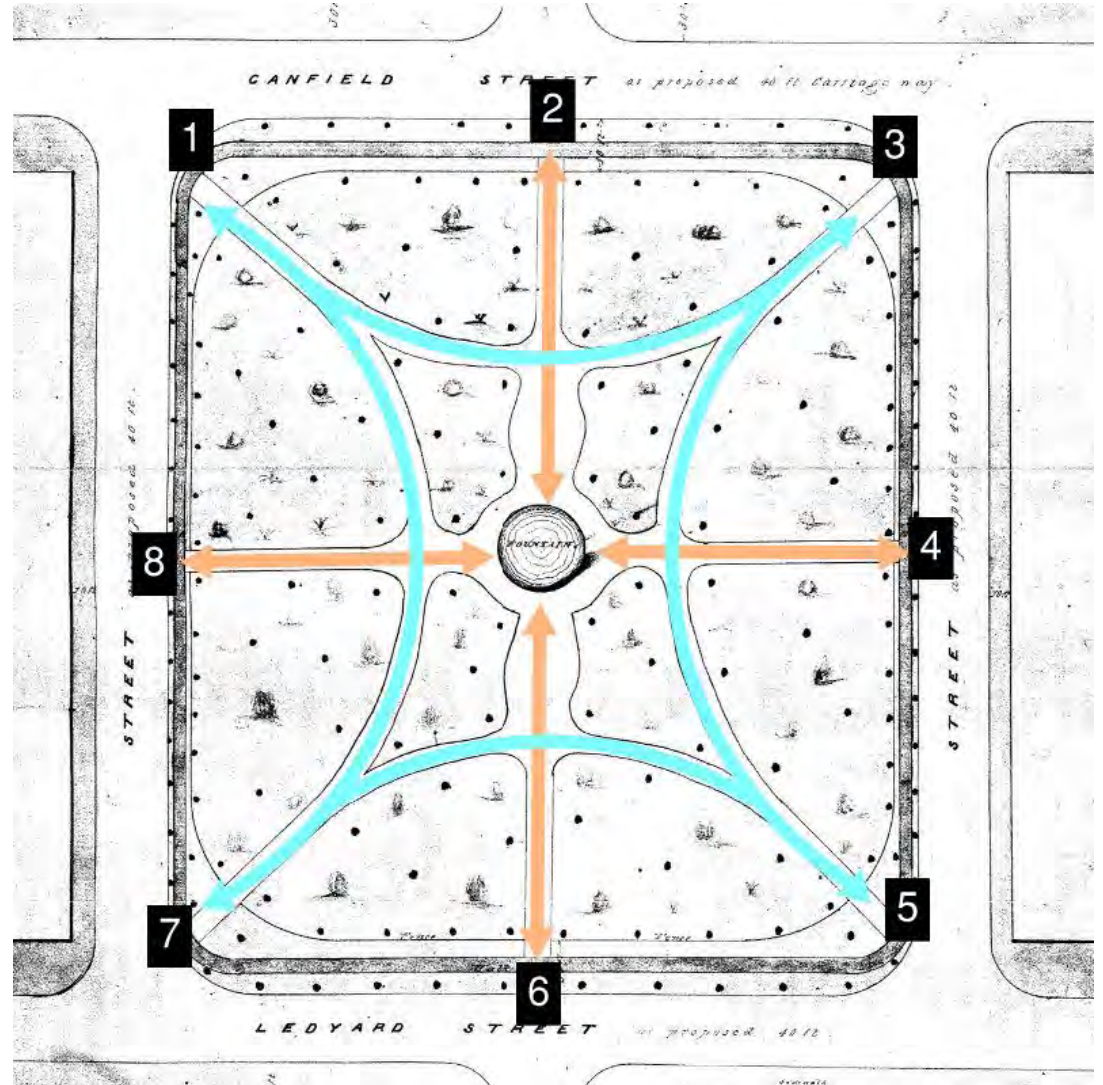
### **ENGAGED STAKEHOLDERS**

- The Masonic Temple
- Mariners Inn
- Cass Tech Leadership, PSTA
- Chinatown Vision Committee
- Olympia
- Residents (from prev. community benefits group)
- Robert Burns Club
- Residents that live on the park (2714 Second)
- Park Users
- Food Distribution Group
- Cass Tech Students

## HISTORIC PLANS: CASS PARK 1860

### Park Design Details:

- 8 Entries
- Symmetrical design
- No sidewalk connections across Temple and Ledyard Streets
- Curvilinear/radiating pathways
- Central focal point

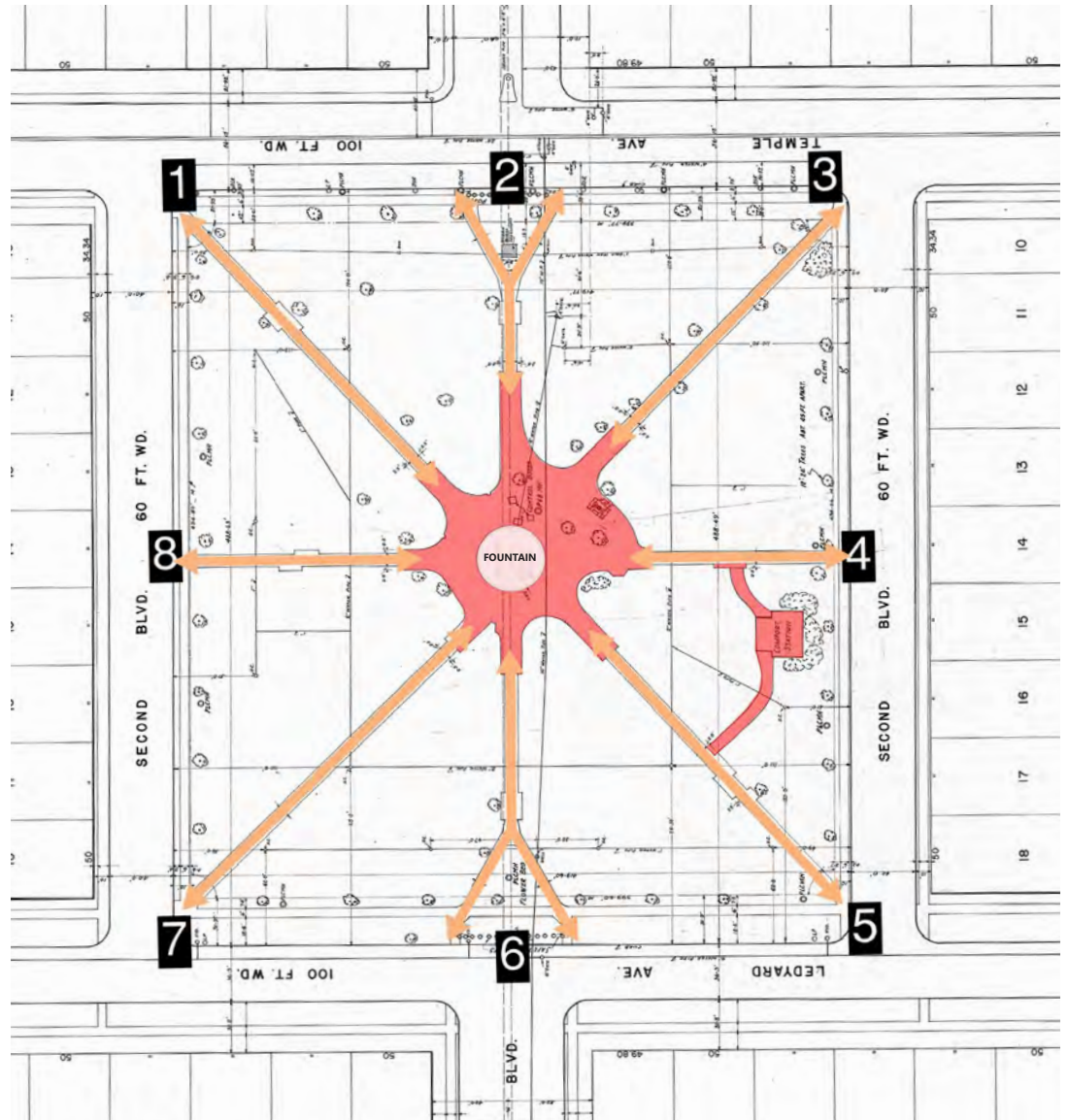




## HISTORIC PLANS: CASS PARK 1934

### Park Design Details:

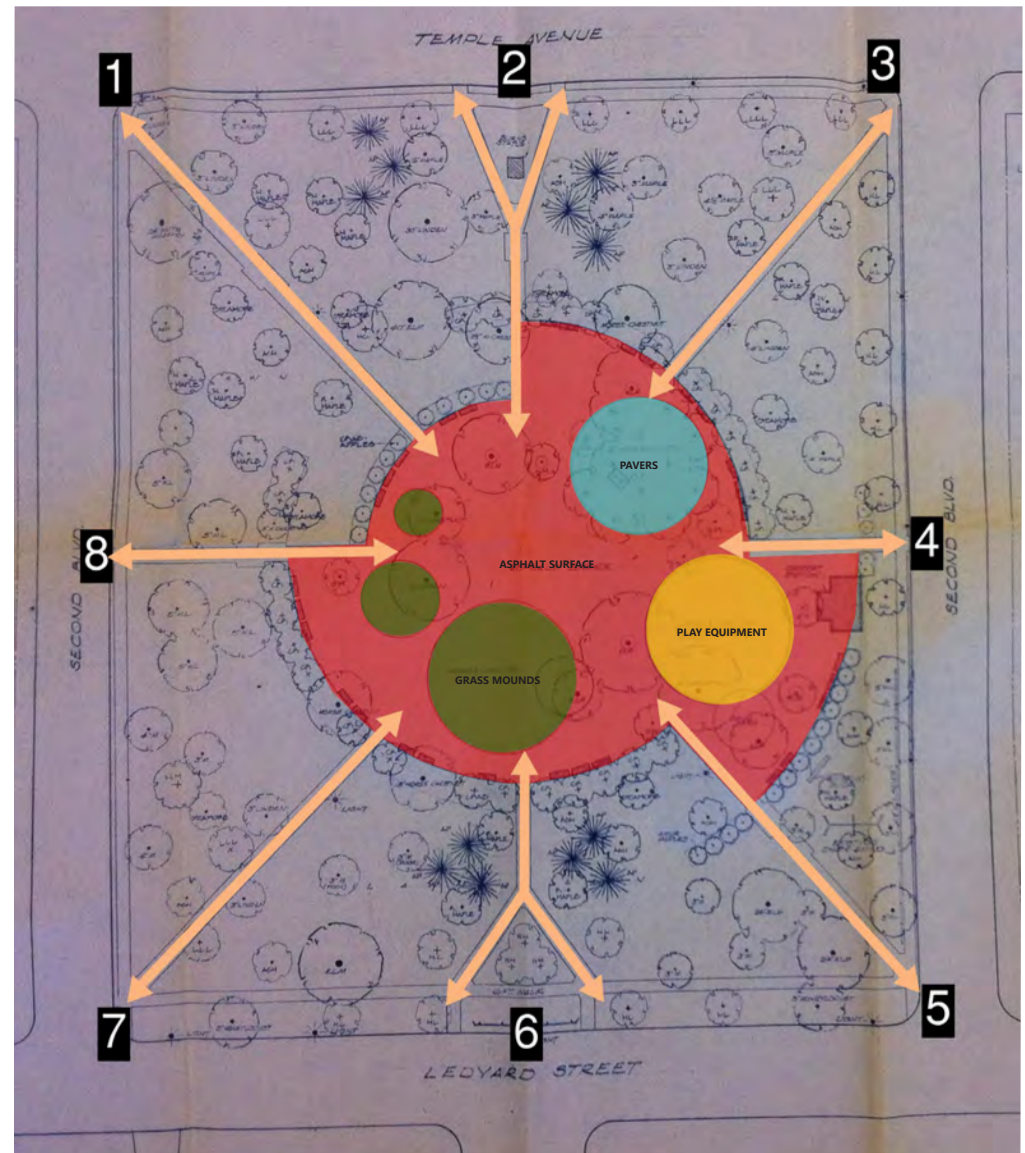
- 8 Entries
- Asymmetrical center and pathways introduced
- Split entry responding to sidewalks across Temple and Ledyard Streets
- Central focal point



## HISTORIC PLANS: CASS PARK 1978

### Park Design Details:

- 8 Entries
- Center and pathways become more asymmetrical
- Adventure pathway and meandering center introduced
- Straight pathways with varying lengths
- No central focal point
- Different surface materials introduced
- Structural elevations introduced; mounds and playground





## EXISTING PARK CONDITIONS

The most recent aerial from 2025 displays the existing conditions of the park. Currently, Cass Park offers majority of passive activities to the surrounding urban environment.

- Deteriorated surfaces
- Scarce amenities (non-park standard benches and picnic tables)
- Lack of ADA accessibility to picnic area(s)
- Dense trees
- Sculptural features



ROBERT BURNS STATUE

FITNESS EQUIPMENT

JAMES LAWTON  
SCULPTURE

CASS PARK SIGN AND  
FLAG POLES

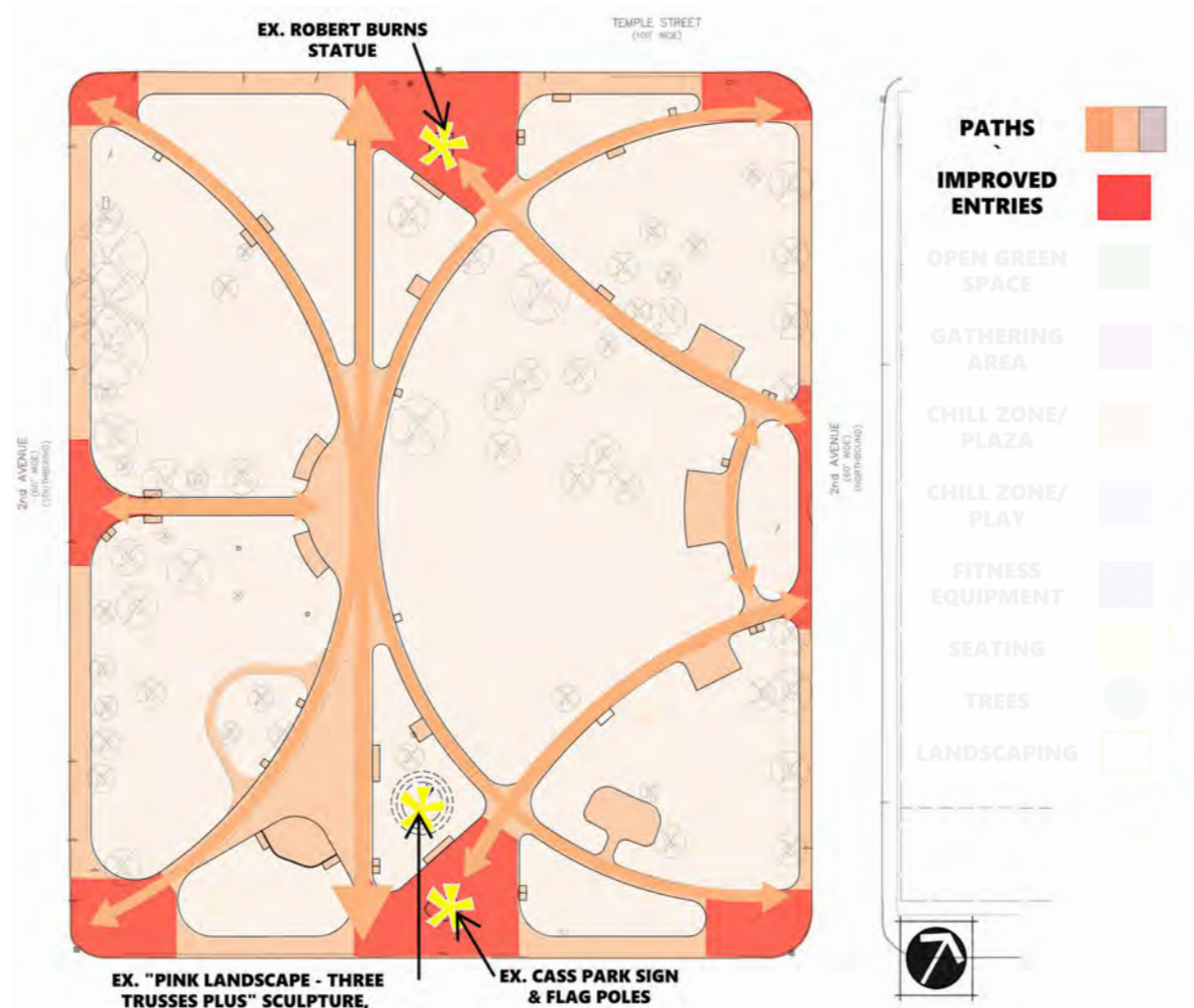


Not to scale

## CASS PARK 2025 PROPOSED ENTRIES AND PATHS

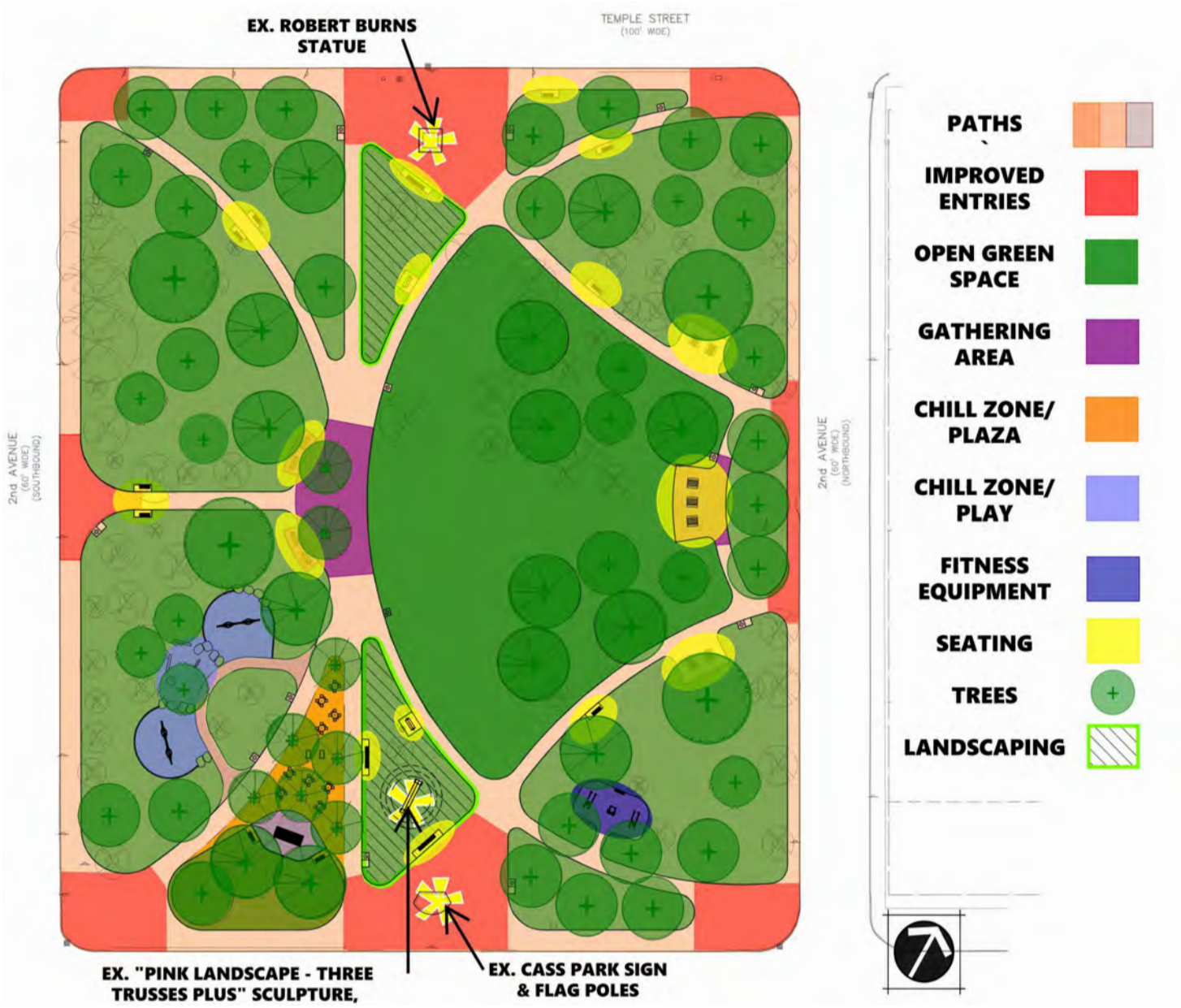
### Park Design Details:

- 8 Entries
- More formalized design
- Refines the symmetry of all designs and balances the park across the x and y axis
- Refines pathway systems and balances curvilinear and straight circulation
- Improves hardscape materials
- Central focal point nod to 1860 plan
- Provides programmed and unprogrammed spaces that respond to today's needs, while respecting the park's relationship towards the historical park designs
- 40,000+ square foot lawn space is required to allow for medium sized events (using city event capacity policy of 30 sf/person)





# CASS PARK 2025 PROPOSED PLAN



## CASS PARK HISTORICAL FEATURES

### **HISTORICAL FEATURES IMPROVEMENTS:**

The Robert Burns Statue will remain in its existing location (north entrance) with a repaired base and restoration. The James Lawton sculpture will be restored to the original pink color and relocated slight south of it's current location to the more prominent entrance and will be on a landscaped area, as oringially intended by the artist. South entrance will also include the restored Cass park sign and flag poles.



Restore Robert Burns Statue



Relocate and restore the James Lawton Sculpture, "Pink Landscape - Three Trusses Plus"



Restore Cass Park Sign and Flag Poles



## CASS PARK HISTORICAL LIGHTING

### HISTORICAL FEATURES IMPROVEMENTS:

Mismatched modern light fixtures will be replaced with the standard light poles used in the right-of-way in other historic neighborhoods throughout the City. Using this standard will help with future maintenance and replacements.



Current Park Lighting



Historic Park Lighting



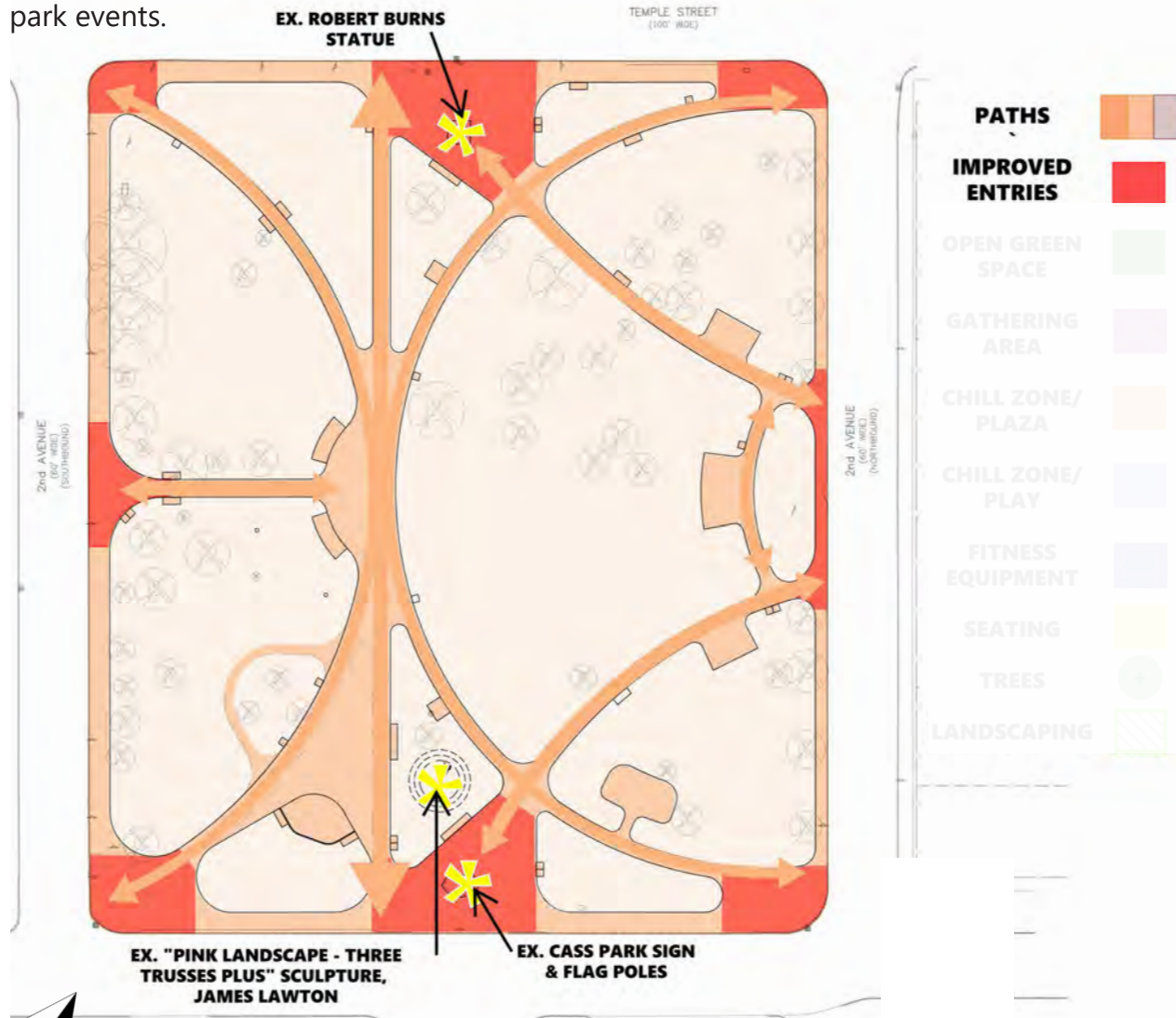
Historic Park Lighting





## PROPOSED ENTRIES AND PATHS

The entries will be improved, enhancing direct access to park amenities and surrounding places. The north-south promenade will be emphasized and shifted slightly west to accommodate more green space necessary for park programming. The southwest edge of the park is designed to accommodate the students that gather there from Cass Tech High school. The pathways on the east side were designed to accommodate the monthly food distribution group that has been operating in the park for over 25 years as well as other park events.



Not to scale

## PROPOSED OPEN GREEN SPACE

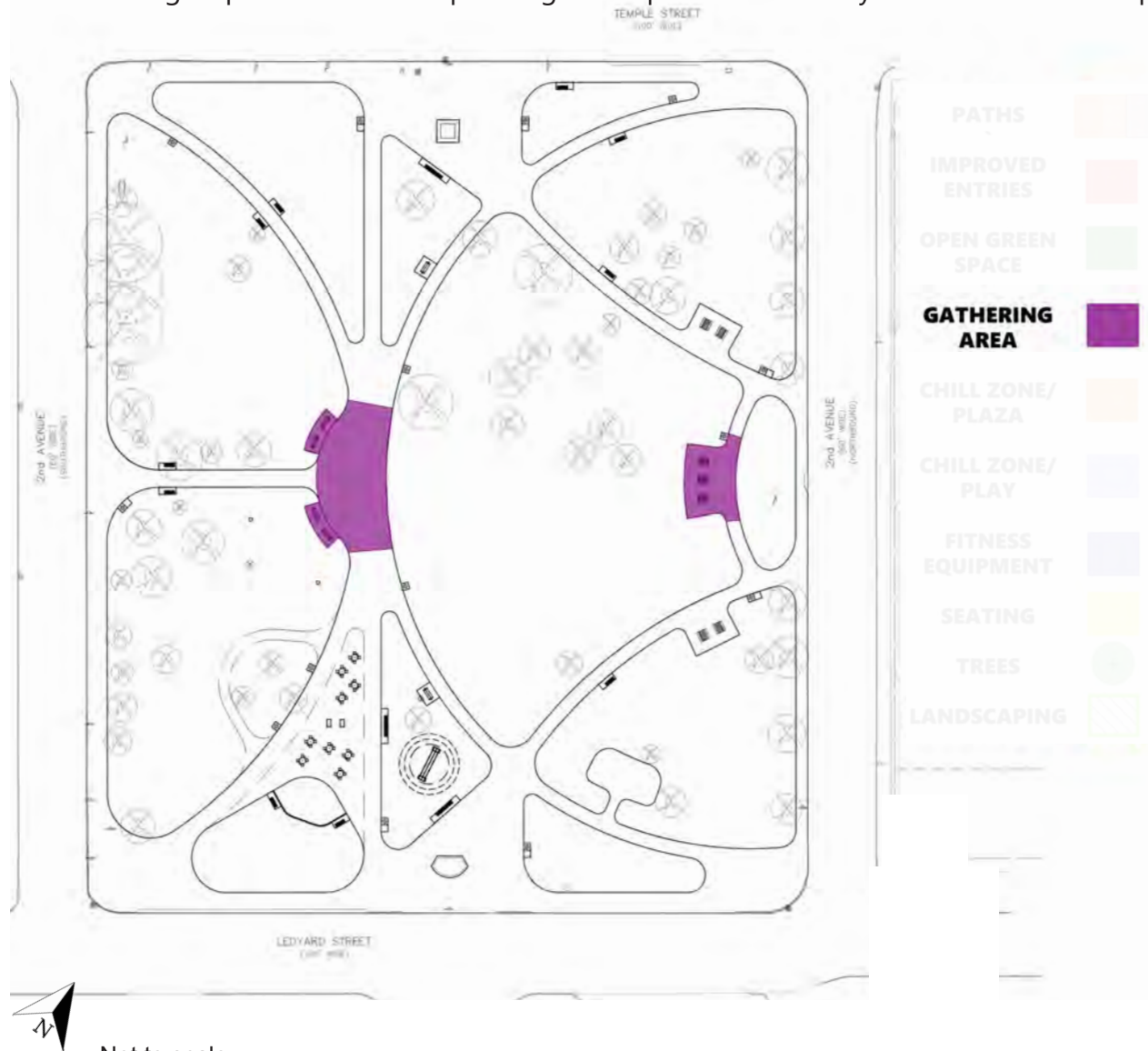
One of the main changes community members asked for was to increase useable green space in the park. The various proposed greenspaces will allow for quieter as well as more active areas for activities such as relaxing, reading, playing, or exercising as well opportunities for community gatherings. To be able to accommodate medium-sized events, such as movie nights, student concerts and seasonal celebrations at least 40,000 SF of contiguous greenspace is needed, which resulted in the proposed lawn area, while still retaining the historic park symmetry along one axis and the vista down 2nd Ave.





## PROPOSED GATHERING AREA

The central gathering area will serve as hardscape meetup space with swinging benches overlooking the open green space, as a reference to the past historic park plans with a more centralized focal point. In addition, the eastern gathering area accommodates the monthly food distribution group that has been operating in the park for over 25 years as well as other park events.



## PROPOSED CHILL ZONE - PLAZA SEATING

The proposed plaza will be located across from Cass Tech High school, and will be a more active space, including cafe seating tables. The seating amenities will be City Standards, items are standardized through various parks in the city for ease of maintenance. All amenity materials will have a black powder coated finish.



Not to scale





## PROPOSED CHILL ZONE - PLAY

The proposed play elements are intended for people of all ages to have the opportunity to play and socialize. The selected colors comply with the elements of design in the ordinance: the swing posts will be black and the standing seesaw will be finished wood, as shown.



## PROPOSED FITNESS EQUIPMENT

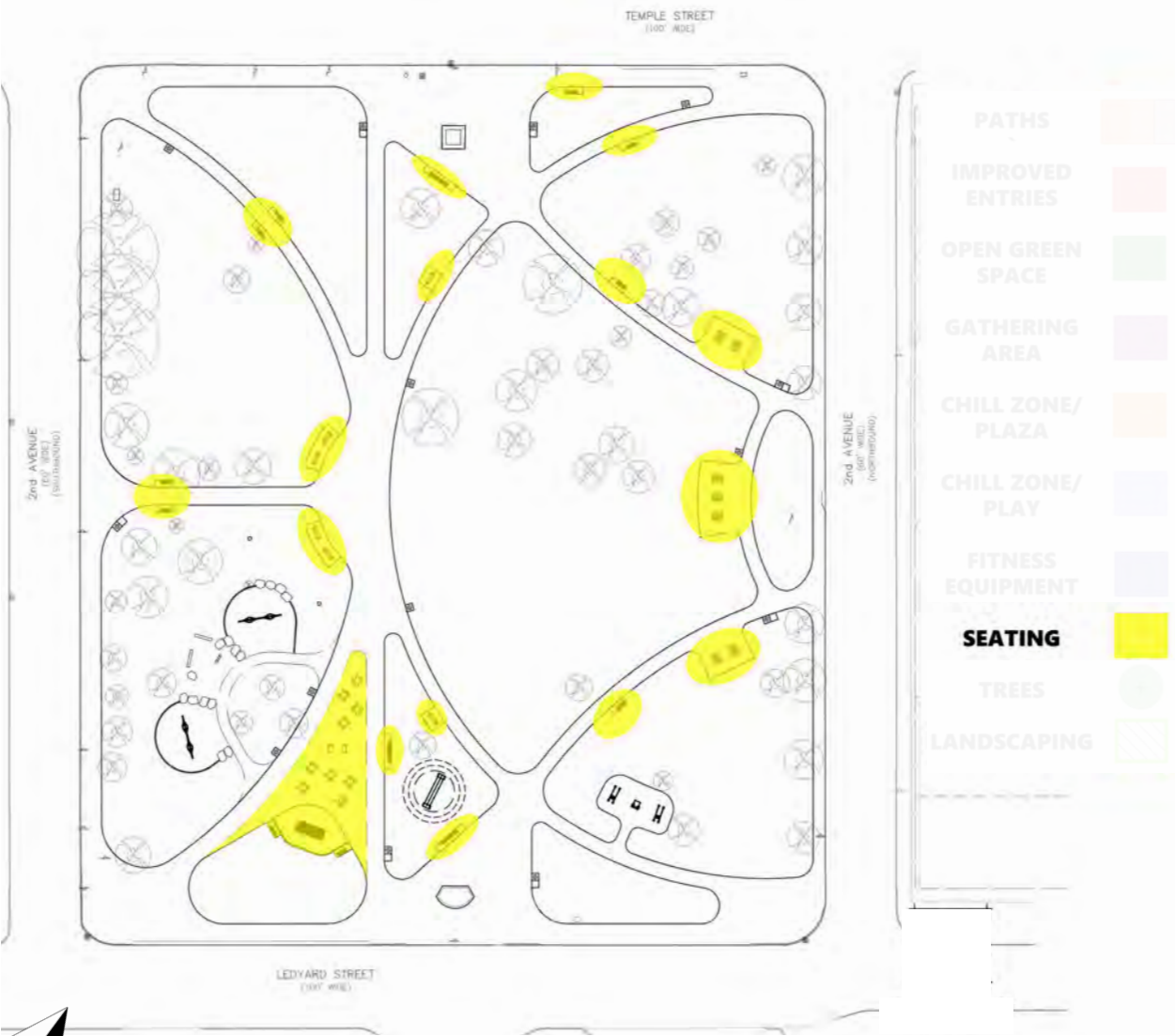
The proposed fitness equipment will replace the current, dilapidated equipment, and be relocated southern portion of the park closer to the active part of the park near Cass Tech High school. The color palette will be silver and black, as is City Standard for ease of maintenance as well as to ensure it blends into the background of the park scenery.





# PROPOSED SEATING

There are various proposed seating types throughout the park: cafe tables, swinging benches, park benches, and picnic tables. All items are City Standards and found in various parks across the city for ease of maintenance. All seating amenities will have black powder-coated finish.



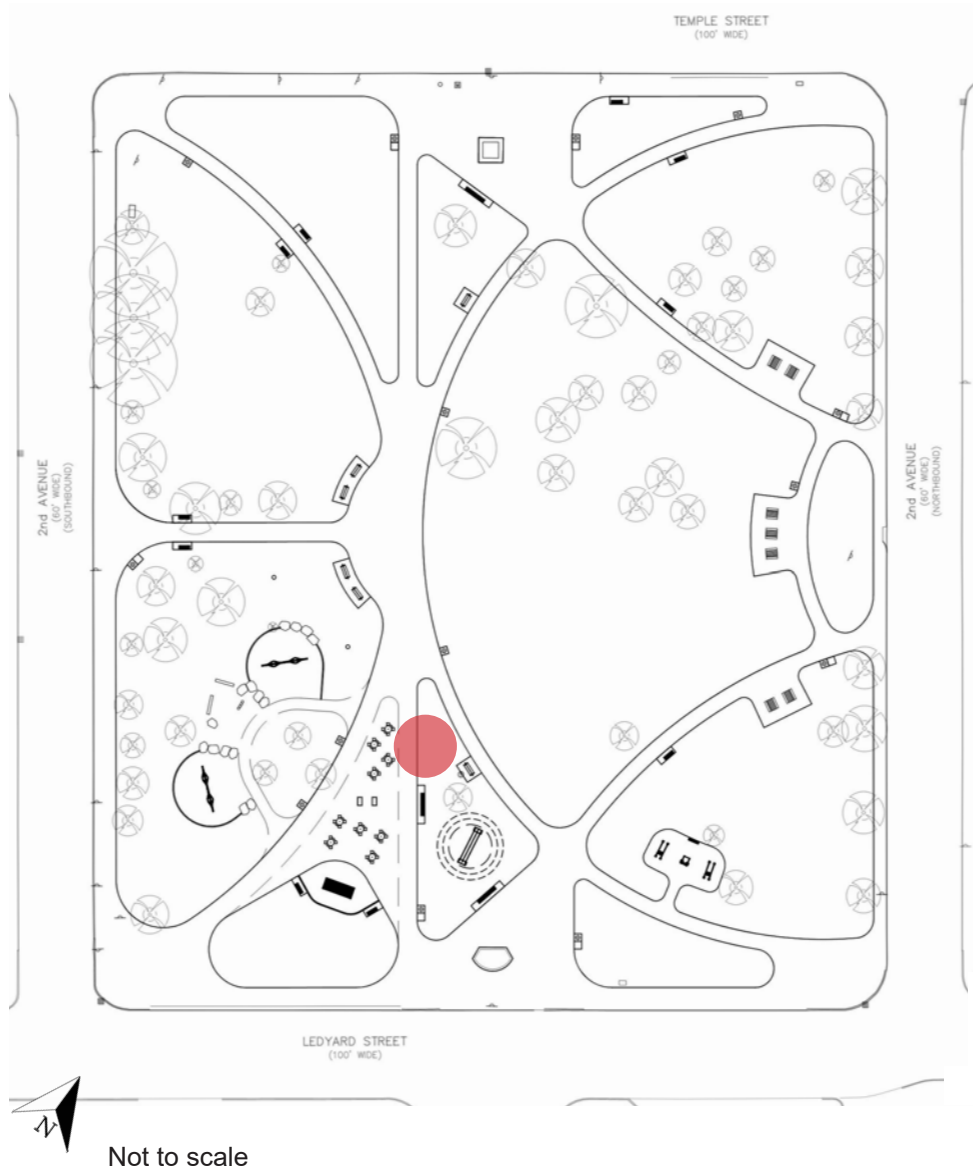
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## PROPOSED DRINKING FOUNTAIN

The proposed drinking fountain is another improvement in reimagining the historic presence of the park. The drinking fountain will be accessible to all and include a pet fountain; amenity will have black powder-coated finish.




## CASS PARK ARBORIST TREE SURVEY

### EXISTING TREES:

The majority of the trees in Cass Park either have trunk damage, are dead (poor condition), or need pruning (fair). Most of the proposed tree removals are Bradford trees which are invasive as well as being in poor condition, they are along the northern and southern edges of the park and will be replaced with healthier spacing and native and non-invasive varieties.



Not to scale

-  TREE, POOR CONDITION (-59)
-  TREE, FAIR CONDITION (46 TO REMAIN)
-  TREE, GOOD CONDITION (16 TO REMAIN)

NOTE: PROPOSE PLANTING OF 60+ NEWER TREES



INVASIVE BRADFORD PEAR



## PROPOSED TREES AND LANDSCAPING

For every tree removed in the park it will be replaced, with improved spacing for tree health as well as non-invasive and native varieties. Any gaps in the perimeter planting will be replaced to ensure the sense of enclosure that the park historically has had is retained. There will also be shade trees planted along pathways and two, loose lines of trees to retain the vista down 2nd Avenue through the park. Garden beds will be added to enhance this 2nd Ave entries and vista as well.



## PROPOSED TREE SELECTION



'OCTOBER GLORY' RED  
MAPLE



'AUTUMN GLORY'  
MAIDENHAIR TREE



'EXPRESSO' KENTUCKY  
COFFEE TREE



'PRINCETON' ELM



SWAMP WHITE OAK



## PROPOSED LANDSCAPING SELECTION



HYDRANGAEA PANICULATA



FILIPENDULA RUBRA



VERONICASTRUM VIRGINICUM



ECHINCEA PURPUREA



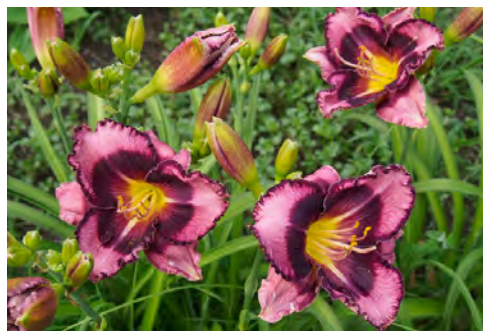
PHLOX PANICULATA



RUSSIAN SAGE



'ENDLESS HEART' DAYLILY



'STORM SHELTER' DAYLILY



THALICTRUM AGUILEGIFOLIUM



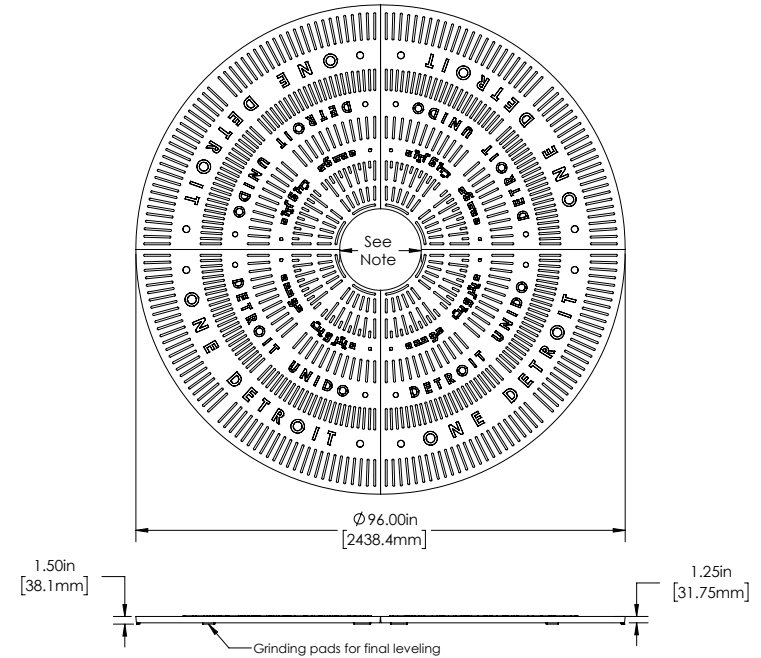
## PROPOSED TREE GRATES - GATHERING SPACE AND CHILL ZONE/PLAZA

### PROPOSED TREE GRATES

The tree grates will be located in the gathering and chill zone/plaza space as shown on the map in shaded areas, to accommodate trees within the gathering areas, to help retain the symmetry of the green spaces in the park and canopy.



### TREE GRATE DETAIL



## PARK SIGNAGE

### **EXISTING PARK SIGN:**

Currently the only sign in Cass Park is a engraved concrete pillar, as shown below and in the adjacent park site plan. The sign is currently located in a raised planter bed center in the park along Ledyard St and 2nd Ave.



EXISTING PARK SIGN TO REMAIN

### **PROPOSED ADDITIONAL PARK SIGNS:**

The proposed design will place one standard park sign with city branding at north park entrance, as shown on the adjacent site plan. The park sign will identify the site as a City park as well as post park hours.



PROPOSED PARK SIGN



# CASS PARK 2025 PROPOSED PLAN



**SCOPE OF WORK AND CUT SHEETS ATTACHED**

# **CASS PARK**

## **SPRING 2026 DESIGN**



GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
**Parks & Recreation**  
**Division**



















