



# HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION APPLICATION FOR WORK APPROVAL

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

## APPLICATION ID

HDC2025-00589

## PROPERTY INFORMATION

**ADDRESS(ES):** 2589 W. Grand Blvd.

**HISTORIC DISTRICT:** West Grand Boulevard African American Arts and Business Historic District

## 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 checked="" 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 Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial (MLK) Park are intended to enhance the existing use of the park by providing social interaction and enjoyment. Additionally, several vacant lots have been acquired for more opportunities for enjoyment and play. These improvements include replacing the old deteriorated walks, removal of invasive trees and plant additional trees, install benches and picnic tables that currently don't exist, and add some play elements that are inspired by Martin Luther King Jr. speech delivered here in Detroit in 1963.

The redesign of MLK 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.

## APPLICANT IDENTIFICATION

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

**NAME:** City of Detroit - General Services Department

**COMPANY NAME:** City of Detroit

**ADDRESS:** 115 Erskine

**CITY:** Detroit

**STATE:** MI

**ZIP:** 48201

**PHONE:** +1 (313) 224-1100

**EMAIL:** [theresa.mcarleton@detroitmi.gov](mailto:theresa.mcarleton@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.

Signed by:

City of Detroit - General Services Department

City of Detroit

*Theresa Mcarleton*

09/12/2025

SIGNATURE

115 Erskine

DATE

Detroit

MI

48201

+1 (313) 224-1100

[theresa.mcarleton@detroitmi.gov](mailto:theresa.mcarleton@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
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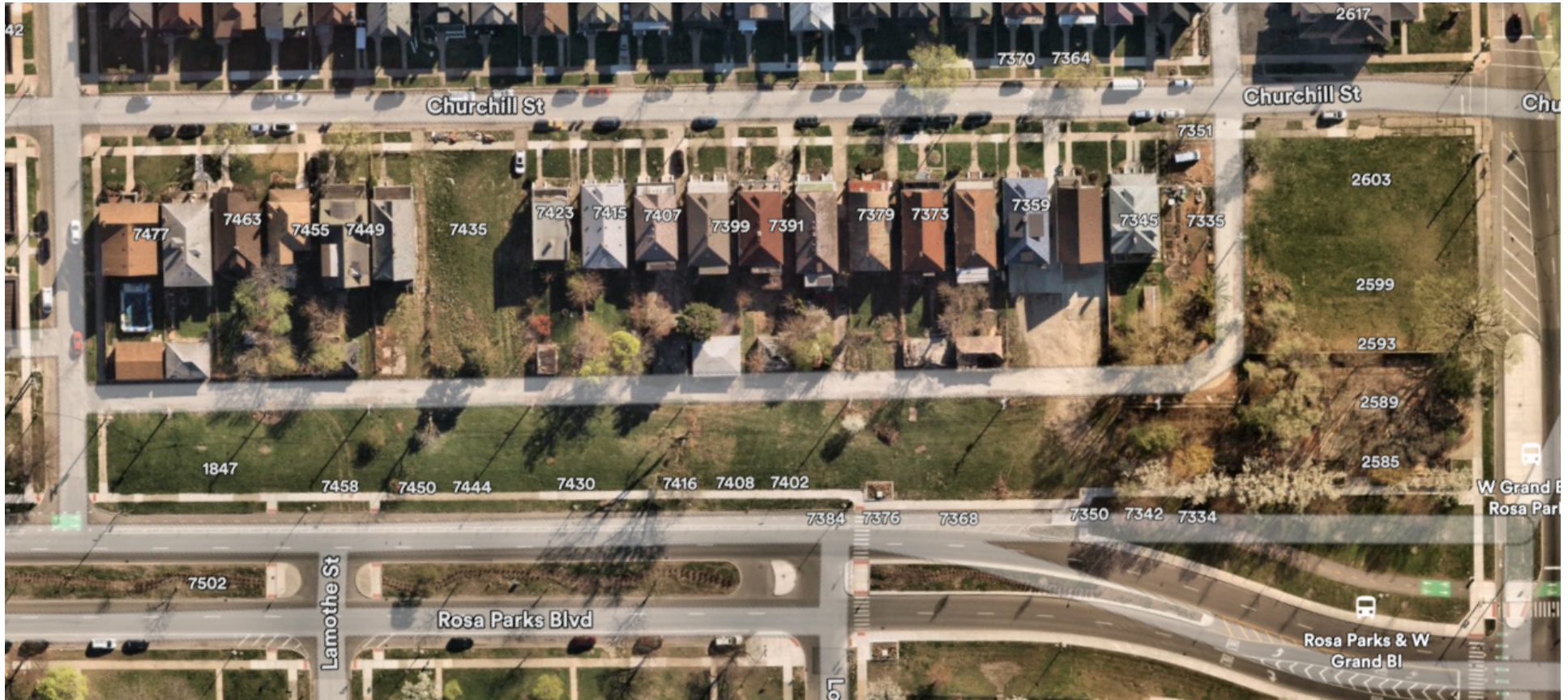
GENERAL

<b>1. DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING CONDITION</b> <i>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.")</i>	
The most recent aerial from 2025 displays the existing conditions of the park. Currently, MLK Memorial Park offers majority of passive activities to the surrounding urban environment.	
<b>2. PHOTOGRAPHS</b> <i>Help us understand your project. Please attach photographs of all areas where work is proposed.</i>	
<b>3. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT</b> <i>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.)</i>	
The proposed improvements to Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial (MLK) Park are intended to enhance the existing use of the park by providing social interaction and enjoyment. Additionally, several vacant lots have been acquired for more opportunities for enjoyment and play. These improvements include replacing the old deteriorated walks, removal of invasive trees and plant additional trees, install benches and picnic tables that currently don't exist, and add some play elements that are inspired by Martin Luther King Jr. speech delivered here in Detroit in 1963.	
<b>4. DETAILED SCOPE OF WORK</b> <i>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.")</i>	
See attached package.	
<b>5. BROCHURES/CUT SHEETS</b> <i>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.</i>	

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

<p><b>8. SITE IMPROVEMENTS</b></p> <p><i>If site improvements are proposed, please provide any relevant site improvement plans pertaining to your project.</i></p>	
<p><b>9. OTHER</b></p> <p><i>Please provide any additional details. HDC Staff may ask you to submit additional information at a later time depending on your project.</i></p>	

# MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. MEMORIAL PARK (2589 W GRAND BLVD)



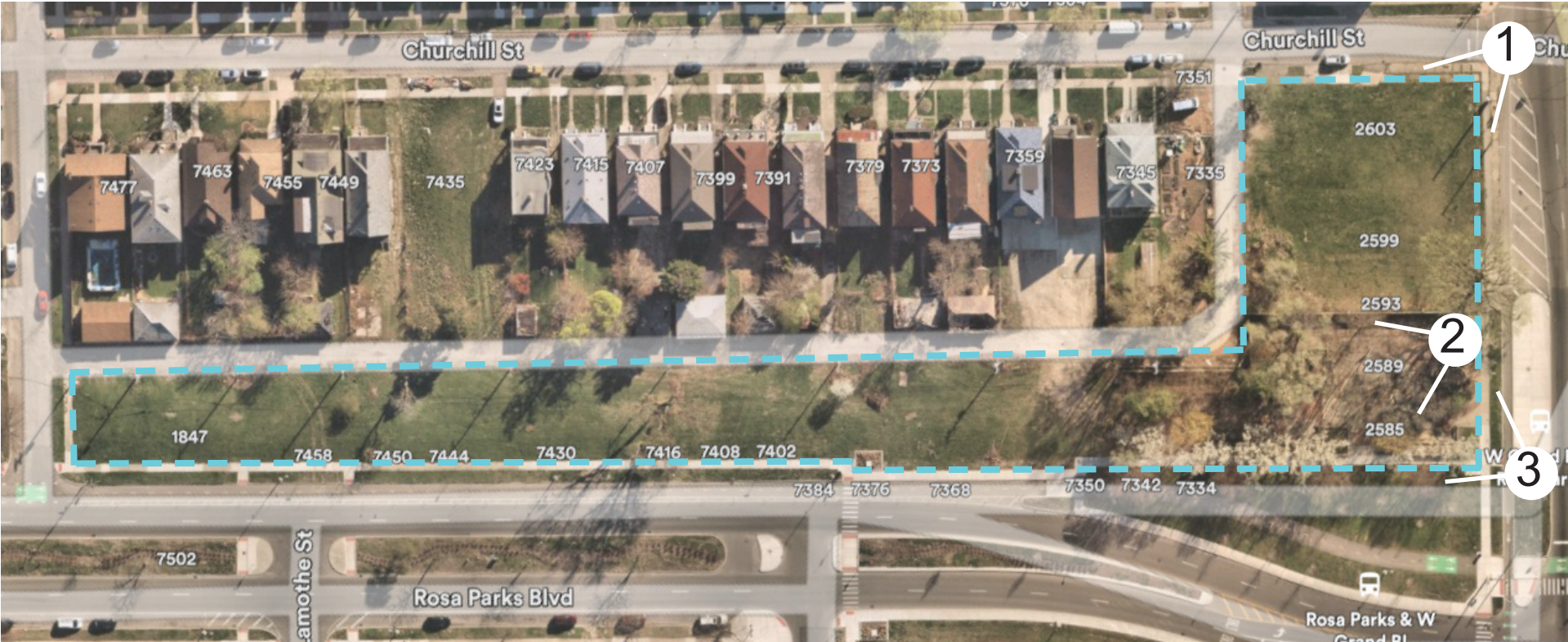
**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**October 8, 2025**



GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
**Parks & Recreation**  
Division



EXISTING PARK PHOTOS





EXISTING PARK PHOTOS





EXISTING PARK PHOTOS





EXISTING PARK PHOTOS



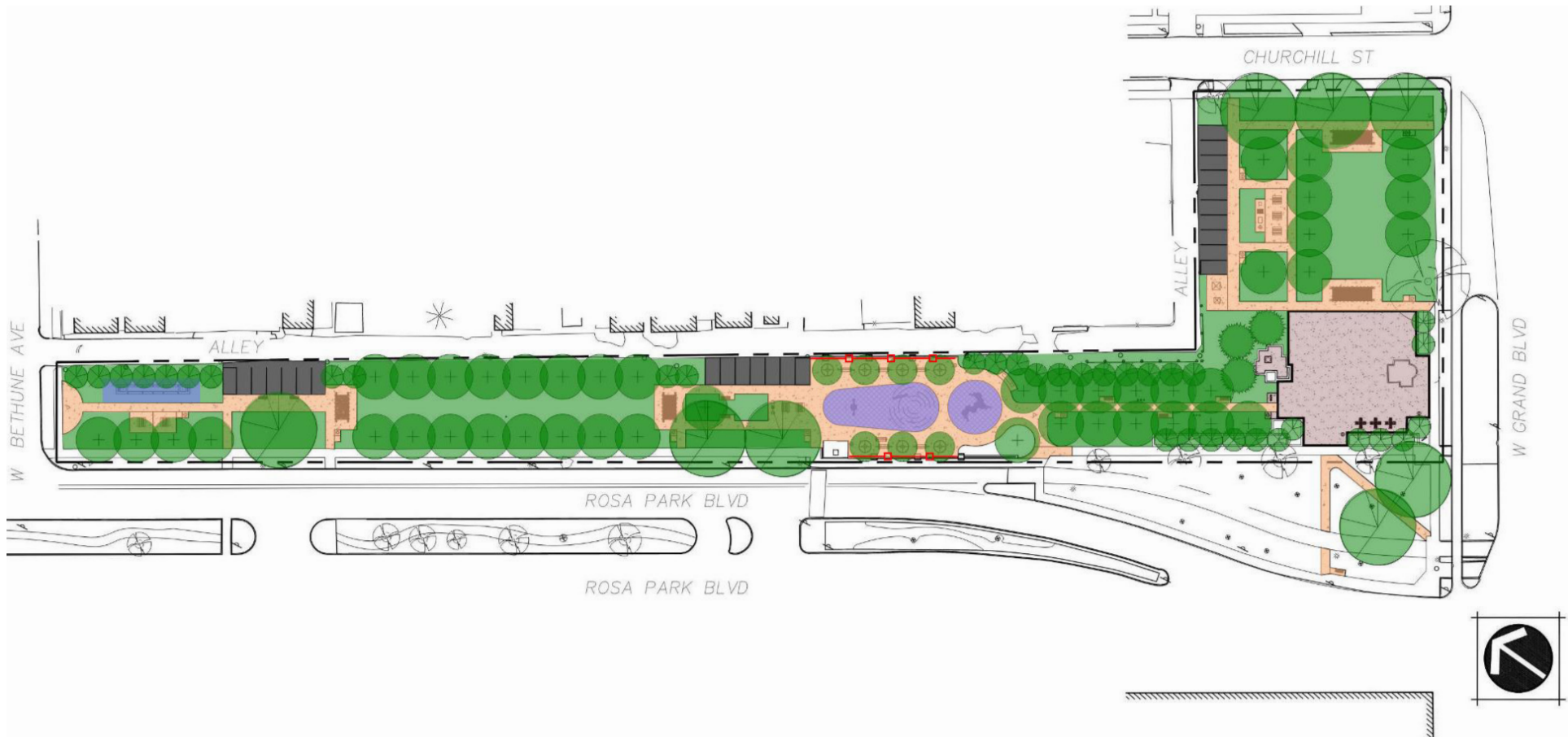


EXISTING PARK PHOTOS





# MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. MEMORIAL PARK (2589 W GRAND BLVD) SPRING 2026 IMPROVEMENTS



**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**October 8, 2025**



GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
**Parks & Recreation  
Division**

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## HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE CONSIDERATIONS

### West Grand Boulevard African American Arts and Business Historic District (Sec. 21-2-238)

**"Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial park, on the northeast corner of Rosa Parks Boulevard and West Grand Boulevard, is surfaced with concrete and brick and is landscaped with raised planters, trees, and bushes."**

*In this plan all deteriorated pavers and walks will be replaced with an aggregate concrete finish. The majority of the trees in MLK Memorial Park either have trunk damage or are dead. Those trees will be removed and replaced with native and non-invasive species that are more healthily spaced out.*

**"...Significant institutions within and outside of the district continue to anchor the community today."**

*MLK Memorial Park will continue to serve as a place for community to gather and recreate. The improvements to be made will enhance the space, making it more accessible. Additional play elements and improvements are inspired by Martin Luther King Jr. and his historical connection to Detroit.*



## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) Memorial Plaza was a small project within the larger Virginia Park Urban Rehabilitation Project A-4-2. This federal project was planned and executed to impact the entire Virginia Park neighborhood.

MLK Plaza was referred to as South entrance Park “P” within the project as shown below.

This project began in the 1970s - 1982 with oversight by the Detroit Housing Commission and the now defunct Community Economic Development Department (CEDD).

Parcels for the plaza site were acquired by the City in the summer of 1975 and assigned to the Detroit Housing Commission. A plaza dedication ceremony occurred on November 8, 1980 and the Martin Luther King Jr. Bust was created by Detroit artist Oscar Graves in 1982.

The proposed improvements to Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial (MLK) Park are intended to enhance the existing use of the park by providing social interaction and enjoyment. Additionally, several vacant lots have been acquired for more opportunities for enjoyment and play. These improvements include replacing the old deteriorated walks, removal of invasive trees and plant additional trees, install benches and picnic tables that currently don't exist, and add some play elements that are inspired by Martin Luther King Jr. speech delivered here in Detroit in 1963.

The redesign of MLK 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.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH SCHEDULE**

- Community Meeting #1 with internal stakeholders and community members- March 21, 2024
- Community Meeting #2 - June 18, 2024
- Community Survey - Spring/Summer 2024
- Community Meeting #3 - Fall 2025

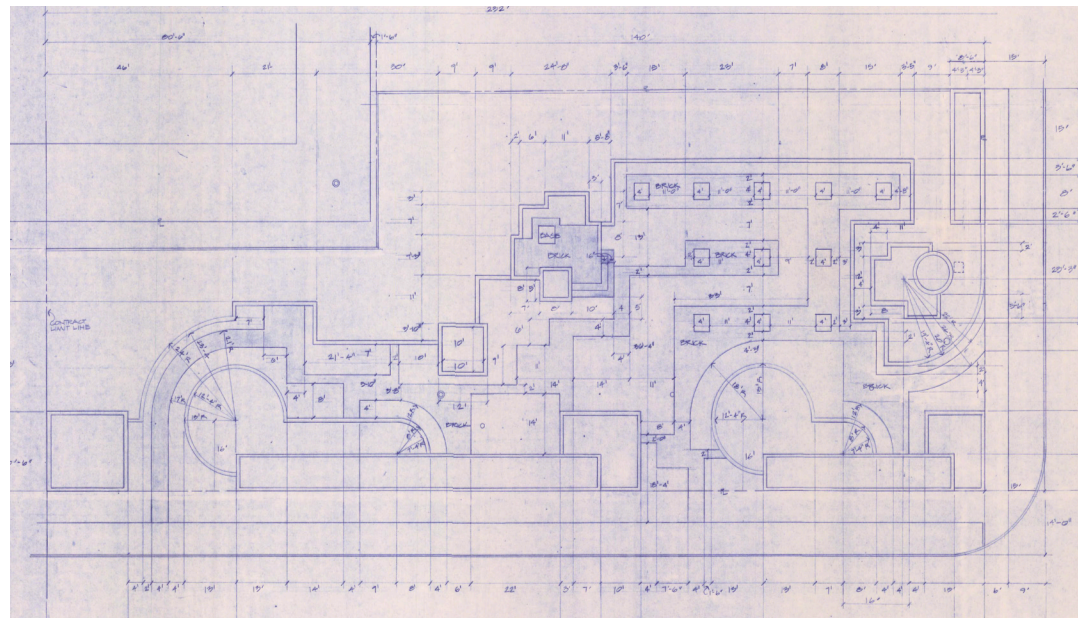
### **ENGAGED STAKEHOLDERS**

- Churchill Block Club
- LaSalle Garden Block Club
- West Grand Blvd.  
Collaborative
- National Action Network
- Residents who live near  
the park

## MLK MEMORIAL PARK 1977 HISTORICAL PLAN




### Park Design Details:

- 3 Main Entries
- Different surface material introduced (brick pavers and exposed aggregate finish)
- Raised Planter Boxes
- Focal Points, MLK Bust and Fountain



MLK MEMORIAL PARK LAYOUT

- Deteriorated surfaces
- Scarce amenities (benches and tables)
- Lack of ADA accessibility
- Dense trees
- Park features (MLK Bust and Water Fountain)

-  SITE BOUNDARY  
 MLK MEMORIAL PARK  
 HISTORIC DISTRICT



MLK BUST      WATER FOUNTAIN



## MLK MEMORIAL PARK HISTORICAL FEATURES

### **HISTORICAL FEATURES IMPROVEMENTS:**

The Martin Luther King Bust will remain in its existing location in the plaza with restoration and the water fountain will be restored to be operational.



Replace brick surfacing of raised platform and raised planting bed to remain



MLK Bust Restoration



Water Fountain Restoration



## MLK MEMORIAL PARK HISTORICAL LIGHTING

### HISTORICAL FEATURES IMPROVEMENTS:

Current lighting system is nonexistent; damaged conduit and poles gone. Proposal is to replace 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, Damaged



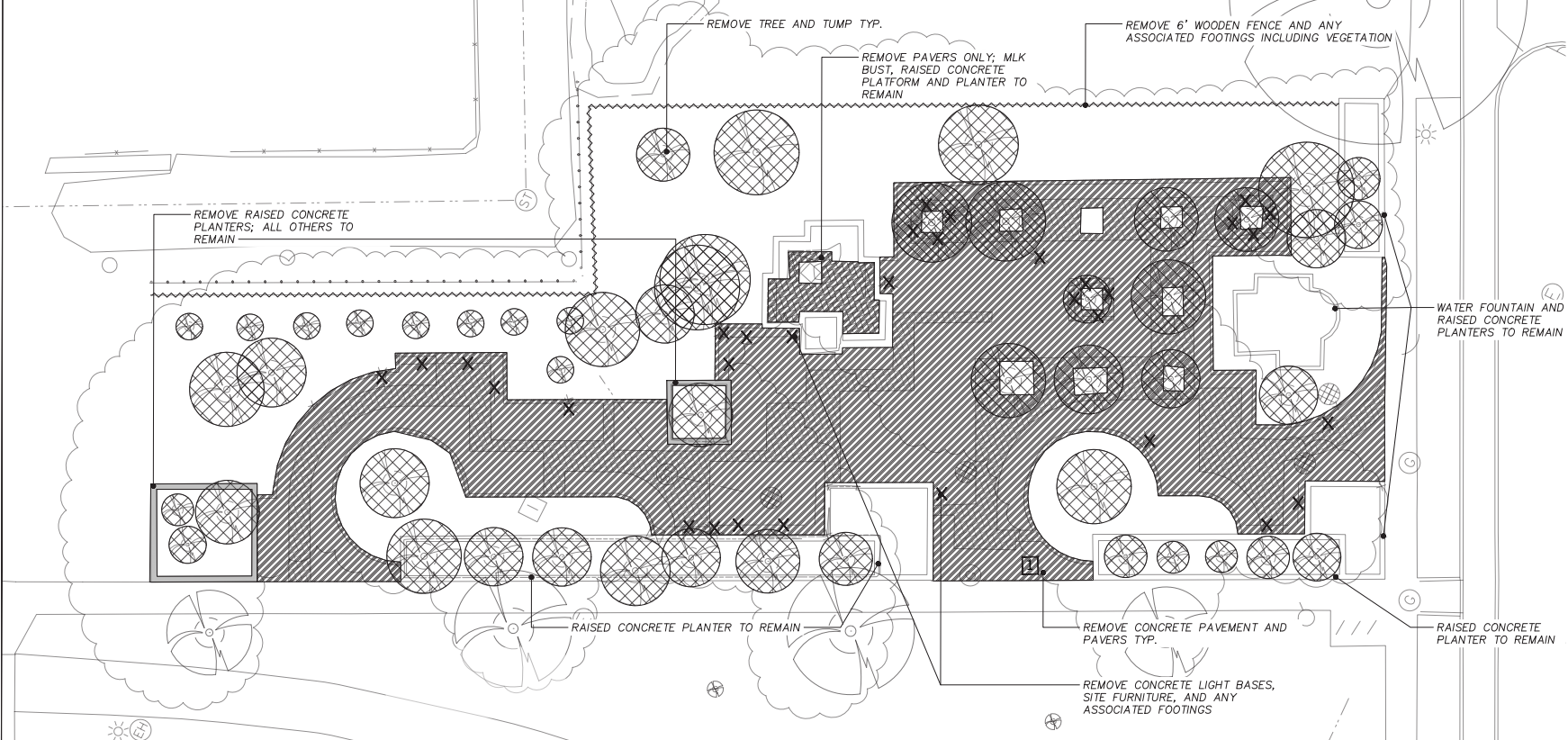
Historic Park Lighting



Historic Park Lighting

# MLK MEMORIAL PARK DEMOLITION PLAN

All concrete and pavers will be removed and replaced with a concrete exposed aggregate finish and most of the raised concrete planters will remain except 2. The majority of the trees along the perimeter of the park are invasive trees (Bradford Pear) and the trees within the plaza area will be unable to be saved due to the proposed park layout. Most of the proposed tree removals are Bradford trees which are invasive and will be replaced with healthier spacing and native and non-invasive varieties.



DEMOLITION NOTES:

		QUANTITIES		NOTES
SYMBOL	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL	UNIT	
	FENCE REMOVAL	260	LF	REMOVAL TO INCLUDE FOOTINGS AND ANY ASSOCIATED VEGETATION; PROPERLY DISPOSE
	TREE REMOVAL		EA	6"-18" TREE REMOVALS TO INCLUDE STUMP AND PROPERLY DISPOSE
	CONCRETE AND PAVER REMOVAL	7300	SF	REMOVE ALL PAVEMENT MATERIAL AND PROPERLY DISPOSE
	RAISED CONCRETE PLANTER REMOVAL	125	LF	REMOVE CONCRETE AND PROPERLY DISPOSE
	LIGHT BASE REMOVAL AND SITE FURNITURE		EA	EX. LIGHTS ARE DISCONNECTED; REMOVAL TO INCLUDE ANY ASSOCIATED FOOTINGS AND PROPOSELY DISPOSE ITEMS

GENERAL NOTES

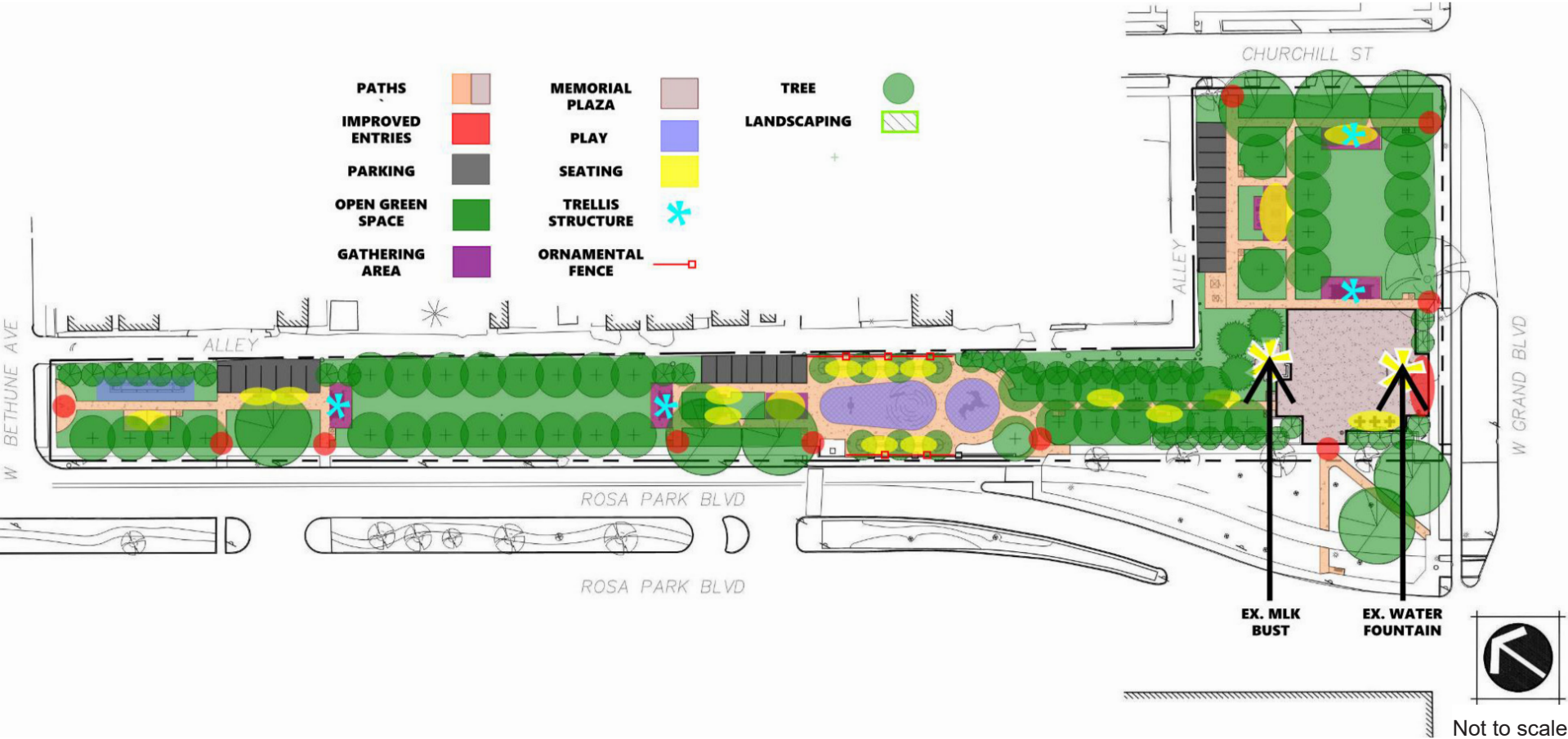
- A. THE CONTRACTOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR VISITING THE SITE TO DETERMINE THE EXTENT OF THE WORK DEMOLITION AND CONSTRUCTION (WHETHER SHOWN ON THE DRAWINGS OR NOT).
- B. EXISTING MATERIALS/ITEMS TO BE SALVAGE BY CONTRACTOR SHALL BE STOCKPILED OR STORED IN APPROVED LOCATIONS BY CITY REPRESENTATIVE AND RELOCATED. CONTRACTOR TO PROTECT ALL MATERIALS DESIGNATED TO REMAIN AND SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR REPLACEMENT OF ANY MATERIALS THAT BECOME DAMAGED DURING CONSTRUCTION. THE EXTENT OF REPLACEMENT/REPAIR OF DAMAGED MATERIALS/ITEMS SHALL BE DETERMINED BY CITY REPRESENTATIVE.
- C. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL REMOVE AND CLEAR DEBRIS FROM OFFSITE IN A LEGAL MANNER.
- D. CONTACT MISS DIG 72 HOURS PRIOR TO ANY DEMOLITION.



Not to scale



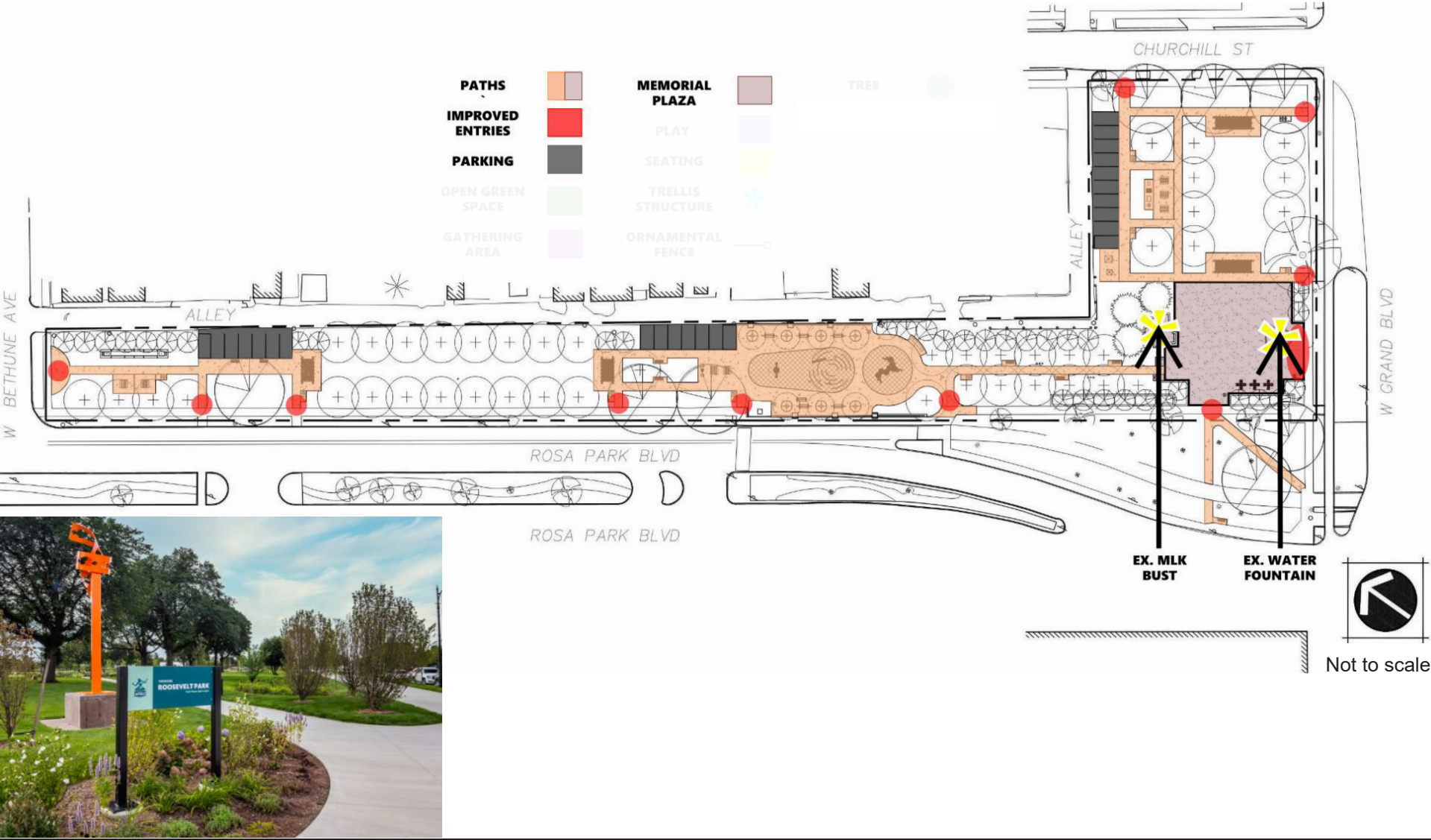
# MLK MEMORIAL PARK PROPOSED PLAN





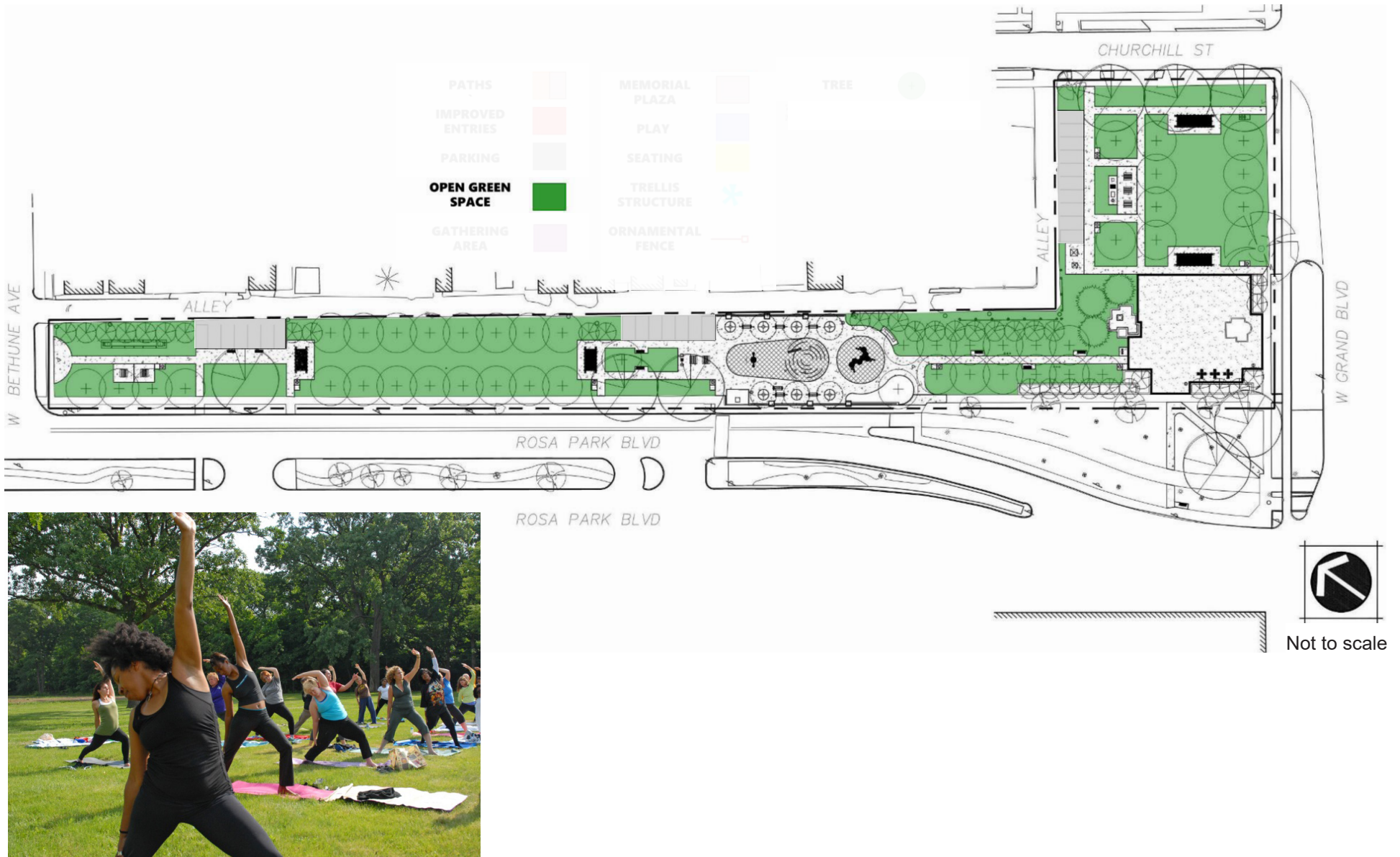
# PROPOSED ENTRIES, PATHS, AND PARKING

The entries will be improved, enhancing direct access to park amenities and surrounding places. Currently, there are no nearby parking spaces and park users use the alley to park.



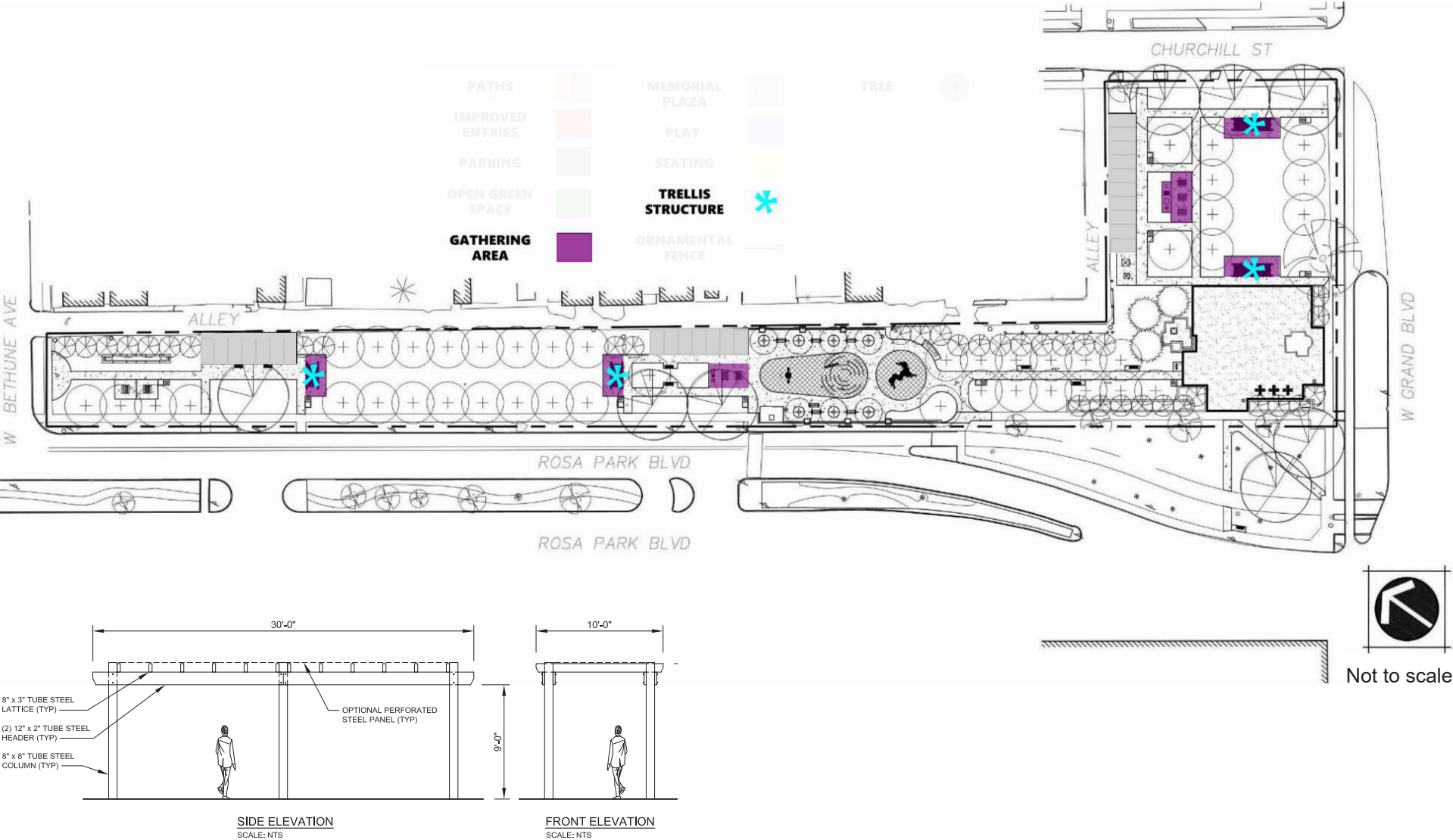
## PROPOSED OPEN GREEN SPACE

The proposed greenspaces will allow passive activities such as relaxing, as well opportunities for community gatherings. Some of the green spaces will be able to accommodate small-sized events.



# PROPOSED GATHERING AREA/TRELLIS STRUCTURE

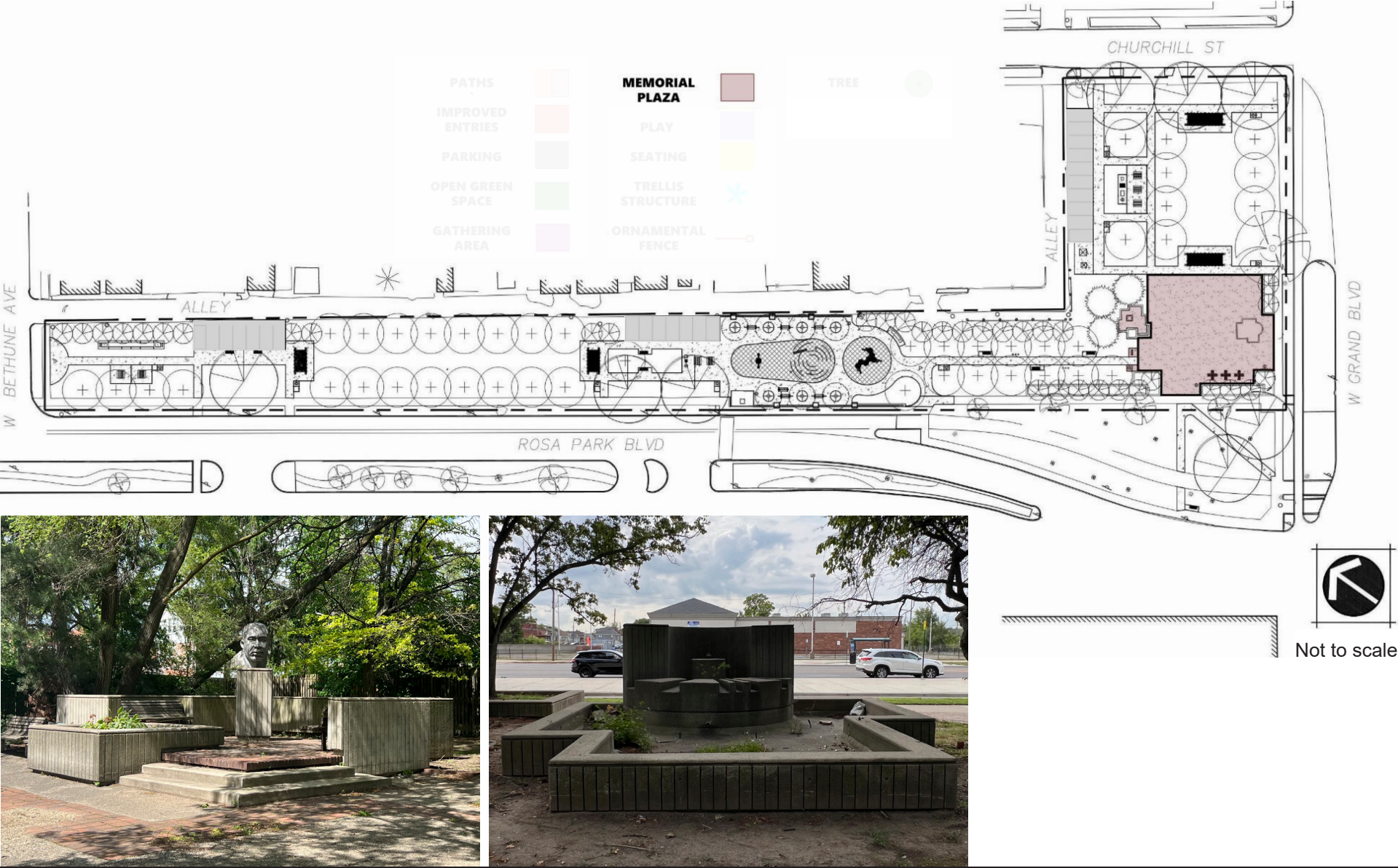
The proposed gathering areas will serve as a meet up space with picnic tables and there are trellis structures anchoring each passive and active space overlooking green spacing. The trellis structures will be a steel frame material in the color black.





# PROPOSED MLK MEMORIAL PLAZA IMPROVEMENTS

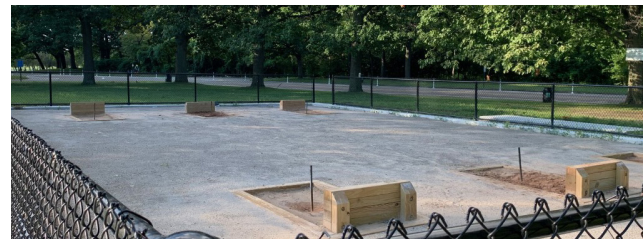
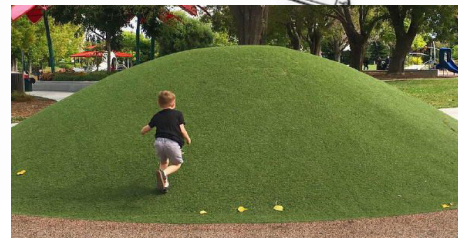
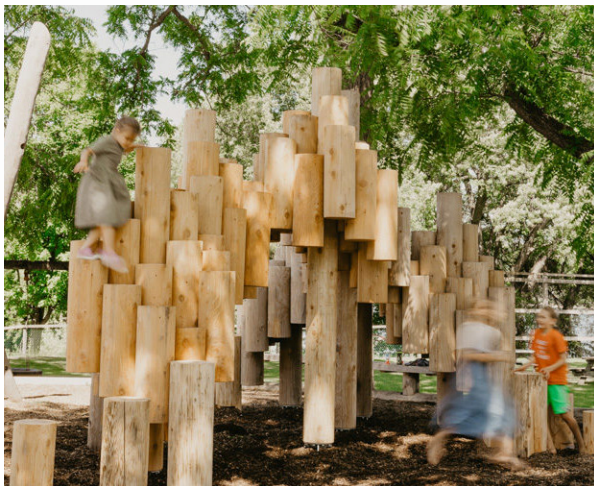
The proposed plaza will replace all deteriorated pavers and walks with an aggregate concrete finish. Restoring both the MLK and water fountain will enhance the plaza as focal points. This improvement helps reimagining the historic presence of the park.





## PROPOSED PLAY ELEMENTS

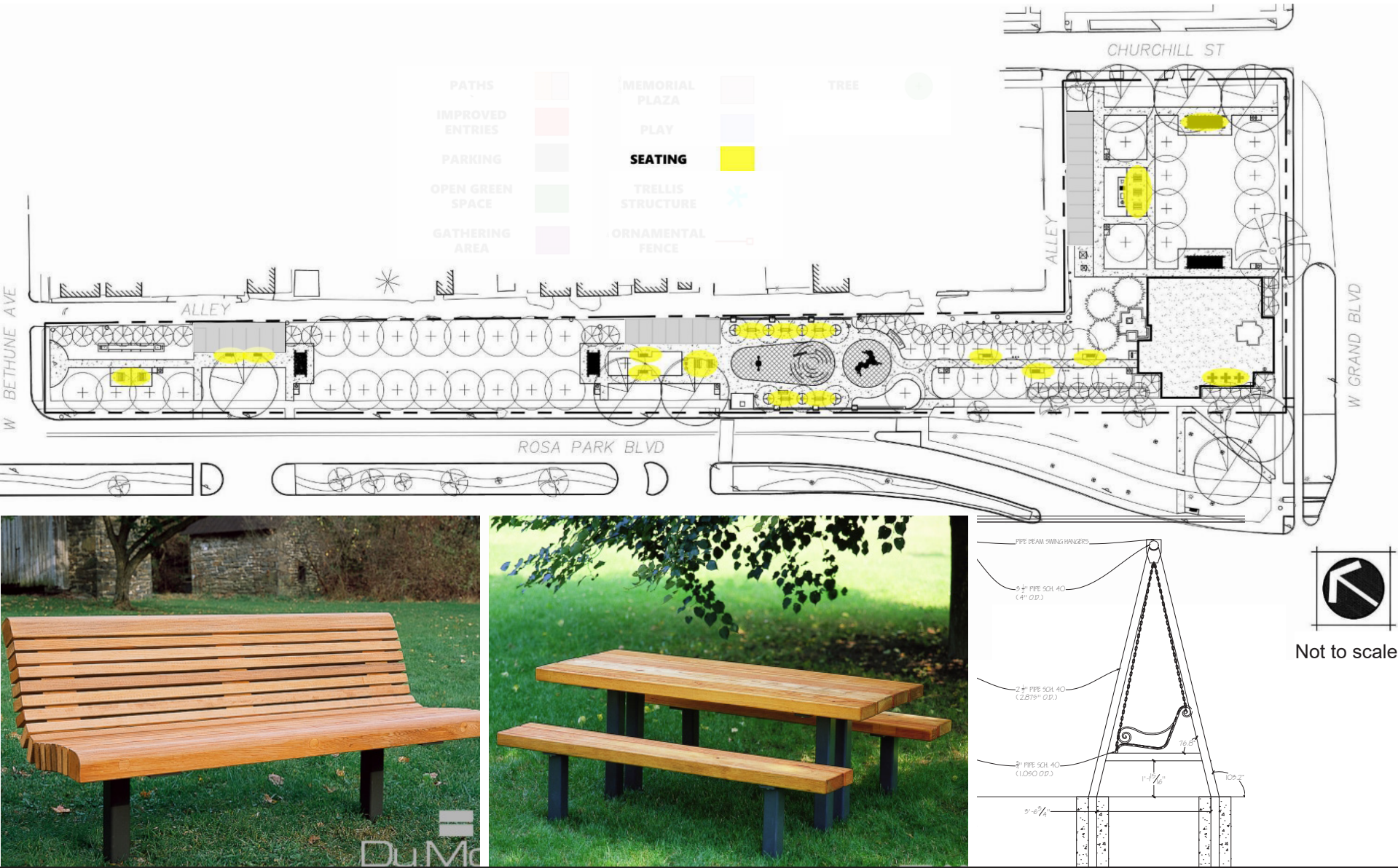
The proposed play elements are intended for people of all ages to have the opportunity to play and socialize. The swing posts and climbers are robinia wood. In addition, the horseshoe court will be located at Bethune Ave and Rosa Parks Blvd where residents currently bring their own to play.





# PROPOSED SEATING

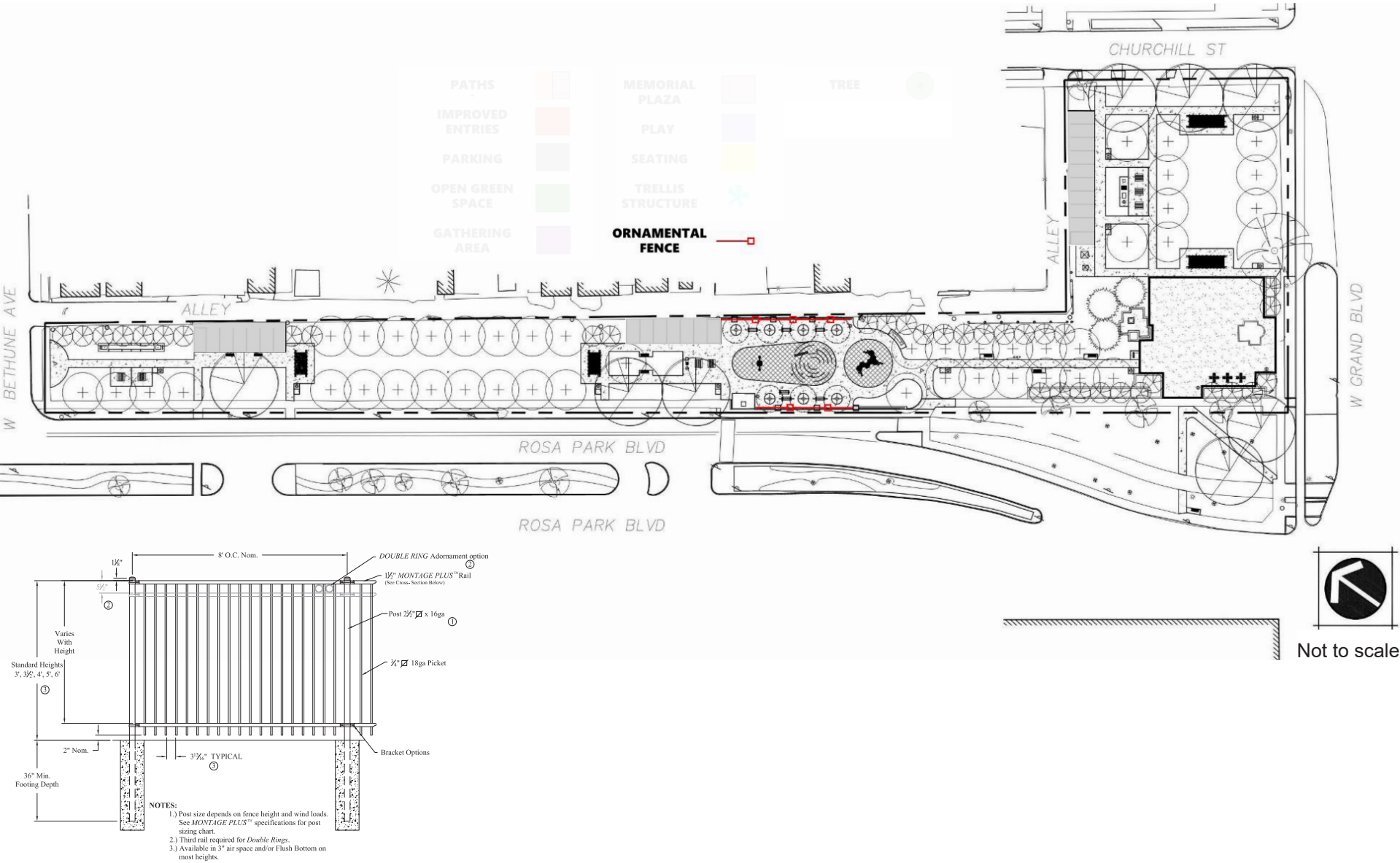
There are various proposed seating types throughout the park: park benches, swinging benches, and picnic tables. All items are City Standards and found in various parks across the city for ease of maintenance. Benches and tables will be douglas fir wood with metal frames. Swinging benches will be steel with a black powder coated finish.





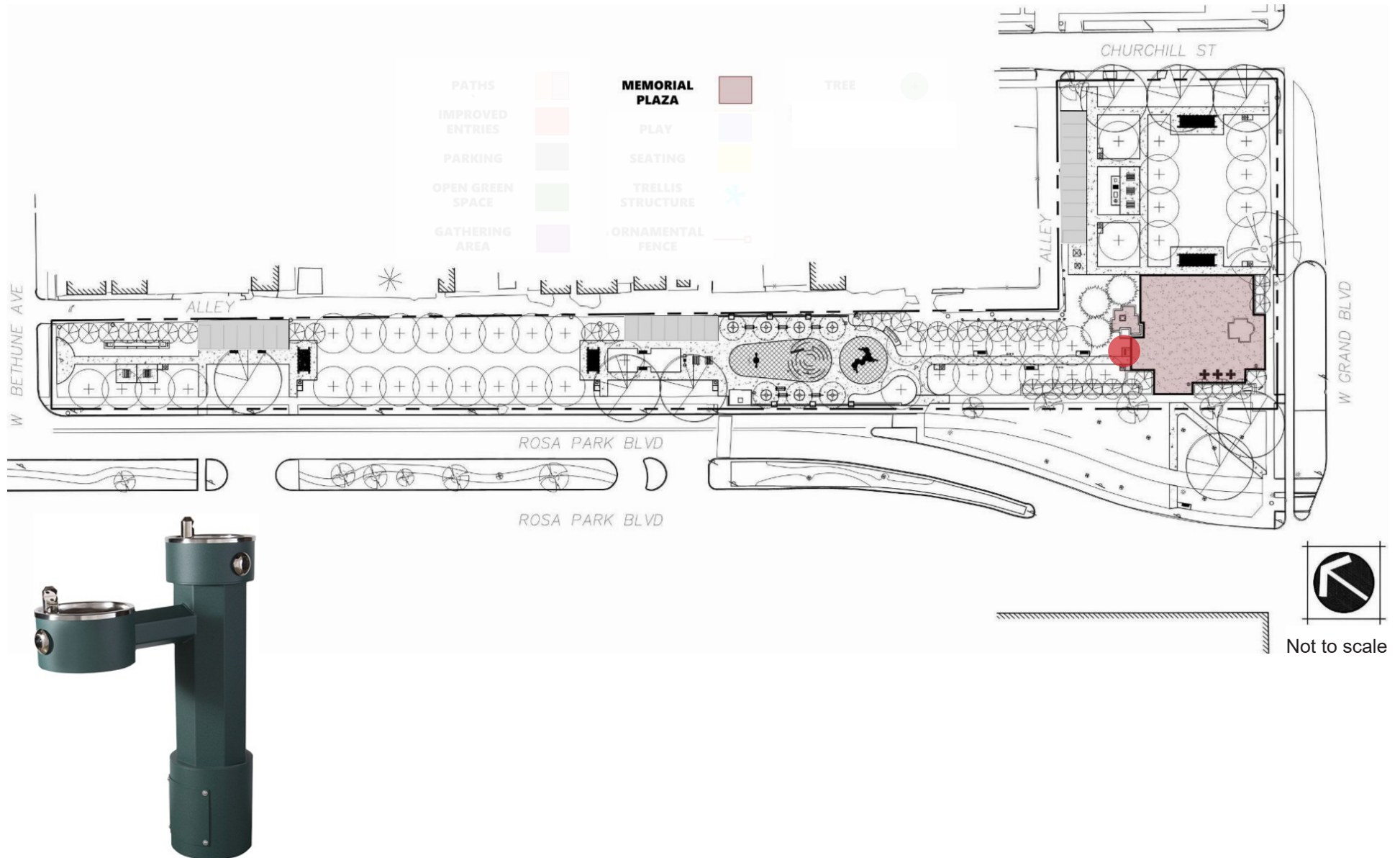
# PROPOSED ORNAMNETAL FENCE

The four foot ornamental fence is being proposed along Rosa Park Blvd and along the alley. The intent is to protect park users using the play area and those who are sitting nearby.



## PROPOSED DRINKING FOUNTAIN

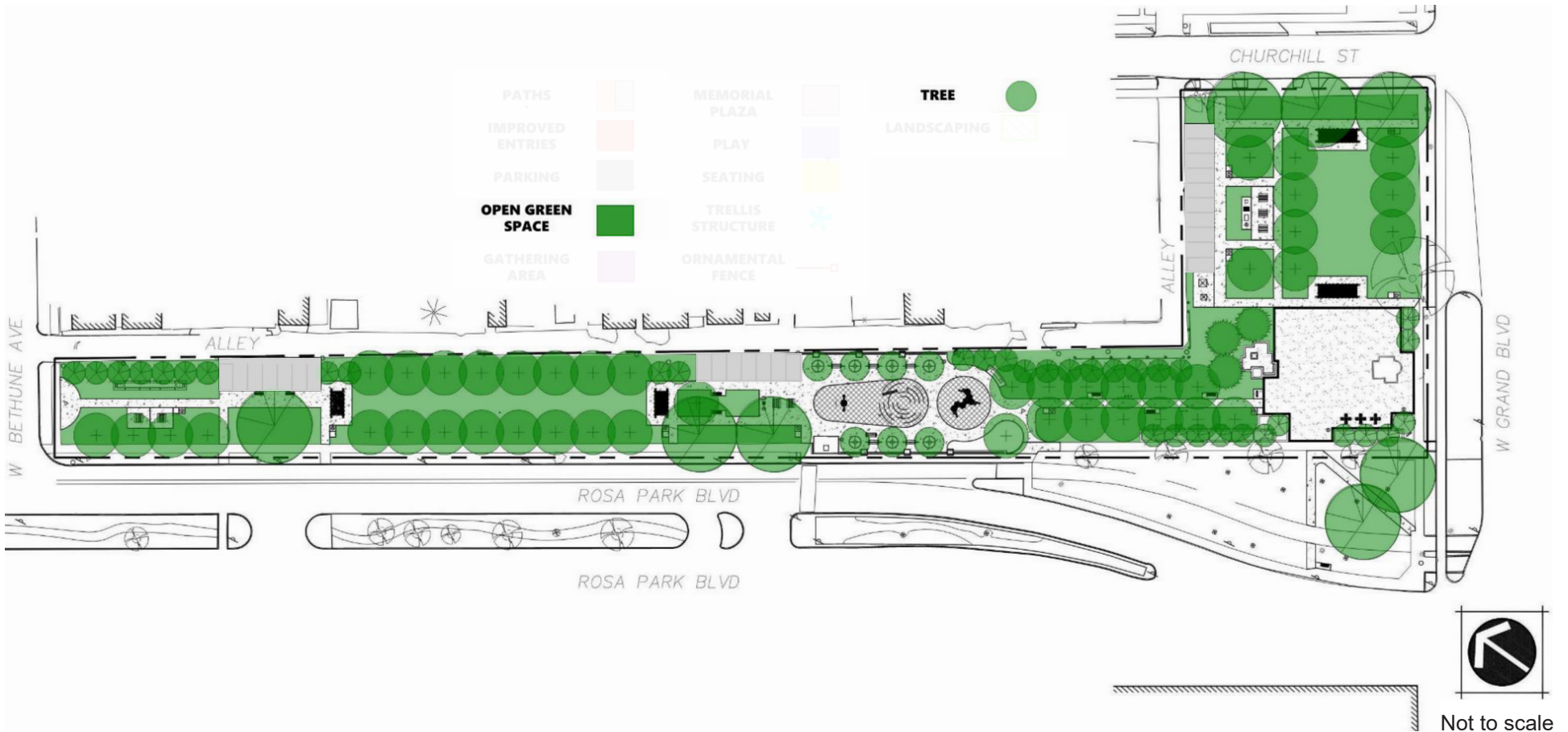
The proposed drinking fountain is another improvement in reimagining the historic presence of the park. The drinking fountain will be accessible to all and include a pet fountain; amenity will have black powder-coated finish. The fountain will be located in the shaded red area shown on the plan below.





## PROPOSED TREES

For every tree removed in the park it will be replaced with 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 both sides of pathways creating an allee of trees



## PROPOSED TREE SELECTION



EASTERN REDBUD



CORNELIAN CHERRY  
DOGWOOD



'BLOODGOOD' LONDON  
PLANE



'PRINCETON' ELM



NORWAY SPRUCE



# PROPOSED TREE GRATES - GATHERING AREA AND PLAY AREA

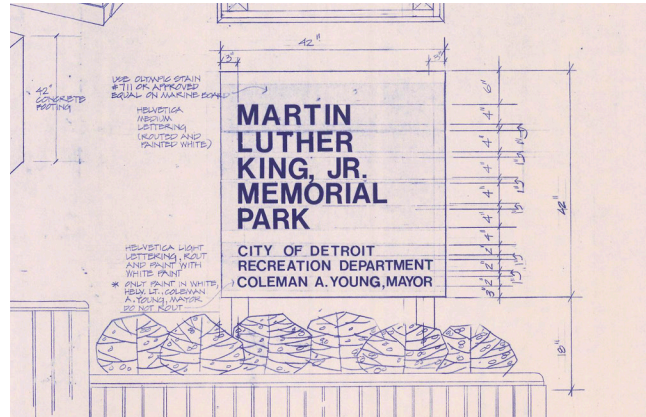
The tree grates will be located in the gathering and play area as shown on the map in shaded areas, providing shade in the active space. The surrounding green spaces with trees will also provide canopy shade.



## PARK SIGNAGE

### EXISTING PARK SIGN:

Currently, there are no park signs. Shown below is a drawing of the park sign that once existed. This park sign was implemented in the raised planter boxes visible from W Grand Blvd and Rosa Parks Blvd.



PARK SIGN, NONEXISTENT

### PROPOSED PARK SIGNS:

The proposed design will place various standard park signs with city branding at all park main entrances. The park sign will identify the site as a City park as well as post park hours.



PROPOSED PARK SIGN

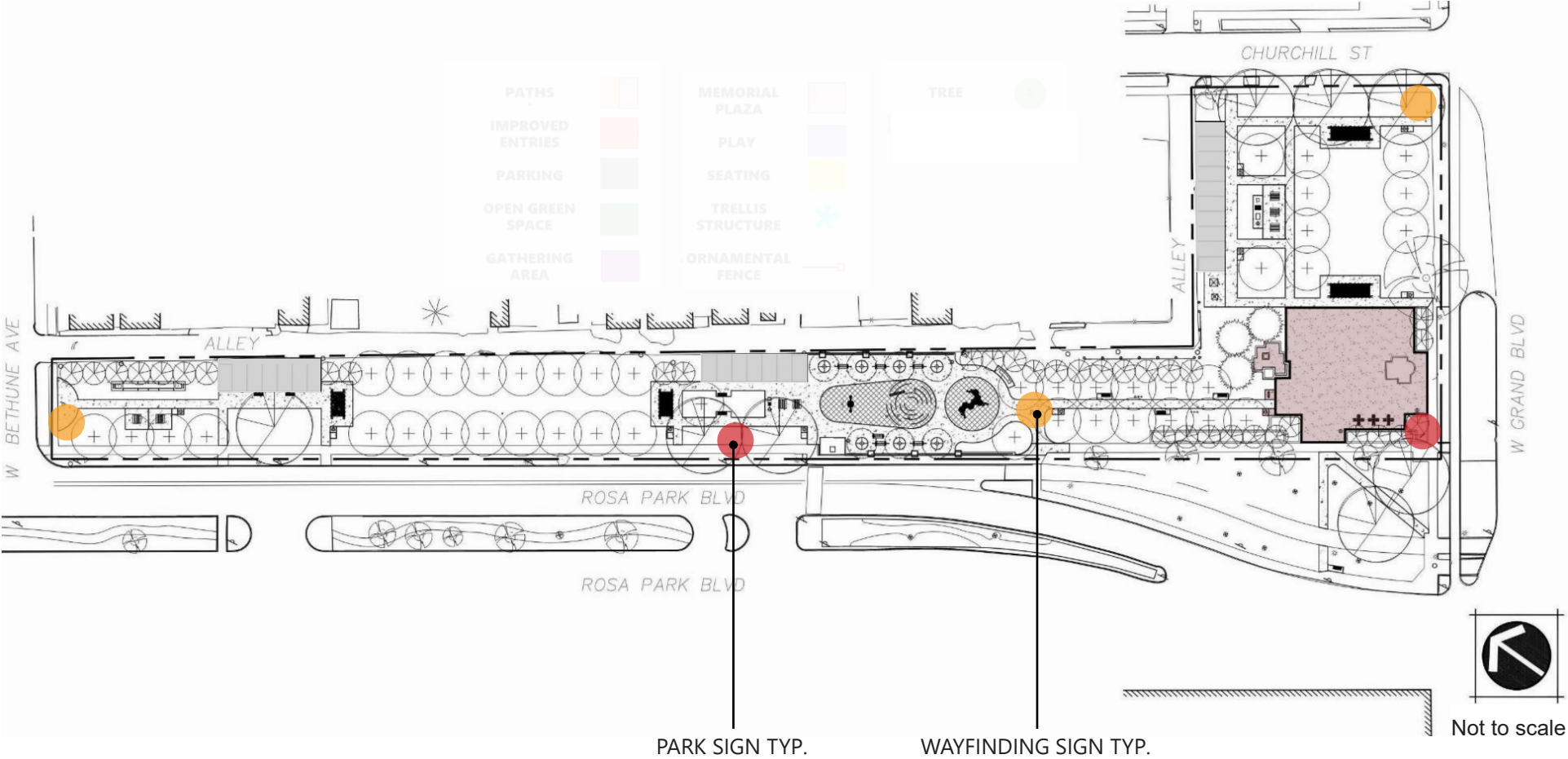


PROPOSED WAYFINDING SIGN

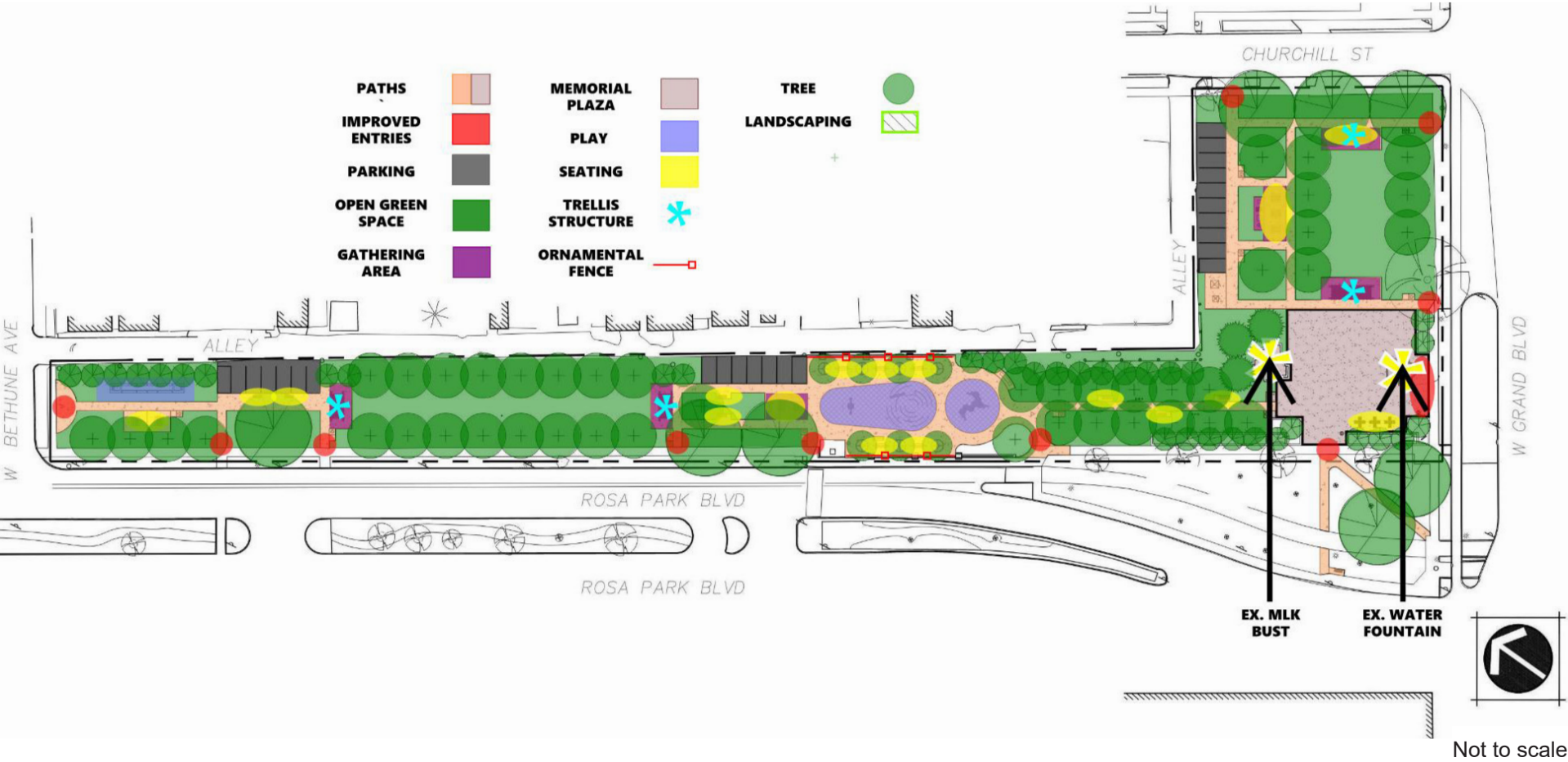


# PROPOSED PARK AND WAYFINDING SIGN LOCATIONS

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. The fountain will be located in the shaded red area shown on the plan below.



# MLK MEMORIAL PARK PROPOSED PLAN





## CUT SHEETS ATTACHED

# MLK MEMORIAL PARK

## SUMMER 2025 DESIGN



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