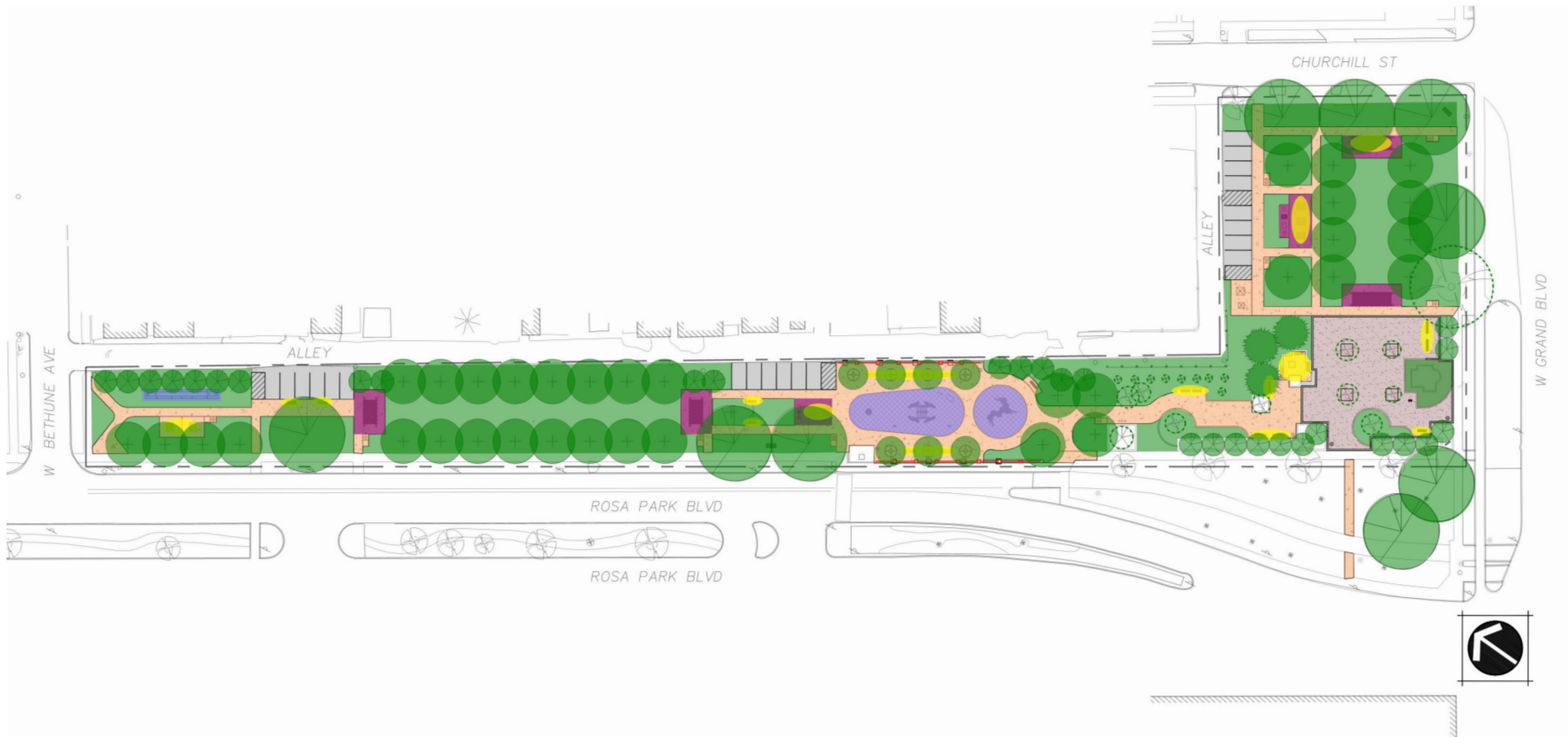


MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. MEMORIAL PARK (2589 W GRAND BLVD) SPRING 2026 IMPROVEMENTS



HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
November 12, 2025



GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
**Parks & Recreation
Division**

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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 - March 21, 2024
- Community Meeting #2 - June 18, 2024

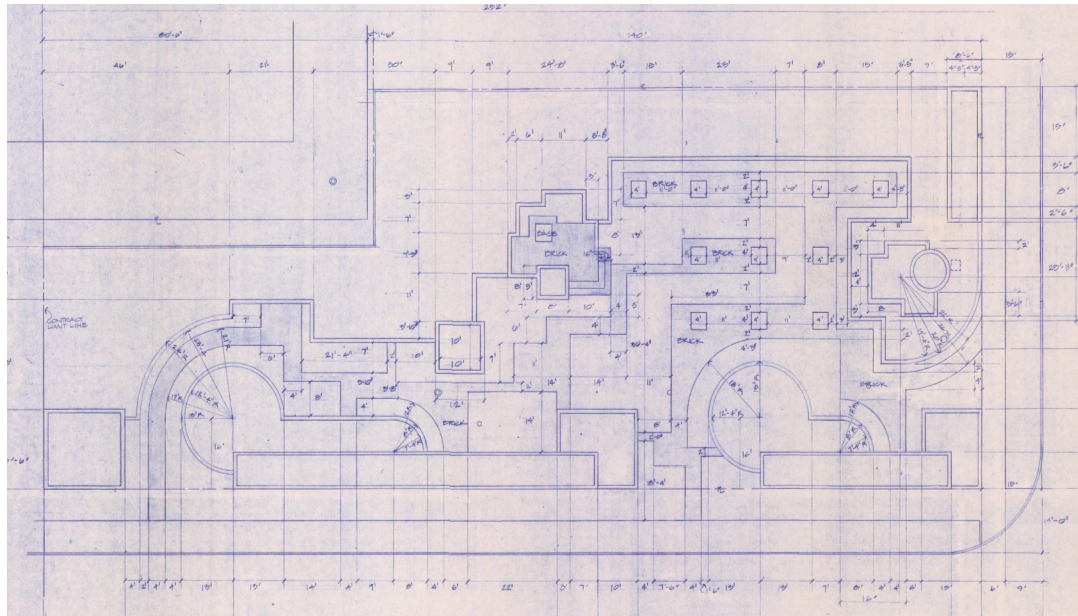
ENGAGED STAKEHOLDERS

- Churchill Block Club
- LaSalle Garden Block Club

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



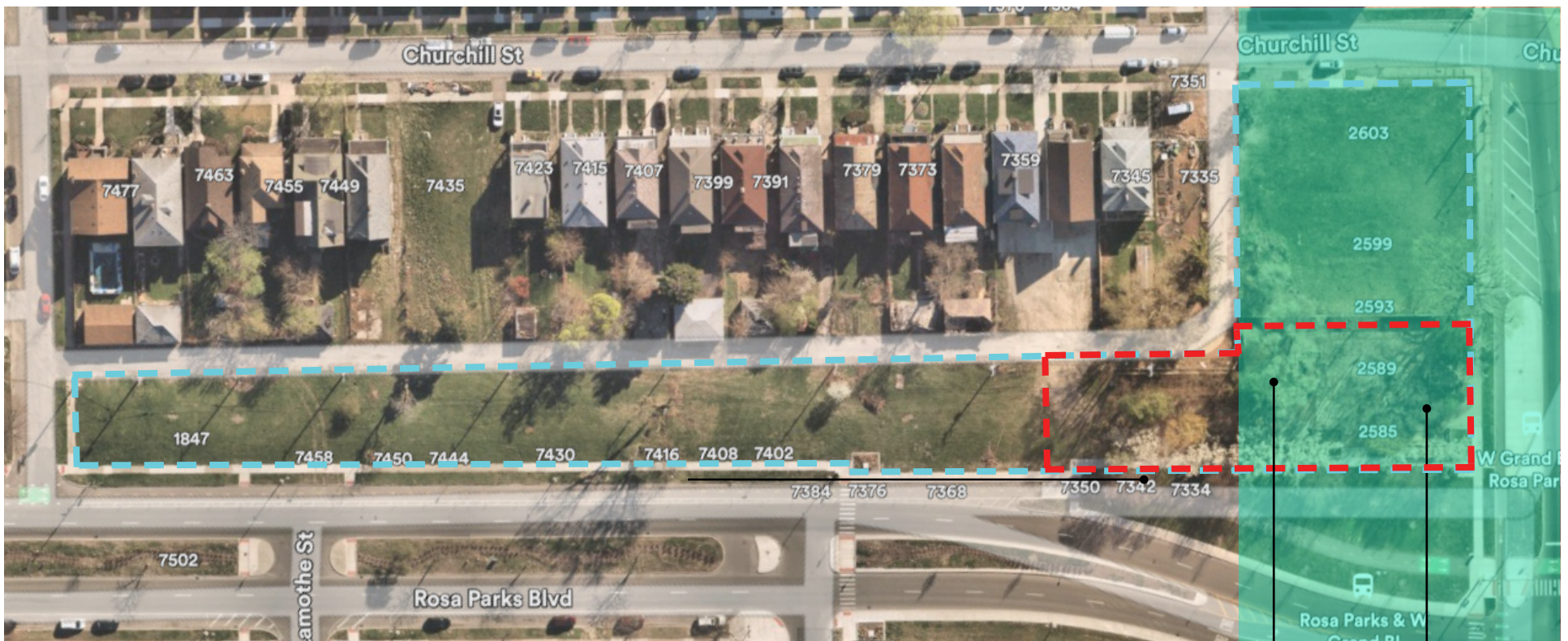
MLK MEMORIAL PARK LAYOUT

EXISTING PARK CONDITIONS

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.

- 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



Not to scale

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 planter bed to remain



MLK Bust Restoration

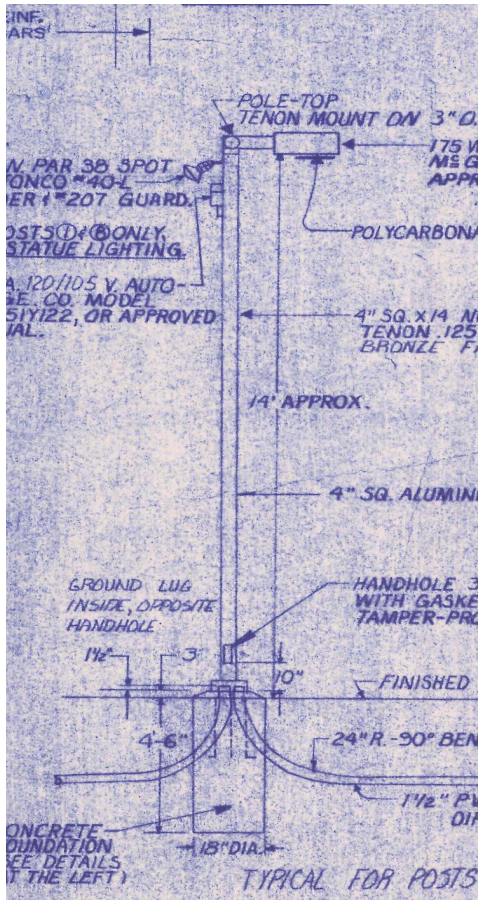


Water Fountain Restoration

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



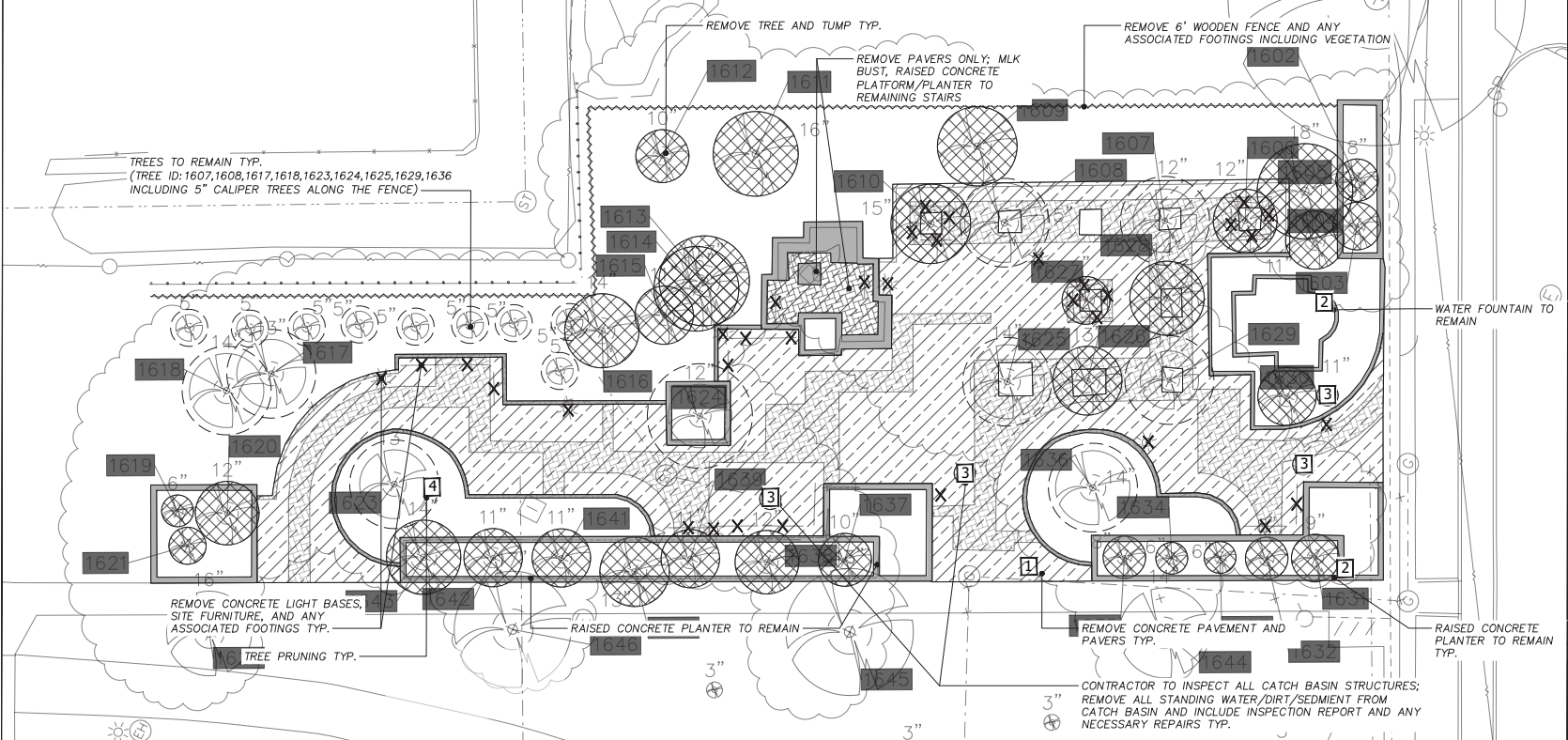
Historic Park Lighting



Historic Park Lighting

MLK MEMORIAL PARK DEMOLITION PLAN

All concrete and pavers will be removed and replaced with compacted crushed limestone, all raised concrete planters will remain, most of the brick edging will remain intact, and due to the proposed park layout selective trees will remain. The majority of the trees along the perimeter of the park are invasive trees (Bradford Pear), which will be replaced with healthier spacing and native and non-invasive varieties.



DEMOLITION NOTES:			
		QUANTITIES	
SYMBOL	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL	UNIT
	FENCE REMOVAL	260	LF
	TREE REMOVAL 6"-18" DBH	32	EA
	CONCRETE AND PAVER REMOVAL	7500	SF
	RAISED CONCRETE PLANTERS, BRICK EDGE, MLK BUST, FOUNTAIN TO REMAIN		
	LIGHT BASE REMOVAL AND SITE FURNITURE	33	EA
		NOTES	
		REMOVE TO INCLUDE FOOTINGS AND ANY ASSOCIATED VEGETATION; PROPERLY DISPOSE	
		TREE ID: 1602, 1603, 1604, 1605, 1606, 1609, 1610, 1611, 1612, 1613, 1614, 1615, 1616, 1619, 1620, 1621, 1626, 1627, 1628, 1629, 1630, 1631, 1632, 1633, 1634, 1635, 1637, 1638, 1639, 1640, 1641, 1642, 1643; TREE REMOVALS TO INCLUDE STUMP AND PROPERLY DISPOSE	
		REMOVE ALL PAVEMENT MATERIAL AND PROPERLY DISPOSE	
		THESE ITEMS TO BE KEPT IN STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY AND TO REMAIN INTACT	
		EX. LIGHTS ARE DISCONNECTED; REMOVAL TO INCLUDE ANY ASSOCIATED FOOTINGS AND PROPOSEDLY DISPOSE ITEMS	

	CATCH BASIN CLEAN UP AND INSPECTION	4	EA
	TREES TO REMAIN AND PRUNE	18	EA
	PRESSURE WASH RAISED CONCRETE PLANTER FACE	560	LF
		CONTRACTOR TO REMOVE ALL ACCUMULATED SEDIMENT/DIRT/WATER FROM CATCH BASIN; VISUALLY INSPECT STRUCTURES FOR DEFECTS AND PROVIDE CONDITION REPORT; RESTORE EACH CATCH BASIN TO FULL OPERATIONAL CAPACITY, ENSURING PROPER WATER FLOW	
		CONTRACTOR TO ASSESS TREE HEALTH AND SAFETY, REMOVING DEAD OR HAZARDOUS BRANCHES AND SHAPING THE TREE FOR AESTHETIC OR STRUCTURAL REASONS; PRUNE TREES IN APPROPRIATE SEASON	
		APPLY A CONCRETE SAFE, BIODEGRADABLE CLEANING SOLUTION AND CLEAN THE CONCRETE FACE USING A PRESSURE WASHER AT APPROPRIATE PSI; ALL RESIDUE TO BE REMOVED; AVOID ETCHING OR DAMAGING THE CONCRETE SURFACE.	

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).

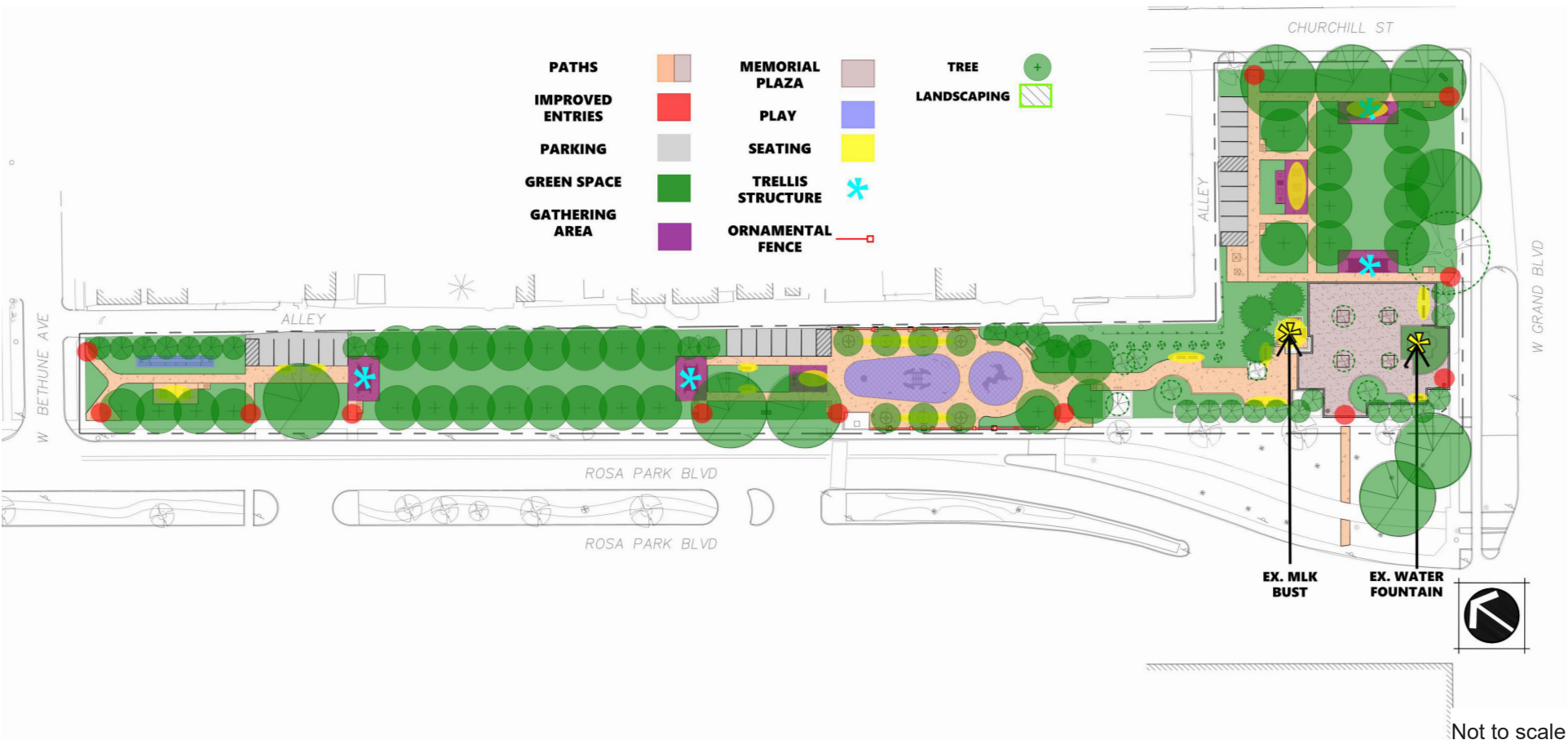
B. EXISTING MATERIALS/ITEMS TO BE SALVAGE BY CONTRACTOR SHALL BE STOCKPILED OR STORED IN APPROVED LOCATIONS BY CITY REPRESENTATIVE AND RELOCATED. CONTRACTOR TO PROTECT ALL MATERIALS DESIGNATED TO REMAIN AND SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR REPLACEMENT OF ANY MATERIALS THAT BECOME DAMAGED DURING CONSTRUCTION. THE 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.



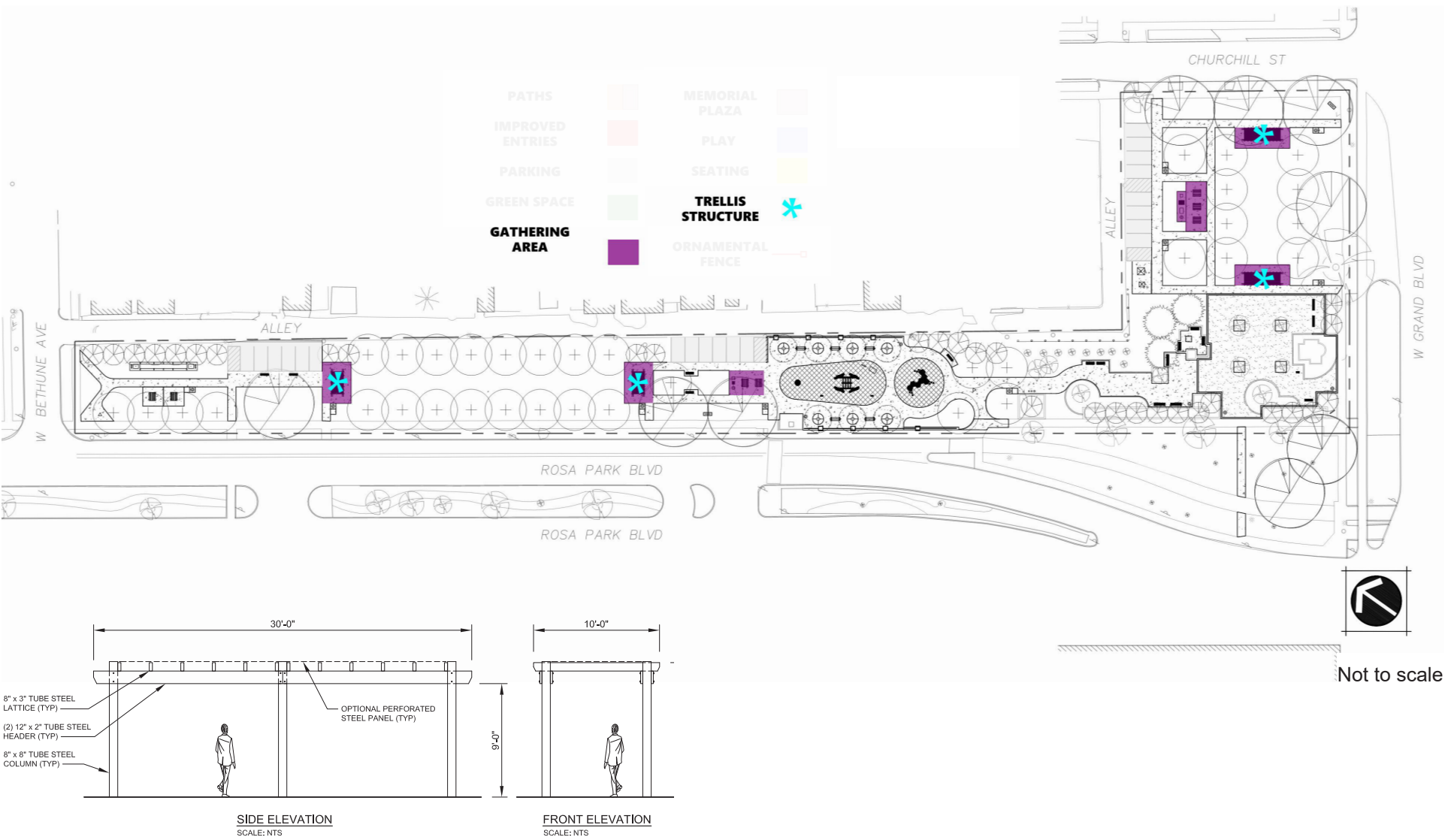
PROPOSED OPEN GREEN SPACE

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.



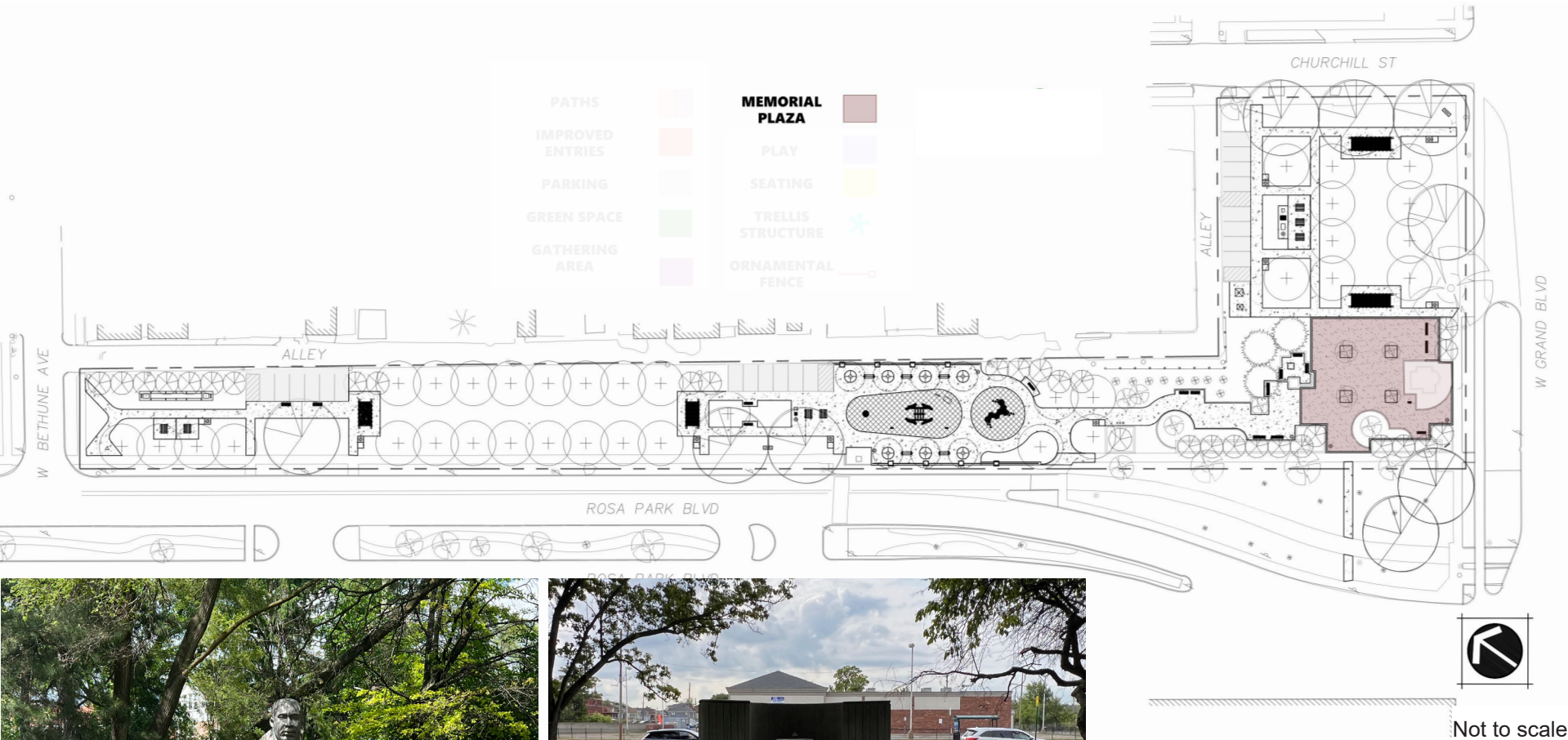
PROPOSED GATHERING AREA/TRELLIS STRUCTURE

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.



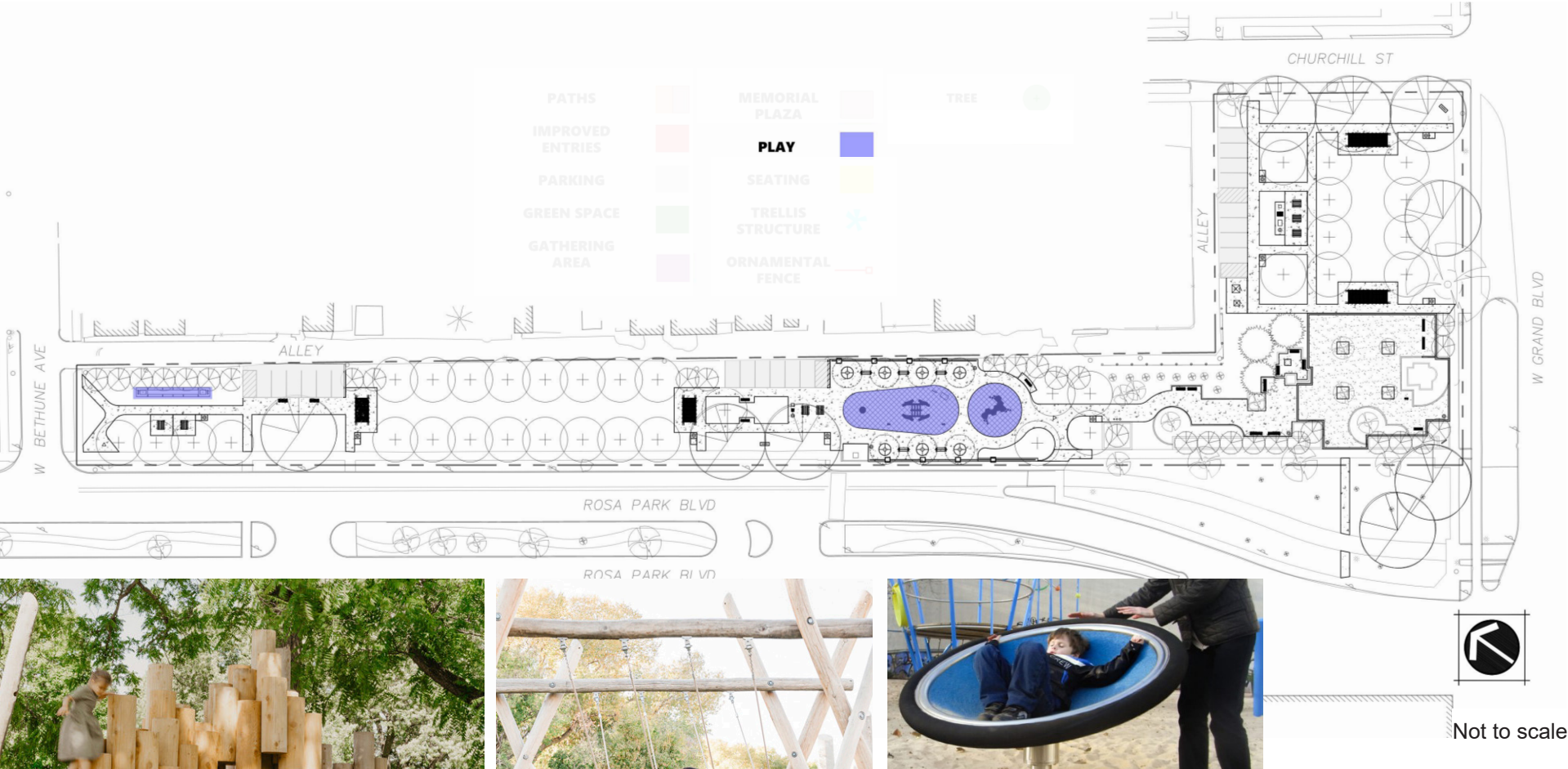
PROPOSED MLK MEMORIAL PLAZA IMPROVEMENTS

The proposed plaza will replace all deteriorated pavers and concrete surface with a compacted crushed limestone finish. Proposal plans to restore both the Martin Luther King Jr. bust and water fountain that will enhance the plaza as focal points. This improvement helps reimaging the historic presence of the park.



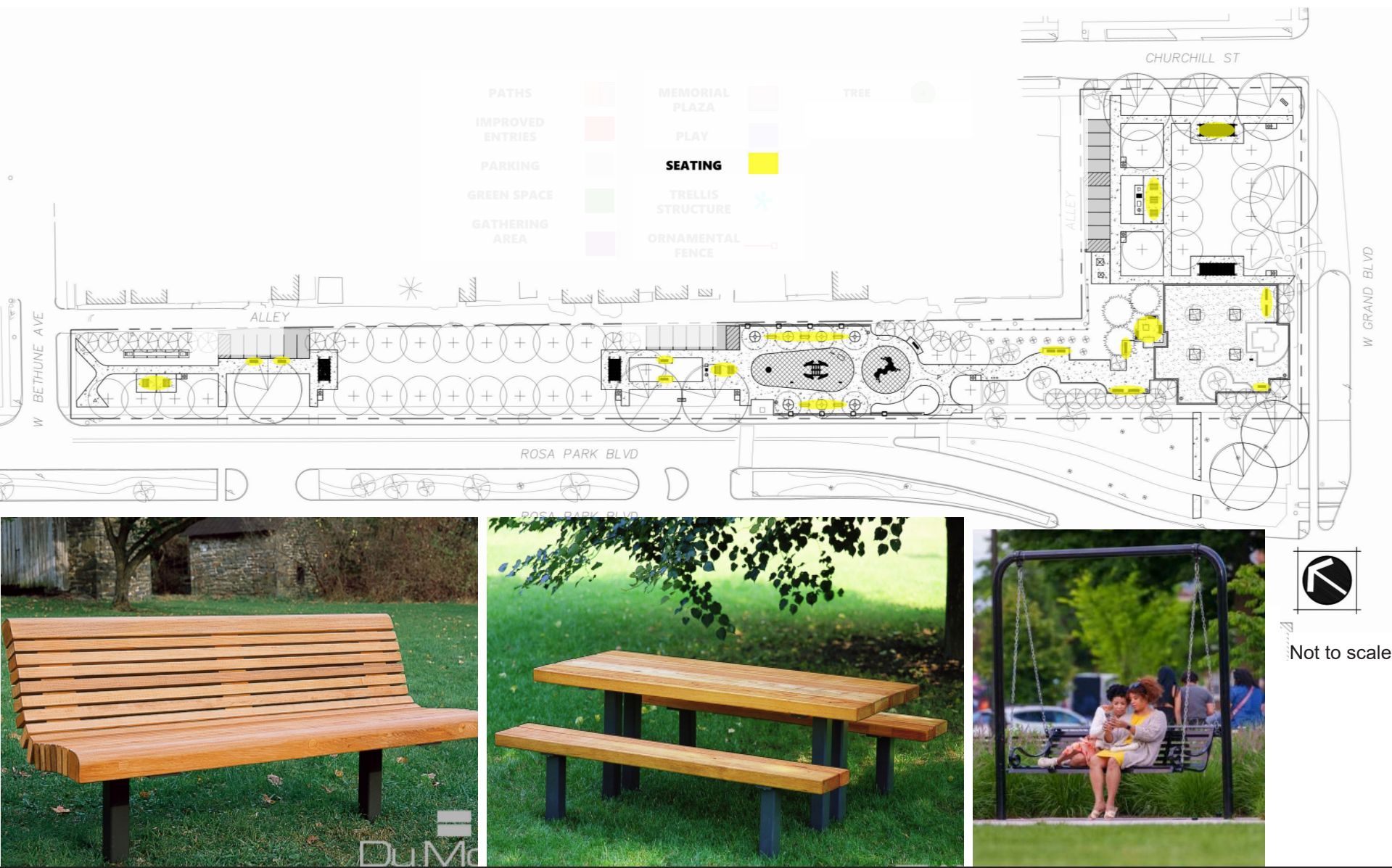
PROPOSED PLAY ELEMENTS

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. The spinner will be a element to influence people to play together. In addition, the horseshoe court will be located at Bethune Ave and Rosa Parks Blvd where residents currently bring their own to play.



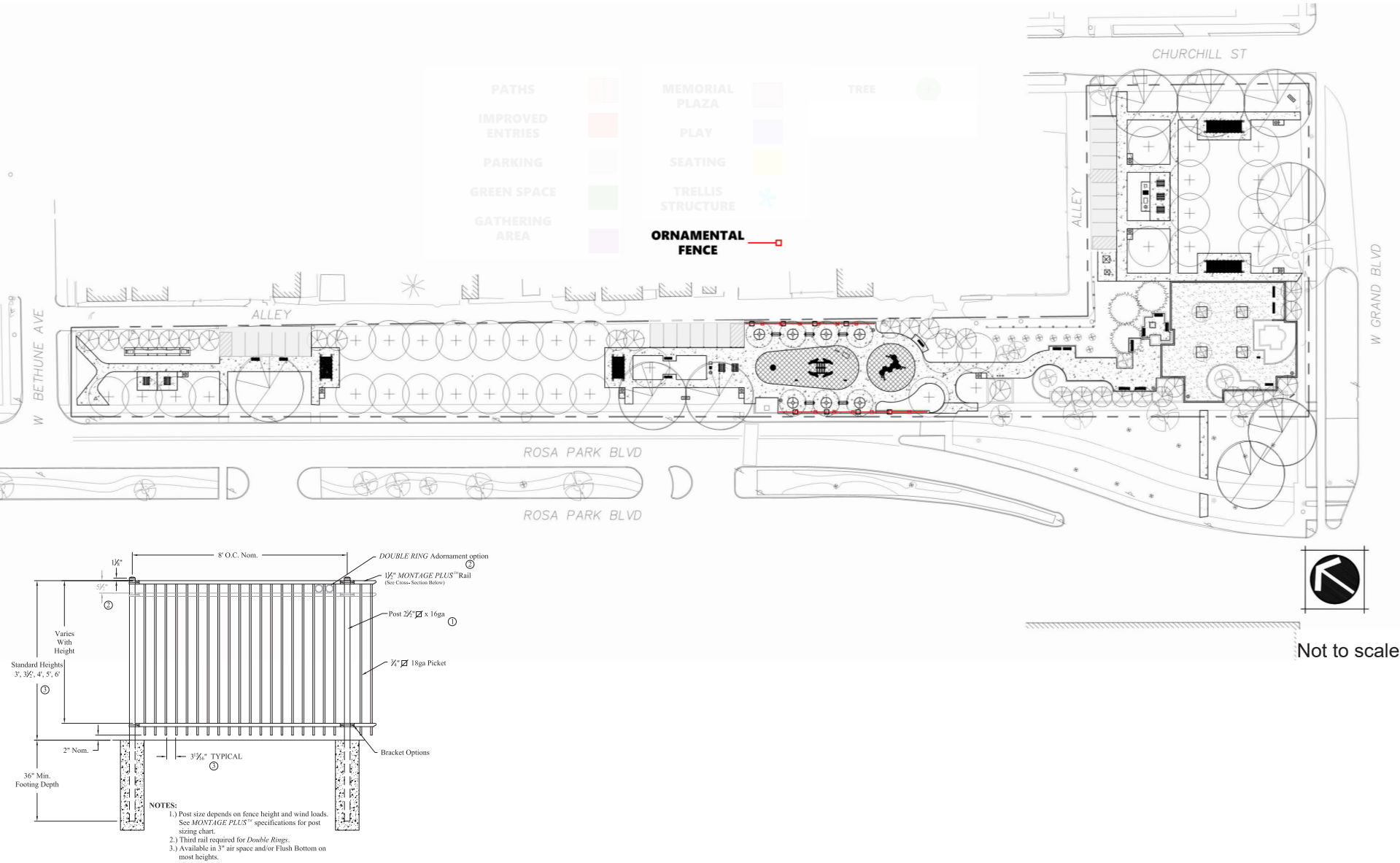
PROPOSED SEATING

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 much like what use to be in the park. Swinging benches will be steel with a black powder coated finish.



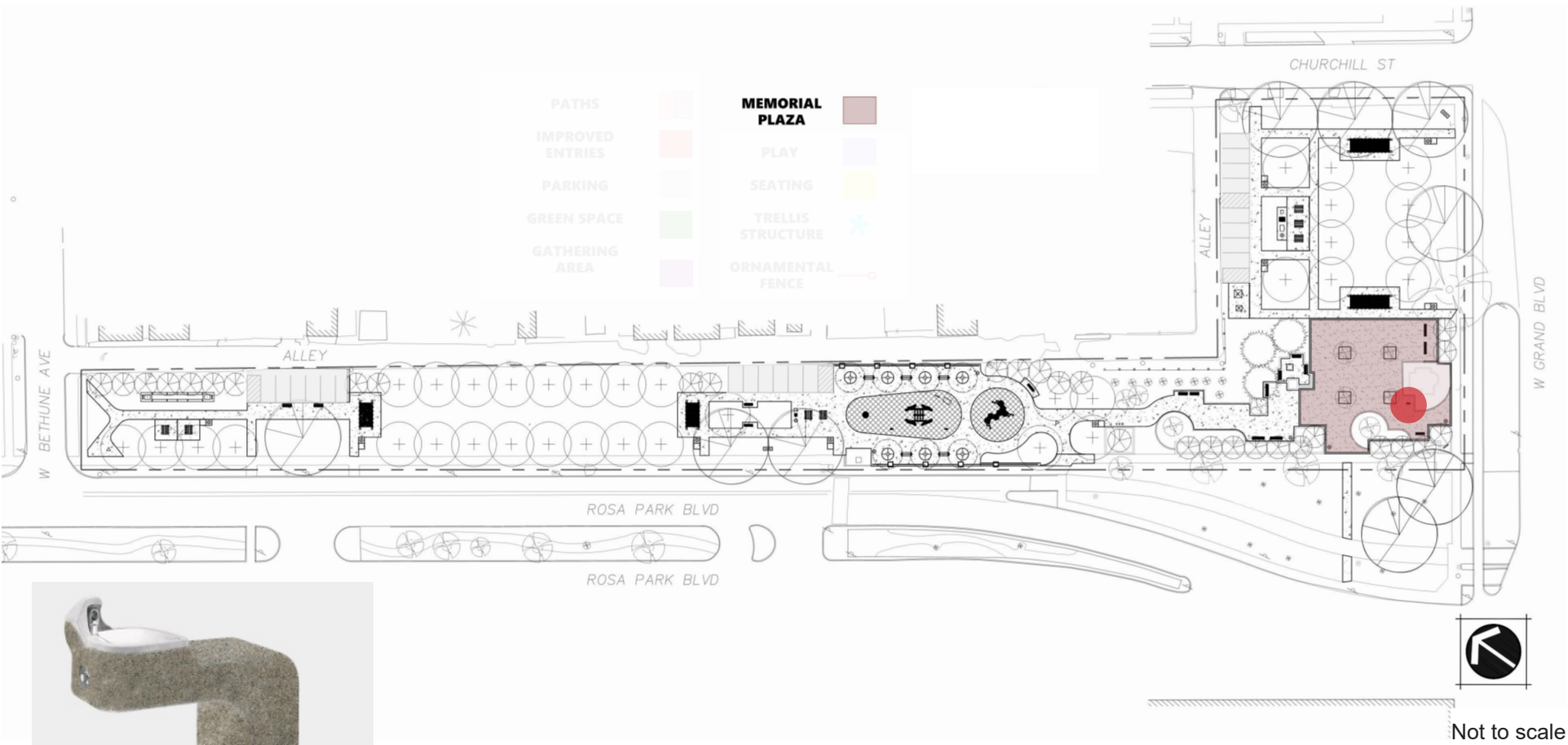
PROPOSED ORNAMNETAL FENCE

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.



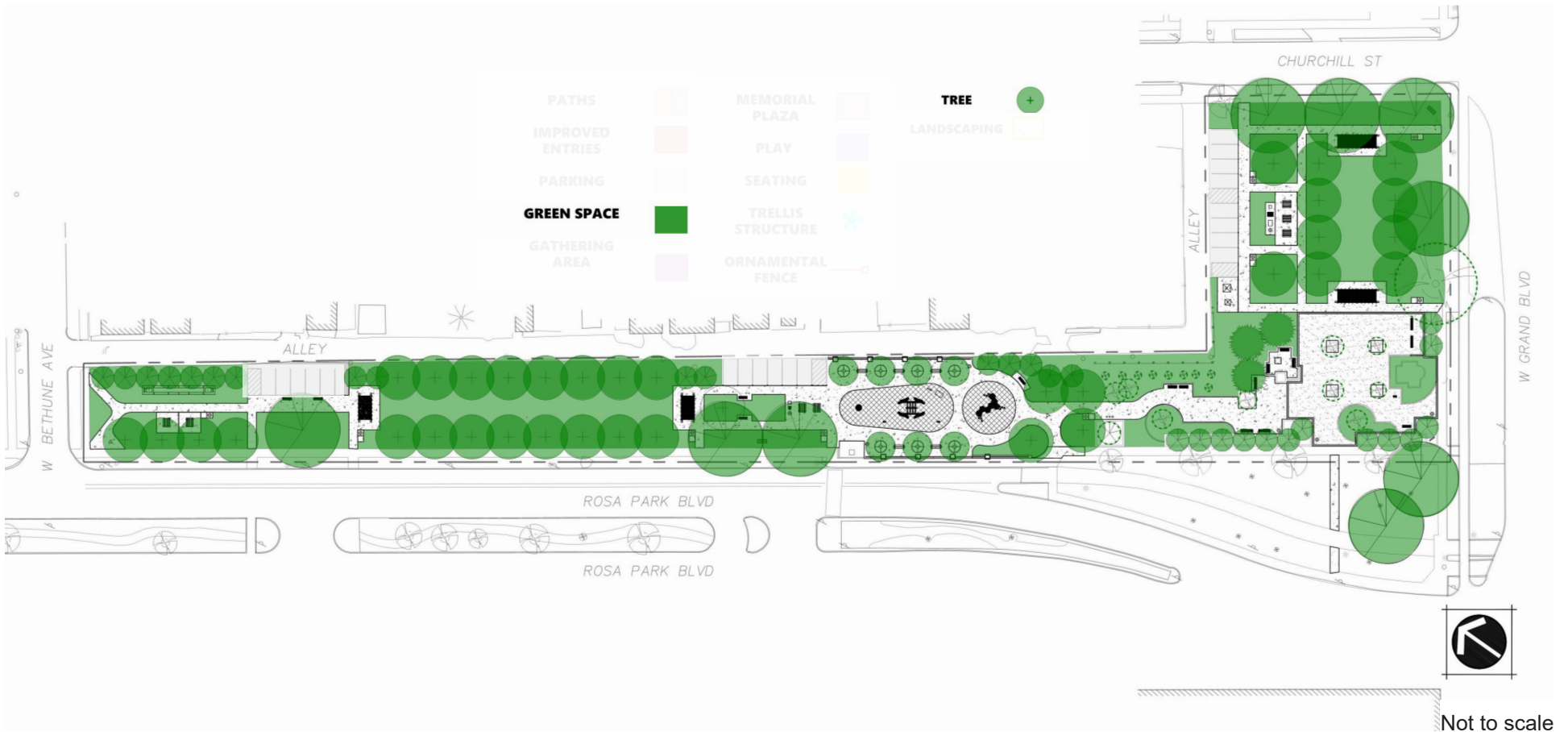
PROPOSED DRINKING FOUNTAIN

The proposed drinking fountain is another improvement in reimagining the historic presence of the park. The drinking fountain will be accessible to all. The fountain will be located in the same location as the historic drinking fountain and be the same similar material as shown in the shaded area 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

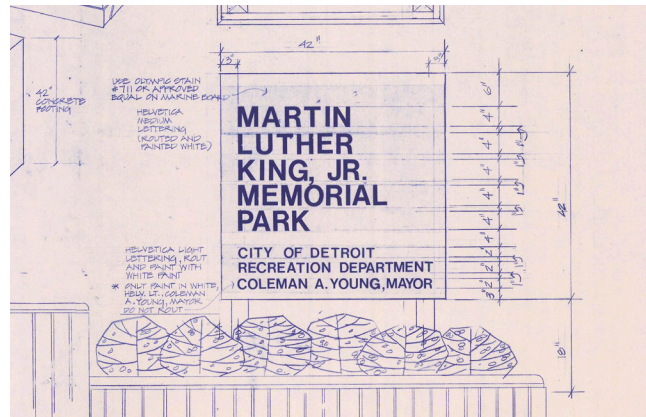
The tree grates will be located in the gathering and play area as shown on the map in shaded areas, providing shade in the active space. The surrounding green spaces with trees will also provide canopy shade.



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.



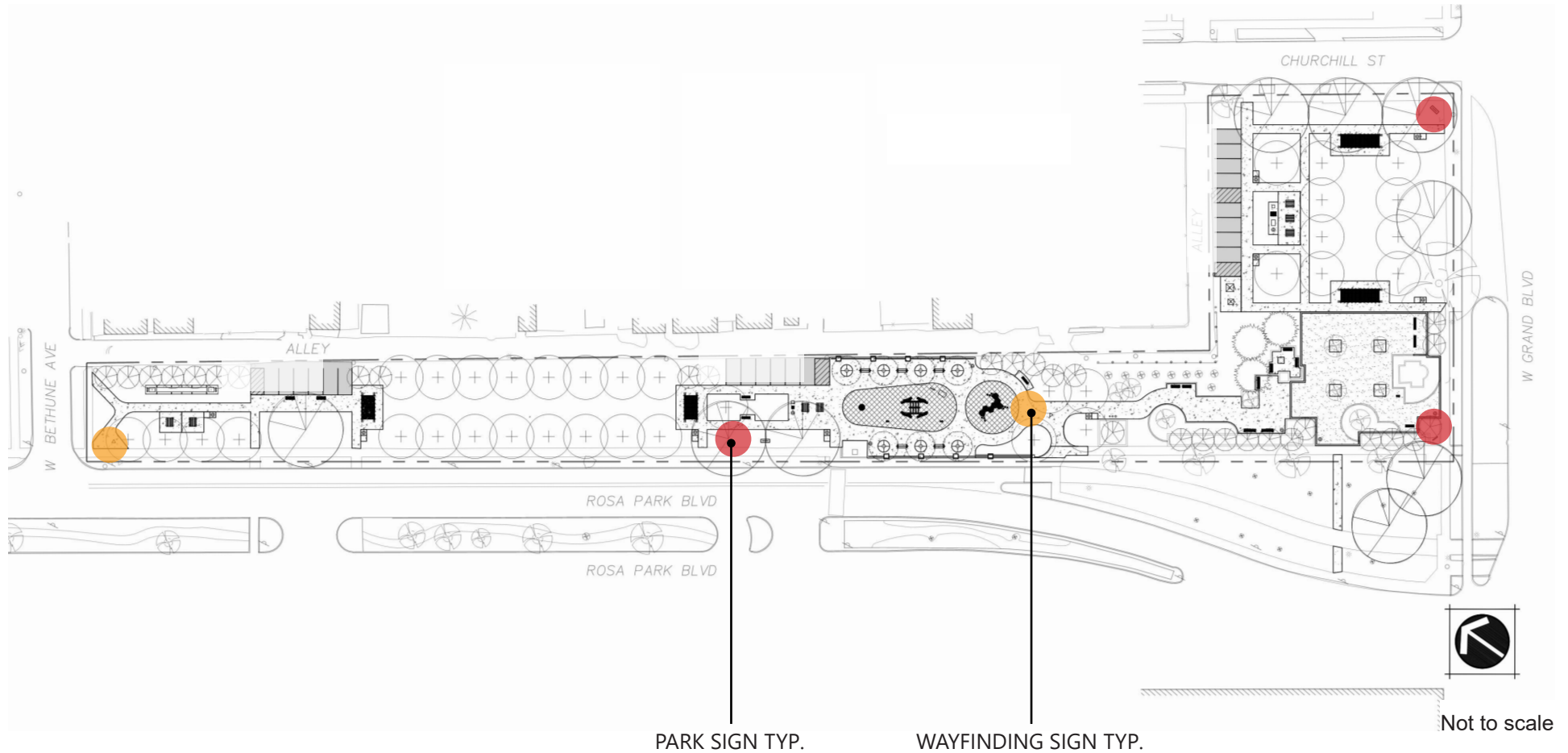
PROPOSED PARK SIGN



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
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