

re·pub·lic

noun

a state in which the supreme power rests in the body of citizens entitled to vote and is exercised by representatives chosen directly or indirectly by them.



Sunset image of "Auction Oak".

## Development of Alternatives

This section begins with a summary of the Park influences related to its edges. The bulk of this section then outlines three design alternatives for Republic Square. Some elements informed by the existing conditions are common to all three alternatives, but each alternative is nonetheless a distinctly different vision for the Park's future design, carefully developed to test a wide range of approaches to the Park. The section culminates with a summary of Community Workshop 2 and the second online poll, where the three design alternatives were presented to the public and feedback was gathered for further refinement.

## Park Influence

The edges of a park are key to the overall success and economic viability of any urban park space. The character of Republic Square's street edges is currently dictated by the automobile, with no buffer between sidewalks and the street and street trees only on the park side of each edge. Each edge should be analyzed for its unique qualities.

**A:** All concepts should include a "bridging element" adjacent to the new Federal Court Plaza. These elements include any type of activity that will encourage people to use both the Park and plaza seamlessly, and may include food kiosk/dining, play areas, water features, event spaces, or gallery space.

**B:** 5th St frontage should be buffered from the Park as it is dominated by auto traffic. The existing on-street parking should be preserved as part of this buffer, and new construction should work to improve the growing conditions for existing trees along this edge. On-street parking here should also be retained for the viability of any proposed food service. Improvements to 5th St should also be made with the planned 5th St Mexican-American Heritage Corridor in mind.

**C:** Frontage along Guadalupe St should be open, comfortable, and flexible enough to change as the transit system matures. There should be an emphasis on shade, buffering bus activity from the Park, and providing plenty of walking space for pedestrians. All options should consider including textured paving at the back of curb to alert pedestrians of bus activity.

**D:** 4th St should undergo a right-of-way reassignment to provide a greater balance between vehicular, parking, rail and pedestrian needs. Angled parking all along 4th St is a possible means of mitigating the partial removal of parking along Guadalupe (due to CapMetro bus assignments). Shortening the bulb-outs on corners could create space for bicycle, petty cab, or motorcycle parking. This would also allow the Park to capture additional pedestrian

space and provide greater growing space for existing trees.

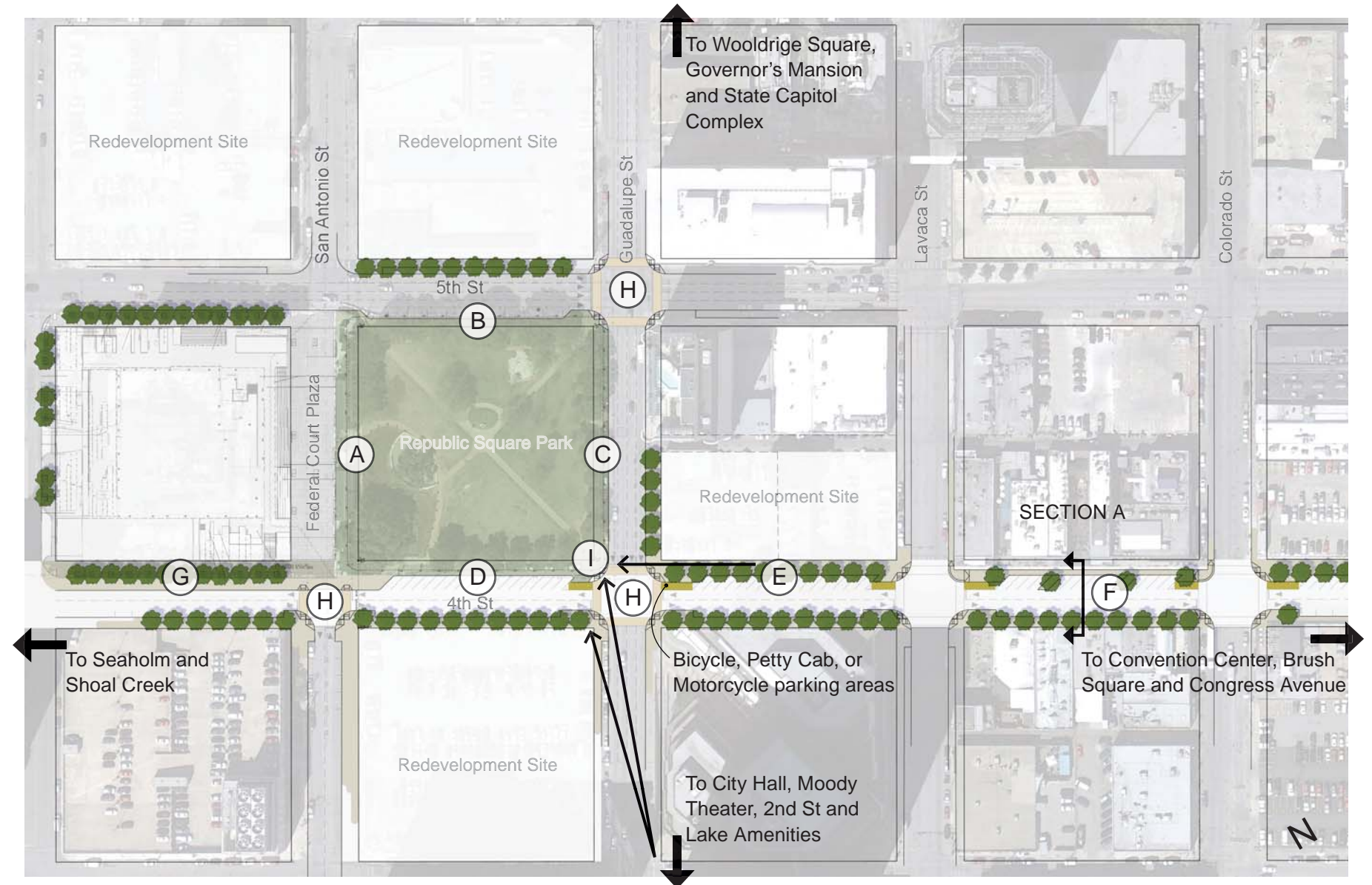
**E:** The re-configuration of 4th St creates more parking and more pedestrian space for outdoor dining between Guadalupe St and Lavaca St, which will benefit the atmosphere around the Park.

**F:** The space within the right-of-ways of Lavaca St and Colorado St should be redesigned to create a fully accessible walkway at grade, while still preserving the old loading docks on the north side of the street. These crossings are an important part of the pedestrian route to the Park but pose problems for connectivity and overall accessibility as they exist currently (Refer to SECTION A on page 9).

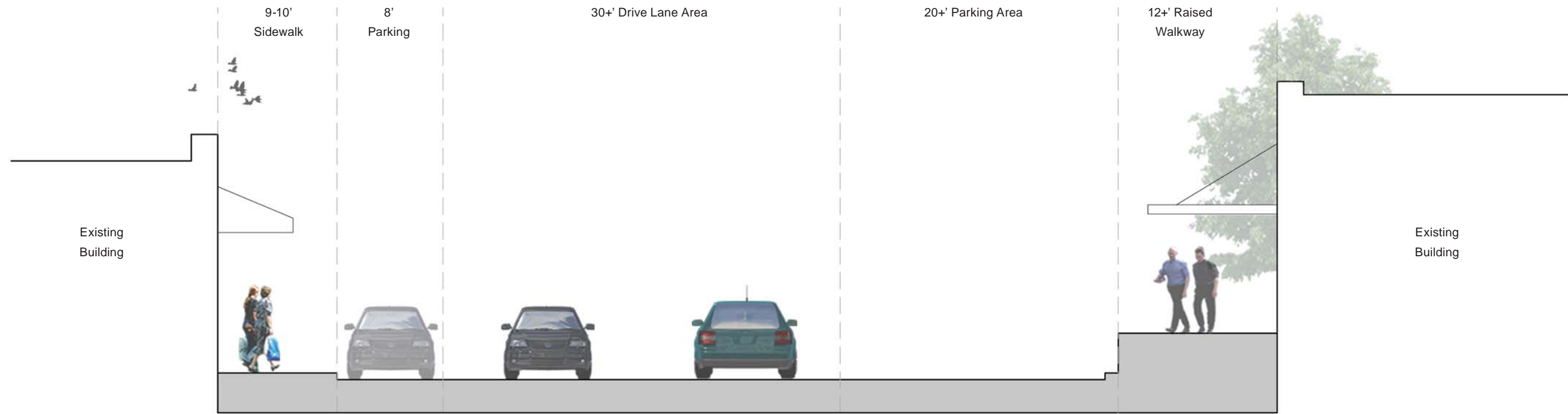
**G:** Paving on 4th St between San Antonio St and Nueces St should be reduced to create space for additional event space, large-scale bicycle parking or lawn space for pets. Parking will not be permitted along the perimeter of the Federal Courthouse.

**H:** Intersections connecting to the Park should be improved for both function and aesthetics. Bulb-outs should be created to improve pedestrian-auto visibility, increase space for properly designed ADA ramps, and reduce pedestrian crossing distances. A simple decorative finish incorporated into the crosswalk is recommended to inform pedestrians that they are crossing into something special. This same decorative finish could also be integrated into crossing at the other historic squares.

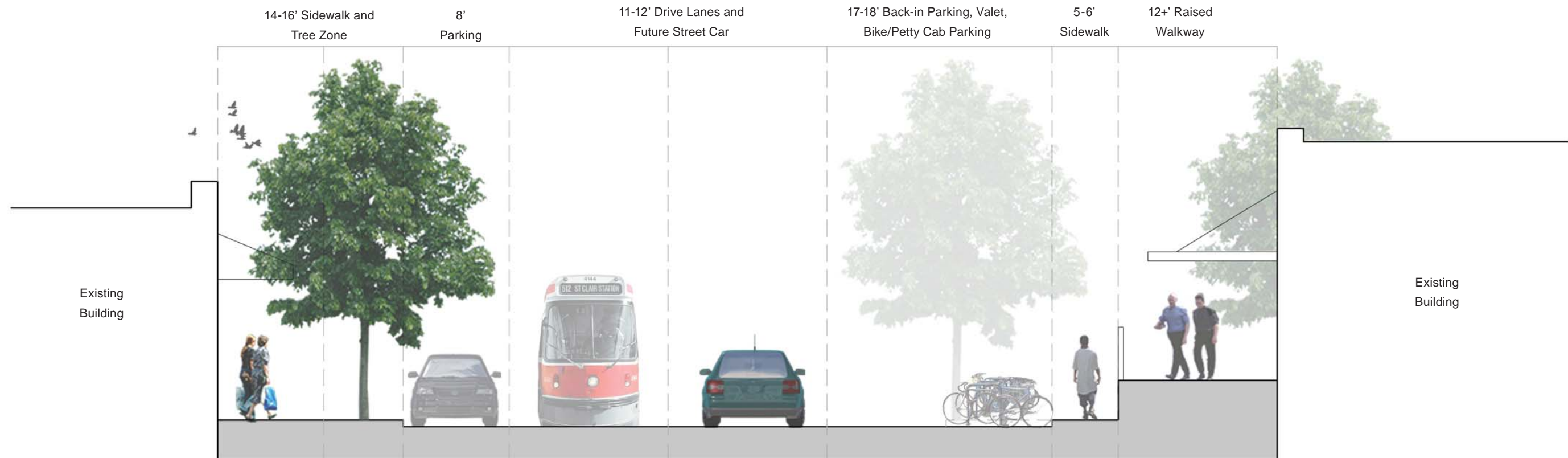
**I:** The corner of 4th St and Guadalupe St should receive a sculptural iconic element to draw interest from the 2nd St area, and from further down 4th St. The feature should be attractive at night, and have some level of inter-activity at the ground plane.



*Park Influence Map; This map identifies key relationships between the park and its edges, as well as improvements that could be considered as part of the "Great Streets" program along 4th St.*



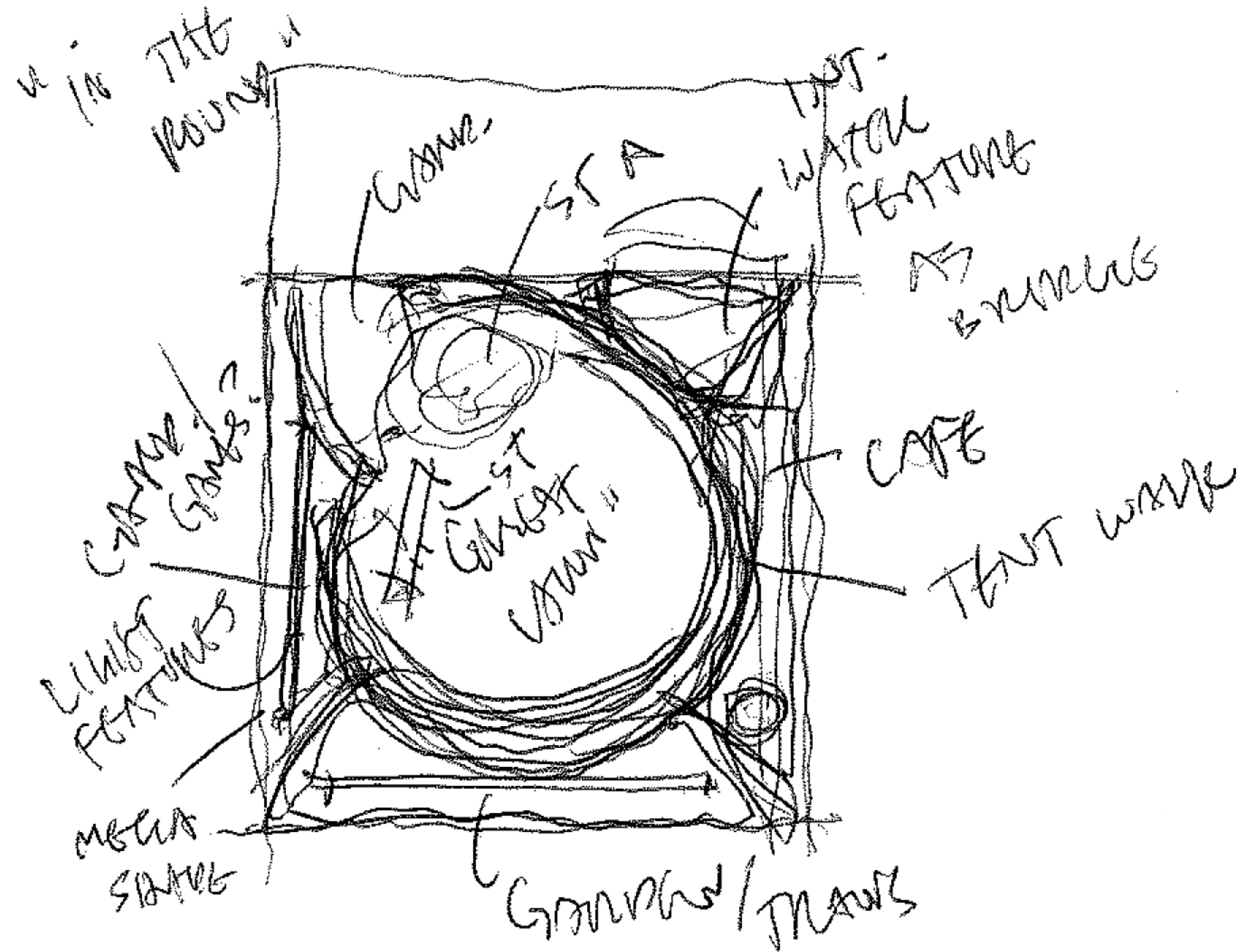
4th St SECTION A: Existing Condition  
(looking west)



4th St SECTION A: Optional Condition  
(looking west)

## Concept A

This concept is all about the relationship between the audience and performers. In this case, the audience can orient themselves around the entire perimeter of a large lawn space that acts as a stage "in the round". The lawn space is intended to be bright and open, which will be in contrast to its deeply shaded edges. This effect will be attractive to both visitors and locals and will provide a dramatic context for events.





Naturalistic children's play area



Flexible games area



Dynamic seatwall



Curved promenade

## Concept A - Plan

Inspired by the idea of “theater in the round,” The layout for Concept A is based on a circular promenade that delimits a large central lawn, which acts as the Park’s stage for activities and flex use, and connects pedestrians to all four corners of the park. The promenade’s outer edge is activated with a dynamic seat wall that rises up from and dies back into grade, creating an audience space to compliment the open lawn.

A: Plaza extension with food kiosk, major art piece or small fountain and cafe seating

B: 30,000 square feet of event lawn

C: Children’s play area with natural elements, perimeter fence and other interchangeable play items

D: “Auction Oaks” preservation area to be protected

E: Existing deck and seating to be protected

F: Transit station with shelters and seat walls provided by CapMetro

G: Game and flexible use area for bocce, ping-pong, washers, etc. on crushed stone aggregate

H: Arc Promenade with stone seat wall and new tree plantings

I: Corner Pedestrian Plaza for bike storage, event queue, art display, etc.



**40%**

Total area that reads below .5 foot candles;  
which is the minimum amount recommended;  
Baseline is 98%

**80%**

Total frontage that has open views from the  
street between 2.5' and 7'; Baseline is 95%



Bird's eye perspective of Concept A looking northwest

A: Plaza extension with food kiosk, major art piece or small fountain and cafe seating

B: 30,000 square feet of event lawn

C: Children's play area with natural elements, perimeter fence and other interchangeable play items

D: "Auction Oaks" preservation area to be protected

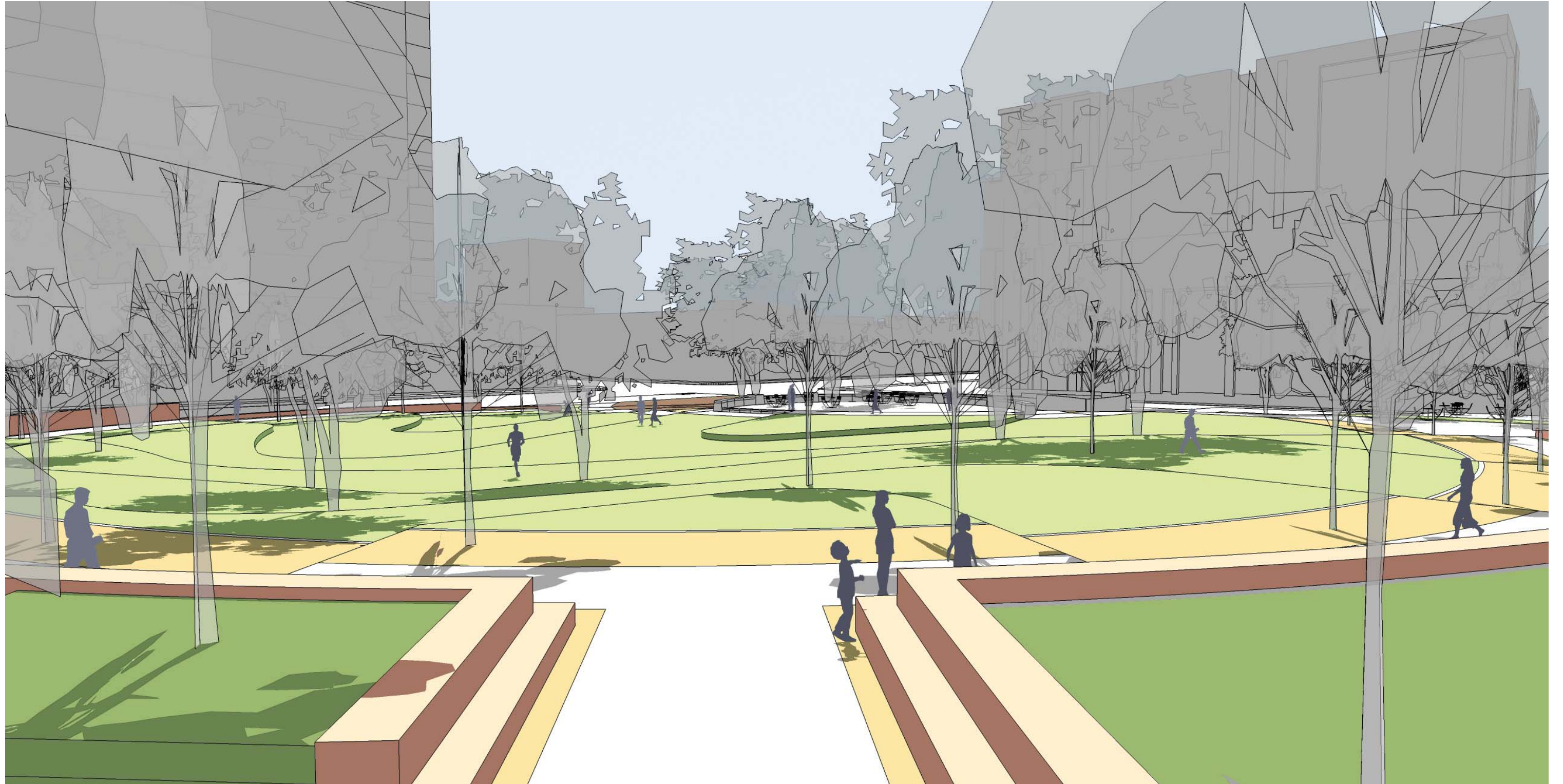
E: Existing deck and seating to be protected

F: Transit station with shelters and seat walls provided by CapMetro

G: Game and flexible use area for bocce, ping-pong, washers, etc. on crushed stone aggregate

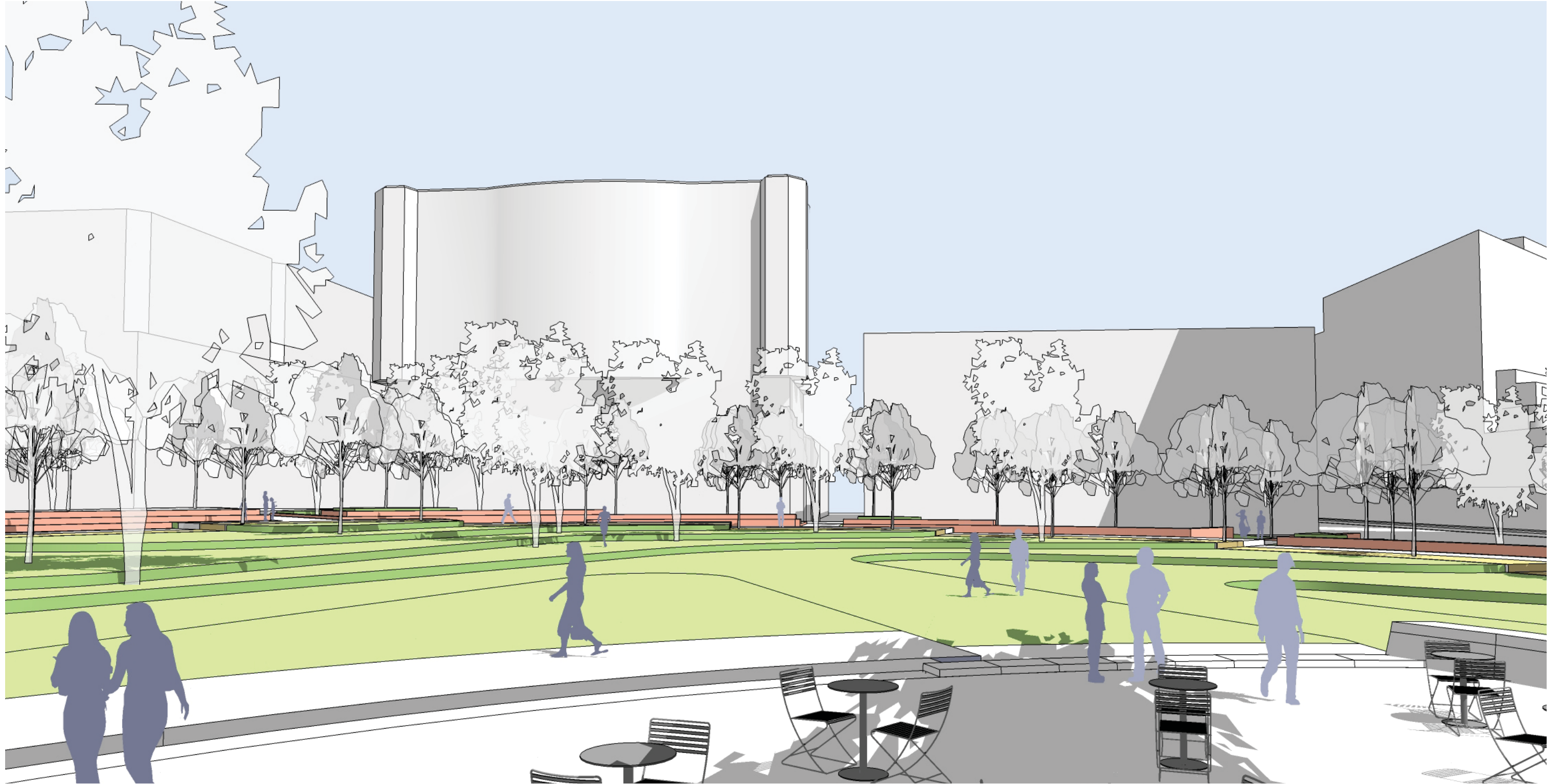
H: Arc Promenade with stone seat wall and new tree plantings

I: Corner Pedestrian Plaza for bike storage, event queue, art display, etc. (not shown in perspective, refer to plan)



*Perspective of Concept A looking west at "Auction Oaks" from across the circular lawn*





*Perspective of Concept A looking east from existing deck across the circular lawn*

## Concept A - Program

The program for this option focuses around maximum flexibility for both event and daily uses. The edges of the Park provide a variety of activities, visual interest, and surfaces while the core of the Park is open and flexible.

In addition to the 40 tents that may be set up in the new Federal Court Plaza pending an agreement with the General Services Administration, the Farmers' Market would be able to set up along the promenade, with shopper circulation looping from the kiosk back to the deck and existing "Auction Oaks." Movies in the Park and other staged activities can easily fit in the open lawn, with loading access from 4th St.

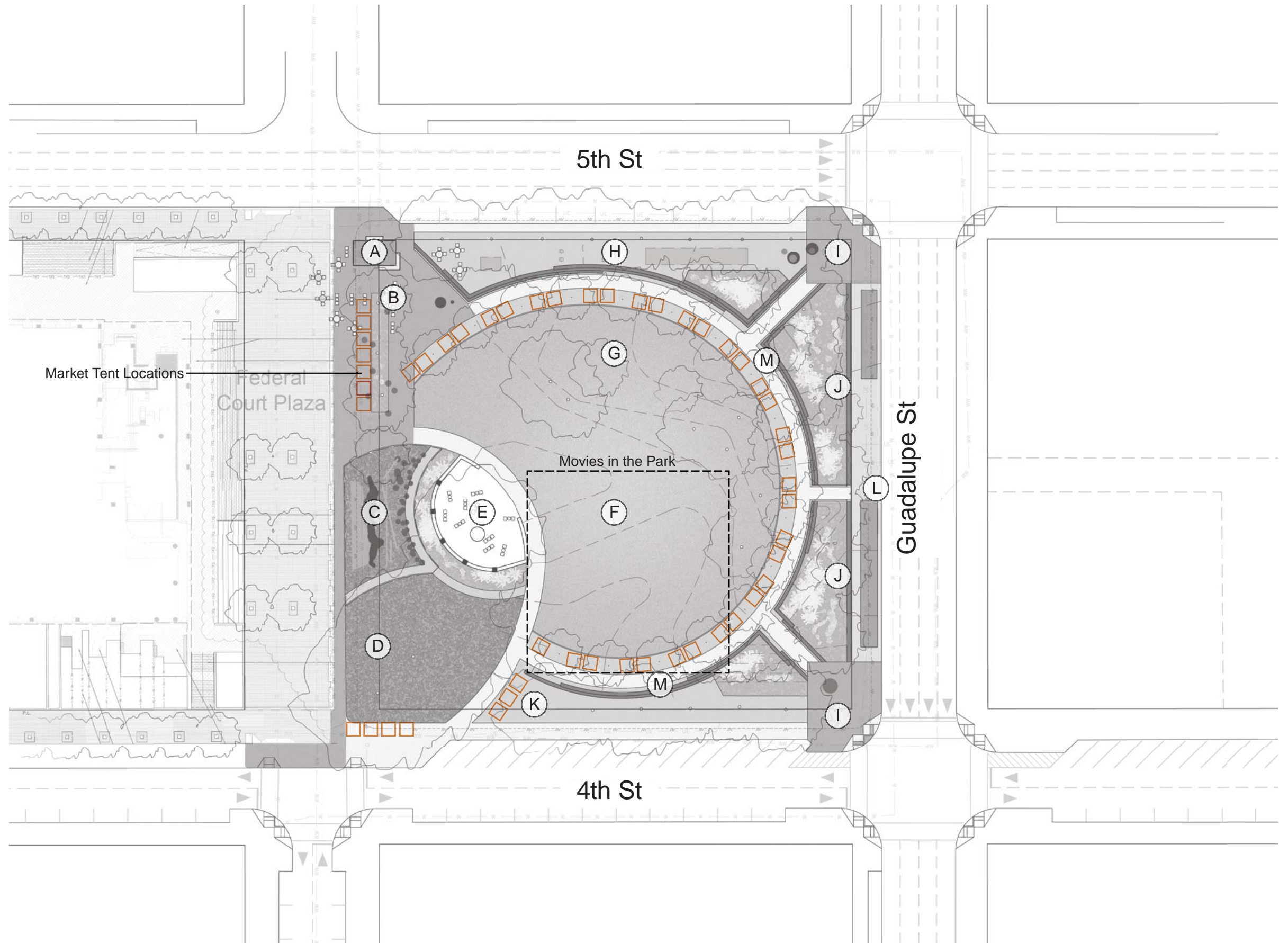
- A: Food Kiosk
- B: Cafe and Multipurpose Plaza
- C: Children's Play Area
- D: "Auction Oaks" Preservation Area to be protected
- E: Existing Deck and Seating to be protected
- F: Open Lawn
- G: Shaded Lawn and Slopes
- H: Game and flexible use area for bocce, ping-pong, washers, etc. on crushed stone aggregate
- I: Corner Pedestrian Plaza for bike storage, event queue, art display, etc.
- J: Planting Area and Buffer
- K: Seating Area
- L: Transit station with shelters and seat walls provided by CapMetro
- M: Arc Promenade with stone seat wall and new tree plantings

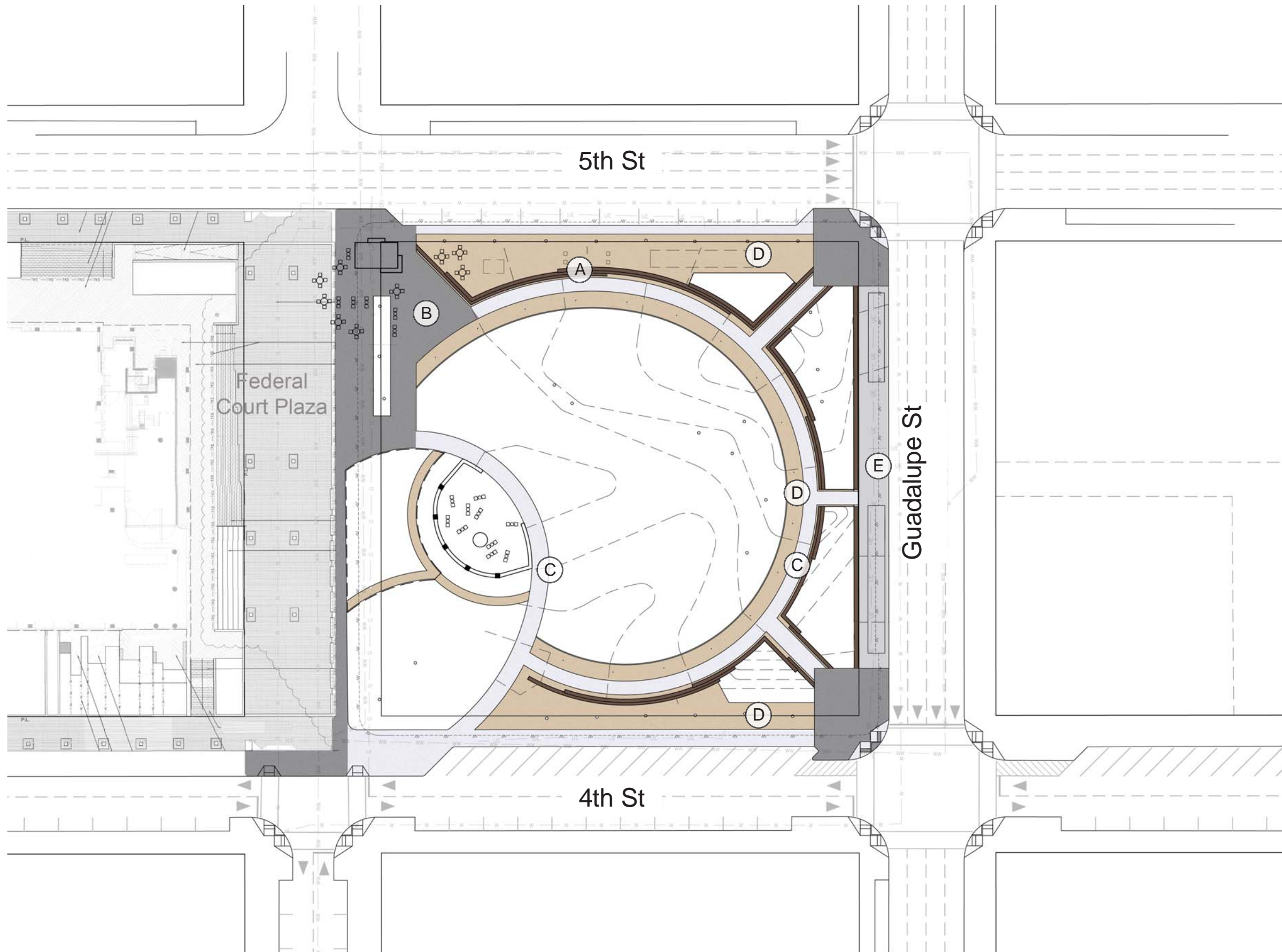
**6%**

Area of park dedicated to arts or creative programming; Baseline is 2%

**75%**

Area of park that is "flexible"; can accommodate more than one use; Baseline is 85%





## Concept A - Hardscape

This concept allows paving from the new Federal Court Plaza to figuratively spill into the western side of the Park, with additional matching paving along Guadalupe St. The interior of the Park is defined by walls and walkways made of native Texas granite, and standard concrete sidewalk.

A: Block Seating

B: Paver materials to match style of Federal Court Plaza

C: Proposed Broom Finish Concrete

D: Crushed Aggregate Surface (Considered 50% pervious)

E: Textured Concrete Paving

**43%**

Total existing park impervious cover;  
Baseline is 25%

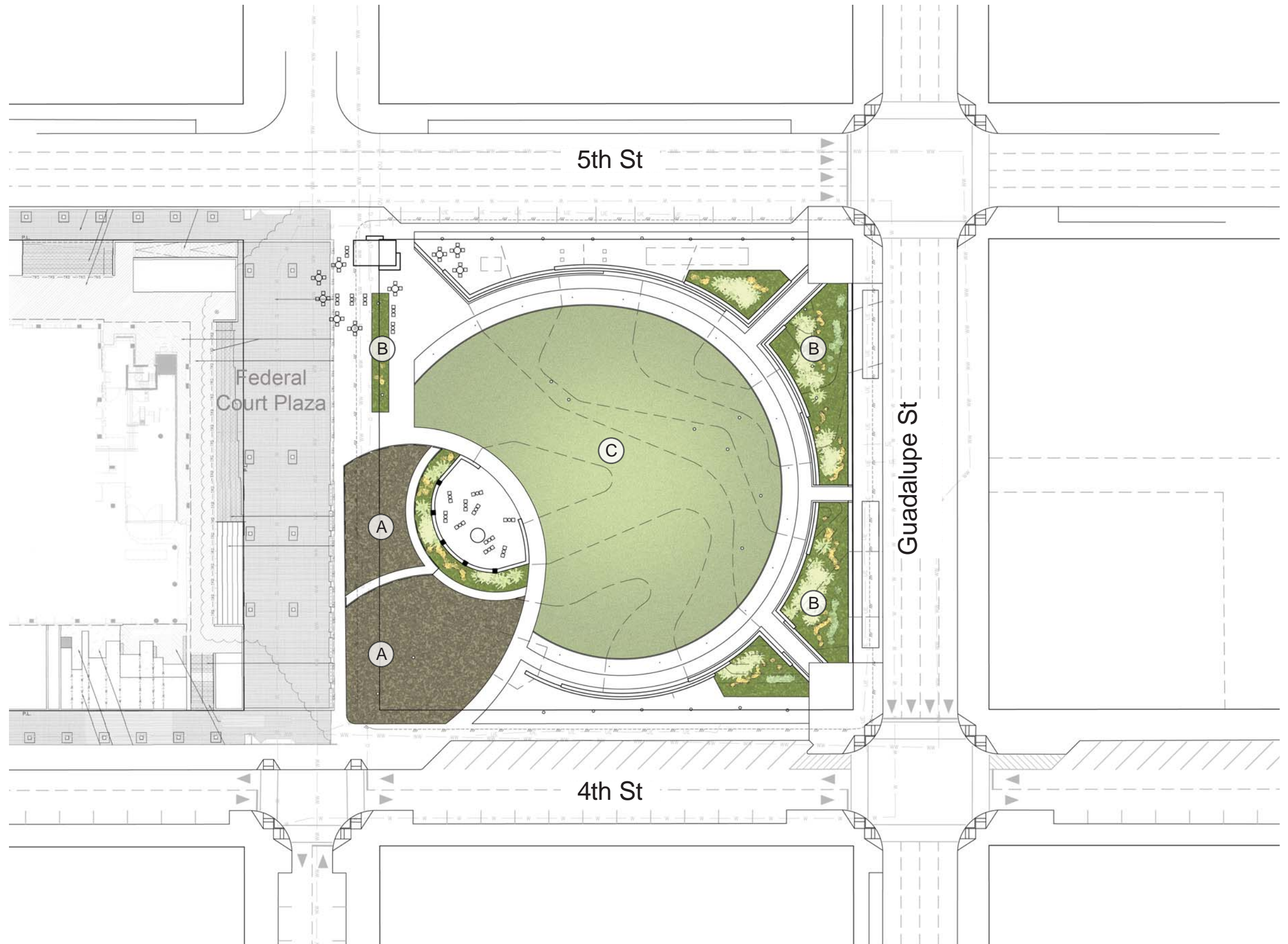
## Concept A - Softscape

This concept is oriented around a large maintained lawn area, with ornamental plantings that soften the back of the existing deck wall, and provide a buffer against bus activity and noise.

A: Existing Wood Chip Mulch

B: Native Ornamental Planting Including Flowers, Grasses and Shrubs

C: Drought Tolerant Turf



**12%**

Total seasonal plantings; Baseline is 6%

**8%**

Area of understory plantings providing wildlife food sources; Baseline is 4%

**30%**

Total lawn or mowed cover (30,000 sf can support events up to 3,000 people); Baseline is 63%



## Concept A - Trees

This concept introduces several areas with new tree plantings, as well as the preservation of most healthy existing trees. A mixture of deciduous hardwoods and trees relocated from the site supplement the existing trees along Guadalupe to provide shade and interest, while a formalized ring of trees in the arc promenade provides structure and seasonal interest in the center of the Park. An additional oak is proposed along the Federal Court Plaza to provide additional shade in the cafe area. The central lawn area is more open and sunny to contrast with the Park's more shaded edges.

- A: Deciduous Trees Planted Formal Ring
- B: Relocated and New Deciduous Trees
- C: New Oak Tree
- D: Existing "Auction Oaks"
- E: Existing Oaks
- F: Existing Mixed Hardwoods
- G: Proposed Mexican Sycamores at Federal Court Plaza

**18%**  
 Tree canopy cover with seasonal interest,  
 Baseline is 8%

**49%**  
 Total designed tree canopy cover; Baseline is 40%