



# Salt Lake City's Civic Center: Vision Study at Library Square

January 2026

**GGN**

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

Salt Lake City’s Civic Center, as defined by the 2016 Downtown Plan, is comprised of two and a half blocks including Washington Square with the City and County Building, Library Square with the Downtown Library Branch, and an additional former museum building, including 200 East which is bound to the north by 400 South, and to the south by 500 South. This civic center blocks are bound by State Street to the west, and 300 East to the east. This complex of civic buildings and public space is on the east edge of downtown and hosts many formal and informal gatherings, free speech events, and the City’s largest signature festival. The Civic Center Vision Study works to consider and respond to the larger network of Civic Center District public spaces, transportation needs, and the downtown neighborhood.

## Purpose

Downtown Salt Lake City is experiencing dramatic residential population growth that is estimated to nearly double from under 15,000 in 2020 to over 27,000 by 2030. The blocks surrounding the Civic Center district have already seen a large number of multifamily units come online. Yet, downtown green space has not yet been acquired to match the increased population. Just 1.9% of downtown landcover is green space, and this neighborhood already has the lowest level of service for park space in the city. A growing downtown population needs attractive and functional green space to serve as a healthful respite from paved areas and buildings; to help cool the downtown area; to support walking, jogging, running, or bicycling for exercise or travel; and to serve as their yards for picnicking, socializing, reading, yoga, active play, or recreational sports. Increasing green space acres and reimagining the existing Library Square will begin to address the green space shortfall downtown.

The Green Loop as a transformative project for downtown livability has been described in planning documents since 2007, including concepts running adjacent to the Civic Center. The 5.3 mile loop encircling downtown could add as much as 54 acres of green space, increasing park landcover to 5.7% with more space for walking, biking, and managing stormwater. Recent studies revealed that residential neighborhoods in Salt Lake City, like Sugar House, have a 28% tree canopy cover while downtown is just 6%. With the Green Loop, downtown could see thousands of more trees, shading public space and cooling it by as much as 15% on the hottest summer days.

## Vision Study - Goals

- Advance the Green Loop streetscape transformation concept where it intersects the Civic Center in conjunction with the Library Square visioning to create a seamless public space, along with the transportation connections particularly for active transportation.
- Collaborate with stakeholders and the community to develop a Vision Study for the Civic Center (Library Square) to create a vibrant everyday public space, a green transportation corridor, and a platform for hosting large signature events.
- Investigate the structural issues at Library Square causing paving system failures and site wall failure, including developing remediation approaches.



Downtown Plan 2016, page 116

- Identify a phasing strategy for the Vision Plan.

## Context

Library Square together with Washington Square, form the most important Civic Center in Salt Lake City, yet the landscape of Library Square is fragmented, visually cluttered, and difficult to use. A network of walls, guardrails, sunken areas, and awkward slopes breaks the plazas into isolated pockets. From above, the site appears open, but at eye level it becomes a labyrinth that blocks walking routes, obscures sight-lines, and limits the daily life and events the space should comfortably support.

## Approach

The approach begins by considering the existing conditions as design opportunities. The monumental architecture of Library Square “pushes outward” toward mountain views and the larger city, but the ground plane does not provide corresponding spaces that gather people together. Instead of forming welcoming outdoor rooms, the landscape is divided into disconnected segments that undercut the potential of this civic setting.

To address this, the design concept centers upon five First Moves.

**Recenter** by using the Library’s Crescent Wall to define a clear, shared central room.

**Reconnect** by improving movement and visibility between the Library, the City & County Building, and surrounding streets.

**Open Up** by removing unnecessary walls and replacing sunken voids with level, flexible ground that restores views and accessibility.

**Increase Daily Life** by adding more shade, planting, play, and comfort, using strategic areas, such as existing sunken zones, to support soil depths for a healthy tree canopy.

**Celebrate This Place** by ensuring that the renewed landscape feels unmistakably like Salt Lake City.

## Process

The project team began by learning, listening and asking questions. Additionally, the design team reviewed existing plans and reports dating back to the 2002 Library Block Plan, and inclusive of plans dated in 2025. While reviewing these plans, the team met with project stakeholders to understand the precedents and plans for the project in their entirety. Simultaneously, the structure and waterproofing of the existing Library Square grounds was evaluated to determine the current state, including identifying items that were in need of repair and/or replacement.

While the existing reports and conditions were being reviewed, the team worked with a community outreach teammate to help identify project stakeholders that were involved in all realms of the project - from the full time Main Downtown Library team, to the many stakeholders that hold events at or near Library Square, to our technical and traffic stakeholders, to operations and maintenance, and many others. Once the team felt grounded in their knowledge of the existing conditions and reports, the team met with the many project stakeholders to obtain further information about the project, begin to discuss design ideas, gather feedback on design concepts, and discuss all aspects of the design with the project stakeholders. From this continual community outreach that happened concurrent to the conceptual design, the final vision study began to take shape.

For the final vision study, the team also engaged teammates with expertise in cost estimating and operations and maintenance and programming. These consultants were able to take the emerging conceptual vision and evaluate relative costs for both construction and future operations and maintenance, and with the project stakeholders, give insight on future programming opportunities.

This final conceptual Vision Study represents the culmination of the design team process thus far, as well as the conceptual design for Library Square.

# Existing Conditions Assessment



# Existing Conditions Assessment





# Library Square Current Conditions

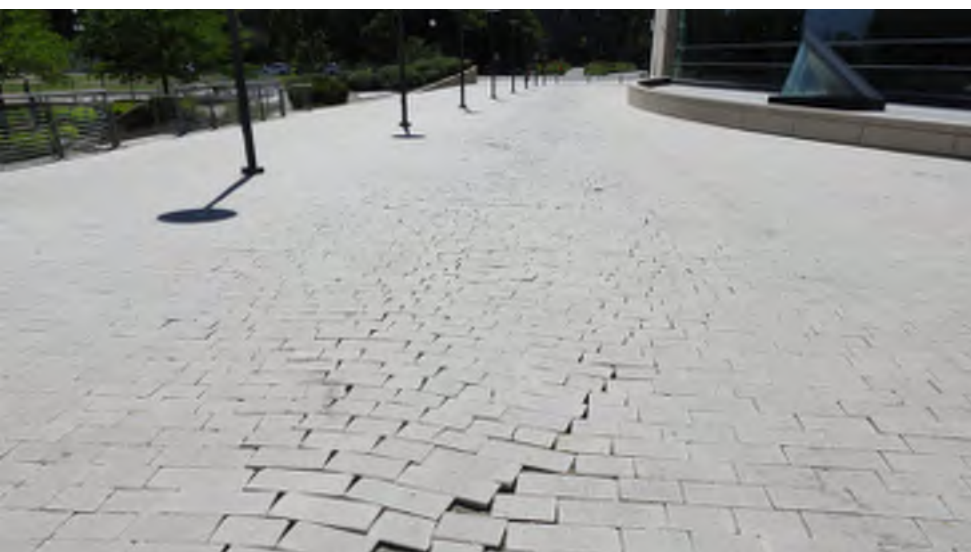
## 200 East / Main Downtown Library Frontage

Planted surface slopes towards building to daylight the lower level of the library. Bridges span the opening to what appear to be egress doors. Trees are relatively small.



## Library Square Entry Plaza

Signs of settlement exist along the stone wall at the junction between on-structure and off-structure. Shifted pavers exist in this location as well - likely from vehicles driving in the plaza.





# Library Square Current Conditions

## Main Library Facade Fountain

The Main Library Facade Fountain is empty due to reported leaks into the library spaces below. There are no obvious physical problems that indicate the leak from above.



## Library Plaza Sunken Garden

The sunken garden shows significant deterioration at the perimeter edges. The plants appear to be somewhat healthy, but the diamond-shaped planter beds are not filled out as much as expected for the prominence of this space.



## Garden Fountain

The fountain has been shut off due to leaks and some deterioration of the stone cladding. The adjacent trees are healthy and provide valued shade.





# Library Square Current Conditions

## Former Museum / Future Tenant Lawn

The current state of the lawn is a patchwork of green areas and worn out areas. This is perhaps a sign of uneven irrigation coverage or overuse in some areas. Some settling is apparent at the junction between on-structure and off-structure.



## Former Museum / Future Tenant Perimeter

At the Former Museum/Future Tenant building, the plants along the west perimeter need some maintenance. The plants along the building's south perimeter have a rich texture that could be built upon in the future.



## Theater Garden

The Theater Garden along the north facade of the Main Library appears as an informal vegetable garden in raised planters. The ground plane exhibits spotty plant coverage, and the transition between the original diamond planters seems unresolved.





# Library Square Current Conditions

## Stairs

The stairs leading up to the sloped lawn are closed due to deteriorating conditions. Concrete spalling and exposed rebar are clearly visible and unsafe.



## Shops

The storefronts at the Shops seem to be in good condition. The immediately adjacent paving is also in good condition. This paving is likely protected from vehicles due to the presence of bollards.



## Sloped Lawn

The lawn on the east side of the Crescent Wall has a patchy, uneven appearance with lack of full coverage. Settling is visible at the on-structure / off-structure junction. Settling is also visible around the edges of the adjacent retaining wall.





# Library Square Current Conditions

## East Oval Plaza

This area is in decent shape. There are some paver issues due to vehicle traffic. The trees in the oval mound seem very small compared to photos from prior years.



## Memorial Garden

The Memorial Garden seems to be very well maintained with mature-sized trees. The black fence around the Memorial seems out of character with the rest of the space, which evokes a feeling that the fence was added long after the space first opened.



## 300 East Gardens

The geometric pattern of the planters in the Gardens near 300 east is not well filled out. The irrigation system appears to be an issue, with an over-abundance of irrigation boxes present.

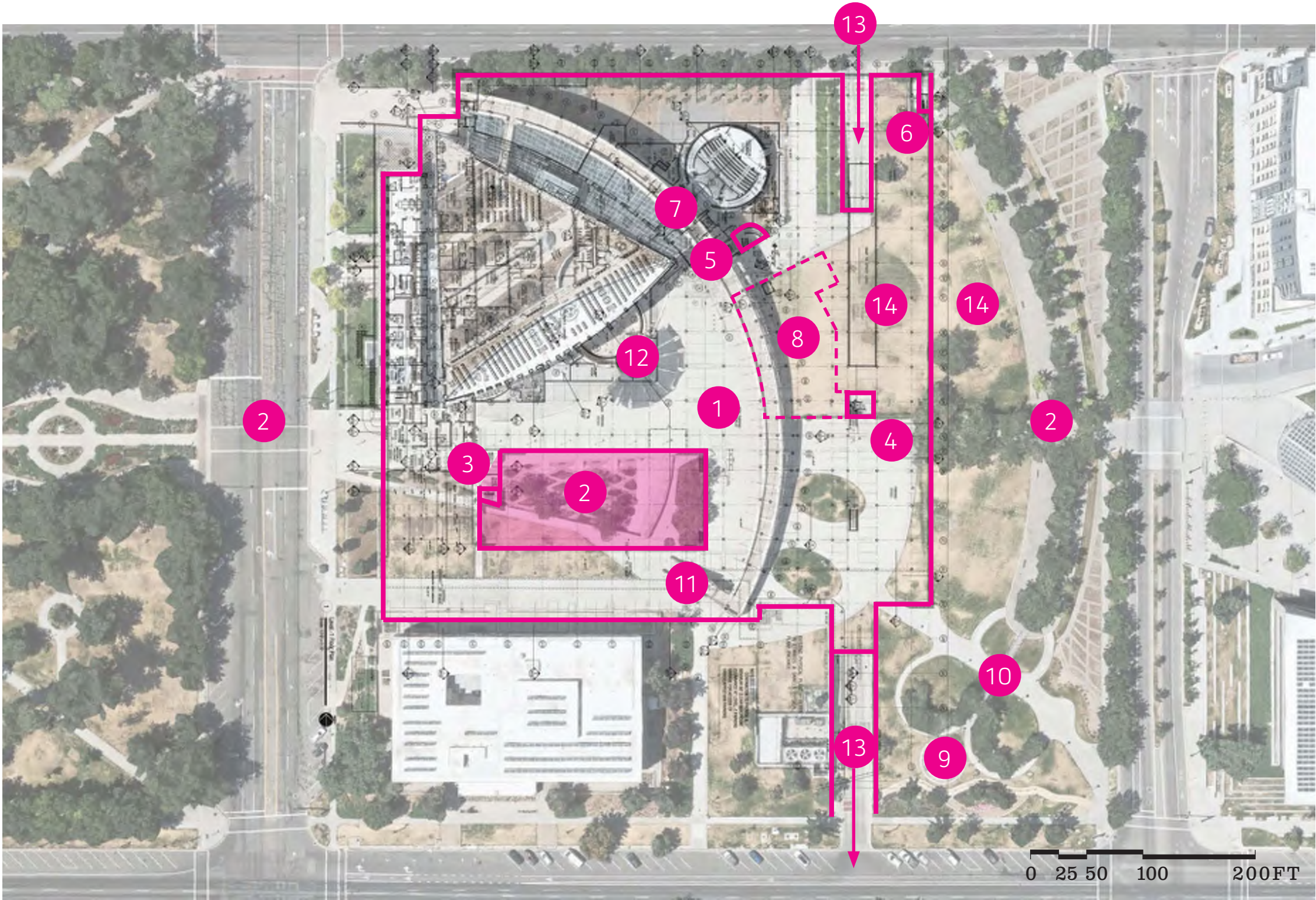




# Constraints Diagram

## Legend

- 1. Over-Structure / On-Structure
- 2. Over-Grade / Off-Structure
- 3. West Egress Stair
- 4. East Egress Stair 1
- 5. East Egress Stair 2
- 6. North Egress Stair
- 7. Egress Stair from Garage
- 8. Shops
- 9. Memorial Garden
- 10. Bridge
- 11. Feature Stairs
- 12. Amphitheater
- 13. Vehicular Egress
- 14. Sloped Lawn





# Outreach and Engagement

# Engagement Timeline

## Activities: *(which received 291 responses)*

- Postcards sent to area residents (12,225 sent)
- Green Loop newsletter (400+ opens)
- Media coverage (3 articles)
- Twilight Concert & Unity Block Fest tabling - Aug 12, 2025 and Aug 29, 2025
- On-site “memory box” at the Library with survey
- On-site signage
- Multiple in-person and virtual meetings with key stakeholders, including meeting with the three big event teams

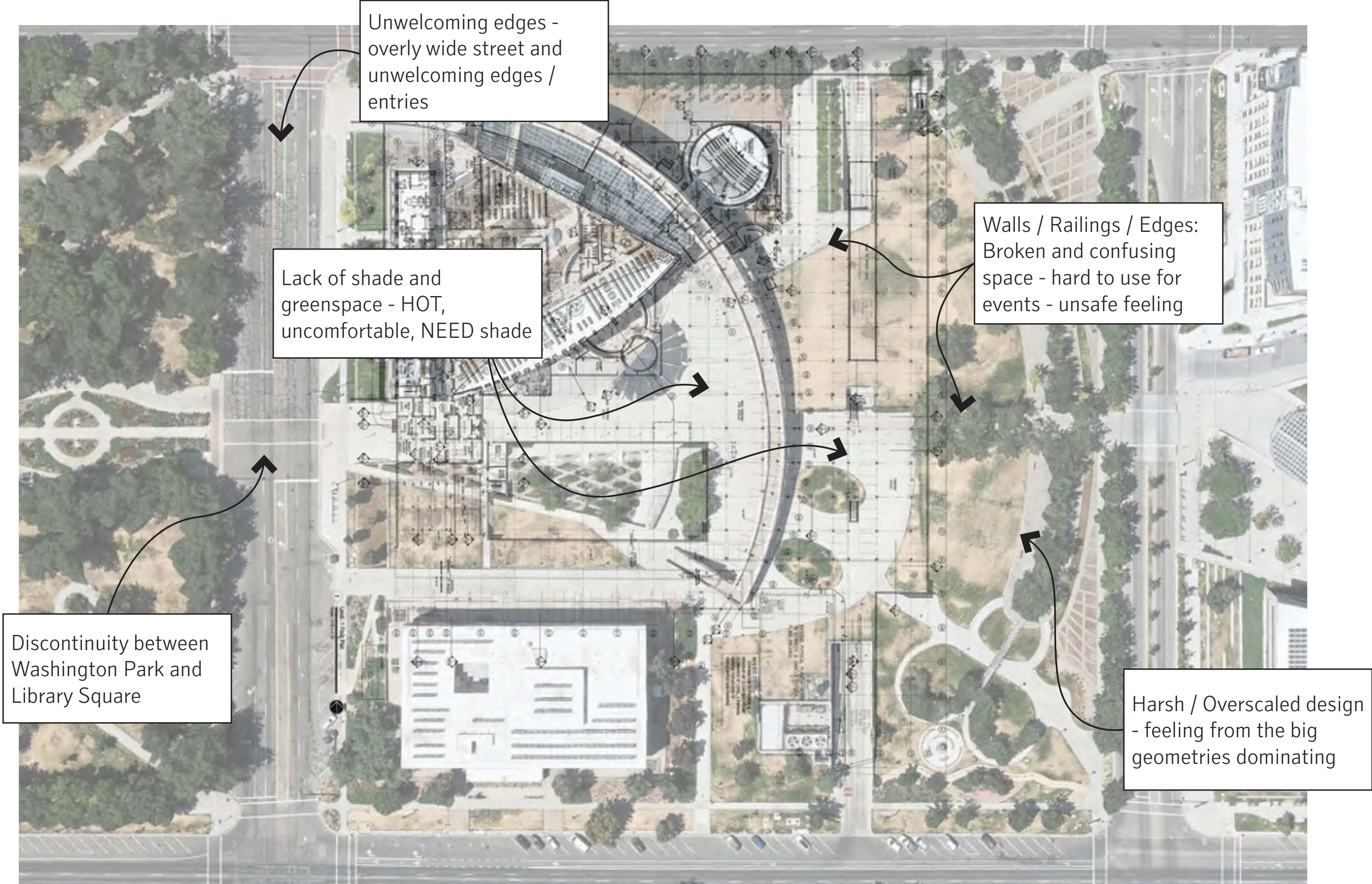
## Common Feedback Themes:

- The plaza is HOT! (dozens of comments)
- Desire for more shade & seating (dozens of comments).
- Need for family-friendly amenities—playgrounds, splash pads / water features (20+ comments).
- Strong advocacy for a downtown skate plaza/park (over 30 distinct comments).
- Continued support for existing events
- Requests for regular programming/events to activate the space daily (10+ comments).
- Calls for improved bike / pedestrian infrastructure (10+ comments).
- Preference for native / water-wise landscaping & trees over lawns (10+ comments).
- Mixed feelings about grass—some want it for picnics, others oppose due to water crisis.
- Safety concerns related to unhoused / drug use. Many comments indicated that people engaged with the site less due to these concerns.





# Engagement Feedback



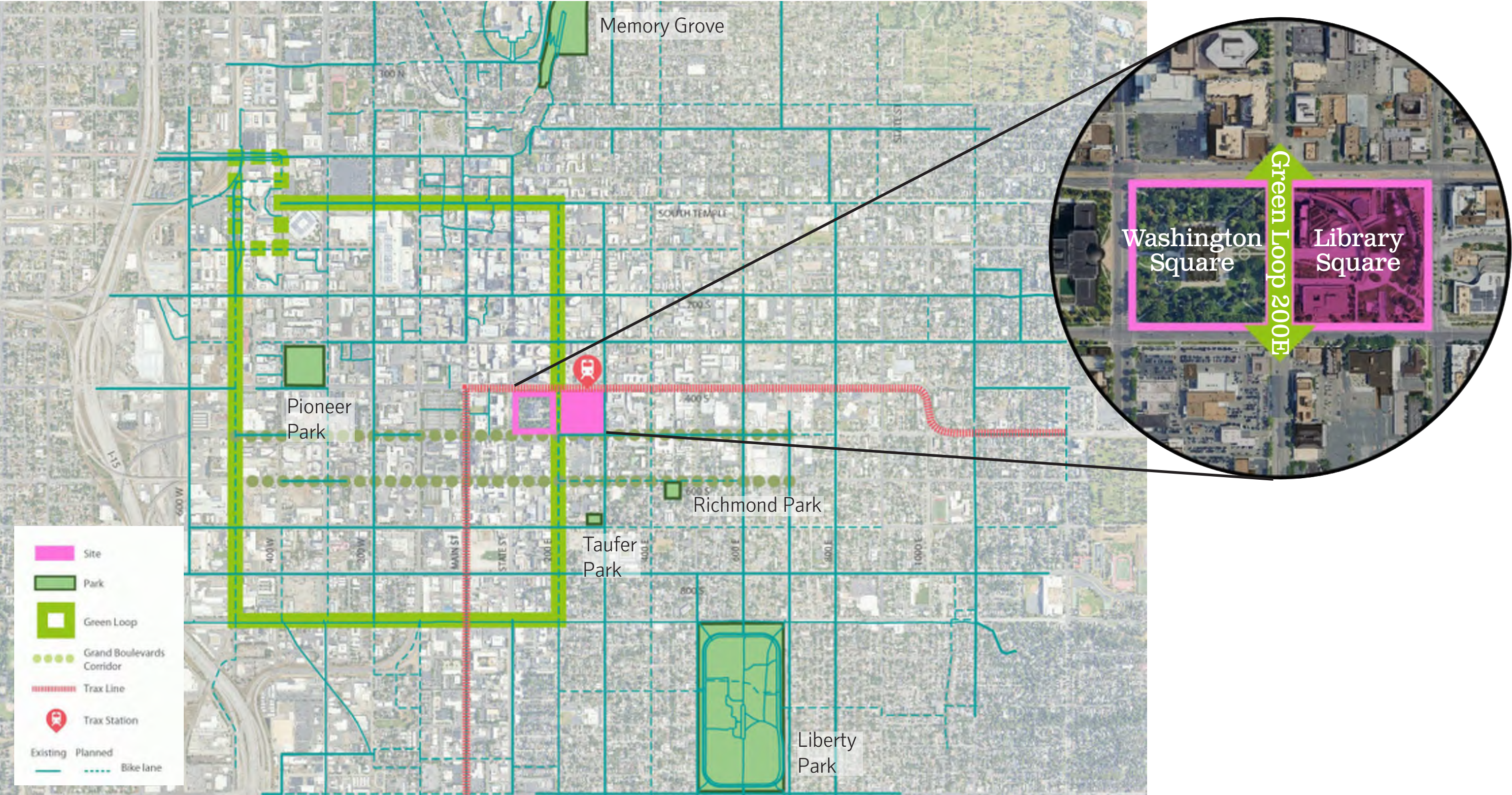


# Vision Framework



# Project Context: Connections

*An Accessible, Central Place - Downtown's "Front Yard"*





## Project Context: High Demand for Public Greenspace

*Rapid Population Growth in Central Community*

**2010:**

5,000 dwelling units

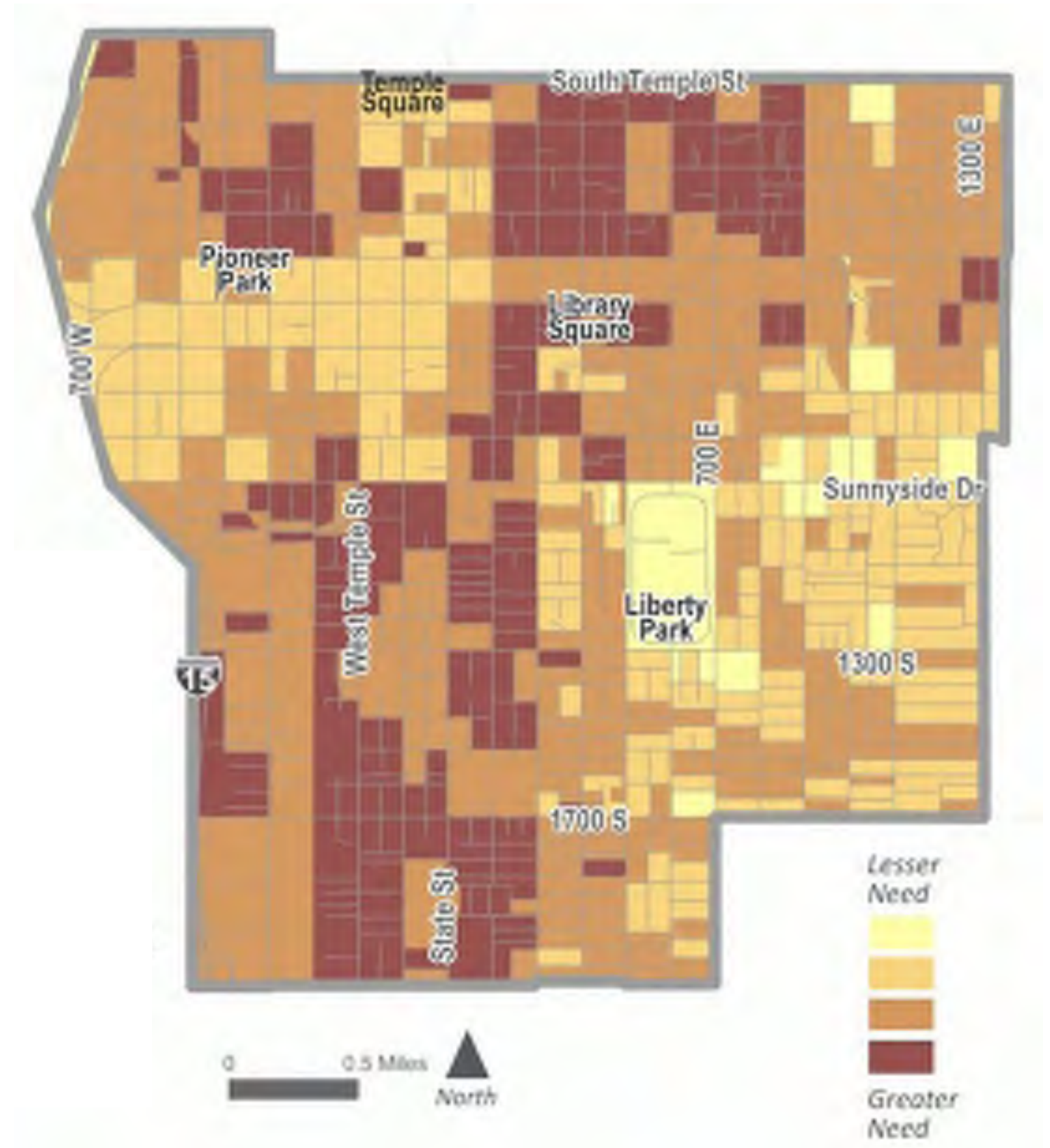
**2019 – 2023:**

4,600 units delivered

4,700 under construction

**300%** growth by 2025

The LOS(Level of Service\*) for parks is **2.8**, which is not only below the SLC average of 3.5, but is also the lowest of all SLC planning areas.



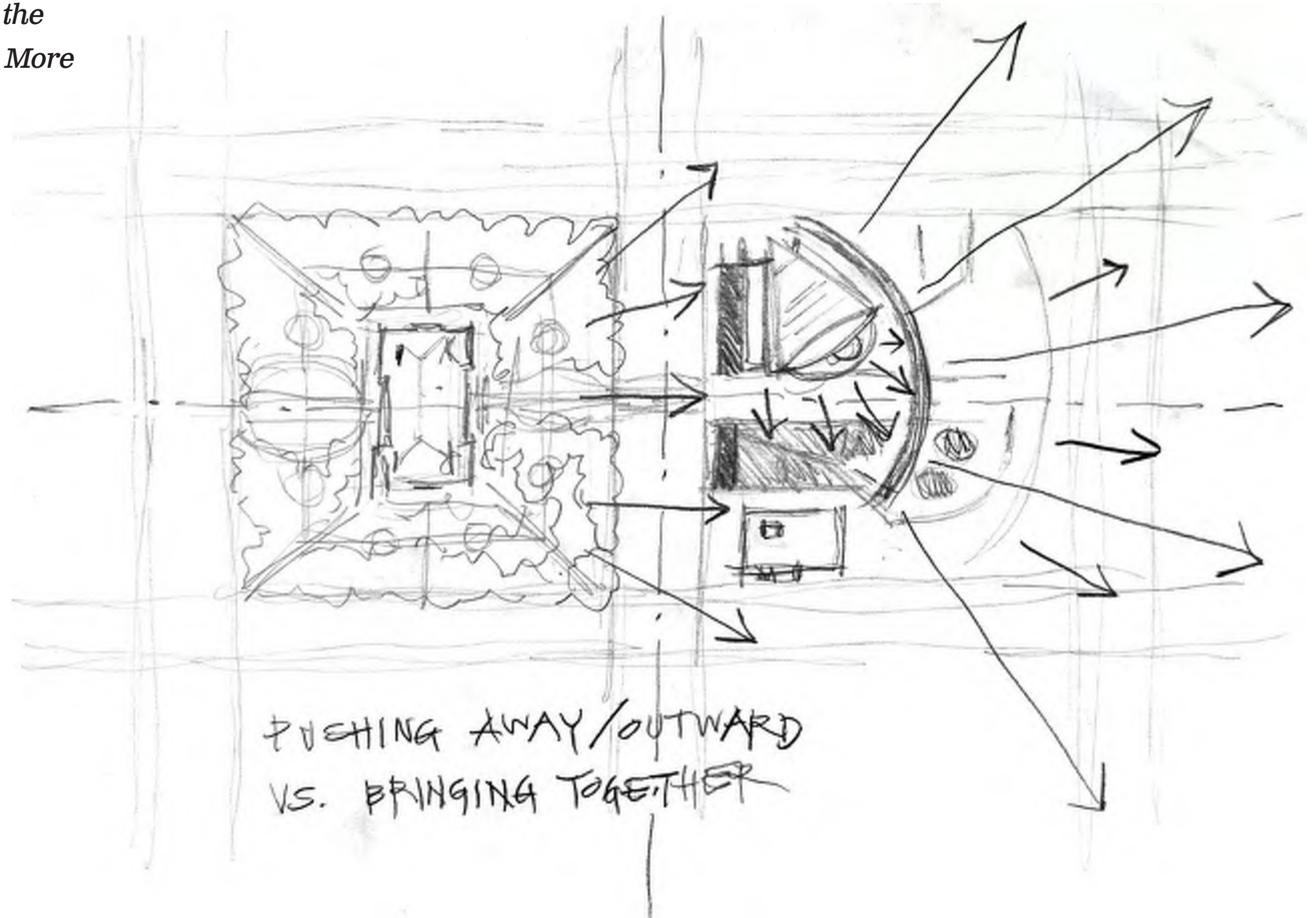


## The Landscape's Physical Design Puzzle:

*Celebrate these Architectural  
Landmarks While Transforming the  
Divided and Isolated Spaces Into More  
Open and Connected “Rooms”*

## Current Challenge:

The geometries of Library Square's architecture and site design "push outward and away" toward beautiful views of mountains, but the landscape around the Library does not balance the monumental geometries by bringing people together into "rooms" on the ground.





# Overall Design Goals:

## Five First Moves

Step 1: Recenter

Step 2: Reconnect

Step 3: Open Up

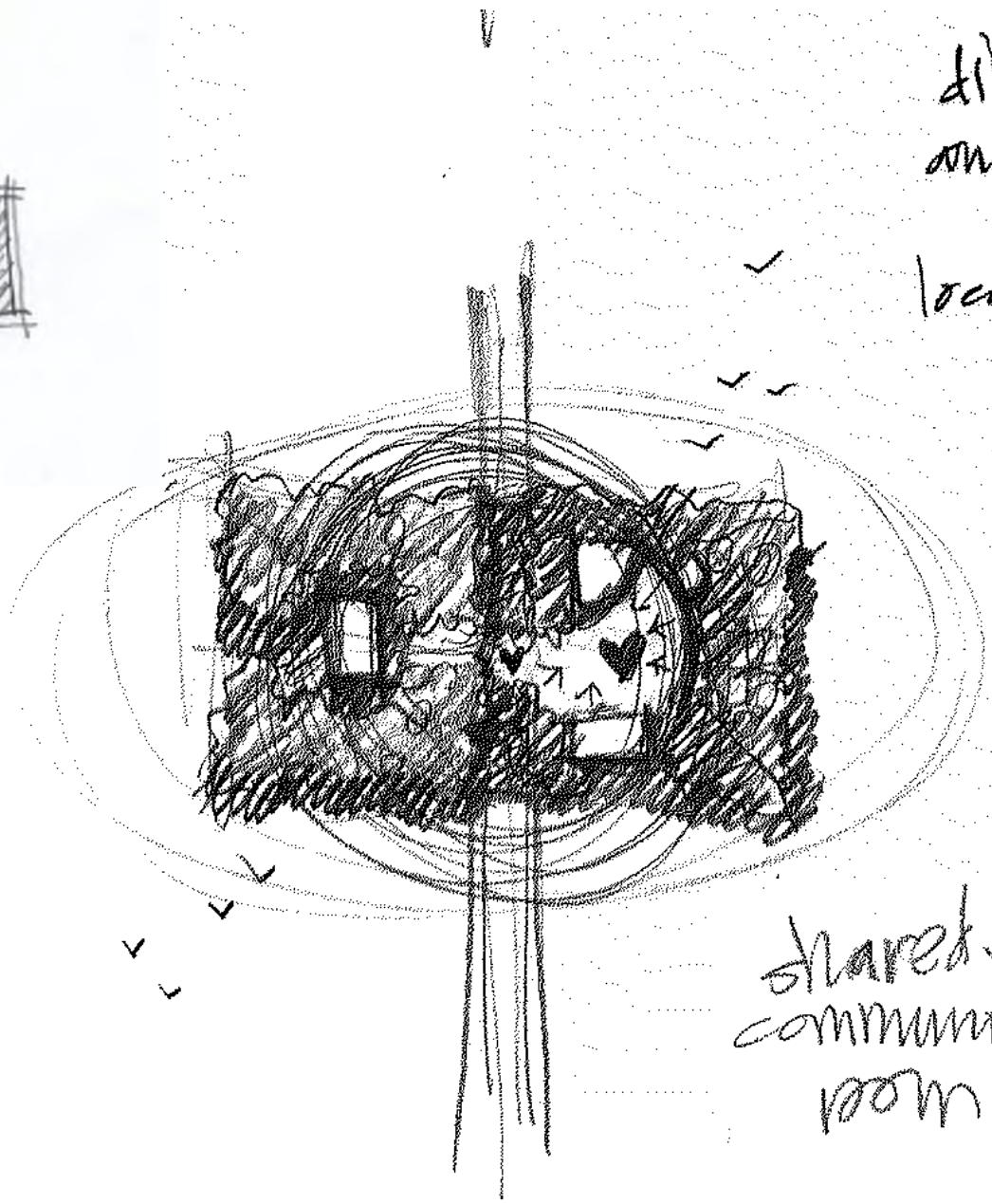
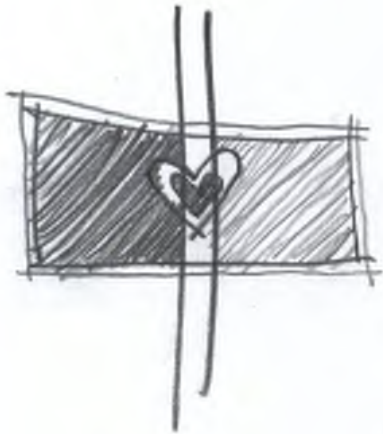
Step 4: Increase Daily Life

Step 5: Celebrate This Place

## Current Challenge:

How can we creatively connect the Green Loop's central flagship block with Library Square's needed repairs, to create a revitalized, green, civic heart for Downtown Salt Lake City?

THE GREEN LOOP  
+  
LIBRARY SQUARE



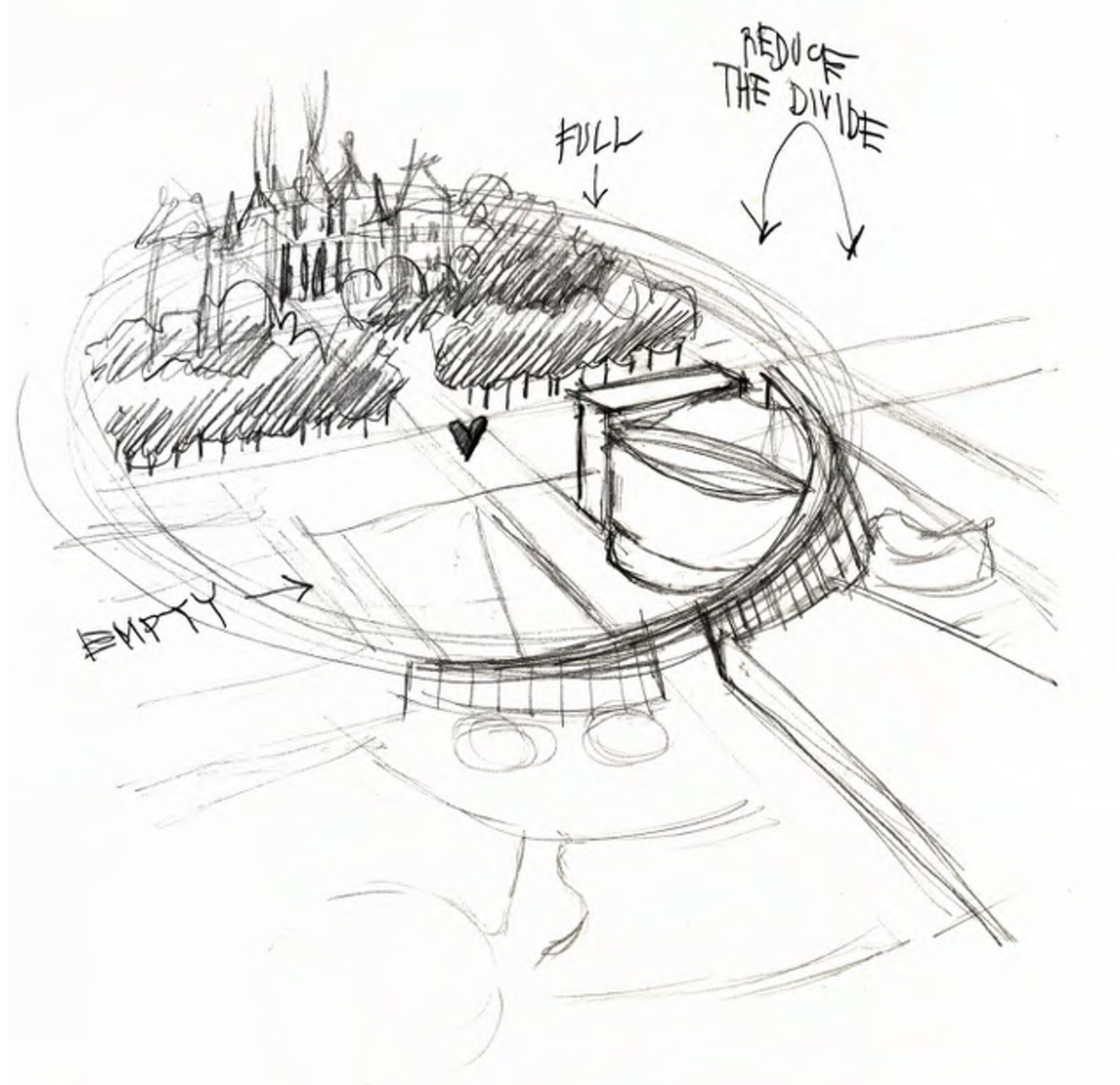
diverse landmarks  
and spaces  
united by  
local nature  
and the land

shared  
community  
room



## Step 1: Recenter

*Start at the Heart and Use  
the Monumental Crescent  
Wall to Create The Edge of  
a Shared Central Room*

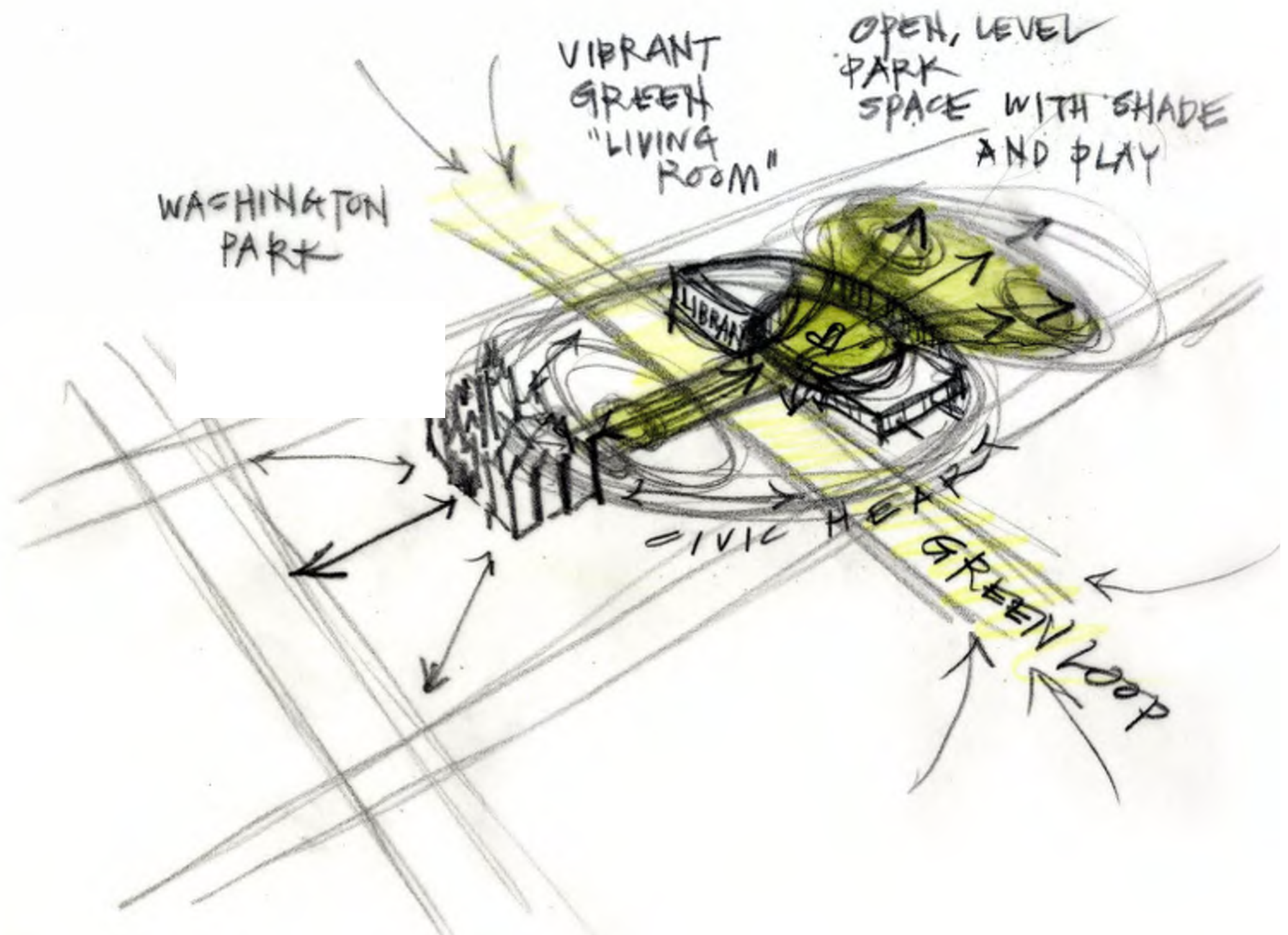


*Bringing Spaces and People Together*



## Step 2: Reconnect

*Welcome People with Green Loop  
Access and Strengthen the Flow  
of Space from the City & County  
Building to Library Square*

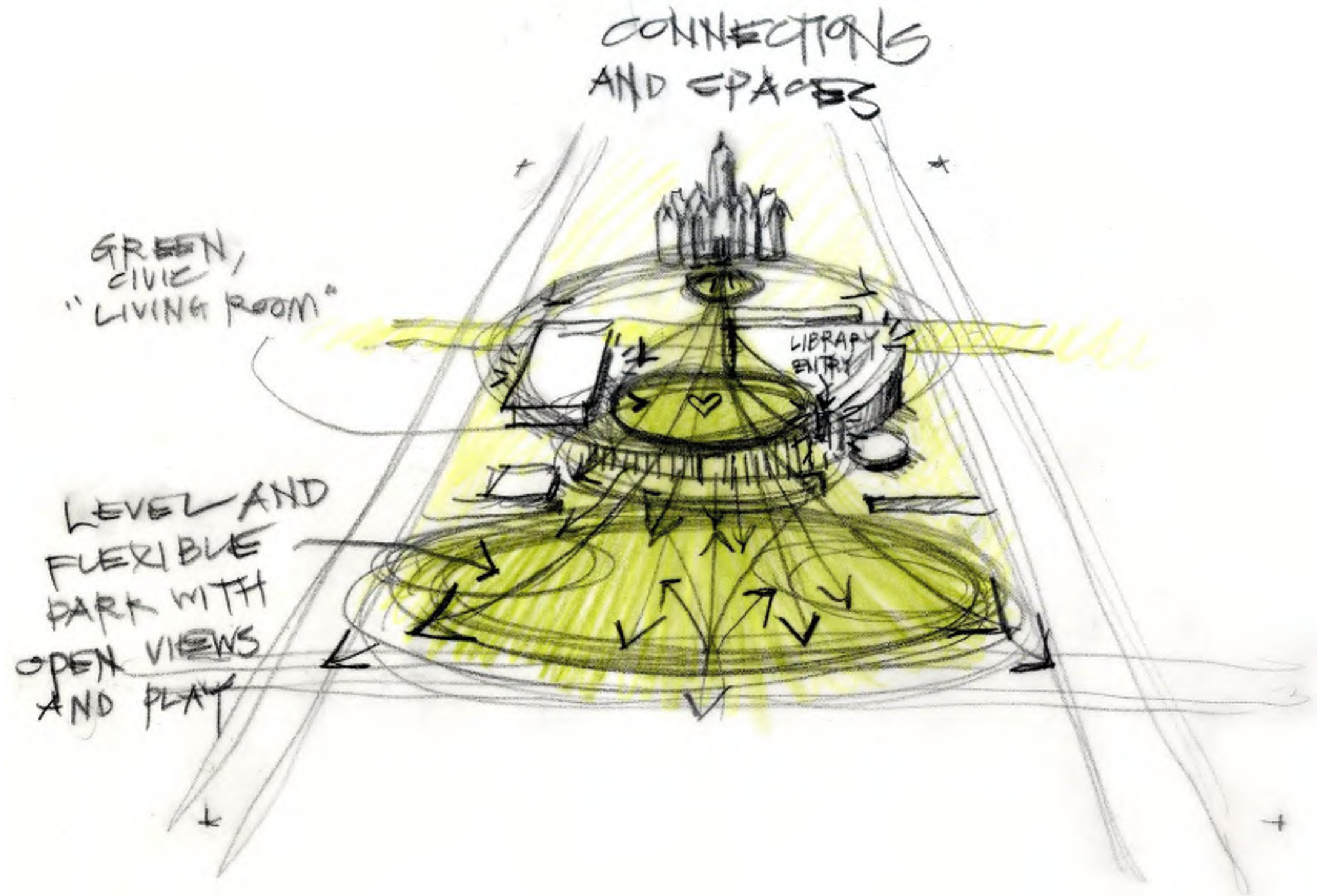


*Bringing Spaces and People Together*



## Step 2: Reconnect

*Welcome People with Green Loop  
Access and Strengthen the Flow  
of Space from the City & County  
Building to Library Square*



*Bringing Spaces and People Together*



### Step 3: Open Up

#### **Current Challenge for Connections:**

The ground of Library Square looks like flat open space from a distance or above, but we quickly heard from visitors, employees, staff, and events teams that, at eye level, the site is full of obstacles, inaccessible slopes, sunken areas, and uncomfortable blank walls. These block walking routes, sight lines, and deter the positive social activities that could be activating Library Square on a daily basis, and between events.

Many of these walls are ornamental and do not hold anything but foam or void space behind them. Portions of the walls on the right side of this image enclose the back side of the micro-retail buildings that are set into the Library's Crescent Wall/Bridge.





## Step 3: Open Up

*Reduce the "Labyrinth" of Site Walls, Dead Ends, and Slopes That Limit Access, Activity, and Events*

### Current Challenge:

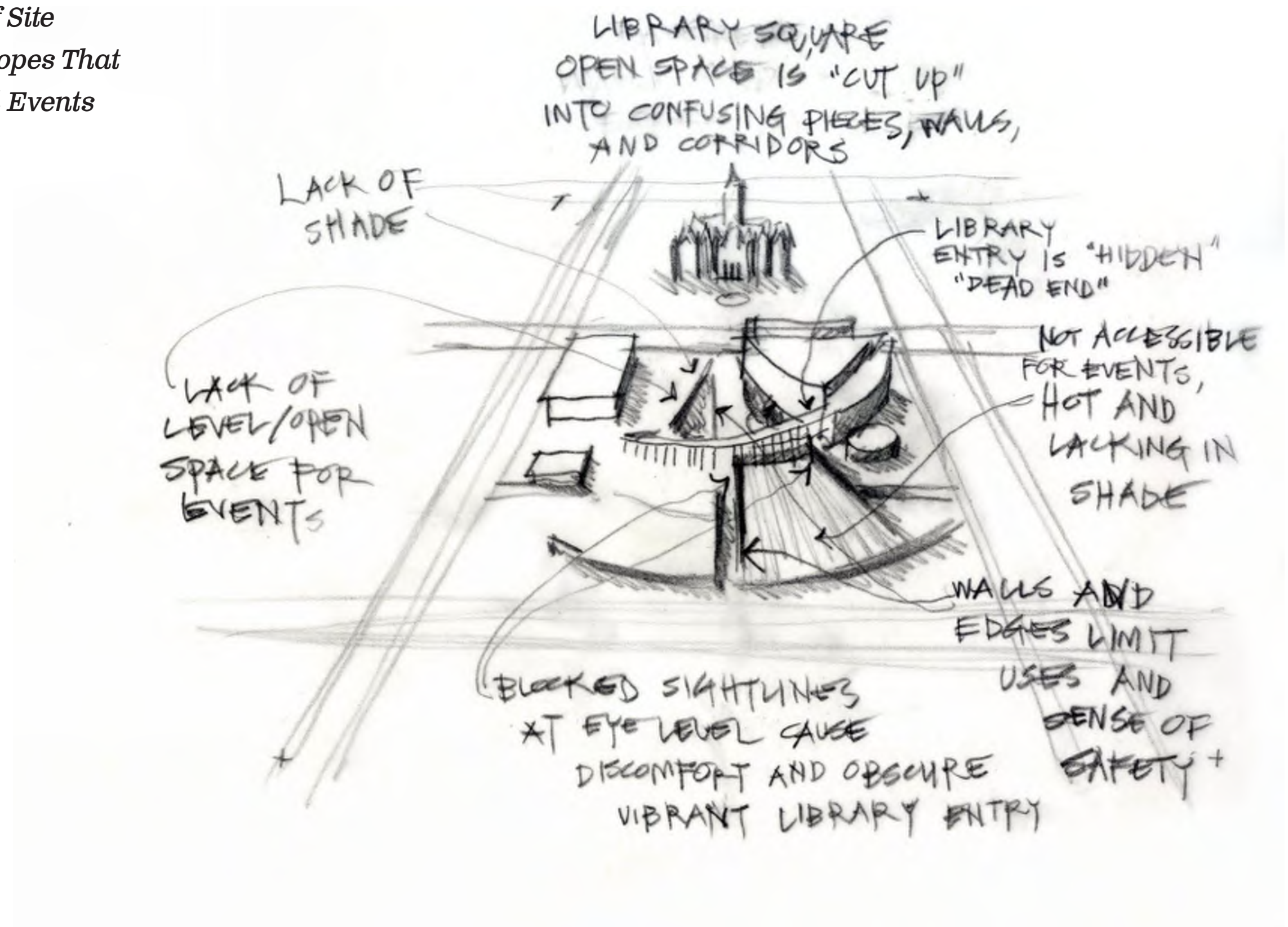
The ground of Library Square looks like flat open space, but we learned that, at eye level, it is full of obstacles, dead ends, and uncomfortable blank walls.





## Step 3: Open Up

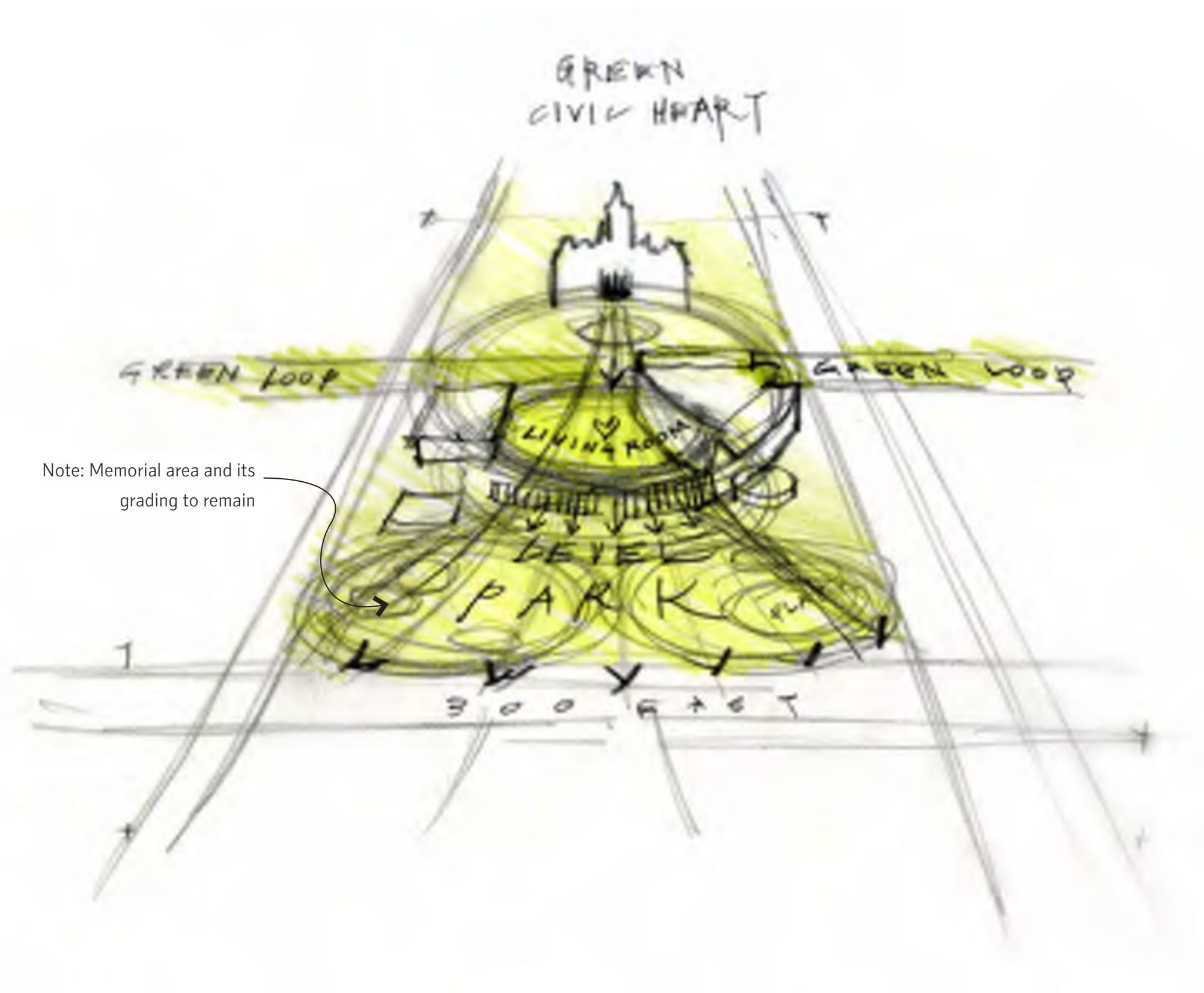
*Reduce the "Labyrinth" of Site Walls, Dead Ends, and Slopes That Limit Access, Activity, and Events*





# Step 3: Open Up

*Leveling the Ground and  
Opening Sightlines at Eye Level  
for More Connected, Flexible,  
and Safe-Feeling Spaces*





# Step 3: Open Up

## Optimizing Event Flexibility and Function

Utah Arts Festival



Twilight Concert Series

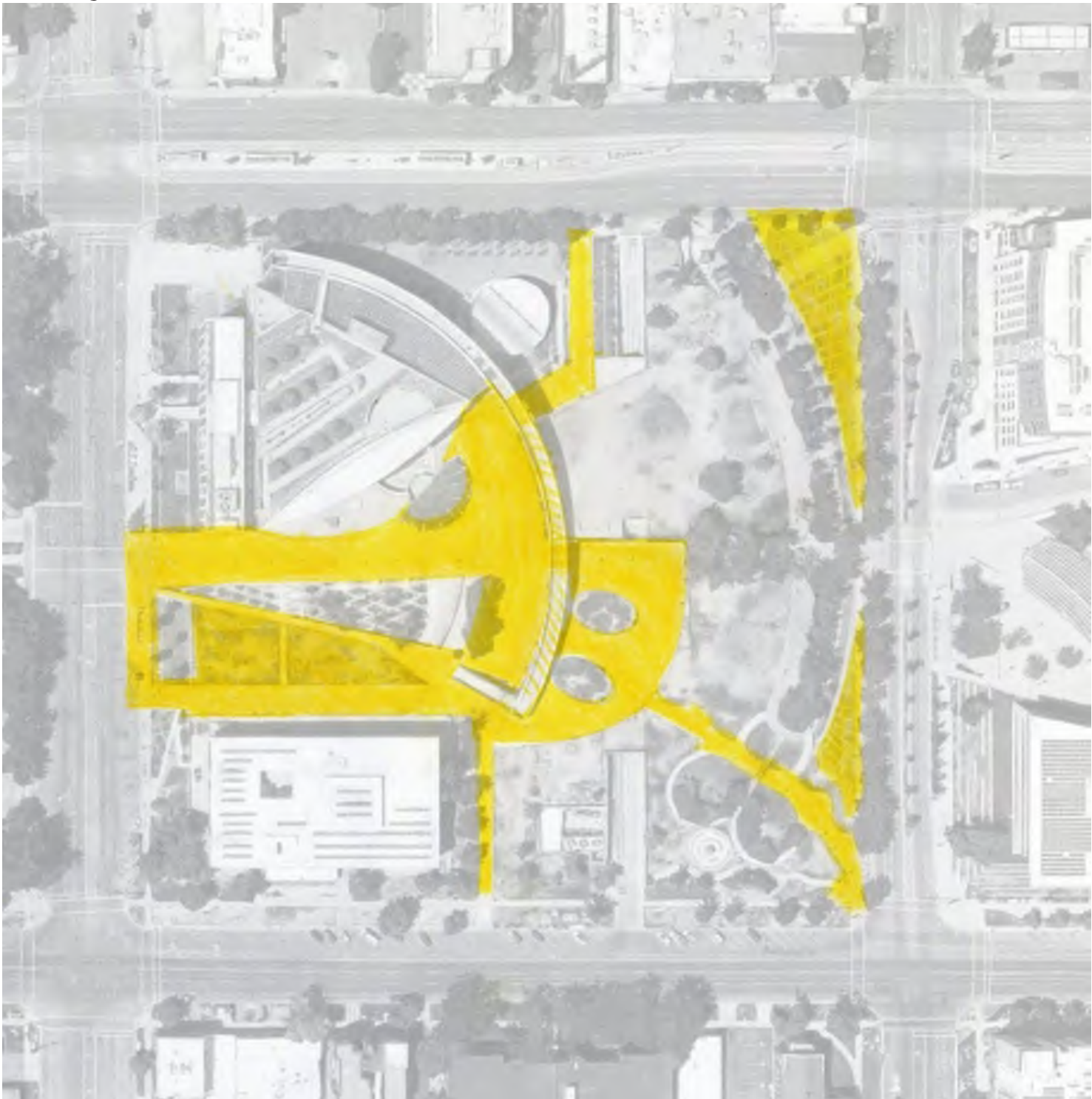




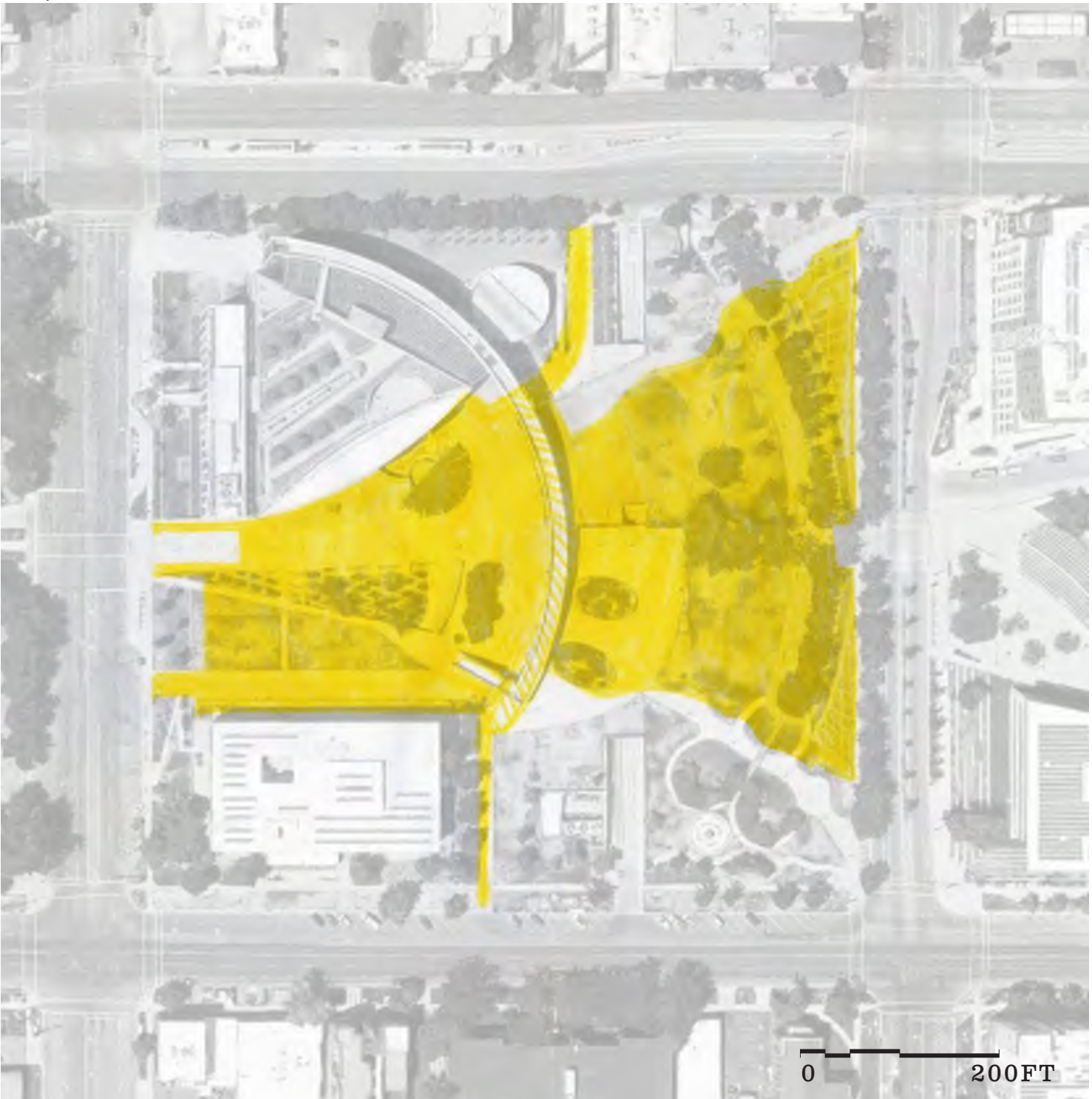
# Step 3: Open Up

*Contiguous Level Space, Open For Programming*

Existing



Proposed

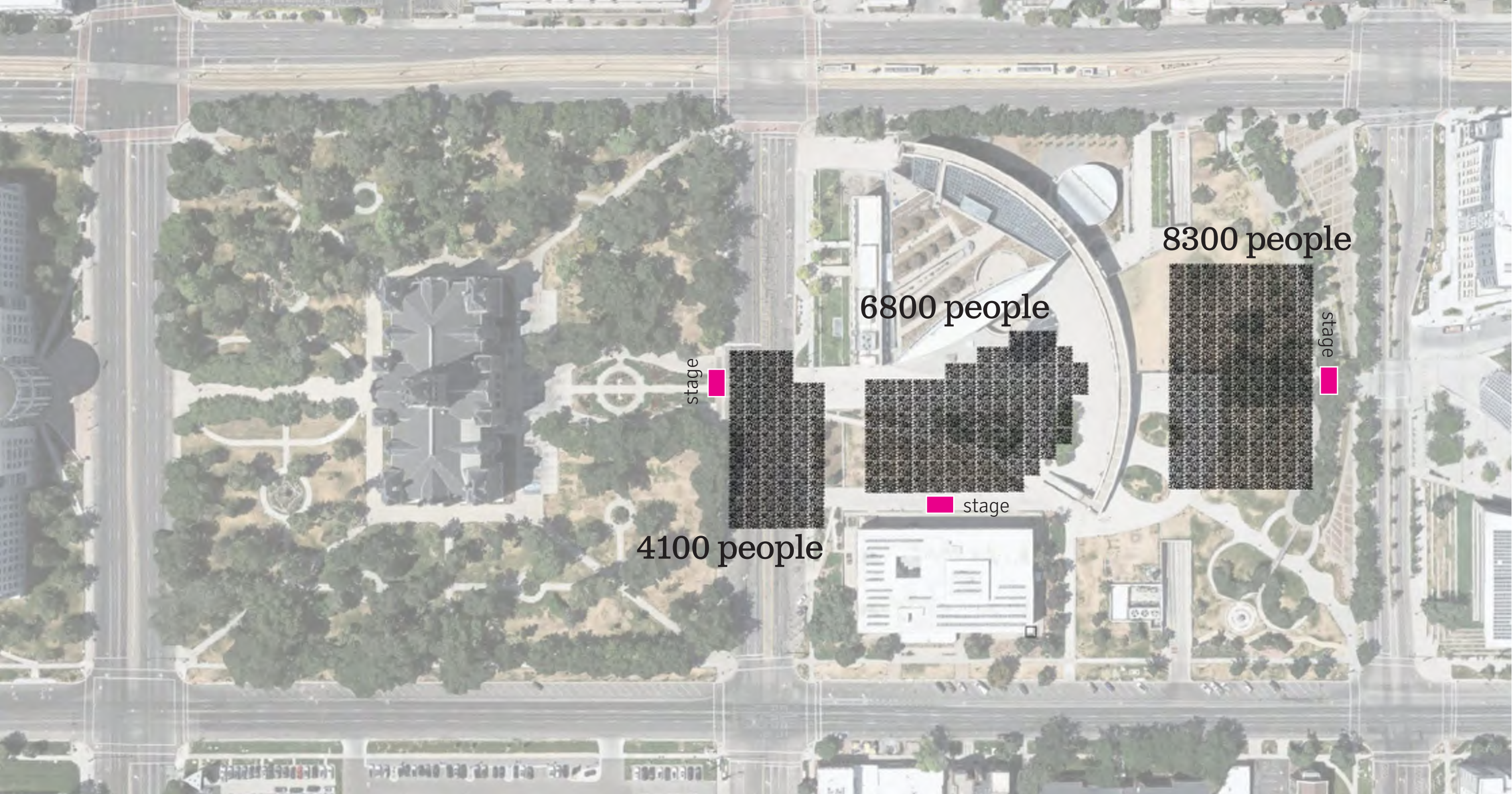




# Step 3: Open Up

Contiguous Level Space, Open For Programming - sample crowd capacity dependent on layout and programming

As Shown: 6 SF /person (standing crowd)



0 25 50 100 200 FT

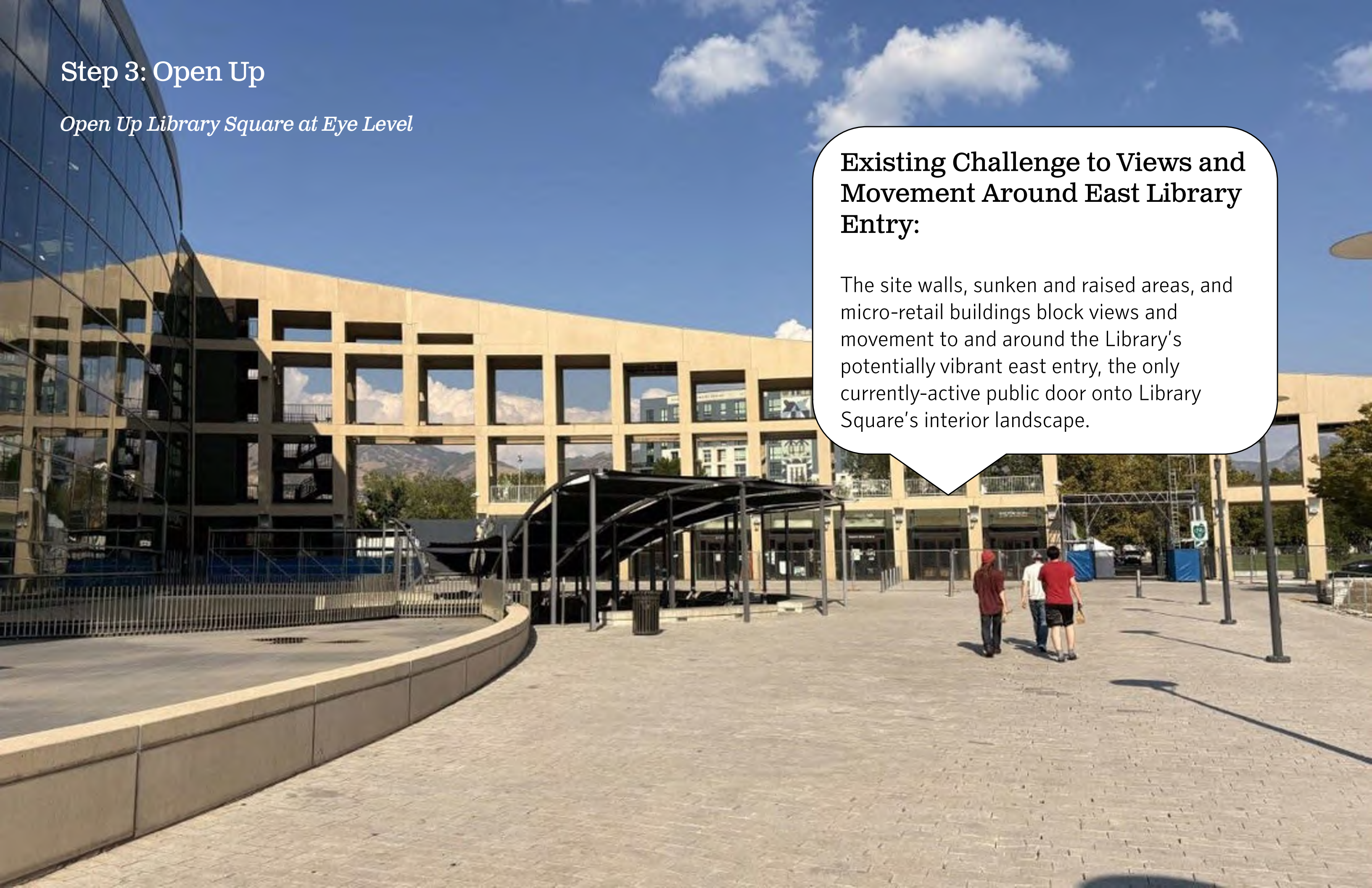


## Step 3: Open Up

*Open Up Library Square at Eye Level*

### Existing Challenge to Views and Movement Around East Library Entry:

The site walls, sunken and raised areas, and micro-retail buildings block views and movement to and around the Library's potentially vibrant east entry, the only currently-active public door onto Library Square's interior landscape.





## Step 3: Open Up

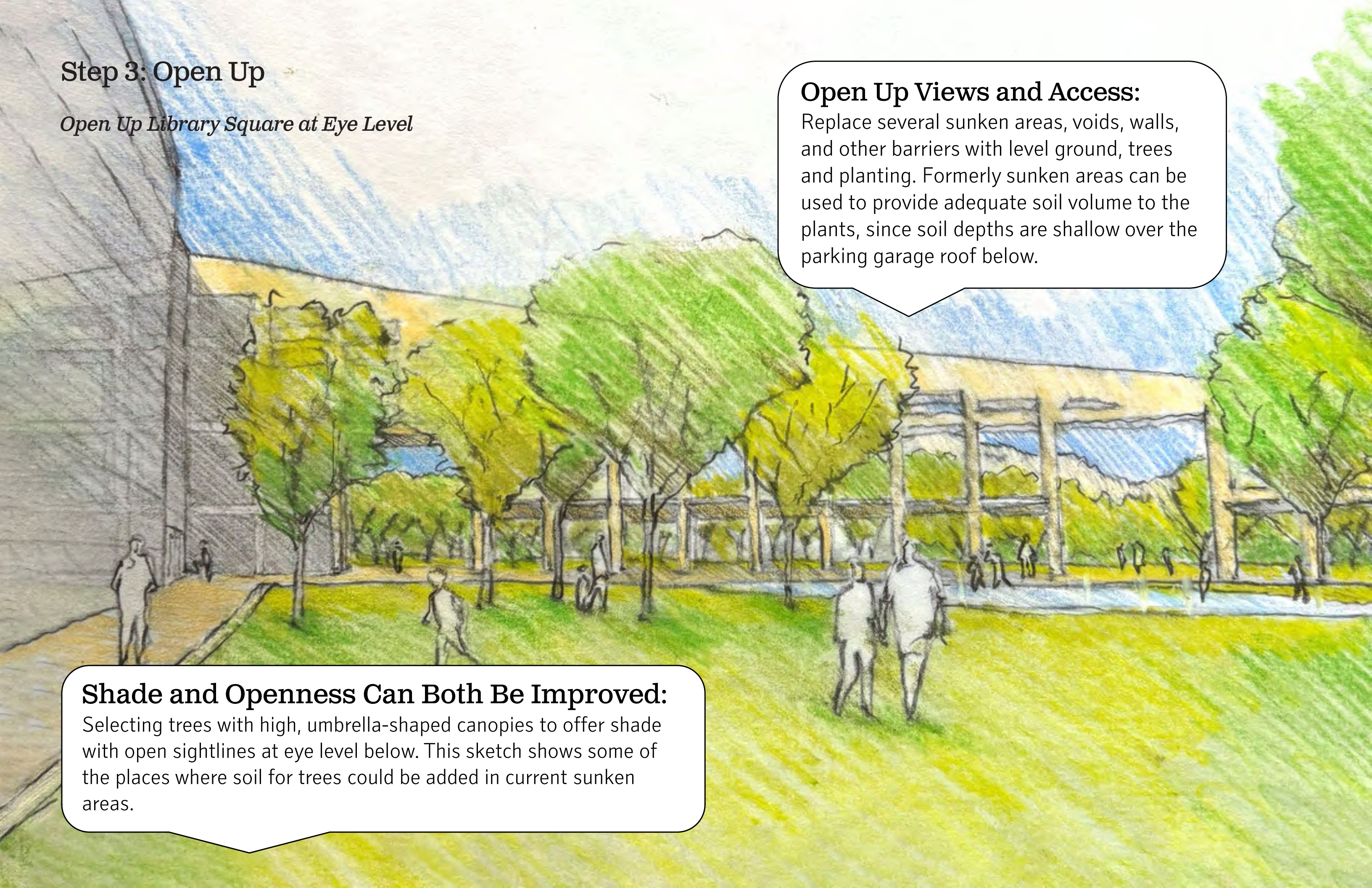
*Open Up Library Square at Eye Level*

### Open Up Views and Access:

Replace several sunken areas, voids, walls, and other barriers with level ground, trees and planting. Formerly sunken areas can be used to provide adequate soil volume to the plants, since soil depths are shallow over the parking garage roof below.

### Shade and Openness Can Both Be Improved:

Selecting trees with high, umbrella-shaped canopies to offer shade with open sightlines at eye level below. This sketch shows some of the places where soil for trees could be added in current sunken areas.





## Step 4: Increase Daily Life

*Bring More Shade, Softness, Nature, Play, and Daily Activities Into the Spaces While Also Optimizing Event Flexibility and Function.*





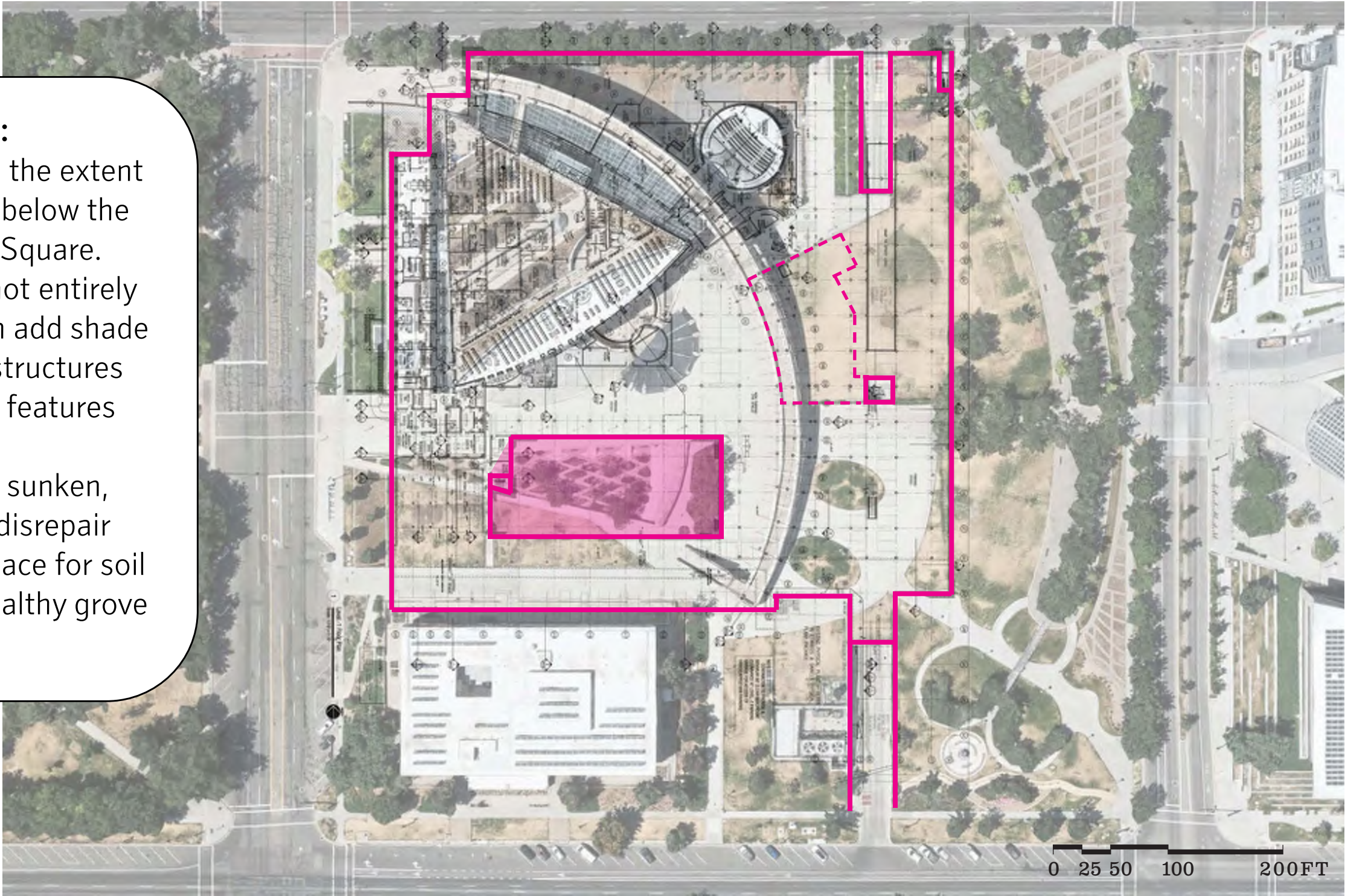
# Step 4: Increase Daily Life

*Bring More Shade, Softness, Nature, Play, and Daily Activities Into the Spaces While Also Optimizing Event Flexibility and Function.*

**Current Challenge:**

The pink outline shows the extent of the building rooftop below the ground level of Library Square. This limits – but does not entirely prevent – where we can add shade trees and other heavy structures such as shade and play features within this area.

The solid pink area is a sunken, walled space that is in disrepair and could serve as a space for soil that could support a healthy grove of shade trees.





# Step 4: Increase Daily Life

*Bring More Shade*

Existing Tree Canopy



Opportunities For Additional Tree Canopy

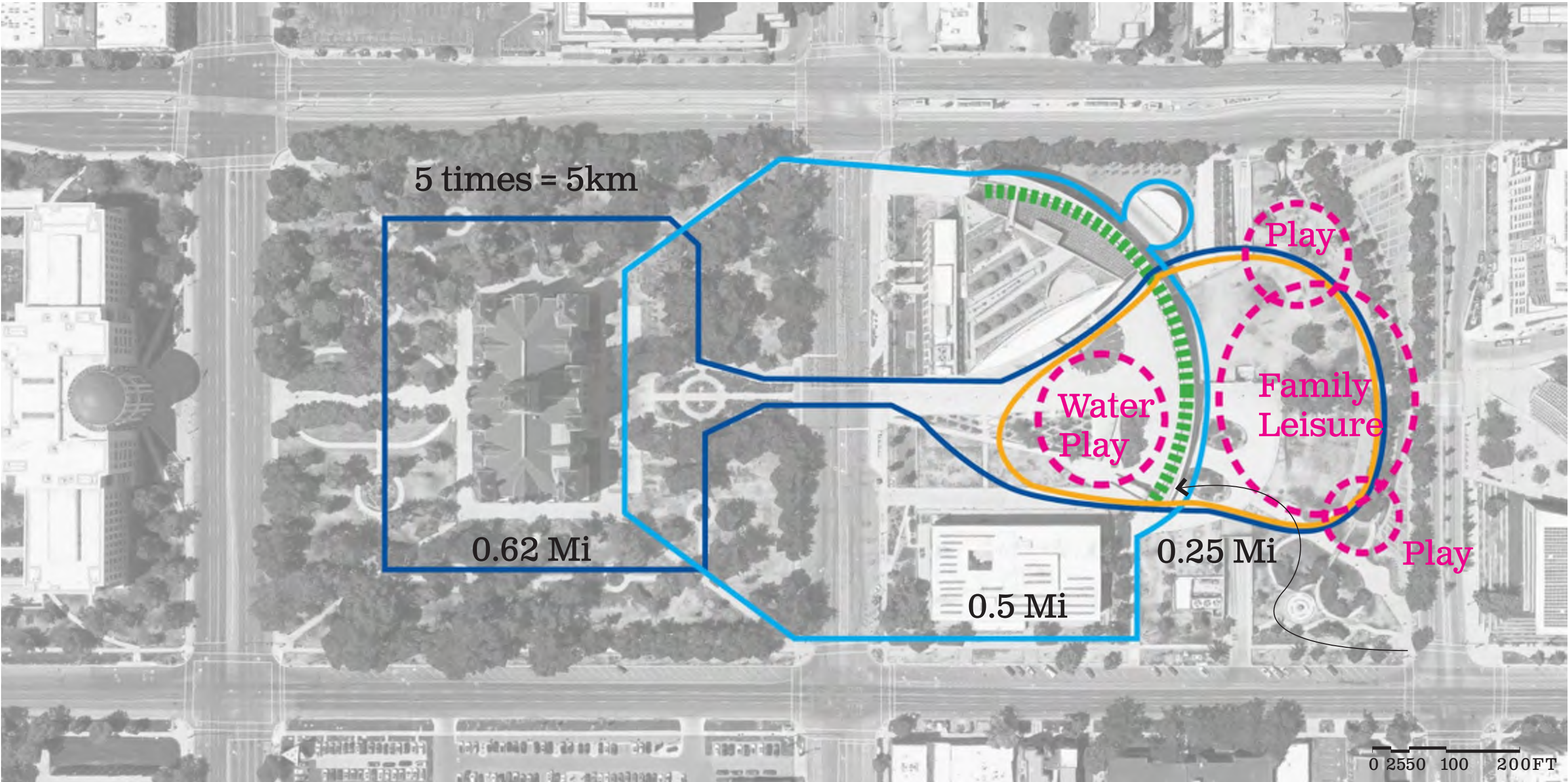


0 200FT



# Step 4: Increase Daily Life

*Play and Daily Fitness Activities - promote use of Crescent Wall Steps for Fitness Routines / Classes*





# Step 5: Celebrate This Place

*Make It All Feel and Look Unique to Salt Lake City.*





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*Make It All Feel and Look Unique to Salt Lake City.*





# Library Square Concept Design

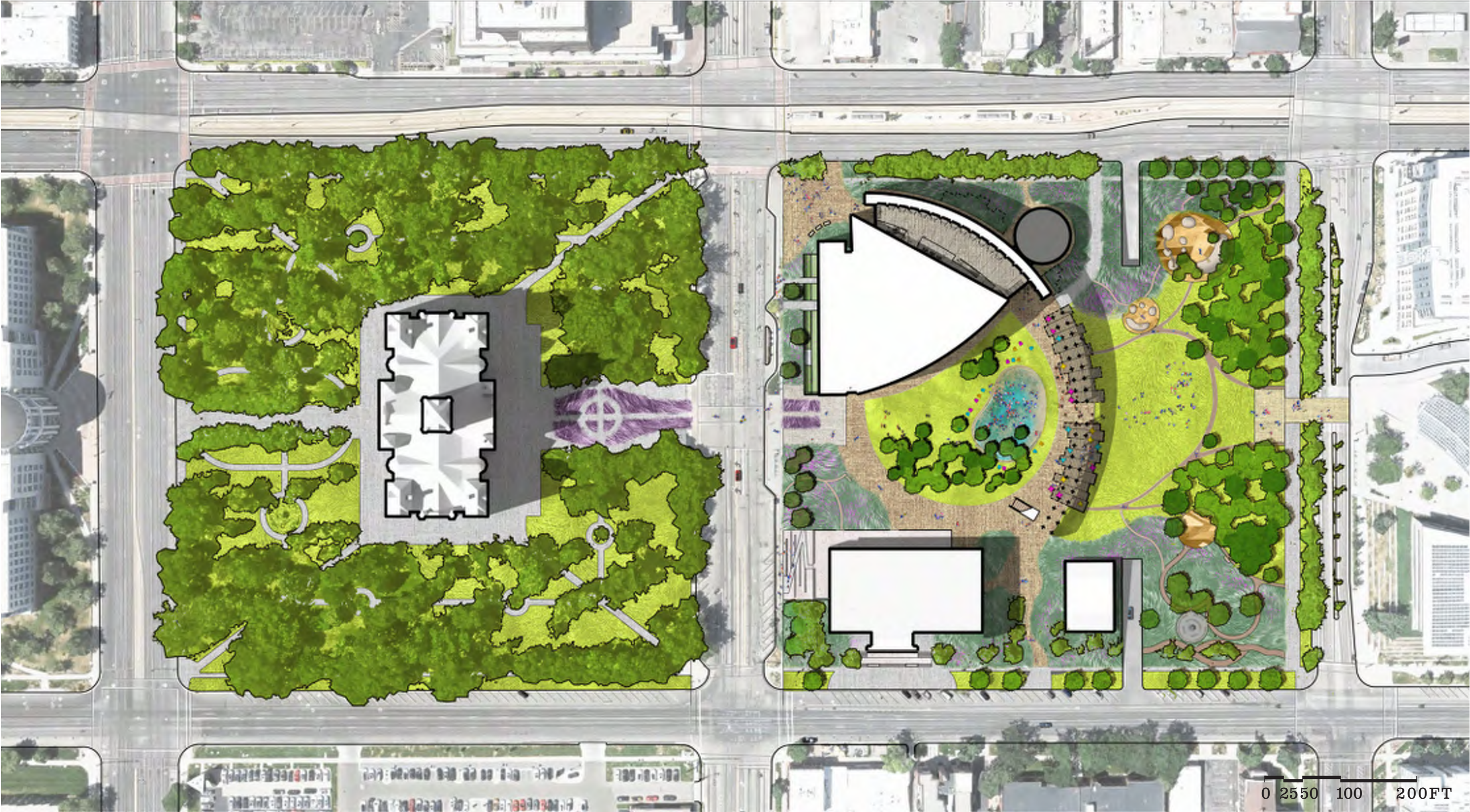


# Library Square Concept Design





# Library Square Concept Design

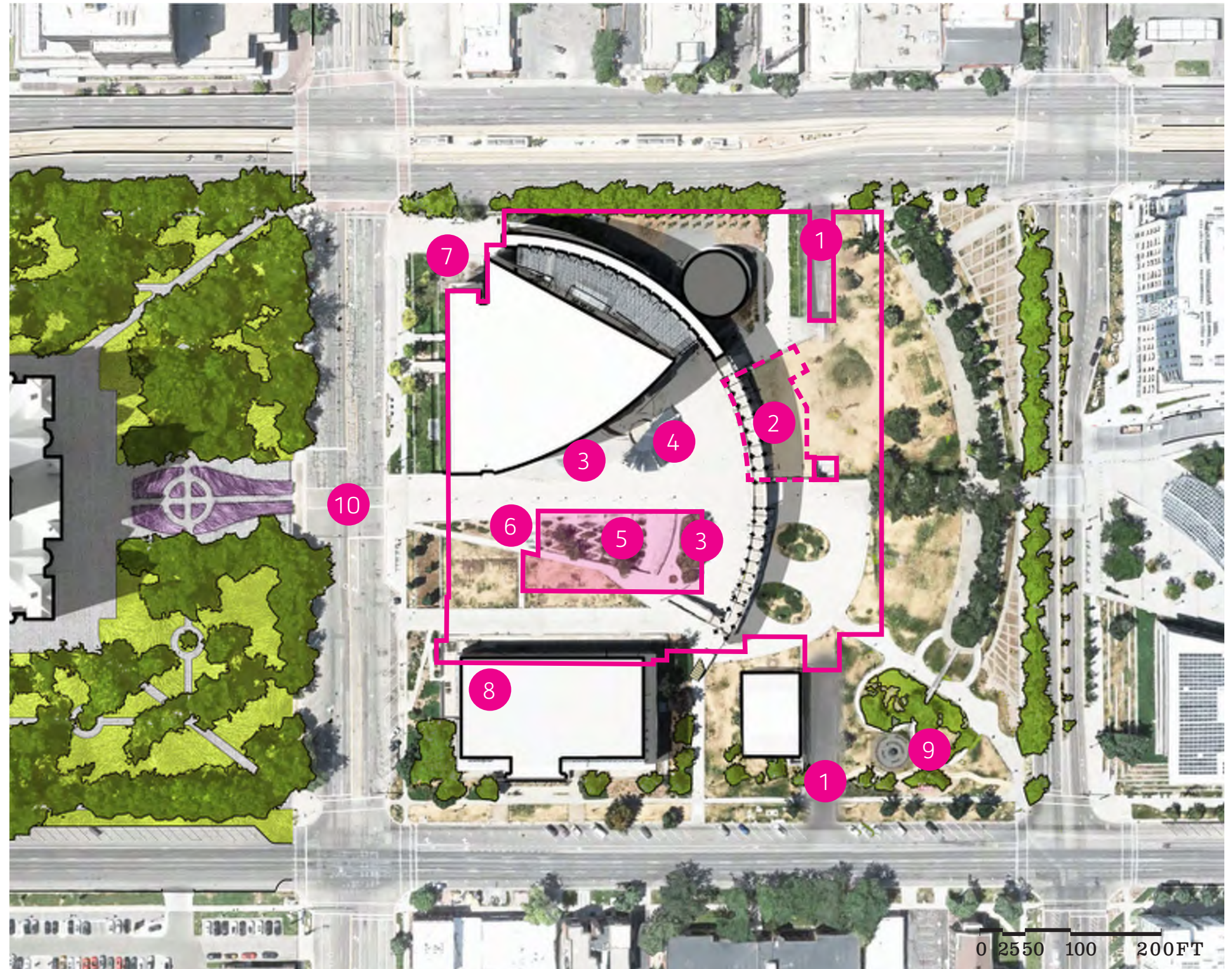




# Existing Conditions

## Key Elements

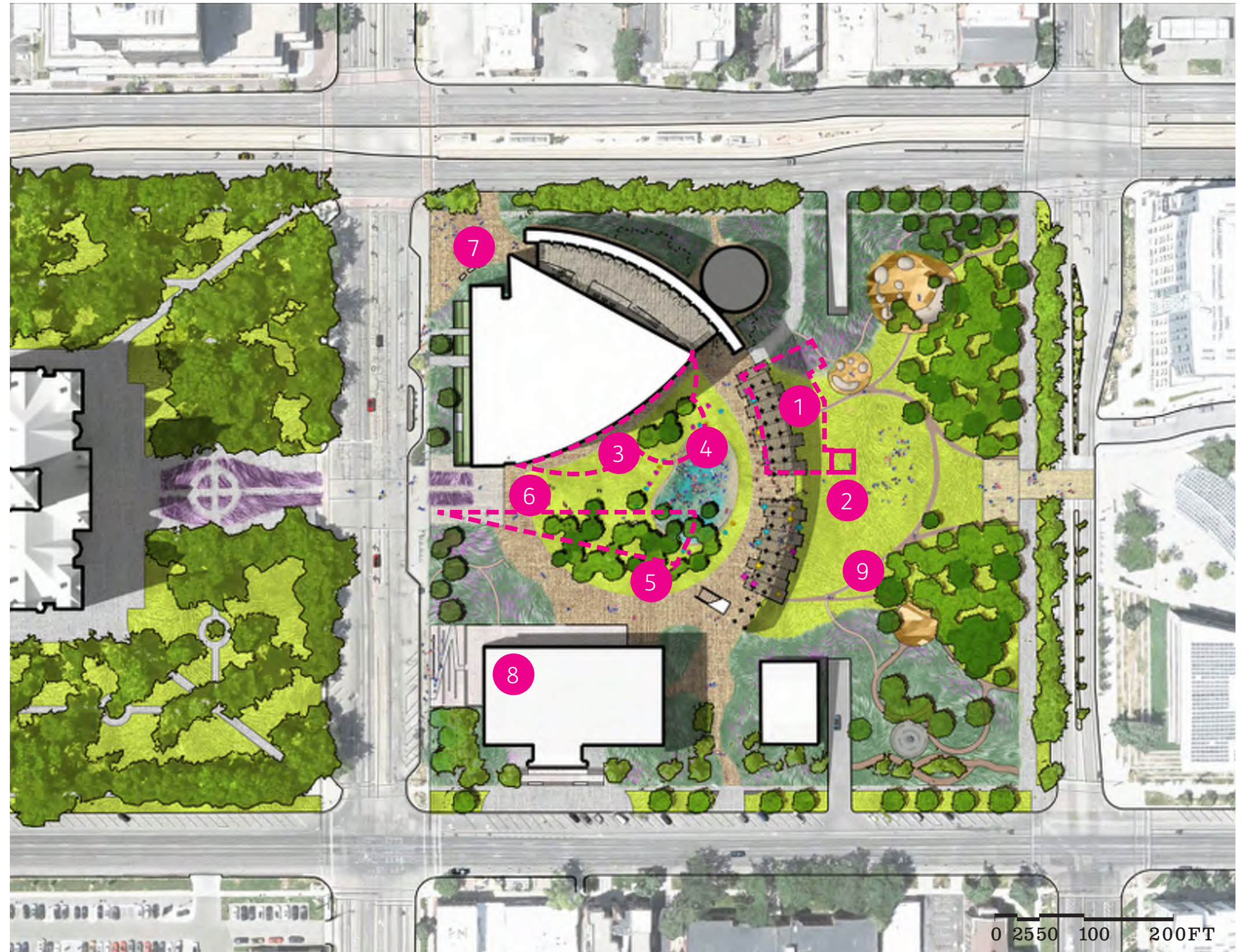
1. Garage Entry - Vehicular Entry
2. Shops & Stair
3. Main Library Facade Fountain
4. Amphitheater
5. Sunken Garden
6. Stair
7. Moat
8. Former Museum / Future tenant Porch
9. Memorial Garden
10. 5-Lane Road with Parking On Both Sides (103')





# Library Square Key Changes

1. Remove Shops
2. Relocate Stair
3. Remove Facade Fountain
4. In-Fill Amphitheater
5. In-Fill Sunken Garden
6. Relocate Stair 2
7. Expand Library Entry
8. Expand Former Museum / Future Tenant Porch
9. Add ~120 Trees





# Library Square Key Changes

Existing



The main design concept for this space is to restore clear sight lines, highlight the existing architecture, and create a more generous, flexible ground plane that can better support daily use and all events usage.

These goals can be achieved by leveling the east end between the Crescent Wall and 300 East, including removing unnecessary site walls and mounded grades, and removing shops and some of the shops' structure, while leaving the Crescent Wall in-tact.

Proposed





# Library Square Key Changes

Existing



The area formerly occupied by the shops becomes a shaded porch that anchors a new circular lawn and light scrim water feature or splash pad that can be easily turned off if another use is required at any time. This configuration extends the Library’s internal street to the outdoors, completing the spatial diagram of the site.

Proposed





# Library Square Key Changes

Existing



The design goal of this space is to create direct views to the main entrance of the Downtown Library, and also to provide additional shade. We can achieve these goals by removing the visual clutter of the central plaza of Library Square by eliminating the existing non-functional fountains, and infilling the amphitheater and sunken garden to create a grand level Living Room. Additional shade trees and porch canopies will also add scale and comfort.

Proposed





# Library Square Key Changes

Existing



Opening up the northwest entrance corner of the Main Downtown Library allows for improved visibility and access, while accommodating additional shade trees and creating welcoming resting spaces at the entrance.

Additionally, widening the green buffer along 400 South / University Blvd. and aligning the sidewalk to the west with the sidewalk along Washington Square allows for a more comfortable pedestrian experience.

Proposed



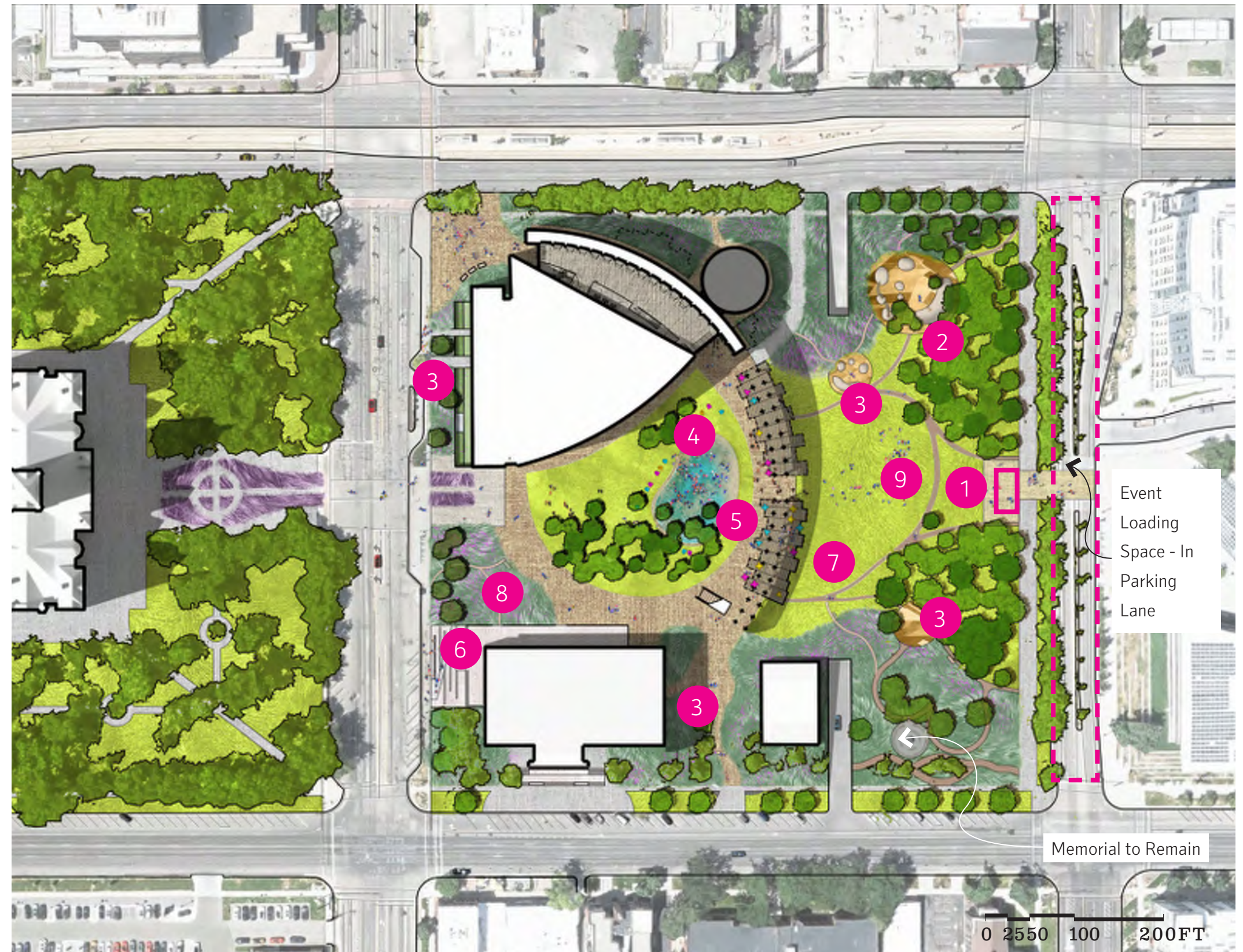


# Library Square Programming



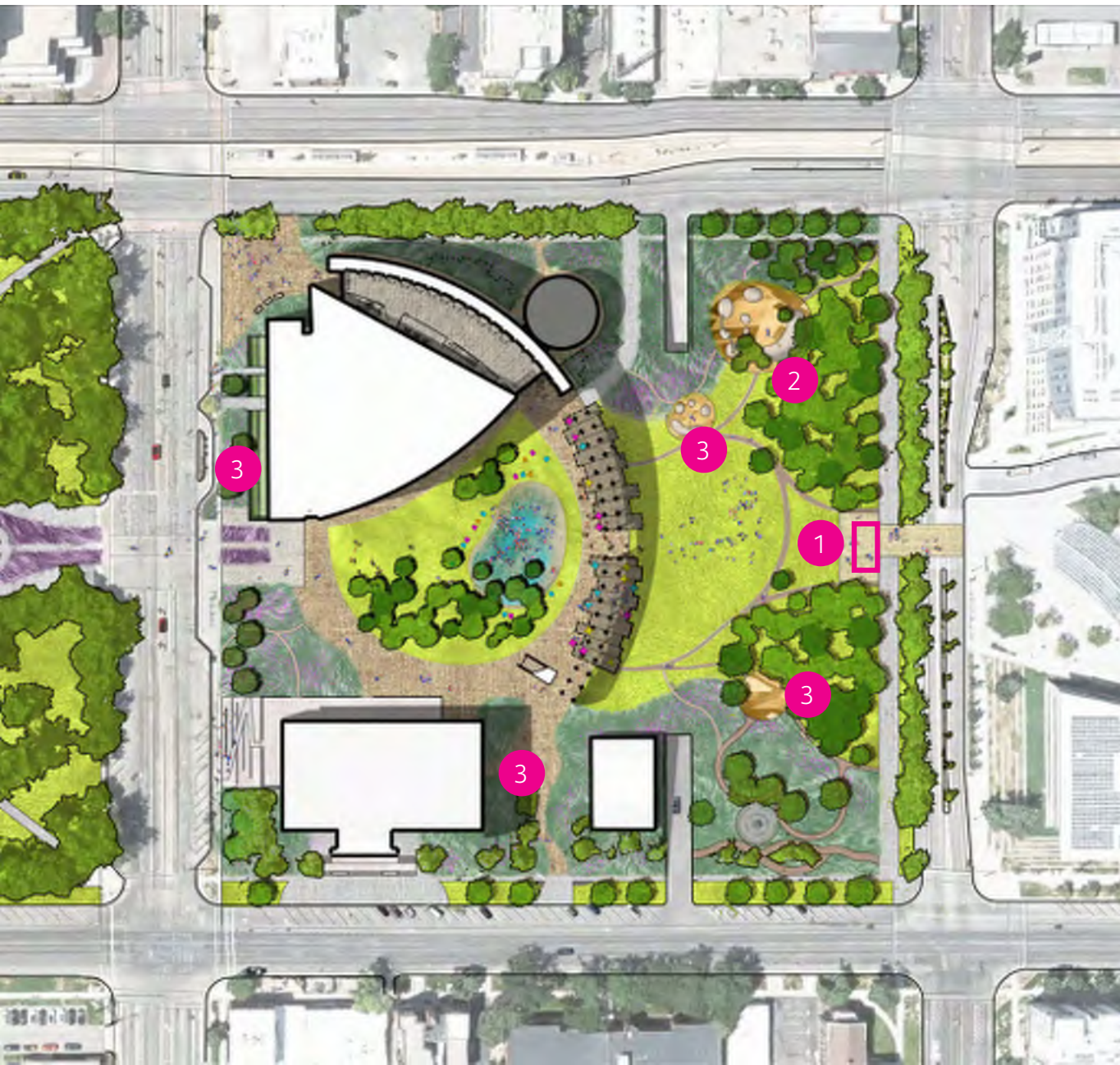
# Library Square Programming Options

1. Space for Main Stage
2. Playground
3. Family Amenity Space/Dog Park/Skate Park
4. Water Feature
5. Shade Canopies
6. Seat Steps/Informal Performance Space
7. Fitness Loop/Dog Walking Loop
8. Garden Walks
9. Passive Seating





# Library Square Programming Options



1 Space for Main Stage



2 Playground



3 Potential Family Amenity/Dog Park



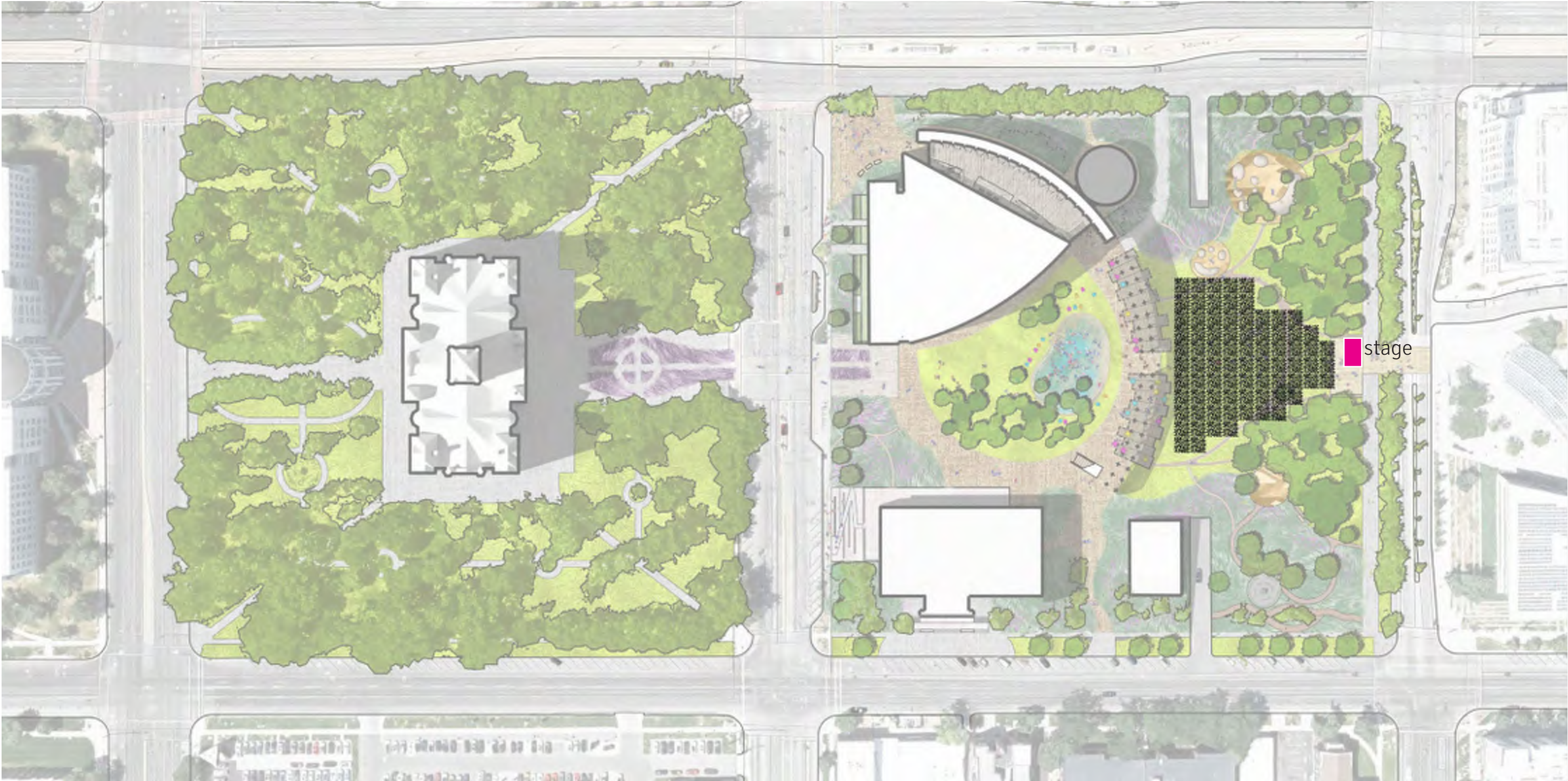
3 Potential Skate Park/Dog Park



# Library Square Programming - Space for Main Stage

*Diagram depicts a 5000 person standing crowd. Library Square could accommodate up to 20,000 - as shown on the existing conditions aerial. Crowd capacity is dependent on how other programming is incorporated, festivals are set up and so forth.*

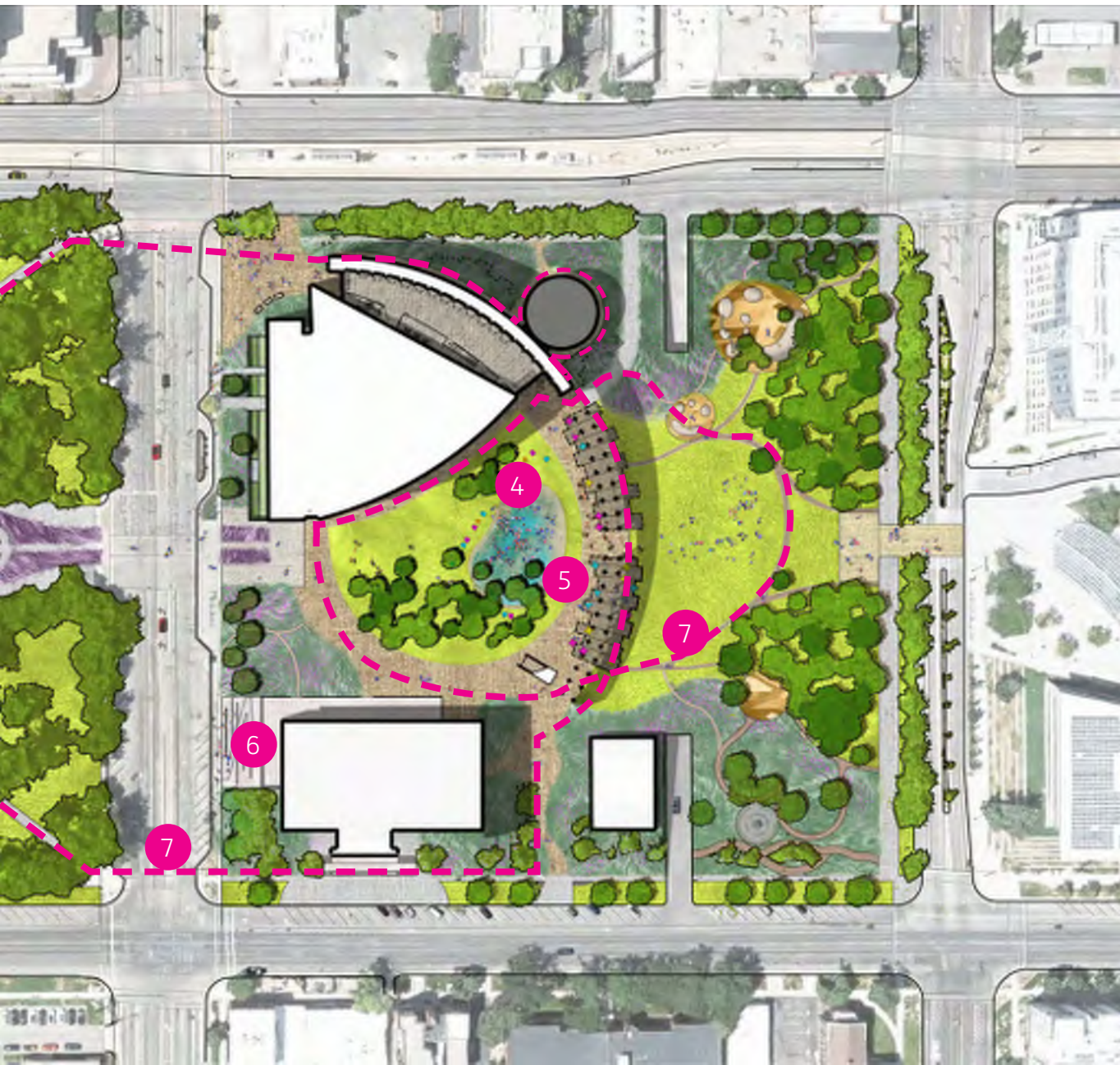
As Shown: 6 SF /person (standing crowd)



0 25 50 100 200 FT



# Library Square Programming



4 Water Feature - Scrim / Splash Pad



5 Activity Porch with Shade Canopies



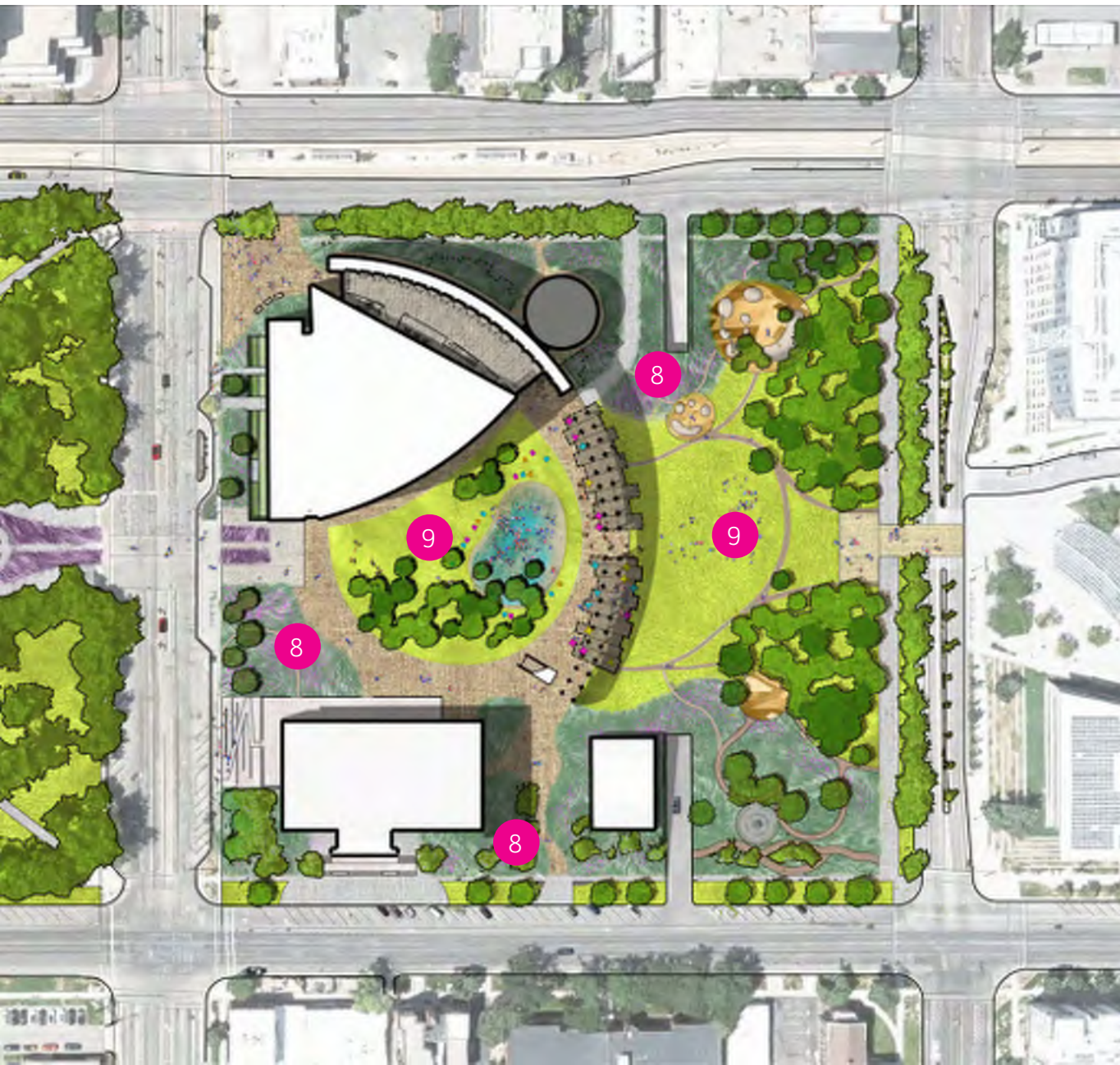
6 Engage Sidewalk with Seat Steps for Potential Informal Performance



7 Fitness Loop/Dog Walking Loop



# Library Square Programming



8 Garden Walk



Garden Walk



9 Passive Seating



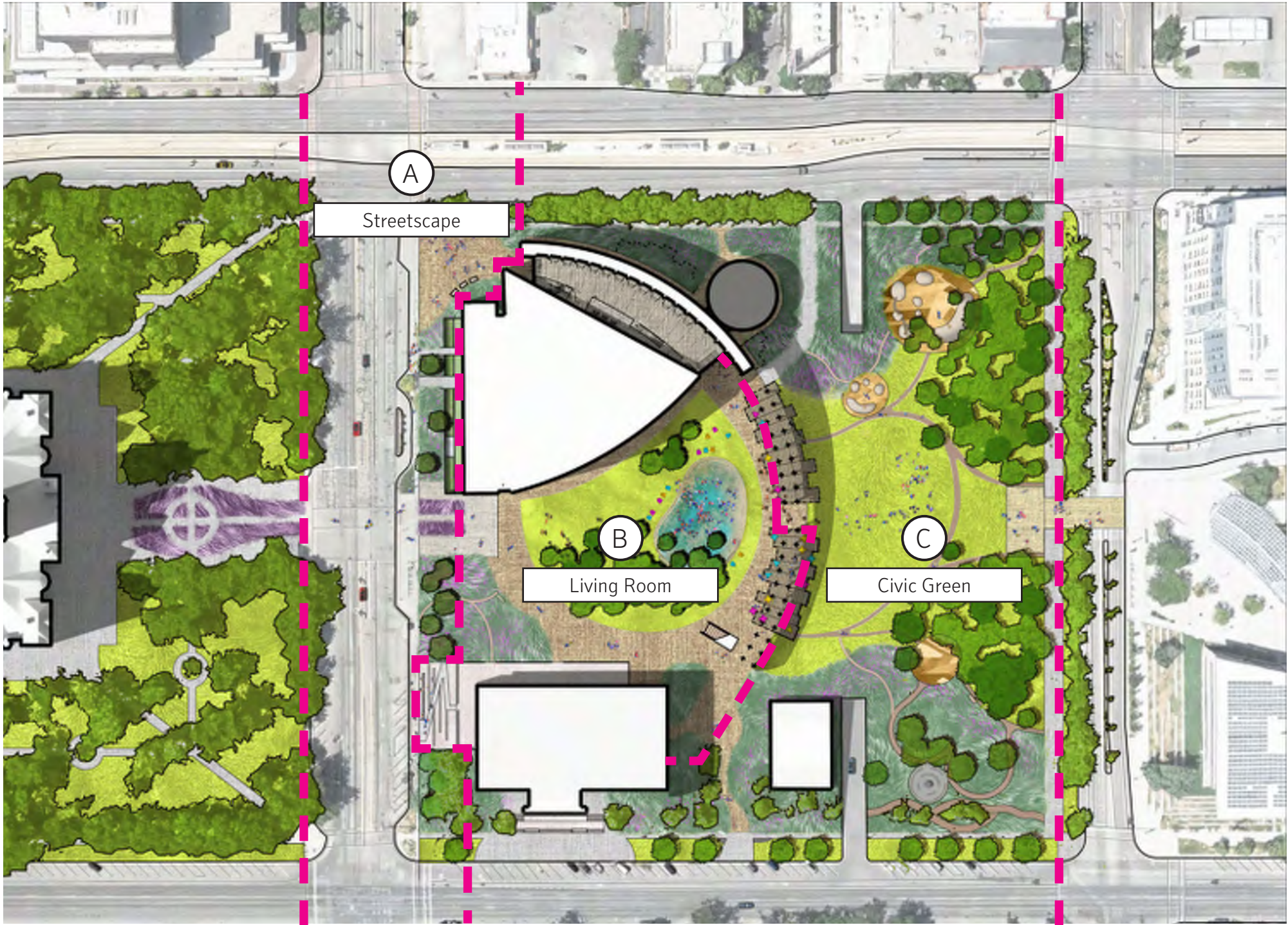
Passive Seating



# Future Operations and Maintenance



# Operations & Maintenance: Project Conceptual Phasing Plan





# Operations & Maintenance

## Introduction

The purpose of the Vision Study with regard to Operations and Maintenance (O&M) is to provide high level (O&M) estimates for the annual maintenance needs and costs associated with the proposed Vision Study concepts of the Civic Center: Library Square. The future O&M model for the streetscape portion at 200 East has not been fully developed and continues to be an ongoing conversation and will not be covered in this Vision Study. The estimates are based on quantities associated with the design within this study.

## Existing Maintenance

The maintenance of the Civic Center: Library Square largely fall under the responsibilities of four agencies:

- SLC Public Lands / Parks Maintenance - responsible for all surface improvement, this includes paved surfaces, landscaped areas, and site furnishings
- SLC Public Services / Facilities - responsible for the parking garage and access (stairs, ramps) to the parking garage
- SLC Main Downtown Public Library - responsible for all facilities and surrounding grounds associated with the library structure, including the reflecting pools / fountains, airflow and fire suppression system
- Former Museum / Future Tenant - responsible for the facilities and grounds identified within its leased boundary

Maintenance responsibilities for 200 East, 300 East, and 400 South are assumed to remain the same as today and will be done by various City departments. The estimated annual maintenance for the “streetscapes” is separated in the detailed maintenance breakdown for informational purposes.

The City departments that may be responsible for the maintenance of the streetscapes include:

- Public Lands
- Public Utilities
- Public Services



# Operations & Maintenance: Existing Conditions - Responsibilities Diagram

## LEGEND

- SLC Public Lands / Parks Maintenance
- SLC Public Services / Facilities
- SLC Main Downtown Public Library
- Former Museum / Future Tenant





# Operations & Maintenance: Existing Conditions - Responsibilities Matrix

Roles/ Responsibilities	Public Lands	Events	Facilities	Public Services	Architecture and Construction Management	Public Utilities	SLC Police	Potential Tenant	Library
Management	Provides input on design process	Participate and provide input on design process	Participate and provide input on design process	Participate and provide input on design process	Provides input on design process	Participate and provide input on design process		Participate and provide input on design process	Participate and provide input on design process
	Upon project completion, responsible for coordinating all efforts and communications between all departments and private entities			Manages and oversees the design and construction process					
Funding	Responsible for providing funding for ongoing maintenance of the Green Loop after completion (within the identified boundary)			Securing and providing funding for the construction				Responsible for providing funding for ongoing maintenance of the Green Loop after completion (within the identified boundary)	Responsible for providing funding for ongoing maintenance of the Green Loop after completion (within the identified boundary)
Construction Management					Function as project manager for the construction of improvements. Manage the bidding and negotiation of contracts in accordance with City's requirements.				
Maintenance	Responsible for all surfaces improvement: - Pavers - Curtain wall - Landscapes - Trees (Urban Forestry) - Fencing - Site furnishing (trash cans, seating, bike racks, etc.) - General site cleaning - Snow removal - Monument		Responsible for all surfaces improvement: - Stairways to parking - Parking garage - Equipment in parking garage - Ramps leading up from parking garage			Responsible for: - Maintenance of electrical, water, sewer lines		Responsible for: - All facilities connected to the leased facility - Grounds within the identified boundary	Responsible for: - All facilities connected to library structure - Reflecting pool - Grounds within the identified boundary - Airflow and fire suppression systems
Security	Provide overall security through the presene of maintenance services.						Provides daily patrol and overall site security		Provides security within the library grounds
Reservations		Responsible for coordinating future events/reservations with vendors							
Programming		Oversee all programming activities in the park. Communicate with third-party events							
Volunteer Coordination									
Communications/ Marketing	Serves as lead for all Communications related to all programming, events, volunteer efforts, etc. (upon completion)			Serves as lead for all Communications related to the capital campaign					Provides public outreach related to the library programs
Advocacy	Oversees the advocacy efforts for the project (upon completion)								



# Operations & Maintenance

## Maintenance Considerations

The first critical step for understanding the implication of the proposed design on future maintenance needs was to define the landscape types proposed in the design. Each landscape type will have its own level of use, maintenance needs, and skills required to carry out those tasks.

By using precedent projects with similar landscape types, climates and level of use, we used the estimated annual maintenance hours that were developed for these landscape types and adjusted to make them suitable to Salt Lake City’s climate. These precedent projects include: Pioneer Park (Salt Lake City, UT), Michigan Central (Detroit, MI), and Moakley Park (Boston, MA).

For this phase of the work, we will provide a set of assumptions to support an understanding of the project’s maintenance needs. These assumptions are intended to guide discussions and serve as general guidelines.

To arrive at the estimated annual budget, the annual hours were multiplied by hourly rates for staff. Also included are allowances for other annual maintenance expenses such as materials and supplies, equipment and vehicle maintenance, plant replacement, and utilities.

## Maintenance Principals

The goal of maintenance is to provide a high quality of service to ensure that the site is clean, attractive, and usable for visitors, while also maintaining any special function or features of the site. To achieve the highest levels of service for maintenance, a number of principles should guide maintenance work: classifying maintenance standards (the levels of service); having an effective management and maintenance process; and ensuring that those performing maintenance and repair have the needed skills and equipment to complete the work.

Although many organizations structure their operations around a fiscal or calendar year divided into four quarters, this approach is not always well-suited for maintenance work. Maintenance planning is more effectively organized by season, as many key drivers of maintenance are directly influenced by seasonal conditions. These include levels of use, growing conditions and plant maintenance, and snow removal needs.

Maintenance work should be performed when most appropriate. For example, low impact maintenance tasks, such as litter removal, may take place throughout the day. When possible, disruptive maintenance tasks, such as power washing or major repair, should be performed during early morning or off-hours when there are fewer visitors. Similarly, maintenance work that will affect the use of or limit access to site features, such as lawn renovation or pavement replacement, should be announced prior to scheduled work whenever possible. Notification may be done through postings on bulletin boards, social media, or temporary signage.



# Operations & Maintenance

## Standards of Care

The standards of care for maintenance of any public space directly affect maintenance budgets and influence perceptions of safety and use. For example, a maintenance plan in which all tasks are carried out at or above recommended best maintenance practices may create a pristine landscape, but may ultimately prove to be financially unsustainable. Alternatively, a maintenance plan in which tasks and repairs are carried out at minimal levels may reduce annual budgets but will likely result in high capital costs required for replacement or repairs that could have been prevented with regular care. Low standards of care can also create the perception of an unsafe environment for users.

Intensity of use and standards of care are intimately linked. In general, the greater number of visitors a site receives, the greater the maintenance load. Similarly, areas with intensive use and higher concentrations of visitors, such as the lawn area that is used for special events, typically require more maintenance and higher standards than the same landscape type along the sidewalk. Directly related to this is the fact that the level of maintenance impacts use: a well-maintained public space attracts visitors, whereas a poorly maintained site discourages positive visitorship and often invites misuse and vandalism. The latter scenario would also require significant maintenance to mitigate and repair the damage brought on by vandalism. From a management perspective, it is more desirable to provide a high level of maintenance as a result of positive uses rather than anti-social activities.

Given this relationship between maintenance and use, it is important to develop a maintenance plan that balances fiscal considerations with maintenance needs in order to provide a sustainable, high-quality visitor experience. The standards of care used in the maintenance estimates in this memo take these factors, the climate, seasonal events, and anticipated usage of the site into consideration.



# Operations & Maintenance - Maintenance Assumptions

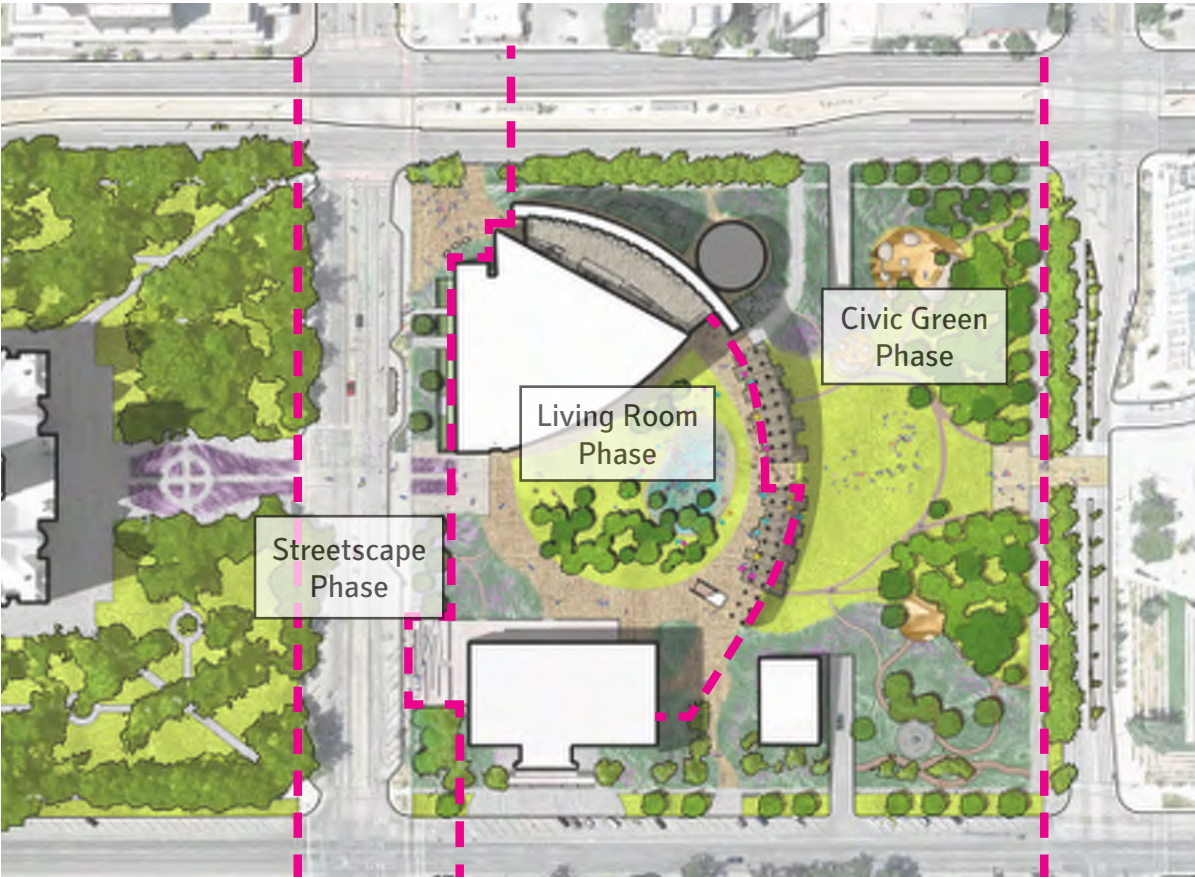
The maintenance estimates are based on the following assumptions:

- Overall, hardscape maintenance will be straightforward, requiring regular litter removal and cleaning. As a best practice it is recommended that all power washing should be performed without chemicals (to protect water quality) and with a fan-tipped nozzle (to avoid overexposing aggregates and joints). Always test water pressure prior to power washing. Graffiti and gum should be removed as needed, ideally within 24 hours of detection. Hardscape repairs may not be needed every year but should be addressed as soon as the need arises. Repair measures may also be needed for landscape areas impacted by maintenance work.
  - Pavers can be installed on a wet-setting bed or dry (sand) setting bed. While the dry-setting bed would allow stormwater infiltration, the pavers may require more frequent repair and resetting as the setting material may settle or wash off during a storm event.
- Key maintenance tasks for plantings will be weeding, managing the growth of plants, fertilizing, and irrigation (where installed). Work should be done on a regular schedule that adjusts for changes in weather and seasonality/growing season, and that is appropriate for the selected plant species. Dead or dying plants should be removed and replaced promptly. Depending on the reason for plant death, the plant may be replaced one for one with the same species or replaced with a similar species that may be better suited to the area's micro-climate. Consistent monitoring is crucial in ensuring the establishment and health of the planting communities on site.
  - Prune overgrown plant material to ensure access and visibility are not obscured. Trees and large shrubs along the pathways should be maintained to prevent overcrowding.
  - Existing trees, especially those impacted by the construction should be inspected at least once annually to ensure they are healthy and not showing signs of distress. Specimen trees should be inspected on a quarterly basis, if not monthly. Mature trees do not show signs of distress until months or years after they begin declining. Routine inspections would allow proper planning and mitigation.
  - There may be some green infrastructure planting areas along the streetscape as the design is further developed. Currently, none has been accounted for in the estimates.
- All irrigation and water features will be winterized in fall before the first frost, and turned back on in the spring when conditions are deemed safe for operations. The irrigation system should be monitored regularly to ensure adequate coverage and functionality and inspected for damage. Repair and/or replace damaged above-grade components and broken equipment immediately.
- At this phase of the design, typical park site furnishing such as waste receptacles, drinking fountains, lighting, benches, bike racks, etc. is accounted for as an allowance (10-15% of total maintenance hours). No permanent exterior restrooms are currently accounted for in this project.
  - Some on-site furnishing maintenance such as the library book return and ballot boxes are not accounted for in the estimates.
- Hourly rates average at \$25-28/hour. These rates are based on a range of staff utilized for the O&M estimates at Pioneer Park in 2025.
- The estimated annual maintenance budget does not include overtime costs.
- It is assumed that the other than personnel costs (fringe benefits) rate ranges from 35%-40%.
- The estimated maintenance needs do not account for post-event maintenance, or damage as a result of excessive use from permitted uses (such as large events and festivals).
  - Some time is allowed for pre-event set up and post-event cleanup for smaller activities and programs.
  - It is assumed that large special events produced by an outside vendor, it will be their responsibility to restore the landscapes.
- Hour and costs relating to programming, administration, or security were not included. Hours and costs related to capital repairs and replacements were not included.



# Operations & Maintenance - Maintenance Assumptions

Phasing Diagram



It is estimated that 4,782 to 9,914 personnel hours are necessary to maintain the fully completed future project. The annual maintenance would likely fall somewhere in the middle, or around 7,348 hours.

Estimated Future Maintenance	Lower	Upper
Streetscape phase	1,403 hours	2,706 hours
Living Room Phase	989 hours	2,066 hours
Civic Green Phase	2,159 hours	4,614 hours
SLC Downtown Library	31 hours	63 hours
Future Tenant	125 hours	265 hours
Others	75 hours	200 hours
Totals	4,782 hours	9,914 hours

Future maintenance costs are estimated below. The lower range assumes \$25/hour with a fringe benefit rate of 35%. The upper range assumes \$28/hour with a fringe benefit rate of 40%. The upper range assumes more work done by staff with specialized skills (arborist, irrigation specialist, trades and repairs). Rates are based on O&M estimates done for Pioneer Park. Rates are in 2025 dollars. Maintenance expenses will range between 25-35% of personnel costs. These expenses include materials such as plants, mulch, and trash bags, as well as tools, use of equipment, and other related items.

Budgets by Area	Personnel Costs		Maintenance Costs	
	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
Streetscape phase	\$47,353	\$94,697	\$11,838	\$33,144
Living Room Phase	\$33,390	\$72,304	\$8,348	\$25,306
Civic Green Phase	\$72,860	\$161,492	\$18,215	\$56,522
SLC Downtown Library	\$1,031	\$2,218	\$258	\$776
Future Tenant	\$4,210	\$9,282	\$1,053	\$3,249
Others	\$2,531	\$7,000	\$633	\$2,450
Totals	\$161,377	\$346,992	\$40,344	\$121,447

Total Budget by Area	Personnel + Maintenance	
	Lower	Upper
Streetscape phase	\$59,192	\$127,841
Living Room Phase	\$41,738	\$97,611
Civic Green Phase	\$91,076	\$218,015
SLC Downtown Library	\$1,289	\$2,994
Future Tenant	\$5,263	\$12,530
Others	\$3,164	\$9,450
Totals	\$201,721	\$468,440



# Operations & Maintenance - Staffing Considerations

Based on the proposed landscape types and the maintenance associated with them, the following is a list of staff or related skills are necessary to maintain the features within the project area. Whether these tasks are done in-house or contracted is to be determined by each individual agency.

Recommended staff include:

## General

- Grounds maintenance staff (provides services such as groundskeeping and cleaning)
- Skilled laborer (provide services such as pavement repair)

## Landscapes

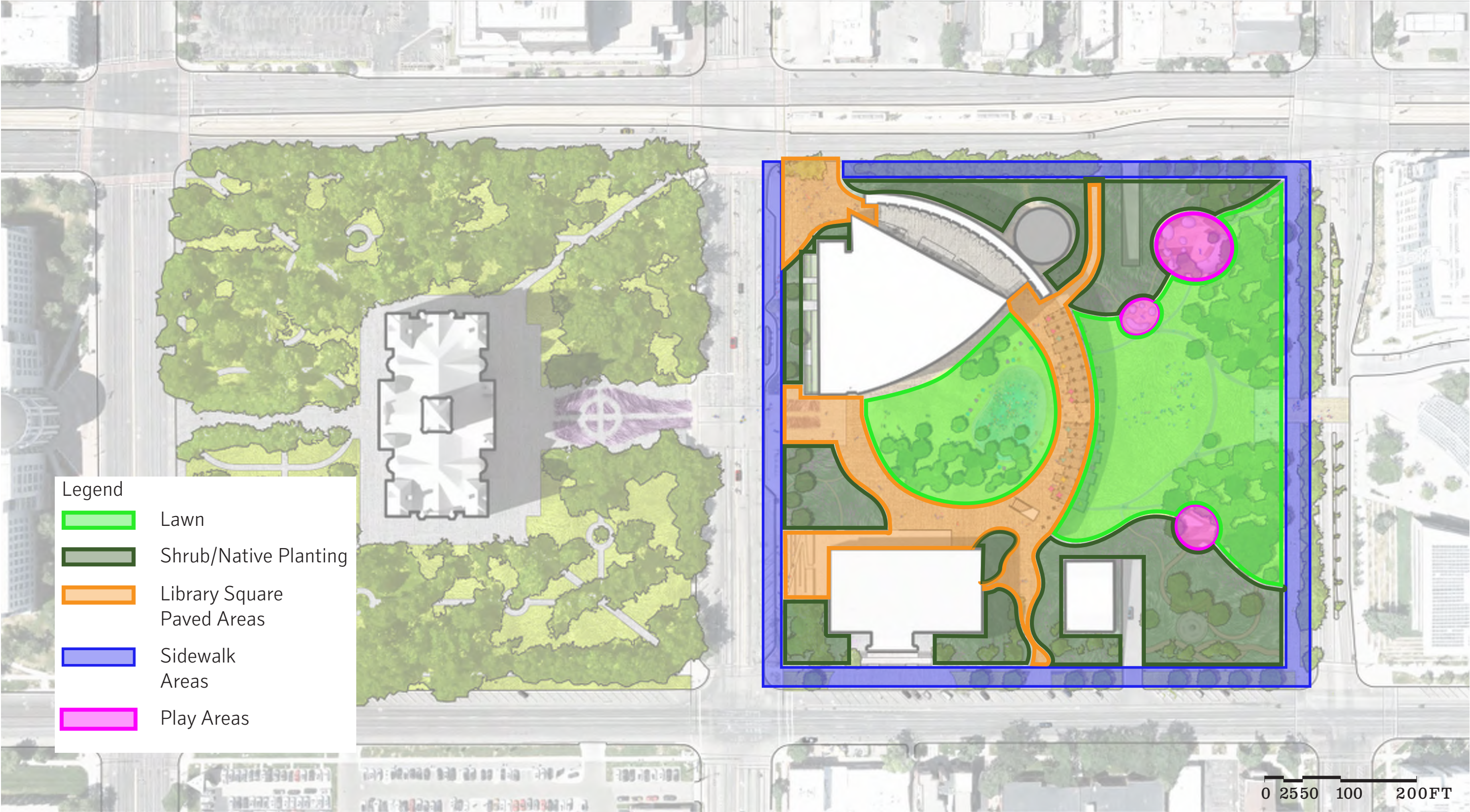
- Landscape maintenance staff
- Horticultural maintenance staff
- Arborist

## Specialized

- Trades
- Heavy equipment operator
- Electrician
- Plumber (irrigation specialist, water feature specialist)
- Carpenter/Handyman



# Operations & Maintenance: Landscape Type Diagram





# Operations & Maintenance: Estimated Maintenance Hours by Landscape Type

Project Concept Design				Phase 1			Phase 2			Phase 3		
	Unit	Hours/ Unit (Lower)	Hours/ Unit (Upper)	Ph 1 QTY	Total Hours (Lower)	Total Hours (Upper)	Ph 2 QTY	Total Hours (Lower)	Total Hours (Upper)	Ph 3 QTY	Total Hours (Lower)	Total Hours (Upper)
Sidewalk Paved Areas (200 East, 300 East, and 400 South)					672	1,007		9	9		64	96
Sidewalk	Acre	200	300	2.5	508	762	0	0	0	0.2	50	75
Pavers	Acre	300	450	0.5	153	245				0.05	14	22
Roadway	Acre	300	450									
Parking	Acre	300	450									
Library Square Paved Areas					0	0		337	489		523	752
Concrete	Acre	350	500				0.7	241	344	1.3	462	660
Pavers	Acre	300	450				0.3	96	145	0.20	61	91
Library Square Landscapes and Amenities					604	1,385		562	1,307		1,175	3,164
Lawns												
Lawns	Acre	100	350	0.9	89	331	0.7	73	257	2.7	272	952
Shrub planting												
Shrub planting	Acre	150	550	0.5	71	260	0.2	25	92	1.1	163	596
Trees												
Trees	Each	3	5	80	240	400	36	108	180	80	240	400
Irrigation												
Irrigation	Acre	150	275	1.4	204	374	0.9	135	248	3.8	571	1,046
Scrim Water Feature												
Scrim Water Feature	Each	100	250				1	100	250			
Play Area												
Play Area	Each	65	85						0	2	130	170
Shade Canopy												
Shade Canopy	Each	15	35				8	120	280			
Site Furnishing and Others					128	353		90	269		186	602
Site Furnishing					128	353		90	269		186	602
Site-Wide												
Program Support/Impact												
Program Support/Impact	Allowance											
Post-Event Support												
Post-Event Support	Allowance											
Total Estimated Hours per Phase					1,401	2,796		989	2,666		2,159	4,814
Total Full Build Out Estimates												

Project Concept Design				Library Entrance			Leonardo Porch			Others		Notes
	Unit	Hours/ Unit (Lower)	Hours/ Unit (Upper)	Lib QTY	Total Hours (Lower)	Total Hours (Upper)	Leo QTY	Total Hours (Lower)	Total Hours (Upper)	Total Hours (Lower)	Total Hours (Upper)	
Sidewalk Paved Areas (200 East, 300 East, and 400 South)					0	0		0	0			CIP Concrete Needs depends on dry laid vs wet laid To be determined To be determined
Sidewalk	Acre	200	300									
Pavers	Acre	300	450									
Roadway	Acre	300	450									
Parking	Acre	300	450									
Library Square Paved Areas					21	30		83	118			CIP Concrete Place space or gathering space
Concrete	Acre	350	500	0.06	21	30	0.2	83	118			
Pavers	Acre	300	450									
Library Square Landscapes and Amenities					7	25		31	112			Lawn areas that are used for programming, gathering, events, and activities will require a higher level of maintenance (such as renovation, fertilizer application, etc.) due to compaction and overall use impact. Lawn areas along the sidewalk that are typically only mowed every 10-14 days (or less frequently) will require less maintenance.  Planting area with seasonal interest will require more maintenance, the maintenance needs depended on the selected species, preferred aesthetics, and number of plants.  Newly planted small trees typically require less maintenance. Transplanted matured trees would require more maintenance. Existing matured trees that have been impacted during construction will require frequent inspection and monitoring.  There would be some reduction in irrigation maintenance needs when all the systems are installed. Each unit is approximately 2,000 SF. Material choices and complexity of the play pieces would impact the overall maintenance needs. Each unit is assumed to be approximately 2,000 SF.
Lawns												
Lawns	Acre	100	350									
Shrub planting					0.06	7	0.2	31	112			
Shrub planting	Acre	150	550									
Trees												Includes bike racks, trash receptacles, drinking fountains, light, signage, seating, walls, planters, fences, etc. Allows 10-15% of total maintenance needs.
Trees	Each	3	5									
Irrigation												
Irrigation	Acre	150	275									
Scrim Water Feature												Support needs depended on the frequency of events and programs. Assumes 5 hours per event from a range of 15-40 events. Very large festivals are not included in this allowance.
Scrim Water Feature	Each	100	250									
Play Area												
Play Area	Each	65	85									Support needs depended on the frequency of events and programs. Assumes 12 hours per event from a range of 15-40 events. Very large festivals are not included in this allowance.
Shade Canopy												
Shade Canopy	Each	15	35									
Site Furnishing and Others					3	8		11	35			Support needs depended on the frequency of events and programs. Assumes 5 hours per event from a range of 15-40 events. Very large festivals are not included in this allowance.
Site Furnishing					3	8		11	35			
Site-Wide										75	200	
Program Support/Impact										75	200	Support needs depended on the frequency of events and programs. Assumes 12 hours per event from a range of 15-40 events. Very large festivals are not included in this allowance.
Program Support/Impact	Allowance											
Post-Event Support										180	480	Support needs depended on the frequency of events and programs. Assumes 12 hours per event from a range of 15-40 events. Very large festivals are not included in this allowance.
Post-Event Support	Allowance											
Total Estimated Hours per Phase					31	63		115	265	75	200	Total Full Build Out Estimates
Total Full Build Out Estimates										4,782	9,914	



# Cost Estimate



# Cost Estimate

Base Total Cost estimate \$52,064,000

Additional Design Enhancements

- SLC Main Library Entry +/- \$500,000
- Future Tenant Porch +/- \$ 1,800,000

Total Conceptual Cost Estimate including above Design Enhancements  
\$54,368,000

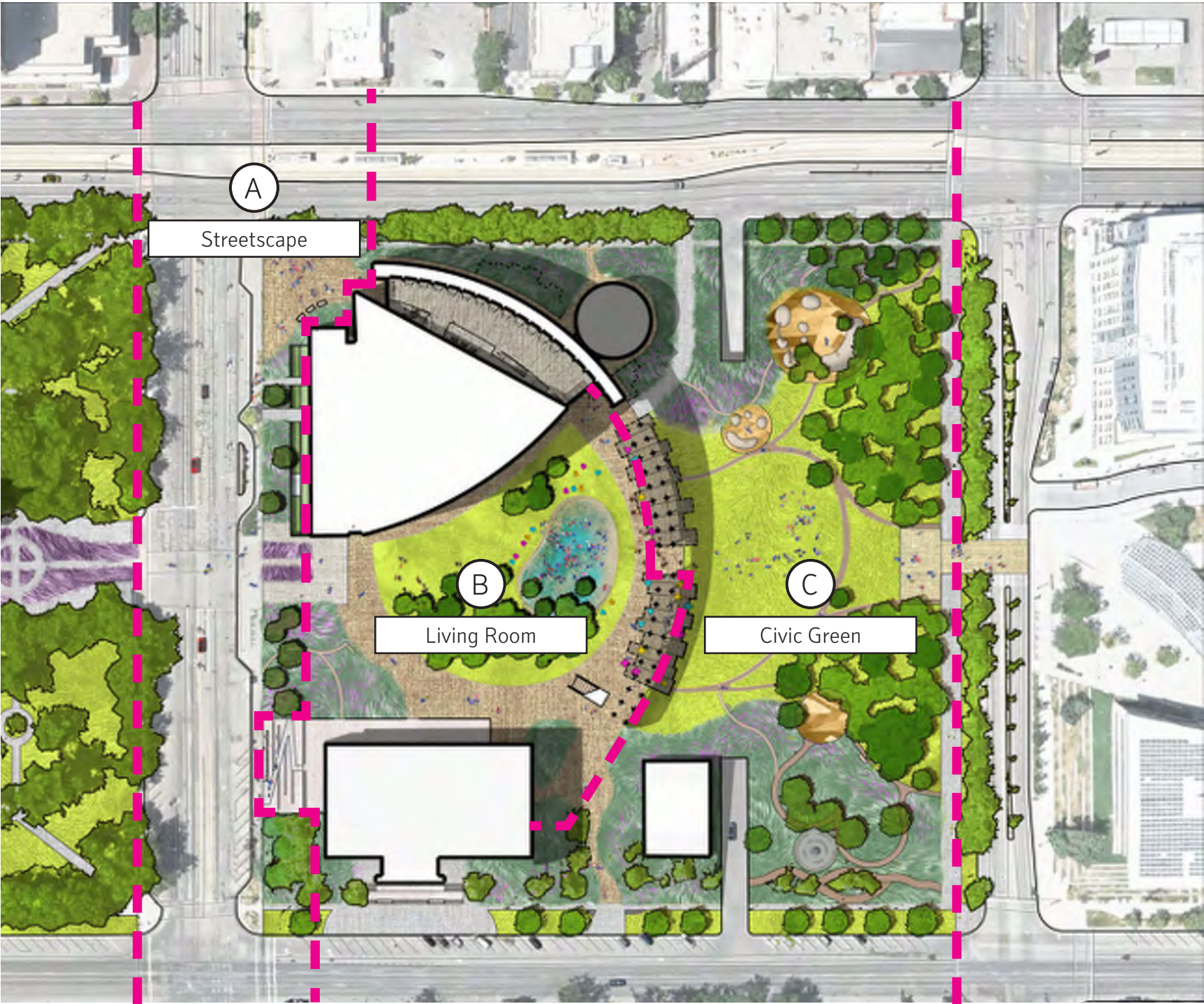
Phasing Costs - Base Options with Enhancements

- Streetscape: \$13,140,000
- Living Room: \$14,324,000
- Civic Green: \$26,904,000

Phasing Costs - Base Options without Enhancements

- Streetscape: \$12,640,000
- Living Room: \$12,524,000
- Civic Green: \$26,900,000

*All pricing as listed above will require an additional 25% to 30% to cover City Soft Costs.*





# Acknowledgments, Resources, and Credits



# Acknowledgments

## Vision Plan Working Group

Blake Thomas, Senior Advisor to the Mayor's Office - Real Estate and Capital Projects  
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Lisa Demmons, Fire Captain, Fire Department  
Steve Wooldridge, Police Lieutenant, Police Department



# Acknowledgments

## Stakeholder Engagement

Utah Art Festival Stakeholders  
SLC Arts Council  
SLC Library and SLC Library Board  
SLC Public Lands  
Utah PRIDE Festival Stakeholders  
Twilight Concert Series Stakeholders  
Living Traditions Presents Stakeholders  
Donor Connect for Memorial Garden Stakeholders  
SLC City Planners  
Library Square Operations + Maintenance Teams  
SLC City Traffic Stakeholders  
SLC Downtown Community Council and Central City Community Council meetings, a subset of District 4

## Design Consultant Team

GGN / Prime Consultant / Landscape Architecture & Planning  
Alta Planning + Design / Multimodal Transportation  
DCW Cost Management / Cost Estimating  
David Evans Associates / Community Engagement  
ETM Associates / Operations & Maintenance  
SGH / Structural Engineering & Architectural Waterproofing  
Talisman Civil Consultants / Civil Engineering

## Resources

*The following studies are referenced in this Vision Study:*

Library Square Structural and Waterproofing Analysis, December 2025 (SGH)  
Library Square Geotechnical Report, January 2026  
Library Square Memo of Prior Studies Summary, September 2025 (GGN)  
(The Library Square Memo summarizes the following existing plans and reports):

*2002 Library Block Plan*  
*2005 Central Community Plan & 2012 TOD Amendment (400 South Livable Communities Project)*  
*2007 Downtown Rising Plan*  
*2015 Plan Salt Lake*  
*2016 Downtown Plan*  
*2017 ULI Technical Assistance Panel Report*  
*2017 Salt Lake City Transit Masterplan*  
*2019 Public Lands Needs Assessment*  
*2022 Re-imagine Nature*  
*2023 Connect SLC Citywide Transportation Plan*  
*2023 Urban Forest Action Plan*  
*2025 500 & 600 South Grand Boulevards Vision Plan*  
*2025 Salt Lake City Green Loop 200 East Design Report*  
*Available event plan layouts for SLC festivals since 2000*