

ELMA LEWIS

AMPHITHEATRE



JULY 2013

CONCEPTUAL DESIGN PACKAGE

MARCIANO/MATTHEW/MUNROE

in association with **JAMARHL CRAWFORD**

ELMA LEWIS

AMPHITHEATRE

OBJECTIVE

Revitalize the Franklin Park Bear Dens into a primary Point of Interest within the 485 acres of Boston's Franklin Park.

Pay homage to the original design of Arthur Shurtlecliff while upgrading the 1.5-acre zone into an area for recreation and public performance.



RESTORE THE 1.5 ACRE GROUNDS OF ARTHUR SHURTLECLIFF'S 'BEAR DENS'

CREATION OF THE ELMA LEWIS TRAIL . . . PROVIDE SIGNAGE ALONG SEAVER

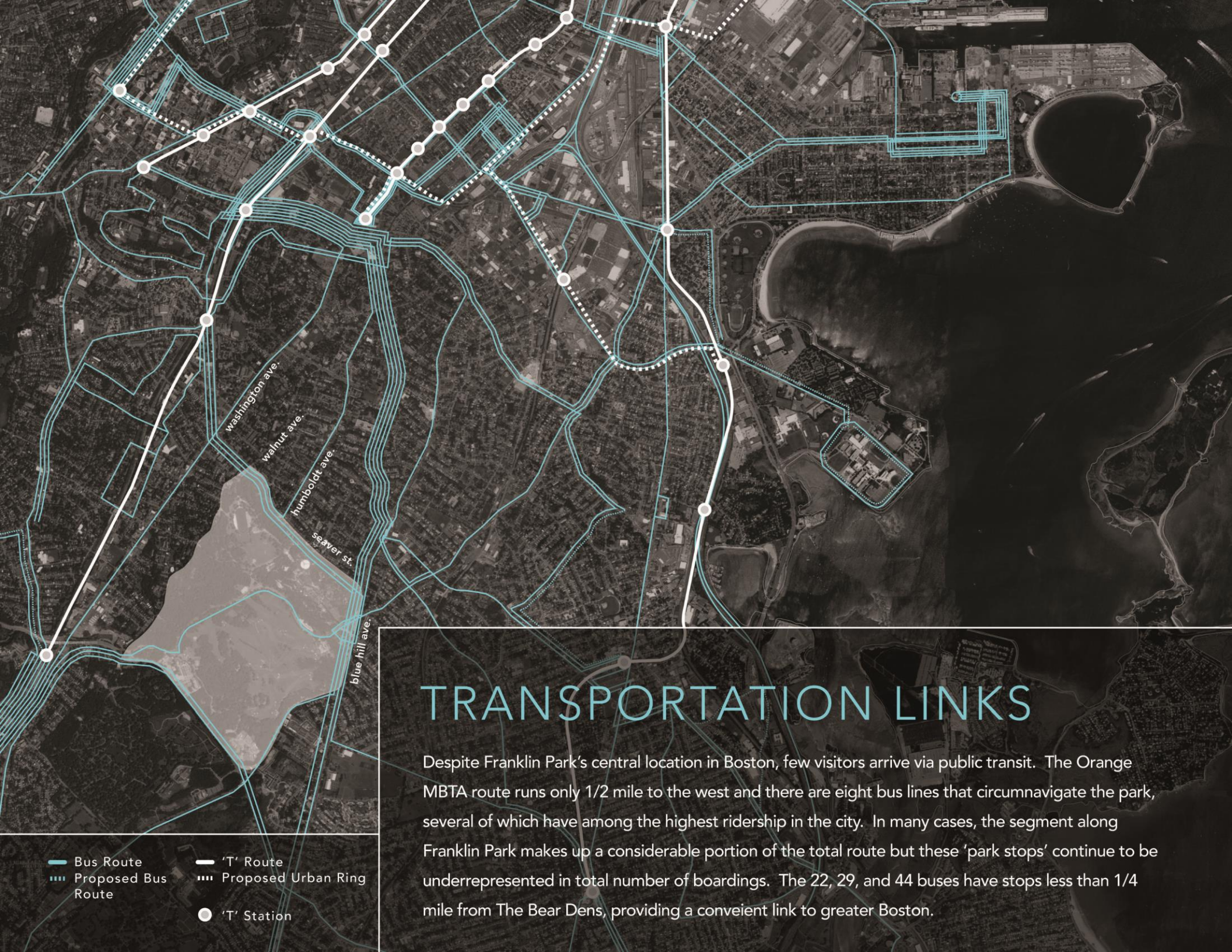
+ WALNUT . . . CREATION OF AN AREA FOR PUBLIC ART INSTALLATIONS . . .

CREATION OF AN OUTDOOR PERFORMANCE VENUE FOR UP TO 300 PEOPLE

CREATION OF AN AREA FOR PUBLIC RECREATION, INCLUDING A SKATEPARK



FRANKLIN PARK STUDY



TRANSPORTATION LINKS

Despite Franklin Park's central location in Boston, few visitors arrive via public transit. The Orange MBTA route runs only 1/2 mile to the west and there are eight bus lines that circumnavigate the park, several of which have among the highest ridership in the city. In many cases, the segment along Franklin Park makes up a considerable portion of the total route but these 'park stops' continue to be underrepresented in total number of boardings. The 22, 29, and 44 buses have stops less than 1/4 mile from The Bear Dens, providing a convenient link to greater Boston.

- Bus Route
- - - Proposed Bus Route
- 'T' Route
- Proposed Urban Ring Route
- 'T' Station



44

22

29

1/4 mi.

seaver st.

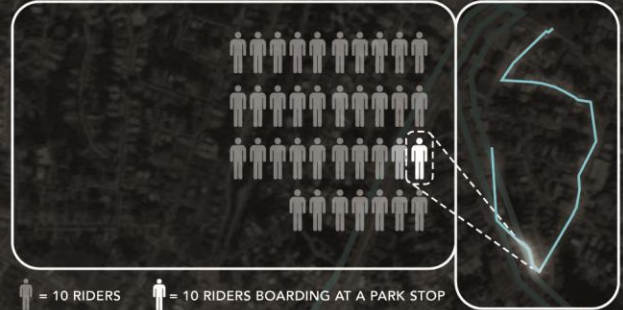
washington ave.

humboldt ave.

blue hill ave.

44

JACKSON > RUGGLES



10%

% of bus stops along Franklin Park

28 STOPS

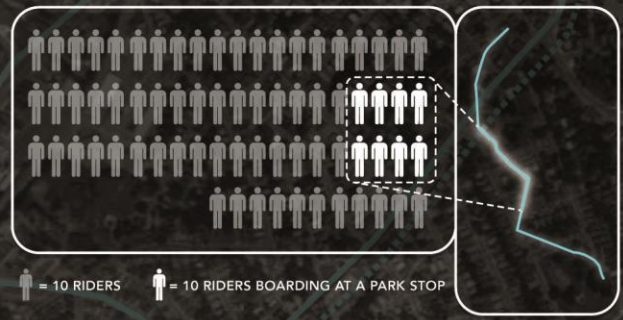
3%

% of ridership boarding at stops along Franklin Park

3700 WEEKDAY RIDERS

22

ASHMONT > RUGGLES



27%

% of bus stops along Franklin Park

34 STOPS

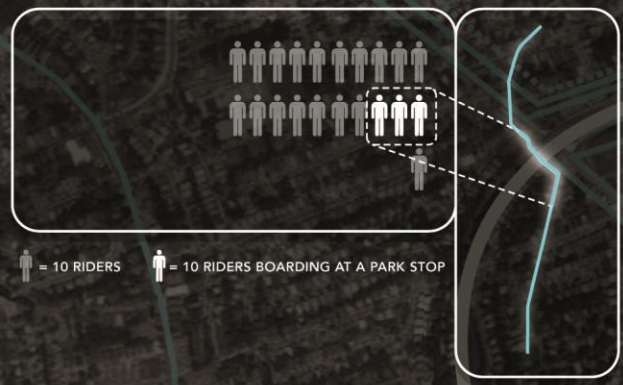
11%

% of ridership boarding at stops along Franklin Park

7100 WEEKDAY RIDERS

29

MATTAPAN > JACKSON



24%

% of bus stops along Franklin Park

37 STOPS

16%

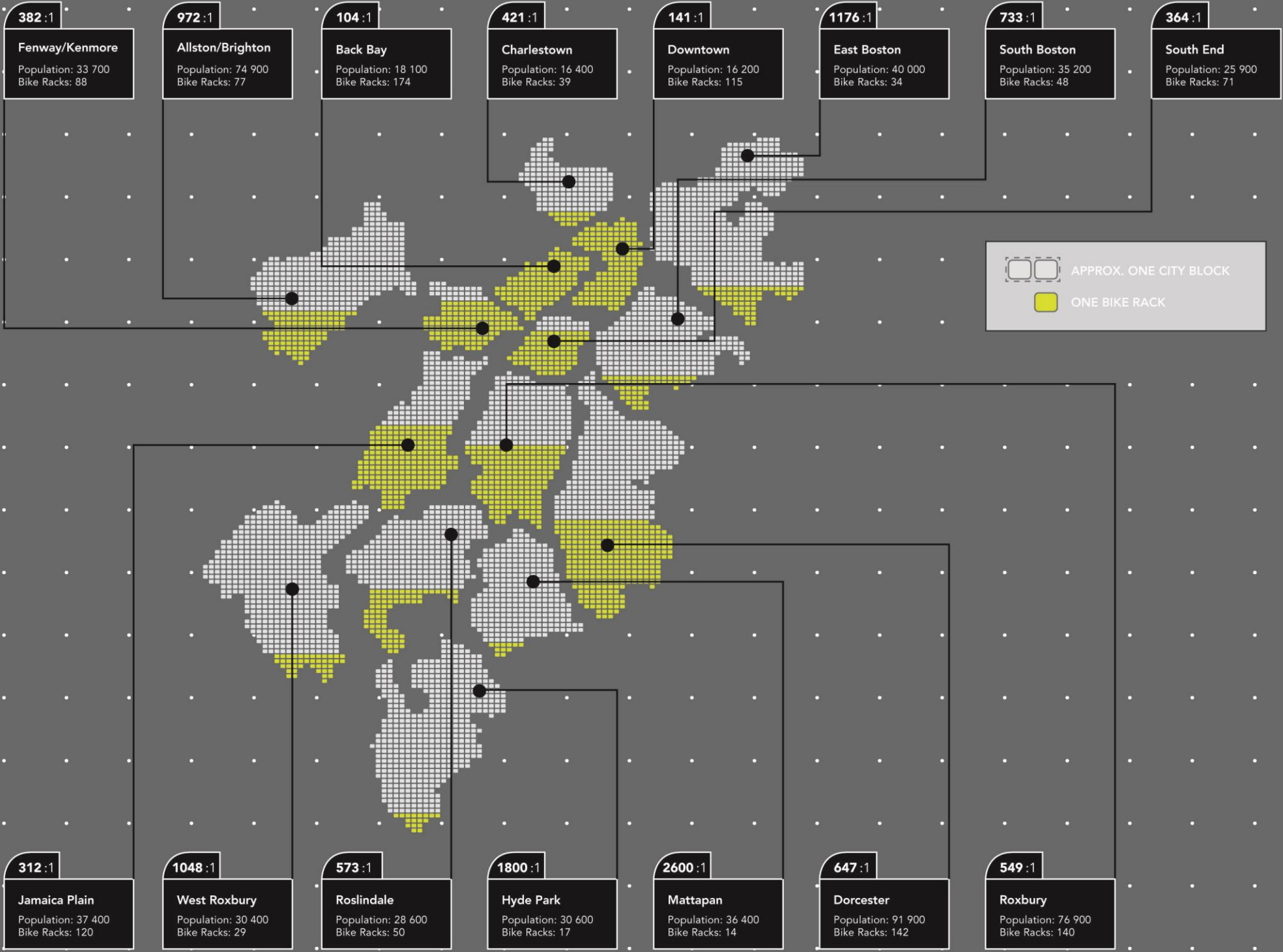
% of ridership boarding at stops along Franklin Park

2100 WEEKDAY RIDERS



BOSTON BIKES

Boston Bikes is a city-wide initiative that encourages citizens and visitors to use bicycles for fun, exercise, and transportation. Since its launch in 2007, 60 miles of new bike lanes have been installed and ridership in the city has nearly doubled. Much of the credit for this success can be attributed to the introduction of the Hubway, a bike-sharing program available to both visitors and residents.



382:1
Fenway/Kenmore
 Population: 33 700
 Bike Racks: 88

972:1
Allston/Brighton
 Population: 74 900
 Bike Racks: 77

104:1
Back Bay
 Population: 18 100
 Bike Racks: 174



421:1
Charlestown
 Population: 16 400
 Bike Racks: 39

141:1
Downtown
 Population: 16 200
 Bike Racks: 115

1176:1
East Boston
 Population: 40 000
 Bike Racks: 34

733:1
South Boston
 Population: 35 200
 Bike Racks: 48

364:1
South End
 Population: 25 900
 Bike Racks: 71

 APPROX. ONE CITY BLOCK
 ONE BIKE RACK

312:1
Jamaica Plain
 Population: 37 400
 Bike Racks: 120

1048:1
West Roxbury
 Population: 30 400
 Bike Racks: 29

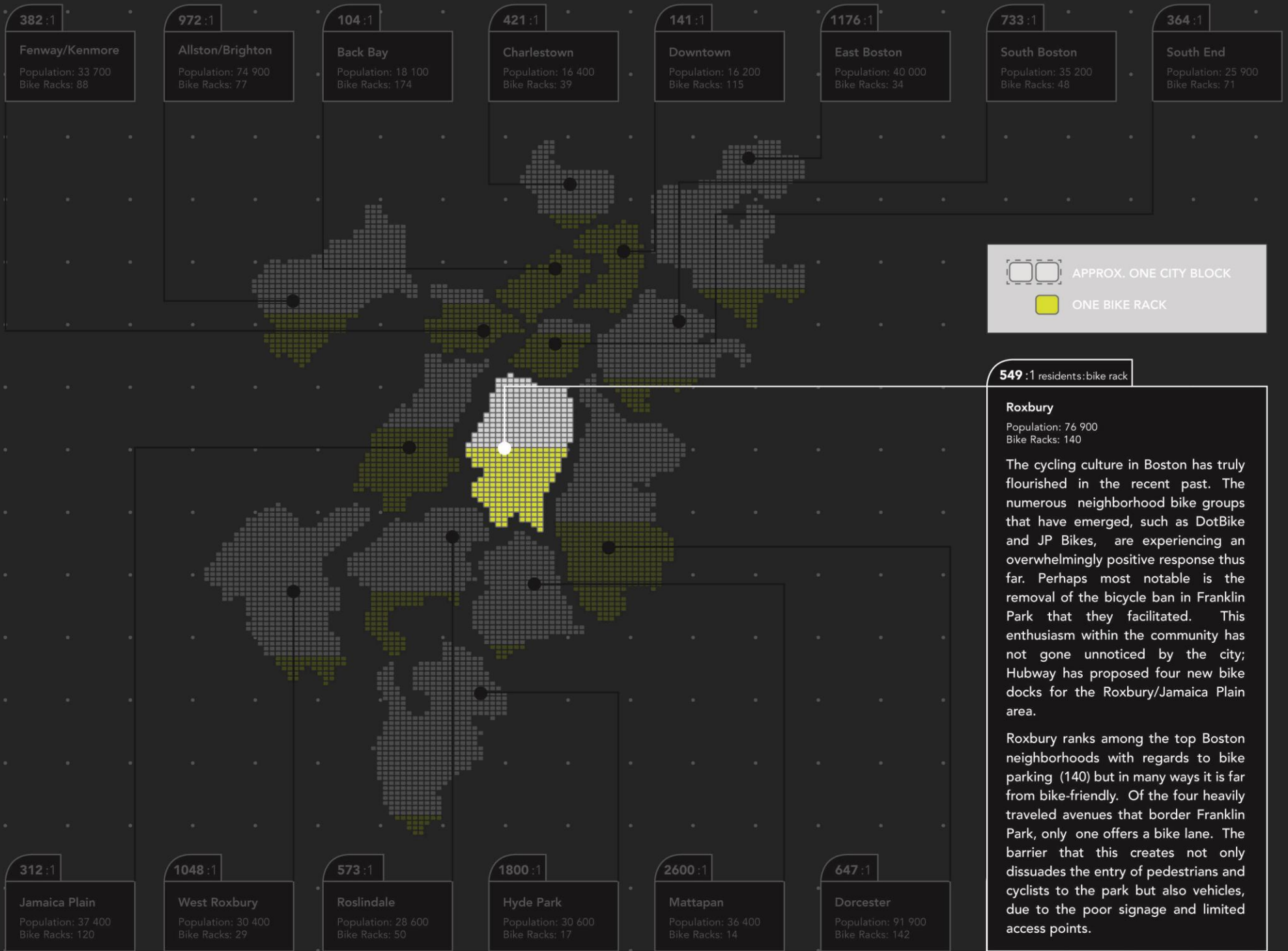
573:1
Rosindale
 Population: 28 600
 Bike Racks: 50

1800:1
Hyde Park
 Population: 30 600
 Bike Racks: 17

2600:1
Mattapan
 Population: 36 400
 Bike Racks: 14

647:1
Dorchester
 Population: 91 900
 Bike Racks: 142

549:1
Roxbury
 Population: 76 900
 Bike Racks: 140



 APPROX. ONE CITY BLOCK
 ONE BIKE RACK

549:1 residents:bike rack

Roxbury
 Population: 76 900
 Bike Racks: 140

The cycling culture in Boston has truly flourished in the recent past. The numerous neighborhood bike groups that have emerged, such as DotBike and JP Bikes, are experiencing an overwhelmingly positive response thus far. Perhaps most notable is the removal of the bicycle ban in Franklin Park that they facilitated. This enthusiasm within the community has not gone unnoticed by the city; Hubway has proposed four new bike docks for the Roxbury/Jamaica Plain area.

Roxbury ranks among the top Boston neighborhoods with regards to bike parking (140) but in many ways it is far from bike-friendly. Of the four heavily traveled avenues that border Franklin Park, only one offers a bike lane. The barrier that this creates not only dissuades the entry of pedestrians and cyclists to the park but also vehicles, due to the poor signage and limited access points.

NEARBY POINTS OF INTEREST

What is necessary is a reconfiguration of the Bear Dens in order to host civic events such as Elma Lewis Playhouse in the Park, and to provide both young and old a place to call their own within the community. So who is the end-user that benefits to gain from a redevelopment of The Bear Dens? **Numerous Points of Interest, both within and around Franklin Park, already attract a significant crowds each day and have the potential to direct foot traffic towards The Bear Dens. Notable Points of Interest include:**



WHITE STADIUM

1

Just 450 feet southwest of The Bear Dens lies White Stadium, a 10,000 seat athletic facility. It is currently used by the Boston Public Schools during the football season. The facility is specced for a \$45M redevelopment with fundraising led by John Fish.



FRANKLIN PARK PLAYSTEAD

2

Located a short distance from White Stadium is the Franklin Park Playstead. This is an area, which can be reserved by families or groups who are looking to have a large outdoor gathering. People can be seen barbecuing there all throughout the summer.



TIFFANY MOORE TOT LOT

3

Dedicated in remembrance of the 1988 murder of Darlene Tiffany Moore, the playground opened on July 30th, 2011. It not only offers a safe and protected play area for children but also demonstrating the positive impact that can result from investment in community.



FRANKLIN PARK ZOO

4

Occupying a total of 72 acres of Franklin Park's 485 acres, the zoo is arguably the primary attraction in the area. It consistently draws over 300 000 visitors annually. The Bear Dens have a historical link to the Franklin Park Zoo and its revitalization could potentially benefit both attractions.



ELLIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

5

The 394 students who attend the nearby elementary school represent a prime user group for The Bear Den redevelopment. Located just four blocks down Walnut Avenue, it could serve as a historically significant educational activity for the before and after-school programs already in place.



NATIONAL CENTER OF AFRO-AMERICAN ARTISTS (NCAAA)

6

Founded in 1968 by Elma Lewis, the NCAAA is committed to preserving and fostering the cultural arts and heritage of African Americans. In honor of the late Elma Lewis, The Bear Dens are to be renamed: The Elma Lewis Amphitheatre.



5 | 6

1

2

3

4

washington ave.

seaver st.

1/4 mi.

1/2 mi.

3/4 mi.

1 mi.

1 1/4 mi.

1 1/2 mi.

1 3/4 mi.

2 mi.

humboldt ave.

blue hill ave.

POINTS OF INTEREST

- 1 White Stadium
- 2 Franklin Park Playstead
- 3 Tiffany Moore Tot Lot
- 4 Franklin Park Zoo
- 5 Ellis Elementary School
- 6 NCAA



THE BEAR DENS

LONG CROUCH WOODS

At the northernmost edge of Boston's Franklin Park is a 23-acre area known as the Long Crouch Woods. Flanked by Walnut Avenue and Seaver Street, it represents a key asset to the neighborhoods of Roxbury & Dorchester as well as the larger municipal area as a whole. Approximately 1.5 acres of these woods are composed of what was once The Bear Dens; originally a part of the Franklin Park Zoo. Currently underutilized, but remarkably beautiful, the Dens were designed by Arthur Shurtleff in 1912. Their potential is undeniable and even with no amenities provided, joggers and passersby are, now, able to appreciate what is essentially a 20th century ruin.

What is necessary is a reconfiguration of the Bear Dens to ensure the safety of user groups and to create a new attractor within Franklin Park. Areas of concern include:



THE UN-NAMED PATH

1

One principal access is an un-named dirt path, located roughly 250 feet to the east of Playstead Road; originally, this was the processional path leading to the Bear Dens, but it has since fallen into a state of disrepair.



LACK OF SIGNAGE

2

Image 2 depicts a path leading from Playstead Road to The Bear Dens. It is at intersections such as this that signage will need to be implemented in order to provide awareness of this new point of interest. The Playstead is a primary location for cookouts, especially during the warmer months; Clear signage will help to direct secondary user groups.



STONWORK REPAIR

3

Safety of occupants is a primary factor of this proposed reconfiguration of Franklin Park's Bear Dens. The stonework is truly unique and aesthetically pleasing, but in certain areas stone is crumbling and falling apart. The re-pointing of certain areas of stone will be necessary to ensure the safety of end-users.



RUST AND CORROSION

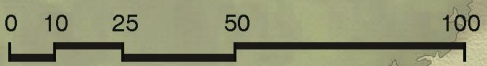
4

Image 4 depicts another safety concern of The Bear Dens. The corrosion of the metal that once formed the bars of the dens is not only a visual blight but also presents a falling and medical danger. The primary medical concern revolves around the potential for transmission of tetanus. The metal must be removed in order to advert these concerns.

SITE PLAN
EXISTING



SEAVER STREET



4

DEN 3

DEN 2

DEN 1

3

2

1

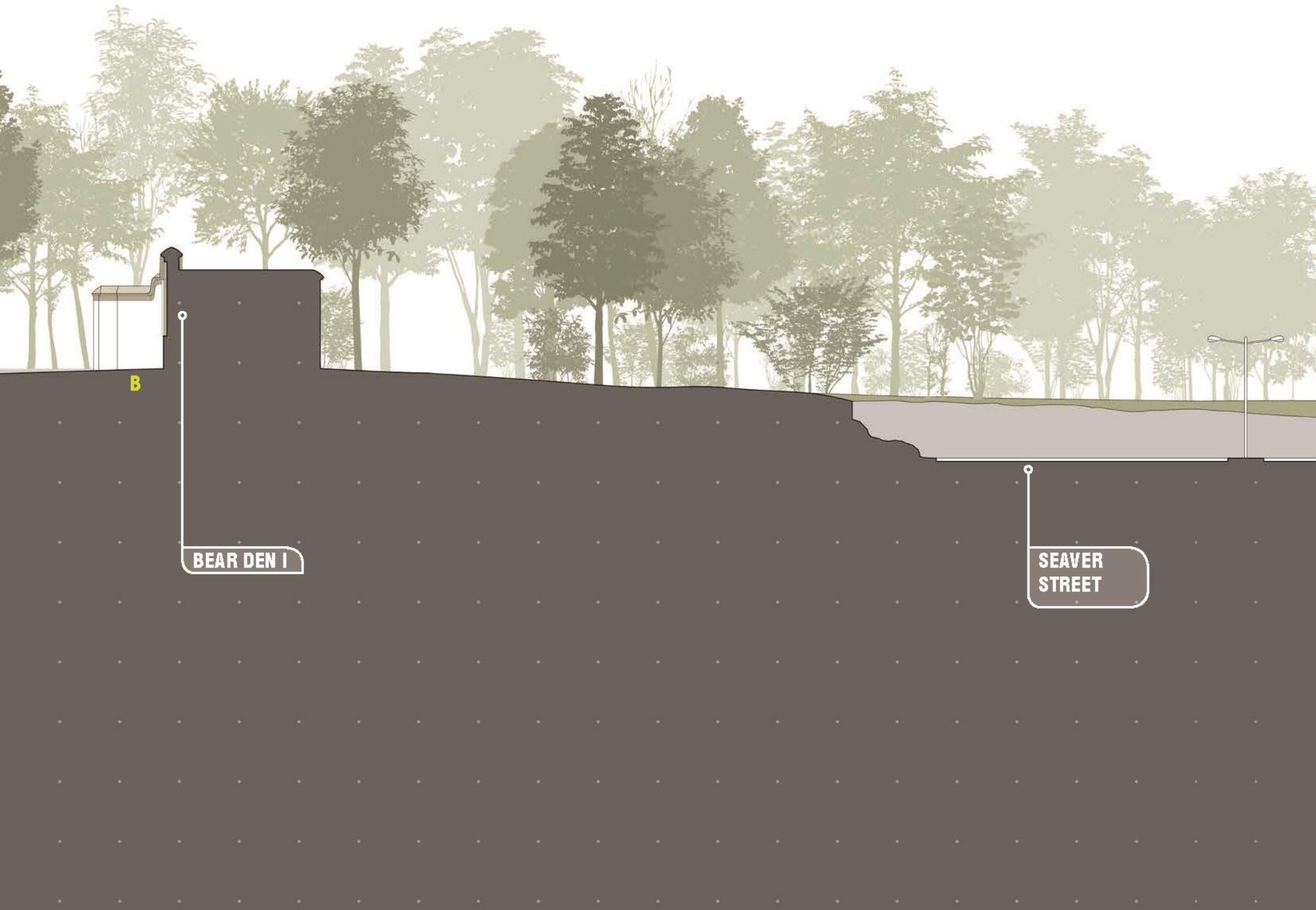
SITE SECTION
EXISTING



With a grade change of 14.5 feet from points **A** to **B** at the site of The Bear Dens, there is already a sense of presence to the site. The procession as one ascends the stairs is theatrical and already well-suited for a civic space.

DESIGN IMPLEMENTATION

Following the restoration of The Bear Dens, the programming of the site will establish three new points of interest within the Long Crouch Woods: (1) an outdoor amphitheatre (2) a recreation/skatepark area (3) an outdoor art exhibition



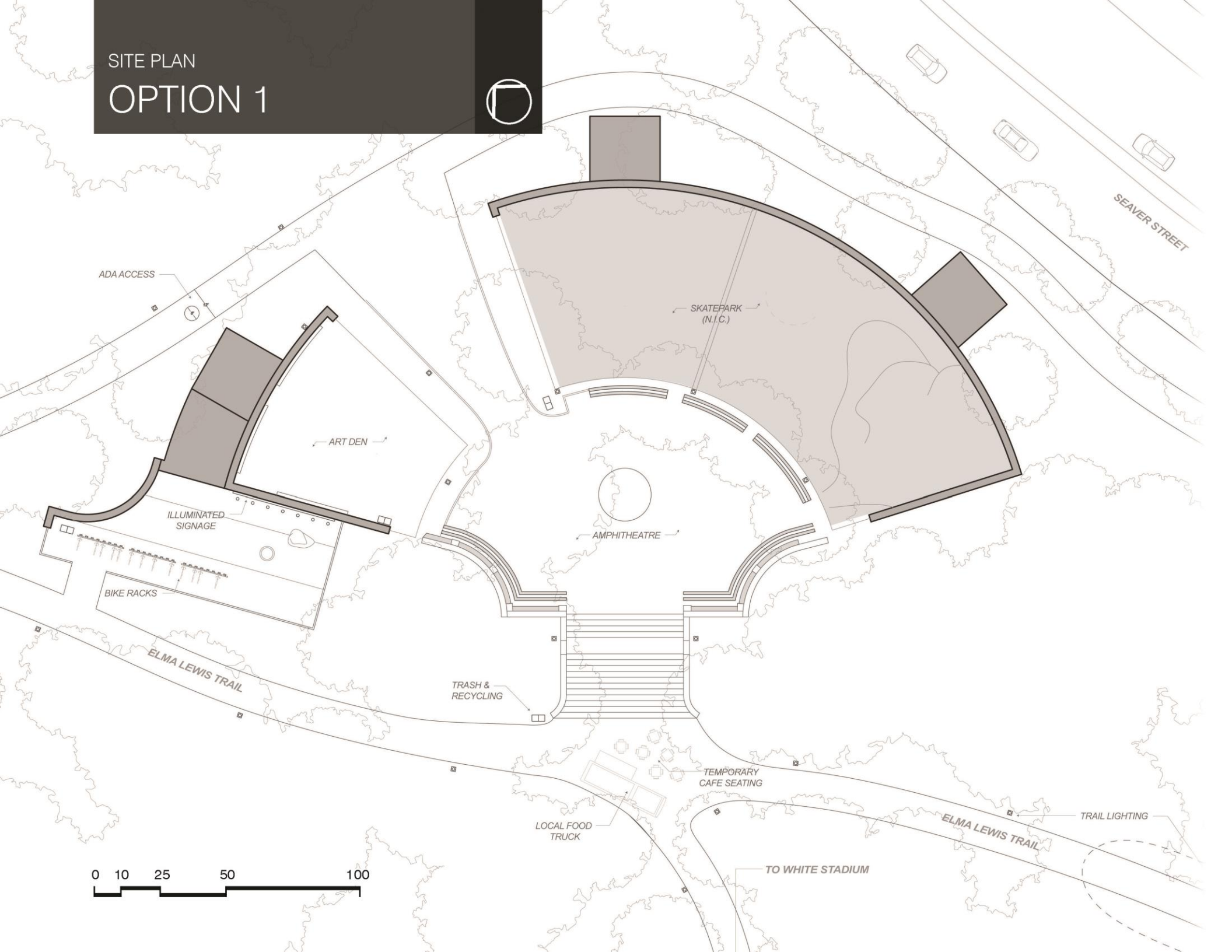
B

BEAR DEN I

SEAVER STREET

SITE PLAN

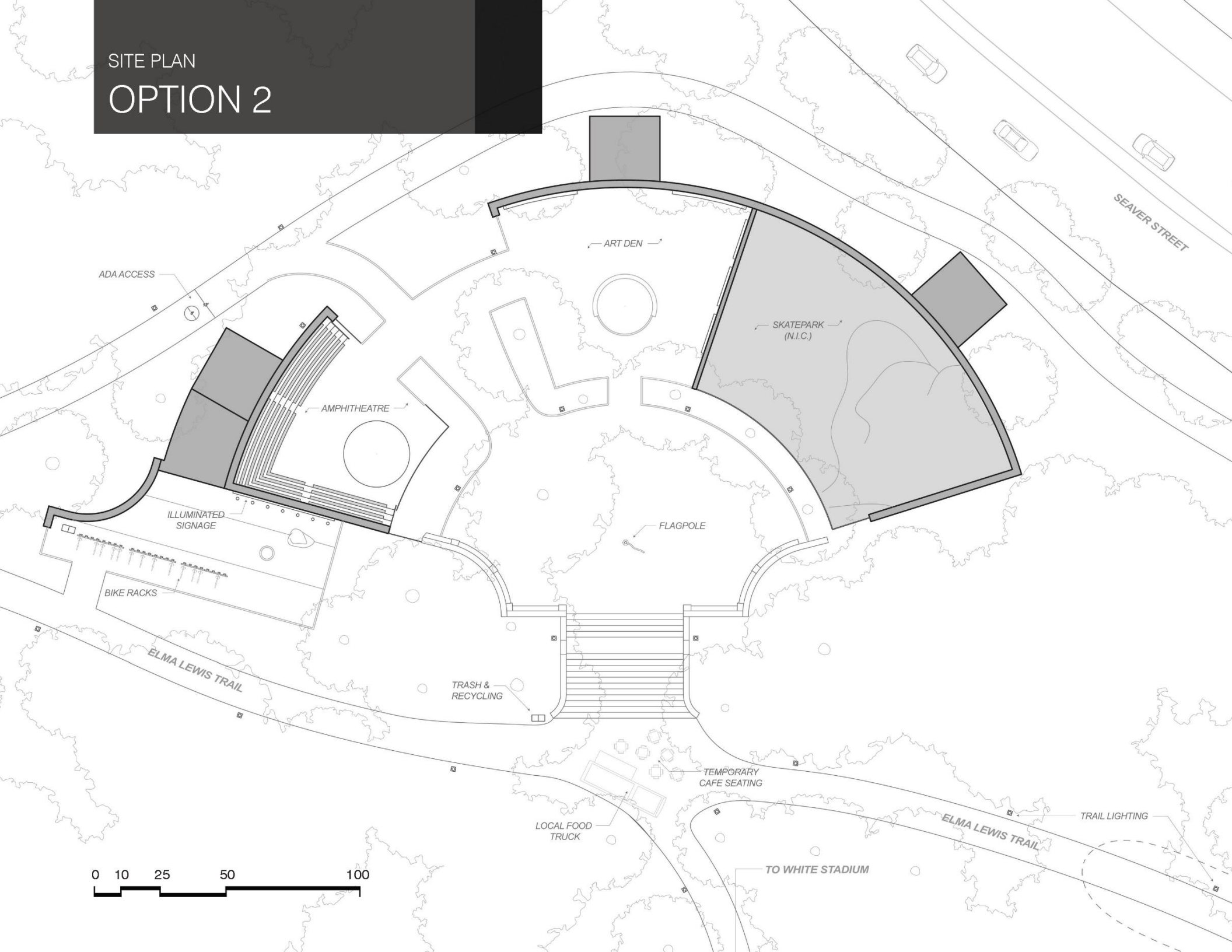
OPTION 1



OPTION 1

This option uses the existing division of space as a point of departure. The amphitheatre seating would follow the current fence line that defines the bear cages but would invert the original spectator-spectacle relationship by placing the stage in the center rather than on the perimeter. This arrangement would offer the most spacious layout for the amphitheatre and would maximize visibility from the trail below. However, this pushes the secondary program (i.e. the art den and the skatepark) to the perimeter, concealing much of the granite stonework.

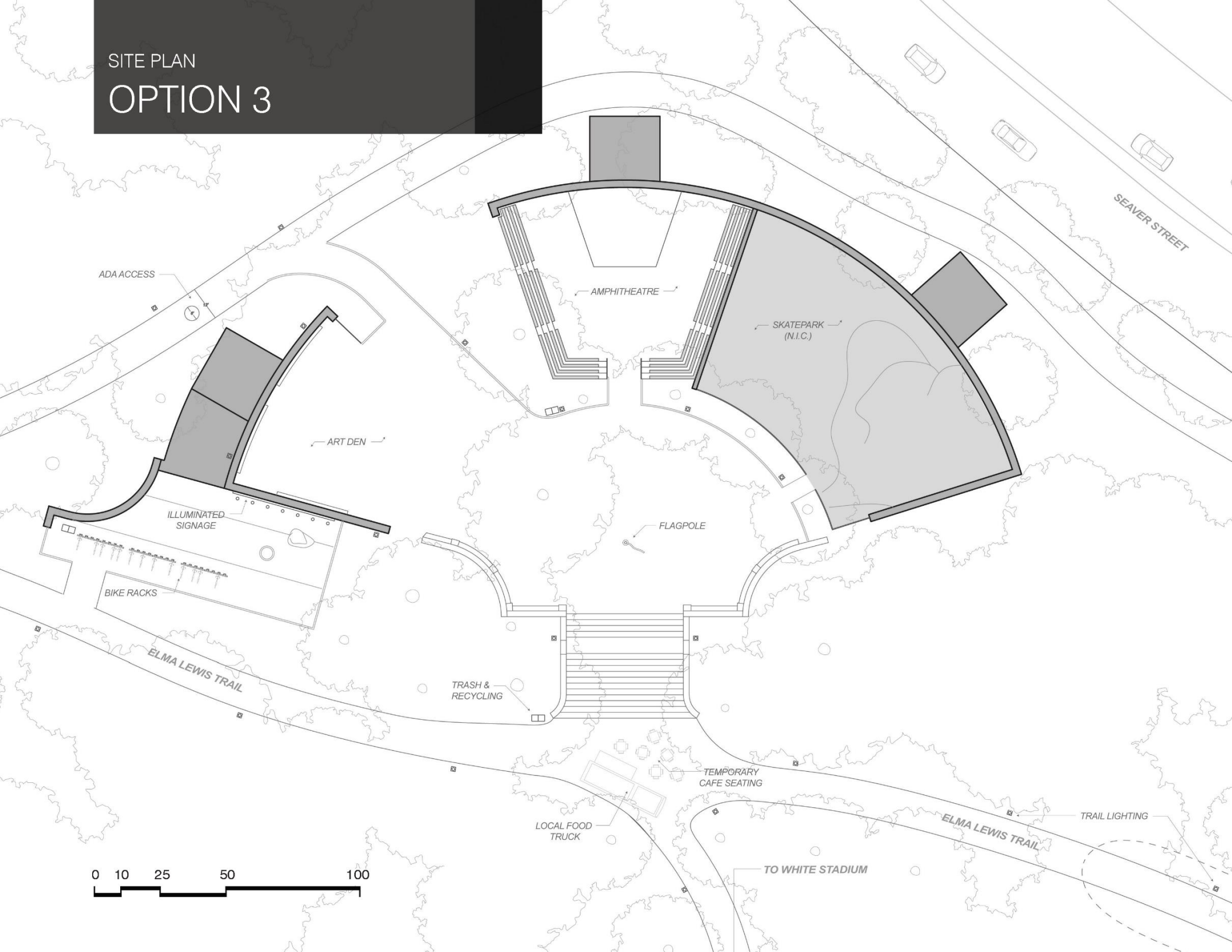
SITE PLAN OPTION 2



OPTION 2

The boundaries of the individual spaces in Option 2 are much less defined than in Option 1. This is done by establishing physical connections between spaces but also through strategic orientation of each program element. In the case of the amphitheatre, the stadium seating ascends towards the granite walls so to mitigate what could be a visual boundary. Despite the amphitheatre's less prominent location, it remains highly visible from the trail below, particularly for pedestrians arriving from the Seaver Street entrance.

SITE PLAN OPTION 3



0 10 25 50 100

TO WHITE STADIUM

SEAVER STREET

ELMA LEWIS TRAIL

ELMA LEWIS TRAIL

TRAIL LIGHTING

TEMPORARY CAFE SEATING

LOCAL FOOD TRUCK

TRASH & RECYCLING

FLAGPOLE

ART DEN

ILLUMINATED SIGNAGE

BIKE RACKS

AMPHITHEATRE

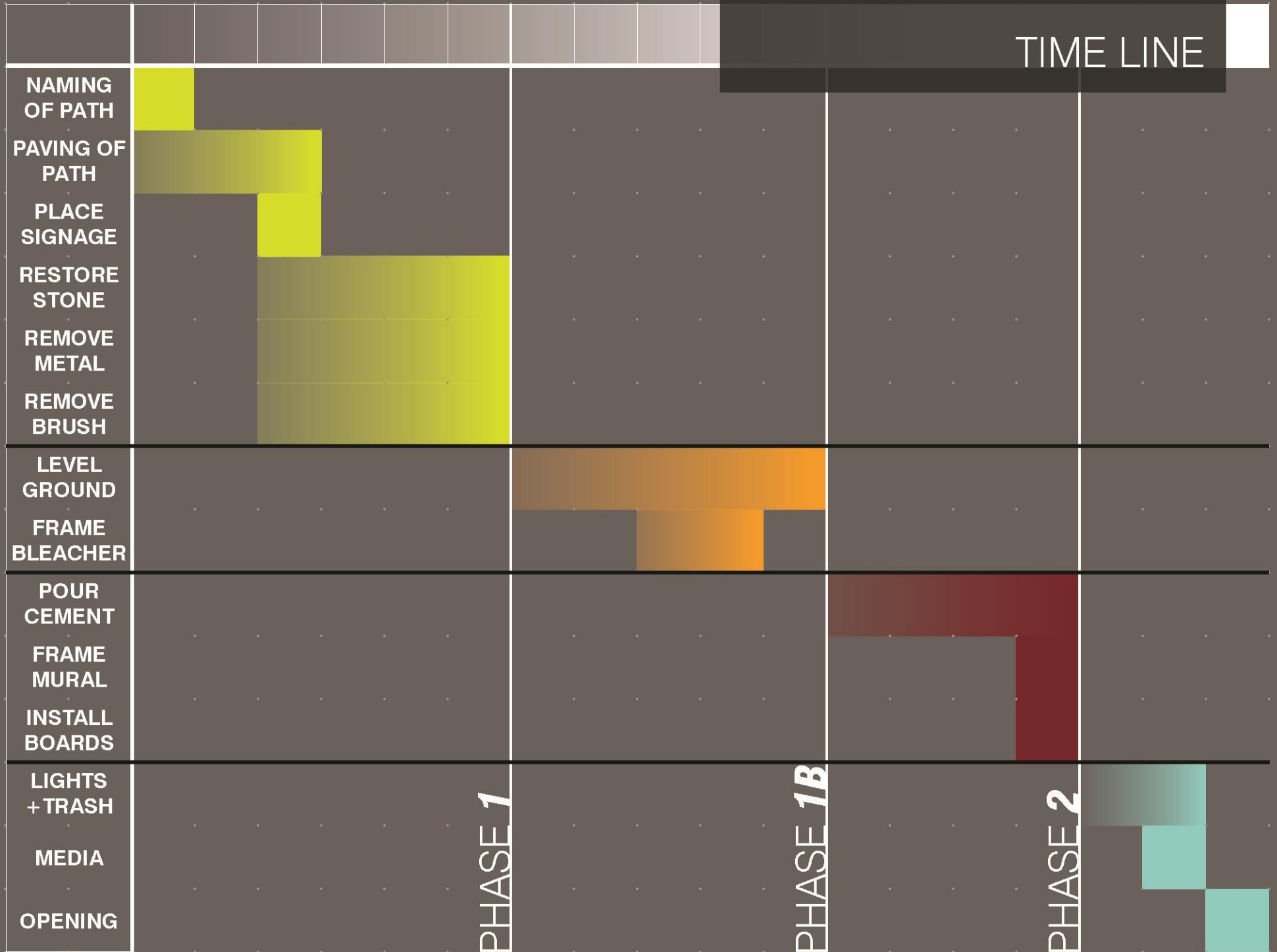
SKATEPARK (N.I.C.)

ADA ACCESS

OPTION 3

Option 3 strives to maintain the symmetry of Arthur Shurtlecliff's original design for The Bear Dens. Although the position of the amphitheatre does not maintain a strong visual connection to the trail, it's central placement and symmetrical layout emphasizes it's importance. The orientation takes full advantage of the original granite wall, highlighting the iconic concrete relief as the backdrop for performances. Den 2 would be opened up to the existing public space and converted into the Art Den, prominently displaying the work of the local residents.

TIME LINE



||| MA
MARCIANO/MATTHEW/MUNROE

For inquiries please contact Chris Marciano
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