



Agenda Report

City Council

Date: June 14, 2022
To: Brian Saeki, City Manager
From: Kyle Cason, Public Works Director
Subject: Greenleaf Promenade – Design Options

RECOMMENDATION

Provide direction on conceptual design for SWA for Greenleaf Promenade.

BACKGROUND

On February 26, 2019, City Council selected a concept design from SWA Architects for the Uptown Whittier Streetscape Beautification project inclusive of improvements from “paseo to paseo” along Greenleaf Avenue. The project area was approximately midblock north of Wardman Street to midblock north of Philadelphia Street and improvements consisted of new parklets, curbs, gutters, paving, concrete, tree removal, tree preservation, and tree replacement. At the time of Council discussion, the project costs were estimated at \$3.8M.

On May 28, 2019, City Council was presented with a summary of public input gathered as part of the Uptown Streetscape Plan process referencing desired improvements including outdoor dining and parklets, gathering spaces, enhanced safety, cleanliness, and walkability among others.

In June of 2020, due to the COVID-19 public health crisis, the City Council approved a temporary closure of Greenleaf Avenue to facilitate the Greenleaf Promenade Outdoor Dine & Shop program. The closure, commonly referred to as the Greenleaf Promenade, has allowed for retailers and restaurants to operate their businesses in the City-owned public right-of-way through approval of a temporary encroachment permit while adhering to indoor occupancy restrictions. The application process detailed equipment guidelines, current health order protocols, and notice of the City’s right to revoke the permit at any time should it be deemed necessary due to non-compliance or public safety.

Due to the evolving pandemic, the City Council approved an extension of the street closure on October 13, 2020, through a minimum of 120 days after the point at which restaurants were permitted to serve indoors at 100% capacity again.

On March 23, 2021, the City Council received a presentation featuring a draft concept of a single-block closure of Greenleaf designed by SWA Architects (Attachment A). At that time, City Council directed staff to research traffic control alternatives and perform

further outreach to stakeholders in the impacted Uptown area, specifically businesses, property owners, and nearby residents.

On June 15, 2021, consistent with the Governor's executive orders, the Health Officer Order for Los Angeles County allowed for the full reopening of businesses and restaurants, setting the new deadline for removal of outdoor operations along the Promenade of October 15, 2021.

On August 10, 2021, the City Council received the results of the Greenleaf Promenade community survey. Feedback indicated that more than 1600 of 1800 community members supported a permanent Promenade. Of those respondents, 60 of 81 Uptown business owners supported the permanent closure, as well as 199 of 241 Uptown property owners. When asked to rank priorities within the Promenade, common responses included outdoor dining, aesthetic uniformity, security, cleanliness, and diversification of businesses. Streetscape improvements including sidewalk repair, lighting, public art, and community gathering space were also noted. City Council action included approving an extension of encroachment permits through February 1, 2022, and directing staff to bring back a report containing further information regarding various options for construction of a future hybrid or permanent Greenleaf Promenade.

On October 26, 2021, City Council authorized a hybrid concept for the Greenleaf closure that would include the installation of bollards to facilitate expedited police and fire response, uniform build-outs, and hosting of special events in the Promenade.

In November of 2021, business owners were reminded of allowable Promenade operations and notified that the Greenleaf Promenade permit revocation process had been further refined to include multi-step notification of first and second violations.

On January 25, 2022, City Council authorized an extension of the current Greenleaf Promenade encroachment permits for an additional 90 days, with a tentative date of expiration as May 1, 2022.

On March 8, 2022, the City Council authorized the City Manager to enter into an agreement with SWA Group for preliminary engineering and design services and directed staff to bring back an analysis of concerns brought forward by the Whittier Uptown Association (WUA), Uptown Whittier Improvement Association (UWIA) and Whittier Area Chamber of Commerce.

On March 22, 2022, the City Council approved \$84,545 in funding for the following interim improvements for the Greenleaf Promenade: special event lighting for City sponsored events, additional temporary lighting to improve safety and site aesthetics; additional public trash bin service, and additional sidewalk and street cleaning services. The City Council also extended the encroachment permits to February 1, 2023, and directed Staff to bring back a report on security, rebranding, and marketing for the Greenleaf Promenade.

Since the March 22, 2022 meeting, we have continued increased patrols from our security service provider, who are present daily from 1PM to 5AM. Along Greenleaf Avenue, staff have replaced all the existing 50W LED street lights with 100W LEDs. City staff has met with the Whittier Uptown Association and Uptown Whittier Improvement Association to coordinate efforts regarding the branding of Uptown Whittier and discussions will continue following City Council direction on the Greenleaf design concepts. The City's anticipated expansion of public information efforts will include a city-wide branding initiative inclusive of placemaking and signage in Uptown Whittier and the nearby historic district. City staff will meet with both associations, as well as additional Uptown area stakeholders, to outline critical needs and ideas prior to the solicitation of branding proposals later this year. In the meantime, City staff is working collaboratively with both associations, as well as the Whittier Chamber of Commerce, to ensure that events and activities taking place throughout the summer season are marketed and supported.

DISCUSSION

Per Council's direction, staff discussed potential Greenleaf design options with SWA. Utilizing the originally approved 2019 Streetscape plan, along with the hybrid closure park concept from 2021, SWA developed an Open Street Promenade Option. This option would allow the option of permanent outdoor dining areas, while preserving limited on street parking and creating drop off/loading areas for ridesharing. The concept is substantively similar to the 2021 concept, with the exception of vehicular traffic being allowed on a regular basis. Removable bollards could be installed to allow for temporary street closures, perhaps on the weekends or during special events.

The corridor of Greenleaf Avenue between Wardman Street and Hadley Street has approximately 150 on-street stalls. The 2019 ("original Streetscape") concept would reduce the on-street parking in this corridor to 96 stalls. The 2021 ("Promenade") concept would reduce the on-street stalls in this corridor to zero. The Open Street Promenade Option would reduce the on-street parking in this corridor to 24 stalls.

SWA has completed preliminary efforts for this corridor, and in-house water main design is underway. Following City Council's direction on the preferred Greenleaf design option, the next steps are project visioning with a site wide conceptual design, including preliminary grading and cost estimates. Upon completion of these tasks, the project will be handed to a design engineer for precise grading and final design ahead of construction bids early in 2023.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact with this report.

STRATEGIC PLANNING GOAL

- Maintain & Enhance Quality of Life
- Transparent & Open Government

- Promote a Strong Local Economic Base

ATTACHMENTS

A. SWA Greenleaf Concept Design Presentation

Greenleaf Promenade - Design Options

Greenleaf Avenue, Whittier, CA



swa

Comparison of Streetscape Design Concepts
June 14, 2022

Project Location



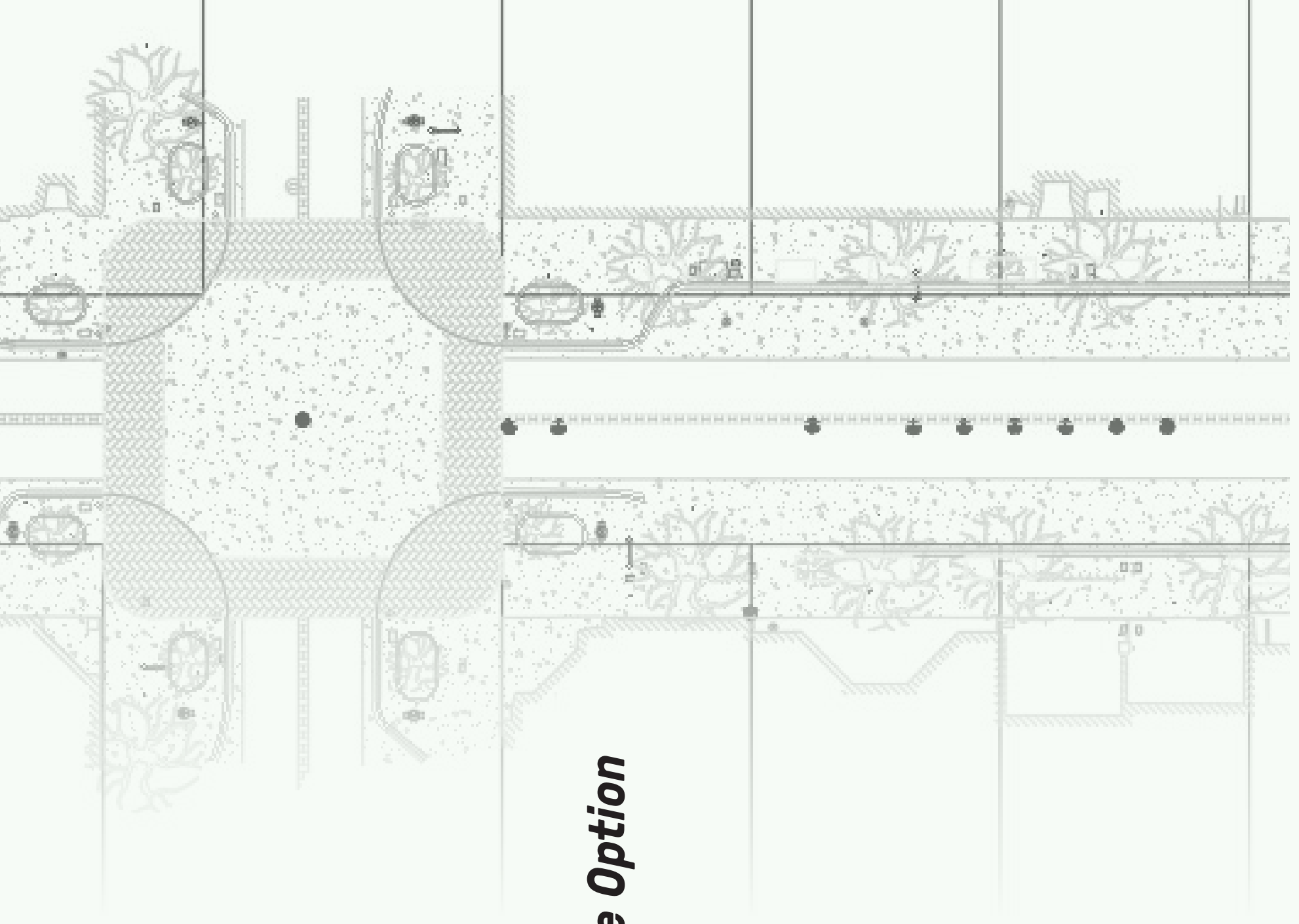
Project Status

Completed Efforts

- Topographical site survey and base mapping
- Existing site inventory
- Constraints + opportunities evaluation

Next Steps Efforts - *Pending Selection of Promenade Option*

- Project visioning and site-wide conceptual design
- Preliminary grading and utilities design
- Conceptual estimate of probable cost
- Conceptual visualizations



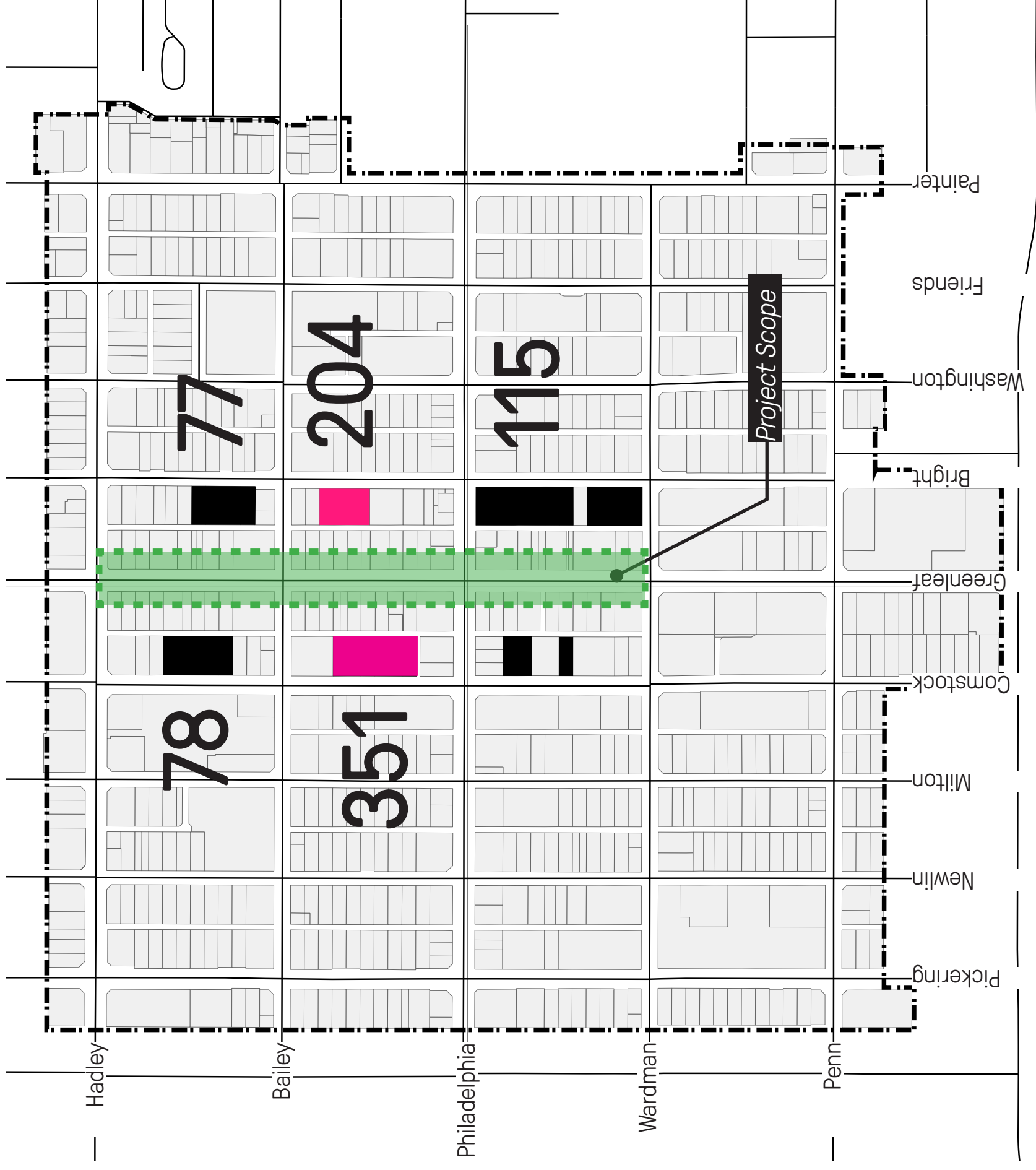
Existing Parking

825

Existing parking spaces in adjacent garages and surface lots

150

Existing on-street parking spaces in 3-block scope area



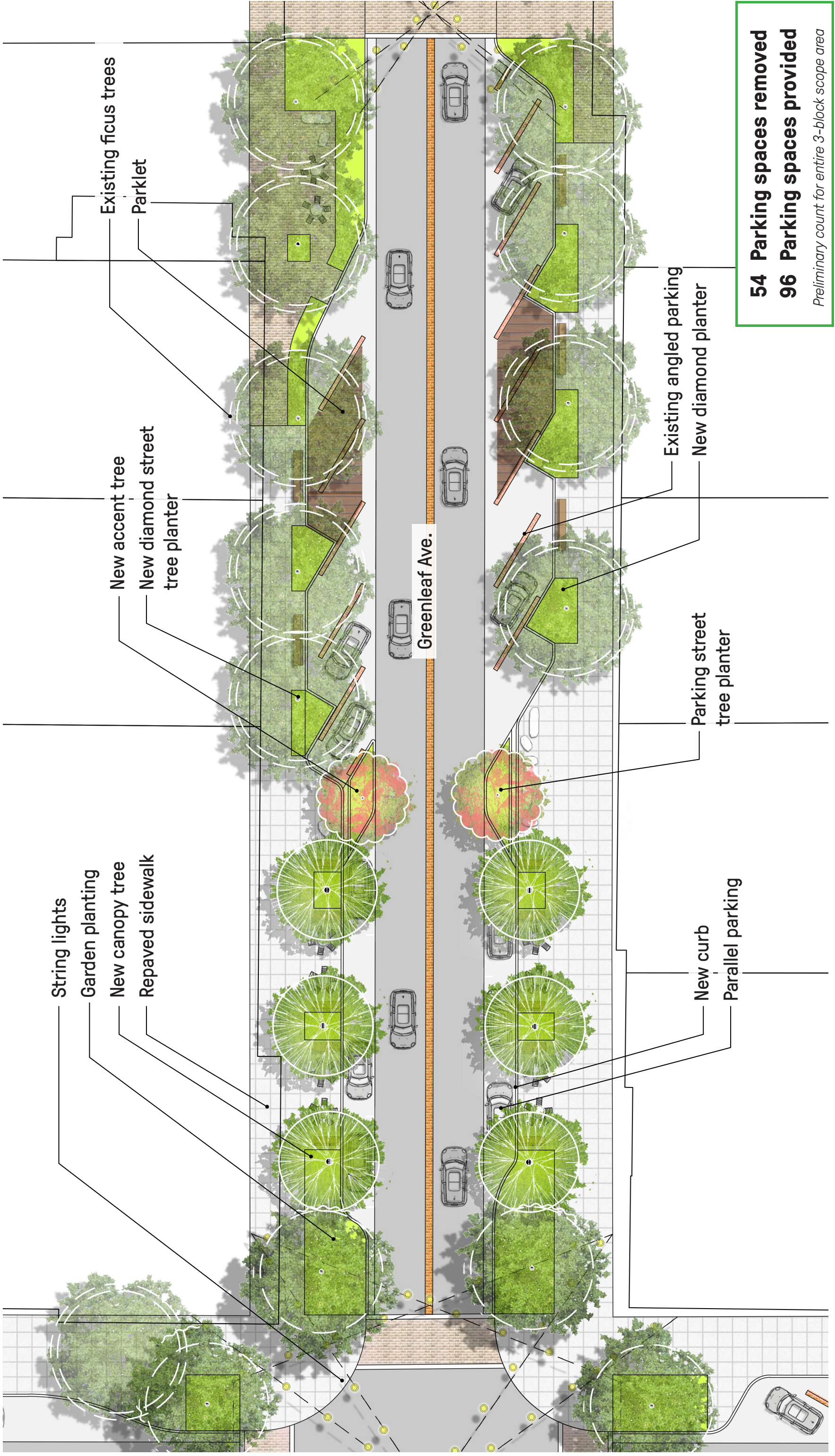
Legend

Existing Parking Garages

Existing Surface Parking Lots



1/2 Block Concept - 2019 'Gardens of Uptown' Streetscape Option



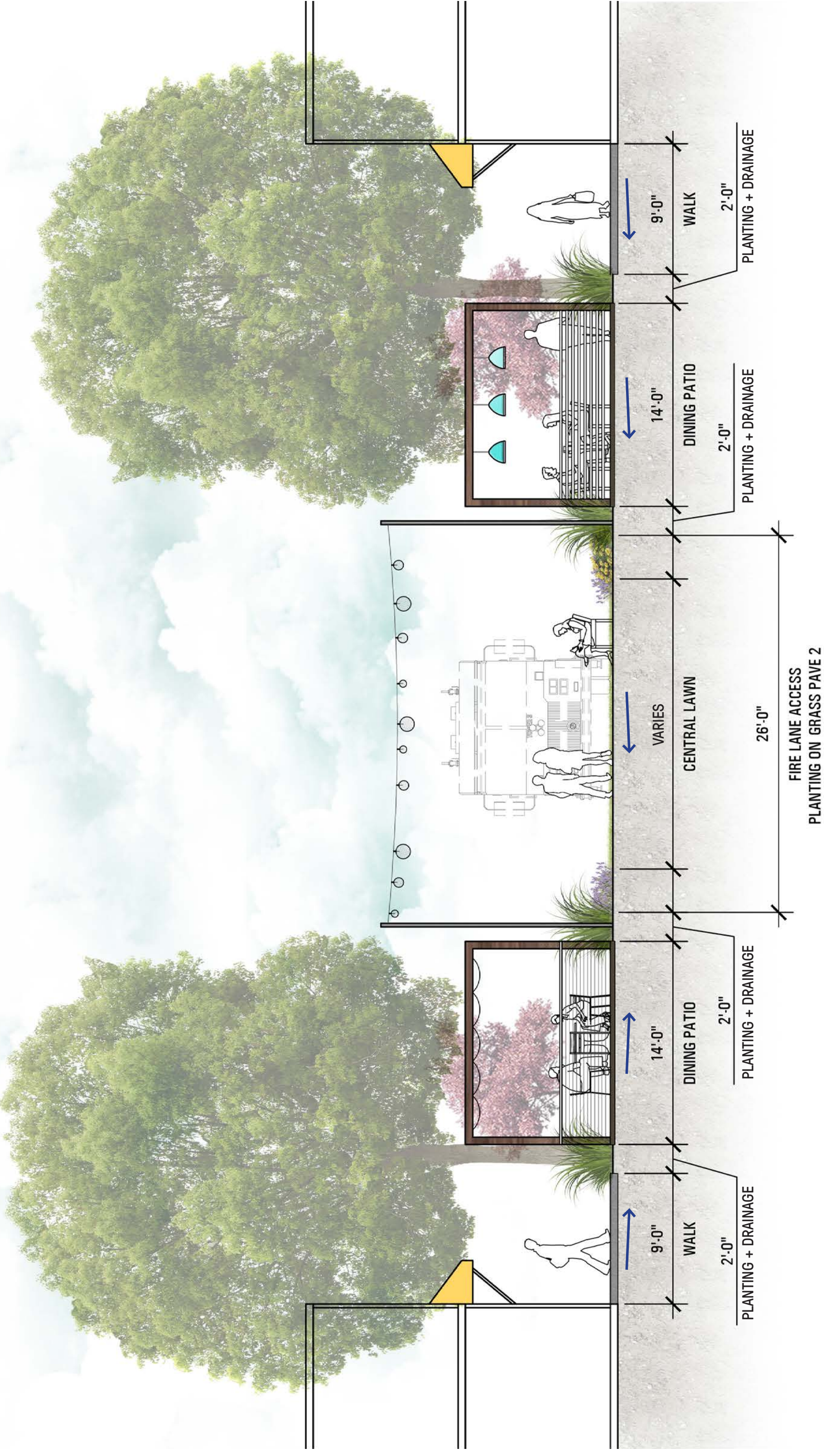
1/2 Block Concept - 2021 Pedestrian Promenade Option



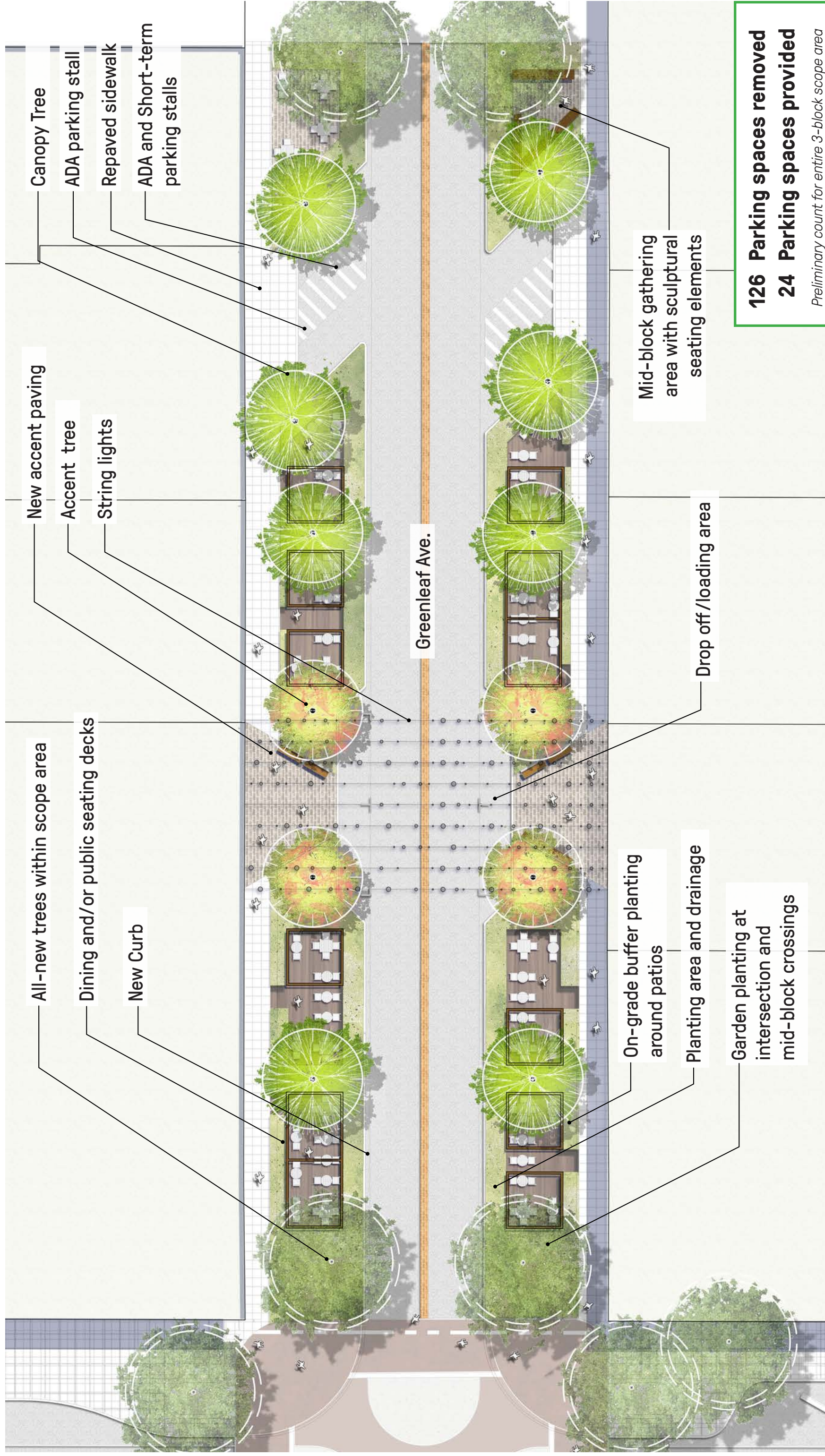
150 Parking spaces removed
0 Parking spaces provided
Preliminary count for entire 3-block scope area



Pedestrian Promenade - Typical Section



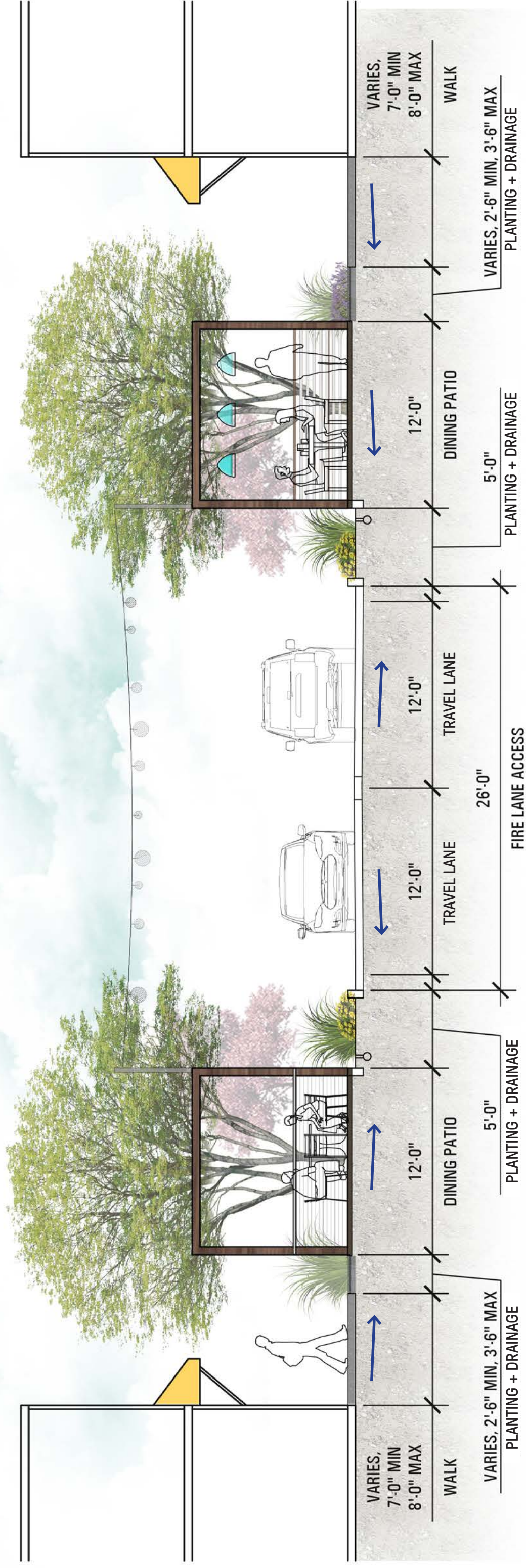
1/2 Block Concept - Open Street Promenade Option



126 Parking spaces removed
24 Parking spaces provided
Preliminary count for entire 3-block scope area

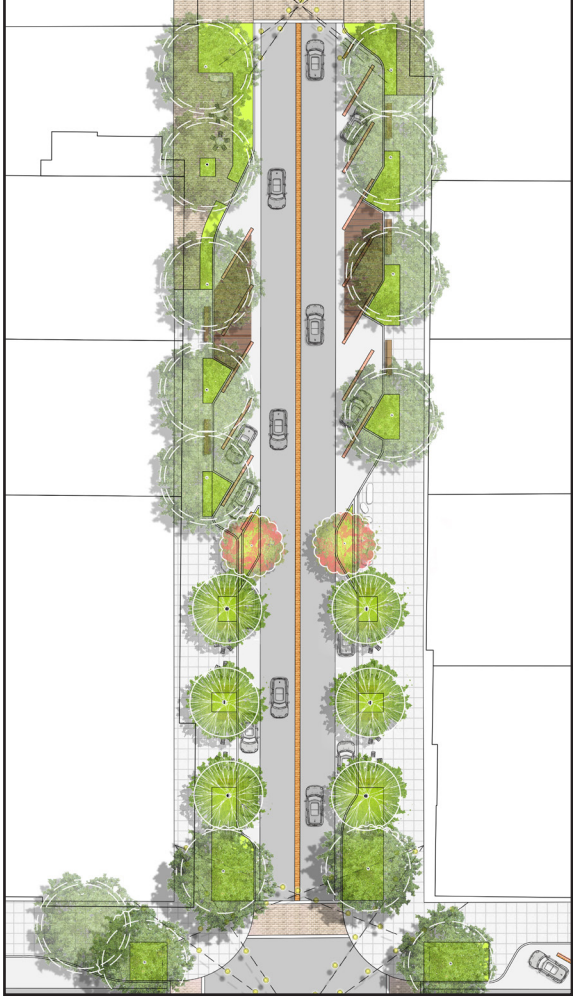


Open Street Promenade - Typical Section



Comparison Summary

Gardens of Uptown



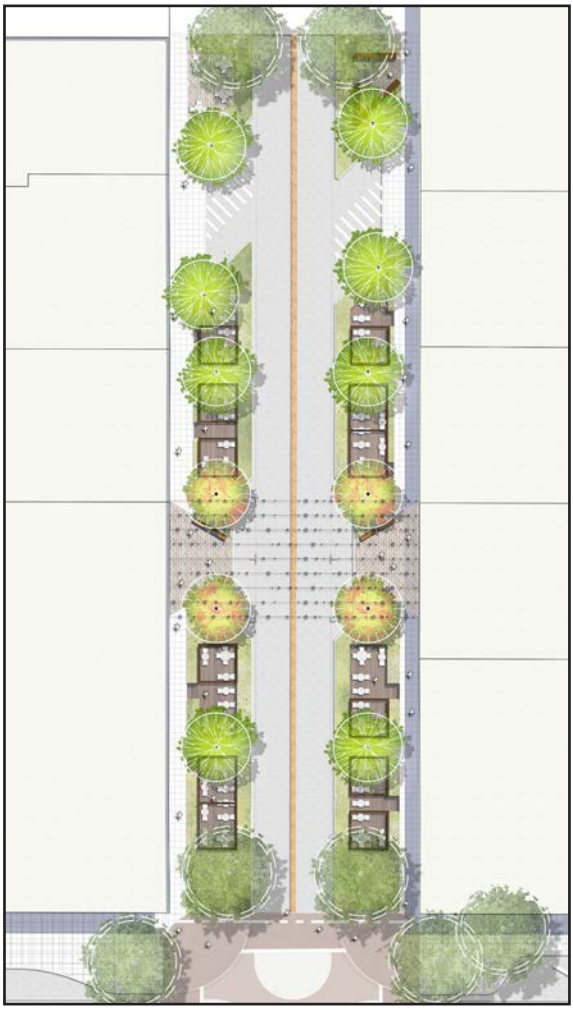
- Maintains vehicular circulation
- Mix of parallel and diagonal parking
- Small seating parklets in select parking spots
- New and enhanced landscaping
- Mix of existing and new trees

Pedestrian Promenade



- Pedestrian-only street experience
- Park-like environment
- Large dining and gathering patios
- New and enhanced landscaping
- Mix of existing and new trees

Open Street Promenade



- Maintains vehicular circulation
- Drop-off zones and handicap parking provided
- Large dining and gathering patios
- New and enhanced landscaping
- All-new trees



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