

Clemente Park Master Plan

A Department of Planning and Development Proposal

March 1, 2023



LOWELL
FORWARD



Introduction

Roberto Clemente Park (802 Middlesex Street; Lowell, MA) is a 3.02 acre park in Lowell’s Lower Highlands / Cambodia Town neighborhood. It is located directly across from Pailin Plaza, a popular shopping and dining destination, and is known locally as “Pailin Park.” **Per square foot, it is the most used park in the City.** Park features include 2 bocce/boule courts (upgraded in 2022), 7 volleyball courts, 2 basketball courts, a skate park, a playground, and a “healing garden” / monument.

The Lower Highlands is home to 11% of the City’s population, but holds only 2% of the City’s park space. Clemente Park is located within census tract 3112, which is a state-designated environmental justice area meeting the criteria for minority and income. The median household income in this tract is \$37,448, which is 65% of the City-wide median income and only 44% of the State-wide median. 72% of households are minorities, and 10% of households experience language isolation.

DPD has been conducting **community engagement** in the Cambodia Town neighborhood for the past two years and has collected extensive feedback on the **prioritization** of improvements and the **long-term vision** for Clemente park. DPD has also been working closely with stakeholders including the Clemente Park Committee, the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association (CMAA), the Lowell Community Health Center (Lowell CHC), and Lowell Community Health Center’s REACH LoWELL Program (Lowell CHC REACH LoWELL). This proposal was developed in response to the challenges and opportunities raised through the engagement process.

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Vision Statement

2027

Roberto Clemente Park is an active and vibrant park that serves as a community hub at the heart of Lowell's Cambodia Town. The upgraded volleyball and basketball courts attract players from all over the City. The new inclusive playground and solar-powered picnic pavilion have made the park more welcoming to families and children. Clemente Park is the first park in the City to offer space specifically oriented toward teens and young adults outside of organized sports and has become a favorite hangout for high school students after school. In the new community garden, neighbors are growing a lush urban farm. Terraced seating along the Middlesex Street sidewalk, new ADA-accessible paths throughout the park, and a new ADA entrance at the playground have opened up access and circulation to and through the park. A lush rain garden welcomes visitors at the playground entrance while also helping to slow and purify stormwater runoff from the street into the park. On weekends and some evenings, the community flocks to Clemente Park to attend markets, concerts, and outdoor movie screenings on the new stage. The flexible event space has created many opportunities for creative programs at the park and rotating public art exhibits draw visitors to the park from near and far. Clemente Park has become an inclusive space that truly represents the vision and the values of the community for whom this park is a vital part of their lives.

Goals

- + Facilitate a truly inclusive bottom-up planning and design process.**
- + Foster stewardship and a sense of pride in the park.**
- + Improve access and circulation to and through the park; remove physical and social barriers.**
- + Diversify park uses and park usership; ie. create inclusive spaces for women, children, seniors, and teens/young adults.**
- + Create flexible spaces for programs and events.**
- + Introduce culturally-significant public art.**
- + Upgrade recreational facilities (volleyball and basketball).**
- + Improve park safety.**

Community Engagement

DPD has been conducting community engagement in Cambodia Town over the past 2 years in collaboration with the Lowell Community Health Center’s REACH LoWELL Program and the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association (CMAA). Engagement has touched on a wide range of topics related to the built environment throughout Cambodia Town, as well as honed in specifically on Clemente Park.

Engagement Methods:

- Interactive Boards
- Interactive Model of Clemente Park
- Surveys (Digital + Analog)
- Comment Cards
- E-mail Hotline (openspace@lowellma.gov)
- Stakeholder Interviews
- One-on-one/Anecdotal Engagement

“The park needs more places to sit so students and community members can do work.”

In-Person Engagement Events:

- 7/17/2021 Pop-Up Public Meeting at Clemente Park
- 6/26/2021 Pop-Up Public Meeting at Clemente Park
- 7/27/2022 CHOP Dinner
- 7/27/2022 CMAA Rising Star Youth Summer Camp
- 8/16/2022 Boys & Girls Club Workshop
- 8/20/2022 South East Asian Water Festival
- 10/8/2022 Volleyball Tournament at Clemente Park
- 11/6/2022 Bon Kathen Festival at Glory Buddhist Temple



Pop-Up Public Meeting 7/17/2021



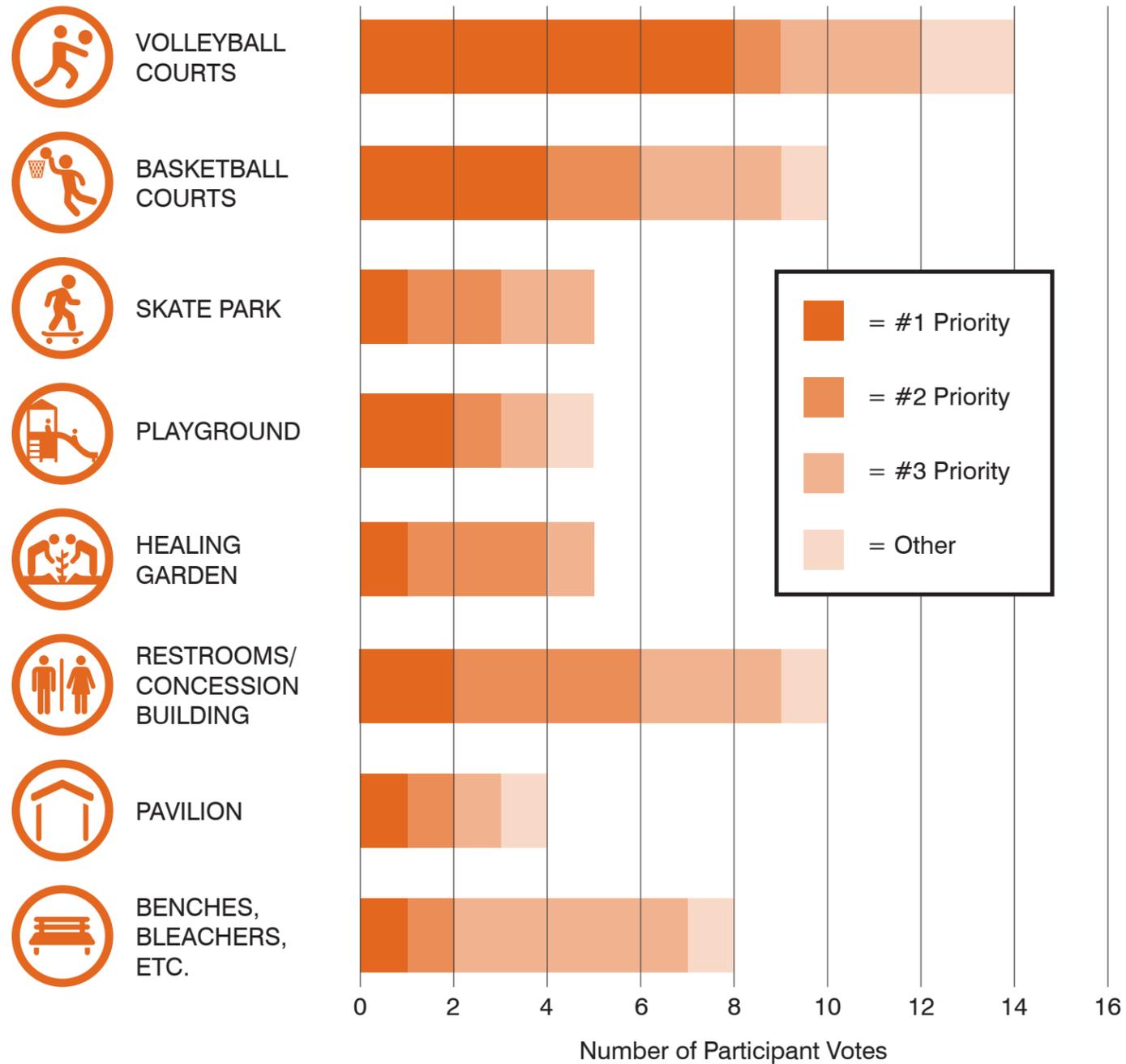
Bon Kathen Festival, Glory Buddhist Temple 11/6/2022.



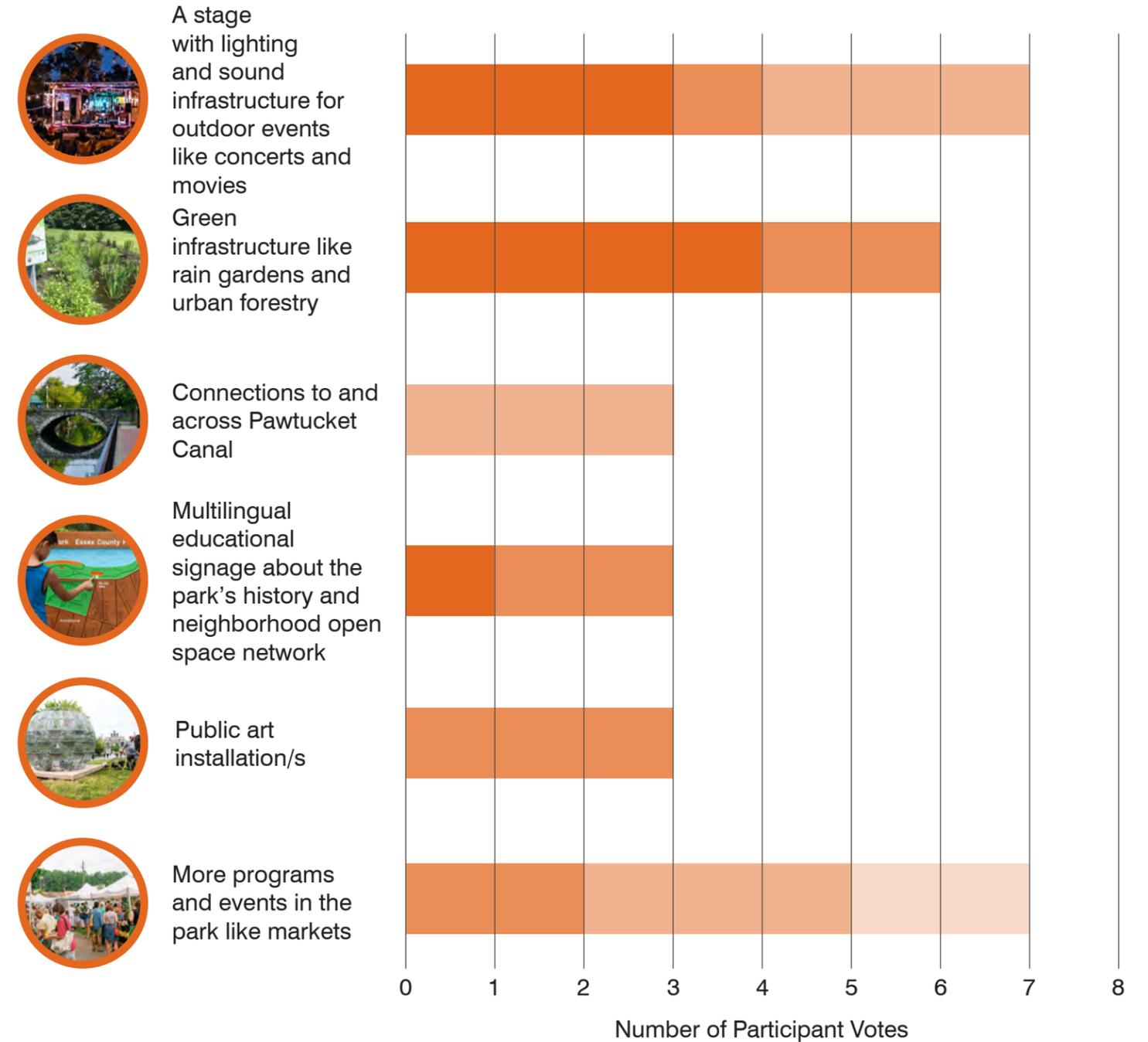
Volleyball Tournament 10/8/2022.

Community Engagement Results

Which existing park features should the City prioritize for upgrades?



What new park features should the City consider adding to the park in the future?



History

Sources:
<https://richardhowe.com/2016/04/29/clemente-park-a-history/>
<https://libguides.uml.edu/lowellsunphotos/clemente-park#:~:text=Clemente%20Park%20was%20originally%20the,Lowell%20Board%20of%20Park%20Commissioners>



1906 Washington Park founded as a state-of-the-art 3500-seat baseball stadium. The stadium was home to the Lowell Tigers of the Professional New England Baseball League

1909 The Lowell Tigers were sold and the new owners chose to return to their former home field (now Stoklosa-Alumni Field on Rogers Street).



1973 Washington Park was renamed to Roberto Clemente Park after the Puerto Rican baseball hall-of-famer.

Lights were installed to allow for night games.

1921 Lowell Board of Park Commissioners took the site by eminent domain for use as a public playground. The stadium was torn down, the park was leveled and new baseball diamond was installed.



1980s Thousands of Cambodian refugees immigrated to Lowell and settled in the Lower Highlands neighborhood. The baseball field was replaced with volleyball and bocce courts, which are more popular among the Cambodian community.

2011 The concession stand was added to the park and a new playground was installed.

2022 The Bocce/Boule Courts were upgraded with a permanent roof structure. The Clemente Park Committee and the City's Department of Planning and Development secured \$610,000 in CPA and CDBG funds to go toward additional park upgrades.



Case Study

FDR Park

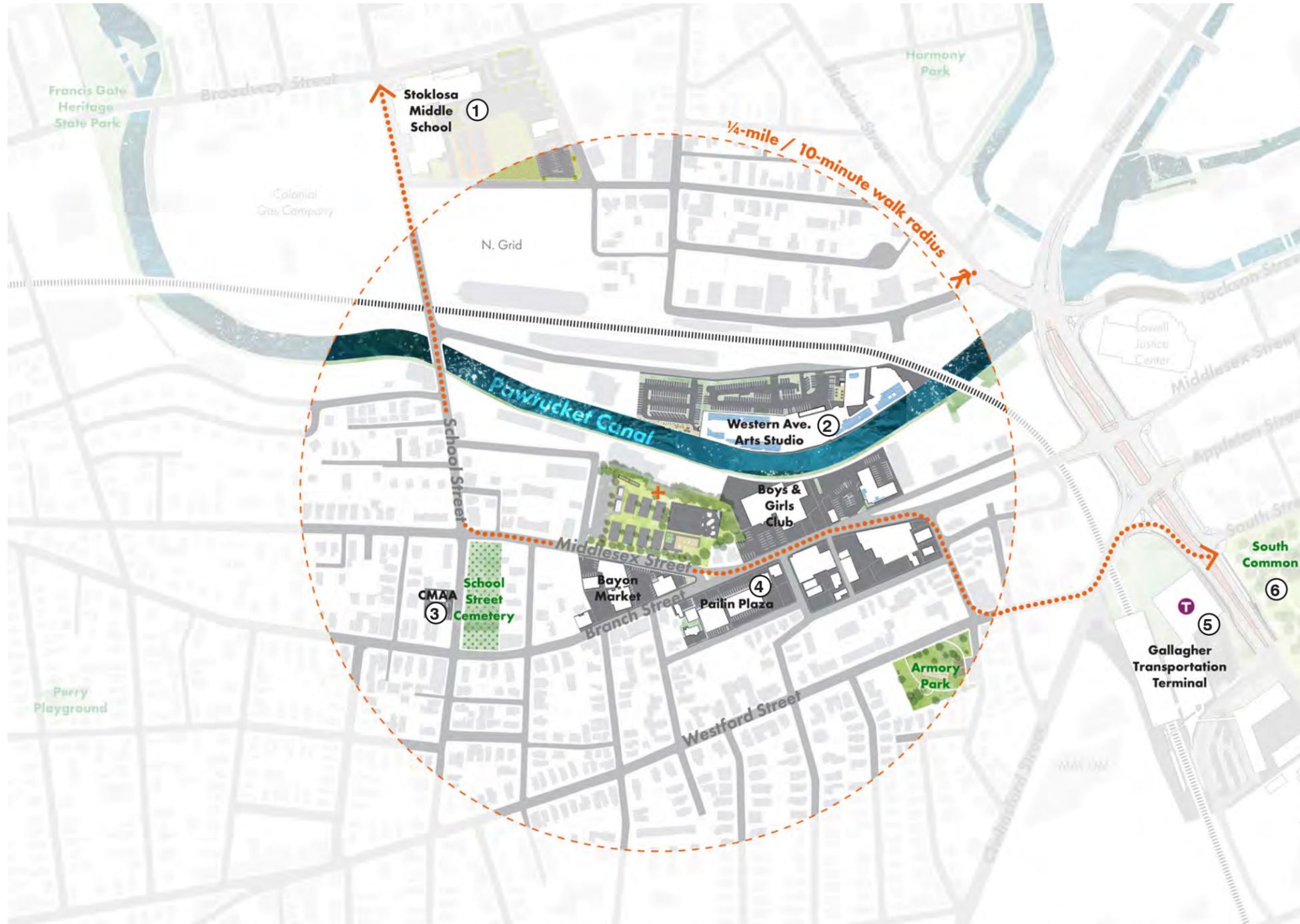
Philadelphia, PA

“In re-writing their history narrative, the Southeast Asian Market in FDR Park became a cultural landmark, no longer a place to hide, but a place of pride.”

- <https://www.fdrseamarket.com/our-story>



Context



1 Stoklosa Middle School



2 Western Ave Art Studios



3 CMAA



4 Pailin Plaza



5 Transportation Terminal



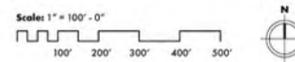
6 South Common

Roberto Clemente Park Context
Lower Highlands / Cambodia Town - Lowell, MA

Drawn By: Jess Wilson
Date: 11/15/2022

Projection: Lambert_Conformal_Conic
Coordinate: NAD_1983_StatePlane_Massachusetts_Mainland_FIPS_2001
Source: City of Lowell: Parcels, Buildings (2022); Aerial (2020); Open Space, Parks, Roads (2017); Vegetation (2005).

Disclaimer: Any map printed from this system is considered unofficial unless it has been stamped/signed/certified by the Office of the City Assessor. The City of Lowell makes no warranty of representation as to the accuracy, timeliness or completeness of any of the data. The City of Lowell shall have no liability for the data or lack thereof, or any decision made or action taken or not taken in reliance upon any of the data.



Existing Conditions



2 Bocce/Boule Courts



7 Volleyball Pits



2 Basketball Courts



Skate Park



Playground



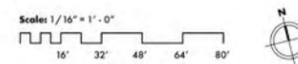
Healing Garden

Roberto Clemente Park
803 Middlesex Street

Drawn By: Jess Wilson
Date: 4/26/2022

Projection: Lambert_Conformal_Conic
Coordinate: NAD_1983_StatePlane_Massachusetts_Mainland_FIPS_2001
Source: City of Lowell: Parcels, Buildings (2022); Aerial (2020); Streets (2019); Open Space, Parks (2017).

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Phase 1 Demolition



2 Bocce/Boule Courts



7 Volleyball Pits



2 Basketball Courts



Skate Park



Playground



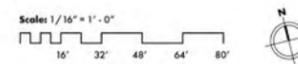
Healing Garden

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Phase 1 Improvements



7 Upgraded Volleyball Pits



Terraced Seating



Temporary Flex Plaza



Market/Event Space



Upgraded Playground



New Basketball Court

Roberto Clemente Park
803 Middlesex Street

Drawn By: Jess Wilson
Date: 4/26/2022

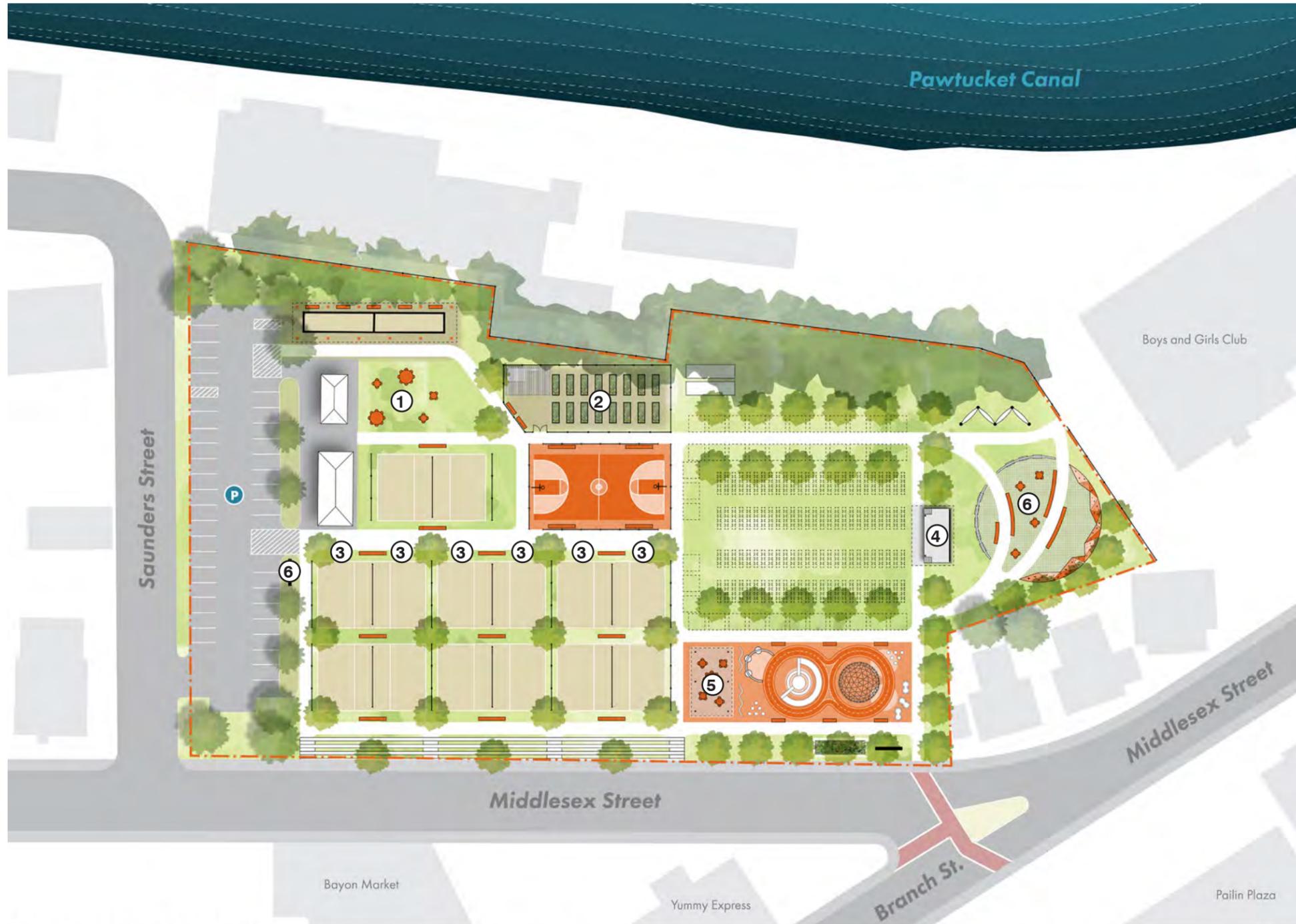
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Source: City of Lowell: Parcels, Buildings (2022); Aerial (2020); Streets (2019); Open Space, Parks (2017).

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Scale: 1/16" = 1' - 0"
16' 32' 48' 64' 80'



Phase 2 Improvements



Roberto Clemente Park
803 Middlesex Street

Drawn By: Jess Wilson
Date: 4/26/2022

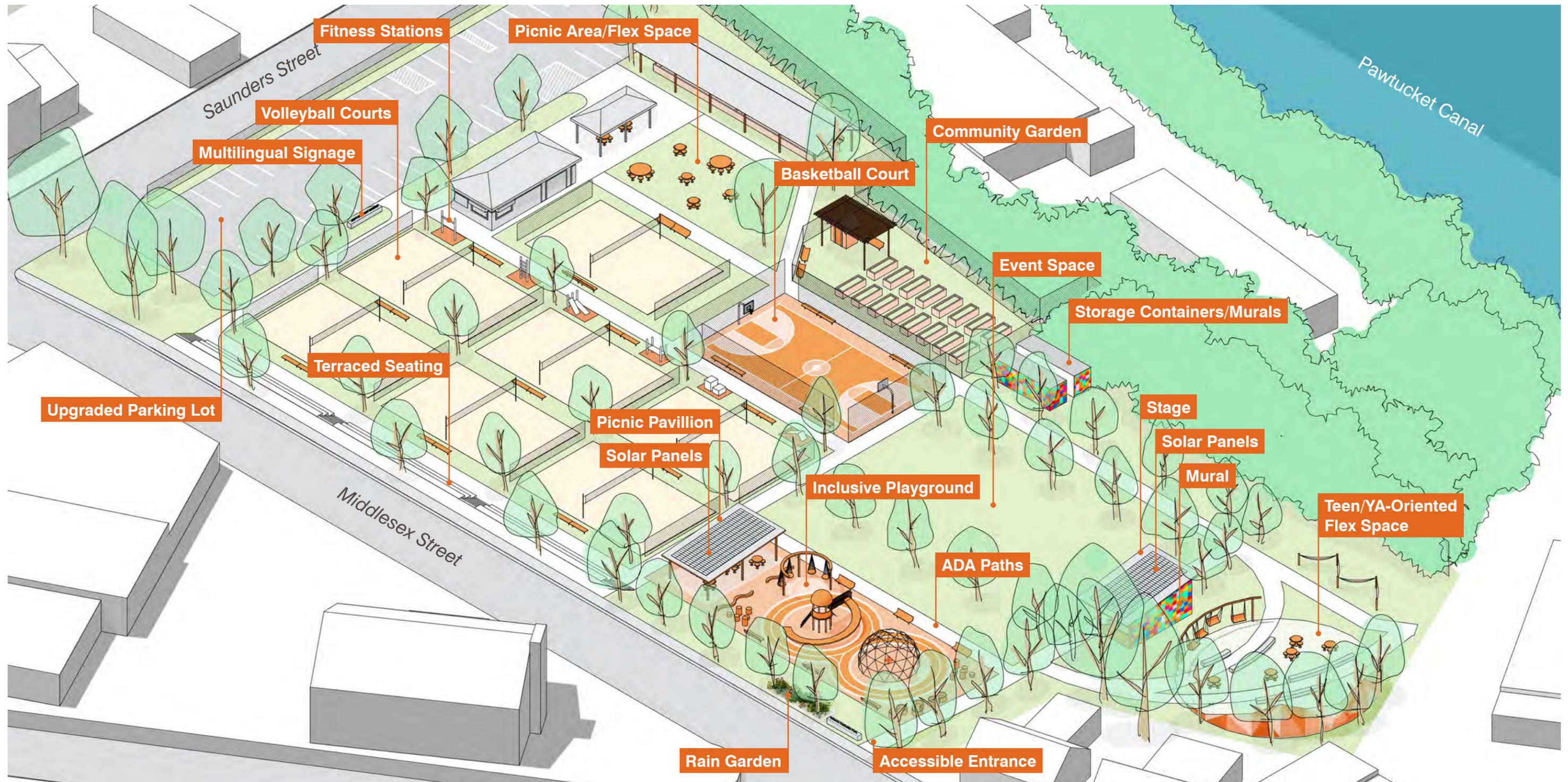
Projection: Lambert_Conformal_Conic
Coordinate: NAD_1983_StatePlane_Massachusetts_Mainland_FIPS_2001
Source: City of Lowell: Parcels, Buildings (2022); Aerial (2020); Streets (2019); Open Space, Parks (2017).

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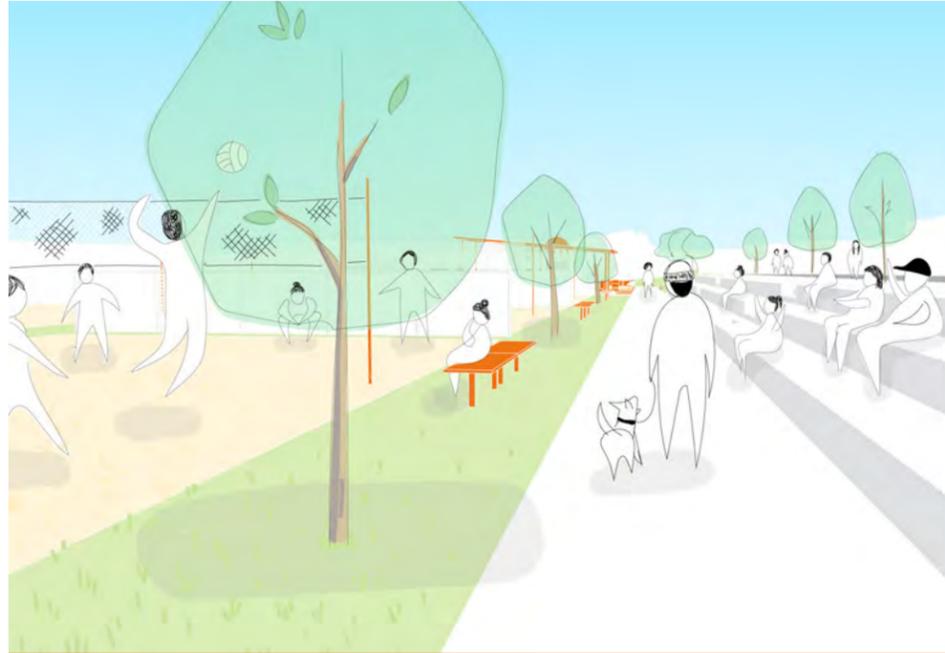
Scale: 1/16" = 1' - 0"
16' 32' 48' 64' 80'



Clemente Park Master Plan



Illustrative Vignettes



Volleyball Courts + Terraced Seating



Event Space + Stage



Inclusive Playground + Picnic Pavilion



Basketball Court



Community Garden



Teen/YA-Oriented Space

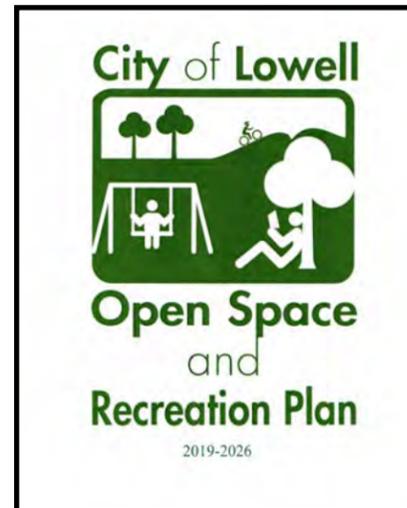
Alignment with City Goals



Sustainable Lowell 2025 Master Plan

- + Sustainable Neighborhoods
 - + Objective #3: Prioritize land-use policies that promote walkable, well-networked neighborhoods.
 - + Objective #7: Ensure the integration of nature, green space, and high quality recreational resources into the urban landscape.
- + Mobility + Access
 - + Objective #1: Promote bike and pedestrian mobility.
- + Vibrant and Unique Urban Hub
 - + Objective #1: Promote Lowell as a welcoming, safe, and attractive urban hub that serves the needs of residents, business, visitors, and other stakeholders.

- + Environmental Resilience
 - + Objective #6: Promote urban forestry as a method for improving public health as well as the physical and built environment.
- + Sustained Public Engagement
 - + Strengthen community pride and build public trust by ensuring that pertinent information and success stories are widely communicated, and resident comments and observations are welcomed.
 - + Continue to make strides towards more inclusive and transparent decision-making practices.
 - + Make planning and public engagement fun and enjoyable, whenever possible.



City of Lowell 2019-2026 Open Space and Recreation Plan

- + Goal #1: Strengthen pedestrian connections throughout all neighborhoods to provide residents safer access to parks, open spaces, and the opportunity to walk for exercise and leisure.
 - + Incorporate public art on and along DPD, CASE sidewalks throughout the City, including temporary and permanent installations where appropriate. Include cyclic maintenance of permanent installations in a preventative maintenance plan.
- + Goal #4: Prioritize improved maintenance, security, and preservation of parks and open spaces across the City and enhance these spaces with the new amenities requested by residents.
 - + Continue to support the expansion of the City's Community Gardening Program and improve urban agricultural uses in the City.
 - + Increase vegetation and natural landscapes in more densely populated neighborhoods that have limited park spaces.
 - + Install more picnic tables at select park locations to provide more picnic locations at parks across the City.
 - + Introduce more interactive public art in parks. Include cyclic maintenance of permanent installations in preventative maintenance plan.

- + Goal #5: Streamline communication to the public about parks, open spaces, amenities, and events to increase knowledge of and access to these offerings.
 - + Add signage at parks - explaining the history of location names and background information about the location prior to the park's creation.
 - + Create designated walking tour routes with markers providing historic location information and clearly mapped routes of varying distances.
 - + Install maps at parks that show the locations of other parks and green spaces in the area and routes to follow to get there.
 - + Translate important signage and information about open space and recreational opportunities into other languages.
- + Goal #6: Increase recreational opportunities and modify existing parks and open spaces so that all residents regardless of age, ability, and neighborhood of residence can enjoy them.
 - + Action #13: Install a shade structure over the bocce court, renovate basketball court and skate park at Clemente Park.
 - + Pursue potential opportunities to access Western Canal from Clemente Park.

Project Phasing



Existing Conditions

- + 2 Bocce/Boule Courts (Completed 2022)
- + 7 Volleyball Pits
- + 2 Basketball Courts
- + Skate Park
- + Playground
- + Healing Garden
- + Concession Building/Restrooms
- + Pavilion



Phase 1

- + Upgraded Playground
- + Upgraded Basketball Court
- + ADA Paths + Rain Garden
- + Upgraded Benches, site furnishings throughout
- + 7 Upgraded Volleyball Pits, Reconfigured
- + Terraced seating and improved access along Middlesex Street sidewalk
- + Temporary Flex Space + Solar-Powered Public Art
- + Outdoor Market/Event Space



Phase 2

- + Playground Pavilion
- + Teen space (bench swings, climbing wall, social furniture)
- + Community Garden
- + Stage + Infrastructure
- + Storage for events
- + Upgraded Parking Lot
- + Fitness Equipment
- + Additional site furnishings

Phase I Scope + Cost Estimate

Design + Engineering (20% of estimated construction cost)	\$216,700.00
Community Engagement	\$500.00
Demolition + Site Preparation	\$50,000.00
7 New Volleyball Pits	\$120,000.00
1 New Basketball Court	\$60,000.00
Universally Accessible Playground w/ PIP Rubber Surface	\$600,000.00
Terraced Seating + Steps Along Middlesex Street	\$200,000.00
ADA-Accessible Paths	\$6,000.00
Signage	\$2,000.00
Trees/Landscaping/Rain Garden	\$15,000.00
Site Furnishings (Benches, Picnic Tables, Trash Cans, Bike Racks)	\$20,000.00
Public Art (Solar-Powered Art + Poetry Trail)	\$10,000.00
Total Estimated Construction Cost	\$1,083,500.00
Contingency (25% of estimated construction cost)	\$270,875.00
Phase 1 - Total Estimated Cost	\$1,571,075.00

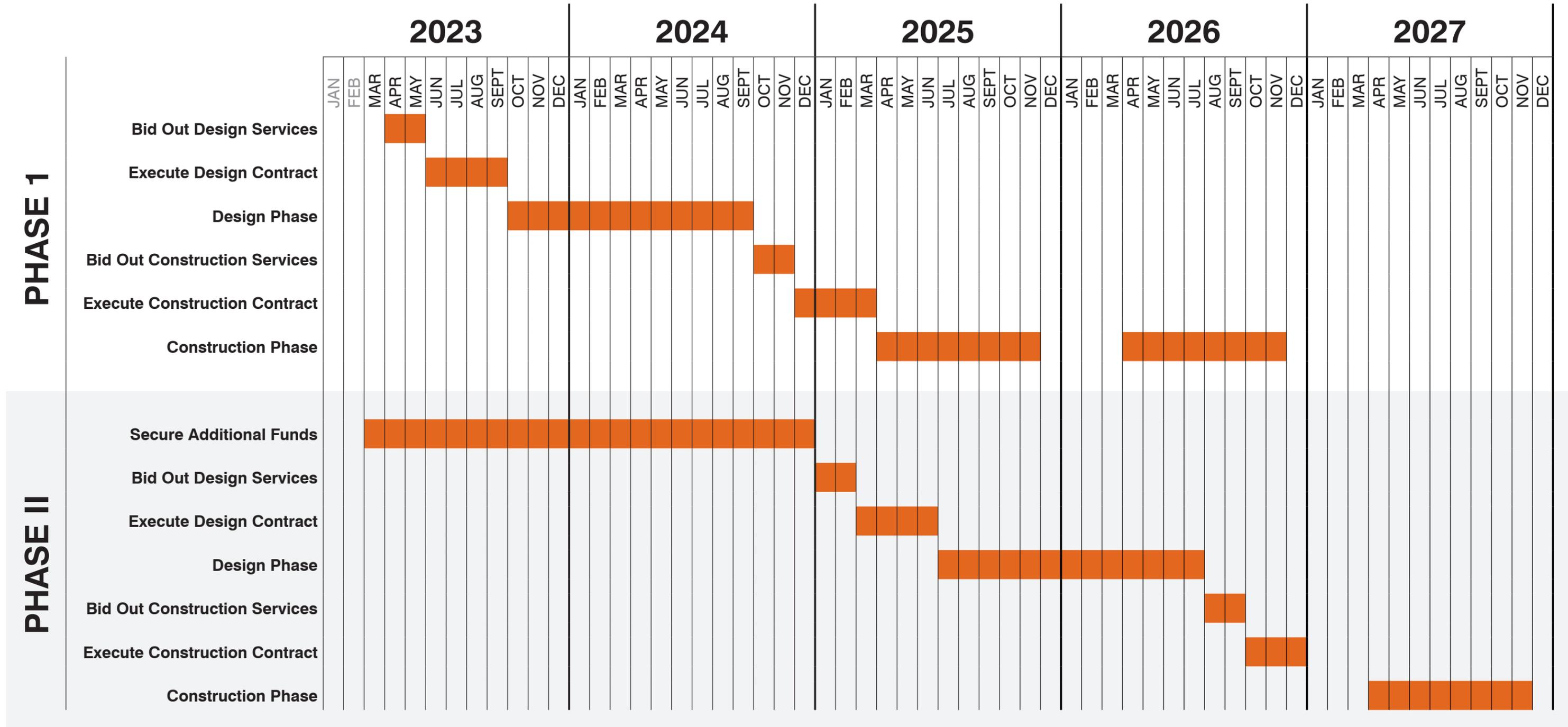
Available CPA Funding:	\$110,000
Available CDBG Funding:	\$500,000
Available ARPA Funding:	\$967,150
Total Available Funding:	\$1,577,150

Phase II Scope + Cost Estimate

Design + Engineering (20% of estimated construction cost)	\$571,200.00
Solar-Powered Picnic Pavillion	\$600,000.00
New Community Garden	\$20,000.00
Additional Site Furnishings (Benches, Picnic Tables, Trash Cans, Bike Racks)	\$20,000.00
Solar-Powered Stage	\$750,000.00
Event Infrastructure (lights, audio, etc.)	\$500,000.00
Storage	\$8,000.00
Murals	\$10,000.00
Climbing Wall	\$400,000.00
Bench Swings	\$400,000.00
Permeable Plaza	\$75,000.00
Fitness Stations	\$30,000.00
Resurface + Restripe Parking Lot	\$12,000.00
Trees/Landscaping	\$15,000.00
New Signage	\$6,000.00
Delivery	\$10,000.00
Total Estimated Construction Cost	\$2,856,000.00
Contingency (20% of estimated construction cost)	\$571,200.00
Phase 2 - Total Estimated Cost	\$3,998,400.00

Funding not yet secured, final scope and budget to be determined.

Timeline





MARKET
TODAY!