

THE PROCESS



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

HIGH FALLS STATE PARK

ROC THE RIVERWAY

1. Recharging the Trail
 2. Restore the Shore
 3. Water Landings
 4. Genesee Gateway
 5. Link to the River
 6. Bridge the Genesee
7. Riverside Development
 8. Arena on the River
 9. Aqueduct Re-imagined
 10. Library North Terrace
 11. Childs Basin
 12. ROC Convention Expansion
 13. Riverway Broad to Main
 14. Main Street Resurgence
 15. Riverway Main to Andrews
 16. Charles Carroll Plaza
 17. Riverfront Reborn
 18. Mill Street Connection
 19. Bridge the Loop
 20. Welcome Connection
21. Over the Falls Bridge
 22. Preserving Pont de Rennes
 23. Tree Top Trail
 24. Bee Bee Flats
 25. Connect the Gorge
 26. High Falls Adventure
 27. Running Track Bridge
 28. Downtown / Riverfront Management Entity
(Not on Map)



ROC the Riverway
Source: City of Rochester

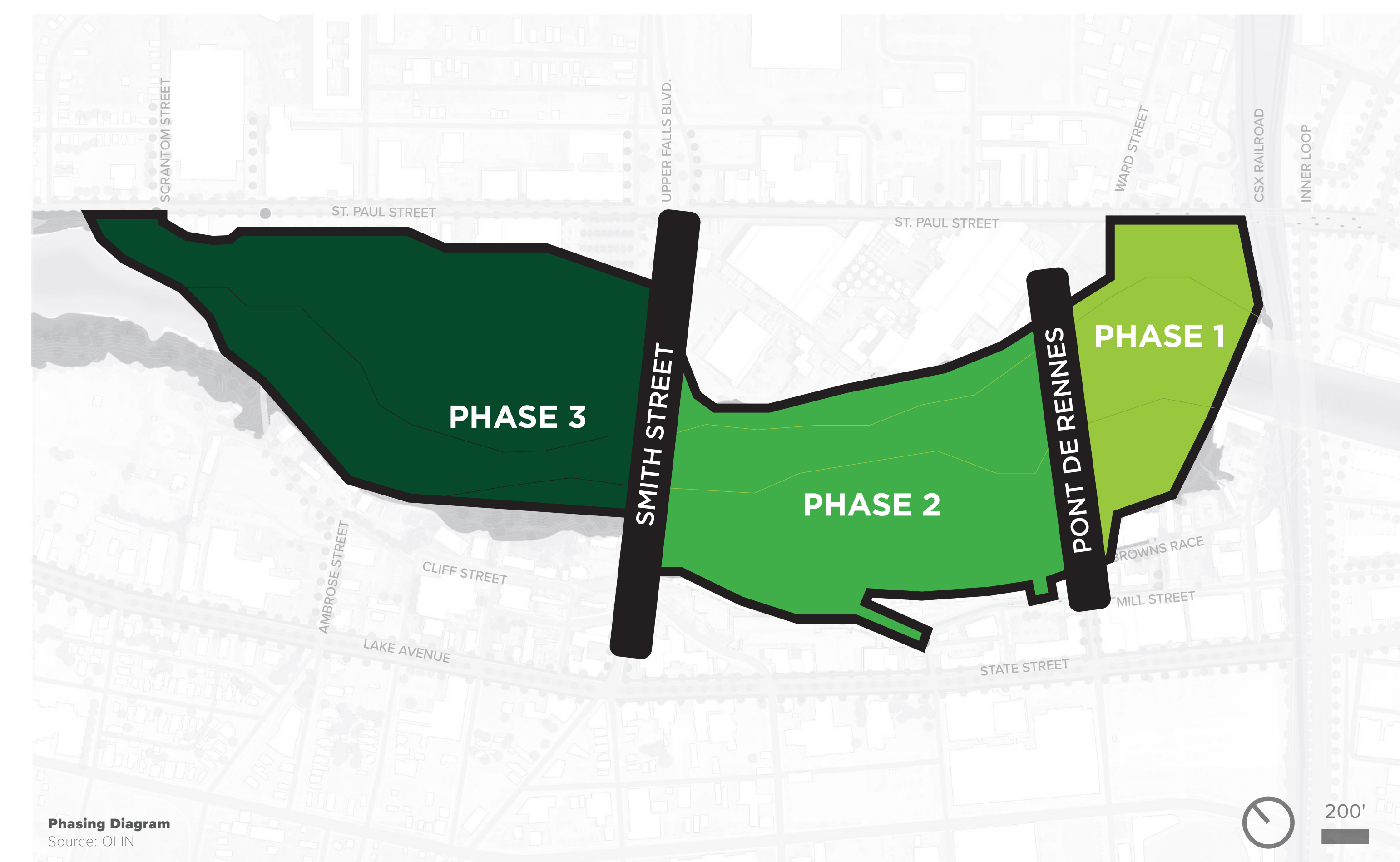
STATE PARK PROCESS



In Summer 2024, Empire State Development (ESD), New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP), and a multidisciplinary consultant team led by OLIN began the planning, design, and implementation process for High Falls State Park. Over approximately eight years, the team will complete a three-phase process:

- » Development of a framework plan to guide design and construction of the park.
- » Preliminary technical design and permitting, including environmental review and targeted early activation opportunities.
- » Final design documentation and construction will likely be phased due to the project's scale and the complexities of ongoing site remediation and acquisition. Similarly, the park will be open to the public in phases before the completion of the entire 40-acre State Park.

PHASING PROCESS



PHASE 1 focuses on the gorge immediately downstream of High Falls and improvements to High Falls Terrace.

PHASE 2 transforms the former industrial lands on the west side of the gorge and connects the park to the Brown's Race district.

PHASE 3 completes High Falls State Park with the east side of the gorge and connections to the Genesee River Trail towards Lower Falls.

2025 FRAMEWORK PLAN



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

HIGH FALLS STATE PARK



WEST

- 1 TERRACE PARKING
- 2 TERRACE OVERLOOK
- 3 TRAIN TRESTLE WALK
- 4 ISLAND OVERLOOK
- 5 ISLAND BRIDGE
- 6 HYDRO OVERLOOK
- 7 SOUTH LAWN
- 8 TAIL RACE
- 9 SCRAMBLE STEPS
- 10 WEST PLAYGROUND
- 11 BEEBEE STATION WALK
- 12 WEST LAWN

- 13 WOODLAND GROVE
- 14 INCINERATOR PLAZA
- 15 SMOKESTACK

EAST

- 16 PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- 17 RIVER LOUNGE
- 18 RELIC GARDEN
- 19 OBSERVATION DECK
- 20 EAST LAWN
- 21 EAST PLAYGROUND
- 22 MEADOW OPENING
- 23 WOODLAND GROVE
- 24 FOREST LOOKOUT
- 25 RIVER OVERLOOK
- 26 SCRAMBLE STEPS
- 27 EVERGREEN PARK

- GATEWAYS
- ROAD
- BOULEVARD
- PEDESTRIAN PATH
- PARK PATH
- TRAILS
- SCRAMBLES
- OPENING
- AMENITIES / STRUCTURE
- GATHERING SPACE



WALK-THROUGH

TAKE A WALK THROUGH HIGH FALLS STATE PARK



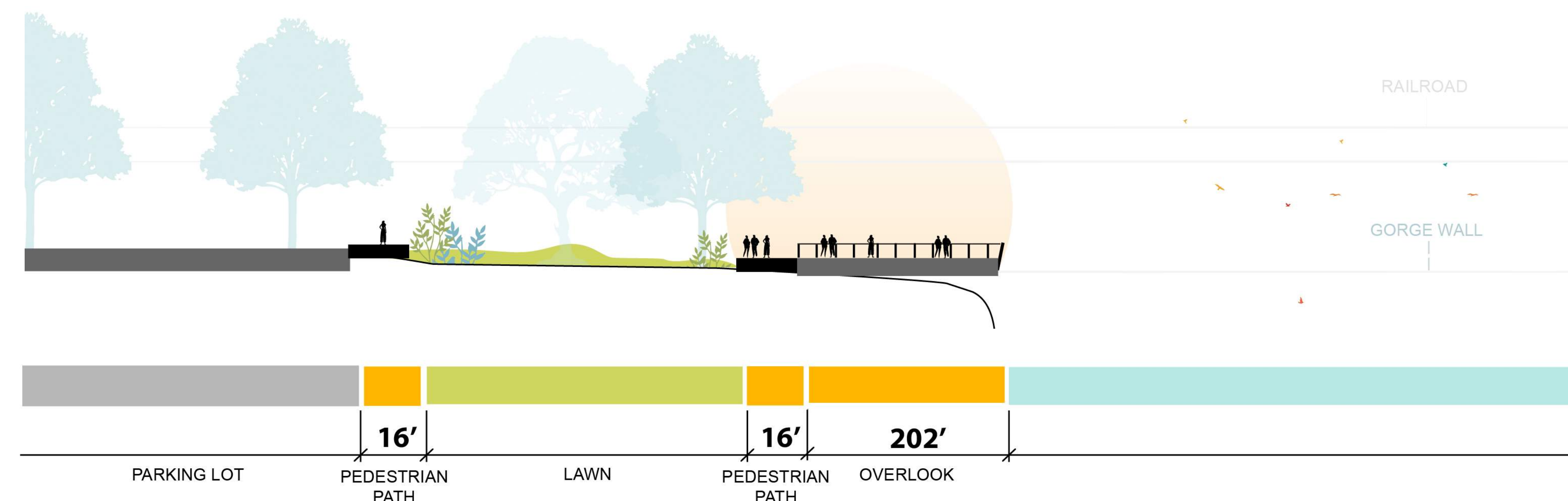
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|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 HIGH FALLS TERRACE OVERLOOK | ● GATEWAYS | — TRAILS |
| 2 ISLAND OVERLOOK | ■ ROAD | ■ SCRAMBLES |
| 3 BEEBEE STATION WALK | ■ BOULEVARD | ■ OPENING |
| 4 WEST PLAYGROUND | — PEDESTRIAN PATH | □ AMENITIES / STRUCTURE |
| 5 WEST LAWN | — PARK PATH | ■ GATHERING SPACE |
| 6 INCINERATOR PLAZA | | |
| 7 PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE | | |
| 8 RELIC GARDEN | | |
| 9 WOODLAND GROVE | | |

NOTE: Feature names are placeholder titles based on visual landmarks and existing site elements; final park nomenclature to be determined.

HIGH FALLS TERRACE OVERLOOK



From this overlook, visitors are offered a striking orientation toward the power and scale of High Falls, with panoramic views of the gorge, the river below, and the surrounding city.



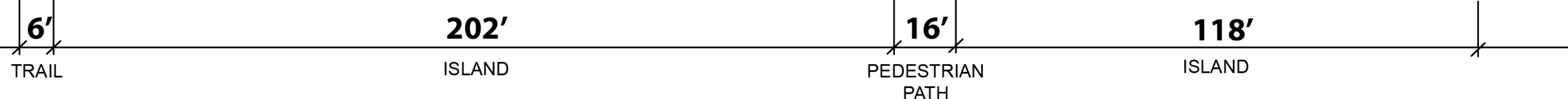


WALK-THROUGH

ISLAND OVERLOOK



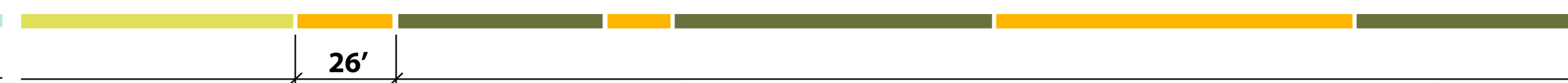
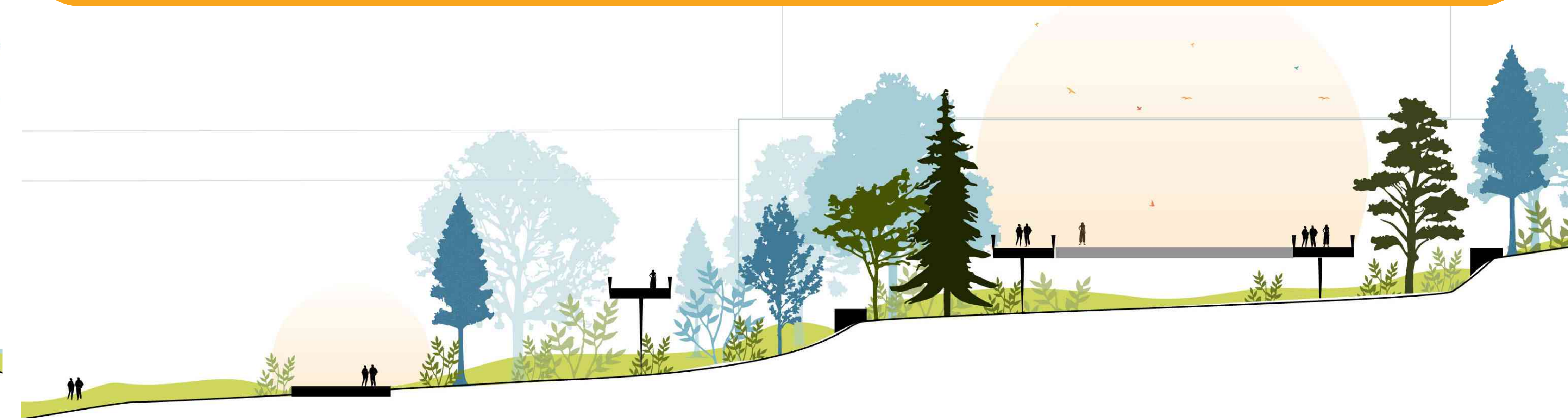
This overlook offers a powerful moment of orientation, drawing the eye toward the dramatic cascade of High Falls and immersing visitors in the ever-changing energy of the landscape.



BEEBEE STATION WALK



The Beebee Station Walk connects visitors to Rochester's industrial past, tracing the site of RG&E's massive power plant. For over 50 years, the plant spanned eight acres, rising from the gorge floor to tower over Platt Street—an iconic symbol of the city's industrial legacy.





WALK-THROUGH

WEST LAWN



A welcoming, flexible lawn that supports a wide range of passive and active uses throughout the year. From picnics and casual play to seasonal events and community gatherings, this open space invites people to relax, connect, and enjoy the park in every season.



LAWN

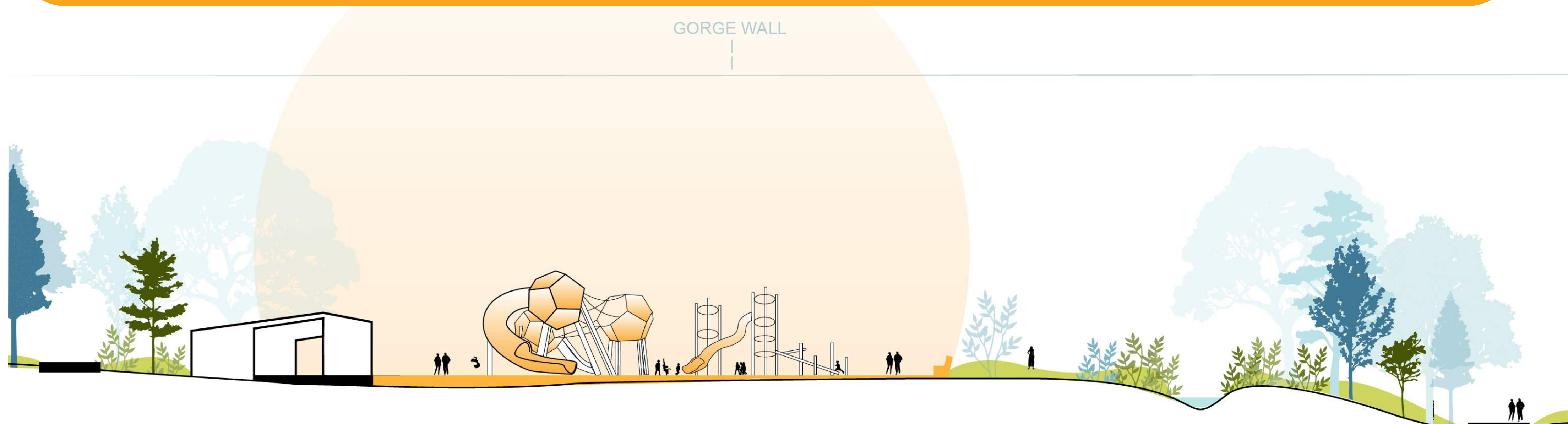
20'
EPHEMERAL STREAM -
HISTORIC RACE

LAWN

WEST PLAYGROUND



A wonderful opportunity for families to enjoy the park, a destination for play, learning, and exploration. This is one of the two destination playgrounds in the project. Thoughtfully designed for all ages and abilities, the playground invites curiosity and connection, offering a joyful entry point into the larger park experience.



16'
18'
SHARED
PATH GROVE

224'
PLAYGROUND

60'
GROVE

16'
EPHEMERAL
STREAM -
HISTORIC
RACE

60'
GROVE

16'
SHARED
PATH

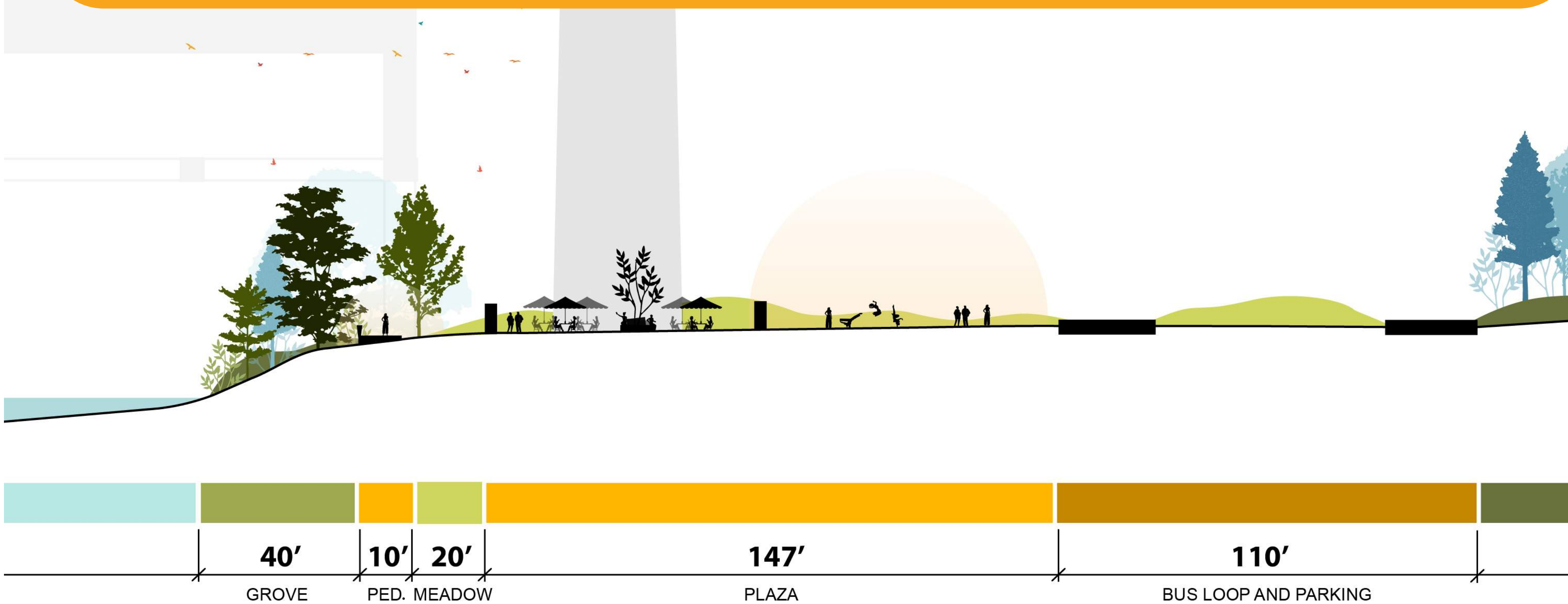


WALK-THROUGH

INCINERATOR PLAZA



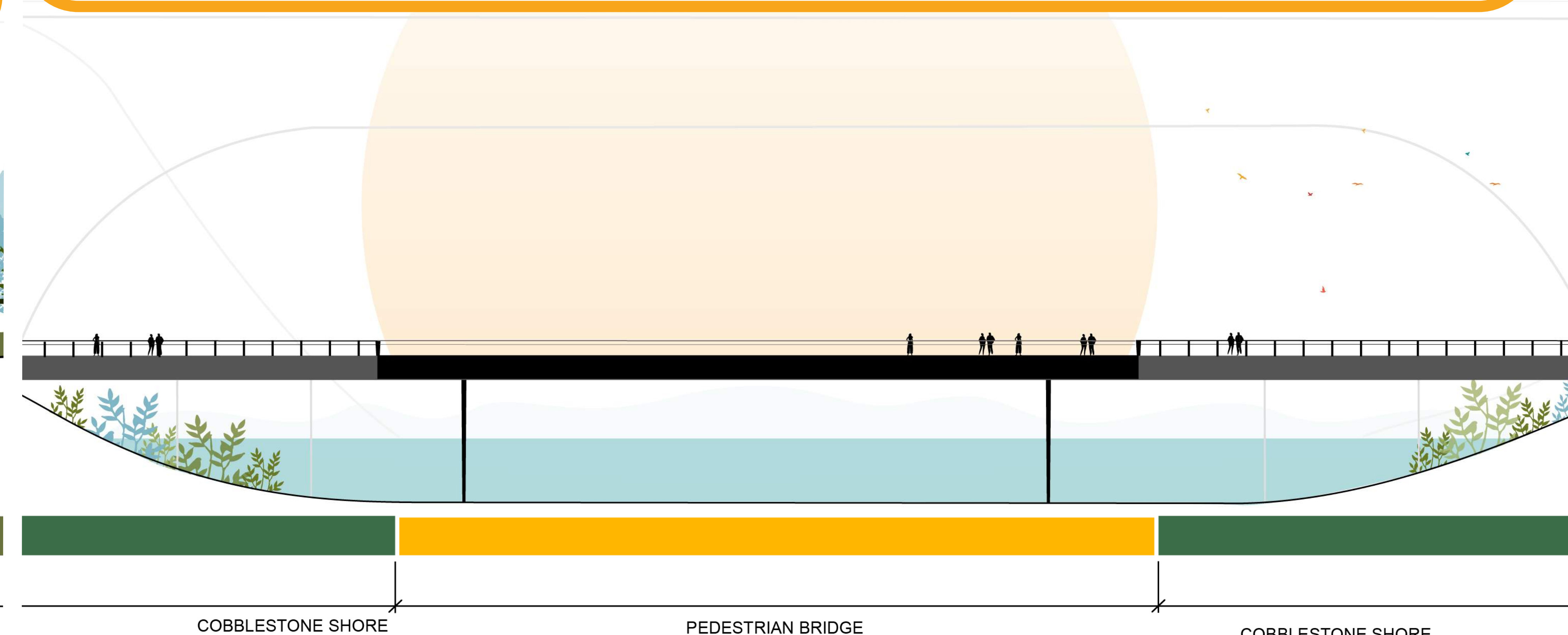
An industrial relic reimagined as a striking public space, Incinerator Plaza preserves and recreates portions of the historic structure to honor the site's layered heritage. This partially retained form provides a dramatic and iconic backdrop for events, performances, and gatherings.



PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE



A central connector within the park, the Pedestrian Bridge links the east and west sides, creating a seamless experience across the gorge. This elevated walkway offers dramatic panoramic views of the river and the surrounding landscape.



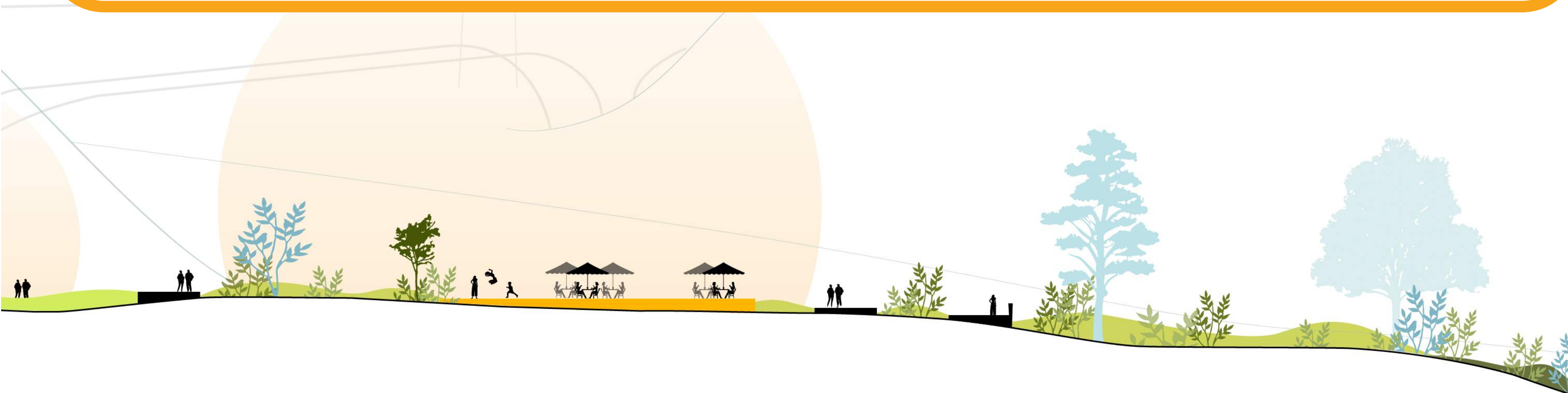


WALK-THROUGH

RELIC GARDEN



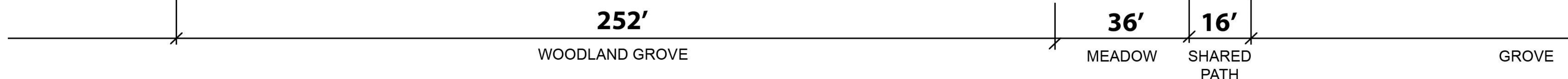
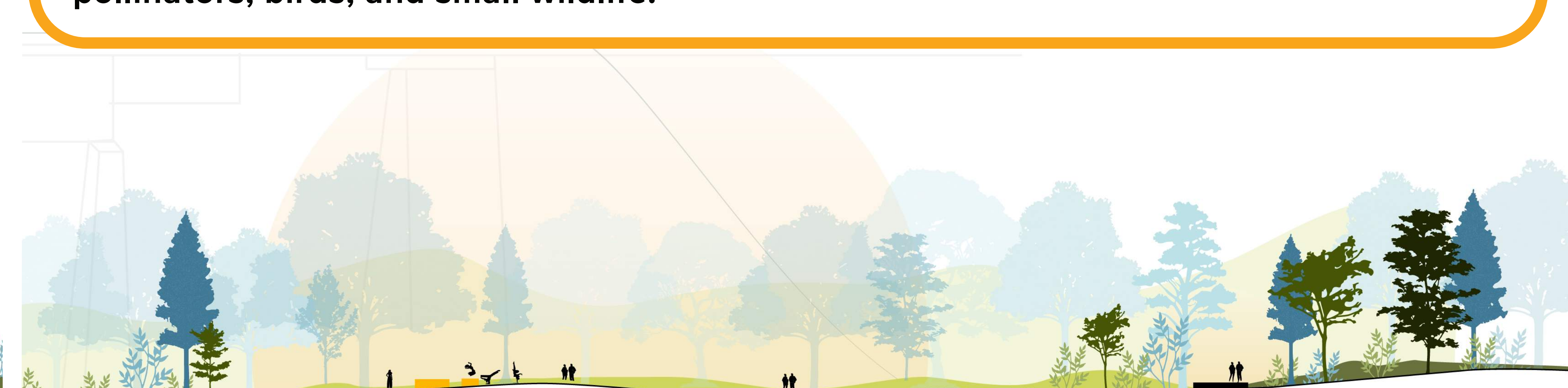
The relic garden honors an iconic footprint of the old RG&E gas holding tanks from a prior industrial era. The garden will tell the story of how the former industrial site was adapted into a place for community gatherings within an ecological setting.



WOODLAND GROVE



Nestled within the woodland, the groves create moments of openness that invite light into the forest canopy—supporting a greater diversity of plant and animal life. These sunlit pockets enhance habitat variety, encouraging native flora to thrive and attracting pollinators, birds, and small wildlife.



FRAMEWORK PLAN FEEDBACK



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

HIGH FALLS STATE PARK

EXAMPLES OF INTERPRETIVE FEEDBACK WE HAVE HEARD:

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND IDENTITY

INDIGENOUS ROOTS

Honoring the Seneca Nation's stewardship and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

INDUSTRIAL AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

Celebrating Rochester's identity as a hub for mills and technical innovation, alongside progressive leaders like Frederick Douglas and Susan B. Anthony.

DIVERSE NARRATIVES

Representing a broad multicultural history including Black history, women's rights, and multiple eras of immigration.

EDUCATION, EQUITY, AND ENVIRONMENT

THE PARK AS A CLASSROOM

Creating outdoor classrooms and guided paths focused on ecological restoration and the intersection of nature and industry.

IMMERSIVE STORYTELLING

Utilizing graphical storytelling systems and interpretive signage to engage visitors.

EQUITABLE CONTEXT

Acknowledging the impacts of the Inner Loop development and the historical distribution of natural resources.

WHICH EXPERIENCE FROM THE WALK-THROUGH ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED IN?

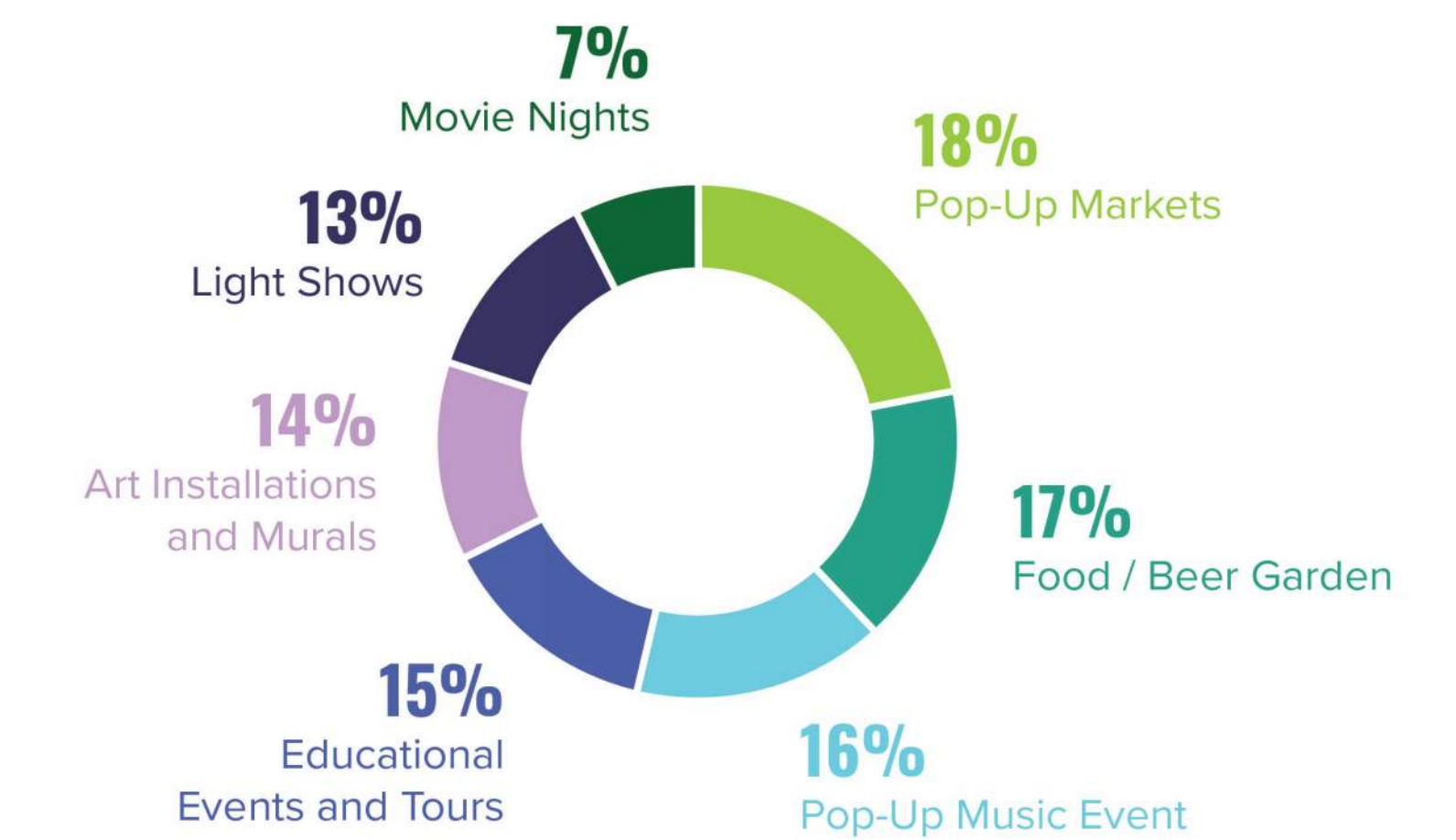


NEARLY 300 RESPONSES!

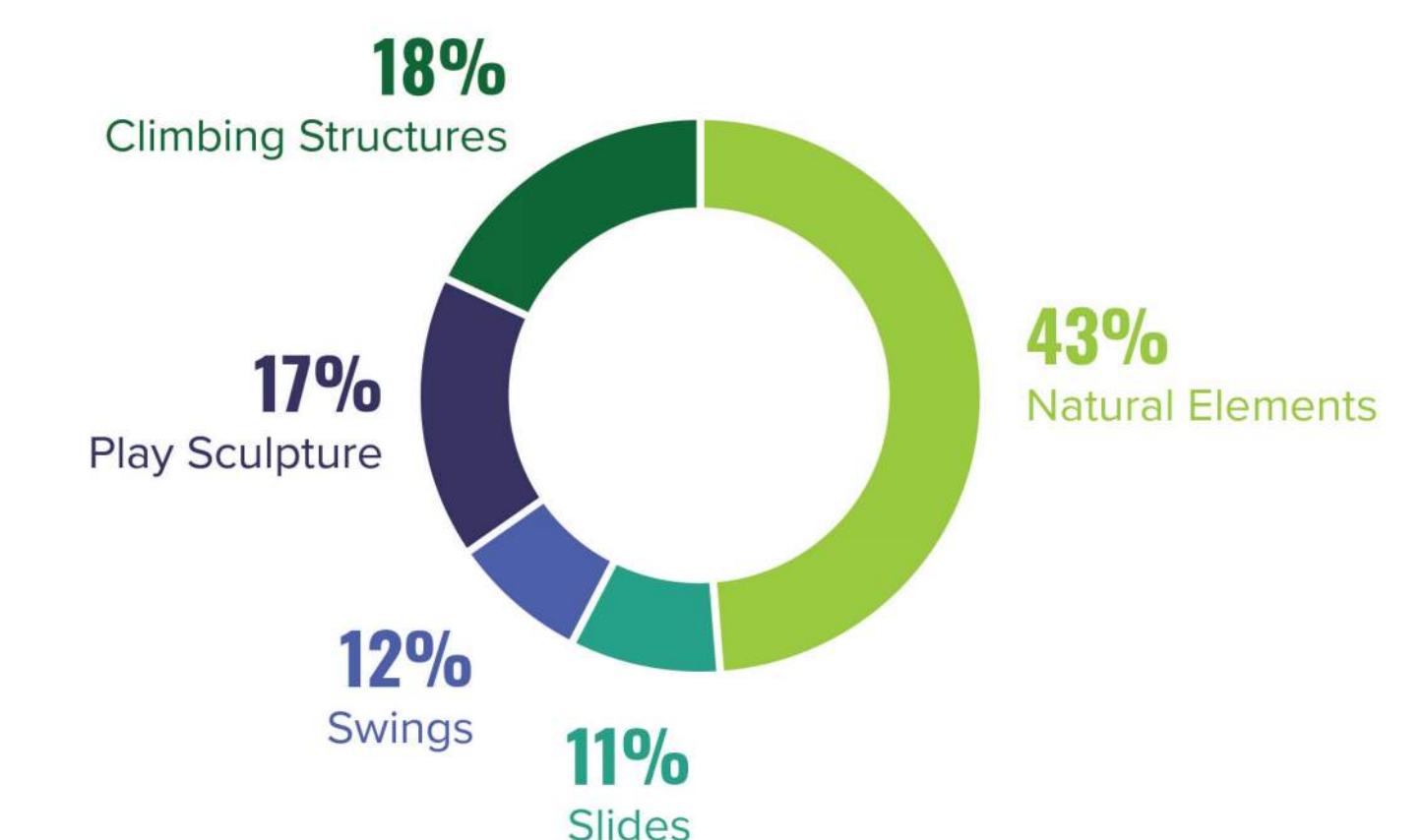
ANYTHING WE MISSED?



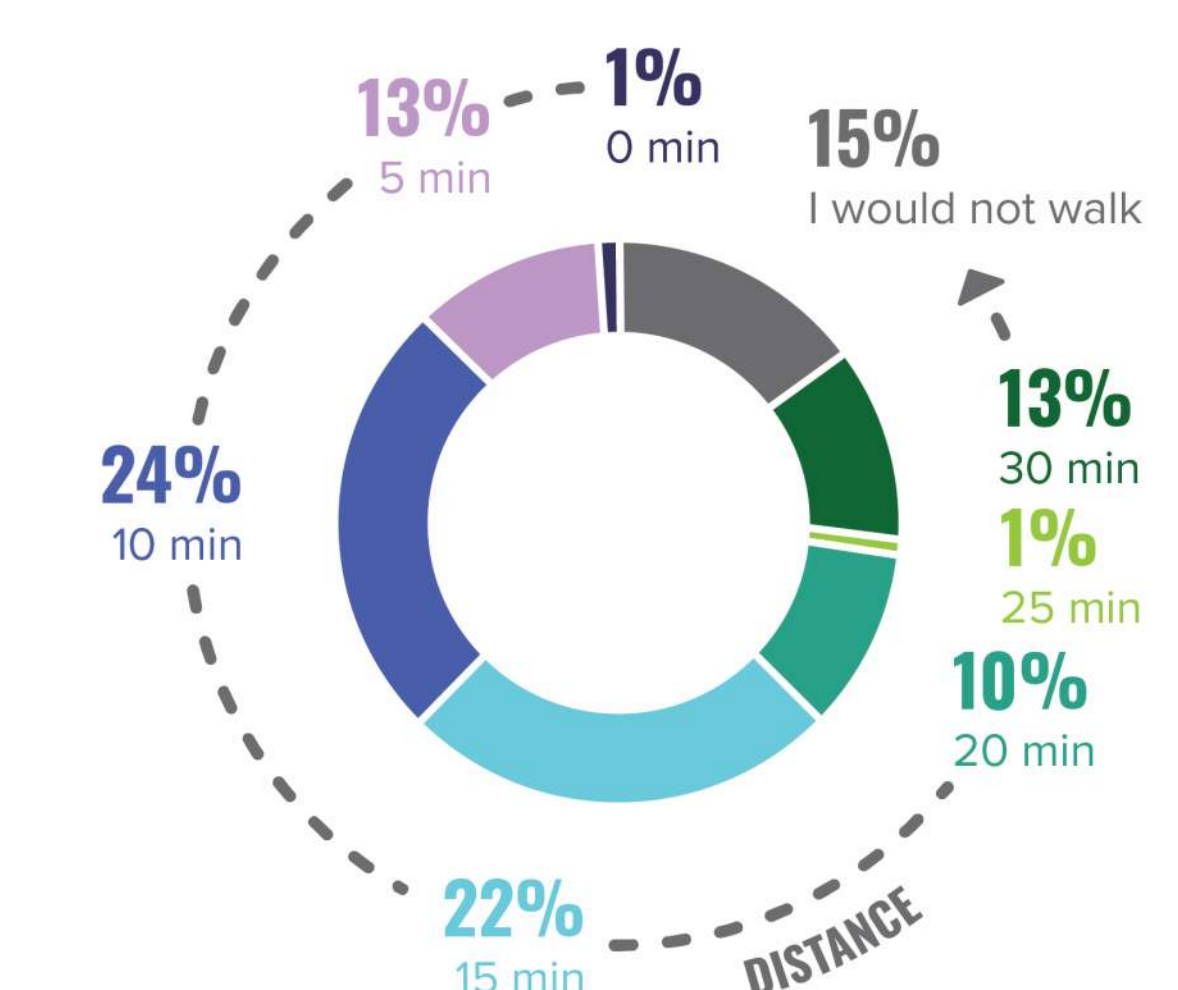
WHAT TYPES OF EARLY IMPROVEMENTS AND EVENTS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AT HIGH FALLS STATE PARK?



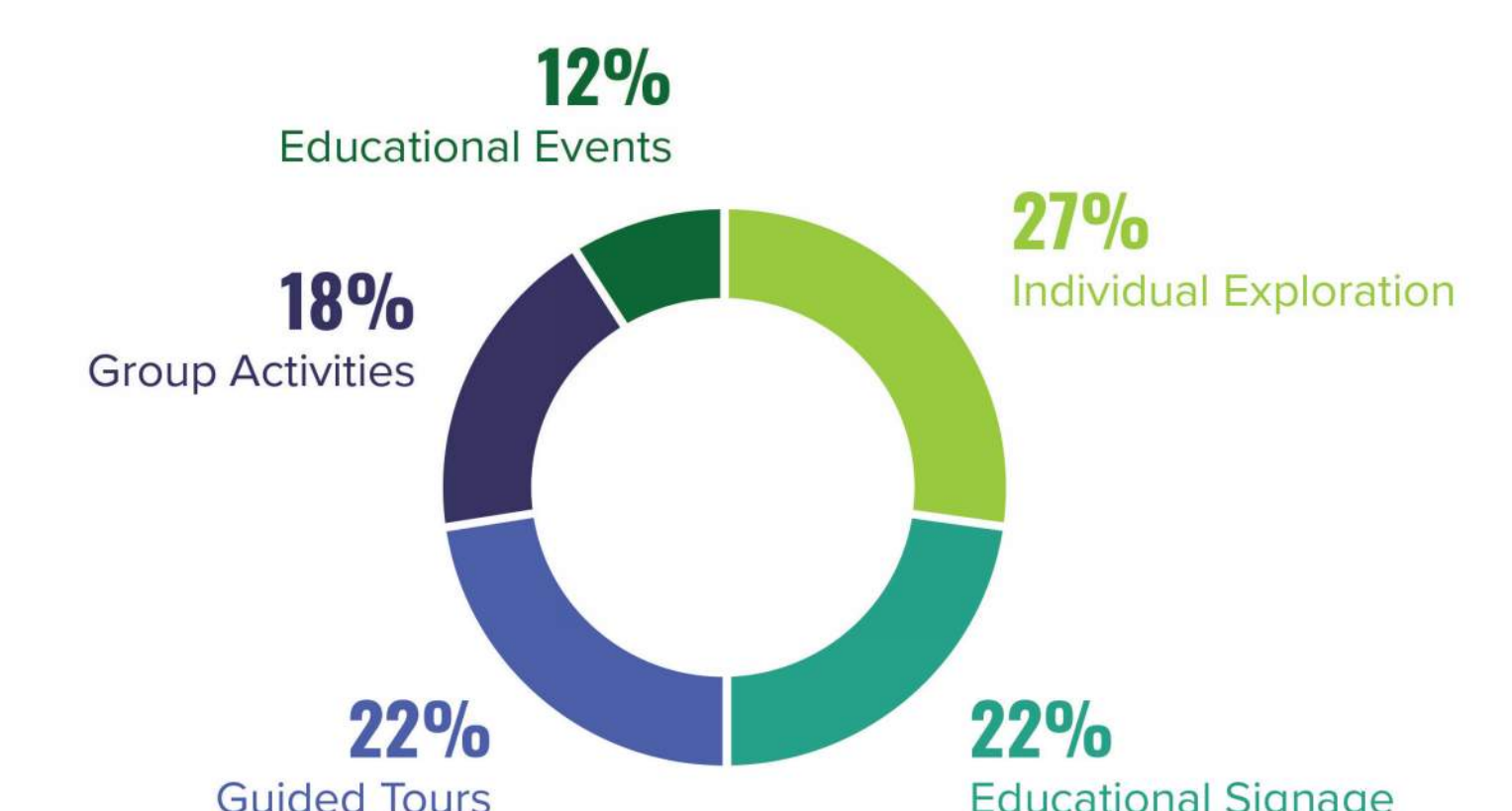
WHAT TYPES OF PLAY ELEMENTS ARE YOU INTERESTED IN?



HOW FAR WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO WALK TO VISIT A DESTINATION PLAYGROUND?



WHAT TYPES OF EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES ARE YOU INTERESTED IN?



HIGH FALLS TERRACE ERAS



INDIGENOUS ROOTS AND EARLY SETTLEMENT (PRE-1840s)

Pre-1788

The site is part of the territory of the Seneca People and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. The falls served as a significant natural landmark for the indigenous population.

1820s

Following the Phelps and Gorham Purchase, the site remained an undeveloped plateau. While the west bank industrialized, this “wild” east bank became the primary vantage point for early travelers to view High Falls.



“FALLS FIELD” ENTERTAINMENT ERA (1847-1886)

1847

The site is named “Falls Field” and began hosting traveling circuses.

1876

John Meinhard transformed the property into a Victorian pleasure garden featuring a zoo, bowling alley, and Rochester’s first merry-go-round.

1880s

The park reached peak popularity as a transit hub where trains stopped specifically for tourists to pay five cents to enjoy the view.



INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (1886-Late 20th Century)

1886

The park was sold for railway development, ending the entertainment era.

1890s-1970s

The site was heavily industrialized with rail lines, coal trestles, and utility structures, completely cutting off public access to the river gorge.



PUBLIC RECLAMATION & REVITALIZATION (1990s-Present)

1990s

The City of Rochester reclaimed the post-industrial land and formally converted it into a public municipal park to support the “High Falls Entertainment District” developing across the river.

2012

The Genesee Brew House opened adjacent to the park, re-anchoring the area as a tourist destination.

2018

New York State launched “ROC the Riverway,” funding major renovations to modernize the site.

2023

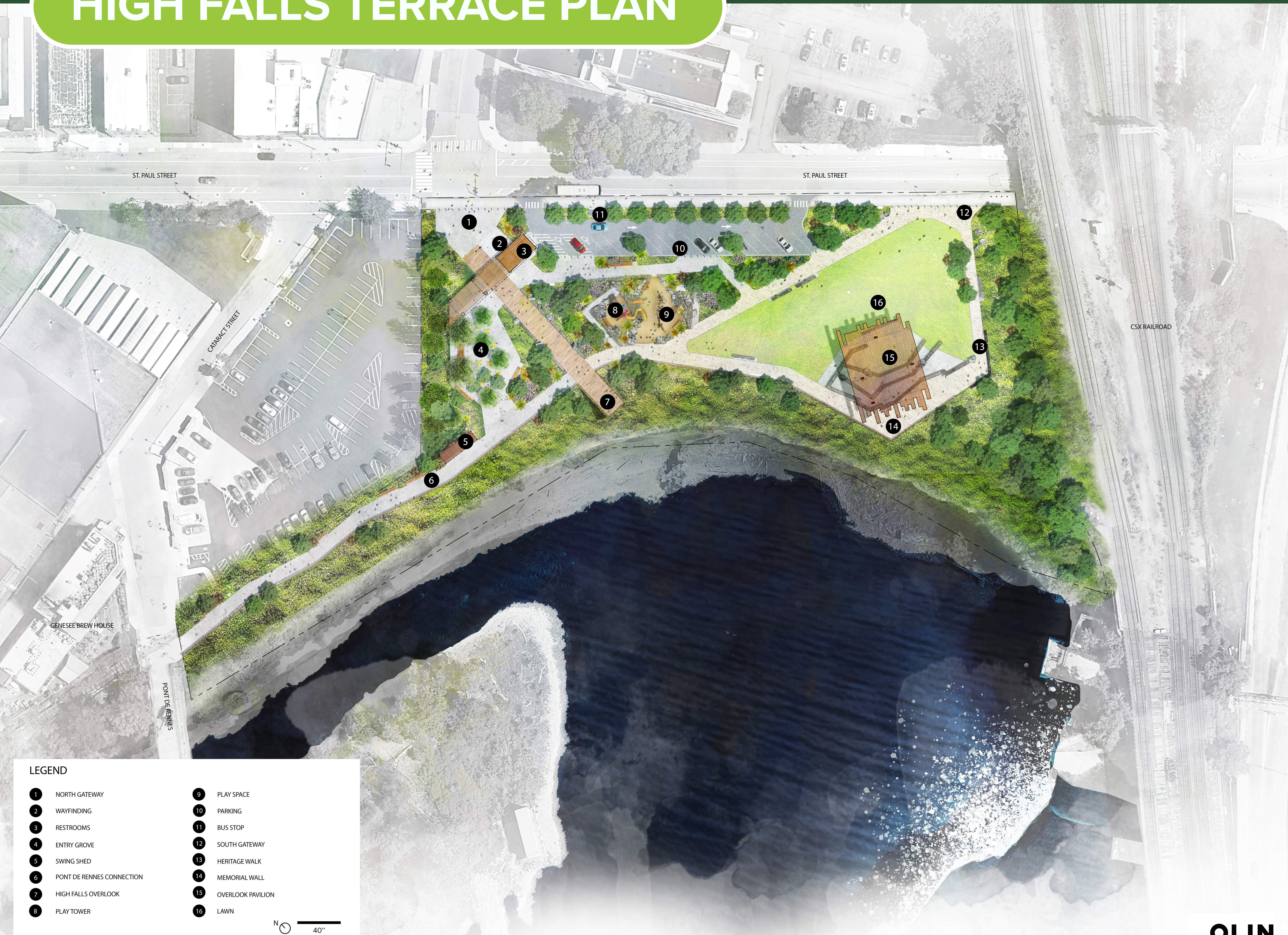
High Falls Terrace Park renovations are complete.

HIGH FALLS TERRACE PLAN



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

HIGH FALLS STATE PARK



ST. PAUL STREET

ST. PAUL STREET

CANTRACT STREET

CSX RAILROAD

GENESEE BREW HOUSE

PONT DE RENNES

LEGEND

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|----|-------------------|
| 1 | NORTH GATEWAY | 9 | PLAY SPACE |
| 2 | WAYFINDING | 10 | PARKING |
| 3 | RESTROOMS | 11 | BUS STOP |
| 4 | ENTRY GROVE | 12 | SOUTH GATEWAY |
| 5 | SWING SHED | 13 | HERITAGE WALK |
| 6 | PONT DE RENNES CONNECTION | 14 | MEMORIAL WALL |
| 7 | HIGH FALLS OVERLOOK | 15 | OVERLOOK PAVILION |
| 8 | PLAY TOWER | 16 | LAWN |



AERIAL VIEW



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

HIGH FALLS STATE PARK



PROPOSED OVERLOOKS



New York State
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Historic Preservation

HIGH FALLS STATE PARK

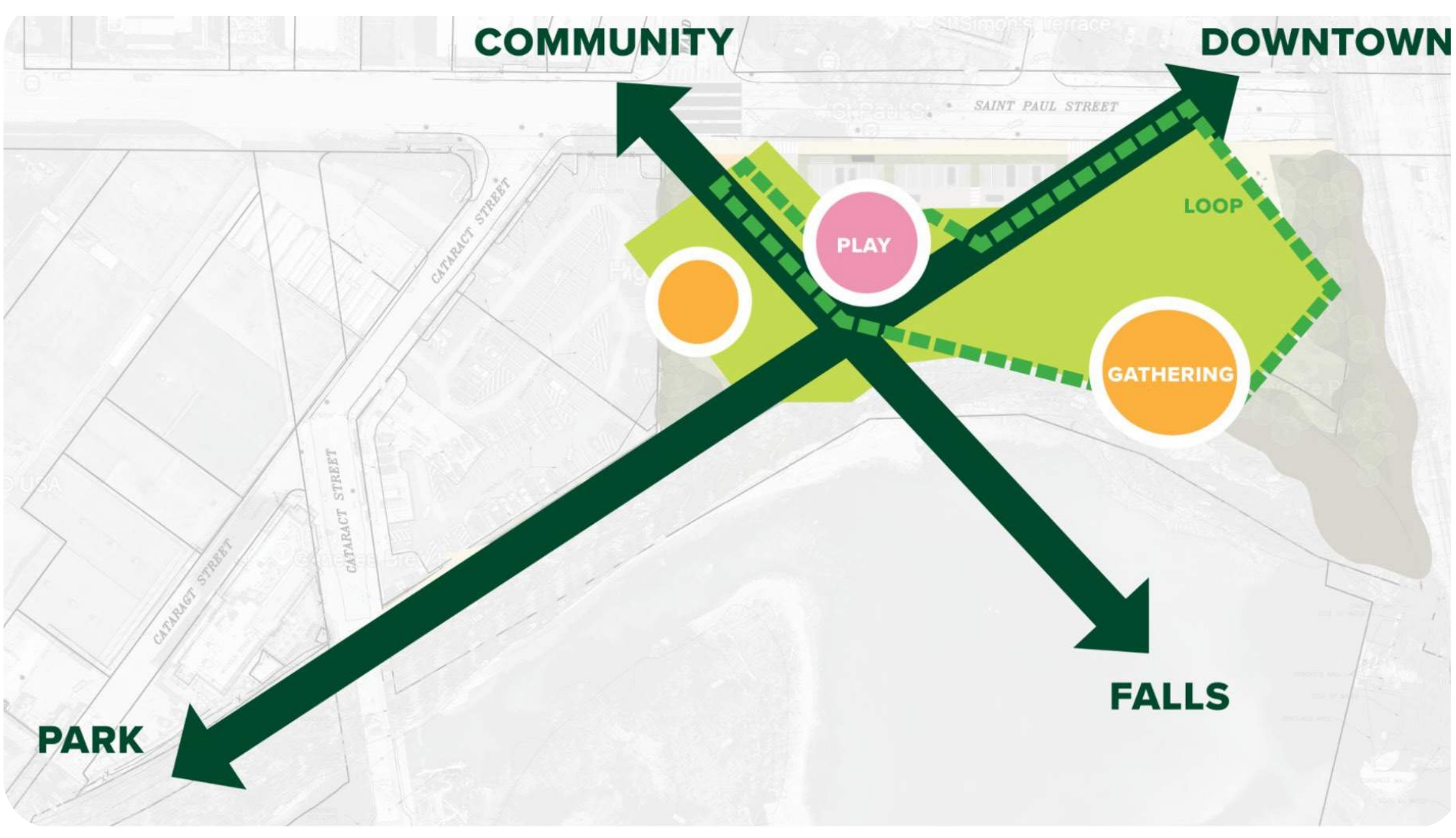




CIRCULATION & MATERIALS

CIRCULATION CONCEPT

High Falls Terrace creates strong connections between the Community, Downtown, the Falls, and the Park. An accessible path network and central loop promote freedom of movement, while the layout prioritizes a gorge-view gathering space and places play areas adjacent to the community and parking for maximum ease of access.



- LEGEND**
- RESTROOM
 - BICYCLE PARKING
 - BUS STOP
 - STEPS
 - ACCESSIBLE CIRCULATION
 - SEATING
 - COMPANION SEATING
 - WALL
 - GUARDRAIL / FENCE



STONE PAVING



WOOD DECKING



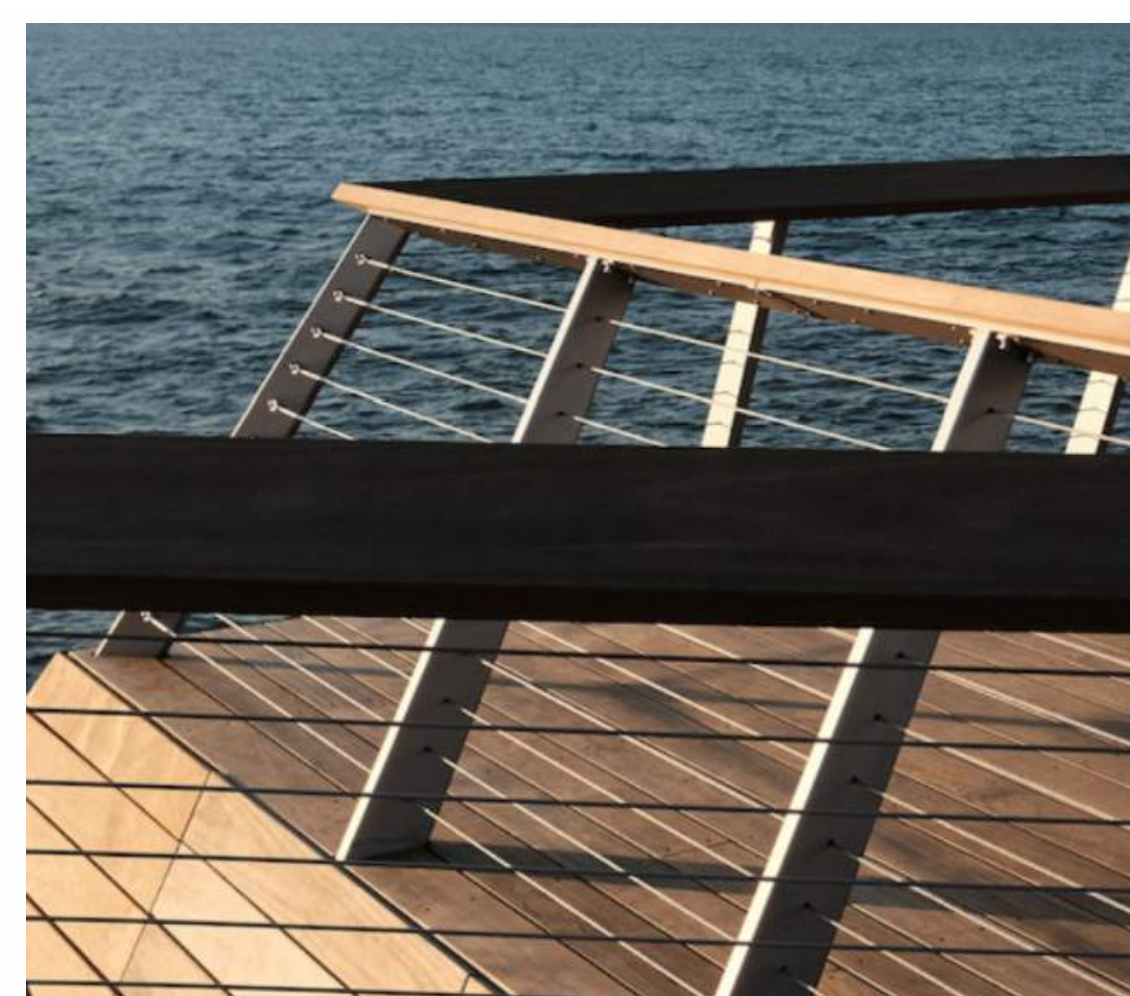
CONCRETE



PLAY SURFACING



ASPHALT



STEEL

HERITAGE WALK

Uniquely positioned with a view of the Falls that spurred Rochester's industrial growth, the Heritage Walk will be a memorial centered on immigration and the migration of people to Rochester. The memorial will highlight the lived experience of the people who sought a better life in Rochester's factories and neighborhoods through themes of past (memories of original homelands), present (daily life in Rochester), and future (aspirations for themselves and their families). The Heritage Walk will be the first phase of a larger Heritage Trail that will traverse High Falls State Park and interpret the many stories and cultures that shaped this historic site.

HIGH FALLS INTERPRETIVE PRINCIPLES

1) CONSULTATION FIRST

Authenticity Through Consultation

Parks will partner directly with organizations and local experts to ensure narratives are led by the people who lived them.

2) SITE SPECIFICITY

Right Story, Right Place

Every interpretive element should have a direct historical link to the High Falls site to maintain and emphasize a sense of place.

3) PARK INTEGRATION

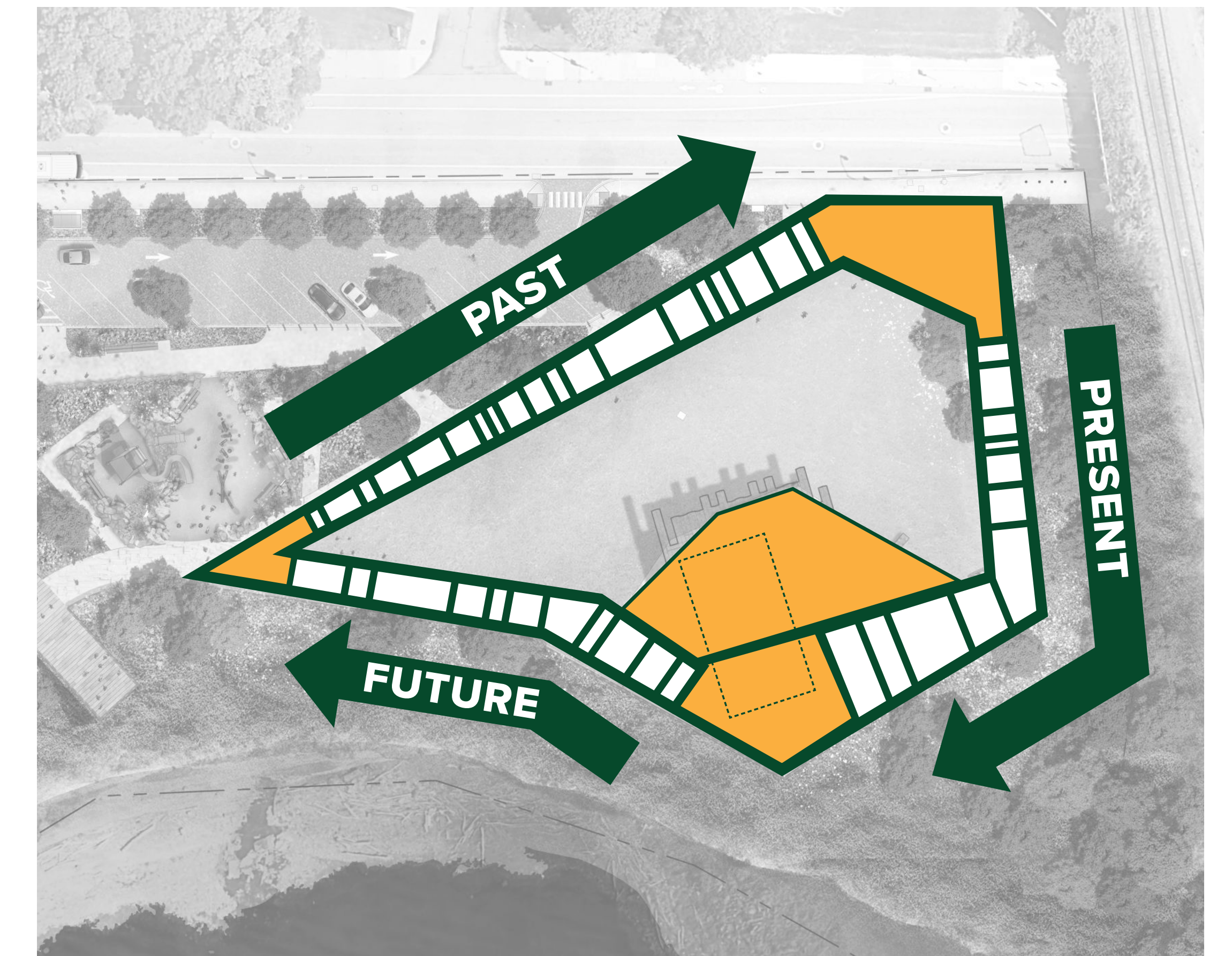
Landscape is the Monument

The design will avoid standalone objects in favor of embedded narratives. History is woven into the functional DNA of the park: the park, the seating, the lighting, and the relics.

4) REGIONAL COORDINATION

Complementing, Not Competing

High Falls State Park will tell stories that complement rather than duplicate nearby historical sites.

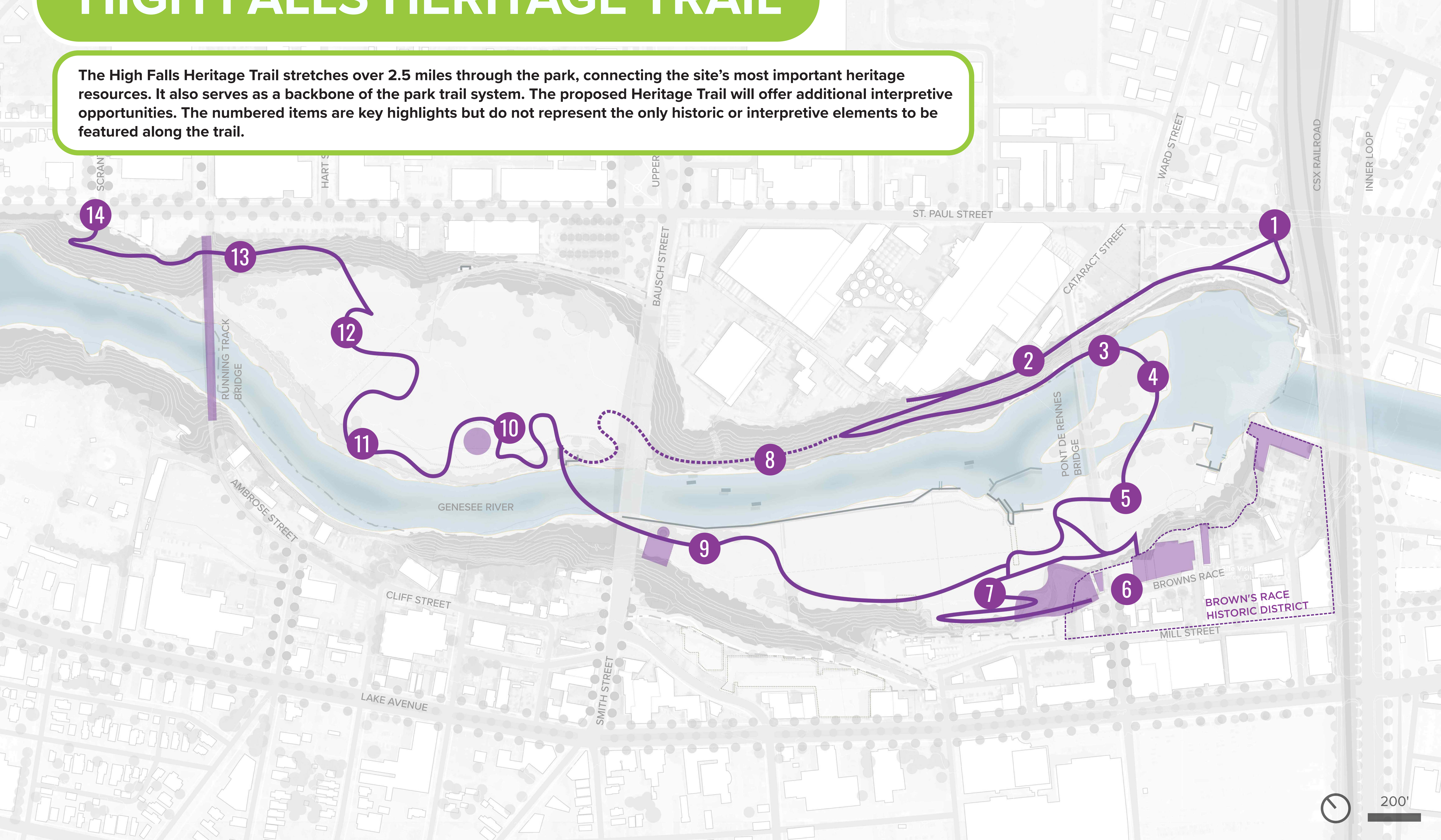


Content shown is illustrative. Final signage and text will be developed through a collaborative consultation process.



HIGH FALLS HERITAGE TRAIL

The High Falls Heritage Trail stretches over 2.5 miles through the park, connecting the site's most important heritage resources. It also serves as a backbone of the park trail system. The proposed Heritage Trail will offer additional interpretive opportunities. The numbered items are key highlights but do not represent the only historic or interpretive elements to be featured along the trail.



- 1** HERITAGE WALK AT HIGH FALLS TERRACE
- 4** HIGH FALLS VIEW
- 7** BEEBEE STATION WALK
- 10** STORAGE TANK FOUNDATIONS
- 13** RUNNING TRACK BRIDGE VIEW
- 2** BREWERY TRAIL TRESTLE
- 5** BROWNS RACE VIEW
- 8** SMOKESTACK AND INCINERATOR PLAZA
- 11** WEST GORGE WALL VIEW
- 14** FINISH AT EVERGREEN PARK
- 3** EAST GORGE WALL VIEW
- 6** WATERWORKS BUILDING
- 9** BREWERY TRAIL EXTENSIONS
- 12** BAUSCH+ LOMB SITE

HIGH FALLS HERITAGE TRAIL

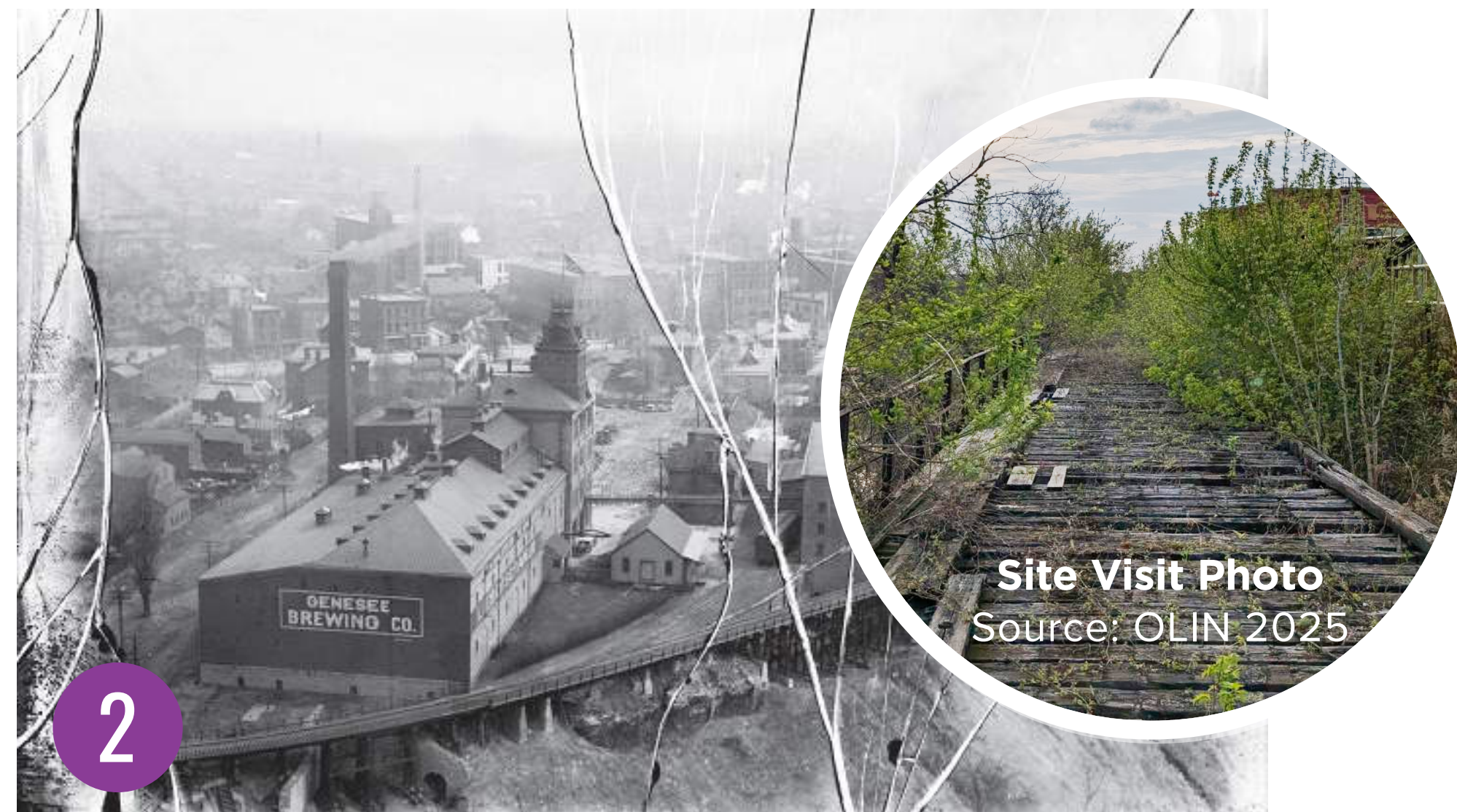


New York State
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Historic Preservation

HIGH FALLS STATE PARK

1 HERITAGE WALK AT HIGH FALLS TERRACE

This area of the park provides a view from across the gorge to the Browns Race Historic District where the gorge walls were altered by numerous mills.



Genesee Brewery and Train Trail, 1917
Source: Albert R. Stone Negative Collection, RMSC

2 BREWERY TRESTLE

The elevated walkway offers a unique walking experience along the gorge wall. Following the trail, visitors arrive at an island with an immersive view of the waterfall.



High Falls, 1875-1880
Source: T.X. Grasso's "Geology and Industrial History of the Rochester Gorge, Part One", Rochester History, LIV (4), 1992.

3 EAST GORGE WALL VIEW

A portion of an industrial train track will be repurposed into a pedestrian friendly walkway. This trail wraps the popular Genesee Brewery warehouses with panoramic views to the river and the park.

4 WATERFALL VIEW

Located on the island at the bottom of the gorge, this viewing deck provides a 360-degree view to this post-industrial park of great cultural, geological, and ecological interest.



Looking at the backs of several mills and factories, 1880
Source: Tim O'Connell, Maps and Surveys Dept., City of Rochester

5 BROWN'S RACE VIEW

At the bottom of the park, visitors can look up towards the post-industrial gorge wall. The gorge walls were altered by multiple mills during the industrial era of the site and later by a natural adaptation process.

6 WATERWORKS BUILDING

The Waterworks Building is a key attraction in the Browns Race area. As part of the Park Campus, it serves as a major exhibit space, visitor center, and ecology center, telling the story of the park's evolution.



RG&E Beebee Station Demo, 2016
Source: The RochesterSubway

7 BEEBEE STATION WALK

For over 50 years, the Beebee Power Plant occupied an 8-acre site along the High Falls gorge. The station was developed in the late 1800s and used as a coal and oil-fired electrical generation plant. It was demolished in the 2010s.

8 SMOKESTACK AND INCINERATOR

The smokestack next to the incinerator building is the last of the kind in the Rochester area from the Industrial Era. The smokestack is a landmark visible from most of the park and the city beyond.



Incinerator And Coal Gasification Construction Looking Southeast, 1920s
Source: Albert R. Stone Negative Collection, RMSC

9 GORGE TRAIL

This footpath provides a more direct connection between High Falls Terrace Park and the East part of the park.

10 STORAGE TANKS

The ghost footprint of the former industrial facility is revealed through the design of the garden space in this area.



Historic Photo looking from RG&E gas holding tanks to the south, 1947
Source: Rochester Public Library Picture File, Local History & Genealogy Division, Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County N.Y.

11 WEST GORGE WALL VIEW

The geological strata is visible at the west gorge wall, offering a stunning natural educational resource for visitors to learn about the geological setting of the park.

12 BAUSCH + LOMB SITE

The park meadow fields tell a story of natural adaptation and remediation of post-industrial land. Visitors can walk through these meadows, which were once occupied by industrial facilities.



Bausch + Lomb Expansion, 1919
Source: A Photographic History of Bausch + Lomb

13 RUNNING TRACK BRIDGE

The Running Track Bridge was constructed in 1887. Although currently abandoned, the City of Rochester plans to convert the structure into a walking trail, extending the El Camino Trail to the Genesee Riverway Trail on the west side of the river.



Running Track Bridge
Source: Albert R. Stone Negative Collection, RMSC

14 FINISH AT EVERGREEN PARK

The trail ends at one of the main gateways at Evergreen Park and connects to the regional Genesee River Trail seamlessly.