The background of the slide is a high-angle aerial photograph of a city. The city is built on a grid pattern of streets, with numerous green spaces, parks, and trees scattered throughout. In the distance, a large body of water is visible. The overall image has a slightly grainy, high-contrast look.

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PUBLIC REALM DESIGN FRAMEWORK

for the East Bend Development Area

November 2025



OJB Gensler



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BACKGROUND + INTRODUCTION

1

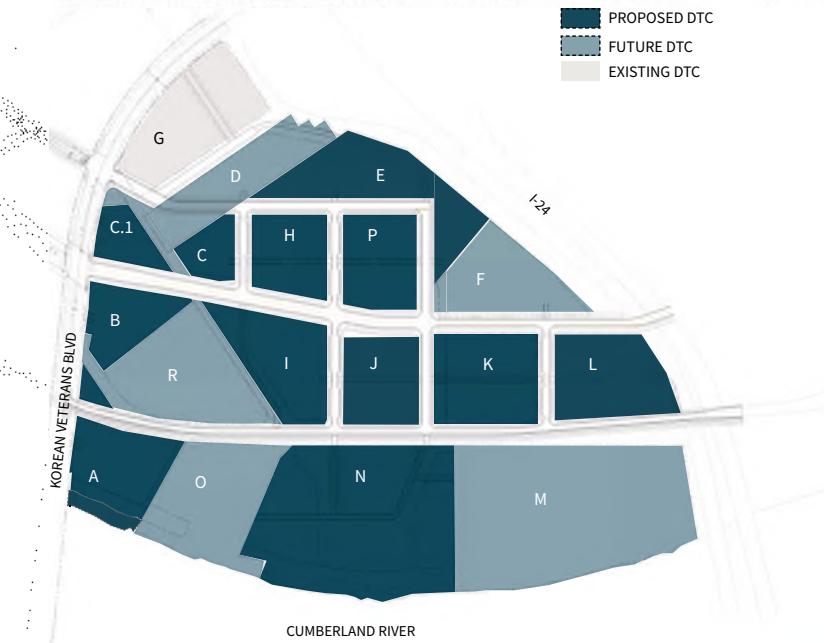
East Bend Public Realm Framework

Purpose and Use

Background

The *Imagine East Bank Vision Plan* (“Vision Plan”), adopted in October 2022, envisions an East Bank with vibrant urban neighborhoods woven together by a dynamic, inviting public realm made up of streets, parks, riverfront and outdoor spaces.

As portions of the east bank are positioned for development, design based zoning regulations are adopted to ensure implementation of the vision. These regulations are defined in the expansion of the Downtown Code (“DTC”) through creation of new subdistricts. For example, the East Bank Subdistrict was created to define policy that covered the first 30 acres of the East Bank Central Waterfront District. In August of 2025, a large percentage of land within the East Bend Neighborhood of the vision plan was purchased for redevelopment. The following Public Realm Framework was developed by the landowner and their consultants, OJB and Gensler, in collaboration with Metro Nashville Planning Department, in support of Metro Council’s approval of the East Bend Subdistrict of the DTC.



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The Framework

The public realm is the usable space outside and between buildings such as streets, parks, playgrounds and plazas. As the East Bank develops, the importance of ensuring there is ample and equitable public space is critical to creating and preserving the vibrant and accessible neighborhood described in the vision plan. The intent of the framework is to define, protect and strengthen these spaces for public life as they are created in coordination with private development.

The framework builds on the vision plan by providing a greater level of detail on the scale, proportionality, character, and design intent of these spaces. The framework bridges the gap between the broad planning guidance of the vision plan and the formal development standards and permitted uses of the zoning regulations of the DTC to help shape the public space. Through text, renderings, cross sections, and diagrams, the framework provides detail on the expectations for character, connectivity, scale, porosity, activation, and design quality that are to be achieved in future development proposals in the East Bend.

Purpose

- To provide guidance for Metro Nashville Staff, applicable design review committees, and other review bodies in their evaluation of a development proposal’s design merits and consistency with the *Imagine East Bank Vision Plan*.
- To provide property owners, developers, designers, and other stakeholders with predictable and implementable guidance based on planning, design policies and best practices.
- To encourage best-in-class site and architectural design, with an emphasis on the relationship and balance between public space and buildings.
- To articulate the overarching goals necessary to create public spaces on the East Bend that work for everyone.

Application and Use

Applicants seeking approval for development within the East Bend Subdistrict should refer to this document throughout their design process. Proposals should clearly express how they advance the overarching concepts and elements relevant to their site.

The Framework and DTC Zoning

The framework document offers design-based guidance for the East Bend Subdistrict. This content has been formulated to support, and to provide consistency and connectivity to the neighboring IDA-South’s existing zoning (DTC) entitlements and the broader Downtown Code Design Guidelines (“DTC DG”). While the DTC remains the sole regulatory tool, the framework establishes design-based support for applicants to use through the development review process.



East Bend Public Realm Framework

Vision for East Bend

Imagine East Bank Vision Plan

Imagine East Bank envisions *“a place reclaimed for all Nashvillians to enjoy”*. As one of four connected neighborhoods envisioned to comprise the East Bank development, the East Bend Subdistrict will create a unique, walkable district built to serve Nashvillians -- whether living, working or visiting the city. The East Bend will provide an authentic experience for all through a commitment to the following guiding principals:

- **Equitable Access to quality experience.** Whether you are living, working or visiting the district, the East Bend will strive to achieve a high quality experience accessible to residents, their families and their guests.
- **Safe and Simple Multi-modal Connections.** Provide a robust multimodal transportation system enabling easy and equal access to and through the East Bank.
- **Respect for the River.** Re-center the river as a vital community amenity and bolster resiliency through enhanced floodplain and storm water management.
- **Neighborhoods for Nashvillians.** Create vibrant, livable, and authentic neighborhoods that prioritize the everyday needs of Nashvillians.

The East Bend Public Realm Framework is designed to support the implementation of these foundational principles through alignment with the Complete Community Objectives outlined in the Image East Bank Vision plan.

The East Bend Subdistrict promotes an **integrated multimodal network** that supports walking, biking, and vehicular travel to create a well-connected and accessible environment for all users. The proposed district grid connects the East Bend to adjacent neighborhoods and establishes an infrastructure network that supports a **thoughtfully curated mix of uses** including commercial, residential, office, hotel and entertainment program that will support a thriving community. The East Bend district is imagined as a place that is **authentically Nashville**. The framework supports connections to the existing context by preserving key viewsheds and neighborhood fabric while enhancing connections to the river. It guides the area's evolution into a vibrant, authentic destination, refining rather than redefining the neighborhood's identity and reinforcing its relationship to the waterfront. The East Bend district will facilitate **a resilient relationship to the Cumberland River**. Open spaces along the river thoughtfully respond to the natural floodplain. Rather than viewing the floodplain as a limitation, the framework embraces it as a defining feature by shaping a resilient, adaptable landscape. The East Bend will **reclaim** this underutilized industrial site and return it to the people of Nashville as a public urban amenity. Parks and open spaces along the river **establish the waterfront as a shared community amenity** by offering access for recreation, relaxation, and social connection. These spaces strengthen the neighborhood's identity, enhance ecological resilience, and create a continuous public realm that celebrates the river as a defining feature of East Bend.



Background image from Imagine East Bank Vision Plan



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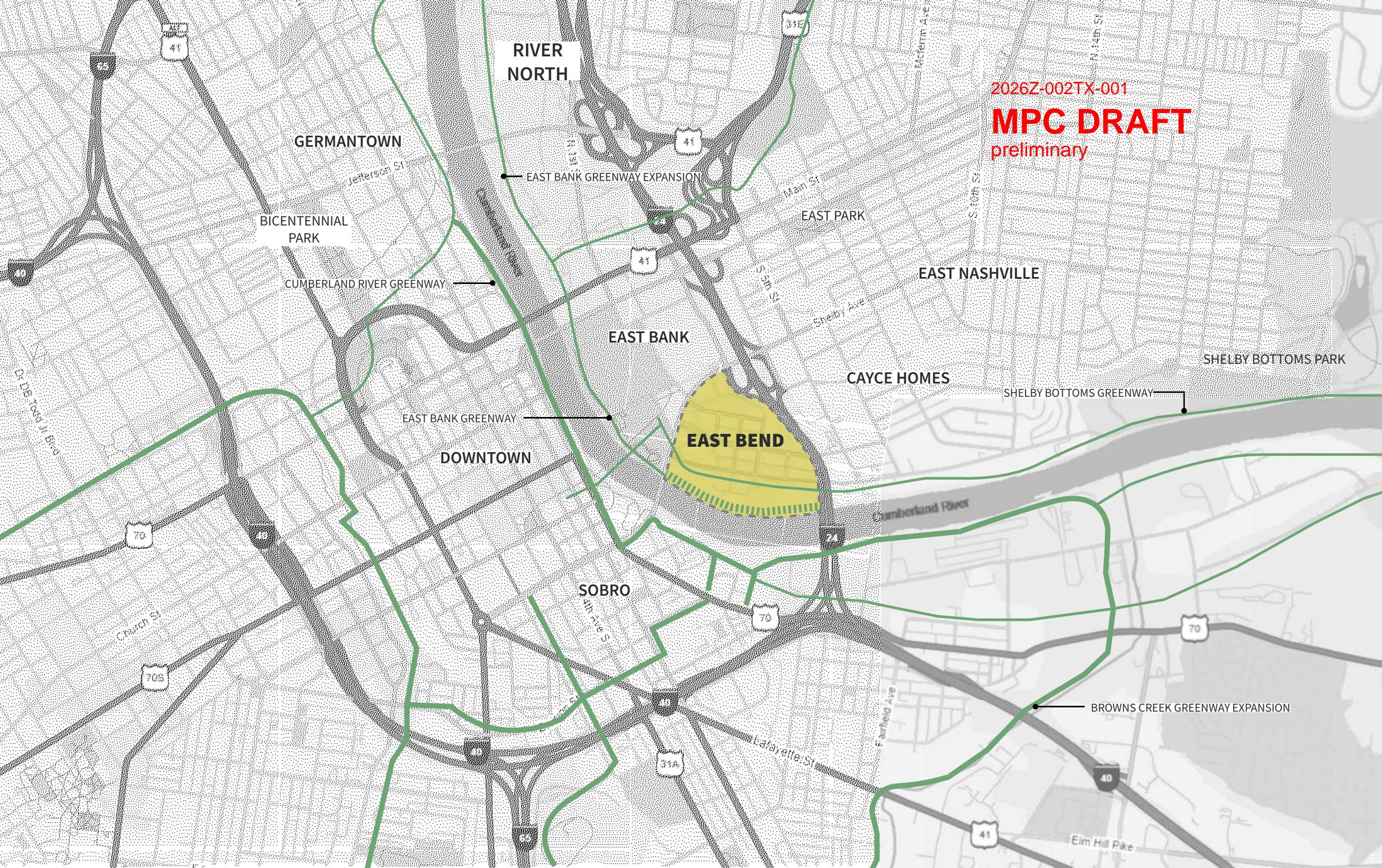
PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK

CONTEXT AND RELATIONSHIPS

Shaped by Place

The East Bend site is situated in a vibrant area surrounded by neighborhoods rich in character, each reflecting the authentic spirit of Nashville. Its prime location offers seamless connections to nearby destinations, from local dining and entertainment to parks and cultural landmarks, making it an integral part of the city's fabric. The surrounding context provides a sense of place and community, allowing residents and visitors alike to experience the energy, charm, and authenticity that define Nashville.

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PUBLIC REALM COMPONENTS

Creating a Place

Open Space 1

A lively, meandering promenade forms the neighborhood's social spine. Lined with active retail and inviting front doors, it links Nissan Stadium to Open Space 2, blending movement with moments of pause to create a vibrant, active corridor.

Open Space 2

This riverfront open space pulses with energy, offering flexible areas for events, gatherings, and daily activity. Connected seamlessly to Open Space 1, it anchors the neighborhood with social spaces, shaded seating, and waterfront views, creating a lively civic hub along the Cumberland River.

Open Space 3

Open Space 3 redefines the city's connection to the Cumberland River. A multi-use public space and ecological corridor, it integrates active transportation, recreation, and community gathering along a restored waterfront within the 75' Floodway Buffer.

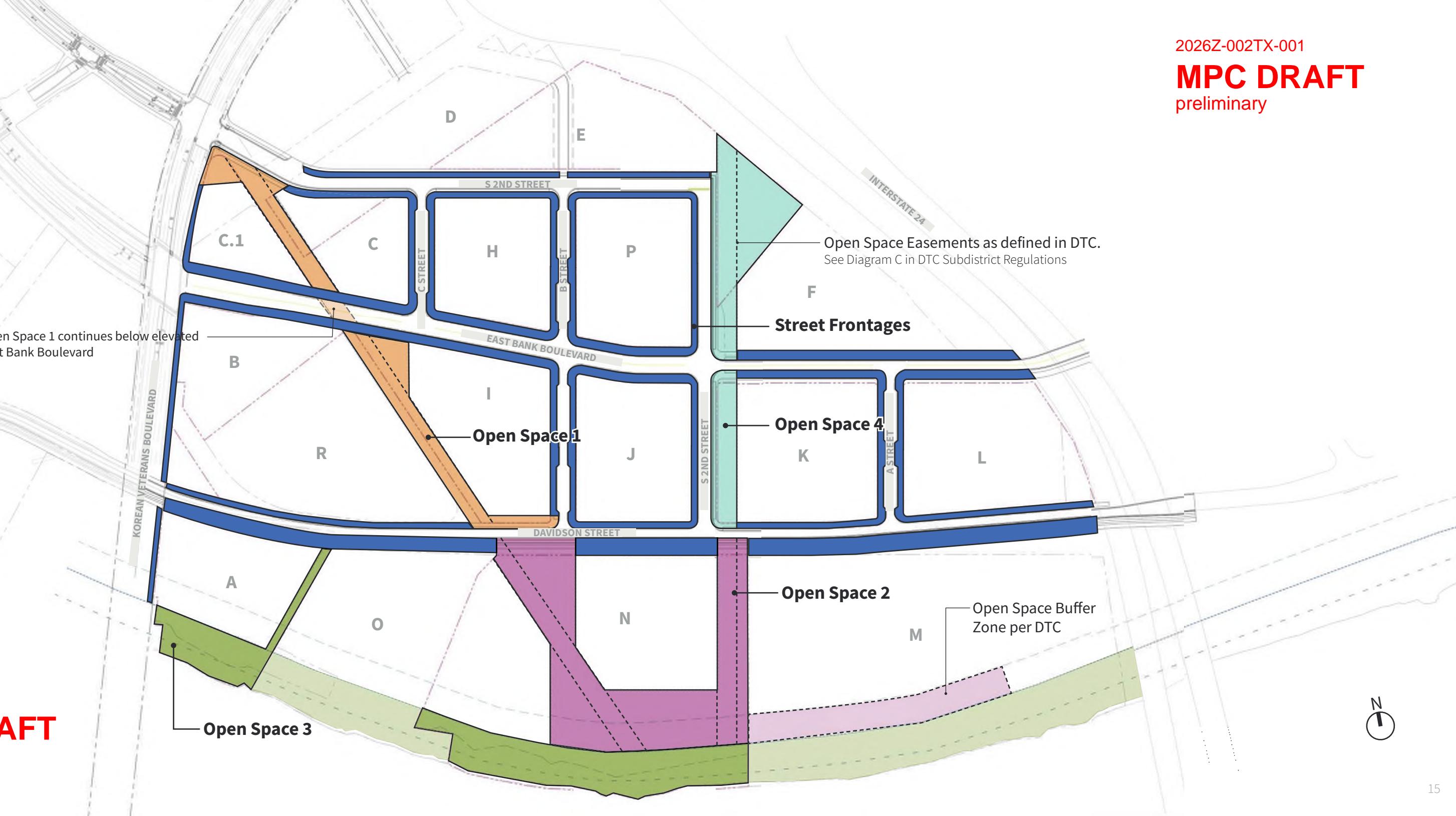
Open Space 4

A calm, park-like corridor, Open Space 4 weaves through the heart of the neighborhood, offering a quieter counterpoint to Open Space 1. It links homes, streets, and smaller open spaces with shaded paths, flexible lawns, and neighborhood-scale gathering areas, providing an intimate, restorative experience while reinforcing East Bend's sense of place.

Street Frontages

Tree-lined, active streets connect all open spaces and development parcels, forming a continuous public realm that encourages walking, cycling, and neighborhood activity.

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KEY PLACES

An Activated Public Realm

East Bend's open spaces form a connected, vibrant public realm that shapes the neighborhood's identity. A lively promenade serves as the social spine, linking destinations and activating streets with retail and gathering spaces. Along the Cumberland River, terraces, trails, lookouts, and waterside amenities blend recreation, events, and ecological restoration, while interior park-like corridors provide shaded paths and intimate gathering areas that balance the energy of the waterfront. Tree-lined streets and active frontages tie it all together, creating a continuous network for walking, cycling, and social interaction—a lively, resilient neighborhood where city life meets the river.

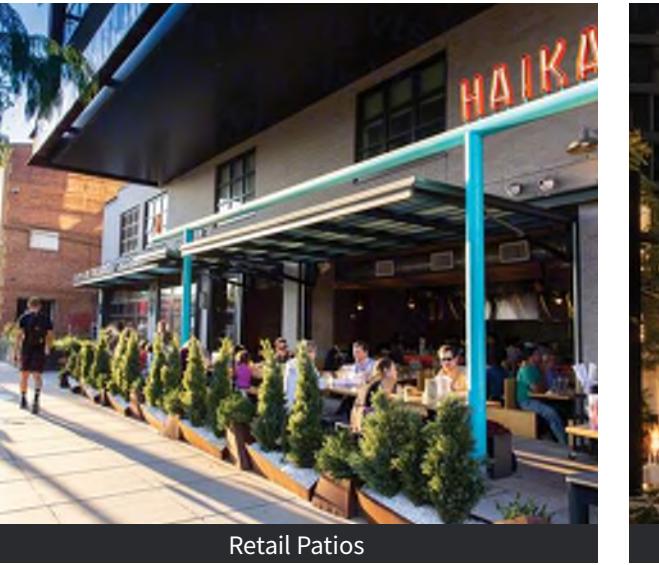
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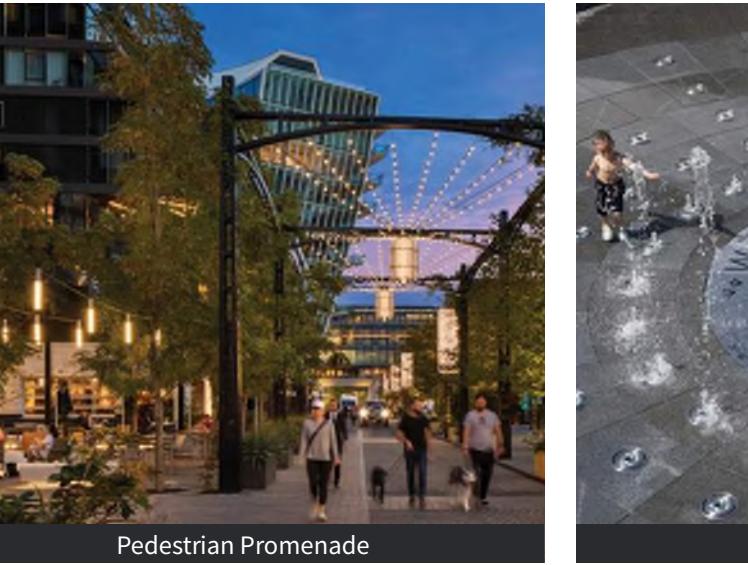
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CHARACTER + FUNCTION

Open Space 1



Retail Patios



Pedestrian Promenade



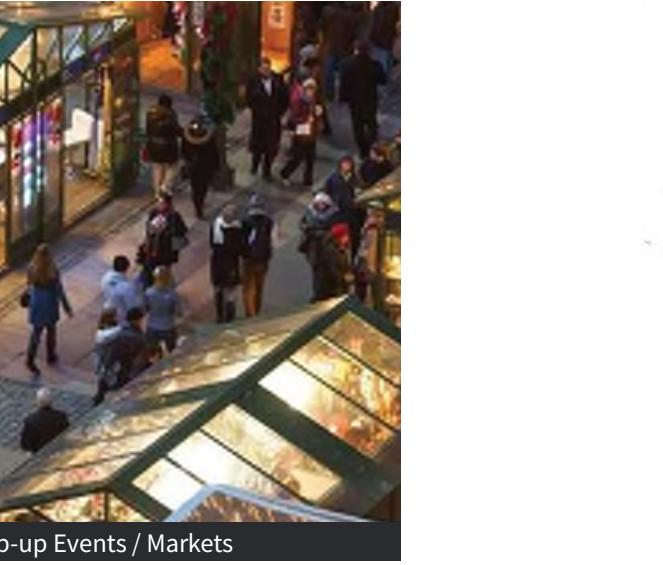
Water Feature



Seating Groves



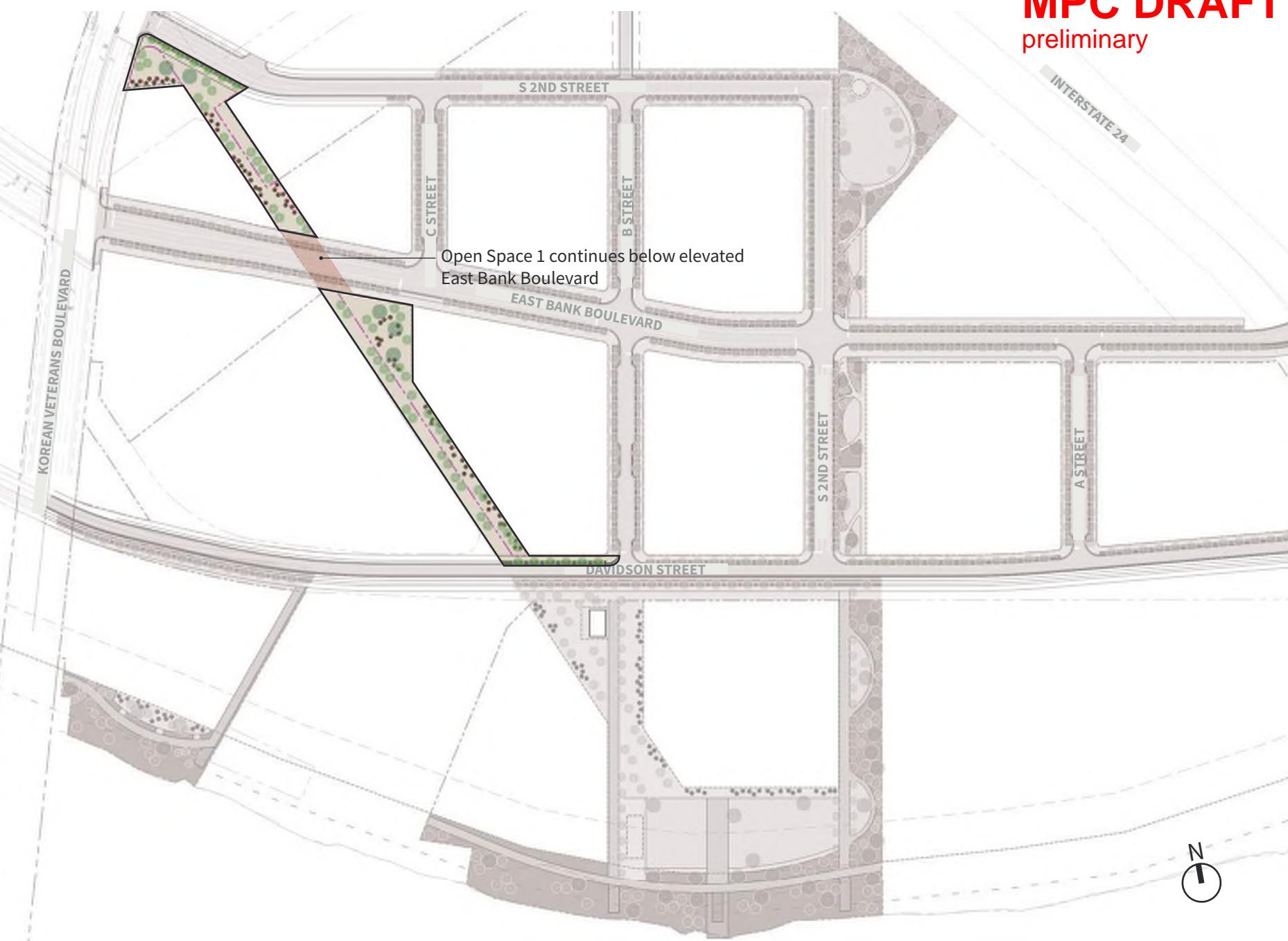
Meeting Points / Public Art



Pop-up Events / Markets

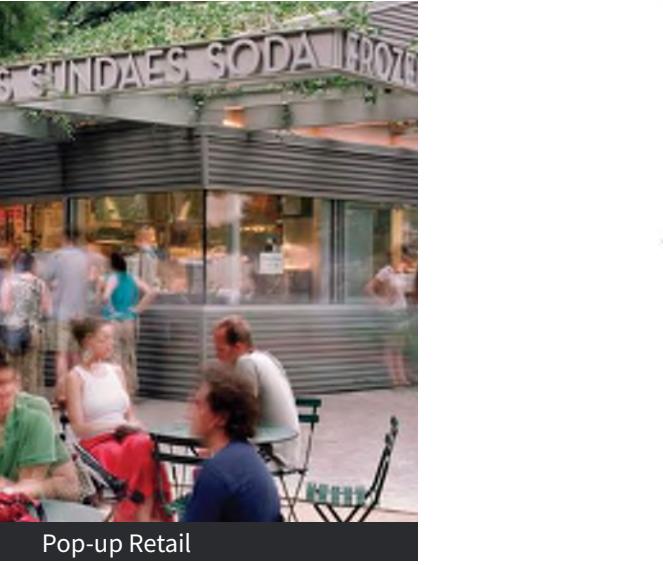
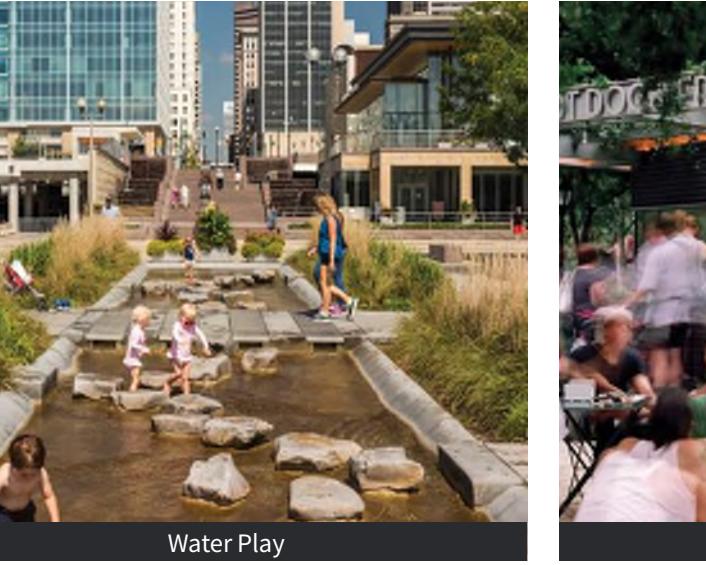
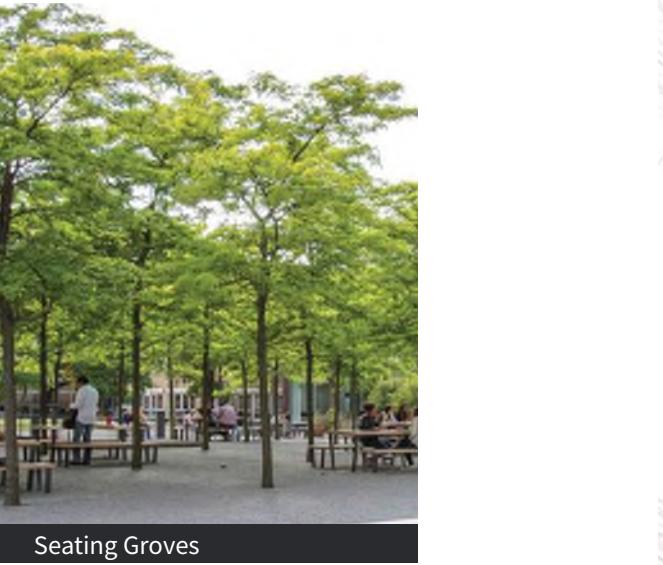
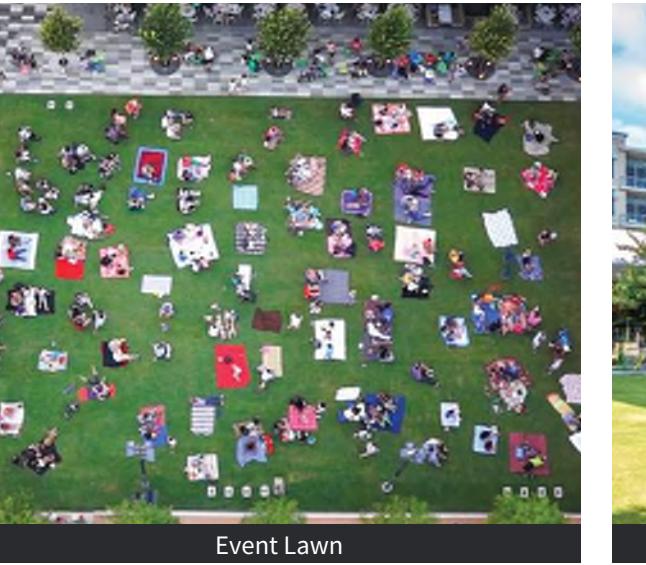
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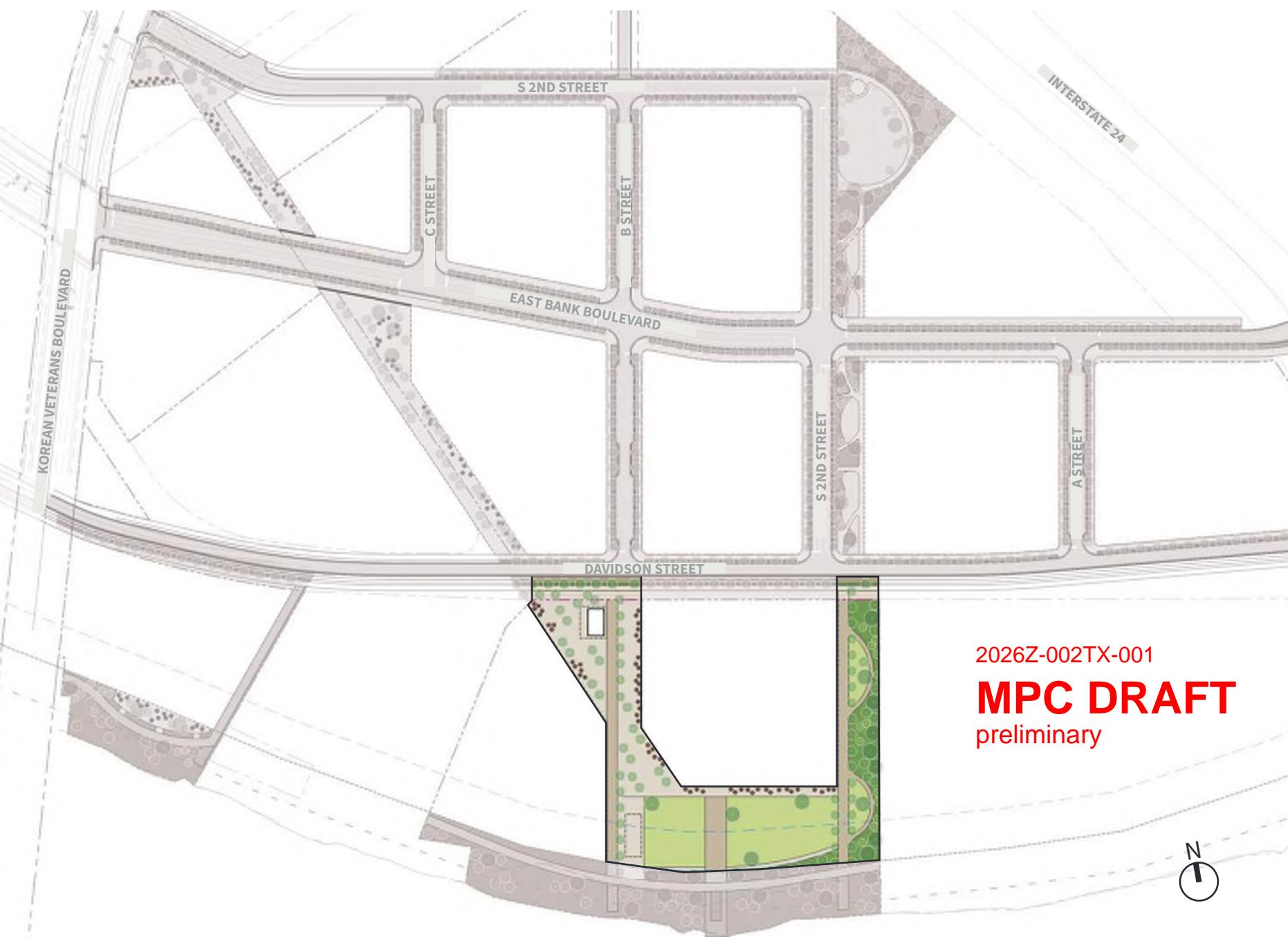


CHARACTER + FUNCTION

Open Space 2

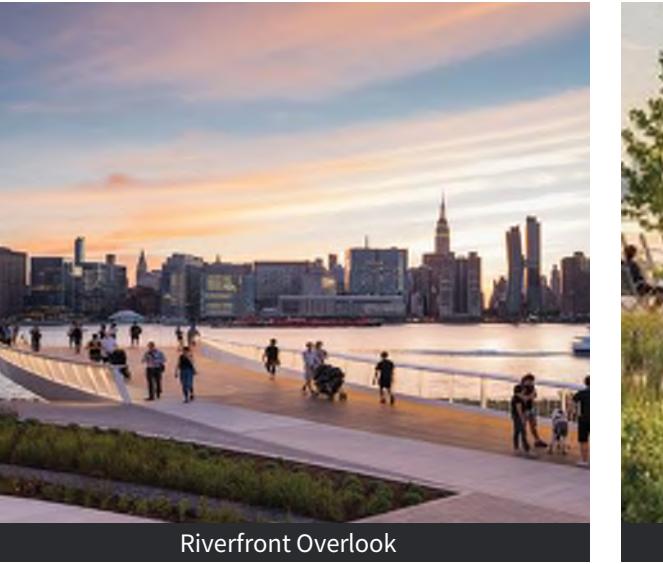
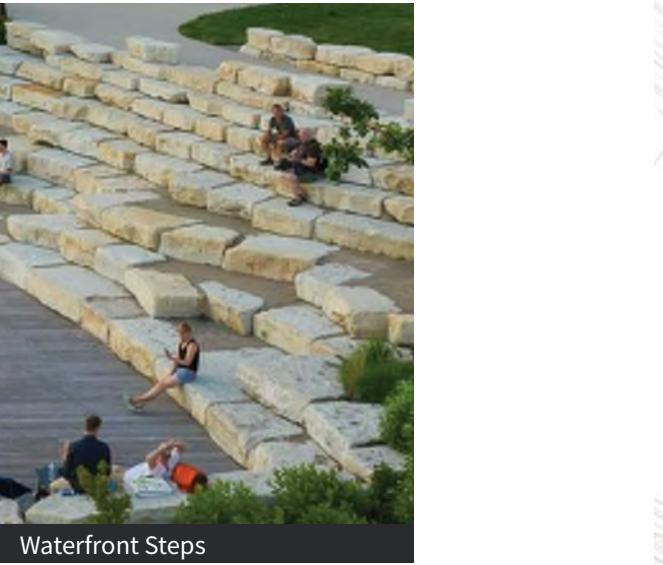
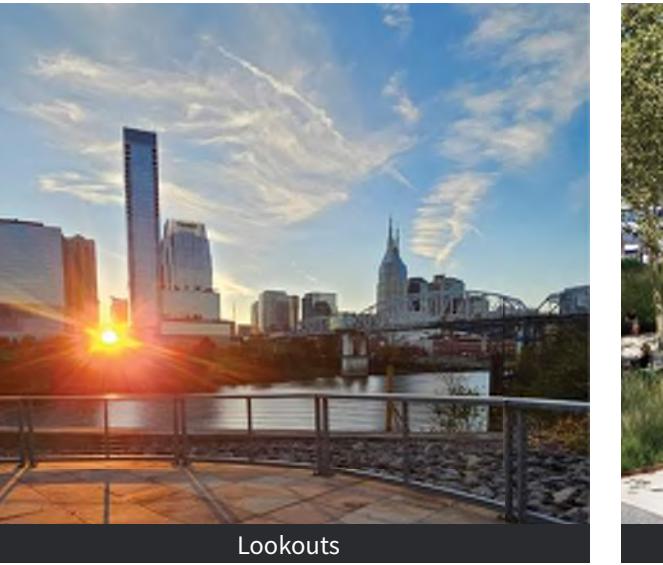


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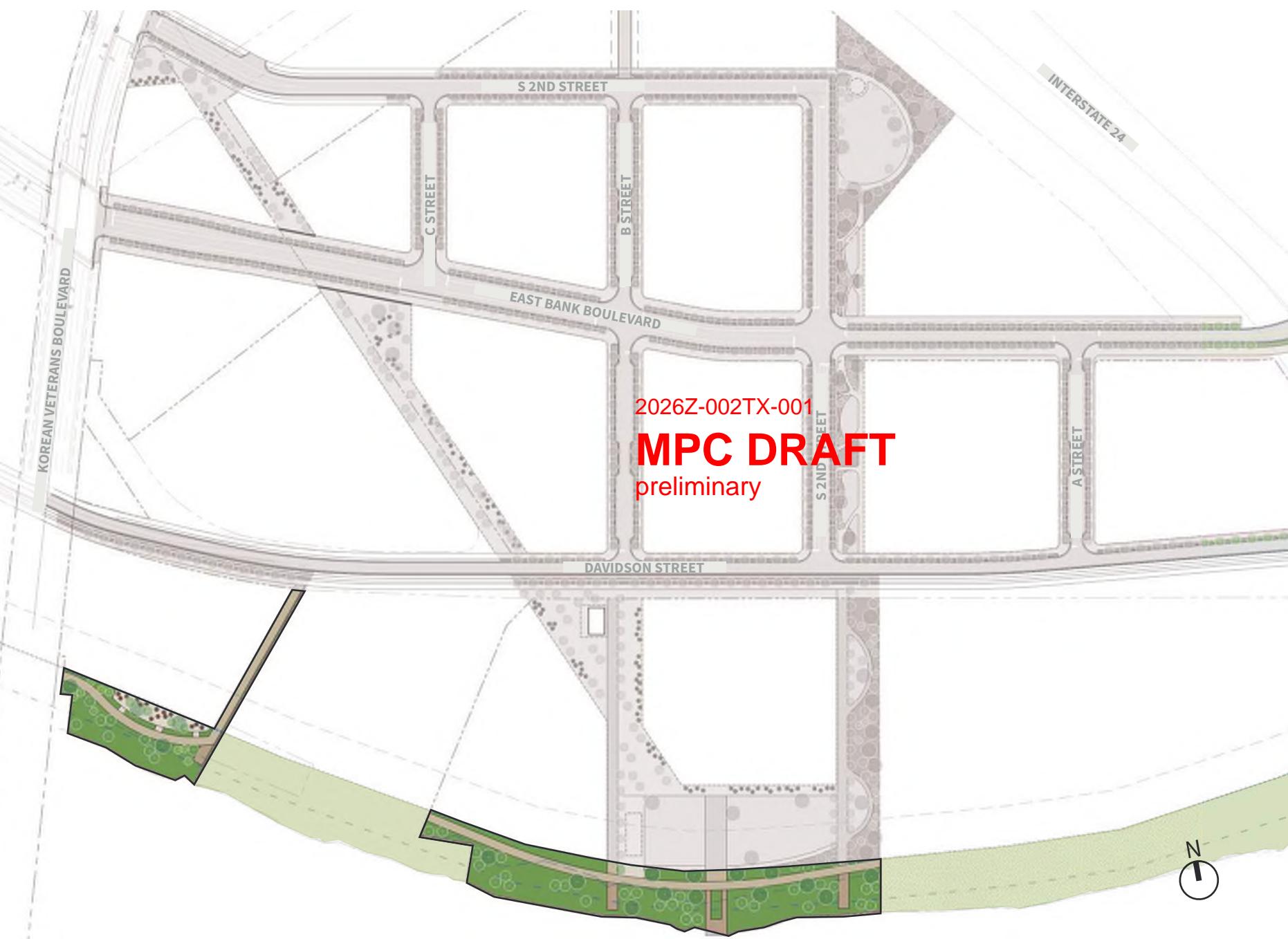


CHARACTER + FUNCTION

Open Space 3

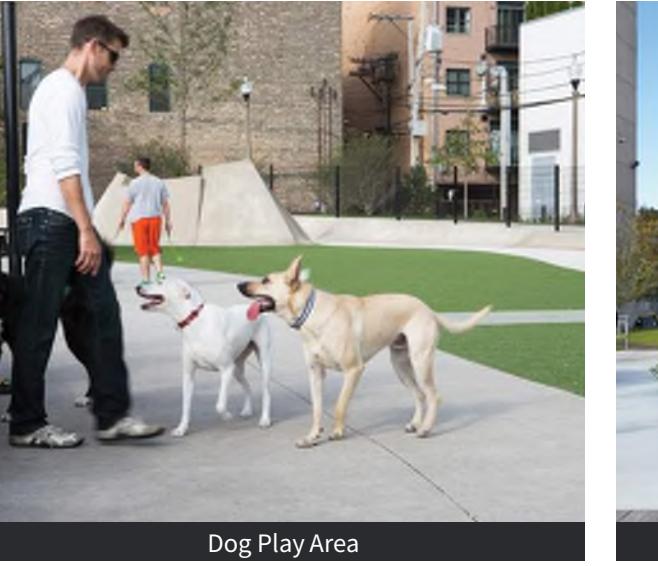


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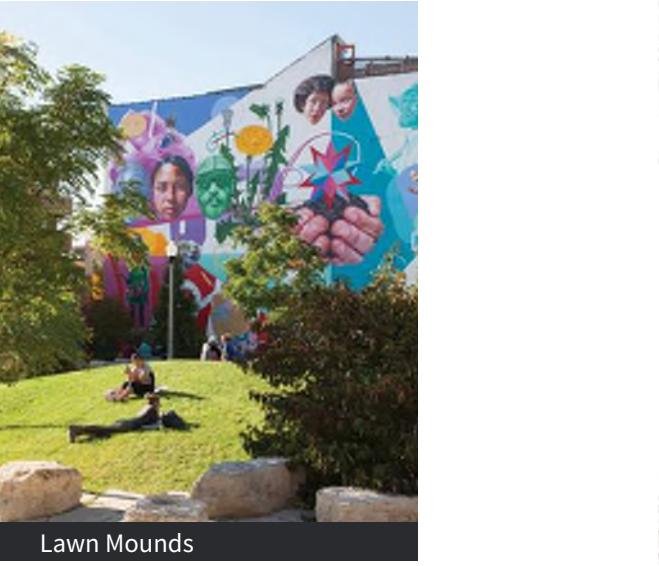
Open Space 4



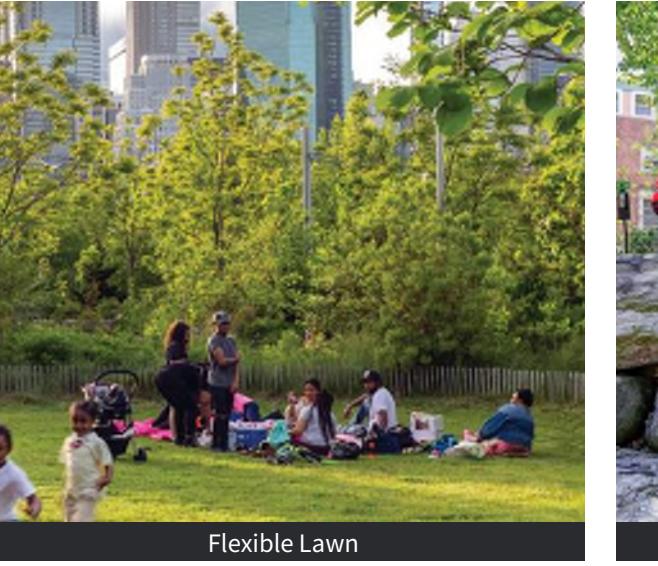
Dog Play Area



Stormwater Gardens



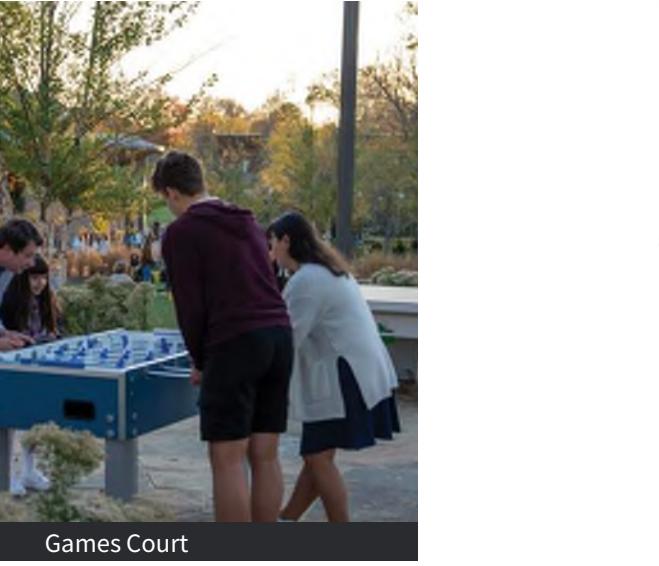
Lawn Mounds



Flexible Lawn

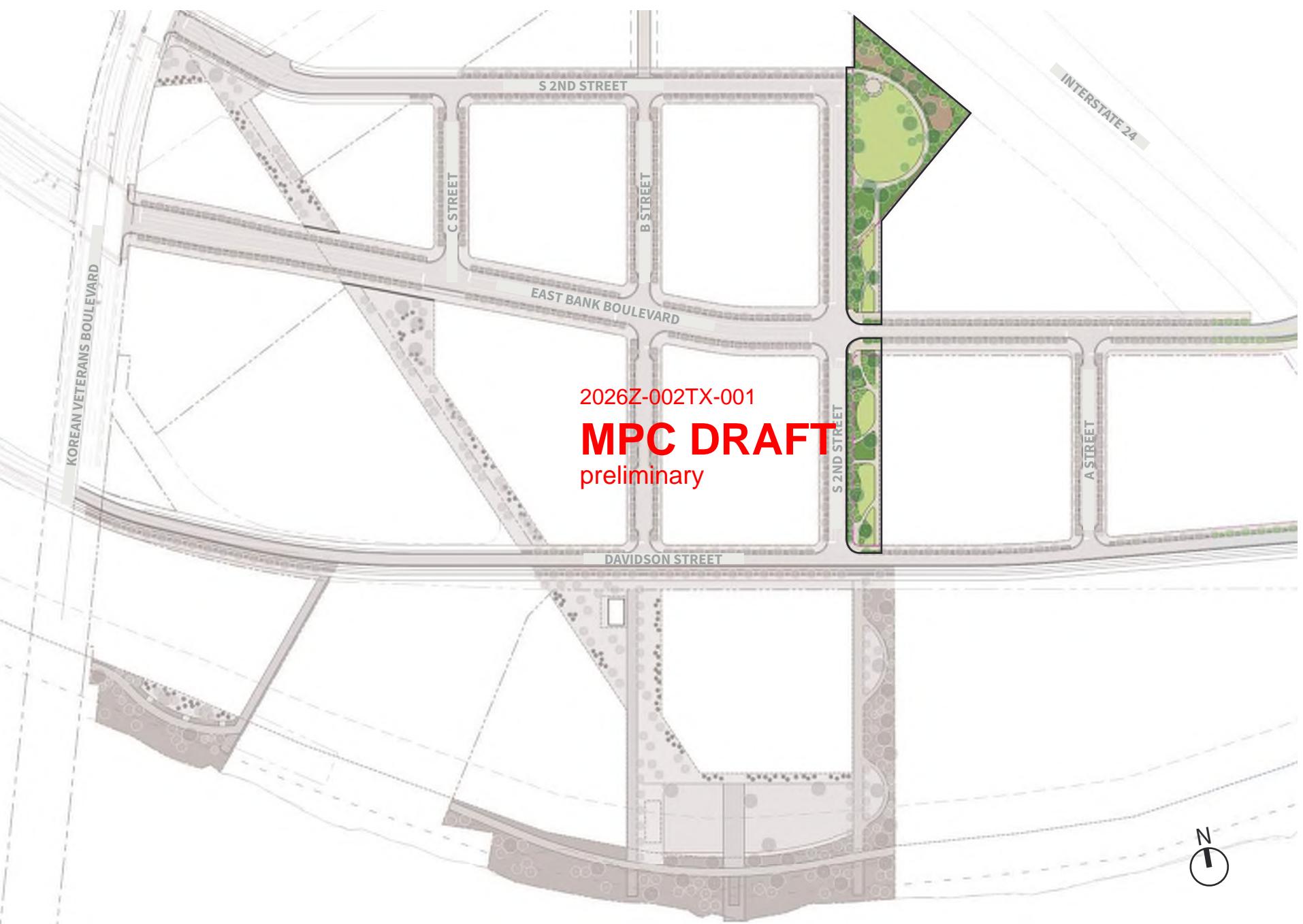


Children's Adventure Play



Games Court

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OPEN SPACE SCALE

Key Dimensions

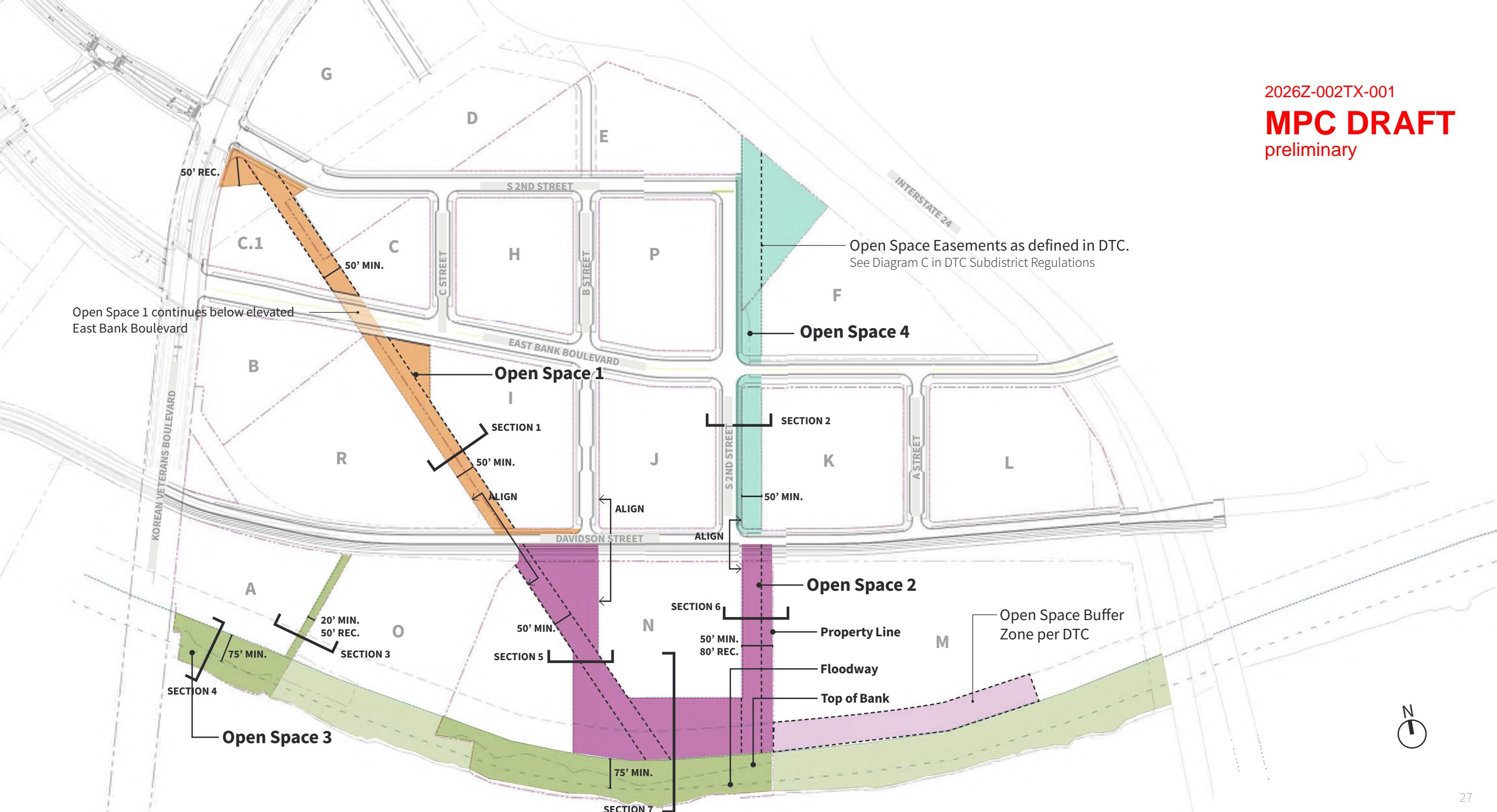
East Bend's open spaces are designed as a sequence of expanding and contracting experiences that guide movement and create a dynamic public realm. Open Space 1 narrows to about 50 feet along much of its length, offering an intimate, human-scaled promenade, but opens at key points into plazas and gathering spaces that punctuate the corridor with activity.

Open Space 2 opens broadly from Open Space 1, fostering social interaction along the riverfront, then gradually narrows as it approaches Open Space 3 and the water, focusing circulation and drawing people toward the river. Open Space 3 continues along the river as a linear, integrating trails, lookouts, and waterside amenities that connect neighborhood and river.

Open Space 4 contracts as it moves inland, forming a quieter, park-like corridor linking homes, streets, and smaller open spaces, before opening at its terminus into a larger community gathering space that caps the sequence.

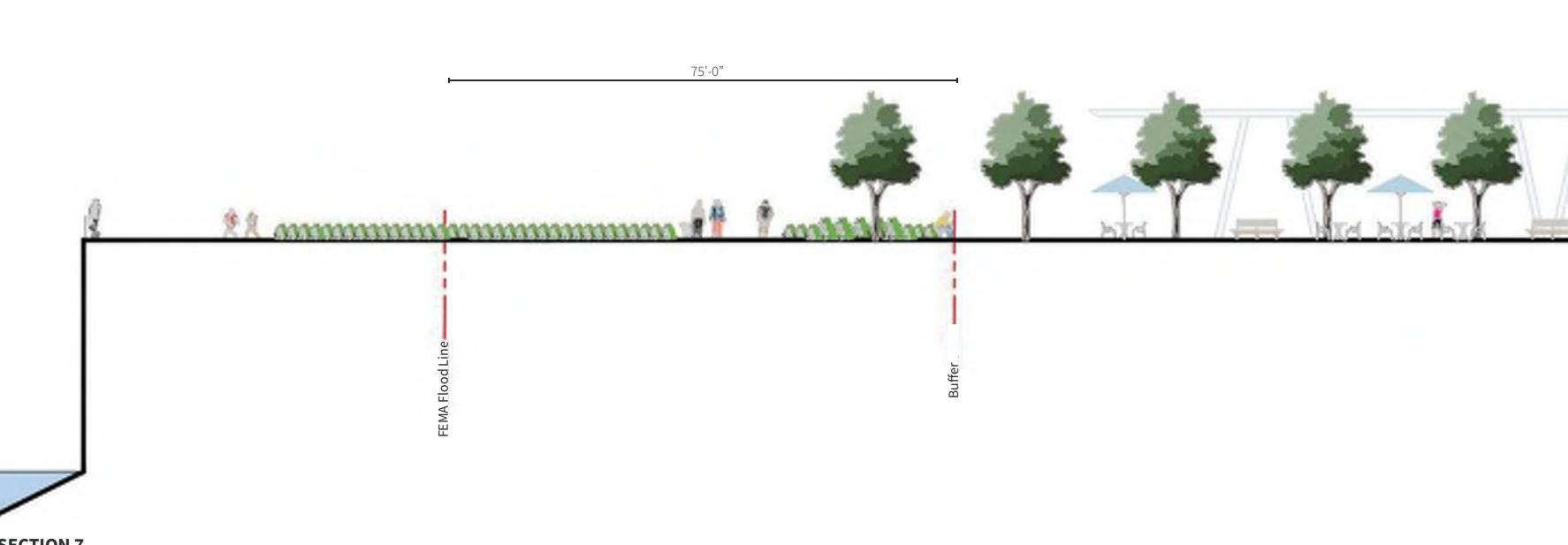
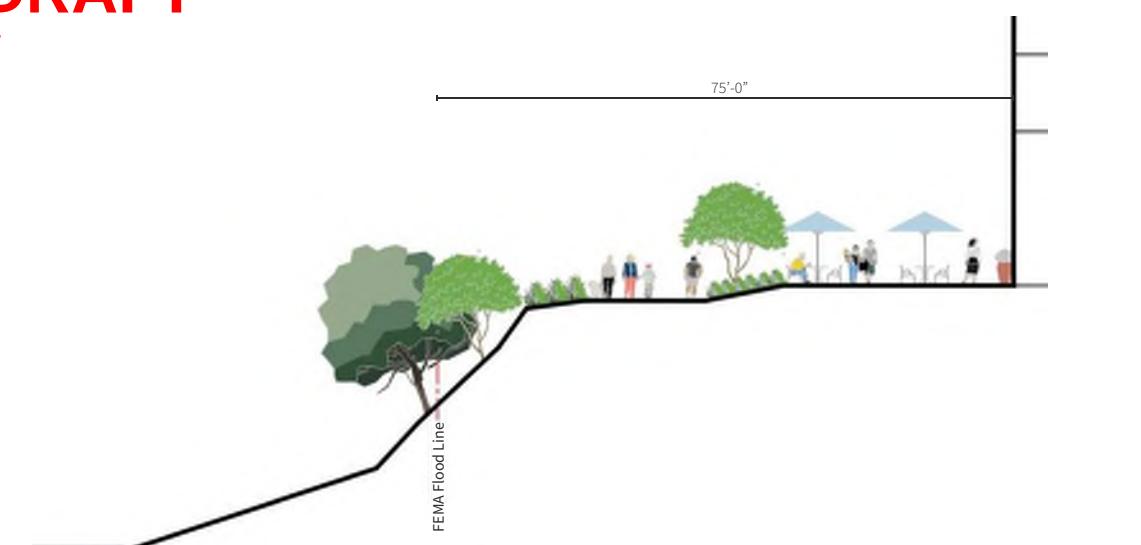
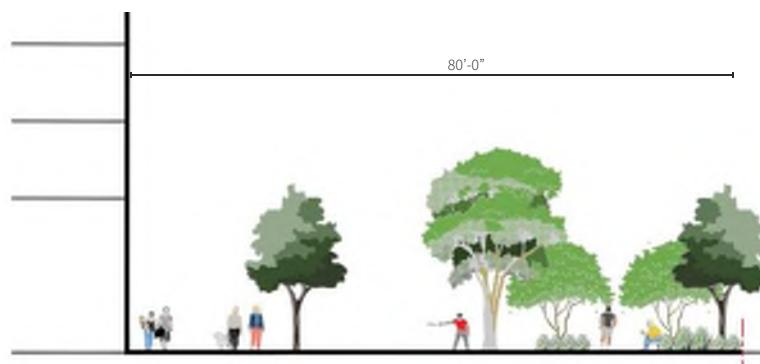
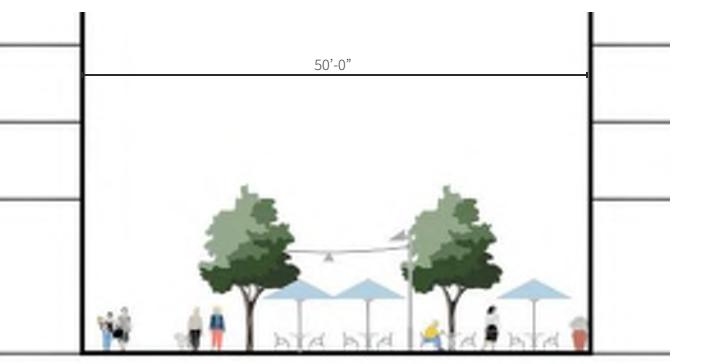
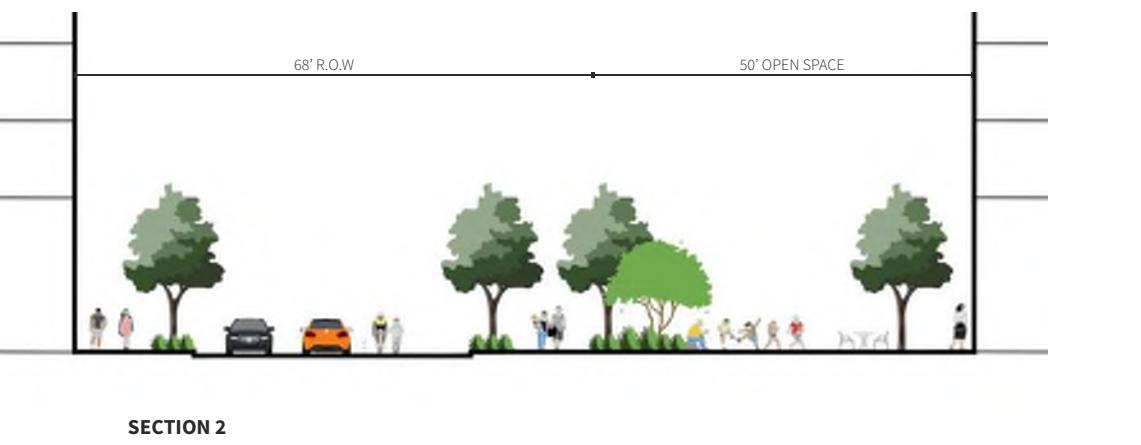
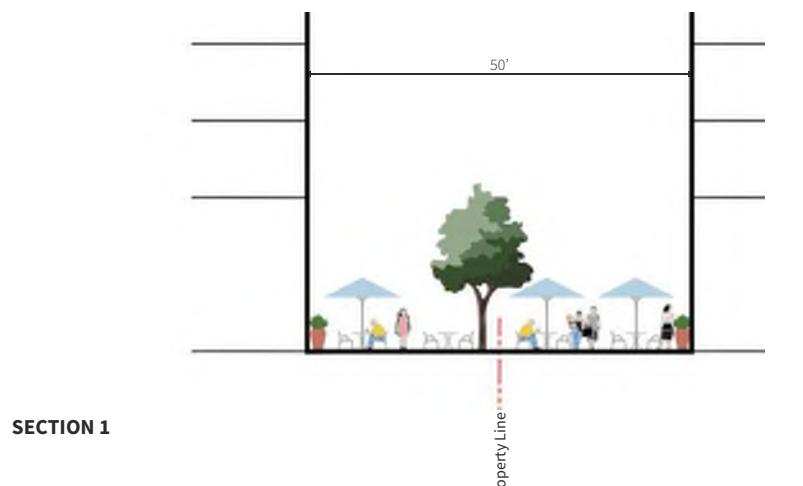
Through this rhythm of expansion and contraction, East Bend's open spaces create a layered, engaging network that balances movement and pause, intimacy and civic scale, resulting in a diverse and memorable public realm.

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OPEN SPACE SCALE

Open Space Sections



CONNECTIVITY + CIRCULATION

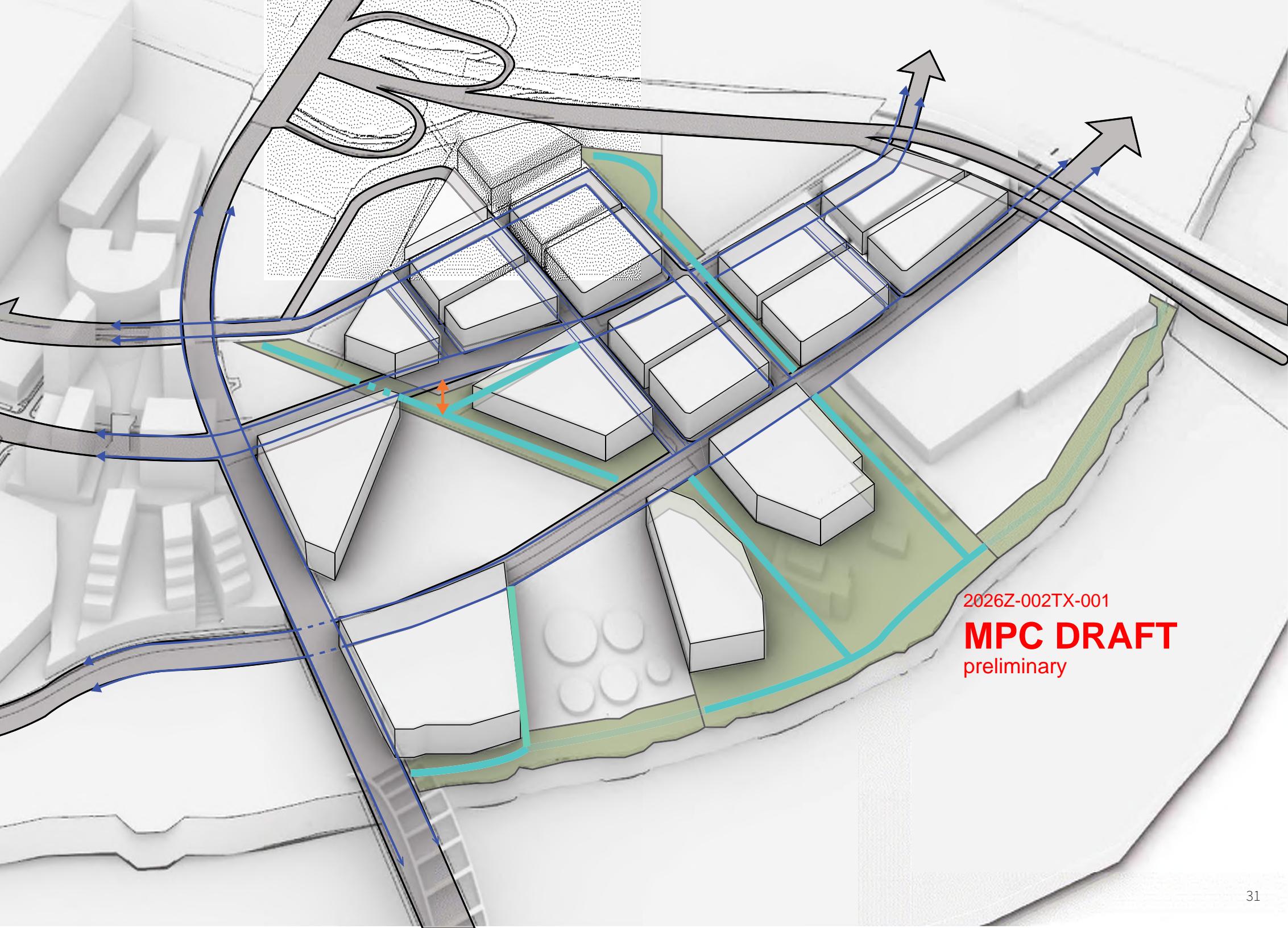
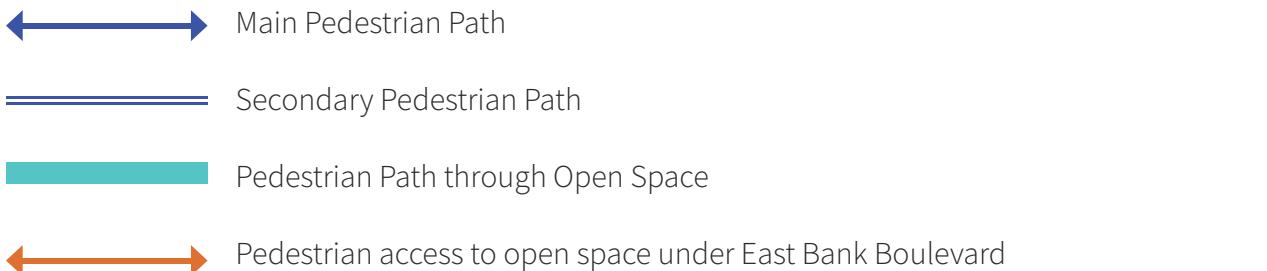
Pedestrian Circulation - 3D View

A vibrant and accessible Public Realm relies on a thoughtfully designed, safe, and continuous pedestrian network. East Bend will provide walkways that seamlessly link to the existing East Bank Subdistrict pedestrian plan while anticipating future connections to adjacent neighborhoods and development sites.

The pedestrian circulation framework includes the following key elements, illustrated in the diagram to the right:

- Main pedestrian paths throughout.
- Pedestrian paths through open space
- An elevated pedestrian path along Korean Veterans Blvd.
- Pedestrian paths to continue open space connectivity under the elevated portion of East Bank Blvd.

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CONNECTIVITY + CIRCULATION

Bicycle Circulation - 3D View

An integral component of a successful Public Realm is an intentional, safe and well connected bicycle mobility network. East Bend will incorporate protected bike infrastructure that will connect effectively to the existing East Bank Subdistrict mobility plan as well as provide intuitive connectivity to future bicycle networks in adjacent neighborhoods and future properties within the district.

The bicycle infrastructure plan includes the following components, shown in the diagram to the right.

- A two-way cycle track along Davidson that will connect directly to the East Bank Subdistrict under Korean Veterans Blvd.
- Protected bike lanes within the 2nd Street R.O.W connecting with the East Bank Subdistrict at the intersection with Korean Veterans Blvd.
- A two-way protected bike lane along 2nd street fronting the open space connecting to the Davidson Street cycle track
- Off street connections at both Parcel A and Parcel N that connect the Davidson Street cycle track to the bike way along the river.

↔ Off-street bike way or protected bike lane

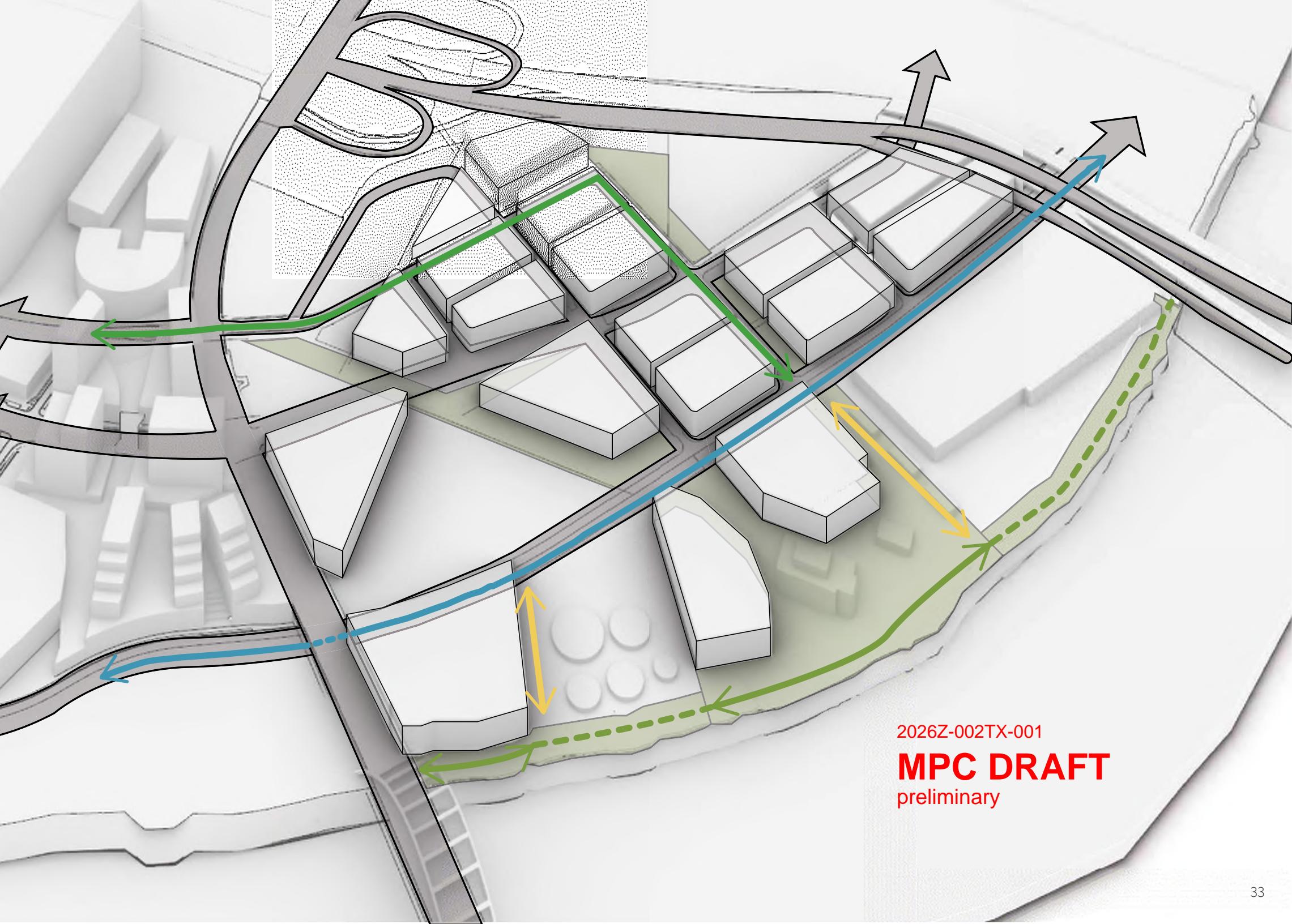
↔ Cycle track

↔ Off-street connector

↔ River trail

— Future river trail

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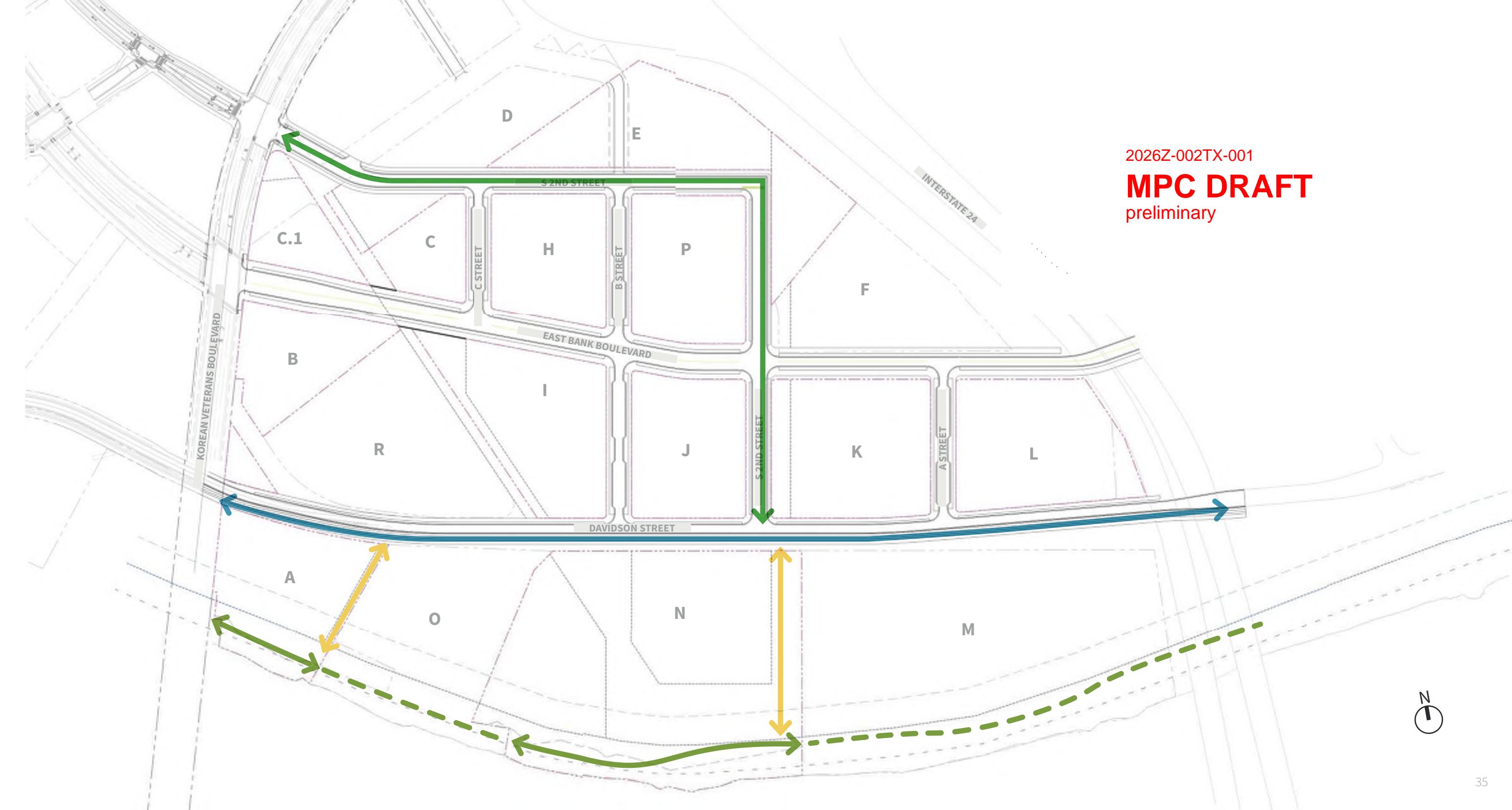
CONNECTIVITY + CIRCULATION

Bicycle Circulation

East Bend features a continuous and connected bicycle circulation network that integrates on-street protected bike lanes, cycle tracks, off-street bike ways, and connections to the river trail. This network links neighborhoods, open spaces, and key destinations, providing safe, accessible, and convenient routes for cyclists of all ages and abilities. By combining dedicated infrastructure with shared pathways, East Bend supports active transportation, recreation, and seamless connectivity throughout the community.

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- ↔ Off-Street Bikeway or Protected Bike Lane
- ↔ Cycle Track
- ↔ Off-Street Connector
- ↔ River Trail
- Future River Trail



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BUILDING ACCESS AND ACTIVATION

2D Access Diagram

East Bend's buildings are designed to balance operational efficiency with an engaging public realm. Building service and access points are carefully organized to ensure smooth access for deliveries, maintenance, and other operational needs, without disrupting pedestrian activity. At the same time, street-facing frontages are activated with transparent storefronts, entrances, and ground-level amenities that encourage walking, gathering, and social interaction. This approach ensures that buildings function effectively behind the scenes while contributing to a vibrant, human-scaled streetscape.

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Activated Frontages

Building and Service Access Points



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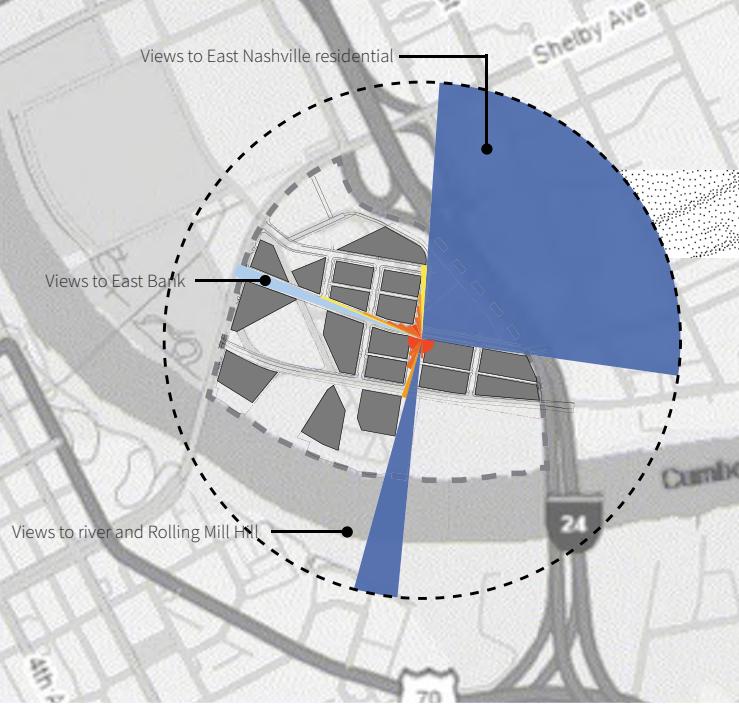
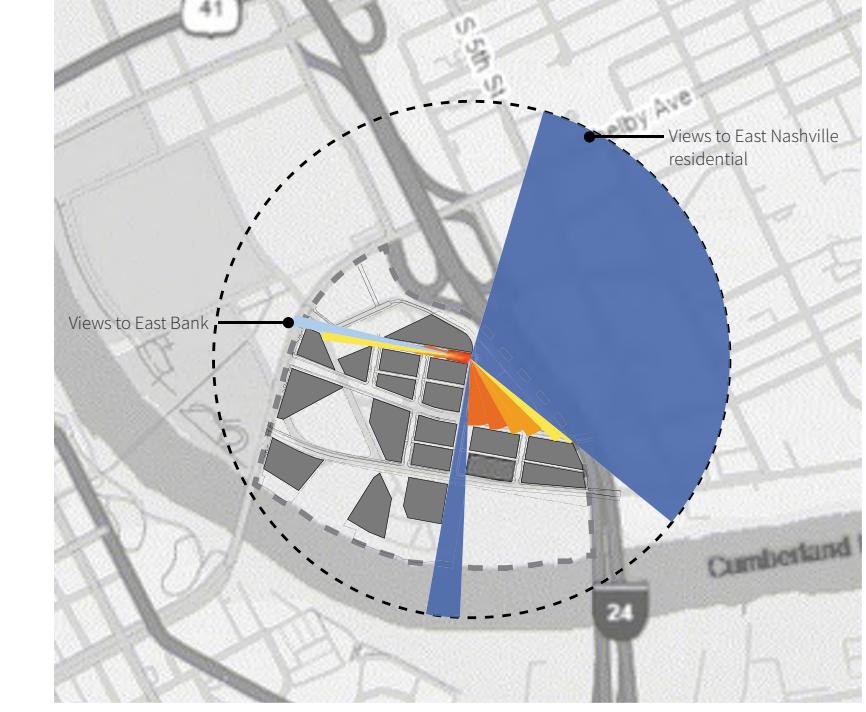
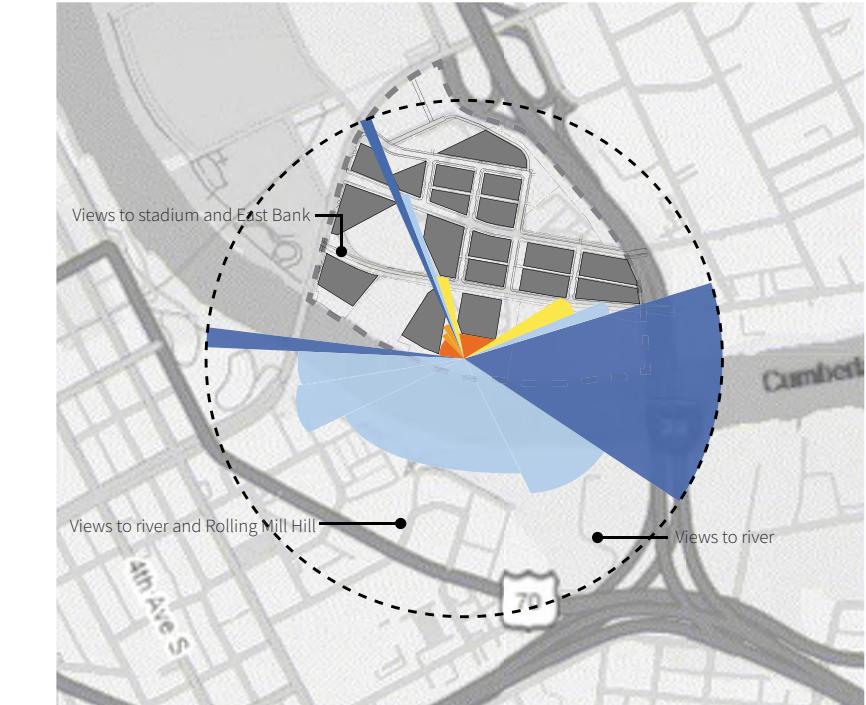
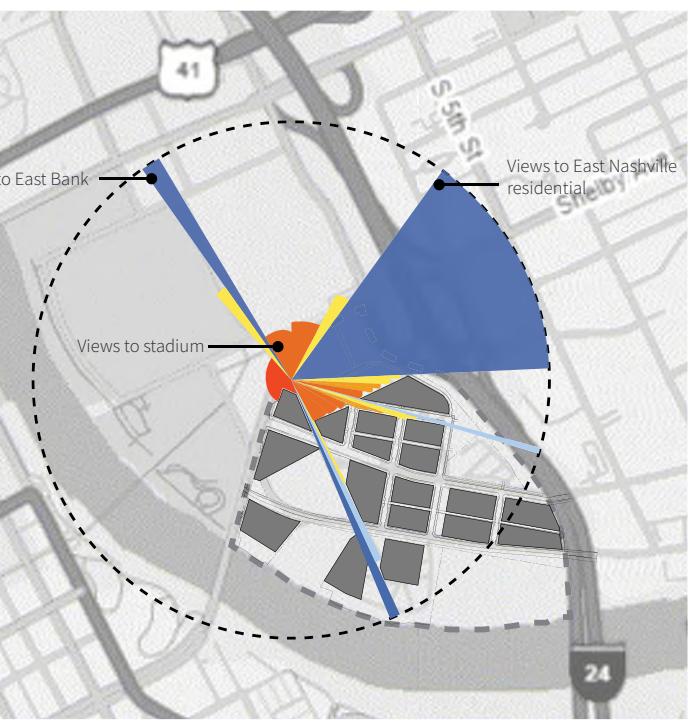
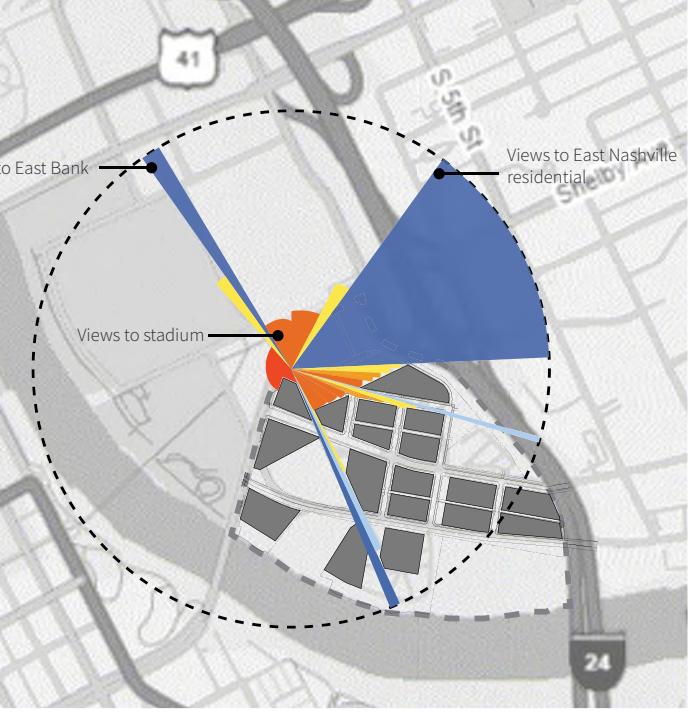
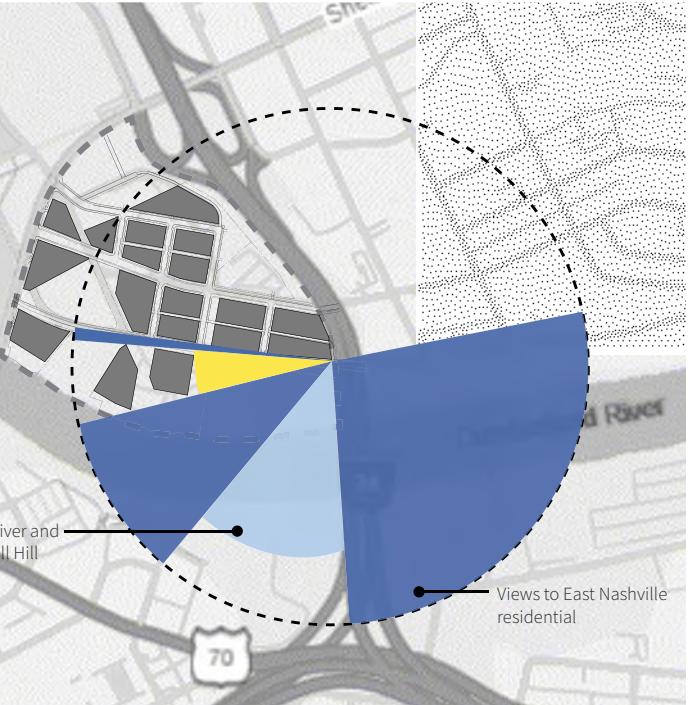
VIEWSHEDS

Perceiving the River & Skyline

Building placement and organization create a porous site, maintaining key views and sight-lines throughout. Strategic setbacks, spacing, and orientation allow people to see both into and out of the site, connecting interior spaces with the surrounding streetscape and open areas. This visual permeability enhances way finding, safety, and engagement, while preserving the overall character and viewsheds of the area.

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SOLAR STUDIES

Sunlit Open Spaces

The organization of parks and building masses is carefully arranged to maximize solar access and create bright, sunlit open spaces throughout the site. Building heights and orientations are calibrated to minimize unwanted shadowing on key public areas, ensuring that open spaces receive ample daylight year-round. Parks and plazas are strategically placed within solar corridors, allowing sunlight to reach gathering areas, paths, and landscaped zones during peak daytime hours.

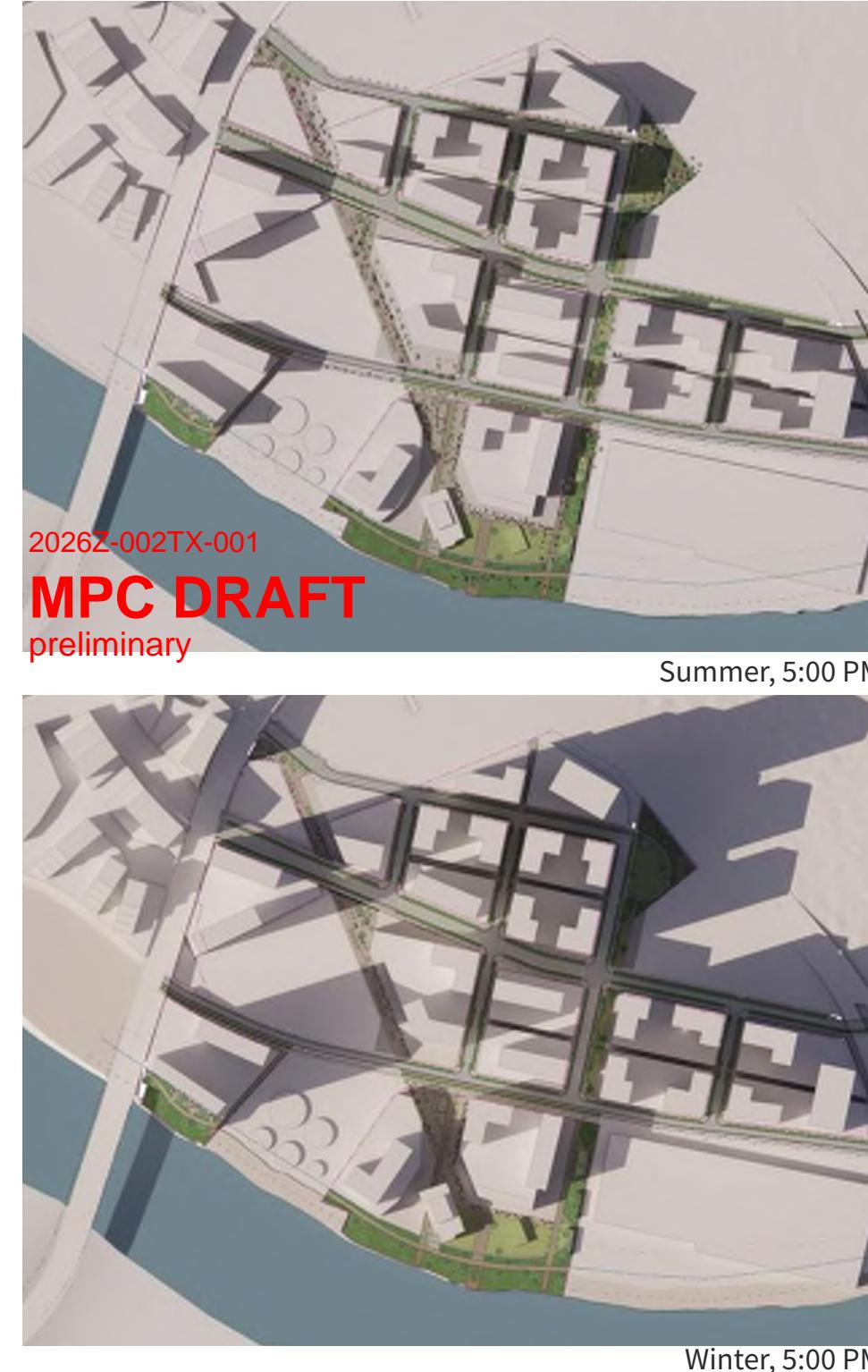
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Summer, 8:00 AM



Summer, 12:00 PM



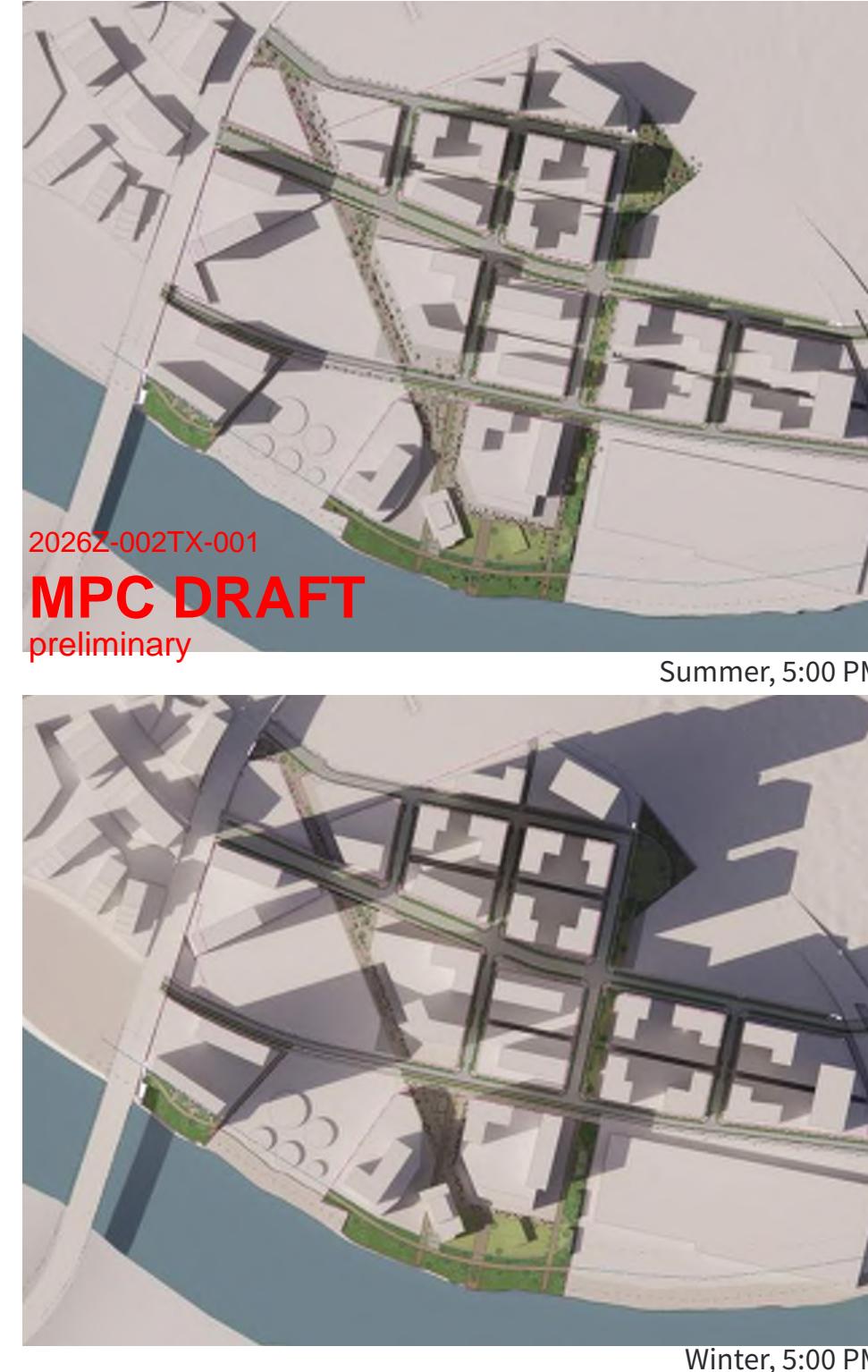
Summer, 5:00 PM



Winter, 8:00 AM



Winter, 12:00 PM



Winter, 5:00 PM



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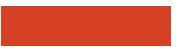
STREETSCAPES AND FRONTAGES

STREETSCAPES

Street Typologies

The streetscapes of East Bend are carefully designed to vary in scale and function, creating a layered and active public realm. East Bank Boulevard serves as the central vehicular spine, providing primary access while maintaining a tree-lined, human-scaled environment. S 2nd Street prioritizes pedestrians and cyclists, lined with active retail and front doors that engage the street and support daily neighborhood life. Davidson Street, running along the waterfront, combines a roadway with a dedicated cycle track on the waterfront side, providing a scenic and safe route for cyclists while connecting to the river trail. The neighborhood streets are quieter, featuring on-street parking, generous green buffers, and front-facing residential entries, stoops, and small-scale neighborhood services that foster a sense of community. Together, these streets create a cohesive and varied network that balances movement, access, and place-making throughout East Bend.

 East Bank Boulevard (Section 1)

 East Bank Boulevard (Section 2)

 S 2nd Street (Section 1)

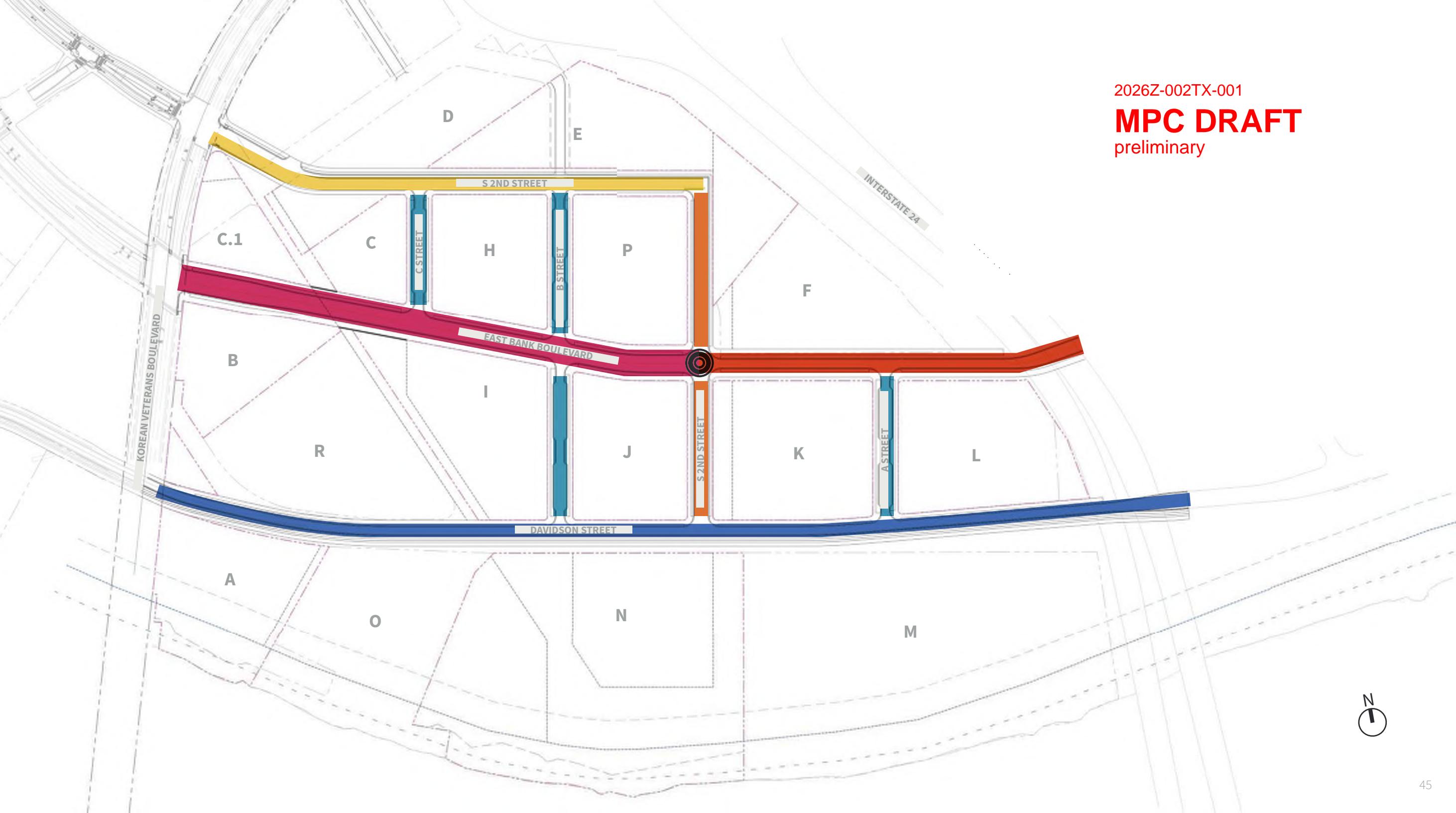
 S 2nd Street (Section 2)

 Davidson Street

 Streets A, B, and C

 Signalized Intersection

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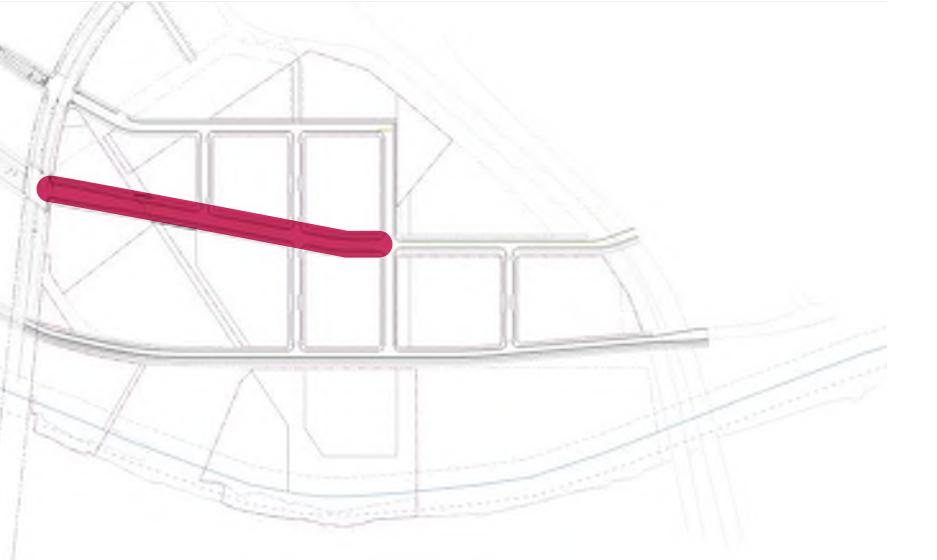
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STREET SECTIONS + CHARACTER

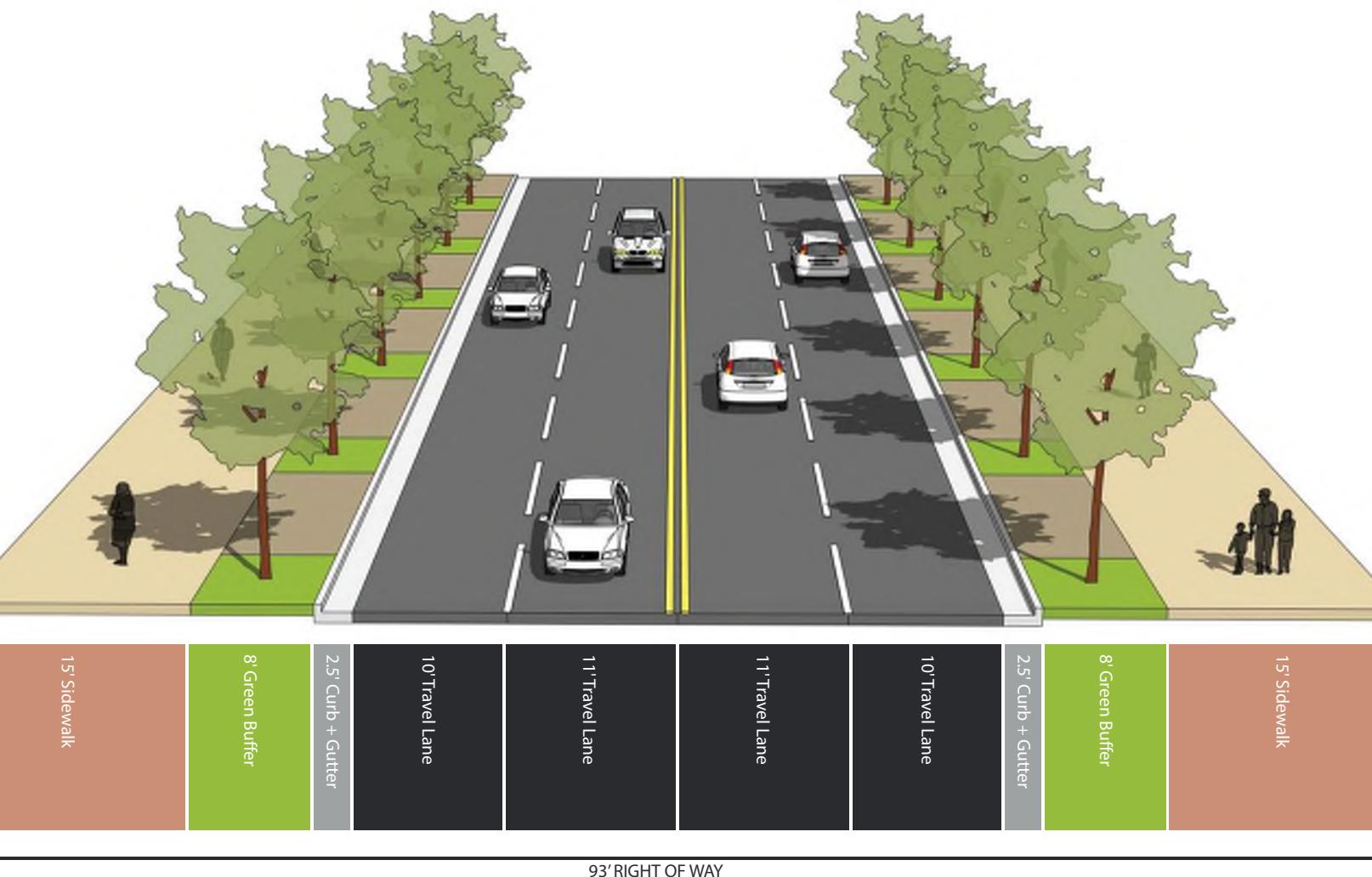
East Bank Boulevard (Section 1)

East Bank Boulevard (Section 1) is the neighborhood's central spine, featuring four travel lanes framed by a generous green buffer and wide sidewalks. The expansive pedestrian zones provide ample space for retail spill-out, outdoor seating, and active street life, creating a vibrant, welcoming corridor that balances vehicular movement with a lively public realm.

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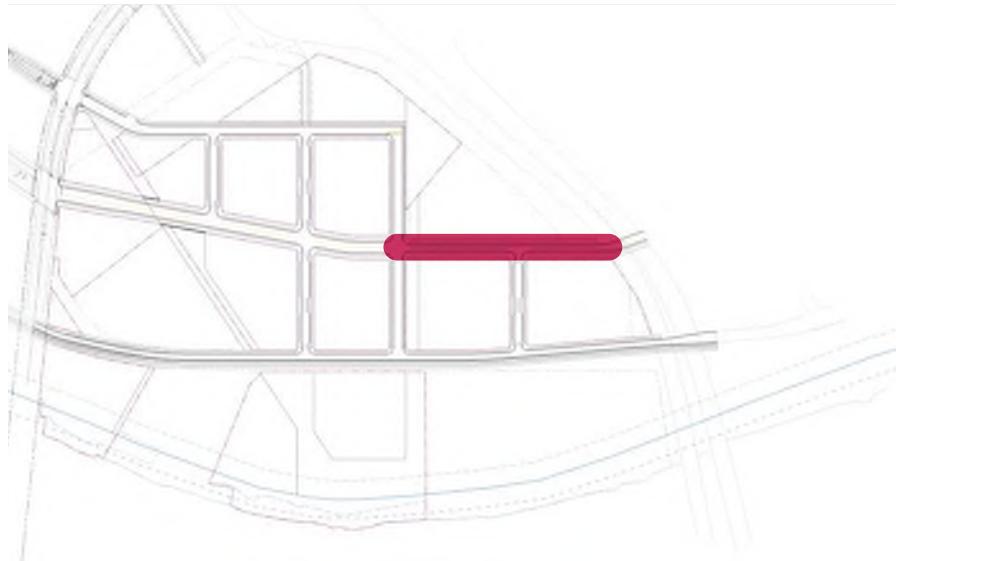


STREET SECTIONS + CHARACTER

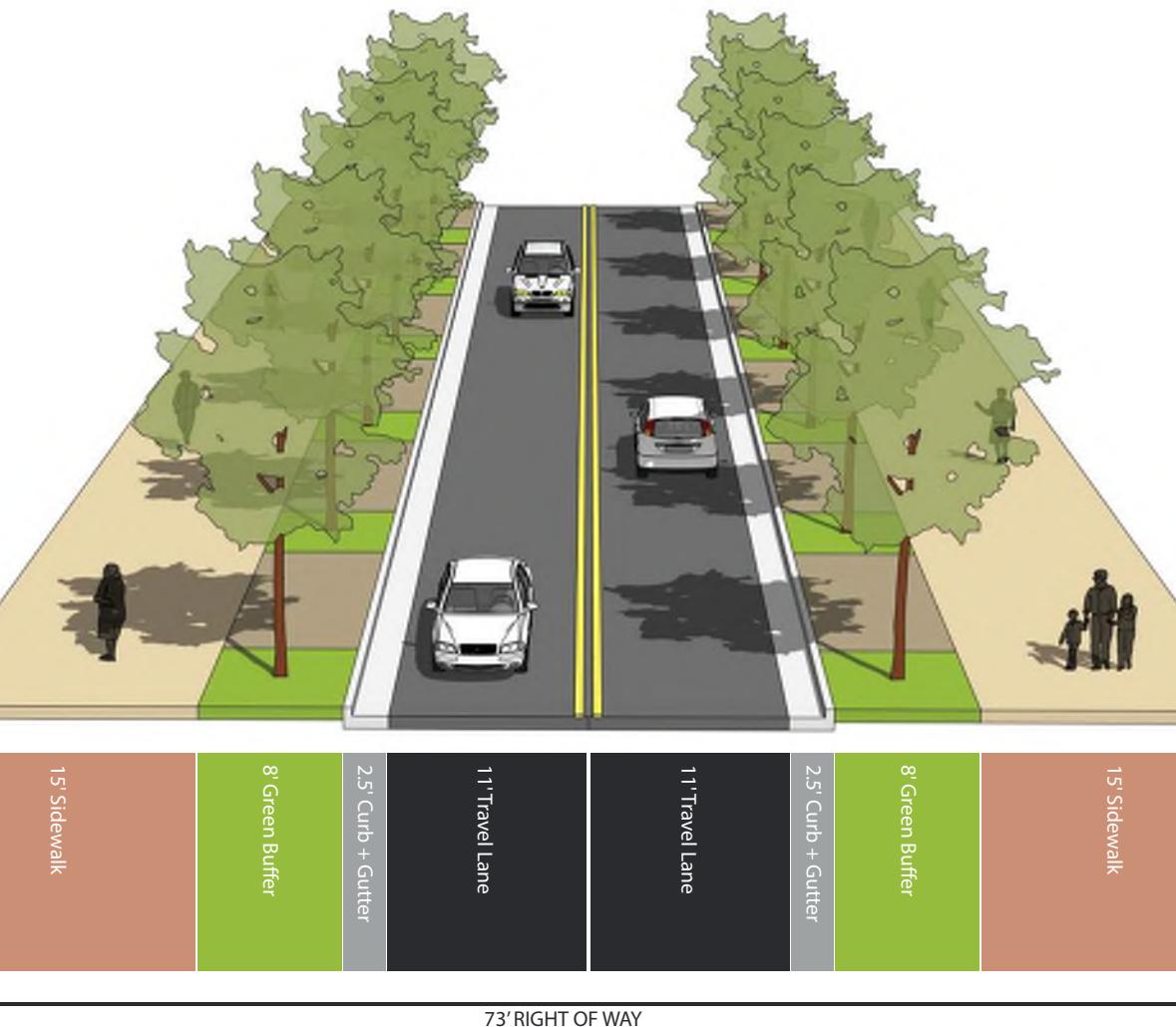
East Bank Boulevard (Section 2)

East Bank Boulevard (Section 2) narrows to two travel lanes while retaining its generous sidewalks and green buffers. The wide pedestrian zones continue to support retail spill-out, outdoor seating, and active street life, maintaining a vibrant, human-scaled corridor that balances slower vehicular movement with a dynamic public realm.

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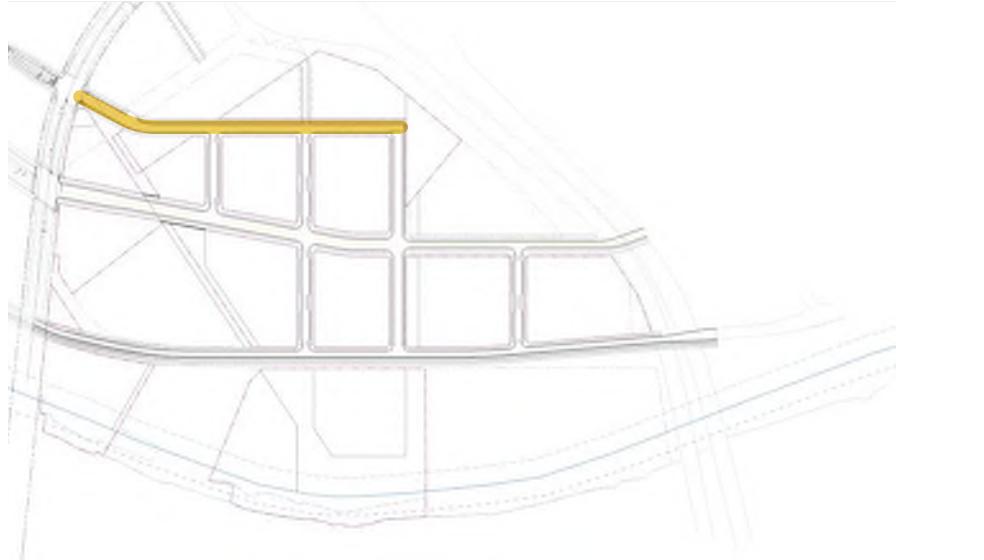
STREET SECTIONS + CHARACTER

S 2nd Street (Section 1)

S 2nd Street (Section 1) is a pedestrian- and bicycle-focused corridor featuring two travel lanes, bike lanes on both sides, generous sidewalks, and green buffers. Flanked by active retail and building frontages, the street encourages walking, cycling, and social interaction, creating a vibrant, human-scaled public realm that supports daily neighborhood life.

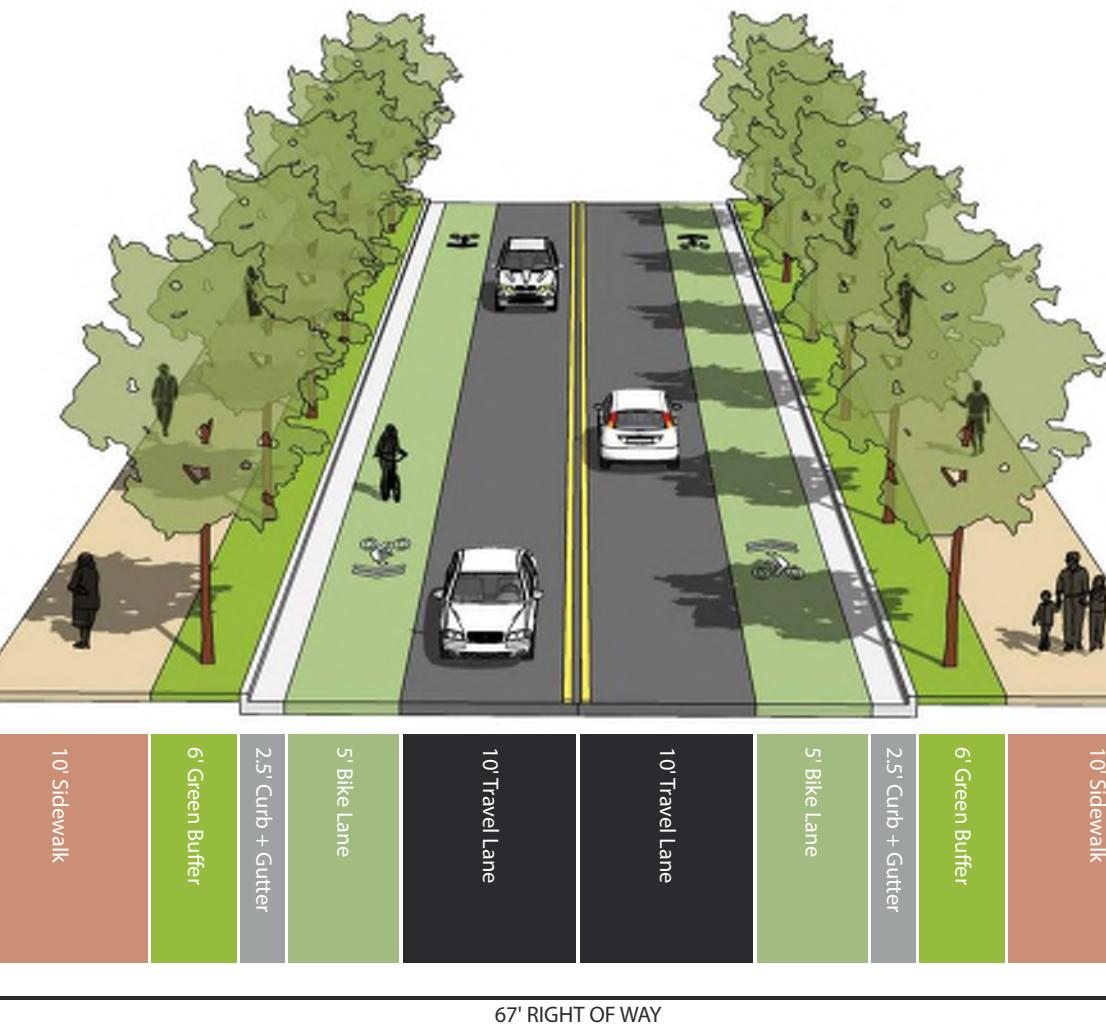
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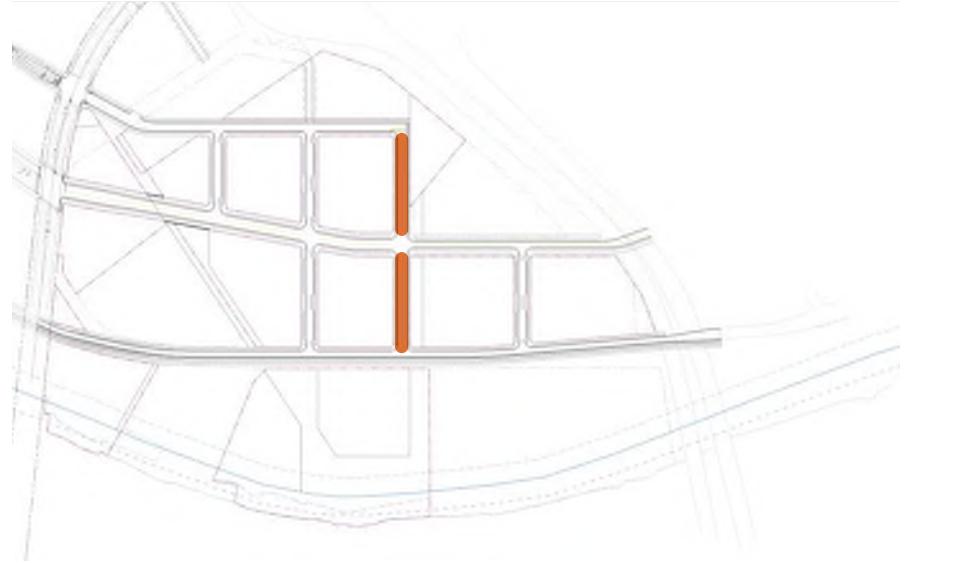


STREET SECTIONS + CHARACTER

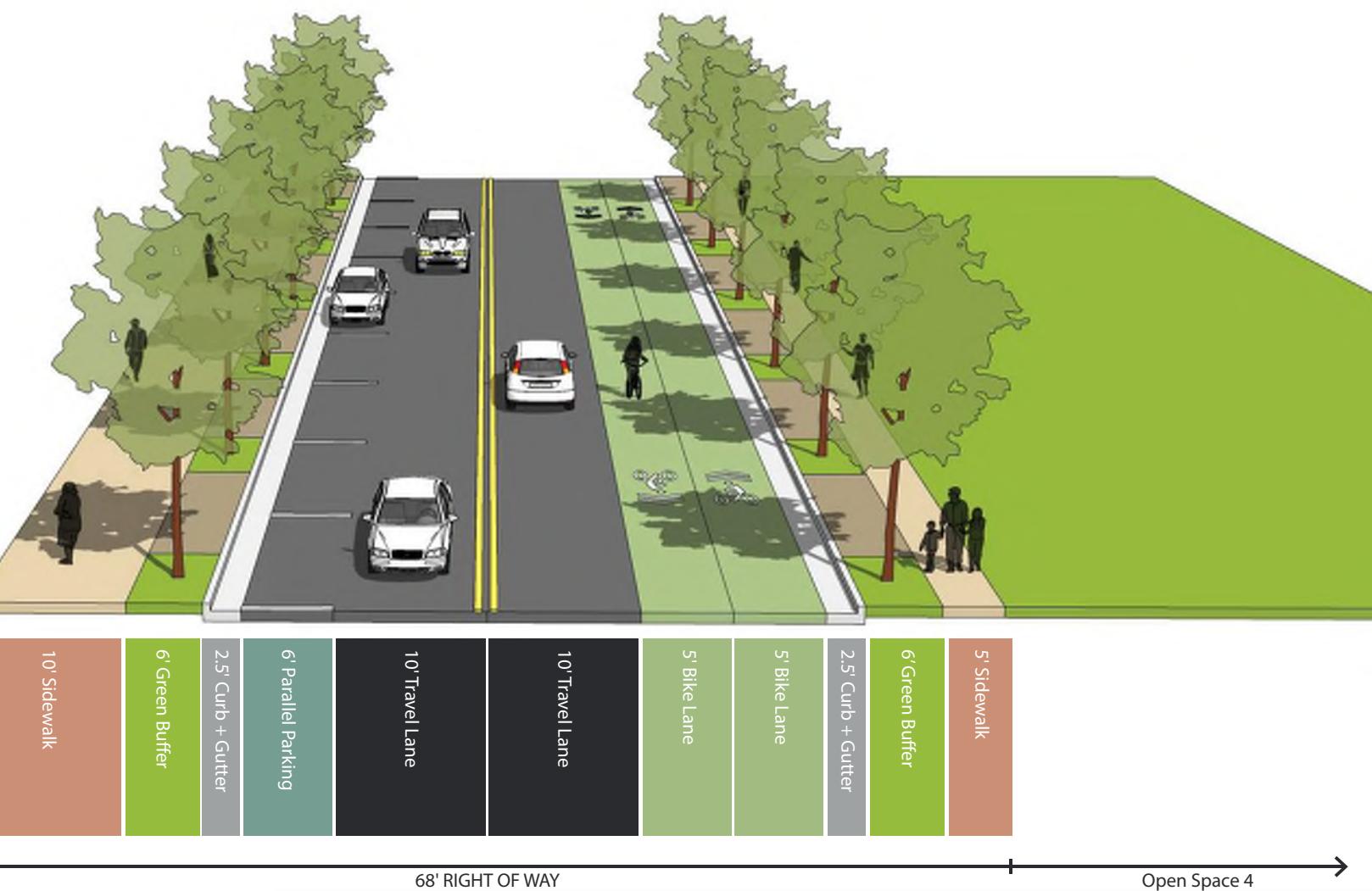
S 2nd Street (Section 2)

S 2nd Street (Section 2) along Open Space 4 is designed as a lively, human-scaled corridor with two travel lanes, bike lanes on one side, and on-street parking on the opposite side. On the side adjacent to Open Space 4, the street opens into a generous green space, expanding the public realm and creating opportunities for recreation, seating, and flexible neighborhood activities. With wide sidewalks, active retail frontages, and this enhanced connection to open space, the street offers a dynamic and engaging environment that encourages walking, cycling, and social interaction while linking the neighborhood's interior to its green corridors.

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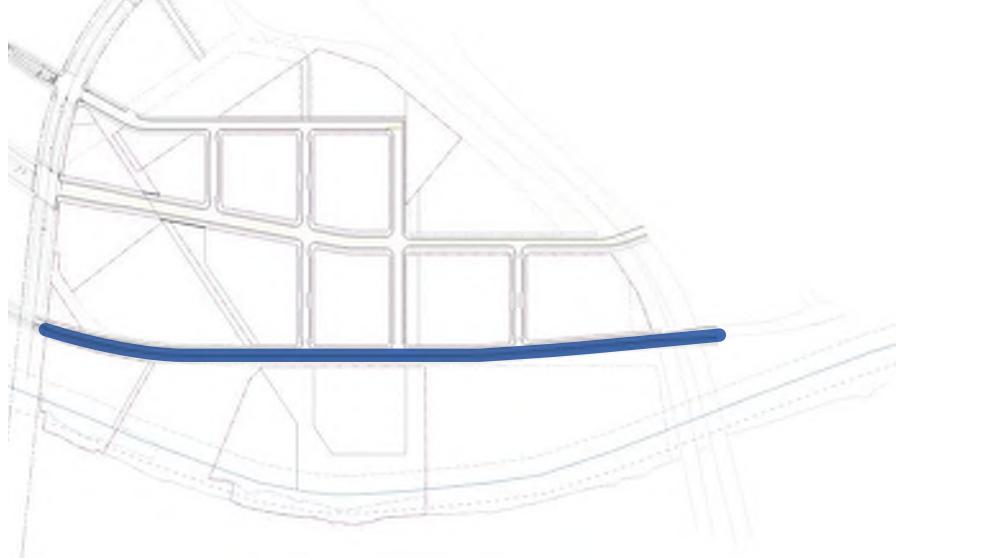


STREET SECTIONS + CHARACTER

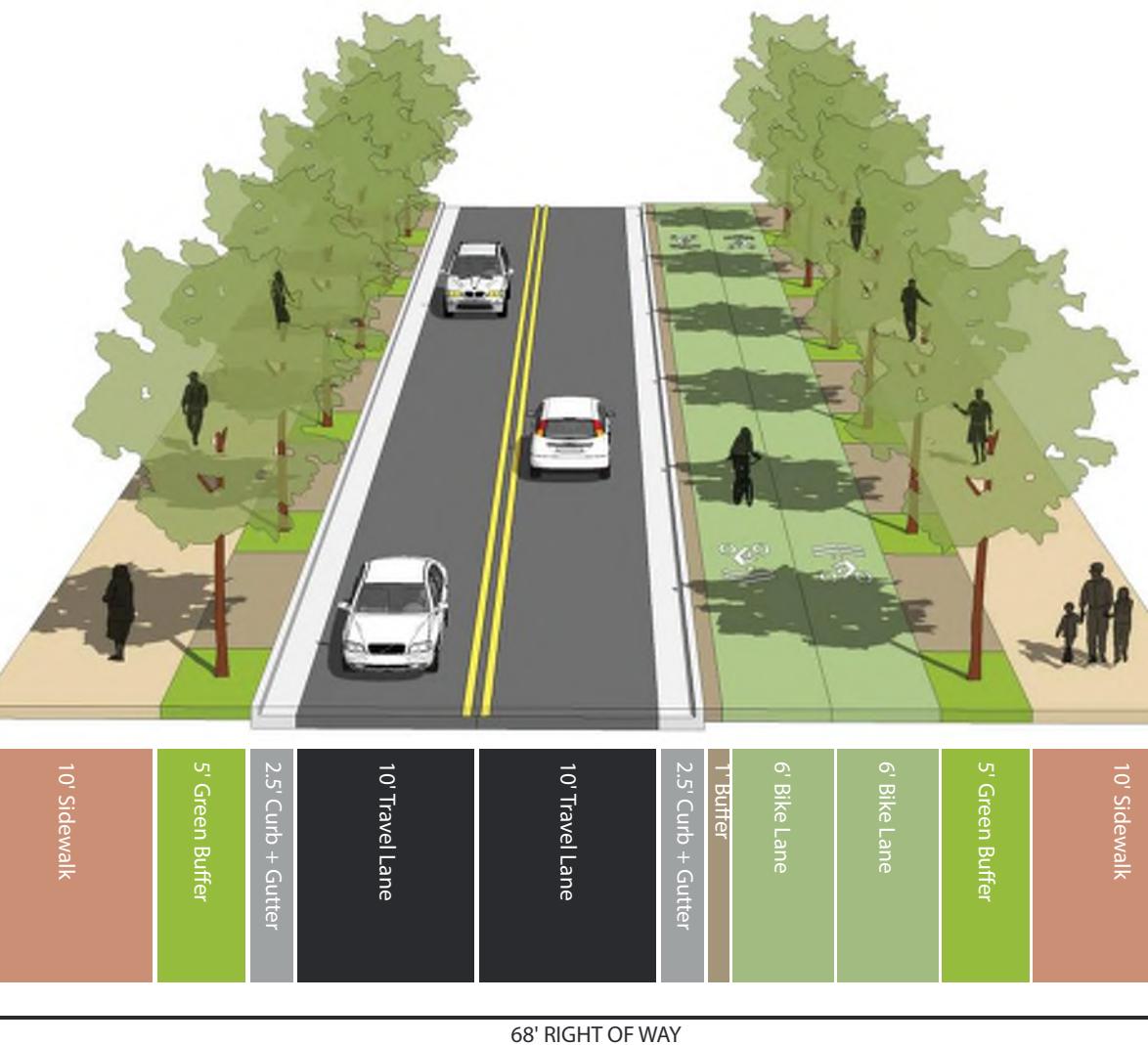
Davidson Street

Davidson Street serves as the riverfront road, featuring two travel lanes framed by green buffers and generous sidewalks. A dedicated cycle track runs along the riverfront side, providing safe and scenic access for cyclists while connecting pedestrians and cyclists to the river trail. With wide sidewalks, landscaped edges, and views of the river, Davidson Street balances vehicular movement with an active, inviting public realm that encourages recreation, walking, and social interaction along the waterfront.

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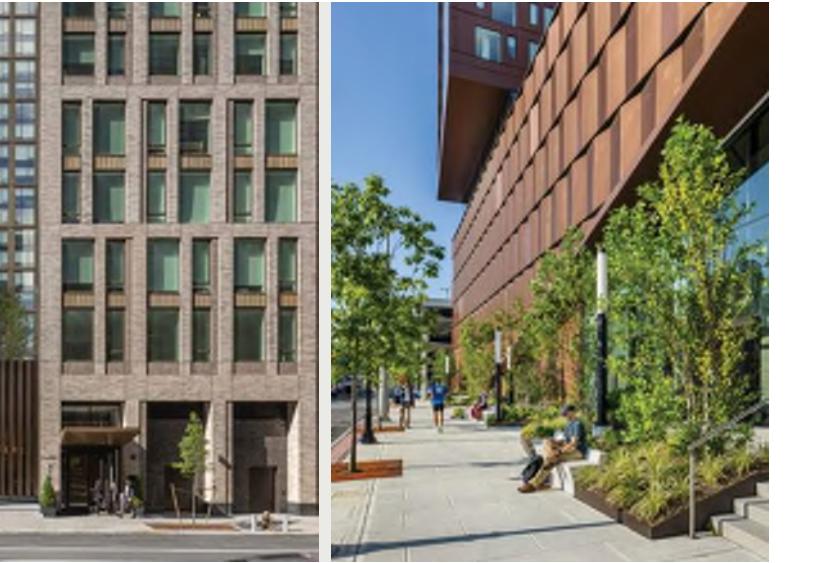
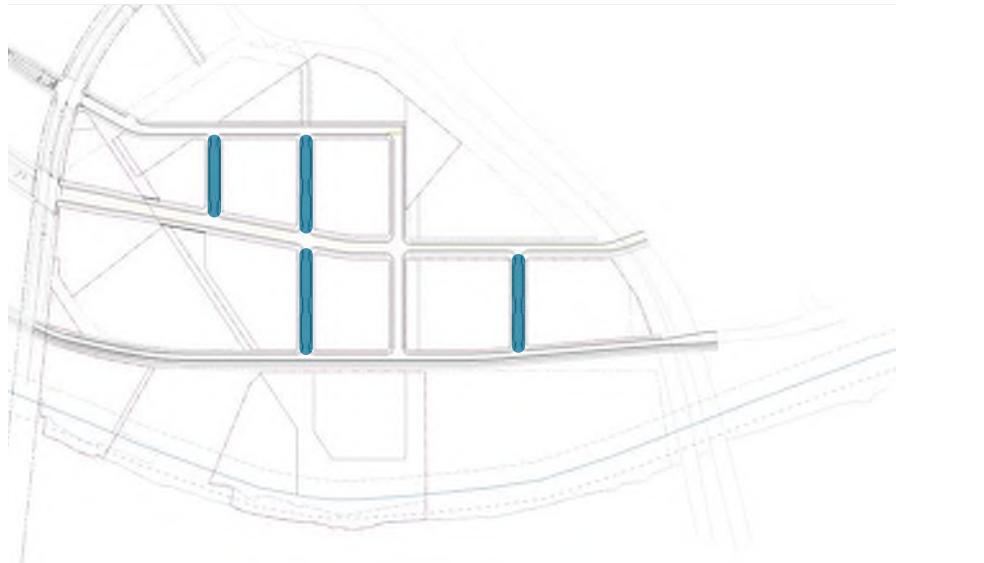


STREET SECTIONS + CHARACTER

Neighborhood Streets (A, B, + C)

Neighborhood Streets (A, B, and C) are residential-focused corridors designed to prioritize a calm, human-scaled environment. Flanked by residential lobbies, stoops, and front-facing entrances, these streets feature smaller sidewalks and generous green buffers that provide lush landscaping, shade, and separation from vehicular traffic. This combination of greenery and intimate streetscape elements fosters a sense of community, encourages casual interaction, and creates a tranquil, walkable environment that complements the more active commercial and riverfront corridors.

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