



# A PLAZA Full of Potential

Walking Tour & Possibilities Workshop

June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016



## Project Sponsors:



## Consultant Team:

**DESIGNWORKSHOP**



MARLON BLACKWELL ARCHITECTS



# OUR CHALLENGE

**To create a world-class public space that...**

leverages the space to its fullest potential

honors its cultural heritage

integrates its historic role as a governmental plaza

improves access and mobility

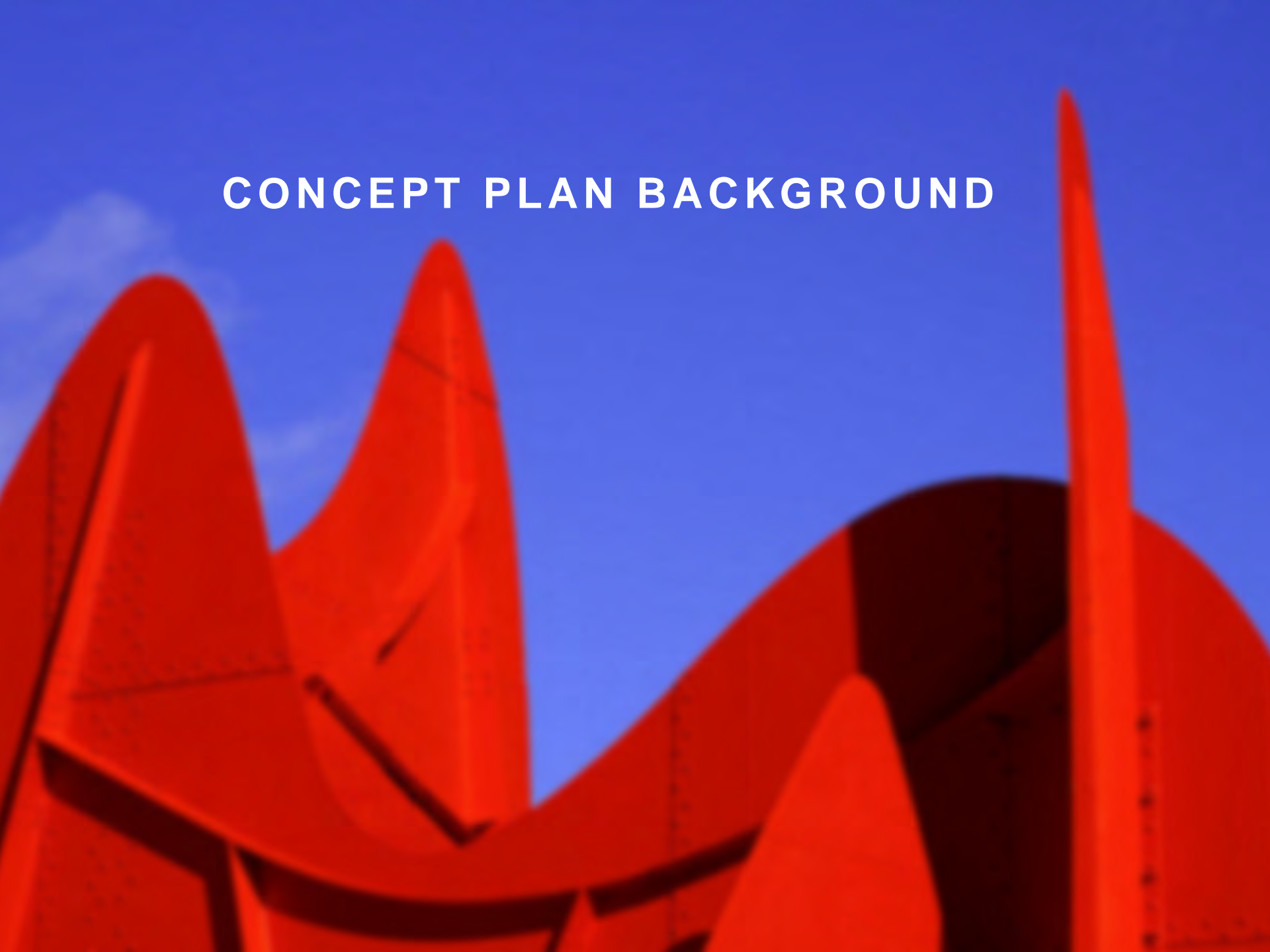
activates the space during all seasons

catalyzes future development

and creates iconic experiences

**...for current and future generations.**

# CONCEPT PLAN BACKGROUND



# CONCEPT PLAN SCHEDULE

## JUNE / JULY

### **Imagine the Possibilities:**

*A burst of ideas from the community.*

## AUGUST

### **Evaluate Options:**

*An exploration of different opportunities and decisions.*

## SEPTEMBER

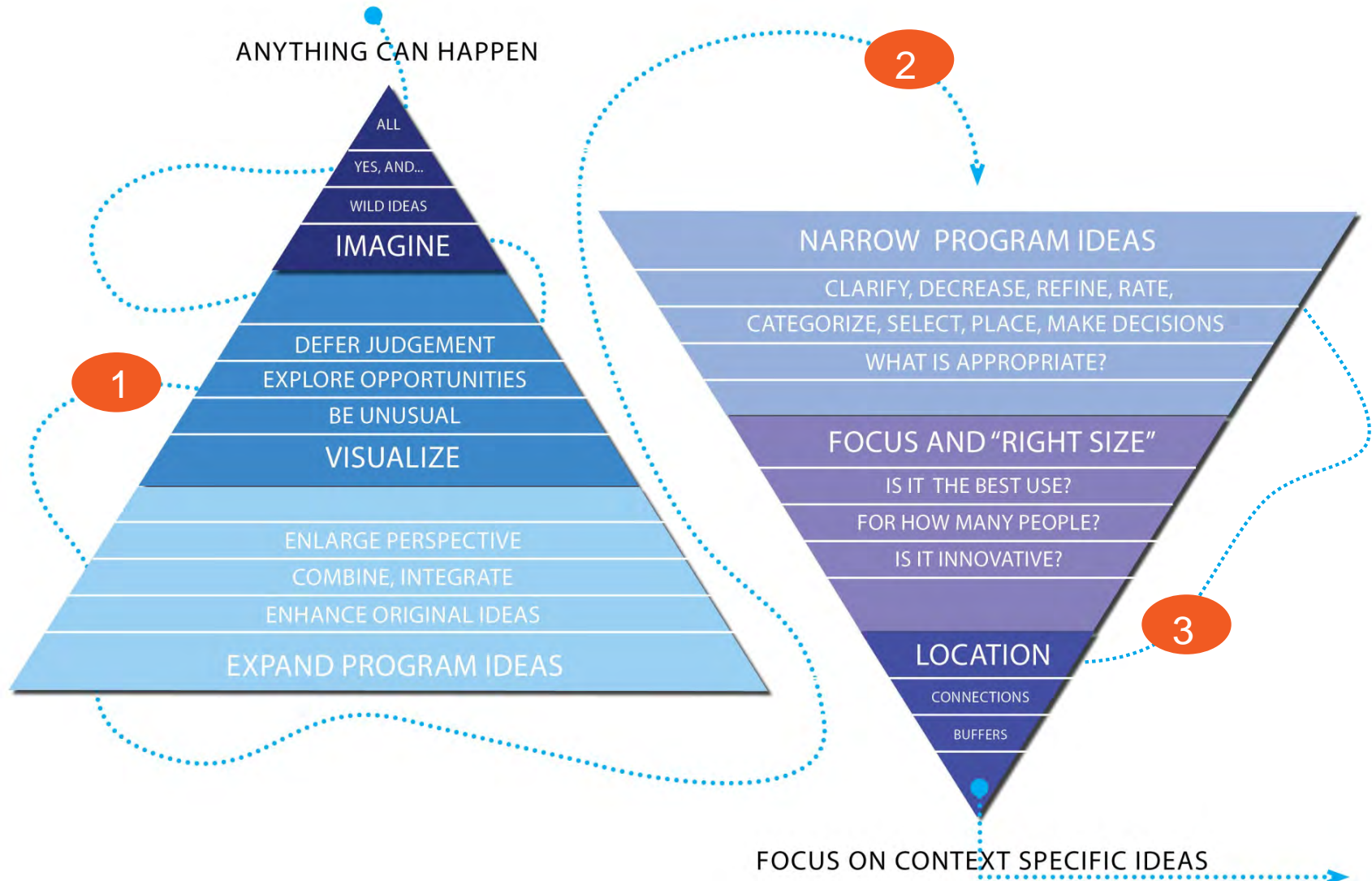
### **People's Choice:**

*A new vision for the plaza is unveiled.*

## NOVEMBER

*Final Concept Plan  
Documentation Complete*

# DREAM BIG. REFINE IDEAS.





# THE PLAZA TODAY



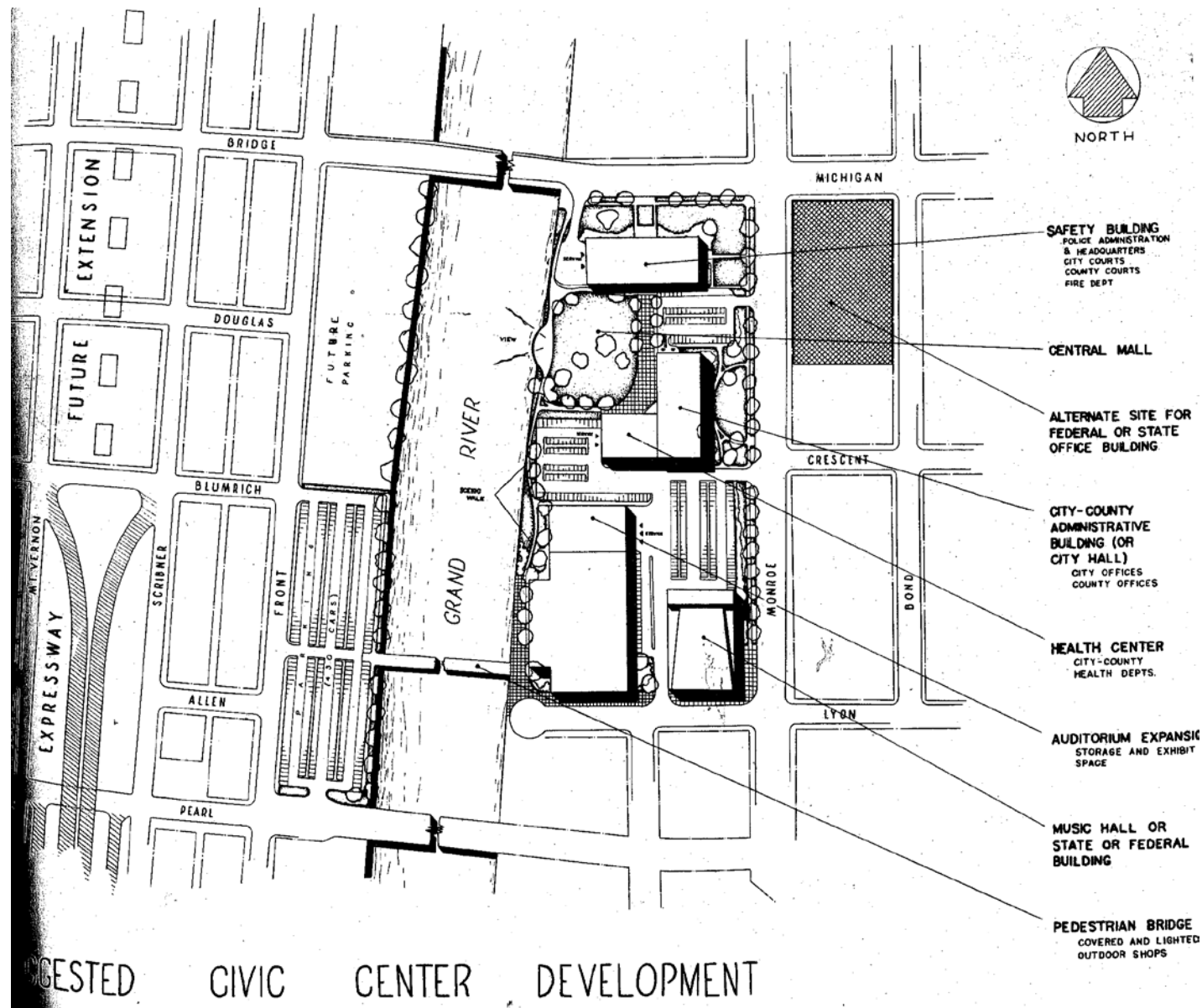


## PAST VISIONS

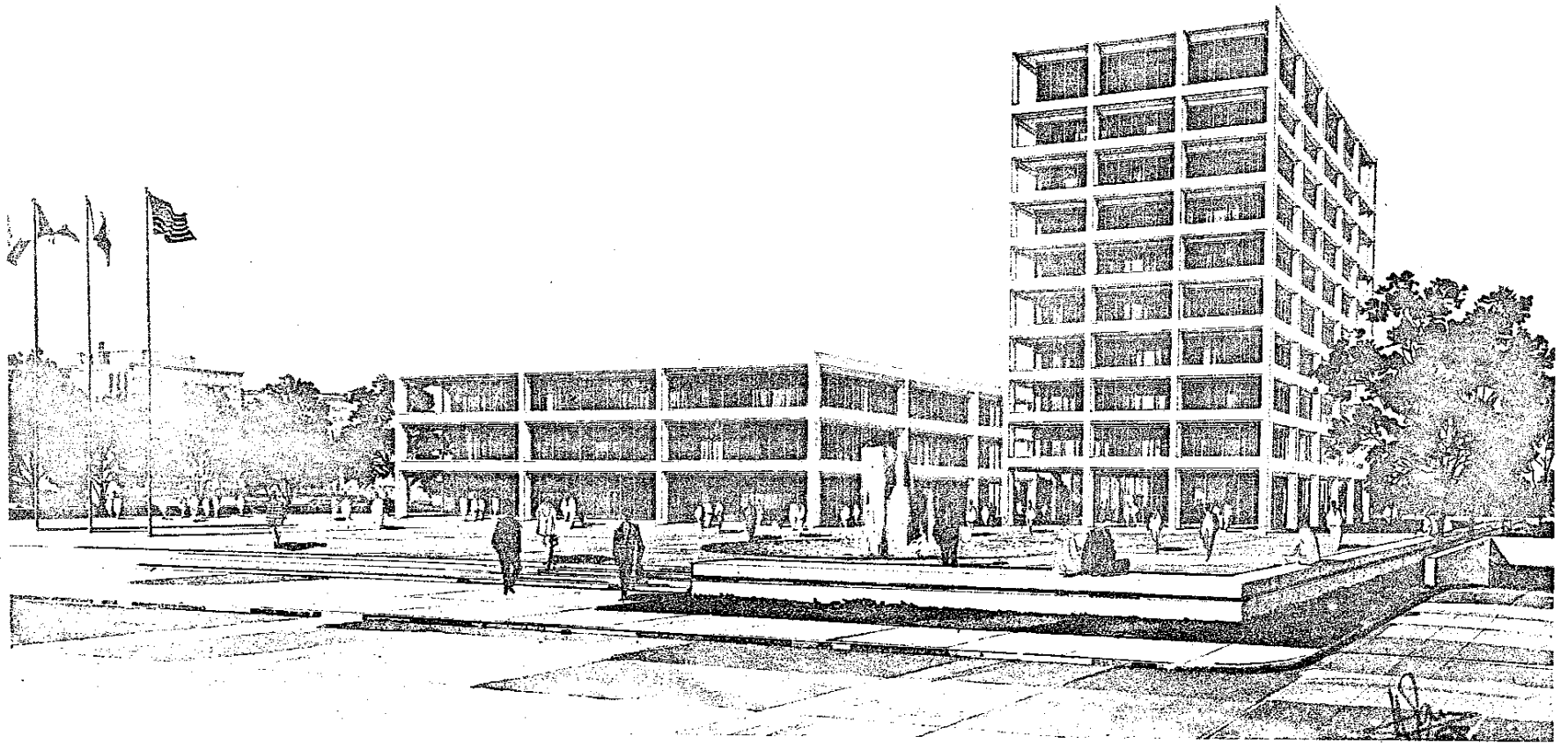




# 1956 VISION

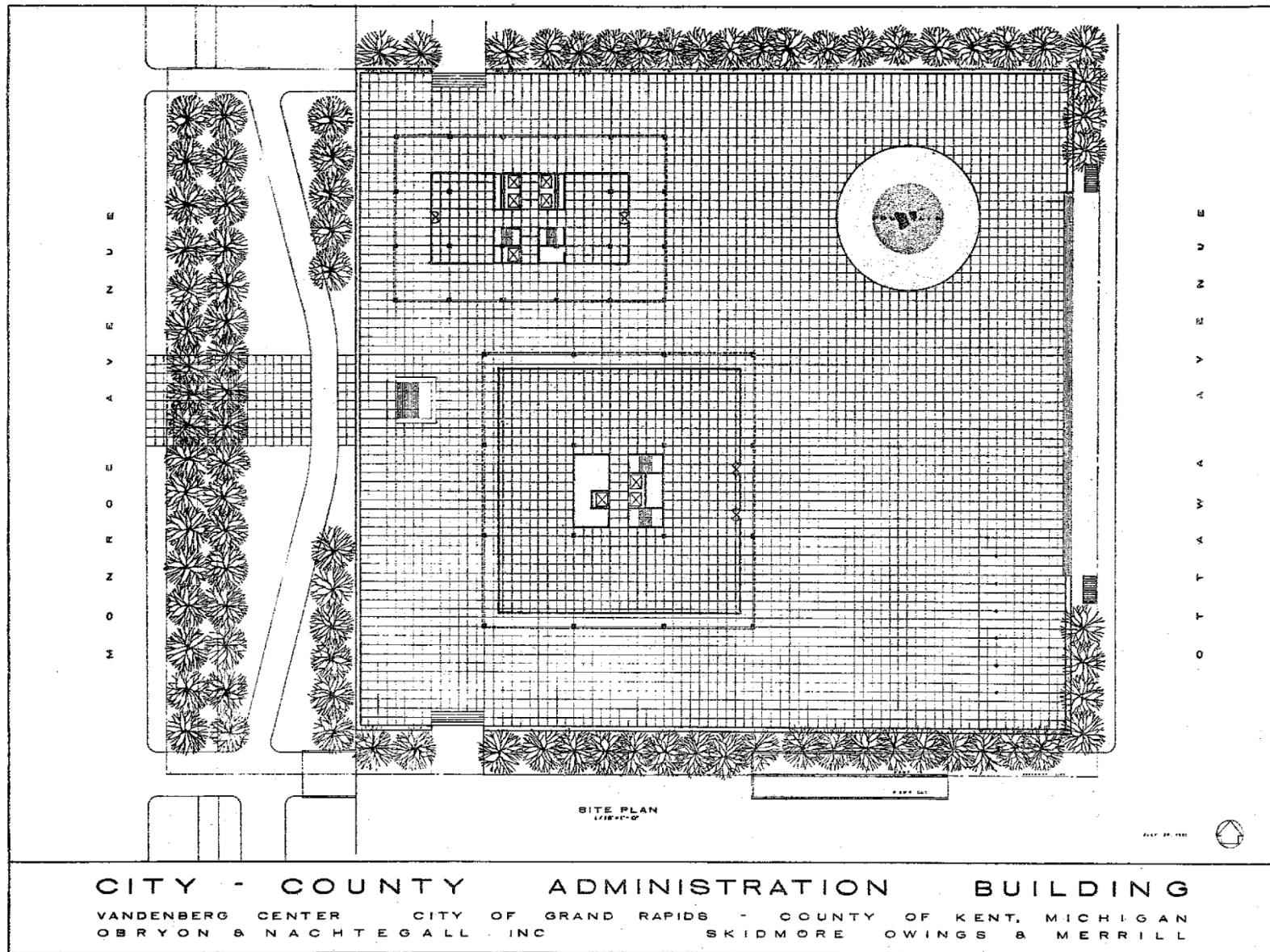


# 1965 VISION

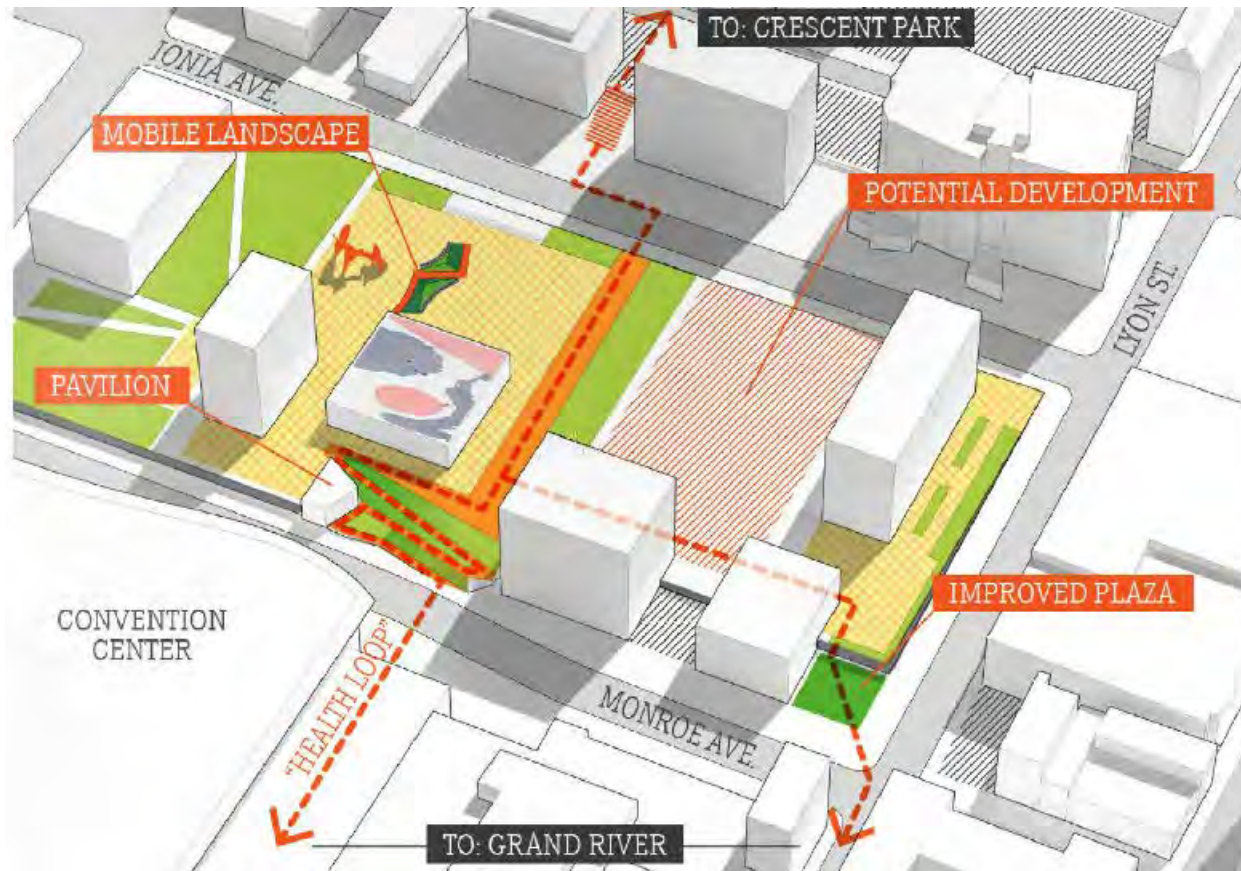




# 1965 VISION



# GR FORWARD VISION



## ACCESS

- Physical Connectivity
- Visual Connectivity
- ADA & Lighting
- Integrate Health Loop

## ACTIVATE

- Mobile Landscapes
- Year-Round Activities
- Create Intimacy
- Establish a Human Scale

## ATTRACT

- Downtown Vitality
- Inclusiveness
- Economic Development
- Visitors for Tourism



# REALIZING THE GR FORWARD PLAN



Restore the River as the Draw and Create a Connected and Equitable River Corridor



Create a True Downtown Neighborhood that is Home to a Diverse Population



Implement a 21st Century Mobility Strategy



Expand Job Opportunities & Ensure Continued Vitality of the Local Economy



Reinvest in Public Space, Culture & Inclusive Programming



Retain and Attract Families, Talent and Job Providers

# PROJECT VISION

## **Grand Rapids' has the "ICON" ...it's time to create "ICONIC EXPERIENCES!"**

While visually respecting Alexander Calder's *La Grande Vitesse*, which serves as a symbol for Grand Rapids, and maintaining the plaza's function as the downtown's public space for large gatherings, the project seeks to address accessibility issues, activate the plaza on a daily basis and attract economic vitality.

Together, these strategies will create a vibrant, year-round public space for the citizens of and visitors to the city.



# ACTIVATING CIVIC SPACE

CASE STUDY | SUNDANCE SQUARE, FORT WORTH, TX



Before



After



# ACTIVATING CIVIC SPACE

CASE STUDY | SUNDANCE SQUARE, FORT WORTH, TX



Image source: MVLA



# ACTIVATING CIVIC SPACE

CASE STUDY | SUNDANCE SQUARE, FORT WORTH, TX



image source: MVLA



# INVESTING FOR A VIABLE DOWNTOWN

CASE STUDY | WAYNE FERGUSON PLAZA, TX





# YEAR-ROUND ACTIVATION

CASE STUDY | DALEY PLAZA, CHICAGO, IL





# CATALYZING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CASE STUDY | MILLENNIUM PLAZA, DENVER, CO



image: Design Workshop



# CONNECTING THE CITY

CASE STUDY | PORTAL TO THE POINT, PITTSBURGH PA

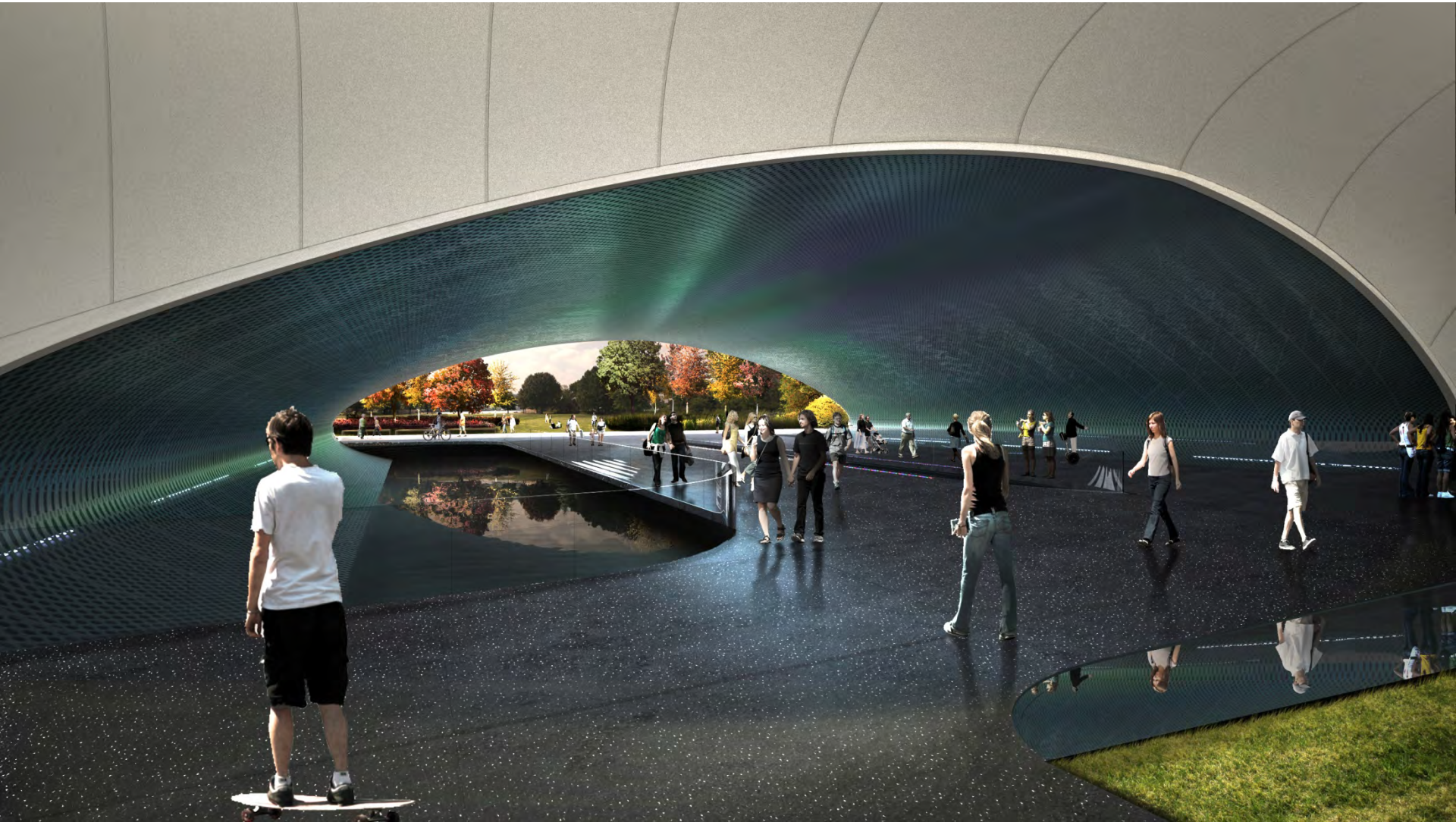


*image source: Marlon Blackwell*



# CONNECTING THE CITY

CASE STUDY | PORTAL TO THE POINT, PITTSBURGH PA



*image source: Marlon Blackwell*



# CONNECTING THE CITY

CASE STUDY | PORTAL TO THE POINT, PITTSBURGH PA



*image source: Marlon Blackwell*



**THE PLAZA WE HAVE NOW &  
THE PLAZA WE WANT IN THE FUTURE**



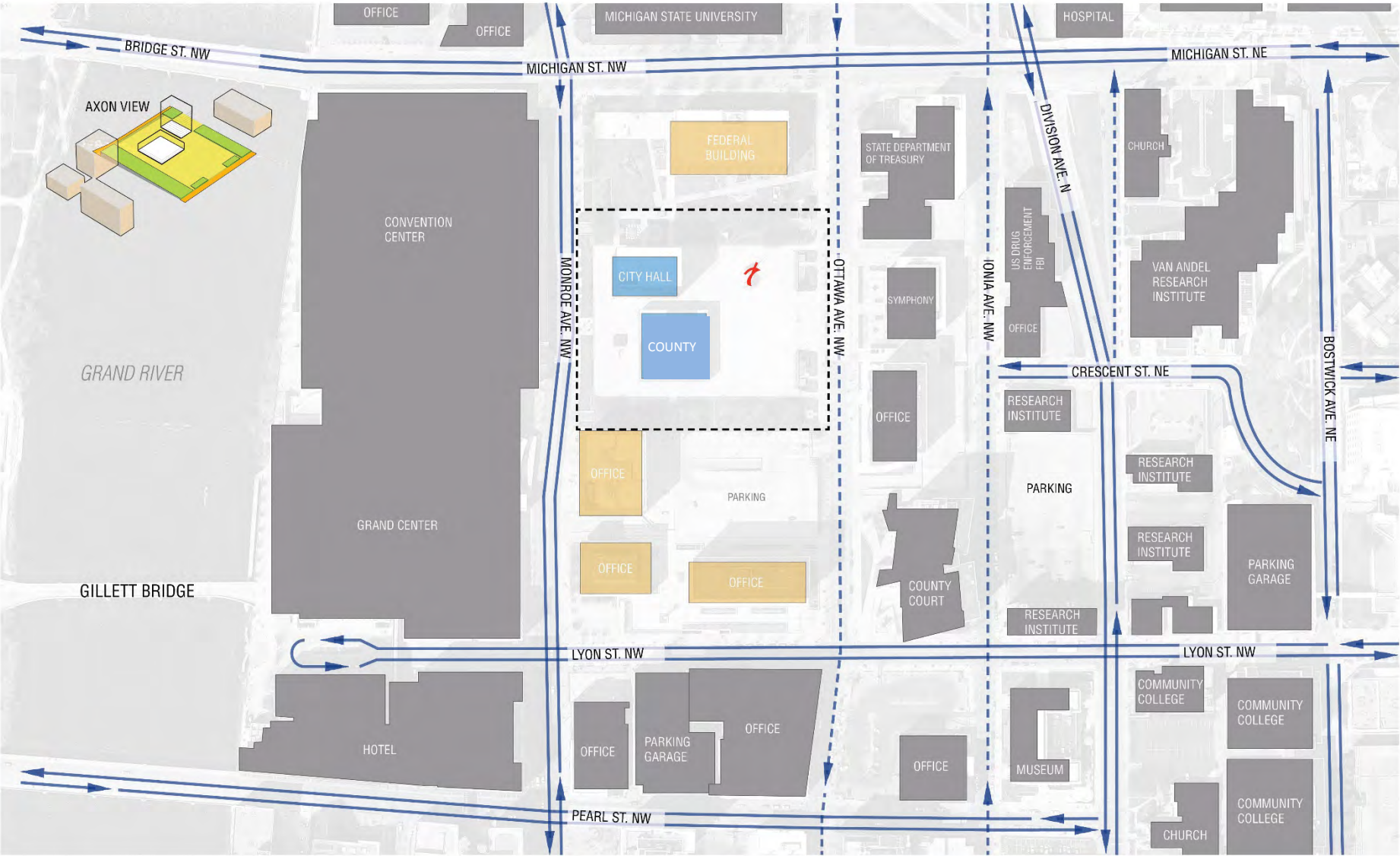


# PLAZA CONTEXT



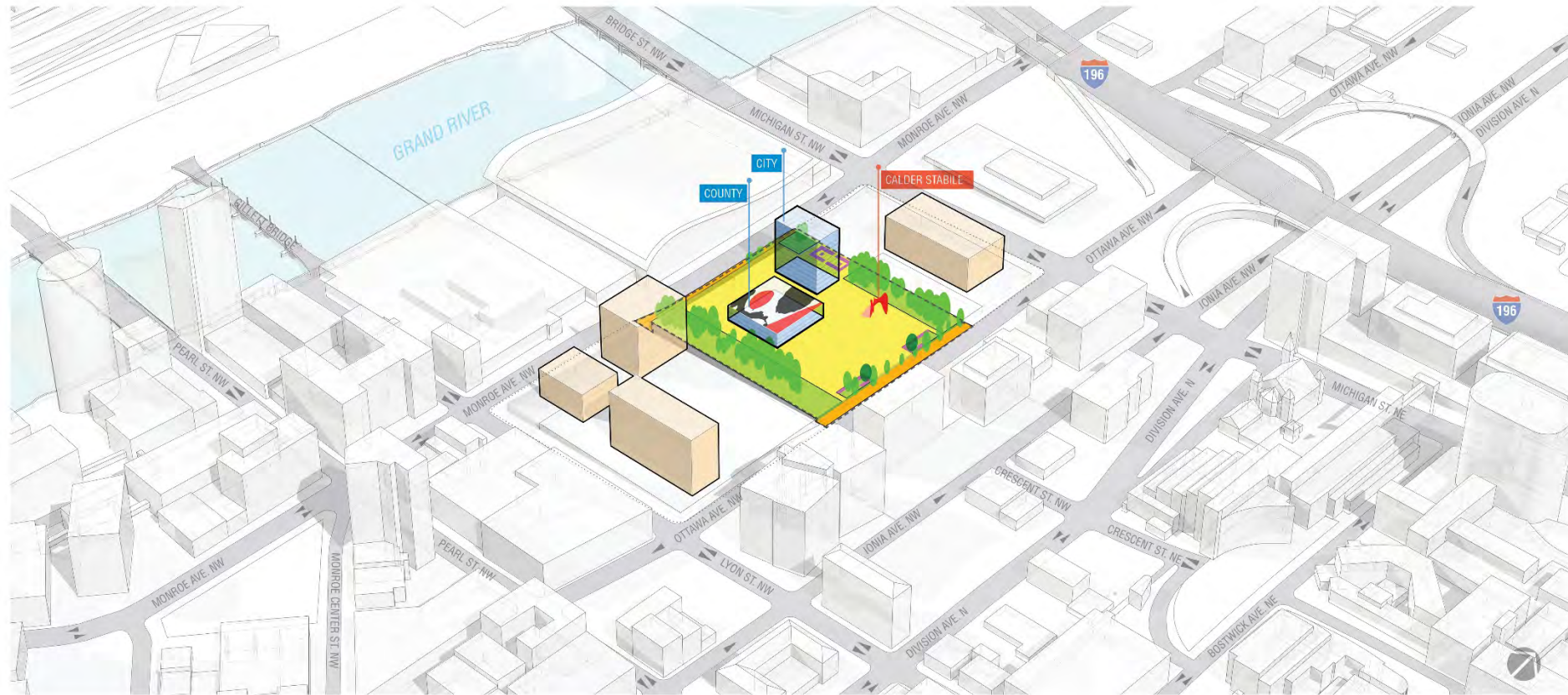


# PLAZA CONTEXT

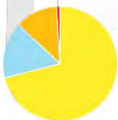
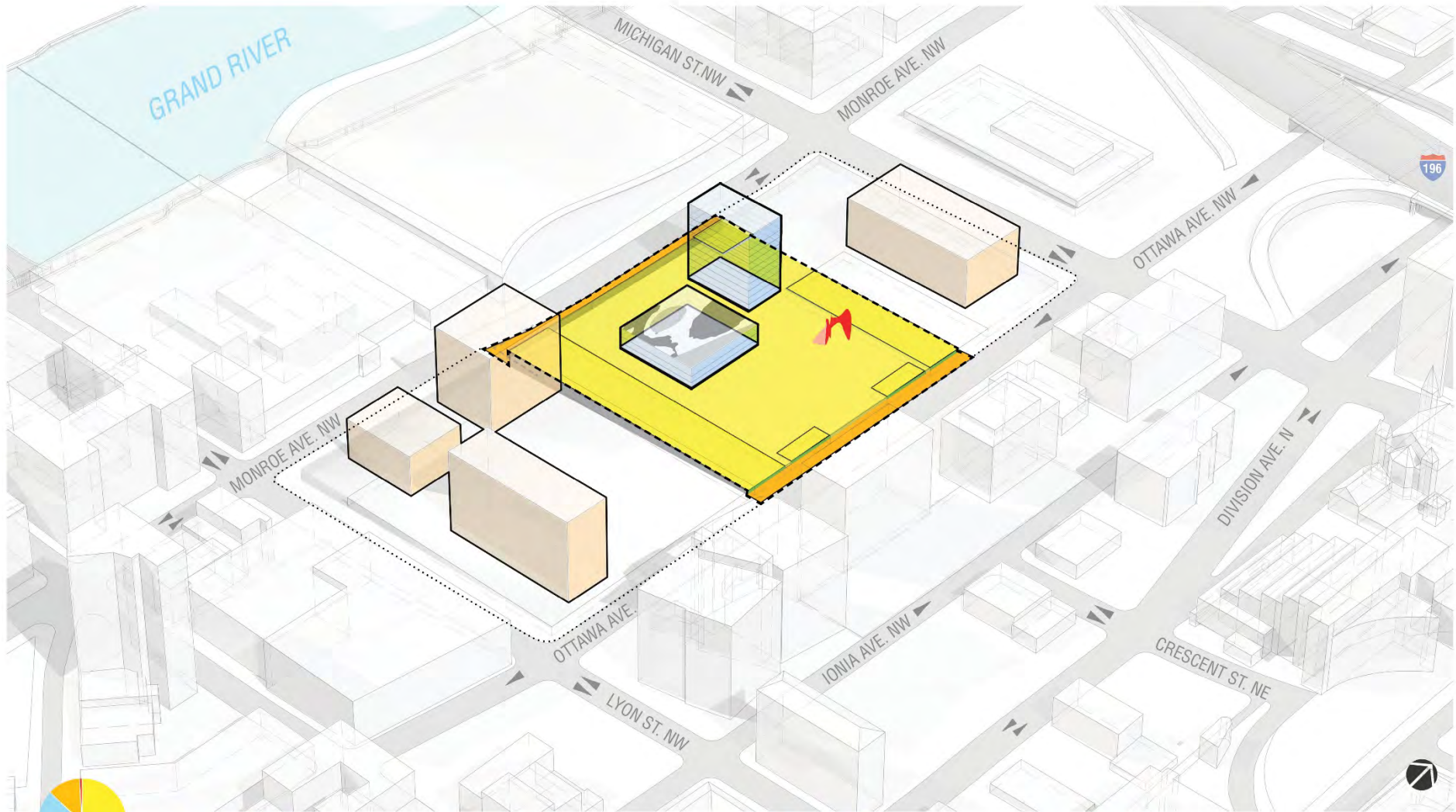




# PLAZA CONTEXT



# THE PLAZA



**71%** PLAZA SPACE  
(159,750 SQ. FT ±)

**16%** BUILDING FOOTPRINT  
(36,000 SQ. FT ±)

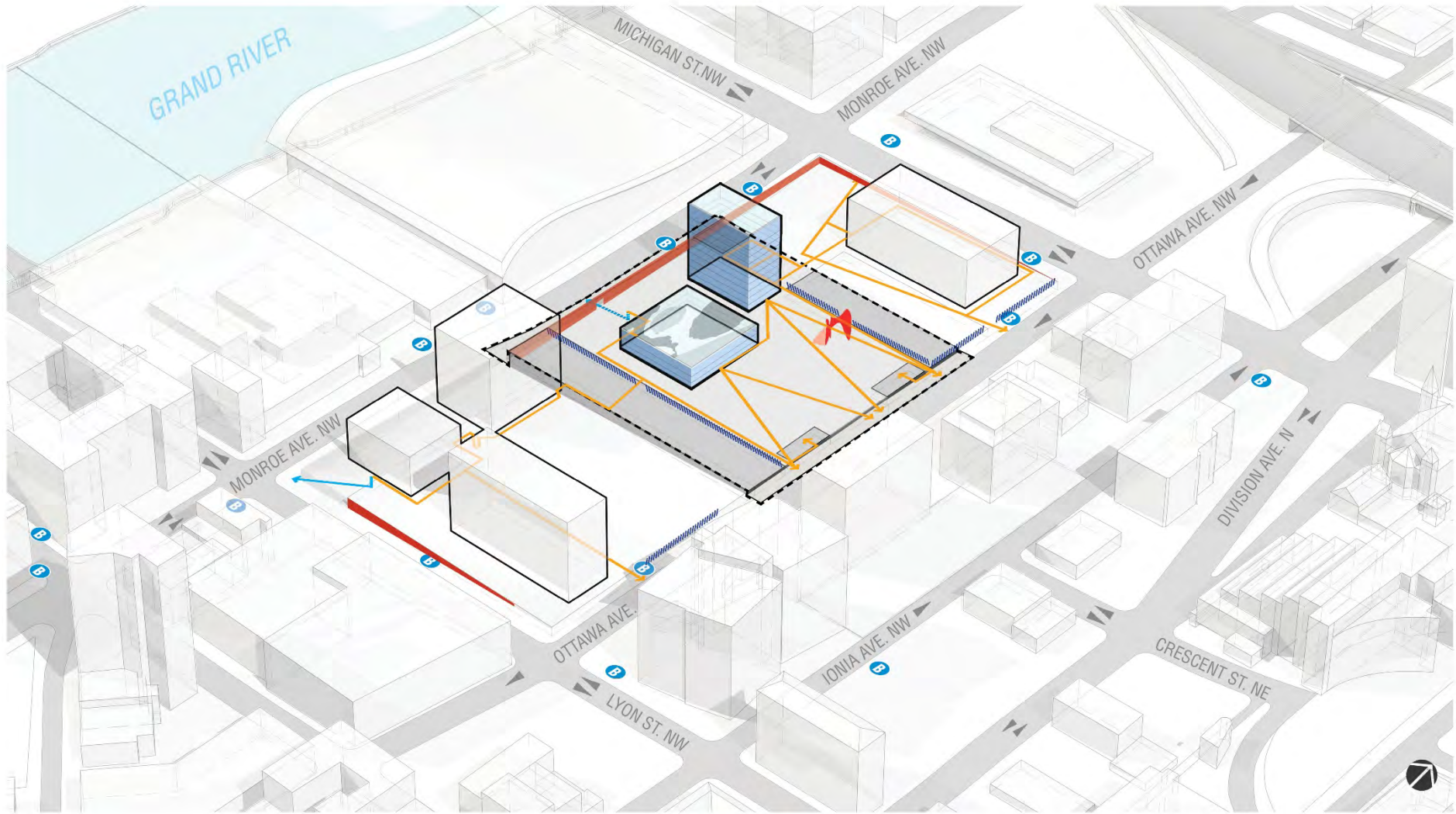
**12%** LINEAR STREETSCAPE  
(27,000 SQ. FT ±)

**1%** CALDER STABLE  
(2,250 SQ. FT ±)





# PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION



- LEGEND
- PEDESTRIAN ROUTES - UPPER
  - PEDESTRIAN ROUTES - LOWER
  - SMALL-SCALE BARRIERS
  - LARGE-SCALE BARRIERS
  - BUS STOPS



# POTENTIAL CIRCULATION AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT



1. Monroe Avenue Wall



2. Monroe Avenue Streetscape



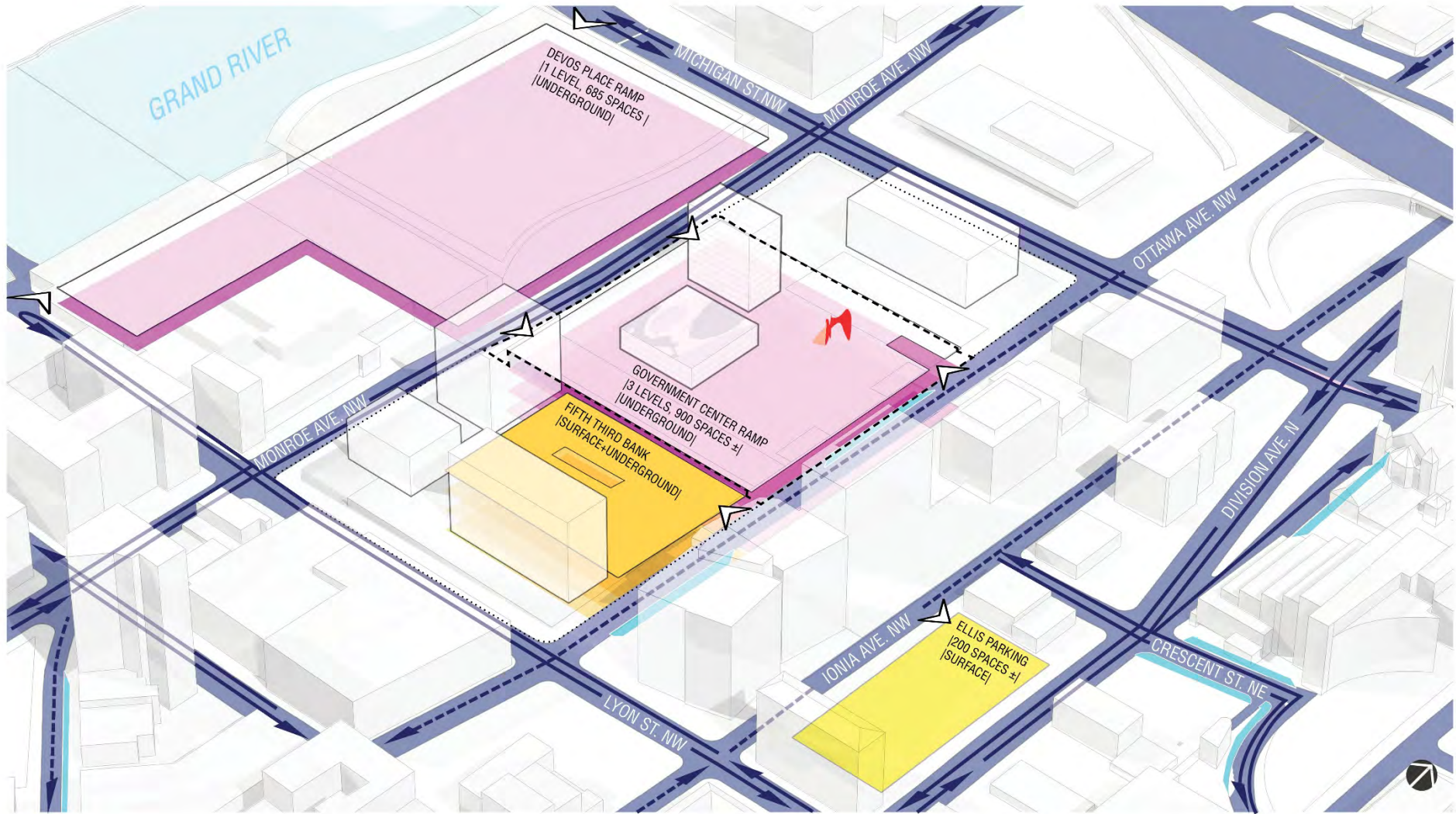
3. Ottawa Avenue Streetscape



4. Plaza parking garage stairway



# STREETS & PARKING



## LEGEND

- TWO-WAY STREETS
- ONE-WAY STREETS
- STREET PARKING
- PARKING LOT ENTRANCES
- UNDERGROUND PARKING
- SURFACE PARKING
- PRIVATE PARKING



# CALDER PLAZA EVENTS



Festival of the Arts, 2002



Festival of the Arts, 2002



Siciliano's Big Brew Day, 2014



Fiesta Mexicana, 2012



Al Gore Campaign, 2000



Gus Macker Tournament, 1996



Gull Wing Group Convention, 2007



Laughing Fest, 2011

# CALDER PLAZA EVENTS

Events	Attendance
<b>SPRING (March - May)</b>	<b>103,600</b>
Laughing Fest	50,000
Gazelle Girl Half Marathon	4,000
Fashion Show	1,000
Siciliano's Big Brew Day	600
Fifth Third Riverbank Run	40,000
Girls on the Run	3,000
Soul Pose*	5,000
<b>SUMMER (June - August)</b>	<b>525,200</b>
Festival of the Arts	500,000
Greater Grand Rapids Pride	10,000
Grand Rapids on Tap	
Cruizin' the Calder	200
Color Run	15,000
<b>FALL (September - November)</b>	<b>630,750</b>
Fiesta Mexicana	50,000
Hispanic Festival	20,000
ArtPrize	500,000
Paul Collins Diversity/ African American Festival	60,000
Zombie Beer Festival	750
<b>WINTER (December - February)</b>	<b>3,530</b>
They Ugly Sweater Run - 5K	3,500
Chanukah Lighting	30
New Year's Eve Party	
<b>Total Event Attendees Estimate</b>	<b>1,263,080</b>

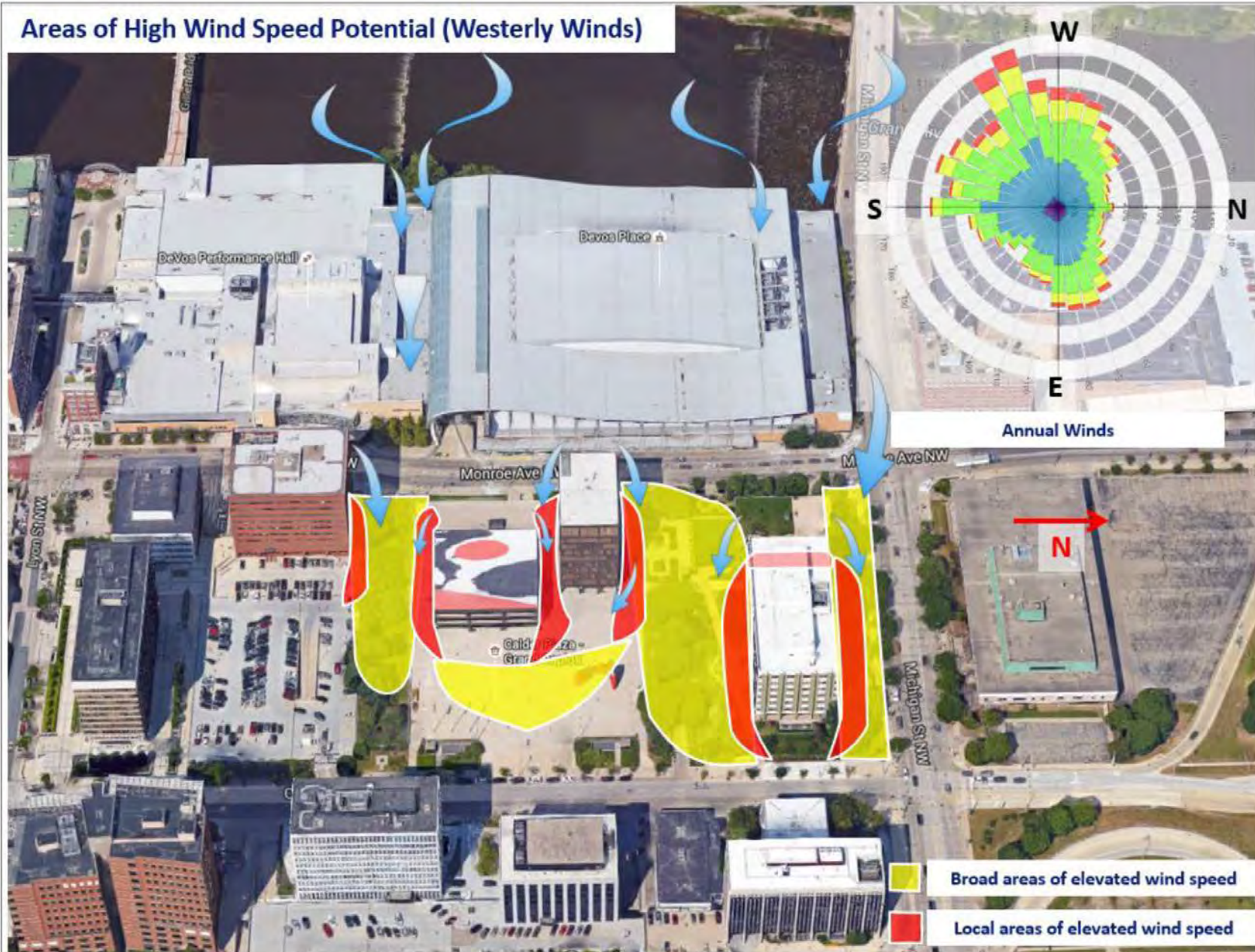
\* Soul Pose was a non-reoccurring event.

This chart shows events that occurred or will occur 2015 - 2016.



# HUMAN COMFORT

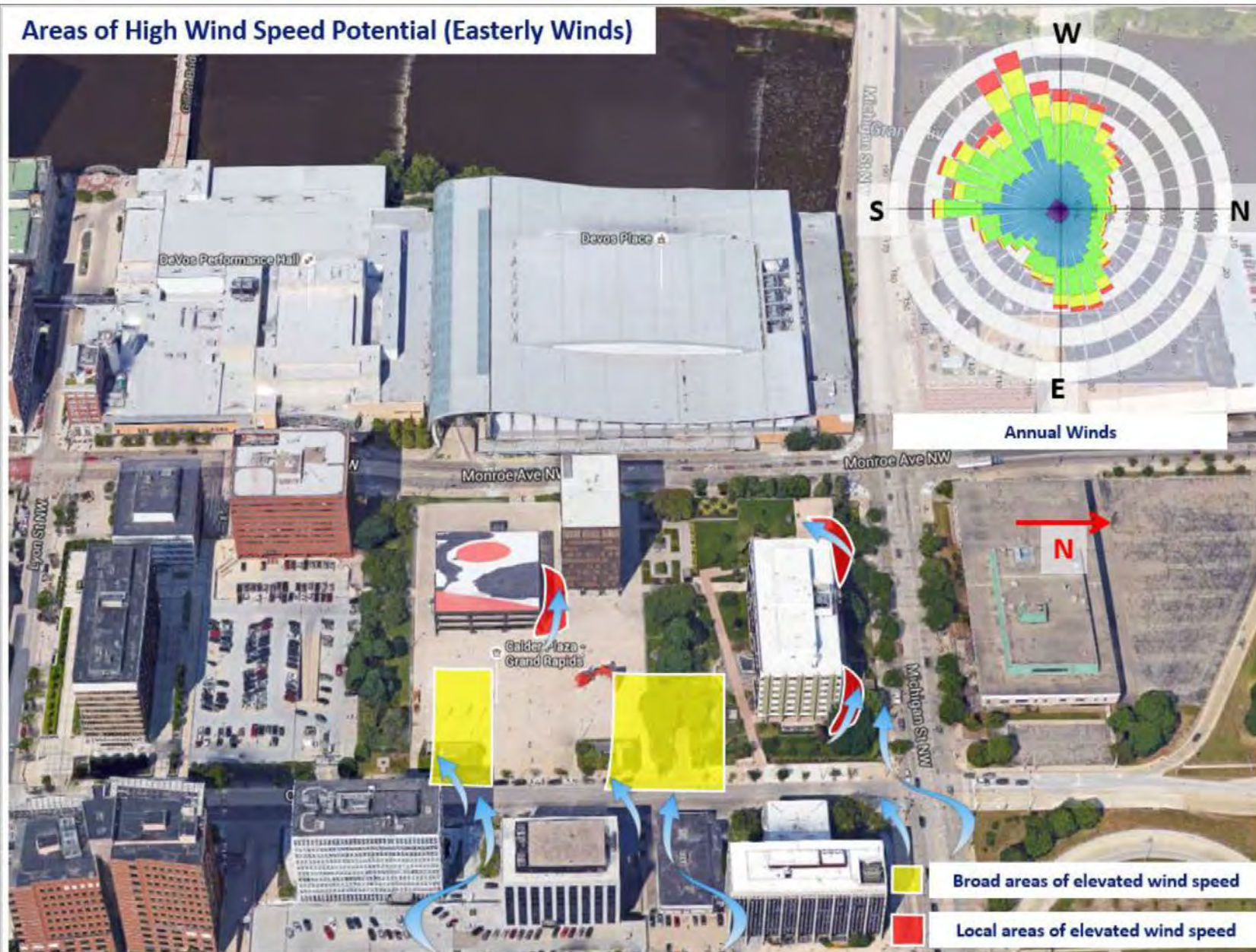
Areas of High Wind Speed Potential (Westerly Winds)





# HUMAN COMFORT

Areas of High Wind Speed Potential (Easterly Winds)





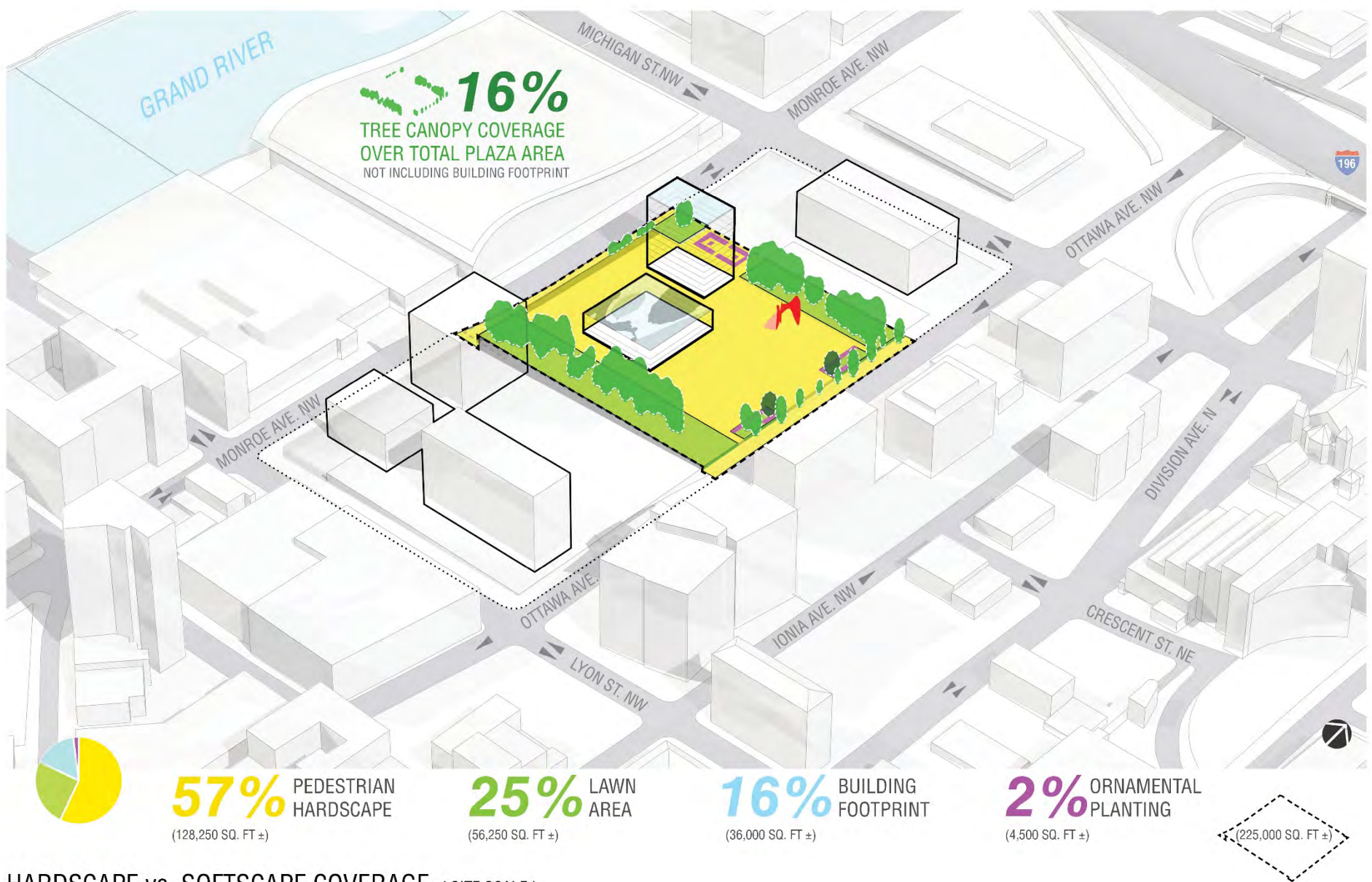
# HUMAN COMFORT

Winter Winds – Areas of High Snow Drift Potential





# VEGETATION & HARDSCAPE



HARDSCAPE vs. SOFTSCAPE COVERAGE | SITE SCALE |



# VEGETATION EXAMPLES



Shade trees



Flower planter boxes



Ornamental planting



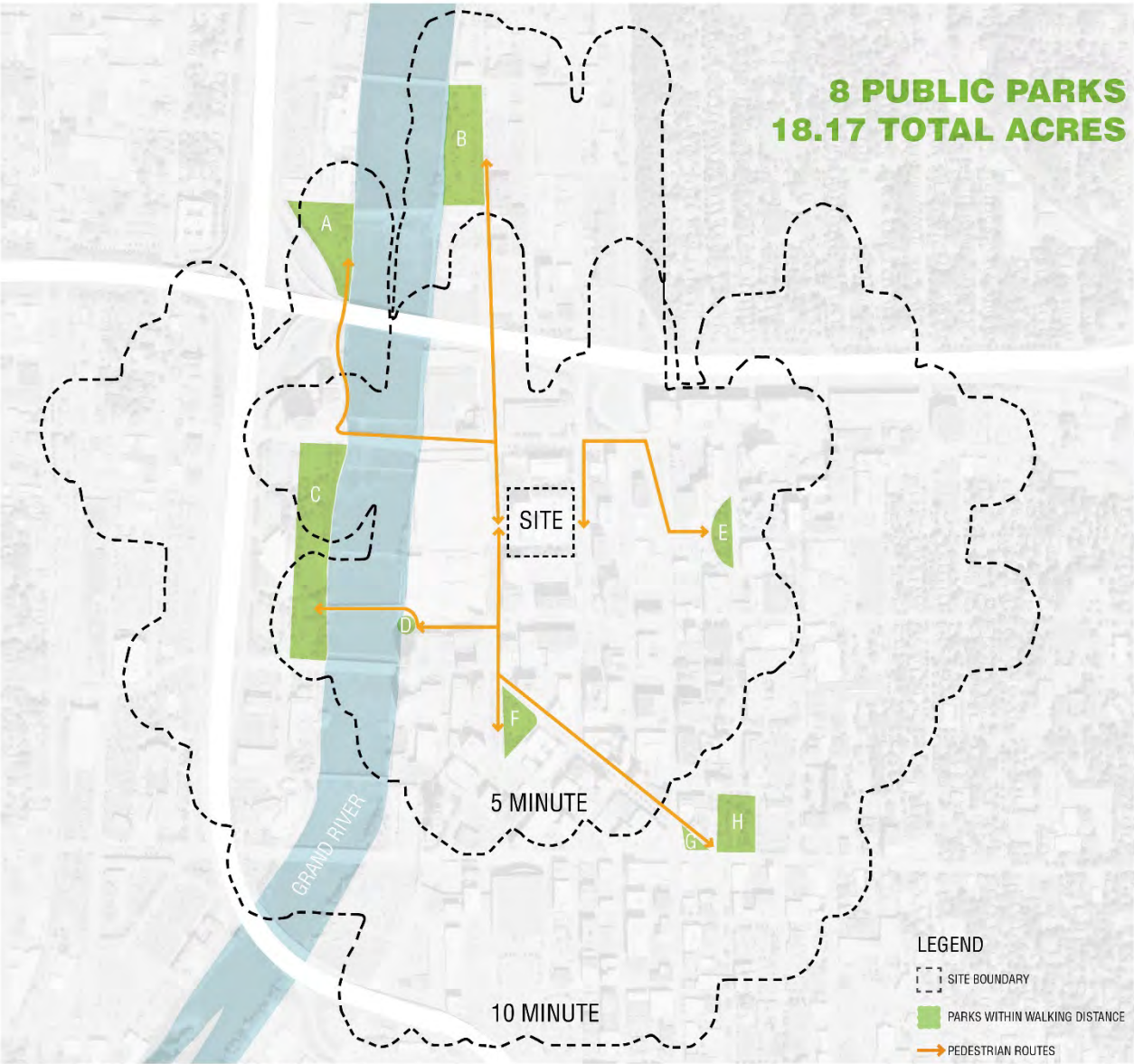
Lawn



Ornamental trees



# PARK PROGRAMMING



**B** SIXTH STREET BRIDGE PARK  
[4.26 ACRES]  
[0.50 MILES TO SITE]

**A** FISH LADDER PARK  
[3.40 ACRES]  
[0.70 MILES TO SITE]

**C** AH-NAB-AWEN PARK  
[6.78 ACRES]  
[0.40 MILES TO SITE]

**E** CRESCENT PARK  
[1.06 ACRES]  
[0.30 MILES TO SITE]

**D** LYON SQUARE  
[0.27 ACRES]  
[0.25 MILES TO SITE]

**F** ROSA PARKS CIRCLE  
[0.59 ACRES]  
[0.25 MILES TO SITE]

**H** VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK  
[1.61 ACRES]  
[0.50 MILES TO SITE]

**G** MONUMENT PARK  
[0.20 ACRES]  
[0.50 MILES TO SITE]



# PARK PROGRAMMING



Ah-Nab-Awen Park



Veterans Memorial Park



Monument Park



Fish Ladder Park



Rosa Park Circle



Lyon Square



Crescent Park



Sixth Street Bridge Park

**SIXTH STREET BRIDGE PARK**

**B**

- PICNIC
- SITTING
- TRAILS
- WATERSPORTS
- WETLAND

**FISH LADDER PARK**

**A**

- FISH LADDER
- SCENIC VIEW
- FISHING
- WATER SPORTS
- SUNBATHING
- TRAILS
- SITTING
- PICNIC

**AH-NAB-AWEN PARK**

**C**

- PICNIC
- ART EXHIBITION
- FESTIVALS
- MOVIE
- WEDDING
- FISHING
- WATER SPORTS
- TRAILS
- SITTING

**CRESCENT PARK**

**E**

- PICNIC
- SITTING
- DOWNTOWN VIEW

**LYON SQUARE**

**D**

- ART EXHIBITION
- DINING
- PICNIC
- CONCERT MARKET
- SITTING
- TRAILS
- FISHING
- WATER SPORTS

**ROSA PARKS CIRCLE**

**F**

- ICE-SKATING
- CONCERT
- SITTING

**VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK**

**H**

- TEMPORARY EVENTS
- SITTING

**MONUMENT PARK**

**G**

- DINING
- SITTING

Photo Sources:  
 Therapian.org  
 GR Public Library, Clint Lang  
 Michigan Municipal League  
 Nasaa-arts.org  
 Grpartners.com  
 Artprize.org, Heather Gordon  
 Grand Rapids Parks

## NEXT STEPS

**Downtowngr.org**

**Online Survey June 29- July 11**

### **AUGUST**

**Evaluate Options:**

*An exploration of  
different opportunities  
and decisions.*

### **SEPTEMBER**

**People's Choice:**

*A new vision for the  
plaza is unveiled.*

### **NOVEMBER**

*Final Concept Plan*

*Documentation Complete*



