

Berkeley City Councilmember
Igor Tregub, District 4
 2180 Milvia Street, 5th Floor
 Berkeley, CA 94704
 itregub@berkeleyca.gov

CONSENT CALENDAR

December 2, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Councilmember Igor Tregub
 Subject: Budget Referral: FY26 AAO1 Downtown Berkeley
 Revitalization Projects

RECOMMENDATION

Refer the (1) Addison Catenary Lighting Project, (2) Oxford for All proposal, and (3) Harold Way Placemaking Project schematic design to the Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Annual Appropriations Ordinance #1 (AAO1), AAO2, or biennial budget process adoption, as appropriate, to be funded through the Street and Open Space Improvement Plan (SOSIP) and/or Long-Range Development Plan (LRDP) Funds.

These projects are high-impact investments in Downtown Berkeley's ongoing revitalization. By transforming these key downtown spaces into safe, visually captivating, walkable destinations, these projects will encourage more residents, students, and visitors to explore local shops, restaurants, and cultural venues. These projects will highlight Berkeley's creative and transit-oriented character, inviting people to visit, linger, take photos, and share their experiences. As pedestrian and bike traffic increases, existing businesses will be encouraged to extend hours, host outdoor events, and new businesses will be encouraged to occupy vacant storefronts creating a positive cycle of growth and reinvestment that benefits the entire community.

Through public-private collaboration and thoughtful designs, these initiatives will transform Downtown Berkeley with a spirit of creativity, inclusivity, urban vibrancy, and transit safety-- a place where people want to gather, spend time, and contribute to the city's economic life.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The estimated costs for the three projects as proposed are as follows, in order of priority:

1. \$150,000 – Addison Street Catenary Lighting Project
2. \$2,500,000 – Oxford for All - design, engineering, and construction
3. \$250,000 – Harold Way Placemaking Project

Funds are available in both the SOSIP and LRDP funding streams to support all three requests. No use of General Funds is being proposed.

In addition, some staff time will be needed to administer funding from SOSIP and/or LRDP funds.

(1) Addison Catenary Lighting Project

BACKGROUND

Addison Street is the heart of Berkeley’s Arts District and home to the majority of Berkeley’s arts institutions including the Berkeley Repertory Theatre, The Freight, and the California Jazz Conservatory, where many performances start and end in the dusk or complete darkness, especially in the fall and winter months.

Despite being a cultural and economic anchor, frequently visited by many, its streetscape lacks lighting, visual character, and design features that encourage extended evening activity.

Throughout the City we see examples of well and creatively lit streets, like “Lights on Fourth”¹ Street making it a warm, festive and welcoming destination where businesses are able to extend shopping and dining hours well into the evening attracting hundreds of visitors.

The opportunity exists to replicate this kind of creative lighting in Downtown Berkeley. The Downtown Berkeley Association (DBA) made this project one of their priorities and are leading a group of volunteer arts district community leaders and architects to work on this project *pro bono*.

Proposed Elements Include:

- **Bistro Lighting Installations²**

¹ <https://www.berkeleyside.org/2023/11/09/around-berkeley-fourth-street-holiday-lights-san-francisco-symphony>

² Downtown Berkeley Addison Lights 2024 PDF (see attached)

- Seven sets of three light strands arranged perpendicular to the street
- Five feet between strands and 50 feet between sets
- Mounted approximately 20 feet high, to avoid a full canopy effect, maintaining an open streetscape
- **Tree Lighting Enhancements³**
 - Trees at the Addison and Shattuck and Addison and Milvia corners
 - LED lighting to enhance ambiance and safety
 - Seasonal flexibility for artistic variation and cultural celebration

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Despite frequent performances and events, the Addison Arts corridor lacks the visual cohesion and bright ambiance expected of Berkeley's Arts District, leading to low pedestrian activity during evening hours. The Addison Street Lighting and Ambiance Project can bring similar vitality to Downtown, showcasing the Berkeley Arts District as a place where people gather to experience culture, community, and creativity.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

- **Lighting and Public Safety⁴**

Well-illuminated streetscapes support both real and perceived safety. Improved visibility allows pedestrians to better navigate the environment and assess traffic, while also reducing opportunities for disorder. When people feel safe, they are more likely to walk, stay longer, and participate in evening activities, which increases community presence and helps maintain a sense of shared stewardship in public space.
- **Cultural Identity and Place-Making**

Addison Street is the center of Berkeley's Arts District, where cultural institutions, performances, and community gatherings define the character of downtown. Thoughtful lighting can emphasize this identity by creating a welcoming and recognizable atmosphere. The project incorporates flexible design elements that can reflect seasonal and cultural moments and strengthen a shared sense of pride and belonging.
- **Economic Vitality and Evening Activation**

Cultural venues draw significant foot traffic, particularly in the evening. Lighting that supports comfort, visibility, and ambiance encourages visitors to spend more time in the district before and after events, benefiting nearby restaurants, cafes, and local shops. Increased evening presence supports

³ Downtown Berkeley Addison Lights 2024 PDF (see attached)

⁴ Welsh and Ferrington, "Effects of Improved Street Lighting on Crime" <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/effects-improved-street-lighting-crime>

small businesses, encourages extended hours, and contributes to a more vibrant and inviting downtown.

- **Pedestrian Experience and Accessibility⁵**

Lighting is a core component of pedestrian-friendly design. National research shows that most severe pedestrian collisions occur in dark conditions. Enhancing lighting along Addison Street will improve visibility for both pedestrians and drivers, making it easier and safer for people to move through the corridor, especially during fall and winter months when many performances occur at dusk or after nightfall.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Enhanced pedestrian lighting increases both safety and comfort, making it easier for people to navigate Downtown in the evening without relying on automobiles. The project's focus on durable, energy-efficient LED lighting ensures long-term sustainability with minimal maintenance and low energy consumption.

Additionally, the lighting design will complement Vision Zero⁶ initiatives by improving visibility for all users, including cyclists and pedestrians, while strengthening the sense of place that supports a thriving, mixed-use urban core. The project's proximity to BART, AC Transit, and major bicycle routes amplifies its impact, fostering a more connected and environmentally responsible Downtown that aligns with the City's broader Climate Action Plan⁷ and equity-focused sustainability framework.

(2) Oxford For All⁸

BACKGROUND

This item intends to reaffirm the Oxford for All Referral approved by the City Council on June 3, 2025. The \$400,000 was originally referred to the June budget process (FY26 Mid-Biennial Update) for a quick-build. Per City Manager the full amount for the project completion, which is approximately \$2,500,000, should be re-referred to non-General Fund funding sources (e.g., LRDP, SOSIP), as available and applicable to provide the City of Berkeley Public Works Department with necessary funds to support design, engineering, and construction costs for the project.

⁵ <https://www.nhtsa.gov/book/countermeasures-that-work/pedestrian-safety>

⁶ <https://berkeleyca.gov/your-government/our-work/adopted-plans/vision-zero-action-plan>

⁷ <https://berkeleyca.gov/your-government/our-work/adopted-plans/berkeley-climate-action-plan>

⁸ <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2025-06-03%20Item%2024%20Referral%20Oxford%20for%20All.pdf>

Improving safety on Oxford Street and Fulton Street is especially important at this moment. In the next decade, many significant developments are planned along the Oxford corridor that could dramatically affect transportation, development, urban design, housing, potentially land values/affordability and more. The University of California is planning to redevelop and expand University Hall at Oxford and University and is planning a student housing project at Fulton and Bancroft that will contain an estimated 1625 beds.⁹ Anchor House, between University and Hearst on Oxford has already come online with 772 new beds for transfer students.¹⁰ Additionally, a 17-story, 283-unit private mixed use development called The Hub will be built at the intersection of Oxford Street and Center Street.¹¹ Nearby on Hearst Avenue, the entirely new College of Data and Society Gateway building is currently under construction.¹² Beyond these projects, many substantial projects are planned on adjacent streets. These new developments will spur new transportation demand for safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

This referral builds on prior work and recognizes the urgent need to address traffic safety on Oxford Street with proven infrastructural solutions. Full build-out of Oxford for All will result in cost savings in the long run.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

Berkeley's 2019 Greenhouse Gas Inventory found that 60 percent of emissions in the City come from transportation sources, predominantly private vehicles. Building connected, safe active transportation facilities is one of the most effective ways Berkeley can reduce its largest source of greenhouse gas emissions. Oxford St. and Fulton St. next to campus are highly interconnected to other nearby streets that have already received bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements, such as Bancroft Way, Oxford Street, and Fulton Street south of Bancroft Way. Because this project would close a key gap in Berkeley's bicycle network, its impacts in reducing greenhouse gas emissions would be particularly high.

⁹ <https://capitalstrategies.berkeley.edu/Bancroft-Fulton>

¹⁰ <https://studenthousingbusiness.com/uc-berkeley-completes-772-bed-residence-hall-for-transfer-students/>

¹¹ <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/2022-04/4-The-HUB-Applicant-Statement-01-20-22-2128-Oxford.pdf>

¹² <https://capitalstrategies.berkeley.edu/gateway>

(3) Harold Way Placemaking Project

BACKGROUND

In 2022, the DBA, in partnership with Berkeley Design Advocates (BDA), designed the Harold Way Placemaking Project Schematic Design. The DBA and BDA received input from neighbors, nearby property owners, City staff, and Councilmembers in the development of this concept.

The Harold Way Placemaking Project has long been envisioned as a key opportunity site for Downtown Berkeley, anchored between the Berkeley Public Library and YMCA. Historic buildings such as Dharma College and the Mangalam Center provide additional architectural and cultural character to this cityscape. The area presents a transformative opportunity to create a vibrant pedestrian-oriented open space.

In the past, Harold Way was the site for several community events including the Dia De Los Muertos celebration, Harold Way Pumpkin Patch, Asian Cultural Festival, Lunar New Year Celebration, and Berkeley Bliss Silent Disco.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Downtown Berkeley is rapidly evolving as a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly district with a growing residential population and increased public activity. Harold Way exists between the bustling BART Plaza and the quieter institutional and residential spaces. The one-block street is nestled between the Berkeley Public Library Central Branch and the Downtown Berkeley YMCA, and just around the corner from Berkeley High School.

Creating an attractive, safe, and flexible open space here aligns directly with the community's goals for enhanced placemaking, pedestrian safety, and sustainability. Being just one block long, Harold Way is not a major thoroughway for vehicular traffic, making this an ideal place for creating a pedestrian hub with inviting features such as trees, seating areas, and a public restroom.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Harold Way Placemaking Project fulfills several primary objectives of the Streets and Open Space Improvement Plan (SOSIP):¹³

¹³ [Downtown-Streets-and-Open-Space-Improvement-Plan.pdf](#)

- **Placemaking:** Create an attractive, memorable public environment that reinforces Downtown Berkeley as a destination.
- **Public Life:** Encourage social, cultural, and business activity in the heart of the city.
- **Health & Comfort:** Provide safe, attractive, and comfortable spaces for pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Access:** Enhance multimodal connectivity and universal accessibility.
- **Sustainability:** Support Berkeley’s climate and resilience goals by promoting walkability and green design.

This schematic design phase is a critical next step toward delivering a shovel-ready project, positioning the City for future state, federal, and private grant opportunities to fund construction.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

According to the Climate Action Plan and Resilience Update,¹⁴ the transportation sector accounts for 46% of the City of Berkeley greenhouse gas emissions. Every effort to make communities safe and inviting for pedestrians contributes to the reduction of Vehicle Miles Traveled and, therefore, aids in decarbonization and overtime amounts to tangible sustainability impacts.

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Igor Tregub, Council District 4
510-981-7140
ltregub@berkeleyca.gov

Olga Bolotina, Chief of Staff, Council District 4
obolotina@berkeleyca.gov

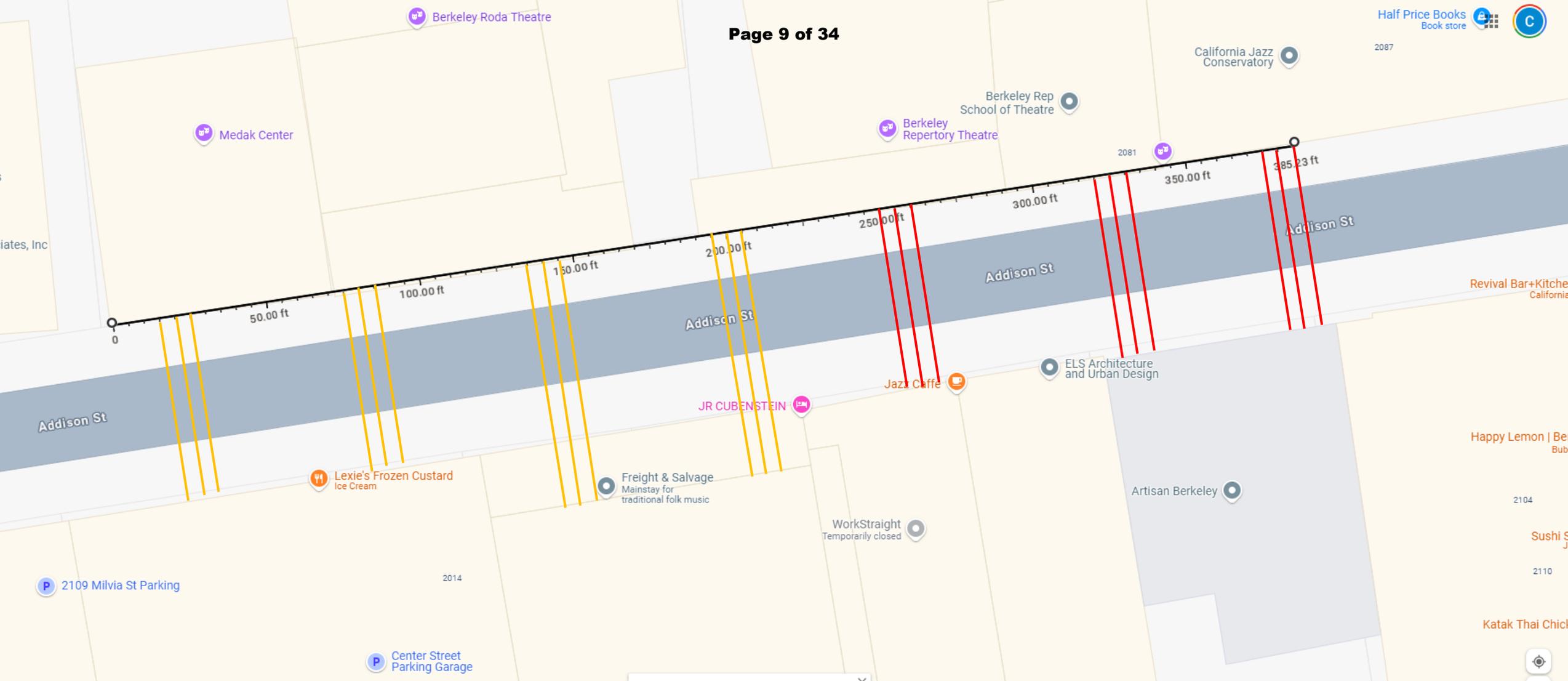
Amy Johnson, Legislative Aide, Council District 4
amjohnson@berkeleyca.gov

Shamaila Ahmed, Legislative Aide, Council District 4
sahmed@berkeleyca.gov

¹⁴ Climate Action Plan and Resilience Update:
<https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2022-11-29%20Item%2016%20Climate%20Action%20Plan.pdf>

Attachments:

1. Downtown Berkeley Addison Lights 2024
2. Harold Way Placemaking Project Workshop Report & Initial Options 7/04/2022



Bistros perpendicular to street:

- 7 sets of 3 strands:
 - Phase 1 in yellow
 - Phase 2 in red
- 5' between strands
- Approx 50' between sets
- 20' high

HAROLD WAY PLACEMAKING PROJECT

WORKSHOP REPORT
04/25/2022 DRAFT



contents

introduction 3

historical context 4

urban context 3

how big is Harold Way? 4

opportunities 5

housing proposals 6

conversations 7

concepts

background

ideas



introduction

Harold Way is just one block long connecting Kittredge Street and Allston Way in Downtown Berkeley. It is centrally located to a number of Downtown Berkeley's star attractions such as the City Library, YMCA, Civic Center, the offices, shops and restaurants on Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley High School, Downtown Berkeley Bart Station, and the Downtown Bart Plaza. Demonstrated through temporary closures to vehicular traffic, Harold Way can be pedestrianized presenting a **valuable new public space opportunity in the downtown.**

Beyond its worn asphalt and narrow sidewalks, Harold Way can be reimagined as a rich and exciting public open space destination for gathering, festivals, recreation, or simply a safe place to enjoy a conversation with friends and family.

The Harold Way Place-Making Project was initiated to brainstorm with the community, what kind of place Harold Way could become.



Little need for vehicular traffic opens an opportunity to convert the entire street for pedestrian uses.





background

historical context

Historically, Harold Way's primary purpose was to provide service access for commercial uses fronting Shattuck Avenue and Allston Way. These commercial tenants included the Former J.F. Hinks department store, Shattuck Hotel, as well as many small shops and restaurants. Harold Way also provided access to a service garage for the Post Office on the western half of the block.

Today the former J.F. Hinks Department Store was been repurposed as Landmark's Shattuck Cinemas, and Dharma College now owns all three properties on the west side of the street. Proposals for two new housing projects have been made recently for the site of the Post Office service garage, and the former J.F. Hinks department store.

The redevelopment of these two sites is indicative of a larger national trend where downtowns are diversifying land uses to create more residential opportunities in the downtown core convenient to shopping and transit.



Downtown Berkeley prior to the extension of Kittredge Street and the creation of Harold Way.



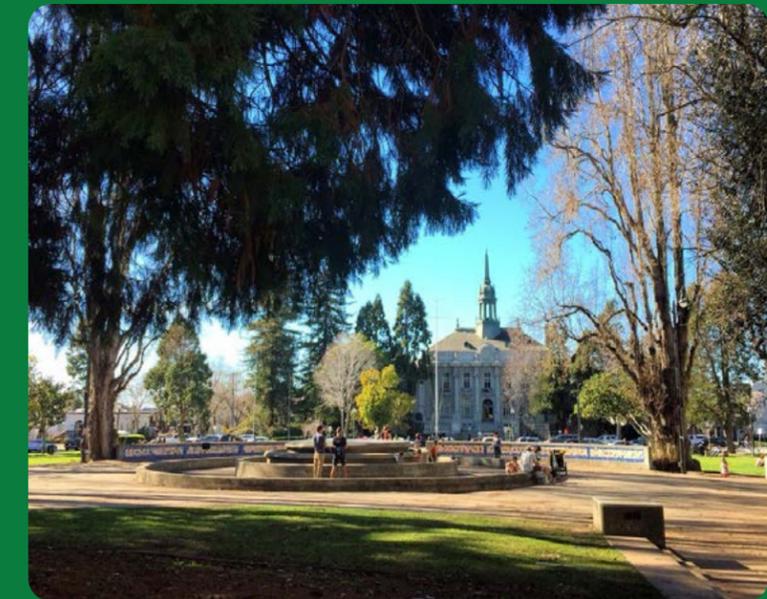
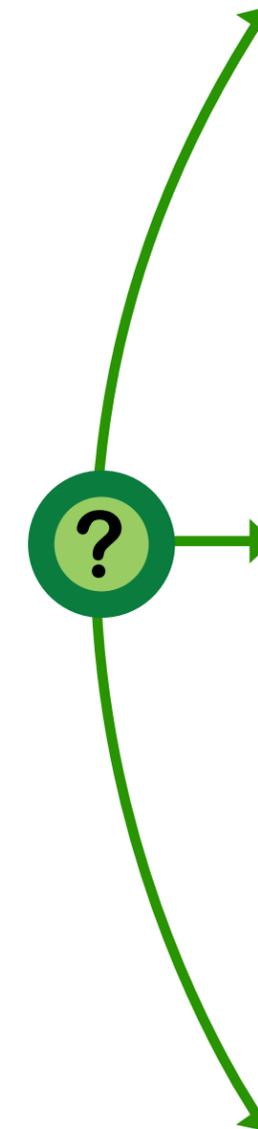
Dharma College is now located in the former Armstrong Business School Building

urban context

Downtown Berkeley has a rich variety of public open spaces including Civic Center, Downtown Plaza, the Addison Arts district, Shattuck Avenue, and the nearby West Circle at UC Berkeley. Distinctly missing however are public spaces not fronting major streets with significant traffic. In contrast, Harold Way is distinctly quiet, and halfway between the downtown retail corridor and Civic Center. There is an opportunity to create a new kind of public open space in Berkeley, perhaps quieter, calming, and more locally oriented to downtown residents.



Little need for vehicular traffic opens an opportunity to convert the entire street for pedestrian uses.



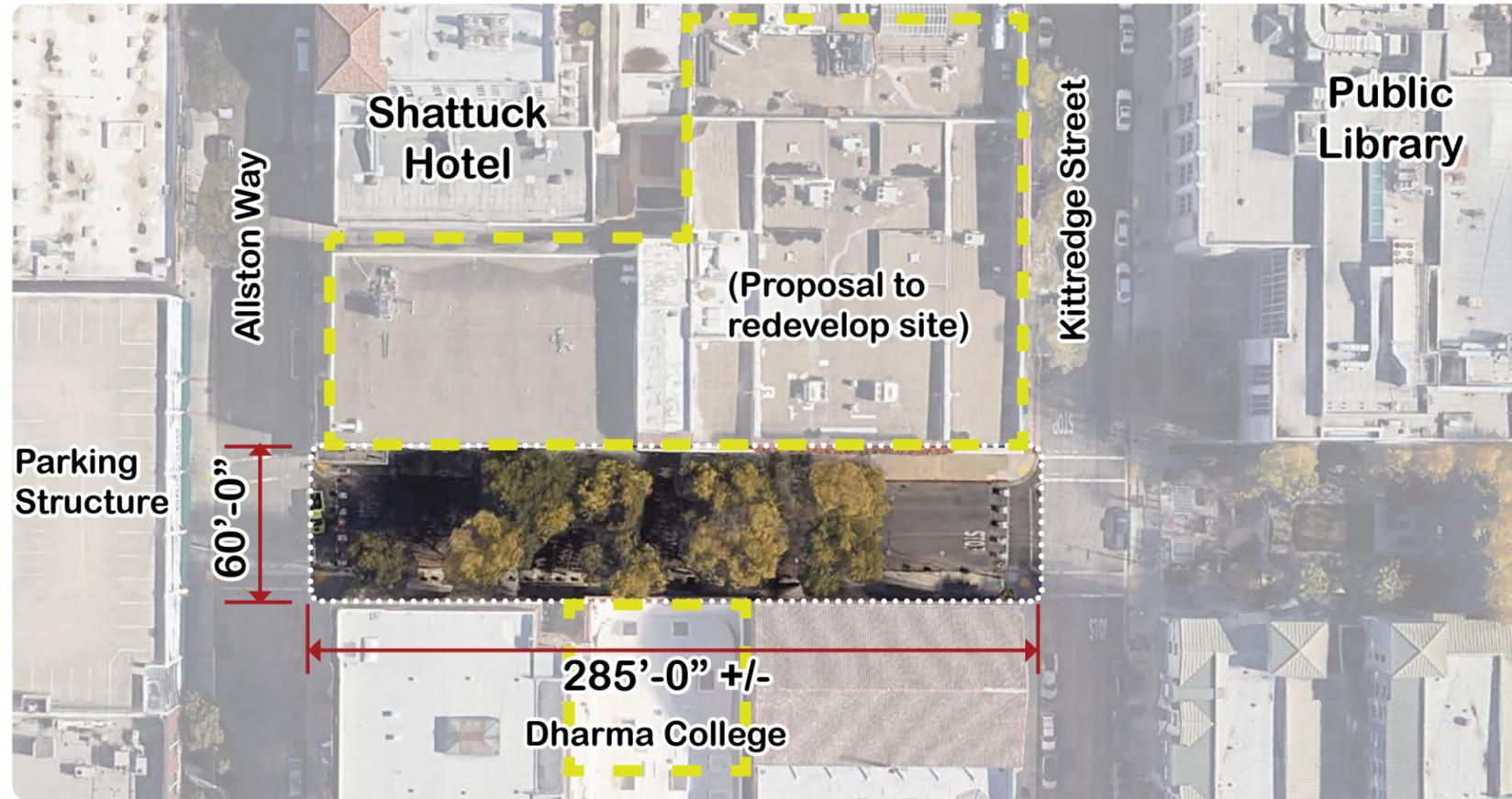
What kind of destination does downtown need?

How can it relate and support other attractions? Civic Center, Library, Downtown Plaza?

What amenities are missing downtown?



how big is Harold Way?



- What elements make a plaza more comfortable to spend time?
- How flexible should the space be?
- What kind of activities might be ideal for a space of this size and proportion?
- How are challenges such as homelessness addressed?



A comparable pedestrianized street is the popular Mint Plaza in downtown San Francisco, providing a useful pedestrian connectivity as well as a place for events and gathering.



opportunities

With the increasing desire amongst many communities to reconsider how streets are designed and who they serve, new examples of creative place-making are emerging in more and more urban areas. Below are a number of examples demonstrating ideas that span a spectrum from minimal to extensive interventions in the design of the streets and useable public open space. In all four cases the design of the street creates a memorable sense of place and enhances the quality of life for workers, tourists, and residents alike.



Arbour Blocks in Seattle, Washington is a richly designed street prioritizing the pedestrian.

credit: Lara Swimmer



Bradley Ave. Plaza and Green Alley, LA

credit: BUILD SF



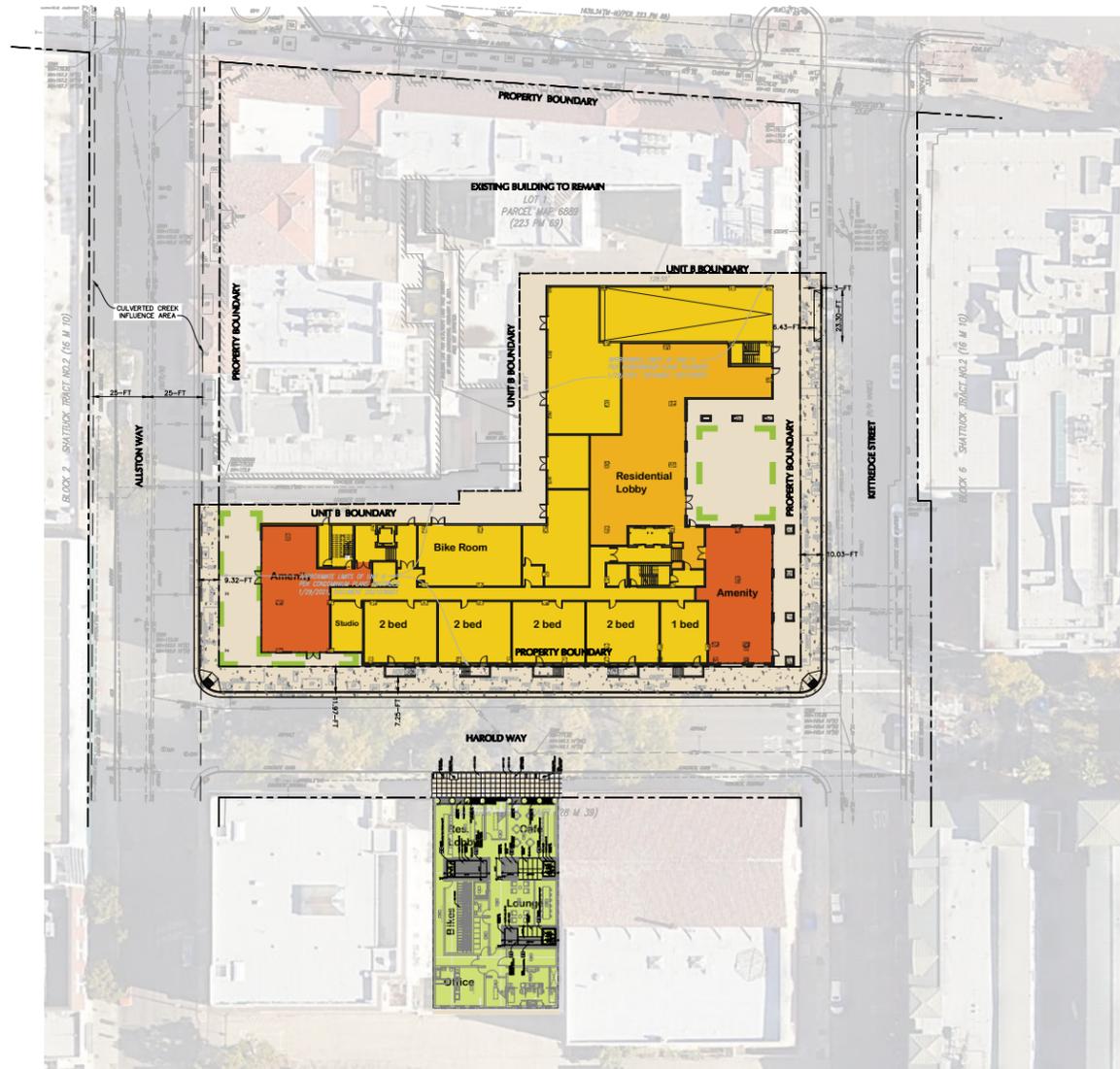
Linden Alley, San Francisco



Bell Street, Seattle

in planning

Two projects that are currently in Planning with the City of Berkeley are 2065 Kittredge Street and 2210 Harold Way. 2065 Kittredge Street is proposed to replace the former department store / Landmark Shattuck Cinemas with 188 residential units, and 3,600 sf of retail space on the ground floor. 2210 Harold Way is proposing 36 apartments over a ground level lobby and small cafe.



2065 Kittredge Street: Corner of Allston Way and Harold Way



2210 Harold Way

Arbour Blocks in Seattle, Washington is a richly designed street prioritizing the pedestrian.

ideas



conversations

Quote from Mayor



conversations

Ideas captured during the charette expressed great imagination and excitement for how a new public space in Berkeley could showcase the community's appreciation and wealth of culture, arts, food, and diversity.

AUDIENCE
 high schoolers
 library patrons
 Y members.
 local residents
 in Downtown.

CULTURE
 art
 murals.
 movies - at night.
 cool backdrops
 for Instagram
 shots + selfies
 books
 author events.
 Berkeley history
 photography/

PAIN POINTS.
 access to restrooms
 clean / filtered
 drinking water.
 safe place to sit
 no good local grocery
 (aside from weekend
 farmers mkt)

INSPO.
 Tel Aviv.
 greenways w/
 juice bars
 Paris - along
 the river.
 NY - High Line.

granite surface. free little
PHYSICAL libraries
 Lighting - atmospheric
 plants / community
 garden
 tables / chairs for
 enjoying food.
 commercial kitchen
 games - chess,
 corn hole
 bocce
 basketball?
 1/2 court.
 parking. nfi
 restroom / water.

FOOD.
 invite local vendors
 food trucks.
mini-farmers mkt.

MARKETING,
 dedicated.
 social media
 outreach.
 posters in downtown
 content
 created by youth.
 banners on Harold
 way + surround
 streets. (like Mexican
 park / picado)

PROGRAMMING
 exercise
 partnerships with
 Berkeley Historical
 Society.
 chalk festival.
 BAM / PFA.
 music. book groups
 FBI Nights - ~~at~~ silent
 Telegraph Ave. ~~at~~
 Oakland Museum.

HUMOR.
 ie. piano crosswalk
 shadow play
 (exploratory)

conversations

The Berkeley community has a deep and generous talent pool ready to offer world class thinking on design, social, cultural, and economic issues facing a re-imagined Harold Way.

Following a short presentation, participants developed sketches, discussed issues, precedents and shared their thoughts.



conversations

The Berkeley community has a deep and generous talent pool ready to offer world class thinking on design, social, cultural, and economic issues facing a re-imagined Harold Way.

Following a short presentation, participants developed sketches, discussed issues, precedents and shared their thoughts.

SAN RAFAEL
CHALK ARTIST
EVENT
SALESFORCE
PARK - EVENTS
TALKS

The openness of
the space allows
for large gatherings
Such as Asian festival.
How can we preserve
the openness of the
space

YMCA - COOL
OUTDOOR EXERCISE
- COOL CURATED
EXERCISE
- ABLE TO CHANGE

TRELLIS GIVES
RES. NEIGHBORS
ABOVE SOME
FILTERING
FROM ACTIVITY/
NOISES

NICE TO
HAVE A WATER
FEATURE
(ROSE GARDEN)
FISH/FROGS/
PEACEFUL GARDEN

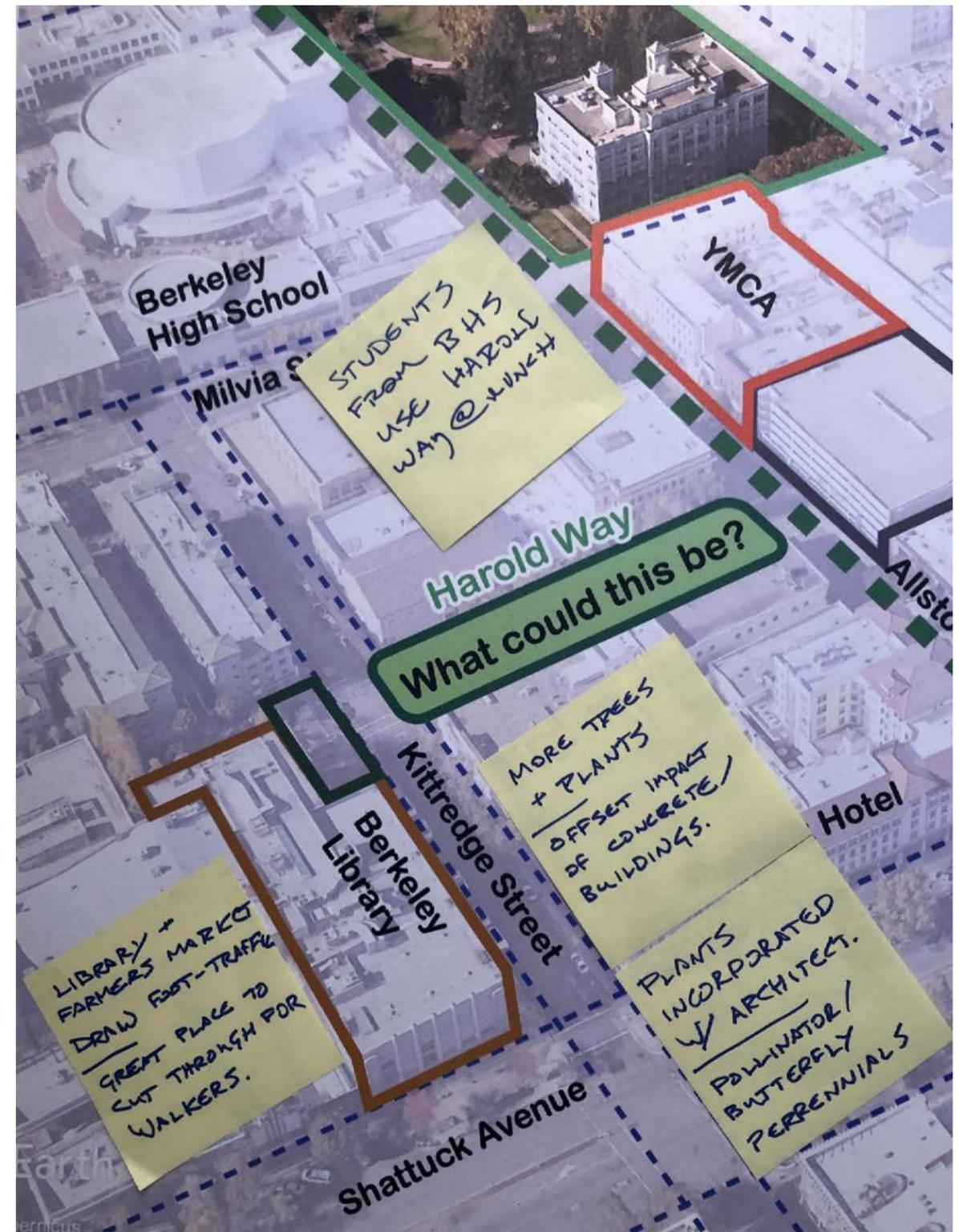
A PLACE TO
WALK TO IN THE
EVENING, HANG
OUT, CHAT CHAT.
REGULAR SCHED.
PERFORMANCE

This event had
mostly white men.
Plans to capture
input from families
and poe.?

BRING ARTS +
CULTURE OUT
INTO THE STREETS
- HISTORIC SOCIETY
- BAMPHA EXP.
CELEBRATE

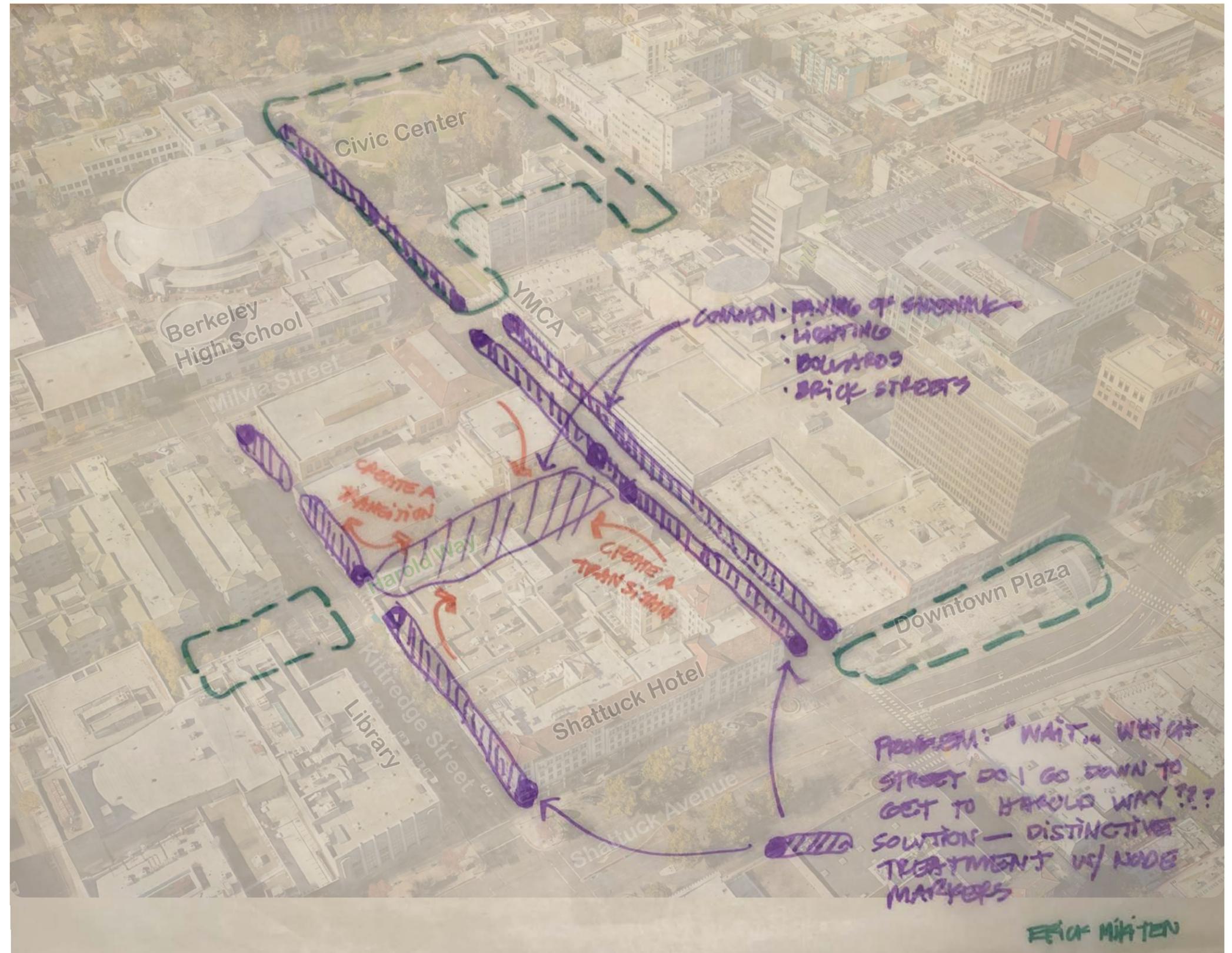
Can this space
speak to/
connect to
other public
spaces in downtown
(current + future)?

is Harold
NO NEED FOR
CARS -
CHALLENGES
NUISANCE BEHAV.
FULL TIME RES.
ON A BENCH.
28' - 0" +/-



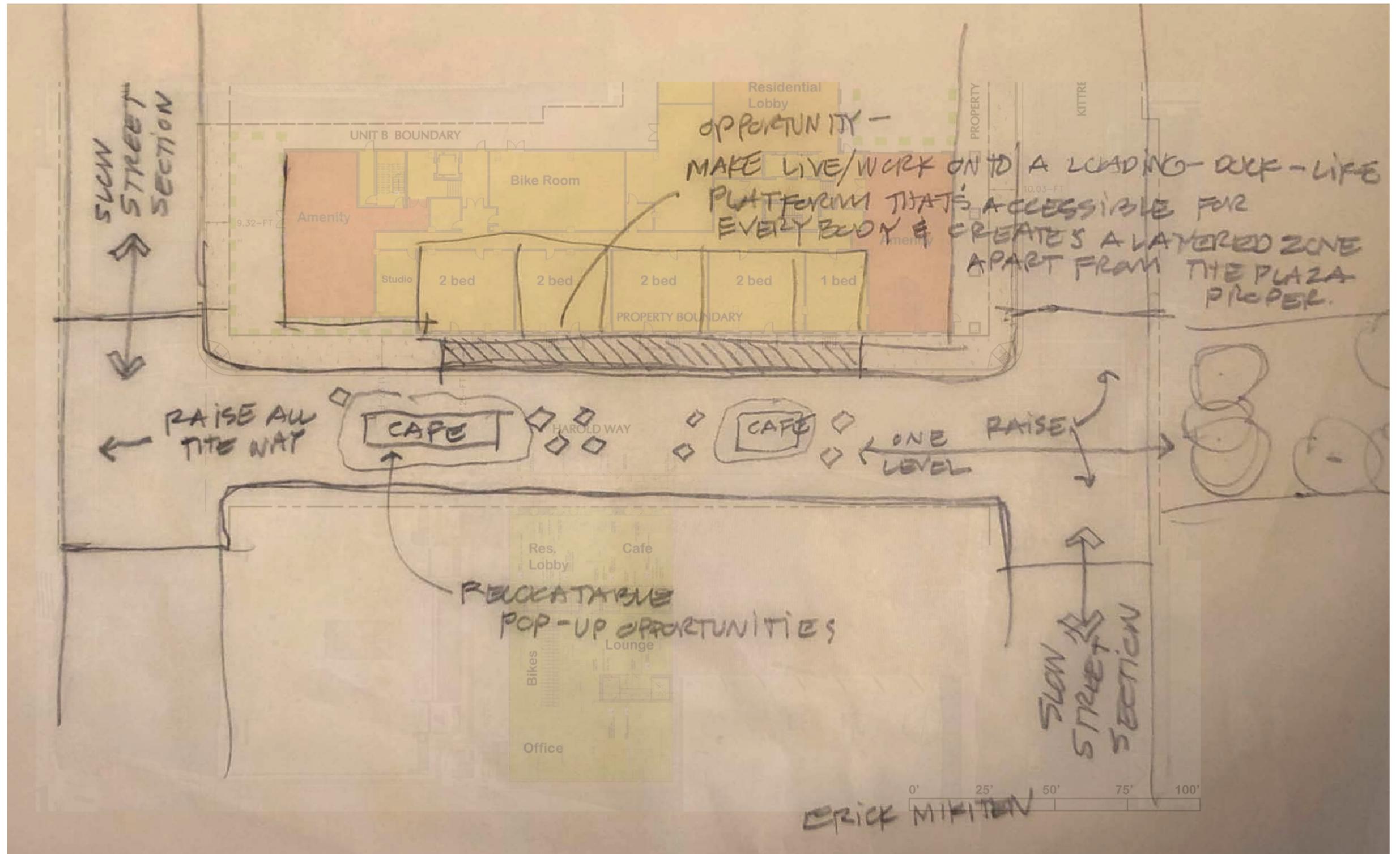
sketch concepts

Bullet Points



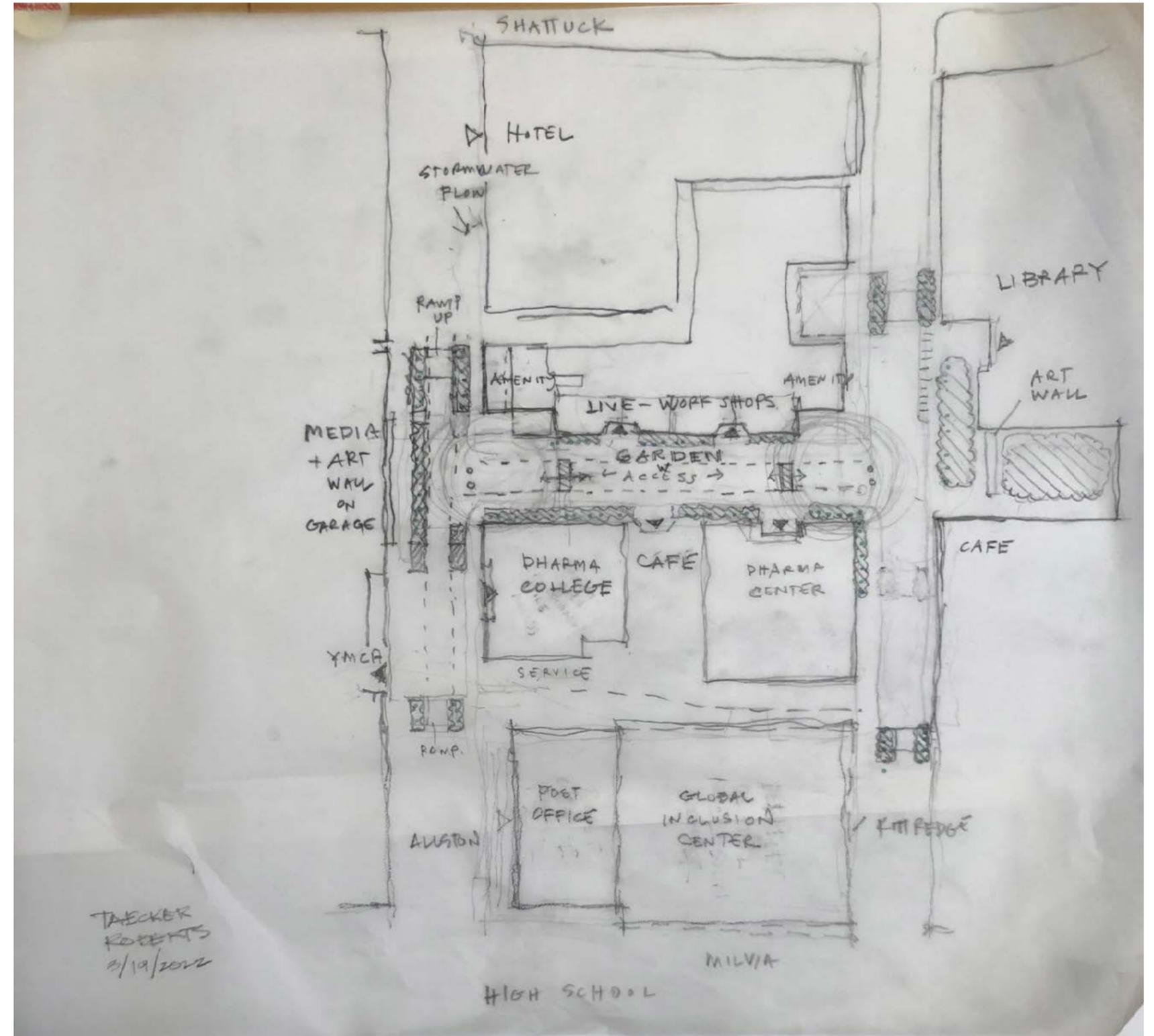
sketch concepts

Bullet Points



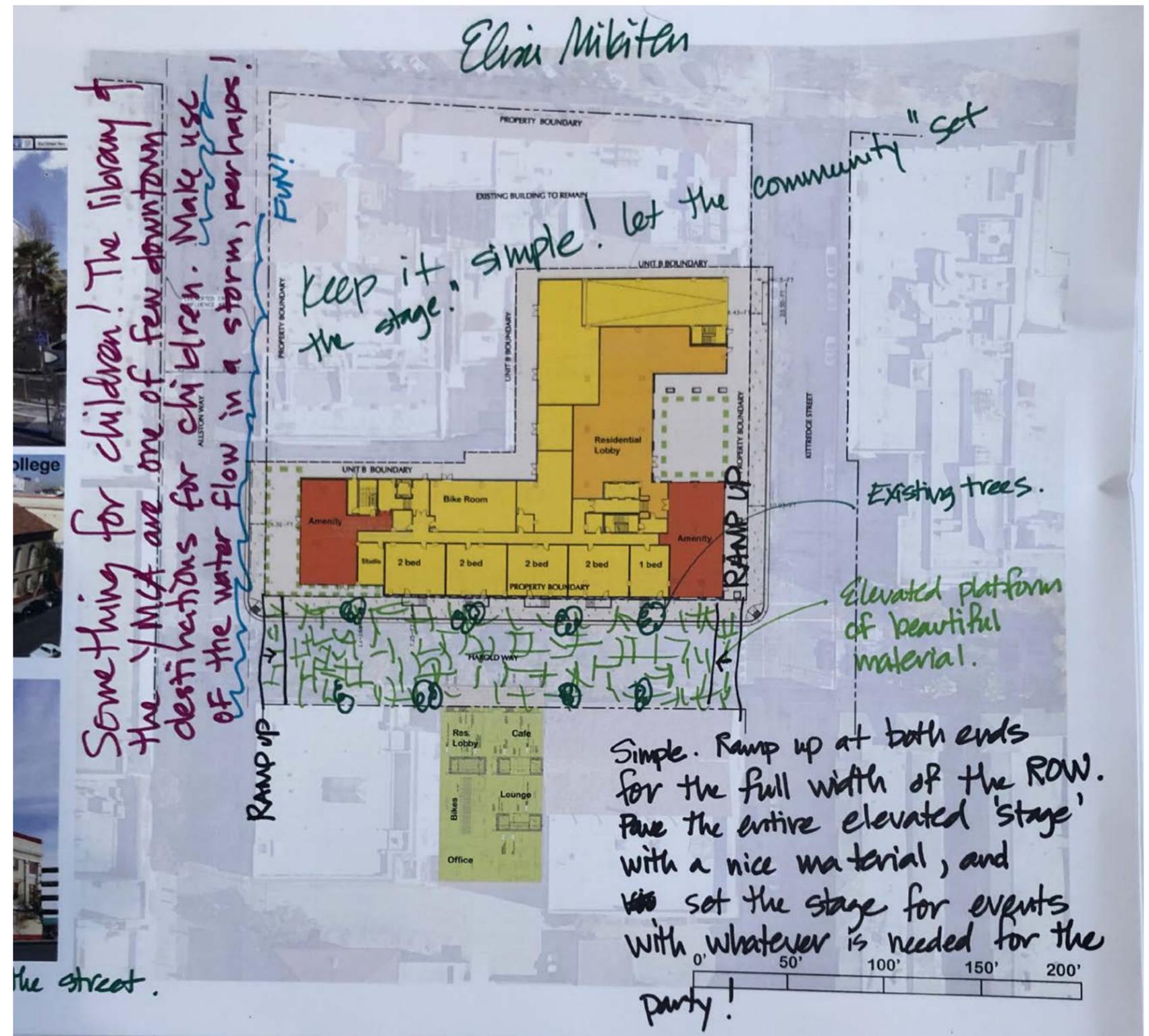
sketch concepts

Bullet Points



sketch concepts

Bullet Points



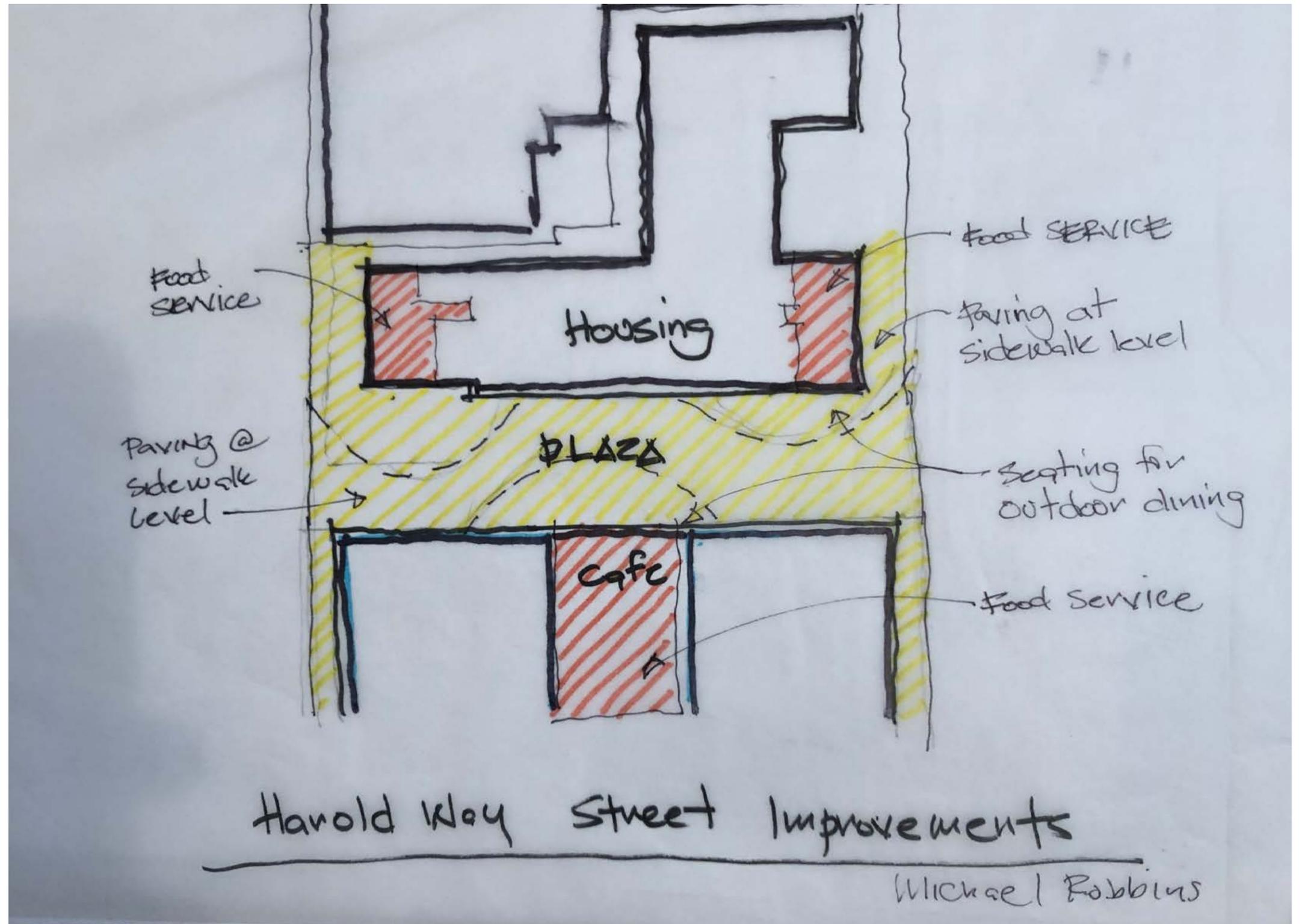
sketch concepts

Bullet Points



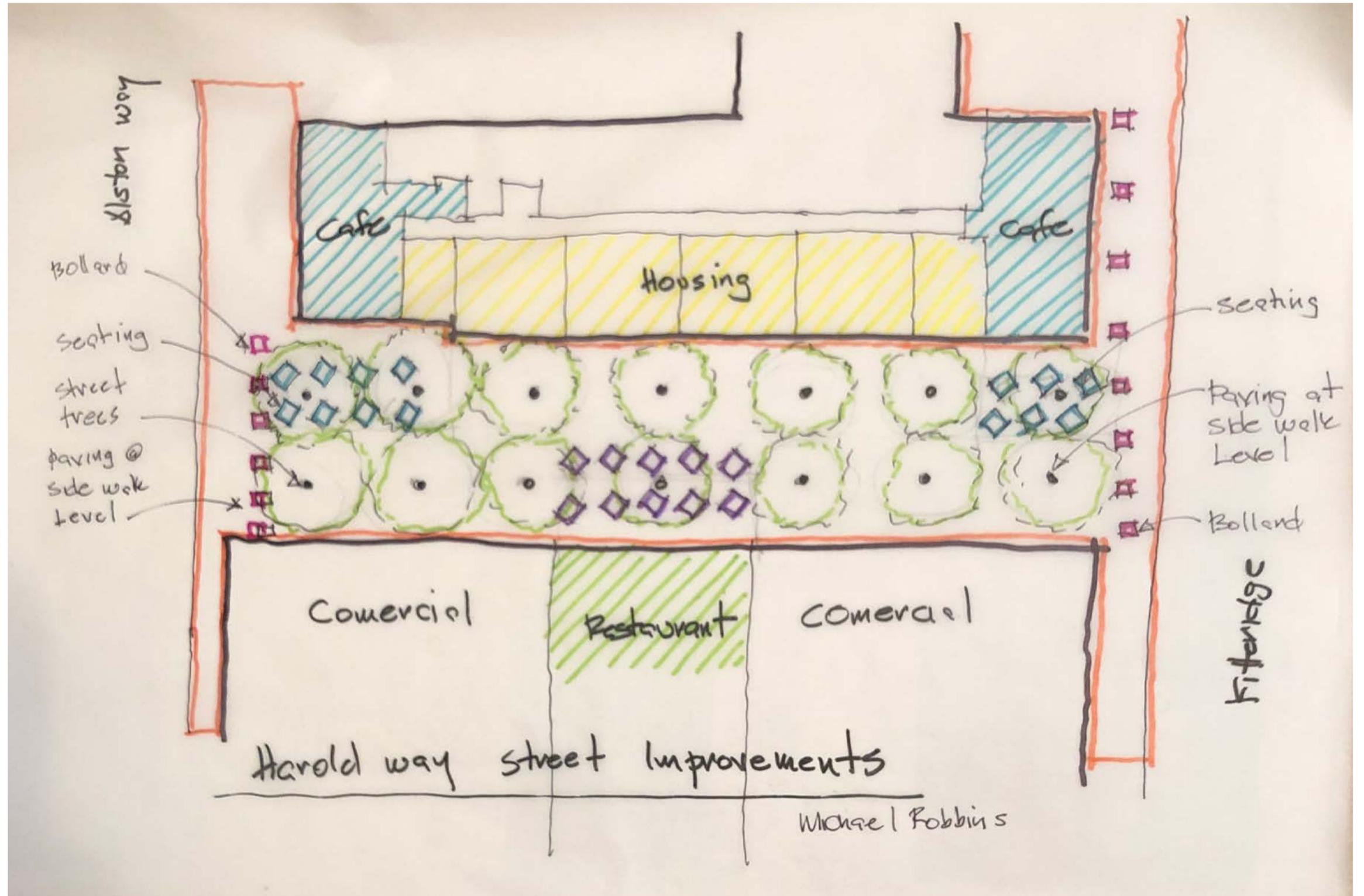
sketch concepts

Bullet Points



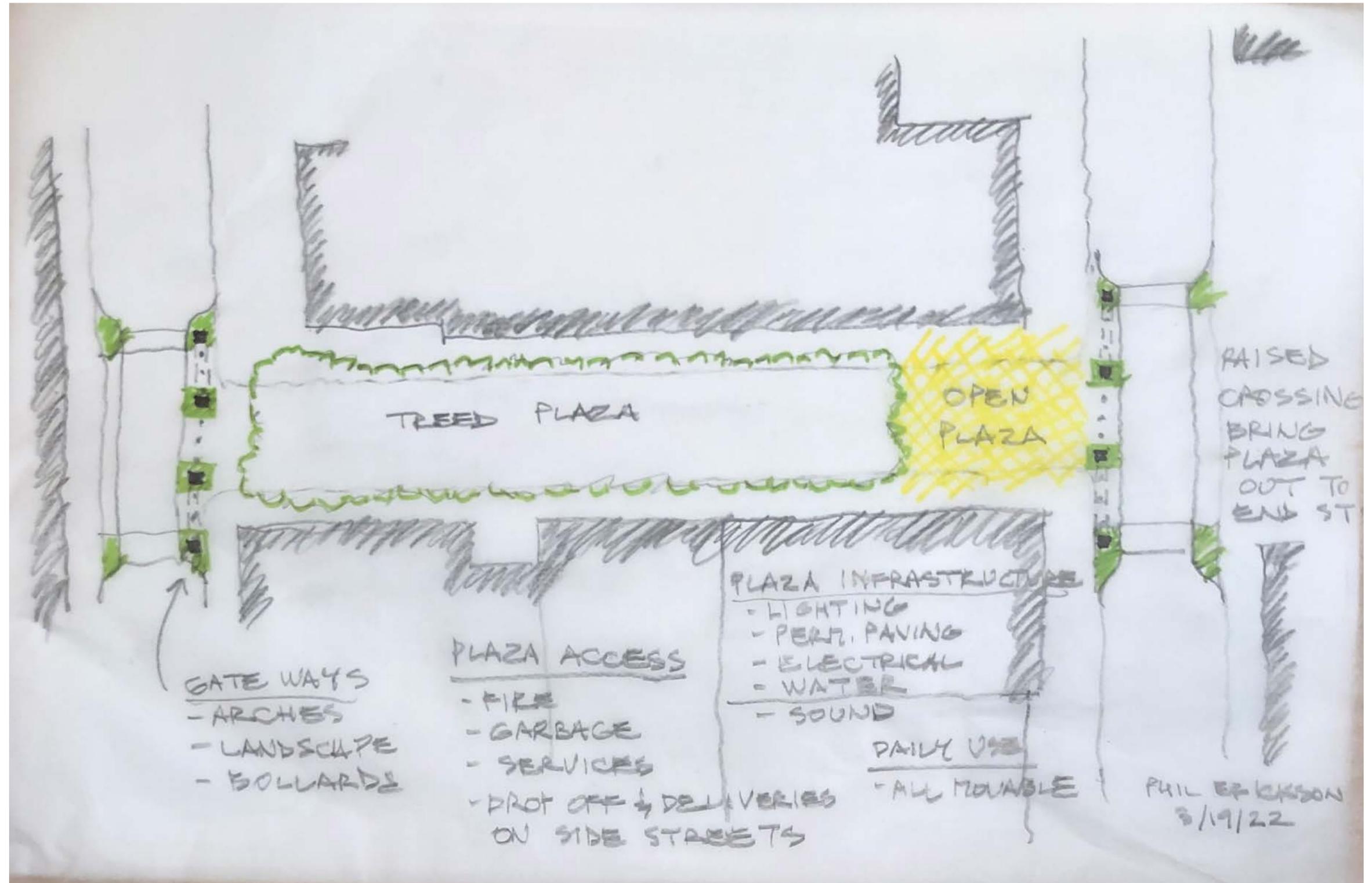
sketch concepts

Bullet Points



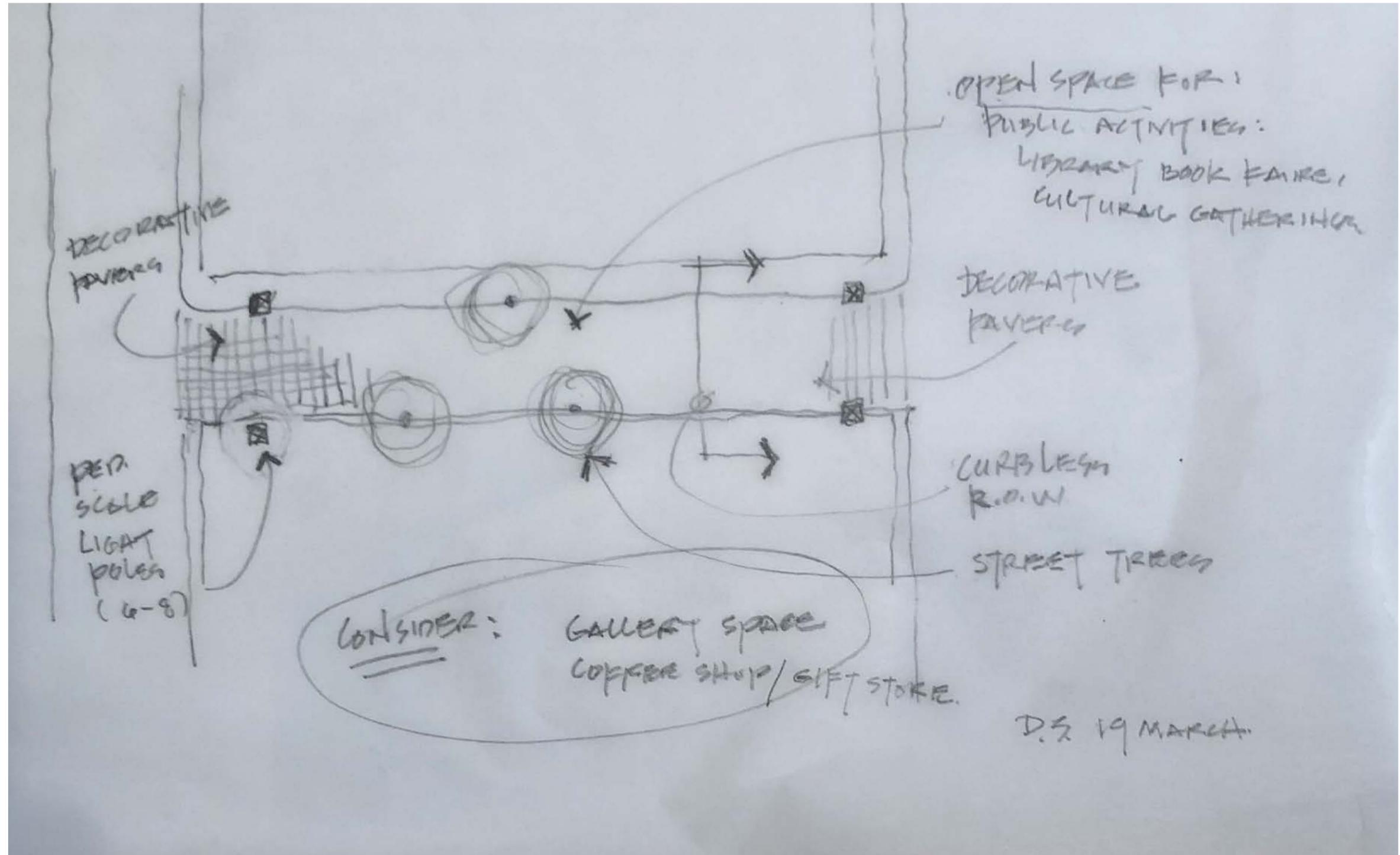
sketch concepts

Bullet Points



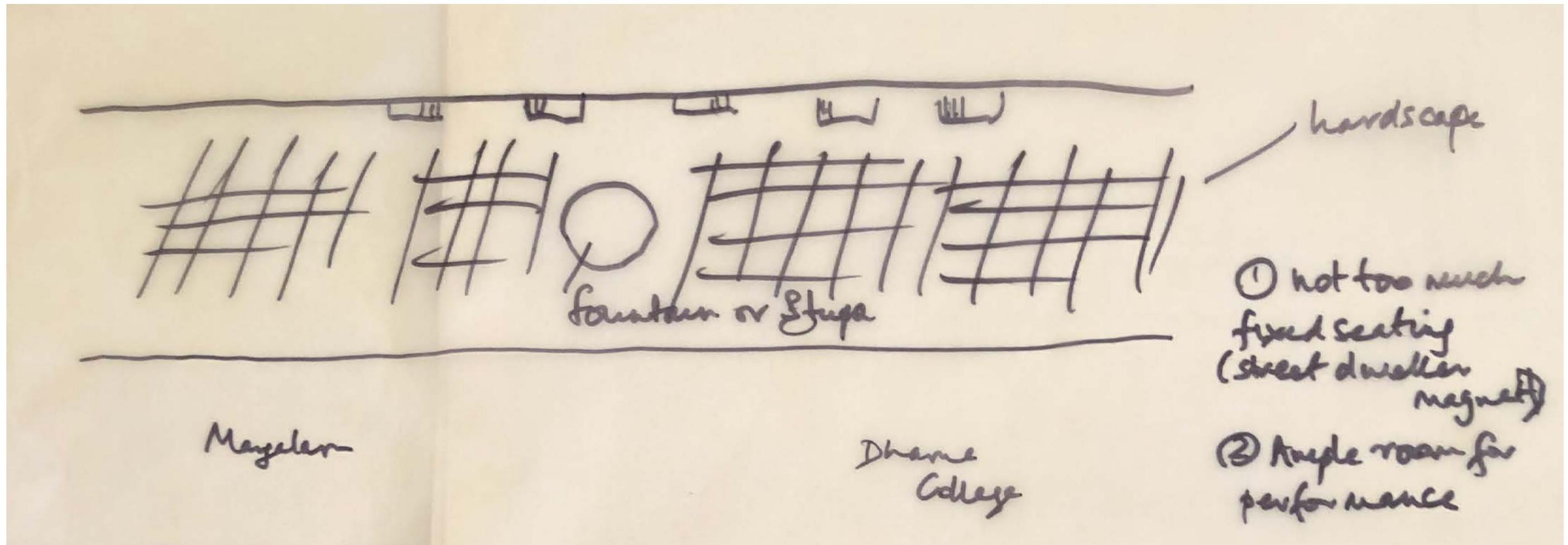
sketch concepts

Bullet Points



sketch concepts

Bullet Points



Synthesis

