

## Restoration of ST- 17, Bath Island Park

**Public Engagement &  
Design Development**





# **RESTORATION OF ST- 17, BATH ISLAND PARK**

**Public Engagement & Design Development**

**Presented to**

Director General Parks & Horticulture Department  
Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC)

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## **SPECIAL THANKS**

Karmran Ali Khan, CEO, MK Associates

Rizwan Raza, Senior Electrical Engineer

Zahra Ali, Environmentalist, Founder, Crops in Pots

The project team greatly appreciates the constant support and encouragement provided during the course of this work by Mr.Taha Saleem, Deputy Commissioner, District Central, (former Director General, Parks & Horticulture Department, KMC), and Mr.Junaidullah Khan, Director General, Parks & Horticulture Department, KMC

The support and assistance of resident communities of Bath Island and Hijrat Colony and members of the Bath Island Residents Society office is also acknowledged and appreciated. Of particular note is the inspirational guidance provided by Ms.Saleka Enver, resident of Bath Island, who has been instrumental in mobilizing multiple stakeholders and ensuring inclusivity of our efforts.

## **Final Report**

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# **FOREWORD**

The story of our ‘Baghban 10 Bath Island Park’ (ST-17, Bath Island) is very interesting and spans over a period of more than two (2) years. It all began when Hanif Nasir Sahib, Ex Director General Parks & Horticulture Department, KMC, took me and the late Mrs. Neelo Fazlur Rahman (wife of the Interim Sindh Chief Minister in 2018), to see the park with a plea to do something about it. Ms. Neelo handed over the responsibility of mobilizing the communities and other relevant stakeholders to me as I am a resident of the area.

Thus began the journey to do something for this once lovely park, which was now barren, abandoned, vandalized and in a derelict condition. What made this project all the more challenging was the fact that one side of its wall was adjoining the “katchi abadi”, which was the informal settlement of Hijrat Colony, and on the other side of the wall was Bath Island. Thus the park has acted as a border space between two different socio-economic communities. The children from Hijrat Colony could be seen playing cricket and other games in the barren park. Other than that the park witnessed no visitation. My aim was to help provide for a sustainable family park for both the communities.

So began the quest to find people and institutions who would help us in this endeavor. When Mr. Taha Saleem took charge as Director General Parks & Horticultural Department, KMC, we found someone willing to listen and to do something about it. He was on the same wavelength. He too wanted inclusivity. He was and still is very encouraging and forthcoming. So on the 10th of February 2021, I managed to arrange a meeting at the park with the DG Parks, some residents, and also representation from Hijrat Colony. And thus Baghban 10 was formed that day!

On a lighter note, I would like to mention that once the park was cleared of debris by KMC, and some water arrangement was in place, we were invited to plant a few flowering shrubs in a cleared bed, on the 10th of April, 2021. They looked beautiful, but within a couple of days they were duly eaten by the goats. And why not, after all it was “biryani” for them!

When I mentioned Baghban 10 to my Shehri-Citizens for a Better Environment colleagues, Farhan Anwar, an urban planner and academic, who is Founder and CEO of Urban Collaborative and also a Shehri-CBE member, volunteered to chalk out a plan with the help of his students from Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Habib University and IBA. Even during the pandemic, these students worked tirelessly, talking to community leaders and members from both sides, and incorporating their findings in their design plan for the park.

Kudos to Farhan and his team!

We now proudly present this report that offers a unique model of inclusive, participatory and ‘bottoms up’ planning where all critical stakeholders have contributed to the framing of the proposed design and management ideas. This engagement augers well for the future sustainable design and management of this park.

**-Saleka Enver, Resident Bath Island, Clifton**

# 1

# INTRODUCTION

This section provides a backdrop to the project, identifying the project space and critical stakeholders involved in this public engagement process.



ST 17 plot in Bath Island was envisioned as a 'public park' in the Bath Island Scheme developed in the early 70's. The park is nestled between the formal Bath Island settlement and the informal settlement of Hijrat Colony (originally an unauthorized settlement that was later regularized). The space has been upgraded at various stages since its inception, with the last upgrade being done about ten (10) years back but renovation works have never been successfully sustained and presently, the park is in a state of disrepair and not equipped to attract any regular visitation by residents.



Presently, it only serves as a space at times frequented by youth of Hijrat Colony for playing cricket, or as a short cut route for pedestrians and motorcyclists moving in and out of Hijrat Colony. There has been a community led effort to restore that park where the Bath Island community has engaged with the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) Parks & Horticulture Department and wishes to have the park restored in a participatory manner.

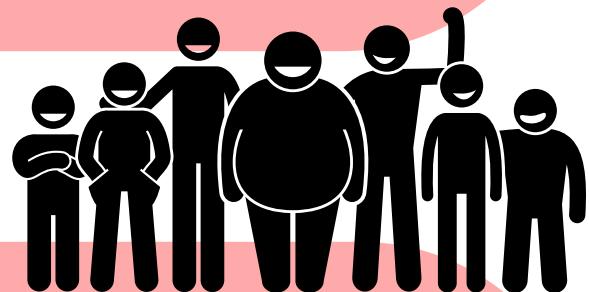


The team of Urban Collaborative has engaged with critical stakeholders – KMC and communities – both Bath Island and Hijrat Colony residents, in order to ensure that the design is human centered and demand driven with critical stakes built and ownership created. The findings of extensive field research and community engagement process have fed into the proposed public space design of the park.



# 2 PROJECT GOALS & OBJECTIVES

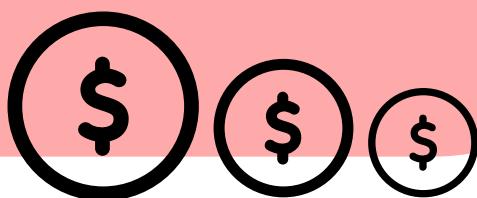
To understand the existing socio-economic community profiles and through innovative design options cater to varying community needs of residents belonging to both the Bath Island and Hijrat Colony localities



Implement an inclusive, gender sensitive design accommodating multiple uses and activities, considerations for comfort, access and mobility ease that includes incorporation of Universal Access Design requirements



Design should build in considerations of cost effectiveness by using sustainable and durable materials



# 3

# THE

# PROCESS

## Public Engagement

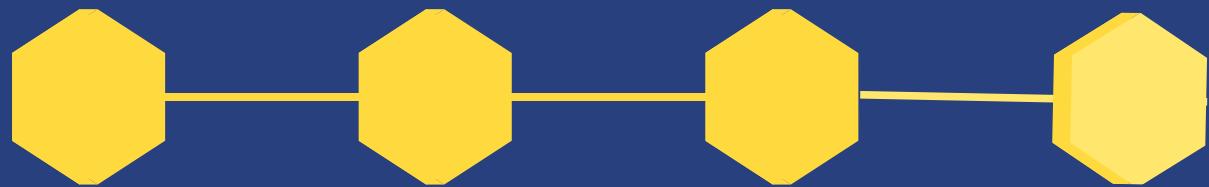
Primary & Secondary Research

Field observations, In-Depth-  
Interviews, Focus Group  
Discussions, online survey and  
precedent studies

## Design Development

Urban + Cultural innovation

3D modelling/ Sustainability  
Evaluation/ Cultural  
Aesthetic + Visual Identity



## Site Analysis

Understand +  
Document Site  
Problems

Issues of access and  
mobility, social and  
environmental fabric  
of the project site  
and surroundings

## Findings & Analysis

Urban Placemaking Design  
Review of public engagement  
findings within the analytical  
framework of the thematic  
design cores

# 4

# ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The research and design work in this project has placed its analysis and design within a strategic analytical framework that covers four important public space design thematic cores:



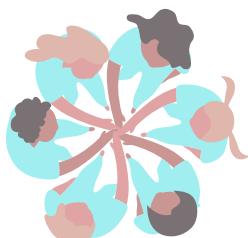
#### I. Uses & Activities

A broad range of activities that cater to a diverse profile of visitors, across varying age groups and gender, is critical to defining a good public space. A space that offers uses and activities that draw visitors on a regular basis is important. Different activities can attract different crowds at different times of the day therefore the spatial set up and time slots for various activities and uses are important factors



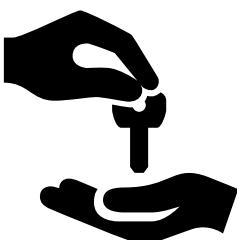
#### 2. Comfort & Accessibility

Public space designs that emphasize comfort are more likely to be perceived to be inviting. This means accounting for safety, cleanliness and seating arrangements aligned with appropriate natural or artificial shading. People prefer to have a choice in sitting and relaxing under a shade or being up and about; involved in various activities. A good public space design addresses also the basic concerns of a clean and litter-free area, a safe and secure atmosphere and the aesthetic appeal of the place. The space in terms of mobility should need to take special account of the mobility and accessibility needs of the elderly and people with special needs



#### 3. Inclusivity

A sociable environment is a key attribute of any successfully designed public space. This can be measured by whether people feel comfortable and encouraged to meet their friends or interact with neighbors and even strangers within the space. Achieving this quality can be a difficult task but every successfully designed space will possess this attribute. A truly sociable space should depict diversity which is reflective of the population residing within its proximity



#### 4. Ownership

The visitors should also have a sense of ownership towards the space such that they assume stewardship of it. It is therefore important to make the space design and implementation process participatory so that maximum stakes are built in it, so that once the space is activated, all critical stakeholders work together to sustain it.

4

# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

-

# PRIMARY RESEARCH

An extensive process of public consultations was conducted to make the park restoration effort inclusive and participatory so that the proposed design could reflect the needs and aspirations of the community.

## Research Objectives

- Access important communities and stakeholders to document perceptions and expectations regarding design and functional aspects of the park
- Document challenges and opportunities in inclusive design
- Gauge potential for community ownership and viable collaboration with government and private stakeholders for sustainable management of the park

## Research Methodology

During the course of public consultations, both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies were applied. For qualitative research, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were the primary mode of engagement. In quantitative research, an online survey – close ended questions – was conducted where the target audience were Bath Island residents living in the vicinity of the park

# Qualitative Research

Four separate stakeholders were consulted. For each stakeholder group, the responses and feedback have been categorized in the four (4) design thematic cores, earlier identified in the analytical framework.



# BATH ISLAND RESIDENTS

## Uses & Activities

Community youth advocated for a passive/active space regulation. However, adults expressed concerns about allowing active sports, such as cricket and football in particular. They believed it would physically damage the park and stray balls could hit other park goers. A consensus was built to have those physical activities that require minimal equipment and space and can be time regulated.

A walking and jogging track was strongly recommended by all as a necessary and essential requirement.

Community youth expressed an interest in having swings and children play area fixed instruments.

Cycling was proposed as a potential activity. However, there were doubts raised for its feasibility in terms of a certain radius and a track that needs to be in place for making cycling safe and viable.

Having a small tuck shop or canteen was also suggested.

## Comfort & Accessibility

Preference was expressed for separate timings for families and active sports and other activities accordingly. Preferred timings for families suggested were from Asr to Maghrib prayer timings (roughly 5-7 pm).

Security concerns were underscored. The residents wanted the park to be safe for access and for that suggested some kind of monitoring and surveillance devices installed.

Good lighting arrangements were also stressed to facilitate access and safety.

Community felt that the park was the only recreational space for residents within the area that was at a walking distance. Else, people travel all the way to other parks, clubs etc. and pay.

## Inclusivity

Participants, particularly youth, expressed their interest in participating in confidence building measures with the Hijrat Colony children, in the form of activities, such as plantation drive, wall painting, etc.

The inclusion of Hijrat Colony residents was agreed upon mutually given that security, supervision and maintenance are ensured.

Even though the idea of active sports was conflicted upon, however, the community stressed upon not denying any child playing areas and fixed play instruments.

A proposal for keeping entry tickets was discussed but a consensus emerged on not having entry ticketed, even nominally, as that can be a discouraging factor for the Hijrat Colony residents.

## Ownership

Ownership and participatory approach emerged as two important themes whereby residents were keen to share ownership if it came through the participation of residents in giving input in the design of the park, volunteer time and actively participating in its implementation. Residents expressed willingness to be involved in a joint management committee for the park and devise documentation of rules that could be supervised by the society officials.



# HIJRAT COLONY RESIDENTS

## Uses & Activities

The youth of Hijrat Colony actively voiced their enthusiasm for the park to be restored as a cricket ground. However, they showed limited interest in other active sports such as football and basketball. In contrast to the youth, the adult representatives of Hijrat Colony proposed that the park should be designated as a space for families only. According to them, apart from physically damaging the park, active sports such as cricket and football tend to make a space more male-dominated as well and the Hijrat Colony youth have an alternative space near the colony where they can play cricket.

Children under 12 years of age, requested for the installation of rides such as swings, slides, seesaws, and trampolines in the park.

A walking/jogging track was thought to be an essential requirement of the park by both the youth and the elderly of Hijrat Colony.

The idea of having a canteen/tuck shop in the park was suggested by the adult representatives of the community.

## Comfort & Accessibility

The elder representatives of Hijrat Colony preferred separate timings for families and active sports if the latter was to be incorporated in the final design of the park.

The preferred timings for families to access the park by the community at Hijrat Colony was suggested as after Maghrib prayers (roughly 7pm onwards).

Both the youth and the elderly also requested the installation of a main gate that opened towards Hijrat Colony to make the park more accessible for the residents of Hijrat Colony.

Hijrat Colony did not raise much concerns about security as were raised by the representatives of Bath Island.

## Inclusivity

Despite sharing some bad experiences of the past, the community showed a willingness to have the space activated as an inclusive space providing recreational opportunities for both Hijrat Colony and Bath Island residents.

Elders of Hijrat Colony were extremely forthcoming in terms of collaborating with other stakeholders in the upkeep of the park.

## Ownership

The elders offered to station two colony men as volunteers in the park's guard room space to help in ensuring security and upkeep of the park.

Furthermore, the adult representatives of Hijrat Colony also appreciated the idea of joining a multi-stakeholder committee tasked with the overall management of the park.



# BATH ISLAND SOCIETY

## Uses & Activities

Members of the Bath Island Society highlighted the need for following activities:

- Greenery
- Walking track
- Sitting space
- Swings in a separate space
- Canteen- a small tuck shop

## Comfort & Accessibility

It was emphasized during the discussion that the park should be divided into active (cricket or yoga) and passive (sitting and relaxing) spaces to ensure the safety of everyone

Different timings of the park were suggested wherein 4 pm to 7 pm would be reserved for women, children and elderly or, in other words, for passive activities

The members felt that children from Hijrat Colony climb walls to enter the park, which made the space unsafe. Hence, they requested that another gate for them should be made to facilitate their access

Security of the park was another challenge highlighted by them, for which they extended services of at least two guards so that the Park could become as safe as possible

The amenities requested by Bath Island Society members are as follows:

- Grass
- Lighting
- Solar plan

Their requests were reflective of another park that was quite popular among residents; thus, they believed that these elements would also encourage people to use the park

## Inclusivity

The Society members expressed concern on how the park could be made an inclusive space as perceptions were that both the communities were uncomfortable in sharing the space

However, after a discussion on the significance of the space for both communities, the society members became more accepting of sharing the park

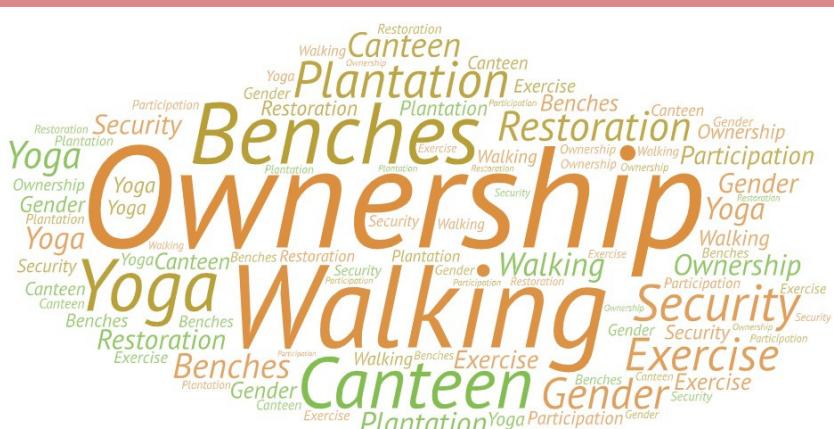
They mentioned the need to council Hijrat Colony kids regarding the rules and regulations so that any mishaps could be avoided. They were empathetic towards these children and ensured complete cooperation

## Ownership

The society members were willing to provide their support in managing the park

They offered to place security guards and have random checks around the park

They also agreed to become active members of a joint committee should that be formed having representatives from both communities and a member from KMC



# PARKS & HORTICULTURE DEPARTMENT, KMC

## Uses & Activities

The KMC Parks department team felt that community needs and aspirations should be considered in designing park uses that are also viable and done in a cost effective manner

## Comfort & Accessibility

KMC wants to ensure that security and lighting is ample so that visitors feel safe in the park  
They will provide security and maintenance staff for the park  
They also offered to provide gardeners, plants, soil and fertilizer

## Inclusivity

The Director General was persistent that the only way the park could be restored and maintained in the long run would be by ensuring its accessibility to both communities

The Director General was enthusiastic to bring onboard multiple investors and donors that might be interested in the park restoration project

Unilever has started a project to make benches, slides and swings with recycled plastic and the possibility of same fixtures being installed in the Bath Island Park were discussed

## Ownership

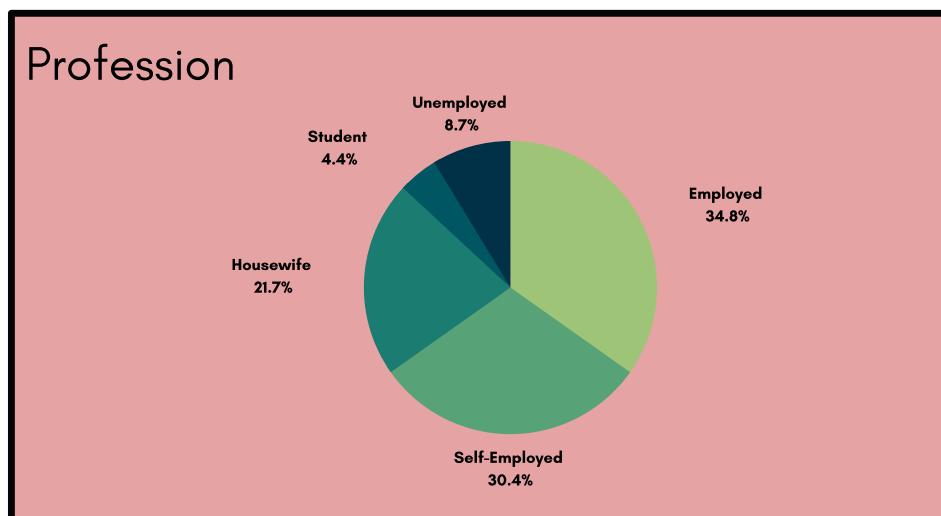
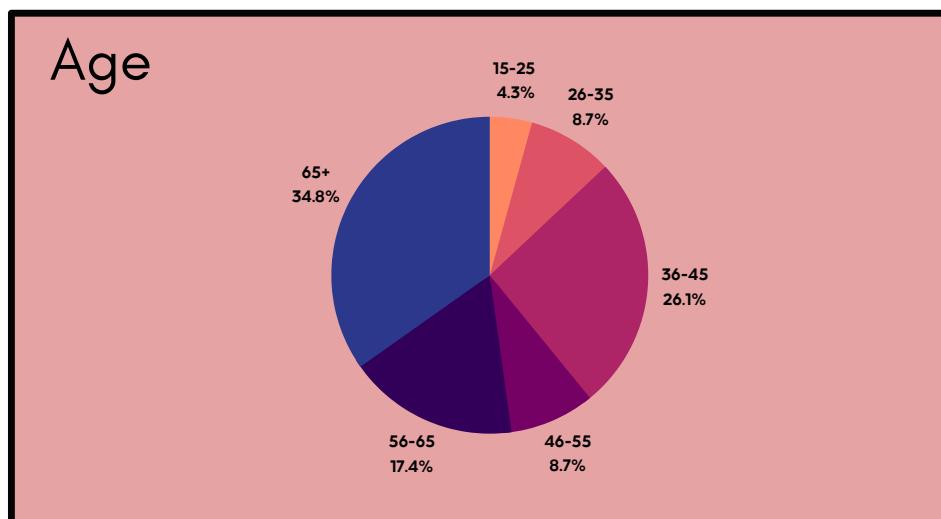
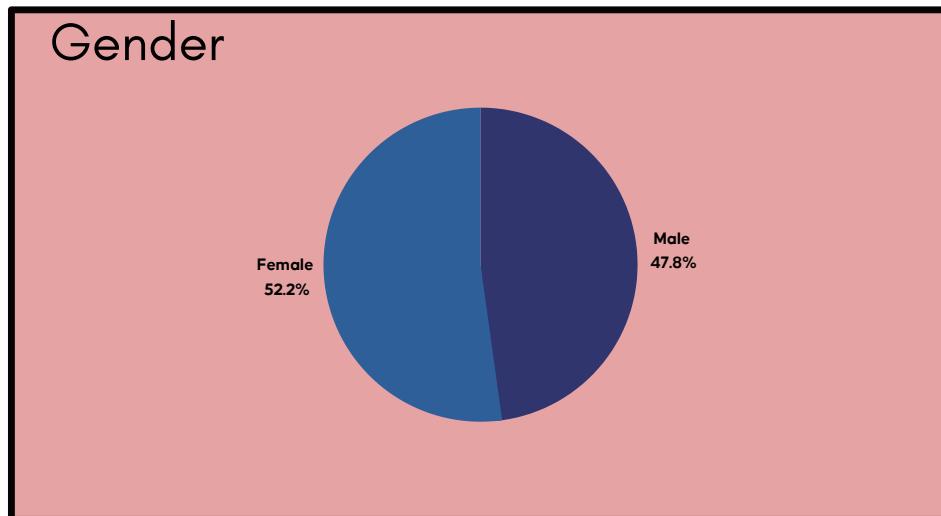
The Parks & Horticulture Department has facilitated the formation of community-based group called Baghban that operates via a Whatsapp group allowing the community members to stay in touch with KMC officials for better community based upkeep of neighborhood parks. It was felt that the same group can play a lead role in creating a participatory forum for sustainable management of the park



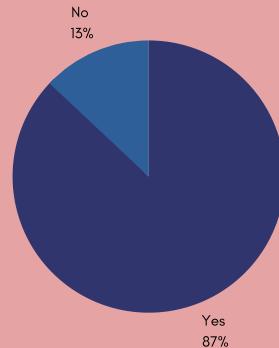


# Quantitative Research

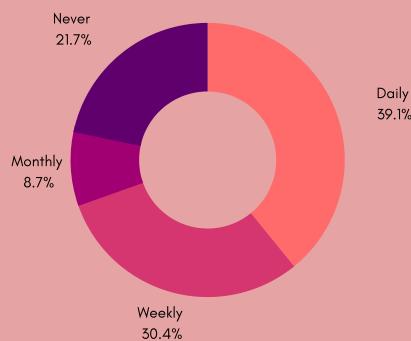
An online research was conducted to document experiences and seek suggestions from the bath island residents community for incorporation in the design development process. Following were the results



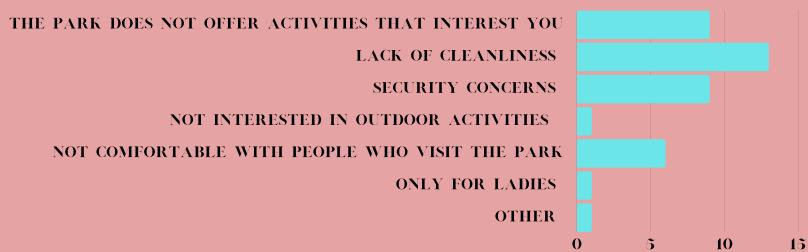
## Any parks in the neighborhood?



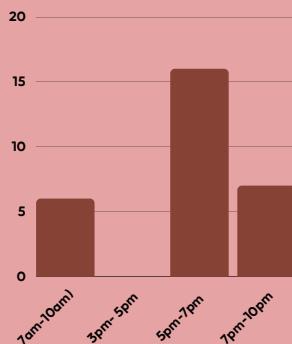
## How often do you visit park in your neighborhood area?



## Why don't you visit the park in your neighborhood?



What time do you prefer to visit the park?



What activities do you want to see in a restored ST-17 park?

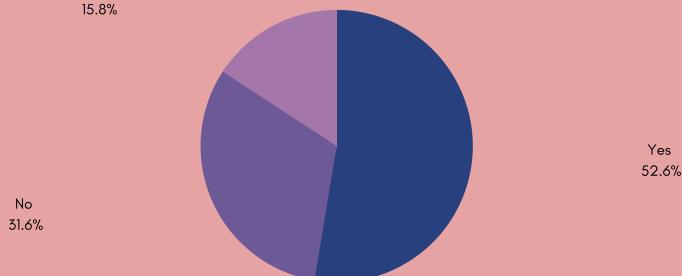


What are your major concerns regarding the ST-17 Park that you believe should consider while designing and doing restoration works?



Do you think active sports (like cricket, football, netball, etc.) should be allowed in the park?

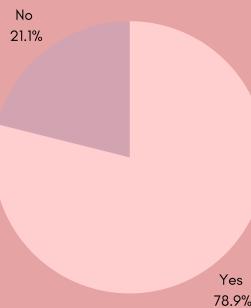
Only if there is a separate time & space allotted  
15.8%



Do you believe Hijrat Colony residents and Bath Island residents should have equal access to the park facilities?



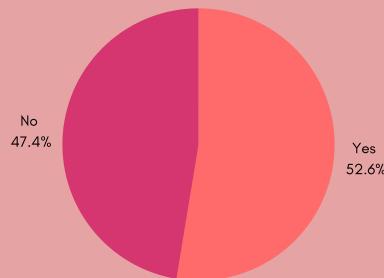
Do you think the park should have separate family timings and timings for youth/active sports?



Do you think there should be a ticket in the park?



Will you be willing to be part of the park's maintenance committee, which would work collaboratively with other governmental and nongovernmental agencies



In what way would you like to help in the restoration of the park?



# 5

# CONCLUSION

The public engagement process started in the backdrop of a perception created that communities of Bath Island and Hijrat Colony will not be comfortable sharing the park space and that the dream of inclusivity will be hard to attain. During the course of consultations apprehensions certainly were raised and fears shared – on both sides, but more so by the Bath Island community. However, what has been most encouraging and heartening is that both the communities in a high majority, also were not only willing to engage in conversations on finding common ground but also offered very useful suggestions and ideas on how the existing trust deficit can be tackled in a positive way – where the park space becomes the catalyst for this positive change. Youth within the Bath Island community offered volunteer help in engaging with the youth and children of Hijrat Colony in activities such as murals painting, plantation and recycling activities in the park. The elders of the Hijrat Colony offered to station their youth to ensure safety and security in the park that responded well to the number one concern raised by the Bath Island community – safety and security. Both the communities stressed the need and desire of making the park a ‘community’ – ‘family’ park. Residents of both the communities again in a high majority, agreed with the idea of forming a community based platform where all relevant stakeholders could work together to ensure the sustained upkeep of the park. These were very positive findings that this report has documented.

Another critical success of this process has been the facilitative role played by the custodians of the park – the Parks and Horticulture Department of KMC. They encouraged citizen participation and committed themselves to respond to the aspirations of the communities. While the findings of the public engagement process have fed into the design development process – the real success of this endeavor lies in continued engagement between communities and other stakeholders where they find ways to collaborate in the design implementation process and subsequently in the management and upkeep of the park where they collectively own and enjoy the space that has the capacity to improve community inclusivity.

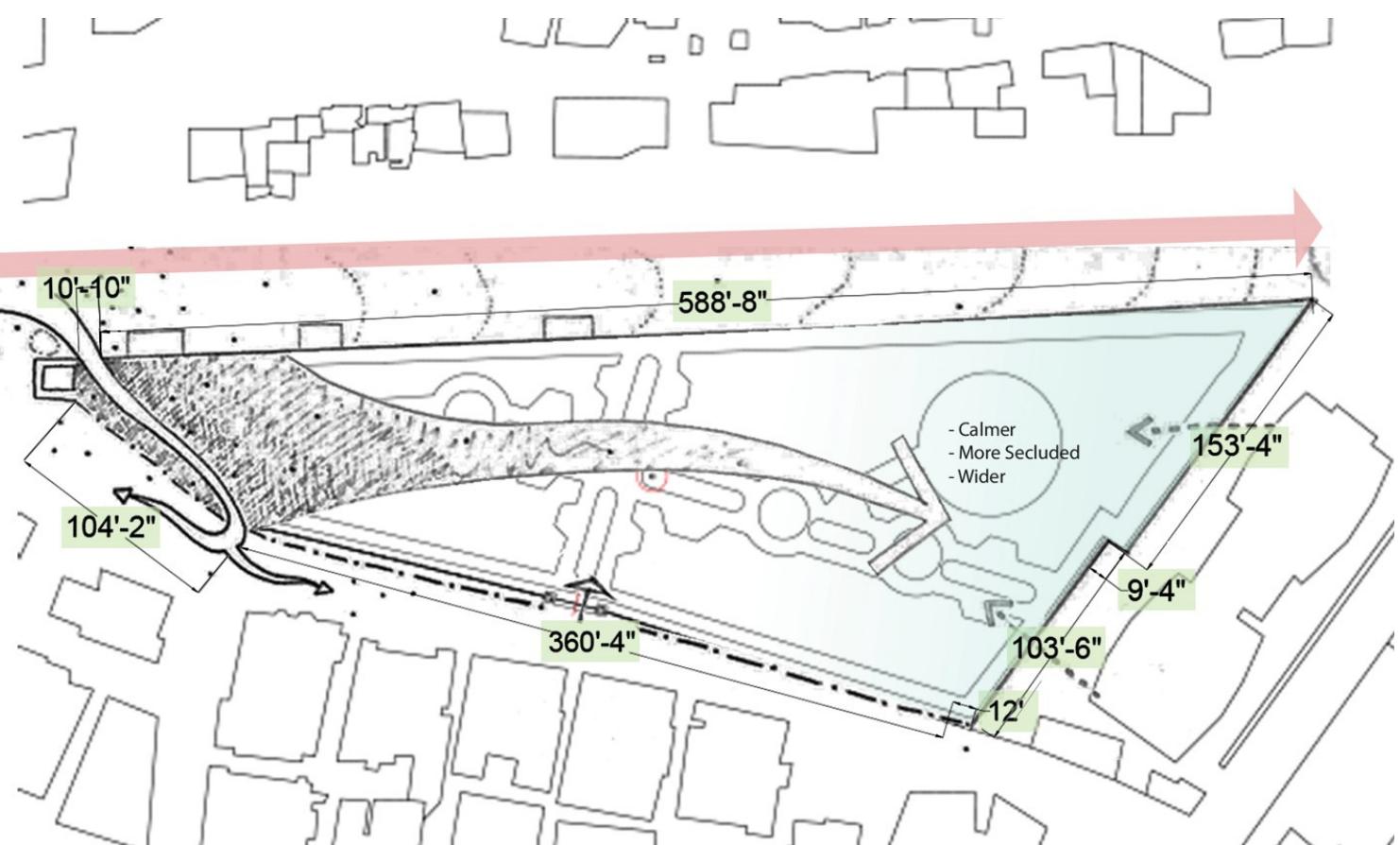
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# DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

# Site Analysis – Macro Plan



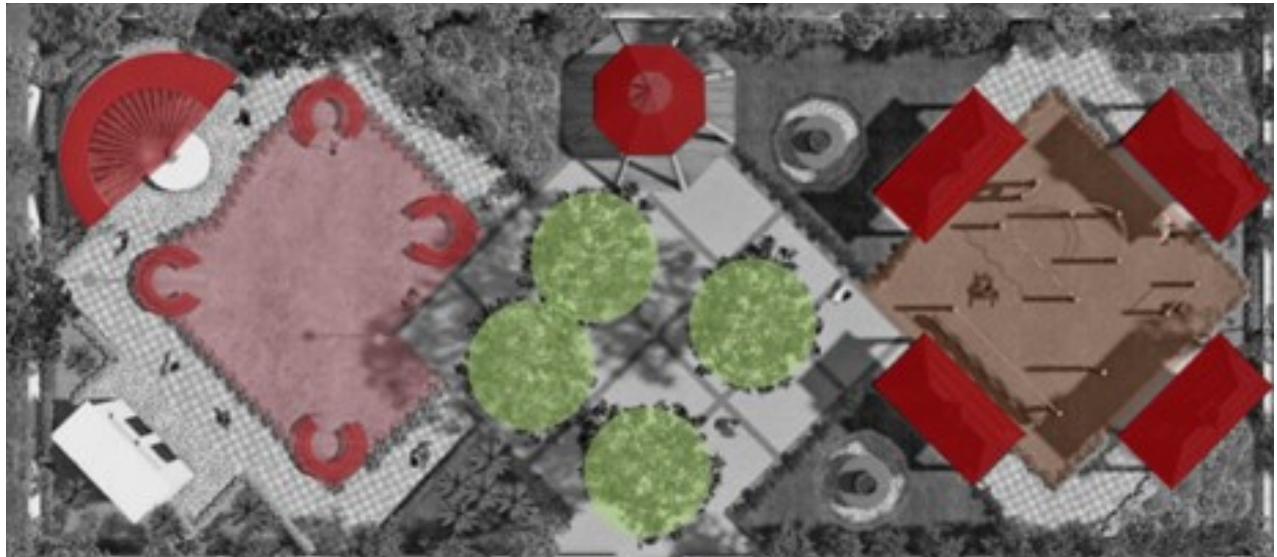
# Site Analysis – Micro Plan



# Precedent Study



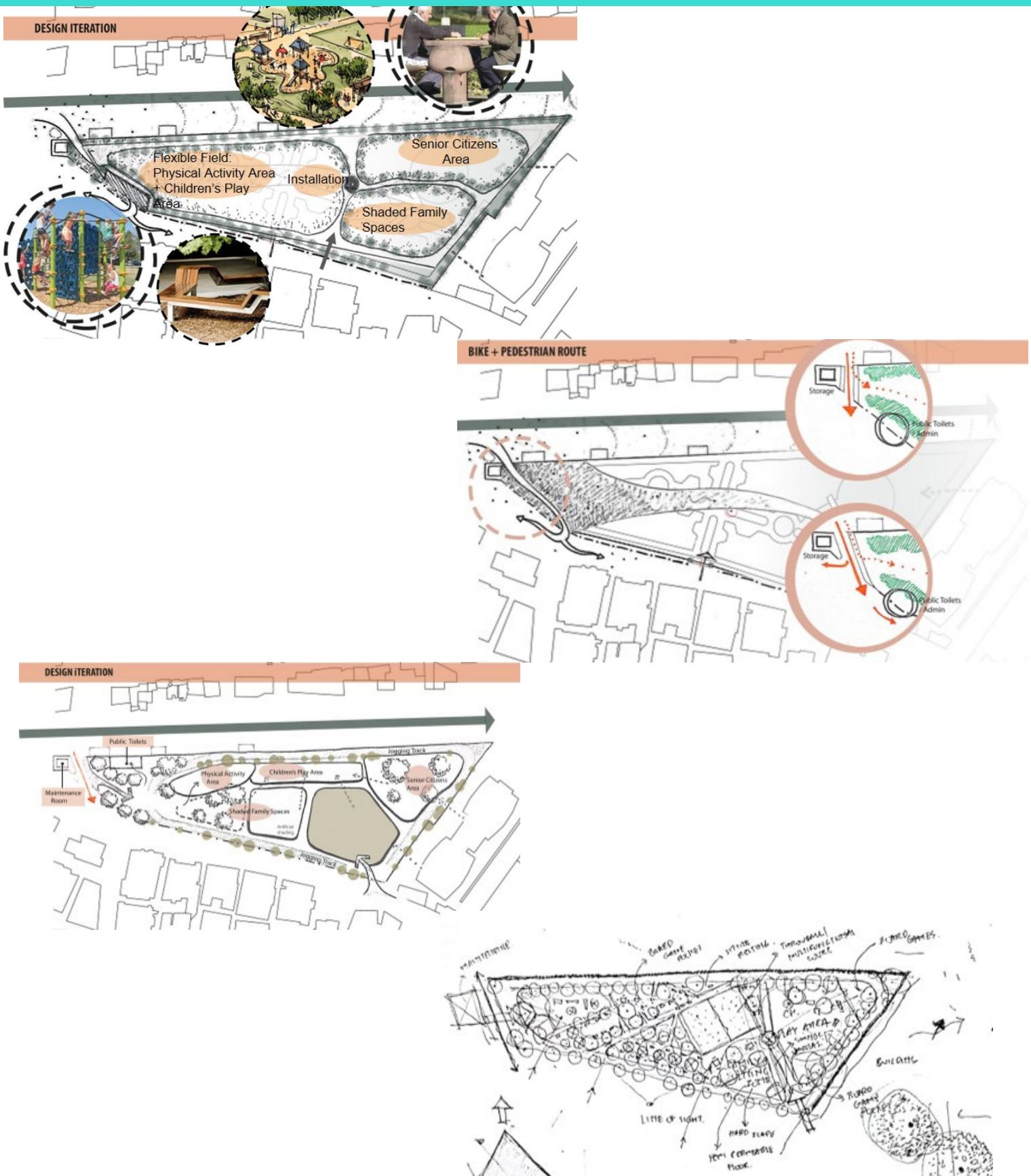
The objective is to provide a dedicated facility for Senior Citizen where they can get involved in activities like recreation, reading, health, meditation, group interactions and information communication. The facility will have spaces earmarked for indoor as well as outdoor activities. This facility aims to provide for all such activities at one place wherein the senior citizen can keep themselves indulged for most of their day to day activities.

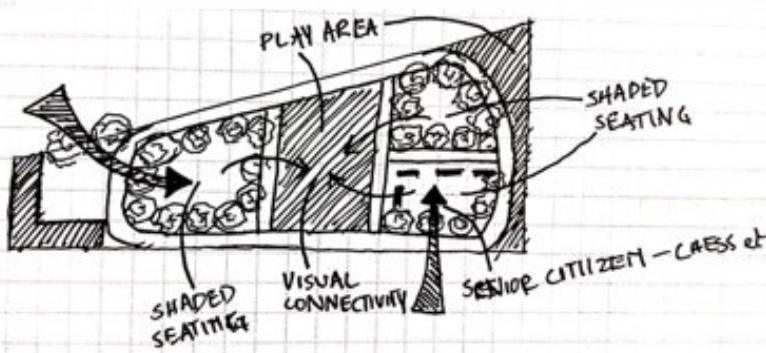
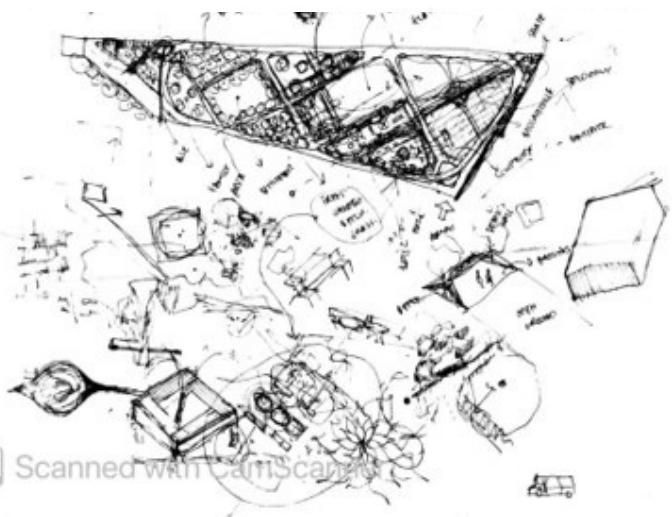
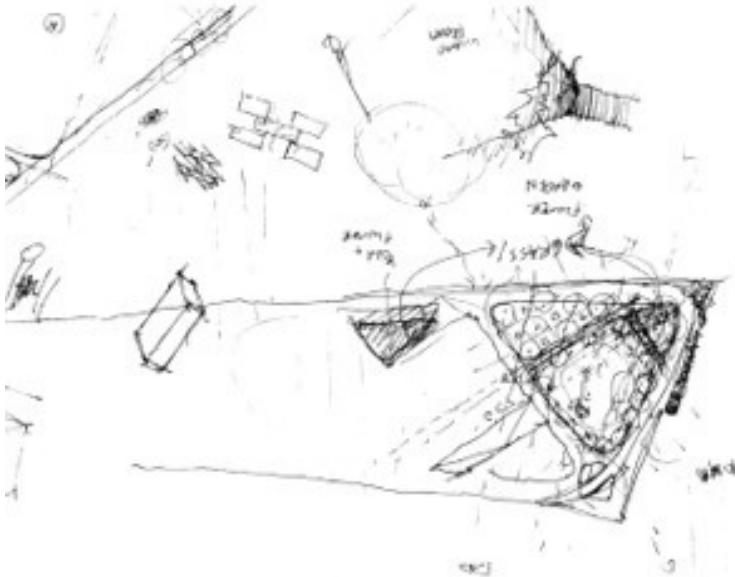


Open grass patch as a separate tranquil space with seating that promotes interaction

Cluster formation of shading trees forms an Introverted pocket space

# PROCESS WORK – SCHEMATICS AND SKETCHES





# Program



# Master Plan – Site Context

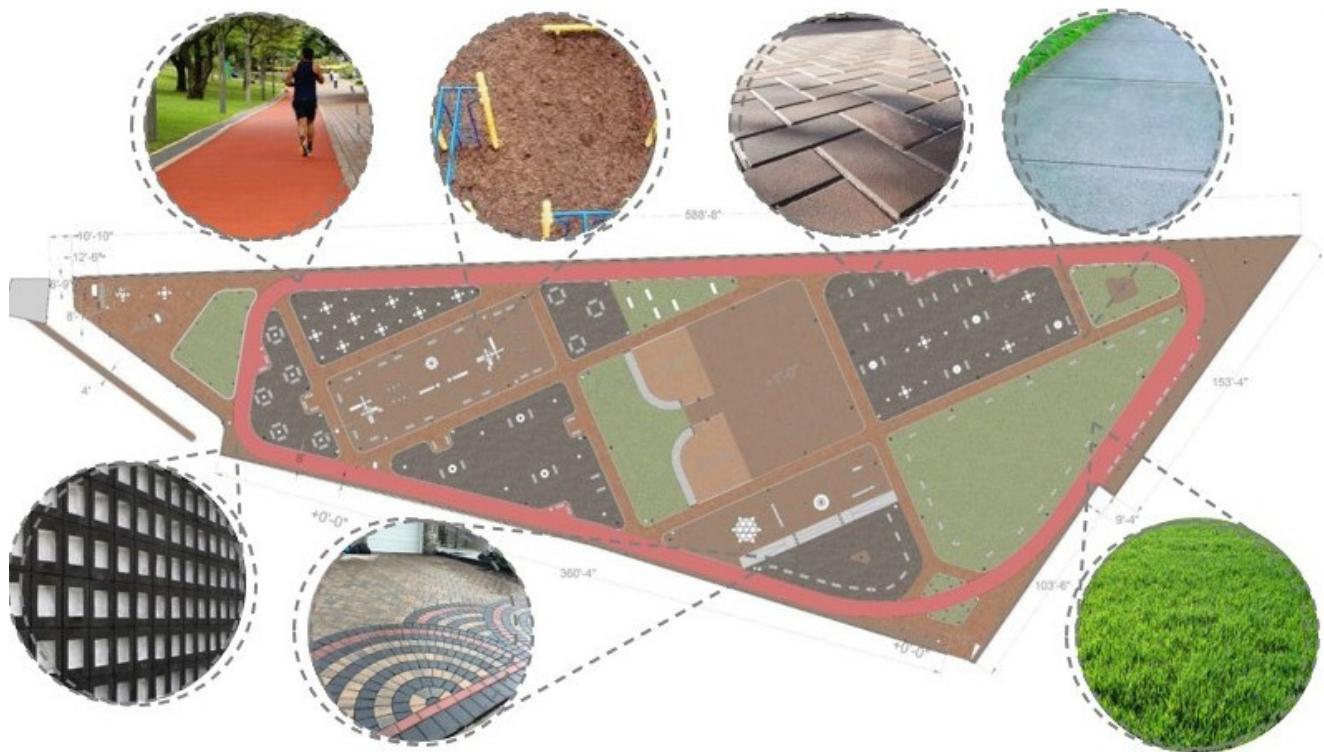


# Master Plan – Detailing

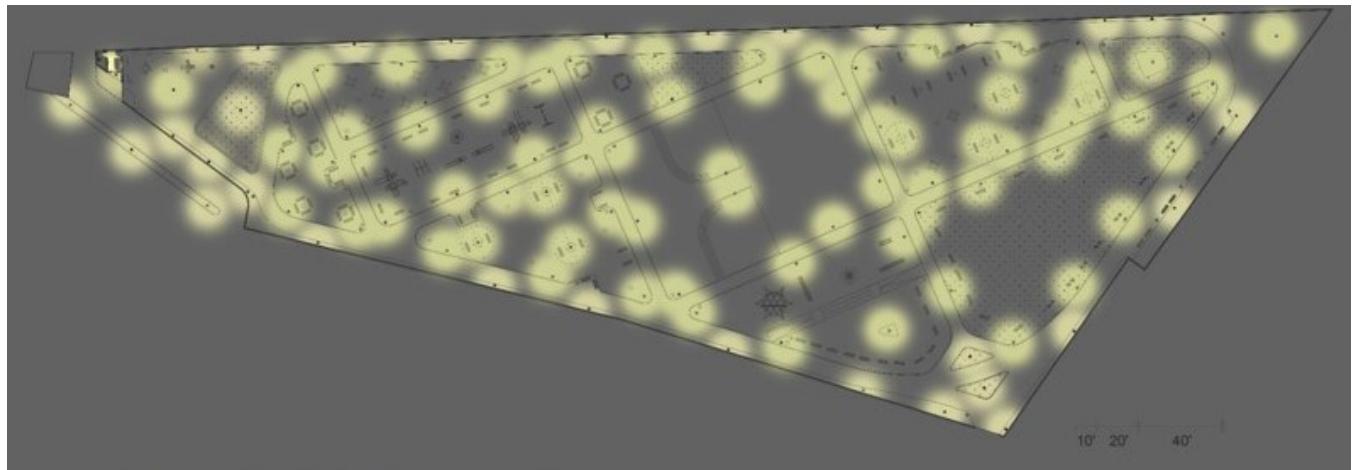


Total no. of Trees	=	165
Benches	=	180
Gazebos	=	7
Bollards	=	10
Gates	=	2

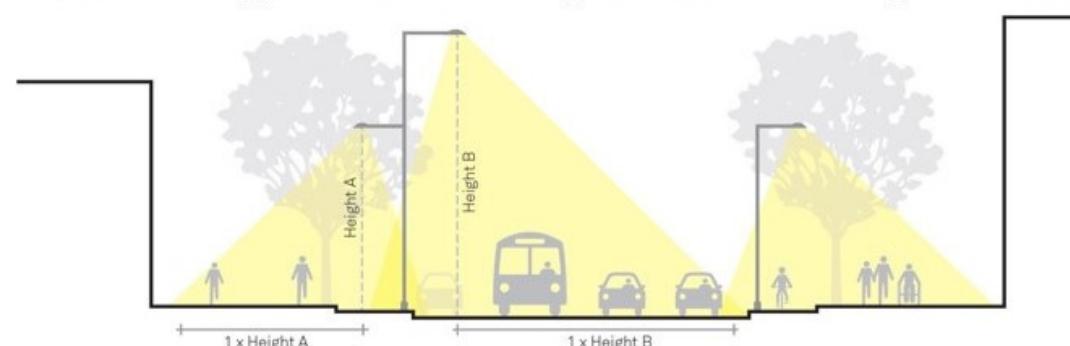
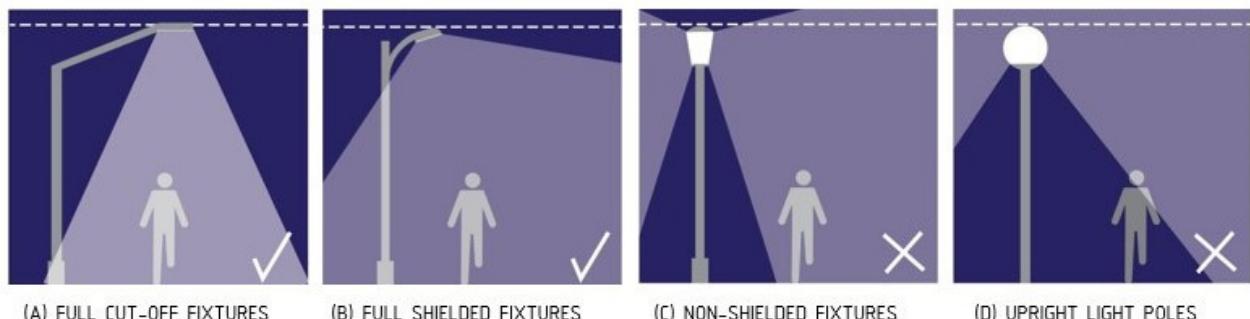
# Material Plan



# Lighting Plan

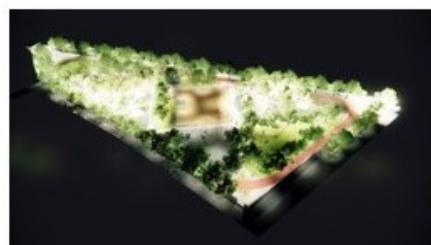


Lamp Posts	=	95
Wall Mounted	=	2
Lights in Gazebos	=	7
Total no. of Lights	=	105



The spacing between light poles is typically 2.5-3 times the height of the fixture. A single row of light poles might be sufficient for a narrow street.

# Night Views



# Detailing – Vegetation



BANYAN TREE



ALBIZIA LEBBECK



AFRICAN TULIP



CHINABERRY TREE



LIGNUM TRFF



AMALTAS TREE

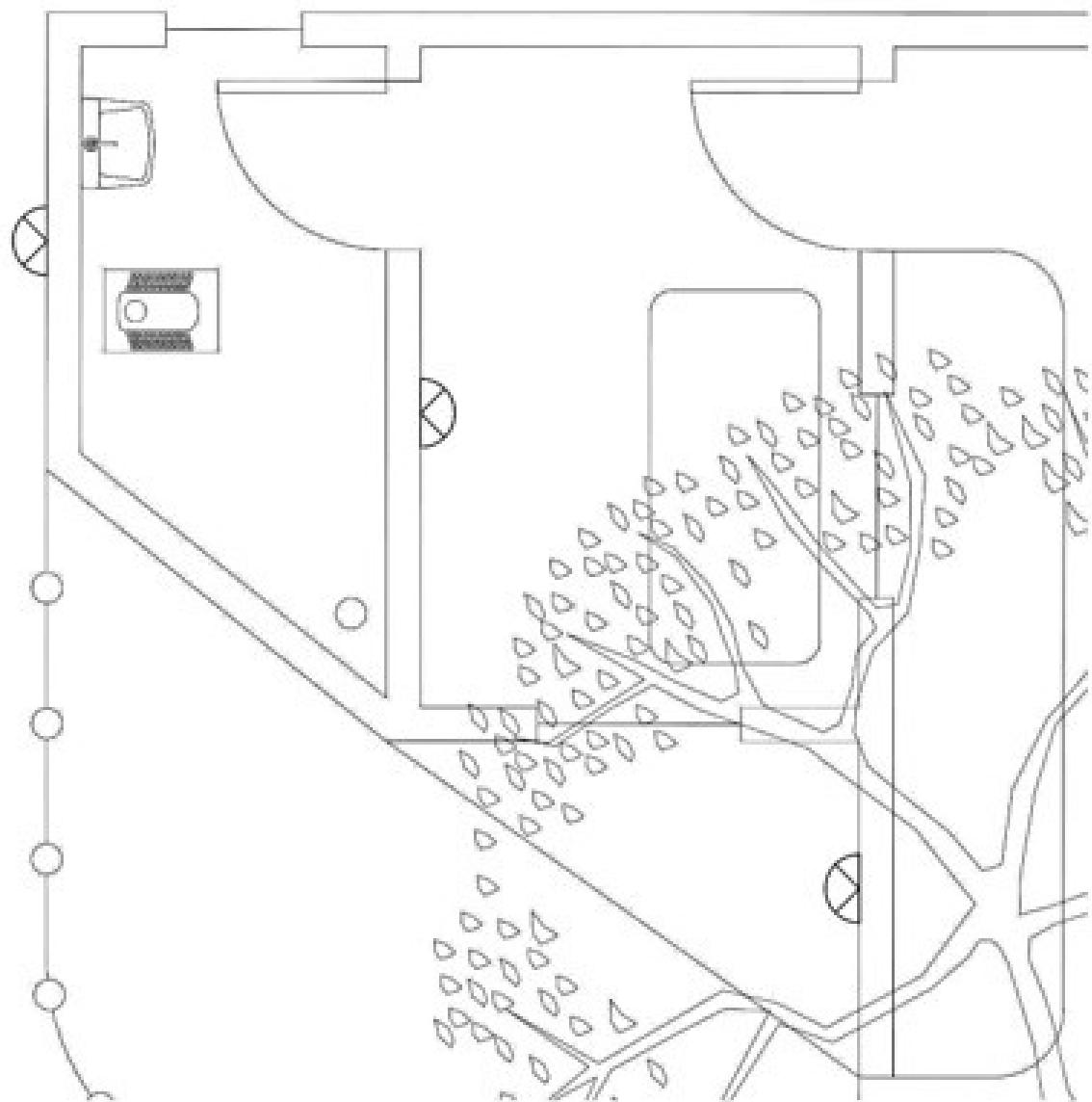


GULMOHAR TREE



PEELU TREE

# Detailing – Guard Room



Innovating for a more livable tomorrow



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PECHS, Karachi



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