



The 17th Avenue Pocket Plaza

Supplementary Information to the Application
for the City of Calgary Council Innovation Fund



February 2017



A Pocket Plaza for 17th Ave

We are a group of design-minded citizens building a Pocket Plaza on 17th Avenue. This is a community-driven initiative that will improve a forgotten space along one of our city's most important streets.

The southwest corner of 5A Street and 17th Avenue SW presents an untapped opportunity to enrich the public space network along 17th Avenue: one of our city's most vital places.

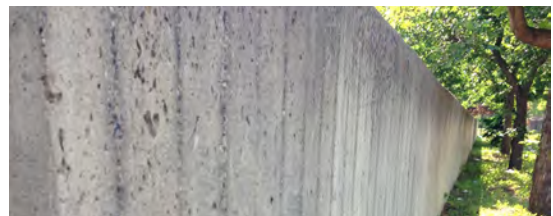
Currently, the space is hidden in plain sight of the street, a residual area filled with gravels, overgrown weeds, and jagged chunks of sandstone. This forgettable spot offers an invaluable opportunity to punctuate the public spaces of 17th Avenue and create a much-needed open space amenity. Located in an area under-served by parks and open space, the proposed plaza will encourage passersby to pause, grab a seat, and take in the theatre of life offered by 17th Avenue.

The proposed plaza is a product of its place. Our team has completed extensive community consultations and engagement to ensure that the project emerges from the creativity and momentum of its community. City and school officials, local businesses,

students, and neighbourhood residents have all been involved from the early stages, contributing their time, thoughts, opinions, memories, and experiences of the space and surrounding neighbourhood.

Many of our team members also live nearby; we frame this as an act to improve the spaces we encounter every day.

This project is driven by a group of local citizens in partnership with the Cliff Bungalow-Mission Community Association. All work to date has been completed in a volunteer capacity, fueled by a love for our city and a deep-rooted desire to help improve the public spaces in which we share our lives.

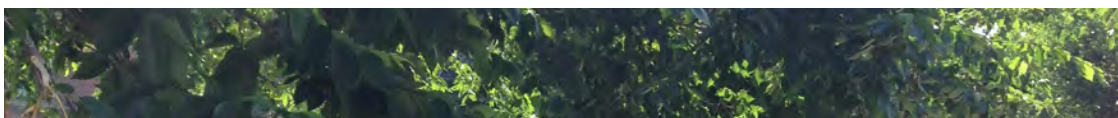


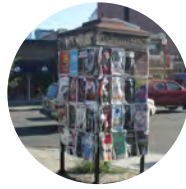
Answering the Need for Open Space

The pocket plaza helps increase public space in neighbourhoods that are behind city targets. It also fills a gap in the open space network along 17th Ave.

The public realm plays a vital role in the happiness of a city. By creating standards and goals for percentage of public open space, based on community density, cities can begin taking back lost lands and transforming them in to lively public space.

The communities of Cliff Bungalow and Beltline are both lacking open space that meets the City of Calgary's standards. The below stats and adjacent map illustrate a glimpse at current open space surrounding the proposed pocket park.





A Social Place

This piece of our city is shared by lots of different people: businesses, shoppers, students, tourists, revelers. This plaza will invite them all.

The proposed site is located amidst Western Canada High School, local restaurants, pubs and bars, cafes, businesses, residences, and shopping.

Bus Route 6 stops in the middle of the site on 17th Avenue, serving surrounding businesses and residents, as well as many students from the High School.

This location is perfect for a variety of sidewalk uses: taking a break from the busy street life, having coffee or tea with friends, eating lunch outside, or simply waiting for the bus.

A Citizen-Driven Process

To date, our team has worked with all major stakeholders, including the City and CBE. We have run workshops with students at the High School, and led community engagement with local residents.

The work began when we noticed a small space that we had walked past hundreds of times. **Inspired by our experiences in Melbourne** and other great pedestrian cities, we decided to pursue a renovation of this space. We wanted this ugly little spot to live up to its place on one of our city's best streets.

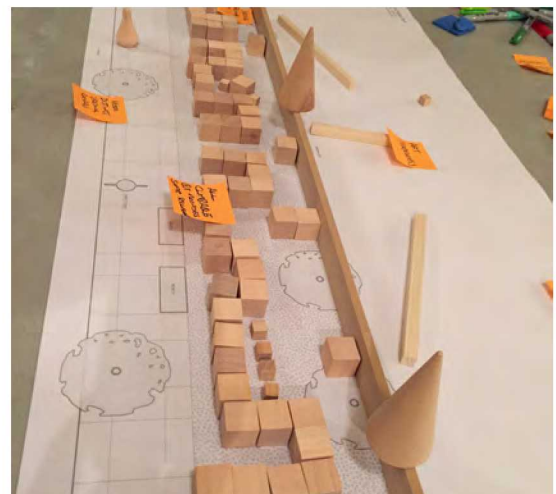
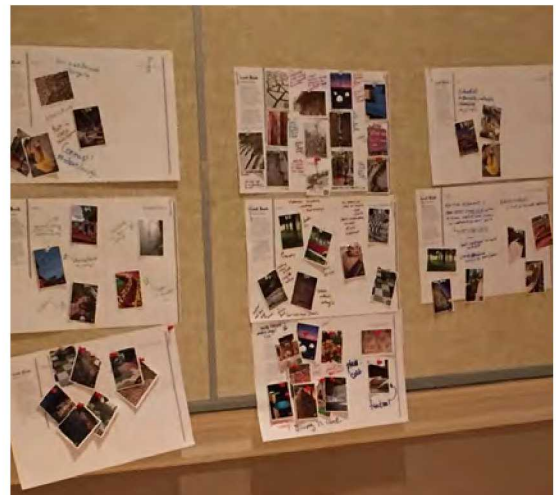
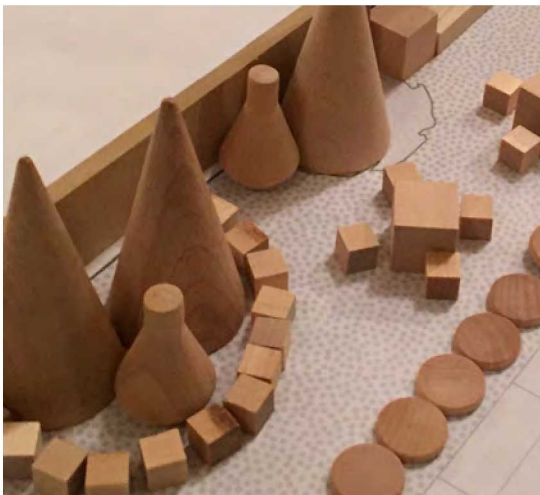
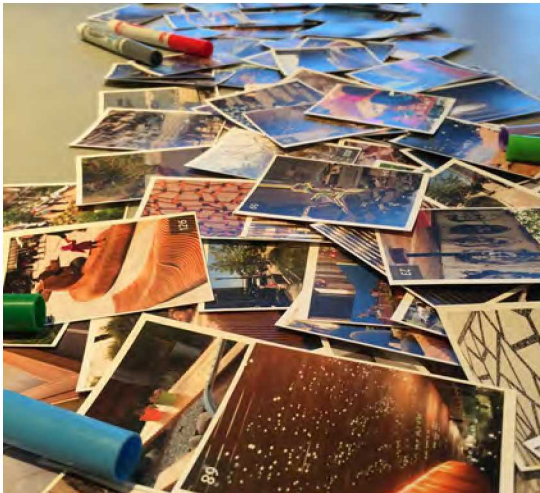
We began with a site analysis that identified patterns of use, land ownership, and micro-climate, by day and by night. From this initial impression, we built momentum around our project by developing an early schematic design that **we submitted to Calgary's 'Lost Spaces' competition** in 2015.

It became clear early on that Western Canada High School would need to become a key collaborator if the project was to succeed. We engaged the school's administration as well as its students; we held a **discussion with the Eco-Club**, and ran **activities with the Design Studies class**.

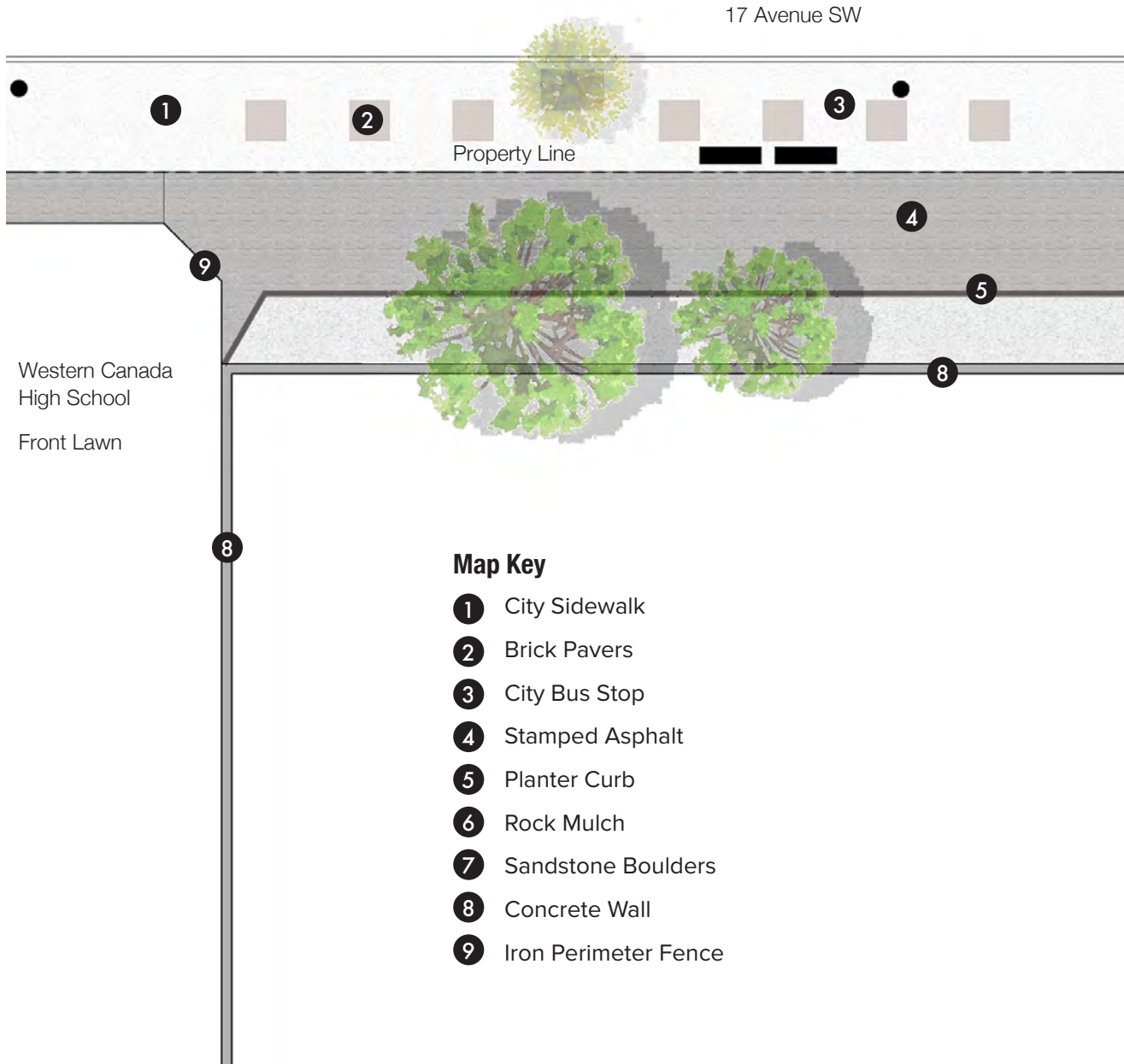
We met in person over a series of months with the **Calgary Board of Education**, the **Cliff Bungalow-Mission Community Association**, the **17th Avenue BRZ**, our local **Counsellor**, and a series of City of Calgary departments, including **Water Services, Transportation, and Centre City Implementation**.

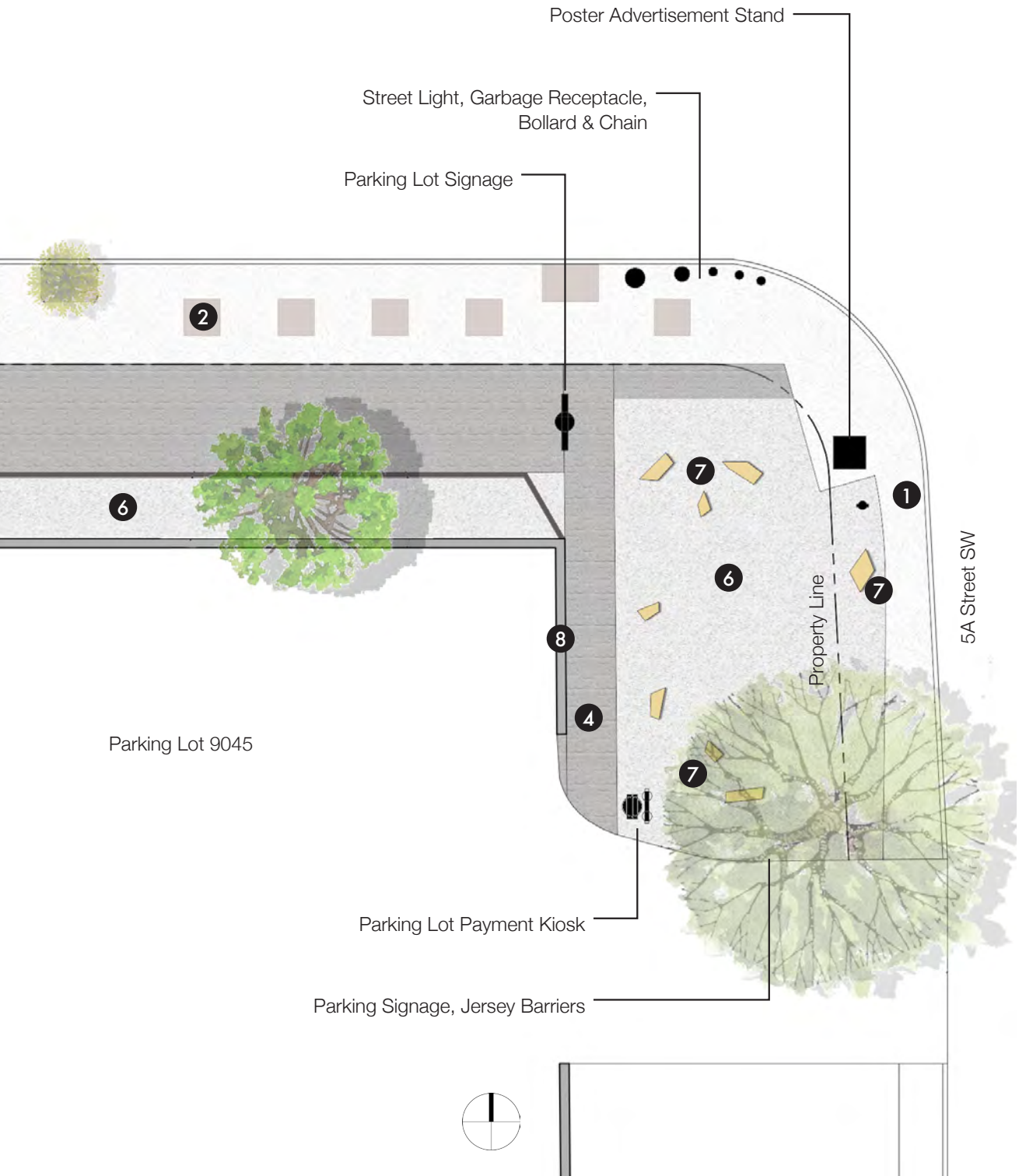
When it came time to engage the broader community, we designed and hosted an **interactive drop-in workshop at the Cliff Bungalow-Mission Community Association** building. This workshop, which saw more than 45 attendees, galvanized support, gathered insight, spurred creativity, and attracted expert talent to the effort.

The conceptual design presented on the next pages integrates the input we received from all of these groups: decisions about function, aesthetic, cost, and maintenance all find their roots in a community-driven process.



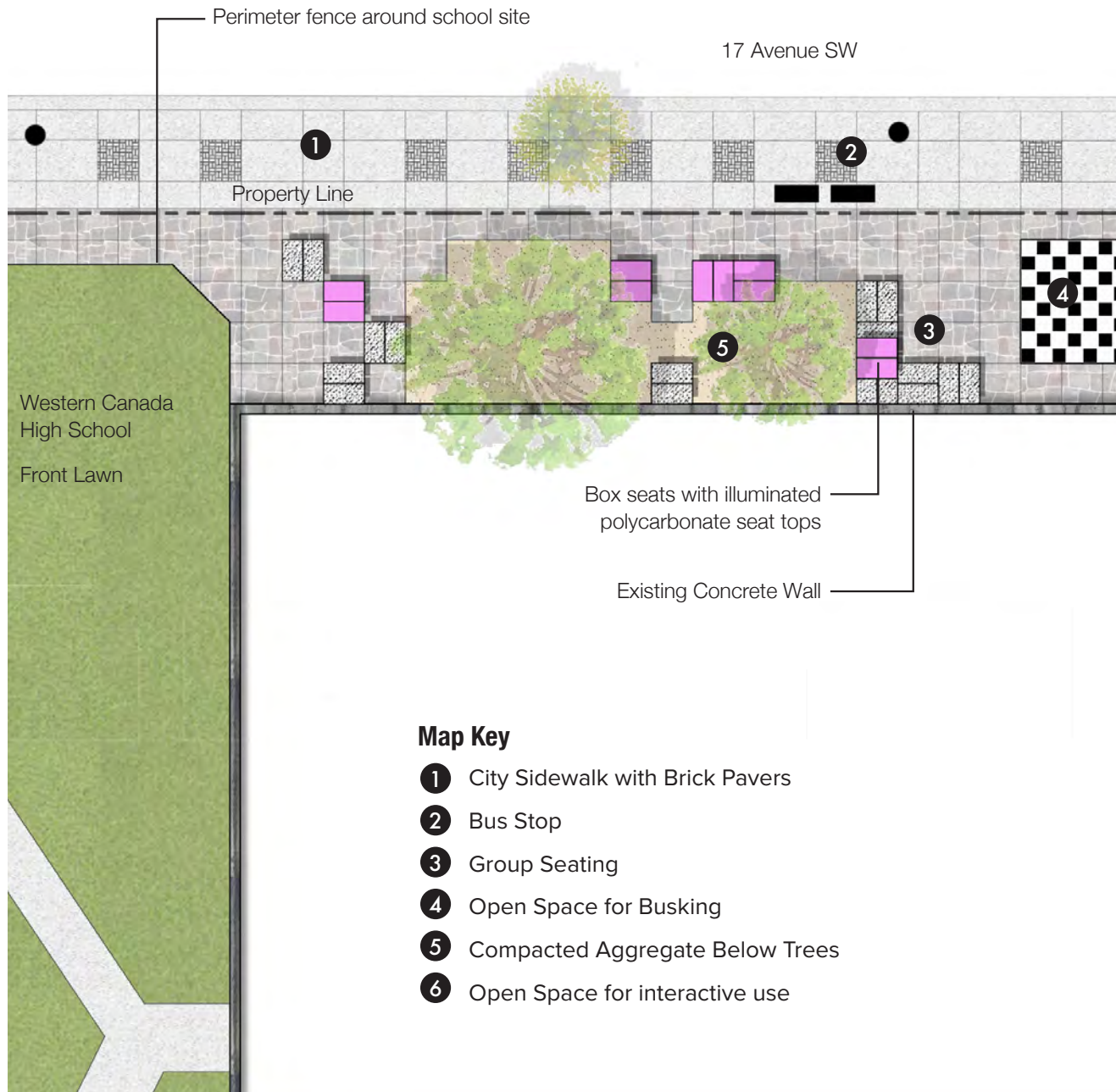
Existing Conditions

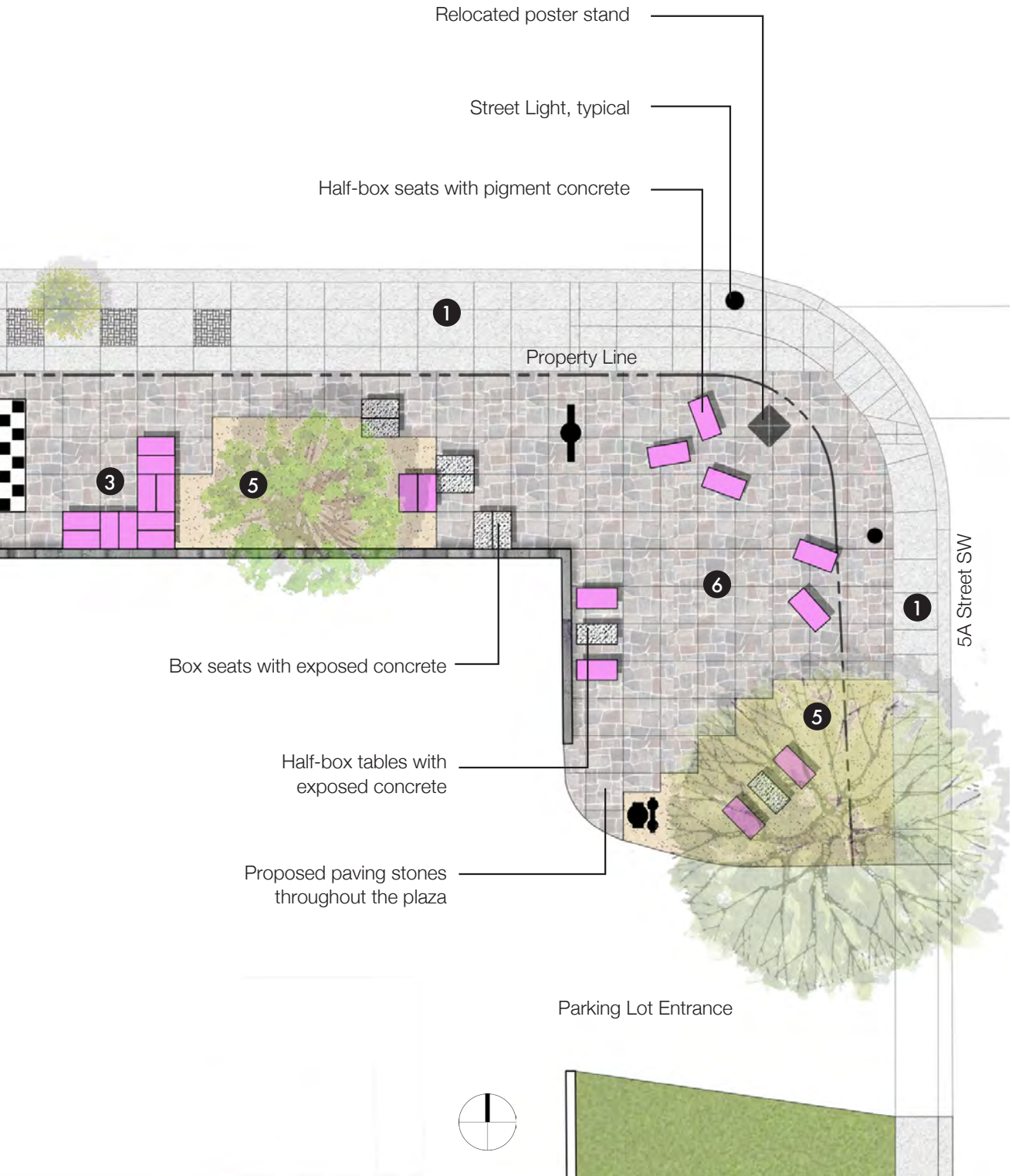




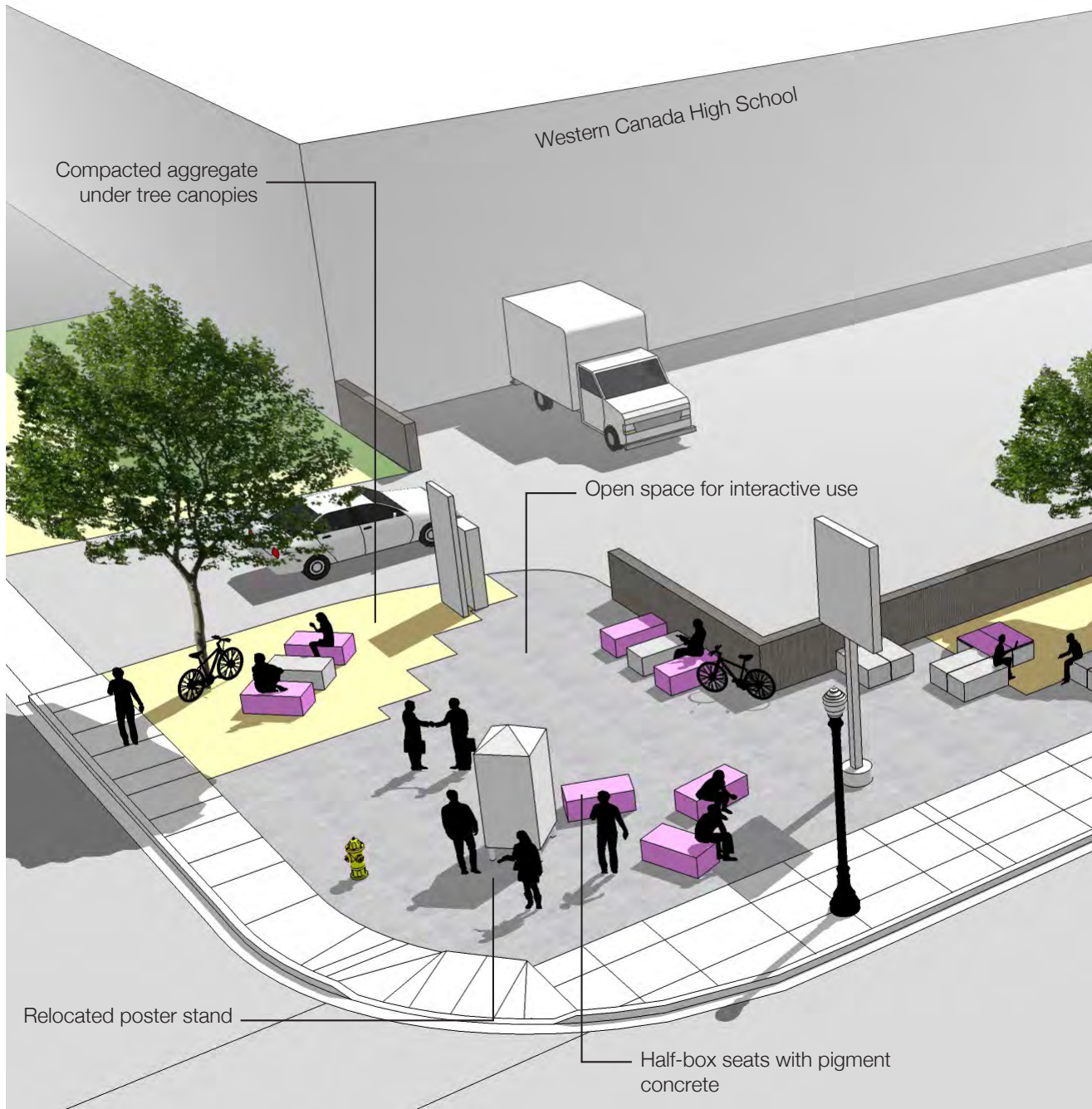
Parking Lot 9045

Concept Plan





Concept Overview





Concept Snapshots





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