

PUBLIC ART OPPORTUNITIES

One of the major challenges of the Rhode Island Avenue, NE corridor is bringing cohesion to this disjointed streetscape. Broad swaths of the public realm along Rhode Island Avenue, NE are largely barren in appearance and without distinct character or identity. As such, one of the main design principles for the corridor is to prioritize a continuous, coherent visual experience and use visual cues that will thematically differentiate special districts. In the streetscape plan, the design team explored how to improve the

streetscape using paving, planting, and simple site furnishings.

However, the team felt that one key area needing further exploration for this streetscape was the introduction of public art to bring artistic flourishes and visual excitement to the street. The design team collaborated to identify potential locations for activation through art and to develop a conceptual approach to those opportunities using inspirational images of the types of elements that could work to transform the street.

The opportunities identified by the team include:

- The Metro underpass
- Wedges/triangles
- Areas for scrims/vegetative barriers
- Medians
- Blank vertical surfaces
- The “Gateway” at Eastern Avenue, NE



The team imagined these as both permanent and short-term interventions. Some could be implemented repetitively to establish continuity along the street, while others could be used individually to indicate a particular identity for one area or for a thematic section of the street. In addition to the map below, the following pages include a more detailed description of these concepts, accompanied by precedent images that illustrate a range of public art opportunities.

As the corridor revitalization continues, art has also been an important feature. Art Enables (2204 Rhode Island Avenue, NE) seeks to engage the community through art, and hosted the second open house. Nearby Brookland has also seen artist housing and studio space added to the neighborhood. Public art along Rhode Island Avenue, NE should seek to engage local businesses and residents as much as possible.



SCRIMS/VEGETATIVE BARRIERS

Flat transparent or opaque screens are installed to create a visual barrier to the eyesores along the street and bring color and pattern into the environment.



SURFACES

Blank walls are decorated with imagery that enhances the street and resonates with the residents and the character of the surrounding neighborhoods.



MEDIANS

Plantings, pavement patterns, art and lighting mark the medians and add visual delight for both pedestrians and vehicular travelers.



WEDGES

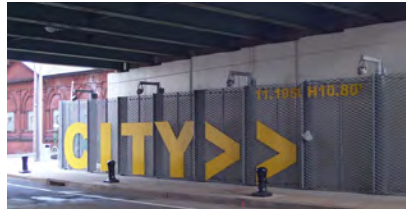
The triangular open spaces along the street become places to sit and gather with the addition of temporary sunshades, sculpture, moveable planters, umbrellas, and seating.

Note: Many wedge-shaped spaces are owned by the National Park Service (NPS), adding some challenges to revitalization.



THE METRO UNDERPASS

Bold super-graphics, imaginative lighting, and colorful painting bring life to a dark tunnel.



VILLAGE

The charming main street look and small scale of the “village” section of Rhode Island Avenue, NE (20th-24th Street, NE) is dramatized with a creative use of paint.



GATEWAY

Overhead sculptural forms are used to mark the entrance to Rhode Island Avenue, NE from Maryland at 4th Street NE.



Design Concept

STREETSCAPE MASTER PLAN

These pages show the final streetscape plan for the Rhode Island Avenue, NE study area. Supplemental enlargements and visualizations of selected focal areas follow.



REFERENCE PLAN





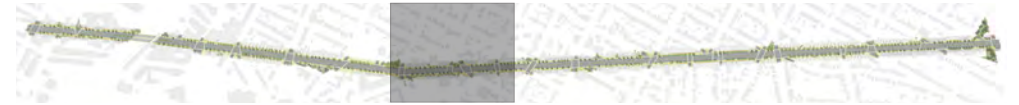
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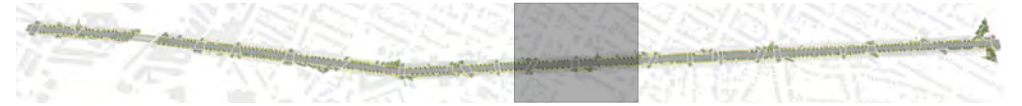
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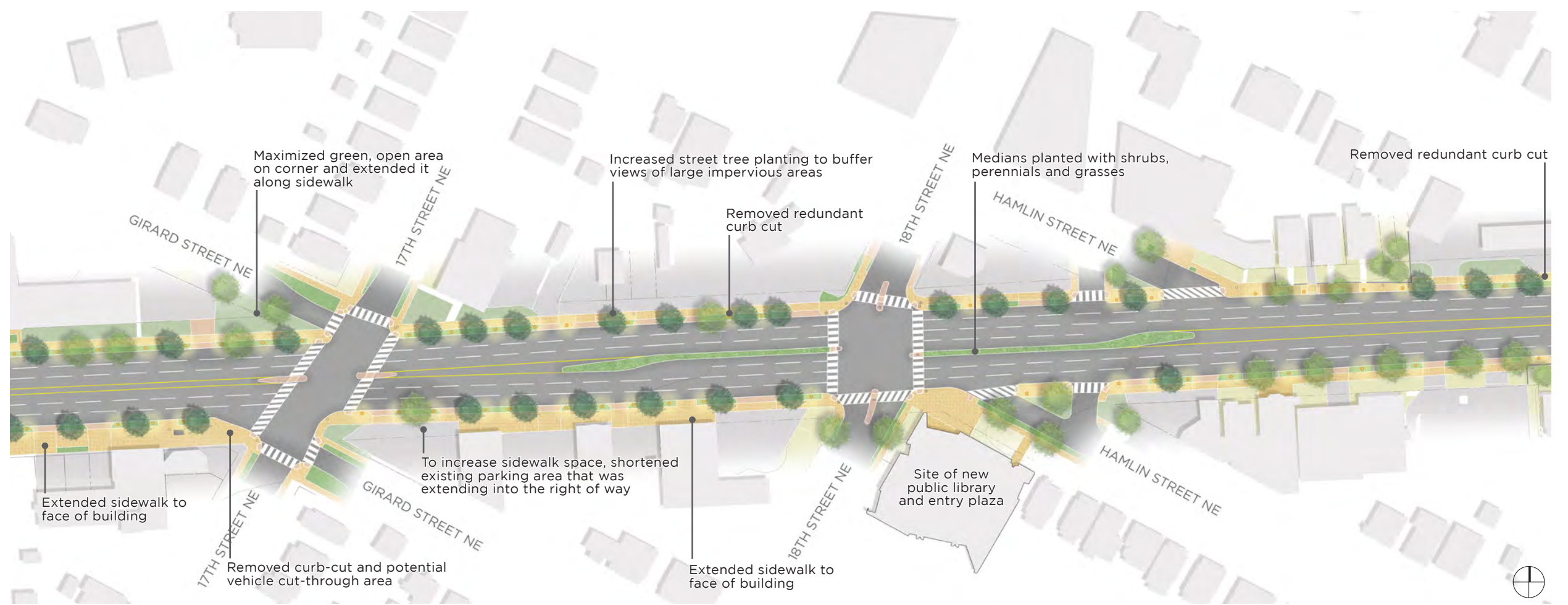
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REFERENCE PLAN



FOCUS AREA 1: METRO



TRASH RECEPTACLES



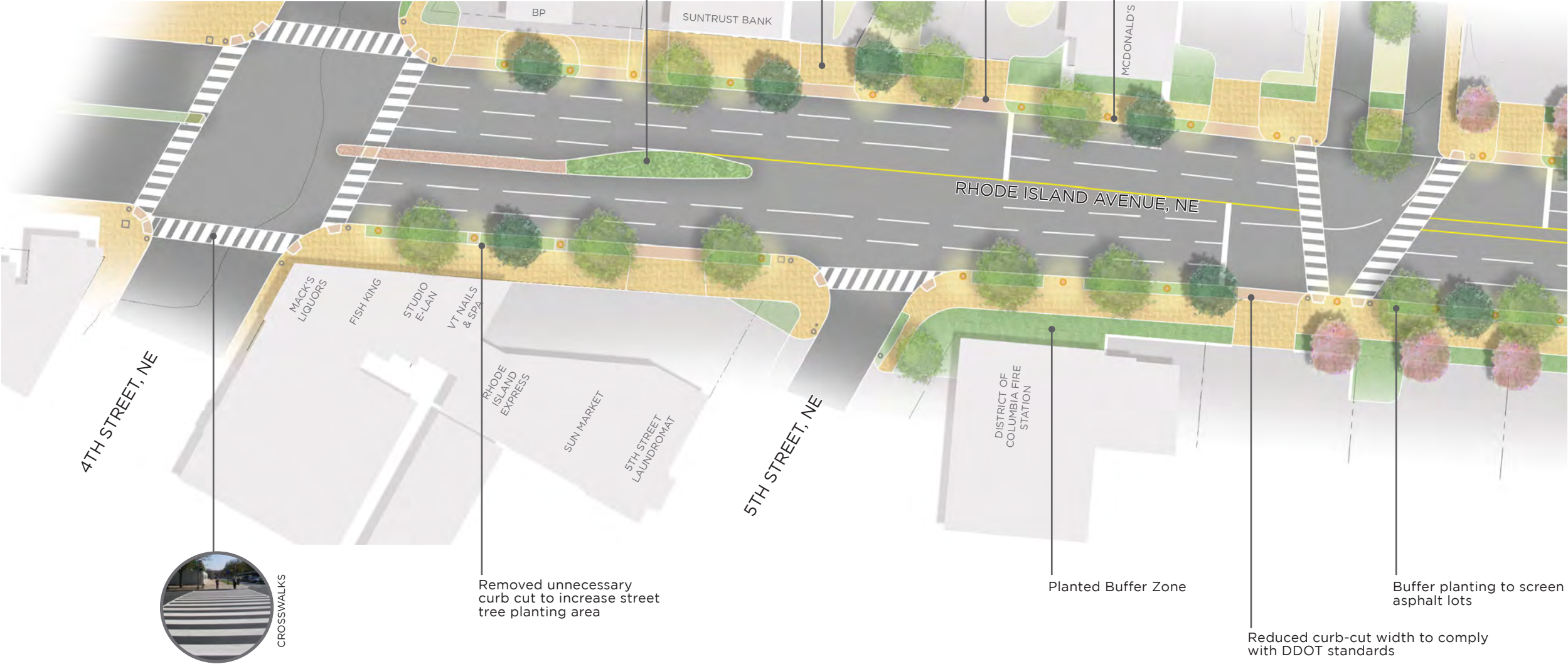
BLACK U-RACK

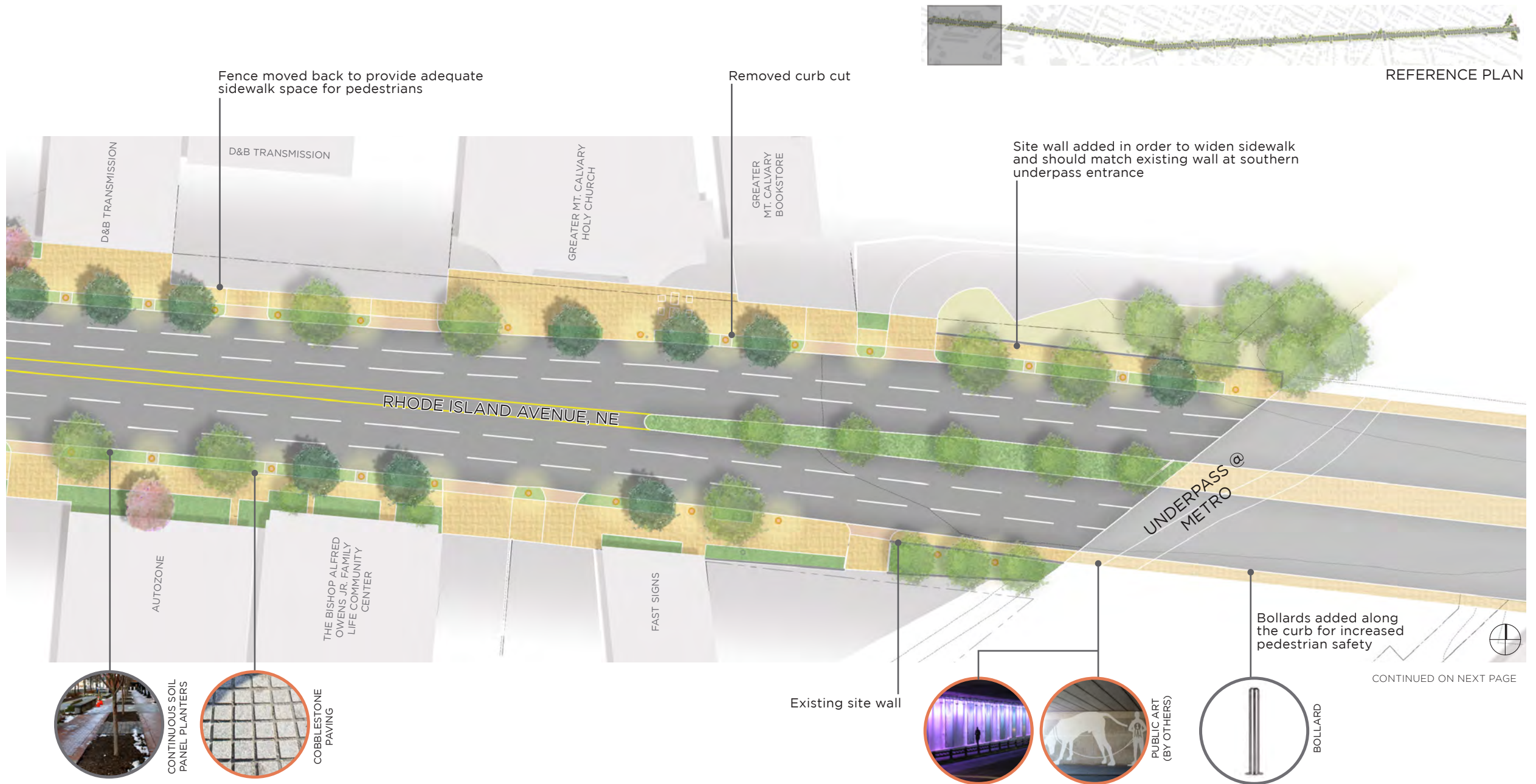


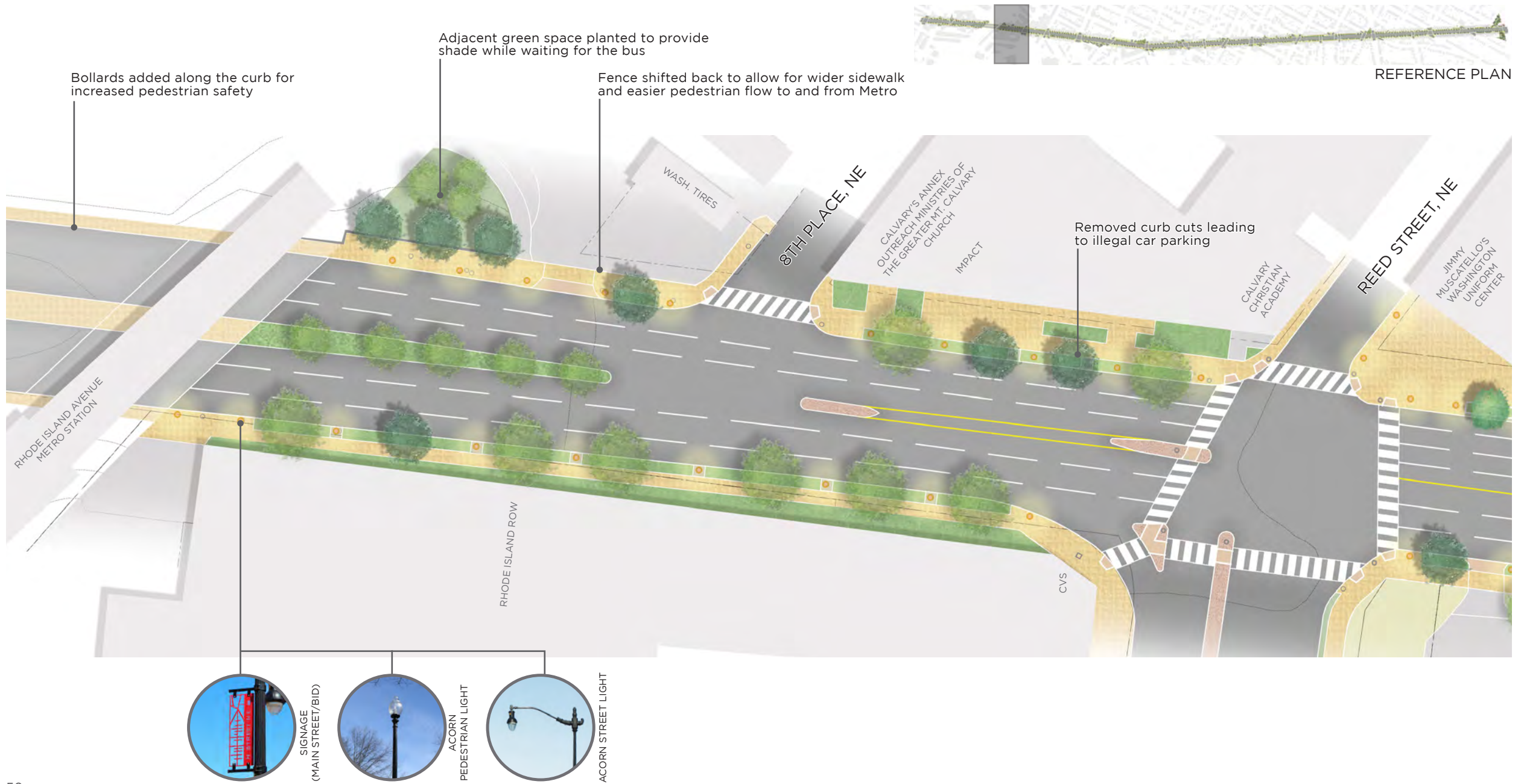
BUS SHELTER



SOCRATES BENCH







VISUALIZATION |
NORTHERN SIDEWALK LOOKING EAST

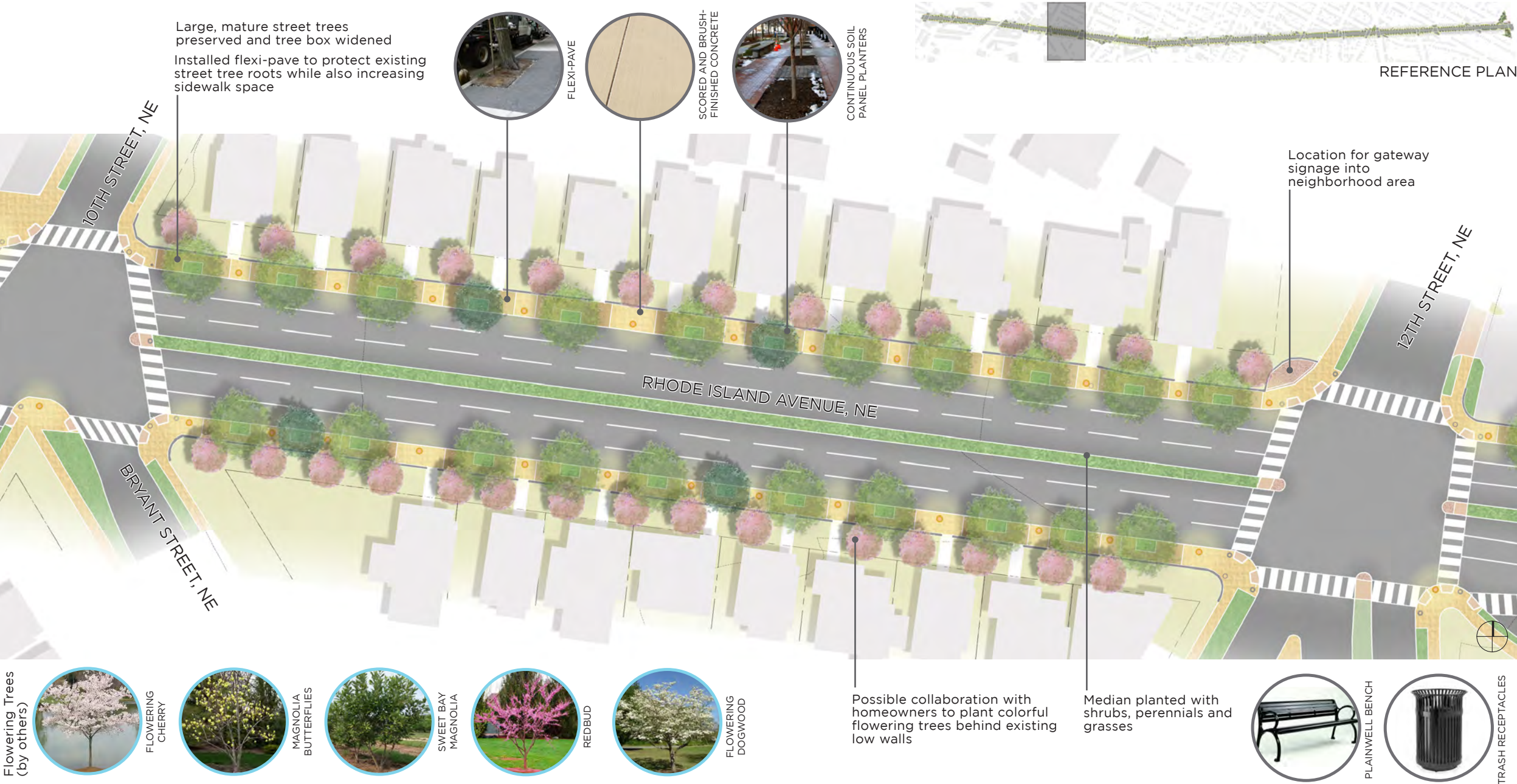


PROPOSED CONDITIONS

EXISTING CONDITIONS



FOCUS AREA 2: TRADITIONAL RESIDENTIAL



VISUALIZATION |
NORTHERN SIDEWALK LOOKING WEST

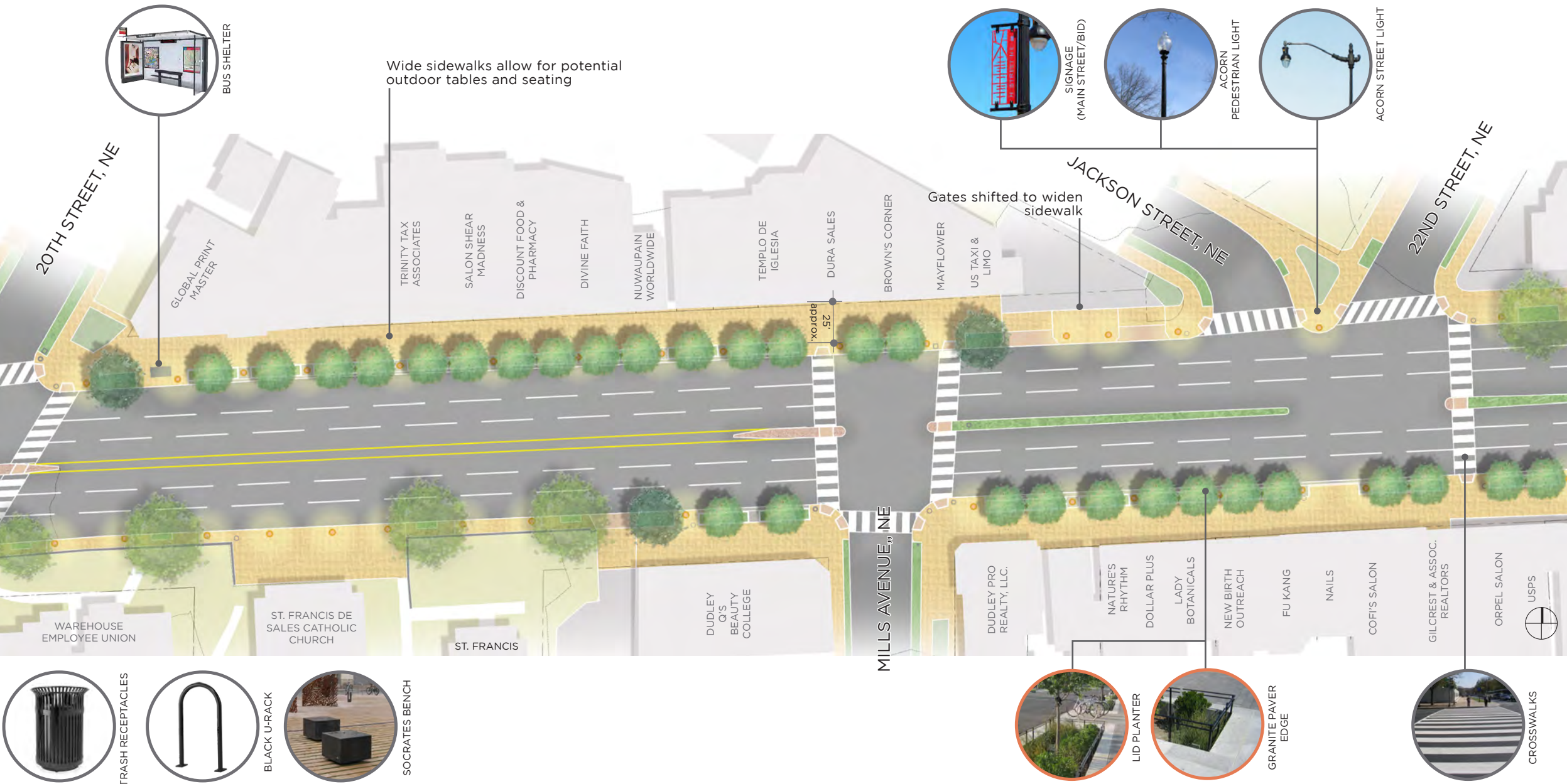


PROPOSED CONDITIONS



EXISTING CONDITIONS

FOCUS AREA 3: VILLAGE





LID PLANTERS

TREES:



GLEDITSIA TRIACANTHOS 'SHADEMASTER'



KOELREUTERIA PANICULATA



GINKGO BILOBA 'AUTUMN GOLD'



SYRINGA RETICULATE

SHRUBS:



ARONIA MELANOCARPA 'AUTUMN MAGIC'



CALLICARPA DICHOTOMA 'EARLY AMETHYST'



ILEX GLABRA 'COMPACTA'



CORNUS ALBA 'IVORY HALO'



ITEA VIRGINICA 'LITTLE HENRY'

PERENNIALS/GRASSES:



AMSONIA HUBRICHII



CAREX 'OEHME'



PANICUM VIRGATUM



POLYGONATUM ODORATUM 'VARIEGATUM'



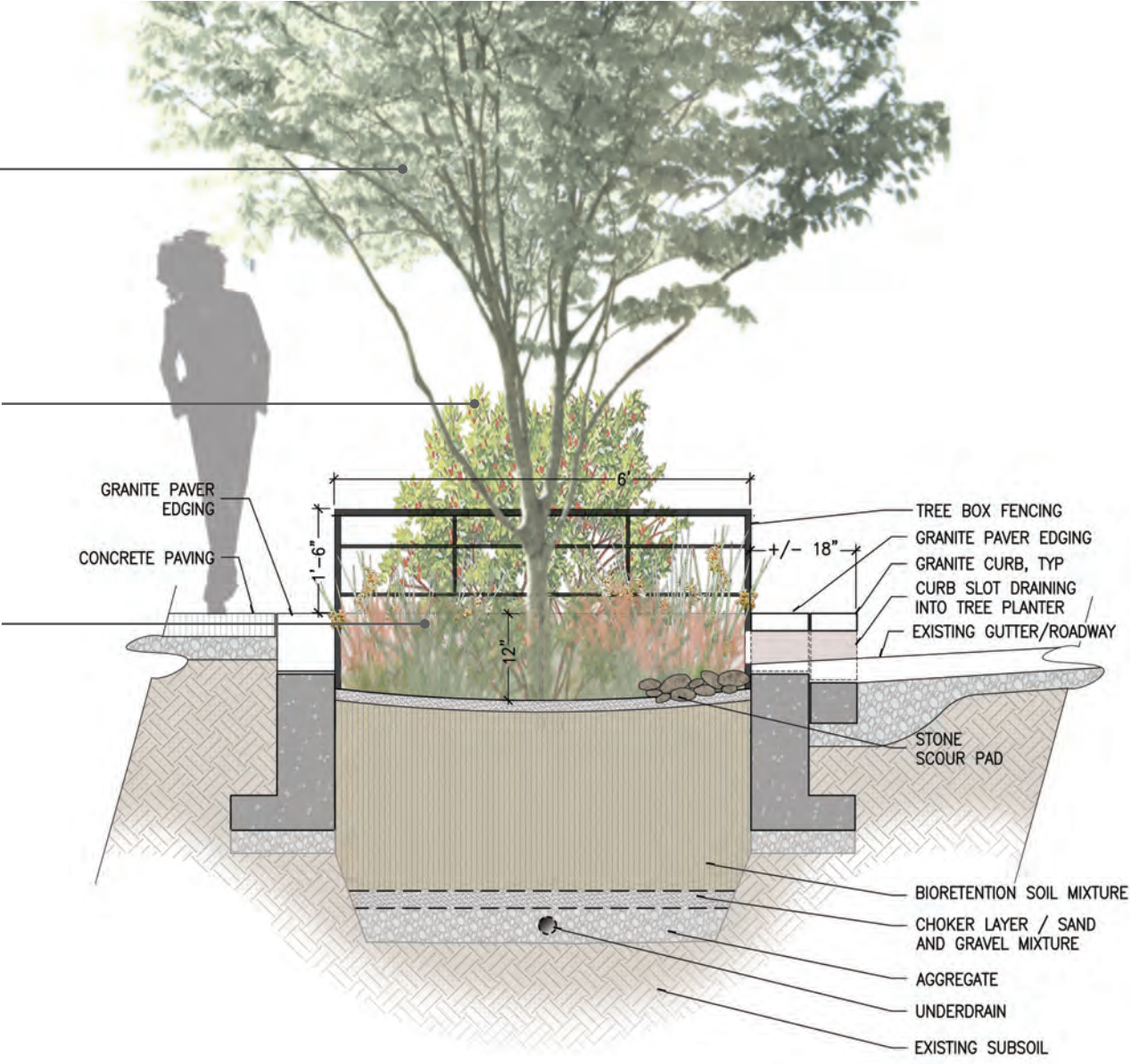
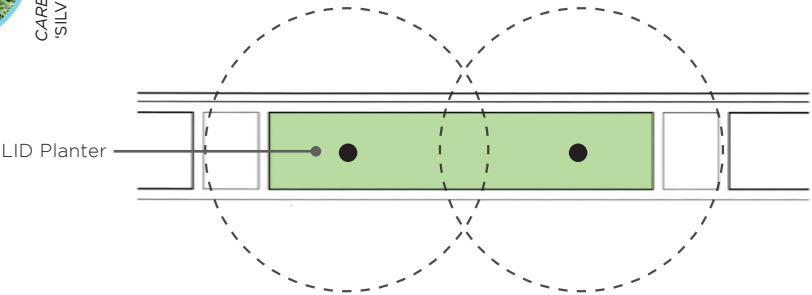
PYCNATHENUM MUTICUM



JUNCUS PATENS



CAREX MORROWII 'SILVER SCEPTRE'



VISUALIZATION |
NORTHERN SIDEWALK LOOKING WEST

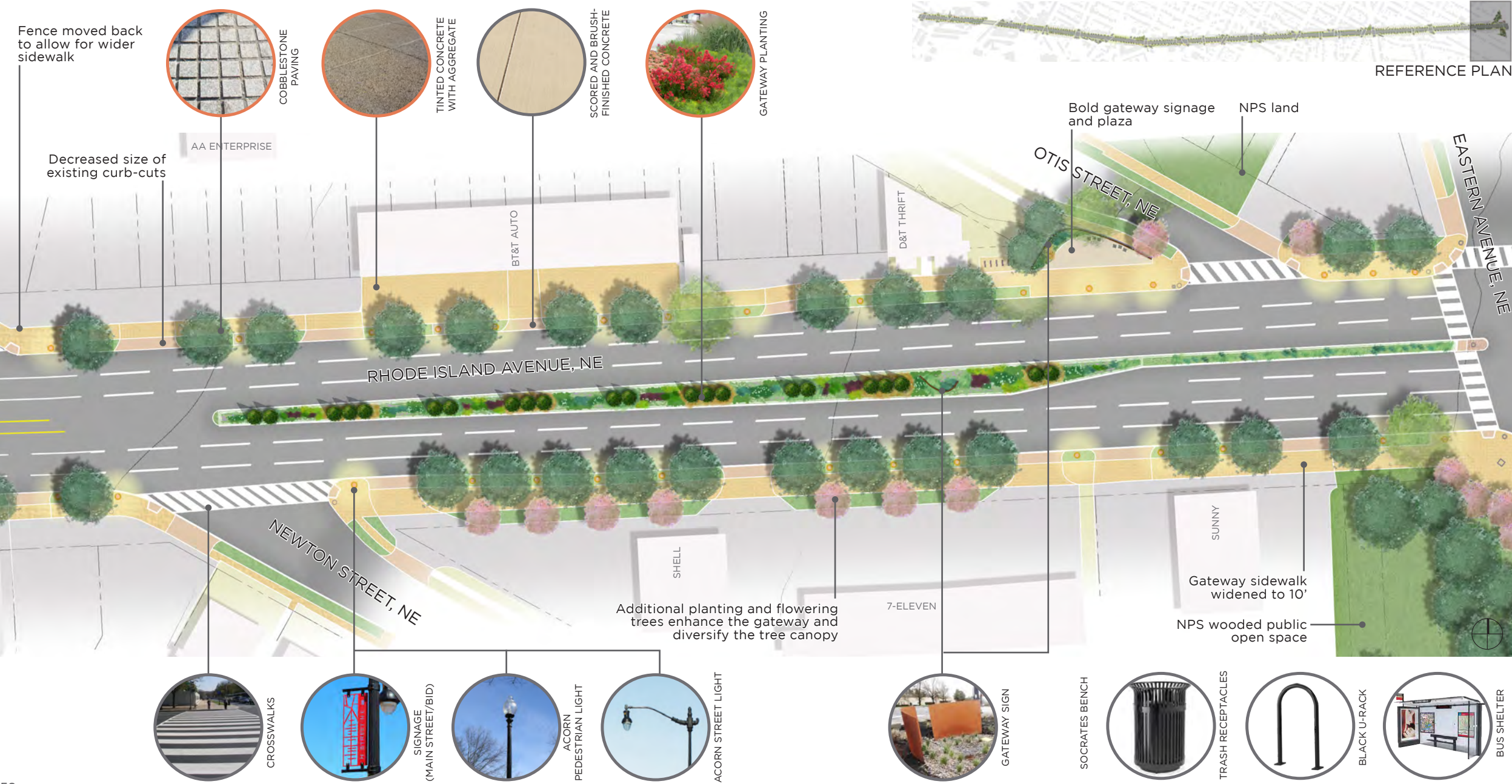


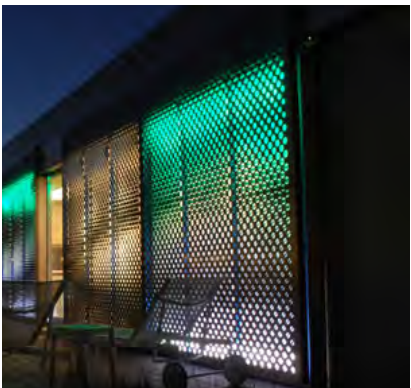
PROPOSED CONDITIONS

EXISTING CONDITIONS



FOCUS AREA 4: GATEWAY





COR-TEN STEEL

PERFORATED METAL

LIGHTING EFFECTS

GATEWAY SIGNAGE

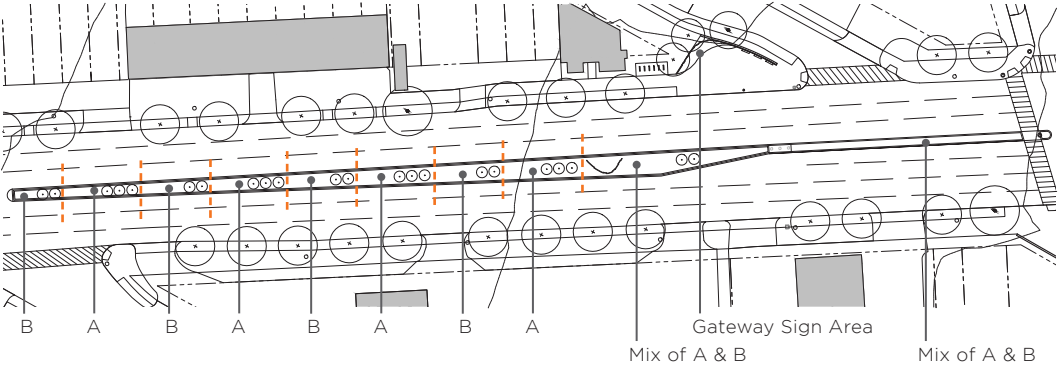
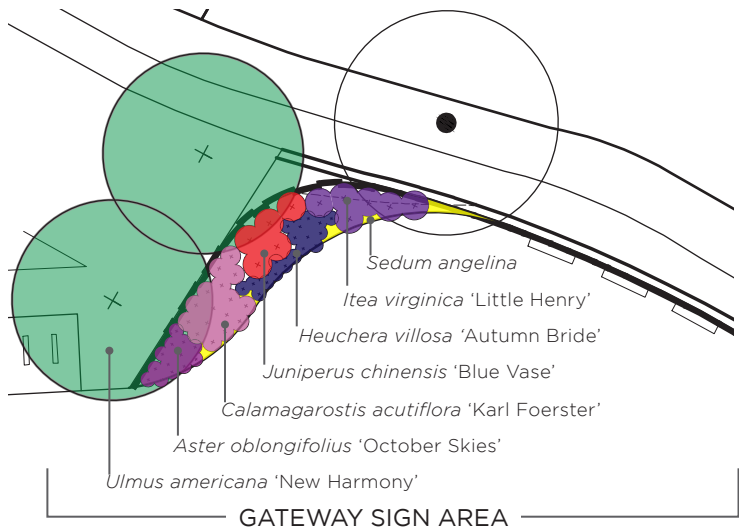
The current gateway signage welcoming people to the District is tucked off to the side of Rhode Island Avenue, NE and is barely noticeable in the surrounding busy urban landscape. Its traditional detailing and diminutive scale is out of place.

The entrance at Rhode Island Avenue provides a perfect location for something more bold. This page provides some precedent “inspiration” images for signage alternatives. The signage material could have the strong-yet-earthy color of cor-ten steel, whether it’s made from that actual material or is a screen or scrim panel that captures the look of the material. These photographs illustrate the range of treatments from thick substantial-looking wall panels to something more delicate, perhaps perforated or punched, providing a more translucent presence. The potential for punchy lighting also exists and should be considered in the final design.

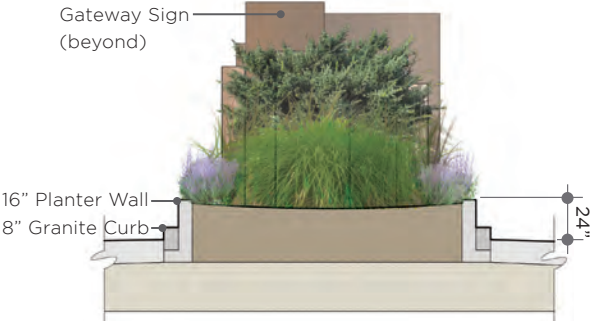
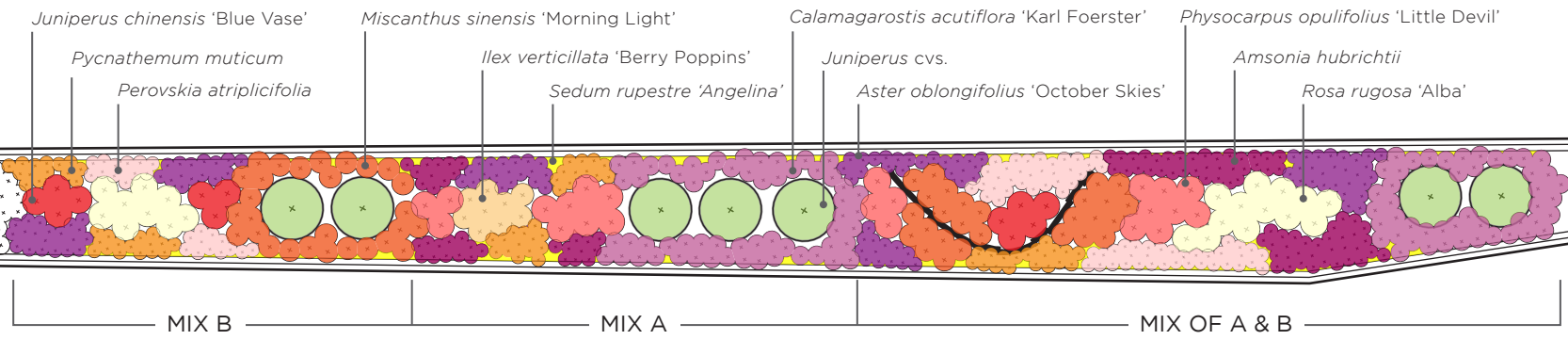
MEDIAN PLANTING

As an accompaniment to the new gateway sign, a median filled with vigorous plants provides extra pop, further emphasizing entry into the District. The planter, with 24” high walls that protect and separate it slightly from the street, should be filled with tough plants. The vegetation shown on this page was selected for its texture and movement, foliage color, and for its many seasons of interest. While these plants are drought tolerant, it is recommended that the planter be irrigated to help the plant material flourish.

The median planting plan shown here has strong repeating clumps of evergreen trees surrounded by tall grasses, moderate-sized shrubs anchoring the center of the planter, with recurring clumps of perennials at the perimeter. A brightly-colored sedum has been selected to periodically spill over the planter’s edge.



PLANTING KEY



MEDIAN PLANTER CROSS-SECTION

VISUALIZATION |
NORTHERN SIDEWALK LOOKING WEST



PROPOSED CONDITIONS

EXISTING CONDITIONS



