

APPENDIX B

La Brea Tar Pits Loops and Lenses Master Plan and Concept Design Summary Booklet

Master Plan and Concept Design
March 2023

La Brea Tar Pits

Loops and Lenses



Master Plan and Concept Design
March 2023

La Brea Tar Pits

Loops and Lenses

**Prepared for the Natural History
Museums of Los Angeles County**

La Brea Tar Pits & Museum
5801 Wilshire Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90036

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The possibilities that exist at La Brea Tar Pits have captured our collective imaginations for some time. As we look forward to the next generation of research and public service, the opportunity to reshape this very special place is both thrilling and timely. Building upon the Loops and Lenses competition entry, the La Brea Tar Pits Master Plan and Concept Design seeks to capture the immense potential of transformation with a comprehensive vision that extends the research and programmatic mission of La Brea Tar Pits through a cohesive campus in the heart of Los Angeles.

This master planning effort has benefitted tremendously from the dedicated support and active engagement of the NHMLAC Leadership and Master Planning Team, Board of Trustees, Board Steering Committee, NHMLAC Planning Working Groups, and our strong team of engineering and specialty consultants. In a new framework vision that weaves together a renovated and expanded museum with a rejuvenated park, Weiss/Manfredi is honored to share a Master Plan that will guide this remarkable and unique institution towards the future as a vibrant community asset and an internationally recognized scientific and cultural mecca.



Marion Weiss and Michael A. Manfredi

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Discovery and Inspiration

“Loops and lenses connect and reveal an open-ended journey of discovery and inspiration.”

This story begins 20 million years ago. Organisms on the ocean floor were slowly compressed by marine sediments into crude oil. Then came the glacial retreat during the Ice Age, followed by thousands of years of tectonic shifts before oil finally seeped up to the earth’s surface and turned into asphalt. It is within these sticky pools of tar that animals and plants are trapped, killed, and ultimately preserved. Over time, the site has become a rich repository of extinct and extant lifeforms on Earth, forming a record of our changing environment. Specimens excavated from the site teach us about the history of the planet and, more importantly, help us imagine our future on Earth in the current Anthropocene era.

Throughout our lives, La Brea Tar Pits has provided an enduring source of wonder and a point of orientation for our own exploration and understanding of the world. Few other parks in the world bring active discovery and raw curiosity into such

tantalizingly close reach. Few other museums in the world juxtapose real-time excavation and imaginative display. With all the potential of a phenomenal landmark in place, the site can be further transformed into a cohesive destination that serves both the public and scientists. Already an internationally recognized institution and a key component to the region’s cultural milieu, the transformed museum and site must have greater legibility, provide a richly layered visitor experience, and enhance the city with a dramatic new setting for science, education, and public life.

Building upon the Loops and Lenses competition entry, the La Brea Tar Pits Master Plan redefines Hancock Park and the museum as one unified identity. The continuous loops connect the rich but disparate existing structures, enhancing amenities for community and research. The lenses, as framed views throughout the park and museum, bring into focus the museum collection and scientific

activities at multiple scales. As flexible armatures, loops and lenses connect and reveal—they form an intimate journey of discovery and inspiration. Together they tell the story of La Brea Tar Pits: the continuum from prehistoric time to our contemporary moment.

FOUR DESIGN PRINCIPLES:

- Connect the Museum and Park to the Cultural Landscape
- Enhance Hancock Park’s Environmental Identity
- Magnify the Museum’s Visibility
- Reveal the Museum Collection



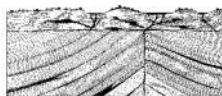
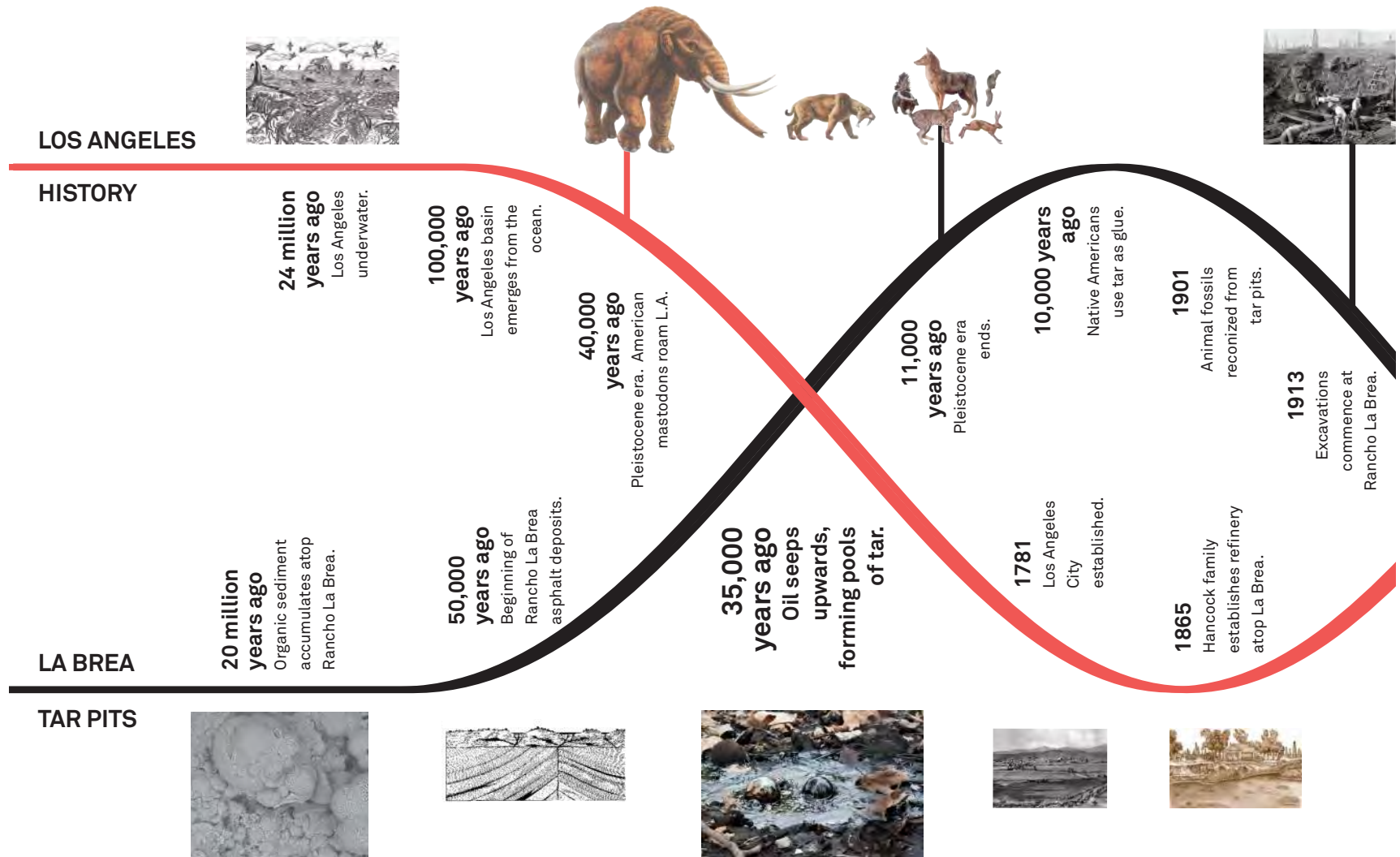


Connecting Histories

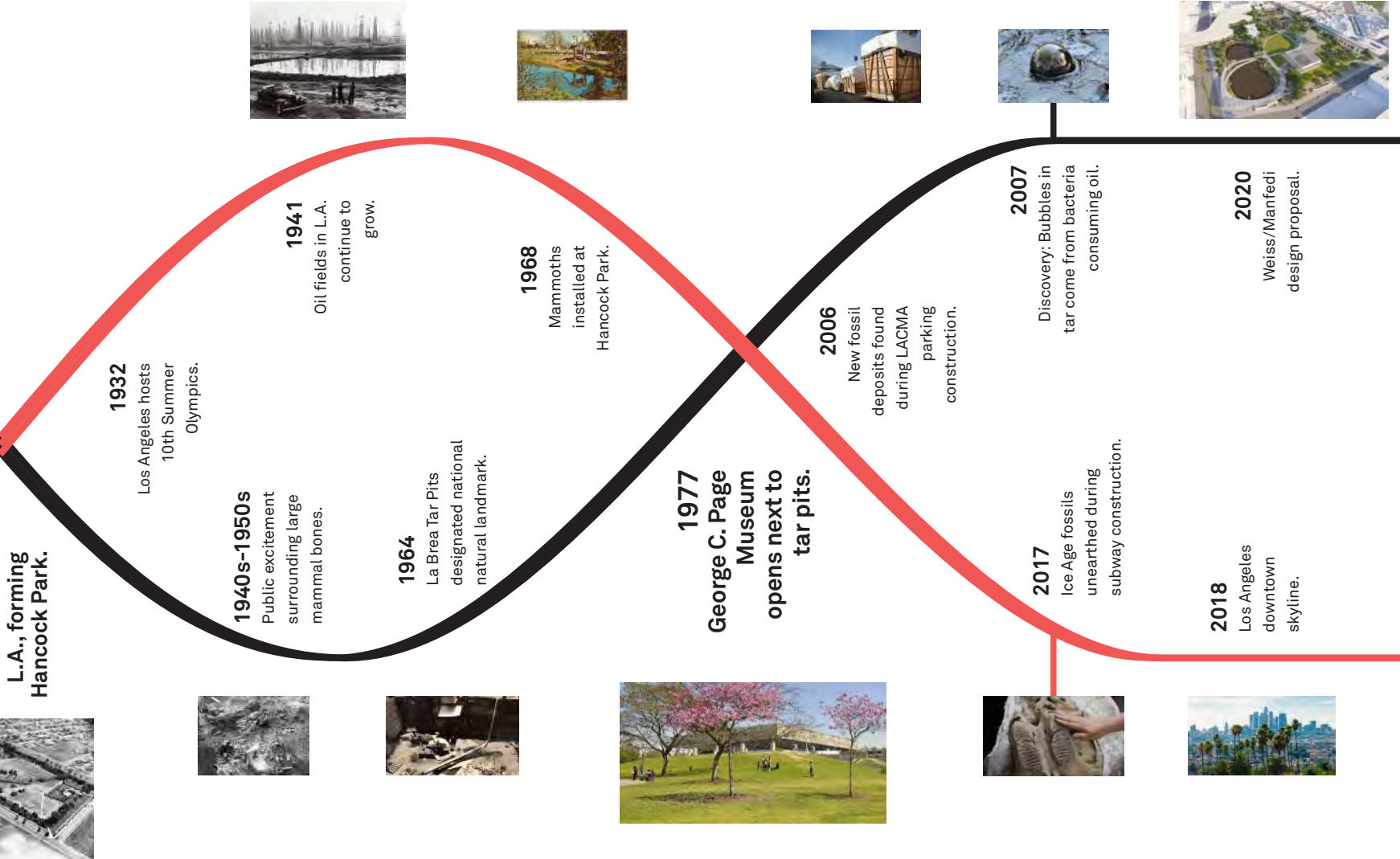
La Brea Tar Pits & L.A.

The paleontological history of the Tar Pits and the relatively short history of Los Angeles have been interconnected in continuous and paradoxical ways. Here, science is literally extracted from this

ever-changing site. The La Brea Tar Pits has preserved the flora and fauna from the Pleistocene past in a city committed to inventing the future.



How can these histories connect in new revealing ways?



Amplify the Park Identities

The creation of Hancock Park was a gift to the community over 100 years ago. Over time, the park and the museum have evolved idiosyncratically. The existing collection of pathways wander through the park yet fail to create legible connections. However,

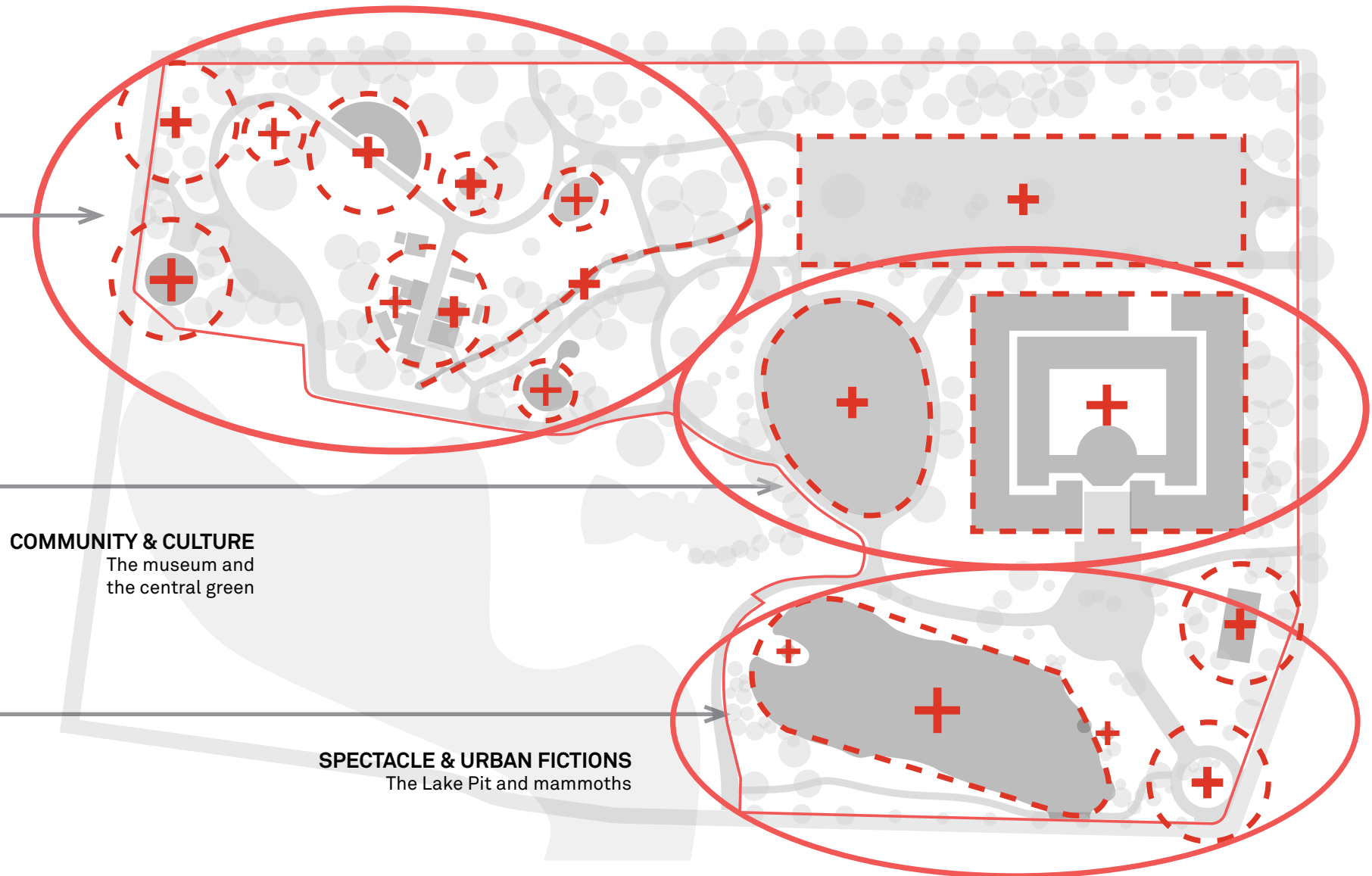
a collection of latent identities exists on site. “Excavation and discovery” characterize the northwest precinct, “community gathering and the museum” give focus to the center, and “the lake pits and park amenities” are visible from Wilshire Blvd.



RESEARCH & REVELATION

The excavation pits and the Pleistocene Garden

How can we bring into focus and connect the latent identities of each park precinct?



Existing Site The Museum and Hancock Park

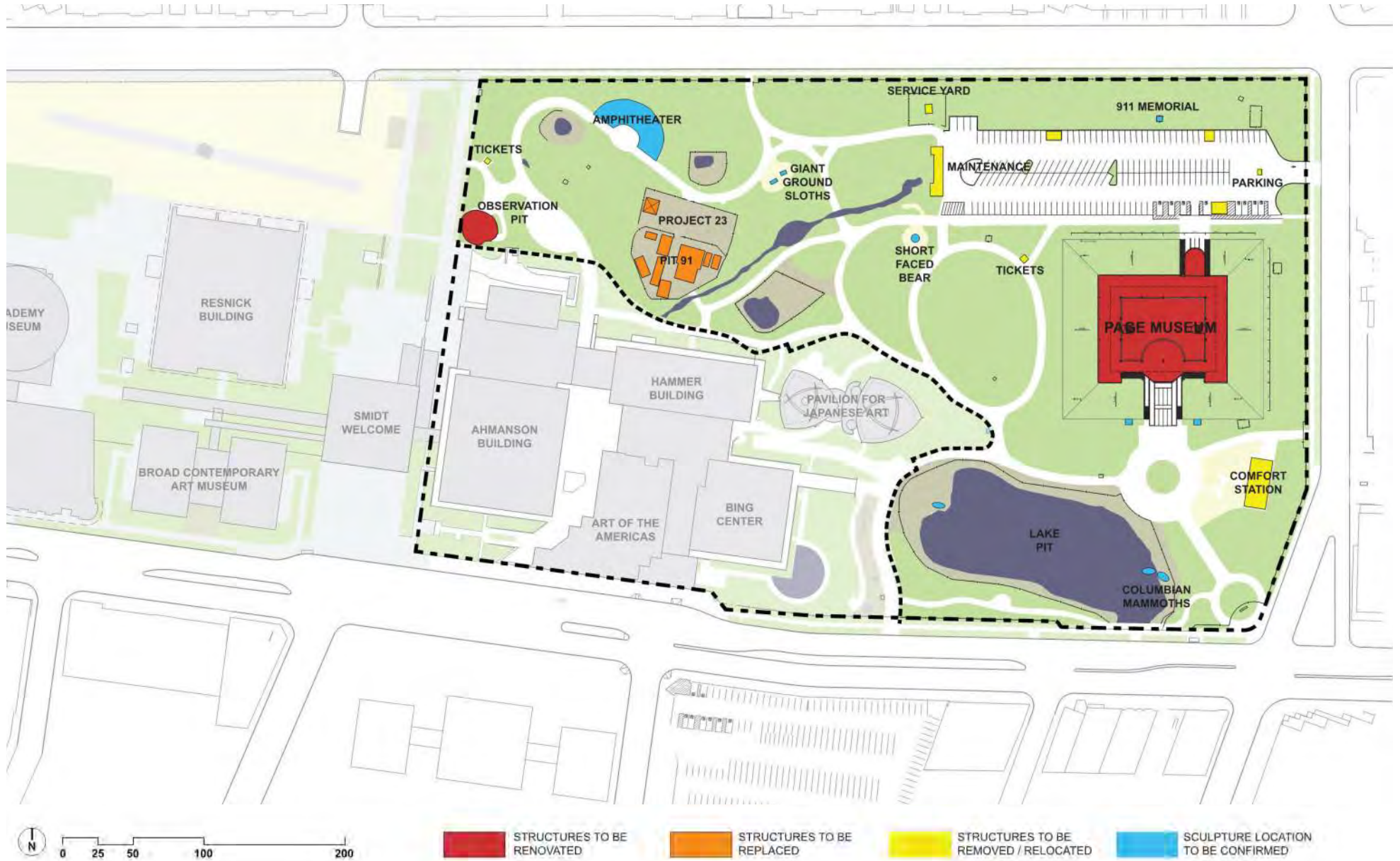
The scope extent of the Master Plan includes the existing museum and Hancock Park.



Site Analysis

Existing Site Structures

Through examination of existing documents and site visits, the structures that exist onsite have been identified.



Site Analysis

Existing Pits and Tar Seeps

Existing tar pits and their potential as future excavation sites have been studied with Research and Collections.



 TAR SEEPS

Connect the Museum and the Park to the Cultural Landscape

Loops and Lenses

Hancock Park is the only public greenspace within a 1.5-mile radius. An active excavation landscape unique among public parks, the park's tar seeps occur sporadically. Since 1926, a constellation of structures has been constructed to contain and display this phenomenon as a part of Los Angeles's history. They are distributed at various locations across the site, lacking a shared identity. Understanding the rich overlap between these elements is central to our approach, which seeks to connect and inspire.

The La Brea loops, a triple Möbius that links all the existing elements of the park, aims to redefine Hancock Park as a unified experience. This 1-kilometer pedestrian path unifies the rich yet disparate existing elements of the site: the Lake Pit, the tar pits, the lawn, pavilions, and the museum.

Within the loops are park areas with distinct themes: research and revelation, community and culture, spectacle and urban fiction. The different identities of the loops embody journeys, with programming that appeals to diverse interests—from paleontology to bird-watching, from art to kids' playgrounds. The science walk allows students and curious adults to observe excavation and research in action. Picnic and recreational areas are situated throughout the park. Various park destinations and seating areas along the loop provide more intimate spaces for reflection. At the loop's outward-most points, the path transforms into entry pavilions that provide orientation, legibility, and amenities. Greater visibility from Wilshire Boulevard and the surrounding context further binds La Brea to the community of Los Angeles.

Wilshire Gateway & Lake Pit

At the Wilshire Gateway, a new Entry Canopy defines a welcoming threshold between park and city and enables greater visibility from Wilshire Boulevard and the surrounding context. Under the canopy, a new welcome pavilion and shaded entry plaza provide orientation, spaces for gathering and queuing, and restrooms. Through conversations with the various NHMLAC Working Groups, an enhanced school drop-off was identified, enabling the choreography of student tour itineraries that are distinct from general museum visitors and other tour groups. A picnic area under the canopy and shade trees provides new programming opportunities, from outdoor education and school lunches to orientation and gathering.

The Wilshire Loop features a new garden bioswale that tells a story of sustainability and manages stormwater in an area separate but

adjacent to the Lake Pit. Supported by the engineered bioswale site, new plantings form a Pleistocene Garden and create a new, more accurate setting for the relocated iconic mammoths and mastodon sculptures. The loop pathway provides cinematic views of this important new landscape while interpretive signage allows park visitors to imagine a Pleistocene environment, extending the narrative impact of this important gateway to the La Brea Tar Pits. A pedestrian bridge increases the legibility of the Lake Pit bringing park visitors above the lake and the methane bubbles that break its surface. New interpretive opportunities reveal the former industrial heritage of the site and explain the connection between Los Angeles of today and the natural resources that have powered its growth and development.

Research & Revelation

At the 6th Street Gateway, a shaded entrance and welcome pavilion provides orientation, legibility, and amenities. As a visible point of Connection to LACMA and a point of arrival from the residential communities to the north, this new entry will welcome visitors to a shaded park space where community park and recreational needs are balanced with the research activities of La Brea. Under the canopy of shade trees, visitors will find diverse destinations including play areas, picnic areas, seating and interpretation zones at the protected tar seeps, the gentle topography and bioswales along Oil Creek, and the revitalized destinations of the Dorothy Brown Amphitheater, the Observation Pit, and Pit 91. Along the south edge of the loop path, connections will allow access to the LACMA plaza and links to other Hancock park programs and transportation connections.

As the precinct most rich with fossils and active tar seeps, the planning approach to the westernmost Research Precinct involved extensive conversations with Research and Collections. As National Natural Landmarks it is important to preserve the active tar seeps which continue to trap leaves, insects, pollen, and other materials to log an ongoing record of La Brea. As fossil-rich zones, the pits must be protected to allow future excavation and research. As dynamic dig sites, they must continue to be safe and functional facilities that demonstrate the impact of ongoing research to diverse park visitors. Finally, as historic settings, Pit 91 and the Observation Pit must continue to reveal the legacy of the site while adapting to new uses and engaging park programming.

Much of the existing research facility will change, with the activities of excavation and research reorganized

to realize opportunities to enhance the public park experience and more effectively supporting the excavation and research process. A key factor in this reorganization involves relocating the storage and excavation of Project 23 materials to space within and adjacent to the expanded museum, while Pit 91 continues to be a key research and interpretation destination in the park.

Central Green

As a site for community and culture, the Central Green provides a destination community lawn that amplifies the rich activities and events that take place in Hancock Park. At the heart of Hancock Park, the Central Green is a point of connection between the other two loops of La Brea Tar Pits, the museum, LACMA, and the Japanese Pavilion. The Central Green is active throughout the day. Early in the morning, as the park opens, the Central Green is a setting for community activities and

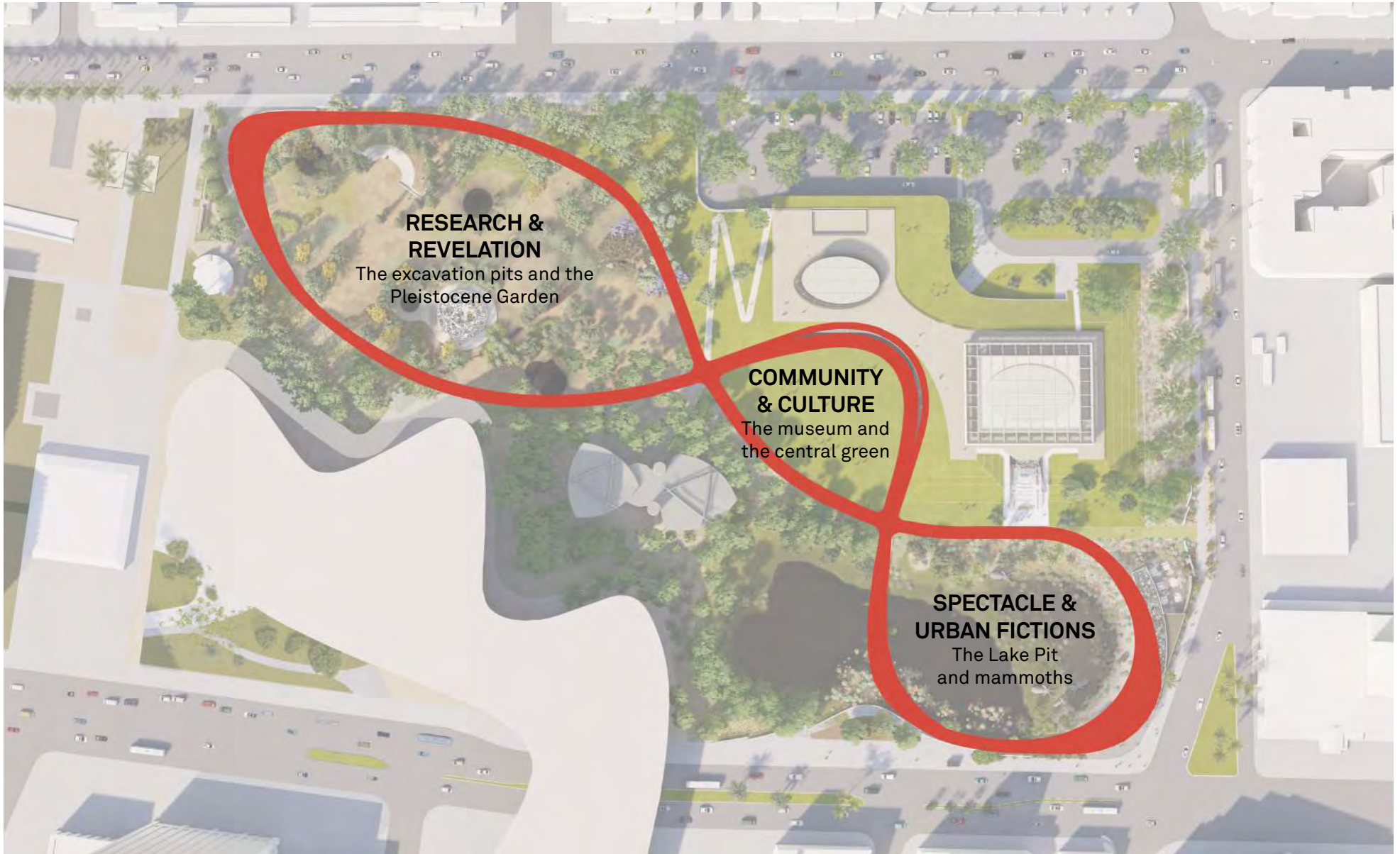
health and wellness programs. As the day progresses, the lawn comes alive with visiting school children, museum tour groups, and community members. Provisions for improved infrastructure and a drivable path allow increased event opportunities in the park and additional dining opportunities on summer weekends and holidays when the museum visitation increases. In the evening, the green is transformed for events and outdoor film, with the illuminated museum framing a place of connection and wonder.



Site Strategy

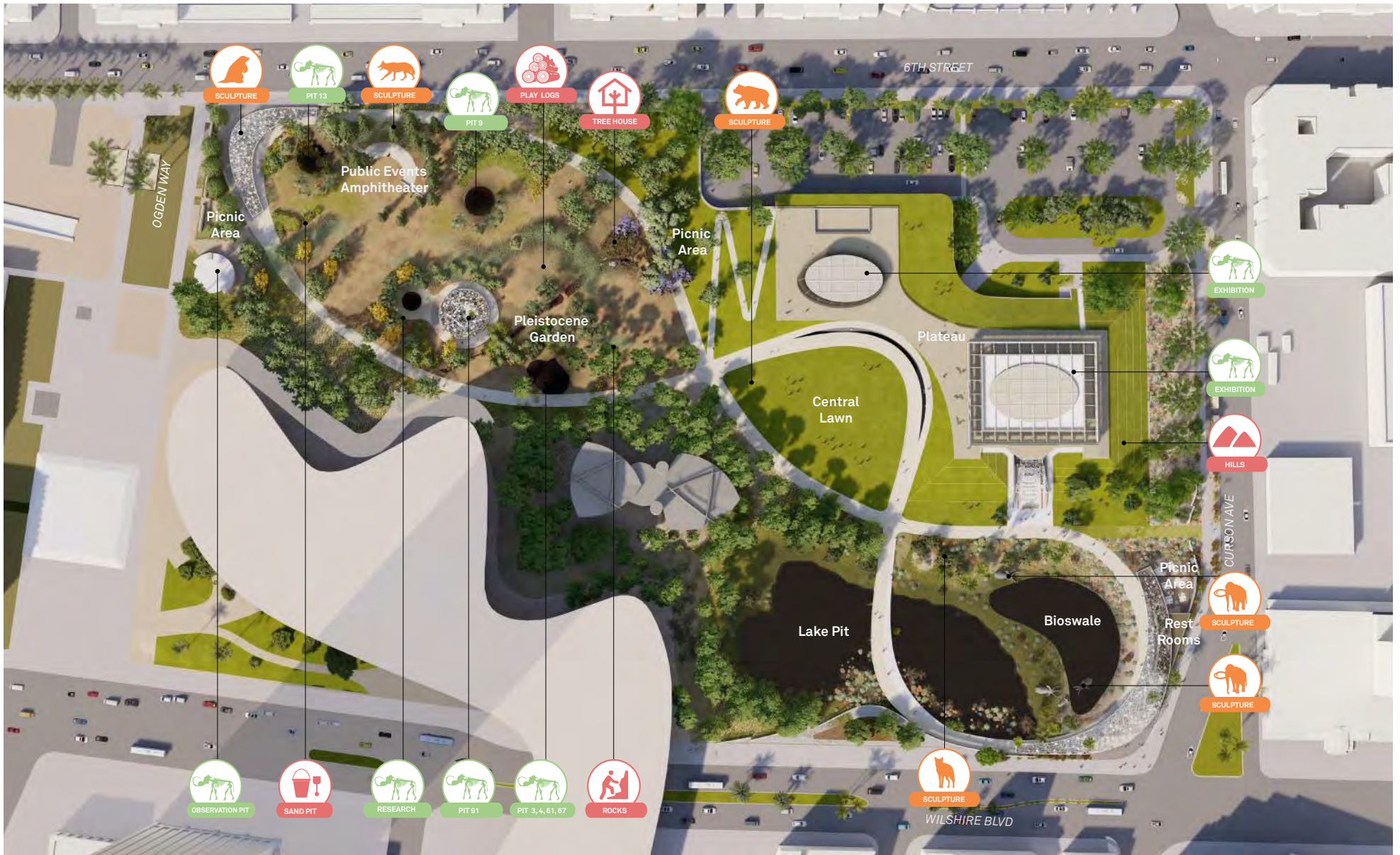
Loops & Lenses

The La Brea Loops, a 1-kilometer triple Möbius path, link all existing elements of the park and provide a connected identity.



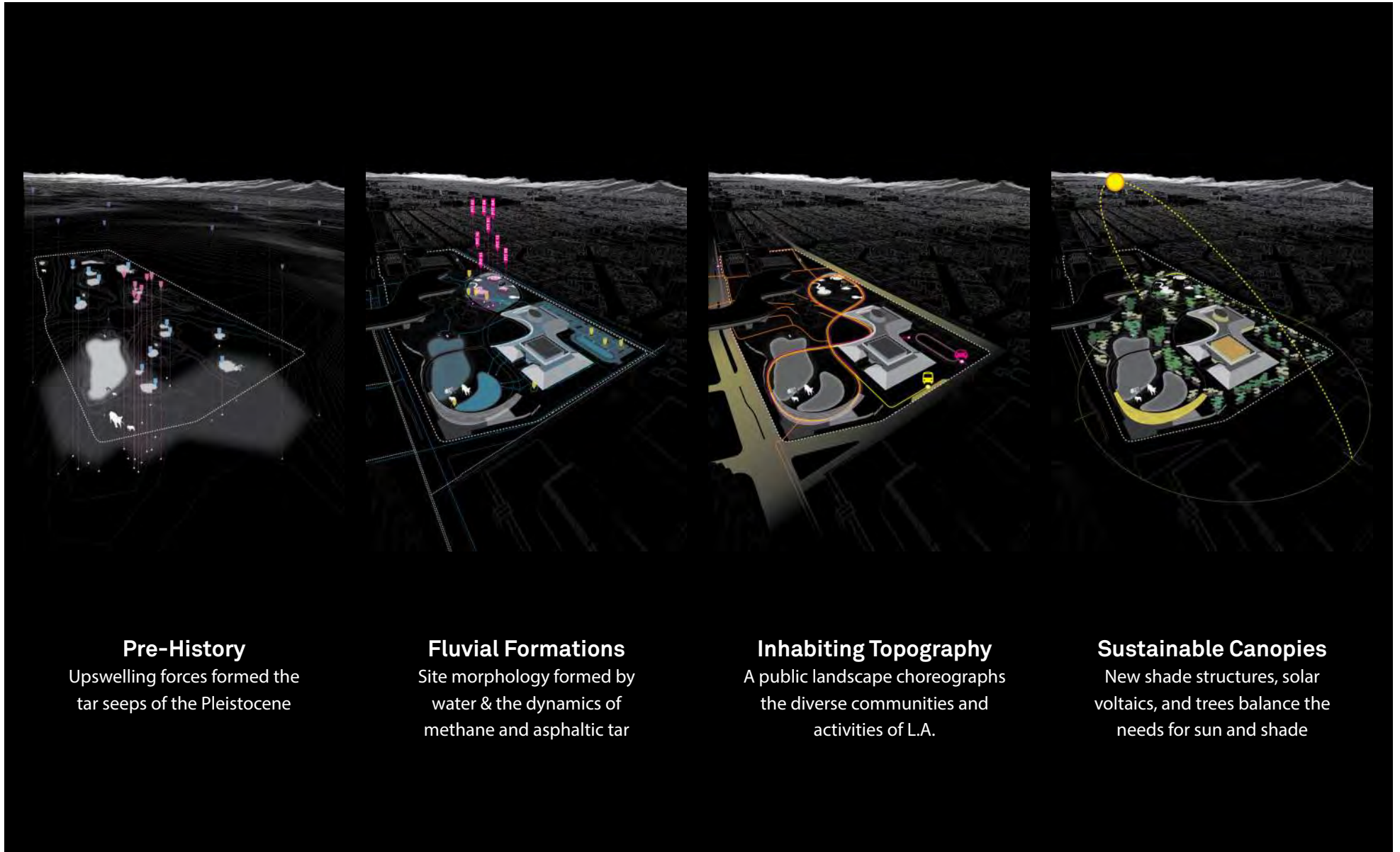
Site Plan

A unified park will express the vitality and critical relevance of La Brea Tar Pits' mission and create a dynamic, actively programmed site.



A Dynamic Site

A richly layered site, the reimagined park and museum will create a dynamic setting for science, education, ecology, and public engagement.



Pre-History

Upswelling forces formed the tar seeps of the Pleistocene

Fluvial Formations

Site morphology formed by water & the dynamics of methane and asphaltic tar

Inhabiting Topography

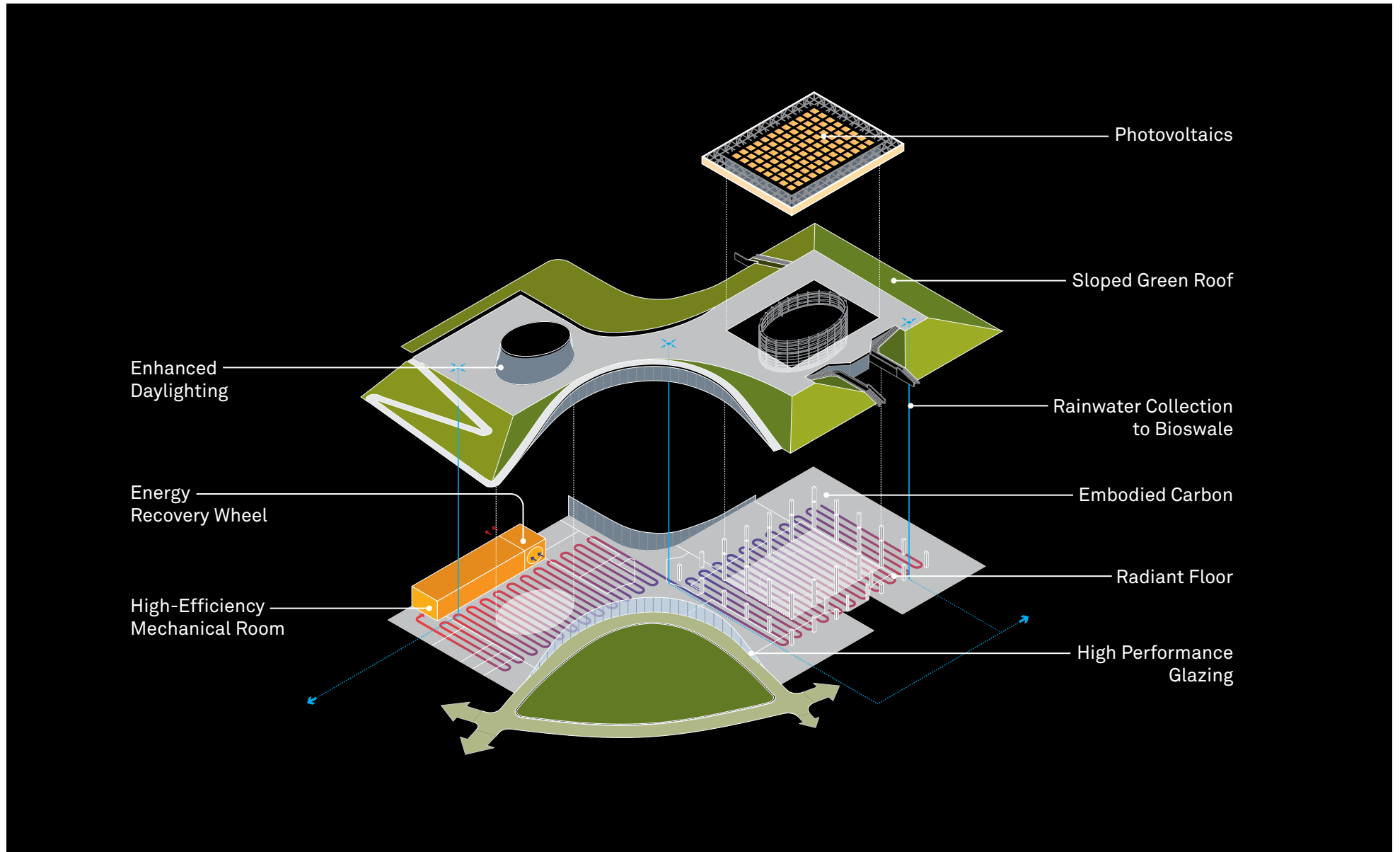
A public landscape choreographs the diverse communities and activities of L.A.

Sustainable Canopies

New shade structures, solar voltaics, and trees balance the needs for sun and shade

Sustainability Goals

The renovated and enhanced museum will recognize the ambitious goals outlined in L.A. County's "Our County Plan."



Enhance Hancock Park's Environmental Identity

The park areas encircled by the loops are given three distinguishing themes: research and revelation, community and culture, and spectacle and urban fiction. Each with its distinct identity, they serve diverse interests and usage. They are designed to maximize space for community, creating opportunities for the public to engage with the site's natural history.

Within the research loop, reframed and protected pit sites and a new outdoor classroom allow people to better witness active excavation and engage in programs and education under a canopy. The existing lawn is expanded for public recreation, with additional picnic areas around the loop. Various play areas throughout the park provide a space for children to learn about the site's geology through play and tactile experience.

Within the loops are distinct landscape zones, representing different geologic epochs of the site's history and aiming to refine the identity of the park to better tell La Brea's story. The approach to landscape takes advantage of the park's topography and opportunities to manage stormwater and envision a programmatically rich ecosystem that reflects the botanical diversity La Brea has witnessed across several epochs. Extending the story of the botanical fossil record of the museum, the park provides an opportunity to understand plant communities of the past, the impacts of climate change, and the urgency for learning to adapt to the climate of the future. The new park landscape extends from Wilshire Boulevard through the site, forging connections between city and museum, and past, present, and future.

PUBLIC AMENITIES

- Amenity pavilions
- Central lawn
- Café
- Rooftop Terrace
- Expanded Lake Pit
- Bioswales
- Outdoor classrooms
- Picnic areas
- Public art
- Play areas
- Rolling hills
- Observation Pit

Hancock Park Planting Concept

The planting concept for Hancock Park is comprised of three distinct zones encircled by the looping path system. Each loop has its own usage and distinguishing theme—Pleistocene, Holocene, and Anthropocene—representing different geologic epochs in the site’s history. A woodland zone along the park’s peripheral edges (northern, southern, eastern, and western) provides shade to the picnic areas and the parking lot to the north. These landscape zones are designed to maximize space for community, creating opportunities for the public to engage with the site’s natural history and create a distinctive identity for the park to help tell La Brea’s story. The planting scheme addresses the realities of Los Angeles’s current and projected climate and aims to ease water consumption, ensure appropriate maintenance, promote

sustainable growth, and provide a model for resilient site planning in the area.

The Southeastern Loop

The southeastern loop near the corner of Wilshire Boulevard and Curson Avenue encompasses the area surrounding the Lake Pit. The Columbian Mammoth sculptures located in the Lake Pit are an iconic element of Hancock Park and a key part of the story, however the current installation lacks historical accuracy. The concept plan envisions this loop as a Pleistocene environment reminiscent of the climate these animals inhabited. This zone will incorporate a biofiltration area to help manage stormwater and will be planted with low ground cover plant types that would have attracted large herbivores. The proposed ephemeral wetland is a more accurate portrayal of the Pleistocene environment that

existed around the tar seeps when the mammoths like those represented would have been trapped. High biodiversity and era-accurate planting will serve an educational narrative in this highly visible entry to the park.

The Western Loop

The western Loop is envisioned as a Holocene landscape consisting of plantings from a warmer era after the ice age. This zone contains historic excavation pits and active research zones, allowing visitors to witness ongoing excavations. Areas of climate-appropriate native plantings ease water consumption, ensure appropriate maintenance, and promote sustainable growth. A forested woodland consisting of Torrey Pine and Coast Live Oak provides shade to the tar pits landscape. These trees have the character and scale to achieve a high-impact landscape to

enhance the identity and experience surrounding the excavations, seeps, and recreational areas. The western loop also contains Oil Creek which will be developed into a biofiltration zone for stormwater management and can support Sequoia and Monterey Pine trees in wetter pockets.

The Central Loop

The central loop is an Anthropocene landscape, engineered to support community engagement. Here a large common lawn adjacent to the museum provides a setting for recreation, events, and public gathering. The lawn and sloped green roof of the museum requires a higher degree of irrigation than the zones at the southeast and west.

Peripheral Edges of the Park

A woodland forest occupies the park's

edges to provide shade to the picnic area on Curson Avenue and the parking lot north of the museum, and to provide a visual buffer from the LACMA expansion to the west and south. The palette of Torrey Pine and Coastal Live Oak are extended and support the development of a unified canopy across the site. A biofiltration area is located within the vehicular drop-off loop to manage stormwater flows from the parking lot.

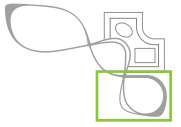
Existing Conditions and Enhancements

Existing trees and plantings throughout the park are scattered and achieve little sense of character or unity. The enhanced character of the park will require new plantings as well as existing trees and plantings that complement the concept design. Species such as the Western Sycamore, California Buckeye, and Redwood should be preserved. Mexican fan palms, agaves, and yuccas

will be reduced. The museum expansion and parking lot will require the removal of existing trees on the northern side of the site. Due to the cost and difficulty, it is not recommended to move the existing trees. Replanting the site with new trees is likely to be less costly and new smaller specimen trees will provide value and survive better over time. Current soils on site appear to be suitable for the proposed planting palette and a large renovation of soils is not anticipated, however this will require further evaluation as the project proceeds.

Wilshire Gateway & Lake Pit

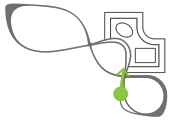
A new Pleistocene garden bioswale and entry canopy increases the legibility of the Lake Pit and enables greater visibility from Wilshire Blvd and the surrounding context.



1. Lake Pit
2. Pleistocene Garden Bioswale
3. Wilshire Gateway
4. Restrooms
5. Picnic Area
6. School Drop-Off
7. Education Entrance

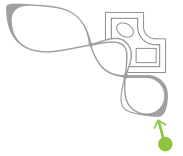
Bridge Across Lake Pit

A pedestrian path brings people above the Lake Pit, a dynamic site for urban fiction and imagination.



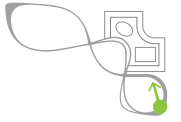
Arrival Experience

The entry canopy at Wilshire Blvd is the gateway between city and park, providing orientation, legibility, and shade.



Entry Plaza

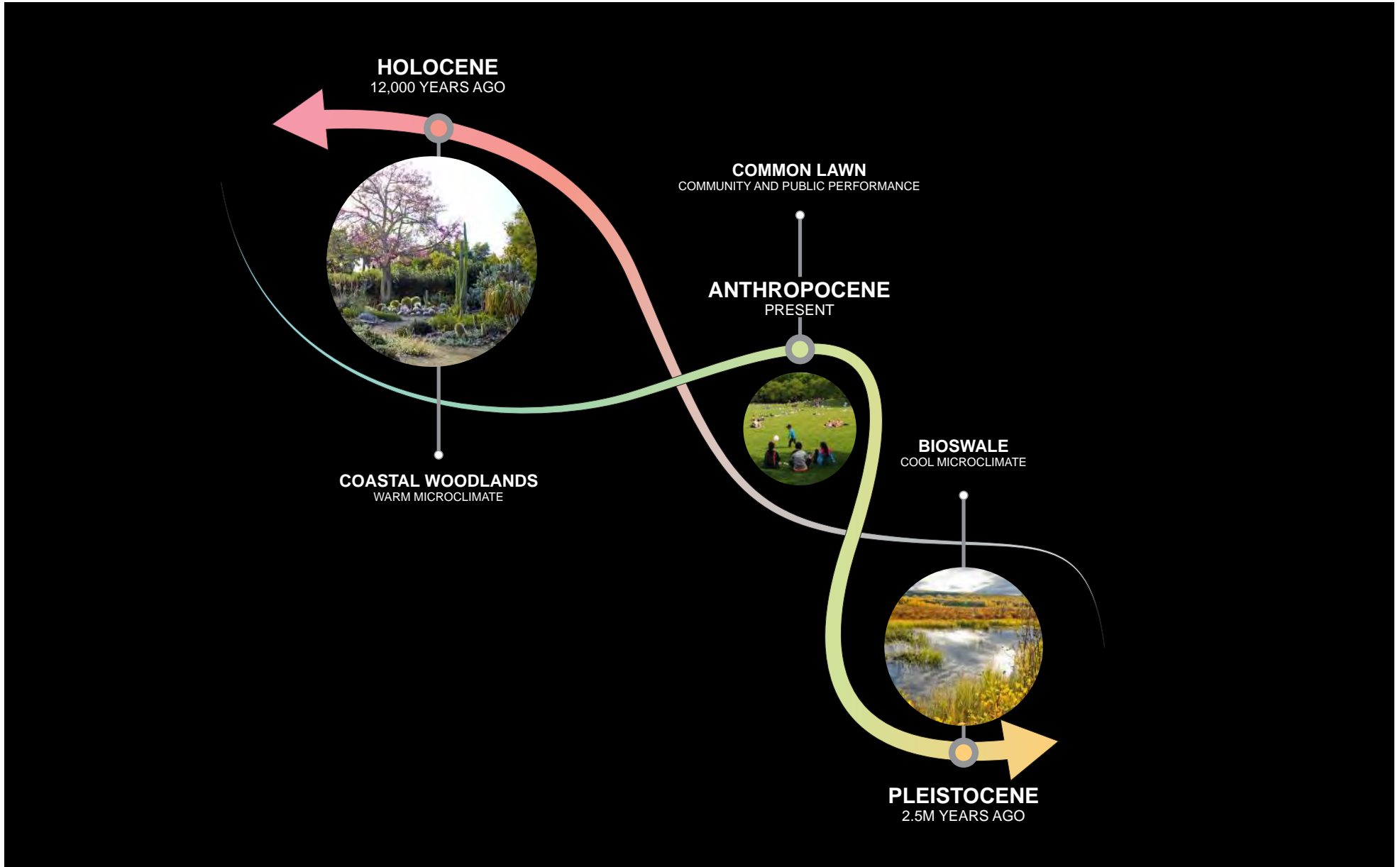
A new shaded entry plaza at Wilshire Blvd provides framed views with a Pleistocene garden bioswale, sculptures, and interpretive signage.



Landscape Zones

Geologic Epochs

The planting concept for Hancock Park is comprised of three distinct zones, each with its own distinguishing theme representing different geologic epochs.



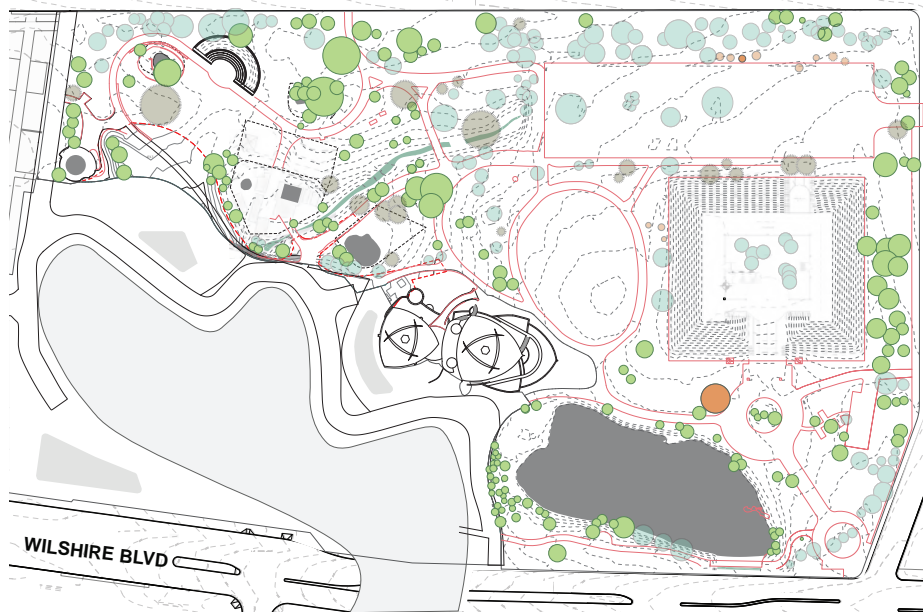
Sustainable Site Strategies

Understanding L.A.'s current and projected climate, the planting strategy aims to ease water consumption, ensure appropriate maintenance, and promote sustainable growth.



Existing, New & Relocated Trees

The planting scheme seeks opportunities to preserve existing trees and to strategically plant new ones.



Existing Trees

- TO REMAIN
- TO BE REMOVED/RELOCATED
- DISEASED TO BE REMOVED
- MEMORIAL TREES TO REMAIN
- MEMORIAL TREES TO BE RELOCATED/REMOVED

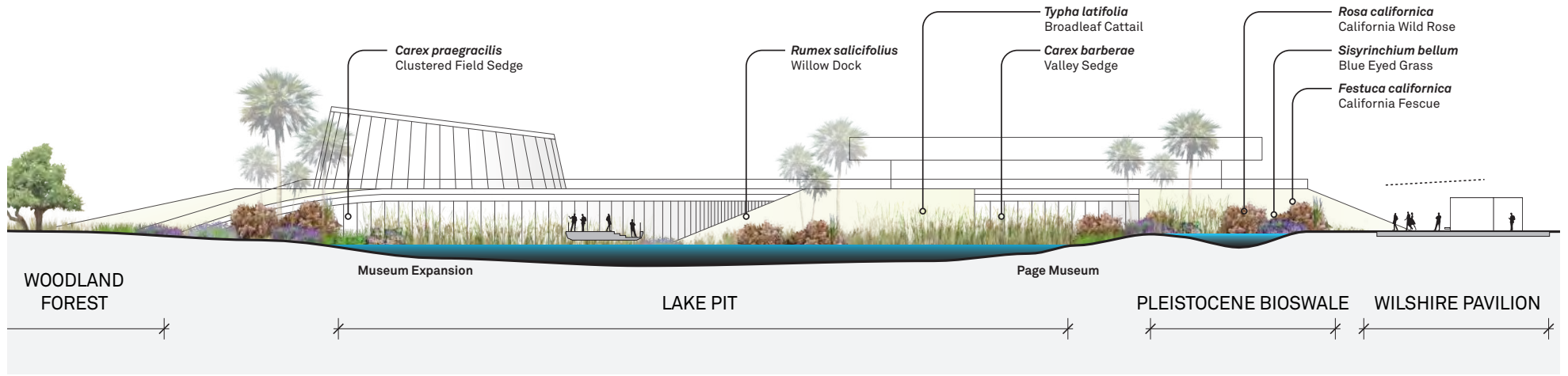


Potential New Trees

- *Plans are conceptual and subject to change
- TO REMAIN
 - NEW OR RELOCATED TREES

Lake Pit Entry Garden & Pleistocene Bioswale

A new Pleistocene garden bioswale supports sustainable stormwater management and makes the museum's mission visible in the park.



Herbaceous Species:



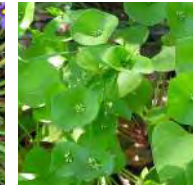
Anemopsis californica
Yerba Mansa



Hemizonia fasciculata
Clustered Tarweed



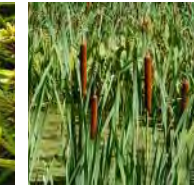
Sisyrinchium bellum
Blue Eyed Grass



Claytonia perfoliata
Miner's Lettuce



Cyperus eragrostis
Tall Cuperus



Typha latifolia
Broadleaf Cattail



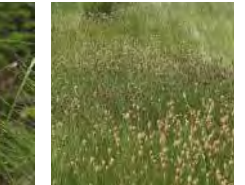
Rumex salicifolius
Willow Dock



Festuca californica
California Fescue



Carex barberae
Valley Sedge



Carex praegracilis
Clustered Field Sedge

Woody Species:



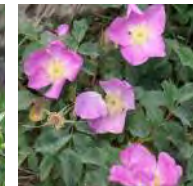
Baccharis salicifolius
Seep Willow



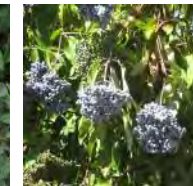
Salix exigua
Narrowleaf Willow



Salix goodingii
Goodding's Willow



Rosa californica
California Wild Rose



Sambucus caerulea
Blue Elderberry



Pluchea sericea
Arrowweed



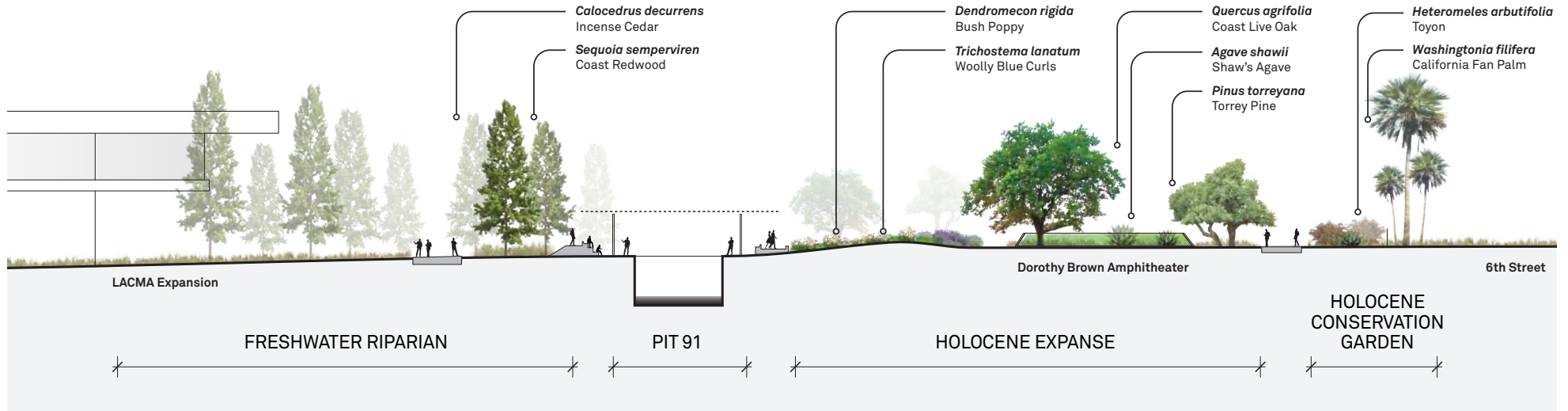
Salix lasiolepis
Arroyo Willow



Cornus stolonifera
Creek Dogwood

Late Pleistocene- Holocene Expanses

Climate-appropriate native plantings enhance the identity and experience around the tar seeps and throughout the surrounding park.



Trees:



Quercus agrifolia
Coast Live Oak



Pinus torreyana
Torrey Pine



Washingtonia filifera
California Fan Palm



Arctostaphylos glandulosa
Eastwood Manzanita



Bigberry Manzanita
Arctostaphylos glauca



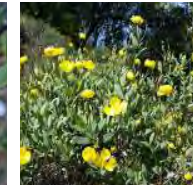
Artemisia californica
California Sagebrush



Baccharis pilularis
Coyote Brush



Comarostaphylis diversifolia
Summer Holly



Dendromecon rigida
Bush Poppy



Eriogonum arborescens
Santa Cruz Island
Buckwheat

Shrubs:



Heteromeles arbutifolia
Toyon



Salvia apiana
White Sage



Frangula californica
California Coffeeberry



Prunus ilicifolia
Hollyleaf Cherry



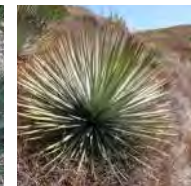
Salvia mellifera
Black Sage



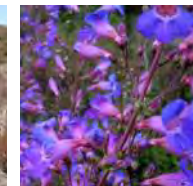
Trichostema lanatum
Woolly Blue Curls



Agave shawii
Shaw's Agave



Hesperoyucca whipplei
Our Lord's Candle



Penstemon spectabilis
Showy Penstemon

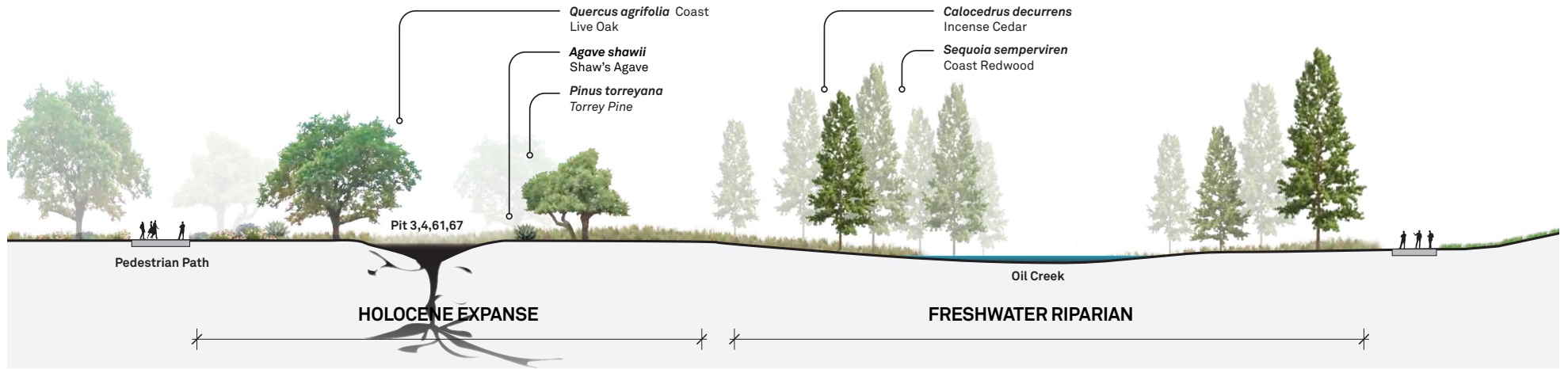


Mimulus aurantiacus
Bush Monkeyflower

Perennials:

Freshwater Riparian

A forested woodland provides shade around the tar pits, and a new biofiltration zone at Oil Creek manages stormwater, supporting pine trees in wetter pockets.



Trees:



Acer negundo
California Box Elder



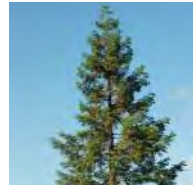
Platanus racemose
Western Sycamore



Calocedrus decurrens
Incense Cedar



Pinus radiata
Monterey Pine



Sequoia semperviren
Coast Redwood

Shrubs:



Sambucus caerulea
Blue Elderberry



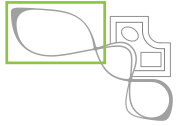
Salix gooddingii
Goodding's Willow



Salix laevigata
Red Willow

Research & Revelation

The research precinct preserves existing trees and creates new landscape settings for research, learning, and community recreation.



- 1. 6th Street Entrance
- 2. Pit 13
- 3. Pit 9
- 4. Observation Pit
- 5. Pit 10
- 6. Pit 91 Outdoor Classroom
- 7. Pit 3, 4, 61, 67

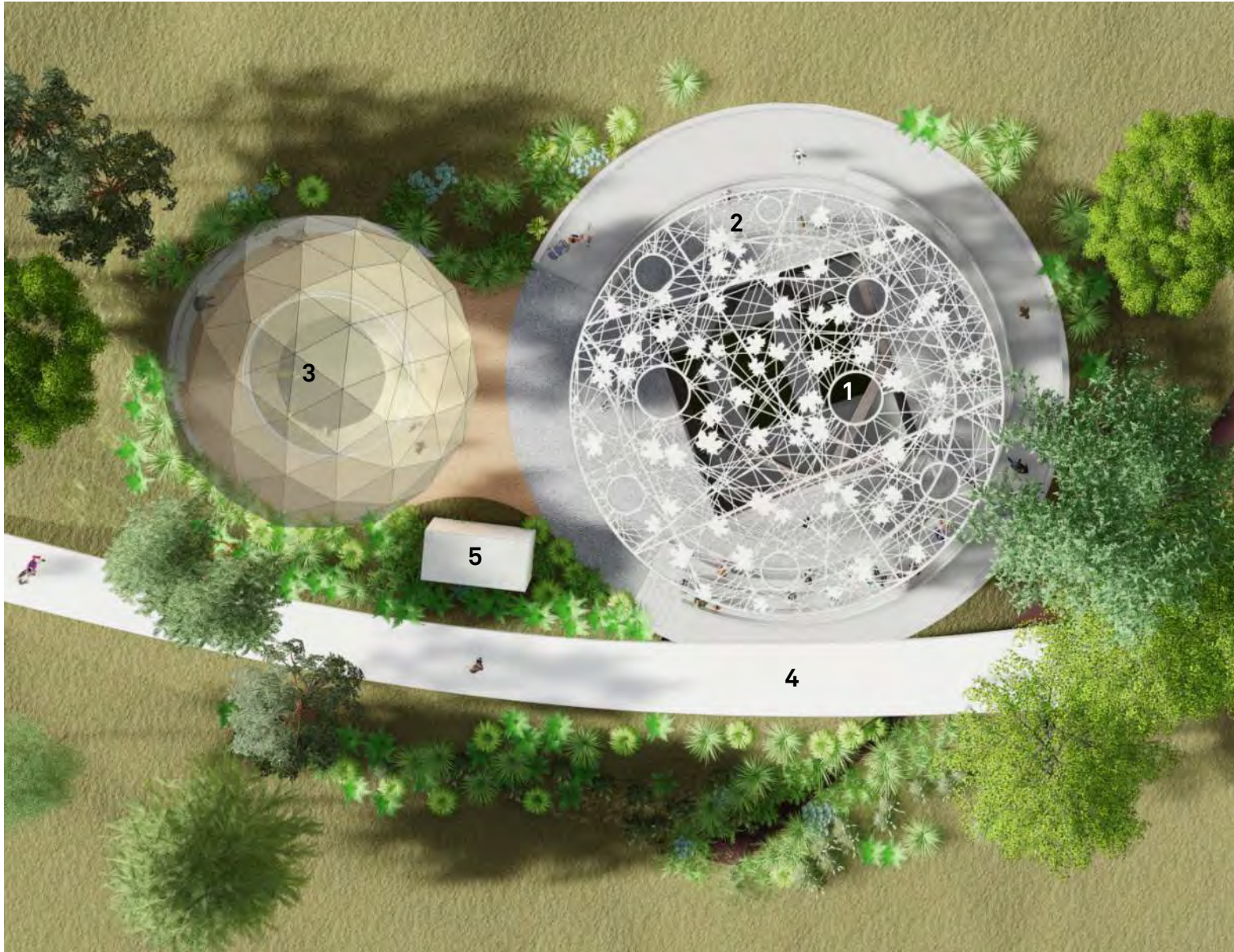
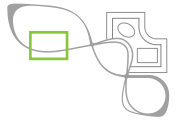
6th St Gateway

The entry canopy at 6th St provides orientation, legibility, and shade, while integrating existing trees into the canopy.



Research & Revelation

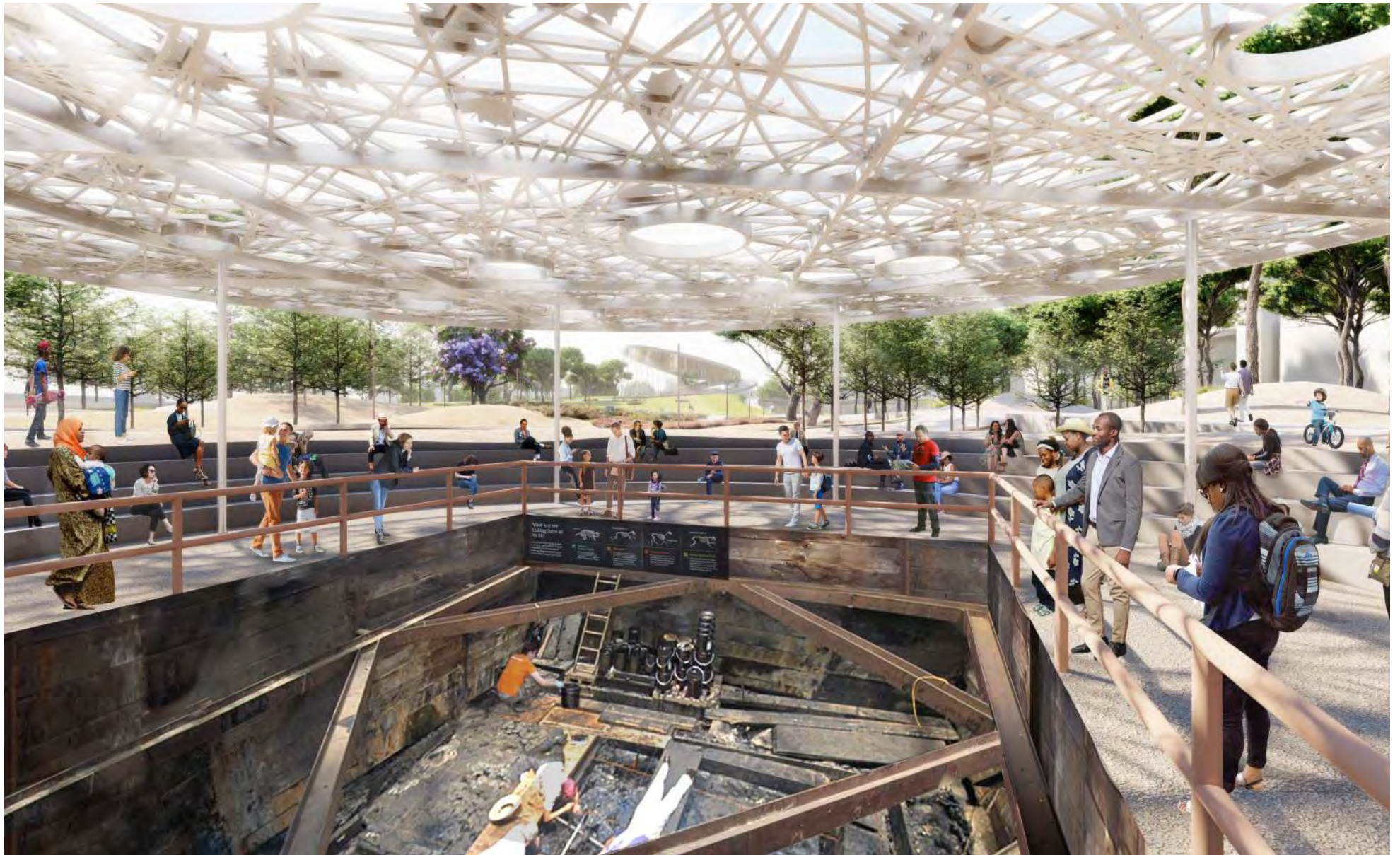
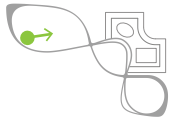
A new shaded classroom at Pit 91 engages park visitors in the process of excavation and sets the stage for future excavation and education opportunities.



1. Pit 91
2. Shaded Outdoor Classroom
3. Potential Future Field Work Area at Pit 10
4. Loop Path
5. Field Storage

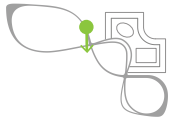
Pit 91

The active excavation sites unique to La Brea place park visitors at the precipice of scientific discoveries.



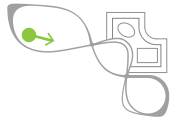
Play Area

Pit stops for play populate the loop.



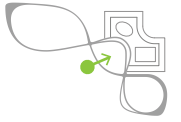
Science Walk

Along the loops, the pits reveal scientific discovery to involve and engage the community.



Central Green

A new Central Green enhances Hancock Park's identity as a setting for community engagement.



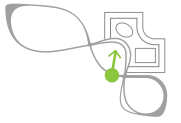
Digital Mediums

Light projections express the museum's mission and create a place of wonder.



Activating the Site at Night

A digital diorama brings the Pleistocene to life.





Magnify the Museum's Visibility

The design approach to the museum expansion is rooted in close analysis of the existing building, preserving and magnifying its unique strengths. The museum pioneered the idea of exposing active research to the visitor. To further this spirit, our proposal aims to reveal the wealth of the collection and research to the public.

The expansion nearly doubles the current museum's size, sharing the same main and terrace levels as the existing building. A new museum lobby is situated between the two wings, welcoming visitors from the central lawn and from the drop-off and parking area at the northeast corner. Exhibit halls in both wings allow increased visibility of the active research taking place in labs and allow for views into collections storage. Theaters and classrooms adjacent to

exhibits further enhance education and interpretation opportunities, extending the impact of a site rich in programs and activities.

The existing terrace on the museum's roof provides vistas of the park's tree canopy. The proposed design expands this terrace twofold, creating an expanded and accessible platform for public engagement and events. Here, the iconic fiberglass frieze of the museum finds its crystalline counterpart in the expansion, revealing La Brea's artifacts through the lens of its glass facade. Park visitors peek into the museum exhibitions, labs, and collections from various locations. Like a magnifying glass, the goal of the exhibitions is to bring artifacts into focus and amplify the telling of La Brea.

Building & Program

The preliminary building program and concept design balances program, use, adjacencies, site constraints, and budget considerations.

Lobby, Retail, and Food Service

The Master Plan includes greatly expanded facilities to support the visitor experience of La Brea Tar Pits. Additional spaces and a better choreographed experience will inspire more people to visit La Brea – and while there, participate in more activities and enjoy a more impactful experience. A central lobby is connected to a drop-off area and the central green. Retail and café off the lobby create a zone of amenities that are available to the public. Considerations for projected visitation and use informed the sizing of café and spaces for catering increase opportunities for events at the museum.

Flexible theaters, gallery spaces, and indoor and outdoor gathering spaces have the potential to greatly increase the opportunities to host events at La Brea. The rooftop bar creates a local destination and accessible gathering space on the expanded public plateau.

Exhibitions

A thorough study of existing exhibits and exhibition spaces at the museum led to the incorporation of two new exhibition halls featuring visible connections to labs and collections. Benefiting from input by Museum Content, potential exhibit installations will better tell the story of the Pleistocene, explain the impact of La Brea research, and reveal the depth and significance of the collection. While a comprehensive exhibit design is to be developed in future phases of design, the planned new exhibition halls provide a flexible

set of exhibit spaces of different scales and proportions that can accommodate a host of new exhibit and narrative opportunities.

Research & Collections

The Master Plan includes an increase of specialized lab spaces to better support the various processes of research at La Brea Tar Pits. Adjacency of exhibits to labs and collections reveal the staggering scale of the collection and the pipeline of research to museum visitors. Key lab spaces include a new solvent lab and jacket workroom to replace temporary facilities currently located in the park near Pit 91, as well as a new preparation lab, microfossil/community lab, imaging lab, visiting research spaces, and collections storage.

Classrooms & Theaters

The Master Plan include dedicated classrooms, the largest of which can be flexibly used as a multi-purpose space when not used for education functions. A microfossil/community lab provides an interactive classroom/lab setting for school and museum tours. A separate education entrance and lobby connects the education space of the museum to a park itinerary with additional outdoor spaces for learning. Improved theater spaces will increase opportunities for film, performances, lectures, symposia, and events at the museum. Leveraging adjacencies and connections to exhibits, lobby, central lawn, and expanded plateau, the spaces enable the museum to host programs and events of varying types and scales.

Offices, Facilities, & Maintenance

A preliminary staffing projection was developed to test opportunities for enhanced office and staff spaces. The Building Working Group provided extensive feedback on existing operations as well as how operations might be improved in the reimagined museum.

A Flexible Framework

As the program was tested and concept options developed, the Master Plan identified opportunities, clarified priorities, revealed the relative value of program elements, and established a framework for reinvisioning the museum. As the La Brea Tar Pits project progresses and additional program clarifications arise, the Master Plan and Concept Design provides a flexible framework, with opportunities to refine, increase, or scale back program elements as priorities evolve.

Main Level Plan

A central lobby connects the rejuvenated museum and new expansion.



1. Lobby
2. Expansion Exhibit Hall
3. Research Gallery
4. Research Labs
5. Collections Storage
6. Collections Support
7. Offices
8. Café
9. Gift Shop
10. Theater
11. Field Station Labs
12. Back of House
13. Satellite Facility

Northeast Drop-off

The northeast corner becomes a new drop-off to a lobby connected to the park.







Plateau Level Plan

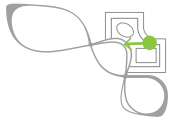
The expanded plateau creates a setting for community engagement, events, and rooftop bar.



1. Expanded Plateau
2. Rooftop Bar
3. Classrooms & Exhibits Below
4. Exhibits Below
5. Green Roof
6. Accessible Ramp
7. Parking
8. Central Green

Expanded Plateau

The museum terrace extends to create an accessible and expansive public destination.





Reveal the Museum Collection

At La Brea, the impact of scale and the reality of the extraordinary can, in one instant of a school field trip, forge a lifelong point of reference for understanding our place in the universe. The museum currently has an invaluable collection of over 3.5 million specimens collected onsite, but only a fraction are currently displayed. The renovated and expanded museum will unpack and reveal more of this immense collection to the public.

At the center of the rejuvenated museum, a new research gallery houses a visible collections exhibit, inspired by the museum's iconic Dire Wolf Wall, that speaks to the immensity of the La Brea collection. Visible labs enable a thematic connection between

exhibit material and the processes of excavation, conservation, curation, and research. Views into collections storage reveal a staggering quantity of fossils and artifacts, enabling visitors to comprehend the breadth of the collection as well as the pipeline of research.

With increased volume through a sunken exhibition pit and crystalline lantern, the new expansion exhibition hall allows for a host of new exhibit and education opportunities at multiple scales. Views into field station labs and to the park serve as a reminder of the distinctiveness of La Brea—and of a museum whose mission is profoundly interwoven into the unique history of its one-of-kind site.

Exhibits Connected to the Park

Visually connected to the park, the new Expansion Exhibition Hall enables a variety of scales of new exhibit and education opportunities.



Exhibition & Research

In the Expansion Exhibit Hall, views into Field Station Labs reveal excavation and the process of research.

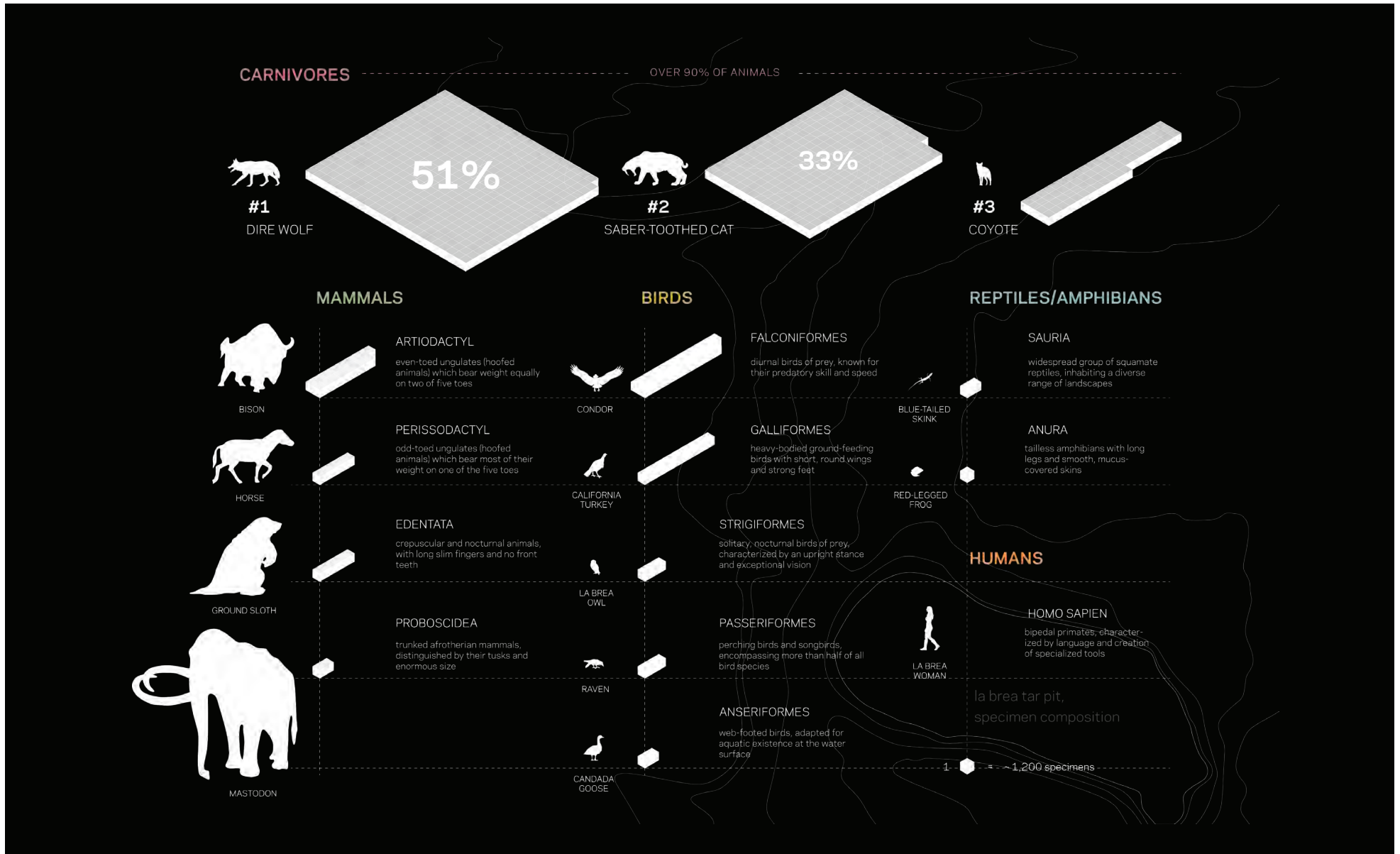


Excavation close-up: unpacking of Project 23 viewed from exhibitions



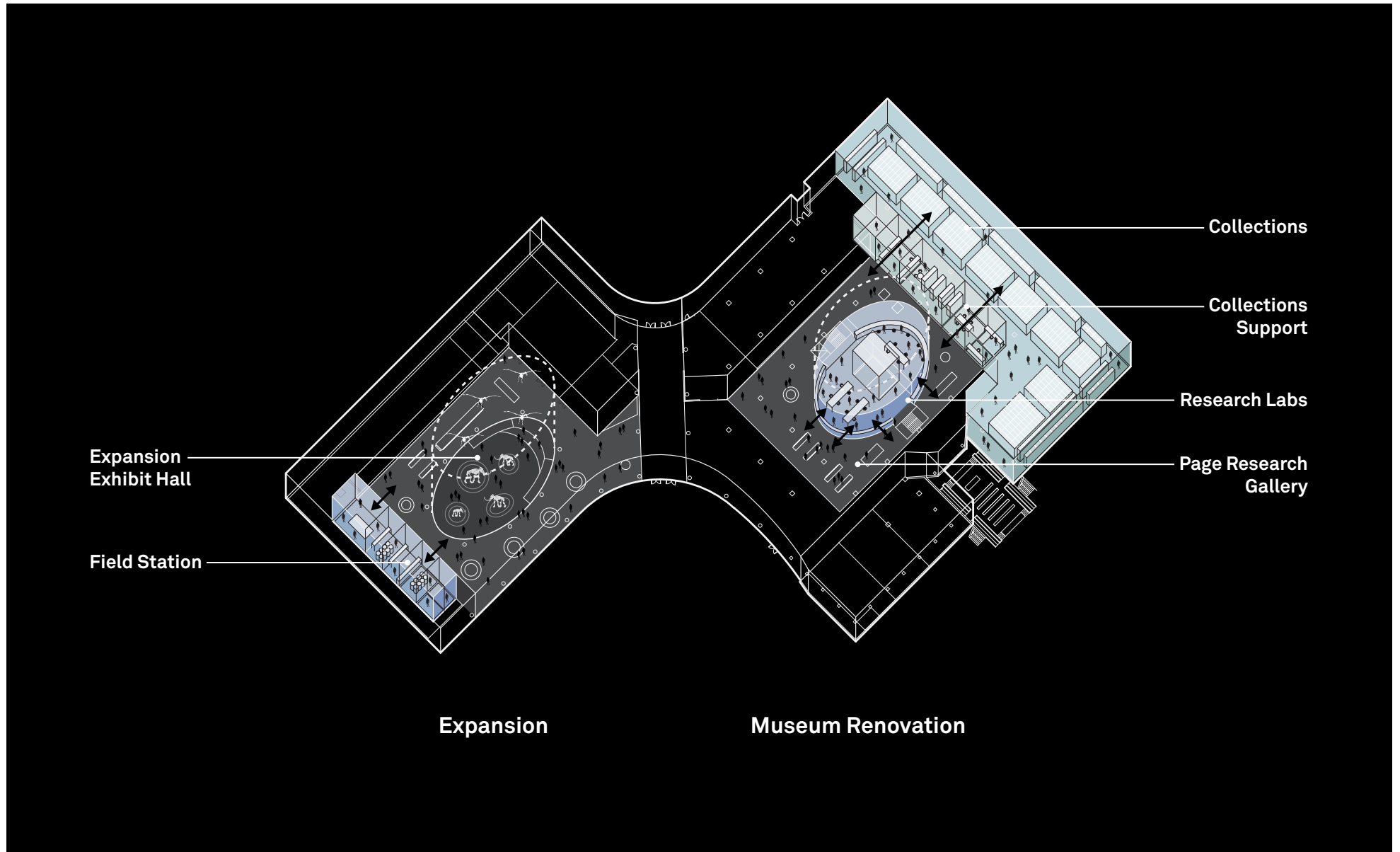
Collection Breakdown

An analysis of the La Brea collection's unique composition tells a larger story about the Pleistocene environment.



Exhibitions & Research

Exhibitions in the renovated museum and expansion are connected to research and collections and provide a range of narrative opportunities.



Exhibitions

Exhibit opportunities range from large specimen mounts to small-scale interactive collections exhibits that enable new ways to tell the story of La Brea.



Visible Labs & Collections

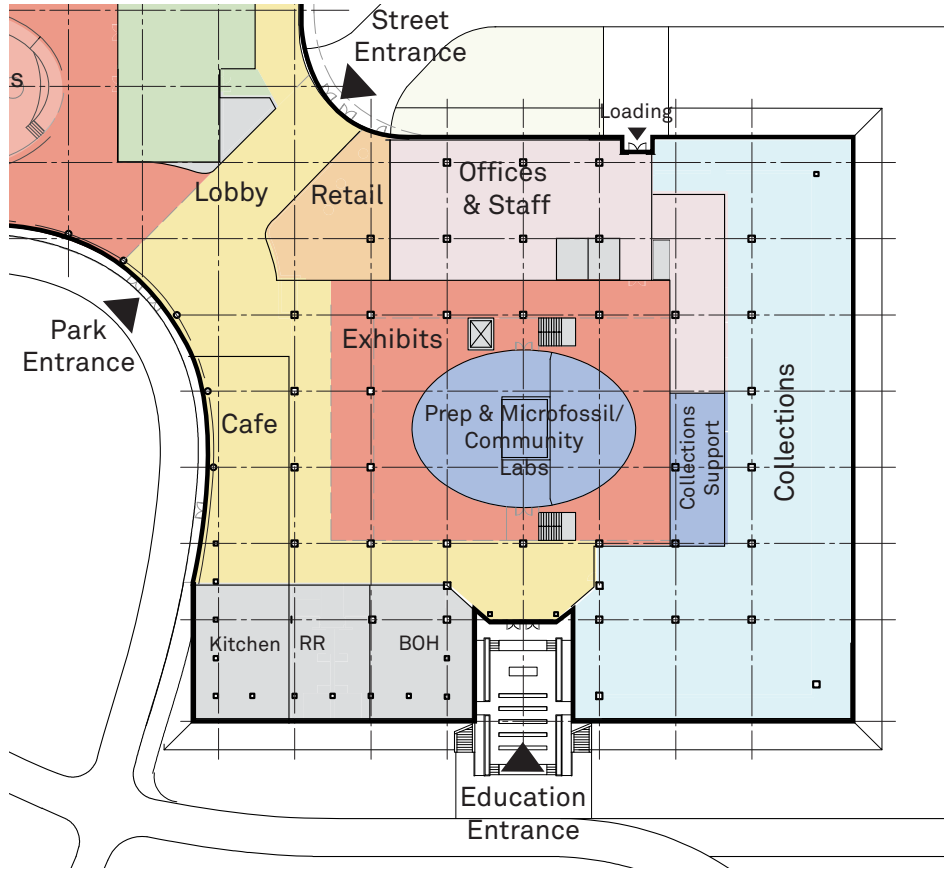
An expanded Fossil Lab and visible collections reveal the impact of research.



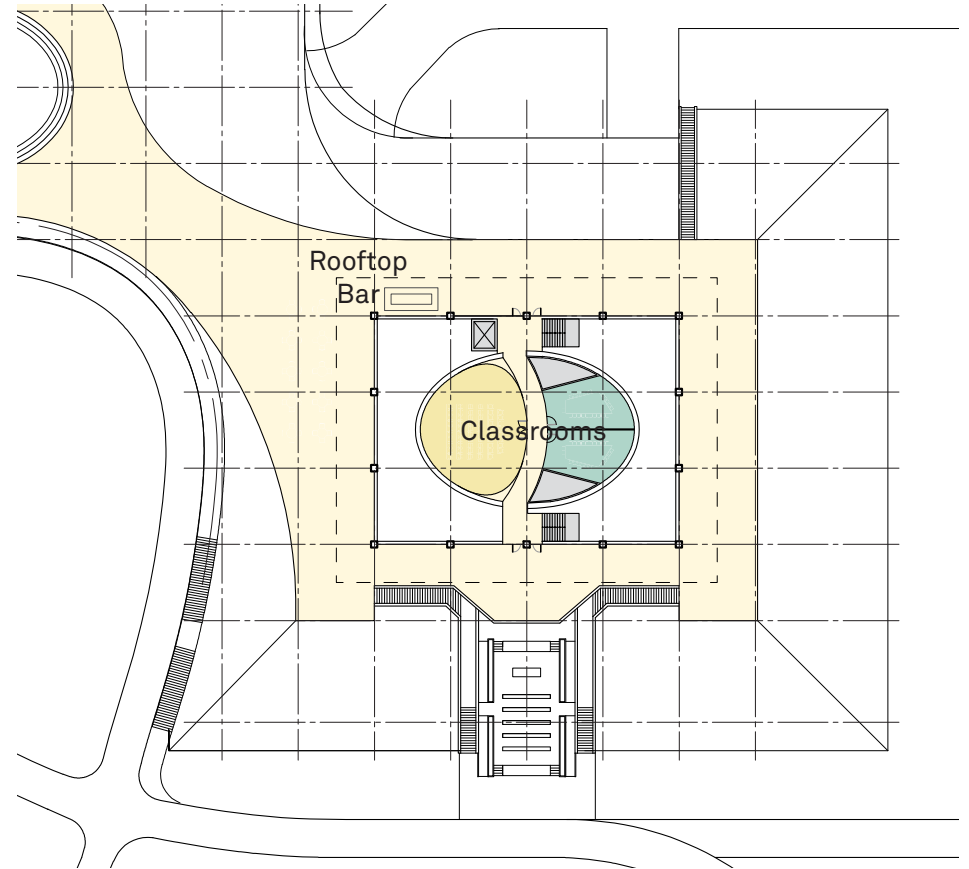
Research Gallery

Enlarged Plans

Expanded visible labs and visible collections exhibits reveal the impact of research. Classrooms above have views of exhibits and the park.



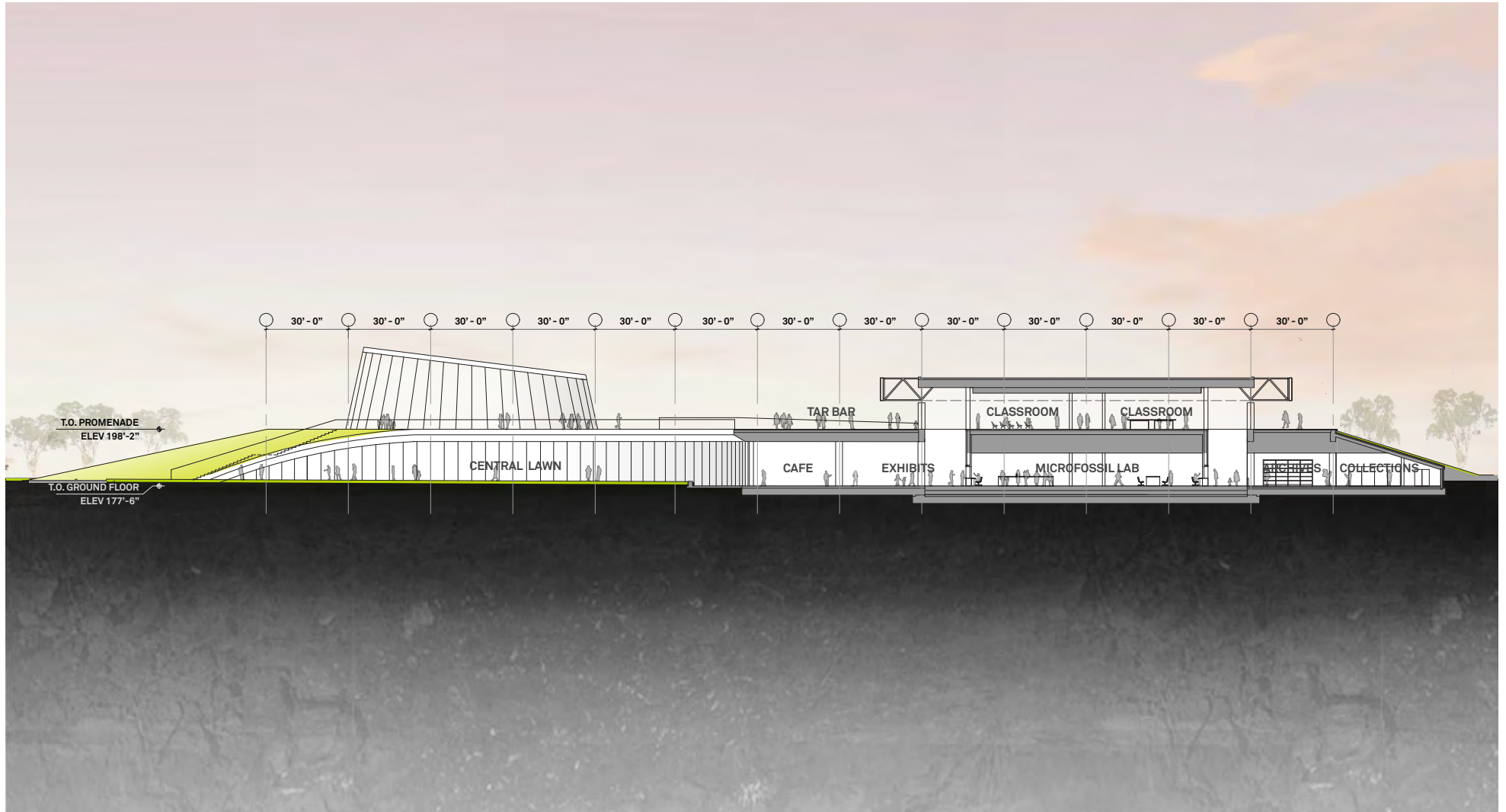
Ground Floor

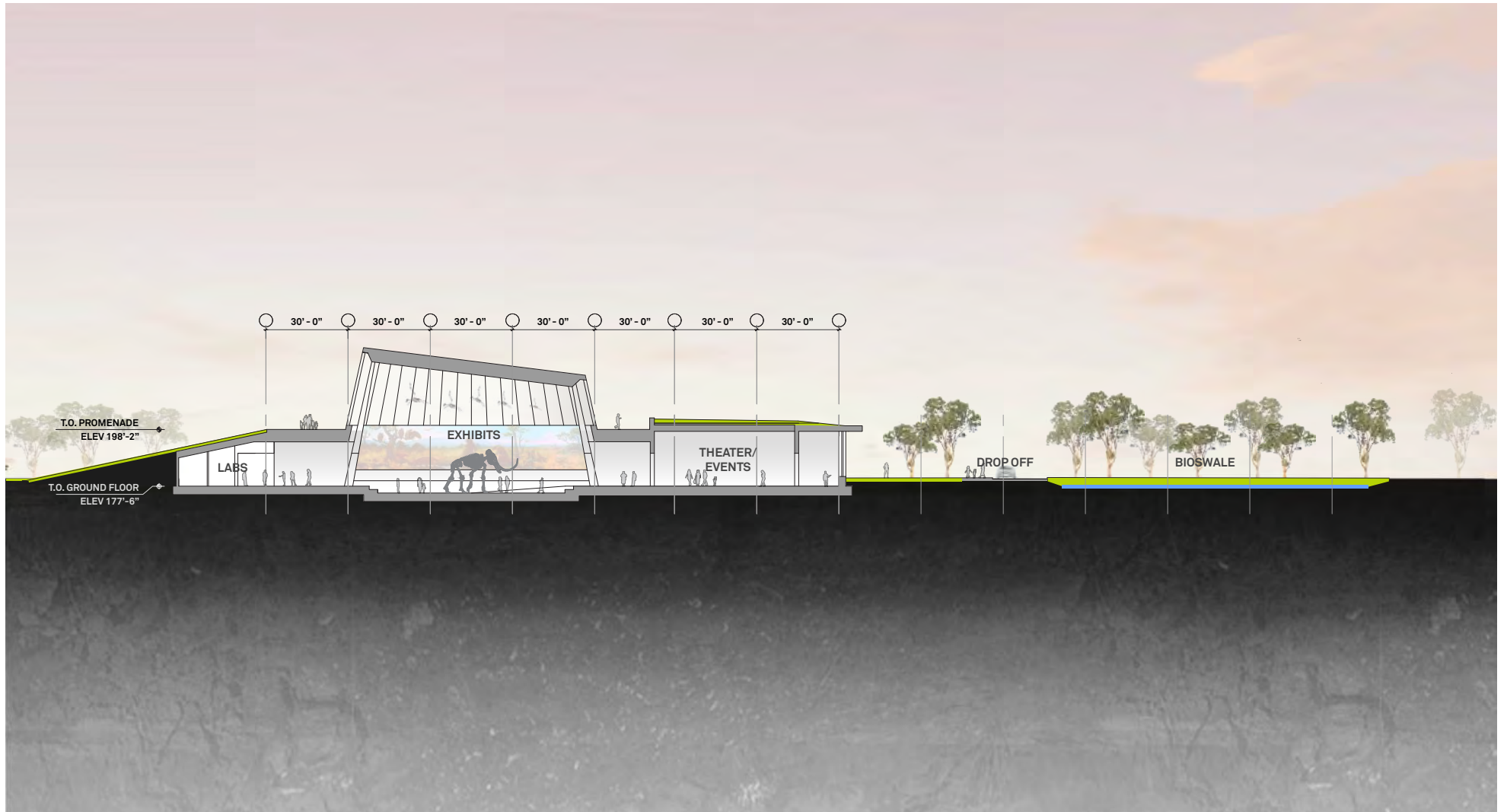


Promenade Level

Building Sections

A new research gallery in the renovated museum along with new exhibitions, galleries, labs, and theaters in the expansion renew the identity of the museum.





Building Program

Through detailed work sessions with NHMLAC Working Groups, a preliminary program range was identified and further refined through site and budgetary considerations.

	Existing	Master Plan
Visitor Experience		
Lobby, Pre-function & Orientation	1,602	4,000
Retail	1,513	1,700
Café	-	3,000
Kitchens, Storage & Support	242	3,210
Subtotal	3,357	11,910
Exhibitions		
Exhibitions	19,604	24,000
Subtotal	19,604	24,000
Research & Collections		
Labs	2,123	4,450
Collection Storage	8,071	14,500
Research & Collections Support	730	2,080
Subtotal	10,924	21,030
Programs & Education		
Theaters	4,366	4,000
Classrooms	950	2,810
Green Room	-	210
Subtotal	5,316	7,020

	Existing	Master Plan
Offices & Shared Staff Spaces		
Offices	1,429	3,240
Shared Staff Spaces	288	1,890
Subtotal	1,717	5,130
Back of House		
Shop		980
Building Maintenance/Custodial	662	930
Storage	-	2,950
Loading Areas	704	1,100
Circulation	1,900	-
Subtotal	3,266	5,960
Total Museum NSF	44,184	75,050
Total Museum GSF	63,219	104,319
Other Programmed Space		
Parking	62,990	65,000

Capturing Imagination

The story of La Brea is about the multi-million-year geological continuum, nearly 300 years of Los Angeles's modern history, over a century of technological progress and scientific discovery, and lastly, a day's journey where new stories are created. This incredible story needs to be told not only through words, but also through experience. We are excited for this extraordinary opportunity to reshape

La Brea Tar Pits, a site so central to our cultural imagination. The La Brea Tar Pits Master Plan seeks to unify a constellation of critical research sites, buildings, exhibition experiences, programs, and the park with a provocative and inspiring new identity. Loops and Lenses connect and reveal—together they form an intimate journey of discovery and wonder across multiple epochs.



Project Credits

Natural History Museums of Los Angeles County

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