

Atlas of Infrastructure Adaptation

Double Duty in the Public Realm

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Riverside Park South in Queens, NY. Photo: David Lloyd / SWA



Buffalo Bayou Promenade. Photo: Bill Tatham / SWA



Suzhou Center in Suzhou, China. Photo: David Lloyd / SWA



Halperin Park in Dallas, TX. Photo: Bill Tatham / SWA



Foreword

**Gerdo Aquino, Co-CEO &
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When we began the research that culminated in *Landscape Infrastructure (2013)*, we were responding to a disciplinary blind spot. Infrastructure was largely understood as technical substrate—necessary, expensive, and often invisible. Landscape, by contrast, was treated as civic amenity or aesthetic afterthought. We believed that division was false. The most compelling public spaces were those where performance and experience were inseparable, where flood control systems became parks, where transportation corridors doubled as ecological networks, where utility rights-of-way supported recreation and habitat.

At the time, we framed these examples as evidence that landscape could operate at the scale and rigor of infrastructure. We argued that infrastructure could do more than move cars, freight, or people. It could also move communities, repair ecosystems, and anchor identity.

More than a decade later, that argument has not only endured, it has expanded. The challenges facing cities have intensified in scale and complexity: climate volatility, extreme heat, biodiversity collapse, aging public works, economic inequality, and the urgent need to reduce carbon emissions. In this context, the idea of single-purpose infrastructure feels increasingly untenable. Monofunctional systems designed to solve one problem in isolation are proving brittle and expensive. They consume land, energy, and public resources while delivering increasingly narrow returns.

What has emerged in response is a growing commitment to multi-benefit infrastructure. Around the world, we are witnessing a proliferation of projects that tether additional ecological, social, and economic value to transportation corridors and other overlooked spaces. Some are highly visible and widely celebrated, transforming former highways and rail lines into open space destinations and tourism hotspots. Others are quieter, more acupunctural interventions like cooling a neighborhood, stitching together a trail network, or restoring habitat along a drainage channel. Together, they represent a profound cultural shift.

This shift is worth celebrating. It signals a new understanding that infrastructure is not simply a means to an end or a cost to be managed, but a platform for common ground. When designed thoughtfully, it can serve commuters and park-users alike. It can address technical requirements while advancing public health, climate adaptation, and social equity. It can create shared civic value in places that were once defined by structural division.

Our own thinking has evolved alongside this movement. In the early years, much of our work focused on demonstrating that infrastructure could be beautiful, ecologically valuable, and socially catalytic. Over time, we have deepened our engagement with performance metrics around stormwater capture, shade provision, public health, habitat connectivity, and decarbonization. We have become more attentive to life cycles and maintenance demands, to governance and stewardship, to the shifting realities of funding and public accountability. The question is no longer whether infrastructure can host multiple benefits, but how to do so responsibly, measurably, and at scale.



Belgrade Waterfront Promenade in Belgrade, Serbia. Photo: David Lloyd / SWA

This publication reflects that maturation. It builds upon the foundation of our earlier work while recognizing the tremendous advancement and innovation that has occurred since. Through SWA's internal research and innovation platform, XL Lab, and through collaboration with partners across disciplines, we have continued to examine infrastructure adaptation as both design strategy and cultural project. The global survey presented here reveals patterns that were not yet fully visible a decade ago: new typologies, coalitions, financing mechanisms, and forms of technical integration. What once felt experimental is becoming embedded in municipal policy and public expectation.

Importantly, this work also underscores the value of applied research within practice. The original Infrastructure Research Initiative was formed out of a simple premise: that the firm's collective experience working along highways, rail corridors, flood control channels, and other infrastructural systems could be synthesized into shared knowledge. That effort demonstrated the value of practice-based research. This booklet represents a renewed commitment to that ethos—a small but focused contribution intended to equip practitioners, city leaders, and advocates with insight drawn from a growing body of built work.

Throughout this publication, one theme appears repeatedly: infrastructure is most powerful when it moves from singular function to layered performance. A transportation corridor becomes a climate buffer. A floodplain becomes habitat and parkland. A capped freeway becomes a civic commons. In each instance, the technical demands remain real and rigorous, but they are no longer the sole measure of success. Social connection, ecological restoration, and long-term resilience are equally central.

Looking back over two decades of engaging infrastructure as a design medium, we are struck less by how radical these ideas seem today and more by how necessary they have become. The future of infrastructure no longer belongs solely to engineers and transportation planners. It belongs to multidisciplinary teams capable of aligning science, design, policy, and community voices around shared goals. It belongs to a public that expects its investments to deliver returns for generations to come.

Introduction

Infrastructure as Common Ground

by Jonah Susskind, XL research and innovation lab

We live inside, along, above, and below infrastructure.

We cross over it and move through it, often without noticing — underpasses, rail corridors, levees, viaducts, ports, streets and sidewalks poured long before we arrived. It carries us to work, to school, to the grocery store. It hums beneath our routines. It is background. And yet, infrastructure is often the most durable urban design decision a city ever makes.

Throughout history, ports and harbors often determined where trade accumulated. Rivers dictated settlement patterns. Railroads stretched cities outward. Highways cut through them. These systems structured growth, concentrated capital, and shaped who had access to opportunity. They also hardened shorelines, divided neighborhoods, displaced communities, and reinforced inequities. Built for efficiency and expansion, they were rarely designed with ecological performance or social justice in mind.¹

Infrastructure is humble and monumental at the same time. It is trivial in our daily movements and sublime in its scale. Camouflaged by familiarity, yet utterly structural in consequence. For landscape architects, this paradox is not theoretical. It is the foundation of our work, which when done well, is often an act of nearly invisible integration. If infrastructure forms the bones of the city, then adapting infrastructure can be one of the most powerful ways of bringing it to life.

Sanshan Hillside Park in Foshan, China. Photo: David Lloyd / SWA



The Park Question

Cities today face a simple yet stubborn problem: how do we create more public open space when there is so little land left to spare? The need has never been clearer. Since the pandemic, parks have become classrooms, protest grounds, dining rooms, and places of refuge.² As climate extremes intensify, landscapes must cool overheated neighborhoods, absorb floodwaters, fortify against biodiversity loss, and support low-carbon mobility. Open space cannot be viewed as an optional amenity for cities. It is vital social and environmental infrastructure.

But acquiring new acreage for parks in dense cities is politically complex and financially daunting. Nineteenth-century models of large-scale public land purchases for park systems are rarely replicable. Municipal budgets strain under competing demands. Real estate values rise faster than public investment can keep pace.

And yet, cities are not without space. Transportation systems comprised of roads, parking lots, rail corridors, waterfront edges, utility easements, and so much more occupy vast amounts of publicly controlled land. Some systems are aging. Some are oversized. Some are misaligned with contemporary mobility patterns. All of them are valuable spatial assets embedded in the urban fabric. With about a quarter of urban land given over to roadways alone in the US, the question is not whether available land exists.³ It is whether we can reimagine its purpose. What if the corridors built for vehicular throughput could also host public life? What if land devoted to movement could also become

land for gathering? What if infrastructure could transition from monofunctional to multi-benefit? This premise is at the heart of infrastructure adaptation.

Learning from Transition

Over the past two decades, cities around the world have begun to experiment with this premise. Elevated railways have become promenades. Highway caps have stitched neighborhoods back together. Industrial waterfronts have been retooled as civic landscapes. Rail easements have anchored and extended regional trail systems. Flood control channels have softened into ecological corridors. Some of these projects are monumental and internationally celebrated. Others are more quiet and acupunctural. Together, they represent a growing recognition: infrastructure is never fixed. It is always transitional.

But transition is not neutral. The same systems that once enabled economic growth also facilitated displacement. In the United States, the construction of highways destroyed hundreds of thousands of homes, disproportionately in Black, immigrant, and low-income communities. Infrastructure has historically distributed both benefit and burden unevenly.⁴

Recent adaptation projects have delivered extraordinary public value through economic vitality, ecological restoration, and new mobility options and more. They have also, at times, accelerated speculative investment, gentrification, and displacement.⁵ The relationship between urban greening and real estate capitalization is well documented, and lessons from past investment in

infrastructure represent critical responsibilities for today's practitioners.⁶ Adaptation can help repair historic harms. It can also amplify them. These transformative projects must be paired with deliberate coalition-building, equitable financing, inclusive design processes, and long-term stewardship planning.

What Follows

This booklet builds on years of research into hundreds of infrastructure adaptation projects worldwide. What began as a broad survey has been distilled here into a focused inquiry that is less about cataloging projects and more about extracting patterns and practices.

The sections that follow move across scales. First, we return to the park question and the urgency of public open space in dense, climate-stressed cities. Here we explore why infrastructure corridors represent one of the few scalable pathways for viably expanding the public realm.

Second, we present a curated set of case studies. Rather than attempting comprehensiveness, we focus on projects that demonstrate the range of possibilities when ports, rivers, railways, and roads are treated as landscapes in transition.

Third, we distill the recurring phases of infrastructure adaptation. These projects rarely unfold linearly. They require clear vision, creative financing, broad coalition-building, careful negotiation across agencies, complex translation between disciplines, and sustained stewardship over time. By naming these phases, we make visible the social and political labor that underpins physical change.

Finally, we zoom out. A geographic accounting of the projects studied reveals that infrastructure adaptation is not a singular trend but a dispersed global movement. When mapped together, these interventions trace a quiet restructuring of cities along their infrastructural seams.

An Inflection Point

Today, we are living through several simultaneous infrastructural shifts. Mobility is electrifying. Climate shocks are intensifying. Cities are both sprawling and densifying. Public trust in institutions is strained. The systems that once powered expansion must now support resilience. Infrastructure sits at the center of these pressures. It is the largest reservoir of publicly controlled land. It is the connective tissue between neighborhoods. It is where histories of exploitation are most spatially legible, and where processes of repair are often most tangible.

Because infrastructure is both ordinary and monumental, adapting it can feel incremental and transformative at once. We cross it every day. We barely notice it. And yet, it shapes who is connected, and who benefits. If the last century built infrastructure to move goods, vehicles, people, and water, this one must adapt it to move cities toward equity, resilience, and shared public life.

The question is whether we can recognize infrastructure not as background — but as common ground.

NOTES

- ¹ L.M. Aiello, A. Vybornova, S. Juhász, M. Szell, & E. Bokányi, Urban highways are barriers to social ties, *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A.* 122 (10) e2408937122, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2408937122> (2025).
- ² Zhao H, Mailloux BJ, Cook EM, Culligan RJ. Change of urban park usage as a response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. *Sci Rep.* 2023 Nov 7; 13(1):19324. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-023-46745-1>.
- ³ Erick Guerra, Duranton, Gilles, and Xinyu and Ma, "Urban Roadway in America: The Amount, Extent, and Value," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 91, no. 1 (January 2, 2025): 102–16, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944363.2024.2368260>.
- ⁴ Archer, Deborah N. "White Men's Roads Through Black Men's Homes: Advancing Racial Equity Through Highway Reconstruction." *Vanderbilt Law Review.* 73, no. 5 (2020): 1259–1330.
- ⁵ Lindsey, Greg, Yunlei Qi, Torsha Bhattacharya, and Tracy Loh. "Neighborhood Change and Gentrification Near Three Urban Trails." *Findings*, October 22, 2021, 29521. <https://doi.org/10.32866/001c.29521>.
- ⁶ Dooling, Sarah. "Ecological Gentrification: A Research Agenda Exploring Justice in the City." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 33, no. 3 (2009): 621–39. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2009.00860.x>.

Buffalo Bayou Park in Houston, TX. Photo: Bungyu Choi / SWA



Part 1

Opportunity Space

Opportunity Space

Every city has an infrastructural fingerprint.

Its form is shaped by the dominant transportation systems that fueled its economic rise. Port cities expanded along wharves and piers that gradually stitched together into vast waterfront logistics systems. River cities organized themselves around floodplains, levees, and historic trading posts as commerce moved inland. Rail cities clustered around depots, branch lines, and stockyards. Automobile cities stretched outward along highways, interchanges, and arterial grids to accommodate the speeds and scales of the twentieth century.

Infrastructure is never a single object. It is a system. As ports expanded, they generated warehouses, rail linkages, and industrial districts. As railroads matured, they accumulated yards, sidings, and maintenance depots. As highways multiplied, they produced interchanges, parking fields, medians, and frontage roads. These systems grew in boom times, hardened in downturns, and shifted as technologies evolved. The spatial code of a city is often inseparable from these investments.

To read a city is to read its dominant systems of movement. And to expand public space within a built-out metropolis is to work within those inherited systems.

Spurs and Burrs

Transportation infrastructure is typically understood as a line — a road, a corridor, a channel. Linear systems offer distinct advantages: they extend across neighborhoods, create access along their edges, and can serve thousands without requiring the footprint of a large, centralized park.

But the opportunity space is larger than the corridor itself. Infrastructure systems accumulate ancillary pieces, or what we've taken to calling "spurs and burrs" that support the main line. These are things like parking lots, storage depots, medians, spillways, and crossings. These spaces are often treated as purely utilitarian, and many are oversized relative to contemporary need, leaving them partially vacant. Others are seasonally active or slipping into obsolescence. All are connected to the larger system.

When mapped together, these elements reveal the true spatial footprint of transportation infrastructure — not just the line, but the points and spaces around it. For designers and city leaders, this expanded view is critical. Because infrastructure is connective, even modest adaptation projects can reverberate outward. A rail-to-trail conversion can link neighborhoods that have long existed side by side without meaningful exchange. A waterfront revitalization can reshape adjacent districts. A freeway cap can repair severed social networks. Infrastructure adaptation is rarely about a park alone. It is about unlocking a system.

Reading the System

Transportation infrastructure occupies an extraordinary amount of urban land. The illustrations in this chapter inventory the spatial anatomy of four dominant systems: port, river, rail, and road. They reveal not only the primary corridors, but the supporting elements that together form the infrastructural fabric of cities. When viewed at scale, these networks trace legible patterns. The urban fingerprint comes into focus.

Railway infrastructure has fundamentally shaped Denver's "urban fingerprint," transforming the city from a 19th-century frontier outpost into a densely connected metropolitan hub.

For practitioners, this exercise is not merely academic or descriptive. It is strategic. Understanding a city's infrastructural inheritance helps identify where opportunity may already exist. It reframes infrastructure not as a constraint, but as latent civic capacity.

In built-out cities where high land values can make traditional park acquisition increasingly difficult, transportation systems often represent the most viable pathway for expanding and improving open space. The opportunity space is not hidden. It is the very armature upon which our cities and metropolitan areas are built. And for those willing to read the system carefully, it offers one of the most powerful levers for shaping what comes next.





Port Corridors

Port cities are shaped by their edges.

Where deep water meets land, maritime trade has historically generated some of the most powerful engines of urban growth. In the United States, while maritime commerce intensified through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, these working edges hardened. Bulkheads, seawalls, dredged channels, and expansive port terminals replaced tidal wetlands and working shorelines. Industrial efficiency reshaped coastal ecologies, often degrading habitat and severing everyday relationships between urban life and the water itself. In many cities, waterfronts that once supported fishing, bathing, and ferry travel became dangerous and inaccessible.

The resulting port landscapes are rarely singular objects. They are layered systems of working infrastructure interspersed with supporting spaces. These include slips, dry docks, staging yards, ferry terminals, breakwaters, storage areas, and service yards that ebb and flow with shifting economic demand.

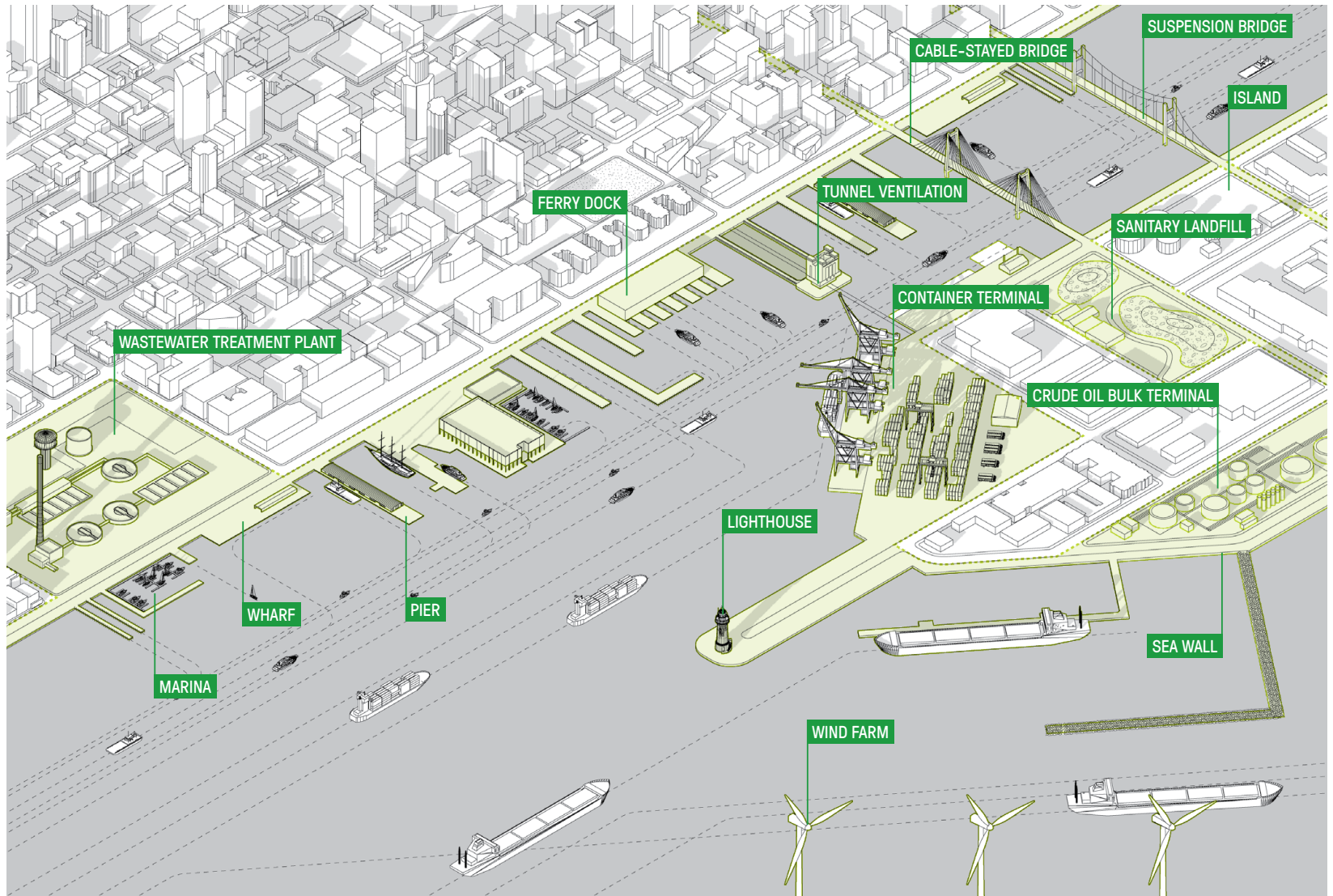
Today, the geography of maritime logistics is changing again. Containerization, deeper harbors, and larger vessels have pushed many port operations farther from historic urban cores. What remains are fragments of earlier port systems embedded within dense city fabric.

These spaces often hold extraordinary potential. Underutilized piers, obsolete warehouses, redundant bulkheads, and industrial staging areas can become catalysts for new forms of public waterfront. Promenades, ferry landings, ecological shorelines, and hybrid recreational-industrial landscapes can reconnect cities to their water while repairing some of the environmental damage left behind by earlier phases of port expansion.

Ship traffic in and out of San Francisco, CA



Spatial anatomy of an international seaport





River Corridors

River cities are shaped by water in motion.

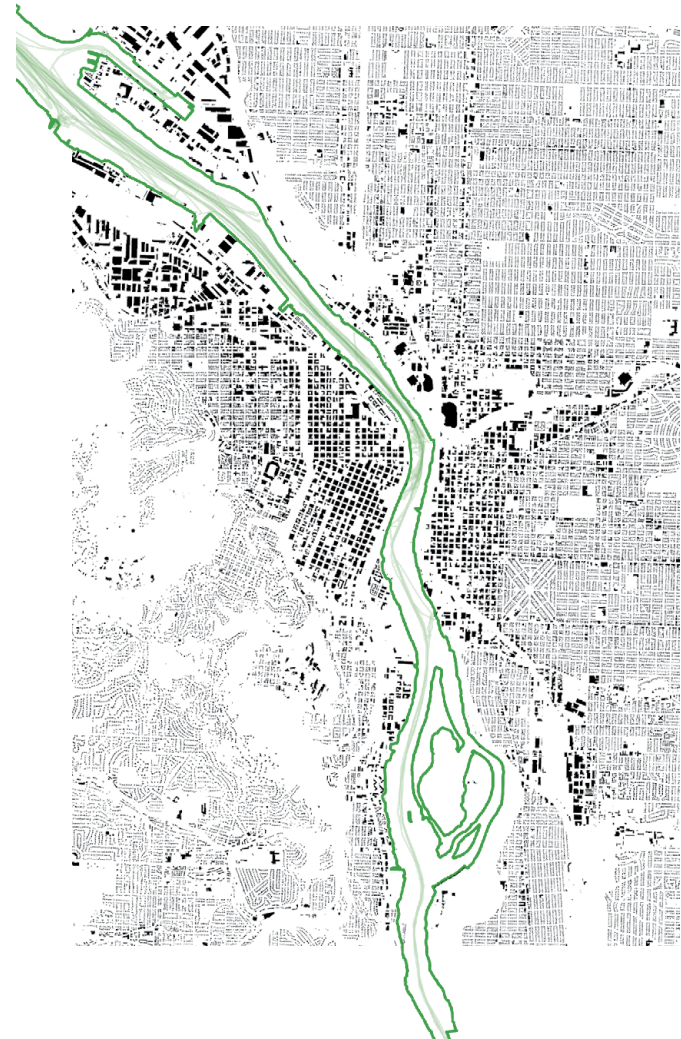
Long before railroads or highways, rivers served as the primary corridors of inland transportation throughout much of the world. Settlements clustered along their banks to access trade routes, fertile floodplains, and reliable sources of water. Over time, many of these rivers were engineered to support more reliable navigation, control flooding, and accommodate accelerating urban growth.

By the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, large portions of the American river landscape had been reshaped by intensive dredging and channelization. Meanders were straightened, wetlands drained, and floodplains confined behind engineered embankments. In some cities, rivers were encased in concrete channels designed to move water as quickly and efficiently as possible. These interventions reduced flood risk for expanding urban districts but often degraded riparian ecosystems and limited public access to the water.

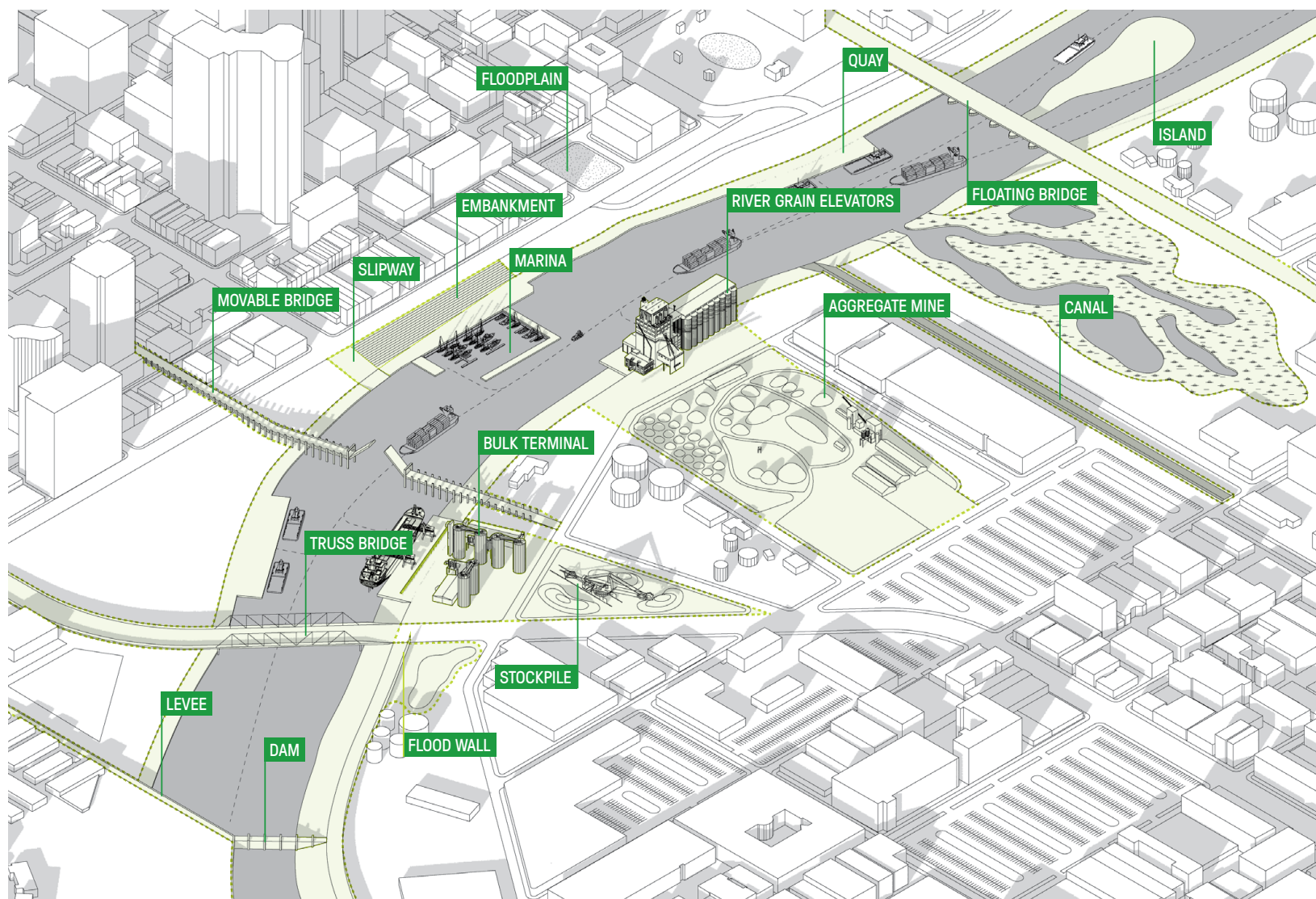
The resulting landscapes are not simply rivers but systems of flood control and water management infrastructure. Levees, spillways, dams, locks, maintenance roads, detention basins, and service easements extend far beyond the river channel itself.

Today, many cities are reconsidering these engineered waterways. As climate volatility intensifies and ecological restoration gains urgency, river corridors are emerging as powerful frameworks for public space. Linear parks, restored floodplains, multi-use trails, and habitat corridors can transform these infrastructural landscapes into resilient civic spines that reconnect cities to their rivers while maintaining, if not expanding, their essential hydrological function.

Boat traffic on the Willamette River through Portland, OR



Spatial anatomy of a mid-sized river with active transportation and obsolete uses





Rail Corridors

Rail cities are shaped by tracks.

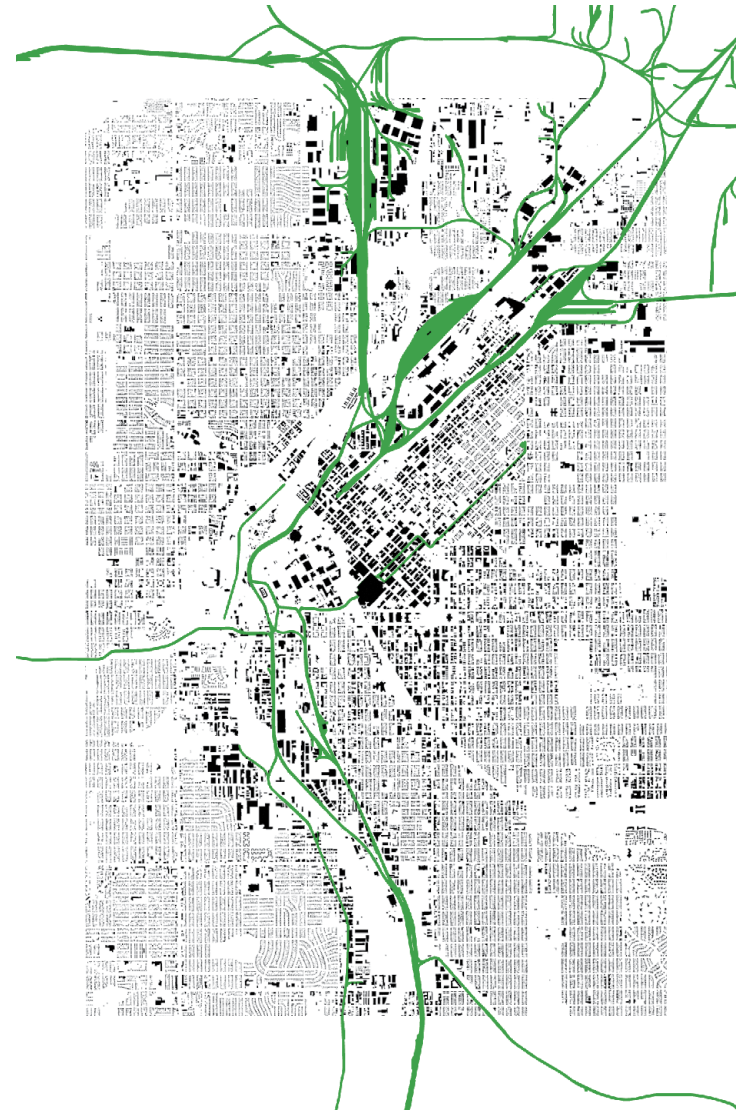
Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, railroads transformed the geography of American urbanization. Steel tracks stitched together regional economies, linking inland cities to ports, factories, and agricultural hinterlands. Rail lines entered cities as powerful logistical spines, concentrating industry, warehouses, and labor along their edges.

Over time, these corridors accumulated extensive support infrastructure. Rail yards, switching facilities, sidings, maintenance depots, freight terminals, and industrial spurs spread across large swaths of urban land. Entire metropolitan regions grew around the rhythms of freight movement, with branch lines threading deep into warehouse districts and industrial waterfronts.

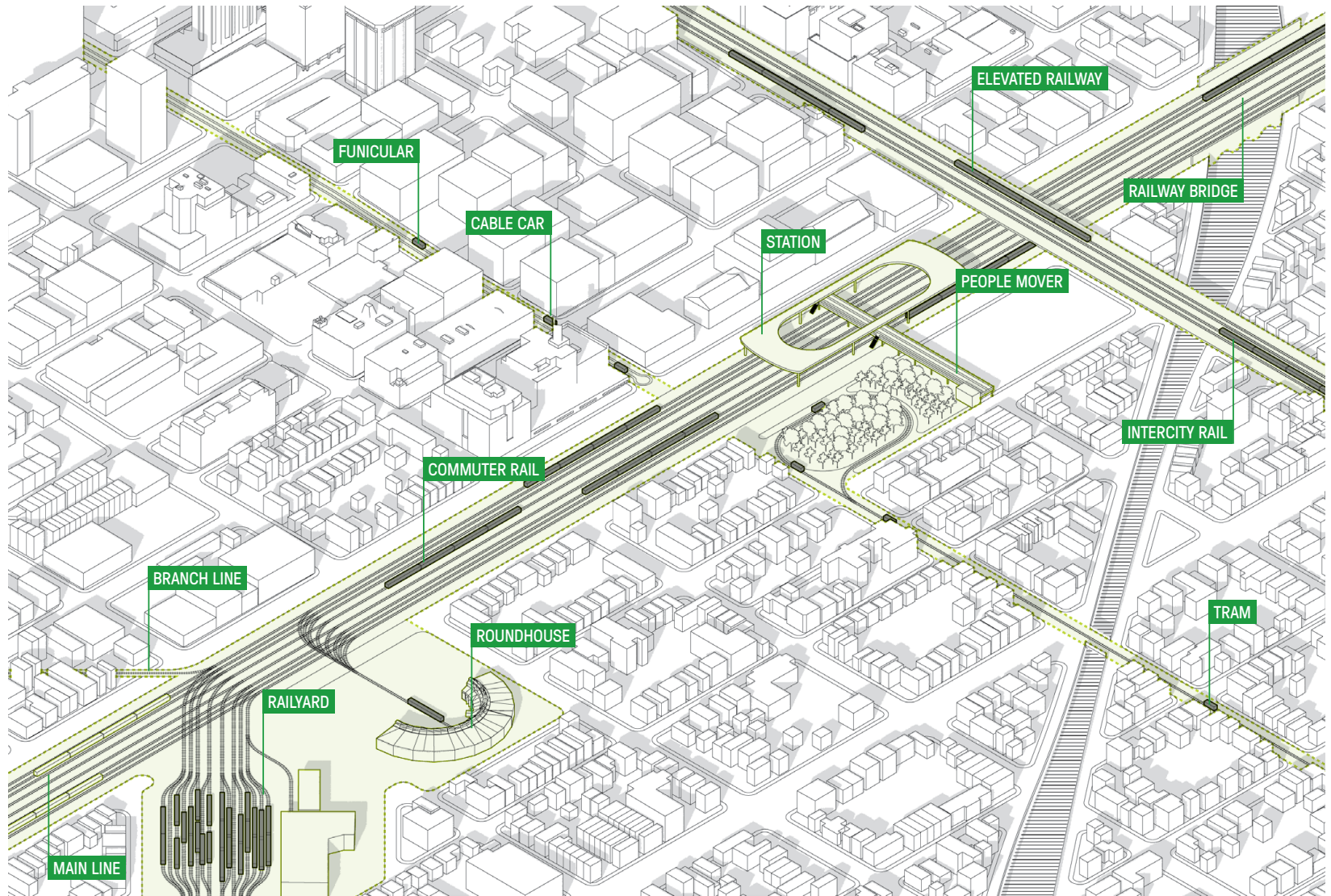
As freight transportation shifted modes in the late twentieth century, many of these systems contracted or reorganized. Consolidation within the rail industry, the decline of urban manufacturing, and the rise of containerized trucking left behind fragments of earlier rail landscapes embedded within dense city fabrics.

Today these corridors represent some of the most visible opportunities for infrastructure adaptation. Disused rights-of-way, oversized yards, and elevated or sunken rail alignments can become powerful spaces for public life. Rail-to-trail conversions, linear parks, and multimodal greenways reuse these connective corridors to link neighborhoods, expand mobility options, and introduce recreational systems into the industrial seams of the city.

Rail lines through Denver, CO



Spatial anatomy of an urban rail network with “spurs and burrs”



IV

Road Corridors

Automobile cities are shaped by asphalt.

Beginning in the early twentieth century, and accelerating dramatically soon after, the rise of the automobile transformed the spatial logic of metropolitan regions everywhere. Highways, arterial roads, and interchanges reorganized cities around speed and individual mobility, enabling development to spread far beyond historic urban cores.

Unlike earlier transportation systems, road infrastructure is highly distributed. Highways generate a vast network of supporting spaces: interchanges, frontage roads, medians, parking lots, service stations, maintenance yards, and wide rights-of-way that cut across entire metropolitan landscapes. As suburbs expanded and travel demand increased, these systems multiplied, producing enormous quantities of pavement dedicated almost entirely to the movement and storage of privately owned vehicles.

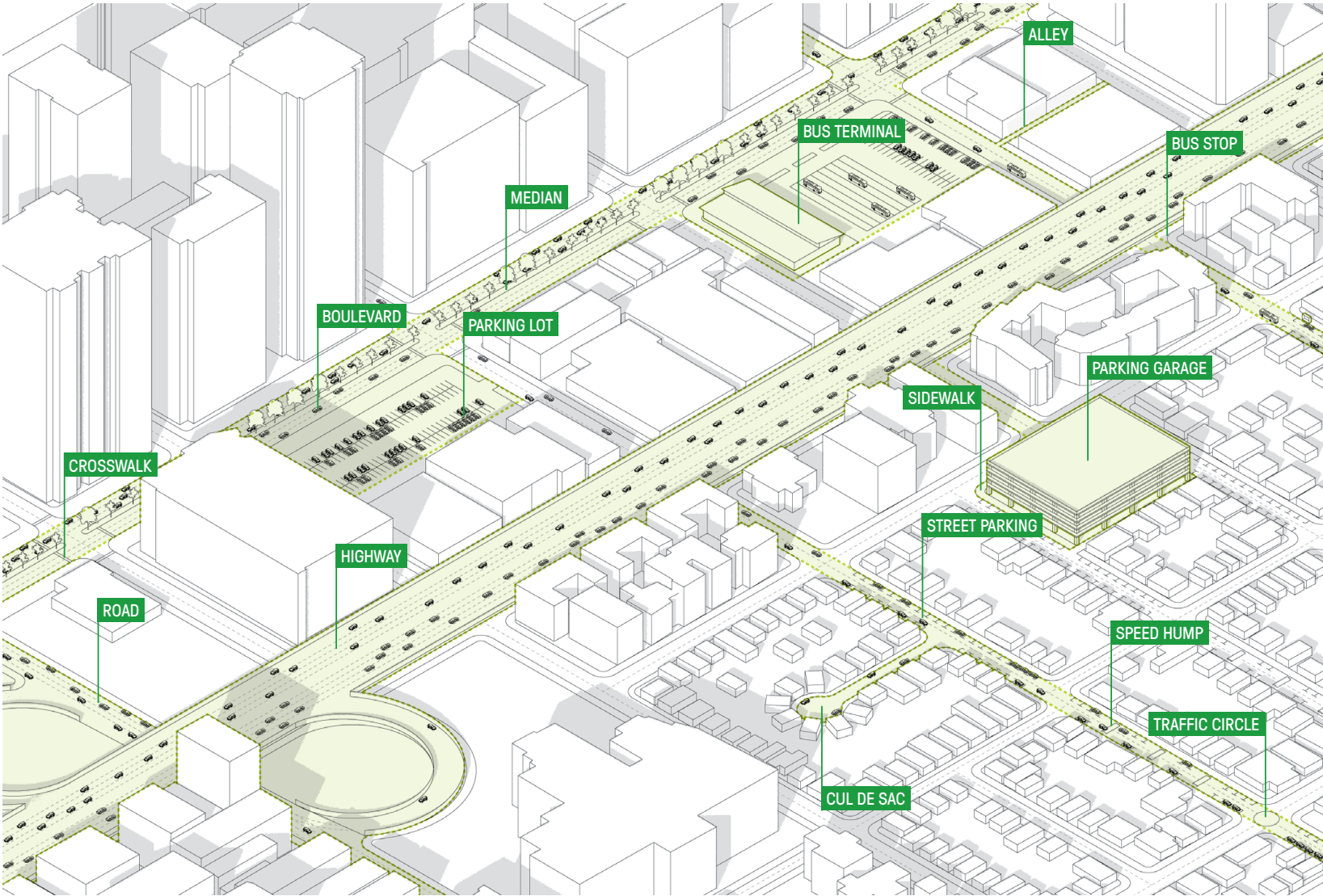
Today, many of these landscapes are being reconsidered. Changing mobility patterns, climate concerns, and renewed interest in walkable urban environments are prompting cities to rethink the balance of space allocated to automobiles.

Because road infrastructure is so spatially expansive, even small adjustments can produce meaningful change. Road diets, protected bike corridors, median parks, freeway caps, and the redesign of interchanges and excess rights-of-way can create new public landscapes within systems originally designed solely for traffic. In automobile-oriented regions, the largest opportunity for expanding public space may be in the asphalt landscapes that structure everyday movement.

Highway corridors through Charlotte, NC



Spatial anatomy of a primary road corridor with active uses, storage, and fallow areas



Part 2

Over Under Around and Through: Case Studies

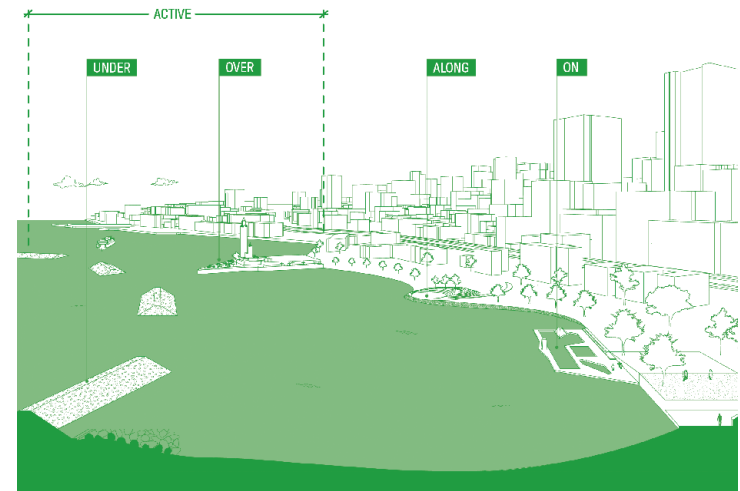
Over Under Around and Through

Infrastructure adaptation projects rarely follow a single model. Each site comes with its own constraints, histories, and operational realities. Yet across hundreds of built examples, certain spatial relationships appear again and again.

One useful way to understand these projects is through a set of simple prepositions: **along**, **over**, **under**, **in**, and **on**. These positions describe how public space is introduced relative to an existing infrastructure corridor. A greenway might run along a rail line. A park might bridge over a highway. Public spaces sometimes occupy leftover land under elevated infrastructure. In other cases, new uses may be inserted in former canals, rail spurs, or service yards. Temporary activations and tactical interventions may sit on the infrastructural surface itself.

Equally important is the distinction between **reuse** and **co-use**. Some projects transform transportation infrastructure that is no longer active, like abandoned rail corridors, obsolete piers, or former industrial yards, into new civic, recreational, and ecological landscapes. Others operate alongside working systems, layering public life into infrastructure that continues to move trains, trucks, ships, or water.

The projects that follow illustrate how these spatial strategies play out across port, river, rail, and road systems. Drawn from a larger body of research into hundreds of infrastructure adaptation projects worldwide, they offer a set of precedents and tactics for practitioners looking to unlock the public potential embedded within and around existing urban fabric.



Typical Port and Road Corridors



01

Floodable Front Porch

Hunter's Point South Waterfront Park

Queens, New York

Port | Along | Reuse

Hunter's Point South Waterfront Park occupies a former rail transfer site along the East River in Queens, directly across from Midtown Manhattan. For more than a century the waterfront served as a logistics edge where railcars were ferried across the river on barges before trucks and tunnels replaced the system. By the late twentieth century, the shoreline had become an underused industrial landscape embedded within a rapidly changing urban district.

The park now forms the public waterfront for a new mixed-use neighborhood that includes thousands of housing units, including many that are permanently affordable. Designed by SWA/Balsley and Weiss/Manfredi with ARUP, the project reclaims this working waterfront as a resilient civic landscape while accommodating the environmental realities of a tidal estuary.

Rather than relying solely on hard flood defenses, the design treats the park as a floodable front porch for the neighborhood. A series of graded lawns, wetlands, and absorbent landscapes allow storm surges and rainfall to move through the park without catastrophic damage. During Hurricane Sandy, the park's layered stormwater system temporarily stored and slowed hundreds of thousands of gallons of water before releasing it back into the river.



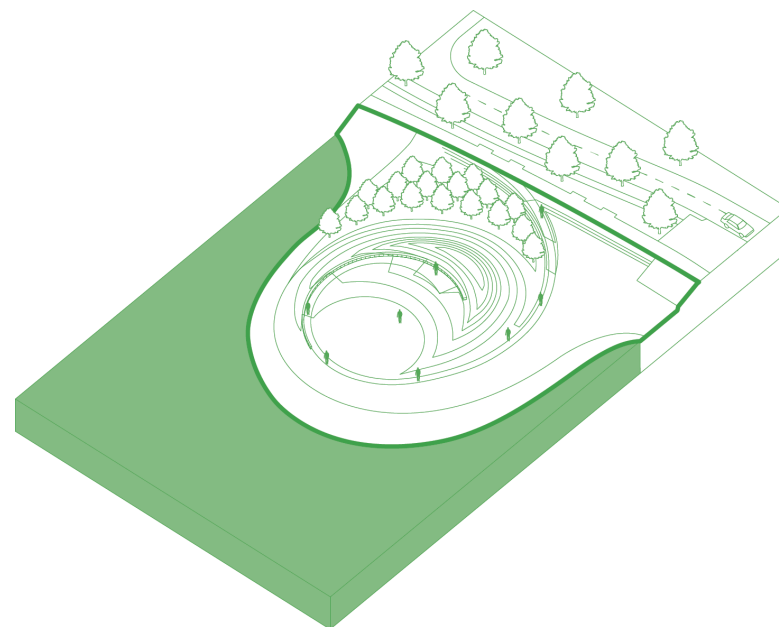
Photo: David Lloyd / SWA

At the same time, the park functions as everyday public space. A waterfront promenade, ferry landing, bikeway, playfields, and tidal marsh walkways provide continuous access to the East River while supporting active recreation and alternative mobility. The public park is maintained by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation with funds from the city budget and a capital maintenance fund and additional support from the Hunters Point Parks Conservancy.

Several lessons emerge for practitioners. Building the park before surrounding development establishes public access early and helps catalyze private investment. Combining soft ecological systems with durable infrastructure creates resilience without sacrificing public use. And positioning the park as the neighborhood's shared waterfront—its civic “front porch”—helps make dense urban living both desirable and sustainable.

Park First

Strategically sequencing public space can unlock redevelopment that might otherwise stall. One of the most consequential decisions was to construct the park before surrounding housing development. This sequencing was made possible through a unique confluence of events, including New York City's early planning for the 2012 Olympic Games, which helped catalyze broader redevelopment ambitions for the site. Even after the Olympic bid was lost, the planning framework remained in place. By delivering high-quality public space first, the city established a clear civic identity for the district and signaled long-term public investment. The park quickly became a destination and helped attract private developers to adjacent parcels.



Phase Two of the project repurposed this land projection, which had sheltered a transfer bridge to the south that eased rail cars from land to barges in the East River bound for Manhattan. The land was excavated so that at high tides, water would inundate at the back, turning it into an island. An elevated metal boardwalk serves to connect pedestrians to the tranquil lawn, which hosts public art.

02 Mangrove Mile

Shekou Coastal Promenade

Shenzhen, China

Port | Along | Co-use

Shekou sits on the southern edge of Shenzhen, facing Hong Kong across the Pearl River Delta. When the region was designated one of China's first Special Economic Zones in 1980, Shenzhen entered a period of extraordinary economic growth. Over four decades, the city expanded from a small fishing settlement into a global megacity of more than ten million residents. Much of that expansion occurred through coastal land reclamation, filling shallow bays and tidal marshes to create new urban land. Through this process, vast tracts of native mangrove rich marine wildlife habitat were nearly obliterated.

By the early 2000s, local officials sought ways to address ecological damage without slowing economic development. In 2005, the city launched a design competition to develop a master plan for 15 kilometers of shoreline to mark the endpoint of encroachment into Shenzhen Bay. SWA's winning proposal established a continuous linear park that would serve as both public waterfront and environmental buffer between dense urban districts and the bay.

The first sections of Shenzhen Bay Coastal Park opened in 2011, restoring mangrove habitat and creating a ribbon of trails along the shoreline. In 2017, the Shekou Promenade extended the park six kilometers westward toward the Shekou Ferry Terminal, linking waterfront neighborhoods to transit and regional mobility networks.

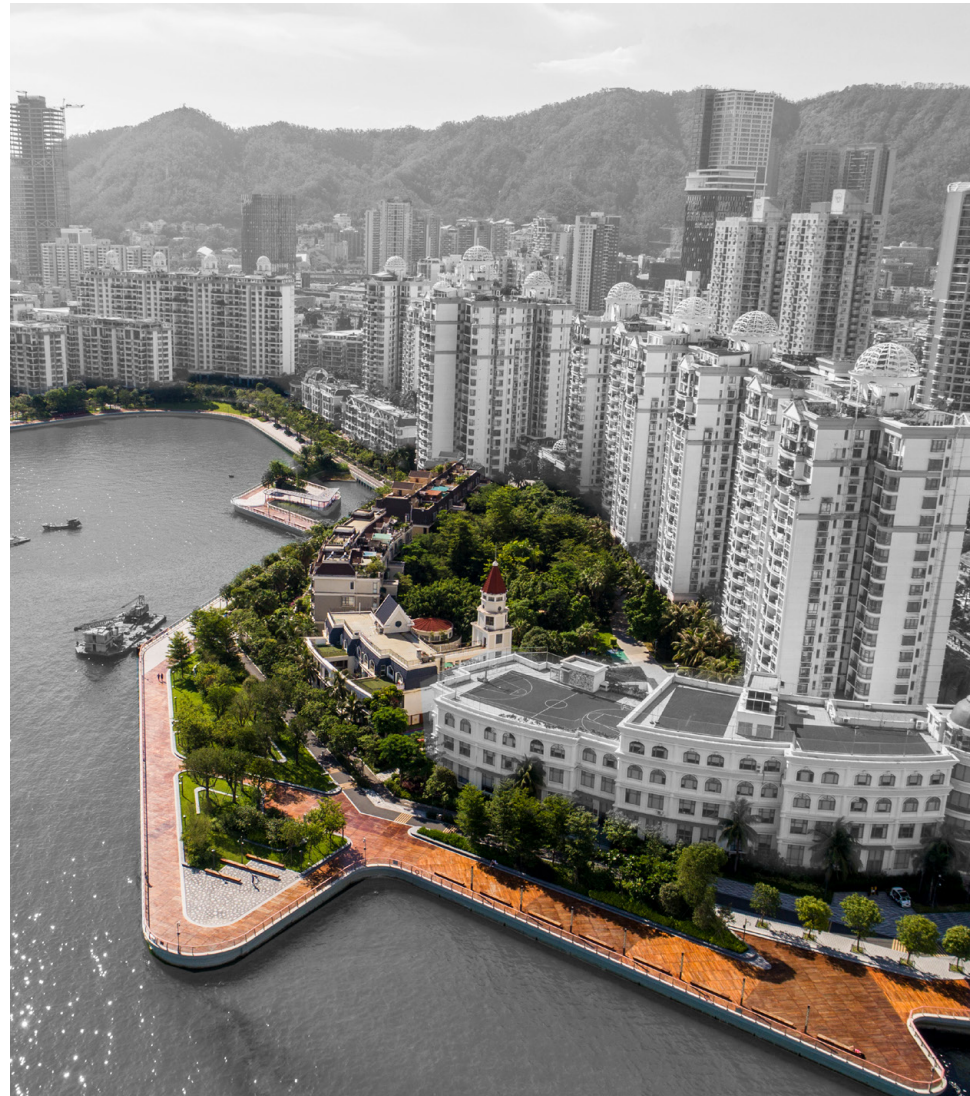


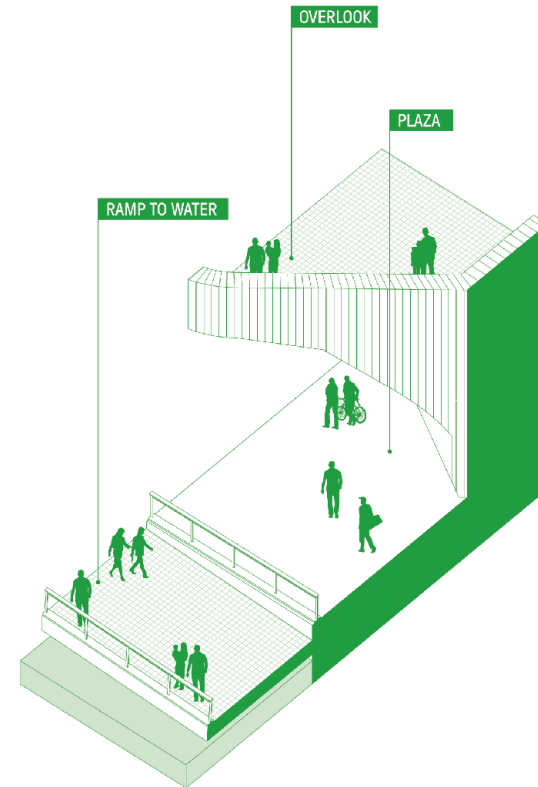
Photo: David Lloyd / SWA

Before the park was constructed, this part of the coast supported a mix of port and fishing infrastructure, including a 150-year-old harbor, barge docks, an oil-loading pier threaded with industrial piping, and an aging wooden boardwalk. Rather than erasing these layers of maritime history, the park incorporates them through preservation and reinterpretation, using former working elements and industrial motifs as part of the public landscape. Tree-lined paths and boardwalks follow the shoreline while connecting to ferry service, transit infrastructure, and regional cycling routes.

The result is both a public waterfront and a piece of landscape infrastructure—providing ecological repair, recreational space, and much-needed breathing room for one of the world's fastest-growing metropolitan regions.

Growth Control

Typically, urban growth boundaries rely on agricultural land or conservation areas to contain terrestrial urban sprawl. In most coastal regions, the sea itself acts as a natural limit to urban expansion. In Shenzhen, however, aggressive land reclamation had already pushed development far into the bay. By establishing a permanent recreational corridor along the shoreline, the park helps stabilize the city's edge while protecting access to the water. In this sense, the project demonstrates how landscape infrastructure can function as a strategic tool for shaping long-term urban growth.



A viewing platform juts out over a plaza to mimic the rolling landforms and mountain overlooks that were present near the site before the coastline was transformed through land reclamation projects that began in the 1980s. Two parallel pedestrian pathways extend northward from the plaza with one ramping down towards the high-tide mark before rising back up to grade.

03

In-Harbor Infill

Nelson Mandela Park Rotterdam, Netherlands Port | In | Co-use

For most of the last two centuries, the Port of Rotterdam has been Europe's busiest seaport, serving as a primary transfer point for imports and exports across the continent. The port's infrastructure stretches from the historic city center westward along the Maas River toward the North Sea. As shipping technologies evolved during the twentieth century, port activity gradually migrated farther downstream to accommodate larger vessels and containerized freight.

This shift left a number of inner harbor basins underused. One of these areas, Maashaven, sits adjacent to dense residential neighborhoods that developed during urban renewal programs of the 1980s. Today the surrounding districts are home to a diverse population, many of whom arrived through government-supported housing initiatives. Despite the growing residential density, nearby parks and open spaces have struggled to meet the needs of local residents.

In 2019, the City of Rotterdam identified Maashaven as one of several districts where public open space was insufficient. Rather than redevelop the harbor entirely, the city proposed a more surgical approach: filling a portion of the underused basin with dredged sediment to create new land for a public park while maintaining the harbor's remaining industrial functions.



Image: SWA/Balsley

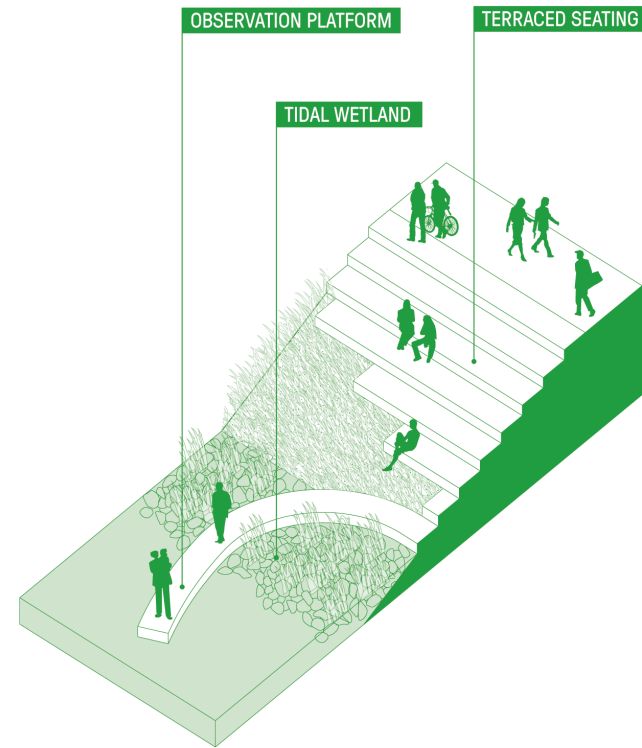
An international design competition selected SWA/Balsley to develop the park concept. The resulting plan introduces seventeen acres of new public landscape built from reclaimed sediment within the inner harbor. Two large landforms, waterfront terraces, tidal marsh habitat, and flexible lawns create a sequence of public spaces overlooking the water, while new connections link the park to nearby transit stations and surrounding neighborhoods.

Industrial heritage remains visible throughout the site. The former Maassilo grain complex, now converted into an event and office venue, anchors the park's edge, while barges continue to use portions of the harbor basin for cargo transport.

The project transforms roughly twelve percent of the harbor into a civic landscape, demonstrating how strategic infill can create public space within active port infrastructure

Reclaiming the Basin

By using dredged sediment to selectively reclaim space within an existing harbor basin, the project meets the recreational needs of surrounding neighborhoods while preserving the basin's working role in Rotterdam's logistics network. For port cities with aging inner harbors, the strategy suggests powerful possibilities for inserting public space directly into working waterfront systems, allowing civic and industrial functions to coexist within the same infrastructural landscape.



Terraced seating features allow users to get down to the water's edge and immerse themselves in a constructed tidal marsh area.

04

Desalination Destination

South Bay Park Tianjin, China Port | Along | Reuse

South Bay Park sits within the Sino-Singapore Tianjin Eco-city, a large-scale waterfront development district established east of Tianjin within the rapidly industrializing Binhai New Area. For centuries, this low-lying coastal landscape was defined by salt production. Vast evaporation ponds lined the shoreline, while nearby ports and heavy industrial facilities helped transform the region into one of northern China's major manufacturing and logistics hubs. By the early 2000s, however, the environmental costs of this growth had become increasingly apparent. Wetlands had been heavily altered, waterways polluted, and much of the coastline reshaped through dredging and land reclamation.

In response, a consortium of Chinese and Singaporean state-backed developers launched the Sino-Singapore Tianjin Eco-city as an experimental model for more environmentally focused urbanization. The project sought to demonstrate how damaged industrial landscapes could be remediated and reimagined through ecological planning, public open space, and new forms of ecologically sensitive urban development. Key performance targets were established around air and water quality, habitat restoration, transportation, and access to greenspace.

As part of a larger regional master plan by SWA, South Bay Park was designed to anchor a new eco-tourism and waterfront recreation district surrounding the National Maritime Museum. The 350-acre park



Photo: Bill Tatham / SWA

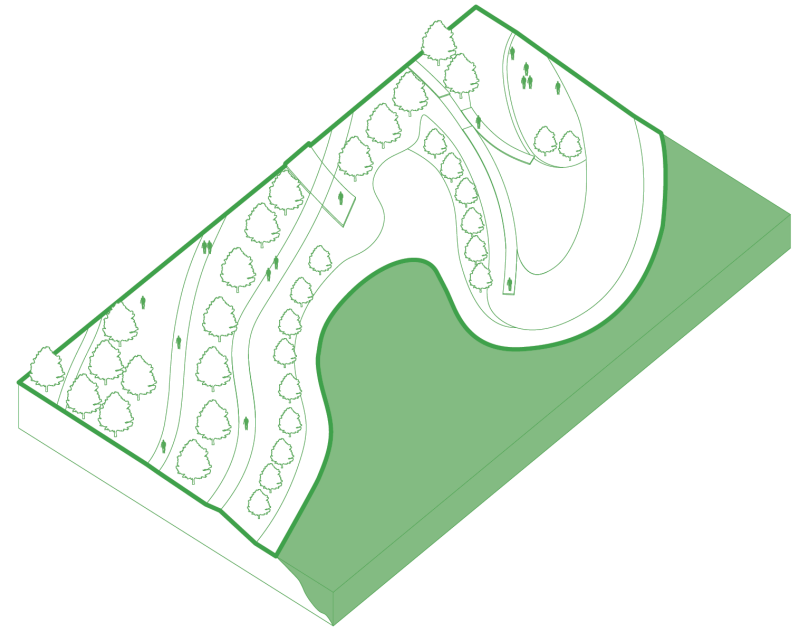
transforms reclaimed coastal land into an archipelago of constructed islands, coves, beaches, and planted shorelines connected through footbridges and waterfront paths. Fishing terraces, lawns, play areas, picnic spaces, and overlooks create a highly accessible public waterfront intended to support both everyday recreation and regional tourism.

The park also functions as a major landscape remediation project. Built on highly saline and contaminated dredged soils, the site required extensive ecological engineering. Stormwater is filtered through bioswales, grass trenches, and planted detention systems before being recirculated using renewable energy-powered pumps. Salt-tolerant planting strategies and afforestation zones were designed to gradually improve soil quality while supporting habitat creation and biodiversity.

Today, South Bay Park illustrates a broader shift occurring across many former industrial waterfronts: the use of ecological public space not simply as amenity, but as a catalyst for regional land use transition. In Tianjin, investments in recreation, tourism, habitat restoration, and environmental performance are being leveraged to help reshape the identity of an industrial coastline undergoing rapid transformation.

Eco-nomics

Unlike many infrastructure adaptation projects that emerge incrementally, South Bay Park formed part of a coordinated national effort to reposition environmental performance as an engine for long-term economic development. The project demonstrates how ecological restoration, tourism infrastructure, and public space investment can be deployed together to support the transition of historically industrial regions toward new urban identities and economic models.



South Bay Park is a canopy-rich public green space that surrounds the district's iconic National Maritime Museum. Designed as a string of sculpted landforms connected by pedestrian bridges, the park's undulating sequence of coves and points help create dynamic aquatic habitat for marine life.

05

Chain of Channels

Bayou Greenways

Houston, TX

River | Along | Co-use

Houston is often called “Bayou City,” a reference to the slow-moving waterways that cross the region on their way to the Gulf of Mexico. Twenty-three bayous run through the metropolitan landscape, shaping both the city’s hydrology and its urban form. Because Houston sits on flat coastal terrain and experiences major flooding every few years, more than 36,000 acres of land have been reserved for flood control infrastructure.

For much of the twentieth century, these waterways were treated strictly as engineering systems. Many bayous were straightened, deepened, and lined with concrete by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to increase drainage capacity. The resulting channels became overlooked “back-of-house” landscapes—difficult to access and often disconnected from surrounding neighborhoods.

Over time, a different possibility began to emerge. Beginning with early improvements along Buffalo Bayou in downtown Houston, designers and civic advocates explored how flood control corridors might also support recreation and mobility. These experiments demonstrated that flood infrastructure could double as public space without compromising its primary hydrological function.



Photo: Jonnu Singleton / SWA

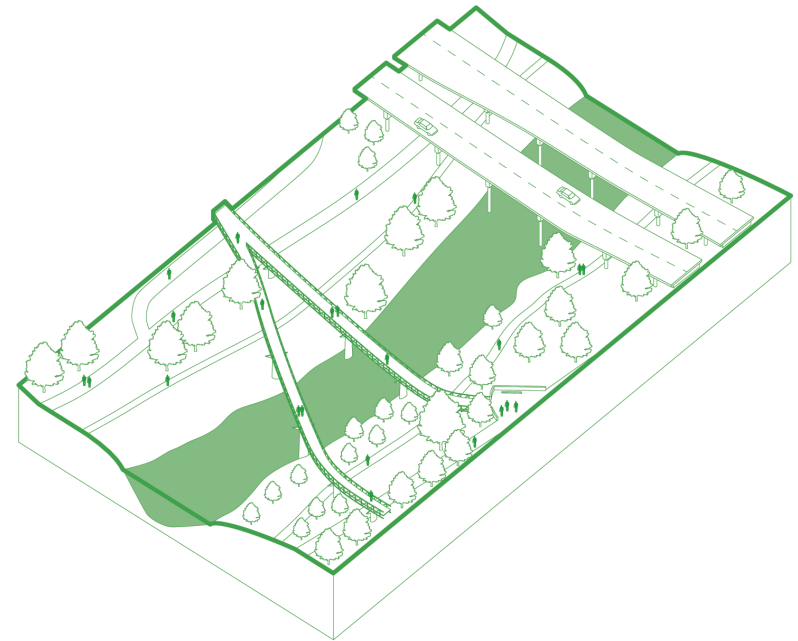
The Bayou Greenways initiative scales that idea across the entire metropolitan watershed. Led by the Houston Parks Board with planning and design support from SWA and others, the project transforms flood control corridors into a regional network of parks and trails. Multi-use paths run along channel banks and flood benches, linking neighborhoods, transit corridors, and civic destinations while preserving the bayous' ability to carry stormwater during major flood events.

Since the first segments opened in 2014, the system has grown to include hundreds of miles of trails and thousands of acres of connected green space. Today the network attracts millions of annual visitors and is on track to place high-quality park access within 1.5 miles of the majority of Houston residents.

What began as a collection of engineered drainage channels is gradually becoming one of the largest linear park systems in North America.

Watershed Moments

Large infrastructure transformations rarely begin at metropolitan scale. In Houston, the Bayou Greenways initiative grew out of a series of smaller pilot projects that demonstrated how flood control corridors could support public life. Early interventions along Buffalo Bayou allowed residents to experience these waterways as civic spaces for the first time in generations. As each project proved successful, support grew among local officials, community advocates, and philanthropic partners. Over time, these incremental improvements helped build the political and financial momentum necessary to imagine the bayous not as isolated drainage channels, but as a connected metropolitan park network.



Buffalo Bayou Park and other projects along this bayou demonstrated early on that flood control and recreation could be compatible. This section of Buffalo Bayou Park shows the Rosemont Pedestrian Bridge that links the south side of the park to the north side at park level and over one of the six lane parkways that bound the corridor to the neighborhood beyond. Buffalo Bayou Greenway, which runs underneath, has 26.9 miles of trails.

06

Leveraged Levees

Milton Street Park Los Angeles, CA River | Along | Co-use

Ballona Creek once meandered across the coastal plain of Los Angeles, irrigating ranch lands before emptying into the Pacific Ocean. During the twentieth century, however, the waterway was dramatically reshaped as part of a regional flood protection campaign. By the late 1930s, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers had straightened and lined most of the lower nine miles of the creek with concrete, transforming it into a high-capacity drainage channel.

In the 1970s, a service road along the north levee was repurposed as a 6.5-mile Class I bike path. The trail connected residential neighborhoods with beaches, wetlands, parks, and employment centers across the Westside of Los Angeles. Despite its popularity, the route remained difficult to access. Long stretches of the corridor passed behind fences and flood control infrastructure, leaving few entry points for the three million residents living within a short distance of the path.

Milton Street Park addresses this gap. In 2007, two regional conservation authorities acquired a narrow 1.2-acre parcel adjacent to the bike trail and commissioned SWA to design a small public park that could improve access to the corridor. Completed in 2016, the linear park introduces a sequence of shaded outdoor rooms along the levee, including a pavilion, seating terraces, native planting areas, and bike amenities for trail users.



Photo: Jonnu Singleton / SWA

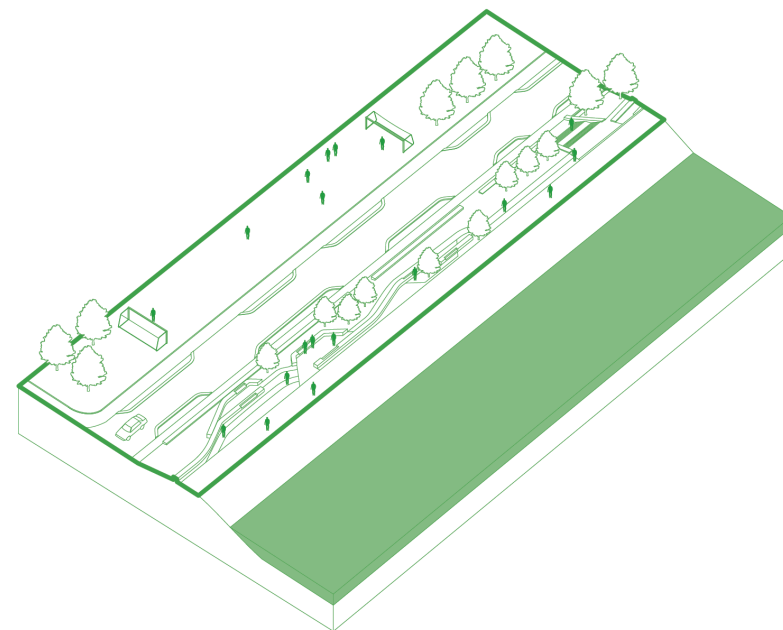
A broad stair at the park's entrance doubles as an outdoor classroom for a nearby middle school, while bioswales and vegetated buffers filter stormwater before it enters the creek. Together, these elements transform a previously overlooked parcel into a neighborhood gateway to the Ballona Creek Greenway.

Though modest in size, the park demonstrates how targeted interventions can activate large infrastructure corridors. Positioned midway between the Pacific Ocean and inland recreation areas, Milton Street Park now serves as a resting point, gathering space, and ecological oasis along one of Los Angeles's most heavily used bike routes.

Pocket Access

Large linear infrastructure systems often fail as public spaces for a simple reason: they lack access. Miles of trails or flood control corridors can pass near neighborhoods without offering safe or welcoming entry points. Milton Street Park illustrates how small, strategically placed parks can solve this problem. By creating a visible and inviting gateway to the regional bike path, the project helps unlock the recreational potential of an entire corridor.

This “pocket access” strategy can be repeated along many types of infrastructure—levees, rail corridors, canals, and highways—where narrow parcels or leftover spaces provide opportunities for small civic interventions that connect surrounding communities to larger regional networks



The design includes a series of intimate gathering spaces, lush native planting, and a robust stormwater infiltration system. Gabions are used for retaining walls, integrated seating, and area delineation for cyclists and pedestrians.

07

Absorbent Archipelago

Changsha Baxizhou Island

Changsha, China

River | In | Co-use

For centuries the Xiang River served as the primary transportation corridor linking central China to the Yangtze River basin and provinces farther south. Though river transport has since declined, the river continues to shape the growth of Changsha, a rapidly expanding megacity in Hunan Province.

Beginning in the mid-2000s, Changsha launched a series of major development initiatives along the Xiang River's eastern banks. One of these efforts, the Dawang Mountain Development Zone, pursued a different strategy from nearby commercial districts. Rather than focusing solely on urban construction, planners emphasized conservation and recreation to support a growing eco-tourism economy.

Baxizhou Island, a narrow 185-acre river island located just upstream of the city center, became the site of the district's first pilot project, with SWA commissioned to design the park in 2012. Formed by centuries of sediment deposition along a gentle bend in the river, the island measures roughly two miles long and a quarter mile wide. Its landscape is highly dynamic, shaped by seasonal cycles of flooding, erosion, and sediment movement. Instead of resisting the river's fluctuations, the design embraces them. A network of secondary channels and wetlands increases edge habitat while allowing floodwaters to move across the island without damaging critical infrastructure. Trails, boardwalks, and campsites are positioned according to elevation, while plant communities transition from flood-tolerant wetlands to upland forest.

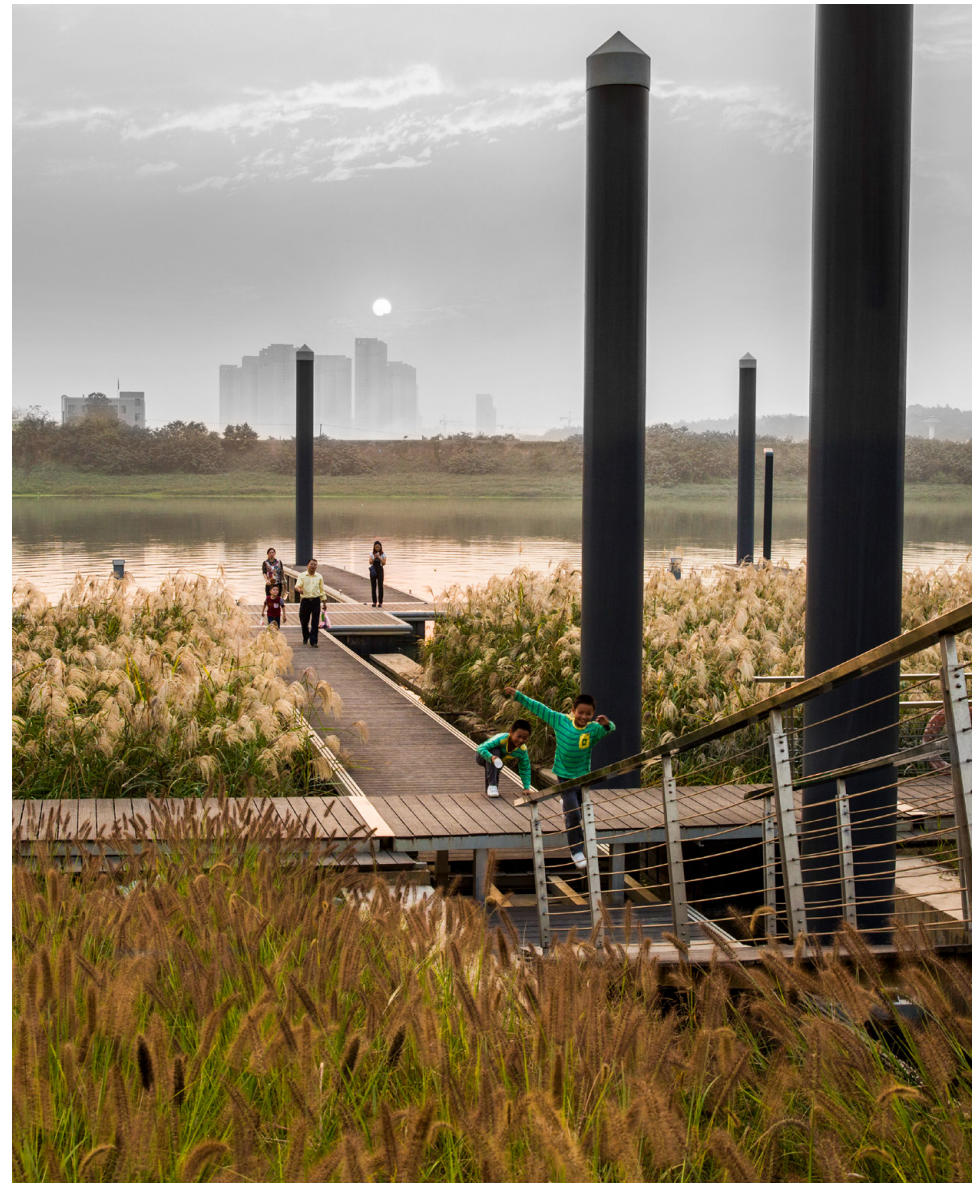


Photo: David Lloyd / SWA

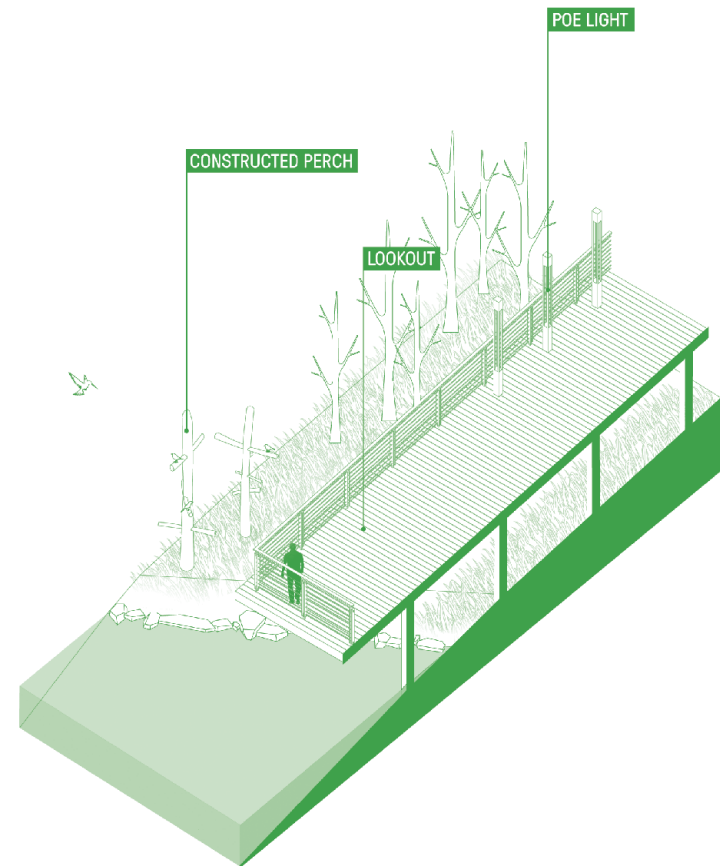
More than 25,000 native trees were planted to create groves, clearings, and ecological corridors connected by over thirteen miles of paths. Repurposed timber and stone were used for paving, while vertical log installations provide habitat for migratory birds.

Since opening in 2015, the island park has become a major recreational destination for residents of Changsha. It has also been tested by extreme flood events—including a record flood in 2017 that temporarily submerged much of the island—providing valuable lessons for future riverfront resilience projects.

Today Baxizhou Island serves as a model for ecological park design along the Xiang River, informing similar strategies for a series of river islands upstream and downstream of the city.

Inundation by Design

By organizing trails, plant communities, and recreational spaces according to elevation, the park allows large portions of the island to flood without catastrophic damage. Wetlands and secondary channels help distribute water across the landscape, while upland zones protect more sensitive uses. This approach transforms flood risk into an ecological and recreational asset. Seasonal inundation reshapes habitats, supports biodiversity, and reinforces the island's identity as a dynamic river landscape.



A primary feature of Changsha Baxizhou is a system of elevated overlooks that jut over the river and provide visitors with commanding views up- and down-stream. Snags and woody perches create habitat for local birds.

08

Industrial Afterlife

Guangzhou Steel Park (Guanggang Park)

Guangzhou, China

Rail + River | Through | Reuse

For more than half a century, the Guangzhou Steel Factory occupied a strategic industrial corridor along the Pearl River in southern Guangzhou. Established in 1958 as one of South China's first major steelworks, the facility operated as part of a larger logistics network tied to freight rail, river shipping, and nearby port infrastructure. Rail spurs threaded through blast furnaces, transfer stations, material yards, and industrial processing areas before extending toward Guangzhou's shipbuilding district and industrial waterfront along the Pearl River.

As Guangzhou expanded outward in the early twenty-first century, the factory's heavy industrial operations became increasingly incompatible with the surrounding urban fabric. Production ceased in 2013, and the site was incorporated into a larger redevelopment initiative. Rather than clearing the former steelworks entirely, the landscape framework developed by SWA and local collaborators preserves large portions of the site's manufacturing infrastructure as the organizational backbone for a new public park and ecological corridor.

The project operates simultaneously as environmental remediation, industrial heritage preservation, and urban redevelopment initiative. Extensive soil remediation and environmental cleanup were paired with the construction of new public open space intended to anchor a rapidly densifying mixed-use district expected to house hundreds of thousands of residents.

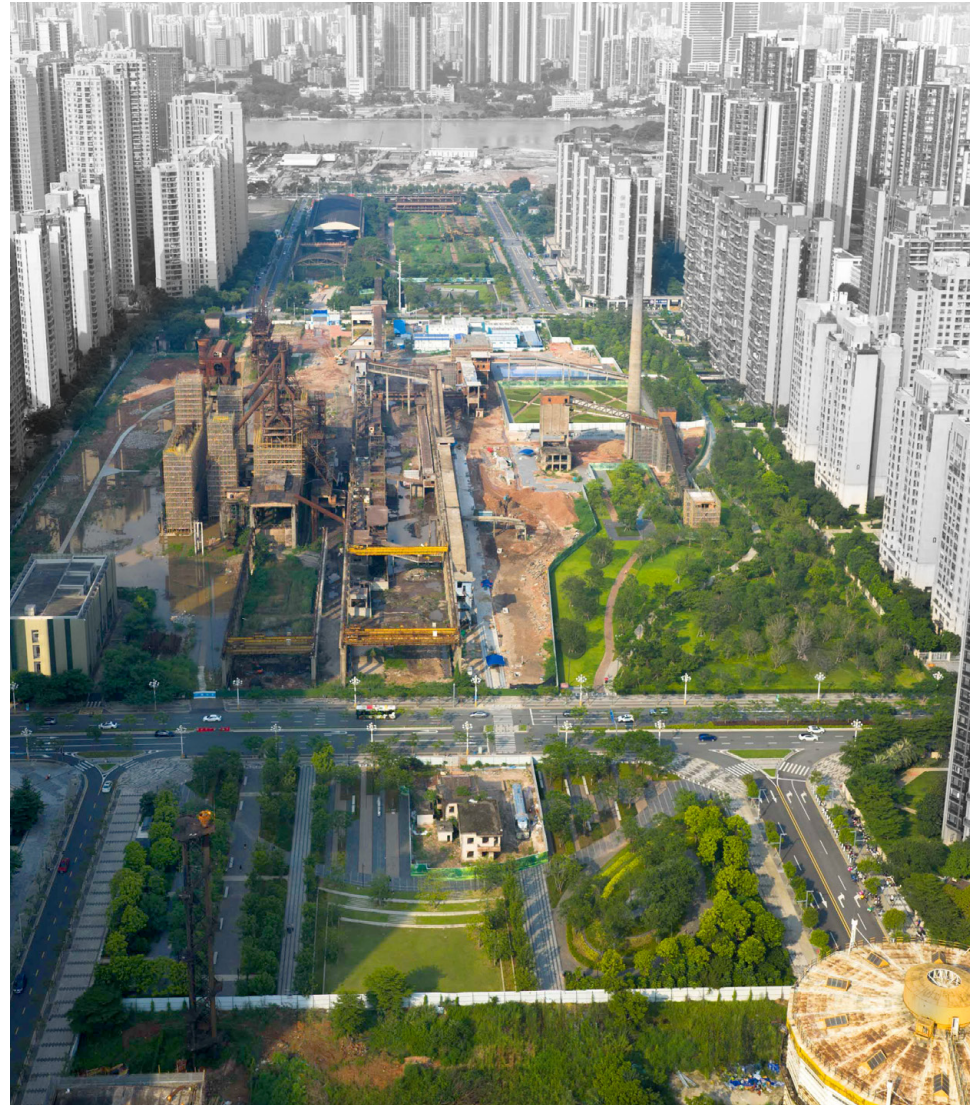
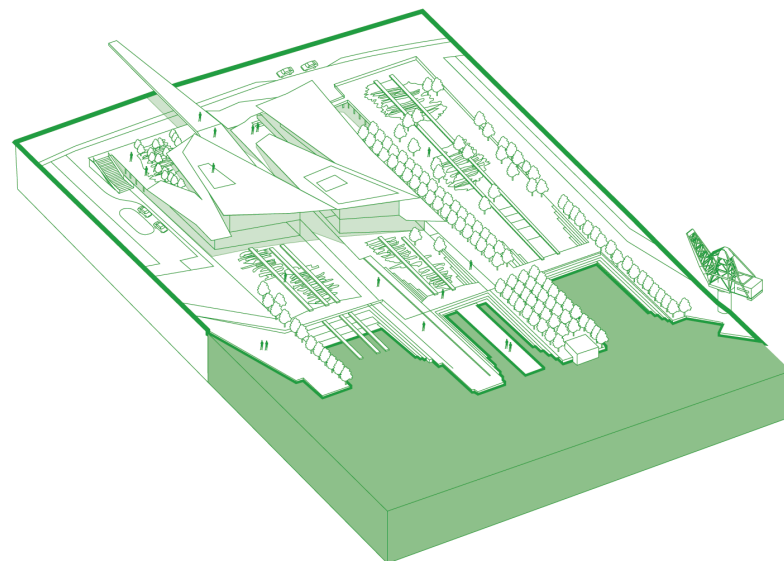


Photo: Chill Shine Studio / SWA

Today the 34-hectare park forms the central green spine of the redevelopment district. Former rail alignments reappear as pedestrian paths, gardens, and plazas that weave through preserved industrial structures including blast furnaces, transfer stations, hoppers, and dedusting machinery. Rather than treating these remnants as isolated artifacts, the design preserves the directional logic and spatial relationships of the former production system itself. Rail lines continue through meadows, plazas, and groves of ficus trees, while elevated pedestrian corridors frame views toward the surviving furnaces and processing infrastructure. To the east, the corridor extends into adjacent shipyard redevelopment zones. Tower cranes, hollowed-out ship hulls, and oversized industrial gear cogs are preserved and repurposed as working landscape elements, extending the industrial heritage framework from the former steelworks to the waterfront itself.

Networked Remnants

At Guanggang, the adaptive reuse of rail infrastructure does more than preserve industrial memory; it reveals how inherited logistical systems can structure new ecological, recreational, and civic relationships across an entire post-industrial district. Rail corridors that once linked steel production to shipbuilding and river commerce are now helping organize a larger network of public waterfronts, parks, and mixed-use districts emerging across Guangzhou's former industrial edge. Nearby shipyard redevelopment projects preserve slipways, cranes, and maritime infrastructure as part of publicly accessible cultural landscapes along the Pearl River, demonstrating how infrastructure adaptation can expand incrementally through connected industrial territories rather than isolated sites alone.



At the eastern end of the former steelworks rail corridor, century-old shipyard slipways have been preserved in situ and transformed into a publicly accessible waterfront park featuring a floating theater, stepped seating, heritage gardens, and a cultural gallery documenting the site's maritime history and revitalization process.

09

Railyard Riverwalk

Sava Promenada

Belgrade, Serbia

Rail | In | Reuse

For more than a century, a large freight railyard occupied the low-lying land along the Sava River just south of Belgrade's historic city center. Built in 1881, the Beograd Spoljna rail yard served as a critical logistics hub connecting the Balkans to broader European rail networks. Despite frequent flooding and unstable ground conditions, the site remained an active industrial landscape for decades.

By the early twenty-first century, however, rail operations began shifting to newer facilities outside the city core. The planned relocation of freight activity opened an extraordinary redevelopment opportunity: 247 acres of riverfront land within walking distance of Belgrade's historic center.

The site became the focus of the Belgrade Waterfront redevelopment initiative, a major public-private partnership launched in the 2010s to transform the former rail yard into a new mixed-use district. SWA developed the landscape master plan and design guidelines for the site's parks, streetscapes, and public waterfront.

At the heart of the plan is Sava Promenada, a 1.8-kilometer riverfront park that runs through the former railyard from Branko's Bridge to the New Railway Bridge. The promenade was among the first public spaces constructed within the redevelopment zone, establishing a civic spine that connects new neighborhoods with the river.



Photo: David Lloyd / SWA

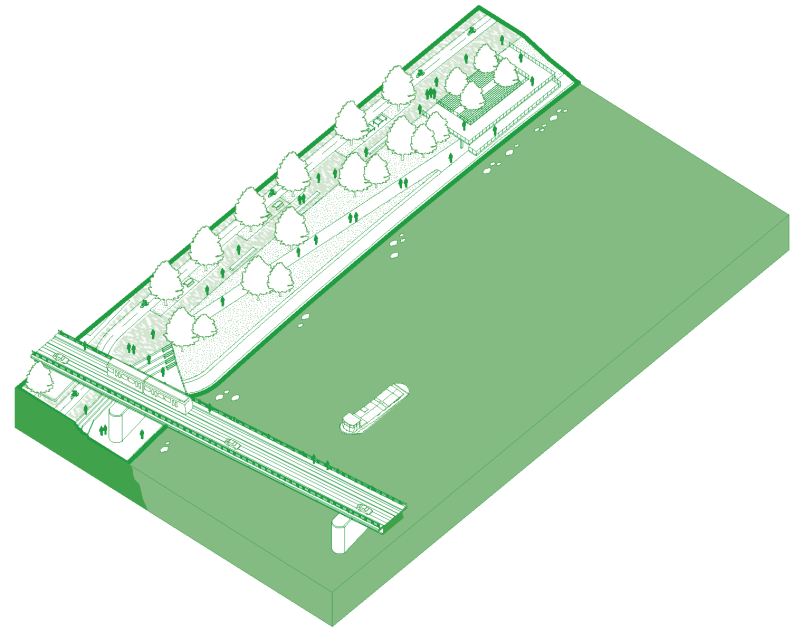
The design builds on the area's longstanding river culture. Belgrade's famous *splavovi*—floating bars and clubs moored along the waterfront—remain a lively presence, while the historic zigzagging stone embankment used by fishermen was preserved. Behind the embankment, new fill raised the grade to form a flood-protective levee supporting the promenade above.

Today the riverwalk combines pedestrian paths, cycling routes, terraces, play areas, and event spaces oriented toward the water. Fragments of the site's industrial history remain embedded in the landscape, including reclaimed rail tracks repurposed as tree grates.

As the Belgrade Waterfront district continues to develop, the promenade anchors public life along the river and demonstrates how former rail infrastructure can become the backbone of a new urban waterfront.

Early Identity

Large redevelopment districts often struggle to attract early public life. Building a central public space early in the process can establish identity and momentum before surrounding development is complete. By delivering a continuous riverfront park within the former rail yard, the project immediately reconnected the city to its waterfront and created a destination for residents and visitors alike. This strategy can be decisive. A well-designed public waterfront not only provides recreation and mobility—it also signals long-term civic investment and helps catalyze the broader transformation of former infrastructure landscapes.



A section of the promenade as it goes under Savski Most (Old Sava Bridge). The bridge marked the northern edge of the former train yard, where freight trains coming from the north would go under the bridge and branch out.

10 Last Link

Hi Line Connector

Dallas, TX

Rail | In | Co-use

The Missouri–Kansas–Texas Railroad, commonly known as the “Katy,” once ran through the heart of Dallas, helping establish the city as a major rail hub during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. When rail service declined in the late 1980s, a section of the abandoned corridor was donated to the city. Local advocates soon recognized the opportunity to transform the former rail line into a public trail.

In 1997, the nonprofit Friends of the Katy Trail formed to champion the corridor’s conversion into a linear park. The Katy Trail opened its first section in 2000 and quickly became one of Dallas’s most popular public spaces. The 3.5-mile route now attracts millions of annual users and has helped catalyze significant development in adjacent neighborhoods.

Inspired by this success, civic leaders began imagining a larger connected trail system. In 2015, the Circuit Trail Conservancy was established to advance a 50-mile urban trail network known as The Loop Dallas, designed to link parks, neighborhoods, and employment centers across the city.

The Hi Line Connector was built to close one of the system’s most critical gaps. Completed in 2024, the one-mile trail links the Katy Trail to the Trinity Strand Trail in the Design District. The route follows the wide median of Hi Line Drive—named for the overhead electric line that once powered nearby industrial infrastructure—creating a multi-use path that

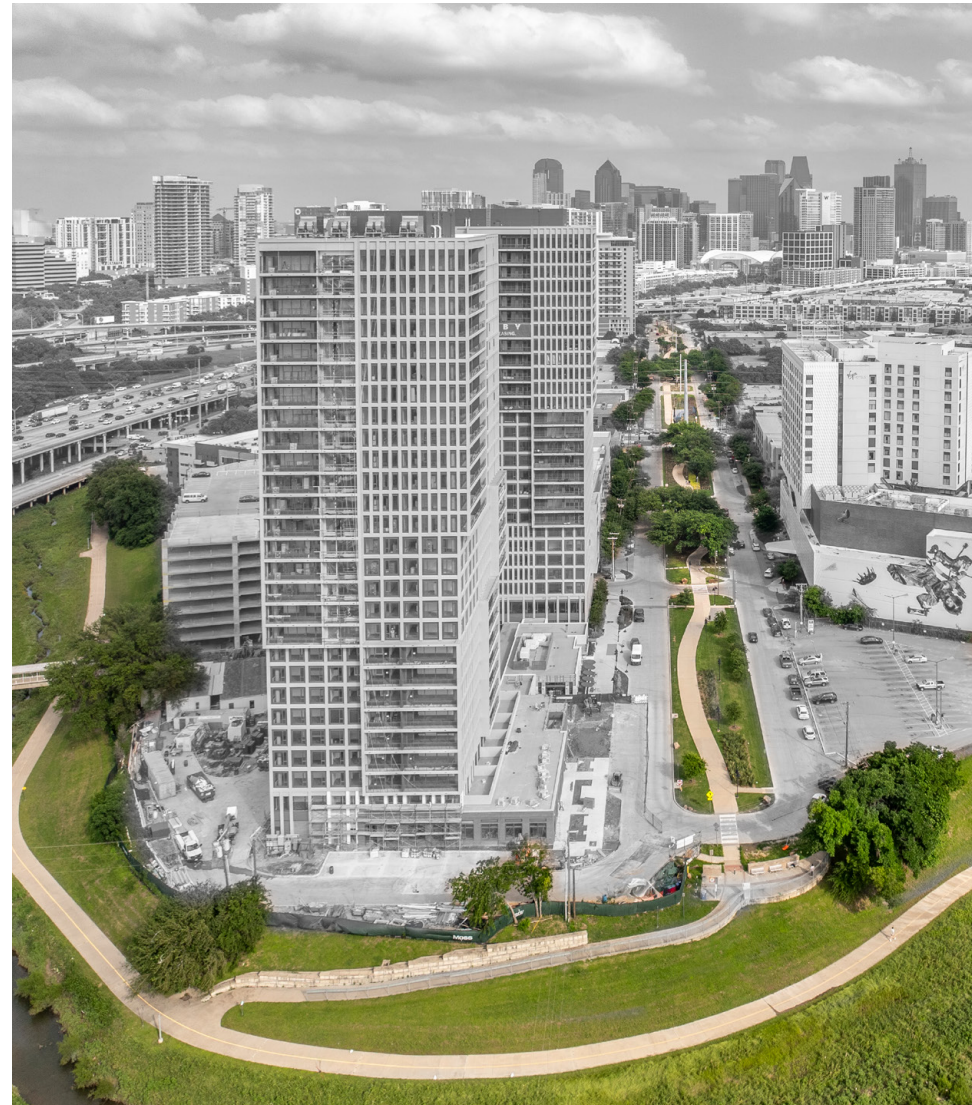


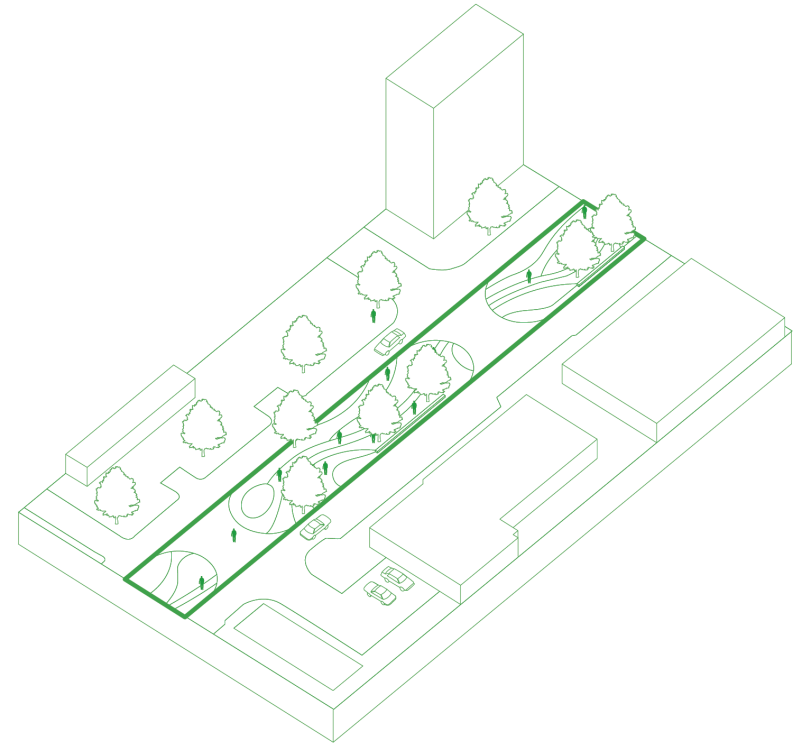
Photo: Bill Tatham / SWA

accommodates walking, cycling, skateboarding, and micromobility. Murals by local artists transform a formerly overlooked underpass into a vibrant gateway, while improved crossings beneath Interstate 35E and nearby rail lines enhance safety and accessibility.

Though modest in length, the connector plays an outsized role in the city's growing trail network. By linking two previously isolated corridors, the project allows residents to travel continuously from Uptown through the Design District and beyond.

The Middle Mile

Urban trail systems often fail not because of missing miles, but because of missing connections. Small gaps between otherwise successful corridors can prevent a network from functioning as a coherent mobility system. The Hi Line Connector illustrates the power of targeted gap-filling projects. By closing a one-mile break between two major trails, the project unlocks a much larger network and significantly expands the reach of active transportation across the city.



Set into an existing median, a 12-foot-wide path easily accommodates simultaneous walking, running, and cycling. The project features the city's first mid-intersection street crossing.

11

Platform for Pride

The Memorial at Harvey Milk Plaza

San Francisco, CA

Rail | Over | Co-use

Harvey Milk Plaza sits at the entrance to Castro Street Station along San Francisco's Market Street corridor. The underground transit station opened in 1980 as part of the Bay Area Rapid Transit expansion, which placed regional rail and city streetcar lines into a shared subway beneath the city's primary commercial spine. At street level, the station entrance was designed with a dramatic diagonal stairway descending into a sunken garden and concourse below.

Almost immediately after construction began, the site took on an additional and unexpected role. In 1978, Harvey Milk—the Castro district's city supervisor and one of the most prominent leaders of the gay rights movement—was assassinated in San Francisco City Hall. The plaza above the station soon became a gathering place for the LGBTQ+ community and its allies, hosting memorials, protests, celebrations, and political rallies. In 1979, the city formally named the space Harvey Milk Plaza, and in 1997, a towering rainbow flag was installed as a permanent symbol of LGBTQ+ pride.

Over the following decades, the plaza's civic importance grew while its physical form remained largely unchanged. When accessibility improvements to the transit station were proposed in 2016, local advocates recognized an opportunity to rethink the plaza as both transportation infrastructure and a public memorial.



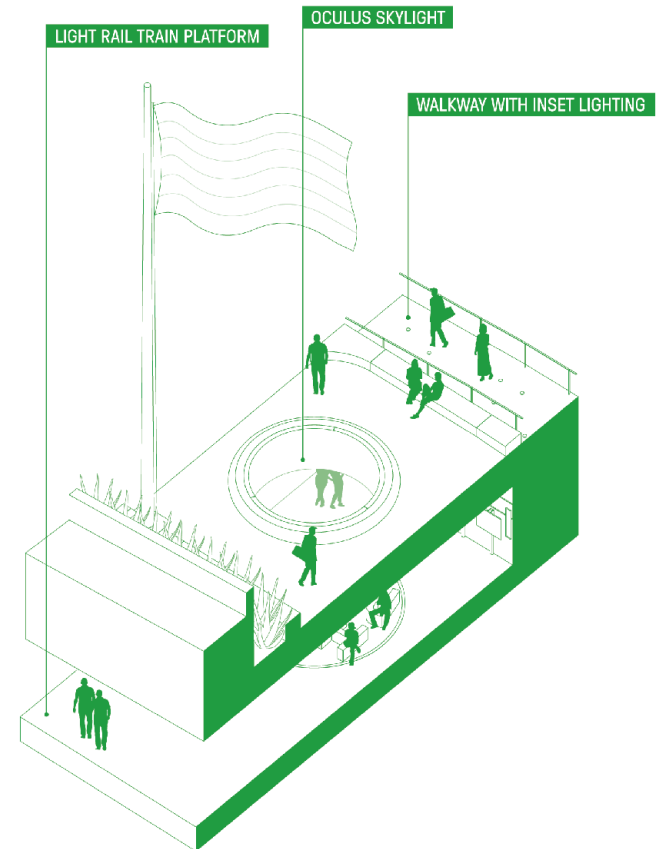
Photo: Bill Tatham / SWA

SWA's redesign transforms the station entrance into a flexible civic landscape. A circular gathering space framed by a memorial grove provides room for rallies and commemorations, while a raised "soapbox" platform offers a place for public speech and activism. At the center of the plaza, a large circular skylight brings daylight into the transit concourse below, illuminating a public art gallery while visually connecting the underground station to the plaza above.

The project demonstrates how transit infrastructure can support more than mobility. At Harvey Milk Plaza, the roof of a subway station becomes a platform for collective memory, civic gathering, and the continuing struggle for social justice.

Transit as Civic Stage

Transportation infrastructure often produces leftover or purely functional public spaces at street level. Yet these locations can also become powerful civic stages when communities claim them for public life. Harvey Milk Plaza illustrates how transit nodes can serve as gathering places for social movements. Because stations sit at the intersection of mobility networks and daily life, they naturally concentrate people, visibility, and symbolic power. Designing these spaces to support assembly, protest, and public expression allows infrastructure to accommodate not only movement through the city, but also moments when communities come together to shape its future.



As both a transit station and a memorial, the design includes public art and interactive elements dedicated to visibility and representation of the wide spectrum of people encompassed by the LGBTQ+ community.

12

Floating Forests

Suzhou Center Bridges

Suzhou, China

Road | Over | Co-use

Suzhou is an ancient city in the Yangtze River Delta surrounded by lakes and waterways. In the early 1990s, a new district known as Suzhou Industrial Park (SIP) was developed east of the historic city as a major center for technology, manufacturing, and high-density housing. Planned to accommodate nearly one million residents, the district required an extensive transportation network to support its rapid growth.

One of the primary roadways built during the district's early expansion was Xinggang Street, a nine-lane boulevard that runs along the western edge of Jinji Lake. As development intensified, the boulevard became a major barrier between the commercial district of Suzhou Center and the recreational waterfront parks surrounding the lake. In 2011, SWA was selected through an international design competition to develop a landscape strategy for the district's central business area. A key feature of the proposal was a pair of landscaped pedestrian bridges designed to reconnect the commercial core with the lakefront parks across the boulevard.

Completed in 2017, the two bridges span more than 600 feet each and cross not only the arterial roadway but also subway lines and underground traffic tunnels below. Rather than functioning as simple crossings, the structures were conceived as elevated parks. Using post-tensioned concrete construction, the bridges support dozens of large trees planted directly within the structural girders, creating the



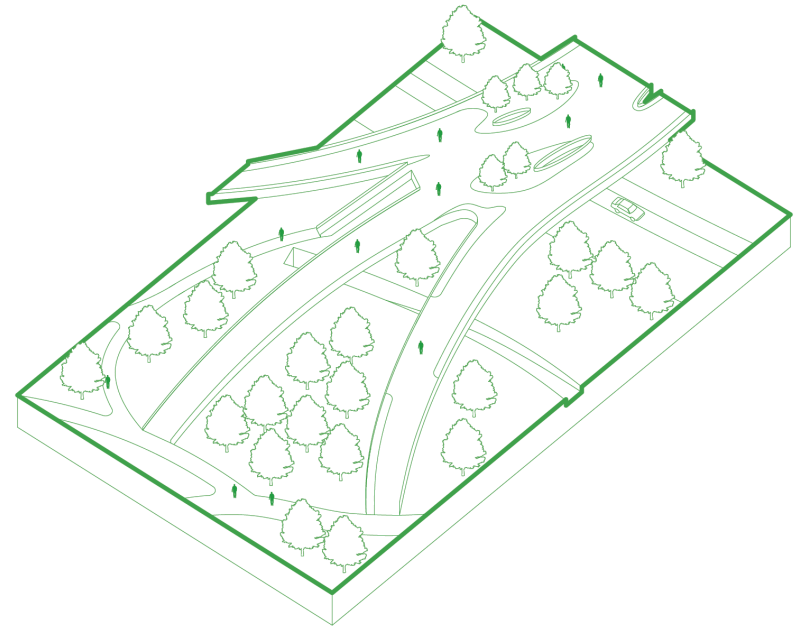
Photo: Jonnu Singleton / SWA

experience of walking through a floating urban forest. At their narrowest points the bridges stretch nearly 100 feet wide, accommodating walking paths, overlooks, and gathering spaces. As visitors move across the spans, the decks gradually split into ramps and terraces that descend toward the lakefront promenade, connecting the retail district, transit hub, and waterfront park network without requiring pedestrians to cross traffic at street level.

Today the bridges function as both transportation infrastructure and public landscape—providing shade, views, and gathering space while restoring pedestrian continuity between the city and its waterfront.

Second Ground Plane

Major urban boulevards are often designed for vehicle throughput during early phases of development. As districts mature and densities increase, those same roadways can become barriers to pedestrian movement and public life. The Suzhou Center Bridges demonstrate how new ground can be layered above existing infrastructure to repair these divisions. By treating pedestrian bridges as parks rather than purely functional crossings, the project creates a second landscape plane that restores walkability between dense districts and their surrounding amenities.



A pair of plant-rich bridges split into “fingers” as they extend over the multi-lane roadway below, connecting a terraced outdoor shopping area to a nearby waterfront park.

13

Connector Cap

Halperin Park

Dallas, TX

Road | Over | Co-use

Halperin Park spans Interstate 35E in Oak Cliff, one of Dallas's oldest neighborhoods. The freeway corridor was constructed in 1968, cutting through historically Black and Hispanic communities that had already been marked as "hazardous" or "declining" in redlining maps of the 1930s. The new highway physically divided Oak Cliff, isolating the historic Tenth Street Freedman's Town from nearby neighborhoods and civic amenities. Decades later, the Texas Department of Transportation launched the Southern Gateway Project, an effort to widen eleven miles of Interstate 35E to address regional congestion. The initial plans included additional traffic lanes but offered few benefits for the communities most directly impacted by the freeway.

In 2015, local residents proposed an alternative vision: a deck park that would reconnect the two sides of Oak Cliff while improving environmental and social conditions along the corridor. Inspired in part by the success of Klyde Warren Park in downtown Dallas, designed by OJB, community advocates persuaded regional transportation leaders to incorporate the idea into the larger highway reconstruction effort.

The resulting project places a five-acre public park atop a structural deck spanning the interstate. Designed by HKS with landscape architecture by SWA, the park reestablishes the historic alignment of 12th Street as a pedestrian promenade while creating a new civic landscape above the traffic below.

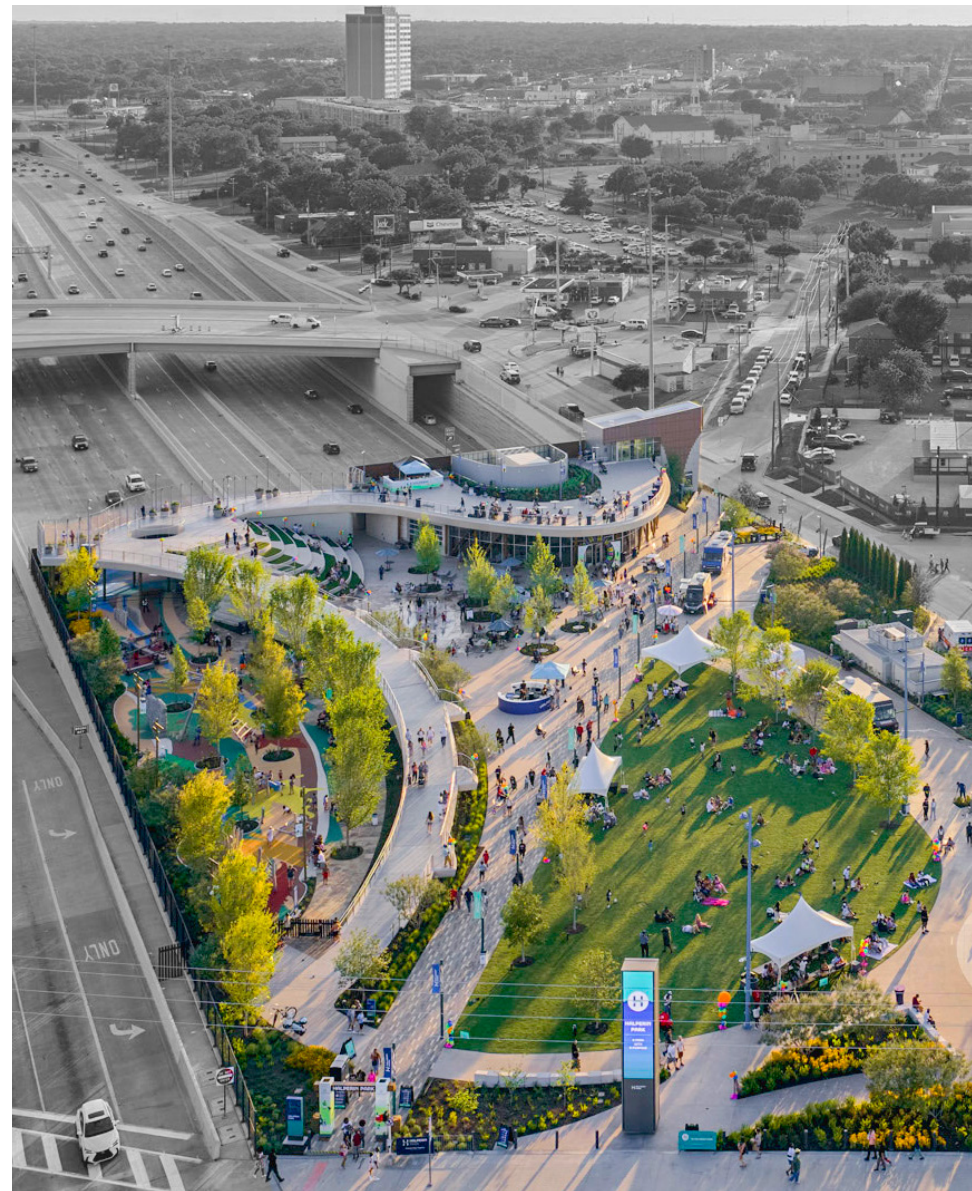


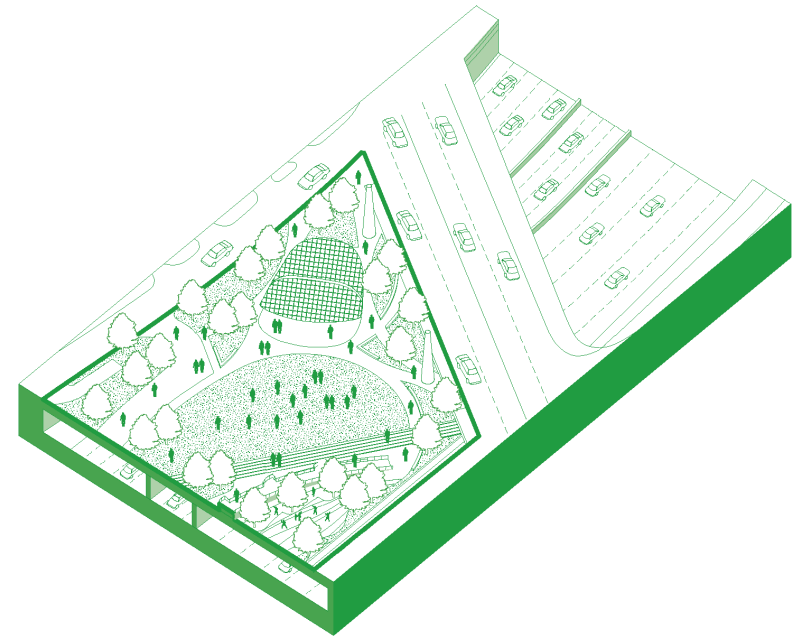
Photo: Bill Tatham / SWA

Amenities include a performance pavilion, open lawns, play areas, water features, food vendors, and educational exhibits highlighting neighborhood history. Elevated overlooks provide views toward downtown Dallas, while shaded pathways and gathering spaces create a new destination for residents and visitors alike.

Halperin Park serves as both a public gathering space and a physical reconnection between neighborhoods long divided by highway infrastructure.

Public Spaces for Reconciliation

Urban freeways often leave lasting scars in the neighborhoods they cut through. Deck parks offer a powerful strategy for repairing these divisions by creating new public ground above existing infrastructure. At Halperin Park, the freeway cap does more than provide recreational space. It restores a historic street connection, reduces noise and air pollution exposure, and creates a shared civic destination between communities on both sides of the highway. For cities grappling with the legacy of mid-twentieth-century highway construction, projects like this demonstrate how transportation infrastructure can be retrofitted to support neighborhood reconnection and equitable development.



Phase 1 of the deck park over I-35 showing South Ewing Avenue along the east end of the deck. The deck spans a 12-lane highway with five lanes in each direction plus two reversible express lanes.

14

Freeway Fringe

Ricardo Lara Linear Park

Lynwood, CA

Road | Along | Co-use

Ricardo Lara Linear Park occupies a narrow strip of land wedged between an elevated freeway and a surface street in Lynwood, a working-class city in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. The park runs for nearly a mile along Interstate 105, also known as the Century Freeway, which was completed in 1993 after decades of political controversy and community resistance. Like many highways built during the late twentieth century, the freeway was routed through predominantly Black and Latino neighborhoods. In Lynwood, the project cut the city in half and left behind large swaths of state-owned right-of-way.

Today, freeway infrastructure maintained by the California Department of Transportation occupies roughly eleven percent of the city's total land area. Despite the abundance of transportation infrastructure, Lynwood has historically lacked accessible public parks. In 2012, the city secured funding through a statewide ballot initiative aimed at expanding park access in underserved communities. Officials identified a long, neglected parcel running along the north side of the freeway—once part of the Santa Ana Line of the Pacific Electric Railway's Red Car network—as an opportunity site.



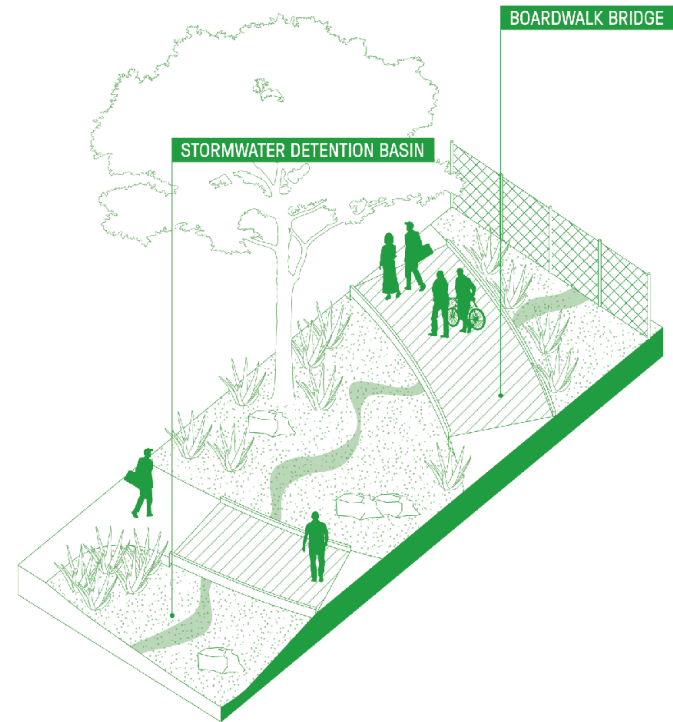
Photo: Jonnu Singleton / SWA

SWA worked with community groups to transform the former dumping ground into a linear neighborhood park. The design weaves together a one-mile walking path, a community garden, fitness stations, playground areas, and a dog park within the site's narrow footprint. Native plantings and a continuous bioswale capture and filter stormwater draining from the freeway above.

Since opening in 2015, the park has become an active social space for nearby residents while improving environmental conditions along the freeway corridor. Its success helped inspire additional freeway-adjacent parks nearby, demonstrating how leftover infrastructure landscapes can catalyze a network of valuable community amenities.

Better Buffers

Urban freeways often generate long, underused strips of land—buffer zones, maintenance corridors, and remnant rights-of-way that sit between transportation infrastructure and surrounding neighborhoods. For cities where highways occupy large portions of the urban landscape, these fringe spaces represent an important opportunity. Reimagined collectively, they can form a distributed network of neighborhood parks embedded within the infrastructure that once divided or otherwise disenfranchised communities.



Each block includes features identified by the community during a community engagement process. The flood-prone parcel was designed to capture and filter stormwater with a catchment area of 24 acres, collecting 82,700 cubic feet of stormwater per year.

15

Graphic Gateways

Houston Gateway Art Bridges

Houston, TX

Road | In | Co-use

Houston's highway network is among the largest in the United States, supporting one of the nation's most important logistics hubs. Thousands of cargo trucks move daily between the Port of Houston and regional distribution centers along a system that includes more than 5,600 lane miles of roadway.

Like many large American cities, Houston continues to expand and reconstruct its freeway corridors. In 2011, the Texas Department of Transportation announced the North Houston Highway Improvement Project, a multi-decade effort to reconfigure and widen portions of Interstate 69 near downtown. Additionally, ahead of the 2017 Super Bowl, local civic leaders sought ways to improve the visual experience of the corridor for residents and visitors. A design competition invited proposals for temporary beautification projects along the I-69 freeway leading into the city center.

SWA proposed a series of large-scale art installations mounted on ten pedestrian bridges crossing the depressed freeway between Elgin and Bell Streets. Using the existing chain-link fencing along each bridge, the design intervention involved threading thousands of colored plastic slats through the wire mesh to create ribbon-like patterns stretching across the highway.



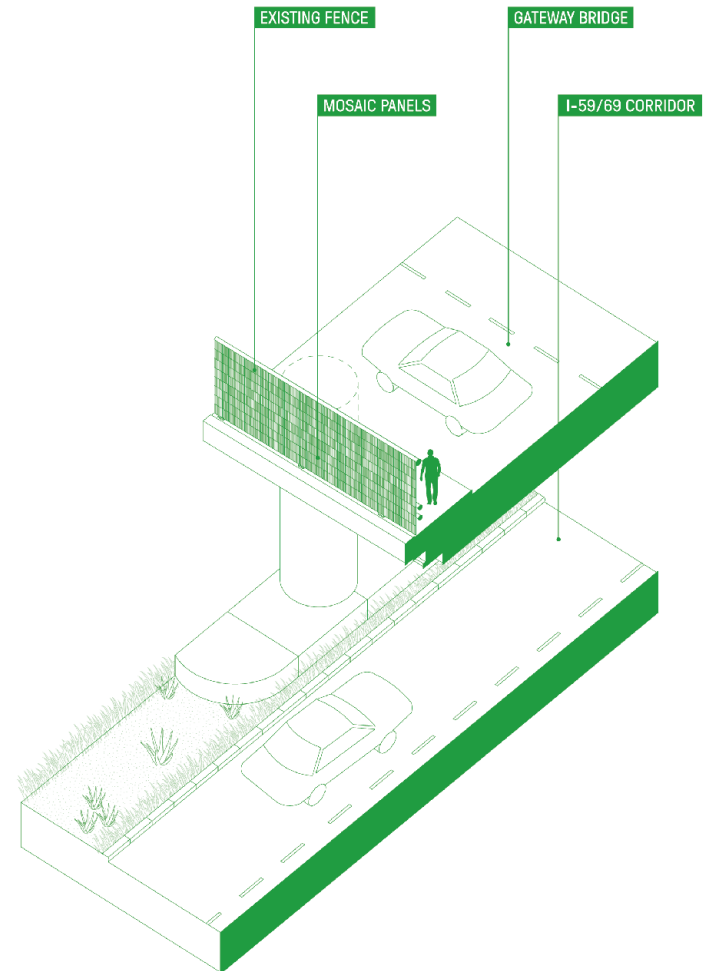
Photo: Maribel Amador / SWA

The images were derived from photographs taken by Houston elementary school students and translated into abstract, pixelated mosaics that complied with highway safety regulations. From the roadway below, the installations appeared as sweeping bands of color spanning the overpasses, transforming a gray freeway trench into a dynamic gateway to downtown.

For pedestrians and cyclists crossing the bridges, the artwork created a partial visual screen from traffic while framing views toward surrounding neighborhoods. Installed for two years, the project demonstrated how modest, low-cost interventions can improve the experience of highway infrastructure while testing ideas for longer-term corridor improvements.

Tactical Touch

Major highway reconstruction projects often take decades to plan and build. In the meantime, temporary design interventions can help cities experiment with ways to improve the public realm around transportation infrastructure. The Houston Gateway Art Bridges illustrate how tactical projects can activate existing infrastructure with minimal construction. By using standard bridge fencing as a canvas, the installation transformed ordinary overpasses into civic landmarks visible to hundreds of thousands of drivers each day. These kinds of temporary interventions can build public support for larger infrastructure improvements while demonstrating new possibilities for entire highway corridors.



Colorful mosaic panels were woven into the existing chain-link fences along the pedestrian walkways on both sides of highway overpasses above the I-59/69 corridor. The installations were visible to cars and trucks passing underneath as they came in and out of Houston's downtown core. For pedestrians, the art installations provided a visual barrier from the dizzying traffic below.

Part 3

The Seven Phases

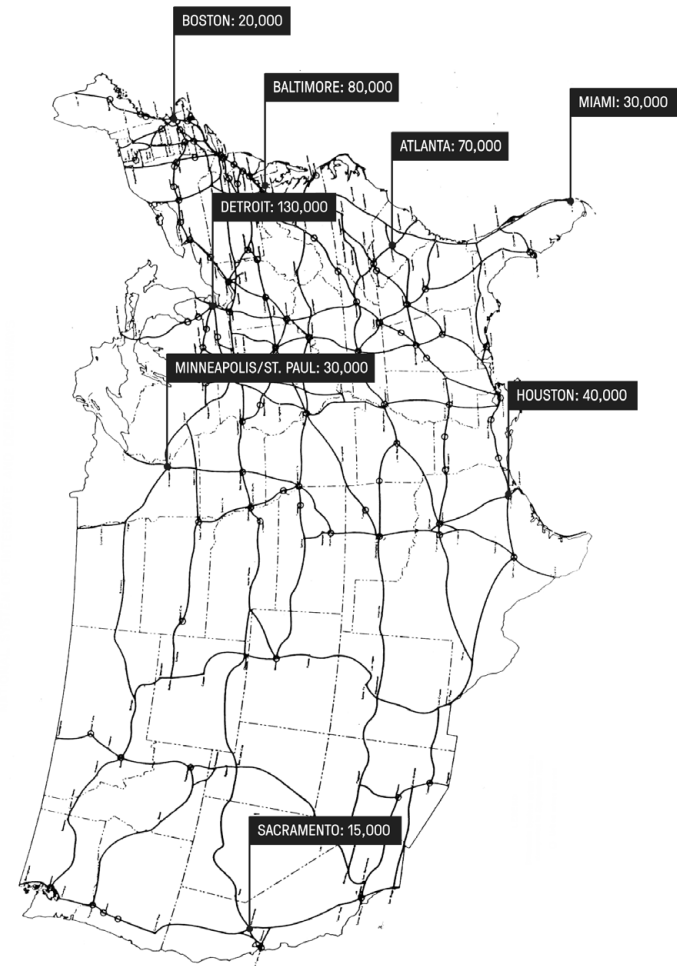
The Seven Phases

Large-scale infrastructure projects have long played a defining role in shaping cities and regions. They connect ports to markets, move people across metropolitan areas, and provide the physical backbone for economic growth. Yet the history of infrastructure investment is also deeply entangled with patterns of social and spatial inequity.

In the United States, the construction of the interstate highway system during the mid-twentieth century stands as one of the clearest examples. Authorized in 1956, the program produced more than 40,000 miles of roadway and became the largest public works initiative in the nation's history. While it dramatically improved regional mobility, its impacts were far from evenly distributed. In city after city, highway alignments were routed through neighborhoods with the least political power—often displacing predominantly Black, immigrant, and working-class communities and dismantling local economic networks that had taken generations to build. The physical and social scars of these decisions remain visible today.

In recent decades, a new wave of projects has begun to reinterpret this legacy infrastructure. As exemplified in the previous chapters, abandoned rail corridors have been converted into parks and trails. Industrial waterfronts have been restored as ecological landscapes and public promenades. Highway caps, flood control systems, and utility corridors are increasingly being redesigned to support recreation, habitat, and community life.

These infrastructure adaptation projects are often celebrated for their ability to transform underutilized spaces into civic assets. Yet they also operate within the same political and economic



Approximate number of people displaced in eight major US cities due to the construction of the Interstate highway system between 1955 and 1975.⁹

environments that shaped earlier generations of infrastructure investment. In many cities, new parks and trails have been accompanied by rising property values, speculative development, and new pressures on surrounding communities. The lesson is not that these projects should not be built. Rather, it is that the benefits and burdens of large-scale urban transformation must be considered carefully from the earliest stages of planning through long-term stewardship.

Infrastructure adaptation projects are rarely simple undertakings. They unfold over many years—sometimes decades—and require coordination among public agencies, community groups, private investors, designers, and political leaders. Because of their scale and duration, they are often best understood not as single projects but as a sequence of smaller efforts that accumulate over time.

Breaking large projects into phases can introduce greater accountability at every stage. It allows planners and designers to identify key decision points and better negotiate trade-offs between competing priorities such as economic development, public access, environmental performance, and neighborhood stability.

Who leads these projects also matters. Developer-led initiatives often prioritize shorter investment timelines and market-driven outcomes. In contrast, projects initiated by grassroots organizations or community partnerships frequently emphasize coalition building, participatory decision-making, and long-term stewardship.

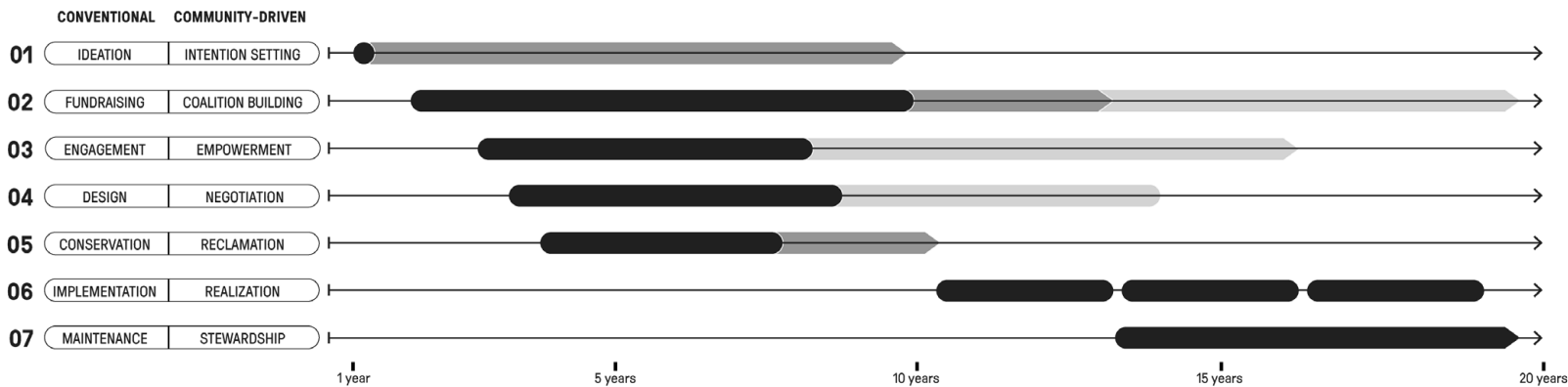
These differences reveal how deeply project outcomes are shaped by the processes used to deliver them. One often-overlooked barrier to equitable development lies in the language and procedures used by design and planning professionals. Terms embedded in environmental review processes, approval pathways, and construction contracts can unintentionally exclude local stakeholders who are unfamiliar with the technical vocabulary of infrastructure delivery.

Creating space for broader participation sometimes requires rethinking these processes as much as the projects themselves.

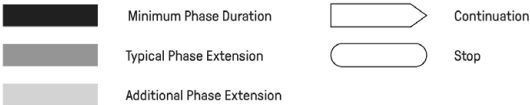
The seven phases outlined in the following pages synthesize anecdotes, reflections, and lessons learned from a diverse group of designers, project managers, economists, and nonprofit leaders, drawn from both their own writings, recordings, and interviews conducted with the authors. Taken together, their perspectives offer practical guidance for navigating the complex social, financial, and political terrain of infrastructure adaptation projects.

While every project unfolds differently, these shared experiences highlight key moments of decision—points where leadership, funding strategies, design choices, and governance structures can shape whether projects reinforce existing inequities or create more inclusive and resilient outcomes. The phases that follow do not describe a rigid sequence. In practice, they often overlap, repeat, or unfold in unexpected ways.

GENERALIZED
INFRASTRUCTURE ADAPTATION TIMELINE



This generalized project timeline is organized into seven distinct, though often overlapping, phases. While few infrastructure adaptation projects follow this exact progression, the framework was developed through the analysis of precedent projects and informed by interviews with more than thirty practitioners, advocates, and subject-matter experts. The following pages pair excerpts from those conversations with key insights, recurring challenges, and strategic considerations associated with each phase.



Phase 1

Ideation / Intention Setting

Infrastructure adaptation projects typically begin with an especially compelling idea—one that captures the public imagination while building enough support among agencies, advocates, and community members to move a complex project forward. These visions rarely emerge from a single source. They can grow out of government planning initiatives, community advocacy efforts, or the persistence of individual champions who recognize new possibilities in overlooked infrastructure.

Shifts in environmental policy, changing attitudes toward automobile dependence, and growing interest in urban conservation have all helped catalyze these ideas in recent decades. Sometimes a project begins through formal processes such as rezoning or public requests for proposals. In other cases, it grows from grassroots initiatives or small neighborhood improvements that gradually gain momentum and institutional support.

Regardless of where the idea originates, this early phase is an important moment in defining a project's intentions. Interviewees emphasized that the vision-setting stage should include honest reflection on the inequities embedded in past infrastructure investments—from displacement caused by highway construction to uneven access to parks and public space.

Projects that pair bold civic visions with clearly articulated social goals are more likely to build the broad coalitions required to sustain them over time. Establishing these intentions early can shape decisions throughout the life of a project, influencing everything from funding strategies and design priorities to long-term maintenance and stewardship.

On catalyzing adaptation...

"Throughout the life of a project, the original idea is always being threatened. People have to remain inspired. The visionary idea can't be buried on a shelf somewhere - it has to be on the surface at all times where it can continue to spark the public imagination."

- Tom Balsley, Principal, SWA ¹

"Projects like these don't have to be bold to be visionary. Oftentimes, the best way to garner support from the local community is to pay attention to how these spaces are already being used informally, and to develop a plan that can help support these uses by maintaining them while making them safer and more accessible."

- Rahid Cornejo, Project Director, Bergen Arches Preservation Coalition, Bergen, New Jersey ²

"When you're first building out a team - even if it's a team of volunteers before you have staff - it's so easy to assume that the only people you need are visionary people. You also need people who are going to be able to help you wrestle your big ideas to the ground - people who will say, 'this is great, but how are we going to do this?' If you're predisposed to being too up there in 'blue sky,' you need someone who can bring you back to the ground without diluting the vision."

- James Warren, Board Member, Richmond Bridgepark Foundation, Richmond, Virginia ³



Phase 2

Fundraising / Coalition Building

Infrastructure adaptation projects are often costly to implement. Yet there is no single financing model for transforming legacy infrastructure into public space. Early in a project's life, there is often pressure to secure large capital commitments to demonstrate momentum and long-term feasibility.

While early fundraising can help signal credibility, interviewees emphasized that financial backing alone rarely determines whether a project succeeds. Without broad public support and meaningful partnerships across civic organizations, advocacy groups, and local residents, even well-funded proposals can struggle to maintain momentum. **This phase is therefore as much about building durable coalitions as it is about securing capital.**

One frequently cited strategy for aligning investment with community priorities is land value capture. These mechanisms redirect a portion of the economic value generated by public improvements—often reflected in rising land values—back toward public benefits such as affordable housing, local infrastructure, or neighborhood services. Tools can include tax-based financing districts, transferable development rights, or inclusionary zoning policies.

There is no universally “correct” way to fund an infrastructure adaptation project. However, funding strategies shape project outcomes. Approaches that rely heavily on private development incentives or speculative investment may accelerate neighborhood change in ways that undermine the communities these projects were intended to serve. Designing funding structures that balance financial feasibility with long-term community benefit is a critical challenge at this stage.

On getting buy-in without selling out...

“Bringing in private conservancies to help oversee fundraising and coalition building efforts early on can help jump-start a project, but long-term challenges can arise when it comes time to transfer these responsibilities over to a community-based partnership – especially if that group did not have a seat at the table all the way through. Continuity is key.”

- Ben Helphand, Executive Director, Neighborspace, and Board President, Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail, Chicago, Illinois ⁴

“If you make partnerships with those who are doing work in housing affordability, and economic development, and all of the other things that exist outside of the park boundary, those relationships can really help you to be an advocate, and to make sure the work that you’re doing is supporting and capturing value for those initiatives.”

- Stephen Gray, Founder, Grayscale Collaborative; Associate Professor of Urban Design, Harvard Graduate School of Design ⁵

“When infrastructure reuse projects are located near other kinds of large capital improvement projects that are simultaneously under consideration by the city, this can put projects in competition with each other for tax-based financing strategies. For instance, a project that transforms a port area into a public open space might find itself in competition with a nearby transit improvement project. Whenever a city has to push for a value capture framework, it spends some of its political capital.”

- Yuxiang Luo, Principal, Urban Economic Development at James Lima Planning + Development ⁶

Coalition building at the beginning of a streetscape improvement project in Whittier, CA.
Photo: Jonnu Singleton / SWA



Phase 3

Engagement / Empowerment

Major transportation infrastructure in the United States has historically been shaped by top-down planning processes. In response to the lasting inequities produced by urban renewal and highway construction in the mid-twentieth century, most contemporary infrastructure adaptation projects now incorporate community engagement as a central component of project development.

Yet conventional engagement practices like public meetings, comment periods, and advisory committees often fall short of meaningfully shaping project outcomes. Interviewees emphasized that engagement strategies must frequently extend beyond these formal procedures and be tailored to the needs, schedules, and capacities of local communities.

Meaningful engagement requires giving communities a voice early enough in the process to shape the agenda itself. Some project leaders have experimented with shifting key decisions earlier in the process, inviting residents and local organizations to help define priorities before design teams or development proposals are assembled. Approaches like these can help ensure that projects reflect local values rather than simply asking communities to react to plans that have already taken shape.

Sustaining this level of engagement can be challenging. Infrastructure adaptation projects often unfold over many years, and maintaining trust and participation requires ongoing dialogue long after initial planning phases conclude. Establishing consistent forums for feedback and accountability allows later stages of a project to learn from earlier ones and helps ensure that community priorities remain visible throughout the project's evolution.

On centering local voices and values...

"When your project is going through 45 different neighborhoods, including communities of color where infrastructure projects often come with a negative reputation, you have to treat each neighborhood differently. It takes a lot of time and effort to figure out what the best approach is for establishing trust and communicating with each particular neighborhood. Often, this requires us to go out and meet people where they are as opposed to asking them to come to us."

- Lynnette Reid, Former Director of Planning, Atlanta Beltline, Inc. Atlanta, Georgia⁷

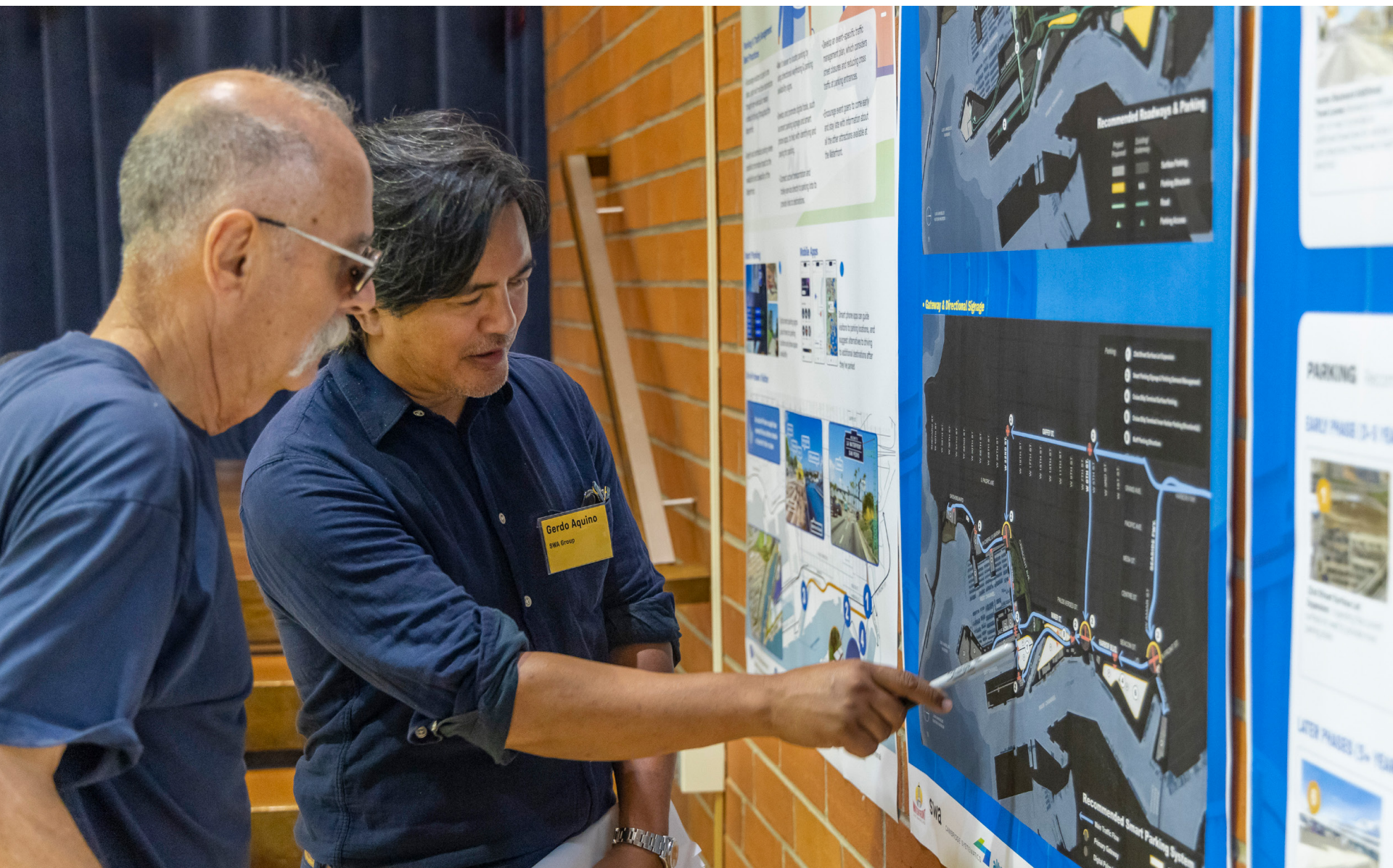
"I didn't realize how important [meeting with community groups] was to the communities east of the river where planning often happens to that community, not really with that community. Going in early and having the respect to ask for permission and to do a needs assessment instead of showing up with the final rendering and saying, 'We want your input.' I think that was appreciated, but that took a lot of time."

- Scott Kratz, Director, 11th Street Bridge Park, Washington DC⁸

"I would argue that asking for an 'efficient' solution might lead cities astray since what we have found in the field is that a multidisciplinary approach that involves as many of the implementers and beneficiaries as possible seems to be the approach that has the best chance of success. We also found that the best wisdom in the field is that you have to start early, and you have to do deep, authentic community engagement to build coalitions, and that takes time. It's almost the opposite of efficient, and maybe it's important to recognize that."

- Jon Christensen, UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability on findings from his 2019 report, "Greening Without Gentrification," co-authored with Alessandro Rigolon (University of Utah)⁹

Public Meeting at the Port of Los Angeles, CA to share ideas for the San Pedro Waterfront Connectivity Plan. Photo: Bill Tatham / SWA



Phase 4

Design / Negotiation

Traditional transportation infrastructure is typically designed for singular, predefined functions. Ports are engineered for cargo throughput, roadways for vehicle flow, and flood control systems for hydraulic efficiency. These systems rarely account for broader social or cultural impacts and have often reinforced existing inequities by prioritizing technical performance over public welfare.

When these monofunctional systems are reimagined as multi-benefit public spaces, designers must work within the constraints of infrastructure originally built for very different purposes. Introducing new civic uses often requires confronting physical limitations, regulatory requirements, and operational priorities embedded in the existing system.

In this phase, design becomes a process of negotiation between competing uses, stakeholders, and expectations. Projects that layer public space onto working infrastructure must reconcile different schedules, safety concerns, and operational needs. Co-use environments in particular demand careful coordination so that industrial functions remain viable while public access is made possible.

These negotiations can be technically and institutionally complex. Shared spaces often require new management strategies, flexible programming, and ongoing communication between operators, designers, and local communities. While the results can unlock significant public value, the practical work of balancing these overlapping uses is often far more demanding than the initial design vision suggests.

On making more out of monofunctional systems...

“Inevitably, design challenges arise when making decisions about the future of an infrastructure corridor that traverses so many neighborhoods with very different needs using a single-purpose instrument like a path.”

- Asima Jansveld, Former Managing Director, High Line Network (discussing the Atlanta Beltline) ¹⁰

“One of the greatest challenges for infrastructure co-use projects arises when there are heavy restrictions on how agencies like departments of transportation can legally use funds. Often, this means that we as designers have to look for ways to smuggle in public realm assets by connecting them to infrastructure as opposed to recreation. For instance, a department of transportation can often fund things like green stormwater infrastructure, pathways, benches, and lighting. Each of these components individually is easily understood as infrastructure, but when choreographed well, it can function as park space for end-users, even though we can’t always call it a park as we are designing.”

- Marie Law Adams, co-founder, Landing Studio (discussing projects in Massachusetts) ¹¹

“In [our project with the state DOT], we had to create two different drawing sets, one that was intended for communication with the local community and another that was intended for communicating with the State. The difference in sets was not about being disingenuous to either group but about how one puts the project in the specific group’s language. We had to develop a technique to communicate different issues that are present in the same physical environments to different groups.”

- Dan Adams, co-founder, Landing Studio (discussing projects in Massachusetts) ¹²

Design charrette in Downtown Los Angeles, CA. Photo: David Lloyd / SWA



Phase 5

Conservation / Reclamation

Unlike many public realm improvement projects, infrastructure adaptation almost always begins with an existing artifact. Whether a rail viaduct, highway structure, flood channel, or industrial waterfront, some piece of the infrastructure's previous life remains, and the question of what to preserve becomes unavoidable.

For many communities, preservation can carry both positive and negative meanings. Retaining historically significant structures can honor cultural heritage, reinforce community identity, and serve as a visible reminder of collective resilience. Transforming aging infrastructure into public space can turn neglected sites into civic assets while maintaining a tangible connection to the past.

At the same time, some infrastructures are deeply associated with histories of displacement, environmental harm, or systemic inequity. In these cases, preservation can also mean sustaining physical reminders of injustice or maintaining structures that continue to shape neighborhood conditions in harmful ways.

This phase asks a difficult question: what should be preserved, and what should be repaired, transformed, or removed altogether. Interviewees emphasized that navigating these tensions requires careful listening to the communities most affected by the original infrastructure. Decisions about conservation are rarely purely technical or aesthetic. They often carry symbolic and political weight. Infrastructure adaptation therefore requires a nuanced approach to reclamation that balances honoring local histories with the need to address longstanding inequities and create more just conditions moving forward.

On recovering the palimpsest...

"Even if the physical infrastructure itself is torn down to make way for the project, it is important to celebrate the heritage of the site. In some cases, this can be done without preserving anything physically."

- Tom Balsley, Principal, SWA ¹³

"All of our urban landscapes have some degree of history, but the dialogue around what defines a place as historic continues to move forward in time. So, if we can articulate our values and say we care about this place because of the events that happened here, we care about this place because it's a symbol of something that the broader society values - we need to be clear about what those values are, and then we can move to the future."

- Patricia O'Donnell, Founder, Partner, Heritage Landscapes LLC
(discussing the challenges of preserving urban landscapes) ¹⁴

"Sometimes adaptive reuse - reinventing and reinterpreting remnants - makes your budget spread farther. But we're taking it further now. There are remnants, but we interpret them in new ways. We aren't just saving the rail tracks, we're making gardens that follow the path of those rail tracks. We're not strictly preserving, we're amplifying through reinterpretation and twisting things that makes you see the infrastructure in a new way."

- Mary Margaret Jones, President and CEO, Hargreaves Jones
(discussing Crescent Park in New Orleans, Louisiana) ¹⁵

Industrial structures are preserved as part of Gantry Plaza State Park in Queens, NY.
Photo: Betsy Pinover Schiff / SWA



Phase 6

Implementation / Realization

From a project management perspective, the implementation phase is often defined by timelines, permitting milestones, and construction schedules. Tools such as Gantt charts help coordinate contractors, manage approvals, and keep large projects moving efficiently toward completion. Yet these timelines rarely reflect how local communities experience the transformation of their urban environment. For residents, this phase is often defined by daily disruptions like construction fencing, traffic detours, street noise, and restricted access to familiar places. These impacts can disproportionately affect vulnerable populations, including older residents, people with mobility challenges, and communities with limited access to nearby services.

This phase tests whether a project's stated intentions are truly realized in the physical transformation of a place. Interviewees emphasized that trust between communities and project leaders is often most fragile during construction. When responsibility shifts from planners and designers to contractors and project managers (many of whom may not have participated in earlier engagement processes) there is a risk that speed and efficiency overshadow other project goals.

Framing this phase as realization rather than implementation can help bridge this gap. Connecting construction decisions back to the project's original intentions encourages greater transparency and accountability, helping ensure that the physical outcome reflects the commitments made during earlier stages of planning.

On breaking ground without breaking trust...

"Since the project was so big and so interwoven with the city, it had to be an open construction site. People were using the trails on the site through the entire construction timeline. This meant we needed to produce a lot of PR materials, temporary signage, and wayfinding."

- Scott McCready, Principal, SWA (discussing Buffalo Bayou Park in Houston, Texas) ¹⁶

"What is the organization doing in terms of broader urban issues than just the implementation of a park space? How does that large-scale public park impact, and how is it impacted by issues of affordability, housing, health and well-being, economic development, local jobs, and cultural identity?"

- Stephen Gray, Founder, Grayscale Collaborative and Associate Professor of Urban Design, Harvard Graduate School of Design ¹⁷

"At the beginning [of the High Line project], I thought it would make sense for an architect to be the lead, but this was truly a landscape project. When I talked to architects about their concept, it was all additives - about adding things to the High Line. Landscape architects almost always have some existing conditions [in their projects] whereas architects are used to beginning from scratch. The existing condition was so important to us, and had such a deep connection with the history and what people fell in love with."

- Robert Hammond, Co-Founder and Former Executive Director, Friends of the High Line ¹⁸

Construction crews begin capping Interstate 35 to make new ground for Halperin Park in Dallas, TX. Photo: David Lloyd / SWA



Phase 7

Maintenance / Stewardship

Maintenance is essential to sustaining public urban spaces and the communities that use them, yet it is often overlooked during the early stages of project development. Funding for design and construction is typically easier to secure than the long-term resources required to care for complex public landscapes over time. When maintenance responsibilities fall to under-resourced municipal agencies, these spaces can become difficult to manage. Expansive parks, trails, and hybrid infrastructure landscapes often require specialized upkeep, while local parks departments frequently operate with constrained budgets, standardized maintenance practices, and limited influence over capital funding decisions.

The long-term success of a project ultimately depends on who is responsible for caring for it—and how that care is sustained over time.

When maintenance is deferred, the physical quality of public spaces deteriorates and community trust can erode alongside it. These impacts are often most visible in historically underserved neighborhoods, where patterns of underinvestment can reinforce perceptions of neglect and deepen existing inequalities.¹⁹

In response, many cities have turned to conservancies, nonprofit partnerships, or hybrid public-private models to support ongoing stewardship. While these arrangements can provide critical resources, they also raise important questions about public accountability and the uneven distribution of philanthropic investment across different communities. Interviewees emphasized that stewardship should be treated as a core component of project planning rather than an afterthought. Integrating maintenance feasibility into early design phases, establishing clear funding strategies, and cultivating community involvement in the long-term care of public spaces can help ensure that these investments remain valued civic assets for generations.

On safeguarding long-term value...

“Going through a feasibility study on maintenance earlier on would have been good because we would have had a lot more time to build up those reserves and to prepare the city budgets – or to create partnerships with non-profit entities that could help shoulder the maintenance burden.”

- Megan Injaychock, Senior Landscape Architect, Atlanta Beltline, Inc. Atlanta, Georgia²⁰

“Our city budgets are typically incapable of securing long-term maintenance for these projects, but operational support is so hard to raise from the private sector. Even when it's done successfully, there are tricky questions about oversight and accountability. Who gets to say how these projects evolve over time?”

- Catherine Nagel, Executive Director, City Parks Alliance²¹

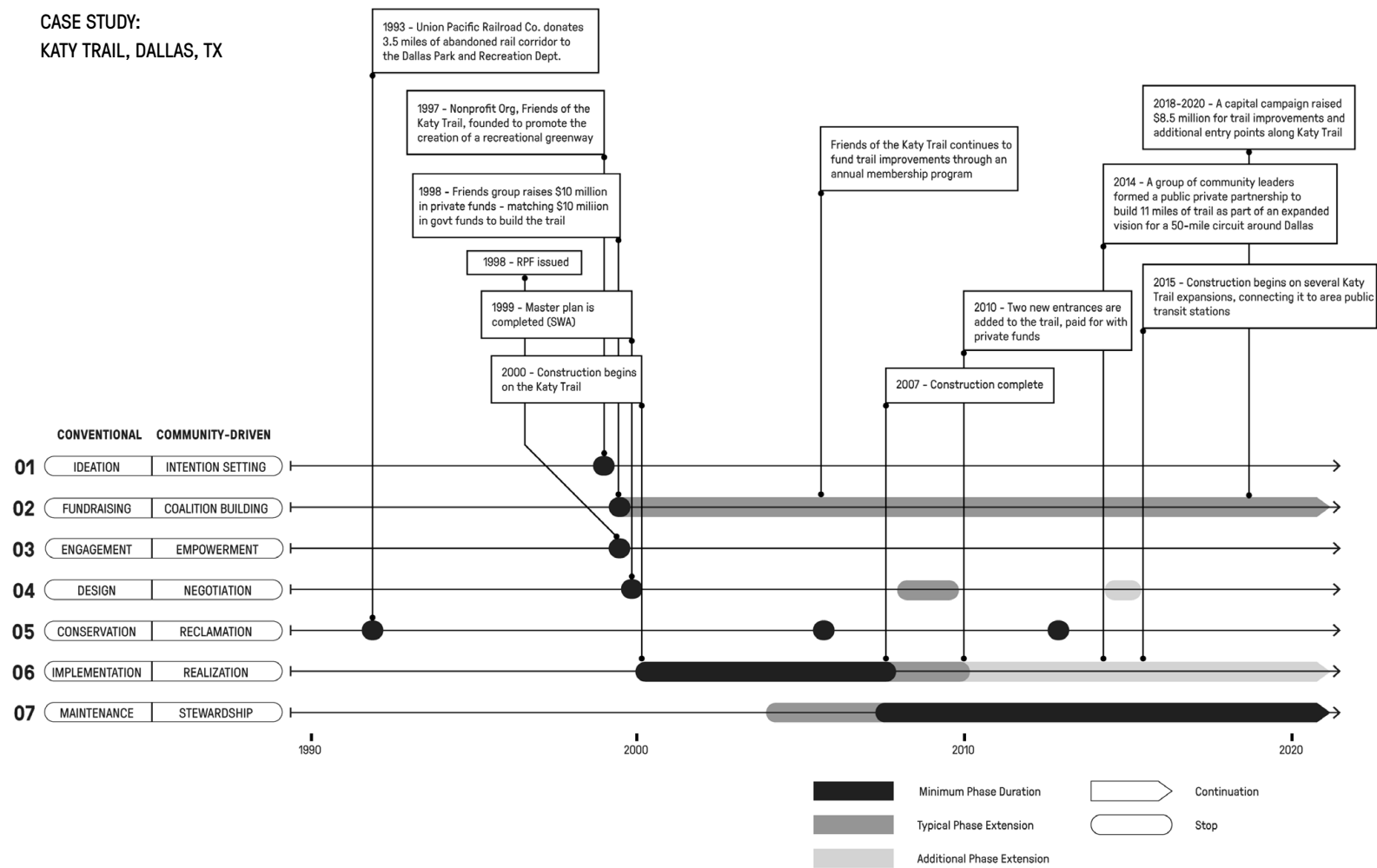
“Especially with infrastructure co-use projects, it is important for the designers to make sure that routine maintenance fundamentally fits into the design of the space. Working directly with maintenance and operations crews will ensure a park lasts much longer. Not being able to get a vacuum truck in to clean out a catch basin, or not being able to do bridge inspections, for instance, will destroy a park within the first few years of its existence.”

- Marie Law Adams, Co-founder, Landing Studio (discussing projects in Massachusetts)²²

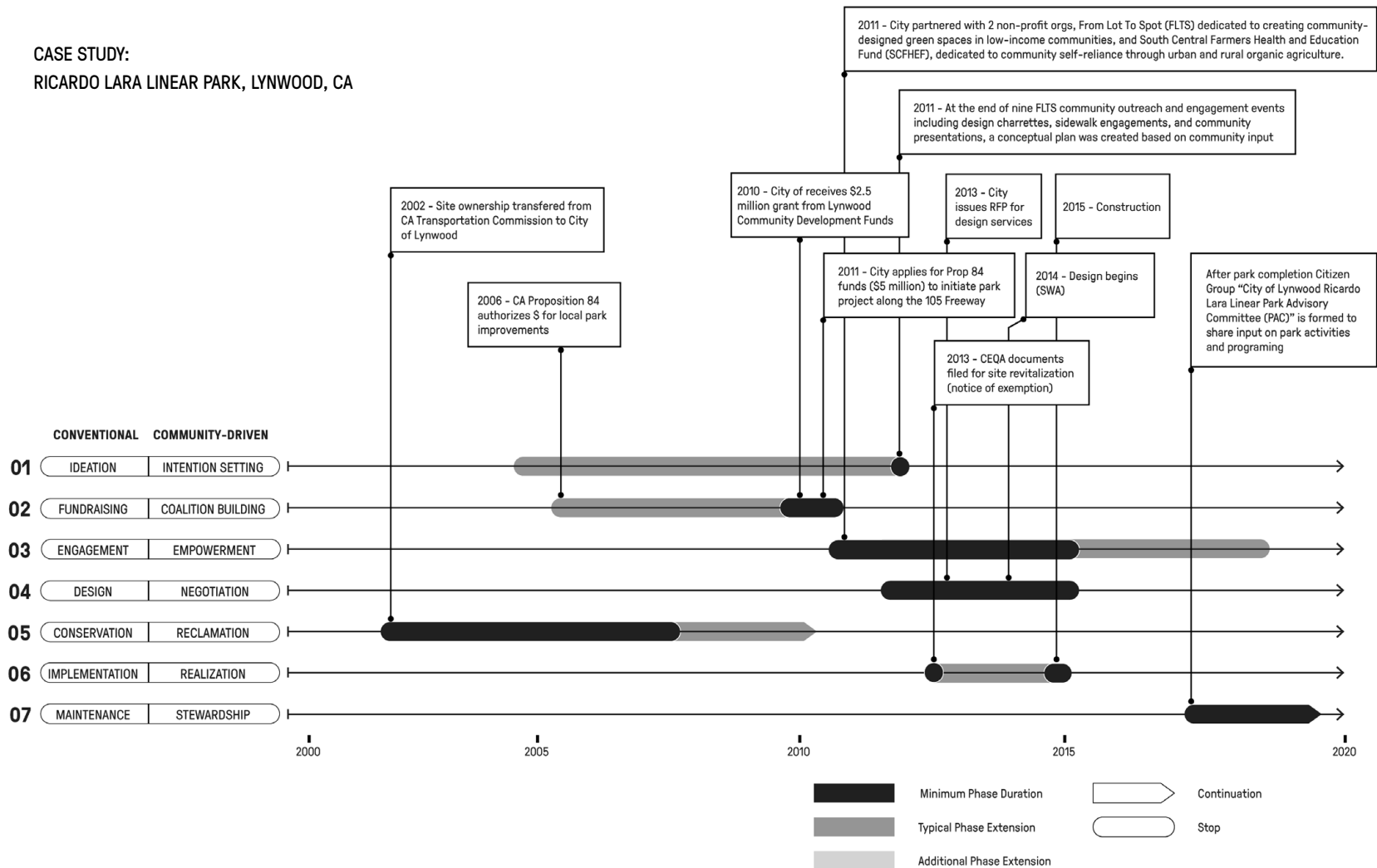
Volunteers water newly planted trees at Exploration Green in Houston, TX.
Photo: Jonnu Singleton / SWA



CASE STUDY:
KATY TRAIL, DALLAS, TX



CASE STUDY:
RICARDO LARA LINEAR PARK, LYNWOOD, CA



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Part 4

Networks in Waiting

Networks in Waiting

Infrastructure adaptation is not a singular trend or a unified movement. It has no manifesto, no central organization, and no single geographic center. Instead, it has emerged gradually across continents and political contexts as designers, advocates, and public agencies begin to reconsider the physical systems that structure urban life. Rail corridors, flood channels, highways, waterfronts, and utility easements are increasingly being reimagined as spaces capable of supporting more dynamic ecological processes and modern forms of civic life.

What connects these efforts is not style or program but structure. Most cities already contain extensive infrastructural networks embedded within their urban fabric. These systems form continuous spatial armatures that cut across neighborhoods and jurisdictions. When even a small segment of one of these systems is adapted for public use, it has the potential to unlock a much larger geography of possibility.

In this sense, infrastructure adaptation projects often operate on what might be thought of as a readymade network. The spatial framework already exists. The task is not to invent a new system but to reinterpret and retool the one already in place. The average project documented in this research extends roughly two miles or less, yet many of the most transformative examples function as the building blocks of much larger networks.

Some networks grow incrementally. A single demonstration project can generate momentum that gradually expands outward through adjacent segments. A temporary waterfront activation leads to a permanent park, which connects to an older green space, which in turn inspires proposals to extend public access



Sydney, Australia

further along the shoreline. Over time, what began as a localized intervention becomes part of a continuous landscape.

Other networks emerge from comprehensive top-down visions. In some cities, planners have proposed entire metropolitan systems of parks, trails, and waterfront spaces built upon former infrastructure corridors, brownfield sites, and riparian floodplains. These ambitious frameworks can take decades to break ground and may never be fully realized, but when they do advance, it is usually incremental, through successive phases of planning, funding, and construction. Individual projects serve as links in a chain, each reinforcing the broader idea that urban infrastructure can function as a public landscape network.

Whether built piece by piece or conceived all at once, these projects share a common spatial logic: they scale naturally through connection. Linear transportation infrastructures in particular lend themselves intuitively to extension. A trail can lengthen. A waterfront promenade can continue around a harbor. A flood channel park can expand upstream and downstream. Each additional segment increases the usefulness and visibility of the whole.

This scaling effect is similar to the dynamics of a social network. A single node may have limited influence, but as connections multiply, the network becomes exponentially more valuable. Physical infrastructure networks operate in much the same way. When segments of these systems are reclaimed as public spaces, they begin to support new forms of encounter, exchange, and connection. A bike path becomes a commuting corridor. A waterfront promenade becomes a social spine. A linear park becomes a platform for neighborhood interactions.

Over time, these spaces begin to form a fabric by stitching together parts of the city that were previously disconnected. Former industrial edges become shared civic commons. Dividing overpasses becomes connective tissue. The physical network begins to support a social one.

The impacts of these networks often become most visible at the metropolitan scale. When infrastructure adaptation projects accumulate, they can reshape patterns of movement, recreation, and development across entire regions. Alternative transportation routes encourage walking and cycling. Public spaces attract new residents and visitors. Reused infrastructure reduces the environmental costs associated with new construction while supporting more compact urban forms.

Yet the growth of these networks is rarely straightforward. Infrastructure adaptation projects frequently span multiple jurisdictions and governance structures, requiring coordination across agencies that were not originally designed to work together. Funding mechanisms are often layered and experimental, drawing from combinations of public investment, philanthropy, value capture, and community advocacy. Long timelines expose projects to shifting political cycles and economic priorities.

Equity challenges also emerge as these projects gain popularity. The addition of high-quality public space can increase land values and accelerate development pressures in surrounding neighborhoods. Many cities are now experimenting with new policies and programs like affordable housing initiatives, land trusts, and anti-displacement measures to ensure that the

benefits of these projects are more widely shared. These experiments reveal some of the ways that infrastructure adaptation projects depend not only on design but also on governance. The transformation of infrastructure into public space requires new forms of collaboration between planners, engineers, designers, community organizations, and policymakers. It also demands new ways of thinking about how infrastructure is financed and managed.

Despite these challenges, the growing body of work documented here suggests a profound shift in how cities relate to their infrastructural foundations. Systems once conceived purely as technical utilities are increasingly understood as opportunities for galvanizing civic life.

The projects collected here demonstrate that infrastructure adaptation is not merely a strategy for reusing obsolete structures. It is an evolving typology within the built environment that operates simultaneously at the scale of architecture, landscape, infrastructure, and metropolitan planning. By working within existing networks rather than replacing them, these projects offer a powerful mechanism for urban transformation.

Taken together, they suggest that the transformation of infrastructure into public space is no longer an isolated experiment. It is a dispersed but growing movement that invites cities everywhere to look again at the systems they already have and imagine how those networks might support a more connected, resilient, and vibrant urban future.



Houston, Texas



Part 5

Project Directory

The index that follows gathers the broader field of case studies examined during the research for this publication. While only a selection appear in the preceding chapters, the full list reveals the geographic breadth of this emerging practice. Spread across cities and continents, these projects illustrate the many ways designers and communities are reimagining the infrastructural frameworks that shape urban life.



Port Projects

Aitken Place Park

Toronto, Canada
SWA/Balsley, Forrec

Barangaroo Reserve

Sydney, Australia
PWP

Bjørsvika

Oslo, Norway
SLA, Gehl

Brattøra Open Space

Trondheim, Norway
SLA

Breakwater Park

Kingston, Canada
Claude Cormier + Associés

Bridge 406

Malmo, Sweden
SLA

Brooklyn Bridge Park

New York City, NY
MVVA

Brooklyn Navy Yard

New York City, NY
WXY

Chelsea Cove

New York City, NY
MVVA

Cherry Street Pier

Philadelphia, PA
Groundswell

Cirkelbroen Bridge

Copenhagen, Denmark
Studio Olafur Eliasson

Clock Tower Beach

Montreal, Canada
Claude Cormier

Crane Cove Park/Pier 70

San Francisco, CA
AECOM, SITELAB

Danish Maritime Museum

Helsingør, Denmark
BIG

Darling Harbour

Sydney, Australia
HASSELL

Domino Park

New York City, NY
JCFO

Droogdokkenpark

Antwerp, Belgium
Vogt

East River Esplanade

New York City, NY
SHoP, Ken Smith Workshop

Elliott Bay Seawall

Seattle, USA
JCFO

Exploratorium at Piers 15 & 17

San Francisco, CA
GLS

Foot of Lonsdale Plaza

Vancouver, Canada
Hapa Collaborative

Governors Island

New York City, NY
West 8

HafenCity

Hamburg, Germany
ASTOC, KCAP

Havnebadet Brygge

Copenhagen, Denmark
BIG

HtO

Toronto, Canada
Janet Rosenberg & Studio, Claude
Cormier + Associés, Hariri Pontarini
Architects

Hunter's Point South Waterfront Park

New York City, NY
SWA and Weiss Manfredi + ARUP

Kalvebod Bølge

Copenhagen, Denmark
JDS, KLAR

Koper Central Park

Koper, Slovenia
ENOTA

Landgangen

Esbjerg, Denmark
Cobe

Lille Langebro

Copenhagen, Denmark
Urban Agency

Lower Don Lands

Toronto, Canada
MVVA

Maker Park

New York City, NY
Ken Smith Workshop

Marina Bay

Singapore
Urban Redevelopment Authority

Market Island

Amsterdam, Netherlands
Inside Outside

Naval Cemetery Landscape

New York City, NY
Nelson Byrd Woltz

New Holland Island

Saint Petersburg, Russia
West 8

New Order of Nature

Fredericia, Denmark
SLA

Norwegian National Opera and Ballet

Oslo, Norway
Snøhetta

Oyster-ecture

New York City, NY
SCAPE

Paths to Pier 42

New York City, NY
Hester Street Collaborative,
dlandstudio, Leroy Street Studio

Pier 17

New York City, NY
SHoP

Pier 25

New York City, NY
MNLA

Pier 35

New York City, NY
SHoP, Ken Smith Workshop

Pier C Park

Hoboken, NJ
MVVA

Shekou Promenade

Shenzhen, China
SWA

Sherbourne Common

Toronto, Canada
PFS

Southeast False Creek

Vancouver, Canada
PWL

Spadina Wavedeck

Toronto, Canada
West 8, DTAH

St. Pete Pier

St. Petersburg, FL
Rogers Partners, Ken Smith Workshop

Sugar Beach

Toronto, Canada
Claude Cormier + Associés

Sørenga Central Park and Harbor

Promenade
Oslo, Norway
Grindaker

Terminal B

Boston, MA
Touloukian Touloukian

Thames Barrier Park

London, England
Allain Provost, Alain Cousseran, Arup

The Edge Park

New York City, NY
W

The Pier

Vancouver, Canada
Durante Kreuk

Tianjin Eco-City South Bay Park

Tianjin, China
SWA

Tsim Sha Tsui Waterfront

Hong Kong, China
JCFO

Vancouver Convention Centre

Vancouver, Canada
LMN, MCM/DA

Water Mirror

Bordeaux, France
Michel Corajoud

Water Taxi Beach

New York City
Tom Fox

Weta Richmond Ferry Terminal

Richmond, CA
Marcy Wong Donn Logan Architects

Wilmington Waterfront Park

Los Angeles, CA
Sasaki

Yangpu Riverfront South Section

Shanghai, China
DA Landscape

Zhongshan Shipyard Park

Zhongshan, China
Turenscape

River Projects**11th Street Bridge Park**

Washington, DC
OLIN, OMA

Anaheim Coves

Anaheim, CA
City of Anaheim

Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park

Bishan, Singapore
Ramboll, Studio Dreiseitl

Bridgemarket

New York, NY
Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer

BridgePark

Richmond, VA
Spatial Affairs Bureau

Bronx River Greenway

Bronx, NY
MKM

Buffalo Bayou Park

Houston, TX
SWA

Changsha Baxi

Changsha, China
SWA

Chicago Riverwalk

Chicago, IL
 Sasaki, Ross Barney Architects
ChonGae Canal Restoration Project
 Seoul, South Korea
 Mikyoung Kim Design

Coldbrook Edge

Grand Rapids, MI
 STOSS

Confluence Park

Denver, CO
 Wenk

Crescent Park

New Orleans, LA, USA
 Hargreaves

Crossroads + Marsupial Bridge

Milwaukee, WI
 LA DALLMAN + Crisman + Petrus

Dale Hodges Park

Calgary, Canada
 O2 Planning + Design

Edmonton Funicular

Edmonton, Canada
 DIALOG

El Valle Trenzado

Elche, Spain
 Grupo Aranea

Falls Park on the Reedy

Greenville, SC
 Arbor Engineering

Fez River Rehabilitation Project

Fez, Morocco
 Aziza Chaouni Projects

First San Diego River Improvement Project

San Diego, CA
 WYAC

Gowanus Canal Sponge Park

Brooklyn, NY
 dlandstudio

Gran Malecón

Barranquilla, Colombia
 Diseños y concepto

Harold Simmons Park

Dallas, TX
 MVVA

High Line Canal

Denver, CO
 Agency Landscape + Planning, Sasaki,
 Livable Cities Studio

Julian B. Lane River Centre

Tampa, FL
 W, Civitas

LA Riverfront Greenway Phase II

Los Angeles, CA
 Studio MLA

Les Berges de Seine

Paris, France
 Franklin Azzi + Jean-Christophe
 Choblet

Louisville Waterfront Park

Louisville, KY
 Hargreaves

Lower Don Trail

Toronto, Canada
 DTAH

Madrid Rio Park

Madrid, Spain
 West 8, MIRO arquitectos

Medellín River Parks

Medellín, Colombia
 Sebastian Monsalve Gomez, Juan David
 Hoyos, Nicolas Hermelin, Luis Vera

Meishe River Greenway and Fengxiang Park

Haikou, China
 Turenscape

Middle Arm Waterfront Greenway

Richmond, Canada
 City of Richmond

Mill 19

Pittsburgh, PA
 TEN x TEN, D.I.R.T. studio

Mill River Park and Greenway

Stamford, CT
 OLIN

Milton Street Park

Los Angeles, CA
 SWA

Milwaukee RiverWalk

Milwaukee, WI
 KenKay Associates, Mary Miss, Engberg
 Anderson Architects

Minghu Wetland Park

Liupanshui, China
 Turenscape

Osumi Braids

Berat, Albania
 Bel architekten

Pasarela/Caseta Aranzadi

Pamplona, Spain
 Peralta Ayesa

Pingshan High School Pedestrian Bridge

Shenzhen, China
 NODE

Pijinuiskaq Park

Bridgewater, Canada
 Ekistics

Providence Pedestrian Bridge

Providence, RI
 Inform Studio

Providence River Relocation

Providence, RI
 William D. Warner Architects & Planners

Qian'an Sanlihe Greenway

Qian'an City, China
 Turenscape

Quays of the River Schelde, Sint-Andries en Zuid
Antwerp, Belgium
WIT

Quzhou Luming Park
Quzhou City, China, built
Turenscape

River Aire Renaturation
Geneva, Switzerland
Georges Descombes

Riverfront Park
Denver, CO
Design Workshop

RiverWalk
Calgary, Canada
Stantec

Riverwalk Commons
Newmarket, Canada
JRS

Riverwalk East
Chicago, IL
Site Design

San Antonio River Walk
San Antonio, TX
Robert Hugman

Sanya Mangrove Park
Sanya City, China
Turenscape

Sava Promenade
Belgrade, Serbia
SWA

Shanghai Houtan Park
Shanghai, China
Turenscape

Spruce Street Harbor Park
Philadelphia, PA
Groundswell

St. Patrick's Island
Calgary, Canada
W, Civitas

The Floating Gardens - Yongning River Park
Taizhou , China
Turenscape

The Wharf
Washington, DC
Perkins Eastman, Nelson Byrd Woltz,
Michael Vergason, Parker Rodriguez

The Wild Mile Chicago
Chicago, IL
SOM

The Yards Park
Washington, DC
M. Paul Friedberg

Tom Lee Park
Memphis, TN
SCAPE, Studio Gang

Town Branch Commons
Lexington, KY
SCAPE

Tulsa Gathering Place
Tulsa, OK
MVVA

Vallée de L'Issy
Ait Mansour, Morocco
Inside Outside

Van der Donck Park
Yonkers, NY
Saratoga Associates

Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade
Portland, OR
Mayer/Reed

Wadi Al Azeiba
Muscat, Oman
Atelier Jaxqueline Osty

Washington Canal Park
Washington, DC
OLIN

Waterloo Greenway
Austin, TX
MVVA

Welland Canal Park & Civic Square
Welland, Canada
JRS

West Eau Claire Park
Calgary, Canada
O2 Planning + Design

West Harlem Piers
New York, NY
W

Westminster Pier Park
New Westminster, Canada
PWL

Willamette Falls Riverwalk
Oregon City, OR
Snohetta, Mayer/Reed, DIALOG

Wusong Riverfront
Kunshan City, China
SWA

Xinhua Waterfront Park
Shanghai, China
West 8

Yong-chong River Water Infrastructure
Shenzhen, China
NODE

Yongxing River Greenway
Beijing, China
Turenscape

Zaryadye Park
Moscow, Russia
reuse + Diller Scofidio + Renfro

Rail Projects

Atlanta BeltLine

Atlanta, GA
Perkins + Will, Kimley-Horn

Bergen Arches Greenway

Jersey City, NJ
Supermass Studio

Chemin-qui-marche Lookout

Montreal, Canada
Lemay

Coulée verte René-Dumont (La Promenade Plantée)

Paris, France
Jacques Vergely

Crescent Park

New Orleans, LA
Hargreaves

Dequindre Cut

Detroit, MI
Smith Group

East Boston Greenway

East Boston, MA
Brown, Richardson + Rowe

Europaallee

Zurich, Switzerland
Rotzler Krebs

Federation Square

Melbourne, Australia
Lab architecture studio, Bates Smart Architects

Harahan Bridge

Memphis, TN
Philips Lighting

Hudson Yards

New York City, NY
Nelson Byrd Woltz

Jardins de Rambla de Sants

Barcelona, Spain
Sergi Godia/Ana Molino

John Street Roundhouse Park

Toronto, Canada
IBI Group

Katy Trail

Dallas, TX
SWA

Klybeck Quai

Basel, Switzerland
Fontana Landschaftsarchitektur

Lafitte Greenway

New Orleans, LA
Design Workshop

Lake Link Trail

Cleveland, OH
CMG

Lakeview Low-Line

Chicago, IL
PORT

Lowcountry Lowline

Charleston, SC
Design Works

Memorial Hannoverscher Bahnhof

Hamburg, Germany
Vogt

Middlegrounds Metropark

Toledo, OH
Smith Group

Midland Railway Square

Midland, Australia
Place Laboratory

Millennium Park

Chicago, IL
Edward Uhler

Nørreport Station

Copenhagen, Denmark
Cobe

Olympic Sculpture Park

Seattle, WA
Weiss/Manfredi

Parco Biblioteca degli Alberi

Milan, Italy
Inside Outside

Piggyback Yard Feasibility Study

Los Angeles, CA
Studio MLA

Ping Tom Park

Chicago, IL
Site

Platform Park

Los Angeles, CA
Terremoto

Precollinear Park

Turint
Torino Stratosferica

Quequechan River Rail Trail

Fall River, MA
Brown, Richardson + Rowe

Rail Deck Park

Toronto, Canada
Public Work

Rail Park

Philadelphia, PA
Studio Bryan Hanes

Railroad Park

Birmingham, AL
TLS

Randall's Island Connector

Bronx, NY
MNLA

Rotterdam Centraal Station
Rotterdam, Netherlands
West 8

Salesforce Park
San Francisco, CA
PWP

San Clemente Beach Trail
San Clemente, CA
BGB

Santa Fe Railyard Park
Santa Fe, NM
Ken Smith Workshop

Schuykill Yards
Philadelphia, PA
SHoP + West 8

The 606
Chicago, IL
MVVA

The Goods Line
Sydney, Australia
Aspect Studios

The High Line
New York City
JCFO

The Lowline
New York City
RAAD

The QueensWay
New York City
dlandstudio, WXY

The Triboro Corridor
New York City, NY
ONE

The Underline
Melbourne, Australia
Aspect Studios

The Underline
Miami, FL
JCFO

Tracks at Brea Trail
Brea, CA
David Evans and Associates

Urban Outfitters Headquarters
Philadelphia
D.I.R.T. Studio

Viaduct Rail Park
Philadelphia, PA
Hood Design

Village of Yorkville Park
Toronto, Canada
Schwartz Smith Meyer, PWP

West Toronto Railpath
Toronto, Canada
Scott Torrance

Road Projects

10,000 Suns
Providence, RI
A. E. Anderson

41st Street Pedestrian Bridge
Chicago, IL
AECOM

Alley Oop
Vancouver, Canada
HCMA

Atlanta Museum of Freeway Art
Atlanta, GA
SWA

Bonaventure Project
Montreal, Canada
Groupe Rousseau Lefebvre

BQ-Park
New York City, NY
BIG

Bremen Street Park
East Boston, MA
Brown, Richardson + Rowe

Brooklyn Bridge: Back to the Future
New York City, NY
BIG

Brooklyn Heights Promenade
New York City, NY
Clark & Rapuno

Champs Elysées
Paris, France
PCA-Stream

Chinatown Park
Boston, MA
Turenscape, Carol R. Johnson

Claiborne Corridor Innovation District
New York City, NY
Colloqate

Colorado Esplanade
Santa Monica, CA
PWP

Columbus Circle Plaza
New York City, NY
OLIN

Destination Crenshaw
Los Angeles, CA
Perkins + Will

Drexel Square
Philadelphia, PA
West 8

Elevated Park Chapultepec
Mexico City, Mexico
RVDG, FRENTE

Engels Plein
Leuven, Belgium
West 8

Frances Appleton Pedestrian Bridge

Boston, MA
Rosales + Partners, STV

Gallery Alley

Lincoln, NE
Clark & Enersen

Gate of Creation (Universidad de Monterrey)

Monterrey, Mexico
SWA

Goose Creek Rest Area

Harris, MN
Damon Farber, VJAA

Gubei Gold Street

Shanghai, China
SWA

Gutherie Green Park

Tulsa, OK
SWA

Houston Art Bridges

Houston, TX
SWA

Hub 404

Atlanta, GA
NBW, Rogers Partners

Indianapolis Cultural Trail

Indianapolis, IN
REA

Israels Plads

Copenhagen, Denmark
Cobe

Jackson Street Reconstruction

Saint Paul, MN
Toole Design

Kansas City Deck Park

Kansas City, MO
QJB

King Street Pilot

Toronto, Canada
Public Work

Klyde Warren Park

Dallas, TX
QJB

La Radura della Memoria

Genoa, Italy
Inside Outside

Liberty Park

New York City, NY
AECOM

Library Lane

Louisville, KY
PORT

Long Beach Pilot Parklet Program

Long Beach, CA
Studio One Eleven

Lower Hill District Master Plan

Pittsburg, PA
West 8, BIG

Lower Rainier Vista & Pedestrian Land Bridge

Seattle, WA
GGN

Macon Yards

Macon, GA
Hood Design

Madrid Rio Park

Madrid, Spain
West 8, MIRO arquitectos

McBurney Lane

Langley, Canada
Hapa Collaborative

Moscow Street Program

Moscow, Russia
Strelka KB, Djao-Rakotine, Snohetta,
West 8, Topotek 1, Martha Schwartz
Partners, OKRA, Karres + Brands

Mulberry Commons Park

Newark, NJ, USA, in planning
Sage and Coombe Architects +
Supermass Studio

Post Office Square

Boston, MA
Halvorson

Northcenter Town Square

Chicago, IL
PORT

Oval+

Philadelphia, PA
PORT

Oxnard Green Alleys Plan

Oxnard, CA
SWA

Pacific Plaza

Dallas, TX
SWA

Perch

New York City, NY
HardingOstrow

Petuelpark

Munich, Germany
Stefanie Jühling and Otto A. Bertram

Pink Balls

Montreal, Canada
Claude Cormier

Powell Street Promenade

San Francisco, CA
Hood Design

Presidio Tunnel Tops

San Francisco, CA
JCFO

Radial Reuse Project

Lincoln, NE
Clark Enerson

Rainbow Bridge

Long Beach, CA
SPF:a

Ricardo Lara Linear Park

Lynwood, CA
SWA

Schenley Plaza

Pittsburgh, PA
Sasaki

Seoullo 7017 (Skygarden)

Seoul, South Korea
MVRDV

Southern Ridges

Singapore
RSP

Southwest Corridor Park

Boston, MA
Fay, Spofford & Thorndike

Splashpad

Oakland, CA
Hood Design

St. John's Park

New York City, NY
Ballman Khapalova

Stephen Avenue

Calgary, Canada
Gehl Studio, Stantec

Sundance Square Plaza

Fort Worth, TX
Michael Vergason

Superkilen

Copenhagen, Denmark
BIG

Suzhou Center Bridge

Suzhou, China
SWA

SW Montgomery Green Street

Portland, OR
NNA

Tabiat Pedestrian Bridge

Tehran, Iran
Diba Tensile

Tanderrum Pedestrian Bridge

Melbourne, Australia
ohn Wardle Architects, NADAA

Te Ara | Whiti - Lightpath

Auckland, New Zealand
LandLAB

The Bentway

Toronto, Canada
Public Work

The Better Block Project

Dallas, TX
SWA

The Forest Bath

Aarhus, Denmark
SLA

The Reserve

Playa del Rey, CA
KSA

The South Boulevard

Copenhagen, Denmark
SLA

The Stitch

Atlanta, GA
Studio Gang

The Storefront Theater

Lyons, NE
Matthew Mazzotta

Times Square

New York City, NY
Snøhetta

Tire Garden

Stavroupoli, Greece
Makridis Associates

Tonya Park + Ken Genser Square

Santa Monica, CA
JCFO

Tram Park

Barcelona, Spain
Batlle i Roig

Trillium Park & William G. Davis Trail

Toronto, Canada
LANDinc

Tverskaya Street Revitalization

Moscow, Russia
West 8

Tysons Corner Center Plaza

Tysons Corner, VA
RIOS

Underpass Park

Toronto, Canada
PFS Studio, The Planning Partnership

Urban Wilderness Gateway

Knoxville, TN
PORT

White Flowers Boulevard

Kazan, Russia
PARK, Project Group 8

Wynwood Walls

Miami, FL
Tony Goldman

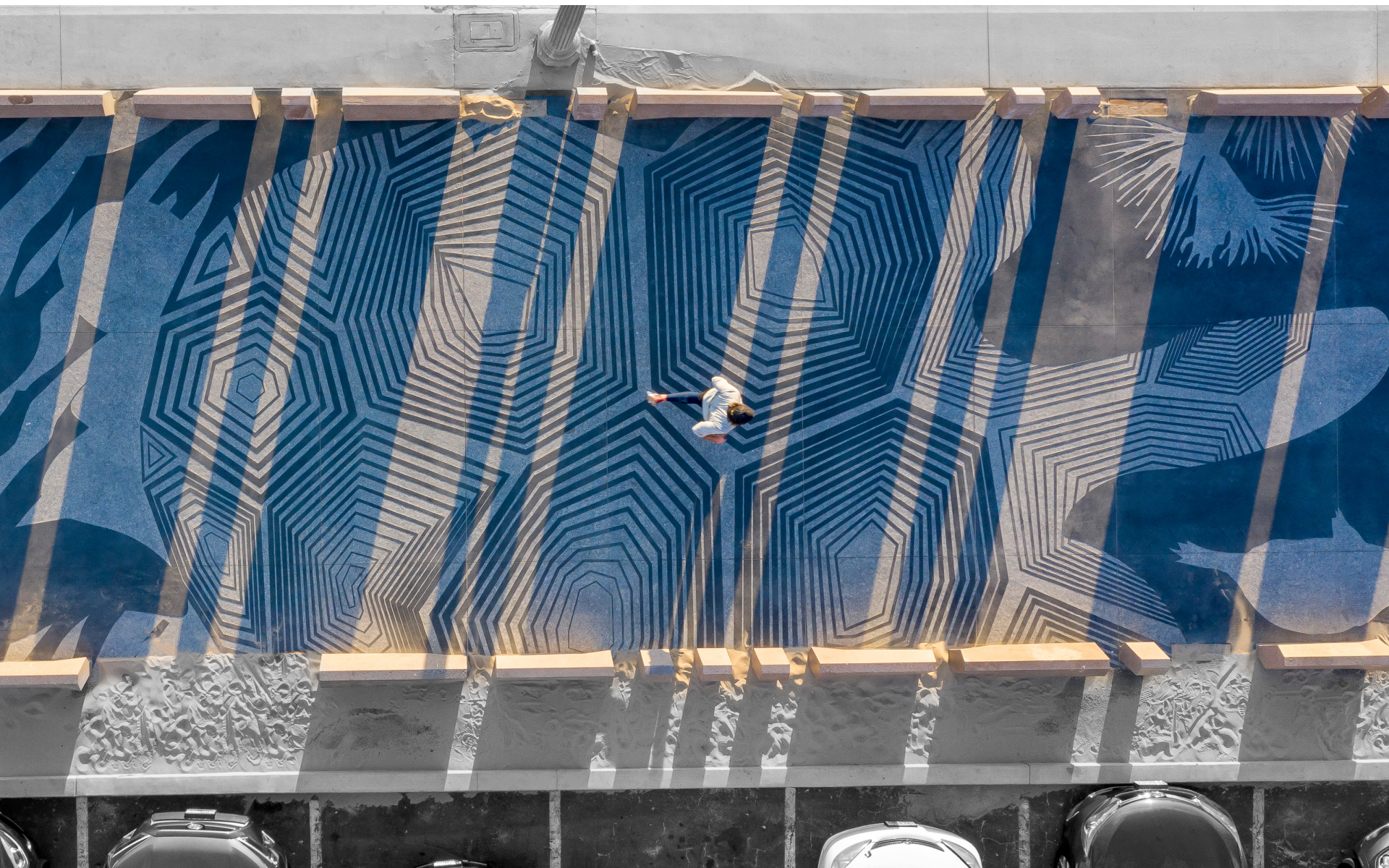
Yongqing Fang Alleyways

Guangzhou, China
Lab D+H

Rosemont Bridge over Buffalo Bayou in Houston, TX. Photo: Jonnu Singleton / SWA



Santa Monica North Beach Trail along a former Southern Pacific Railroad easement in Los Angeles, CA. Photo: Jonnu Singleton / SWA



Pacific Plaza built on a former parking lot in Dallas, TX. Photo: Bill Tatham / SWA



El Paso Pedestrian Improvements in El Paso, TX. Photo: Jonnu Singleton / SWA



Parking Day in Houston, TX. Photo: Jonnu Singleton / SWA

