

Mission Dolores Park Rehabilitation Project

San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Design Review Informational Package / November 14, 2011

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the community participation process

Goals of the Community Design Process

The Mission Dolores Park community design process was based on the belief that participation by a representative cross-section of stakeholders is the foundation and lifeblood of any successful urban park project. This is especially true for this project. Mission Dolores Park is defined by its extraordinary diversity of users and constituents. Many of these groups have established organizations and set positions—on the issues and in the landscape. A successful project had to find a way to respect, include and balance all these interests. To do this, the project team set out to organize a process that:

- engaged all the existing groups as leaders of the project from the beginning
- was open to everyone and gave everyone comfortable ways to fully participate
- involved everyone in each step of the design process to make them co-designers and co-owners of the park
- created a collective discussion and decision ma compromise

STEP 1: Building a Representative Steering Committee

To meet these goals, the project team worked for two months before the first workshop to build a fully representative Project Steering Committee.

Starting with the Existing Leadership

First, the project team met individually with the leaders of organizations, institutions and businesses actively involved in the park to hear their ideas and concerns and invite them to be the core of the Project Steering Committee. Everyone responded positively to the invitation to help lead the process. In April, leaders came together to discuss the park, the design process and who to recruit to create a fully representative committee. Founding members of the committee included representatives of:

- Dolores Park Works
- Dolores Park Dogs
- Friends of Dolores Park Playground
- Mission Dolores Neighborhood Association
- Mission Community Council
- Dolores Park Café
- Bi-Rite Market

1.

• created a collective discussion and decision making culture that encouraged moderation and





Reaching Out to Every Park Constituency

At the Steering Committee core group meeting the project team asked, "Who would be around this table if we had the perfect Dolores Park Steering Committee?" Leaders listed over 30 individuals, entities or constituencies that make of the park community. The project team the organized reached out to each constituency through over 20 one-on-one meetings. The result was a remarkably diverse, representative steering committee, with over 40 members including representatives of:

- Immediate park neighbors
- Surrounding neighborhood associations
- Local and park serving business
- Park organizations and activists
- Youth, family, senior and disabled park users
- Park user groups
- Neighboring schools
- Local recreation and social service organizations
- Sponsors of park programs and events
- Historic preservation advocates

Providing Consistent Representative Leadership

This Steering Committee met 8 times, before and after each community workshop to:

- Identify key questions to take to the whole community and refining presentations and materials.
- Talk through challenging issues to figure out how they could be productively discussed in a large open forum
- Represent the community in the day-to-day design process

Steering committee members immediately showed deep commitment and engagement and wanted more than a monthly forum. At members' request, the project team established a Google on-line discussion group. The Google Group became a prime forum for day-to-day discussion generating over a thousand posts by members.

STEP 2: A Transparent, Collective Design Process

Working with the Steering Committee, the project team then launched a series of 6 Community Workshops developed to reflect the key steps in any schematic design process:

- Site Analysis and Visioning
- Programming and Conceptual Designing
- Exploring Options for Each Element or Aspect
- Creating a First Draft Plan
- Refining the Draft Plan
- Reviewing and Finalizing the Plan

These workshops were not formatted to collect input, but rather to engage community members in initiating each step based on their own knowledge and experience of the park. For example, the site analysis, programming and conceptual design sessions started with literally blank pages. Starting this way:

Workshop 1: Site Analysis and Visioning

June 2, 2011 Community Participants: 120

The design process began where it should—in the field. After a Steering Committee member opened the workshop and Supervisor Wiener welcomed the over 100 participants, everyone went out in small groups to assess the site. A Steering Committee member led each group pointing out critical issues, providing information, and taking notes.

When everyone returned, we engaged in an hour long brainstorm and discussion answering the questions: "What needs to fixed? What needs to be changed? What needs to be added? What needs to be preserved?" Critically, this happened just after everyone toured the site with analytical eyes and in a diverse group—leading to more grounded and moderated suggestions. Participants listed over 250 ideas for improvements, but also repeatedly said, "Fix it, but don't change it." Additional ideas were collected on cards at the session and on-line at the projects web page. This comprehensive initial brainstorm became a touchstone throughout the process.

Workshop 2: Creating Your Dolores Park Plan

June 30, 2011 Community Participants: 120

After the traditional opening by Steering Committee members and the Supervisor, the project team provided a succinct overview of the context of the project: the bond mandate, the budget and time line and a distillation of the site assessment and programming brainstorm done by participants at the first workshop.

With this information, participants were asked to work in small groups to "Create Your Own Rehabilitation Plan" starting with the

• Made it possible for everything that followed to be based on local expertise and desires.

• Grounded participants in the realities of the site, the budget and the many competing ideas, preparing them for the challenge of finding solutions and making hard choices. • Eliminated an "outside" plan as a distraction or excuse, leaving everyone with the responsibility to solve problems together.

entrances, paths, restrooms and maintenance building....and then moving on to whatever was most important to members of the group. After 45 minutes, the 12 small group plans were posted around the workshop room for an informal salon viewing and discussion. Participants were surprised by the immediate consensus on some points and the range of ideas on others.

Then, as would be a practice throughout the process, the group came back together to hear reports from each small group on specific items where a choice or decision needed to be made. At this session, the question was "Where should we place the restrooms and maintenance building?" As each group reported, live before everyone's eyes, the community first decision was made: every group supported moving the maintenance building to the northwest corner of the park near the intersection of Church Street and 18th Street.

Forming Working Committee to Explore Complex Areas

In Steering Committee discussions after workshop 2, it became clear that several key topics and areas of the park were too complex and too important for participants to plan in the limited time allowed at workshops. To provide time to fully consider the issues and give everyone space to participate, the project formed working committees on Dog Play Areas, the North Multi-use Field, the Sports Courts and the park's Western Edge. Each committee met between 4 and 12 times, working in the field, doing research, testing alternative proposals and finally providing the alternatives or plan that were reviewed by the entire community.

Without these committees the workshops would have become bogged down in detail or derailed by passions, or worse, these most critical issues would have been left undecided. A prime example is sports courts. Initially there seemed to be too many ideas and needs to fit into too little space—with blog posts and petitions pointing to conflict. However, through creative collaboration lead by tennis and bike polo players the same northern court area was reconfigured to include more courts that better served everyone.

Workshop 3: Exploring Key Areas & Elements of the Park August 4, 2011

Community Participants: 120

While the committees did their work, the entire community came together to explore three central issues identified in the first two workshops: the placement of the bathrooms, the future of the clubhouse and the circulation paths in the park. Based on participants' conceptual designs, the design team developed materials on each of these issues, including a diagram showing the range of bathroom location options and a proposal for meeting circulation needs with as little pavement as possible. Working in 12 small groups, participants weighed the options for bathroom locations and by the end of the evening developed a clear decision to place facilities on the south and north sides of the park adjacent to the playground and sports courts.

At the same time, the small groups developed diverse ideas about the park paths—foreshadowing that this would be the critical issue to resolve in the balance of the process. Some groups reported accepting the proposal as what was needed to meet ADA requirements and maintenance needs, but most groups were unsatisfied. They felt that the width and course of the path and the required retaining walls would have too much impact on park. At the end of the session, an ad-hoc committee was formed to explore path options. Before the next workshop, this group met on site in the park and traveled to Alta Vista Park to review the recently rehabilitated path system.

Workshop 4: Reviewing a First Draft Plan August 25, 2011

Community Participants: 100

This session marked the beginning of a new phase of the process—the review and refinement of successively more refined draft plans. The project team explained that the next three sessions would have a similar form: the committee and team would present the current plan distilling all the collective work to date. Participants would then work in small groups to confirm their ideas had been fully captured and grapple with the remaining unresolved issues.

This first plan review and revisions session began with a collective presentation of the plan by the project team and representatives of the Dog Play Area, North Field, Sports Courts and Western Edge Committees. The Recreation and Parks Department then explained the maintenance and operation needs that were informing the plan and the Mayor's Office on Disability discussed the accessibility goals the City had for the project. As part of the presentation, the project team outlined the refinement to the park paths and explained the maintenance and accessibility needs that limited the team's ability to change the course or wide of the path as much as participants would like.

With this context, participants reviewed the first draft plan in small groups, commenting on all aspects of the design. Groups were also asked to consider in detail whether they would retain and repurpose the existing clubhouse or remove it.







When the small groups reported back two things were clear: 1) many aspects of the plan were widely supported and 2) the paths and clubhouse questions remained unresolved. A majority of groups were still unsatisfied with the paths and the explanation of their necessity. Participants split on the future of the clubhouse with 5 groups voting to remove it and 7 groups voting to repurpose it for a range of activities from recreation to food service. Participants also provided a range of comments for refining aspects of the plan from picnic table placement to dog play area boundaries.

Extended Project Team and Committee Deliberation

Recognizing key issues remained to be resolve, the project team, extended the period of deliberation before the next workshop to two months. The goal was to give the team and project committees enough time create a complete draft plan before the entire community came back together. This would assure everyone would have a final opportunity to review all aspects of the project at this fifth session and then confirm their comments had been heeded at the last and sixth workshop.

The Steering Committee held two extended meetings during these months—one focused on the landscape, another focused on buildings. Working Committees also met and the project team worked closely with the participants most concerned about the remaining unresolved questions.

Workshop 5: Reviewing the First Complete Plan October 20, 2011

Attendance by Community: 80

The project team started this session by reviewing a chart of all the work completed and decisions made to date and the relatively short list of tasks remaining. The message was clear: "We've come a long way together. We have a few tough decisions left to make. But, given what we already done...we can do this." Just as the Steering Committee had worked overtime in the last period, the team asked participants to stay an extra hour, so everyone could thoroughly consider all aspects of the plan.

The team then presented the first complete draft plan bringing together all the community's work to date. Throughout the presentation, the team highlighted the questions remaining: the future of the clubhouse, the paths, the building architecture and important other areas that hadn't received close review by the whole community: the 19th St. Plaza, the entrances, tree management and benches and trash cans.

The 12 small groups reported back twice: once on building matters and then, after more deliberation, on the landscape. 9.5 of the 12 groups voted to remove the clubhouse, resolving one of the key outstanding questions. All the groups reacted favorably to the building architecture offering complementary refinements. For example, almost all the groups also favored a more traditional "hip" roof on the northern restroom and changes to southern restroom to better integrate it with the landscape.

In the landscape report backs, groups provided support and refinements in each of the remaining areas. The refined path system without retaining walls was judged to be an improvement, but still not satisfactory to many. The 19th St. entry plaza was also an improvement, but many thought more could be done. Just as the team had hoped, community members were now full participants in the design process, considering different options and perspectives and not satisfied until we got it right.

October 27, 2011

Just as with the last days on a traditional in-office design project, the final workshop was the occasion for a flurry of creative problem solving. By the end of the night, the remaining issues were resolved with greater consensus than anyone would have expected. This is best exemplified by the resolution to the path discussion. After Workshop 5, a widely supported resolution on paths seemed unlikely. Then in the days before the last workshop, the project team explored a new solution proposed by a Steering Committee member. This creative alternative was presented to the final workshop along with the follow-up to all the other direction the community gave at Workshop 5.

The final small group report backs were short and sweet. 8 of 12 groups voted for the alternative path plan and smiles and handshakes were exchanged. The groups reported back appreciation for the responsive refinements made to the buildings and landscape. The session and the community design process closed with everything on the "to do" list checked off and everyone (literally almost everyone in the room) agreeing that the process was more productive and congenial than they could have expected. Together we had succeeded in "fixing" Dolores Park without "changing" what made it such a wonderful and beloved place.

Workshop 6: Final Plan Review

Attendance by Community: 60

schematic design drawings

The following pages illustrate the project's schematic design intent. Included are the site and architecture plans:

- Schematic Site Plan (Rendering) L1
- L2 Schematic Site Plan
- L3 18th Street Elevation
- L4 Sections at Athletic Courts
- Court Restroom Plans & Elevations A1
- A2 Court Restroom - Sections
- Playground Restroom Plans & Elevations A3
- Operations & Maintenance Site Plan A4
- Operations & Maintenance Plan A5
- A6 Operations & Maintenance Elevations & Sections
- A7 Context Photos
- A8 Design Inspiration
- A9 Perspectives



10. NORTH HELD Mutti-use for events and sports

- Unstriped and unlit • Special drainage and irrigation to sustain
- high use • Dashed lines indicate U-10 soccer field
- dimensions

11. OFF LEASH DOG PLAY AREAS • A) South off leash and play area: Marked by signage at corners and backless benches. Amenities provided: benches. trash receptacles, bag dispensers, allspecies drinking fountain, storage box,

bulletin board B) North off leash dog play area: Marked by signage at corners. Amenities provided: drinking fountain, bag dispensers, trash receptacles

12. SOUTH EDGE

- New overlook at southwest corner with decorative paving and benches • New benches along 20th St. sidewalk
- Disabled parking spot provided
- Turf & Irrigation rehabilitated with careful attention to root systems of mature trees

11 PICNIC AREA

CHURCH STREET

- Small clusters of picnic tables close to playground
- Existing to remain at south dog play area with new paving

14. RENOVATED ENTRY Linear plaza with seat wall

Accent planting between tennis fence &

seatwall

- Bike racks
- Park signage at corner curved wall
- park entrances
- MISSION DOLORES PARK L1 / Schematic Site Plan (Rendering)



15. DOLORES ST. CURB PLANTING

• Turf & Irrigation rehabilitated with careful attention to root systems of mature trees Increased trash receptacles & bike racks • Expanded cobble border (2') at lawn edge Paved compacted triangular corners at

PARK WIDE IMPROVEMENTS

Irrigation renovated • Turf planting renovated

- Accent planting · Increased bike parking
- Increased trash receptacles
- Improved drainage
- Improved signage
- Updated lighting
- Increased benches
- Historic signage

RENOVATED ENTRY PLAZA

- ADA compliant & disabled curb drop-off
- Bell relocated closer to sidewalk
- Wide steps
- Side paths at same grade as promenade
- Replace bell mounting structure

2. 19TH STREET PROMENADE

- Maintains existing character
- Internal valley gutters removed
- Turf in median to remain, flowering perennials in central circle & terminus points only
- Landing plaza at path crossing

3. NORTHERN EDGE

- A) Tennis courts refurbished
- B) Relocated tennis courts
- C) Relocated basketball court D) New multi-use court with curbed wall, stepped fence, "bang board" against bathroom wall, unmarked asphalt surface
- E) ADA compliant mid-block entrance aligned with High School entrance. Sloped walk at 1:12
- F) Improved entrance from J-Church

4. OPERATIONS BUILDING

- Built under basketball court
- Entrance and exit drive off 18th St.
- Internal path access to park Gated yard, open to sky

5. RESTROOMS

- A) Compatible with historic character, designed to serve 2,500 person/day, expandable for weekend use, built-in drinking fountains, green roof B) Portable toilets for large events with
- crowds > 5,000, temporary as needed
- C) Pissoir in park's southwestern quadrant

6. CLUBHOUSE SITE

- Restored to turf
- . CONNECTING PATH
- Connects park elements
- Works with natural topography for minimum impact
- Avoids cutting across open green
- No retaining walls needed
- A) 6' wide concrete path with 2' wide cobble shoulders
- B) 8' wide concrete path with 2' wide cobble shoulders for large event access
- C) Existing path widened to 6' wide concrete with 2' wide cobble shoulders D) 6' wide concrete path

8. WESTERN EDGE

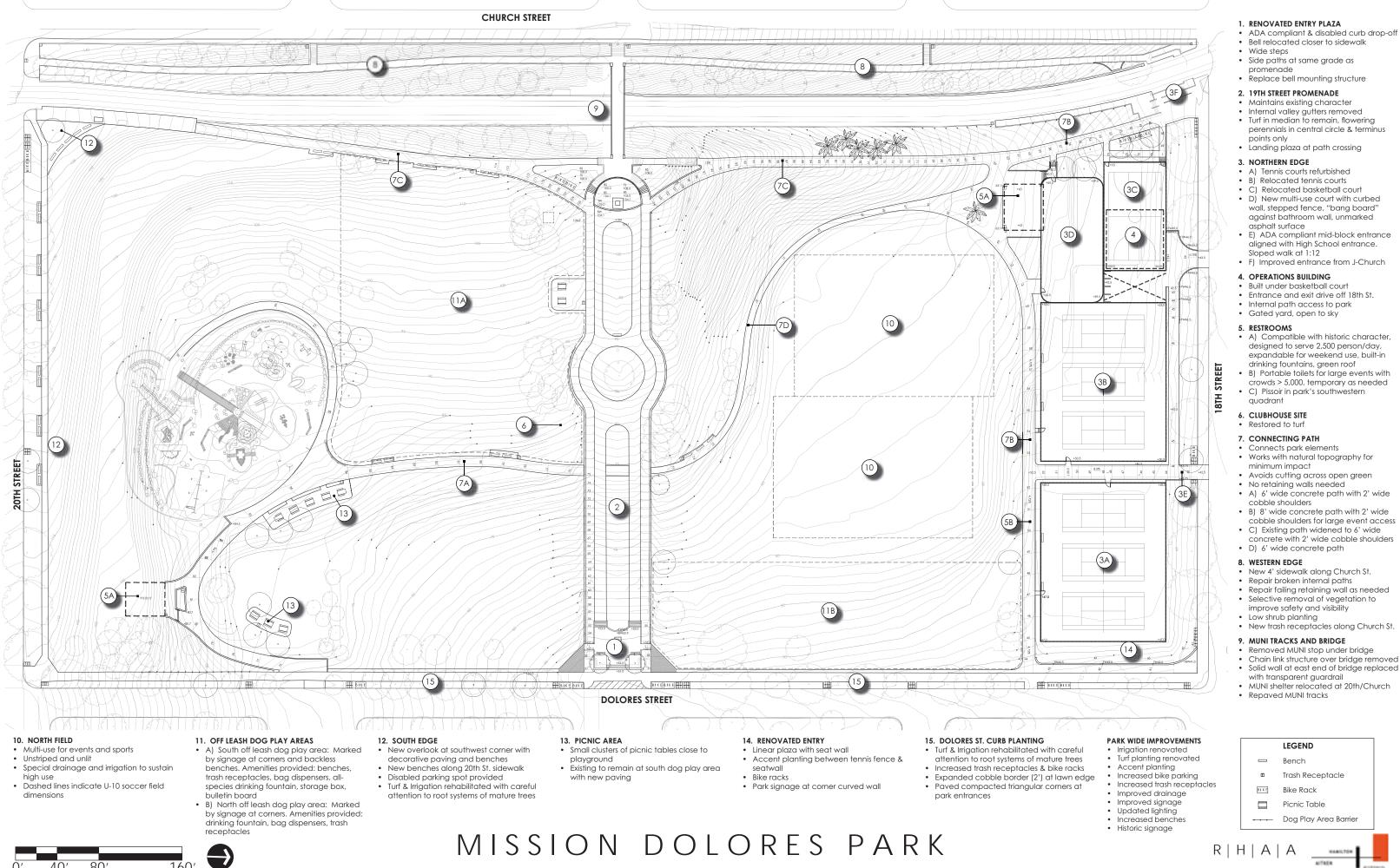
- New 4' sidewalk along Church St.
- Repair broken internal paths
- Repair failing retaining wall as needed
- Selective removal of vegetation to improve safety and visibility
- Low shrub planting
- New trash receptacles along Church St.

9. MUNI TRACKS AND BRIDGE

- Removed MUNI stop under bridge
- Chain link structure over bridge removed Solid wall at east end of bridge replaced
- with transparent auardrail
- MUNI shelter relocated at 20th/Church
- Repaved MUNI tracks

 $R \mid H \mid A \mid A$

	LEGEND
	Bench
Ξ	Trash Receptacle
BIKE	Bike Rack
	Picnic Table
	Dog Play Area Barrier



L2 / Schematic Site Plan

- perennials in central circle & terminus

- designed to serve 2,500 person/day, expandable for weekend use, built-in
- crowds > 5,000, temporary as needed

- A) 6' wide concrete path with 2' wide
- B) 8' wide concrete path with 2' wide cobble shoulders for large event access
- concrete with 2' wide cobble shoulders

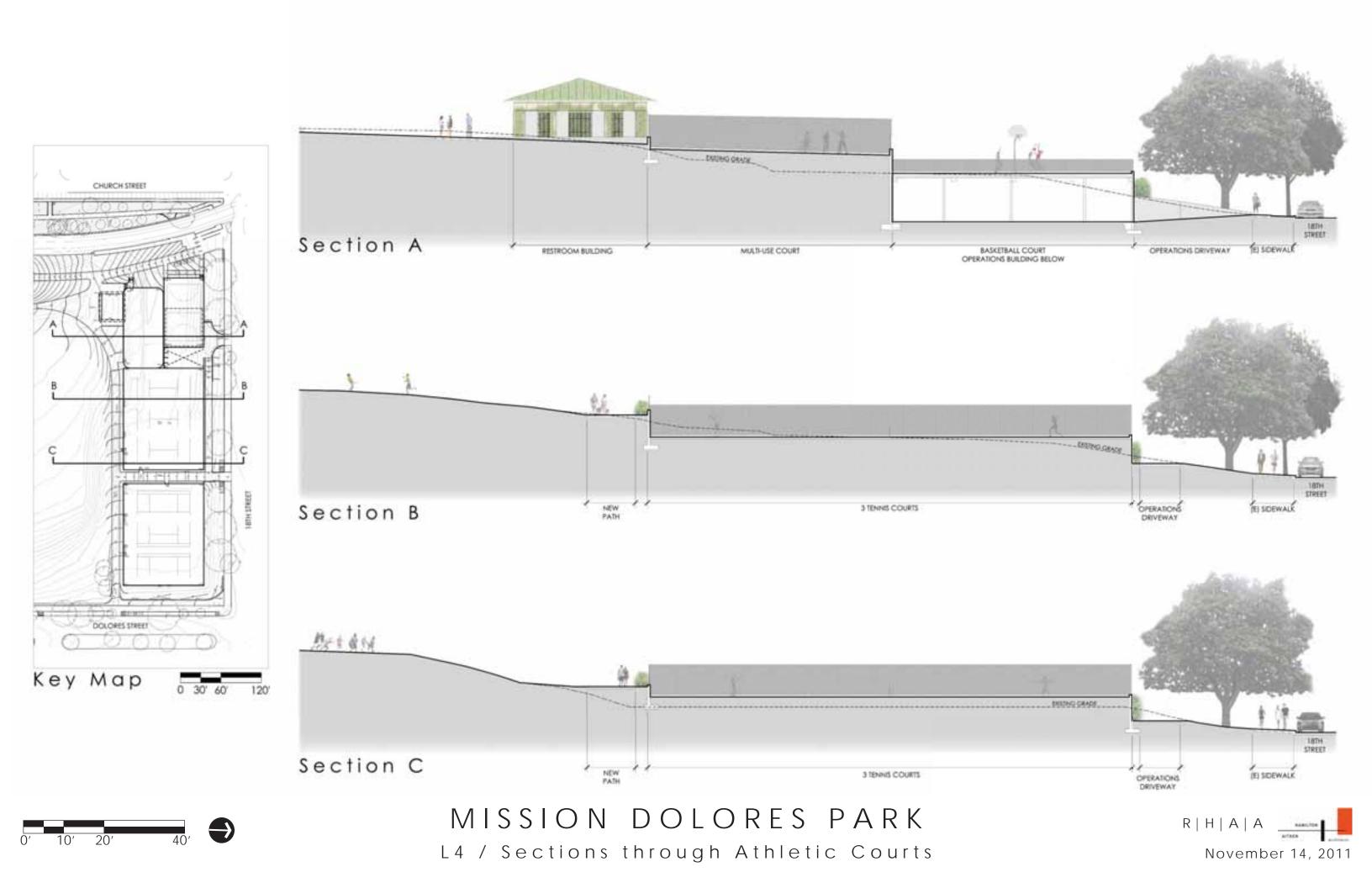
- Chain link structure over bridge removed

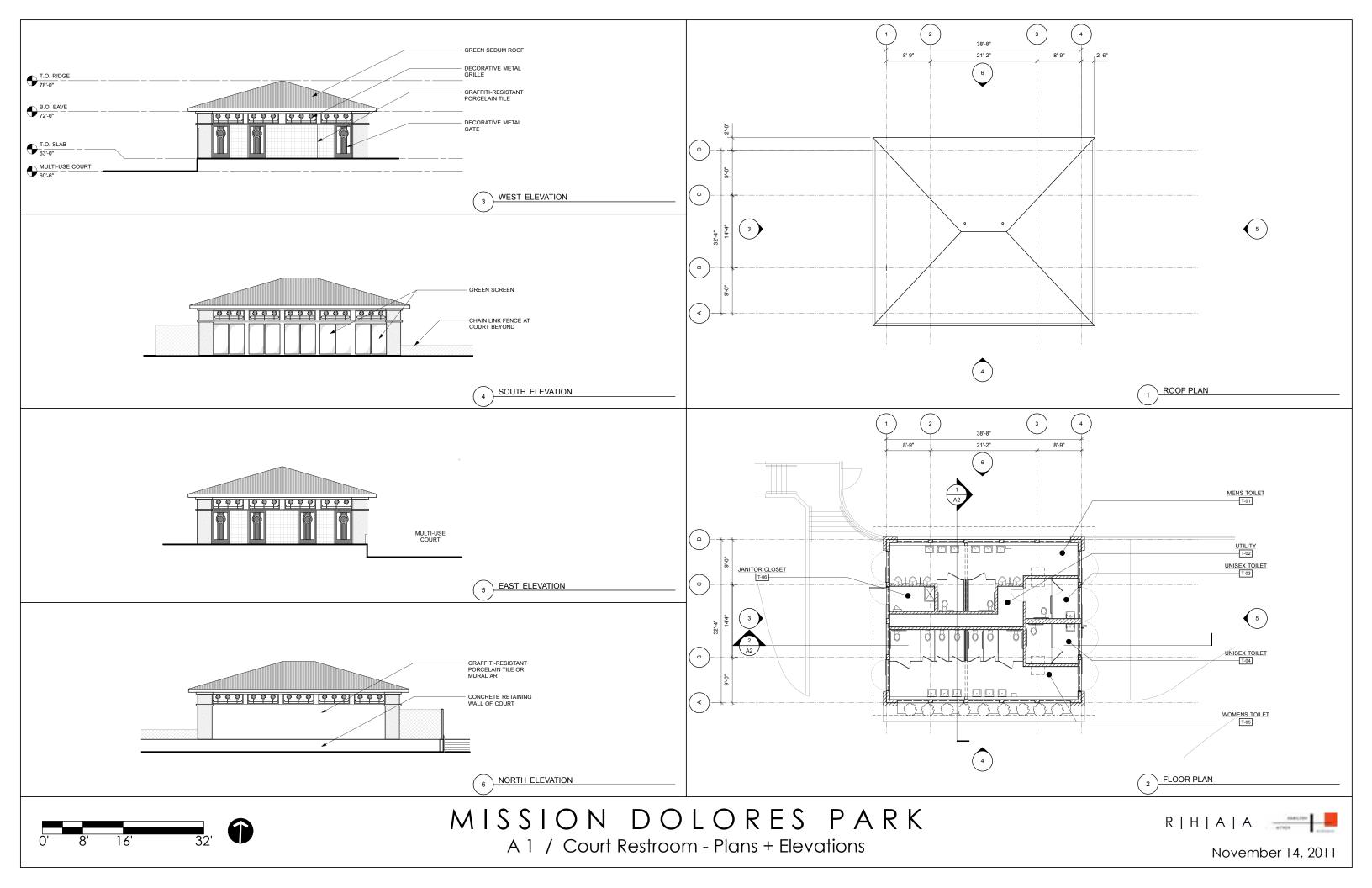




L3 / 18th Street Plan & Elevation

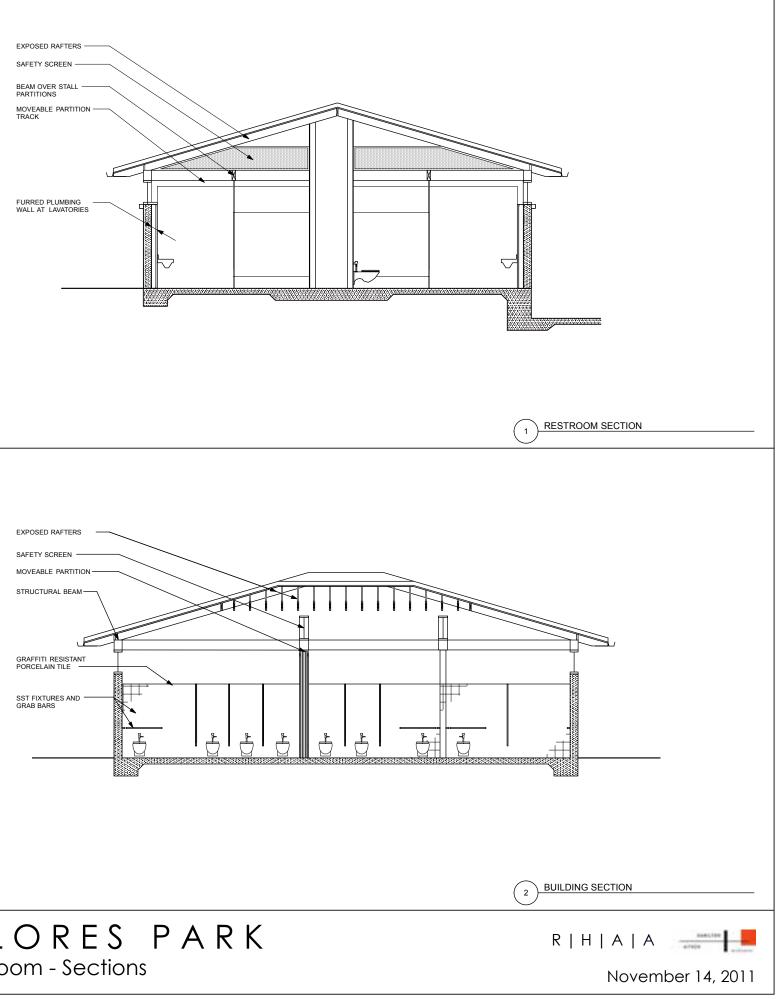


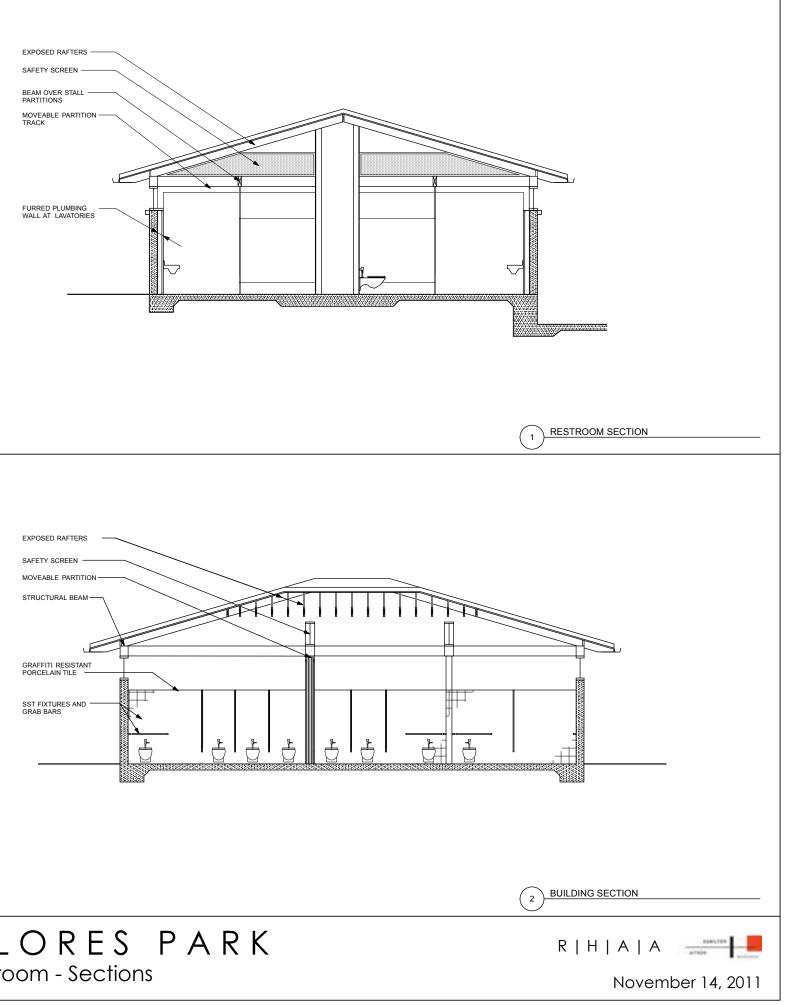


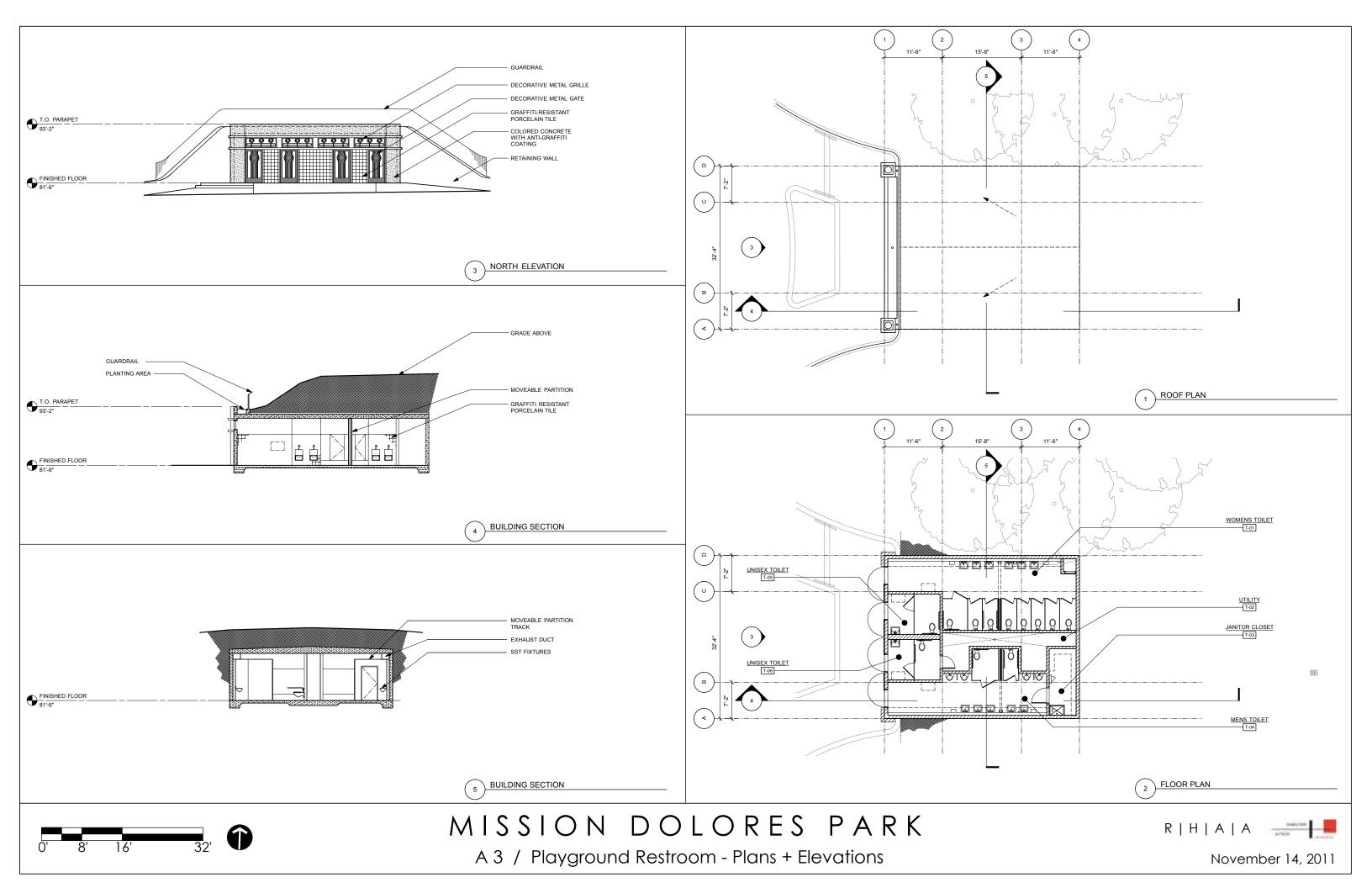


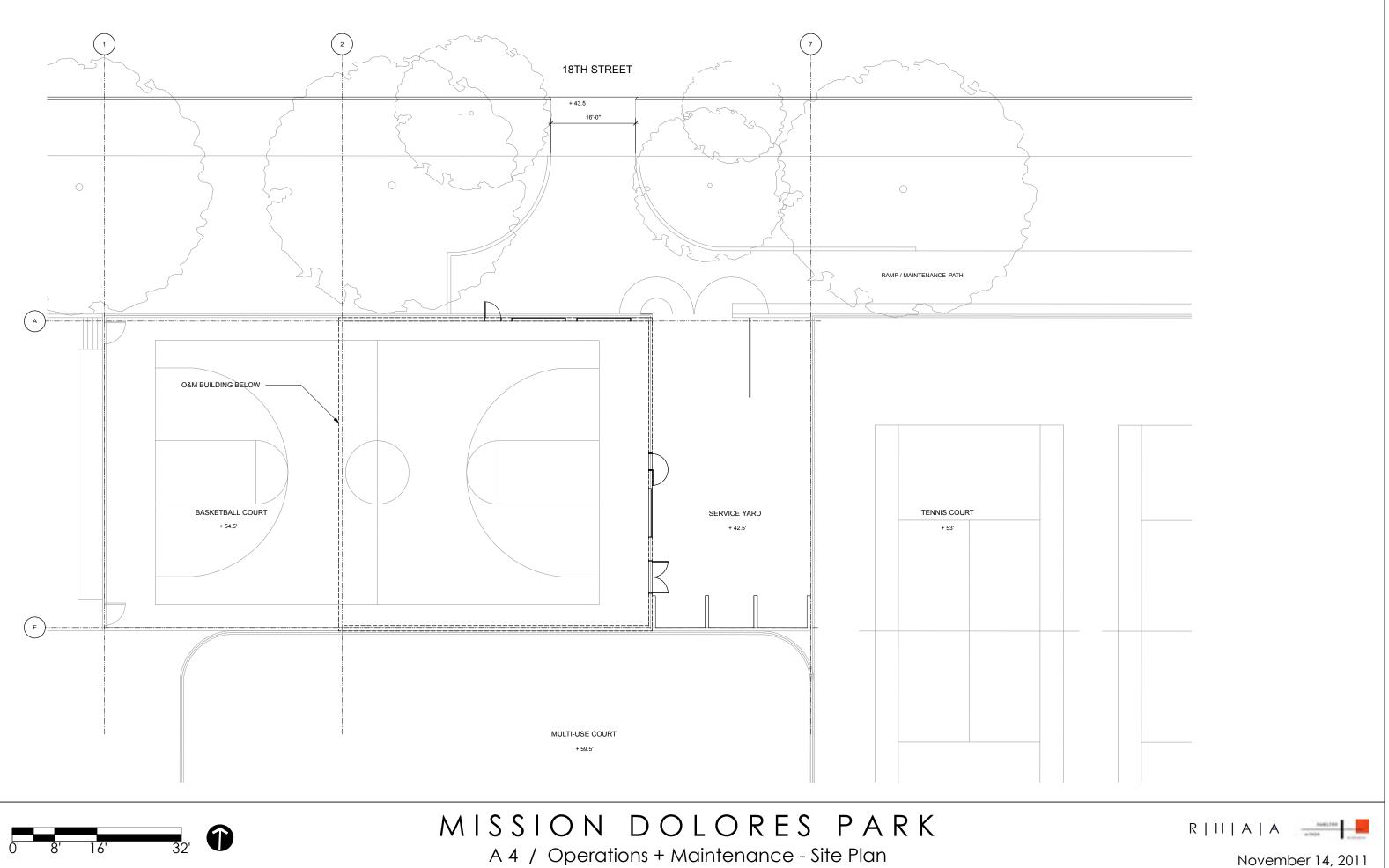


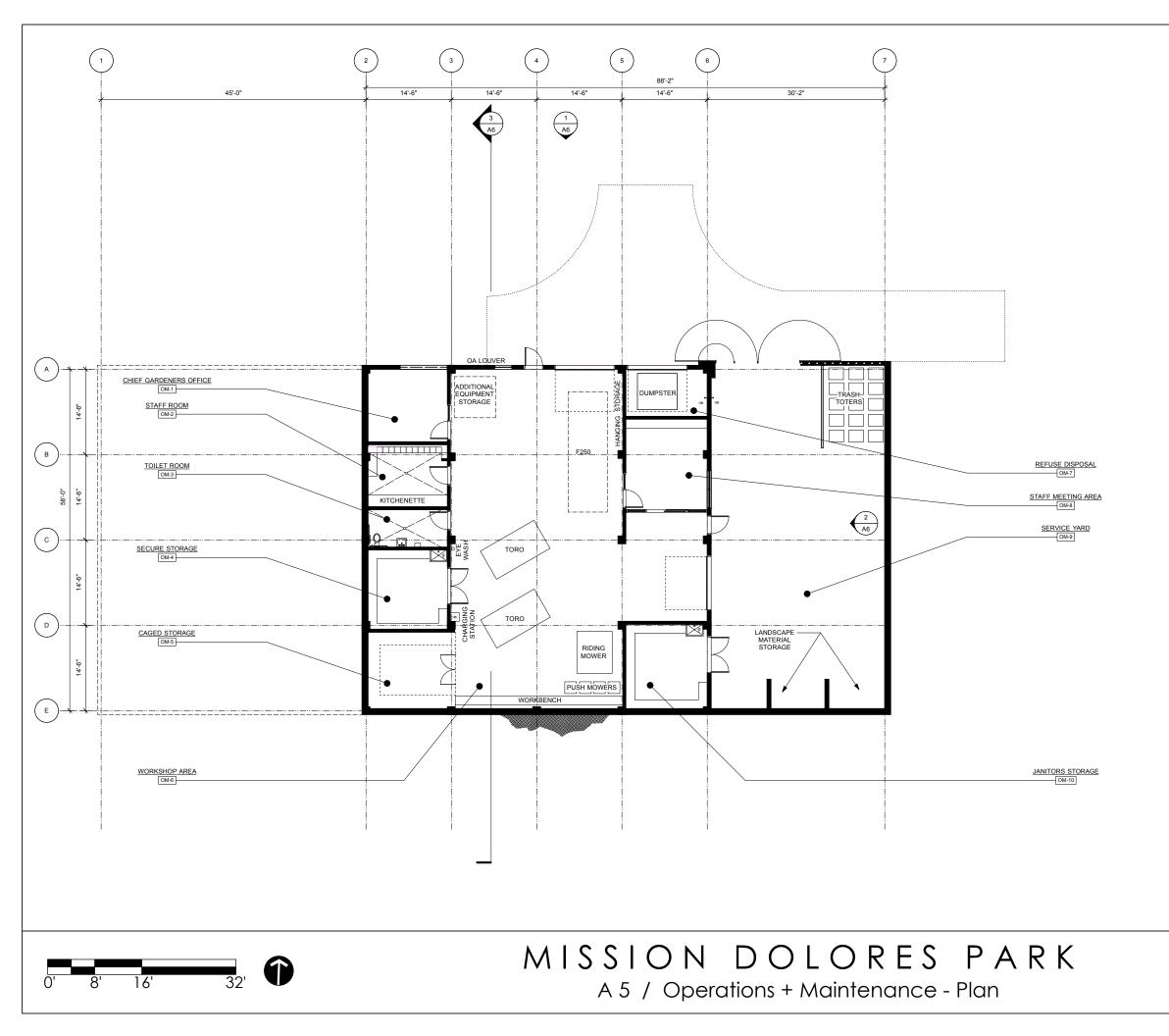












PROGRAM

- INDOOR MEETING AREA FOR 10 STAFF SECURE OFFICE SECURE FILE STORAGE

- SECURE FILE STORAGE
 T-1 DATA LINE
 (2) TOROS
 (2) TOROS
 72² RIDING MOWER
 PUSH MOWER STORAGE
 FORD RANGER OR F250
 ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATION
 10/X15² CAGED EQUIPMENT
 HANGING STORAGE TOOLS
 MAINTENANCE BENCH / SHELVES 12 LF
 ADDITIONAL CLEAR SPACE FOR RUN-OFF
 VENTED GAS CAN CABINET
 VENTED FLAMMABLE STORAGE CABINET
 VENTED FLAMMABLE STORAGE CABINET
 RAG DISPOSAL BUCKET

- RAG DISPOSAL BUCKET
 SECURE PLANT STORAGE
 ALARM, MOTION SENSORS
 ACCESSIBLE TOILET ROOM

- ACCESSIBLE I DILE I ROOM
 (12) LOCKERS
 KITCHENETTE, SINK,
 EYE FLUSHING STATION
 12/X15' CUSTODIAL STORAGE SPACE
 300 SF TRASH/RECYCLE ROOM
 COLOR ON TOTHORY
- (20) 64 GAL TOTERS
- 8 YD DUMPSTER HOSE BIBB & SEWER

OUTDOOR YARD • TEMPORARY PARKING FOR 6 VEHICLES

- TEMPORARY PARKING FOR 6 VEF
 OPEN MAINTENANCE AREA
 DELIVERY GARAGE DOOR
 HOSE BIBB & DRAIN
 STORAGE : CHIPS, MULCH, SOIL

SCREEN FROM VIEW

- SITE DIRECT VEHICLE ACCESS TO 18th STREET DIRECT TORO ACCESS TO PARK BOX TRUCK DELIVERY ACCESS

DIRECT RECOLOGY ACCESS TO TRASH

GROSS AREA: BUILDING SERVICE YARD 1840 SF -- EXTERIOR

3520 SF -- INTERIOR







PLAYGROUND RESTROOM VIEW EAST FROM 20TH STREET



BUILDER

COURT RESTROOM VIEW EAST

COURT RESTROOM VIEW NORTH



OPERATIONS + MAINTENANCE



OPERATIONS + MAINTENANCE 18TH STREET ELEVATION

MISSION DOLORES PARK A7 / Context Photos



PLAYGROUND RESTROOM



DRIVEWAY AT 18TH STREET





AERIAL OF PROMENADE



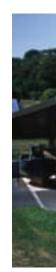
CONVENIENCE STATION - 1940'S CONCRETE FRIEZE



CLUBHOUSE ADDITION PRONOUNCED CORNERS



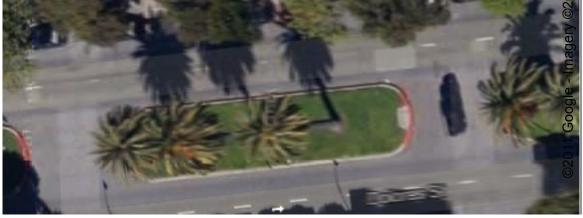
CONCRETE BRIDGE EXPRESSED CORNERS





CLUB HOUSE ADDITION HIP ROOF





DOLORES STREET MEDIAN OF PALMS

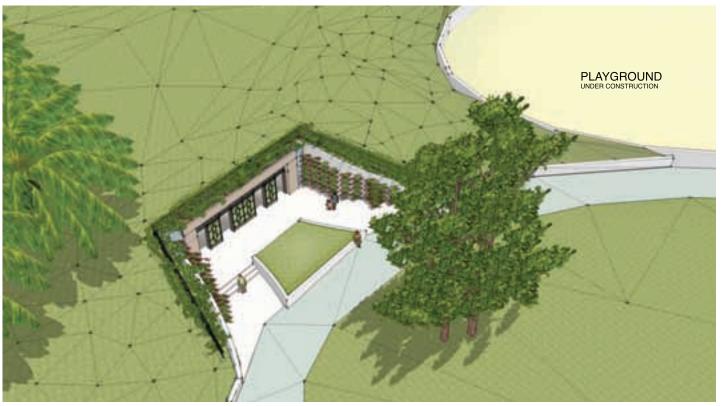


MISSION DOLORES PARK A8 / Design Inspiration



LOW SLOPE GREEN ROOF

GREEN WALL





PLAYGROUND RESTROOM





COURT RESTROOM

MISSION DOLORES PARK A9/ Perspectives

