

ABSTRACT

PROJECT NAME: SECOND + SECOND

LOCATION: Minneapolis, MN

ENTRY CATEGORY: General

100 WORD DESCRIPTION: The SECOND + SECOND project is new urban fabric that stitches a mixed-use development into the Historic North Loop District of Minneapolis. The project re-imagines privately owned space as public realm, using texture, planting and infrastructure to be welcoming, immersive, and sustainable. Three key spaces- the Garden Street, the Portal, and Foundry Court – connect to and through a city block amplifying the character and materiality of the district while scaling inspired spaces for residents and the public . The project sets a new precedent for elevating developer-funded projects as an investment in quality urban spaces shared as a resident amenity.

NARRATIVE

SITE / NEIGHBORHOOD

The 1 acre site sits within the North Loop Neighborhood, a historic warehouse district listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the former site of a foundry work yard. The site is also linked to the Mississippi River and first attracted early logging and milling operations, followed by commercial manufacturing and warehousing as rail yards were established. In the later decades of the previous century, the character of the neighborhood changed again and the site was cleared as a part of Minneapolis's Gateway demolition project in the 1960's and turned into a parking lot atop a brownfield site.

PROCESS

The landscape architect co-led engagement for this project, bringing many stakeholders to the table at multiple points during the design process. These included the North Loop Neighborhood Association, Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission, and Minneapolis City Planning Commission. The project was also subject for review under the Warehouse District historic Guidelines and required balancing specific historic constraints on design with the contemporary and evolving principles of public space, planting and material design. The landscape architect was responsible for leading a multi-disciplinary team on all site issues which included grading, stormwater, utilities, lighting and structure.

A unique site investigation included photography, clay castings, collage and drawing to fully capture the range of characters and qualities of the site and led to the paving, planting and seating textures of the final design

THE GARDEN STREET

The Garden Street is a pedestrian's first introduction to the space. The boulevard planting is a lush garden experience featuring native and resilient perennials and trees, creating an immersive threshold for visitors coming to the space. Custom metal guards frame and protect the planting areas and strategically located furniture at intersections amplify everyday social interactions and scale the street.

THE PORTAL

Mediating between the courtyard and the streetscape, the portal links the Garden Street to the Foundry Court. A large opening is carved through the ground floor of the building, using reflective surfaces, lighting and framed views to pull people into the heart of the space. The portal is lined with mirror polished stainless-steel, creating a playful illusion of additional space that draws walkers into the courtyard.

THE FOUNDRY COURT

The Foundry Court creates a new activated heart for the neighborhood that reflects its past use as a work yard for the adjacent former brass and aluminum foundry. The entire courtyard sits atop above a parking garage structure, requiring meticulous care to accommodate the technical needs of a rooftop while still allowing for the integration of proper stormwater management, lush planting, and dynamic surfacing.

Three types of Bluestone paving patterns indicate different space use. Inspired by the process of metal casting, custom precast site furnishings provide a series of seating and retaining assemblies. Large soil volumes are accommodated through these retaining walls and small landforms to support large caliper trees and deep-rooted plantings. The custom site furniture incorporates reclaimed Douglas Fir to recall the stacks of wood used for the foundry furnace and bring warmth to the site.

NARRATIVE (CONTINUED)

PLANTING

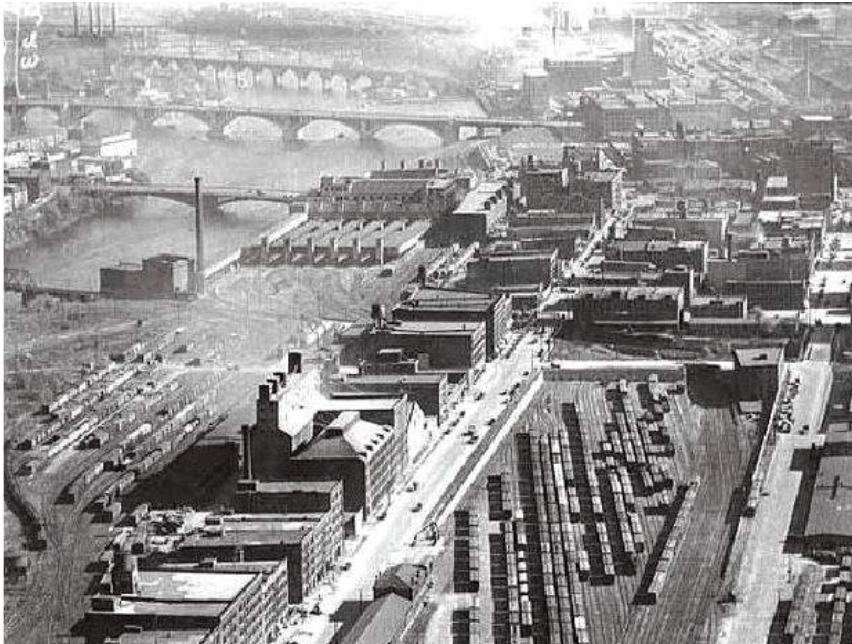
As part of the Mississippi Flyway, the plaza hosts a planting palette that embraces the scrappy urban vegetation while incorporating native species that support insect and bird life. In addition to the native plants, the team also introduced native cultivars such as Tiger Eye Sumac to ensure resilient plantings that illustrate the unique urban plant history of the district. In addition to being adaptive, the plant palette requires only small volumes of water.

STORMWATER

With its connection to the river and goals of sustainability, the project deploys strategic stormwater strategies, exceeding city requirements. The rooftops allow for ponding and rate control while connecting down to a sand filtration layer below the courtyard. A long trench drain within the court also collects surface stormwater moving it through the sand layer before it is released to the city system. Water that runs off the sidewalk flows into long, linear street planters inhabited with long-rooted native species and resilient street trees that provide biofiltration to increase the quality of stormwater that makes it back into the city system.

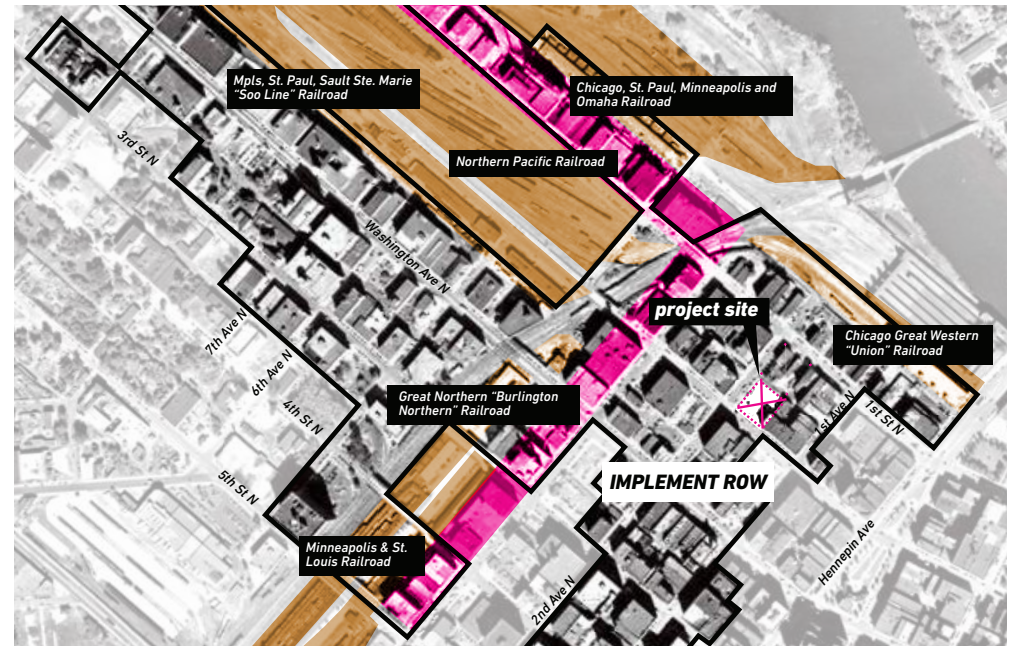
CONCLUSION

With the a rich pedestrian realm, thoughtfully designed gateway and central space, the project establishes a new vision for how landscape can enrich the urban fabric. The project demonstrates the power of a collaboratively designed, public realm to honor the past while projecting the future of this vibrant neighborhood. This project is worthy of consideration because it demonstrates the agency of landscape architects to shape the future vision of our cities and urban fabric as inspired, contextual and multi-functional places.



INTERCONNECTED HISTORY

RAILROADS, WAREHOUSING, AND MANUFACTURING



“The railroads not only facilitated the growth of the industries tied to them, they shaped the physical growth of Minneapolis.”

- MINNEAPOLIS WAREHOUSE DISTRICT DESIGNATION STUDY, 2009

HISTORY

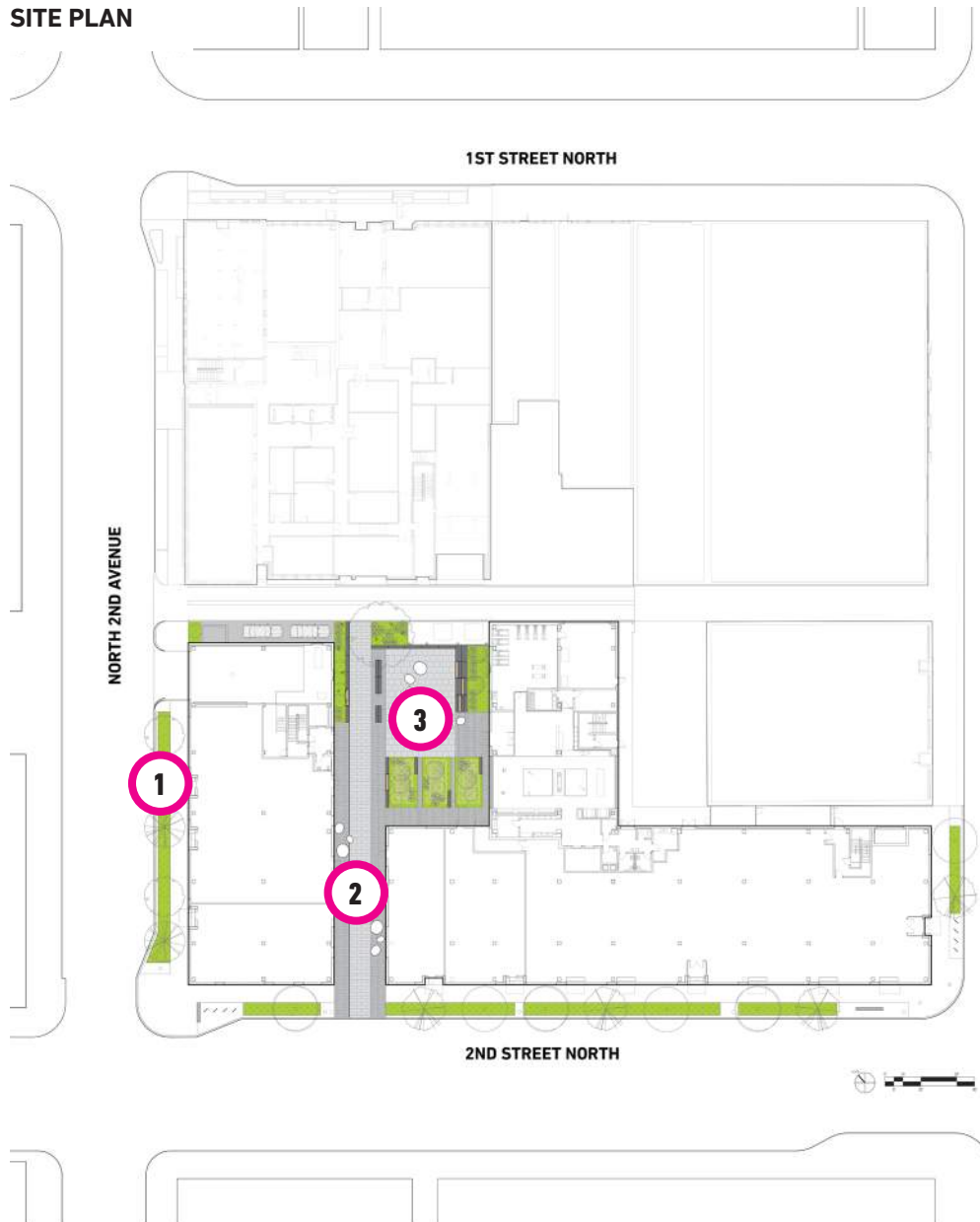
The neighborhood is inextricably linked to the proximity and power of the Mississippi River. The river-adjacent location attracted early logging and milling operations, and then commercial manufacturing and warehousing with the arrival of the railroads. The character of the neighborhood changed again, cleared as a part of Minneapolis's Gateway demolition project in the 1960's.



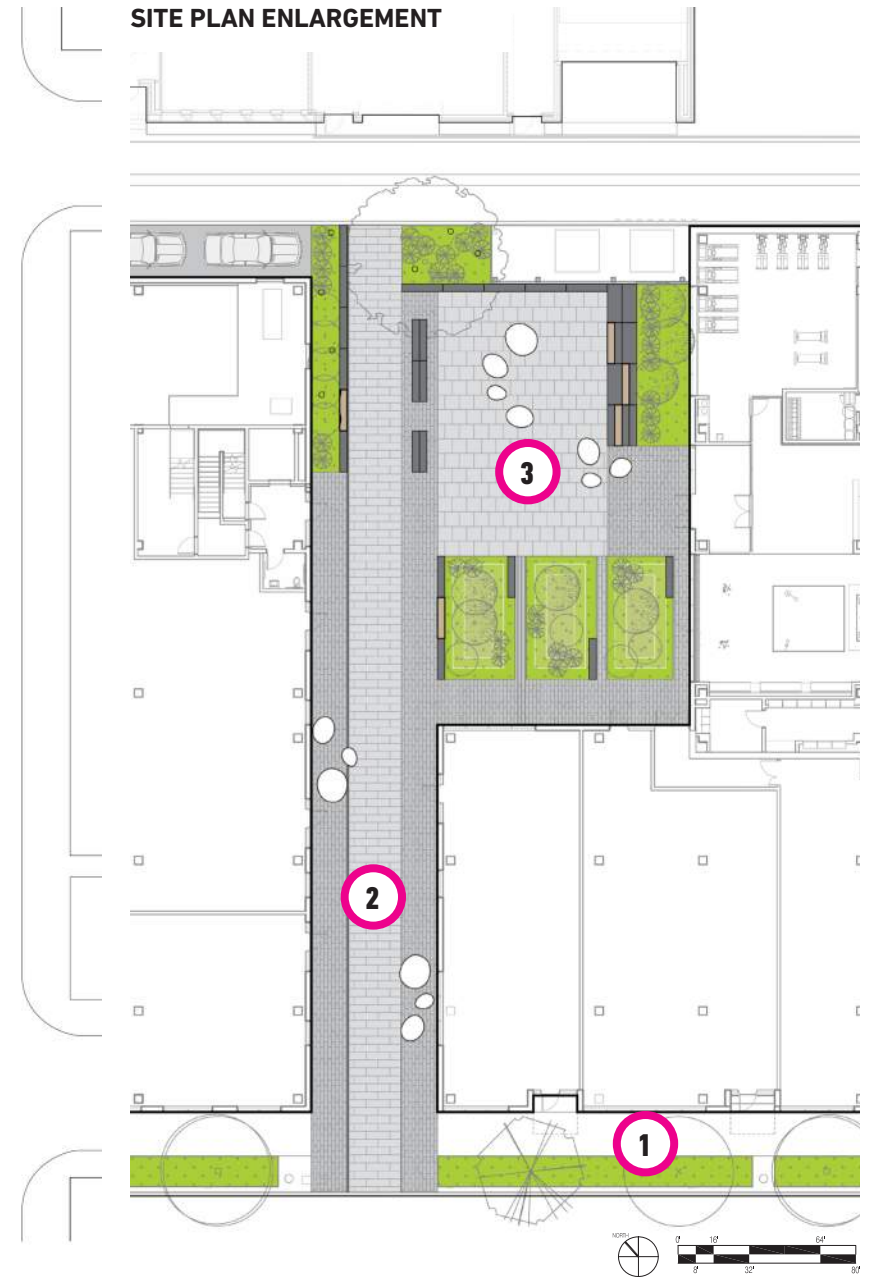
CONTEXT

The 1-acre site sits within the North Loop Neighborhood, a historic warehouse district listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the former site of a foundry work yard. The neighborhood is inextricably linked to the Mississippi River and downtown Minneapolis.

SITE PLAN



SITE PLAN ENLARGEMENT

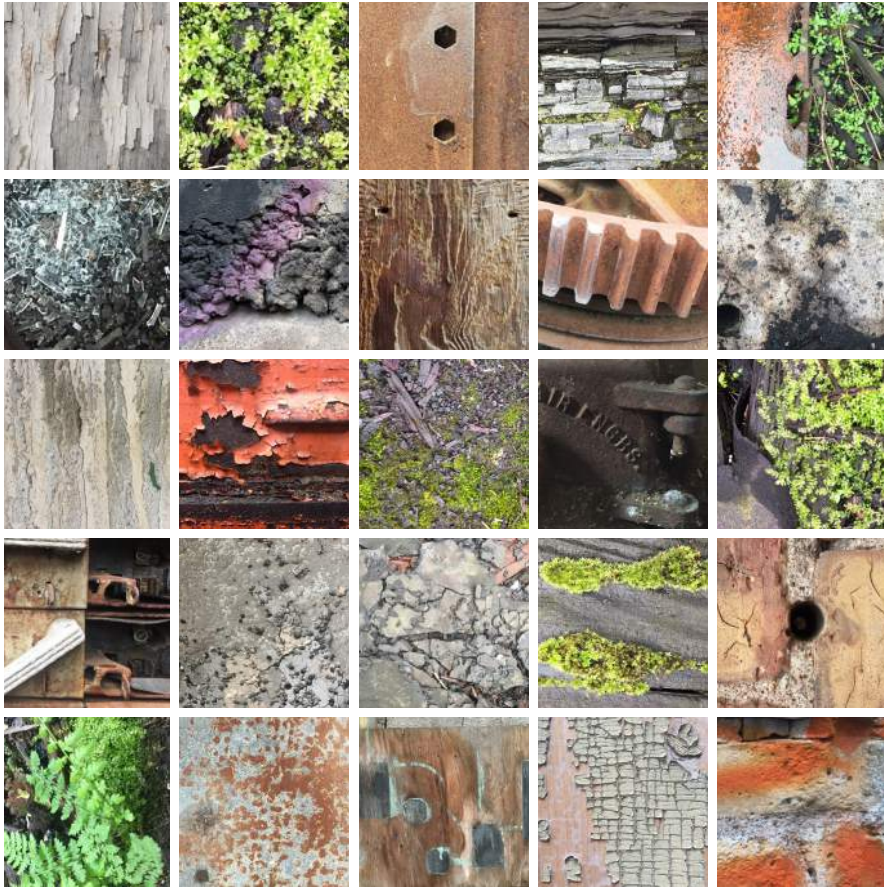


LEGEND

1. GARDEN STREET / 2. THE PORTAL / 3. THE FOUNDRY COURT

SITE PLAN

This site occupies approximately 40% of an urban block that stitches a new mixed-use development into the Historic North Loop District of Minneapolis. Three key spaces, the Garden Street, the Portal, and the Foundry Court work together to create a multi-functional public realm.



PROCESS

The landscape architect engaged in a process investigation of the site using photographic methods, clay castings, collages, and drawings to capture the range of qualities of the site. This documentation was pulled together with an artist collaborator in an exhibition called "Residuals". This work also served as the basis for the overall design and details.



THE FOUNDRY COURT

The Foundry Court creates a new activated heart for the neighborhood that reflects its past use. The courtyard sits atop a garage, requiring meticulous care to accommodate the technical needs of a rooftop while still allowing for the integration of stormwater management, lush planting, and dynamic surfacing.



THE PORTAL (Daytime View)

The portal links the Garden Street to the Foundry Court through a large opening in the ground floor of the building. It provides visual and pedestrian access through an activated in-between space. The portal is lined with a mirror polished stainless-steel material, creating an illusion of additional space.



THE GARDEN STREET

The Garden Street maximizes the boulevard with native and urban resilient perennials and trees, creating an immersive garden experience for pedestrians and a threshold for visitors coming from adjacent blocks. Custom metal guards frame and protect the planting areas.



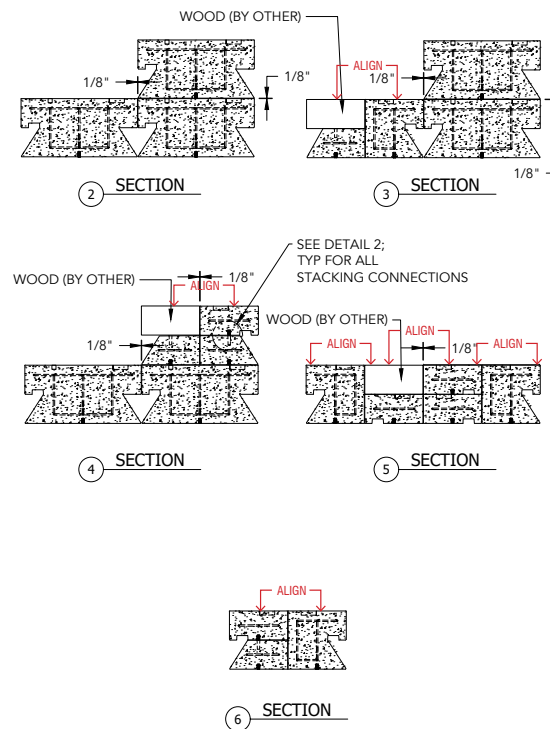
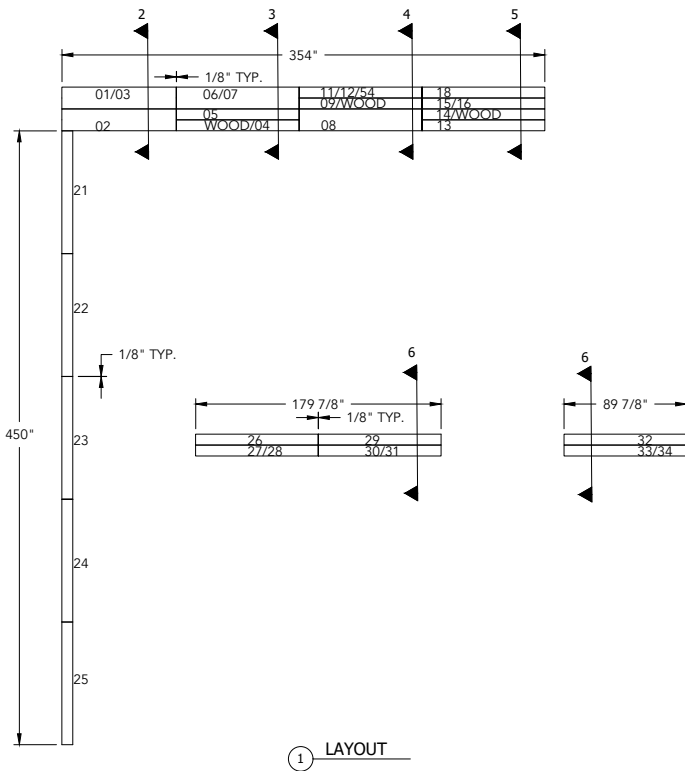
PLANTING

The planting design strives to capture the lush and scrappy spirit of the wild plants that pushing through cracks in the urban infrastructure throughout the North Loop.



COURTYARD ELEMENTS

Three types of Bluestone paving establish the surface for the court and indicate different speeds of pedestrian movement. Custom precast site furnishings, provide a series of seating and retaining assemblies.



SITE FURNITURE

The precast site furniture is inspired by the process of the adjacent Commutator foundry. The landscape architect iterated numerous options and arrived at a custom unit that produces numerous types of seating. The pieces can be reconfigured in numerous combinations to form freestanding, retaining and stacked combinations of objects with timber pieces inserted at regular intervals.



PLANTING ATOP PARKING STRUCTURE

As part of the Mississippi Flyway, the plaza hosts a planting palette that embraces the scrappy urban vegetation while incorporating native species that support insect and bird life. Large soil volumes are accommodated through retaining walls and landforms in order to support large caliber trees and deep-rooted plantings above the parking structure below.



THE PORTAL (Nighttime View)

The Portal comes alive at night providing a transformational experience of passage with the careful addition of lighting and strategic reflection of the unique site features.



THE FOUNDRY COURT AT NIGHT

The lighting within the Foundry Court alludes to the history and character of the neighborhood while extending use of the space beyond day-time. Linear LED lighting integrated into the furniture frames the side of the courtyard and emphasizes the rectilinear forms and axial paths of travel.



BENCH + PLANTER AT NIGHT

Distributed lighting in the planting landforms highlights the organic and varying habits of the plants and provides a contrasting, mysterious backdrop to the linear lights of the bench elements.