

Parkman Plaza, Boston Common

Site Programming and Preliminary Design Study



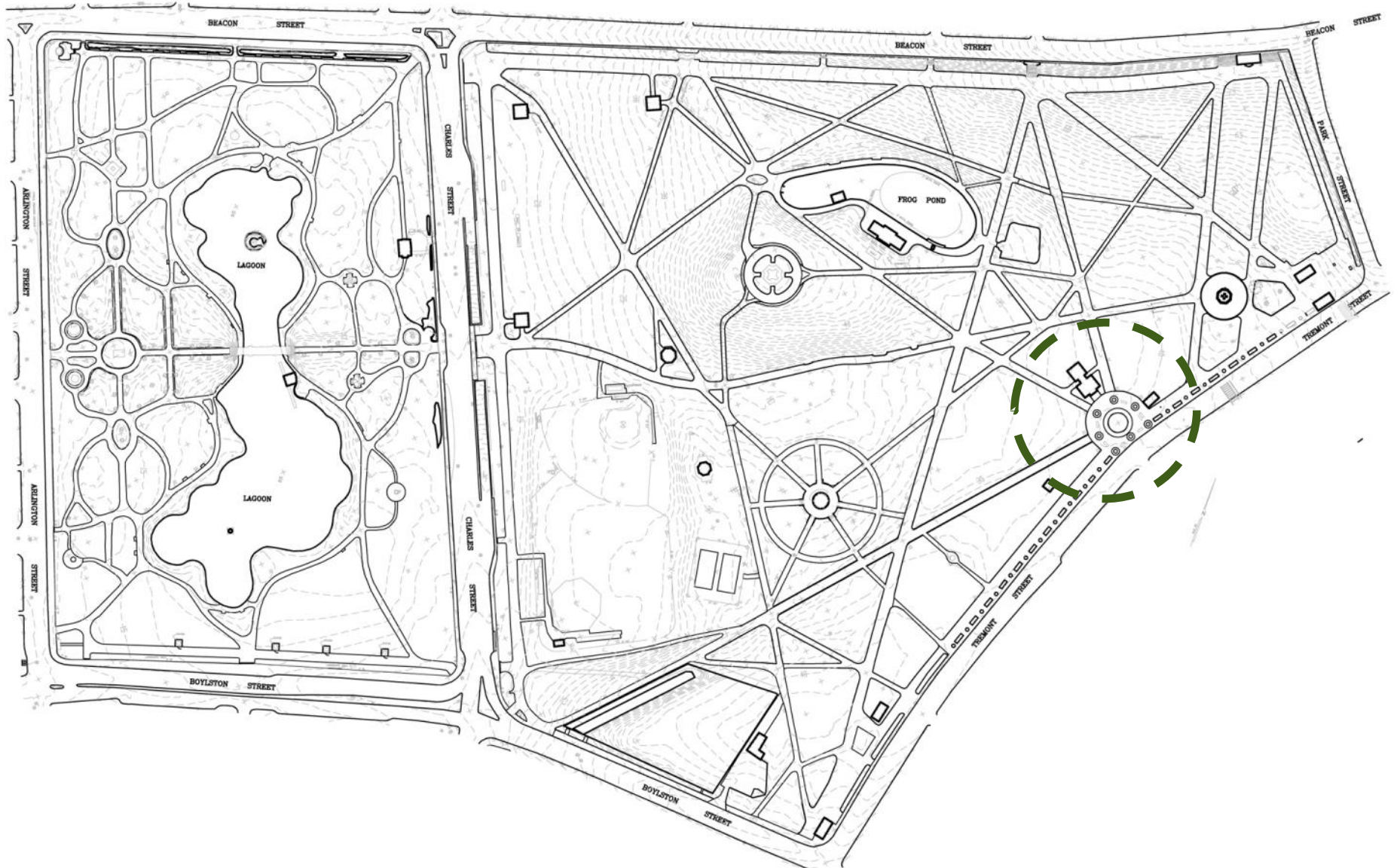
Boston Landmarks Commission Presentation
June 24, 2014

Martin J. Walsh
Mayor



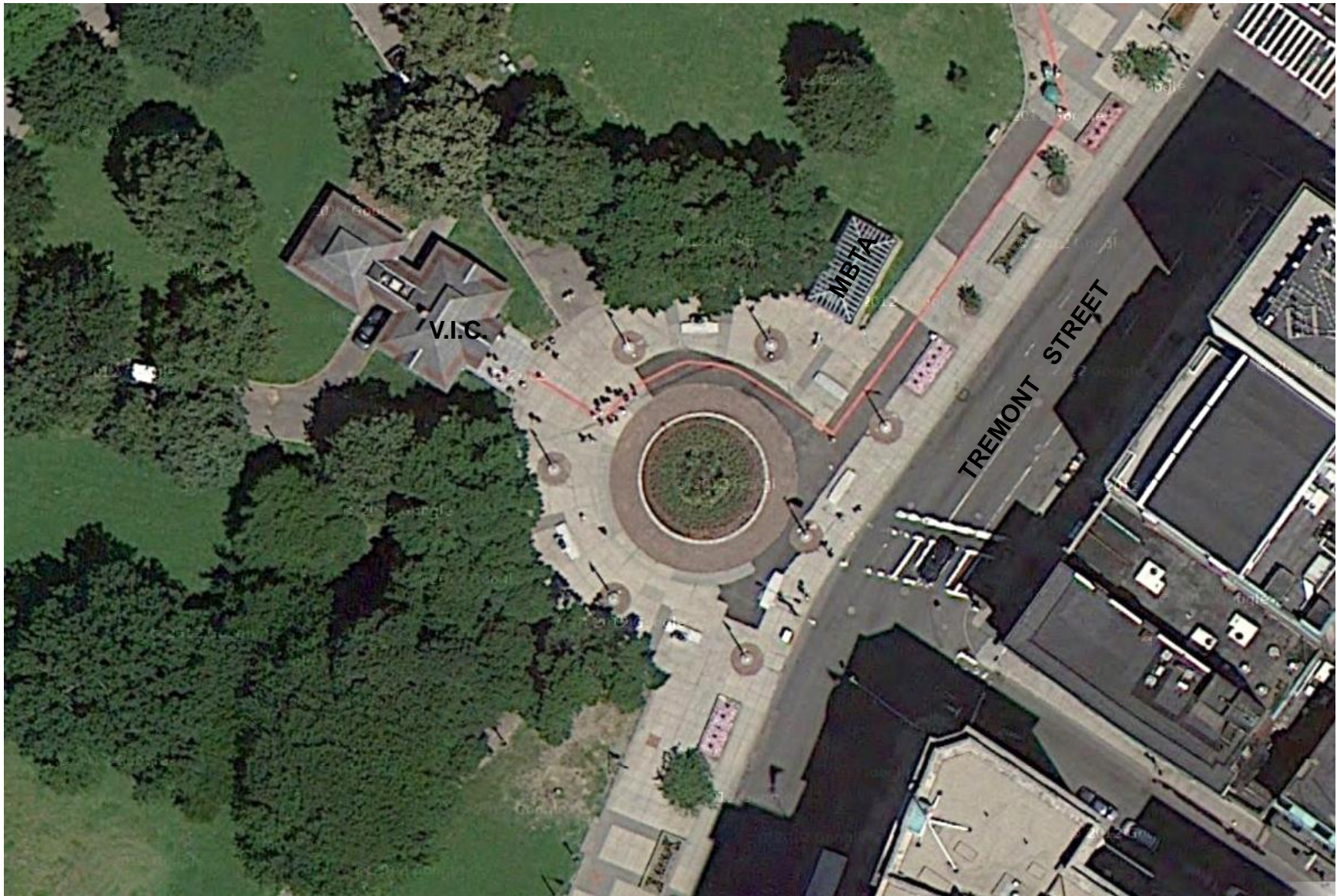
Christopher Cook
Interim Commissioner

Site Location



Parkman Plaza - Site Programming and Preliminary Design Study

Existing Site Conditions



Site History



1901 - Map of Boston Common and Public Garden by George H. Walker and Company (Boston Public Library Leventhal Map Center)

Site History



1897 circa - Construction of subway tunnel, current MBTA Green Line (Boston Public Library)



1918 - View along Tremont Street (Boston Public Library)



1919 - View along current Lafayette Mall (Boston Public Library)

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Site History



1925 - Aerial view of Boston Common
(Boston Public Library)



1927 - Fire Department water pressure test
along Tremont Street (Boston Public Library)



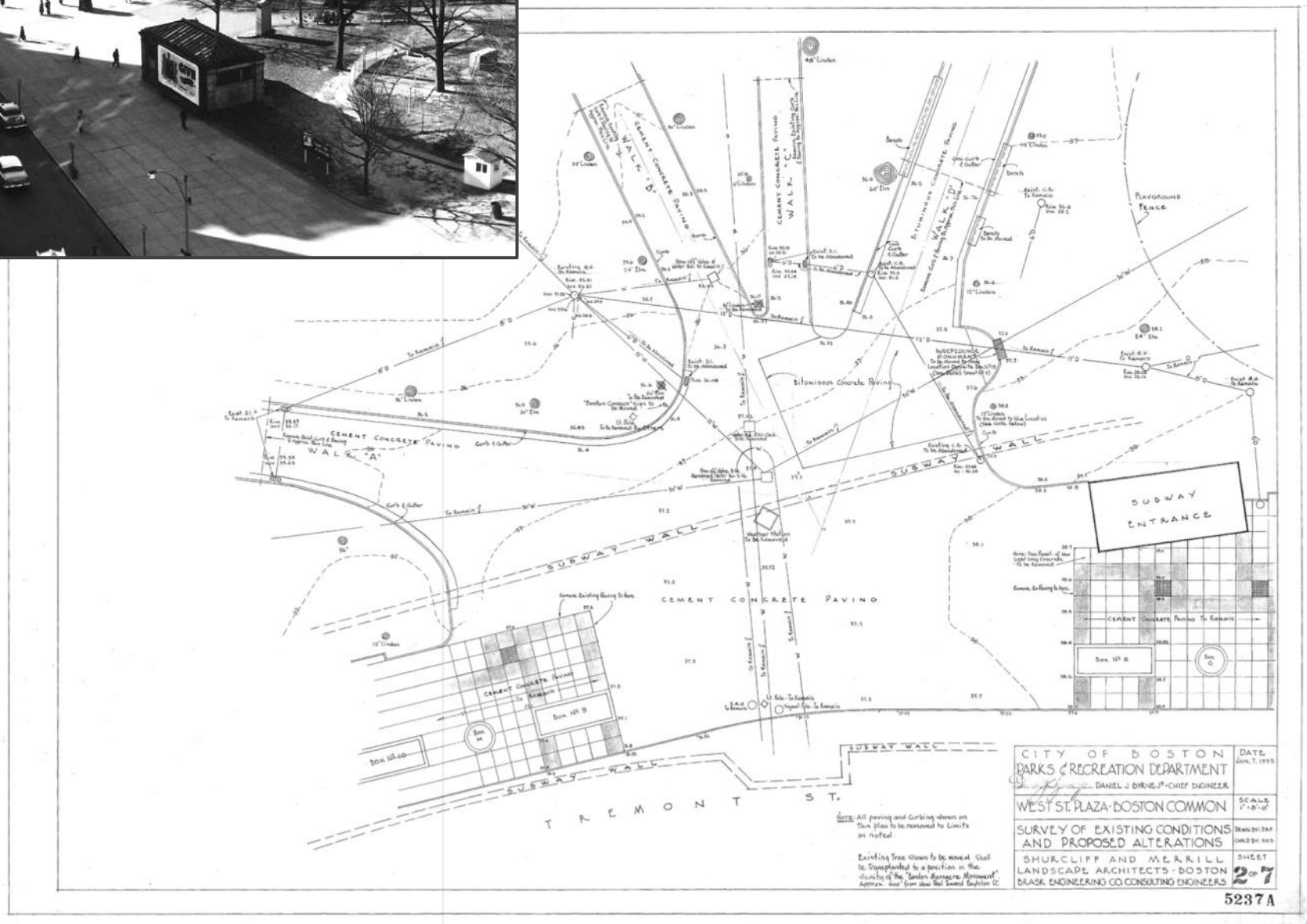
1927 - View of Boston Common from building
on Boylston Street (Boston Public Library)



1929 - View along Tremont Street, compare
to 1918 photograph above
(Boston Public Library)



Site History

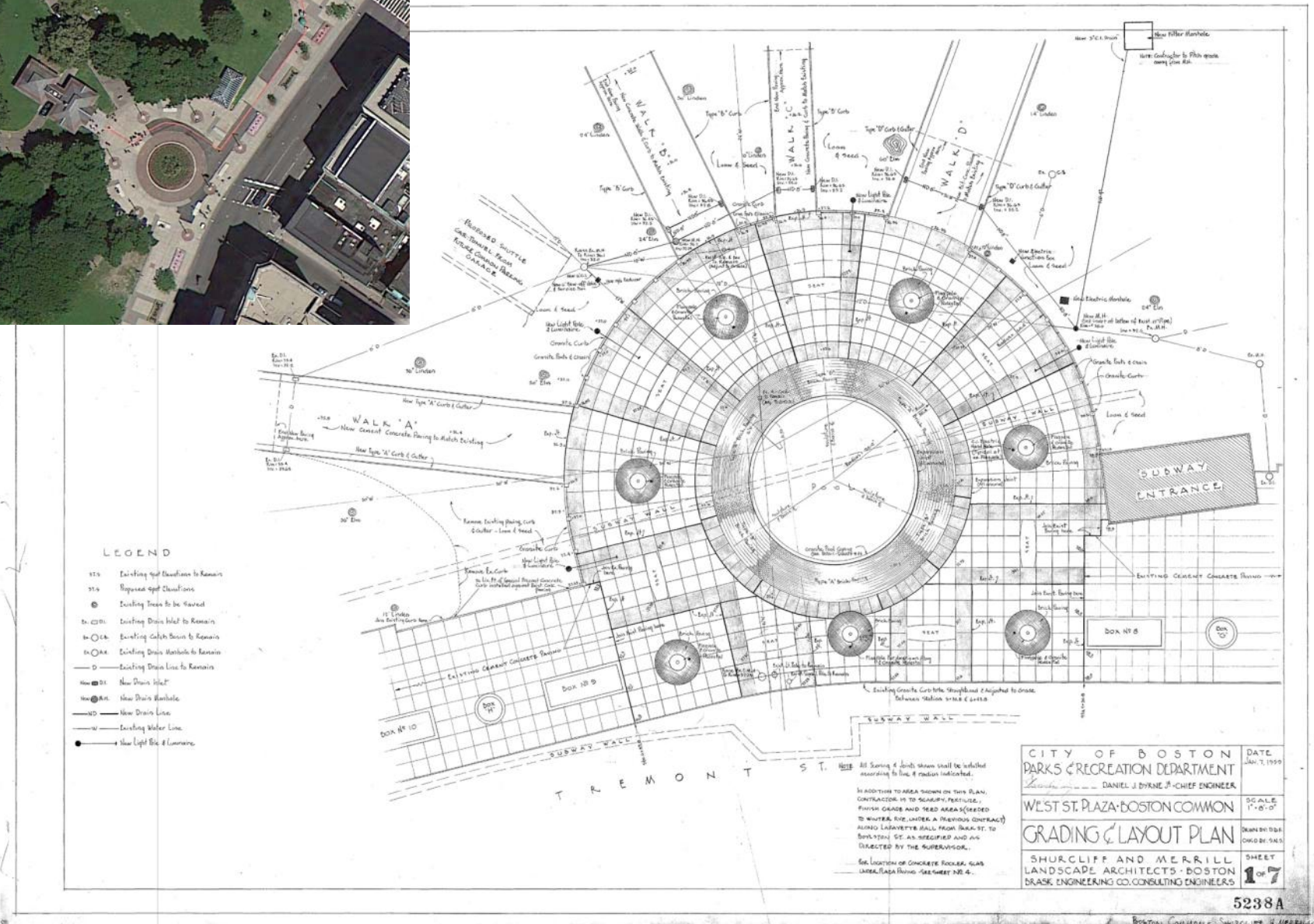


1959 - Original Parkman (West St.) Plaza Design Plans (scaled to fit sheet)

Parkman Plaza - Site Programming and Preliminary Design Study



Site History

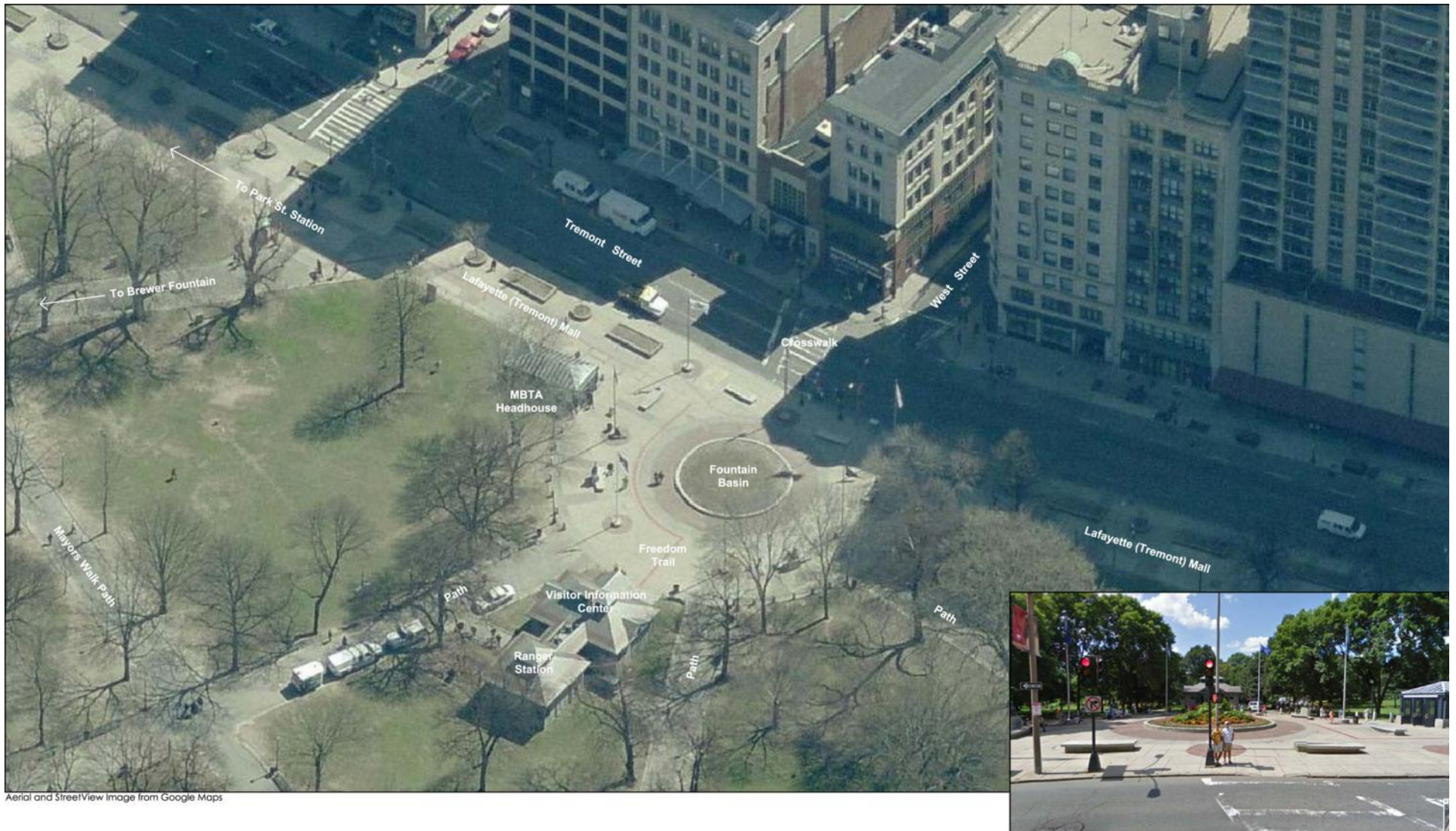


1959 - Original Parkman (West St.) Plaza Design Plans (scaled to fit sheet)

Parkman Plaza - Site Programming and Preliminary Design Study



Site Analysis – Existing Conditions



Site Analysis – Existing Conditions

General

- Plaza constructed in 1960.
- Dedicated to George Parkman, Jr., philanthropist to Boston parks
- Plaza is of a semi-circular design and is a convergence of three interior park pathways and Lafayette Mall.
- Designated crosswalk across Tremont Street.
- Secondary headhouse for Park Street Station.
- The Visitor Information Center (VIC) constructed in 1993 and hosts 3500 to 5000 visitors per day during peak season; open year around.
- Start of the Freedom Trail and guided historic tours.
- MBTA Green Line tunnel is directly underneath a portion of the Plaza and basin.



Site Analysis – Existing Conditions

Site Elements

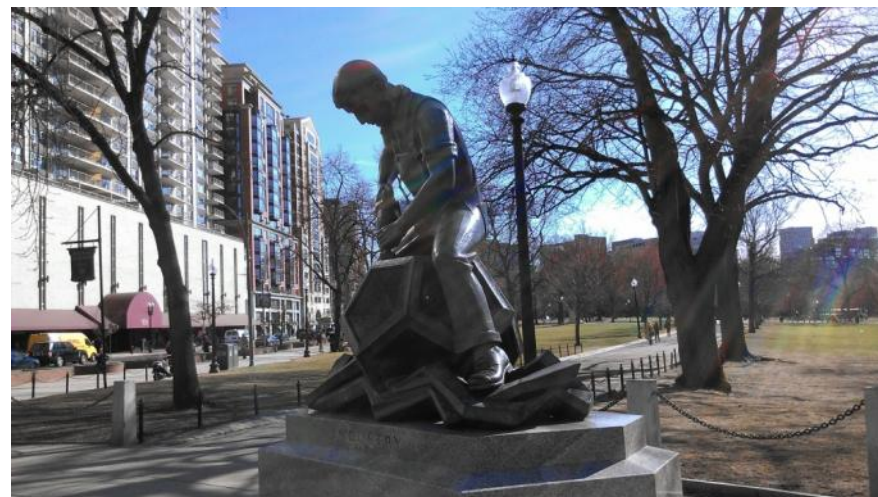
- Planter established in the non-functioning water feature located in center of plaza; original water feature built in 1960.
- 3 statues symbolizing Religion, Industry, and Learning are the works of Arcangelo Cascieri and Adio DiBiccari; added to original 1959 plaza design.
- Circular and rectangular brick planters and stone benches along Tremont Street frontage. Fountain basin edge and planters used as supplemental seating.
- Series of seven flagpoles presenting the U.S. flag and the flags of the six New England states. Flags are not lighted.
- The lighting comes from street lights along Tremont Street supplemented by acorn-style lights posts along edge of Plaza.
- Large shade trees edge the north and south sides of Plaza.



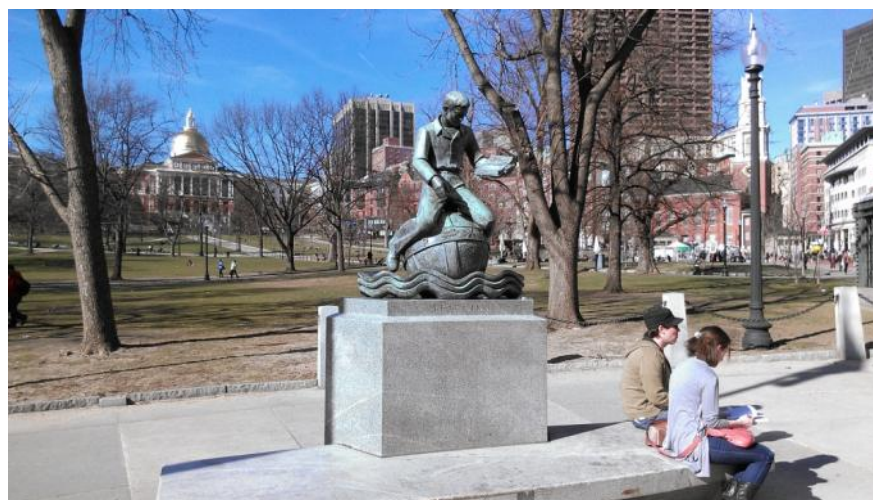
Site Analysis – Existing Conditions



“Religion” Sculpture



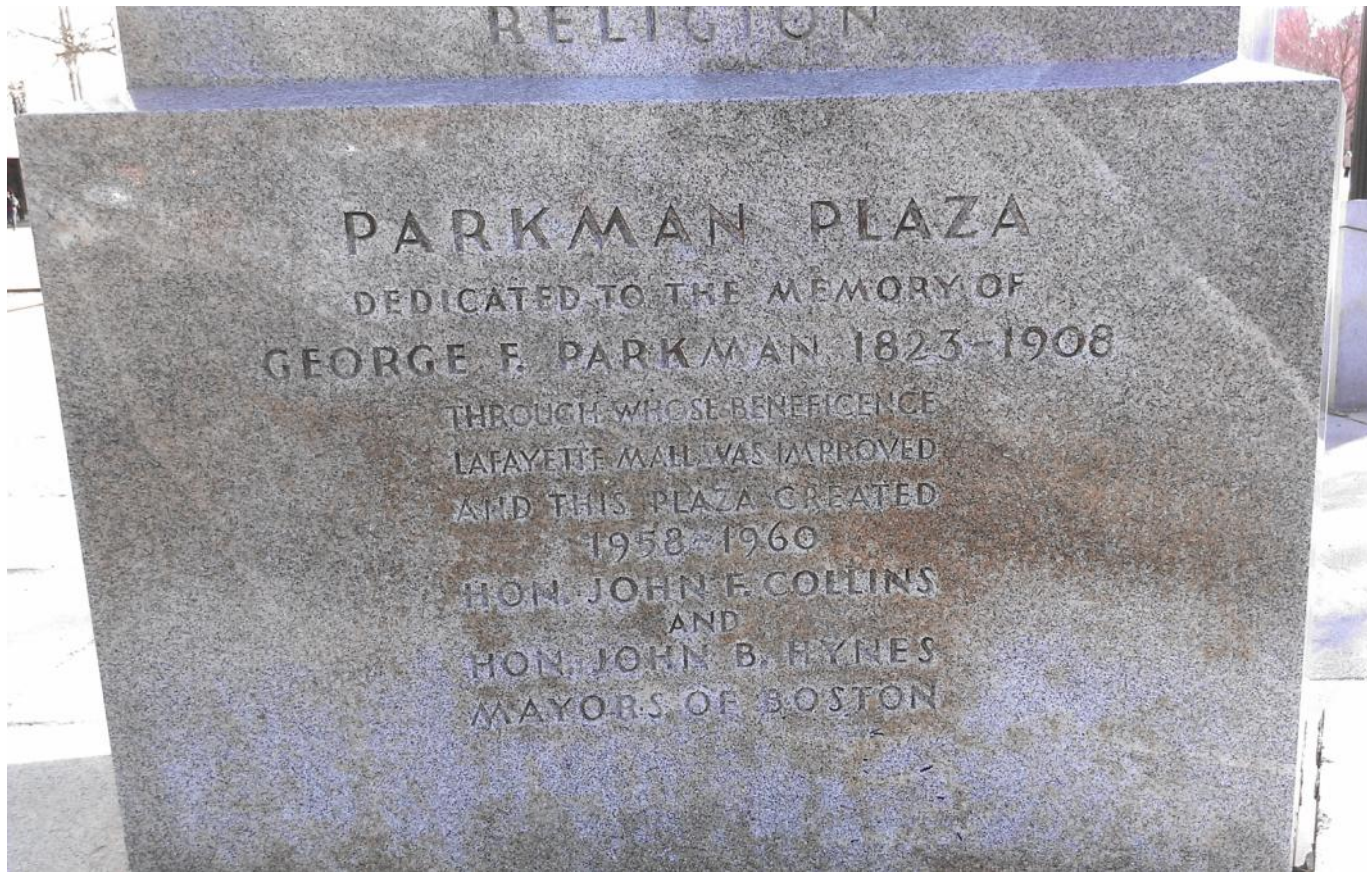
“Industry” Sculpture



“Learning” Sculpture

Parkman Plaza - Site Programming and Preliminary Design Study

Site Analysis – Existing Conditions



“Religion” Sculpture

Site Analysis – Existing Conditions

Site Pavement

- Paving design is mostly concrete with brick accents around fountain basin and flagpole bases.
- Many paved areas in poor condition with some settlement at the edges of differing pavement types.
- Plaza grades are generally flat although there are several low spots that collect water.
- Freedom Trail is marked with a red painted line within the Plaza.



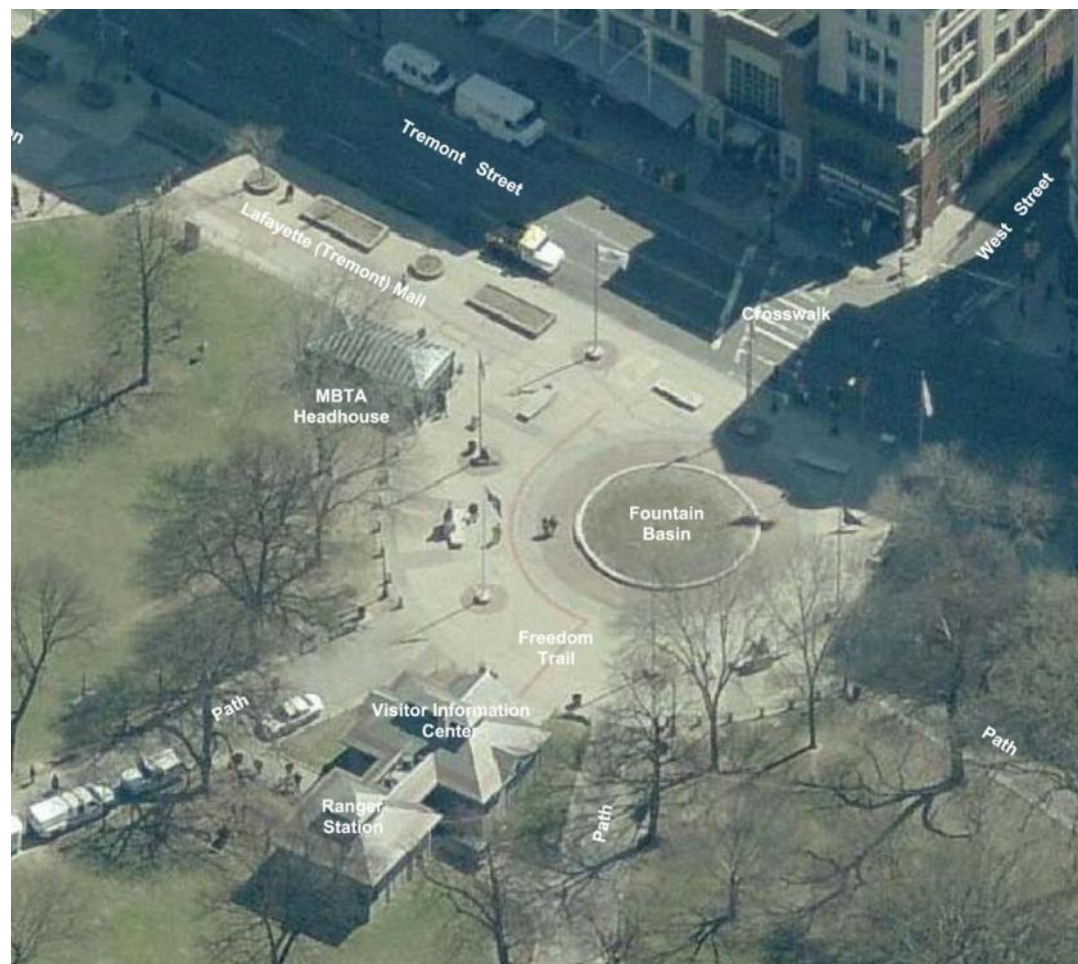
Site Analysis – Existing Site Issues

Stakeholder Interviews

Interviews conducted with various BPRD departments, Greater Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau, Freedom Trail Foundation, Friends of the Public Garden, Boston Landmarks Commission, and Boston Art Commission during May and June 2013.

Various Key Points from Interviews

- Large volumes of pedestrian traffic (general park and VIC/tour group use).
- Most use of the Plaza appears to be transient in nature.
- Four regular tour companies; Freedom Trail Foundation being the largest. Three other smaller tour companies. VIC used for on-site ticket sales. Tours operate on alternating schedules and gather outside of main Plaza space.
- Tourists sometimes find the VIC difficult to locate. Entrance path to VIC sometimes congested.
- Freedom Trail should be better identified.
- Several existing vendors spaces permitted in Plaza.



Site Analysis – Existing Site Issues

- Plaza space should be better unified.
- Plaza should be integrated as a part of the Common, but still maintain a unique identity.
- Pedestrian circulation space should not be decreased in size.
- Location of several site features (benches, sculpture, flagpoles) impede maintenance operations and pedestrian flow.
- Few interviewed are attached to the existing site furnishings (location or design).
- General consensus to keep the Plaza open to Tremont Street.
- No desire to restart water feature.
- Sculptures were not part of original 1959 design but added before site construction.
- Sculptures should continue to be a part of the Plaza design, but they may be relocated within the Plaza space.



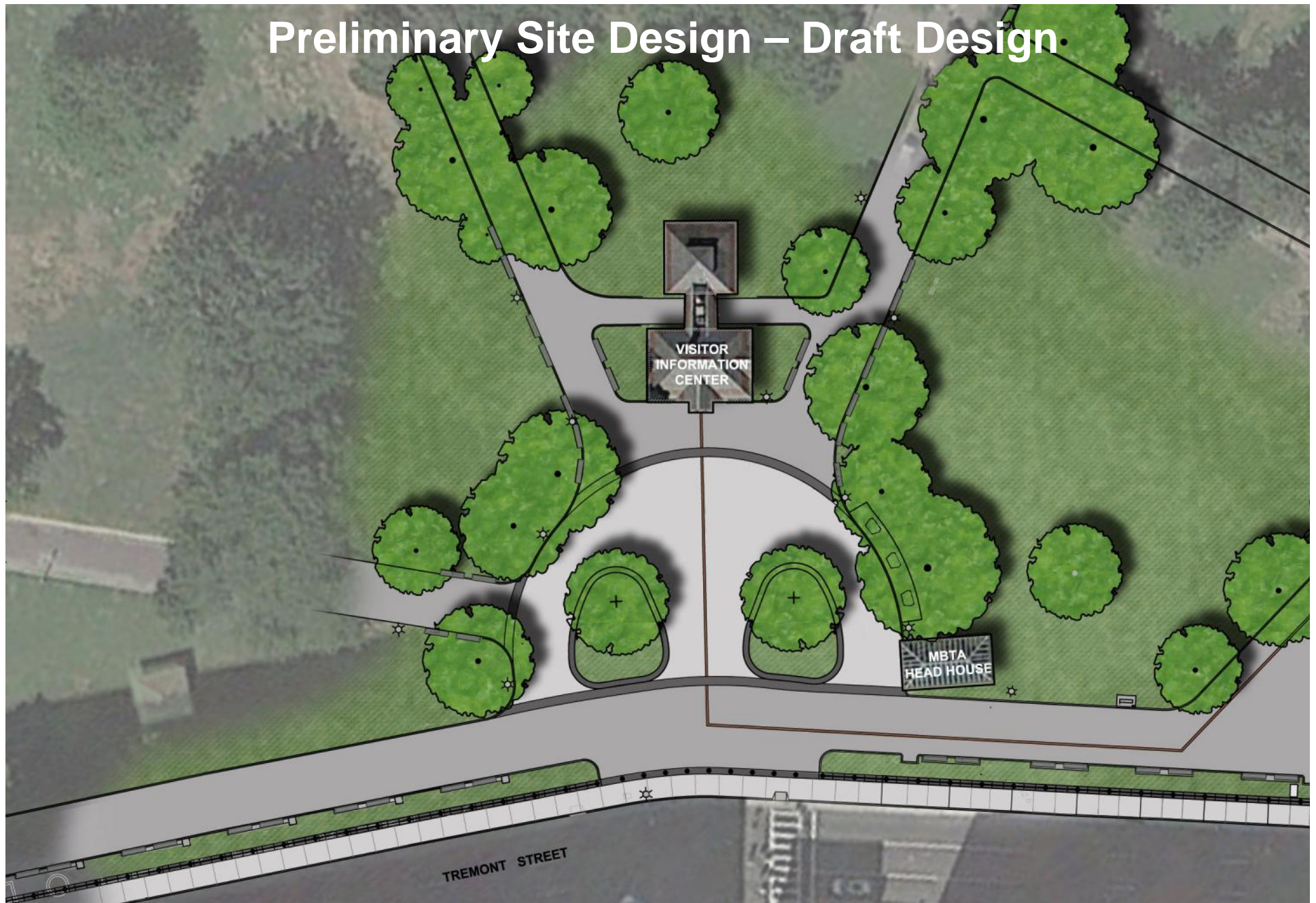
Site Analysis – Existing Site Issues

Summary

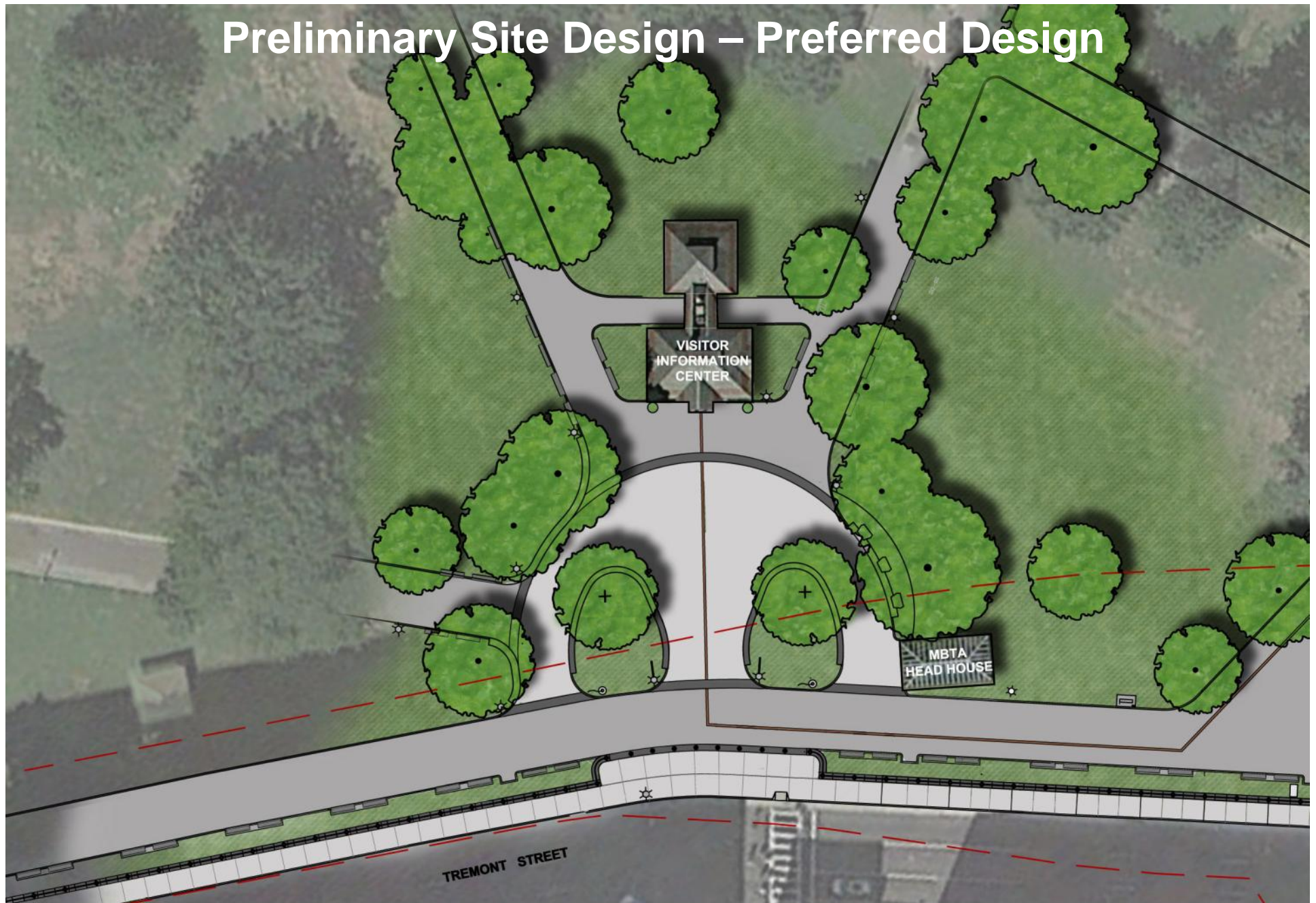
Any Plaza redesign should determine the best way to accommodate the circulation, orientation, and large gathering of people without the Plaza becoming a sea of paving.



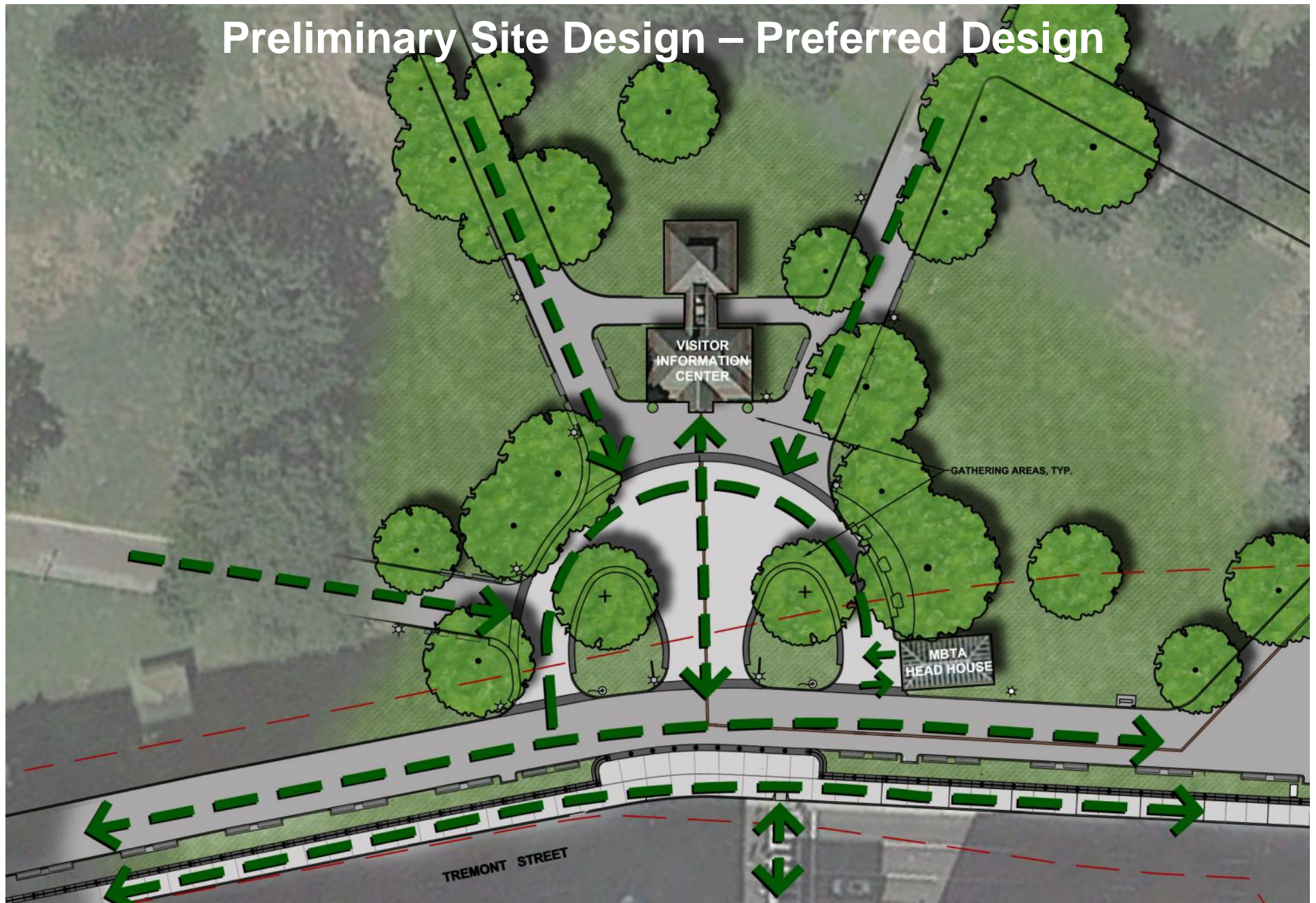
Preliminary Site Design – Draft Design



Preliminary Site Design – Preferred Design



Preliminary Site Design – Preferred Design



Preliminary Site Design – Preferred Design



Context within Common

Parkman Plaza - Site Programming and Preliminary Design Study

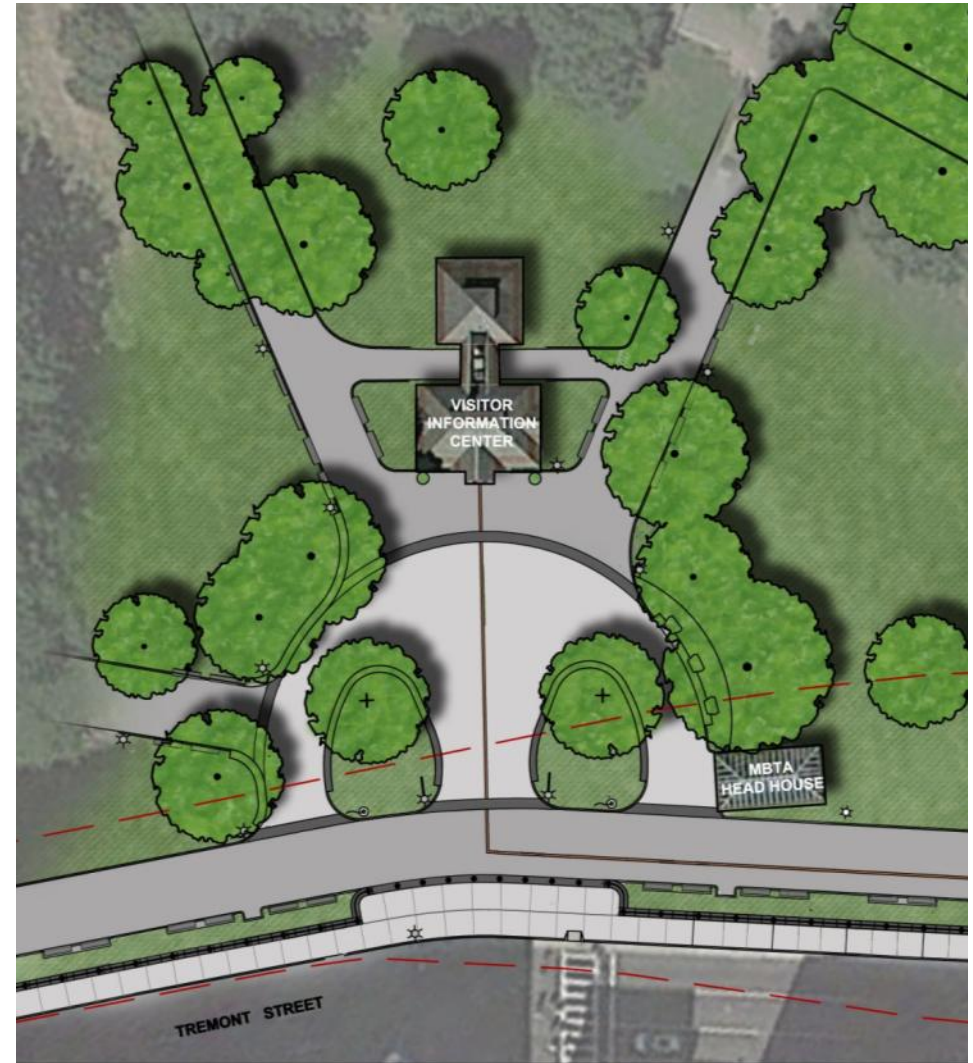
Preliminary Site Design – Preferred Design

DESIGN SUMMARY

- Basin removed and outer diameter of plaza circle reduced. Semi-circular shaped plaza.
- Twin seasonal and/or grass planters with seatwalls and center pathway; elements define a central gateway to VIC.
- Pedestrian area enlarged in front of VIC.
- Sculptures located to north side of plaza and integrated in seatwall.
- New benches placed along connecting park paths to provide additional seating.
- Freedom Trail installed with brick.
- Fenceline defines a "gateway" and continues along Tremont Street towards Boylston Street.
- Lafayette Mall continuously paved with bit. concrete pavement.
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WALKABLE AREA IN NEW PLAZA: 11,690 SF

OVERALL SEATWALL LENGTH: 292 FT

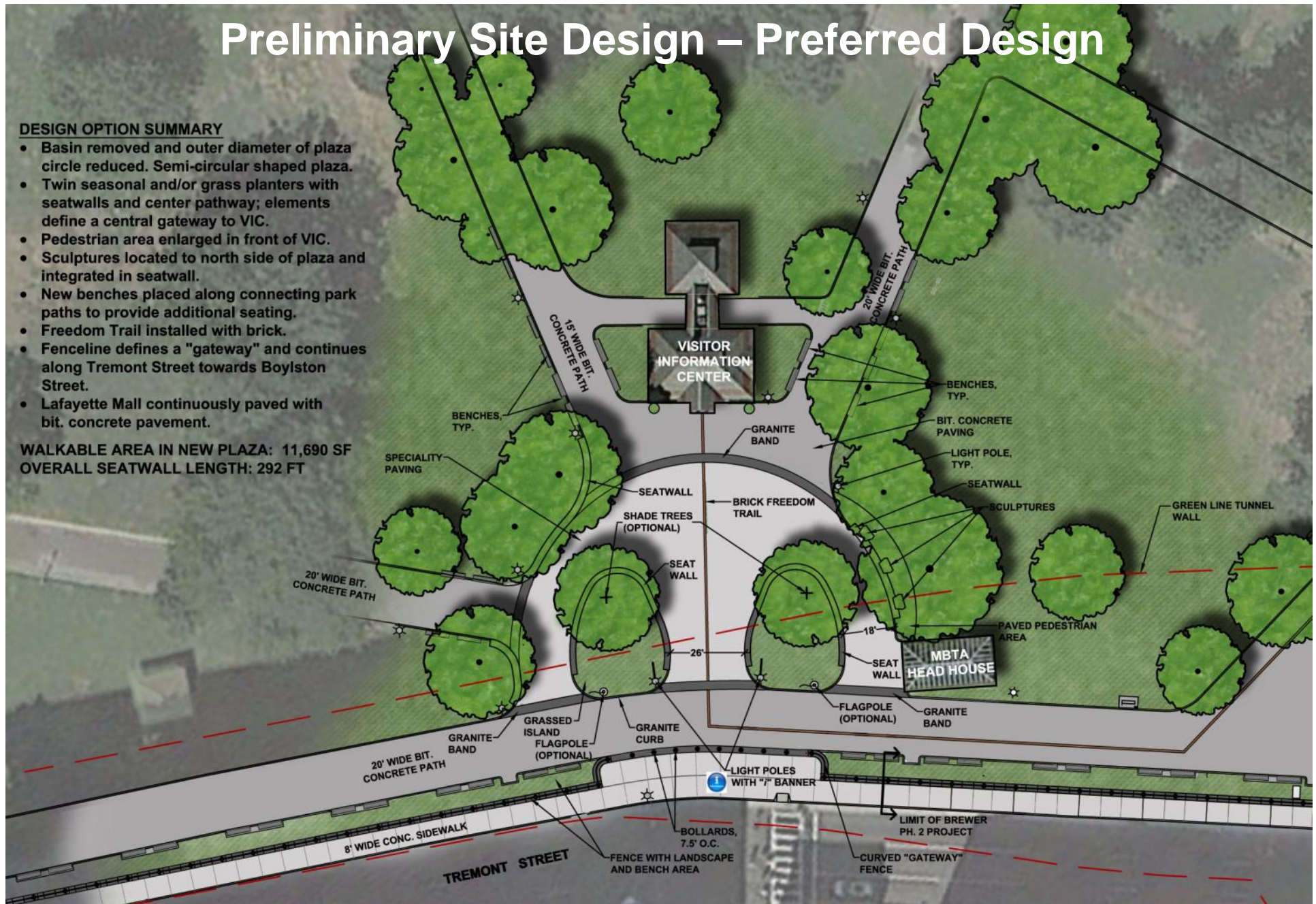


Preliminary Site Design – Preferred Design

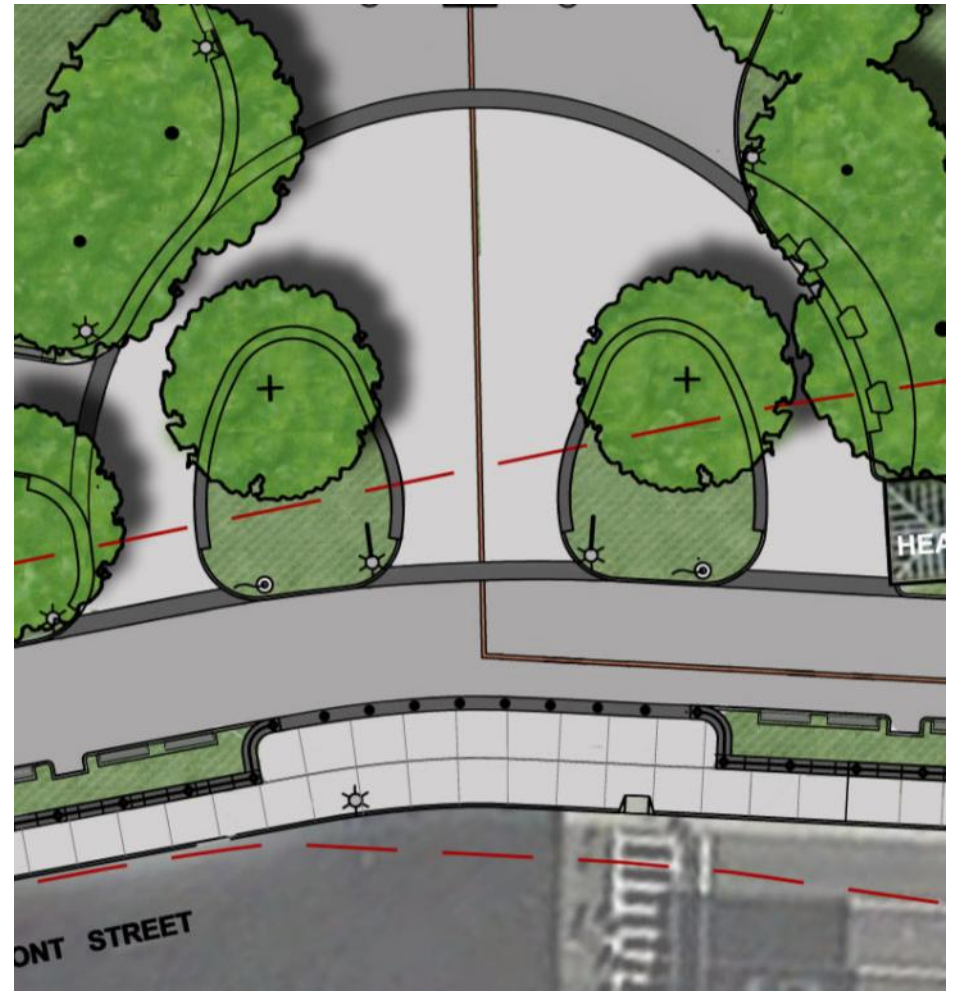
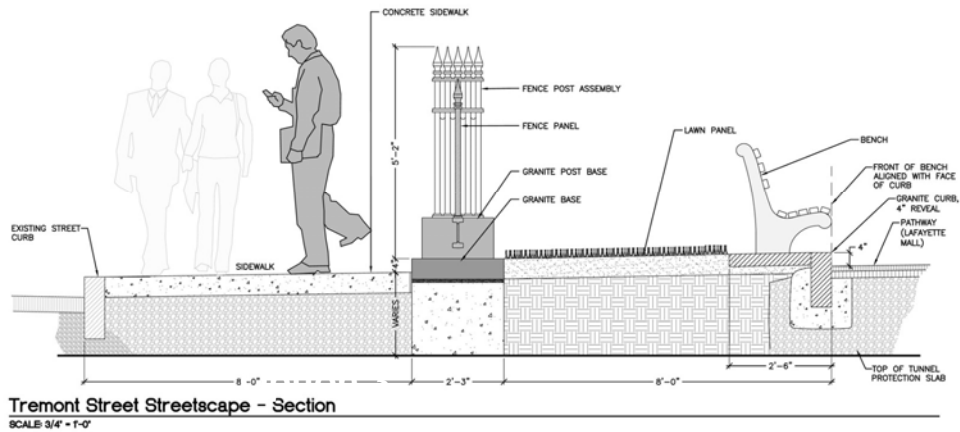
DESIGN OPTION SUMMARY

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Preliminary Site Design – Lafayette Mall Fence



Parkman Plaza - Site Programming and Preliminary Design Study

Preliminary Site Design – Lafayette Mall Fence

