Community Meeting #1

Benjamin G. Brown School

Somerville, MA

AGENDA

- Introductions
- Design Schedule
- Similar Past CBA Projects
- Existing Conditions & Site Analysis
- Program Possibilities
- Questions for Discussion

Monday, November 18, 2019

PROJECT OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTIONS

City of Somerville
Arn Franzen, Senior Project Manager, Public Space & Urban Forestry

CBA Landscape Architects LLC
D.J. Chagnon, Principal-in-Charge
Kaila Bachman, Principal, Project Manager
Jessica Choi & Liz Thompson, Staff Landscape Designers

DESIGN SCHEDULE

Preliminary Community Meeting (December 2018, held by the City): Collect community input about desires for the schoolyard redesign.

Community Meeting 1 (November 18, 2019): Present site analysis and precedents. Present rough conceptual designs based on previous community input process by the City, and develop wish list to guide Schematic Designs for future meetings.

Community Meeting 2 (Early January 2019:) Present Schematic Design Alternatives based on first meeting input. Community review and discussion, with the goal of developing a final Preferred Design Plan.

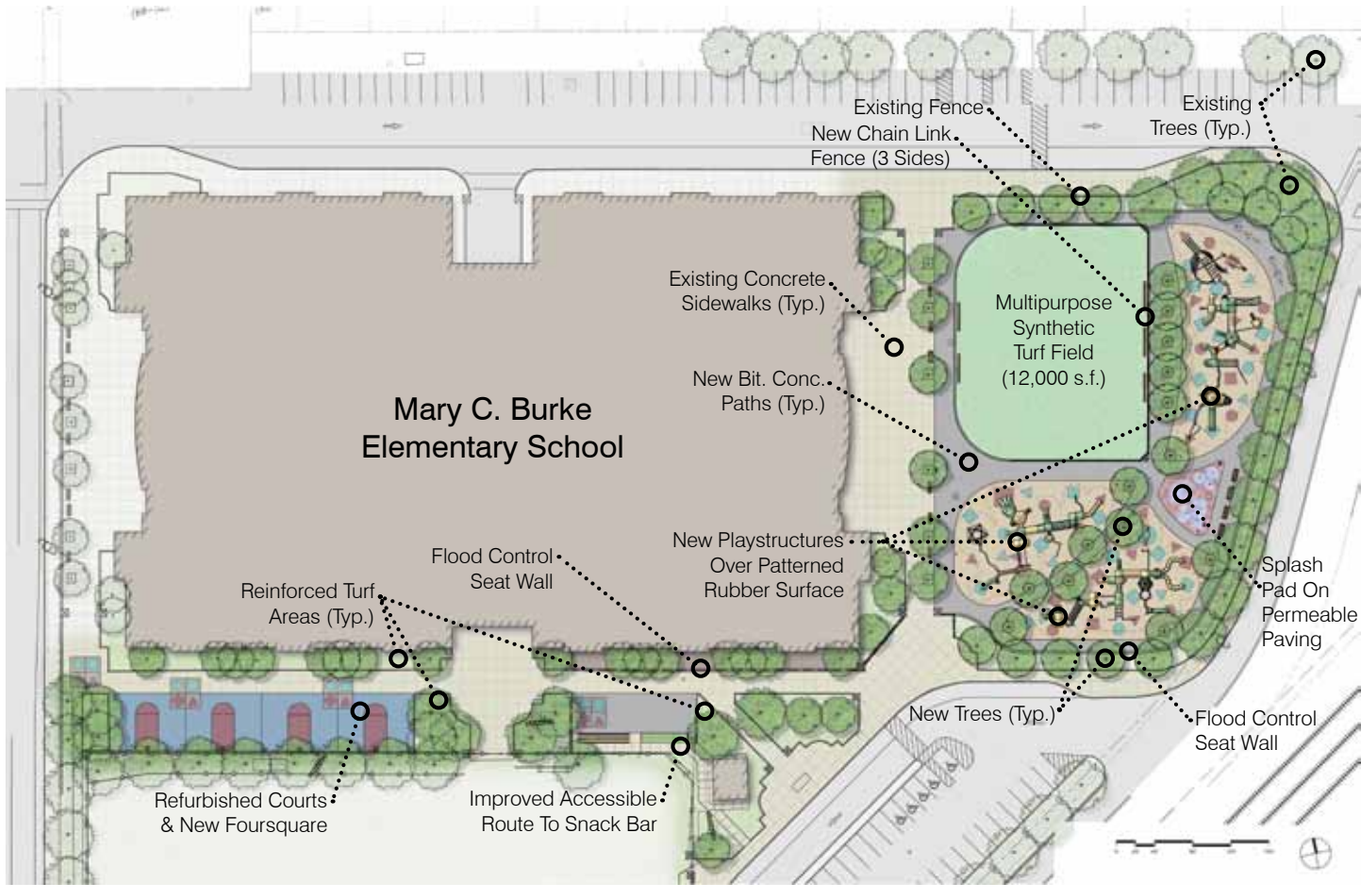
Community Meeting 3 (Late February 2020): Present Definitive Design for Schoolyard construction, including features and site furnishings based on community discussion at Meeting 2. With community input, discuss project budget, bidding process, suggested Alternates, and prioritize strategy to maximize budget.

Construction Documents (Spring 2020): CBA will finalize Definitive Design and suggested Alternates into detailed Construction Documents suitable for bidding purposes.

Construction Start: Schedule to be determined by funding availability.

SIMILAR PAST CBA PROJECTS

MARY C. BURKE SCHOOLYARD - CHELSEA



Illustrative Plan of Phase 1 Construction (CBA)

Rendering of the playstructures and the synthetic turf multipurpose field (prepared by play equipment manufacturer)

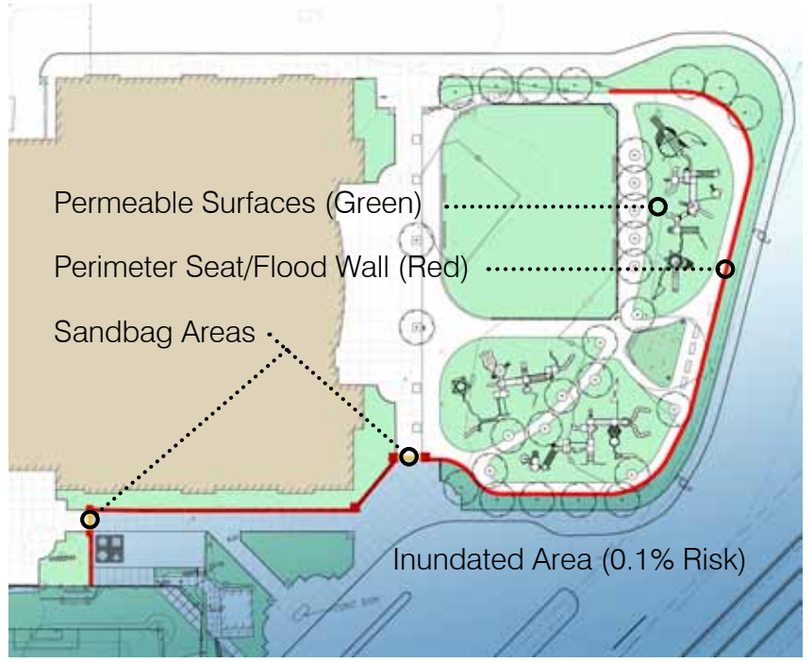
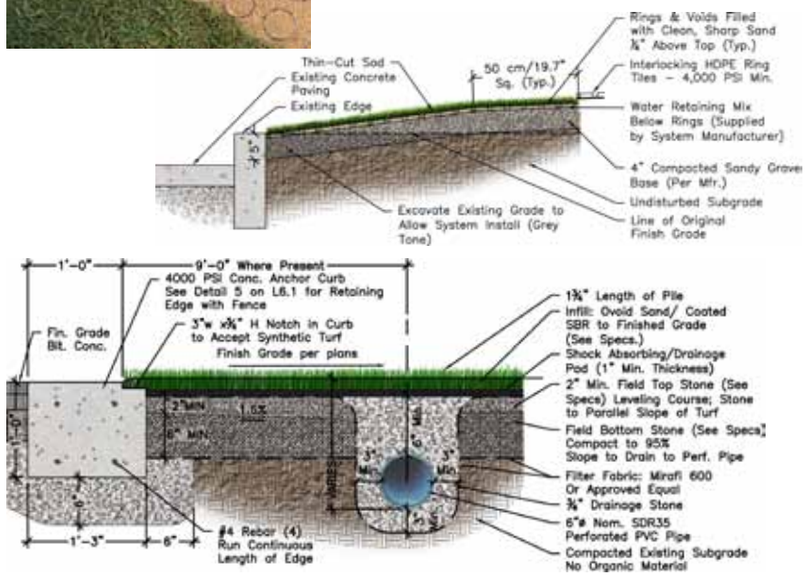


Diagram of flood control measures

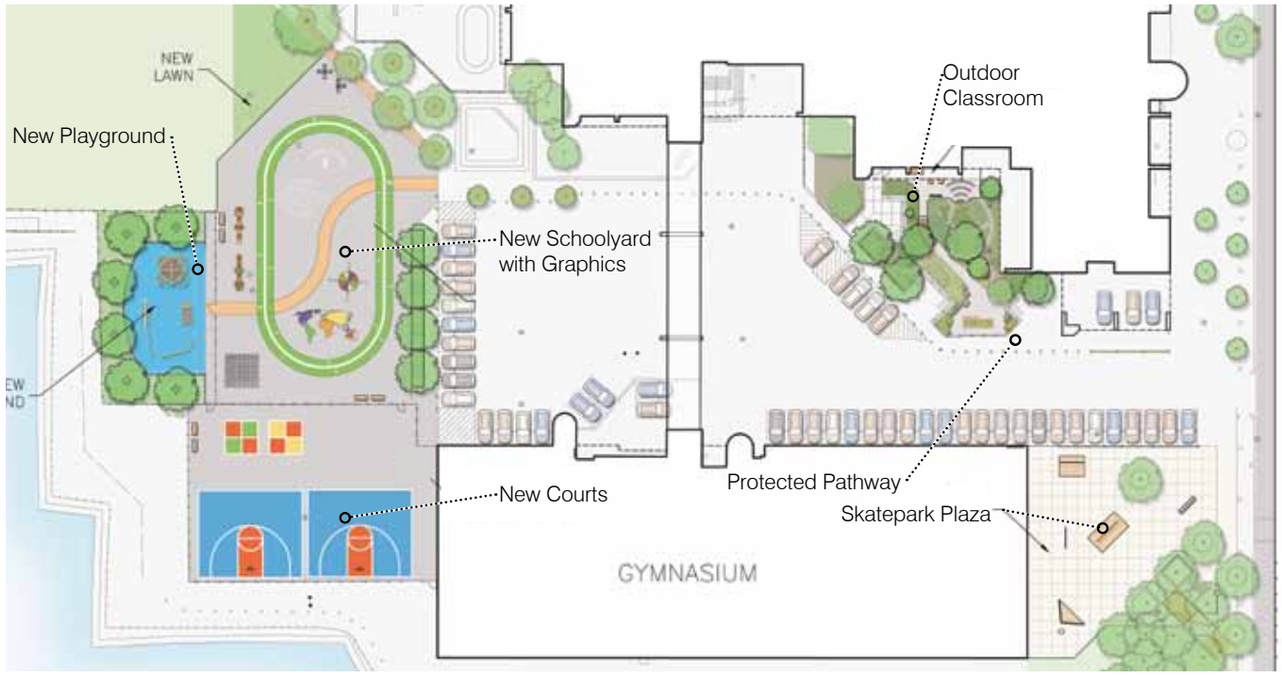
Left & Middle: Detail of lawn reinforcement for high wear areas (detail by CBA; product image from manufacturer)

Bottom: Synthetic Turf Field detail



MARIO UMANA SCHOOLYARD - EAST BOSTON

The new climbing structure and painted schoolyard.

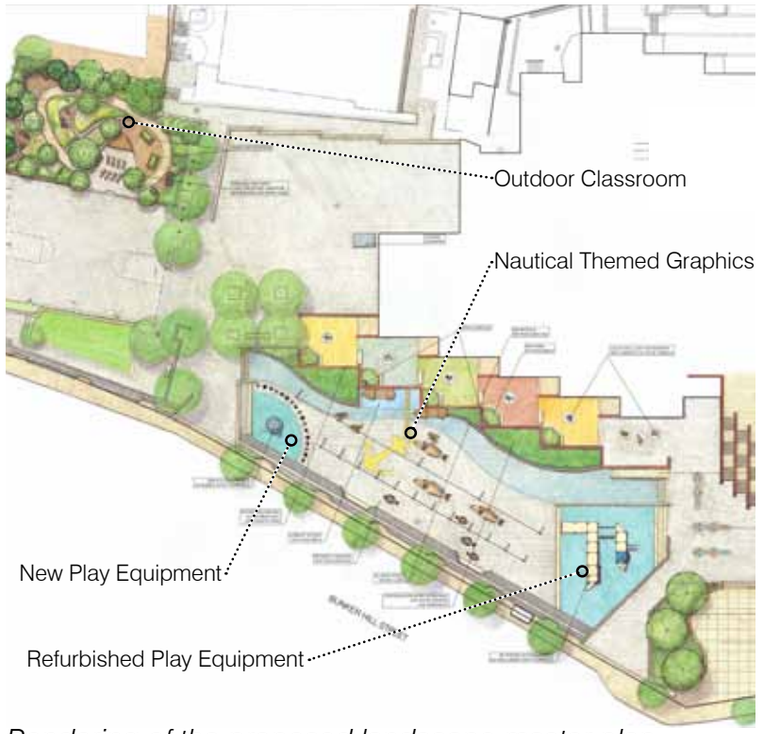


The rendered Landscape Master Plan.

View of the outdoor classroom, showing the peastone path, boardwalk, weather station, storage, and pulley system.

Rendering of the new outdoor classroom.

HARVARD KENT SCHOOLYARD - CHARLESTOWN SIMILAR PAST CBA PROJECTS



Rendering of the proposed landscape master plan.

Raised plant beds and classroom gathering area beyond.

Raised plant bed with viewing window and thermometer.

Nautical themed play graphics.

New playground equipment showing the net climber in the foreground.

Entry plaza seating area.

Plan of the outdoor classroom.

MORRIS PARK/KEVERIAN SCHOOLYARD - EVERETT SIMILAR PAST CBA PROJECTS

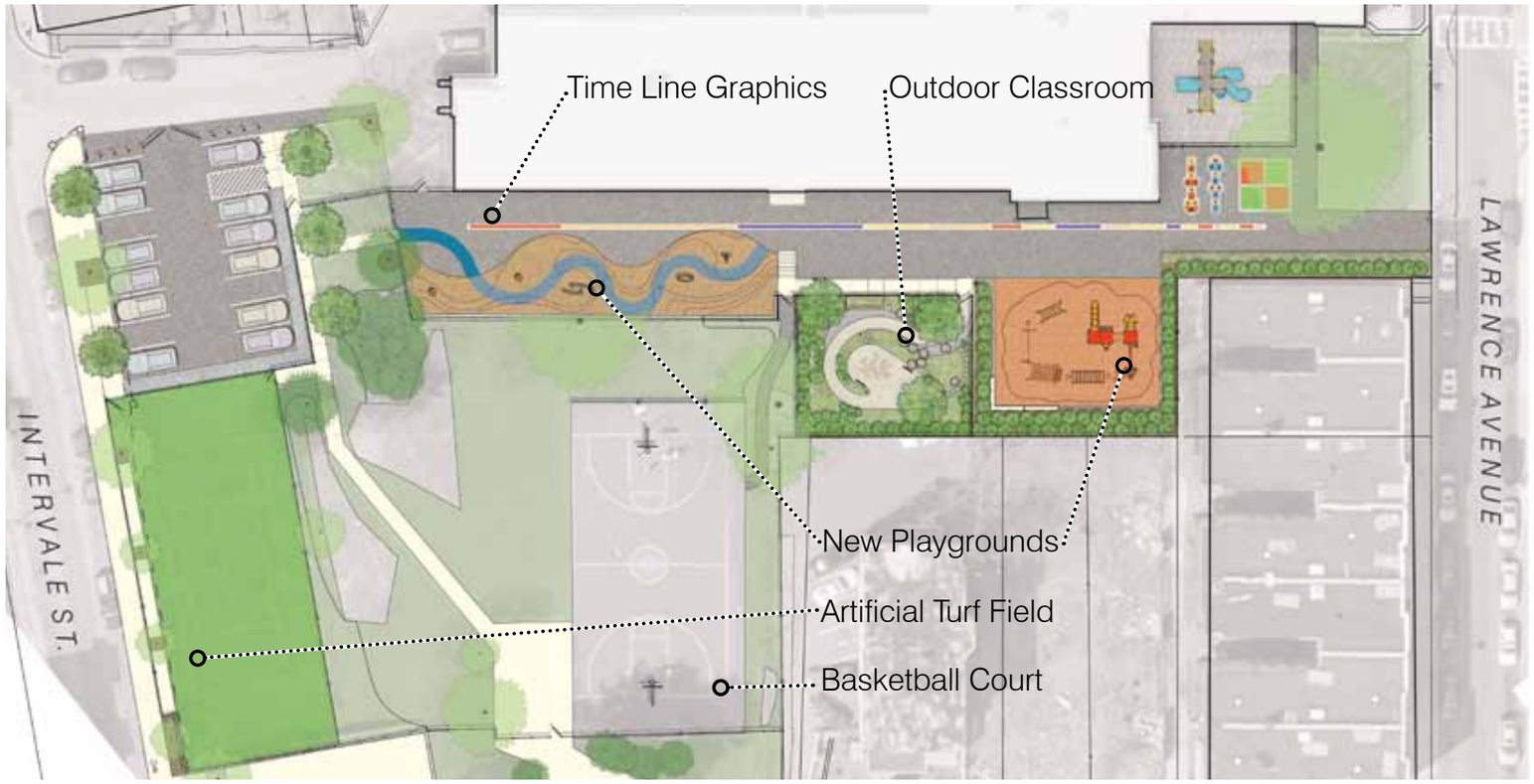
View of the playground and plaza with water sprays.

Rendered illustrative plan of the park renovation

Net climbing structure is oriented to allow "performances" with or without the outdoor musical instruments.

Dish swings can accommodate single or multiple riders in a confined space.

DR. MLK JR. SCHOOLYARD - DORCHESTER



Rendered Landscape Master Plan for the schoolyard.

Looking down the stepping stone path in the outdoor classroom.

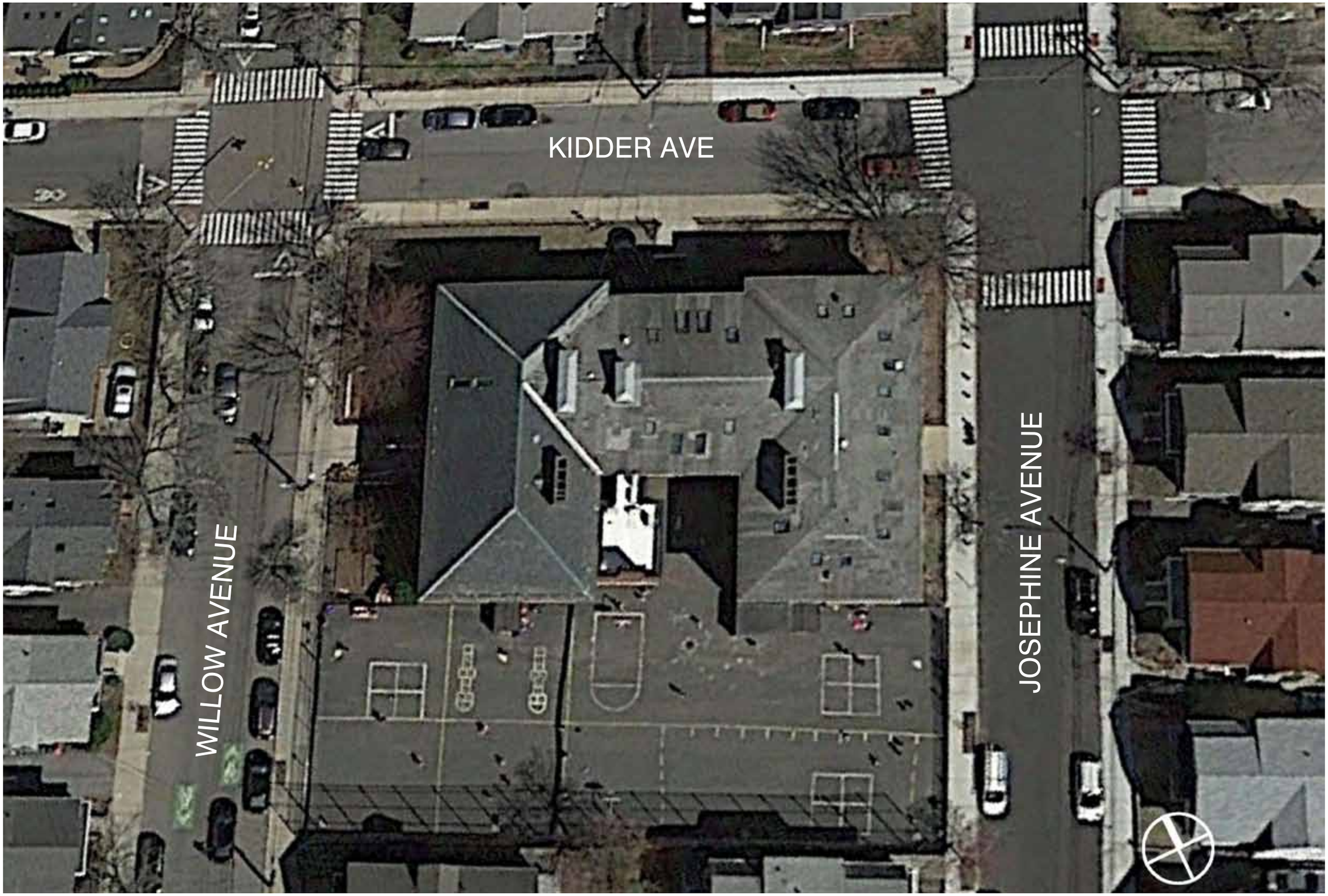
New play equipment.

The new turf field provides a low-maintenance play space

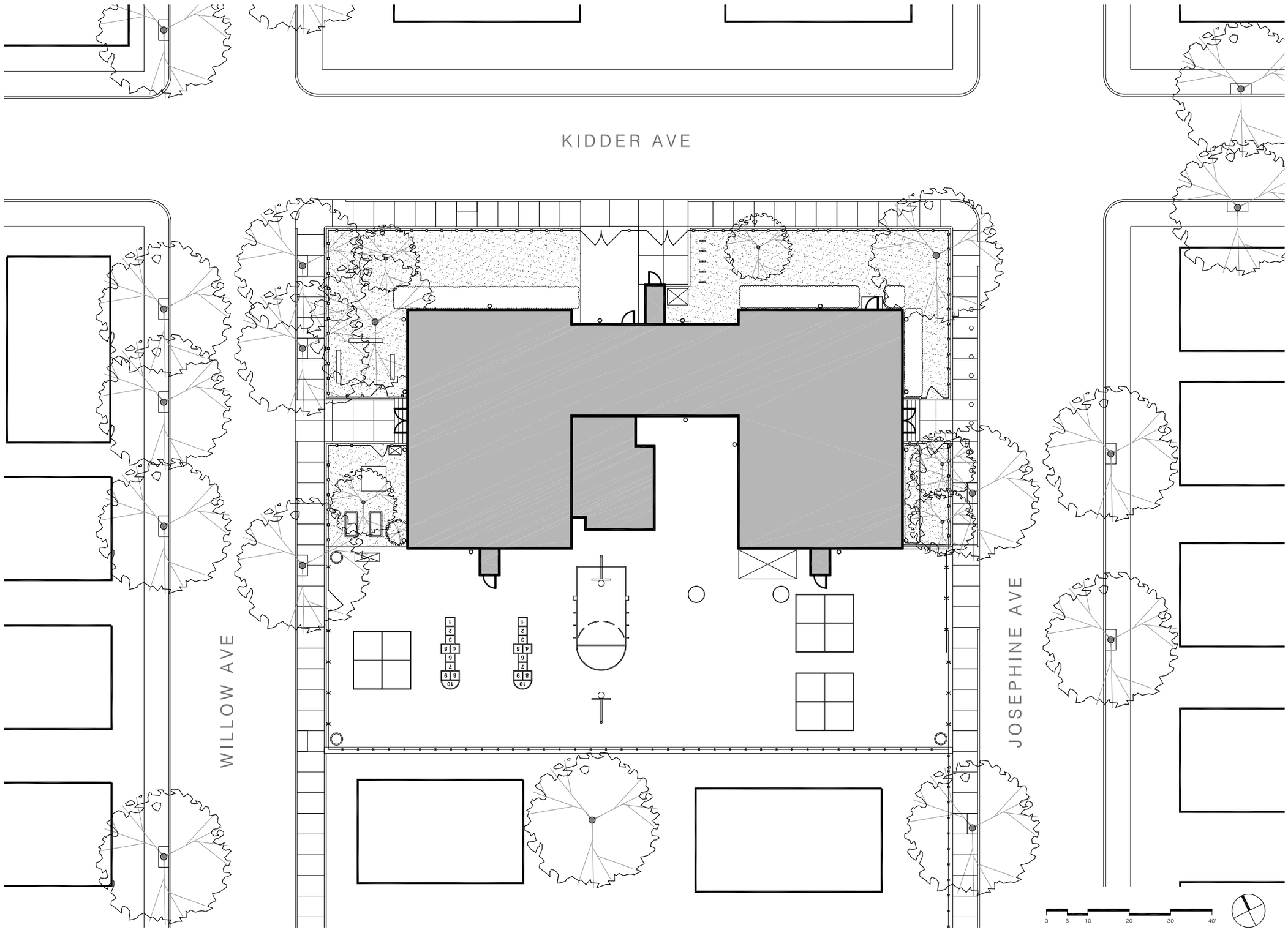
View of the playground from the outdoor classroom.

EXISTING CONDITIONS & SITE ANALYSIS

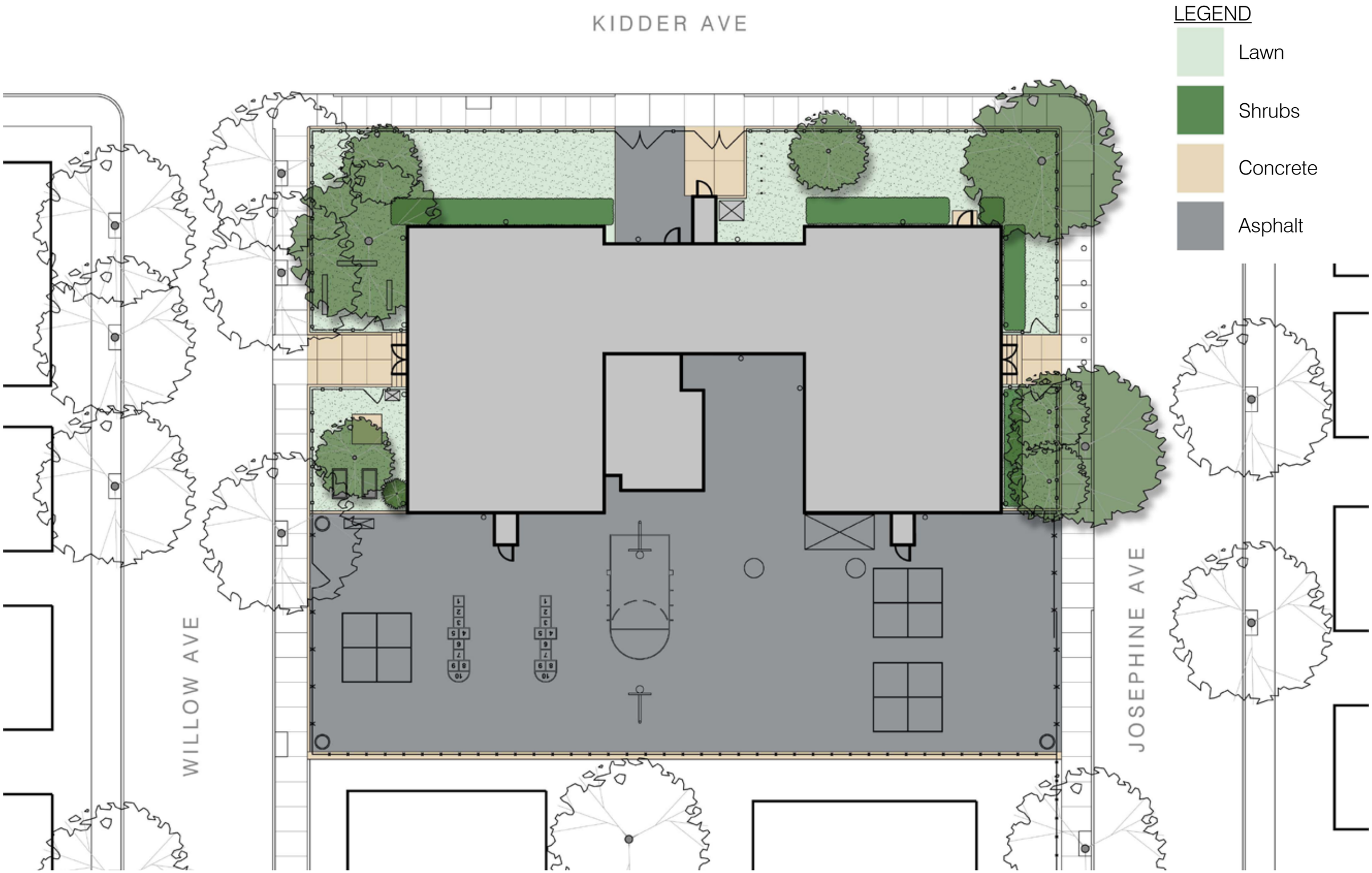
AERIAL IMAGE



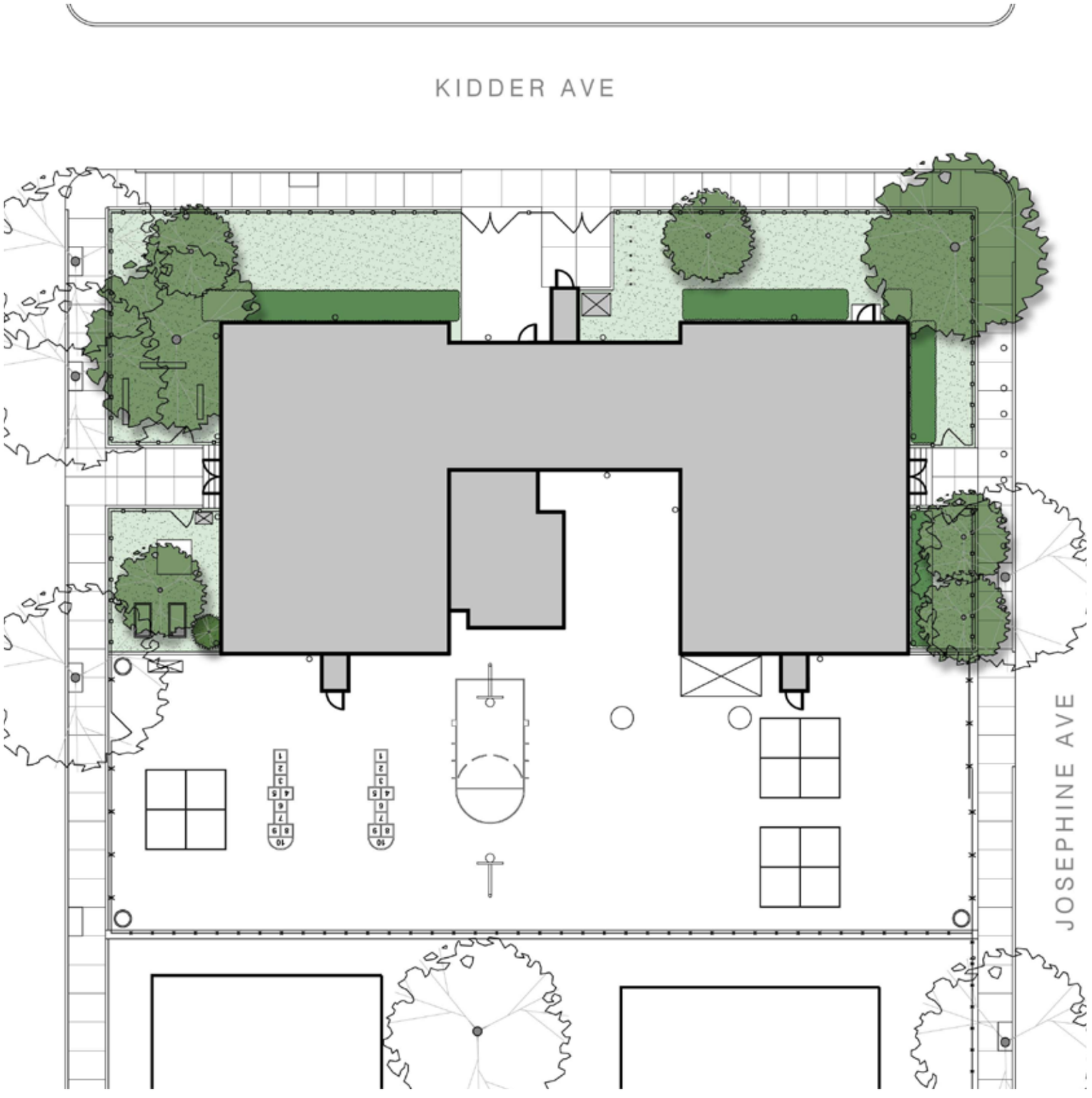
EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN



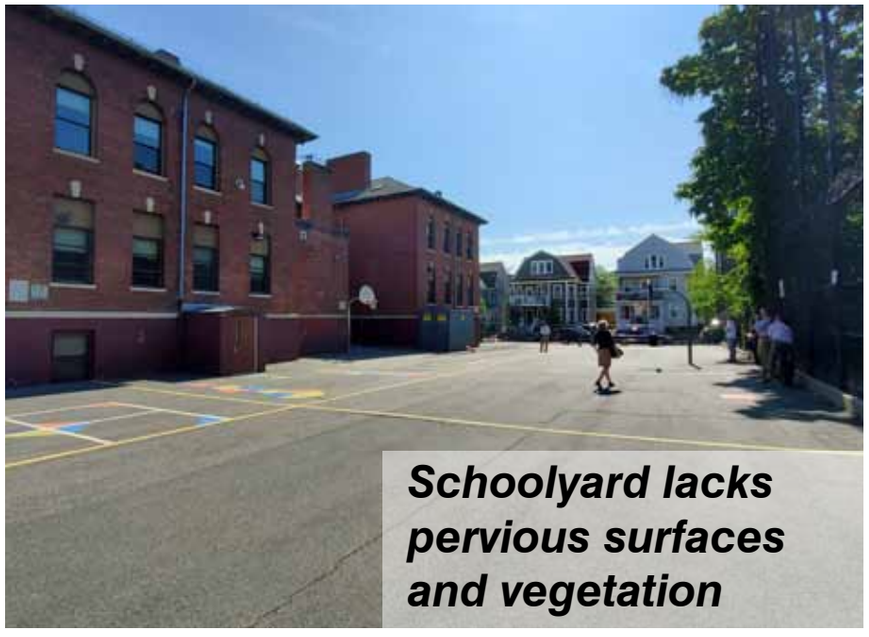
SURFACE MATERIAL



PLANTINGS



Gardens along Willow Avenue



Schoolyard lacks pervious surfaces and vegetation

DRAINAGE

KEY

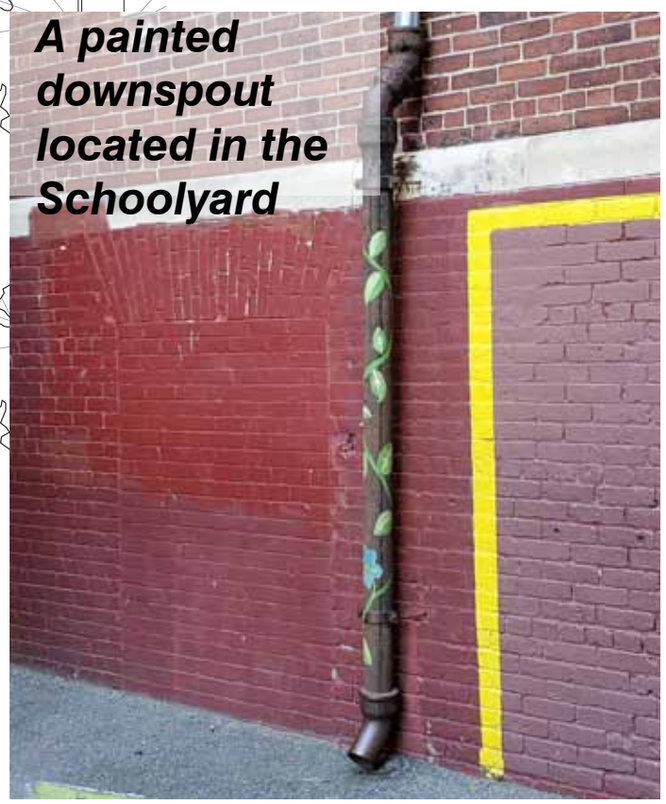
location of drain pipe

direction of drainage

KIDDER AVE

WILLOW AVE

JOSEPHINE AVE



KEY

entrance to school

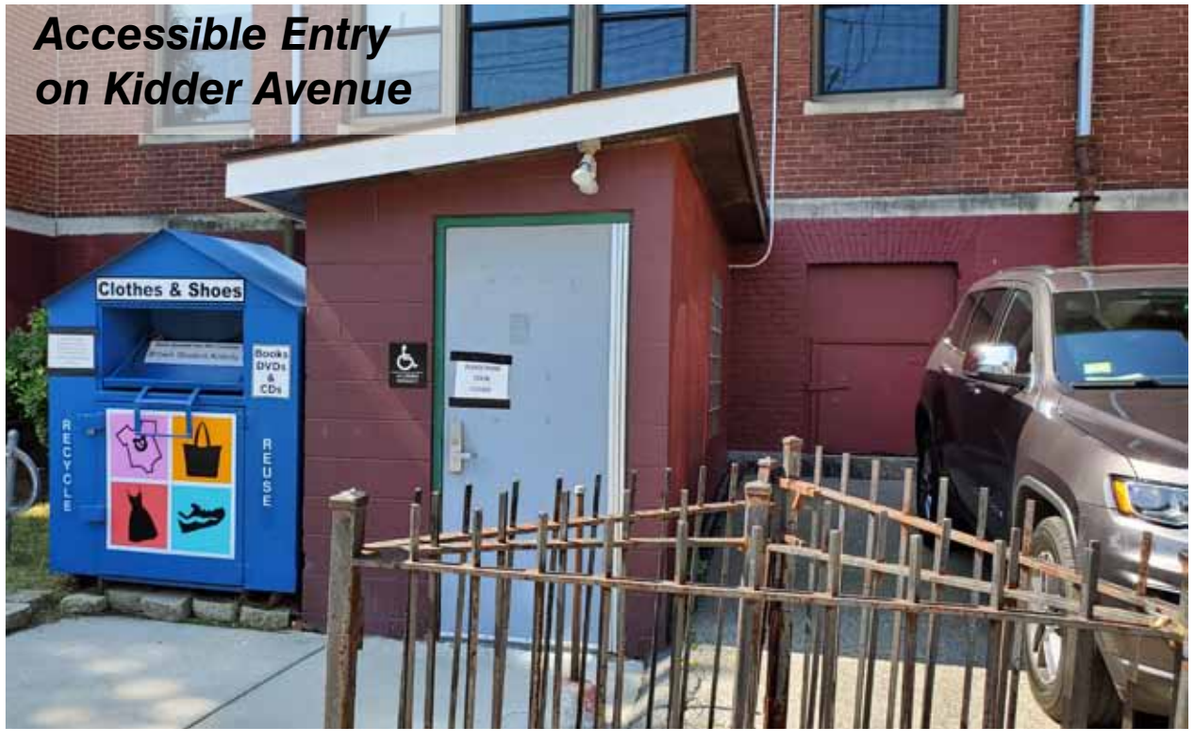
gates

KIDDER AVE

WILLOW AVE

JOSEPHINE AVE

Most-used access points, on Willow Avenue (shown) and Josephine Avenue, are not ADA accessible



Accessible Entry on Kidder Avenue

A nook between the wings of the school offers shade

Ornamental fencing along Willow, (shown) Kidder, and Josephine Avenues

Sliding vehicular gate at Josephine Avenue

IDEAS FROM 12/11/18 MEETING

Flexibility of Space:
- Maintain and maximize open space
- Flexibility is the key
- Movable equipment may be useful
- Open flexible space as “a set of blocks” rather than scripted use

Multifunctional Space:
- The schoolyard serves as the school’s gym, gathering space, and multifunctional area; all these uses need to be part of the new design.
- Outdoor classroom space is important to consider
- Consider space to eat outside
- Alley as a gathering area?
- Overlapping-use program is key due to the small schoolyard area
- Consider the entire site, not just blacktop area.
- Remember space is open to neighborhood outside school hours.

Green Space:
- Garden Space should be included, in a sunny spot with access to water
- Trees, including additional street trees, to add shade
- Maximize natural materials and areas
- Nature Education is a possibility

Imagination Space:
- Play should incorporate creativity
- Kids often do imaginary games during recess - play area should encourage this

Sports:
- Keep basketball - explore adjustable hoops to maximize age range
- Running-around-room, gym space, foursquare, etc - needs to be level
- Consider parkour / exercise equip’t
- Strong support for synthetic turf - emphasis on safe technologies

Structured Play:
- Climbing Structures (fit narrow, tall space)
- Explore climbing walls
- Early grades need playstructures; older kids often stop using them

Arts:
- Incorporate public / community art
- Consider murals, etc on the back wall

Inclusive Design:
- Involve kids in the design process - STEAM education opportunity
- Space should be appropriate for all ages - neighborhood park outside school hours
- Improve ADA accessibility around site and upgrade ADA entrance to building

Fencing:
- Chain link fencing is institutional; consider alternatives
- Fencing around green spaces has sharp picket tops and other issues and should be replaced.
- Access from playground area to side yards is important - add gates
- Need to keep balls from going out the sides - both above and below fences

Other Features:
- Lighting is a big priority
- Additional bike & scooter parking
- Gathering area for parents at pickup/ dropoff times
- Drinking fountain / bottle filler
- Consider snow issues, including falling off sloped roofs into play area
- Sustainable drainage, stormwater, heat island reduction, etc.
- Explore what has worked at other sites and schools in the City and elsewhere

Future Goals:
- Consider possible future alterations to the building - atrium in the alley? Upgrades to structure? etc.
- Improve parking situation / opportunities in the neighborhood, not the schoolyard

PROGRAM POSSIBILITIES

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Schoolyard, Dorchester

East Somerville Community School - East Somerville

HARD COURT SPACE

Morse-Kelley Playground - Somerville

GATHERING SPACE

Harvard Kent Schoolyard - Charlestown

Kenney Park - Somerville

South Plaza - Cambridge

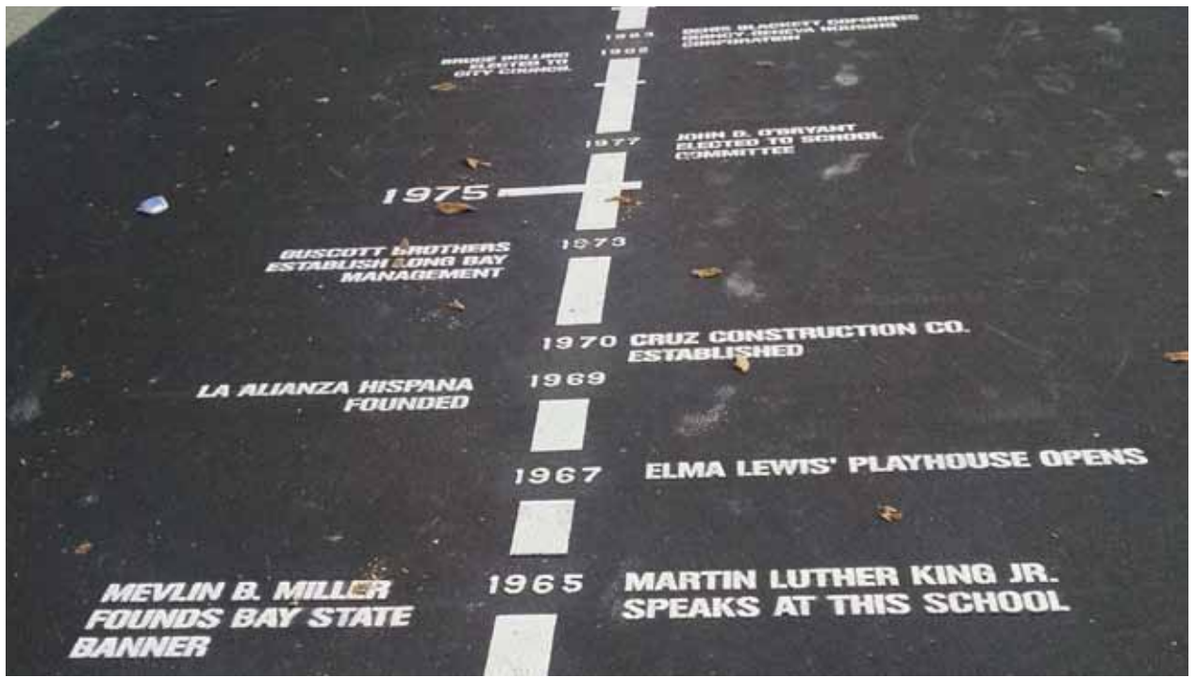
Gramstorff Park - Everett

Monsignor Reynolds Playground - South End

Box District Park - Chelsea

BLACKTOP GRAPHICS

Harvard-Kent Elementary School - Charlestown



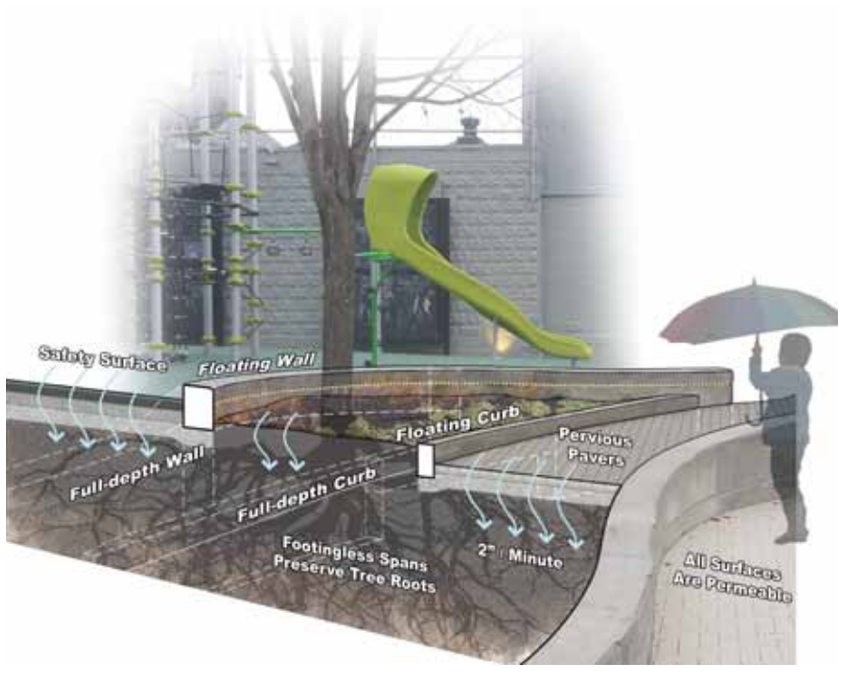
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Schoolyard - Dorchester

Joyce Kilmer Upper School - West Roxbury

Eliot School - Boston

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

**Graphic from San Francisco Public Utilites Commission*



Sustainable Features Photo-diagram

Cremin Playground - Somerville

**New Lots School Campus - Brooklyn*
(Image from East New York)

**(not a CBA project)*

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

Harvard Kent Schoolyard - Charlestown

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Schoolyard - Dorchester

Alma Del Mar - New Bedford

PLAY EQUIPMENT

Gramstorff Park - Everett

Roberts Playground - Dorchester

Choate Park - Medway

Morris Playground / Keverian School - Everett

DRAMATIC/IMAGINATIVE PLAY

Morris Playground / Keverian School - Everett

Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary - Natick

Gibbons Playground - Boston

Choate Park - Medway

ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS

Water Fountain / Bottle Filler
Paris Street Playground - East Boston

Fencing and Shade Structures
Gramstorff Park - Everett

Contemporary Lighting
Deanna Cremin Playground - Somerville

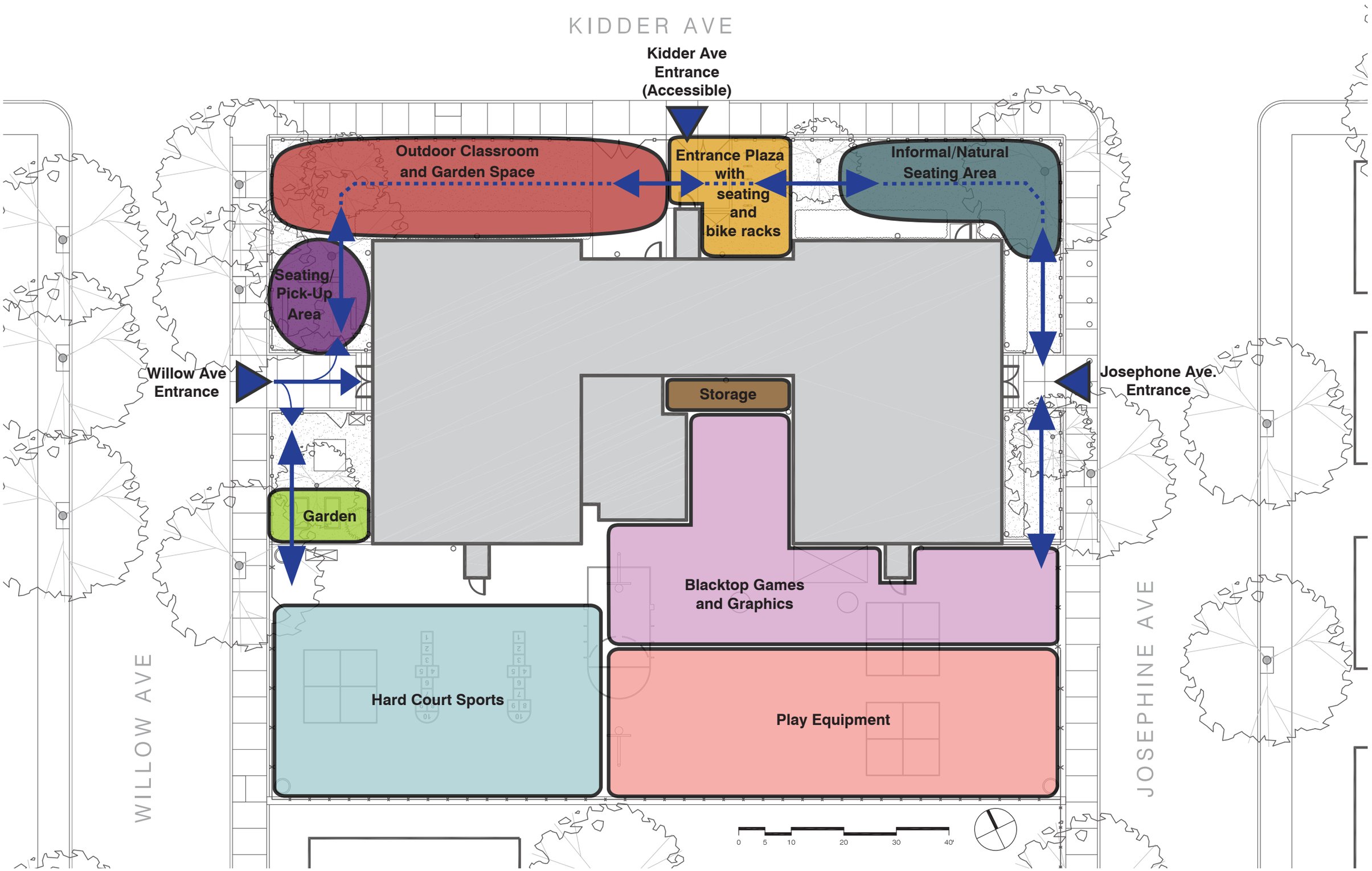
**Sensory Play Wall*
(Image from Landscape Structures)

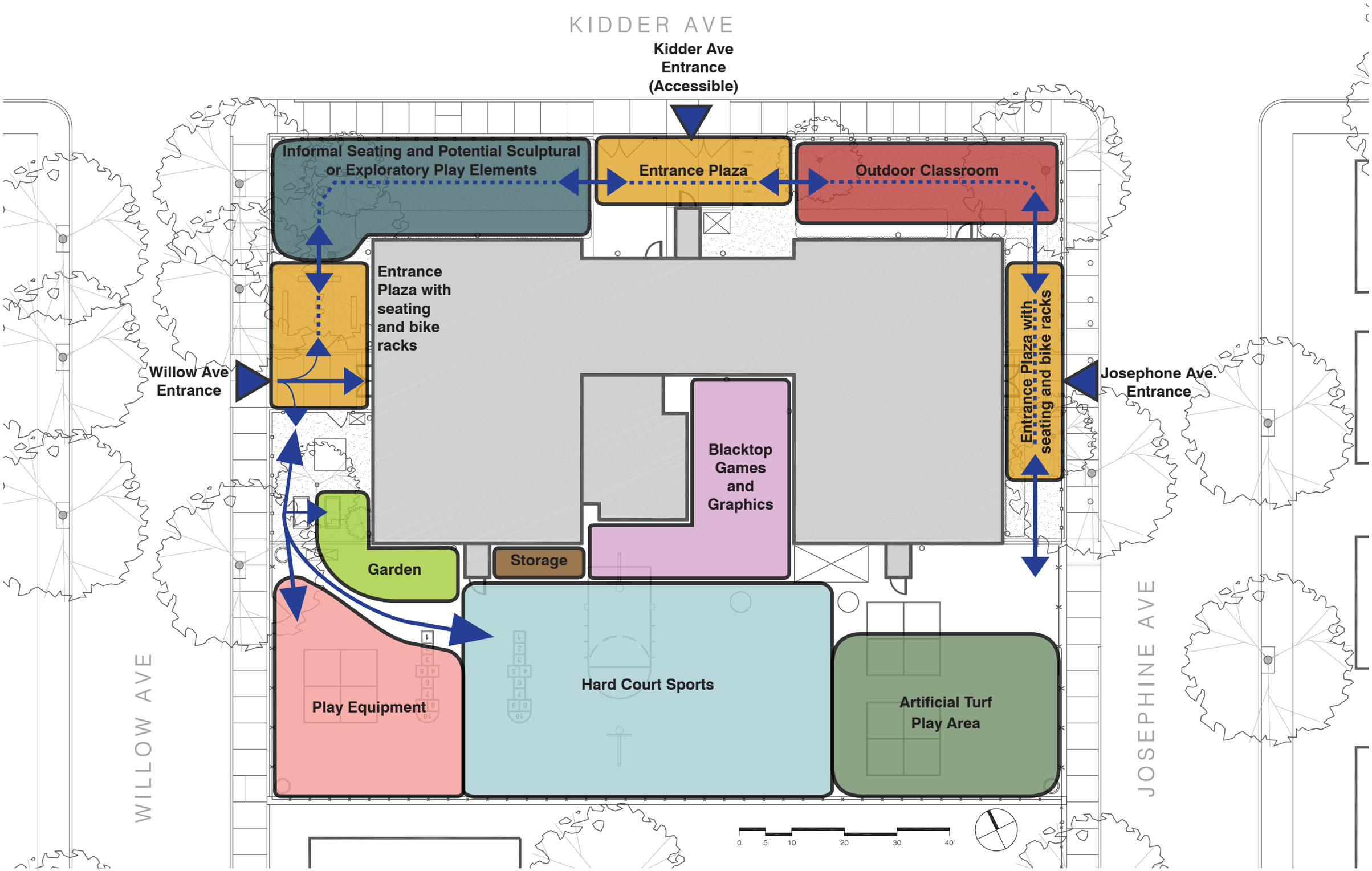
**Imagination Playground Big Blue Blocks*
(Image from Imagination Playground)

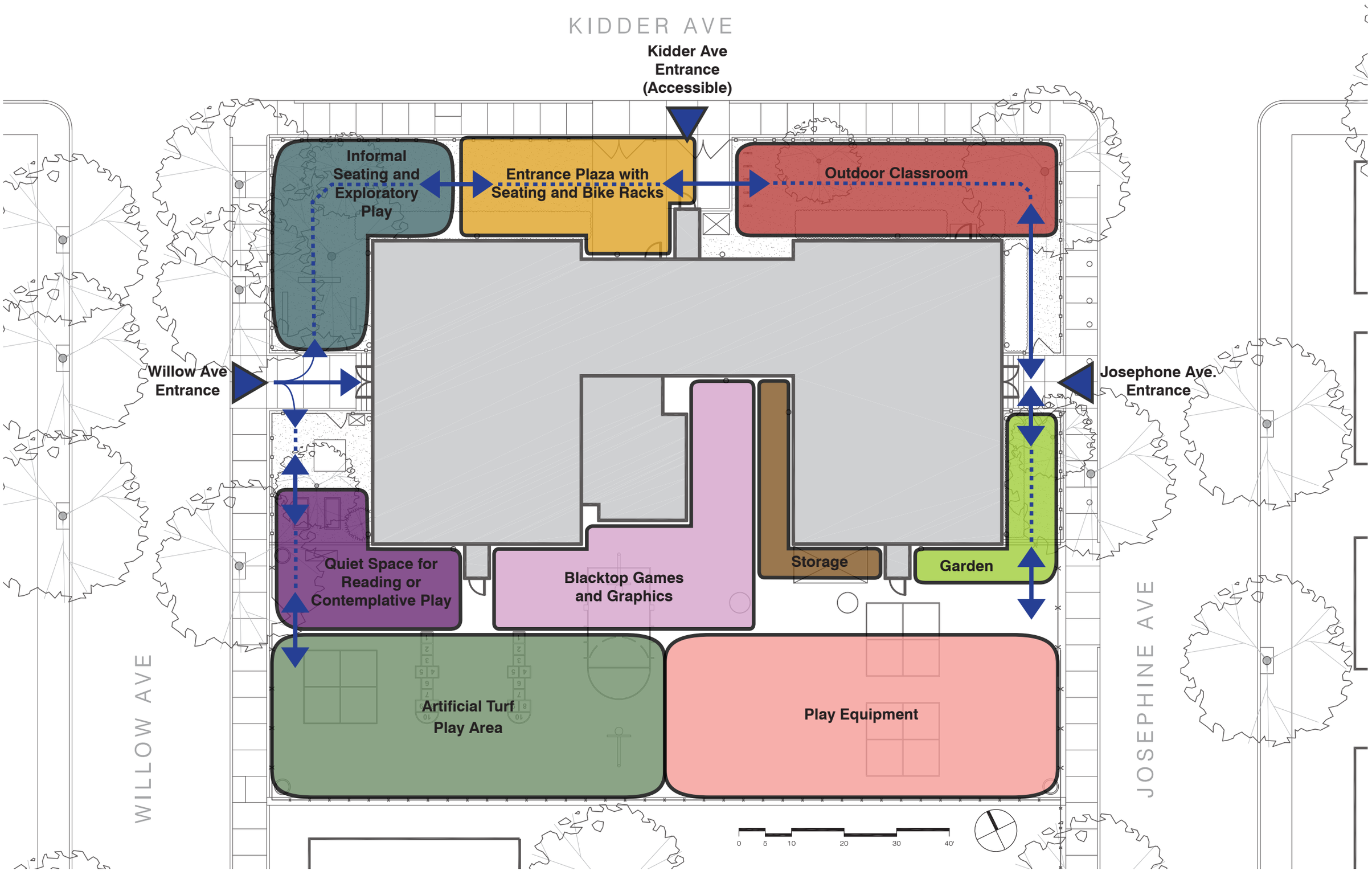
**Outdoor Chalkboards*
(Image from Kid Somania)

**(not a CBA project)*

CONCEPTUAL LAYOUTS


KIDDER AVE
Kidder Ave Entrance (Accessible)
Outdoor Classroom and Garden Space
Entrance Plaza with seating and bike racks
Informal/Natural Seating Area
Seating/ Pick-Up Area
Willow Ave Entrance
Josephone Ave. Entrance
Storage
Garden
Blacktop Games and Graphics
Hard Court Sports
Play Equipment
WILLOW AVE
JOSEPHINE AVE
0 5 10 20 30 40'


KIDDER AVE
Kidder Ave Entrance (Accessible)
Informal Seating and Potential Sculptural or Exploratory Play Elements
Entrance Plaza
Outdoor Classroom
Entrance Plaza with seating and bike racks
Willow Ave Entrance
Josephone Ave. Entrance
Blacktop Games and Graphics
Garden
Storage
Play Equipment
Hard Court Sports
Artificial Turf Play Area
WILLOW AVE
JOSEPHINE AVE
0 5 10 20 30 40'


KIDDER AVE
Kidder Ave Entrance (Accessible)
Informal Seating and Exploratory Play
Entrance Plaza with Seating and Bike Racks
Outdoor Classroom
Willow Ave Entrance
Josephone Ave. Entrance
Quiet Space for Reading or Contemplative Play
Blacktop Games and Graphics
Storage
Garden
Artificial Turf Play Area
Play Equipment
WILLOW AVE
JOSEPHINE AVE
0 5 10 20 30 40'

DISCUSSION

- What concerns do you have about the site?

- What features would you like in the schoolyard?

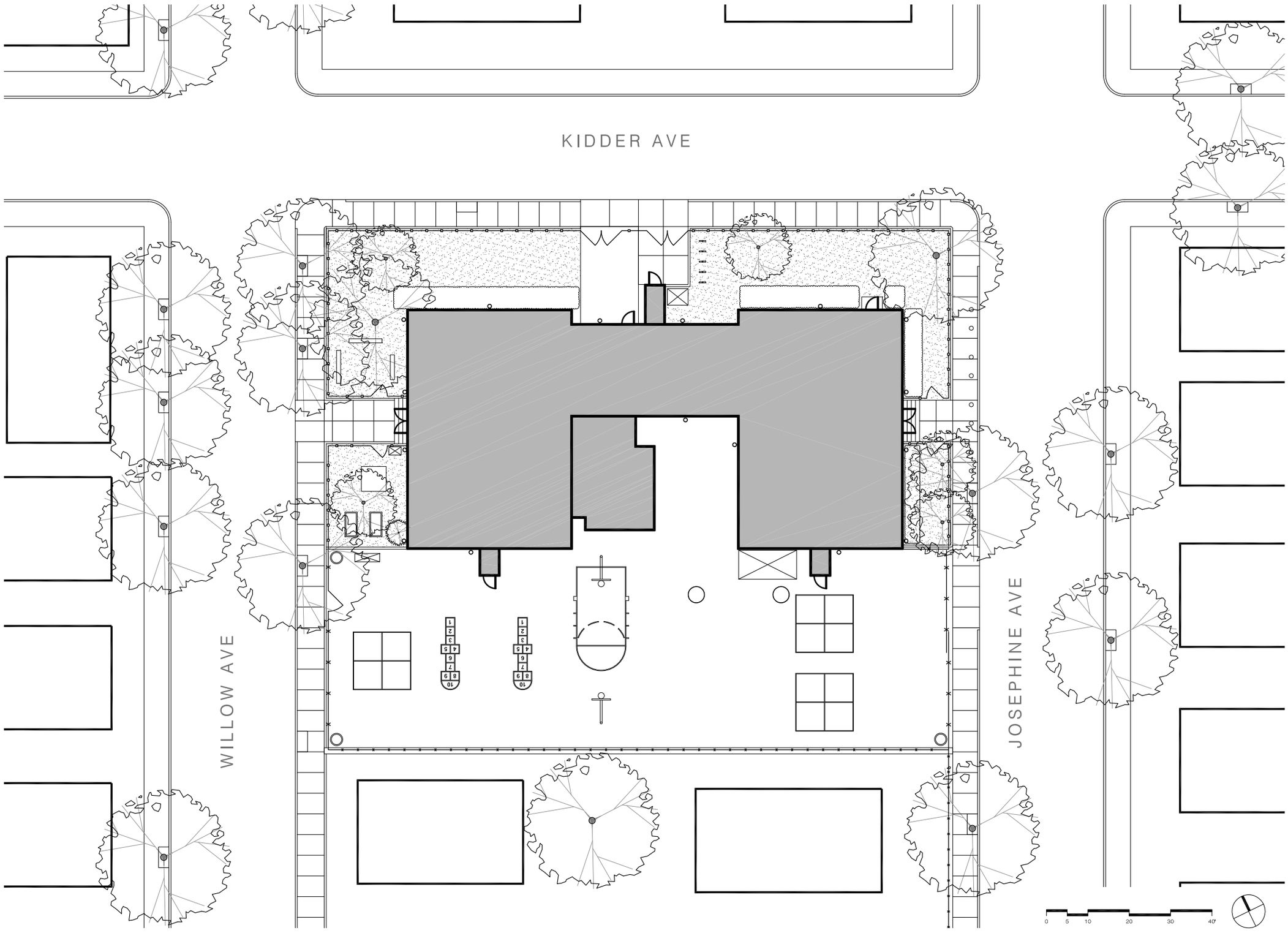
- Which activities should have the highest priority?

THANK YOU

Other questions, concerns, and ideas? Interested in attending future public meetings and sending more feedback? Please contact:

Arn Franzen, Senior Project Manager
Public Space & Urban Forestry, City of Somerville
Phone: (617) 625-6600 x 2545
email: AFranzen@somervillema.gov

Be sure to sign up for the project email list to receive updates and meeting notices, on the sign-in sheet at the meeting or by emailing Arn!

BASE PLAN FOR DISCUSSION

EXISTING CONDITIONS