

spark  
AT MIDTOWN

# POP-UP STREETLET

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**SPARK POP-UP STREETLET CASE STUDY**  
Prepared by City Fabrick



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**SEPTEMBER 2018**

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A woman is shown from the side, focused on drawing a diagram on a whiteboard. She is wearing a brown patterned top, a silver hoop earring, and a silver bracelet. She holds several markers in her right hand, including a black one with a yellow band and an orange one. Her left hand is holding a blue marker and is positioned near the whiteboard. The diagram consists of a network of black lines forming irregular shapes. Some of these shapes are filled with orange and yellow wavy lines. The text '01 PROJECT OVERVIEW' is overlaid on the left side of the image in a white, bold, sans-serif font. A thin white horizontal line is positioned below the text.

# 01 PROJECT OVERVIEW

## What is The Spark?

The Spark is a proposed affordable housing community in Central Long Beach along Long Beach Boulevard near the Metro Blue Line light rail system.

The development will include ninety-five units of family-oriented & supportive housing, as well as groundfloor spaces for community partners including the YMCA of Greater Long Beach.





## What is a Streetlet?

As defined in the City's Downtown and TOD Pedestrian Master Plan, a Streetlet is a new type of neighborhood public open space that re-imagines underutilized sections of the street to create hubs of community activity.



Associated with the proposed Spark development is a new public open space, referred to as a “streetlet”, created through the closure of Rhea Street adjacent to the project site. As supported by the Long Beach Midtown Specific Plan, the street closure will retain the public right-of-way between Long Beach Boulevard and the alley, but will close the street to vehicular traffic. The conceptual design of the streetlet includes a playground, outdoor fitness equipment, and a variety of spaces for informal and programmed activities.



## What is Pop-Up Urbanism?

Sometimes referred to as "tactical urbanism", pop-up urbanism is the action of instigating and demonstrating physical change by experimenting with temporary and low-cost materials. This low-risk, high-reward strategy tests the feasibility of innovation without having to invest in large infrastructural changes.

**Successful pop-up urbanism strategies will incorporate opportunities for the community to provide feedback and offer their support.**





## Goals

Demonstrate the proposed open space associated with the Spark development

Introduce the proposed Spark development to the surrounding neighborhood

Share initial design and programming concepts with the community and solicit feedback in a creative and engaging manner

Refine the conceptual design of the open space based on community feedback and incorporate them into a schematic design



# Process



INITIAL  
PROPOSAL

GRANT  
AWARDED

TEAM  
MEETINGS

ENGAGE  
PARTNERS

PROMOTE  
EVENTS

PLAN  
LOGISTICS

POP-UP  
EVENT

SCHEMATIC  
DESIGN





## Partners + Roles

### ENTERPRISE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

LINC Housing secured a grant through Enterprise Community Partners to develop an innovative outreach program to engage local residents to learn more about the development and guide the design of the proposed public open space and associated functions.

### LINC HOUSING

### CITY FABRICK

### YMCA OF GREATER LONG BEACH

### CITY OF LONG BEACH

### OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER DEE ANDREWS

### WALK LONG BEACH

### MOLINA HEALTHCARE

### ASSURANCE LEARNING ACADEMY

### ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM LOCAL BUSINESSES





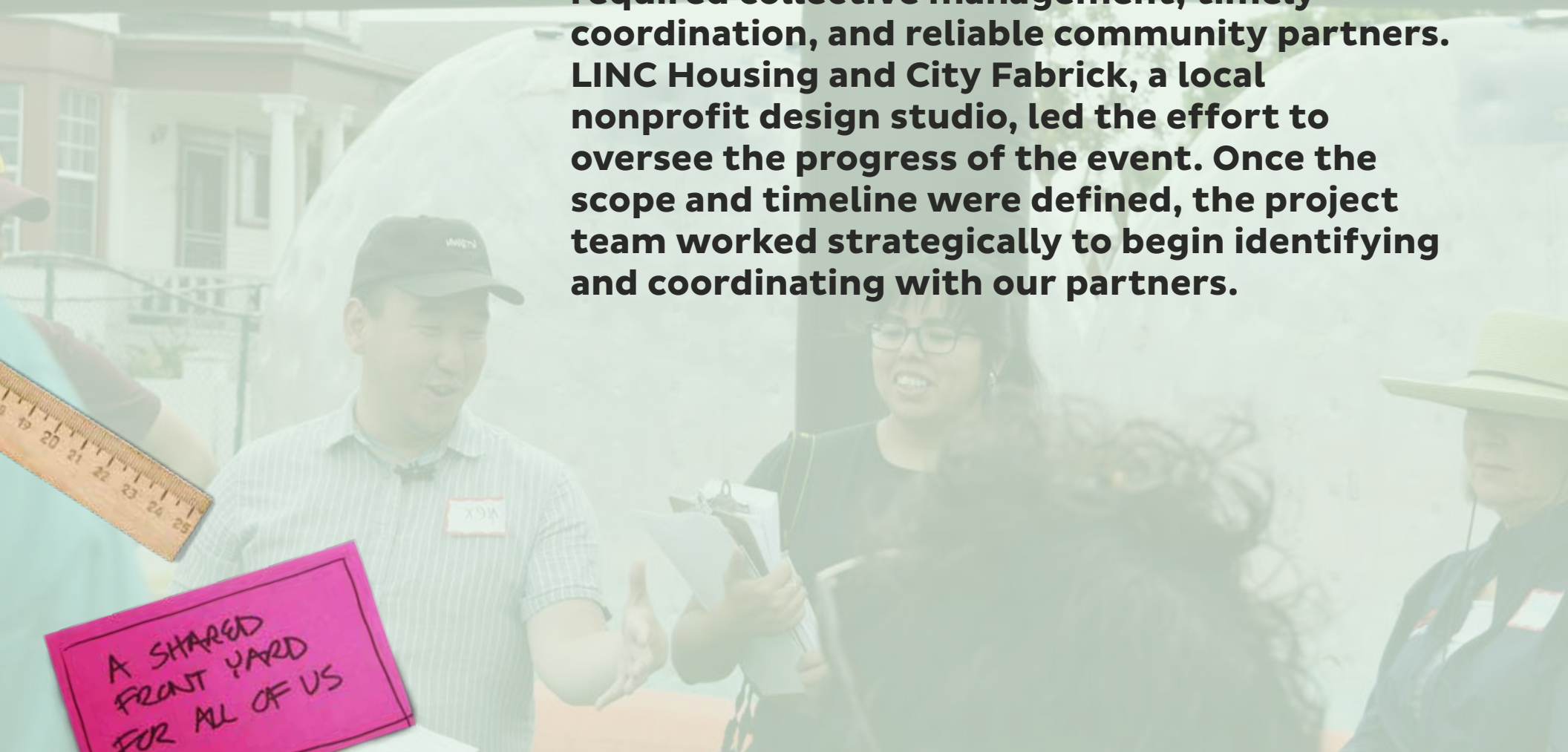
# 02 PROJECT COMPONENTS

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## Planning

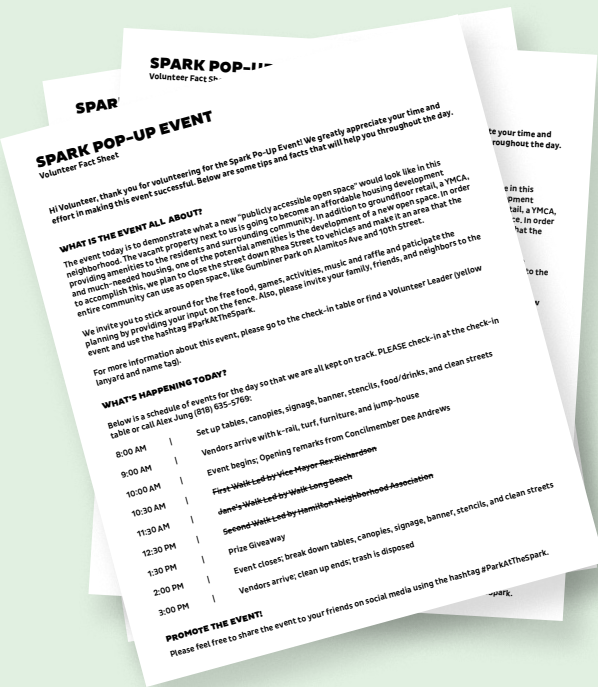
Planning for this public event required collective management, timely coordination, and reliable community partners. LINC Housing and City Fabrick, a local nonprofit design studio, led the effort to oversee the progress of the event. Once the scope and timeline were defined, the project team worked strategically to begin identifying and coordinating with our partners.



# Planning

The team began by meeting with local government officials to discuss the regulations and requirements involved with executing the event. This initial step is important as these department representatives can help navigate the bureaucratic process and avoid any unforeseeable complications. For our event, we fostered an early and collaborative partnership with several departments within the City of Long Beach who helped us access City resources and waive regulatory fees, such as event and street closure permits. Councilmember Dee Andrews was also a strong political supporter for the project and was approached by our team to participate at the event.

Working in parallel, we sought the local expertise of community members from Long Beach Forward (formerly Building Healthy Communities). Long Beach Forward is a place-based community, health-advocacy organization that has an extensive network of active community organizations. Our team met with local organizations who served the various welfare needs of the surrounding residential community. There are many primary-Spanish, Khmer, and Tagalog speakers living in this neighborhood and it was important to identify groups that have organized in these communities. With their support, we gained greater cultural awareness and expanded our reach to a wider audience.





## Outreach

The community outreach for the event involved the promotion of both digital and physical materials in coordination with our local partners.



## Outreach



The effort began by establishing a consistent brand for the event, one that would be compatible in Spanish, Khmer, and Tagalog, which gave a greater sense of legitimacy to the effort. The branding, which included a logo, font, and color palette, was incorporated in all the production materials, including the design of the event space. Outreach materials such as fliers, were written so that it could be understood by people of varying literacy levels and translated into multiple languages. Using our local community partners' social media accounts, we advertised the event several weeks leading up to the date, with greater impressions made as the event came closer.



## Outreach

While promotion through social media can be effective, the outreach was focused on attracting the residents and businesses surrounding the event location. LINC Housing and City Fabrick fliered throughout the neighborhood several weeks leading up to the event. We found this to be the most successful method of outreach as the invitations felt more personal. Supportive local businesses even donated their products and materials to the event, which helped with our limited budget.

Finally, we notified the businesses and residents that would be directly affected by the noise and traffic created by the event. Due to the sensitivities of hosting the event directly adjacent to a funeral home, we visited the business several times to avoid any conflicts. The residences within close proximity to the event were also engaged earlier on in the process so that they were fully aware of the event and proposed Spark development.



## Placemaking

**The team worked collaboratively with local officials and community organizations to incorporate their opinions into the design and programming of the event.**

One of the meetings involved a charrette, or a collaborative brainstorming effort using sketches to explore design ideas, to spatially plan out the site. This effort proved to be very effective for those who understand spatial ideas better with visuals and graphics.

The general areas of activity (community resources, open lawn, active frontage, and recreational uses) were spatially organized to match the locations of the proposed amenities, allowing the design team to observe the overall functionality and circulation patterns of the space.

The site was designed to be experiential, leading participants through unique spaces beginning at the community resources area. At this location, participants were able to sign-in, learn about the event, obtain resources from our various partner organizations, participate in interactive art, receive free food and refreshments, and sign-up to stay informed throughout the development of the Spark.



# Placemaking

Recognizing the site's adjacency to a high-volume street near transit, the design of the space is oriented towards Long Beach Boulevard with secondary entrances towards the residential neighborhood.





## Placemaking

### youth stories



Since 2001, the YMCA Youth Institute has helped young people navigate their way through adolescence & into adulthood. The following clips are a powerful collection of stories told by our young adults who can reflect on what factors helped move them from low-income minority youth into college and beyond.



**The YMCA of Greater Long Beach is a key partner for The Spark who will operate youth programs on the ground floor of the new building.**

The YMCA's booth at the event included a station to listen to stories of young people who have been impacted by their programs. Adjacent to this area was the open lawn where the YMCA and other organizations provided consistent, active programming. A local community member was a DJ for the event, allowing us to make announcements and keep the festive energy high. Many adults with children felt comfortable leaving their children to play in this area while they participated in the engagement process.



## Placemaking

To anchor the rear, large-scale inflatables were added to simulate the proposed recreational area.

This area by far was the most entertaining for children (and adults) of all ages.





## Placemaking



The City Fabrick team designed a series of large vinyl banners to hang alongside of the fence, typical to the banners that are hung around development sites to notify the public and block out construction. However, these vinyl banners were designed to be informative, interactive, and thought-provoking. The result of this collective planning effort manifested into a fun and engaging event that informed the next iteration of the design.













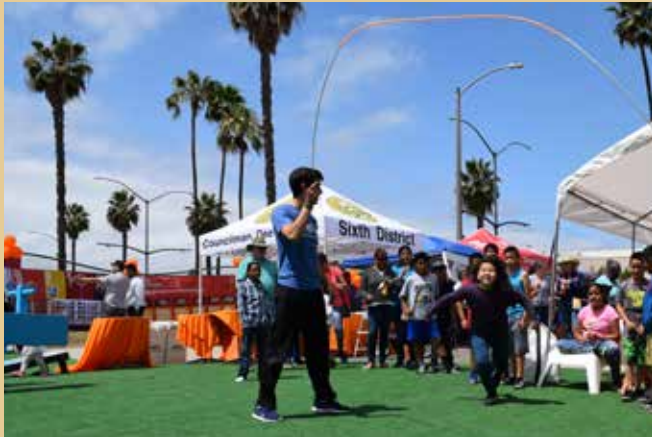




































# 03 PROJECT ANALYSIS

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## Outreach Results

How did you get to this pop-up open space?

<b>WALK</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>OTHER</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>CAR</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>WHEELCHAIR</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>TRANSIT</b>	<b>7</b>		
<b>BIKE</b>	<b>4</b>		

How many days a week do you exercise?

<b>0 DAYS</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1 DAY</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>3 DAYS</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2 DAYS</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>7 DAYS</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5 DAYS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4 DAYS</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6 DAYS</b>	<b>6</b>

What should be the guiding motivation for this open space?

<b>CULTURE</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>EQUITY</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>SAFETY</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>SUSTAINABILITY</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>HEALTH</b>	<b>14</b>		
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>14</b>		

## Outreach Results

### Active Uses?

<b>PLAYGROUND</b>	<b>44</b>	YOGA	25
<b>OUTDOOR EQUIP.</b>	<b>32</b>	ZUMBA	17
<b>JOGGING</b>	<b>26</b>	DANCE	17
<b>AEROBICS</b>	<b>25</b>		

### Passive Uses?

<b>PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>ART EXHIBIT</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>DOG WALKING</b>	<b>10</b>



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## Overall Budget

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### Total costs for the Spark Pop Up Event were approximately \$7,000.

Enterprise Community Partners grant funds supported event day expenses & supplies, such as equipment rentals & the interactive stations.

LINC contributed funds for refreshments and giveaways to engage the approximately 200 event attendees.

In-kind support from the City of Long Beach included permits, signage, etc.

Local businesses donated raffle prizes for the event.

Volunteers from Molina Healthcare, Chase Design Group, and JusticeCorps set up the event, supervised event stations, and helped with clean up.



# Planning the Event

**Have regular check-in meetings with the core partners leading up to the event, with more frequent meetings the week before the event.**

**Notify and check-in with businesses and residents that would be affected by the event and encourage their involvement in the planning process.**

**Identify community partners that have a strong understanding of the local community and are willing to participate in the event program and/or share the event with their base network.**

**Host a design charrette with community, public, and business partners to help inform the layout and feel of the event.**

**Involve public partners, such as local agencies and elected officials, early on to support with things such as street closures, street clean-up, event permits, and promotion.**

**Engage local residents and businesses early on using both digital and printed materials with engaging graphics, understandable terminology, and translated versions.**

**Solicit donations from businesses early on as to cut down on costs and establish stronger relationships with the community.**

**Work together to develop thoughtful questions and creative ways to ask them.**

**Establish high-quality communication material so that the overall feel of the event is consistent and intentional.**





## Day of the Event

**Reach out to volunteers to help at the event, especially during the set-up & break down—the more people that get involved, the smoother the event will run, and the more volunteers can enjoy the event too!**

**Host a variety of programs for people of various ages and abilities so that people can remain longer in the space; these can include a community fair, physical exercise activity, coloring and reading areas, and carnival games.**

**Make sure that there is a person who has the flexibility to leave and pick up materials for unforeseen circumstances.**

**Make sure to have at least one dedicated “photographer” or “videographer” to document the event.**

**Have translators available so that language is not a barrier to participation.**

**Having music, preferably a DJ, is a great way to attract interested bystanders and keep them around the space longer.**

**Consider the main points of entrance to the event and use signage and maps to help orient people throughout the space.**

**Giveaways are an enticing way to attract a greater number of visitors.**

**Bring a first-aid kit just in case of an accident and establish a protocol for disruptions and emergencies.**

**Make sure that there is proper supervision for children participating in physical activities.**



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## Prototype Observations

**During the event, a funeral procession began at the mortuary next door, and programming and activity was temporarily paused so as to be sensitive to the grieving family.**

The mortuary was engaged several times throughout the planning process and was asked to notify the project team if there were any ceremonies planned for the event date. However, there was an unexpected service with a Cambodian Buddhist family, which involved a funeral procession where typically a priest, also known as an achar, Buddhist monks, and the loved ones of the deceased participate. The mortuary and our Cambodian-serving community partners mentioned that many Cambodian families throughout the region attend funerals at this location, and it is common that a procession walk occurs circling several times along Rhea Street and around the building. During and after the event, the project team met with the mortuary to brainstorm how the new open space can sensitively incorporate the mortuary's program into the design.





## Prototype Observations

Provide a diversity of activity for residents of different age groups and user types.

The sidewalk is too narrow to accommodate people walking on both sides of the casket.

Avoid creating visual barriers that create hiding places that are accessible.

Reduce obstacles between the children play area and lawn.

Provide comfortable places for people to sit, adjacent to the various activity nodes.

Protect buildings from graffiti while providing active edges around the space.

Provide shade throughout the space

Try to limit noise impacts from the park on the local neighbors.

There should be a convenient place for bike parking, bike sharing, and scooter rentals.

Where do local doggies go to enjoy this space? Is there anywhere to do their business?

Create a garden walk that enhances the funeral procession experience.

Ensure that the space is regularly active to prevent nuisance activity.

## Design Refinement

### garden walk

the north sidewalk has been widened, and enhanced with verdant planting on both sides.

### outdoor gym

outdoor fitness stations are included in the zone, with a fence that also serves as a balancing bar for classes.

### lawn to playground

the playground and lawn are free of obstructions, allowing for children to freely play between the two spaces.

### pee patches

there are a number of planting areas located throughout the space to distribute pet potty spots.

### active mobility

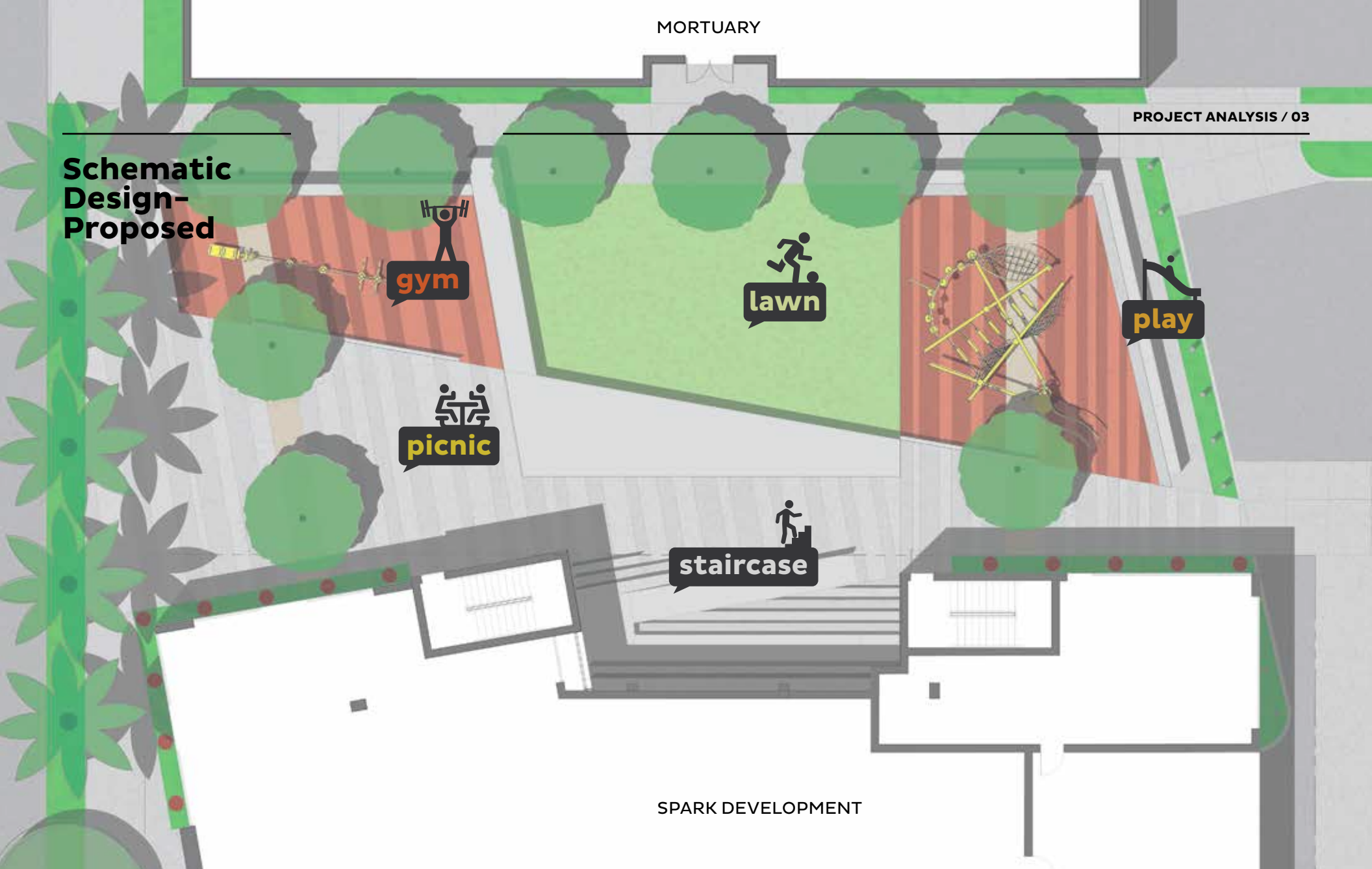
an area along the Long Beach Boulevard sidewalk has been set aside for bike and scooter parking.

### planting buffers

pots and planting areas are added to the base of secondary facades to buffer building edges.



# Schematic Design-Proposed



SPARK DEVELOPMENT

# Precedent Imagery





## Conclusion

Prototyping the closure and activation of Rhea Street for the proposed open space informed the project team about the design & programming of the new streetlet at the Spark.

Our collaboration with stakeholders, organizations, and community members fostered a great deal of support and ownership and we believe that these groups will serve as champions for the proposed space.



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# THANK YOU

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CITY FABRICK  
// DESIGN STUDIO  
[CITYFABRICK.ORG](http://CITYFABRICK.ORG)



LINC HOUSING  
// DEVELOPER  
[LINCHOUSING.ORG](http://LINCHOUSING.ORG)

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## SPARK AT MIDTOWN

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