

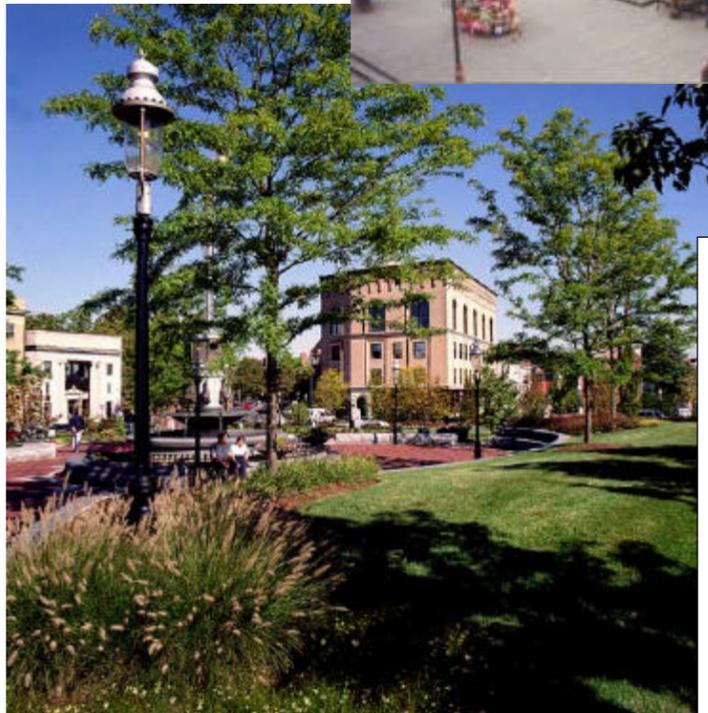
Proposed Universal Design Elements



Raised lawns define spaces, provide a low, informal seating edge, and help protect from unintended cut-across paths that damage grass.

Quality, decorative paving looks beautiful, durable and well-kept.

Tree wells give trees adequate area to grow and protect them.



Bringing the elements together:

Hardscape – paving, seat walls and fountain;

Softscape – lawn, trees and landscaping;

Center focal point – fountain with seating;

Choice in seating – center or edge;

Decorative, pedestrian-scaled lighting for safety.

Sun and shade.

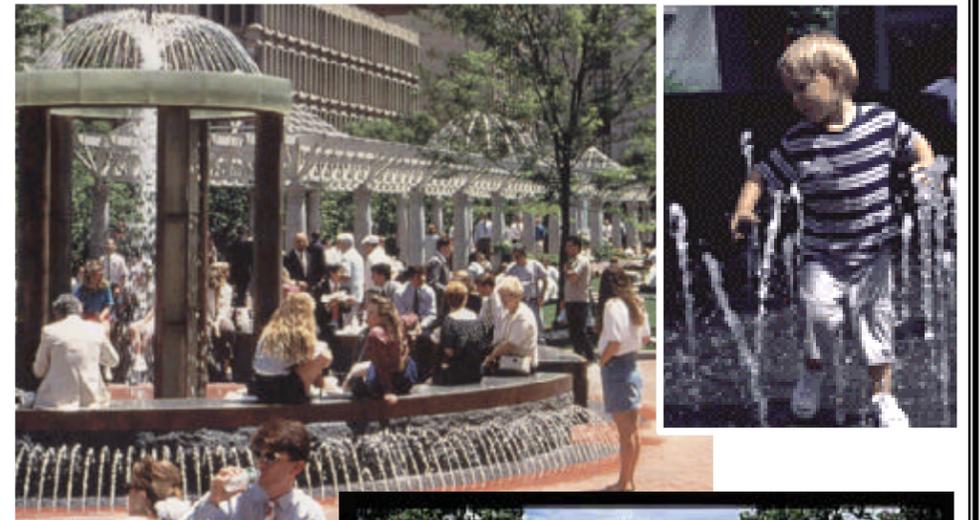
Elements Shared by All Proposed Alternatives

1. Retention of the basic existing geometric forms and layout of the square, circle and diagonals.
2. Retention of the current location of diagonal walkways.
3. Retention of the current location of perimeter sidewalks, to line up with the sidewalks that continue from here and go throughout the blocks of the historic Chico grid.
4. Replacement of existing muddy planting strips with adequate perimeter planting areas protected from adjacent parking to ensure the growth of healthy trees.
5. Reconfigure adjacent street to provide diagonal parking on Main and Broadway in order to retain the existing amount of parking while accommodating other desired design features.
6. Option to preserve existing large trees on the four sides (e.g. existing and new Christmas trees, palms etc.).
7. Expanded central plaza (hardscape) area.
8. Rebuilt, raised tree lawns, reduced in overall size.
9. Public restrooms provided convenient to, but outside of the formal Plaza space.
10. Abundant seating choices:
 - Benches, stairs, seat walls and raised lawns
 - At the edge and in the middle
 - In shady and in sunny areas
11. Increased 'permeability' and safety - opening up for improved physical and visual access, to increase security and comfort:
 - Bulbed-out corners with pedestrian signals for safe and easy crossing into and out of the Plaza
 - Removal of low-growing bushes that block views into and out of the space
 - Open-air performance platform(s)
 - Opened-up, expanded central plaza area
 - New, human-scaled and high-quality lighting
12. Focal point(s), water, and art to attract people:
 - Fountain or other central feature
 - Special features at edges or corners
 - Public art integrated into elements of the design
13. Space and facilities for different uses and activities:
 - Raised lawns for day-to-day or events seating
 - Hardscape for strolling, events seating and dancing
 - Performance platform(s) for day-to-day seating or for events staging, with the option to attach a covering
 - Adequate number and location of electrical outlets for events
14. Beauty, quality and durability in all elements:
 - 'Furniture' – benches, trash receptacle
 - Construction elements - paving, planters, stage(s)
 - Trees and plantings



Corner bulbouts reduce the crossing distance to the Plaza and help open up views and access into the site. Combined with decorative paving, they create a more inviting entrance.

Benches offer seating at the edge or corners, good places to gather or meet up with others.



Water fountains are always great people-attractors in warm climates – and people are the essential ingredients for a successful, activated public space!

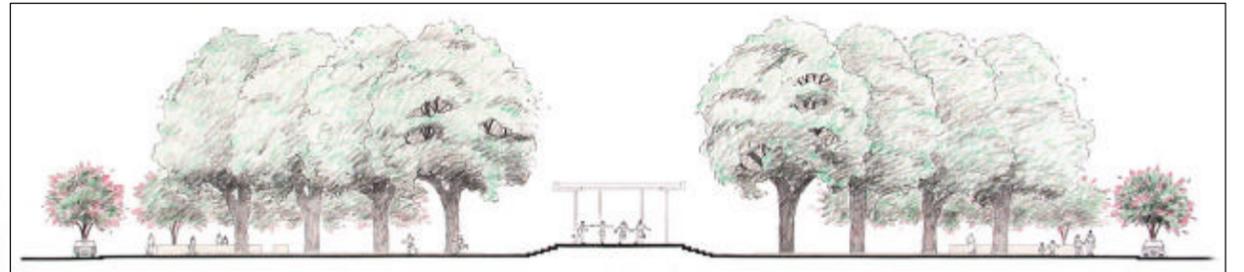
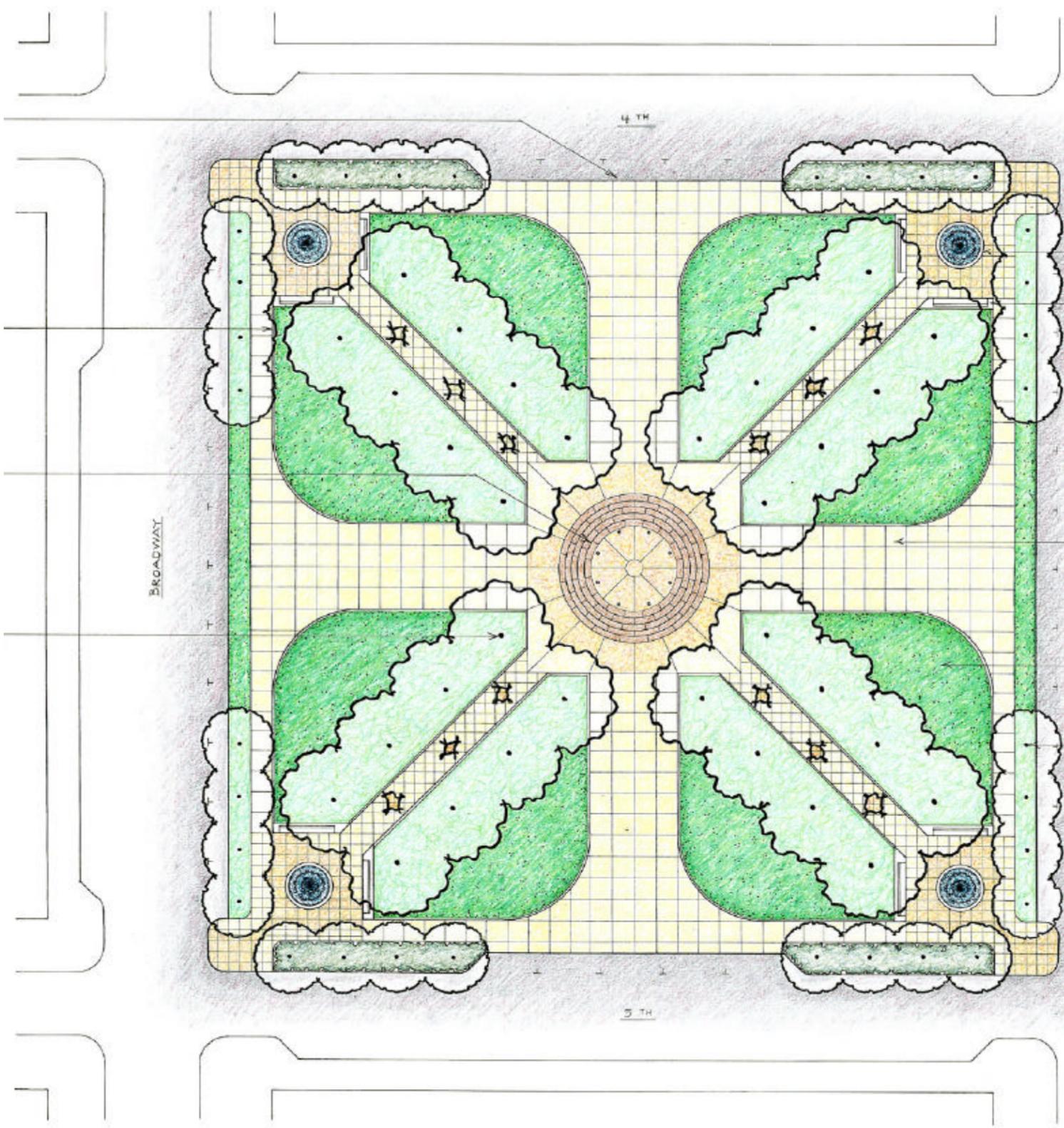
They can be more formal and set apart, providing beauty to see, hear and feel; or they can be interactive, providing a bit of refreshment to attract kids and adults alike – or they can be designed to be a combination of both!

Additionally, they provide great opportunity for public art.



New Design Alternative 1

Cross Section



Alternative 1

The original focus of the Plaza was an ornate fountain located at the intersection of the diagonal paths. This was an extremely important design element, and this alternative proposes to create a new, modern fountain at the center. This fountain would be designed so that the water could be turned off so that it could also function as a pavilion and stage for the many performances and events which are now held in the Plaza. The precise design of this central feature might be commissioned of an artist or it might be the subject of a competition.

Instead of entirely restoring the planting of street trees at the edges of the Plaza, a wide gap is left on each side to improve views of the pavilion. There are generous paved areas on all four sides of the pavilion where audiences could be seated for performances and events.

At all four corners of the Plaza, where pedestrians typically cross the street, there are smaller, more intimate plazas, each with benches and a small fountain. These are the natural points for people to run into each other and have informal conversations, or to bring their lunch to the Plaza and watch the activity along the street.

Measurements (approximate):

- Plaza (hardscape in center): 4,000 s.f.
- Central fountain/stage: 900 s.f.
- New walks/side plazas (hardscape in 4 quadrants): 12,000 s.f.
- 4 Corner 'plazas': 3,500 s.f.

(For scale and comparison, the current central plaza hardscape area is approximately 1,500 s.f., or about 2% of the block. Overlay base map transparency for comparison.)

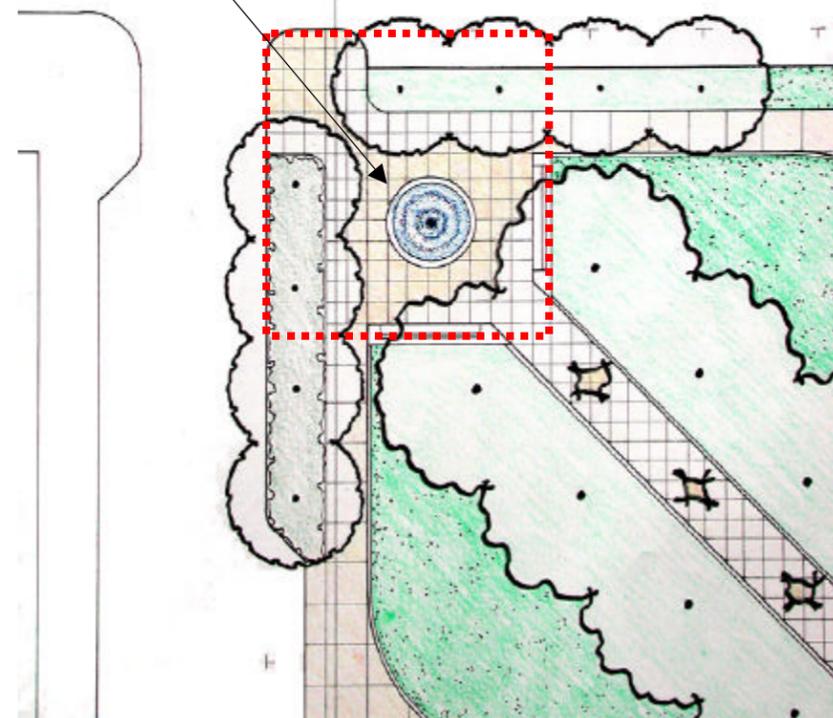
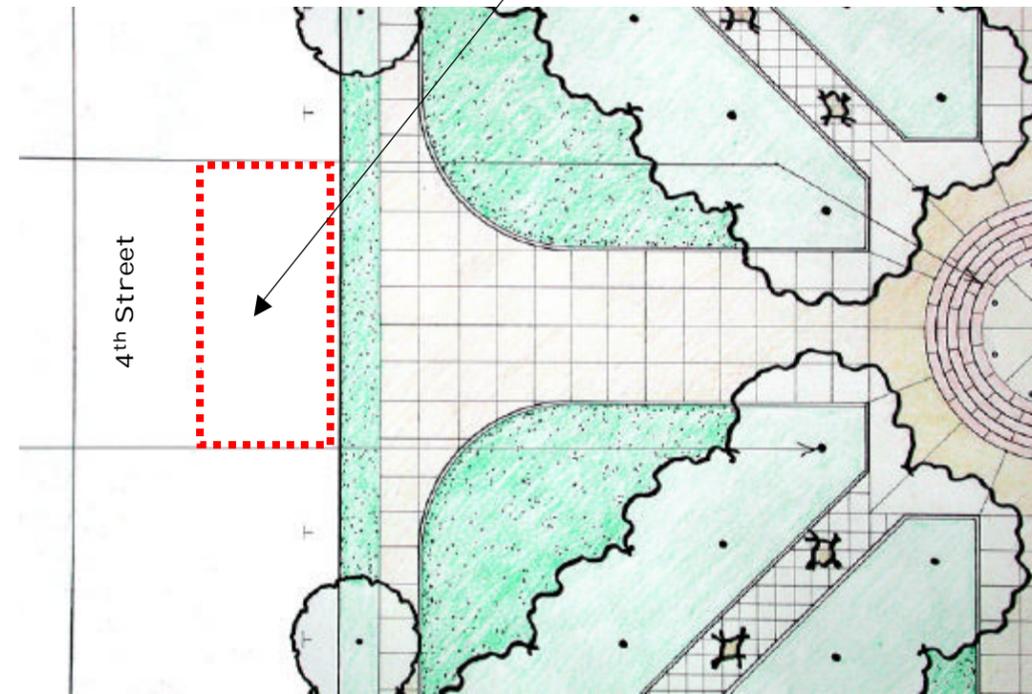
A Note on Fountains: Historically, fountains have been prevalent in important civic spaces and, originally, Chico's City Plaza also enjoyed a formal central fountain. Well-designed civic fountains can add beauty, liveliness and refreshing sight, sound and feel to a space. This makes fountains and other water features natural people-attractors - especially in warm climates such as Chico's - and many of the community goals identified in the public process involve increasing daily activity in the Plaza. It should be understood that fountains also involve a commitment to regular, sustained maintenance, and can actually end up detracting from a space without this.

Elements - New Design Alternative 1

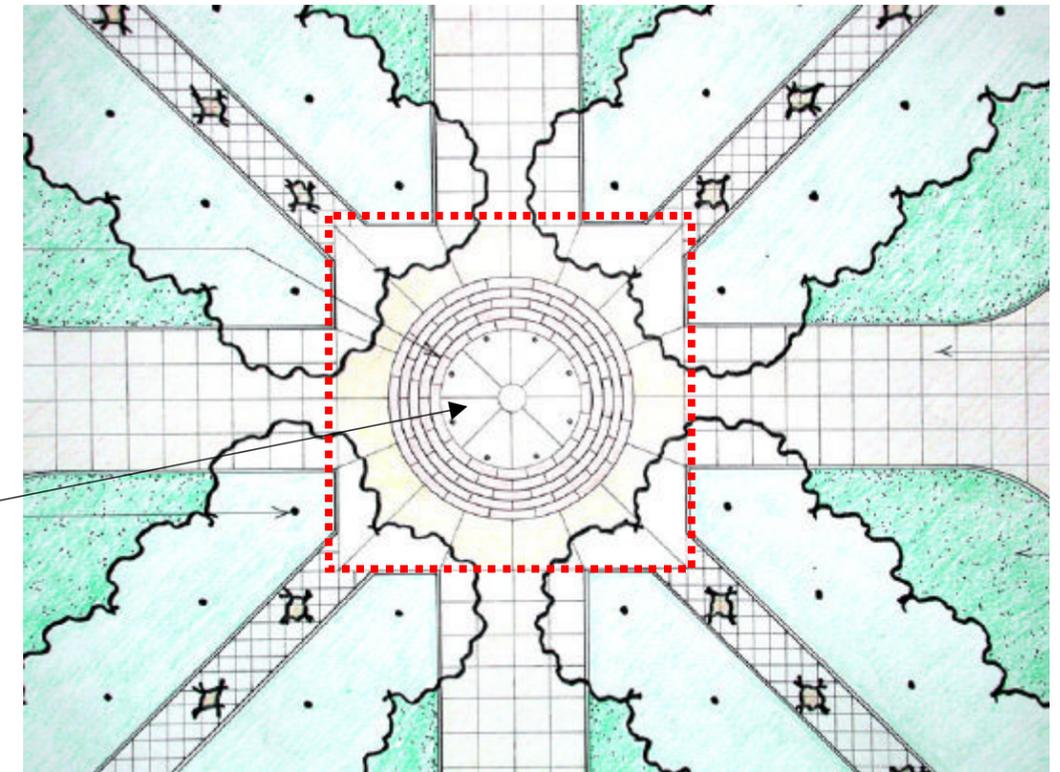
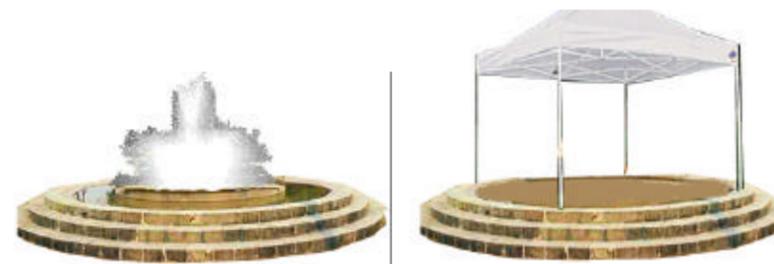


Fountain and Gathering Places at Corners

For Large Events, 4th Street is Closed and Performance Larger Stage Set up adjacent to curb



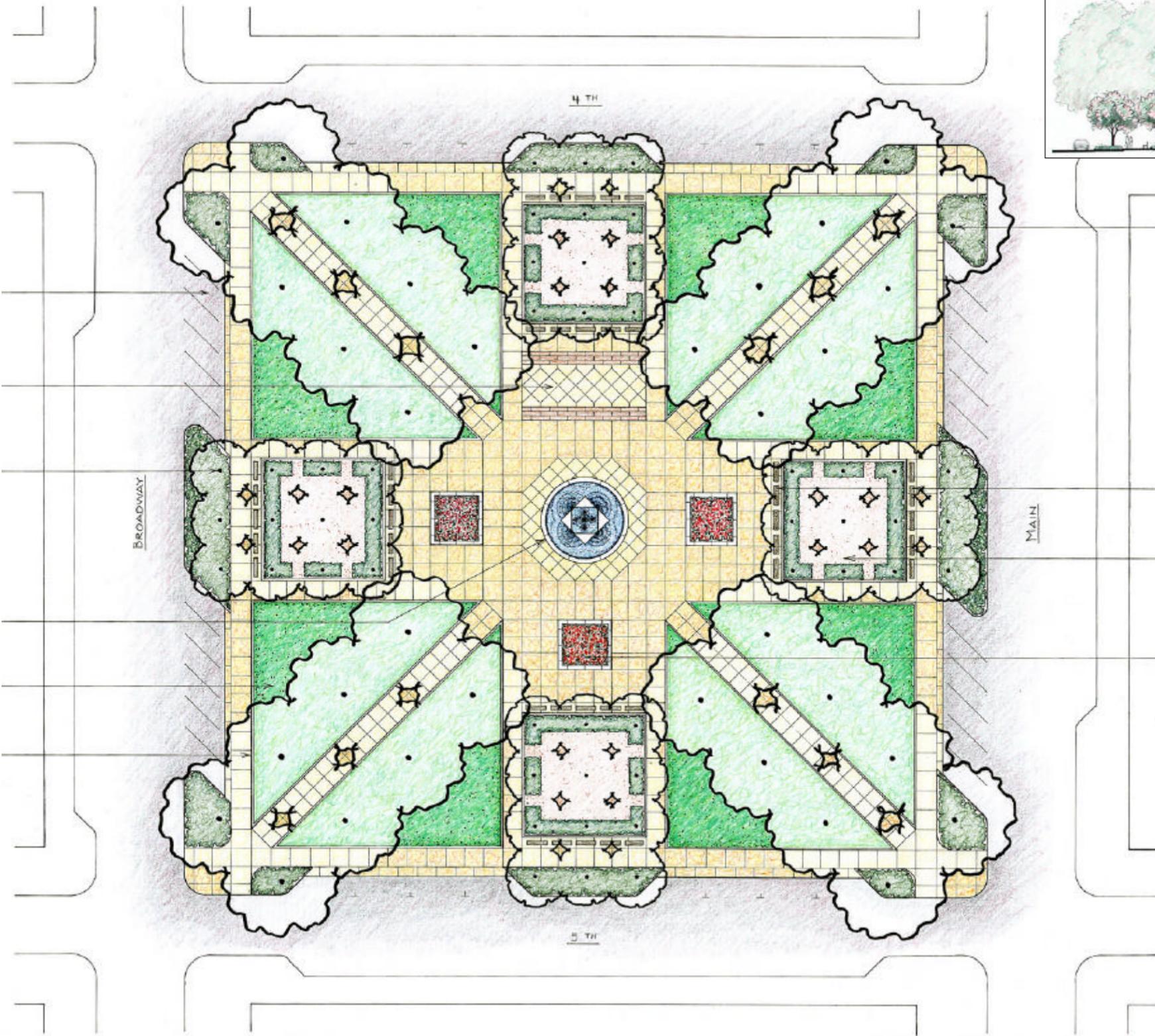
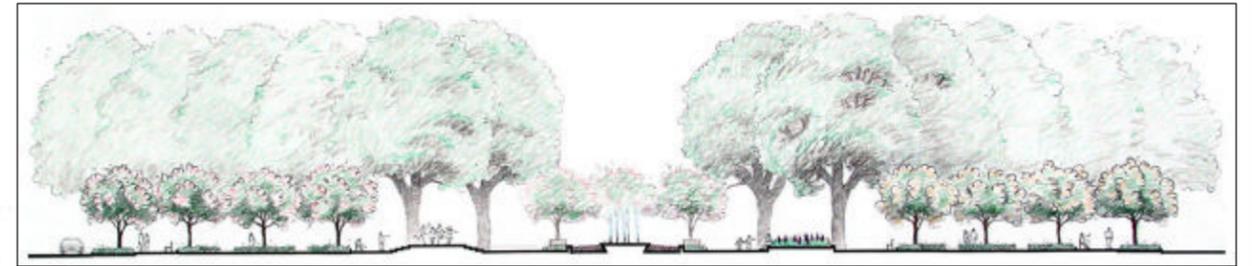
Center Fountain that can be Converted into Small Performance Platform



Central Podium / Fountain

New Design Alternative 2

Cross Section



Alternative 2

The central focus of this design is a traditional fountain set in the center of a large central plaza. The diagonal rows of big trees are pushed toward the periphery, with the outside trees actually planted in the parkways at the street corners, so that they are quite visible from a distance as people approach the park along the adjacent streets.

Along each side of the park, instead of a line of street trees there is a grid of flowering trees – reminiscent of the orchards that are a part of the local landscape. Under the grids of trees would be raised planter gardens, each of a different design and each surrounded by hedges. Rows of benches under the canopy to the flowering trees face both outward toward the street and inward toward the fountain.

In addition to the four peripheral planter gardens, the central plaza contains four raised flower beds where the plantings could be changed to respond to the seasons. The sides of the raised planters and the outside edge of the fountain are all about 18 inches above the paving and wide enough to provide lots of comfortable informal seating. On one side of the plaza is a raised platform that would serve as a bandstand or a performance stage. The platform could have a permanent roof, but it is suggested that a removable awning might be sufficient to protect performers from the sun, depending on the season and the time of day.

(Note: It is envisioned that various local groups - such as a garden club, rose society or audobon group - may like to 'adopt' the planting and maintenance of individual planter gardens within this plan. If this is not the case, these elements of the plan should be revisited to determine how they could be adapted to a lower-maintenance set-up to avoid comparatively high maintenance costs.)

Measurements (approximate):

- Plaza (hardscape in center): 3,650 s.f.
- Central fountain: 900 s.f.
- Performance stage: 1,400 s.f. (50' x 28', plus steps)

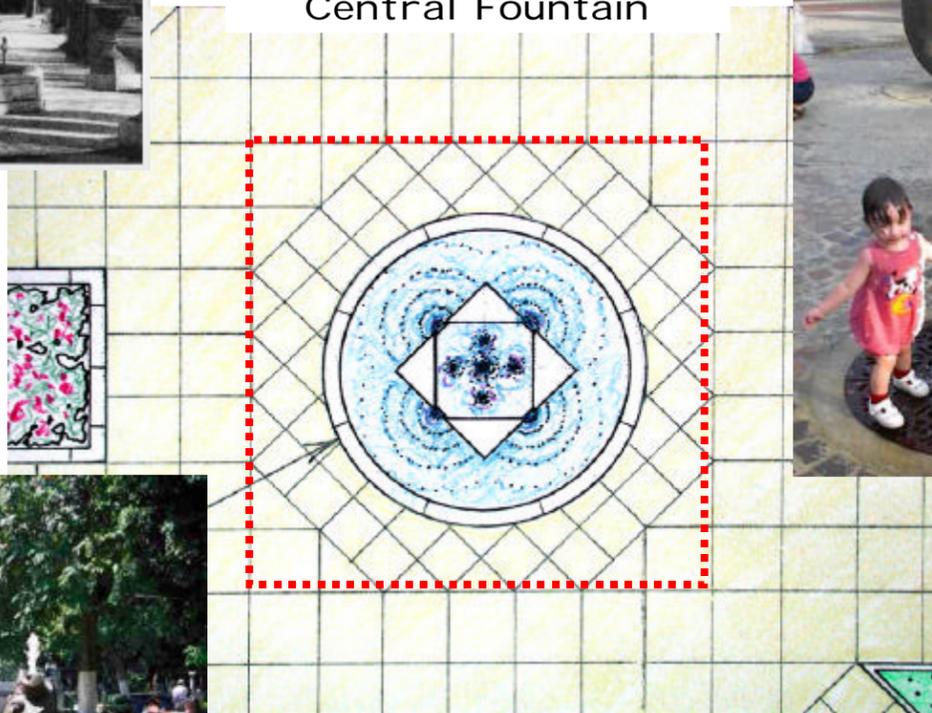
(For scale and comparison, the current central plaza hardscape area is approximately 1,500 s.f., or about 2% of the block. Overlay base map transparency for comparison.)

Elements - New Design Alternative 2

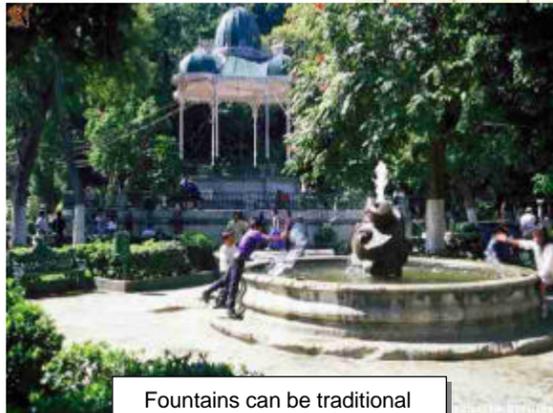


Original fountain in City Plaza

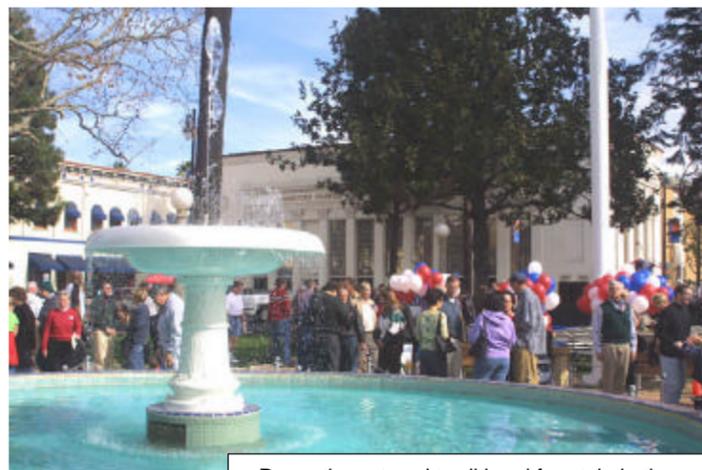
Central Fountain



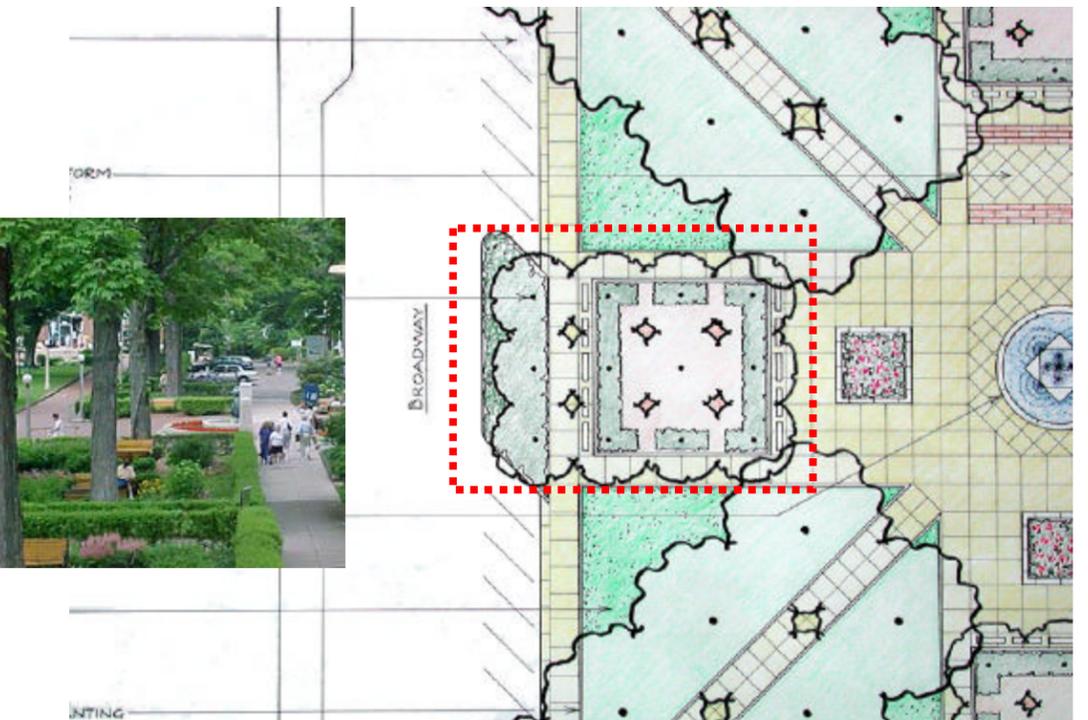
Interactive fountains are magnets for children



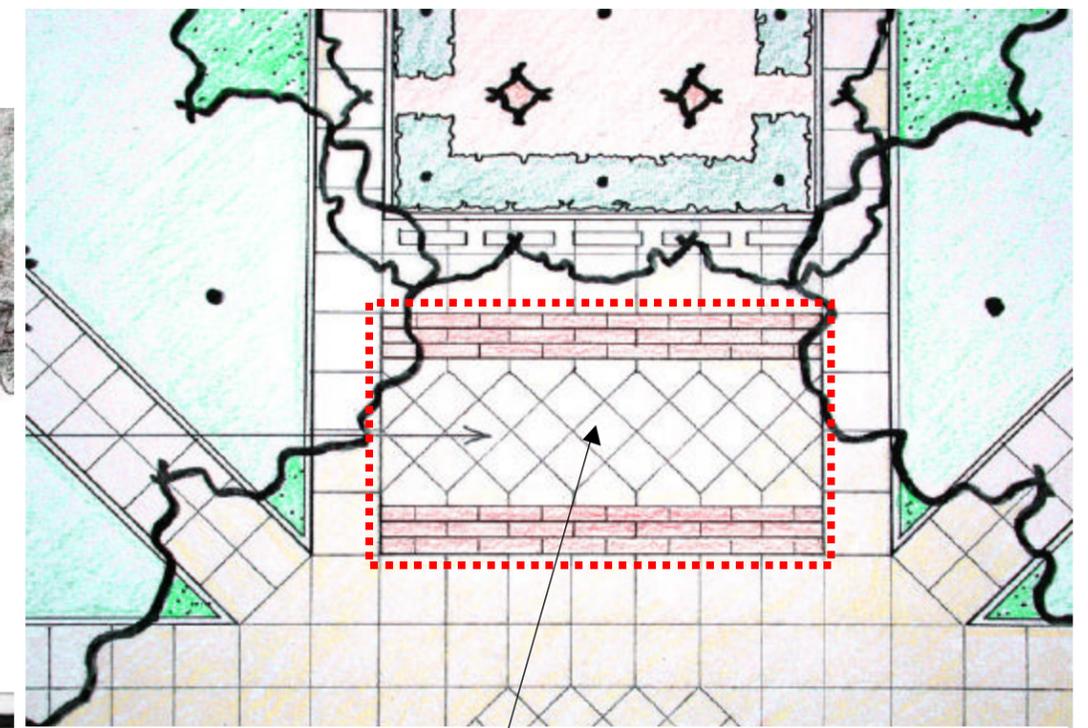
Fountains can be traditional and interactive



Recently restored traditional fountain in the recently rebuilt town plaza in Orange City, CA



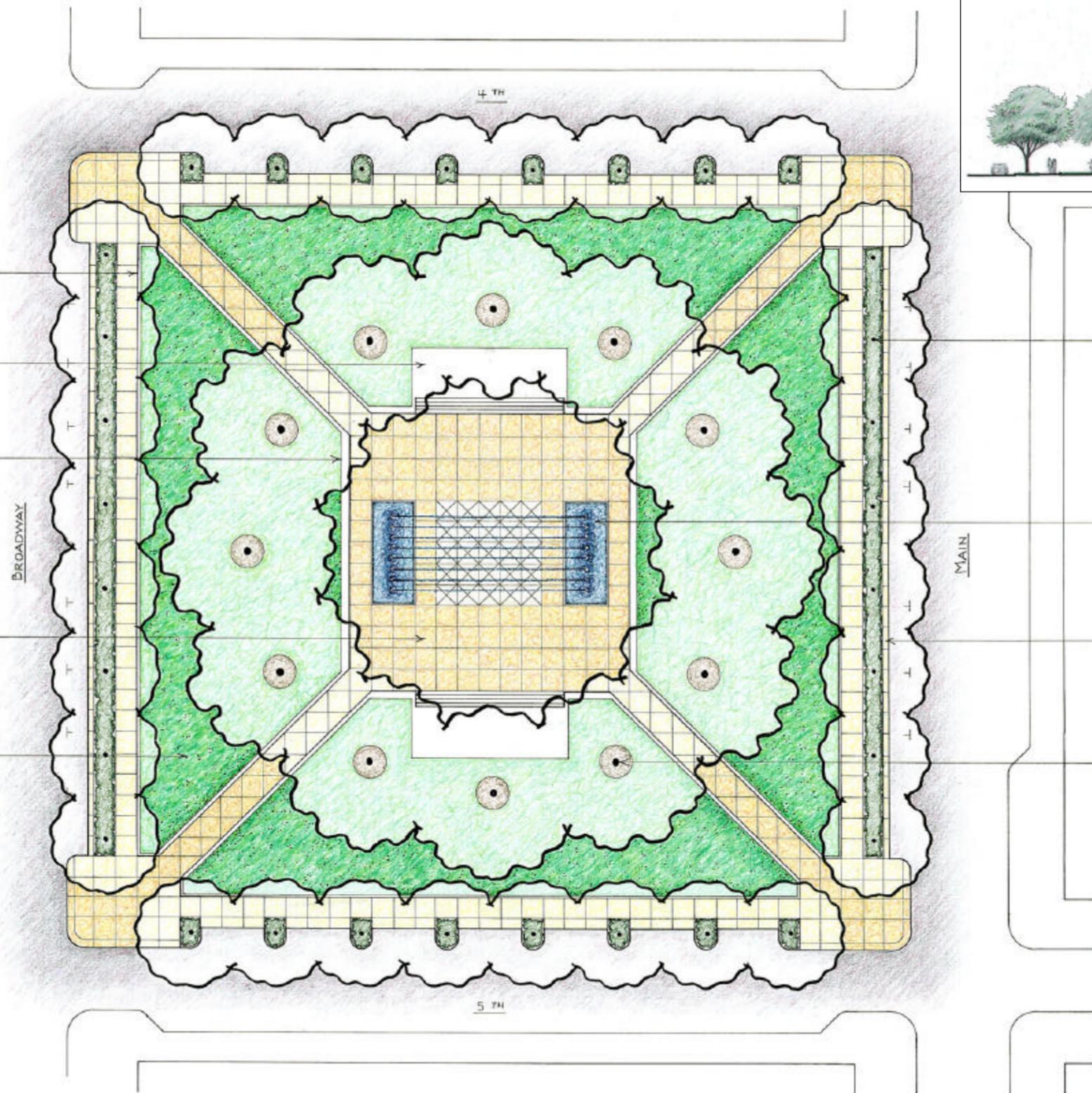
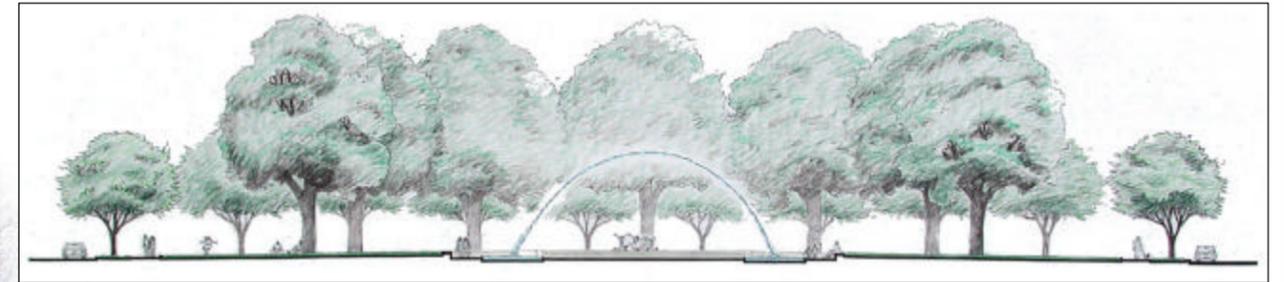
Tree Bosques in Formal raised Planters



Performance Platform (50' x 28')

New Design Alternative 3

Cross Section



Alternative 3

This design is perhaps the closest to the simplicity of the original layout of the park. All four sides are lined with regularly spaced street trees, but these are now provided with sufficient room for their root systems. The only entries to the park are along the four diagonal paths, which define four very large, simple lawn areas. The lawns slope gradually upward from the edge and end in 18-inch seatwalls which completely surround the central plaza. Thus, the park looks very green from the outside but nonetheless has a substantial paved area in its center. The central plaza is a perfect square. There are performance platforms on two sides, so depending on the season and/or the time of day, performances can be either in the sun or in they shade.

In the center of the plaza, a dramatic water feature is envisioned. It is composed of two rows of special nozzles that shoot streams of water that create an arch under which people can walk without getting wet. This kind of water use – called “laminar flow” – does not work if the wind speed gets very high. So, in windy conditions, a wind sensor would shut down the main nozzles, and a set of conventional nozzles would cut in to create a row of vertical spouts along each side of the plaza.

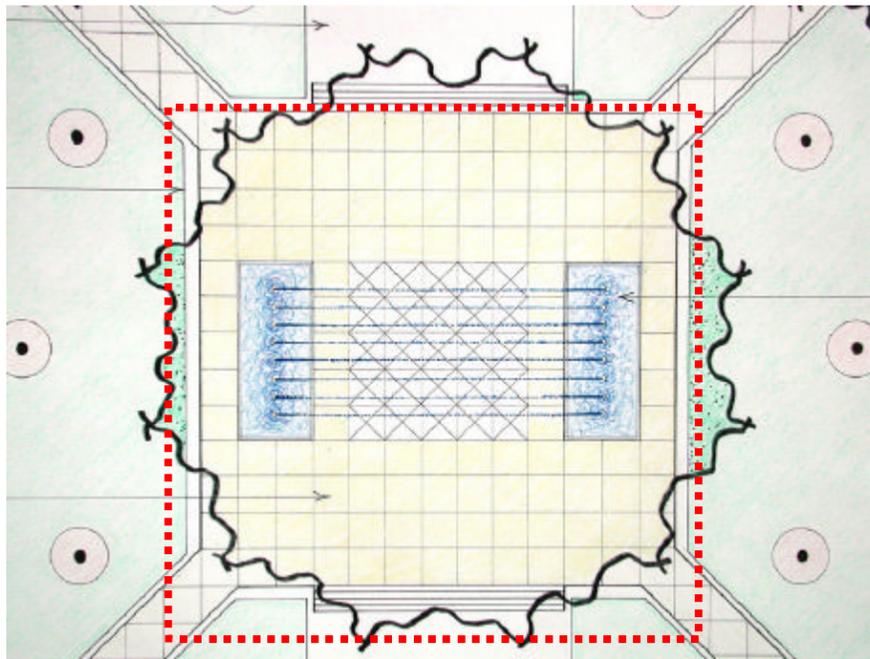
In order to permit very large trees – perhaps as big as the existing elms – eventually to become the dominant element of the park, a spacing of at least 50 feet apart is recommended. This scheme is the only one that actually achieves this spacing, and the plan shows the trees planted in a great circle surrounding the central plaza. In this way they would have sufficient room for their roots and their branches would not crowd each other.

Measurements (approximate):

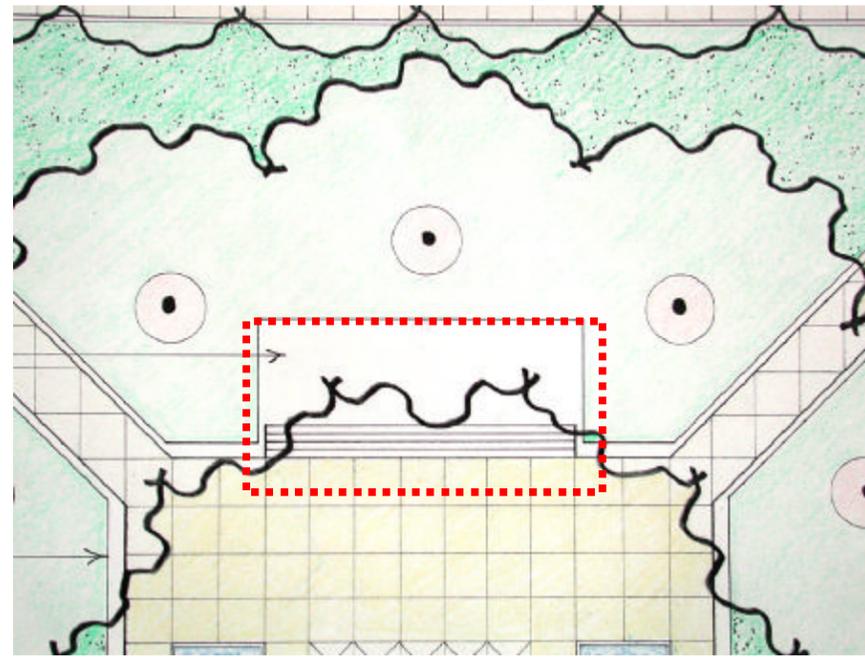
- Plaza (hardscape in center): 10,000 s.f.
- Fountains area: 1,360 s.f.
- Performance stages: two at 1,4200 s.f. each (60' x 20', plus steps)

(For scale and comparison, the current central plaza hardscape area is approximately 1,500 s.f., or about 2% of the block. Overlay base map transparency for comparison.)

Elements - New Design Alternative 3



Square Central Plaza



Two Performance Platforms (60' x 20')



Sloping Lawn Panels



An Archway made of Water



Archways of water using laminar flow jets.

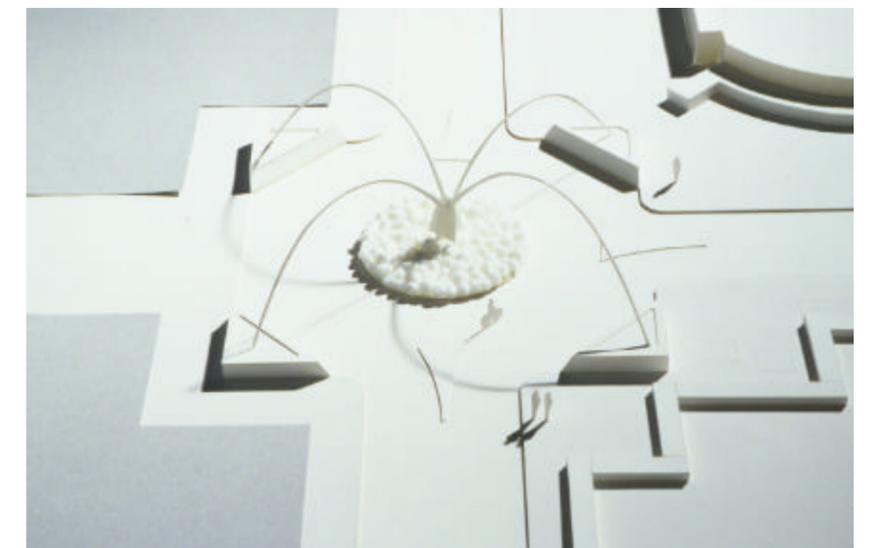


Laminar flow archway in a children's garden in Camden, NJ.

Laminar flow jets within fountain in Lincolnshire, IL town plaza.



Laminar flow jets create archway of water within a fountain.



Laminar Flow Jets for Fountain (example from another Design Project)

New Design Alternative 4: A Composite



Alternative 4: A 'Composite'

After the follow-up public meeting and presentation of the three initial proposed alternatives, this 4th 'Composite' alternative was developed. The design team used the more middle-ground of the participant comment and what seemed to be the most well-received features of the existing proposals to develop this 4th composite alternative.

Retained Elements of Existing Plaza Design (similar to 1992 Master Plan):

- Diagonal pathways and circular path in the center
- Diagonal tree planting
- Retain large and/or significant trees in the four orthogonal quadrants (as long as desired): the large tree in the middle of Broadway side, the new Christmas tree on the Main Street side, and the large trees along the 4th and 5th Street sides (retain in new side planting areas, similar to Alternative 2)

New elements:

- Corner bulbouts (similar to existing 1992 Master Plan)
- Diagonal parking on Main and Broadway sides
- Street tree configuration that eliminates the planting strips adjacent to parking and provides ample room for trees to thrive and be protected (parking spaces eliminated by street-tree-planting areas are made up with additional spaces enabled by using diagonal parking on Main and Broadway)
- Expanded central plaza (hardscape) area for current, more intense uses
- Restoration of water feature to the center of the plaza
- Two large, 18"-high rectangular performance platforms/stages located in the 4th and 5th Street quadrants, with rear colonnade backdrop to provide a permanent attachment structure for non-permanent coverings that could be erected as desired, and steps that provide informal seating
- New access walkways opened up on all 4 block sides (similar to Alt. 2), forming raised (approx. 12-18"), hedge-defined planting areas on each side
- Drain wells in corners and lawn grading to enable adequate drainage
- Slightly-raised lawn panels (approx. 6")

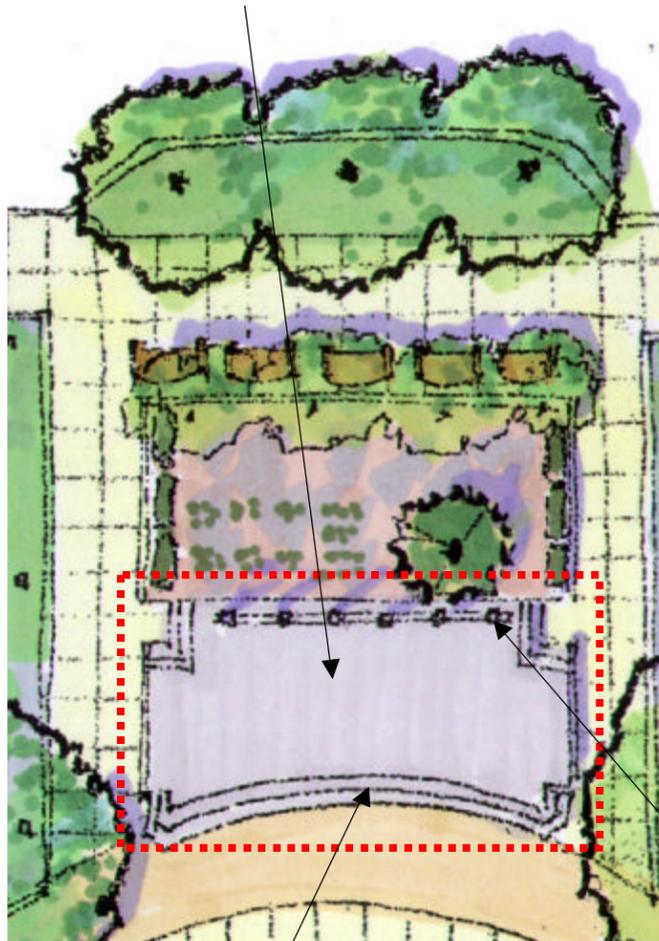
Measurements (approximate):

- Plaza (hardscape in center): 17,500 s.f. (about 20% of the block)
- Center fountain area: 500 s.f.
- Performance stages: two at 1,100 s.f. each (45' x 25' each, plus steps)

(For scale and comparison, the current central plaza hardscape area is approximately 1,500 s.f., or about 2% of the block. Overlay base map transparency for comparison.)

Elements - New Design Alternative 4

Performance platforms on 4th and 5th Street sides (45' x 25')



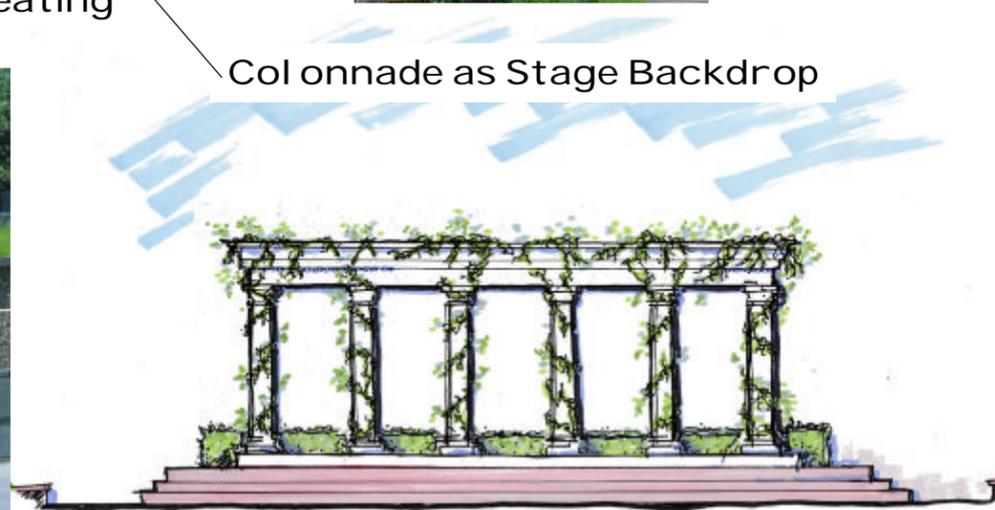
Platform Steps Offer Informal Seating



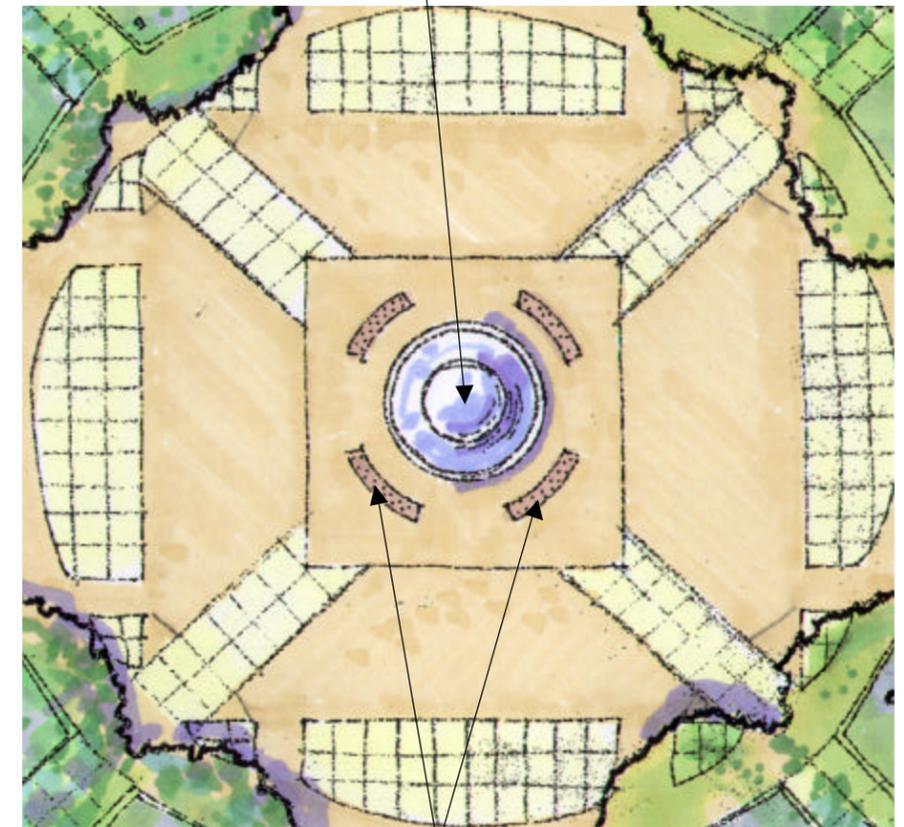
Raised platforms on Main and Broadway sides (and behind stages on 4th and 5th street Sides)



Colonnade as Stage Backdrop



Traditional Fountain at Center



Interactive fountain Features around It

