

MRT Yuanshan Station - The Green Colonnade

IFLA AAPME Awards 2024

Category | Social and Community Health



- **PROJECT TITLE |**

MRT Yuanshan Station – The Green Colonnade

- **LOCATION |**

MRT Yuanshan Station, Exit 1 – Minzu W. Road,
Datong District, Taipei City, Taiwan

- **AREA |** 6,700 m²

- **BUILT |** 2022



PROJECT STATEMENT

The MRT Tamsui-Xinyi Line, one of the metro routes operated by Taipei Metro, is noted for seamlessly linking the richly varied landscapes in different parts of Taipei City. The whole line meanders through the city either underground, on the ground level, or are elevated. It serves as a vital travel avenue for commuting to work, school, and tourist destinations.

Yuanshan Metro Station sits in the midpoint on the Tamsui-Xinyi line as a gateway from the nature-rich suburbs into Taipei's downtown area, where the elevated route service transitions to the underground route. This unique converging point lends the areas surrounding Yuanshan Metro Station a rich cultural flair: temples, historic landmarks and heritage sites abound.

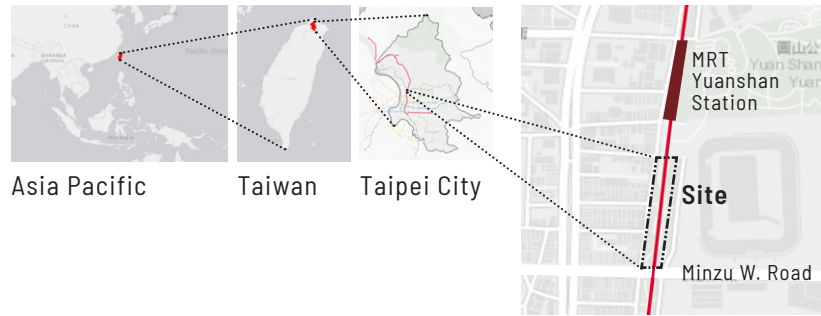
Taipei Metro has elevated the travel experience of the urbanites as it extends and expands their day-tripping distance. For users, a Metro Station aptly symbolizes the portal to their destination: it's a proverbial start of a guided storytelling journey.

On the other hand, the elevated Metro Line architecture at Yuanshan offers rather limited greening options. The gigantic support pillars of the Metro rail also form a series of awkward spatial blockages. Getting the most space for commuters, tourists and vegetation, therefore, posed as the greatest landscaping challenge.

With that in mind, the history, culture, community assets, ecosystems and location strengths are incorporated into an effective placemaking process for Yuanshan: large installation art pieces, communal street block furniture, landscape lighting elements and vegetation placements are curated to draw users into a time capsule, to connect with the Yuanshan community, and to harness ideas for Yuanshan's present and future.

PROJECT NARRATIVE AND CONTENTS

LOCATION AND BACKGROUND



Urban Taipei Travel Axle and Green Colonnade

The MRT Tamsui-Xinyi Line and the Green Colonnade, supported by a robust public transportation infrastructure, offer a leisurely journeying experience combining bus travels, biking and walking, where you can put life on hold.

OBJECTIVE

1. Building and strengthening awareness, offering a relaxing, friendly leisure space while honoring the cultural and traditional value of the community.
2. The project also serves as an urban window on Yuanshan Metro and a community tour guide for visitors and residents.
3. Reimagining and rediscovering the community spirit of Yuanshan and in the process, directing people to Yuanshan's past so they're inspired to partake in its presence and future.



FIELD RESEARCH AND FINDINGS

The flourishing golden rain trees grown alongside the Green Colonnade of MRT Yuanshan Station have given the community character. Yet the shrubs under the elevated Metro structure was in rather poor health. The exposed dirt between shrubs also gave off a desolate impression. The colonnade space was limited to pedestrian and bike traffic, meaning that its community potential was diluted.



Bushes and shrubs under the elevated Metro structure are in poor health



Pedestrians and cyclists cut into each other often due to poor route design

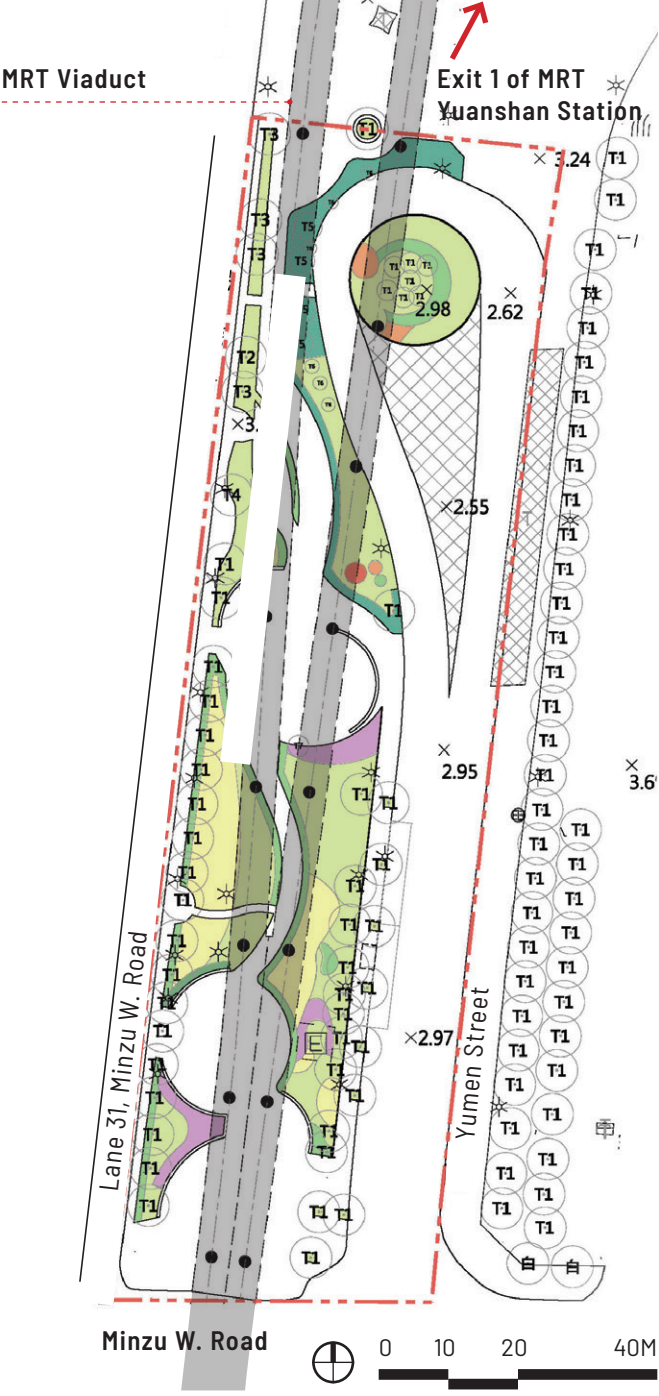


Little-used open space under the elevated Metro structure



Steps between site and neighborhood alleyways impede the "barrier-free" travel experience

Poor User Design of The Site

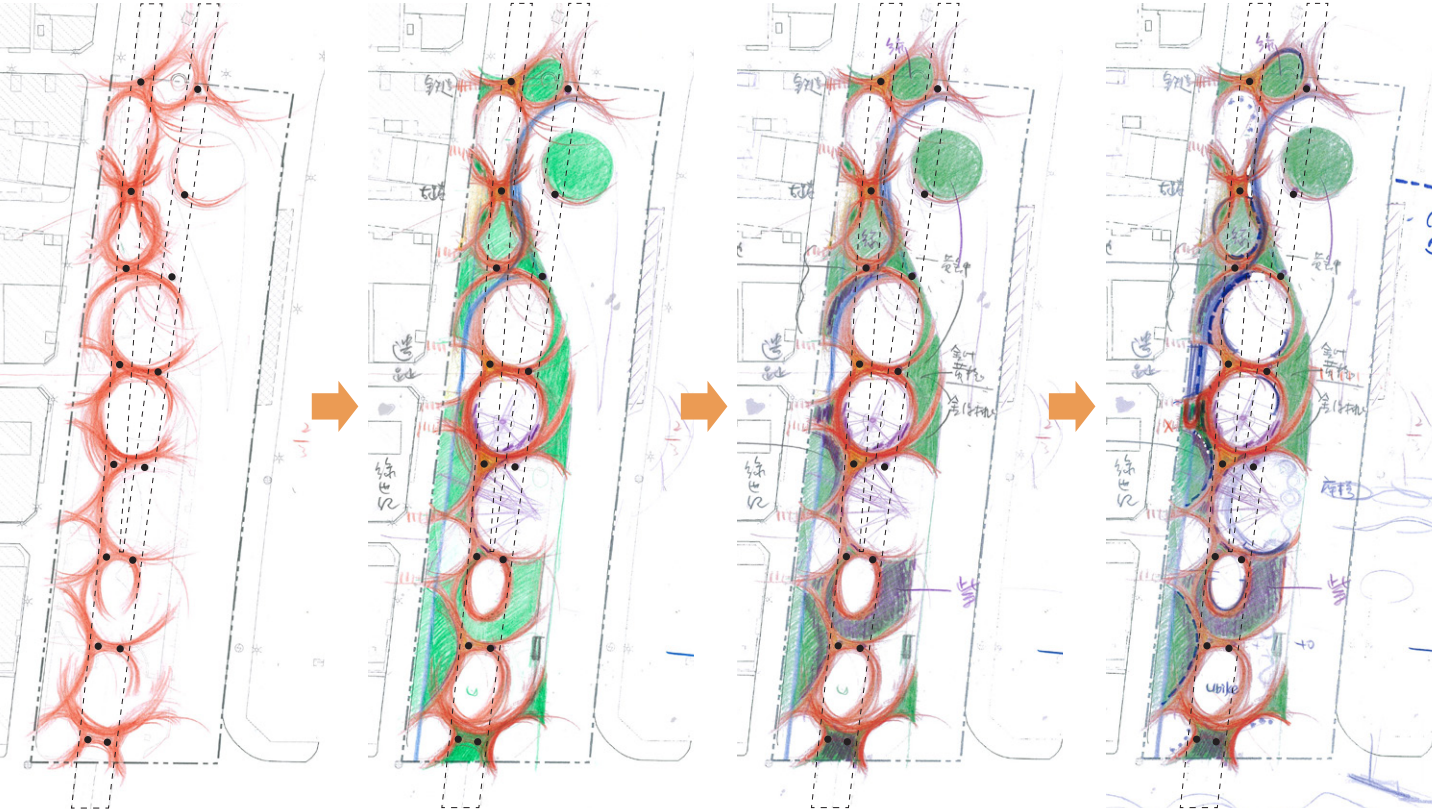


DESIGN EVOLUTION

Shaping Spaces, Enriching Lives

Large circles are drawn in the areas between support pillars to maximize space potential. Linear elements are positioned between these circles to build routes.

Deconstructing Usable Spaces



Support pillars are individual nodes, from which space potentials are maximized between the pillars; next, flow wavelengths are drawn to guide pedestrian traffic

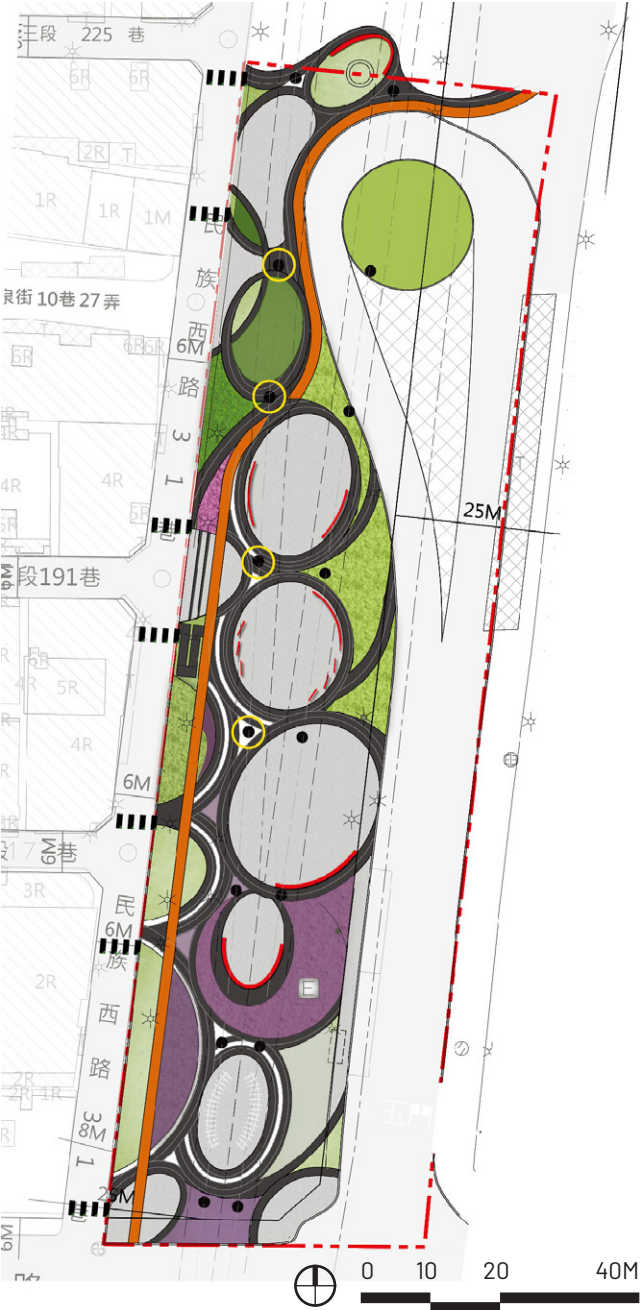
Plants are grown in the little-used spaces in between

Groundcovers of various colors are filled in for added vibrancy

Bicycle lanes are clearly demarcated

(待抽換)

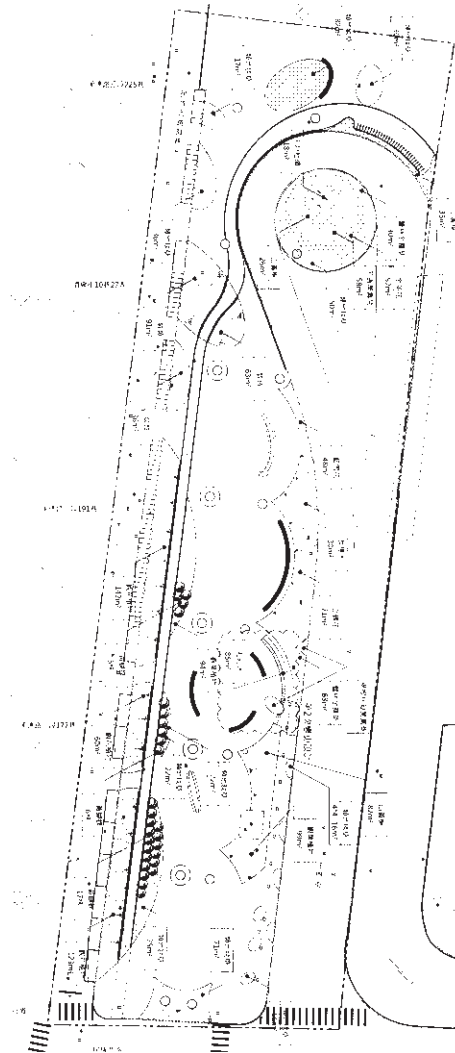
Optimal Space Use



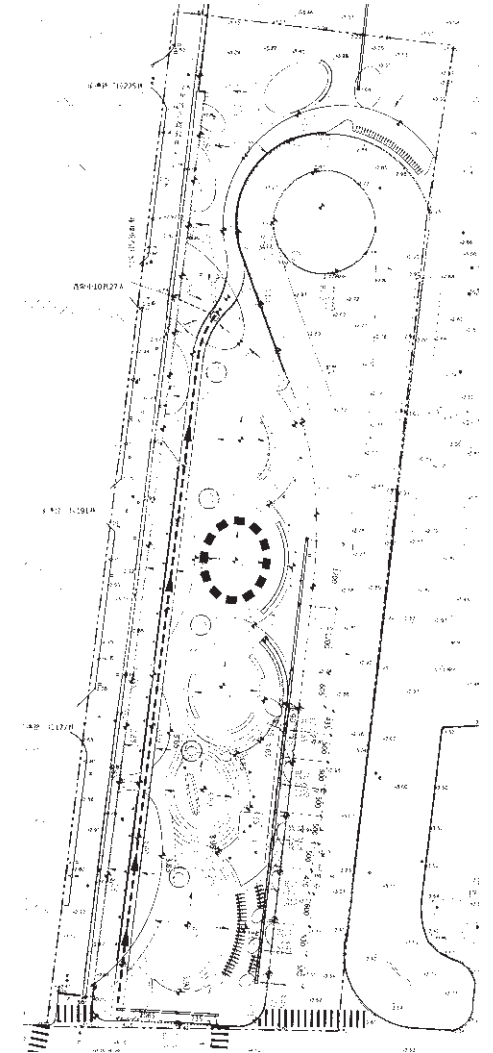
RESILIENCE DESIGNS FOR THE COMMUNITY

Environmental Substrate Makeover

Sunlight exposure, plant hydration considerations and drainage are the factored in when the design team worked to greenscape the spaces under the Metro structure. The shaded area was first ruled out. Next, gravel was deployed underneath the breathable asphalt paver for effective water retention to nourish the roots of the vegetation. Lastly, a greening improvement project was performed to complement the elevation difference elements and waterflows on the ground level. The colonnaded space was literally “turning over a new leaf !”



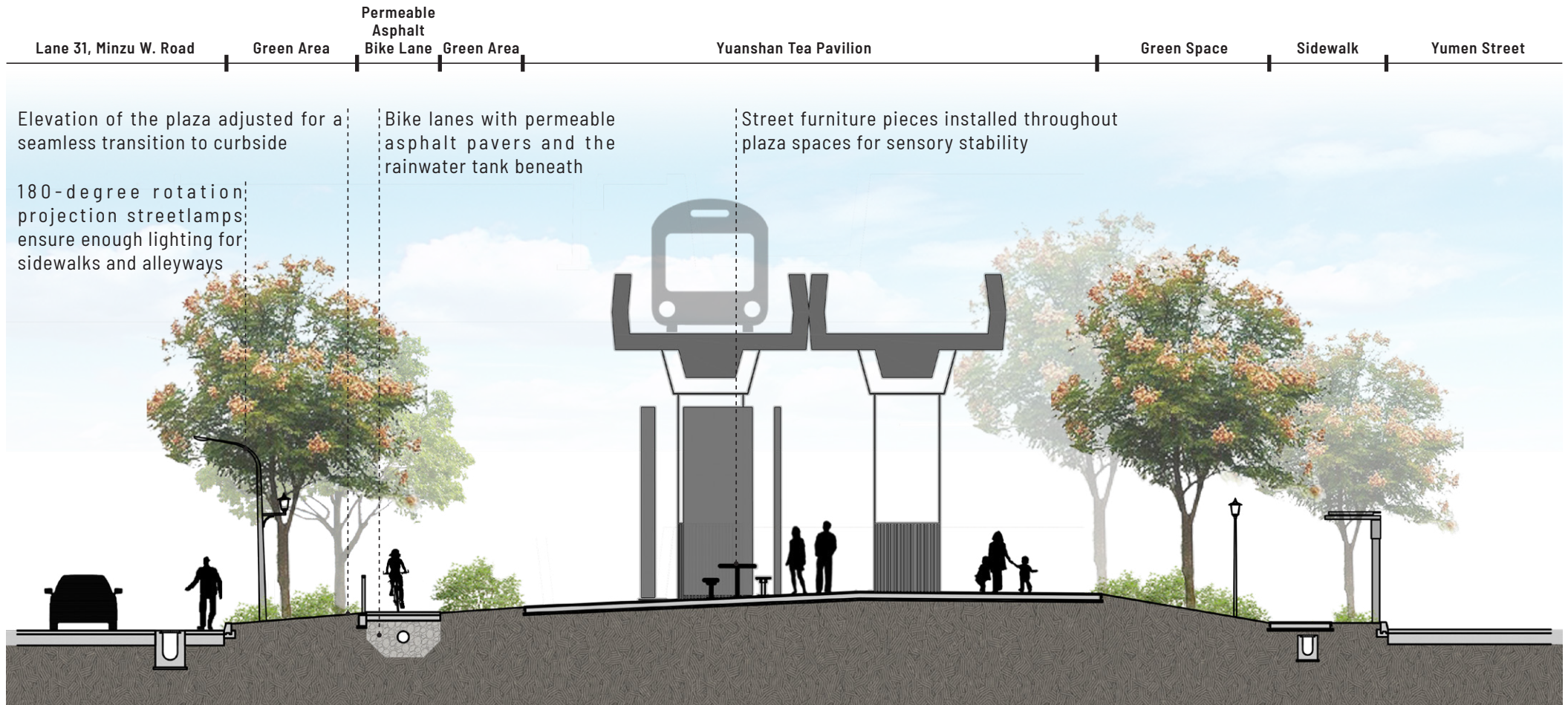
(待简化彩现)



Sunlight exposure analyzed

Butterfly-attracting plants /Hydration considerations

Drainage planning



Nurturing the Earth's Web of Life

The high temperature, humidity, and proximity to the river and mountains of Yuanshan make for remarkable biodiversity. Yangmingshan National Park, northeast of the site, is noted as the greatest nursery for Taiwan's butterfly species. More than 17 flowering nectariferous plants and herbivorous plants are selected and grown here, glamming up the Yuanshan community - a stretch between suburbs and the city - with the most luxurious colors.



Spider Tree



Siebold Ardisia



Camphor Tree



Formosan Sweet Gum



Common Melastoma



Vining Galphimia



Chinese Tallow Tree



Formosan Elderberry



Common Free Fern



Chinese Hydrangea



Oldham's Azalea



Taiwan Gordonia



Commuters to work and school benefit from the Green Colonnade landscape upgrades



Plants staying hydrated by rainwater



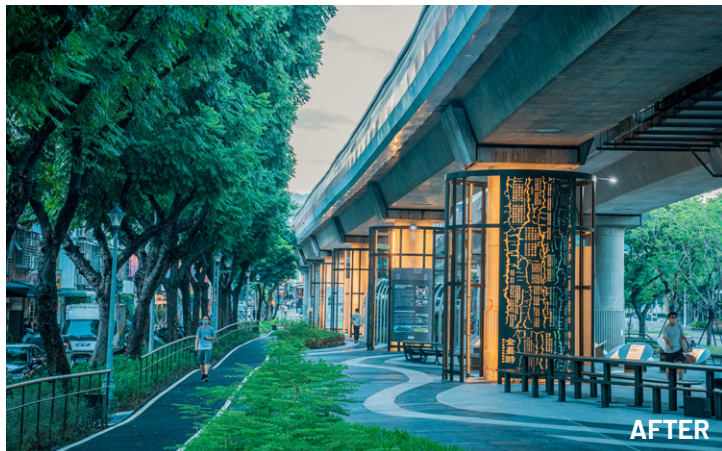
Residents enjoying the space under the Metro viaduct



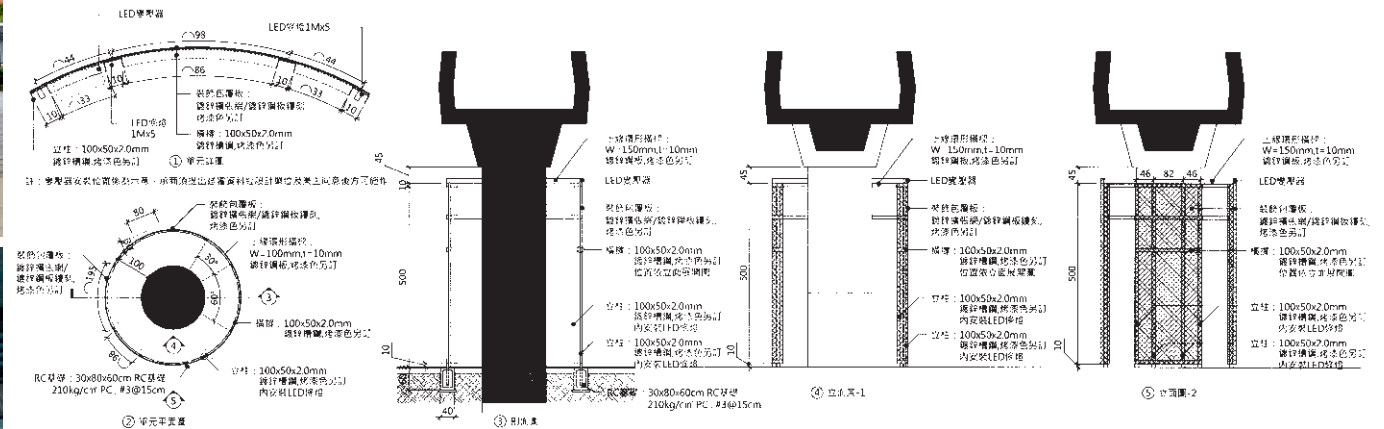
Neatly-rowed and boxed plants separate cyclists and pedestrians

Totem Panels and Local Storytelling

Following an investigative journey through Yuanshan and consultation with local gentry and experts, the design team found inspiration from the site's collective vision. The support pillars of the Metro viaduct are encircled in a luminous, metallic panel, on which are vignettes of the community's history.



(待简化彩现)



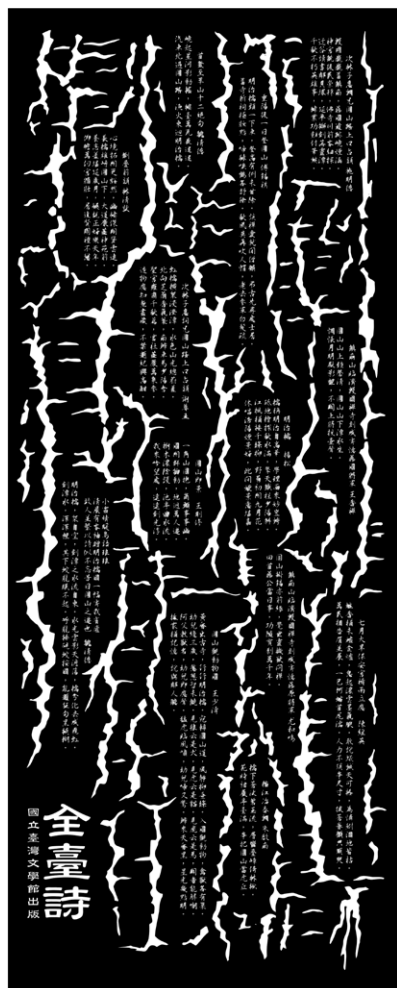
THEME 1 THE ROADMAP

Historic landmarks and heritage sites are featured to create a culturally-inspired totem.



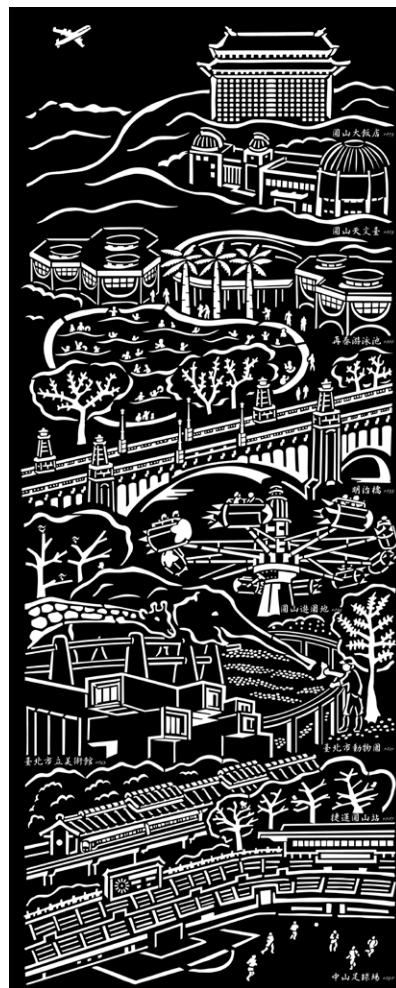
THEME 2 POETRY YUANSHAN

Yuanshan's historic tidbits, lovingly rendered in poetic works, are collected from a museum of Taiwan Literature and curated.



THEME 3 THE YUANSHAN IMPRESSION

Nostalgic photos of Yuanshan are collaged to reenact the community's glorious past.



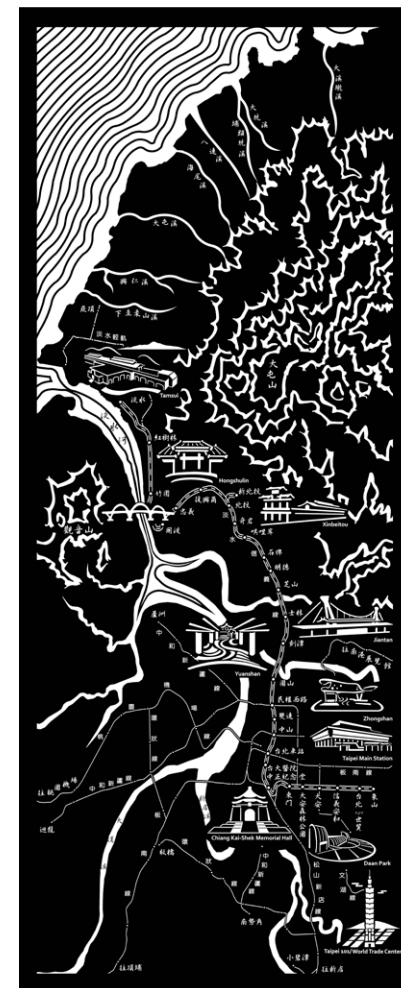
THEME 4 YUSHAN FLORA

Shrubs and vegetation of the Yuanshan neighborhood are spotlighted to acknowledge the rich and varied flora in Taipei suburbs



THEME 5 TAIPEI METRO AND TAIWAN RAILWAY

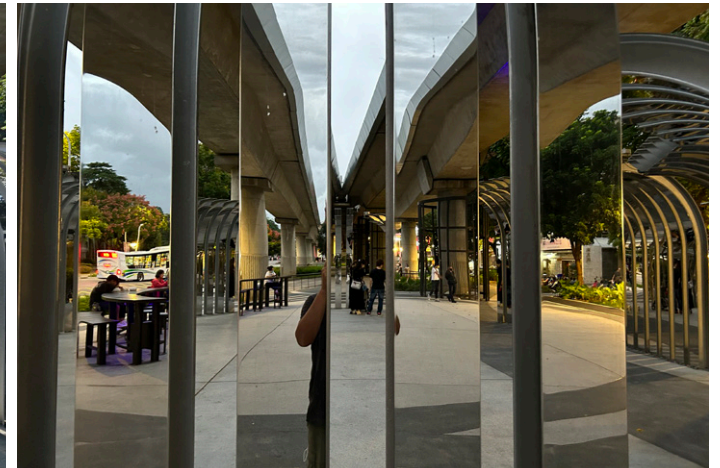
MRT Yuanshan Station's strategic location is explained in relation to Taipei Metro, highlighting the pivotal role it plays.



Where Form Meets Function with Flair

1. Fantasy Plaza

A circular plaza is formed with large, glass-surfaced stainless steel, to repeatedly mirror the space and pedestrians. The space is perfect for dance and fencing practices, and every type of self-improvement activity. The mirror elements offer a quaint, pantomime experience and even more imaginations.



2. Open Theater

The theater element of this space is heightened with the presence of arched benches. The space is an excellent platform for art and performance activities and by extension, it suggests that “All the World’s a Stage” and we’re all players and members of the audience, watching and being watched.



3. Light and Landscaping

Carbon-reducing designs are incorporated into the lighting equipment installed here. The pre-existing lamps were relocated to complement other deployment purposes. The newly-added LED lamps by the decorative panels radiate a warm, reader-friendly, soft-white light. The dreamy blue light is used for the street furniture, an arrangement inspired by the “Avatar” cinematic experience to help people unwind and settle into the night.



Seamless Experiences, Effortlessly Enjoyed

The design team visited residents in the community, hosted workshops and presentations to get a feel for locals' aspirations for the renovated space and street furniture. The Green Colonnade under the Metro viaduct could evolve into a special space where "getting around" and "taking a load off" are promised.



DIALOGS ON MANY LEVELS



Dialog between the trees and pillars



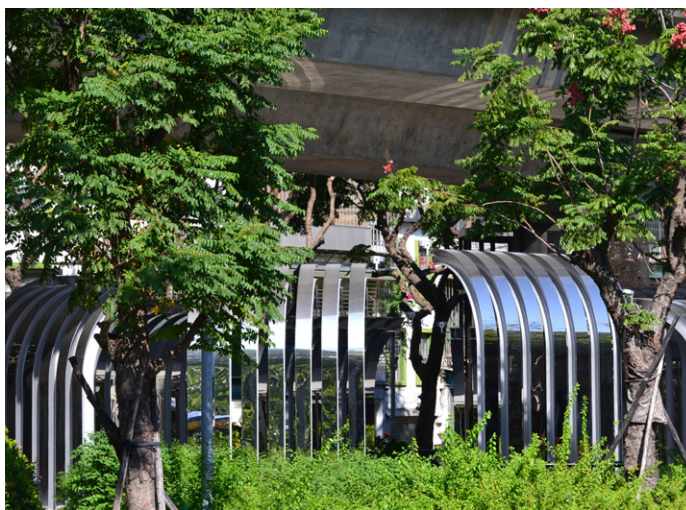
Comforts offered by street furniture to different user groups



Quiet tango between the pillars and MRT Yuanshan Station



The colonnade and the neighborhood



Trees and fantasies



Voice of our space



Meeting with borough chiefs and design presentation



Design workshop



Design finalization and onsite presentation



Presentation on design details and what has been achieved

COLLABORATIONS AND ACHIEVEMENT OF SOCIAL COHESION

The borough chiefs continued to inquire about the environmental quality of the green colonnade and possible improvements and expansion of the project.

The MRT Yuanshan Green Colonnade has successfully improved spatial quality, won hearts, and reenacted the collected vision of Yuanshan. The locals and chiefs have fallen in love with the reimagined site and worked in concert to maintain its cleanliness. The shrubs and plants there receive the best care possible. The project is achieved in the spirit of "Building Green, Living Green: Environmental Design at its Finest."



An exhibition about the Metro Colonnade and its future

