

Project Title	An Incubator of Culture, Sports and Urban Wellness: Huangqi Mountain South Master Plan	Dongguan, Guangdong Province, China
Project Statement	<p>Dongguan, a city once famous for its fragrance culture and perfume production, and then associated with labor-intensive manufacturing industries, is undergoing a transformation toward a vibrant urban hub focused on life and service. To better serve its predominantly working-age population, the city urgently needs more recreational and cultural amenities.</p> <p>Huangqi Mountain South, located adjacent to the urban core, presents an opportunity to improve the physical health, as well as the mental well-being of Dongguan people by revitalizing existing recreational resources and introducing a cultural layer to the site.</p> <p>Inspired by Dongguan's fragrance culture, this project utilizes fragrance as a guiding force to weave together a network of programs throughout the site. Fragrance-themed itineraries and Scent Boxes are devised to connect people to their surroundings and facilitate physical and psychological healing experiences.</p> <p>The site is partitioned into six distinctive experiences along the Fragrance Corridor: Jiangjunmao, Sports Park Complex, Children’s Park, Water Sports Park, Eco Bridge, and Fragrance Therapy Valley. By connecting to public transportation and incorporating slow traffic systems, the project aims to extend its influence beyond the site's boundaries and transform Huangqi Mountain South into a recreational and cultural hub for the region.</p>	
Project Narrative	<p>Once an essential stop along the Maritime Silk Road, Dongguan was known as the Oriental Capital of Fragrance since the Qing Dynasty (1636 AD -1912 AD), owing to its fragrance products and trade. However, in recent decades, the city has been infamously associated with labor-intensive manufacturing industries, and its fragrance culture has faded.</p> <p>Dongguan also has a strong tradition in sports and gained national recognition in weightlifting and professional basketball competition. However, the lack of recreational destinations and facilities in the city poses a significant challenge for its predominantly working-age population, calling for additional infrastructure and amenities.</p> <p>Today, Dongguan is transitioning into a livable and service-oriented city. The 175-hectare Huangqi Mountain South, which is adjacent to the city’s new administrative and economic core, presents an opportunity to revamp the city's recreational system and provide new cultural destinations. The plan addresses both the physical health and mental well-being of contemporary urban dwellers by providing a variety of sports and cultural programs.</p>	

Project Narrative

A Challenging Site

Adjacent to the South Ecological and Technological Innovation Zone, a vital development area in Dongguan, the linear site resides between Huangqi Mountain and Bayi Road, the gateway of the city's Landscape and Leisure Axis.

Despite the city's ambitious plan to build central Dongguan into a regional service center, the quantity and quality of existing outdoor recreational facilities cannot meet the growing demands of the population. The popularity of existing sports parks on site is waning due to homogeneous programs, a dispersed layout, outdated facilities, and generic settings. Although the site is surrounded by significant subtropical landscapes and is once part of the ecological corridors for species such as the Annam Tree Frog (*Hyla Simplex*) and the Melodious Laughing Thrush (*Garrulax canorus*), industrialization and urbanization in the past decades have eroded its ecological value. Due to the low elevation and poor drainage, some parts of the site are often flooded during big storms.

The site is presently a mosaic of natural and urban patches including sports facilities, fishponds, sparse woodlands, farmlands, and an urban village. The low biological diversity and fragmented programs have rendered it an underutilized place from both the environmental and recreational perspectives.

Encountering Fragrance

This project presents an opportunity to integrate recreational experiences with culture in the dynamic urban landscape of Dongguan. The plan seeks to capitalize on this opportunity and convert the site into an urban hub with ecological, recreational, and cultural significance. Taking inspiration from Dongguan's previously renowned but presently overlooked fragrance culture, this initiative employs fragrance as a guiding force to weave together a network of recreational, cultural, and ecological programs throughout the site. The design framework utilizes two tiers of design elements: Fragrance Journey and Scent Boxes to celebrate the culture of fragrance and to introduce a vibrant recreation setting. The Fragrance Journey works as the primary circulation path meandering through the corridor along which different aromatic immersions are organized. Along the corridor, a family of structures called Scent Boxes further emphasizes the culture via special programs and spatial experiences.

1. Fragrance Journeys

A themed circulation system connects the fragmented facilities and reorganizes existing and proposed programs into a holistic network. It consists of three paths: Fragrance Corridor, Fragrance Loop, and Discovery Trail.

Project Narrative

The primary path, Fragrance Corridor, runs through the linear site and accommodates walking, jogging and biking activities. Adapted from existing paths, this 6-kilometer route connects all zones and destinations from Jiangjunmao to the Fragrance Therapy Valley. The corridor is framed by featured plantings with special fragrances.

Two Fragrance Loops, derived from the Fragrance Corridor, offer special trips highlighting different fragrances. The first loop departs from the Water Sports Park and leads to the Huangqi Forest Park, where visitors reach the highest point of the Huangqi Mountain. The second Fragrance Loop, located at the Fragrance Therapy Valley, introduces a secluded healing experience where scented woody plants and herbal flowers along the way evoke a variety of emotions and senses.

The Discovery Trail is a network of trails of all difficulty levels, connecting programmed spaces in the corridor to the forest park, elevating accessibility to the woodlands, and increasing their recreational values.

2. Scent Boxes

Scent Boxes are multifunctional cubic structures that allow people to feel, capture, and create scents. They serve as art installations, recreational program spaces, and cultural venues.

While adhering to a guideline to maintain their basic structure and scale, the Scent Boxes vary in forms, materiality, and programs to respond to specific contexts and needs, resulting in a unique and characterful collection throughout the site.

In addition to providing basic amenity services for daily users, Scent Boxes offer distinctive recreational and cultural experiences. For example, boxes in the Fragrant Orchard host agricultural workshops where children and parents make jam and bake goods from freshly picked fruits, while another Scent Box in the woodland area has glassy facades and minimalist structures that blend into the surroundings, showcasing scented artwork that magnifies the natural forest breeze.

Scent Map and Zoning

Under the concept of Encountering Fragrance, a Scent Map is developed to characterize different zones and specific recreational programs, in order to create identities for each zone where a specific fragrant atmosphere is created. Challenged by the intricacy of existing conditions, the design is highly associated with recreational facilities and environmental resources already on site.

Project Narrative

Building on existing woodlands, a loop trail completed with platforms, outdoor furniture, and a pedestrian bridge introduces a highly accessible hiking system to **Jiajunmao** area. Expanding from underutilized sport venues, including the stadium and swimming pool, **Sports Park Complex** area links the proposed metro station with a cluster of both indoor and outdoor fitness venues. The **Children's Park and Nature Education** area, catering to families and minors, transforms existing natural elements of woodlands, orchards, and flower fields into outdoor campuses, mazes, and mini sport fields, which provide opportunities for exercise, exploration, and play for all ages.

The **Eco Bridge** extends the focus on ecology and recreation into a large urban fabric. The Museum of Fragrance, a hub to exhibit the fragrance culture of Dongguan, is concealed under the bridge, which continues the city's green fabric. The **Fragrance Therapy Valley** uses scents as a medium to influence visitors' emotions. For instance, the sweet aroma of *Gardenia jasminoides* evokes feelings of happiness and joy. This secluded environment offers visitors a sensory retreat from the bustle of daily life.

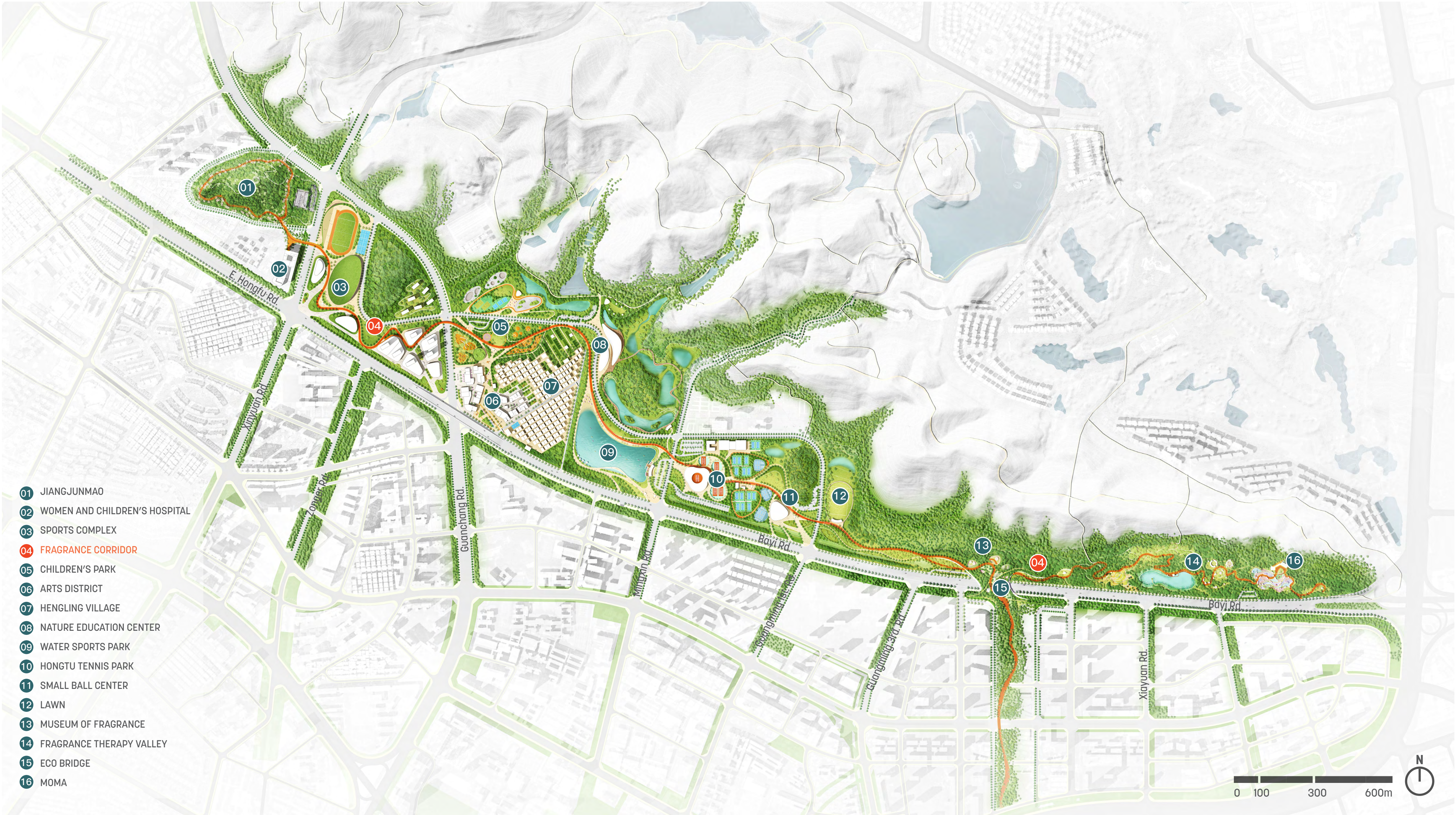
A Sustainable Approach

Huangqi Mountain South Master Plan is not just a current urban asset but also a future one. The design framework emphasizes the integration of sustainable environmental strategies to ensure the site's longevity.

As the site sits in the lower level of the watershed, it is equipped with a comprehensive stormwater management system to mitigate against potential floods. Green infrastructures such as wetlands, bioswales, detention ponds, and retention ponds throughout the site, blend themselves into the fragrance landscape.

A tailored ecological restoration strategy will guide the nurturing of the flora community, which will involve thinning and clearing existing homogeneous canopy species, planting climax communities, and reseeded featured fragrance communities. Secondary forests and wetlands are expected to mature in about 15 years and reach the status of a climate community in 30 years.

Departing from traditional Chinese models of fitness and catering to specific sports and users, Huangqi Mountain South Master Plan is an innovative approach to address the growing demands for physical and mental wellness among the Chinese population. This network of public amenities provides a wide range of recreational opportunities for groups of all ages and athletic abilities. It also responds to the availability of vernacular culture by rebranding the fragrance history of Dongguan. Combining recreation with local cultures, Huangqi Mountain South Master Plan sparks the imagination about future public recreational experiences.



SITE PLAN

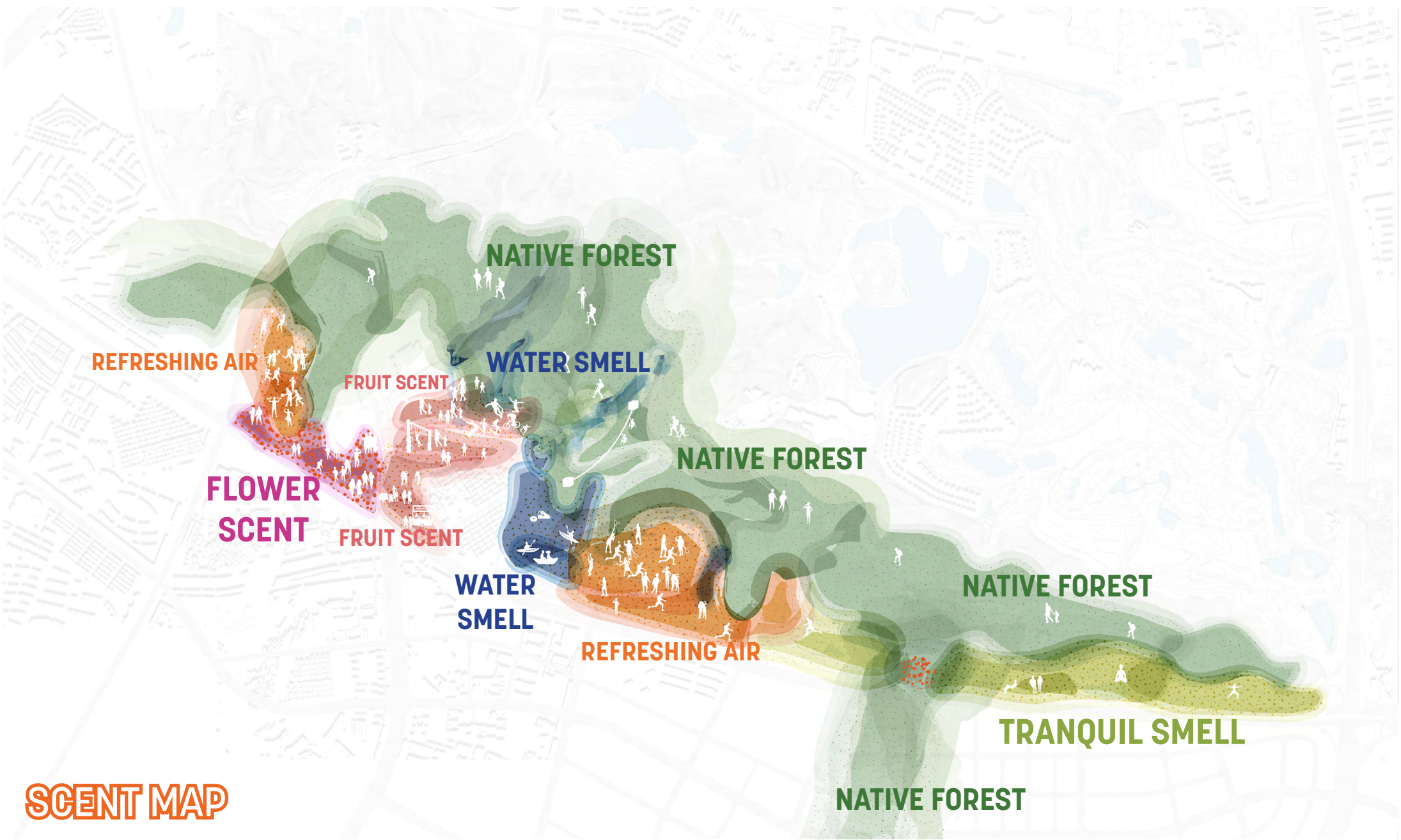
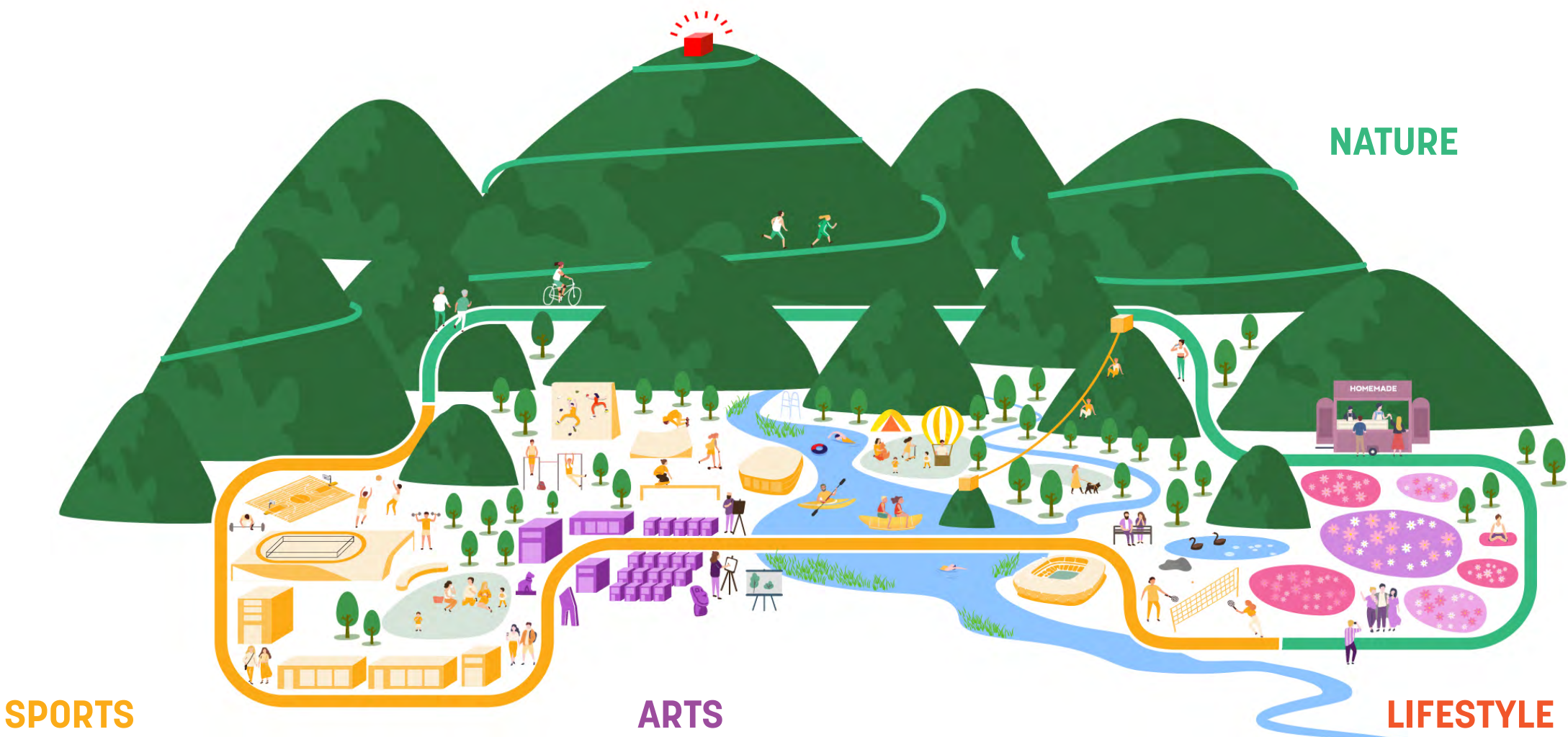
Huangqi Mountain South Recreation and Culture Belt Master Plan adapted an innovative approach to address the growing demands for the physical health and mental wellness of the local people.



EXISTING CONDITION

The site is presently a mosaic of natural and urban patches including sports facilities, fishponds, sparse woodlands, farmlands, and an urban village.

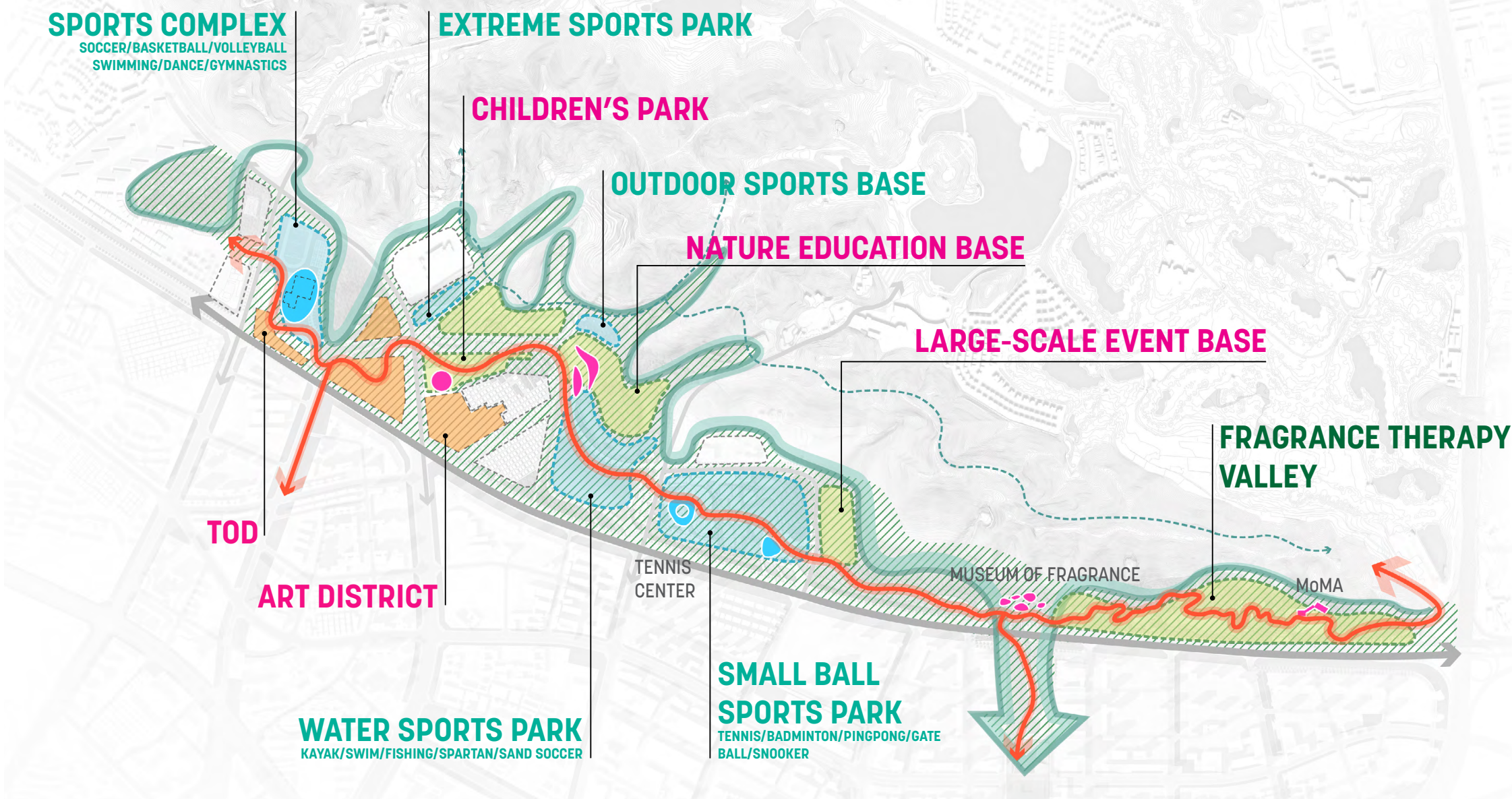
ENCOUNTERING FRAGRANCE



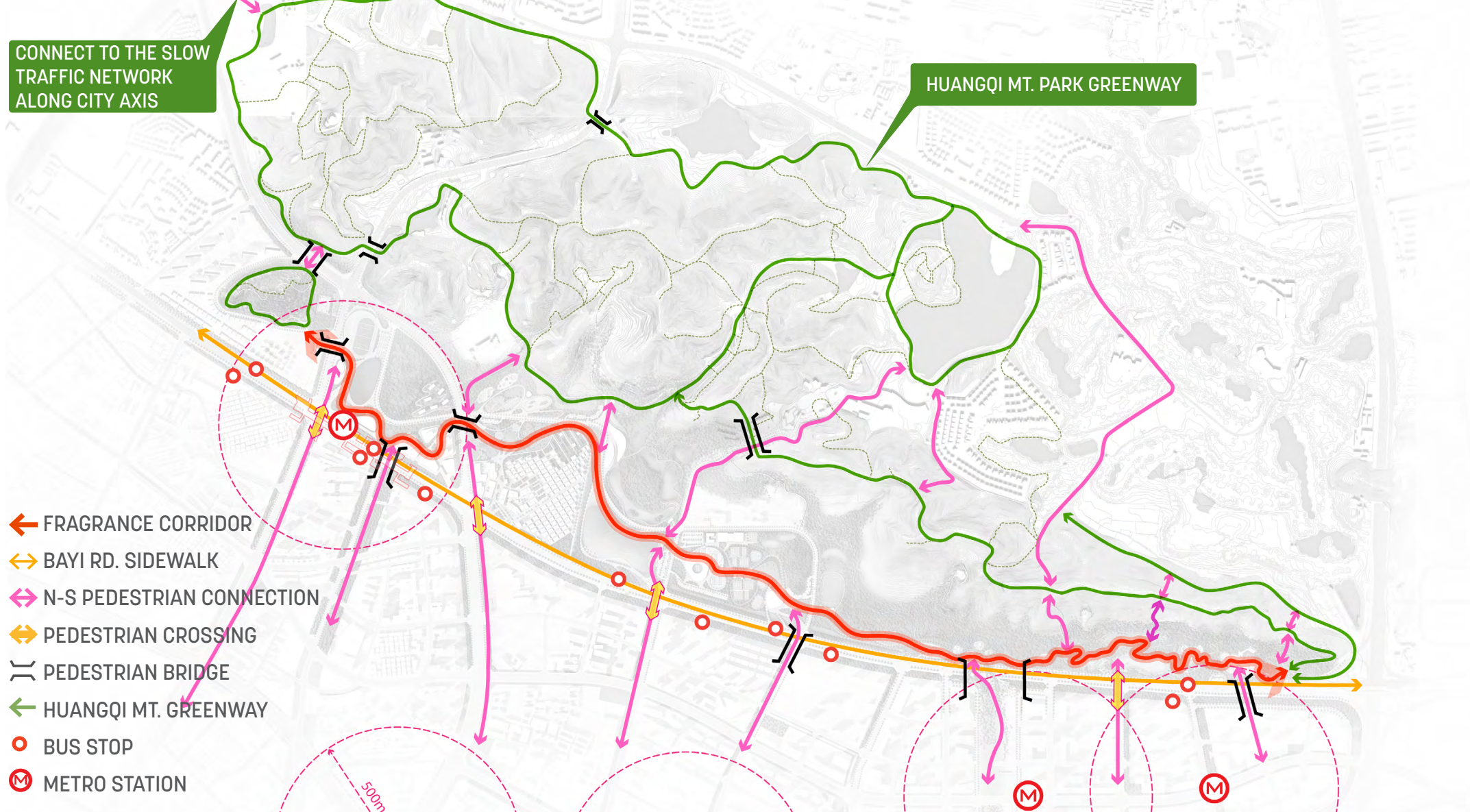
DESIGN CONCEPT & PROGRAMS

Taking inspiration from Dongguan's previously renowned but presently overlooked fragrance culture, this initiative employs fragrance as a guiding force to weave together a network of recreational, cultural, and ecological programs.

DESIGN FRAMEWORK



SLOW TRAFFIC SYSTEM

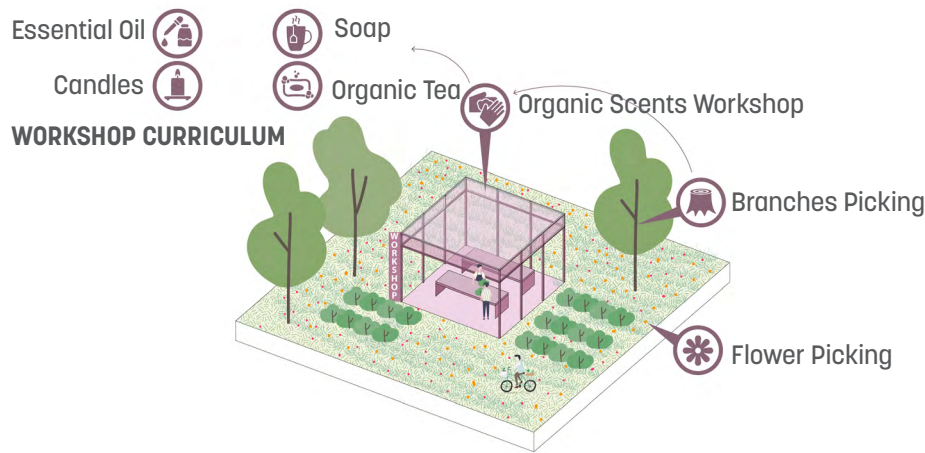


FRAGRANCE JOURNEYS

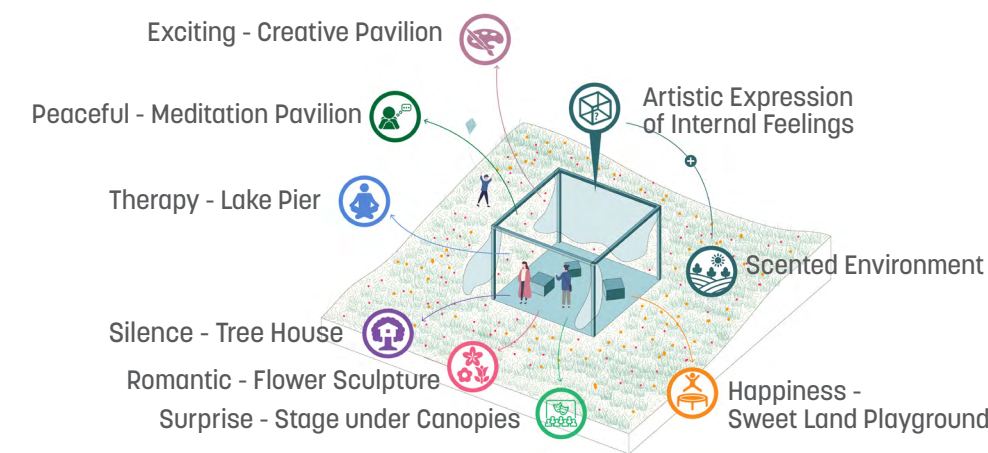


SCENT BOX

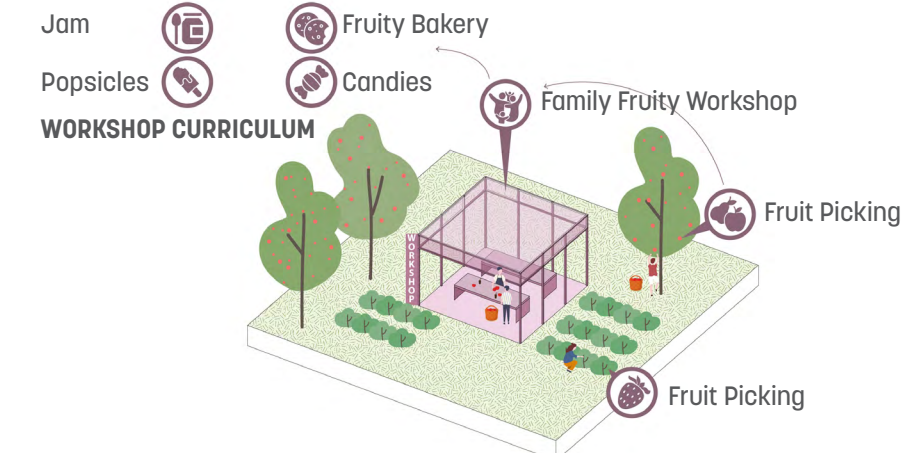
CREATE SCENTS - FRUIT



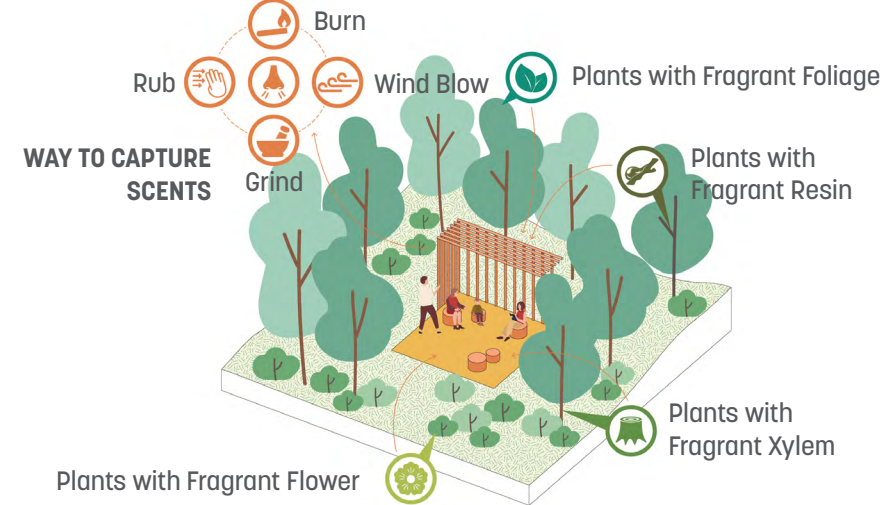
FEEL SCENTS



CREATE SCENTS - FLOWER AND WOOD



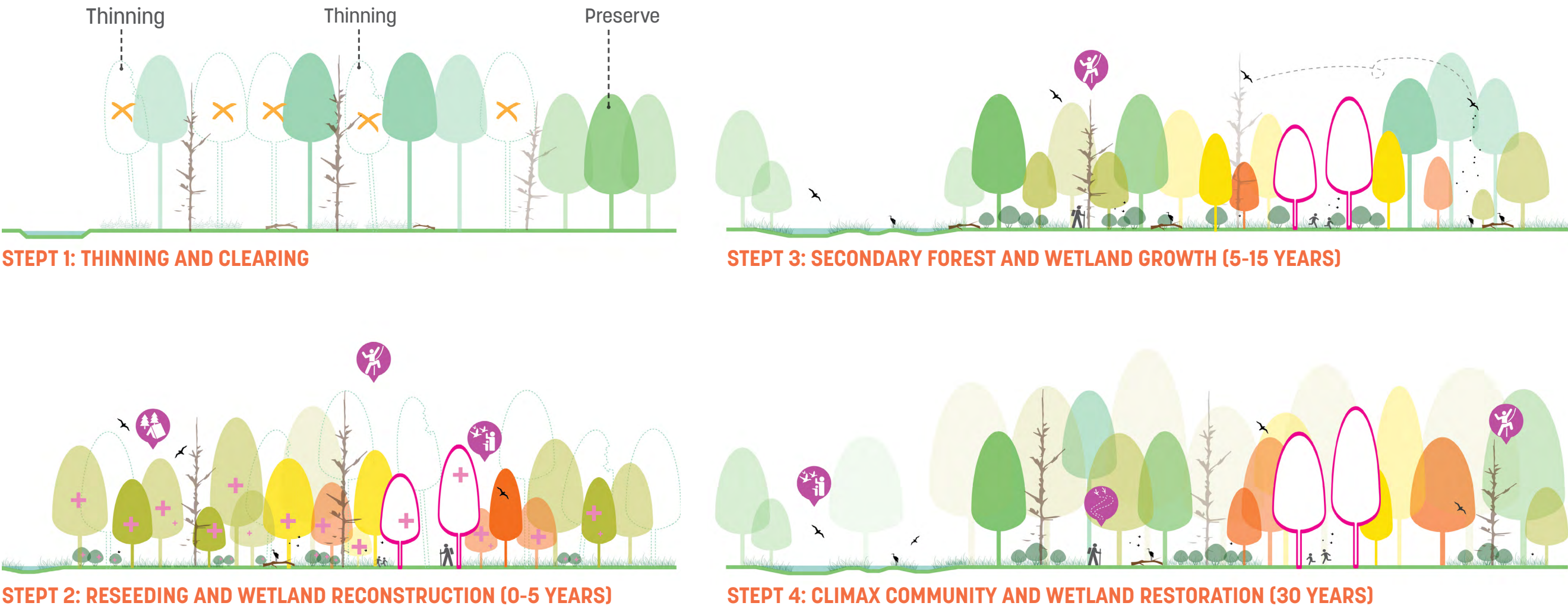
CAPTURE SCENTS



DESIGN FRAMEWORK

A themed circulation system connects the fragmented facilities and reorganizes existing and proposed programs into a holistic network. Fragrance-themed itineraries and Scent Boxes are devised to facilitate physical and psychological healing experiences.

ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION STRATEGY



STEP 1: THINNING AND CLEARING

- Thin some of the decaying *eucalyptus* trees and reduce the crown density from 0.6 to 0.3.
- Keep the **litter layer** to increase **fertility** of the soil.

STEP 2: RESEEDING AND WETLAND RECONSTRUCTION (0-5 YEARS)

- Plant **seedlings of species** from **zonal climax communities** in forest gaps.
- Plant the featured *Aquilaria sinensis* tree community and other **local fragrant plant species** to create a featured landscape belt.
- Introduce local **foliage trees and flowering trees** to enrich seasonal appearances of the forest.
- Connect existing fishponds to **create wetland** and introduce wetland plants.

STEP 3: SECONDARY FOREST AND WETLAND GROWTH (5-15 YEARS)

- Growing **secondary forest** provides diverse habitat for wildlife, that help spread seeds and accelerate the forest growth.
- **Wetland** matures with flood control and water purification functions.
- Become a forest offering **leisure, education and sports opportunities** for local residents.

STEP 4: CLIMAX COMMUNITY (30 YEARS)

- Become a **near-natural forest** with high ecological resilience as well as landscape and cultural values.
- Nurture the **climax community** - evergreen broad-leaved forest in Dongguan, which is previously absent due to long-term human disturbance.

Acacia Forest

Eucalyptus Forest

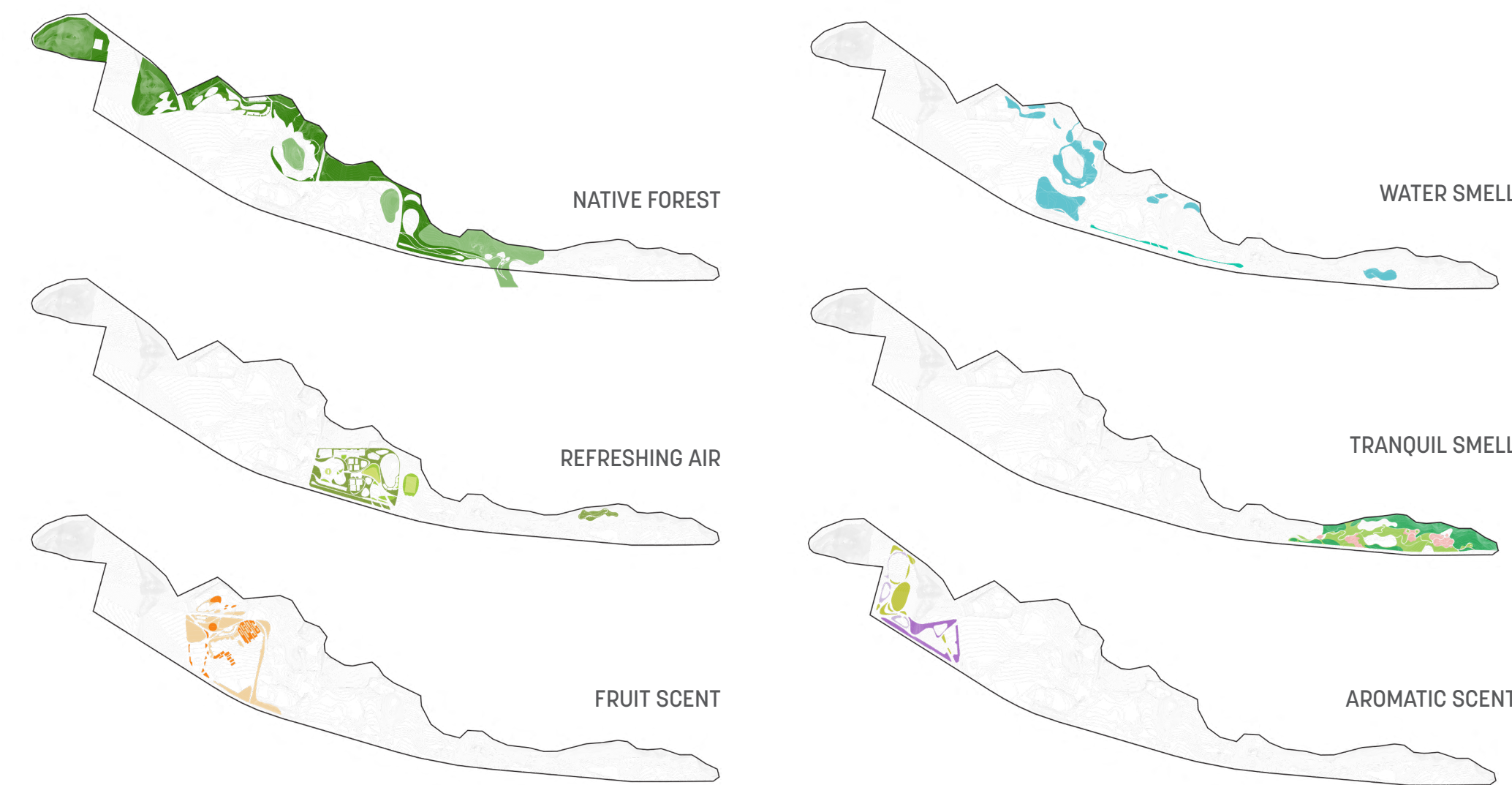
Climax Community

Foliage Trees and Flowering Trees

Featured *Aquilaria sinensis* Community Species

Fragrance Tree Community

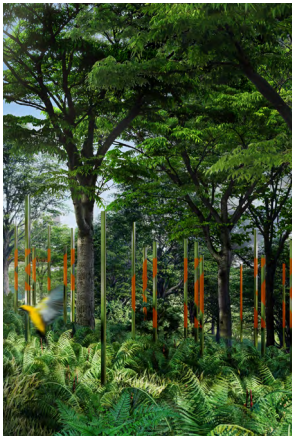
PLANTING STRATEGY



NATIVE FOREST



EXISTING WOODLAND
Eucalyptus robusta
Pinus elliottii
Acacia confusa



RESTORED WOODLAND
Aquilaria sinensis
Schima superba

REFRESHING AIR



SPARSE WOODLAND
Fortunella margarita
Citrus reticulata
Pistacia weinmanniifolia



MEADOW
Verbena officinalis
Mentha haplocalyx



LAWN
Cynodon dactylon

FRUIT SCENT



ORCHARD
Litchi chinensis
Mangifera indica
Chaenomeles sinensis
Dimocarpus longan



MEADOW
Cymbidium sinense
Hedychium coronarium

WATER SMELL

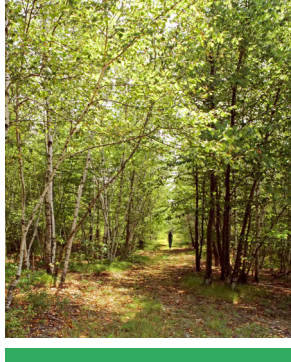


LAKE
Lythrum salicaria
Acorus calamus
Nymphaea tetragona



SEASONAL WETLAND
Verbena officinalis
Juncus effusus
Monochoria korsakowii

TRANQUIL SMELL



FOREST
Cinnamomum burmannii
Schima superba
Mentha haplocalyx
Piper sarmentosum



SPARSE WOODLAND
Michelia alba
Litsea cubeba
Pistacia weinmanniifolia
Coryza japonica



FLOWER MEADOW
Rosa rugosa
Verbena officinalis
Monochoria korsakowii
Miscanthus sinensis

AROMATIC SMELL



TREE GROVE
Aquilaria sinensis
Cinnamomum burmannii
Elaeocarpus decipiens



PERENNIAL
Osmanthus fragrans
Michelia champaca
Michelia madaia
Daphne odora



GARDEN
Syringa oblata
Cymbidium sinense

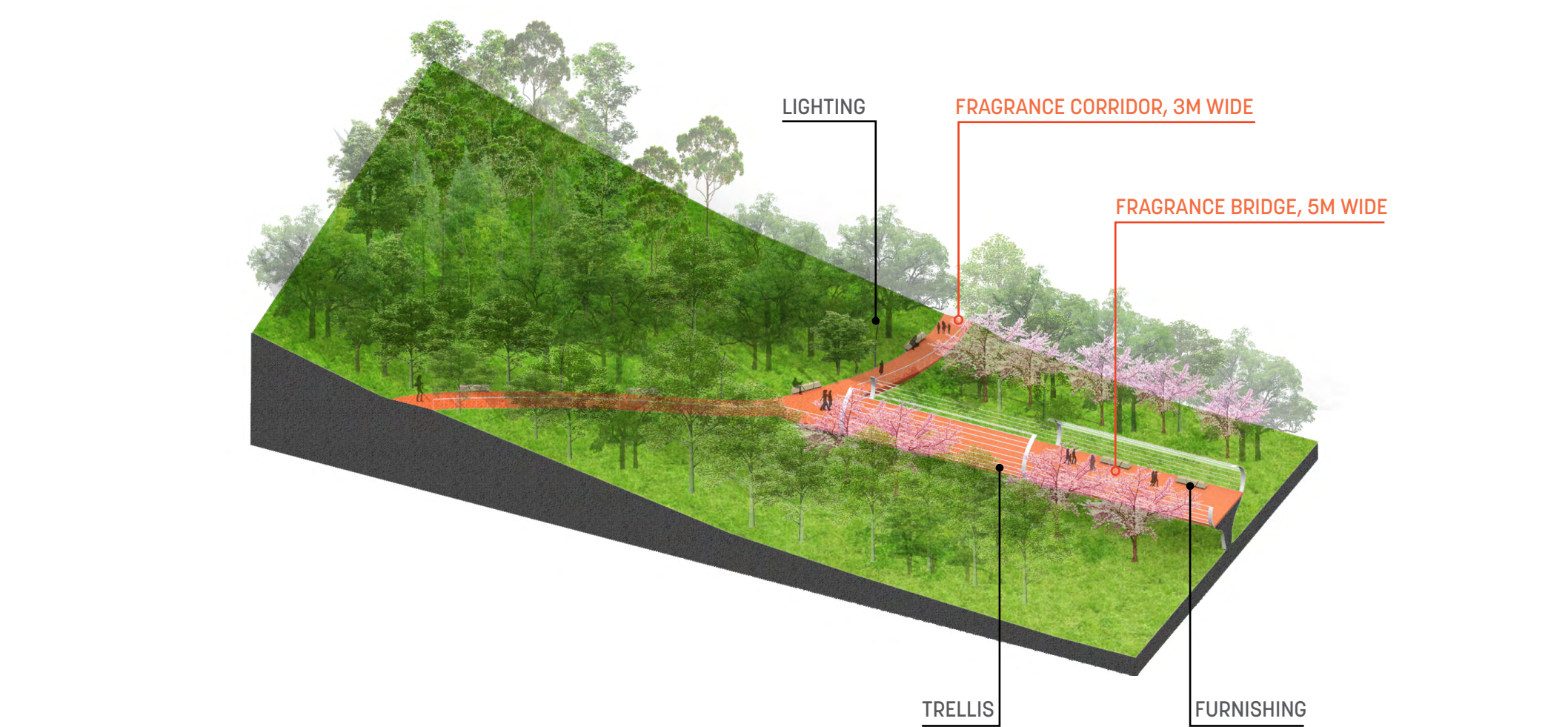
RESTORATION AND PLANTING STRATEGIES

Periodical measures are to be adopted to restore the climax community and the featured *Aquilaria sinensis*. Other plant species with special fragrances are proposed to create diverse fragrance experiences.



JIANGJUNMAO SEGMENT

Building on existing woodlands, a loop trail with platforms, outdoor furniture, and a pedestrian bridge introduces a highly accessible hiking system to Jiajunmao area.



FRAGRANCE CORRIDOR AT JIANGJUNMAO SEGMENT

FRAGRANCE CORRIDOR

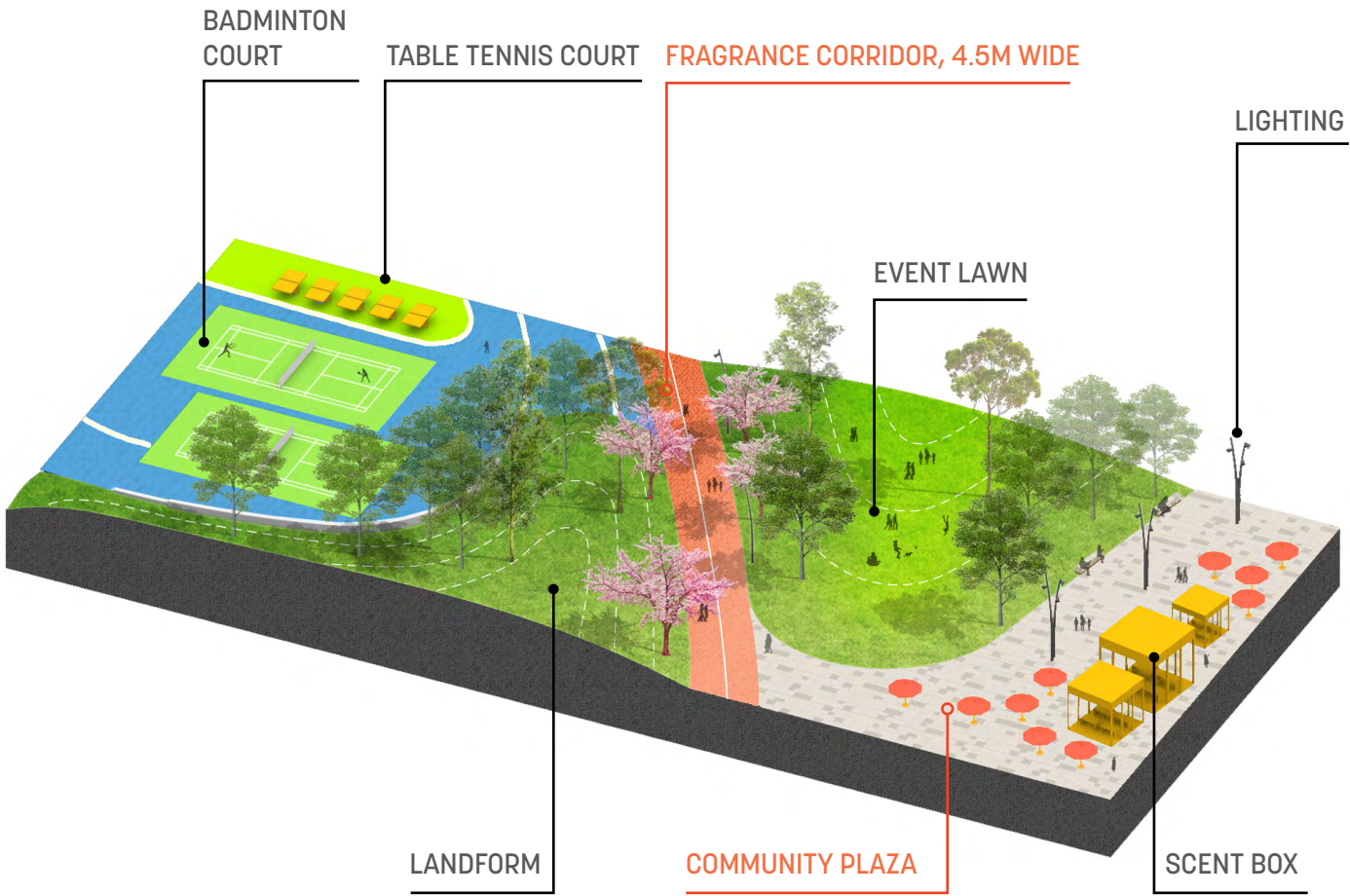
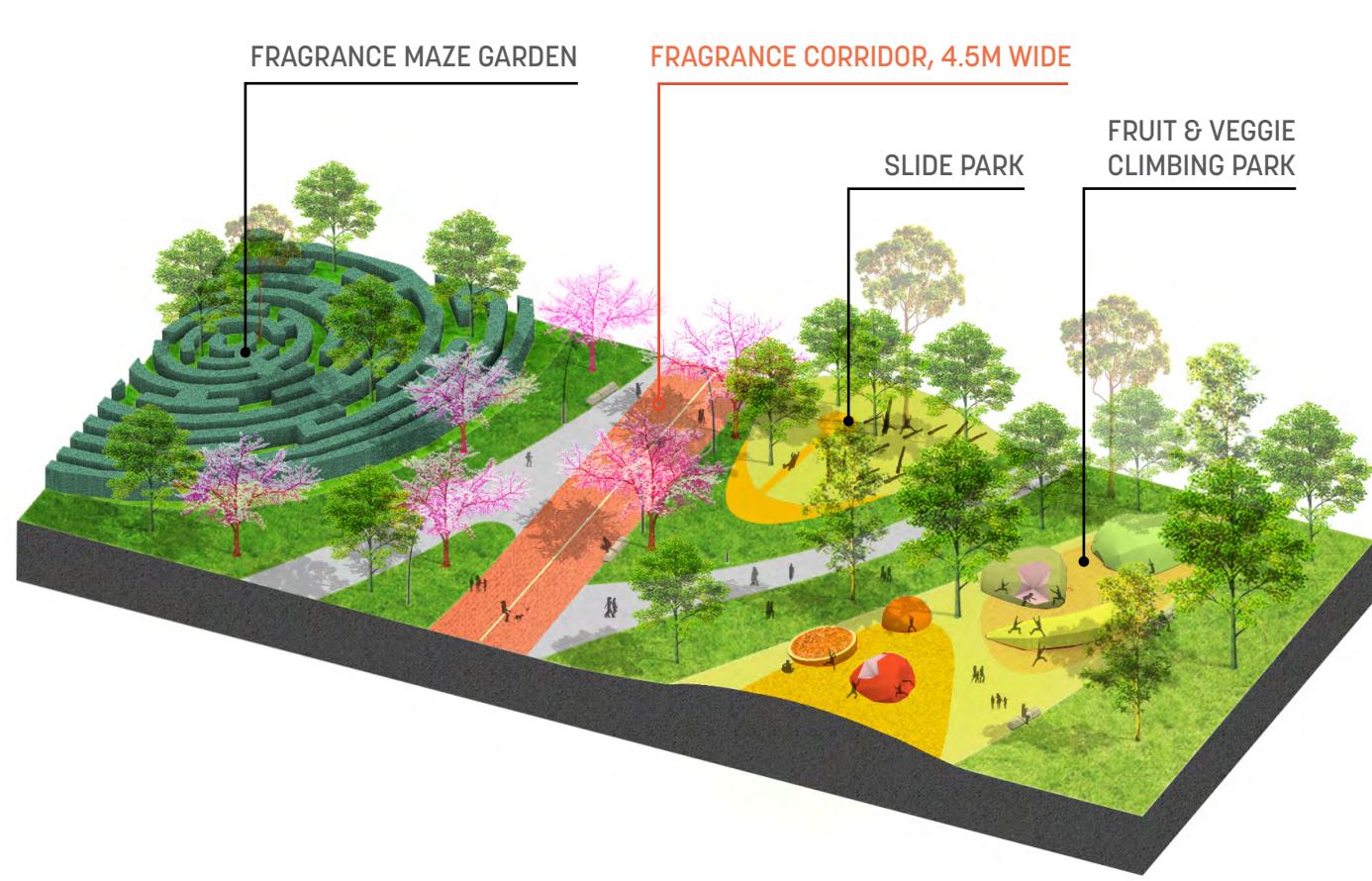
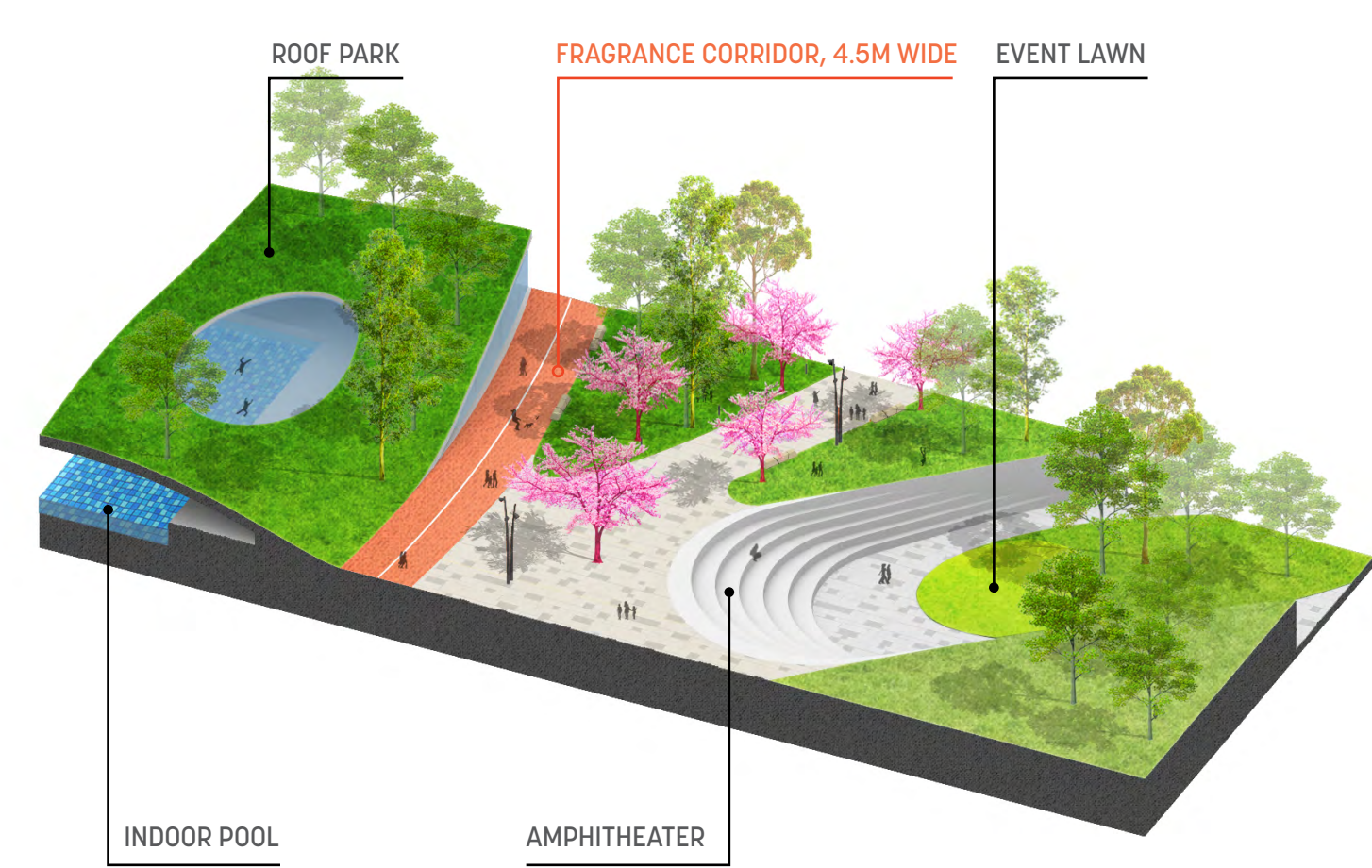
SPORTS PARK + TOD SEGMENT



CHILDREN'S PARK SEGMENT

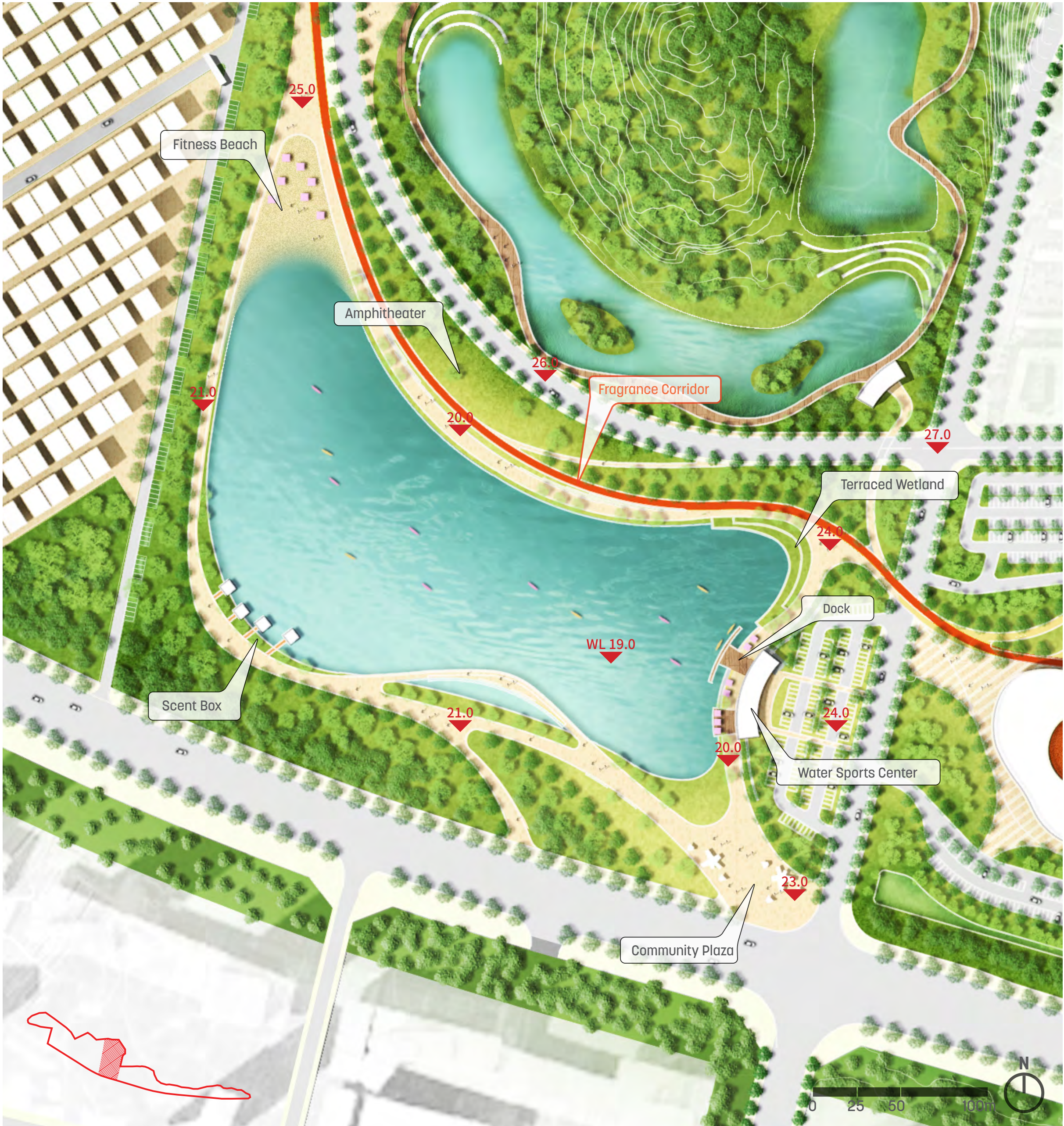


SMALL BALL SPORTS PARK SEGMENT



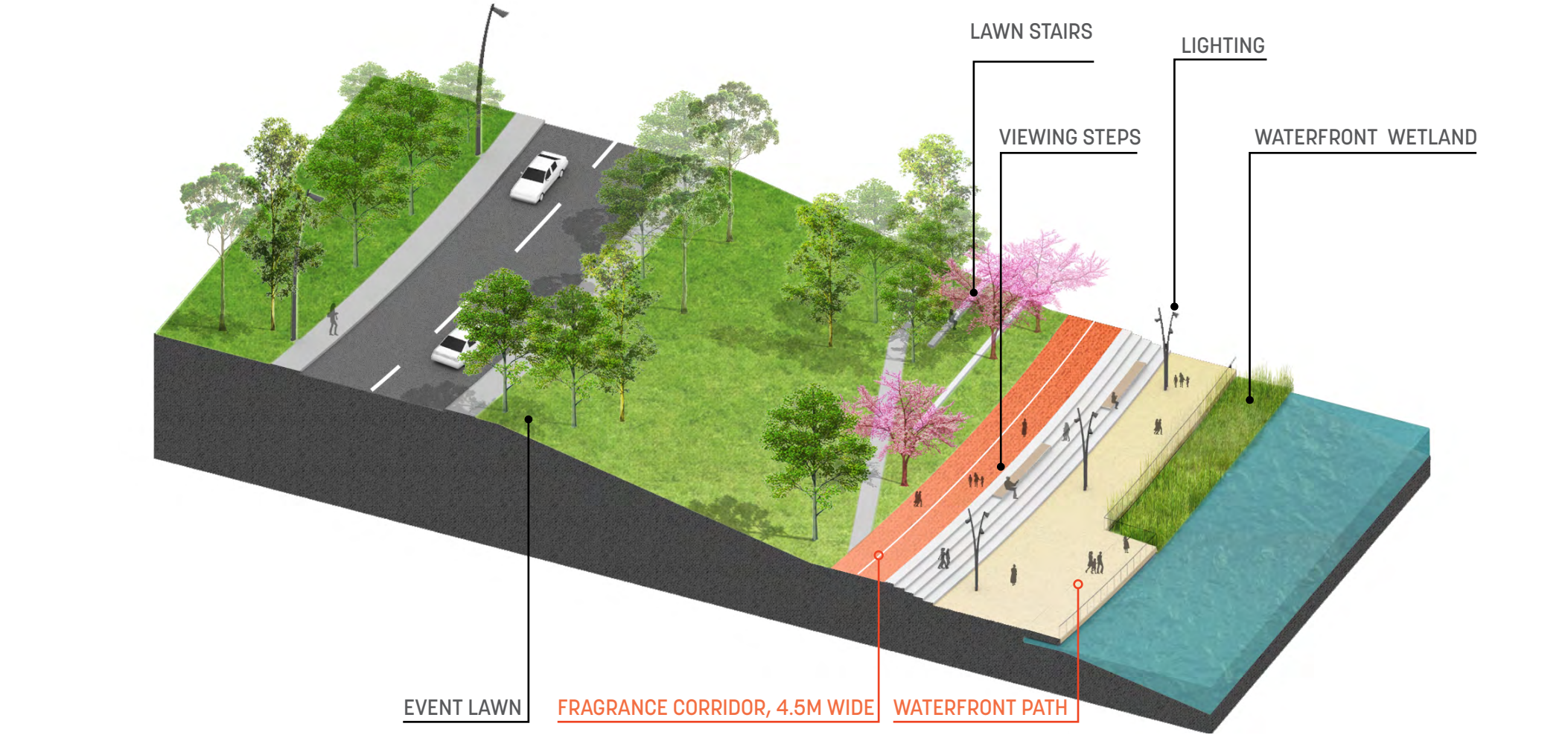
SPORTS COMPLEX, CHILDREN'S PARK & SMALL BALL SPORTS PARK

Expanding from underutilized sport venues, including the existing stadiums and swimming pool, Sports Park Complex and Small Ball Sports Park provide a cluster of both indoor and outdoor fitness venues. Children's Park is added to extend the range of user groups.

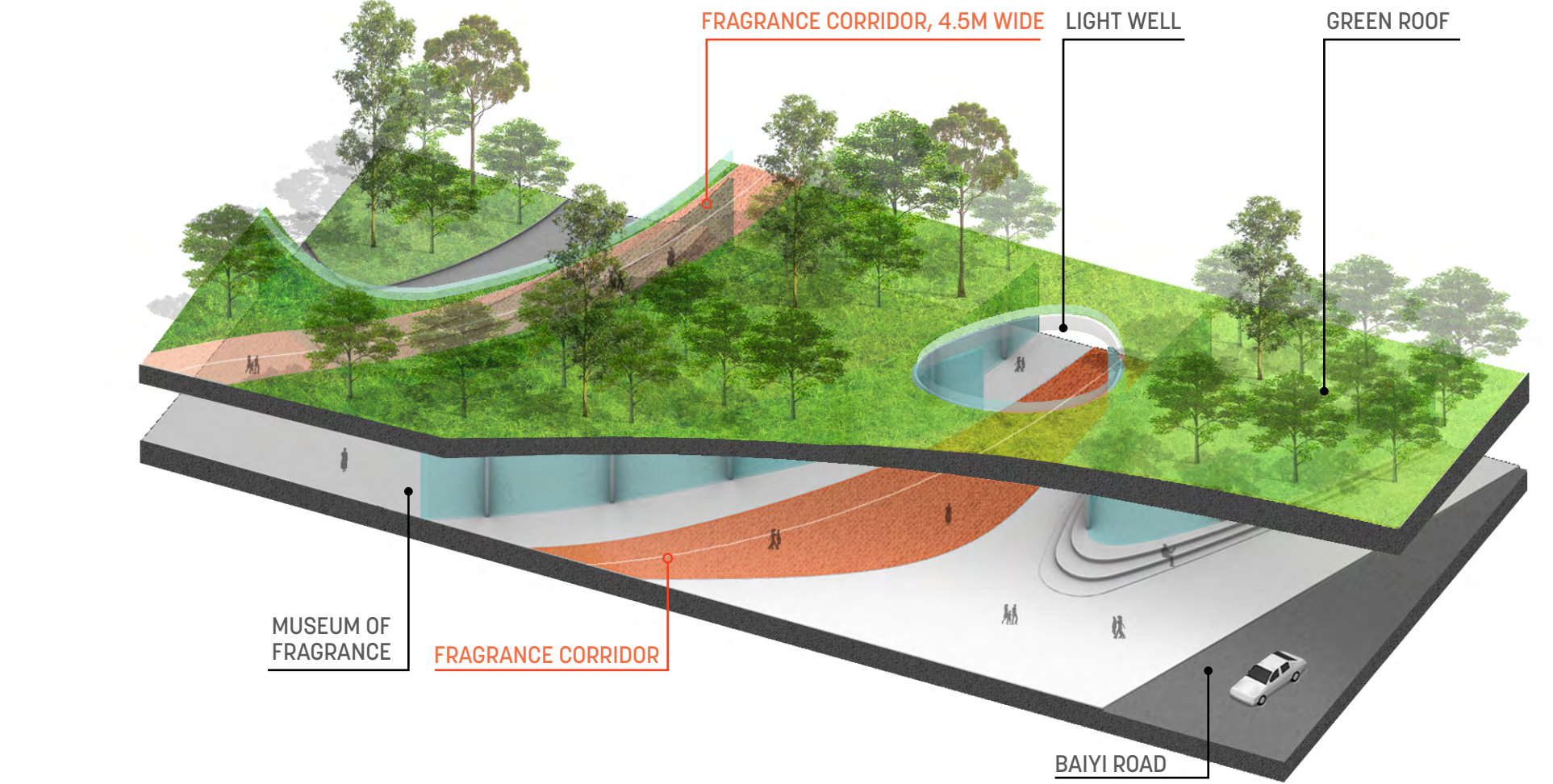
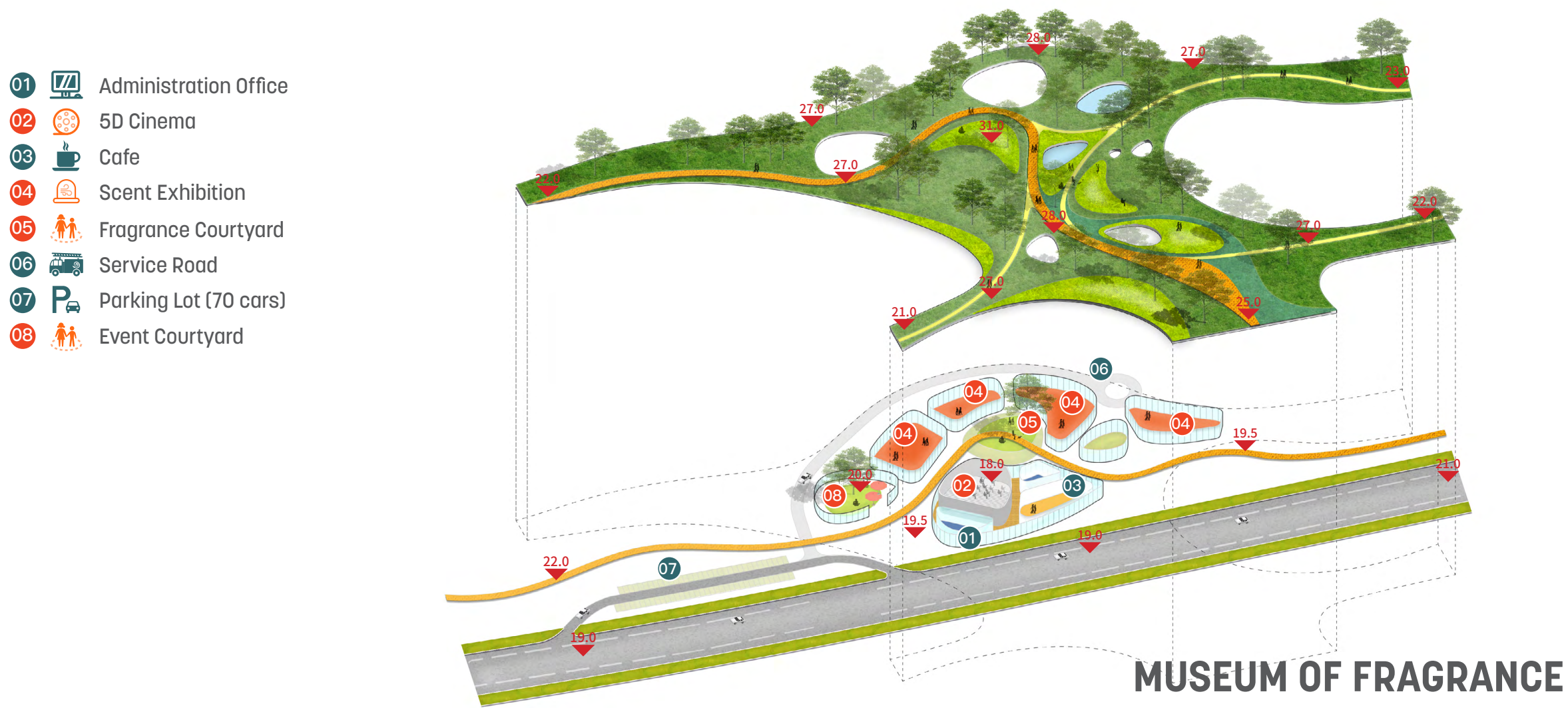
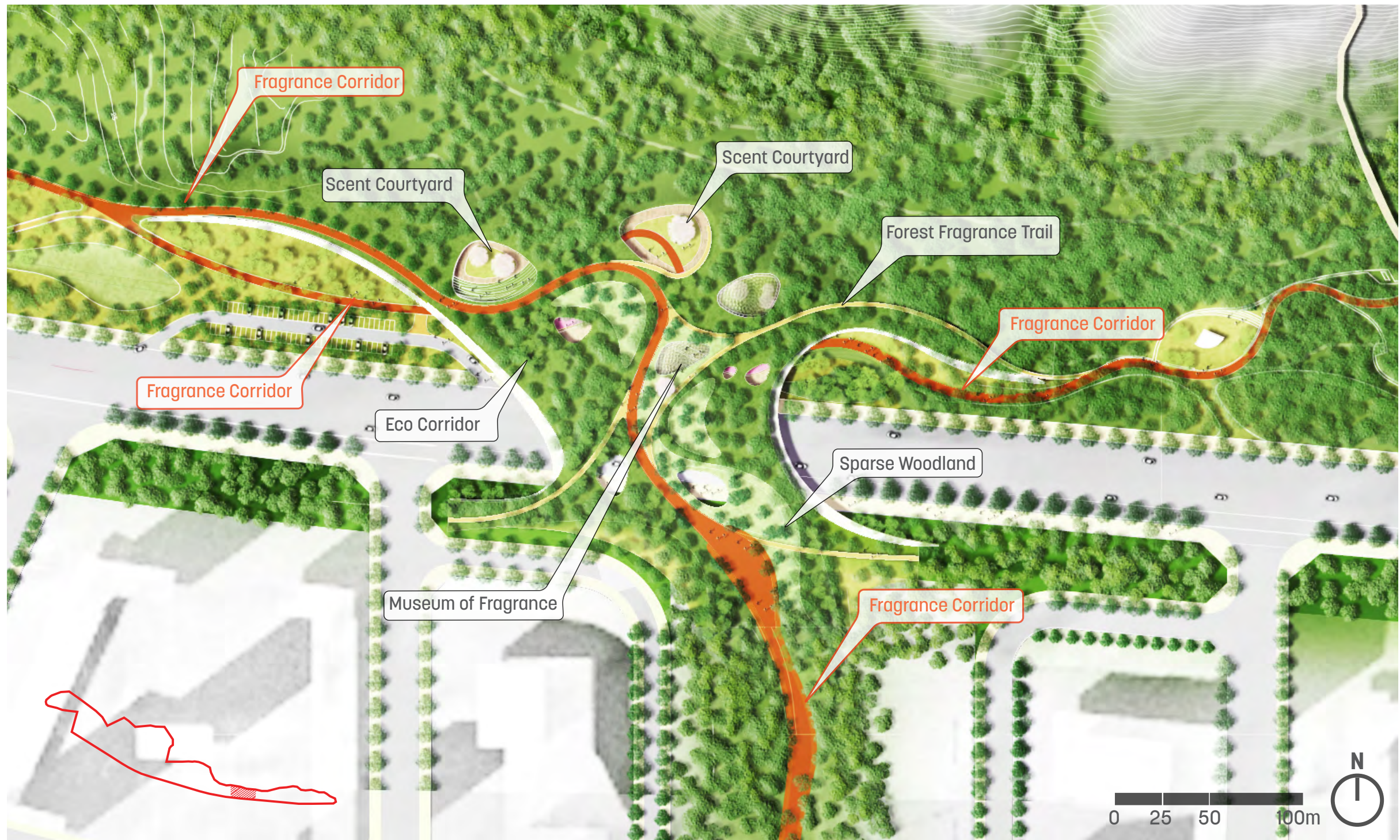


WATER SPORTS PARK

Water Sports Park transforms undervalued fishponds into lakes for kayaking and boating.



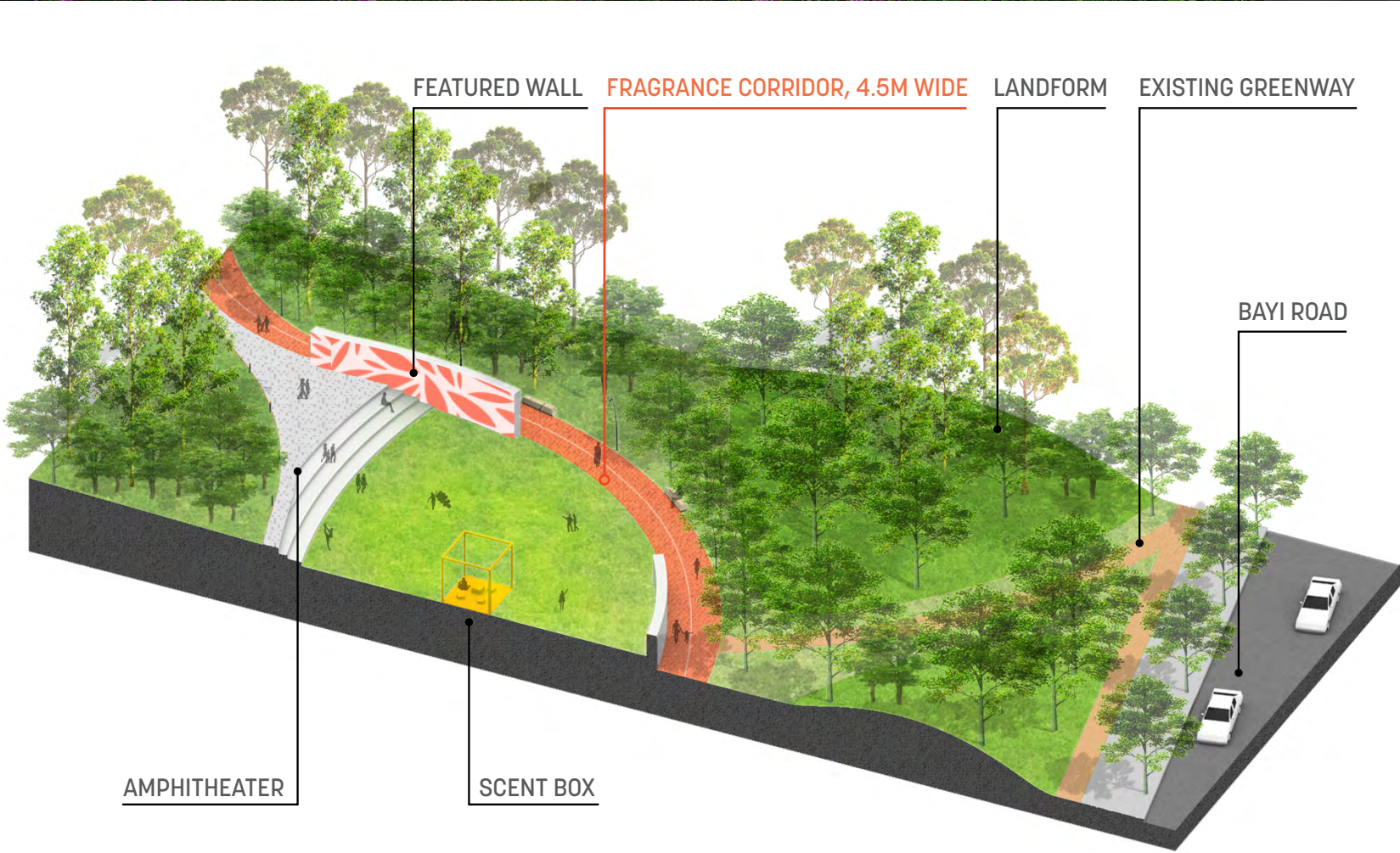
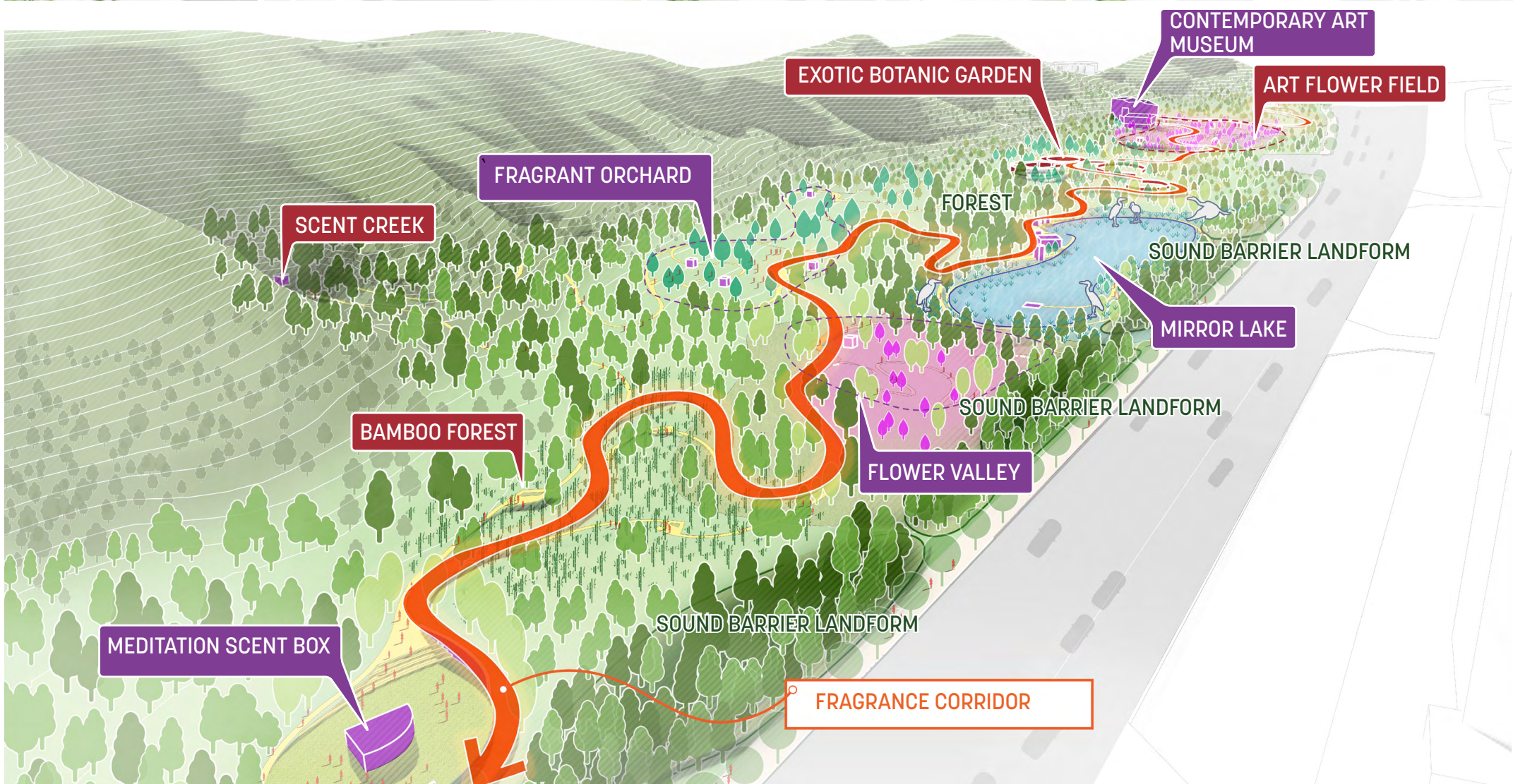
FRAGRANCE CORRIDOR AT WATER SPORTS PARK SEGMENT



ECO-BRIDGE AND MUSEUM OF FRAGRANCE

The Eco-Bridge extends the momentum of the ecology and recreation into a large urban fabric. The museum of fragrance, a hub to exhibit the fragrance culture of Dongguan, conceals under the bridge, which continues the city's green fabric.

FRAGRANCE CORRIDOR AT ECO-BRIDGE



FRAGRANCE THERAPY VALLEY

The Fragrance Valley acknowledges the importance of mental well-being in modern life by using scents as a medium to influence visitors' emotions. This secluded environment offers visitors a sensory retreat from the bustle of daily life.

FRAGRANCE CORRIDOR AT FRAGRANCE THERAPY VALLEY SEGMENT