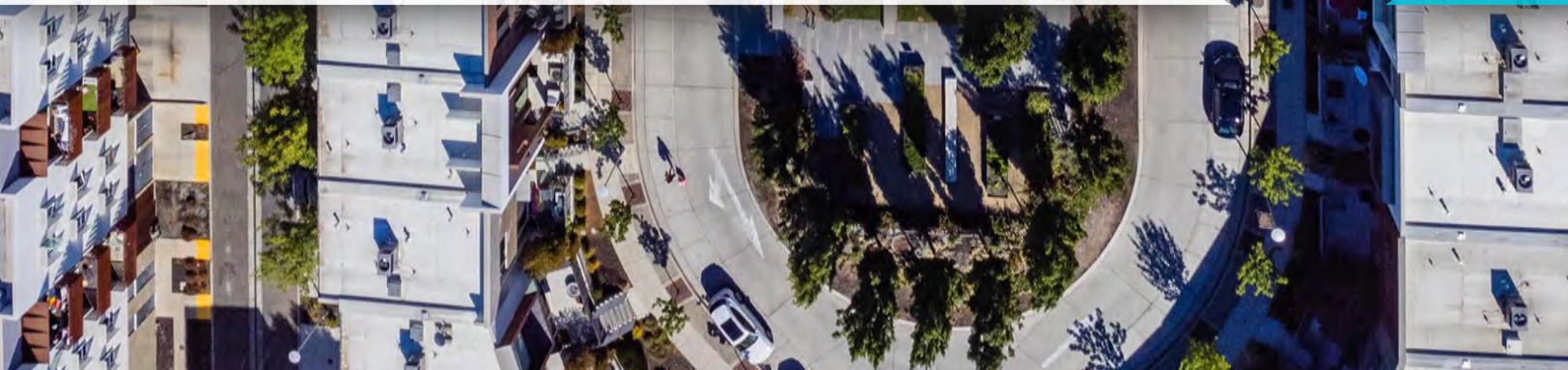




PUBLIC REALM

CHAPTER





401

CHAPTER 6

PUBLIC REALM



Neighborhood parks allow opportunities for passive and active recreation while also providing a sense of identity

The public realm defines the overall character and framework for development at Innovation Park—linking places, defining destinations, and establishing the foundation for urban form. It includes a hierarchy of tree-lined, complete streets and paths, and public parks and plaza.

The transportation network must provide safe and inviting infrastructure for the pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers, and to help establish visual continuity among districts and neighborhoods. As with other complex urban systems, the elements of the public realm will reflect their context—be it a vibrant and bustling urban street, academic campus, or quiet and inviting neighborhood.

Similarly, the open space elements that contribute to the public realm include passive and active places, which must be designed considering their context, users, and the role they play in the overall community.

The following outlines the attributes of the public realm at Innovation Park. While playing integral roles with one another, the transportation network and open space elements are discussed individually.



Inviting neighborhood walkway



The transportation network in Innovation Park will meet the needs of many users

6.1 POLICIES

6.1.1 Inviting and Context Sensitive Complete Streets.

Tree-lined streets at Innovation Park will be pedestrian and bicycle friendly, while safely meeting the needs of vehicles. The network of streets and their streetscapes will be designed considering their context. In vibrant and bustling areas, the street scene will work to facilitate this by accommodating higher volumes of users and special activities like street front dining and gathering for events or activities. Other less traveled streets will have quieter streetscapes, reflecting their setting such as neighborhoods within larger districts.

6.1.2 Varied Public Open Space Areas. Open space choices will be included at Innovation Park to meet the needs of area residents and workers. These may include urban plaza, passive recreation, active sports fields, and a curvilinear park, all within proximity and safe, convenient, and attractive access by users.

6.2 TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

The transportation network serves and provides the framework for development at Innovation Park. This includes the introduction of a hierarchical and interconnected system specially tailored to meet the needs of the district it is a part of or serves. Innovation Park provides transportation access for many modes, meeting the needs local users and visitors.

An important attribute of the transportation network is that Innovator Drive, and East, Main, and West Entrance Roads include Class IV bike lanes, which introduce well-defined travel lanes for cyclists that minimize interaction with other modes of travel. This affects the public realm by contributing to the concept of complete streets, which seeks to provide convenience, safety, comfort, access, affordability, and reasonable travel time for all modes.

The details of the transportation network are discussed in greater detail in the Circulation Network chapter, while this chapter focuses on the desired character of the public realm.



Activated street corner

6.2.1 Innovator Drive

Innovator Drive serves as the primary transportation spine, providing access to the Districts located within. In addition to serving the most users, it will also set the tone for urban development and how places are used. The character of Innovator Drive includes two complementary zones, generally defined by the intersection of Main Entrance Road north and south.

The intersection of Innovator Drive and Main Entrance Road/B Street is the geographic and functional heart of Innovation Park. It will be activated on all four corners, including ground floor shops and restaurants, office space and apartments, the Urban Plaza and the Hospital/Medical Campus. This area is seen to be a vibrant, active, and inviting place, serving residents and visitors alike. It will be accessible by pedestrians, cyclists, and autos, and be within walking proximity of the future RT station. These attributes will continue northward to the intersection with Sports Parkway.

The design of the public realm will be informed by street characteristics, streetscape, and buildings that front on it. It needs to reflect the intent that this place will be busy and open to all—visually and physically. Generous sidewalks, street front buildings, hardscape, and street trees, organized to support an urban place.

The public realm generally south of the Urban Plaza (south of the mixed use corner fronting the Urban Plaza) along Innovator Drive should reflect a less intense urban setting than that to the north, as it will be largely composed of apartments on the east and medical buildings to the west, suggesting that visitors will be passing through this area, rather than going to it. Generous sidewalks remain essential, but the nature of the streetscape should reflect its context, offering a subtle transition space to the uses fronting it.



The public realm must facilitate convenient, safe and attractive access

6.2.2 Sports Parkway

Sports Parkway bounds all of Innovation Park serving as an important circulation route and community boundary. It will in turn need to accommodate daily transportation needs and contribute to the overall character of the community. The inner side of the parkway will abut development in each of the districts. The outer side will bound all of Innovation Park Loop, an important element of the open space framework, which is discussed in greater detail following.

The character of the streetscape on the inner side of the parkway should be carefully considered as it will need to both enhance the district it is adjacent to and lend to the identity of the community as whole, serving to unify the various districts, buildings and uses. The character of this area should be attractive and inviting, yet more likely to accommodate less activity and intensive uses than found along segments of Innovator Drive.

6.2.3 East, Main, and West Entrance Roads

These roads will serve as important connections to the adjacent community and help define the unique attributes of the districts they will be a part of.

6.2.3.1 East Entrance Road/B Street

East Entrance Road/B Street will enter Innovation Park from Truxel Road, an important connector, and provide access to any future RT station off of Truxel Road. A challenging design attribute of this road is how the uses fronting it vary, including residences, school, ground floor shops and dining, Nature Park, and finally Urban Plaza. Each of these places will have different degrees of use and purpose. As such the road will function as an important linkage and provide a community character defining streetscape.

As Innovation Park will be a bicycle and pedestrian supportive urban environment, East Entrance Road must help to define and support the context it is traversing, and resident and visitor use experience.

The intersection with Innovator Drive marks the heart of the community and in the immediate vicinity will include residences with ground floor shops and dining, Urban Plaza and Nature Park. The public realm must be designed to facilitate convenient, safe, and attractive access and visibility to these key community elements. Further east of the intersection, East Entrance Road will pass apartments and the school, and local serving ground floor shopping and dining, suggesting the need for another level of design for this segment that respects urban living, and recognizes this area will be less intensively used than the segment leading to and supporting the heart of the community.



Street with higher density and intensity uses



Conveniently located urban plaza

6.2.3.2 Main Entrance Road/B Street and West Entrance Road/D Street

These streets will connect Innovation Park to East Commerce Road, an important transportation route. They will both enter Innovation Park at important District Locations. Main Entrance Road/B Street will be located between the Innovator and Health Districts, while West Entrance Road/D Street will traverse the Innovator District. In both circumstances, in addition to providing safe and attractive access, they must be designed to sew their respective context together, and not separate them, and to contribute to the look and feel of inviting and cohesive places. This is equally important on both, as Main Entrance Road/B Street will terminate at the heart of the community, where it will intersect Innovator Drive and meet East Entrance Road/B Street, and West Entrance Road/D Street will cross the middle of the Innovation District and intersecting with Innovator Drive. These locations will include higher-density and -intensity uses, and a strong public realm to support them is essential.

6.3 OPEN SPACE

The open space network will include public and semi-public, and active and passive spaces (Figure 6-1). Each will add to the quality of life to residents and visitors, as each are located and tailored to accomplish this.

As already discussed, a fundamental building block of the public realm is the circulation network, which will provide access throughout, following tree-lined and carefully planned streets. This will in turn provide clear linkages to important destinations, with each discussed following.

6.3.1 Urban Plaza

Located at the four corners intersection with Innovator Drive, the heart of Innovation Park is the Urban Plaza (approximately 0.8 acres). This highly visible, centrally located public open space is intended to serve residents and visitors alike. It is foreseen to meet the needs of many—on a daily basis, serving local workers, students, and residents, providing a place to sit, gather with friend, have lunch, and similar. As the working day ends, Urban Plaza would provide the opportunity for activities and programming such as outdoor dining and personal and group fitness sessions. On weekends it could host gatherings, music, and events, helping to establish this core area as a vibrant destination.



Figure 6-1. Parks and Open Space Network
 SOURCE: ESA, 2021



The urban plaza serves as a vibrant destination

Several plaza design elements should be considered in its design:

- Relationship to urban context and adjacent and nearby ground floor uses
- Space programming – flexible, multi-use central area; secondary spaces
- Hardscape/Landscape types and locations
- Vegetation – trees and plants; ornamental planting/ rain gardens
- Seating
- Lighting
- Plaza/street paving materials
- Special design elements such as signage, special lighting, public art, vendors/pop-ups

The diversity and role of urban plazas should not be underestimated, and instead embraced as a formative element, which contributes to the character of the entire area.

6.3.2 Nature Park

Located along East Main Entrance Road, just east of Innovator Drive will be Nature Park, a natural passive open space, designed using elements of an existing habitat. This approximately 4-acre park will serve as a “decompression area” from the urban core, with easy access from residences, offices, the Hospital/Medical Campus, and for visitors. As a nature-based park, it will fuse programmed and non-programmed experiences for visitors.

The key feature will be the native habitat and associated overlooks, shoreline, wildlife (primarily birds) and vegetation, which will provide a delightful pause from urban living. Situated along East Main Entrance Road, nearby apartments will have immediate physical and visual access from all sides. Numerous opportunities exist for its design and realization—trails and connections to adjacent uses, picnic and seating areas, lawn spaces, and special landscapes such as meadows, pollinator gardens, play areas, or event areas.

Nature Park presents a unique opportunity to balance natural and urban environments that would be widely accessible and appreciated by many. Its design will need to recognize this, and like other community elements, seek the best approaches for achieving complementary integration, and an open, public feeling. This openness should include physical and visual access from adjacent apartments, people traveling along East Main Entrance Road, and nearby students and workers.

Adjacent apartments or townhomes and their circulation systems should be connected to, and serve as attractive thresholds into the park, and should not establish hard edges or boundaries separating them from the park. While passive and naturalistic, Nature Park will be an urban park, intended for use and enjoyment by the community.



Residents and visitors will enjoy decompressing at Nature Park



Innovator Loop Curvilinear Park provides an inviting and attractive greenway accessible to all

6.3.3 Innovator Loop Curvilinear Park

Innovator Loop Curvilinear Park (Innovator Loop) will bound all of Innovation Park along Sports Parkway, intersect with each of the streets entering, and serve as a Class I bike route and pedestrian path, complete with streetscape and landscape improvements (totaling approximately 5.5 acres). Each of these attributes leads to the recognition that it will be both an important part of community infrastructure and a significant open space amenity that will be appreciated by residents, workers, students, and visitors. It will accommodate workers who bicycle to work, residents and visitors who participate in cycling, and residents and workers who enjoy walking for fitness, health, or general wellness.

As part of the open space network, Innovator Loop is described as a curvilinear park, providing an inviting and attractive greenway accessible to all. It's tree-lined trail is equally well suited to serve dedicated cyclists or those on an afternoon walk, providing both with an alternative route to and from districts within Innovation Park.

Adjacent to Innovator Loop would be two 0.25-acre passive parks, located both east and west along the loop. These highly visible and attractive special green areas would serve as resting spots for walkers and cyclists, or as destinations for relaxation or small events. There are numerous creative approaches for designing small parks of this type—they could include bosques, rain gardens, ornamental or native planting, special paving, public art, small-scale fitness or playground areas, benches, tables, lighting, and signage. They should be designed as special places that visitors appreciate discovering and using.

These small parks would add to the diversity and character of Innovation Park's open space framework and provide another level of detail and interest to its integrated public realm. It's important that these places be designed to be visible, attractive, accessible and functional. As part of this functionality - pet waste stations and waste receptacles could be provided in these passive parks and along Innovator Loop.



Sports fields would be associated with a potential future school

6.3.4 School Shared Sports Fields

A school may be located within the Life District, bounded by B Street and Sports Parkway. In addition to meeting the educational needs of students, it would include approximately 4.4 acres of sports fields. Access to these active recreation facilities will be made available to the community during non-school hours for organized games and/or events.



The Hospital/Medical campus would offer open spaces open to the public

6.3.5 Hospital/Medical Campus Semi-public Open Space

The Hospital/Medical Campus grounds will include approximately 9 acres of publicly accessible privately owned open space. Running from north to south, an open space spine will connect and harmonize the campus by establishing a multifunctional collection of formal and informal destinations meeting daily needs and serving special functions. Primary features are the centrally located amphitheater, lawn terraces and seminar court. Tiering off this framework would be a series of “green fingers” which would provide access to several amenities including a meditation area, barbeque area, play area, and rainwater gardens. Integrated throughout would be pedestrian and bicycle paths.



Residents would enjoy a variety of private open spaces and amenities

6.3.6 Private Open Space and Residential Amenities

The higher-density nature of the residential units at Innovation Park will necessitate the provision of private open spaces for residents. Typical amenities provided for residents include residential facing small parks, swimming pools, tot lots/children play areas, dog park, game courts, BBQ and picnic areas, community centers, balconies, porches and gardens. A variety of these private amenities will be provided for Innovation Park residents.