



POCKET PARK

OLD WASHINGTON ROAD CORRIDOR

Waldorf, Maryland

Old Washington Road
Corridor Pocket Park Proposal
Submitted by Donald Ely for
Three Ring Studio

*Three Ring
Studio*

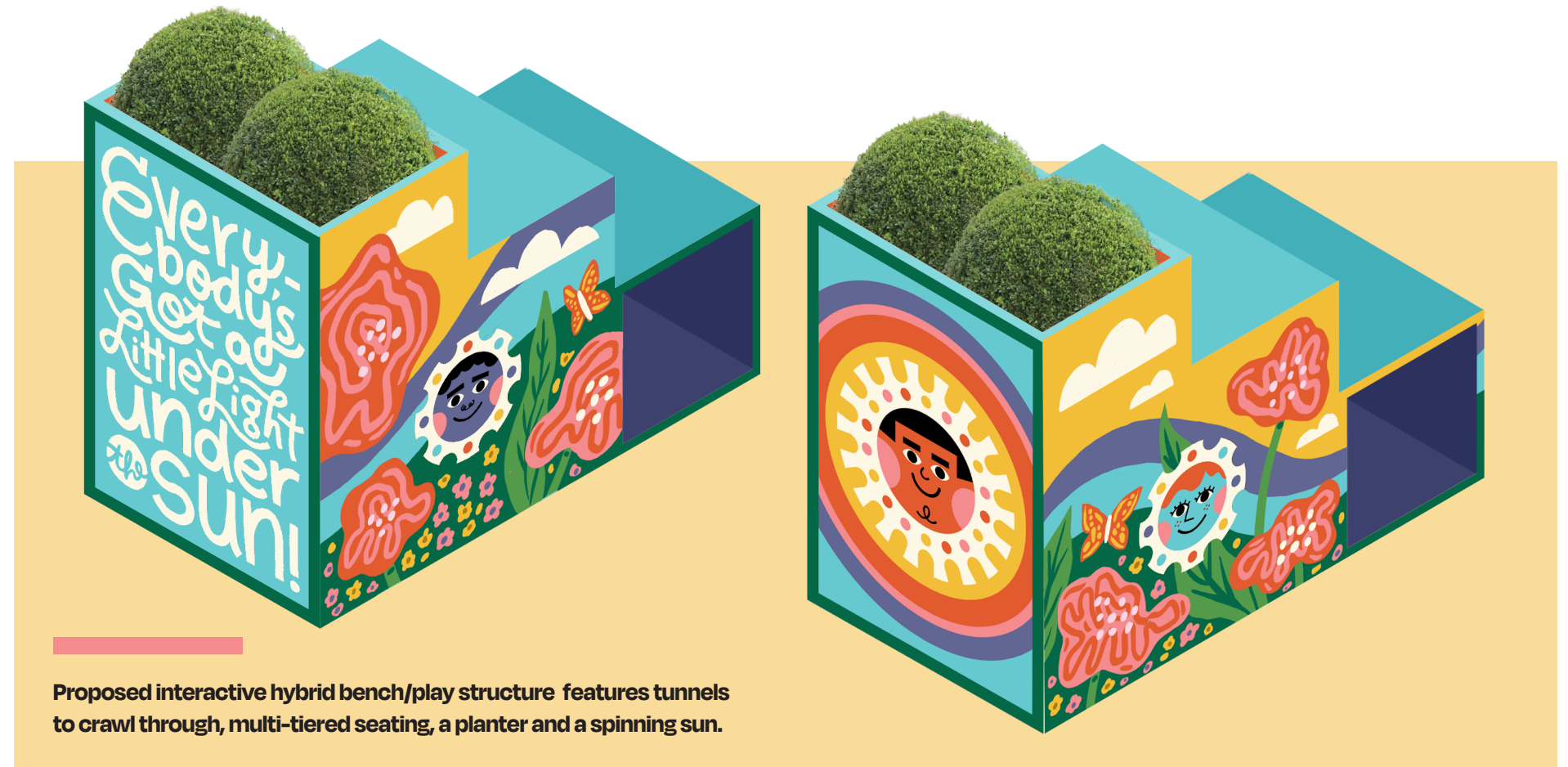
Artist Statement

Charles County, Maryland has been my hometown for a little over twenty years. Growing up here in the late nineties and into the turn of the century means that I've seen Waldorf go through myriad changes. Iconic motels that were once hustling and bustling during Waldorf's mid-century hey day (then deemed "Little Las Vegas") have slowly faded away. I've seen night life struggle to survive in a county whose residents would rather travel out of town to spend their hard earned money. The St. Charles Town Centre has transformed from being a popular hang-out spot with packed parking lots, to what some would consider a "dead mall" whose lots are now used primarily for commuter parking. The changes to our county's landscape are constantly evolving, and with that comes a need to reimagine and repurpose spaces that have been neglected or are no longer in vogue.

Life in the post Y2K era has been transient, chaotic and unpredictable. Covid lockdown taught us that our prioritization of work over family life was perhaps a little misguided. Humans in 2023 crave connection, they want to get out of the house and into the community. Families have discovered a new love for the outdoors and outdoor activity, and businesses large and small are learning how to adapt to its consumer's evolving behaviors.

During the pandemic, I applied for my first-ever public art project in La Plata, Maryland. The task was simple: to replace a fading mural that never reached its truest potential. Taking on this project was a challenge for me because I had only painted interior murals for small businesses before and this project was in a busy parking lot, surrounded by businesses and residents who were watching my every move. I felt vulnerable and quickly discovered that getting started was a challenge. However, those feelings subsided when I began to see the immediate impact that a simple wash of color had on the community. Every day came with comments like "thank you," "we needed this," "I can't wait to show my kids," "this world could use more color," "I love the message"—the list goes on and on. I knew at that point that I had found my calling.

Immediately after that mural was completed, I applied for and won two more projects: Phoenix Run basketball court murals (also in La Plata), and a mural for Hagerstown, Maryland's growing



Proposed interactive hybrid bench/play structure features tunnels to crawl through, multi-tiered seating, a planter and a spinning sun.

public art district. I went into both projects with one goal in mind: to create works of art that spoke to a universal audience, encouraging love, tolerance and peaceful communion.

These works of art were only successful because of community engagement. The Phoenix Run project involved numerous community discussions, formal and informal feedback sessions, community paint days and so much more. An engaged community takes pride in, and ownership of, the space that they inhabit.

My Hagerstown mural spoke to the concept of inclusion and was created through the implementation of residential portraits, solicited through social media. Residents featured in the final mural were present at the unveiling, putting a real face on the art that they inspired.

My proposal for Sunshine Pocket Park follows in the thematic footsteps of my previous public works. Incorporating the lyrics, "everybody's got a little light under the sun," from the Parliament song "Flashlight," this project creates an intimate place that encourages residents and visitors to share an experience and create new memories. There will be benches for

relaxation, spaces to crawl through and climb, areas to explore and photo opportunities.

As with my previous projects, there is a community component involved at the execution phase. Residents will be invited to help plant a safety hedge (donated by the Wills Group) and paint a multi-colored sidewalk. Lastly, local K-12 schools will be invited to paint sunshine pavers that will be hidden throughout the park. Motion is not only implied through the use of color, but infused in the design of the landscape and structures.

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SUNSHINE PARK

Sunshine Showcase

This series of multi-tiered, interactive benches will be arranged in a semi-circle on a brand new concrete patio. The new structures provide tunnels for kids to crawl through, steps for visitors to climb and sit on, and planters for decorative shrubs. Movement is incorporated via the giant sun and four mini-suns which will rotate on ball bearings, encouraging sensory play.

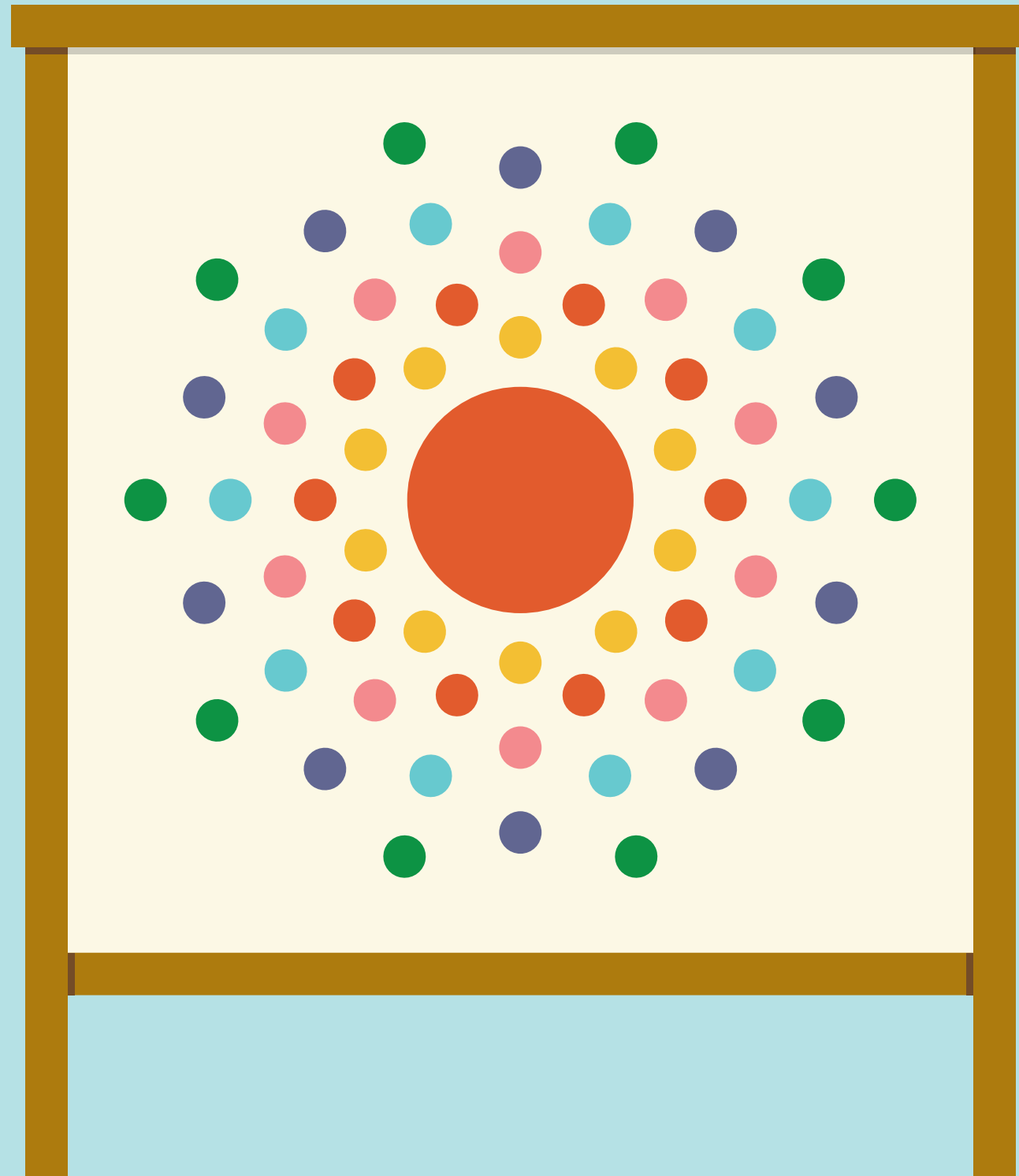
*Design is for proof of concept and may be edited before final execution. Any changes will be routed for approval.

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Sunshine Showcase benches will be secured with 4x4" posts embedded in concrete.
Hedge benches measure in at: 4'w x 7'd x 5.8'h
Podium bench measures at: 8'w x 6'd x 4'h





SUNSHINE PARK

Suncatcher Backdrop

Piece will be constructed with colored plexiglass sandwiched between two pieces of die-cut plywood. Structure will measure at a total height of 8' tall and 6' wide; mounted to 4 x 4 beams.

This piece is designed to catch sun and project colored discs of light on the ground. It also acts as a colored lens to see the park through and will make for a great social media-worthy backdrop.

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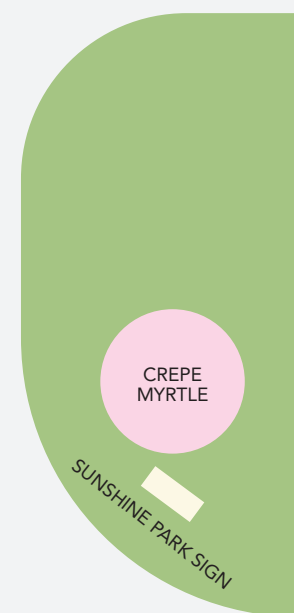
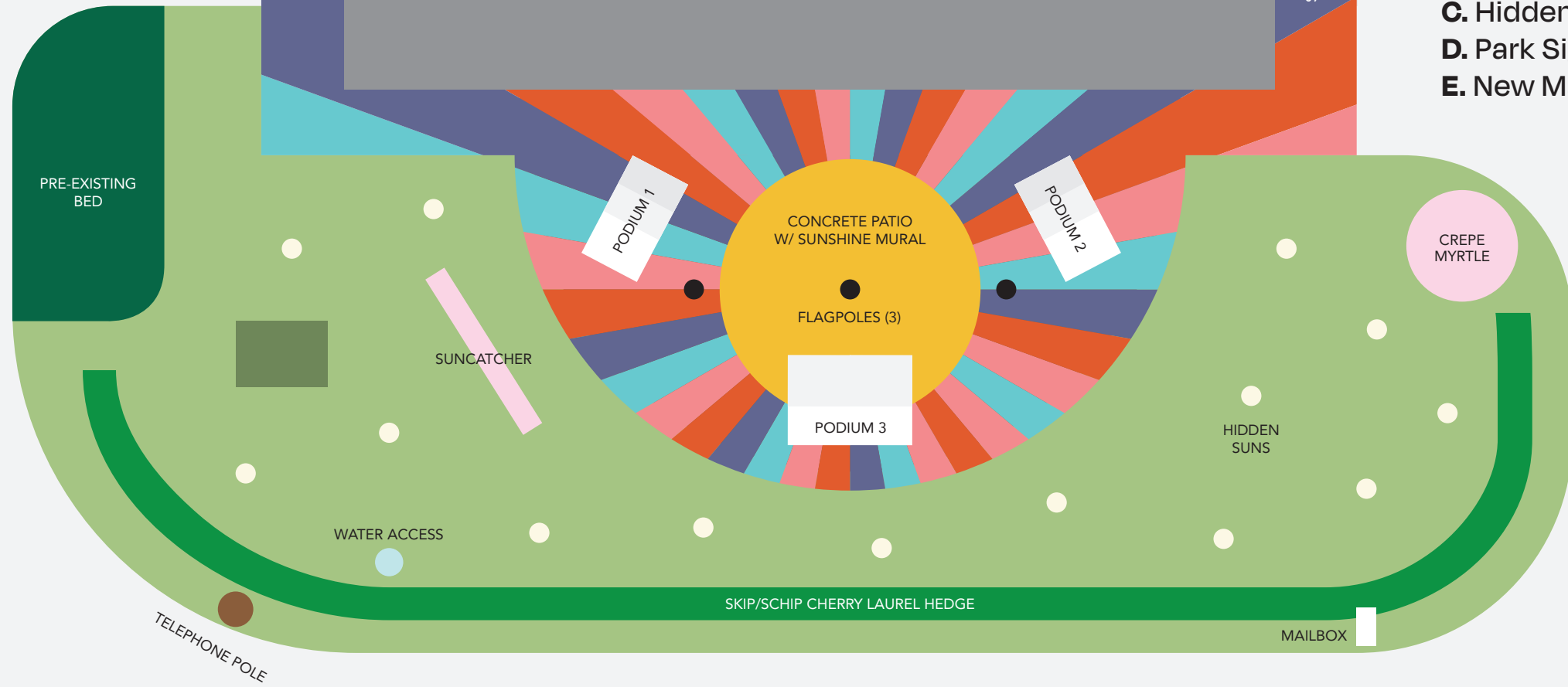
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ELITE GYMNASTICS BUILDING

SUNSHINE PARK

Aerial View

- A. Skip Cherry Laurel Hedge
- B. Crepe Myrtle Trees
- C. Hidden Sun Pavers
- D. Park Sign
- E. New Mailbox



A



B



C



D



E

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