1. Nestled within the close-knit community of Elysian Park and boasting 700 feet of Los Angeles River frontage, Marsh Park was envisioned an opportunity to establish the first river park, reconnect a neighborhood with nature and the river, and educate the community about the restorative power of native landscape.

2. A large glass factory occupied a portion of the site, partly sequestering the property from the river, and ultimately leading to its blighted and degraded condition. A largely barren site, the existing industrial building remained an imposing force that would have to be overcome as part of the new park vision.

3. Once an overwhelming eyesore, the existing structure now provides a compelling juxtaposition between its striated metal skin, and the organic drifts of native grasses, and the ribbons of decomposed granite pathways that meander in and out of its shadow.

4. The existing site was largely covered with asphalt and remnant concrete paving, and fill from illegal dumping, and overcome with invasive weeds. With access from both the river and adjacent neighborhood prohibited, the site became a favorite of transients and had become a concern for neighborhood safety.

5. The adjacent neighbors now overlook a verdant park space that balances an expansive native planting with a lawn for open play, picnics and festivals. Once dominated by paving and compacted soils, the park is now largely planted and therefore permeable fostering natural aquifer recharge.
6. Decomposed walking paths meander through the park offering a delightful respite from the river’s bike path, and a variety of places to sit. Conceived as a delightful garden loop, the path has become a favorite of those seeking a stroll along beds edged with native plants.

7. A new community space greets visitors arriving via the river trail or Gleneden Drive. Conceived as a largely open pavilion, the structure, set within the garden, hosts neighborhood gatherings, festivals, nature groups and even the occasional quinceañera.

8. The entry from the Los Angeles River Trail is celebrated by an elaborate iron fence that conjures images of river wildlife in silhouette. The asphalt trail gives way to decomposed granite and native riparian species, within which picnic opportunities are situated.

9. The park is comprised of several distinct threads woven together: Community health is celebrated through a sequence of exercise stations set within the native landscape. Ecological health is celebrated through a demonstration of native landscape and its restorative abilities, and the arroyo which collects and filters storm water sitewide.