

futuretogether

MEMORANDUM

Date: February 17, 2025
To: Alex M. Smith, Director of the Philadelphia Art Commission <Alex.Smith@Phila.gov>
Philadelphia Art Commission <ArtCommission@phila.gov>
From: Isaac J. Salm - Future Together LLC <isaac@letsfuturetogether.com>
Jaime Salm - Future Together LLC <jaime@letsfuturetogether.com>
cc: Elisa Ruse-Esposito, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation <Elisa.Ruse-Esposito@phila.gov>
Alyssa Young, Kaboom! <ayoung@kaboom.org>
Heidi Segall Levy, Watchdog <hsegalllevy@watchdogpm.com>
Sarah Lytle, Playful Learning Landscapes <stlytle@playfullearninglandscapes.fun>

Reference: Request for Administrative Approval – Fernhill Park Play Village

We respectfully request administrative approval for the installation of the Fernhill Park Play Village, an innovative interpretive play area located on the upper portion of Fernhill Park near the Morris Street entrance. This project is made possible through the generous support of Kaboom! and The William Penn Foundation and has been developed in collaboration with the Germantown community. The initiative is led by FutureTogether and the Friends of Fernhill Park, alongside the expert team from Playful Learning Landscapes, to align with the educational and play objectives outlined by our grant funding.

The Friends of Fernhill Park, a dedicated advocate and active community partner, has played a crucial role in guiding the design and ensuring a thoughtful balance between the needs of the neighborhood's children and the site's environmental and spatial constraints. The project transforms the underutilized yet cherished toddler track into an engaging Play Village. This installation is not a traditional playground but rather a collection of interactive and educational spaces that encourage creativity, learning, and imaginative play. The Play Village consists of five unique installations, each designed with a distinct educational and play objective while maintaining a cohesive aesthetic and design language.

1. Nature Stage – A dynamic space where children can act, perform, and engage in role-playing. This installation also provides opportunities for community-led programming, including performances, storytelling, and interactive events.
2. Riverbed Crossing – A creative interpretation of a natural riverbed, featuring a log crossing and a small boat structure. Cutouts of leaves are incorporated into the design, allowing children to engage in a nature-themed matching game. This installation also serves an

educational purpose, teaching children about the water cycle and how water travels from mountains to oceans, sustaining ecosystems like Fernhill Park.

3. Zig-Zag Beams – A series of balance beams with integrated cutout vowels (five beams) and embedded concrete consonants. This area encourages literacy-based play by challenging children to form words, while also offering opportunities for imaginative games such as the classic 'lava' game.
4. Play Village Facades – Three distinct interpretive play facades, each with unique interactive features:
 - o The first facade includes round “windows” that can be transformed into various imaginative settings, such as a plane, train, or spaceship.
 - o The second facade features two large abacuses, encouraging early math skills and interactive group play.
 - o The third facade integrates innovative tactile mazes, designed to stimulate sensory engagement and problem-solving.
5. Story Hills – A landscaped, dimensional space that invites children to climb, explore, and engage in storytelling activities. This area promotes creativity and literacy by encouraging children to share their own stories while learning the fundamental elements of storytelling.

This project represents a collaborative effort to enhance Fernhill Park by providing an engaging, educational, and community-driven play experience. The proposed Play Village aligns with the broader mission of Playful Learning Landscapes by integrating learning into everyday public spaces. We believe this installation will serve as a valuable asset to the Germantown community, fostering imaginative play, social interaction, and educational growth for children between the ages of 0 – 8 years old.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to your feedback and the opportunity to bring this innovative project to life.

Sincerely,

Isaac J. Salm
Future Together LLC, Business Director
O: 215-925-9359 EXT. 112
M: 305-815-8330
isaac@letsfuturetogether.com

Attachments: Site Plans, Process, Renderings, Technical Drawings

futuretogether

Fernhill Park Play Village Revisions

Fernhill Play Village

In Partnership with:

**William Penn
Foundation**



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The Site - Fernhill Park Toddler Track



AERIAL VIEW



MORRIS ST. ENTRANCE



TODDLER TRACK



TRACK CONDITION



PLAY VILLAGE HILL



ENTRY PATH VIEW

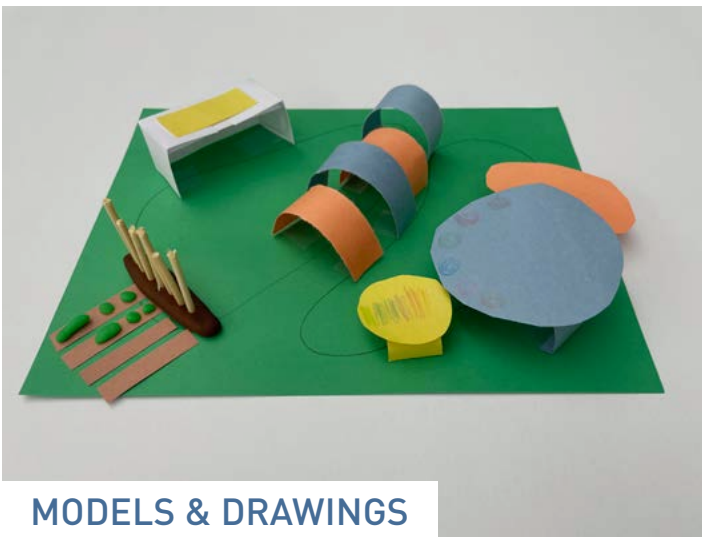
Our Process - Community Engagement & Co-Design



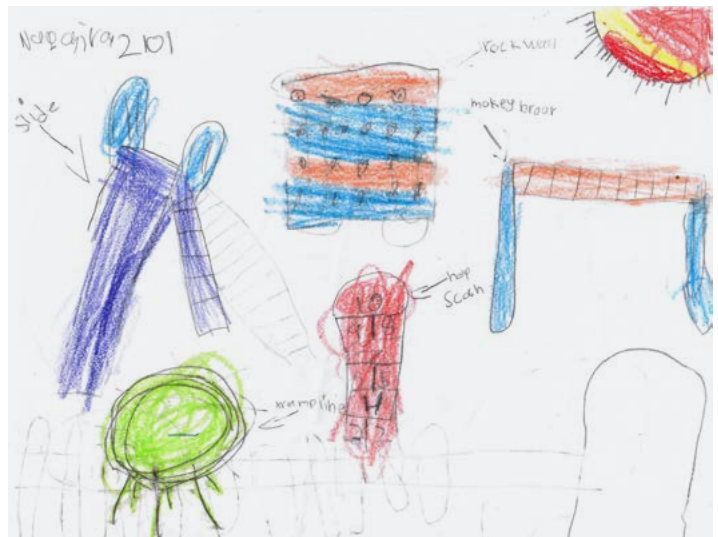
WORKSHOP 01



WORKSHOP 02



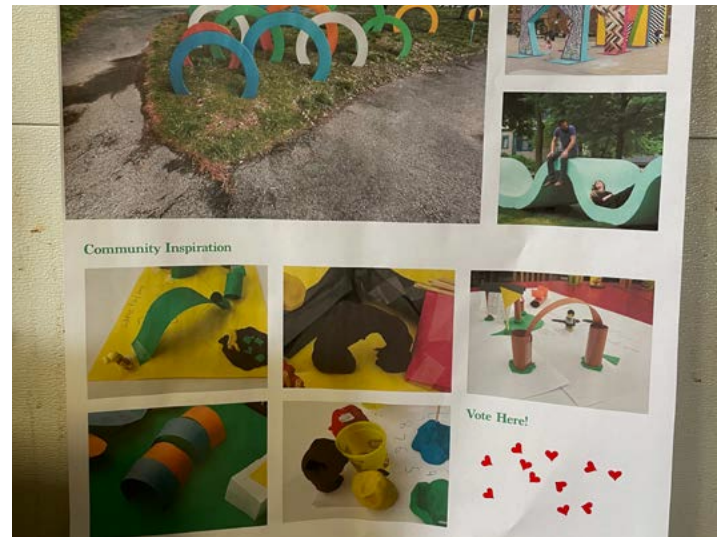
MODELS & DRAWINGS



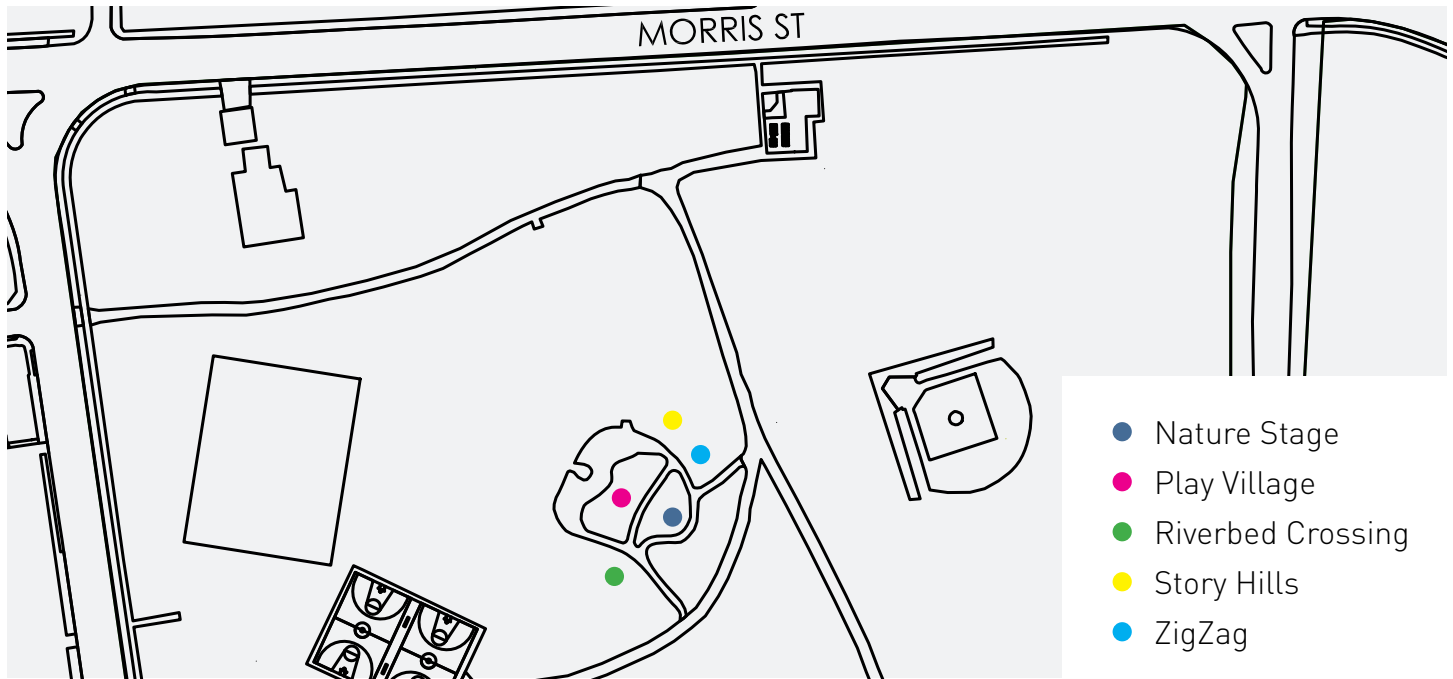
Our Process - Play Area Research & Precedents



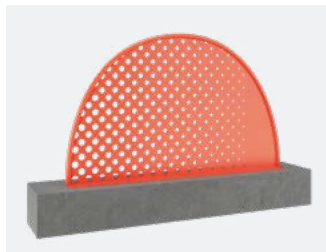
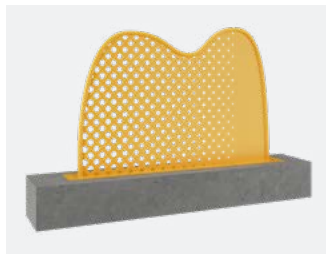
Our Process - Community Selection



Fernhill Park Play Village - Proposed Layout



Nature Stage - Performance, Learning & Play



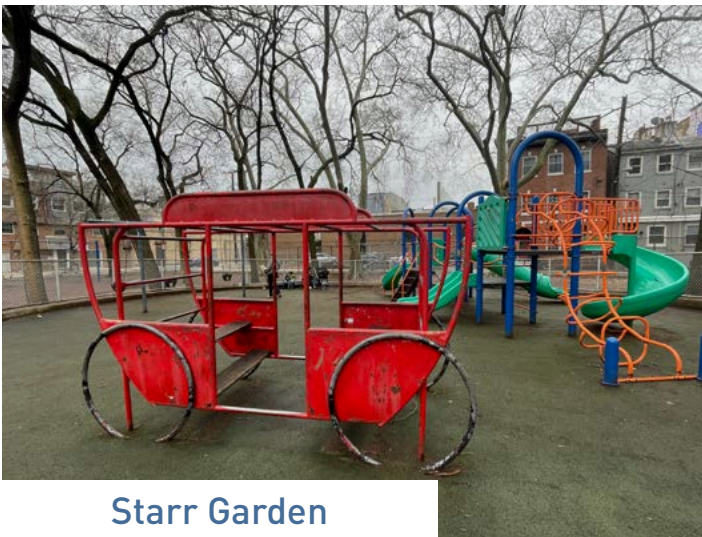
Nature Stage - Precedent



FDR Park



Northwood Park



Starr Garden



Schuykill River Park

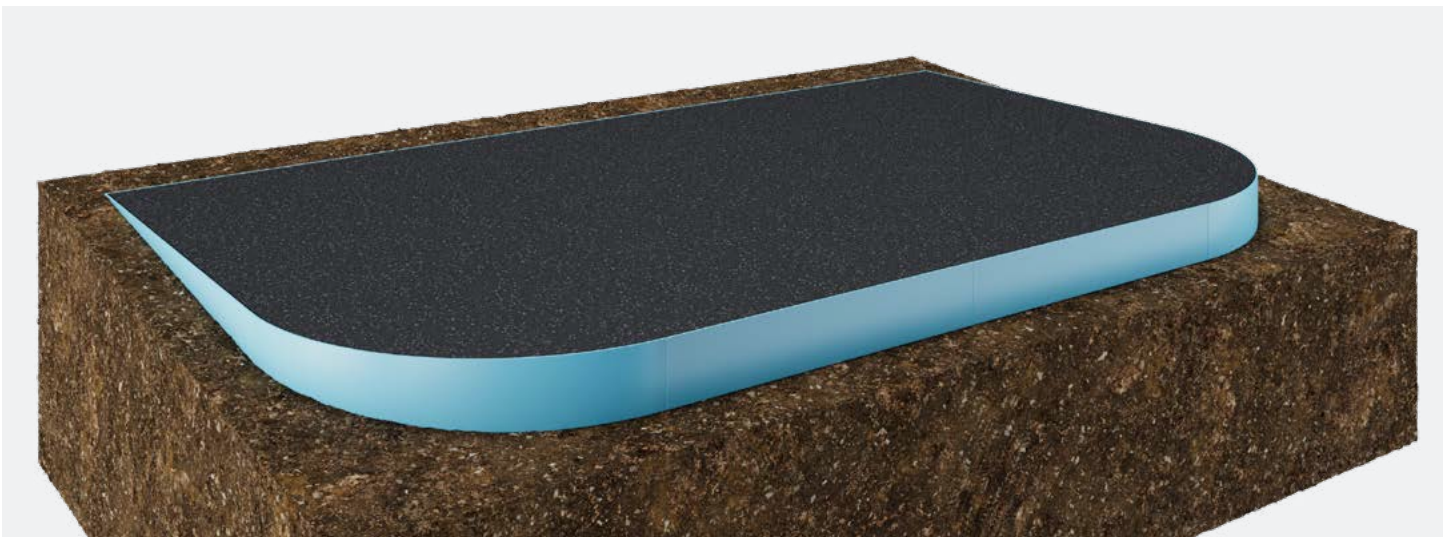
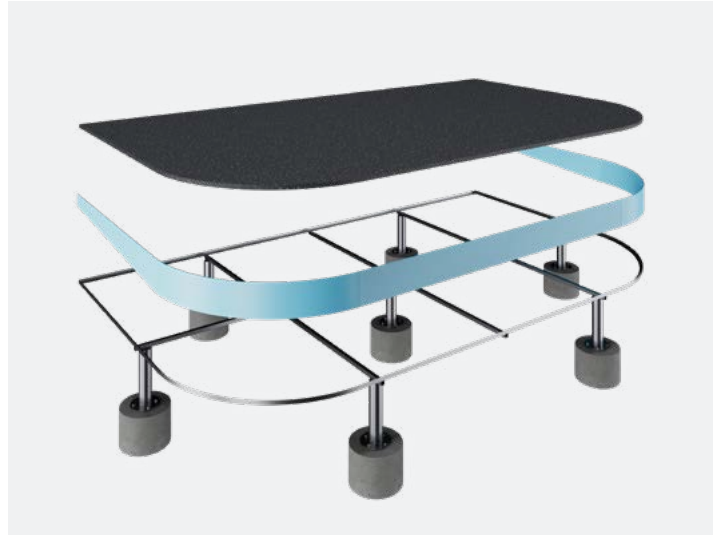
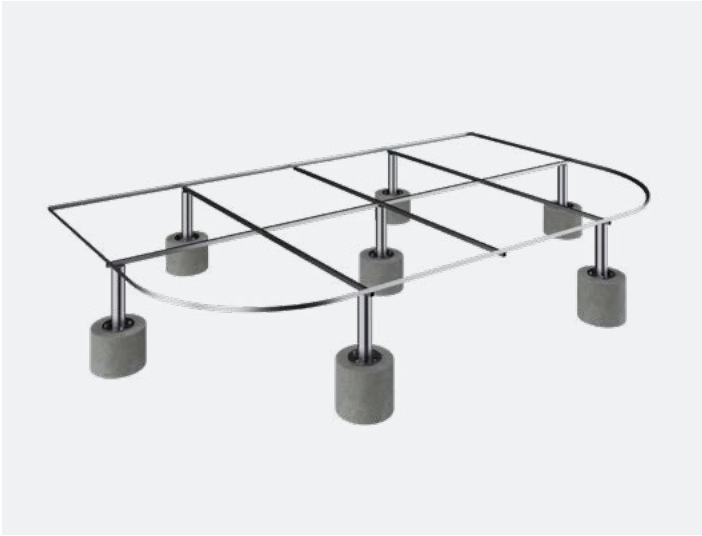


Hancock Playground

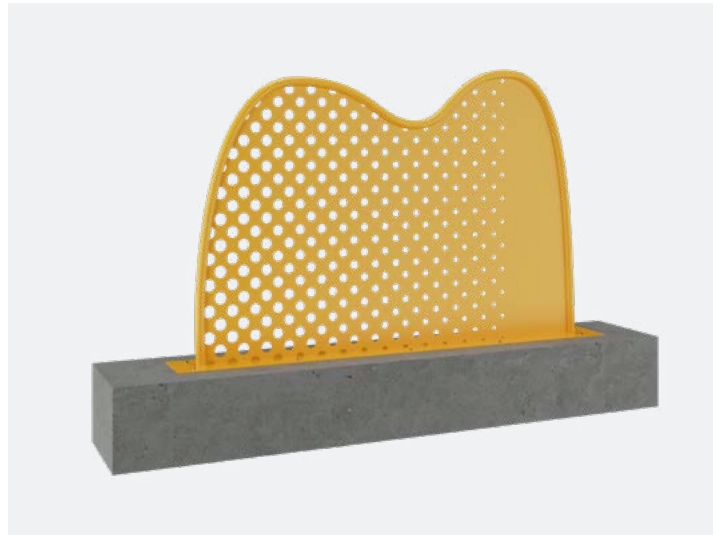
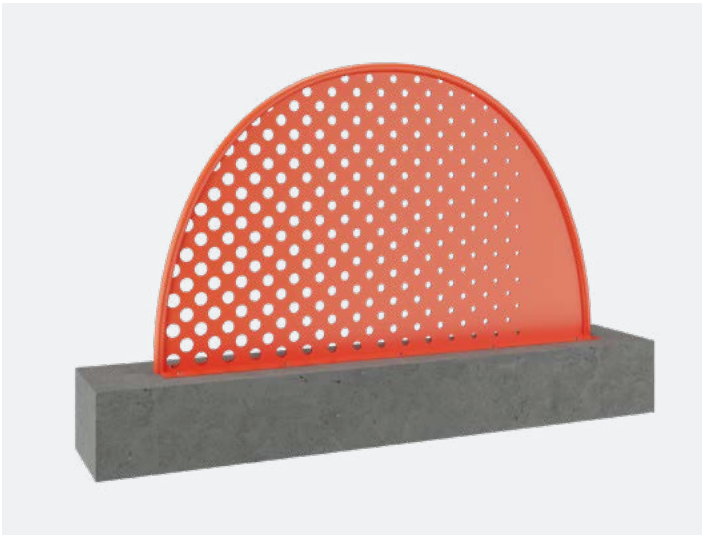
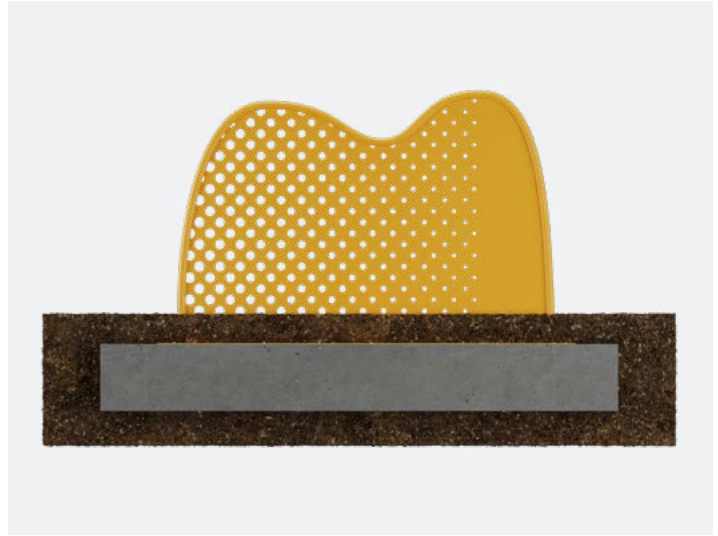


S. Phila. High School

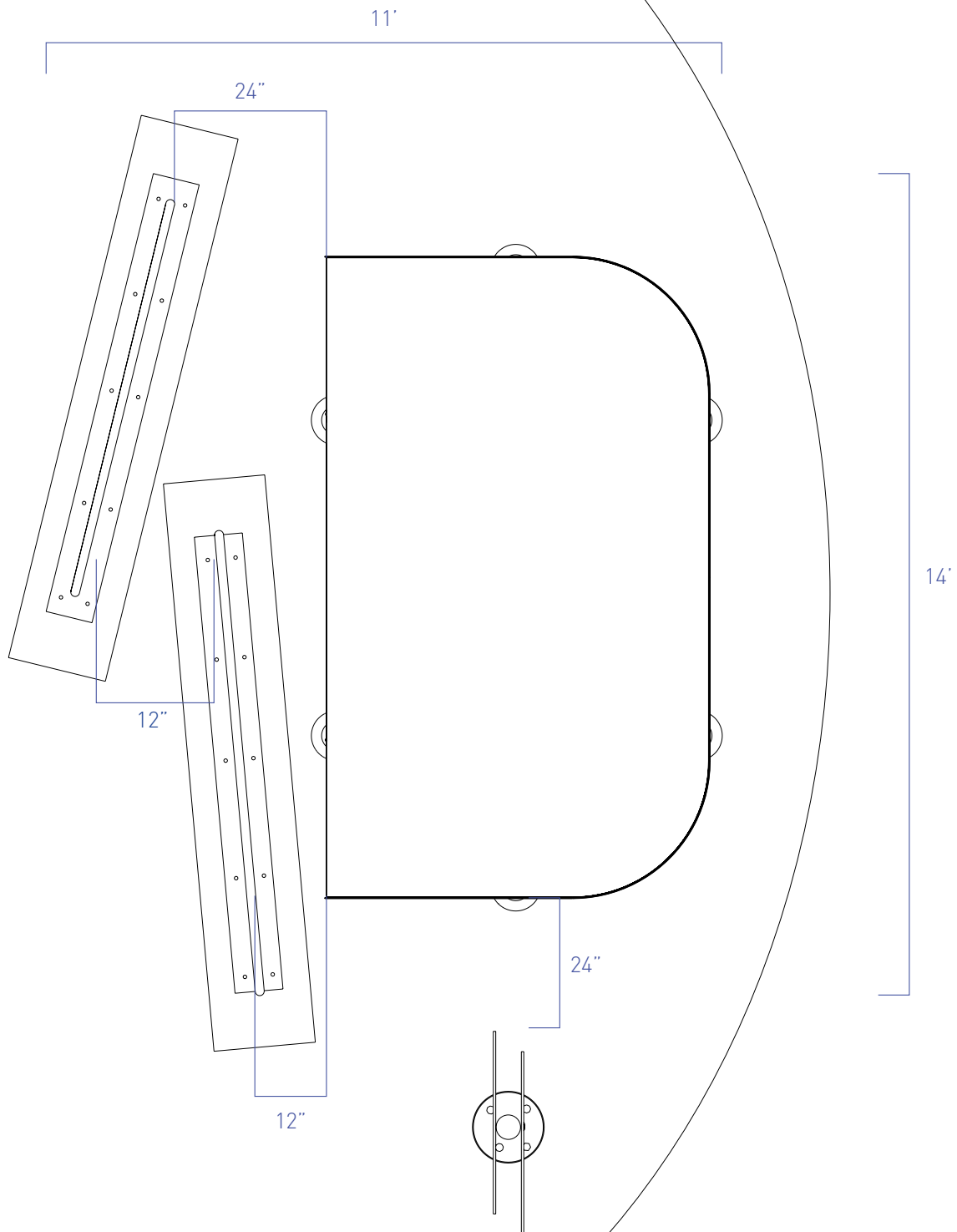
Nature Stage - Stage Framing



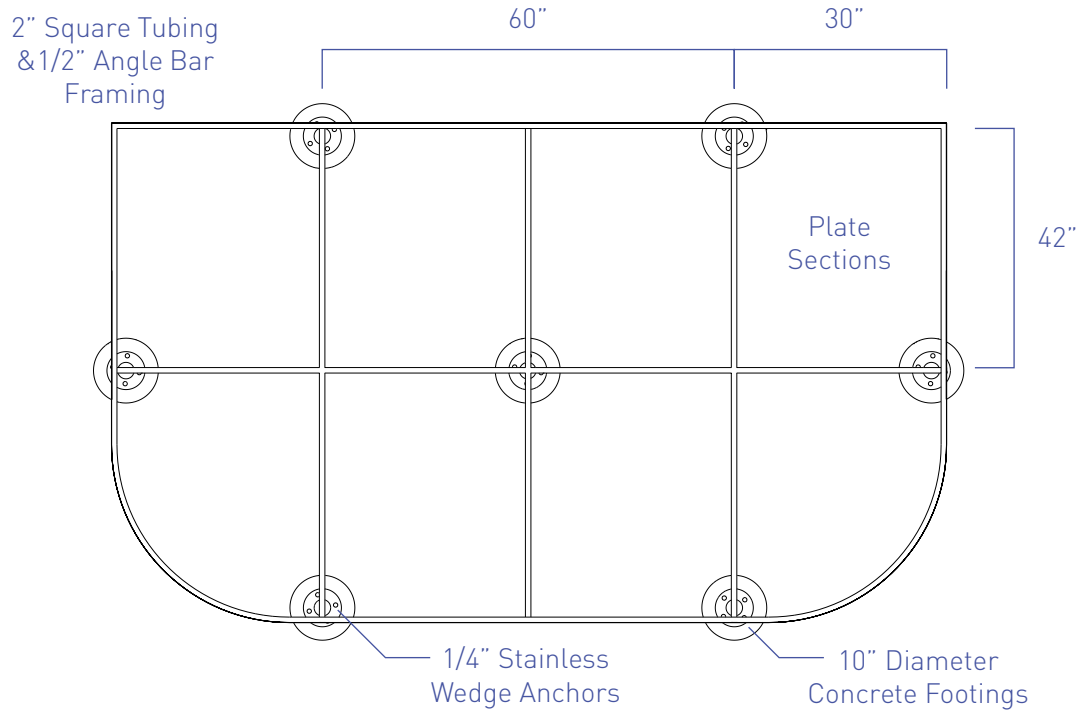
Nature Stage - Stage Backdrop Components Detail



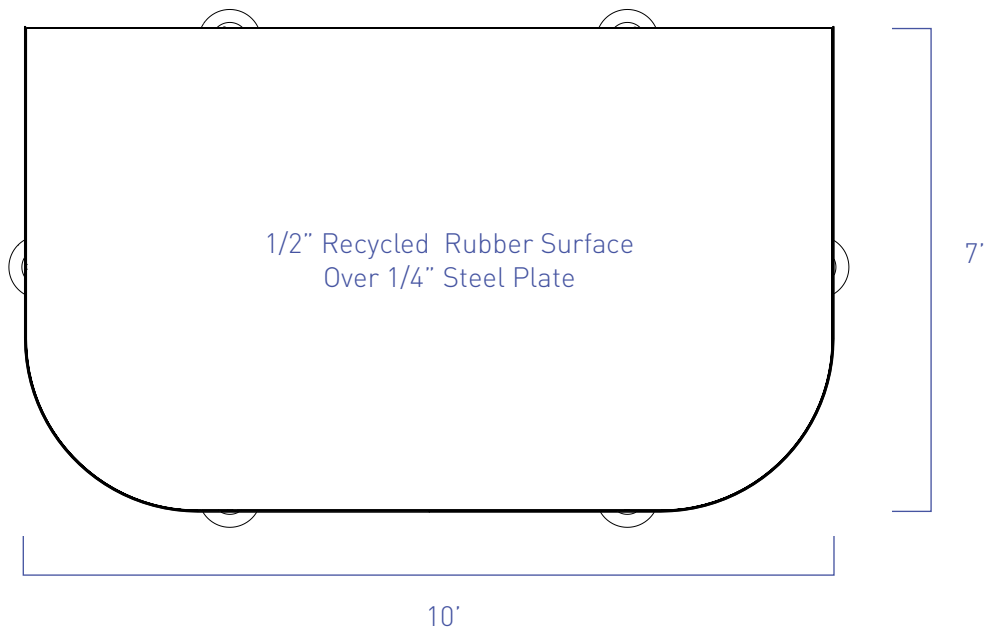
Nature Stage - Technical Drawings Overall Layout



Nature Stage - Technical Drawings Stage Top View

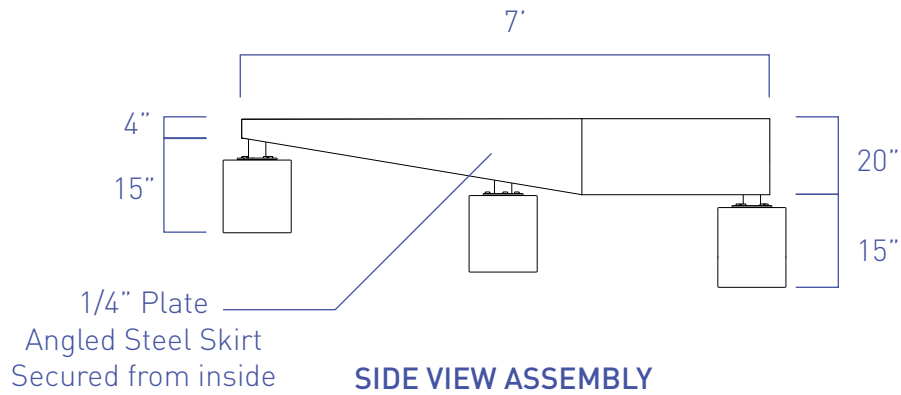
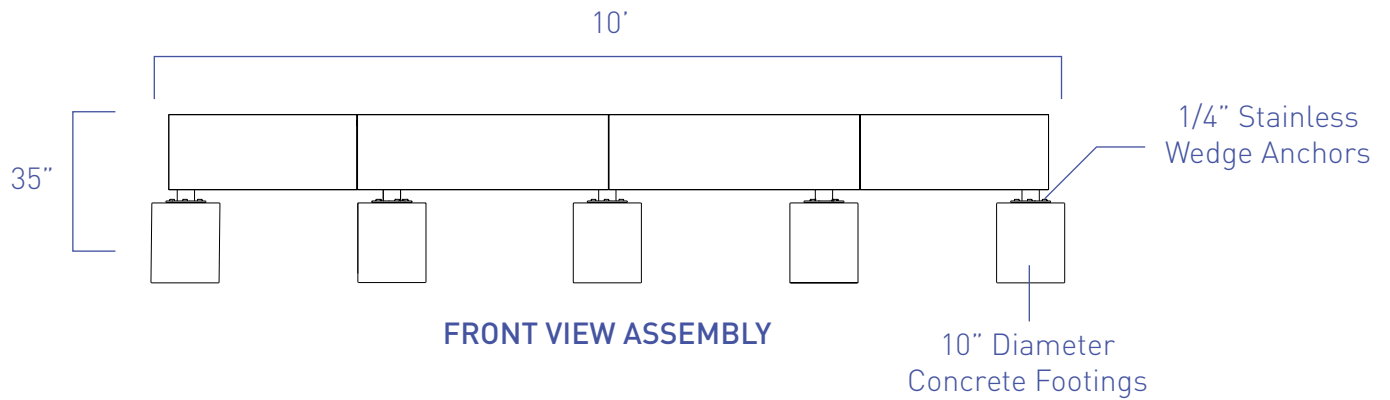


TOP VIEW ASSEMBLY

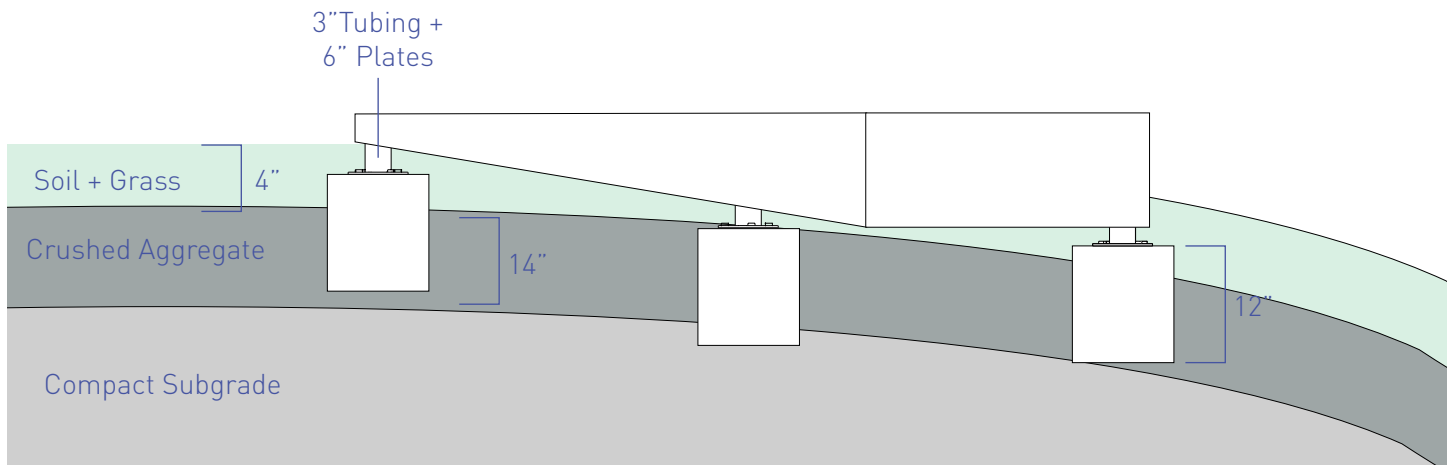


TOP VIEW

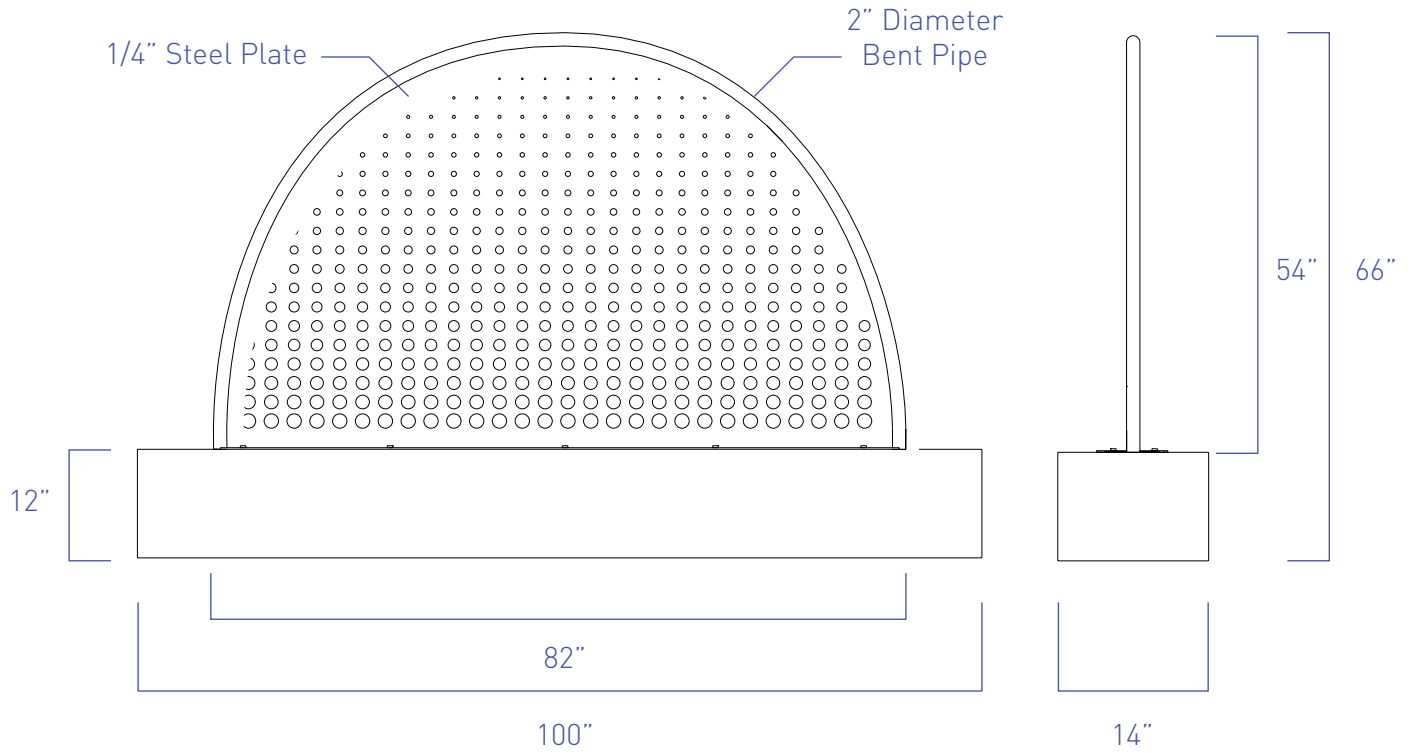
Nature Stage - Technical Drawings Stage Side & Front View



Nature Stage - Proposed Installation Stage

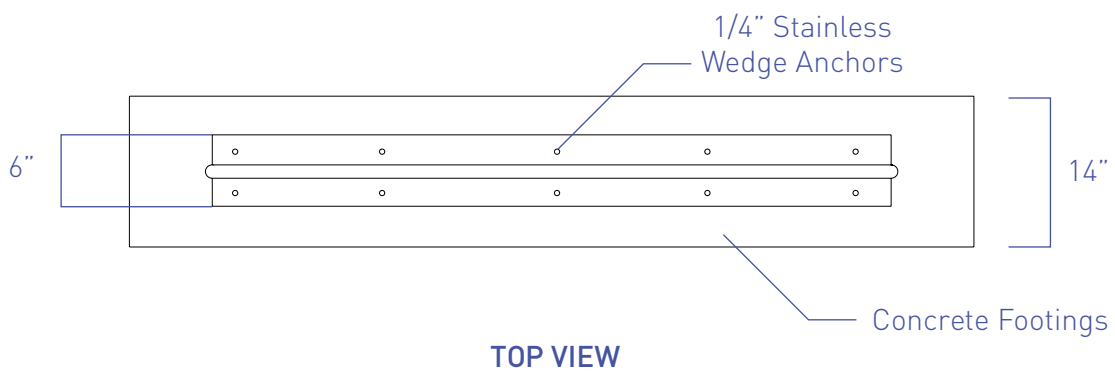


Nature Stage - Technical Drawings Round Backdrop



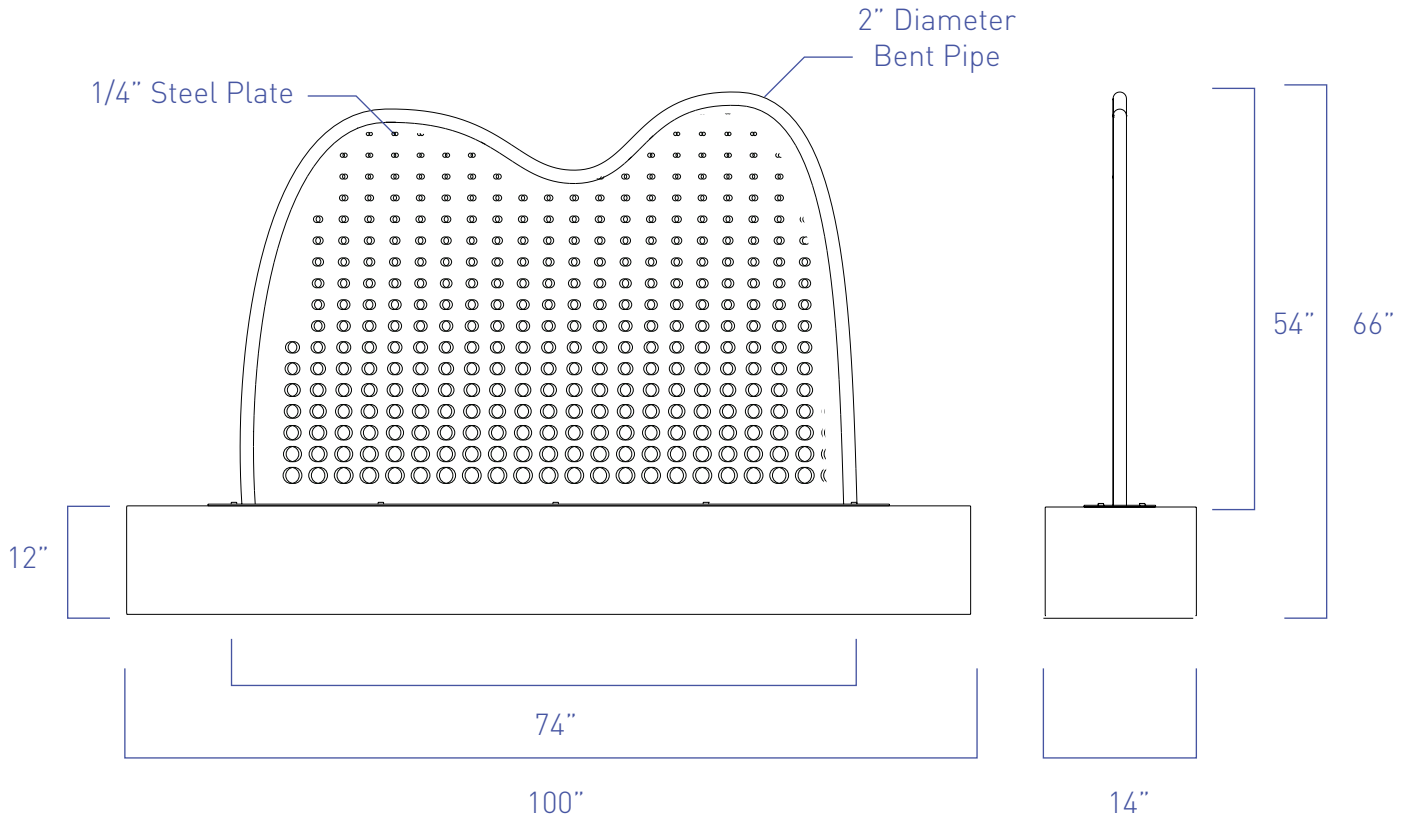
FRONT VIEWS

SIDE VIEW



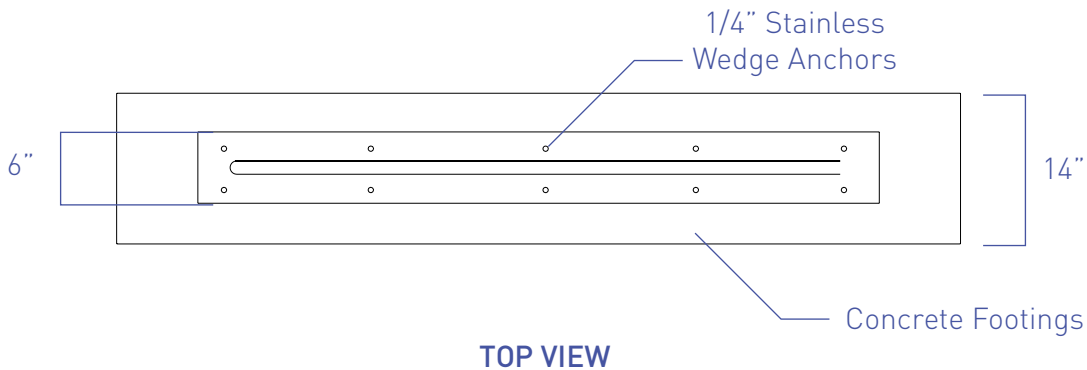
TOP VIEW

Nature Stage - Technical Drawings Squiggle Backdrop



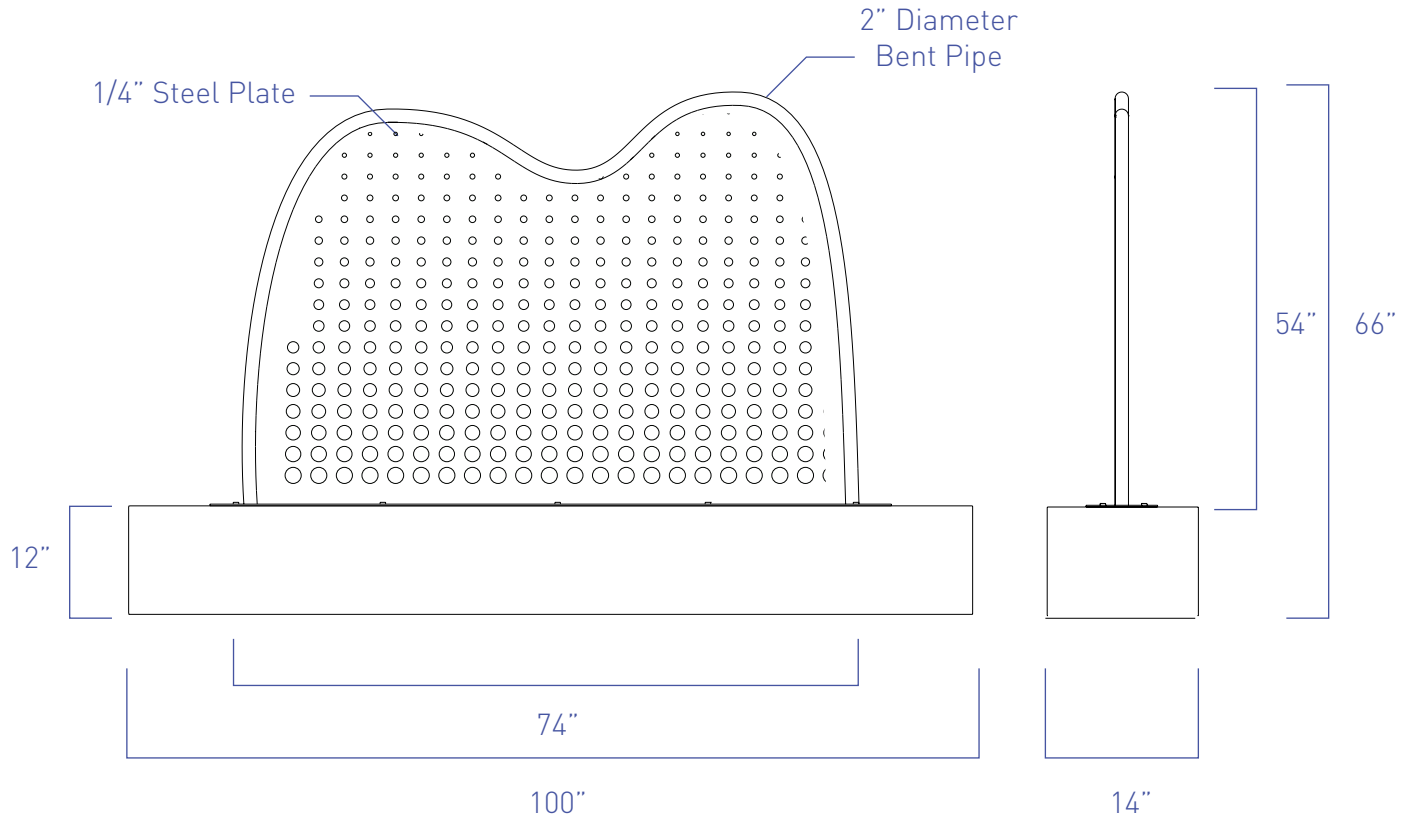
FRONT VIEWS

SIDE VIEW



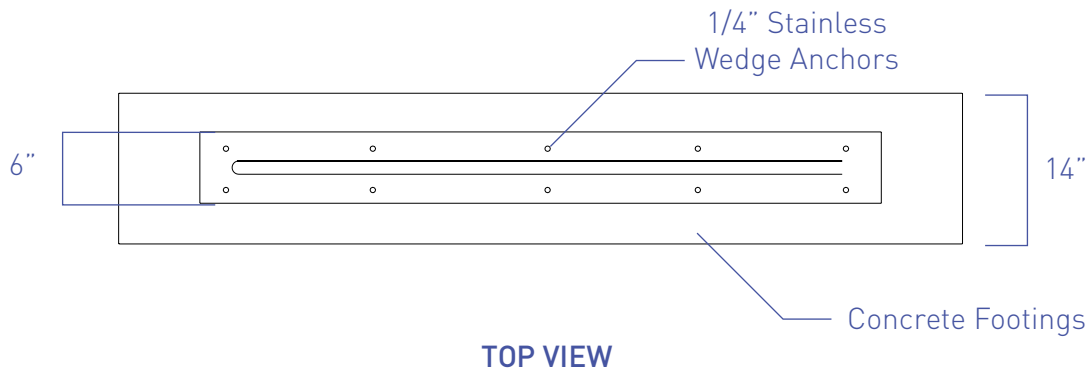
TOP VIEW

Nature Stage - Technical Drawings Squiggle Backdrop



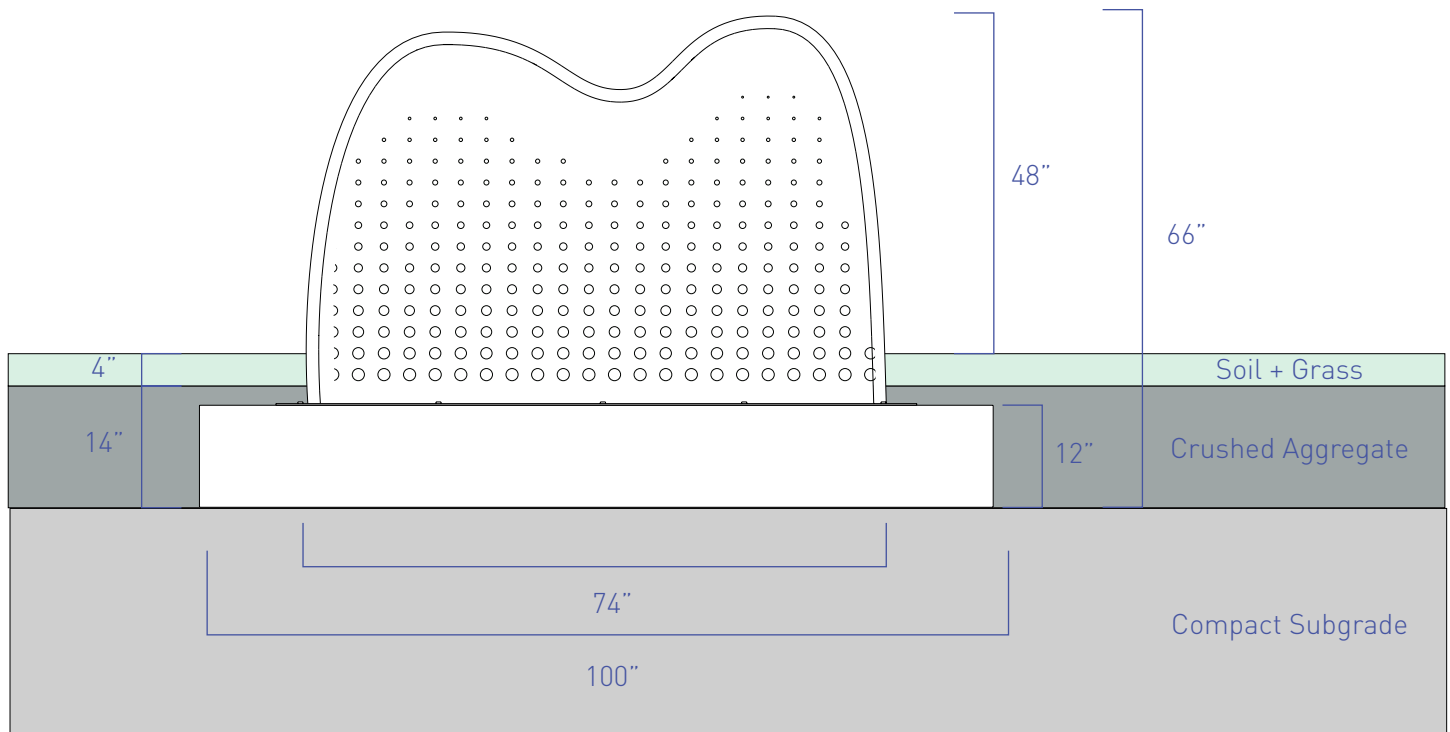
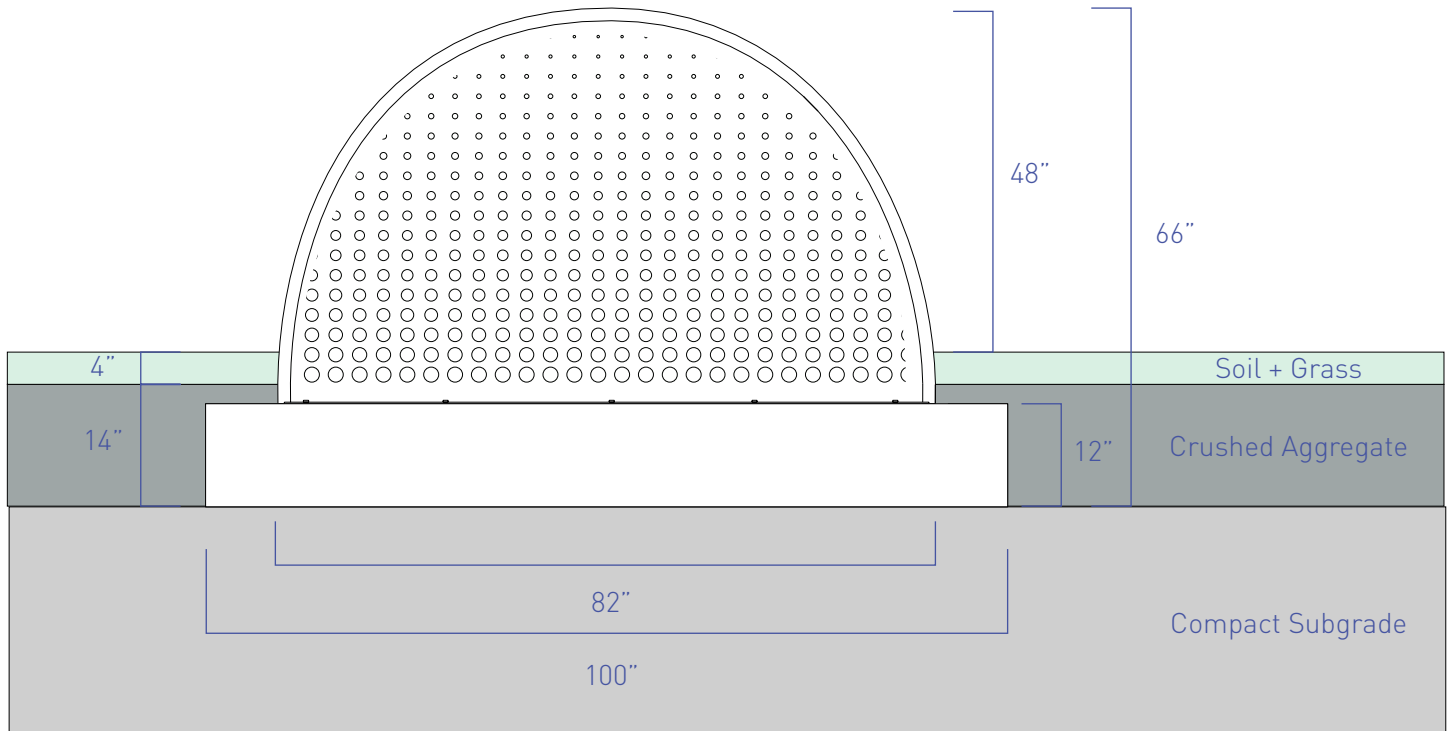
FRONT VIEWS

SIDE VIEW

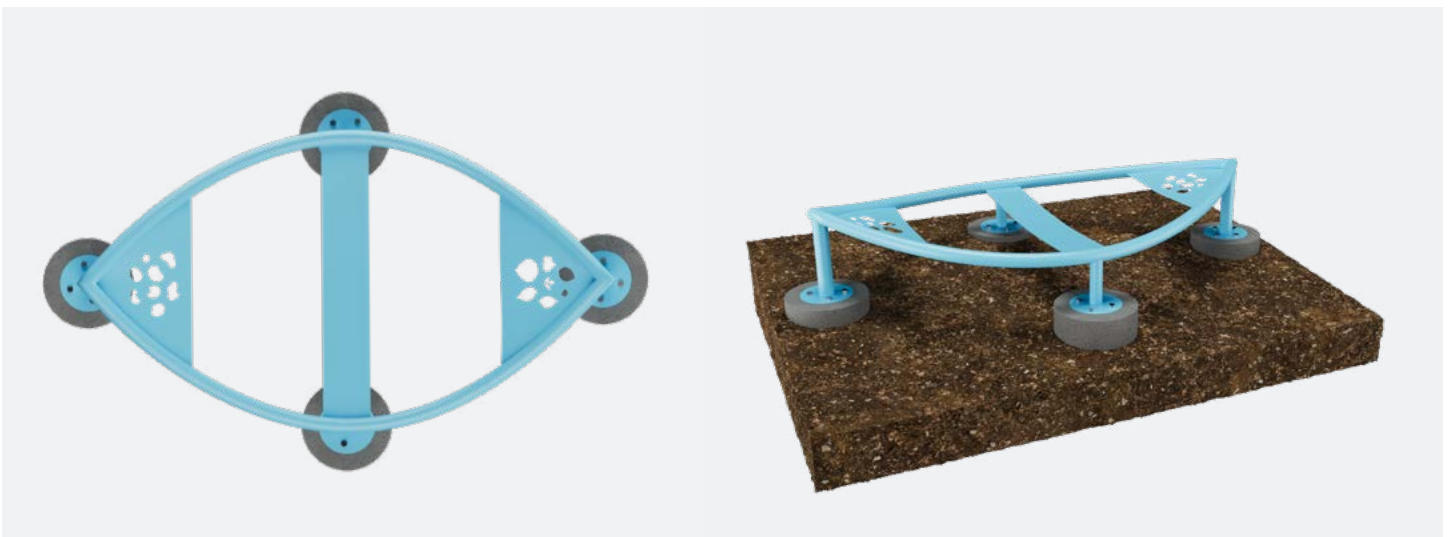


TOP VIEW

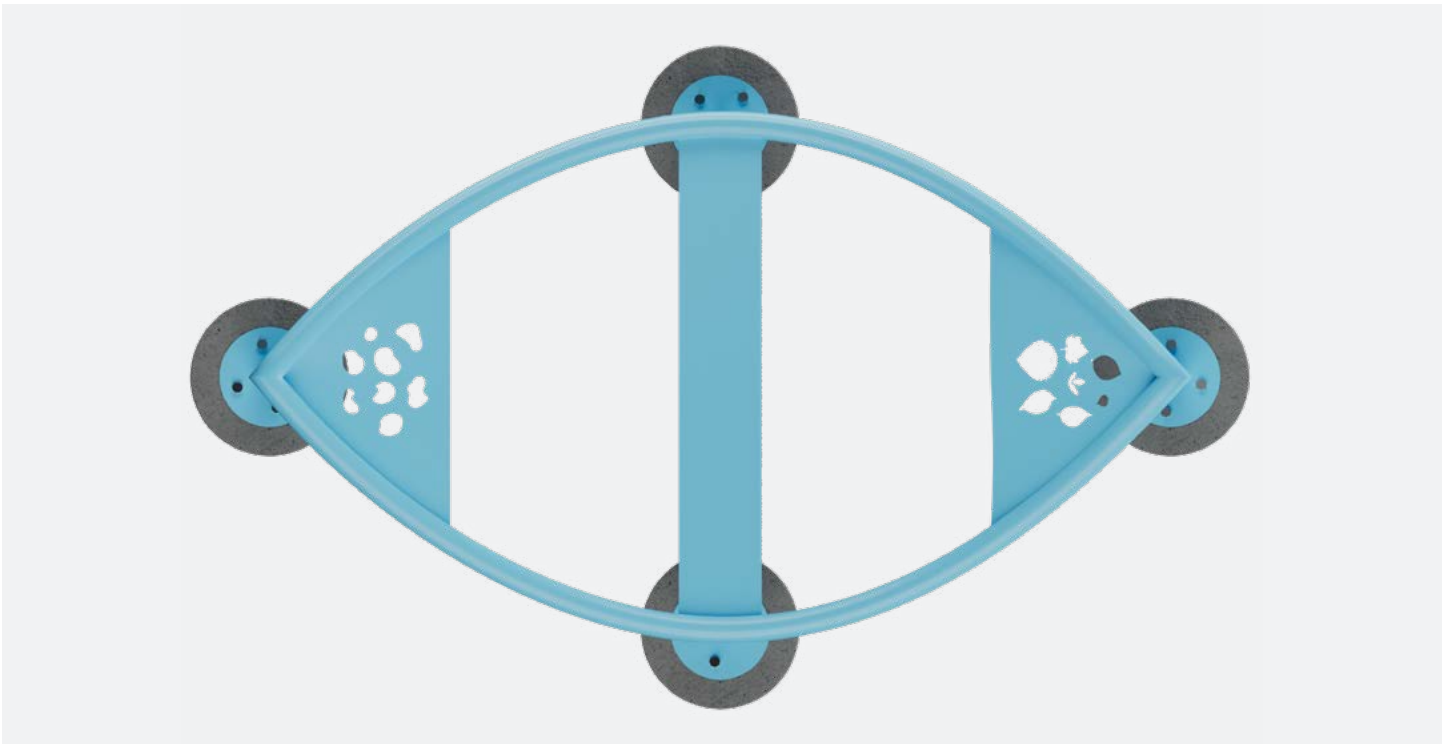
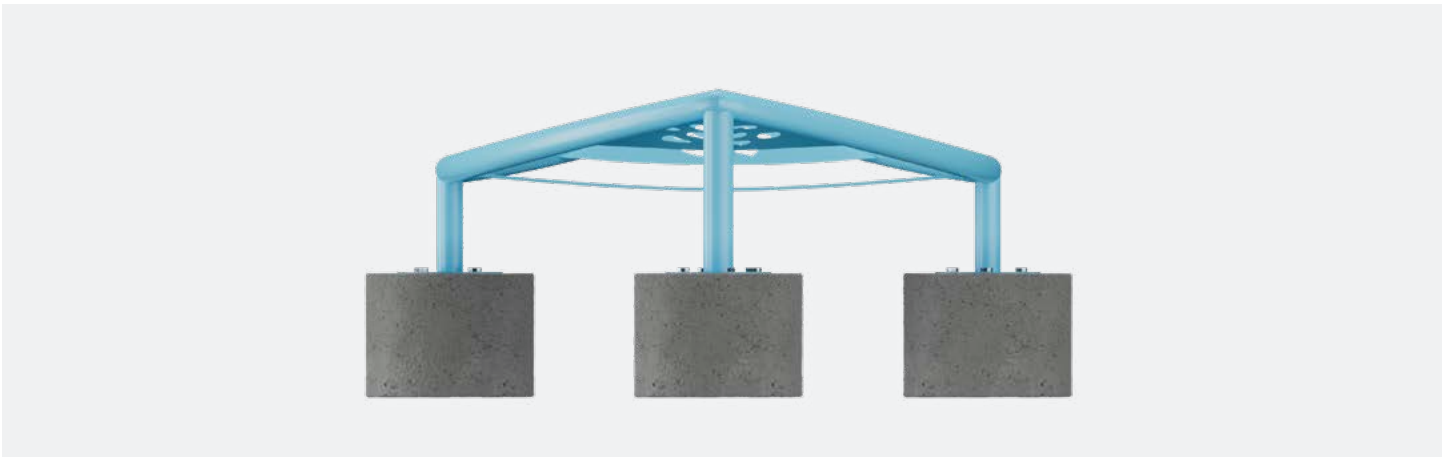
Nature Stage - Proposed Installation Method Backdrops



Riverbed Crossing - Discover Nature



Nature Stage - Canoe Detail



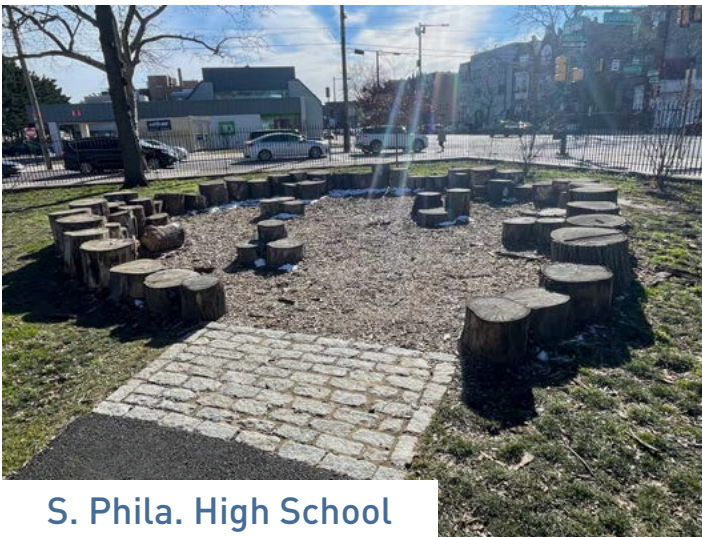
Riverbed Crossing - Precedent



The Philadelphia School



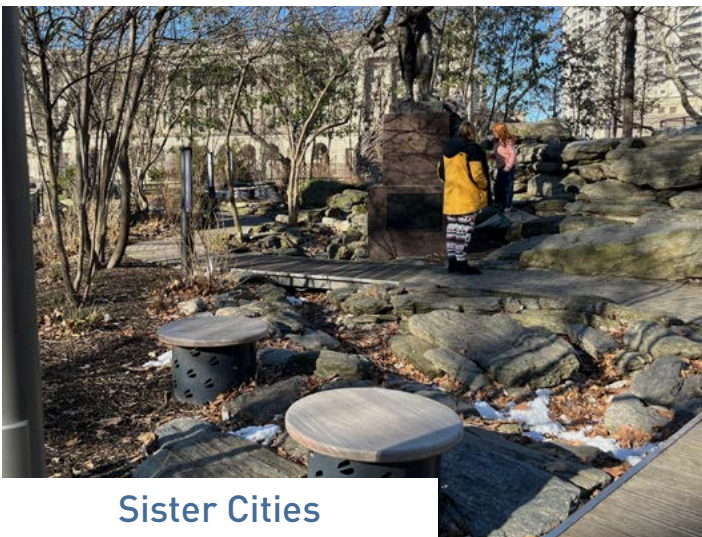
FDR Park



S. Phila. High School



S. Phila. High School

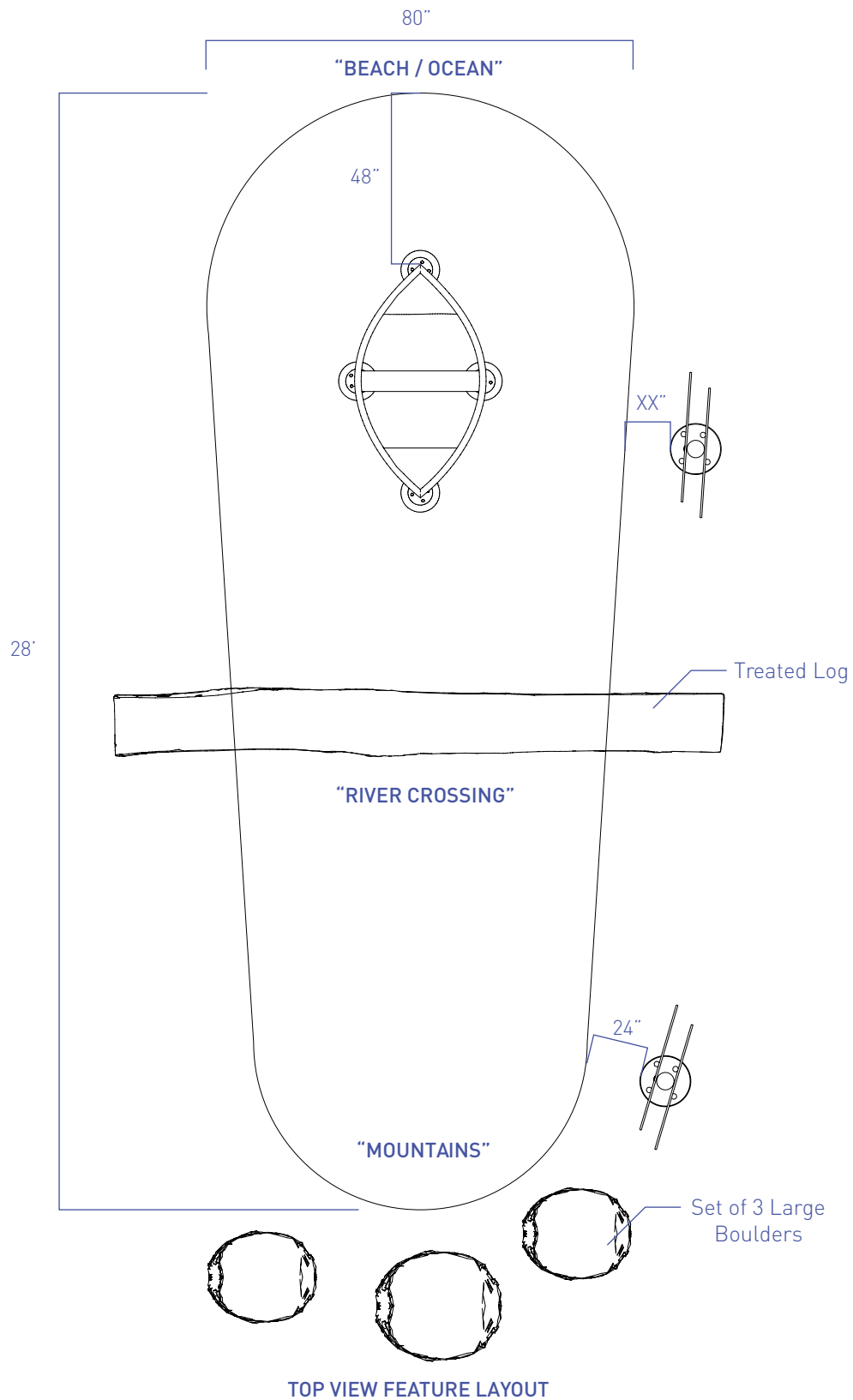


Sister Cities

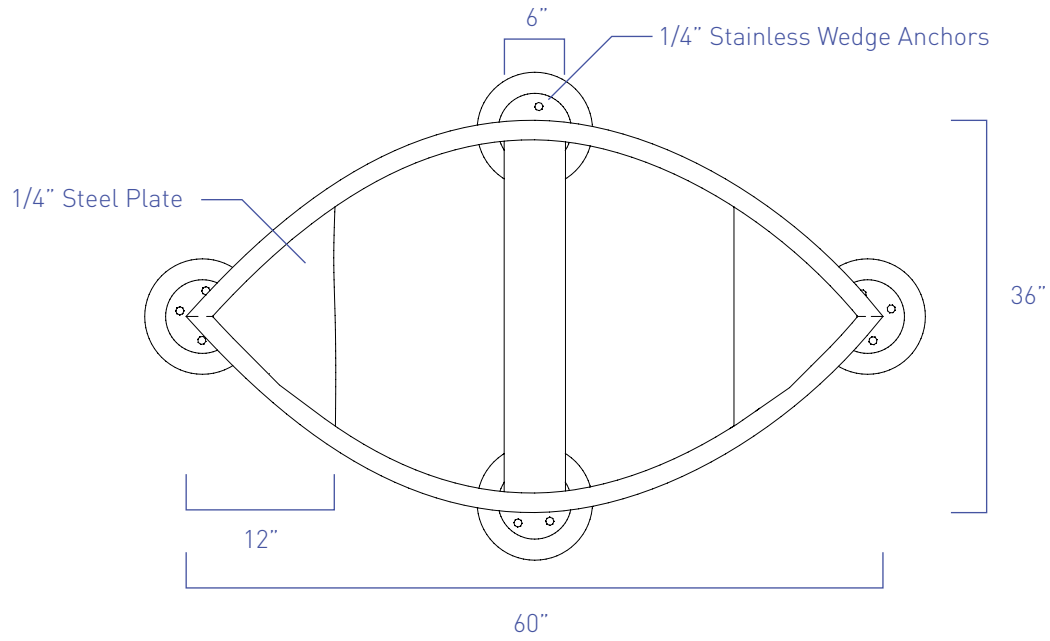


Winter Street Greenway

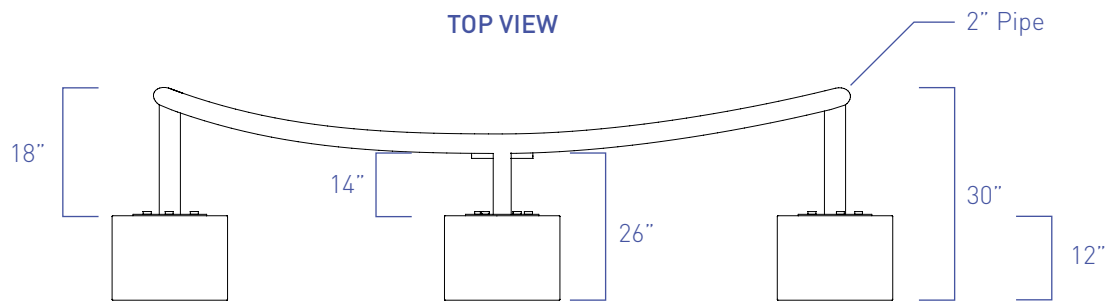
Riverbed Crossing - Technical Drawings Overall Layout



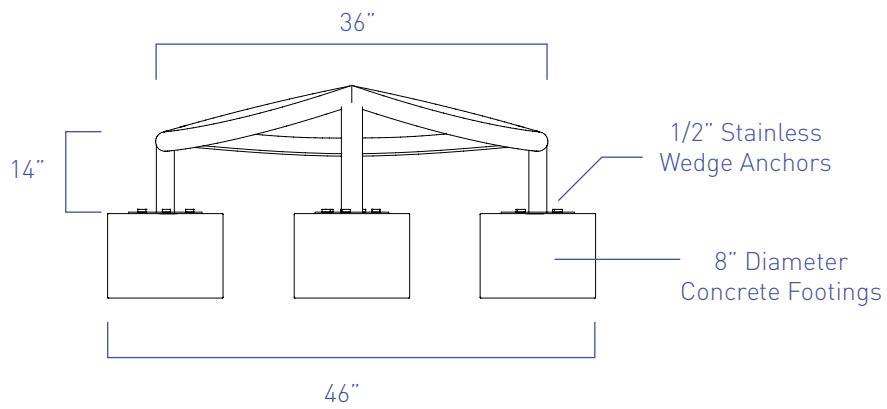
Riverbed Crossing - Technical Drawings Play Boat



TOP VIEW

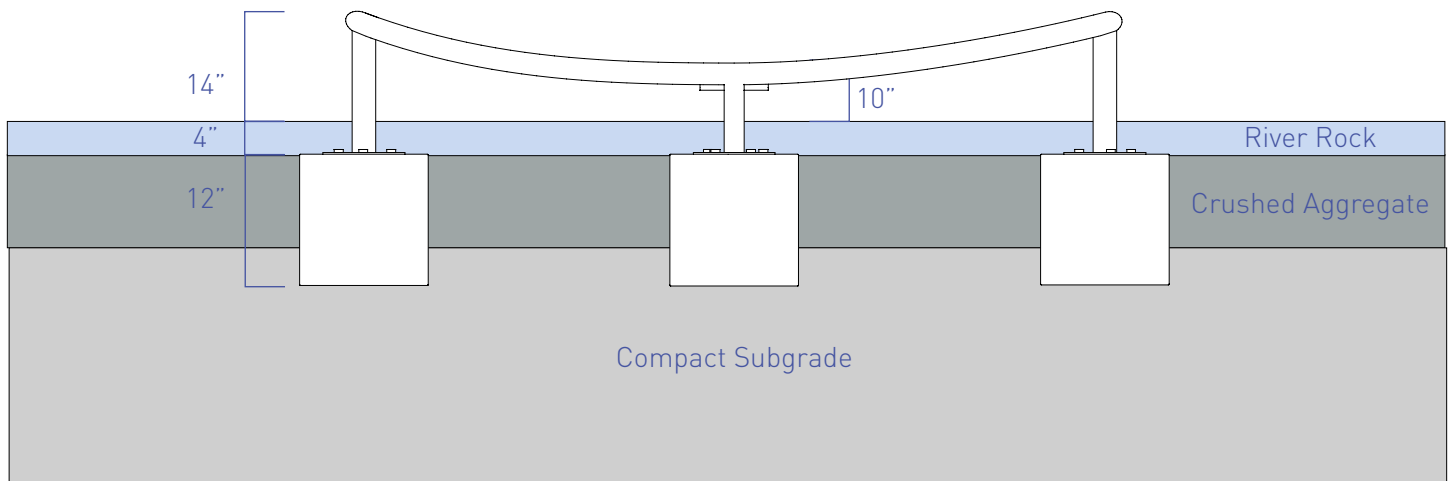


SIDE VIEW

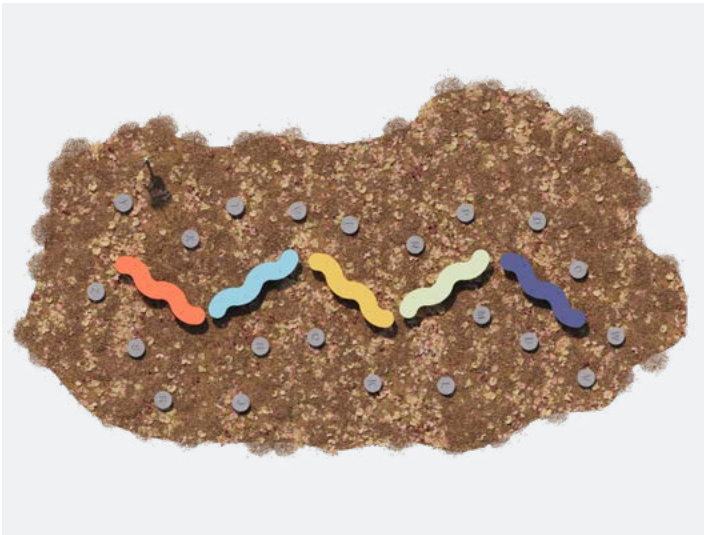


FRONT VIEW

Riverbed Crossing - Proposed Installation Method



ZigZag Beams - Balancing Mind & Body



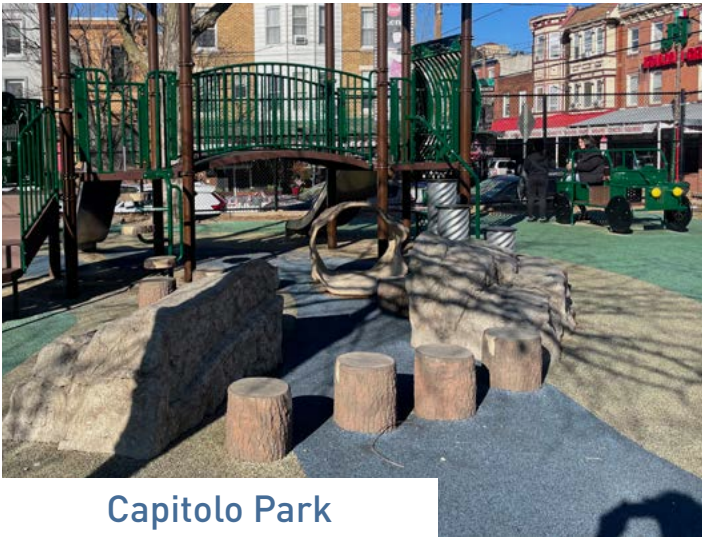
ZigZag Beams - Precedent



Seger Playground



Frankford Friends



Capitolo Park



E. Penitentiary P.G.

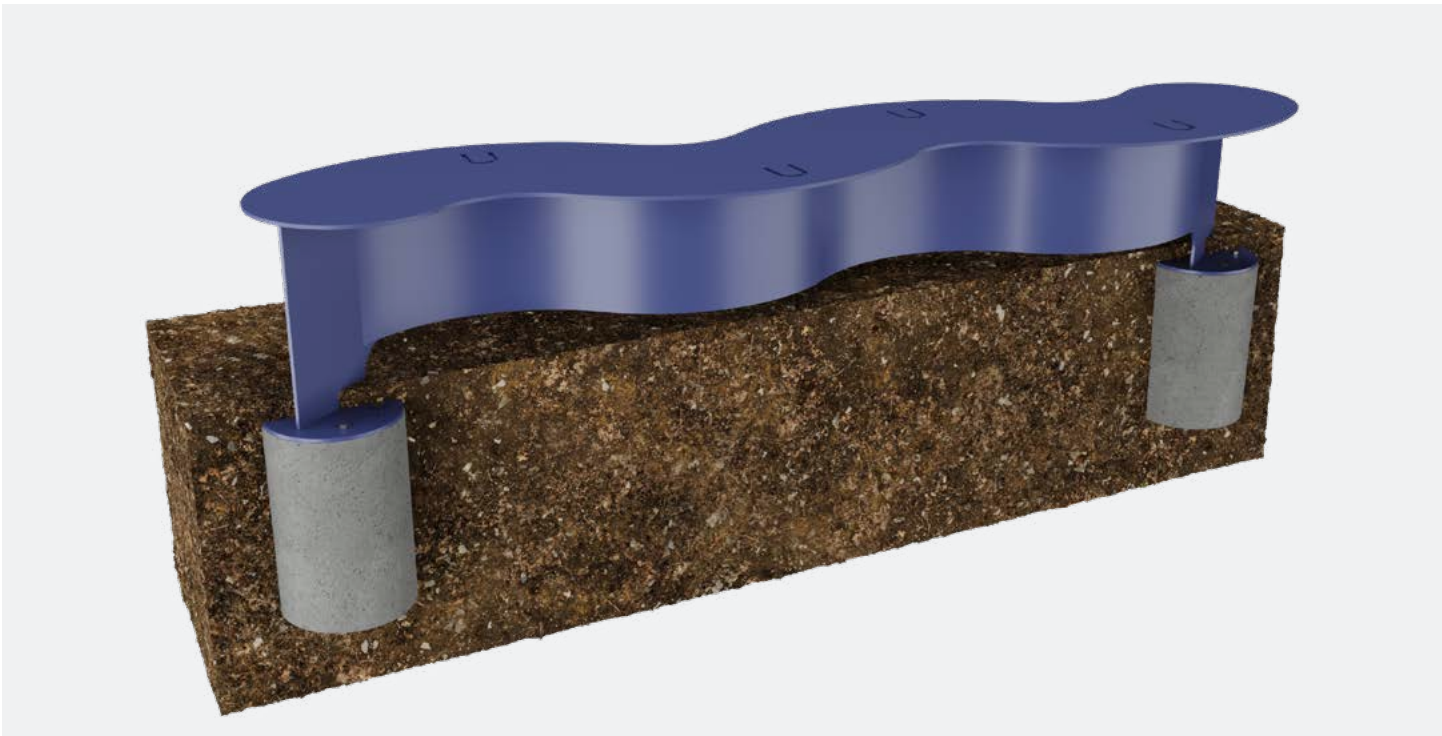
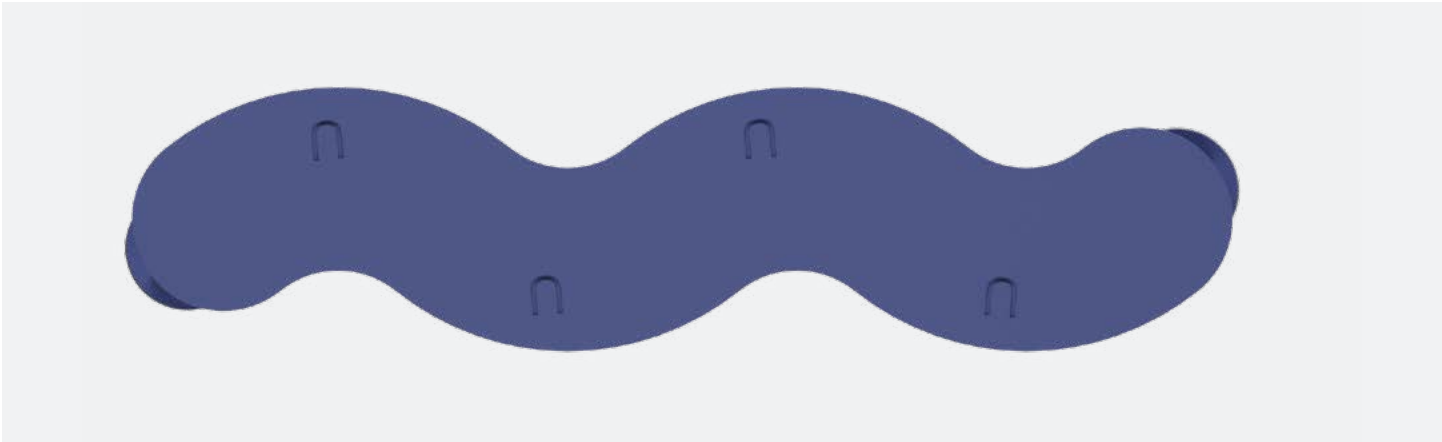


Awbury Arboretum

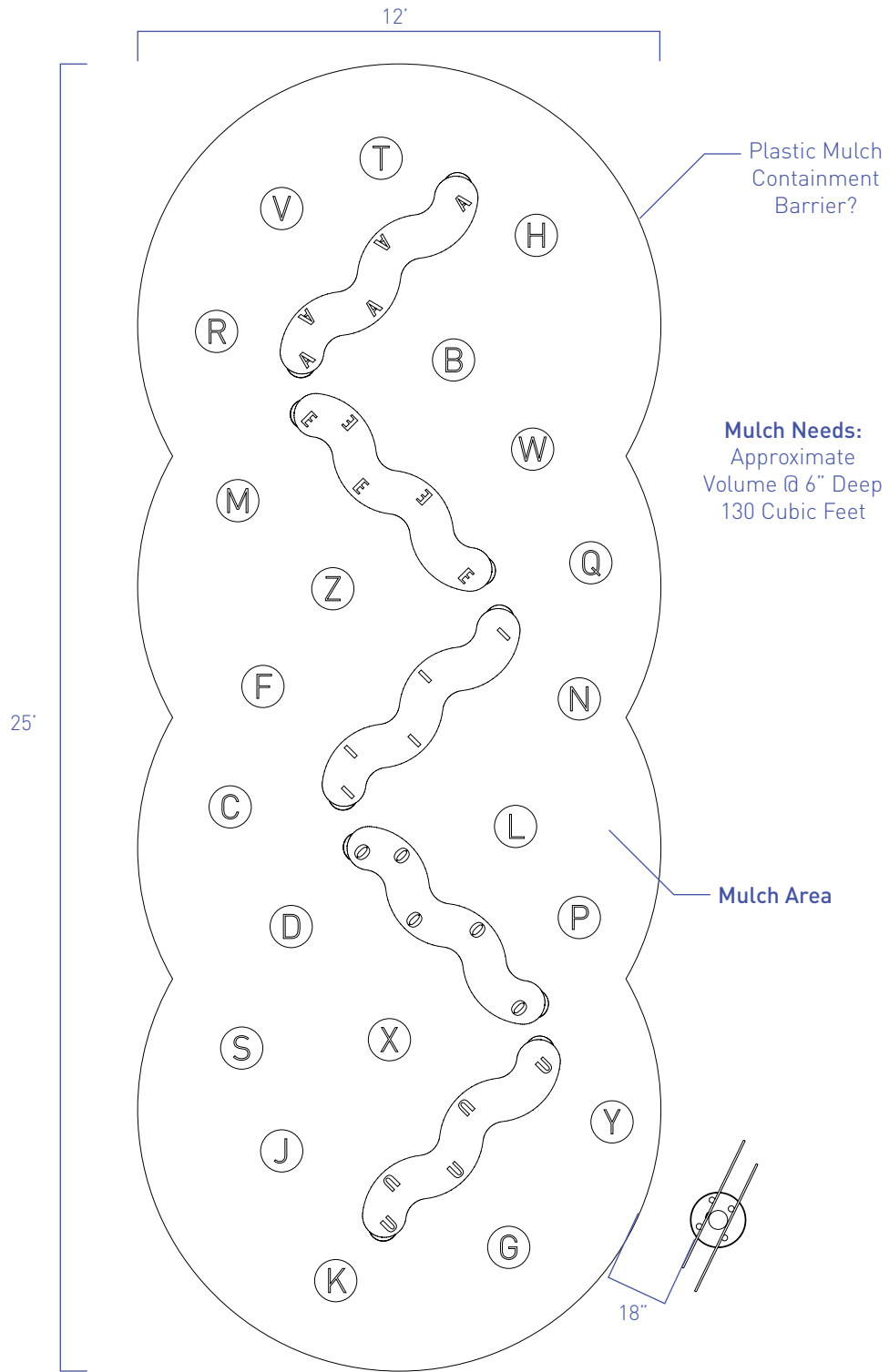


FDR Park

ZigZag Beams - Component Detail

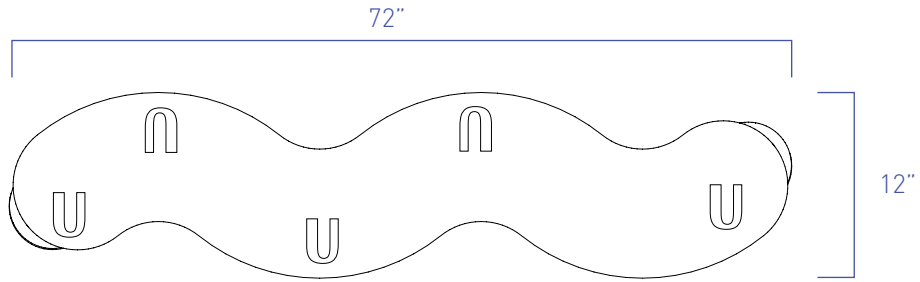


ZigZag Beams - Technical Drawings Overall Layout



TOP VIEW FEATURE LAYOUT

ZigZag Beams - Technical Drawings

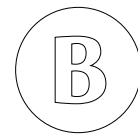


TOP VIEW

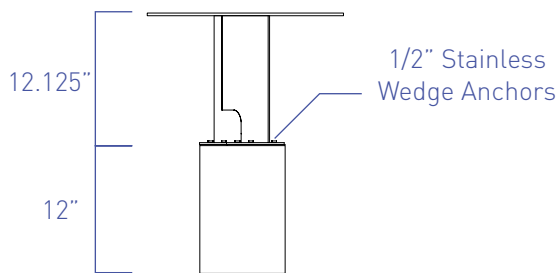


SIDE VIEW

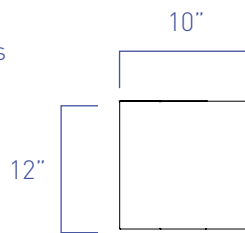
CONSONANTS



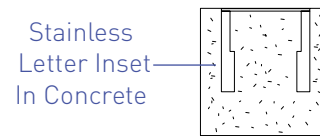
TOP VIEW



FRONT VIEW

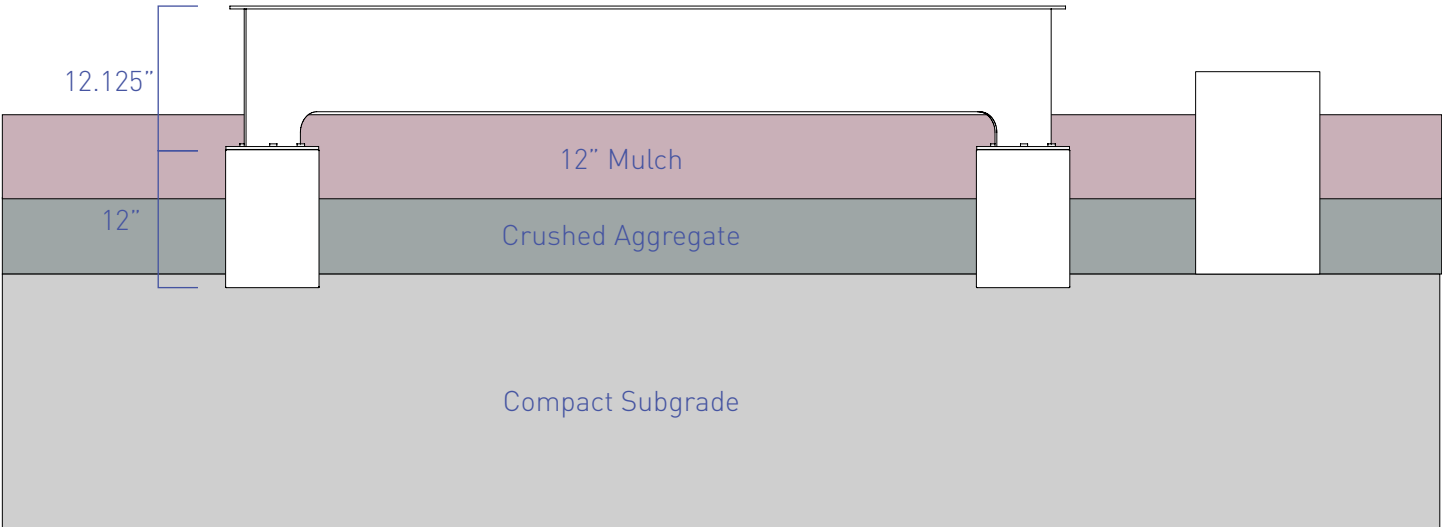


FRONT VIEW

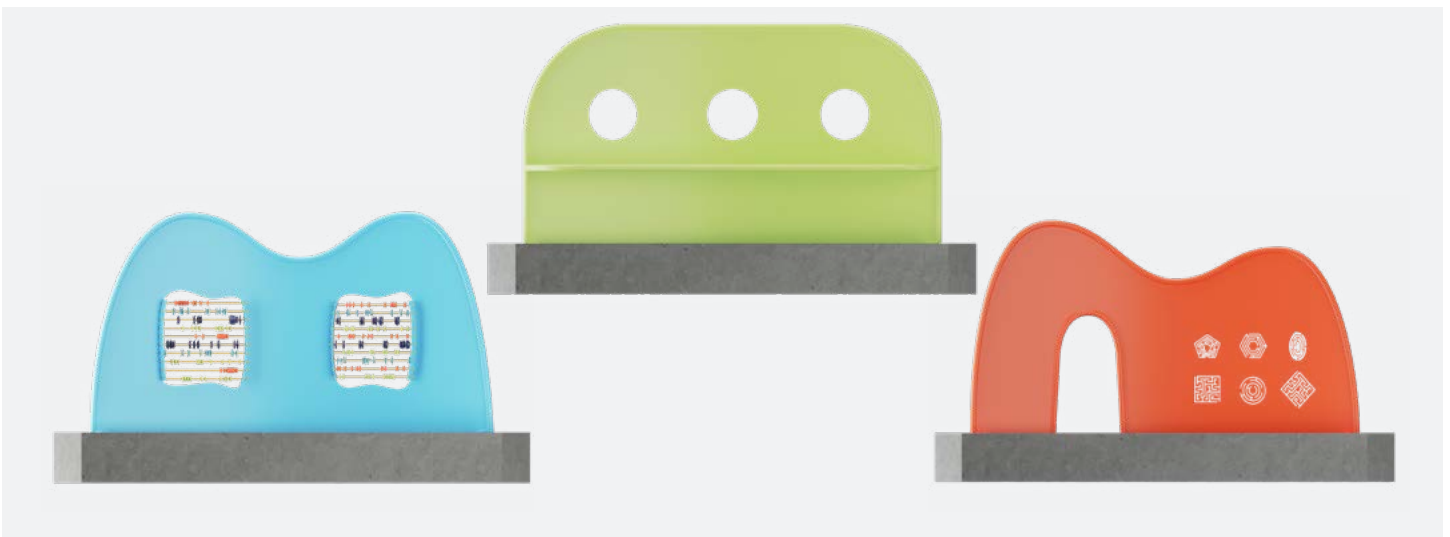


CROSS SECTION

ZigZag Beams - Proposed Installation Method



Play Village - Imaginary Play



Play Village - Abacus Station Detail



Play Village - Tactile Maze Detail



Play Village - Windows Detail



Play Village - Precedent



FDR Park



Hancock Playground



Northwood Park



Piedmont Park Atlanta

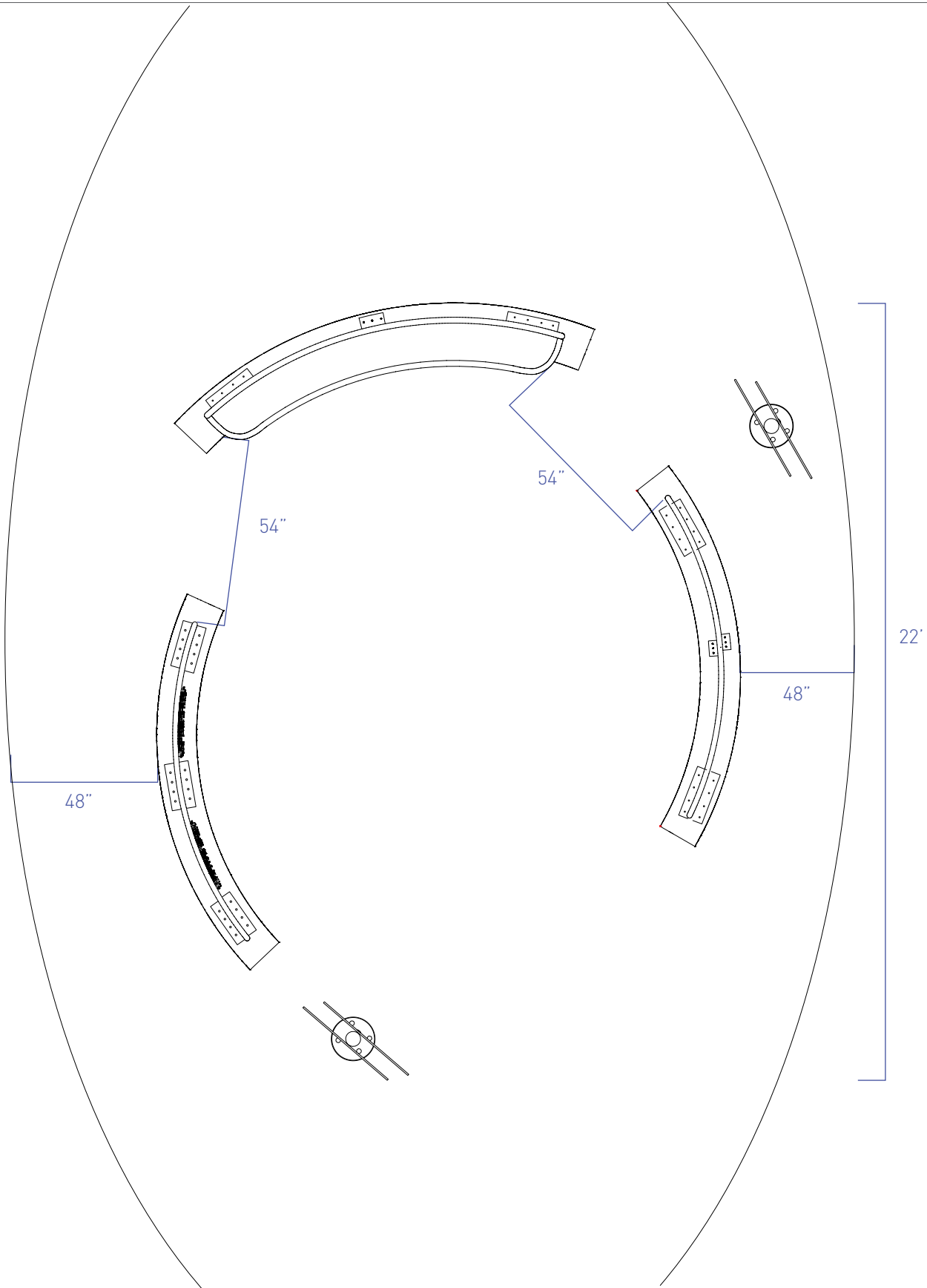


Helen Diller San Fran

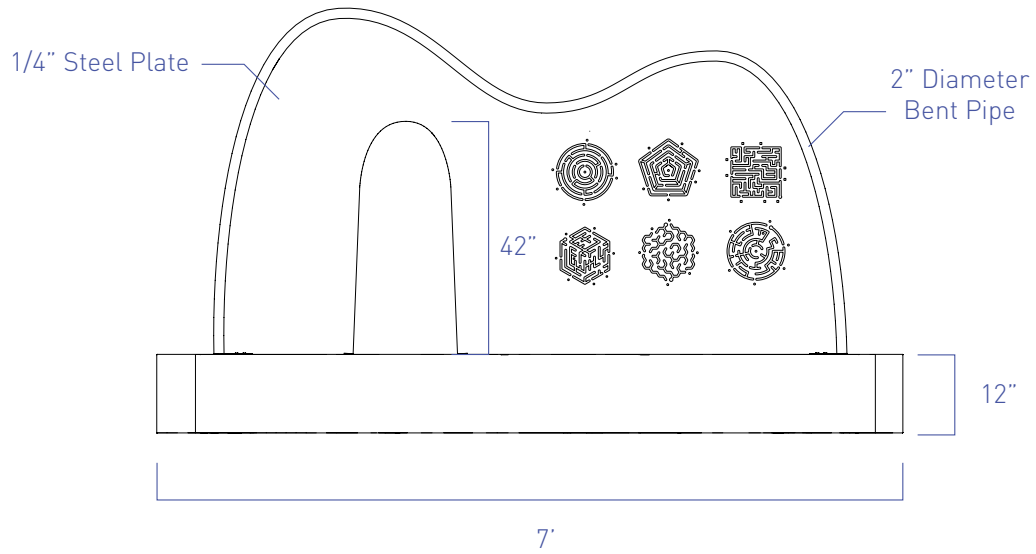


Urban Conga Cleveland

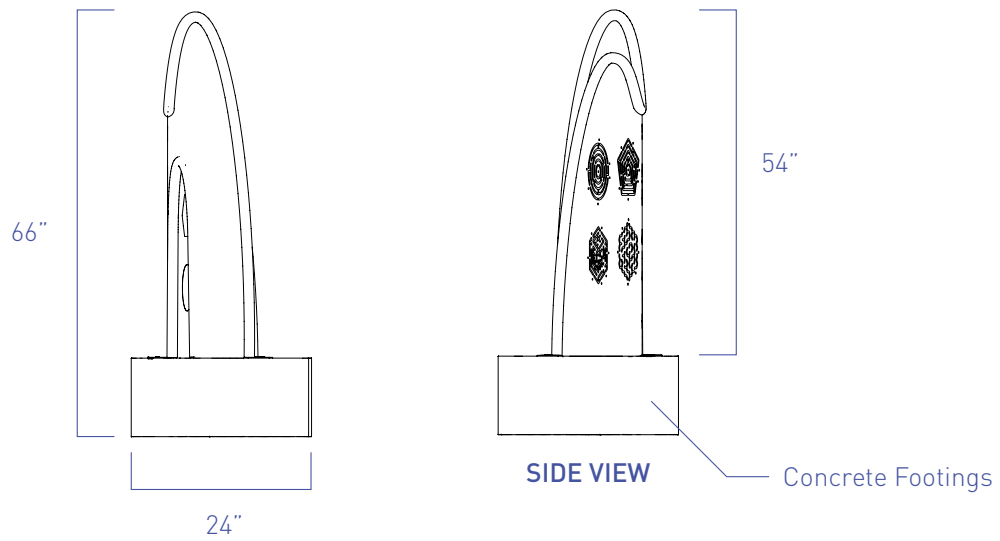
Play Village - Technical Drawings Overall Layout



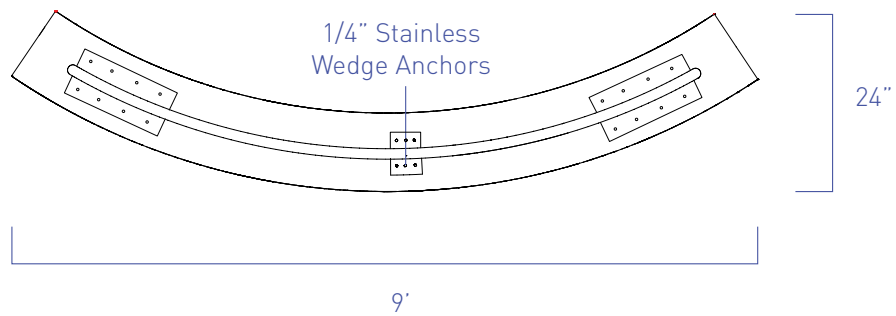
Play Village - Technical Drawings Tactile Maze Wall



FRONT VIEW

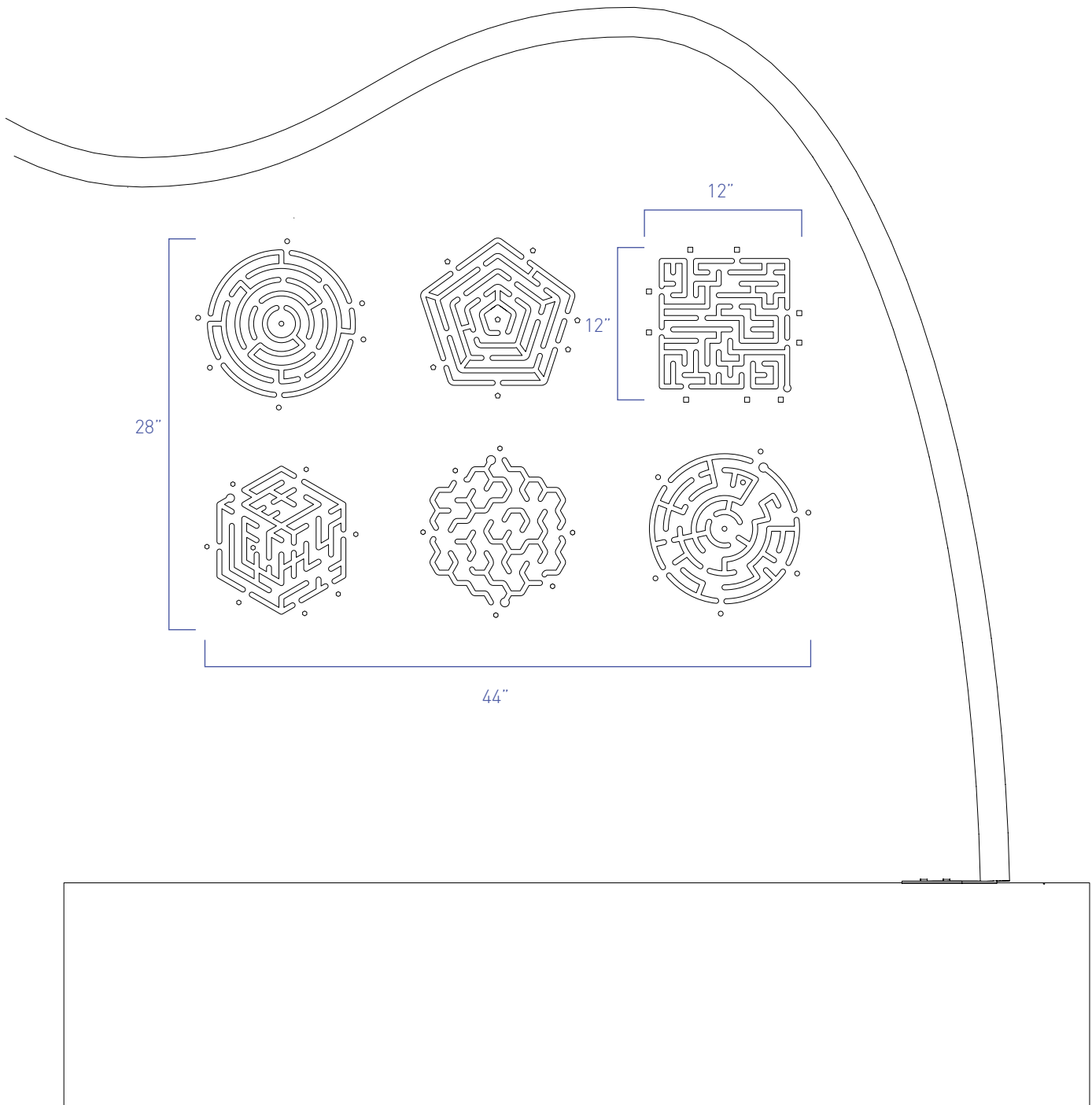


SIDE VIEW

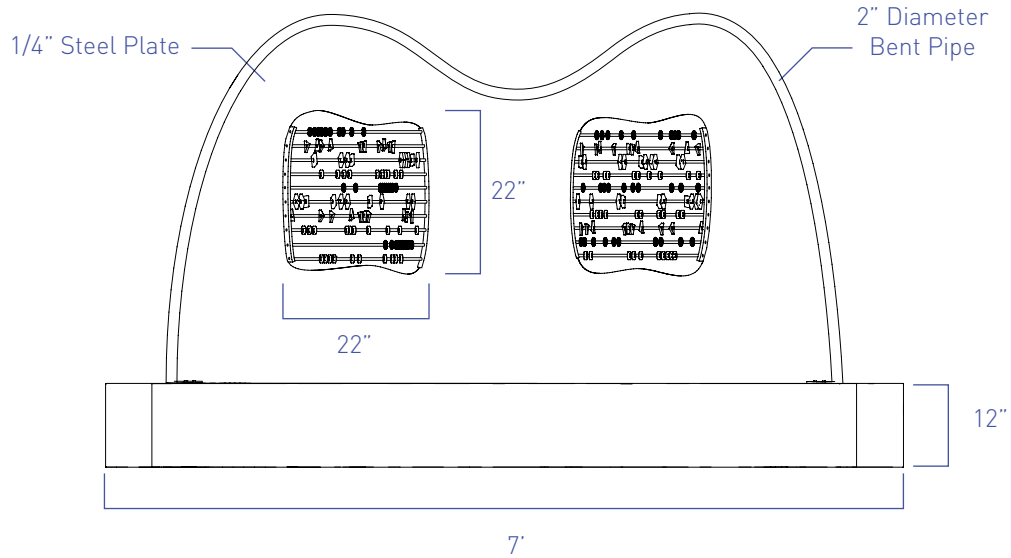


TOP VIEW

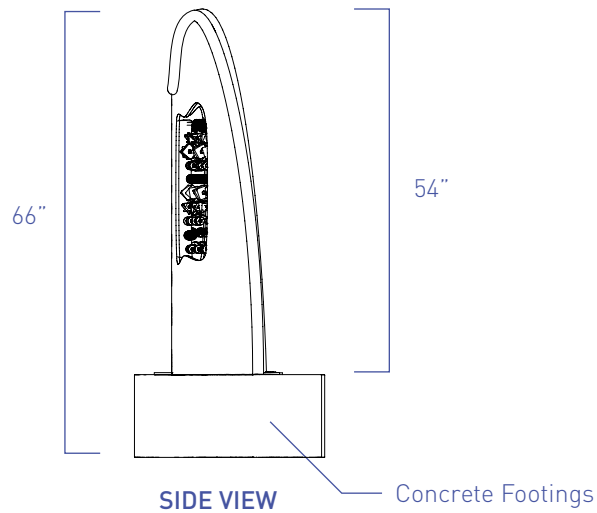
Play Village - Technical Drawings Tactile Maze Wall Detail



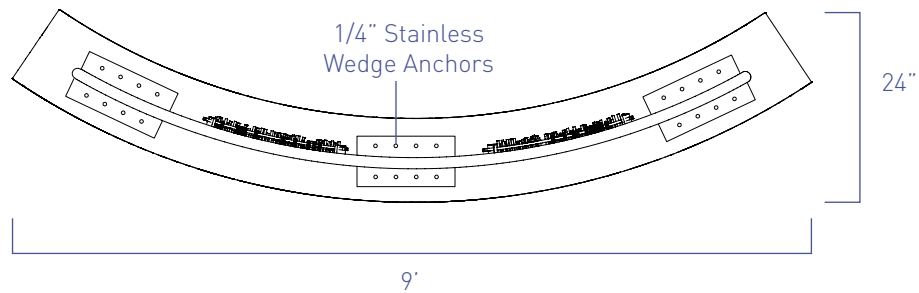
Play Village - Technical Drawings Abacus Wall



FRONT VIEW

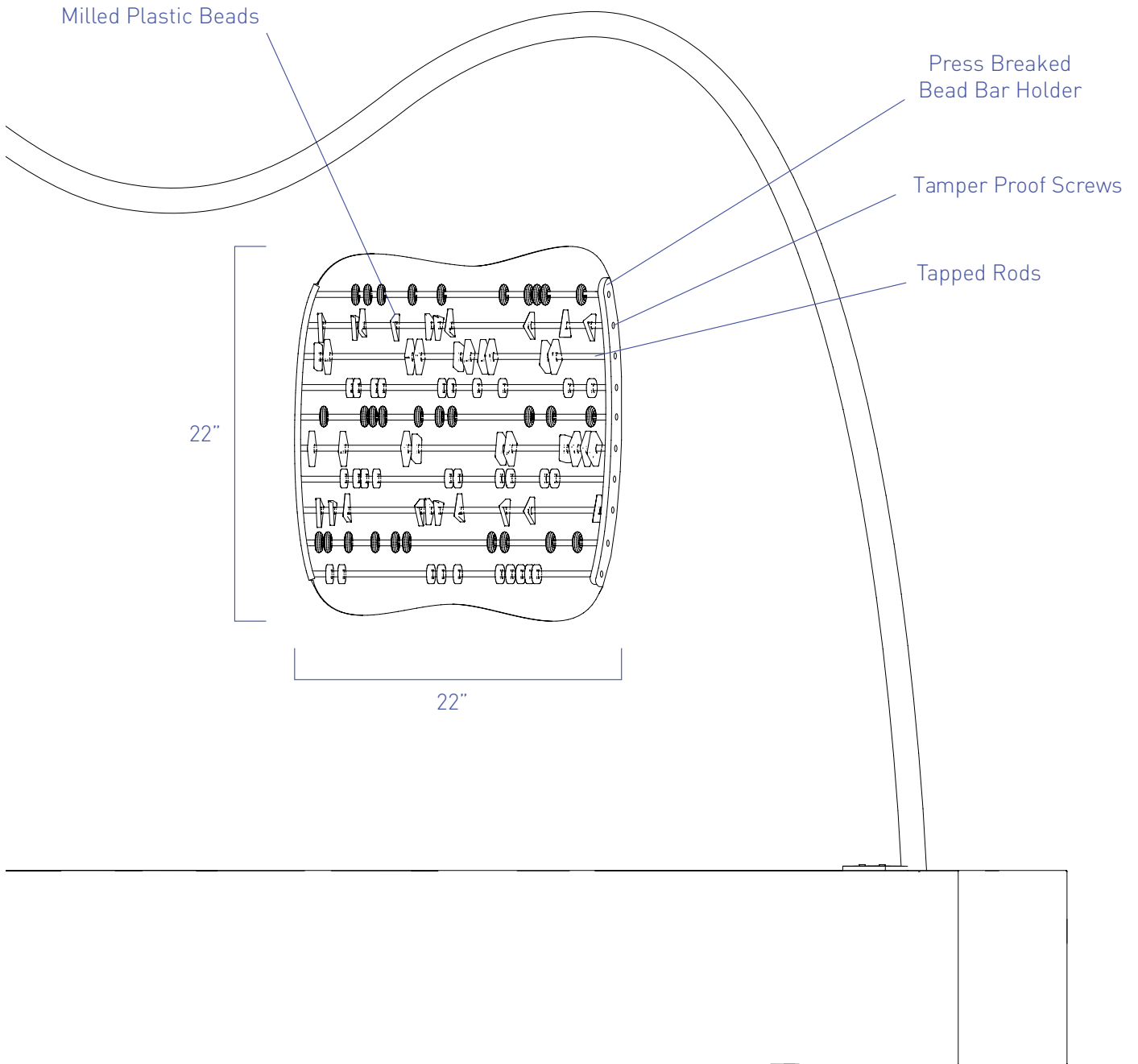


SIDE VIEW

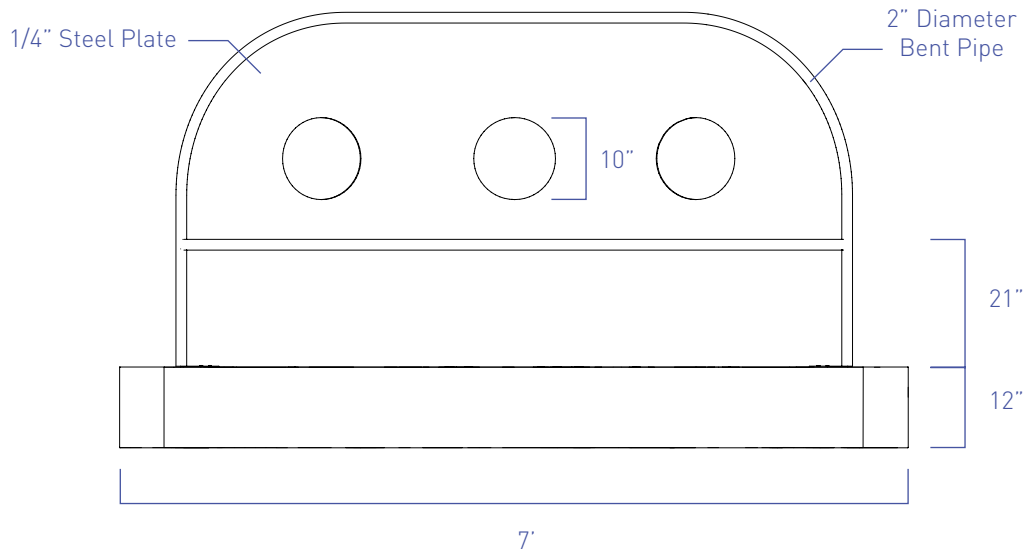


TOP VIEW

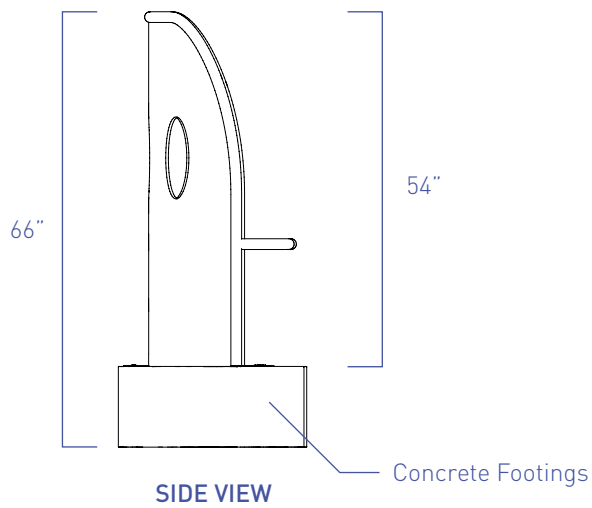
Play Village - Technical Drawings Abacus Wall Detail



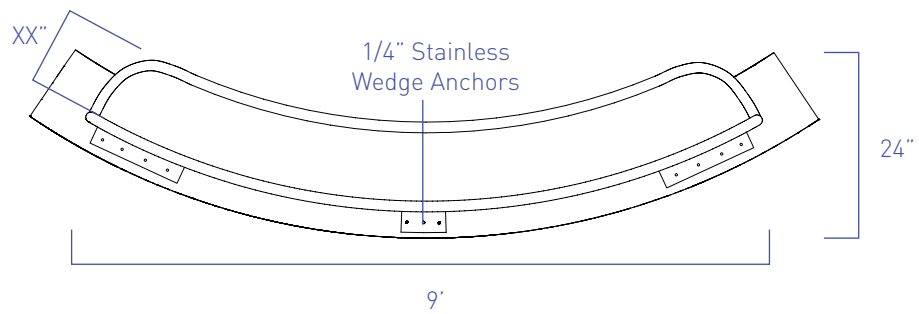
Play Village - Technical Drawings Window Wall



FRONT VIEW

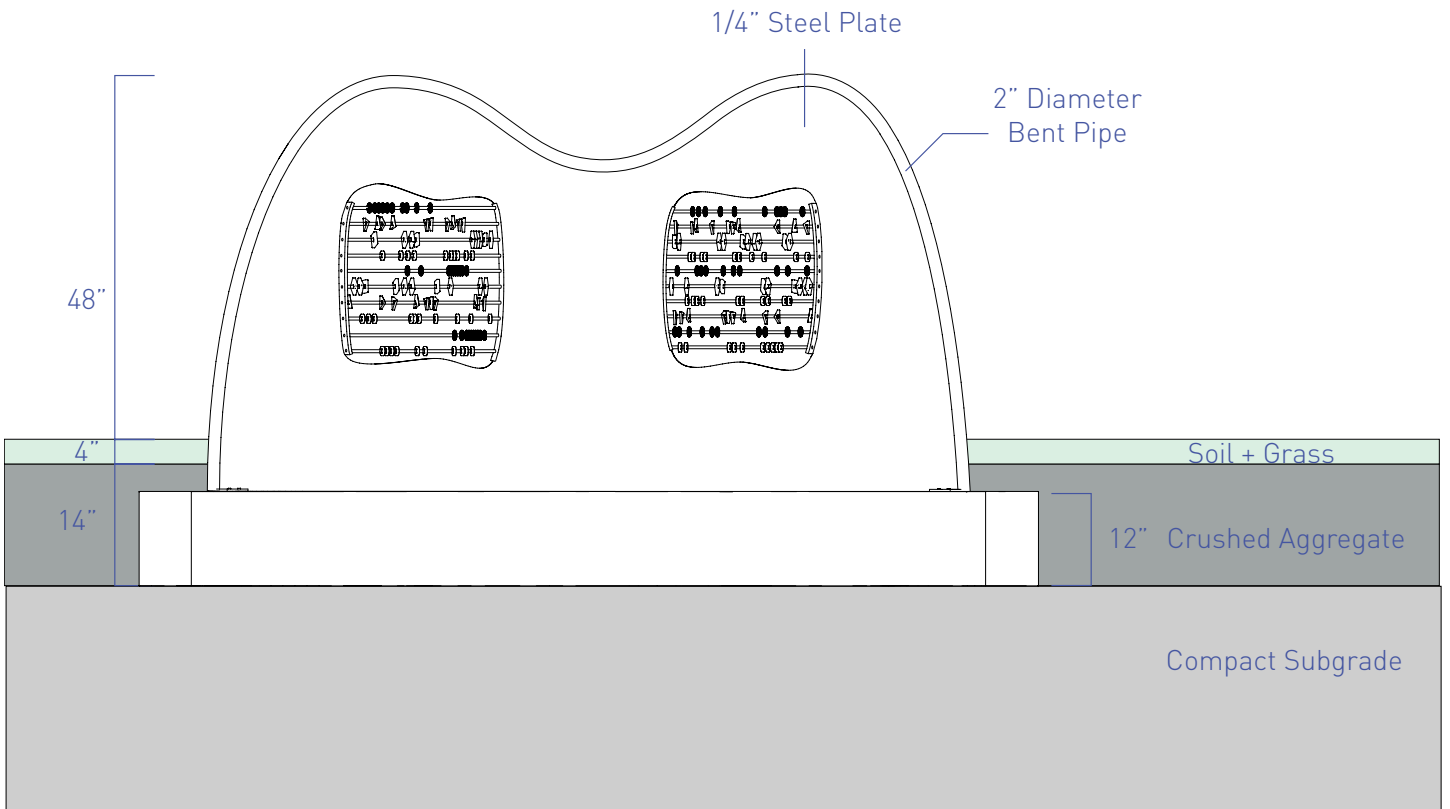
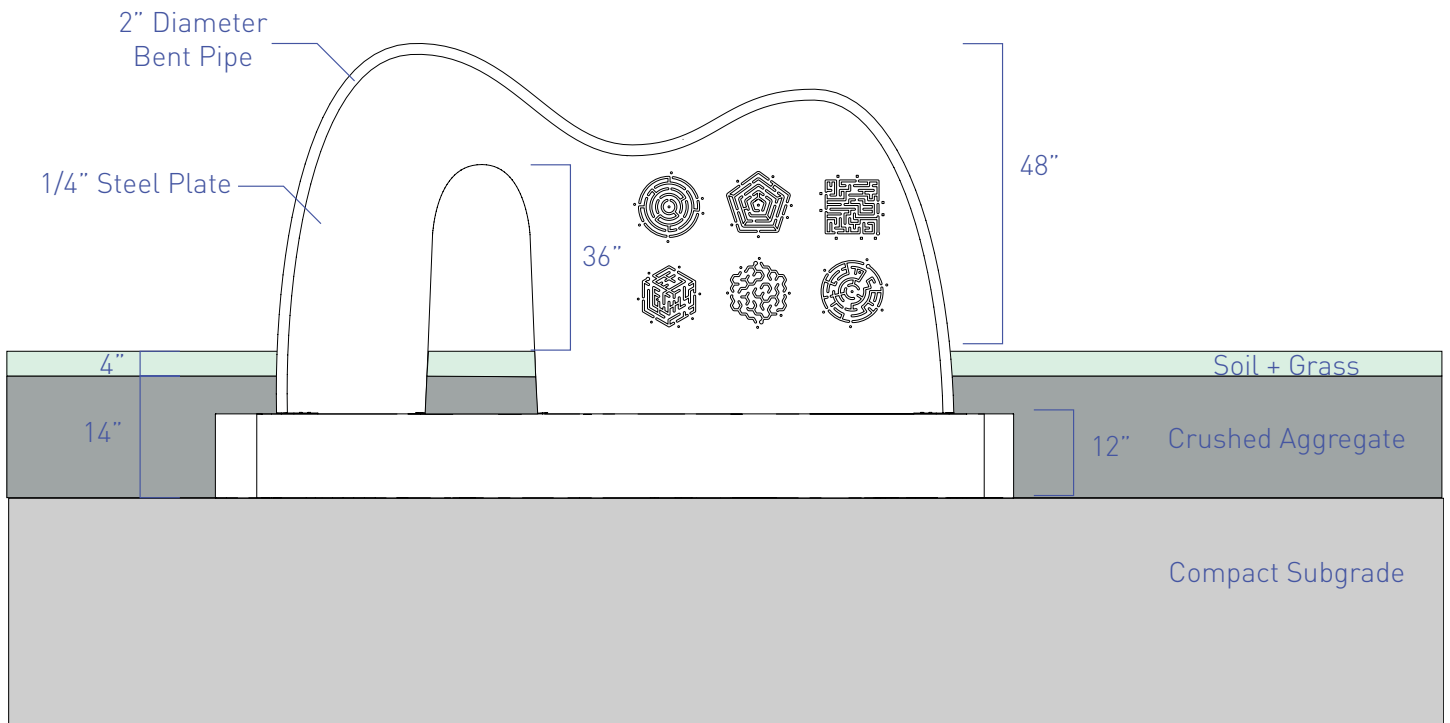


SIDE VIEW

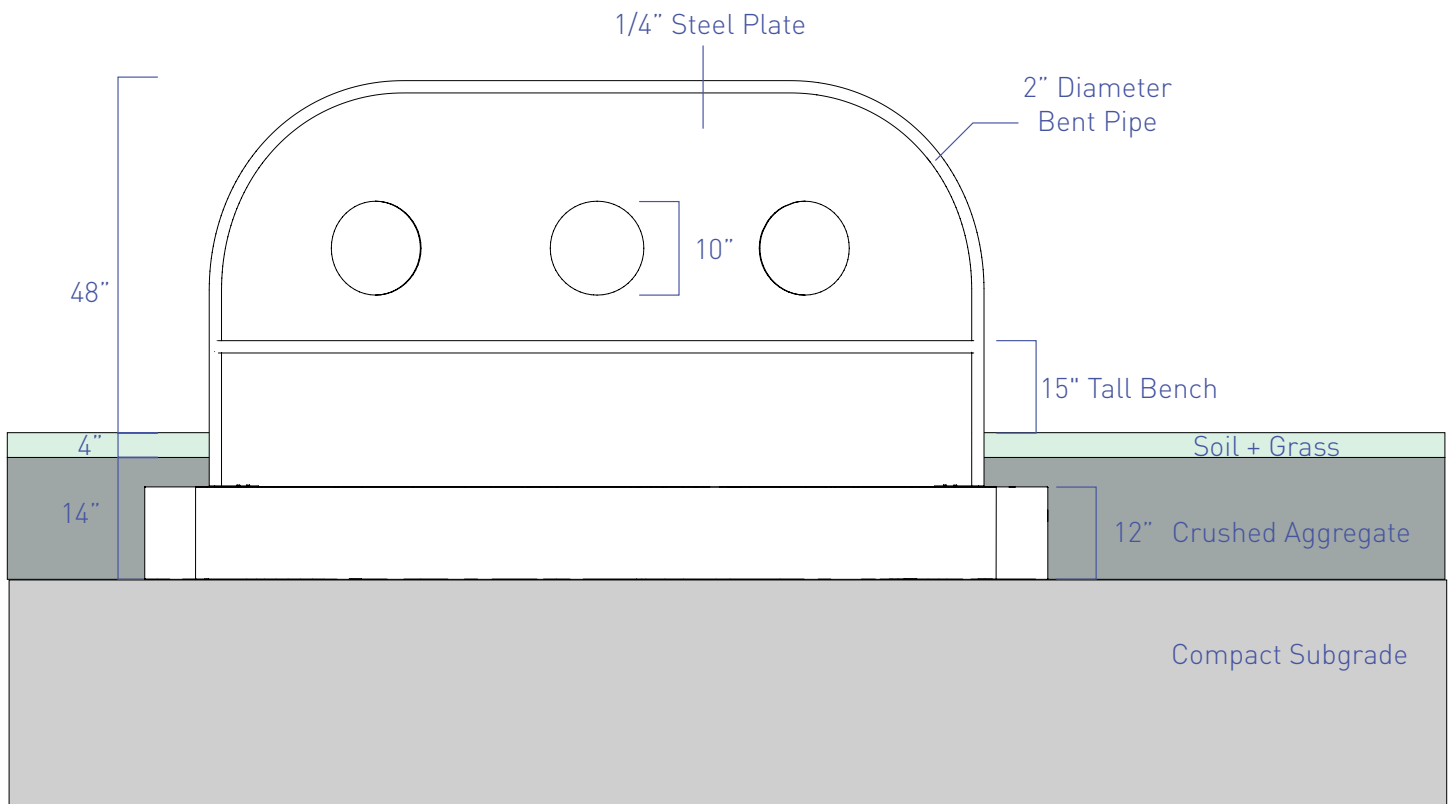


TOP VIEW

Play Village - Proposed Installation Method



Play Village - Proposed Installation Method



Mounds - Play Hills & Story Game



Mounds - Layout



Mounds - Precedent



Seger Playground



John F. Collins Park



Monet Ave. CA



Fin Project Miami

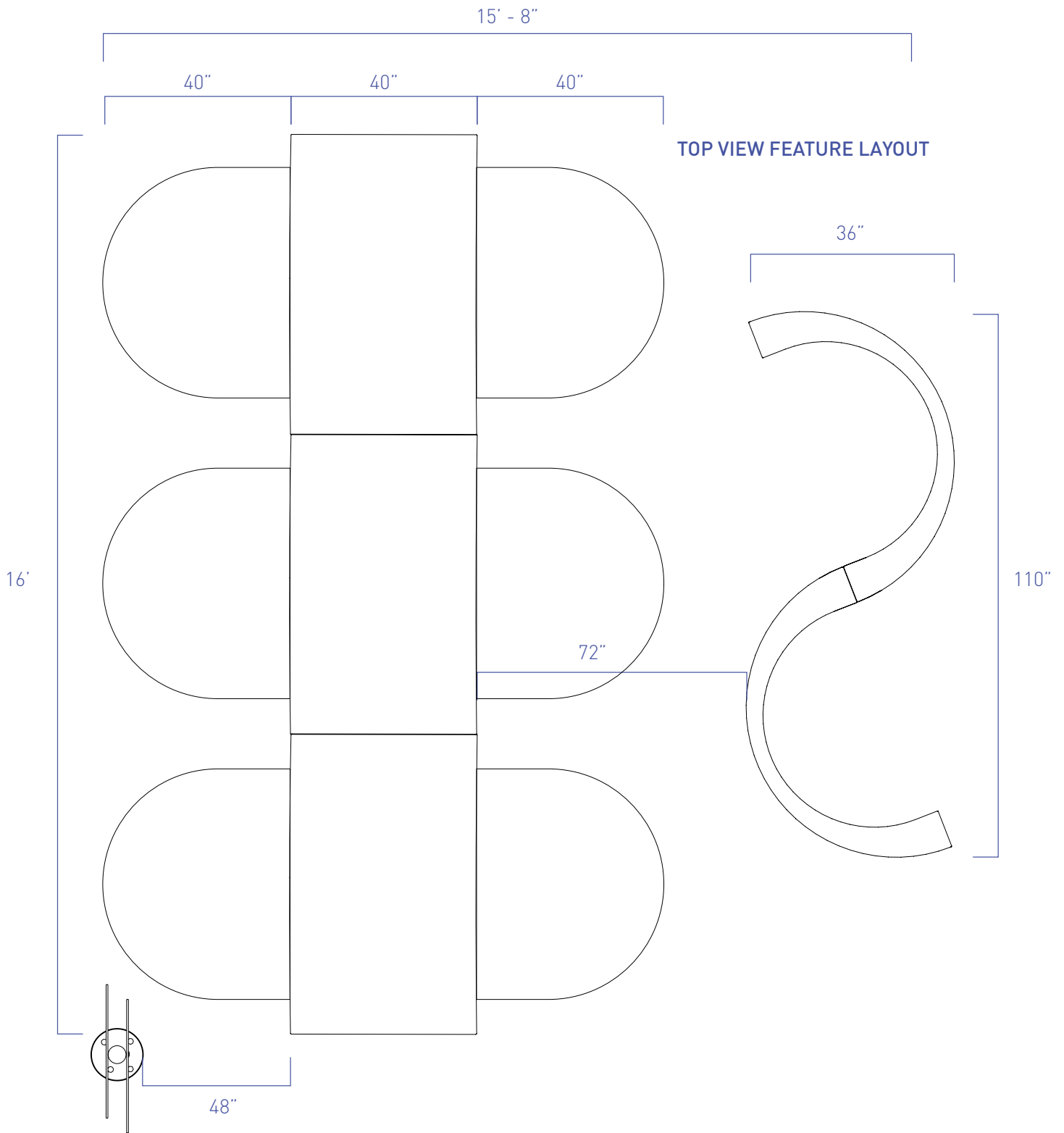


The Battery NYC

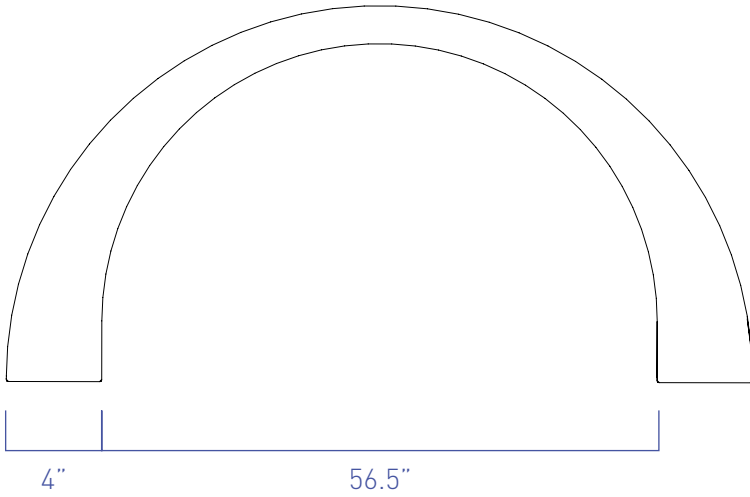


Breakwater Jamestown NY

Mounds - Technical Drawings Overall Layout



Mounds - Technical Drawings Precast Arches

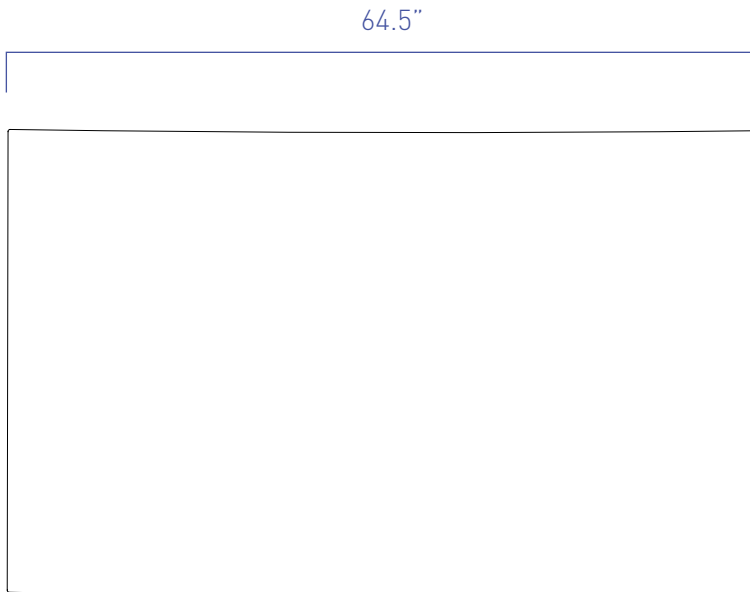


FRONT VIEW

32"

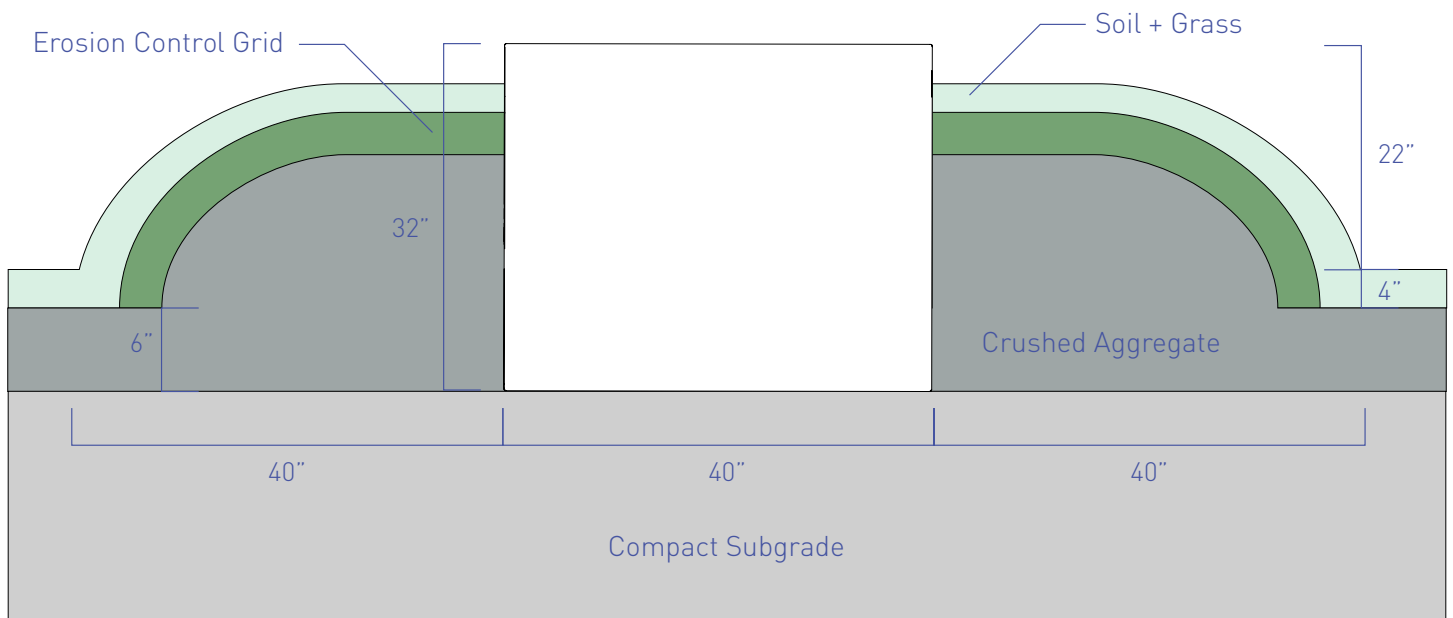


SIDE VIEW

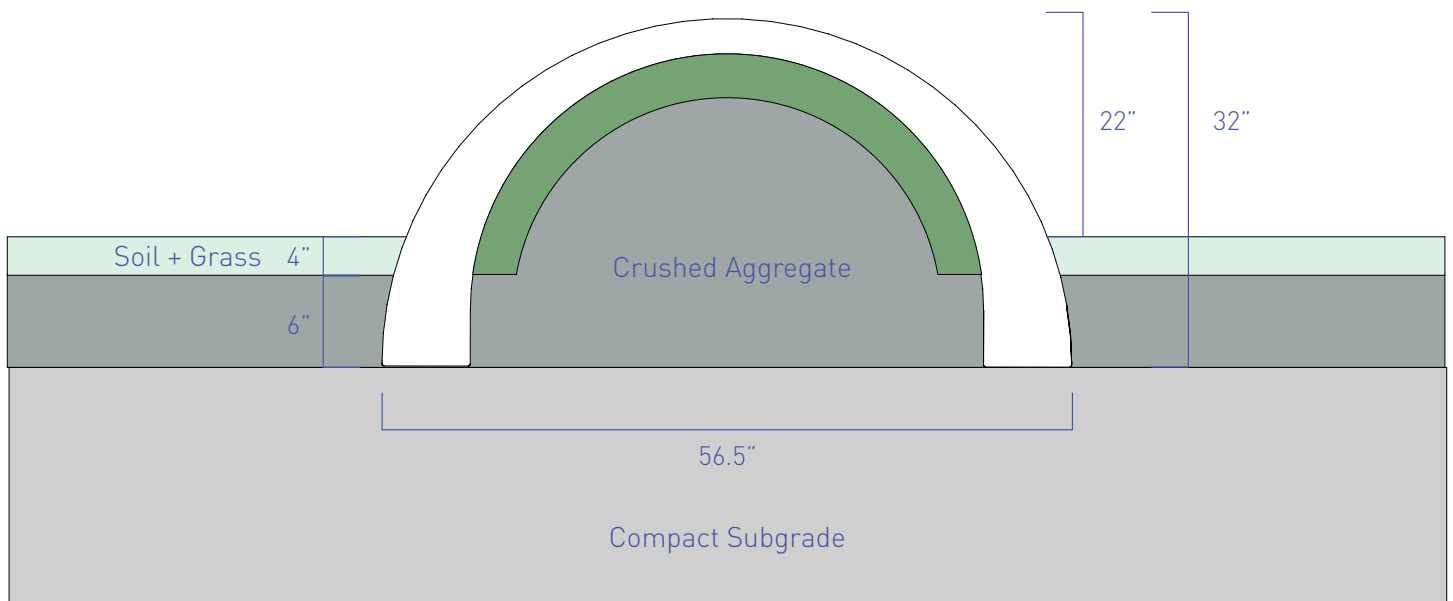


TOP VIEW

Mounds - Proposed Installation Method

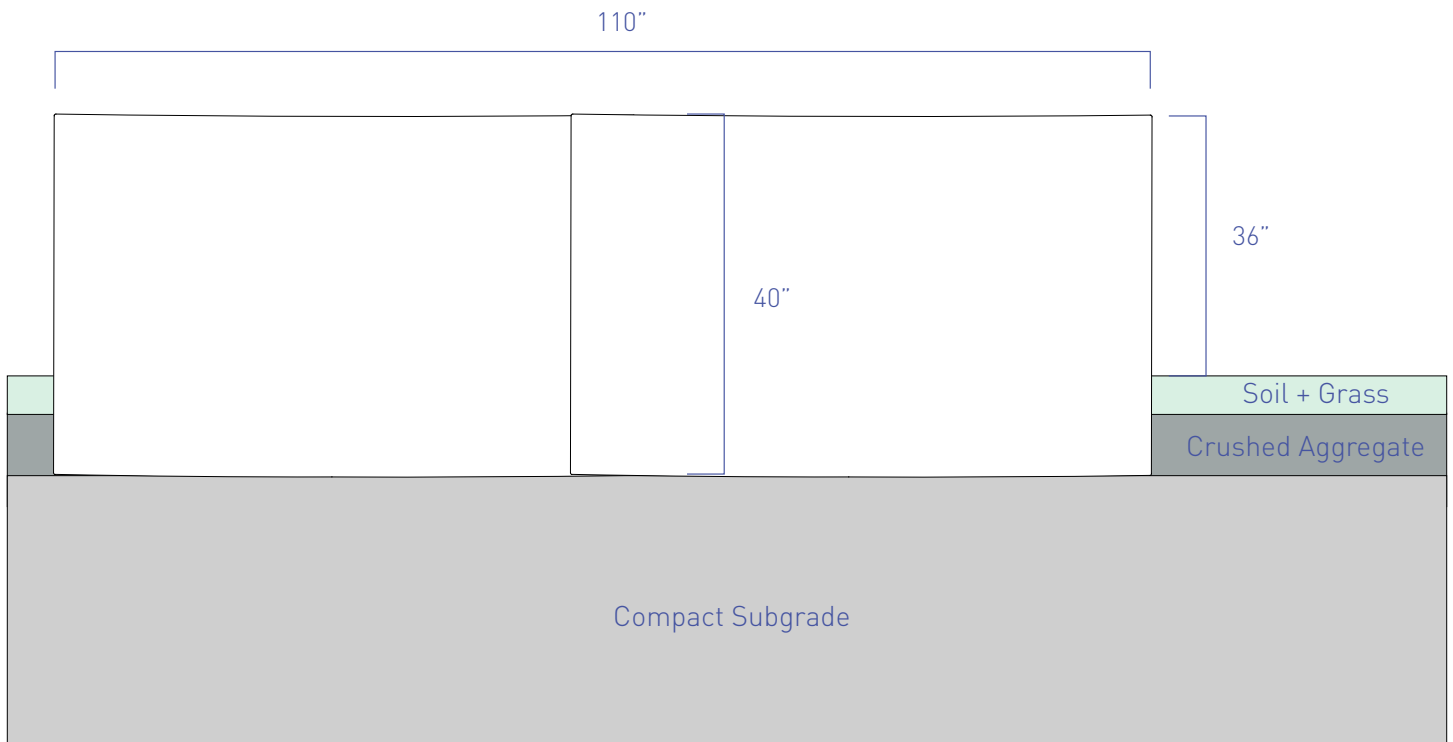


FRONT VIEW



SIDE VIEW

Mounds - Proposed Installation Method



TOP VIEW

Modular Signage - Wayfinding & Education



Seating & Signage - Precedent



Northwood Park



Gold Star Park



FDR Park



E. Penitentiary P.G.

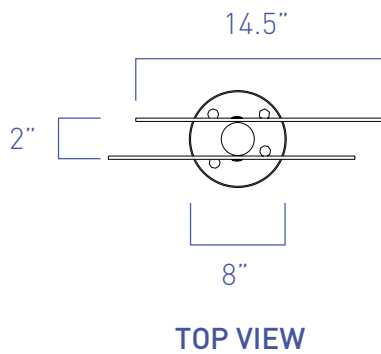
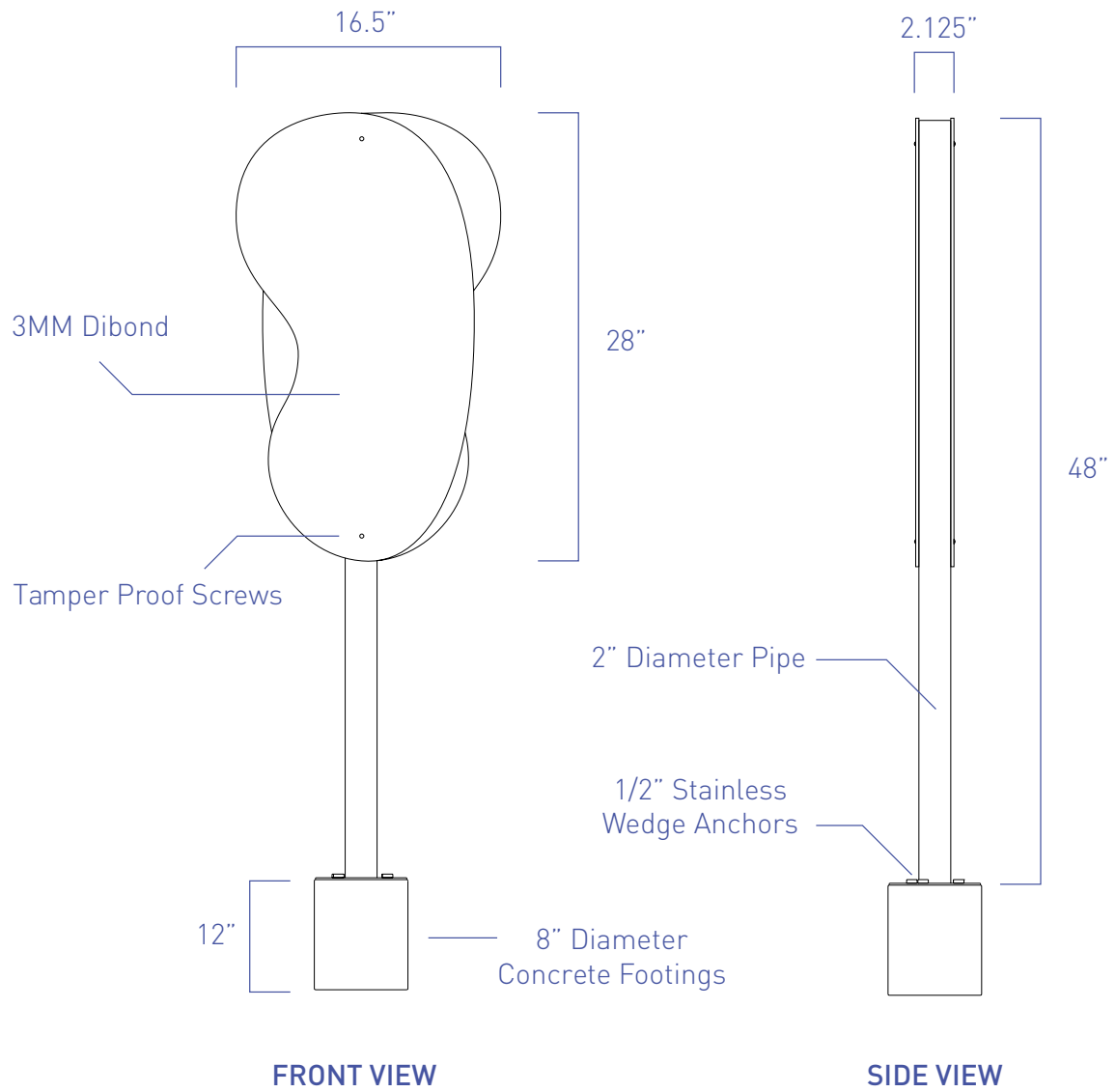


Northwood Park

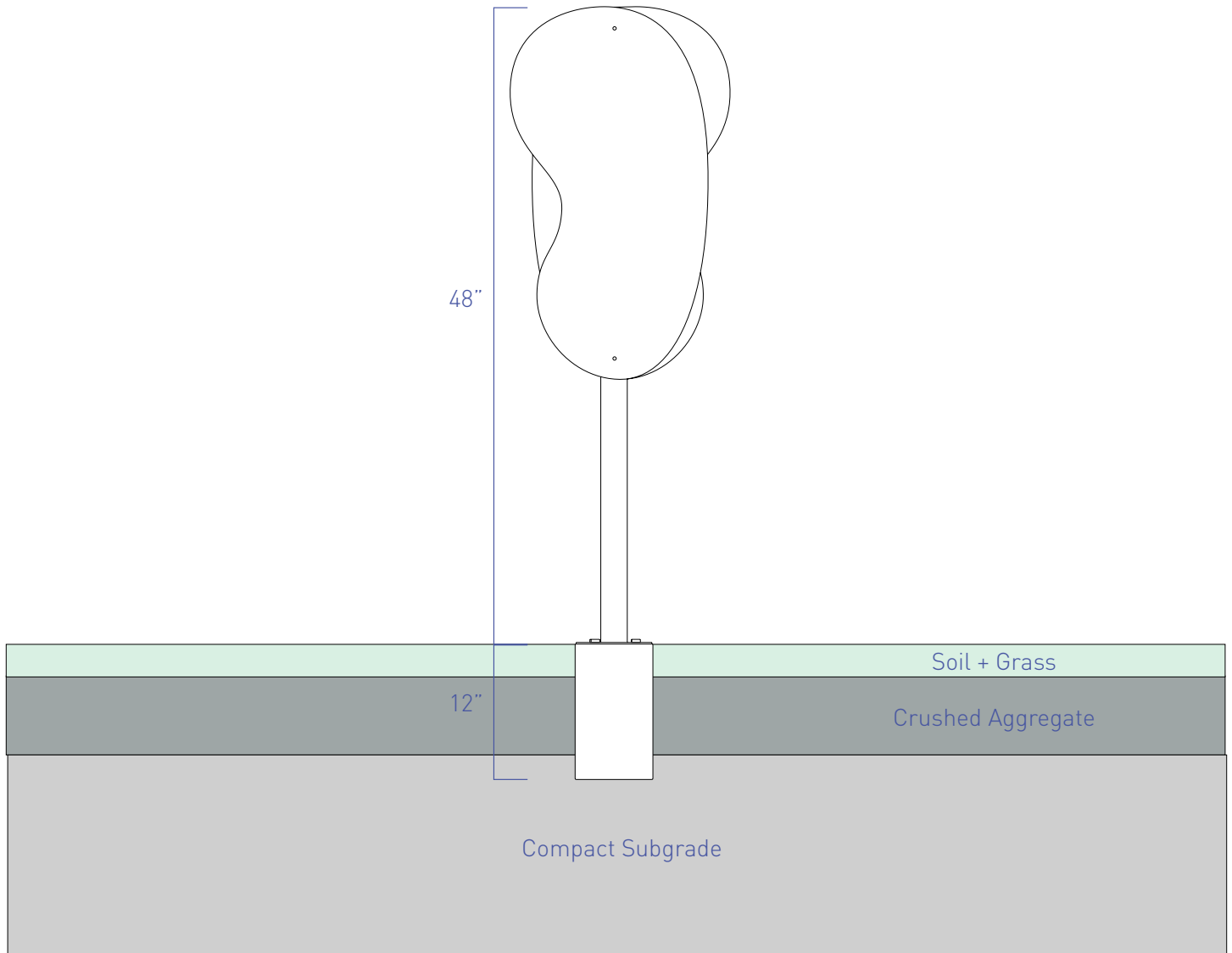


FDR Park

Modular Signage - Technical Drawing



Modular Signage - Proposed Installation Method



Modular Signage - Welcome to Fernhill Play Village



Fernhill Play Village

Nature Stage: Let Your Imagination Shine

Step onto the Nature Stage and become
an actor, director, or storyteller!
Choose a character, pick a setting,
and act out an exciting story with
your friends.



Fernhill Play Village

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Modular Signage - ZigZag Beams



Fernhill Play Village

Zig Zag Beams: Spell with a hop, skip, and jump!

Hop from letter to letter to spell any word you choose. Or, take turns spelling; first to complete five words wins!



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Fernhill Play Village

Play Village Sensory Maze: Feel Your Way to Fun!

Close your eyes and use your hands to follow the path.

Can you find two matching shapes without peeking?



Fernhill Play Village

Play Village Abacus: Play, Count, and Create!

Make a bead pattern for a friend to copy. Now, use the abacus to count the trees you see! How many people do you see?



Fernhill Play Village

Riverbed Crossing: Where Does River Water Come From?

Rivers carry water from many places! Some water starts as melted snow in the mountains, while other sources include rainfall and underground springs. Imagine how this water flows, shaping the land and creating homes for plants and animals along the way. Learn more by scanning the QR code below:



Fernhill Play Village

Riverbed Crossing: Leaf & Rock Challenge

Look closely at the bow and stern of the canoe. Find rocks or leaves along the riverbed that match these shapes and sizes! Collect and compare them! How many matches can you find?





Fernhill Play Village

Story Hills: Bring your stories to life

Every Story Begins Somewhere

Start at the first hill! Who is your
story about? Climb up and share!
What Happens Next?

At the second hill, add a twist or
challenge. Tell your adventure at
the top!



Fernhill Play Village

Story Hills: Bring your stories to life

Every Story Begins Somewhere

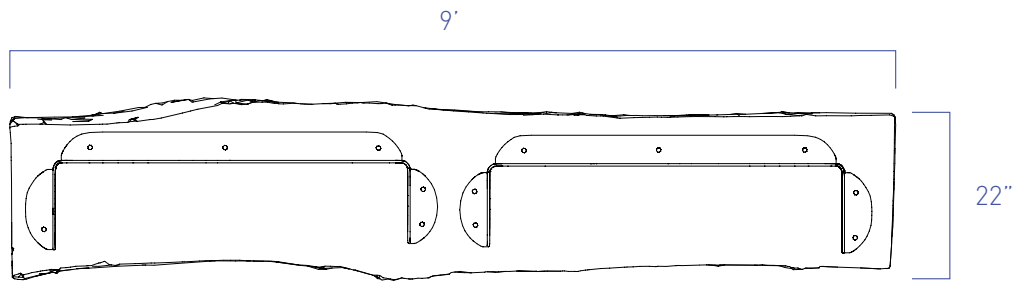
Start at the first hill! Who is your
story about? Climb up and share!
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At the second hill, add a twist or
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Nature Stage - Log Bench



Log Benches - Technical Drawings

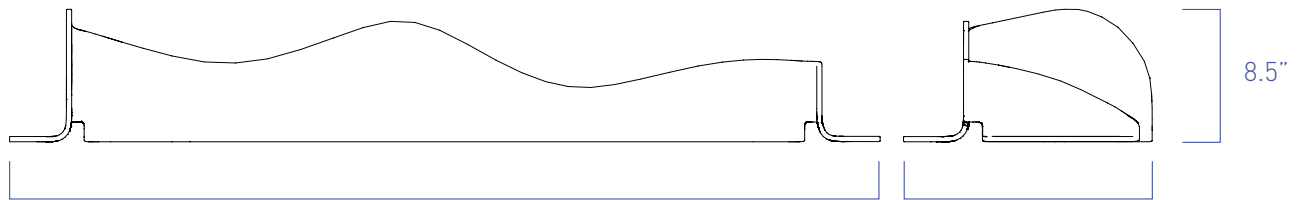


TOP VIEW



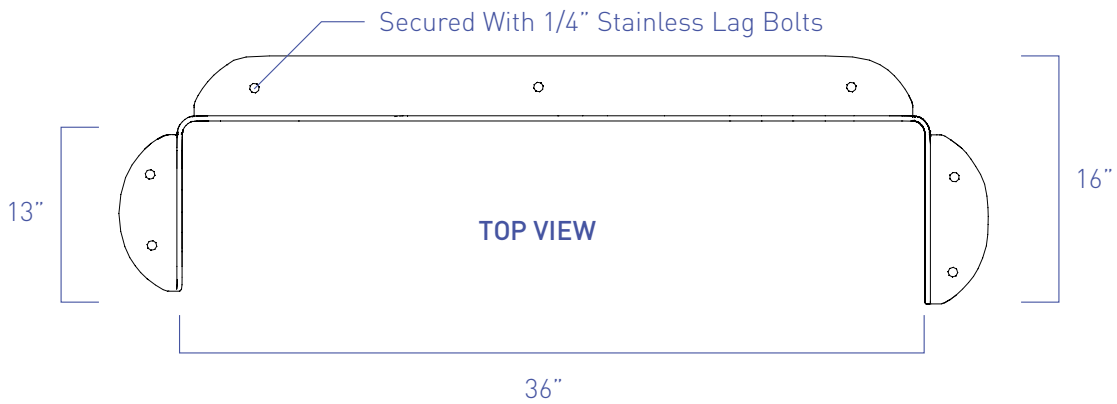
FRONT VIEW

SIDE VIEW



FRONT VIEW

SIDE VIEW



TOP VIEW

Contact

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