

May 31, 2023

**Philadelphia Art Commission**

1515 Arch St., 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Subject: Tacony Boat Launch Art Commission Submission

To Art Commission Committee Members,

NV5 is the lead designer for the redesign of the Tacony Boat Launch in Northeast Philadelphia. We are submitting this letter to request inclusion on the agenda for the June 14 Art Commission meeting. We will submit our project package next week.

This project is being managed by local non-profit, Riverfront North Partnership, in collaboration with the Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation (PPR), who owns and operates the park. Over the past year and a half, our team at NV5 has been working closely with Riverfront North Partnership on community and stakeholder engagement and design development to make site improvements to the Tacony Boat Launch. PPR has been involved throughout the project in informational meetings and design presentations.

This project emerged out of the ‘Riverfront North Park Study’, completed in 2018, which identified this underutilized existing city park as an ideal location for a kayak launch, a public restroom, habitat restoration, programming, and other improvements. The Riverfront North Greenway Master Plan, completed in 2020, also highlighted this park as a trailhead connection to the Kensington and Tacony Trail, the second phase of which is currently under construction. The goal of these studies and of this project is to connect communities with the river. The mission of Riverfront North Partnership is to “complete and sustain the riverfront trail and network of parks along the Delaware River that connects residents of urban neighborhoods to nature, offering unparalleled recreational, community building, and environmental education activities.”

The existing site is currently a public park operated by Philadelphia Parks and Recreation, but it is underutilized in its current state. The majority of the park consists of deteriorated asphalt parking lot, with some lawn space, and a concrete motorized boat launch. There are a few benches, but these are need of replacement.

The project proposes access to the Kensington and Tacony Trail; a building with two accessible, plumbed restrooms; a space for bicycle or kayak rentals; a dedicated accessible non-motorized boat launch; retention of the existing motorized boat launch; living shoreline improvements; native plantings; a large raingarden; a new parking lot; open lawn; and one new custom park entry sign.

The proposed park entry sign for the Tacony Boat Launch measures 5’ wide and 15’ high. The sign is designed to welcome visitors to the park in multiple languages while also providing a unique look. Made of stone and steel and located between an entry alley of trees the sign is reflective of the riverfront’s industrial past.

The new building is a prefabricated concrete structure used in many PPR facilities. The building includes restrooms, kayak or bicycle storage, storage for maintenance equipment and an open pavilion area for gathering. The facility will be an anchor for the park.

The existing motorized boat ramp is an existing ramp to remain which will be flanked by the new non-motorized facility. The non-motorized boat launch is accessible and will provide an opportunity for Philadelphians to get on the water to paddle. Multiple shade trees will be planted alongside a meadow planting and the installation of a living shoreline. Due to the nature of park use the parking lot provides traditional parking spaces for vehicles, as well as spaces sized for vehicles with boat trailers.

Our team is pleased to provide this request for your review, and will follow up with the full package next week.

Please provide all decisions of the commission to:

Rosa Mannion, RLA  
NV5  
1315 Walnut Street, Suite 900  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
(267) 303-3753  
Rosa.Mannion@NV5.com

I will serve as the primary contact person for this submission. We request conceptual and final approval at this meeting.

We look forward to the opportunity to speak with you regarding our project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rosa', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rosa Mannion, RLA  
Principal Landscape Architect

Cc: Stephanie Phillips, Riverfront North Partnership and Aparna Palatino, Philadelphia Parks and Recreation



# TACONY BOAT LAUNCH

## SITE IMPROVEMENTS

RIVERFRONT NORTH PARTNERSHIP

ART COMMISSION CONCEPT & FINAL REVIEW

JUNE 14, 2023



Project Location



# Existing Site Conditions





# Existing Conditions



The current vehicular entrance and gate at Milnor Street, looking northeast toward the Link Logistics site (under construction).



The Kensington & Tacony Trail (under construction) runs along the inland edge of the site, looking southeast toward the Delaware River.



# Existing Conditions



The current vehicular entrance, Kensington & Tacony Trail under construction, and view of the adjacent Baldor Foods warehouse on Milnor Street, looking west.



View of the adjacent Baldor Foods warehouse which abuts the north edge of the site and the Kensington & Tacony Trail (under construction), looking northwest.



# Existing Conditions



Current park amenities include a concrete boat launch and three park benches, looking southeast toward the Tacony Palmyra Bridge.



The site consists largely of asphalt (vehicular circulation and parking lot) and turf, looking south toward the Tacony Palmyra Bridge.



# Existing Conditions



The existing concrete boat launch will remain, looking southwest.



The existing shoreline is covered with concrete rubble, looking southwest toward the Tacony Palmyra Bridge.



# Existing Conditions



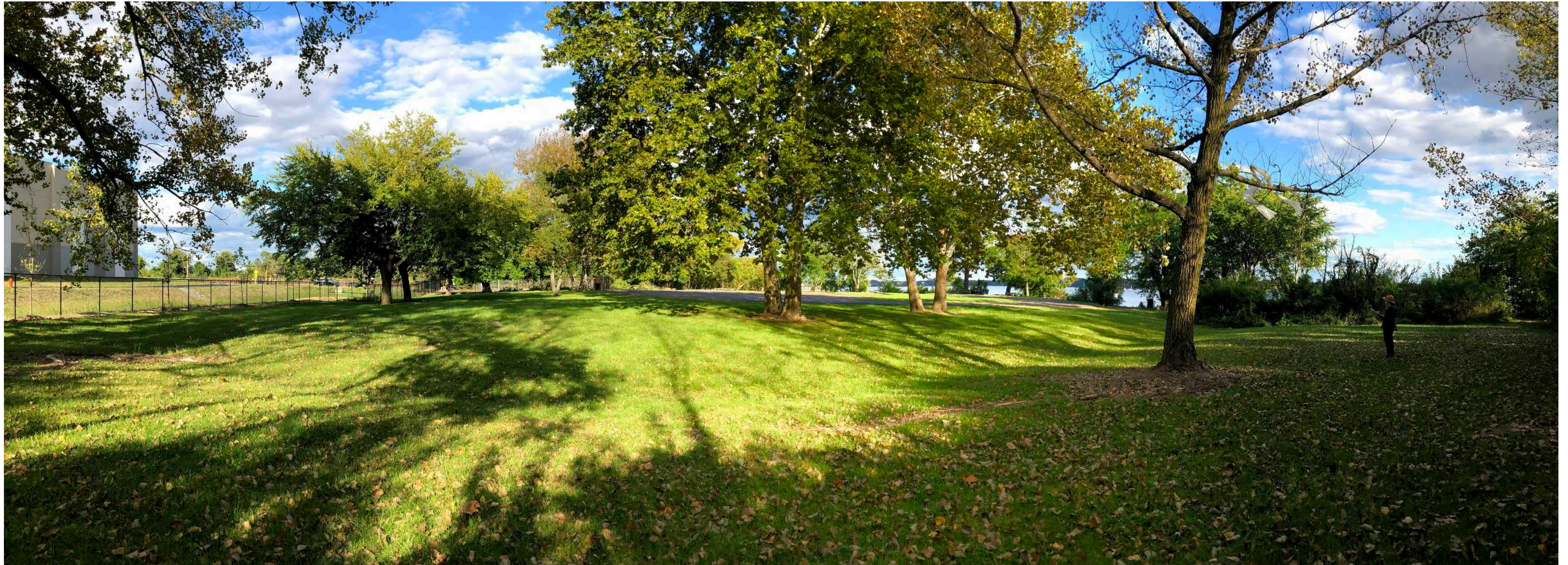
The current shoreline consists of large concrete rubble and stone, looking northeast along the Delaware River.



The current bank slope is steep and subject to erosion, looking northeast along the Delaware River near high tide.



# Existing Conditions



A number of large, native trees will remain along the southwestern edges of the site, looking southeast toward the Delaware River.



# Public Engagement

Public engagement consultants held community events, stakeholder interviews, and conducted online and in-person surveys to collect feedback from residents in Winter 2021, Spring 2022, and Summer 2022. Events were held at the Tacony Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia, the Frankford Fish Fest, and at Russo Playground on Cottman Avenue. Top requests included lighting, litter receptacles, restrooms, and water recreation opportunities.





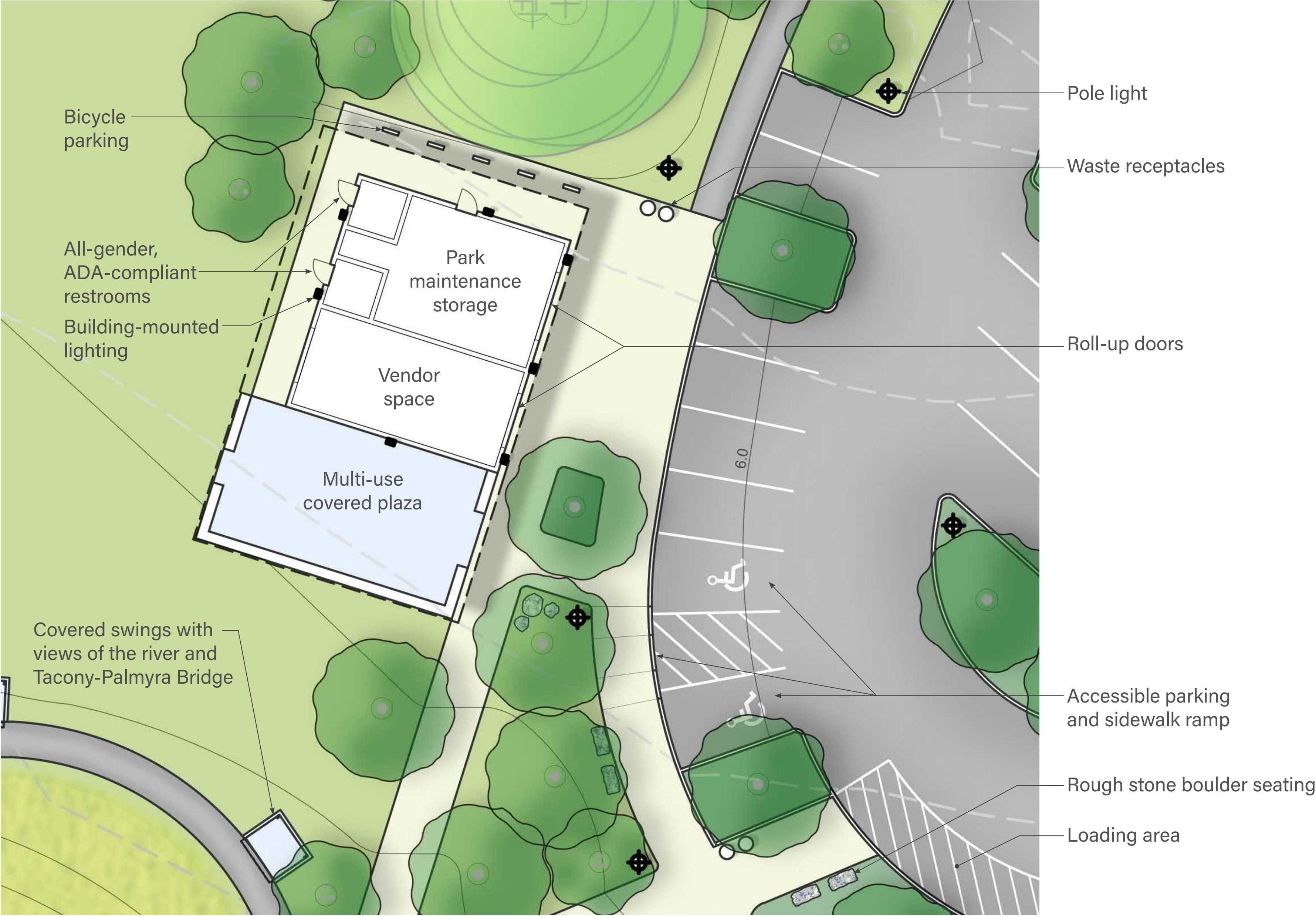
# Proposed Site Plan



## Tacony Boat Launch

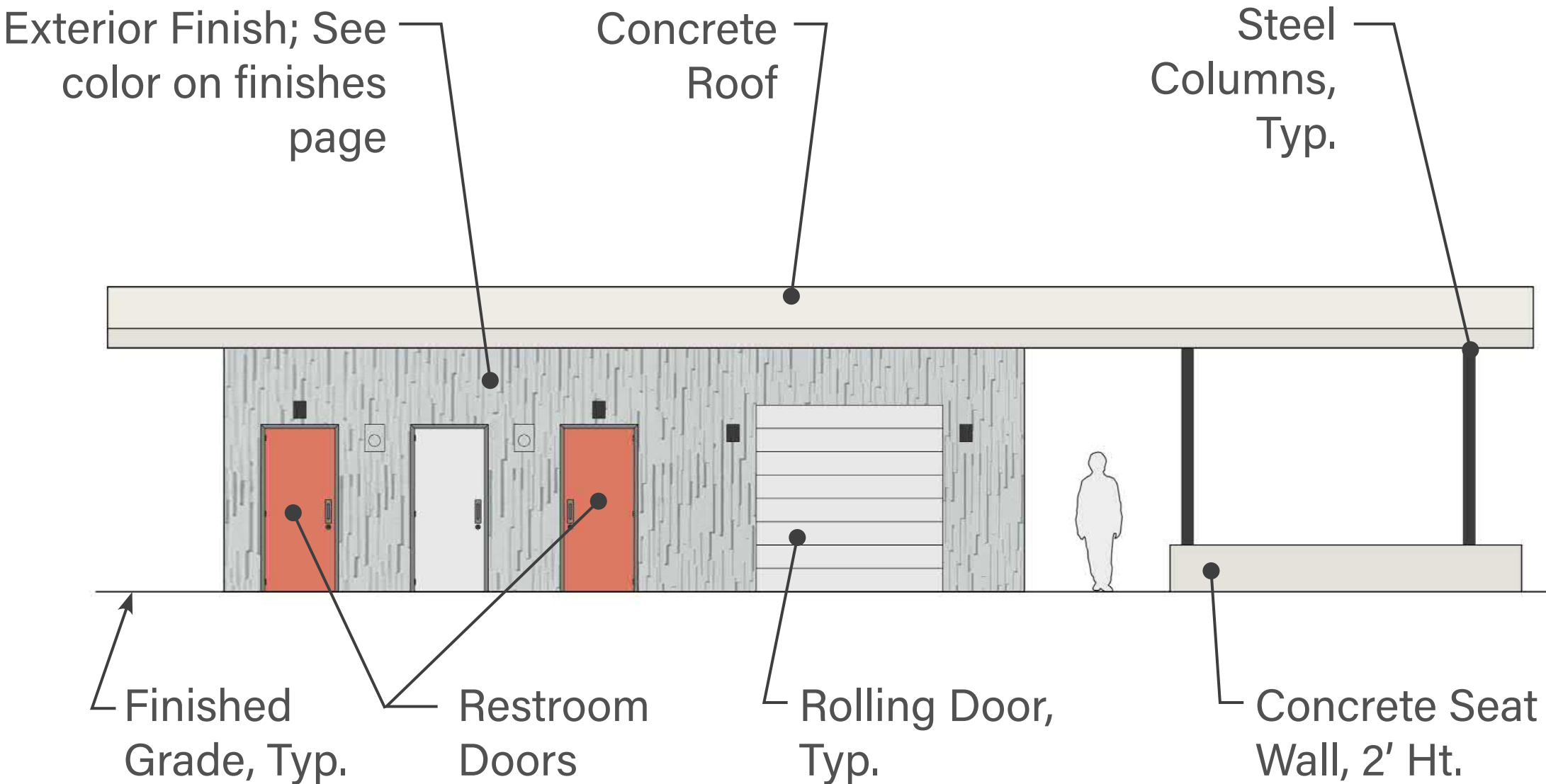


# Proposed Park Building

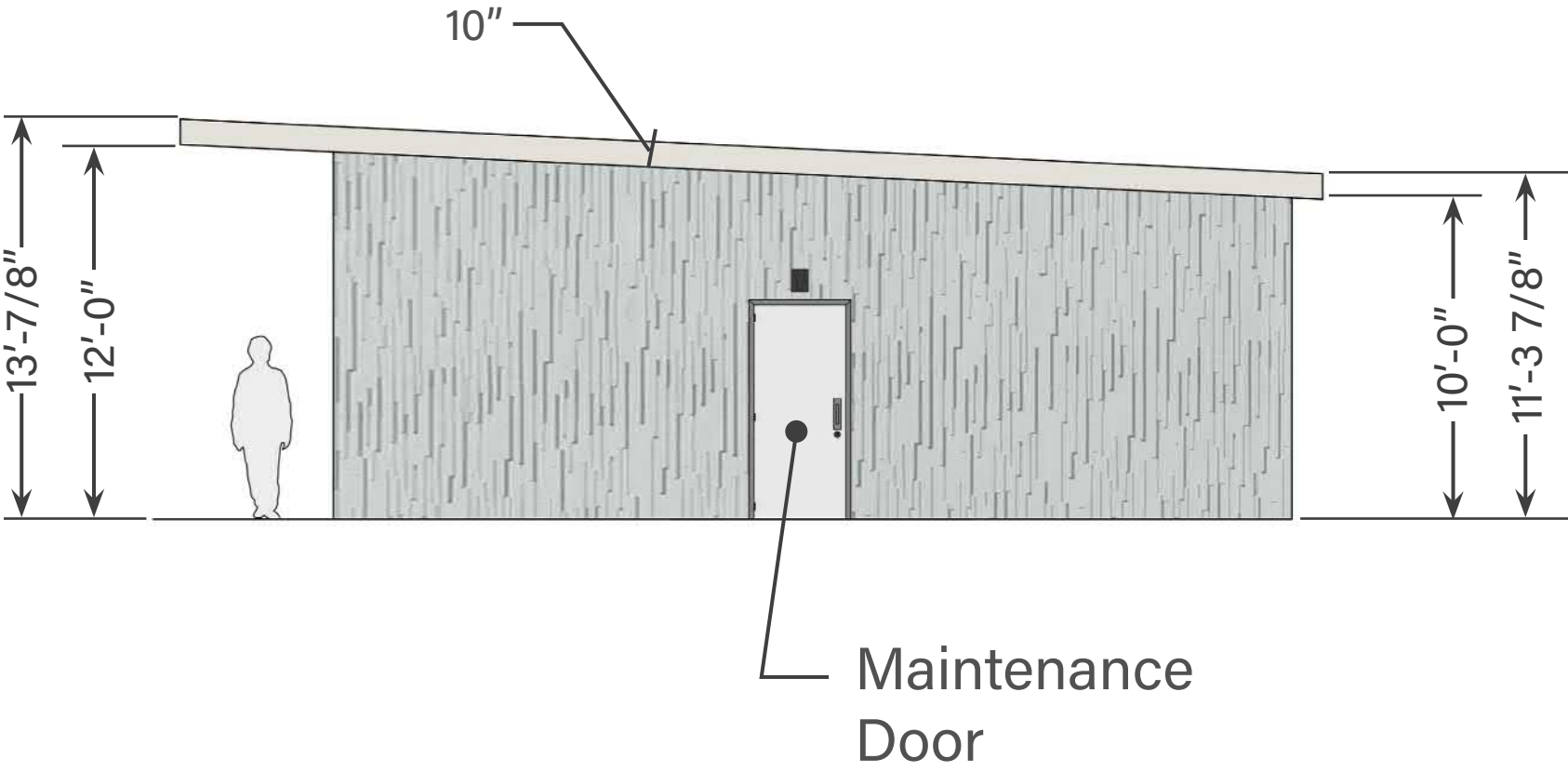




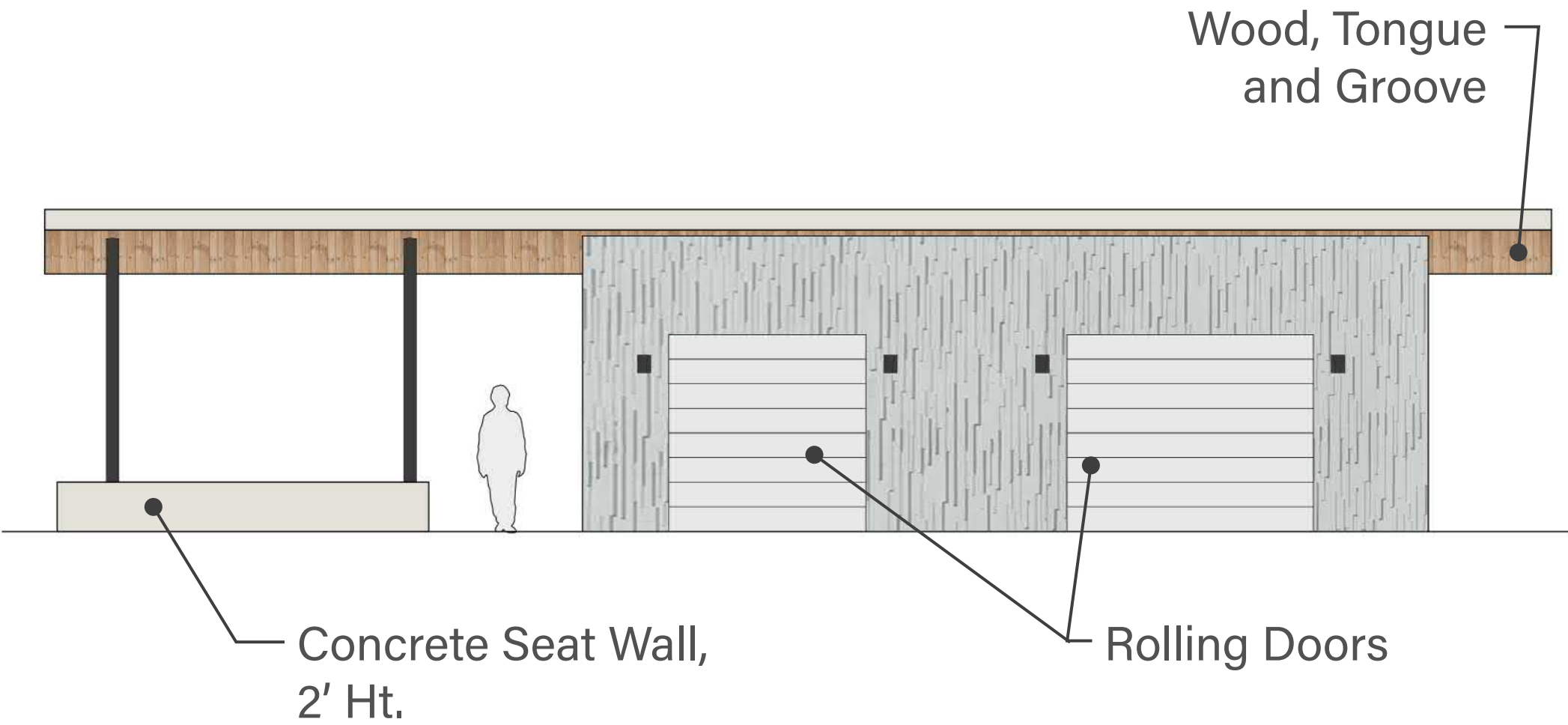
# Proposed Park Building Elevations



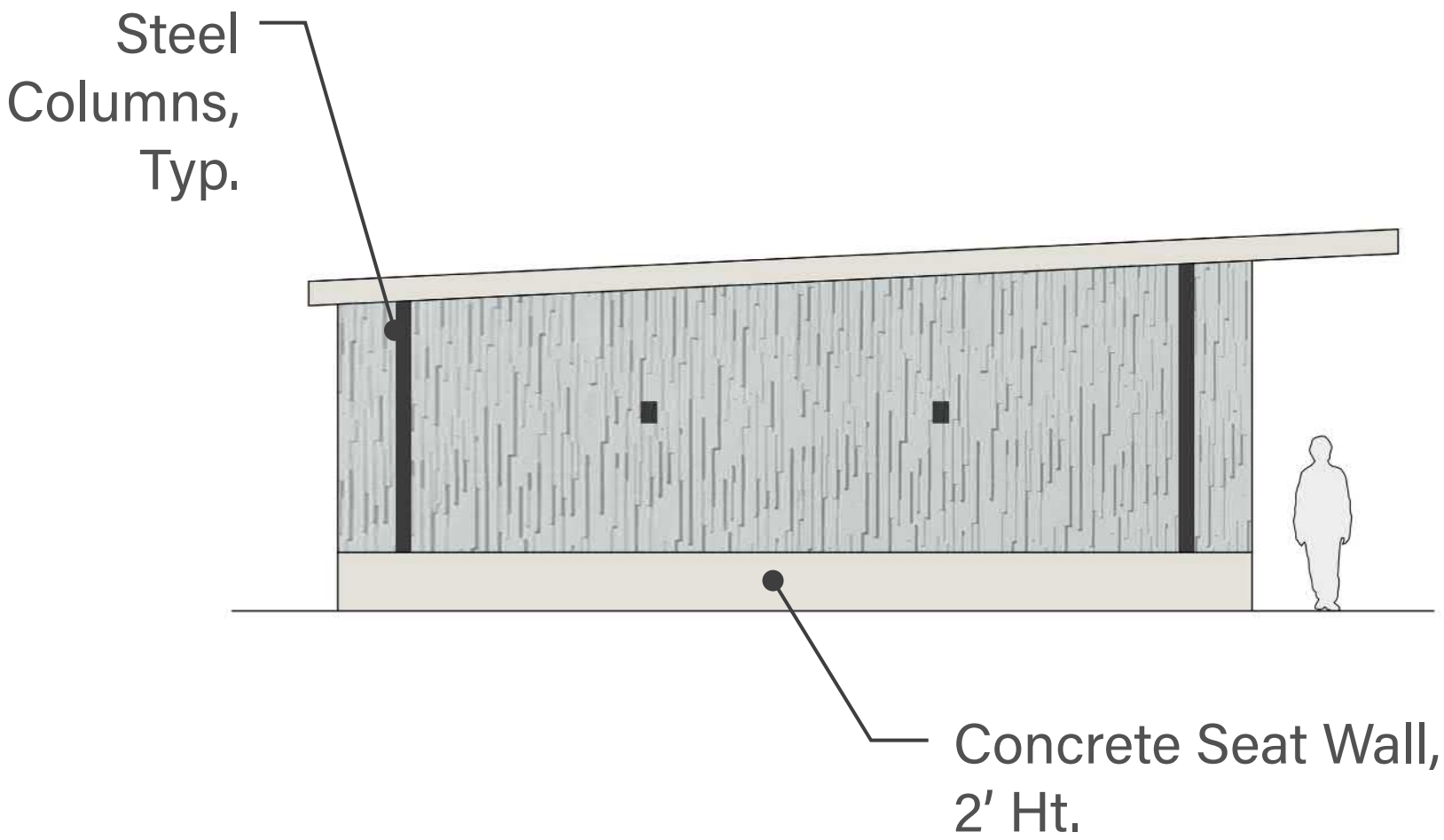
Rear Elevation



Right Elevation



Front Elevation

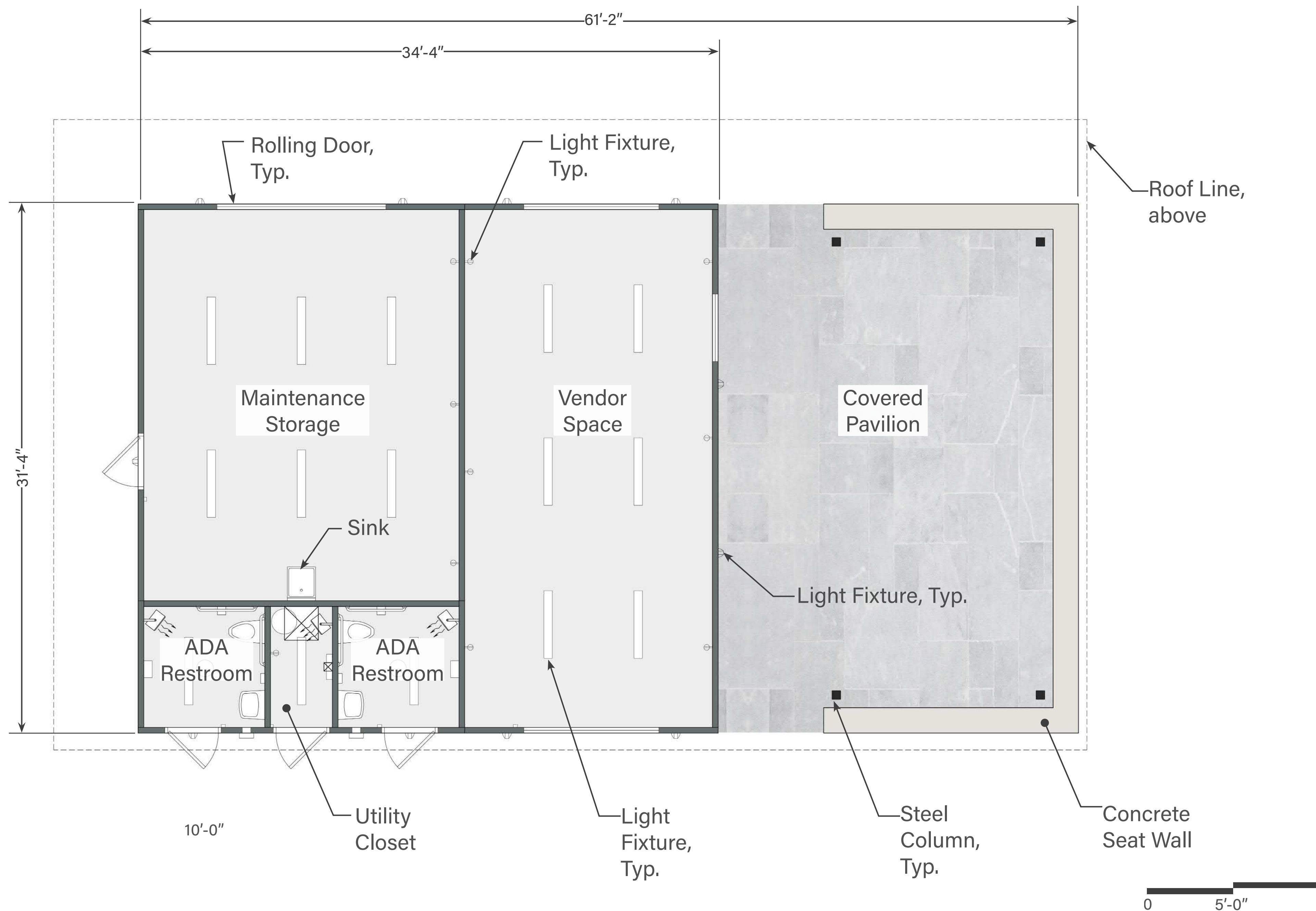


Left Elevation





# Proposed Park Building Plan





# Proposed Park Building Finishes

## Exterior Finishes



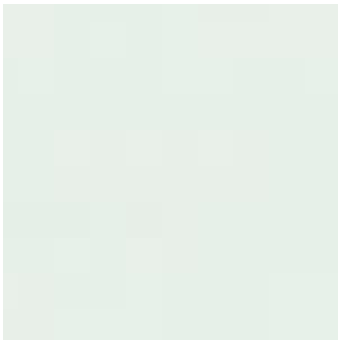
Exterior Wall Paint -  
Gull Gray



Lower Concrete Formliner -  
Salem Pattern



## Interior Finishes



Interior Wall Paint -  
Zephyr



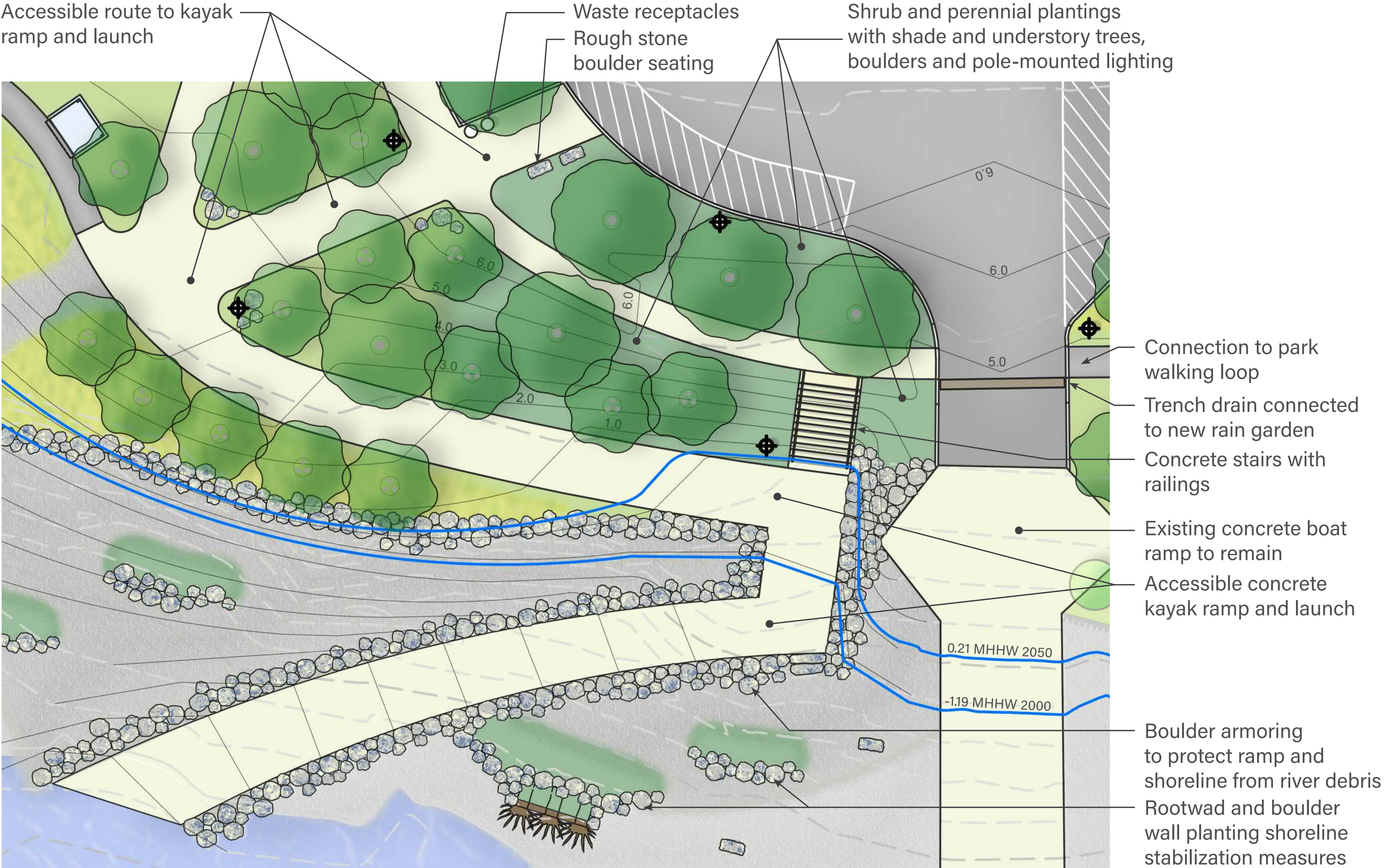
Epoxy Floor Paint -  
Steel Gray



*Precedent Imagery*

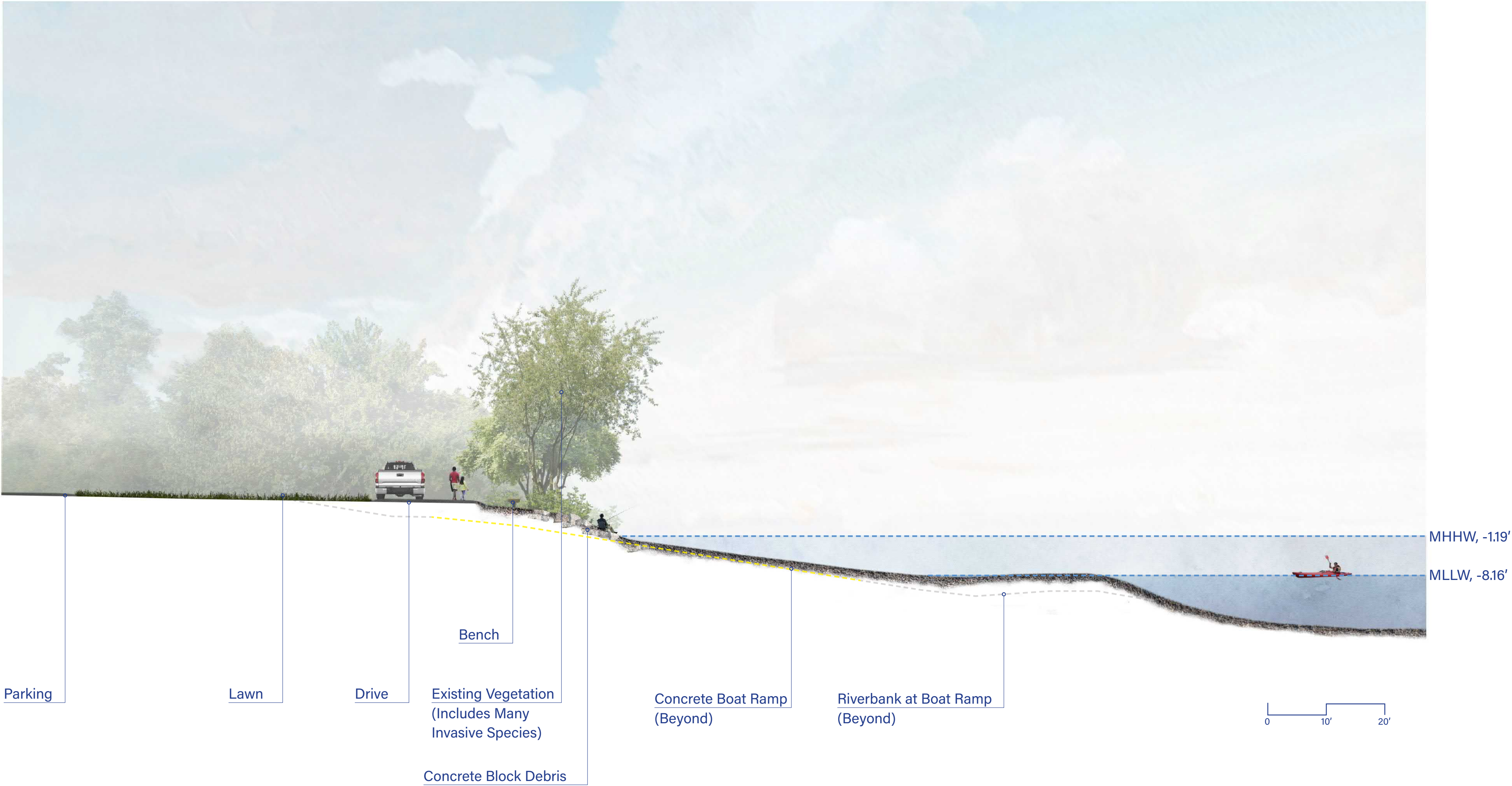


# Proposed Accessible Kayak Launch





# Site Elevation - Existing Conditions





# Site Elevation - Proposed Living Shoreline





# Proposed Living Shoreline

Boulder-protected shoreline planting with live woody branch bundles, live stakes, and perennial planting

Seeded wet meadow between current high tide and top of bank

Beach stone path connecting the park to the river's edge

Boulder wall to protect shoreline slopes

0.21 MHHW 2050  
-1.19 MHHW 2000

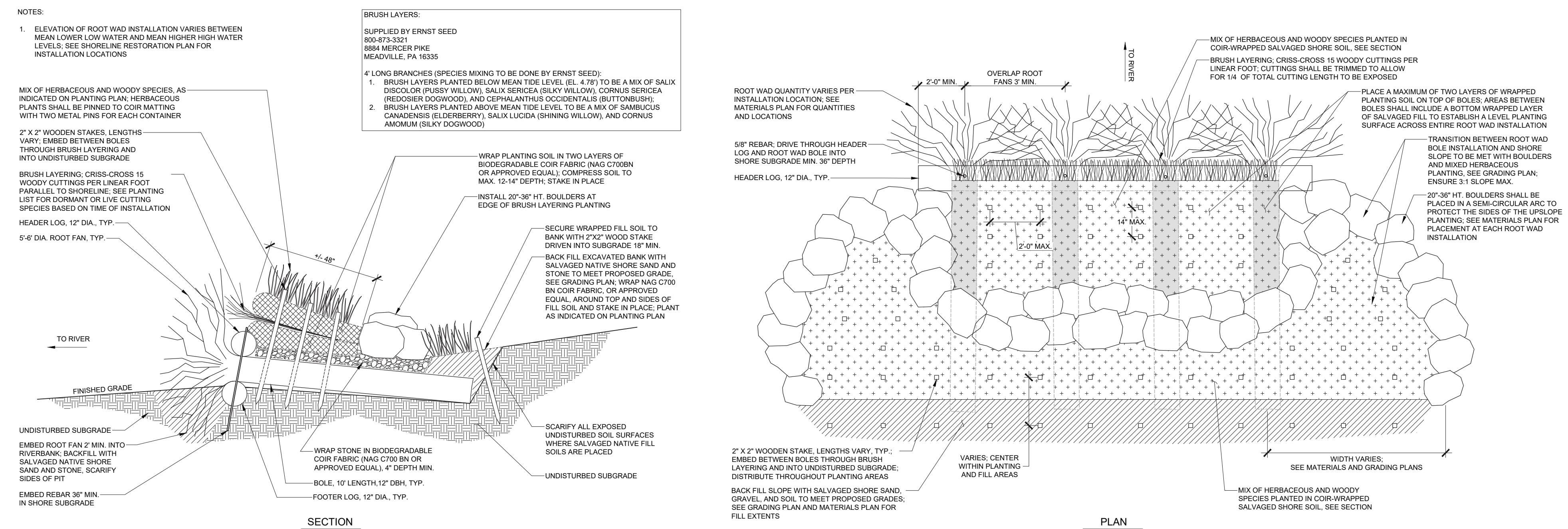
Rough stone boulder seating

Rootwads with brush layering, live stakes, and perennial planting to stabilize the shoreline and increase habitat along the river's edge

Beach stone and sand replaces existing concrete rubble along the shoreline

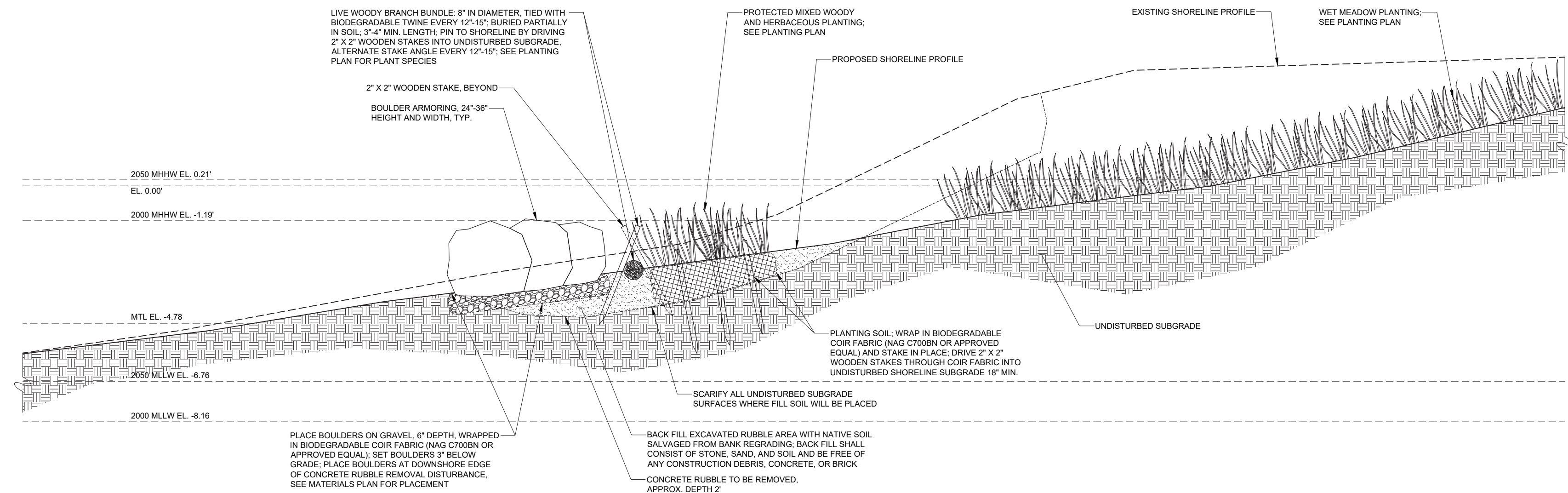


# Proposed Living Shoreline Details



1 Rootwad with Brush Layering and Planting

Scale: 0 1' 2' 4' 1/2"=1'-0"



2 Boulder-Protected Shoreline Planting

Scale: 0 1' 2' 4' 1/2"=1'-0"



# Tree Planting



Nyssa sylvatica  
Tupelo/Black gum  
30-50' H/20-30' W  
Zone: 3-9



Platanus occidentalis  
American Sycamore  
75-100' H/75-90' W  
Zone: 4-9



Betula nigra  
'Heritage'  
River Birch  
40-70' H/40-60' W  
Zone: 4-9



Liquidambar styraciflua  
'Rotundiloba'  
Round-lobed Sweetgum  
(fruitless cultivar)  
60-70' H/20-30' W  
Zone: 4-9



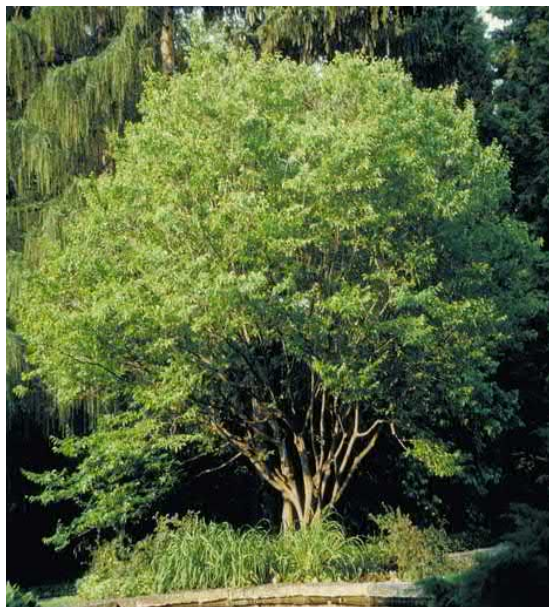
Quercus phellos  
Willow Oak  
40-75' H/25-50' W  
Zone: 5-9



Quercus bicolor  
Swamp White Oak  
50-60' H/50-60' W  
Zone: 3-8



Celtis occidentalis  
Hackberry  
40-60' H/40-60' W  
Zone: 2-9



Carpinus caroliniana  
American Hornbeam  
20-35' H/20-35' W  
Zone: 3-9



Amelanchier  
canadensis  
Serviceberry  
25-30' H/15-20' W  
Zone: 4-8



Ostrya virginiana  
American Hophornbeam  
25-40' H/20-30' W  
Zone: 3-9



Cercis canadensis  
Eastern Redbud  
20-30' H/25-35' W  
Zone: 4-8



# Proposed Site Furnishings

Waste receptacles  
PPR standard



Bicycle racks  
PPR standard



Building  
lighting



Custom lounge  
swings



Pole lighting  
PPR standard



Park benches  
PPR standard



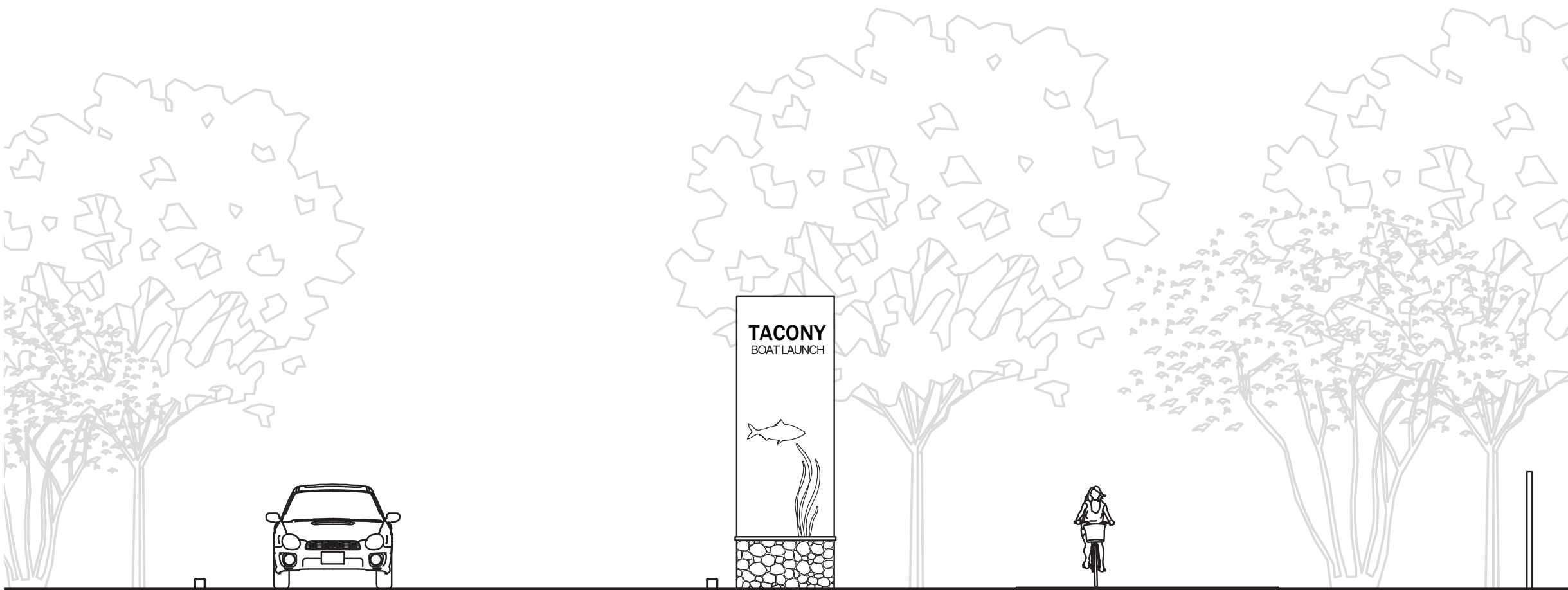


# Proposed Park Sign



STEEL BLADE SIGN ON STONE-VENEERED CONCRETE BASE

SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"





# Proposed Site Lighting



Light Pole



Wall-Mounted Light



# Perspective Rendering





# Perspective Rendering

