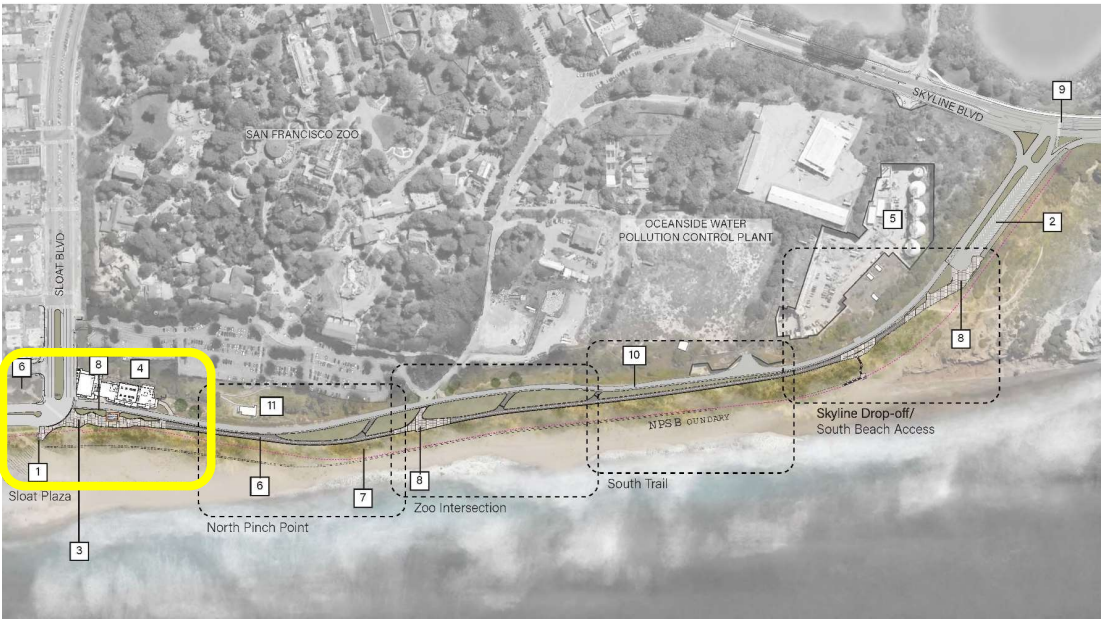
OCEAN BEACH CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION PROJECT

Mark Baugh-Sasaki
Final Design

Visual Arts Committee – MAY 15, 2024



Ocean Beach Climate Change Adaptation Project, with Sloat Plaza on the far left (North).

The Westside Pump Station is to the East of the Plaza site; two artworks will be located here. To the West of the highway is the future site of Sloat Plaza, where Mark Baugh-Sasaki's sculptural series, Listening Stones, will be installed in 2028-2029.

PUBLIC ART PROJECT GOALS

- Be an anchor point / landmark for the new plaza
- Addresses and speaks to climate change and/or sea level rise
- Complements views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas
- Relates to and is visually compatible with the character of the site and surrounding areas (including forthcoming mural by artist Jet Martinez and existing sculptures by artist Mary Fuller at the nearby Westside Pump Station)

ART IMPLEMENTATION BUDGET

- **$300,000** inclusive of all artist's fees, as well as associated expenses for design, fabrication, insurance, transportation, and contingency.
- **$50,000** allocation for installation managed by SFAC.

Climate Change is shifting our environment on a global scale, as well as on a local level. Having grown up in and around the Sunset Neighborhood of San Francisco, I have witnessed this change, particularly along Ocean Beach. I've watched the beach shift and erode away, closing roads and endangering infrastructure during stronger storms and higher tides. The ritual and choreographed movements of heavy machinery and trucks try to resist the reshaping of the coastline. I have found that being present in the space, not dwelling on what has come to pass, and to focus on solutions that will make our future environment more livable, has helped me find ways to shoulder our new reality. The sculpture Listening Stones will draw on the relationship between San Francisco, its water source in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and relating the fragility of that system to that of sea level rise and the site. The artwork will create a contemplative space where participants can slow down, be present in, listen to, and explore their relationship to the landscape. One where the community actively listens to their surroundings both figuratively and literally, drawing connections between their actions and the larger environment.

The artwork will consist of eleven carved granite boulders representing the reservoirs that are a part of the Hetch Hetchy Aqueduct and will be distributed throughout the main plaza area. They will be installed to appear as if they are part of the site. Seven of the boulders will have a cone cut through the rock pointing in different directions: south, down the coast to north, down the Great Highway, and at various angles to the west to capture both the built and natural environments. The cones will collect and amplify the ambient sounds of the space and enable participants to use the boulders as listening devices to hear what the landscape is saying. After prototyping in the space with several different cone angles, I settled on a 20-degree opening to best gather and direct sound to the listener. The openings will be set at varying heights to accommodate participants of different heights and capabilities. The other four boulders will be cut with a flat surface. These elements of the artwork provide a contrast to the more natural forms of the seven boulders and serve as a reminder of the human hand within the landscape. Each stone element will be surrounded by a bronze ring inset into the walking surface. These circles draw attention to each element and signify to the visitor that these were transported from another place. The ring design references bronze survey markers found throughout the Sierras designating sites of importance.

I am drawn to granite as my primary material because of its wide array of connections to San Francisco and the site. I am particularly interested in the link between the Sierra Nevada Mountains and the location of the proposed artwork. Our water begins in the Tuolumne River Watershed in Yosemite National Park, is collected and stored in 11 reservoirs, and passes through a gravity fed system that brings the water to the city. Here, it inevitably passes through our bodies and eventually ends up being treated at the water treatment plant next to the site, then is released back into the water cycle. Granite also draws connections to the iron deposits that often give Ocean Beach a black color after a big storm. The iron ore arrives on the beach from the erosion of granite in the mountains, washing down the rivers, into the bay, and eventually deposited at our feet. There is something poetic about how both water and stone undergo a transformation and journey to ultimately end up in the same place. I feel it's important to bring attention to our relationship between water, place, and purpose as our climate changes and water becomes an ever more scarce and unpredictable resource.

My goal with this artwork is to create a space where viewers engage with the work and by doing so engage with their surroundings. Listening Stones asks visitors to contemplate their own experience, effect, and relationship to the world around us.

Cutaway view of artwork to show conical listening cone cut through granite boulder

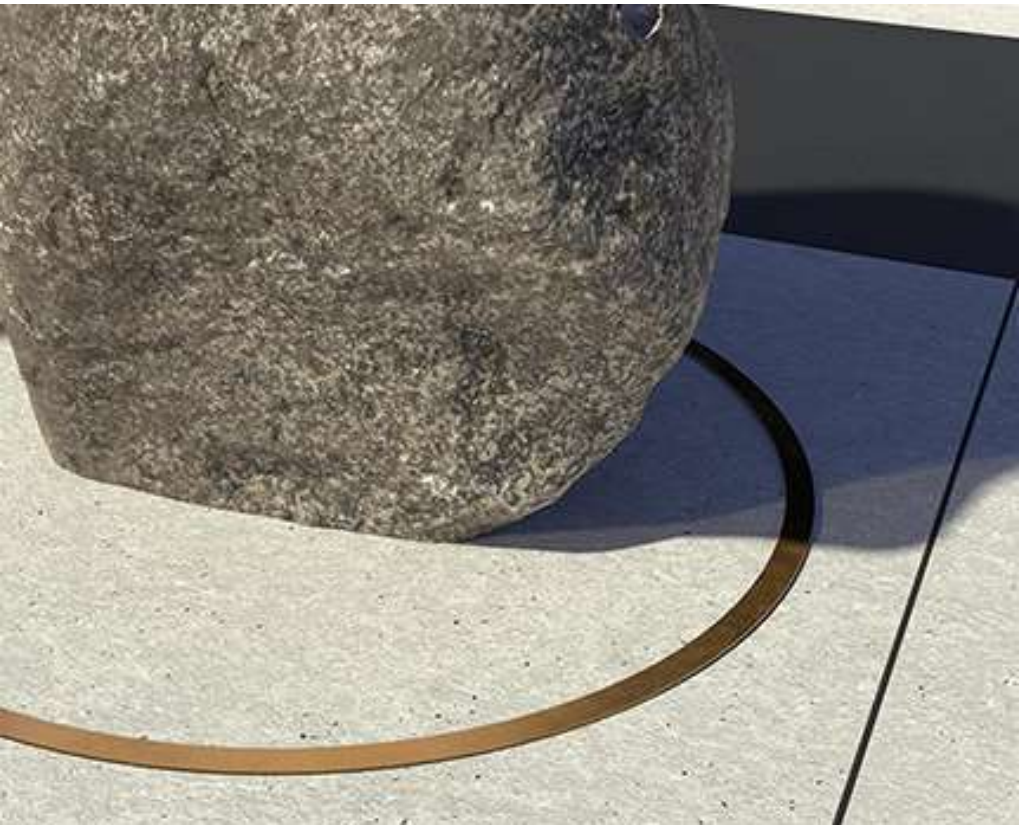
Example of material: Cut granite with flame finish (matte)

Example of material: Bronze (natural patina)

Listening Stones is comprised of 11 granite boulders representing the reservoirs that are a part of the Hetch Hetchy Aqueduct system. These boulders will be placed throughout the main plaza area. Seven of the boulders will have a cone cut through the rock pointing in different directions. These cones will collect and amplify the ambient sounds of the space and enable participants to use the boulders as listening devices to hear what the landscape is saying.

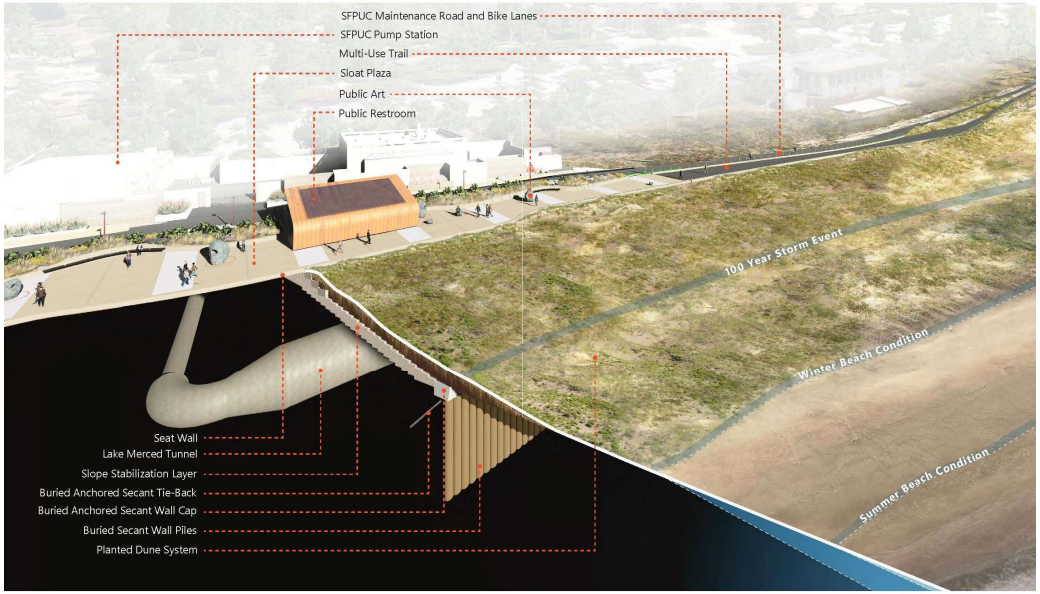
The conceptual proposal was approved by the Arts Commission on Nov 7, 2022.

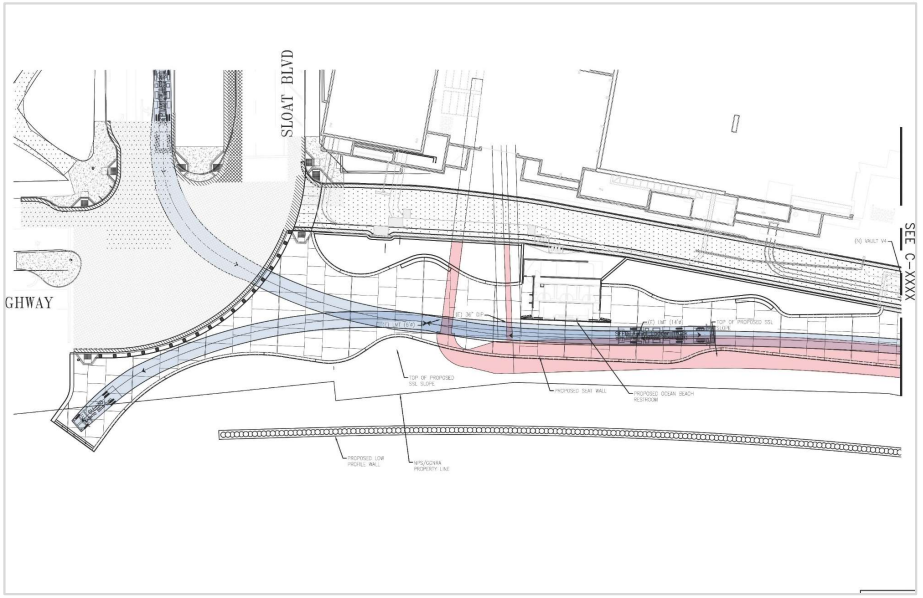
Granite boulders sourced in Northern California. The bronze rings, inset into the plaza paving will sit flush at the surface, encircle each boulder and will be offset 18" (originally 24") from the boulder, itself. The ring size will vary based on each boulder's circumference. The rings will not intersect with paving joints.



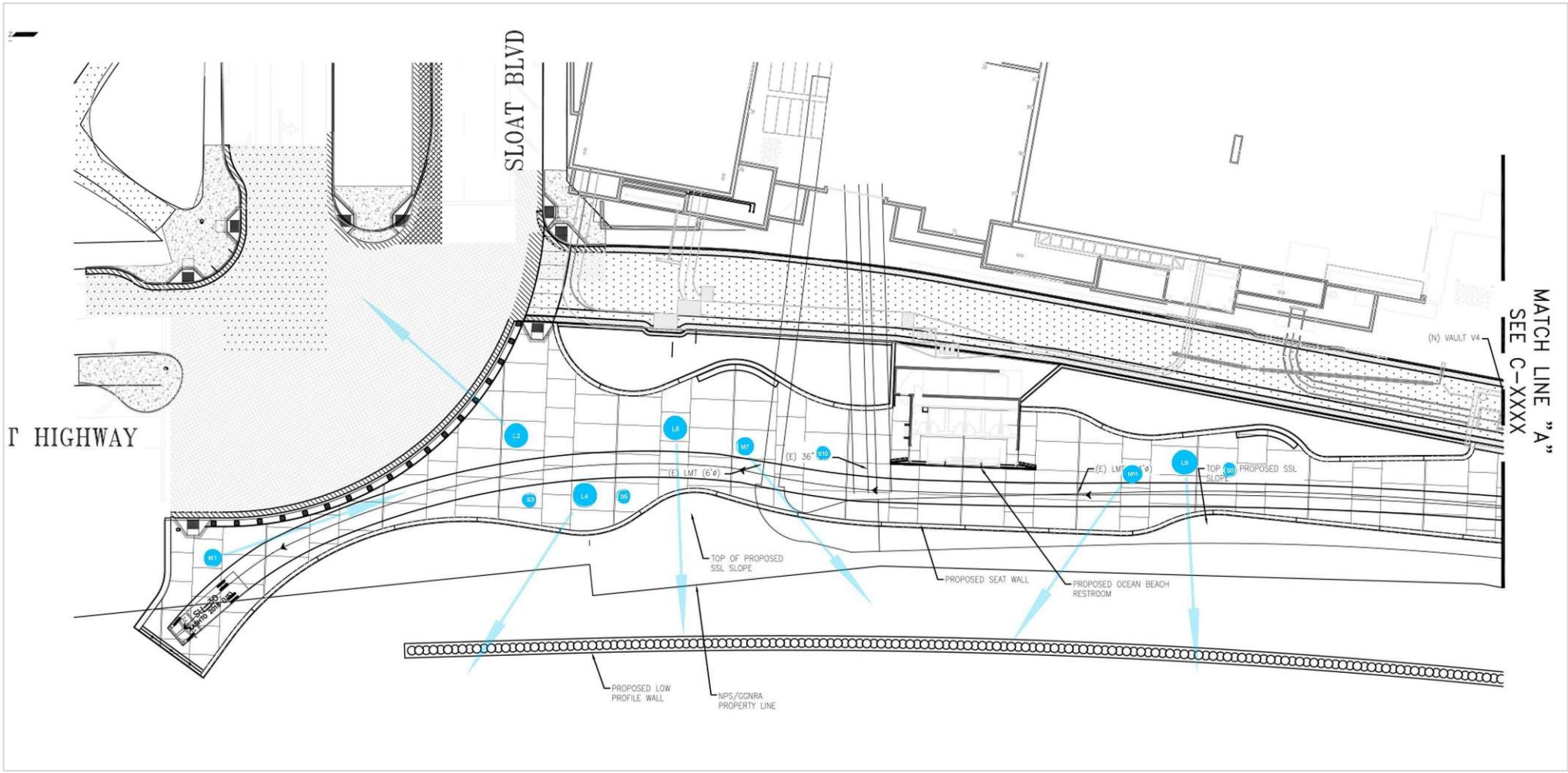
The main focus of developing the design was to identify the placement of each boulder. The artist dedicated time walking the site, getting a sense of scale and the spacing between the boulders and other future built elements.

SECTION PERSPECTIVE - BELOW GRADE INFRASTRUCTURE AT SLOAT INTERSECTION

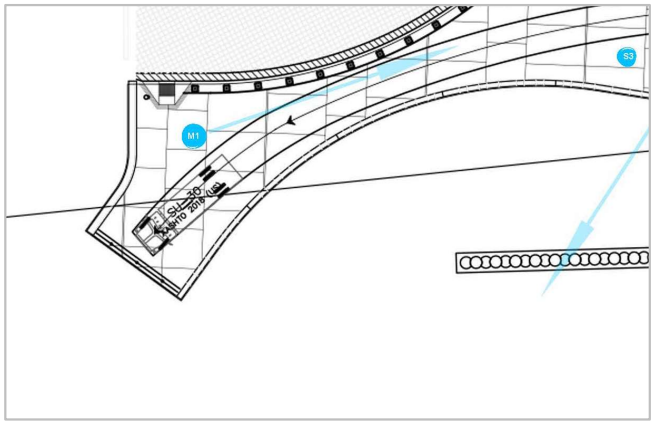


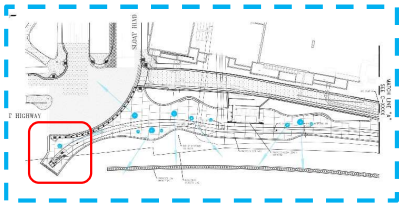


There were several design constraints impacting the placement of the boulders, including an underground tunnel infrastructure (red), which has weight limits to above ground elements. The boulders also need to allow clearance for emergency and maintenance vehicle routes (blue)

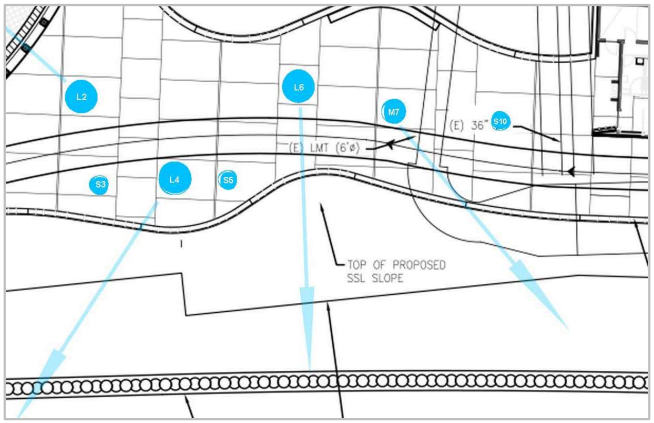


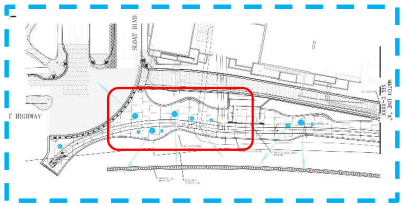
Final artwork placement indicating the view/listening angles of the seven cone-cut boulders. The boulders are meant to be approached both from afar and up close. They welcome touch, site, and sound, and allow for fluid movement throughout the plaza. The artist considered the placement in relation to curb cuts and clearance from walls and other built elements, with a general guide of 5’ minimum clearance to allow fluid accessible movement around each boulder.



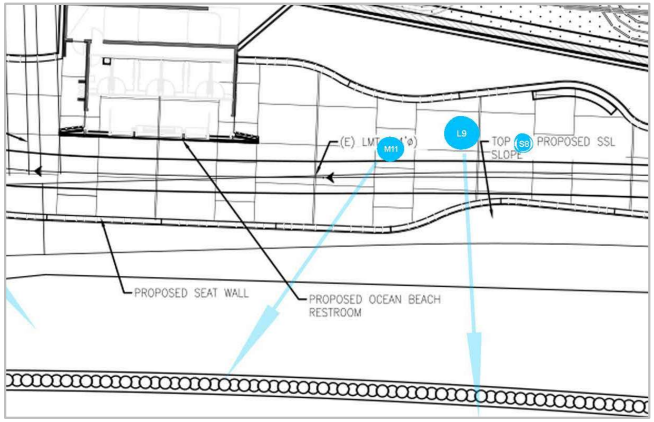


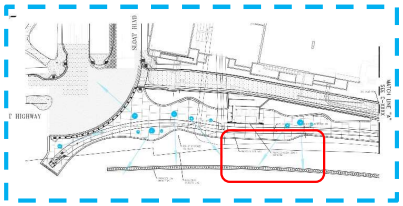
A close-up of the medium sized boulder placed at the north entrance of the plaza. This boulder is roughly 4-5 feet from the edge of the curb cut and has a cone cutout pointing south, drawing folks further into the plaza.





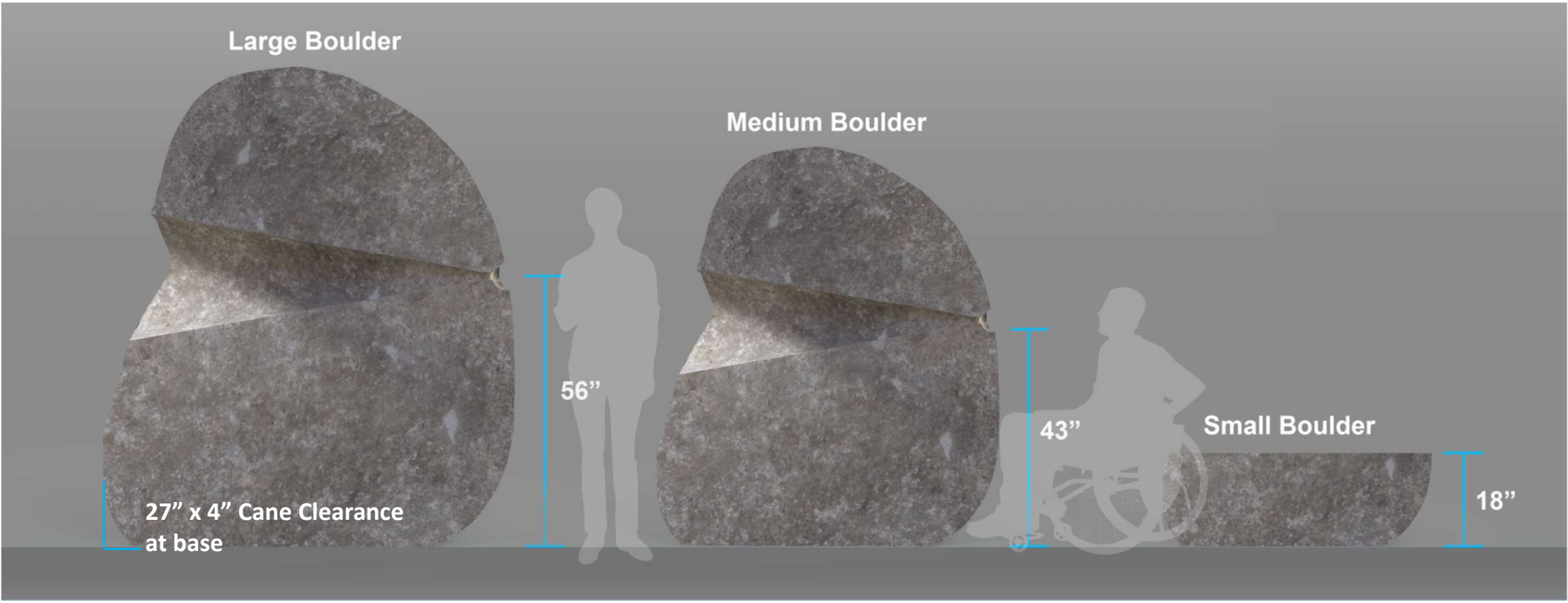
The artwork footprint (shown in blue) represents both the boulder and the bronze ring. Note that the boulders and rings never cross a paving joint. These pavers come in two sizes, 10 and 20 feet wide.





The boulders also need to stay clear from the plaza restroom for safety and privacy, as well as away from the built-in seating along this curved seat wall.

A cross-section view of the large, medium and small boulders. The listening cone cuts will have a 20-degree opening to best gather and direct sound to the listener. The small boulders will be cut flat at 18” high. The artist explains that these four horizontally-cut boulders “provide a contrast to the more natural forms of the seven boulders and serve as a reminder of the human hand within the landscape.”



LARGE (4 total)
7’ to 9’ h, 5’ to 6’d, 32,000 lbs

MEDIUM (3 total)
5’ to 6’ h, 4’ to 5’d, 13,000 lbs

SMALL (4 total)
18” h, 3’ to 4’d, 4,000 lbs

PROJECT TIMELINE

Final Design Approval	**April 17, 2024**
Plaza Construction Begins (4 years)	2025
Construction Documentation Approval	2027-2028
Fabrication and Installation	2028-2029