

**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO  
PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT**

**DATE:** September 25, 2019

**TO:** Planning Commission

**FROM:** Planning Staff

**SUBJECT:** EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Consideration of a Coastal Development Permit to (a) install five (5) park benches along the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Bluff Trail, (b) replace an existing 3-foot high cable fence barrier used to protect a native strawberry area located at the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Bluff Trail Overlook area with 3-foot high split rail fencing, and (c) install two (2), 24-inch by 36-inch interpretive signs along Pillar Point Bluff (Jean Lauer Trail). The project is appealable to the California Coastal Commission.

County File Number: PLN 2018-00380  
(San Mateo County Parks Department)

**PROPOSAL**

The San Mateo County Parks Department (Parks Department) is requesting to install five (5) park benches along the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Bluff Trail. The park benches will be installed and interspersed along the trail as depicted in Attachment C of the staff report.

The Parks Department also proposes to replace an existing 3-foot high cable fence barrier used to protect a native strawberry area with 3-foot high split rail fencing located at the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Bluff Trail Overlook area. Due to the difficulty in achieving efficient repair and maintenance levels for the cable fence, the Parks Department has opted to replace it with a split rail fence that would be easier to maintain.

Also proposed for ground installation are two (2) 24-inch by 36-inch interpretive signs along Pillar Point Bluff (Jean Lauer Trail). The location for the interpretive signs was chosen based on its close proximity to a former Ohlone village of Chiguan, where vistas would overlook the travel route of the Portola Expedition. The two (2) interpretive signs are proposed for the Ohlone-Portola Heritage Trail that traces the 10,000 year trade route linkage between Ohlone villages and other Indian tribes eastward of this location based on the three (3) diaries of the Portola expedition. The signs would be located along Airport Street in Moss Beach, at or around sign bollard Location No. 12 of Pillar Point Bluff (Jean Lauer Trail). The signs would be supported by two (2) concrete

footings at 18 inches below grade and would be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Planning Commission approve the Coastal Development Permit, County File Number PLN 2018-00380, based on and subject to the required findings and conditions of approval listed in Attachment A.

## **SUMMARY**

The site is within the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve and the Pillar Point Bluff located west of Half Moon Bay Airport and Cabrillo Highway. The project area includes trails along the bluff, sensitive habitats, riparian areas and wetlands that are available for public recreation, primarily focused on education and protection of natural resources.

Regarding compliance with the General Plan, the proposed improvements support the existing recreational and open spaces uses of the County park property and further improve public education and accessibility. Regarding compliance with the San Mateo County Local Coastal Program, the project complies with policies pertaining to hazards, sensitive habitat, California wild strawberry and recreation and visitor serving facilities. No structures are intended for human habitation and bench locations are located an adequate distance from bluff edges. The proposed improvements would result in minimal land disturbance while protecting sensitive habitats, such as the native strawberry area, and increasing public education and accessibility at the park through the installation of two interpretative signs and five park benches along existing public trails. The proposed split rail fencing would replace existing protective fencing, providing equivalent protection while reducing maintenance costs. Also, the proposed improvements would not increase the intensity of the existing use. No additional parking would be required for the proposed improvements.

Although zoning permits (including a building permit) are not required because the project would be undertaken by the County Parks Department, compliance with RM and PAD zoning regulations and standards are required, as indicated in the staff report, such as, in part, that the proposed materials of the benches, split rail fence and interpretive signs are compatible with the surrounding natural environment and do not detract from the scenic qualities of the area.

DPA:pac - DPADD0488\_WPU.DOCX

**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO  
PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT**

**DATE:** September 25, 2019

**TO:** Planning Commission

**FROM:** Planning Staff

**SUBJECT:** Consideration of a Coastal Development Permit, pursuant to Section 6328.4 of the San Mateo County Zoning Regulations, to (a) install five (5) park benches along the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Bluff Trail, (b) replace an existing 3-foot high cable fence barrier used to protect a native strawberry area located at the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Bluff Trail Overlook area with 3-foot high split rail fencing, and (c) install two (2), 24-inch by 36-inch interpretive signs along Pillar Point Bluff (Jean Lauer Trail). The project is appealable to the California Coastal Commission.

County File Number: PLN 2018-00380  
(San Mateo County Parks Department)

**PROPOSAL**

The San Mateo County Parks Department (Parks Department) is requesting to install five (5) park benches along the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Bluff Trail. The park benches will be installed and interspersed along the trail as depicted in Attachment C.

The Parks Department also proposes to replace an existing 3-foot high cable fence barrier used to protect a native strawberry area with 3-foot high split rail fencing located at the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Bluff Trail Overlook area. Due to the difficulty in achieving efficient repair and maintenance levels for the cable fence, the Parks Department has opted to replace it with a split rail fence that would be easier to maintain.

Also proposed for ground installation are two (2) 24-inch by 36-inch interpretive signs along Pillar Point Bluff (Jean Lauer Trail). The location for the interpretive signs was chosen based on its close proximity to a former Ohlone village of Chiguan, where vistas would overlook the travel route of the Portola Expedition. The two (2) interpretive signs are proposed for the Ohlone-Portola Heritage Trail that traces the 10,000 year trade route linkage between Ohlone villages and other Indian tribes eastward of this location based on the three (3) diaries of the Portola expedition. The signs would be located along Airport Street in Moss Beach, at or around sign bollard Location No. 12 of Pillar Point Bluff (Jean Lauer Trail). The signs would be supported by two (2) concrete

footings at 18 inches below grade and would be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Planning Commission approve the Coastal Development Permit, County File Number PLN 2018-00380, based on and subject to the required findings and conditions of approval listed in Attachment A.

## **BACKGROUND**

Report Prepared By: Dennis P. Aguirre, Project Planner, Telephone 650/363-1867

Applicant/Owner: San Mateo County Parks Department

Location: Fitzgerald Marine Reserve and Pillar Point Bluff, Moss Beach

APNs: 037-101-190, -260, -270, -280, 037-196-100 (Fitzgerald Marine Reserve) and 037-300-080 (Pillar Point Bluff).

Zoning Districts:

- RM-CZ/DR/CD
- RM-CZ/DR/GH/CD
- PAD/DR/CD

General Plan Designation: Open Space (Fitzgerald Marine Reserve) and Agriculture (Pillar Point Bluff).

Existing Land Use: Unimproved trail and reserve

Flood Zone: Zone A2, V and X, Community Panel No. 06081C0119F, effective August 2, 2017.

Environmental Evaluation: This project is exempt from environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 15303, relating to the installation of new small structures such as benches, signs and fences.

Setting: The site is within the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve and the Pillar Point Bluff located west of Half Moon Bay Airport and Cabrillo Highway. The project area includes trails along the bluff, sensitive habitats, riparian areas and wetlands that are available for public recreation, primarily focused on education and protection of natural resources.

## DISCUSSION

### A. KEY ISSUES

#### 1. Conformance with the General Plan

The County's General Plan designates the subject parcels for Urban Open Space and Public Recreation land uses. The proposed improvements support the existing recreational and open spaces uses of the County park property and further improve public education and accessibility. The analysis below, under the LCP Section, provides evidence of the project's consistency with applicable LCP policies.

#### 2. Conformance with the Local Coastal Program

A Coastal Development Permit is required for the project pursuant to LCP Policy 2.1. The proposed improvements do not qualify for a Coastal Permit Exemption and are located with the Coastal Commission appeal jurisdiction due to their proximity to the Pacific Ocean. Staff has determined that the project, as conditioned, is in compliance with applicable LCP policies, including the relevant components elaborated as follows:

##### a. Hazards Component

Hazards Policy 9.3 (*Regulation of Geologic Hazard Areas*). The project complies with this policy since no structures intended for human habitation are proposed. Bench locations are located an adequate distance from bluff edges to avoid risks from coastal erosion. If the benches are threatened in the future, they will be removed or relocated outside of hazardous areas.

##### b. Sensitive Habitat Component

Policy 7.4 (*Permitted Uses in Sensitive Habitats*) permits uses within sensitive habitats that include trails on public lands provided that the development will not have a significant adverse impact on the sensitive area. The project complies with this policy as the proposed improvements would result in minimal land disturbance while protecting sensitive habitats, such as the native strawberry area, and increasing public education and accessibility at the park through the installation of two interpretative signs and five park benches along existing public trails.

Policy 7.49 California Wild Strawberry (*Fragaria californica*). Requires any development, within one-half mile of the coast, to mitigate against the destruction of any California wild strawberry in one of the following

ways: (a) Prevent any development, trampling, or other destructive activity which would destroy the plant; or (b) After determining specifically if the plants involved are of particular value, successfully transplant them or have them successfully transplanted to some other suitable site. Determination of the importance of the plants can only be made by a professional doing work in strawberry breeding. The proposed split rail fencing will replace existing protective fencing, providing equivalent protection while reducing maintenance costs.

c. Recreation/Visitor Serving Facilities Component

Policy 11.4 (*Recreation and Visitor- Serving Facilities Permitted in the Coastal Zone*). The project complies with this policy since the trail is a permitted facility in the Coastal Zone and the installation of the benches, signs and protective fences do not substantially alter the natural environment. It also enhances public opportunities for coastal recreation.

The proposed improvements would not increase the intensity of the proposed use. The additional benches are intended to increase opportunities for rest and passive enjoyment along existing trails. The split rail fence would replace an existing fence and ease maintenance efforts. The interpretive signs offer public education along existing trails. No additional parking would be required for the proposed improvements.

3. Compliance with RM-CZ Zoning Regulations

The project site is located in the Resource Management – Coastal Zone (RM-CZ) Zoning District. Pursuant to Section 6903 of the Zoning Regulations, development located in the RM-CZ Zone shall require an RM-CZ Permit. However, pursuant to Section 6458 of the Zoning Regulations, on premise signs and minor grading (in this case, minor land disturbance resulting from the installation of the fence, benches and signs) are excluded from this requirement. The following is a discussion of project compliance with applicable development criteria:

- a. Development shall be located, sited and designed to carefully fit its environment so that its presence is subordinate to the pre-existing character of the site and its surrounding is maintained to the maximum extent practicable. The proposed materials of the benches, split rail fence and interpretative signs are compatible with the surrounding natural environment and do not detract from the scenic qualities of the area.

- b. Wherever possible, vegetation removed during construction shall be replaced. Vegetation for the stabilization of graded areas or for replacement of existing vegetation shall be selected and located to be compatible with surrounding vegetation, and should recognize climatic, soil and ecological characteristics of the region. Condition No. 5 of Attachment A requires that any removed vegetation in areas that are not proposed for structural or ADA improvements to be replaced with native, drought-tolerant, non-invasive vegetation. Additionally, all disturbed areas shall be stabilized prior to final approval of the building permit.
- c. Removal of living trees with trunk circumference of more than 55 inches measured 4-1/2 feet above the average surface of the ground is prohibited, except as may be required for development permitted under this ordinance, or permitted under the timber harvesting ordinance, or for reason of actual or potential danger to life or property. No trees would be removed under this proposal.

4. Compliance with the Planned Agriculture District (PAD) Zoning Regulations

The location for the interpretive signs is along Pillar Point Bluff, which is zoned PAD, within lands suitable for agriculture. The project continues the permitted recreational use of the property and therefore does not require a PAD Permit.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This project is exempt from environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15303, relating to the installation of new small structures such as benches, signs and fences.

C. REVIEW BY THE MIDCOAST COMMUNITY COUNCIL (MCC)

The MCC was notified of the Planning Commission's review of this project. As of the printing of this report, no comment has been submitted to the County.

D. REVIEW BY THE CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION (CCC)

The CCC was notified of the Planning Commission's review of this project. As of the printing of this report, no comment has been submitted to the County.

E. OTHER REVIEWING AGENCIES

Building Inspection Section

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Recommended Findings and Conditions of Approval
- B. Vicinity Map
- C. Project Illustrations

DPA:pac - DPADD0489\_WPU.DOCX

County of San Mateo  
Planning and Building Department

**RECOMMENDED FINDINGS AND CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

Project File Number: PLN 2018-00380

Hearing Date: September 25, 2019

Prepared By: Dennis P. Aguirre  
Project Planner

For Adoption By: Planning Commission

**RECOMMENDED FINDINGS**

Regarding the Environmental Review, Find:

1. That the proposed project is exempt from environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15303, relating to the installation of new small structures such as benches, signs and fences.

Regarding the Coastal Development Permit, Find:

2. That the project, as described in the application and accompanying materials required by the Zoning Regulations, Section 6328.4, and as conditioned in accordance with Section 6328.14, conforms with the applicable policies and required findings of the San Mateo County Local Coastal Program (LCP). Specifically, the project complies with policies regarding Hazards, Sensitive Habitat, and Recreation/Visitor Serving Facilities.

**RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

Current Planning Section

1. The project approval applies only to the proposal as described in this report and materials submitted for review and approval by the Planning Commission on September 25, 2019. The Community Development Director may approve minor revisions or modifications to the project if they are found to be consistent with the intent of and in substantial conformance this approval.
2. During project construction, the applicant shall, pursuant to Chapter 4.100 of the San Mateo County Ordinance Code, minimize the transport and discharge of stormwater runoff from the construction site into storm drain systems and water bodies by:

- a. Using filtration materials on storm drain covers to remove sediment from dewatering effluent.
  - b. Stabilizing all denuded areas and maintaining erosion control measures continuously between October 1 and April 30. Erosion control measures shall be certified weed-free. Use of monofilament fiber rolls is prohibited.
  - c. Removing spoils promptly, and avoiding stockpiling of fill materials, when rain is forecast. If rain threatens, stockpiled soils and other materials shall be covered with a tarp or other waterproof material.
  - d. Storing, handling, and disposing of construction materials and wastes so as to avoid their entry to the storm drain system or water body.
  - e. Avoiding cleaning, fueling or maintaining vehicles on-site, except in an area designated to contain and treat runoff.
  - f. Limiting and timing application of pesticides and fertilizers to avoid polluting runoff.
3. The project site is located within the Fitzgerald Area of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) Watershed. Runoff and other polluted discharges from the site are prohibited. Development shall minimize erosion, treat stormwater from new/replaced impervious surfaces, and prevent polluted discharges into the ASBS or a County storm drain (e.g., car washing in a driveway or street, pesticide application on lawn).
  4. The project site is located within the Fitzgerald Area of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) Watershed and is considered a Construction Stormwater Regulated Site. Weekly construction inspections are required throughout the duration of land disturbance during the rainy season (October 1 to through April 30) for sites within the ASBS Watershed, as required by the State Water Resources Control Board General Exceptions to the California Ocean Plan with Special Protections adopted on March 20, 2012.
  5. Any removed vegetation in areas that are not proposed for structural or ADA improvements shall be replaced with native, drought-tolerant, non-invasive vegetation. All disturbed areas shall be stabilized at the completion of the project.
  6. The project shall comply with all applicable building codes. Compliance shall be confirmed by the Building Inspection Official.

DPA:pac - DPADD0489\_WPU.DOCX



**County of San Mateo - Planning and Building Department**

# **ATTACHMENT B**

# VICINITY MAP





**County of San Mateo - Planning and Building Department**

# **ATTACHMENT C**

# Split-Rail Fence



Proposed Location



# Benches (5)



## Proposed Locations



# Interpretive Sign

## Starving Explorers

Accounts from the Ohlone Portola Heritage Trail

You are standing near the where the Portola Expedition arrived in this area in October 1771 and camped at Pillar Point. Native Californians would likely have greeted these Spanish explorers in the valley below.

The expedition had already passed by Monterey Bay without recognizing their location. As the men continued their search through Ohlone territory, villagers pointed out the right place and provided much needed food, shelter, and guidance. After a day's rest, the explorers continued their search north toward present-day Point.

The Ohlone Portola Heritage Trail

The Ohlone Portola Heritage Trail is a 10-mile trail that follows the route of the Portola Expedition through the Ohlone territory. The trail is a mix of dirt, gravel, and paved paths, and is suitable for all types of hikers. The trail is a mix of dirt, gravel, and paved paths, and is suitable for all types of hikers.

The Ohlone Portola Heritage Trail is a 10-mile trail that follows the route of the Portola Expedition through the Ohlone territory. The trail is a mix of dirt, gravel, and paved paths, and is suitable for all types of hikers. The trail is a mix of dirt, gravel, and paved paths, and is suitable for all types of hikers.



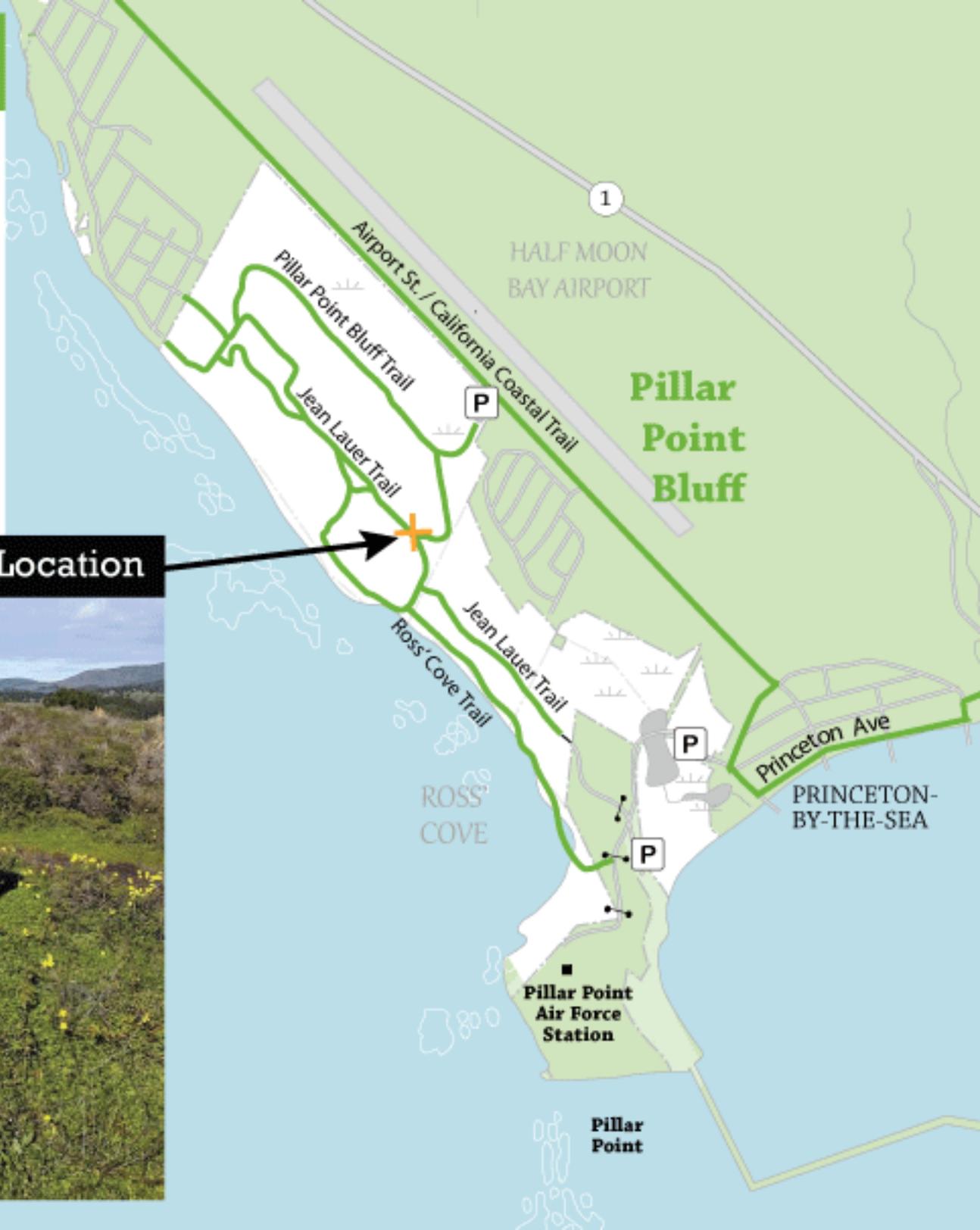
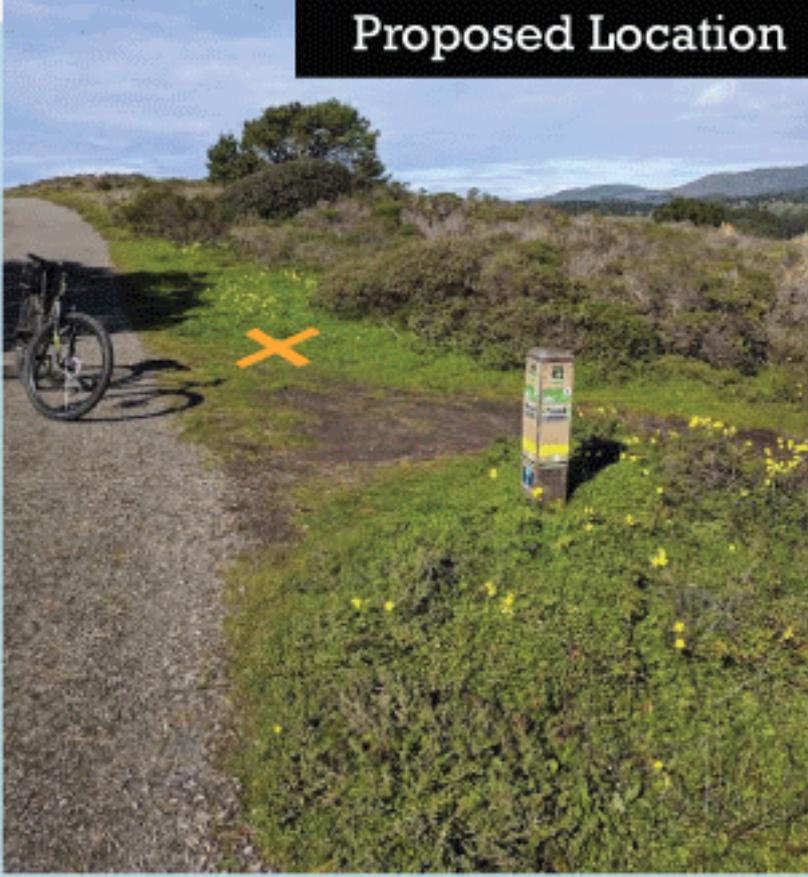
"We could not tell... whether we were far away from Monterey or close to it. We were frequently seeing signs that pointed out, and we were astonished to a mark the four oaks in a line."

—from the Journal of Don Juan Manuel de Gálvez



DRAFT

## Proposed Location



OHLONE-PORTOLA HERITAGE TRAIL  
TYPICAL INTERPRETIVE TRAIL WAYSIDE



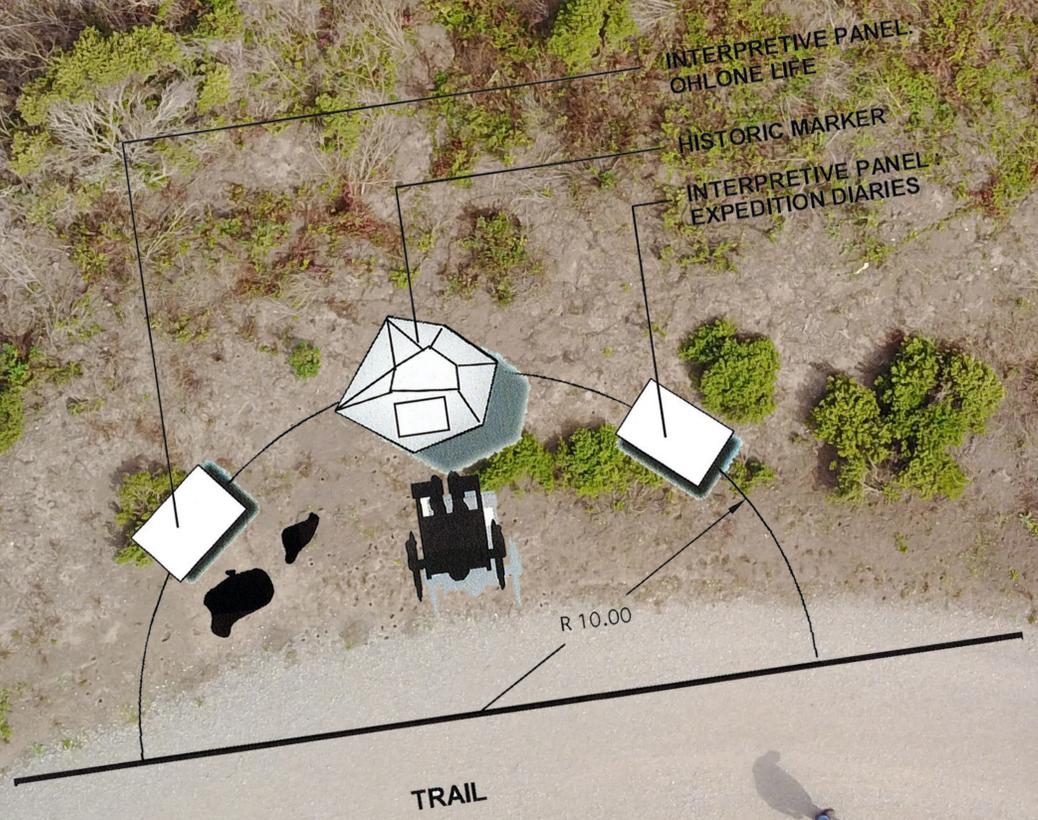
INTERPRETIVE PANEL  
HISTORIC MARKER  
INTERPRETIVE PANEL  
EXPEDITION DIARIES

R 10.00

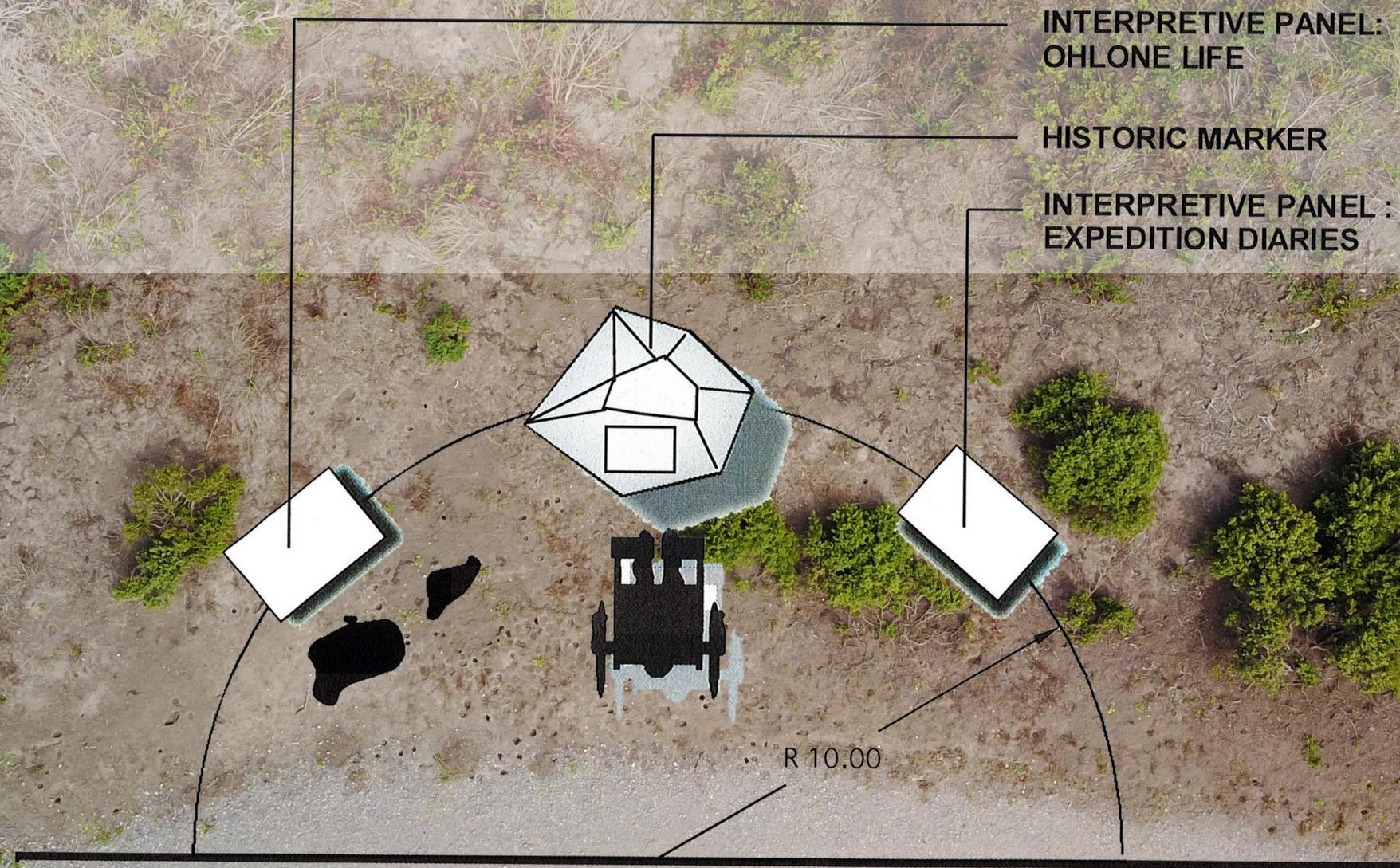
TRAIL



# OHLONE-PORTOLÁ HERITAGE TRAIL TYPICAL INTERPRETIVE TRAIL WAYSIDE



# OHLONE-PORTOLÁ HERITAGE TRAIL: TYPICAL INTERPRETIVE TRAIL WAYSIDE



TRAIL

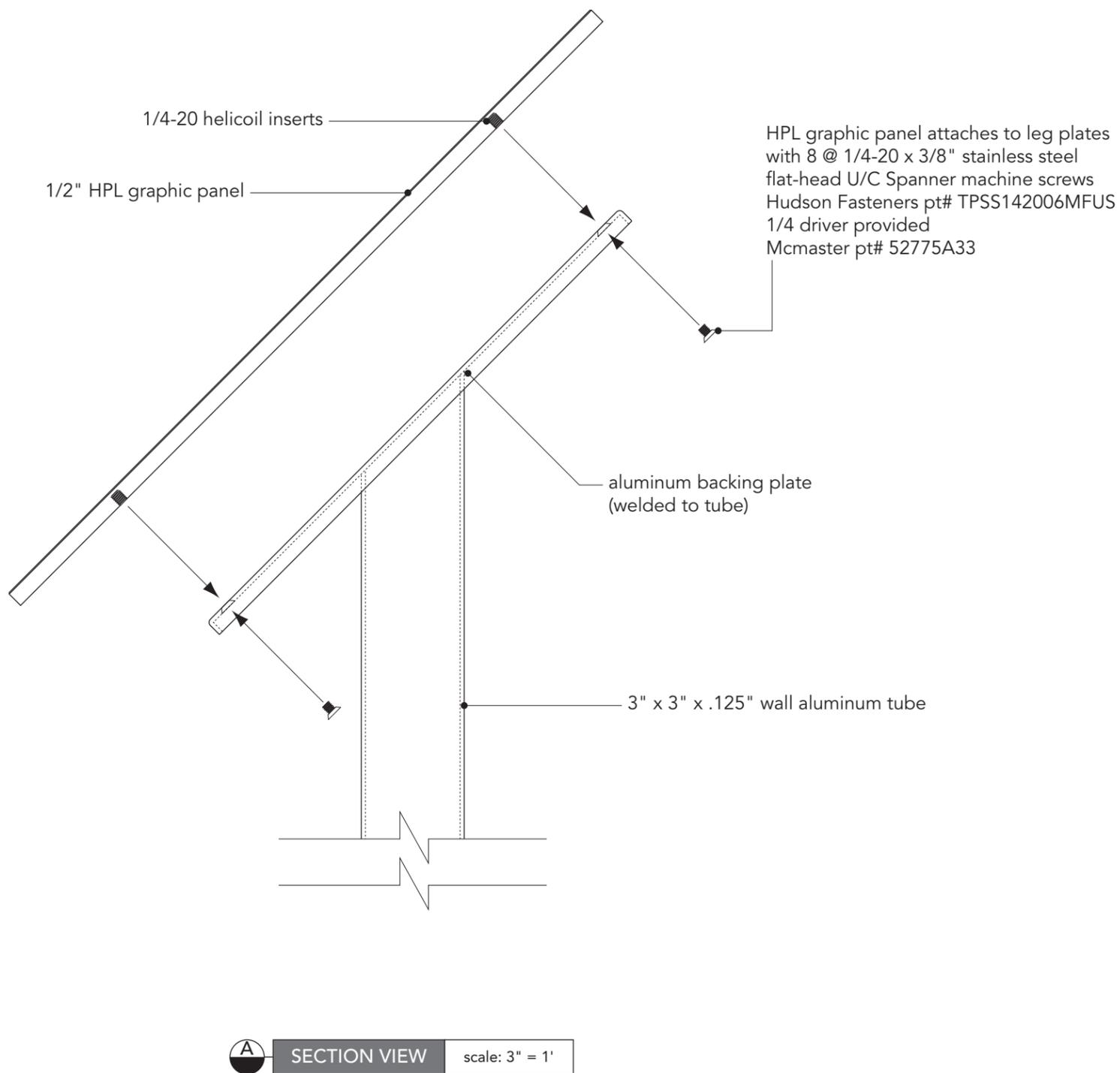
Installation Instructions for KVO Streamline Pedestal Legs (model KVO 3624 STRL DLP-AL). Please take a moment to go over these simple instructions to ensure a successful installation.

It is important to note that all parts have a durable powder coat finish (Cardinal T241-BK59 Black Fine Texture Semi-Gloss), but care should be taken during installation to avoid scratching or scuffing. Make sure parts are put onto a clean, level surface. Try to avoid sliding the parts during installation (it may help to put the parts on a piece of cardboard, plastic, cloth etc).

Step 1: Attach leg assemblies to graphic panel with provided 1/4-20 x 3/8" security screws (security bit is included).

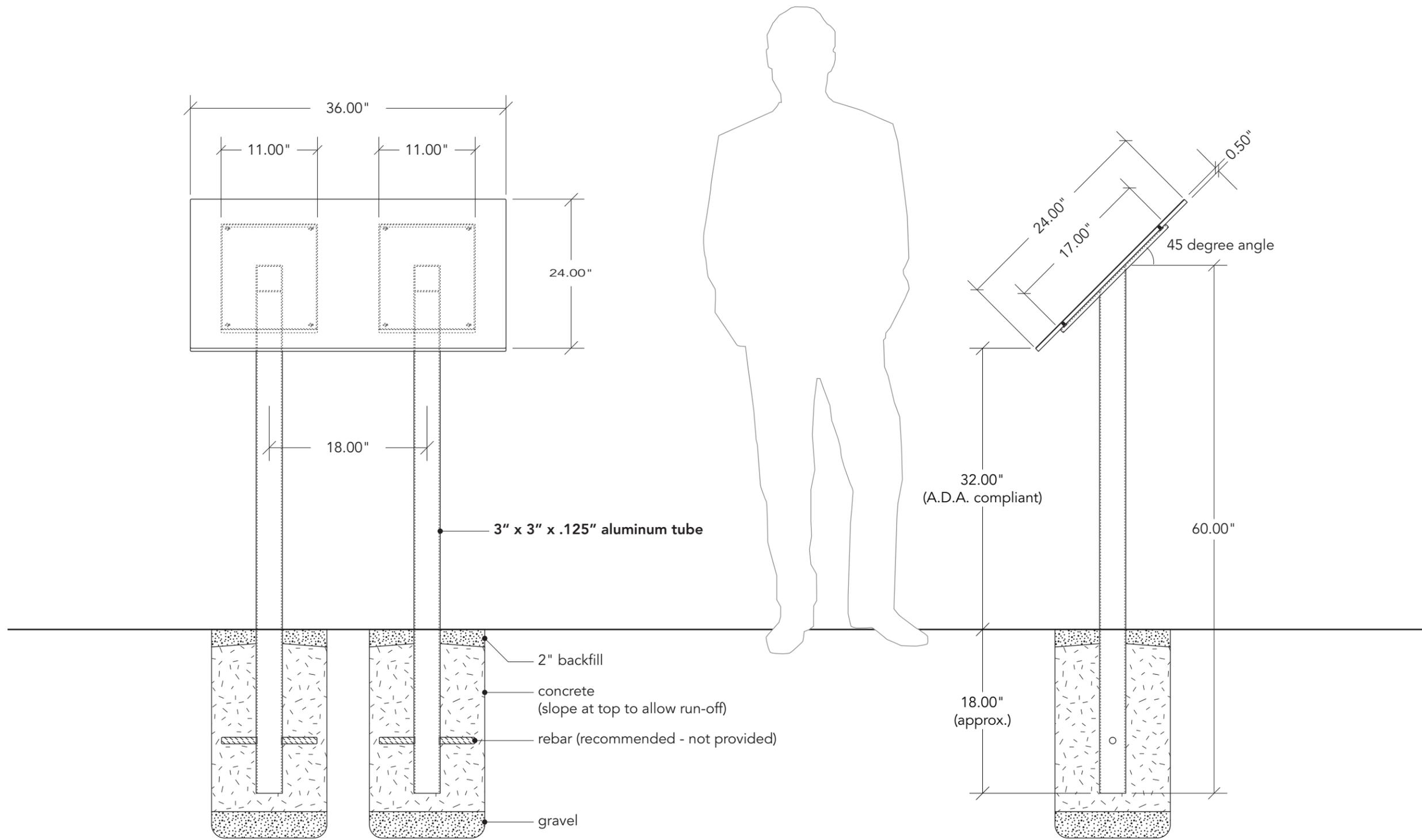
Step 2: Carefully set unit into ground using local installation guidelines. The drawing on page 2 represents a commonly used installation method. Be careful to make sure exhibit base is set squarely into the concrete. You may need to brace the unit while the concrete sets.

Congratulations, the installation is now complete. If you have any questions regarding the installation of your KVO Exhibit Base, please contact a KVO representative at: 800-657-6412



©2019 All ideas, arrangements, and plans indicated or represented by the above drawings are the property of KVO Industries and were created, evolved and developed for use on and in connection with the above specified project. No part of the above drawing, design, arrangements or ideas thereon shall be duplicated or used for any purpose whatsoever without the express written permission of KVO Industries.

project	description	drawn by	project manager	date	item	quantity	scale	revision	page no.			
11694 San Mateo Parks	installation instructions	SV	Chris Howell	09/10/19	B	4 (four) units	as shown		1 of 2	<input type="radio"/> Preliminary Design <input type="radio"/> Design Development <input checked="" type="radio"/> Final Design		4 Maxwell Ct. Santa Rosa, CA 95401 T 707 573 6868 F 707 573 6888 kvoindustries.com



**ELEVATION VIEW**  
scale: 1" = 1'

**SIDE VIEW**  
scale: 1" = 1'

©2019 All ideas, arrangements, and plans indicated or represented by the above drawings are the property of KVO Industries and were created, evolved and developed for use on and in connection with the above specified project. No part of the above drawing, design, arrangements or ideas thereon shall be duplicated or used for any purpose whatsoever without the express written permission of KVO Industries.

project	description	drawn by	project manager	date	item	quantity	scale	revision	page no.
11694 San Mateo Parks	3624 STRL DLP-AL Aluminum construction exterior grade powder coat finish color: Cardinal T241-BK59 Black Fine Texture Semi-Gloss	SV	Chris Howell	09/10/19	B	4 (four) units	as shown		2 of 2

- Preliminary Design
- Design Development
- Final Design



4 Maxwell Ct.  
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

T 707 573 6868  
F 707 573 6888  
kvoindustries.com