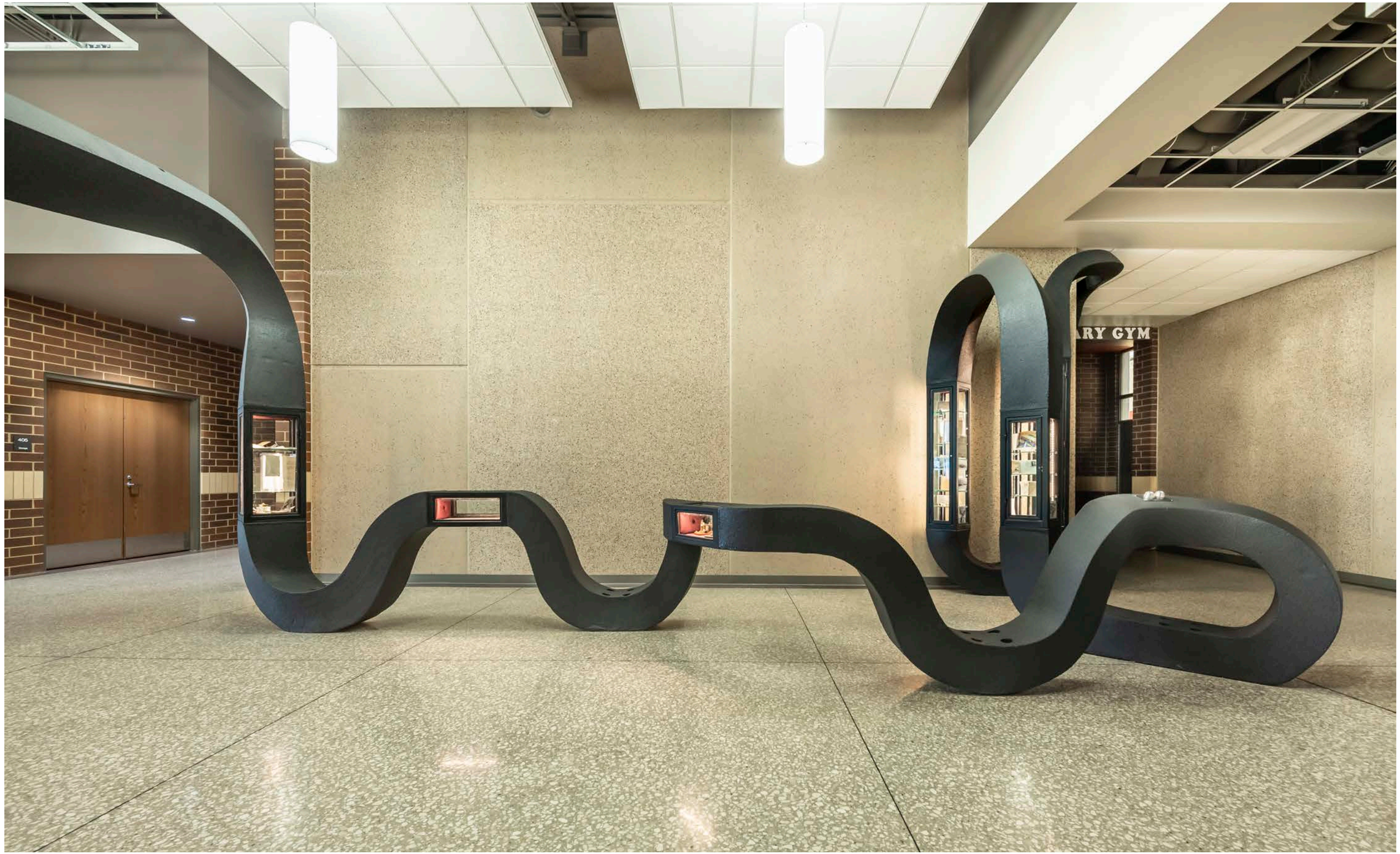
A Form of Connection
(working title)

BALL-NOGUES STUDIO
April 2026

Bloomington Convention Center
Public Artwork Proposal

Previous Work


405
RY GYM

Concept

A Form of Connection (working title)

The best public art changes how people recognize and remember a place. For the Bloomington Convention Center, I envision a singular sculptural form that winds around the skybridge connecting the existing convention center to the new expansion. It then extends outward, over the courtyard, and then forms a kind of entry canopy at an entrance to the original building. In traversing along all of the walls of the bridge, the work transforms a familiar piece of connective architecture into a civic marker and gives the convention center a new image by which it can be known.

The work takes the form of a lyrical line overhead, vine-like in spirit but abstract. It wraps the skybridge, thickening and narrowing as it entwines the bridge, at times drawing close to the architecture and at times pressing outward over the courtyard. The scale matters here. I want the work to have a presence from below the skybridge, from inside the convention center, and when viewed from up and down South College Avenue. It holds its own in relation to the building from all of these vantage points. Up close, viewers can read the pattern, precision, and intricacy of its colored panels but from a block or two away, they grasp the scale of its signature urban gesture.

I have explored lines before in my work—from the meandering vitrines of *Cabinet of Obsolescence* in Fort Dodge. In Bloomington, however, the line takes on a new role. It softens the serial, rectilinear geometry of the skybridge, while the bridge, in turn, gives the line an armature to cling to, measure itself against, and transform. The two exist in a symbiotic relationship. Rather than sitting beside the buildings as an autonomous object, the sculpture treats the bridge's existing structure not as a constraint, but as a partner and dances with the bridge to highlight its function as a connector. It transforms a pedestrian passage into a distinct architectural composition.

That relationship suits Bloomington where culture, learning, making, nature, and public life overlap in vivid ways. By wrapping the bridge between the original convention center and the expansion, the sculpture gives form to the notion of connection at multiple levels: between old and new, arrival and departure, visitor and resident. It marks a threshold within the building complex, but it also does something larger: it turns a path between two buildings into a memorable public image—one that speaks to Bloomington's curiosity, invention, and broad civic imagination. Bloomington's public art collection already shows a real comfort with abstraction; this project builds on that sophistication while operating at the scale of new building.

Hundreds of unique folded aluminum elements compose the form and assemble into a continuous faceted body. I intend that logic to remain evident In the finished piece. The artwork does not begin as a smooth volume and then receives a decorative skin; instead, disciplined variation among individual parts make-up the form so that structure, skin, and geometry are one. This approach places the project in a forward-looking conversation about how digital modeling and contemporary manufacturing produce a one-of-a-kind civic form with precision, efficiency, and clarity. It also makes the work lightweight, durable, and highly specific to the geometry of the skybridge. The sculpture feels both lyrical and exacting: vine-like trajectories animate it, while a rigorously and elegantly engineered system of parts grounds it.

Color and integrated lighting make the twisting form even more legible. Two sides carry one family of color, while the opposing sides carry another, so that as the sculpture wraps and turns, one chromatic range slips from view while another appears. Precisely aligned lighting rakes across the faceted surface at night, drawing out its depth and geometry rather than simply flooding it with illumination. I do not want spectacle. I want a calm, sophisticated after-dark presence that gives the bridge a different life in the evening.

I am not after a literal emblem. I am after something more potent: a form so particular in its relationship to the buildings and urban context that people cannot separate it from how they know the place. Its overhead sweep, its unusual intimacy with the bridge, and its transformation of a functional connector into a memorable civic gesture can make it a lasting image for the convention center and, over time, a lasting symbol for Bloomington itself.

Technical Overview

The proposed artwork is an aluminum structure that wraps the skybridge connecting the existing convention center to the new expansion. It extends outward from the building at times and forms a canopy-like entry at one of the entrances to the original building. Hundreds of unique parts, each CNC-laser-cut, folded, and assembled into a larger system, create the continuous faceted, vine-like structure. This method calibrates the work closely to the geometry of the skybridge while maintaining a high degree of formal specificity.

I propose 5052 alloy, marine-grade aluminum as the primary material. This architectural aluminum contains relatively high magnesium content, which gives it excellent corrosion resistance, and the formability required for a folded, faceted structure of this kind. Even if the coating suffers localized damage, the underlying alloy still resists degradation at a high level. The sculpture will receive a flexible exterior-grade powder coating, most likely TIGER Drylac exterior grade or equivalent, selected for corrosion resistance, flexibility, and long-term color retention in an exposed public setting.

The work will weigh approximately 8,000 pounds, distributed across fourteen anchor posts aligned with key structural nodes of the skybridge. That distribution enables us to share the load across multiple points that will be coordinated with the bridge's structural logic. The connection detail uses a bolt-in-place plate connection on an HSS stub-up just above the vapor barrier. The team will weld these HSS connections to the structure and encase them in the vapor barrier during bridge construction. Ball-Nogues and Nous Engineering have already begun calibrating the artwork's stiffness, strength, snow loads, and other structural matters so that the sculpture can extend meaningfully over the courtyard while remaining within engineering constraints.

Digital modeling, parametric coordination, and contemporary manufacturing technologies make this artwork possible. These tools do not merely support the design; they drive it. They allow the team to precisely develop, nest, fabricate, and assemble a large number of unique parts into a continuous one-of-a-kind form. They also allow close coordination among sculptural intent, attachment strategy, structural engineering, and fabrication efficiency.
The proposed materials and finish systems are designed to produce a work that remains durable, low-maintenance, and appropriate for long-term public use.

Integrated lighting will be incorporated into the sculpture and carefully aimed so that light rakes across the faceted surfaces at night. This lighting strategy accentuates the geometry and thickness of the work rather than simply producing a flashy effect. The goal is a subtle but unmistakable after-dark presence that extends the sculpture's visibility and reinforces its role as a landmark.

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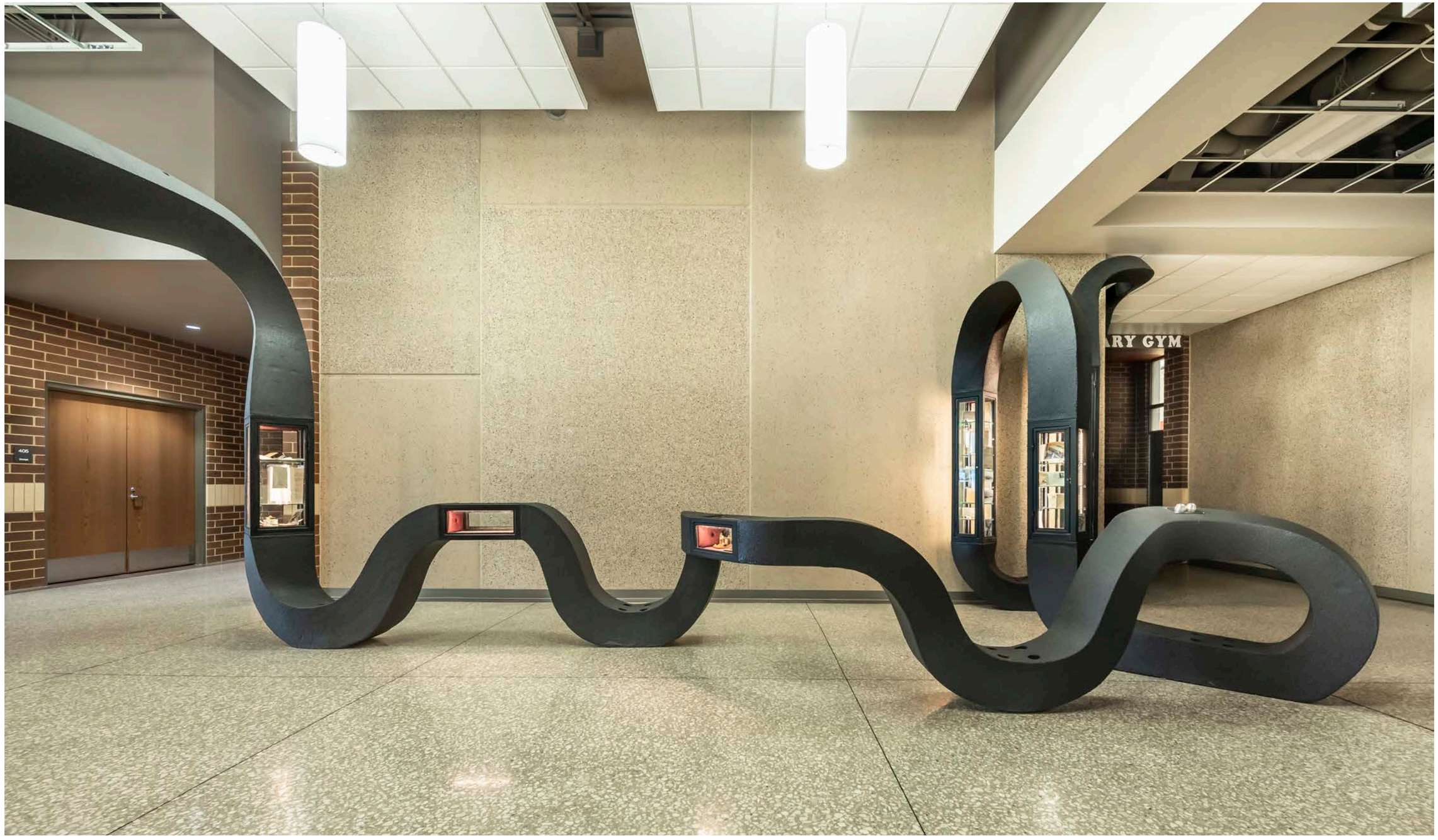

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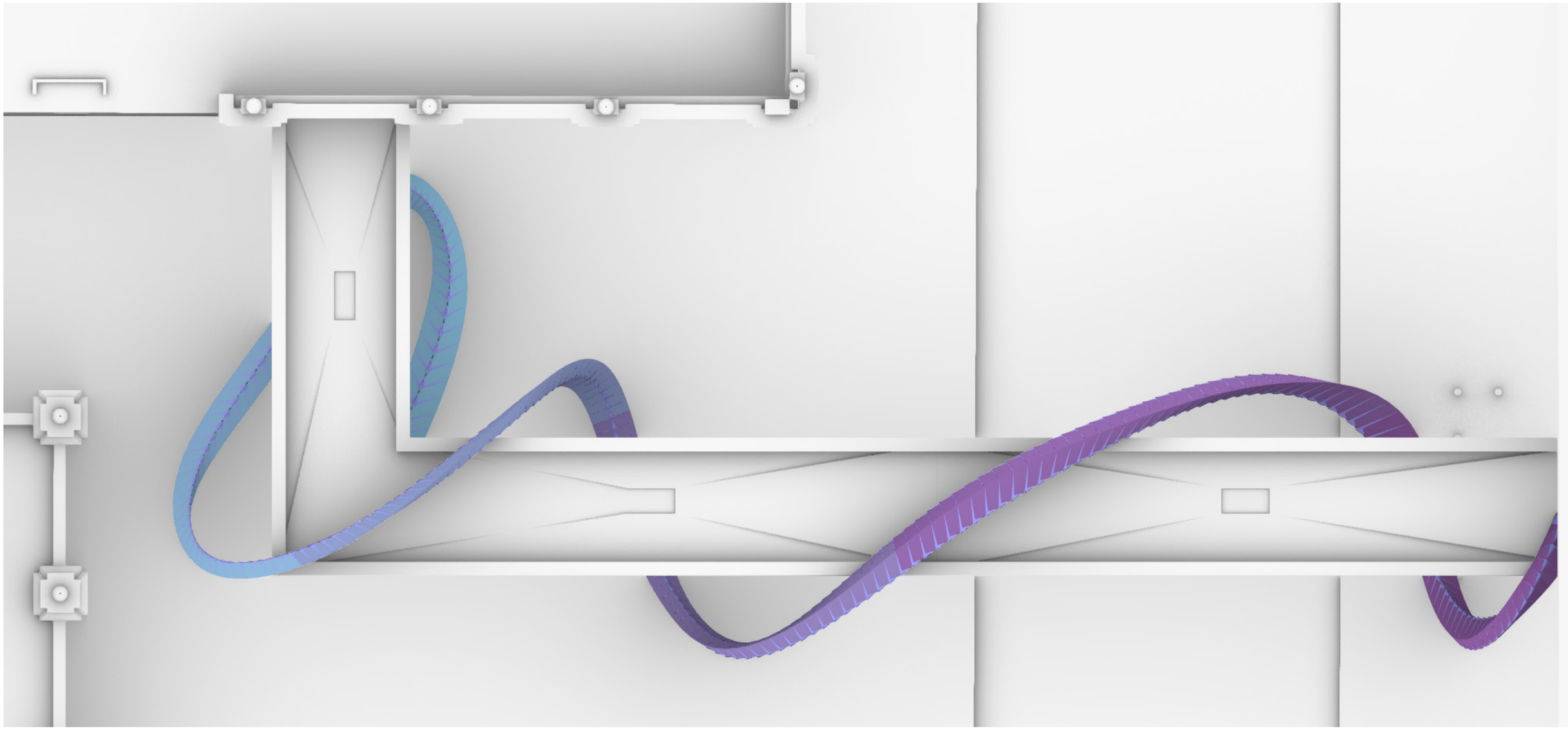

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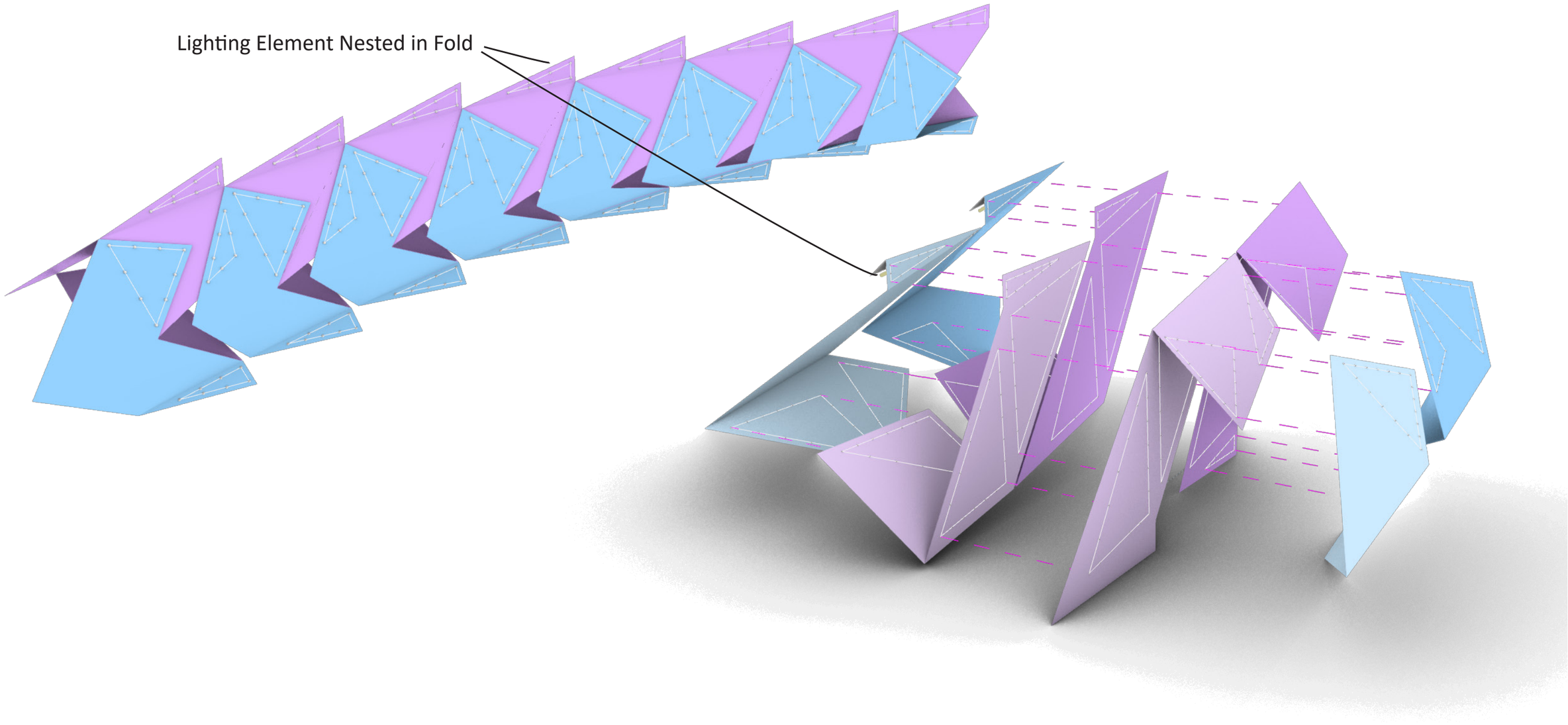

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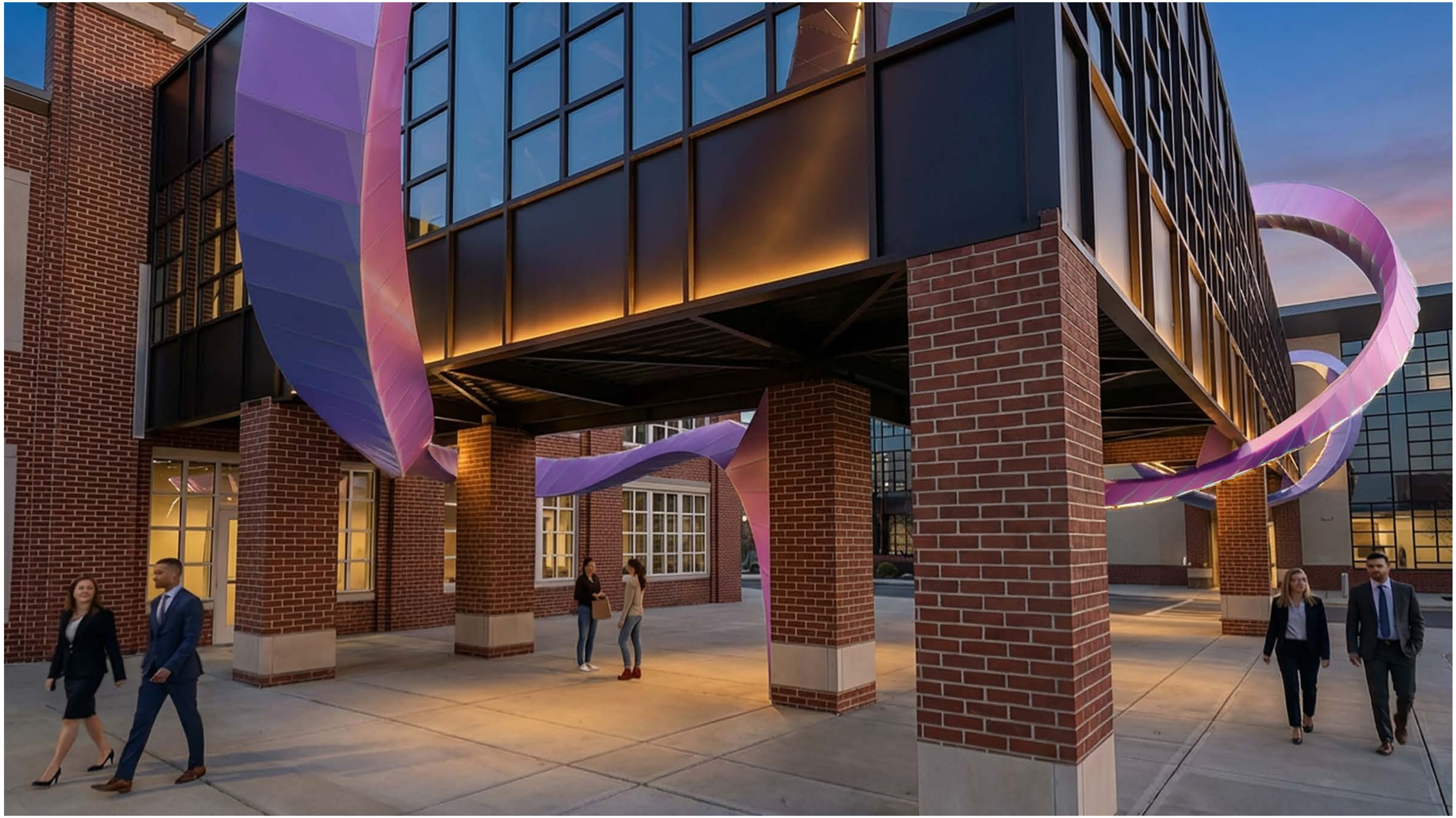

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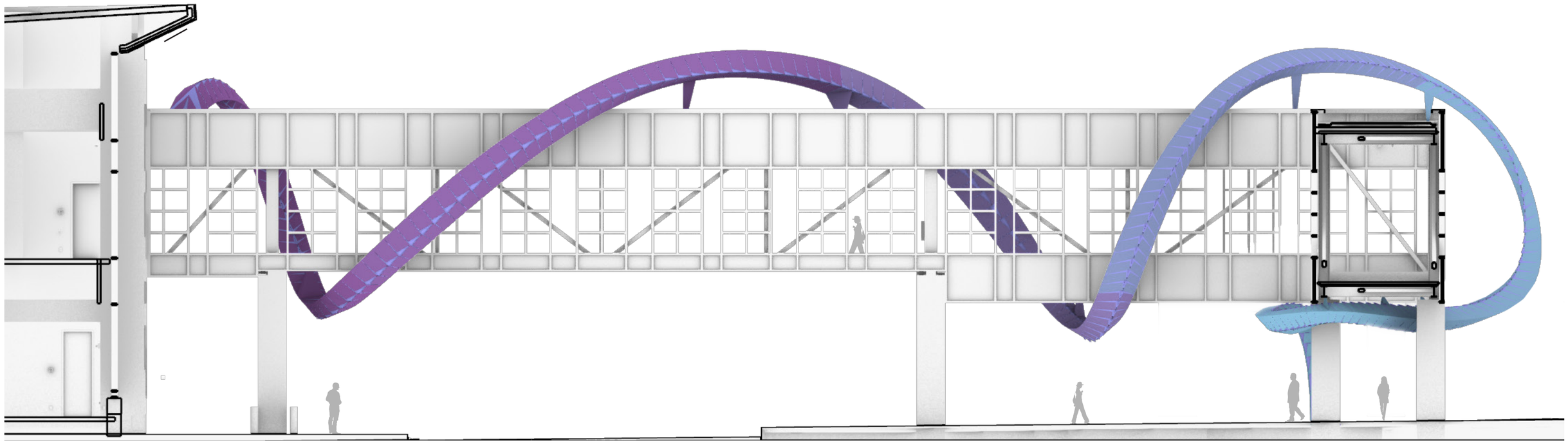

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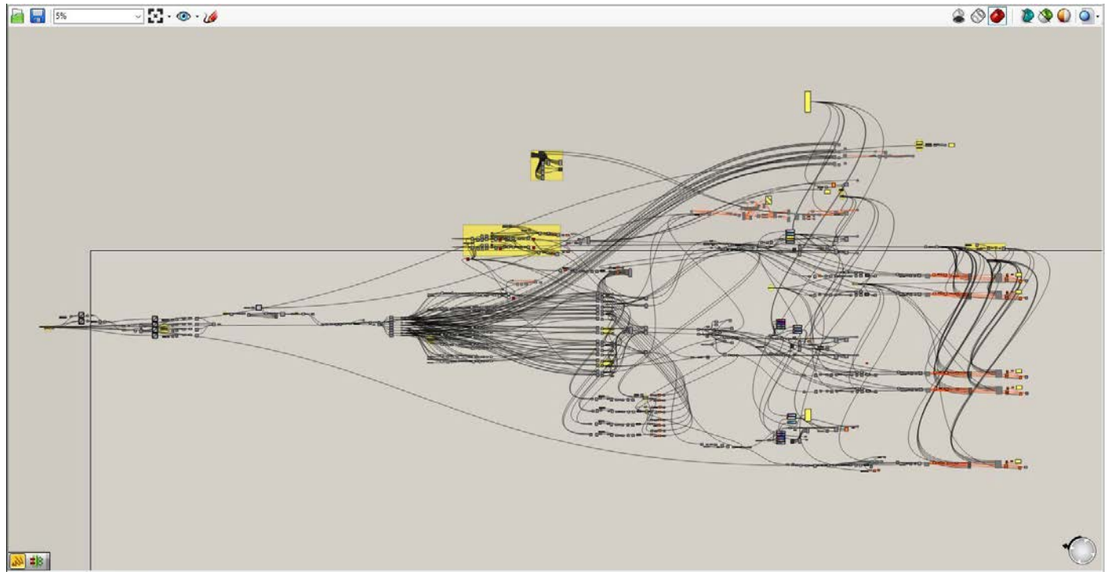

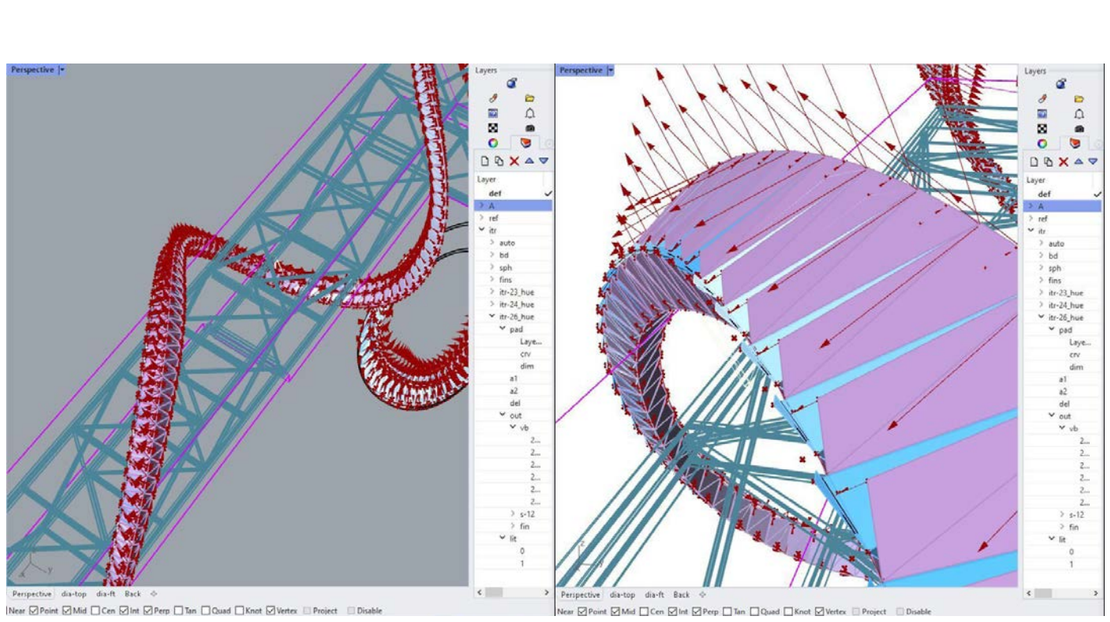

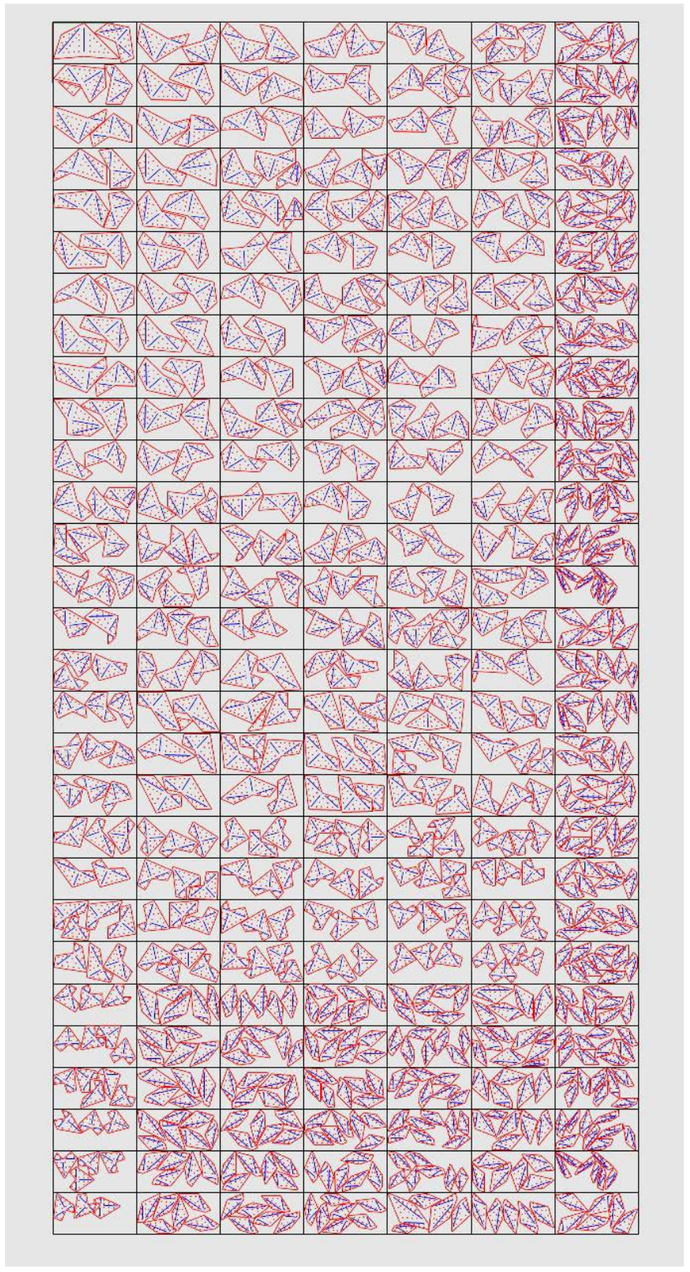

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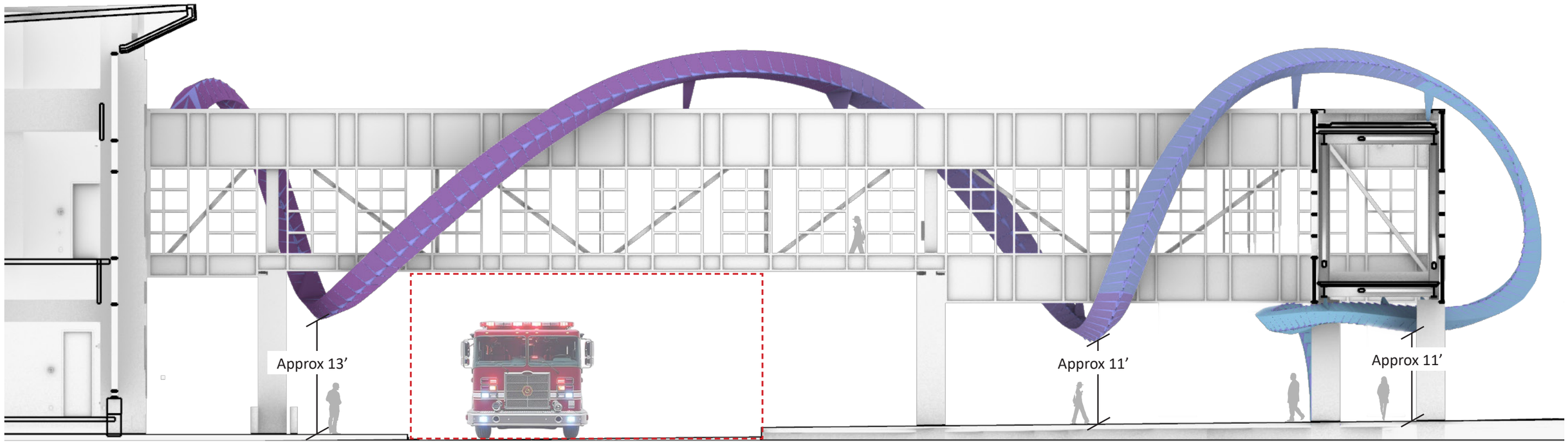
Please Play Movie File:

1_BNS_Exploded View



College St clearance

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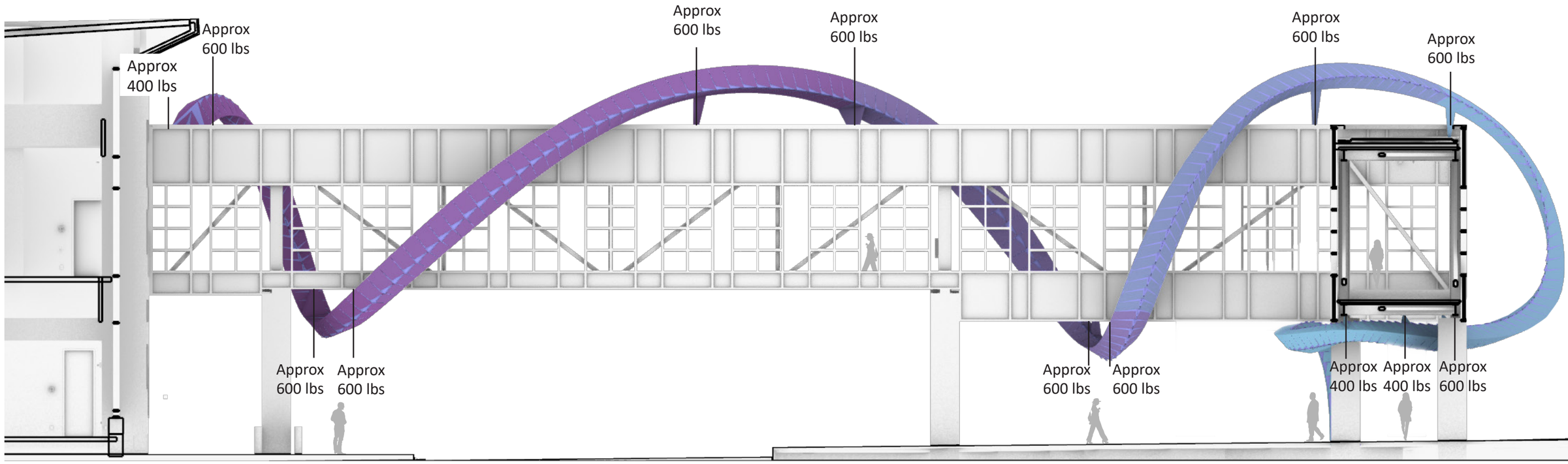

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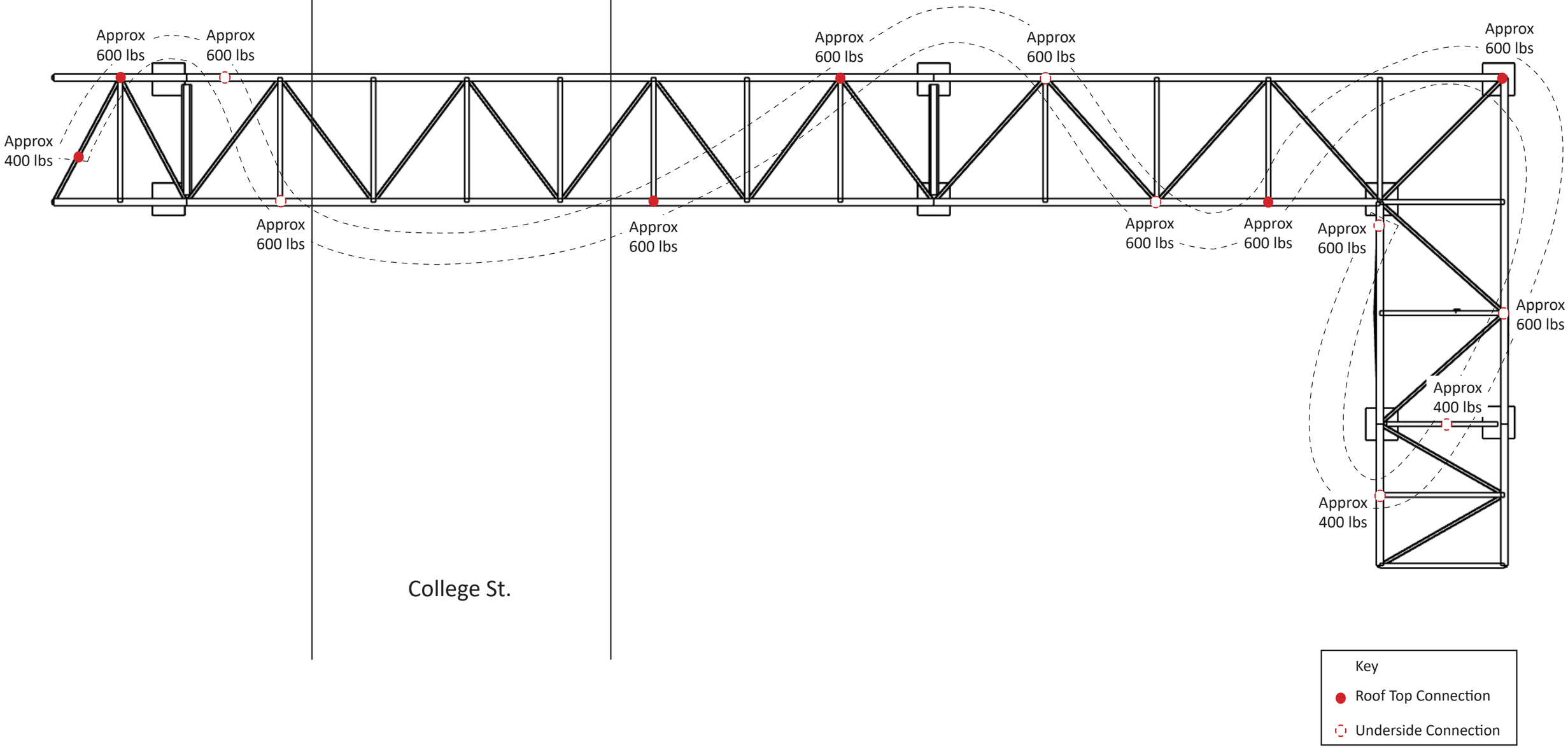
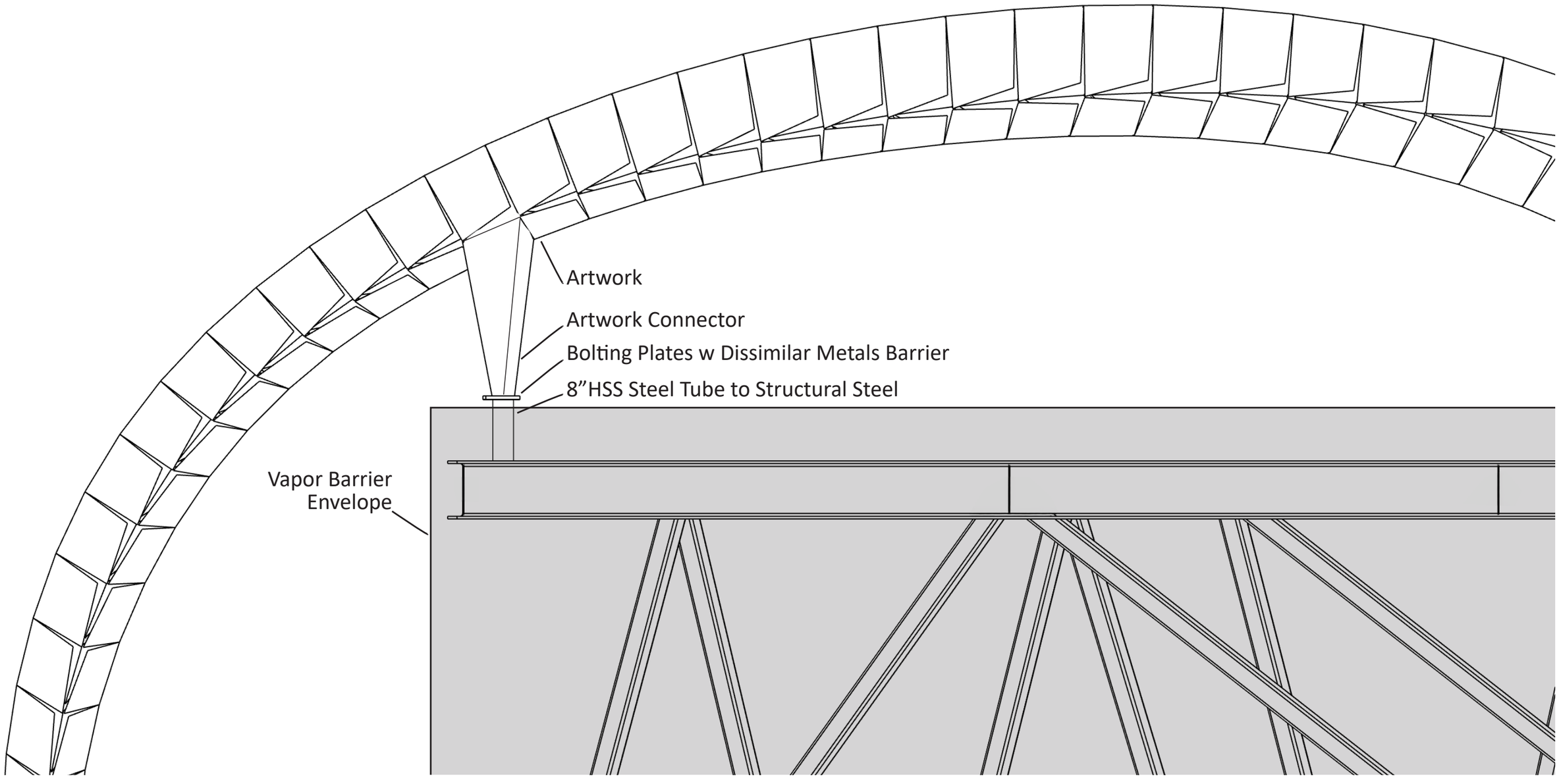


Plan view of approximate load distribution over 14 anchor posts on both underside and roof of the skybridge.



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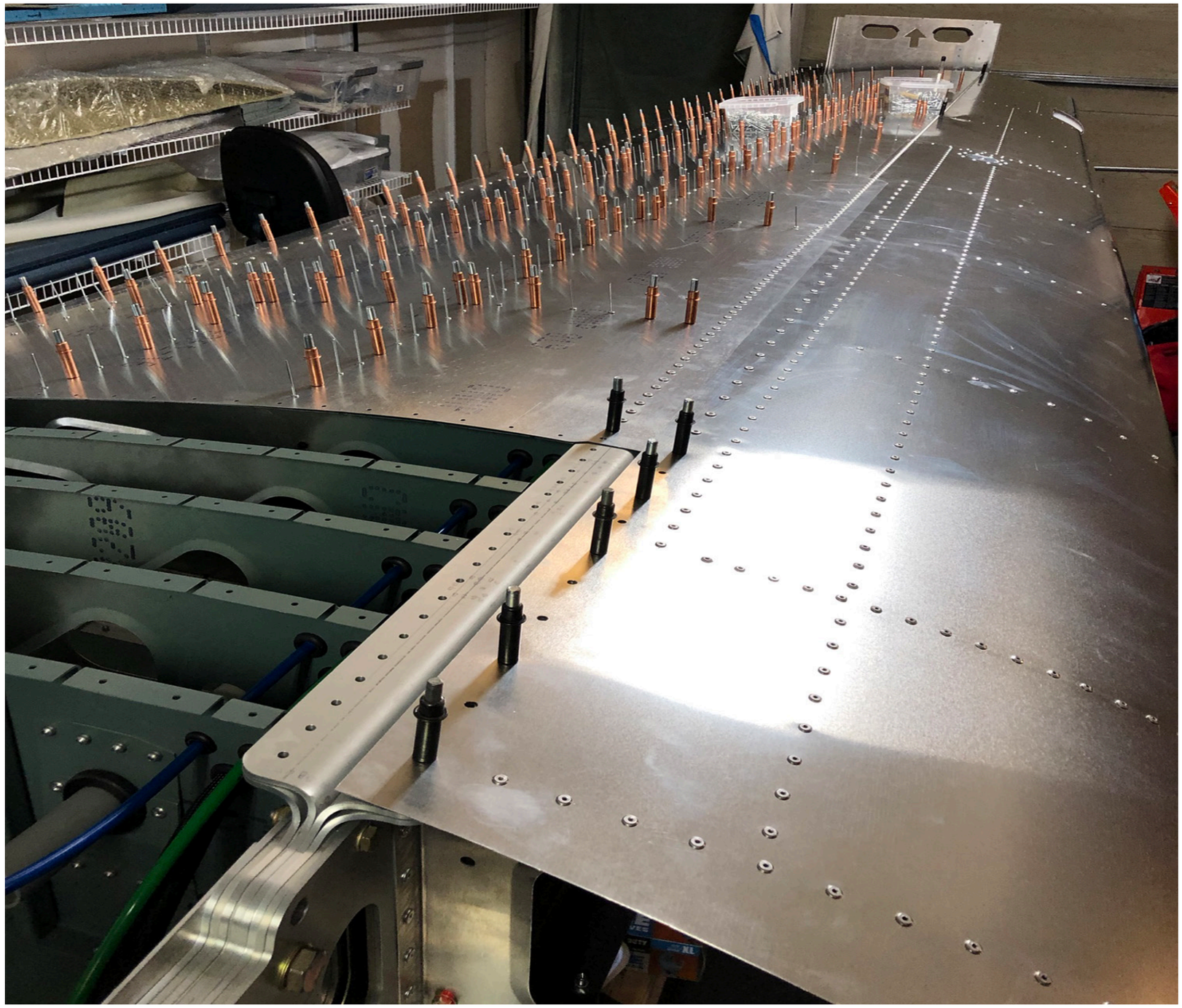
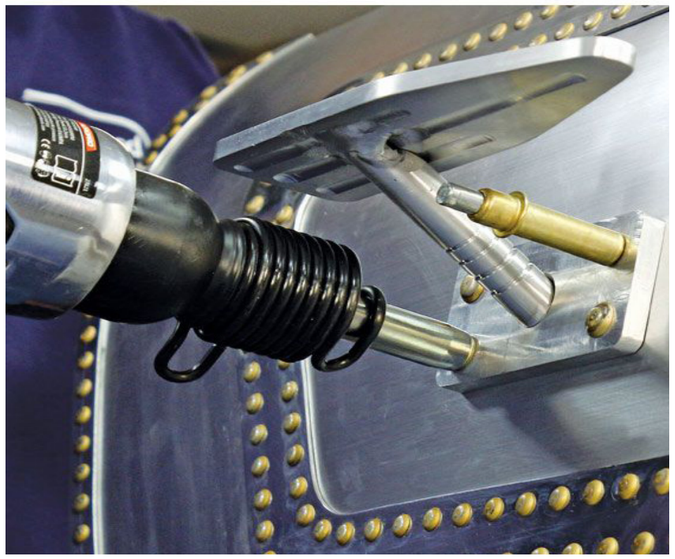
CNC Laser Cutter

Digital modeling, parametric coordination, and contemporary manufacturing technologies make this artwork possible. These tools do not merely support the design; they drive it.

CNC Break Press

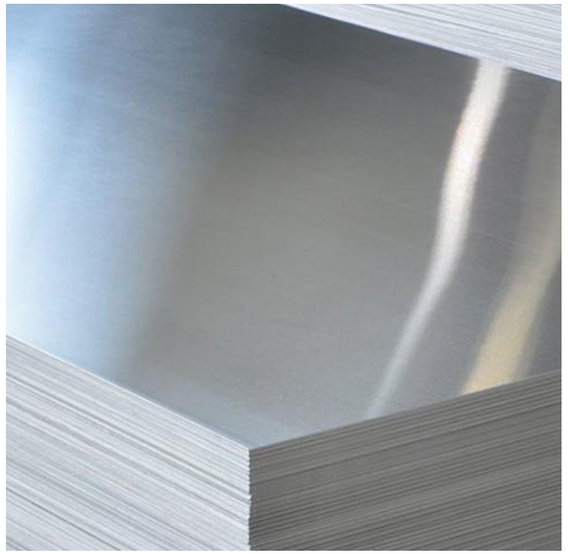
They allow the team to precisely develop, nest, fabricate, and assemble a large number of unique parts into a continuous one-of-a-kind form.



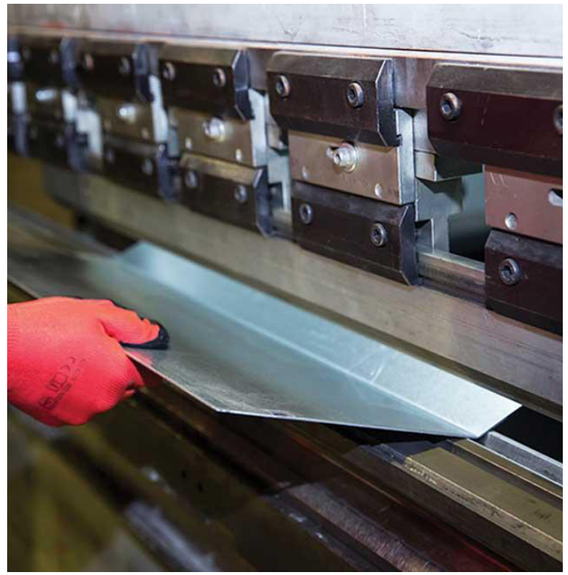


Aluminum Pop Rivets

They also allow close coordination among sculptural intent, attachment strategy, structural engineering, and fabrication efficiency.

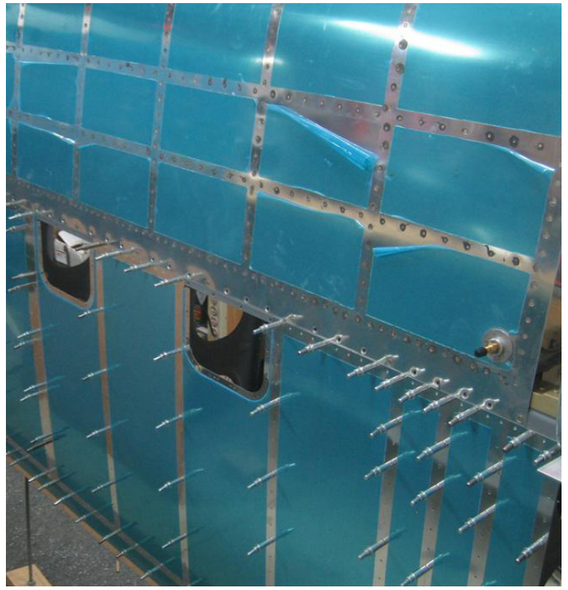


5052 Aluminum Sheet



CNC Break Press

Powder Coating Alum

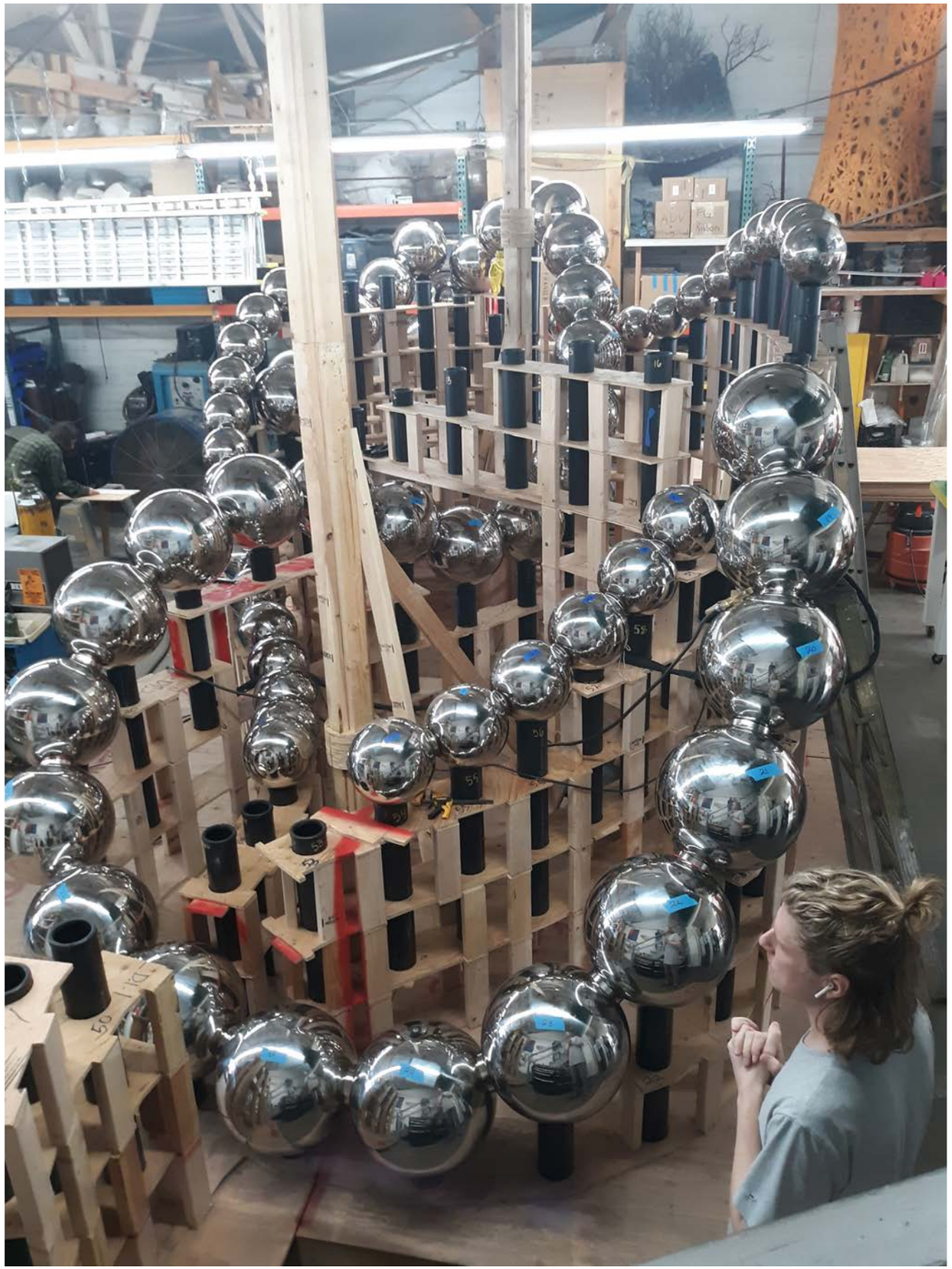


Pop Rivets

HSS pipe zinc primer and top coat painted

Exterior Architecture LEDs

The proposed materials and finish systems are designed to produce a work that remains durable, low-maintenance, and appropriate for long-term public use.



Similar Falsework.

Integrated lighting will be incorporated into the sculpture and carefully aimed so that light rakes across the faceted surfaces at night. This lighting strategy accentuates the geometry and thickness of the work rather than simply producing a flashy effect. The goal is a subtle but unmistakable after-dark presence that extends the sculpture's visibility and reinforces its role as a landmark.

Routine Maintenance:

For powder coated aluminum: the surface of the should naturally repel dirt, but it may accumulate over time.

First try a low-pressure spray of water, and if ineffective, a spray mixture of water and mild neutral soap. Work your way from the top of the art piece to the bottom with a micro fiber rag. Lastly try appliance grade stainless steel spray.

It is recommended that the artwork is cleaned at least once per year using a scissor lift and work from top down on both sides with a water high pressure washer.

Powder coated aluminum surfaces are sensitive to strong acidic or alkaline cleaners such as Bleach, Tile Cleaners, CLR, Vinegar, or Masonry Cleaners and as such these should not be used. They may cause the powder coated aluminum to corrode or discolor prematurely.

Long Term Conservation:

The Artwork is made of powder coated aluminuml and will last for several decades without a significant loss of vibrancy.

Additional Considerations:

Graffiti:

1. Graffiti should be removed as soon as possible.

2. Micro fiber cloth should be used to avoid scratching or damaging the sculpture.

3. Mild, non-abrasive solvents such as mineral spirits should be tested first in a non-conspicuous part.

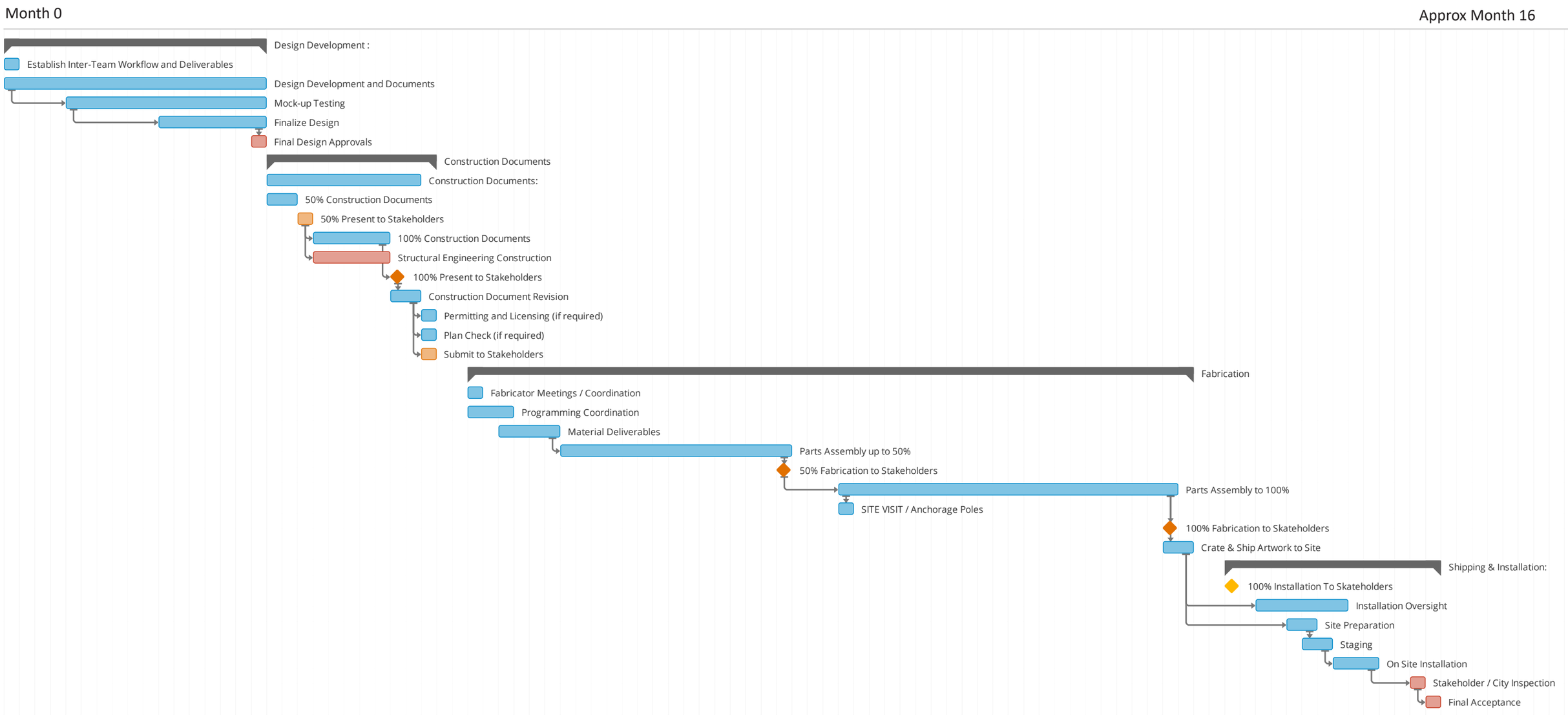
4. Should a stronger solvent be needed, more aggressive solvents such as lacquer thinner, or Matthews Paint reducers can be applied. TEST FIRST ON A SEPARATE PIECE OF ALUMINUM. DO NOT USE IF ANY FADING OF FINISH HAPPENS, Give it ten minutes after applying to see final result.

5. When removing graffiti, start at the top and gently move downward. Repeat this process as many times as needed to remove the graffiti.

6. Excess rubbing or pressure should be avoided in any one spot to avoid damaging the stainless steel surface.

Low pressure hand pump spray bottle for cleaning Using mild soap and micro fiber rags. Lastly try appliance grade stainless steel spray.

Work will commence after receipt of a fully executed contract and receipt of first payment



Prelimary timeline

Bloomington CC Public Artwork - Prelimary Budget $400,000

GENERAL EXPENSES

Modeling, Drafting, and Management – Senior PM Staff, Modeling, Drafting, Admin	$17,000
Professional Consultant Fees - Engineer, Conservator	$8,000
Expenses - Travel	$12,500
Insurance (WC, liability, business auto, umbrella) Fine Art Insurance	$8,250
Full Scale Mock Up, Models (Digital & or Physical),	$500

DESIGN FEE

Oversight during Design Development, Meetings, Fabrication and Installation	$60,000

FABRICATION

Labor – Senior PM Staff, Shop Tech, Subcontractors, Welders, ShopDrawings	$94,000
Materials – Aluminum Plate, Steel Tube, Hardware, Powder Coating	$69,500
Space Rental and Storage – If additional space is needed	$5,250
Tools and Equipment Purchases and Rental	$3,000

INSTALLATION

Shipping	$12,000
Installation Labor – Senior Staff, Shop Tech, Subcontractors,	$52,000
Site Preparation – Landscape / Hardscape Protection	$6,000
Equipment Rental	$12,000

CONTINGENCY 10% $40,000

Total Budget $400,000

BNS Hourly Rates 1/2026

Benjamin Ball (Artist)	$215	Senior Designer	$143	Designer	$110
Senior PM Staff	$182	Shop Tech	$83	Admin	$72

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Data Sheets

ROLLED METAL PRODUCTS
STAINLESS | ALUMINUM | SPECIALTY ALLOYS

TECHNICAL DATA SHEET

Aluminum 5052
(UNS A95052)

ALUMINUM ALLOY

Description

Aluminum alloy 5052 contains nominally 2.5% magnesium, 0.25% chromium and has good workability, medium static strength, high fatigue strength, good weldability, and very good corrosion resistance, especially in marine atmospheres. It also has the low density and excellent thermal conductivity similar to other aluminum alloys. Alloy 5052 can be hardened by cold work and is not heat treatable to higher strength. Since the alloy spontaneously ages at room temperature immediately after cold work, all flat rolled mill products are supplied with stable properties using a stabilization treatment. This is usually achieved by a stabilization thermal treatment, either a low temperature thermal treatment or as a result of heat introduced during rolling, which results in the H3x tempers.

This grade is used in a wide range of atmospheric environments, including food and architectural applications and in many marine environments. The magnesium content is low enough that it does not suffer from the stress corrosion cracking that can affect alloys with more than about 3.5% Mg. Alloy 5052 is also used for consumer electronics casings, notebook computers and televisions.

Mechanical Properties

Mechanical property requirements for strain hardened and stabilized H32 temper (¼ hard) as specified in ASTM B209 and ASME SB209

Thickness (inch)	Yield Strength Min. (ksi)	Tensile Strength (ksi) Min.	Tensile Strength (ksi) Max.	Elongation (%) Min.	Bend Diameter Factor, N
0.017 – 0.019	23.0	31.0	38.0	4	0
0.020 – 0.050	23.0	31.0	38.0	5	1
0.051– 0.113	23.0	31.0	38.0	7	2
0.114 – 0.249	23.0	31.0	38.0	9	3
0.250 – 0.499	23.0	31.0	38.0	11	-
0.500 – 2.000	23.0	31.0	38.0	12	-

Mechanical property requirements for strain hardened and stabilized H34 temper (½ hard) as specified in ASTM B209 and ASME SB209

Thickness (inch)	Yield Strength Min. (ksi)	Tensile Strength (ksi) Min.	Tensile Strength (ksi) Max.	Elongation (%) Min.	Bend Diameter Factor, N
0.009 – 0.019	26.0	34.0	41.0	3	1
0.020 – 0.050	26.0	34.0	41.0	4	2
0.051– 0.113	26.0	34.0	41.0	6	3
0.114 – 0.249	26.0	34.0	41.0	7	4
0.250 – 1.000	26.0	34.0	41.0	10	-

Mechanical property requirements for strain hardened and stabilized H36 temper (¾ hard) as specified in ASTM B209 and ASME SB209

Thickness (inch)	Yield Strength Min. (ksi)	Tensile Strength (ksi) Min.	Tensile Strength (ksi) Max.	Elongation (%) Min.	Bend Diameter Factor, N
0.006 – 0.007	29.0	37.0	44.0	2	4
0.008 – 0.031	29.0	37.0	44.0	3	4
0.032– 0.162	29.0	37.0	44.0	4	5

Mechanical property requirements for strain hardened and stabilized H38 temper (full hard) as specified in ASTM B209 and ASME SB209

Thickness (inch)	Yield Strength Min. (ksi)	Tensile Strength (ksi) Min.	Elongation (%) Min.	Bend Diameter Factor, N
0.006 – 0.007	32.0	39.0	2	-
0.008 – 0.031	32.0	39.0	3	-
0.032– 0.128	32.0	39.0	4	-

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Chemical Composition

Chemical Composition (wt%) limits as specified in ASTM B209 and ASME SB209*

Element	5052
Silicon	0.25
Iron	0.40
Copper	0.10
Manganese	0.10
Magnesium	2.2–2.8
Chromium	0.15-0.35
Zinc	0.10
Aluminum	balance
Other Elements (Each)	0.05
Other Elements (Total)	0.15

** Maximum, unless range is indicated*

Physical Properties

Physical properties for Alloy 5052

Property	5052 Data
Density, lb/in^3	0.0968
Modulus of Elasticity, psi	10.2 x 10^6
Coefficient of Thermal Expansion, 68-212˚F, /˚F	13.2 x 10^{-6}
Thermal Conductivity, Btu/ft hr ˚F	80
Specific Heat, Btu/lb ˚F	0.21
Electrical Resistivity, Microohm-in	1.965

Standards

Typical standards for Alloy 5052 aluminum

5052
ASTM B209
ASME SB209

RMP Midwest
12550 Lombard Lane
Alsip, IL 60803

RMP Northeast
450 Winks Lane
Bensalem, PA 19020

RMP South
711 Maddox Simpson Pkwy.
Lebanon, TN 37090

TIGER Drylac® Powder Coatings

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VOL. 3

Powder coatings for exterior & interior applications

Exterior & Interior Applications

TIGER Drylac® Series 149 and **Series 138** are Polyester TGIC-Free weather resistant powder coatings. **TIGER Drylac® Series 149** is suitable for interior and exterior applications while **Series 138** is a super durable (SD) powder coating compliant to AAMA 2604* with excellent weather resistance properties for high performance architectural exterior applications (*AAMA 2604 compliance dependent upon the color and/or effect).

Standard interior applications

TIGER Drylac® Series 09 is a polyester/epoxy-based standard cure powder coating. When lower or faster cure parameters are required, **TIGER Drylac® Series 89** polyester/epoxy-based is recommended. Both **TIGER Drylac® Series 09** and **TIGER Drylac® Series 89** are ideal for applications such as electrical and electronic enclosures, store fixtures, shelving, office and school furniture, ceiling panels, cladding components, radiators, tools and equipment, toys and machinery parts. They provide very good mechanical and flow properties, excellent coverage and good storage stability.

Chemical resistance

TIGER Drylac® Series 69 is an epoxy-based powder coating with excellent chemical and corrosion resistance, very good mechanical and flow properties and good storage stability. It provides excellent coverage. It is ideal for laboratory equipment, machinery parts, pump housing as well as surfaces where increased chemical resistance is required.

Specialties

TIGER Drylac® Series 09 Electrostatic Dissipative (ESD) powder coatings allow a controlled dissipation of the static buildup or prevent the buildup of a high charge in applications such as computer hoods and electronic cabinetry. Resistivity measurements in the lab measure 10^6 to 10^9 ohms. It is possible to custom-match colors in a range from dark grey to black.

FDA-compliance

TIGER Drylac® Series 09 FDA-compliant powder coatings are in conformity with the Food and Drug Administration's raw materials requirements of 21 CFR 175.300 "Resinous and Polymeric Coatings". FDA-compliant powder coatings also "conform" and "comply" with the requirements of 21 CFR 178.3297 "Colorants for Polymers". **TIGER Drylac®** has not conducted compliance tests, but rather relies on the raw materials suppliers to provide the appropriate documentation. It is the buyer's and customer's responsibility to test applied parts carrying the mention "FDA approved", as may be required by their customers.

Textured and smooth gloss levels

Smooth flat matte gloss levels range from 0 to 15 units.
Smooth matte gloss levels range from 16 to 25 units.
Smooth semigloss gloss levels range from 55 to 65 units.
Smooth glossy gloss levels range from 80 to 95 units.
Fine and rough textured gloss levels cannot be measured and are, therefore, accorded visually.

Disclaimer
The colors featured in this color card are matched as accurately as possible to **RAL standards**. Some deviations from the RAL standards might be noticeable due to texture and/or gloss level of the surface finish. Swatches have been matched to color standards at a **45-degree visual angle under a D65 Daylight** primary source. Gloss level on fine and rough textured swatches cannot be accurately measured. The swatches are to be considered as an indication only. In practice, discrepancy between the color swatch and the actual powder coating may arise. This is due to paper and ink limitations, the influence of light and heat during the color card production, as well as gloss level, substrate, surface variations, binder systems and pigments, coating thickness and cure oven conditions used during application. For an accurate color and finish assessment, it is recommended to obtain a powder coated sample panel from **TIGER Drylac®**.