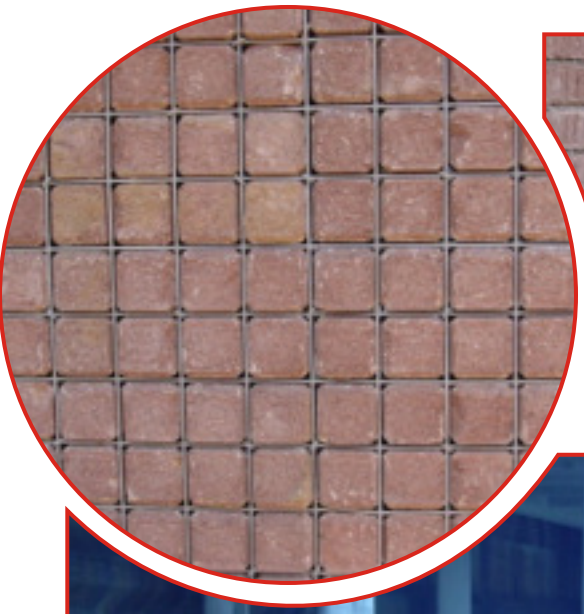
Modular Gabion Systems



Project

Location:
Sesquicentennial Park, Houston, Texas
Contractor:
Austin Filter Systems
Architects:
Tan & Associates
Specifier(s):
City of Houston
Project Date:
2001
Project Notes:

Sesquicentennial Park marks the spot on the banks of Buffalo Bayou where the Allen Brothers founded the city. The city's plan called for linking the new park to other recreational areas by extending along the north bank, a system of bike trails already in place upstream. The challenge for project architects, Tan & Associates, was two-fold: the trail design must be sensitive to the architecture of the new park and the trail base must be engineering for expansive clay soil (prone to dramatic swelling and shrinking), fluctuating water levels and post-storm flow rates of five feet per second[1] followed by rapid draw down. To address the issues of constant subgrade undulation and flooding, they chose Modular Block Face Systems to form the base of the bike trail.

Modular Block Face Systems incorporates a block measuring 3.5" thick x 12" long x 6" high with a slotted face designed to fit perfectly into the 3" x 3" opening of our PVC coated welded wire mesh Modular Gabions. The 6000 psi paver material can be colored to architectural specifications. In this case, the Ragazzo Blocks were color matched to pavers and brick work in Sesquicentennial Park.

The contractor, Austin Filter Systems, worked with Modular Gabion Systems and Ragazzo Blocks for the first time on this project. Though unusually stormy weather and the subsequent fluctuations in the bayou's water level hampered construction, workers were able to maintain their schedule because Modular Gabion Systems cut the expected installation time by 50% or more. Our precision welded, corrosion resistant wire mesh is dimensionally consistent to 1/8" so the gabions require no stretching or straightening[2] and may be joined with our unique spiral connection which simply screws into the mesh. The spiral binder alone is 10 times faster than hand lacing but creates the strongest joint in the industry. Additionally, workers assembled the structure from roll-stock. Roll-stock may be used to build a continuous structure as long as 300', eliminates unnecessary joints and redundant panels and creates a cleaner, smoother project line.

The final result at Sesquicentennial Park is a clean, urban visual scheme in a permeable, flexible and durable erosion control structure.

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[1] Figure provided by Harris County Flood Control District.

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[2] Oklahoma DOT test

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