

Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel

Submission Form

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name	8280 Wisconsin Avenue
File Number(s)	Site Plan No. 820180230 and Preliminary Plan No. 120180280
Project Address	8280 Wisconsin Avenue

Plan Type Concept Plan Sketch Plan Site Plan

APPLICANT TEAM

	Name	Phone	Email
Primary Contact	Doug Firstenberg	301-913-9610	firstenberg@stonebridgecarras.com
Architect	Steve McDaniel and Jared Loos, EwingCole		
Landscape Architect	Tade Willger, LandDesign		

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

	Zone	Proposed Height	Proposed Density
Project Data	CR-3.0, C-3.0, R-2.75, H-145	145 feet	175,000 square feet / 5.38 FAR
Proposed Land Uses	Research and Development and office uses (Bio-science Lab)		
Brief Project Description and Design Concept <i>(If the project was previously presented to the Design Advisory Panel, describe how the latest design incorporates the Panel's comments)</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Check if requesting additional density through the Bethesda Overlay Zone (BOZ) Please see the attached supplemental statement, which includes how the Applicant's Site Plan design addresses the Design Advisory Panel's comments relative to the Sketch Plan as well as M-NCPPC Professional Staff's design comments (which related to the southern portion of the Wisconsin Avenue facade).		



<p>Exceptional Design Public Benefit Points Requested and Brief Justification</p>	<p>Please see the attached supplemental statement that outlines the Applicant's justification for 25 public benefit points in the Exceptional Design category.</p>
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DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL SUBMISSION PROCESS

1. Schedule a Design Advisory Panel review date with the Design Advisory Panel Liaison.
Laura Shipman, Design Advisory Panel Liaison, laura.shipman@montgomeryplanning.org, 301-495-4558
2. A minimum of two weeks prior to the scheduled Design Advisory Panel meeting, provide the completed Submission Form and supplemental drawings for review in PDF format to the Design Advisory Panel Liaison via email.
3. Supplemental drawings should include the following at Site Plan and as many as available at Concept and Sketch Plan:
 - Property Location (aerial photo or line drawing)
 - Illustrative Site Plan
 - 3D Massing Models
 - Typical Floor Plans
 - Sections
 - Elevations
 - Perspective Views
 - Precedent Images
 - Drawings that show the proposal in relationship to context buildings and any planning board approved abutting buildings in as much detail as possible



**8280 Wisconsin Avenue
Site Plan – Design Advisory Panel Submittal**

I. Brief Project Description and Design Concept

Donohoe Development Company and StonebridgeCarras (the "Applicant") are seeking approval for development of up to 175,000 square feet of research and development uses, underground parking, public open space and streetscape improvements (the "Proposed Project") on ±0.40 acres of property located in the southwest quadrant of Wisconsin Avenue and Battery Lane in the Wisconsin Avenue Corridor (per the Approved and Adopted Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan – the "Sector Plan") of the Bethesda Central Business District (the "Property"). The Applicant presented Sketch Plan No. No. 320180150 (the "Sketch Plan") for the Proposed Project to the Design Advisory Panel (the "DAP") on May 23, 2018. The Montgomery County Planning Board (the "Planning Board") approved the Sketch Plan on July 25, 2018. The DAP was in support of the design of the Proposed Project as shown on the Sketch Plan and provided two specific recommendations to be addressed through the Site Plan submittal. In addition to these recommendations from the DAP, at follow-up design meeting with M-NCPPC Professional Staff ("Staff"), the Applicant was asked to explore alternatives to the design of the southern portion of the facade on Wisconsin Avenue.

As the Sketch Plan design was well received by both DAP and the Planning Board in their respective reviews of the Sketch Plan, and to promote efficiency in the DAP review process, the Applicant has organized the DAP submission (based upon the Site Plan filed in July) to start where the DAP review of the Sketch Plan left off (rather than restarting how and why the design shown at Sketch Plan evolved). As such, this submission focuses specifically on addressing the two DAP comments and the design comment of the Staff related to the Sketch Plan approved by the Planning Board. The Applicant will be prepared to review the background of how and why the design has emerged as it has and how this design addressed the Sector Plan recommendations and the related Bethesda Downtown Plan Design Guidelines (the "Design Guidelines") in detail should there be any DAP questions or comments relating thereto. Each of these three comments is set forth below along with a summary of how the Applicant's pending Site Plan design addresses each comment.

DAP Recommendation 1. Provide a landscaping plan showing the design of the public realm and the enhanced tree canopy along Battery Lane, a canopy corridor.

Response: The Applicant has modified the streetscape illustrated on the Sketch Plan to enhance the public realm on Battery Lane in a number of ways. Utilities that were previously proposed on Battery Lane and that were presenting significant issues in terms of allowing for meaningful streetscape/landscape have been relocated to Wisconsin Avenue to allow for a wider accessible pathway on Battery Lane than that previously allowed. The updated landscape plan

also reflects two street trees along Battery Lane in accordance with Section 2.1.10 of the Design Guidelines (Canopy Corridors). A rendered landscape plan is included with this submittal, which demonstrates that this recommendation has been and will be satisfied with the proposed Site Plan.

DAP Recommendation 2. Provide a diagram that illustrates what a strict interpretation of the guidelines would bring and why the applicant is proposing a departure. Particularly from the step-back guidelines.

Response: A massing diagram that shows what a strict interpretation of the Design Guidelines would allow for at this corner lot with limited size and property depth is included with this submittal labeled on the bottom of the graphic as “Strict Interpretation of the Design Guidelines.” The strict interpretation massing diagram reflects full tower step-backs along Wisconsin Avenue and Battery Lane of 15 feet. Strict adherence to the tower step-back recommendations in the Design Guidelines would not allow for an economically viable floor-plate for bio-science lab uses. (At the time of Sketch Plan, the Applicant discussed that the Proposed Project was intended to specifically draw bio-lab and bio-science tenants to not only the Property, but also potentially to create a bio-science cluster for this part of Downtown Bethesda. The Proposed Project embraces the opportunities provided for with NIH and related bio-research governmental agencies, programs, and ancillary uses and facilities in an urban design not available elsewhere in the region – looking to bring the success of areas such as Cambridge Massachusetts to Bethesda and Montgomery County). The Applicant suggests that the alternative methods provided in the Design Guidelines recognized that certain types of development and redevelopment such as the Proposed Project. Thus, alternative ways of achieving the goals and objectives provided in the Design Guidelines is both necessary and appropriate to attract this use to the Property and area.

The Applicant is proposing a departure from Section 2.4.7 of the Design Guidelines (Tower step-back) for two reasons. First, the departure from the Design Guidelines is necessary for the Proposed Project to incorporate a corner treatment that will function as a sculptural point of interest at this gateway site along the northern section of the Wisconsin Avenue Corridor. The departure is consistent with the Design Guidelines recognition that the Planning Board may approve alternative design approaches that truly achieve exceptional and unexpected creative solutions that improve the Downtown. Thus, the departure from the tower step-back recommendations will allow for a signature design element on the prominent corner of Battery Lane and Wisconsin Avenue. Second, Section 2.4.7 of the Design Guidelines recognizes that there are alternative methods to reducing bulk on sites with limited size or property depth from the street. The Property lacks the size and depth from Wisconsin Avenue to allow the Proposed Project to literally incorporate the setbacks and step backs provided for in the Design Guidelines and as such the alternative design is justified. The Applicant has also included two separate

diagrams which annotate and demonstrate how this alternative design meets the spirit and intent of the Design Guidelines. *See Sheets 6 and 7 of the DAP submittal.*

M-NCPPC Professional Staff Comment 1. The sculptural corner of the façade on Wisconsin Avenue is essential to the design of the project, but explore minor design changes to the southern portion of the Wisconsin Avenue façade.

Response: While the DAP did not express concerns relating to the Wisconsin Avenue façade of the Proposed Project, Staff raised some concerns about providing some “relief” along the middle portion of the Wisconsin Avenue façade. The suggestion was to provide more visual interest and aesthetic relief to the important frontage of the Proposed Project along Wisconsin Avenue. In response, and as reflected on the graphic elevation labeled “SE CORNER TREATMENT” within the DAP submission, the Applicant proposes to angle the façade back into the building at the southern end along floors 3 thru 5. The diagonal deflection mimics the major chamfered vertical expression at the NE corner of the building. This architectural feature will break up the continuous glazing along Wisconsin Avenue and provide for a more graceful transition to the northern façade.

II. Exceptional Design Public Benefit Points Requested and Brief Description

The Applicant is seeking 25 public benefit points in this category on the basis that the Proposed Project fulfills the 6 identified criteria in the CR Zone Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines. The design of the Proposed Project is very innovative in its response to the context in three specific ways: 1) it responds to the low-rise buildings in the area by: i) having a recessed area that is 3 stories high at the entrance and 2 stories high to the south of the entrance; and ii) by having a step-back and building material change at 72' in height, along Wisconsin Avenue; 2) it has a prominent façade on Wisconsin Avenue, which is in scale with this regional artery; and 3) in the context of a small site (the proposed lot area of Property is 17,814 s.f.), the design demonstrates that the functional requirements of a commercial building can be used to create a northern gateway to the Bethesda CBD as well as the Woodmont Triangle. The Site Plan design contributes to a sense of place by helping to define the intersection of Battery Lane and Wisconsin Avenue, through its relationship to the buildings on the other three corners. In doing so, it realizes the opportunity, through its height and commercial uses, to create an architectural beacon as a gateway building into the Bethesda CBD starting from the main entrances to the National Institutes of Health and Walter Reed National Medical Center. The Proposed Project will meet the ground in a way that is new and innovative for Downtown Bethesda, and it will create tremendous architectural interest and the type of welcoming ground-level experience sought through the Sector Plan and Design Guidelines for all modes of transportation, including pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles. The Proposed Project uses shapes and form at the base, the middle, and the top that are original, with a “tech” orientation in its design elements to connect

with its two leading technology leaders to the north, the National Institutes of Health and Walter Reed. Materials will include tech-style metal panels which are new to the Bethesda palette. The Site Plan addresses the challenges of a very small site for commercial development, by implementing a side core to create efficient and necessary floor sizes appropriate for this type of use, building step-backs at the ground floor and the elimination of the two existing Wisconsin Avenue curb cuts which will greatly improve and enhance the pedestrian experience. Last, the Project includes low impact development approaches, such as a compact, efficient footprint, which will have less surface area than the average commercial building resulting in less energy.

Conclusion: This DAP submission builds upon the positive reception by DAP (and the Staff and the Planning Board) at the time of Sketch Plan review. The Applicant believes it has addressed the concerns and requests of both DAP and the Staff, and therefore, the Applicant requests a favorable recommendation by DAP for the overall Proposed Project and a recommendation that the Staff recommend and the Planning Board award 25 public benefit points for the exceptional design of this unique and innovative Proposed Project and the introduction of urban bio-science to Downtown Bethesda.

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WISCONSIN AVE VIEW



DAP - Sketch Plan Comments

- 1) Provide a landscaping plan showing the design of the public realm and the enhanced tree canopy along Battery Lane, a canopy corridor.
- 2) Provide a diagram that illustrates what a strict interpretation of the guidelines would bring and why the applicant is proposing departure. Particularly from the step-back requirements.
- 3) Illustrate how the project is meeting the design guidelines.

Additional Staff Comments

- 1) Study the articulation of the south end of the west facade to break it from the full length of Wisconsin Ave.
- 2) Study lengthening the amount of glass at the north end of the western facade.

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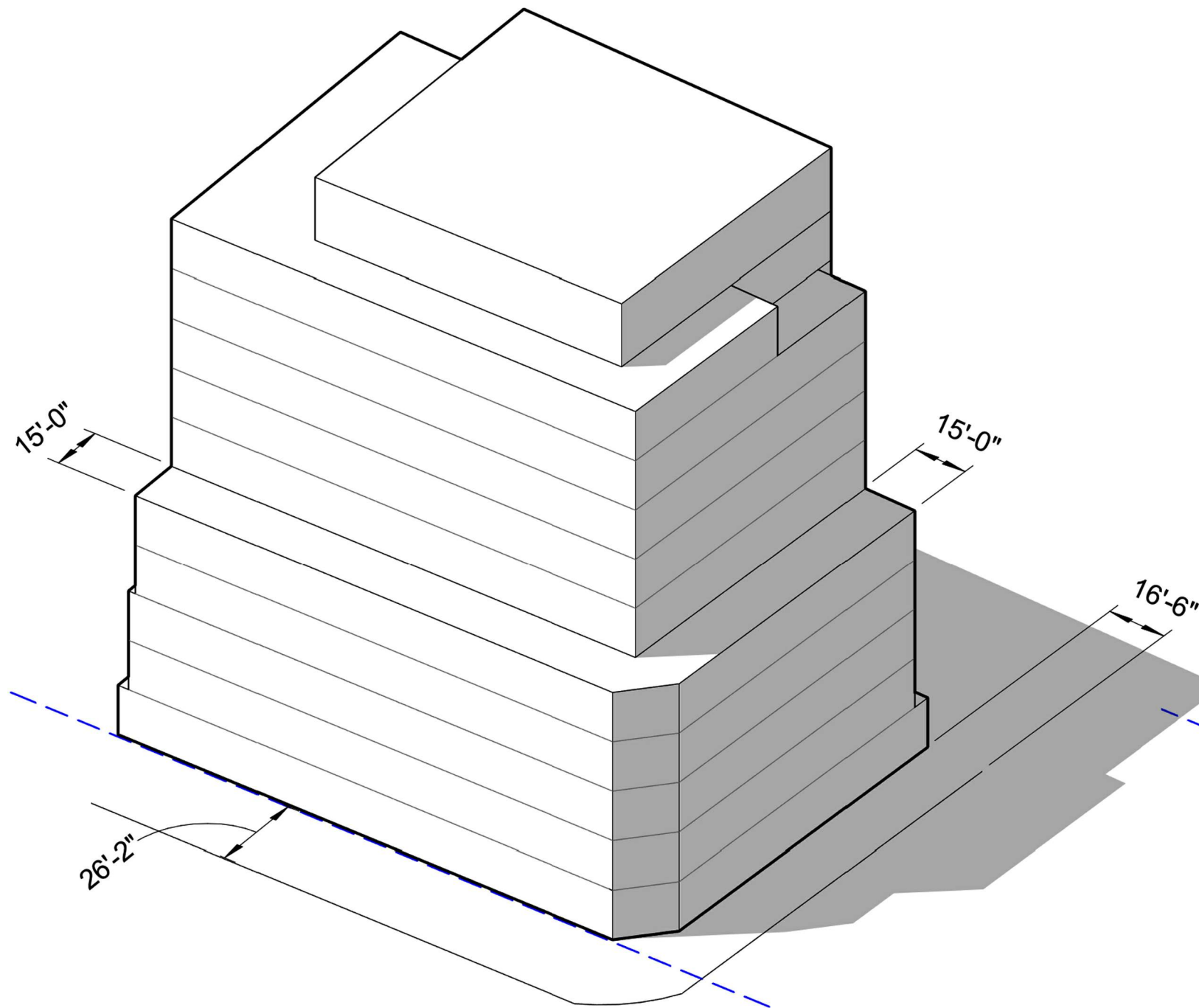
SITE PLAN



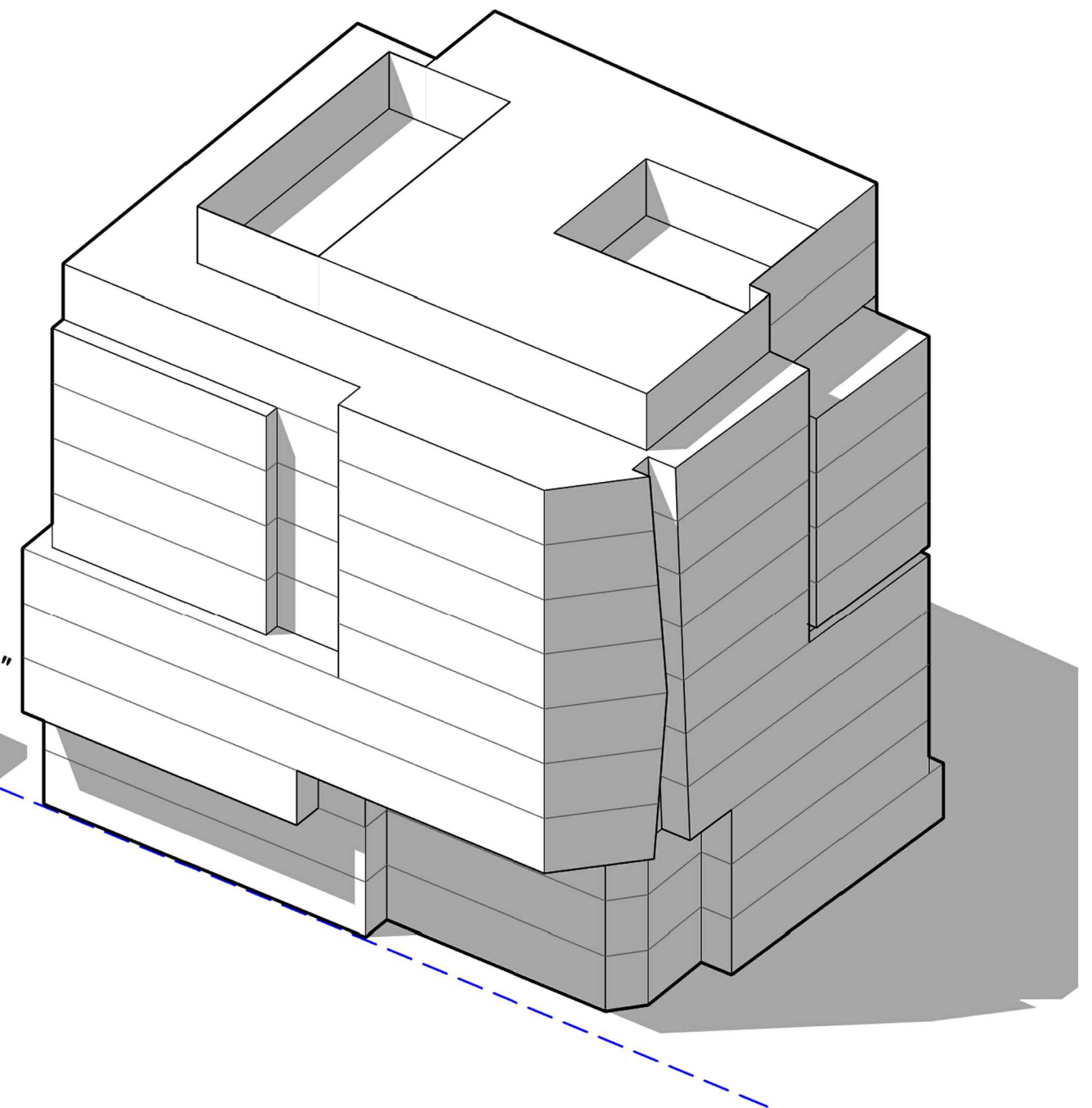
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STRICT INTERPRETATION OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

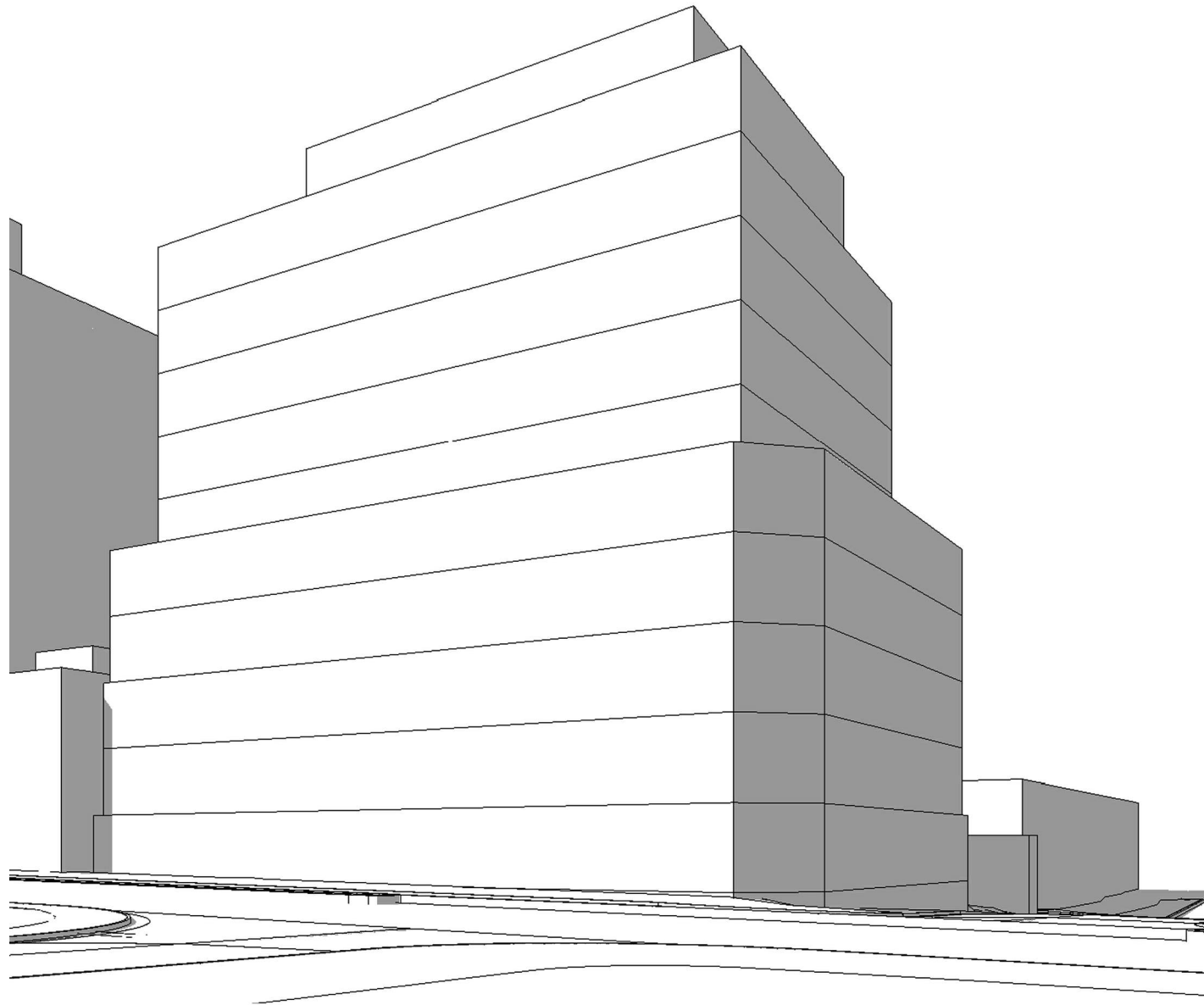


CURRENT DESIGN WITH METHODS TO REDUCE BULK

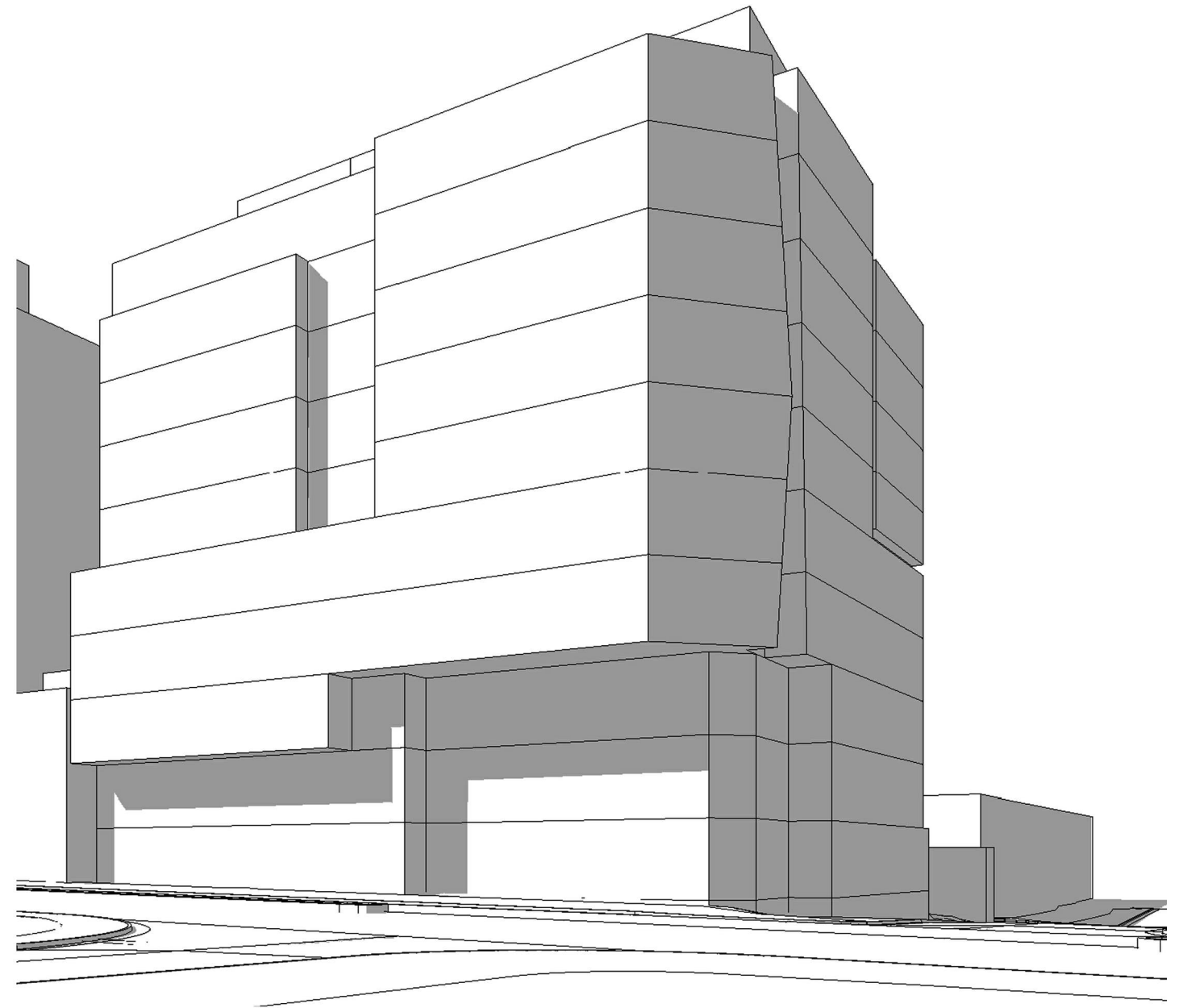
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STRICT INTERPRETATION OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES



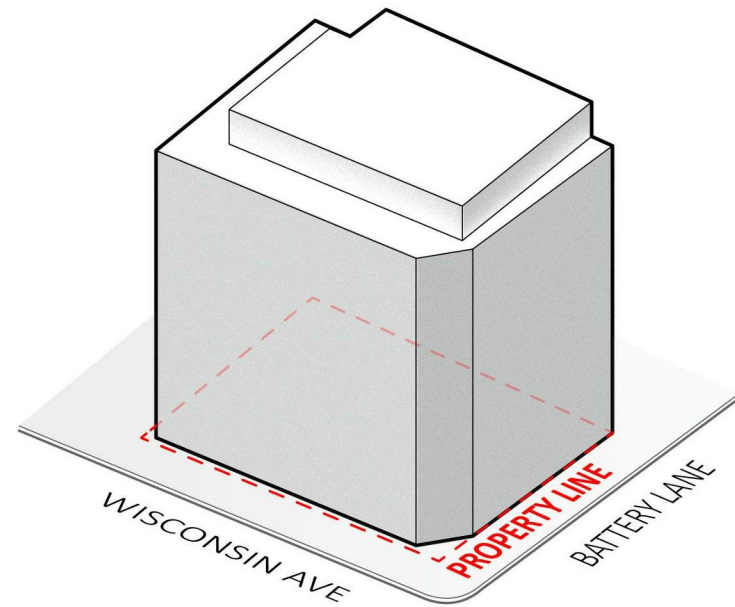
CURRENT DESIGN WITH METHODS TO REDUCE BULK

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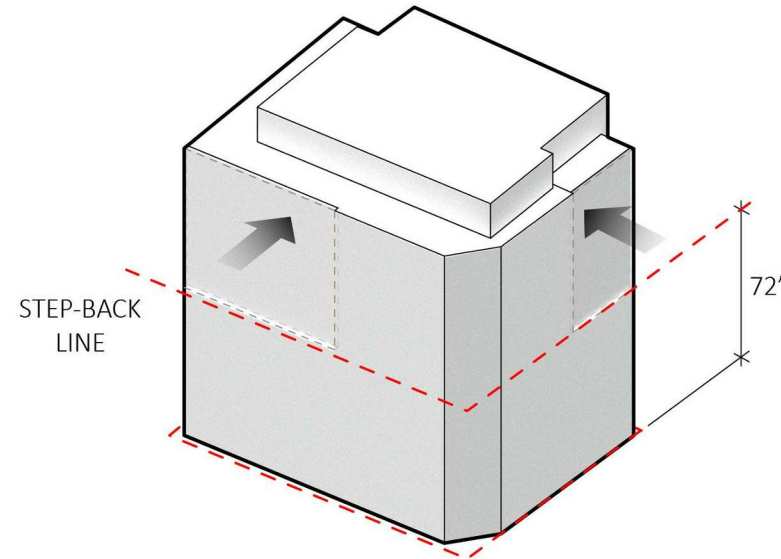
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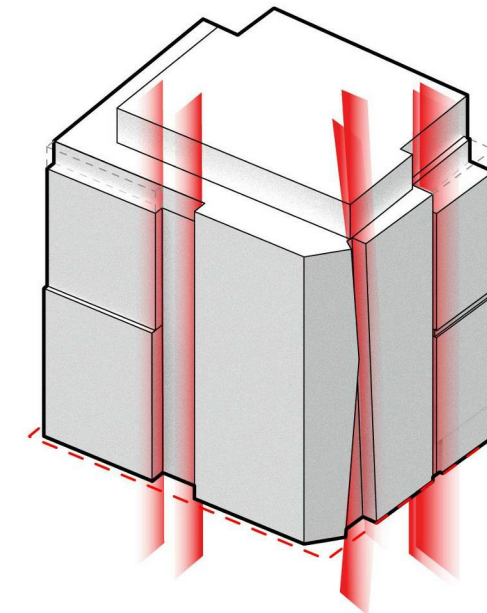
FORM DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES



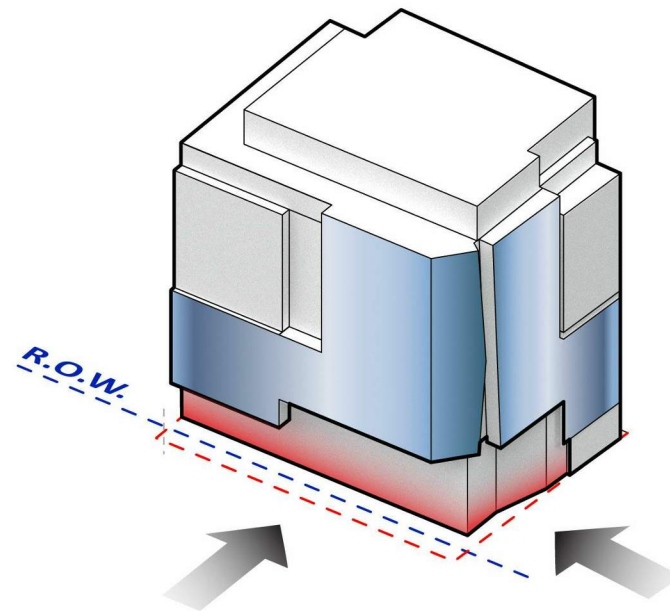
1 ACKNOWLEDGE THE CORNER



2 BREAK DOWN MASS IN SECTION



3 BREAK DOWN MASS IN PLAN



4 BASE SETBACK AND
CREATE RELIEF IN FACADE OVERHANG

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2.4.8 Tower - Menu of Methods to Reduce Bulk

D. Modulate and articulate facades

F. Limit apparent face

2.4.7 Step-back

Alternative methods (limit size/depth)

Change materials/reduce bulk

2.4.9 Tower Top

E. Transparent screen wall to view mechanical equipment

2.4.2 Base: Bldg Placement

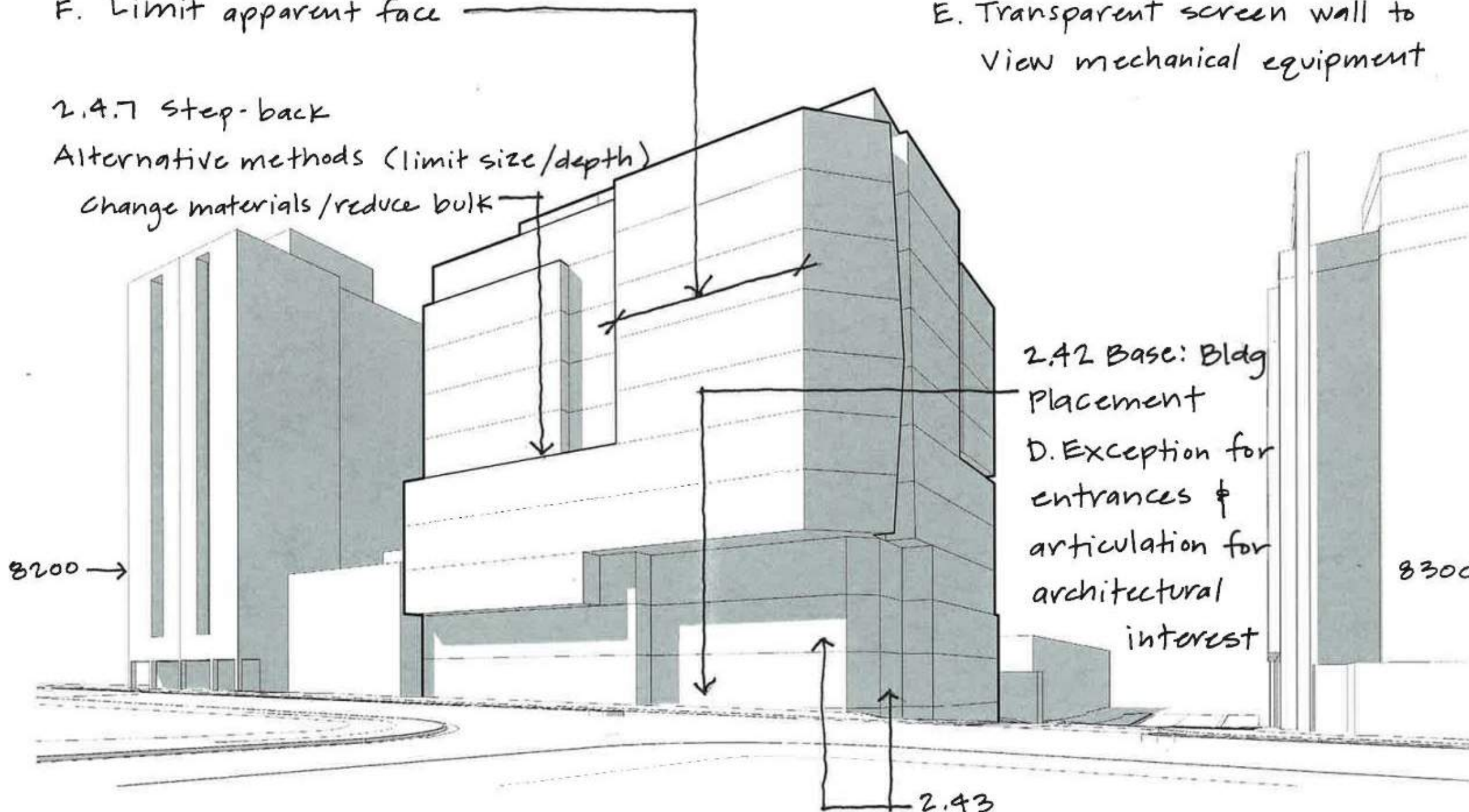
D. Exception for entrances & articulation for architectural interest

2.4.3

Base: Street Activation

A. Provide transparency

C. Include textured materials, planting and seating



2.45 Corner Treatments

A. View corridor to gateway building from north

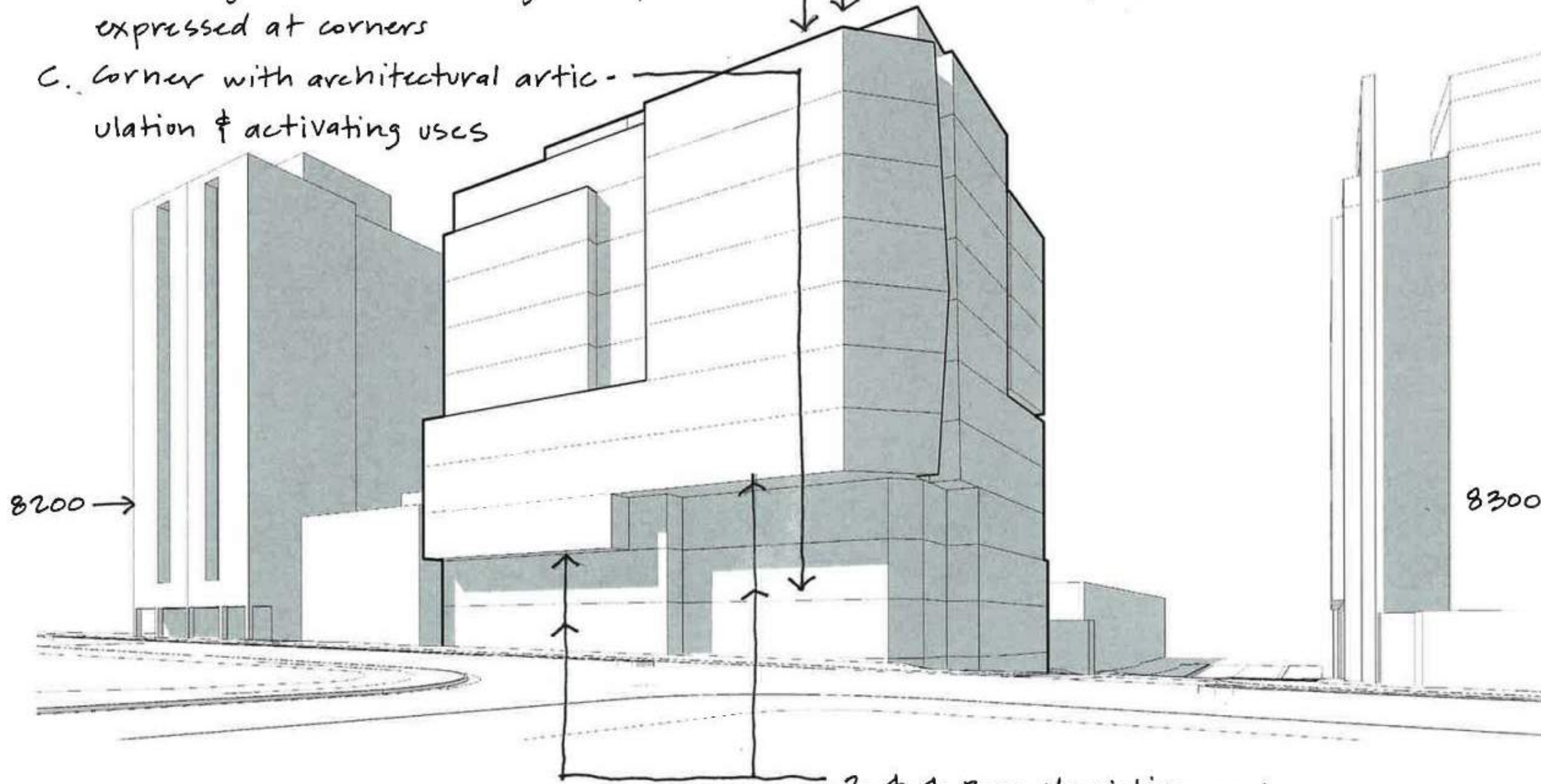
B. Full height of tall buildings may be expressed at corners

C. Corner with architectural articulation & activating uses

2.4.1 Compatibility - design should respect existing character

• vertical expression respects

8200 & 8300

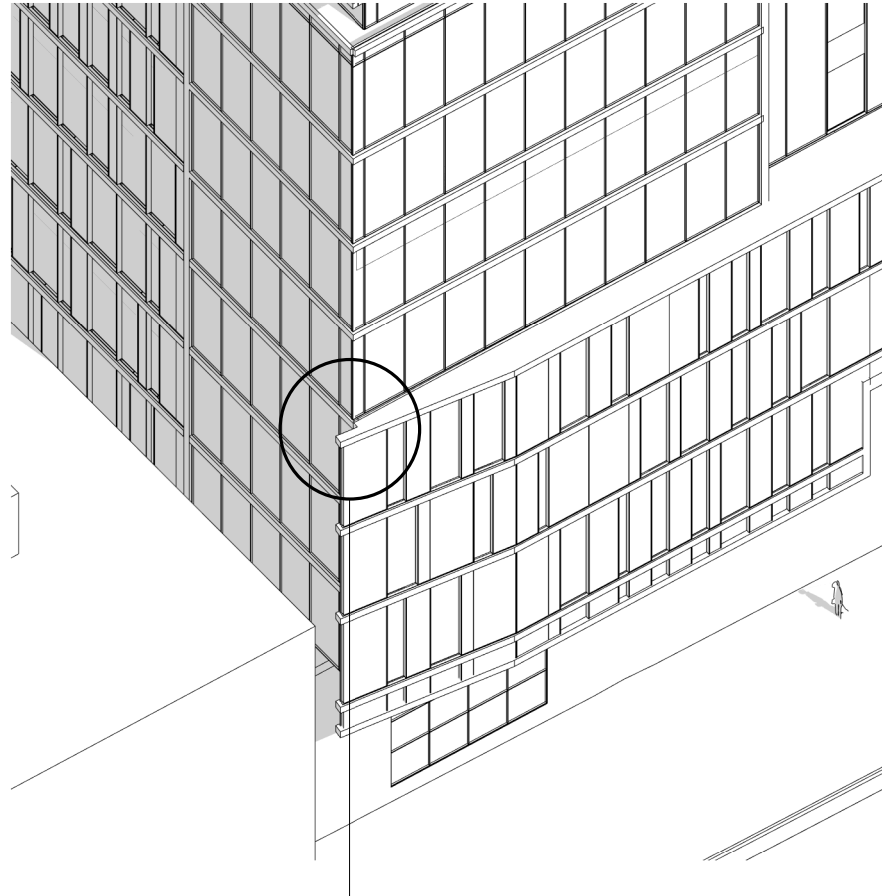


2.4.4 Base Variation and Articulation

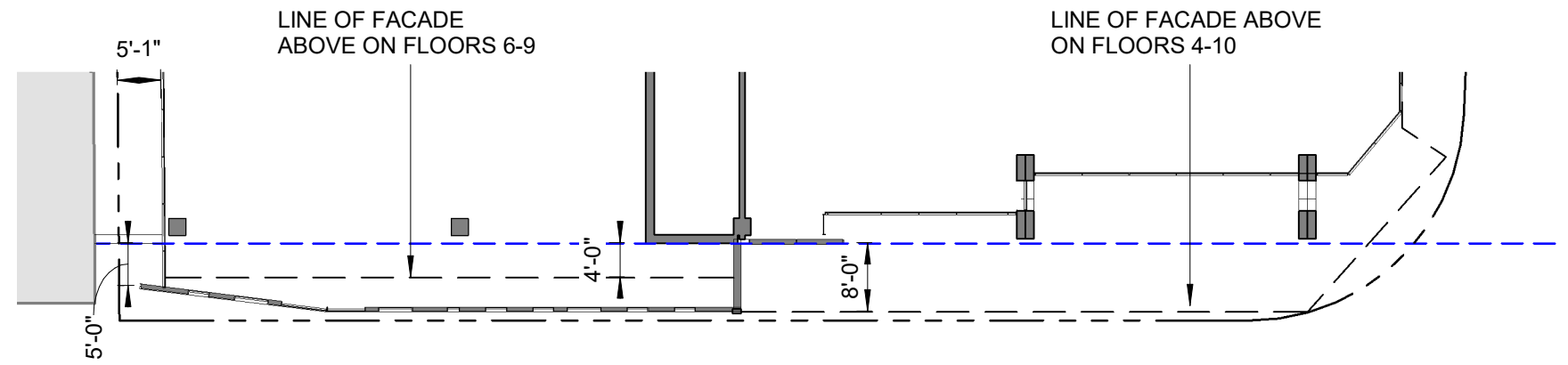
B. Provide plane changes

C. Variation in building materials

SE CORNER TREATMENT



LOWER FACADE PULLED TOWARDS UPPER PORTION WITH ENOUGH ROOM FOR PROPER FLASHING



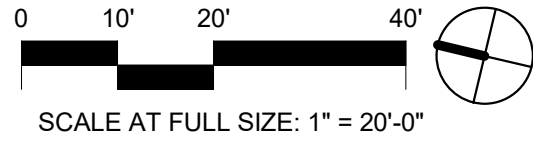
STAIR BROUGHT INTO BUILDING TO SIMPLIFY CORNER DETAILING

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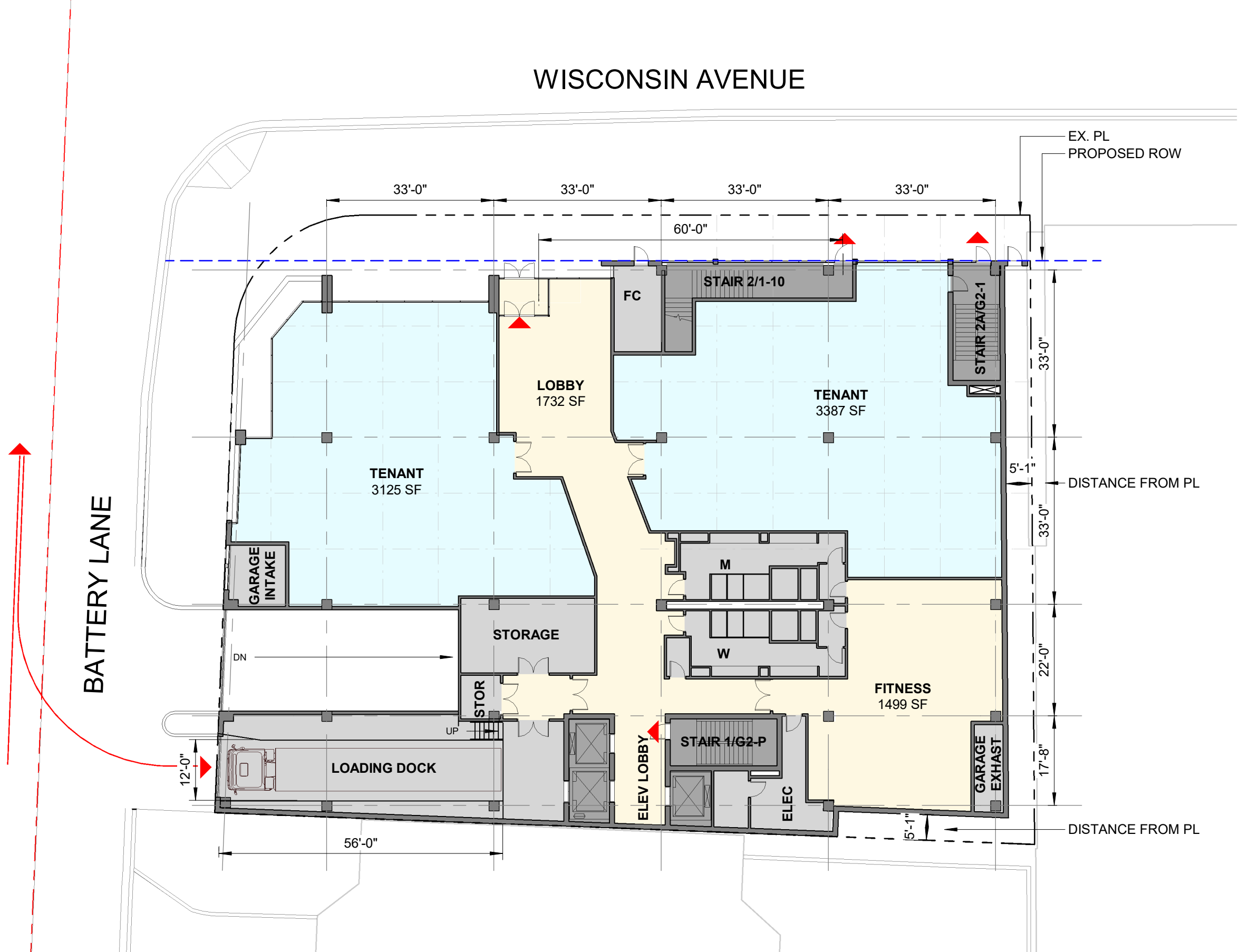
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FIRST FLOOR PLAN



WISCONSIN AVENUE

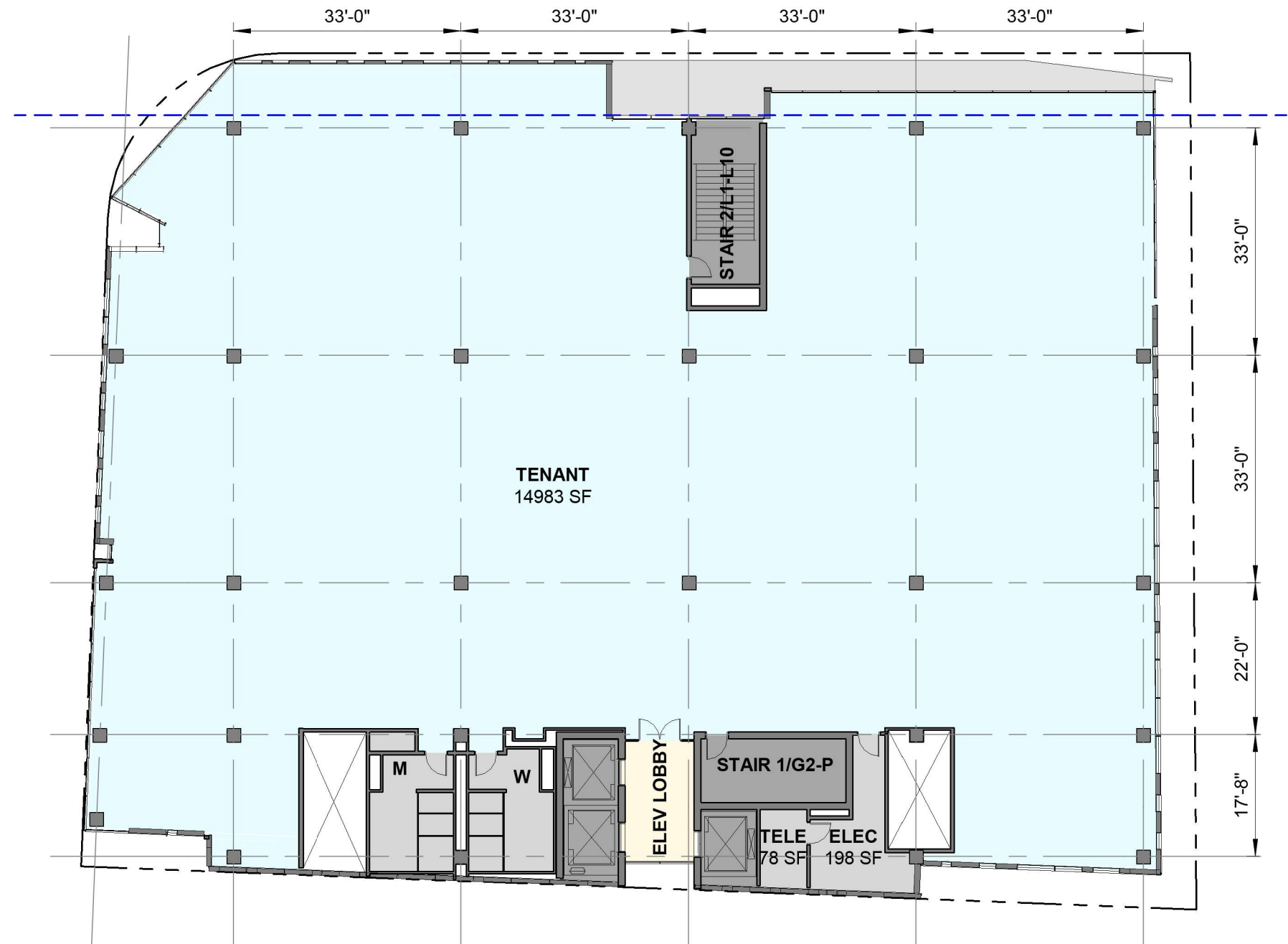
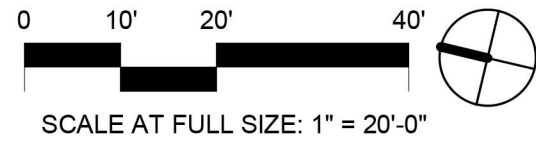


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TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN



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WISCONSIN AVE VIEW (MINIMAL CONTEXT)

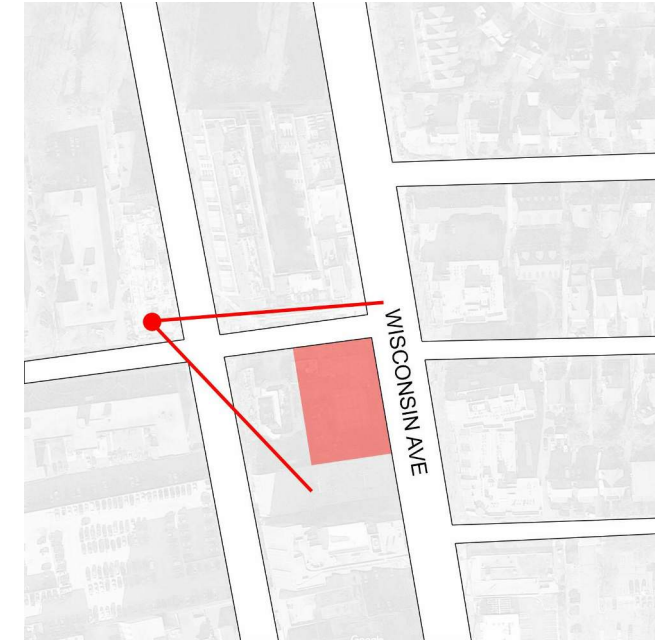


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BATTERY LANE VIEW



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AERIAL VIEW

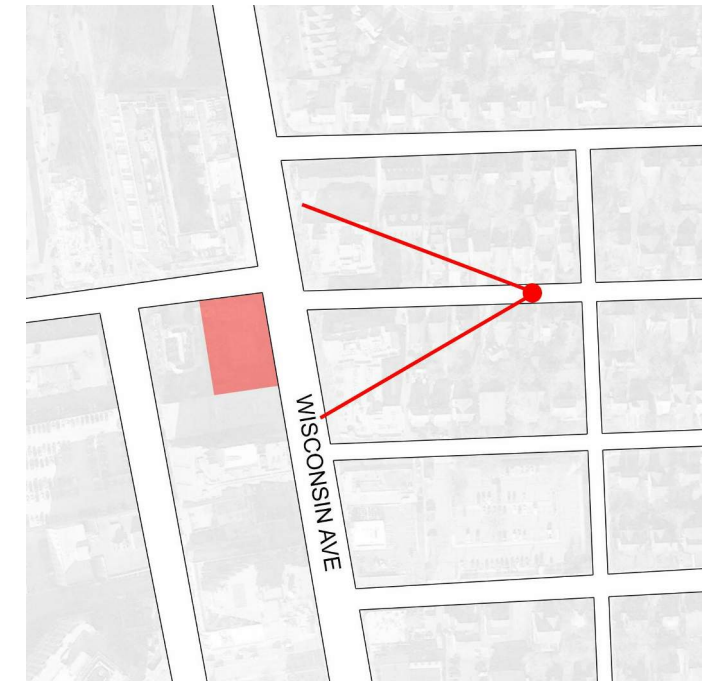


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ROSEDALE VIEW



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