

# Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel

## Submission Form

### PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name	Avocet Tower
File Number(s)	Sketch - 320180070; Preliminary - 120180040; Site - 820180040
Project Address	7373 Wisconsin Avenue Bethesda, MD 20814

Plan Type

Concept Plan ☐

Sketch Plan ☒

Site Plan ☒

### APPLICANT TEAM

	Name	Phone	Email
Primary Contact	Christopher Smith - StonebridgeCarras	301-913-9610	smith@stonebridgecarras.com
Architect	Jon Pickard/Justin Doro - Pickard Chilton (jdoro@pickardchilton.com); Steve Smith - CooperCarry (StevenSmith@CooperCarry.com)		
Landscape Architect	Trini Rodriguez - Parker Rodriguez (trodriguez@parkerrodriguez.com)		

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

	Zone	Proposed Height	Proposed Density
Project Data	CR 5.0, C 5.0, R4.75, H-250	250'	8.35 FAR, or up to 535,000 GSF
Proposed Land Uses	Commercial Office and Hotel		
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>	<p>As part of the public/private partnership with Montgomery County, StonebridgeCarras is designing and building the new 2nd District Police Station at 4823 Rugby Avenue in the Woodmont Triangle District of Downtown Bethesda. Upon turn-key delivery of the New Police Station to the County in early 2018, StonebridgeCarras will secure control and redevelop the site located at 7359 Wisconsin Avenue. In addition to the property located at 7359 Wisconsin Avenue, StonebridgeCarras is the owner of the properties located at 7351 Wisconsin Avenue and 4630 Montgomery Avenue, and is seeking approval for redevelopment of the combined site. The redevelopment of the Property, in part due to the unique PPP for the New Police Station, has been designated a Strategic Economic Development Project by the County as per Executive Order 083-17 issued on May 25, 2017</p> <p>The Project consists of approximately 400,000 SF of Class A commercial office space, an approximately 225 key (135,000 SF) hotel, and a fully enclosed above and below grade parking garage for approximately 500 vehicles. The Project contains various public amenities, including the entry plaza, wide pedestrian friendly streetscapes, a food service space associated with the hotel off the plaza, and various occupiable rooftop terraces for building tenants. The plaza space is intended to draw both building occupants and community members over to the east side of Wisconsin Avenue and will serve as an entrance into the Pearl District.</p> <p>For additional information on the Project, please see the attached narrative.</p>		



Exceptional Design Public Benefit Points Requested and Brief Justification	Please see attached narrative.
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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](mailto: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



## Avocet Tower – 7373 Wisconsin Avenue

### EXCEPTIONAL DESIGN NARRATIVE

Avocet Tower, a mixed-use redevelopment of 0.84 ± acres of land located at the corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Montgomery Avenue and created in large part through a public/private partnership with Montgomery County, has been designed to enliven and aesthetically awaken this important transit-oriented core intersection in the heart of Downtown Bethesda. Through the provision of a large interactive public plaza that will integrate the new mixed-use project and surrounding land uses and urban activities, an enhanced pedestrian environment and exceptional architectural design and “place-making,” Avocet Tower will help define the urban skyline and further reinforce the functional emergence of Downtown Bethesda as the urban core of Montgomery County and the region.

Avocet Tower will be comprised of approximately 400,000 square feet of Class A commercial office space, an approximately 225 key (135,000 square feet) hotel, and a fully enclosed above and below grade parking garage for approximately 500 vehicles. As one of Bethesda’s tallest buildings, Avocet Tower’s elegant glass façade and highly articulated architectural composition will reshape Bethesda’s new landscape.

A tremendous opportunity is bestowed upon this core location through enhanced transit serviceability (i.e., Purple Line, Bus Rapid Transit, Second Metro Red Line entrance, etc.), and the Avocet Tower redevelopment will not only embrace the continued urbanization of this area allowed through transit orientation, but also serve to incorporate and integrate the development that has already occurred. The design challenges of addressing the new goals, objectives, guidelines and requirements while also achieving compatibility with the “old” have been carefully scrutinized and successfully incorporated with Avocet Tower.

Avocet Tower will create a continuous flow of activity from Wisconsin Avenue through a public/private plaza and the lobby areas for both the office and hotel, which will provide work and gathering spaces, as well as a restaurant and socializing space for Avocet Tower occupants as well as the residents, workers, and visitors at the urban core of Downtown Bethesda. The plaza at the front entrance of the Avocet Tower on Wisconsin Avenue will feature a more than 45 foot “overhang” from the building rising above the public plaza – creating a dramatic and welcoming element to the Project (the “Entry Plaza”).

Avocet Tower has been designed as a predominantly glass façade within highly articulated series of masses that relate and respond to the desire of the Sector Plan’s urban design vision. In keeping with the intent of the approved Bethesda Downtown Plan Design Guidelines (the “Design Guidelines”), the building

modulates in form both horizontally and vertically, introduces outstanding mixes of elegant glass, metal and precast and provides this important intersection with both an outstanding plaza at the ground level and an architectural embellishment at the top to help define the Downtown Bethesda skyline as an urban signature. Avocet Tower is comprised of three major vertical masses interconnected by the podium and other minor elements. Each of these masses is uniquely defined by distinct enclosure strategies and steps down from west to east. The façade of the building, as well as the parking garage above, are clad with a series of plane changes and pedestrian-scaled architectural embellishments which serve to both define the base of the building as well as provide for a human-scaled pedestrian experience. The transition to the tower mass is marked by a series of stepping architectural brows and culminates in the large building undercut at the corner, which holds the office tower a minimum of 45 feet above the entry plaza below. Each of the three vertical masses has its own unique crown. The hotel mass to the east is crowned by a small setback terrace and green roof. The central mass is defined by a variation and extension of the cladding. The major office mass to the west is articulated by a rooftop terrace that can be occupied, capped by a functional architectural embellishment that wraps across the top of the terrace, down the south face of the westerly mass and as currently conceived is expressed again as an artistic soffit feature for the entry plaza. This architectural embellishment creates a significant feature in the Downtown Bethesda.

Avocet Tower is set back from Wisconsin Avenue, Montgomery Avenue and Waverly Street in order to provide significant pedestrian dedication zones along each of these streets, further emphasizing the pedestrian-friendly ground level experience. Avocet Tower both integrates and aesthetically distinguishes the building on the Property. The ground floor provides the continuity of flow of pedestrians, plaza users, and office and hotel occupants. As the building rises from the plaza to accommodate the unique use of an office and hotel, the massing varies in material and height to ensure that the facades are not exceedingly long, uninterrupted and rigidly uniform. Avocet Tower has created a unique and exceptional experience along its very uniquely shaped site for office users, hotel guests, and pedestrians. Through careful siting of the building improvements and the mix of uses, the integration of public and private gathering spaces and the circulation to, through and around the Property, Avocet Tower serves both as a monumental entrance to the urban core of Downtown Bethesda as well as a gateway to the new Pearl District to the east.

The planning and design of Avocet Tower has been reflective of the following Exceptional Design considerations.



## **Providing innovative solutions in response to the immediate context**

Avocet Tower's design:

- Creates a gateway to the Pearl District and a distinctive pedestrian node at the corner of Wisconsin and Montgomery Avenues.
- Elevates the office space at the corner to reveal pedestrian-scaled forms within the plaza that relate in scale and character to the neighboring historic building to the south, and to the local Bethesda context.
- Purposefully modulates the building's massing to create three distinct vertical masses along Montgomery Avenue that step down to transition from the grand scale of the Central Business District, to the more residential scale of the Pearl District to the east.

The distinctive form of the shade trellis descending the side of the building and framing the soffit of the Entry Plaza at the corner of the intersections of Wisconsin and Montgomery Avenues creates a gateway to the Pearl District along Montgomery Avenue to the east. Additionally, the open space and "living room-like" character of the Entry Plaza will serve as spatial node that welcomes all to the center of Downtown Bethesda.

In elevating the office building at least 45' at the corner, the articulated architecture that reveals itself incorporates more pedestrian-scaled forms and a higher degree of detail. Furthermore, integrated and highly articulated solid zones deliberately reflect the character of surrounding Bethesda and purposefully relate the scale of the plaza to that of the neighboring historic building to the south.

Looking down Montgomery Avenue, the project is seen as three major vertical masses, interconnected at the podium level as well as other minor elements. Each of these masses is defined by bespoke enclosure strategies and, from west to east, drops away to relate to the urban scale along Wisconsin Ave and the residential scale of the Pearl District.

## **Creating a sense of place and serves as a landmark**

Avocet Tower reflects the sense of place through both the architecture and overall design through:

- Rather than simply adorning the building a dramatic crown, the tower top presents and serves as a large and lush rooftop terrace, available to all building tenants.

- The rooftop terrace is covered by a solar mitigating shade trellis, which wraps down the southern face of the building to become a distinctive overhang to the Entry Plaza, connecting the base and the top of the building.
- The dual gardens at the top and base of the tower, along with the integrated shade trellis, form a monumental architectural gesture. It will attract people from the Metro stops across Wisconsin Avenue as well as pedestrians from along the Wisconsin Avenue Corridor.

Avocet Tower's rooftop shade trellis is designed to reach outward and attract people from Bethesda's Central Business District and Metro station. It will also announce the project as a new destination within the Downtown Bethesda skyline. The crowning element is composed of series of evenly spaced rods that begin as the soffit feature of the Entry Plaza, climb the south face of the most prominent office massing, and continue up to the top of the building where it becomes an elegant shade trellis for the open space on the sky terrace. Additionally, the western mass of the building is prominently elevated to create an Entry Plaza at the corner of Wisconsin and Montgomery Avenues.

#### **Enhancing the public realm in a distinct and original manner**

Avocet Tower engages the public distinctly both at ground level and through the unique architecture and architectural embellishments at the top of the building. The public experience starts blocks away as the intersection of building and of Wisconsin Avenue create a unique vantage point for the building from afar. The aesthetic crowning element, as well as the public plaza at ground level, bring the attention from top to ground as you arrive at Avocet Tower.

- Along Avocet Tower's three major frontages on Wisconsin Avenue, Montgomery Avenue and Waverly Street, the project has been designed to create a vital and active streetscape by offering the integrated experience of the connected office and hotel lobbies, hotel restaurant, conference spaces and the entry plaza.
- The Entry Plaza is designed to create an urban living room at the corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Montgomery Avenue, providing outdoor seating and meeting areas.
- As a part of the Entry Plaza, a large and distinctive piece of art will further enhance the dynamic quality of elevating the office building and activating the ground level as a green space for work, play and contemplation.

The Entry Plaza, office lobby, hotel lobby and ground floor hotel amenities are designed as an integrated whole. The range of uses, from informal work and meeting spaces, to the hotel-operated food service space with indoor and outdoor seating, to a lush and active green space at the corner, all combine to create a vibrant and active streetscape and ground level across nearly the entire site.

The plaza is designed in overall context as a point, counter point to the architectural massing. The plaza includes the same shapes on a ground plane as above, rectangles intersecting and juxtaposing each other in the plaza. A series of north/south movements of the plaza are combined with intersections of east/west movement, predominantly displayed in the seating options and the extensive water feature, creating a series of rooms to enjoy, sit, contemplate or work. The water starts as an element on the building, drawing down and horizontally over a series of beautiful stones. The water disappears under two “bridges” that shift and intersect the horizontal planes and rooms. The rooms created provide different seating options and feel. The building overhangs the plaza at a minimum 45’ above the ground creating a dynamic space for the plaza visitors. The hotel has a private dining area within the plaza space as well.

The artwork is designed to function at two scales: first, drawing people in from the Metro and surrounding area due to its vibrancy and size; and then as it enhances the experience of working, playing or contemplating within the Entry Plaza through its dynamic and lively modulations and manipulations.

The building and public spaces shapes, design and integration of unique spaces and materials creates a dynamic, unique and original public experience.

**Introducing materials, forms or building methods unique to the immediate vicinity or applied in a unique way.**

As one of Bethesda’s tallest building, Avocet Tower’s elegant glass façade and bold architectural composition will reshape and redefine the city’s new business landscape. Key among the building:

- Avocet Tower’s exterior enclosure is designed to emphasize the three vertical massings, employing different arrangements of curtain wall and highly articulated precast concrete panels to represent a transition in scale from the urban Central Business District toward the residential districts to the east.
- The above-grade parking garage is fully enclosed in curtain wall and highly articulated precast concrete panel to simultaneously diminish its presence and create a modulated and pedestrian scaled street face.

- Avocet Tower has a number of soffits that have been designed to provide warmth, shelter and a human scale and to counter the large and small overhung spaces through the use of wood prints, crisp lines, scaled articulation and inviting up-lighting.

The tower is clad with an intricate lattice of brushed nickel, aluminum, precast concrete panels and glass curtain wall. The transition to the tower mass is marked by a series of stepping architectural brows and culminates in the large building undercut, which elevates the office tower at least 45' above the Entry Plaza below. The combination of the purposeful placement of the three vertical masses at differing depths from the street face; the lush and diverse landscaping; and the composed brows and architectural features will provide for a varied, elegant and distinct experience on all three of the building's frontages. Warm and elegant up-lighting on the more natural elements, such as the highly articulated precast concrete panels and warm soffits, will transition the scale of the building's base to a more inviting and pedestrian scale that will be reminiscent of the historic building to the south as well as other adjacent historic structures.

**Designing compact, infill development so living, working and shopping environments are more pleasurable and desirable on a problematic site;**

The anticipated activity at Avocet Tower's Entry Plaza and street-level hotel amenities will serve to identify this site as an exciting and lively destination and an exceptional gateway to Bethesda's newly conceived Pearl District.

- Avocet Tower will be constructed on three currently underutilized sites in the heart of Downtown Bethesda. It presents a unique opportunity to combine the needs of a forward-thinking Class A office building with onsite parking and a contemporary and youthful hotel experience.
- The combination of a "hip" and active hotel lobby and restaurant, with adjoining conference and informal work spaces, seamlessly transition into an office lobby space designed with hoteling stations and work rooms. These elements funnel activity out into the plaza, creating a dynamic and exciting site throughout the day.
- The streetscape of the building, as well as the parking garage above, are clad with a series of plane changes and pedestrian-scaled architectural embellishments which serve to both define the base of the building as well as provide for a human-scaled pedestrian experience.

These spaces will create a connection to nature through direct access to daylight, diverse plant life and water features. It will also serve as a place for interaction and cultural exchange with the integration of a variety of seating, dining, work and conversational spaces and integrated artwork. This open ground-scape will serve as the catalyst of integrating the office and hotel users with the local community.

**Integrating low-impact development methods into the overall design of the site and building, beyond green building or site requirements.**

Avocet Tower is being designed not only for today's residents, workers and visitors but for the future of the way people are utilizing spaces and enjoying the environments they inhabit.

- The enclosure system provides for a highly developed shading system, allowing for great views and controlled natural light deep within the office spaces.
- Each of the three vertical masses as well as the podium structure of the parking garage are articulated by scaled and composed architecture features, horizontal brows, and material shifts, which all serve to make a large single structure appear as the integrated whole of a series of elements.
- The roofscapes at the top of the parking garage, hotel and office buildings are developed as a series of accessible tenant terraces and landscaped areas. They support required storm water management while providing tenants unique elevated exterior spaces along with a visual and physical connection to the natural environment.

The building enclosure is a crafted composition of highly efficient low-e coated glass, solar-oriented metal shading devices and highly articulated precast concrete panel. The mix of glass, metal and concrete is proportioned and manipulated to respond to climate and to provide distinct scales as a part of an overarching and balanced composition. Avocet Tower provides less than the required parking to encourage alternative transportation methods. The design integrates siting, fenestration, water quality/quantity management, green roofs and other critical sustainability actions that are integral to the design all to provide the project a minimum LEED Gold rating for the office tower core and shell. The rooftop terrace and richly appointed plaza provide escapes from the office and allow natural light, fresh air and an alternate location to work, rest or enjoy.

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12.13.17

# DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL REVIEW

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7359 WISCONSIN AVE

STONEBRIDGECARRAS  
BETHESDA, MARYLAND

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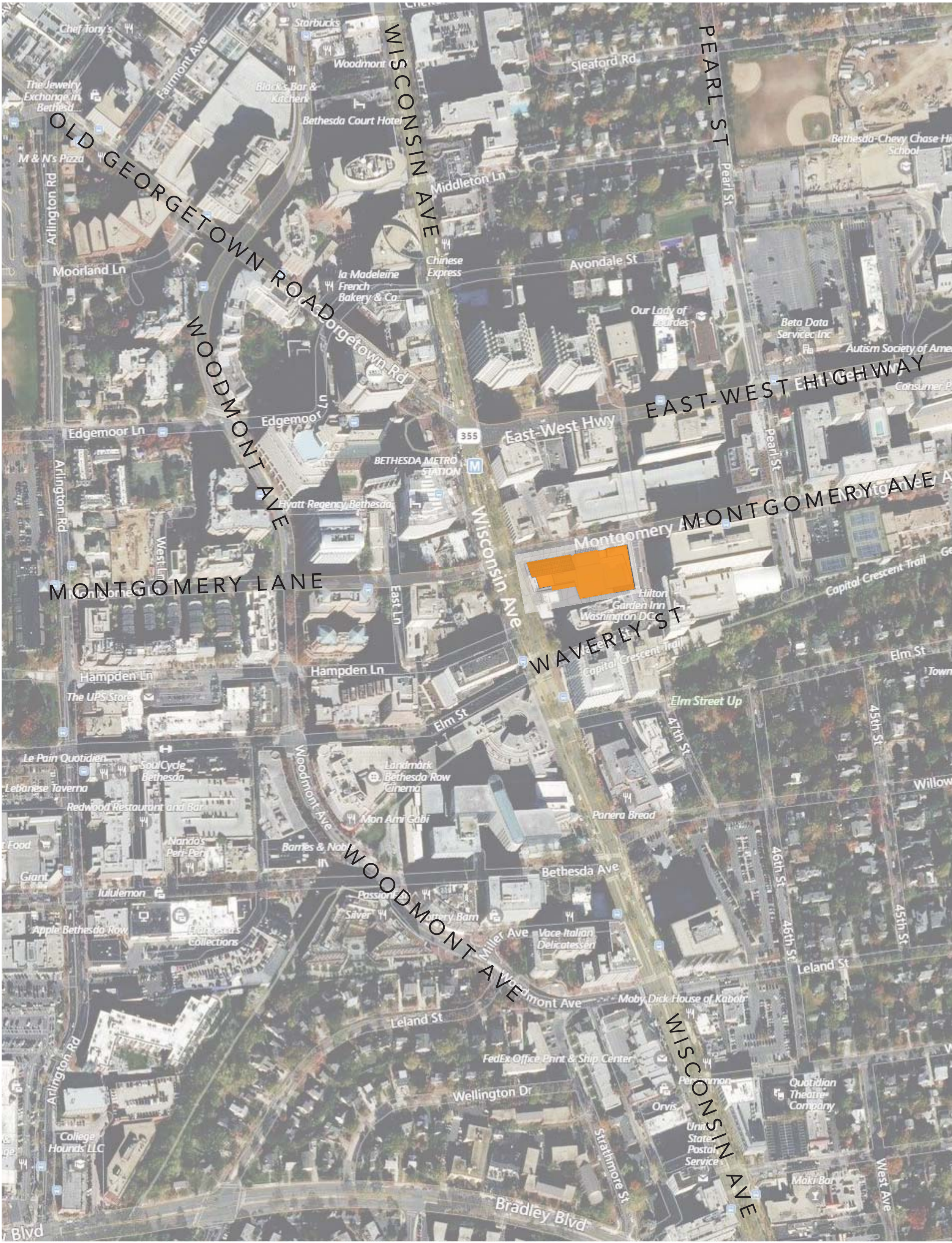
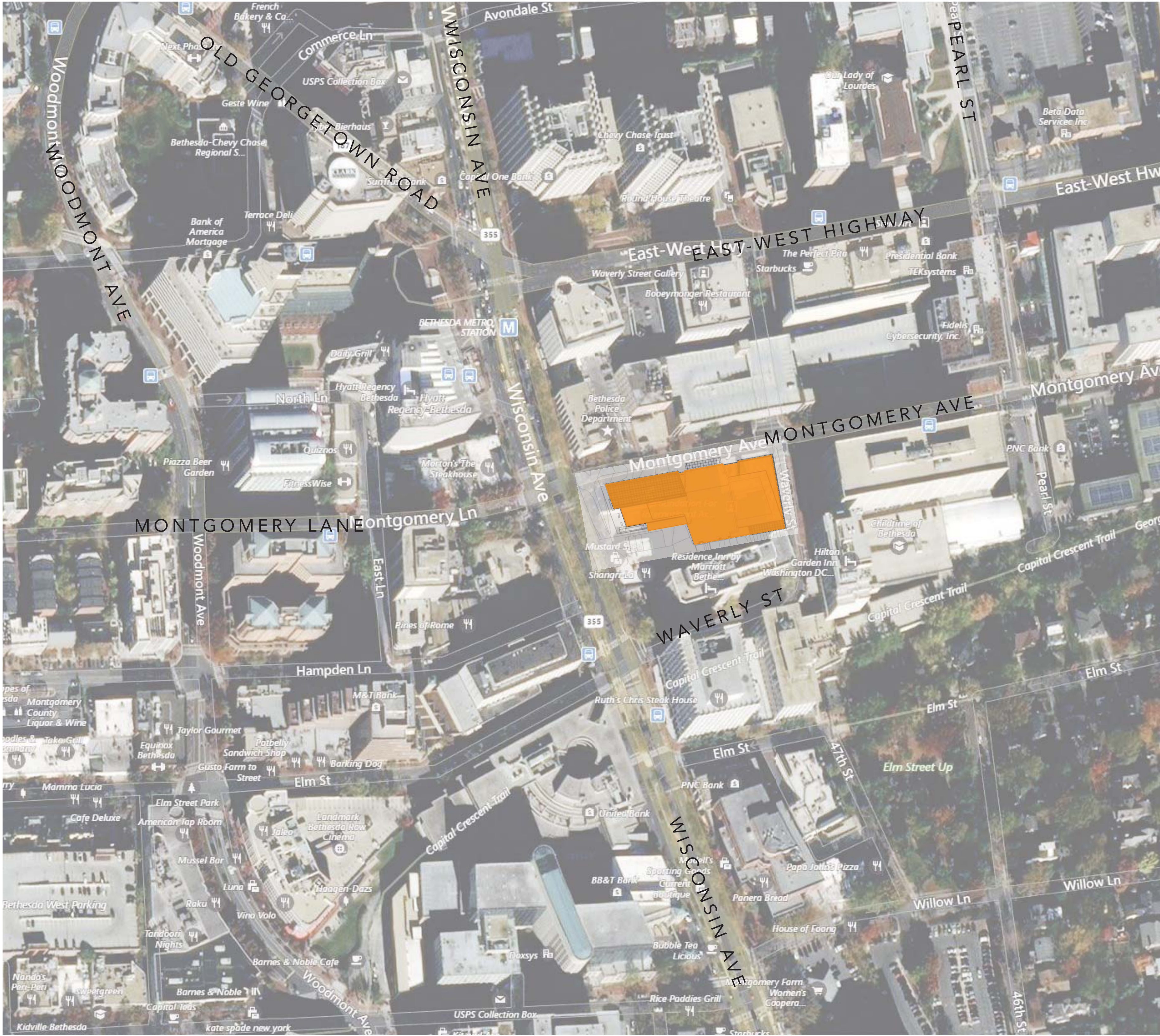
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7359 WISCONSIN AVE





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# BETHESDA CONTEXT



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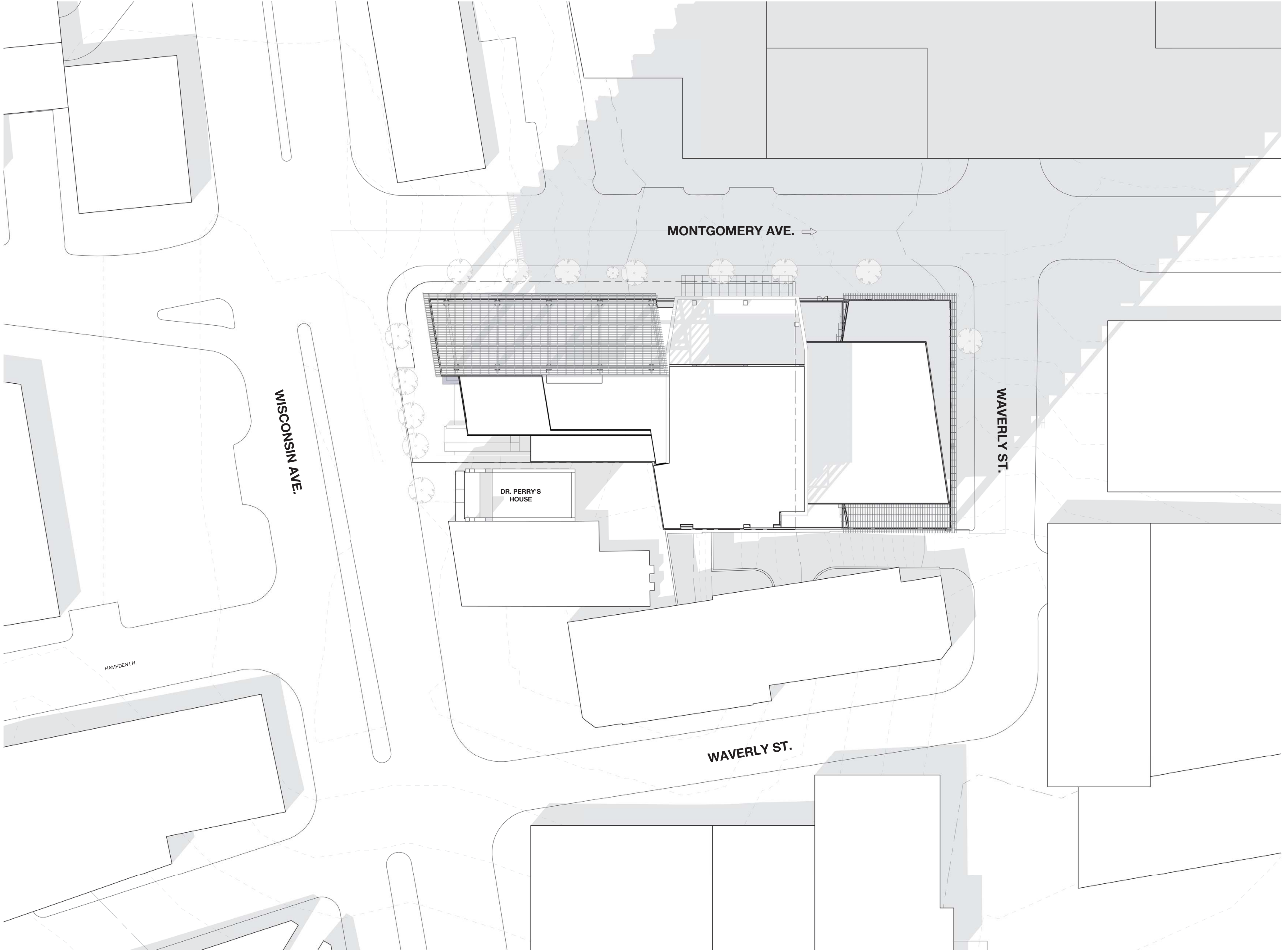
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# SITE PLAN





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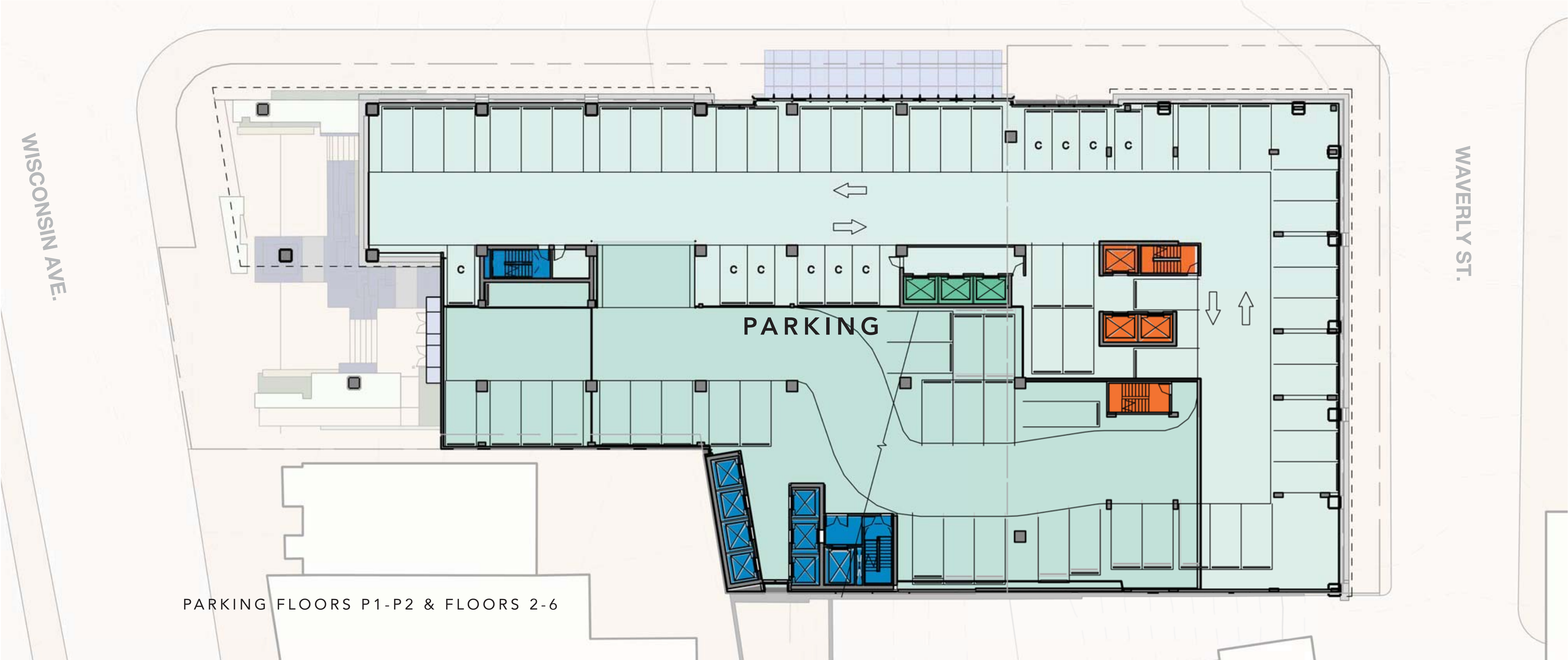
# ILLUSTRATIVE GROUND LEVEL PLAN





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# ILLUSTRATIVE PARKING PLAN

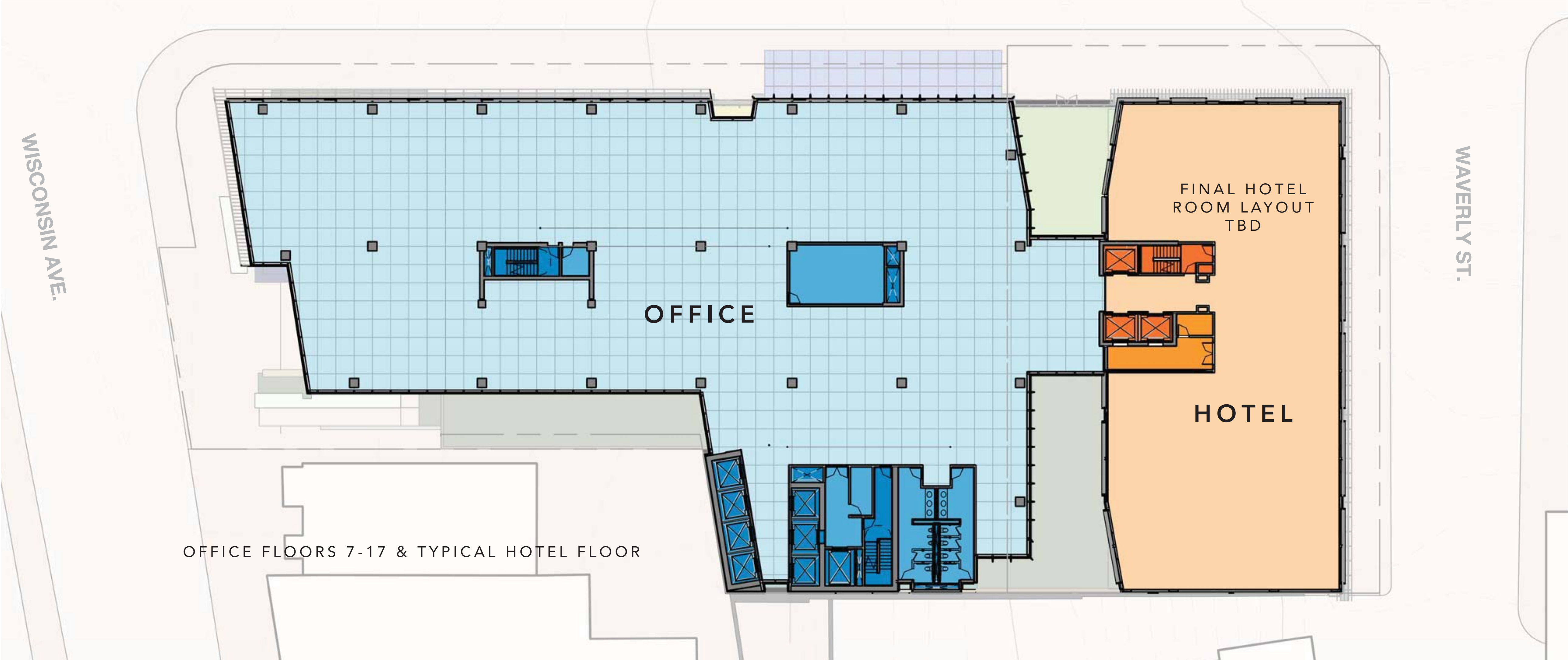


NOTE: INTERIOR, INCLUDING CORE LAYOUT, COLUMNS AND ARTICULATION OF FACADE OF BUILDING TO BE A PART OF BUILDING PLANS. FLOOR PLANS ILLUSTRATIVE ONLY.



DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL REVIEW

# ILLUSTRATIVE OFFICE & HOTEL PLAN





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# ILLUSTRATIVE FLOOR 18 PLAN



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# ILLUSTRATIVE UPPER OFFICE PLAN

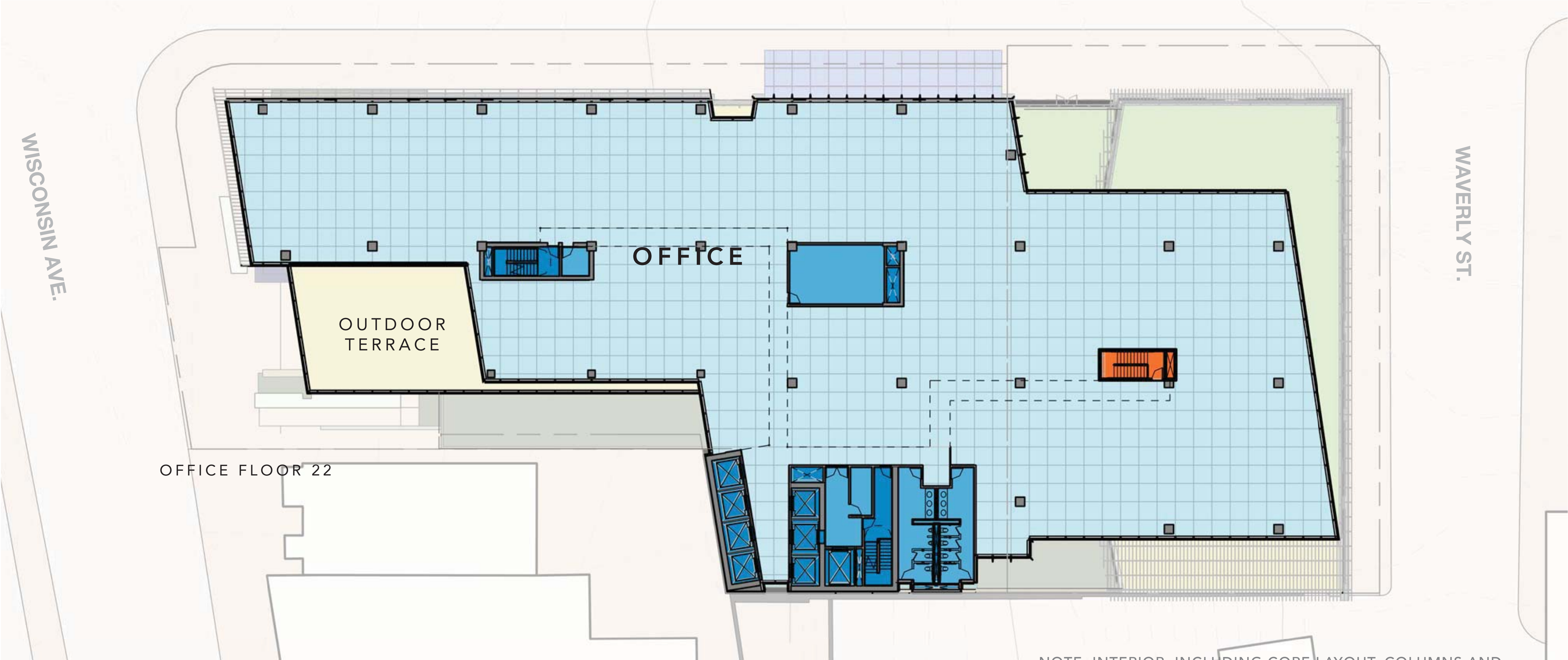


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# ILLUSTRATIVE FLOOR 22 PLAN

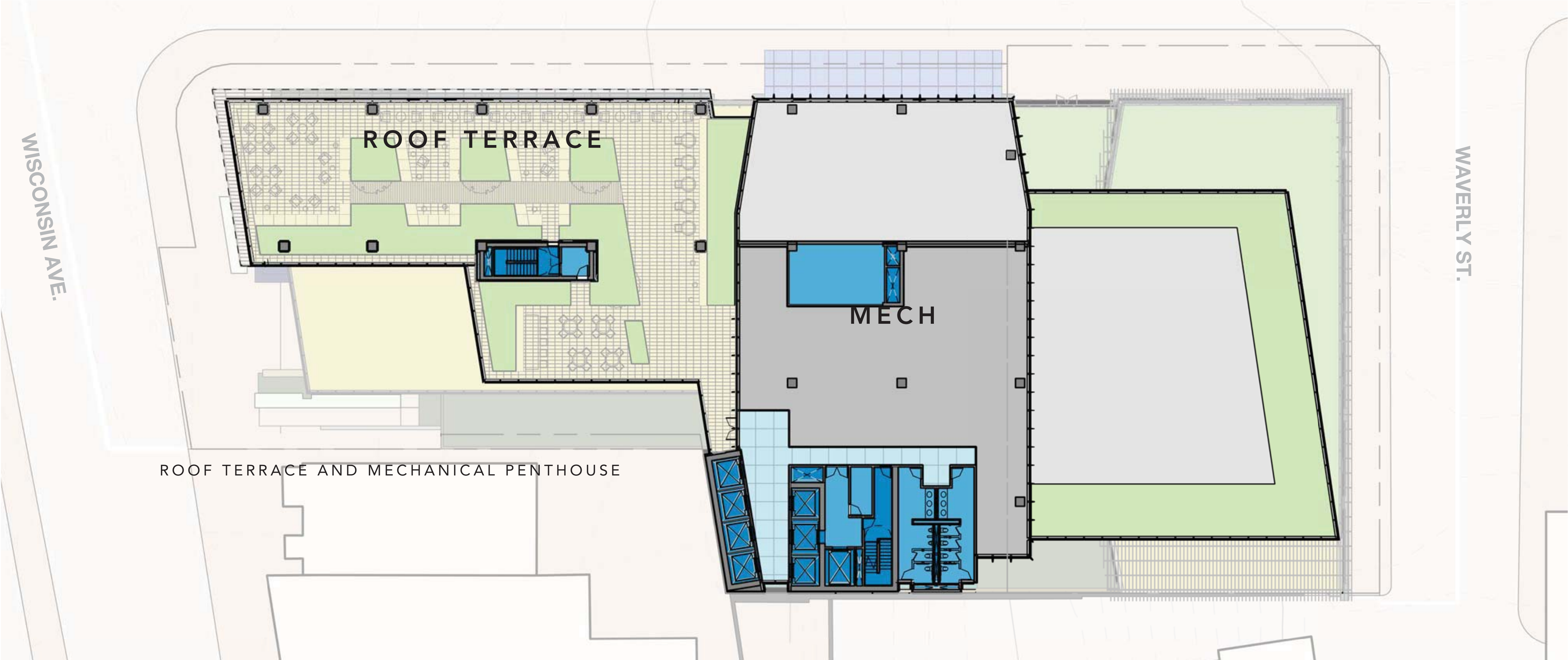


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# ILLUSTRATIVE ROOF TERRACE PLAN

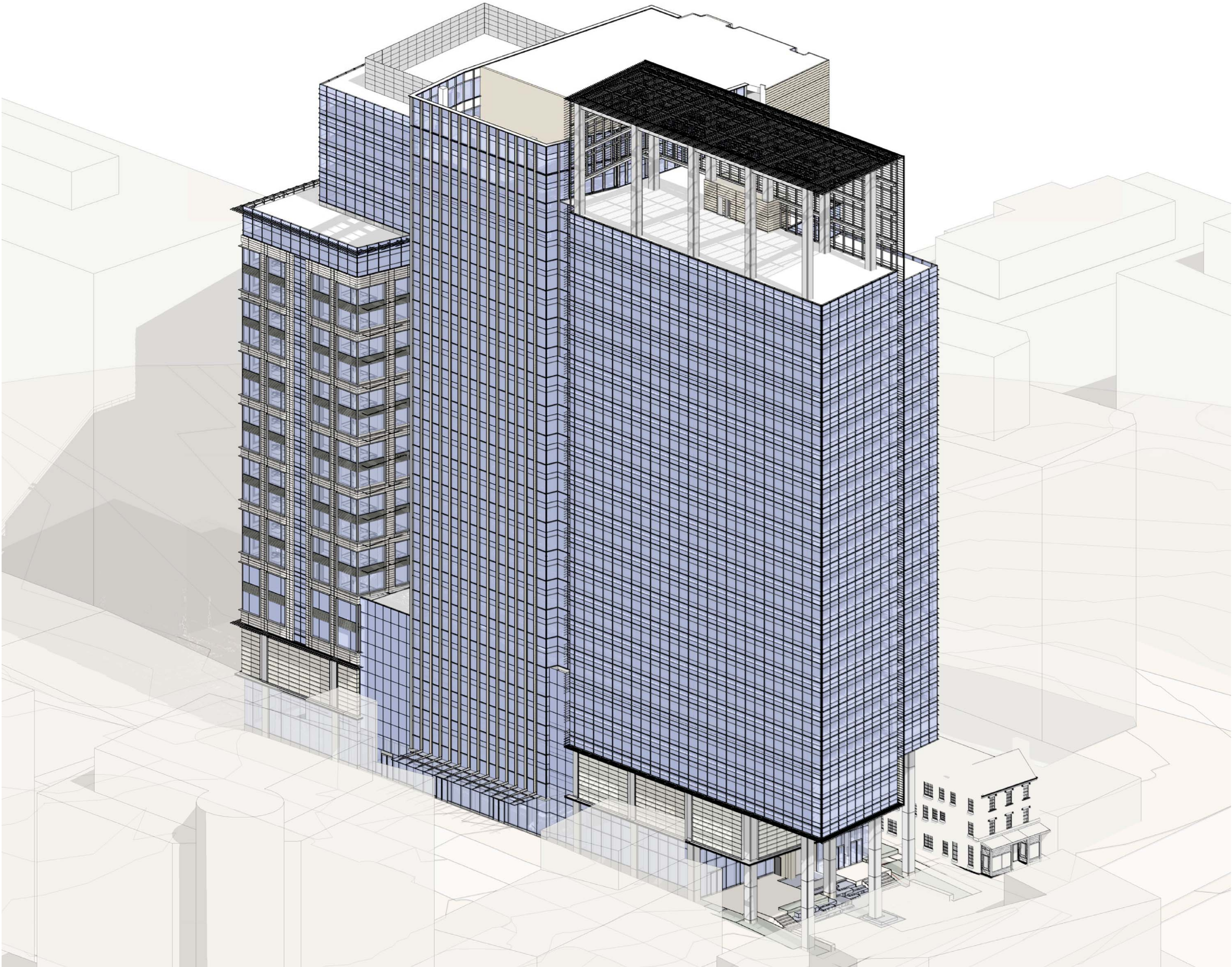


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# ILLUSTRATIVE NW AXONOMETRIC ELEVATION



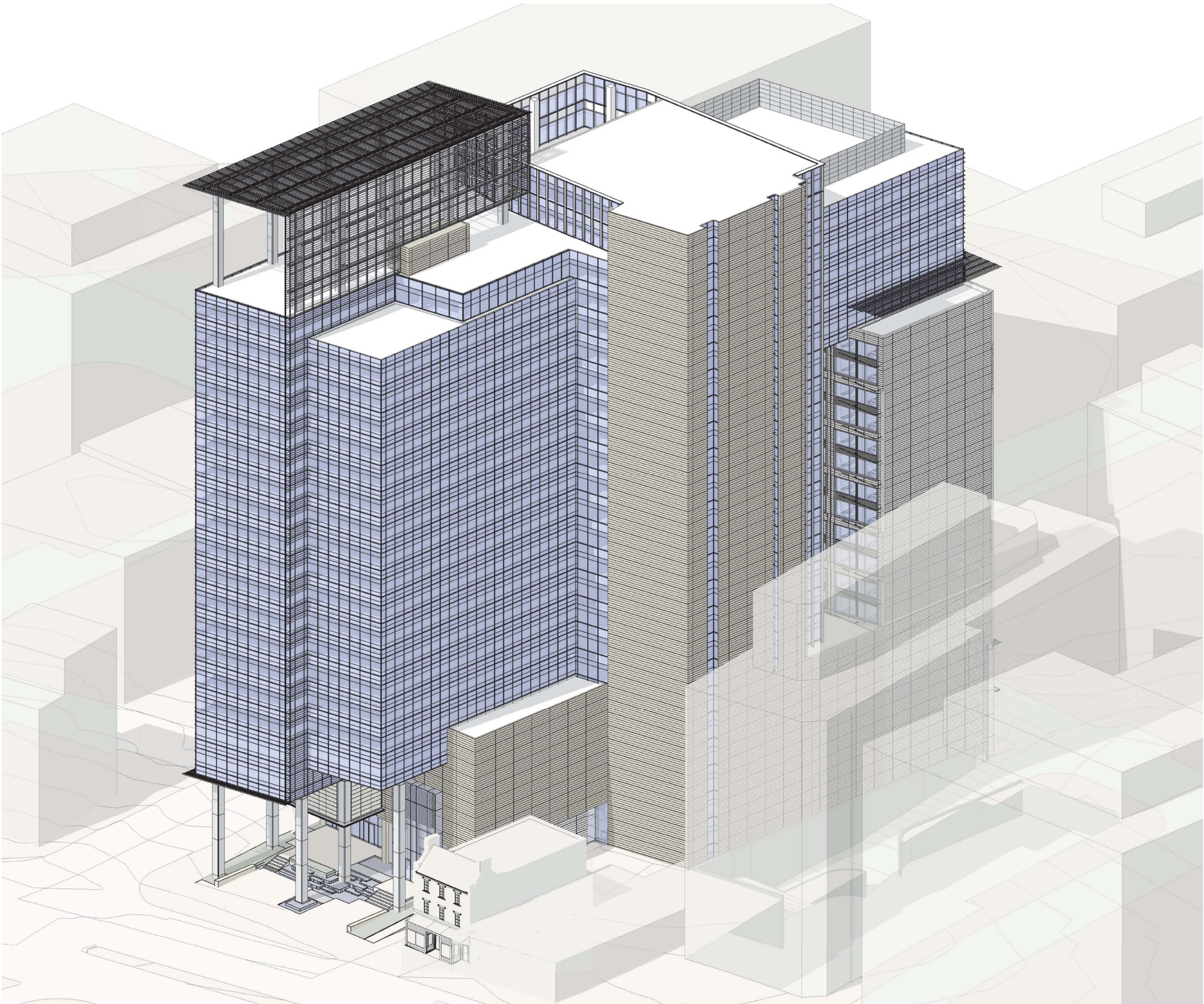
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# ILLUSTRATIVE SW AXONOMETRIC ELEVATION



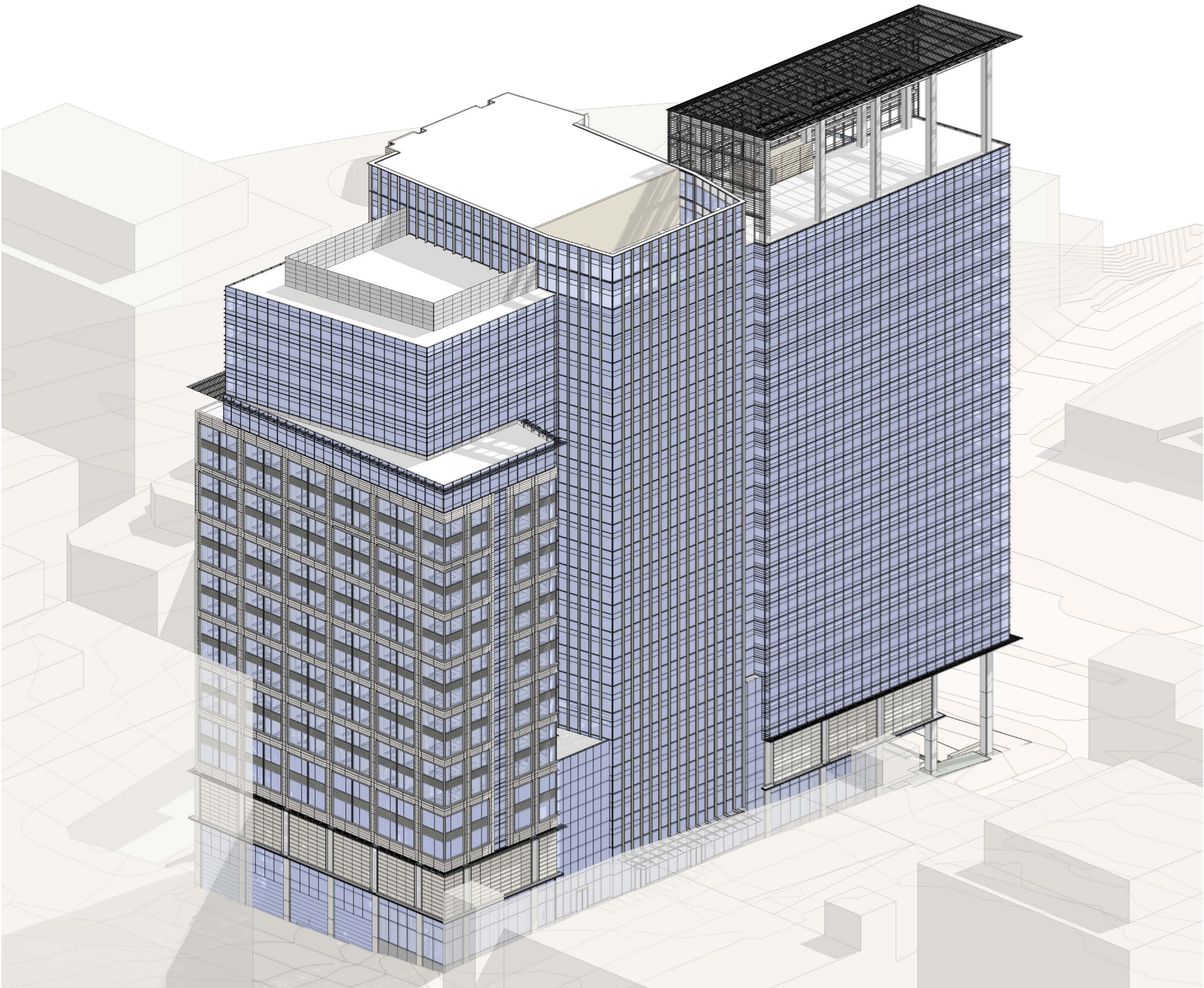
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# ILLUSTRATIVE NE AXONOMETRIC ELEVATION













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# PERSPECTIVES



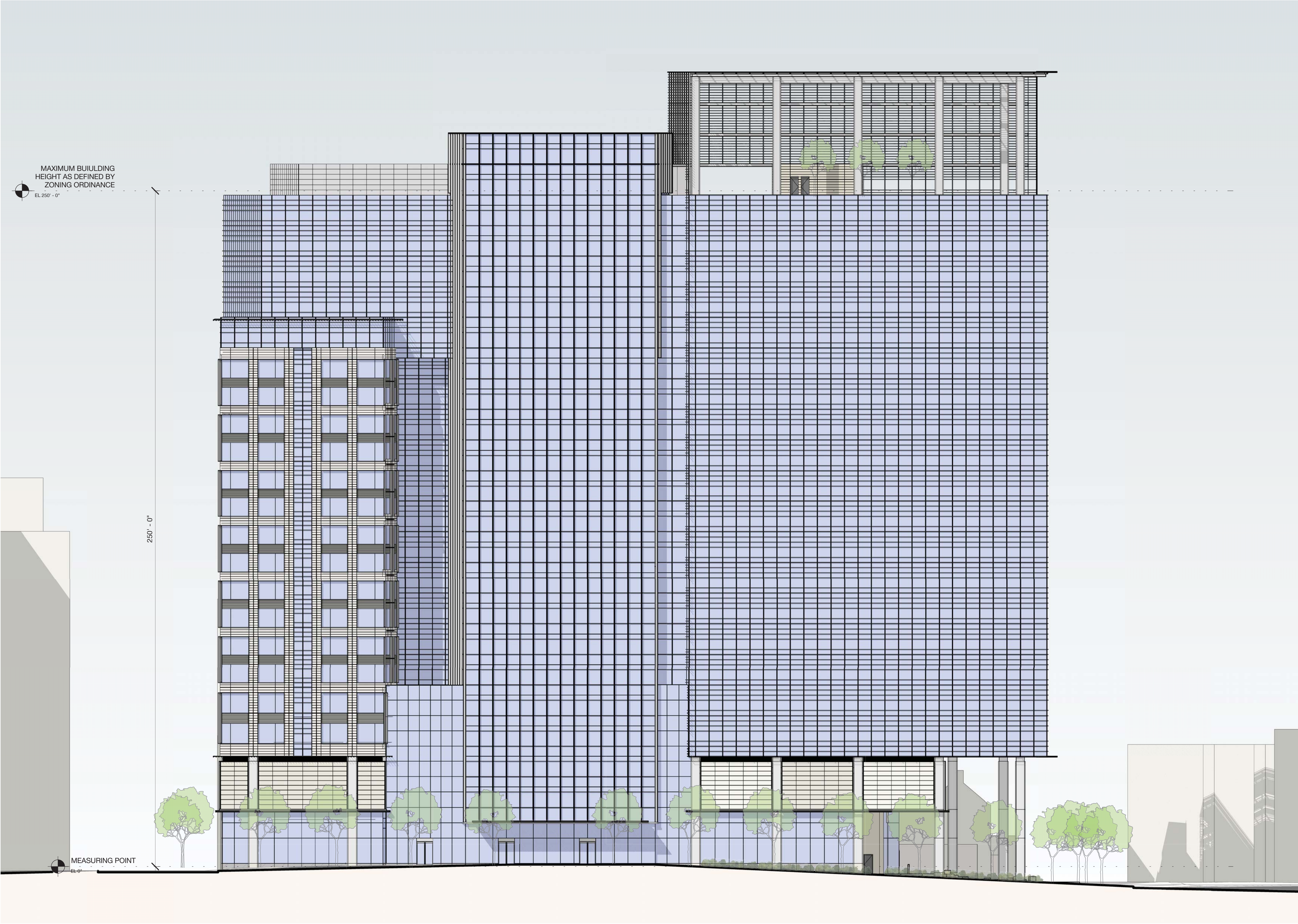
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# ILLUSTRATIVE NORTH ELEVATION

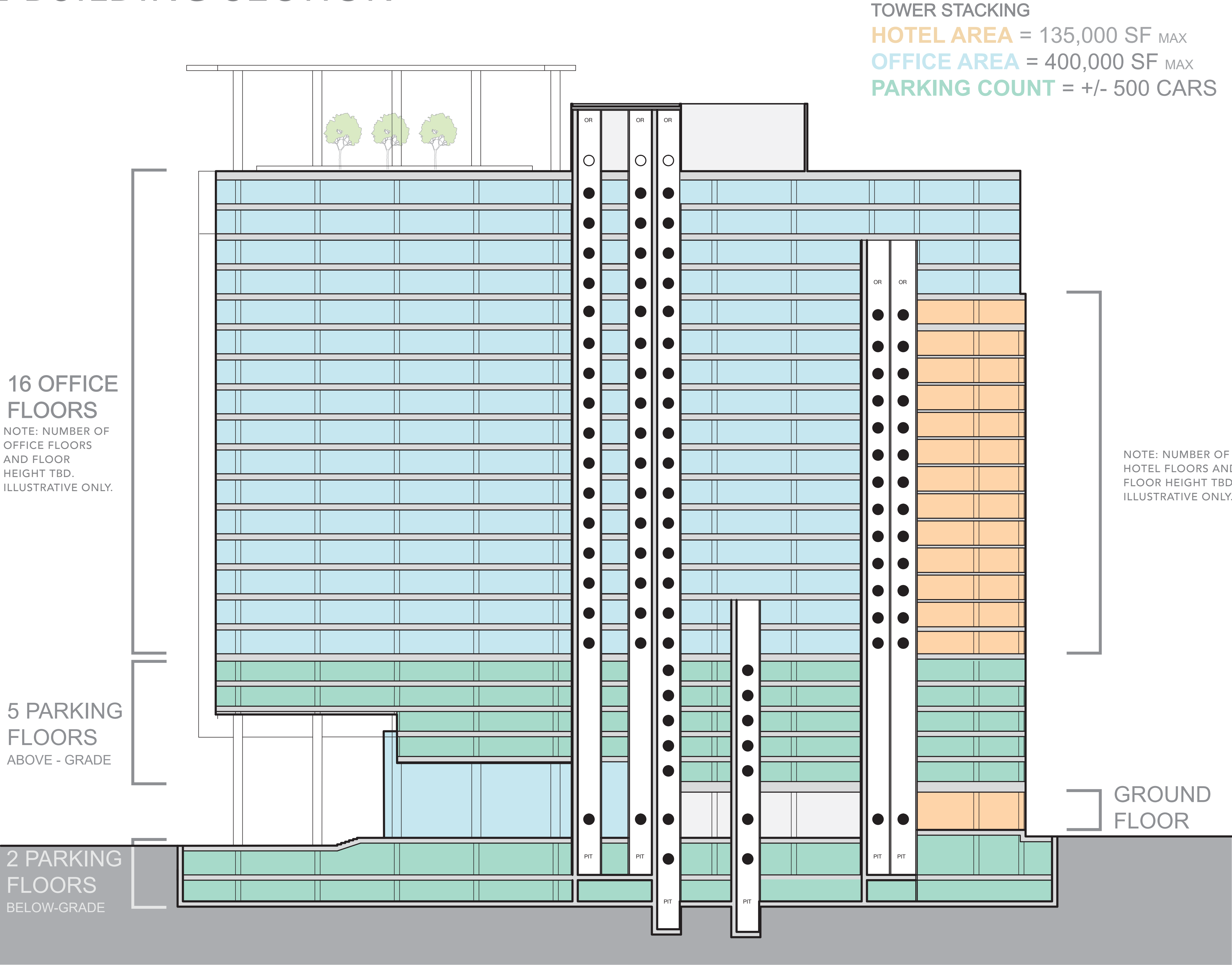


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# ILLUSTRATIVE BUILDING SECTION





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# PLAZA FROM WISCONSIN AVE



7359 WISCONSIN AVE

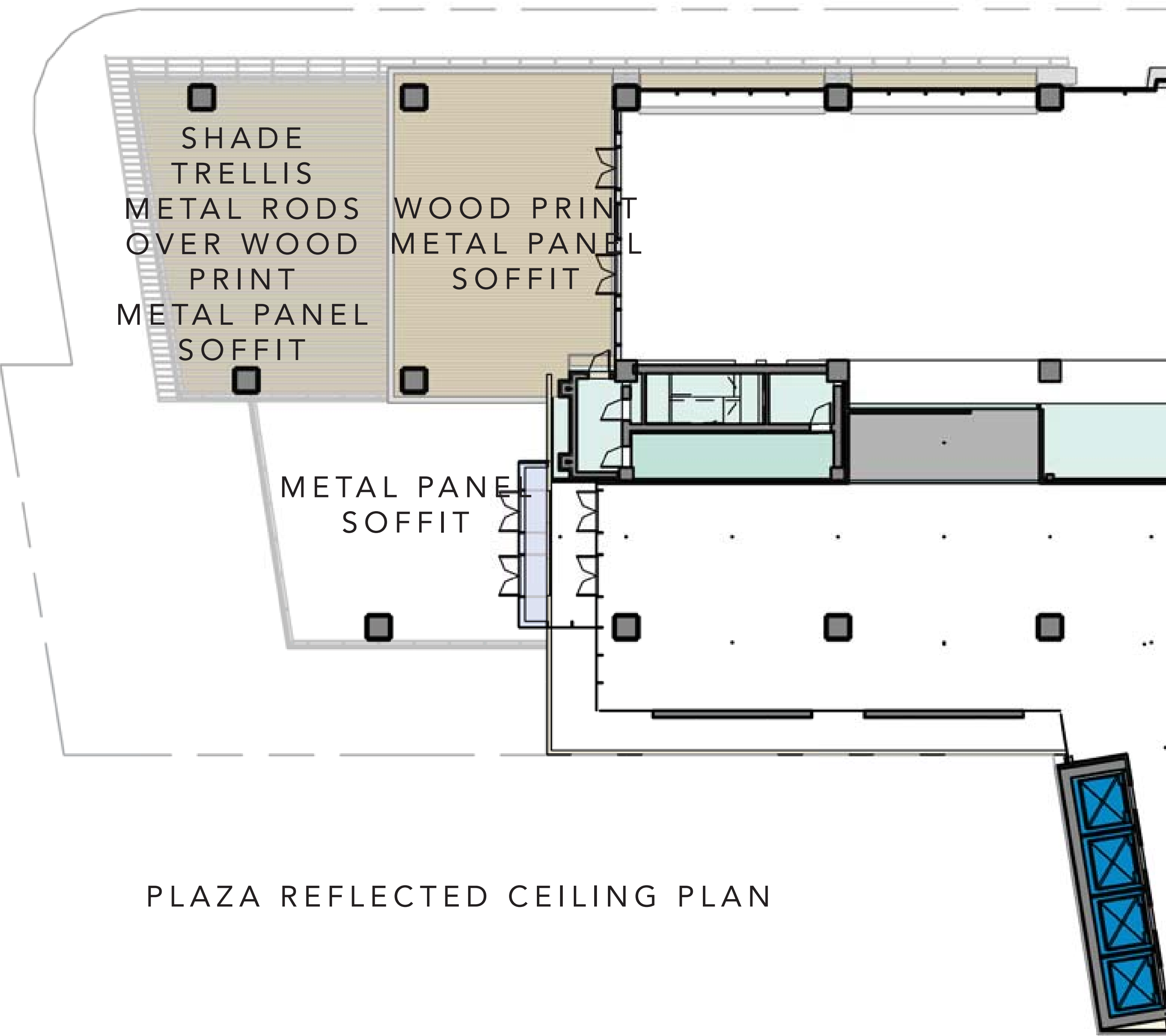
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# GROUND LEVEL PLAZA PLAN



PLAZA REFLECTED CEILING PLAN



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# PLAZA VIEW LOOKING SOUTH



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# PLAZA VIEW LOOKING NORTH



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# PLAZA VIEW FROM ABOVE





DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL REVIEW

# PLAZA VIEW LOOKING SOUTH





DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL REVIEW

# PLAZA VIEW LOOKING NORTH





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PUBLIC SPACE PRECEDENTS

