# **Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel** Submission Form RESUBMISSIO N

6/13/18

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Project Name	4 Bethesda Metro Center								
File Number(s)	3201800110								
Project Address	4 Bethesda Metro Center								
Plan Type	Concept Plan	Sketch Plan	Site Plan						
APPLICANT TEAM									
	Name	Phone	Email						
Primary Contact	Robert Harris	301-841-3826	rrharris@lerchearly.com						
Architect	SOM								
Landscape Architect									

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

	Zone	Proposed Height	Proposed Density					
Project Data	CR	290 ft.	1,092,242 sf. *					
Proposed Land Uses								
Proposed Land Uses Brief Project Description and Design Concept (If the project was previously presented to the Design Advisory Panel, describe how the latest design incorporates the Panel's comments)	* Density includes existing hotel (233,664 sf.) and 358,578 sf. office to remain.  The project involves the demolition of the former "foodcourt" building at the Bethesda Metro Center and replacement of it with either an office building or residential tower, with ground-floor retail. The project also includes significant upgrades/revisions to the Metro Plaza and the lower level bus area. The project implements the Bethesda Downtown Plan for this site. It responds to the Sector Plan goals for this site. The architectural design of the project will both enhance the pedestrian environment and surrounding public use space. The massing and verticality of the building will emphasize that urban context, while façade treatments and architectural elements will provide an appropriate human scale at the pedestrian level. The proposed building has been strategically designed to help frame the Metro Plaza in order to provide a well-defined space, while simultaneously preserving the views of Wisconsin Avenue and Old Georgetown Road. It closely follows the Design Guidelines for this site. Retail and restaurant uses, as well as activating uses with outdoor seating will be incorporated at the Plaza level as							
	will a substantial redesign/recor	nfiguration of that open space to ral lawn, a retail promenade, a ga	provide a Wisconsin Avenue					

Exceptional Design
Public Benefit Points
Requested and Brief
Justification

Applicant is seeking 10 points for exceptional design related to the signature building design itself it meets the Design Guidelines for the Bethesda Downtown Plan as follows:

- Integrates a signature tall building providing orientation to the symbolic center of Bethesda.
- · Active, visible and accessible ground-floor uses.
- De-clutter plaza spaces.
- Integrating green lawn area and plantings allowing for informal gatherings and events.
- · Creates multiple access points to the Metro Station.
- Improves the bus bay.
- · Encourages temporary programming.
- Creates a destination use/event venue to draw residents and visitors into the plaza space.

## **DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL SUBMISSION PROCESS**

- Schedule a Design Advisory Panel review date with the Design Advisory Panel Liaison.
   Laura Shipman, Design Advisory Panel Liaison, <u>laura.shipman@montgomeryplanning.org</u>, 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



#### **MEMORANDUM**

TO:

Design Advisory Panel

FROM:

**Brookfield Properties** 

CC:

M-NCPPC Staff

**SUBJECT:** 

Design Advisory Panel Resubmission – June 27, 2018 Meeting

**DATE:** 

June 13, 2018

We appreciate the time and attention that both M-NCPPC Staff and DAP members have given to this significant project. We also want to thank you for the questions and suggestions you made at our presentation on April 25. Since then, we have studied the various comments and suggestions we have received from you, Staff and the public. We are incorporating those suggestions where possible (recognizing that this is a Sketch Plan application focused primarily on general building location, height and density). Further design details - including consistency with the Bethesda Design Guidelines - will be addressed more completely in the subsequent Site Plan. We have been invited back to the DAP meeting on June 27 for further discussions regarding the building placement, massing and relationship to the Metro station/bus bay. Please allow the following to provide some additional detail on those items as you review these submitted materials.

#### **Building Location**

A threshold issue concerns the location of the new building proposed in the Bethesda Sector Plan. Although members of the DAP have not proposed a different location, some members of the public, primarily inspired by Clark's opposition campaign, have questioned it, arguing that the project should "protect Bethesda open space" by shifting our proposed building back into the site (and away from the Clark building). Putting aside the fact that Clark is interested in preserving its views down Wisconsin Avenue as it attempts to market its own building for sale, there are a variety of reasons for why the building needs to be located as we have proposed.

First, today there is extensive open space at Metro Center but it needs improvement because it is interrupted by several barriers, including different surface levels, raised planting areas and poor access options. Our plans will not only preserve the same amount of existing open space, they will also make this space much more functional and accessible. In fact,

contrary to the misperception created by Clark, the amount of usable open space at Metro Center will grow, not shrink (the existing usable open space for the 3 BMC project today is approximately 36,000; with demolition of the old "food court" building and construction of the new office/residential building, the usable open space will be approximately 40,000 sq. ft. for BMC alone with a total of more than 70,000 sq. ft. for the entire block). This area also suffers from limited activation along its edges and no active programming. Our plans are designed to draw the public into this space and provide activated programming on a regular basis for the public to enjoy.

The Bethesda Sector Plan calls for a new building at Metro Center to support improvements to the existing open space both physically and operationally. With the incorporation of changes suggested by Staff, the DAP and members of the public, the objectives of the Sector Plan and Design Guidelines are reflected in Brookfield's current Sketch Plan and will be refined and clarified in the subsequent Site Plan.

Improving the public space first requires recognition that Metro Center is a large "superblock" with five buildings around its edge. This creates the central open space that will necessarily remain because of the configuration of the block. The Sector Plan calls for a new building to help activate that central open space. The location of the new building is controlled by the placement of the existing buildings around that central open space as well as structural limitations. Any new building has to be built on an existing podium where column placement, the location and support capabilities of existing beams, the need to retain Metro bus service below the plaza, the practical location of elevator connections between the new building and the existing parking garage below and encouraging pedestrian flow to and through the site, are all factors. There also are Code limits as to the building location, particularly the fire access requirement that the main door to the building must be located within 50 feet of Old Georgetown Road. The Sector Plan concept of a "build-to line" along main streets also affects the design. Even more importantly, the value of including ground-floor retail, which works best when it includes space that is visible and close to main vehicle and pedestrian routes like Wisconsin Avenue, is also a factor. The proposed project seeks to address these and other driving forces. Cartoons and bubble drawings as proposed by Clark of other building locations ignore these factors as well as the requirement of a practical floor plate size which will be needed to adequately finance this project.

The plans have been revised to address the various site constraints and planning objectives. In response to those looking for highly visible open space along Wisconsin Avenue, the Plan now creates a large, open and flexible space fronting on Wisconsin Avenue to accommodate the flow of people and thus function as a "front door" for Metro Center. At the same time, we are proposing more green space within this front plaza to make it more inviting. The team is also reviewing the possibility of raising part of the building 30 feet to create even more public space. The open space along Wisconsin Avenue provides a clear and visual connection to the other adjacent open spaces on the site and provides an opportunity to accommodate temporary uses such as pop-up retail during holiday seasons. By "filling in the hole" that now makes the front portion of Metro Plaza completely unusable, the Plan also adds more useable open space. Moving the Metro escalator farther south also creates a better

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connection to the Metro, improves the functionality of this open space and creates a stronger pedestrian flow into and through the site.

The central open space portion of Metro Plaza (which needs to be located where it is for the reasons described above), has been completely redesigned to function as a "living room" for both the surrounding uses and all of Bethesda with a location that is buffered from the noise and traffic along the eastern side of the site. It provides a safe and comfortable flexible space for outdoor fitness, movies on the lawn, community events, concerts and other functions. It will have movable seating and a large lawn area that is adaptable and comfortable. Connecting this central portion of the Metro Center open space will be a retail promenade running east and west (connecting the Wisconsin Avenue open space to the interior central lawn and points farther to the west). This retail promenade will provide for additional retail opportunities to complement the Daily Grill, the new Starbucks on the plaza and other uses in the Hyatt Hotel.

One suggestion at the last DAP meeting was the possibility of doing a predictive heat map to see where pedestrians would travel in the space. Applicant looked into this but was advised that the exercise would be too hypothetical to be of much value given the anticipated changes at Metro Center including: the additional of a new building, enabling direct passage to and from the north (including the Metropolitan and Clark projects) where there currently is no passageway, the addition of an elevator and stairs at the central plaza, and changes to the bus bay. Nevertheless, in speaking with retail consultants including Streetsense (who currently occupies the old food court building), applicant is confident that the design changes, addition of retail and more active programming of the open space will greatly increase its use.

In response to the DAP comment, applicant has reached out to Chevy Chase Land Company to incorporate their central open space into a more cohesive design with that of 2 Bethesda Metro Center.

#### Massing

The architectural design of the Project will both enhance the pedestrian environment and surrounding public use space, and emphasize the urban nature of the Project. The massing and verticality of the building will emphasize the urban context of the Project, while façade treatments and architectural elements will provide an appropriate human-scale at the pedestrian level.

The proposed building massing has been strategically designed to help frame the Metro Plaza, in order to provide a well-defined and activated space. Specifically, the location of the existing buildings and the proposed building are designed to "surround" a central civic gathering space, as expressly called for in the Sector Plan. Additionally, the proposed building has been located on the north side of the main public open space, based on a series of computational environmental solar models studying how to preserve light and air for the open space.

Although the specific architecture has not been developed, the location and proposed massing of the building will add to the symbolic center of Bethesda. The building has been situated at the focal point from East West Highway, with visibility along Wisconsin Avenue as well. The formal nature and massing of the building will reinforce its role as the literal and

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symbolic center of Bethesda. To underscore the importance of this building and site, the massing, form and façade articulation will be designed with a vertical emphasis, which will set it apart from, and act as a complementary counter point to, the more horizontally-stepped adjacent buildings.

The building design will adhere to time tested notions of proportions, including an articulated base, middle, and iconic top. The architectural articulation of the base of the building will be sufficiently varied to break up the massing at pedestrian level. The ground floor will use both retail operations and architectural elements such as well-designed entries, materials, awnings, signage, plantings, and views into and from ground floor spaces, to create a visually inviting, active, and human-scaled building edge for the frontage on Old Georgetown Road and Wisconsin Avenue, and onto the primary public open spaces on the site.

The proposed massing differentiates the building's base from the tower above. Above the base, the building's tower is set back from the property line on all four sides. The placement of the tower meets the intent of the Guidelines by providing at least 30 feet of separation from adjacent buildings and 45 feet or more for a majority of the façades. Since the building edge is set-back 50 feet and more from the street, the building's full height may be expressed to the ground across the building's frontage to reinforce the street edge along Wisconsin Avenue and to express prominent corners or entryways into the site. Where a step-back is not provided, alternative treatments, such as modulation and articulation of the façade, using unique geometry and limiting the apparent face of the building, may be used to enhance the pedestrian environment at the building's ground level. Additionally, balconies or terraces, if provided, will be oriented towards the streets and public open spaces where possible.

Given the Property's prominent location at the terminus of a major view corridor along East-West Highway and Wisconsin Avenue, the top of the proposed building will be highly visible and serve as a beacon in downtown Bethesda. As encouraged by the Design Guidelines, the building design will sculpt the top of the building and incorporate potential architectural embellishments that will contribute to the Bethesda skyline. The top will house the primary amenities for building occupants (as well as mechanical penthouses). The architecture will incorporate these fundamental spaces (e.g. rooftop amenity areas and mechanical penthouses), while reflecting the prominence of the building.

All of these design elements will be further refined at the time of Site Plan. But the basic building massing and location is specifically designed to provide a signature tall building to "terminate major view corridors such as East-West Highway," as called for in the Design Guidelines.

#### Metro Connection

There have been many complaints over the years about the Metro bus level of the Metro Center project including its design, operation, lighting, connection to the plaza level and other factors. One of the major goals of the 4 BMC project is to improve it in all of these respects. Brookfield is working with WMATA to obtain their approval of various changes to be incorporated into the 4 BMC development. Some potential ideas are:

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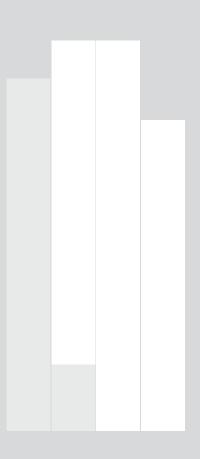
- Add an elevator at the Western end to provide better access for people west of the site.
- Add shuttle drop-off and improve the Kiss and Ride areas.
- Provide for two-way traffic for better pickup and drop-off.
- Expand bicycle parking and storage.
- Provide a new bus driver rest area.
- Reduce bicycle and pedestrian conflicts with buses and cars.
- Widen existing walkway and stairs leading to Woodmont Avenue.
- Reduce curb cuts and conflict points at Woodmont Avenue.
- Expand pedestrian area.
- Add seating and improve circulation.
- Add a lay-by and off-hours service zone.
- Enhance lighting.
- Develop a more formal vestibule area
- Provide for improved wayfinding.

Applicant will continue to work with WMATA and refine these concepts in connection with its future Site Plan.

#### **Programming**

In addition to major physical improvements to the central open spaces at the project to make them more programmable, Brookfield has engaged its affiliate, Arts Brookfield, to actively program the type of events suitable for these spaces - in particular, the central lawn and the "arts zone". This includes such things as family movies, arts events, fitness activities, concerts and other such functions in a safe, children friendly setting away from an busy highway (the highway noise level closer to Wisconsin Avenue substantially exceeds the 65 decibel maximum set for outdoor activities use but the central lawn area meets those standards). All of these activities will be operated by Arts Brookfield and will be free to the public without any public funding. There will also be space for outdoor dining, not only for the Daily Grill and Starbucks, but other anticipated restaurants to serve area workers and residents alike.

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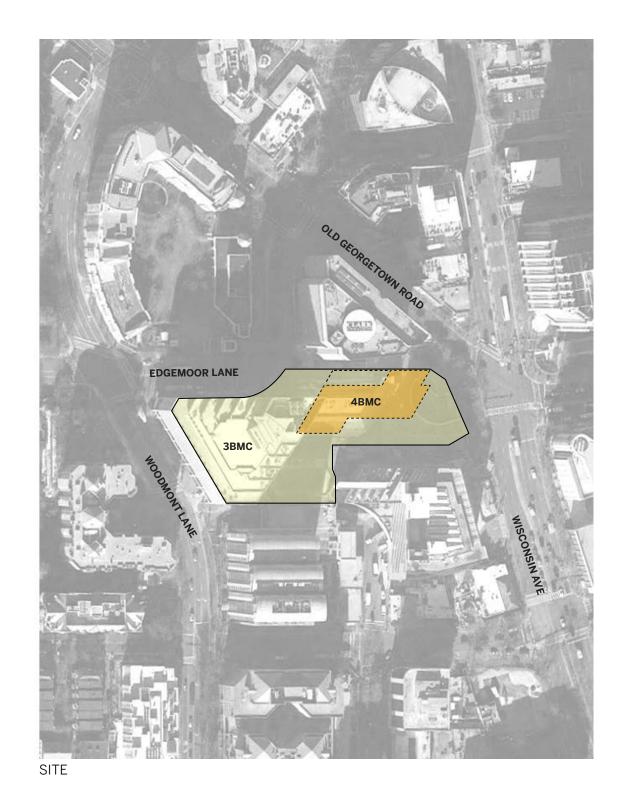


4BMC DAP SUBMISSION

JUNE 13, 2018

Brookfield







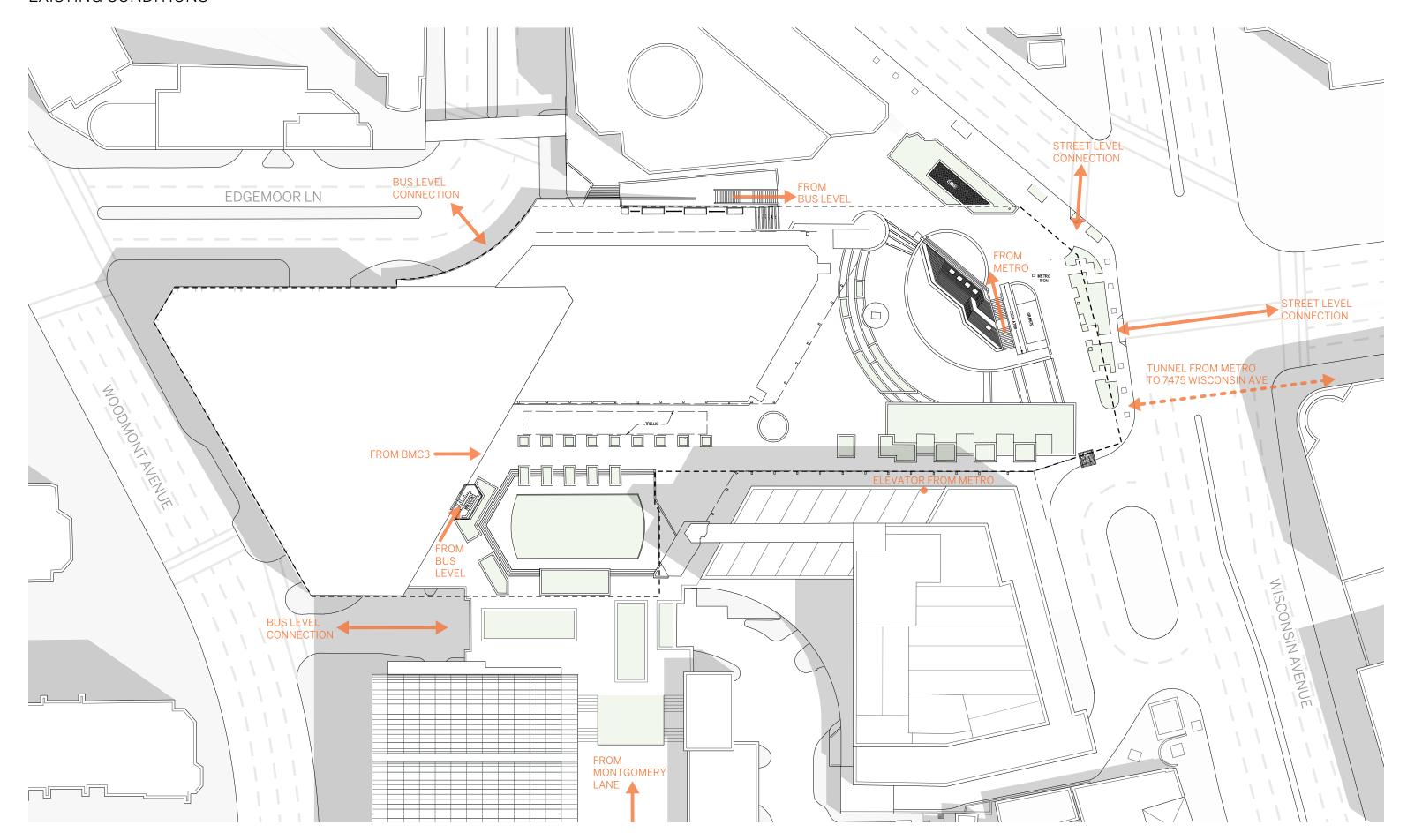


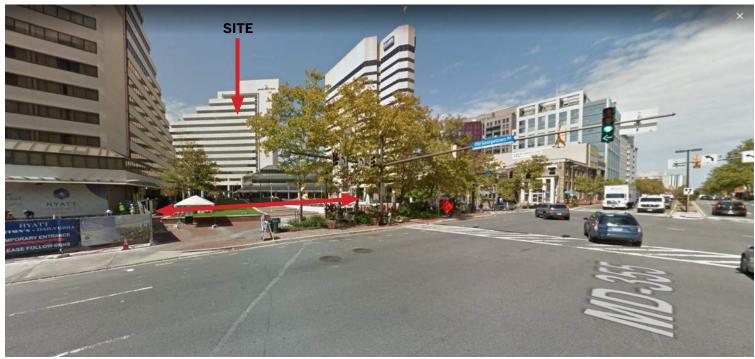






# **EXISTING CONDITIONS**





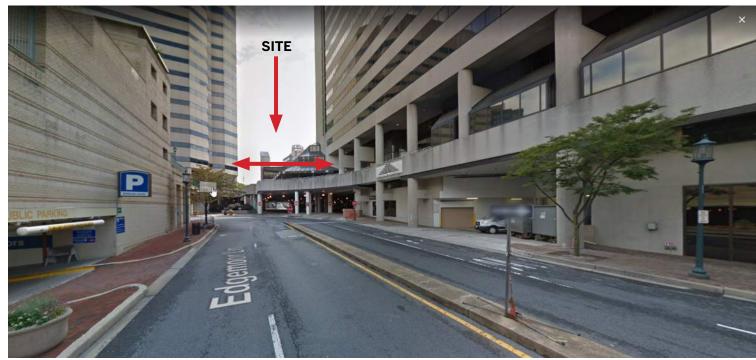
WISCONSIN AVE LOOKING NORTH



WISCONSIN AVE LOOKING SOUTH

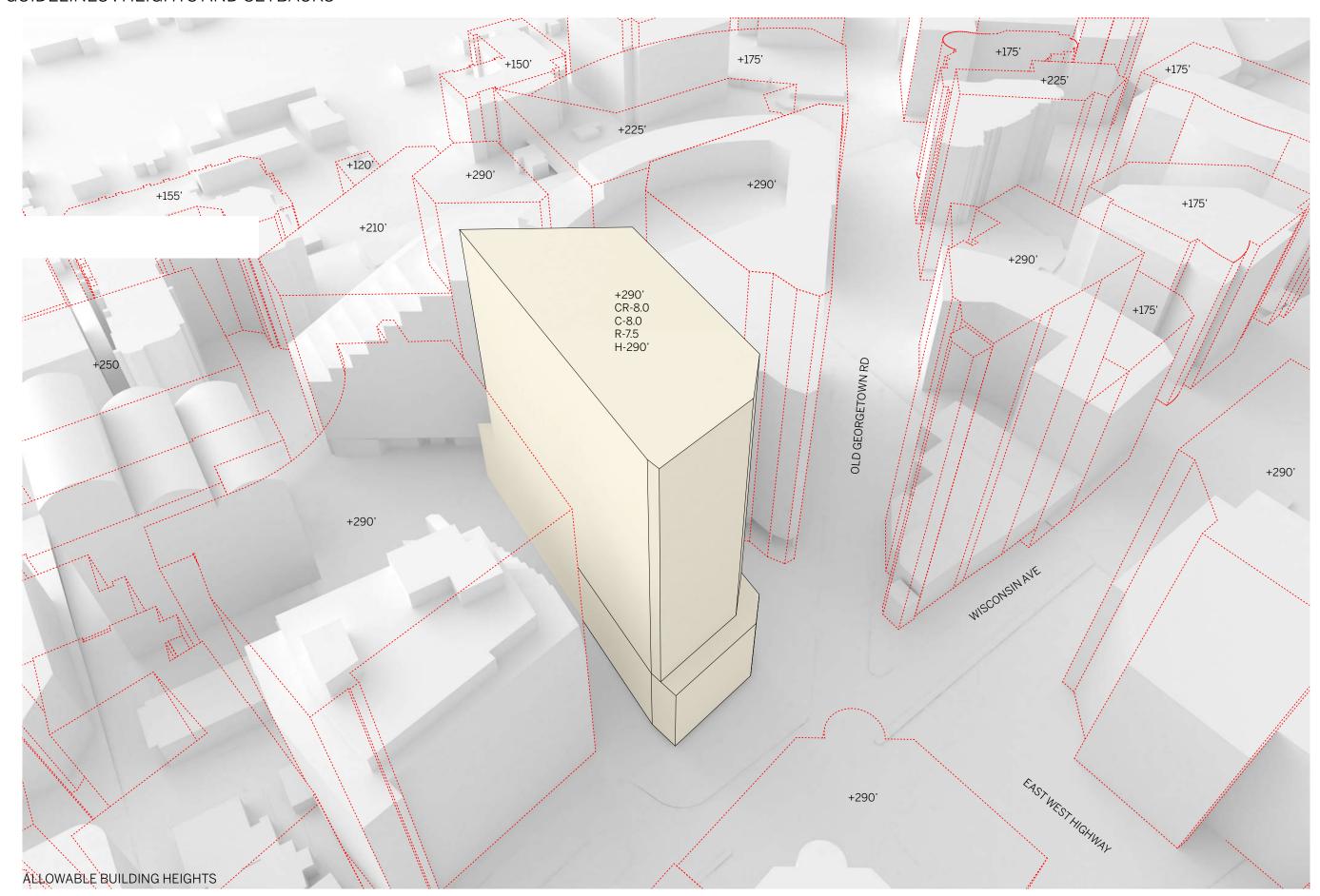


EAST WEST HIGHWAY LOOKING WEST

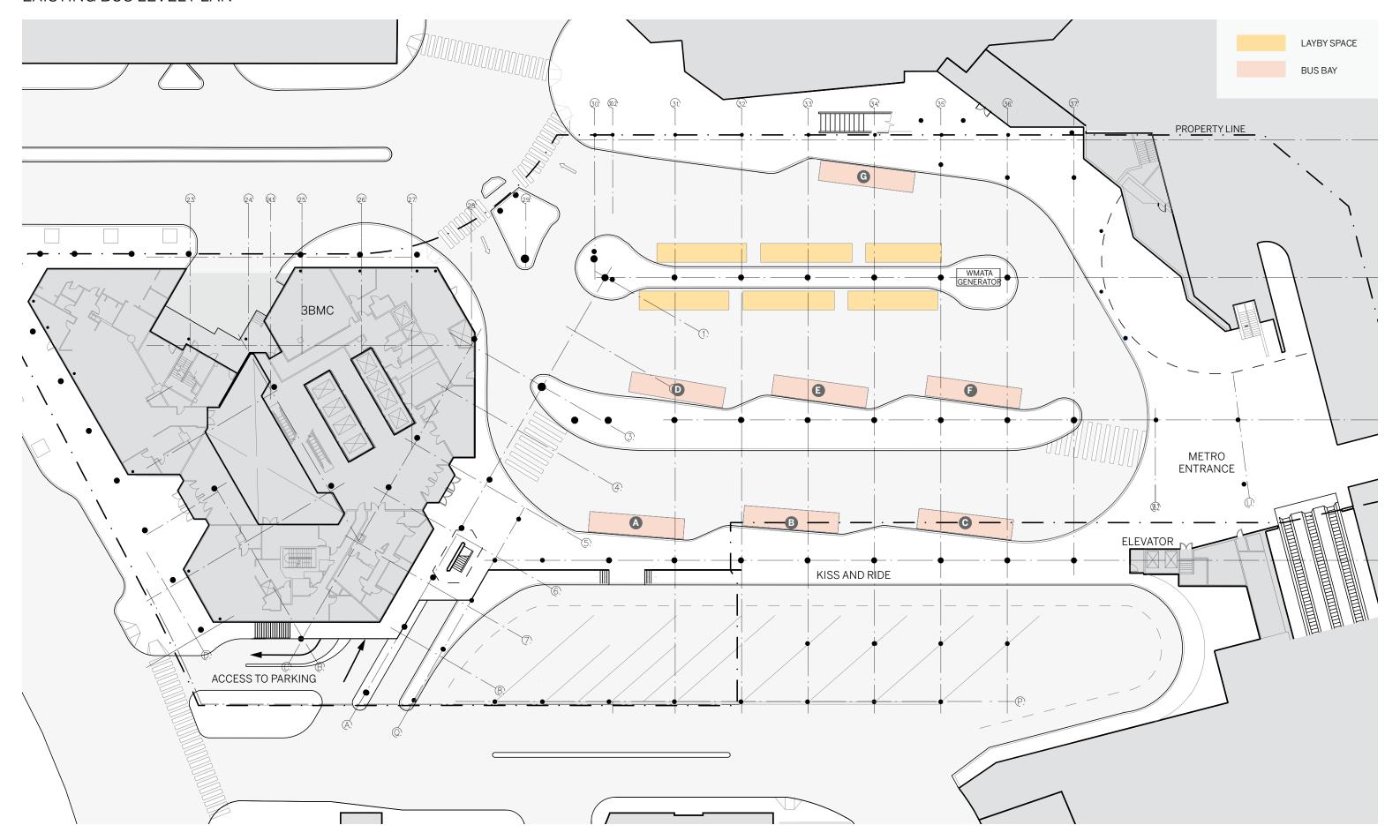


EDGEMOOR LANE LOOKING EAST

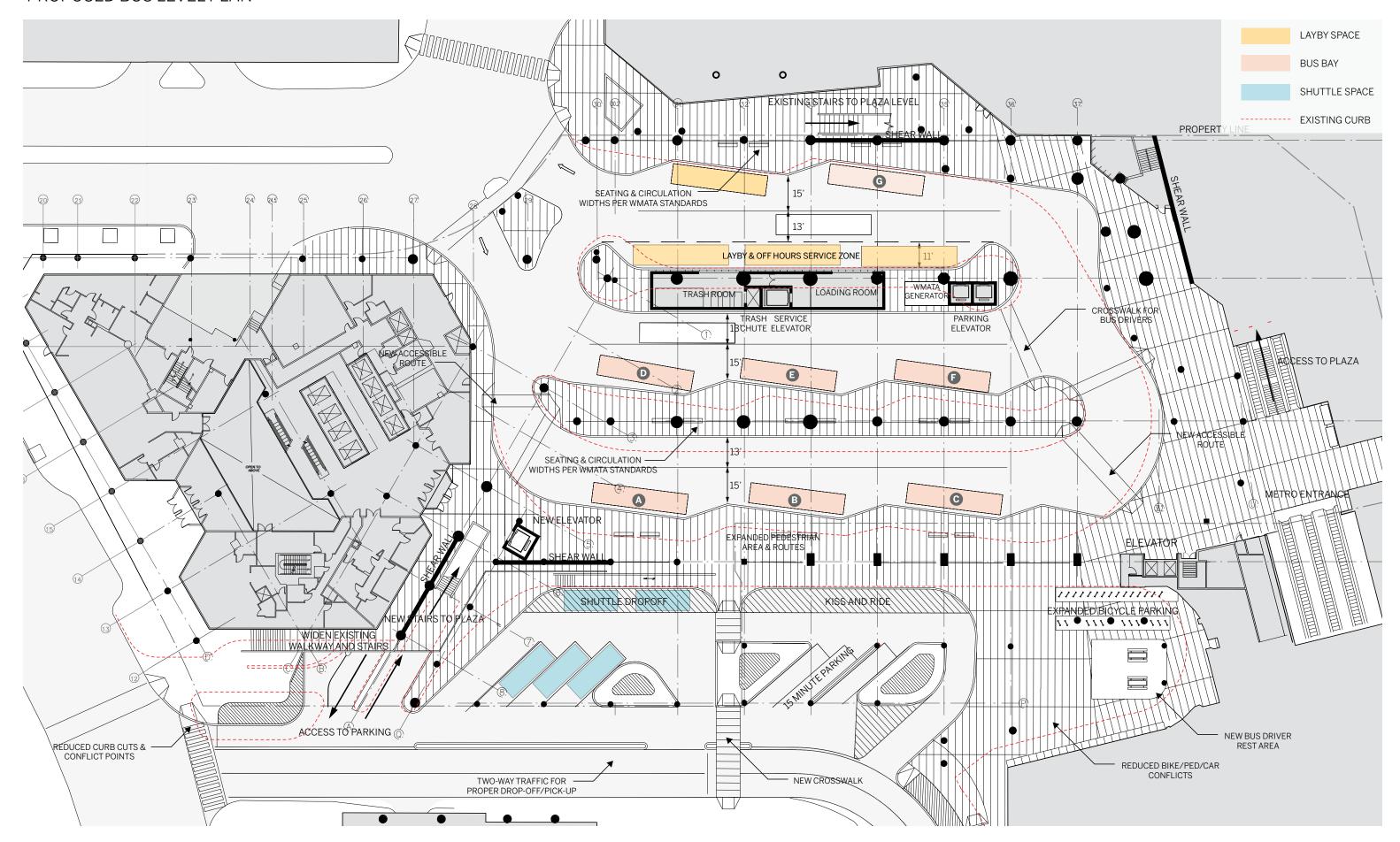
# DESIGN GUIDELINES: HEIGHTS AND SETBACKS

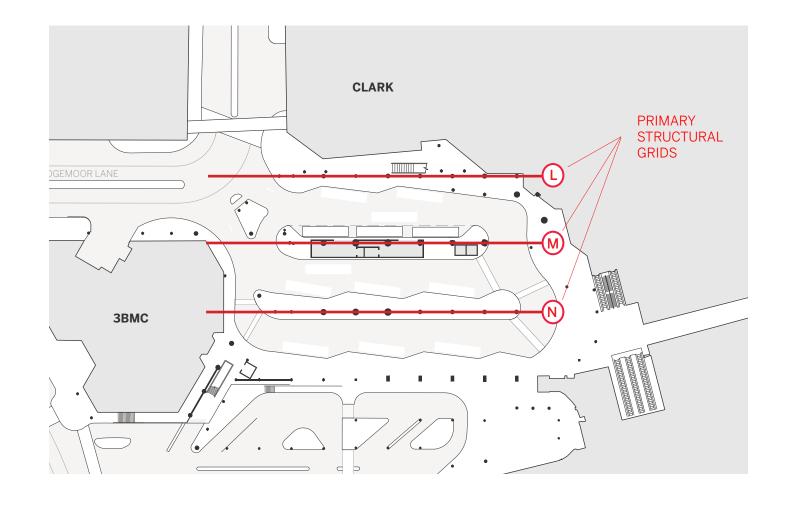


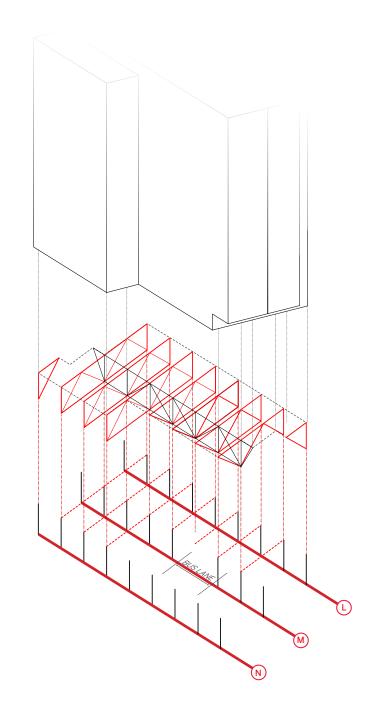
# EXISTING BUS LEVEL PLAN



## PROPOSED BUS LEVEL PLAN







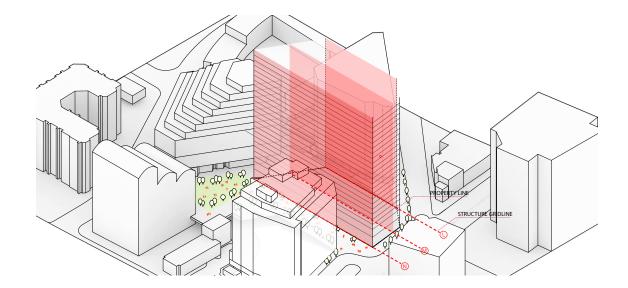
PROPOSED BUS LEVEL PLAN WITH PRIMARY STRUCTURAL GRID

STRUCTURAL TRANSFER DIAGRAM

## FORM DEVELOPMENT DIAGRAMS

#### 1. STRUCTURAL ALIGNMENT

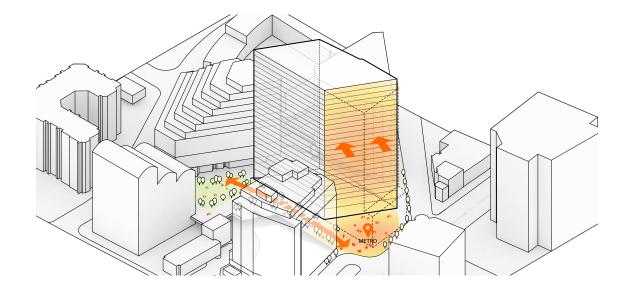
The existing structure at Bethesda Metro Center is composed of 3 primary gridlines (M, N and P). The proposed massing and building footprint location are defined by the limits of this structure and the bus level drive aisles below.





#### 2. BREAK DOWN THE MASS

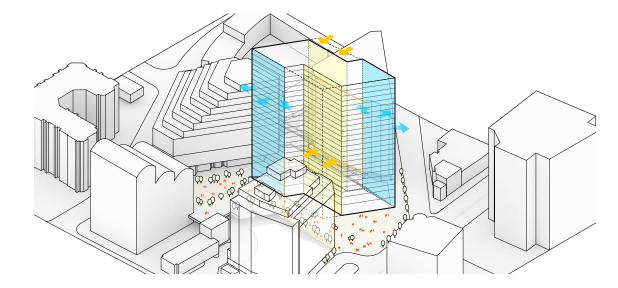
In response to the Metro access and Plaza the building massing pushes back, creating an open and active front door for Bethesda.





#### 3. SHAPE THE TOWER

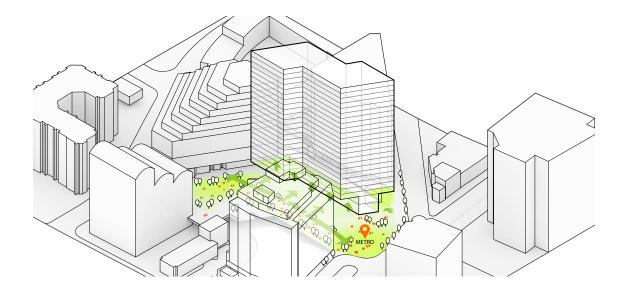
The building form steps back on the Northwest and Southeast giving relief to the main public space at the metro entrance and buildings to the North. The Northwest and Southwest corners push out, engaging the public realm.





### 4. ESTABLISH THE STREET

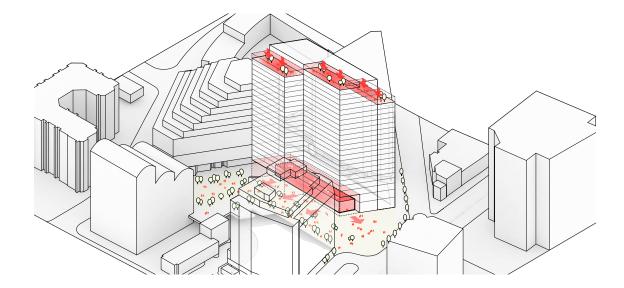
The ground floor and podium are sculpted to create intuitive and activated connection to central spaces of the site. Additionally the lower levels respond and activate the Metro Plaza and Wisconsin Ave frontage.





#### 5. AMENITIES

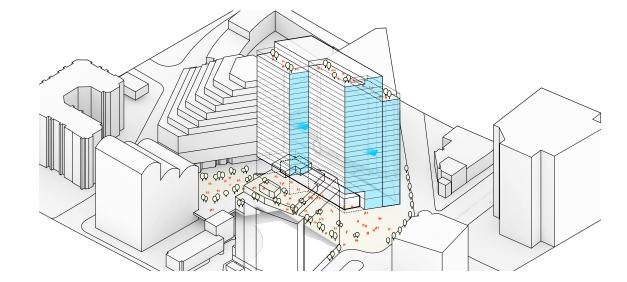
The building amenities interact with the public spaces, to create a network of uses that enrich the whole development.



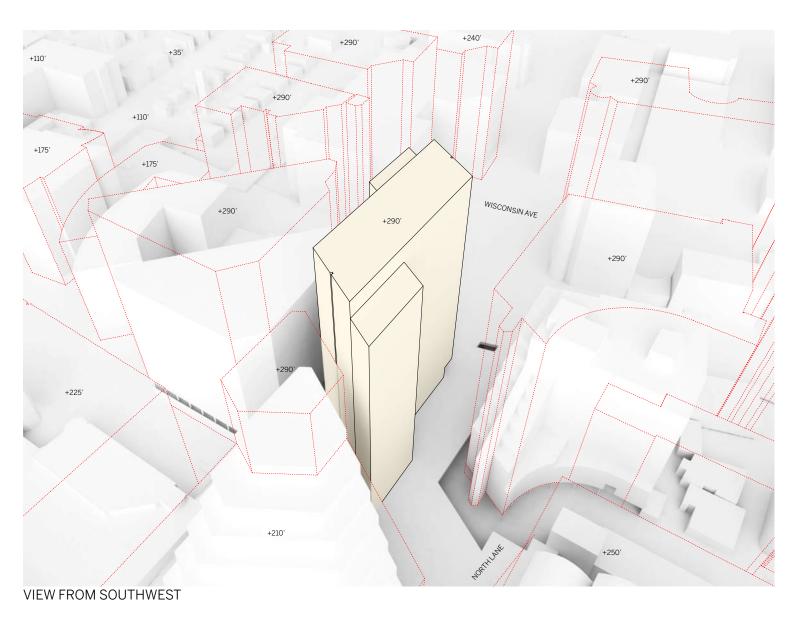


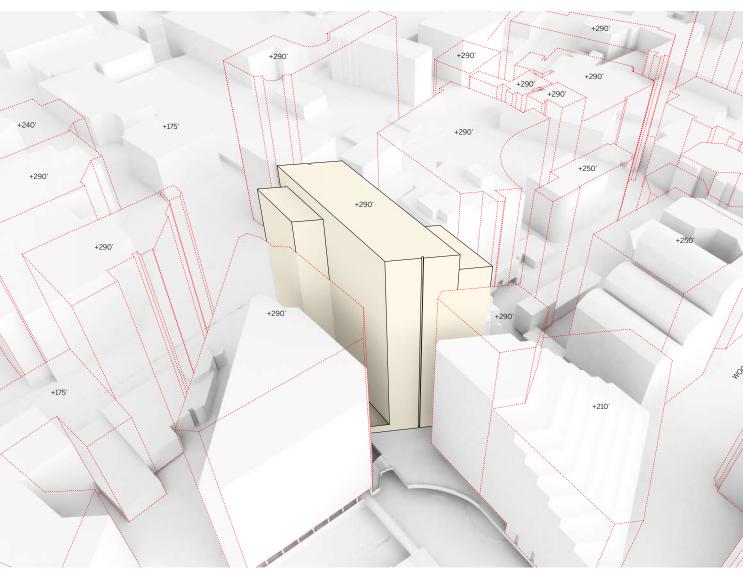
### 6. KEY FACADES

Key Façades are pushed forward to capture views and to create hierarchy and proportion in the massing. The Eastern forms also step in plan to help funnel people into the site and to open view corridors.



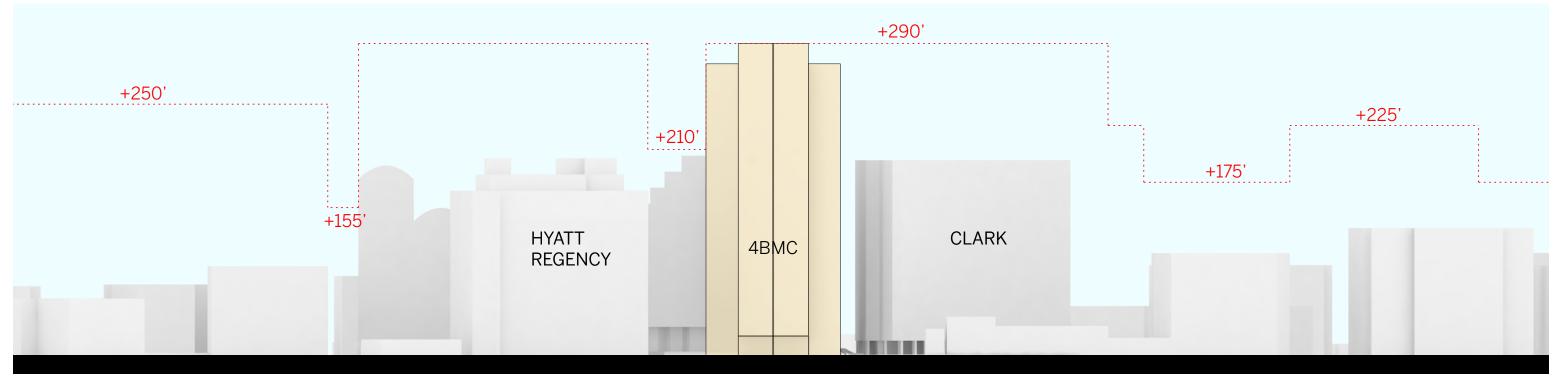




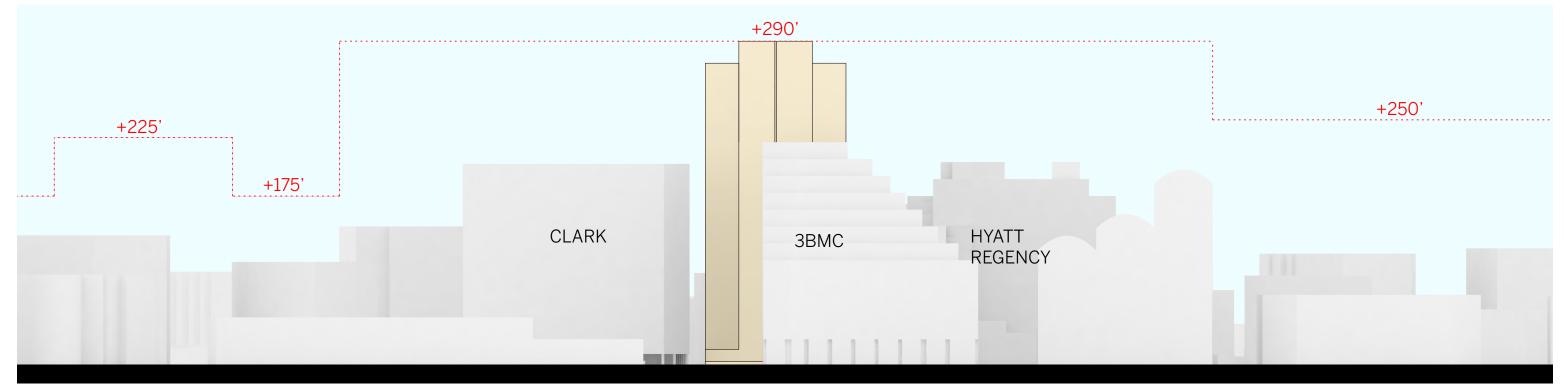


VIEW FROM NORTHWEST

© SOM 2018 11



WISCONSIN AVENUE - LOOKING WEST



WOODMONT AVE - LOOKING EAST

### 2.4.8 Tower: "Menu" of Methods to Reduce Bulk

Intent: Downtown Bethesda is an important location in Montgomery County for increased building heights to accommodate future growth. However, collectively, buildings at taller heights can be an imposing presence on the public realm by casting large shadows, limiting sky views and creating an uncomfortable scale for pedestrians.

#### A. Limit Tower Floor Plate

Reduced tower floor plates limit shadows on the public realm and allow access to sky view while also improving the quality of the building's indoor environment.



#### B. Use Unique Geometry

Varied geometry adds visual interest and helps to reduce the perceived bulk of a building's upper floors. Angled and curved facades allow a building to be viewed dynamically from different vantage points. They can enhance privacy between towers in close proximity by directing views away from nearby windows.





#### C. Vary Tower Heights

Whether creating a large development with several towers, or an infill development between multiple existing towers, variation in building height can reduce the imposing massing of several large structures built adjacent to each other.





There are several ways to reduce the actual bulk of a building's upper floors or to creatively reduce the perceived bulk of the building. Below is a menu of design techniques that can be used to sculpt building towers and achieve a varied skyline responsive to human scale. Every project is not required to apply every method; however, several should be used in combination to best meet the guideline intent.

#### D. Modulate and Articulate Facades

Techniques to break up large facades and reduce perceived building bulk include shifts in massing to allow for upper floor terraces, green roofs and balconies; changes in facade planes; and varied fins, frames and mullions to add depth to glass facades.





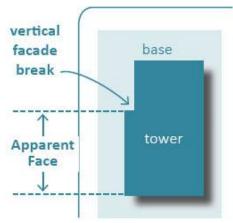
#### E. Vary Tower Placement and Orientation

Similar to variation in tower height, variation in tower placement and orientation can increase perceived separation between towers, reduce the perceived imposing massing of several adjacent towers and increase privacy by orienting views in different directions.



#### F. Limit Apparent Face

The apparent face is the length of a facade plane that is unbroken by vertical changes in depth. Limiting this length reduces the perceived bulk of a long building facade.





# TOWER TOP DESIGN



EAST WEST HIGHWAY LOOKING WEST

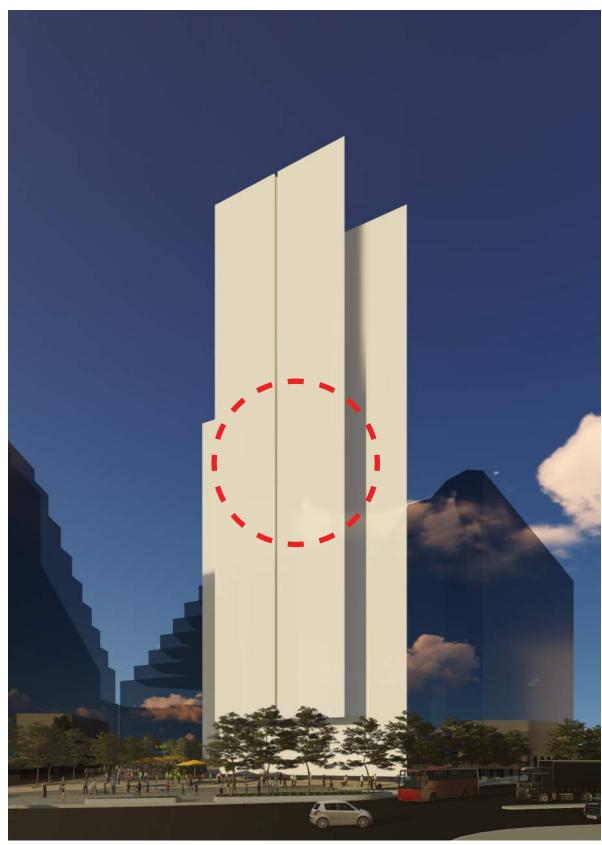












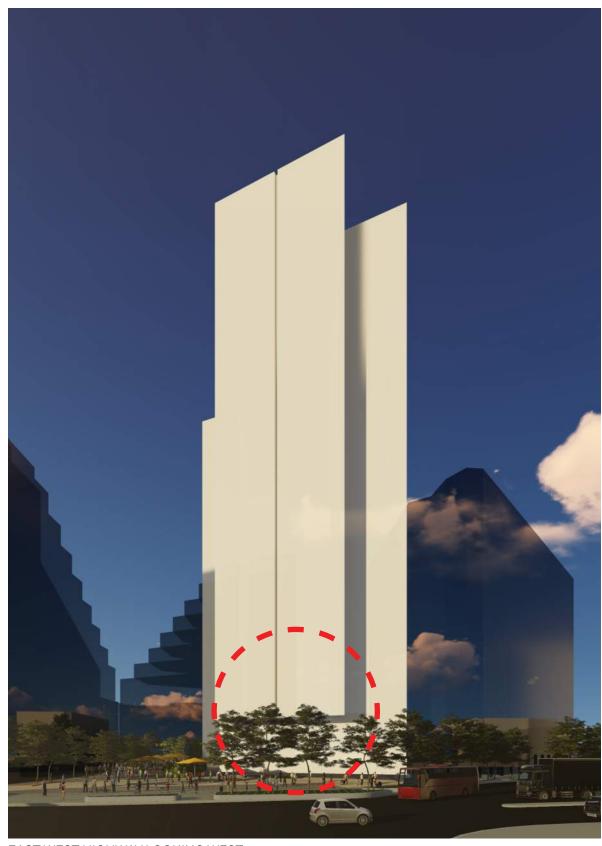
EAST WEST HIGHWAY LOOKING WEST





BALCONIES AND MASSING





EAST WEST HIGHWAY LOOKING WEST

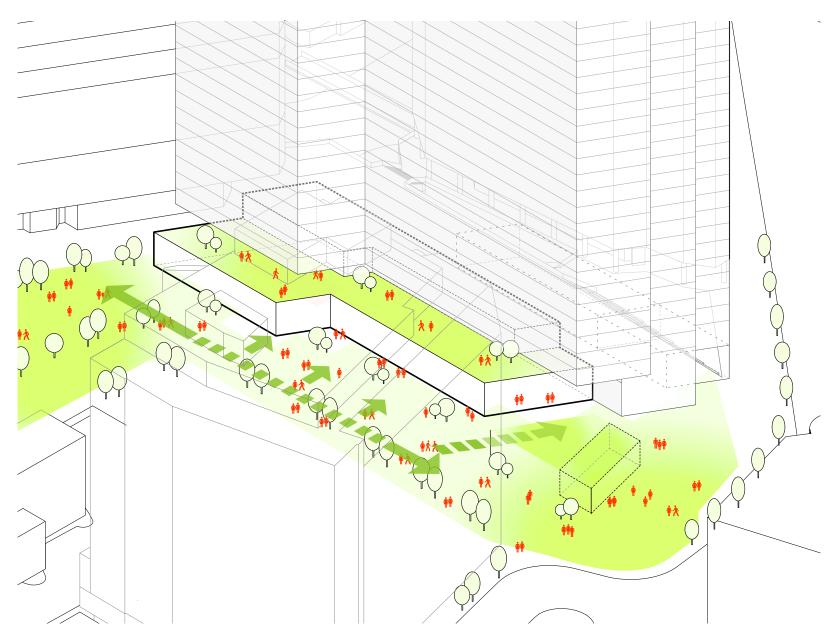












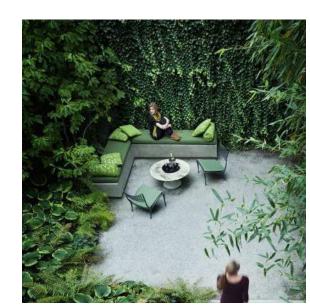
A Village of Green Space

Elevated just above the ground plain, the building amenities cascade out onto private terraces overlooking the newly re-imagined central lawn and promenade.

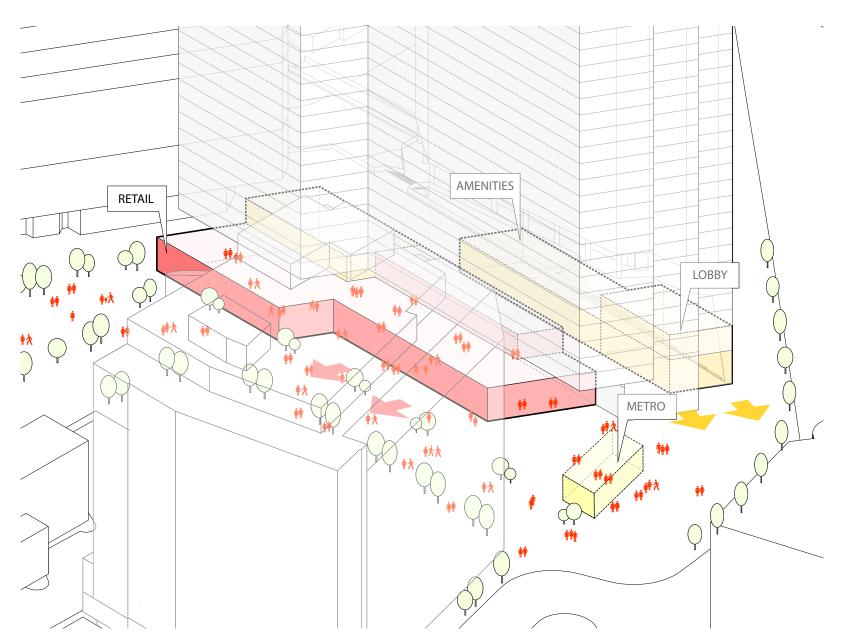








Green Space Reference





The ground floor and podium are sculpted to create intuitive and activated connection to central spaces of the site. Additionally the lower levels respond and activate the Metro Plaza and Wisconsin Ave frontage.



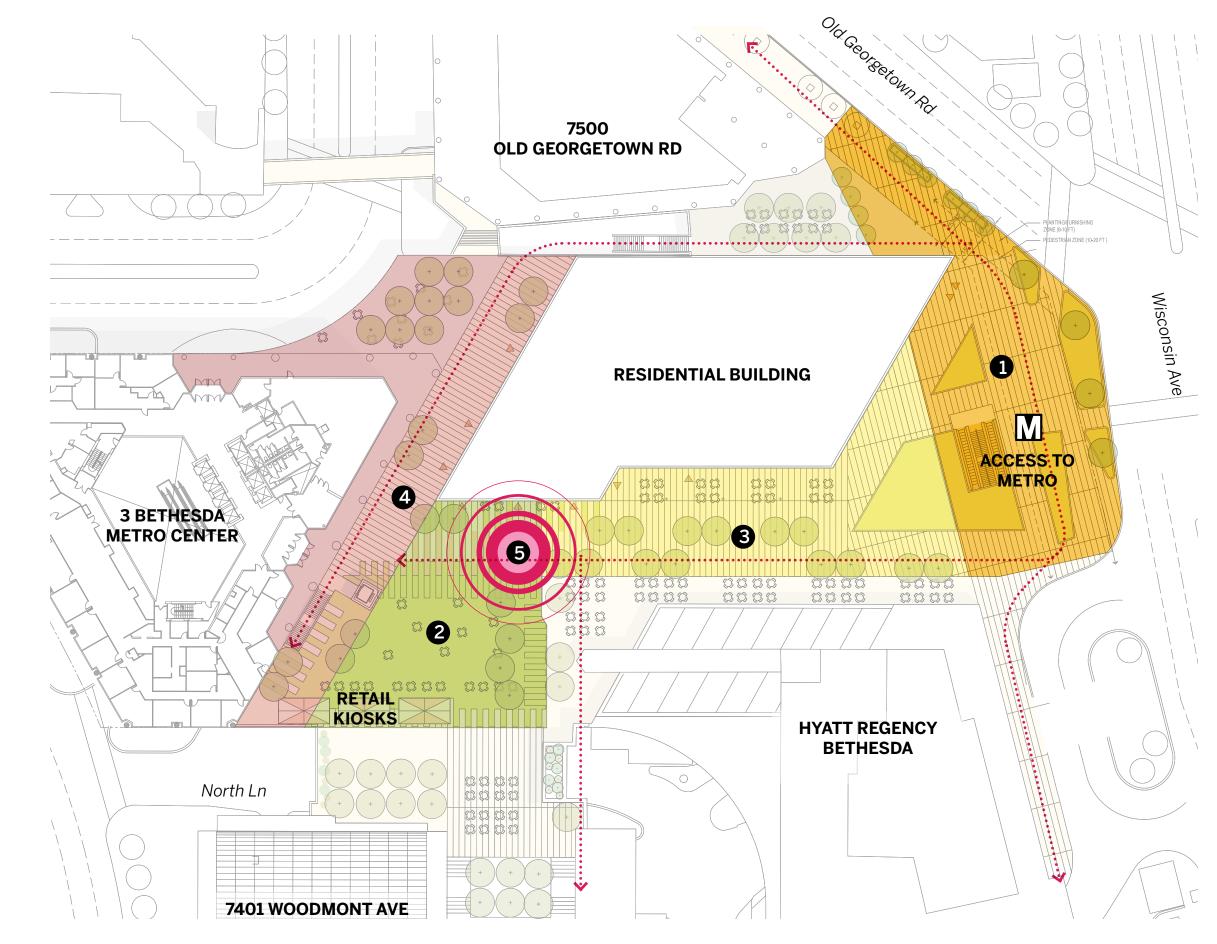






Retail Reference

- 1 THE PLAZA
- 2 CENTRAL LAWN
- 3 THE PROMENADE
- 4 THE GALLERY
- **5** ARTS BROOKFIELD ZONE

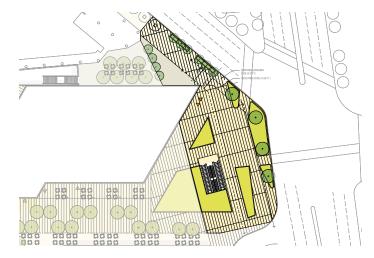


M Access to Transit

Pedestrian Circulation

### THE PLAZA

Located along the redevelopment area's Wisconsin Avenue frontage. The Wisconsin Plaza will be designed as an open & flexible space that will accommodate multiple flows of people. The plaza will provide clear visual connections to the adjacent open spaces to encourage visitors and users to meander further into the site.





A Welcoming, Open and Flexible Plaza David H. Koch Plaza, NY



Featuring a New Subway Entrance Seamlessly Integrated with the Landscape Dilworth Plaza, Philadelphia, PA



Where Multiple Flows of People Converge Bailey Plaza, Ithaca, NY



And Potential Temporary Uses Weekend Farmers Market

### THE PROMENADE

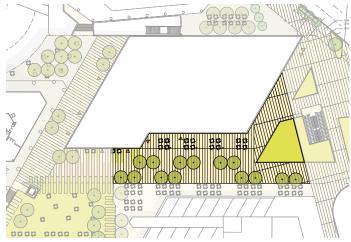
The Retail Promenade connects the Wisconsin Avenue plaza to the interior Central Lawn. The proposed design of The Promenade envisions a unified public space that works both for pedestrians passing through and as a destination in itself. The Retail Promenade will be lined by active ground floor uses. The Retail Promenade design will incorporate lighting, paving, seating, and landscaping that will be designed as part of an integrated experience.



A Well Proportioned Promenade Bethesda Row, Bethesda MD (55')



Outdoor Seating and Landscaped Terraces





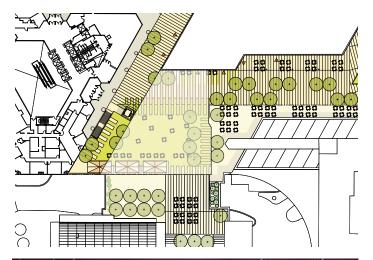
Featuring Active, Visible and Accessible Ground-floor Uses



A Clear, Intuitive Connection to Inner-block Spaces The Avenue, Washington D.C.

### **CENTRAL LAWN**

The Lawn is envisioned as a flexible, inviting green space. This unprogrammed space will be scheduled with "popup" programs and events potentially including outdoor fitness programs (e.g. yoga), "movies on the lawn", community events, and concerts. Moveable seating will be added to encourage visitors to interact within the space, creating a more flexible and dynamic space.





A Flexible Space Programed with Temporary Events and Installations



Featuring Art Installations to Create Visual Interest and Draw Visitors



Activated with Retail Kiosks Industry City, Brooklyn



Transforming the Lawn into a Destination The Piazza at Schmidt's, Philadelphia PA

### THE GALLERY

The Gallery will serve as an intimate outdoor passage that provides a north-south

pedestrian link in the heart of downtown Bethesda. It will be designed to facilitate informal outdoor gatherings that will serve as both a place for employees, residents and visitors to sit and relax.





A Linking Space SUNY Simons Center, Stony Brook NY



Featuring Outdoor Seating and Permanent Art 888 Brannan St, San Francisco CA

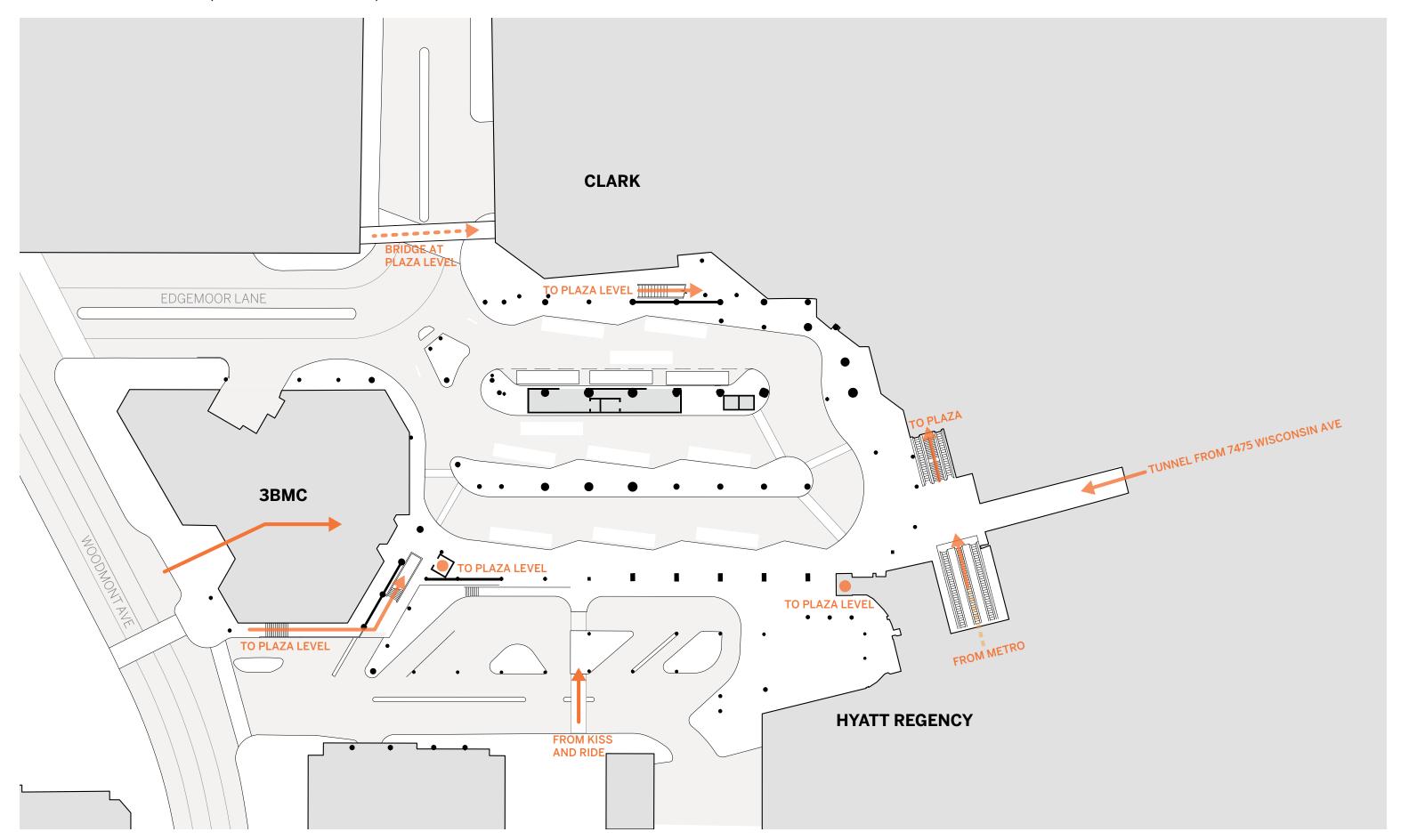


A Place for Informal Gatherings Village of Yorkville Park, Toronto

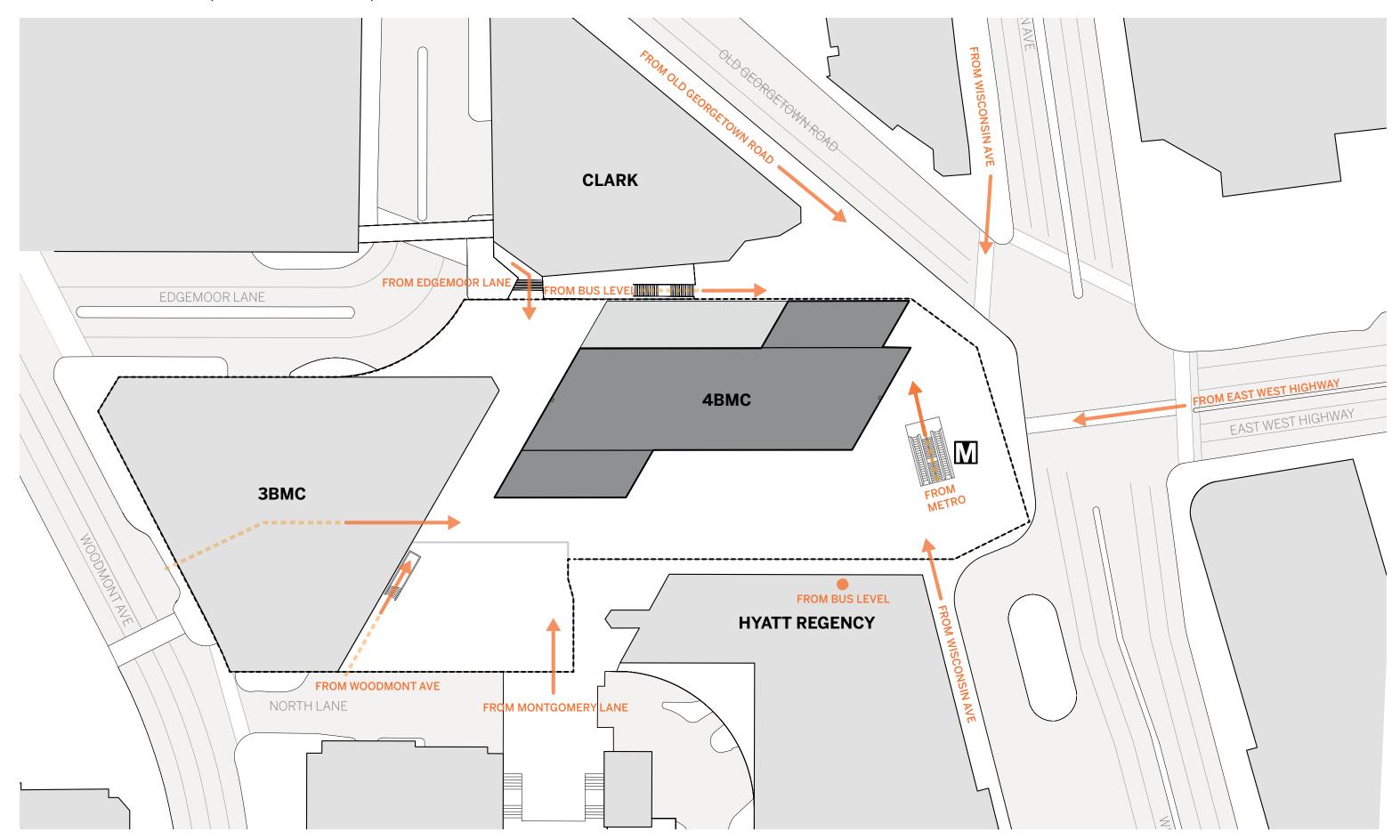


For both Employees and Visitors SUNY Simons Center, Stony Brook NY

# CONNECTIONS TO SITE (FROM LOWER LEVEL)



# CONNECTIONS TO SITE (FROM PLAZA LEVEL)



# 2.4.6 Tower: Separation Distance

Intent: To allow access to light and air, limit the impact of shadows on the public realm and reduce the extent of large blank walls as new buildings develop at or near the property line.

### **Guidelines:**

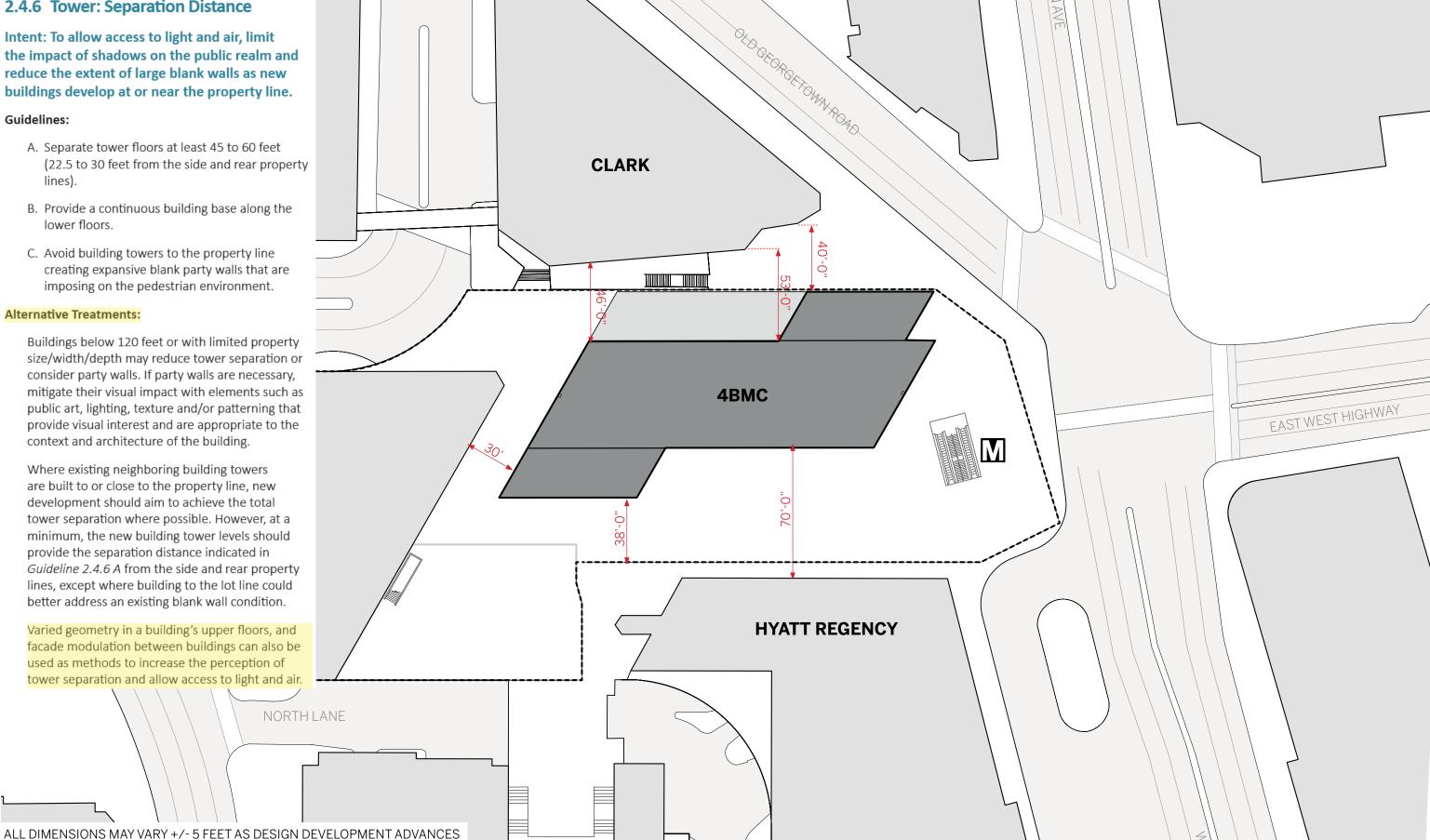
- A. Separate tower floors at least 45 to 60 feet (22.5 to 30 feet from the side and rear property
- B. Provide a continuous building base along the lower floors.
- C. Avoid building towers to the property line creating expansive blank party walls that are imposing on the pedestrian environment.

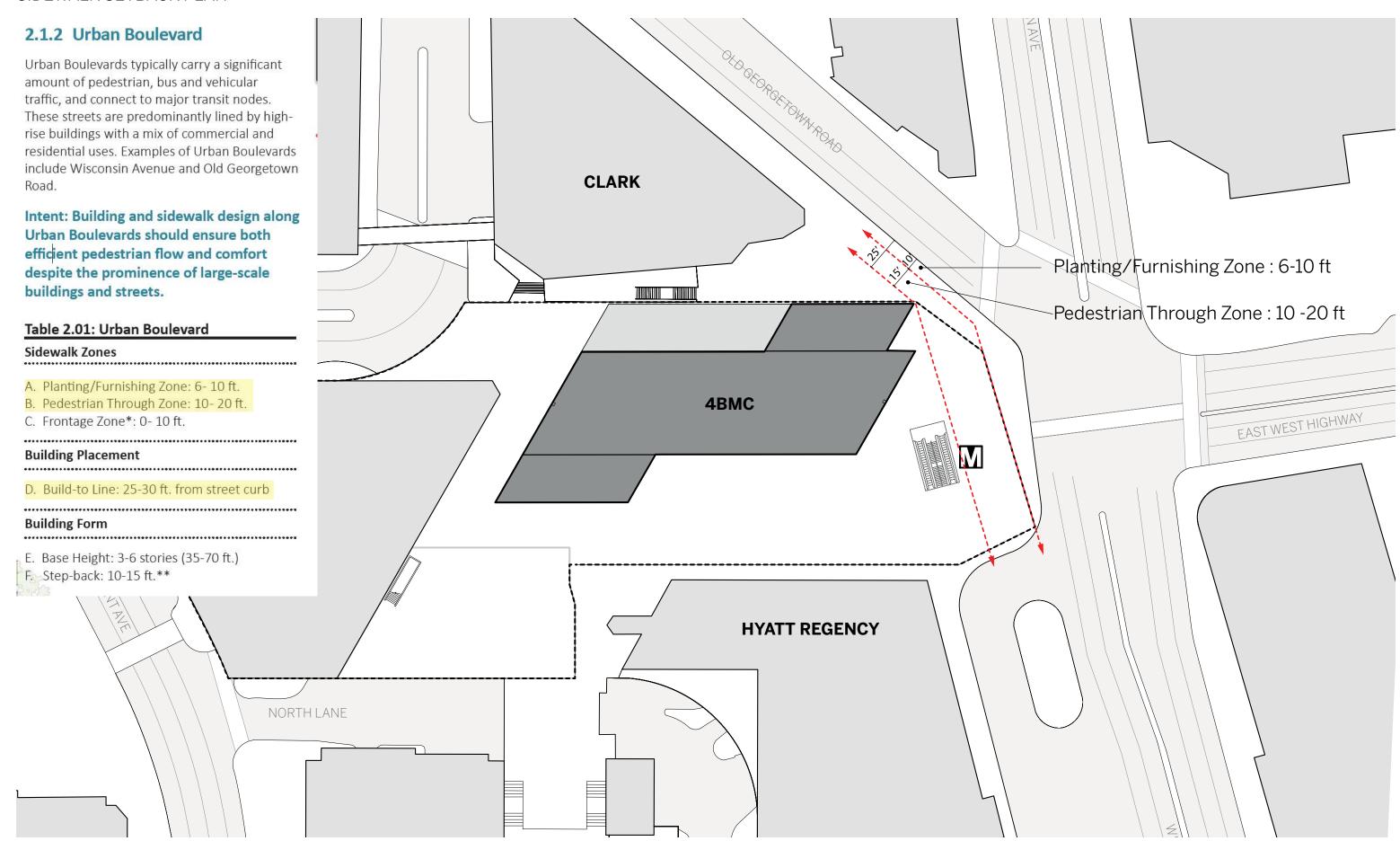
#### Alternative Treatments:

Buildings below 120 feet or with limited property size/width/depth may reduce tower separation or consider party walls. If party walls are necessary, mitigate their visual impact with elements such as public art, lighting, texture and/or patterning that provide visual interest and are appropriate to the context and architecture of the building.

Where existing neighboring building towers are built to or close to the property line, new development should aim to achieve the total tower separation where possible. However, at a minimum, the new building tower levels should provide the separation distance indicated in Guideline 2.4.6 A from the side and rear property lines, except where building to the lot line could better address an existing blank wall condition.

Varied geometry in a building's upper floors, and facade modulation between buildings can also be used as methods to increase the perception of tower separation and allow access to light and air.





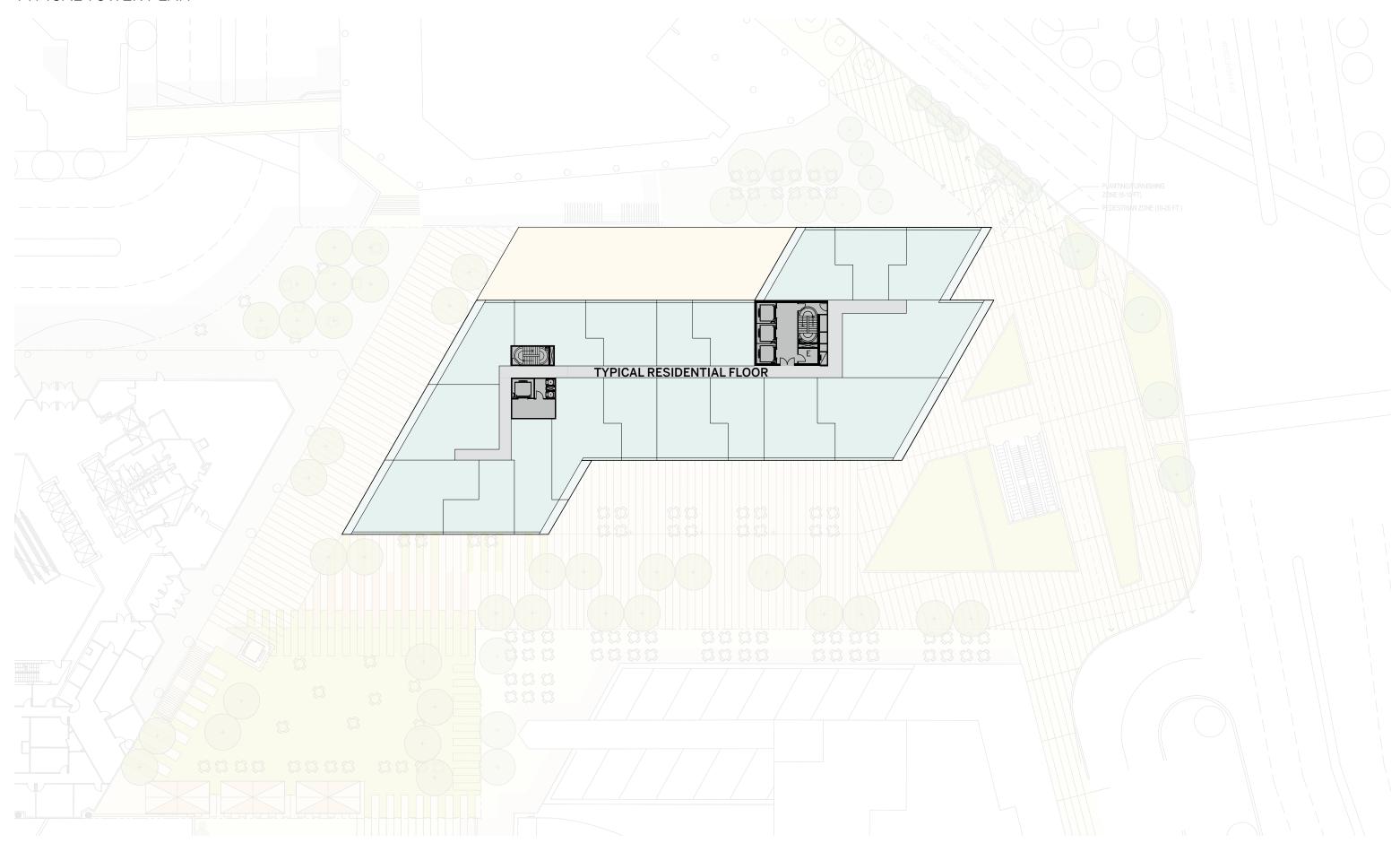
## GROUND LEVEL PLAN

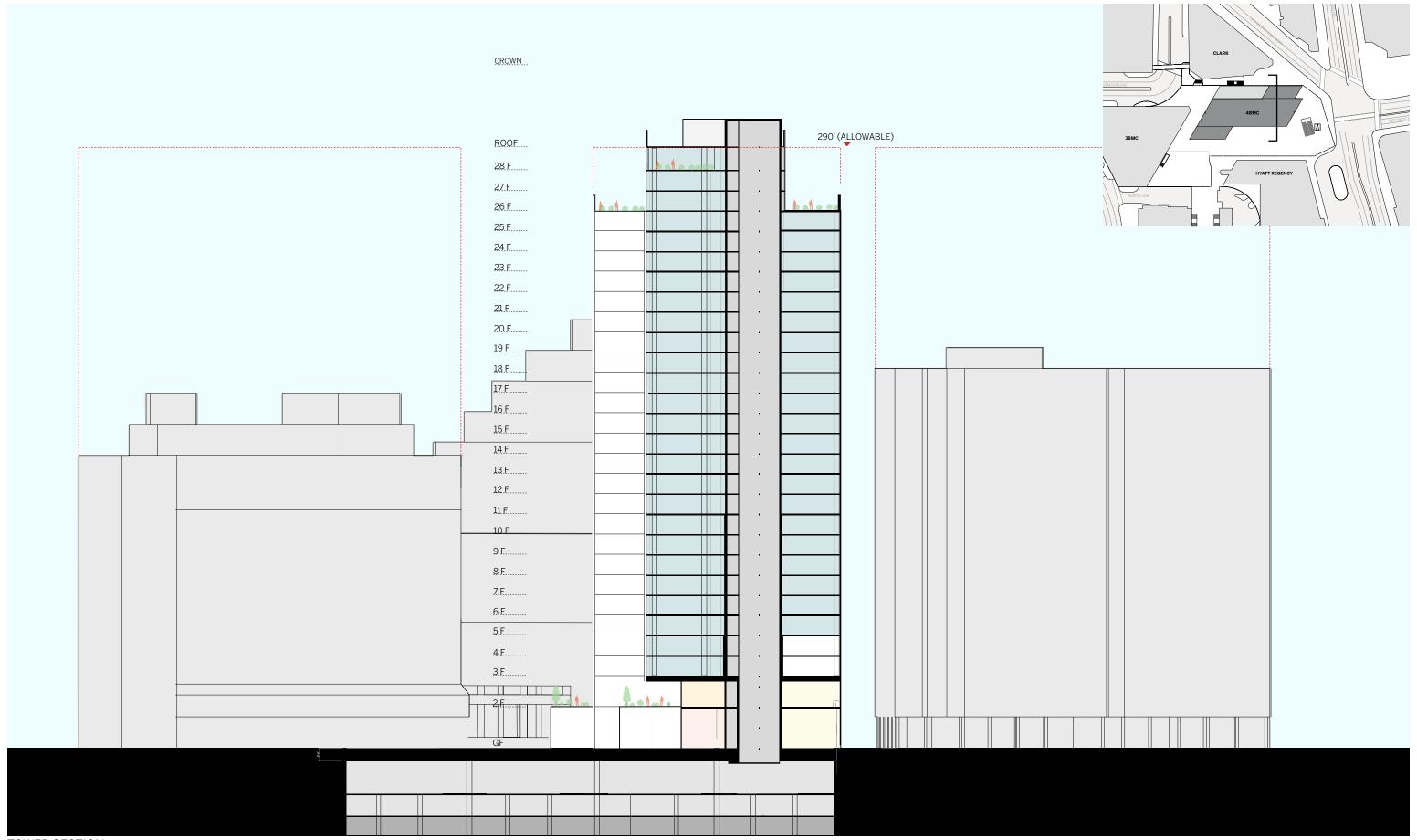


# ROOF PLAN



# TYPICAL TOWER PLAN

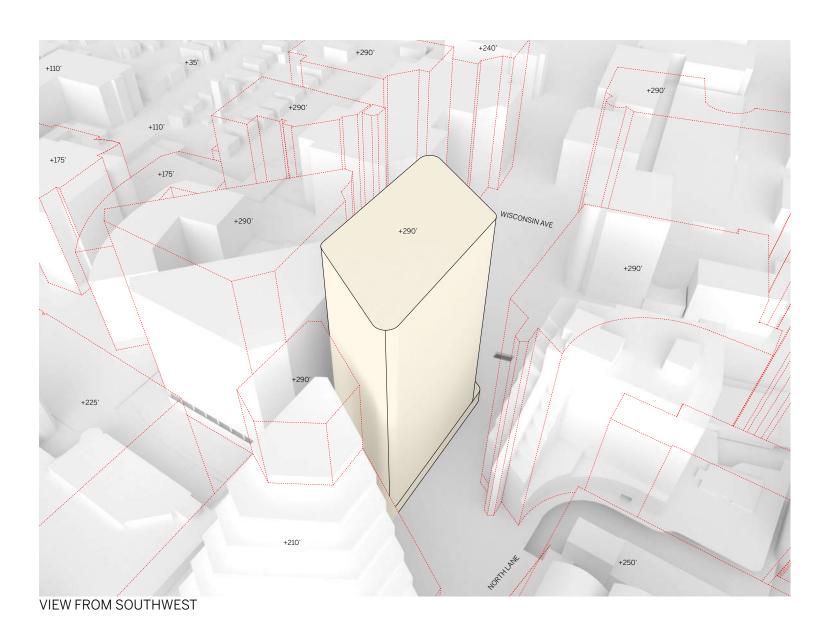


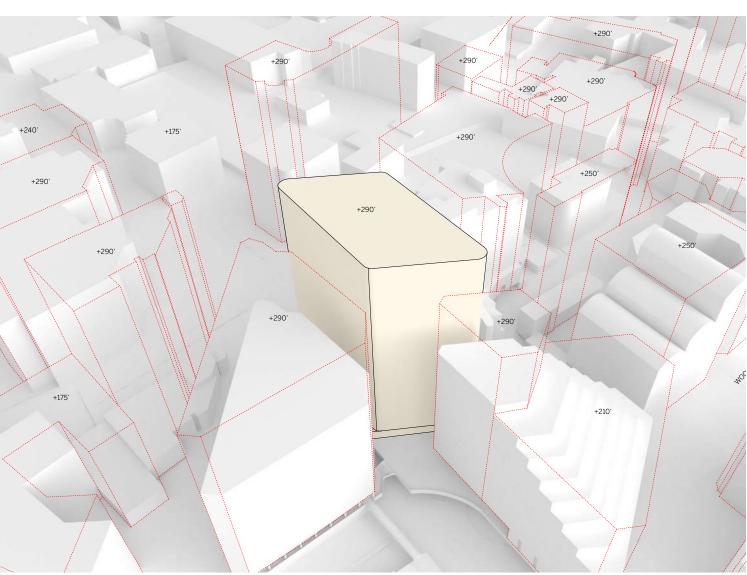


TOWER SECTION

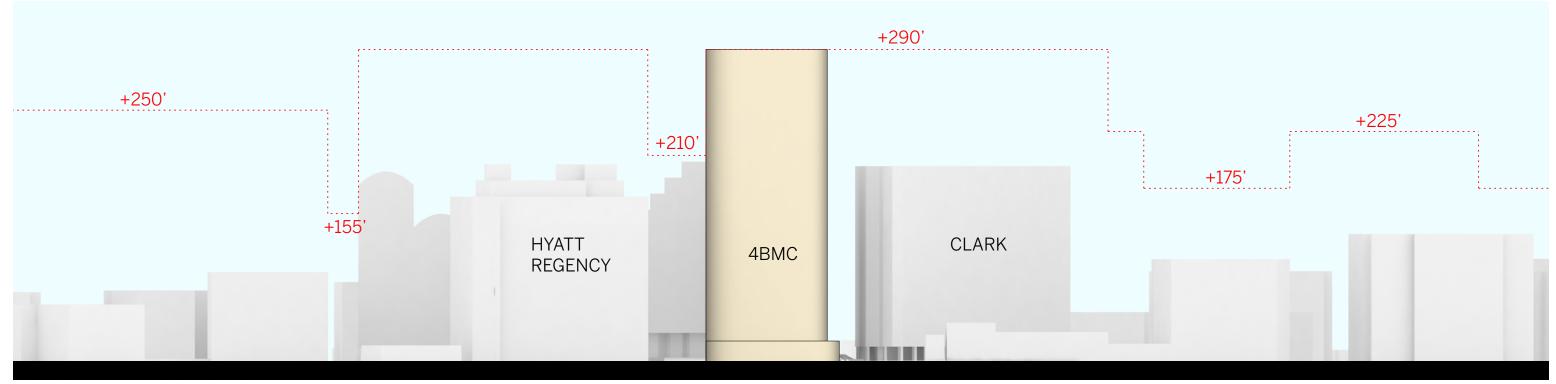
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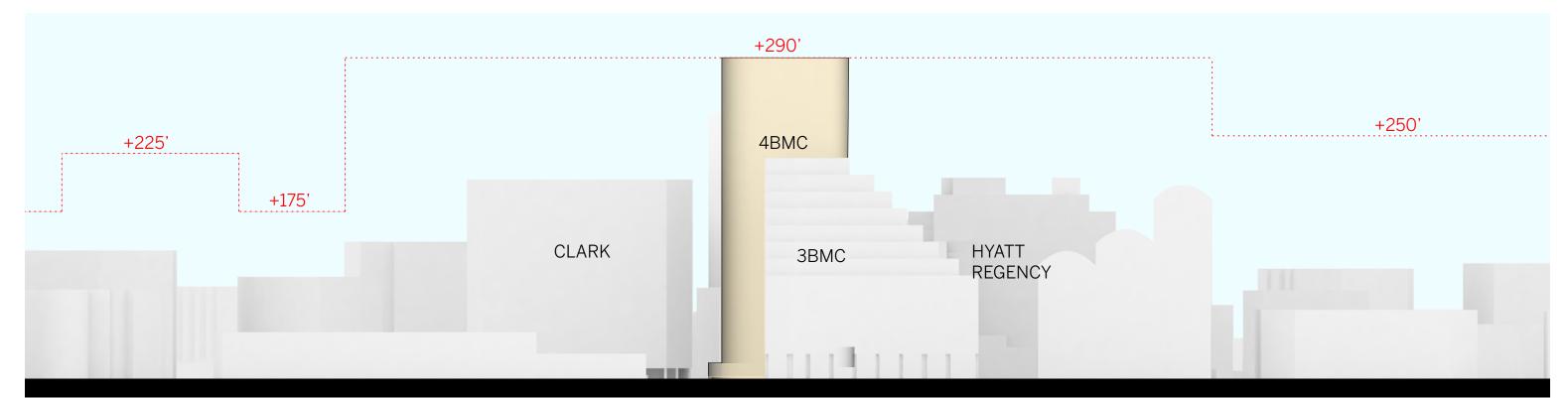




VIEW FROM NORTHWEST

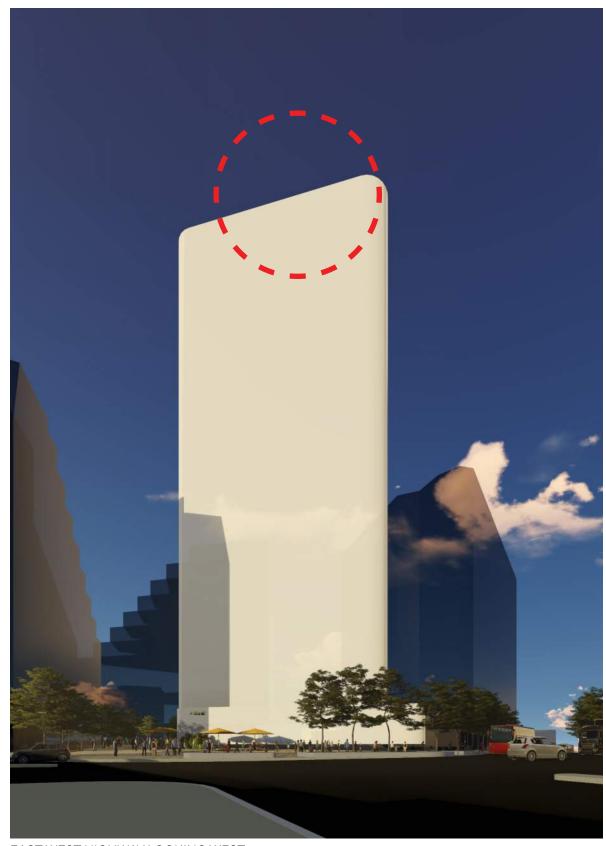


WISCONSIN AVENUE - LOOKING WEST



WOODMONT AVE - LOOKING EAST

# TOWER TOP DESIGN



EAST WEST HIGHWAY LOOKING WEST

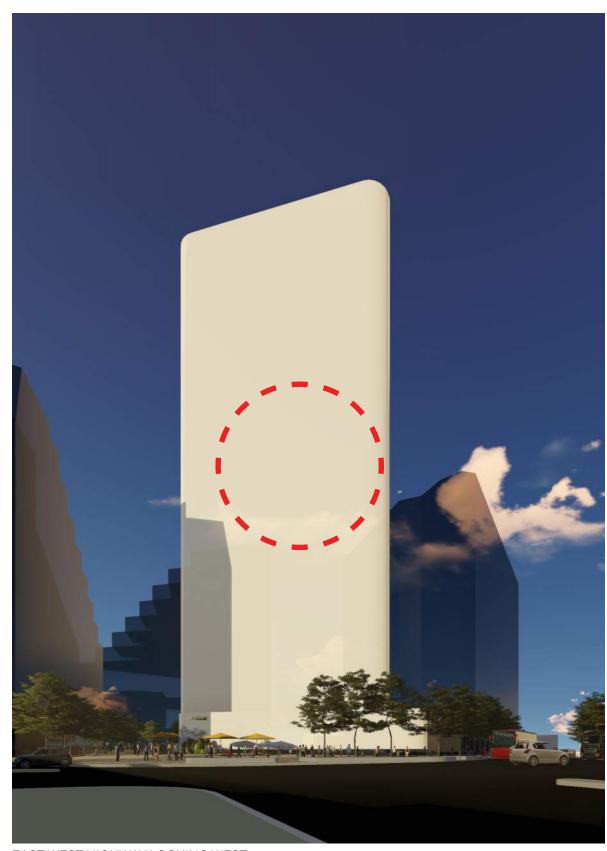












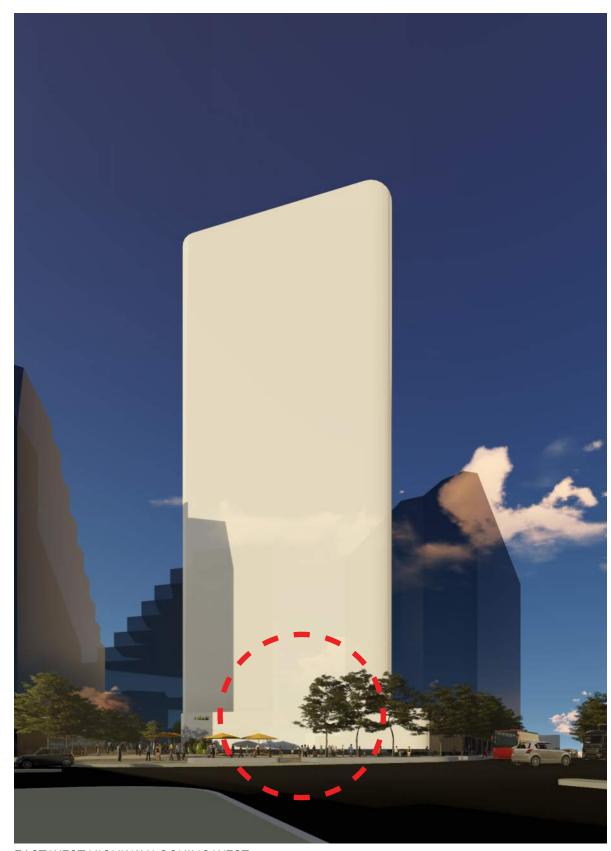
EAST WEST HIGHWAY LOOKING WEST







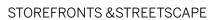




EAST WEST HIGHWAY LOOKING WEST

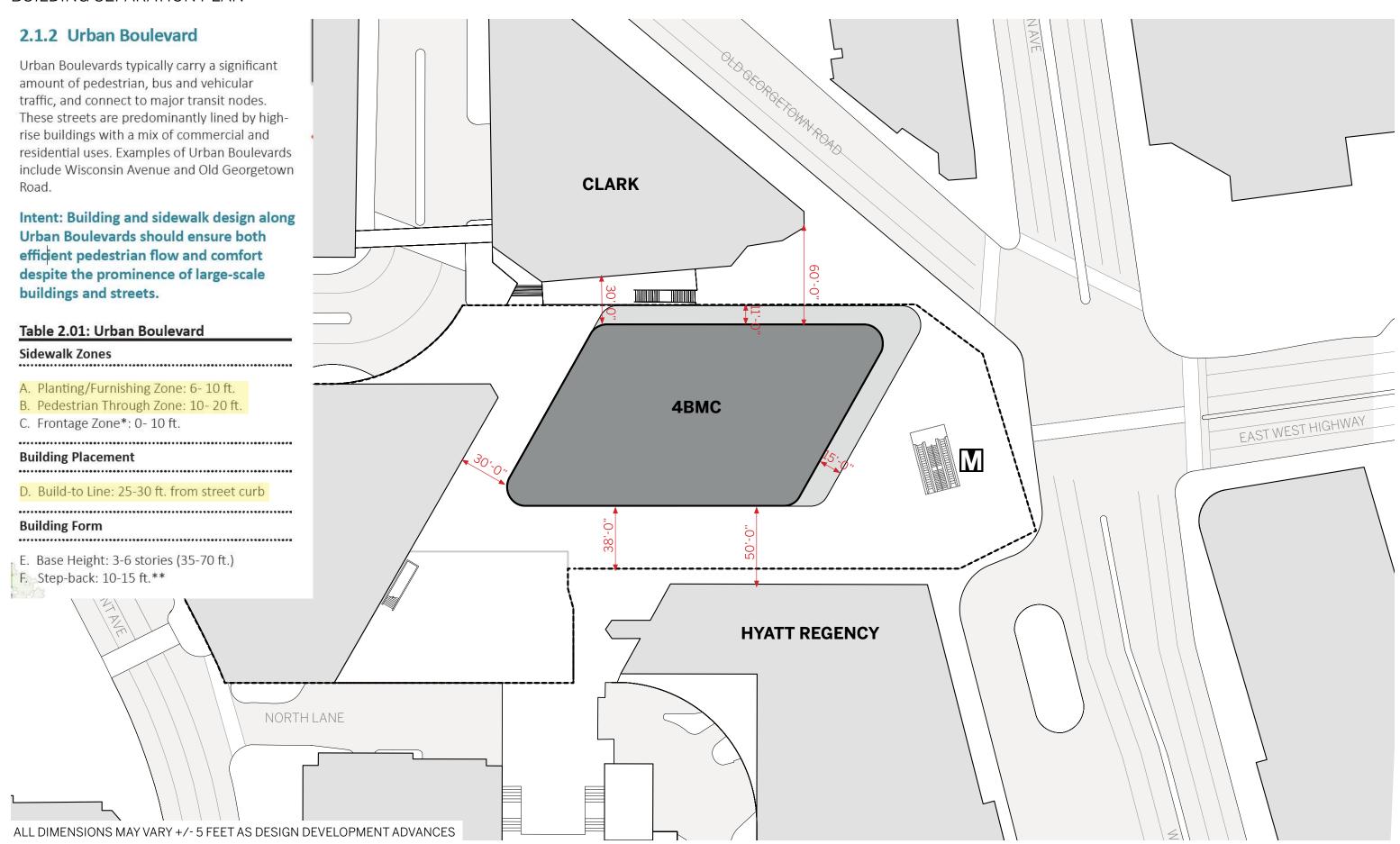


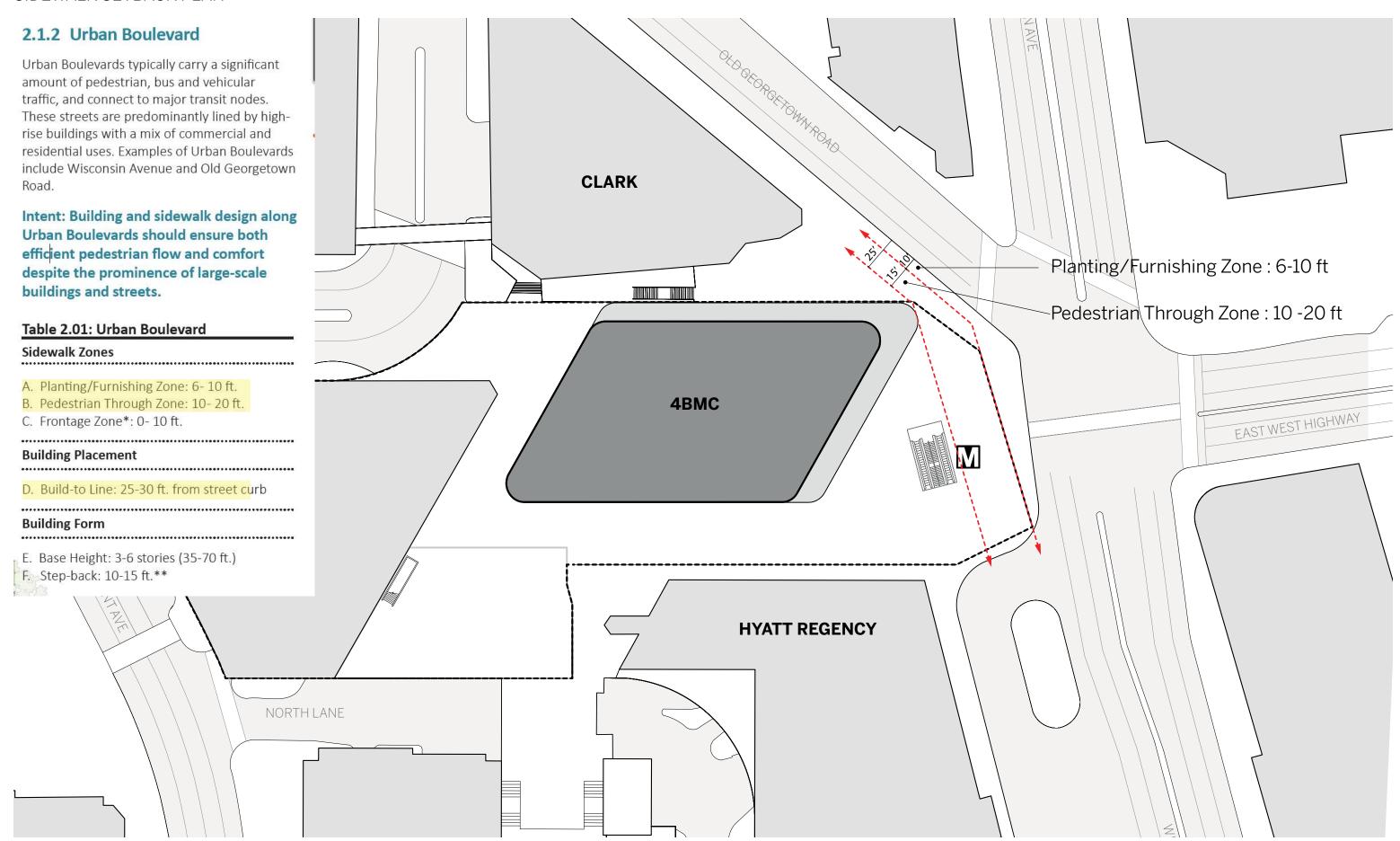




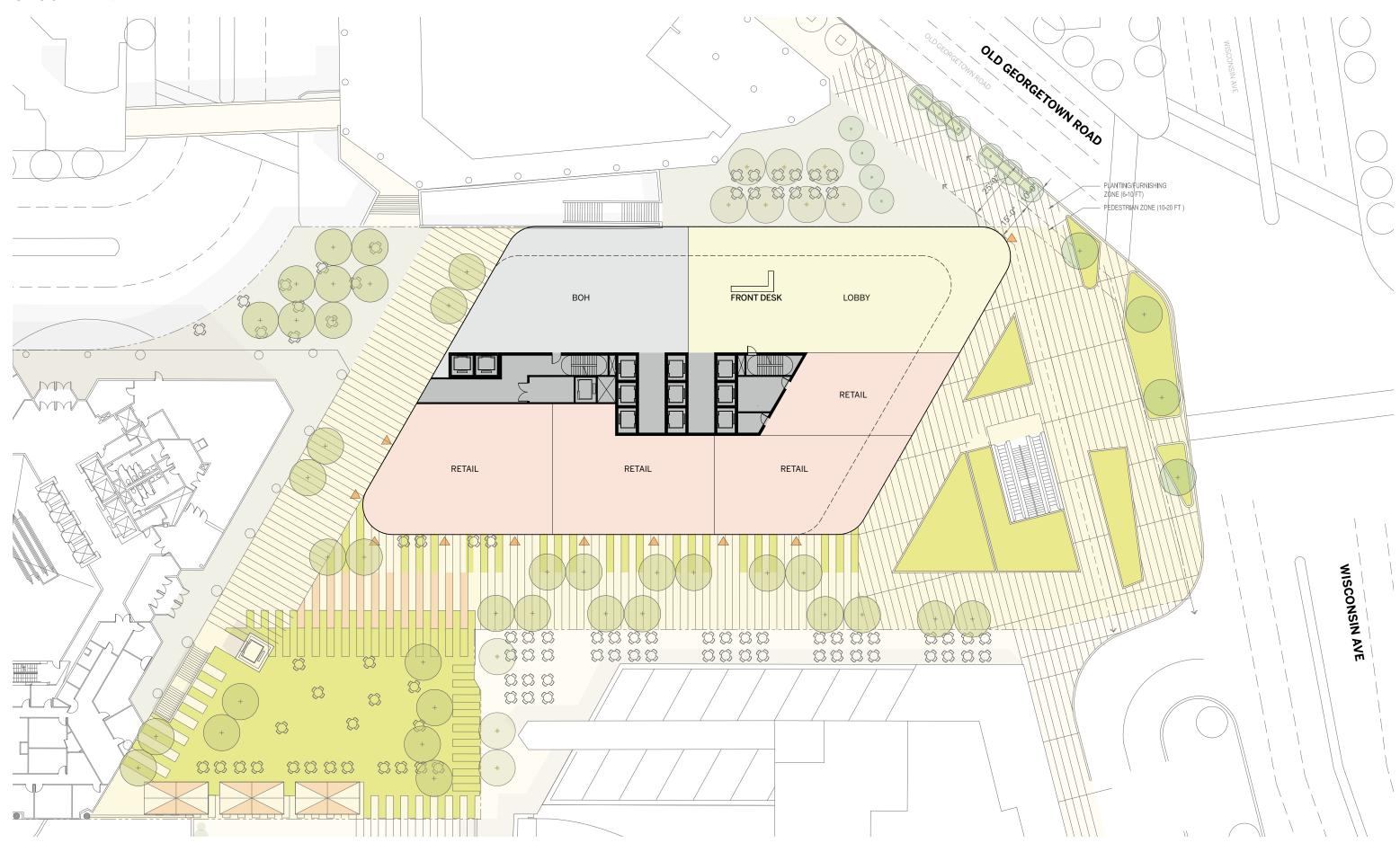


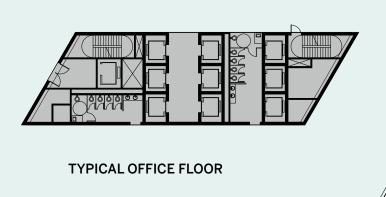


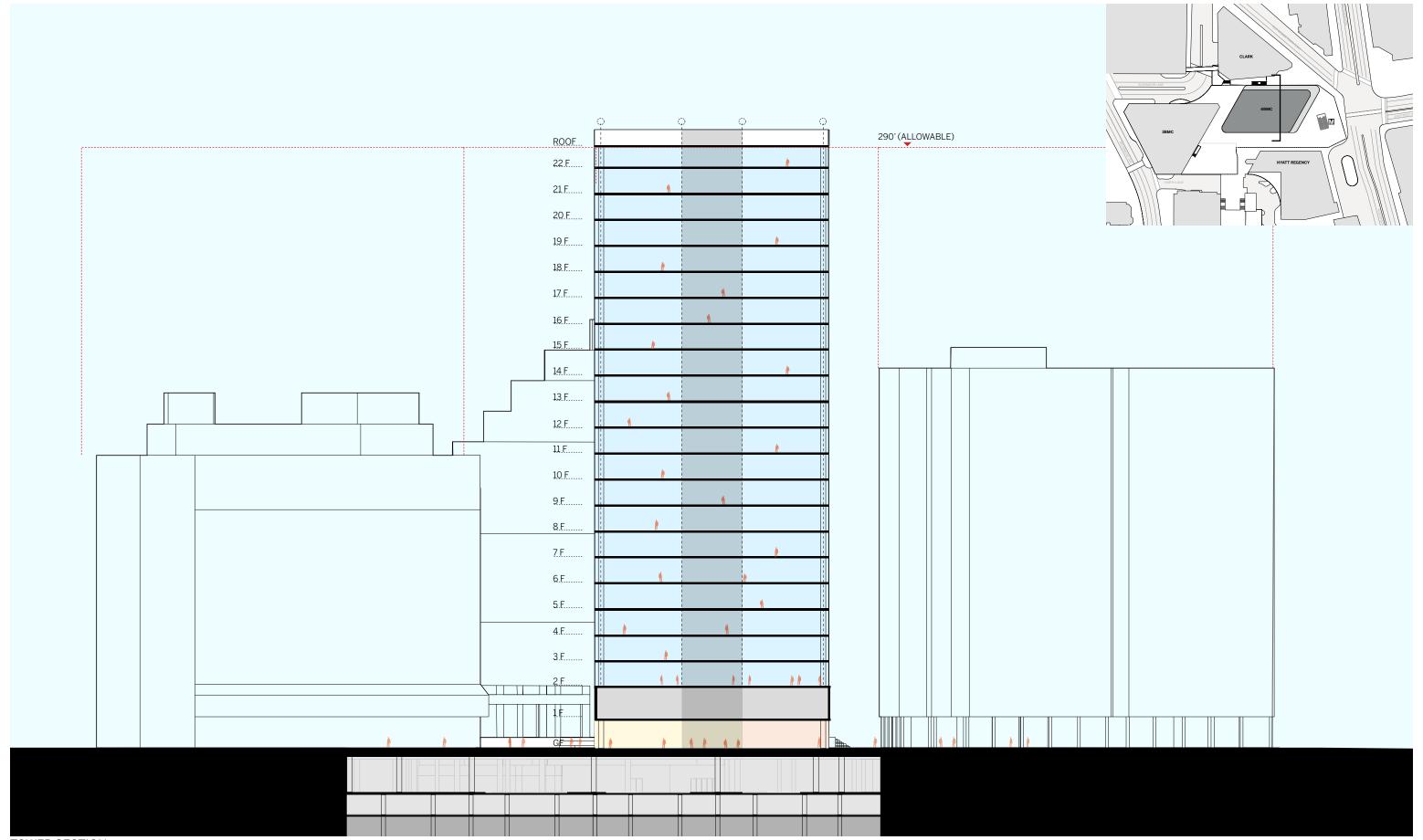




## **GROUND LEVEL PLAN**







TOWER SECTION