

Silver Spring Downtown Design Advisory Panel (DAP)

Submission Form

Revised February 2023

Project Name	
File Number(s)	
Project Address	

Plan Type: Concept Plan Sketch Plan Site Plan Consultation w/o Plan

APPLICANT TEAM

	Name	Phone	Email
Primary Contact			
Architect			
Landscape Architect			

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

	Zone	Proposed Height	Proposed Density (SF/FAR)	Requested Additional Density (SF/FAR)	MPDU %
Project Data					
Proposed Land Uses					



DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL SUBMISSION PROCESS & REQUIREMENTS

1. Schedule a Design Advisory Panel review date with the Design Advisory Panel administrator: Cashielle Nelson: SSDAP-Admin@mncppc.org
2. At least two weeks prior to the scheduled Panel meeting, provide via email to the Design Advisory Panel administrator the completed Submission Form and required drawings in PDF format. Incomplete applications will be returned for revision. **Applications deemed incomplete by the DAP Liaison may result in the loss of the scheduled meeting date if not returned complete within the above time frame.**
3. Concept Plan and Sketch Plan applications must include the following, at a minimum:
 - Property location plan showing three-block context radius
 - Illustrative site plan showing two-block context radius
 - Perspective images of all building faces from a 3D model that show the proposal in the built context, as well as with nearby building massings as approved by the Planning Board. (Bring the 3D model to the Panel review.)
 - 3D building massing diagrams illustrating:
 - the maximum mapped density and height on site;
 - Design Guidelines conformance;
 - how the proposed design conforms to the Design Guidelines and where it does not conform, how it still meets the Guidelines' intent;
 - Precedent images showing scale, architectural character, materiality, etc. (Concept & Sketch Plans only).
4. Except as noted, Site Plan applications must include all of the above, as well as, at a minimum:
 - Site landscape plan;
 - Floor plans for parking level(s), ground floor, typical floor, roof, and unique conditions;
 - Building/site sections showing full adjacent street sections with opposite building face;
 - Elevations for each façade;
 - Key perspective views expressing character of the building elevations and streetscape.



DESIGN GUIDELINES CONFORMANCE

The primary goal of the DAP is to provide advice and recommendations that will heighten design excellence and improve the quality of architecture, urban design, and landscape architecture in downtown Silver Spring. Simple compliance with the numerical standards in the Design Guidelines does not in itself achieve Design Excellence.

STREETS

List the Street Type(s) that are part of this project and fill in the Active Zone Elements chart with the recommended dimensions from the Design Guidelines and the proposed provided dimensions. Streets that do not include separated bike facilities will not have a Pedestrian/Bike Buffer.

STREET TYPE(S): _____

ACTIVE ZONE ELEMENTS	Recommended	Provided	Justification
Frontage Zone			
Sidewalk / Sidepath			
Pedestrian/Bike Buffer			
Separated Bike Lane (one-way or two-way)			
Street Buffer			

BUILDING FORM

Fill in the chart below with the number of floors for each Building Massing Component and with the horizontal distance (in feet) of step-backs or tower separations. If a Building Massing Component is not provided, indicate with n/a.

BUILDING MASSING COMPONENTS	# of Floors	Dimension Provided	Comments
Pedestrian Level		--	
Base		--	
Middle / Tower		--	
Top		--	
Cap		--	
Step-back above Base	--		
Step-back above Middle	--		
Tower Separation	--		



DOES THE PROJECT INCLUDE A SECTOR-PLAN RECOMMENDED PARK OR OPEN SPACE?

Yes No

- If yes, please provide diagrams demonstrating conformance with Section 2.4.3.B of the Guidelines

IS THE PROJECT ONE OF THE SITES IDENTIFIED IN CHAPTER 3 OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES?

Yes No

- If yes, please provide diagrams demonstrating conformance with the Site-Specific Guidelines in Chapter 3.

EXCEPTIONAL DESIGN POINTS REQUIREMENT:

All projects are required to achieve the maximum 10 Public Benefit points for Exceptional Design. Below are the criteria from the [CR Implementation Guidelines](#). Project submissions should address the points below:

1. Provide innovative solutions in response to the immediate context.
2. Create a sense of place and serves as a landmark.
3. Enhance the public realm in a distinct and original manner.
4. Introduce materials, forms or building methods unique to the immediate vicinity or applied in a unique way.
5. Design compact, infill development so living, working and shopping environments are more pleasurable and desirable on a site.
6. Integrate low-impact development methods into the overall design of the site and building, beyond green building or site requirements.



Silver Spring Design Advisory Panel
8676 Georgia Avenue and 8601 Cameron Street, Silver Spring, Maryland
Applicant Narrative

October 4, 2023

The Applicant appeared before the Design Advisory Panel (“DAP”) on July 19, 2023 in connection with the Sketch Plan application for the proposed redevelopment of the property located at 8676 Georgia Avenue and 8601 Cameron Street in Silver Spring, Maryland (the “Property”). Following the DAP meeting, the Applicant has made revisions to the building massing and design to respond to the comments received. The revised plans are being submitted concurrently with this letter. This letter provides a written response to the DAP’s feedback, as summarized in the meeting notes dated July 21, 2023. Where appropriate, the Applicant has provided a point-by-point response to the comments received. And in other instances, where several of the comments were addressed in a similar fashion, the Applicant has consolidated its response.

Comments on Overall Building Massing

- *It is a tight site, but the design does a good job of balancing between slab and tower. Panel acknowledges that it is difficult to fit a viable residential tower on this site.*
- *The canted approach at the corner of Ramsey Avenue and Cameron Street could be really successful as it gives a more perpendicular face to the approach on Cameron from the courthouse. However, the open space and the Diner at this important corner adjacent to the townhouses across Ramsey Avenue, is not sufficiently resolved.*

○ **APPLICANT RESPONSE:**

- **In response to DAP’s comments, the design team has pulled the Historic Tastee Diner further away from the new building. The revised location, shown in the updated drawings, is as far away from the new construction as possible, given the property boundary and the required functionality of the door leading into the Historic Tastee Diner (which cannot swing into a public right-of-way). This move pulls the Historic Tastee Diner out from under any overhang of the new construction. It also allows for the missing back corners and partial fourth wall of the diner car to be reconstructed, letting the Historic Tastee Diner read more fully in the round. This change in the location will allow the Historic Tastee Diner to have a greater visual presence in the Cameron Street streetscape and especially at the corner of Cameron and Ramsey.**
- **The Historic Tastee Diner only contains approximately 800 square feet of space. Currently, most of the former Tastee Diner restaurant, including the kitchen, the dining room, storage, and restroom areas, is located in the non-historic addition (to be demolished), which was built when the Historic Tastee Diner was relocated to Cameron Street. To help ensure a viable future use of the Historic Tastee Diner, particularly its functionality as a restaurant space, it must remain connected to the new building behind it. This will be accomplished by a light, appropriately-designed**

and fully-functional link, pulled in from the back corners of the diner and connected to shared space with the new building. This will accomplish the goals of creating functionality to ensure that the Historic Tastee Diner remains vibrant and utilized while at the same time allowing it to remain visually prominent at its new location.

- The Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Plan (the “Sector Plan”) requires that public open space required for this Project be provided through a contribution, so that public open space will be provided off-site. Nonetheless, the relocation of the Historic Tastee Diner allows the Applicant to accommodate outdoor café seating, which is an important element for any restaurant use and will also serve to enliven the adjacent streetscape.

- *The setback along Cameron Street is only 4’, which is not sufficient and does not meet the Design Guidelines.*
 - **APPLICANT RESPONSE:**
 - **As the DAP acknowledged, the site is very narrow. Given this constraint, the site cannot accommodate a working/functional building with setbacks greater than shown. That being said, the design team has evaluated the Design Guideline recommended setbacks, and with design techniques, such as designing the exterior wall with recessed glazing, varying façade depths, balconies and tiered setbacks, the building can satisfy the intent of the recommended setbacks.**

- The base along Ramsey Avenue does not sufficiently address the townhomes, it is too high, and it does not step down enough in the southern direction. It undermines the move with the Diner because it is so large. Refer to Metro Tower in Bethesda as a precedent for a similar constrained site with a more successful massing approach.
- Consider the townhomes as an asset that will remain in the downtown long term, do not assume they will be redeveloped and therefore ignore them. Consider them both in terms of the massing on Ramsey Avenue, and the street-facing façade.
 - **APPLICANT RESPONSE:**
 - **The design team has included, in this submission, a building section and a conceptual view, which reflect the massing on Ramsey Avenue.**
 - **As illustrated in this section, the building tower steps back significantly above the parking levels to create a roof terrace and a lower mass at the street face that is compatible with the townhomes.**
 - **The base, at the corner of Cameron Street and Ramsey Avenue, informed by the updated placement of the Historic Tastee Diner, steps in vertically and horizontally to dynamically break up the mass of the building. This facade articulation extends as far as possible down Ramsey Avenue given the functionality of the building.**
 - **The top of the tower steps down four floors from the Georgia Avenue side of the Property, so that its top, along Ramsey Avenue by Cameron Street, is well below the 300’ maximum approved building height (mapped for both the subject**

Property and the confronting townhouses). Due to site constraints, any further horizontal setback at the parking levels will not allow for a functioning parking garage given the ground floor commercial use (which promotes many of the goals of the Sector Plan) and this level of residential density (which similarly promotes the County's housing targets, as expressed through the Sector Plan). Furthermore, the Applicant does not believe any additional horizontal setback is required to promote compatibility, for the reasons discussed above.

- *There was a concern about shadows on the townhomes, but the applicant responded that due to the angle of the site, the shadows do not fall on the townhomes.*
- *There are a couple issues with the development's relationship to the Verizon building.*
 - *Relationship of the tower to the Verizon building is awkward with the narrowing space between the new tower and the Verizon building getting narrower as it approaches Georgia Avenue.*
 - *Because the tower is set back off of Georgia Avenue behind the Verizon front elevation, it highlights and calls attention to the Verizon building. This new building should be the most important elevation along Georgia Avenue.*
 - *What will the Georgia Avenue façade look like? It is a very important façade. It needs a setback or some interesting façade treatment.*
- *The Panel understand that due to the site constraints a setback along Georgia Avenue is not possible, but the current design emphasizes the corner at the Verizon substation to the south of the site, which is undesirable. Other treatments should be considered to emphasize the corner at Georgia Avenue and Cameron Street. Consider the corner of the PSFS building in Philadelphia as an example where the corner of the base is accentuated. Also consider other treatments including a reverse cantilever at this corner.*
 - **APPLICANT RESPONSE:**
 - **The Applicant reached out to Verizon and learned that it is not interested in a potential sale or air rights agreement. The substation is very much in use and will likely not be for sale in the foreseeable future.**
 - **While the façade of the building will be further developed during the Site Plan phase, the design team has adjusted the building massing along Georgia Avenue so that the base of the building creates a continuous street edge that has been pulled up to Georgia Avenue as much as possible, given the Property line constraints (i.e. there is more right-of-way dedication along the Property's Georgia Avenue frontage, as compared to the Verizon site). This massing move results in the new building visually concealing as much of the side of the Verizon building as possible. Distinct material treatments are used to differentiate the strong corner of the building coming down to the ground and the base level of the building, though they are now in the same plane along Georgia Avenue.**

- The design team intends for the Georgia Avenue façade to be prominent at the corner of Georgia Avenue and Cameron Street by extending a pattern of metal and glass from the tower through the base and to the ground.
- Closer to the Verizon building, the base façade will utilize perforated metal and spandrel glass to break the vertical pattern and emphasize the continuity of the corner. The base along Cameron Street will be a plane that is proud of the Georgia Avenue corner and it will utilize the same perforated metal (or similar materials) and patterning as the portion of the base separated by the metal and glass corner.
- *Why isn't there an entrance on Georgia Avenue?*
 - **APPLICANT RESPONSE:**
 - The Applicant currently intends to have a building entrance on Georgia Avenue. The presence and exact placement of this entrance, however, is dependent on the ultimate retail tenant. More information should be known at time of Site Plan review.
- *The garage podium can really hinder street activation along Georgia Avenue. Could a liner of units be applied to the front of the garage podium to help activate this primary street without dramatically reducing the parking?*
 - **APPLICANT RESPONSE:**
 - The design team evaluated adding a liner of units, however, such is not feasible because it would result in nonfunctional residential and garage areas. The building is too narrow for this to be feasible.
 - The building has been designed to place the parking above a double-height active ground floor/commercial use area, where the pedestrian experiences the building. This will result in an active ground plane that will be engaging to all walking along Georgia Avenue Cameron Street.
 - Additionally, special attention will be paid to the design of the garage façade so as to blend seamlessly in with the overall building design. Specific design will be evaluated further at time of Site Plan.

Comments on Treatment of Tastee Diner

- *The building is so large and the Diner is so tiny; it seems out of place in the current proposed design. The diner is made to be so small in this context that it dramatically diminishes its historic importance. Somehow the Diner needs its own space.*
- *The slightly recessed open space that the Diner sits under is very strange and overpowers the little building.*
- *The panel did not agree that the diner will be heightened. The DAP thought the angled elevation was a very nice urban design move, but would not heighten the experience of the Diner. The*

Diner is too small and would likely never be seen from the Courthouse view and across landscape.

- *Precedents to consider, both in Philadelphia: Sister Cities Café at Logan Circle and Cret Park at 16th St and Benjamin Franklin Parkway.*
 - **APPLICANT RESPONSE:**
 - **Based on comments from the Historic Preservation Commission (“HPC”) and the DAP, the design team has reconsidered the location of the Historic Tastee Diner in relation to the new building design. As discussed in greater detail above and illustrated on the updated plans, the Historic Tastee Diner has been pulled out closer to the street so that it stands proud and reads independent of the new structure, but is still linked to the new construction to allow for future functionality. The connection to the new building allows for sufficient space to attract a new commercial tenant and/or be programmed as a street activating amenity space.**
 - **The revised placement and building massing enhances the visibility of the Historic Tastee Diner from Cameron Street and Ramsey Avenue.**
 - **The design team has considered the other examples referenced by DAP members. The design team has redesigned how the Historic Tastee Diner relates to the new construction (in context with the facts specific to the subject Property), as described above.**
- *Explore placing the dining cab inside the lobby, where it could be more of an object in the ground floor space, rather than something alien that sticks out from the building façade. This would allow the building to create a continuous street wall at this very nice plaza. The Diner inside could be part of a larger café experience. The Diner inside could also be part of a larger display with public art at the outside plaza.*
 - **APPLICANT RESPONSE:**
 - **The HPC does not support placing the dining cab inside the lobby. Furthermore, the Applicant views the Historic Tastee Diner as an important public resource that is best appreciated from the public realm.**
- *The plaza could also become larger and the Diner could be an object within the plaza as a iconic kiosk (coffee shop) or something similar. The Diner could be more a part of the space (interior or exterior) rather than a part of the new building.*
- *How will the open space be programmed to work with the Diner?*
 - **APPLICANT RESPONSE:**
 - **Given the narrowness of the site and the Applicant’s desire for the Historic Tastee Diner to have continued functionality, the Historic Tastee Diner cannot be physically separated from the proposed building. And the Applicant does not**

believe this separation is necessary. As discussed above, the revised design pulls the Historic Tastee Diner out, so that it stands fully proud of the new building.

- As noted above, the Sector Plan does not recommend public open space on this property and rather, requires the Applicant to make a contribution towards off-site public open space.

Comments on Structured Parking and Service

- *The parking levels should be hidden, they should not be accentuated. Bring the materials from the tower down to the parking levels so the parking is fully integrated and does not stick out as something completely different from what is happening in the tower. Refer to Ripley II at the southern end of the Ripley District in Silver Spring as a precedent for both treatment of parking façade and for how loading and service entrances are designed.*
- *Parking above-grade can make the base-middle-top distinction difficult, but if the parking is invisible in the base that will help.*
- *Explore if any units or other uses can line the parking, specifically along the edge at Georgia Avenue.*
- *The service and parking entrances are next to each other on the same façade; consider the impact on the neighbors and make these entrances as narrow and hidden as possible.*

- **APPLICANT RESPONSE:**

- **The façade treatment of the garage levels will be at the same level of detail and quality of materials as the tower but will be more opaque and with lighting designed to avoid views of car headlights from the exterior of the building.**
- **Per HPC Staff recommendations, the new building base behind the Tastee Diner is comprised of horizontal elements inspired by the horizontal banding, proportions, and overall appearance of the Historic Tastee Diner, without “. . . trying to copy the Art Moderne design.”**
- **The architectural design of this portion of the new building will be finalized at time of Site Plan, but is intended to honor the Historic Tastee Diner, while simultaneously blending with the overall design of the new building.**
- **At time of Site Plan, the design team will focus specifically on materials, colors, and textures used in this portion of the façade.**
- **Of particular importance will be ensuring that the materials shield views of vehicles and headlights in the parking garage directly above the Historic Tastee Diner so they are not visible from outside the building.**
- **Service and parking entrances are immediately facing the service entrance to the townhomes. The location of the service and parking entrances is consistent with the Sector Plan recommendations. In addition, the entrances have been narrowed, to the maximum extent possible, to meet County requirements.**
- **As noted above, the Applicant explored the possibility of providing liner units along Georgia Avenue, but the building is too narrow for this to be feasible – this would result in both nonfunctional residential and garage areas.**

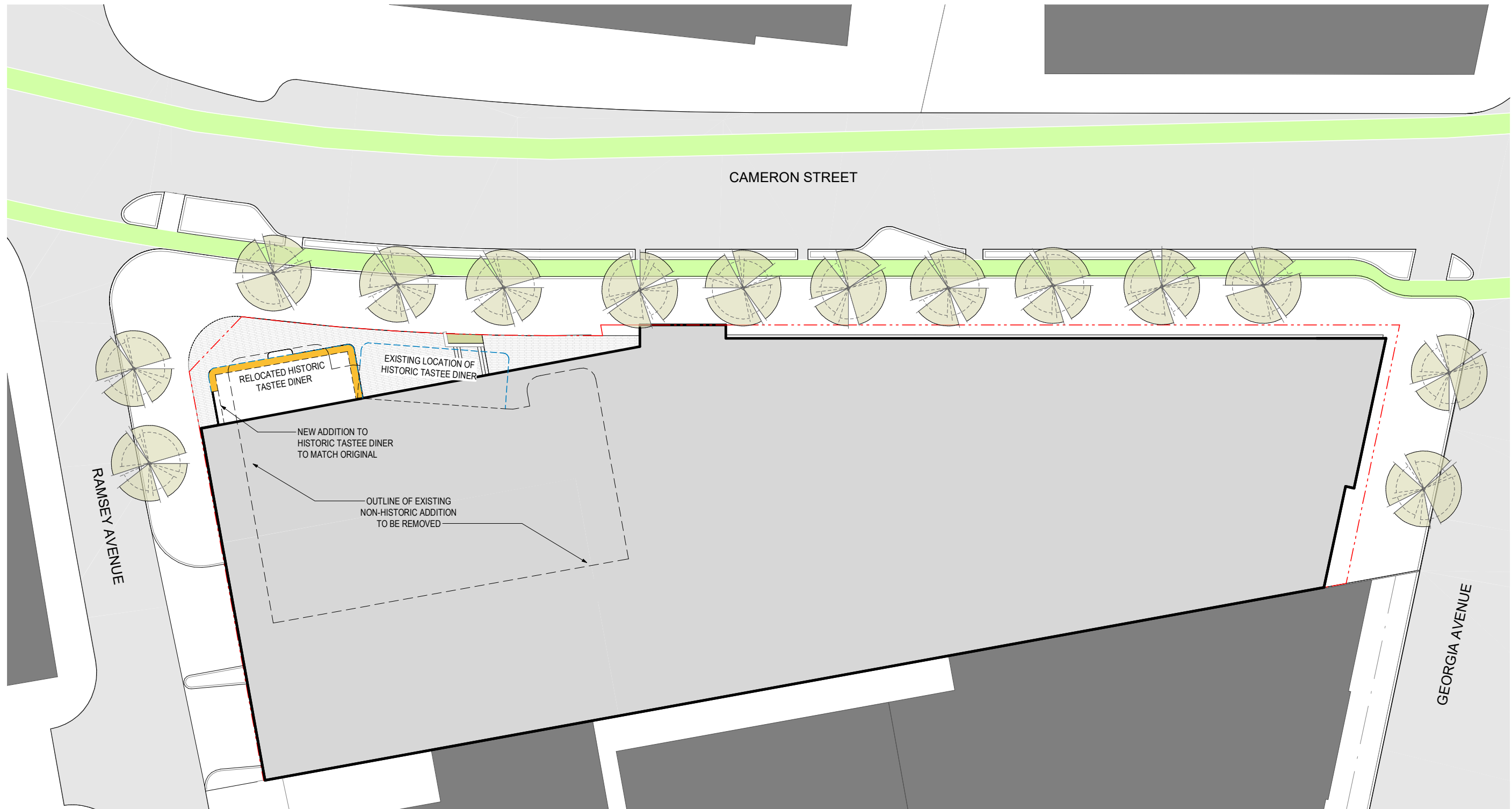
Panel Recommendation:

- *Panel would like this applicant to return again during Sketch Plan.*
- *Panel requests the following exhibits in addition to the required submission:*
 - *Ground floor plan showing programming and then upper parking levels so the Panel can understand the relationships within the base.*
 - *Parking plans with circulation diagrams.*
 - *Street level massing perspectives (with people) that show the relationship between the Diner and the proposed open space;*
 - *Street sections along Georgia Avenue, Cameron Street and Ramsey Avenue. Provide multiple sections where necessary to show different conditions, including people, trees and any buildings across the street.*
 - *Details of Georgia Avenue façade to understand how that will be treated.*
 - *More information about the open space so the Panel can understand how it relates to the Diner and what sort of experience/programming will be provided in this space.*
- **APPLICANT RESPONSE:**
 - **The requested plans that relate to Sketch Plan review have been included in the submittal package. Additional materials will be provided during Site Plan review.**
 - **As shown on the updated perspectives and video – the ground floor will be an activated area with a 2-story street activation/commercial component, with parking above.**
 - **Details of the Georgia Avenue façade will be provided at time of Site Plan, but representative examples are provided to show design intent.**
 - **As noted, the Sector Plan recommends no open space on the property. Rather, the applicant must pay into a fund for public open space to be provided elsewhere. Based on comments received from both the HPC and DAP, the Historic Taste Diner has been pulled further out from the building so that it reads more as an independent structure. Interpretative/educational signage may be considered further at time of Site Plan review.**

**8676 GEORGIA AVENUE
SILVER SPRING, MD**

**SKETCH PLAN
DAP**

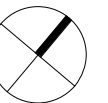
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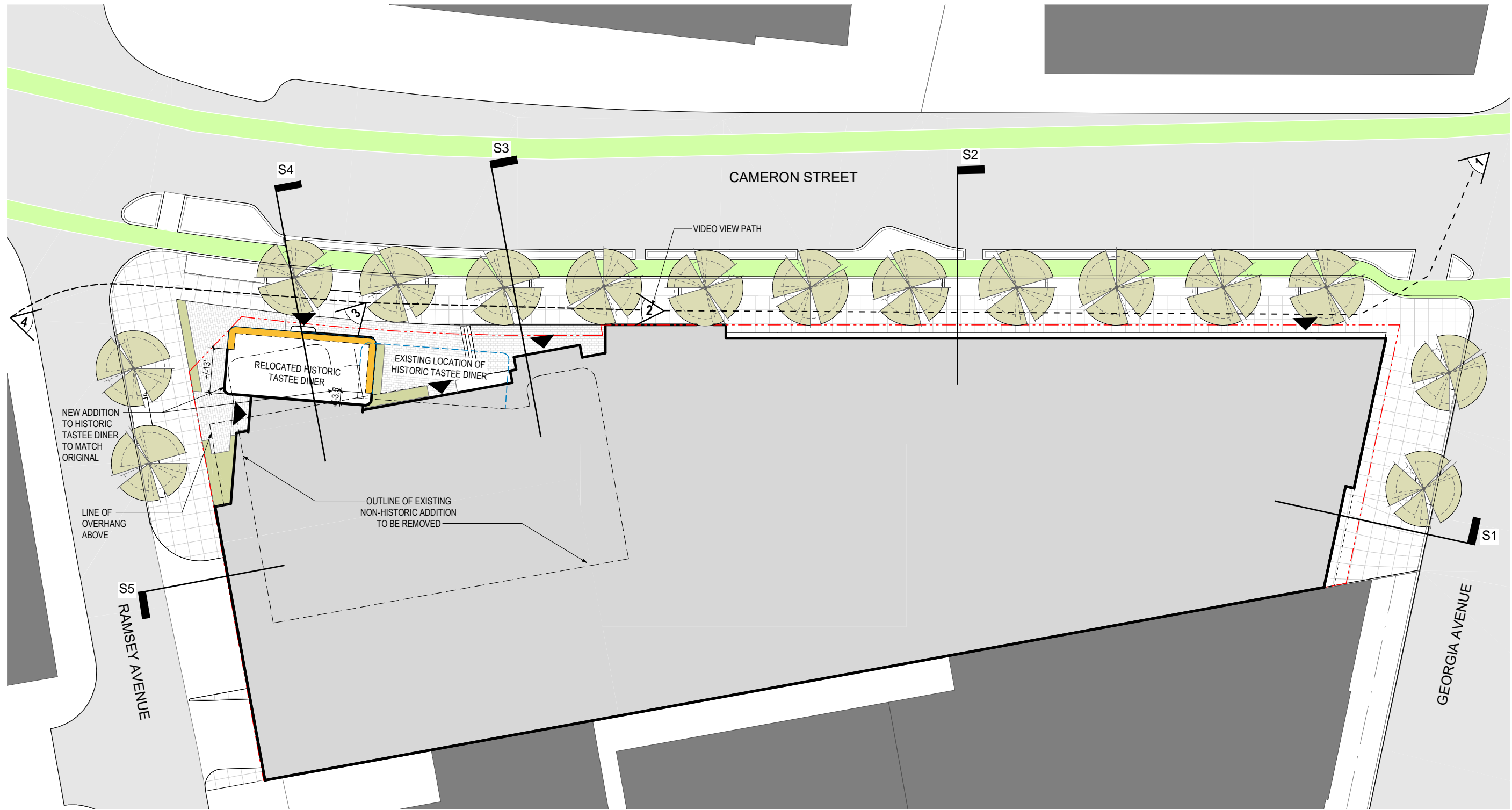


FIRST FLOOR PLAN AT RELOCATED DINER CAR

LEGEND

EXTENT OF HISTORIC TASTEE DINER

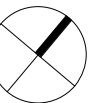




FIRST FLOOR PLAN AT RELOCATED DINER CAR

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EXTENT OF HISTORIC TASTEE DINER

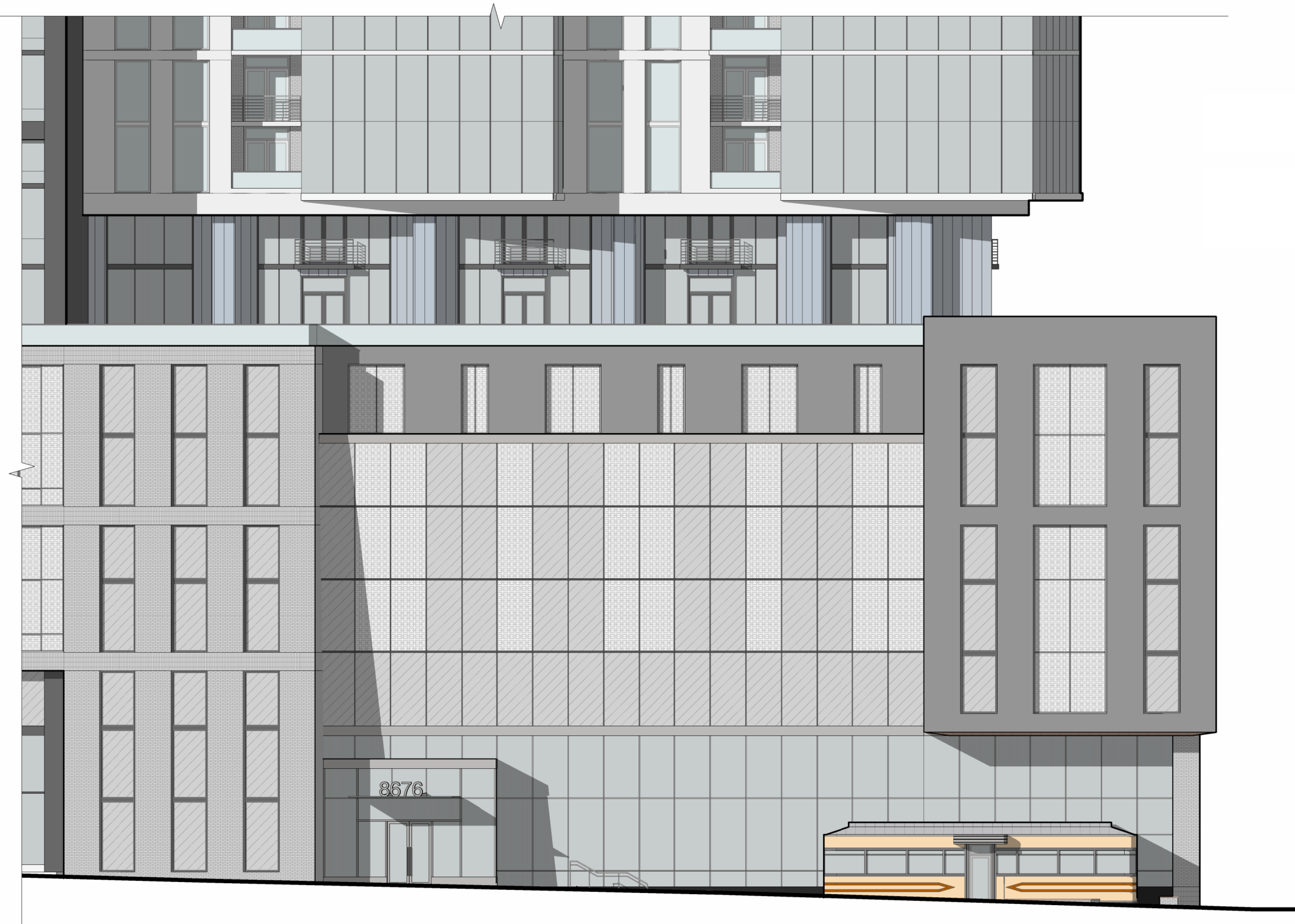




PARTIAL NORTH ELEVATION AT CAMERON STREET



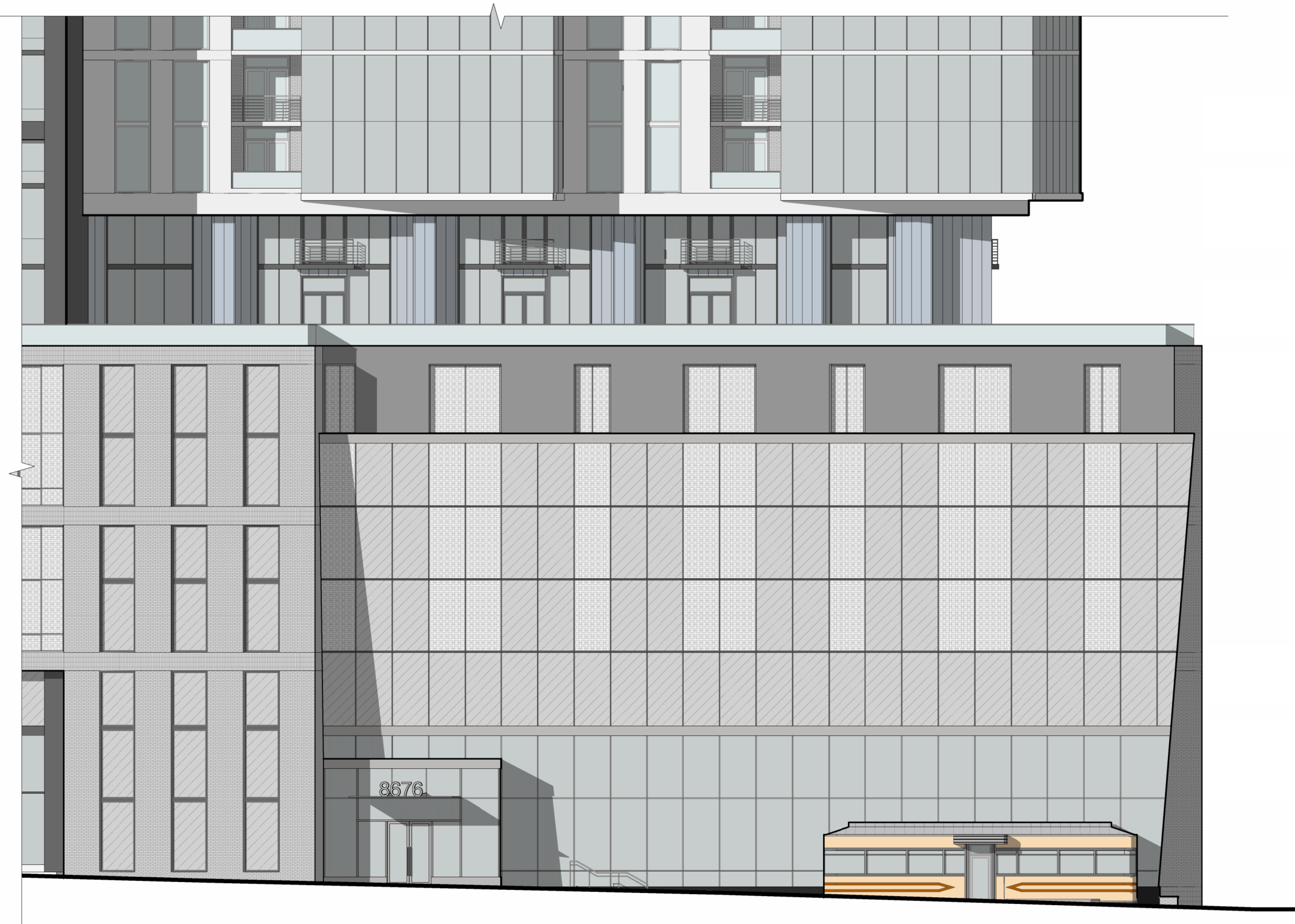
PARTIAL WEST ELEVATION AT RAMSEY AVENUE



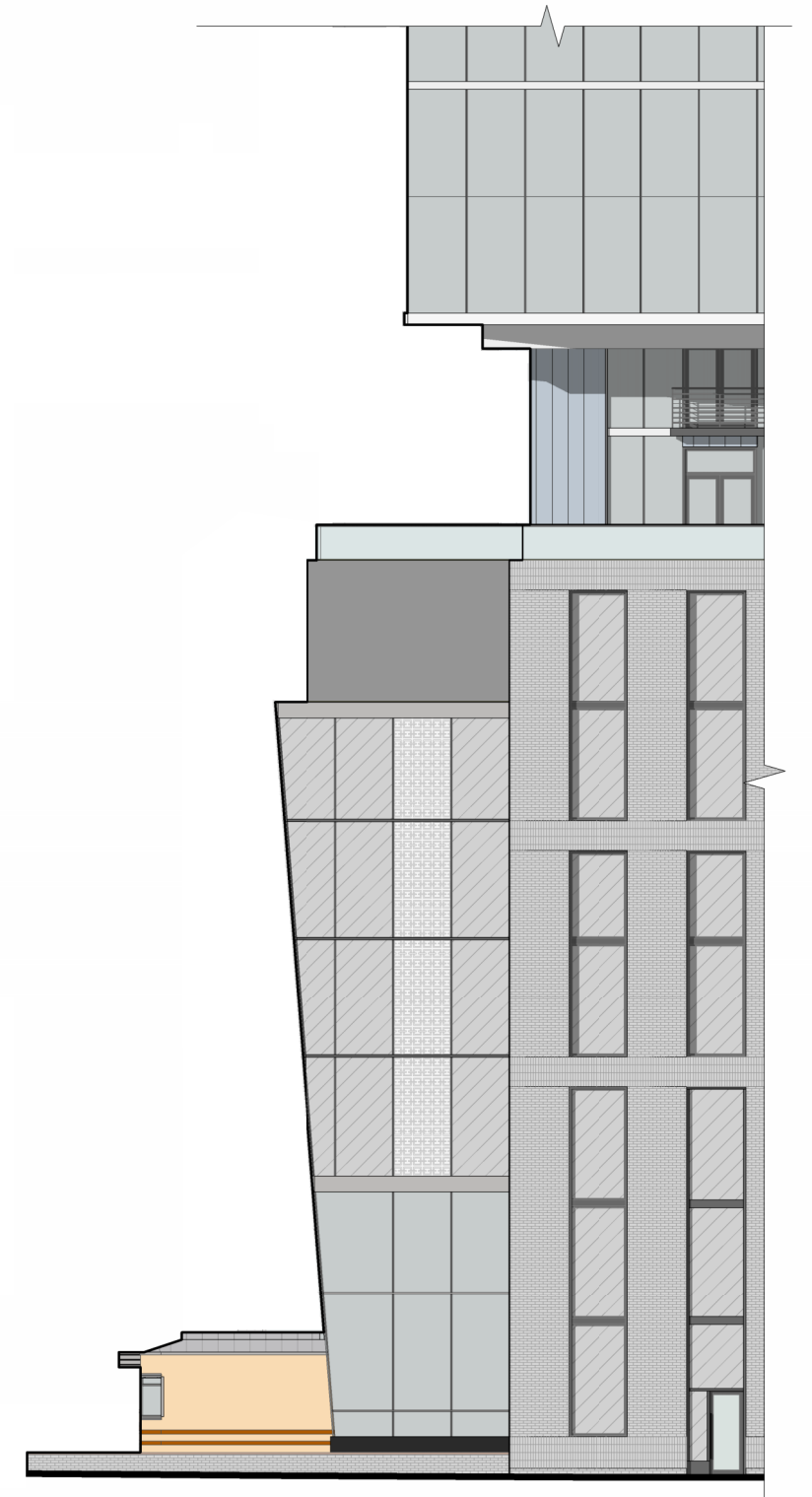
PARTIAL NORTH ELEVATION AT CAMERON STREET



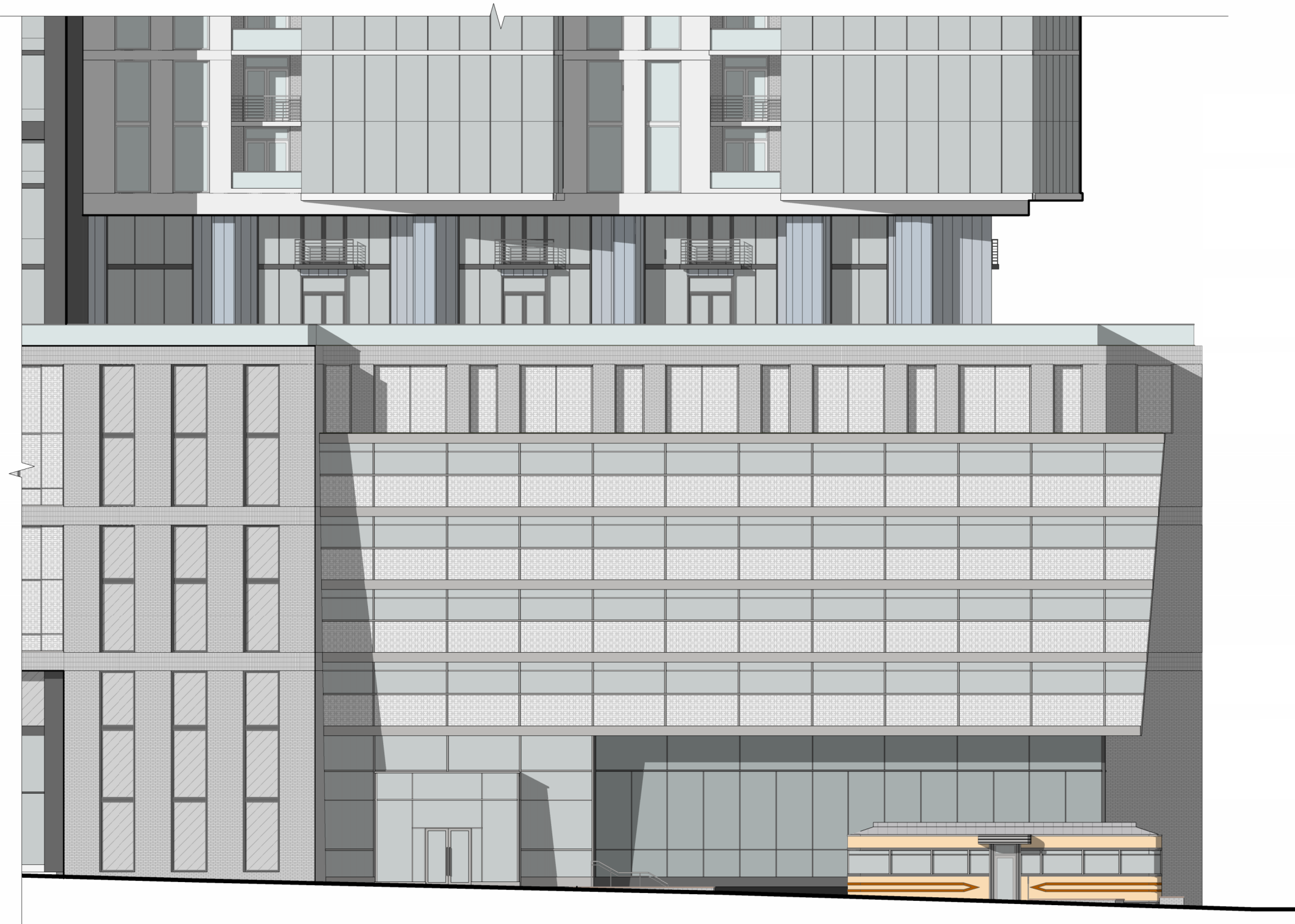
PARTIAL WEST ELEVATION AT RAMSEY AVENUE



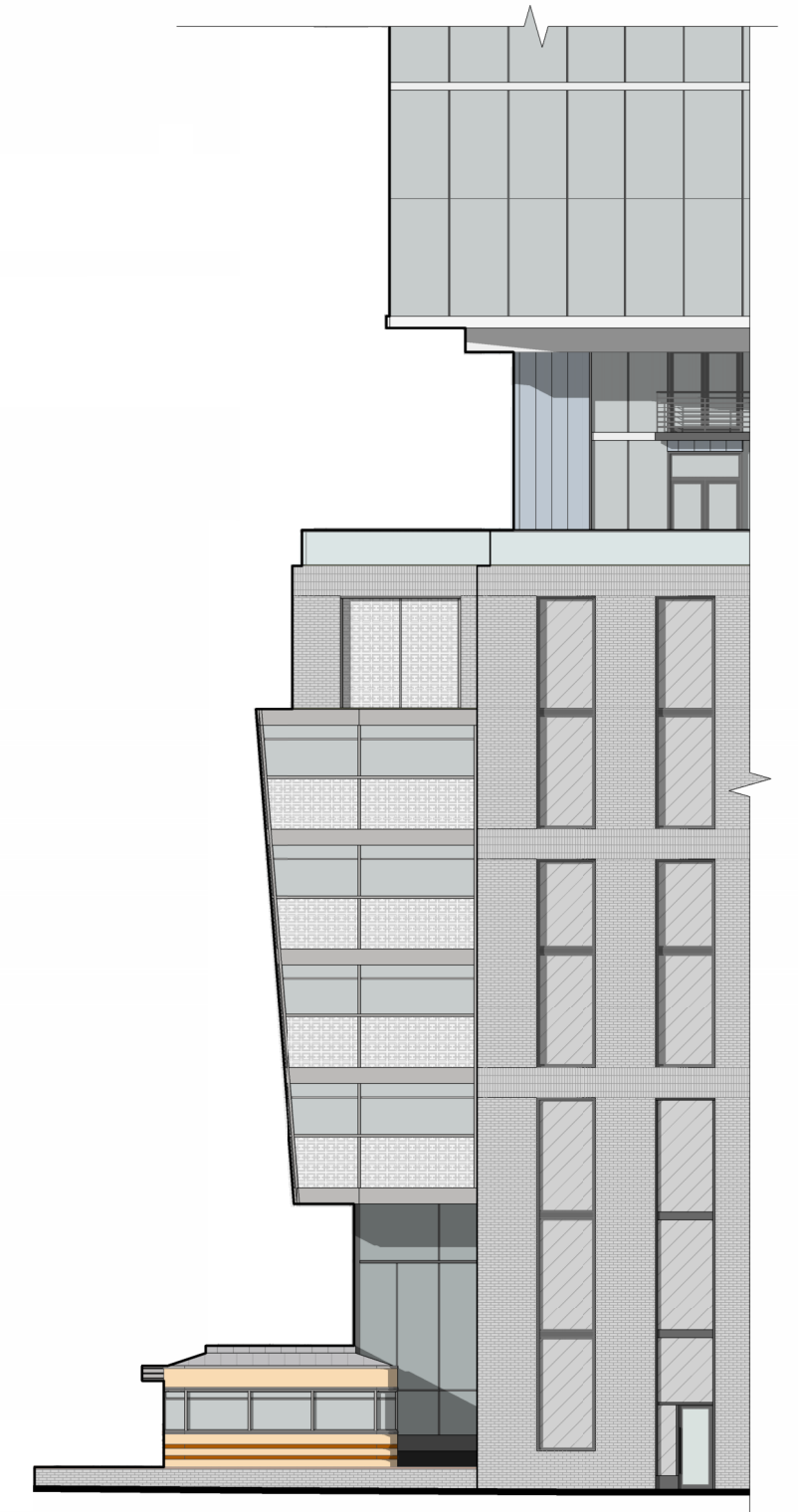
PARTIAL NORTH ELEVATION AT CAMERON STREET



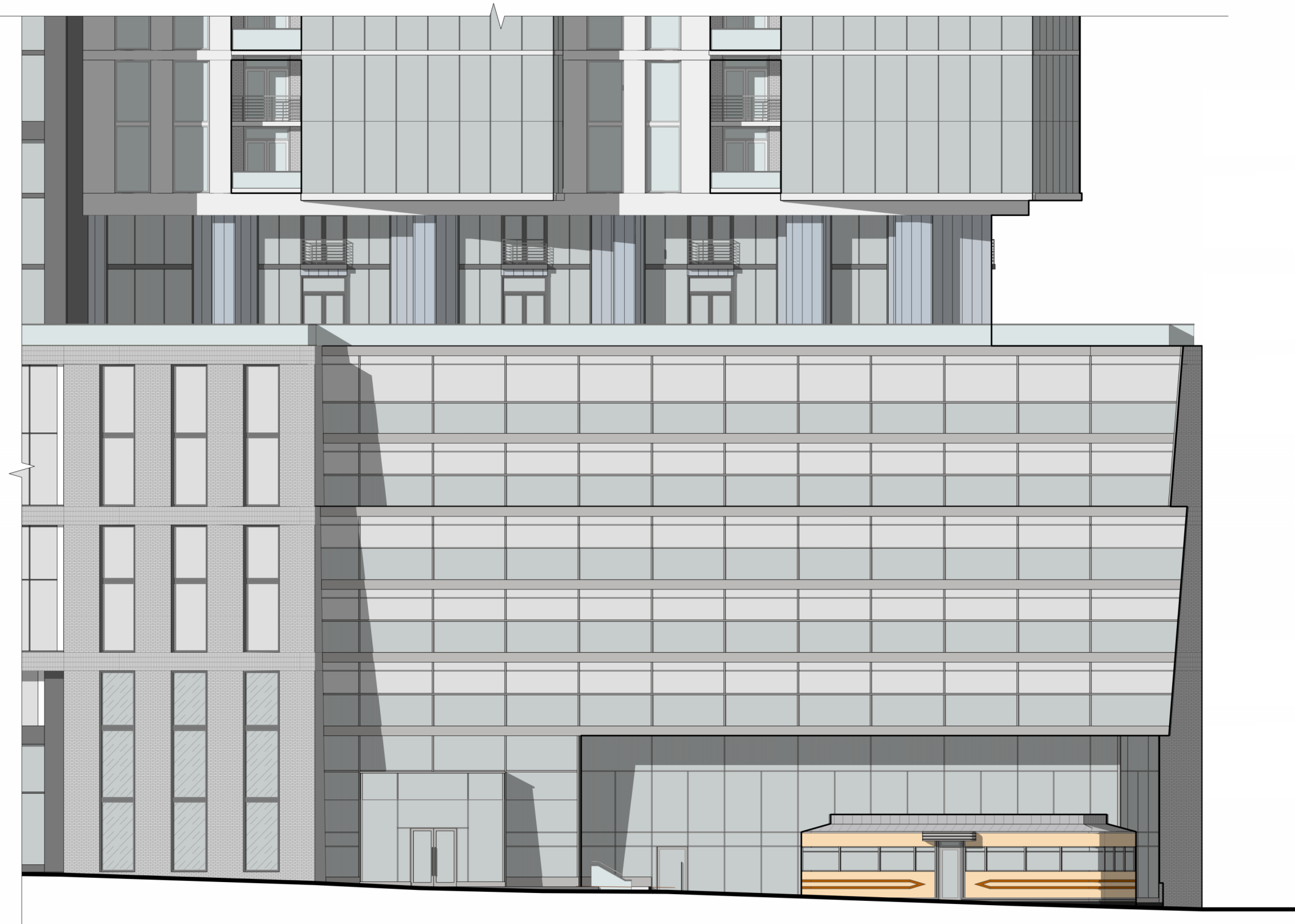
PARTIAL WEST ELEVATION AT RAMSEY AVENUE



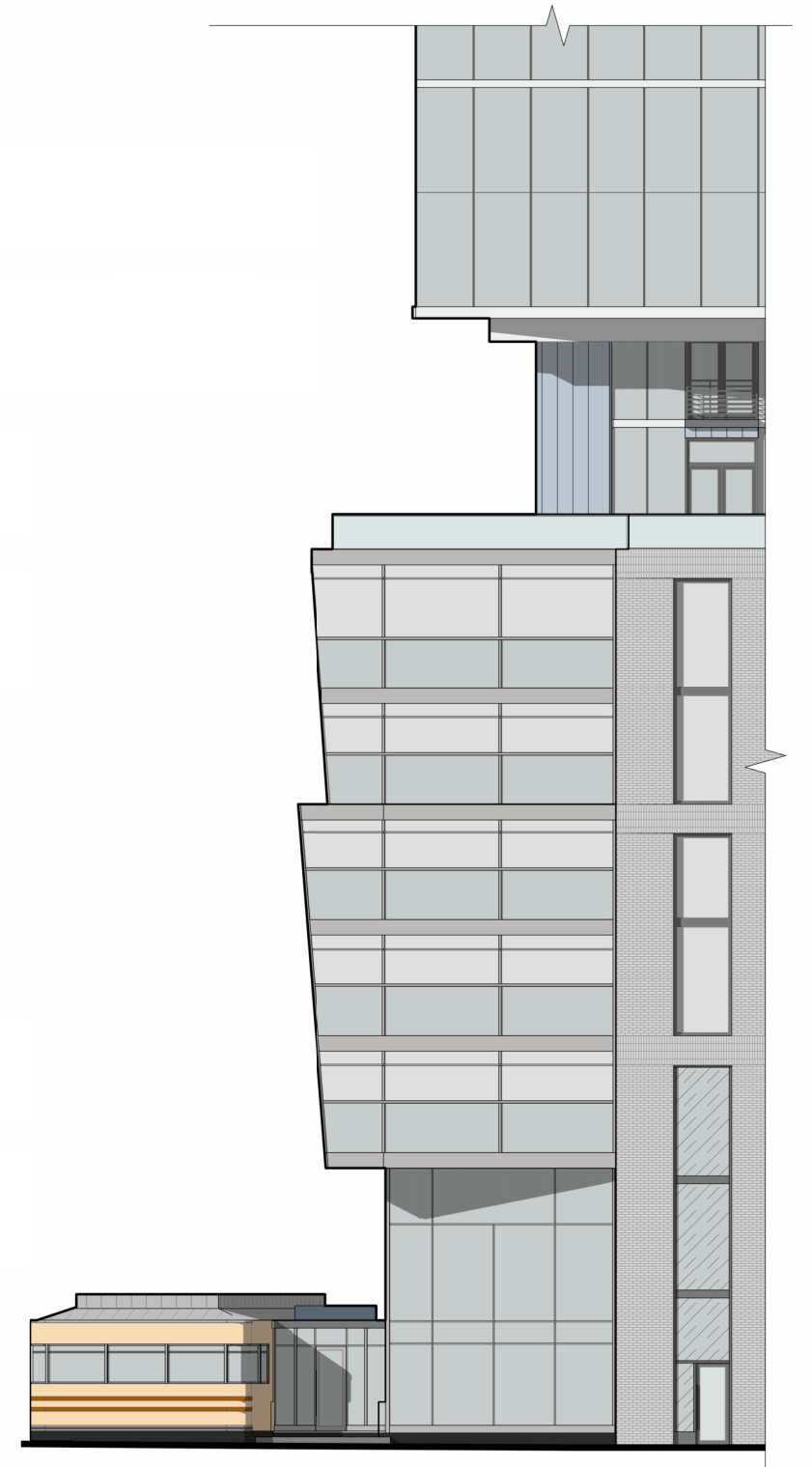
PARTIAL NORTH ELEVATION AT CAMERON STREET



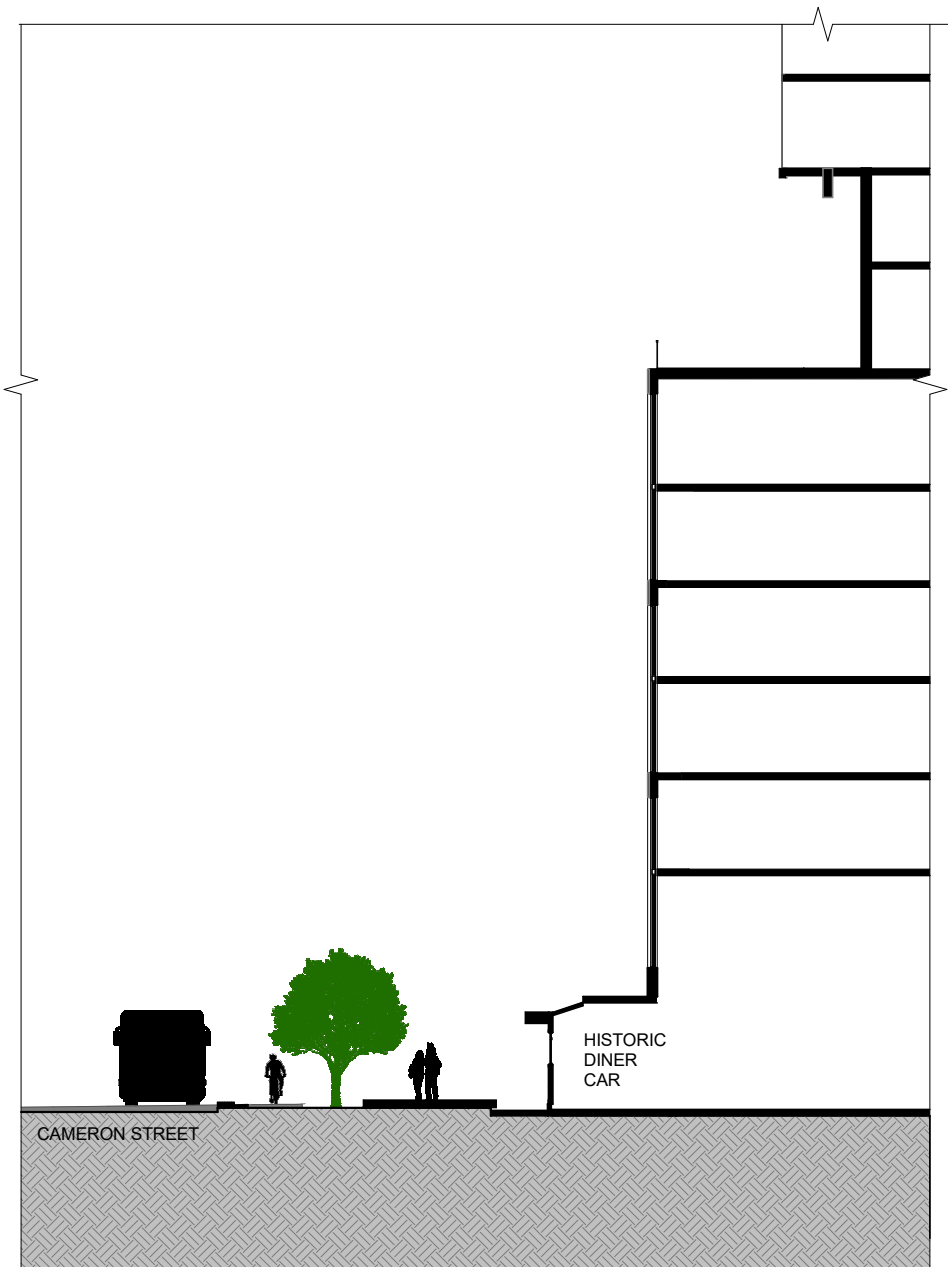
PARTIAL WEST ELEVATION AT RAMSEY AVENUE



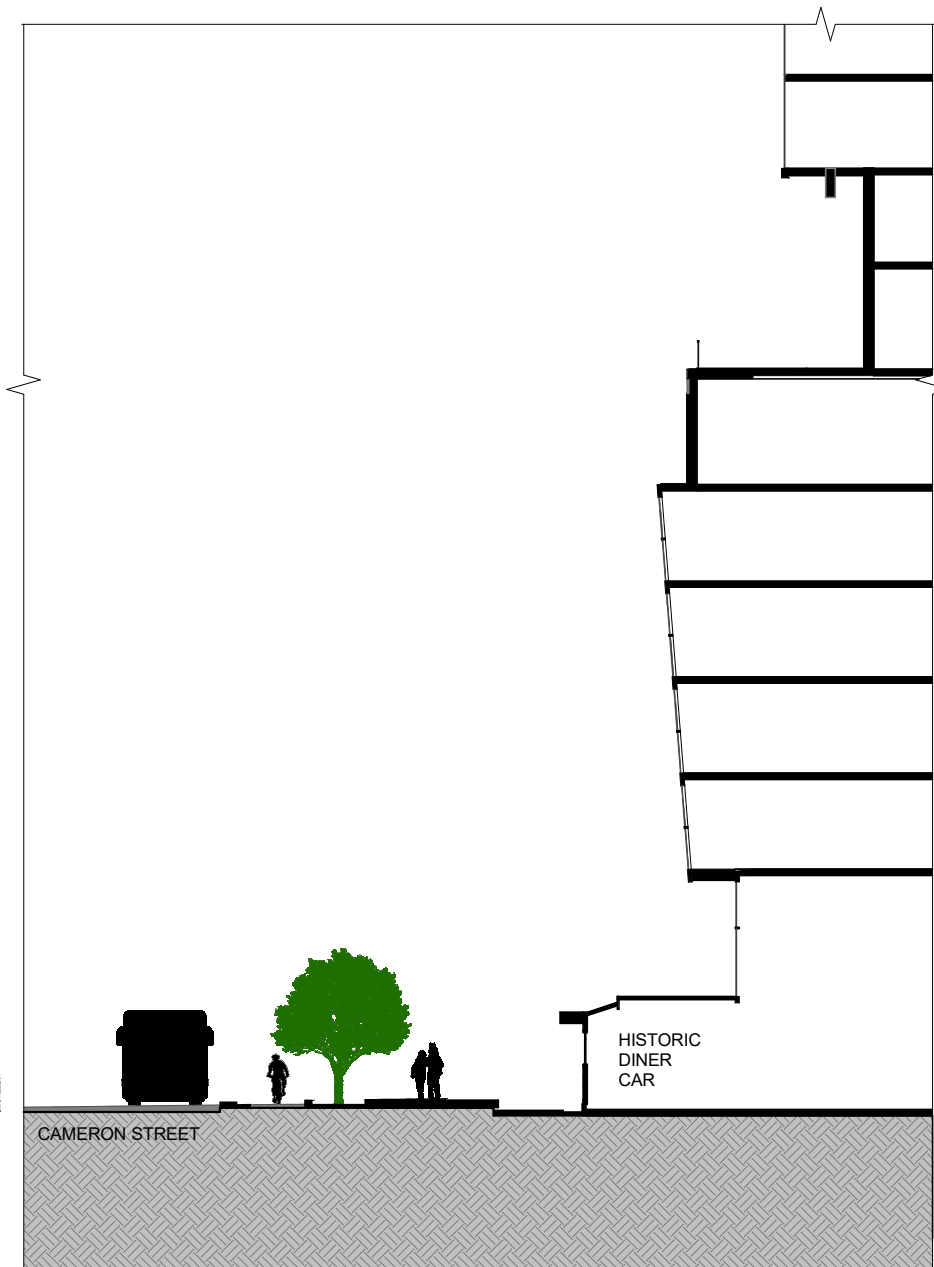
PARTIAL NORTH ELEVATION AT CAMERON STREET



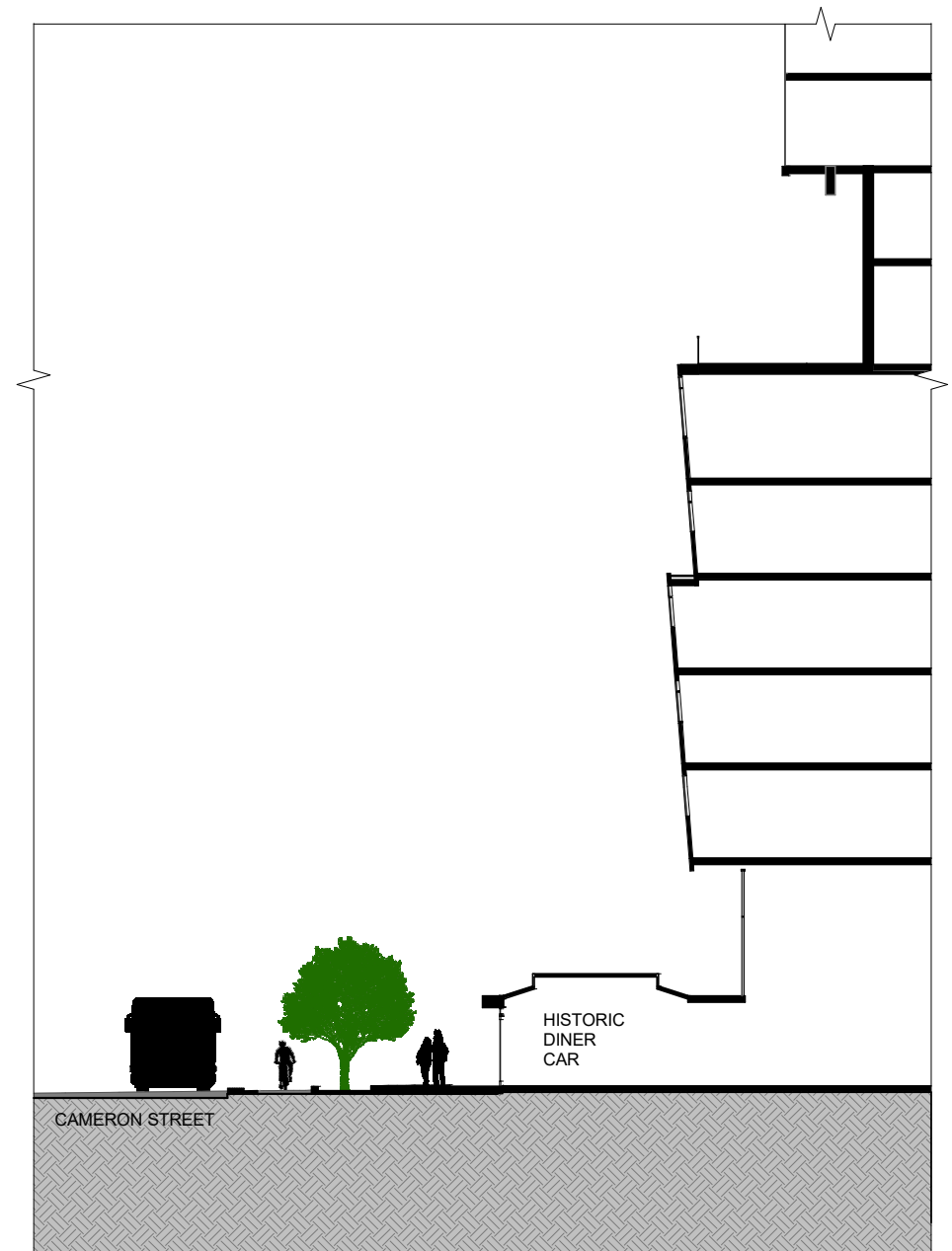
PARTIAL WEST ELEVATION AT RAMSEY AVENUE



PROGRESS STUDY 1



PREVIOUS HPC SUBMISSION



CURRENT DESIGN











Roadside Development

CONCEPT RENDERINGS - FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES

8676 Georgia Ave

10/04/2023

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Bonstra Haresign
ARCHITECTS



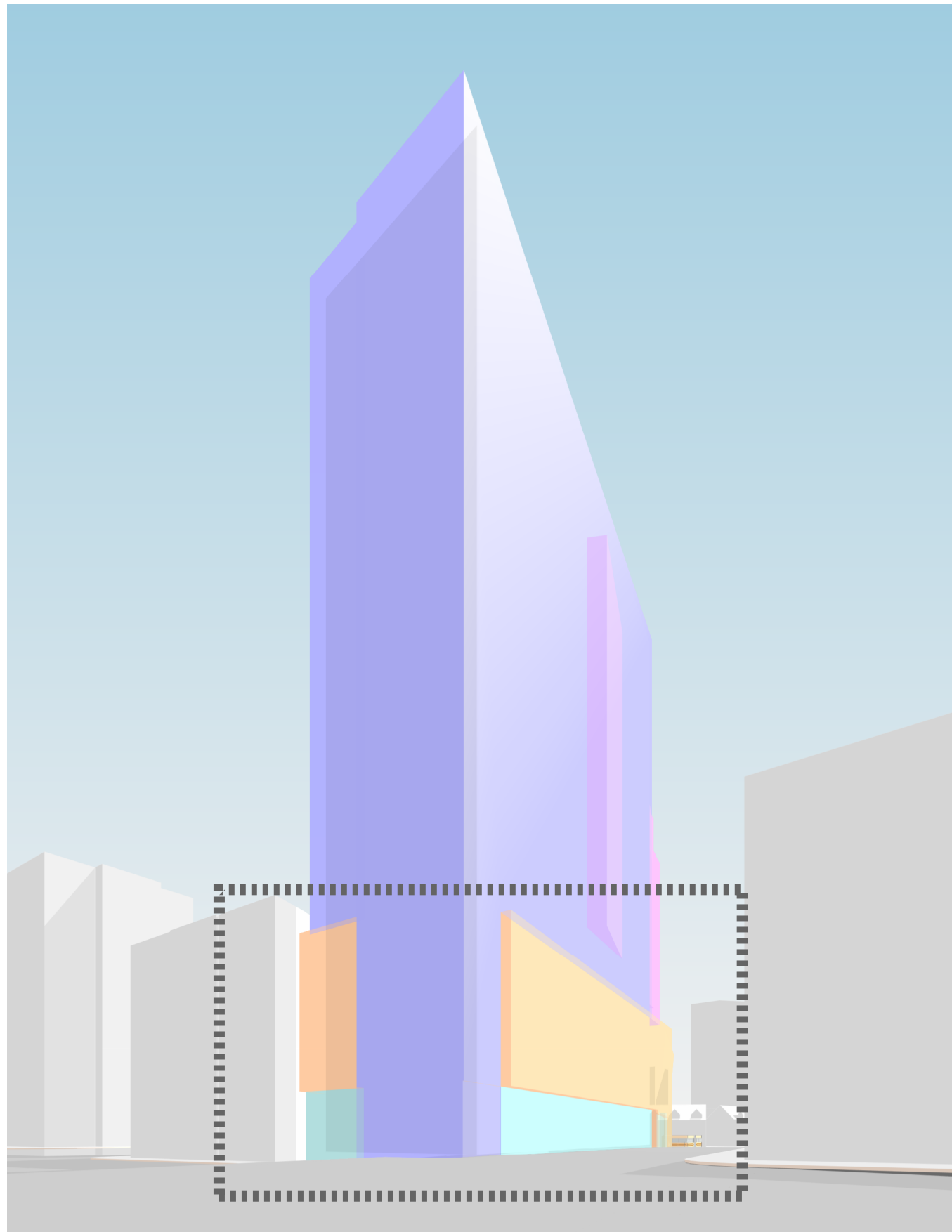
CONCEPT RENDERINGS - FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES



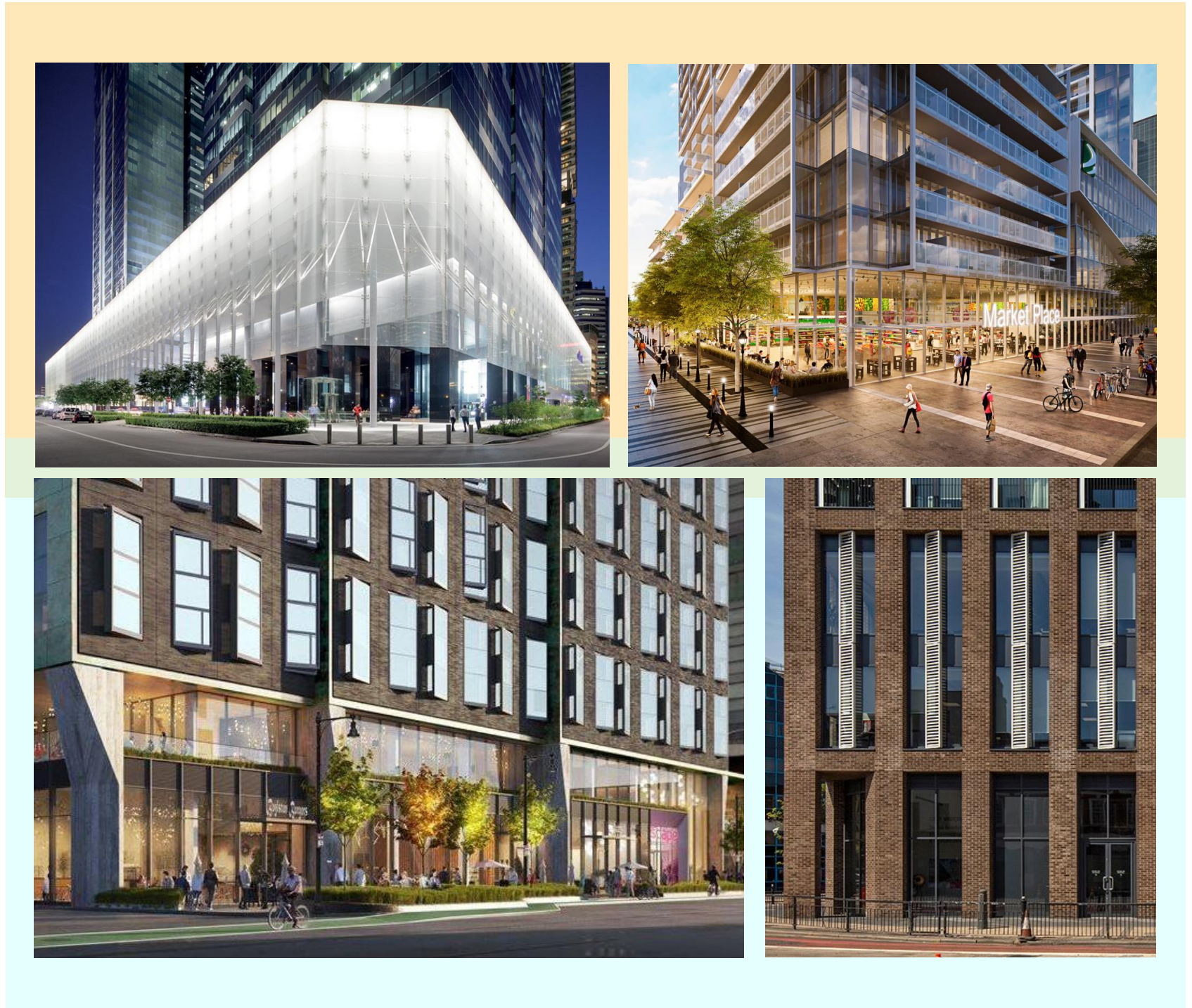
EXAMPLES OF FACADE PLANES AND DEPTH CHANGES



EXAMPLES OF FACADE PLANES AND DEPTH CHANGES



ILLUSTRATIVE VIEW FROM GEORGIA AVENUE



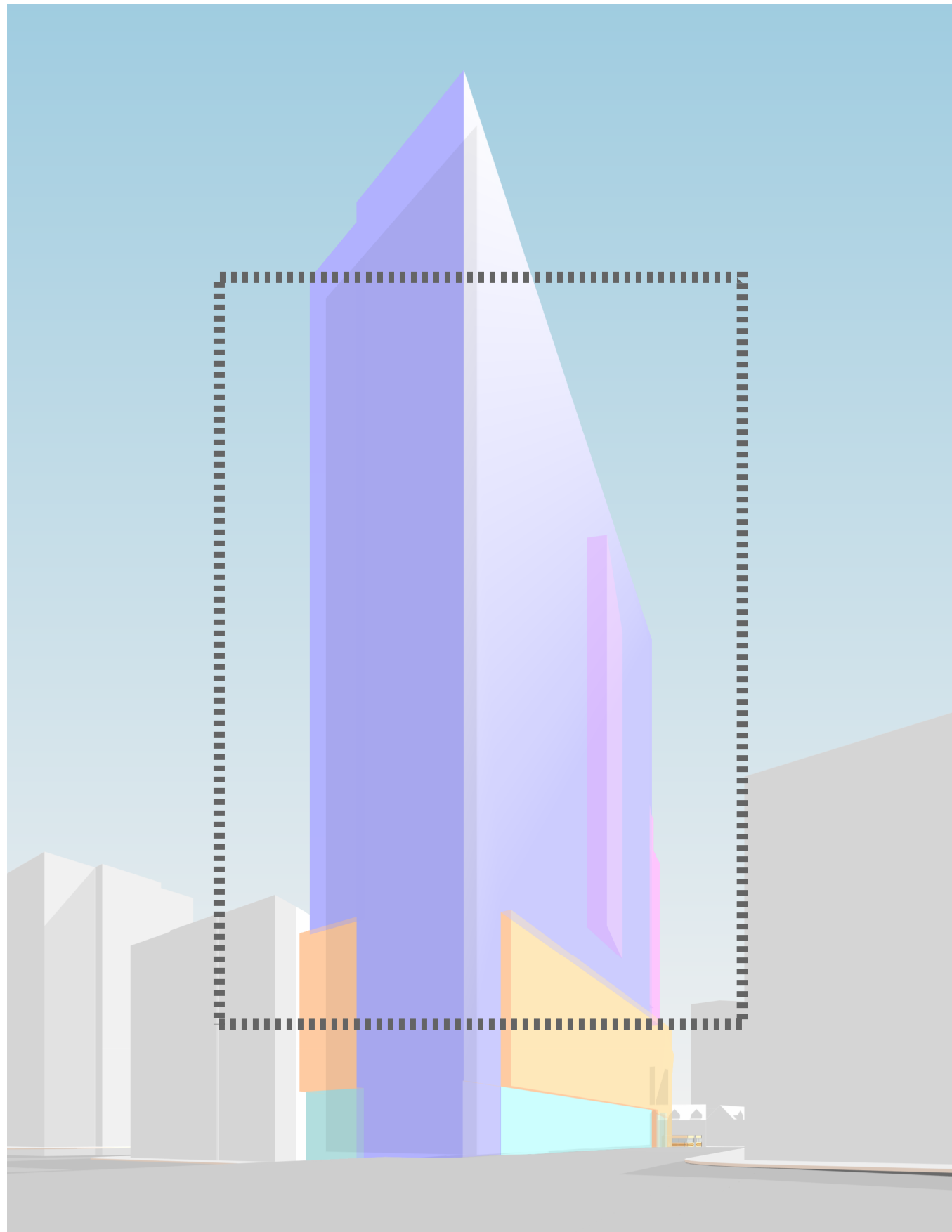
BUILDING BASE DESIGN

Roadside Development

10/04/2023
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8676 Georgia Ave

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ARCHITECTS



ILLUSTRATIVE VIEW FROM GEORGIA AVENUE



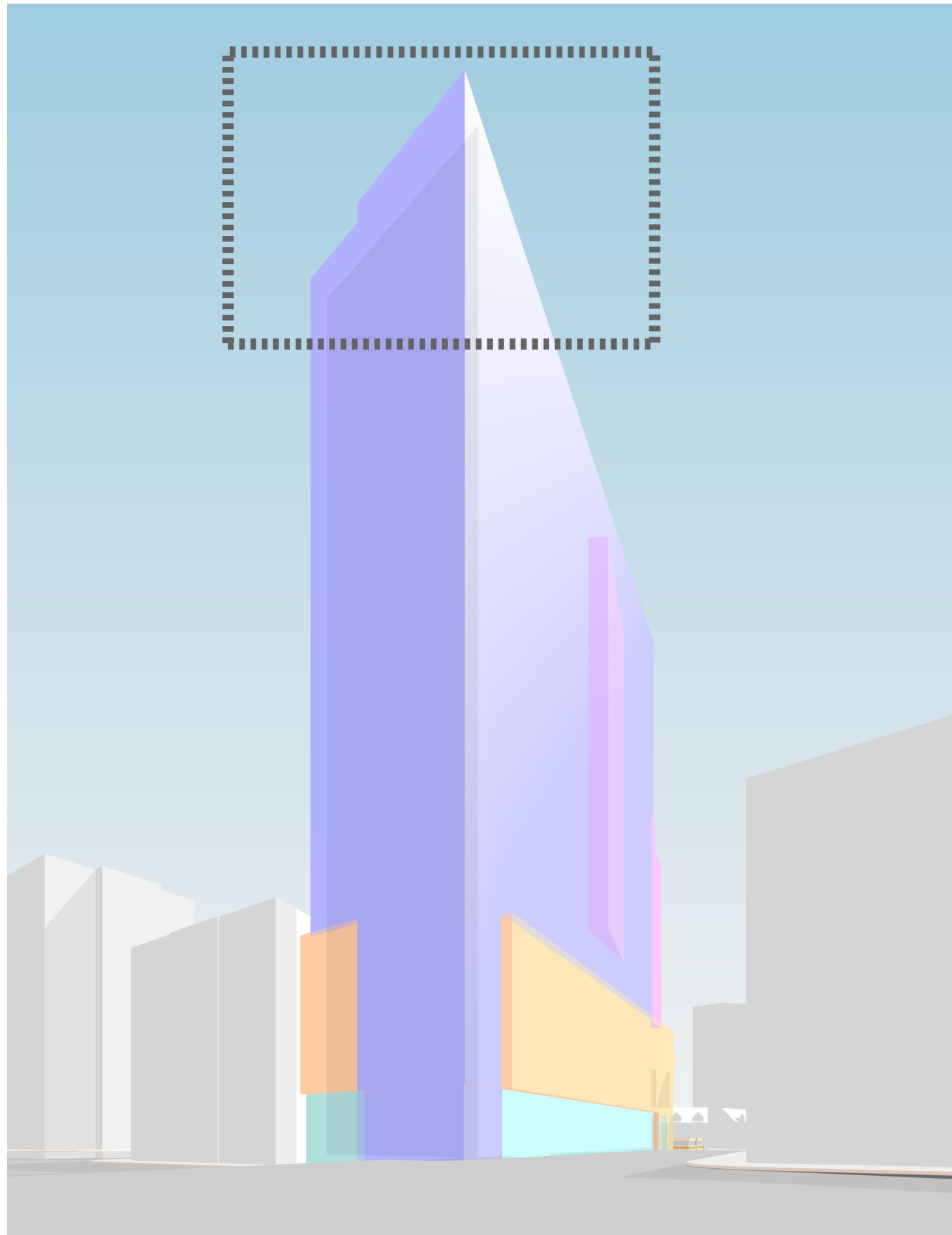
BUILDING MIDDLE DESIGN

Roadside Development

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ILLUSTRATIVE VIEW FROM GEORGIA AVENUE

Roadside Development

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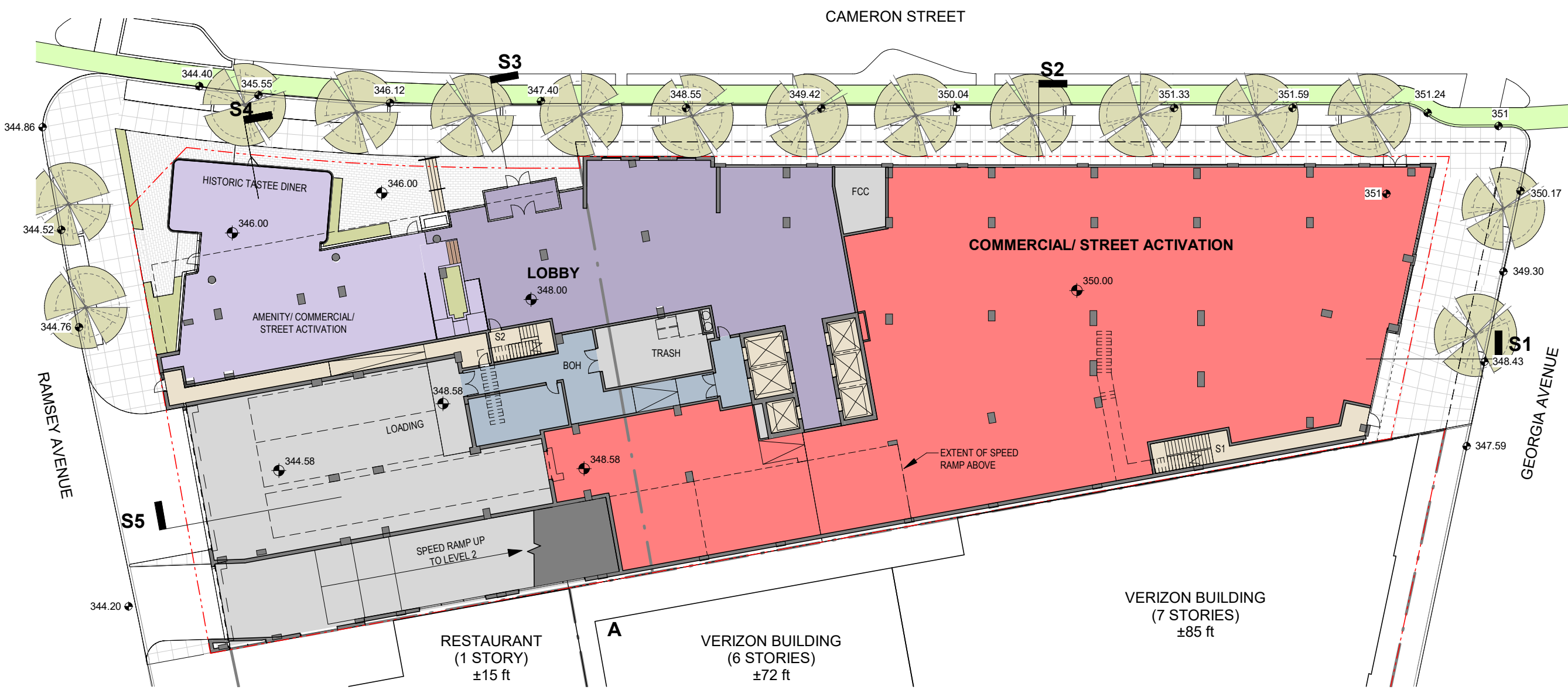
BUILDING TOP DESIGN

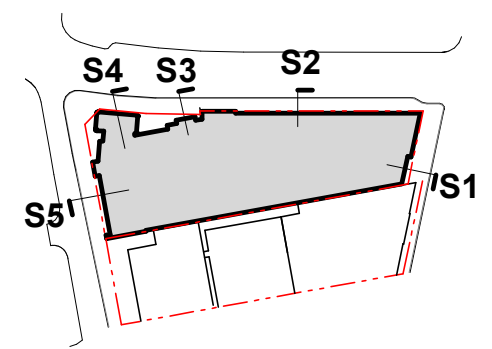
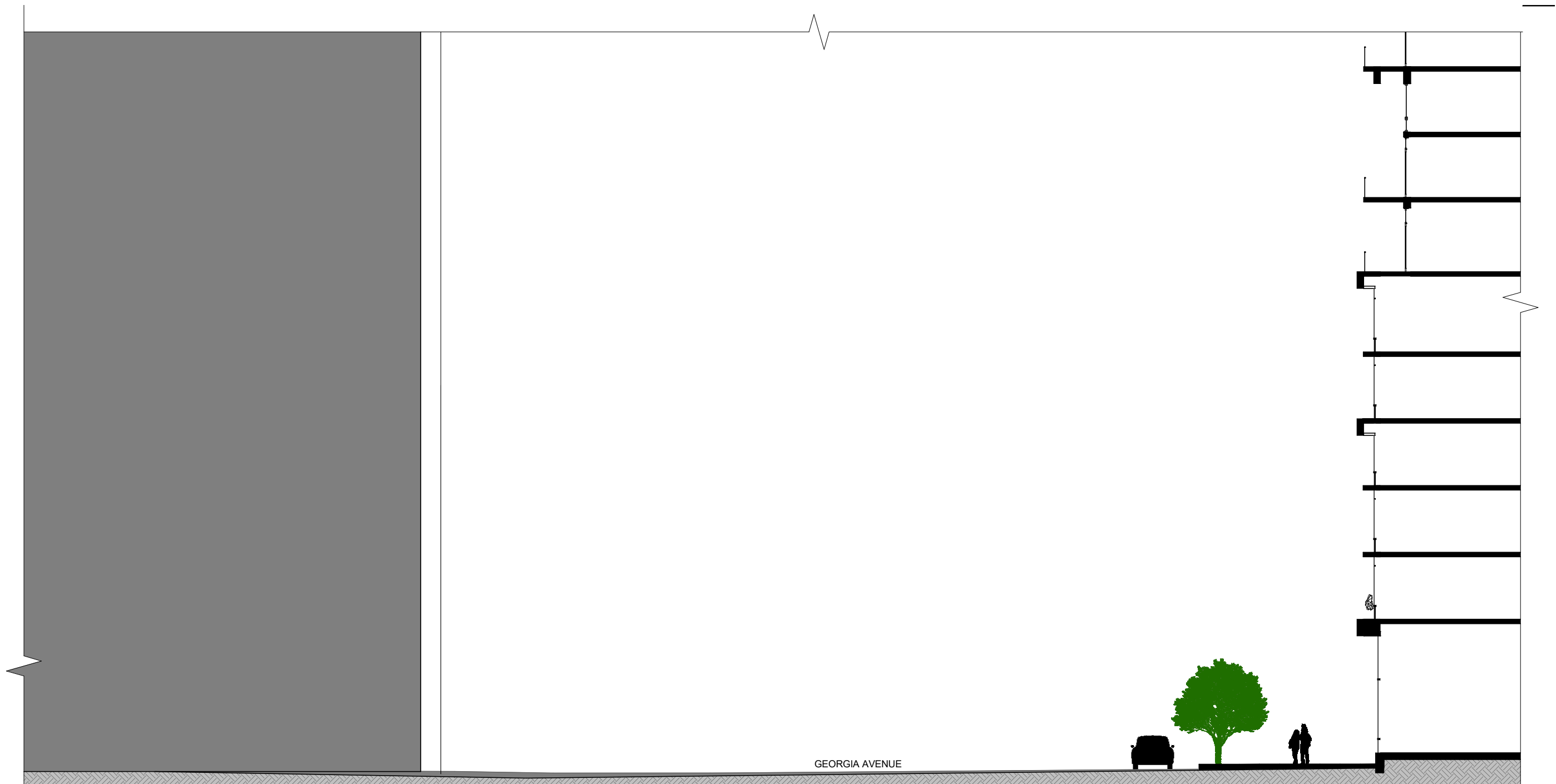
8676 Georgia Ave

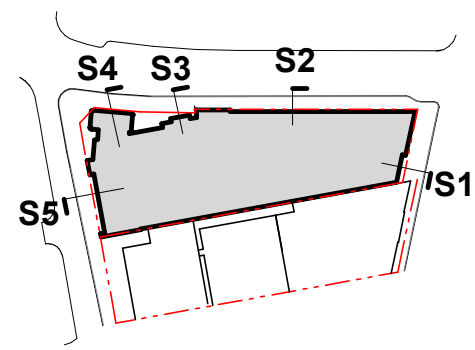
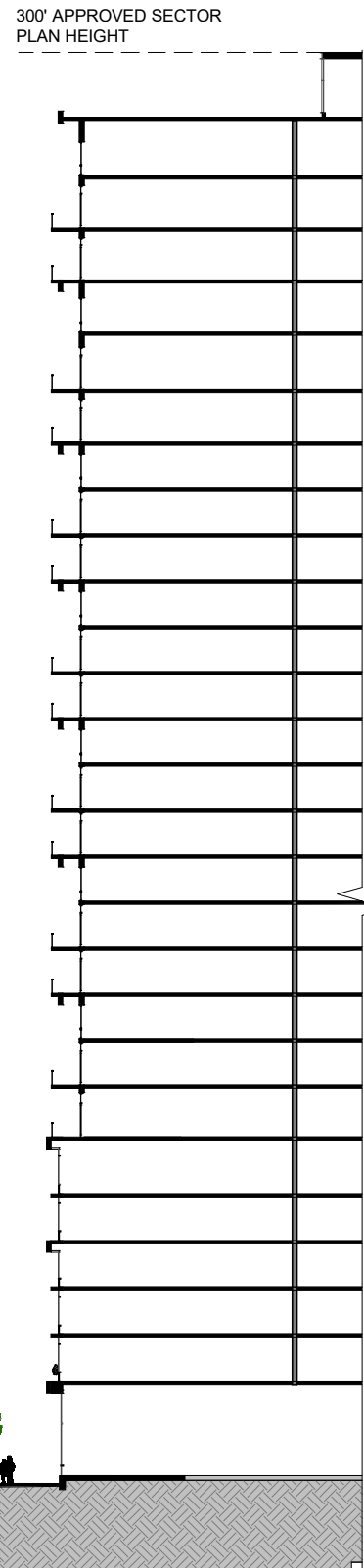
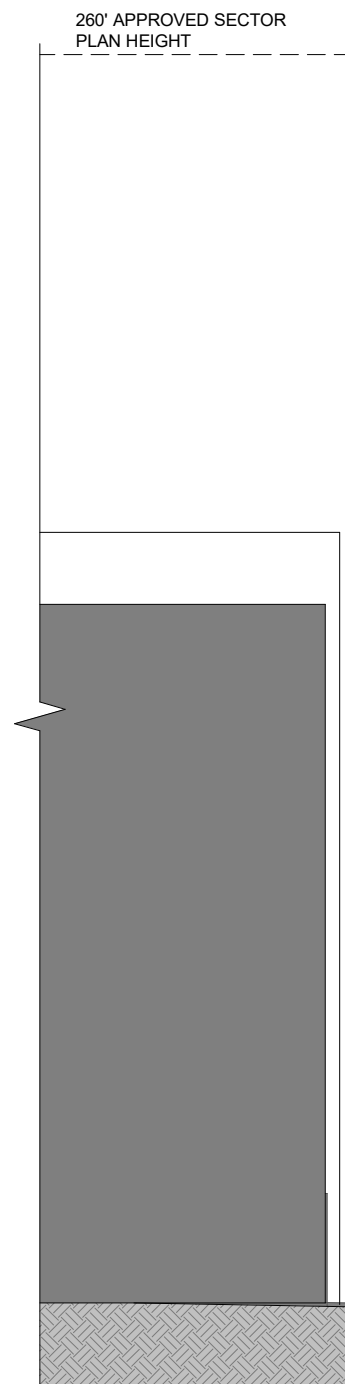
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ARCHITECTS

LEGEND

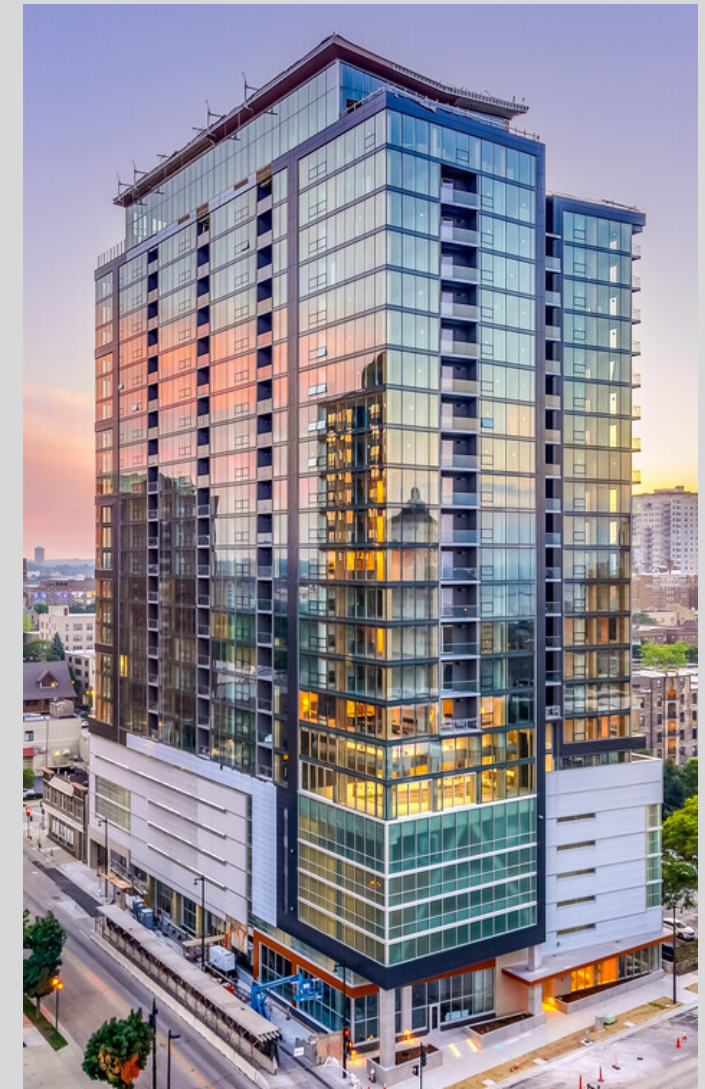
- AMENITY / LOBBY / COMMERICAL / STREET ACTIVATION
- COMERCIAL / STREET ACTIVATION
- CIRCULATION
- COURTYARD/ GREEN AREA
- PUBLIC DECK
- RESIDENTIAL DECK
- POOL
- RESIDENTIAL
- BOH
- LOADING / PARKING
- BUILD-TO LINE
- BIKE LANE

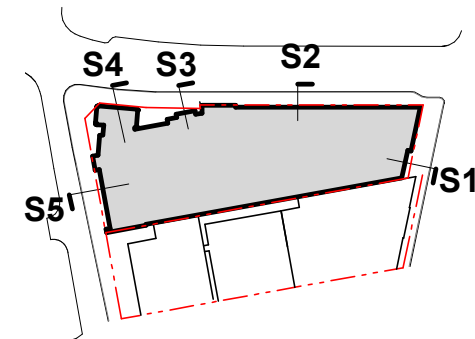
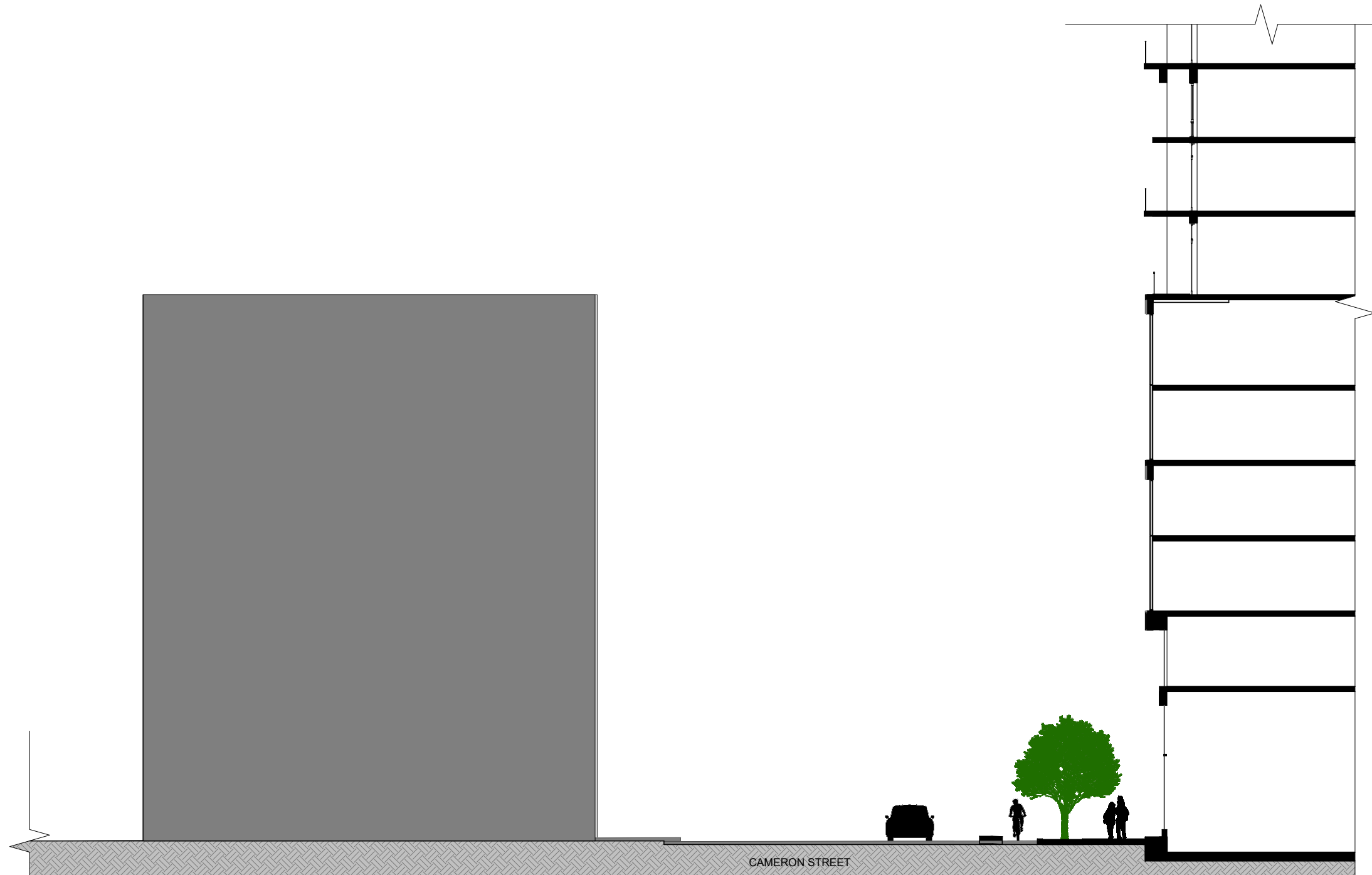




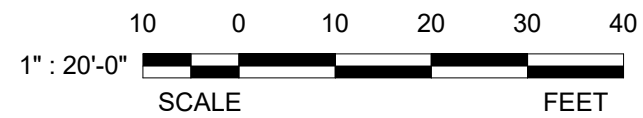


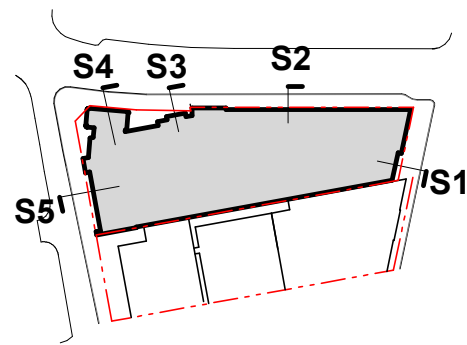
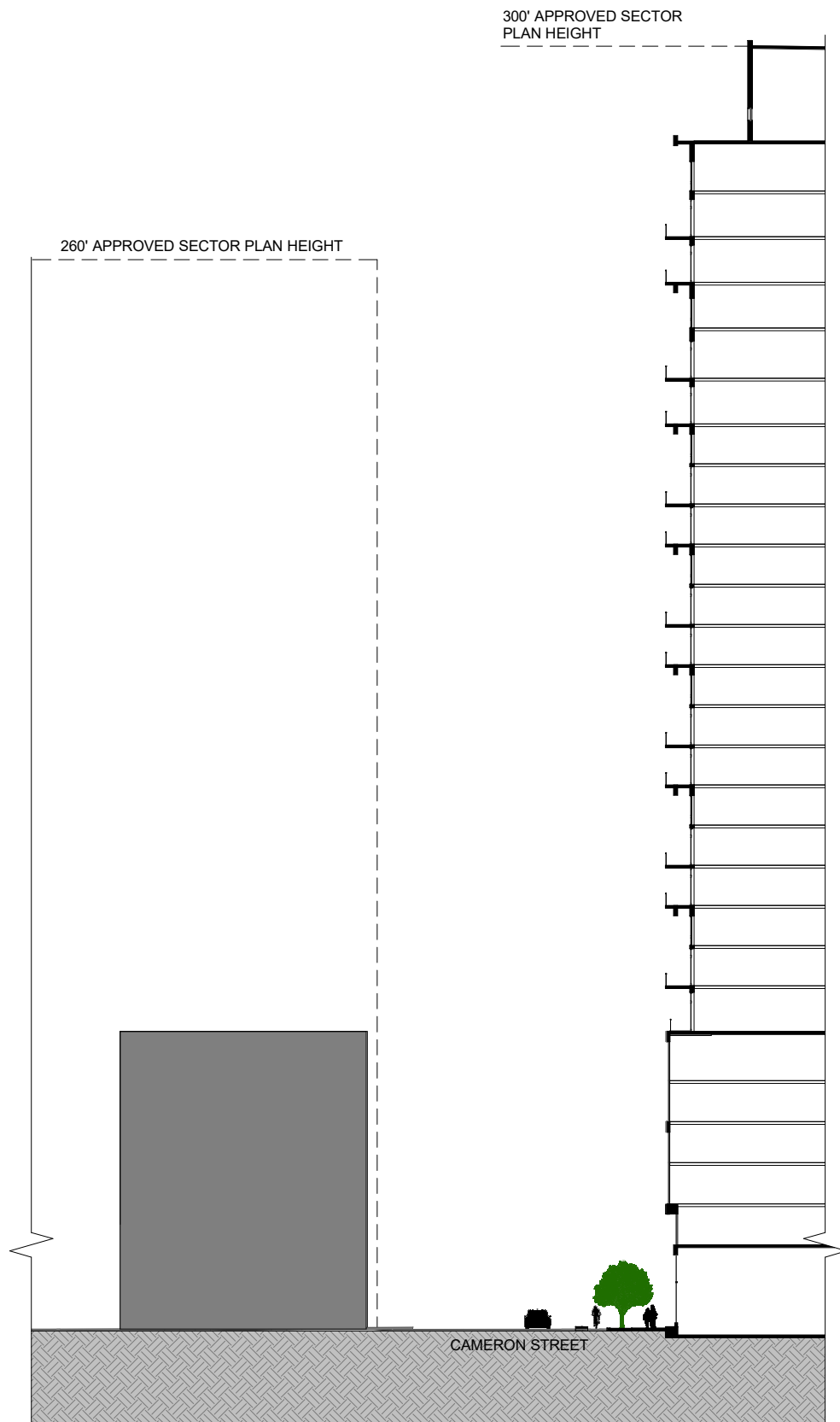
REPRESENTATIVE IMAGES



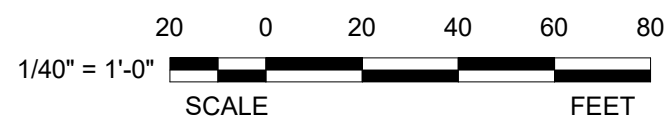
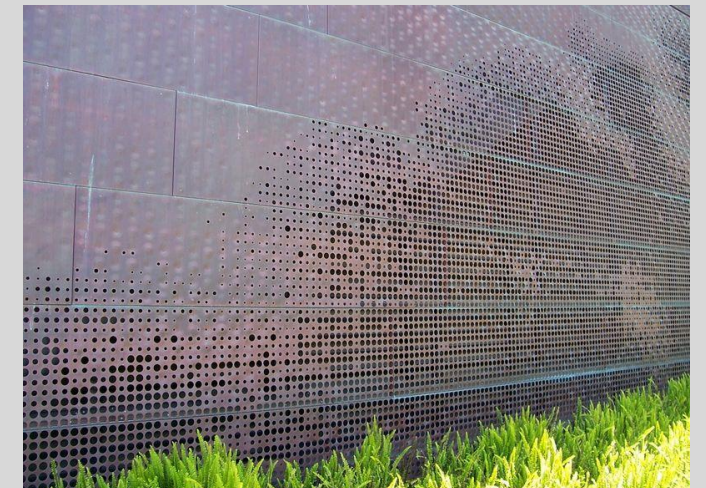
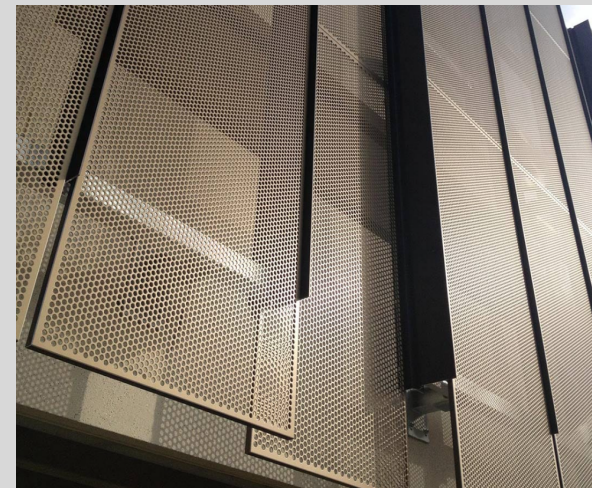


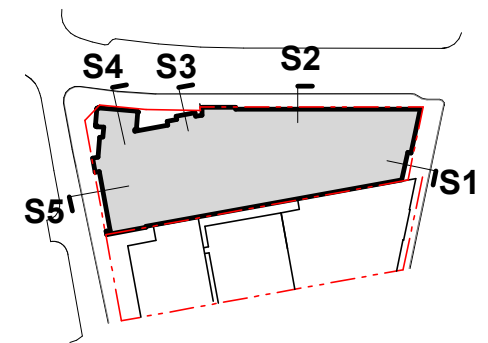
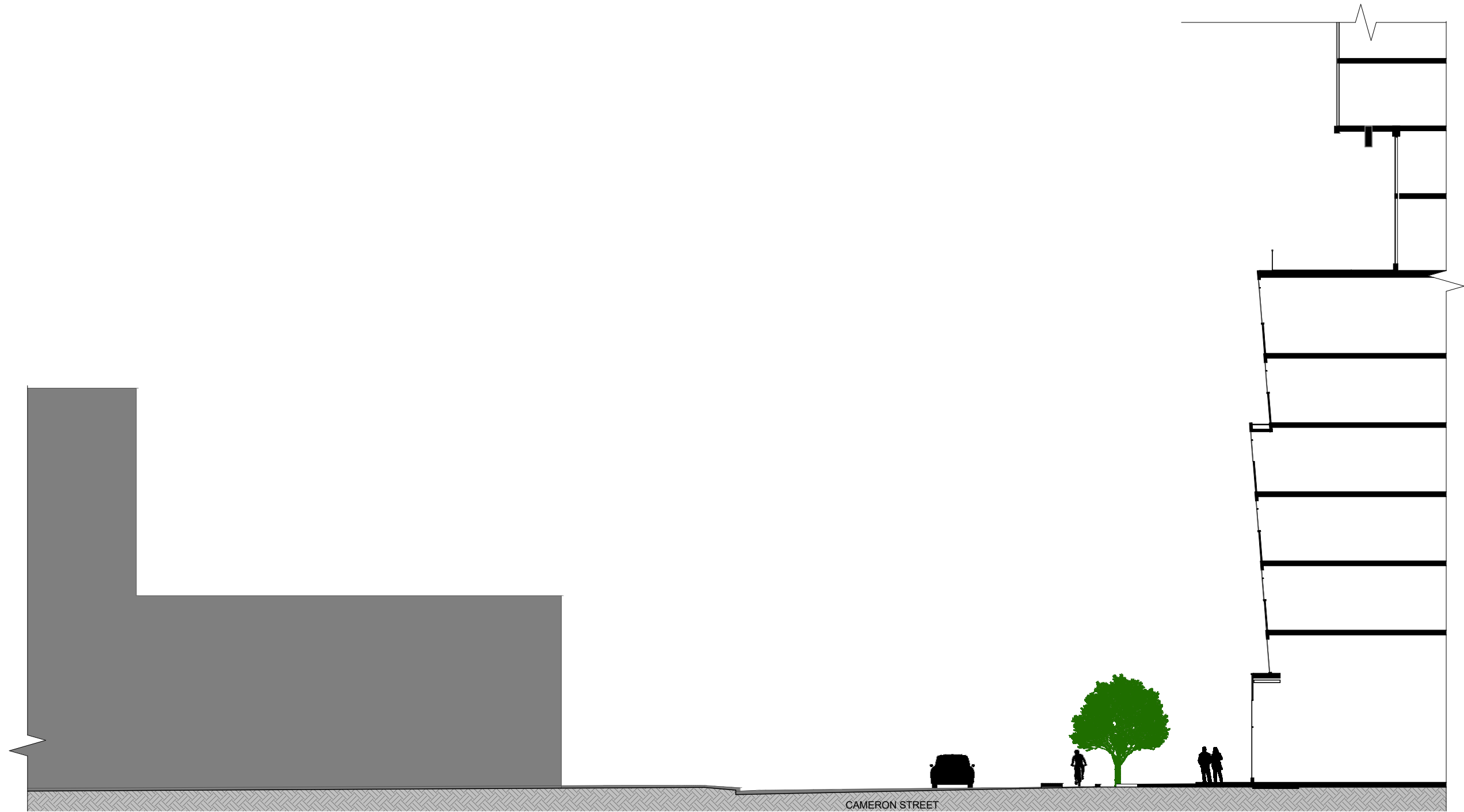
S2- STREET SECTION AT CAMERON STREET (PARTIAL)

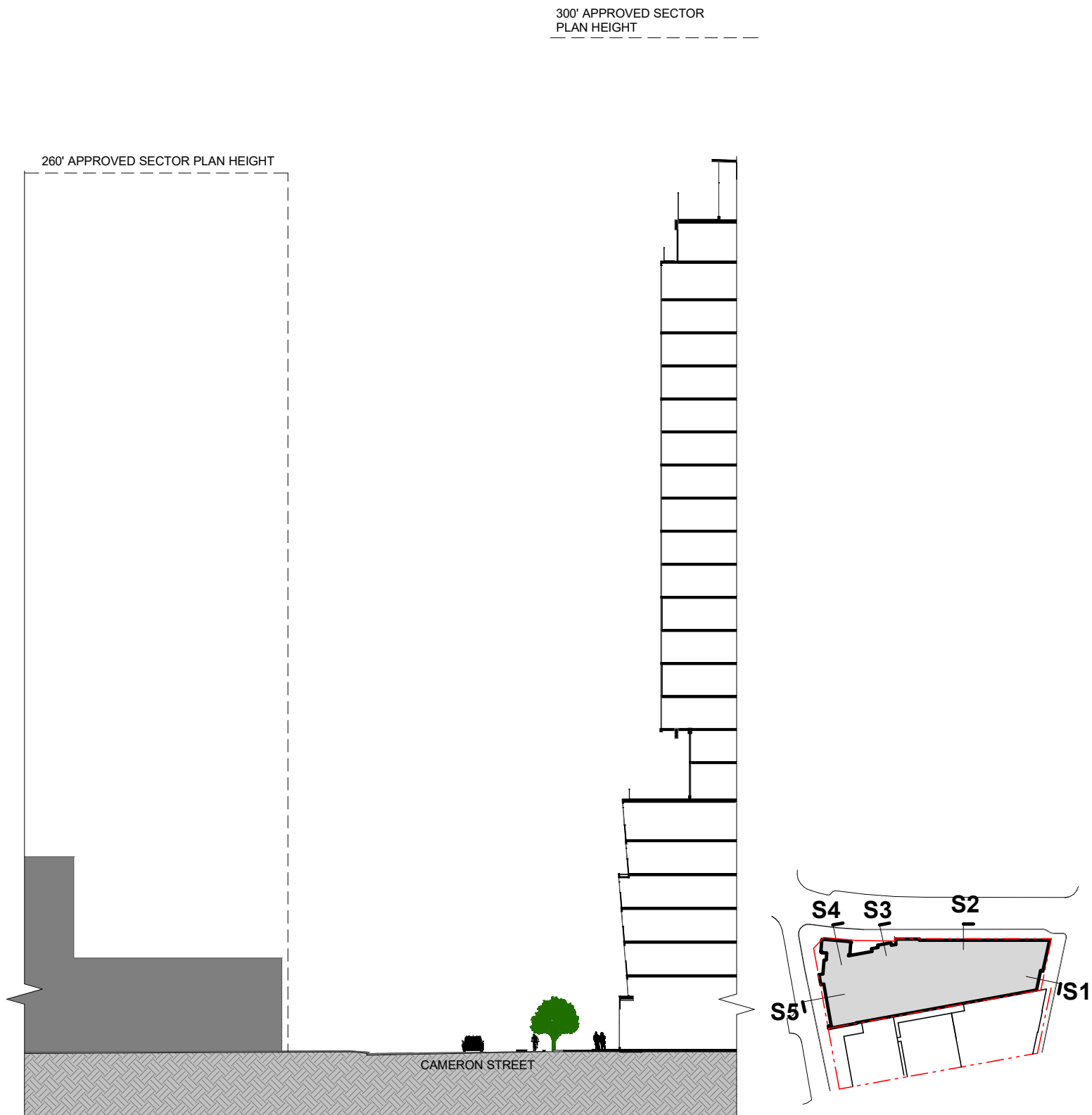




EXAMPLES OF FACADE PLANES AND DEPTH CHANGES

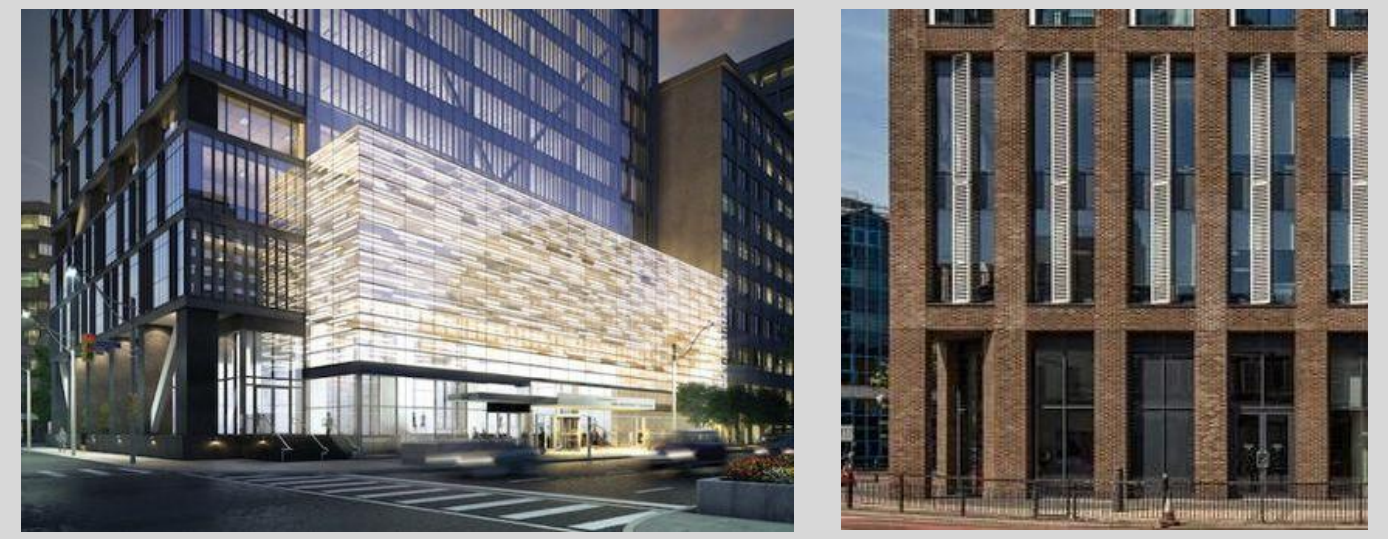


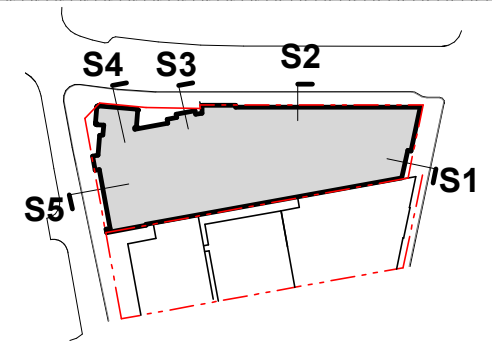
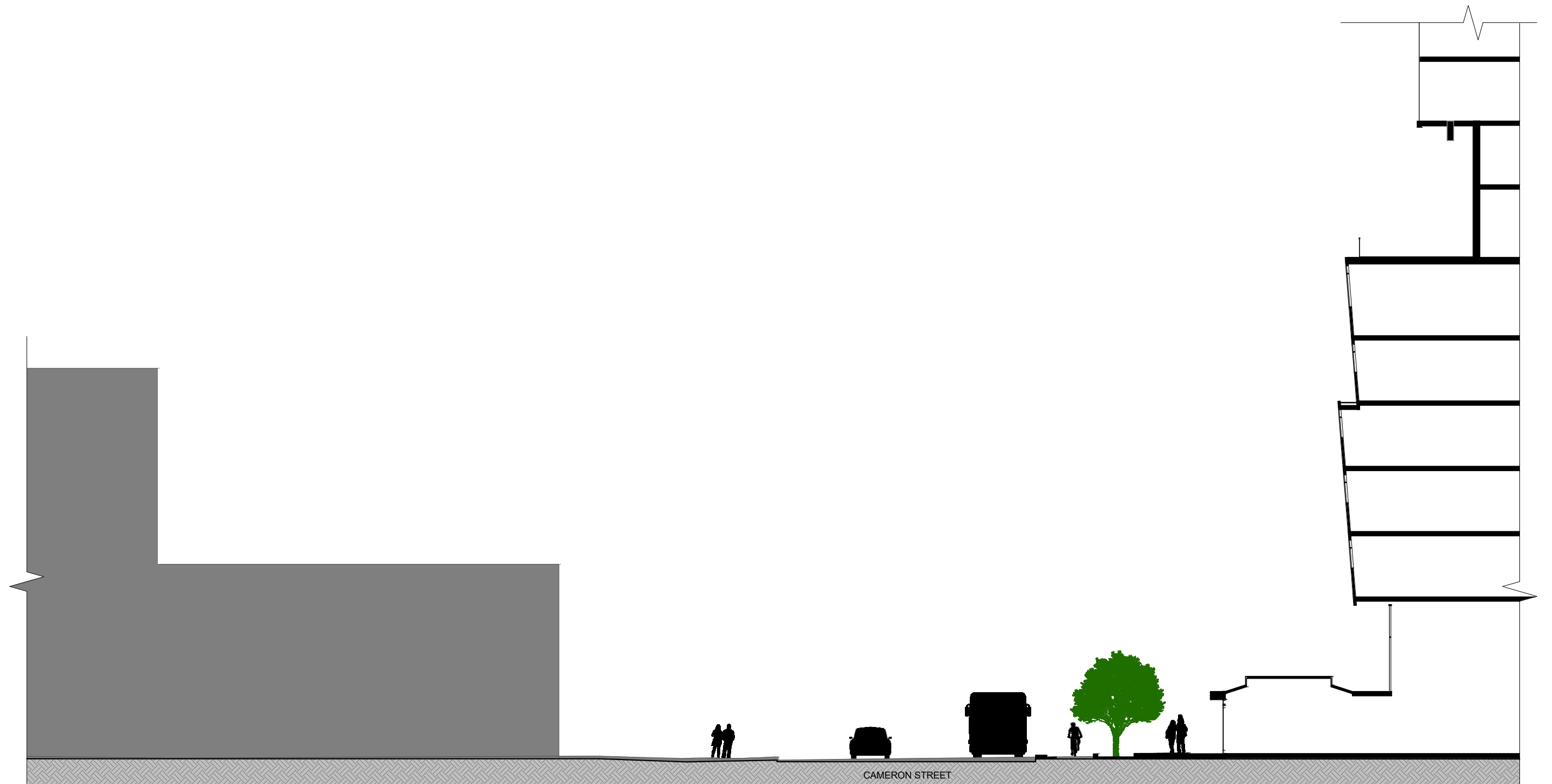




REPRESENTATIVE IMAGES

Emphasis on horizontality at corner of Cameron Street and Ramsey Avenue per HPC Comments.

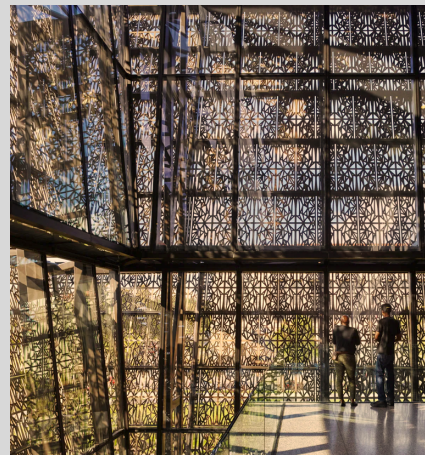




S4 - STREET SECTION AT DINER CAR (PARTIAL)

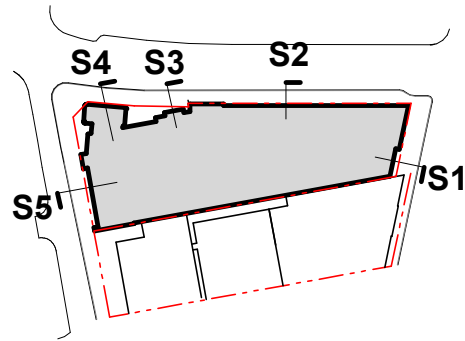
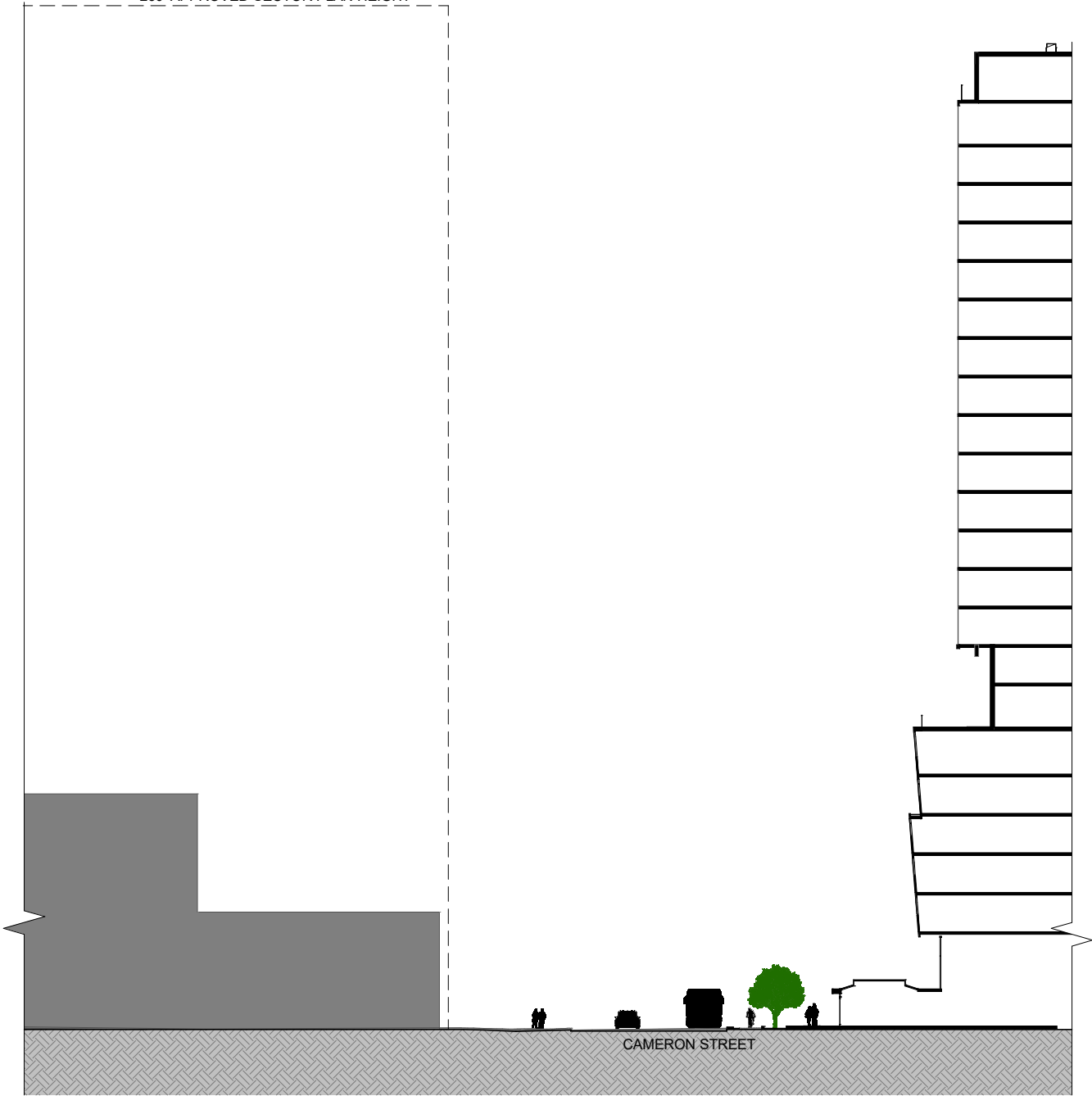
REPRESENTATIVE IMAGES

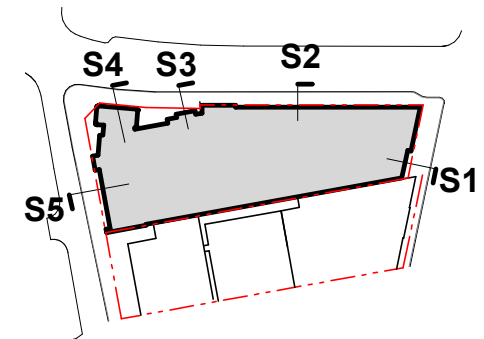
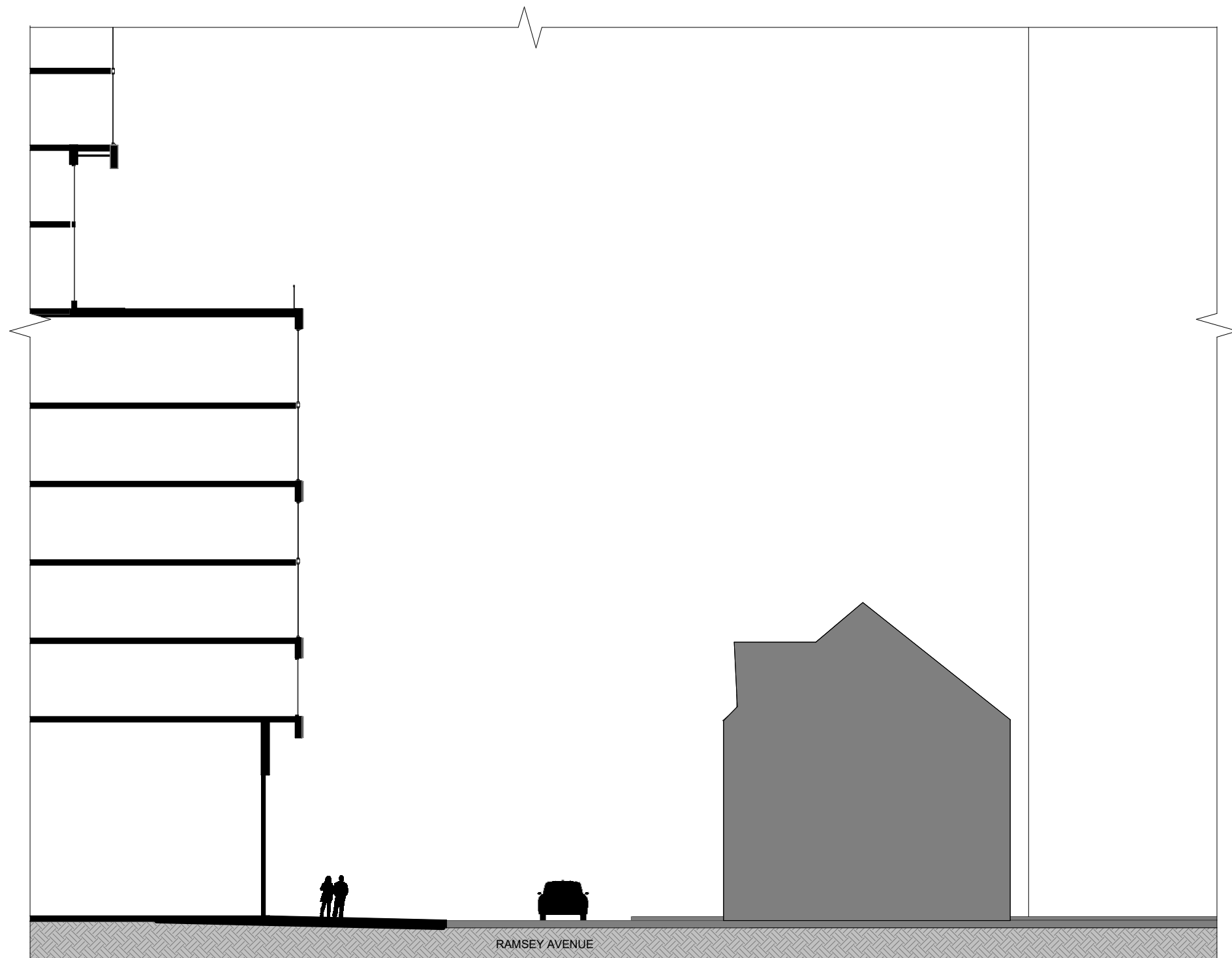
Emphasis on horizontality at Cameron Street and Ramsey Avenue Corner per HPC Comments. Images Show Precedent for Potential Materials



300' APPROVED SECTOR
PLAN HEIGHT

260' APPROVED SECTOR PLAN HEIGHT



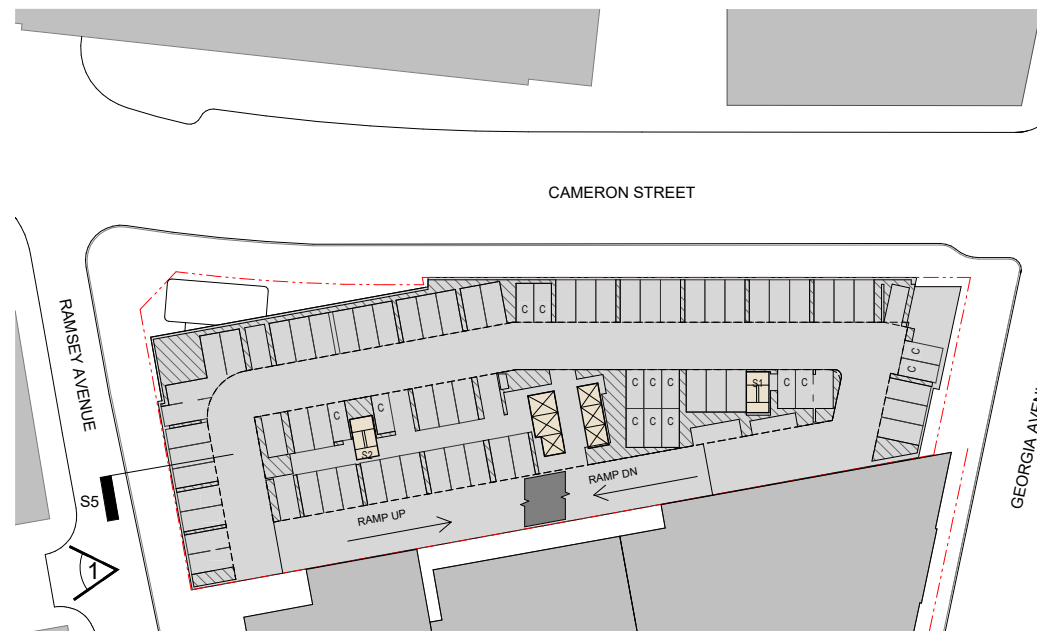
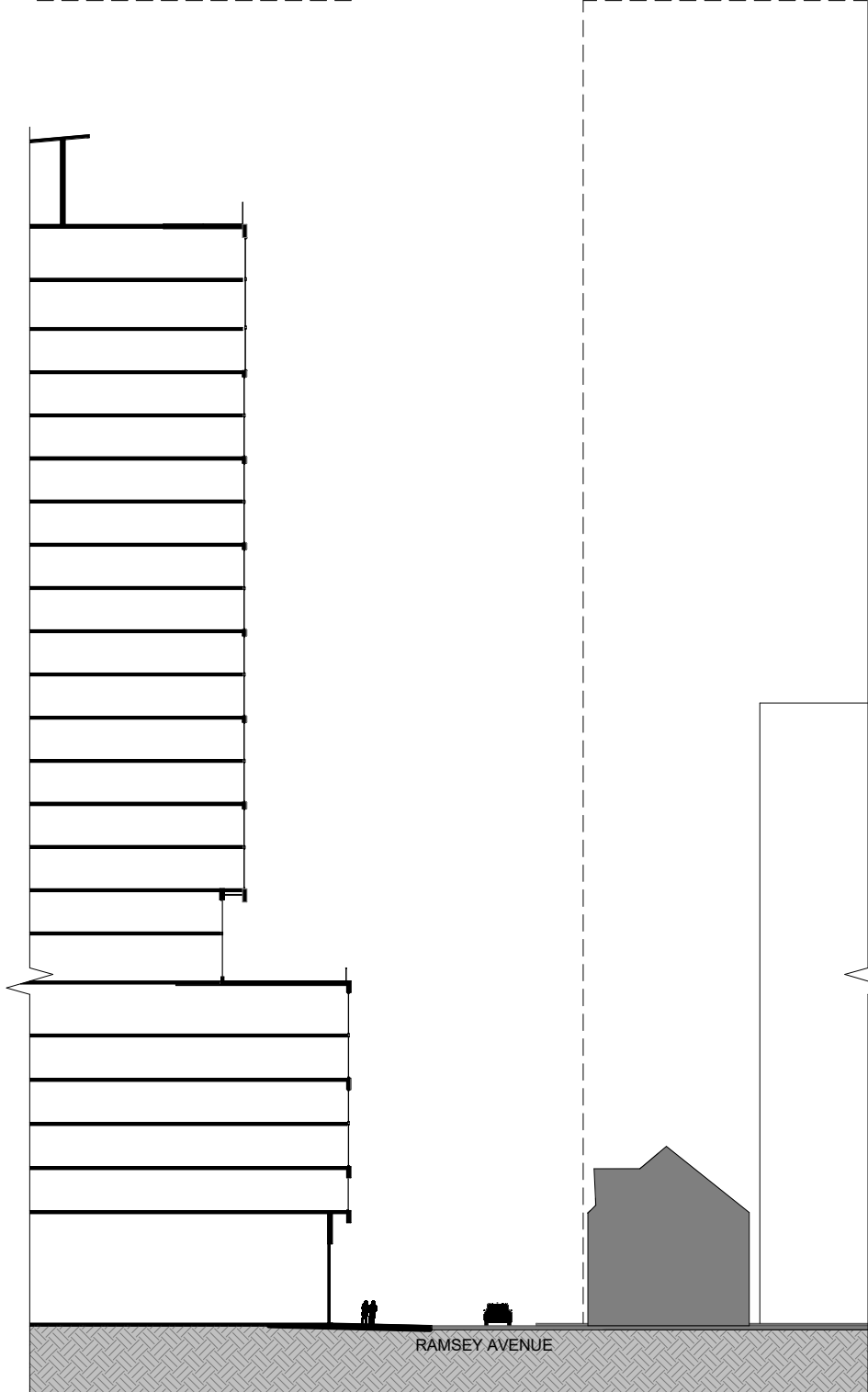


REPRESENTATIVE IMAGES



300' APPROVED
SECTOR PLAN HEIGHT

300' APPROVED
SECTOR PLAN HEIGHT



VIEW 1 FROM RAMSEY AVENUE

