Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel (DAP)

Submission Form (Revised March 2020)

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name	7475 Wisconsin Avenue
File Number(s)	TBD
Project Address	7475 Wisconsin Avenue and 4650 East West Highway

Plan Type ■ Concept Plan ☐ Sketch Plan ☐ Site Plan ☐ Consultation w/o Plan

APPLICANT TEAM

	Name	Phone	Email
Primary Contact	Nick Gordon	240 418 0189	Ngordon@mrprealty.com
Architect	Chris Huffer, SK+I Architecture	240 479 7484	chuffer@skiarch.com
Landscape Architect			

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

	Zone	Proposed Height	Proposed Density (SF/FAR)	Requested BOZ Density (SF/FAR)	MPDU %
Project Data	CR 5, C 5,R 4.75, H 290/175	Up to 302'	Up to 439,000 sq. ft.	0	17.6%
Proposed Land Uses	Multi family residential and retail				

DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL SUBMISSION PROCESS & REQUIREMENTS

1. Schedule a Design Advisory Panel review date with the Design Advisory Panel Liaison.

2. At least two weeks prior to the scheduled Panel meeting, provide via email to the Design Advisory Panel Liaison the completed Submission Form and required drawings in PDF format. Incomplete applications will be returned for revision. **Applications deemed incomplete by the 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 3-D model that show the proposal in the built context, as well as with nearby buildings approved by the Planning Board. (Bring the 3-D model to the Panel review.)
   - 3-D building massing diagrams illustrating:
     - both strict conformance with the design guidelines and the proposed design, indicating where the proposal does not conform and how the alternative treatments meet the intent of the guidelines
     - the maximum standard method of development density on site
     - the maximum mapped density on site
   - Precedent images showing scale, architectural character, materiality, etc. (Concept & Sketch Plans only).

   Except as noted, Site Plan applications must include all of the above, as well as, at a minimum:
   - 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 Bethesda. Simple compliance with the numerical standards in the Design Guidelines does not in itself achieve Design Excellence.

STREET TYPE(S): Urban Boulevard (Wisconsin and East West)

	Recommended	Provided	Alternative Compliance?
Sidewalk Zone			
Planting/Furnishing Zone	6 10'	6'-14'	
Pedestrian Though Zone	10 20'	10'-13'	
Frontage Zone	0 10'	3'-5'	
Building Placement			
Build-to Line (from street curb)	25 30'	25'-32'	
Building Form			
Base Height	3 6 stories	60'	
Step-Back	10 15'	2'-42'	

DOES THE PROJECT INCLUDE A THROUGH-BLOCK CONNECTION OR TRAIL? ☐ Yes ■ No

- If yes, please provide sectional diagrams demonstrating conformance with Section 2.1.9 of the Guidelines

DOES THE PROJECT INCLUDE A SECTOR-PLAN RECOMMENDED PARK OR OPEN SPACE? ☐ Yes ■ No

- If yes, please provide diagrams demonstrating conformance with Section 2.2 of the Guidelines

BUILDING FORM

	Recommended	Provided	Alternative Compliance?
Tower			
Separation Distance	45-60’	12' 25'	
Step-Back	Per Street Type	2' 22' (Wisc) 2' 42' (E W)	
Bulk Reduction Methods			

IS THE PROJECT LOCATED IN A DISTRCT IDENTIFIED IN CHAPTER 3 OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES? ☐ Yes ■ No

- If yes, please provide diagrams demonstrating conformance with the District-Specific Guidelines

EXCEPTIONAL DESIGN POINTS REQUESTED (MIN: 10, MAX: 30): 20

- 10 Points: Generally consistent with the Design Guidelines and meets four of the CR Guideline Criteria
- 20 Points: Superlative design that in a uniquely compelling way meets the Design Guidelines or overcomes a significant site or similar constraint; a top example of design within Montgomery County
- 30 Points: Singular design that exemplifies the highest intent of the Design Guidelines and may be considered a top example of design within the Mid-Atlantic region

7475 Wisconsin Avenue & 4650 East West Highway
Design Advisory Panel Submittal
CRR Plan No. E20260040

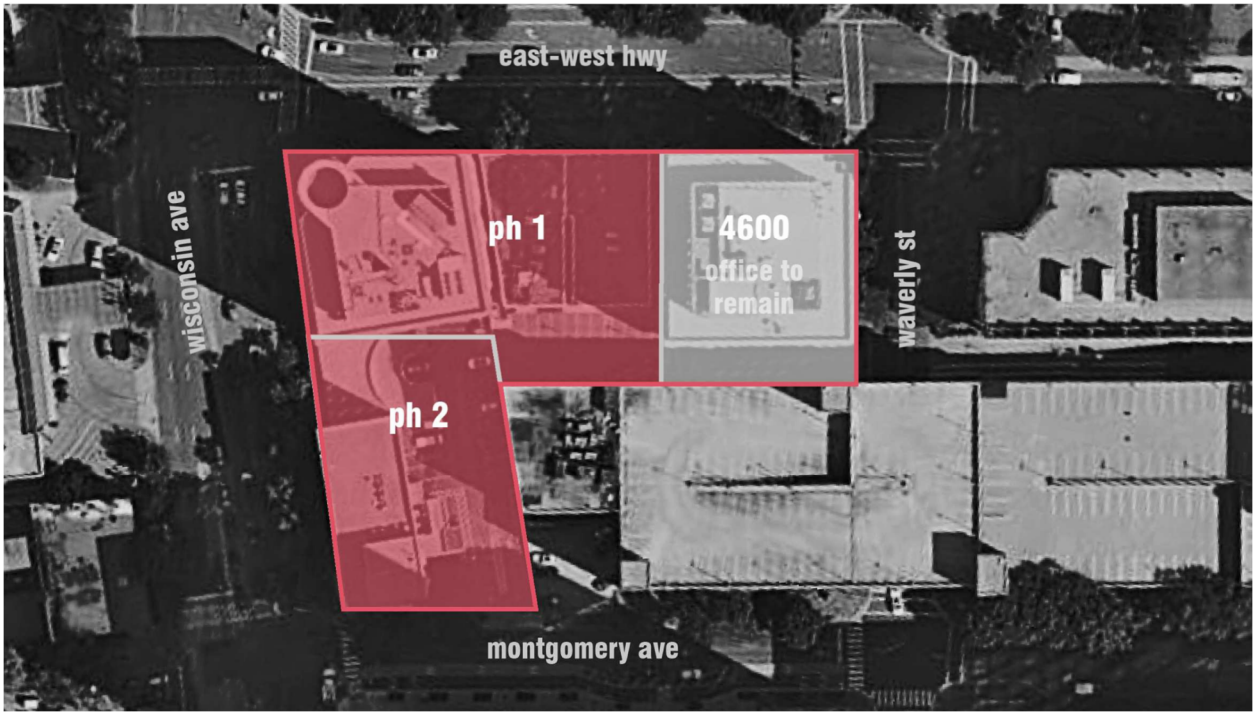
I. Brief Project Description and Urban Design Concept

Bethesda Crescent 7475 Owner LLC (the "Applicant")[1] recently acquired four (4) parcels that wrap the prominent intersections of Wisconsin Avenue with East West Highway (to the north), Waverly Street (to the east), and Montgomery Avenue (to the south) (collectively, the "Assembled Site"). The Assembled Site includes the following properties (also illustrated below in red): (a) 7401 Wisconsin Avenue located at the northeast corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Montgomery Lane (improved with a 5-story office building); (b) 7475 Wisconsin Avenue located at the southeast corner of Wisconsin Avenue and East West Highway (improved with a 11-story office building); (c) 4650 East West Highway located mid-block on the south side of East West Highway (improved with a 2-story office building); and (d) 4600 East West Highway located at the southeast intersection of East West Highway and Waverly Street (improved with a 9-story office building). The Assembled Site consists of approximately 2.59 acres of tract area.

The office buildings located at 7475 Wisconsin Avenue and 4650 East West Avenue (the "Phase 1 Property") have struggled to meet market demands for office space in Downtown Bethesda and each have no tenants in more than 50% of their respective buildings. As a result, the Applicant is filing an expedited Commercial to Residential Reconstruction Plan ("CRR Plan") in May of 2026

[1] The Applicant is a joint venture comprised of MRP Realty and Prime Finance.

to allow for demolition of the vacant office buildings and development of a multi-family building on the Phase 1 Property. While the Applicant anticipates that the office building located at 4600 East West Highway will continue to compete for market share in the longer term, it may pursue a subsequent CRR Plan for the office building located at 7401 Wisconsin Avenue for a Phase 2 multi-family building in the future (the "Phase 2 Property"). The Phase 1 Property and Phase 2 Property are illustrated below.



The Applicant is pursuing a Concept Plan for redevelopment of the Phase 1 Property with ±420 multi-family dwelling units (including up to 17.6% Moderately Priced Dwelling Units, or "MPDUs"), ground floor retail and amenity space, underground parking, and ±11,500 square feet of public open space (the "Project"). The Applicant currently estimates that the Project will include approximately 439,000 square feet of residential and retail gross floor area that is served by ±274 below grade structured parking spaces. The Project proposes to maximize the zoned height of the Phase 1 Property with additional height (12' or 1 story) for increased MPDUs to achieve a maximum height of 302' at the corner of Wisconsin Avenue and East-West Highway and a step-down mid-block to a height of 187' to the eastern portion of the Phase 1 Property.

The Phase 1 Property is zoned CR-5.0, C-5.0, R-4.75, H-290 and CR-5.0, C-5.0, R-4.75, H-175 within the Bethesda Overlay Zone. The Phase 1 Property is located in the Wisconsin Avenue Corridor (as defined in the Approved and Adopted Downtown Bethesda Sector Plan – "Sector Plan") of Downtown Bethesda. The Sector Plan identifies the Phase 1 Property as Map #123 and Map #125 with the following recommendations:

- Rezone Map #123 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 103 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 290 feet to

provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.

- Rezone Map #125 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions. (Sector Plan, p. 102-103).

The Property is located immediately to the east of the Bethesda Metro Station, with direct pedestrian access to the Metro Station provided through a tunnel from the Phase 1 Property under Wisconsin Avenue. There is one (1) curb cut along the Phase 1 Property's East West Highway frontage, and access is also provided through an internal alley from Wavely Street to the existing improvements on the Assembled Site.

The Applicant is submitting updated plans and detailed elevations for the DAP review concurrent with its filing of an expedited CRR Plan and to respond to the DAP's comments from its presentation on January 28, 2026.

II. Response to DAP Comments from Concept Plan

At the conclusion of the Applicant's Concept Plan presentation to the DAP on January 28, 2026, the Applicant was asked to come back with a design that addressed comments relating to the updated Metro entrance and balconies at the corner of Wisconsin Avenue and East West Highway. We have summarized those comments based on the published DAP meeting minutes and the Applicant's response below.

A. **Metro entrance.** *There are two alternatives to consider, either making it more muscular and covered and protected at the corner, or having the Metro entrance located elsewhere, prominently within the base and integrated into the building.*

o A mixture of the two, study both. Integrate it into a big move or integrate it into the building.

In response to this comment, the Applicant has decided to integrate the entrance into the corner of the building with a covered and protected stairway that provides for direct access to the tunnel underneath Wisconsin Avenue. The updated design continues to include a jump elevator along the Wisconsin Avenue frontage that provides a secondary access point to the tunnel beneath Wisconsin Avenue. The jump elevator incorporates a securable interior vestibule at grade. The Applicant took the DAP's recommendation to simplify the architectural façade to allow it to dictate the ground plane design and make the Metro access a secondary design feature of the Project.

B. **Balconies**. T*here seems to be a lack of clarity on some of the facades as they go up, the building is trying to make up its mind of what it wants to be. I am always a proponent of simplicity, and those balconies seem less intentional.*

The façade planes have been simplified to critical moves allowing the overall mass take priority and downplaying the prominence of the balconies. This simplification of the balcony expression in turn, simplifies the detailing.

III. Updated Design and Exceptional Design Public Benefit Points

In addressing the DAP comments, The Project's overall massing has been simplified to create a stronger form, that focusses less on the Metro entrance and more on the presence, visibly and quality of the corner tower. A materiality update to the shorter wing is also incorporated to assist in emphasizing the corner tower as vertical anchor. Through additional refinement and team deliberation, the materiality is simplified to allow for a more subtle articulation of the façade that elevates the design with an understated elegance.

The Applicant is requesting approval of 20 public benefit points in the category of exceptional design based on the following rationale.

Providing innovative solutions in response to the immediate context.

The Project integrates multiple disparate elements from two height envelopes, two main thoroughfares, a private alley, and an existing Metro entrance. Because the Project is featured at the intersection of two urban boulevards, the project needed to establish a strong corner element that could not only express the verticality of its towering height but also be articulated to clearly ground itself. The proposed design negotiates these elements through establishing a definitive base, middle, and top readings, responding to the needs of the site.

At the base it was essential to create active and transparent building frontages and keep loading off the East-West Highway and Wisconsin Ave. An approximately 18' high ground level will be activated by a mix of retail and residential amenities occurring behind tall, glassy storefronts. To reinforce and prioritize the slenderness of the corner tower, the lower wing is setback creating a distinct and vegetative backdrop to the private to outdoor area it looks upon. In order to successfully promote pedestrian activity, the parking and loading entrances are both located off an existing private alley.

Though there's an existing service alley that can be shared with the neighboring office building, in the final condition, the overutilized alley would be further strained. To promote better vehicular circulation and access, an abandoned curb cut along East-West has been re-introduced to provide a new access point.

Creating a sense of place and serves as a landmark.

Serving as one of the landmarks when entering Bethesda from the North, the façades along East-West Highway and Wisconsin Ave needed to come together to frame the prominent intersection of East-West, Wisconsin and Old Georgetown Rd. The visibility is further emphasized by the verticality of the asymmetrical corner treatment, generating interest from any approach to Bethesda. The carefully structured and proportioned façade creates not only a distinct architecture but also creates opportunities for streetscape activation. The Metro access tunnel that presented as one of the many unique nuances to the site, ends up embedding itself as another layer reinforcing how the Project will function as a signature gateway to Bethesda.

Enhancing the public realm in a distinct and original manner.

Using the corner tower as a signaling point and anchor to one of the most active intersections in Bethesda, the Project will serve as a landmark. Though the corner tower serves as anchor, East-West Highway is also identified as a canopy corridor. By setting back the lower wing along East-West Highway, the Project can provide room for more trees and vegetation while simultaneously creating a quaint outdoor space that elicits pedestrian interaction.

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

In keeping with the guidelines, the Project purposefully implements angled setbacks and balconies to create a definitive base, middle, and top. Materiality is simplified for a cohesive whole. The articulation and detailing of the façade materials also allows for a transition between the aforementioned base, middle, top readings while still unifying the tower. Highlighting the setback along East West highway again, aids in reducing the overbulk and emphasizing the slenderness of the corner tower.

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

The Project will host a mix of retail and residential amenity spaces at the ground level, overlooking the sidewalks along Wisconsin Ave and East-West Highway. Residents will be positioned to have access to the adjacent retail along East-West Highway and the Metro entrance next to their front door. While the setback along East-West highway provides a unique engagement with the public realm, the created outdoor spaces also invite a variety of uses that can be used by the space's tenants. The corner tower will host an amenity filled rooftop with indoor to outdoor facilities, all overlooking the evolving Bethesda skyline.

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

The Project is located in the high-performance area of the BOZ, and the building will strive to integrate low-impact development methods into the Project. The methods will include using high efficient mechanical units high-performance façade materials to lower u-value and heat-gain coefficients. The Project is meeting the required 35% green cover through use of intensive green roof, bioretention, and tree canopies. In addition to integrated private balconies, the Project will also include a large outdoor amenity space at the roof to enhance the indoor/outdoor experience.

Conclusion

The proposed CRR Plan will revitalize this prominent corner in the Bethesda Central Business District by replacing two (2) highly vacant and underutilized office buildings with a mixed-use multi-family residential building that activates Wisconsin Avenue and East West Highway. The Applicant respectfully requests that the DAP provide favorable feedback on the design of the Project, and also recommend that the Project receive 20 design excellence public benefit points, to the Planning Board.

Very truly yours,

Selzer Gurvitch Rabin Wertheimer & Polott, P.C.

Matthew M. Gordon

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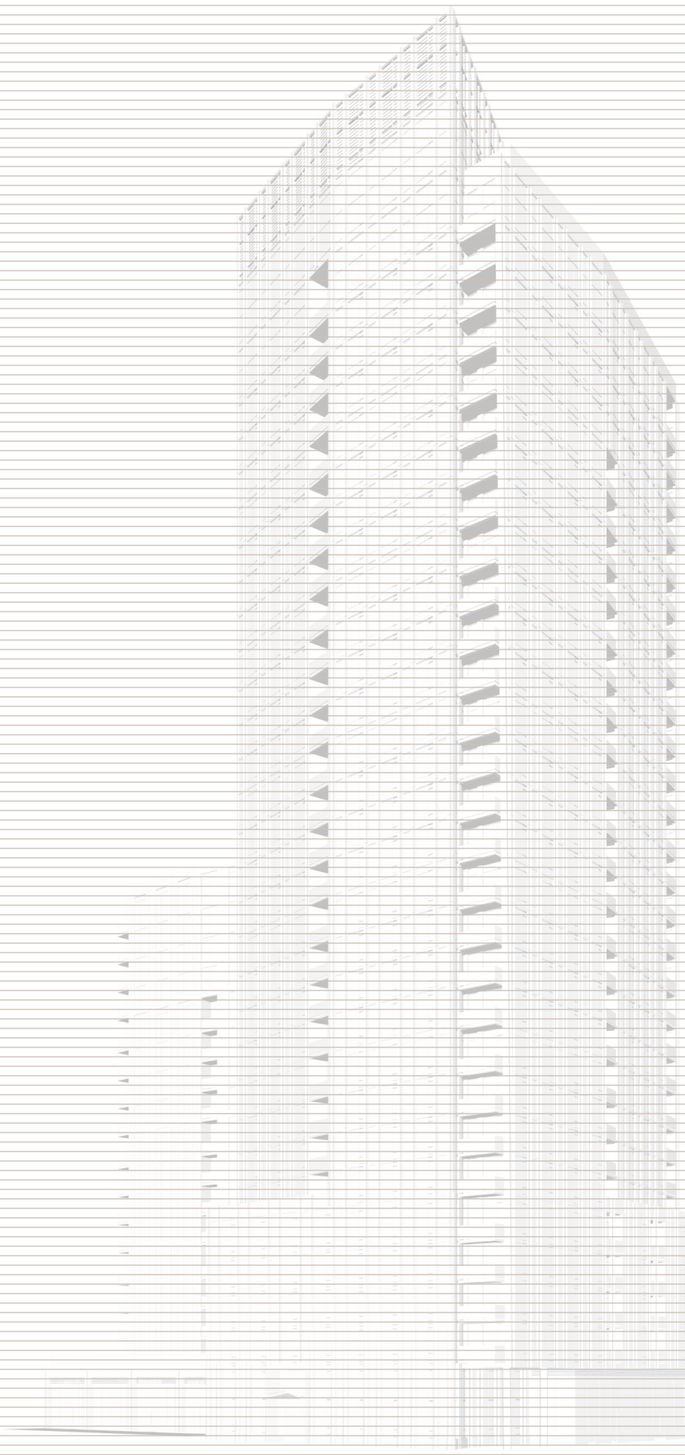
Counsel to Bethesda Crescent 7475 Owner LLC



bethesda crescent

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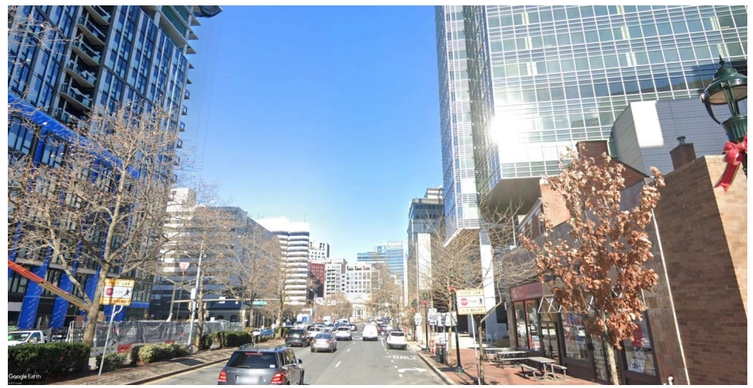
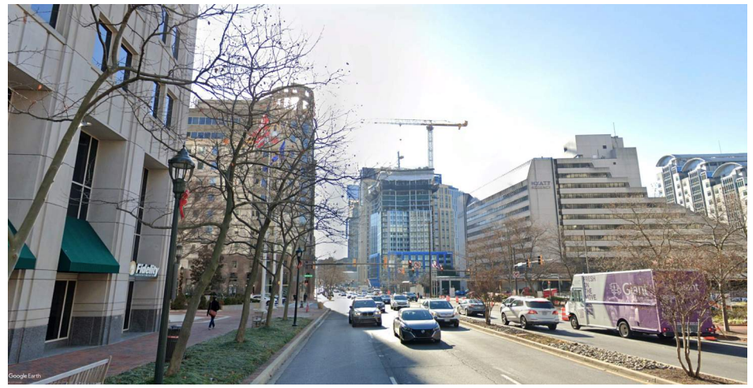
arlington rd
old georgetown rd
edgemoor ln
avondale st
chelten rd
M
site
east-west hwy
montgomery ave
woodmont ave
hampden ln
elm st
waverly st
pearl st
montgomery ave
wisconsin ave

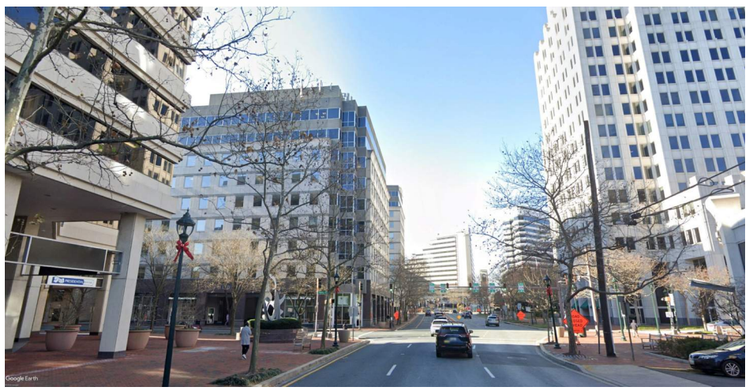
view from old georgetown rd



view of from wisconsin ave looking north



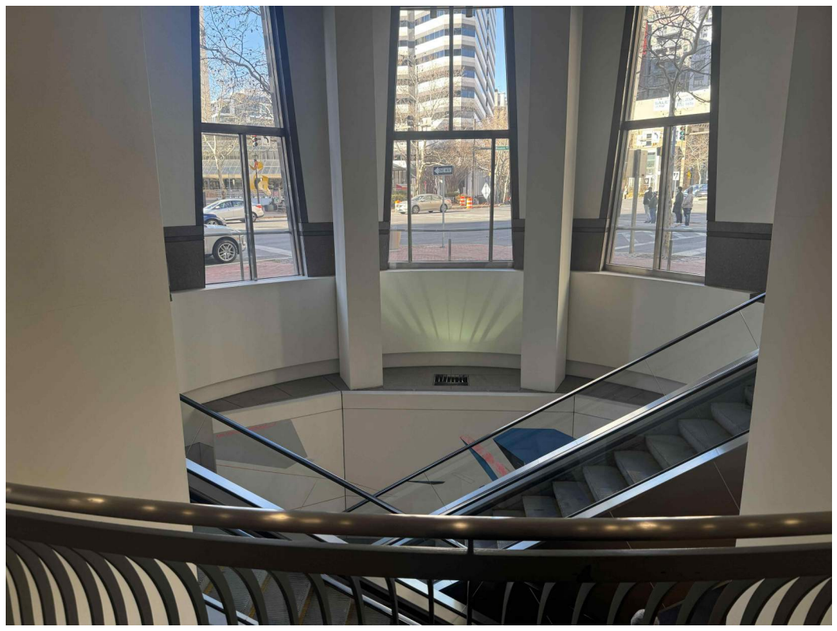
view of from wisconsin ave looking south

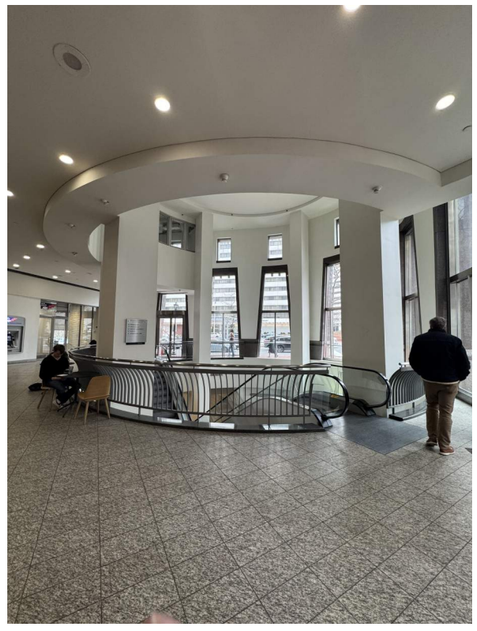


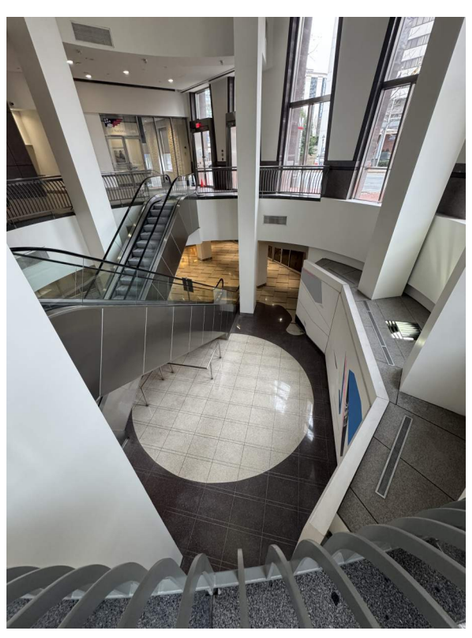
view from east-west highway

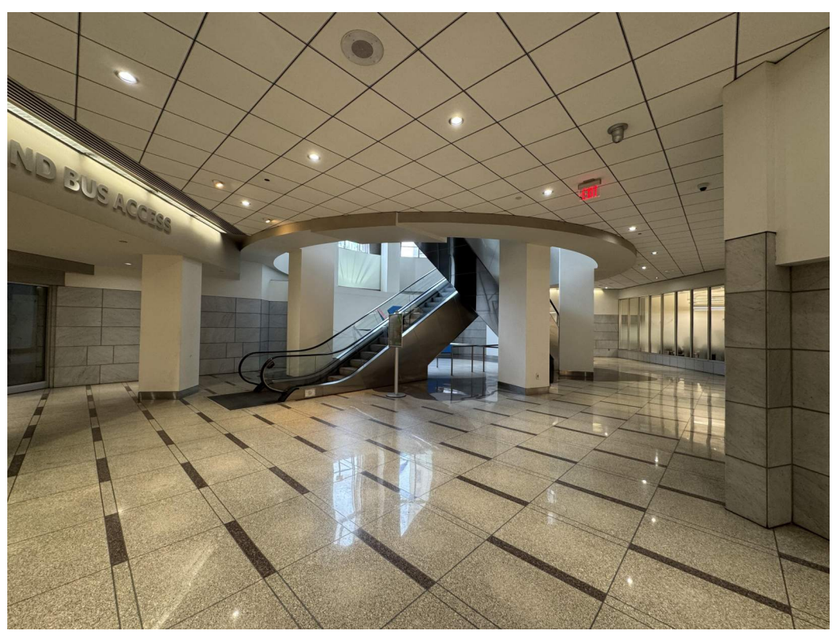
view of base along east-west highway

view of base along wisconsin ave









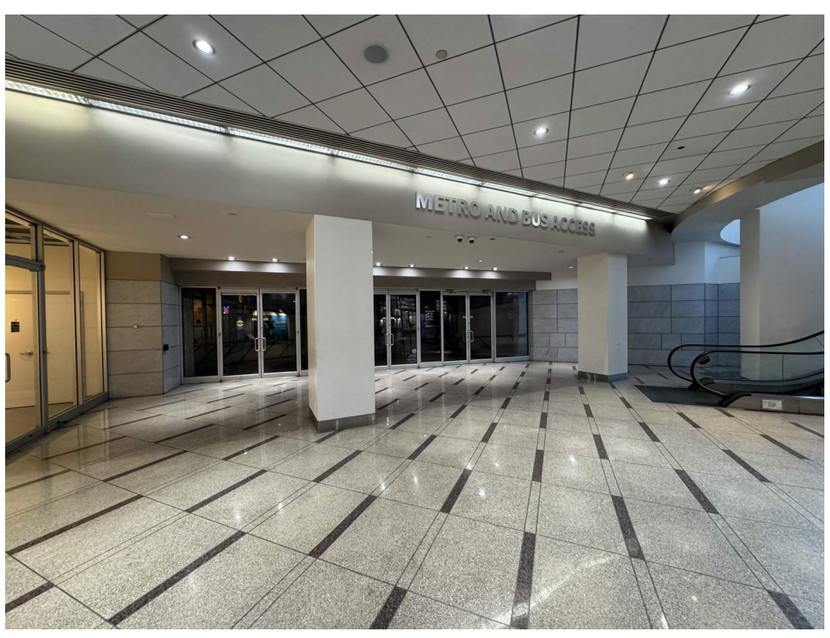
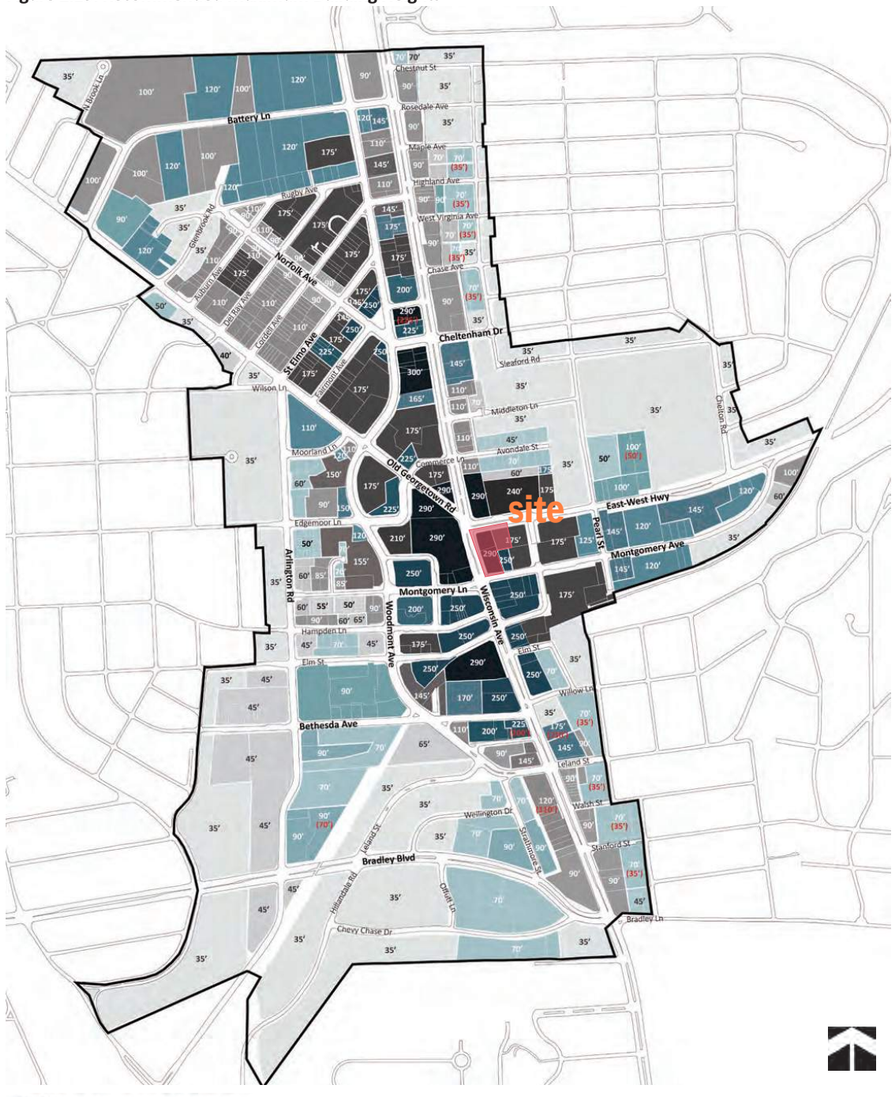
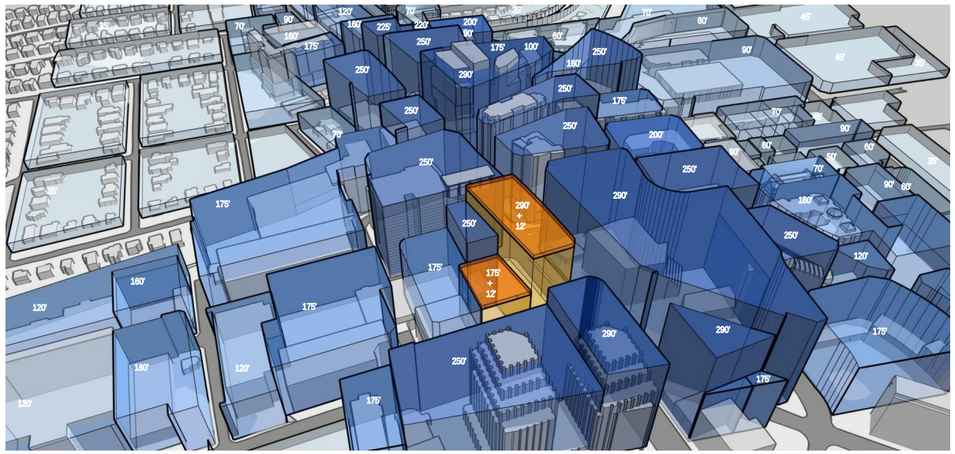


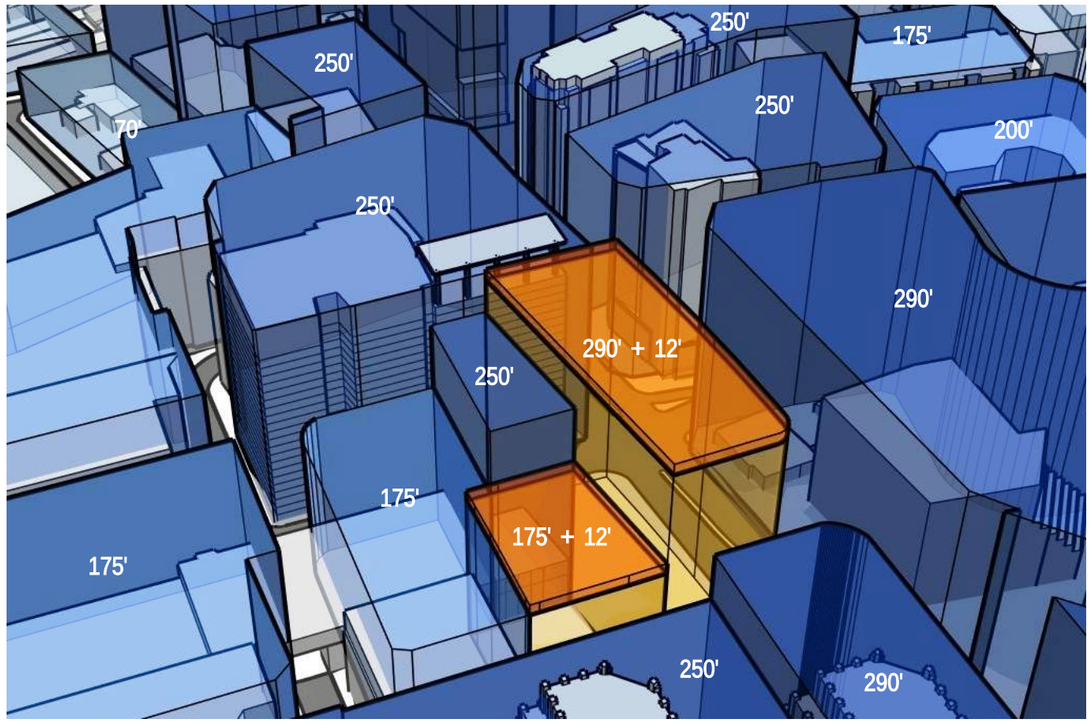
Figure 2.19: Recommended Maximum Building Heights



CR-5,
C-5,R-4.75,
H-290/175



allowable building heights - north aerial N



allowable building heights enlarged N

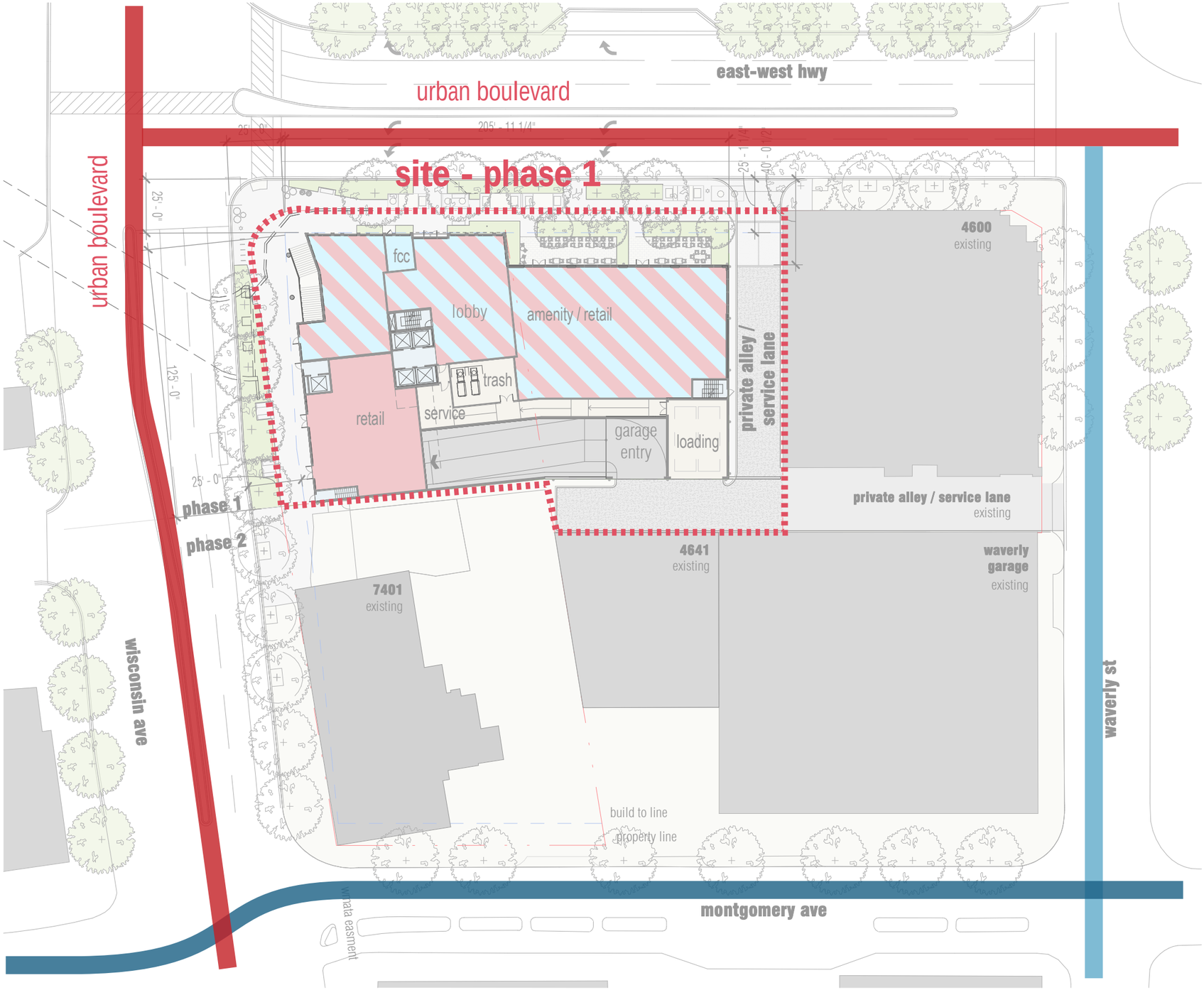
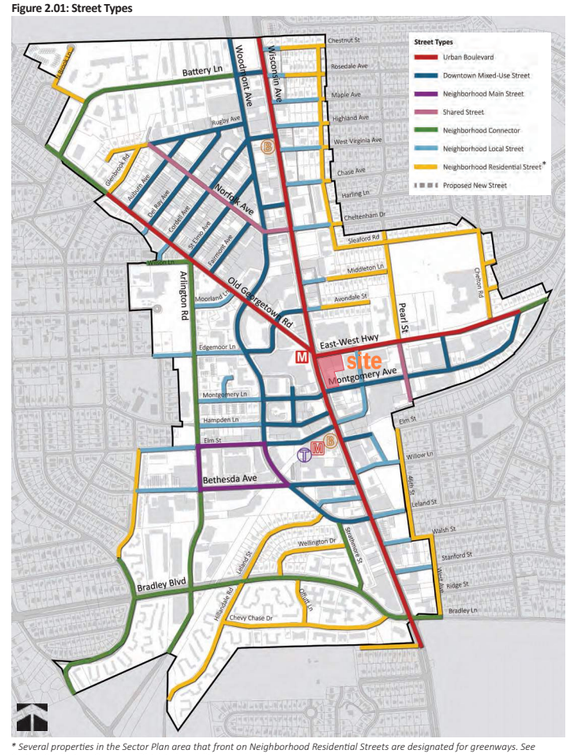


Figure 2.10: Recommended Retail Nodes

Figure 2.01: Street Types



** Several properties in the Sector Plan area that front on Neighborhood Residential Streets are designated for greenways. See Section 3.4 Eastern Greenway Districts for additional guidelines.*

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0' 25' 50' 100'

20 public benefit points requested in the category of exceptional design

design goals

- achieve the design goals of the bethesda plan and provide a dynamic, sustainable, and inclusive address
- strengthen the center of activity at the heart of the wisconsin avenue corridor
- promote a diversified mix of housing in downtown through office conversion to mixed-use multi-family development
- beautify downtown through greening and improved streetscapes
- add residential density immediately adjacent to public transportation and reduce vehicle miles traveled in the region
- create a signature residential tower that is scaled, approachable, engages and enhances the pedestrian experience, and becomes an iconic moment when entering downtown bethesda from the north and west

dap recommendations

- corner articulation - corner seems forced because of Metro entrance orientation.
- metro access and base activation. metro Entrance should be secondary to building design.
- metro stair orientation and "pit" has too much impact on corner.
- access to Metro should be protected.
- stair angle limits ability/activation of retail or amenity at corner by pushing it too far away

wisconsin ave looking south

wisconsin ave looking north


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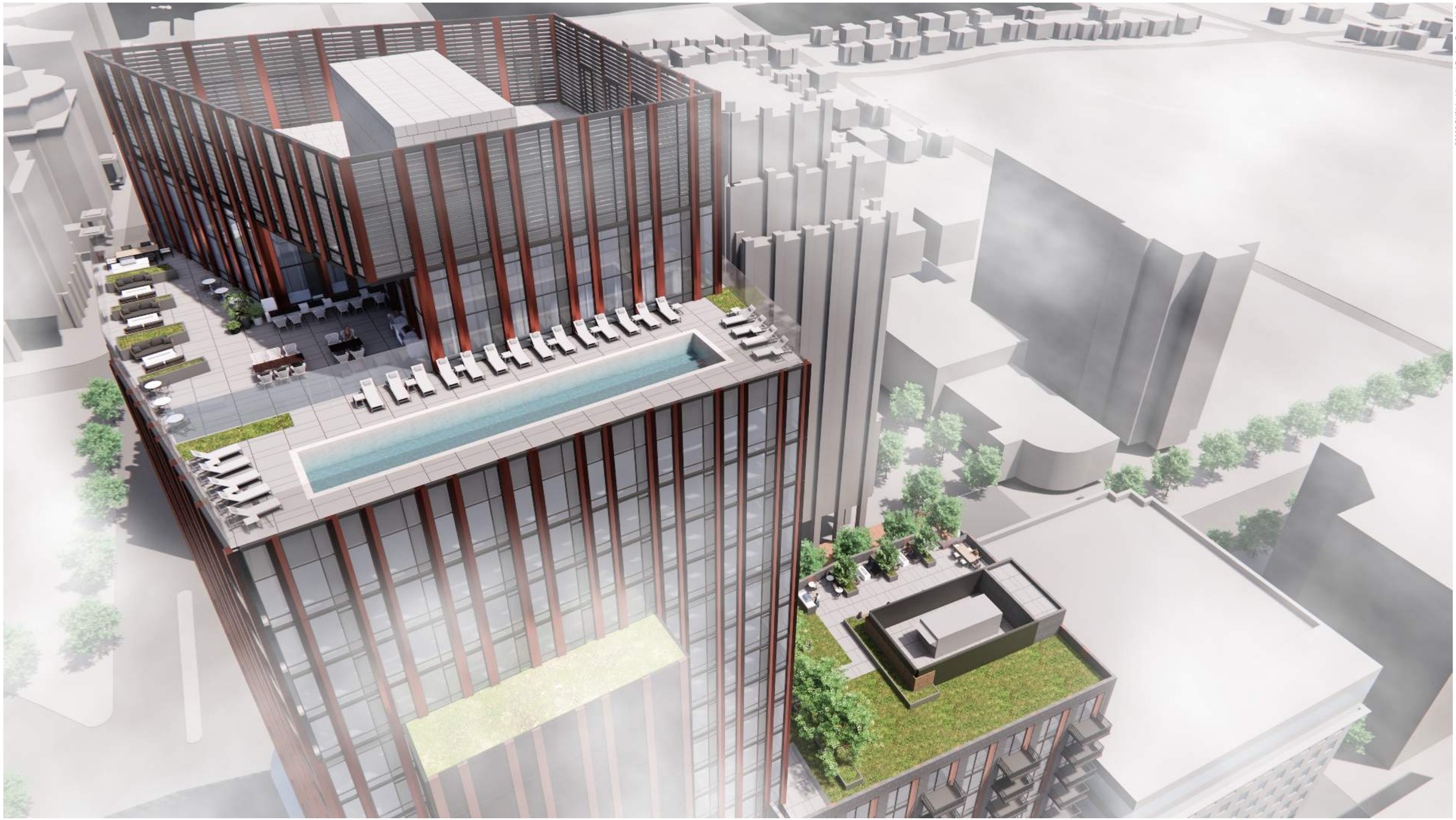
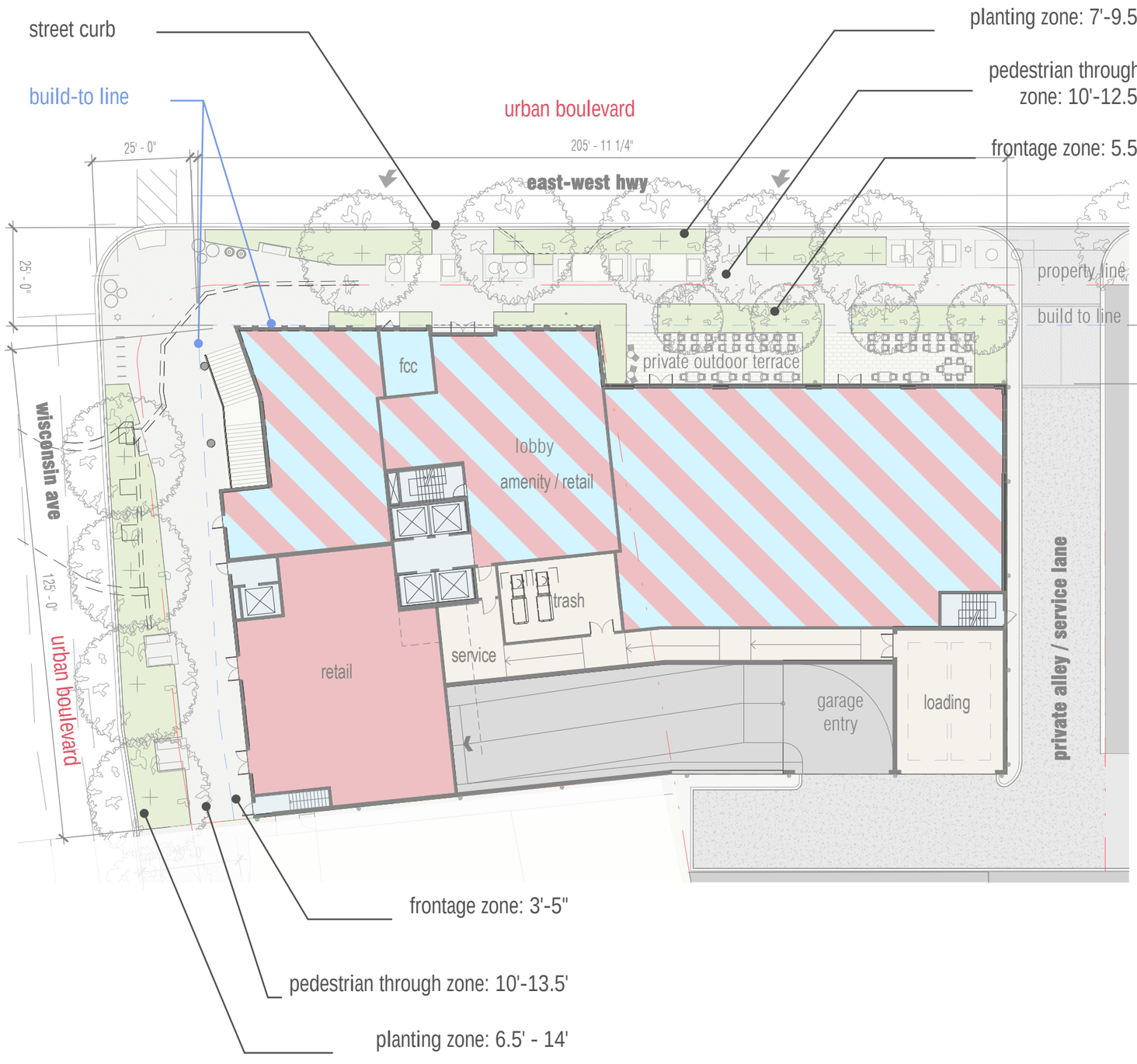
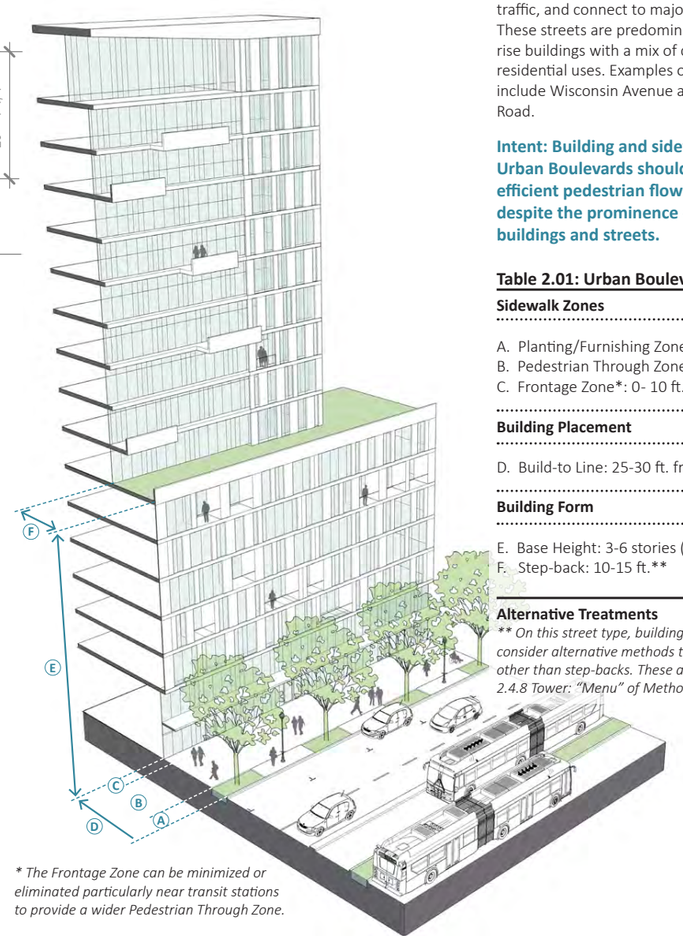






** The Frontage Zone can be minimized or eliminated particularly near transit stations to provide a wider Pedestrian Through Zone.*

2.1.2 Urban Boulevard

Urban Boulevards typically carry a significant amount of pedestrian, bus and vehicular traffic, and connect to major transit nodes. These streets are predominantly lined by high-rise buildings with a mix of commercial and residential uses. Examples of Urban Boulevards include Wisconsin Avenue and Old Georgetown Road.

Intent: Building and sidewalk design along Urban Boulevards should ensure both efficient pedestrian flow and comfort despite the prominence of large-scale buildings and streets.

Table 2.01: Urban Boulevard

Sidewalk Zones

A. Planting/Furnishing Zone: 6- 10 ft.
B. Pedestrian Through Zone: 10- 20 ft.
C. Frontage Zone*: 0- 10 ft.

Building Placement

D. Build-to Line: 25-30 ft. from street curb

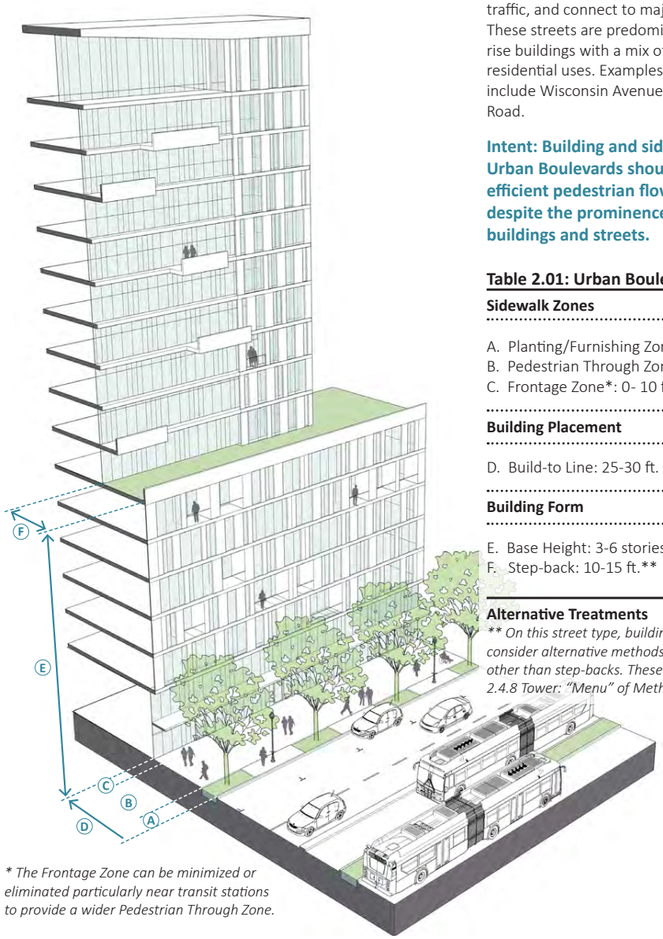
Building Form

E. Base Height: 3-6 stories (35-70 ft.)
F. Step-back: 10-15 ft.**

Alternative Treatments

*** On this street type, buildings under 120 ft. may consider alternative methods to reduce tower bulk other than step-backs. These are outlined in Section 2.4.8 Tower: "Menu" of Methods to Reduce Bulk.*

0' 15' 30' 60'



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Woodmont Avenue tree canopy with a double row of trees.

2.1.10 Canopy Corridors

Intent: The Canopy Corridor recommendations in the Sector Plan aim to create green corridors that connect parks, trails, stream buffers and the denser forest networks beyond the Bethesda boundaries.

The canopy corridors align with the recommended bike priority streets where continuous streetscape improvements are most likely. Though bicycle and pedestrian facilities are the priority on these streets, tree canopy is also a crucial element to enhance shade, attractiveness and comfort to encourage people to walk and bike throughout the downtown.

Guidelines:

A. Prioritize street tree planting along existing and proposed bicycle networks to expand linear green corridors.

B. Use appropriate plant species that will thrive in various site conditions and climates. Species should be a combination of native and locally adaptive species lessening water demand while providing biological benefits.

C. Provide soil volumes for canopy trees of no less than 600 cubic feet, as recommended in the Sector Plan. This volume may be achieved through amended soil panels, and where possible, utilize street tree panels for greater soil volumes.

D. Design buildings to allow streets to receive sufficient sunlight to maintain healthy trees along these corridors.

E. Provide the maximum sidewalk width possible to allow for larger canopy, and consider opportunities for double rows of trees.

F. Include additional locations for trees on both private and public property, right-of-way and medians wherever possible.

2.4.3 Base: Street Activation

Intent: To encourage pedestrian activity by providing ground-floor and base design elements that engage with the sidewalk environment.

Guidelines:

A. Provide frequent entries, transparency and operable walls where possible to encourage visual and physical connections between the ground floor and the public sidewalk. Avoid long blank walls along the sidewalk.

B. Orient private balconies and terraces toward the street to encourage an interface between the private and public realms and to create eyes on the street.

C. Include elements such as textured materials, awnings, plantings, signage and seating to create a visually engaging and inviting building edge to frame the sidewalk and create stopping points to relax, gather and socialize.

D. Place particular focus on active ground floor design along the portions of streets identified as the recommended retail nodes in the *Retail Planning Strategy for the Downtown Bethesda Plan*.

2.4.4 Base: Variation and Articulation

Intent: To ensure that facades are not exceedingly long, uninterrupted and rigidly uniform. These variations break up the mass of large buildings, add visual interest and promote human-scaled lower stories to relate to pedestrians.

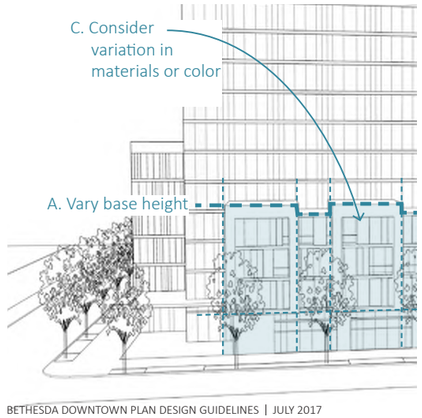
Guidelines:

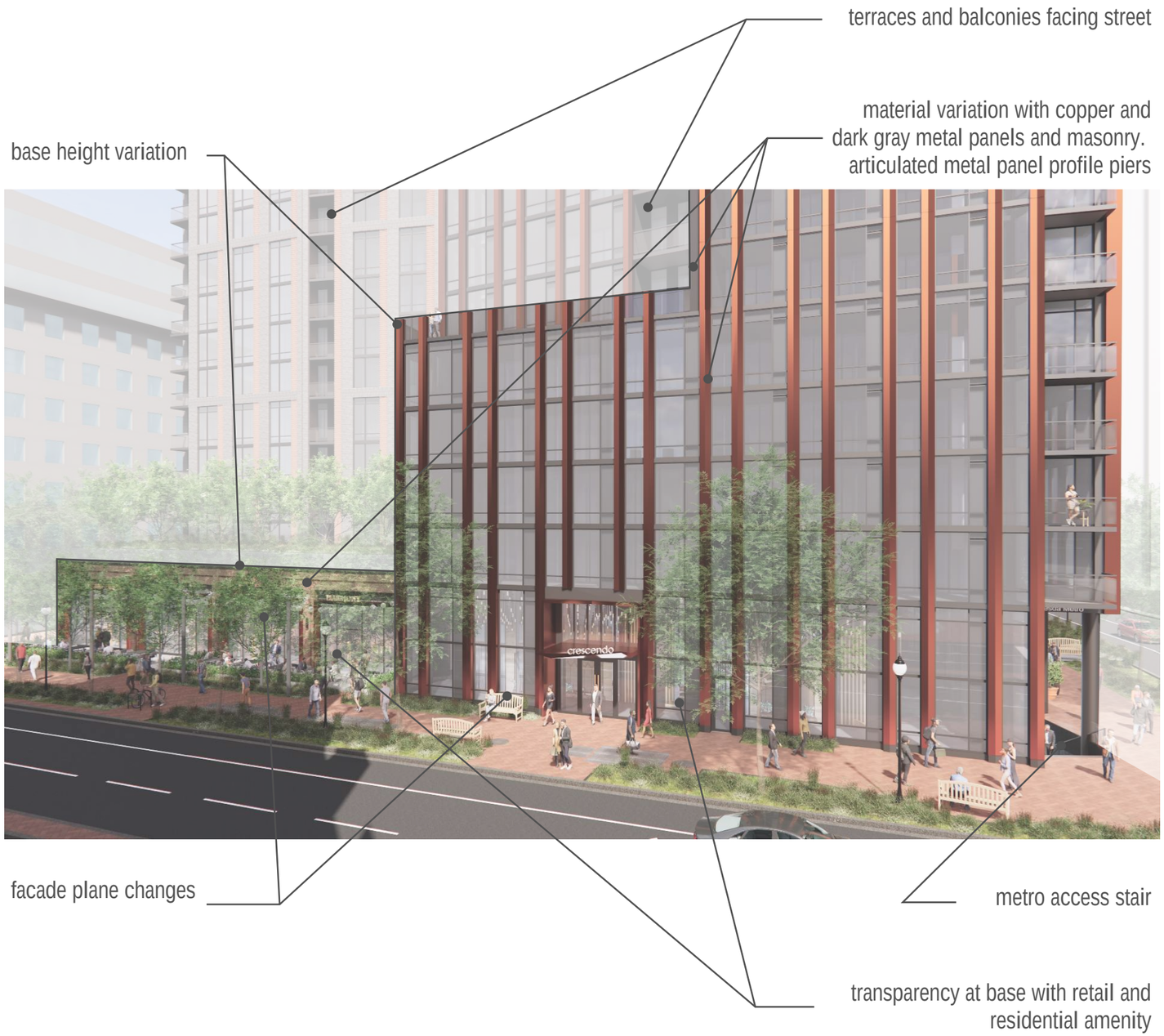
A. Vary base height up to the maximum height designated by the street type. This variation should respond to the street character and typical widths, heights and modulation of existing buildings to create a contextually sensitive building wall along the street.

B. Provide plane changes in the facade that create significant vertical and horizontal breaks, and shadow lines on the facade.

C. Consider variation in building materials or color to add texture to lower floors most visible to those at pedestrian level.

D. Avoid cantilevering the majority of the building mass over the Frontage Zone, public sidewalk or public open space to prevent interfering with street trees and blocking access to sunlight and sky views for pedestrians.





2.4.3 Base: Street Activation

Intent: To encourage pedestrian activity by providing ground-floor and base design elements that engage with the sidewalk environment.

Guidelines:

A. Provide frequent entries, transparency and operable walls where possible to encourage visual and physical connections between the ground floor and the public sidewalk. Avoid long blank walls along the sidewalk.

B. Orient private balconies and terraces toward the street to encourage an interface between the private and public realms and to create eyes on the street.

C. Include elements such as textured materials, awnings, plantings, signage and seating to create a visually engaging and inviting building edge to frame the sidewalk and create stopping points to relax, gather and socialize.

D. Place particular focus on active ground floor design along the portions of streets identified as the recommended retail nodes in the *Retail Planning Strategy for the Downtown Bethesda Plan*.

2.4.4 Base: Variation and Articulation

Intent: To ensure that facades are not exceedingly long, uninterrupted and rigidly uniform. These variations break up the mass of large buildings, add visual interest and promote human-scaled lower stories to relate to pedestrians.

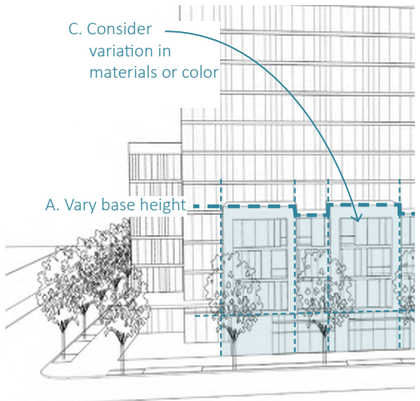
Guidelines:

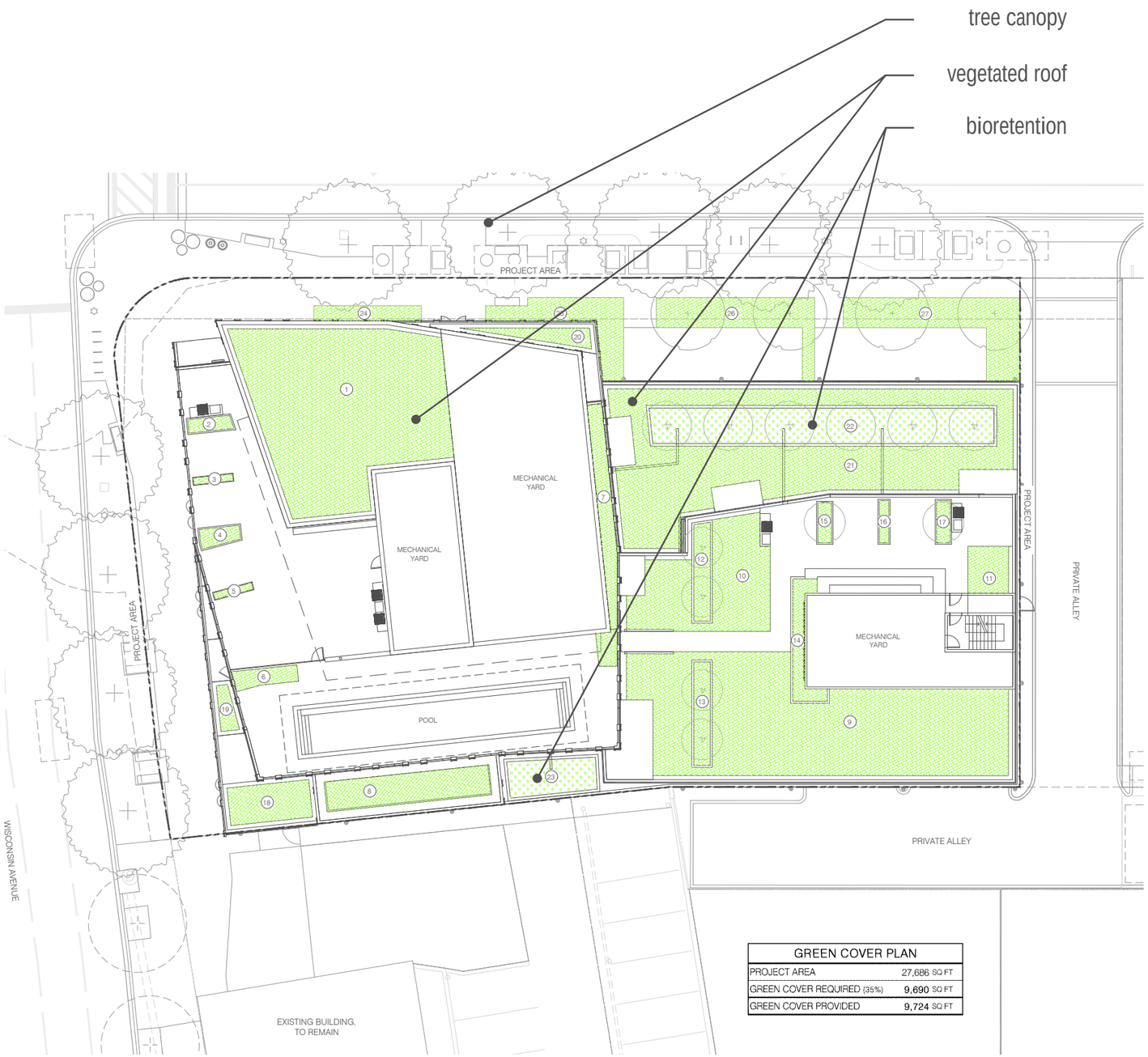
A. Vary base height up to the maximum height designated by the street type. This variation should respond to the street character and typical widths, heights and modulation of existing buildings to create a contextually sensitive building wall along the street.

B. Provide plane changes in the facade that create significant vertical and horizontal breaks, and shadow lines on the facade.

C. Consider variation in building materials or color to add texture to lower floors most visible to those at pedestrian level.

D. Avoid cantilevering the majority of the building mass over the Frontage Zone, public sidewalk or public open space to prevent interfering with street trees and blocking access to sunlight and sky views for pedestrians.





GREEN COVER PLAN	
PROJECT AREA	27,686 SQ FT
GREEN COVER REQUIRED (35%)	9,690 SQ FT
GREEN COVER PROVIDED	9,724 SQ FT

2.3.2 Green Cover

Intent: The green cover guidelines are intended to increase overall tree canopy cover, expand green corridors, reduce heat island effect, improve air quality and carbon sequestration capacity and improve ecological biodiversity. See the Sector Plan *Section 2.4.1 Urban Green.*

Guidelines:

On private property, provide a minimum of 35 percent* green cover, which may include singularly or a combination of the following:

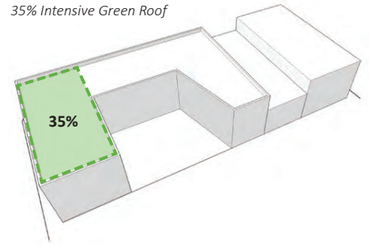
A. Intensive green roof (6 inches or deeper) on 35 percent of rooftop.

B. Tree canopy cover on 35 percent of landscape.

C. A combination of tree canopy and intensive green roof for a total green cover of 35 percent or greater.

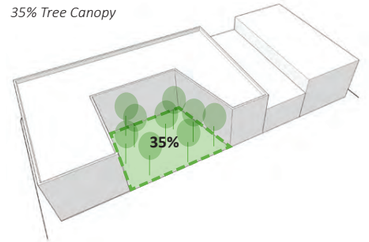
** If on-site energy generation requires the use of the roof or open space, accommodations for these features may alter the 35 percent minimum green cover requirement.*

35% Intensive Green Roof



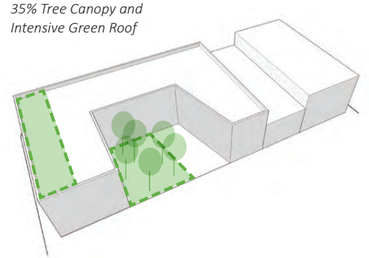
OR

35% Tree Canopy



OR

35% Tree Canopy and Intensive Green Roof



SK+I ARCHITECTURE MRP | REALTY

0' 25' 50' 100'

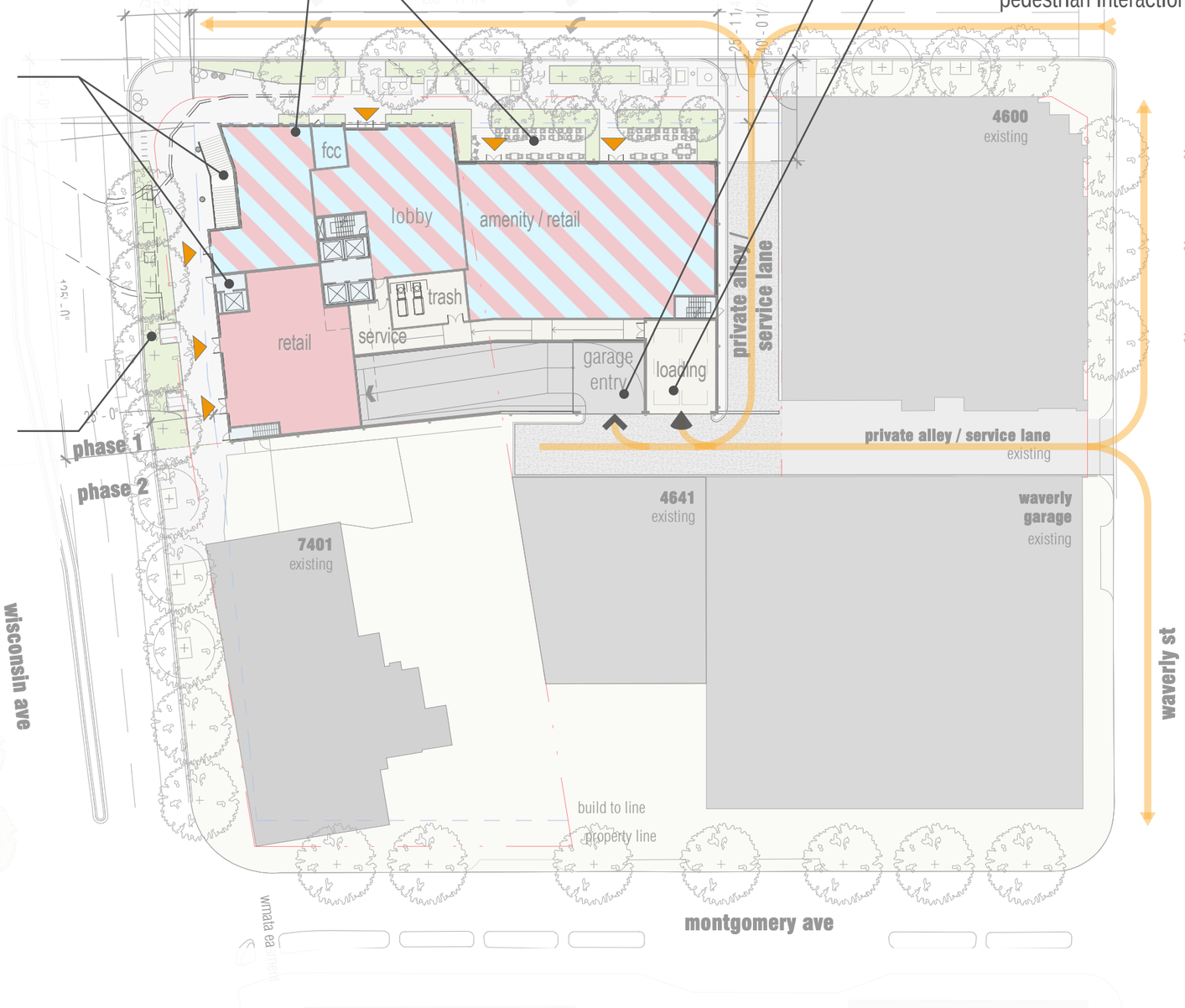
retail, lobby, and amenity spaces with transparency lined ground floor to maintain active building edge

metro station access through re-used connection walkway underneath wisconsin ave

continuous tree canopy to greatest extent feasible

garage and loading located at service alley

garage and loading located near each other to minimize pedestrian interaction



2.3.3 Servicing, Access and Parking

Intent: Loading, servicing and parking should be designed to minimize conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists and reduce the visual impacts of vehicle access and parking on the Public Realm. Site design should prioritize the public sidewalk and bikeways over private vehicular crossings.

Guidelines:

A. Line the ground floor of structured parking with retail or other uses with transparency to maintain an active building edge. Where active uses are infeasible, avoid exposed parking floors along the street through measures outlined in the Zoning Ordinance *Section 6.2.9.D.1 Structured Parking Requirements.*

B. Design exterior of the garage portion of the building to be compatible with the rest of the building facade, in order to enhance the overall architectural quality of the building.

C. Provide a continuous, level and clearly delineated Pedestrian Through Zone across driveways to encourage drivers to yield to pedestrians. Consider applying the same materials across these vehicle access points as the sidewalk, such as brick pavers.

D. Locate loading and servicing within the interior of a building at the rear whenever possible. Service alleys are also recommended where setbacks are required from the side or rear property lines for building code.

E. Avoid placing entries to loading docks, service areas and parking garages on neighborhood residential streets when alternative access is feasible.

F. Minimize the width and height of driveways and vehicular entrances. Where possible, combine loading dock and garage access.

G. Screen vehicle and servicing access areas and trash storage with landscaping or other vertical elements, and design vehicle access doors to incorporate high-quality materials and finishes that are consistent with the building.

H. Vehicle access points should not be located adjacent to a public open space other than through-block connections.

I. Coordinate location of access points with adjacent and confronting properties where possible to ensure a comfortable sidewalk environment and limited conflicts.

J. Provide loading spaces for pick-up and drop-off where feasible to reduce idling in the travel lane.

K. Design structured parking floors to be flexible for future retrofit to other uses where possible.

L. Ensure continuous tree canopy along service areas and lay-by areas to the greatest extent feasible.

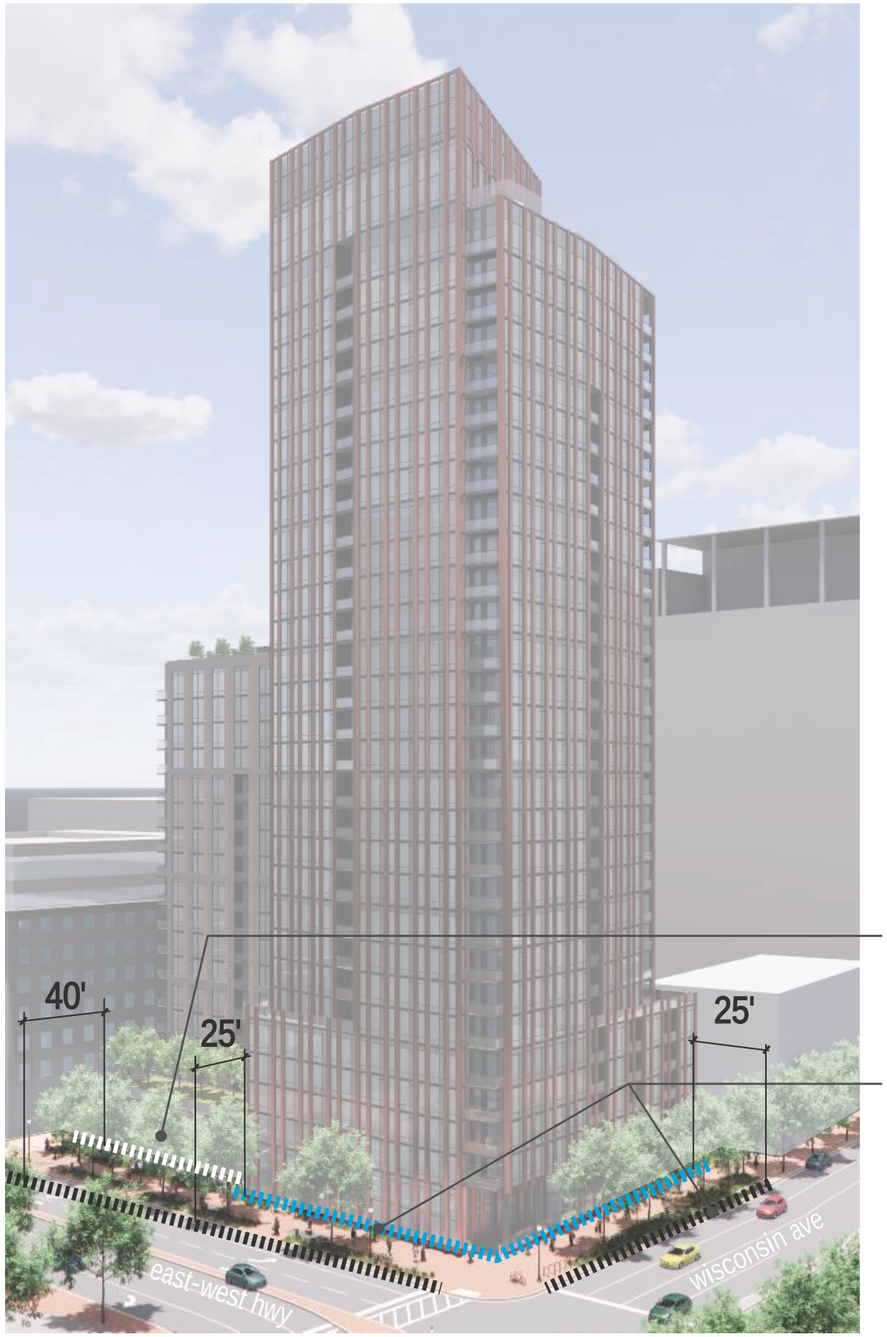
M. While not recommended in Downtown Bethesda, surface parking should be designed according to the following:
- Locate the parking on the back of the building, with the building fronting the primary streets and sidewalks.
- For interim lots, design the parking to provide flexibility for temporary events such as pop-up events and public gatherings to maintain an active street edge. See *Section 2.5 Creative Placemaking*.

Servicing Operations:

The dense urban grid presents both challenges and opportunities for loading and trash collection. Without alleys, trucks and other delivery vehicles have to make complex maneuvers on the streets to access the buildings' loading areas where they exist or simply operate from the streets themselves when the buildings they serve don't have off-street loading facilities. When trucks must access buildings from streets, especially high volume corridors, the loading areas create conflicts with pedestrians. When loading

circulation
- vehicles
- loading
- building entrance
- parking entrance

0' 25' 50' 100'



setback provided for canopy corridor and private outdoor terrace

continuous street edge along build-to line

2.4.2 Base: Building Placement

Intent: To create a continuous street wall to frame the sidewalk and create a more comfortable outdoor room for pedestrians to encourage walking throughout the downtown.

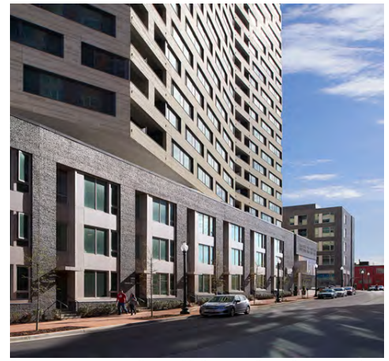
Guidelines:

A. Place the facade of the building base along the recommended build-to-line to create a continuous street edge.

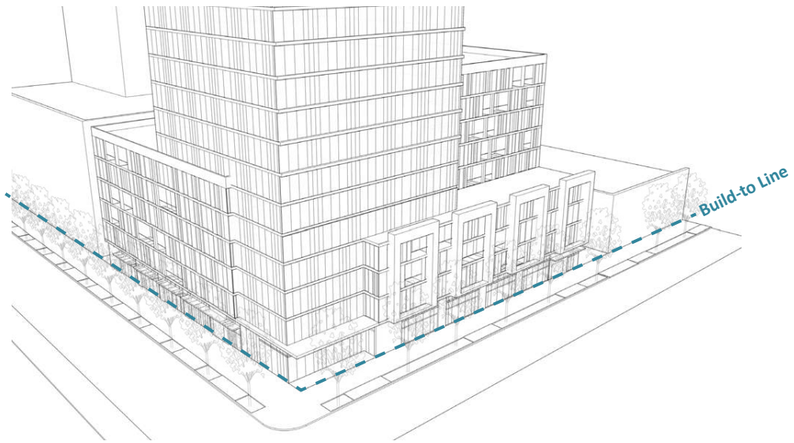
B. Buildings taller than 200 feet that do not step back the upper floors should have a build-to-line of at least 20-30 feet.

C. Where existing building lines for adjacent properties are set back more than the recommended build-to-line, buildings may be placed to align with this existing building line as long as it is within 5 feet of the recommended build-to line.

D. Exceptions to the building placement guidelines include through-block connections and open spaces recommended in the sector plan, entrances and articulation for architectural interest.



The building base of Eleven 55 Ripley in Silver Spring creates a continuous edge along the sidewalk at a low-rise scale. Source: Shalom Baranes Associates Architects



building tower full height expressed on prominent street corner, providing focal point when approaching downtown from the old georgetown rd and north wisconsin ave

corner condition allows for tapering setback

transparent facades at base with retail at corner to activate space

2.4.5 Corner Treatments

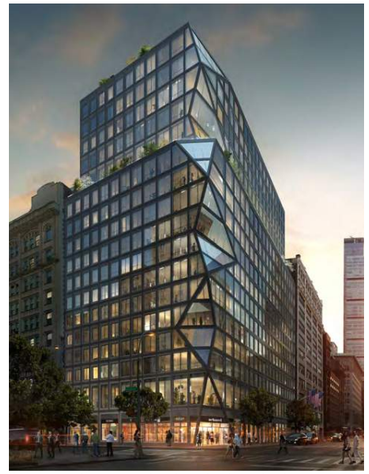
Intent: To anchor and frame street intersections with a continuous building wall or unique design features.

Guidelines:

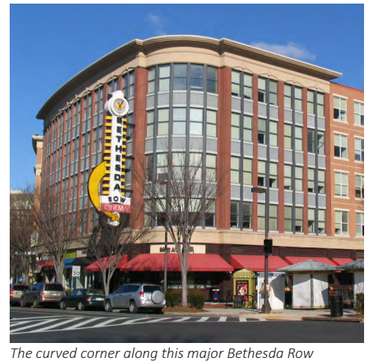
A. Provide signature design elements on prominent corners or intersections as focal points. These prominent locations include sites adjacent to open spaces, with the tallest building heights and buildings that terminate major view corridors such as East-West Highway, Norfolk Avenue, Old Georgetown Road and Bethesda Avenue.

B. The full height of tall buildings may be expressed at corners, as a way to provide variation and increased verticality on buildings with tower step-backs.

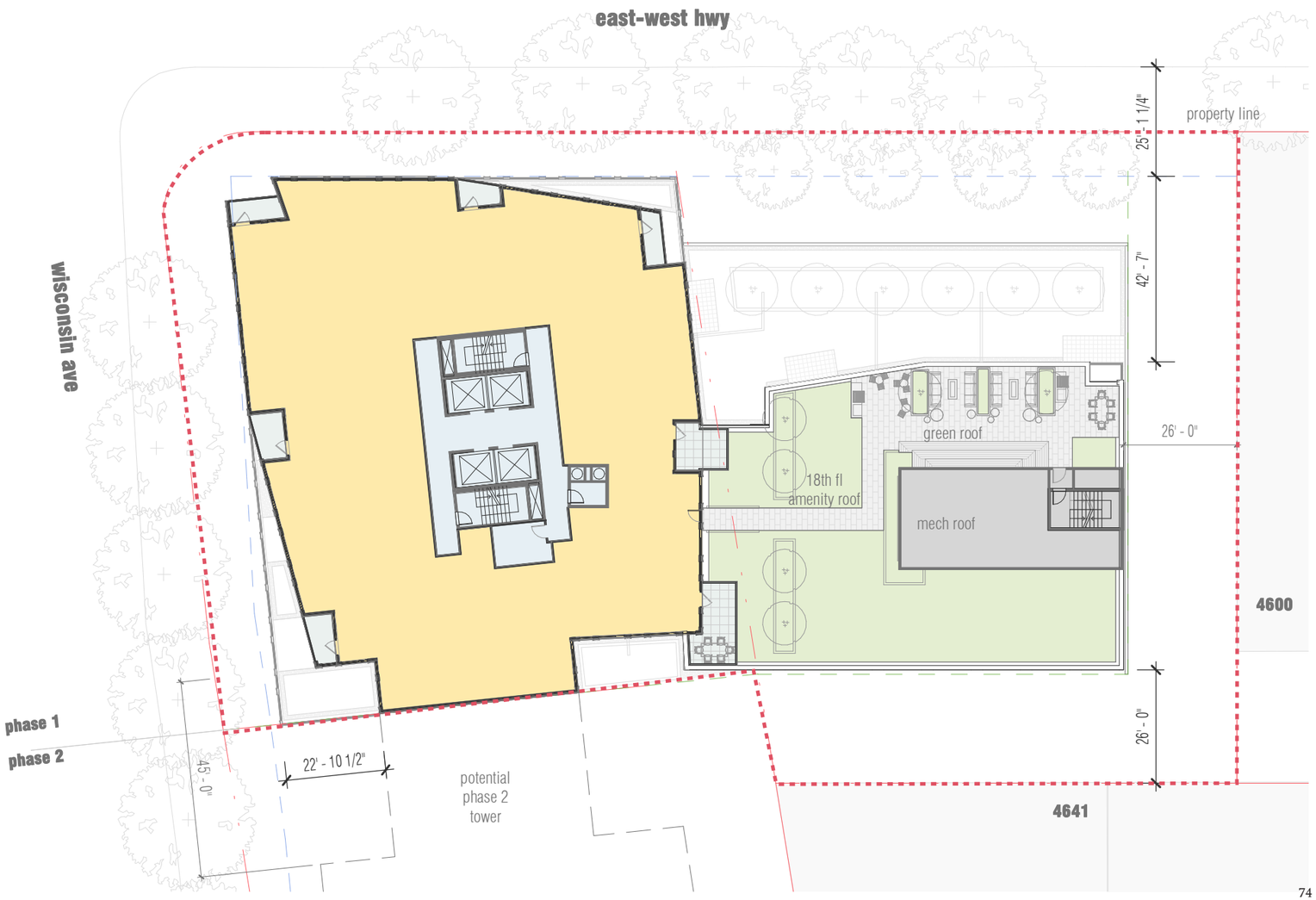
C. Establish block corners with architectural articulation and activating uses. While market forces will dictate actual locations where retail operations are feasible, anchoring key block corners by including activating uses such as retail is encouraged.



This innovative design treatment articulates the building and creates an intersection focal point.
Source: OMA



The curved corner along this major Bethesda Row intersection enhances pedestrian flow and provides an active ground floor.



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 lines).

B. Provide a continuous building base along the lower floors.

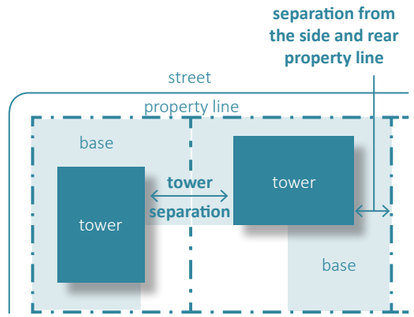
C. Avoid building towers to the property line creating expansive blank party walls that are imposing on the pedestrian environment.

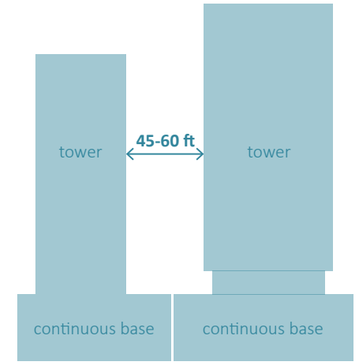
Alternative Treatments:

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.





SK+I ARCHITECTURE MRP | REALTY

0' 15' 30' 60'

2.4.7 Tower: Step-Back

Intent: To provide a human-scaled building edge along the street that enhances pedestrian comfort and access to sky views. In districts with mostly low to mid-rise buildings, the step-back enables new tall buildings to better relate to existing context and maintain a similar street character.

Guidelines:

A. Retain a tower step-back across the majority of the building frontage. The building's full height may be expressed to the ground on important corners, to mark primary entryways or to balance the massing composition with vertical elements.

B. Encourage undulating, curved or angled tower step-backs if the average step-back meets the guidelines for the street type. This expressive geometry can increase visual interest on prominent sites near major open spaces and corners.

C. Allow balconies to encroach in the step-back if they do not significantly add to the perceived bulk and mass of the building's upper floors.

Alternative Treatments:

Though step-backs are one of the preferred methods to reduce tower bulk, especially on small neighborhood street types, alternative methods are outlined in *Section 2.4.8 Tower: "Menu" of Methods to Reduce Bulk*. These alternative methods particularly apply to buildings lower than 90-120 feet as noted in *Section 2.1 Street Types*, or to sites with limited size or property depth from the street.

In cases where a step-back is not provided, another method to relate to the context of adjacent building heights and base conditions is with a change of materials or clear regulating lines.

This residential development in Rockville illustrates the relationship between the pedestrian and the building step-back.
Source: The Upton (above)

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

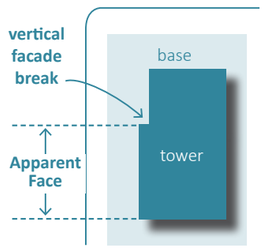
Techniques to break up large facades and reduce perceived building bulk include shifts in massing to allow for upper floor terraces, green roofs and balconies; changes in facade planes; and varied fins, frames and mullions to add depth to glass facades.

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.



2.4.9 Top: Tower Top

Intent: The building top or cap contributes to the skyline, adding visual interest and shaping the image of Bethesda from afar. Tower tops should be carefully considered on prominent sites, including those with the tallest building heights, locations adjacent to major public open spaces and those that terminate views.

Guidelines:

A. Encourage unique design of tower tops that can enhance the image of Bethesda as an innovative downtown, welcoming new businesses, residents and visitors.

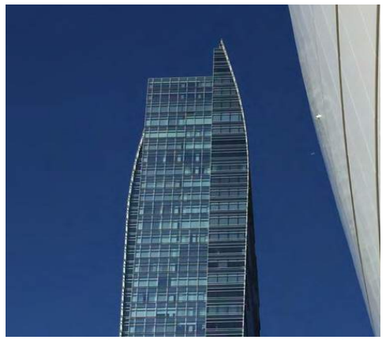
B. Taper tower tops where possible to reduce the perceived bulk of tall buildings.

C. Integrate energy efficiency into the design of tower tops, including solar panels and passive heating and cooling elements.

D. Consider the views of the rooftop composition from adjacent buildings when designing building tops.

E. Not all tall buildings should have a sculptural top. However, mechanical penthouses and rooftop amenity spaces should in all cases be designed to harmonize with the overall building composition.

F. Enclosures for rooftop amenity spaces should either contribute to the creation of expressive tops, or otherwise be set back from the roof line and limited to a portion of the roof area so as to not be perceived from surrounding streets and public spaces.



This curved and tapered top adds a unique element to the skyline.

The form of the tower top for this Pittsburgh office building is part of the energy efficient solar chimney design.
Source: Gensler

2.4.11 Bird-Safe Design

The windows, doors, and arches of buildings can be deadly obstacles for birds causing hundreds of millions of bird collisions annually. Glass is transparent to birds. Reflections of the sky, vegetation, clouds, water, and branches lure birds into the glass causing mortality and injury.

Intent: To design glass buildings to protect local and migratory birds from deadly strikes. Integrate elements into the building and site design to warn birds before they collide.

Guidelines:

A. Glass Coverage and Glazing

- Patterns on Glass: Ceramic dots, or frits, can be screened, printed, applied between layers of insulated glass to reduce transmission of light and prevent bird collisions. These can be applied in different colors and patterns to work effectively.
- Angled Glass: Not as effective as other strategies, angled glass at 20-40 degrees has resulted in reduced mortality.
- Window Surfaces: New one-way transparent opaque films and window surfaces allow sunlight to pass through windows while reducing reflectivity.

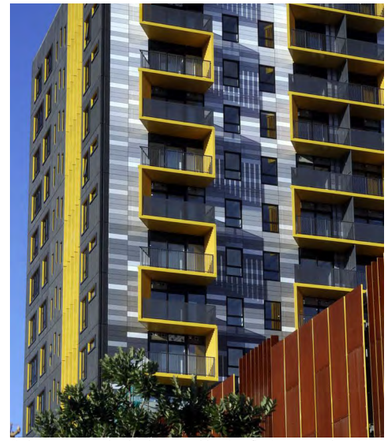
B. Architectural Features

- Awnings, Louvers and Overhangs: When designed to eliminate reflections and shadow glass these architectural features have shown to reduce bird collisions.
- Balconies and Balustrades: Along with providing outdoor spaces for humans, balconies and balustrades can block window reflection.
- Opaque and Translucent Glass: Frosted, colored, opaque, or stained glass have proven to be significantly successful bird deterrents.

C. Facade Treatments

- Screens: Screens can be integrated into facade elements without blocking view or light and are highly effective in protecting birds.

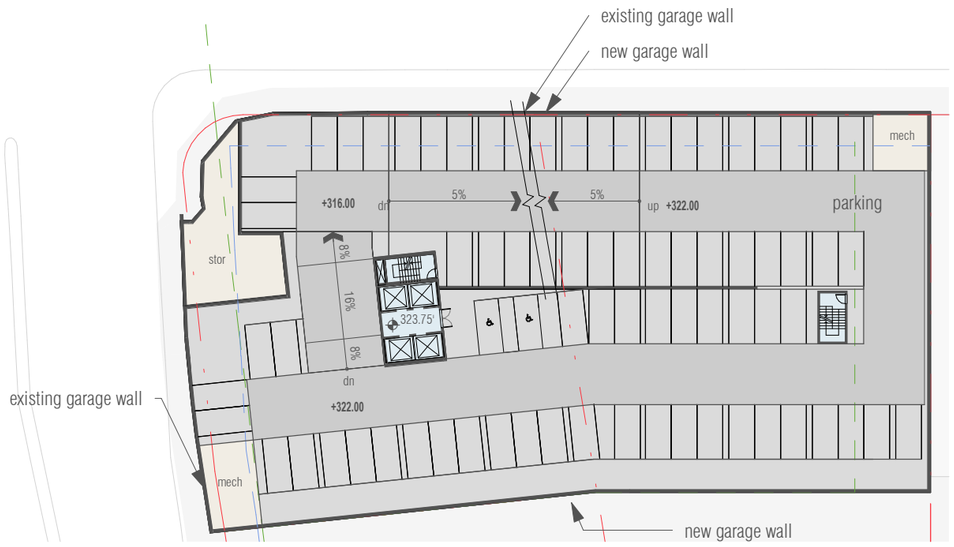
Patterns on this glass building reduce the likelihood of bird collisions.
Source: naturalimages.net



Balconies provide shadows and limit reflections on glass to deter birds.
Source: Merchant Quarter Condominiums

bethesda crescent
7475 wisconsin ave

appendix



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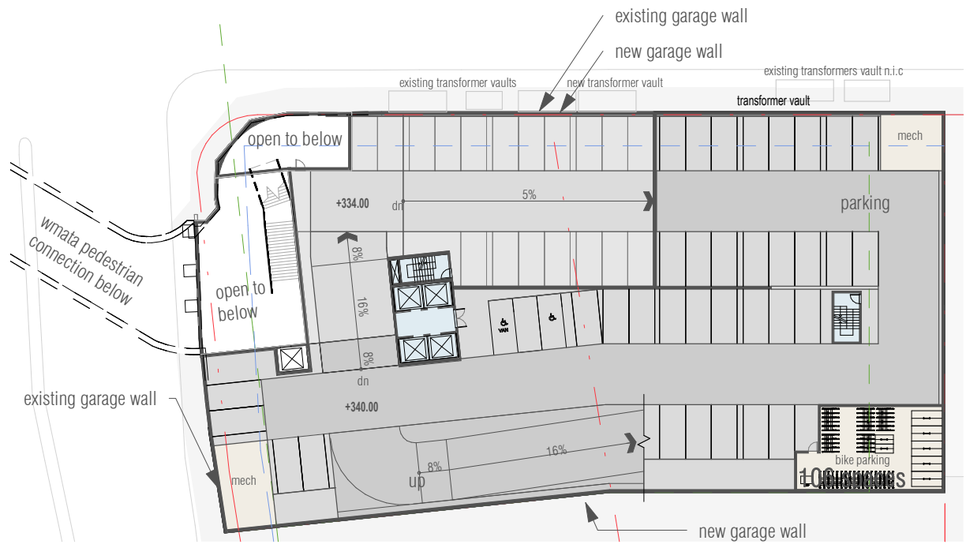

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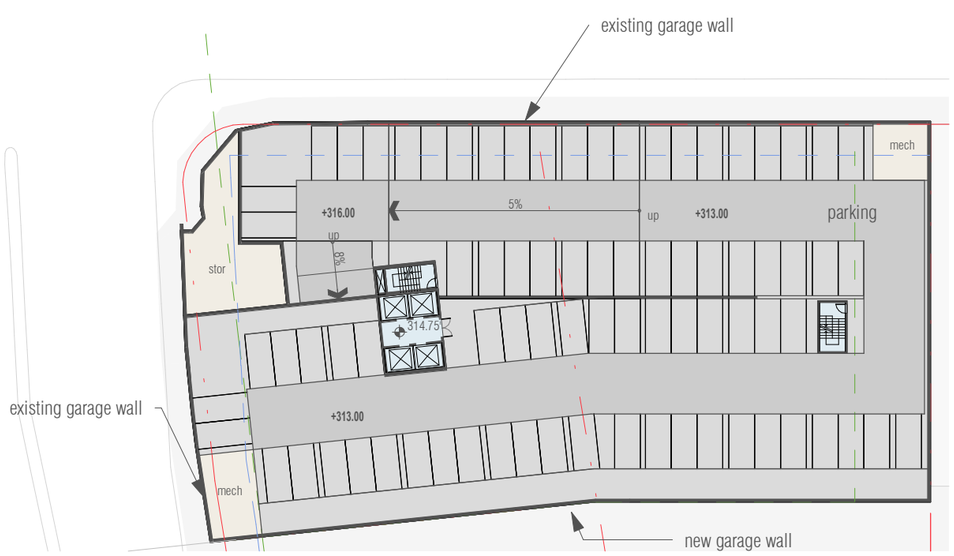

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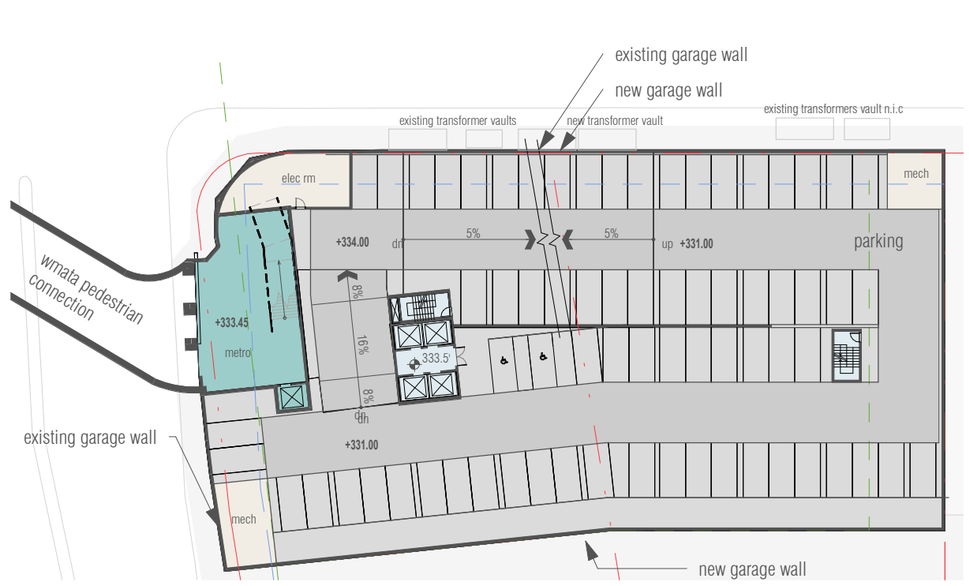


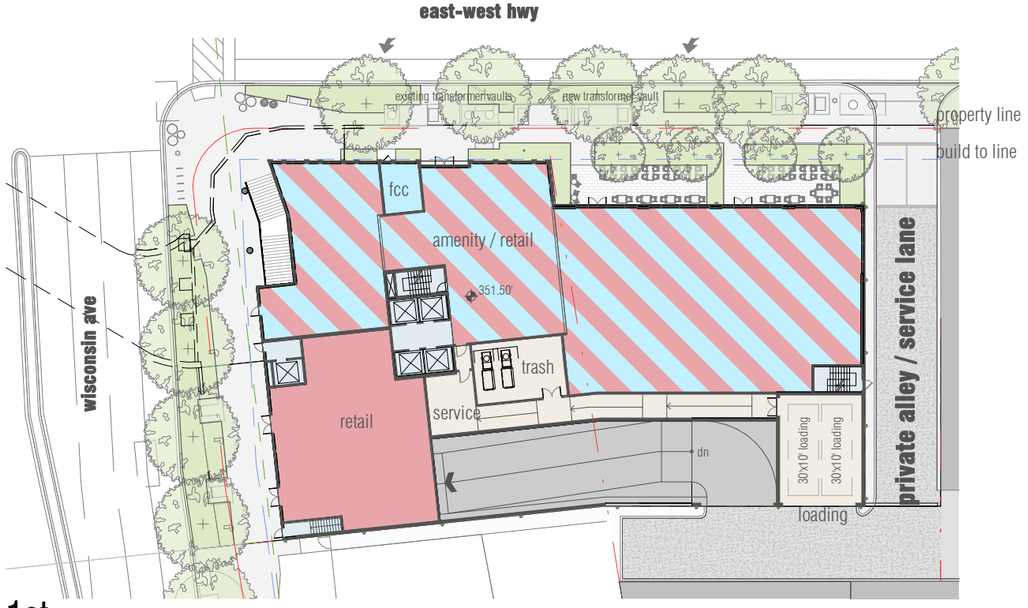
g2

SK+I ARCHITECTURE MRP | REALTY

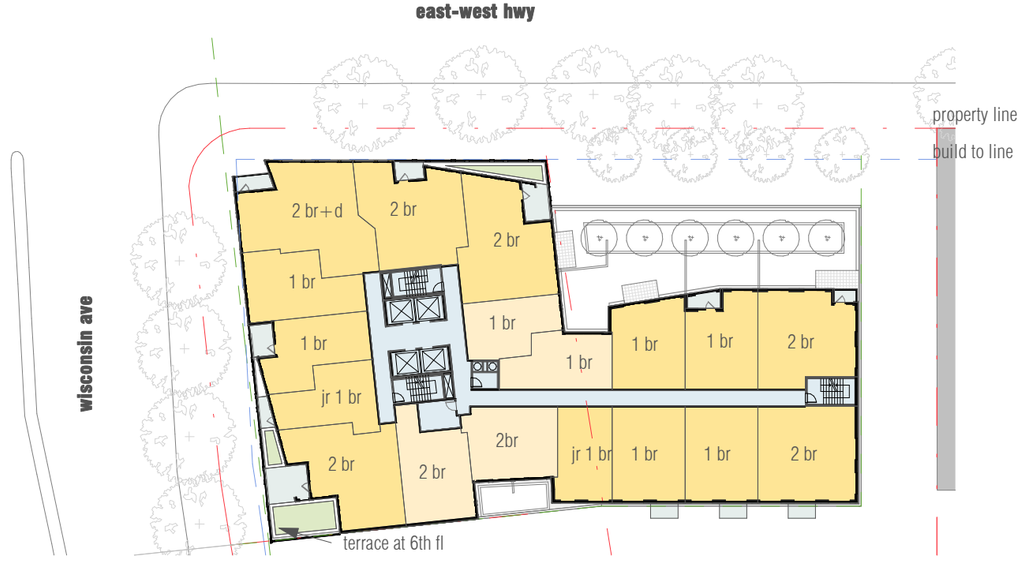
0' 25' 50' 100'

2nd-5th

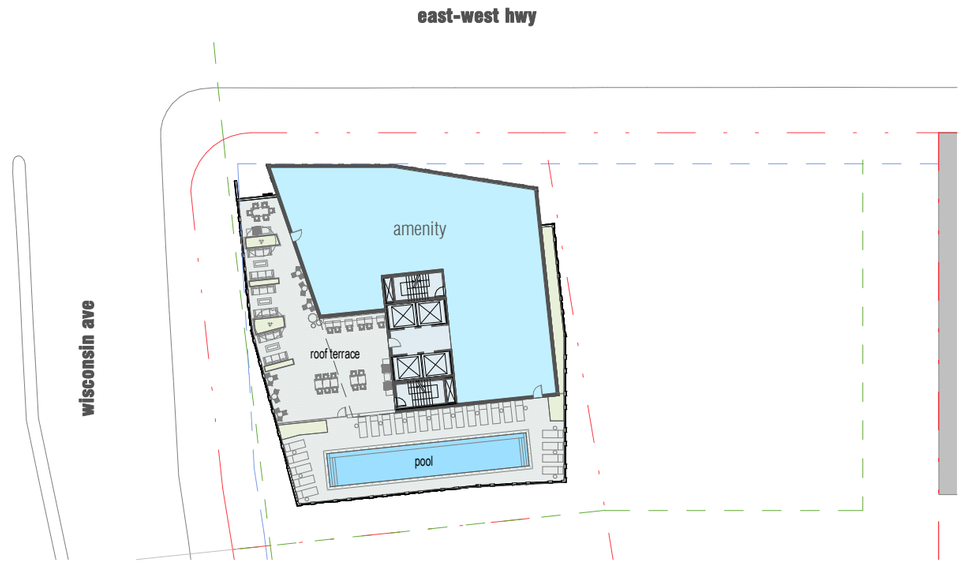
18th-25th



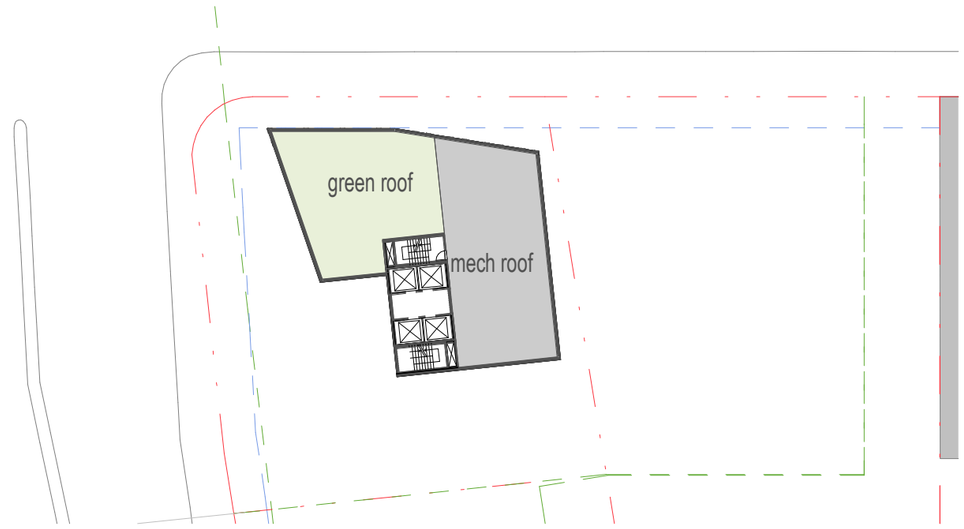
1st



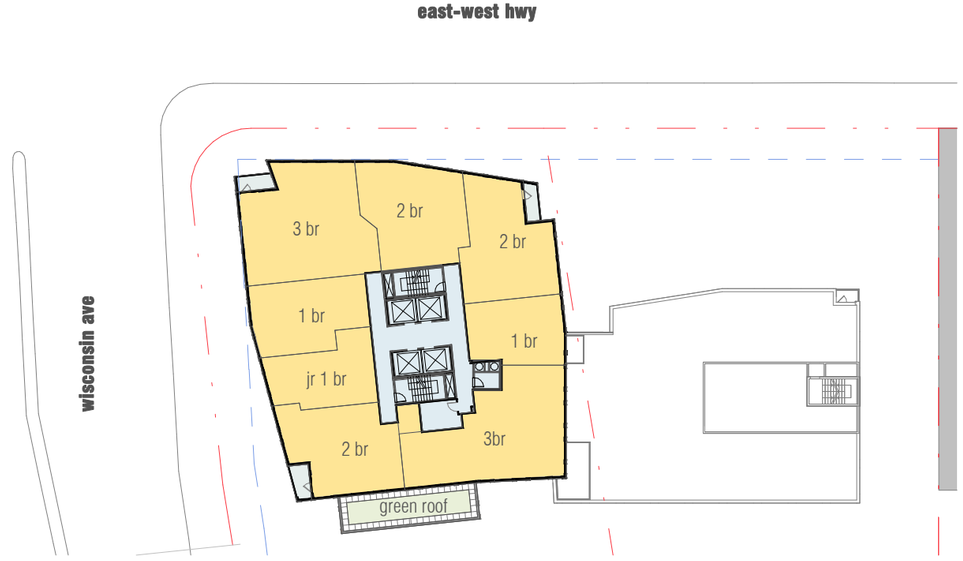
6th-17th



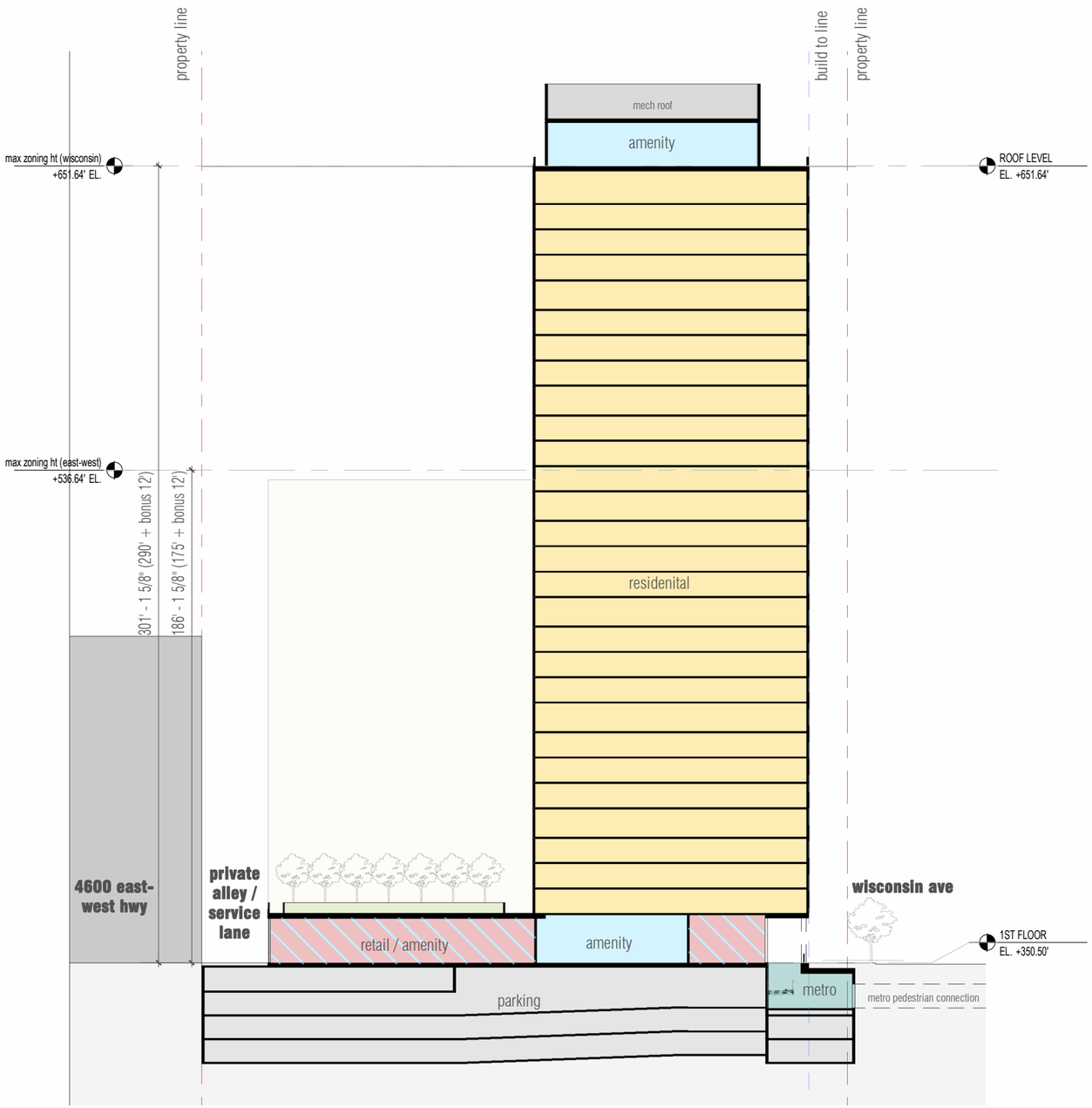
roof

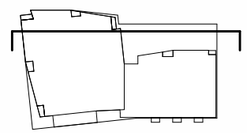


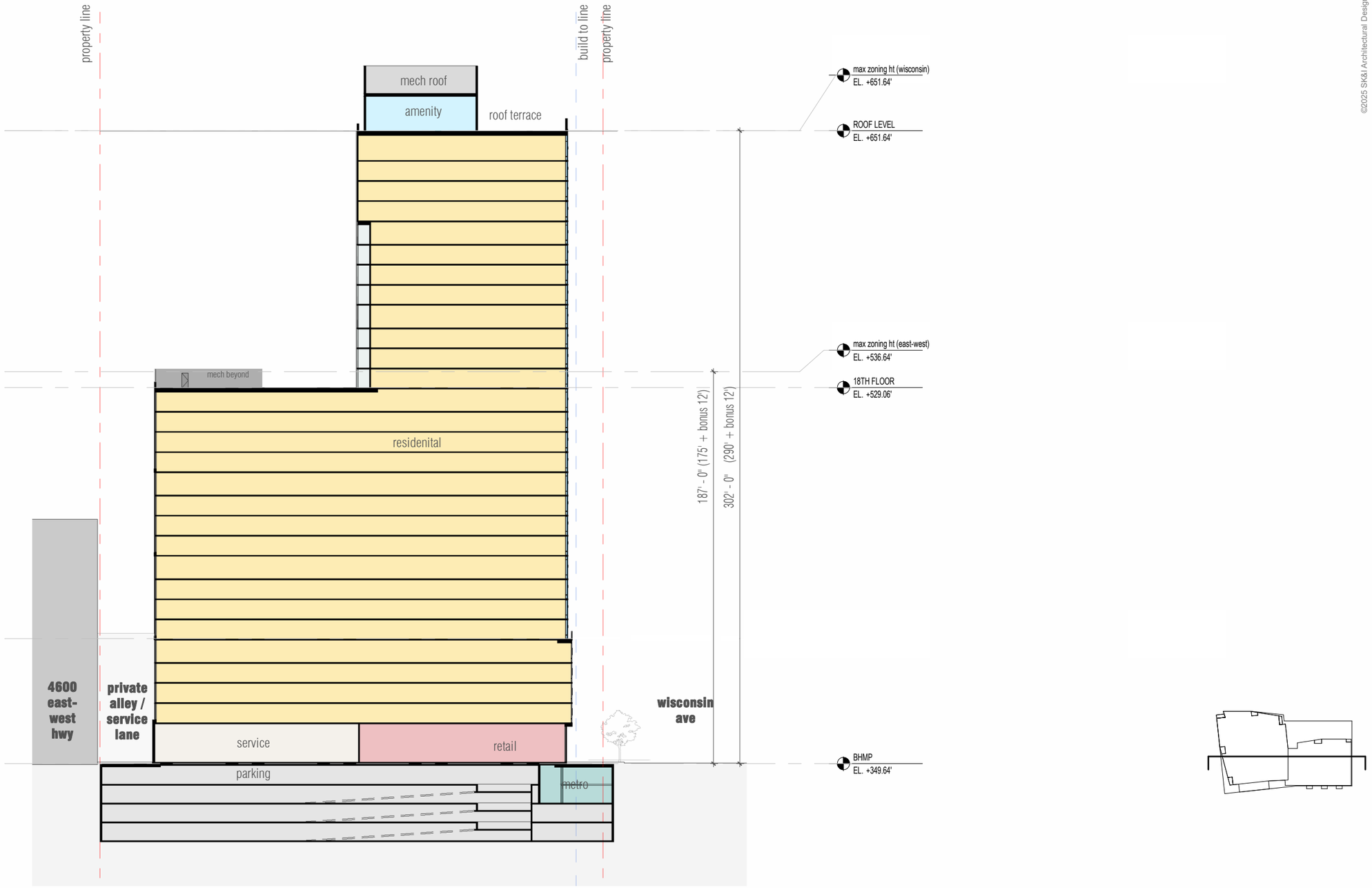
high roof

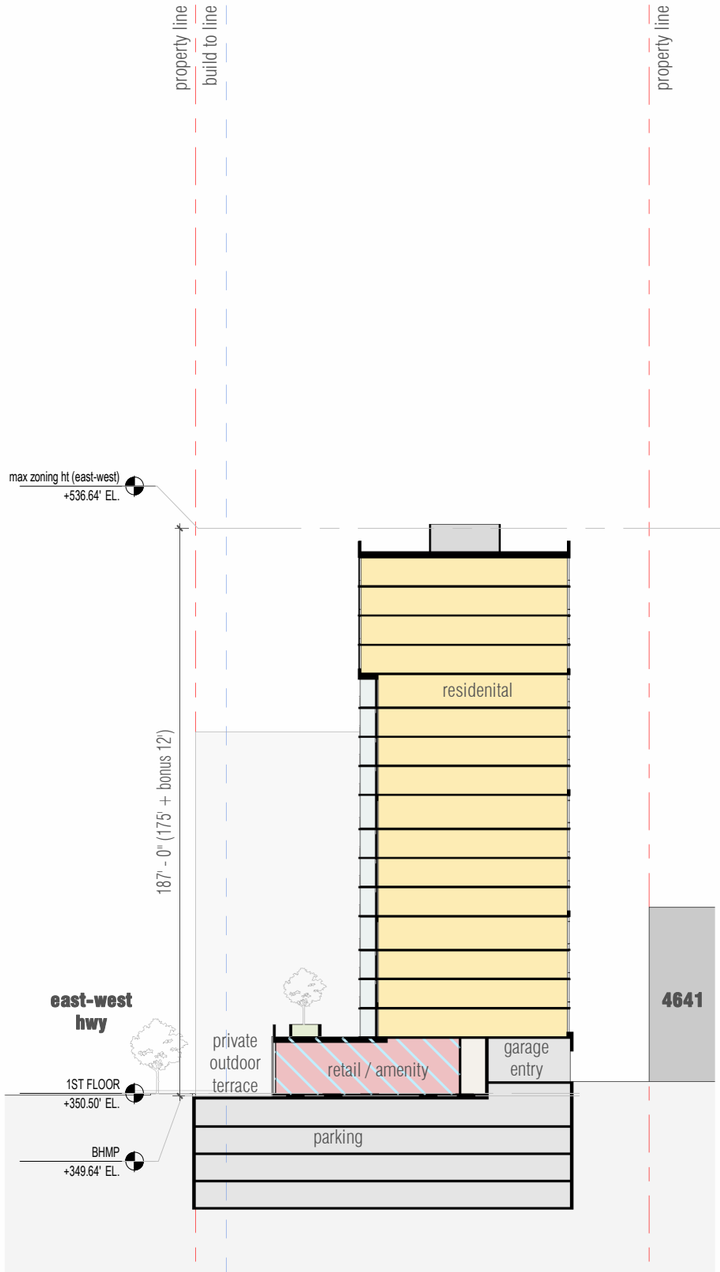


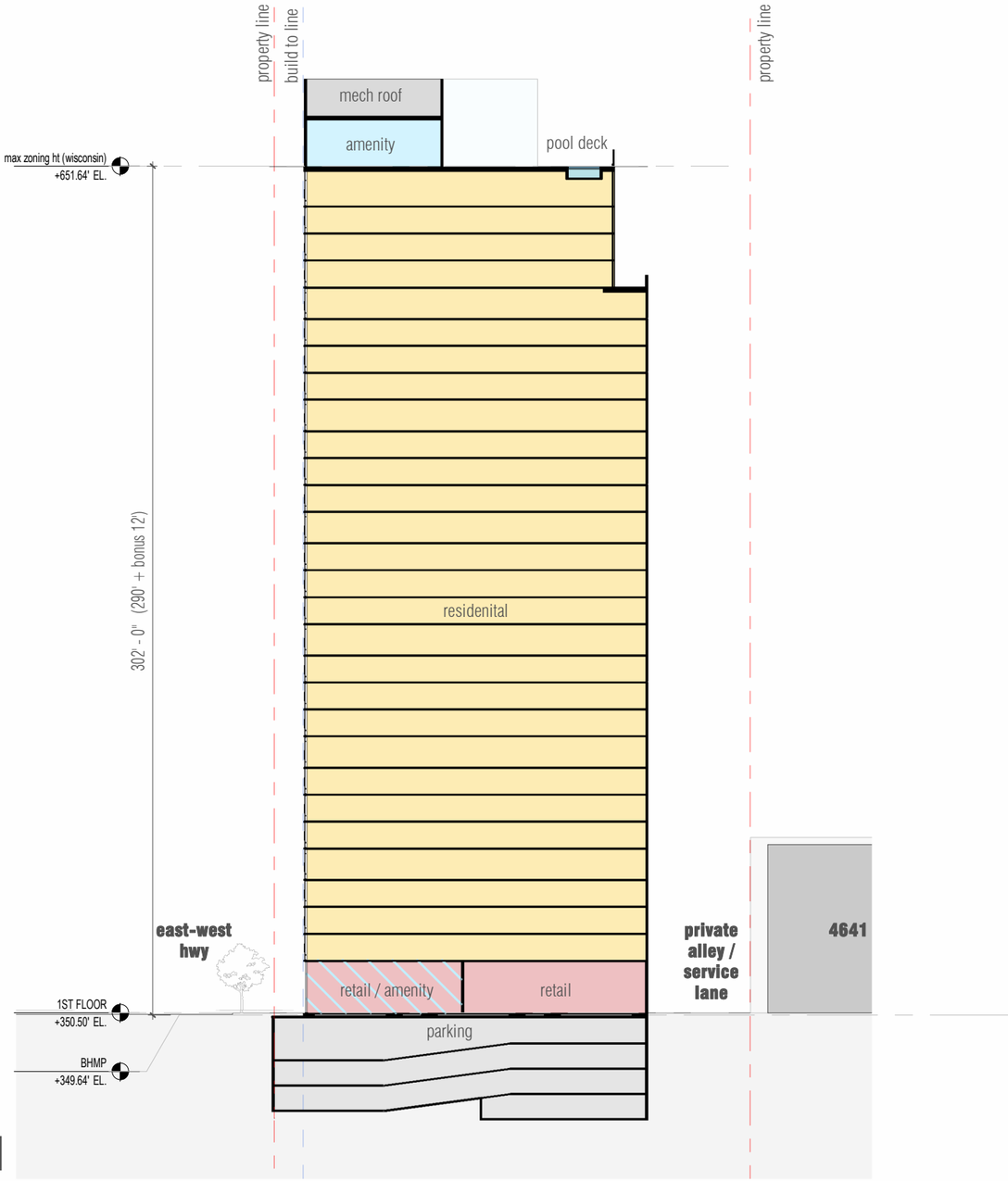
26th-29th

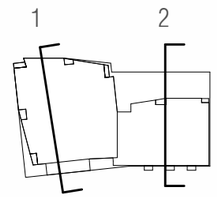






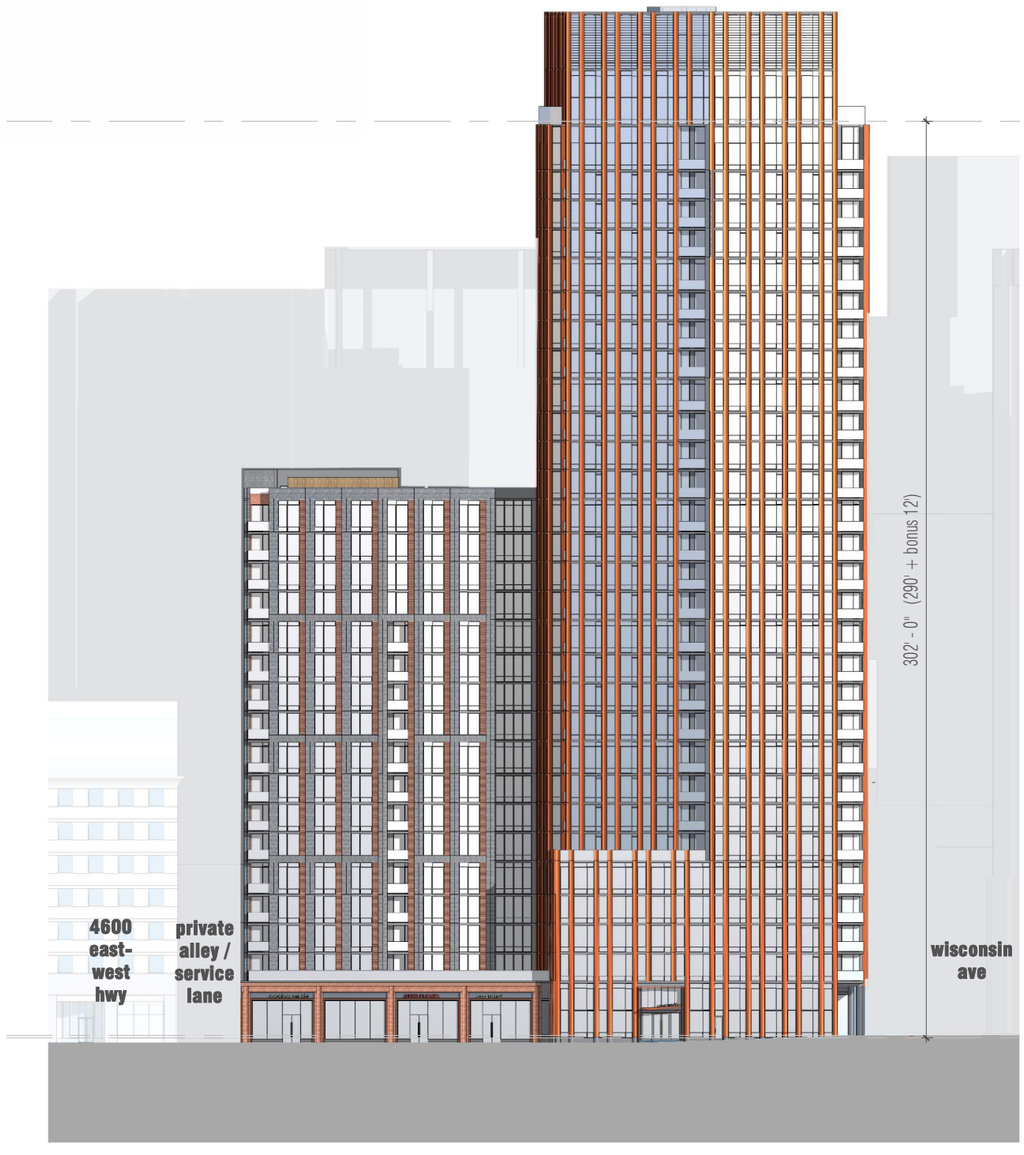






SK+I ARCHITECTURE MRP | REALTY

0' 25' 50' 100'



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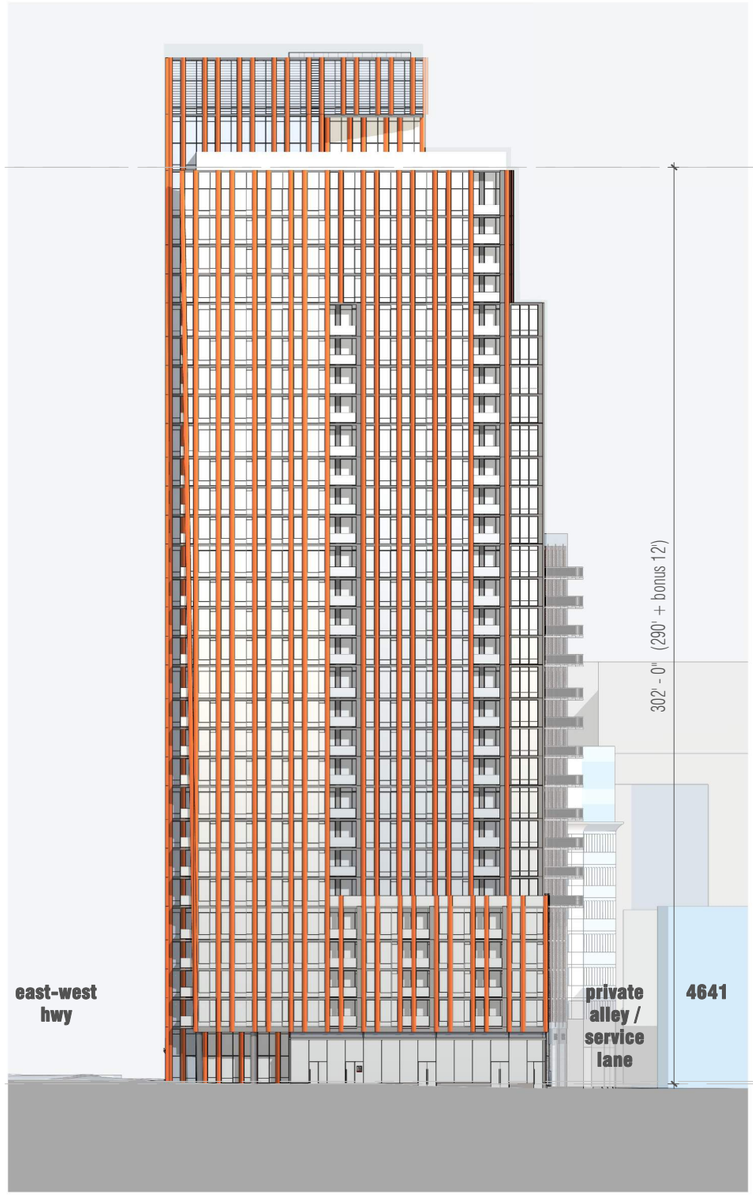

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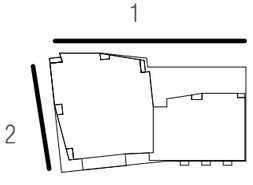

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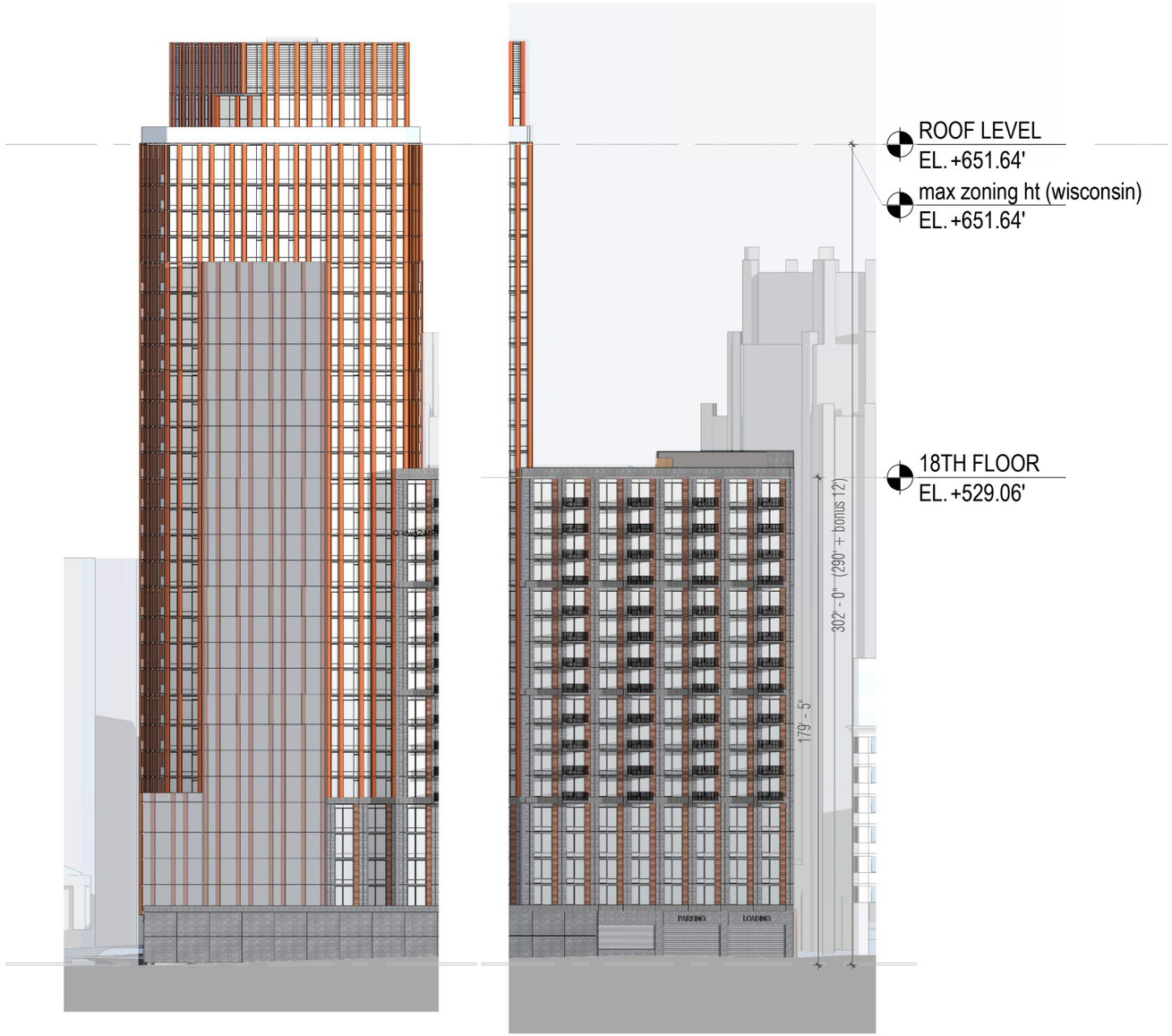

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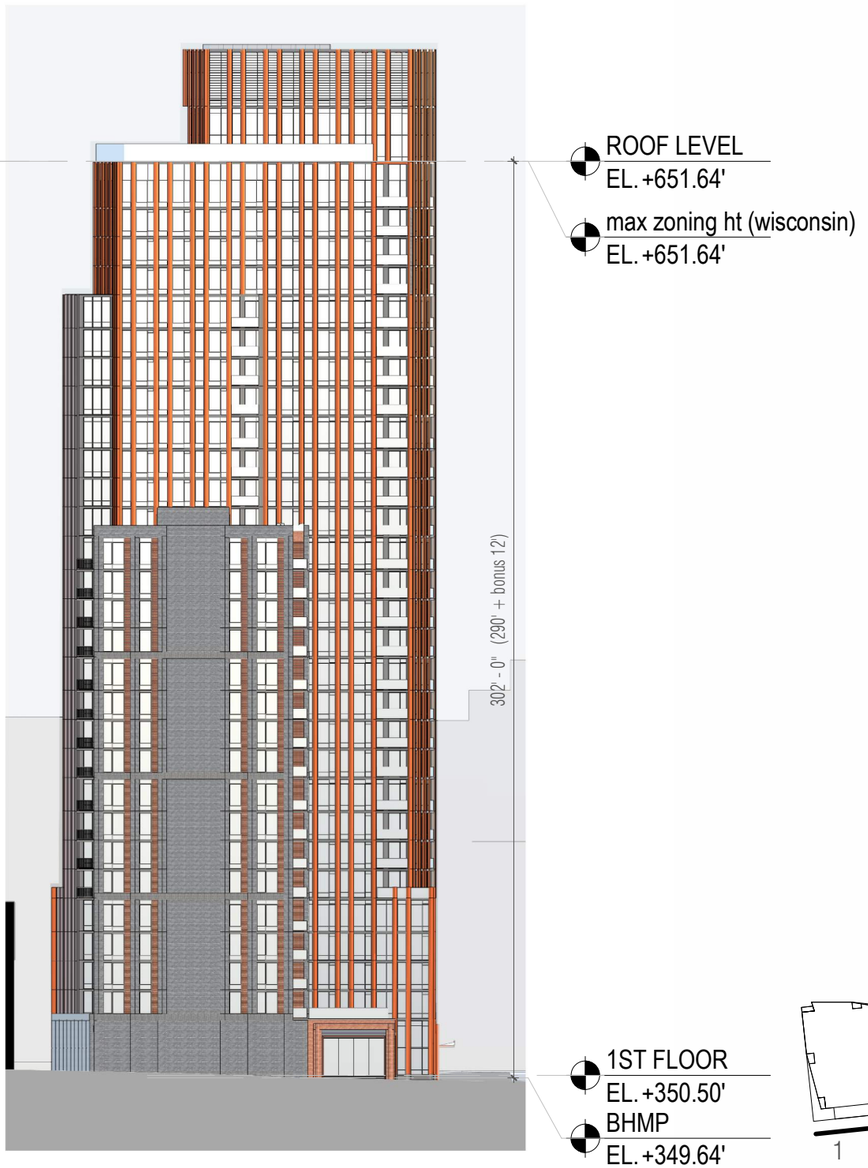

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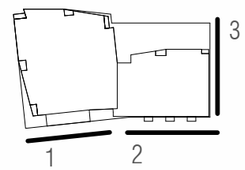

SK+I ARCHITECTURE MRP | REALTY

0' 25' 50' 100'