

Silver Spring Downtown Design Advisory Panel (DAP)

Submission Form

Revised February 2023

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name	Blairs Block F2/G (Pearl 2)
File Number(s)	TBD: SP amendment 82014017D
Project Address	8103-8107 Eastern Avenue/ High Park Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20910

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

APPLICANT TEAM

	Name	Phone	Email
Primary Contact	Eric Wohnsigl	410-685-6655	ewohnsigl@designcollective.com
Architect	Design Collective, Inc.		
Landscape Architect	Mahan Rykiel Associates, Inc.		

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

	Zone	Proposed Height	Proposed Density (SF/FAR)	Requested Additional Density (SF/FAR)	MPDU %
Project Data	CR-5.0 C-5.0 R-5.0 H-240	85'	387,260 GSF/ 136,343 = 2.84 FAR	N/A	12.5%
Proposed Land Uses	Residential and Parking				



DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL SUBMISSION PROCESS & REQUIREMENTS

1. Schedule a Design Advisory Panel review date with the Design Advisory Panel administrator: Cashielle Nelson: SSDAP@montgomeryplanning.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 Types(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): Neighborhood Street, modified

Active Zone Elements	Recommended	Provided	Justification
Frontage Zone	0'	0'	0'
Sidewalk / Sidepath	6' min.	5' min.	Matching first phase
Pedestrian/Bike Buffer	6' default, 2' min.	N/A	No separated bike lane
Separated Bike Lane (one-way or two-way)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Street Buffer	6'	7'-6"	Matching first phase

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	1-2	13' - 25'	Pedestrian levels and base is taller at building main entry and amenities
Base	1-2	13' - 25'	
Middle / Tower	5-6	53' - 64'	
Top	1	12-18'	A cap is expressed within the top of the building at accented corner lantern elements
Cap	1	12-18'	
Step-back above Base	N/A		
Step-back above Middle	1	2'-4'/ 30'	Along Eastern Avenue there are greater setbacks than the typical.
Tower Separation	N/A		



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.



**NARRATIVE FOR PRE-APPLICATION SUBMISSION
TO THE SILVER SPRING DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL**

**THE BLAIRS
SITE PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 82014017____
PRELIMINARY PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 12013022____**

JULY 1, 2026

The Blair Towers, LLC, an affiliate of The Tower Companies (“Blair Towers,” or the “Applicant”), respectfully submits this Pre-Application Submission (“DAP Submission”) to the Silver Spring Design Advisory Panel (“DAP Panel”). The DAP Submission is made in advance of formal applications to the Montgomery County Planning Board (“Planning Board”) for certain amendments to previously approved land use entitlements for The Blairs Master Plan Property (defined below). The Applicant intends to submit these applications in the near future to modify the approved plans for the multifamily residential building with structured parking that was to be constructed within Block F2 of The Blairs Master Plan Property with the next phase of the approved F1/F2 Project (defined below), as well as plans for its landscaping, related improvements, and associated lots, all while maintaining conformance with the applicable approved Project Plan (defined below).

The redevelopment of The Blairs Master Plan Property has been carefully planned, and is expected to occur incrementally over an extended period. As a part of the evolution from today to the future, the changes described in this DAP Submission represent a refinement of plans for development in the “Lower Escarpment” area of The Blairs Master Plan Property, which is the primarily residential area located to the south of Blair Drive. The DAP Submission does not relate to the commencement of the redevelopment of the Upper Escarpment area (*i.e.*, the primarily commercial area of The Blairs Master Plan Property located to the north of Blair Drive) that is contemplated under the Project Plan.¹ Blair Towers will address the ultimate redevelopment of the Upper Escarpment, and other portions of The Blairs Master Plan Property, in the future through appropriate Site Plan applications.

Please note that this DAP Submission is intended to elicit preliminary feedback from the Silver Spring Design Advisory Panel about the proposed design evolution and its conformance with

¹ The line of division between the two escarpments is proposed Blair Drive, which approximately bisects The Blairs Master Plan Property and generally follows a topographical break point that has a slope from east to west (approximate elevation of 325 feet along East-West Highway to approximate elevation of 292 feet along Blair Drive, a drop of 33 feet within the Upper Escarpment). This topographical decline in elevation continues more modestly through the Lower Escarpment to a lowest approximate elevation of 285 feet along Eastern Avenue, a drop of 7 feet within the Lower Escarpment, and thus 40 feet overall.

applicable provisions of the 2022 Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Plan (the “Master Plan”) and its related 2023 Design Guidelines (the “Design Guidelines”). However, the approved F1/F2 project is a legacy project under Section 7.7.1.B.3 of the Zoning Ordinance, which allows an applicant to amend any previously approved application under the development standards and procedures of the applicable zoning on October 29, 2014. As a legacy project, the proposed modifications will require Site Plan and Preliminary Plan amendment applications, but not a Sketch Plan application. Thus, the Design Advisory Panel will not be required to evaluate or recommend any public benefits points or actions for the project from any public benefit category, including Design Excellence.

I. BACKGROUND

On October 24, 2013, the Planning Board approved the Preliminary Plan and Project Plan for certain properties located in the Silver Spring Central Business District (“CBD”) that were classified in the CBD-R2 (Central Business District, Residential, 2.0) Zone. More specifically, the properties that are subject to the approved Preliminary Plan and the approved Project Plan are located in the eastern quadrant of the intersection of Colesville Road/MD 384 and Eastern Avenue, and generally are bordered by Colesville Road, Eastern Avenue, East-West Highway and Blair Mill Road. These properties, excluding the two corner lots with frontage on East-West Highway, comprise an overall gross tract area of approximately 30.367 acres (or 1,322,791 square feet) and are collectively referred to as “The Blairs Master Plan Property.”²

At the time of Preliminary Plan and Project Plan approval, the Blairs Master Plan Property was improved with a mix of uses including 1,376 rental residential units, an office building, and retail/restaurant space. However, the approved Project Plan and Preliminary Plan respectively allowed for the following: (i) the mixed use, infill redevelopment of much of The Blairs Master Plan Property under the optional method of development for the CBD-R2 Zone; and (ii) the resubdivision of The Blairs Master Plan Property into new record lots and parcels, ownership units, and private streets to implement the new redevelopment, while retaining some of the current buildings.

As indicated by the Planning Board Resolutions for the Preliminary Plan and Project Plan, dated December 23, 2013, the approved redevelopment – known as “The Blairs Master Plan” – will provide a maximum of 3,825,400 square feet of gross floor area, comprised of: 450,000 square feet for commercial uses (including retail, office, and hotel), and 3,375,400 square feet for residential uses. As approved, the residential component will provide a total of up to 2,800

² The Blairs Master Plan Property has since been rezoned to the Commercial/Residential (“CR”) zone, CR-5.0, C-5.0, R-5.0, H-240, in connection with Sectional Map Amendment H-146 (adopted by the Montgomery County Council, sitting as the District Council, on October 18, 2022).

residential dwelling units, of which 1,690 will be newly constructed units.³ If, and as, constructed, these 1,690 newly constructed residential dwelling units will be required to provide 12.5 percent Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (“MPDUs”) for the overall development, for a total of 212 MPDUs.⁴

As noted above, the redevelopment of The Blairs Master Plan Property pursuant to the approved Preliminary Plan and Project Plan has been carefully and intentionally planned to occur incrementally over an extended period of time, in accordance with a Development Program approved by the Planning Board. Accordingly, the Site Plan for the first portions of the overall redevelopment – Site Plan No. 820140170 (“Site Plan”) – was approved by the Planning Board on November 13, 2014. The Site Plan facilitated and began the redevelopment of the original Blair Towers multifamily residential buildings (now demolished but formerly located in the north/northwest quadrant of the intersection of Blair Mill Road and Eastern Avenue). In their place, the Site Plan provided for new multifamily residential buildings with structured parking, landscaping, and related improvements in two phases on Blocks F1 and F2 of The Blairs Master Plan Property (the “F1/F2 Project”), the first phase of which has now been completed with construction of the F1 Building, known as The Pearl. The Site Plan also illustrated certain interim improvements to be constructed simultaneously with the F1/F2 Project, including a “Temporary Green” on Block E. In this way, the Site Plan allowed incremental and interim enhancements to begin to occur within other portions of The Blairs Master Plan Property that are not yet suitable and able to be redeveloped. Over time, with the eventual development of other portions of the site in accordance with future Site Plans implementing the Project Plan, these interim improvements will be replaced.

The Planning Board approved a subsequent minor Consent Agenda amendment to the Site Plan – Site Plan Amendment No. 82014017A (the “Consent Amendment”) – on July 14, 2016. The Consent Amendment approved minor refinements to the Temporary Green including, among other things, revisions to the layout and grading of temporary pedestrian paths; the addition of certain temporary features including but not limited to a wood deck/stage, playground equipment, and outdoor fitness equipment; the potential addition of a temporary modular building and associated landscaping; and the potential addition of a temporary urban residents' garden.

The Planning Board then approved Site Plan Amendment No. 82014017B on November 30, 2017 (the “Limited Amendment”). The Limited Amendment extended the geographic limits of the previously approved Site Plan to portions of the Upper Escarpment area, in order to implement other interim uses of a retail nature within a designated "Interim Development Area" and a "Potential Interim Development Area." Within the Interim Development Area of the Upper

³ The Applicant intends to retain 1,110 existing dwelling units within the Blairs Master Plan area. The total number of retained dwelling units includes a small number of residential dwelling units in the existing Blair House apartments that will be consolidated into single units.

⁴ The MPDUs required for the new residential construction for the F1 building ("The Pearl") have already been provided.

Escarpment, the Limited Amendment facilitated the replacement and reconfiguration of a limited number of existing surface parking spaces with a new retail pad site for a building of approximately 5,400 square feet, along with related site improvements and stormwater management facilities. The Limited Amendment proposed no physical changes within the Potential Interim Development Area, which applies to a portion of the surface parking area for the existing Giant grocery store. Rather, the Limited Amendment included the Potential Interim Development Area solely to allow the overall amount of surface parking spaces provided for the existing retail uses in the Upper Escarpment to be re-tabulated, in order to reflect the elimination of those certain existing parking spaces to make space for the new retail pad site building.

Most recently, on January 9, 2025, the Planning Board approved Site Plan Amendment No. 82014017C (the “2025 Site Plan Amendment”). The 2025 Site Plan Amendment modified plans for the future interim retail development and related improvements that were to be constructed within the Upper Escarpment pursuant to the Limited Amendment in order to increase the gross floor area of the previously approved but unbuilt interim pad site building by up to 1,950 square feet for a total area of 7,350 square feet. The Limited Amendment also allowed for an alternative use option and layout for a veterinarian office/hospital on the interim pad site, a revised building footprint associated with the alternative use improvements, and an update to the material of an existing path in the Temporary Green.

II. AMENDMENT REQUEST

As explained above, the Applicant has constructed the first phase of the F1/F2 Project, which includes the multifamily residential apartments known as The Pearl. Now, the Applicant intends to submit Site Plan and Preliminary Plan amendment applications in the near future to modify the approved plans for the second phase of the approved F1/F2 Project, which includes the multifamily residential building with structured parking that was approved to be constructed within Block F2 and G of The Blairs Master Plan Property, its landscaping, and related improvements (the “F2/G Project”). The proposed amendments to the F2/G Project are the subject of this DAP Submission.

Building Form and Design

The residential building that is proposed with the F2/G Project represents the next phase in the long-term redevelopment of The Blairs Master Plan campus and builds upon the architectural and urban design framework established by The Blairs Master Plan and implemented by The Pearl. Originally envisioned as two separate high-rise residential buildings on the F2 and G parcels (with the first residential building to be constructed on Block F2 with the F1/F2 Project and the second residential building to be constructed on Block G in a future phase of development), the F2/G Project has evolved in response to current market conditions into a single, integrated residential community consisting of approximately 350 apartments with a concealed cast-in-place parking

structure. This evolution creates a more cohesive building composition while preserving the overall vision of a walkable, interconnected residential neighborhood envisioned in the approved site master plan.

A primary design objective is to strengthen the public realm and improve connections throughout The Blairs Master Plan campus. The building is carefully positioned to reinforce a network of interconnected pedestrian spaces that extend beyond the project boundaries, linking new public plazas, landscaped open spaces, and the shared mews between the proposed building and The Pearl. Highly transparent ground-floor amenity spaces, walk-out residential units, generous streetscape improvements, and active building frontages contribute to a safer, more engaging pedestrian experience while encouraging activity throughout the day.

The organization of the building mass prioritizes the creation of meaningful open space rather than maximizing building footprint. By opening the courtyard toward the southwest along Eastern Avenue and Blair Mill Road, the project reduces the perceived scale of the development across those streets, allows sunlight to penetrate deep into the site, and preserves long views toward the surrounding neighborhood and Rock Creek Park. This approach also extends the broader network of green spaces envisioned throughout The Blairs Master Plan campus to and through the Mews, creating visual and physical connections that benefit residents, neighbors, and visitors alike.

The architectural massing responds thoughtfully to the surrounding context and the varied scale of development within Silver Spring. Building heights and volumes transition from the taller mixed-use development to the north toward the lower-scale residential neighborhoods to the south, while strategic massing shifts break down the overall length of the building along Blair Mill Road and Eastern Avenue. These refinements reduce the apparent scale of the project, frame important pedestrian corridors, and create a more comfortable and human-scaled streetscape.

Architecturally, the building establishes a complementary relationship with The Pearl through a shared material palette and a consistent base, middle, and top composition while expressing its own distinct identity. Rich masonry detailing, profiled metal panels, generous glazing, and deeply recessed façade elements introduce texture, shadow, and depth that enrich the pedestrian experience and reduce the visual mass of the building. Carefully placed architectural "lantern" elements terminate important view corridors and provide recognizable landmarks that contribute to the identity of The Blairs Master Plan campus.

The project reflects a holistic approach in which architecture, landscape, and urban design are developed as a single integrated system. Building form, open space, and circulation work together to create a more connected public realm, strengthen pedestrian and visual connections across the campus, and reinforce the landscape as the defining organizing element of the community. The resulting design balances neighborhood compatibility, pedestrian experience, environmental responsiveness, and architectural character while advancing the long-term vision for The Blairs Master Plan Property to be developed as a vibrant, interconnected residential campus.

III. CONCLUSION

As noted above, the Applicant intends to file Site Plan and Preliminary Plan amendment applications in the near future for the F2/G Project. These applications will demonstrate that the F2 Project will comply with all applicable requirements of the Zoning Ordinance that govern development under the CBD-R2 Zone, while preserving the intent of the overall development approved for The Blairs Master Plan Property with the Project Plan and the previous Site Plan for the F1/F2 Project and advancing the objectives of the Master Plan. In the meantime, the Applicant appreciates the Silver Spring Design Advisory Panel's review of this DAP Submission at this preliminary juncture.

THE BLAIRS, F2-G SITE

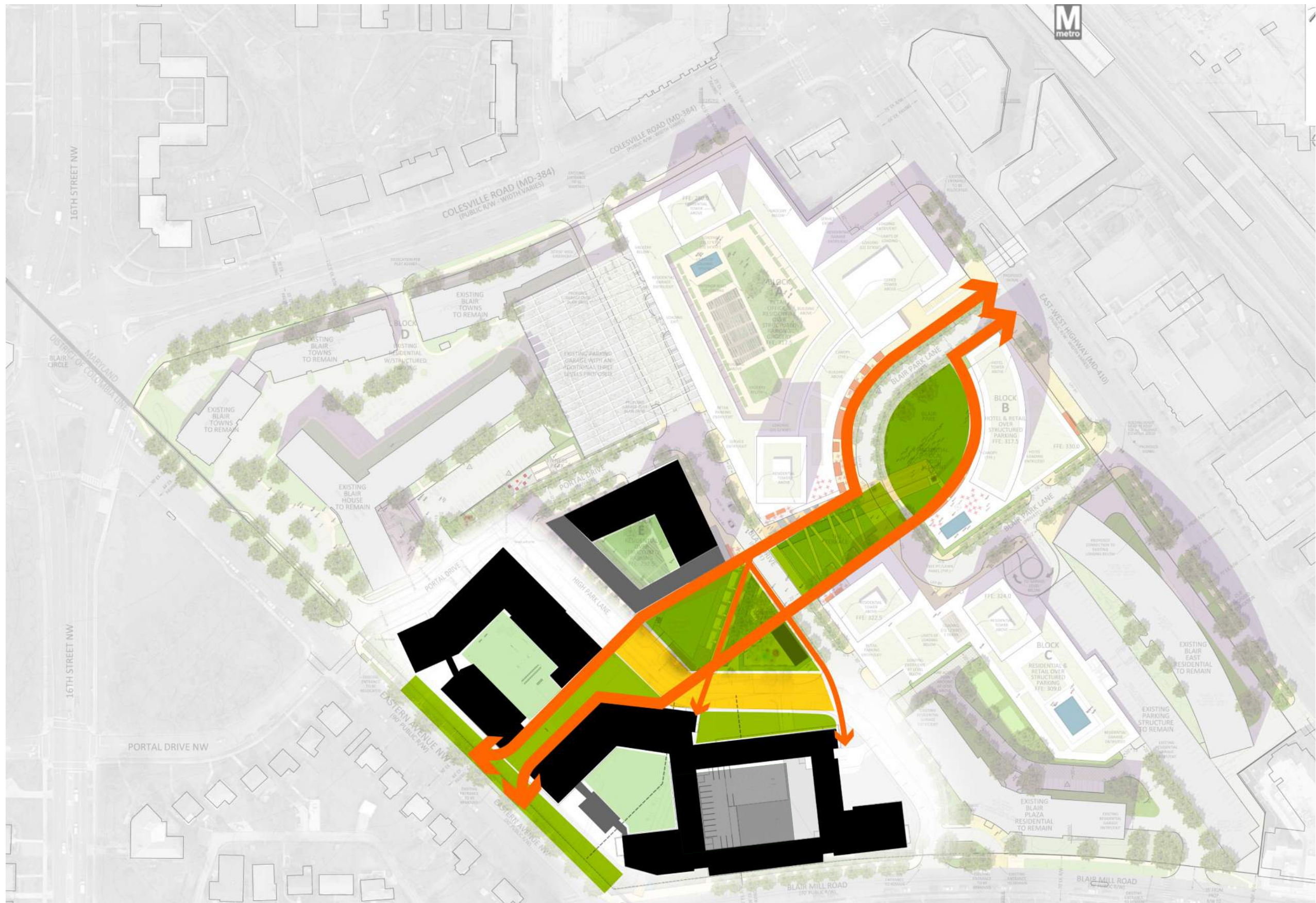
SILVER SPRING, MD

DESIGN ADVISORY PRESENTATION

JULY 15, 2026

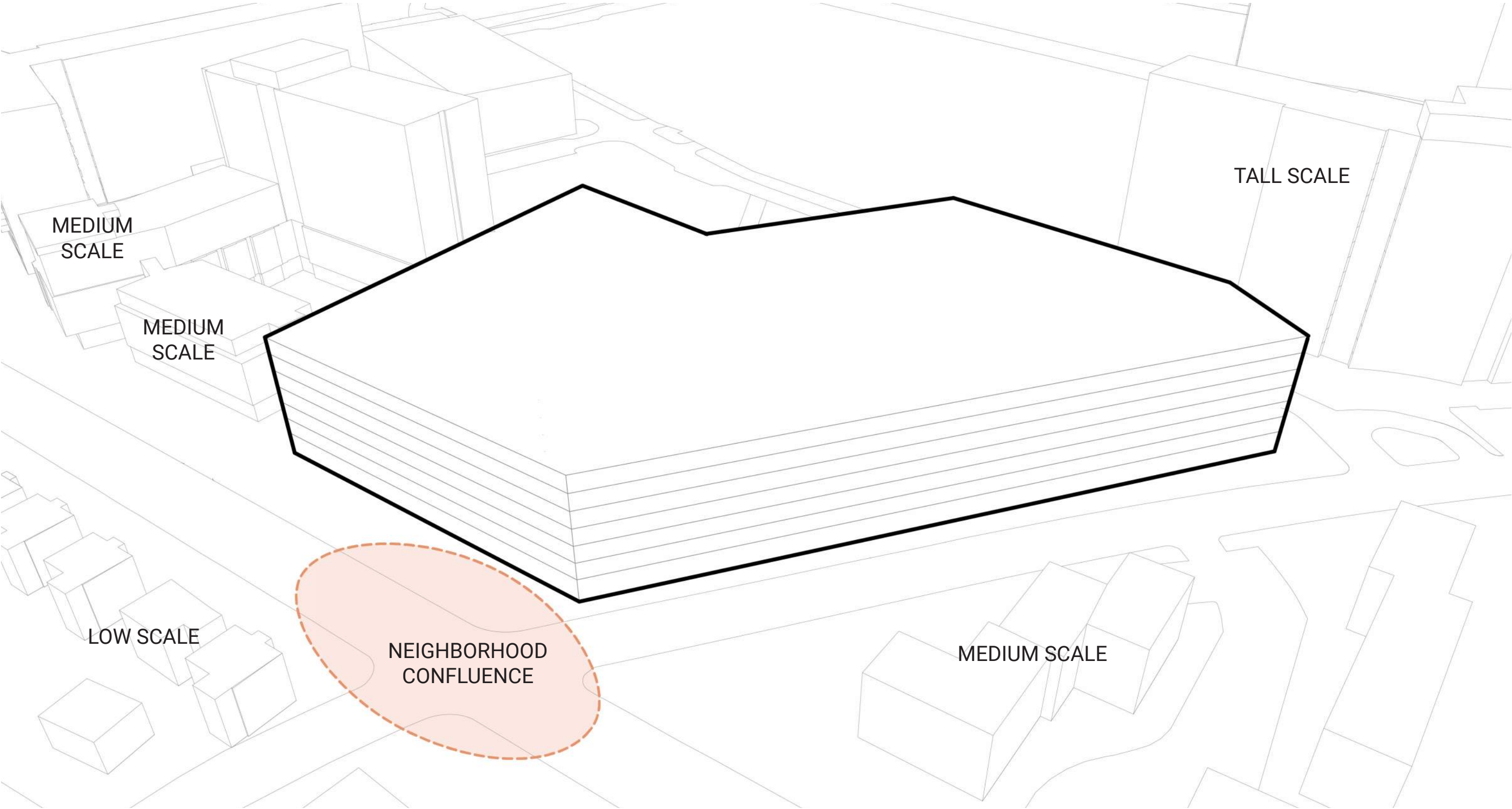






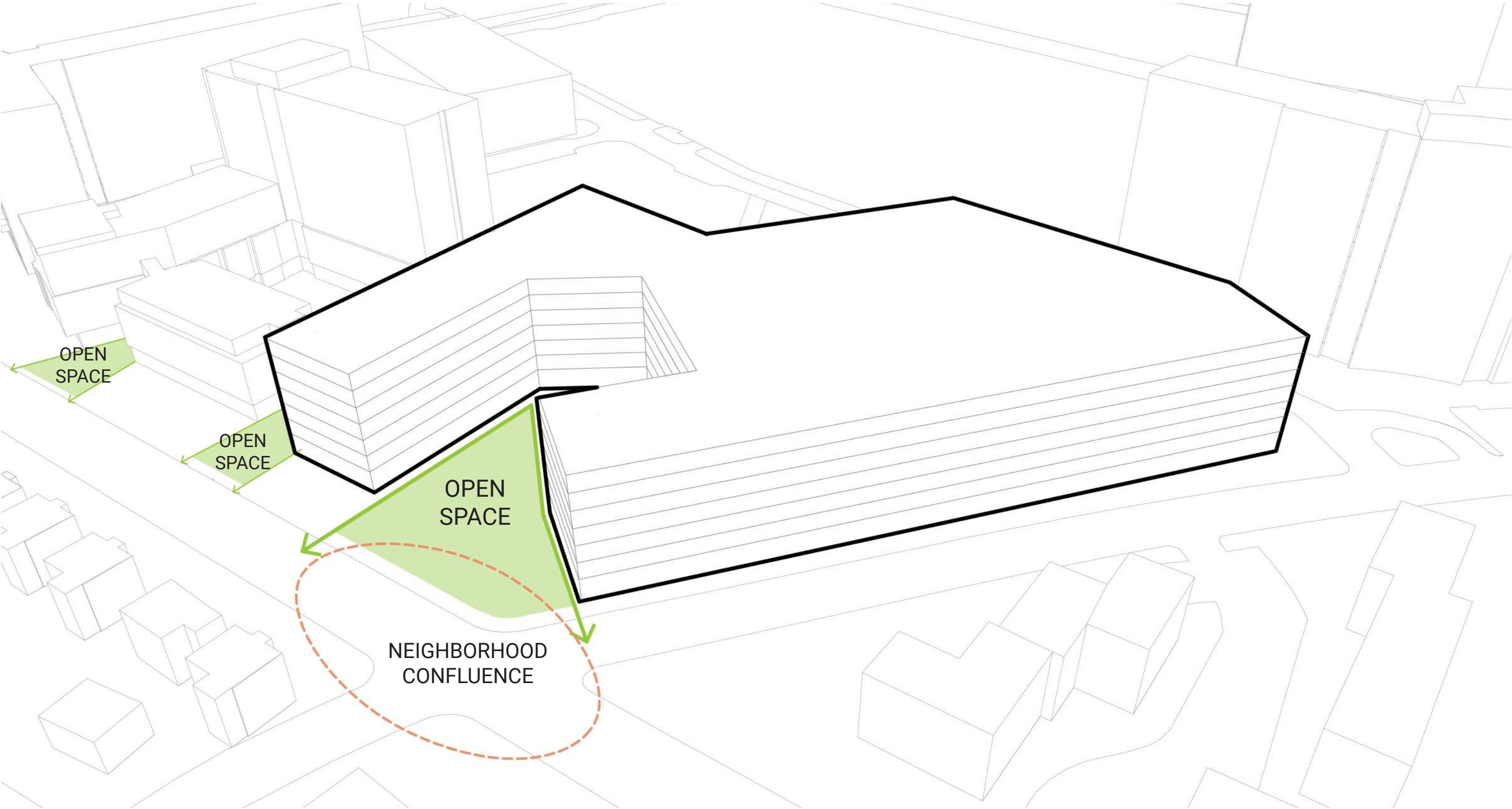


FULL PARCEL + CONTEXT



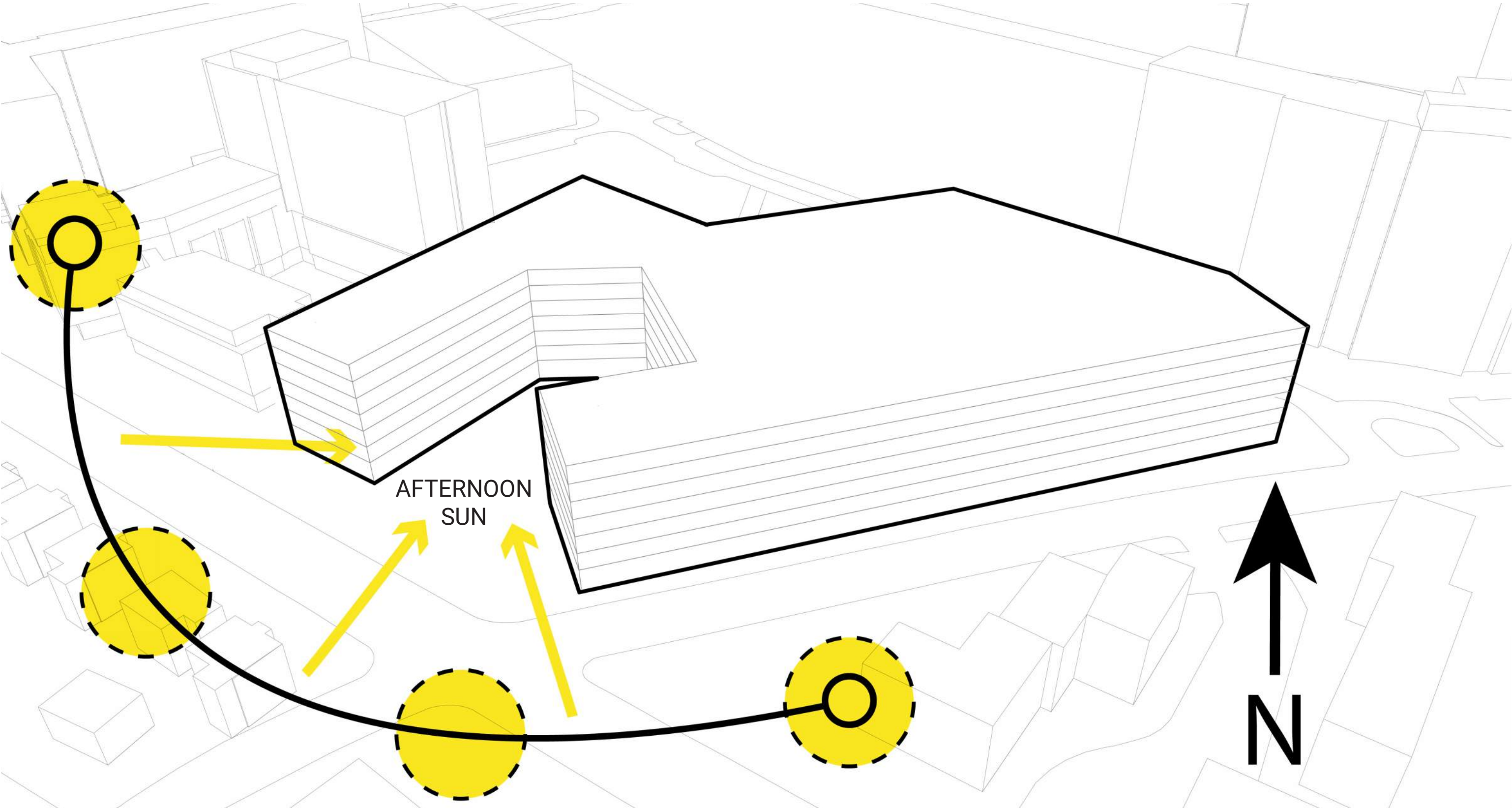
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OPEN COURTYARD AT SOUTH NEIGHBORHOOD



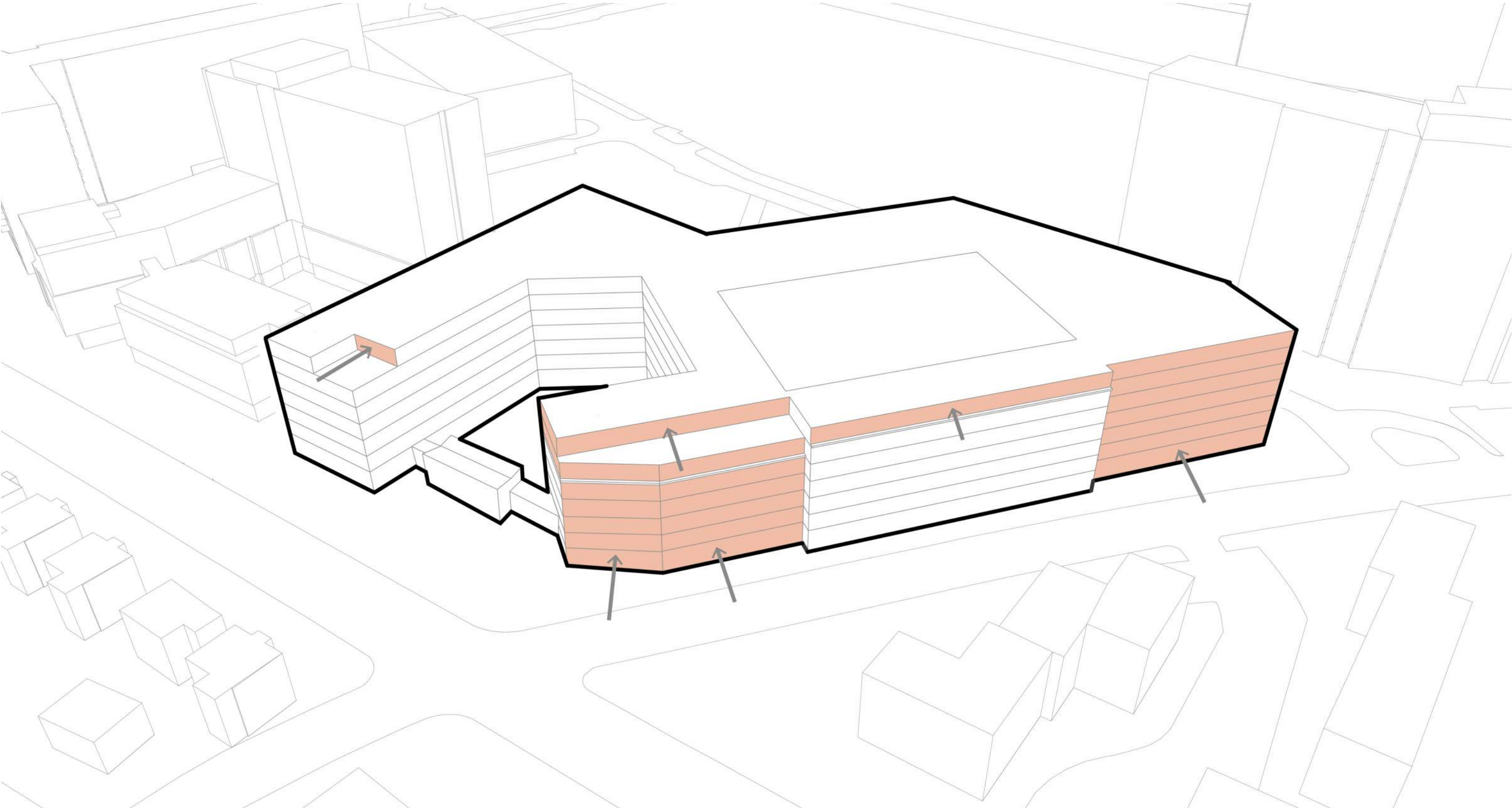
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COURTYARD SOLAR RESPONSE



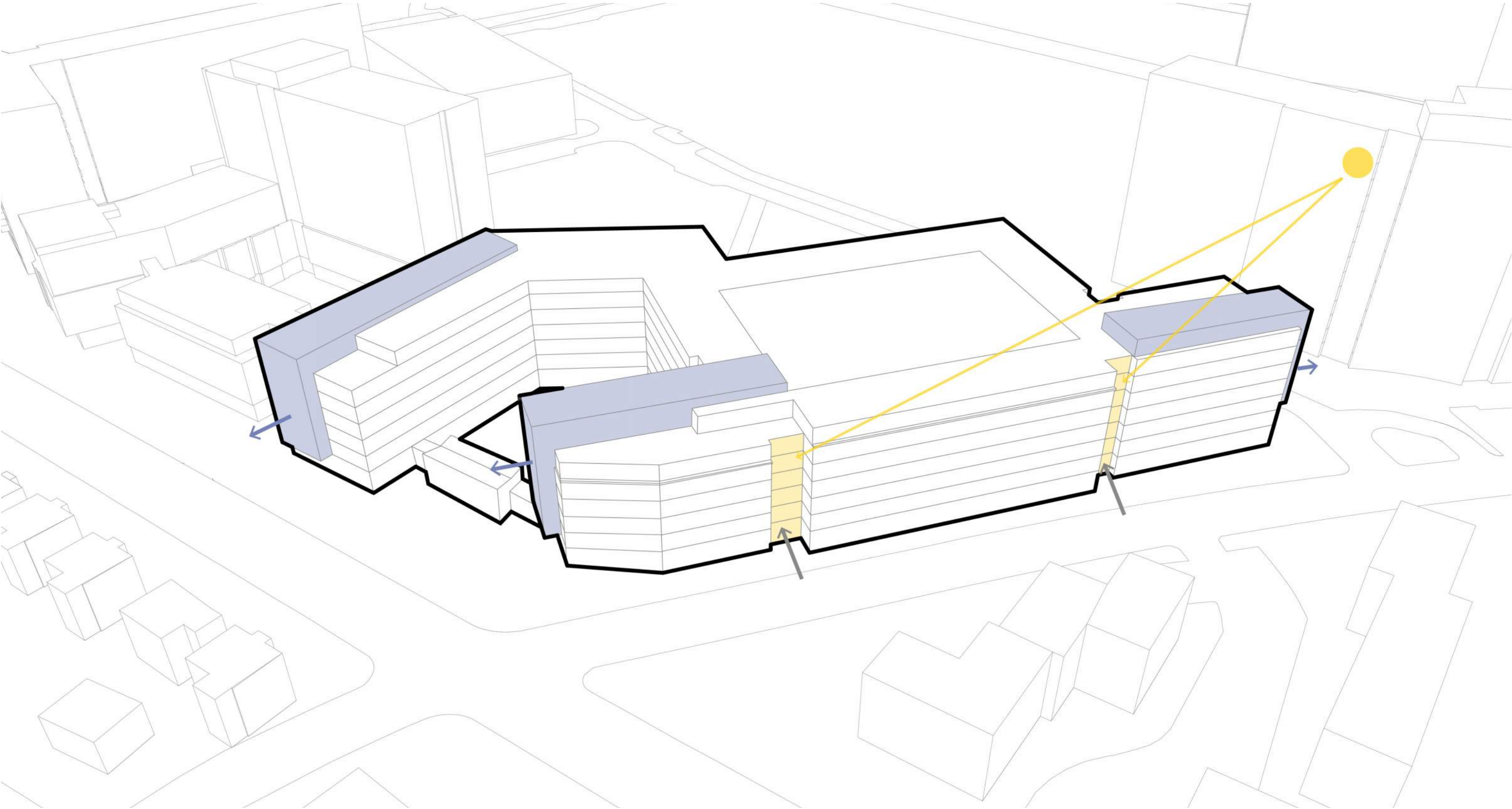
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SETBACKS AT SOUTH NEIGHBORHOOD



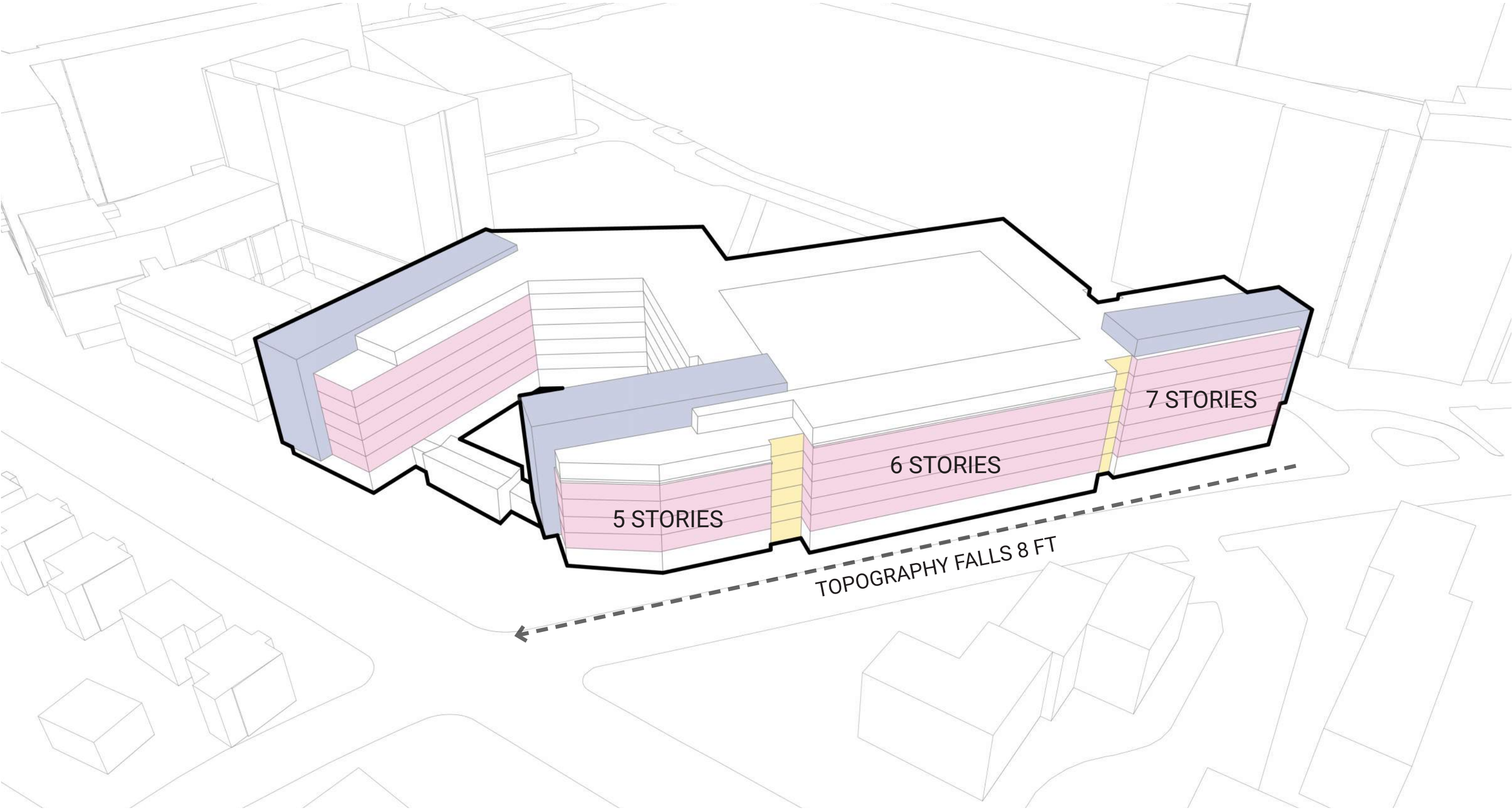
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ARTICULATION AT SOUTH NEIGHBORHOOD



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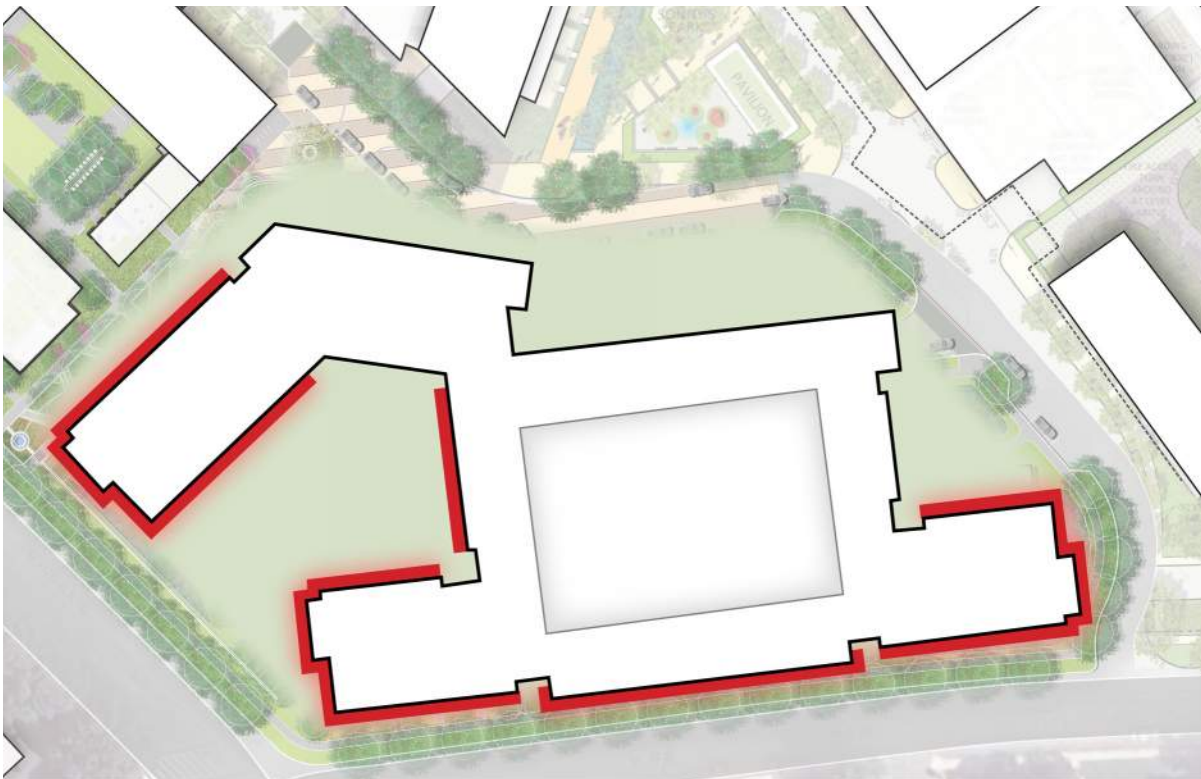
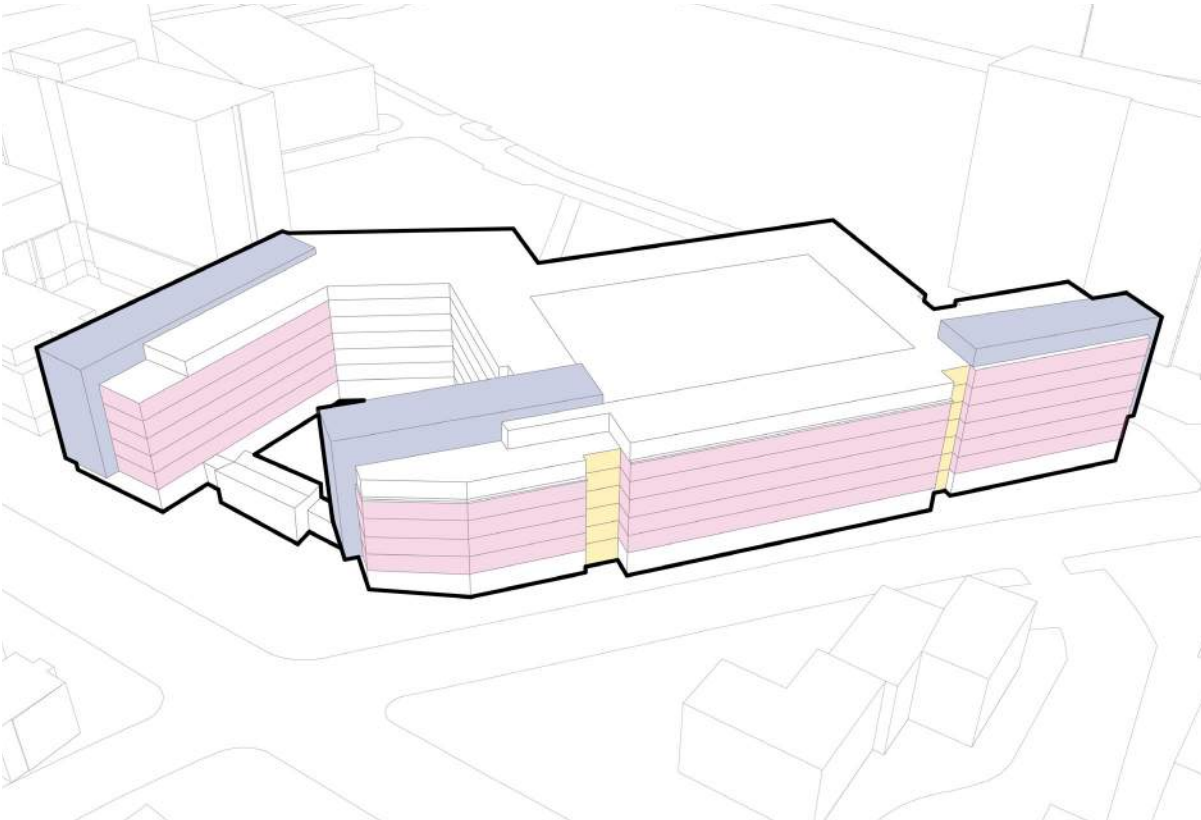
STEPPING SCALE AT SOUTH NEIGHBORHOOD



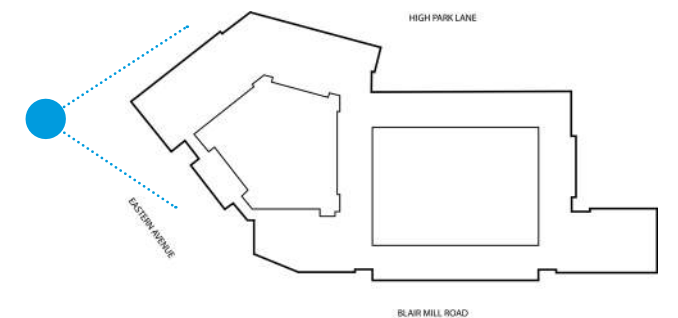
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NEIGHBORHOOD FACADES



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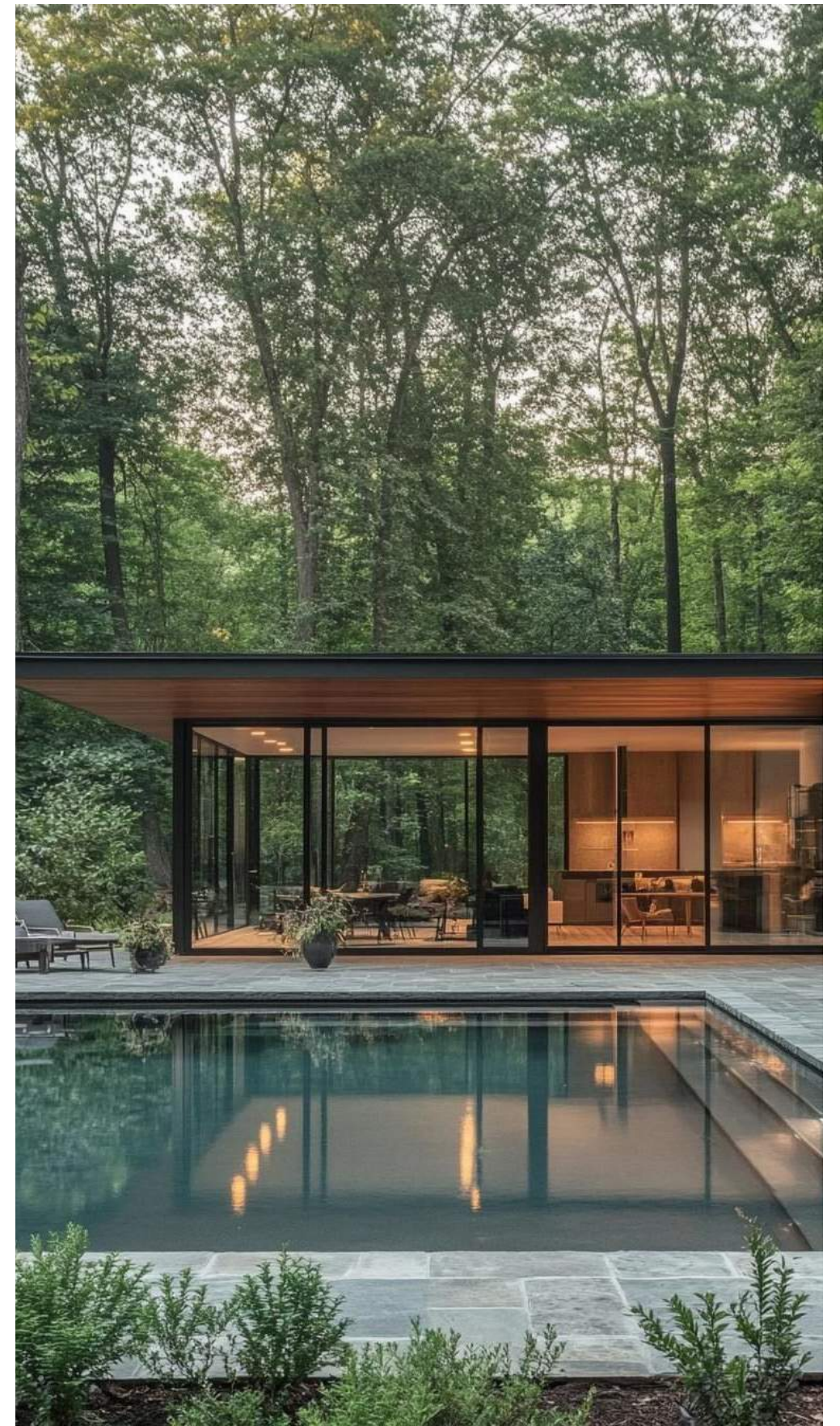
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SOUTH PERSPECTIVE AT
EASTERN AVE. AND MEWS

DAP PRESENTATION | JULY 2026
BLAIRS F2-G MULTIFAMILY | SILVER SPRING, MD

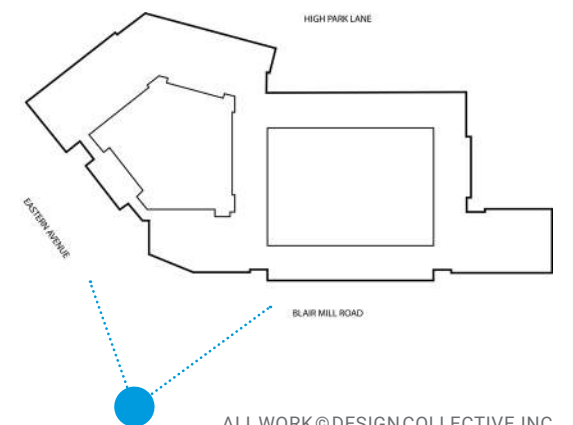


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PERSPECTIVE AT EASTERN
AVE. AND BLAIR MILL RD.

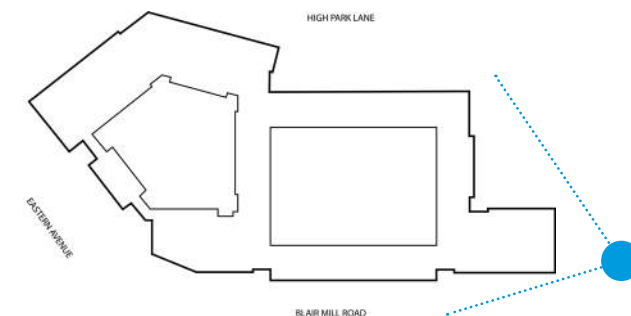
DAP PRESENTATION | JULY 2026
BLAIRS F2-G MULTIFAMILY | SILVER SPRING, MD



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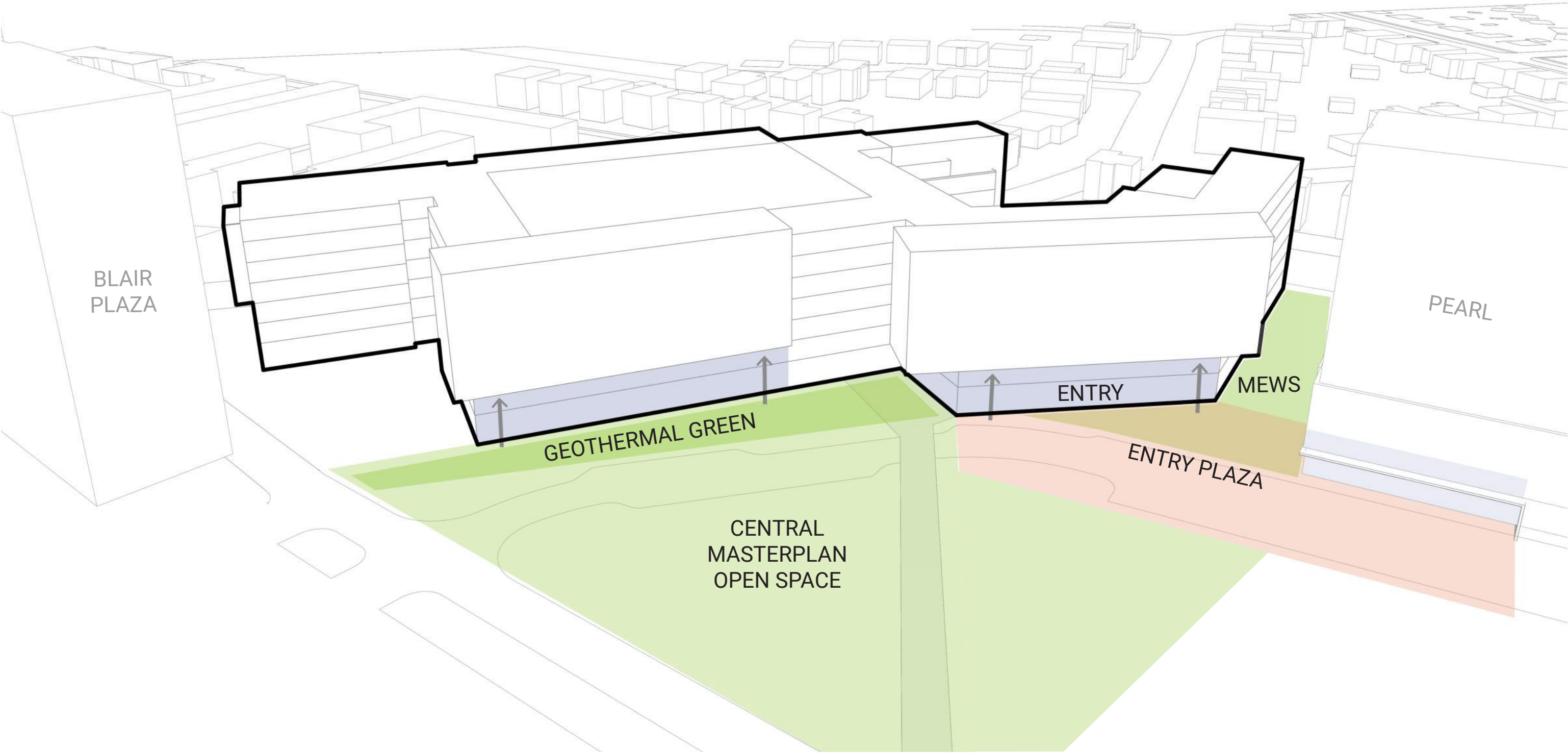
PERSPECTIVE AT BLAIR MILL
RD. AND HIGH PARK LN.

DAP PRESENTATION | JULY 2026
BLAIRS F2-G MULTIFAMILY | SILVER SPRING, MD



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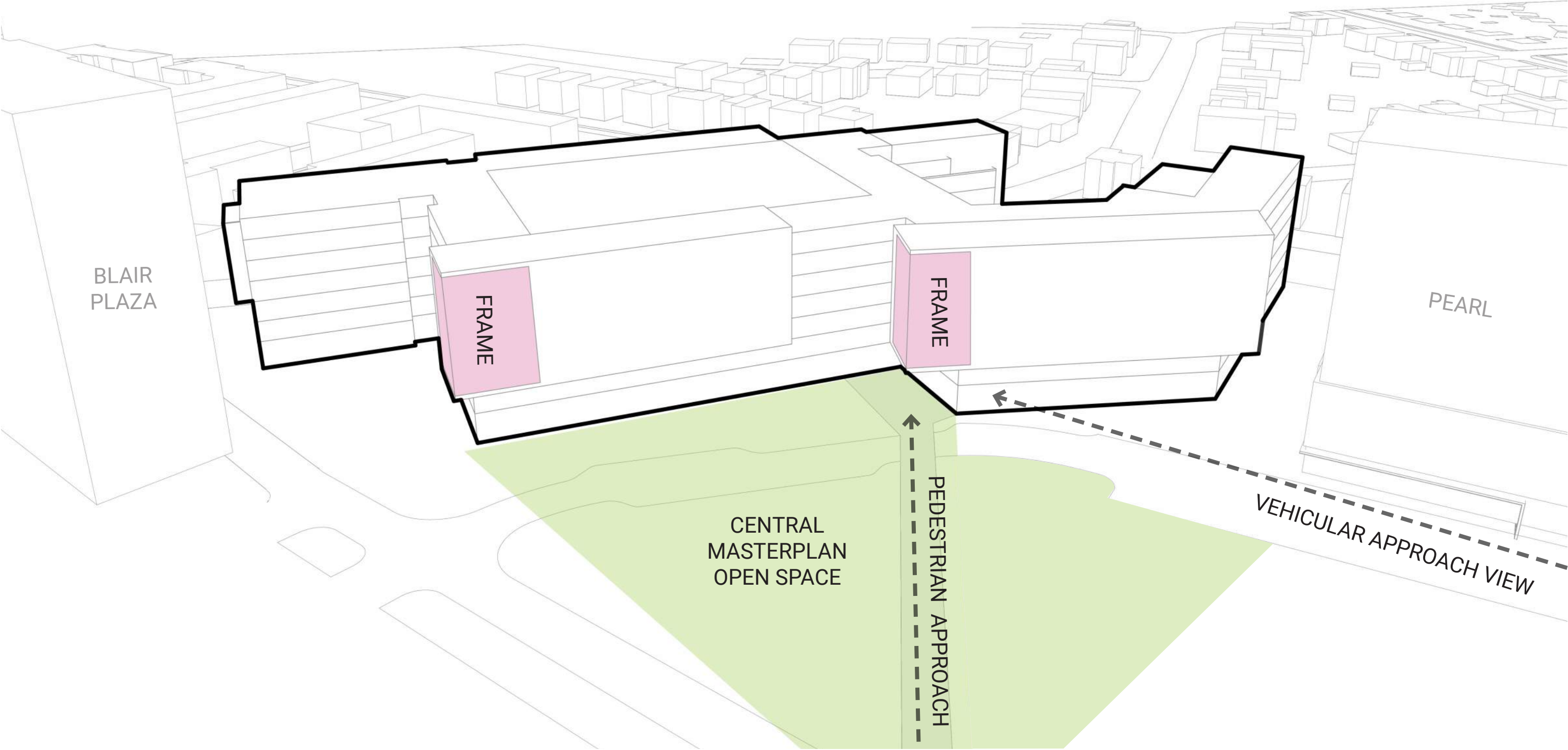
URBAN FRONTAGE - OPEN SPACES AND GROUND LEVEL ACTIVATION



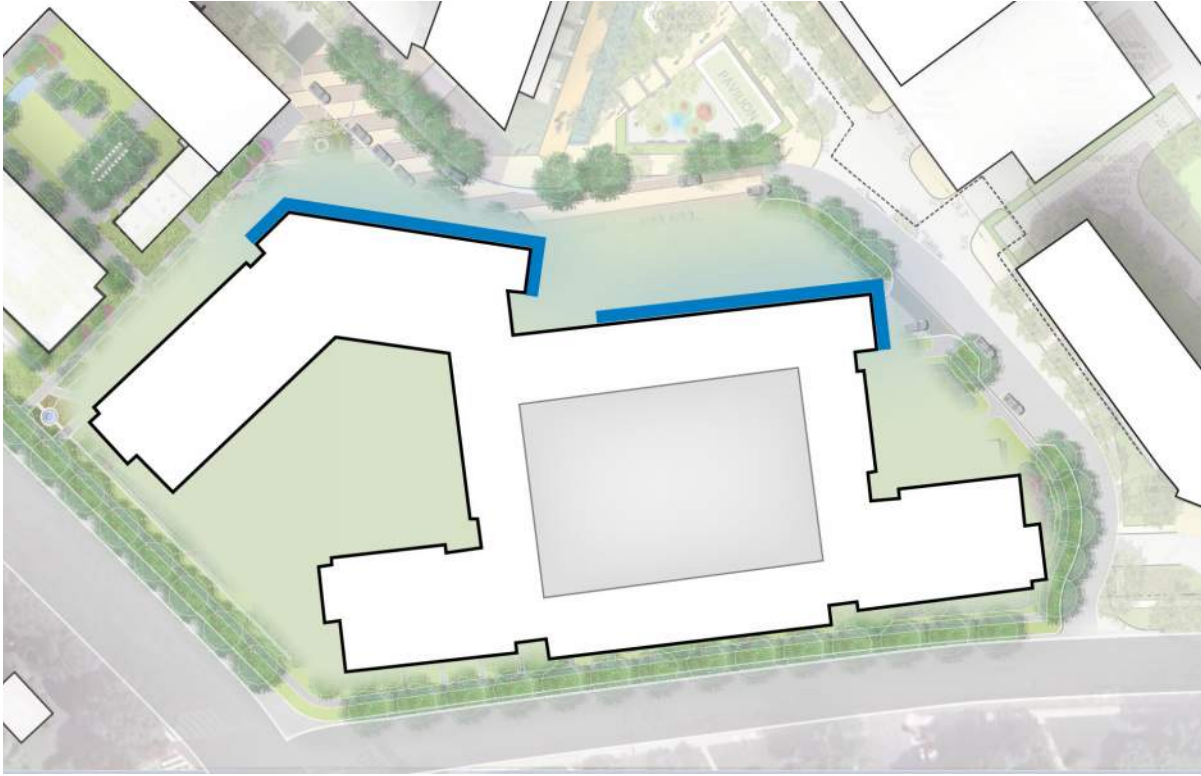
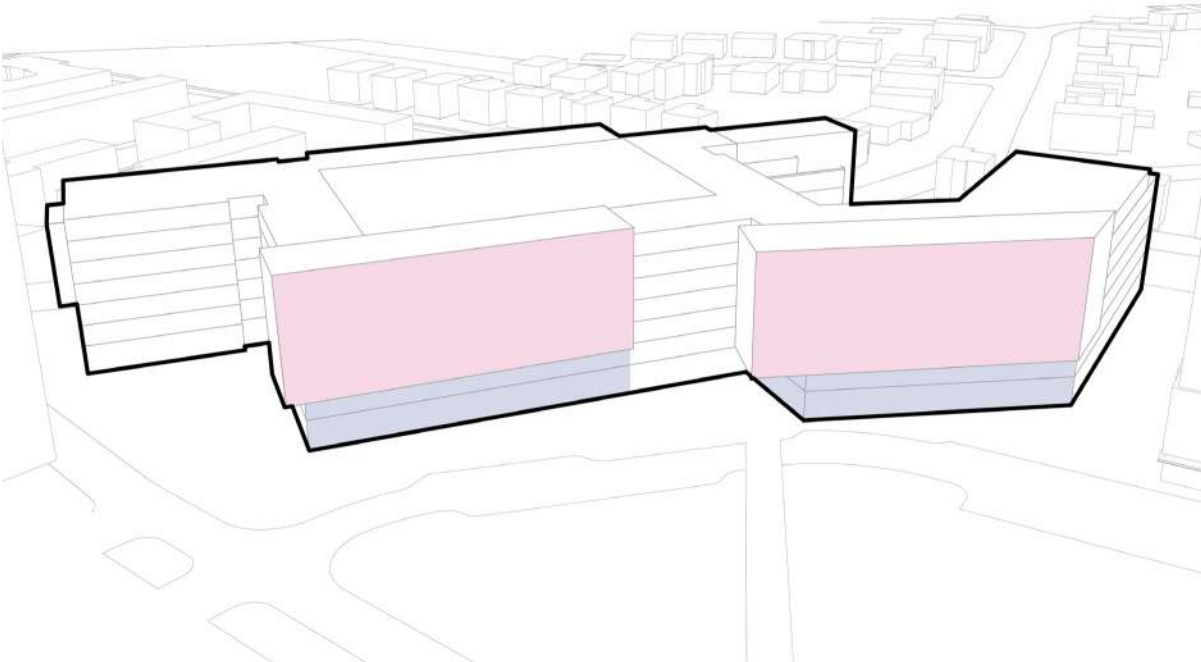
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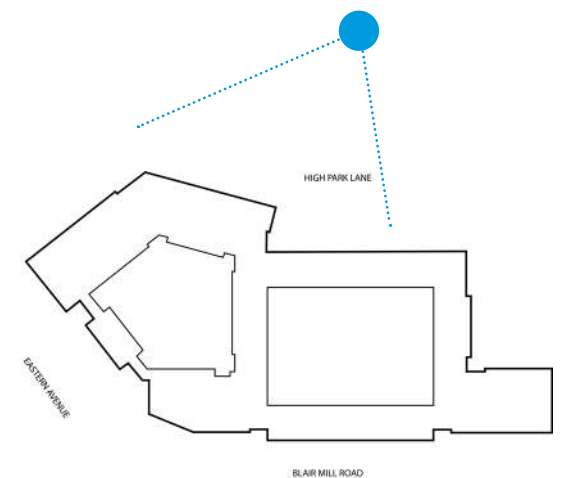
URBAN FRONTAGE - FRAMING PUBLIC SPACE



URBAN FACADES



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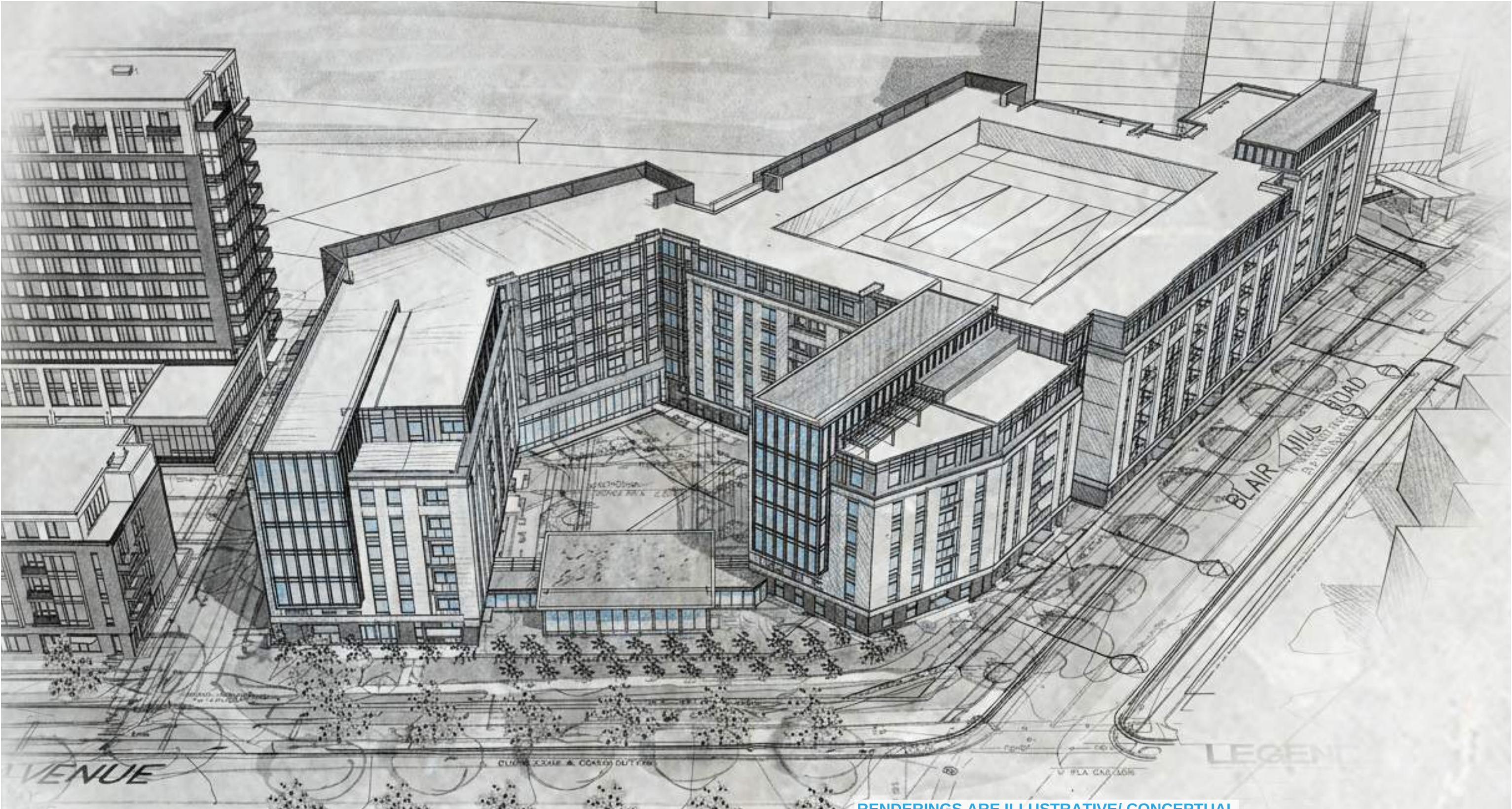
PERSPECTIVE FROM
UPPER ESCARPMENT

DAP PRESENTATION | JULY 2026
BLAIRS F2-G MULTIFAMILY | SILVER SPRING, MD



Design
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SCHEMATIC MASSING



RENDERINGS ARE ILLUSTRATIVE/ CONCEPTUAL

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1 OVERALL BUILDING ELEVATION - SOUTH (BLAIR MILL)
A202 1/16" = 1'-0"



2 OVERALL BUILDING ELEVATION - SOUTH-WEST (EASTERN)
A202 1/16" = 1'-0"

RENDERINGS ARE ILLUSTRATIVE/ CONCEPTUAL



1 OVERALL BUILDING ELEVATION - NORTH (HIGH PARK)
1/16" = 1'-0"



2 OVERALL BUILDING ELEVATION - WEST (MEWS)
1/16" = 1'-0"



3 OVERALL BUILDING ELEVATION - EAST (HIGH PARK)
1/16" = 1'-0"

RENDERINGS ARE ILLUSTRATIVE/ CONCEPTUAL

