

Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel

Meeting Minutes

PROJECT: 4824 Edgemoor Lane

DATE: June 24, 2020

The 4824 Edgemoor project was reviewed by the Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel on June 24, 2020. The following meeting notes summarize the Panel's discussion, recommendations regarding design excellence, and the exceptional design public benefits points. The project is in the Site Plan stage and the Design Advisory Panel will determine if comments from Sketch Plan have been incorporated and take the final vote for design excellence public benefit points. Should you have any additional questions and/or comments please feel free to contact the Design Advisory Panel Liaison.

Attendance:

Panel

George Dove

Karl Du Puy

Rod Henderer

Damon Orobona

Qiaojue Yu

Paul Mortensen, ex officio, Senior Urban Designer in the Director's Office

Staff

Gwen Wright, Planning Director

Robert Kronenberg, Deputy Director

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Area 1 Division Chief

Stephanie Dickel, Area 1 Regulatory Supervisor

Grace Bogdan, Planner Coordinator

Jonathan Bush, Planner Coordinator

Matthew Folden, Planner Coordinator

Emily Balmer, Area 1 Principal Administrative Assistant

Applicant Team

Pat Harris, Attorney

Bill Bonstra, Architect

Shawn Weingert, Developer

Robert Kuentzel, Architect

Wade McKinney

Pat La Vay, Engineer

Discussion Points:



Staff: This project is at Site Plan, the Panel saw this project many times at the Sketch Plan stage, the main issue which was conditioned to be addressed at Site Plan is the treatment of the south façade and the relationship with the Chase Condominium. Also at Site Plan the Panel should be looking for a detailed analysis and conformance with the Design Guidelines.

- I think the design has certainly improved on Woodmont and at the south facing façade. The evolution of this project has definitely moved in the right direction.
- Why do you have the wide two stories line above the base and then the additional two stories high at the southern end of the east elevation? The integration seems awkward. I really like the top 6-7 stories, but the base doesn't seem to wrap the corner and relate to the Woodmont piece. I think it needs some attention and not convinced it needs the four-story base at the southern end.
 - *Applicant Response: The thinking was Woodmont has the high 3-4 story base and use it as a transition for the tower.*
- What is the material and role for the two-story spandrel at the corner?
 - *Applicant Response: The whole building will be brick but the idea was this white mass would be distinct from the ground.*
 - *Applicant Response: We could continue the spandrel at the 2 stories to a 4 story level at the base to help frame the mural on the upper stories at the west elevation.*
- I hear you and can understand the logic but concerned the two-story horizontal spandrels will defeat the verticality of the tower. I think eliminating the gray spandrel at the corner may allow continuity at the corner and will allow the tower to extend to the ground. It may be a rendering issue, but the spandrel seems very heavy at the 2nd story, and at the 4th floor it will be too high.
 - *Applicant Response: What if the 4th level just became spandrel only? I hear what you're saying but we can refine it so its not so competing between vertical and horizontal.*
- Agreed, breaking the spandrel would be an improvement and address comments we've had in the past, while making the corner more pronounced.

Panel Recommendations:

At Site Plan a final vote is taken to determine the amount of design excellence public benefit points to award the Project. The Applicant requests 15 points, the Panel voted 3-2 in support of the 15 points requested (2 in support of 10). The following condition should be incorporated and reviewed by staff during the Site Plan process.

- Simplify the façade at the prominent corner so the gray horizontal spandrel doesn't interrupt the vertical reading of the tower.



4824 EDGEMOOR LANE
Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel
Sketch Plan Narrative

Edgemoor 48, LLC (the "Applicant") is the developer of the property located at 4824 Edgemoor Lane, Bethesda, Maryland (the "Property"). The Property is located at the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Woodmont Avenue and Edgemoor Lane. It is a corner site, generally bordered by Woodmont Avenue to the east, Edgemoor Lane to the north, and a condominium development to the south and west. The Property is also located within 600 feet of the Bethesda Metro Station and bus terminal, and falls within the Bethesda Parking Lot District.

The Applicant proposes to redevelop the Property with a 12-story multifamily building consisting of up to 77 units (the "Project"). The Project represents an opportunity to bring a new environmentally sensitive condominium building with mid-size units and space saving automated parking within half a block of the Bethesda Metro Station. As explained in detail below, the proposed multifamily building is one of exceptional design and creativity. Pursuant to Section 59.4.7.3.E.2 of the Zoning Ordinance, as well as the exceptional design criteria outlined in the Montgomery County *Commercial/Residential and Employment Zones Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines* (the "Implementation Guidelines"), the Applicant is seeking 25 public benefit points for exceptional design.¹

The ensuing narrative provides the information required by the Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel ("DAP") Submission Form.

A. Brief Project Description and Design Concept

Although located at a unique and highly visible location within the Arlington North District of Downtown Bethesda, the subject Property is underdeveloped with a single-family structure. Accordingly, the Applicant proposes to revitalize the Property with a modern residential landmark that will be on equal footing with other new projects in Downtown Bethesda in terms of architectural design, building quality, and visual appeal. Despite having a limited land area to work with (tract area = 8,659 square feet), the Applicant has been able to generate a creative solution that cleverly utilizes the site's configuration and blends seamlessly with the surrounding environment. Additionally, the proposed multifamily building will achieve the recommended maximum building height of 120 feet denoted in the *2017 Approved and Adopted Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan* (the "Sector Plan").

As discussed in detail below, the design concept achieves several planning goals outlined in the Sector Plan, and implements many of the *Bethesda Downtown Plan Design Guidelines*.

¹ Under Section 4.9.2.C.4.f of the Zoning Ordinance, the Applicant can earn up to 30 public benefit points for exceptional design.

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Narrative for Exceptional Design Public Benefit Points Justification

- Architecture

Following previous meetings with the Design Advisory Panel, as well as M-NCPPC Staff, the Edgemoor 48 Project has been redesigned and adjusted per feedback from both the DAP and stadd. Staff indicated that of the three massing design options shown, any were acceptable to continue to the Preliminary Site Plan application. Based on feedback regarding the separation between the project to the south, the design has been updated in a manner that endeavors to address these concerns.

4824 Edgemoor Lane establishes a modern residential design at a unique corner site at the intersection of Woodmont Avenue and Edgemoor Lane in downtown Bethesda. The 12-story project is composed of a continuous wrapped façade that turns the corner of Edgemoor Lane and Woodmont Avenue, acting as a transition from the neighborhood to the urban core. The underdeveloped project site, with a net tract area of only 8,006 square feet, is highly visible along a curving Woodmont Avenue as approached from the north, as well as being visible from the neighborhood to the West and from the Metro to the East.

The irregular triangular shaped site creates the opportunity for the project to wrap around the corner, transitioning from the smaller scale to the higher scale, while the facades double height modulation breaks down the scale of the project. A vertically oriented tower element further modulates the Woodmont Avenue façade, turning the corner to the Southern façade as it pulls back from the Chase Condominium to the South. The southern façade now tapers away from a central point to create a more dynamic relationship with the project to the south, rather than two parallel walls. This move is done to be sympathetic to the Chase, as it has chamfered corners that soften the edges and diminish the perceived mass of the building. This not only provides more separation between the projects, but also allows for more visual relief and perceived separation. In addition, this provides for more light and air between the two projects, creating a much better relationship for occupants of both buildings, as well as from the public realm. The building is grounded by a continuous base that relates to the neighborhood scale and wraps around the entire building. The language of strong tower elements holding in place a curved wall is continuous around the building. Carefully composed 'at risk windows' enhance the elevations of the party wall along the western façade and reinforce the reading of the project as a four-sided building. This contemporary building design will soon become a quiet contributor to the existing urban condition along this picturesque thoroughfare.

- Parking and Loading

Given the Property's proximity to multiple forms of transit, including the Bethesda Metro Station and bus terminal (which is served by numerous bus line), and existing and planned bicycle facilities, the Applicant anticipates that a significant number of its residents will utilize transit for commuting purpose, but may still own a car. Accordingly, parking will be adequately sufficient to accommodate the residents. Given the limited size of the Property, the Project utilizes a parking elevator system to transport vehicles from the grade level of the parking garage to multiple below grade levels. The elevator system will have two cabs that can transport vehicles in either direction.

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Narrative for Exceptional Design Public Benefit Points Justification

The Project will provide loading via a 14-foot wide access point at the southeastern portion of the site, along Woodmont Avenue. In addition to this dedicated loading zone, a temporary passenger loading zone is also provided for package delivery, rideshare pickup or dropoff, and miscellaneous short term deliveries. Access to this space is conveniently located just 35 feet from the lobby via an internal hallway. The loading was specifically located along Woodmont, in response to the concerns of the Chase residents that loading on Edgemoor Avenue would potentially conflict with vehicles entering or exiting the Chase parking garage. Finally, the Applicant is working with MNCPPC and DOT to establish a dedicated loading zone on the north side of Edgemoor Lane mid-block between Woodmont Avenue and Arlington Road for short term deliveries. This delivery/loading zone will be utilized by the surrounding multi-family buildings and will provide a benefit not only the Project, but to the surrounding community.

- **Pedestrian Circulation and Streetscape Improvements**

Given the limited tract size, the Zoning Ordinance does not require the Project to provide any public use space. However, an important aspect of the Project is that it will provide improvements to the pedestrian realm. The design will create a continuous building line along Edgemoor Lane and Woodmont Avenue, which will further activate the pedestrian environment. The Applicant intends to dedicate approximately 306 square feet of land area along the Edgemoor Lane frontage to help enhance the walkability of the site.

The Project includes streetscape improvements along the Property's Edgemoor Lane and Woodmont Avenue frontage, in accordance with the Bethesda Streetscape Standards. These improvements will bookend the Edgemont II project to the north (already under construction). The proposed streetscape improvements, framed by a new, multi-family residential building with interesting architecture, will ultimately contribute to the creation of a cohesive pedestrian system through Bethesda, particularly within the Arlington North District.

B. Exceptional Design Public Benefit Points Requested and Brief Justification

With respect to Exceptional Design, the Project merits 15 public benefit points, as it meets all six (6) of the applicable criteria, as outlined in the Implementation Guidelines:

- *Providing innovative solutions in response to the immediate context.*

Generally, the Project's design evidences a keen understanding of the site's immediate context, opportunities, and constraints. The building design fills a development void in Woodmont Avenue's urban streetwall that is compatible with the established scale of the adjacent buildings and addresses the "missing tooth" condition created by the existing single-family structure. Consistent with the Sector Plan, the building's height of 120 feet appropriately steps down from the taller heights to both the north and west, and provides the appropriate transition to the lower heights further to the west of the Property.

Woodmont Avenue is a frequently traversed one-way artery. Additionally, Woodmont Avenue's curve lends the multifamily building to a dynamic, gradual reveal to motorists and

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Narrative for Exceptional Design Public Benefit Points Justification

pedestrians traveling southbound. Hints of the building's tripartite arrangement will precipitate a dramatic reveal of the signature vertical glass bay, fin, and entry element, just as the view opens at the Woodmont Avenue and Edgemoor lane intersection.

The building is also uniquely designed to ensure that secondary facades on property lines, such as those on the south and west that are in direct view of adjacent residents, are thoughtfully and aesthetically composed to create positive viewing experiences. The revised tapered southern façade with its chamfered corners not only further mitigates the impact of the Project on the Chase condominium building to the south, it also creates visual interest. An innovative measure proposed is the proposed automated parking system that reserves the space needed to provide a superior residential experience.

Furthermore, the Project enhances the public streetscape by providing new sidewalks, new street trees, and a bike lane with a median strip to slow down traffic. These are essential improvements given the immediate context and daily activity along Woodmont Avenue.

- *Creating a sense of place and serves as a landmark.*

The design concept includes various elements to create a sense of place and establish a landmark development. The Project will provide and maintain an aligned street edge along Woodmont Avenue and Edgemoor Lane. The design incorporates a human-scale lobby and amenity spaces, which will activate this street edge and establish an urban sense of place that the existing single-family structure cannot achieve. The building's ground floor spaces will be recessed behind planters aligned with the building facades. The loading and garage access points will be screened with opaque rolling grills to block any views of internal activity.

The composition of the building responds directly to the site, as Woodmont Avenue curves around the project, so too does the façade. The project is grounded by tower elements on the elevations, holding a curved façade that turns the corner from Edgemoor Lane to Woodmont Avenue. The subtle architectural move allows the project to fit in appropriately with the context and provide the opportunity for incorporating additional building signage to stand out, which could enhance pedestrian wayfinding along the street.

Familiar, well-composed residential materials and building elements at grade-level will also function to create a sense of place. The use of familiar residential elements, such as the modulation of the façade to articulate units, as well as the use of balconies and roof terraces will enhance the projects sense of place and help to establish a landmark development in this area of downtown Bethesda.

- *Enhancing the public realm in a distinct and original manner.*

The Project enhances the public realm in a distinct and original manner. The building's base, which reinforces the Woodmont Avenue street edge, incorporates elements to enhance the pedestrian experience. A composition of masonry materials and glass creates a visual connection between the lobby level and the street, thus establishing a harmony with a projecting canopy to

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Narrative for Exceptional Design Public Benefit Points Justification

provide a welcoming, hospitable environment along the sidewalk. Additionally, ± 5-foot-wide planters along the base – positioned between projecting columns in the above façade plane – add to the visual experience for pedestrians along Woodmont Avenue and Edgemoor Lane and provide additional greenery on a constrained site.

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

The Project utilizes various architectural features to accommodate the site's unique and irregular configuration. The building's design concept resembles a fan-shaped, three-dimensional structure that opens up to the southwest corner of Woodmont Avenue and Edgemoor Lane. The geometry of the site is responded to through the use of a curved façade turning the corner around Woodmont Avenue and Edgemoor Lane. This massing is modulated by varied double height readings to break down the reading of the massing. These façade elements also reinforce the cellular nature of a multifamily building and create identifiable multi-story individual (unit) faces, which break down the building's scale in a sculpturally artistic way.

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

The Project's design maximizes the development potential of a constrained site that is in close proximity to a variety of living, working, and shopping opportunities. Prospective residents will be drawn to the proposed landmark development at this highly convenient location along Woodmont Avenue. The site is within 600 feet of the Bethesda Metro Station and within a short walking distance of Bethesda Row – the current retail center of Downtown Bethesda. The Project helps to stimulate pedestrian activity along Woodmont Avenue and Edgemoor Lane. Additionally, by orienting living rooms towards street views, new residents will be able to put "eyes on the street", which increases public connectivity, area safety, and ultimately creates a more pleasurable environment.

Furthermore, the project utilizes a compact, space-saving automatic parking system. This allows for a more spacious, enjoyable lobby environment that will be transparent to the public domain and create a more desirable living experience for prospective residents.

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

The Project will integrate a variety of low-impact development methods into the overall design of the multifamily building that go beyond green building or site requirements. The automated parking system will reduce vehicle emissions, lower excavation costs, and mitigate any adverse impacts on the surrounding environment. The multifamily building will also consist of green roofs and screened HVAC units on the penthouse roof and provide opportunities for enhanced recycling efforts. Overall, the Project is a low-impact, environmentally sensitive development, especially given the physical constraints of the site.

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

THE 4824 EDGEMOOR LANE PROJECT, LOCATED IN DOWNTOWN BETHESDA, CONSISTS OF A NEW 12-STORY CONCRETE FRAMED BUILDING WITH 77 RESIDENTIAL UNITS. LOCATED ON THE GROUND FLOOR WILL BE A LEASING OFFICE, LOBBY AND MAIL/PACKAGE ROOMS. FLOORS 2-12, 7,400 SF EACH, WILL CONTAIN A MIX OF (1) ONE AND (2) TWO BEDROOM UNITS, WITH 7 PER FLOOR. THE CELLAR LEVELS WILL CONTAIN AN AUTOMATED PARKING GARAGE WITH 77 SPACES, BIKE AND TENANT STORAGE AND BUILDING UTILITY ROOMS. THE ROOF WILL CONSIST OF A GREEN ROOF AREA, OUTDOOR ROOF DECK AND PENTHOUSE CONTAINING TENANT AMENITY AREAS. THE SCREENED PENTHOUSE ROOF WILL HOUSE REQUIRED MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT. THE BUILDING WILL BE FULLY SPRINKLERED. THE EXTERIOR BUILDING ENVELOPE WILL BE COMPRISED OF GLASS, CEMENTITIOUS AND METAL WOODGRAIN PANELS. WILDCO AND VEGETATIVE WALLS, ALUMINUM CANOPIES, FINS AND TRELLISES WILL BE IMPLEMENTED TO ACCENT THE BUILDING FACADES.

UNIT CALCULATIONS BASED ON DEMISING PLANS DRAWN JUNE 16, 2020											
LEVEL	GROSS AREA	NET RESI.	SERVICE/CIRC.	EXTERIOR WALL 14"	LEASING/AMENITY/LOBBY	1 BED	1 BED DEN	2 BED	UNITS	EFFIC.	PARKING
PENTHOUSE	3020		450	250	2320						
12th FLOOR	6765	5455	930	380		3	1	2	6	80.6%	
11th FLOOR	7025	5685	930	410		4	2	1	7	80.9%	
10th FLOOR	7025	5685	930	410		4	2	1	7	80.9%	
9th FLOOR	7025	5685	930	410		4	2	1	7	80.9%	
8th FLOOR	7025	5685	930	410		4	2	1	7	80.9%	
7th FLOOR	7025	5685	930	410		4	2	1	7	80.9%	
6th FLOOR	7025	5685	930	410		4	2	1	7	80.9%	
5th FLOOR	7025	5685	930	410		4	2	1	7	80.9%	
4th FLOOR	7460	6110	930	420		4	2	1	7	81.9%	
3rd FLOOR	7460	6110	930	420		4	2	1	7	81.9%	
2nd FLOOR	7390	5880	1095	415		4	2	1	7	79.6%	
1st FLOOR	7350		4600	420	2330						
P1	7700										62
TOTAL	96320	63350	15445	5175	4650	43	21	12	76	81.0%	0
UNIT MIX						56.6%	27.6%	15.8%	100.0%		

NOTE: SQUARE FOOTAGES ARE APPROXIMATE AND SUBJECT TO FINAL DETERMINATION

LOCATION MAP





1 INTERSECTION OF OLD GEORGETOWN RD AND EDGEMOOR LN



2 VIEW SOUTH ON WOODMONT AVE



3 VIEW SOUTH ON WOODMONT AVE



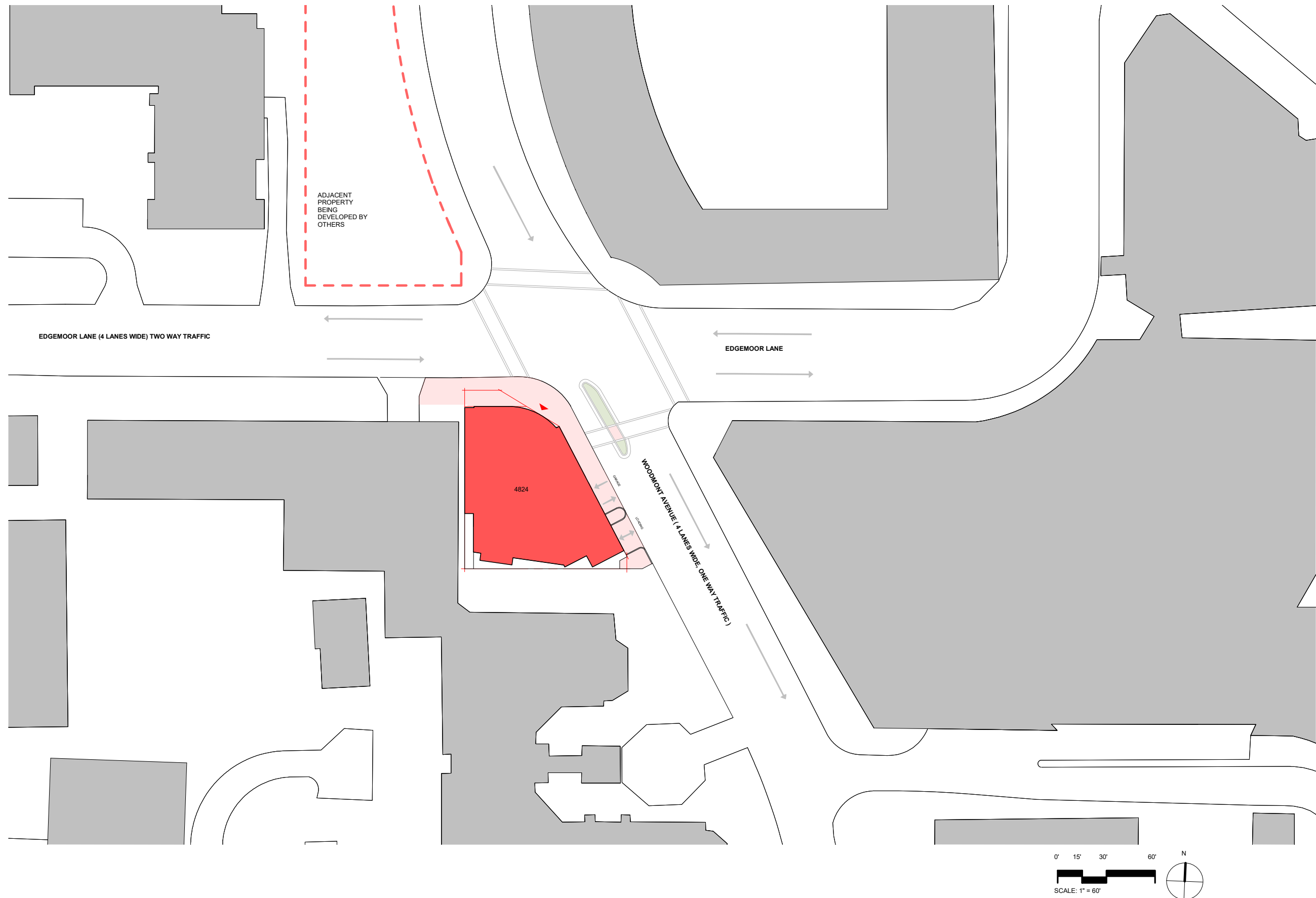
4 VIEW SOUTH ON WOODMONT AVE



5 INTERSECTION OF EDGEMOOR LN AND WOODMONT AVE



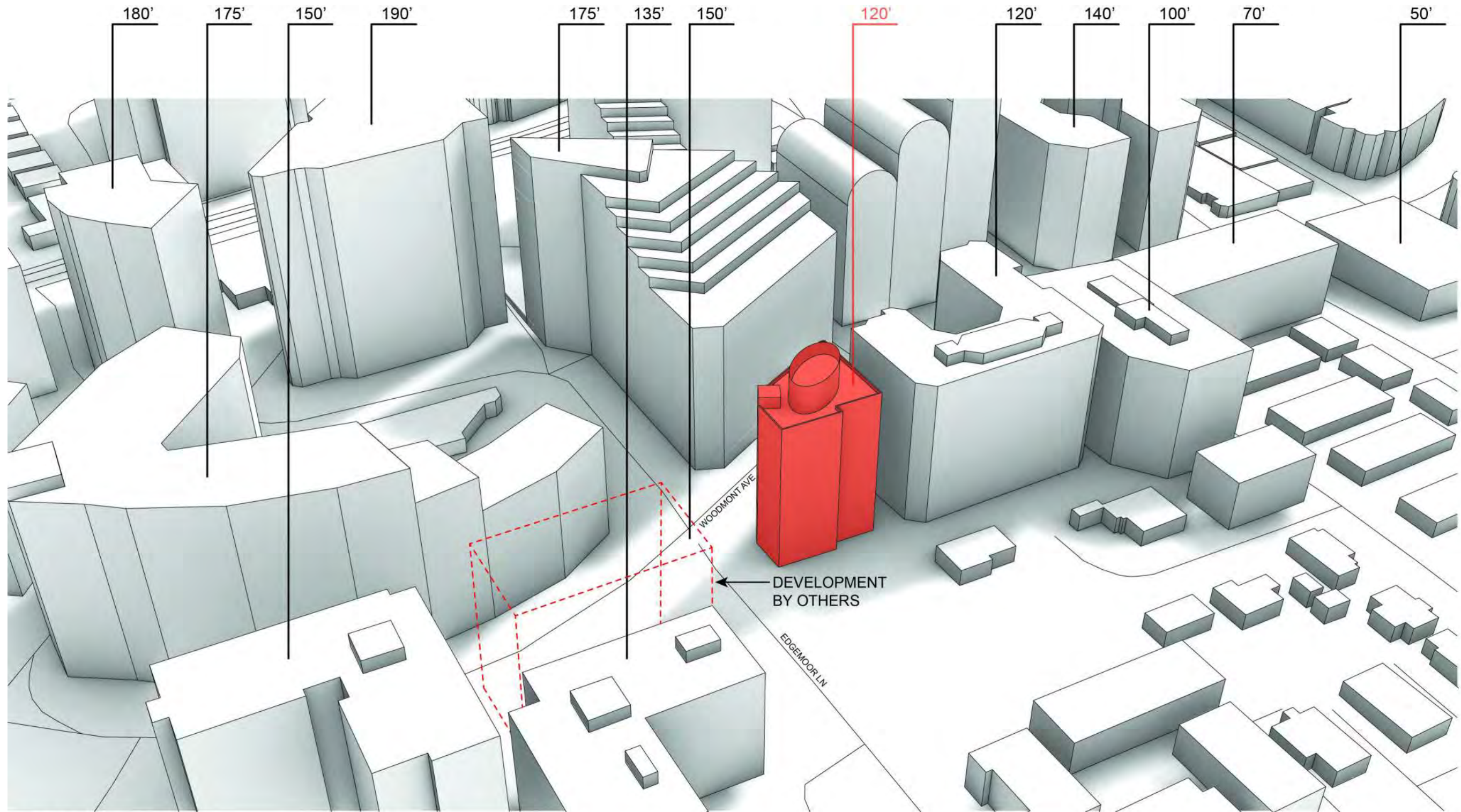
6 VIEW NORTH ON WOODMONT AVE



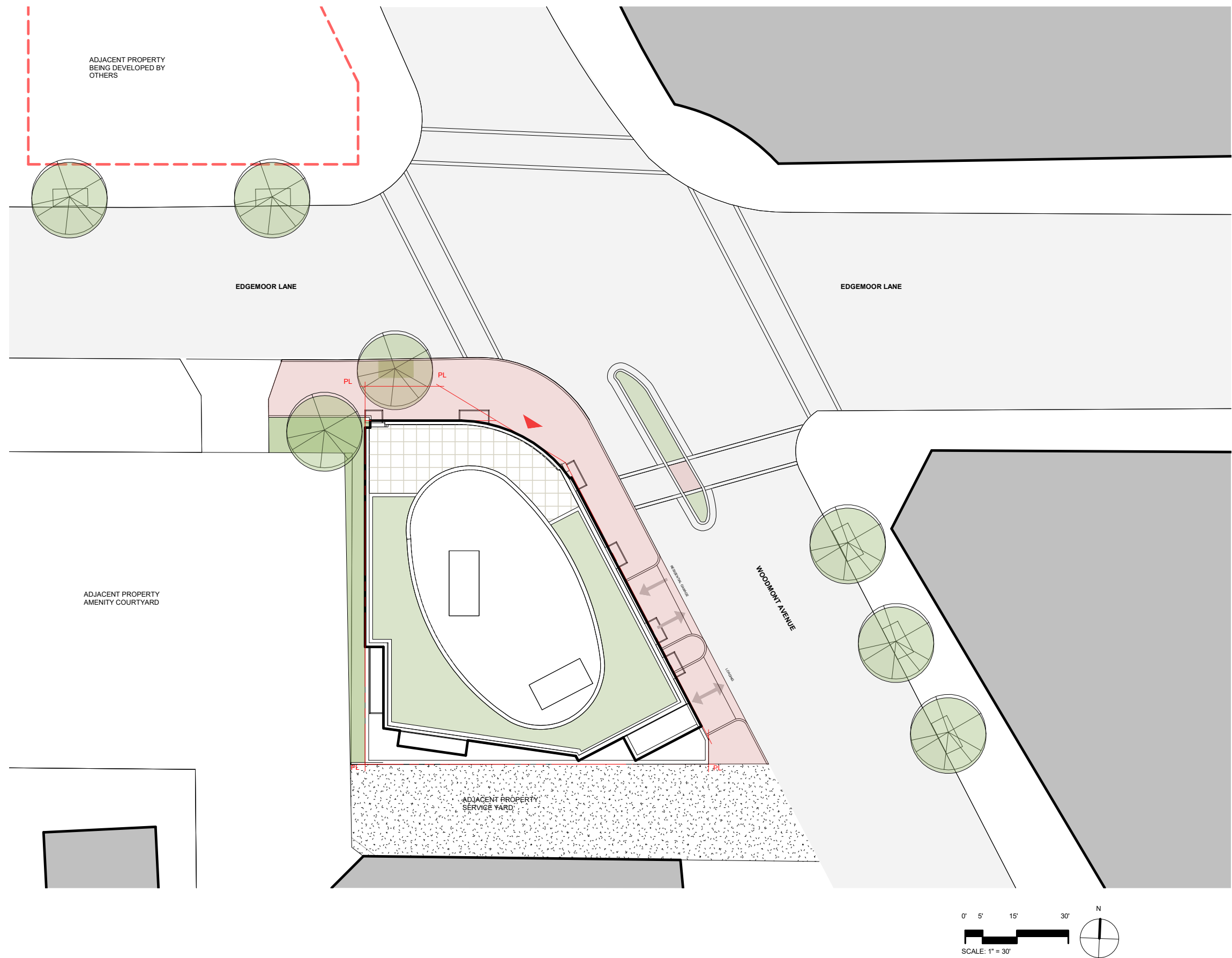
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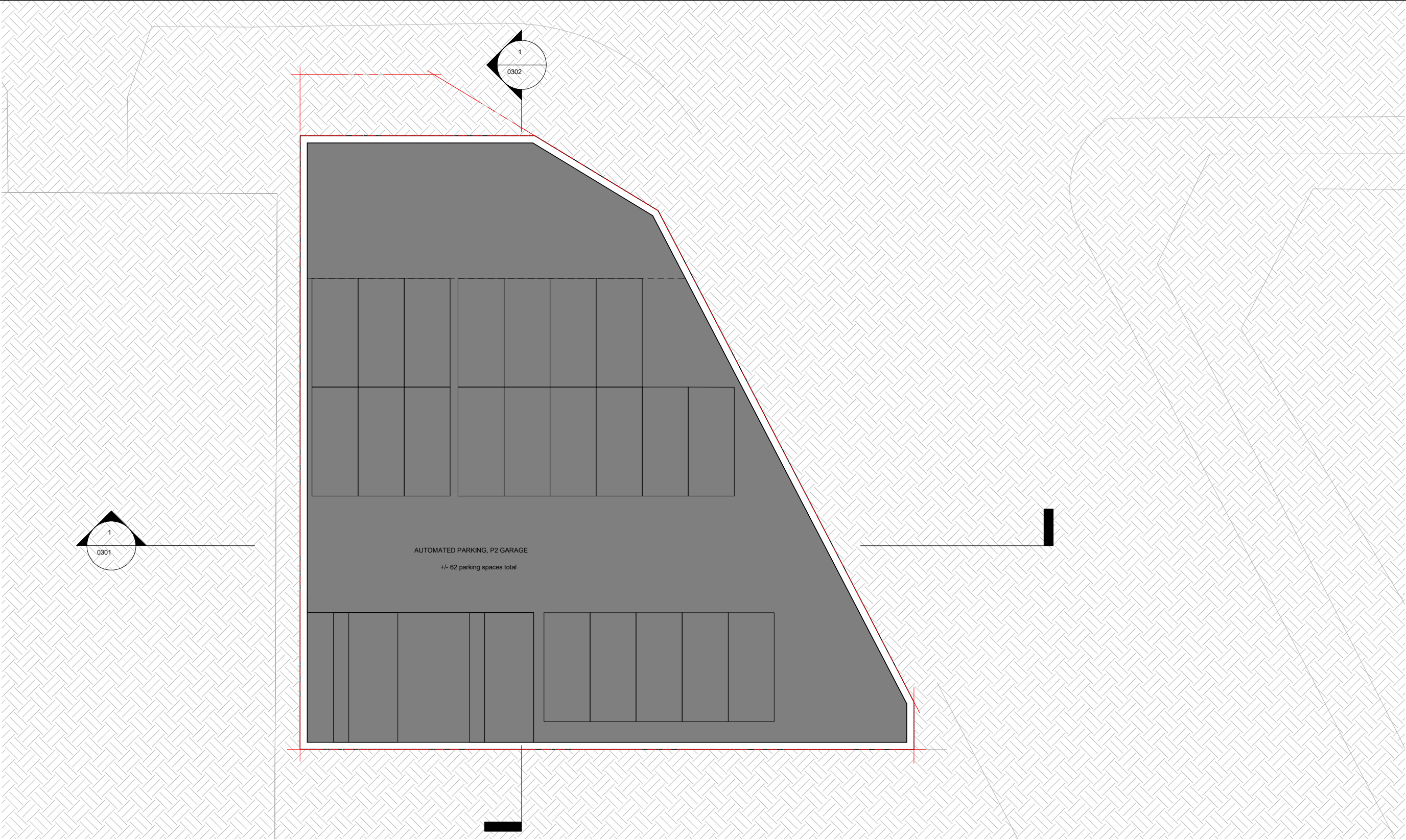
SITE CONTEXT

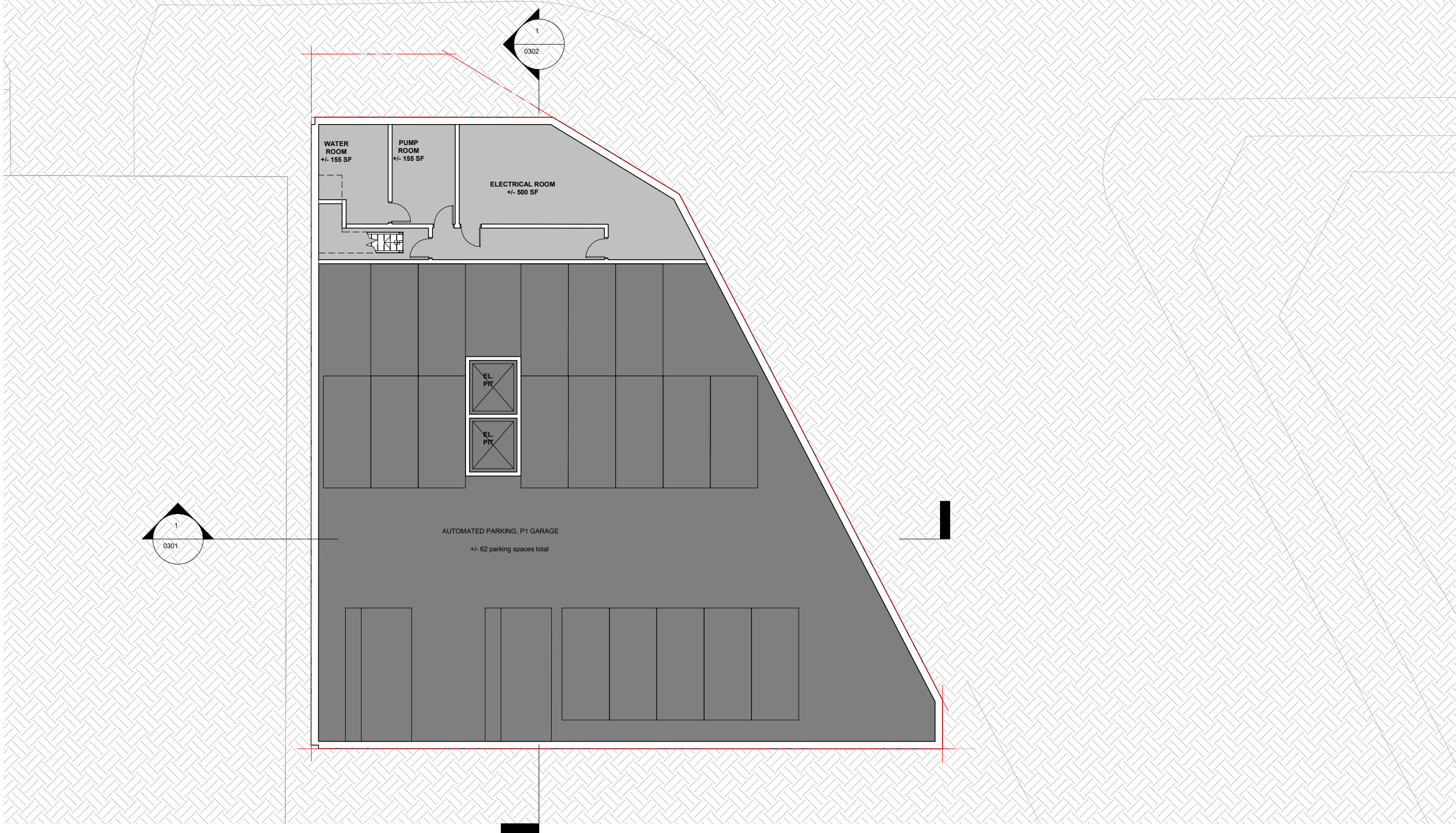
4824 EDGEMOOR LANE, BETHESDA MD



BUILDING MASSING





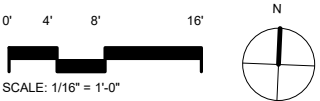
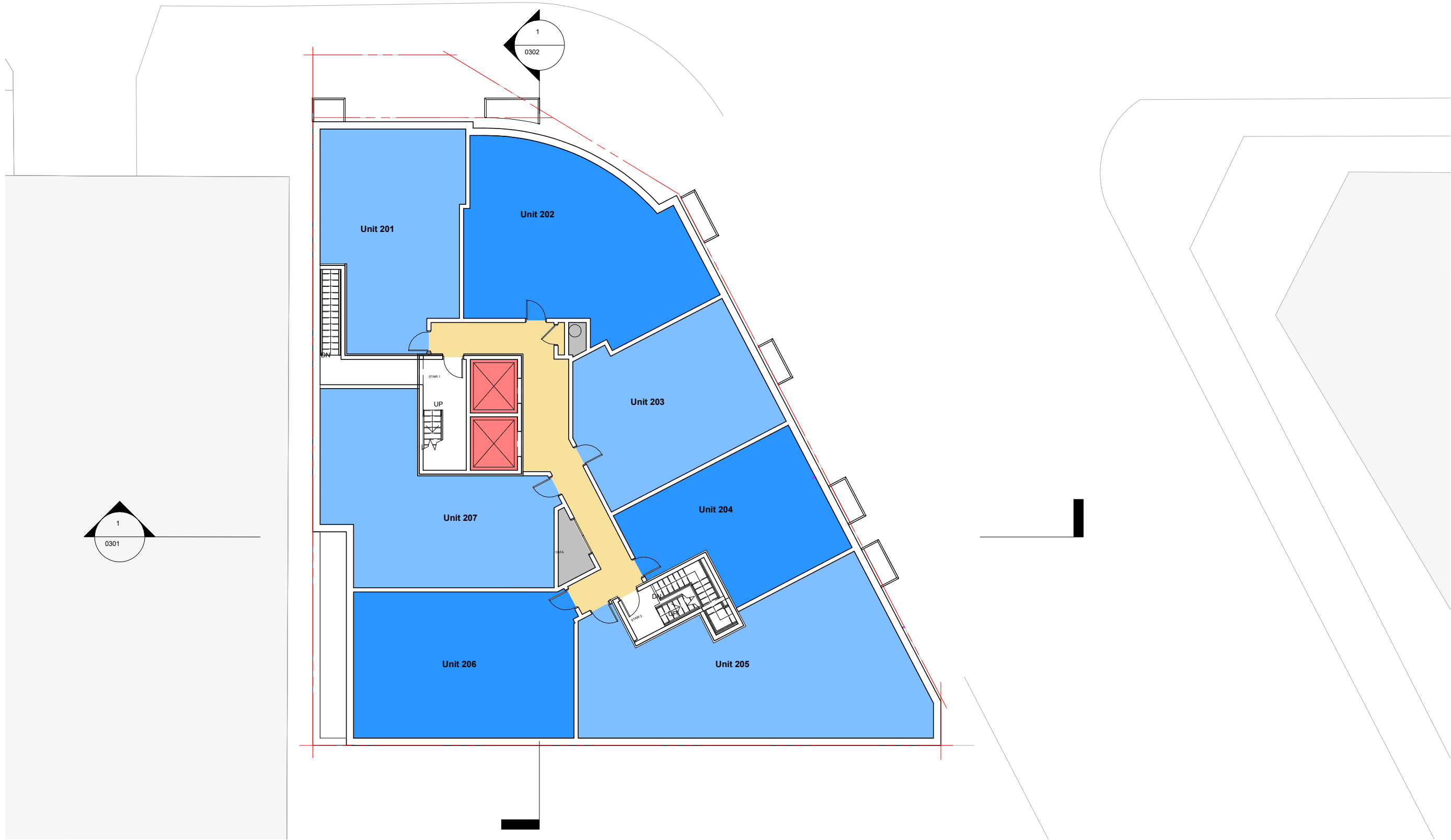


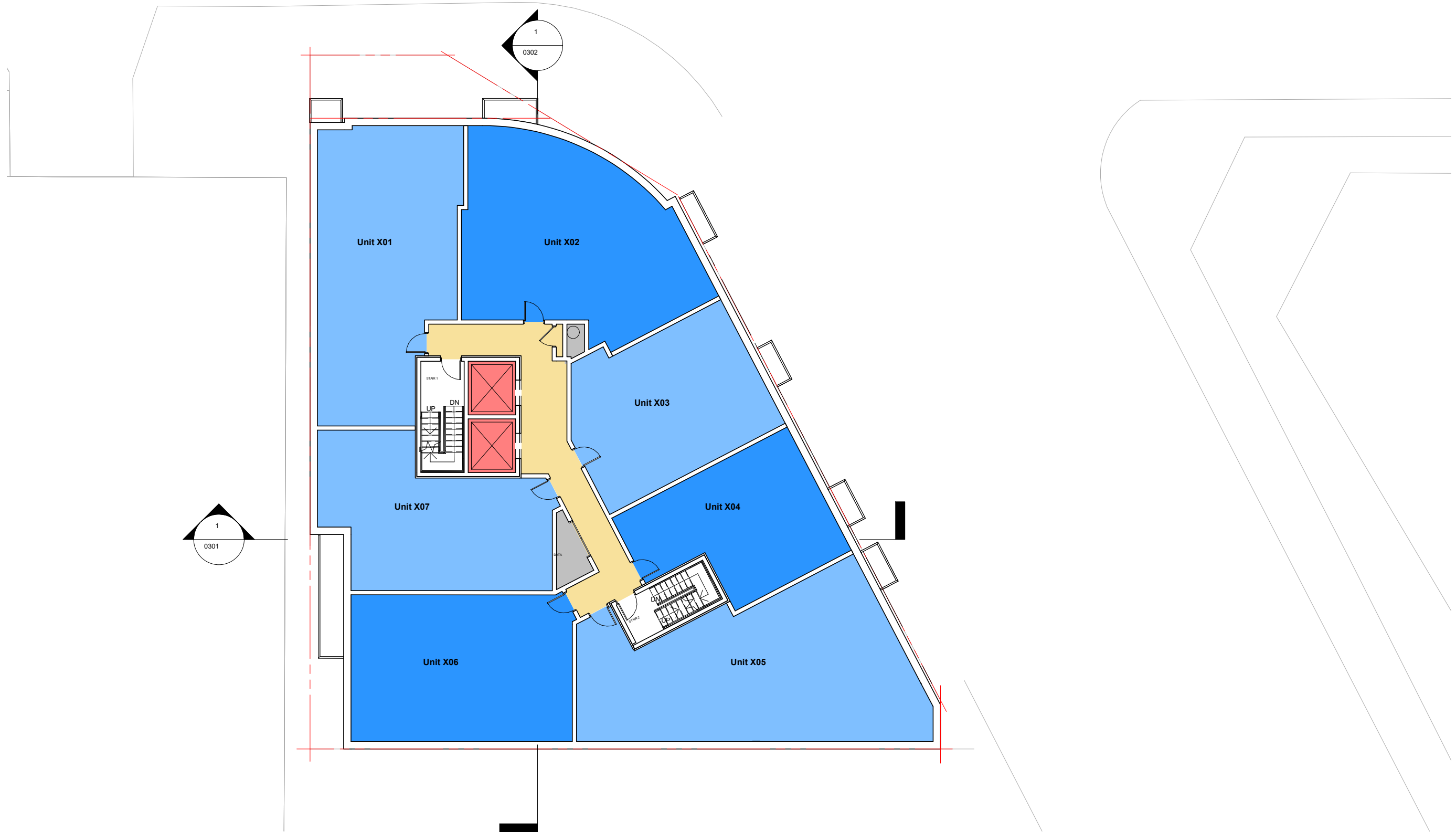


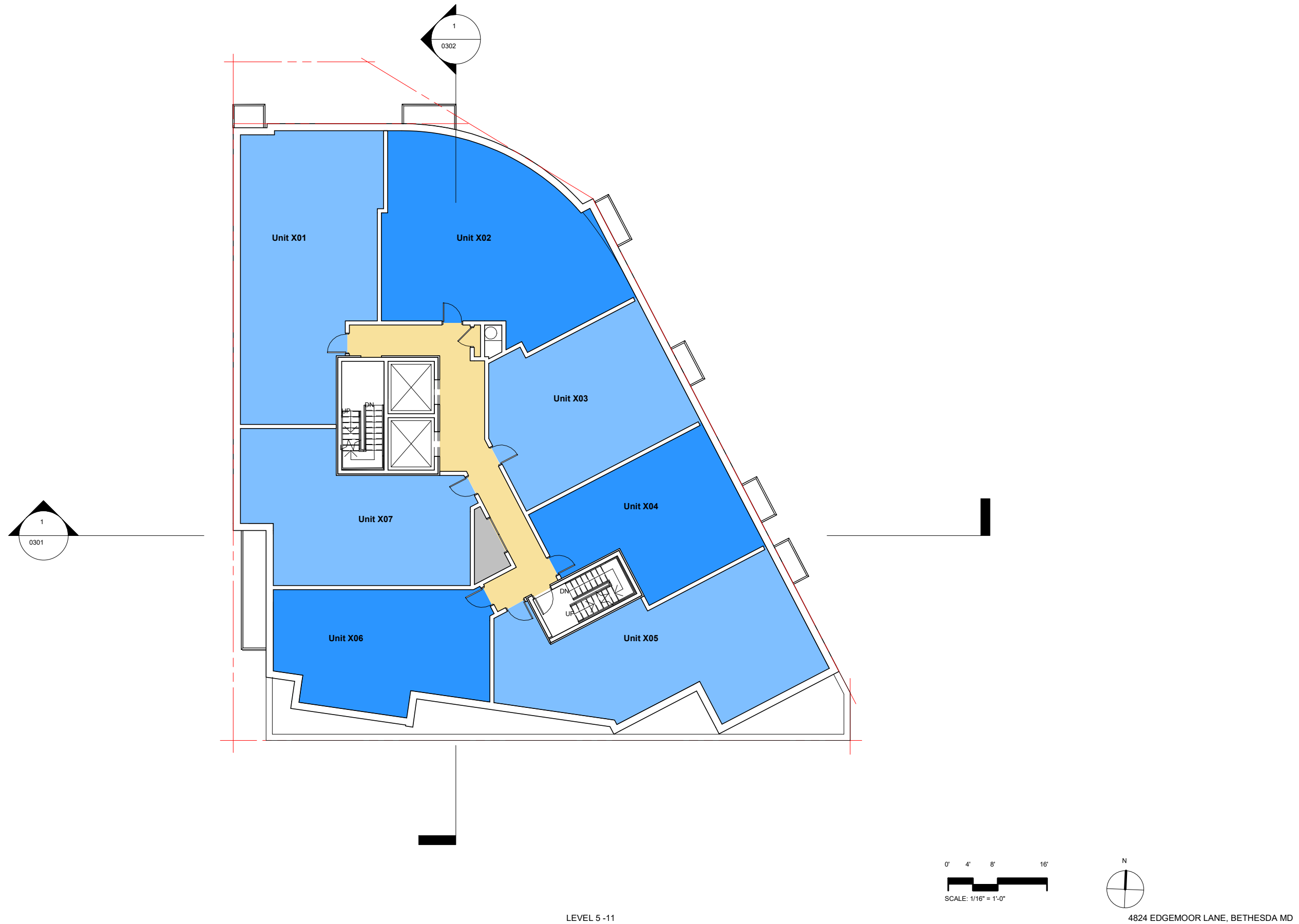
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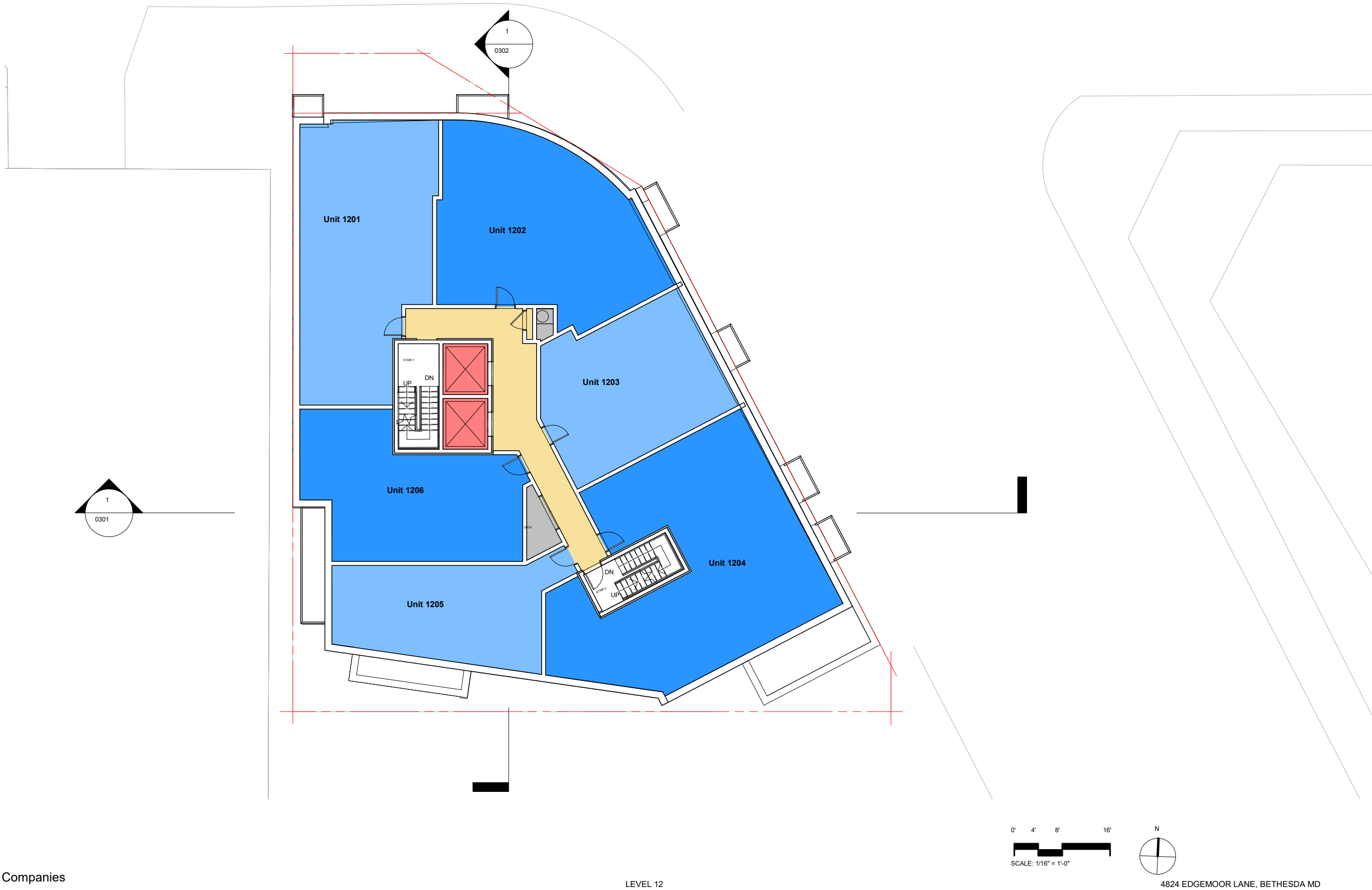
LEVEL 1 - GROUND FLOOR

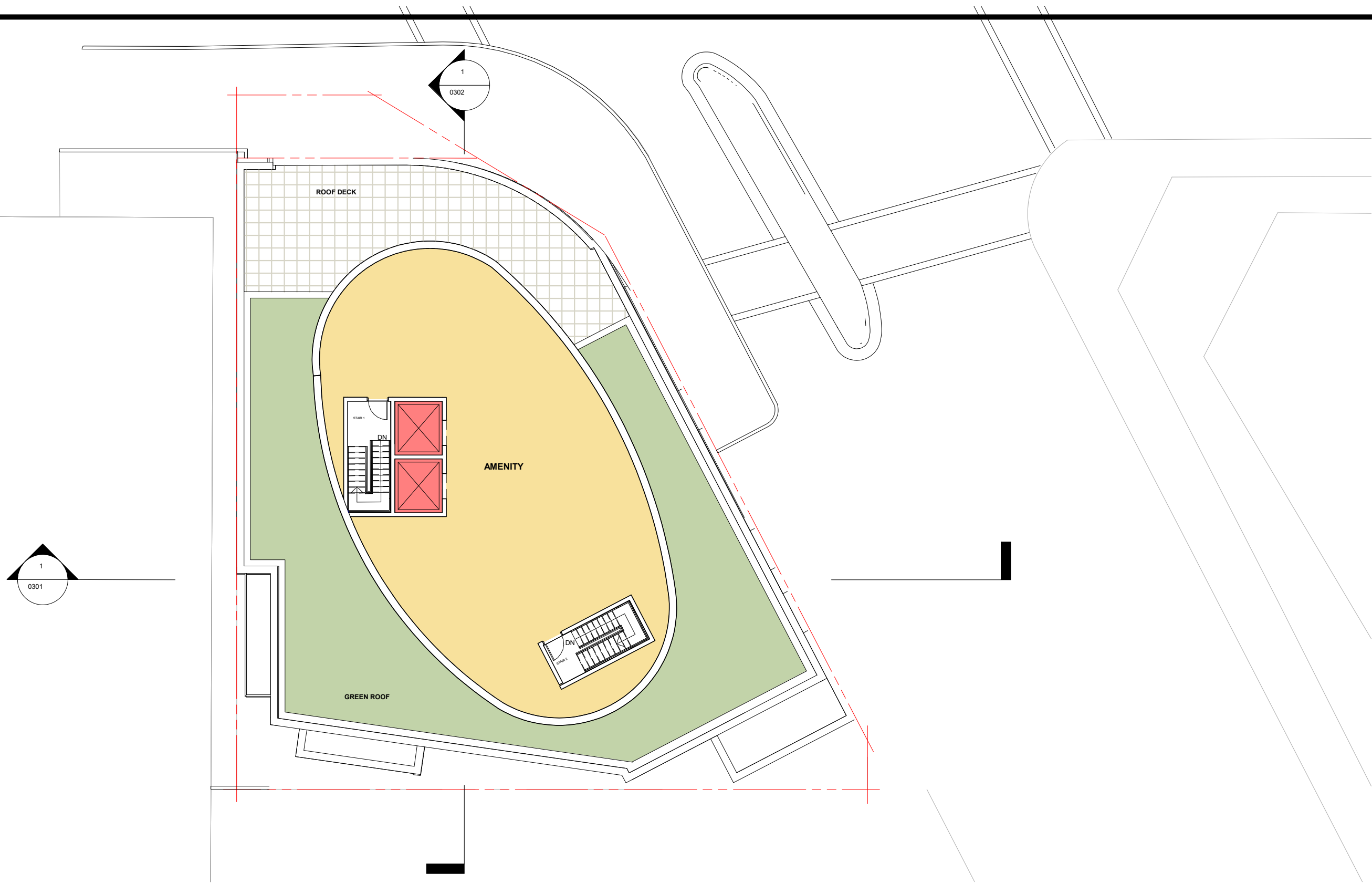
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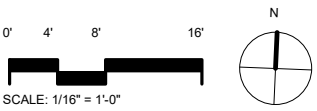
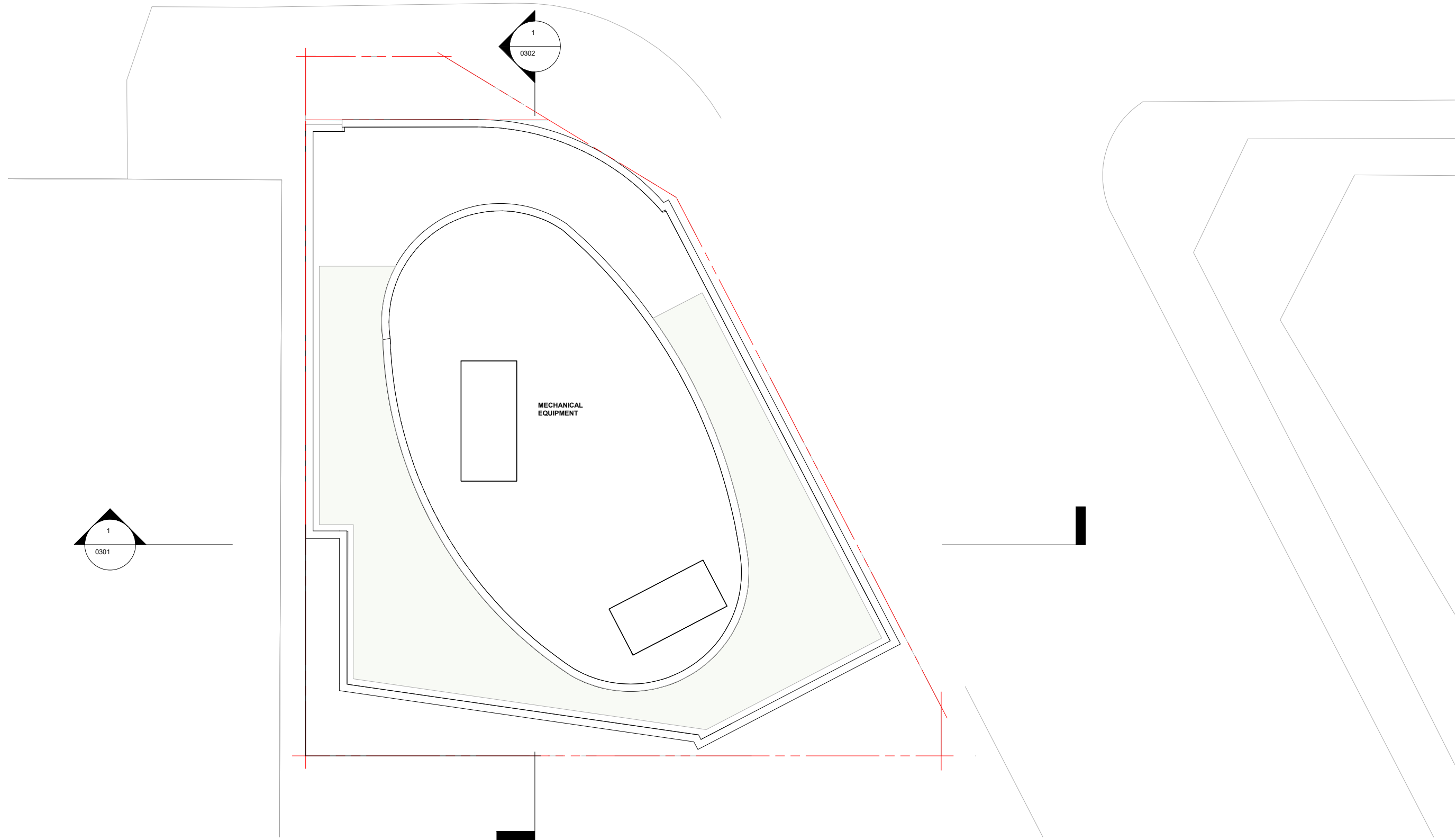










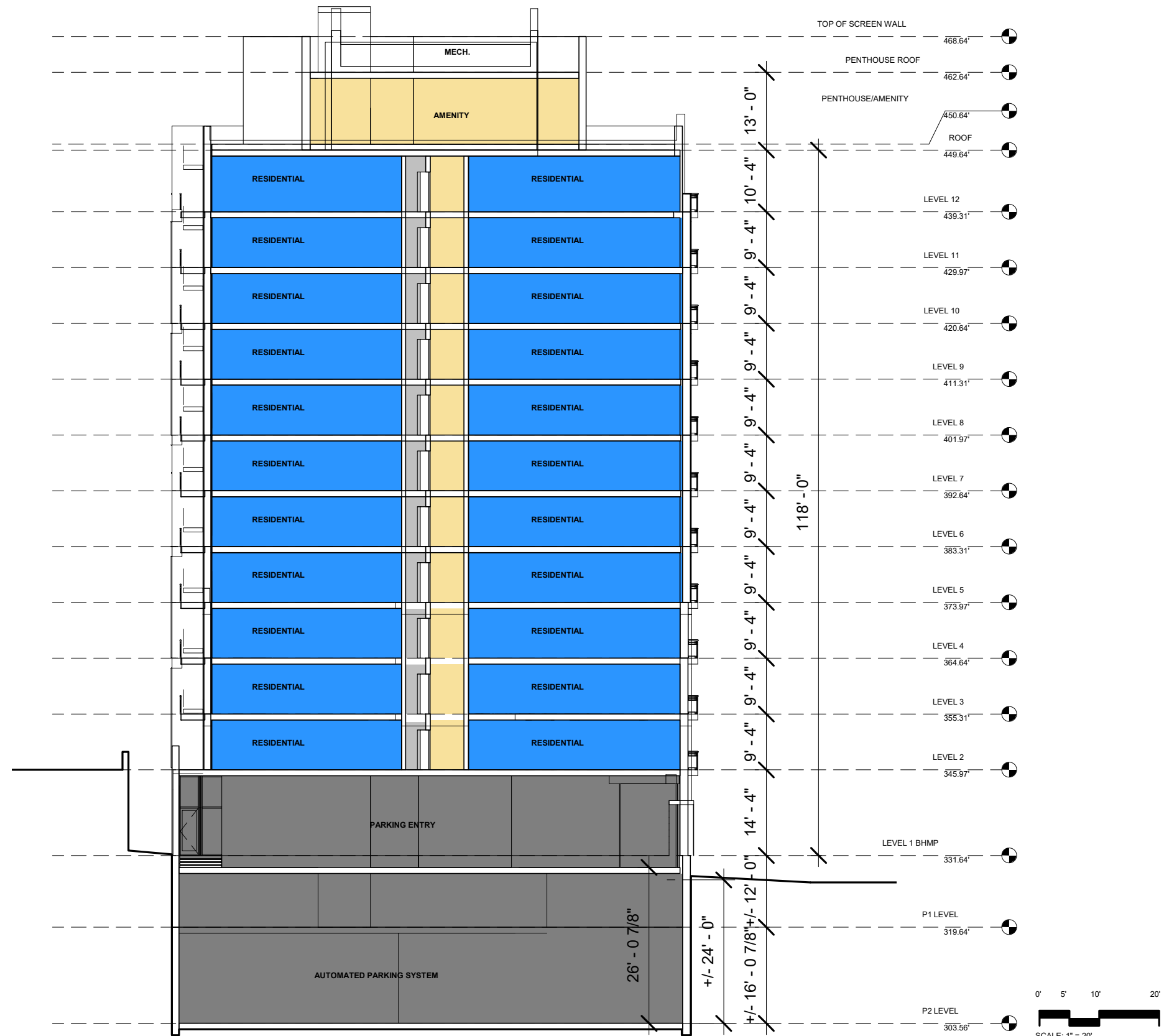


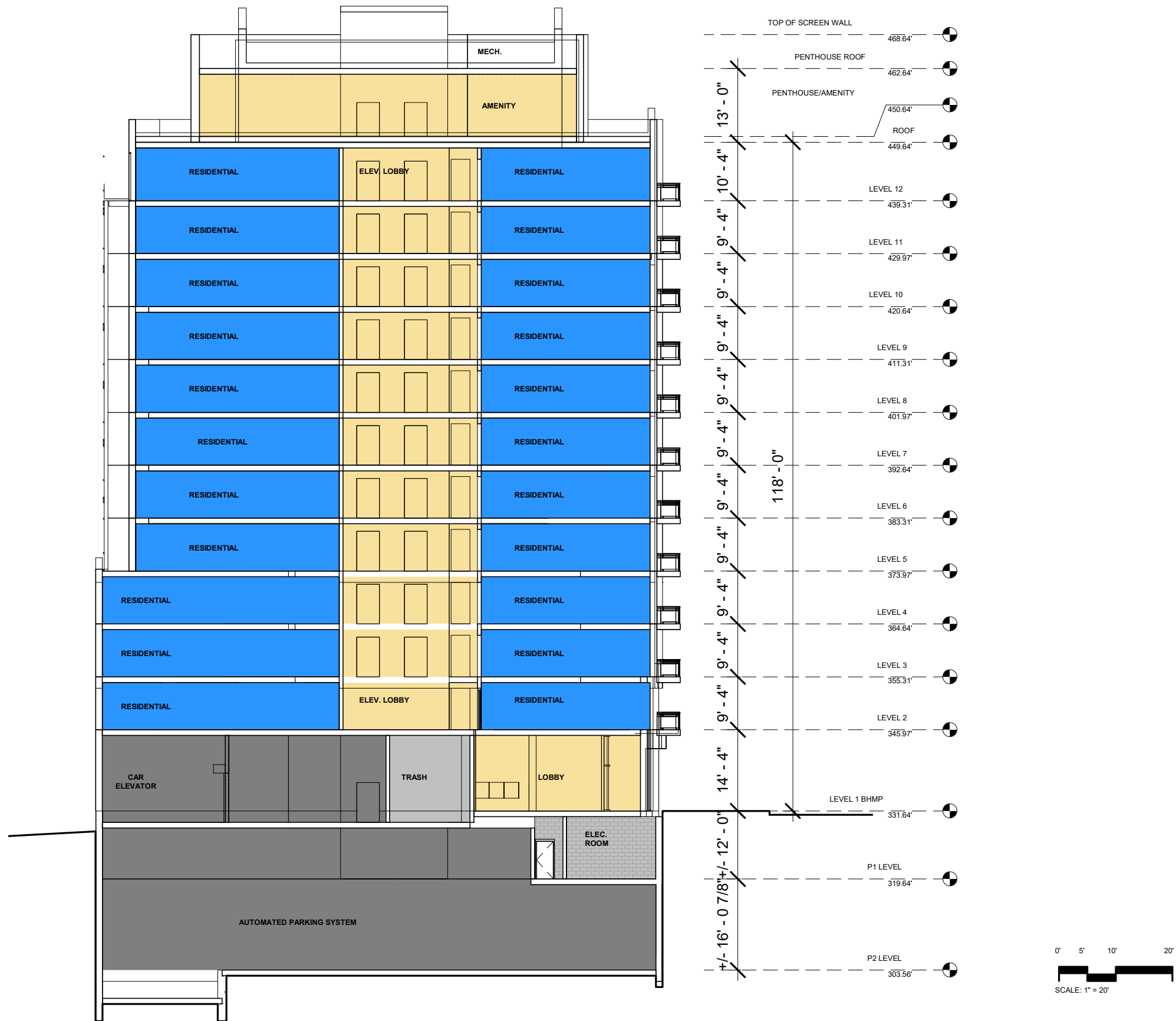














Organizing Grid to Modulate and Break Down Massing



Articulated Floorplates with Double Height Openings



Organizing Grid to Create Uniformity



Double Height Openings to Reduce Apparent Height



Articulated Floorplates with Brick Piers



Articulated Floorplates with Punched Windows



Vertical Colored Panel System for Visual Interest



Vertical Colored Panel System for Visual Interest



Vertical Colored Panel System for Visual Interest



Horizontal Colored Panel System for Visual Interest

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PRECEDENTS

4824 EDMOOR LANE, BETHESDA MD





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NORTHEAST PERSPECTIVE

4824 EDMOND LANE, BETHESDA MD





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SOUTHEAST PERSPECTIVE

4824 EDMOND LANE, BETHESDA MD



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SOUTHWEST PERSPECTIVE

4824 EDMOND LANE, BETHESDA MD

2.1.3 Downtown Mixed-Use Street

WOODMONT AVENUE

Downtown Mixed-Use Streets typically accommodate high levels of pedestrian activity with frequent parking turnover, as well as loading and service access needs for local businesses and multi-unit residential buildings. These streets are predominantly lined by mid- to high-rise buildings with a mix of commercial and residential uses. Examples of Downtown Mixed-Use Streets include Woodmont Avenue and most streets in the Downtown Bethesda core and Woodmont Triangle District.

Intent: Building and sidewalk designs along Downtown Mixed-Use Streets should create a vibrant environment that accommodates the diverse needs of businesses, residents and visitors. Sidewalks should balance ease of walkability for continuous pedestrian flow with space for outdoor uses.

Table 2.02: Downtown Mixed-Use Street

Sidewalk Zones

- A. Planting/Furnishing Zone: 5 - 8 ft.
- B. Pedestrian Through Zone: 8 - 12 ft.
- C. Frontage Zone*: 0 - 7 ft.

Building Placement

- D. Build-to Line: 15- 20 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.

NON-COMPLIANT WITH STEP BACK, SEEKING ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT

SEE SHEET 0610



* The Frontage Zone can be minimized or eliminated to provide a wider Pedestrian Through Zone in areas with heavy foot traffic.



EDGEMOOR LANE

2.1.7 Neighborhood Local Street

Neighborhood Local Streets are typically narrow side streets that accommodate shared bike uses, access to residential parking, on-street parking and low traffic volumes with very slow auto speeds. Sidewalks along these streets are often narrower than on other types because of the constrained street width.

Intent: Building and sidewalk designs along Neighborhood Local Streets should provide efficient and comfortable access from the urban core to neighborhoods of low-scale buildings and detached homes. Because local streets provide a transition from the downtown core to surrounding neighborhood streets, the height of building frontages should reflect this change in scale.

Table 2.06: Neighborhood Local Street

Sidewalk Zones

- A. Planting/Furnishing Zone: 5 - 8 ft.
- B. Pedestrian Through Zone: 6 - 10 ft.
- C. Frontage Zone: 0 - 4 ft.

Building Placement

- D. Build-to Line: 12 - 15 ft. from street curb

Building Form

- E. Base Height: 2 - 4 stories (25 - 50 ft.)*
- F. Step-back: 15 - 20 ft.*

** Properties on a Neighborhood Local Street confronting a Residential Detached or Residential Townhouse zone should see the Montgomery County Code Chapter 59 Section 4.1.8 Compatibility Requirements for base height and upper floor step-backs.*

**NON-COMPLIANT WITH STEP BACK,
SEEKING ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT**

SEE SHEET 0610



CONTINUOUS BAND AROUND
BUILDING ACTS AS BASE AT 25'
ABOVE GRADE

RECESSED GLASSED AREA
ACTIVATES STREET FRONT AT
BASE

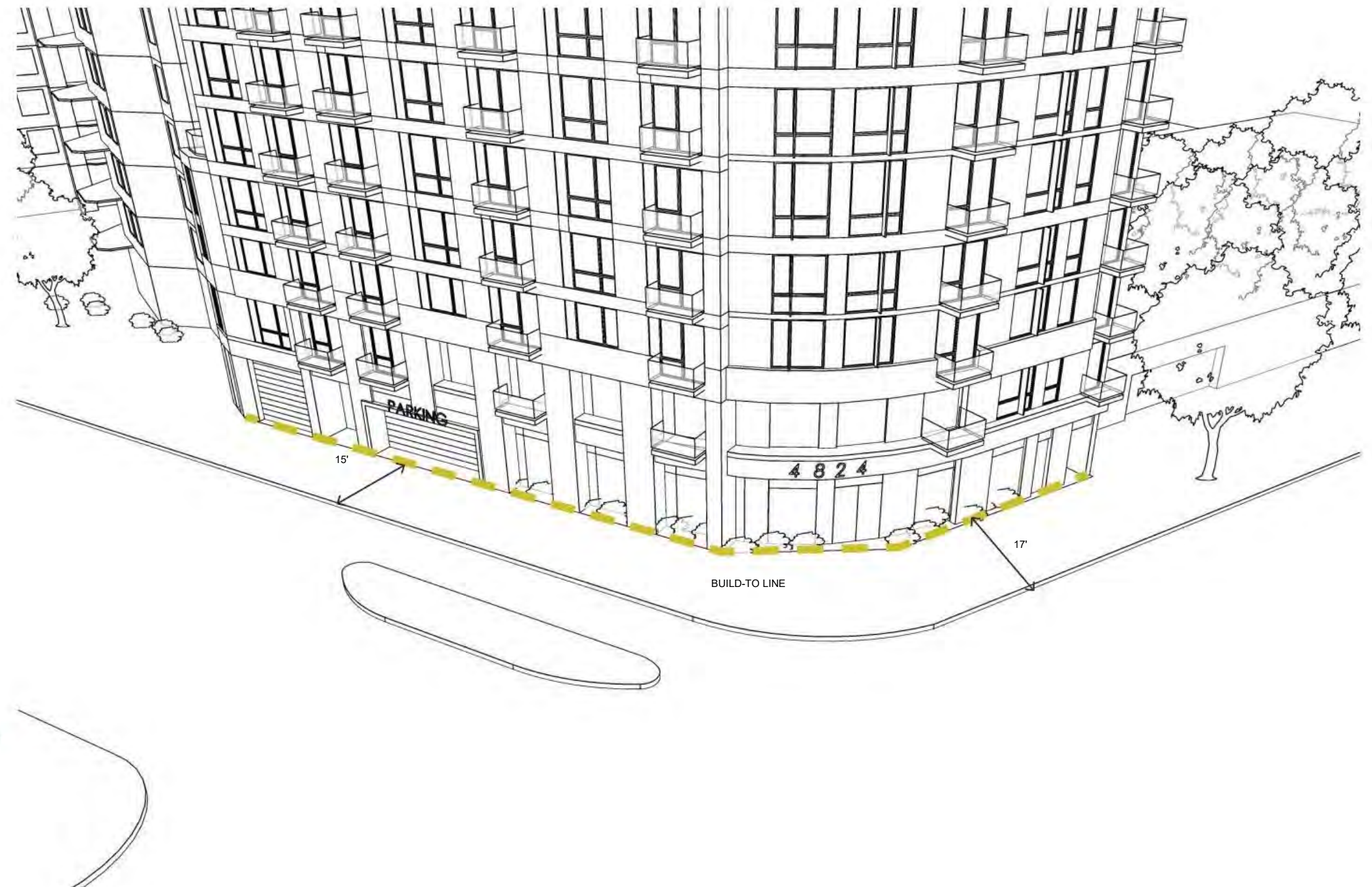


2.4.2 Base: Building Placement

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:

- Place the facade of the building base along the recommended build-to-line to create a continuous street edge.
- 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.
- 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.
- Exceptions to the building placement guidelines include through-block connections and open spaces recommended in the sector plan, entrances and articulation for architectural interest.

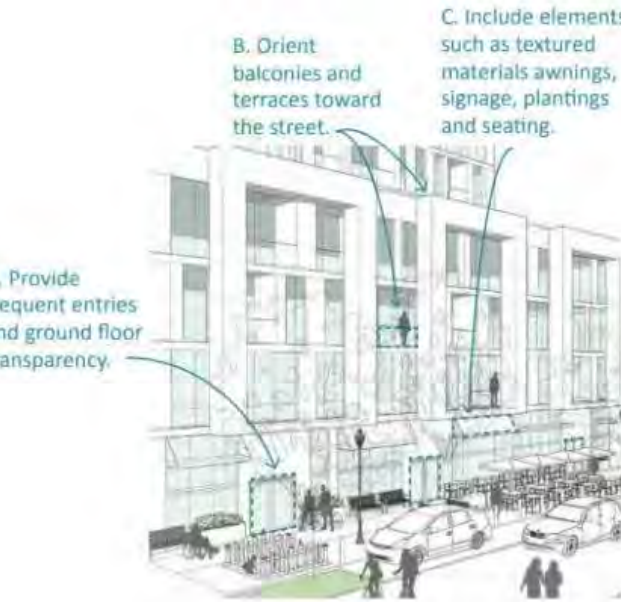


2.4.3 Base: Street Activation

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*.

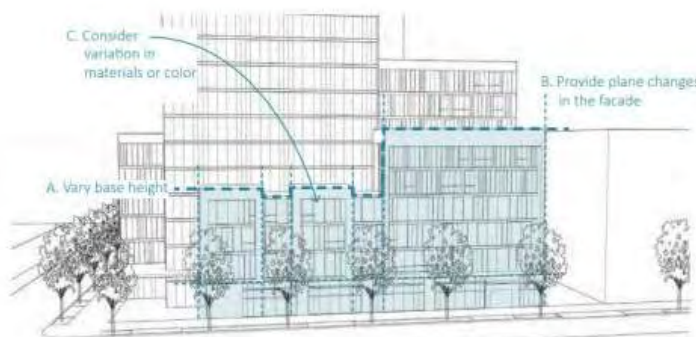


2.4.4 Base: Variation and Articulation

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.



2.4.6 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:

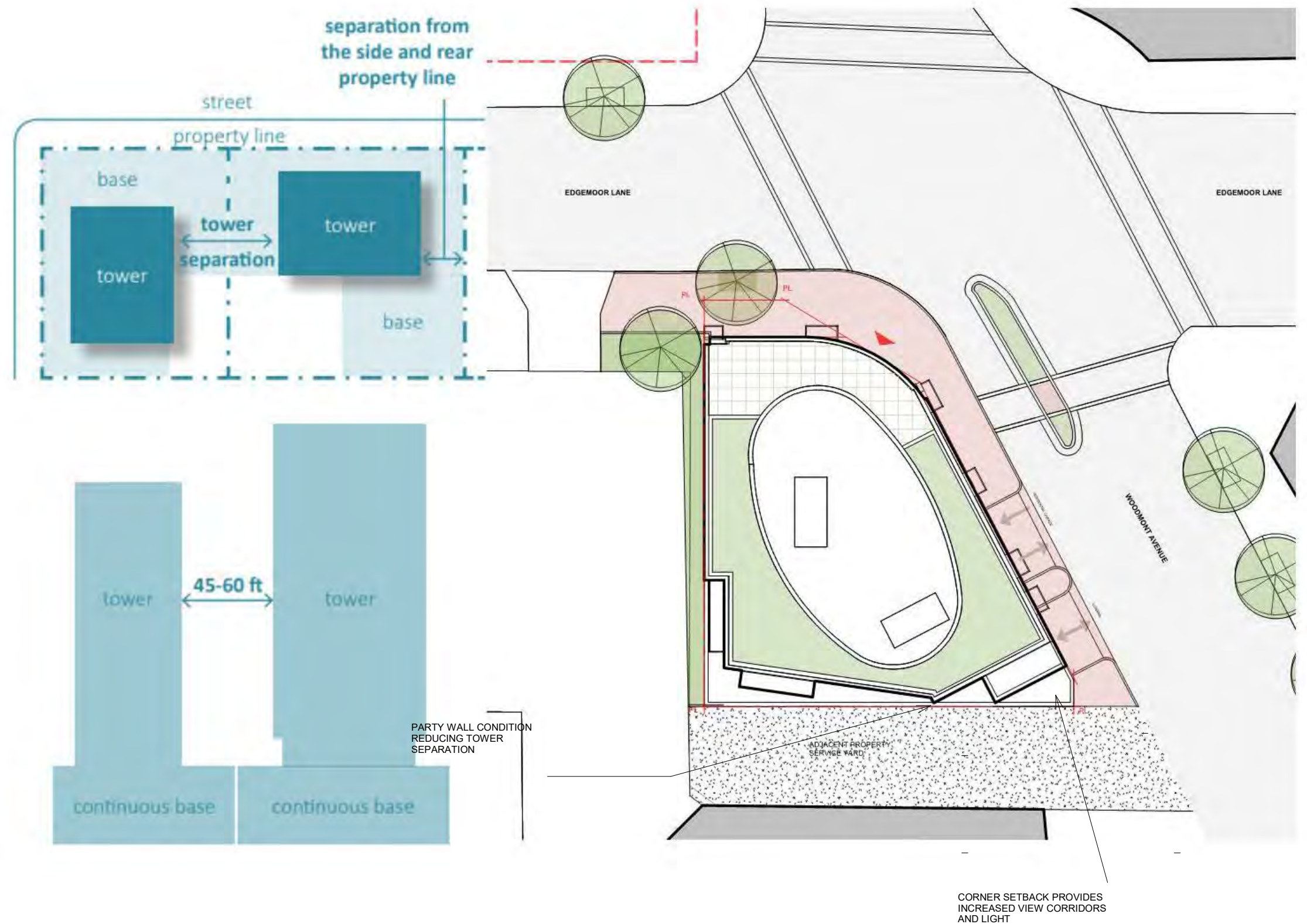
- Separate tower floors at least 45 to 60 feet (22.5 to 30 feet from the side and rear property lines).
- Provide a continuous building base along the lower floors.
- Avoid building towers to the property line creating expansive blank party walls that are imposing on the pedestrian environment.

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.



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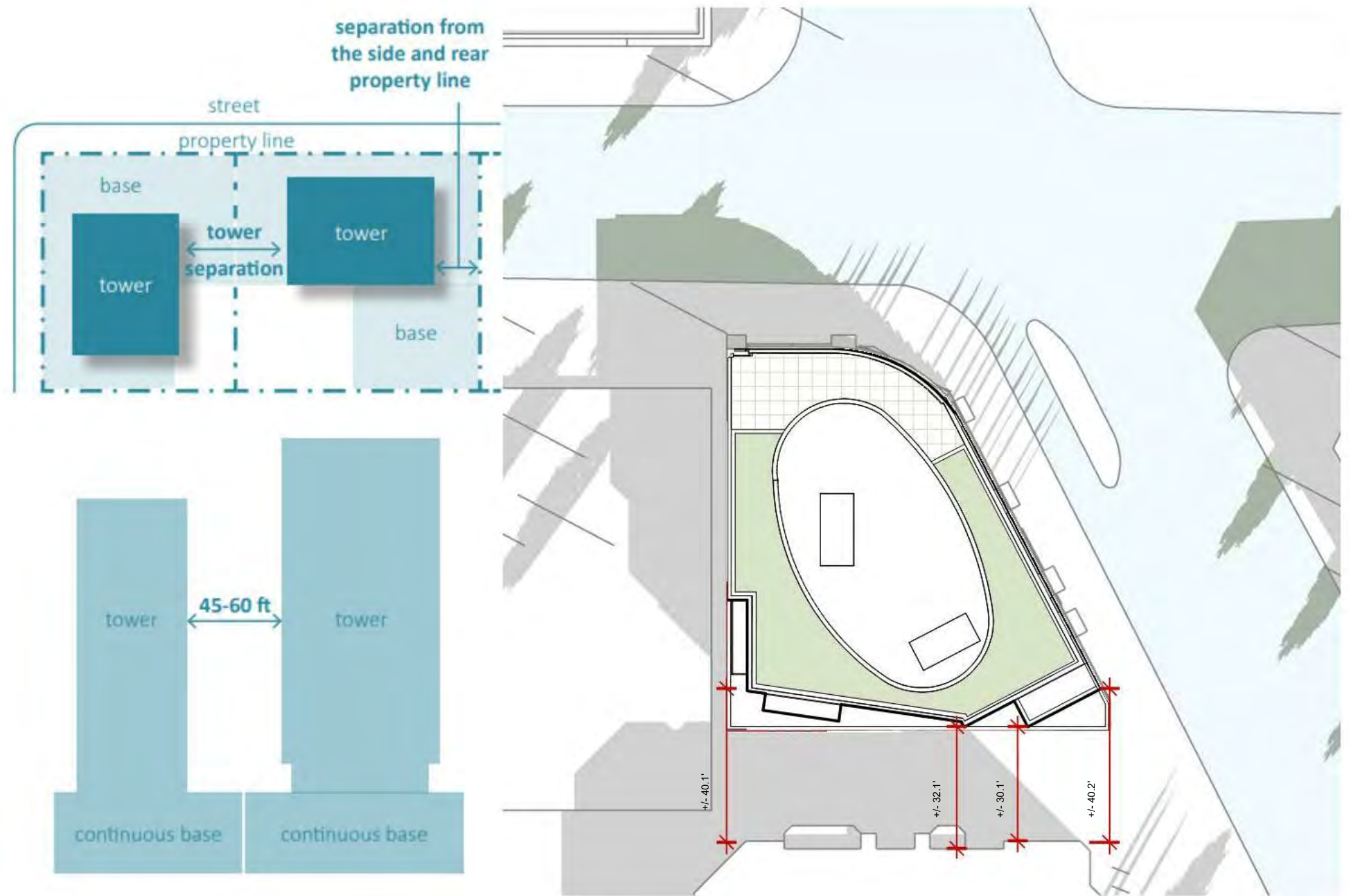
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AVERAGE SEPARATION DISTANCE: 35.05'

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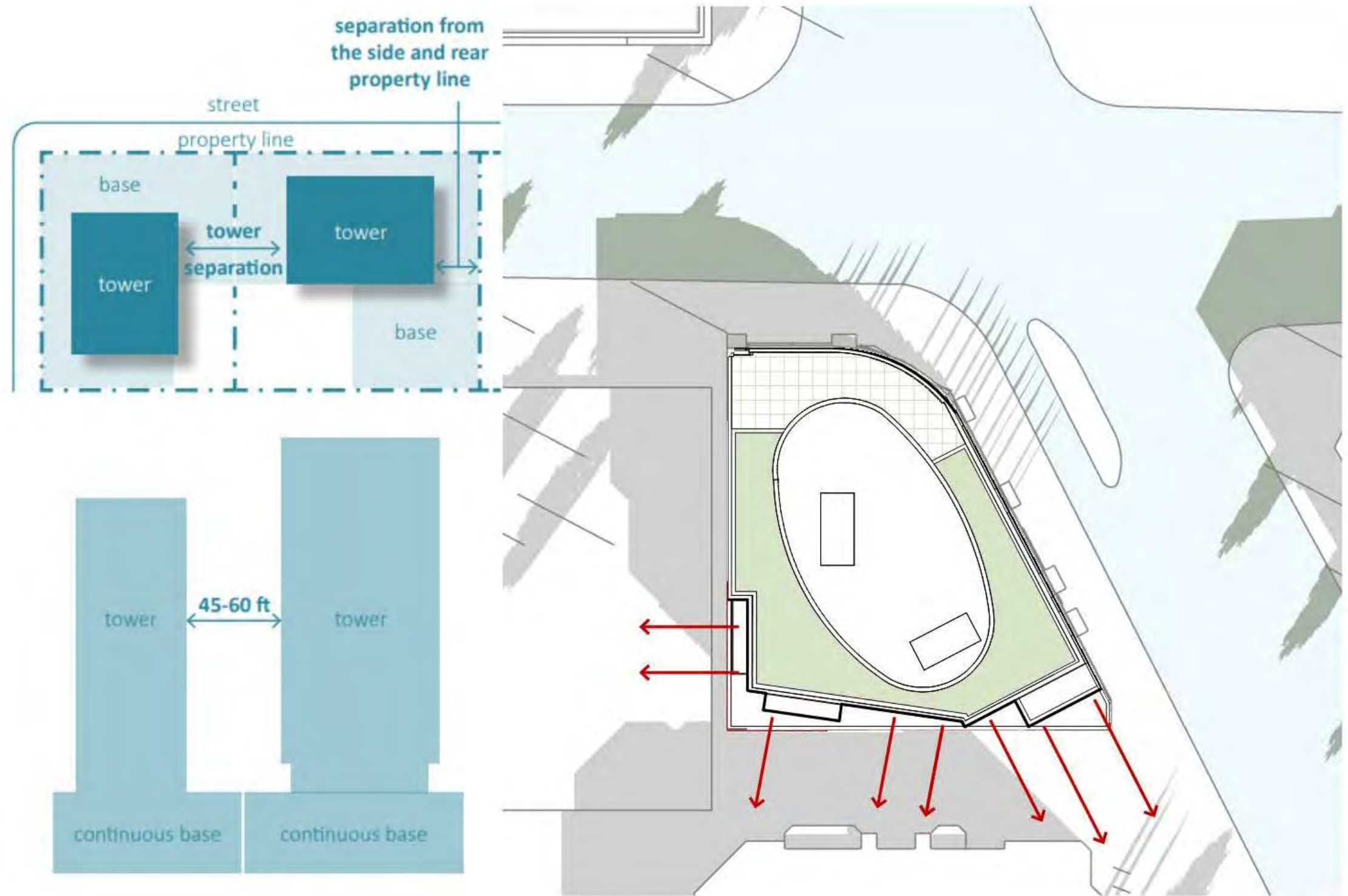
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ANGLED MASSING ELIMINATES DIRECT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WINDOWS AND DIMINISHES PERCEIVED MASS, EASING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TWO BUILDINGS

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:

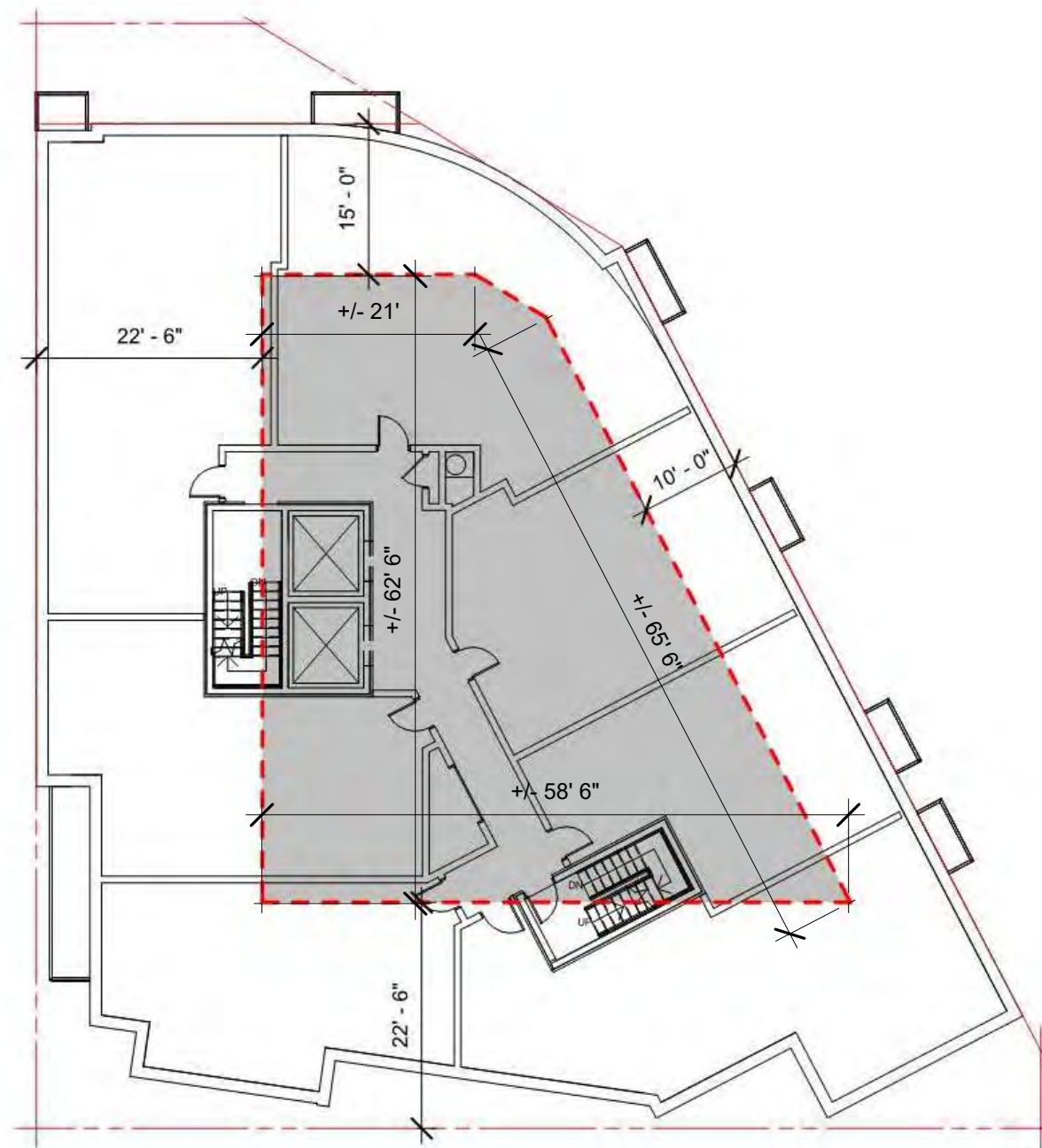
- Retain a tower step-back across the majority of the building frontage. The building's full height may be expressed to the ground on important corners, to mark primary entryways or to balance the massing composition with vertical elements.
- Encourage undulating, curved or angled tower step-backs if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

NON-COMPLIANT, SEEKING
ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT



EXISTING TYPICAL FLOORPLATE:
+/- 7,025 GSF

TYP FLOORPLATE WITH
RECOMMENDED STEP-BACKS:
+/- 2,600 GSF

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**NON-COMPLIANT, SEEKING
ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT**



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.



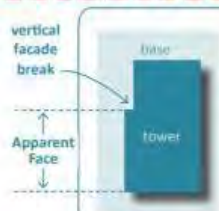
E. Vary Tower Placement and Orientation

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.



2.4.8 - TOWER - METHODS TO REDUCE BULK

4824 EDMOOR LANE, BETHESDA MD



POTENTIAL AREA FOR PUBLIC ART
+/- 2,970 SF