# **DESIGN COMMISSION**

#### **Regular Meeting Agenda**

Council Chambers- Mercer Island City Hall 9611 SE 36TH STREET | MERCER ISLAND, WA 98040

PHONE: 206.275.7605 | www.mercergov.org



# Wednesday, January 23, 2019

**CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL** 

7:00 PM

**Design Commissioners** 

Colin, Brandt, Vice Chair

Richard Erwin, Chair

Clair McPherson

**Anthony Perez** 

Tom Soeprono

Hui Tian

Suzanne Zahr

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** 

Minutes from January 9, 2018

**REGULAR BUSINESS** 

Agenda Item #1: DSR18-018

Design review study session for a proposed new mixed-use building at the "King" and Mud Bay properties in Town Center.

Staff Contact: Nicole Gaudette, Senior Planner

**OTHER BUSINESS** 

Planned Absences for Future Meetings
Announcements & Communications
Next Scheduled Meeting: Possibly February 13, 2018 at 7:00 PM

**ADJOURN** 

# **DESIGN COMMISSION**

#### **MEETING MINUTES**



#### Wednesday, January 9, 2019

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Colin Brandt called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM in the Council Chambers, 9611 SE 36th Street, Mercer Island, Washington.

#### **ROLL CALL**

Vice Chair Colin Brandt, Commissioners, Anthony Perez, Tom Soeprono and Suzanne Zahr were present. Chair Richard Erwin, Commissioners Claire McPherson and Hui Tian were absent.

#### STAFF PRESENT

Nicole Gaudette, Senior Planner, Andrea Larson, Senior Administrative Assistant, Andrew Leon, Planner, and Bio Park, Assistant City Attorney were present.

#### **MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL**

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the December 12, 2018. It was moved by Perez; seconded by Soeprono to: **Approved the December 12, 2018 minutes**Passed 4-0

#### **REGULAR BUSINESS**

#### Agenda Item #1: Design Review DSR2018-021

Andrew Leon, Planner, provided a brief presentation for the design review study session for a proposed exterior addition of an entry vestibule at Mercer Island High School.

Brandy Fox, with the school district, provided some background on the proposed entry vestibule and answered questions regarding the proposed project.

Karen Wood, Mahlum, gave a brief presentation on the proposed project.

The Commission review the proposal and provided comments on the proposed addition.

The Commission provided feedback regarding the roof band, canopy and design on the proposed addition.

#### PLANNED ABSENCES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Commissioner Zhar will be absent February 13. Commissioner Perez will be absent February 27. Vice-Chair Brandt will be absent March 13.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

The next Design Commission meeting is on January 23, 2019 at 7:00PM.

#### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55pm





# CITY OF MERCER ISLAND DESIGN COMMISSION STUDY SESSION STAFF REPORT MAJOR NEW CONSTRUCTION

Agenda Item: 1 January 23, 2019

Project: Xing Hua Group Ltd Mixed-Use Project (DSR18-018)

Description: A Design Commission study session to review a proposed site development

concept for a proposed new mixed-use project in the Town Center.

Applicant: Guohai Lu

Site Addresses: 2885 78th Ave SE; Identified by King County Tax Parcel # 531510-1326 and

275 77<sup>th</sup> Ave SE; Identified by King County Tax Parcel # 531510-1316

Zoning District: Town Center -4 (TC-4)

Exhibits: 1. Plan Set by Johnston Architects, dated received on January 16, 2019

#### 1. SUMMARY

The applicant is participating in a Design Commission study session to review a proposed site development concept for a proposed new mixed use building located in the Town Center - 4 (TC-4) zone. This is their second study session. The site currently contains two buildings. One building is known as the King Building and hosts the Seven Seas restaurant, a laundromat and other businesses. The other building hosts Mud Bay and Mercer Island CrossFit. The proposal will provide 155 multi-family residential units, two levels of below grade parking that would provide 230 stalls and 16,900 square feet of retail. The property currently contains a two-floor retail building and a one-floor retail building along with associated parking and landscaping. All major new construction projects in the Town Center must undergo a study session before the Design Commission. The study session provides an opportunity to obtain feedback from the design commission early in the design review process.

As the project progresses through the application process, an open record public hearing will be scheduled in front of the Design Commission pursuant to Mercer Island City Code (MICC) 19.15.030 Table B. When the applicant formally comes before the Design Commission, the project must meet the criteria listed in MICC Section 19.11, Town Center Development and Design Standards.

#### 2. STAFF ANALYSIS AND CRITERIA FOR REVIEW

Pursuant to MICC 19.15.220(C)(1)(c), new buildings are subject to review by the Design Commission. MICC 19.15.220(C)(2)(a) requires any project that requires design commission approval to go before the design commission with a study session prior to application "to discuss project concepts before the plans are fully developed." Using the preliminary information provided to the City by the applicant, planning staff conducted an initial cursory review of the project.

The applicant previously met with the design commission for a study session on November 14, 2018. The design commission provided with the applicant with feedback. The applicant has submitted revised materials to address the commission's concerns. These new materials will be reviewed at the January 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

The main concerns of the design commission to be addressed by the applicant were:

- Height
- Daylight plane and modulation
- Through-block connection
- Pedestrian plazas

With this current study session submittal, the applicant included additional details of proposed building materials.

Each of the concerns noted at the previous study session, as well as the proposed building materials are addressed below.

#### Height

MICC 19.11.030(A) limits buildings in the TC-4 zone 51 feet. However, it allows an additional 5-feet for parapets and/or sloped roofs. Previous discussion about height was whether a slope roof that sloped up towards the street and used the 5-foot bonus for a height of 56-feet would be acceptable. The design commission guided the applicant away from this design.

The applicant has revised their plans, and the building now has a maximum height of 143.54 feet, which is well under the maximum allowed height limit.

# The prosed building meets the height criteria. Are there any other concerns with height?

#### Daylight Plane and Building Massing and Modulation

Building mass and modulation is regulated by multiple code sections. Within these code sections, there are various methods for achieving desired mass and modulation. Mass and modulation are determined by height, setbacks, daylight plane, through-block connections, and façade modulation standards.

MICC 19.11.030(A)(7) requires block frontages along streets to integrate upper level building stepbacks called daylight plane. The stepbacks only apply to block frontages and shall consider only the first 30 feet of depth as stated in MICC 19.11.030(A)(7)(b)(ii). A credit and debit system is used to ensure that when the daylight plane is averaged, that the credit volume equals or exceeds debit volume.

The Town Center Code requires two types of modulation; major façade modulation and minor façade modulation. Major façade modulation, as provided in MICC 19.11.100(B)(3), provides three options for modulation, the intent of which is to "...at intervals no greater than 120 feet to break up the massing of the block. The design commission may approve modifications or alternatives to the following features if the proposed modulation is at least as aesthetically acceptable as one of the following features..." Block frontages shall include at least one of these features. In summary, the features are either:

- (a) vertical building modulation at least 20 feet deep and 30 feet wide. For multi-story buildings, the modulation must extend through more than one-half of the building stories.
- (b) Use of a significant contrasting vertical modulated design component featuring an extension through all stories above the first story fronting on the street except for upper stories that are setback more than 10 feet from the façade, a change in building materials

that create contrast, horizontal modulation from the façade by an average of 24 inches, or roofline modulation.

(c) Building walls with contrasting articulation and roofline modulation that make it appear like two or more distinct buildings. The contrasting facades shall employ (i) different materials and or configuration of building materials, and (ii)contrasting window design.

All buildings are subject to minor façade modulation as provided in MICC 19.11.100(B)(4), "...to reduce the perceived scale of large buildings and add visual interest to facades..." "...At least three of the following features shall be employed at intervals no greater than 50 feet subject to design commission approval taking into account the nature of the development and the site:

- a. Window fenestration patterns and/or entries;
- b. Use of vertical piers/columns;
- c. Change in roofline;
- d. Change in building material or siding style;
- e. Vertical elements such as a trellis with plants, green wall, art elements:
- f. Vertical building modulation of at least 12 inches in depth if tied to a change in roofline modulation or a change in roofline modulation or a change in building materials, siding style, or color; or
- g. Other design techniques approved by the design commission that reinforce a pattern of small storefronts (or residences, if residential uses are used).

#### Compliance:

The applicant has provided a new detail that demonstrates how the total credit volume greatly exceeds the debit volume to comply with the daylight plane standard. The credit volume equals 189,733 cubic feet, and the debit volume is 80,898 cubic feet.

At the November 14<sup>th</sup> meeting, the fire marshal Herschel Rostov, explained the intricacies of balancing daylight plane requirements with fire code. He stated that the full length of the building along SE 29<sup>th</sup> Street must be within 15 to 30-feet from the right-of-way. As a result of this discussion, it was suggested that an eyebrow be added to the recessed portion of the

building along SE 29<sup>th</sup> Street so it would be within 30-feet of right-of-way. The applicant has added this eyebrow to the top floor.

The commission also had concerns about the overhanging roofs, and stated they add to the volume at the street and increase the perceived scale. To address this the applicant has eliminated the roof overhangs.

The commission requested that the applicant bring more detailed materials information to a future study session. The commission suggested focusing on building mass first, and materials, second. The commission stated that the big building feel should be addressed, that the retail facades seemed to too tall to be pedestrian scale, and that the 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue facade felt very "blocky". The commission also wanted more articulation along the south façade facing the plaza.

The applicant's newest plan set reflects a revised frontage design in an effort to address the design commissions suggestions. These changes include the eyebrow along 29<sup>th</sup> and the elimination of roof overhangs and discussed above. The design also reflects other design changes. The vertical bays along the building frontage were greatly increased. Additional articulation was provided along the south plaza. The façade along 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue was developed and refined. Additional development and articulation were provided at the elevation adjacent to the thru-block connection along 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Canopies were added to the plans, which serve to break up the height of retail and provide a more pedestrian scale.

Has the applicant provided sufficient building modulation? Has the applicant provided sufficient materials modulation?

#### Through-Block Connections

The applicant's property is listed on Figure 7 of MICC 19.11 as being a preferred through-block pedestrian connection location. Through block connections must be 20-feet wide pursuant to MICC 19.11.060(E)(2)(a). Pursuant to MICC 19.11.060(E)(2)(b), the connection shall provide pedestrian amenities such as seating areas, landscaping, art features, etc.

#### Compliance:

The applicant is proposing to incorporate a 20-foot wide through-block connection that extends from 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE to 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE along their northern property line. At the previous study session, the design commission provided guidance for the through-block connections. It was suggested that a pocket be provided in the through-block connection. It was also agreed that an 8-foot wide walking path is fine. The commission also asked that a design be provided that invites the public into the connection.

The applicant has provided plans that show additional details including landscaping, seating areas, and art features in the through block connection. A stormwater feature that includes weirs that create cascades will run the entire length of the connection. Landscaping including vegetation and decorative boulders will also run the entire length of the connection. Pedestrian plazas will be provided at each end of the connection. Seating, bicycle amenities, stone seats, a large specimen tree and a large feature boulder will be provided within these plazas which are part of the through-block connection and serve to invite people into the connection. Additional building articulation is also proposed that will give the connection a more open feel.

Does the through-block connection provide adequate amenities? Does the proposed design provide the inviting feel that will pull people into and through the through-block connection?

#### • Pedestrian Plazas and Site Features

MICC 19.11.060 requires minor site features and major site features. Pursuant to MICC 19.11.060(A), at least <a href="mailto:three">three</a> minor site features shall be provided. Minor site feature options include decorative landmarks, kiosks, and additional sidewalk setback along 78th Ave. Pursuant to MICC 19.11.060(B), at least one major site feature shall be provided. A major site feature may be a through-block connection or public open space. Pursuant to the same code section, the applicant's property must provide a through-block connection since it is adjacent to a preferred through-block connection as shown on Figure 7 of the code.

Other Site Features: Pursuant to MICC 19.11.060(C), the design commission may approve other major or minor site features in place of those listed in the minor site feature and major site feature sections.

#### Compliance:

At the previous study session, guidance was provided in regards to the pedestrian plazas and site features. There was a statement that the south plaza seemed to narrow. The plaza needed to feel like a public amenity. The commission stated that they would be open to the north plaza being enlarged at the through-block connection. There was also a suggestion that the proposed midblock plaza along 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue be treated differently than the south plaza.

#### Minor Site Features:

The proposal provides a water feature fed by stormwater. Seating areas that include tables and chairs as well polished stone seats, and bicycle amenities will be provided at the edge of the through-block connection in the pedestrian plazas. Landscape boulders and vegetation will be provided through the length of the connection. One end of the connection will provide a large specimen tree, the other will provide a large feature boulder. Additional sidewalk setback along 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue is being proposed as a midblock plaza at the building entry along 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue which will include seating, bike racks, and specimen trees.

#### Major Site Features:

The proposal provides a through block connection and public open space in the form of public plazas. The through-block connection extends along the north property line. The public open space is provided at the southeast and northeast corner of the property, as well as midblock on 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE. Pursuant to MICC 19.11.060(B)(1), the total area of the through block connection and the public open space must equal or exceed 3% of the gross floor area of the development. The gross floor area is not yet available so compliance with this section cannot be determined. The applicant will need to demonstrate compliance with their formal application.

As stated previously in the through-block connection section, a pedestrian plaza will be provided at each end of the connection. These plazas will widen the through-block

connection, which will make the connection feel more inviting to the public. Seating, bicycle amenities, stone seats, a large specimen tree and a large feature boulder will be provided within these plazas which are part of the through-block connection and serve to invite people into the connection. A large specimen tree, bike racks, benches, public art, and polished stone seats will be provided in the midblock plaza on 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The south plaza is being enhanced by additional building articulation that will make the plaza feel more open. The applicant is proposing several amenities in the south plaza including a bar height table and chairs, bench seating, step seating, a swing, public art and landscaping.

Does the proposed design provide the inviting feel that will pull people into and through the through-block connection?

#### Materials and Color

The code (MICC 19.11.110(B)) states that the following about external building materials:

- 1. Materials should be durable and high quality for minimal weathering and maintenance.
- 2. Materials and colors should reflect the city's regional setting.
- 3. Materials and colors should be used with cohesiveness and compatibility on all sides of a building.
- 4. Concrete walls should be architecturally treated.
- 5. A harmonious range of colors should be used within Town Center. Neon or very bright colors should not be used.
- 6. Bright colors should be used only for trim and accents.
- 7. Beveled metal siding, mirrored glass, and vinyl siding should not be used. EIFS, stucco and similar materials should be limited to use as a minor building element.
- A variation of building materials should be used to assist in the creation of a visually interesting experience.

#### Compliance:

The applicant is proposing a brick exterior, large amounts of fenestration, projecting glass balconies and inset cable rail balconies. The proposed brick colors are Coal Creek, which is a dark brick, and Inca, which is a red brick. The window frames are proposed to be black vinyl or dark fiberglass. Dark anodized louvers are proposed for use above some of the first floor windows.

Do the proposed materials and colors meet the code standards for exterior building materials?

The applicant appreciates any input the Design Commission is willing to share in addition to the specific topics above.

#### III. RECOMMENDATION

There is no recommended motion at this time, as this is a Design Commission study session.



We are currently designing a proposed 155 unit multi-family residential building in the center of the Mercer Island retail core. Covering most of an entire city block, the project is located between the QFC and New Seasons Market, approximately 3 blocks south of Interstate 90. The proposed 4-story building (above grade) would include two level of below grade parking (230 stalls) and approximately 16,900sf of retail. The majority of the retail is located on the east side of the site (facing QFC).

ADDRESS: 2750 77th Ave. SE & 2885 78th Ave. SE

**PARCEL#:** 531510-1326 & 5131510-1316

**LOT SIZE:** 20,075 + 43,705 = 63,780 SF

**ZONING**: TC-4

**USES:** Residential, restaurant, retail, service, special needs housing.

#### **STREETFRONT** (19.11.020)

**OCCUPANCY:** If public parking is provided, 40% min shall be occupied by retail, restaurant and personal service use. A max 60% can be occupied by hotel, personal care service, or office. Driveway, service and truck loading, parking garage and lobbies are not counted.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Proposal for new multi-story residential mixed-use building, 4 stories above grade and 1 story basement.

#### **HEIGHT LIMIT**

MAX Height: 51'-0" (additional 5'-0" allowed for parapet/

sloped roof)

Ground Floor Height: 15'-0" min and 27'-0" max

#### SETBACKS:

45 degree angle up setback required for upper stories (above 25')

12'-0" setback between structure and the face of the street curb.

15'-0" setback on 78th Ave. SE.

#### STOREFRONT DIMENSIONS

MIN in depth: 16'-0"; MAX in length: 60'-0" continuous linear

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING**: 10% of the total units to qualify for bonus building height over two stories. 60% of median income for rental, 90% of median income for ownership housing.

PARKING: 1 to 1.4 per unit for residential
2-3 per 1,000 SF for general retail
(5-10 per 1,000 SF for restaurant/deli/bakery/food)
3-5 per 1,000 SF for general office

# **Study Session #2 Topics:**

- -Town Center Character
  -Design Concept
- -Building Massing & Modulation
- -Public Amenity Spaces:
  - -South Plaza
  - -Thru-Block Connection
  - -78th Street Boulevard
- -Appendix
  - -Daylight plane calculations
  - -Elevations & Sections
  - -Design Influences





SITE

MIX-USE / RESIDENTIAL

COMMERCIAL

PREFERRED THROUGH BLOCK CONNECTION LOCATION

# TOWN CENTER CHARACTER



Scenic Shoreline Amenity



Wooded Residential Neighborhoods Connected to the Water



190-Seattle/Bellevue Connection



**Community Events** 

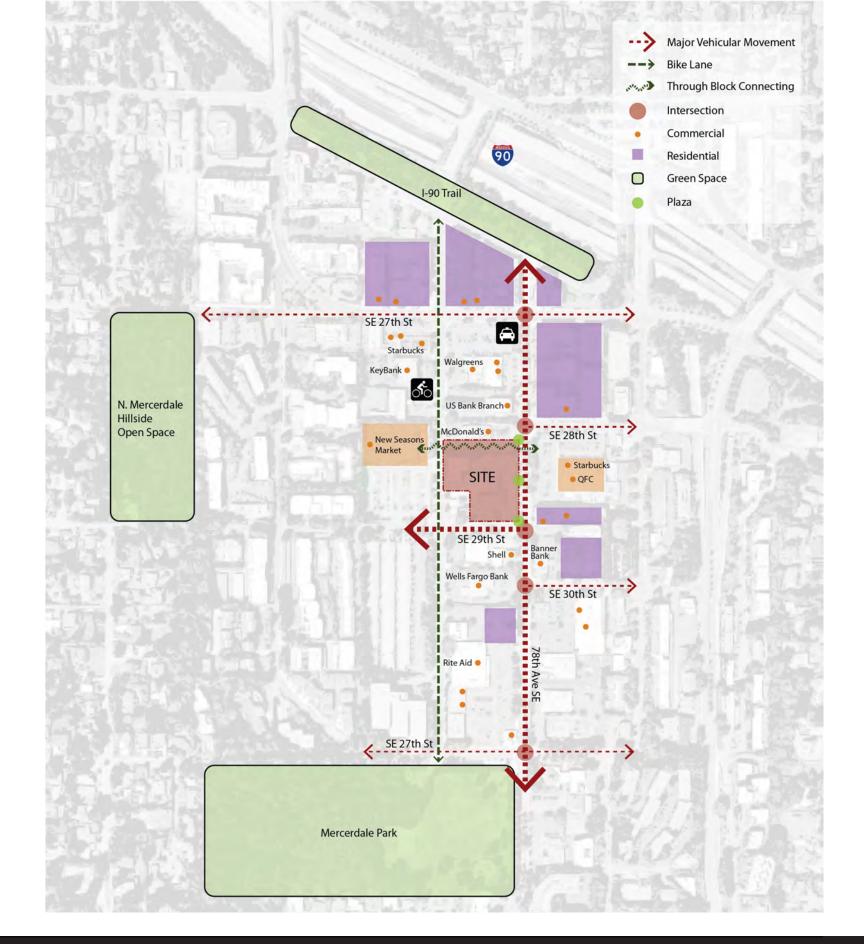


**Emerging Town Center** 



Lots of Parks & Play Structures



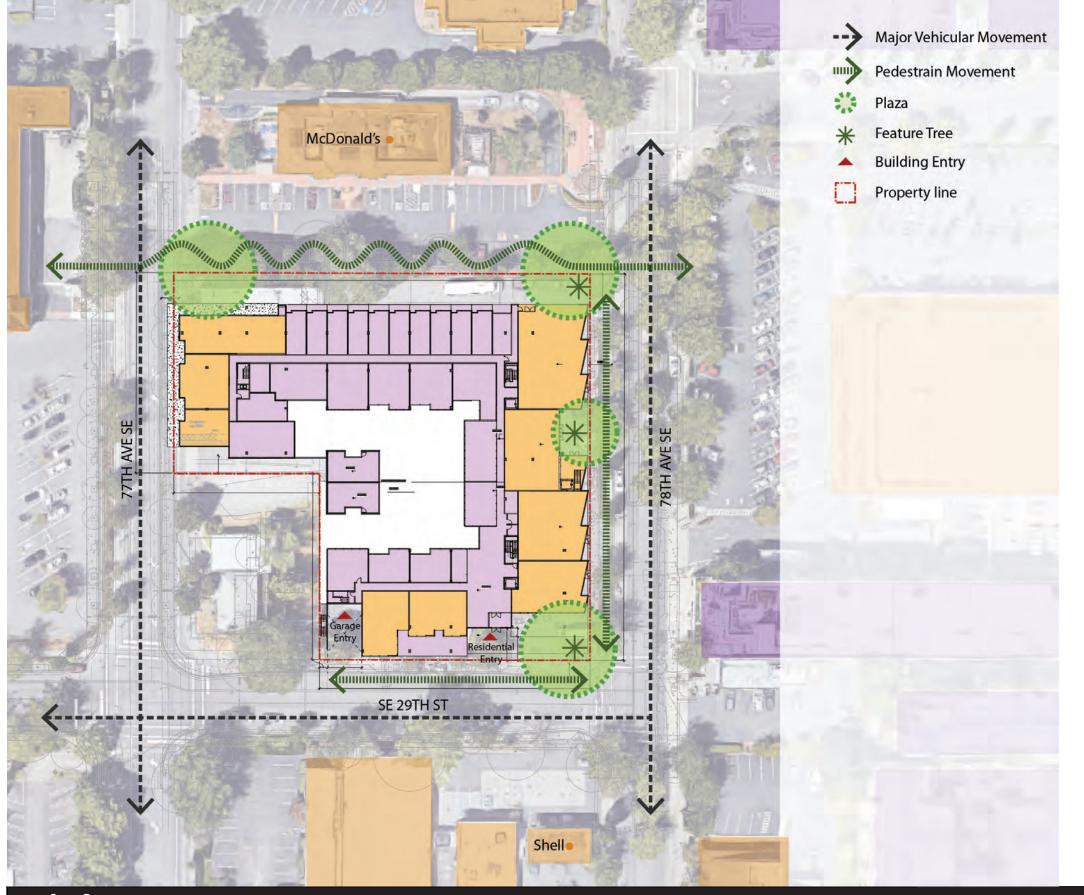


CREATING STRONGER PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE AND CONNECTIONS

-ENHANCING 78TH AVENUE

-ACTIVATING RETAIL

-DISTRIBUTED AND DIVERSE ACTIVITY



### **BOARD COMMENTS:**

- -creating an asset to the community
- -sensitivity to the pedestrian scale
- -feeling of openness
- -improve on the building modulation
- -Mercer Island spirit captured in public areas

## **CREATING FOUR PLAZAS**

- -FEATURE TREE FOCAL POINTS
- -UNIQUE PLAZA PROGRAMMING

### **CREATING DYNAMIC STREETS**

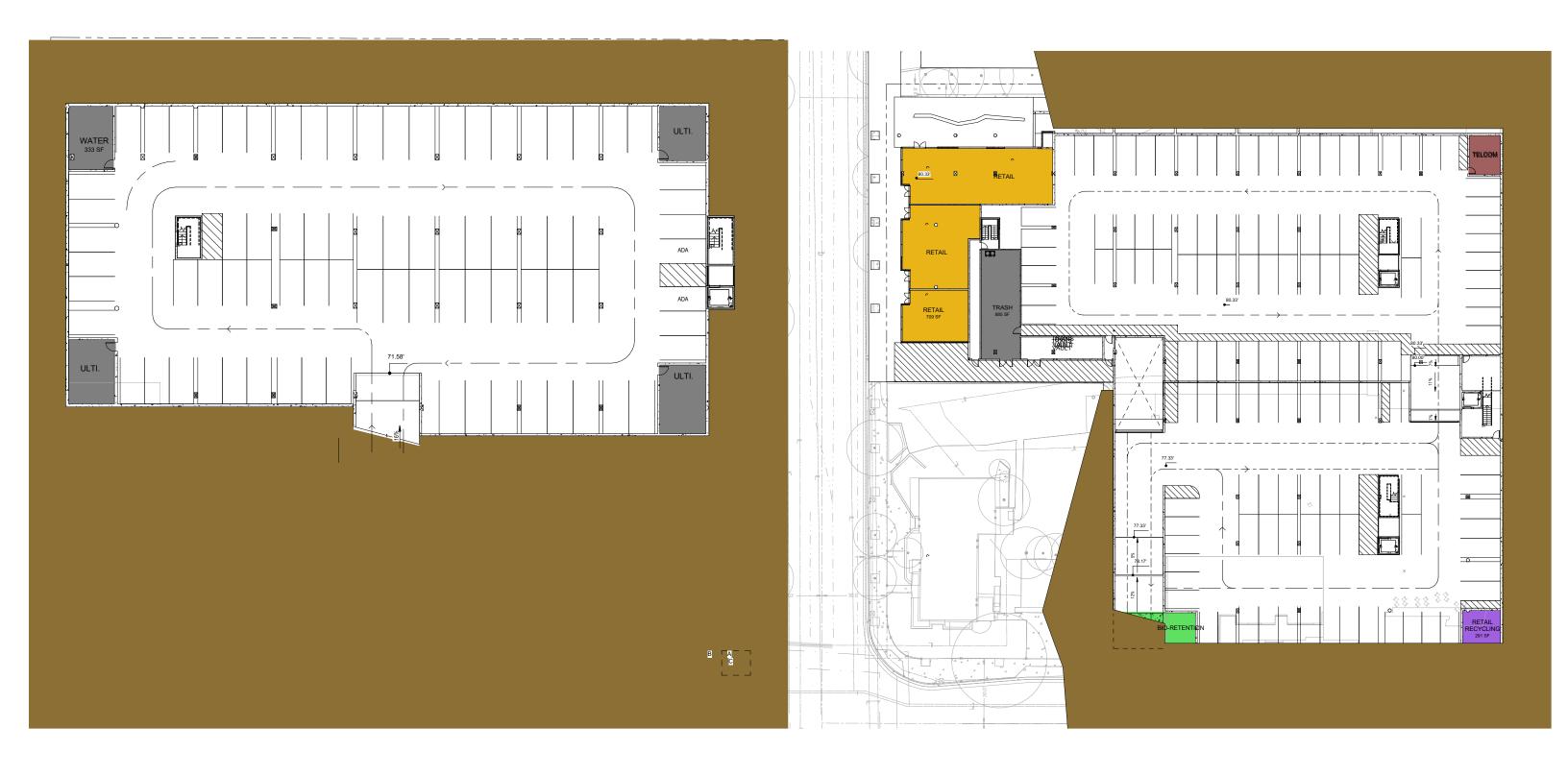
- -MORE LAYERED LANDSCAPING
- -MORE PURPOSEFUL SEATING
- -SUPPORTING RETAIL

# **BUILDING MODULATION**

- -MODULATED FACADES FOR BETTER PEDESTRIAN SCALE
- -ACCESS TO DAYLIGHT



# BUILDING MASSING & MODULATION

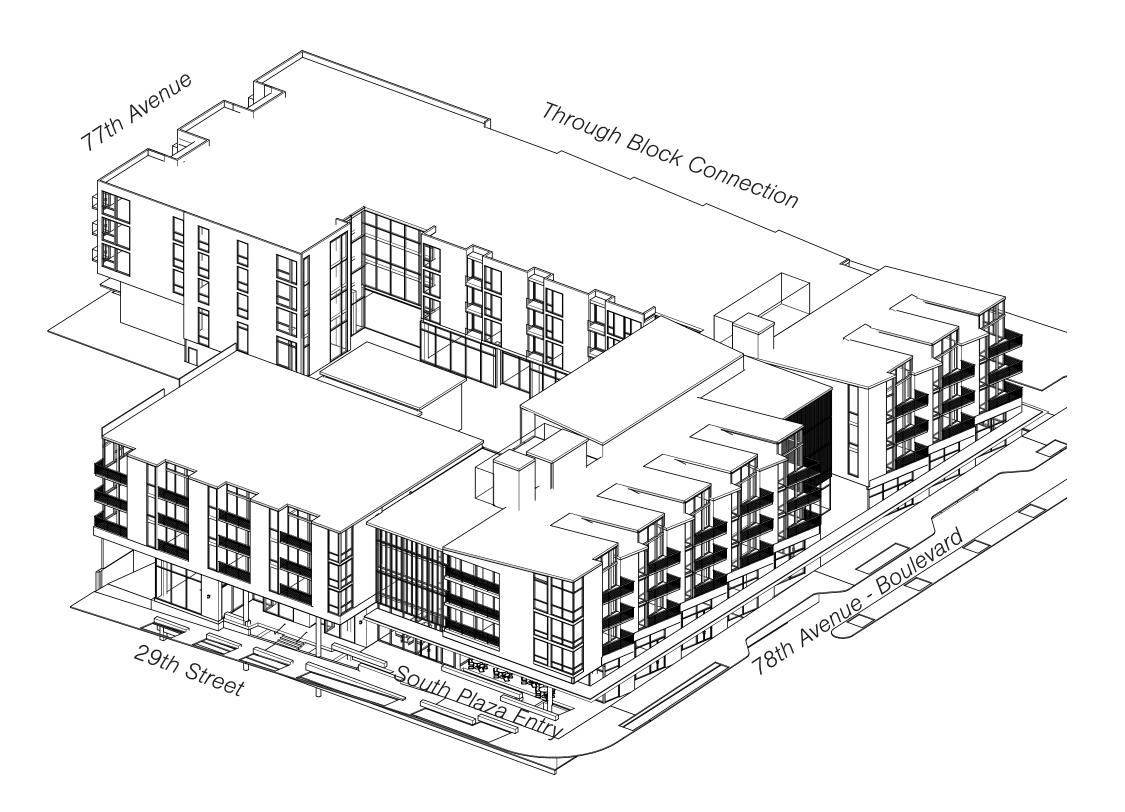


PARKING LEVEL P-2

PARKING LEVEL P-1



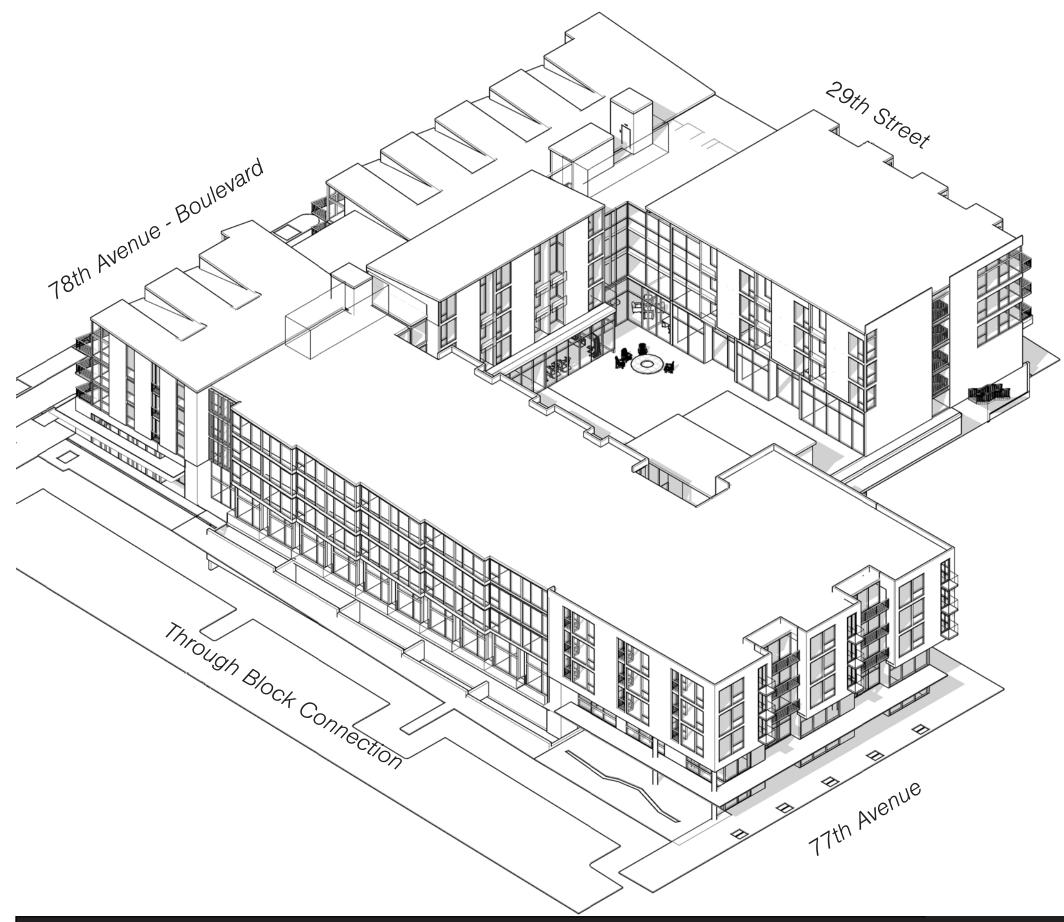
LEVEL 1 LEVELS 2,3,4



## **BOARD COMMENTS:**

- -consider how to distribute the massing into more distinct buildings
- -keep sloped roof modulation under the height limit and reduce the perceived scale
- -continue to develop the vertical bays and how they are articulated
- -be mindful of large brick proportions
- -more articulation of the south facade facing the plaza
- -be mindful of the pedestrian scale at the retail street levels
- -improving the scale of the south plaza





## **BOARD COMMENTS:**

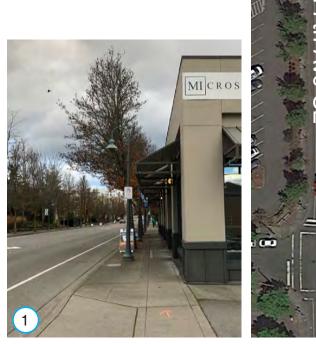
- -consider how to distribute the massing into more distinct buildings
- -continue to develop the vertical bays and how they are articulated
- -be mindful of large brick proportions
- -be mindful of the pedestrian scale at the retail street levels
- -develop and refine the 77th Avenue facade
- -more development and articulation of the elevation at the thru block connection





# PUBLIC AMENITY SPACES

- **1** 77th Ave SE sidewalk
- 2 NW property line (through-block)
- North property line (mid-block)NE property line (through-block)
- **5** 77th Ave SE sidewalk (NE corner)
- **6** 77th Ave SE sidewalk (mid-block)
- 77th Ave SE sidewalk (SE corner)
- 8 SE 29th street sidewalk (SE corner)
- **9** SE 29th street sidewalk

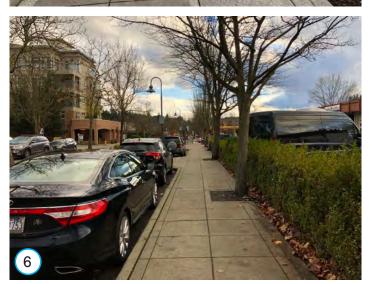










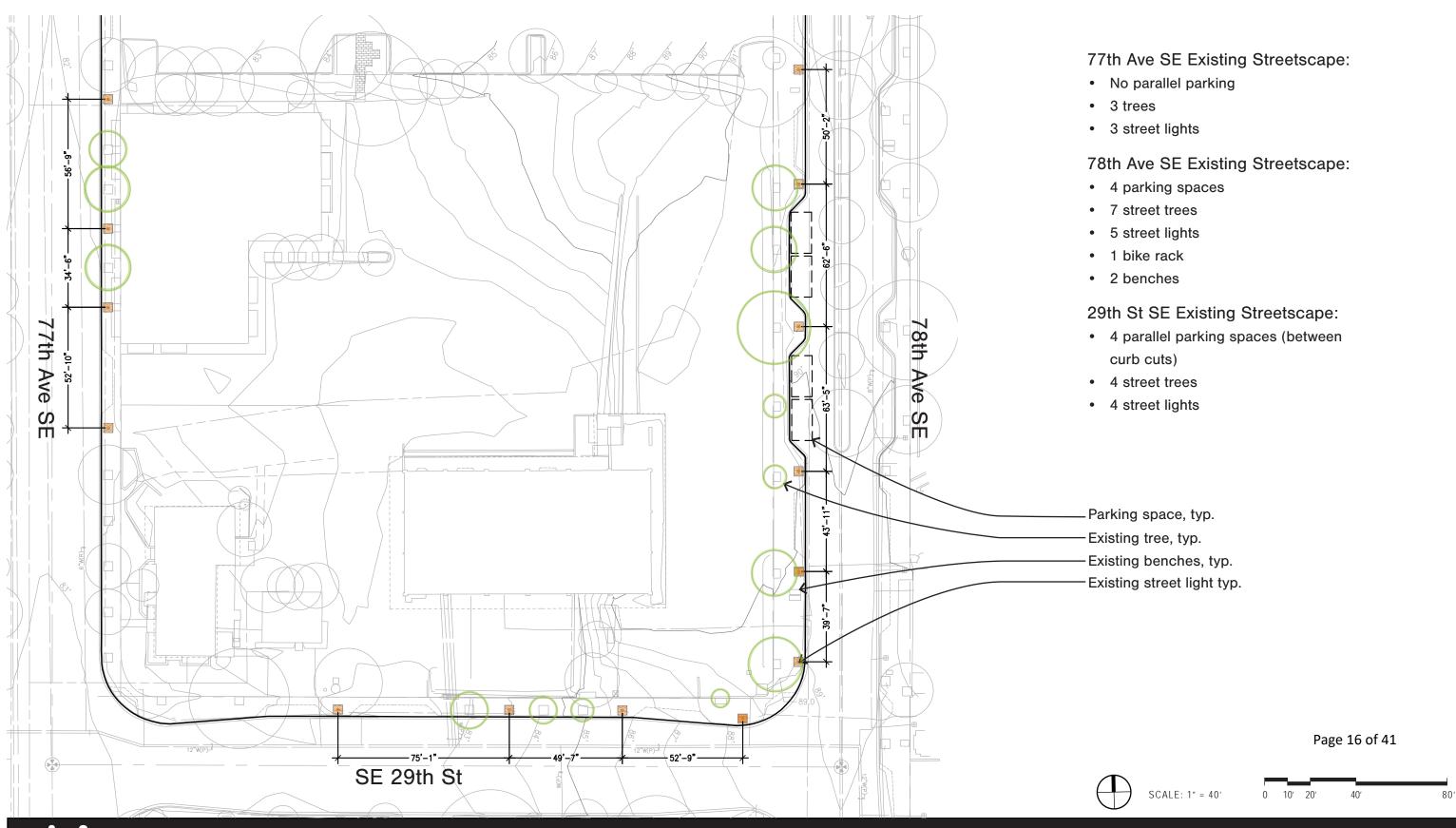


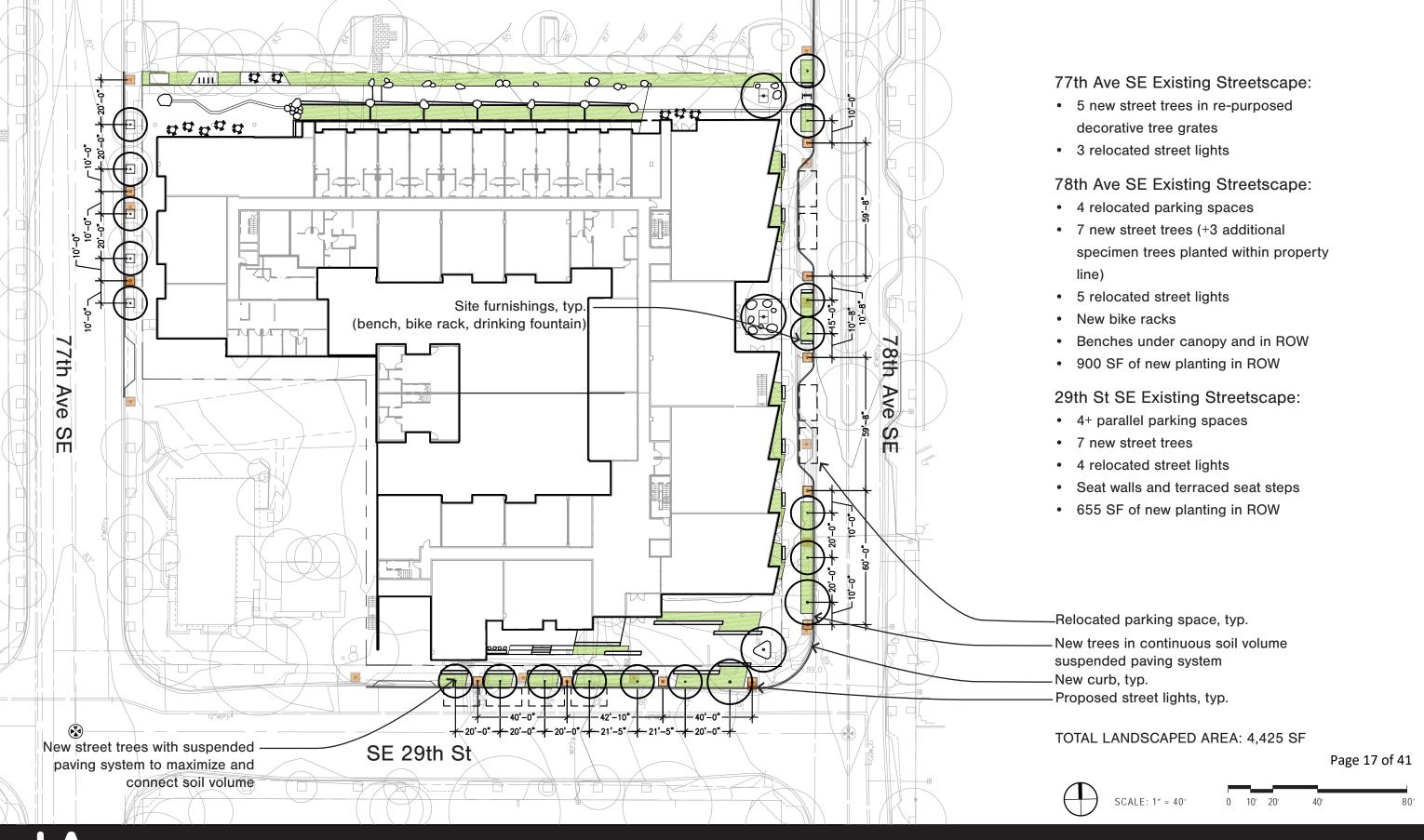








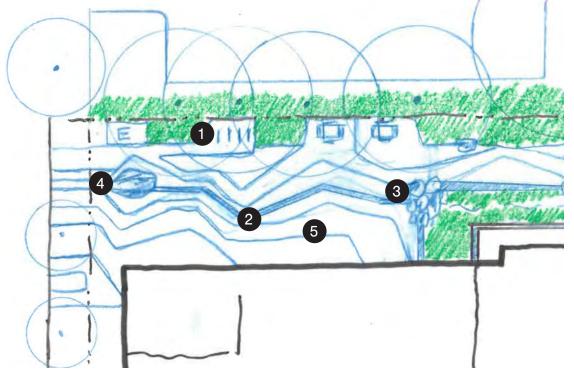








# NW Plaza





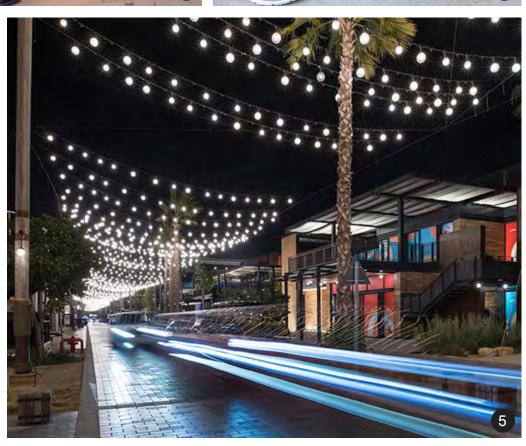




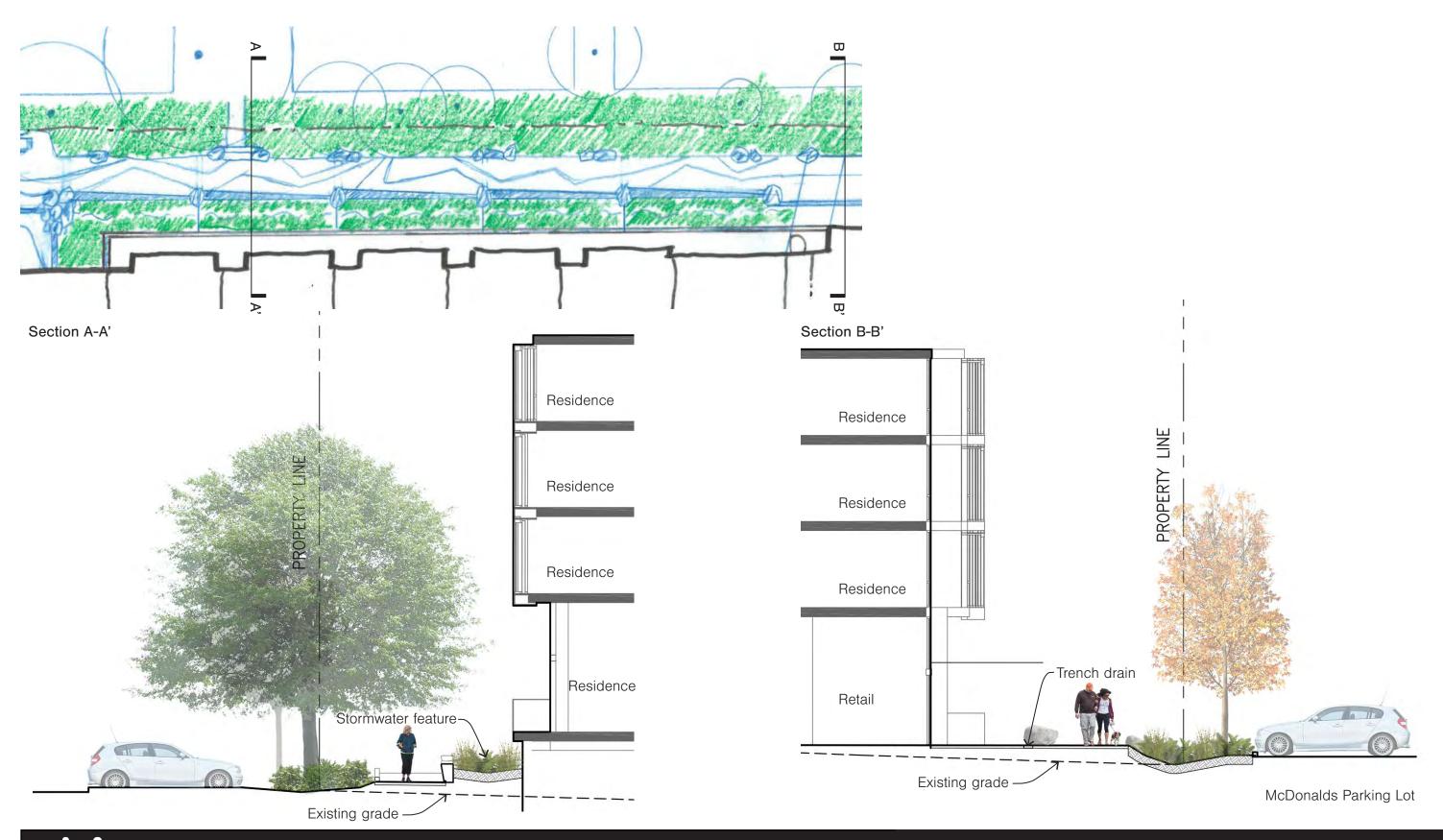


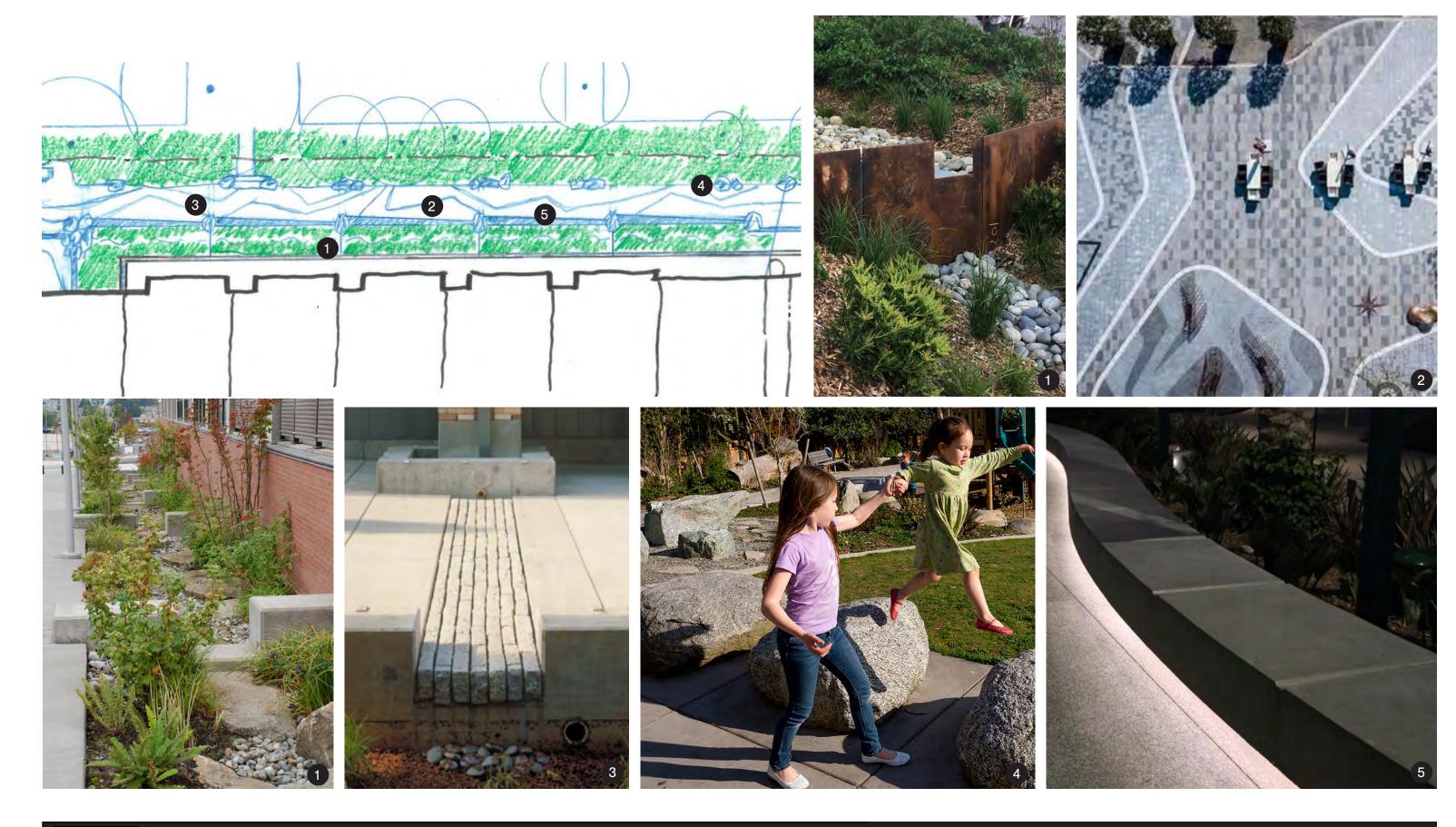


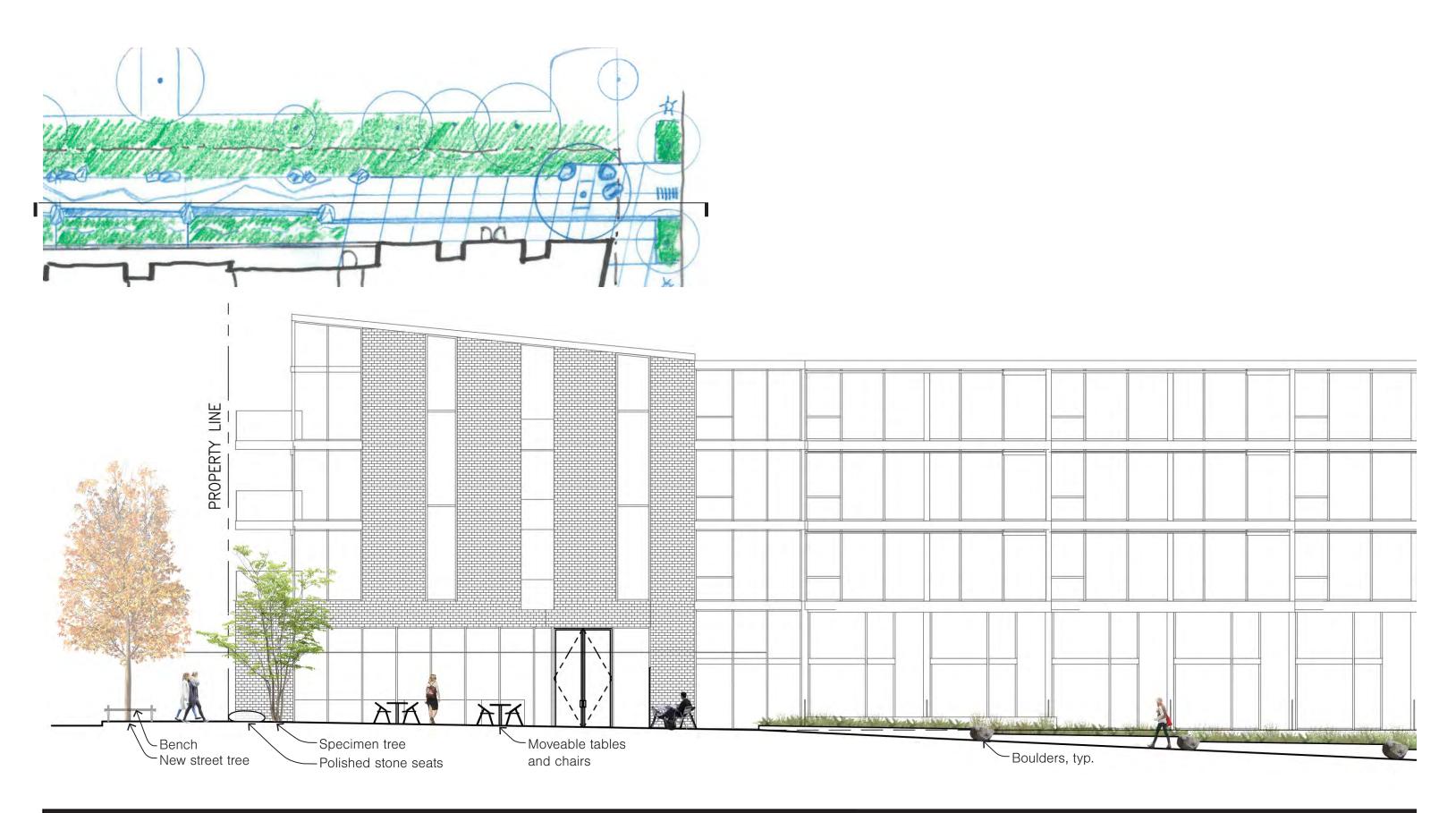










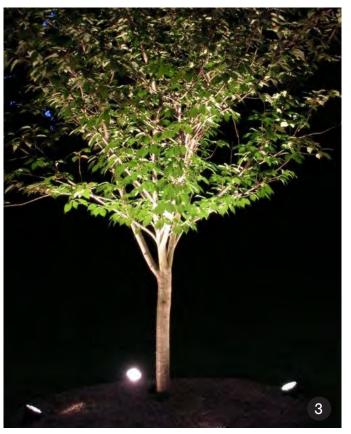






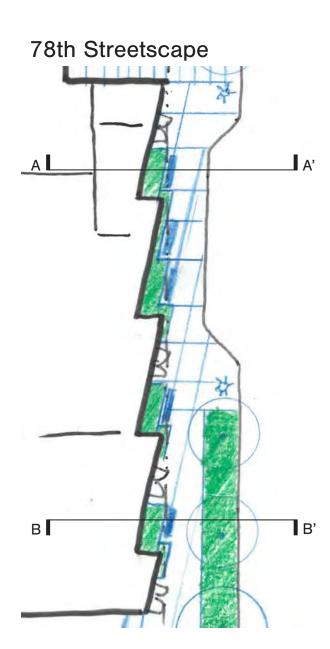








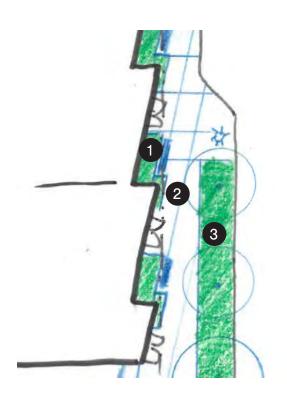




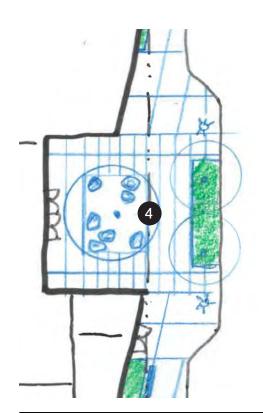


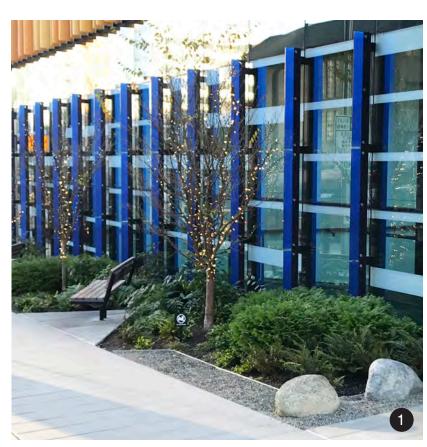


#### 78th Streetscape

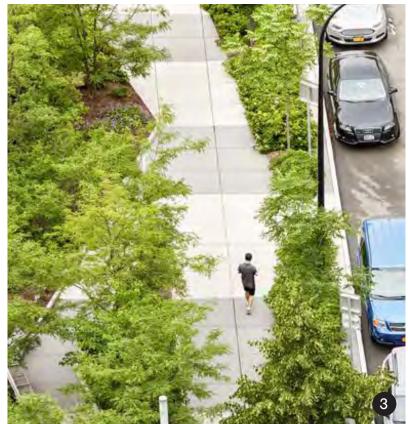


78th Entry Plaza





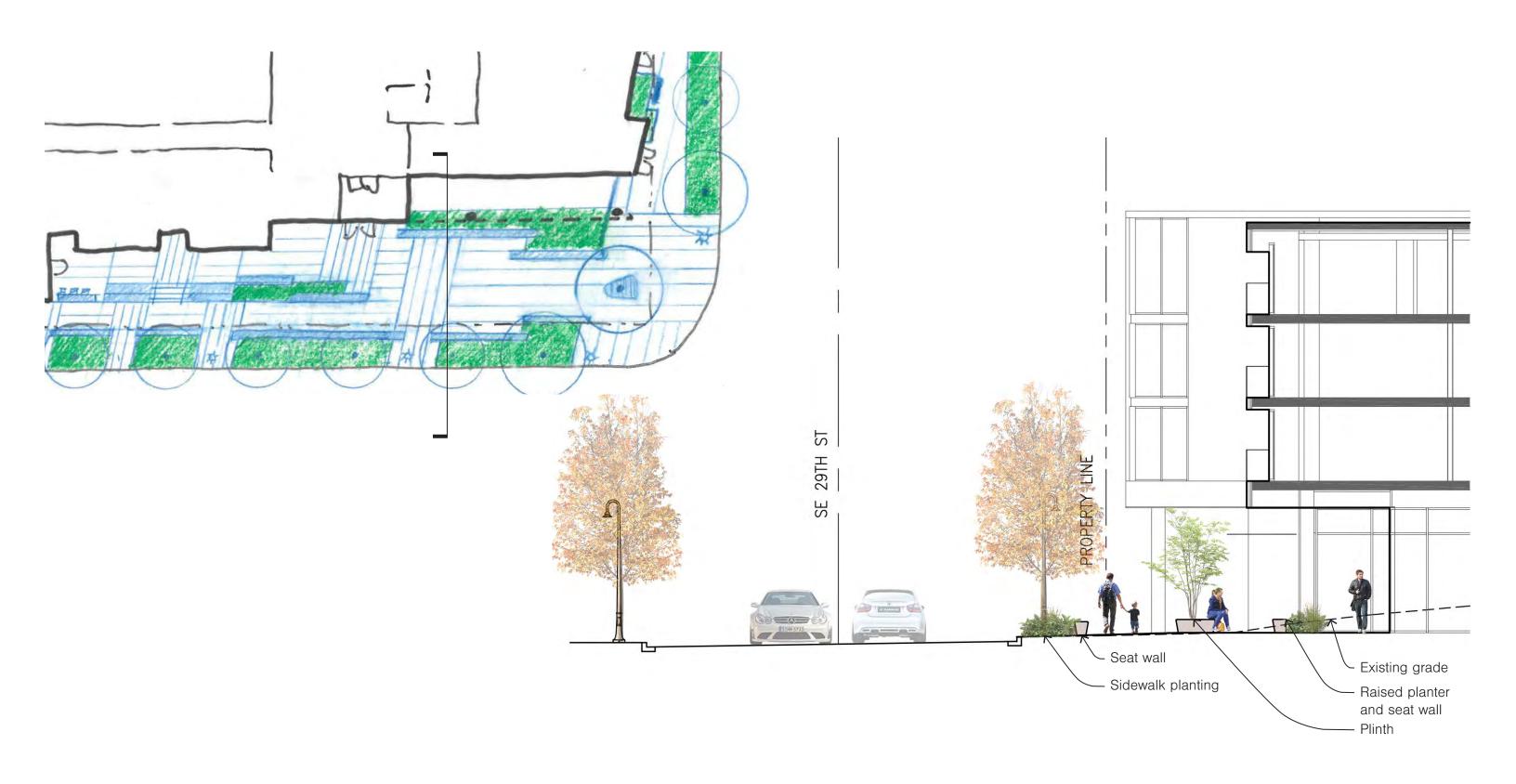
















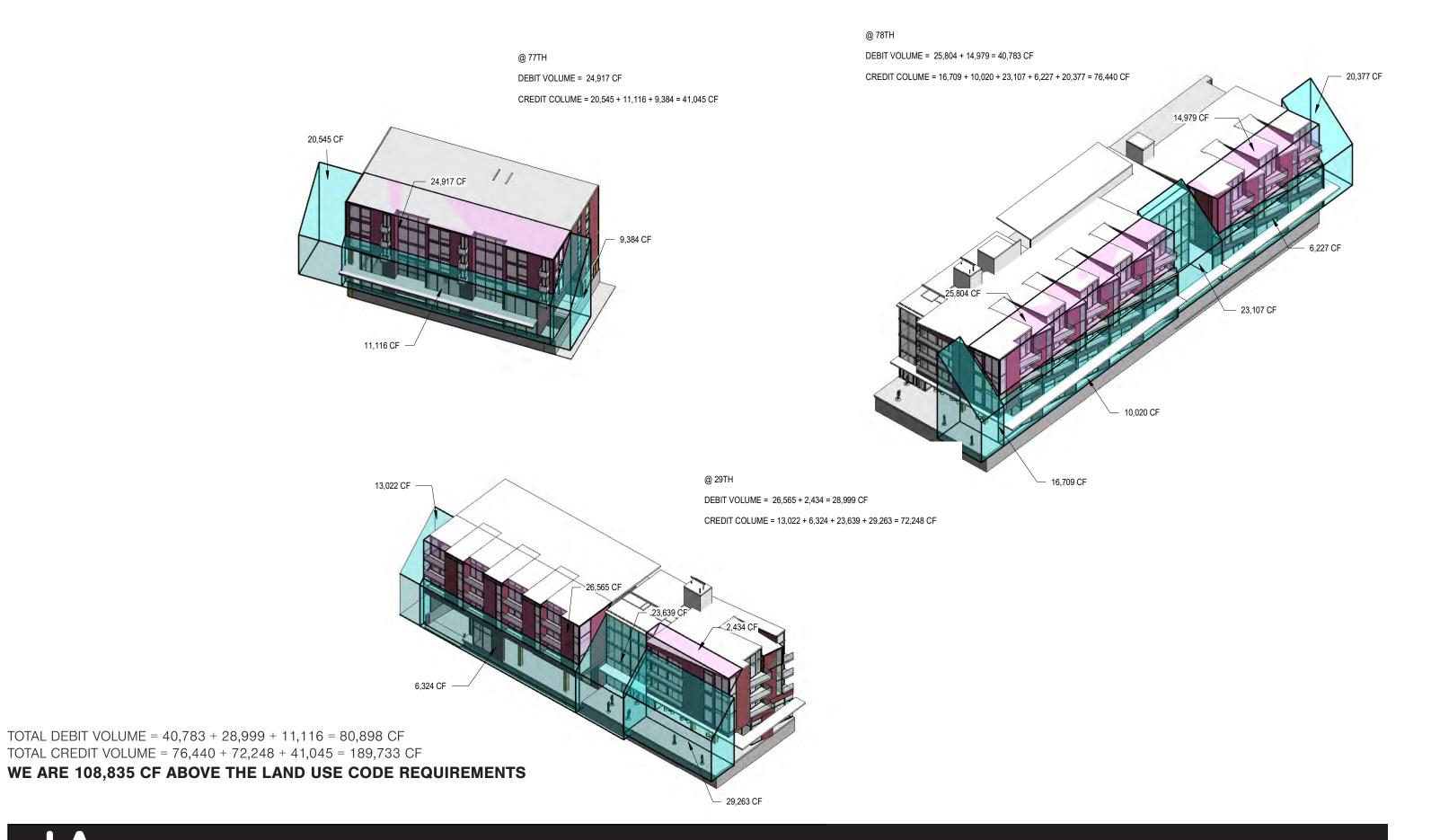






Johnston Architects

# APPENDIX: SUPPORTING INFORMATION





### EAST ELEVATION - 78TH AVENUE



**SOUTH ELEVATION - 29TH STREET** 

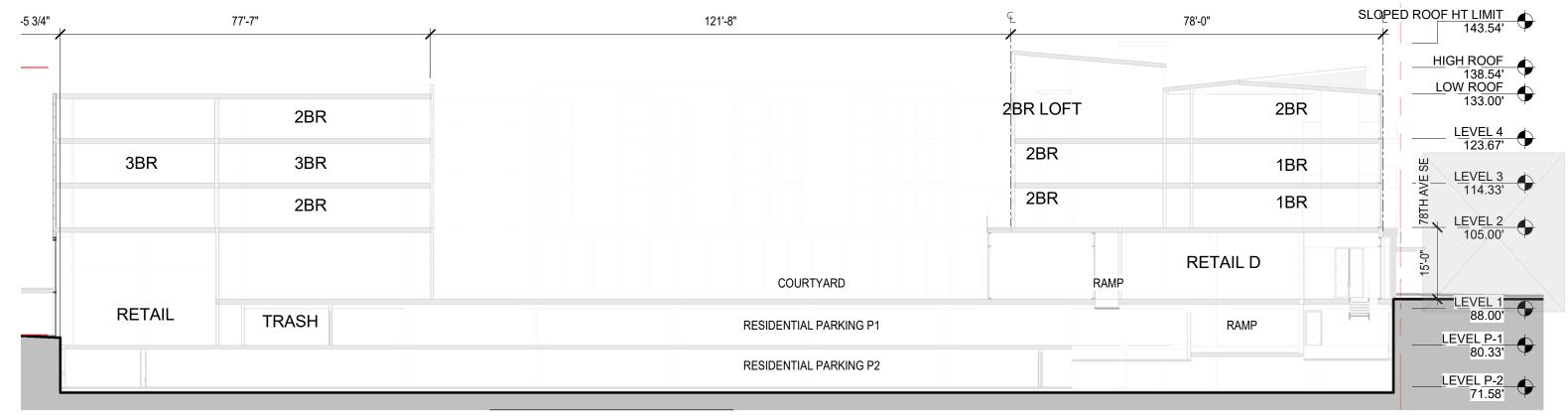




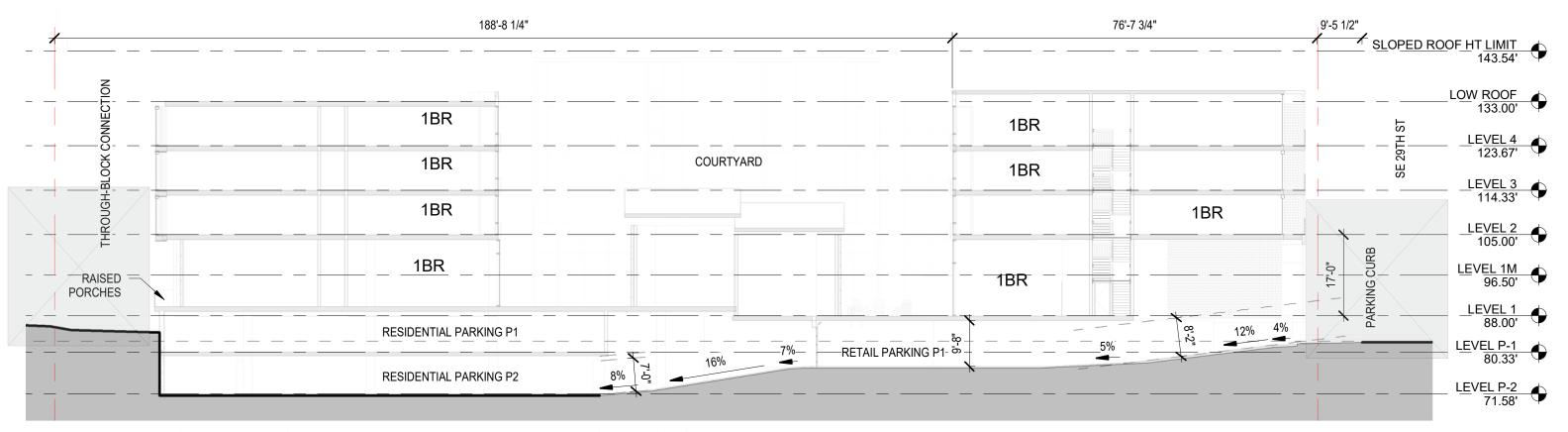
### NORTH ELEVATION - THRU BLOCK PASSAGEWAY



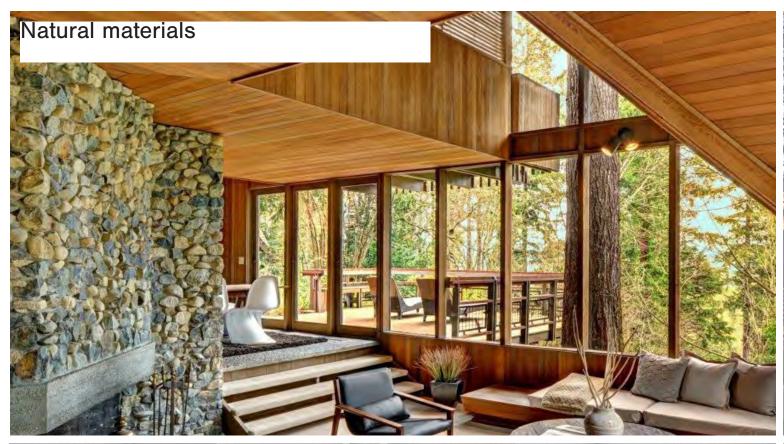
WEST ELEVATION - 77TH AVE



### EAST-WEST BUILDING SECTION LOOKING NORTH

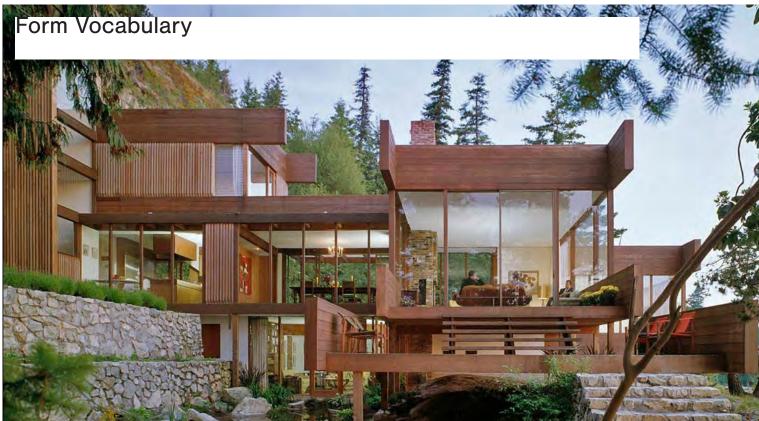


## NORTH-SOUTH BUILDING SECTION LOOKING EAST









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