



# VARSITY ANN ARBOR

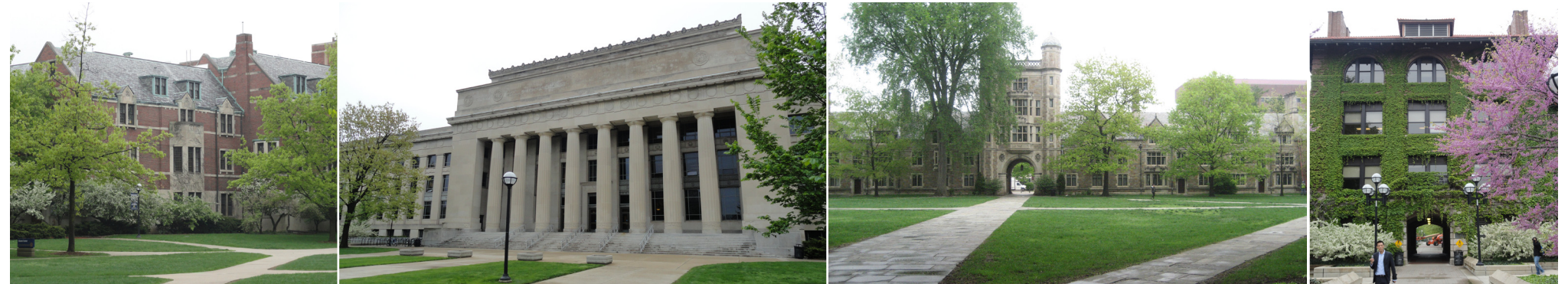
Design Review Board Set - June 1, 2011

## Table of Contents

Pages 2-6	Design Narrative & Context Photos
C-1	Existing Conditions
C-2	Layout Plan
C-3	Landscape Concept
C-4	Overlay Plan
A02.01	Level B1 Floor Plan
A02.02	1st Floor Plan
A02.03	2nd Floor Plan
A02.04	3rd to 12th Typical Floor Plan
A02.05	13th Floor Plan
A02.06	Roof Plan
A03.01	Building South Elevation
A03.02	Building East Elevation
A03.03	Building North Elevation
A03.04	Building West Elevation
A03.10	Building Perspective Views
A03.11	Building Perspective Views







## DESIGN NARRATIVE

The Varsity at Ann Arbor, located a block away from the University of Michigan central campus, aspires to be the University’s premier off campus address. Located at 425 E. Washington Street, it will be constructed on a mid-block site bounded by E. Huron street to the north, a historic house and church to the east, E. Washington Street to the south, and the Sterling 411 Lofts student housing project and another single family home on a historic property to the west. The site is approximately 0.75 acres, not including the historic single family home to the west, and is currently zoned D1. The project, located in the East Huron-2 Character District along the eastern portion of the Huron Street Civic Corridor, conforms to the downtown character overlay zoning district’s building massing standards and is responsive to the downtown Ann Arbor Design Guidelines.

The project will be eligible for the full 700%-FAR through the use of premiums and will contain approximately 178,380 gross sf, which creates 173 student apartments with a total of 418 beds. The amenity/residential lobby space currently is 9,500 sf. The project will have a 2-level parking structure that is 1-story below grade and 1-story above grade. By right, the maximum building height is 180’, the street wall height may be 2 to 4 stories, the average required offset at the street wall is 5’, and the maximum building module length, based on pre-existing lot modules, is approximately 60’. The proposed project will be approximately 132’ tall, 13 stories above grade, with a 2-story tall street wall at both E. Washington street and E. Huron street. Our 2-story street walls will be set 5’ forward of the main building mass and

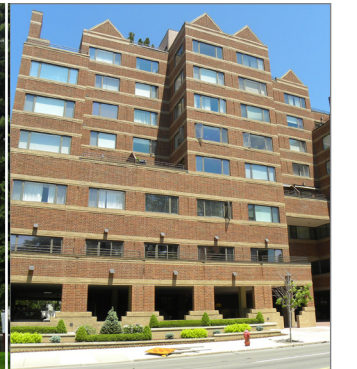
our building module is approximately 55’ along both E. Washington and E. Huron.

The project sits at a mid-block location of a long east-west block bounded by E. Huron Street, E. Washington Street, State Street, and Division Street. The block is transitional as it mediates between the shorter two story historic single family structures and two to three story churches, and the taller hotel, office, parking garage, and residential structures in the area. The intent of the design guidelines is to ensure that future buildings acknowledge and respect the lower scaled buildings while simultaneously celebrating the building’s vertical stature. We placed great importance on the development of the pedestrian experience, the street wall, building details and finishing the building with a distinctive top.

## THE BLOCK

In addition to our block having the relatively new Sterling 411 Lofts residential tower at its southwest corner, the block also has three historic homes fronting E. Huron and is graced by the First Baptist Church and First United Methodist Church. The quality of the streetscape ranges from urban to suburban with varying degrees of quality urban stewardship. The double wide sidewalks of the Sterling 411 Lofts detracts from a continuous strong urban edge. The vehicular oriented parking lots fronting the first baptist church do not contribute to Ann Arbor’s tradition of great street walls. The alley/driveway that forms the west edge of the public parking garage at E. Washington street gives pedestrians and bicyclists a nice north/south midblock connection to the





project. The garage alley is a continuation of the Liberty Street corridor and could potentially be expanded through our site to E. Huron street. Continuing around the block, the quality of open space rises with the park-like setting of the First United Methodist Church, the historic First Baptist Church, and the polychromatic victorian home. Both churches have strong landscaped forecourts as well as private gardens. Of the two remaining single family homes on the block, the western most house along E. Huron is in nice shape, and the house adjacent to the west side of the proposed varsity needs a thorough historic restoration.

#### PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE: E. HURON STREET

As per the zoning, the project will be set back 15 feet from the E. Huron street property line and the building's 2-story streetwall base and setback brings the project's scale down to the scale of the adjacent single family homes. The landscaping will continue E. Huron's existing pattern of a planting strip (lawn and trees) at the street, a sidewalk and an additional 15 feet of lawn and trees up to the building's residential-scaled base. The stone-like base will be articulated with three grand windows and a vehicular entrance to the building's lower-level parking. In addition to the landscaped lawns and tree canopies, pedestrians walking along the south side of E. Huron will be able to cut through the block along the east side of the project via our Varsity Mews and enjoy views to the private gardens of the First Baptist Church. The mews provide residents access to the building's indoor bike storage and enables pedestrians to continue southward past the parking garage and on to Liberty Street.

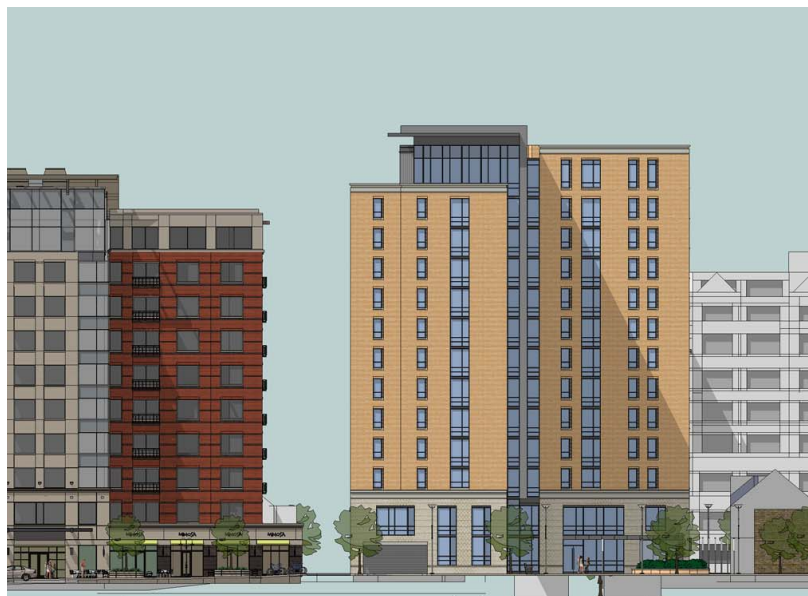
#### PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE: E. WASHINGTON STREET

In contrast to the lawns and trees of E. Huron street, the experience along E. Washington will be more urban. At the building's southwest corner, the project will have a 13-foot-wide service alley with gates that will handle building services including the generator, transformer and trash enclosure (trash and recycling activities will happen inside the building). The remaining 115' of frontage will be defined by a strong base treatment and tree-lined sidewalk that opens up to the building's entry plaza. One of the two street walls fronting E. Washington street will be set on the southern property line and the second will be set back 30' from the property line forming a welcoming 30' x 65' public entry plaza at the building's southeast corner. As at E. Huron street, the two-story street walls will be articulated with grand windows and a vehicular entrance to the building's upper-level parking. Between the two street walls, a north facing 2-story wall of glass will look out onto the project's entry plaza and reveal a dramatic 2-story lobby and street level amenities. The brick paved plaza, leading residents and visitors to the building's canopy-covered entrance, will feature benches and a raised planter for seating, bike storage and access to the mews.

#### MASSING

The Z-shaped footprint was conceived to form an entry plaza that would be oriented southeast toward the University of Michigan Central Campus and respond to the existing open yard space along E. Washington to the east of the project. In addition to breaking the building's scale down horizontally, which is done with the street walls and cornice lines, it also is important to divide the building's scale vertically. A vertical metal element





will float above the entrance plaza, run vertically up the north wall of the entry plaza and fold over the top of the building’s sky lounge. The “folded metal plane” rises above the final residential floor, and the west wing on the building is lowered creating a rooftop terrace adjacent to the sky lounge. The overall effect is a 3-tiered roofline at the building’s south elevation (E. Washington Street.)

With the intention of animating the roof line of the north elevation (E. Huron Street), we developed a horizontal metal element that clads the northwest corner of the 13th floor at the Huron elevation. This gesture makes the masonry towers step from 13 stories to 12 stories as the metal treatment of the top level merges visually into the folded plane and mechanical screen beyond.

#### BUILDING ELEMENTS

In the spirit of the design guidelines, we utilized horizontal molding as cornice lines to delineate the top and base of the building. Cornices were employed to cap off the 2-story street walls, define the base of the building along the east and west elevations, and cap off the tops of the masonry towers.

The ratio of solid to void (window to wall) is driven to a degree by building codes and by a desire to keep the window patterning simple. The smaller single punched openings occur at bedrooms and the wider floor-to-ceiling windows occur in the living rooms. The punched windows are set 5 inches in from the face of masonry with a contrasting 8-inch wide stack course on the left side of the window, a header course spanning from the

left edge of the stack course to the right corner of the window, and a cast stone sill that corresponds to the length of the header course. Like the asymmetrical compositions of the punched openings, the grand windows that punctuate the street walls are also asymmetrical with the larger pane of glass set back 5 inches from the limestone-like architectural block surface and the smaller pane set back an additional 1”-6”.

Similar to the folded plane rising to the top of the building, the project’s entrance canopy is a bent plane of stainless steel that is integrated with a glowing glass cube that is the building’s fire control room.

#### MATERIALS AND TEXTURES

The composition of the building is a juxtaposition of simple brick boxes with vertical and horizontal metal planes separated by glass slots and a glowing lounge at the building’s top. The masonry boxes will have a defined base and top treatments. Limestone-colored architectural block form the free standing street walls that are attached to the building with glass links. The street walls are articulated with limestone-colored cast stone cornices at the top and a sill level reveal at the bottom. The brick walls are intended to be a rich golden hue with a blend of dark buff, copper and iron spots. The contrasting stack courses at the punch windows will be darker with a copper / iron spot hue. The cast stone sills are intended to match the limestone colored architectural block. Finally, the folding metal plane, the building iconic vertical element will be clad in varying textures of medium grey metal panels punctuated with clear glass openings.



EAST WASHINGTON PARKING GARAGE



EAST WASHINGTON PARKING GARAGE



SOUTHEAST CORNER OF DIVISION AND WASHINGTON



STERLING 411 LOFTS LOOKING SOUTHEAST FROM THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF WASHINGTON AND DIVISION



STERLING 411 LOFTS ON THE NORTH SIDE OF WASHINGTON LOOKING EAST



SOUTHEAST CORNER OF WASHINGTON LOOKING NORTHEAST



NORTHEAST CORNER OF WASHINGTON LOOKING SOUTHEAST



SOUTHSIDE OF HURON LOOKING EAST



HURON LOOKING SOUTH



HURON LOOKING SOUTHWEST



HURON LOOKING NORTHWEST



HURON LOOKING NORTHWEST



HURON LOOKING WEST



HURON LOOKING WEST

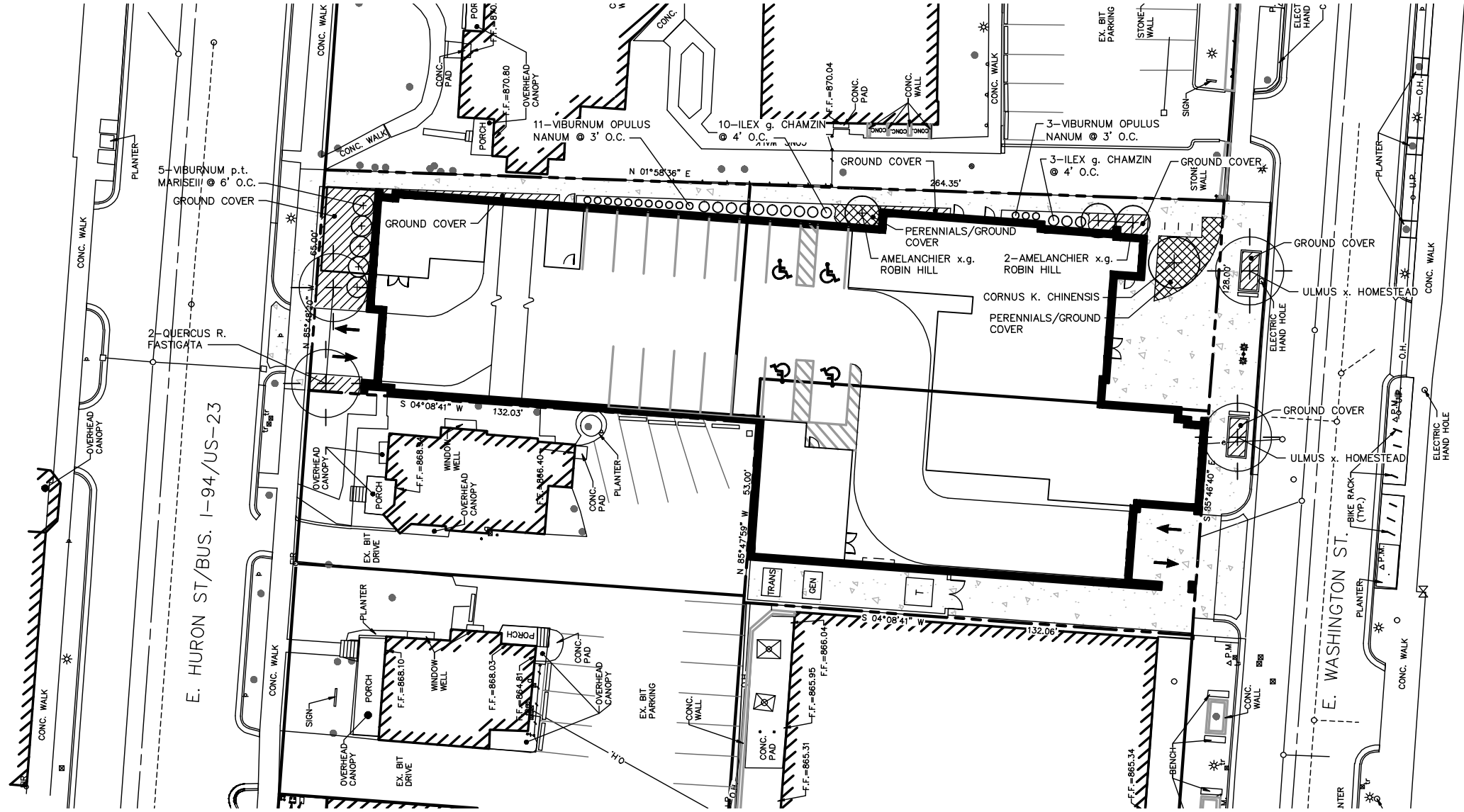






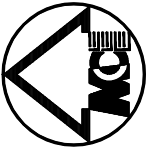






# LANDSCAPE LEGEND

- PROPOSED CANOPY TREE
- PROPOSED FLOWERING TREE
- PROPOSED DECIDUOUS SHRUBS
- PROPOSED GROUND COVER
- PROPOSED PERENNIAL BED



SCALE: 1" = 20'

# LEGEND

- EXIST. UTILITY POLE
- ELEC. TRANSFORMER
- EXIST. OVERHEAD UTILITY LINE
- EXIST. LIGHT POLE
- EXIST. TELEPHONE LINE
- EXIST. ELECTRIC LINE
- EXIST. GAS LINE
- EXIST. WATER MAIN
- EXIST. HYDRANT
- EXIST. GATE VALVE IN BOX
- EXIST. GATE VALVE IN WELL
- EXIST. STORM SEWER
- EXIST. CATCH BASIN OR INLET
- EXIST. SANITARY SEWER
- SIGN
- PARKING METER
- TELEPHONE RISER
- ELECTRIC METER
- GAS METER
- POST
- FENCE
- SINGLE TREE

JOB No. 11054

REVISIONS:

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SHEET 3 OF 4

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6/1/11

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LANDSCAPE CONCEPT

CLIENT

WDG ARCHITECTURE

1025 CONNECTICUT AVE., NW, SUITE 300

WASHINGTON, DC 20036

BOB KEANE

PH: (202) 857-8300

MIDWESTERN CONSULTING

Civil, Environmental and Transportation Engineers Planners, Surveyors Landscape Architects

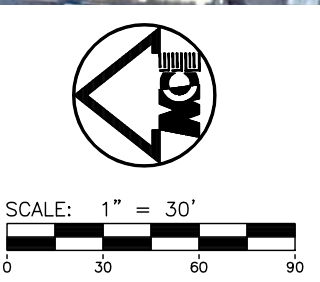
3815 Plaza Drive Ann Arbor, Michigan 48108

Phone: 734.995.0200

Fax 734.995.0599

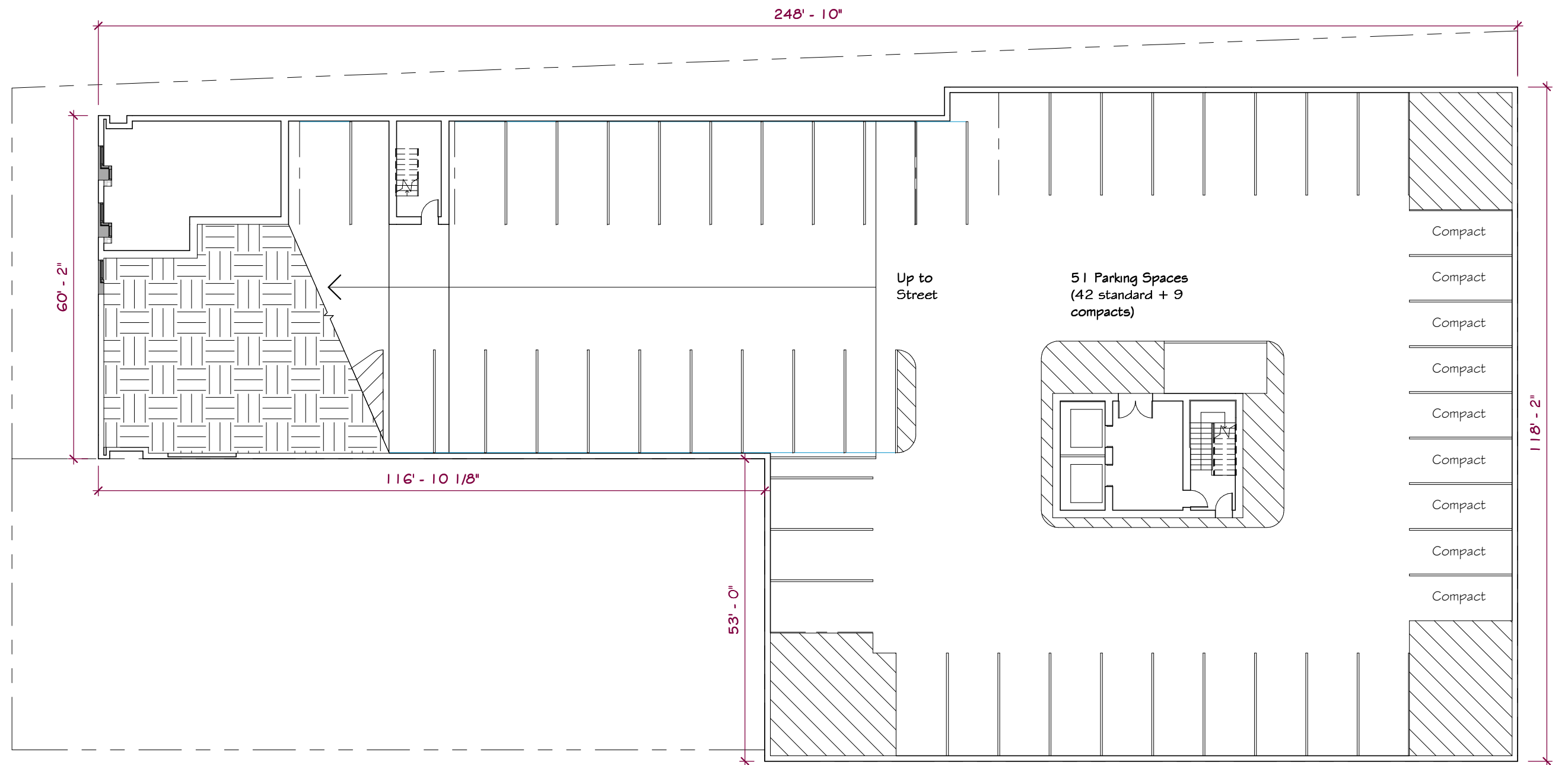






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<b>THE VARSITY AT ANN ARBOR</b>			DESIGN REVIEW BOARD SET			OVERLAY PLAN		
<b>MIDWESTERN CONSULTING</b>			CLIENT WOG ARCHITECTURE 1025 CONNECTICUT AVE., NW, SUITE 300 WASHINGTON, DC 20036 BOB KEANE PH: (202) 857-8300			Civil, Environmental and Transportation Engineers Planners, Surveyors Landscape Architects 3815 Plaza Drive Ann Arbor, Michigan 48108 Phone: 734.963.0200 Fax: 734.963.0699		





① Level B1 Floor Plan  
Scale: 1" = 20'-0"

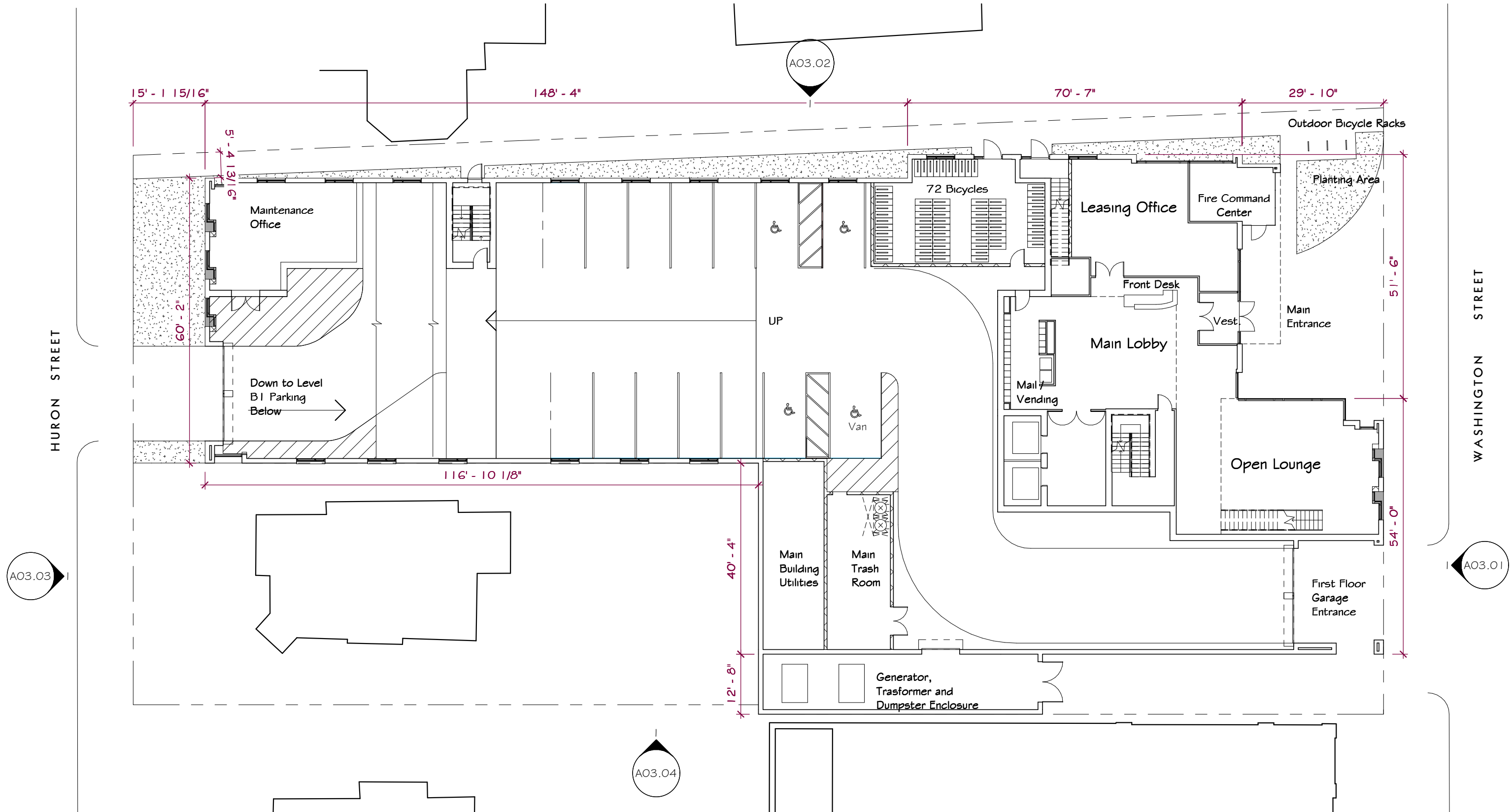


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Ann Arbor, Michigan

**A02.01**  
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1 1st Floor Plan  
Scale: 1" = 20'-0"

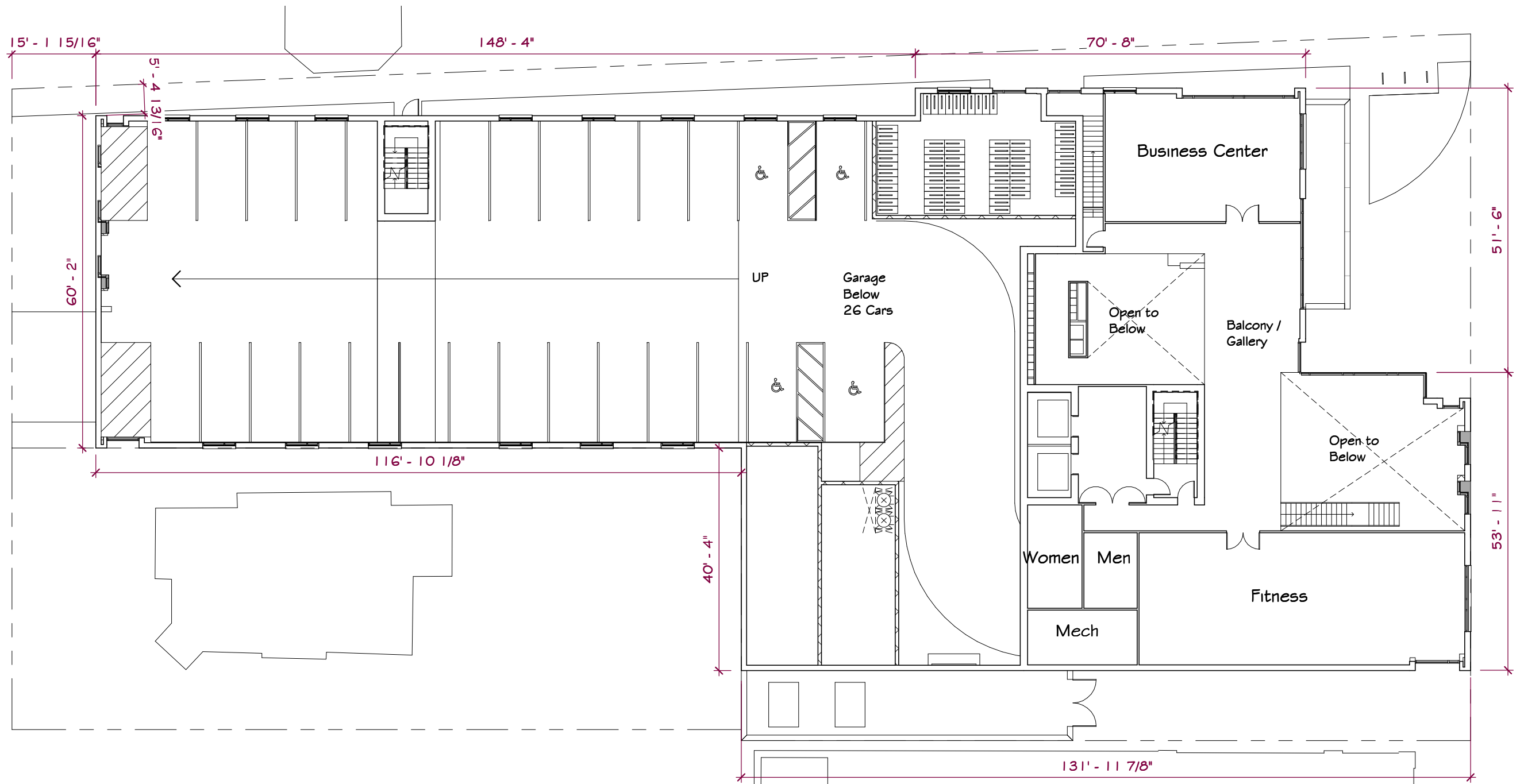


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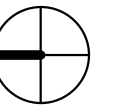
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1 2nd Floor Plan  
Scale: 1" = 20'-0"



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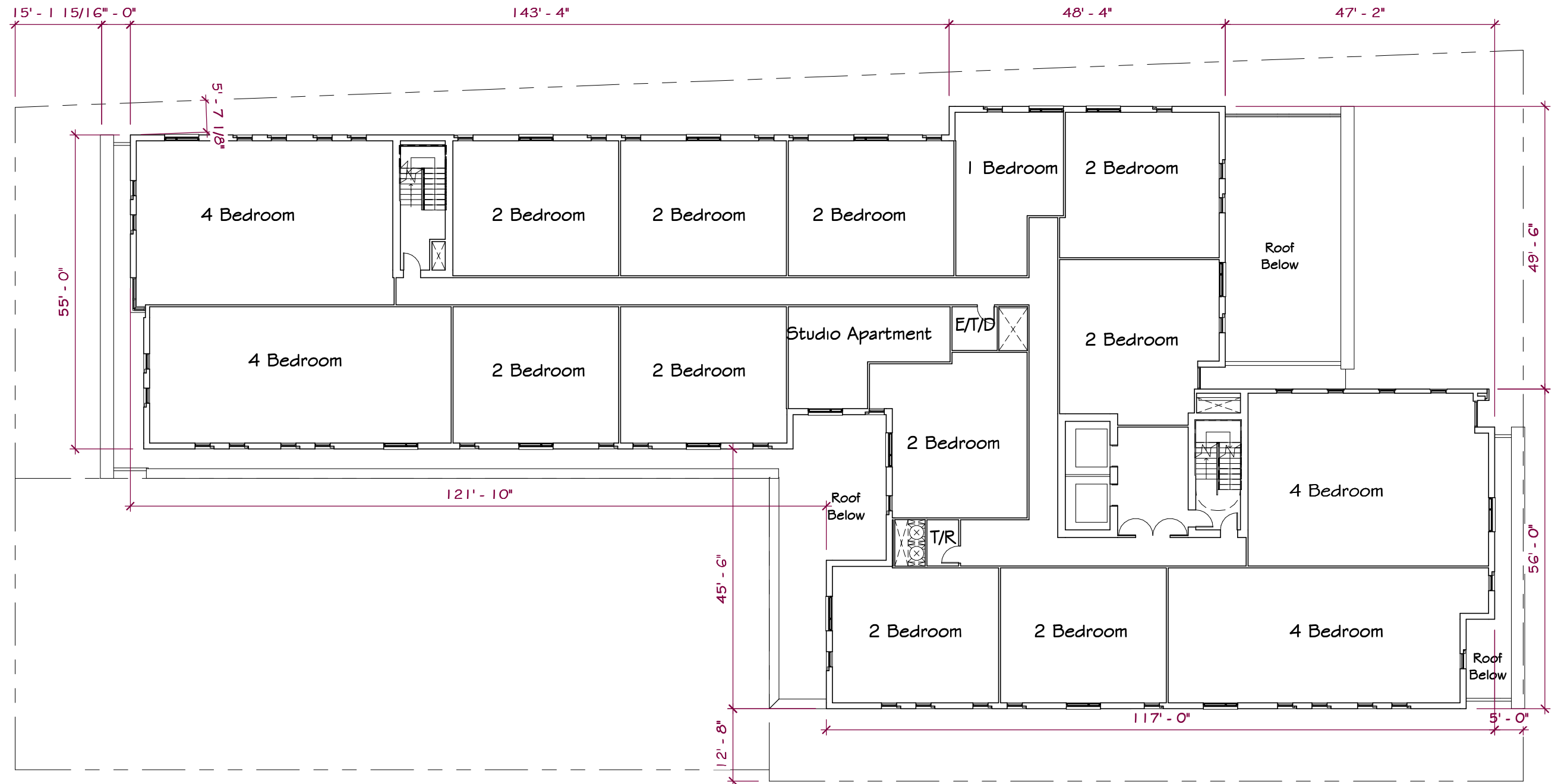
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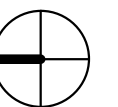
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① 3rd to 12th Typical Floor Plan  
Scale: 1" = 20'-0"



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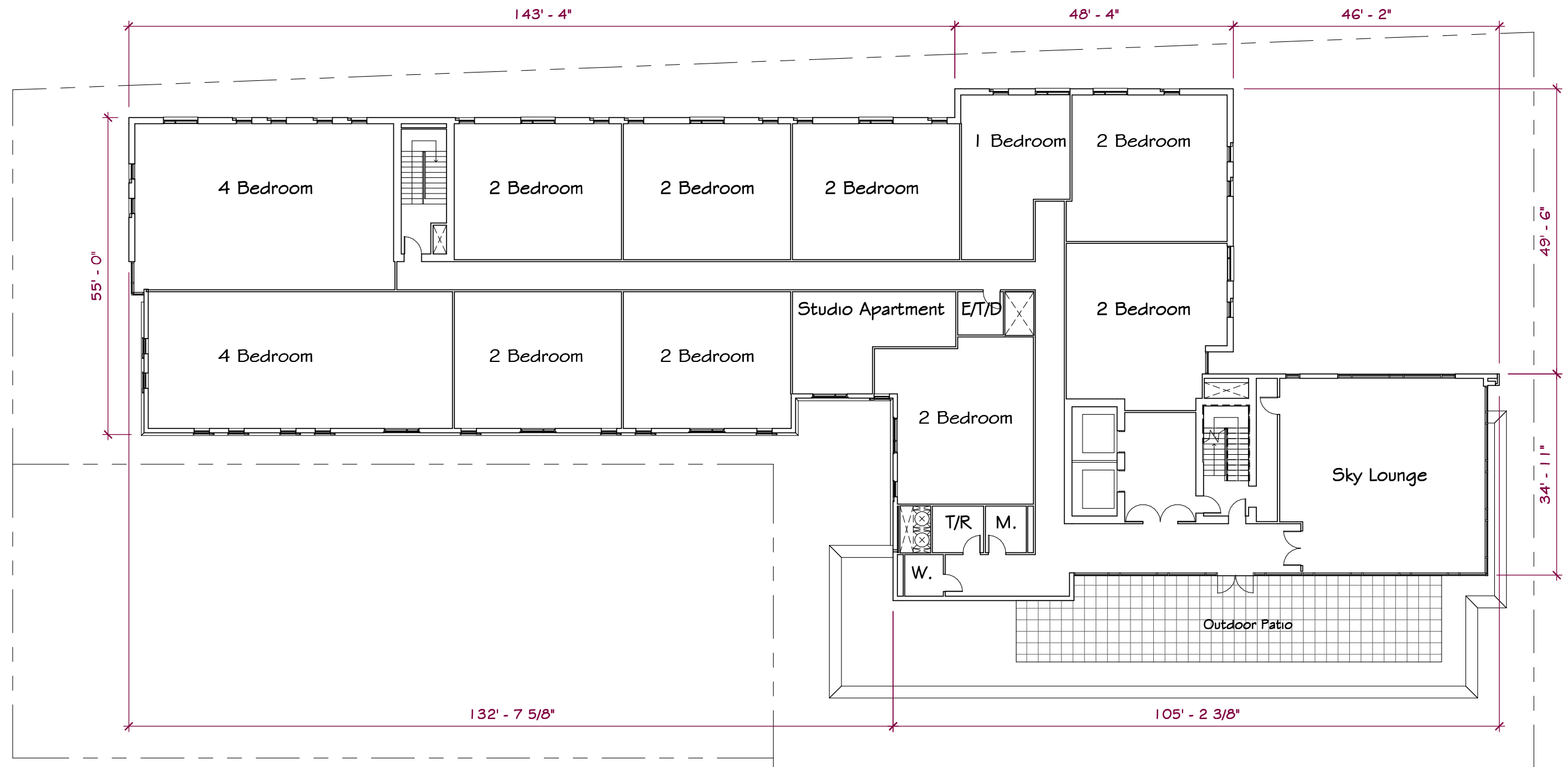
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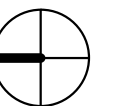
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1 13th Floor Plan  
Scale: 1" = 20'-0"



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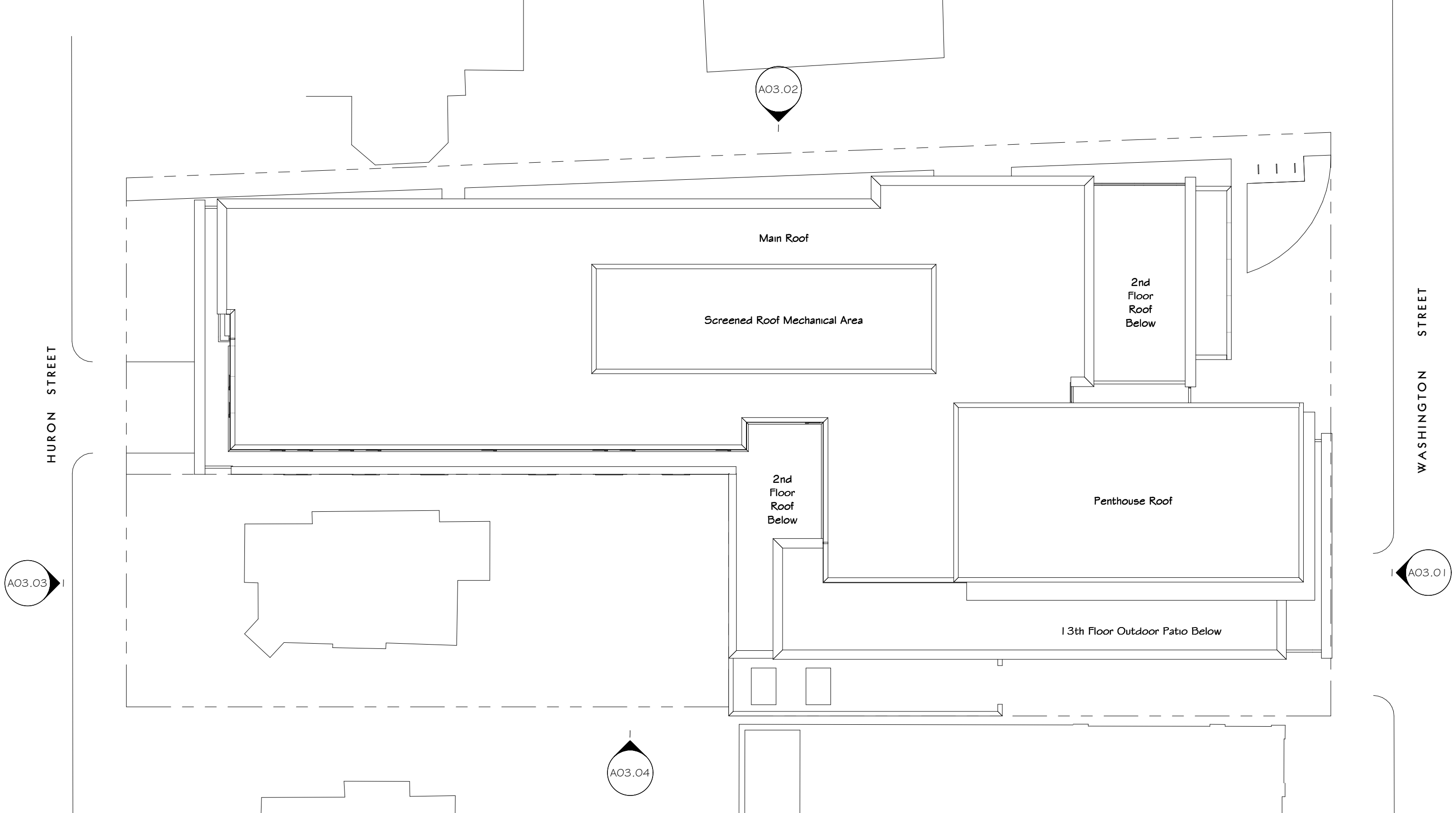
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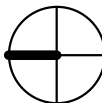
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1 Roof Plan  
Scale: 1" = 20'-0"

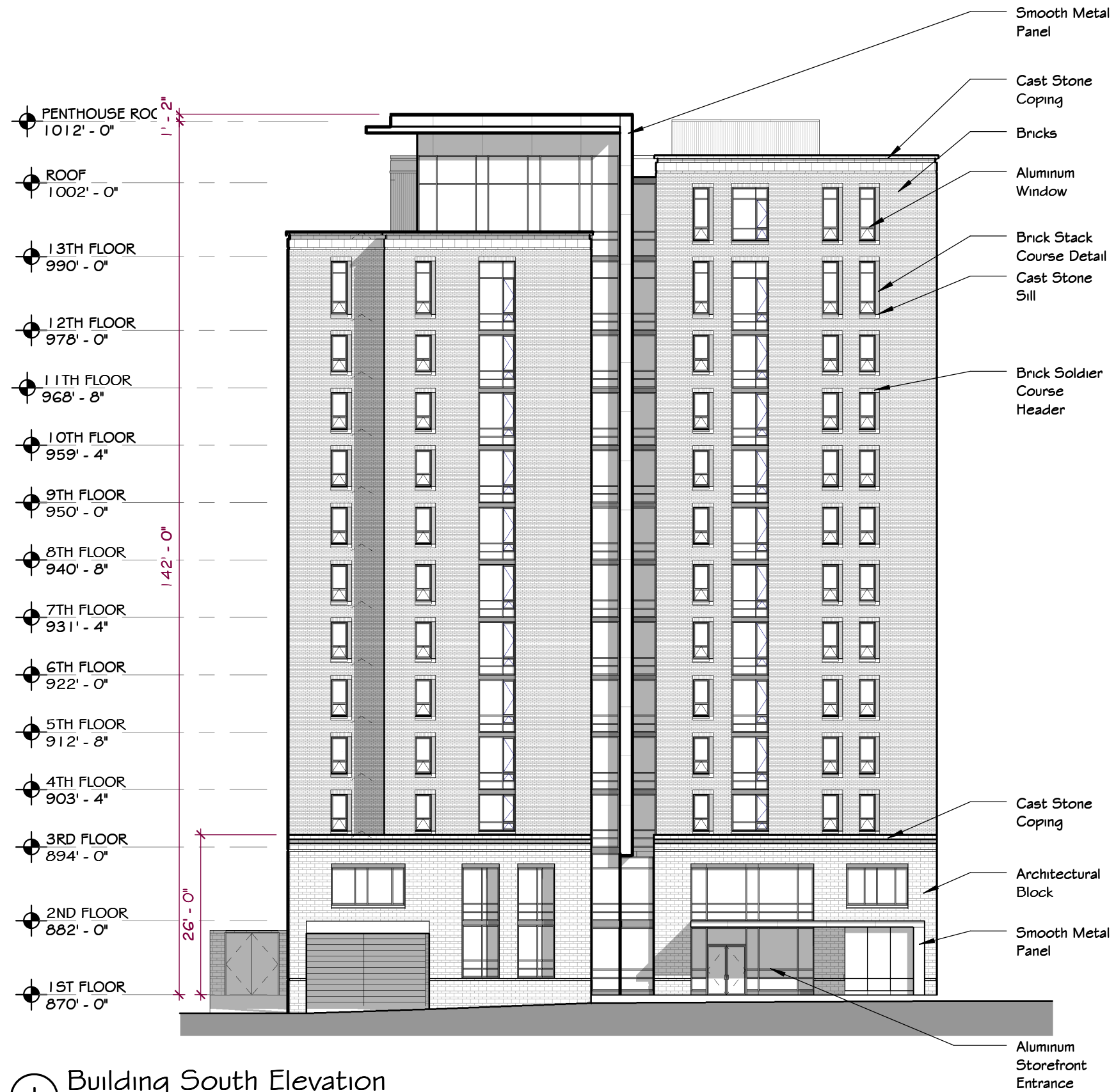


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1 Building South Elevation  
 Scale: 1" = 20'-0"  
 Ref. Drawing: 1/A02.02



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① Building East Elevation  
 Scale: 1" = 20'-0"  
 Ref. Drawing: 1/A02.02

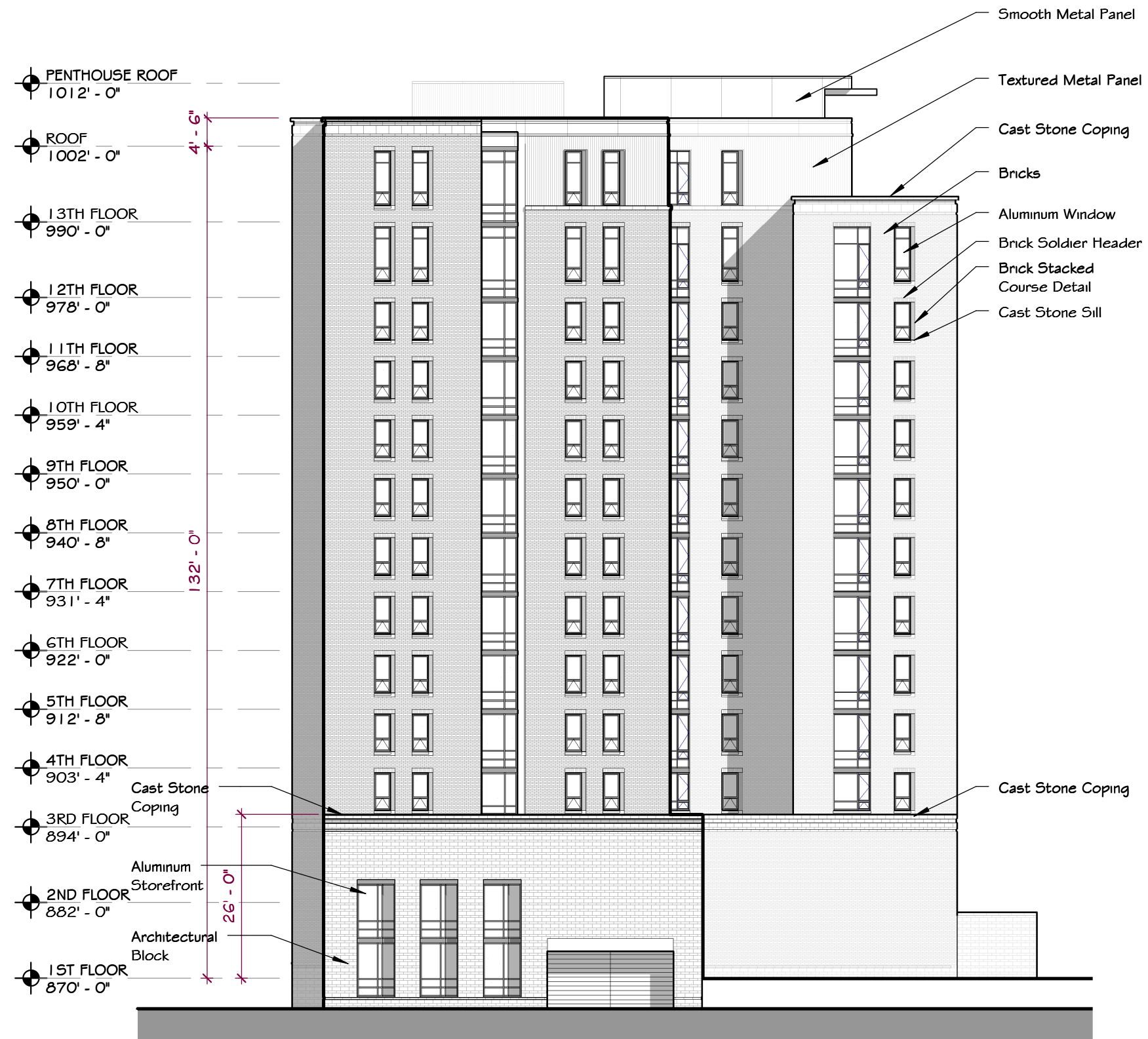


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1 Building North Elevation  
Scale: 1" = 20'-0"  
Ref. Drawing: 1/A02.02



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**A03.03**  
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1 Building West Elevation  
 Scale: 1" = 20'-0"  
 Ref. Drawing: 1/ A02.01



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3. Perspective from Washington Street



2. Perspective from Huron Street



1. Aerial View from Southeast

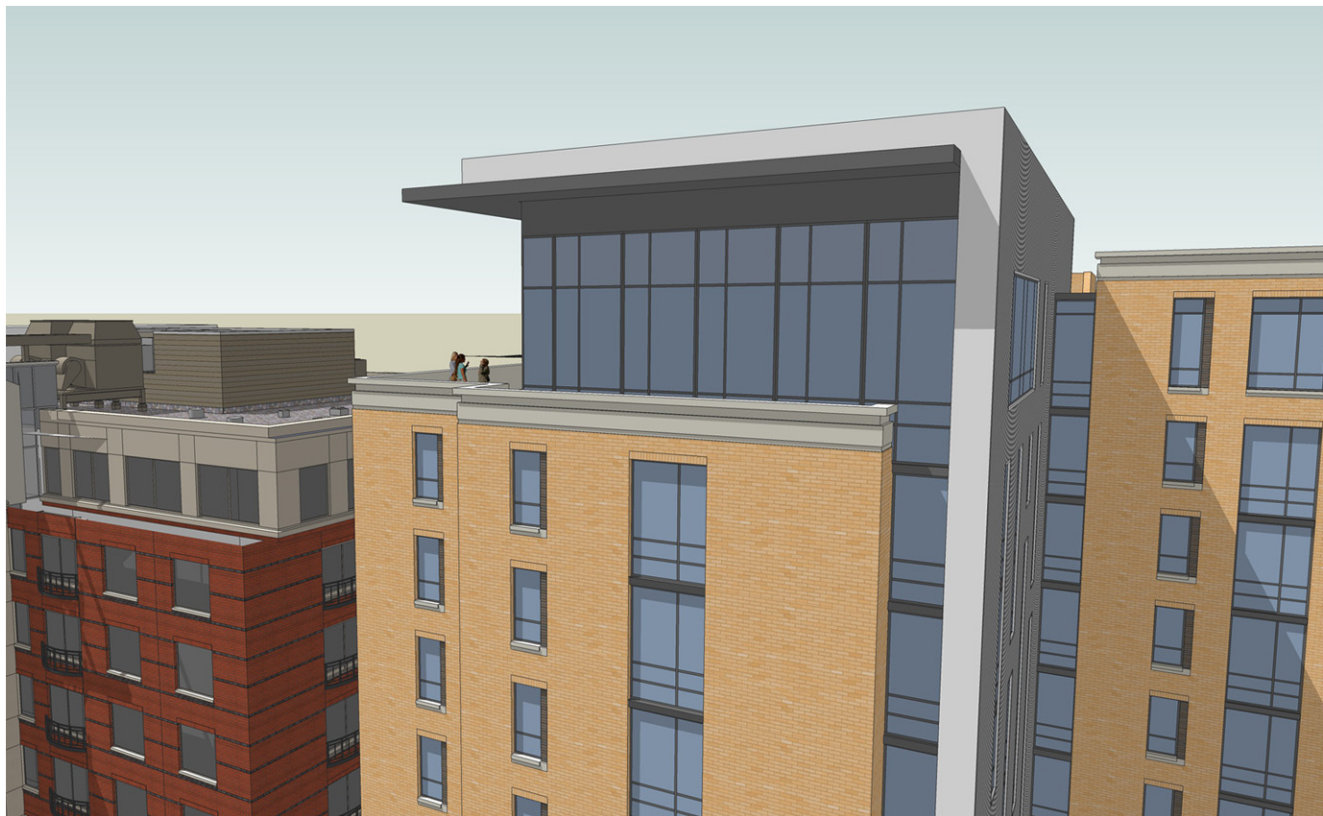


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3. Perspective of Sky Lounge facing Washington Street



2. Perspective from Huron Street of Pedestrian Walkway



1. Perspective from Washington Street of Main Entrance Plaza



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