



MEMORANDUM

TO: City Planning Commission—Committee of the Whole
FROM: [Janelle Widmeier](#), Senior City Planner, (612) 673-3156
DATE: June 12, 2014
SUBJECT: Mill City Quarter Phase II, 428 2nd Street South

The subject property is located at 428 2nd Street South. It is zoned C3A Community Activity Center District, DH Downtown Height Overlay District, MR Mississippi River Critical Area Overlay District and DP Downtown Parking Overlay District. It is also located in the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth* identifies mixed use as the appropriate future land use. The site is located in the Mill District Activity Center and the Downtown Growth Center. It also falls within the boundaries of the *Update to the Historic Mills District Master Plan*, where mixed use development and a plaza in the rail spur “swoop” area is called for on the subject site.

The proposal is for a new 5-story, assisted living facility with a total of 149 units. This project is part of a two phase development that also includes parking lot, pedestrian and bicycle improvements to the parcel separating the two developments (aka a woonerf). The first phase would consist of a new 6-story, mixed use building with ground floor retail and up to 150 dwelling units on the property located at 300 2nd Street South. Certificate of appropriateness applications for the first phase and the woonerf were approved at the [November 19, 2013, meeting](#) of the Heritage Preservation Commission. At this time, the land use applications for the Phase I project and the woonerf have not been submitted. Initial concept plans were initially reviewed for both projects at a joint Committee of the Whole meeting at the end of 2012. Changes to the design that have been made since then include: reducing the height of the building from 6 to 5 stories, adding more recesses and projections, shifting the main entrance further north, and adding first floor walk-outs.

The following required applications have been identified:

- Conditional use permit to allow an assisted living facility.
- Site plan review.
- Plaza administrative review.

The applicant and CPED are seeking feedback from the Planning Commission on the current Phase II project’s design and to discuss any issues before going to a public hearing. This input will be used by the applicant as they prepare formal applications.

Mill City Quarter – Phase 2

Project Overview

The project site for the Mill City Quarter development is bounded by 2nd Street to the south, 3rd Avenue to the west, 5th Avenue to the east and the River West high-rise complex and Mill Place building to the north. The site is currently occupied by a large surface parking lot. The proposed project is an infill, dense urban development that will include mostly residential units, plus a modest amount of commercial/retail space. This use is consistent with the C3A zoning of the site and with the adjacent residential and retail uses. It will be a transit-oriented mixed-use development that will occur in two phases and will greatly enhance the connectivity from the Mill District neighborhood to the Mississippi River.

Third-Party owner Mill Place, Inc. owns the rail spur “swoop” which divides the two city parcels along a SE to NW axis, leading from Second Street to the riverfront. Mill Place ownership has been actively engaged in the four year project planning and the Development Team has reached a Memorandum of Understanding with Mill Place that guides the development of the project to permit a unique pedestrian/bike/river connection through collaboration and easements. Cross easements between Mill Quarter and Mill Place’s land permit creation of a Dutch ‘Woonerf’ where bikes/cars pedestrians and public spaces all co-exist, and speeds are reduced for cars. Shared parking is a consideration for Mill Place.

Phase 2 of the development will consist of a five-story building that will include 104 independent living housing units for seniors and 45 memory care units for senior residents needing assistance. This will add a desirable mixture of housing choices that are currently needed and underrepresented in this neighborhood. Approximately 179 parking stalls will be provided below and above ground for the development of Phase 2. Entry to the parking facility will be from the access drive on the north side of the property. Bicycle parking will be provided to meet a ratio of .5 bike spaces per dwelling unit.

The site design will include landscaped open spaces to foster gathering of people and to facilitate pedestrian traffic and enhance the pedestrian experience around the building and on adjacent properties and the public right-of-way.

Using historical site photos as inspiration, the design concept is based on the rails that once occupied the site, employing paving materials and potentially railroad artifacts to abstract the pattern of a rail yard. The woonerf concept will be a curbless environment, defining vehicular travel lanes via bollards and changes in paving surface type/color. Designed for very slow speeds, (<10 mph) similar to those typically found in parking lots, it allows the pedestrian to become the focus of the space and the vehicle is seen as the “visitor”.

The design is also intended to provide a much-needed and very direct physical connection between the greater downtown area and the Mississippi River. Together with Phase 1, this development will be a strong link between the future Water Works Park on West River Parkway and the Mill District Neighborhood along Second Street. The open space of this project will enhance recreational and cultural opportunities for residents of the neighborhood and visitors to the park, providing an important link in the City’s transportation network, joining the extensive off-street bike trails of the Parkway with multiple bus lines and nearby light rail transit.

A large landscaped plaza east of the “swoop” of the woonerf provides safe and inviting outdoor spaces for relaxing and socializing, for residents and visitors of the project as well as patrons at the small café space. Trees and native perennials and grasses line the woonerf, randomly spaced within a continuous band of pervious pavers. The band of pervious pavers will simultaneously provide natural irrigation for the plants while infiltrating stormwater and will allow for a subtle randomization of plantings that recalls the wild river banks nearby.

This project team is committed to demonstrating a number of best management practices (BMP) for stormwater management and Low-Impact Development (LID). Some of the concepts and techniques being proposed include rainwater harvesting, vegetated walls, pervious paving, pixilated parking, green

roofs and underground detention.

Site connections for the Phase 2 project units will focus on protected and flexible outdoor space. We envision exploring a three-season space that connects directly to the woonerf/river connection path. Both indoor and outdoor plants will be chosen to enhance the care of those residents in assisted living and memory care, as there are particular plants that can trigger memory and bring pleasure.

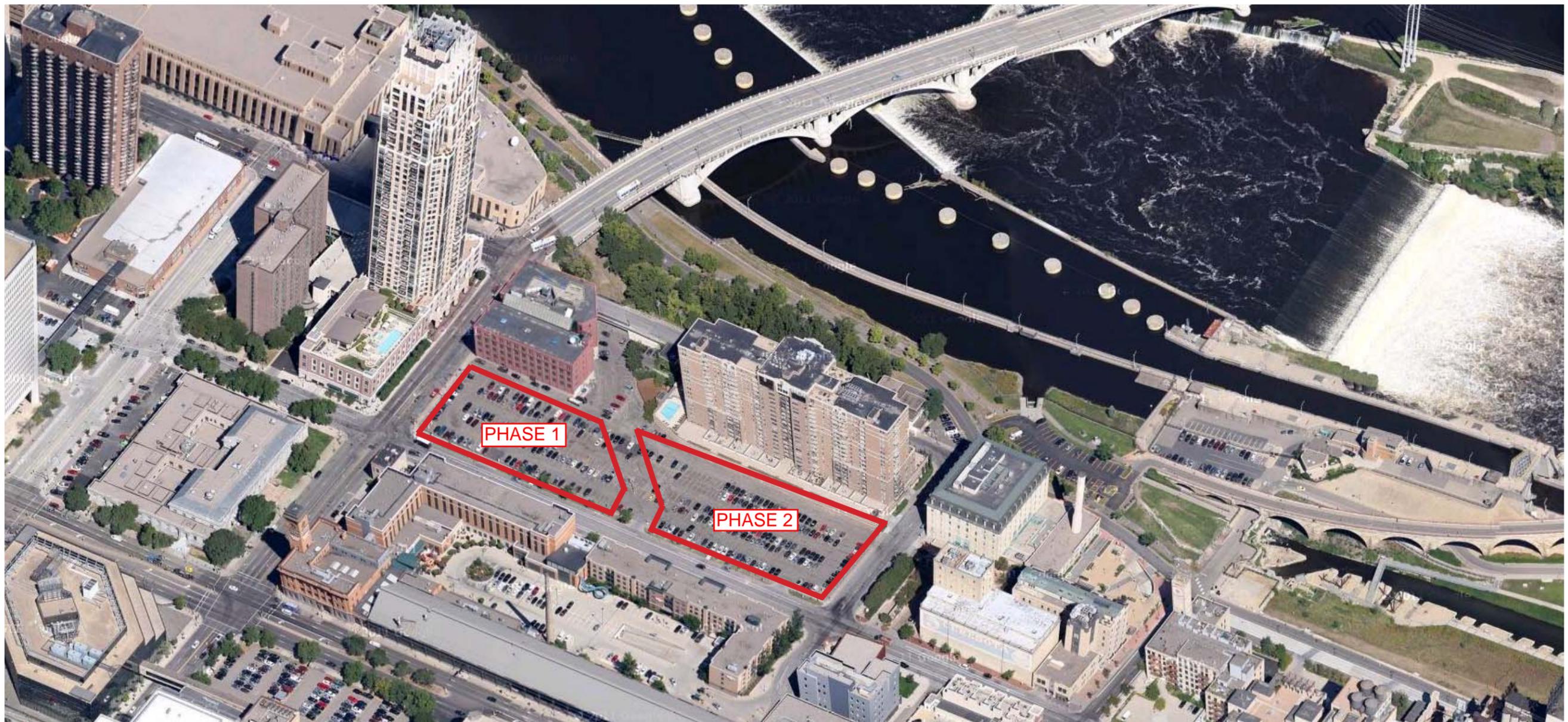
Individual units will have direct, walk-up access along 5th Avenue, providing additional life at street level and opportunities to create individual, micro-landscapes that serves as “front yards” for those units. Walk-up units facing 2nd Street will open onto a landscaped courtyard that will have direct access to the public right-of-way, adding additional visual interest to the neighborhood streetscape and providing additional eyes on the street.

The building placement addresses the primary street intersection, with minimal to no building setbacks along 5th Avenue and 2nd Street. On the north property line, the building setback ranges from 20-30 feet. Along the Woonerf edge, the building setback ranges from 0 to 30+ feet, with recessed courtyards provided for outdoor seating and recreation.

The building massing and material selection works to maintain the traditional building width and scale seen along 2nd Street within the West Side Milling Area. Although the overall building length is longer than traditionally seen, the massing and the materials break down the overall feel and shape of the building into something more traditional to the district. The variation from the rectilinear massing occurs at the recessed exterior courtyards and at the angular cut of the woonerf. The building features a taller first level with a strong masonry base creating a strong street presence. The architecture of the upper levels is organized by gridded facades of a single material, accented with windows and recessed balconies. The design and character of these facades creates a complementary architectural language to the rest of the district.

Primary building materials consist of brick, metal panels, cement board siding and glass. The materials are distributed in a way to break the scale of the building down to more traditional widths within the character area. The primary brick will be a buff color, recalling the historic tones of the district. Gray and charcoal brick will be used at level 1, reinforcing a strong base. The brick placement is focused to anchor the building edges and accentuate the primary facades along 5th Ave, 2nd Street, and the woonerf. Modern materials of gray metal panel and dark brown cement board are used as compliments to the masonry. The use of cement board is limited in scope and used as a secondary material. Glazing locations are an important piece of the design. The majority of the locations have a very traditional gridded layout seen throughout the district. This building incorporates a corner window detail into the larger gridded building masses to add interest and differentiate the building. This detail came out of numerous meetings with potential senior residents that expressed the desire for great views and large areas of glazing.

Details of projecting canopies and openings reflect a more ‘industrial’ character compatible to the district. Balconies along the primary street facades will be recessed so that the railing is in line with the elevation while projected balconies will be incorporated on the non-primary building walls. Through wall mechanical unit grills will be located in these recessed areas on the primary facades. The grills will be flush with the façade on non-primary elevations.



Aerial View - looking north



3rd Avenue frontage



2nd Street and 3rd Avenue



2nd Street and 5th Avenue



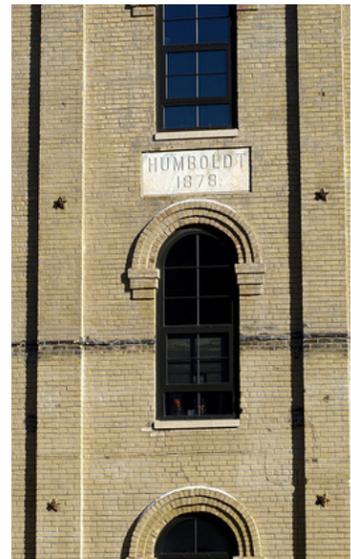
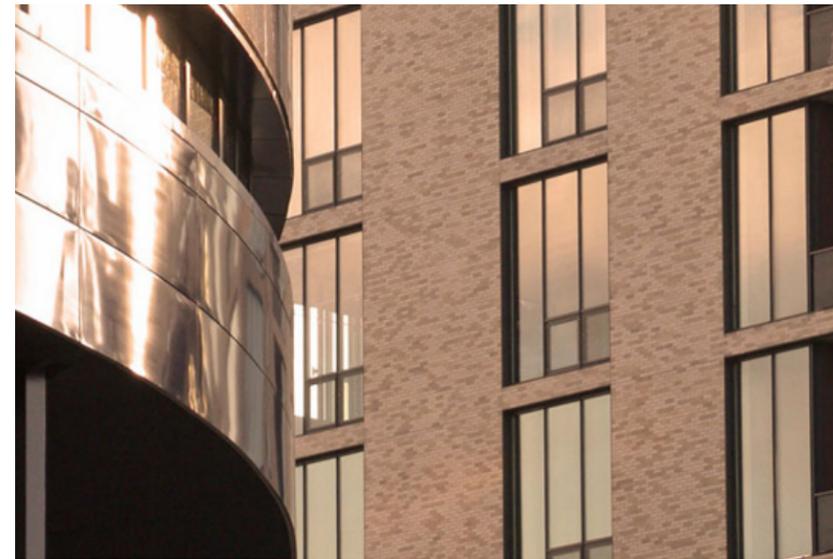
5th Avenue frontage

MILL CITY QUARTER

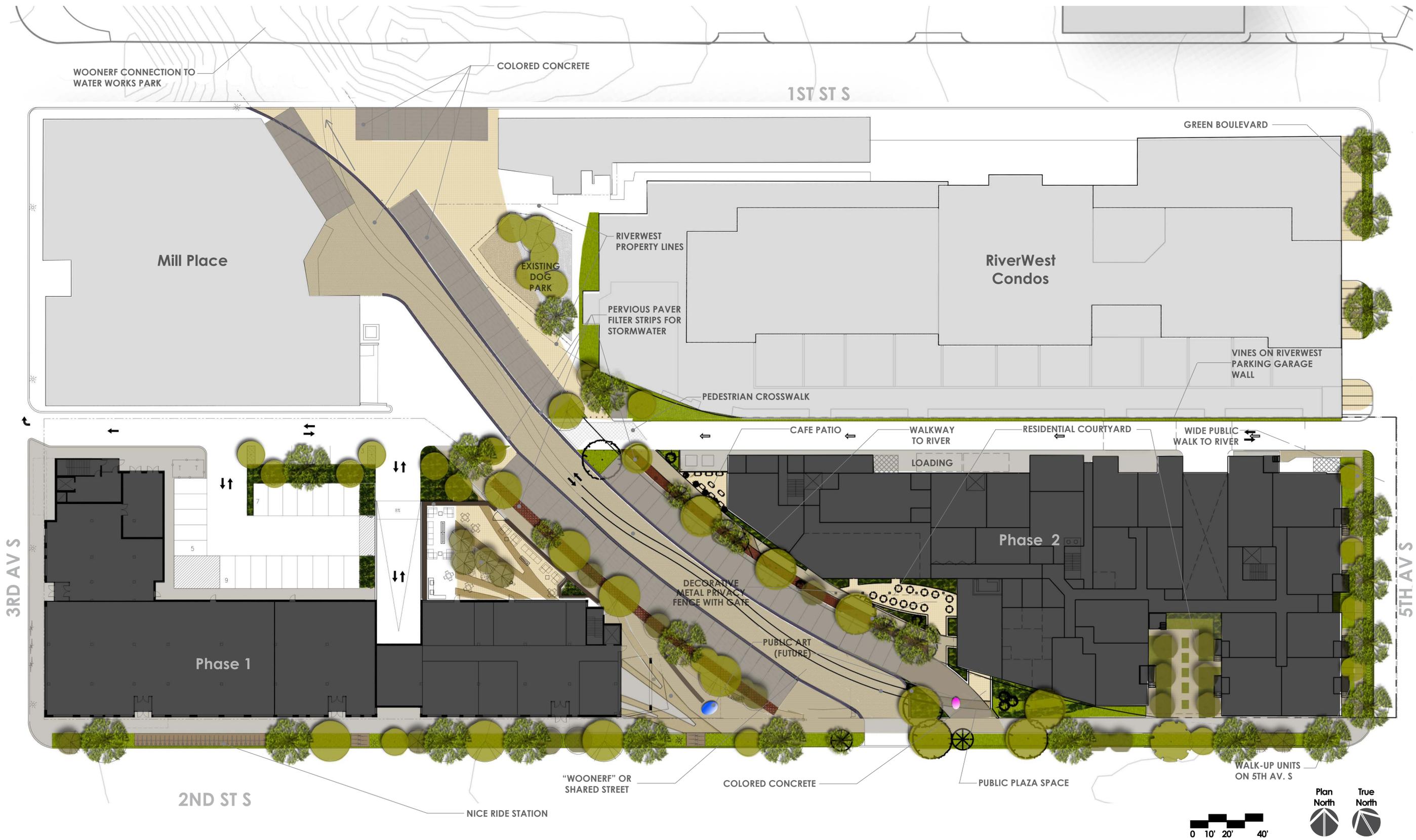


Site Context

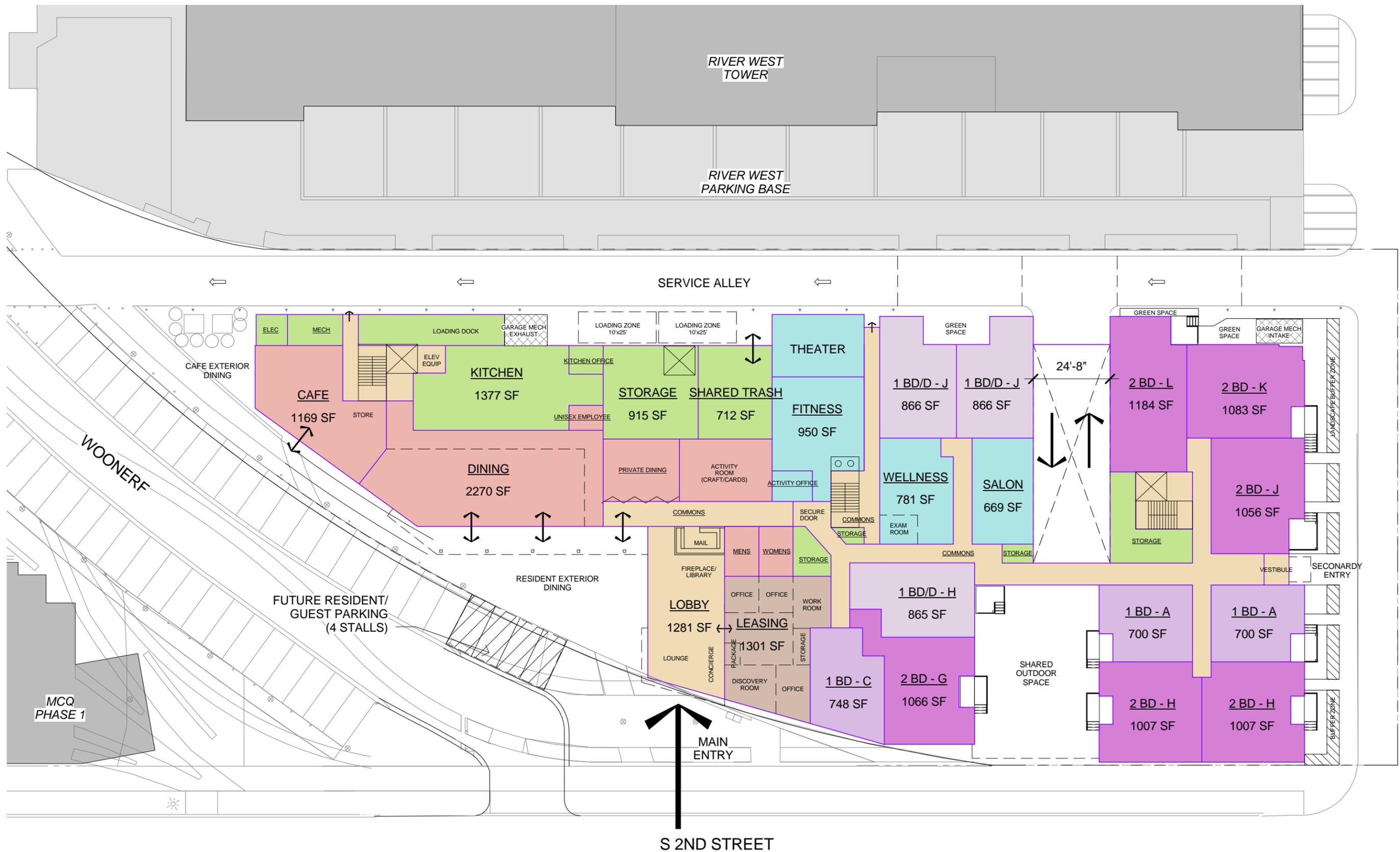
MILL CITY QUARTER



MILL CITY QUARTER



Master Plan

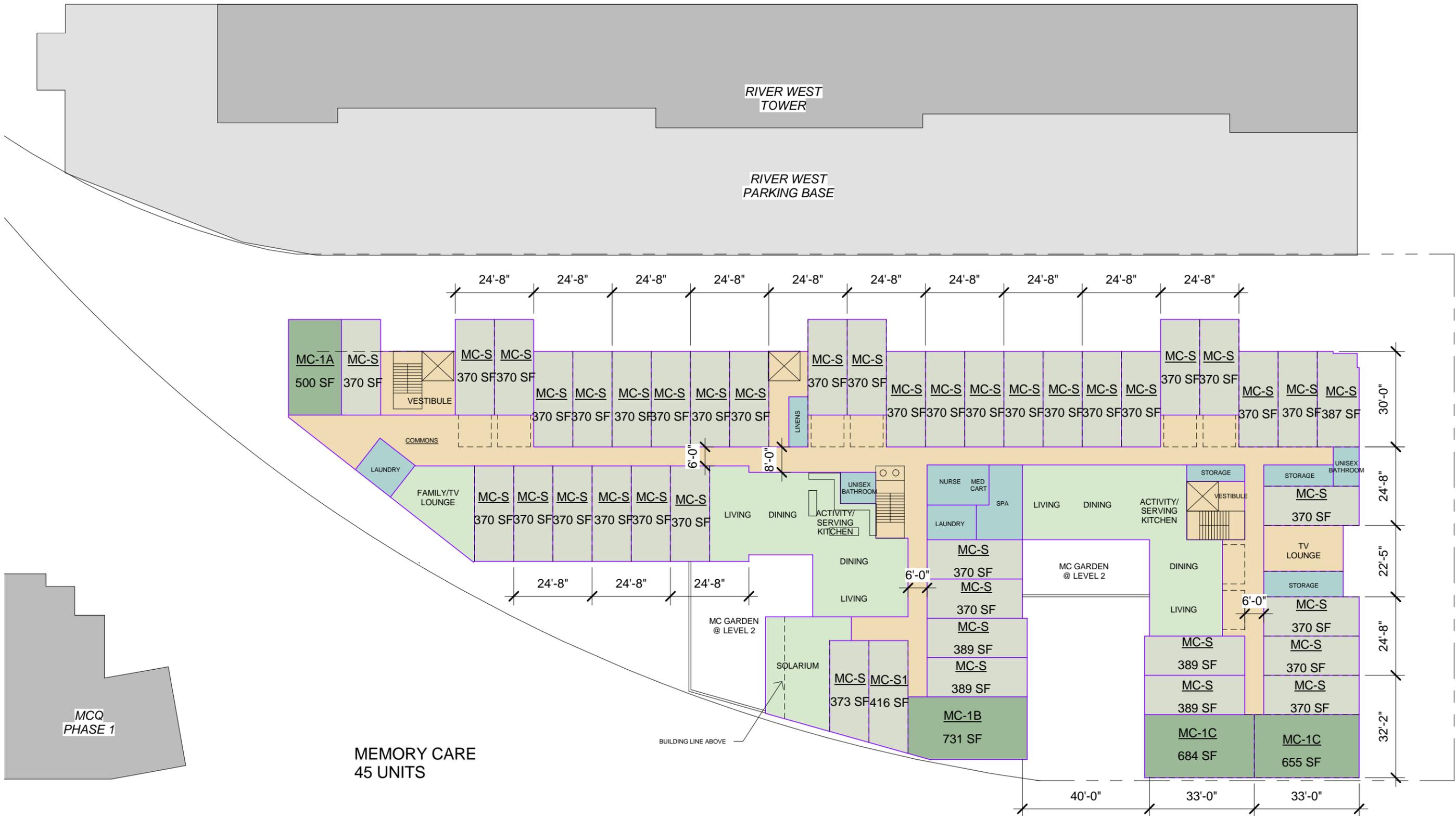


Mill City Quarter - Phase II

6/02/14

Scale 1" = 30'-0"

First Floor Plan



MEMORY CARE
45 UNITS

BUILDING LINE ABOVE

Mill City Quarter - Phase II

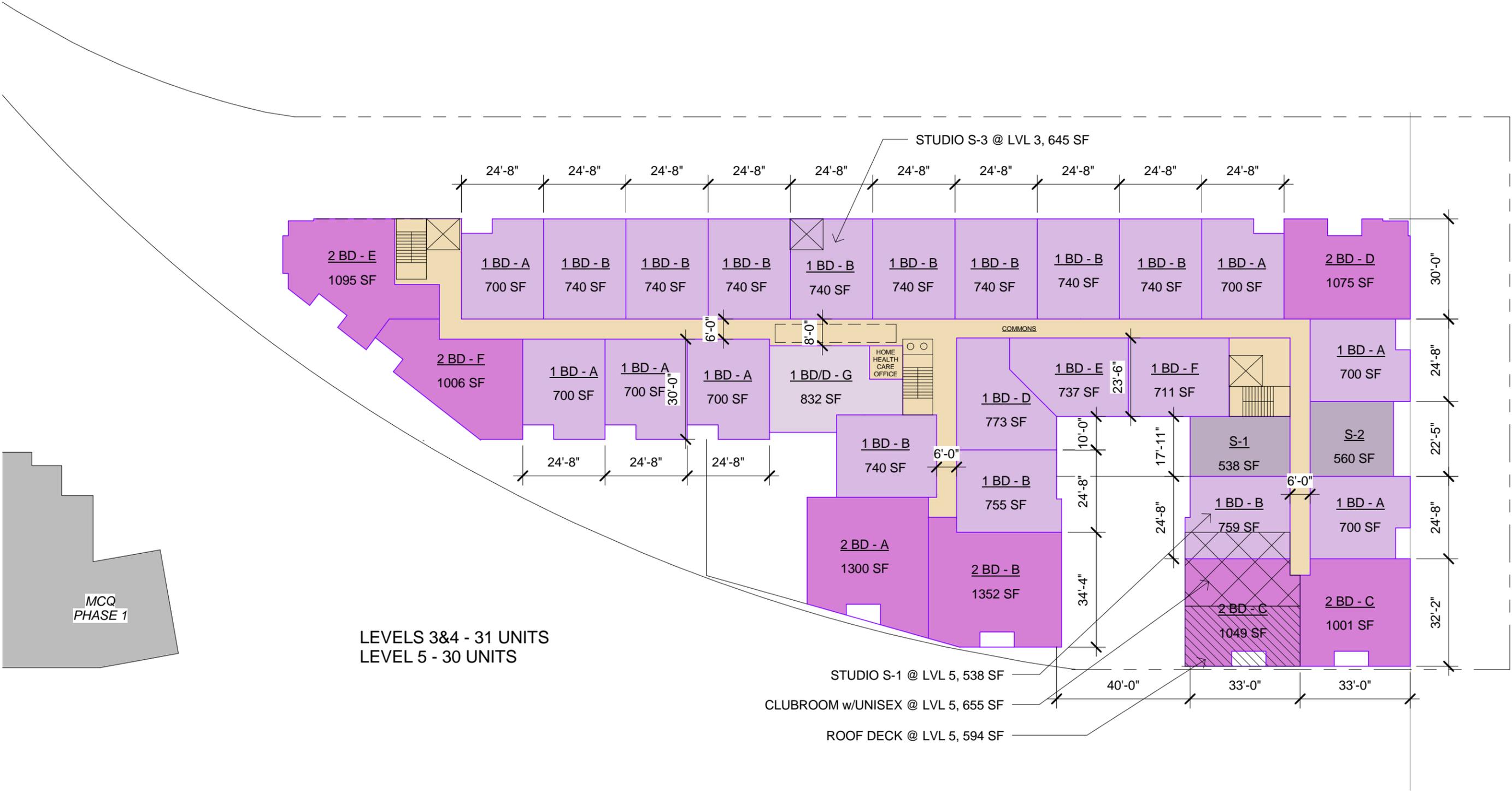
Second Floor Plan

6/02/14

Scale 1" = 30'-0"



RIVER WEST TOWER



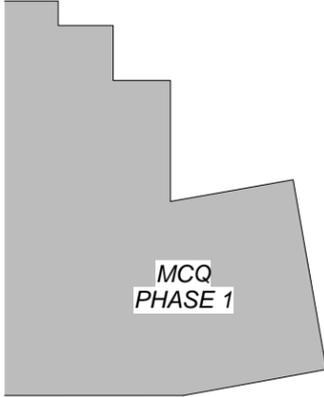
STUDIO S-3 @ LVL 3, 645 SF

LEVELS 3&4 - 31 UNITS
LEVEL 5 - 30 UNITS

STUDIO S-1 @ LVL 5, 538 SF

CLUBROOM w/UNISEX @ LVL 5, 655 SF

ROOF DECK @ LVL 5, 594 SF



MCQ
PHASE 1

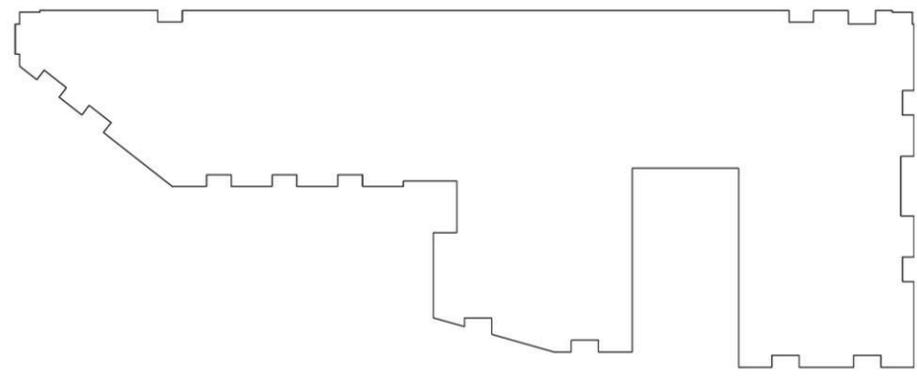
Mill City Quarter - Phase II

6/02/14

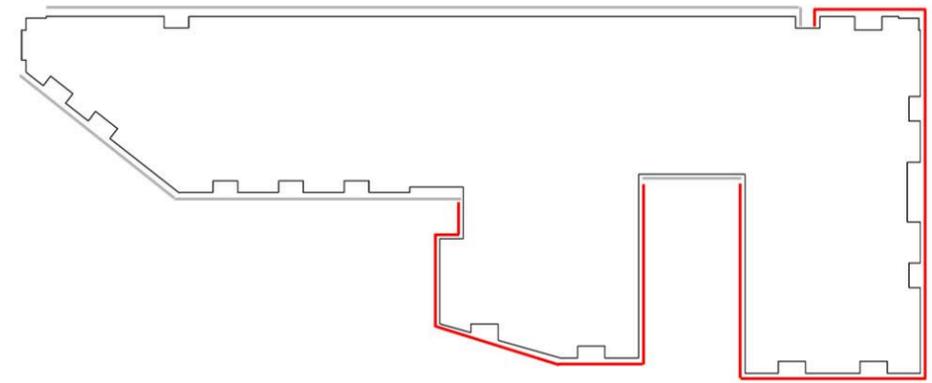
Scale 1" = 30'-0"

Third - Fifth Floor Plan

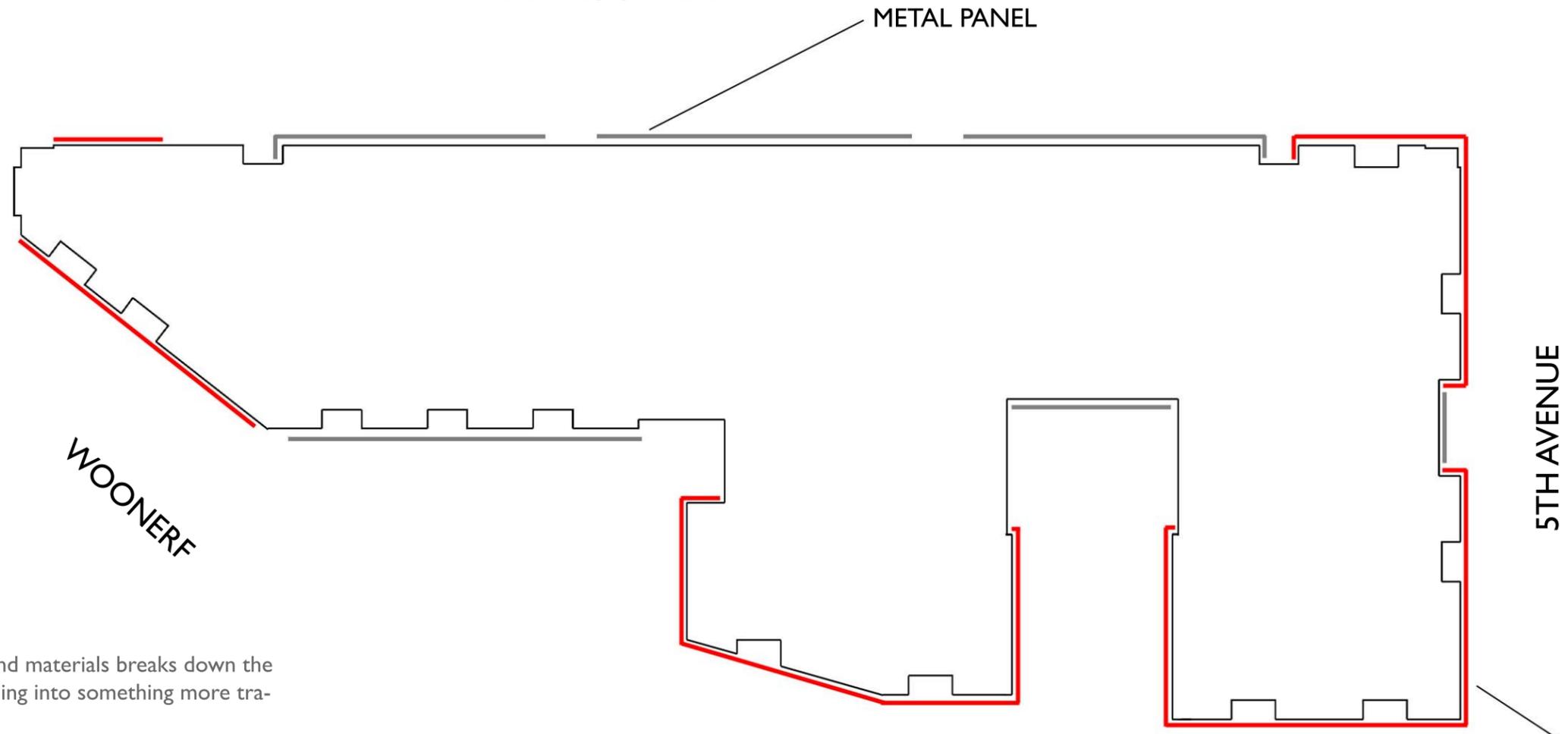




MAIN ROOF PLAN



INITIAL CONCEPT



2ND STREET

5TH AVENUE

BUFF BRICK

REFINED CONCEPT

Notes:

1. Massing of the building shape and materials breaks down the overall feel and shape of the building into something more traditional to the district.

2. Brick placement is focused to anchor the building edges and accentuate the primary facades along 5th Ave, 2nd Street, and the Woonerf.



1
A401
Rendered - South Elevation
3/32" = 1'-0"



2
A401
Rendered - North Elevation
3/32" = 1'-0"

ISSUANCE

PROJECT TITLE

Mill City Quarter -
Phase II

KEY PLAN NORTH ARROW

CERTIFICATION
I hereby certify that this plan, specification or report was prepared by me or under my direct supervision and that I am a duly Licensed Professional under the laws of the State of Minnesota.

License Number _____ Date _____

REVISION	DATE

DATE	6/02/14
DRAWN BY	Author
CHECKED BY	Checker
COMMISSION NO.	1940.01

SHEET TITLE

EXTERIOR
ELEVATIONS -
RENDERED

SHEET NUMBER

A401



2 Rendered - West Elevation
A402 3/32" = 1'-0"



1 Rendered - East Elevation
A402 3/32" = 1'-0"



4 Rendered - West MC Garden Elevation
A402 3/32" = 1'-0"



3 Rendered - East MC Garden Elevation
A402 3/32" = 1'-0"

ISSUANCE

PROJECT TITLE

Mill City Quarter -
Phase II

KEY PLAN NORTH ARROW

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this plan, specification or report was prepared by me or under my direct supervision and that I am a duly Licensed Professional under the laws of the State of Minnesota.

License Number Date

REVISION	DATE

DATE	6/02/14
DRAWN BY	Author
CHECKED BY	Checker
COMMISSION NO.	1940.01

SHEET TITLE

EXTERIOR
ELEVATIONS -
RENDERED

SHEET NUMBER

A402

SEE 1/A401 FOR MATERIAL NOTES





Mill City Quarter - Phase II

6/02/14

Scale

Perspective View SW



Mill City Quarter - Phase II

6/02/14

Scale

Perspective View NW





Mill City Quarter - Phase II

6/02/14

Scale

Perspective View NE



MARCH 20 - 9AM



JUNE 20 - 9AM



SEPT 20 - 9AM



DEC 20 - 9AM



MARCH 20 - NOON



JUNE 20 - NOON



SEPT 20 - NOON



DEC 20 - NOON



MARCH 20 - 5PM



JUNE 20 - 5PM



SEPT 20 - 5PM



DEC 20 - 5PM