



August 2, 2022

Matthew Kowalski  
Planning Services  
City of Ann Arbor  
301 E. Huron St.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Re: **Pre-Petition Conference**  
721 S. Forest Avenue  
WDG Project #: PWA2022025

Dear Commission:

WDG is requesting a PUD Pre-Petition Conference to discuss our concept design proposal for a new student housing project located at 721 S. Forest Avenue.

Applicant/Architect: WDG Architecture  
1025 Connecticut Avenue NW  
Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20036  
Attn: Robert C. Keane, AIA  
[bkeane@wdgarch.com](mailto:bkeane@wdgarch.com)  
202.857.8300

Owner: Subtext Acquisitions, LLC

Civil/Landscape: Midwestern Consulting  
Scott W. Betzoldt, PE, Principal

Site Address: 721 S. Forest Avenue

Existing Conditions: The existing site is currently occupied by a 5-story, 50 unit apartment building and 76 surface parking spaces. The 1.2 acre (52,300 sf) parcel is zoned R4C and is primarily impervious. It is located mid-block on the east side of S. Forest Avenue, between Hill and Willard Streets. The Forest Park Apartments border the north side of the property. Adjacent properties include fraternity houses to the east, west, and south. Refer to attached aerial plan.

Proposed Program: The proposed development consists of a 10-story + penthouse student housing building with lobby, amenity space, parking, and building services located on Level 1; residential on Levels 2-10; one level of parking below grade, accessed at the NE corner of the building; and a penthouse level including residential units, indoor amenity space, and a large outdoor

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patio. The 289,702 GSF building includes 631 beds and 87 structured parking spaces.

The property is accessed from S. Forest Avenue. There are 18 surface parking spaces, separated from the north side property line with a 16-ft landscaped buffer.

Design Goals:

The 721 S. Forest Avenue site is a natural extension of the higher density development along S. University Avenue. The building is oriented to respect the neighboring property to the north and its abundant treescape. The proposed building is approximately three stories shorter than Landmark Apartments (400 ft to the north) and is set back from the street approximately 50 ft, providing a transition to the neighborhood to the south. The base of the building has a 2-story massing that establishes a lower, more pedestrian scale street wall. The penthouse level is set back from S. Forest Avenue, maintaining a 10-story building massing from street level. Parking and loading access are internal to the site, allowing front in and front out traffic with a single curb cut. The project also has a relatively low parking ratio that aligns with Ann Arbor's parking and sustainability goals.

Density. The proposed density is consistent with the Master Plan goal of increasing density in areas where the context can best accept such an increase.

Affordable Housing. The project will make a donation to the City's affordable housing fund or provide an amount of affordable units consistent with City requirements, to be worked out through the process.

Sustainability. We are committed to providing the following sustainable design features:

- Green building certification acceptable to the City
- Green infrastructure and abundant landscaping to help reduce stormwater runoff
- E/V charging stations for residents
- Solar panels to help offset energy consumption
- Limited surface parking
- Significantly reduced parking per bed
- Shared mobility stations
- Class A bicycle parking and storage
- An all-electric building except back-up systems
- High quality, durable exterior building materials
- New finishes providing energy efficient mechanical systems and lighting, and water-saving plumbing fixtures



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Alignment with  
Master Plan:

Natural Systems (Goal C).

- Objective 1: Encourage the use of mass transit and non-motorized modes of transportation through land use design:
  - o Action Statement D: Encourage residential densities that can sustain bus transit
  - o Action Statement H: Consider requesting developers provide on-site and off-site bicycle and pedestrian amenities to mitigate traffic impacts
  - o Action Statement I: Modify City ordinances to allow electric and alternative fuel and recharge centers to be installed at appropriate locations

Land Use.

- The design guidelines for multiple story buildings emphasizes that construction multi-story buildings “minimizes imperviousness” on a site. Along those same lines, our proposal will take careful consideration to ensure that “landscaping, setbacks, building design and materials” will help minimize the impact of a taller building on this site.
- Goal C:
  - o Objective 1: Encourage affordable and accessible housing units to be constructed as part of new development projects

Central Area Land Use.

- Goal A:
  - o Objective 7: To protect and expand the supply of housing to meet the needs of a variety of individual lifestyles and incomes
- Goal B
  - o Objective 2: To promote compatible development of...underutilized or uninviting (sites), wherever this would help achieve the plan’s overall goals
  - o Objective 3: ...well designed multiple family residential development...particularly near campus and downtown

Thank you for your consideration of our proposal.

Sincerely,

Robert C. Keane, AIA  
Managing Principal  
WDG Architecture, PLLC

# Area Development Trends



Recent development trends, especially since 2015, have favored higher rise housing in the area because of its proximity to the U of M Campus and the downtown, and that it is in an area of multiple family homes.



## Alignment with the Master Plan

- This project supports a number of the Master Plan goals such as:
- Higher density housing near transit corridors and walkable to commercial areas
- New higher density development (should be) compatible in character and scale with present development (p. 60)
- Higher density development aligns with the Natural Systems chapter, including “encouraging residential densities that can sustain bus transit”
- Sustainable and pedestrian-oriented design aligns with the Action Statements that discuss providing on-site and off-site bicycle and pedestrian amenities as well as including electric recharge centers at appropriate locations
- The project will include affordable or attainable housing or a donation in lieu will be made to the City’s affordable housing fund which aligns with one of City’s priority goals and objectives
- This development will help “expand the supply of housing to meet the needs of a variety of individual lifestyles and incomes”

### CITY OF ANN ARBOR MASTER PLAN

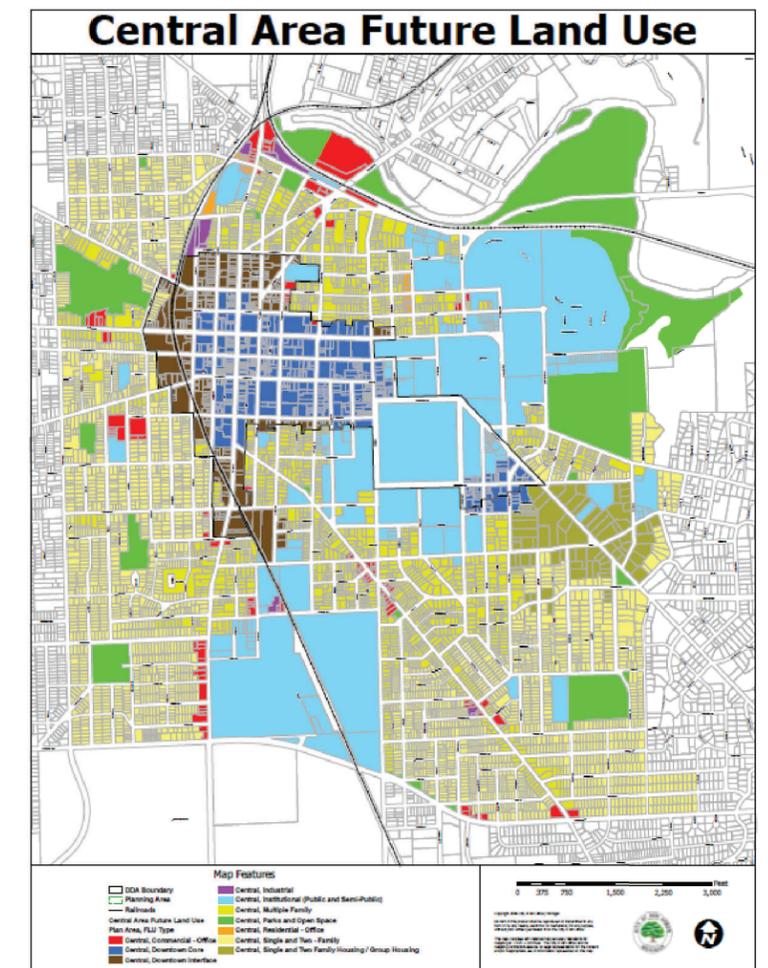


#### Land Use Element



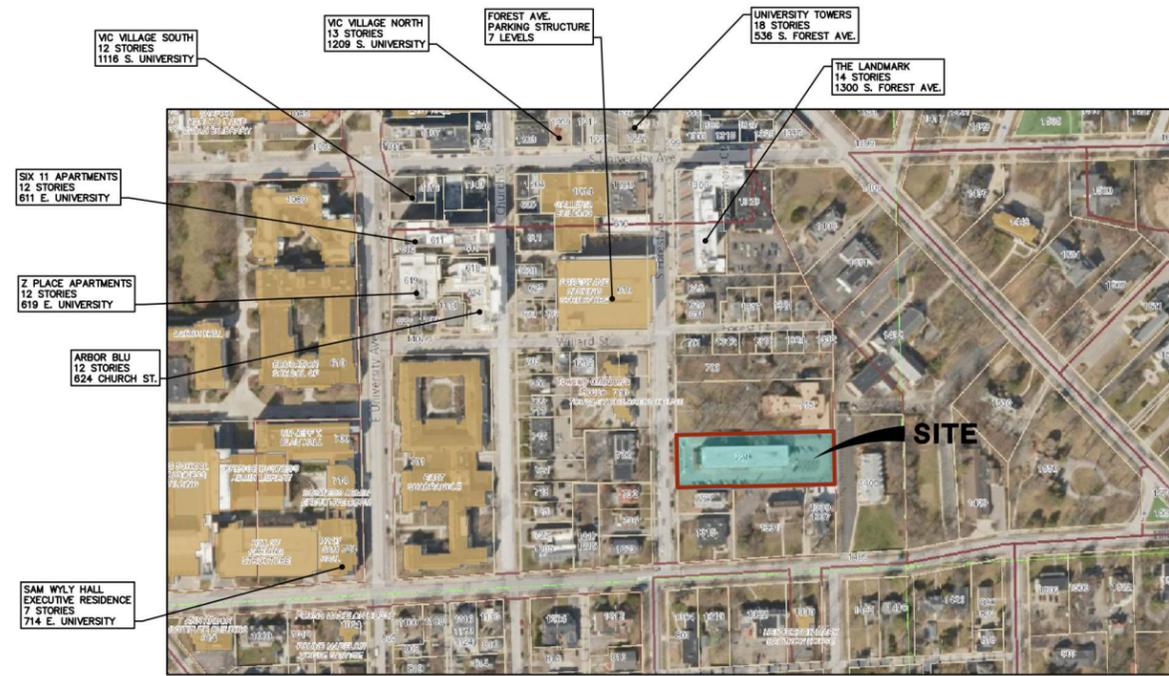
November 5, 2009

Prepared by the Ann Arbor City Planning and Development Services Unit and  
the City of Ann Arbor Planning Commission

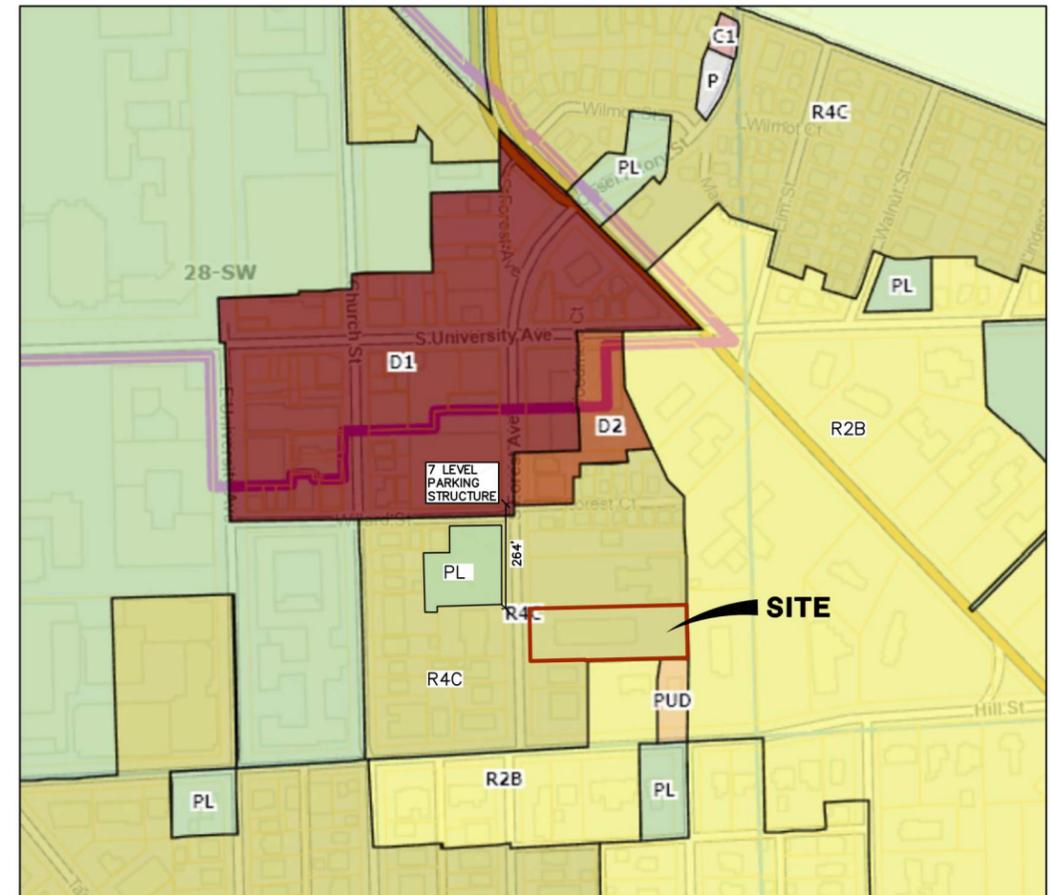


# Existing Site Photos





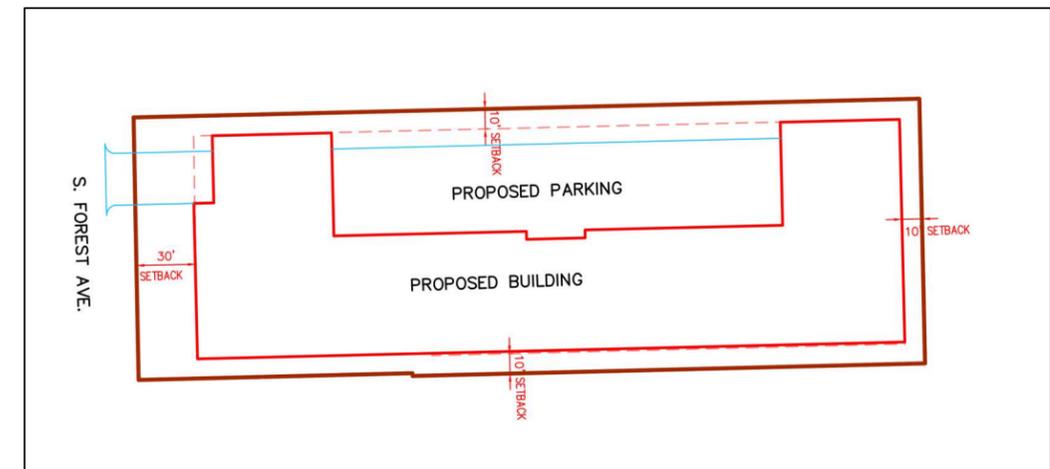
**SITE CONTEXT**  
SCALE 1"=200'



**CURRENT ZONING MAP**  
SCALE 1"=200'



**EXISTING SITE**  
SCALE 1"=40'



**PROPOSED SETBACKS**  
SCALE 1"=40'



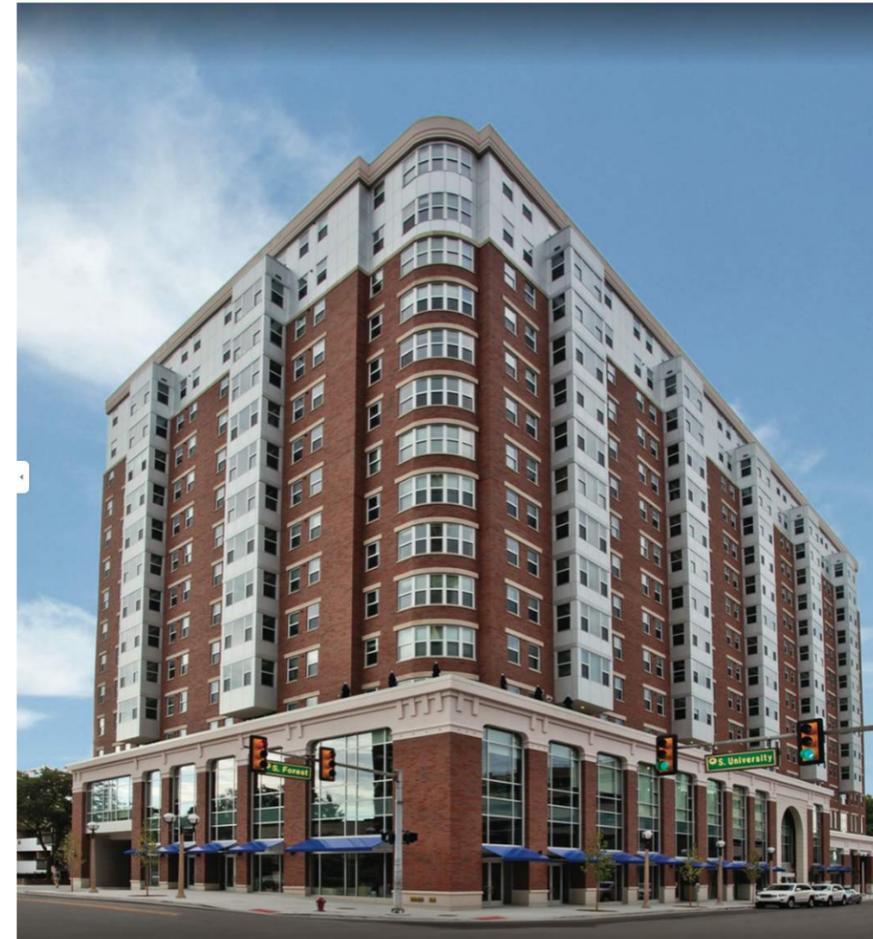




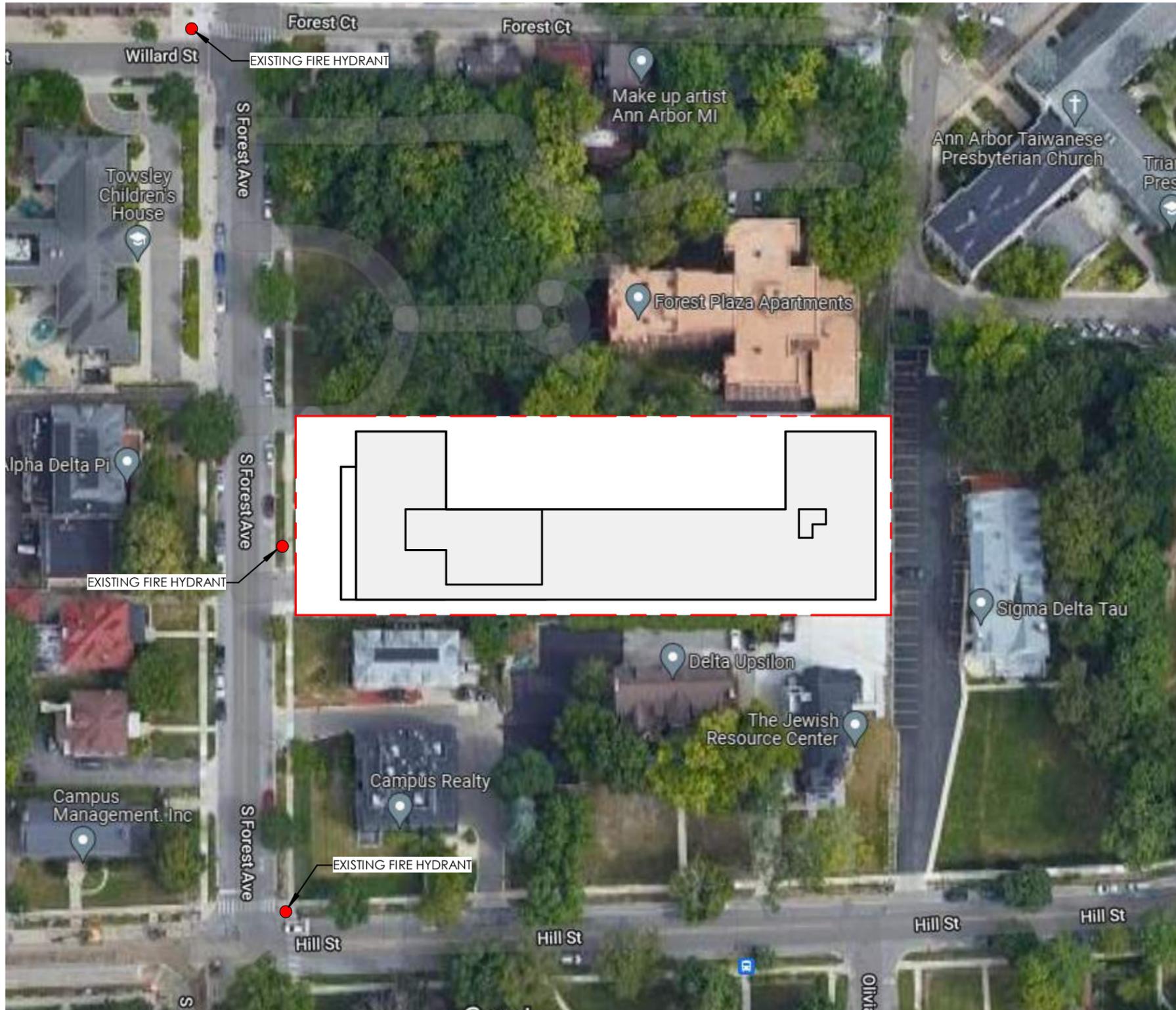
SIX 11 APARTMENTS  
12 STORIES  
611 E. UNIVERSITY



UNIVERSITY TOWERS  
18 STORIES  
536 S. FOREST AVE



THE LANDMARK  
14 STORIES  
1300 S. FOREST AVE



## RESIDENTIAL EFFICIENCY TOTAL

AREA TYPE	TOTAL AREA	%
RES UNITS	209,538 SF	82.6%
RES LOBBY, LEASING & AMENITY	1,746 SF	0.7%
RES LOBBY & AMENITY	8,471 SF	3.3%
RES CORE & CIRCULATION	33,842 SF	13.3%
<b>TOTAL RES GSF</b>	<b>253,597 SF</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### PARKING TOTALS:

LEVEL 1 (SURFACE):	15,907 SF	18 SPACES
LEVEL 1 (STRUCTURED):	9,380 SF	27 SPACES
LEVEL P1 (STRUCTURED):	20,494 SF	60 SPACES

**TOTAL: 72,765 SF 95 SPACES**

### RESIDENTIAL TOTALS:

**TOTAL RES GSF: 253,789 SF**  
(INCLUDES UNITS, CORE, CIRC., LEASING, AMENITY)

**TOTAL RES NSF: 209,538 SF**

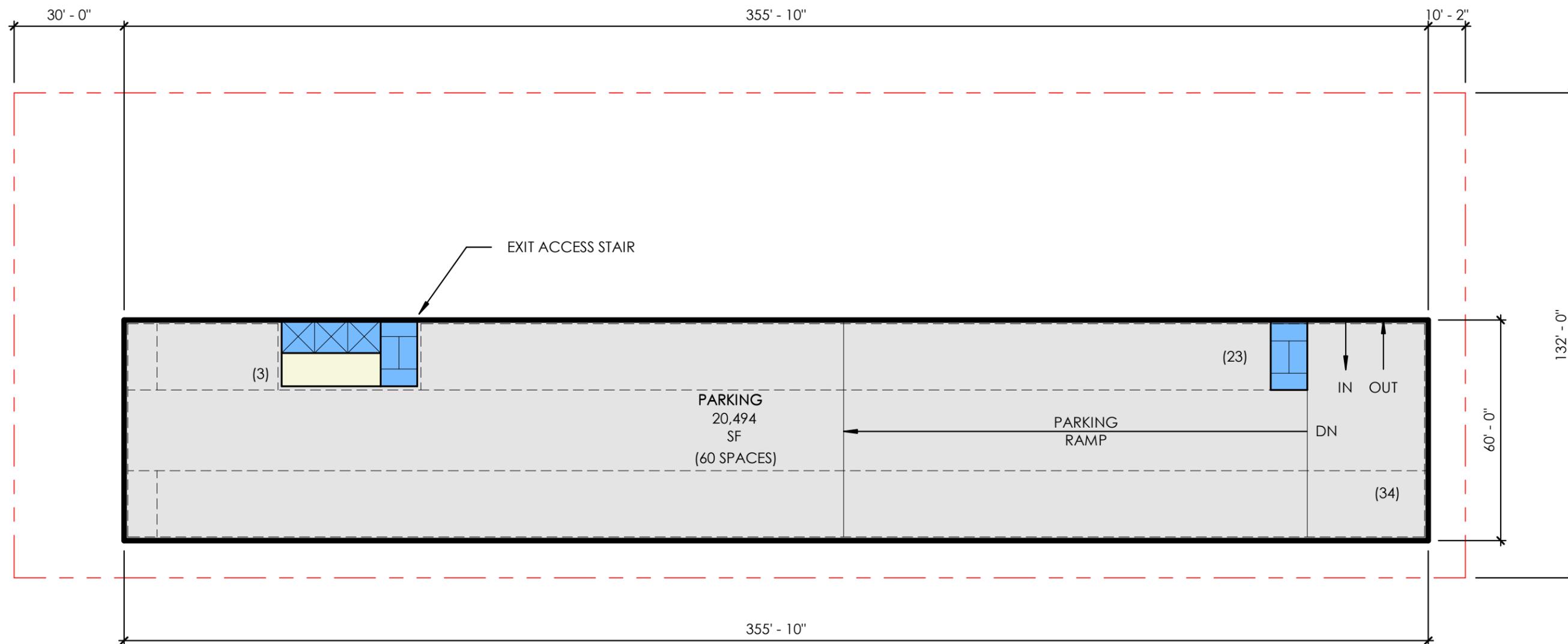
**ESTIMATED BED COUNT: 625 BEDS**  
(335 NSF/BED)



SCALE: 1" = 80'-0"

AERIAL PLAN

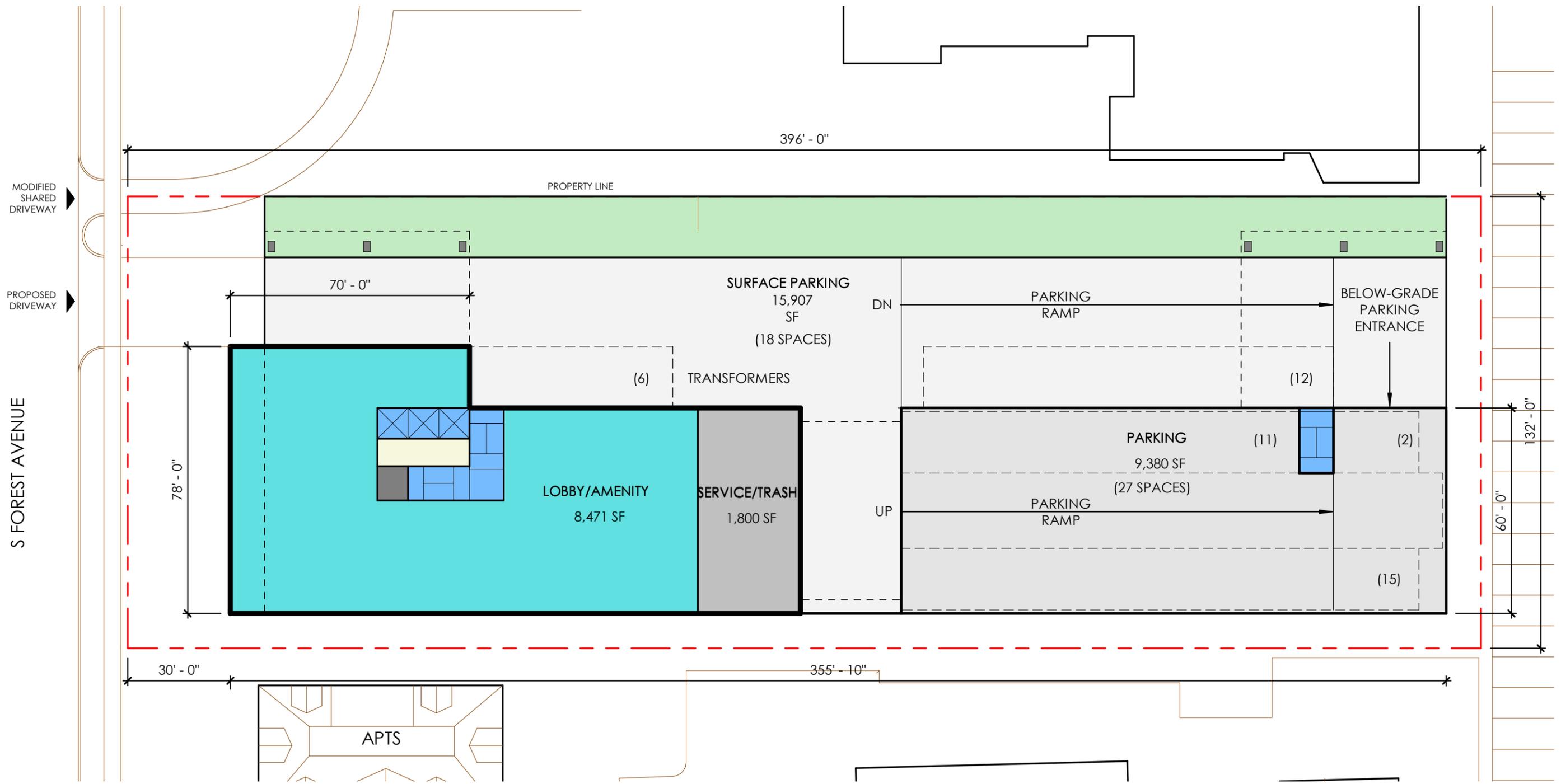
T.3



SCALE: 1" = 30'-0"

LEVEL P1 FLOOR PLAN

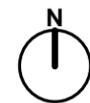
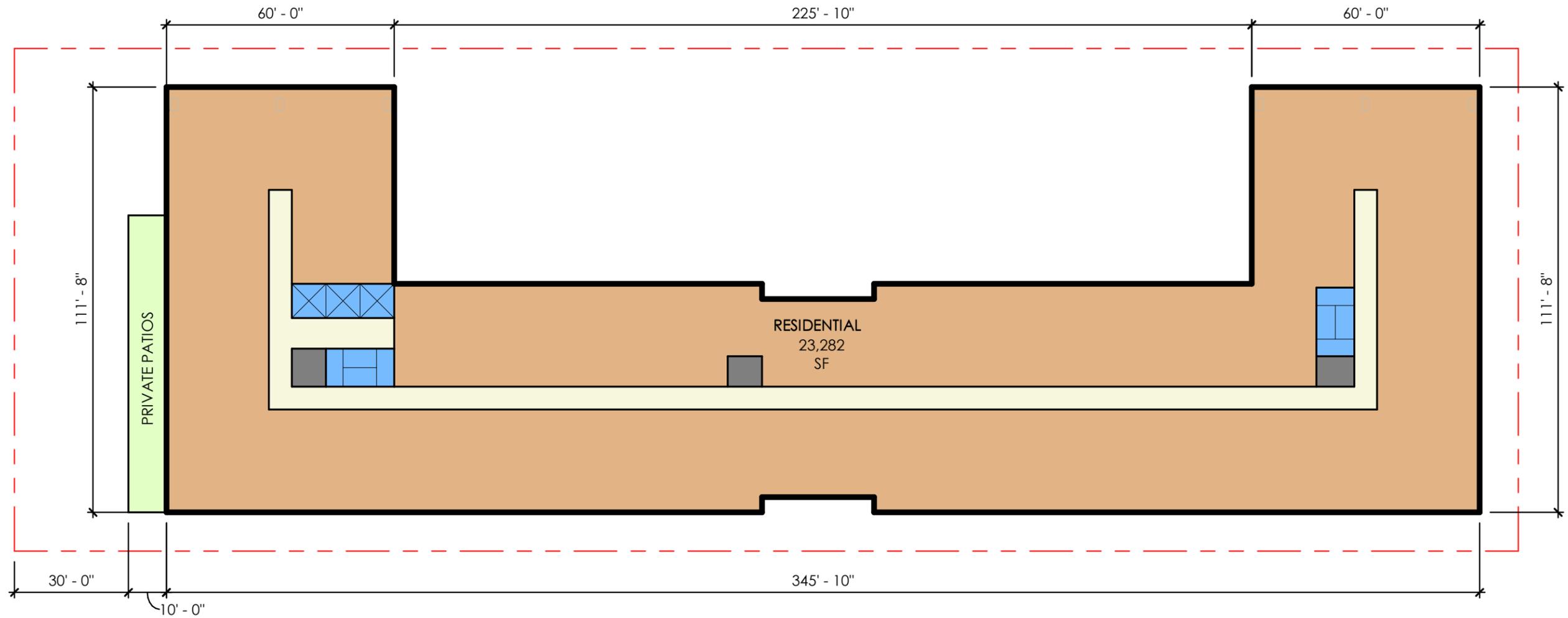
T.4



SCALE: 1" = 30'-0"

LEVEL 1 FLOOR PLAN

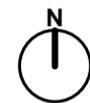
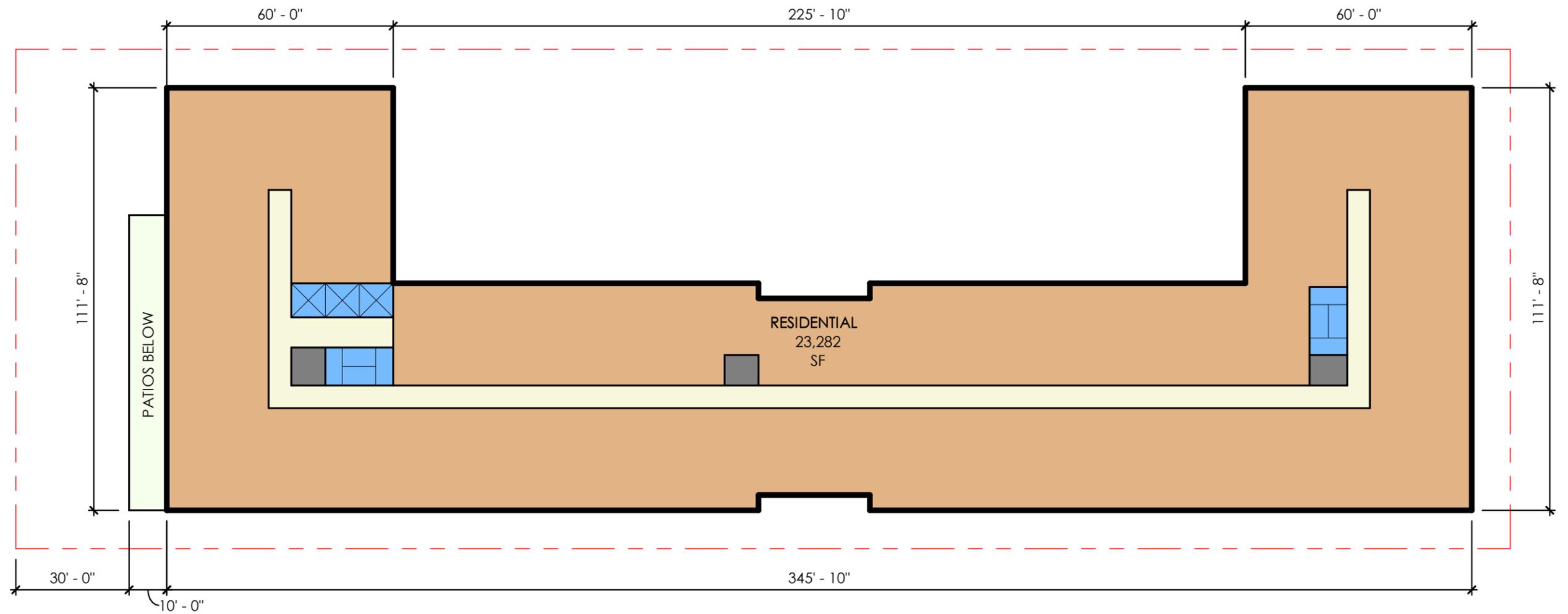
T.5



SCALE: 1" = 30'-0"

LEVEL 2 FLOOR PLAN

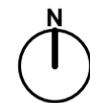
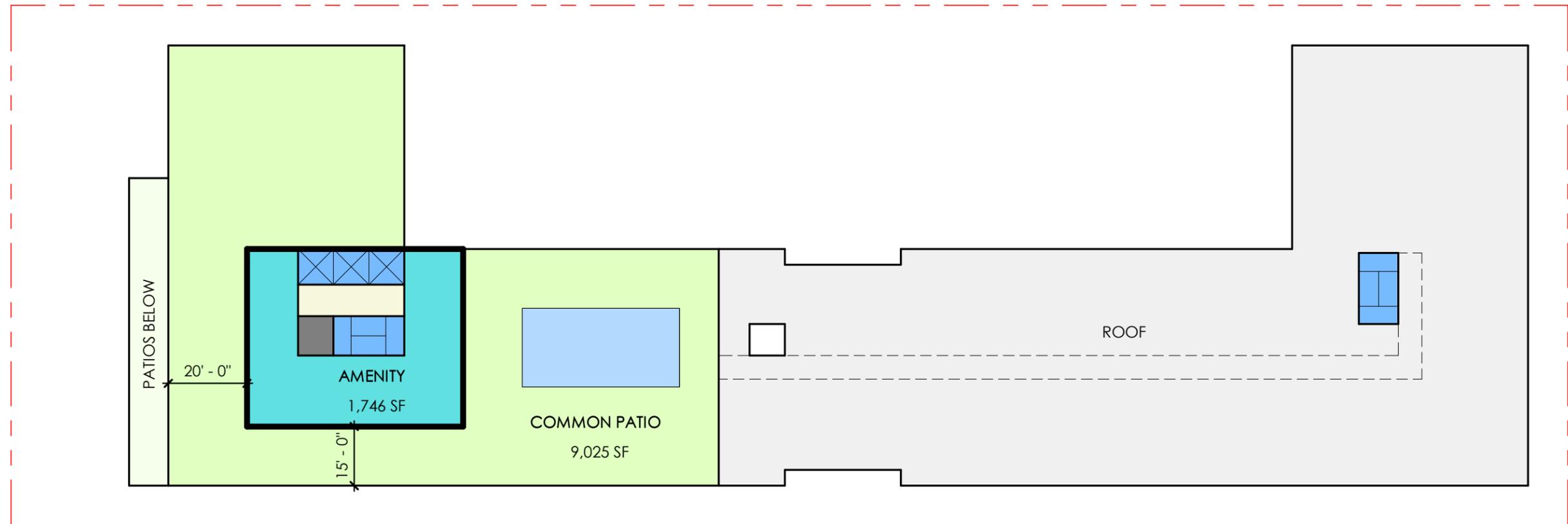
T.6



SCALE: 1" = 30'-0"

LEVEL 3-10 FLOOR PLAN

T.7



SCALE: 1" = 30'-0"

PENTHOUSE FLOOR PLAN

T.8

