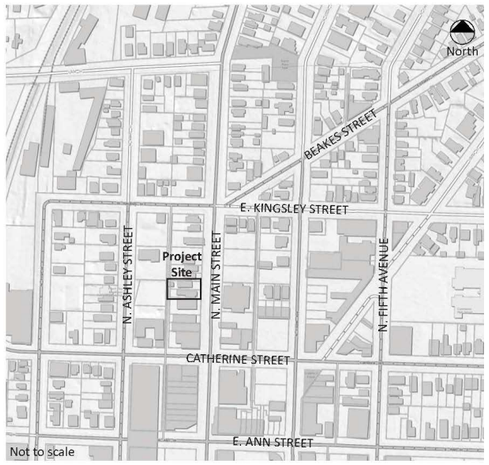


Location Map

Perspective from the Southeast

321 NORTH MAIN

"Moving on Main"

SECTION 2 Project Details

2a. Design Concept

321 North Main is proposed as a new, 3 story mixed use building of 12,104 GSF. The 3rd story is an accessible roof deck of 1,625 SF. Lots at 319 and 323 North Main will be combined into one property. The existing residential structures will be deconstructed and some of the materials reincorporated into the new building and others salvaged for reuse elsewhere.

As a movement center, the project embraces a wide variety of movement programming and practitioners concerned with the social, artistic, sensual and political, body. These include various forms of physical movement, dance, public performance and bodywork designed to connect people to a vital experience of their selves; as well as to promote a sense of interconnectedness with a wider community and the potentials of emotional, physical and spiritual well-being.

321 North Main is registered with the Living Building Challenge for Petal Recognition. The project plans to achieve at least the Energy, Equity and Beauty Petals and Net Zero Energy Building Certification. The project's LEED-certification goal is platinum. One hundred percent of the building's energy needs on a net annual basis will be supplied by on-site renewable energy (without combustion systems or green power purchases). Our annual energy budget is ~100,000 kWh to be provided by rooftop mounted photo-voltaic panels.

2b. Development Program

As a movement center, 321 North Main will host movement arts classes such as martial arts, somatic movement, circus arts and Yoga; public performance, film, wedding and other receptions for up to 300 people in the movement studios. Practitioners will offer massage, acupuncture and other wellness practices in their spaces. Spa rooms will offer therapeutic environments such as infrared sauna and traditional Japanese baths. Three hostel rooms will affordably house up to 16 visitors and flex as meeting spaces, as well, offering access to social forums, receptions and discussion groups. An office serves as a base for practitioners and building staff.

Barrier free access to the roof deck will extend the useable space of the building and provide additional outdoor space for people to enjoy.

Existing commercial buildings

301 North Main

320 North Main

New residential developments

212 Kinsley West Proposed

414 North Main under construction

SECTION 3: Project Design

3a. Site Context

The project is located in the vibrant Kerrytown Character District. Kerrytown, home to restaurants, markets, shops, and entertainment venues, is a popular destination for residents and tourists. Kerrytown is located on the northern edge of Ann Arbor's downtown and serves as a transitional zone between commercial areas and residential areas of the city. It is also the automobile gateway from the north into the downtown from Main Street and US 23. Kerrytown's activity is anchored by a mix of bars and restaurants, and a strong retail presence, including the Ann Arbor Farmers Market. Wayfinding and interpretive signage is prevalent through the core area, as well as ample lighting at night. The area is busy with automobile, bus, and pedestrian activity. The area is walkable and public transit is easily accessible.

The project is located mid-way down the block of Main Street between East Kingsley and Catherine/Miller, on the west side of the street in the downtown zoning district D2. The site is surrounded by a mix of older housing stock to the north (some of which are still residential, but many are now small businesses), as well as larger commercial buildings across the street, south on Main Street and west on Miller. It shares an alley that serves Ann St. and Kingsley, as well as a large private surface parking lot immediately to the west. New residential development is currently being constructed immediately across the street, as well as around the corner west on Kingsley.

3b. Conceptual Design Theme

321 North Main represents an effort to create a center for movement that is restorative with respect to: 1) people (its occupants) and 2) place (its environment), while making the least possible demand on resources.

Movement and flow are expressed by the site, building systems and occupants. Light, energy, people, plants and water weave and flow through the building and site.

In the spirit of the practices to be housed by the building, the design process reflects a transparent, collaborative, and interdisciplinary approach.

3c. Response to the Character District

Like the Kerrytown District itself, the 300 block of North Main transitions from residential to converted residential structures to commercial building types as you move north to south from Kingsley to Miller.

Rather than constructing to the property line, the proposed development maintains green space between buildings. The scale of the proposed structure fits within the transitioning scale of the block while increasing site density.

The building shape incorporates a blend of residential patterns and commercial storefront. However, its mass and shape are defined by its energy and programmatic goals.

The transparent first floor movement studio puts activity on Main Street, while the second floor hostel spaces read as residential use. Residential over commercial is a common pattern.

Naturalized open space provides for the flow of people and water through the site. An inviting pedestrian link connects Main Street and the alley.

The building extends the creative vitality of downtown closer to Ann Arbor's northerly gateway and reinforces the unique, local uses and building types that make the Kerrytown District a destination.

Perspective from the Northeast

Project Site from Main Street

Project site from the Southeast

3d. Design guidelines for Context and Site Planning

A.1 Urban Pattern and Form

The two sites (which will be combined for this project) each have an older home (see tan houses in center of photo) which are in various states of serviceability and decay. They are bounded by commercial buildings to the south towards Catherine/Miller (ballet studio, office buildings which have a commercial form) and a business as an immediate neighbor to the south which added a highly detailed porch and cupola many years ago.

To the north, there are old houses built in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, most of which have been converted for commercial/office use.

Across the street, there is the large McKinley building built several decades ago, a dry cleaners, gas station and the new residential condominium development, 414 Main which is currently under construction.

The project site is in a transition area: flanked by both commercial form and older residential housing stock.

Though the intent and form of the building have been derived from the goal of minimizing energy use, maximizing generation and the building program, there are several ways that the building responds to the urban form of its context, as well as the intent to provide a lively intersection with the community.

The 2-3 story height fits with the scale of the neighborhood acting as a transition between the commercial buildings and new residential condominiums across the street and the smaller residential structures to the north.

The lower floor is very transparent; full height glass is open to movement rooms to the east on Main Street, south and west to the alley, providing interesting views of dance classes and other dynamic programming that will make it interesting and engaging for passersby.

There is a rain garden in the front setback, which will create a lush, green foreground to the building and a beautiful verdant space for users arriving from Main Street. The alley at the back of the lot (west side) will also provide an entry that links to Main Street. This easy site access will allow activity to flow from both front and back.

The building maintains green side yards between the adjacent structures.

Walking South along Main Street

View to the alley from the project site

A.2 Site Planning and Natural Systems

There are large street trees out in front of the two buildings, an aging apple tree in poor condition, some weedy trees that have sprung up on their own including box elder and a massive poison ivy vine that covers the entire north side of the one of the houses. The street trees will stay in the proposed plan, but all existing vegetation will be removed for the project in order to improve the quality of the landscape for the proposed building.

The site is highest in the southeast corner and falls to the northwest, towards the buried Allen Creek. The project will collect rain water for irrigation purposes, and is exploring the idea of harvesting water for interior uses (still in process), but will also take all rainwater into a infiltration-based rain garden and stepped pools that will be designed to hold and infiltrate the first one inch of rainfall and work with the topography of the site. Plants native to southeastern Michigan will be used throughout this green infrastructure system.

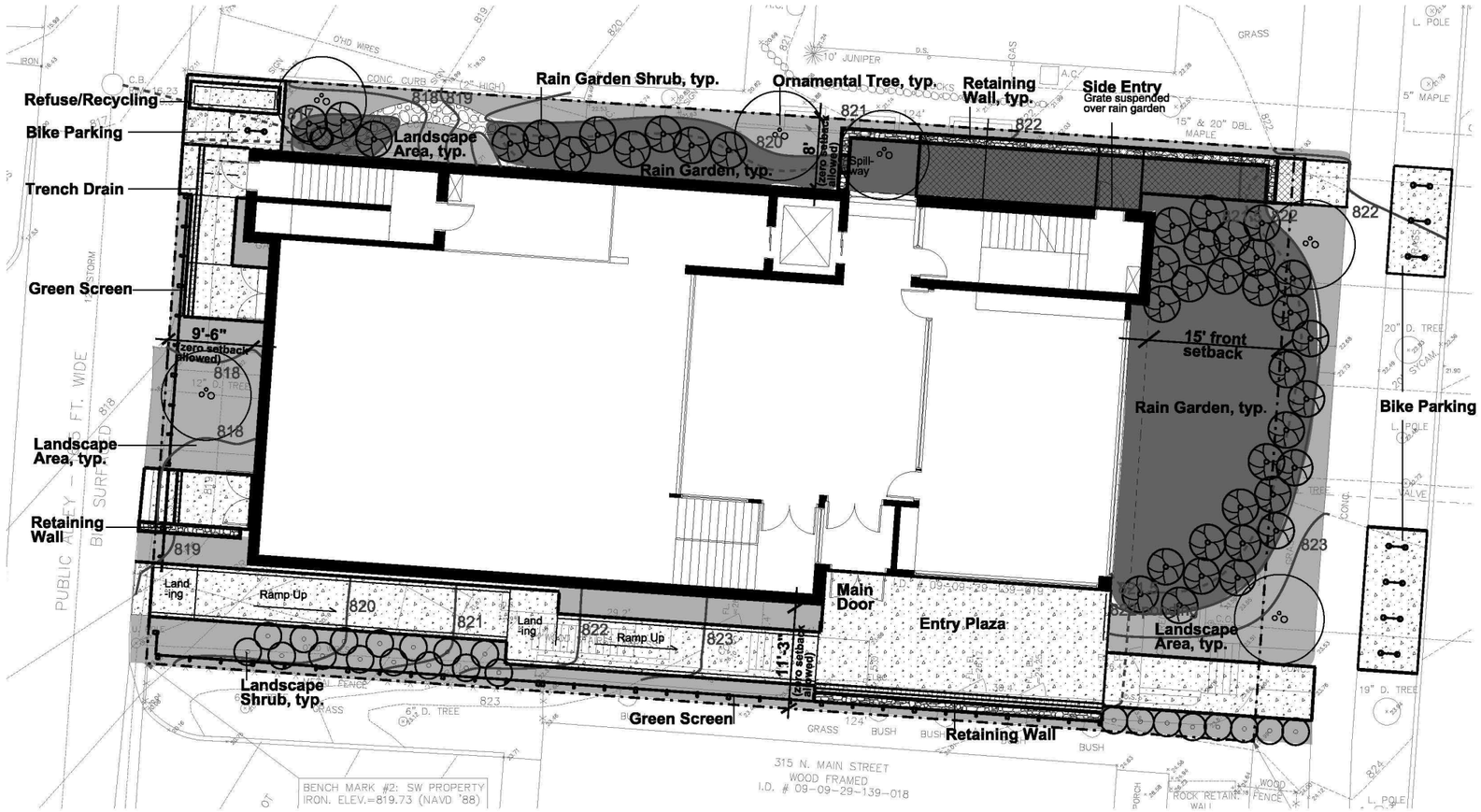
The building is located and massed to maximize its solar access while still allowing summer sun to reach the building to the north.

Where possible, deciduous trees will be planted to soften the building, yet located so they do not interfere with solar access. The first floor level of the building to the south of the site has very few windows, and the view to the alley is quite harsh, therefore a green screen 8-10 feet in height with vines will be placed at intervals on the south and west faces to create an envelope of vegetation where space is tight for planting otherwise.

Both neighbors have been contacted and the project will be collaborating with the on the landscape plan for the space between the buildings.

A.3 Open Space

Site access will be available from the alley and Main Street, both culminating at the entry plaza area and front door on the southeast side of the site. There will be a glass operable door connecting the medium movement studio and the entry plaza so that programming and events can spill outside during warm months. This activity will be visible from both site entries and Main Street. Otherwise, the site is used for rain water infiltration, circulation, service and small zones of intense planting.



Site Plan

A.4 Parking, Driveways and Service Areas

Parking will not be provided on site (which is not a requirement), but is available in the Ann Ashley public parking structure, a half block away. There is street metered parking available throughout Kerrytown and its surrounding neighborhoods as well as the surface lot at Kerrytown on non-market days. The alley side will allow access for temporary drop-off of materials for events, but does not have a dedicated spot for drop-off for building users. Refuse and recycling will be serviced from the alley as well.

A.5 Pedestrian Connections

As previously discussed, access to the front door and entry plaza will happen from both the alley side to the west and Main Street to the east in one straight visible corridor, making wayfinding straightforward. The entry plaza serves as a hub for pedestrian activity, available as a pausing place for users to gather. The rain garden will provide a lush green oasis for those entering from Main Street, as well as pedestrians walking by.

A.6 Cycling and Transit

Designers anticipate that biking will likely be a primary form of transportation during the moderate months. There is room for two bikes on the alley side; the project proposes to have to have 14 more spaces in the right-of-way of Main Street. Main Street is on a AATA bus route as well, with the stop a half a block away near the corner of Kingsley and Main Street.

View from the southeast

3e. Design Guidelines for Buildings

The height, size and shape of the building meet the requirements of the D2 Zoning District.

B.1 Building Massing

The building mass fits comfortably between the larger scale commercial buildings and residential scale buildings on the block.

A change in materials defines 1) the building base, 2) the more transparent first floor, 3) the second floor and 4) the roof top space. Vertical circulation is articulated with a slight change in plane and vertical glazing. Balconies provide opportunities for plants and bay window projections orient views and express programmatic modules.

The distinct roof form follows the dominant solar array, which has a distinctive eyebrow to bring more light into the roof deck and light wells.

3f. Design Guidelines for Building Elements

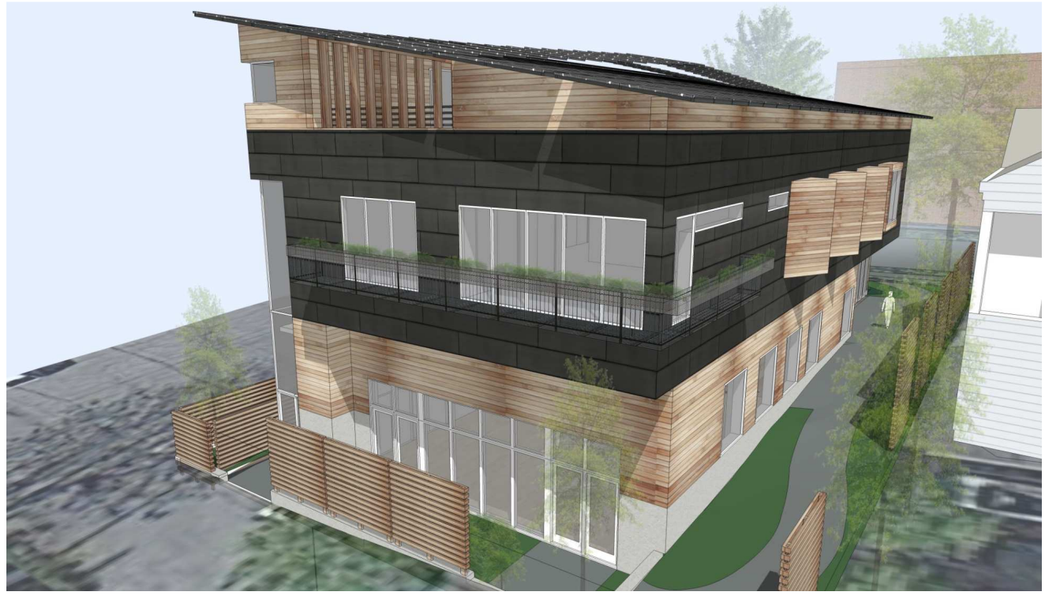
C.1 Street Edge

The street edge is designed specifically to invite pedestrian activity while maintaining a vegetated front setback that functions as a rain garden. Natural wood materials, an entry plaza and a high level of transparency, work together to put activity on Main Street and invite pedestrians in and through the site.

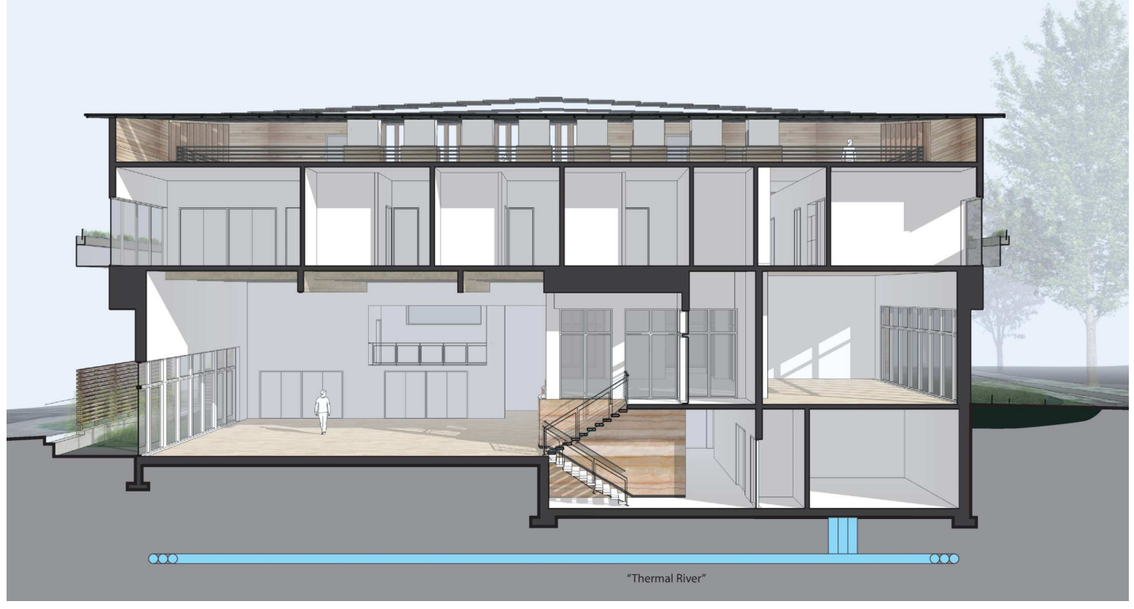
C.2 Entries

The building entry was purposefully designed on the south side of the building for the following reasons: to maximize the transparency of the building's activities on Main Street, provide an entry plaza and to functionally enter the building between two major activity spaces. This location also allows for a large rain garden, minimizing storm water discharge from the site.

The side entry location creates a vegetated pedestrian link between the alley and Main Street. People flow through the site on the south and water flows through the site to the north.



View from the Southwest



East West Building Section

C.3 Windows

A high level of ground floor transparency is provided along Main Street wrapping around to the entry on the building's south side. Vertical circulation is also accented with windows to emphasize movement within the building.

Windows on the south side of the medium movement studio and the west side of the large movement studio will open extending major activity spaces to the entry plaza alley garden.

Windows are located and sized to provide daylight and natural ventilation. Views to the west on the second floor are maximized and glare will be controlled with moveable shades. Glazing will be high performance, without being reflective or heavily tinted.

C.4 Awnings

Rather than applying awnings to the façade, the first floor storefront is recessed around the building to the entry and projecting balconies with planter boxes add dimension to the façade. Most windows will have moveable shades rather than awnings to provide more functional and flexible control for glare and privacy.

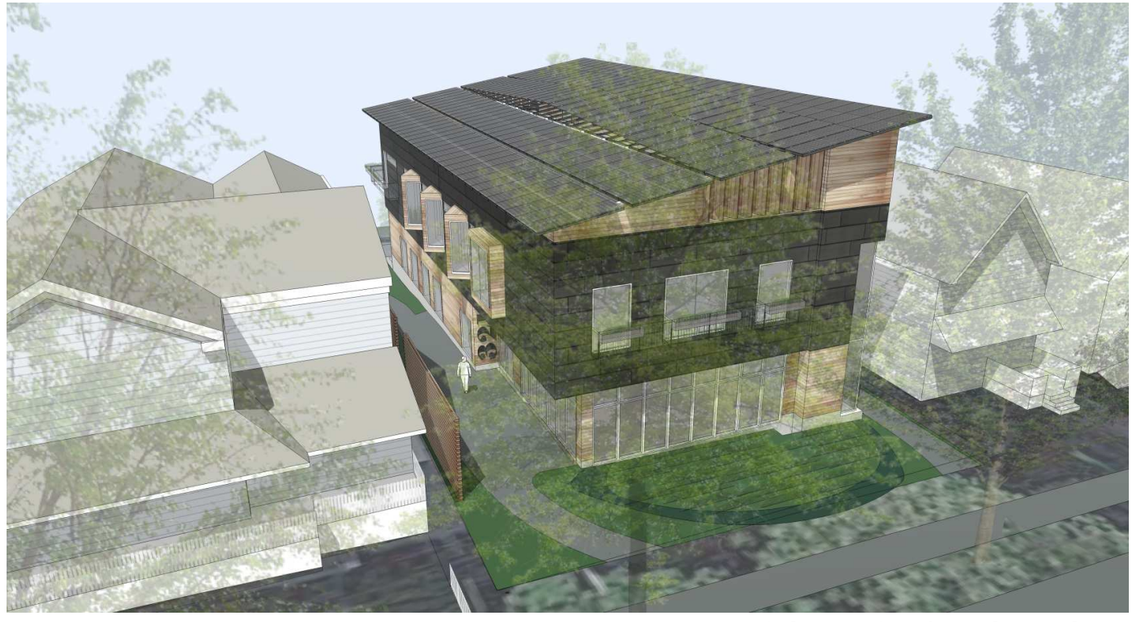
C.5 Materials

The building materials have been selected for their aesthetics, scale, durability and life cycle cost. The pedestrian zone of the first floor will be a natural wood rainscreen that ties in with natural wood used in the interior. The second floor is clad in a contrasting zinc metal panel. The roof deck will be clad in a metal wood-look siding similar in tone to the first floor. Stucco provides a base, allowing the grade to drop from east to west along the building.

C.6 Building Operational Systems

Building operational systems have been carefully integrated into the design of the building. HVAC equipment (heat pumps and ERUs) are contained within the building envelope. The building roof line follows the 100,000kWh solar array, providing a distinctive building cap.

Waste management is screened from the alley with a similar structure as the green screens forming the alley garden area.



Bird's eye view from the southeast

Roof Deck

C.7 Sustainability

321 North Main is being designed with an integrated design process to minimize its demand on resources, maximize the wellbeing of its occupants, identify synergies between systems, and restore natural elements and systems on the site. The project aims to be socially just and culturally rich in addition to being ecologically restorative.

The site design aims to restore a healthy coexistence with nature through, native landscaping including a rain garden and maximizing opportunities for infiltration and natural flow.

Materials will be selected with the aim of choosing products and processes that are safe for all species through time. The building will use salvaged materials from the existing deconstructed houses, regionally manufactured materials and materials with a lower life cycle cost. Materials on the Living Building Challenge red list will be avoided, unless there are no reasonable alternatives.

The building is being designed to be Net Zero Energy Certified and targeting LEED Platinum. It will minimize energy and water consumption and maximize energy production and energy and water storage and reuse. The building will have the capacity to store 5,000 gallons of rainwater. Energy from greywater will also be captured and stored for reuse. A "thermal river," located under the building, will provide seasonal energy storage similar in concept to a horizontal geo-exchange system.

The building will rely on daylighting and allow for natural ventilation and night flushing. Energy recovery units will temper fresh air intake. Building systems will be monitored and controls tied into the building's schedule. At the same time, occupants will also have access to environmental controls and contribute to energy production through the capture of heat produced through movement.

Programmatically the center is reaching out to a diversity of people to engage a range of ages, socio-economic groups and movement practices.

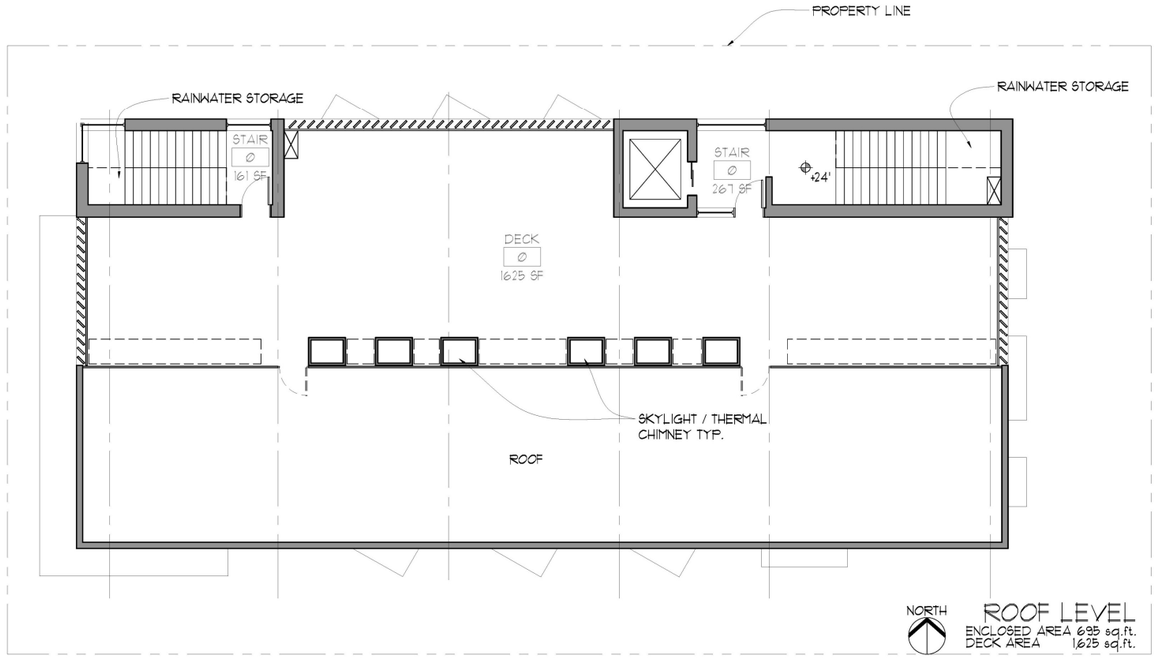
It is our intent that 321 North Main will set a new benchmark for environmental stewardship and sustainability in Ann Arbor. Its design, systems, and performance will be shared publicly, both in the building and online.

East Elevation

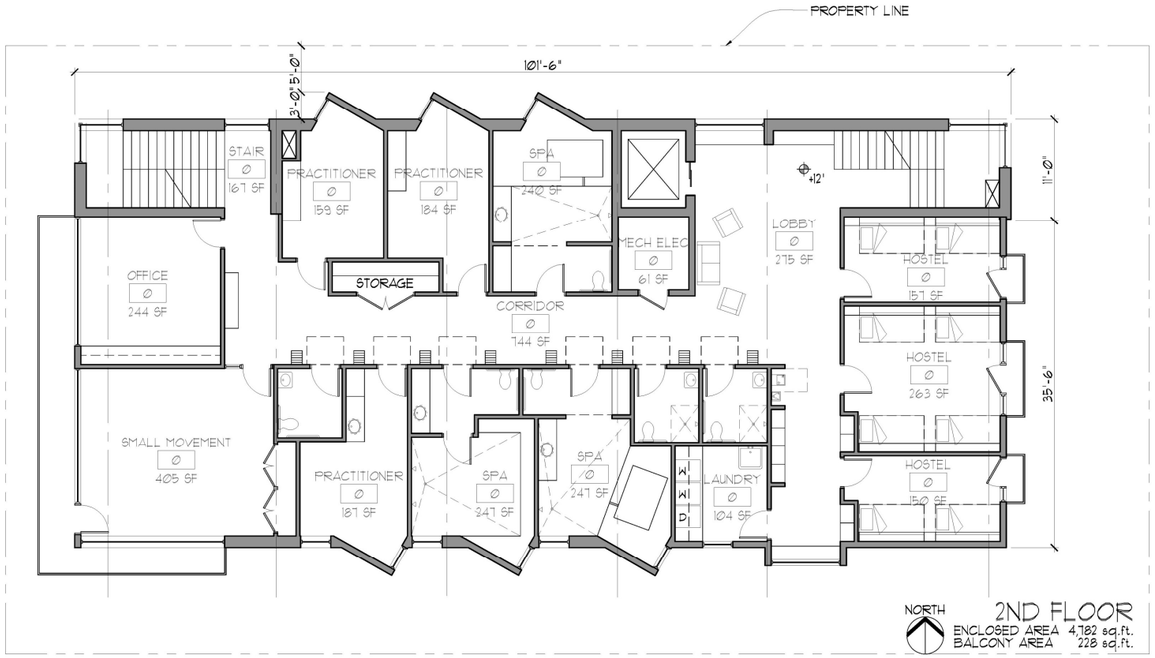
South Elevation

West Elevation

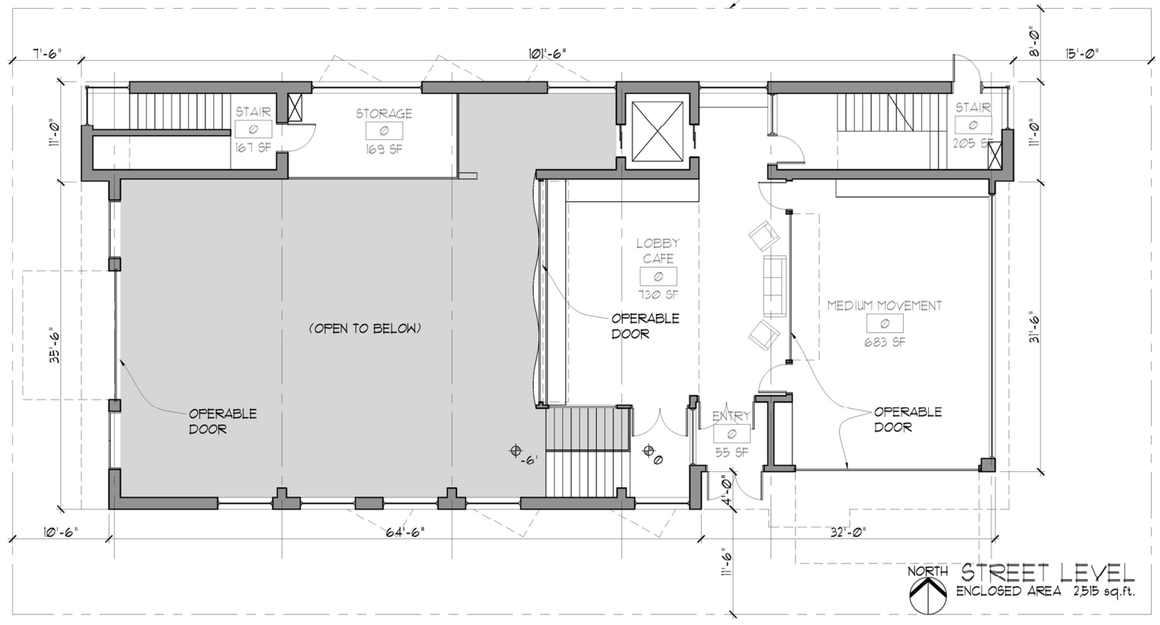
North Elevation



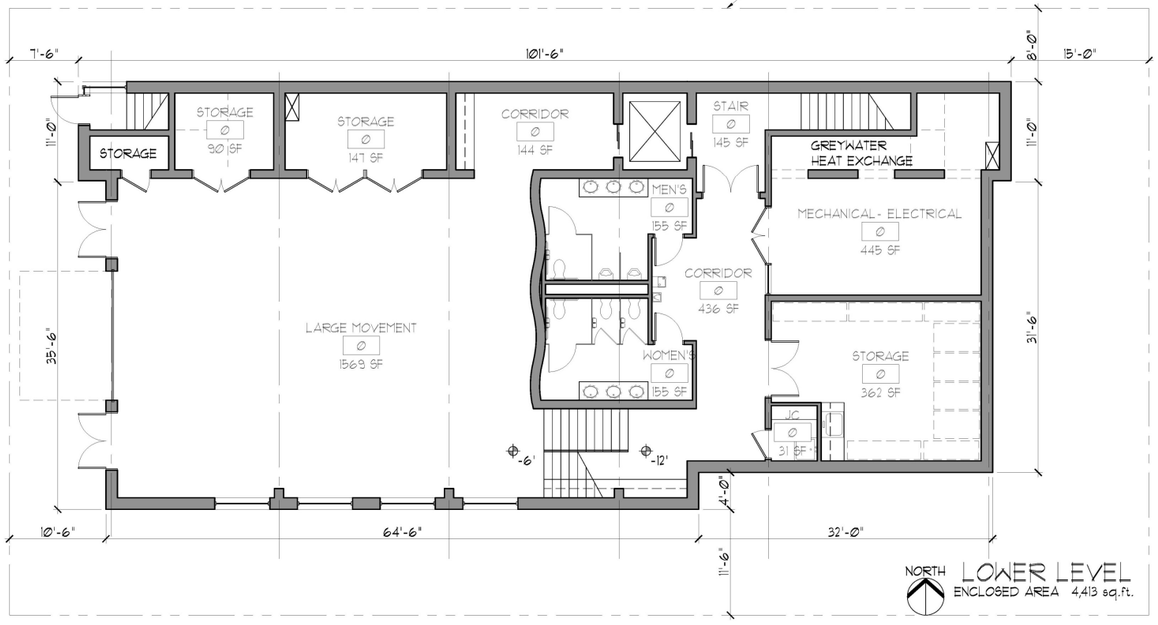
ROOF LEVEL
ENCLOSED AREA 695 sq.ft.
DECK AREA 1625 sq.ft.



2ND FLOOR
ENCLOSED AREA 4,782 sq.ft.
BALCONY AREA 228 sq.ft.



STREET LEVEL
ENCLOSED AREA 2,515 sq.ft.



LOWER LEVEL
ENCLOSED AREA 4,413 sq.ft.