

September 16, 2025

To: Markiea Carter, Director, Department of Community & Economic Development

From: Katherine Keough-Jurs, FAICP, Director, Department of City Planning & Engagement

Subject: Community Engagement Meeting Summary – Duke Energy Convention Hotel

On Thursday, August 21, 2025, the Department of City Planning & Engagement (DCPE) hosted a Community Engagement Meeting regarding the proposed use of TIF funds for a proposed mixed-use development comprised of Duke Energy Convention Hotel located at 251 W. Fifth Street and 240 W. Fourth Street in the Central Business District.

Mailed notices were sent to 142 property owners within 400 feet of the subject property and the respective Community Council which included a QR code to register for the meeting and a link to the DCPE website where additional information about the proposed project could be found: <https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/planning/community-engagement/upcoming-community-engagement-meetings/>. Several social media posts were posted on DCPE's Facebook and Twitter accounts.

The meeting was conducted virtually on Zoom at 5:00 p.m. Staff from DCPE and the Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) were present. The facilitation of the meeting was carried out by a Community Engagement Specialist in DCPE.

A total of six community members attended the meeting. All attendees had the opportunity to hear from the applicant team and learn about the proposed project. Attendees were also provided an opportunity to ask questions. For detailed questions and concerns raised during the meeting, please refer to Attachment 1, labeled as Additional Information. Additionally, you can find the PowerPoint presentation used during the meeting and items submitted by community members in Attachment 2. Lastly, during the meeting, questions were asked that required more information and/or the applicant did not know the answer at that moment; you can find their response to those questions in Attachment 3.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1: Additional Information
- Attachment 2: PowerPoint Presentation and submitted materials from the community.
- Attachment 3: Applicant's follow-up responses from CEM's Q&A.

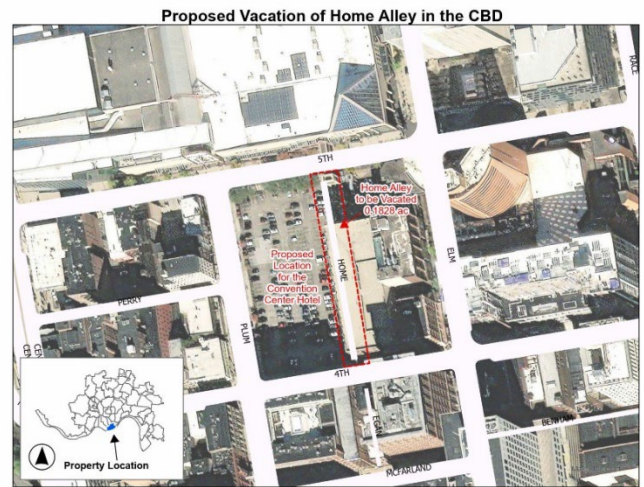
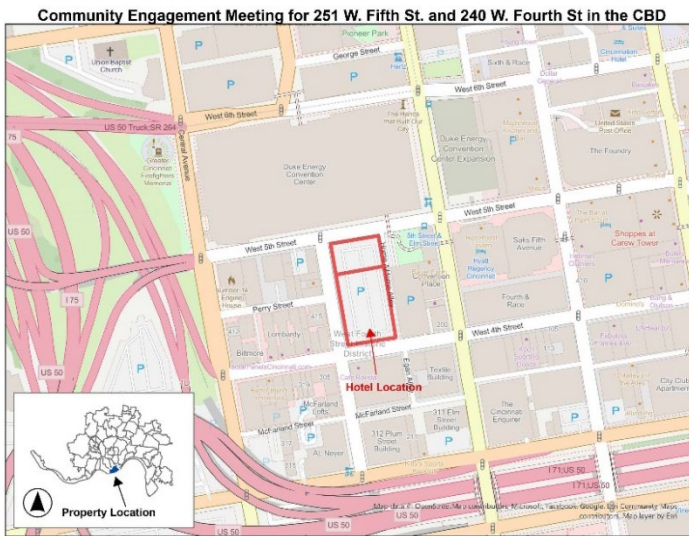
Proposed use of TIF funds for Duke Energy Convention Hotel

This document outlines information shared during the Community Engagement Meeting on Thursday, August 21, 2025. This document is intended as a summary and not as meeting minutes.

Background

3CDC was contracted as the City's development manager for the Convention Center Hotel project and the renovation of the Convention Center. The developer for the Convention Center Hotel project is Portman Holdings. The project site is currently functioning as a surface parking lot and owned by the Port Authority. The project consists of a 700-room convention center hotel including 63,000 square feet of meeting space, 17,000 square feet of outdoor terrace space, and multiple restaurants. The total estimated project cost is approximately \$470MM. The Department of Community and Economic Development plans to offer a 30-year project Tax Increment Financing (TIF) property tax exemption, 30-year hotel tax exemption, \$50MM loan, and multiple property interests conveyed at below Fair Market Value.

Location and Existing Site



Notice

The Department of City Planning and Engagement (DCPE) sent out notices to 142 property owners within 400 feet of the subject property and the Downtown Residents Council.

Meeting Requests and Attendance

Thirteen people requested the meeting link for the community engagement meeting with six community members in attendance. Demographic data was captured for the six attendees using an online QR code to request the meeting link.

Represented neighborhoods	Relationship with the City	Race/Ethnicity
Central Business District: 5 Other: 1	Business Owner: 1	White/Caucasian: 6

Meeting Comments and Questions

Community Member 1: Extended gratitude for the presentation and inquired about the public infrastructure that is planned for the hotel. Specifically, they asked about the impacted Metro stop at the northeast corner of 4th Street and Plum Street and whether there has been collaboration with Metro about it.

Applicant Response: There has been no discussion about removing the stop and they will be sure to collaborate with Metro on it.

Community Member 1: Asked about the traffic calming along 4th Street and if there were traffic calming plans for the 5th Street and Plum Street sides.

Applicant Response: The Department of Transportation and Engineering (DOTE) oversees traffic calming initiatives and efforts and stated that they would inquire with DOTE about future plans.

- *Please see attachment 3 for more details.*

Community Member 1: Reiterated that there should be collaboration in public infrastructure improvements on the 4th Street side and requested further engagement in the future.

Community Member 2: Extended gratitude for the presentation, said it was a great project that will revitalize the community. Community Member is a resident across the street and inquired how noise/dust/traffic disruptions could be minimized during construction?

Applicant Response: The construction team takes these measures into consideration and can follow up with planned details.

- *Please see attachment 3 for more details.*

Community Member 2: How will updates and delays be communicated to the residents?

Applicant Response: Skanska USA is serving as the General Contractor for the project and will provide regular updates to surrounding areas who provide appropriate contact information to the team.

- *Please see attachment 3 for more details.*

Community Member 2: What are the hours of construction?

Applicant Response: Will follow City's requirements for construction.

- *Please see attachment 3 for more details.*

Community Member 3: Lives on 5th street, has seen a couple of vacant buildings and wondered if there was a plan to be redeveloped?

DCED Response: The City and the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) have been in touch with Prestige and the property on the other side of the surface lot, and will follow up on this request

Community Member 1: What are the plans for valet and ride-share pick up? Is there going to be a dedicated ride share area for the project?

Applicant Response: All valet operations will operate on the east/west/south/north side of the hotel. It is hoped that ride share will also use this side of the hotel.

3CDC Input: 3CDC included new bump out areas on 5th Street.

Community Member 1: What does the elimination of off-street parking look like, especially during the construction phase?

Applicant Response: The most heavily impacted street will be Plum Street. About 20 spots will be removed around the perimeter of the hotel property. Whex Garage will remain open during construction.

Community Member 4: Are you planning to share the presentation after the meeting?

Engagement Specialist: Yes, the presentation will be added to the CEM website.

**** No more questions and meeting adjourned****

Re: [External Email] Duke Energy Hotel project

From: Richard Eckler <> **Sent:** Tuesday, August 12, 2025
10:26 PM

To: Avery, Eunique <> **Subject:** [External Email] Duke
Energy Hotel project

You don't often get email from richardeckler@protonmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

External Email Communication

I am a new resident to the city (18 months) and am trying to engage with important developments here. I have questions regarding this project and was hoping to find some answers through your office, which is, of course, named on the web page. There were no materials of any depth explaining how the community might be affected positively or negatively. There is only the vaguest description of costs and how the public contribution was determined or what other investments were considered for the same money. As these costs represent a direct transfer of public wealth to private hands, the accounting and accountability are highly pertinent and I feel I can't adequately engage in the virtual meeting without more understanding.

Thank you,
Richard Eckler

Sent with Proton Mail secure email

**Proposed Use of TIF Funds
for a mixed-use development comprised
of Duke Energy Convention Hotel located
in the Central Business District**

Community Engagement Meeting | August 21, 2025

Welcome & Housekeeping

1. Welcome & Housekeeping
2. Brief presentation
3. Question & Answer
 - Please save all questions/comments until Q&A
 - Staff will unmute each participate one at a time
 - You may use “raise hand” function in the chat bar if you have a follow-up question



Eunique Avery- Senior Community Engagement Specialist

Welcome & Housekeeping

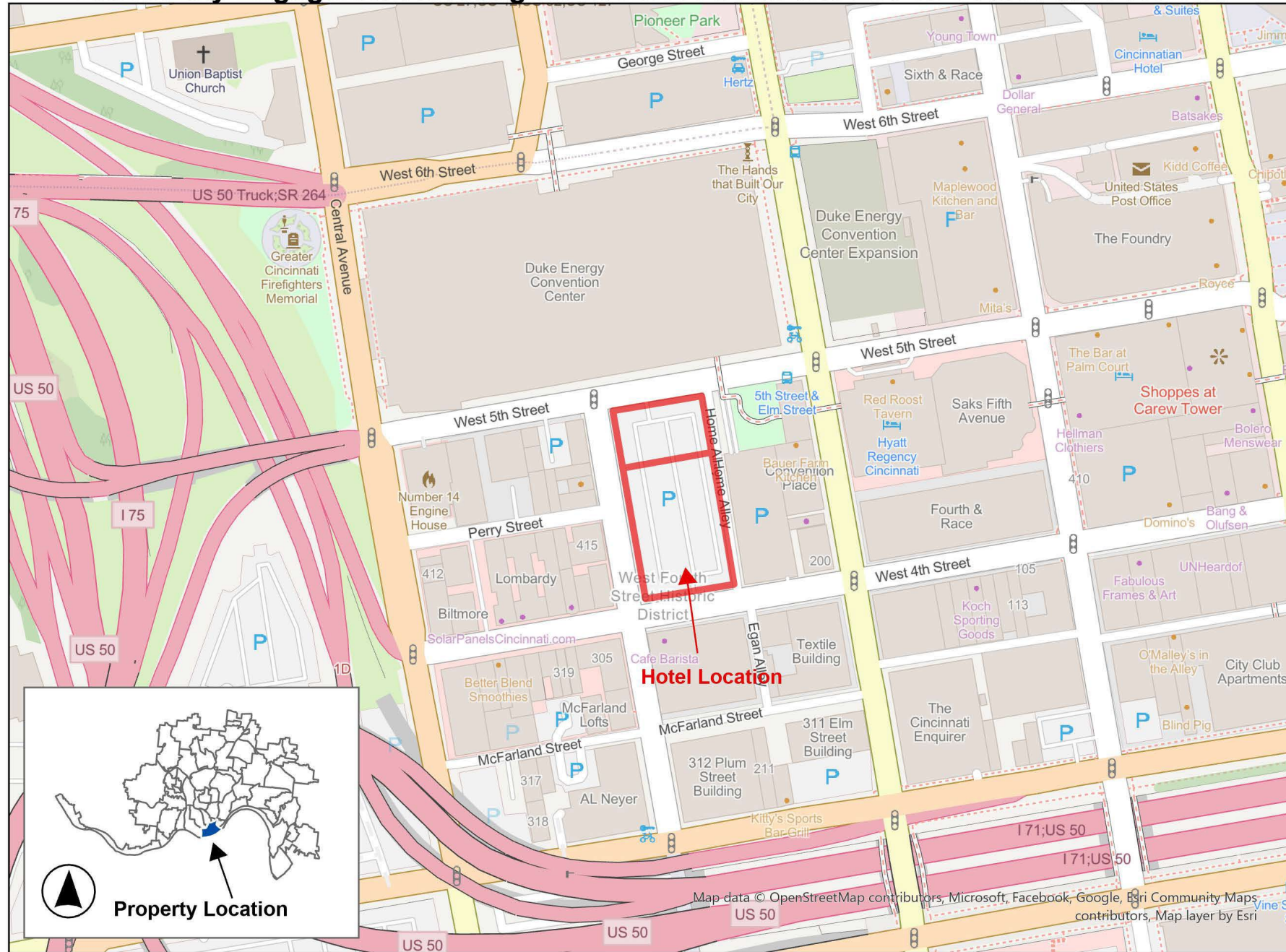
- Please remain muted. City staff will unmute during the open feedback portion of the meeting.
- Chat Bar
 - Use the chat bar for tech-related issues or questions
 - Do not use the chat bar to ask project-specific questions

Purpose of Meeting

This is a public meeting to discuss the proposed use of TIF funds for a mixed-use development comprised of Duke Energy Convention Hotel located at 251 W. Fifth Street and 240 W. Fourth Street in the Central Business District.

- Eunique Avery is here to facilitate the meeting
- DCPE is here to capture notes/comments brought up during the meeting
- Marc Von Allmen from the Department of Community and Economic Development is here to answer any TIF related questions.
- Reid Scott of Portman Holdings and Katie Westbrook from 3CDC is here to answer any project related questions.
- **No decisions are being made at this meeting**

Community Engagement Meeting for 251 W. Fifth St. and 240 W. Fourth St in the CBD



Proposed Vacation of Home Alley in the CBD



Background

3CDC has been contracted as the City's development manager for the Convention Hotel project as well as the renovation of the Convention Center. The developer for the Convention Hotel project is Portman Holdings based in Atlanta, GA. They were selected as the developer for the project after a request for proposals was issued by 3CDC, the City, and the County. Portman has developed over 20,000 total hotel rooms, including multiple convention headquarters hotels in Salt Lake City, San Diego, Charlotte, and additional cities nationwide. The project site is currently vacant, functioning as a surface parking lot. The site is owned by the Port Authority. Project will be a 700-room convention 'Headquarters' hotel including 63,000 SF of meeting space, 17,000 SF outdoor terrace space, and multiple restaurants. Total estimated project cost is approximately \$470MM. The Department of Community and Economic Development plans to offer a 30-year project Tax Increment Financing (TIF) property tax exemption, 30-year hotel tax exemption, \$50MM loan, Multiple property interest conveyed at below Fair Market Value. This TIF request is contingent on the approval of Cincinnati City Council.

Location and Existing Site:

251 W. Fifth Street and 240 W. Fourth Street in the Central Business District



3CDC



Portman Holdings

Cincinnati Convention Center Headquarters Hotel

Community Engagement Meeting

8/21/2025

Introductions

Reid Scott, VP of Development, Portman Holdings

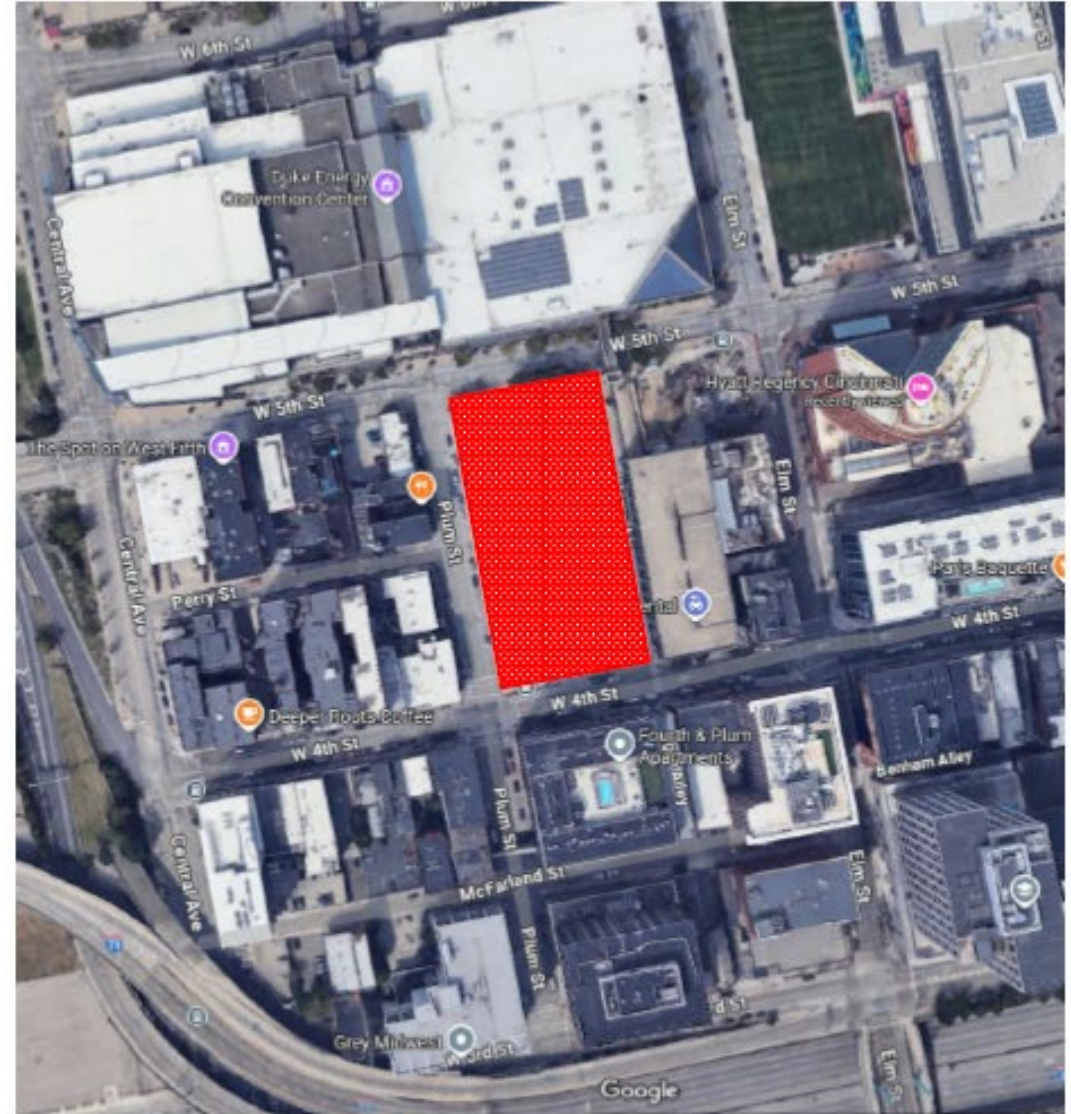
Katie Westbrook, SVP of Development, 3CDC

Project Team

- Developer
 - Portman Holdings, LLC (*Selected Through RFP Process*)
- Design Team
 - Architecture - Cooper Carry, Moody Nolan
 - Interior Design - Parker Torres
 - Civil Engineering - Bayer Becker
 - MEP – CMTA
- General Contractor
 - Skanska USA
- Development Partners
 - 3CDC (*Hired by City/County as Manager of Convention District Redevelopment*)
 - The City of Cincinnati
 - Hamilton County
 - The State of Ohio Department of Development
 - The Port

Project Details & Program

- **Location**
 - 250 W 5th St. Currently the Surface lot bound by W 4th, W 5th, Plum St., and Home Alley
- **Projected Cost:** \$536 Million
- **Hotel Brand**
 - Marriott Hotels & Resorts
- **Program**
 - 700 Guestrooms & Suites
 - Full Service Ground Floor Restaurant (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner) on W 5th
 - Bar and Market Outlets
 - Executive Lounge
 - Approximately 63,000 SF of Meeting Space
 - 17,000 Square Foot Roof Event Terrace on L6
 - Hotel Fitness Center
 - Interior Porte Cochere Accessed via Plum St. and Home Alley
 - Skybridge to Convention Center and Garage
 - Retail Outlet(s) Fronting W 4th
- **Additional Public Realm Improvements**
 - Improved Streetscapes along W 4th St, W 5th St., and Plum St.
 - Plum Street Two-Way Conversion from 3rd to 5th



Project Sources and Uses

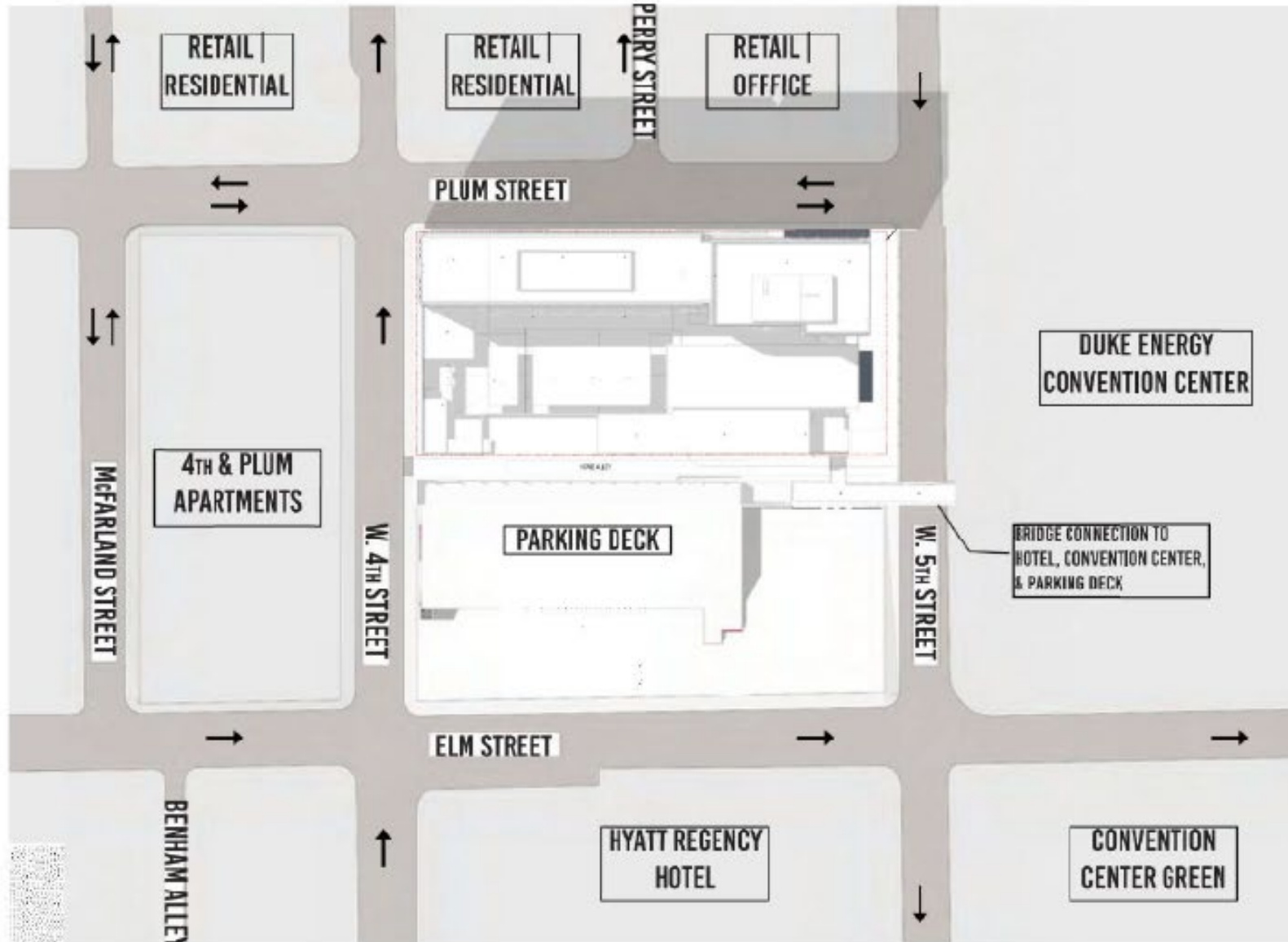
SOURCES	TOTAL
PUBLIC SOURCES	
Ohio Strategic Community Investment Fund	48,414,834
Transformational Mixed Use Dev. Proceeds	37,400,000
Port/State Bonds	117,262,826
City Loan	40,000,000
Convention Center Savings	10,000,000
PRIVATE SOURCES	
Equity	63,216,000
Construction Loan	178,386,000
Key Money	17,500,000
Interest Earnings	4,502,000
Funding Gap / Budget Reduction Target	20,000,000
TOTAL SOURCES	\$536,681,660

USES	TOTAL
Acquisition Costs	12,840,000
Hard Costs & FFE	457,624,000
Soft Costs	66,217,660
TOTAL USES	\$536,681,660



CONTEXT MAP

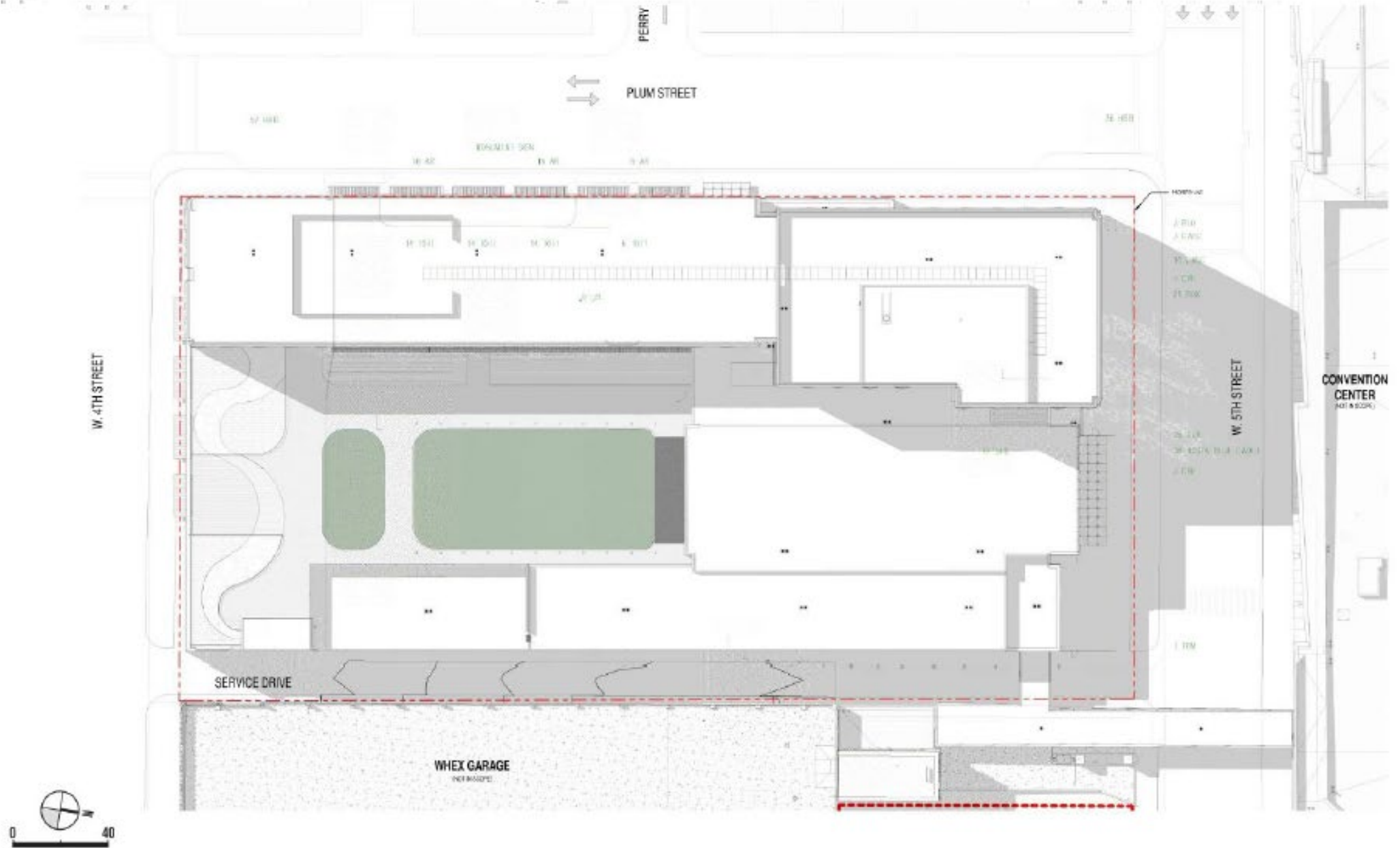
SITE LOCATION



ARCHITECTURAL SITE PLAN

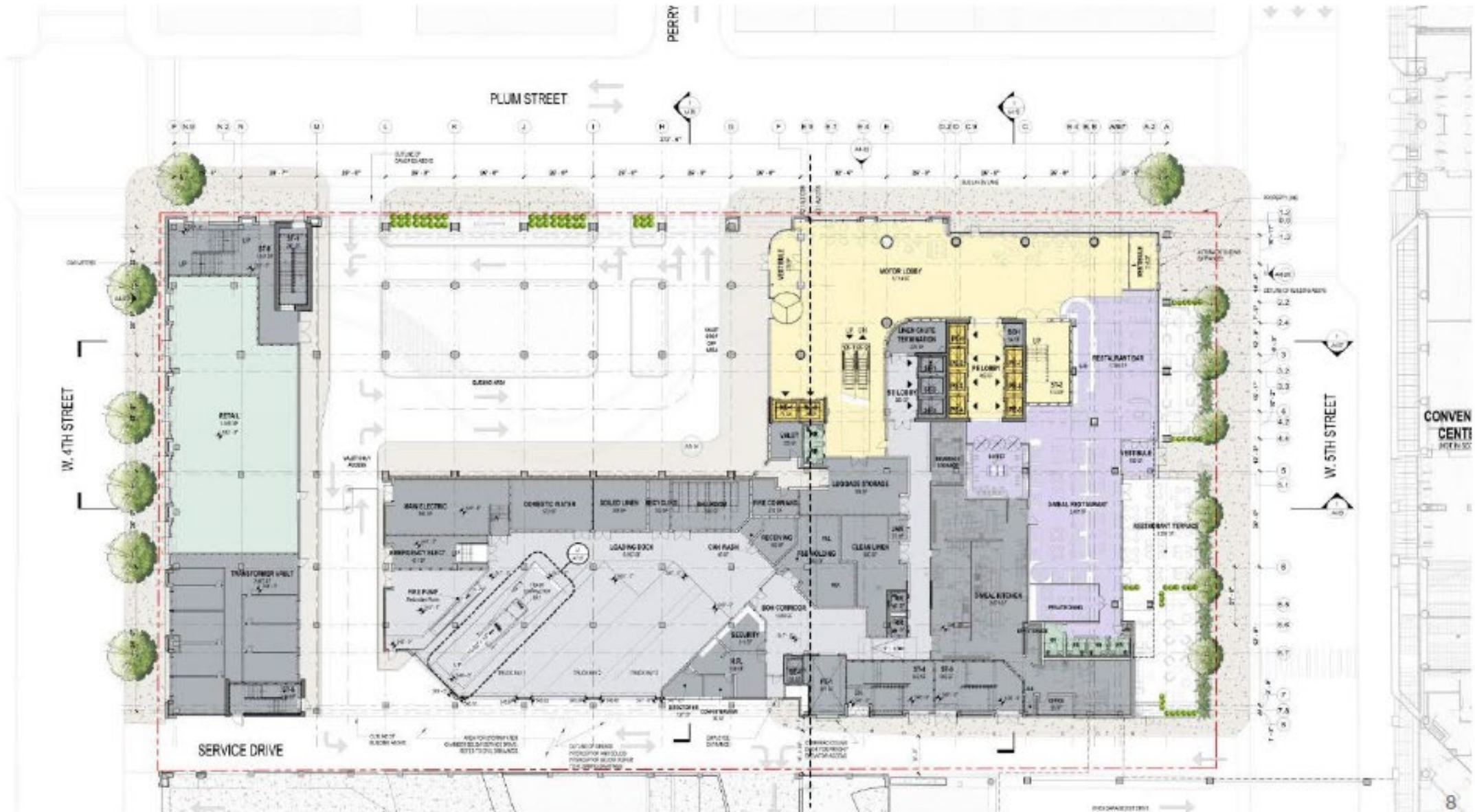
ARIAL VIEW

Attachment 3



FLOOR PLAN

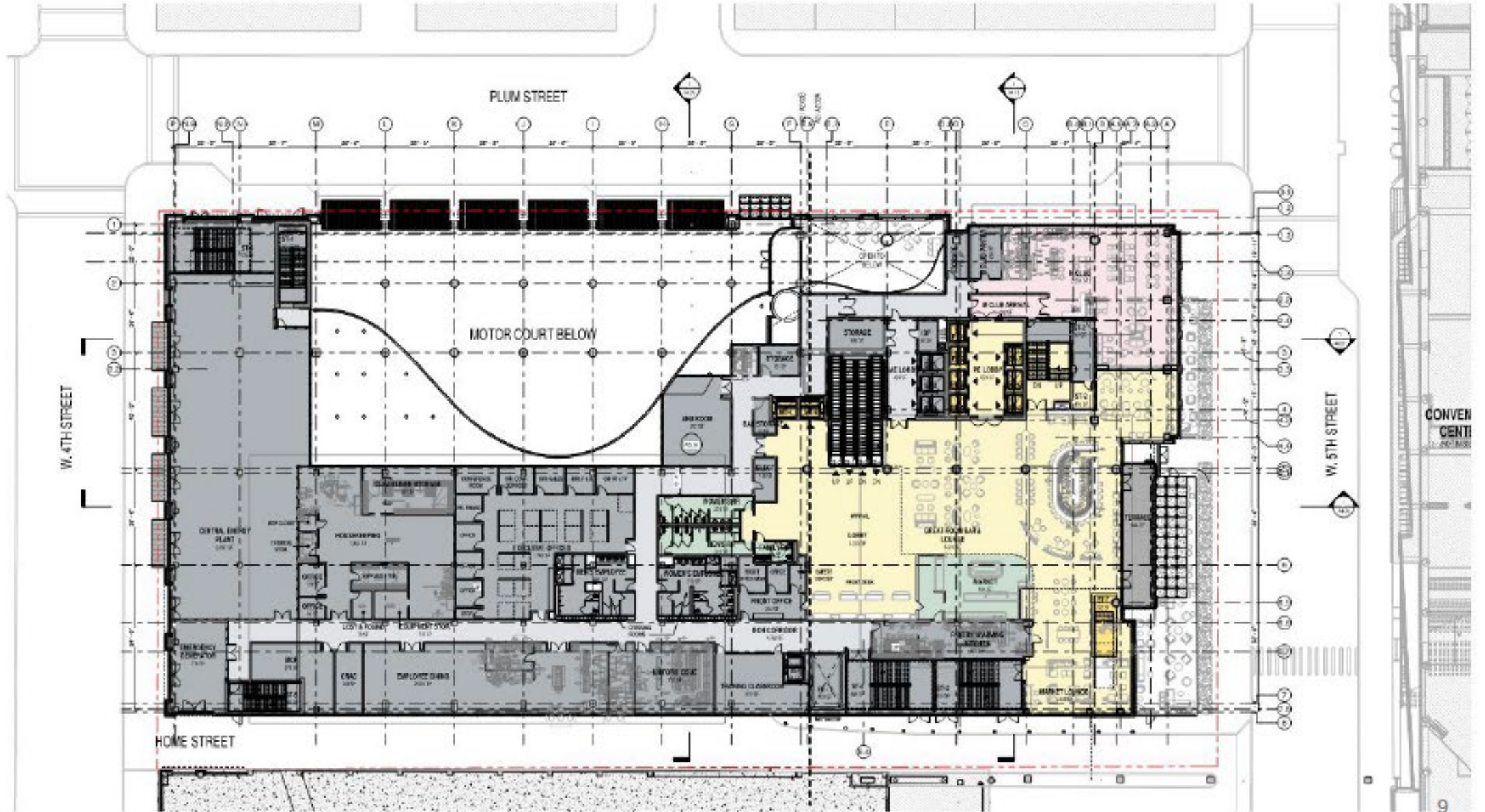
LEVEL 01



FLOOR PLAN

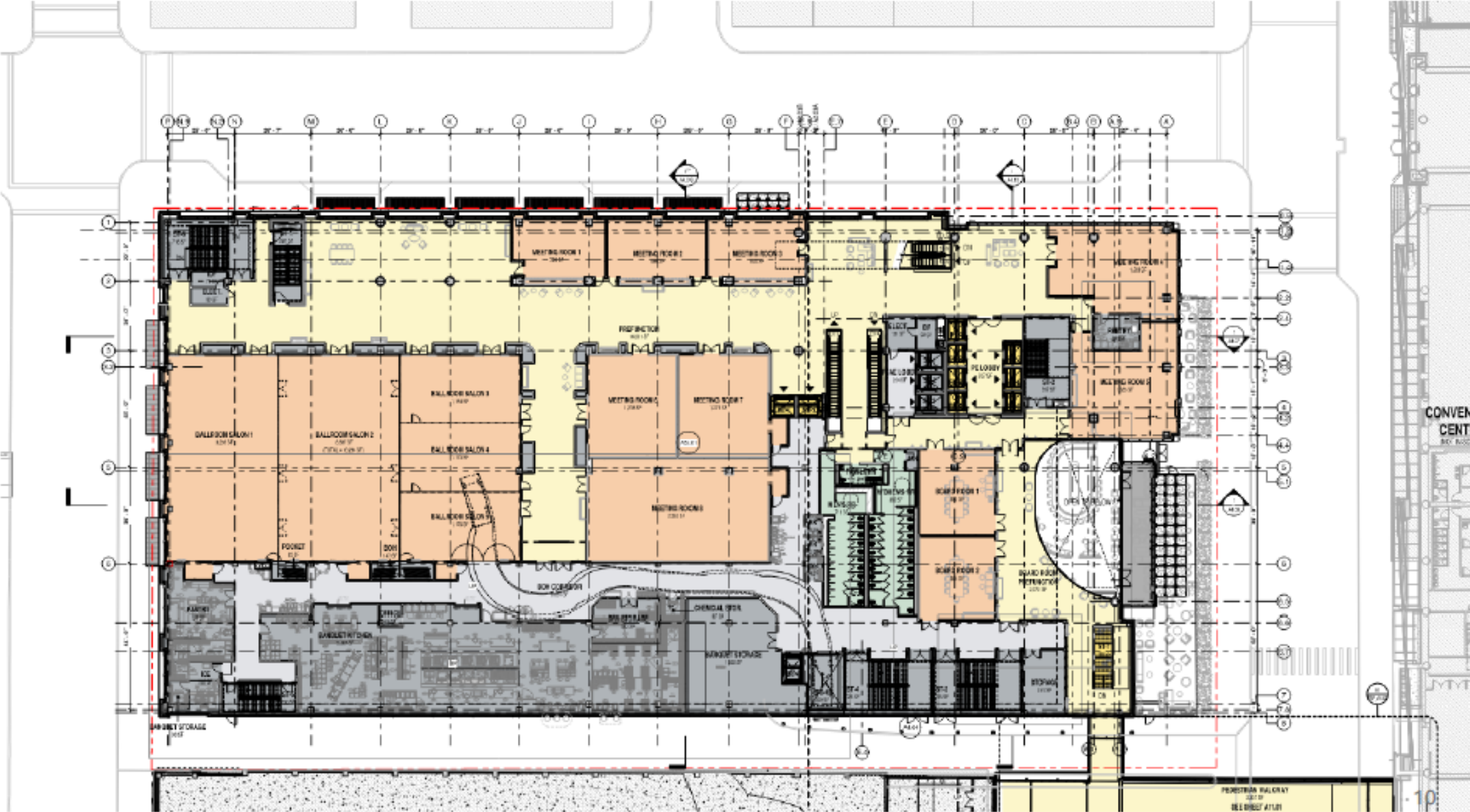
LEVEL 02

Attachment 3



FLOOR PLAN

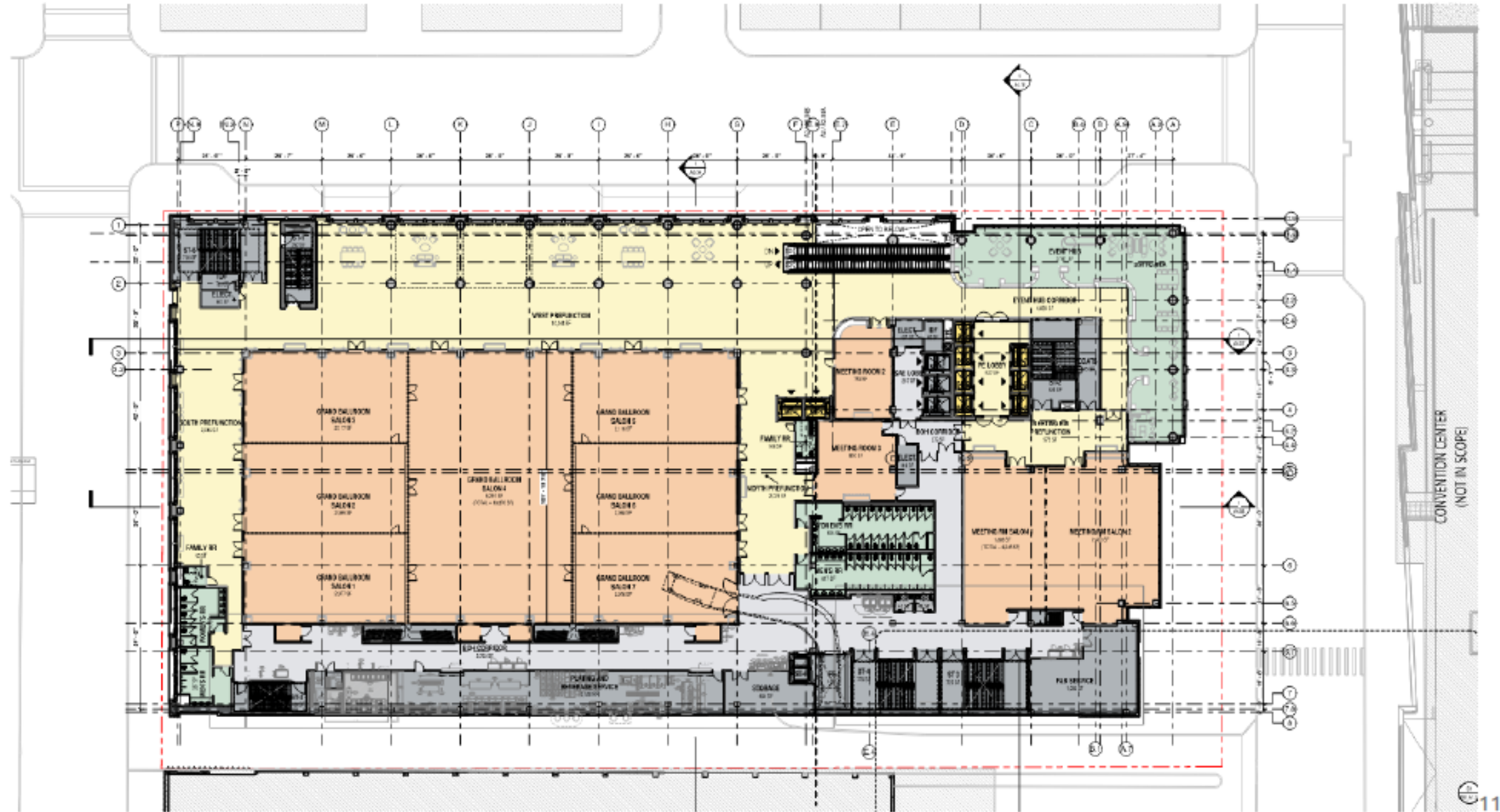
LEVEL 03



FLOOR PLAN

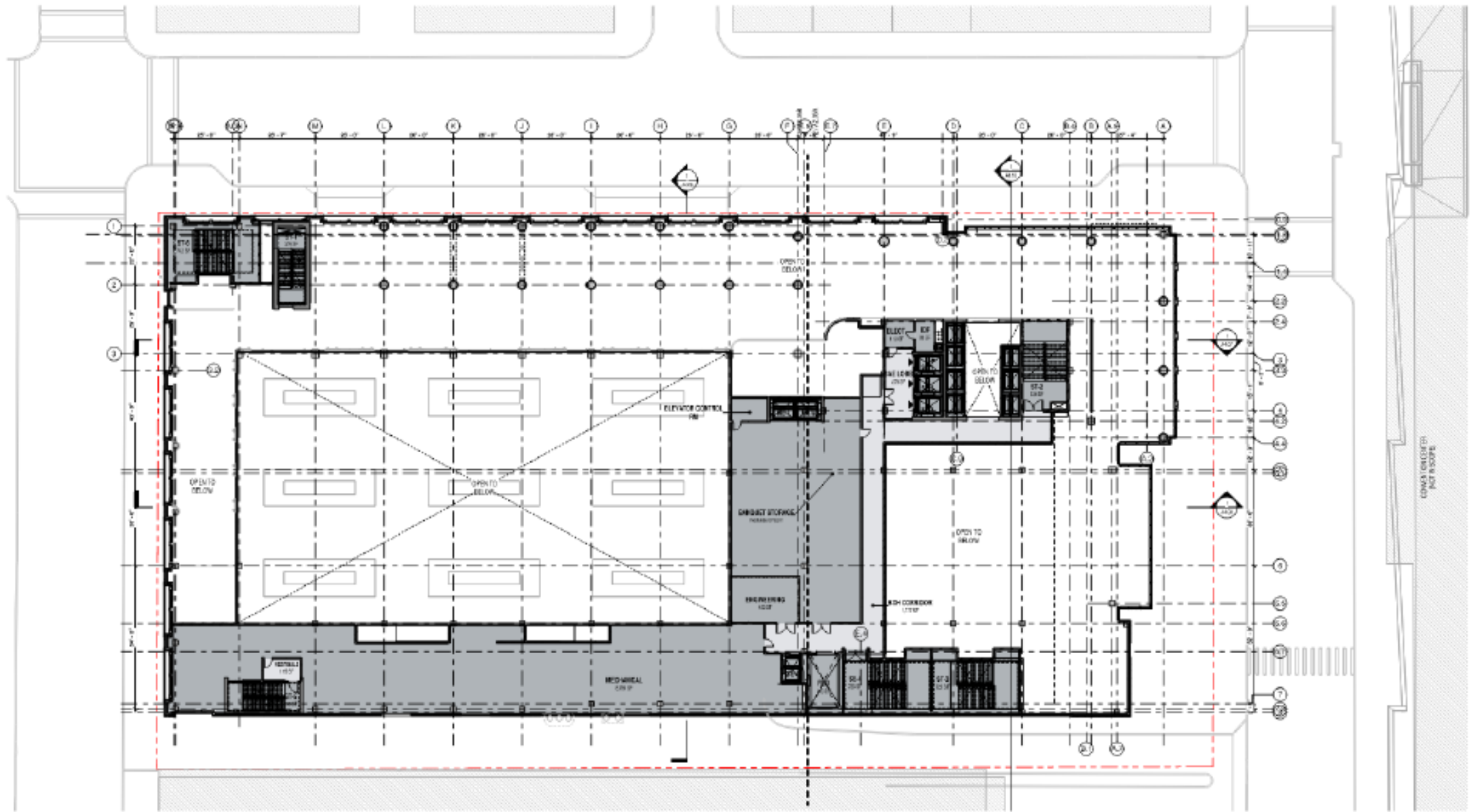
LEVEL 04

Attachment 3



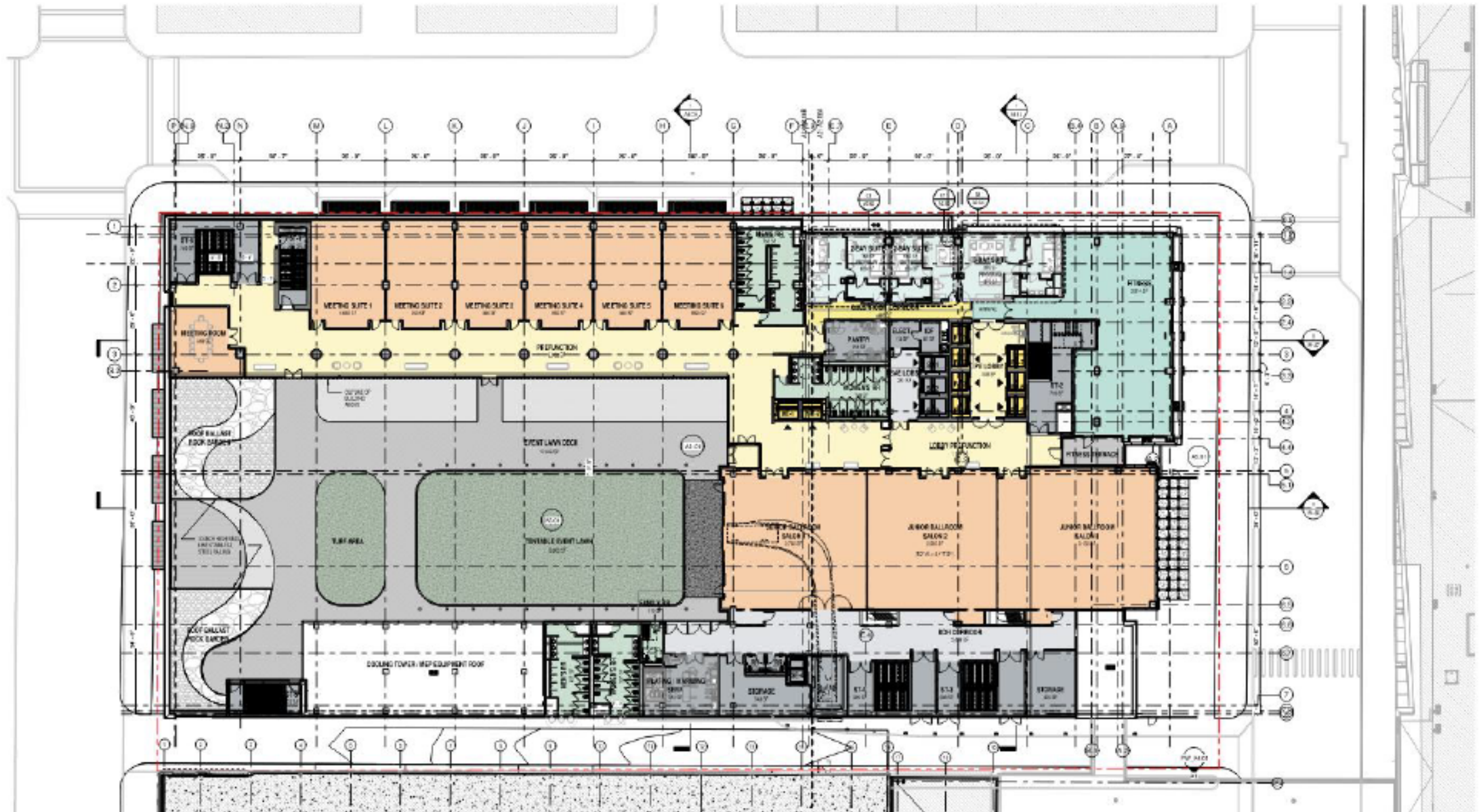
FLOOR PLAN

LEVEL 05



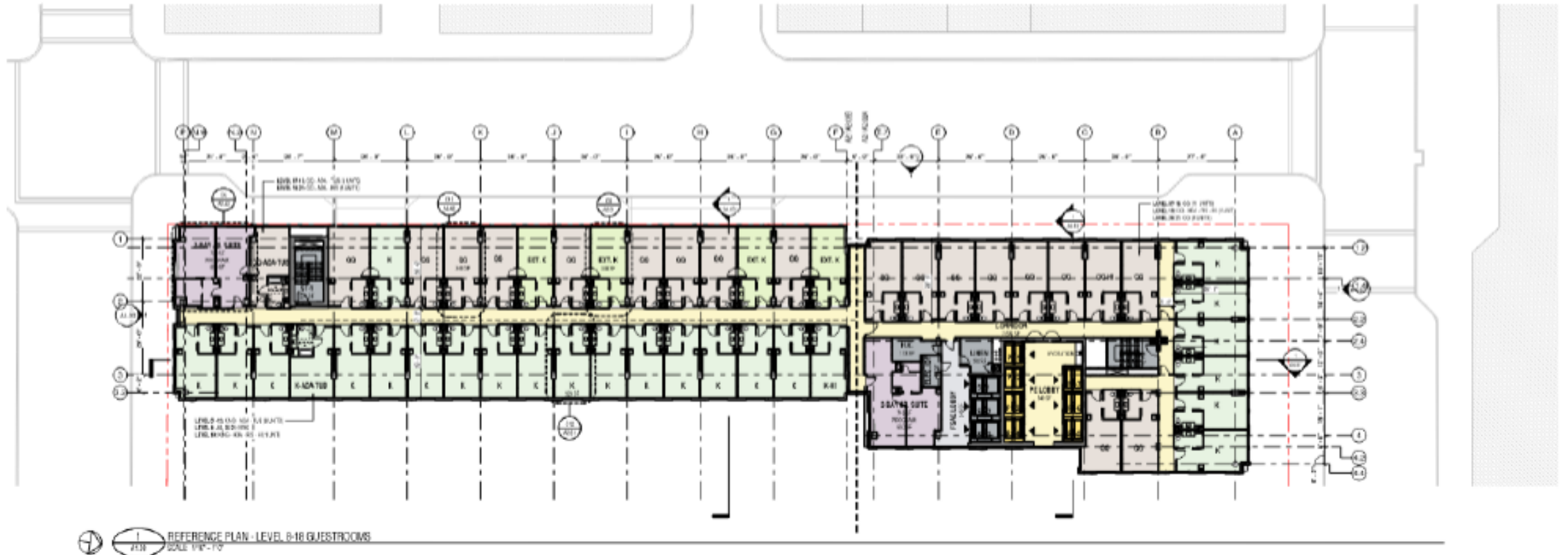
FLOOR PLAN

LEVEL 06



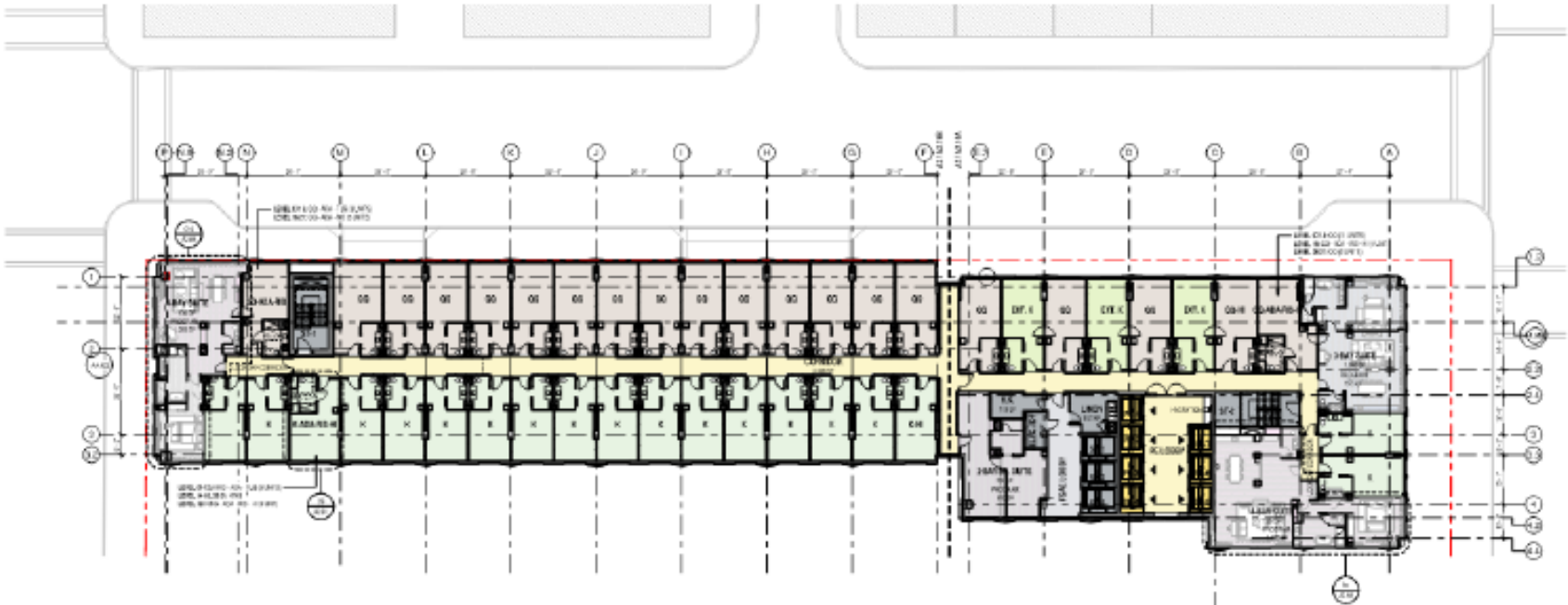
FLOOR PLAN

LEVELS 08-18

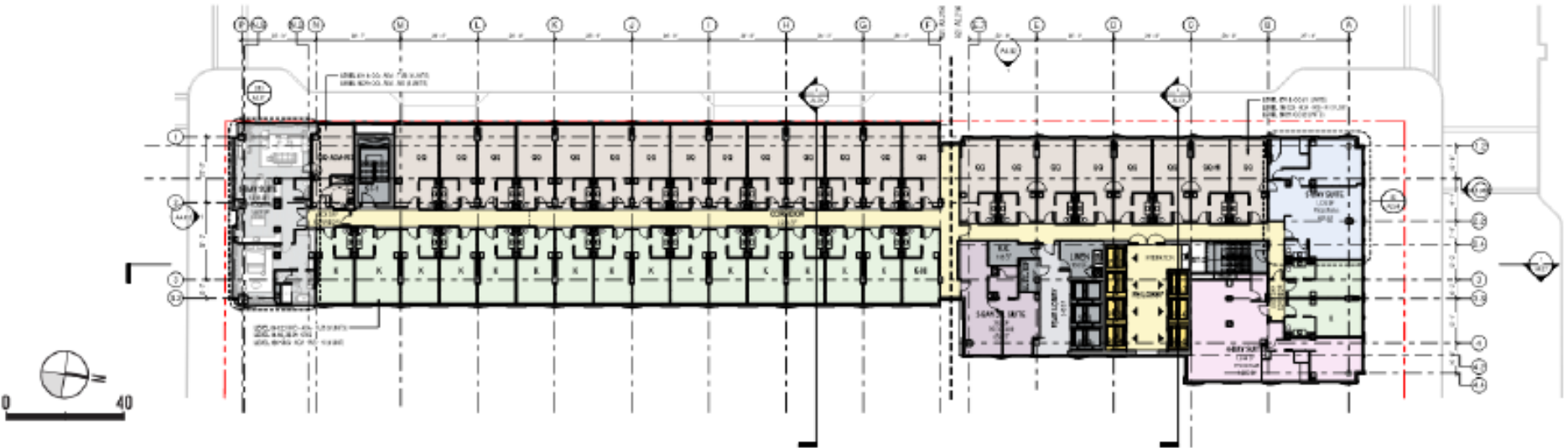


FLOOR PLAN

LEVELS 19-21

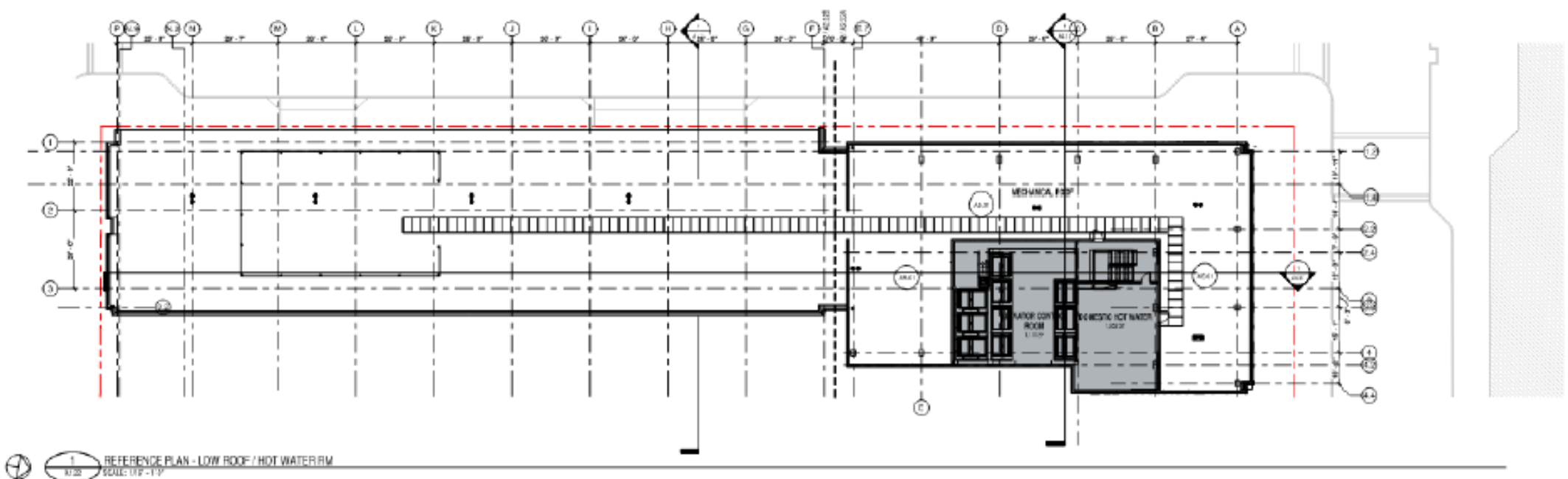


REFERENCE PLAN - LEVEL 19 - 20 GUESTROOMS
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



FLOOR PLAN

LOW ROOF



1
1/8" = 1'-0"
REFERENCE PLAN - LOW ROOF / HOT WATER RM
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

SITE IMAGES



NORTHEAST



NORTHWEST



SOUTHEAST



SOUTHWEST

Aerial Looking Southeast at Plum / W 5th

Attachment 3



Plum at W 5th Looking East

Attachment 3



Plum St. / Porte Cochere

Attachment 3



W 5th Street Looking West

Attachment 3



Aerial View Overlooking Terrace



4th Street at Plum / Retail Area

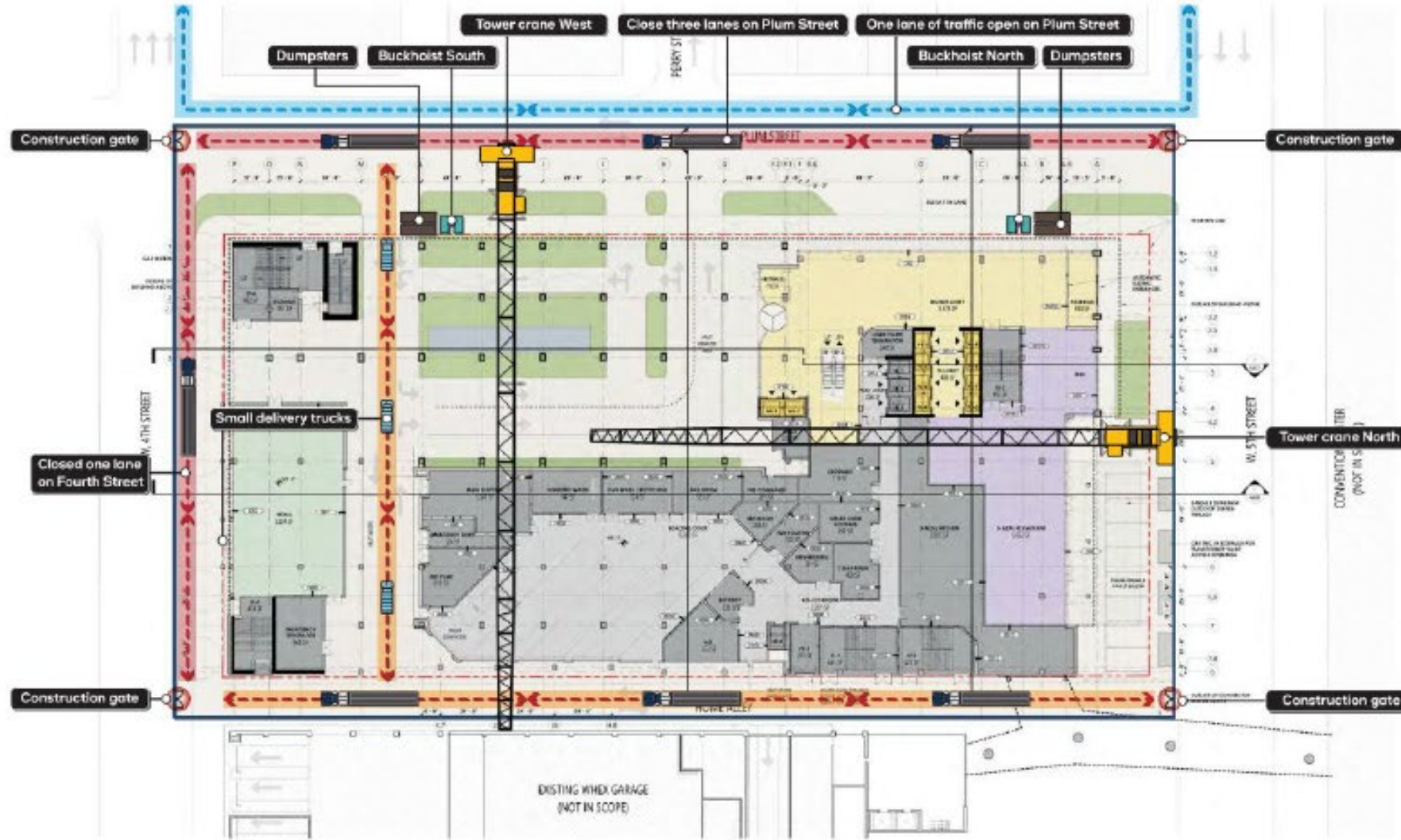
Attachment 3



Schedule

- Current and Completed Activities
 - Removal of Legacy Underground Storage Tanks
 - Environmental Testing and Monitoring
 - Predevelopment / Design
- Milestone Dates
 - Q4 2025 – Groundbreaking
 - April 2026 – Tower Cranes Assembled
 - May 2027 – Topping Out
 - August 2027 – Dry In Complete
 - Q2 2028 – Substantial Completion
 - Summer 2028 – Hotel Open to Public

Logistics



Legend

- Construction fence
- Construction gate
- Construction traffic
- Public traffic
- Closed lane
- Three lanes closed on Plum Street
- On site construction access
- Dumpster
- Buckhoist



Reminder

Everyone will be unmuted one-at-a-time. Due to the number of speakers, please limit your time to two (2) minutes. There will be time at the end for any questions/concerns that were not addressed

- Use “raise hand” function if you have a follow-up question following your initial question
- Do not use the chat bar for project-related questions (tech issues only)

Department of City Planning & Engagement

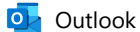
Eunique Avery, Senior Community Engagement Specialist

eunique.avery@cincinnati-oh.gov

Written comment must be submitted by 5pm on Monday, August 25th, 2025, for inclusion in the public engagement summary.



Thank you for coming!



Re: [External Email] Re: Community Engagement Meeting - Convention Hotel

From: Scott, Reid L. <>

Sent: Tuesday, August 26, 2025 11:21:15 AM

To: Avery, Eunike <>; Von Allmen, Marc <>; Simon Kaiser <>; Katie Westbrook <>

Cc: Williams, Dariah <>; Urbancsik, Jesse <>

Subject: RE: [External Email] Re: Community Engagement Meeting - Convention Hotel

Eunike,

Hope this message finds you well this morning. Thanks again greatly for your assistance last week. As we did field some questions during the presentation, we took time to address a few with our team where we believed follow up may be required and have put together a list of responses to certain items. We weren't certain if it made sense for you to send a follow up to any of the participants, but please see the below to distribute as you believe is typical. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask:

8/21/25 Cincinnati Convention Hotel Virtual Engagement Session – Follow Up Q&A Responses

1. Responses Regarding Construction Process

a. What will hours of construction be?

i. RESPONSE: General construction hours will be 7 AM to 5 PM, with the team adhering to city noise ordinance requirements between 11 PM and 7 AM.

b. Will there be weekend work?

i. RESPONSE: Weekend work is anticipated to occur at times during the course of construction.

c. What will the communication process look like/is there a specific point of contact for residents to contact around issues?

i. RESPONSE: Skanska USA is serving as the General Contractor for the project and will provide regular updates to

surrounding areas who provide appropriate contact information to the team. The frequency of distributions of impending activities is currently TBD, but will occur monthly at minimum until impactful activities subside. To start, Dan Balow (dan.balow@skanska.com) will be the primary contact for any major issues to be addressed once construction begins, and any change in process will be communicated to the surrounding stakeholders.

d. What protective measures to control debris, dust, etc. and minimize impact will be implemented?

i. RESPONSE: A screened fence and barricades will surround the site and contractors will adhere to a Stormwater

Pollution Prevention Plan. The ground will be watered down as needed to control dust. Debris will be maintained inside of the construction fencing, and project workers will be responsible for site clean up and performing daily walks of the site perimeter to maintain the areas outside the fence.

2. Responses Regarding Streetscape

a. Are there any plans for upgrades along 4th Street?

i. RESPONSE: The Fourth Street frontage along the hotel site will be improved with new concrete and curbs, tree planting, and new retail frontage.

b. Are any traffic calming measures contemplated?

i. RESPONSE: Plum St. will see a two-way conversion and the introduction of a defined median area (TBD if raised or striped). Fourth and Fifth streets will not see significant changes beyond the interaction with the new Plum two-way conversion and updated signalization/pedestrian crossings. Existing curb cuts servicing the surface lot along 4th and 5th Streets will be removed.

c. Will the Bus Stop along 4th Remain in its current position?

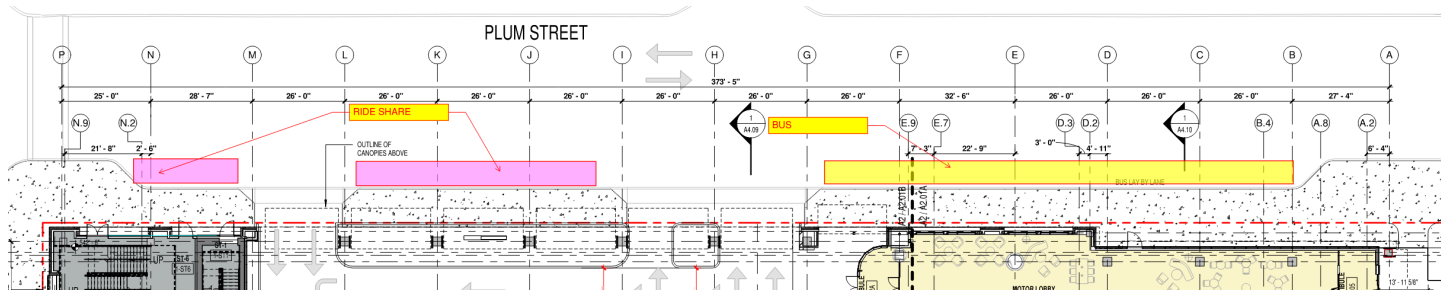
i. RESPONSE: The Fourth Street Bus Stop at the hotel site will remain in at least its approximate location. The bus stop will meet requirements of Metro needs.

d. Will 4th Street lighting change?

i. RESPONSE: Along the hotel site, street lights will be kept, and additional lighting from building and retailers will further illuminate this area with different levels based on time of evening and business hours.

e. Are there designated ride share areas planned?

i. RESPONSE: For servicing the hotel, it is anticipated that most ride share arrivals will utilize the porte cochere area accessed off Plum St. The east side of Plum St. will see non-travel lanes that could be utilized to accommodate ride share, taxi, and bus staging and pickups as needed as similar to the below image



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