

A. Project Vision

Overview

The Athena team's vision for 65-79 Seattle Street is a true mixed income community integrated seamlessly into a stable and deeply rooted neighborhood of Boston. The building is designed to accommodate 69 home ownership units with no less than 45% income restricted. It is sited to both engage with and enhance the proposed Greenway while being set back from adjacent existing buildings through landscape elements and surface parking. The building will reflect and complement elements of the existing neighborhood architecture using siding and masonry materials as well as vertical bays to break down the scale.

The shape of the building embraces and defines the future Greenway and the building patio and plantings will serve to extend the elements of the new open space. The interior common space will open onto the patio to encourage indoor/outdoor activity and will be lined with windows to enhance activity and perceived safety of the Greenway. The bike rooms will be situated in a way that relates to the multiuse paths in the Greenway and on the streets and will incorporate fix-it stations. This combined with a low parking ratio will encourage biking and other forms of transportation and lessen the number of vehicle trips associated with the project.

The building will be designed to appeal to a diverse group of buyers united in their interest in being part of a dynamic, community-oriented neighborhood. It is anticipated that this will include individuals with a preexisting connection to the area as well as those from other Boston neighborhoods. We anticipate it will appeal to those who work at Harvard as well as those who will appreciate the proximity to jobs in other parts of the City. We also believe that the established community and access to open spaces will be welcoming to families, seniors, and early career professionals. Although it will include a common room that will encourage socialization, the building will not be over-amenitized in order to maintain ownership costs that are manageable for buyers of both market and income restricted units.

This vision reflects the principles of development that the Athena team believes are essential to a successful redevelopment of this property. However, the team knows that projects are most successful when they reflect the community in which they are located and that it is important to hear those perspectives. Therefore, the team looks forward to meeting with the Community in advance of any formal process with or submission to the City of Boston in order to hear feedback on this proposal directly.

Consistency with Community Feedback

This project concept responds to the feedback that Harvard obtained from interested community members and local elected officials during two meetings during the summer of 2023 in the following ways:

Affordability Levels: The project includes 69 units of which 31 will be available to buyers earning up to 80% of AMI and 38 will be market rate. At 45% income-restricted, this proposed mix reflects the spirit of the community input. This condominium building will reinforce the existing community's high level of home ownership and provide a foundation of stability and investment in the new developments in this area. The development team will continue to evaluate opportunities to increase the number of affordable units to a maximum of 50% as design progresses.

Massing: The proposed 4-5-story building results in a substantial number of new units to help address the state's housing affordability crisis while maintaining a scale of building that does not overwhelm the neighborhood. Setbacks, materials and articulation contribute to a building that will respond to the existing neighborhood fabric. The project common space will be sufficient to foster building community but will be limited so as to provide maximum space for units.

Target Market: The project will be designed to be welcoming to a wide range of buyers including families and seniors. Nearly 60% of the units are two-bedroom or three-bedroom units. In order to foster an invested community, the condo documents will prohibit short term rentals and limit other rentals.

Parking and Circulation: A parking ratio of .6 (42 spaces) and unlinking parking sales from condo sales will help to achieve the goals of both increased affordability (including for market units) and decreased traffic. The project is well served by bus (proximity, frequency and trip duration) to key destinations and transportation nodes in Boston and Cambridge. The marketing materials for the project will emphasize these connections as well as the connections to the bike network. Several employment centers are within comfortable walking or biking distance. The project proposes a paved connection between Windom Street and Seattle Street to assist in the accommodation of emergency and other vehicles, particularly in the event of a discontinued Windom Street.

Courtyards and Landscape: The project responds to the planned Greenway by orienting its landscaped courtyard toward it. The significant separation between the existing buildings on Seattle and Windom Streets and the proposed building will include a landscaped edge to enhance privacy and add visual interest.

Consistency with Harvard Framework

The project has been designed in consideration of Harvard's design goals for the site as described in the ERC Framework and the Seattle Street RFP. The design responds to the Greenway and orients the buildings public spaces toward it. The project massing considers impacts to the Greenway and limits visibility of parking and service functions. Site improvements reinforce connections – pedestrian, bicycle and visual - to the Greenway along Seattle and Windom Streets. The building has been designed to allow for a future discontinuation of Windom Street. The design team will work with the Greenway designers on grading, planting and other design features to further integrate the two projects.

Commitment to the Principles of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Athena's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion principles is borne of Ms. Serafin's experience as one of few women in senior leadership positions in Boston's development industry. As the only female partner at Redgate she led the firm's inclusive hiring efforts, resulting in Redgate having the highest percentage of female professionals of its peer set during her tenure. Recognizing that it is not enough to attract women to the field, one must foster a culture that retains them, Ms. Serafin established the company's first affinity group, RISE, for female employees. She champions women throughout the industry through her membership, leadership and mentor roles in CREW Boston.

In 2020, Ms. Serafin established and led Redgate's DEI Task Force to examine the company's performance in attracting and retaining professionals of color and assess opportunities to better diversify the firm's suppliers. In addition to amending policies and benchmarking, the Task Force engaged with a consultant to facilitate understanding of the history of privilege and equity in order to foster a culture of shared DEI goals throughout the company.

These DEI principles and experiences have inspired the formation of Athena. A primary goal of the firm is to benefit real estate projects and communities through diverse teams and an intentional focus on enhancing opportunities for equity and shared prosperity. Those principles will be applied to the Seattle Street project. Athena Development, ICON Architecture, RBLA Landscape Design, Kaplan Construction and Our Village Initiative are all WBE firms with a demonstrated commitment to DEI principles. Kaplan Construction has a successful track record working with MBE/WBE/DBE sub-contractors and hiring local and diverse labor in the City of Boston. To ensure that the community that we create at Seattle Street reflects these principles, we have engaged a sales/lottery agent (Rich Hornblower/CB) and condominium unit marketing consultant (Our Village Initiative) who, in addition to successful sales records, are committed to and specialize in broadening opportunities for wealth creation through real estate to communities of color.



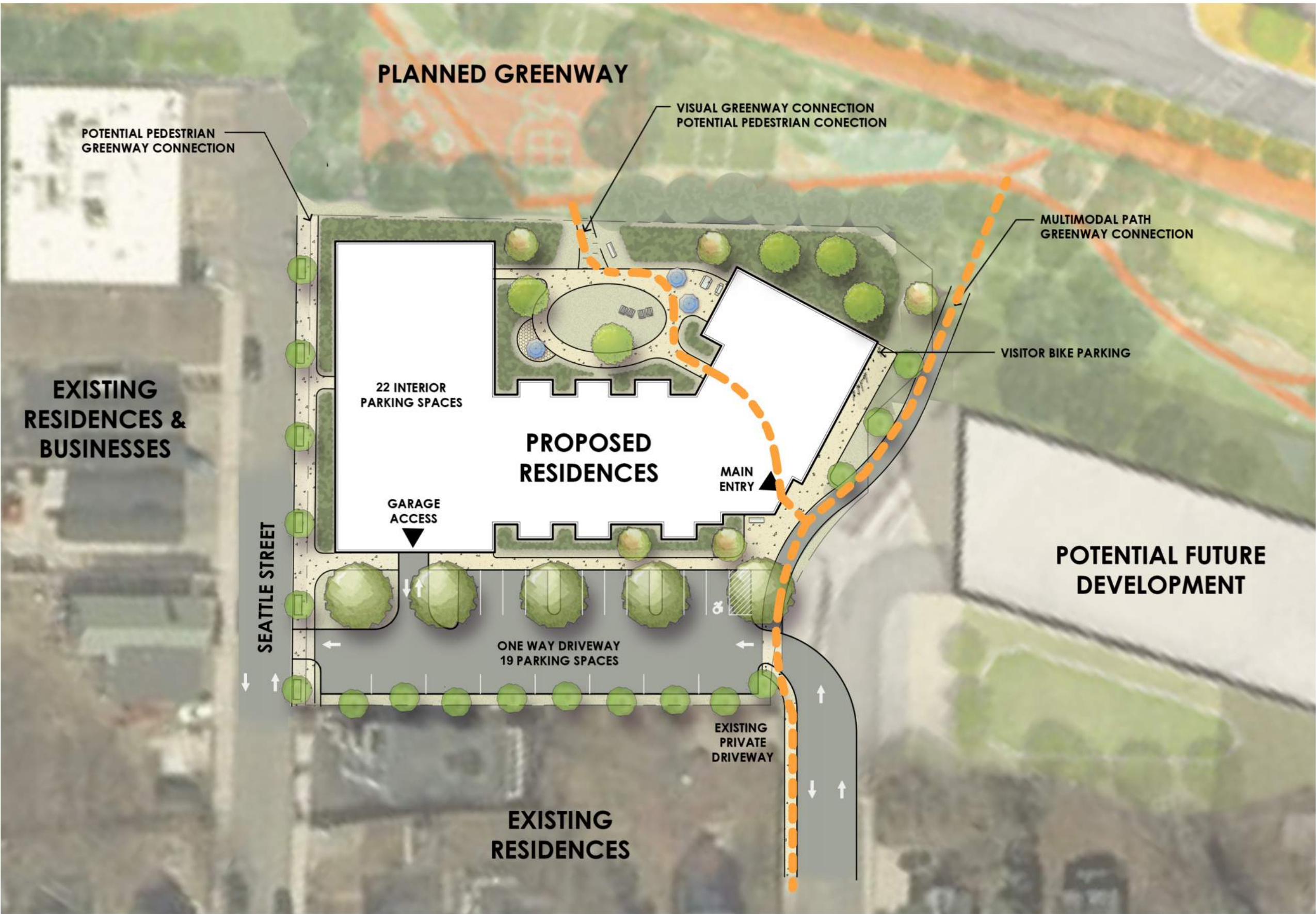
Widened sidewalks with street trees and front yard plantings will improve the public realm.

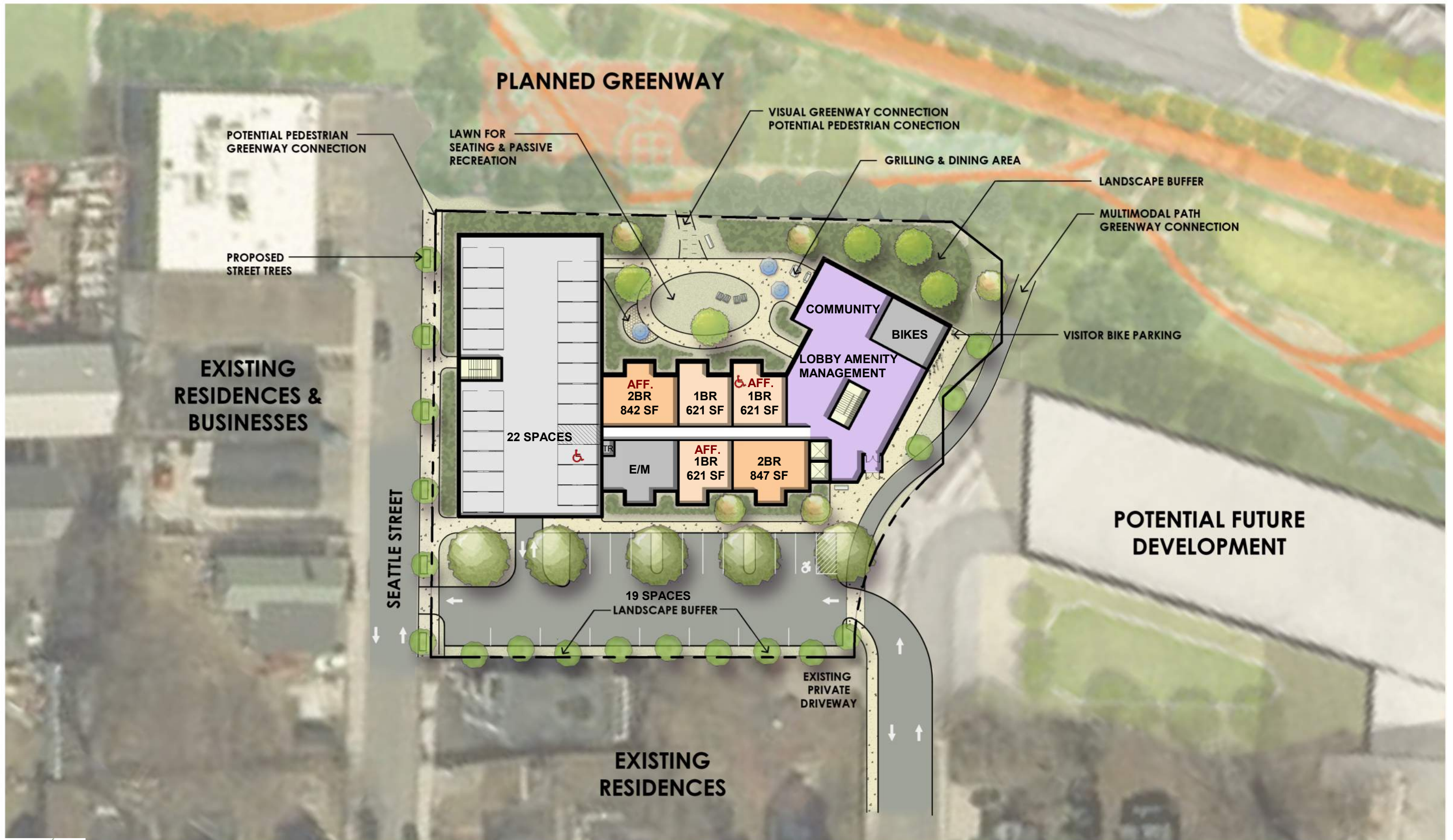


The landscaped courtyard walkways will provide seating opportunities and connect seamlessly to the Greenway.



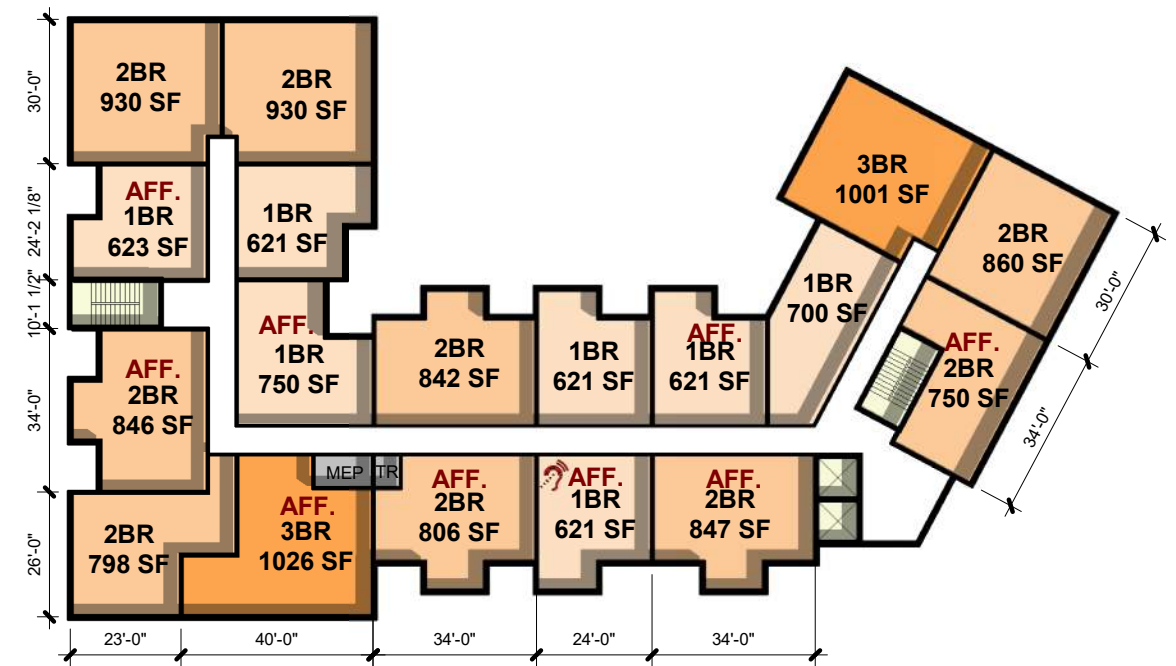
A variety of materials and bays enliven the residential façade.



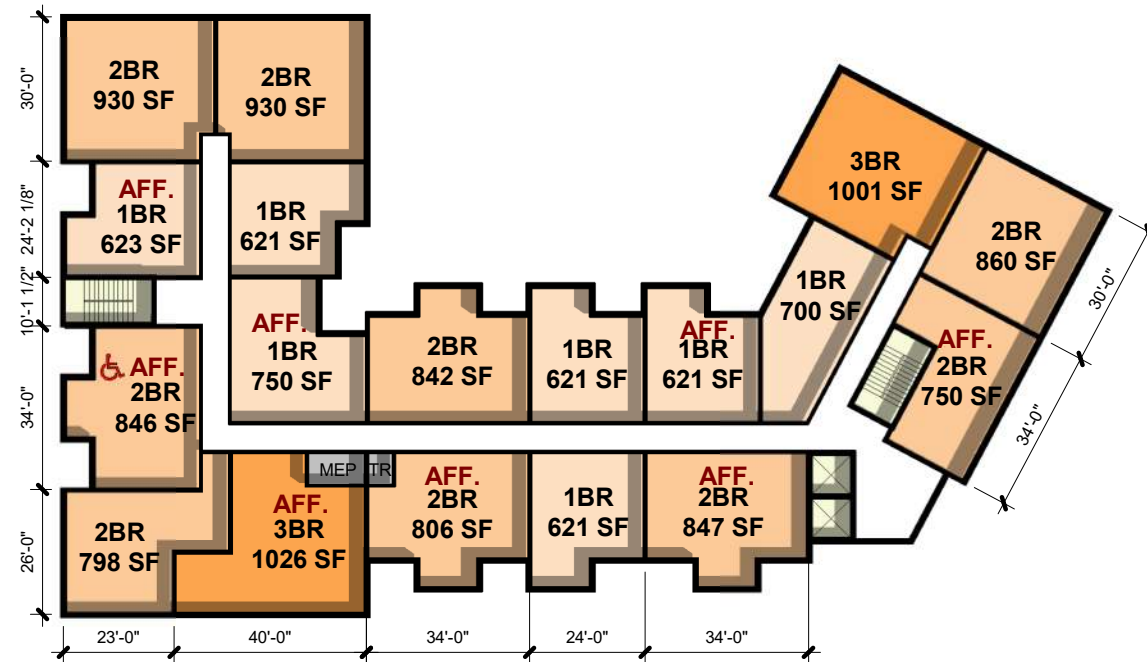




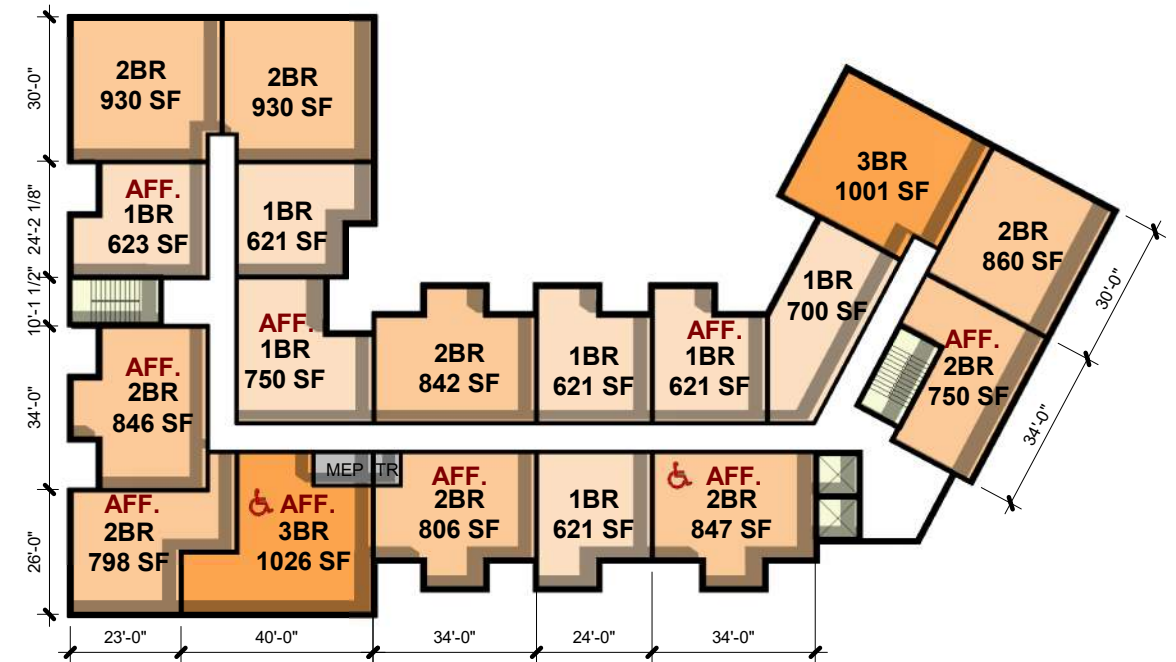
4 LEVEL 5
1" = 40'-0"



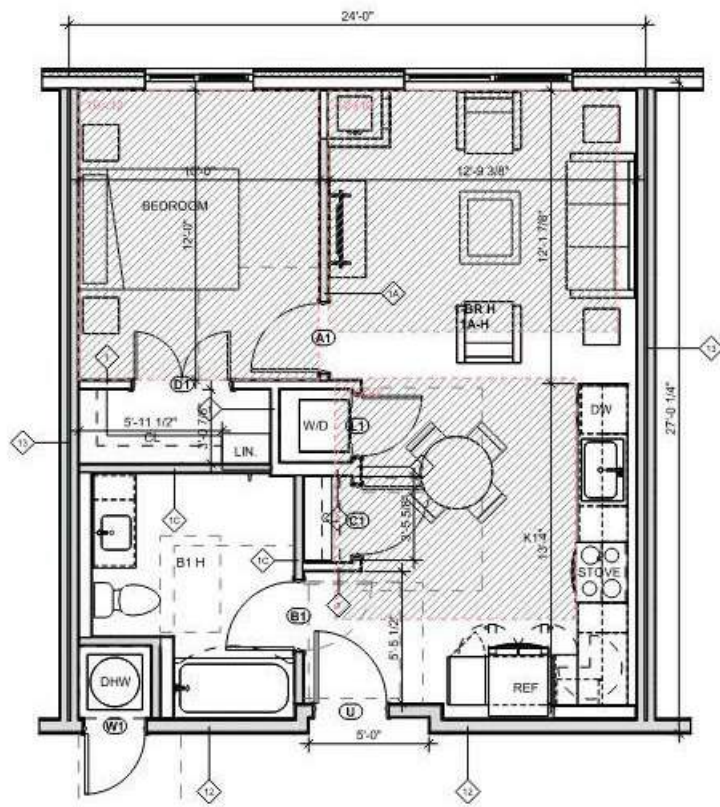
2 LEVEL 3
1" = 40'-0"



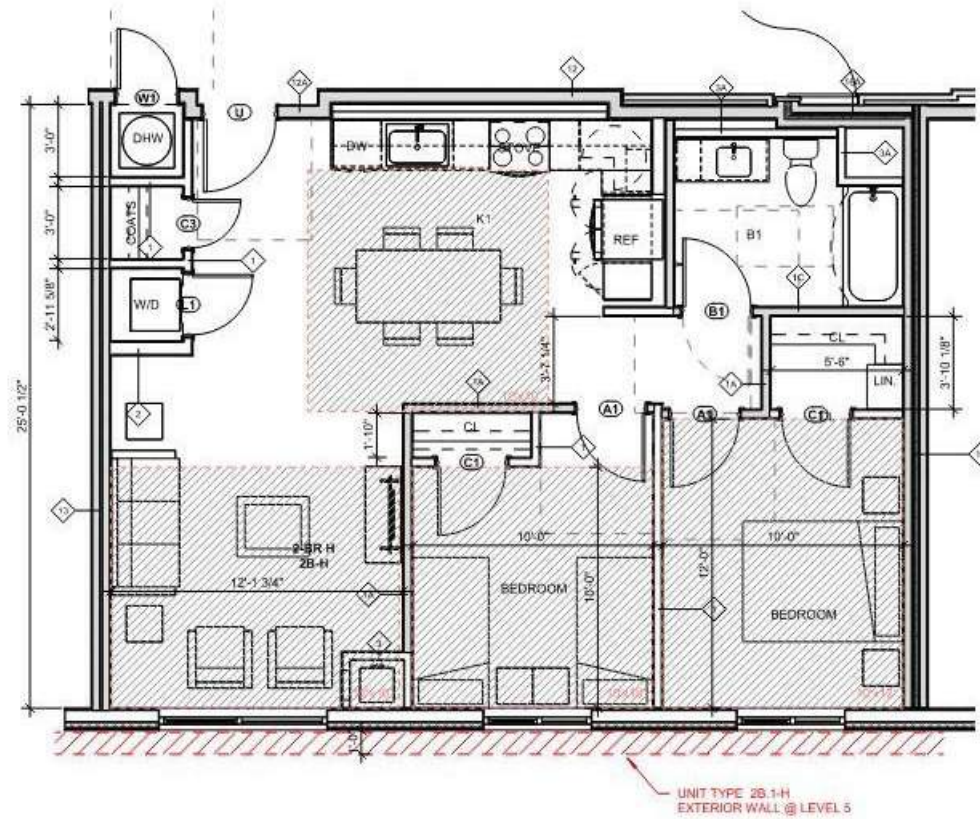
3 LEVEL 4
1" = 40'-0"



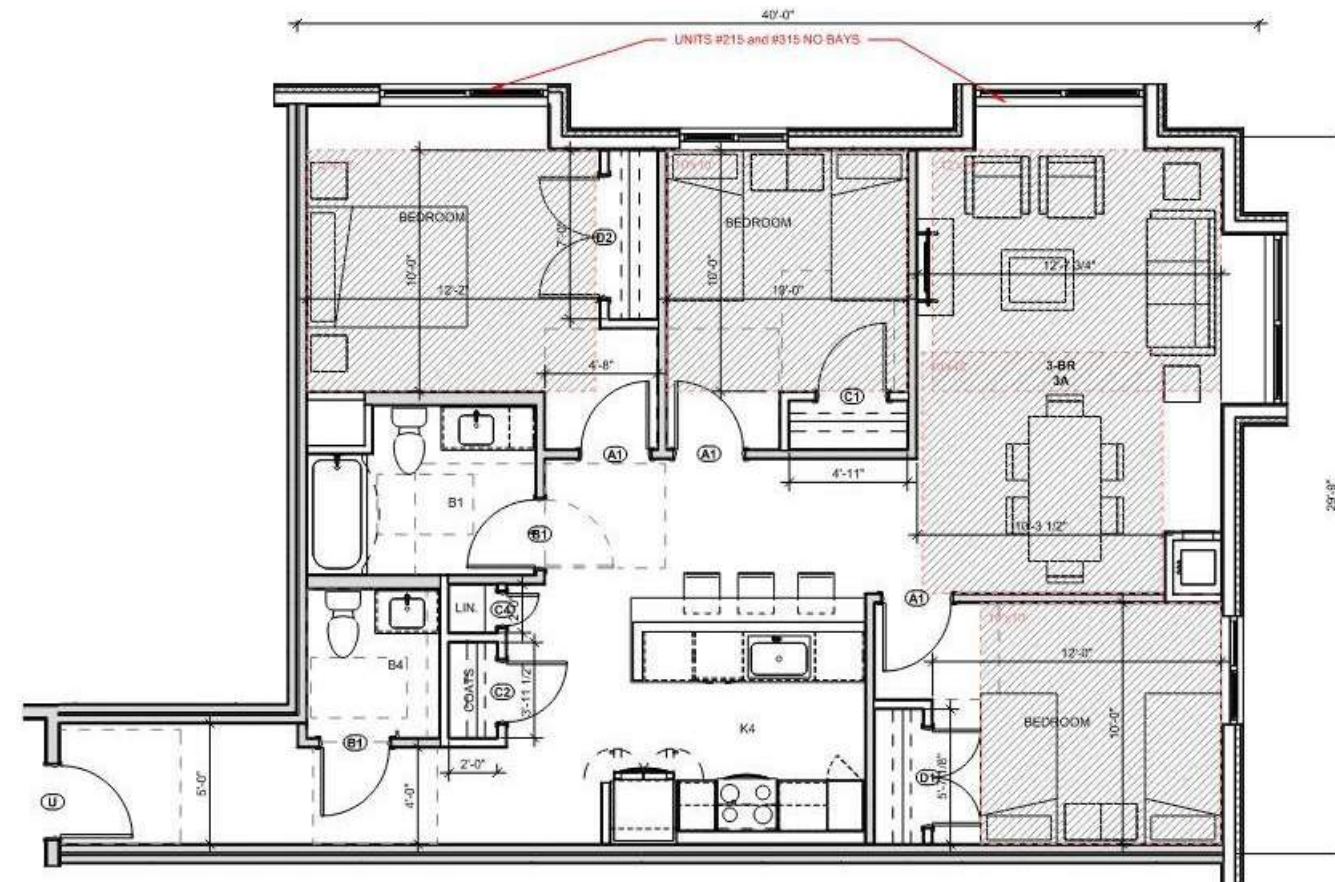
1 LEVEL 2
1" = 40'-0"



1 TYPICAL 1BR UNIT



2 TYPICAL 2BR UNIT



3 TYPICAL 3BR UNIT



1 SOUTH ELEVATION
1" = 30'-0"



2 NORTH ELEVATION
1" = 30'-0"



3 EAST ELEVATION
1" = 30'-0"



4 WEST ELEVATION
1" = 30'-0"

