

FIFTH & UNION | RAINIER SQUARE REDEVELOPMENT  
Early Design Guidance Submittal #2



PROJECT #3017644

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FIFTH & UNION | RAINIER SQUARE REDEVELOPMENT | Early Design Guidance Submittal #2

July 25, 2014

(Revised)





## Introduction

This document has been prepared in response to the Early Design Guidance of the Downtown Design Review Board, as published in minutes of the meeting held on June 17, 2014. In that meeting, priority design guidelines were identified along with recommendations of the Board.

The design team has given careful consideration to the Board’s recommendations. This has resulted in significant modifications and further development of the design concept in several areas, including:

### Site Planning and Massing

- Significant massing setbacks along University Street and Fifth Avenue to open wider sightlines and views of the iconic Rainier Tower base:
  - Hotel set back 26 feet from University Avenue
  - Along Fifth Avenue, base of development has been “carved” and upper level set back 10 feet.
- Further development of the volumetric concepts and contextual datum around the base of Rainier Tower to illustrate how these spaces will add to the character, pattern, and experience of urban form in the neighborhood.
- Illustrative concepts for the architectural treatment at the top of the tower in order to demonstrate its distinctive texture and pattern, promoting visual interest and variety in the downtown skyline.

### Architectural Expression

- Sketches showing further information regarding the potential uses and development of the open space around the base of Rainier Tower, it’s integration with existing public spaces, and views to and from the pedestrian realm at the street level.
- Further information regarding the conceptual basis and programmatic development of the upper levels of the tower.

### The Streetscape

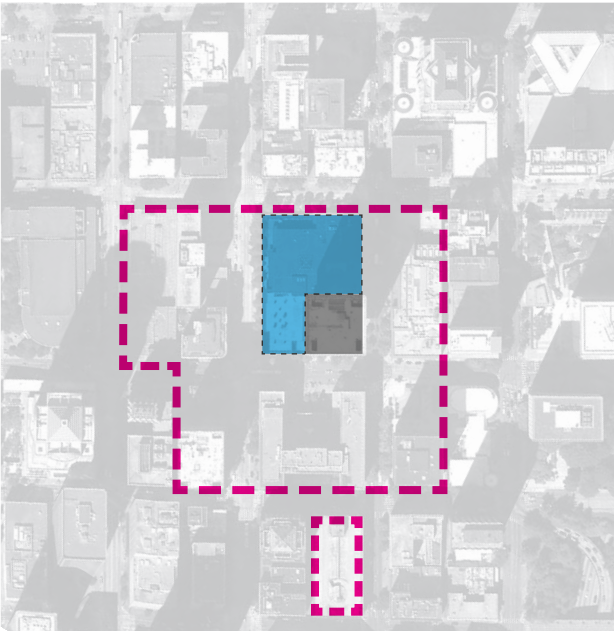
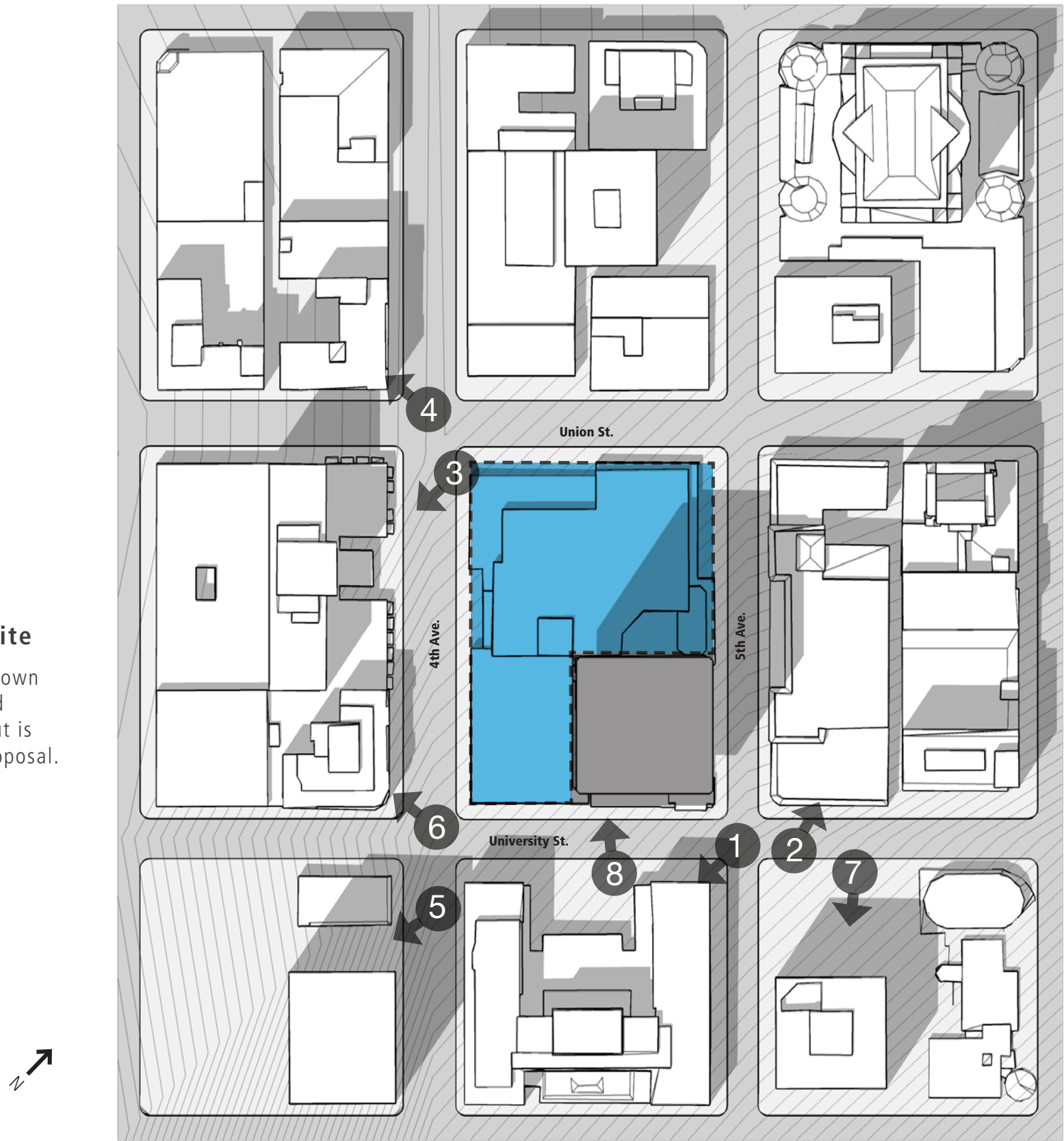
- More detailed renderings showing potential development of the retail street front, building entrances, and streetscape.

Development Site

Metro Tract Area

Existing Rainier Tower Site

Existing Rainier Tower Site is shown for conceptual relationships and possible future development, but is not part of the development proposal.





Surrounding Structures and Uses



1 | Fairmont Olympic Hotel



2 | 5th Avenue Theater



3 | Puget Sound Plaza Building



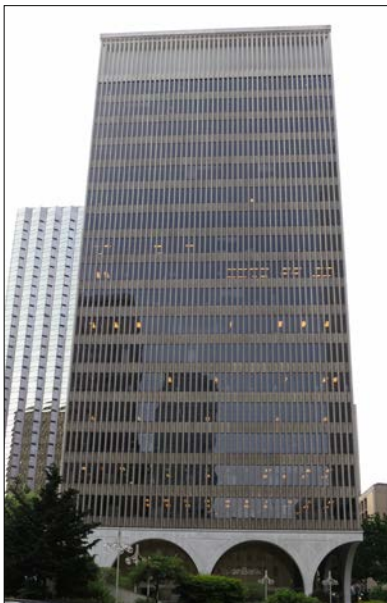
4 | 1411 4th Ave Building



5 | Financial Center Building and Seattle Tower



6 | Cobb Building



7 | IBM Building



8 | Rainier Tower



# A1

## Site Planning and Massing

### Respond to the Physical Environment

Develop an architectural concept and compose the building's massing in response to geographic conditions and patterns of urban form found nearby or beyond the immediate context of the building site.

#### GUIDANCE

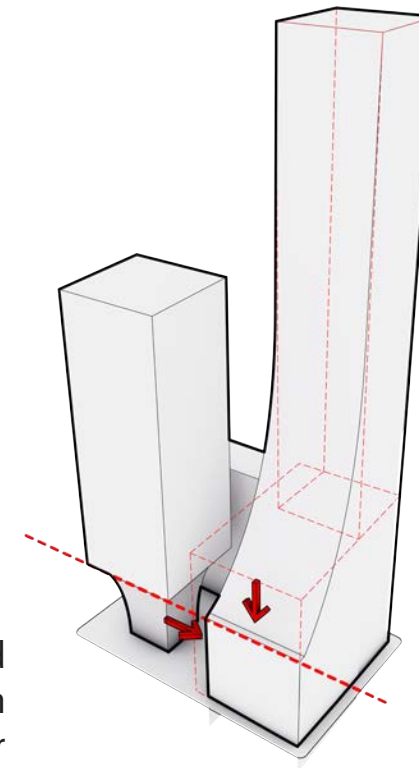
The composition of the three major massing elements (the Rainier Tower and the proposed structures) ought to appear as if communicating with one another. The additions to the block should be designed in a manner that would possess a strong relationship or "attitude" toward the tower's base. Consider a design of the new insertions into the block that would 1) express a clear spatial organization shaped by the base and the two new buildings and 2) provide sightlines to the tower's base from the north on Fifth Ave and from the west along University St. The Board noted the third scheme's reliance upon the horizontal datum line at 139 feet established by the top of the curved base in determining the beginning of the upward curve of the tower and the height of the hotel. The Board questioned the need for strictly adhering to it. The tiers of the proposed residential / office tower could commence just above the retail plinth allowing pedestrians to experience the tower's dramatic shape and opening views to Rainier Tower's curved podium.

#### RESPONSE

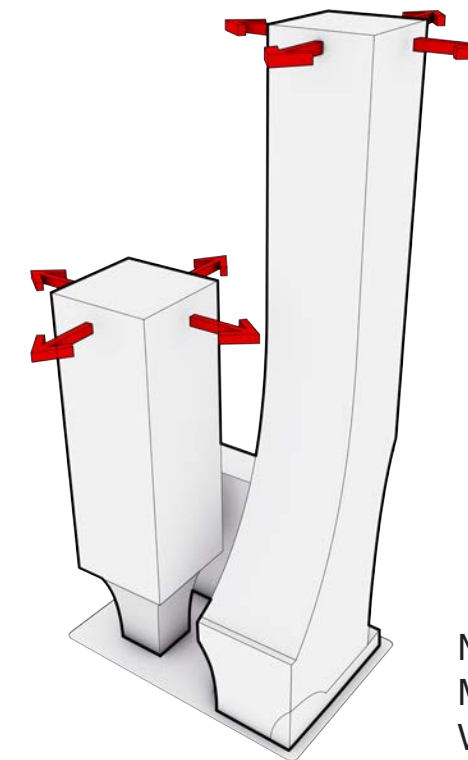
The open space for the proposed project has been configured to provide visual relief around the base of Rainier Tower, giving it "breathing room" and providing dramatic views of the base from the surrounding streets as well as from the common interior spaces of the new development via a large glass-ceilinged atrium. The massing composition of the proposed structures builds from a common pedestrian datum, or "plinth", incorporating a variety of vibrant, pedestrian-oriented retail uses, and sets back from the existing tower base above this level to establish a volumetric urban space that is complementary to the sculpted base of the existing tower. This combination of open space and massing setbacks at the base of the development creates a "lifted urban garden" space that responds to and communicates with the unique geometry of Rainier Tower.

At the top of the existing base, an urban datum establishes an inverse and complementary relationship between the upper levels of the proposed tower to the north, the top floor of the proposed hotel to the west, and the rectangular shaft of the existing tower. As it rises from this datum, the proposed tower gradually slopes away from the existing Rainier Tower, preserving views to the north, and culminating in a slim rectangular profile at the top floors in the northwest corner of the block. In this way, the upper levels of the two towers are set in diametric positions on the block, allowing maximum light, air, and views for both of the towers as well as for the surrounding urban spaces.

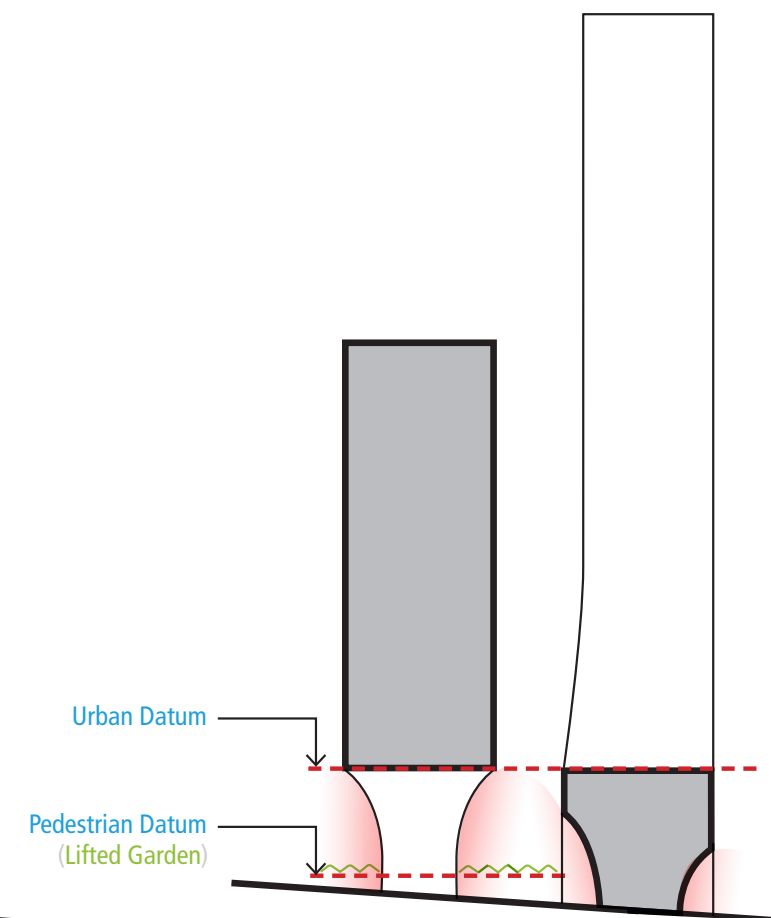
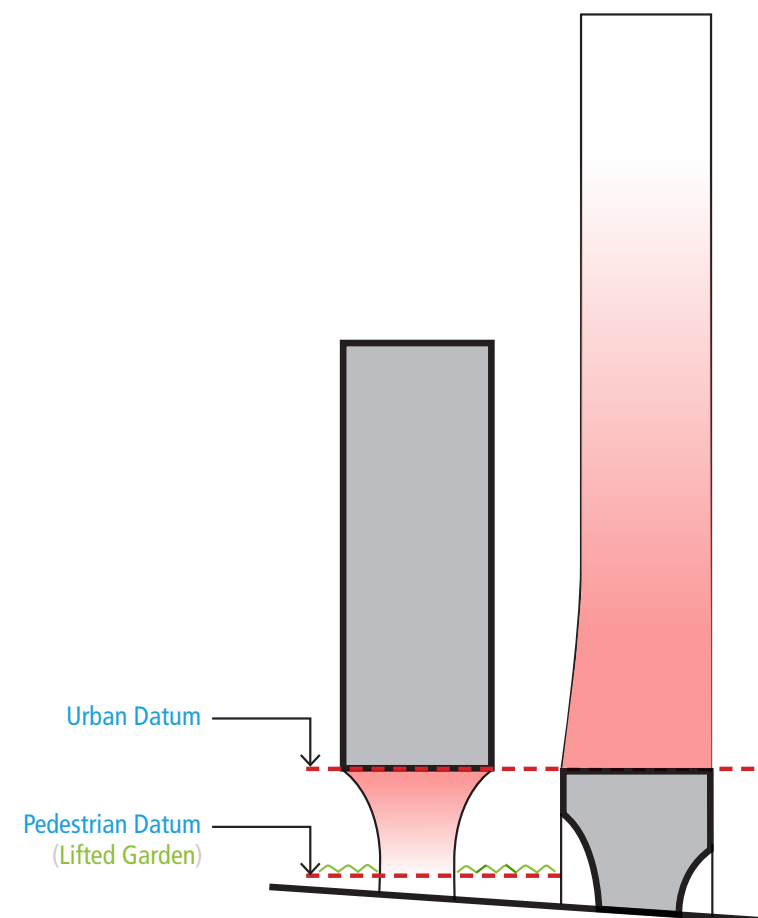
The base of the proposed tower along Fifth Avenue has been articulated to fade back from the base of Rainier Tower at the lower levels to enhance sightlines from the pedestrian streetscape. Along University Street, the hotel has also been set back significantly to open up views of the existing Rainier Tower base.



Edge along 5th Ave Lowered to Meet Significant Datum Line of Rainier Tower

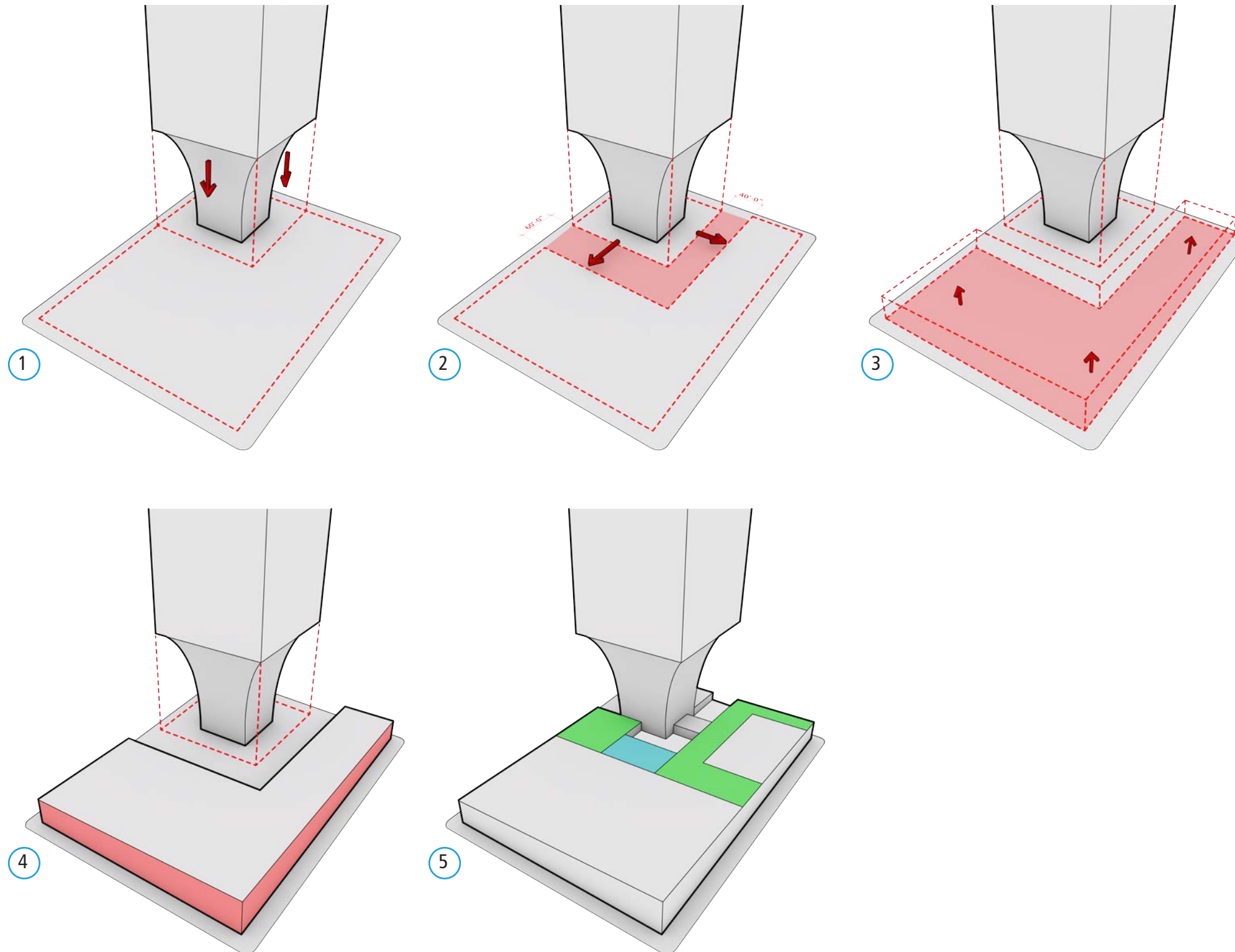


New Tower Location Both Maximizes Views and Retains Visibility of Rainier Tower





## Spatial Organization of Base



- 1 Rainier Tower Footprint Meets the Ground
- 2 Space Below Rainier Tower Grows, Giving Breathing Room
- 3 Remaining Site Rises Up to Become Proposed Tower / Hotel Base
- 4 Retail Along Edge of Base Gives Activation to Streetscape
- 5 Lifted Garden Created, Allowing Daylight / Airflow to Penetrate Site

# A1

## Site Planning and Massing

Respond to the Physical Environment



View from North on Fifth Avenue





View from West along University Street



# A1

## Site Planning and Massing

Respond to the Physical Environment



View from Fifth Avenue and University Street





View from Fourth Avenue and Union Street

# A2

## Site Planning and Massing

### Enhance the Skyline

Design the upper portion of the building to promote visual interest and variety in the downtown skyline. Respect existing landmarks while responding to the skyline's present and planned profile.

#### **GUIDANCE**

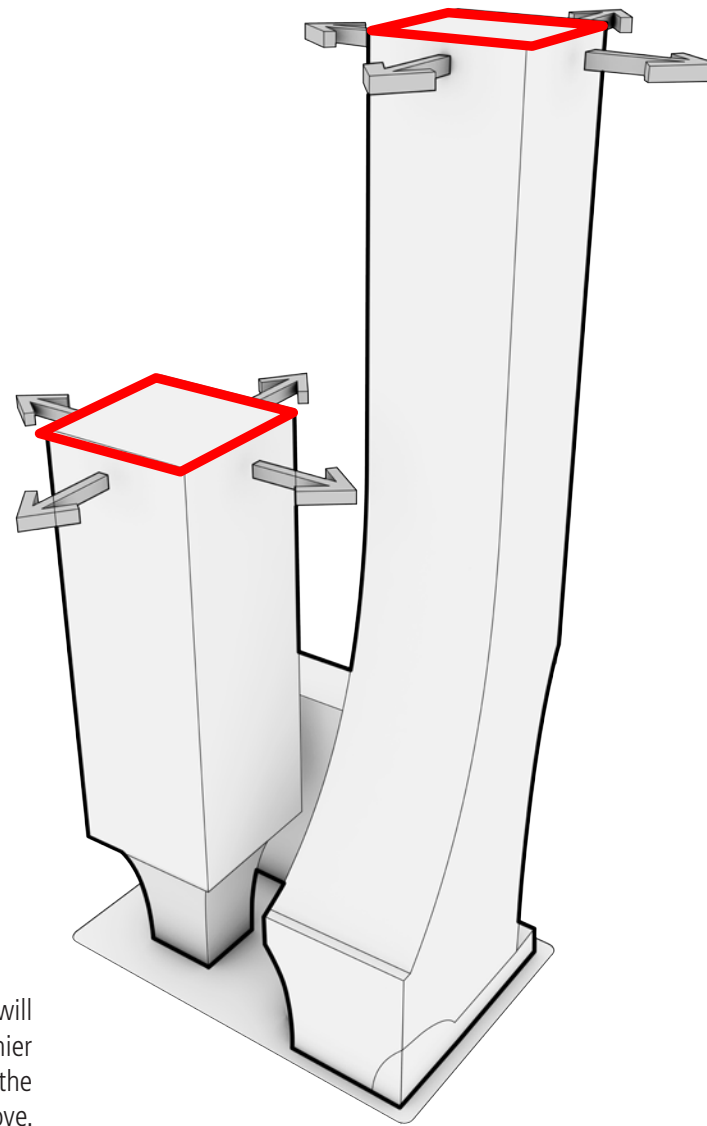
In order to achieve the guidance provided in A1 above, the Board suggested that the applicant consider building higher and consider other departures, similar to the façade modulation (request # 1 in the booklet), which may enable the lower realms of the complex to have a clearer spatial organization.

The upper reaches of the proposed tower have proportions roughly similar to Rainier Tower, square in plan, with a blunt or flat roof. While the architect conveyed the intention of relating the two towers by this similarity of form, the Board members indicated an interest in a more dramatic shape or expression on the skyline. Seattle towers over 40 floors all possess sculpted shafts and/or interestingly shaped tops.

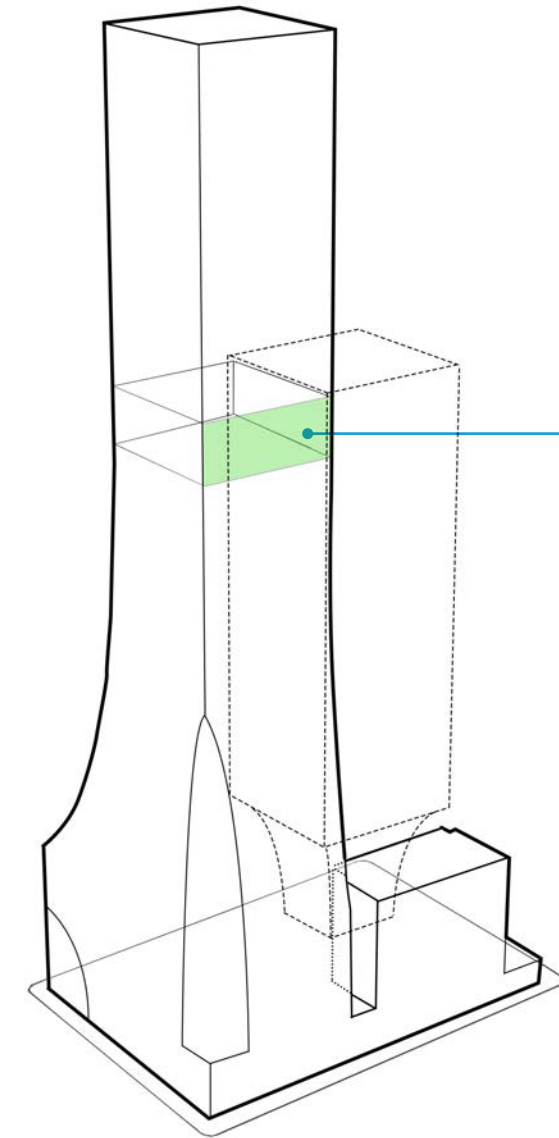
#### **RESPONSE**

A taller tower does not meet the applicant's development program or projected market conditions. The location of the hotel along Fourth Avenue allows potential phasing of the project (which is key to the success of the development), and provides the potential for a distinct architectural identity. In this way it becomes an important element in the urban composition for this block. See response to A-1 above for additional discussion of the base levels of the development and sightlines to the existing Rainier Tower base.

In addition to the gradual reduction in floor plate size as the tower ascends, the top of the tower will possess a unique and distinct identity, expressed through a palette of materials and detailing at the upper levels to form a distinct "top" or "cuff". Its height will provide a visual landmark for downtown on the skyline, adding to its visual interest and variety.



A similar expression at the top will complement Yamasaki's Rainier Tower by not competing with the simple and elegant formal move.



Residential Outdoor Amenity Space









# B1

## Architectural Expression

### Respond to the Neighborhood Context

Develop an architectural concept and compose the major building elements to reinforce desirable urban features existing in the surrounding neighborhood.

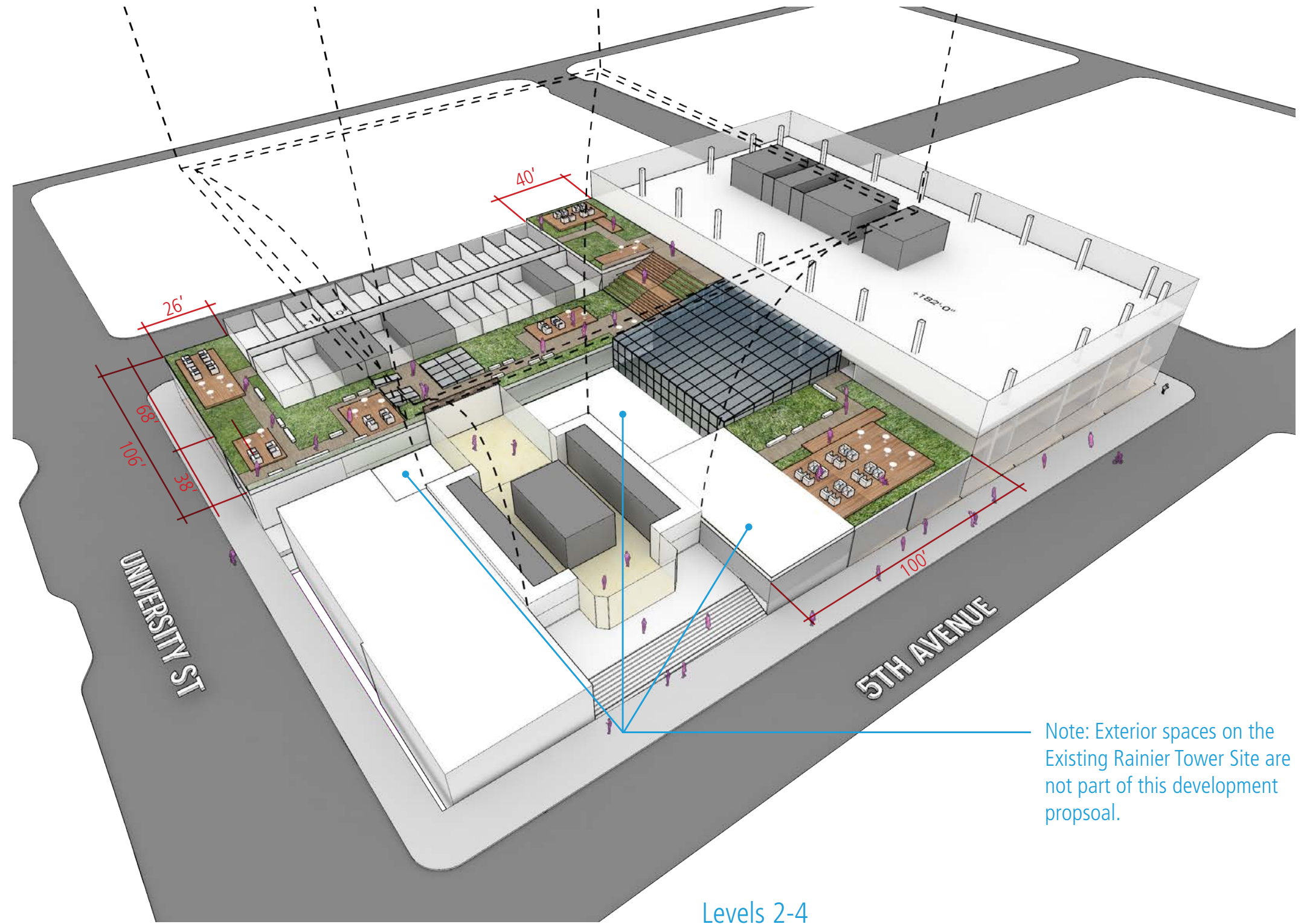
#### GUIDANCE

The desire for a coherent spatial arrangement of the masses at the lower levels or pedestrian realm of the complex corresponds to a second Board interest---that open space, whether private, public or a mix, has an outward presence at or near the streetscape. The applicant could consider the placement of open space at street level as an entry plaza(s) or above the plinth to exert itself in more compelling ways upon the pedestrian experience than the green swaths illustrated (p. 45) in the EDG booklet. Interstitial or negative space introduced by Rainier Tower's idiosyncratic base ought to be complemented by the massing of the new structures. The insertion of new volumes can serve to expand and shape this space into a definable open area. By giving the podium of the Rainier Tower breathing room, the development can celebrate a significant Seattle structure, supplements its visual dynamism and creates a meaningful space that defines the lower realm where the three major buildings meet.

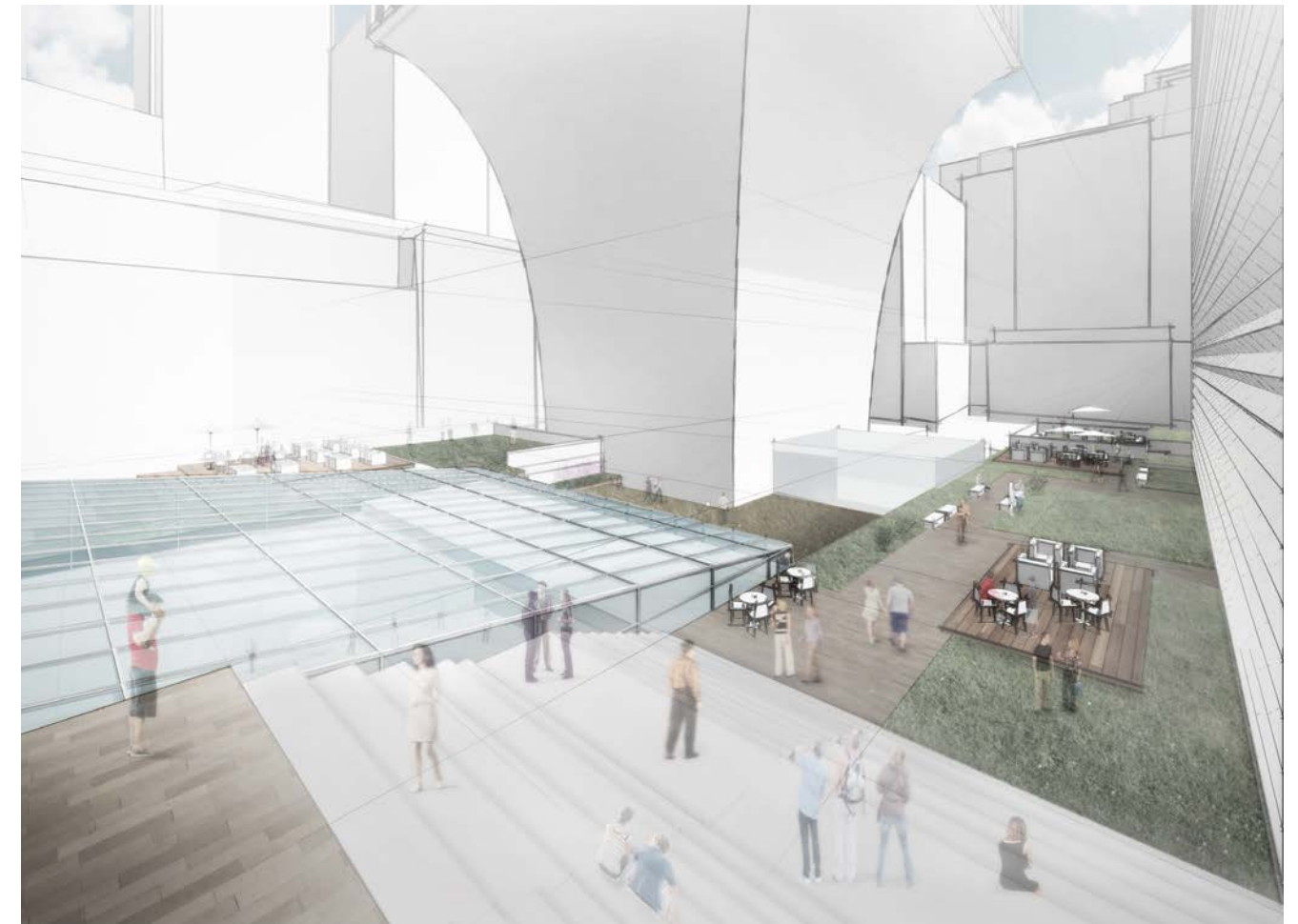
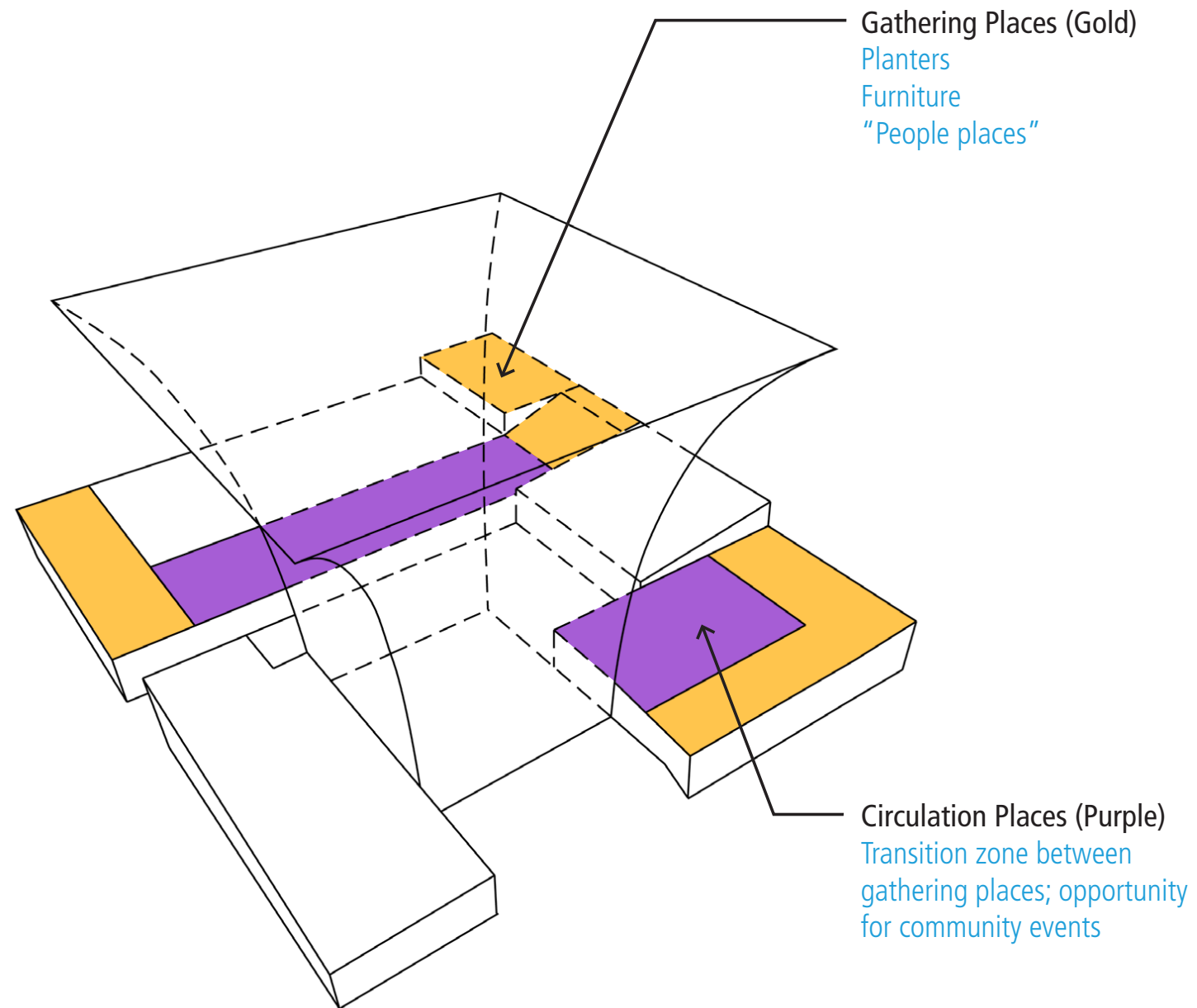
#### RESPONSE

Open space provided at the lower levels of the proposed development has been designed to leverage the unique features of the site's urban context. Open space will be aggregated at the base of the new development to create a series of open spaces envisioned as "lifted urban gardens", providing important visual connection from the pedestrian realm at street level to the sculptural base of Rainier Tower as well as to the light, air, and activity occurring at the new "plinth". A retail-oriented, glass-ceilinged central atrium space in the new development will also afford dramatic views of Rainier Tower and the surrounding context. As discussed in the response to guideline A-1, the massing of the office / residential tower and the hotel have both been adjusted to respond directly to guidance received from the board.

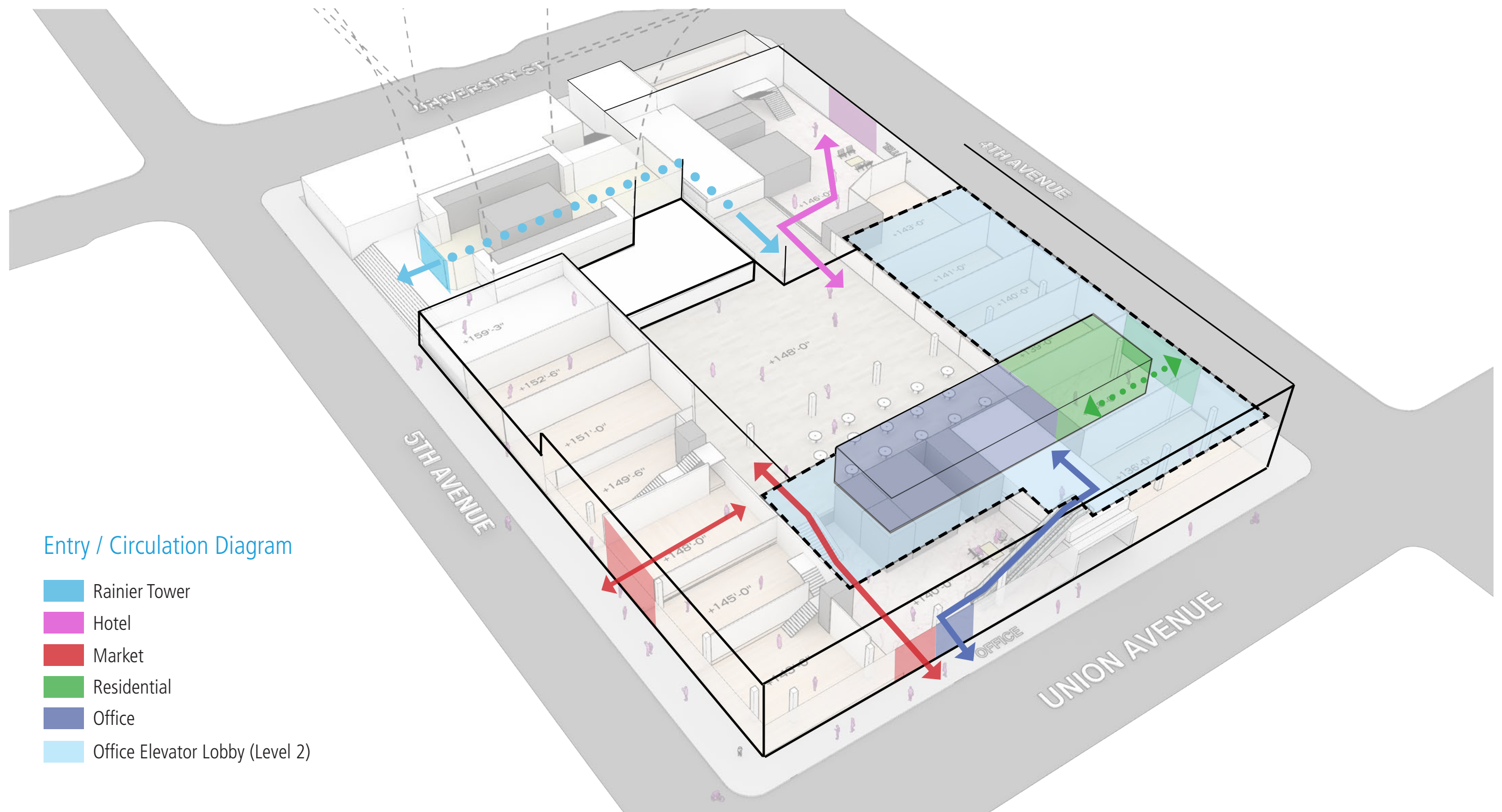
This open space will provide a unique sense of place, to respond and interact with Rainier Tower, and to enhance the downtown urban environment.



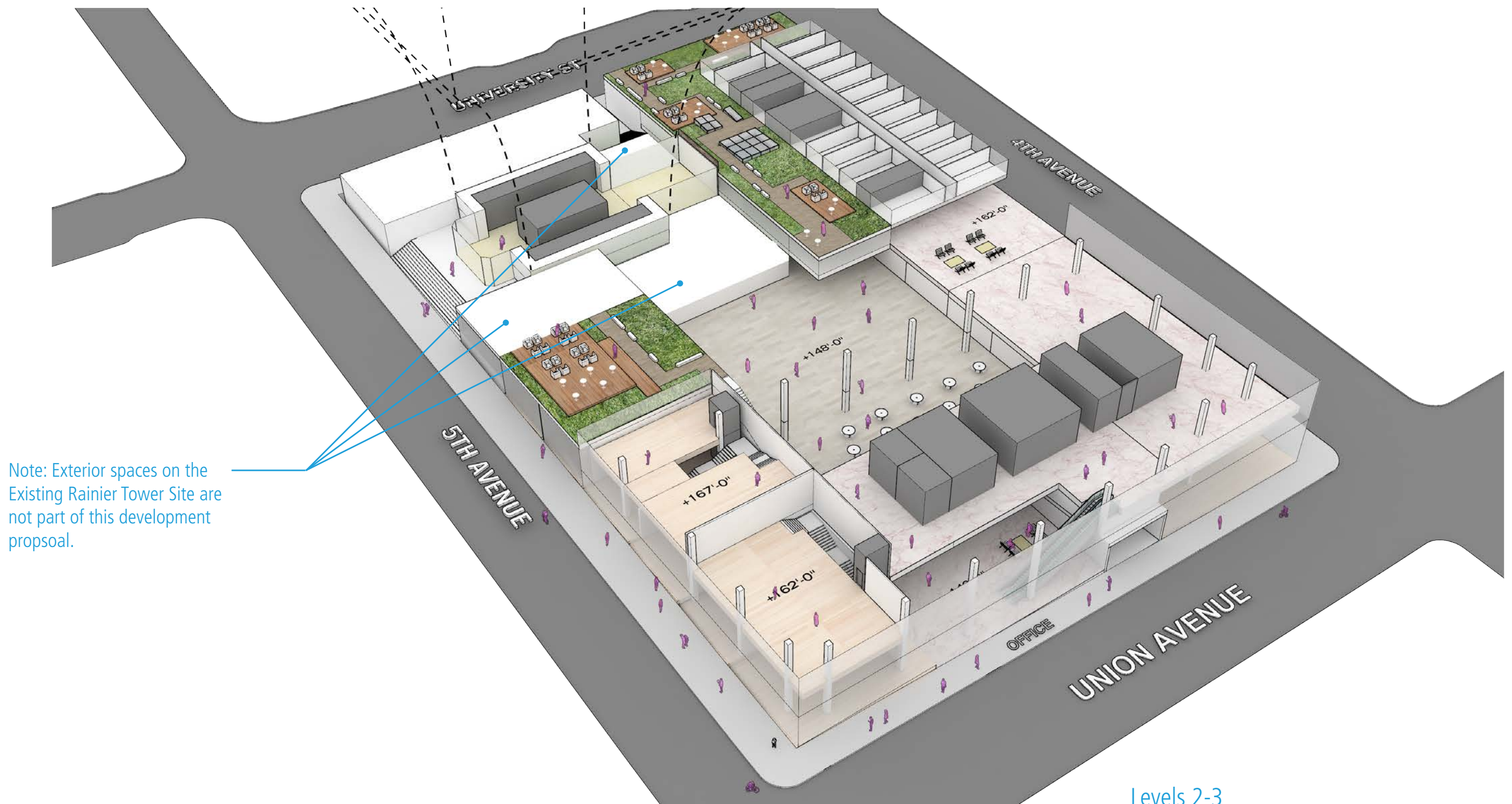




View of Open Space Adjacent to Existing Rainier Tower





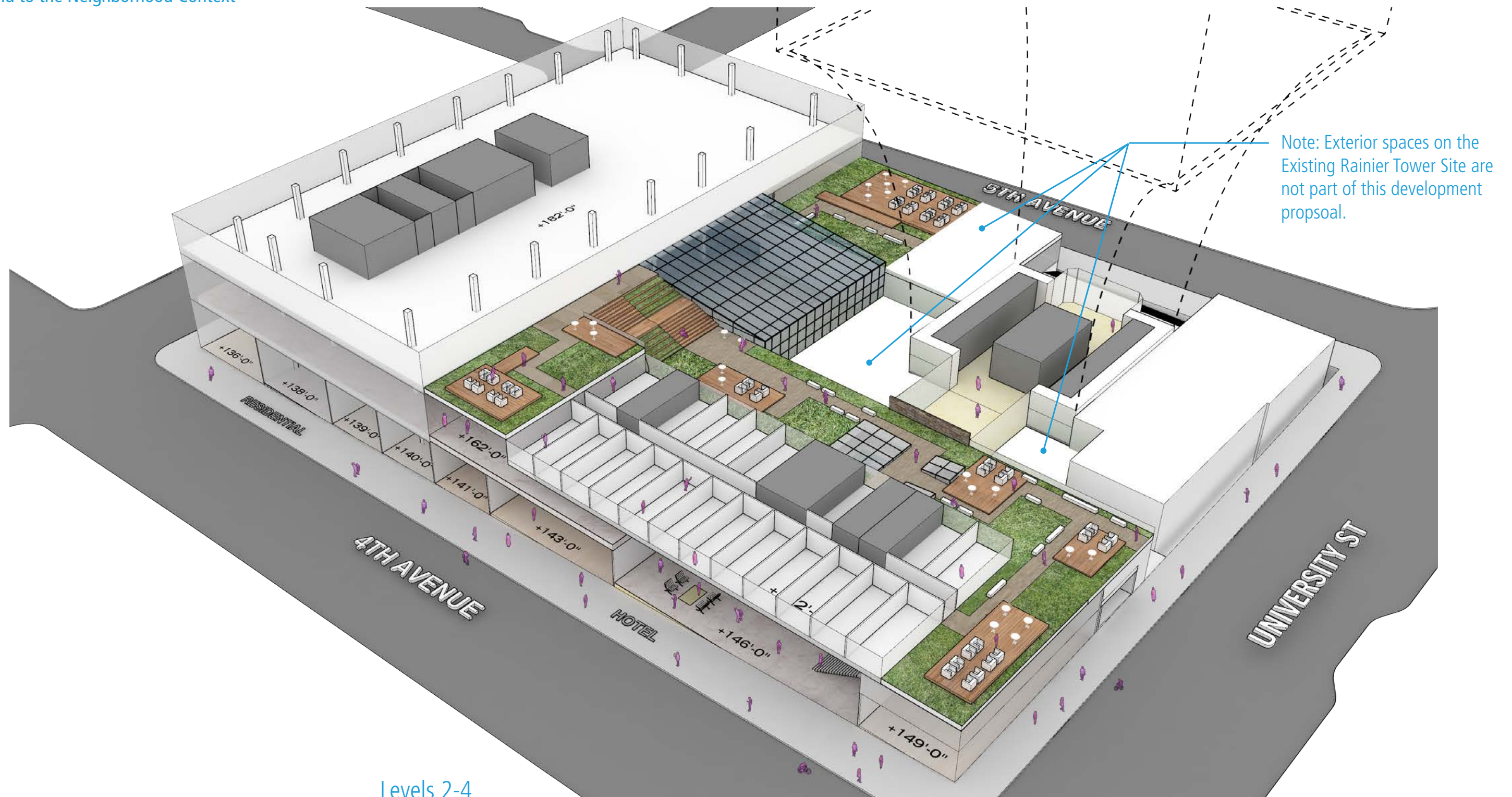




# B1

## Architectural Expression

Respond to the Neighborhood Context







**Architectural Expression**

Reinforce the Positive Urban Form and Architectural Attributes of the Immediate Area

Consider the predominant attributes of the immediate neighborhood and reinforce desirable siting patterns, massing arrangements, and streetscape characteristics of nearby development.

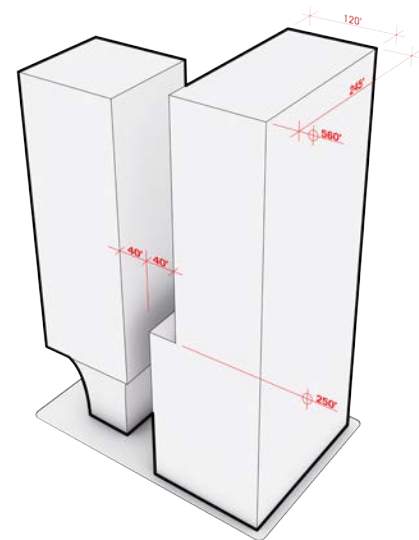
**GUIDANCE**

The concavity of Rainier Tower's base provides the design motif for the proposed tower's form. The architect's inversion of the form, a broad base tapering upward to the shaft, creates a visual reference. At the next meeting, the Board would benefit from a clearer understanding of the compelling reasons for the tiered or stepped building mass. Consider beginning the steps or tiers closer to the pedestrian level. The Board noted that this mid-section of the building has little or no engagement with the form that influenced it.

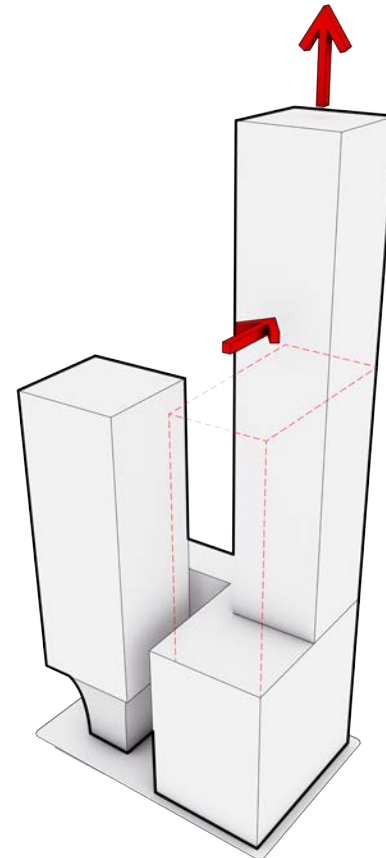
**RESPONSE**

The massing for the office / residential tower is derived from the interaction between urban context, site constraints, functional program requirements and generative formal concepts. Stepping or sloping back the upper levels of the tower, as a formal gesture, responds to the local context of the block and the desire to preserve light, air, and views to and from both towers as well as within the broader context of this dense urban neighborhood. The functional program follows a logical progression from service at subgrade levels, pedestrian-oriented retail at street level, the office levels in the midsection of the tower, culminating with residential program at the upper levels. This program transition reinforces and complements the formal gesture of the tower as part of the urban realm. Building systems and services also follow in a logical and efficient sequence while supporting a graceful, complementary formal relationship between the two towers on the block.

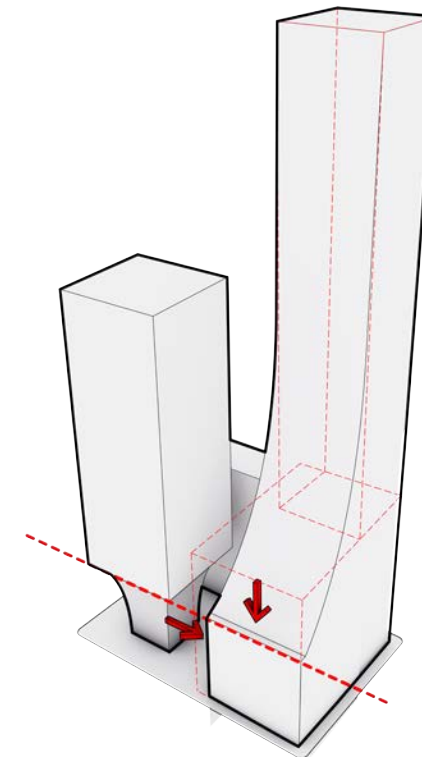
The design has been specifically modified at the pedestrian levels along Fifth Avenue by "carving away" some of the lower façade in a manner reminiscent of Rainier Tower's base, opening up views to the open spaces in the interior of the block as well as to the base of the existing tower. Furthermore, the beginning of the sloped section of the tower's midsection has been set back from the façade by approximately ten feet to reinforce the inverse and complementary relationship between the negative space of Rainier Tower base and the street wall of the new development along Fifth Avenue. This creates yet another opportunity for open space as part of the overall spatial composition at the lower levels of the development.



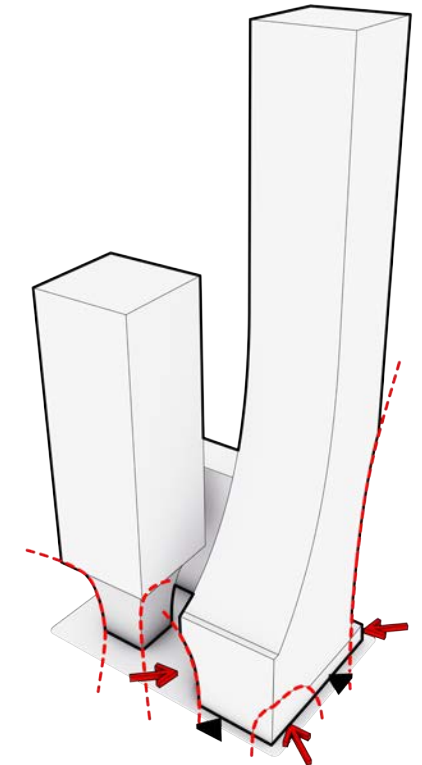
Massing Derived Directly  
from Zoning Requirements



Massing Shifted  
Southwest to Improve  
Visiblty of Rainier Tower



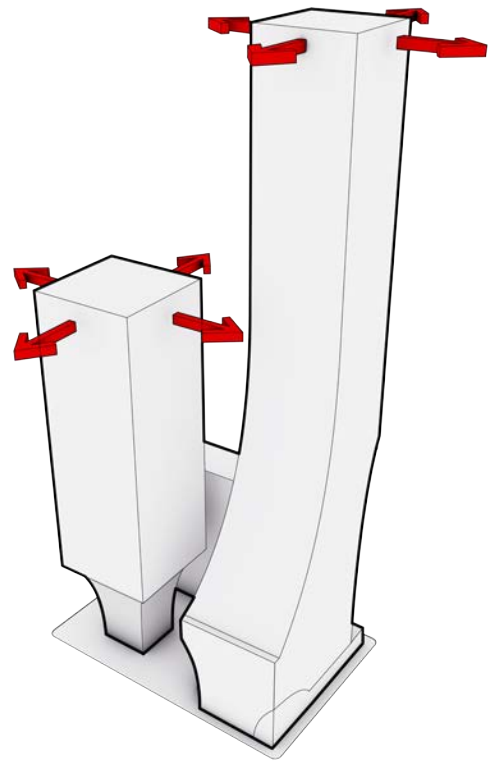
Edge along 5th Ave Lowered  
to Meet Significant Datum  
Line of Rainier Tower



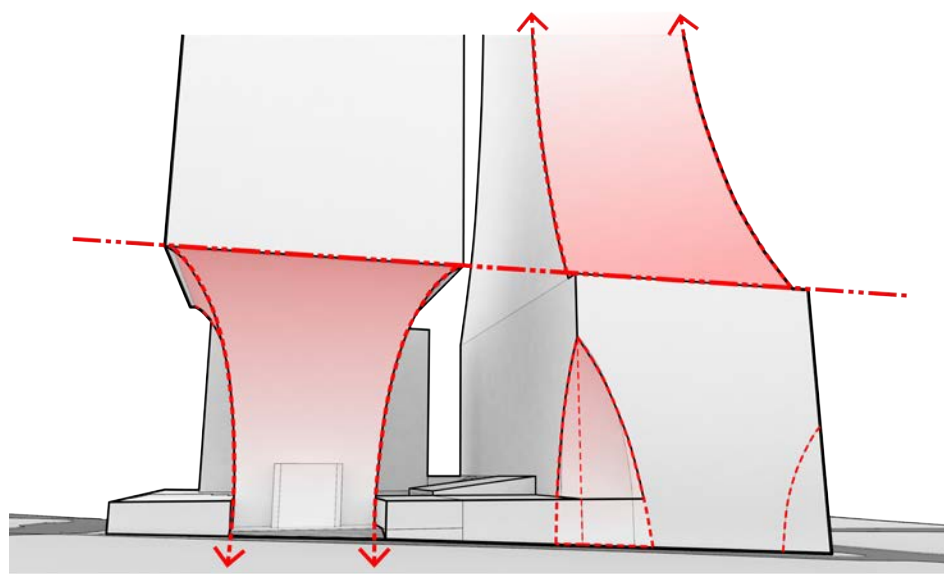
Corners of New Tower's  
Base are Carved Away;  
Giving Nod to Rainier Tower



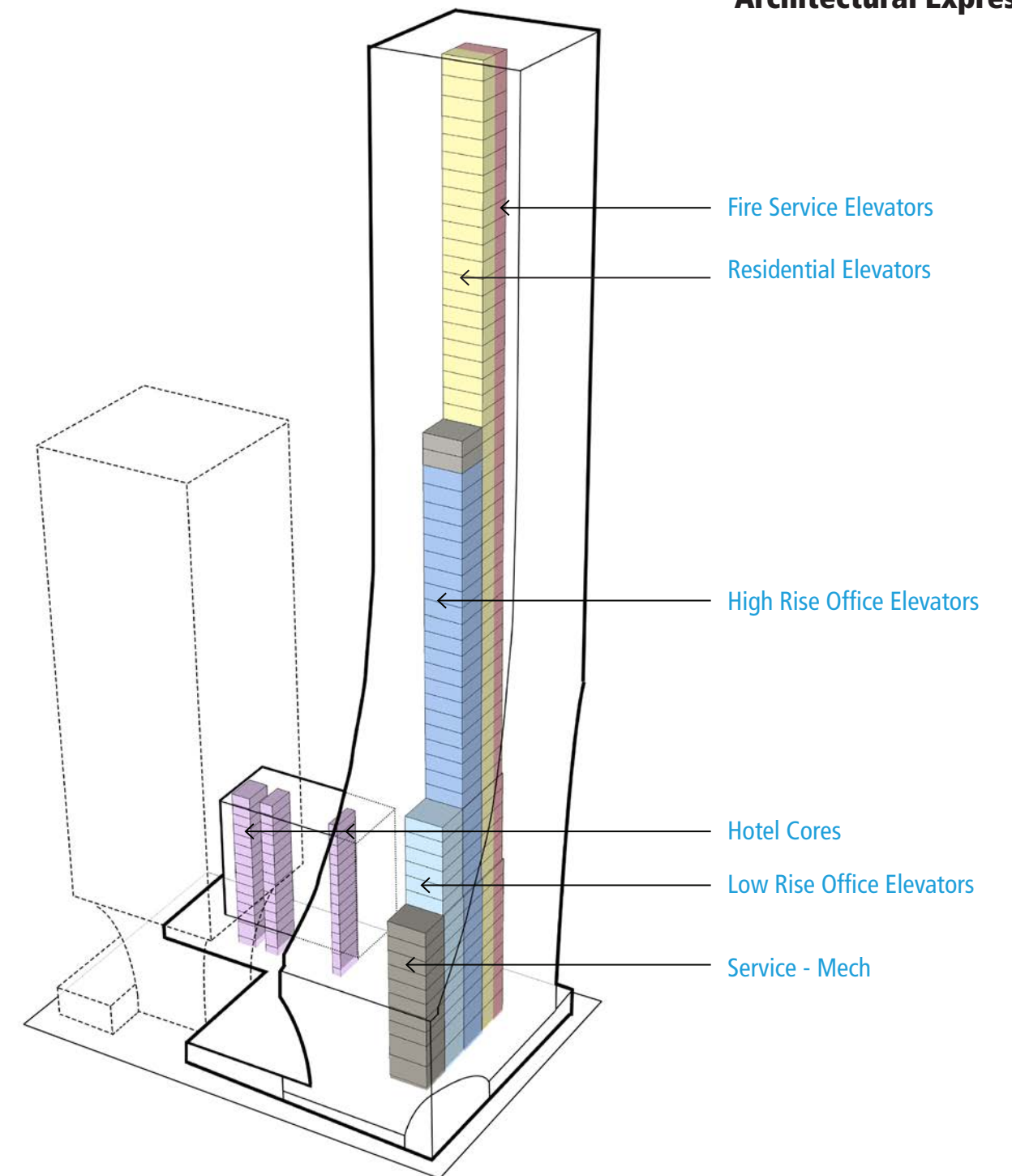
## Tower Massing



New Tower Location Both Maximizes Views and Retains Visibility of Rainier Tower



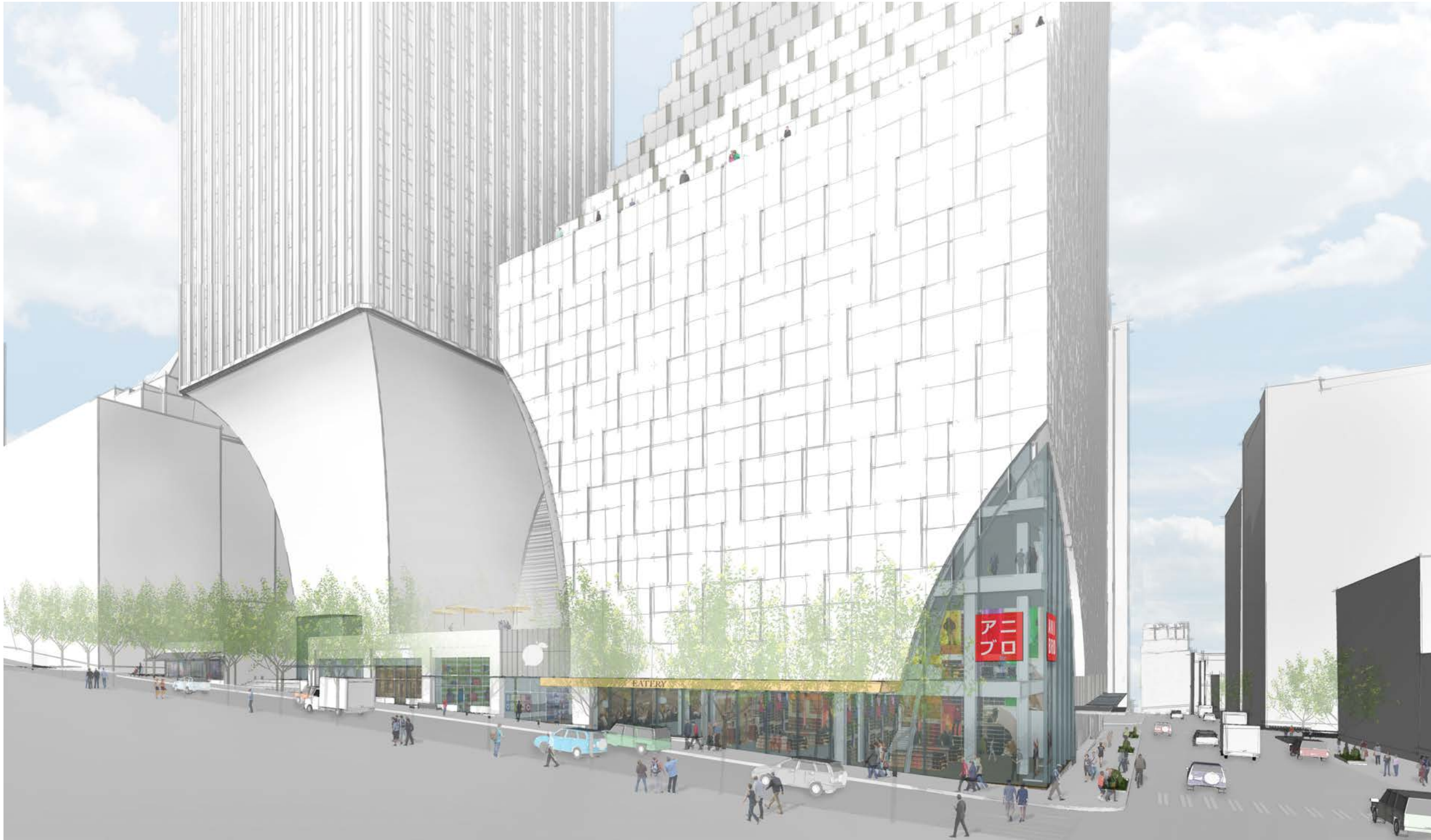
Concavity of Rainier Tower 's Base Inspired Proposed Tower's Form



# B3

## Architectural Expression

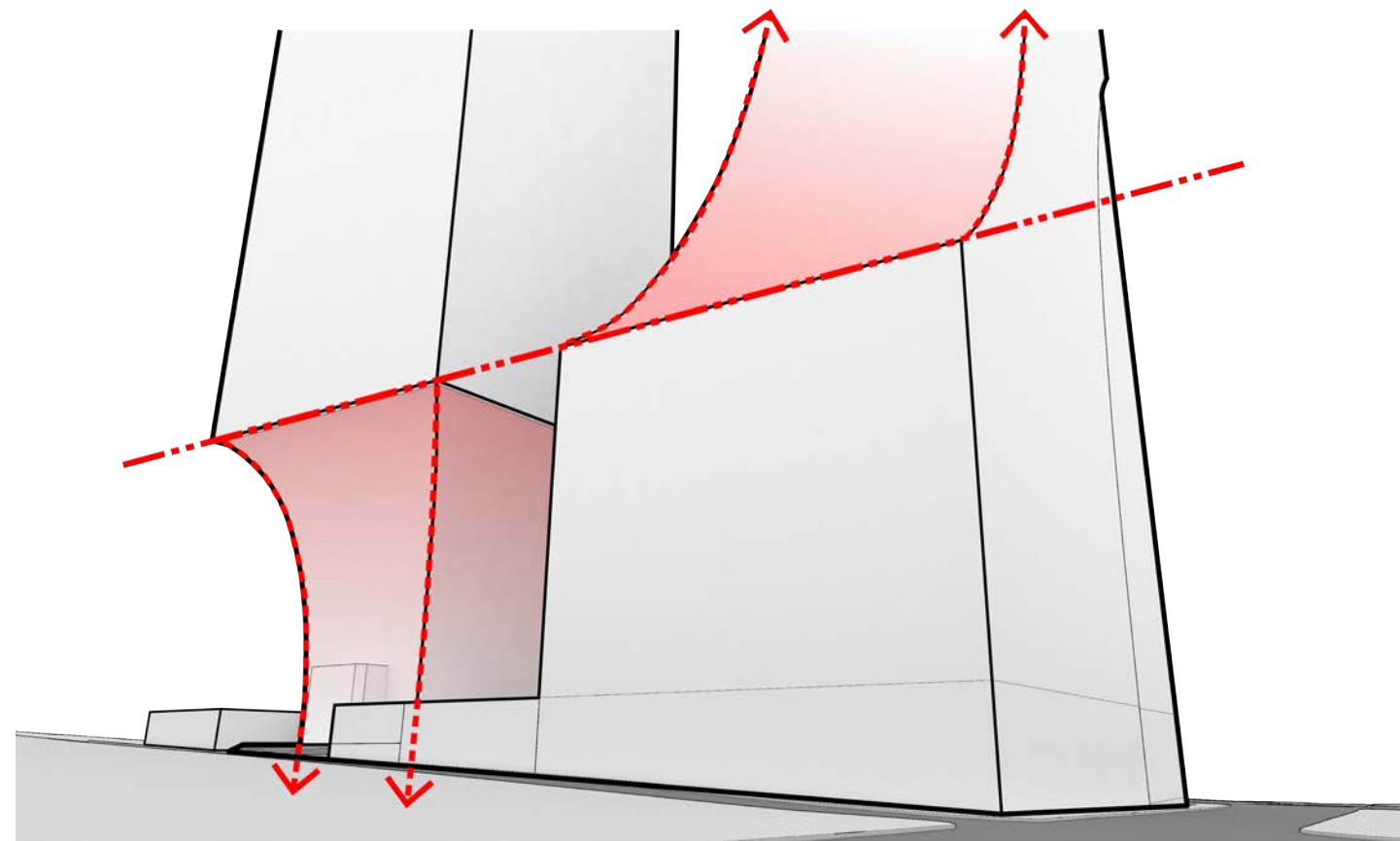
Reinforce the Positive Urban Form and Architectural Attributes of the Immediate Area



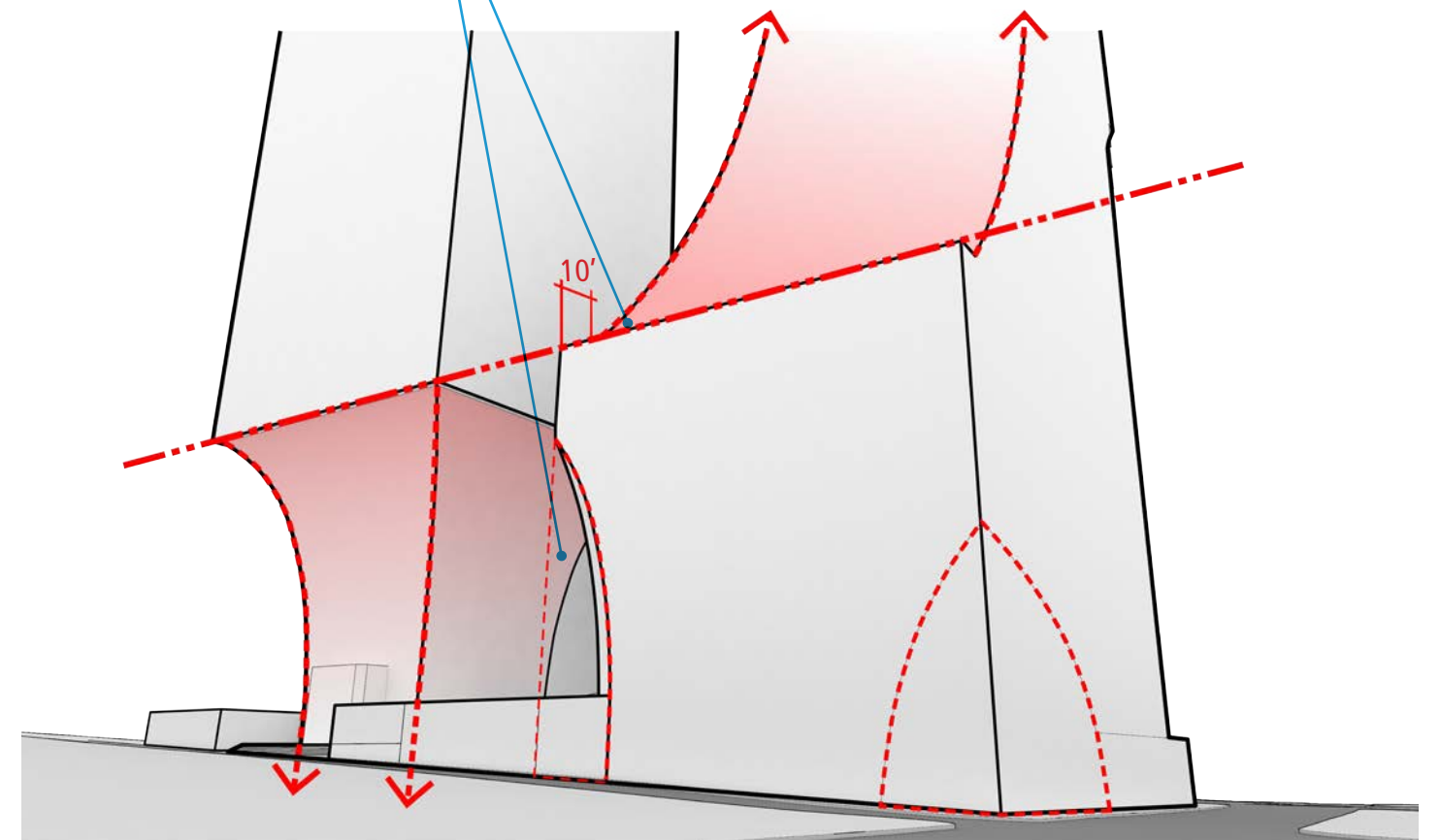
View along Fifth Avenue



10' Setback and Curves in Base Help  
Retain Visibility of Rainier Tower



Previous Tower Massing



Current Tower Massing

## Architectural Expression

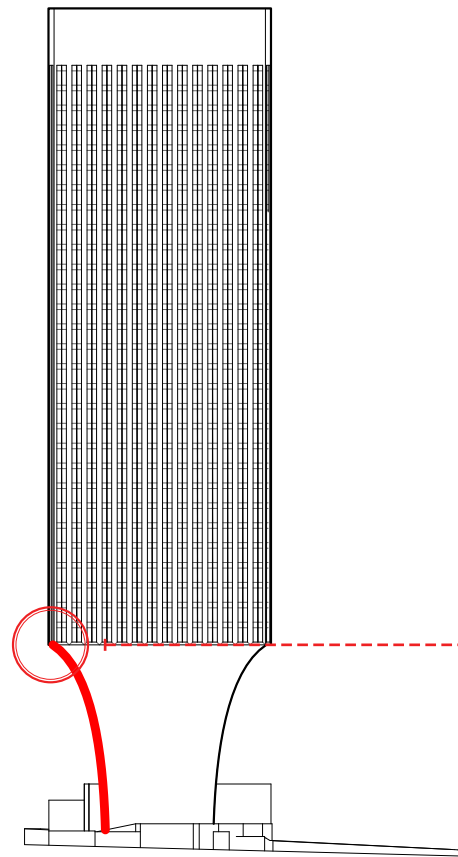
### Reinforce the Positive Urban Form and Architectural Attributes of the Immediate Area

The formal and material juxtaposition of these bold, curving forms of the old and new create a dynamic conversation between the two towers. The design team views the Rainier Tower as a formal expression of the structural heroics and monumental form, appropriate for its time and place as a work of great modern architecture from the 1970's.

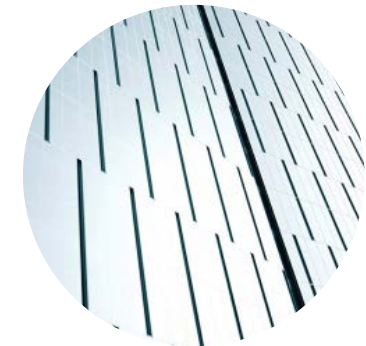
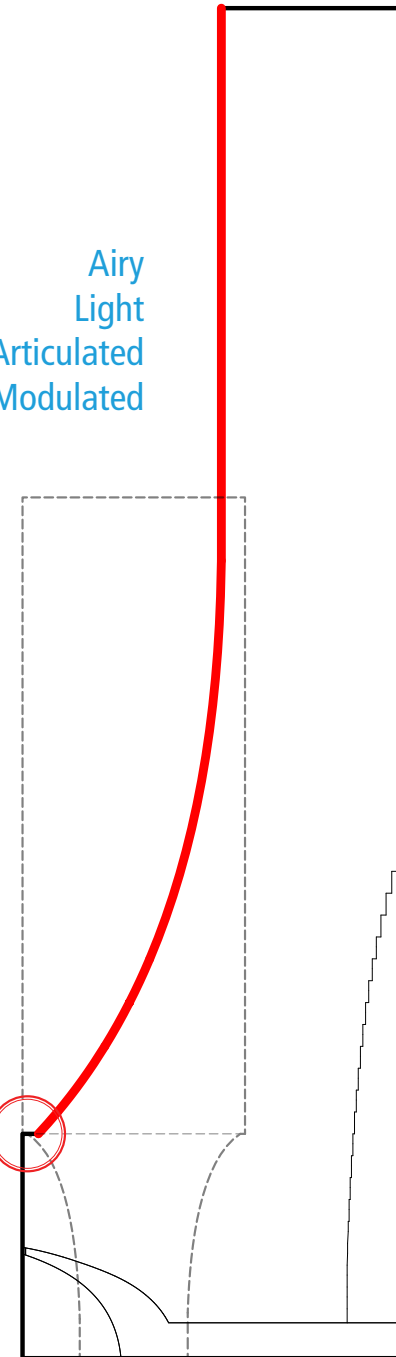
In contrast, our proposed tower responds with an articulated and modulated gesture, through the use of light airy glass and metal, swooping upwards towards the sky. In essence, our proposed tower will complement the moves of Rainier Tower with a contemporary geometric building envelope consistent with the methods and materials of the present time.



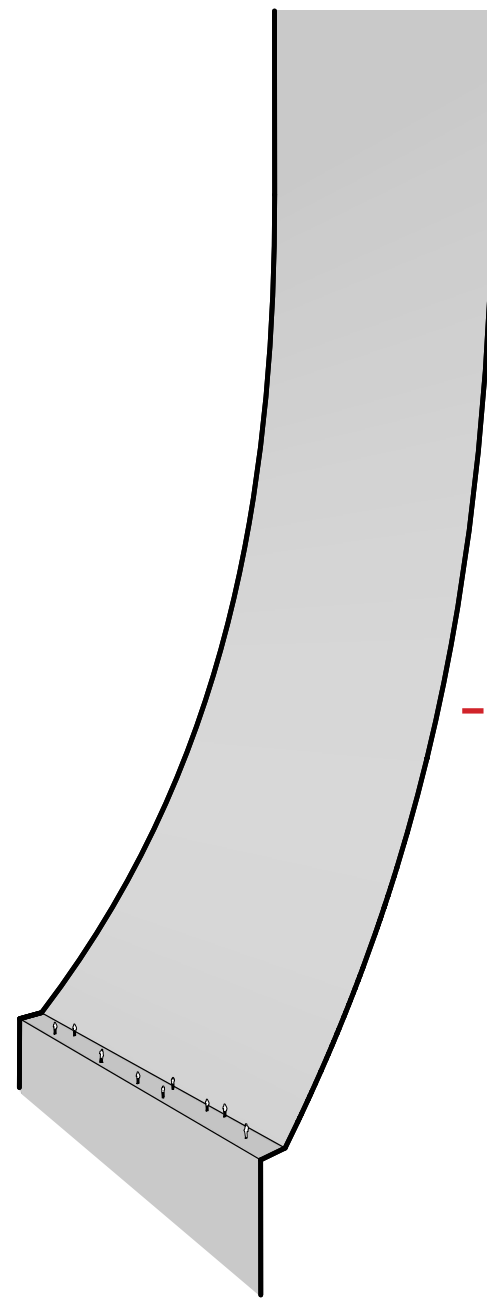
Solid  
Massive  
Grounded  
Monolithic



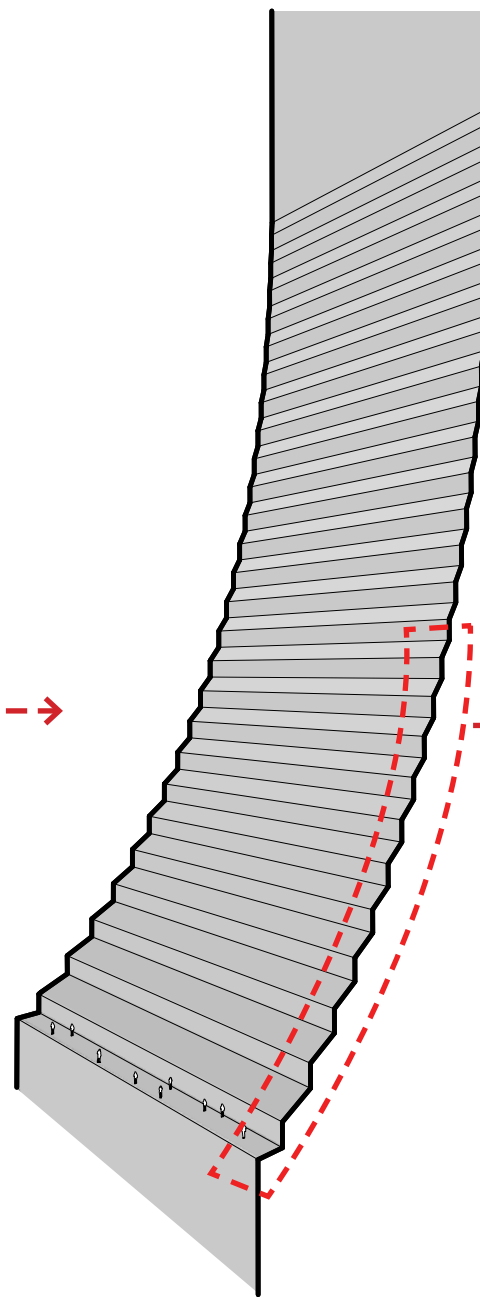
Airy  
Light  
Articulated  
Modulated



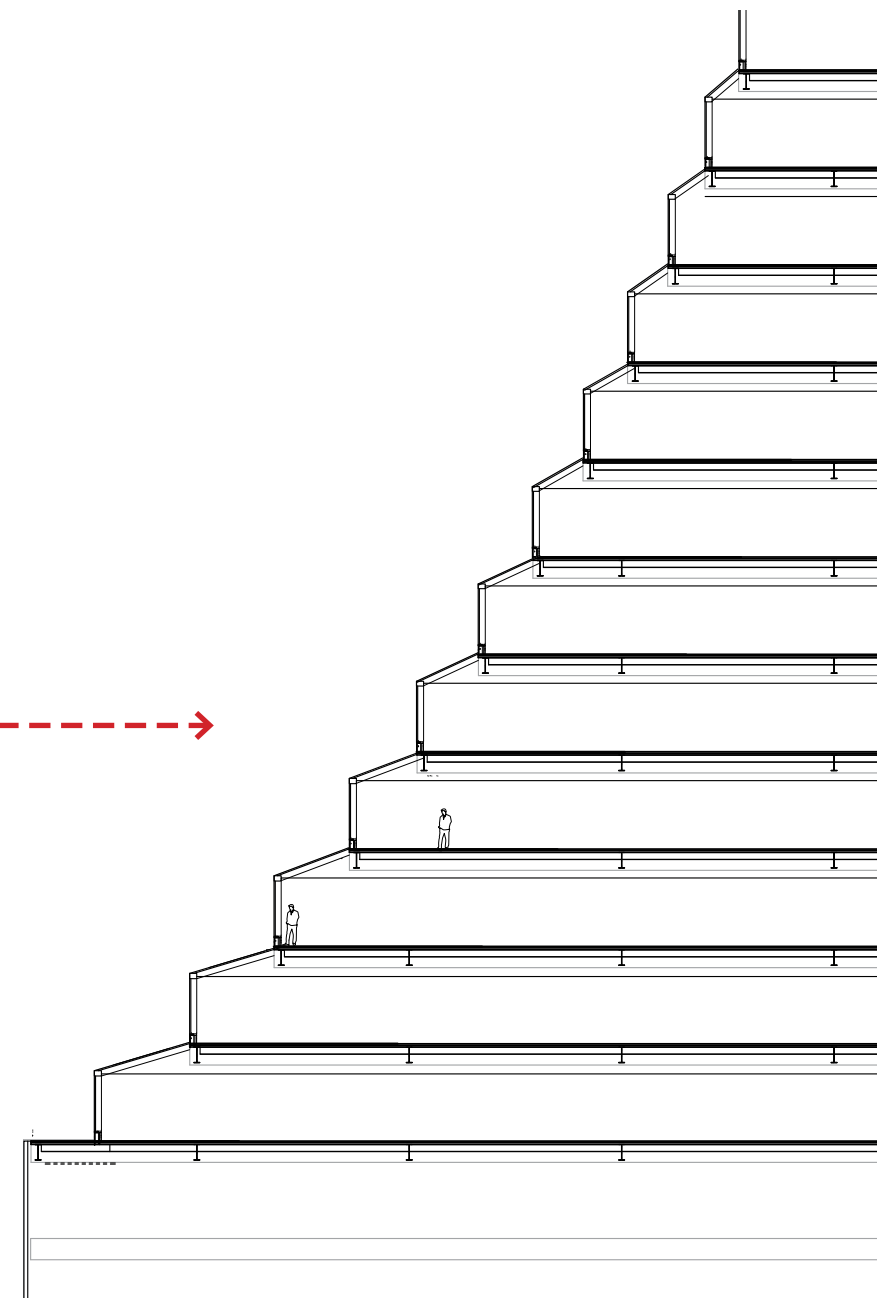




Inspired Smooth Curve



Proposed Curve  
Airy, Light, Articulated  
and Modulated



Curtain Wall Section

# B4

## Architectural Expression

### Design a Well-Proportioned and Unified Building

Compose the massing and organize the interior and exterior spaces to create a well-proportioned building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept. Design the architectural elements and finish details to create a unified building, so that all components appear integral to the whole.

#### GUIDANCE

The Board observed that the hotel's massing and placement appears separate or detached from the rest of the complex. Further consideration should occur about 1) its location and its effect on view blockage of the base from the west and 2) the lack of visual synergy with Rainier Tower. The Board raised the prospects of a taller, narrower hotel structure or one embedded in the proposed tower similar in intention to the manner in which the residential volume expresses itself in Alternative # 2 as a singular form but within the larger building mass.

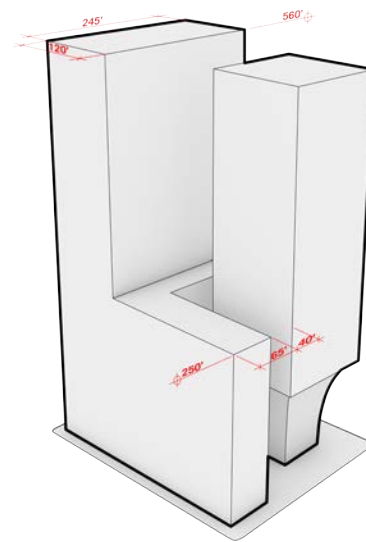
#### RESPONSE

The placement of the hotel program and massing is an integral part of the concept for the site. The tower and the hotel are separated to achieve several important goals:

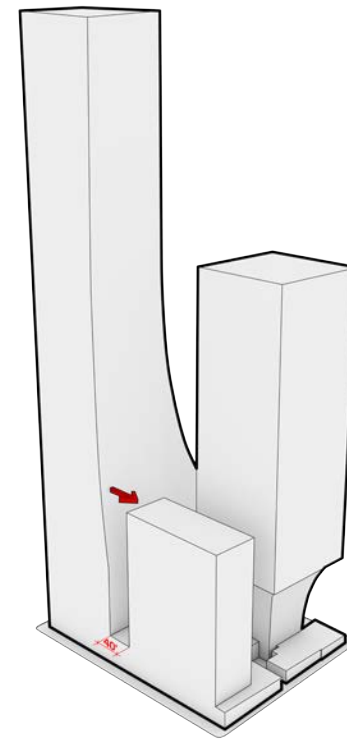
- Introduce additional light and air into the interior of the block, along with view angles to and from the interior from the surrounding streets and buildings along 4th Avenue. This results in additional usable open space and massing articulation at a lower level along the Fourth Avenue urban corridor.
- Provide an opportunity for the hotel to possess a distinct identity in the composition of the block - this is important to attract top-tier hotel operators.

It is important to note that the hotel is connected to the rest of the complex at the second level - this is an integral part of the programming strategy as well as providing connections to and from the open spaces for residents and users.

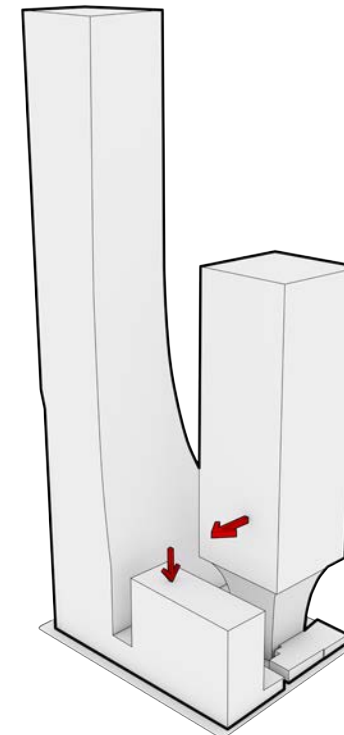
In response to the board's comments, the massing of the hotel has been shifted away from University Street in order to open up a wider view of the Rainier Tower base from the pedestrian realm. This improves the visual framing of the negative space formed by Rainier Tower's base, which is further defined and complemented by the massing and articulation of the proposed surrounding development.



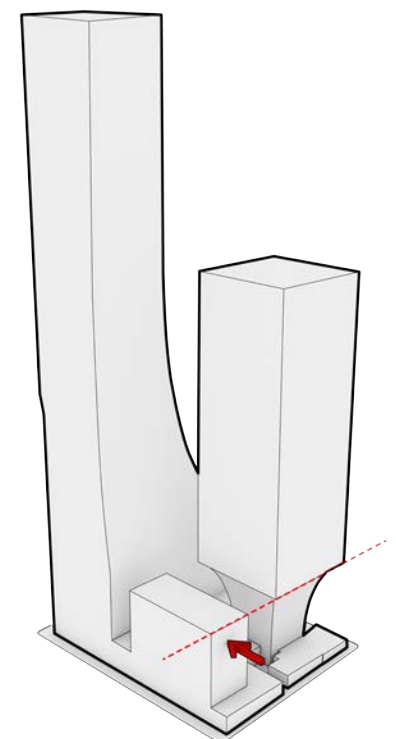
Massing Derived Directly from Zoning Requirements



Hotel Separates from Tower for Improved Daylight and Airflow; Connection at Level 2 Maintained to Unify Base



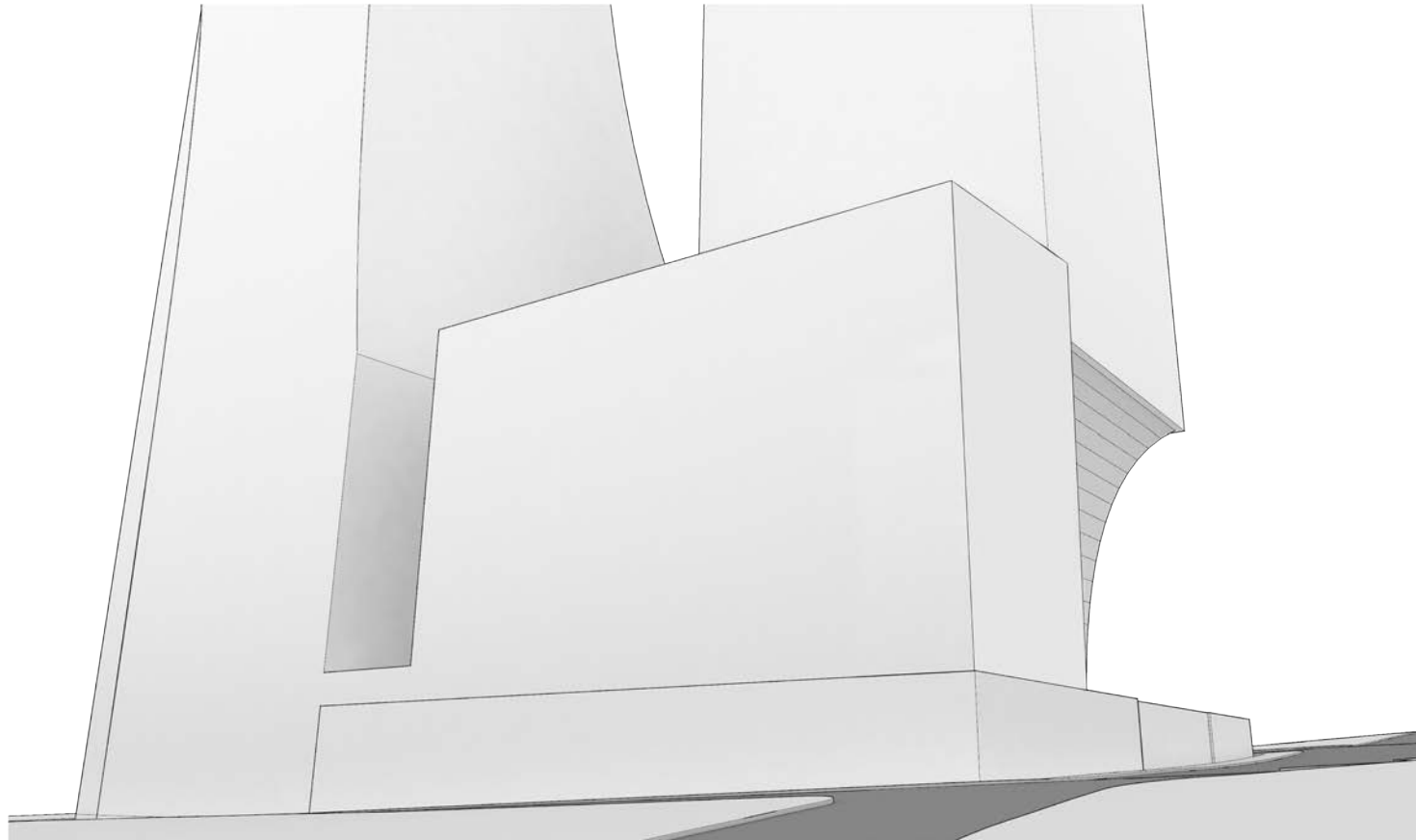
Edge along 4th Ave Lowered to Meet Rainier Tower Datum Line; Maximizing Views from Rainier Tower



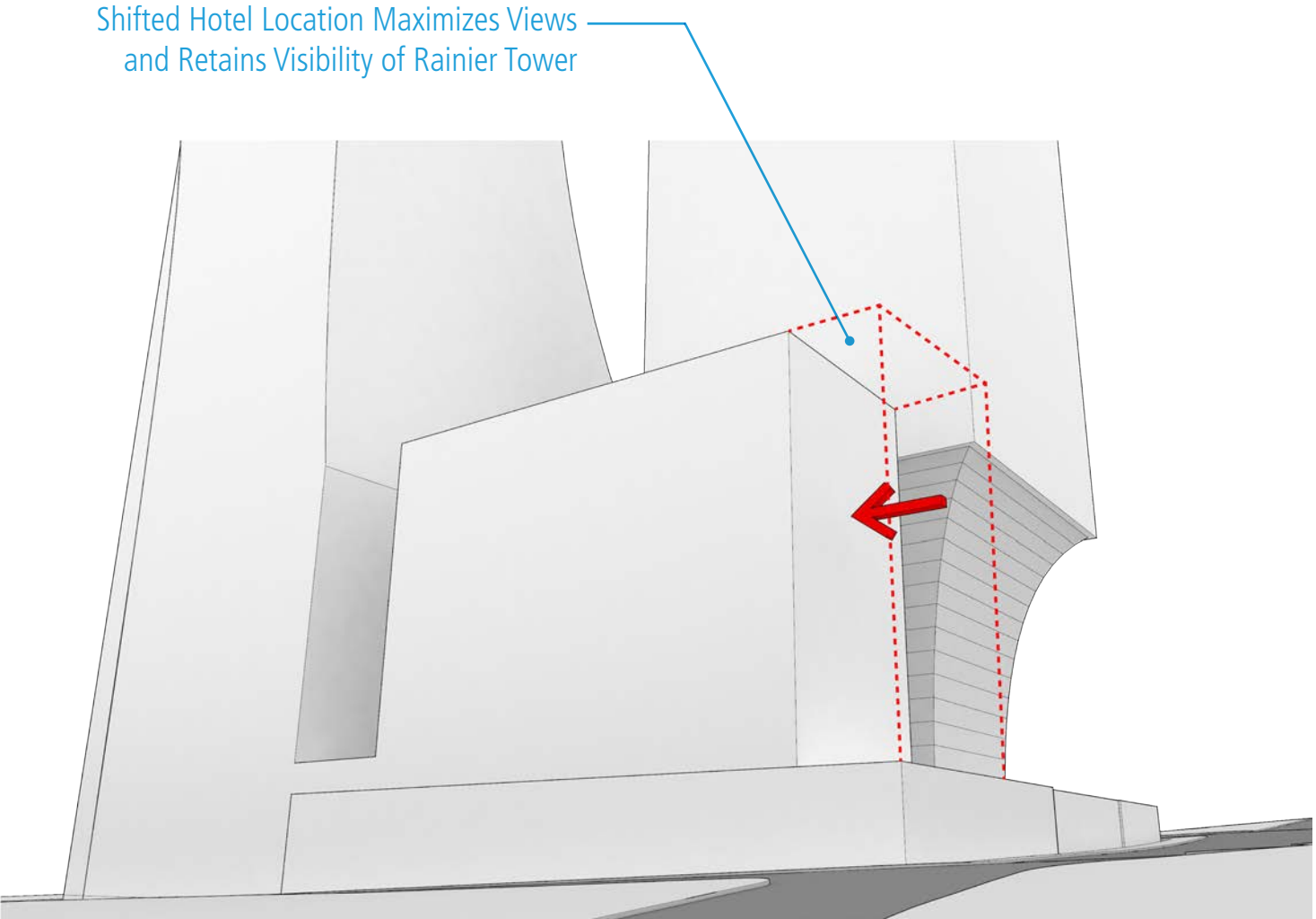
Shifted Hotel Location Away from University Street to Maximize Views at Pedestrian Level towards Rainier Tower

## Hotel Massing





Previous Hotel Massing



Current Hotel Massing

# C1

## The Streetscape Promote Pedestrian Interaction

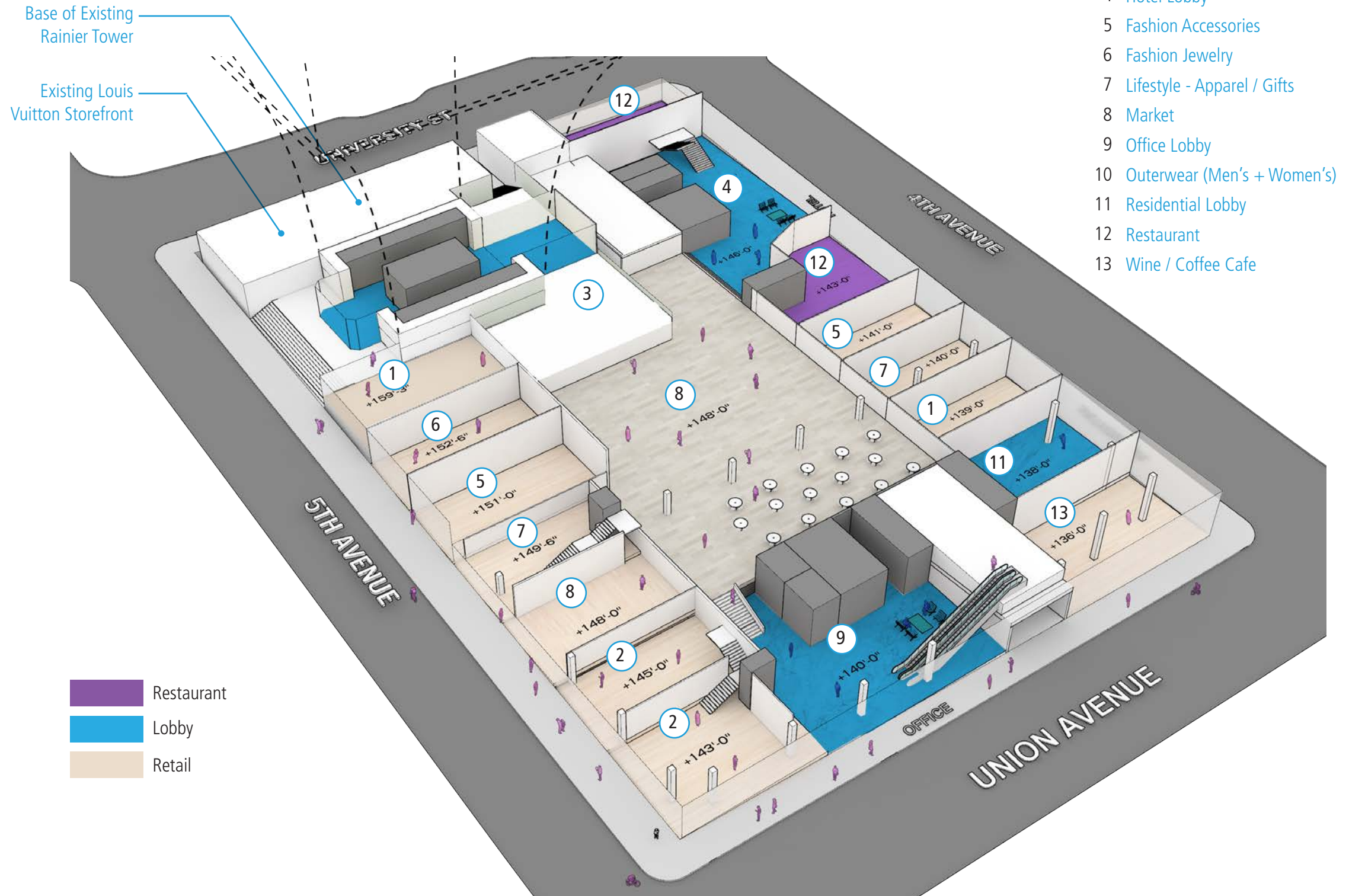
Spaces for street level uses should be designed to engage pedestrians with the activities occurring within them. Sidewalk-related spaces should appear safe, welcoming, and open to the general public.

### GUIDANCE

In following meetings, the architect should provide perspectives of the streetscapes that include the massing of Rainier Tower and the proposed towers. As the design for the commercial plinth evolves more information should inform the reader of the retail components.

### RESPONSE

The base of the project is envisioned as a lively mix of vibrant, pedestrian-oriented retail and hospitality uses. A central concept is that of a "market" or "hub" space in the interior of the block, with a large glass ceiling to introduce natural light and visual connection to Rainier Tower and the rest of the development. Along the street frontages, a carefully curated mix of retail, restaurants, coffee shops, and elegant lobby spaces will engage the interest of pedestrians with multiple and varied storefronts, open facades, lighting, merchandising displays, areas for seating, and other activities that will spill out onto the sidewalk to promote friendly interaction. A refined palette of materials and detailing will enhance the quality of the street-level experience.





- 2 Apparel (Men's + Women's)
- 5 Fashion Accessories
- 6 Fashion Jewelry

- 7 Lifestyle - Apparel / Gifts
- 8 Market
- 9 Office Lobby



View from North on Fifth Avenue



# C1

## The Streetscape

Promote Pedestrian Interaction

- 4 Hotel Lobby
- 5 Fashion Accessories
- 12 Restaurant



View from West along University Street



- 1 Apparel (Women's)
- 5 Fashion Accessories

- 6 Fashion Jewelry
- 7 Lifestyle - Apparel / Gifts
- 8 Market



View from Fifth Avenue and University Street



# C1

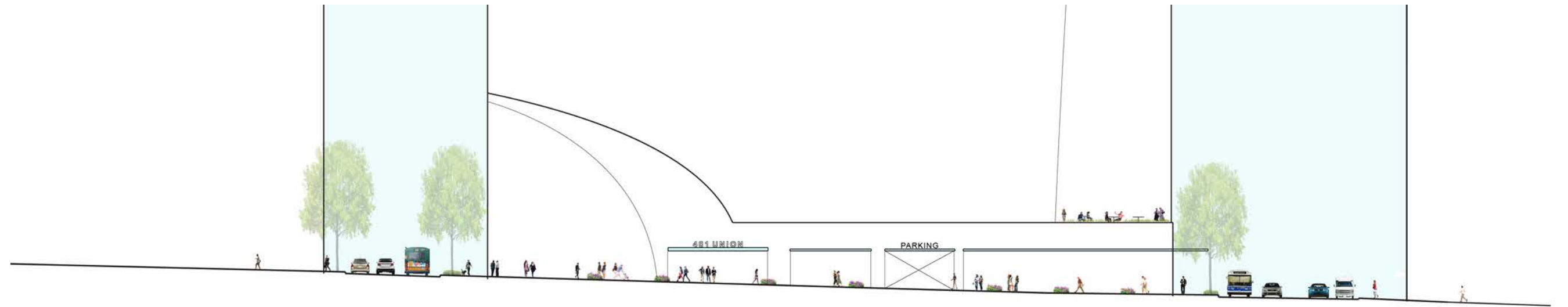
## The Streetscape Promote Pedestrian Interaction

- |                               |                       |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Apparel (Woman's)           | 11 Residential Lobby  |
| 5 Fashion Accessories         | 12 Restaurant         |
| 7 Lifestyle - Apparel / Gifts | 13 Wine / Coffee Cafe |



View from Fourth Avenue and Union Street



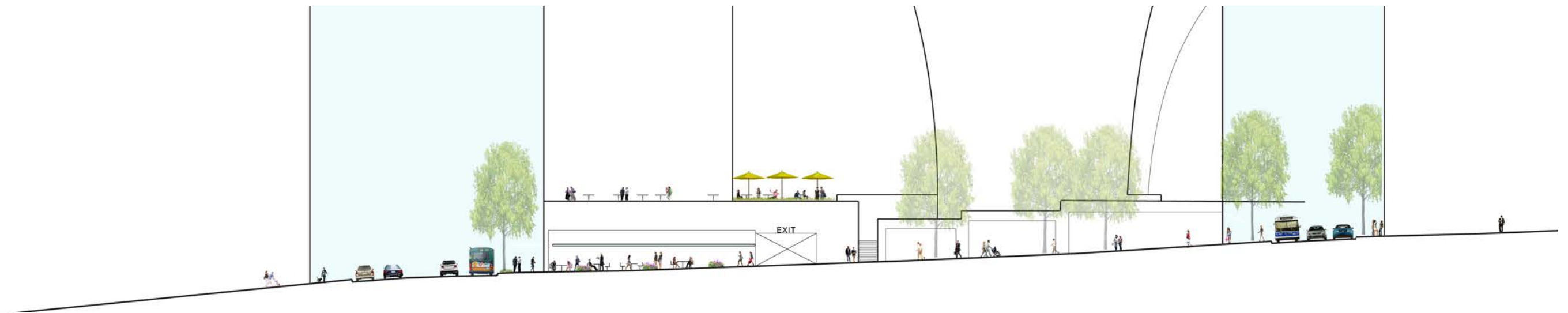


Streetscape along Union Street



Streetscape along Fifth Avenue

Note: These streetscape illustrations show street tree and furniture locations only.



Streetscape along University Street



Streetscape along Fourth Avenue

Note: These streetscape illustrations show street tree and furniture locations only.



# C2

## The Streetscape Design Facades of Many Scales

Design architectural features, fenestration patterns, and material compositions that refer to the scale of human activities contained within. Building facades should be composed of elements scaled to promote pedestrian comfort, safety, and orientation.

### GUIDANCE

During the EDG review process, the focus of the applicant’s and the Board’s effort is the arrangement of the complex’s massing components. The evolution of the facades will be informed by both the parti and urban / building attributes to be revealed in later reviews.

# C3

## The Streetscape Provide Active - Not Blank - Facades

Buildings should not have large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks.

### GUIDANCE

See the guidance for C2.

# C4

## The Streetscape Reinforce Building Entries

To promote pedestrian comfort, safety, and orientation, reinforce building entries.

# C5

## The Streetscape Encourage Overhead Weather Protection

Project applicants are encouraged to provide continuous, well-lit, overhead weather rotection to improve pedestrian comfort and safety along major pedestrian routes.

### GUIDANCE

Continuous canopies are a requirement in the Seattle downtown code. The Board looks forward to the development of this element within the city’s urban fabric.

# D1

## Public Amenities Provide Inviting and Usable Open Space

Design public open spaces to promote a visually pleasing, safe, and active environment for workers, residents, and visitors. Views and solar access from the principal area of the open space should be especially emphasized.

### GUIDANCE

The Board strongly encourages the addition of open space that helps provide visual definition to the complex at street or plinth levels. See the guidance above for B-1.

### RESPONSE

See Response for B1.

# D2

## Public Amenities Enhance the Building with Landscaping

Enhance the building and site with generous landscaping— which includes special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, and site furniture, as well as living plant material.

### GUIDANCE

The treatment of the sidewalks will be an important future consideration.

# D3

## Public Amenities Provide Elements that Define the Place

Provide special elements on the facades, within public open spaces, or on the sidewalk to create a distinct, attractive, and memorable “sense of place” associated with the building.

### GUIDANCE

Rainier Tower, particularly its base, provides this distinct and memorable “sense of place” described by the guideline. The design of the complex should support and enhance the base as a distinct object by providing good sightlines to it and by allowing the massing of the tower and hotel, particularly at the lower levels, to be informed by the sculptural attributes of the podium. As stated in an earlier guidance by the Board, the three major masses and the retail podium should visually communicate with one another. The negative space or interstitial areas ought to be as definable as the surrounding masses.

### RESPONSE

See Response for A1, B1, B3 and B4.

# D4

## Public Amenities Provide Appropriate Signage

Design signage appropriate for the scale and character of the project and immediate neighborhood. All signs should be oriented to pedestrians and/or persons in vehicles on streets within the immediate neighborhood.

### GUIDANCE

In later stages of the review process, the Board will evaluate the applicant’s signage concept.



# D5

## Public Amenities

### Provide Adequate Lighting

To promote a sense of security for people downtown during nighttime hours, provide appropriate levels of lighting on the building facade, on the underside of overhead weather protection, on and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, in landscaped areas, and on signage.

#### GUIDANCE

Development and review of a lighting concept plan will occur in later stages of the review process.

# D6

## Public Amenities

### Design for Personal Safety and Security

Design the building and site to promote the feeling of personal safety and security in the immediate area.

# E1

## Vehicular Access and Parking Minimize Curb Cut Impacts

Minimize adverse impacts of curb cuts on the safety and comfort of pedestrians.

### GUIDANCE

The development proposal, limiting the number of vehicular access points to two, received the Board’s endorsement. Due to the lack of an alley, Union and University streets would serve as ingress and egress respectively. See guidance for E3.

# E2

## Vehicular Access and Parking Integrate Parking Facilities

Minimize the visual impact of parking by integrating parking facilities with surrounding development. Incorporate architectural treatments or suitable landscaping to provide for the safety and comfort of people using the facility as well as those walking by.

# E3

## Vehicular Access and Parking Minimize Presence of Service Areas

Locate service areas for trash dumpsters, loading docks, mechanical equipment, and the like away from the street front where possible. Screen from view those elements which for programmatic reasons cannot be located away from the street front.

### GUIDANCE

Since service access and loading as well as tenant vehicular access and parking occur in the same area, minimize or eliminate potential conflicts that may arise among users. As the programming of the building evolves provide additional information in the MUP plans.