

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

December 04, 2019

HDRC CASE NO: 2019-690
COMMON NAME: La Villita
ADDRESS: 423 S ALAMO ST
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 155 BLK 4 LOT 10 & E IRR 240.51 FT OF 4 & 5
ZONING: D, H, RIO-3
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
DISTRICT: La Villita Historic District
LANDMARK: German-English School
APPLICANT: James McKnight/Brown & Ortiz, P.C.
OWNER: HH SAN ANTONIO LLC
TYPE OF WORK: Construction of a 9-story hotel tower, site work
APPLICATION RECEIVED: November 08, 2019
60-DAY REVIEW: January 07, 2019
CASE MANAGER: Edward Hall
REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting conceptual approval to:

1. Construct a 9-story hotel tower on the existing, vacant lot located at 423 S Alamo. The proposed hotel will feature approximately 275 rooms.
2. Construct street level structures, including a hotel entry and drop off structure, a restaurant, and a structure to connect the historic German School buildings to the proposed hotel tower.
3. Perform modifications to the existing courtyard between the two historic German School buildings.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 4, Guidelines for New Construction

1. Building and Entrance Orientation

A. FAÇADE ORIENTATION

i. Setbacks—Align front facades of new buildings with front facades of adjacent buildings where a consistent setback has been established along the street frontage. Use the median setback of buildings along the street frontage where a variety of setbacks exist. Refer to UDC Article 3, Division 2. Base Zoning Districts for applicable setback requirements.

ii. Orientation—Orient the front façade of new buildings to be consistent with the predominant orientation of historic buildings along the street frontage.

B. ENTRANCES

i. Orientation—Orient primary building entrances, porches, and landings to be consistent with those historically found along the street frontage. Typically, historic building entrances are oriented towards the primary street.

2. Building Massing and Form

A. SCALE AND MASS

i. Similar height and scale—Design new construction so that its height and overall scale are consistent with nearby historic buildings. In residential districts, the height and scale of new construction should not exceed that of the majority of historic buildings by more than one-story. In commercial districts, building height shall conform to the established pattern. If there is no more than a 50% variation in the scale of buildings on the adjacent block faces, then the height of the new building shall not exceed the tallest building on the adjacent block face by more than 10%.

ii. Transitions—Utilize step-downs in building height, wall-plane offsets, and other variations in building massing to provide a visual transition when the height of new construction exceeds that of adjacent historic buildings by more than one-half story.

iii. Foundation and floor heights—Align foundation and floor-to-floor heights (including porches and balconies) within

one foot of floor-to-floor heights on adjacent historic structures.

B. ROOF FORM

i. Similar roof forms—Incorporate roof forms—pitch, overhangs, and orientation—that are consistent with those predominantly found on the block. Roof forms on residential building types are typically sloped, while roof forms on nonresidential

building types are more typically flat and screened by an ornamental parapet wall.

ii. Façade configuration—The primary façade of new commercial buildings should be in keeping with established patterns. Maintaining horizontal elements within adjacent cap, middle, and base precedents will establish a consistent street wall through the alignment of horizontal parts. Avoid blank walls, particularly on elevations visible from the street. No new façade should exceed 40 linear feet without being penetrated by windows, entryways, or other defined bays.

D. LOT COVERAGE

i. Building to lot ratio—New construction should be consistent with adjacent historic buildings in terms of the building to lot ratio. Limit the building footprint for new construction to no more than 50 percent of the total lot area, unless adjacent historic buildings establish a precedent with a greater building to lot ratio.

3. Materials and Textures

A. NEW MATERIALS

i. Complementary materials—Use materials that complement the type, color, and texture of materials traditionally found in the district. Materials should not be so dissimilar as to distract from the historic interpretation of the district. For example, corrugated metal siding would not be appropriate for a new structure in a district comprised of homes with wood siding.

ii. Alternative use of traditional materials—Consider using traditional materials, such as wood siding, in a new way to provide visual interest in new construction while still ensuring compatibility.

iii. Roof materials—Select roof materials that are similar in terms of form, color, and texture to traditionally used in the district.

iv. Metal roofs—Construct new metal roofs in a similar fashion as historic metal roofs. Refer to the Guidelines for Alterations and Maintenance section for additional specifications regarding metal roofs.

v. Imitation or synthetic materials—Do not use vinyl siding, plastic, or corrugated metal sheeting. Contemporary materials not traditionally used in the district, such as brick or simulated stone veneer and Hardie Board or other fiberboard siding, may be appropriate for new construction in some locations as long as new materials are visually similar to the traditional material in dimension, finish, and texture. EIFS is not recommended as a substitute for actual stucco.

4. Architectural Details

A. GENERAL

i. Historic context—Design new buildings to reflect their time while respecting the historic context. While new construction should not attempt to mirror or replicate historic features, new structures should not be so dissimilar as to distract from or diminish the historic interpretation of the district.

ii. Architectural details—Incorporate architectural details that are in keeping with the predominant architectural style along the block face or within the district when one exists. Details should be simple in design and should complement, but not visually compete with, the character of the adjacent historic structures or other historic structures within the district. Architectural details that are more ornate or elaborate than those found within the district are inappropriate.

iii. Contemporary interpretations—Consider integrating contemporary interpretations of traditional designs and details for new construction. Use of contemporary window moldings and door surroundings, for example, can provide visual interest while helping to convey the fact that the structure is new. Modern materials should be implemented in a way that does not distract from the historic structure.

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 5, Guidelines for Site Elements

B. NEW FENCES AND WALLS

i. Design—New fences and walls should appear similar to those used historically within the district in terms of their scale, transparency, and character. Design of fence should respond to the design and materials of the house or main structure.

ii. Location—Avoid installing a fence or wall in a location where one did not historically exist, particularly within the

front yard. The appropriateness of a front yard fence or wall is dependent on conditions within a specific historic district. New front yard fences or wall should not be introduced within historic districts that have not historically had them.

iii. Height—Limit the height of new fences and walls within the front yard to a maximum of four feet. The appropriateness of a front yard fence is dependent on conditions within a specific historic district. New front yard fences should not be introduced within historic districts that have not historically had them. If a taller fence or wall existed historically, additional height may be considered. The height of a new retaining wall should not exceed the height of the slope it retains.

iv. Prohibited materials—Do not use exposed concrete masonry units (CMU), Keystone or similar interlocking retaining wall systems, concrete block, vinyl fencing, or chain link fencing.

v. Appropriate materials—Construct new fences or walls of materials similar to fence materials historically used in the district. Select materials that are similar in scale, texture, color, and form as those historically used in the district, and that are compatible with the main structure. Screening incompatible uses—Review alternative fence heights and materials for appropriateness where residential properties are adjacent to commercial or other potentially incompatible uses.

3. Landscape Design

A. PLANTINGS

i. Historic Gardens—Maintain front yard gardens when appropriate within a specific historic district.

ii. Historic Lawns—Do not fully remove and replace traditional lawn areas with impervious hardscape. Limit the removal of lawn areas to mulched planting beds or pervious hardscapes in locations where they would historically be found, such as along fences, walkways, or drives. Low-growing plantings should be used in historic lawn areas; invasive or large-scale species should be avoided. Historic lawn areas should never be reduced by more than 50%.

iii. Native xeric plant materials—Select native and/or xeric plants that thrive in local conditions and reduce watering usage. See UDC Appendix E: San Antonio Recommended Plant List—All Suited to Xeriscape Planting Methods, for a list of appropriate materials and planting methods. Select plant materials with a similar character, growth habit, and light requirements as those being replaced.

iv. Plant palettes—If a varied plant palette is used, incorporate species of taller heights, such informal elements should be restrained to small areas of the front yard or to the rear or side yard so as not to obstruct views of or otherwise distract from the historic structure.

v. Maintenance—Maintain existing landscape features. Do not introduce landscape elements that will obscure the historic structure or are located as to retain moisture on walls or foundations (e.g., dense foundation plantings or vines) or as to cause damage.

B. ROCKS OR HARDSCAPE

i. Impervious surfaces—Do not introduce large pavers, asphalt, or other impervious surfaces where they were not historically located.

ii. Pervious and semi-pervious surfaces—New pervious hardscapes should be limited to areas that are not highly visible, and should not be used as wholesale replacement for plantings. If used, small plantings should be incorporated into the design.

iii. Rock mulch and gravel - Do not use rock mulch or gravel as a wholesale replacement for lawn area. If used, plantings should be incorporated into the design.

D. TREES

i. Preservation—Preserve and protect from damage existing mature trees and heritage trees. See UDC Section 35-523 (Tree Preservation) for specific requirements.

ii. New Trees – Select new trees based on site conditions. Avoid planting new trees in locations that could potentially cause damage to a historic structure or other historic elements. Species selection and planting procedure should be done in accordance with guidance from the City Arborist.

5. Sidewalks, Walkways, Driveways, and Curbing

A. SIDEWALKS AND WALKWAYS

i. Maintenance—Repair minor cracking, settling, or jamming along sidewalks to prevent uneven surfaces. Retain and repair historic sidewalk and walkway paving materials—often brick or concrete—in place.

ii. Replacement materials—Replace those portions of sidewalks or walkways that are deteriorated beyond repair. Every effort should be made to match existing sidewalk color and material.

- iii. Width and alignment*—Follow the historic alignment, configuration, and width of sidewalks and walkways. Alter the historic width or alignment only where absolutely necessary to accommodate the preservation of a significant tree.
- iv. Stamped concrete*—Preserve stamped street names, business insignias, or other historic elements of sidewalks and walkways when replacement is necessary.
- v. ADA compliance*—Limit removal of historic sidewalk materials to the immediate intersection when ramps are added to address ADA requirements.

B. DRIVEWAYS

- i. Driveway configuration*—Retain and repair in place historic driveway configurations, such as ribbon drives. Incorporate a similar driveway configuration—materials, width, and design—to that historically found on the site. Historic driveways are typically no wider than 10 feet. Pervious paving surfaces may be considered where replacement is necessary to increase stormwater infiltration.
- ii. Curb cuts and ramps*—Maintain the width and configuration of original curb cuts when replacing historic driveways. Avoid introducing new curb cuts where not historically found.

7. Off-Street Parking

A. LOCATION

- i. Preferred location*—Place parking areas for non-residential and mixed-use structures at the rear of the site, behind primary structures to hide them from the public right-of-way. On corner lots, place parking areas behind the primary structure and set them back as far as possible from the side streets. Parking areas to the side of the primary structure are acceptable when location behind the structure is not feasible. See UDC Section 35-310 for district-specific standards.
- ii. Front*—Do not add off-street parking areas within the front yard setback as to not disrupt the continuity of the streetscape.
- iii. Access*—Design off-street parking areas to be accessed from alleys or secondary streets rather than from principal streets whenever possible.

B. DESIGN

- i. Screening*—Screen off-street parking areas with a landscape buffer, wall, or ornamental fence two to four feet high—or a combination of these methods. Landscape buffers are preferred due to their ability to absorb carbon dioxide. See UDC Section 35-510 for buffer requirements.
- ii. Materials*—Use permeable parking surfaces when possible to reduce run-off and flooding. See UDC Section 35-526(j) for specific standards.
- iii. Parking structures*—Design new parking structures to be similar in scale, materials, and rhythm of the surrounding historic district when new parking structures are necessary.

UDC Section 35-672. – Neighborhood Wide Design Standards

(a) Pedestrian Circulation. Pedestrian access shall be provided among properties to integrate neighborhoods.

(1) Provide sidewalks that link with existing sidewalks on adjoining properties. If no sidewalk currently exists on an adjoining property, the applicant will have discretion in the placement of the sidewalk provided the following criteria are met:

- A. Provide a sidewalk connection from one (1) side of the applicant's property to the other, parallel to the public right-of way, on the street sides of the property in all river improvement overlay districts
- B. Provide a connection from the street level sidewalk to the Riverwalk at cross streets and bridges and other designated access points. This requirement may be waived if there is already a public connection from the street level to the Riverwalk.
- C. In order to preserve the rural character of "RIO-6," the HPO, in coordination with the development services department, may waive the requirement of sidewalks.
 - In "RIO-3," the width of the pathway along the river shall match those widths established in the historic Hugman drawings. If there are no sidewalks in the Hugman drawings, the path will not exceed eight (8) feet in width.

(2) Link the various functions and spaces on a site with sidewalks in a coordinated system.

Provide pedestrian sidewalks between buildings, parking areas and built features such as outdoor plazas and courtyards.

(3) Paving materials. Paving materials for pedestrian pathways shall use visually and texturally different materials

than those used for parking spaces and automobile traffic.

- A. Paving materials for pedestrian pathways shall be either:
 - i. Broom-finished, scored, sandblasted or dyed concrete;
 - ii. Rough or honed finished stone;
 - iii. Brick or concrete pavers; or
 - iv. Other materials that meet the performance standards of the above materials.

B. Asphalt is permitted for pedestrian pathways that also are designated as multi-use paths by the City of San Antonio. The public works department will maintain the designated multi-use path locations.

(4) Street Connections to River. Retain the interesting and unique situations where streets dead-end at the river, creating both visual and physical access to the river for the public.

(5) Pedestrian Access Along the Riverwalk Pathway Shall Not Be Blocked.

A. Queuing is prohibited on the Riverwalk pathway.

B. Hostess stations shall be located away from the Riverwalk pathway so as to not inhibit pedestrian flow on the Riverwalk pathway. That is, the hostess station shall not be located in such a manner to cause a patron who has stopped at the hostess stand to be standing on the Riverwalk pathway. Pedestrian flow shall be considered "inhibited" if a pedestrian walking along the pathway has to swerve, dodge, change direction or come to a complete stop to avoid a patron engaged at the hostess stand.

C. Tables and chairs shall be located a sufficient distance from the Riverwalk pathway so that normal dining and service shall not inhibit the flow of pedestrian traffic. See inhibited definition in subsection B. above.

(b) Automobile Access and Parking. Automobile circulation should be efficient, and conflicts with pedestrians minimized. Entry points for automobiles should be clearly defined and connections to auto circulation on adjoining properties are encouraged to facilitate access and reduce traffic on abutting public streets.

(1) Curb Cuts.

A. Limit curb cuts to two (2) on parking areas or structures facing only one (1) street, and one (1) for each additional street face. The prohibition of additional curb cuts may be waived by the HDRC where the intent of the standards are clearly met and specific site circulation patterns require an additional curb cut, such as on long parcels or at nodes.

B. Curb cuts may be no larger than twenty-five (25) feet zero (0) inches. Continuous curb cuts are prohibited.

C. Sharing curb cuts between adjacent properties, such as providing cross property access easements, is permitted.

(2) Location of Parking Areas. Automobile parking in new developments must be balanced with the requirements of active environments. Large expanses of surface parking lots have a negative impact on street activity and the pedestrian experience. New commercial and residential structures can accommodate parking needs and contribute to a pedestrian-friendly streetscape.

A. Locate parking areas, that is any off-street, ground level surface used to park cars or any parking structure, toward the interior of the site or to the side or rear of a building.

B. The extent of parking area that may be located along the street edge or riverside shall be limited to a percentage of the lot line as per Table 672-1 as measured in a lineal direction parallel to the lot line. All parking within a thirty-foot setback from the above mentioned lot line shall comply with the requirements of the table. Where parking is located on corner sites only one (1) lot line has to meet the requirements of the table.

C. Parking lots should be avoided as a primary land use. Parking lots as a primary use are prohibited in RIO-3 and for all properties that fall within one hundred (100) feet of the river right-of-way in all RIO districts.

(3) Screen or Buffer Parking Areas From View of Public Streets, the River or Adjacent Residential Uses. (see Figure 672-2). Parking lots shall be screened with a landscape buffer as per the illustrations of bufferyards and Table 510-2 if the parking area meets one (1) of the following conditions:

A. Within a fifty-foot setback from the edge of the river ROW use, at a minimum, type E; or

B. Within a twenty-foot setback from a property line adjacent to a street use, at a minimum, type B; or

C. Within a twenty-foot setback of commercial or industrial property that abuts a residential property use, at a minimum, type C.

(4) Parking Structures Shall Be Compatible With Buildings in the Surrounding Area. Parking garages should have retail space on the ground floor of a parking structure provided the retail space has at least fifty (50) percent of its linear street frontage as display windows. Parking structures may be made visually appealing with a mural or public art component approved by the HDRC on the parking structure. A parking garage will be considered compatible if:

A. It does not vary in height by more than thirty (30) percent from another building on the same block face; and

B. It uses materials that can be found on other buildings within the block face, or in the block face across the street.

(5) Parking Structures Shall Provide Clearly Defined Pedestrian Access. Pedestrian entrances and exits shall be accentuated with directional signage, lighting or architectural features so that pedestrians can readily discern the appropriate path of travel to avoid pedestrian/auto conflicts.

- (6) Parking lots, structures, and hardscape shall not drain directly into the river without installation of appropriate water quality best management practices (WQ BMPs). Acequias shall not be used for any type of drainage.
- (c) Views. The river's course (both natural and manmade), and San Antonio's street pattern, creates unique views of certain properties from the public ROW. These properties often occur at prominent curves in the river or where a street changes direction and a property appears to be a terminus at the end of a street.

(1) Architectural Focal Point. When a property is situated in such a manner as to appear to be the terminus at the end of the street or at a prominent curve in the river, the building shall incorporate into its design an architectural feature that will provide a focal point at the end of the view. (see Figure 672-3) An architectural feature will be considered to be a focal point through any of the following methods, but not limited to:

- A. Additional height.
 - B. Creation of a tower.
 - C. Variation in roof shape.
 - D. Change of color or materials.
 - E. Addition of a design enhancement feature such as:
 - i. Embellished entrance areas.
 - ii. Articulated corners, especially when entrance is at corner, rounded or chamfered corners ease the transitions from one street facade to the adjoining facade.
 - iii. Recessed or projecting balconies and entrances.
- Billboards, advertising and signage are expressly prohibited as appropriate focal points.

UDC Section 35-673. – Site Design Standards

(a) Solar Access. The intent of providing and maintaining solar access to the San Antonio River is to protect the river's specific ecoclimate. The river has a special microclimate of natural and planted vegetation that requires certain levels and balanced amounts of sunlight, space and water. Development must be designed to respect and protect those natural requirements, keeping them in balance and not crowding or altering them so that vegetation does not receive more or less space and water, but particularly sunlight, than is required for normal expected growth.

(1) Building Massing to Provide Solar Access to the River. Building massing shall be so designed as to provide direct sunlight to vegetation in the river channel as defined:

- A. The area to be measured for solar access shall be a thirty-foot setback from the river's edge or from the river's edge to the building face, which ever is lesser, parallel to the river for the length of the property.
- B. The solar calculations shall be measured exclusive to the applicant's property; that is, shades and shadows of other buildings shall not be included in the calculations. The solar calculations shall only measure the impact of new construction and additions. The shading impact of historic buildings on the site may be excluded from the calculations.
- C. The defined area shall receive a minimum of 5.5 hours of direct sunlight, measured at the winter solstice, and 7.5 hours of direct sunlight, measured at the summer solstice.
- D. Those properties located on the south side of the river (whose north face is adjacent to the river) shall only be required to measure the sunlight in the 30-foot setback on the opposite bank of the river.
- E. Those properties within the river improvement overlay district not directly adjacent to the river are still subject to the provisions of this section. To determine the solar access effect of these buildings on the river the applicant must measure the nearest point to the river of an area defined by a thirty-foot setback from the river's edge, parallel to the river for the length of their property that would be affected by their building. For those buildings on the south side of the river, the 30-foot setback shall be measured only on the opposite bank.
- F. However, in those cases where the above conditions cannot be met due to the natural configuration of the river, existing street patterns, or existing buildings, the HDRC may approve a buildings mass and height as allowed by table 674-2.
- G. If there is a conflict with this section and another section of this chapter this section shall prevail.

(2) Prohibition of Structures, Buildings, Roofs or Skywalks Over the River Channel. No structure, building, roof or skywalk may be constructed over the river channel, or by-pass channel with the exception of structures for flood control purposes, open air pedestrian bridges at ground or river level, and street bridges. The river channel is the natural course of the river as modified for flood control purposes and the Pershing-Catalpa ditch.

(b) Building Orientation. Buildings should be sited to help define active spaces for area users, provide pedestrian connections between sites, help animate the street scene and define street edges. Consideration to both the street and riverside should be given. The placement of a building on a site should therefore be considered within the context of the block, as well as how the structure will support the broader design goals for the area.

(1) Two or More Buildings on a Site.

- A. Cluster buildings to create active open spaces such as courtyards along the street and river edges. Site plazas and courtyards, if possible, so that they are shaded in the summer and are sunny in the winter.

(2) Primary and Secondary Entrances

A. Orient a building's primary entrance toward the street with subordinate entrances located on the riverside and/or the interior of the property. On a major thoroughfare street it is acceptable to provide the primary entrance through a common courtyard and then to a street.

B. The primary entrance shall be distinguished by architectural features such as, but not limited to: an entry portal; change in material or color; change in scale of other openings; addition of columns, lintels or canopies.

C. Secondary entrances shall have architectural features that are subordinate to the primary entrance in scale and detail. For purposes of this division subordinate means that the entrance is smaller in height and width, and has fewer or simpler architectural elements.

(c) Topography and Drainage. The natural contours of occasional hillsides and riverbanks contribute to the distinct character of the San Antonio River and shall be considered in site designs for new development. Site plans shall minimize the need for cut and fill. It should be considered as an opportunity for positive enhancements through the creative use of terraces and retaining walls.

(1) Visual Impacts of Cut and Fill. Divide a grade change of more than ten (10) vertical feet into a series of benches and terraces. Terrace steep slopes following site contours. When creating site benches, using sloped "transitional areas" as part of the required landscaping is appropriate.

(2) Minimize the Potential for Erosion at the Riverbank. Grade slopes at a stable angle not to exceed four to one (4:1) and provide plant material that will stabilize the soil such as vigorous ground covers, vines or turf planting that are native and noninvasive species as found on the permissible plant list maintained by the parks and recreation department. Use of stabilizing materials such as geo-web or geo-grid is permitted as long as plant material is used to conceal the grid.

Use of terraced walls is permitted when there is a slope of more than four to one (4:1).

(3) Retaining Walls. Limit the height of a retaining wall to less than six (6) feet. If the retaining wall must exceed six (6) feet, a series of six-foot terrace walls is acceptable. Walls at dams and locks are excluded from this requirement. If in the opinion of the historic preservation officer a higher wall is consistent with the adopted conceptual plan of the river, a higher wall (not to exceed twelve (12) feet) is allowed. Materials used for the walls may include limestone, stucco, brick, clay, tile, timber, or textured concrete. (see Figure 673-2)

(4) Enhance or Incorporate Acequias Into The Landscape Design and Drainage Scheme of the Site. Where archeological evidence indicates a site contains or has contained a Spanish colonial acequia, incorporate the original path of the acequia as a natural drainageway or a landscape feature of the site by including it as part of the open space plan, and a feature of the landscape design.

(5) Design of Stormwater Management Facilities to be a Landscape Amenity. Where above ground stormwater management facilities are required, such facilities shall be multi-purpose amenities. For example, water quality features can be included as part of the site landscaping and detention facilities can be included as part of a hardscape patio. Using an open concrete basin as a detention pond is prohibited.

(6) Walls and Fences at Detention Areas.

A. When the topography of the site exceeds a four to one (4:1) slope and it becomes necessary to use a masonry wall as part of the detention area, use a textured surface and incorporate plant materials, from the plant list maintained by the parks department, that will drape over the edge to soften the appearance of the structure.

B. The use of solid board or chain link fence with or without slats is prohibited. A welded wire, tubular steel, wrought iron or garden loop is permitted.

(7) Roof Drainage into the River.

A. All roof drainage and other run-off drainage shall conform to public works department standards so that they drain into sewer and storm drains rather than the river. Drainage of this type shall not be piped into the river unless the outlet is below the normal waterline of the river at normal flow rates.

B. All downspouts or gutters draining water from roofs or parapets shall be extended underground under walks and patios to the San Antonio River's edge or stormwater detention facility so that such drainage will not erode or otherwise damage the Riverwalk, landscaping or river retaining walls.

C. All piping and air-conditioning wastewater systems shall be kept in good repair. Water to be drained purposely from these systems, after being tested and adjudged free from pollution, shall be drained in the same manner prescribed in subsection (7)A. above.

(d) Riverside Setbacks. Riverside setbacks for both buildings and accessory structures are established to reinforce the defined character of the specific river improvement overlay district and help to define an edge at the river pathway that is varied according to the relationship of the river and the street. In the more urban areas, buildings should align closer to the river edge, while in more rural areas the buildings should be set farther away.

(1) Minimum setback requirements are per the following Table 673-1.

Description	RIO-1	RIO-2	RIO-3	RIO-4	RIO-5	RIO-6
Riverside Setback	20 FT	15 FT	0 FT	20 FT	50 ft	100 FT

(2) Designation of a development node district provides for a minimum riverside setback of zero (0) feet.

(e) Landscape Design. Lush and varied landscapes are part of the tradition of the San Antonio River. These design standards apply to landscaping within an individual site. Additional standards follow that provide more specific standards for the public pathway along the river and street edges.

(1) Provide Variety in Landscape Design. Provide variety in the landscape experience along the river by varying landscape designs between properties. No more than seventy-five (75) percent of the landscape materials, including plants, shall be the same as those on adjacent properties. (see Figure 673-4).

(2) Planting Requirements in Open Space Abutting the River. On publicly-owned land leased by the adjoining property owner, if applicable, and/or within privately owned setbacks adjacent to the river, a minimum percentage of the open space, excluding building footprint, lease space under bridges and parking requirements, are required to be planted according to Table 673-2.

A. Planting requirements in RIO-4, RIO-5, and RIO-6 should continue the restoration landscape efforts along the river banks. Planting in these RIO districts is to be less formal so as to maintain the rural setting of the river.

B. In "RIO-3," if existing conditions don't meet the standards as set out in Table 673-2, the owner or lessee will not have to remove paving to add landscaping in order to meet the standards until there is a substantial remodeling of the outdoor area. Substantial remodeling will include replacement of seventy-five (75) percent of the paving materials, or replacement of balcony and stair structures.

(f) Plant Materials. A number of soil conditions converge in the San Antonio area to create unique vegetation ecosystems. Along the route of the San Antonio River, the soil conditions vary greatly from the northern boundary near Hildebrand to the city limits near Mission San Francisco de la Espada (Mission Espada) and therefore native and indigenous plants will vary accordingly. Landscaping should reflect the unique soil characteristics of the specific site.

(1) Incorporate Existing Vegetation. Extend the use of landscape materials, including plants, shrubs and trees that are used in the public areas of the river onto adjacent private areas to form a cohesive design.

(2) Use indigenous and noninvasive species characteristic of the specific site as found on the permissible plant list maintained by the parks and recreation department or the Unified Development Code Plant List found in Appendix E. In "RIO-3," plantings of tropical and semi-tropical plants with perennial background is permitted.

(3) Install Trees to Provide Shade and to Separate Pedestrians From Automobile Traffic. Install street trees along the property line or in the ROW abutting all streets according to minimum requirement standards established in subsection 35-512(b), except where this conflicts with existing downtown Tri-Party improvements in "RIO-3." In "RIO-3" the owner has the option of placing trees at the property line, or along the street edge.

(g) Paving Materials. An important San Antonio landscape tradition is the use of decorative surfaces for paving and other landscape structures. Paving materials and patterns should be carefully chosen to preserve and enhance the pedestrian experience.

(1) Vary Walkway, Patio and Courtyard Paving to Add Visual Interest on the Riverside of Properties Abutting the River. Pervious paving is encouraged where feasible and appropriate to the site.

A. A maximum of six hundred (600) square feet is allowed for a single paving material before the paving material must be divided or separated with a paving material that is different in texture, pattern, color or material. A separation using a different material must be a minimum of twenty-four (24) inches wide, the full width of the pathway.

B. A maximum of one hundred (100) lineal feet is allowed in a walkway before the pattern must change in districts "RIO-2," "RIO-3," and "RIO-4." A maximum of five hundred twenty-eight (528) lineal feet is allowed before the pattern must change in districts "RIO-1," "RIO-5" and "RIO-6." The change of material at five hundred twenty-eight (528) lineal feet will define and delineate one-tenth-mile markers.

C. In "RIO-3," the Riverwalk pathway shall be delineated by using a separate material that is clearly distinguished from the adjacent patio paving materials. If the historic Hugman drawings indicate a sidewalk width and pattern on the site, that paving pattern and material shall be replicated.

(h) Site Walls and Fences. Site walls and fences are used to help divide spaces, screen unsightly objects and provide privacy. However, the character of the San Antonio River is such that walls shall not be erected in such a way as to block views of the river from public spaces.

(1) Use of Site Walls to Define Outdoor Spaces.

A. Use of low scale walls (twenty-four (24) inches to forty-eight (48) inches) to divide space, create a variety in landscaping and define edges is permitted.

B. Solid walls (up to seventy-two (72) inches) are permitted to: screen mechanical equipment, garbage receptacles and other unsightly areas; and provide privacy at the back of lots up to the front building face.

(2) Site Wall and Fence Materials.

A. On properties abutting the river, site walls and fence materials may be constructed of: stone, block, tile, stucco, wrought iron, tubular steel, welded wire or a combination of masonry and metal, cedar posts and welded wire or garden loop or other materials having similar characteristics. All other properties, not abutting

the river may use the above listed materials plus wood fencing.

B. All chain link fences are prohibited for properties abutting the river. For properties that do not abut the river chain link is only allowed in the rear yard if not readily visible from the right-of-way. Barbed wire, razor wire, and concertina are prohibited in all RIO districts.

(i) Street Furnishings. Street furnishings are exterior amenities, including but not limited to, tables, chairs, umbrellas, landscape pots, wait stations, valet stations, bicycle racks, planters, benches, bus shelters, kiosks, waste receptacles and similar items that help to define pedestrian use areas. Handcrafted street furnishings are particularly important in San Antonio, and therefore this tradition of craftsmanship and of providing street furniture is encouraged.

(1) Prohibited Street Furnishings in Riverwalk Area. The following street furnishings are prohibited within the publicly owned portion of the Riverwalk area, whether or not the property is leased, and on the exterior of the riverside of buildings directly adjacent to the publicly owned portion of the river:

A. Vending machines.

B. Automatic teller machines.

C. Pay phones.

D. Photo booths.

E. Automated machines such as, but not limited to, penny crunching machines, blood pressure machines, fortune-telling machines, video games, animated characters and other machines that are internally illuminated, or have moving parts, or make noise, or have flashing lights.

F. Inanimate figures such as horses, kangaroos, bears, gorillas, mannequins or any such animal, cartoon or human figure. This section does not affect public art as defined in Appendix "A" of this chapter.

G. Monitors (i.e., television screens, computer screens).

H. Speakers.

(2) Street Furnishing Materials.

A. Street furnishings shall be made of wood, metal, stone, terra cotta, cast stone, hand-sculpted concrete, or solid surfacing material, such as Corian or Surell.

B. Inexpensive plastic resin furnishings are prohibited.

(3) Advertising on Street Furnishings.

A. No commercial logos, trademarks, decals, product names whether specific or generic, or names of businesses and organizations shall be allowed on street furnishings.

B. Product or business advertising is prohibited on all street furnishings.

C. Notwithstanding the restrictions above, applications may be approved for purposes of donor or non-profit recognition.

(4) Street furnishings, such as tables and chairs may not be stored (other than overnight storage) in such a way as to be visible from the river pathway.

(j) Lighting. Site lighting should be considered an integral element of the landscape design of a property. It should help define activity areas and provide interest at night. At the same time, lighting should facilitate safe and convenient circulation for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists. Overspill of light and light pollution should be avoided.

(1) Site Lighting. Site lighting shall be shielded by permanent attachments to light fixtures so that the light sources are not visible from a public way and any offsite glare is prevented.

A. Site lighting shall include illumination of parking areas, buildings, pedestrian routes, dining areas, design features and public ways.

B. Outdoor spaces adjoining and visible from the river right-of-way shall have average ambient light levels of between one (1) and three (3) foot-candles with a minimum of 0.5-foot candles and a maximum of six (6) foot-candles at any point measured on the ground plane. Interior spaces visible from the river right-of-way on the river level and ground floor level shall use light sources with no more than the equivalent lumens of a one hundred-watt incandescent bulb. Exterior balconies, porches and canopies adjoining and visible from the river right-of-way shall use light sources with the equivalent lumens of a sixty-watt incandescent bulb with average ambient light levels no greater than the lumen output of a one hundred-watt incandescent light bulb as long as average foot candle standards are not exceeded. Accent lighting of landscape or building features including specimen plants, gates, entries, water features, art work, stairs, and ramps may exceed these standards by a multiple of 2.5. Recreational fields and activity areas that require higher light levels shall be screened from the river hike and bike pathways with a landscape buffer.

C. Exterior light fixtures that use the equivalent of more than one hundred-watt incandescent bulbs shall not emit a significant amount of the fixture's total output above a vertical cut-off angle of ninety (90) degrees. Any structural part of the fixture providing this cut-off angle must be permanently affixed.

D. Lighting spillover to the publicly owned areas of the river or across property lines shall not exceed one-half (½) of one (1) foot-candle measured at any point ten (10) feet beyond the property line.

(2) Provide Lighting for Pedestrian Ways That is Low Scaled for Walking. The position of a lamp in a pedestrian-way light shall not exceed fifteen (15) feet in height above the ground.

(3) Light Temperature and Color.

A. Light temperature and color shall be between 2500° K and 3500° K with a color rendition index (CRI) of eighty (80) or higher, respectively. This restriction is limited to all outdoor spaces adjoining and visible from the river right-of-way and from the interior spaces adjoining the river right-of-way on the river level and ground floor level. Levels shall be determined by product specifications.

(4) Minimize the Visual Impacts of Exterior Building Lighting.

A. All security lighting shall be shielded so that the light sources are not visible from a public way.

B. Lighting (uplighting and downlighting) that is positioned to highlight a building or outdoor artwork shall be aimed at the object to be illuminated, not pointed into the sky.

C. Fixtures shall not distract from, or obscure important architectural features of the building. Lighting fixtures shall be a subordinate feature on the building unless they are incorporated into the over-all design scheme of the building.

(5) Prohibited Lighting on the Riverside of Properties Abutting the River.

A. Flashing lights.

B. Rotating lights.

C. Chaser lights.

D. Exposed neon.

E. Seasonal decorating lights such as festoon, string or rope lights, except between November 20 and January 10.

F. Flood lamps.

(6) Minimize the visual impacts of lighting in parking areas in order to enhance the perception of the nighttime sky and to prevent glare onto adjacent properties. Parking lot light poles are limited to thirty (30) feet in height, shall have a 90° cutoff angle so as to not emit light above the horizontal plane.

(k) Curbs and Gutters.

(1) Construct Curb and Gutter Along the Street Edge of a Property.

A. Install curbs and gutter along the street edge at the time of improving a parcel.

B. In order to preserve the rural character of RIO-5 and RIO-6, the HPO in coordination with public works and the development services department may waive the requirement of curbs and gutters.

(l) Access to Public Pathway Along the River. These requirements are specifically for those properties adjacent to the river to provide a connection to the publicly owned pathway along the river. The connections are to stimulate and enhance urban activity, provide path connections in an urban context, enliven street activity, and protect the ambiance and character of the river area.

(1) A stair, ramp or elevator connecting the publicly owned pathway at the river to private property along the river is allowed by right at the following locations:

A. At all street and vehicular bridge crossings over the river.

B. Where publicly owned streets dead end into the river.

C. Where the pedestrian pathway in the Riverwalk area is located at the top of bank and there is a two-foot or less grade change between the private property and the pathway.

(2) If there is a grade change greater than two (2) feet between the private property and the publicly owned pathway at the river then the following conditions apply:

A. Access to the publicly owned pathway is limited to one (1) connection per property, with the exception that connections are always allowed at street and vehicular bridge crossings. For example if one (1) property extends the entire block face from street crossing to street crossing the owner would be allowed three (3) access points if the distance requirements were met.

B. The minimum distance between access points shall be ninety-five (95) feet. Only street and vehicular bridge connections are exempted. Mid-block access points must meet this requirement.

C. Reciprocal access agreements between property owners are permitted.

(3) Clearly define a key pedestrian gateway into the site from the publicly owned pathway at the river with distinctive architectural or landscape elements.

A. The primary gateway from a development to the publicly owned pathway at the river shall be defined by an architectural or landscape element made of stone, brick, tile, metal, rough hewn cedar or hand-formed concrete or through the use of distinctive plantings or planting beds.

(m) Buffering and Screening. The manner in which screening and buffering elements are designed on a site greatly affects the character of the river districts. In general, service areas shall be screened or buffered. "Buffers" are considered to be landscaped berms, planters or planting beds; whereas, more solid "screens" include fences and walls. When site development creates an unavoidable negative visual impact on abutting properties or to the public right-of-way, it shall be mitigated with a landscape design that will buffer or screen it.

(1) Landscape Buffers Shall be Used in the Following Circumstances: To buffer the edges of a parking lot from pedestrian ways and outdoor use areas, (such as patios, and courtyards), and as an option to screening in order to

buffer service areas, garbage disposal areas, mechanical equipment, storage areas, maintenance yards, equipment storage areas and other similar activities that by their nature create unsightly views from pedestrian ways, streets, public ROWs and adjoining property.

(2) Screening Elements Shall be Used in the Following Circumstances: To screen service areas, storage areas, or garbage areas from pedestrian ways.

(3) Exceptions for Site Constraints. Due to site constraints, in all RIOs and specifically for "RIO-3" where there is less than ten (10) feet to provide for the minimum landscape berm, a screen may be used in conjunction with plantings to meet the intent of these standards. For example a low site wall may be combined with plant materials to create a buffer with a lesser cross sectional width.

(4) Applicable Bufferyard Types. Table 510-2 establishes minimum plant materials required for each bufferyard type. For purposes of this section, type C shall be the acceptable minimum type.

(5) Applicable Screening Fence and Wall Types. Screening fences and walls shall be subject to conditions of subsection 35-673(h), Walls and Fences.

(n) Service Areas and Mechanical Equipment. Service areas and mechanical equipment should be visually unobtrusive and should be integrated with the design of the site and building. Noise generated from mechanical equipment shall not exceed city noise regulations.

(1) Locate service entrances, waste disposal areas and other similar uses adjacent to service lanes and away from major streets and the river.

A. Position utility boxes so that they cannot be seen from the public Riverwalk path, or from major streets, by locating them on the sides of buildings and away from pedestrian and vehicular routes. Locating them within interior building corners, at building offsets or other similar locations where the building mass acts as a shield from public view is preferred.

B. Orient the door to a trash enclosure to face away from the street when feasible.

C. Air intake and exhaust systems, or other mechanical equipment that generates noise, smoke or odors, shall not be located at the pedestrian level.

(2) Screening of service entrance shall be compatible with the buildings on the block face.

A. When it would be visible from a public way, a service area shall be visually compatible with the buildings on the block face.

B. A wall will be considered compatible if it uses the same material as other buildings on the block, or is painted a neutral color such as beige, gray or dark green or if it is in keeping with the color scheme of the adjacent building.

(o) Bicycle Parking. On-site bicycle parking helps promote a long term sustainable strategy for development in RIO districts. Bicycle parking shall be placed in a well lit and accessible area. UDC bicycle parking requirements in UDC 35-526 can be met through indoor bicycle storage facilities in lieu of outdoor bike rack fixtures.

Sec. 35-674. Building Design Principles

(a) Architectural Character. A basic objective for architectural design in the river improvement overlay districts is to encourage the reuse of existing buildings and construction of new, innovative designs that enhance the area, and help to establish distinct identities for each of the zone districts. At the same time, these new buildings should reinforce established building traditions and respect the contexts of neighborhoods.

When a new building is constructed, it shall be designed in a manner that reinforces the basic character-defining features of the area. Such features include the way in which a building is located on its site, the manner in which it faces the street and its orientation to the river. When these design variables are arranged in a new building to be similar to those seen traditionally, visual compatibility results.

(b) Mass and Scale. A building shall appear to have a "human scale." In general, this scale can be accomplished by using familiar forms and elements interpreted in human dimensions. Exterior wall designs shall help pedestrians establish a sense of scale with relation to each building. Articulating the number of floors in a building can help to establish a building's scale, for example, and prevent larger buildings from dwarfing the pedestrian.

(1) Express facade components in ways that will help to establish building scale.

A. Treatment of architectural facades shall contain a discernible pattern of mass to void, or windows and doors to solid mass. Openings shall appear in a regular pattern, or be clustered to form a cohesive design. Architectural elements such as columns, lintels, sills, canopies, windows and doors should align with other architectural features on the adjacent facades.

(2) Align horizontal building elements with others in the blockface to establish building scale.

A. Align at least one (1) horizontal building element with another horizontal building element on the same block face. It will be considered to be within alignment if it is within three (3) feet, measured vertically, of the existing architectural element.

(3) Express the distinction between upper and lower floors.

A. Develop the first floor as primarily transparent. The building facade facing a major street shall have at least fifty (50) percent of the street level facade area devoted to display windows and/or windows affording some view into the interior areas. Multi-family residential buildings with no retail or office space are exempt from this requirement.

(4) Where a building facade faces the street or river and exceeds the maximum facade length allowed in Table 674-1 divide the facade of building into modules that express traditional dimensions.

A. The maximum length of an individual wall plane that faces a street or the river shall be as shown in Table 674-1.

Table 674-1

Description	RIO-1	RIO-2	RIO-3	RIO-4	RIO-5	RIO-6
Maximum Facade Length	50 ft.	50 ft.	30 ft.	75 ft.	75 ft.	50 ft.

B. If a building wall plane facing the street or river and exceeds the length allowed in Table 674-1, employ at least two (2) of the following techniques to reduce the perceived mass:

- Change materials with each building module to reduce its perceived mass; or
- Change the height with each building module of a wall plane. The change in height shall be at least ten (10) percent of the vertical height; or
- Change the roof form of each building module to help express the different modules of the building mass; or
- Change the arrangement of windows and other facade articulation features, such as, columns, pilasters or strap work, which divides large planes into smaller components.

(5) Organize the Mass of a Building to Provide Solar Access to the River.

A. One (1) method of doing so is to step the building down toward the river to meet the solar access requirements of subsection 35-673(a).

B. Another method is to set the building back from the river a distance sufficient to meet the solar access requirements of subsection 35-673(a).

(c) Height. Building heights vary along the river corridor, from one-story houses to high-rise hotels and apartments. This diversity of building heights is expected to continue. However, within each zone, a general similarity in building heights should be encouraged in order to help establish a sense of visual continuity. In addition, building heights shall be configured such that a comfortable human scale is established along the edges of properties and views to the river and other significant landmarks are provided while allowing the appropriate density for an area.

(1) The maximum building height shall be as defined in Table 674-2.

A. Solar access standards subsection 35-673(a), and massing standards subsection 35-674(b) also will affect building heights.

Table 674-2

Description	RIO-1	RIO-2	RIO-3	RIO-4	RIO-5	RIO-6
Maximum # of Stories	5	10	None	7	5	4
Maximum Height in Feet 60 ft.	120 ft.	None	84 ft.	60 ft.	50 ft.	

(3) On the street-side, the building facade shall appear similar in height to those of other buildings found traditionally in the area.

If fifty (50) percent of the building facades within a block face are predominantly lower than the maximum height allowed, the new building facade on the street-side shall align with the average height of those lower buildings within the block face, or with a particular building that falls within the fifty (50) percent range. However, the remainder of the building may obtain its maximum height by stepping back fifteen (15) feet from the building face.

(4) Designation of a development node provides for the ability to increase the building height by fifty (50) percent from the requirements set out in article VI.

(d) Materials and Finishes. Masonry materials are well established as primary features along the river corridor and their use should be continued. Stucco that is detailed to provide a texture and pattern, which conveys a human scale, is also part of the tradition. In general, materials and finishes that provide a sense of human scale, reduce the perceived mass of a building and appear to blend with the natural setting of the river shall be used, especially on major structures.

(1) Use indigenous materials and traditional building materials for primary wall surfaces. A minimum of seventy-five (75) percent of walls (excluding window fenestrations) shall be composed of the following:

A. Modular masonry materials including brick, stone, and rusticated masonry block, tile, terra-cotta, structural clay tile and cast stone. Concrete masonry units (CMU) are not allowed.

- B. Other new materials that convey the texture, scale, and finish similar to traditional building materials.
- C. Stucco and painted concrete when detailed to express visual interest and convey a sense of scale.
- D. Painted or stained wood in a lap or shingle pattern.

(2) The following materials are not permitted as primary building materials and may be used as a secondary material only:

- A. Large expanses of high gloss or shiny metal panels.
- B. Mirror glass panels. Glass curtain wall buildings are allowed in RIO-3 as long as the river and street levels comply with 35-674(d)(1) above.

(3) Paint or Finish Colors.

- A. Use natural colors of indigenous building materials for properties that abut the Riverwalk area.
- B. Use matte finishes instead of high glossy finishes on wall surfaces. Wood trim and metal trim may be painted with gloss enamel.
- C. Bright colors may highlight entrances or architectural features.

(e) Facade Composition. Traditionally, many commercial and multi-family buildings in the core of San Antonio have had facade designs that are organized into three (3) distinct segments: First, a "base" exists, which establishes a scale at the street level; second a "mid-section," or shaft is used, which may include several floors. Finally a "cap" finishes the composition. The cap may take the form of an ornamental roof form or decorative molding and may also include the top floors of the building. This organization helps to give a sense of scale to a building and its use should be encouraged.

In order to maintain the sense of scale, buildings should have the same setback as surrounding buildings so as to maintain the street-wall pattern, if clearly established.

In contrast, the traditional treatment of facades along the riverside has been more modest. This treatment is largely a result of the fact that the riverside was a utilitarian edge and was not oriented to the public. Today, even though orienting buildings to the river is a high priority objective, it is appropriate that these river-oriented facades be simpler in character than those facing the street.

(1) Street Facade. Buildings that are taller than the street-wall (sixty (60) feet) shall be articulated at the stop of the street wall or stepped back in order to maintain the rhythm of the street wall. Buildings should be composed to include a base, a middle and a cap.

A. High rise buildings, more than one hundred (100) feet tall, shall terminate with a distinctive top or cap. This can be accomplished by:

- i. Reducing the bulk of the top twenty (20) percent of the building by ten (10) percent.
- ii. By stepping back the top twenty (20) percent of the building.
- iii. Changing the material of the cap.

B. Roof forms shall be used to conceal all mechanical equipment and to add architectural interest to the structure.

C. Roof surfaces should include strategies to reduce heat island effects such as use of green roofs, photo voltaic panels, and/or the use of roof materials with high solar reflectivity.

(2) Fenestration. Windows help provide a human scale and so shall be proportioned accordingly.

D. Curtain wall systems shall be designed with modulating features such as projecting horizontal and/or vertical mullions.

(3) Entrances. Entrances shall be easy to find, be a special feature of the building, and be appropriately scaled.

A. Entrances shall be the most prominent on the street side and less prominent on the river side.

B. Entrances shall be placed so as to be highly visible.

C. The scale of the entrance is determined by the prominence of the function and or the amount of use.

D. Entrances shall have a change in material and/or wall plane.

E. Entrances should not use excessive storefront systems.

(4) Riverside facade. The riverside facade of a building shall have simpler detailing and composition than the street facade.

A. Architectural details such as cornices, sills, lintels, door surrounds, water tables and other similar details should use simple curves and handcrafted detailing.

B. Stone detailing shall be rough hewn, and chiseled faced. Smooth faced stone is not permitted as the primary building material, but can be used as accent pieces.

C. Facades on the riverside shall be asymmetrical, pedestrian scale, and give the appearance of the back of a building. That is, in traditional building along the river, the backs of building were designed with simpler details, and appear less formal than the street facades.

(g) Awnings, Canopies and Arcades. (See Figure 674-2) The tradition of sheltering sidewalks with awnings, canopies and arcades on commercial and multi-family buildings is well established in San Antonio and is a practice that should be continued. They offer shade from the hot summer sun and shelter from rainstorms, thereby facilitating pedestrian activity. They also establish a sense of scale for a building, especially at the ground level. Awnings and canopies are appropriate locations for signage. Awnings with signage shall comply with any master signage plan on file with the historic preservation officer for the property. Awnings and canopies installed at street level within the public right-of-way require licensing with the city's capital

improvements management services (CIMS) department. Canopies, balconies and awnings installed at river level within the public right-of-way require licensing with the city's downtown operations department.

(1) If awnings, arcades and canopies are to be used they should accentuate the character-defining features of a building.

A. The awning, arcade or canopy shall be located in relationship to the openings of a building. That is, if there are a series of awnings or canopies, they shall be located at the window or door openings. However awnings, canopies and arcades may extend the length of building to provide shade at the first floor for the pedestrian.

B. Awnings, arcades and canopies shall be mounted to highlight architectural features such as moldings that may be found above the storefront.

C. They should match the shape of the opening.

D. Simple shed shapes are appropriate for rectangular openings.

E. Odd shapes and bubble awnings are prohibited except where the shape of an opening requires a bubble awning, or historic precedent shows they have been previously used on the building.

F. Canopies, awnings and arcades shall not conflict with the building's proportions or with the shape of the openings that the awning or canopy covers.

G. Historic canopies shall be repaired or replaced with in-kind materials.

(2) Materials and Color.

A. Awnings and canopies may be constructed of metal, wood or fabric. Certain vinyl is allowed if it has the appearance of natural fiber as approved by the HDRC.

B. Awning color shall coordinate with the building. Natural and earth tone colors are encouraged. Fluorescent colors are not allowed. When used for signage it is appropriate to choose a dark color for the canopy and use light lettering for signage.

(3) Incorporating lighting into the design of a canopy is appropriate.

A. Lights that illuminate the pedestrian way beneath the awning are appropriate.

B. Lights that illuminate the storefront are appropriate.

C. Internally illuminated awnings that glow are prohibited.

UDC Section. 35-675. Archaeology.

When an HDRC application is submitted for commercial development projects within a river improvement overlay district the city archeologist shall review the project application to determine if there is potential of containing intact archaeological deposits utilizing the following documents/methods:

(1)The Texas Sites Atlas for known/recorded sites, site data in the files of the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory and the Texas Historical Commission;

(2)USGS maps;

(3)Soil Survey maps;

(4)Distance to water;

(5)Topographical data;

(6)Predictive settlement patterns;

(7)Archival research and historic maps;

(8)Data on file at the office of historic preservation.

If after review the city archeologist determines there is potential of containing intact archaeological deposits, an archaeological survey report shall be prepared and submitted. If, after review by the city archeologist, a determination is made that the site has little to no potential of containing intact archaeological deposits, the requirement for an archaeological survey report may be waived.

Upon completion of a survey, owners of property containing inventoried archaeological sites are encouraged to educate the public regarding archaeological components of the site and shall coordinate any efforts with the office of historic preservation.

FINDINGS:

General Findings:

a. The applicant is requesting conceptual approval to construct a 9-story hotel tower on the existing, vacant lot at

423 S Alamo that is to feature approximately 275 hotel room. In addition to the proposed hotel tower, the applicant has proposed to construct street level structures to house hotel amenities, and to connect to the existing, historic German School buildings on site. The applicant has also proposed modifications to the existing courtyard between the two historic German School buildings.

- b. CONCEPTUAL APPROVAL – Conceptual approval is the review of general design ideas and principles (such as scale and setback). Specific design details reviewed at this stage are not binding and may only be approved through a Certificate of Appropriateness for final approval.
- c. DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE – This request was reviewed by the Design Review Committee on November 12, 2019. At that meeting, committee members noted that the existing, historic structures should be incorporated into the design and encouraged the applicant to provide additional master planning documents when submitting for conceptual approval.
- d. EXISTING SITE CONDITION – The existing site features an asphalt surface parking lot, and the German English School historic site, which features a number of historic structures.
- e. LANDSCAPING – The applicant has both rendered site plans and renderings of the site including various landscaping details. Staff finds that the applicant should submit a detailed landscaping plan when returning to the Commission for final approval.
- f. SITE LIGHTING – At this time the applicant has not provided information regarding site lighting. Staff finds that an site lighting plan should be submitted when returning to the Commission for final approval.
- g. SIGNAGE – Per the submitted application documents, the applicant has proposed monuments signs along S Alamo. Both the Historic Design Guidelines, Guidelines for Signage and the UDC Section 35-678 recommend that signage not exceed more than fifty (50) square feet per application. Both documents also note that additional square footage may be approved by the Commission. Staff finds that the applicant should submit a detailed master signage plan, including hotel, tenant, and wayfinding signage to be reviewed and approved by the Commission.
- h. ARCHAEOLOGY – The project area is within the La Villita Local Historic District, La Villita National Register of Historic Places District, and includes the German-English School Local Historic Landmark. In addition, the German-English School is a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (marker #2178). Furthermore, previously recorded archaeological site 41BX304 is located within the subject property. A review of historic archival information identifies the project area as the possible location of the Spanish Colonial Cuartel. Moreover, the reported second location of Mission San Antonio de Valero is in close proximity to the subject property. Therefore, an archaeological investigation is required. State law requires a 60 day notice to the Texas Historical Commission prior to modifying the historical or architectural integrity of a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark. The project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology, as applicable.

Findings related to request item #1:

- 1a. The applicant has proposed to construct a 9-story hotel tower on the existing, vacant lot located at 423 S Alamo. The proposed hotel will feature approximately 275 rooms.
- 1b. ENTRANCE ORIENTATION – According to the UDC Section 35-673, buildings should be sited to help define active spaces for area users, provide pedestrian connections between sites, help animate the street scene and define street edges. Primary entrances should be oriented toward the street and shall be distinguishable by an architectural feature. The applicant has proposed a primary entrance at the base of the tower that is oriented toward S Alamo. Staff finds this to be appropriate and consistent with the UDC.
- 1c. HUMAN SCALE – According to the UDC Section 35-674(b) a building shall appear to have a “human scale”. To comply with this, a building must (1) express façade components in ways that will help to establish building scale, (2) align horizontal building elements with others in the blockface to establish building scale, (3) express the distinction between upper and lower levels, (4) in this instance, divide the façade of the building into modules that express traditional and (5) organize the mass of a building to provide solar access to the river. Per the submitted application documents, a human scale has been provided in multiple instances, including through the installation of recessed balconies on the S Alamo façade and human scaled floor to ceiling heights that translate to the façade through materials. Staff finds these instances of representing a human scale to be appropriate and consistent with the UDC; however, staff finds that the applicant should continue to incorporate human scaled fenestration patterns, detailing and materials throughout the design, including at the street level.
- 1d. FAÇADE SEPARATION – The UDC Section 35-674 (b)(4) notes that a façade in RIO-3 that features more than thirty (30) feet in length should be divided into modules that express traditional dimensions. Per the submitted application documents, the applicant has separated the façade as required by the UDC in all locations with the

exception of the easternmost portions of the tower, where the façade consists of poured concrete. Staff finds that additional façade separation should occur at this location through the incorporation of additional façade materials and additional fenestration.

- 1e. **FAÇADE COMPOSITION** – The UDC Section 35-678(e) notes that traditionally, buildings have been organized into three distinct segments; a base, midsection and cap. This organization helps to give a sense of scale to a building and its use should be encouraged. Per the submitted application documents, the applicant has divided the proposed tower into three distinct segments. The mid-section is framed in a manner that separates it from the base and cap, which feature recessed massing, glass curtain wall systems, and rooftop parapet walls. Staff finds the proposed façade composition to be appropriate and consistent with the UDC.
- 1f. **ALLOWABLE HEIGHT** – There is no height restriction for new construction in RIO-3, consistent with the Downtown District. The applicant has proposed a height of approximately one hundred and twenty (120) feet. Cesar E Chavez Boulevard is a dividing boundary between the Downtown District and the neighborhoods to the south. The proposed height is appropriate within the context of the Downtown District.
- 1g. **HEIGHT COMPATIBILITY** – UDC Section 35-674(c)(3) states that building facades shall appear similar in height to those of other buildings found traditionally in the area. This section also states that if fifty (50) percent of the building facades within a block face are predominantly lower than the maximum height allowed, the new building façade on the street-side shall align with the average height of those lower buildings within the block face, or with a particular building that falls within the fifty (50) percent range. The proposed new construction is located adjacent to structures that are below the allowable building height. The proposed new construction features a podium with 1 story in height; generally, this is consistent with the massing of the historic structures found in the immediate vicinity; however, the proposed tower is located within the La Villita Historic District where there is an immediate contrast between the overall height of the proposed new construction and the height of the historic structures in the immediate vicinity.
- 1h. **MATERIALS** – Per the application documents, the applicant has proposed materials that include concrete, aluminum storefront systems, wood accent walls and metal façade panels. These materials are all consistent with the UDC. When returning for final approval, staff finds that the applicant should submit all materials specifications to staff for review and approval.
- 1i. **WINDOWS** – At this time the applicant has not provided information regarding windows. Staff finds that dark colored frames that are recessed at least two (2) inches within façade planes should be used.
- 1j. **ARCHITECTURAL LIGHTING** – At this time the applicant has not provided information regarding architectural lighting. Staff finds that an architectural lighting plan should be submitted when returning to the Commission for final approval.
- 1k. **MECHANICAL & SERVICE EQUIPMENT** – The UDC Section 35-673(n) addresses service areas and mechanical equipment and their impact on the public. Service areas and mechanical equipment should be visually unobtrusive and should be integrated with the design of the site and building. Noise generated from mechanical equipment shall not exceed city noise regulations. The applicant is responsible for complying with this section of the UDC.
- 1l. **PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION** – Per the UDC Section 35-672(a), pedestrian access shall be provided among properties to integrate neighborhoods. Additionally, the various functions and spaces on a site must be linked with sidewalks in a coordinated system. The applicant has noted various connections, including those adjacent to the right of way and those that connect various site courtyards to each other and the right of way. This is consistent with the UDC.
- 1m. **CURB CUTS** – The applicant has proposed three curb cuts to facilitate vehicular access into the site. Two of the proposed curb cuts will be located on S Alamo, and are associated with the proposed hotel drop off. The third curb cut will be located on Arciniega Street. The UDC Section 35-672(b)(1)(B) notes that curb cuts should not exceed twenty-five (25) feet in width. Staff finds that the proposed curb cut on S Alamo, should feature an uninterrupted sidewalk at the curb with a steeper vehicular approach to ensure that pedestrian access on the sidewalk is not disturbed.
- 1n. **AUTOMOBILE PARKING** – At this time the applicant has not noted on site vehicular parking. If on site automobile parking is proposed, it should be located toward the interior of the site, or to the side or rear buildings. Additionally, all on-site parking is to be buffered and screened from view of the right of way, as noted in the UDC Section 35-672(b)(3). The applicant is responsible for complying with all parking requirements and standards of the UDC.

- 2a. The applicant has proposed to construct street level structures, including a hotel entry and drop off structure, a restaurant, and a structure to connect the historic German School buildings to the proposed hotel tower. These one story structure will interact directly with the existing, historic structures on site.
- 2b. ATTACHMENT: The proposed hotel connections will take place at the southern buildings of the German-English School complex which consist of a single-story stone structure constructed ca. 1858 and a two-story brick wing constructed ca. 1910. In the documents provided, a connection will occur at the southern wall of the 1858 building near the location of an existing mechanical addition. It does not appear that any historic building materials will be removed at this connection, and that the new construction will maintain existing sight lines of the stone structure. Additional construction details should be developed to demonstrate the reversibility of the connection with little to no negative impacts to the stone structure. Sufficient detail to review impacts of the addition to the two-story brick structure have not been provided for review. While a single-story addition at this location may be designed to be consistent with the Historic Design Guidelines, additional information will be needed to evaluate the impacts of the proposal.
- 2c. SETBACKS & ORIENTATION – According to the Guidelines for New Construction, the front facades of new buildings are to align with front facades of adjacent buildings where a consistent setback has been established along the street frontage. Additionally, the orientation of new construction should be consistent with the historic examples found on the block. Per the submitted site plan, the applicant has proposed for the new construction to feature setbacks that are greater than and subordinate to those of the historic structures on the site, with the exception of the proposed hotel entry and drop off structure’s canopy. Staff finds that all elements of the proposed new construction should feature setbacks from S Alamo that are greater than those of historic structures on the lot.
- 2d. ENTRANCES – According to the Guidelines for New Construction 1.B.i., primary building entrances should be oriented towards the primary street. The applicant has proposed entrances that are oriented toward S Alamo, consistent with the Guidelines.
- 2e. SCALE & MASSING – The Guidelines for New Construction 2.A. notes that the height and scale of new construction should not exceed that of the majority of historic buildings by more than one-story. This block of S Alamo features historic structures with one story in height, as well as those with multiple stories in height. The proposed new construction features one story in height, and an overall massing that is consistent with the Guidelines. Additionally, the applicant has proposed to for the new construction to feature various walls plans with various depths. Staff finds this appropriate as the proposed massing is separated and does not add visual mass by adding one continuous wall plane.
- 2f. ROOF FORMS – The applicant has proposed flat roof forms for both proposed structures. Flat roofs are found historically within the immediate vicinity of this structure. Generally, staff finds the proposed flat roofs to be appropriate as flat roofs are found historically within the immediate vicinity and on this lot. Additionally, the flat roofs allow the proposed new construction to feature a massing that is subordinate to the adjacent historic structures.
- 2g. WINDOW & DOOR OPENINGS – Per the submitted application documents, the applicant has proposed for the majority of the exterior facades to feature floor to ceiling storefront and glass curtain wall systems. Per the Guidelines for New Construction 2.C.i., window and door openings that are similar in proportion of wall to window space as those found on nearby historic facades should be used. While the applicant has not proposed window and door openings that related to those found historically within the immediate vicinity, staff finds that the proposed, full height storefront and glass curtain wall systems reduce the overall perceived massing of the additions, do not compete with the historic structures, and are consistent with the Commercial nature of this block.
- 2h. WINDOW MATERIALS – As noted in finding 2f, the applicant has proposed aluminum storefront systems and glass curtain walls. Generally, staff finds that the proposed aluminum curtain wall systems and aluminum storefront systems to be appropriate.
- 2i. ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS – The Guidelines for New Construction note that new building should be designed to reflect their own time while respecting the historic context. Additionally, the Guidelines note that architectural details that are in keeping with the predominant architectural style along the block face or within the district. When contemporary interpretations are incorporated, they should be done so in a manner that does not district from the district. Generally, staff finds the proposed architectural details to be appropriate. Staff finds that the applicant should continue to explore ways to utilize traditional materials, forms and details.

Findings related to request item #3:

- 3a. The applicant has proposed to perform modifications to the existing courtyard between the two historic German School buildings. Currently, this courtyard features raised planting beds, Live Oaks, a fountain and an existing

historical marker.

- 3b. **COUTYARD MODIFICATIONS** – The applicant has proposed to modify the existing courtyard by constructing new planting beds, an outdoor bar area, and new outdoor seating areas. The applicant has not specifically noted which elements of the existing courtyard are to be replaced, and which are to be retained. Staff finds that any contributing or historic elements of the existing courtyard, including paving, should remain as it currently exists. Non-original elements may be removed or modified; however, these modifications should be done in a manner that does not negatively impact existing, historic elements, or result in new conditions that are incongruous with the historic spatial relationships of the site.
- 3c. **OUTDOOR FURNITURE** – The applicant has proposed outdoor seating areas in the existing courtyard. High quality street furnishings are required per UDC Section 35-673(i). The applicant is responsible for complying with this section of the UDC.
- 3d. **LANDSCAPING / SITE LIGHTING** – As noted in findings h and i, the applicant has not provided specifics for site lighting and landscaping at this time. Staff finds that a detailed site lighting and landscaping plan should be submitted when returning to the HDRC for final approval.

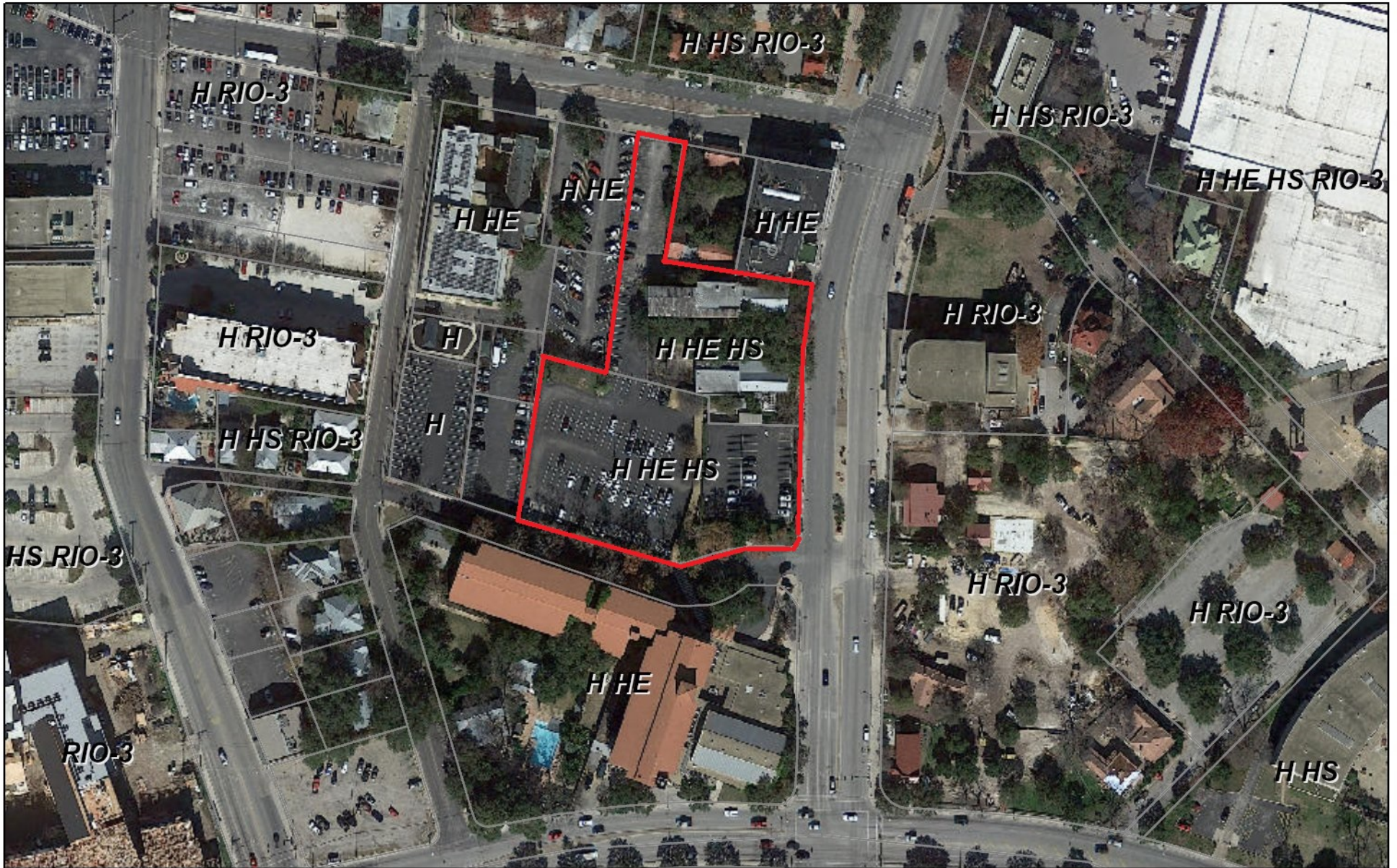
RECOMMENDATION:

Generally, staff finds the proposed new construction and site modifications to be appropriate and consistent with the Historic Design Guidelines, Guidelines for New Construction, and the Unified Development Code, Section 35.

1. Staff recommends approval of item #1, the construction of a 9-story hotel tower based on finding 1a through 1n with the following stipulations:
 - i. That the applicant continue to incorporate human scaled fenestration patterns, detailing and materials throughout the design, including at the street level, as noted in finding 1c.
 - ii. That the applicant incorporate addition fenestration, materials or detailing to separate the north and south facades on the eastern portion of the structure as noted in finding 1d, or at other locations not shown where large expanses of concrete may occur.
 - iii. That that the proposed curb cut on S Alamo, feature an uninterrupted sidewalk at the curb with a steeper vehicular approach to ensure that pedestrian access on the sidewalk is not disturbed, and that all on site automobile parking be screened from view from the public right of way as noted in findings 1m and 1n.
2. Staff recommends approval of item #2, the construction of street level structures and connections to the German-English School based on findings 2a through 2i, with the following stipulations:
 - i. That additional details be developed that allow for the reversibility of the connection with little to no negative impacts to the stone structure. Details regarding this connection as well as any connections to the two-story brick building will require additional approvals as the design is further developed.
 - ii. That the applicant continue to explore ways to utilize traditional materials, forms and details as noted in finding 2i.
3. Staff recommends approval of item #3, modifications to the existing courtyard based on findings 3a through 3d with the following stipulations:
 - i. That all modifications be done in a manner that does not damage historic or contributing elements, and that all historic and contributing elements remain as they currently exist.
 - ii. That the applicant submit both a landscaping and site lighting plan when returning to the Commission for final approval as noted in finding 3d.

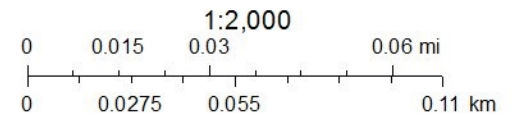
ARCHAEOLOGY – An archaeological investigation is required. The archaeological scope of work should be submitted to the OHP archaeologists for review and approval prior to beginning the archaeological investigation. The project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology, as applicable.

City of San Antonio One Stop



November 22, 2019

- CoSA Addresses
- Community Service Centers
- 🎓 Pre-K Sites
- CoSA Parcels
- BCAD Parcels



CoSA





CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
**OFFICE OF HISTORIC
 PRESERVATION**

**Historic and Design Review Commission
 Design Review Committee
 Report & Recommendation**

DATE: 11/12/2019 HDRC Case# _____

ADDRESS: 555 S ALAMO Meeting Location: 1701 S ALAMO

APPLICANT: JAMES McKNIGHT, BRAUN & ORTIZ

DRC Members present: GIBBS, LAZARINE

Staff present: HUY PHAM

Others present: SEAN STEVENSON, DONS NICE, COYTLEY, MICHAEL M, EDDIE A.

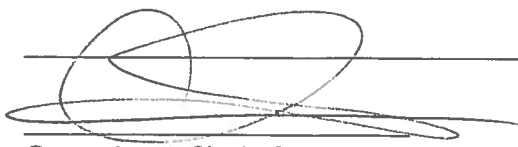
REQUEST: EXTERIOR MODIFICATIONS, REBRANDING

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ LA VILLITA HISTORIC DISTRICT.

COMMENTS/CONCERNS: ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ New construction of a boutique hotel on vacant lot adjacent to existing hotel and historic structures. (German school Sand N).

- ° Incorporate historic structures into hotel programming.
- ° Oriented parallel to two long historic structures, pivots to Hemisfair and La Villita.
- ° 3 one-story structures with tower plan for hotel suite.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: **APPROVE [] DISAPPROVE []**
APPROVE WITH COMMENTS/STIPULATIONS:



 Committee Chair Signature (or representative)

 Date

- "BAR" structure to connect to existing German School building. Bar facade set back from German School from sidewalk.
- Much of the presentation focused on the programming of the hotel rather than architectural details.
- Courtyard element to tie in into the German School buildings.
- Concrete, wood, dark metals, neutral glazing, transparent ground planes.
- Lazarine asked about incorporation Heritier master plan.
- Lazarine encouraged greater master plan relation & preservation sensitivity.



San Antonio Boutique Hotel

November 2019

History of Place

San Antonio & La Villita



"We have no city, except, perhaps, New Orleans, that can vie, in point of the picturesque interest that attaches to odd and antiquated foreignness, with San Antonio. Its jumble of races, costumes, languages and buildings; its religious ruins, holding to an antiquity, for us, indistinct enough to breed an unaccustomed solemnity; its remote, isolated, outposted situation, and the vague conviction that it is the first of a new class of conquered cities into whose decaying streets our rattling life is to be infused, combine with the heroic touches in its history to enliven and satisfy your traveler's curiosity."



"A Journey Through Texas"

F.L. Olmstead 1857

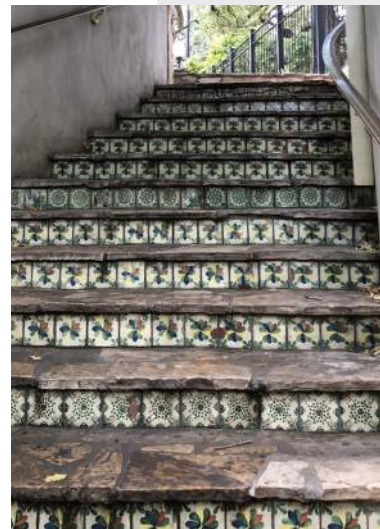
"Many others, like Olmsted, have been struck by the visible evidence of history in San Antonio; for here it is possible to see the past in old, scarred buildings. As the oldest remaining residential area of the city that has grown in dramatic stages beside the banks of the San Antonio River, La Villita ~ the "Little Town" of the Spaniards ~ has stood not on the fringe of events, but with-in their often-stormy center. Villita has had the sometime good, sometimes bad, fortune to be always a small but highly romantic part of the tale that has been woven beside the twisting river for more than two centuries"

-Old Villita

SPIRIT OF PLACE



VERNACULAR



La Villita

Architecture Over Time

Early Period

1720-1820



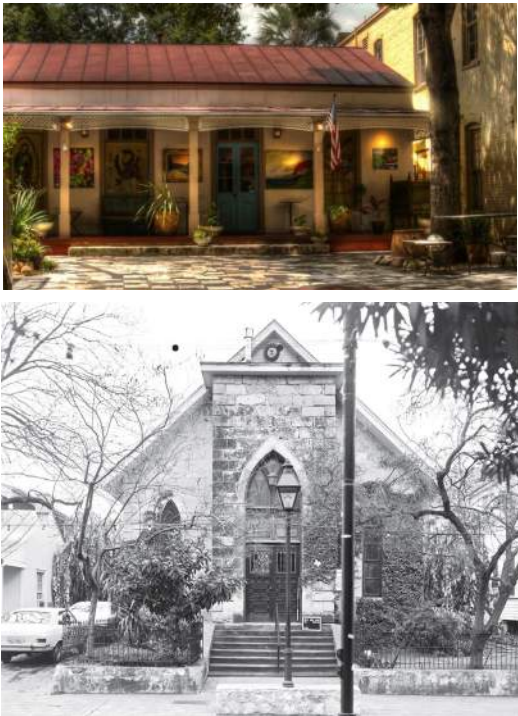
Spanish Period

1820-1840



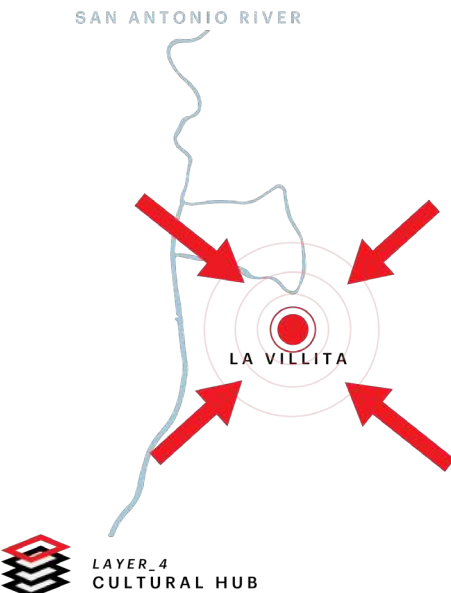
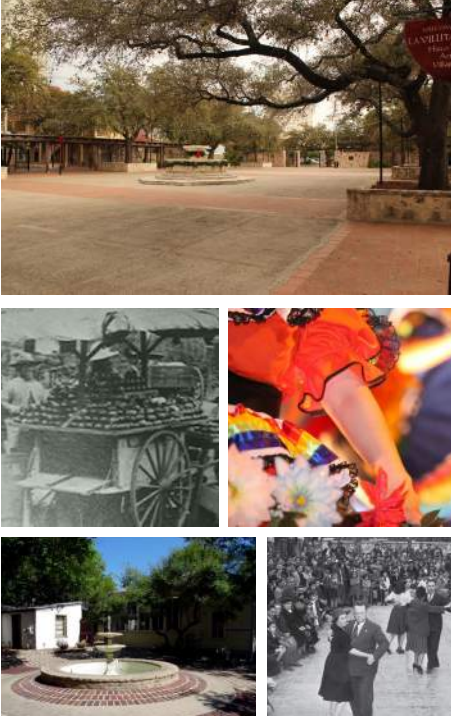
German Immigration

1840-1860



Cultural Hub

1840-Onward



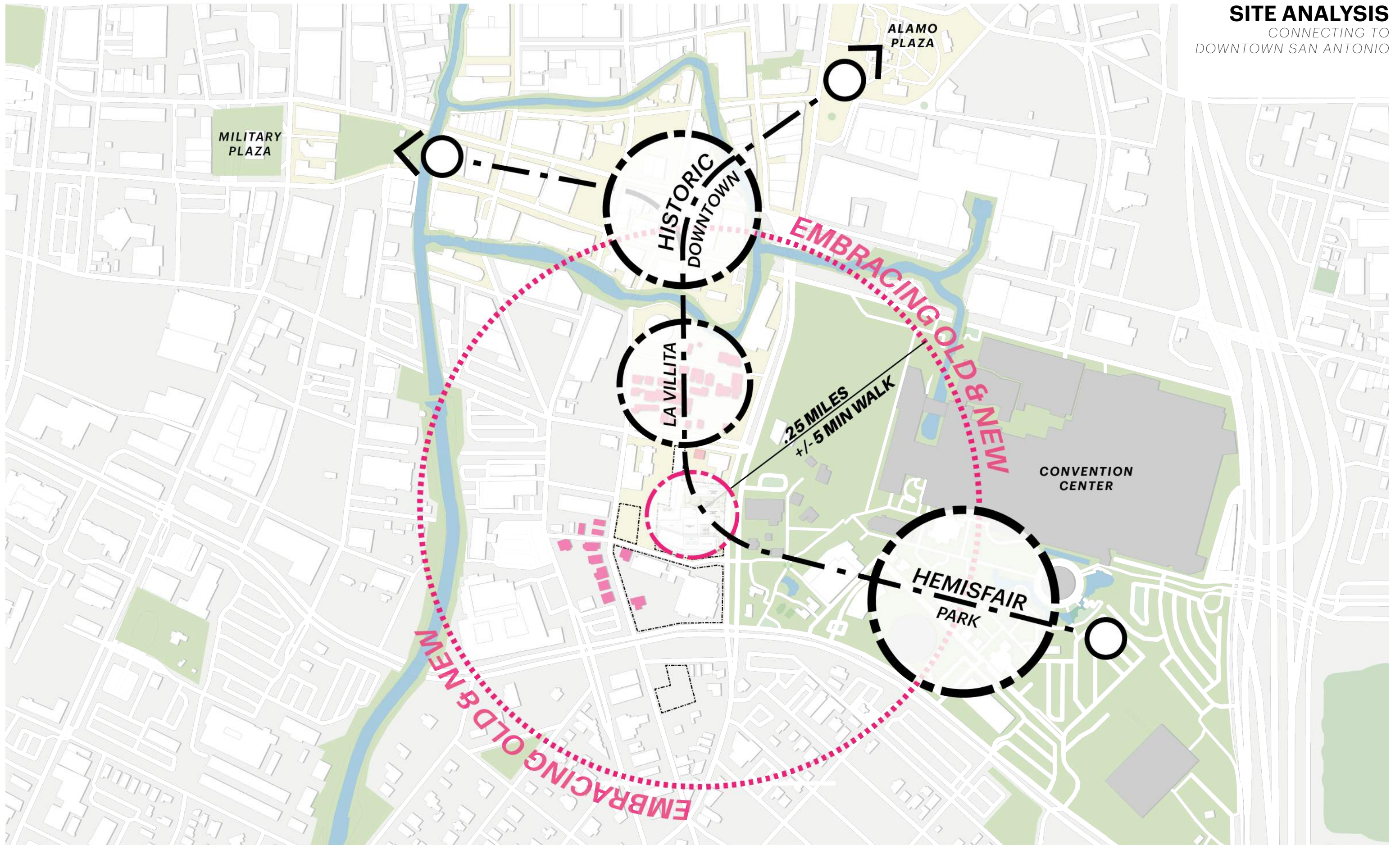
VISIONING

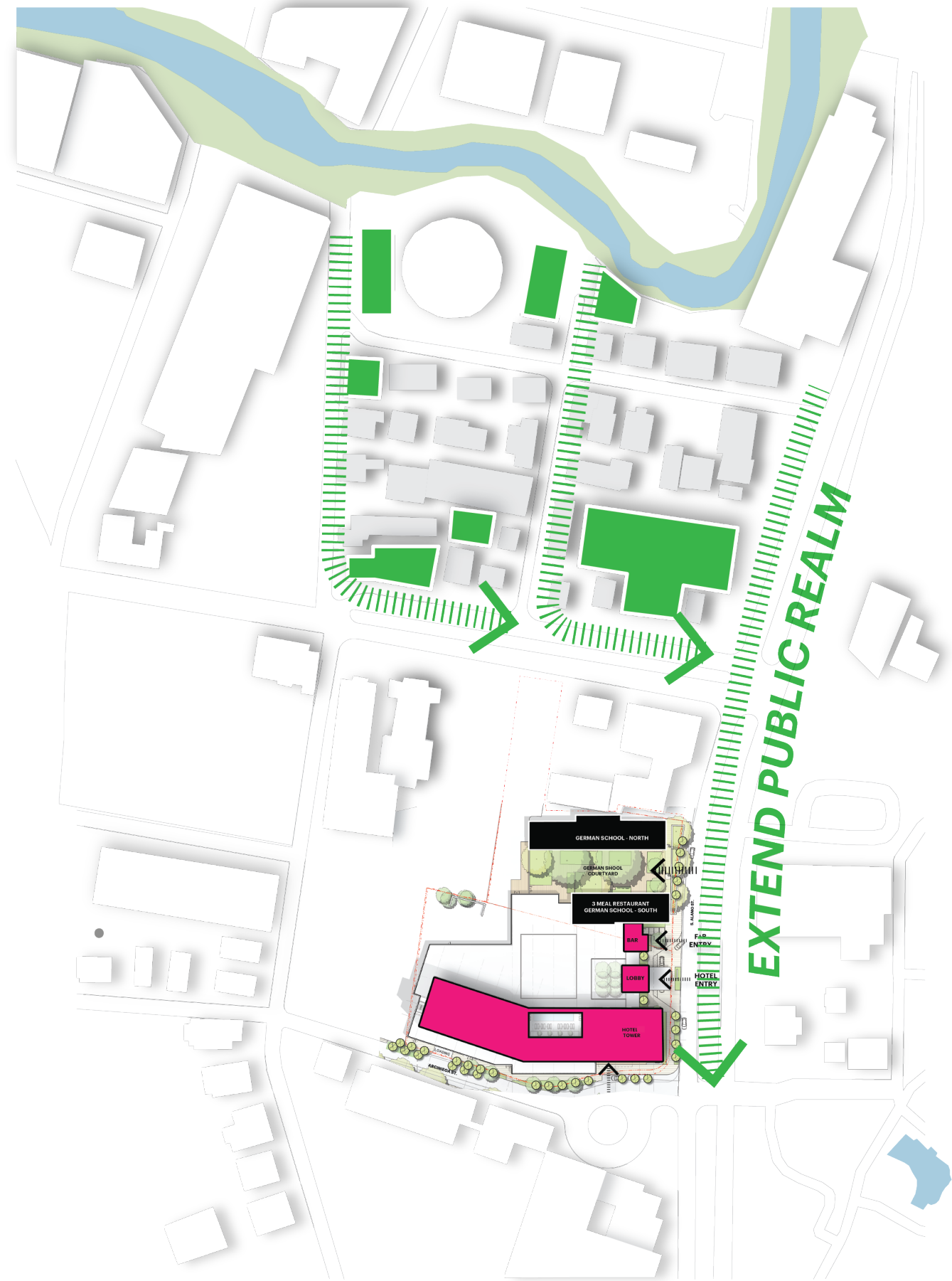
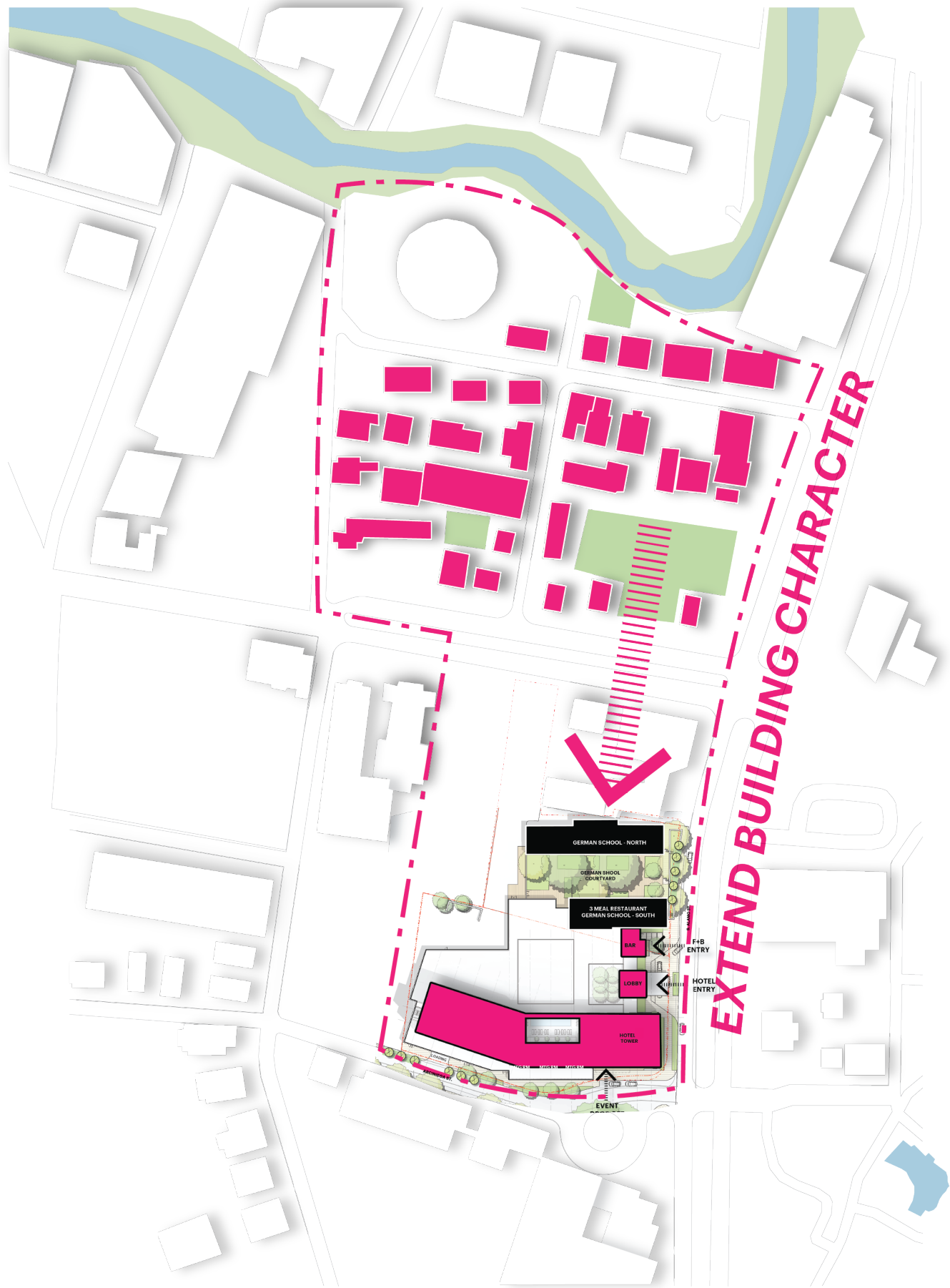
Preservation, Restoration, & Development

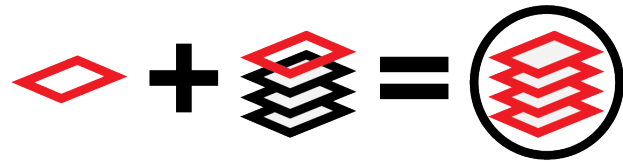
SITE PLAN
Scale 1:400



SITE ANALYSIS
CONNECTING TO
DOWNTOWN SAN ANTONIO







CULTURAL LAYERING:
RESPECTING THE ETHOS OF LA VILLITA

Our Intervention

Cultural Hub

German

Spanish

Early Period



"The district demonstrates in its architectural features
the expression of several types and generations of
people."

*O'Neil Ford, Old Villita

VISIONING

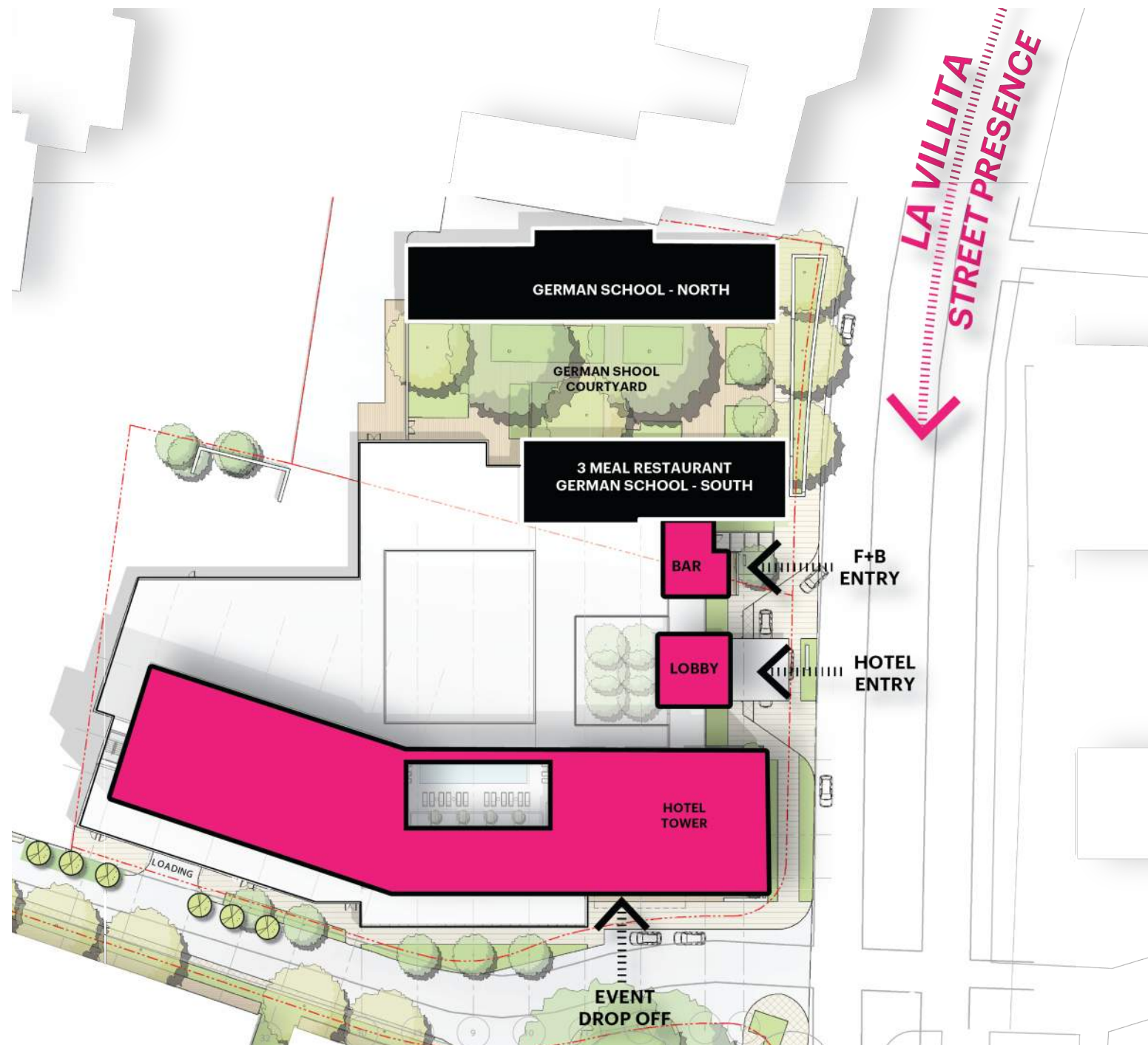
-**Embrace & Respect** the history and traditions of the rich cultural heritage here by promoting and engaging an authentic experience

-**Integrate Into the Unique Fabric** of the neighborhood derived by the local culture and community by understanding its unique sense of **scale, character,** and **honest materiality.**

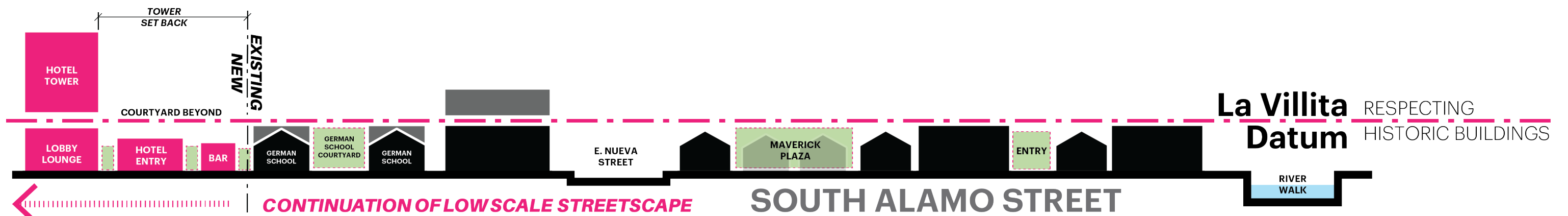
- **Synthesis of Old & New** San Antonio. Although San Antonio has a rich & vibrant past, we recognize San Antonio is dually vibrant, modern, & forward thinking as it looks towards the future city.

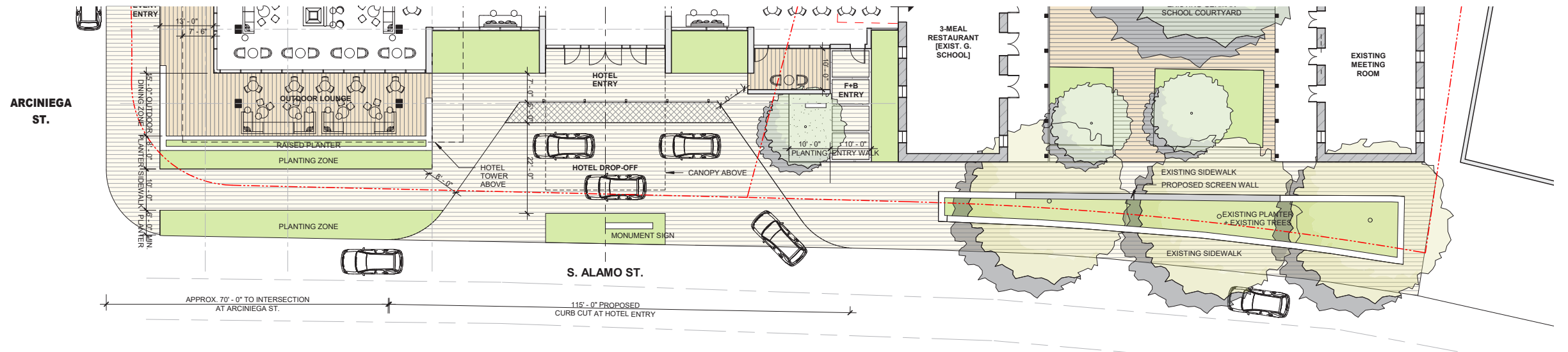
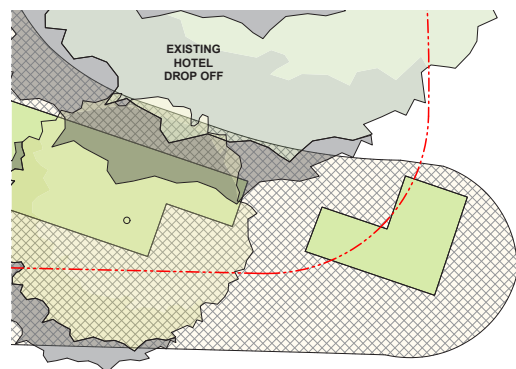
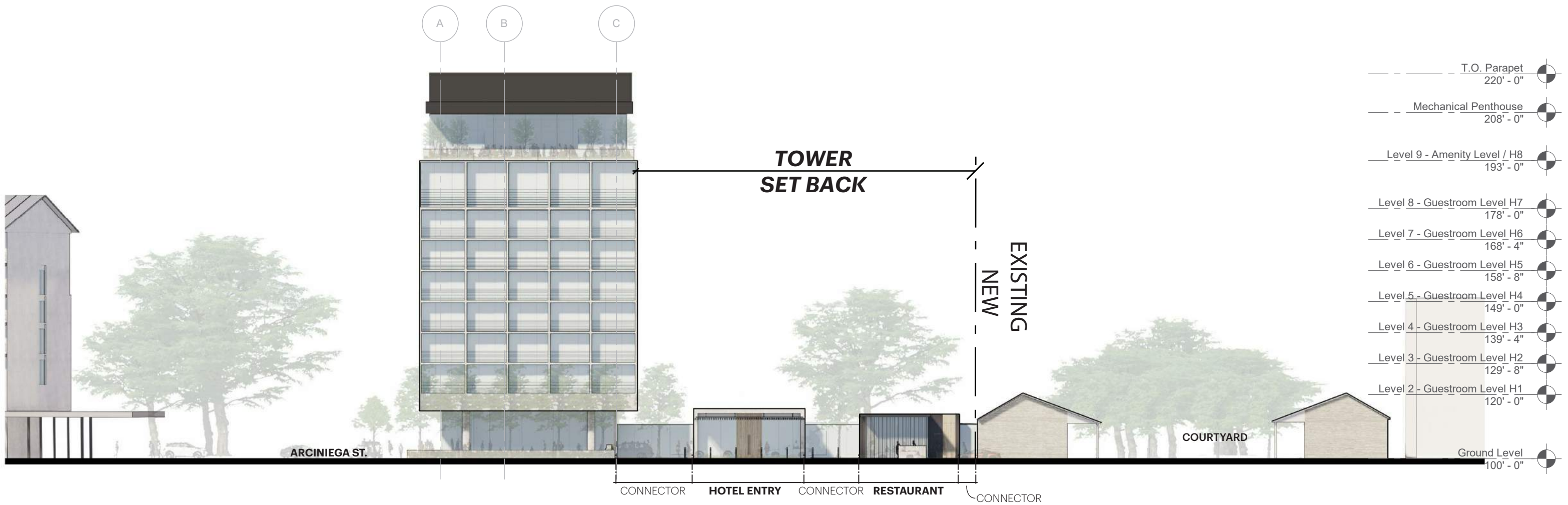
ORGANIZING CONCEPTS

SITE ORIENTATION AND ORGANIZATION



- RESPECT CHARACTER OF EXISTING LOW RISE BUILDINGS OF LA VILLITA
- OPEN ARRIVAL COURT
- CREATE VIEW CORRIDOR TO TOWER OF THE AMERICAS + DOWNTOWN



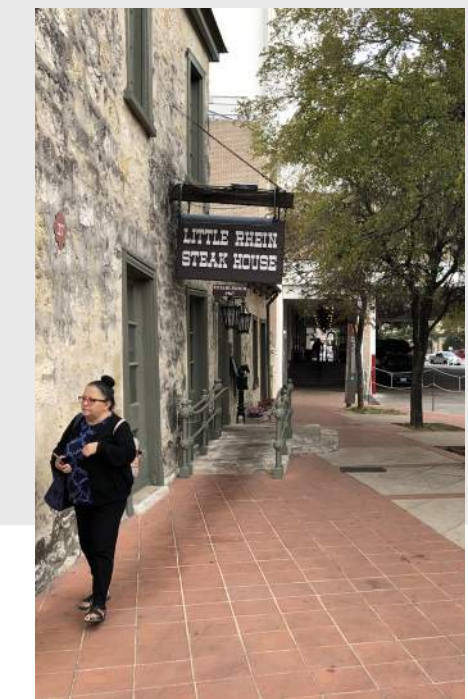


Design

Preservation, Restoration, & Development

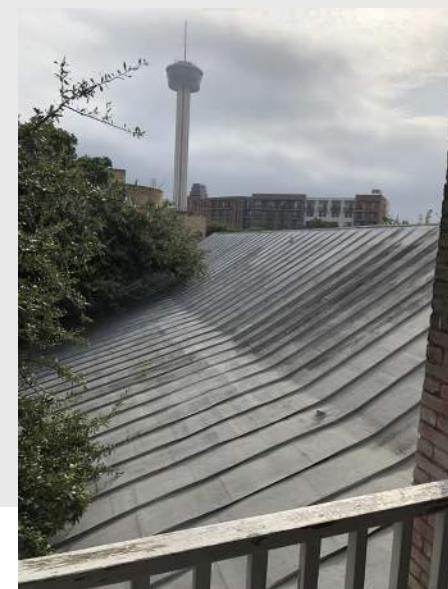
Existing Conditions

La Villita



Existing Conditions

German School



Existing Conditions South Alamo St.





South Alamo Streetscape



South Alamo Streetscape



South Alamo St. Drop Off



Bar & Restaurant Entry



Hotel Drop Off



South Alamo St. Entry



German School Courtyard



German School Courtyard



German School Courtyard

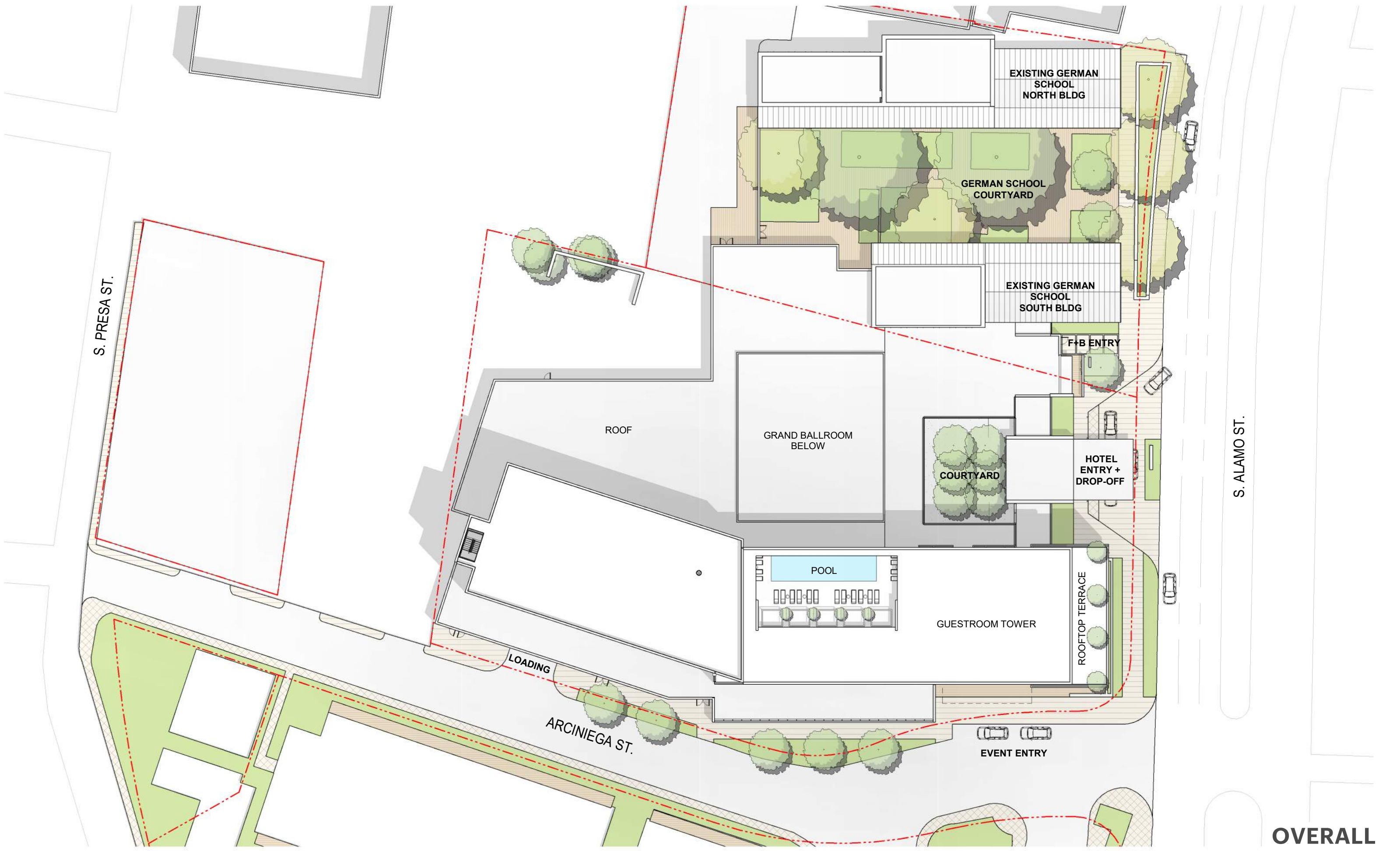


Rooftop Bar

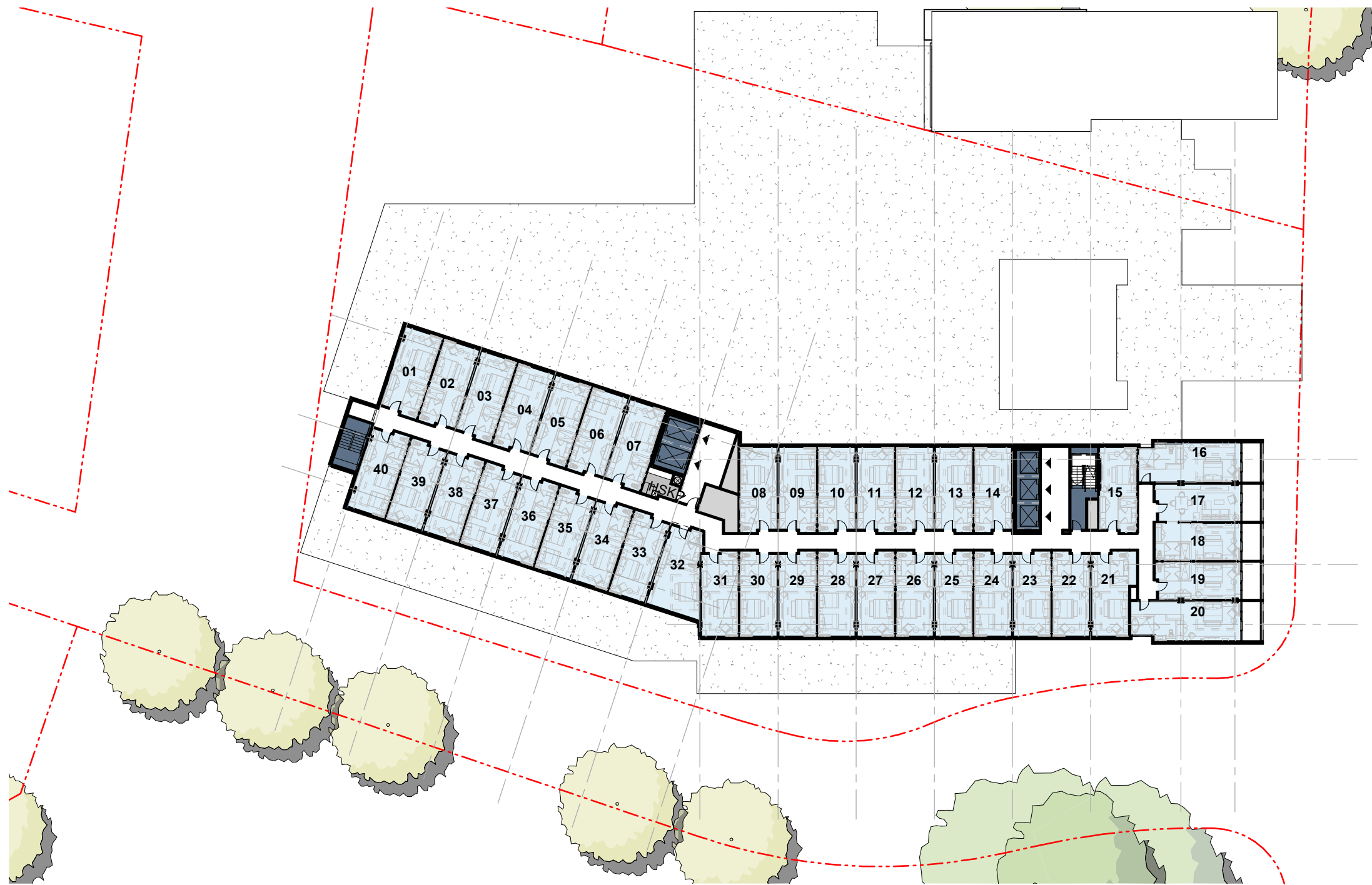


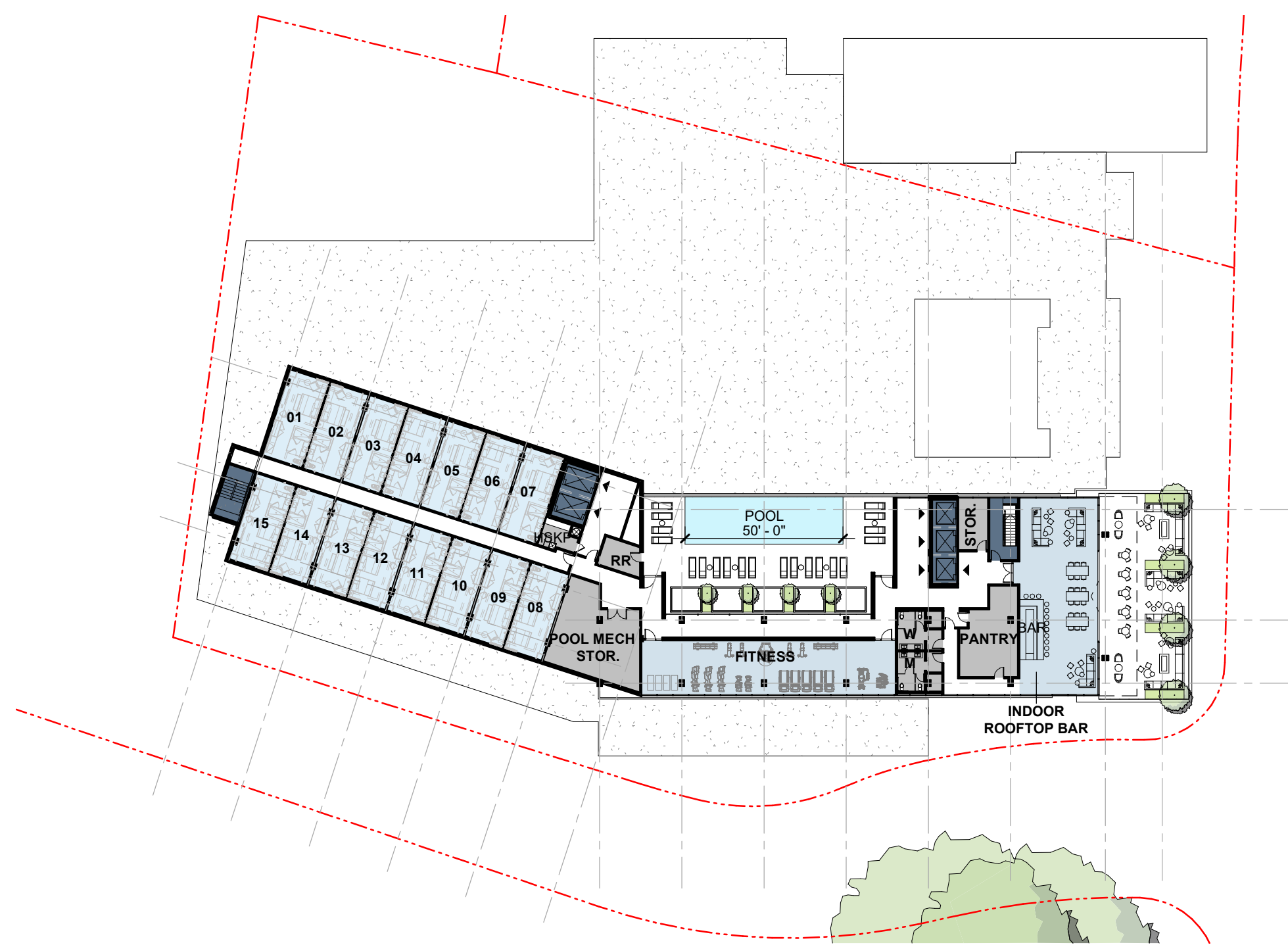
Rooftop Bar

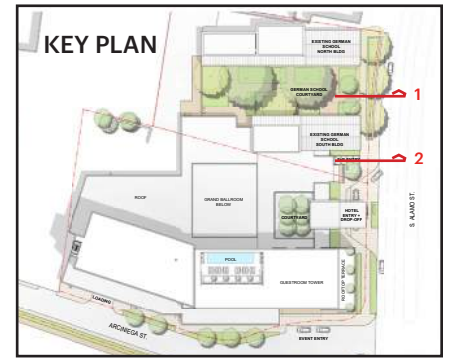
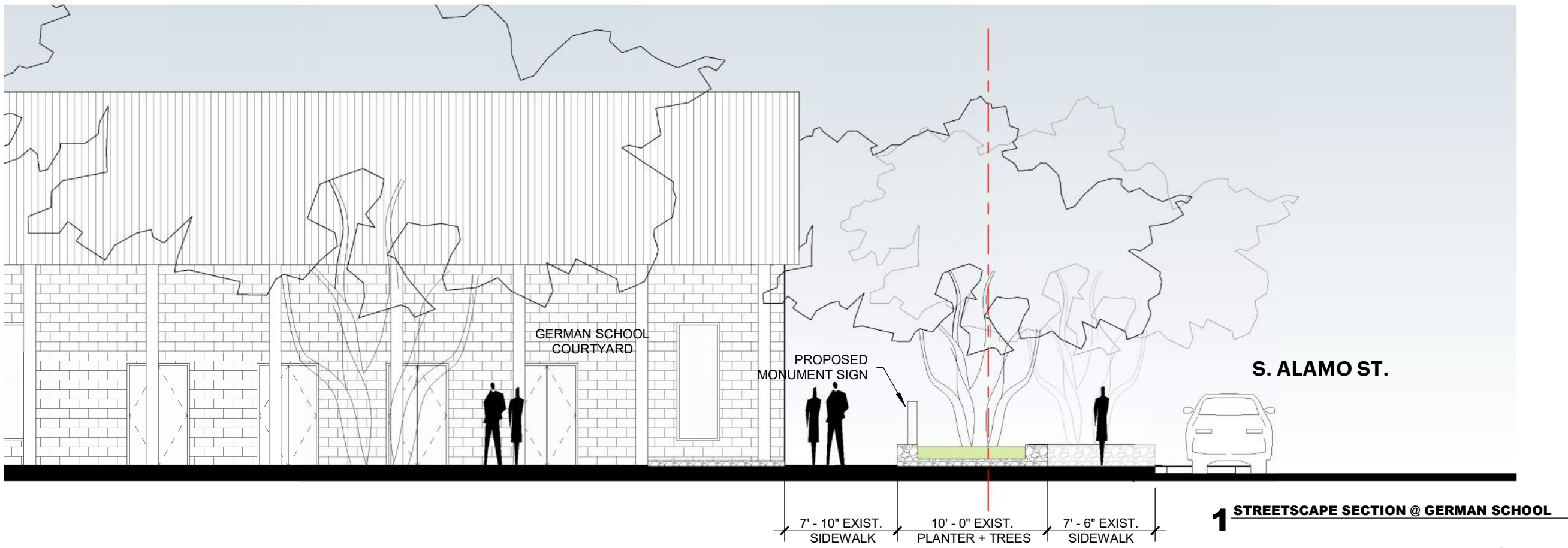
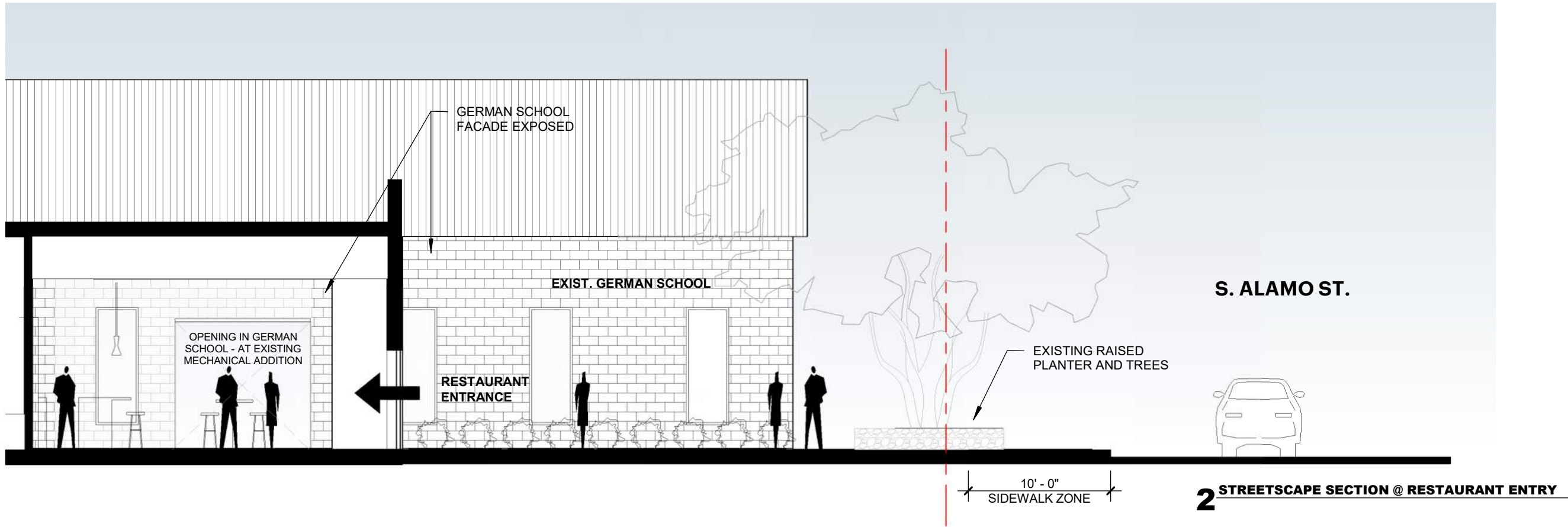
PLANNING





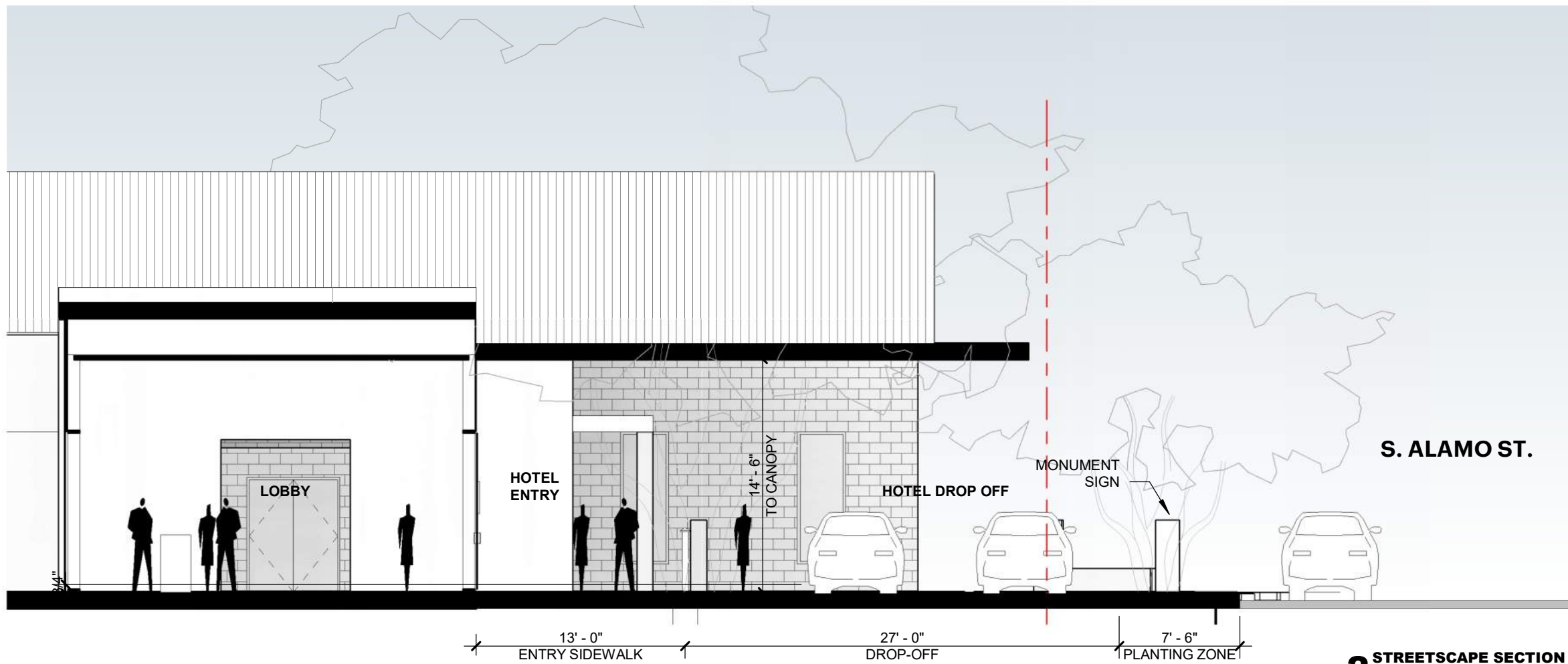




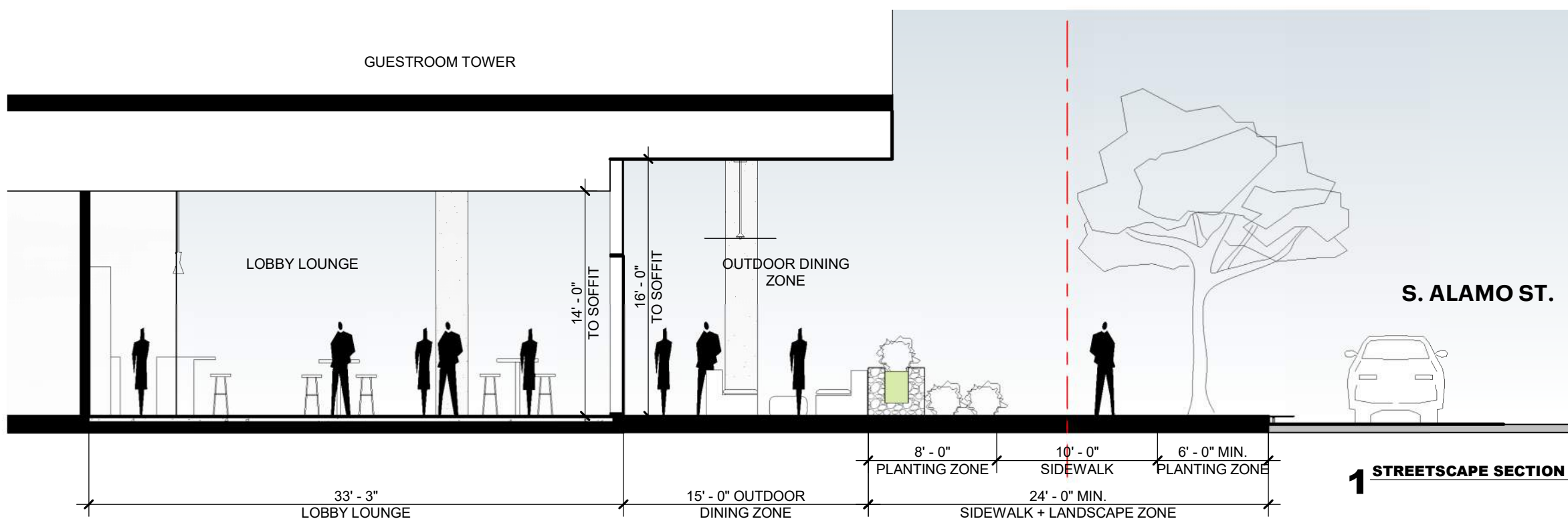


STREETScape SECTIONS
GERMAN SCHOOL

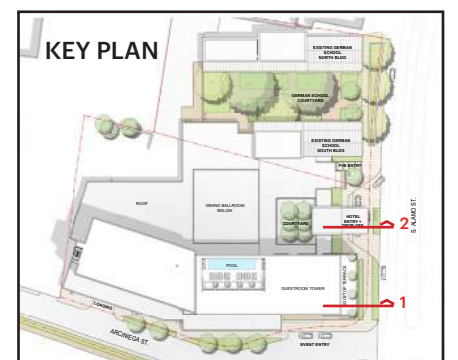




2 STREETScape SECTION @ HOTEL ENTRY



1 STREETScape SECTION @ OUTDOOR DINING



STREETScape SECTIONS
ALONG S. ALAMO STREET





FRANKLIN SQUARE

SALIN ST

MAIN PLAZA

MILITARY PLAZA

WASHINGTON SQUARE

S. EAST ST

S. GOWDY ST

S. SAN SABA

S. PECOS

S. LEONA

S. FRIO

ELRANGO ST.

GRANGER ST.

WYVER AVE