



# Memorandum

Planning Division  
Community & Economic Development Department

**To:** Historic Landmark Commission

**From:** Ray Milliner

**Date:** October 20, 2011

**Re:** Ronald McDonald House Remodel and Construction of New Building

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## Vicinity Map



## ***Background***

On August 18, 2011, the applicant submitted a petition for the following:

- A certificate of appropriateness involving the alteration of a noncontributing structure to remodel the existing Ronald McDonald house.
- A certificate of appropriateness involving new construction for a new building located on the adjacent property to the west.
- A request that the Historic Landmark Commission grant a 15 foot height exception for the new building.

The property, located at 901 East South Temple at the corner of M Street and South Temple and is zoned RMF-35. The principal use of the property is to provide temporary housing for families of children who have been hospitalized.

## ***Proposal***

The applicant is proposing to build a 4 story building on the corner of M street and South Temple. The new building is proposed on the former site of a Sinclair gas station, and would be attached to the existing Ronald McDonald House building with a two story atrium / bridge. The south west corner of the building would have a chapel / meditation component on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor with an exterior deck area. Vehicular access to the property would be from M Street to a parking lot located behind the both buildings. Most of the structure will be small residential units, with a proposed a theater, meeting room, and various activity rooms located on the main floor.

## ***Issues***

### **Height**

Because of the slope and angle of the lot, the applicant is requesting that the HLC grant a height exception that would range from approximately 15 feet on the south west corner to 8 feet on the north east corner. The total height of the building would then be 50 feet above established grade. The purpose of the request is to maximize the property to meet the growing needs of the use. The building would be able to accommodate 66 total guest rooms with another 20 to 24 available in a potential addition to the North West corner of the building.

To support the request, the applicant has provided analysis of buildings along South Temple that are of a similar or greater height than that proposed. He states that these buildings fit into the surrounding vernacular without a significant impact on adjacent property owners (see letter from applicant attachment A and height analysis attachment D).

Staff is seeking Commission direction as to whether or not the proposed building will have a negative impact on the neighborhood, as it relates to compatibility with the surrounding architecture, specifically Standard 3 of the Standards for Certificate of Appropriateness involving new construction or alteration of a noncontributing structure, which states:

### **Standard 3: Relationship to Street:**

- a) Walls of Continuity: Facades and site structures, such as walls, fences and landscape masses, shall, when it is characteristic of the area, form continuity along a street to ensure visual compatibility with the structures, public ways and places to which such elements are visually related;
- b) Rhythm of Spacing And Structures On Streets: The relationship of a structure or object to the open space between it and adjoining structures or objects shall be visually compatible with the structures, objects, public ways and places to which it is visually related;
- c) Directional Expression of Principal Elevation: A structure shall be visually compatible with the structures, public ways and places to which it is visually related in its orientation toward the street; and
- d) Streetscape; Pedestrian Improvements: Streetscape and pedestrian improvements and any change in its appearance shall be compatible to the historic character of the landmark site or H historic preservation overlay district.

The homes most likely to be impacted are those directly behind the proposed building. Although there are a number of tall buildings along South Temple, the immediate streetscape around the Ronald McDonald House consists of one or two story buildings. The previous building on the site was a one story gas station. The introduction of a 50 foot building will represent a significant change on the traditional streetscape. Staff is requesting direction as to whether or not the proposed change is historically compatible.

### **Design**

The proposed design of the building is a flat roofed brick structure broken into five separate sections. Each section has a small projecting bay with either a pitched roof or arched windows. The base of the structure has a stone wainscot that would run the entire length of the façade. The northwest corner of the building is being designed to accommodate an addition.

### **Request**

Staff requests that the Historic Landmark Commission review the attached drawings, photos and site plan and provide the applicant with feedback as it relates to the proposed height increase, and the Historic District Design Guidelines on the following questions;

1. Is the 50 foot height request appropriate for the neighborhood?
2. If not, would any additional height be appropriate?
3. Is the proposed building set back from surrounding residential properties sufficiently to mitigate potential impacts?
4. Is the proposed architectural design appropriate for the site?
5. If not what changes need to be made?

### **Attachments**

- A. Letter from Applicant
- B. Proposed Elevations
- C. Proposed Floor Plans
- D. Height Analysis

**Attachment A:**  
Letter from Applicant

Ray,

Per our phone call last week, we are now wanting to ask for 15 additional feet in height for our project, from 35 feet to 50 feet overall. Some details about our rational and supporting argument are as follows:

1. The Ronald McDonald House (RMH) is looking further into the future to meeting the ever growing needs of the families it serves. In that effort, the project has been designed to maximize the current site so that more property is not needed in the future. The building has been designed as a 4-story building with the top floor only having its guest rooms roughed out and not finished.

The result is that when the new building is complete and the existing building remodeled we will have 52 guest rooms to meet the current demand. As demand grows the top floor guest rooms can be finished in part or whole with another 14 rooms possible on that floor taking the total to 66 total guest rooms. We have also designed a possible north west addition to the building. We do not know if or when the additional need will occur, but if it does this possible addition would add another 20-24 rooms bringing the total possible guest room on the current site to 86-90 rooms.

2. We will maximize the on-site parking to accommodate the total possible 86-90 guest rooms for the 4-story building and meet the current zoning requirements for our use. In an effort to understand the parking needs once any of the number of rooms are completed, the RMH has worked hard to make sure the parking and traffic to and from the RMH does not adversely affect the surrounding neighborhood. The guests who stay at the RMH typically spend most of their time at the hospital or at the house. Because many guests come from rural areas of Utah and the surrounding states, some will have their own vehicles but many do not as one parent will stay with the child and the other parent will return home to work, care for other family members, etc. The RMH already works with local hospitals like Primary Children's Medical Center to minimize guests parking at the house and will have guests park their cars at the hospital and get back and forth in the RMH shuttle which goes between the house and the hospitals multiple times a day. Some guests and staff use the bus to get to and from the house as well. Regardless of the demand, the RMH has multiple options to manage and mitigate the parking so that its impact does not adversely affect the surrounding neighborhood.

3. We believe that a 50 foot maximum height is justified for this site for numerous reasons. The current site is oriented in the east west direction with the existing house on the east of the site and the new house to be built on the west end of the site. The properties northeast and east of the existing house are mostly historic single family type homes the existing house blends well with. The properties northwest of the new building site are a small commercial building with two historic homes behind it inside the block and harder to see from M Street. Across M Street to the northwest is a more recent 1970's apartment block that is close to 45 feet tall. Across M Street directly east is a small gas station that also looks like it was originally built in the 1970's or possibly 1960's. On the east side of that gas station is the historic Maryland Condominiums with that building 50 feet tall to the roof overhangs from the street. Across the street to the southwest is a newer 1980's condominium building and it is 45 feet in height. Directly south of the new building site are smaller apartment houses and a larger apartment block on the corner of 900 East and South Temple. To the southeast is a newer 1970's condominium tower, more than 4-stories tall.

We believe that a 50 foot tall apartment / condominium styled and massed building is appropriate for the new building site because the existing house is at the east side of the site which is adjacent to more similar historic homes. The new building will be adjacent to the more apartment, condominium and business property side of the overall site. The new building will be faced in masonry which was historically used on historic apartment and condominium blocks along South Temple. We also believe that like the intersection of 1300 East and South Temple, our intersection of 900 East and South Temple is very similar with many large apartment and condominium blocks at the multiple corners of the intersection. The building will also not be 50

feet tall along its entire South Temple or M Street frontage as M Street rises in grade to the north and South Temple to the east. If an average overall building height is measured along either of those street frontages, it will be less than 50 feet tall with the 900 East and M Street height at 50 feet and the heights going north up M Street and east on South Temple being lower than 50 feet.

4. Because of the various needs of the RMH and managing those needs with the grades on the site, we need a max. building height of 50 feet to meet all those needs. A quick list of those needs are to maximize the number of parking stalls, to have an at grade drop off and entry point to the building from the parking lot, to have a connection that is level from the new building to the existing building and to create a generally more flat west end to the parking lot so that surface on-site storm water retainage can be accomplished to minimize the cost of that requirement.

5. We met with both the Avenues and East Central Community Councils and had no negative comments about the additional height of the building. We did have comments about concern for parking and for connecting the building to South Temple more. I have addressed the parking above and we have modified the corner so that there is an entry feature that can be utilized to exit the building courtyard along the south side of the building to the street.

I put this together quickly and it still needs some editing and will make more sense related to images in my power point presentation. I am working on that and will get you a copy to review as soon as I can but hopefully before the end of this week.

I will contact you tomorrow and let you know our final conclusion on the October 20<sup>th</sup> HLC agenda being a work session with the board or the voting session. Please let me know when the next meeting after the 20<sup>th</sup> is to take into account for our ultimate decisions and thanks.

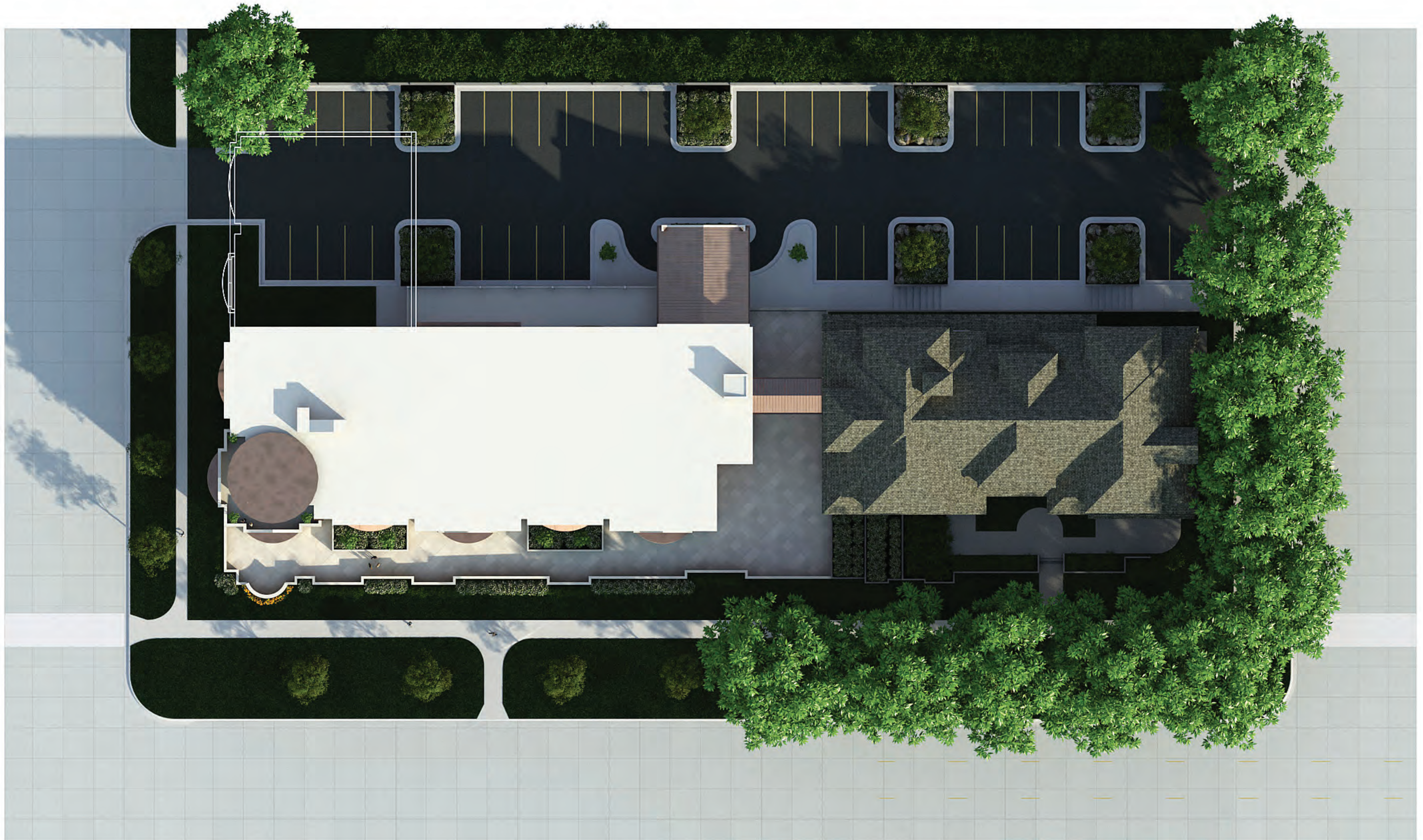
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**Attachment B:**  
Proposed Elevations







A E R I A L F R O N T





F R O N T C O R N E R





S O U T H T E M P L E E L E V A T I O N





M S T R E E T E L E V A T I O N





A E R I A L B A C K , O P T I O N 0 1





B A C K E N T R Y , O P T I O N 0 2





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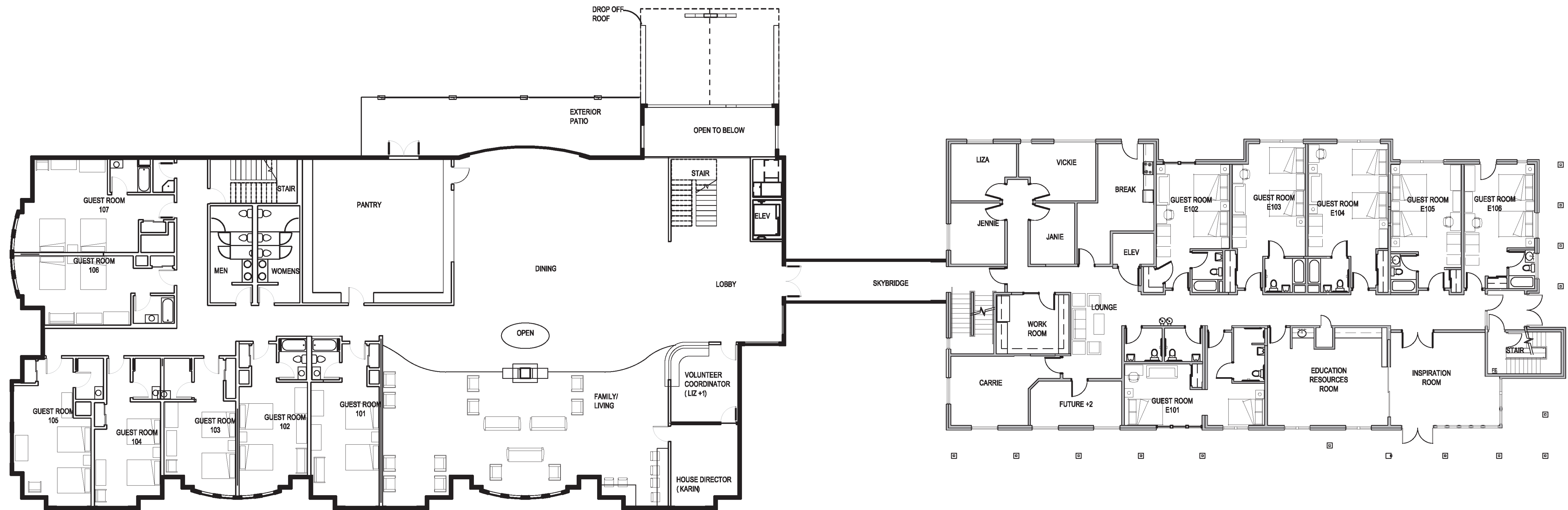


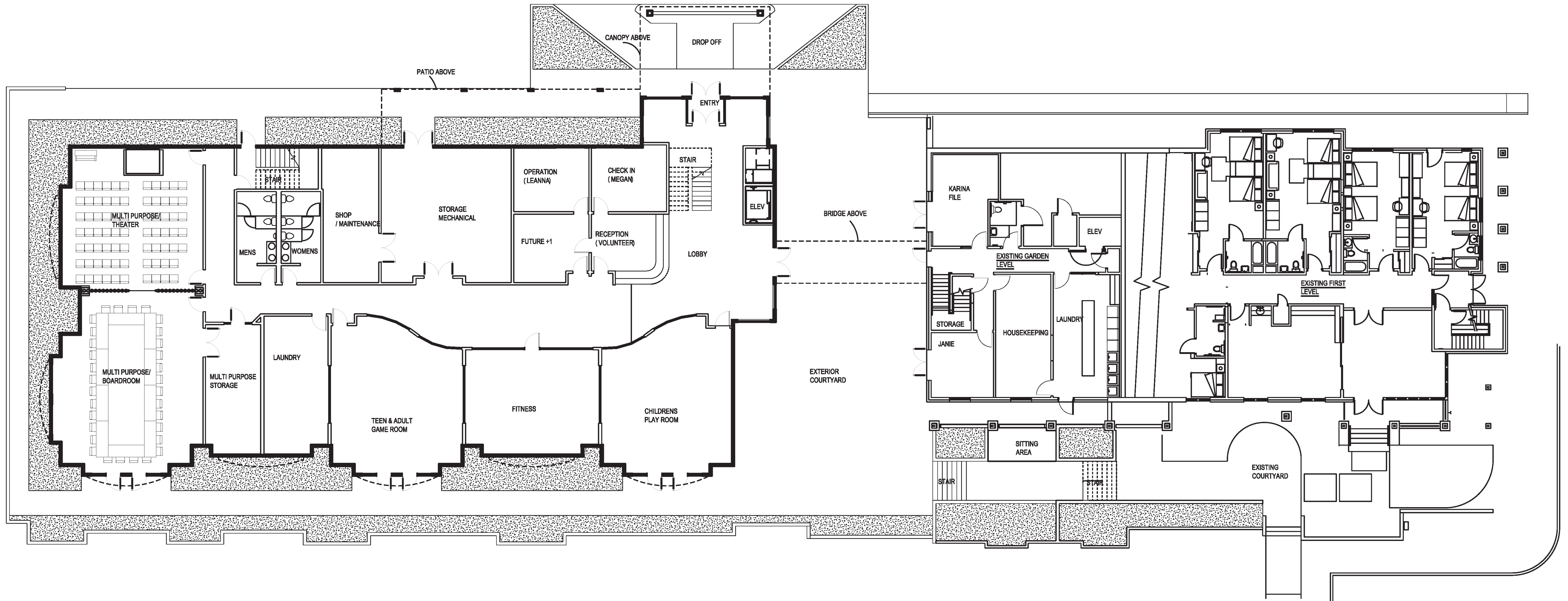


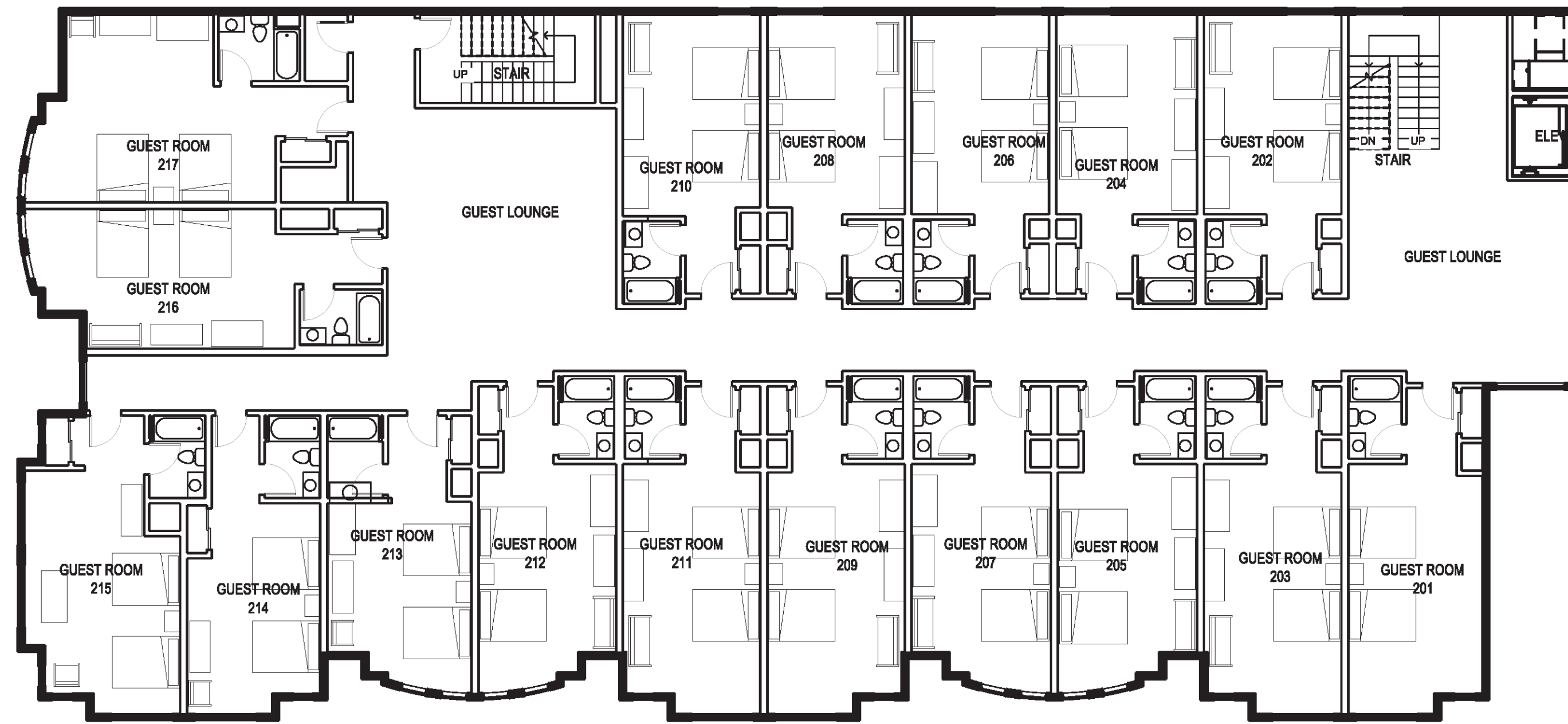
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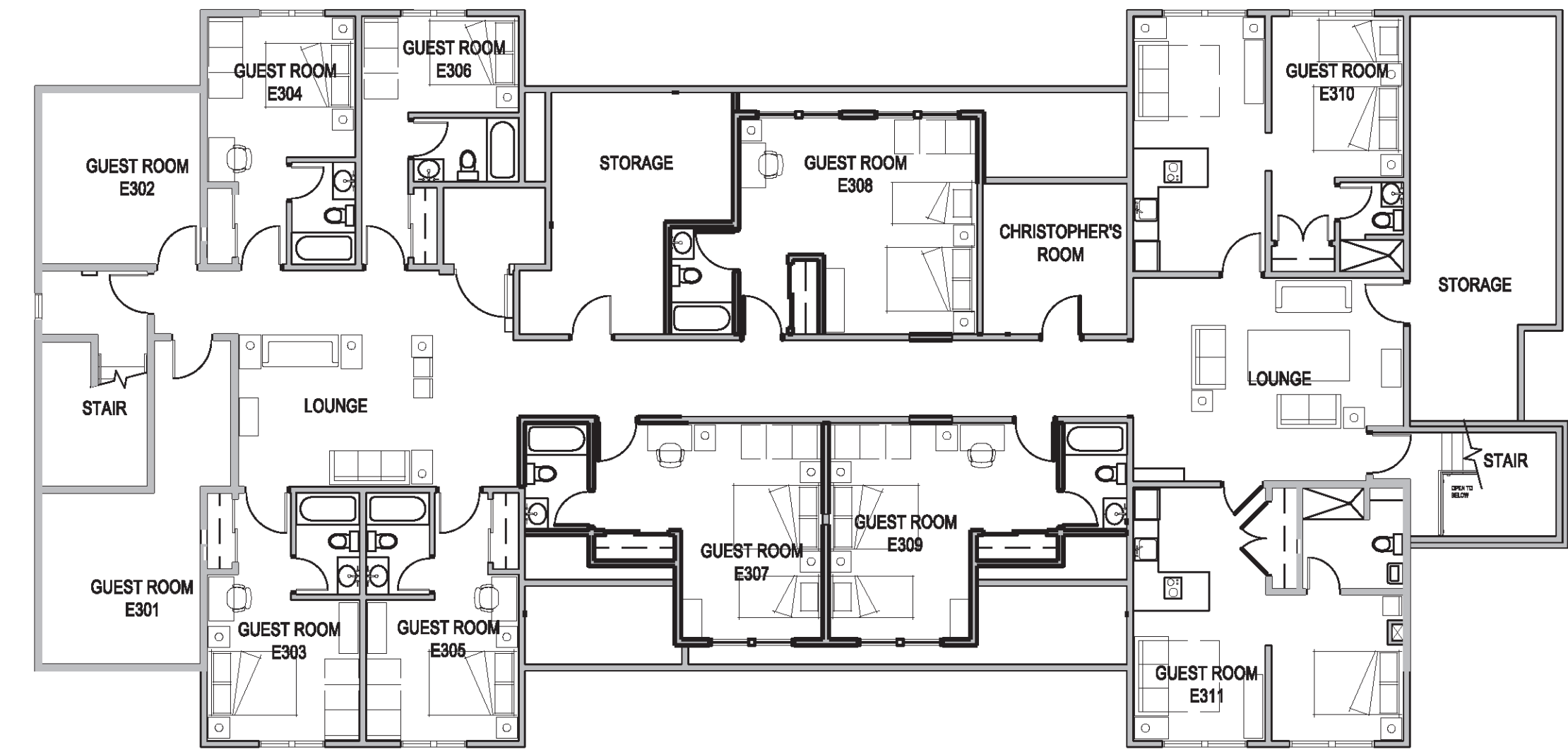


**Attachment C:**  
Proposed Floor Plans









**Attachment D:**  
Height Analysis



# Maryland Condos



# 838 Condos



# Comodore Apartments

