



Executive Director's Recommendation

Commission Meeting: July 9, 2020

PROJECT National Institutes of Health Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Temporary Facility 9000 Rockville Pike Bethesda, Maryland	NCPC FILE NUMBER 8168
SUBMITTED BY United States Department of Health and Human Services	NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 3101.20(38.00)45113
REVIEW AUTHORITY Federal Projects in the Environs per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1)	APPLICANT'S REQUEST Approval of preliminary site and building plans
	PROPOSED ACTION Approve comments on concept plans
	ACTION ITEM TYPE Open Session

PROJECT SUMMARY

The United States Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has submitted preliminary site and building plans for a temporary 24,000 gross square foot single-level modular building on the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Bethesda Campus. The new building would meet an urgent need for near-term research space until a permanent building is available. It is designed to accommodate 130 academic and industry professionals working on Alzheimer's Disease and other related dementias (ADRD) research. The project will maintain the number of on-site trees, meet State and federal stormwater requirements through a series of micro-bioswale areas, and will reduce employee parking (both on-site and overall). The current 2013 NIH Master Plan does not include the new temporary ADRD building; however, the project appears to be consistent with many of the master plan's principles.

KEY INFORMATION

- The National Institutes of Health campus was established in Bethesda in 1938, with a mission "to seek fundamental knowledge about the nature and behavior of living systems and the application of that knowledge to enhance health, lengthen life, and reduce the burdens of illness and disability."
- NIH recently submitted two other temporary building projects to NCPC for review. One project was a new 12,000 square foot Cell Therapy Unit Production Facility (September 2018) and the second was a new replacement 13,200 gross square foot modular building known as the NIAID Bioinformatics Facility (September 2019).
- NCPC reviewed three other projects (new 527,000 square foot Clinical Center Complex addition, new 780-space parking garage, and new utility vault) as a Master Plan amendment in February 2020, but deferred action to allow NIH to develop a parking reduction plan that meets a 1:3 parking space/employee parking goal.

RECOMMENDATION

The Commission:

Notes that the current project submission does not include enough information for preliminary review by the Commission and therefore, NCPC will review the project as a concept submission, with the following comments provided to NIH for consideration during further project development.

Notes that the temporary Alzheimer's and other related dementias (ADRD) building is proposed for a minimum of 10 years, until a new permanent space is available elsewhere on campus. NIH plans to remove the temporary building after relocation to permanent facilities.

Notes that the building siting and design are important given its anticipated use for 10 or more years and **finds** the proposed location (partially on an existing parking lot), orientation, and setbacks from Service Road West and Convent Drive to be appropriate.

Finds the project is consistent with many of the planning principles from the 2013 NIH Master Plan including the preservation of the perimeter buffer zone; the building height limit for the site; and close proximity to Metrorail and core development areas.

Finds the project will adhere to tree replacement policies from NIH and NCPC with a 1-to-1 tree replacement, and that NIH should consider tree locations that will minimize the need to relocate trees or replant on-site to accommodate potential future development once the temporary building is removed.

Notes that NIH and NCPC staff are in discussions regarding a strategy for the campus to reach a 1:3 parking ratio and that the proposed project will improve the parking ratio through a planned employment increase and elimination of parking spaces.

Requests the following for preliminary review:

- Photo simulations of the new ADRD building from the adjacent neighborhood and the Bethesda Trolley Trail.
- Detailed plans that show more refined building materials and a landscape plan.
- Information regarding any other temporary buildings and other uses anticipated in the future, including their size, context, and location.

PROJECT REVIEW TIMELINE

Previous actions	None.
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Remaining actions (anticipated)	October/November – Preliminary site and building plan review.
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PROJECT ANALYSIS

Executive Summary

NCPC staff has reviewed the NIH proposal to construct a new temporary building and recommends review by the Commission as a concept submission since the project submission does not provide enough information related to building materials, landscaping, or visual impacts. NIH describes an urgent need for the new Alzheimer's and other related dementias (ARD) research space but does not expect a permanent building to be available to house the ARD research activity for at least 10 years. The selected project site appears to be reasonable given the proposed use and scale of the building, which is consistent with many of the planning principles from the current 2013 NIH Master Plan. Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission **note that the current project submission does not include enough information for preliminary review by the Commission and therefore, NCPC will review the project as a concept submission, with the following comments provided to NIH for consideration during further project development.**

Background

The NIH submission describes the proposed new temporary Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ARD) building as necessary space for collaborative research. The project is intended to be a transformative, state of the art research center, bringing together world-leading scientists from NIH, Industry, and academia. NIH chose to construct the new building after considering other potential alternatives including renting off-site space and renovating existing space on-campus to meet the need. However, renting space is inconsistent with directives that encourage federal activities to locate on federal campuses both for security reasons and to reduce leasing costs. NIH determined that retrofitting existing on-campus buildings would not yield the required cutting-edge laboratory space that is required to accommodate the ARD research. The current 2013 NIH Master Plan articulates the necessity of on-site modern research space to continue to meet NIH's mission, as well as gradually shifting off-site research to on-campus facilities.

According to the NIH Facilities Program Manual, a temporary need for a research program is demonstrated by either a facility requirement for less than five years or through an unfunded programmed long-term (10+ years) need in the Operating Division (OPDIV) Facilities Plan. In the case of the ARD program, there is an urgent need for ARD-related research that cannot be met through renovation or leasing, and permanent space is unfunded at this time and not anticipated to be available for 10 or more years. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) directs that temporary facilities be clearly of a temporary nature to meet a temporary need. These facilities tend to have lower initial costs, higher annual maintenance and utility costs, and a shorter usable life than permanent structures of the same size. A new permanent new building (N-12) for the ARD program is planned for the eastside of campus and once available, the temporary ARD

building would be removed from the site, with fuel tanks developed as shown in the current master plan. Staff recommends that the Commission **note that the temporary Alzheimer's and other related dementias (ADRD) building is proposed for a minimum of 10 years, until a new permanent space is available elsewhere on campus. NIH plans to remove the temporary building after relocation to permanent facilities.**

Description

The project site encompasses approximately 40,000 square feet of property in the southwestern part of the NIH campus, currently occupied with surface parking, sidewalks, a semi-circular vehicle drive, and open space with intermittent vegetation (including 27 trees). The site is located along an internal north-south road (Service Road West) to the west of Building 14A (lab and administrative space) and Building 14E (Vivarium); north of an industrial water storage tank and Building T14 (maintenance and storage); south of Convent Drive and a chilled water storage tank; and east of Building 46 (electrical substation). There is also an existing paved hiker-biker trail along the outside of the campus perimeter fence, near the ADRD building site (south and west), which accesses nearby residential neighborhoods and downtown Bethesda, known as the Bethesda Trolley Trail.

The proposed project consists of a new 24,000 gross square foot, single-level, temporary building, with spaces for offices, laboratories, conference rooms, storage, a break area, utilities, and showering/locker-room facilities. The building floorplan is designed to encourage interaction, collaboration, and communication between researchers in open, flexible, and multiuse rooms, with interior space to accommodate up to 130 scientists and administrative staff. Specific employment would consist of 72 new NIH employees; 40 relocated current NIH employees (some would split their time between the ADRD building and other on-campus sites); and 30 visiting professionals who would temporarily work on-site for up to a year. Total campus employment would increase by 112 personnel from the project.

Conceptual plans show the temporary building as a straight-lined, modern-looking, modular structure with two primary parallel wings (separated by linear open courtyard spaces), with several rooftop enclosures to house laboratory-related ventilation equipment. The building would measure approximately 275 feet in length, 105 feet wide, with an elevation of 12-25 feet above ground level. Project plans show a 20-foot building setback from the Service Road West, and a 28-foot setback from Convent Drive. The project submission does not include any detailed information related to building materials, window details, or material palette.

Besides the new ADRD building, the project would construct a new five-space parking lot (2 employee spaces and 3 accessible parking spaces), new sidewalks along the west, north, and east sides of the building, and a new stormwater management area in the northern part of the site. The new parking would be along the northwest side of the building (in addition to an outdoor patio area), with vehicular access from Convent Drive. The building would have loading/service access along its southside from Service Road West. The project would require removal of 37 existing spaces on-site (24 employee, 9 government vehicle, 4 accessible parking spaces), and NIH would not fully replace the parking, thereby resulting in a net reduction of 31 employee spaces. The site

plan shows 27 on-site trees located to the west, north, and east sides of the building, with smaller planting beds along the east, north, and west edges of the building. The submission does not include any additional detailed landscaping information.

Staff recommends that the Commission **note that the building siting and design are important given its anticipated use for 10 or more years and finds the proposed location (partially on an existing parking lot), orientation, and setbacks from Service Road West and Convent Drive to be appropriate.**

Analysis

The current 2013 NIH Master Plan shows the project site with future fuel tanks, situated within one of the core development areas, within a 10-minute walk of the nearest Metrorail (Medical Center) station. The master plan identifies a 60-foot maximum height limit for development on the site, and the building would be outside of the identified perimeter (250-foot wide) buffer zone. The project appears to be consistent with many campus planning principles, some of which, have been in effect since the 2005 NIH Master Plan. Staff recommends that the Commission **find the project is consistent with many of the planning principles from the 2013 NIH Master Plan including the preservation of the perimeter buffer zone; the building height limit for the site; and close proximity to Metrorail and core development areas.**

The location and building orientation appear to be reasonable given the configuration and size of the project site. The project will replace 27 existing trees with 27 new trees on the site, which will be consistent with NIH's one-for-one tree replacement policy and NCPC's "no net loss" tree policy (FE.G.2). The proposed tree locations appear to be reasonable given the ADRD building placement; however, NIH should consider its proposed tree locations within the context of the master plan so that tree removal and/or relocation is minimized. As a potential future site for fuel tanks, mature trees would be helpful in shielding the tanks from other nearby development. Staff recommends that the Commission **find the project will adhere to tree replacement policies from NIH and NCPC with a 1-to-1 tree replacement, and that NIH should consider tree locations that will minimize the need to relocate trees or replant on-site to accommodate potential future development once the temporary building is removed.**

Staff notes that the project would decrease overall employee parking on the NIH campus by 31 spaces, with the removal of 24 existing surface spaces and construction of two new employee spaces adjacent to the ADRD building. In addition, nine employee spaces elsewhere would be converted to government vehicle use to replace the nine spaces lost on-site. The project EA describes the parking reduction as feasible since ample capacity exists in other nearby lots, which would absorb the loss of employee parking. NCPC staff will consider the project's parking impact within the overall NIH campus-wide parking reduction plan, which is currently under development to attain the 1:3 parking goal. Staff recommends that the Commission **note that NIH and NCPC staff are in discussions regarding a path for the campus to reach a 1:3 parking ratio and that the proposed project will improve the parking ratio through a planned employment increase and elimination of parking spaces.**

Although the project submission provides some useful information about temporary buildings, NCPC staff remain unclear about NIH's plans for other future temporary development that will be submitted to NCPC for review. The Commission recently reviewed two temporary buildings, neither of which, were reflected in the 2013 Master Plan. Specifically, NIH proposed a new 12,000 square foot Cell Therapy Unit Production Facility (September 2018) and a new replacement 13,200 gross square foot modular building known as the NIAID Bioinformatics Facility (September 2019). Without a broader understanding about NIH's need for future temporary buildings and other development, it is more difficult for the Commission to meet its advisory planning role for the campus. Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission **request information regarding any other temporary buildings and other uses anticipated in the future, including their size, context, and location.**

The conceptual project submission lacks detailed information regarding building materials, textures, and colors, so NIH should include this information in the next preliminary submission. We note that two recent examples of temporary buildings had metal façades (New Cell Therapy Unit Production Facility and NIAID Bioinformatics Facility). However, staff remain unclear if the new ADRD building would also be constructed of similar materials. Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission **request detailed plans that show more refined building materials and a landscape plan.**

The project's Environmental Assessment indicates that the project would not be readily visible from an adjacent residential neighborhood, which is situated approximately 300 feet to the west of the site at its nearest point. Existing conditions photos show vegetation, development, and topography that would appear to obscure the new ADRD building; however, to confirm, NIH should develop photo simulations from the neighborhood. In addition, the Bethesda Trolley Trail is aligned along the campus perimeter fence, near the project site, and photo simulations of the building would help NCPC assess potential view impacts from the trail. Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission **request photo simulations of the new ADRD building from the adjacent neighborhood and the Bethesda Trolley Trail.**

CONFORMANCE TO EXISTING PLANS, POLICIES AND RELATED GUIDANCE

Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital

The proposed project is generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital in particular, the Transportation and Federal Environment Elements. Staff notes that the project would result in an employee increase (+72) and net decrease in employee parking (-31) on-campus, thereby resulting in a marginal improvement to the overall parking ratio. NIH is currently developing a long-term parking reduction plan to attain its 1:3 goal. In addition, staff notes that the project would maintain the number of on-site trees with a 1-to-1 replacement, which is consistent with NCPC's current tree replacement policy.

National Historic Preservation Act

The NIH Preservation Officer has made the “Finding of Effect” for the project on behalf of NIH, determining the project will have “no effect” on adjacent or nearby historically significant properties. For projects in the Environs, outside of the District of Columbia, NCPC does not have a formal review responsibility under Section 106 of the NHPA.

National Environmental Policy Act

The NIH is undertaking an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze potential impacts to the human and natural environment from the project. The draft EA document includes a No Action Alternative and an Action Alternative, which consists of the construction of the new 24,000 square foot temporary building as described in the EDR. The draft document is available for public comment through the Maryland State Planning Clearinghouse from June 4 – July 6, 2020. In lieu of staff comments on the draft EA, the Commission will review the project as a concept submission and transmit its formal comments to NIH for consideration prior to its preliminary project submission.

For projects in the Environs, outside of the District of Columbia, NCPC does not have a formal review responsibility under NEPA.

CONSULTATION

NCPC referred the project out for review by local and State agencies, with no substantive project-related comments transmitted back to the Commission in advance of its July 9, 2020 meeting.

ONLINE REFERENCE

The following supporting documents for this project are available online at www.ncpc.gov:

- NCPC Project Summary Presentation
- Section 106 Determination Letter
- Project Narrative

Prepared by Michael Weil
06/25/2020

POWERPOINT (ATTACHED)

NIH Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Temporary Facility

National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, Maryland

Preliminary Review

United States Department of Health and Human Services, NIH

Project Summary



Commission Meeting Date: July 9, 2020

NCPC Review Authority: Federal Projects in the Environs per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1)

Applicant Request: Approval of preliminary site and building plans

Session: Consent Calendar

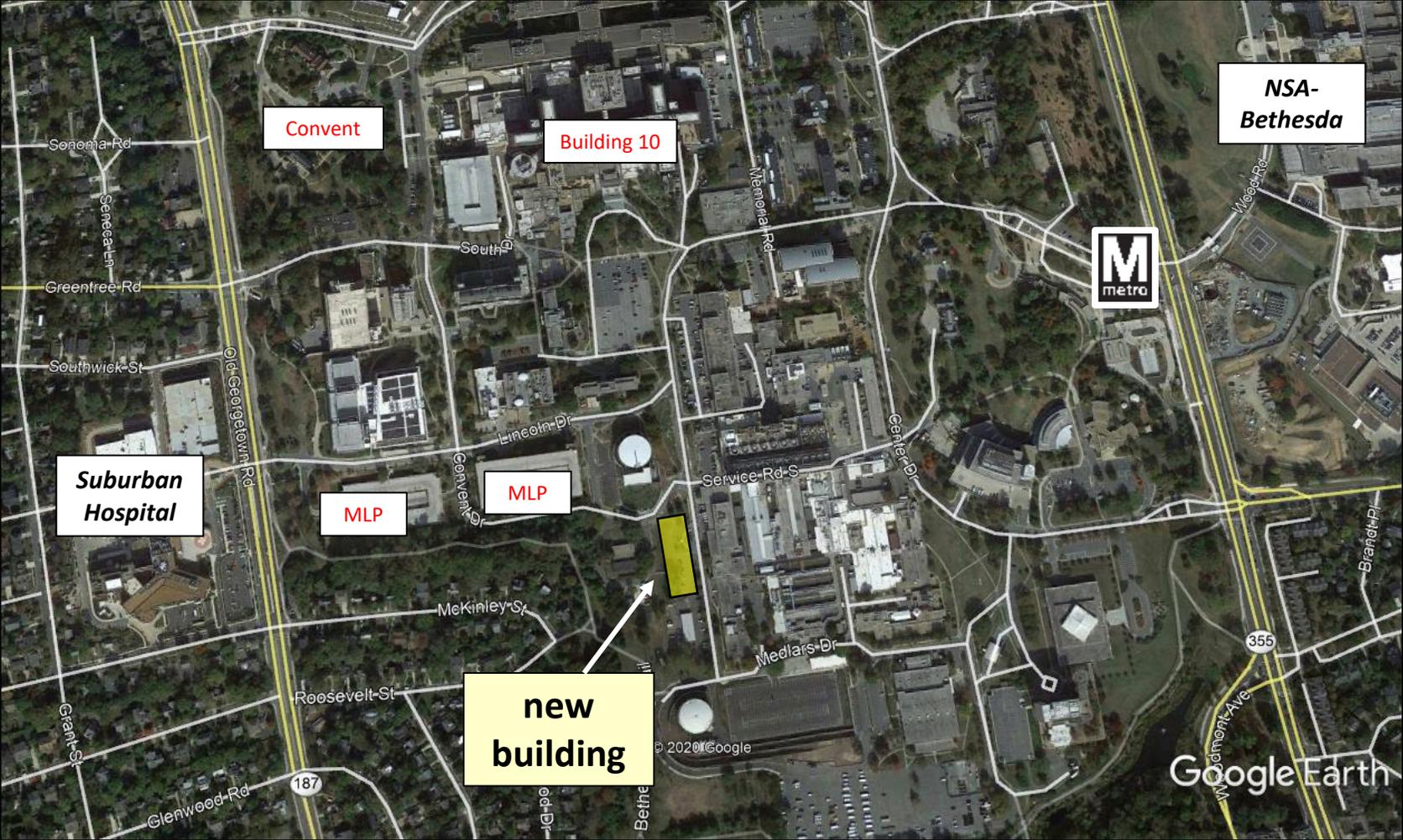
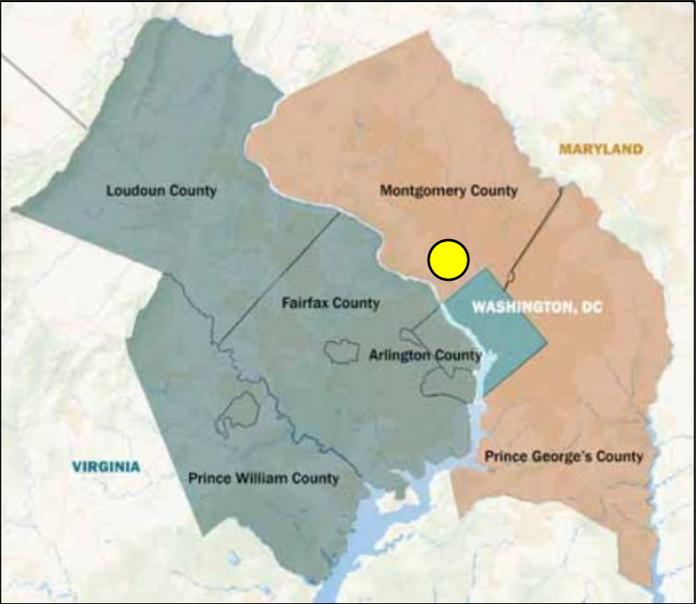
NCPC Review Officer: Michael Weil

NCPC File Number: 8168

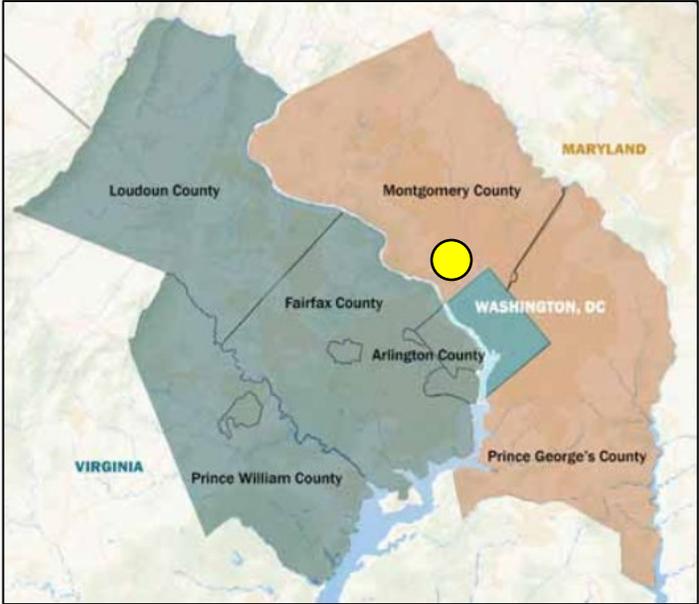
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Project Location

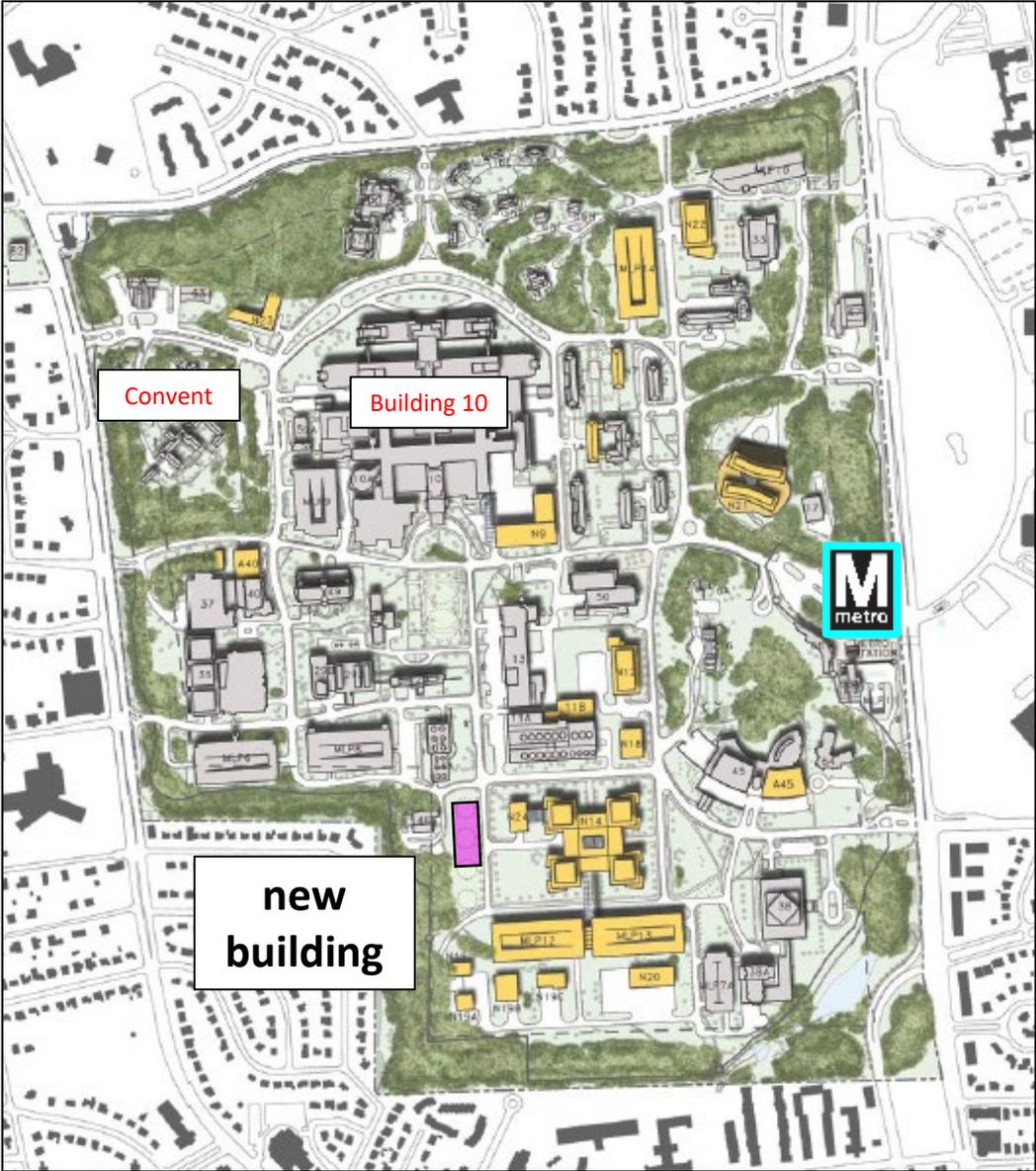


Project Location



2013 NIH Master Plan

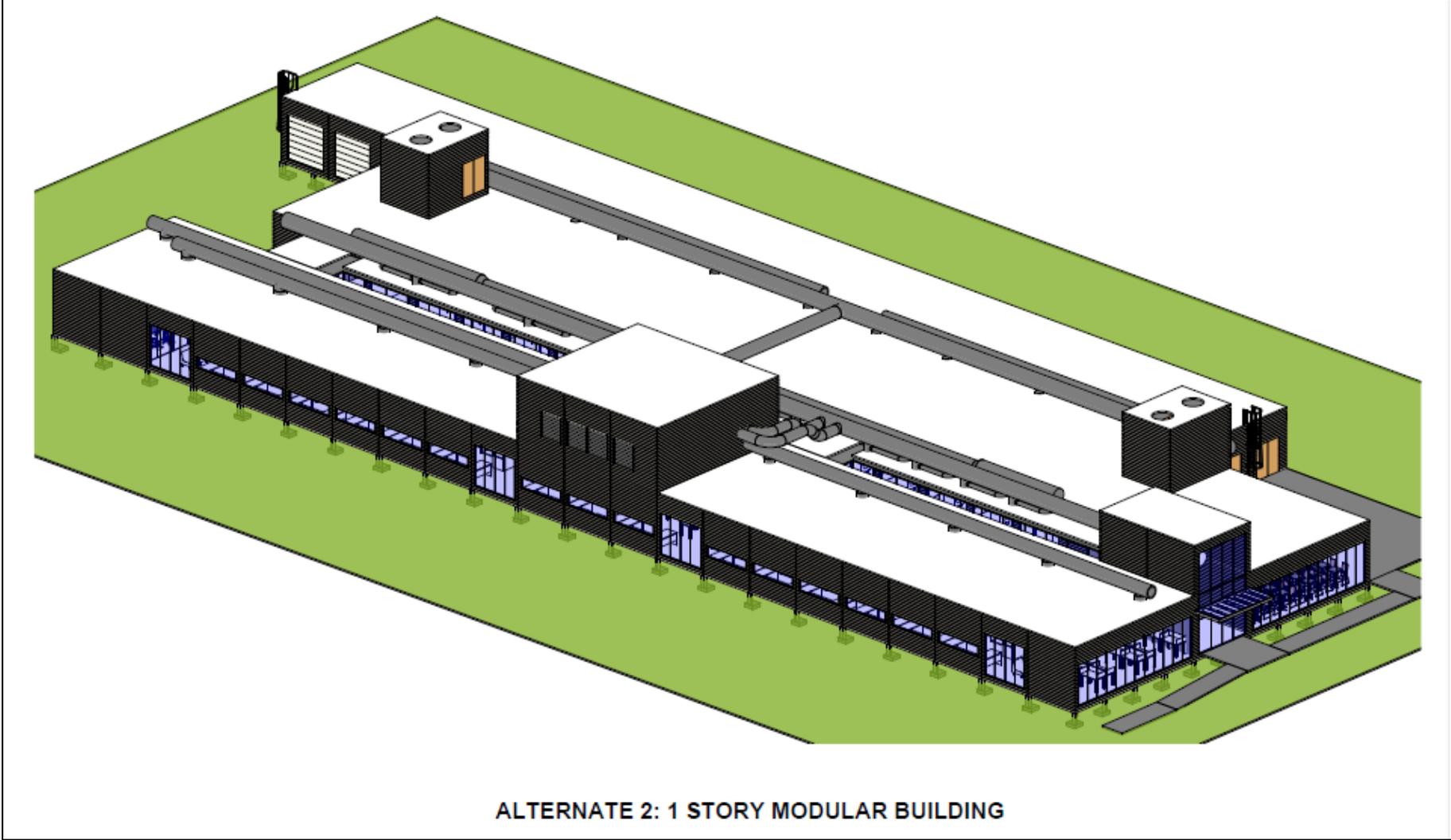
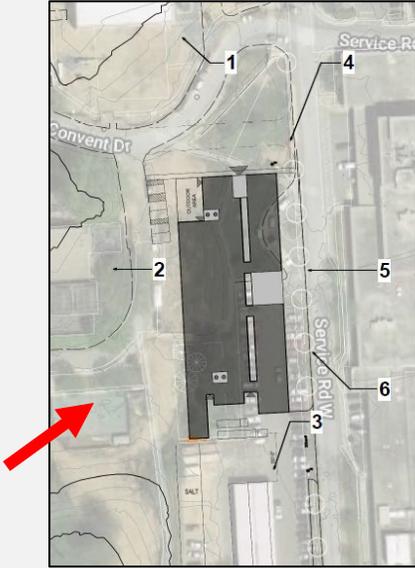
----- NIH Property Line	Existing Building	Formal Open Space
----- Security Fence	New Building	Natural Open Space
----- Buffer Zone	Walks/Plaza/Terrace	Water Features



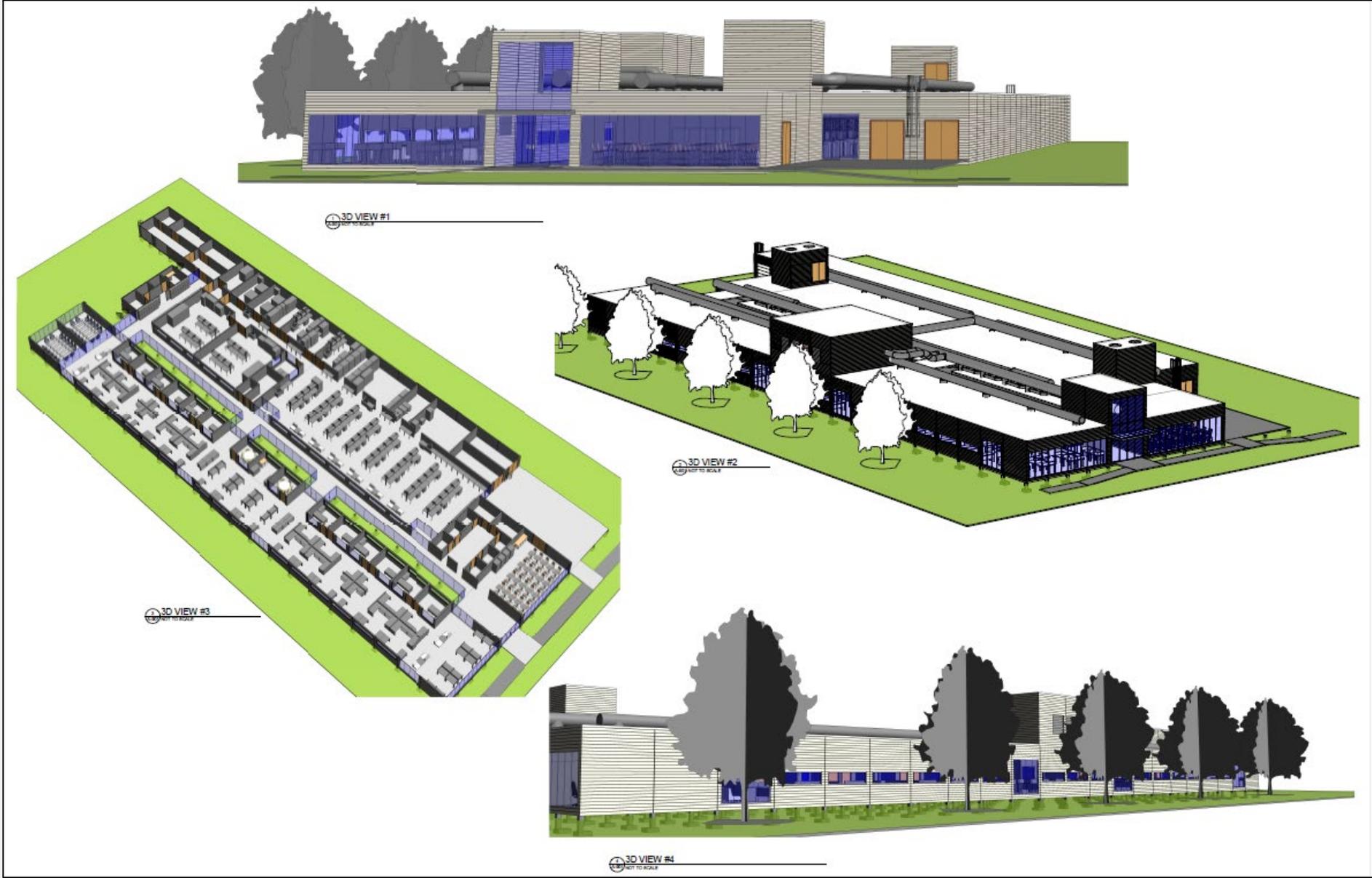
Existing Site



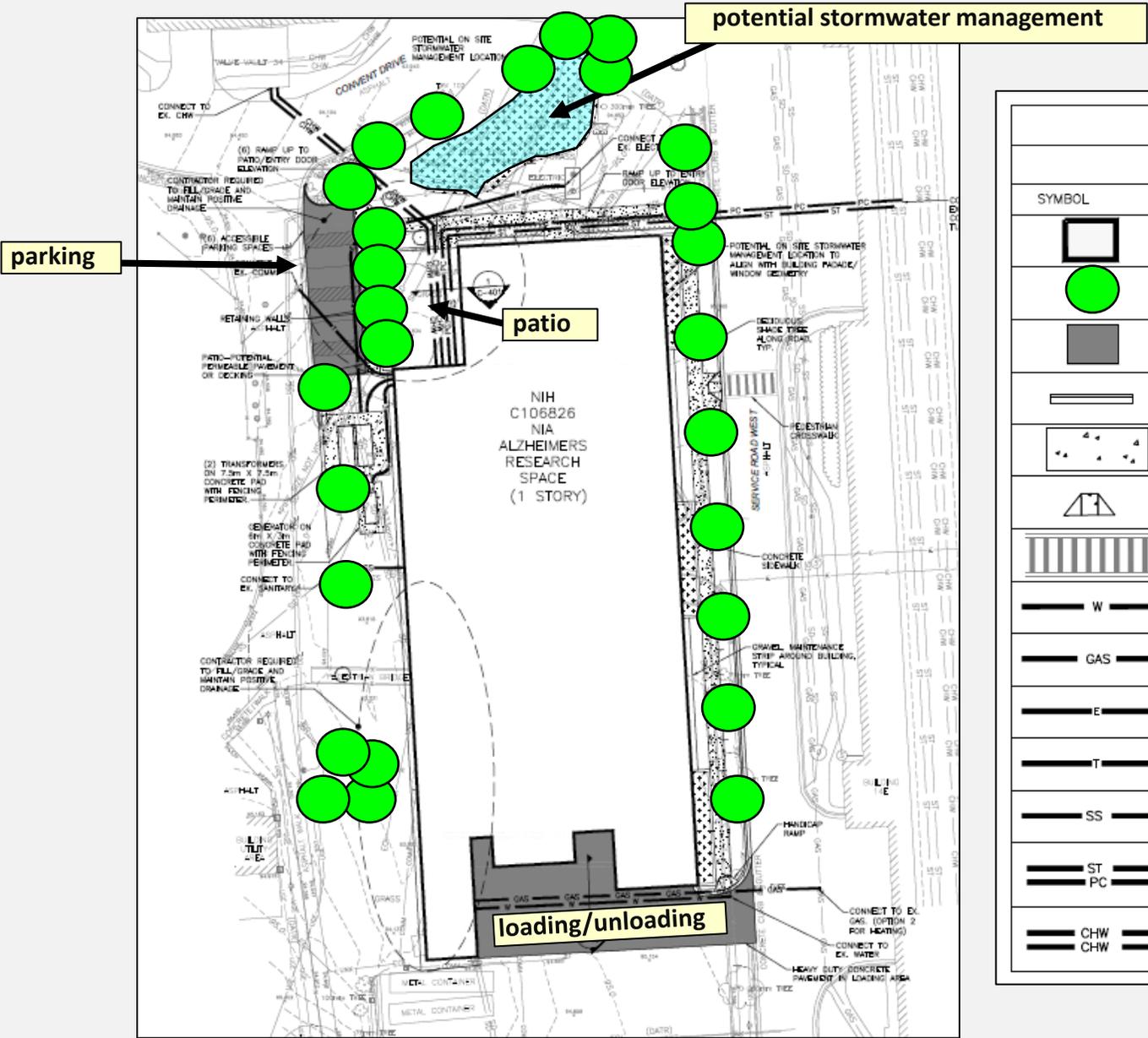
Concept Rendering



Concept Renderings



Site Plan



DRAWING LEGEND	
SITE PLAN LEGEND	
SYMBOL	DESCRIPTION
	BUILDING
	TREE
	ASPHALT PAVEMENT
	CONCRETE CURB AND GUTTER
	CONCRETE PAVEMENT
	HANDICAP RAMP
	PEDESTRIAN CROSSWALK
	WATER PIPING
	GAS PIPING
	ELECTRIC CONDUIT
	COMMUNICATION CONDUIT
	SANITARY PIPING
	HIGH PRESSURE STEAM & PUMPED CONDENSATE PIPING
	CHILLED WATER SUPPLY & RETURN PIPING

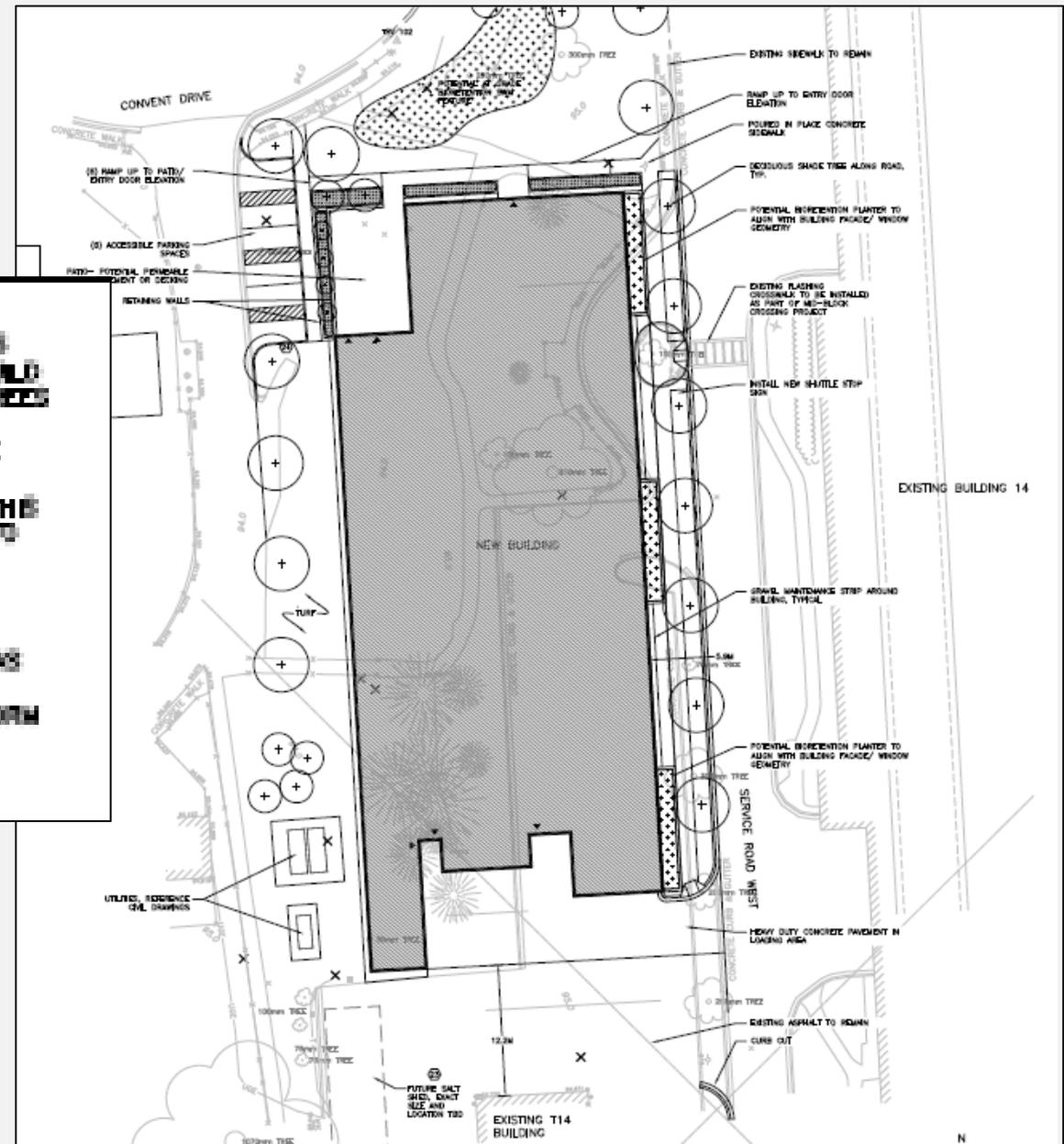
Site Plan

TREE REPLACEMENT NOTES:

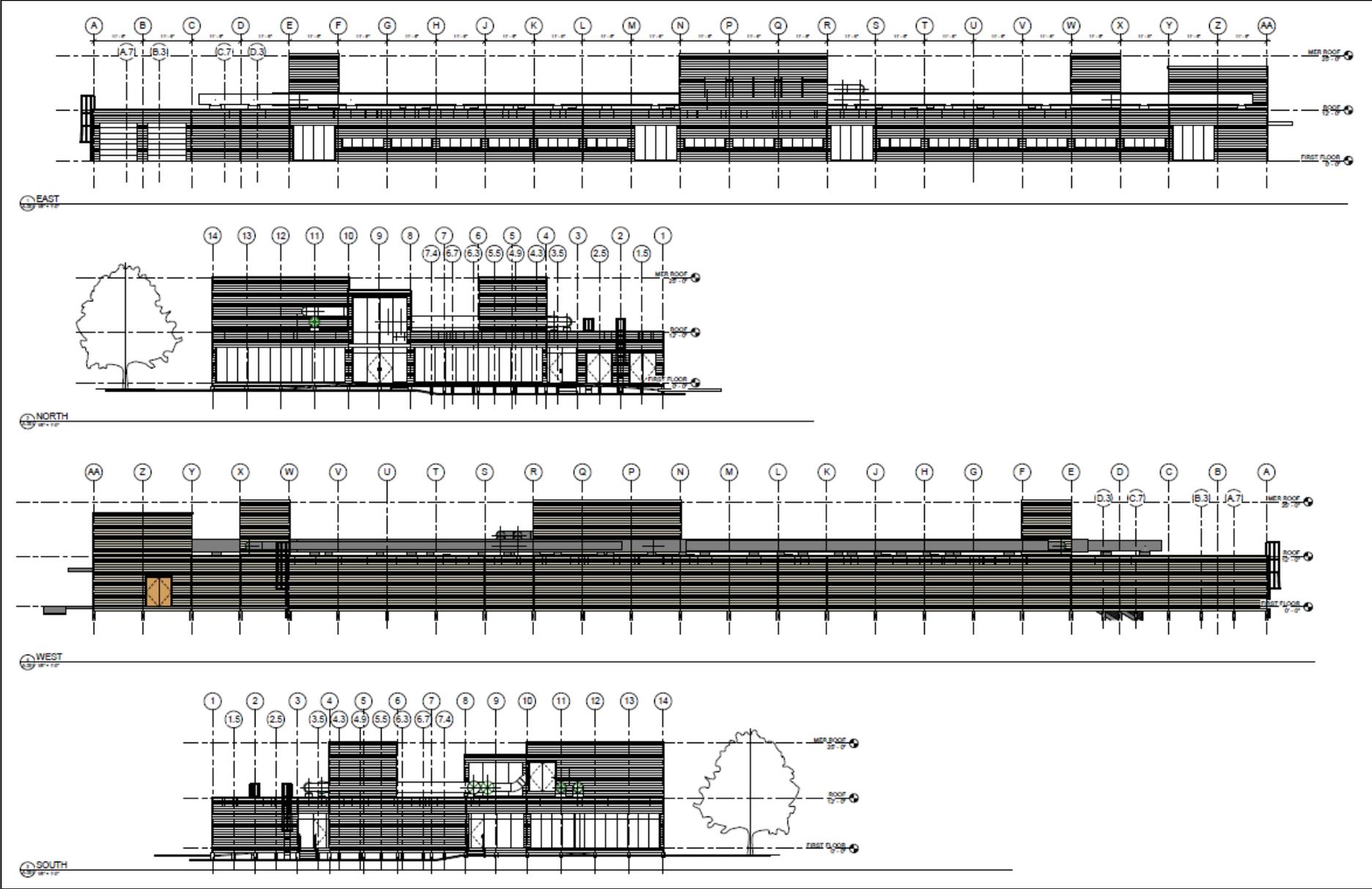
- 1) FOLLOW DDM SECTION 3.5.4 FOR REPLACEMENT TREE REQUIREMENTS
- 2) APPROXIMATELY 30 TREES TO BE REMOVED FROM SITE. DESIGN BUILD CONTRACTOR TO CONDUCT A TREE SURVEY TO DETERMINE WHICH TREES WILL BE AFFECTED BY THE WORK AND WILL NEED REPLACEMENTS
- 3) UTILISE TREE REPLACEMENT MATRIX DDM EXHIBIT 3.1 TO DETERMINE EXACT NUMBER OF REPLACEMENT TREES NEEDED
- 4) IF NOT POSSIBLE TO PLANT ALL OF THE REPLACEMENT TREES ON THE SITE, THE NH LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT WILL PROVIDE DIRECTION AS TO WHERE TO PLANT ON ADJACENT SITES

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT NOTES:

- 1) ALL POTENTIAL STORM WATER MANAGEMENT FACILITIES ARE SHOWN AS OPTIONS
- 2) SELECTION AND SIZING OF OPTIONS SHOULD BE BASED OFF OF STORM WATER CALCULATIONS TO MEET MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT REQUIREMENTS



Elevations



Elevations



