

# Washington Union Station Lighting Upgrades

50 Massachusetts Avenue, NE  
Washington, DC

Approval of Comments on Concept Plans

Union Station Redevelopment Corporation

# Project Summary

**Commission Meeting Date:** October 9, 2025

**NCPC Review Authority:** 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d)

**Applicant Request:** Approval of Comments on Concept Plans

**Session:** Staff Presentation

**NCPC Review Officer:** Lee Webb

**NCPC File Number:** 8703

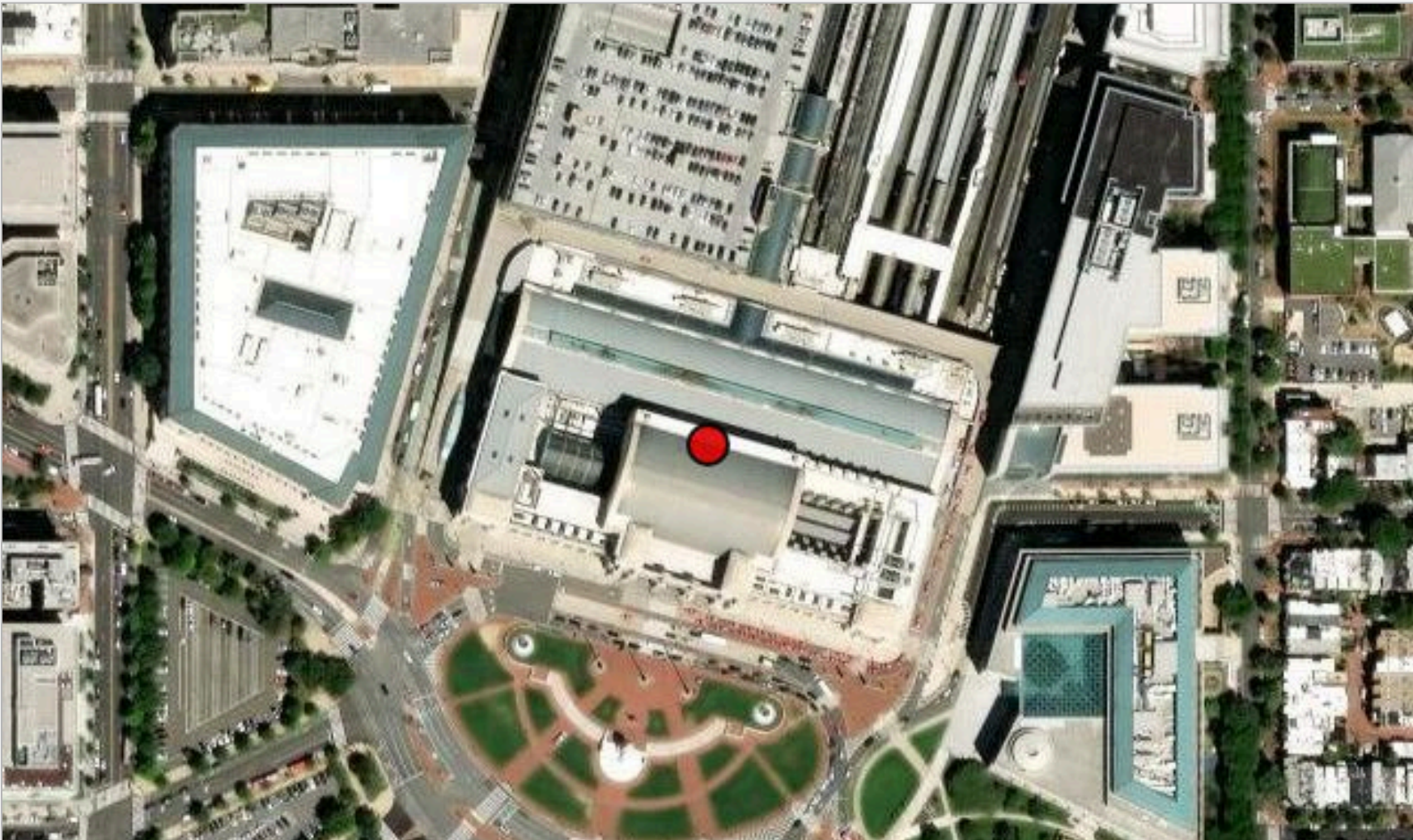
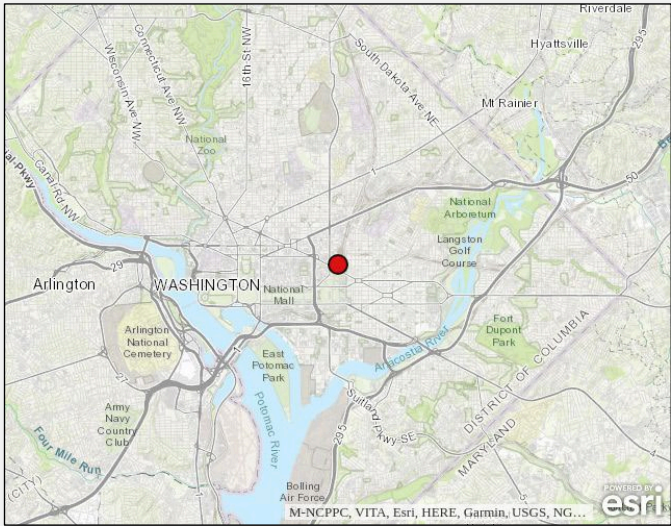
## Project Summary:

The Union Station Redevelopment Corporation (USRC) has submitted plans for proposed improvements to the lighting at Washington Union Station, which is located at 50 Massachusetts Avenue, NE in Washington, DC, just north of the U.S. Capitol Complex. The design approach is guided by three foundational objectives:

- **Public Safety and Security:** Elevating light levels throughout the station and its immediate surroundings to foster a safer, more welcoming environment.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Replacing outdated fixtures and internal optics with focused, low-energy LED technology to reduce consumption and align with contemporary sustainability goals.
- **Architectural Enhancement:** Introducing a layered hierarchy of light that reinforces the spatial rhythm and historic character of the building, while respecting its original design intent.

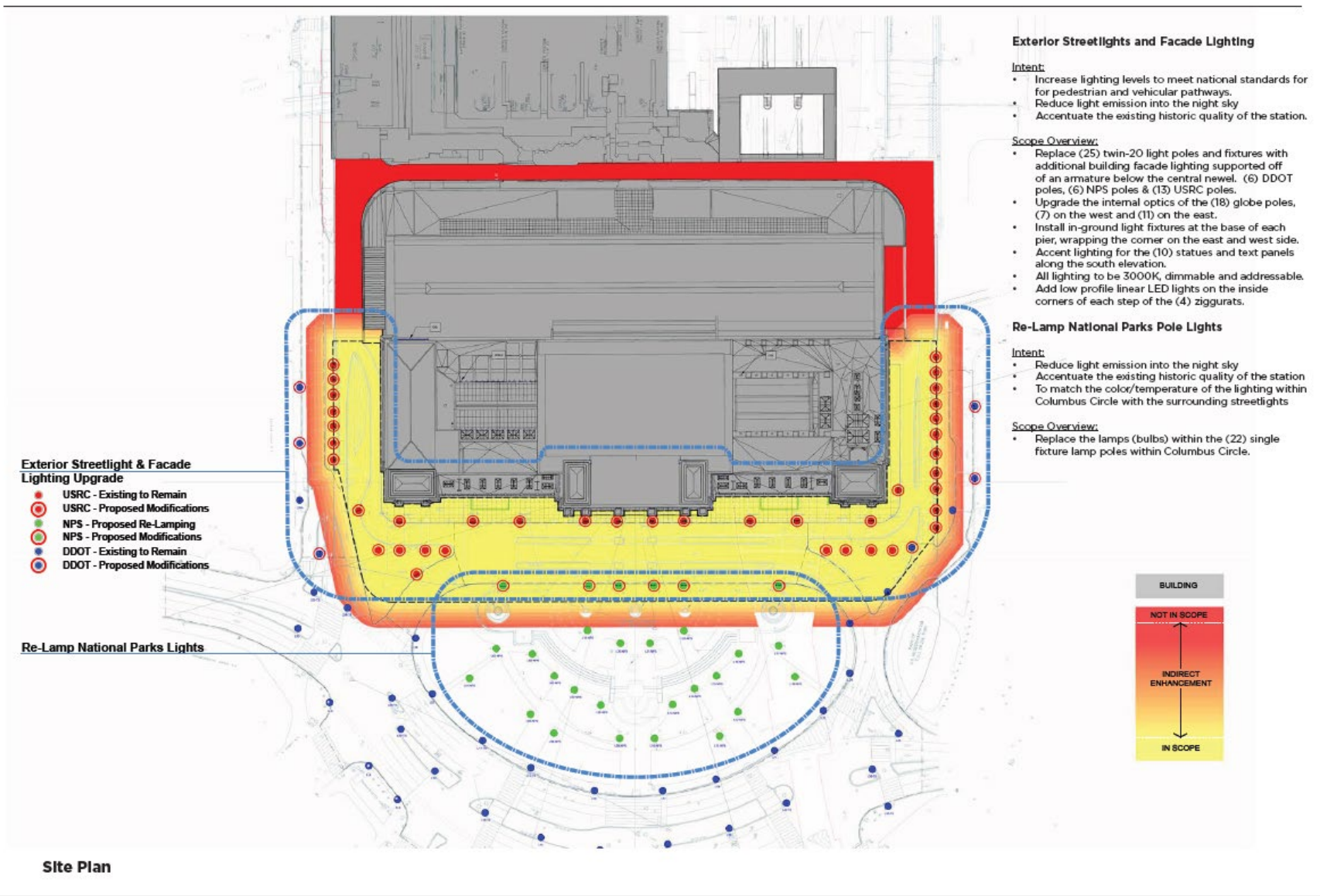
This Concept submission outlines upgrades to both interior and exterior lighting systems. Proposed enhancements include indirect uplighting to accentuate architectural features while improving visibility and safety. The exterior scope encompasses the southern façade facing Columbus Circle, adjacent pedestrian sidewalks and drop-off lanes, and the Colonnade—specifically the Front Entry Portico, Executive Entry Portico, Carriage Porch, and connecting Loggia. The interior scope includes lighting improvements and supplemental fixtures within the Main Hall, West Hall, East Hall, and Retail Concourse.

# Site Location

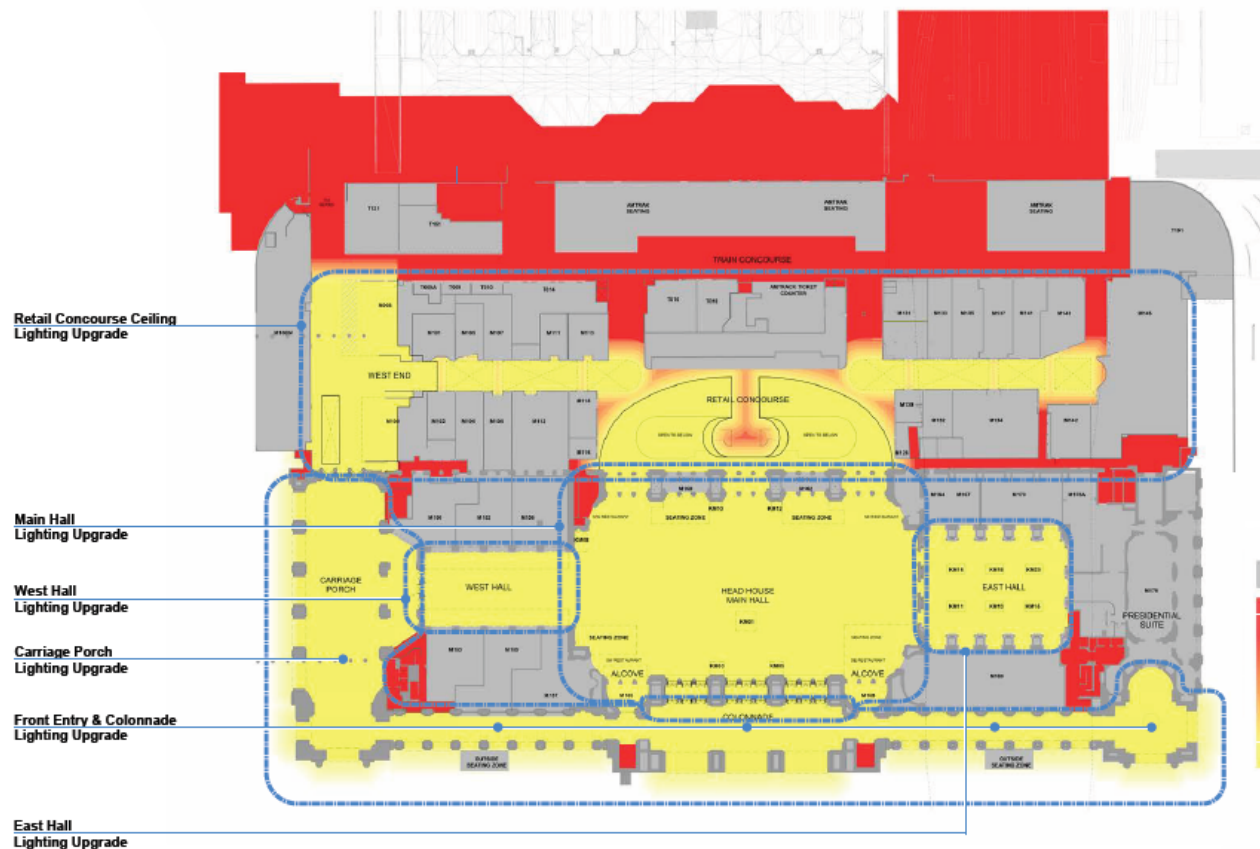


Location Map

# Overall Site Plan



# Ground Level Plan



### Front Entry and Colonnade

Intent:

- Increase lighting levels to meet national standards for pedestrian pathways.
- Decrease glare and provide more indirect lighting.
- Modernize the internal optics of the existing historic fixtures to accentuate the existing historic vaults.

Scope Overview:

- Modernize the internal optics of all hanging sconces
- Modernize the internal optics of dome lights.
- Add low profile spots to illuminate escalator and door thresholds, housing to color match ceiling.
- Add low profile linear LED fixtures on top surface of cornice at spring point of vault arches at the Carriage Porch, Main Entry and Executive entry. Fixture to be hidden from view.
- Add spot lights to statues above main entry doors.
- All lighting to be 3000K, dimmable and addressable.

### Main Hall

Intent:

- Increase lighting Levels to meet security requirements.
- Decrease glare and provide indirect lighting.
- Accentuate the Historic Interiors.

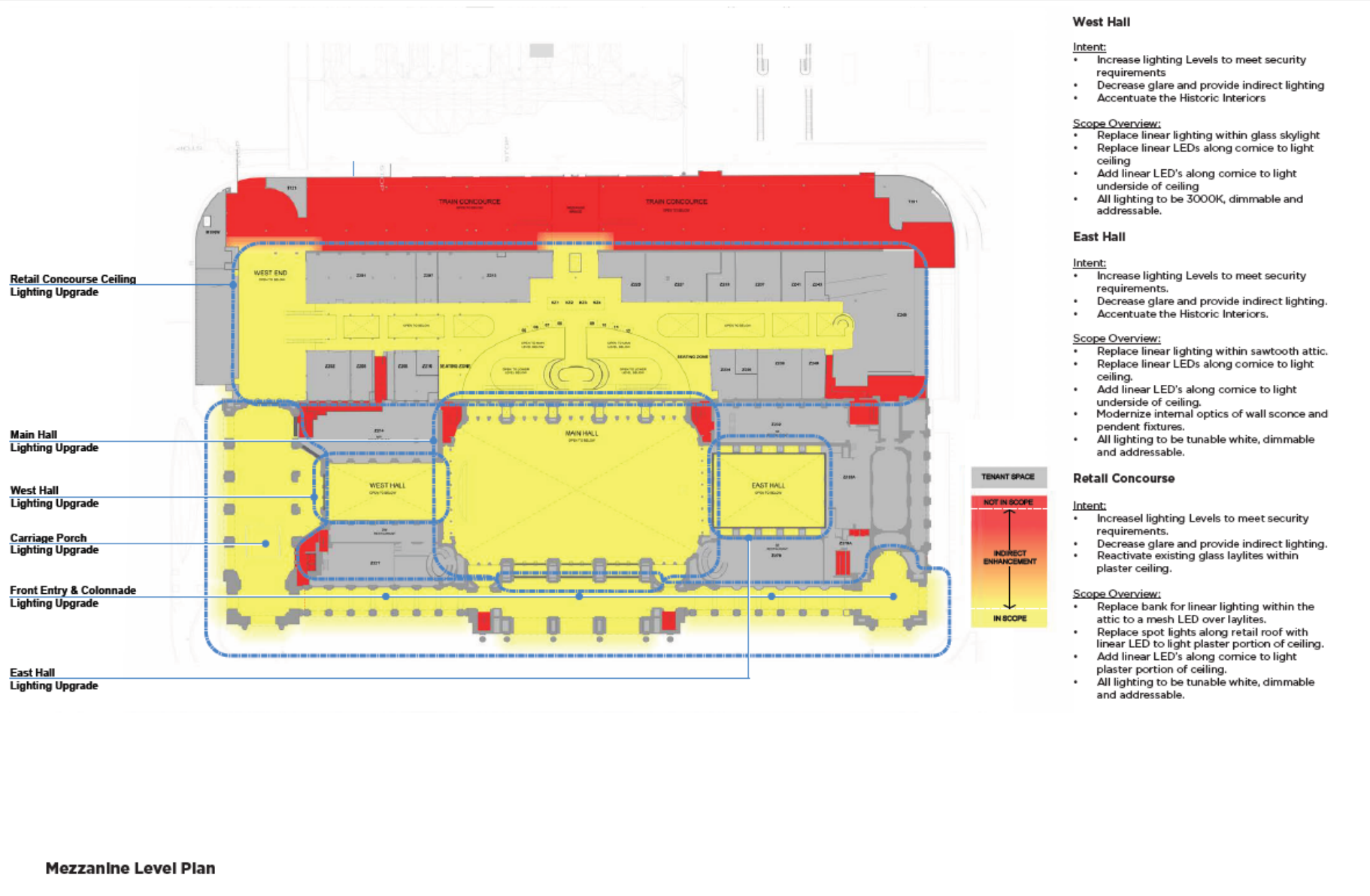
### Scope Overview:

- Replace lighting at spring point of plaster vault.
- Add additional linear LEDs along cornice to light ceiling.
- Add spot lights to light statues, entry and exit points along perimeter of space.
- All lighting to be 3000K, dimmable and addressable.

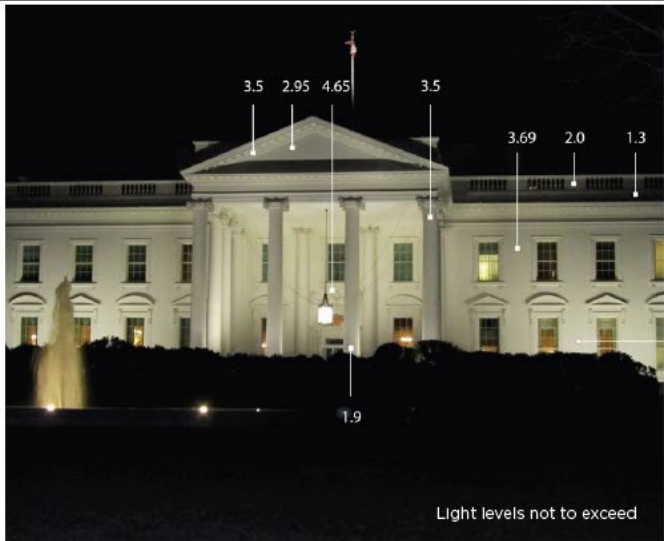
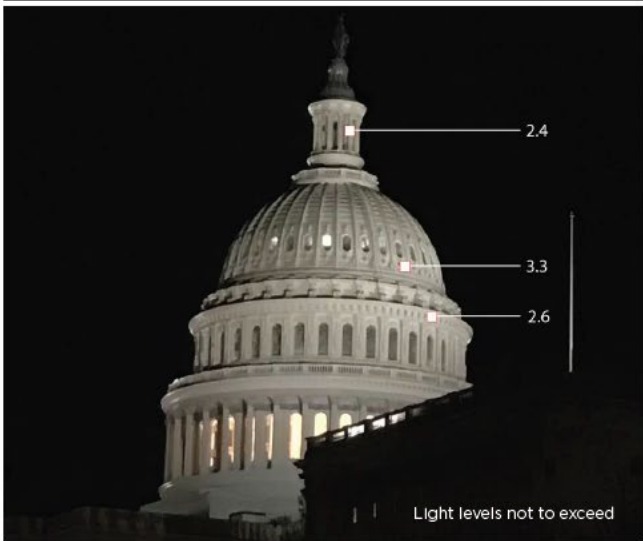


### Ground Level Plan

# Mezzanine Level Plan

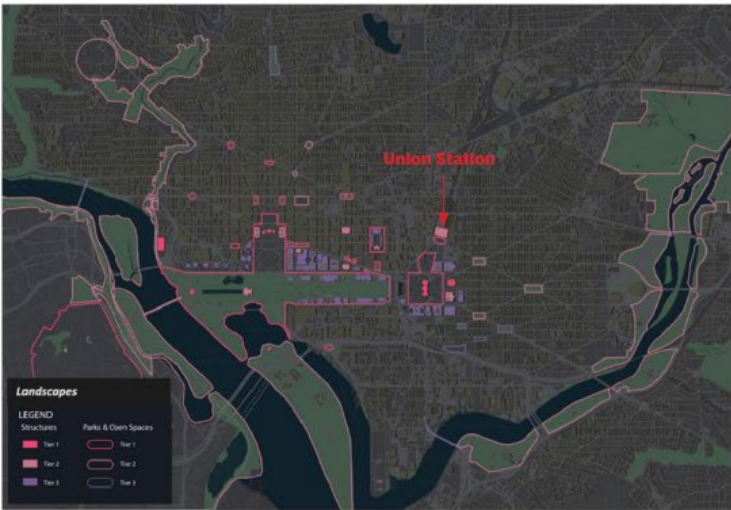


# Lighting Context / Examples

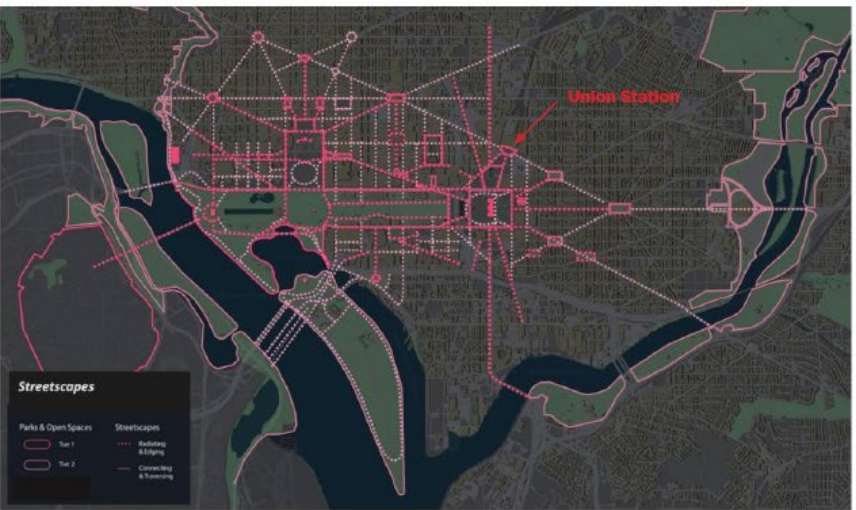


# Lighting Framework

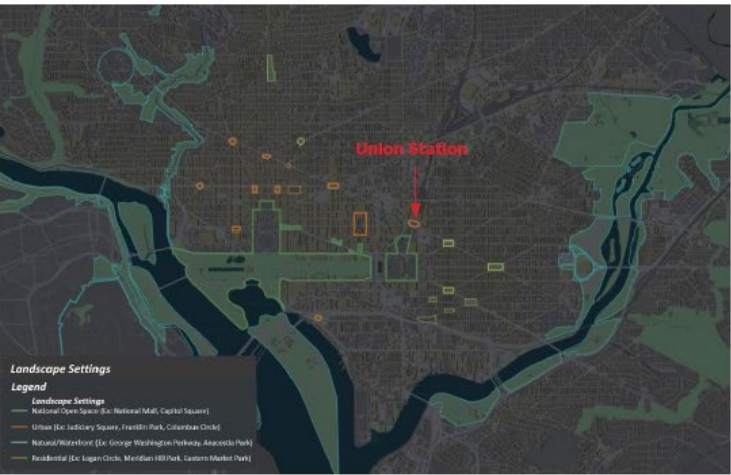
Building - Tier 2/Urban



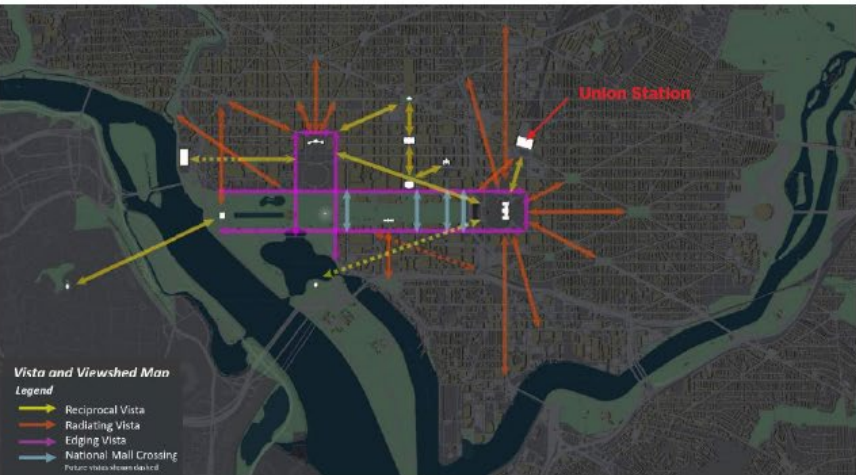
Streetscape - Tier 1/Urban



Columbus Circle - Urban



Vista/Viewshed - Reciprocal along Delaware Ave. Radiating along Louisiana Avenue



# Existing / Proposed – Delaware Avenue

Current Condition  
View looking north on Delaware Ave



Proposed Lighting Upgrades  
View looking north on Delaware Ave



Building & Street Lighting along Vistas  
Credit: pg 5 from August 2019 NCPC Lighting Policy and Framework



# Existing / Proposed – Massachusetts Avenue

Current Condition  
View looking northwest on Massachusetts Ave



Existing Condition Photo

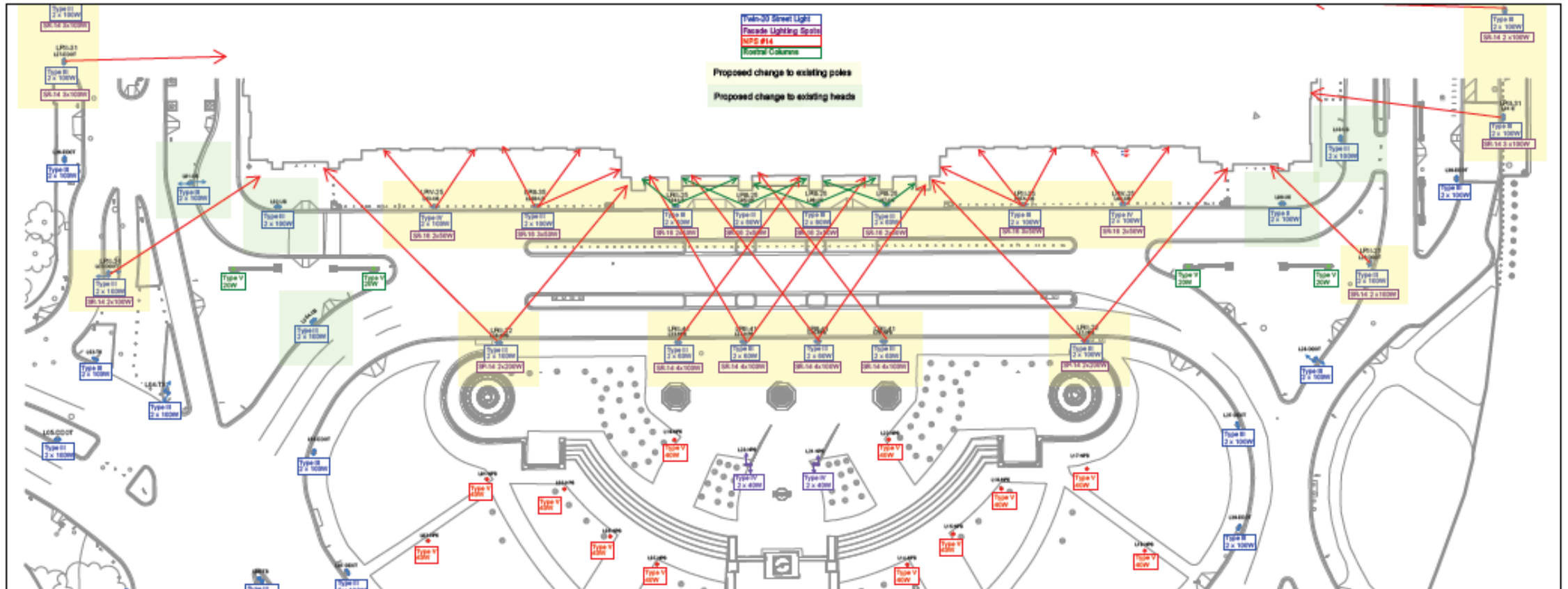
Proposed Lighting Upgrades  
View looking northwest on Massachusetts Ave



Proposed Lighting Design

# Columbus Circle Lighting

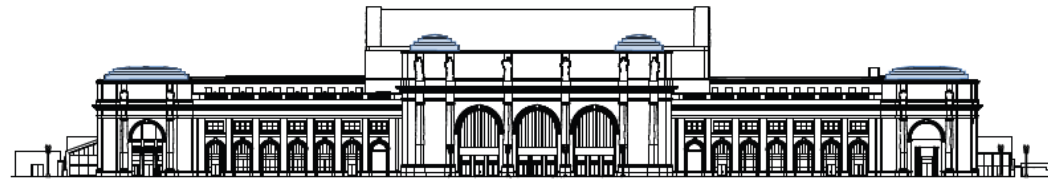
## Columbus Circle Lighting Site Plan



General Notes:

The lighting spread illustrated on the drawings represents the angle of the light spread and the aimed direction from the proposed optics.

# Façade Lighting Components



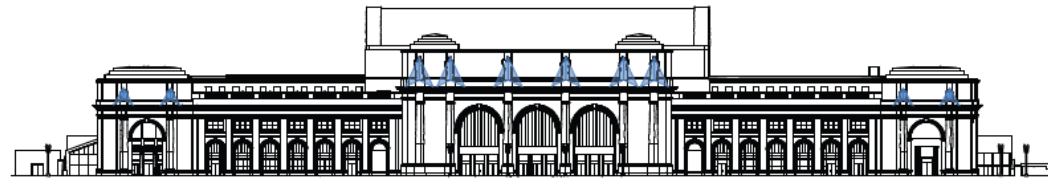
Ziggurat Lighting

## Lighting Layers/Control Zones

### Ziggurat Lighting

The vertical surfaces of the four corbeled tops are to be illuminated by thin LED linear fixtures tucked tight to the inside corners of the steps.

- 3000 K white
- dimmable between 7% & 100%
- Each ziggurat control by separate circuit

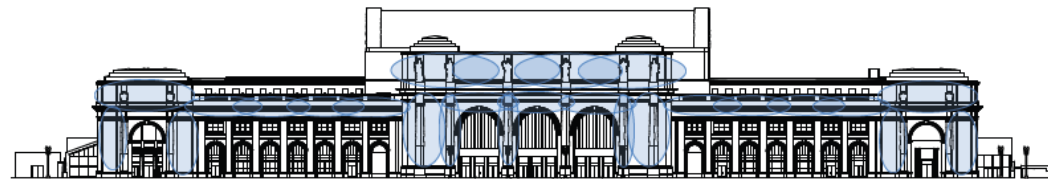


Statue Lighting

### Statue Lighting

The 10 statues above the cornice line are to be illuminated by small LED spot fixtures hidden from an on-grade vantage point.

- 3000 K white
- dimmable between 7% & 100%
- the two west and east statues and the 6 center statues controlled on three separate circuits

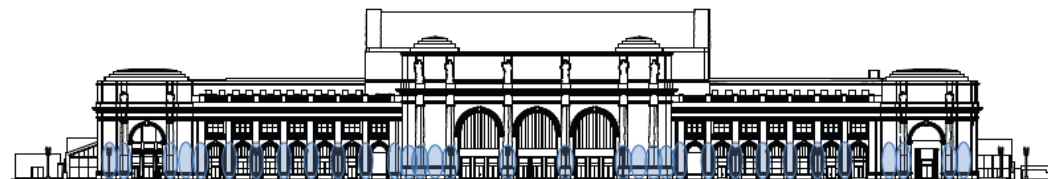


Facade Field Lighting

### Facade Field Lighting

This light is from 25 existing twin-20 streetlight poles, 13 from the station, 6 from NPS and 6 from DDOT. Lights will be aimed 12'-0" min. above grade to eliminate blinding light from people exiting the station.

- 3000 K white
- Each light is individually controlled
- dimmable between 5% & 100%
- the text relief between the statues will be illuminated by linear LED hidden behind the decoration beams, controlled by separate circuit and hidden from view

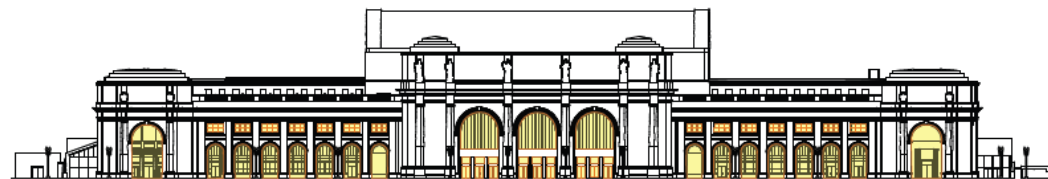


Uplighting

### In-Ground Up-Lighting

To accentuate the piers between the arched openings and to ground the building when lite, single inground lights will be installed

- 3000 K white
- dimmable between 10% & 100%
- controlled on two separate circuits, east and west



Interior Lighting / "Inner Glow"

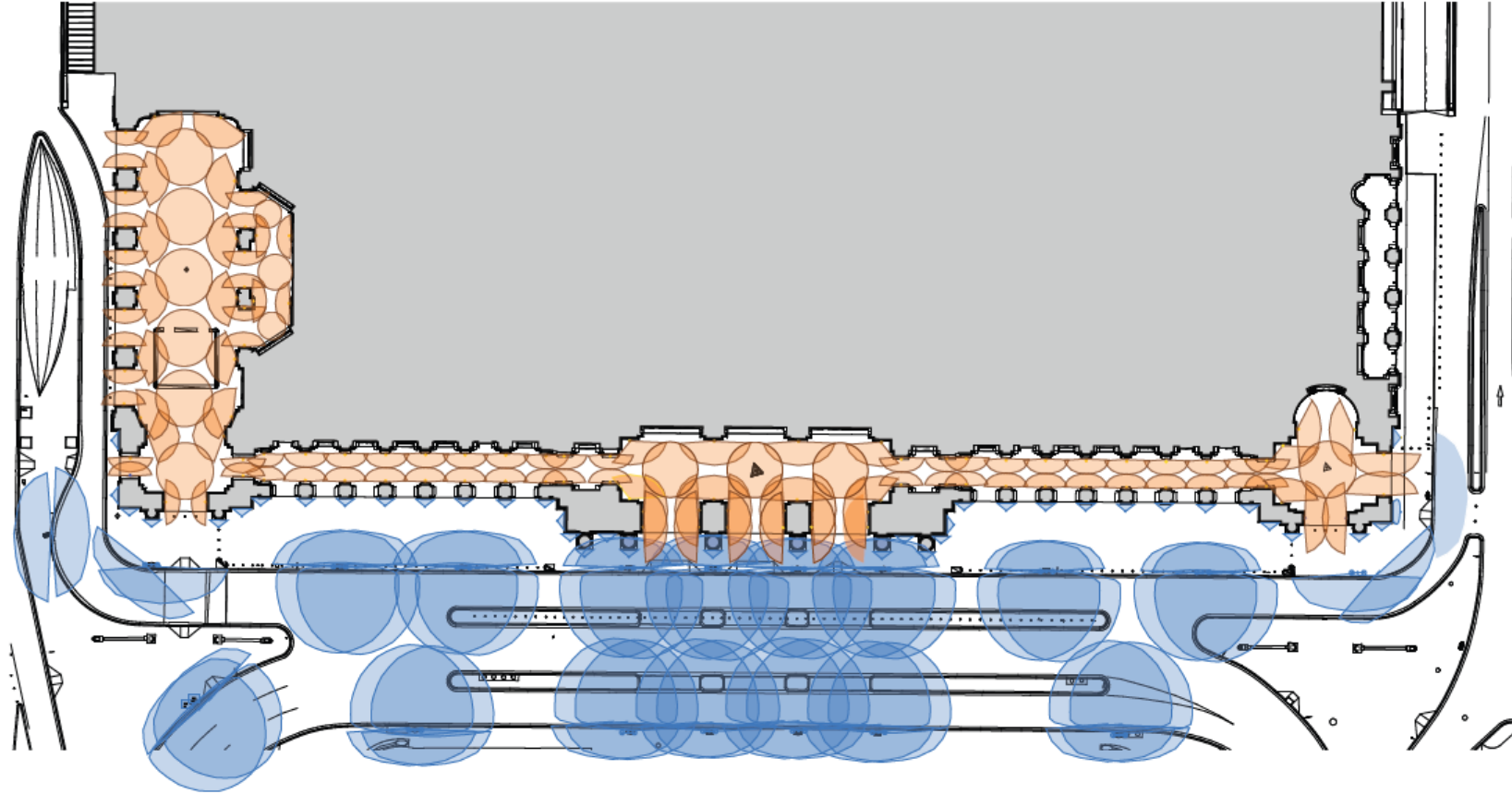
### Interior Lighting

It is intended the lighting from the interior space, seen through the glazed openings, to be the brightest, the Front colonnade being less bright, and the exterior facade to be less than the colonnade

- 3000 K white
- refer to colonnade and interior lighting plans for controls

# Main Level Lighting Plan

Main Level Lighting Plan



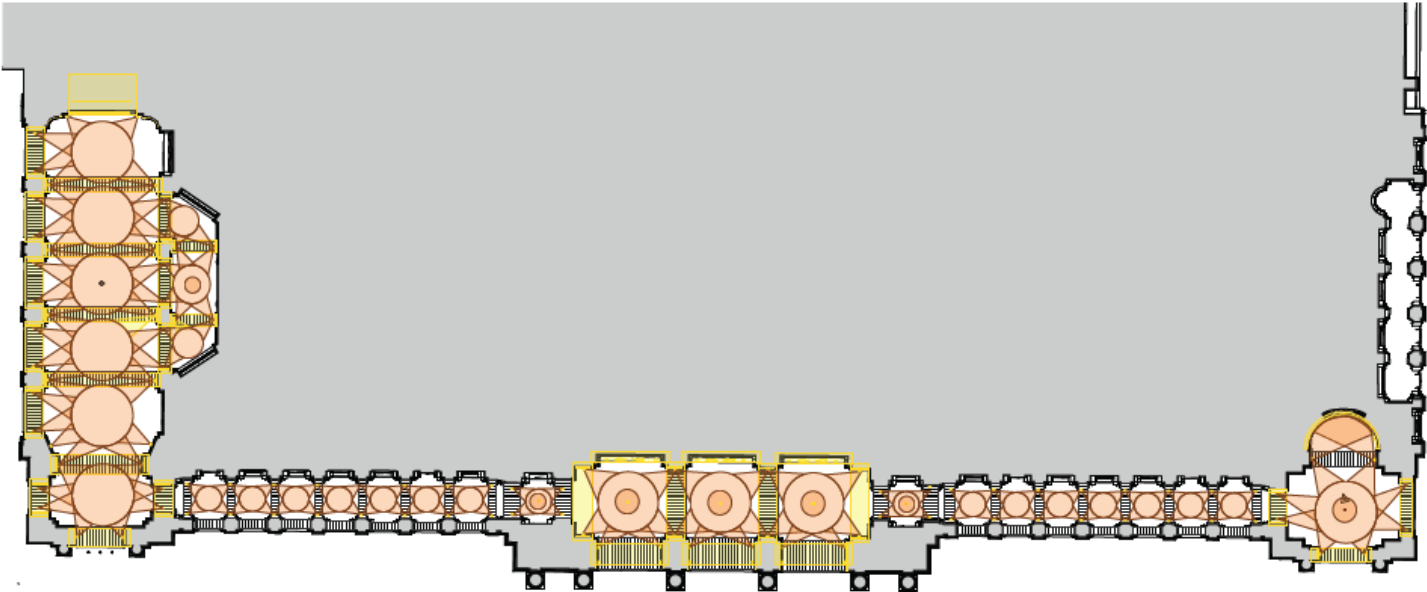
General Notes:  
The lighting spread illustrated on the drawings represents the angle of the light and the aimed direction from the proposed optics.

## Legend

- Light from existing lamp poles
- Light from existing historic fixtures with new optics

# Main Level Lighting Ceiling Plan

Main Level Lighting Reflected Ceiling Plan



General Notes:  
The lighting spread illustrated on the drawings represents the angle of the light and the aimed direction from the proposed optics.

**Legend**

Light from new fixtures
Light from existing historic fixtures with new optics

# Existing / Proposed – Front Entry Portico

Current Condition  
Front Entry Portico



Existing Condition Photo

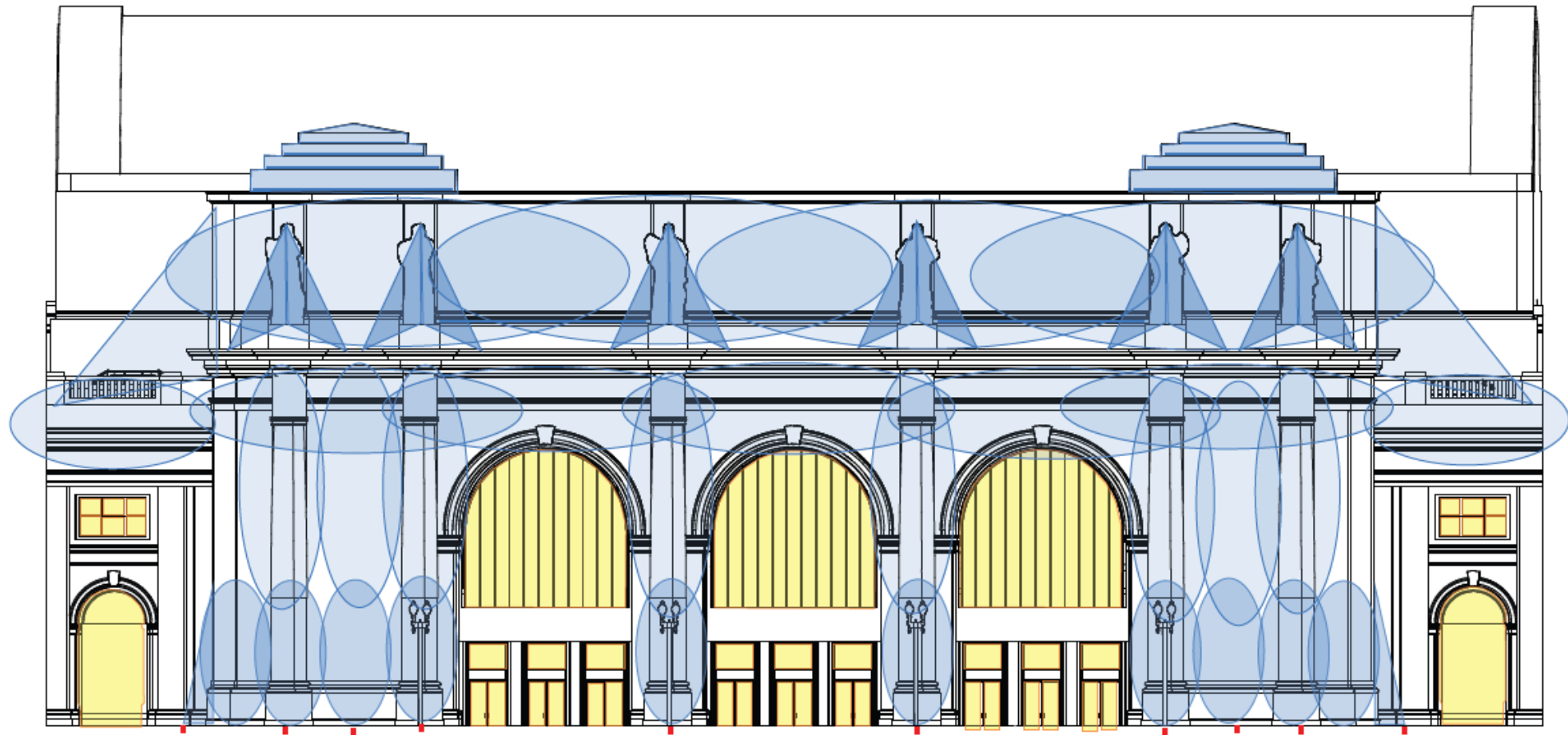
Proposed Lighting Upgrades  
Front Entry Portico



Proposed Lighting Design

# Front Entry Portico – Lighting Components

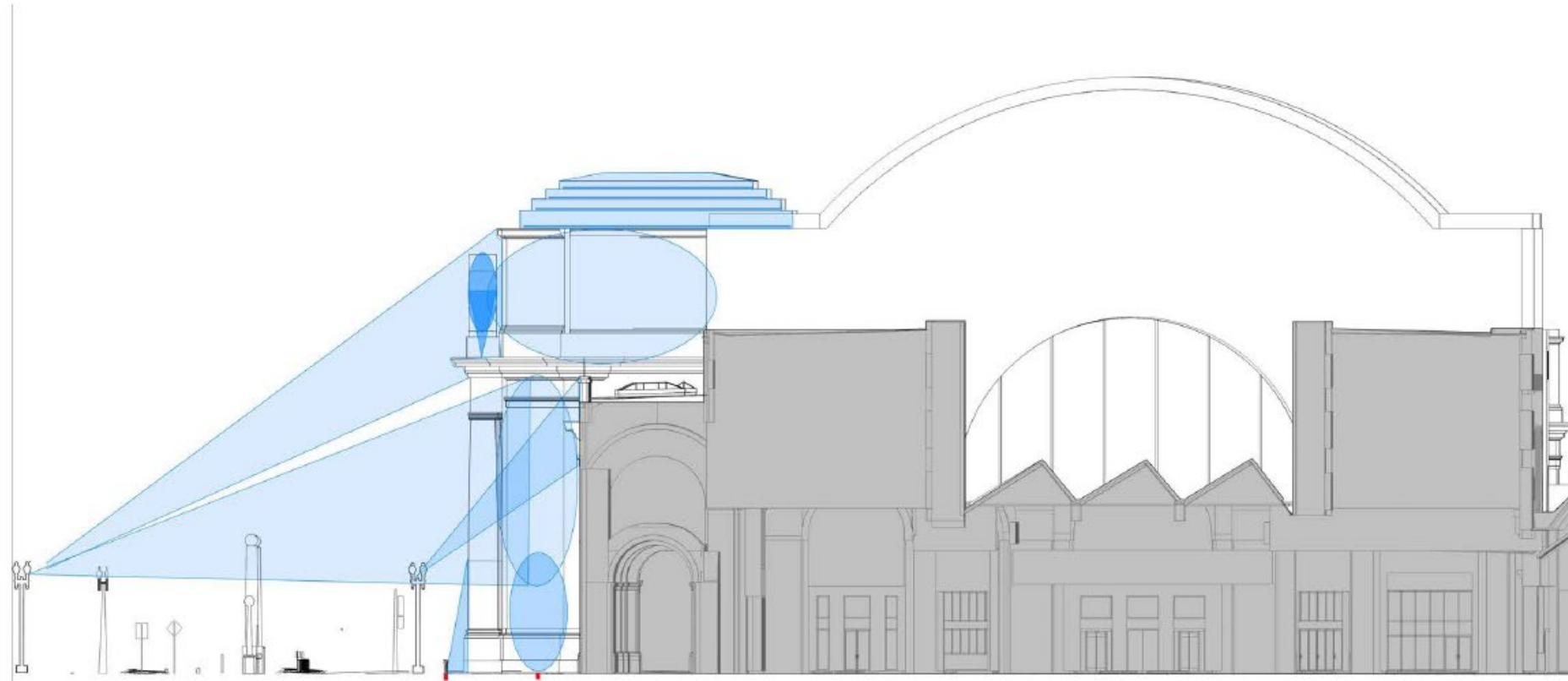
Partial South Elevation - Main Entry Portico



General Notes:  
The lighting spread illustrated on the drawings represents the angle of the light and the aimed direction from the proposed optics.

# Main Entry Portico – Lighting Section

Partial East Elevation - Main Entry Portico

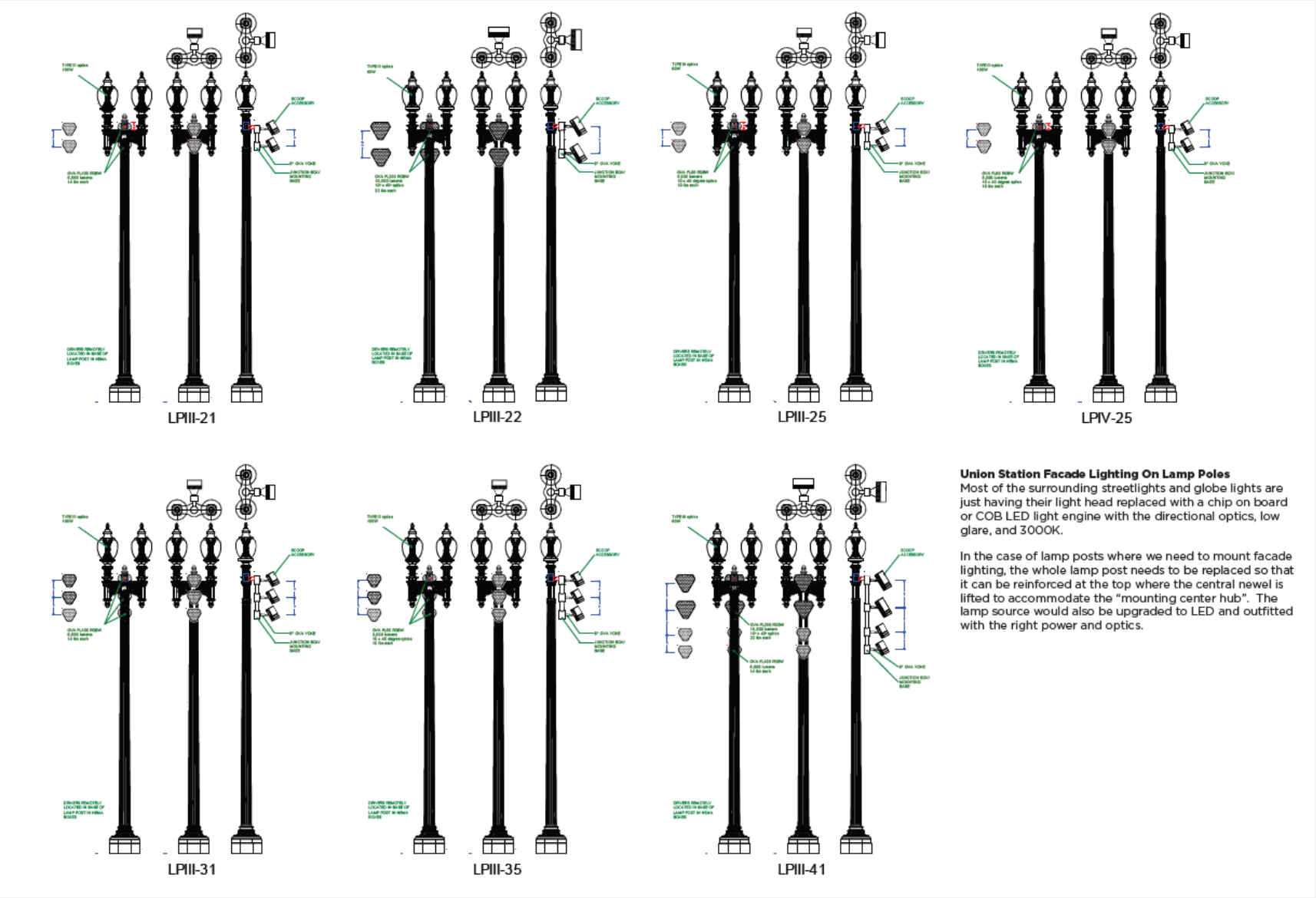


General Notes:  
The lighting spread illustrated on the drawings represents the angle of the light and the aimed direction from the proposed optics.

## Legend

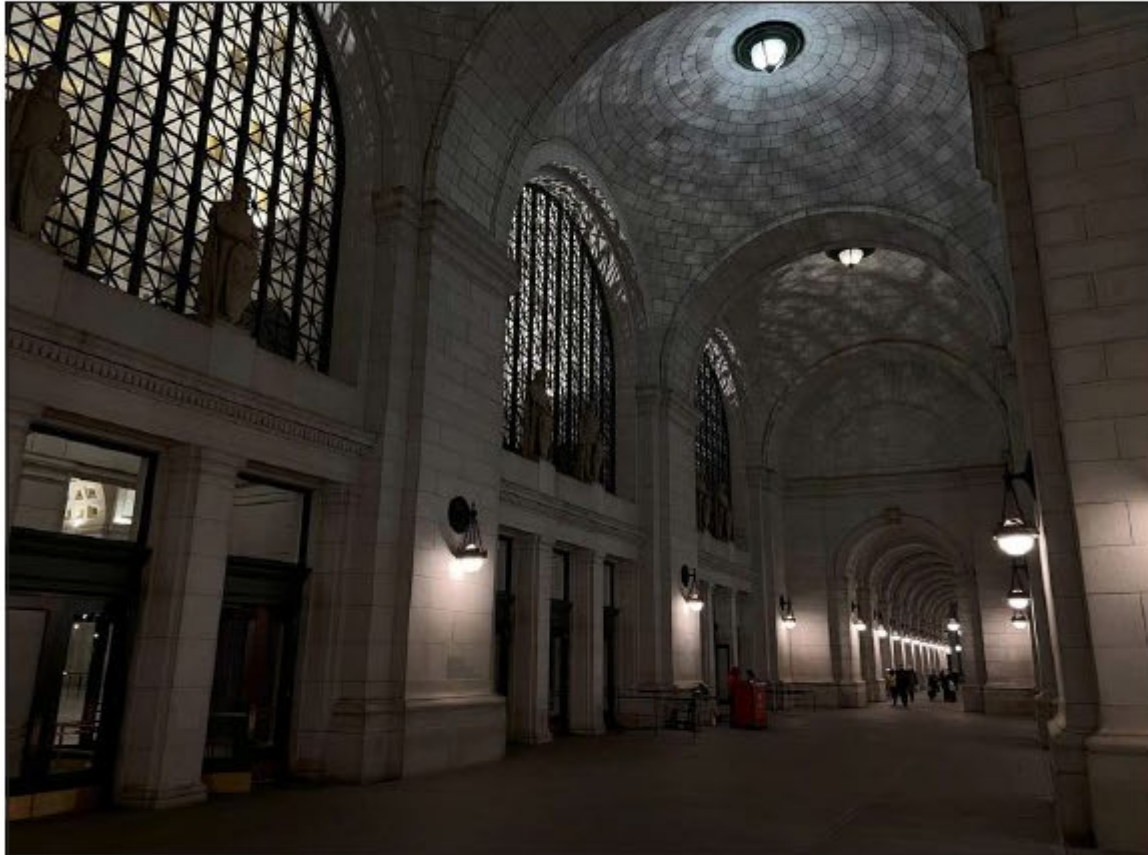
■ Lighting on exterior building facade

# Proposed Pole Additions



# Existing / Proposed Colonnade Lighting

Current Condition  
Colonnade



Existing Condition Photo

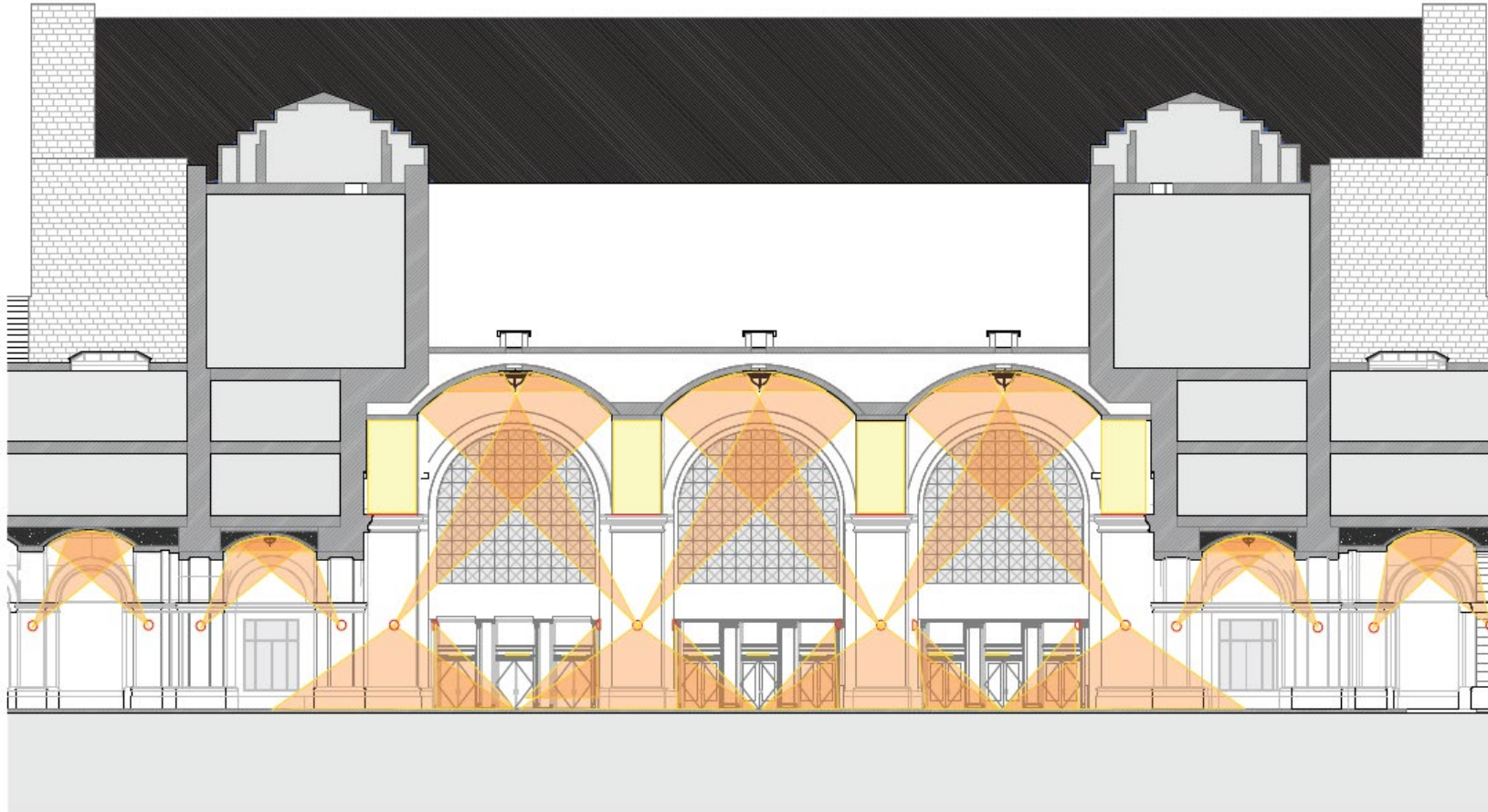
Proposed Lighting Upgrades  
Colonnade



Proposed Lighting Design

# Proposed Entry / Colonnade Lighting

Building Section - Main Entry Portico



General Notes:  
The lighting spread illustrated on the drawings represents the angle of the light and the aimed direction from the proposed optics.

## Legend

- Light from new fixtures
- Light from existing historic fixtures with new optics

# Historic Light Fixture Improvements

Historic Sconce



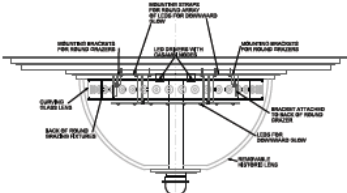
Historic Dome Light



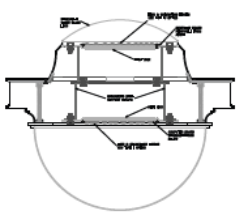
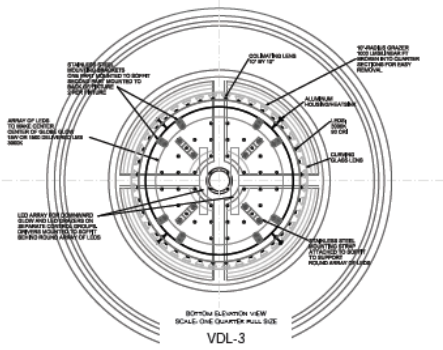
Rostral Lamp Posts along First Street



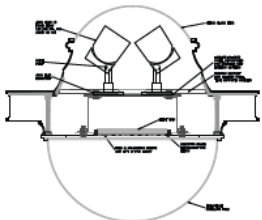
Dome Light Section Detail



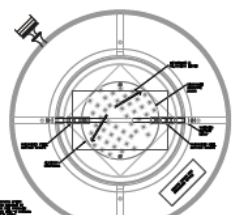
Dome Light Plan Detail



HSC, HSCII-1



HSUI-1, HSLII-2, HSLIV



HSC, HSCII-1



HSUI-1, HSLII-2, HSLIV

## Existing Historic Light Fixtures

There are (5) types of historic light fixtures in and around Union Station:

### Dome Lights

Two Sizes, Large dome lights are located within the front entry portico, small dome lights are located at the Executive Entry and Carriage porch.

### Hanging Sconces

Two Sizes, Large sconces are located within the front entry portico, small sconces are located throughout the remainder of the building.

### Hanging Pendants (not shown)

Located within the East Hall

### Globe streetlights

(7) along west side of station  
(1) along east side of the station

### Ceiling Fixtures (Jelly Jars) (Not Shown)

Single bulb fixtures within the ceilings of the vestibules and on the underside of the colonnade separating the East and West Halls from the Main Hall.

### General Note:

All existing historic fixtures are to remain in their current location. All exterior casing, glass, brackets, chains, eschutcheons, etc composing the exterior appearance of the fixture will be maintained. The proposed modifications will be to remove the internal optics, from a previous retrofit in the 1980's, with LED optics to provide down and up lighting. All modifications to these lights can be completed without removal of the fixture.

The historic case iron globe light poles will need to be removed to have the rust removed, any necessary repair to the case iron, and be repainted. They will all be reinstalled in their current locations.

# Existing / Proposed Carriage Porch Lighting

Current Condition  
Carriage Porch



Existing Condition Photo

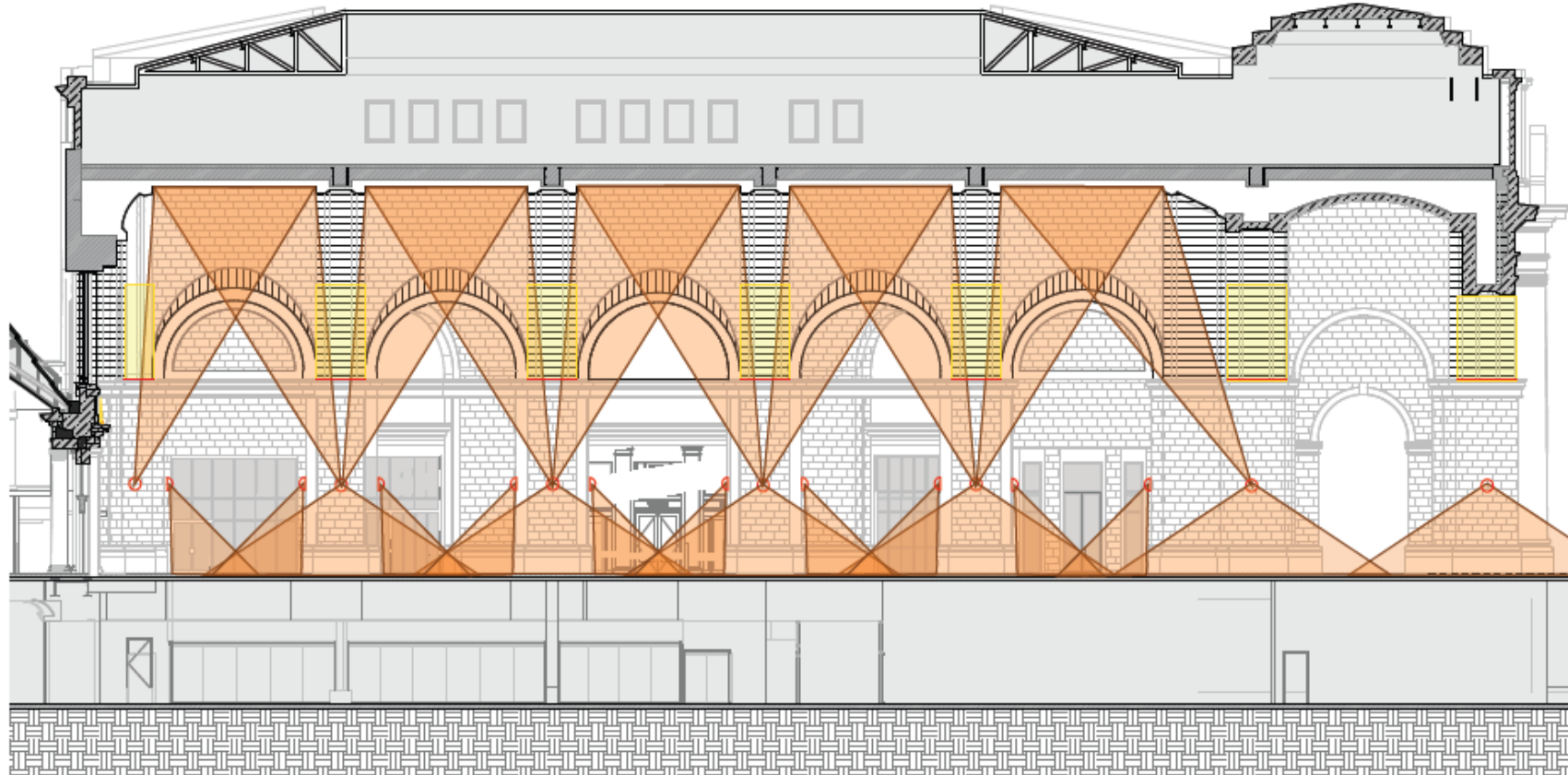
Proposed Lighting Upgrades  
Carriage Porch



Proposed Lighting Design

# Proposed Carriage Porch Lighting

Building Section - Carriage Porch



**General Notes:**

The lighting spread illustrated on the drawings represents the angle of the light and the aimed direction from the proposed optics

**Legend**

- Light from new fixtures
- Light from existing historic fixtures with new optics

# Existing / Proposed West Hall Lighting

Current Condition  
West Hall



Existing Condition Photo

Proposed Lighting Upgrades  
West Hall



Proposed Lighting Design