

Regency Developments

# Urban Design Brief

Holyrood DC2 Rezoning

Stantec Consulting Ltd.  
7-31-2017

## 1. Overview

Regency Developments intends to rezone the lands located at 8510 and 8511 93 Avenue, within the Holyrood neighbourhood. The site is bound by 85 Street to the west, 90 Avenue to the south, a rear lane to the east, and 95 Avenue to the north. The north portion of the site (Area 1) consists of two 5-storey apartment buildings which will not be redeveloped as part of this development. Regency's vision is to redevelop Area 2 (herein referred to as "the site") as mixed-use and high density in support of the planned Valley Line LRT construction. The site is envisioned to include a mix of low and high rise buildings, and their construction will be phased such that the low-rise wood-frame buildings can be built to coincide with the construction of the LRT. The taller concrete buildings will be built over a longer timeframe.

Currently, the site consists of 2-storey apartment buildings with surface parking accessed via the rear lane. The site is adjacent to the planned Valley Line LRT Holyrood Stop at the intersection of 85 Street and 93 Avenue.

The purpose of this urban design brief is two-fold. First, to provide an overview of the existing development and the surrounding area extending approximately 200-400 m from the site (i.e. study area). Second, to provide the overarching design vision that will aid in the preparation and implementation of more detailed design plans in the next phases of development.<sup>1</sup>

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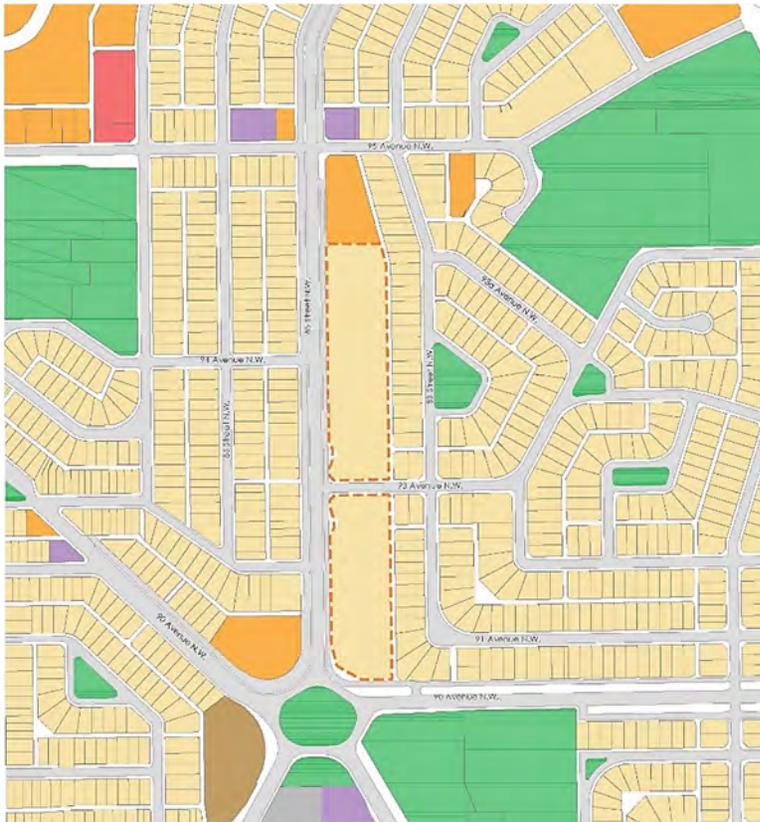
<sup>1</sup> Information contained within this document is conceptual and subject to revisions and modifications. This document's purpose is to illustrate the intended design for the site.

## 2. Context Analysis

### Land Use and Character

The site is located within the Holyrood neighbourhood, southeast of Edmonton's downtown. Other neighbourhoods within proximity to this site are Strathearn, Bonnie Doon, and Idylwyld. All these neighbourhoods were primarily developed during the 1950s as single or semi-detached 1-2 storey homes. As shown in Figure 2.1, the area is predominantly low density residential, with institutional, convenience commercial, and medium density residential uses interspersed throughout. The commercial hub of this area is the Bonnie Doon Mall which is located directly south of the site. There are also several civic/institutional parcels surrounding this site, including an Edmonton Public Library, 3 schools, and the University of Alberta's Campus Saint-Jean.

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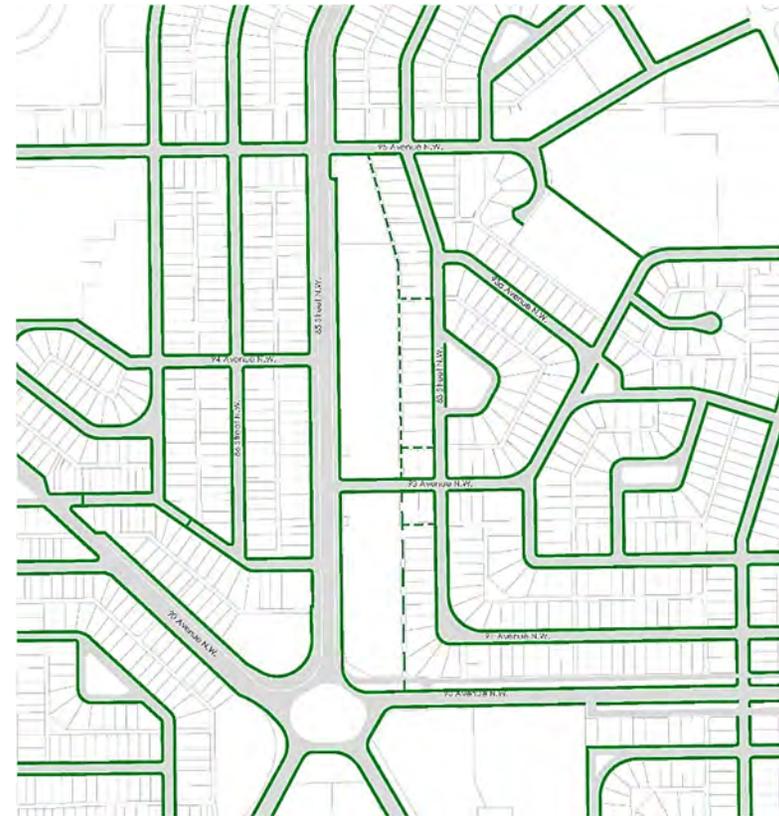


**Figure 2.1: Existing Land Uses**

### Accessibility and Connectivity

Figure 2.2 shows the street network in the vicinity of the site. These streets provide adequate vehicular access out of the community and throughout the city as follows:

- Connected to downtown via Connors Rd
- Access to Whyte Avenue via 83 Street or 85 Street
- Access east via 90 Avenue to industrial area and connections to 75 Street and 50 Street for access north



**Figure 2.2: Street Network and Accessibility**

The green lines on Figure 2.2 illustrate that sidewalks are the primary form of access within this area. The modified grid network of streets provides a reasonable degree of walkability, apart from some uncharacteristically-long blocks along the arterial roadways, including the north-south block that the subject site is part of. The large traffic circle to the south also restricts pedestrian access to the Bonnie Doon Shopping Centre.

The existing on-street bike route on 79 Street connects to river valley trails, access to Downtown, and 76 Avenue east west bike route to University of Alberta.

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The planned Valley Line LRT Holyrood stop will improve access to public transit, with convenient connection to Downtown's major employment centre. The associated upgrades to the surrounding roadways will also improve pedestrian connection across the reconfigured intersection at 85 Street and 90 Avenue. The Holyrood stop will be located at the intersection of 93 Avenue and 85 Street.

### Urban Pattern

Figure 2.3 (figure-ground study) illustrates the modified grid built pattern of this area. The relationship between built areas and open space is typical of post-war suburban neighbourhoods that are largely single use, low density and interspersed with larger non-residential buildings.

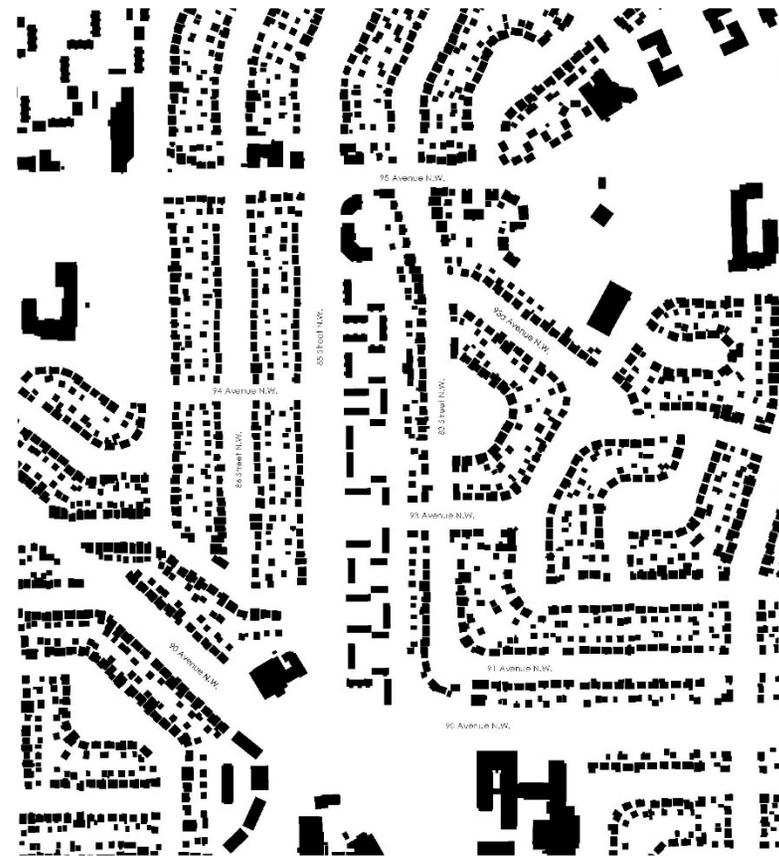


Figure 2.3: Figure-Ground

### Built Form

Figure 2.4 (3d massing model) builds on the figure-ground study and illustrates the built form of the study area as predominantly 1-2 storeys. The model also illustrates a few taller buildings along the arterial roadway and within the neighbourhoods. A few sites have a slightly higher density with 2-4 storey apartments. Southwest of the traffic circle is a 16 storey apartment building accompanied by multiple 3 storey apartment buildings.

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Location in the north portion of application (Area 1) is an existing 5 storey apartment development.



**Figure 2.4: 3D Massing Model**

### Visual Quality and Legibility

The following figures were prepared to understand the legibility of the study area based on the five elements identified by Kevin Lynch (1960) – paths, districts, edges, landmarks, and nodes.

- **Figure 2.5: Paths:** major paths within the study area in of the site include 85 Street, 90 Avenue, 83 Street, and Connors Rd. Other smaller collector and local streets have also been identified as less prominent paths.
- **Figure 2.6: Districts:** the site is surrounded primarily by low-density residential districts. These districts are characterized by tree-lined interior streets and single-family houses interspersed with civic/institutional buildings and walk-up apartment buildings. Bonnie Doon Shopping Centre forms the other major district in the vicinity of the site.
- **Figure 2.7: Landmarks:** The study area has several major and minor landmark buildings. The most significant

landmark within the study area is the 16-storey apartment building, located adjacent to the most significant node i.e. the roundabout. Other church buildings and school buildings also serve as visual references for wayfinding.

- **Figure 2.8: Nodes:** There are several nodes of activity within the study area. The roundabout at the southwest corner of the site is the most significant node in the area, followed by school sites, institutional building sites, and pocket parks.
- **\*Edges:** no significant edges were evident within the study area.

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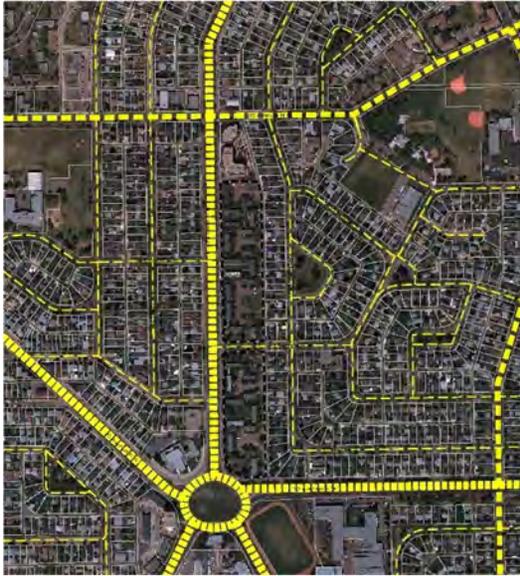


Figure 2.5: Paths

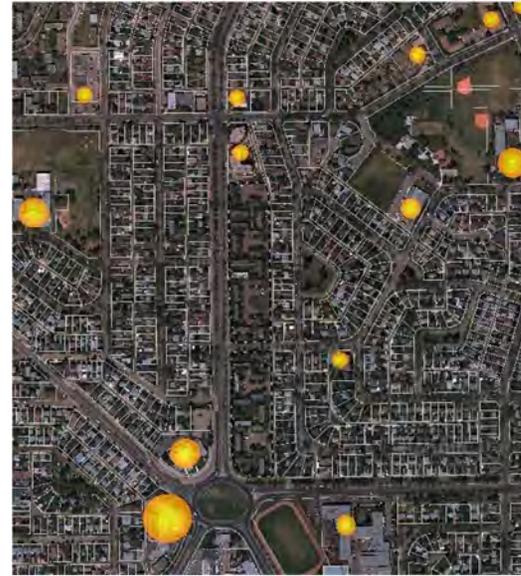


Figure 2.7: Landmarks



Figure 2.6: Districts

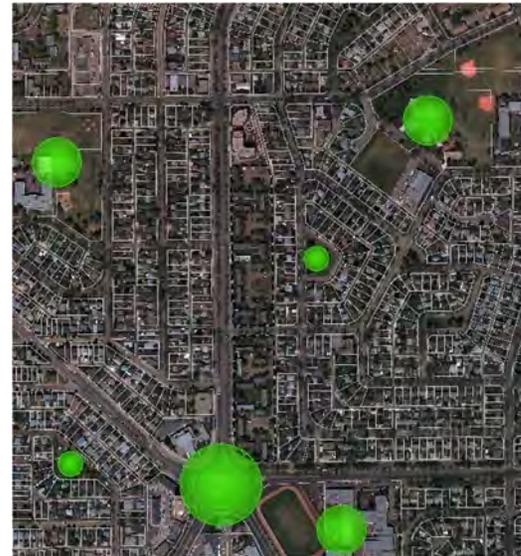


Figure 2.8: Nodes

### 3. Design Vision and Guiding Principles

The vision for redevelopment of this Holyrood site focuses on creating a transit oriented development (TOD) that adds density, supports transit ridership, and integrates well with the existing neighbourhood and the planned Holyrood LRT stop. The design vision for the subject site will:

- Create a compact, walkable, and livable community;
- Establish a viable and thriving development that provides housing and shopping in a mixed use built form;
- Enhance the public realm and provide new amenities; and
- Pursue urban design excellence.

The proposed redevelopment of the currently underutilized multi-family site provides an opportunity for large-scale TOD within an established neighbourhood that is often difficult to achieve. With this design brief in place, the intended vision and principles will guide future detailed plans.

#### **Create a compact, walkable and livable community**

Increased density around a transit station is a key principle to improving mobility, increasing ridership, and increasing foot traffic to commercial uses. The proposed development will also allow more families to live in the neighbourhood, who in turn will support the Holyrood school.

#### **Enhance the public realm and provide new amenities**

Local benefits of this site's rehabilitation are amplified by the community improvements planned for the site, including a connected pathway system and publicly accessible open spaces.

The walkway system has been designed to increase the permeability of the large site.

#### **Establish a viable and thriving development that provides housing and shopping in a mixed use built form;**

Great urban places are created by the interaction between buildings and public spaces to form a high-quality environment and encourage community interaction. With opportunities for retail, offices, residences, and park spaces, activities throughout the day contribute to the overall atmosphere and liveliness promoting safety and comfort that people are drawn to.

#### **Pursue urban design excellence**

High quality design will enliven the public realm creating a sense of place and belonging. Residents and neighbours will be proud of the space that they can use and enjoy throughout the seasons on their daily journey to/from the LRT stop.

The site will be designed for comfort during the cold months by blocking the prevailing winds and allowing solar penetration. Design principles to prevent crime will be utilized to promote public safety and protection of private property.

## 4. Design Intent

### Land Use and Built Form

The overriding design intent is to break up the two long blocks, into four smaller development parcels, and create new pedestrian access through the site. This is achieved through provision of publicly-accessible pedestrian walkways, as well as internal walkways for residents.

The proposed residential development will provide up to 1,200 dwelling units, within several mid to high-rise buildings. As shown in Figure 4.1, seven buildings are proposed in total.

- Four 6-storey residential buildings
- Two 18-storey mixed-use buildings at the intersection of 93 Avenue and 85 Street
- One 22-storey residential building

The placement of each “L-shaped” building provides a clearly defined street wall along 85 Avenue. Ground floor units facing out of the site will be street-oriented with individual access at grade and defensible private amenity space. Ground floor units facing internally to the site will be ground-oriented, and feature individual access at grade and defensible private amenity space.

The deliberate shape and orientation of the buildings creates four internal courtyards or outdoor amenity spaces that will be framed by the surrounding buildings. These outdoor amenity spaces shall be Publicly Accessible Private Parks to contribute to the community.

At the intersection of 93 Avenue and 85 Street, adjacent to the LRT stop, two mixed use buildings will provide ground floor commercial/retail space. This commercial space is ideal for restaurants, coffee shops, and other neighbourhood-scale

convenience opportunities that will draw patrons and help create a “sense of place” within the neighbourhood.

A combination of primary walkways, which include a 1.8 m through zone as well as a 1.2 m furnishing zone, and internal walkways with a 1.5 m through zone will connect residents and pedestrians through and around the site.

Parking is accommodated on-site via underground parkade, accessed from 93 Avenue as well as from the lane adjacent to 90 Avenue, with an additional exit to the north connecting to the rear lane.



Figure 4.1 Site Building/Land Uses

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### Accessibility and Open Spaces

A primary walkway is provided adjacent to the private road on the west edge of the site, to support pedestrian circulation around the site. Primary walkways on site provide a through connection in the north portion of the site and connect to each of the Publicly Accessible Private Parks. Primary walkways are a minimum 3.0 m in width, including a 1.8 m unobstructed sidewalk, as well as a furnishing zone to provide additional separation from vehicular circulation. Internal walkways allow circulation through the site and adjacent to the lane.

Vehicular access to the site is maintained via 93 Avenue and a rear lane to the east of the site. Underground parkades will be accessed primarily from 93 Avenue, with an additional access/egress from the lane adjacent to 90 Avenue and additional egress to Area 1 with access to the rear lane

### Urban Pattern

Figure 4.2 (figure-ground study) shows the L-shaped footprint of the proposed buildings in the context of the existing pattern. It also illustrates how the two larger blocks are further divided into four smaller blocks to increase permeability through the site. The buildings are deliberately aligned with the public roadways to frame them by creating a streetwall. The study also illustrates the way these buildings frame the interior open spaces to create well-defined outdoor spaces with a sense of enclosure.

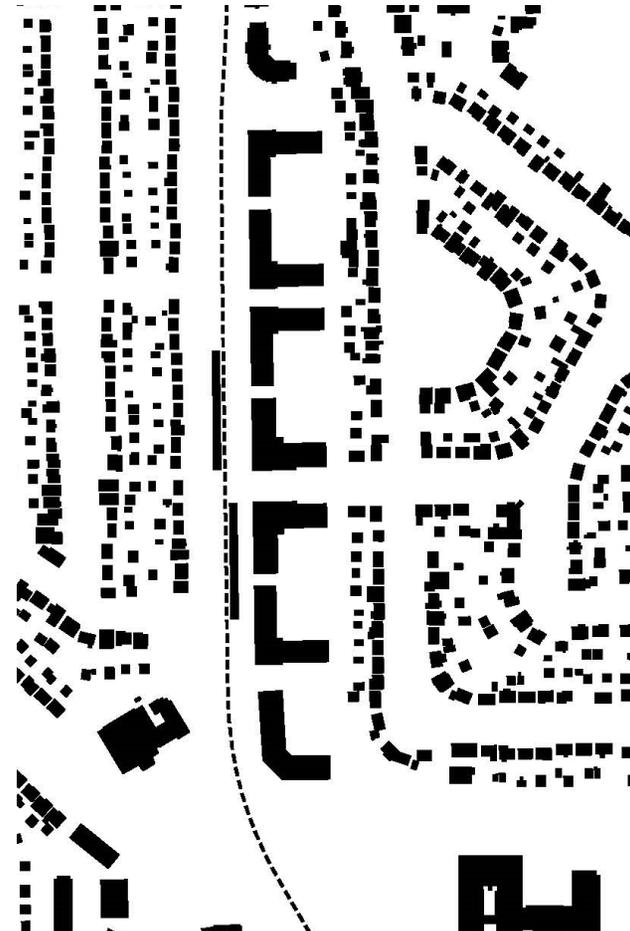


Figure 4.2 Figure-Ground

### Built Form and Transition

Seven buildings are proposed on the site with various heights ranging from 6 to 22 storeys. The varied built form and the arrangement of buildings is utilized to provide an effective transition to the existing low-scale residential on the east side. This is achieved through generally limiting building heights on the east side to a maximum of 6 storeys with a minimum 10.0 m setback and minimizing building frontage along the east side.

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### Visual Quality and Legibility

The previous figures illustrate the clear legibility of the site.

**Paths:** the public walkways and internal walkways will create new paths through and around the site.

**Districts:** because of the large size of the site, harmony in the overall design and built form, the site will have a character different than the surrounding areas. Accordingly, it can be characterized as a new mixed-use, high density district.

**Edges:** The streetwall along 85 Street will create a new edge that will be perforated at regular intervals by paths.

**Landmarks:** the two 18-storey buildings adjacent to the LRT stop will form a prominent landmark on 85 Street. The 22-storey building at the corner of 90 Avenue and 85 Street will serve as a prominent landmark close to the major intersection.

**Nodes:** the proposed design will also add four activity nodes in the form of the open spaces on the site.

### Massing and View Angles

Four of the buildings on site are 6-storeys in height, L-shaped to frame the private road and the on-site outdoor amenity spaces while minimizing the impacts on the adjacent low-density residential.

Section A illustrates the view angles for the portions of these buildings that are oriented to the private road and 85 Street. Of the residential properties adjacent to the rear lane, approximately 77% will have this view angle.

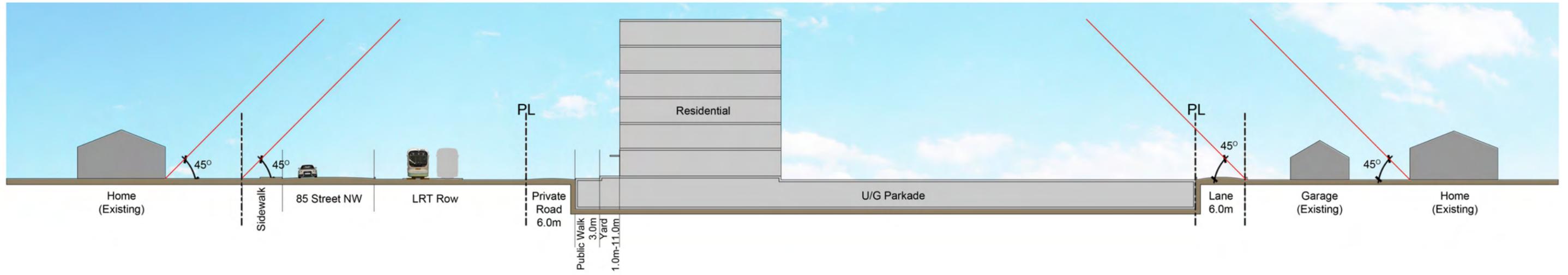
Section B illustrates the view angles for the portions of these buildings that extend to the rear lane. The view angle from the building footprint is provided to show the relative impact on the experience from the actual houses, accounting for the separation distance provided by the rear detached garages and rear yards.

Three towers are provided; two 18-storey towers are located at the intersection of 93 Avenue and 85 Street and a 22-storey tower is located at 90 Avenue and 85 Street. The massing of these buildings is articulated through podiums and stepbacks as follows:

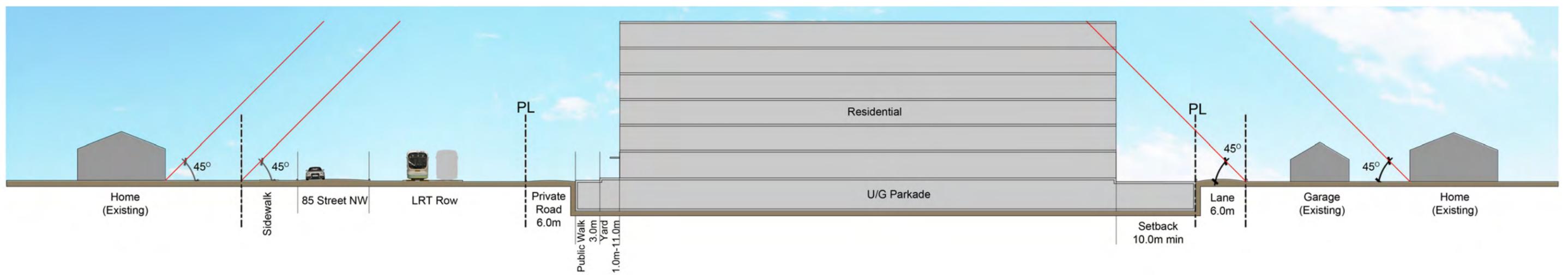
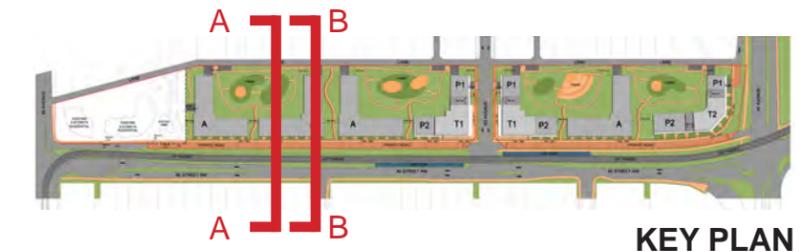
- 10.0 m Podium setback from east property line;
- 25.0 m Tower setback from east property line to minimize shadowing impact on the adjacent properties and the park areas;
- Provision of an 8 storey podium along 85 Street;
- Provision of a 6 storey podium east of the towers, to provide a transition to adjacent low density housing;
- Provision of minimum 2.0 m stepback above the second storey, to frame the pedestrian realm adjacent to the private road as well as 93 Avenue;
- Provision of 8.0 m Stepback from the east façades of all towers at the 14<sup>th</sup> storey.; and
- Provision of 8.0 m Stepback at the 14<sup>th</sup> storey of the north façade of the 22-storey tower.

Section C provides the view angles for the portion of the podium that is oriented to the private road, with a height of 8 storeys. Section D illustrates the view angles for the 18-storey towers adjacent to 93 Avenue, illustrating the tower stepback and 6 storey podium transition to adjacent single detached dwellings. Section E provides the view angle for the 22-storey tower adjacent to 90 Avenue.

**SECTIONS - VIEW ANGLES**



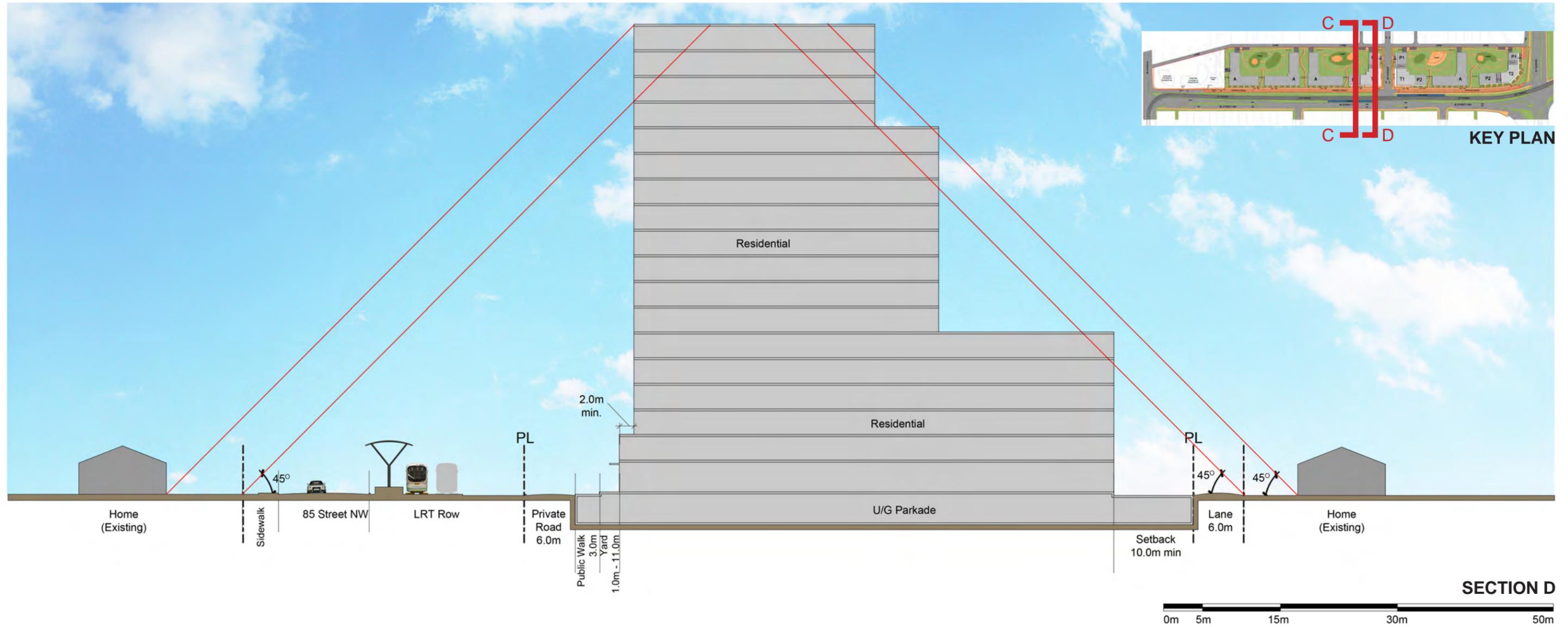
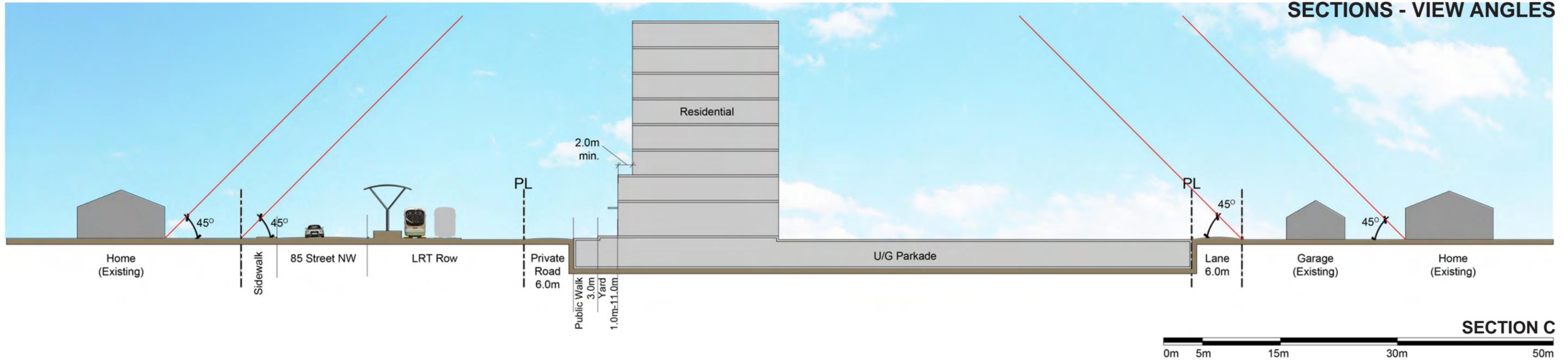
**SECTION A**



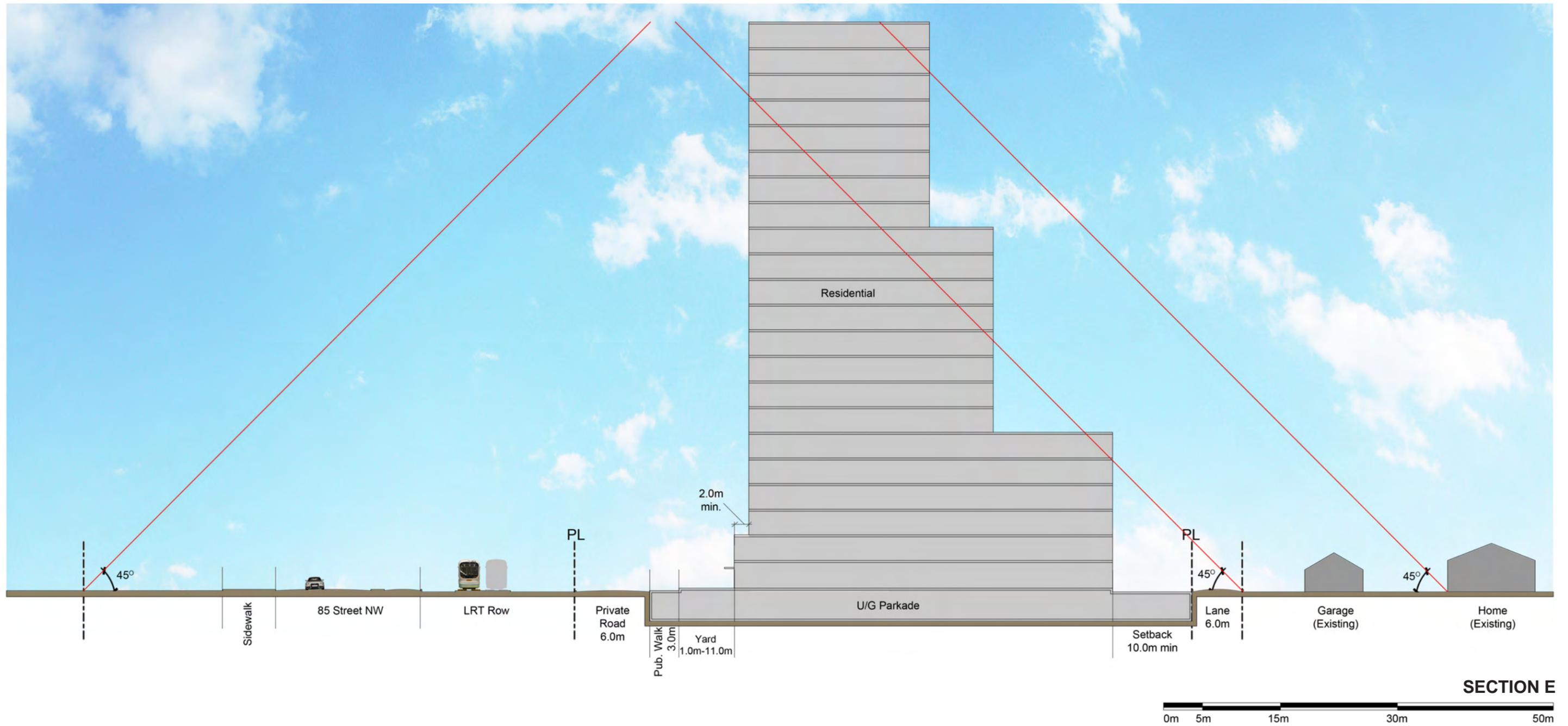
**SECTION B**



**SECTIONS - VIEW ANGLES**



# SECTIONS - VIEW ANGLES

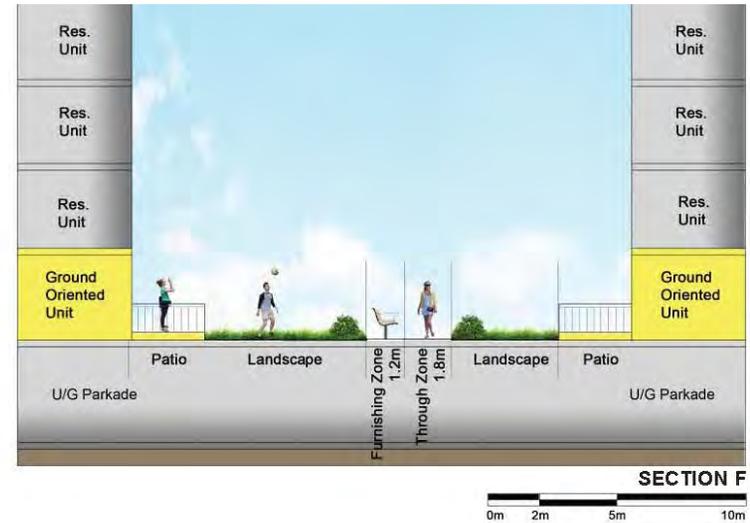
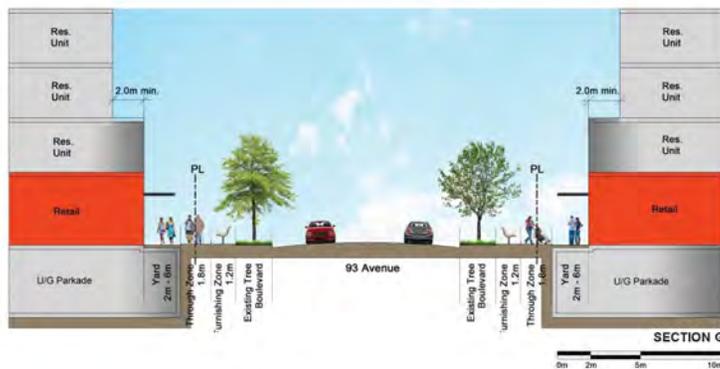


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### Public Realm Design

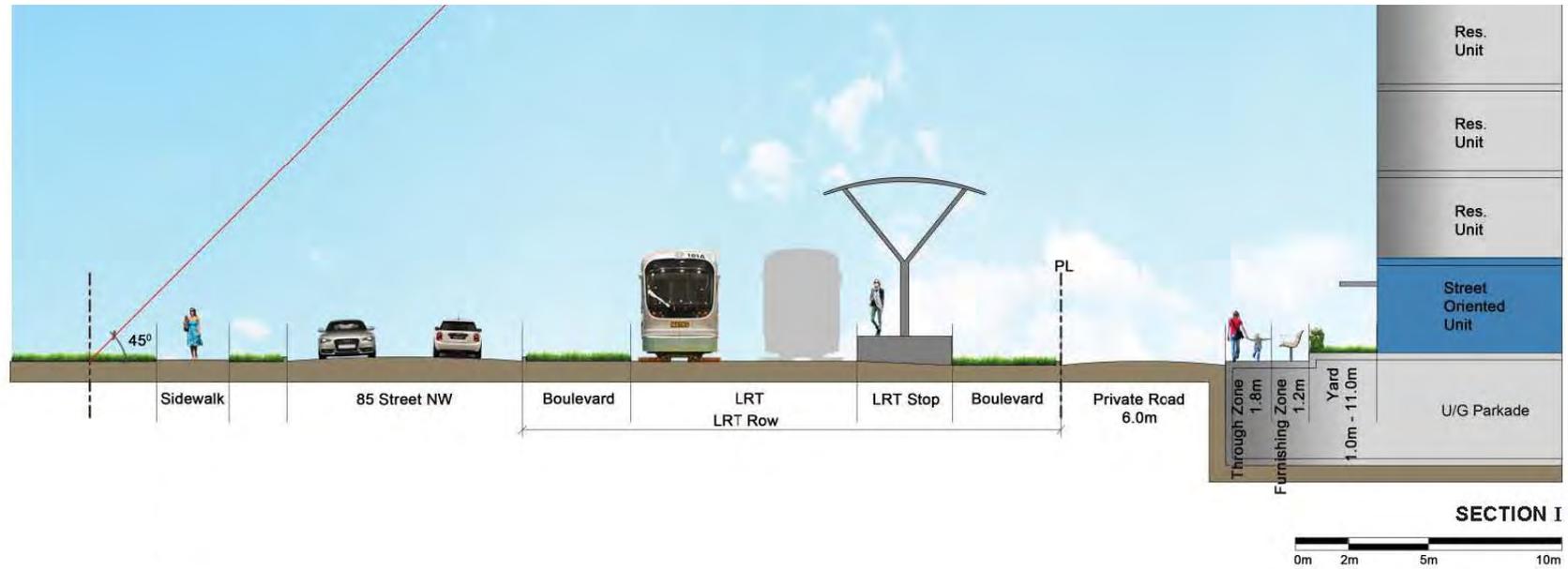
The following outlines the different design features that support the creation of a pedestrian-focused public realm (for more details, please refer to the accompanying DC2 zone).

- The buildings are aligned with and placed closer to the public roadways to frame and reinforce the public open space.
- All buildings abutting 85 Street and 93 Avenue will be designed to provide active street frontage, to increase safety and support pedestrian activity on the streets. All ground-floor units fronting public roadways will take direct access from the sidewalk. Section B (following page) illustrates the cross sections of the LRT corridor within 85 Street and Section G below provides a view of 93 Avenue and the relationship of the public realm with the built form on the site.
- The three taller buildings on the site will include a podium base (6 to 8 storeys) to mitigate wind impacts at the street level and a 2.0 metre stepback after the 2<sup>nd</sup> storey to frame the streets/open spaces.
- Outdoor amenity areas will be well-designed such that they are integrated with the walkways on the site and



- interface actively with the adjacent buildings. These amenity areas will be designed as per City's Winter Design Guidelines to promote year-round use.
- The primary walkways will accommodate various streetscape elements such as street trees, shrubs, benches, pedestrian-scaled lighting, etc. Decorative and security lighting will provide a well-lit environment for pedestrians and provide security in publicly accessible areas. Section F illustrates the cross section of a primary walkway through the site.
- Signs on buildings will be well-designed and integrate with the architecture as per Schedule 59B of the Zoning Bylaw.
- Parking will be provided primarily within underground parkades to allow for pedestrian-oriented, recreational open spaces at grade.
- Garbage collection areas will be provided within the buildings, accessed via the rear lane.

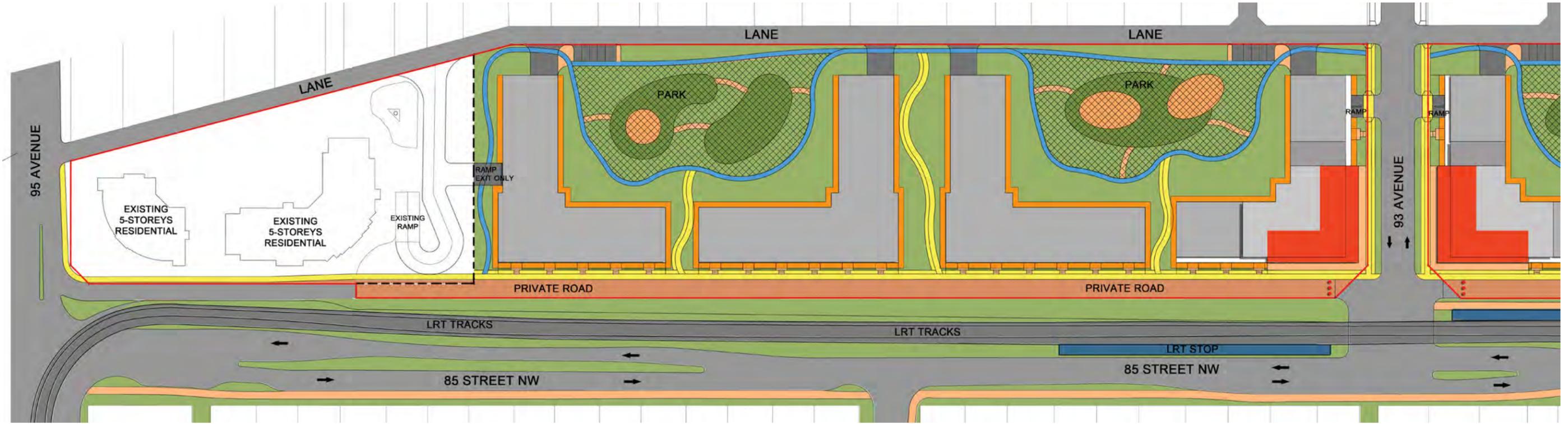
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### Site Plan

The following site plan figure illustrates the building footprint, pedestrian circulation, and Publicly Accessible Private Parks as mentioned in previous sections.

**APPENDIX - IV  
PEDESTRIAN LINKAGES & AMENITY AREAS**

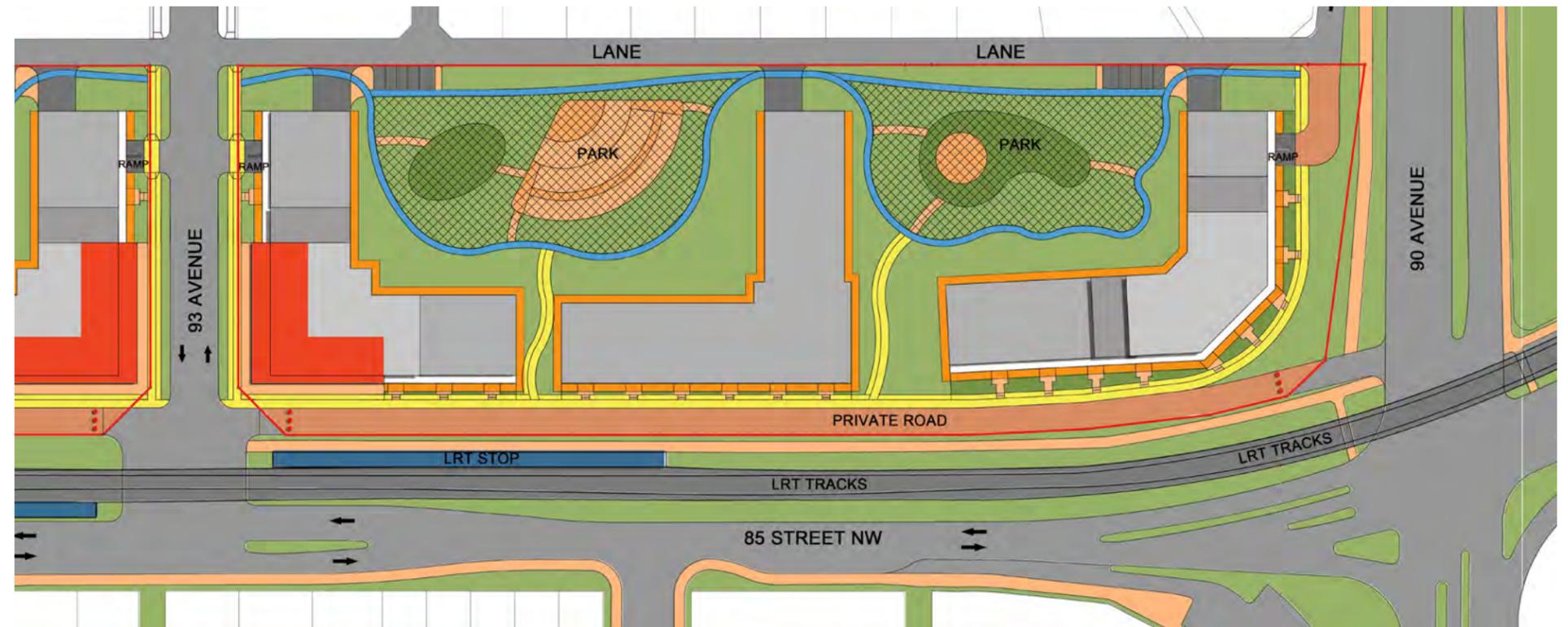


**AREA 1 & AREA 2-A**



**LEGEND**

- RETAIL
- INTERNAL WALKWAY (MIN 1.5M)
- PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE WALKWAY (MIN 3.0M)
- PROPERTY LINE
- PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE PRIVATE PARK
- PRIVATE OUTDOOR AMENITY



**AREA 2-B**

