



August 1, 2025

Dawn Melson-Williams, AICP
Principal Planner
City of Dover, Delaware
Department of Planning & Inspections

RE: Application HI-24-09 Dover Mobility Center Garage at 133 S. Governors Avenue

Dear Ms. Melson-Williams,

In reference to previous correspondence related to the subject application, the Downtown Dover Partnership has elected to implement a series of refinements that strengthen the project's connection to the historic fabric of Downtown Dover while enhancing the pedestrian experience and maintaining the architectural philosophy presented at the December 19, 2024, Historic District Commission hearing.

Overview of Design Revisions:

- **Expanded Retail Footprint:** Increased ground-floor retail space to highlight the Mobility Center, creating a more vibrant, pedestrian-focused environment with direct street-level access.
- **Improved Public Amenities:** Improved features such as bike and scooter parking, public restrooms, and higher ceiling heights on the ground floor to enhance the appeal and function of retail and public spaces.
- **Reduced Neighborhood Impact:** Removed the garage entrance along S. Bradford Street to maintain the quiet, residential character of that corridor and concentrated all garage ingress/egress along S. Governors Avenue, a more appropriate urban thoroughfare.
- **Contextual Building Scale:** Reduced the overall building height along S. Governors Avenue by removing one tier of parking on this elevation, further aligning the building's scale with its historic surroundings.
- **Refined Architectural Character:** Maintained the use of brick facades with detailed cornices as key pedestrian focal points and enhanced the highlighting of brick elements and darkening the precast concrete spandrel panels at the second level to allowing the brick elements to maintain visually prominence.
- **Master Plan Alignment:** Reduced the total parking capacity from 400 to 329 spaces to better align with the intent of the Capital City 2030: Transforming Downtown Dover Master Plan.





These changes reflect our commitment to hearing and addressing the Commission's comments and concerns and we believe the design maintains alignment with the Downtown Dover's historic context and enhances its long-term livability and economic vitality.

The enclosed package includes the following documents for further consideration by the Historic District Commission:

- Revisions to the originally submitted Design Narrative with deleted items denoted with a ~~strikethrough~~ and added items denoted in **bold text**.
- Updated responses to previous Historic District Commission recommendations.
- Updated architectural graphics package, with revised sheets incorporated and denoted as "Revised" with a maroon border and dated August 1, 2025. For ease of review, we have retained the original submission sheets, dated December 19, 2024 without the maroon border.

We appreciate the continued collaboration of the City of Dover and the Historic District Commission as we seek recommendation for Architectural Review Certification. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

J.D. Bartlett, PE
Operations Manager
EDiS Company



August 1, 2024

Department of Planning & Inspections
City of Dover
PO BOX 475
Dover, DE 19903

The Dover Mobility Center will be a newly constructed 4-story, ~~400-space~~ **329-space** multi-purpose garage in the heart of Downtown Dover. The structure will be situated at 133 S. Governor's Avenue, Dover, DE 19904, a future consolidation of six contiguous parcels currently known as 133 S. Governors Ave., 139 S. Governors Ave., 145 S. Governors Ave., 136 S. Bradford St., 148 S. Bradford St., and 150 S. Bradford St. The intended lot consolidation will require vacating a portion of an existing paper alley that currently runs through the boundaries of the project parcels. The site is located one block north of Lookerman Street, the site is bordered by S. Governors Avenue to the west, S Bradford Street to the east, and Minor Street Alley to the south. Currently, surface parking lots on this site serve as public and permit parking for the downtown district.

The proposed Mobility Center aims to accommodate the increased parking demands resulting from incentives outlined in the *Capital City 2030: Transforming Downtown Dover Master Plan*, which anticipates greater business activity and an influx of new residents downtown in mixed-use redevelopment projects. The Center's parking infrastructure is crucial in supporting the transformation of the Capital City into a vibrant hub for commerce, living, and cultural activities projected through 2030 and beyond.

Architectural Design and Adherence to Historic District Guidelines

The architecture of the Mobility Center is crafted to creatively reflect and honor the historic district while adhering to its guidelines. The design aligns with the Historic District Zone's standards, emphasizing that:

"...the slavish and literal copying of architectural styles and elements will trivialize and confuse the genuine historic architecture of the City of Dover... Contemporary architecture should be representative of the time in which it is created and should thus contribute to Dover's architectural diversity for the appreciation of future generations."¹

Although "contemporary" in style, the Center's architecture respects the historic context rather than replicating neighboring structures. Drawing inspiration from the tectonics of early Victorian-era carriage and horse stables—the antecedents of modern automobile garages—the building incorporates their guiding principles of scale, rhythm, proportion, and materiality. This approach enables the structure to harmonize with its surroundings and avoid appearing contextually foreign.

¹ *Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone*; John Milner Associates, 1992; 4-2

Aligned with the Design Standards and the new C-2 zoning regulations, the building's massing incorporates a tripartite form with a six-foot setback. This setback, applied on both frontages after the second floor, scales the building comfortably for public interaction. It also enables the use of materials on the first two levels that correspond with the historic context by aligning with elements like the historic cornice lines prevalent within the historic district.

With the core approach of respect rather than replication, the building takes cues and architectural style from the buildings downtown, rather than direct forgery. An example of which is the building's brickwork, which takes cues such as the size, shape, color variation, and uniformity of bricks prevalent downtown. The patterning of the brick, mainly running bond with accents of soldier coursing, is a common theme downtown and serves as an acknowledgement and method of folding the building into the fabric of Dover.

On the upper levels, contemporary materials and forms predominate. Precast concrete spandrel panels reference historic cornice styles, incorporating dynamic spandrel panels with historically inspired insets. The exposed stair towers on S Governors and S Bradford introduce modern glass construction, serving as a wayfinding beacon. To acknowledge the building's place in the ongoing history of Downtown Dover, the glass also serves as a mirror to reflect its neighboring architecture and sky.

Site

The building is designed to adhere closely to C-2 zoning requirements, which call for a zero-foot setback, positioning the Mobility Center directly along the sidewalk edge. At the entry points, the sidewalk will be expanded to enhance pedestrian flow and create a welcoming, accessible frontage. This expansion is further supported by thoughtfully planned site elements such as light poles and wall sconces that provide essential lighting while complementing the architectural design.

In addition, a selection of street trees and landscaped plantings along the building's perimeter will create a comfortable, shaded environment for pedestrians, contributing to a pleasant streetscape. **In response to Staff and HDC comments, we will explore canopy tree options to provide enhanced greenery and shade.** To the north of the structure on S Bradford Street, a greenspace area is proposed, incorporating trees, shrubs, and various plantings to enhance the aesthetic quality of the site and provide a natural respite within the urban landscape. This greenspace will serve as a "pocket park", offering a convenient and valuable amenity for residents and visitors with pets.

All site elements, including landscaping and lighting, will be carefully positioned to ensure they do not obstruct visibility for drivers or compromise pedestrian safety in addition to limiting light pollution for neighboring properties. Special attention will be given to sightlines at entry and exit points, promoting a safe, pedestrian-friendly environment that aligns with the broader vision of Downtown Dover as a vibrant

and accessible community space. **In response to Staff and HDC comments, exterior and street lighting will complement in their style the light fixtures prevalent throughout the Dover Historic District.**

Ground Floor Programming and Design

The ground floor of the Mobility Center is thoughtfully programmed to serve a variety of needs, enhancing both functionality and accessibility. Key features include ~~a welcome center, with~~ **expanded retail spaces for various local businesses,** public washrooms accessible through ~~the bike & scooter parking area on S. Bradford Street.~~ **welcome center** during business hours to support visitors, as well as a bicycle repair hub that encourages cycling as a sustainable transportation option. **In addition to the retail,** the ground floor also houses a management office, **storage for building operations,** and designated parking areas for bicycles and scooters, which will be complemented by lockers to facilitate secure package delivery and retrieval. Vertical circulation elements, including stairwells and elevators, connect this level to the upper floors, while back-of-house spaces support the operational needs of the facility.

~~In addition to general garage parking,~~ The ground floor is designed with a number of specialized parking spaces, such as accessible spots, including those designated for van access., as well as designated electric vehicle (EV) charging stations ~~and short-term 30-minute parking spaces.~~ These additions promote inclusiveness, sustainable transportation, and convenience for ~~short-term~~ **Dover** visitors.

An exterior location along Governors Avenue is designated for bikeshare docks, aligning with the objectives of both the Kent County MPO's strategic plan and the *Capital City 2030: Transforming Downtown Dover* plan by the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP). This bikeshare docking area supports regional and local goals to encourage sustainable transportation options and increase bike accessibility for residents and visitors. The placement along Governors Avenue strategically situates the bikeshare docks for easy access, allowing users to seamlessly connect to other downtown destinations and transportation nodes. The integration of bikeshare infrastructure into the Mobility Center not only supports eco-friendly transit but also contributes to Dover's vision of a more connected, pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly urban core.

Garage entrances and exits ~~are~~ **is** strategically placed on ~~both S Governors Avenue and S Bradford Street,~~ enhancing access to the facility while limiting a burden of vehicles on ~~either side~~ **S. Bradford Street.** The S Governors Avenue entrance is expected to handle ~~a higher~~ **the** volume of traffic due to its status as a state road with larger traffic flows, allowing for efficient circulation in and out of the garage. This thoughtful layout ensures a streamlined experience for all users, aligning with the Mobility Center's goals of accessibility, sustainability, and integration within the downtown infrastructure.

Façade Design and Materiality of the Pedestrian zone

The Mobility Center's garage façade will feature primarily precast architectural concrete with brick cladding that matches the color and scale of surrounding buildings. This material selection, as well as the overall design, reflects the input gathered from the public at the October 23, 2024 Open House, where attendees helped shape the aesthetic by voting on their favorite of three pre-selected brick samples that range in color and shape. The brickwork employs varying orientations, particularly within column bays and at the cornice level, to introduce architectural texture and provide a contemporary nod to traditional Victorian brickwork. This technique ensures a harmonious blend with Dover's historic aesthetic while expressing a modern identity.

Both street-facing elevations follow this brickwork pattern up to a setback above the second floor. Beyond this setback, the façade transitions to decorative precast concrete spandrels, which, in color and form, were also selected with public input. The thoughtful progression from brick to concrete on the upper floors emphasizes the building's contemporary character while maintaining visual cohesion with the district's architectural language.

Along Minor Street, the brickwork and decorative detailing wrap the corner up to the second structural column, then simplify into a streamlined design. This strategic simplification allows flexibility for future transformations of Minor Street Alley, envisioning a shift from a car-dominated space to a pedestrian-friendly zone. The simplified façade is primed for future additions, such as murals, supplementary lighting, and screening, giving the Downtown Dover Partnership the agency to shape this side of the building as the surrounding area evolves.

The north elevation, which will function as a party wall due to fire safety regulations of proximity to the building's property line and existing adjacent neighbor, has limited openings but retains visual interest through adjacent landscaping. A pocket park with trees, and greenery will create a collaborative public space that draws people into the area. This elevation is specifically designed to host a large mural, turning the party wall into a canvas for public art and adding vibrancy to this side of the building. Together, these design choices reflect a commitment to honoring public input, integrating contemporary style with historical context, and aligning with the Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone.

Windows, Openings, and Canopies

The windows in the Mobility Center's welcome center, retail, and office spaces are proportioned to align harmoniously with those of neighboring buildings, creating a cohesive streetscape. For the parking garage's pedestrian entries, double doors are planned to match the proportions of surrounding storefronts, integrating seamlessly with the architectural rhythm of the street.

Extending across the length of the ground floor, canopies with dark painted metal fascia will be installed, designed with detailing that complements the brickwork and adds an additional layer of architectural refinement. These canopies ~~are topped with a landscaping tray system, which serves the dual function of managing stormwater runoff and~~ visually lowering the building's scale to create a more pedestrian-friendly atmosphere.

In the main body of the parking garage, much of the structure is open above the ~~safety railing and~~ spandrel panels, maximizing airflow to meet the ventilation requirements of a parking facility. This open design supports efficient air exchanges, enhancing both the comfort and safety of the garage environment. The design choices throughout the structure focus on balancing functionality, historical alignment, and pedestrian comfort, reinforcing the Mobility Center as a well-integrated, accessible element of downtown Dover's urban fabric.

Sincerely,

Michael S. McCloskey, AIA, LEED AP
Vice President
215.609.4609 | mmccloskey@core-states.com

August 1, 2025

J.D. Bartlett, PE
EDiS Company
One Riverwalk Center
110 S. Poplar St. #400
Wilmington, DE 19801

Re: HDC Architectural Review Staff Report, HI-24-09 Dover Mobility Center Garage

JD, please forward to appropriate parties for Core States Group response to Staff comments dated December 19, 2024.

Dear Staff:

Thank you for your review and comment of our proposed Downtown Mobility Center Garage at 133 S. Governors Avenue, 139 S. Governors Avenue, 145 S. Governors Avenue, 136 S. Bradford Street, 148 S. Bradford Street, and 150 S. Bradford Street, Dover. Below are our responses to the comments provided in your report.

STAFF COMMENTS

The following conditions are recommended by Staff to improve the project's compliance with the recommended guidelines of the Design Standards and Guidelines. The following are recommended conditions:

Item	Comment	Response
2.	Staff recommends approval of alternative side yard setbacks to accommodate the placement of the building in relation to the northern property line(s) given the lot configuration and the likely Building Code and Fire Code related provisions for building construction.	
3a.	The selected brick choices should be compatible to the brick of other existing buildings in the area.	Color palette will be provided with brick of existing buildings along with our brick selection for demonstration with compatibility. We will provide brick specifications of proposed brick for city review.
3b.	Consideration of wall or free-standing signage may require additional review.	We will design to the guidelines and approved standards and submit for Signage Permit at the

		appropriate time during the design and construction process
3c.	Any light fixtures utilized on the property should be consistent with the style of the lighting used in the nearby areas of the Historic District	Building lighting selections will be done with careful consideration of existing and nearby areas within the Historic District
3d.	Ensure proposed trees are appropriate to urban planting settings along streets. Any trees planted within the street right-of-way must be approved by the City of Dover	Agreed
3e.	The south elevation should include treatment to improve the appearance at the roof level, particularly at the southwest corner, as this building will be taller than the adjacent buildings on Loockerman Street and will therefore be visible	The revised parking garage design lowered S. Governor's Street elevations, along with stairs and elevator tower height. The revised south elevation makes the distinction that the elevator tower along the northwest corner is set back considerably from the south façade, which allows the elevation to read more accurately with the height of the top parking tier at the 4th 3rd tier. Additionally, we have extended the precast raised panel façade treatment throughout all precast spandrel panels to provide architectural articulation throughout.
3f.	The north elevation is a large expanse of blank wall (western portion). While this may be a prime location for public art, architectural features that break up the large solid wall should also be considered.	We have reduced the expanse of solid wall while carrying joint lines that extend from the open spandrel panel now proposed along the northeastern half of the north elevation.
3g.	On the north elevation for the eastern half where the parking garage concrete construction will be exposed with large openings, consideration should be given to greater detailing as this no longer appears to be a "party wall." At the pedestrian level the continuation of brick materials is recommended and other segmentation or	The brick façade has been returned and wrapped to the first precast column bay to create an expression of building depth, improving the visual cues to the urban fabric looking south towards our building.

	detailing to divide this wall and give dimension.	
3h.	Clarify the treatment of the large openings in the brick facades at the second-floor level, especially on the S. Bradford Street elevation.	These are brick framed openings at the second level garage. The Open garage needs free air flow to reduce mechanical ventilation measures, but the design aims to maintain the 2 story enclosed brick expressions at the retail to improve streetscape. The precast spandrel within these openings will be taller as design refinement continues to provide code-compliant guard heights and fall protection, reducing the actual opening height in these areas. However, those panels will be darker in color to fade into the background and ensure that pedestrian focus remains on the brick detailing along the retail spaces. This concept was matched on S. Governor's Street as well.
3i.	Any revisions or changes in the identified materials may be subject to further review by the Historic District Commission.	Understood.

Thank you for your time and attention to our development as part of the revitalization of Downtown Dover.

Sincerely,

Michael S. McCloskey, AIA, LEED AP
Vice President
215.609.4609 | mmccloskey@core-states.com

DOVER MOBILITY CENTER **GARAGE**

DOVER, KENT COUNTY, DELAWARE
DOWNTOWN DOVER PARTNERSHIP | EDiS, COLONIAL PARKING + MOSAIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS JV

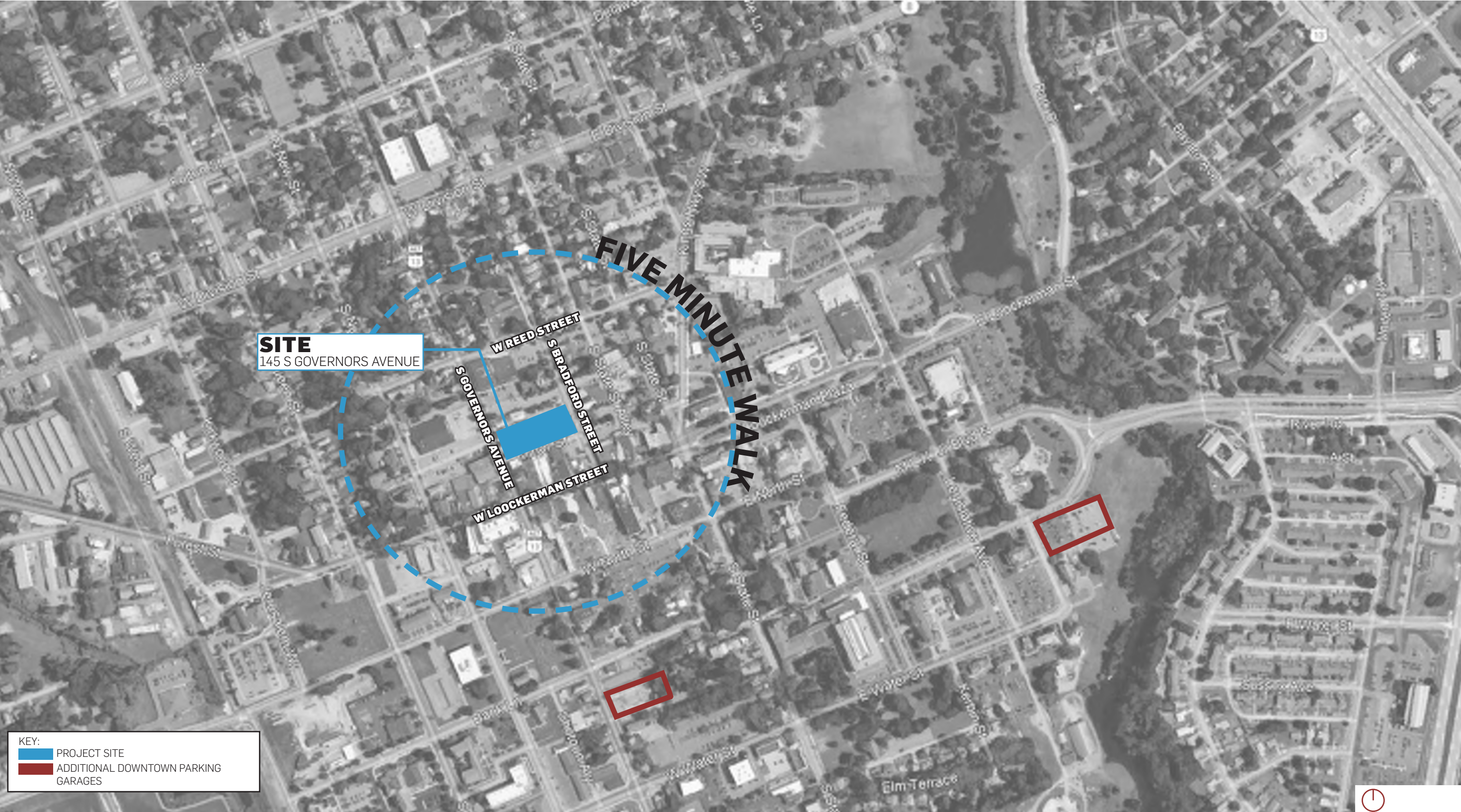
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION PRESENTATION



DOVER MOBILITY CENTER **GARAGE**

DOVER, KENT COUNTY, DELAWARE
DOWNTOWN DOVER PARTNERSHIP | EDiS, COLONIAL PARKING + MOSAIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS JV
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION PRESENTATION





DEVELOPMENT PARCELS

SITE SELECTIONS AND CONSIDERATION



SOURCE: ESRI COMMUNITY MAPS, CITY OF DOVER

IDEAL LOCATION

- Master Plan identified Bradford Street Parking Lot
- Location: Between S Bradford, S Governors, and Minor Streets

VIABLE SITES ACQUIRED

- Identified parcels owned by DDP, City of Dover; 150 S Bradford Street under contract by DDP.

SITE CONTEXT

- Site located one block north of Loockerman Street.
- Walkable link to downtown businesses.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Impacted properties identified.
- Mitigation planned / in-progress.

ADDRESSES AND PARCEL ID

- 133 S. Governors Ave**
Parcel ID: ED05-077.09-02-10.00
- 139 S. Governors Ave**
Parcel ID: ED05-077.09-02-09.00
- 145 S. Governors Ave**
Parcel ID: ED05-077.09-02-08.00
- 150 S. Bradford Street**
Parcel ID: ED05-077.09-02-27.00
- 148 S. Bradford Street**
Parcel ID: ED05-077.09-02-25.00
- 136 S. Bradford Street**
Parcel ID: ED05-077.09-02-24.00





BRICK PATTERNING BRICK COLORING



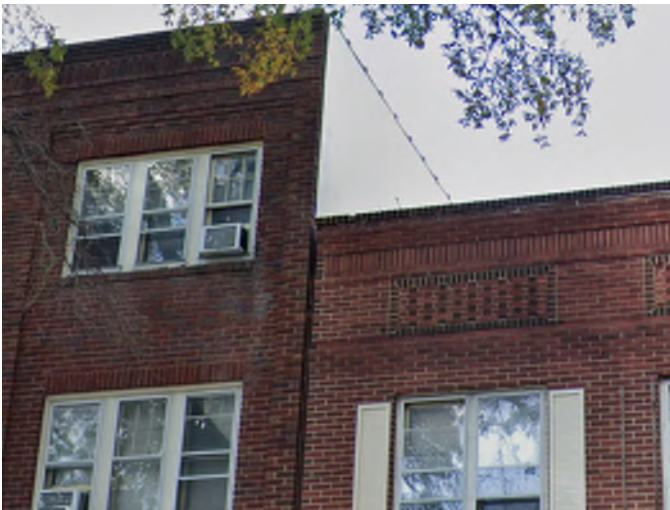
224 W. LOOCKERMAN STREET



1 W. LOOCKERMAN STREET



27 W. LOOCKERMAN STREET



231 W. LOOCKERMAN STREET



147 S. GOVERNORS AVENUE



146 S. GOVERNORS AVENUE



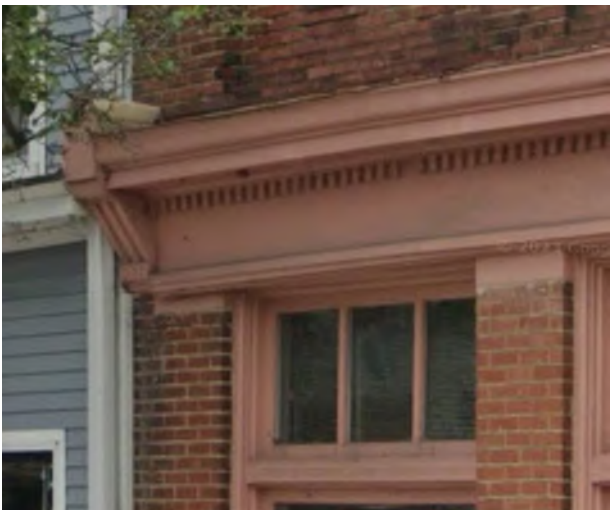
101 W. LOOCKERMAN STREET



155 S. BRADFORD STREET



308 S. STATE STREET

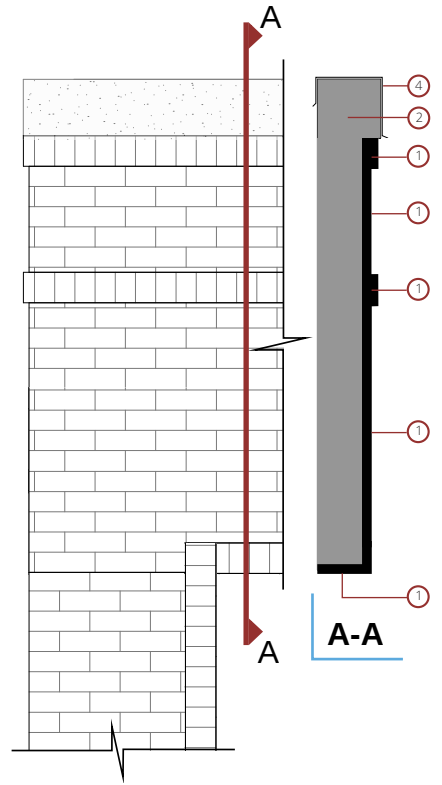


146 S. GOVERNORS AVENUE
DECORATION AND FILIGREE



W: WEST ELEVATION - CLOSE - UP

- KEY:
- 1 BRICK
 - 2 PRE-CAST CONCRETE
 - 3 STOREFRONT / GLAZING
 - 4 PAINTED METAL



W: TYPICAL CORNICE PROFILE

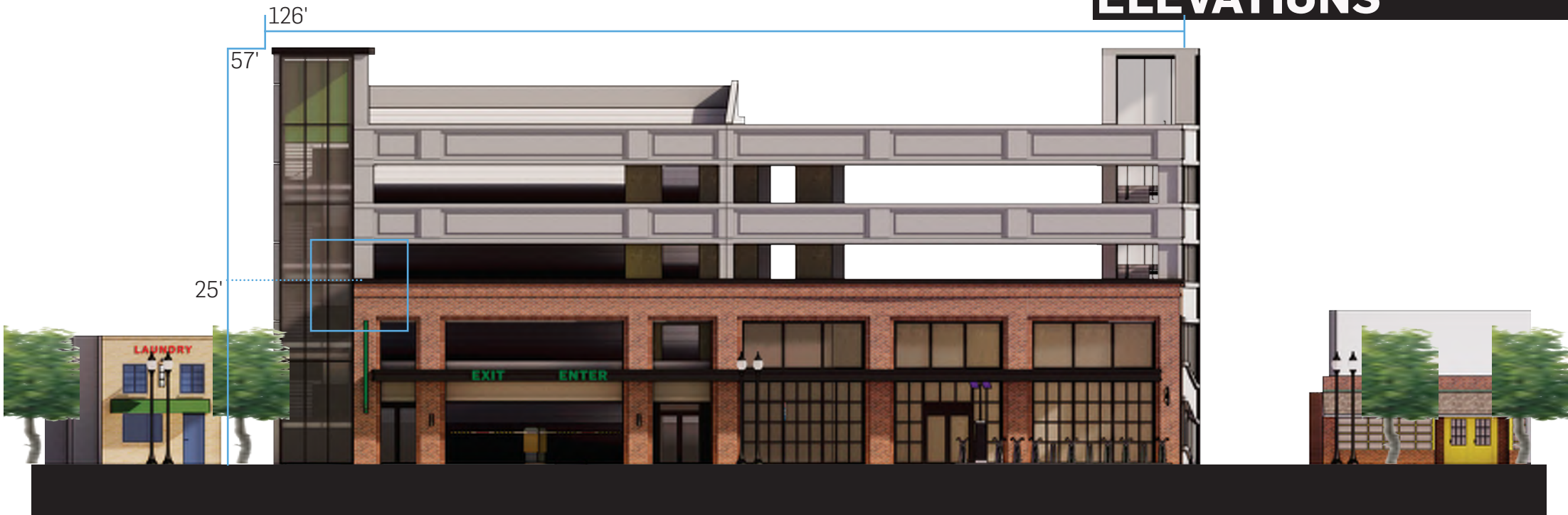


W: WEST ELEVATION - S GOVERNORS AVENUE



E: EAST ELEVATION - S BRADFORD STREET

ELEVATIONS



W: WEST ELEVATION - S GOVERNORS AVENUE

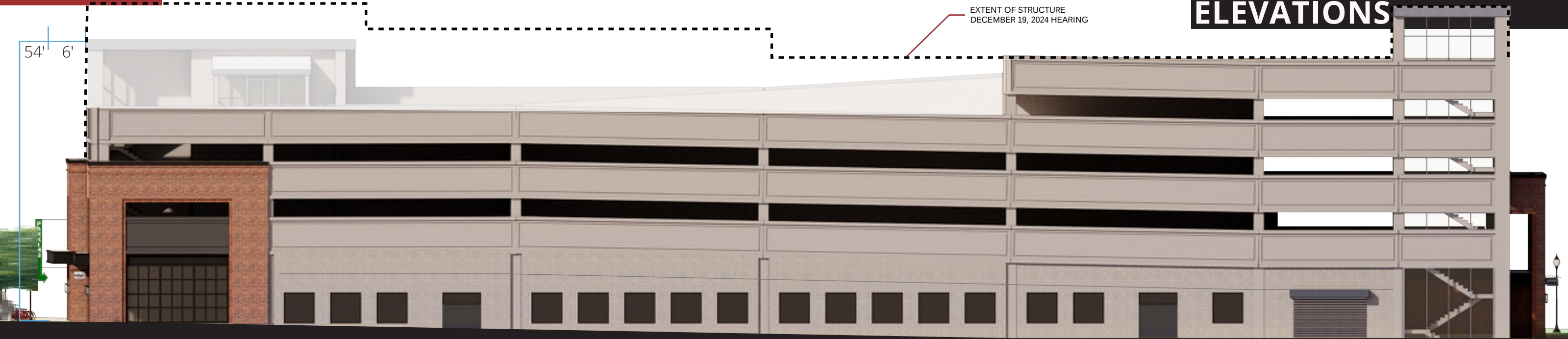
E: EAST ELEVATION - S BRADFORD STREET



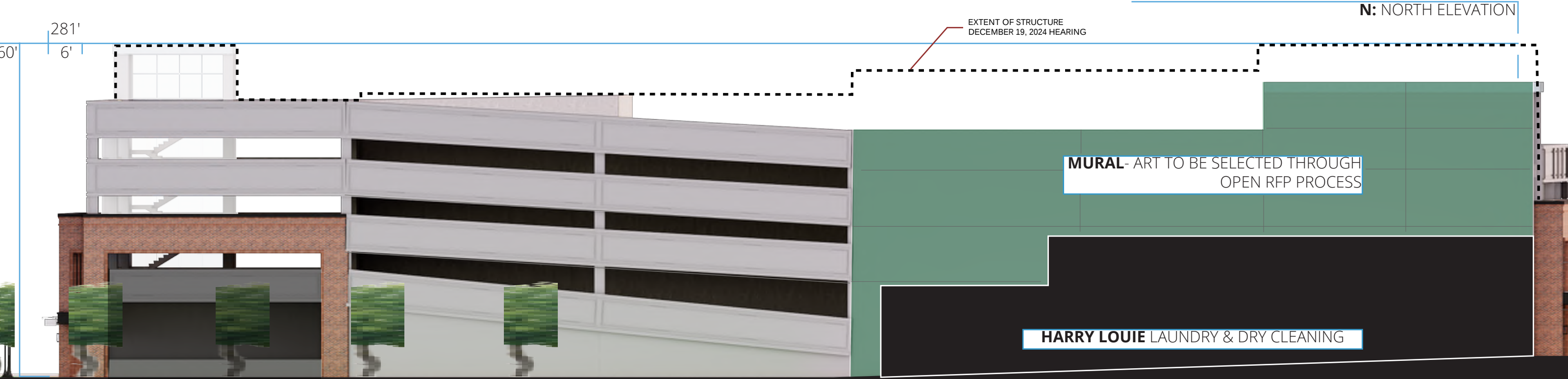
W: WEST ELEVATION - CLOSE - UP

KEY:

- ① BRICK
- ② PRE-CAST CONCRETE
- ③ STOREFRONT / GLAZING
- ④ PAINTED METAL

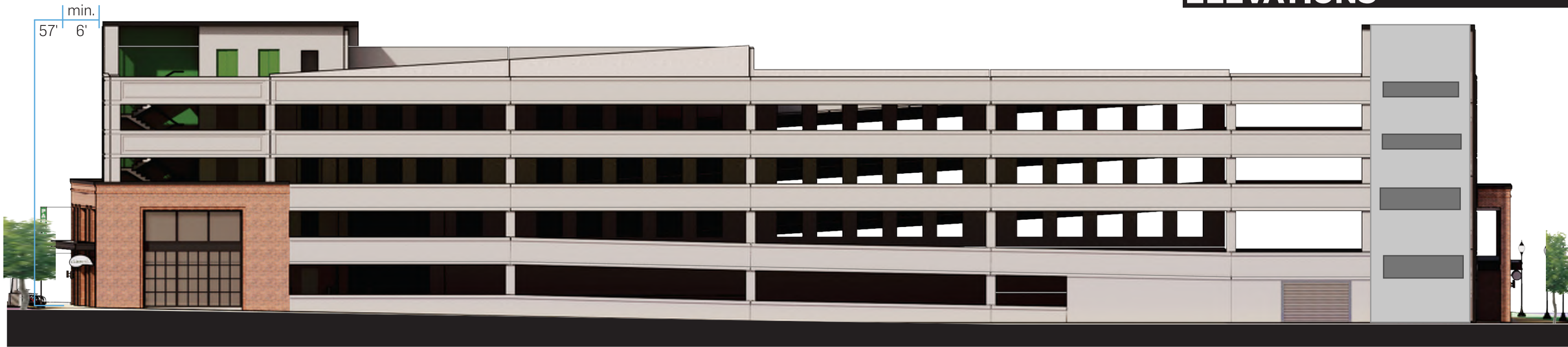


S: SOUTH ELEVATION - MINOR STREET ALLEY



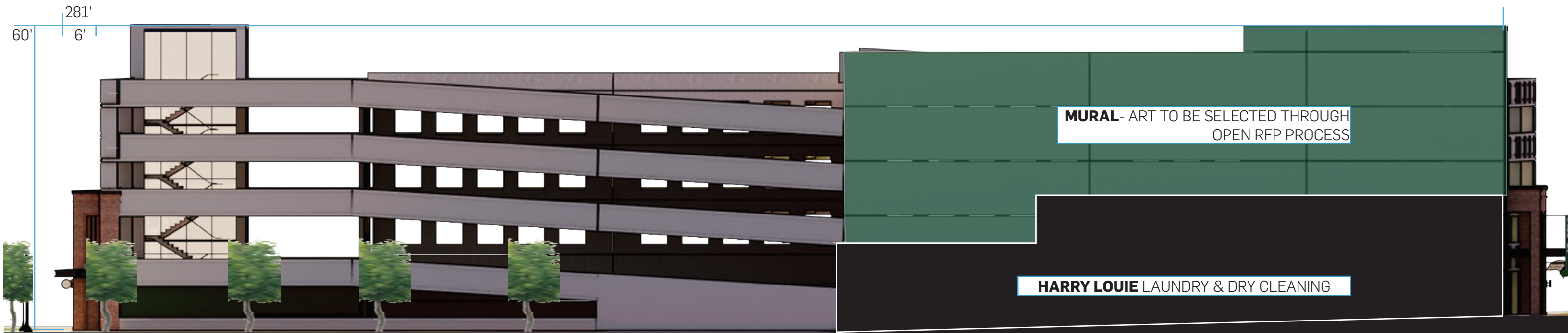
N: NORTH ELEVATION

ELEVATIONS



S: SOUTH ELEVATION - MINOR STREET ALLEY

N: NORTH ELEVATION





A: VIEW LOOKING NORTH-EAST FROM S GOVERNORS AVENUE

PERSPECTIVE VIEW - S GOVERNORS AVENUE



A: VIEW LOOKING NORTH-EAST FROM S GOVERNORS AVENUE



B: VIEW LOOKING NORTH-WEST FROM S BRADFORD STREET

PERSPECTIVE VIEW - S BRADFORD STREET



B: VIEW LOOKING NORTH-WEST FROM S BRADFORD STREET



1: VIEW FACING NORTH FROM S BRADFORD STREET



2: VIEW FACING SOUTH FROM S GOVERNORS AVENUE



1: VIEW FACING NORTH FROM S BRADFORD STREET



2: VIEW FACING SOUTH FROM S GOVERNORS AVENUE