

Comment Response – Screening for garbage and recycling containers

Ron Wright & Associates/Architects, P.S.

Application Checklist Date: 4/5/24

Project Address: 600 Alaskan Way

Project No: DONH- COA-01246

Response to Correction Comments Received via email dated 5/9/24:

We've completed a review for project DONH-COA-01246 at 600 ALASKAN WAY SEATTLE, WA 98104 and additional information is required.

The Board requested the following: demonstration and evaluation of other possible locations rather than the corner including: - Along the private property strip next to the 619 Western and Polson Buildings along Alaskan Way, -Along Western Ave Garage door or other location Plan that shows the garbage screened from all 4 sides. Further explanation/demonstration of why the greenery was limited. (pros and Cons) Specifications of the plants proposed. Can the number of waste bins be reduced to what they used prior.

6/20/24: *Additional response is provided based upon email request for additional information received on 6/20/24. The additional response is incorporated into the previous 5/28/24 response.*

RESPONSE:

- 1.** *Demonstration and evaluation of other possible locations rather than the corner including: - Along the private property strip next to the 619 Western and Polson Buildings along Alaskan Way, -Along Western Ave Garage door or other location.*

The attached EXHIBIT A shows the three parcels that are considered as combined lot for the Polson Building, the 619 Western Building, and 600 Alaskan Way.

The waste and recycling collection service is established as consisting of

- (2) 2-cubic yard size waste containers (dumpsters)
- (4) 2-cubic yard size recycle containers (dumpsters)
- (2) 96-gallon Food and Yard Waste containers

The current location of the waste and recycling containers is shown on the attached EXHIBIT B, together with notations regarding the requirements of SMC 23.54.040 (F), which requires containers to be placed no more than 50 feet from a curb cut or collection location, and further stipulates that the container location cannot be located within a bus stop area.

The ramp installed by SDOT is shown with the 50-foot distance highlighted.

The depth of the lot from the property line to loading dock for both the buildings is 8'-6", which is not enough depth to allow for maneuvering containers within a storage area. In this area between the loading dock and property line, each

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container or pair of containers would require a separate gate to facilitate both user access and collection access.

6/20/24: EXHIBIT D shows the arrangement of the containers perpendicular to the property line with each pair of containers sharing a gate.

There is only one portion of the area between the loading dock and the property line that is within the 50-foot criteria identified above. This area is not large enough to accommodate the containers.

6/20/24: Per the attached sketch (EXHIBIT D) the area is approximately 8'-6" wide by 29'-0" long. Due to the limited depth, the containers are shown perpendicular to the property line, with service to the containers occurring between pairs of containers. The sketch shows the ability to provide a screened location for only 4 of the 6 required 2-yard waste containers.

The stairs at each end of this area are required egress stairs for occupants of the building to reach the public way. The three installed stairs are equidistant from each other, located per SDCI Building Permit No. 6292856-CN.

Note that the intention for the preparation of the sketch for EXHIBIT D is to provide a graphic representation of our statement that the area is not large enough to accommodate the containers. The use of this area for the storage of waste containers would hinder the economic viability of the ground floor tenant spaces of the Western Building, both of which are designed to accommodate the potential for full-service restaurant operations. The Owner has no intention of moving the containers from the existing location, which has been determined by SDCI to be acceptable based upon the historic use of the property.

The area in front of the southern portion of the Polson Building is a bus zone area. Installation of screen adjacent to the northern portion of the Polson Building would limit visibility for buses turning onto Columbia. (There is an existing easement at this corner as well.)

6/20/24: In addition to the visibility issues noted, this location would require a new curb ramp adjacent to the bus shelters and would result in garbage trucks blocking the bus lane at the intersection while servicing the containers.

As requested in the ARC meeting, we have prepared a survey of the building elevations for both buildings, attached as EXHIBIT C. We were asked to provide a review of possible modifications to buildings to place the containers inside the buildings. Any modifications to the existing buildings would be detrimental to the historic character of the buildings. It is also not possible to use the basement area of Polson Building because of the steep slope of the interior ramp from basement level to the street level (20%).

6/20/24: The Polson building basement is used for parking and utility areas, including a City Light vault. The parking spaces are included as part of the tenant lease agreements for the office spaces on the upper floors.

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1. For the possible option of locating the waste containers in the basement of the Polson Building, it has been suggested the 2-yard waste containers could be transported up and down the access ramp to the garage using an industrial pallet jack.

According to Waste Management, a typical 2-yard dumpster has a weight capacity of between 400 and 600 pounds. A pallet jack used for the purpose of moving a full 2-yard dumpster would need to be an electric powered jack (versus a manual jack).

Pallet jacks are designed for the movement of materials in industrial applications on level surfaces – typically within warehouse environments. While it's possible to use a pallet jack to carry a load on an inclined surface, manufacturers of pallet jacks universally caution against the use of pallet jacks on any inclined surface, and specifically note inclines greater than 10% can create dangerous situations for the operator of unit.

It is not feasible to require the Owner to regularly conduct a potentially unsafe operation to move waste containers.

2. The existing garage parking is fully leased as a component of the office leases for the upper floors of the building. The placement of waste containers in the basement would eliminate a minimum of 6 to 8 spaces, resulting in a current dollar value loss of \$1,800-\$2,400 per month, and the spaces would need to be removed from existing tenant leases. This would have an impact upon the future ability to lease the tenant spaces.

Based upon the number and size of the containers being stored, the requirements of SMC 23.54.040 (F), and the historic significance of the buildings as contributing (secondary) structures to the Historic District, the 600 Alaskan Way parcel is the most appropriate location for the storage.

Further, it has been established by SDCI that the 600 Alaskan Way location is an acceptable location for the storage of the containers.

2. *Plan that shows the garbage screened from all 4 sides.*

As requested, we are now proposing to provide the screening on all four sides of the new enclosure. A revised plan is provided.

3. *Further explanation/demonstration of why the greenery was limited. (pros and Cons).*

Per our initial submittal, we reviewed several options for the screening. As noted in the ARC meeting, one option was the development of a green wall solution. The green wall was envisioned as a soft, natural edge for the corner once the plantings become established. This option was ultimately not selected for the final proposed design. Additional rationale for this decision included:

1. The location is fully exposed to the south and west, creating the need for plantings that would survive in full sun adjacent to heat absorbing pavement.

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2. An irrigation system would be required. The system would need to be supplied from the 619 Western Building, which is possible but would be a significant expense.
3. The plantings would need to be selected to prevent the creation of a habitable environment for rodents.
4. The plantings would require regular maintenance – more than a wall or fence solution.
5. It would not be possible for the gates to be green, which would effectively result in a hybrid solution of fencing and green screening.

4. Specifications of the plants proposed.

Plantings in the south (rain garden) area are proposed to be Variegated Sweet Flag (*Acorus gramineus* 'Ogon'), a versatile evergreen groundcover with upright, narrow, golden striped, grassy foliage to 12" high. The plant spacing will be 18" diagonally spaced. The base of the planting is 2-4" rounded river stone rocks.



5. Can the number of waste bins be reduced to what they used prior.

The collection frequency is weekly, as established by Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) and the designated vendor, Recology. The number of containers (identified in the response to Item 1 above) is based upon the size and operational use of the buildings, together with the general established experience of waste and recycling generated by the tenants of both buildings.

The stated focus for Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) is to emphasize waste prevention, which creates more need for recycling containers. The number of waste and recycling containers used in the past (prior to the demolition of the Viaduct) is not relevant for achieving the current waste management goals.

Any reduction in the number of containers would result in the need for more frequent collections on non-standard days, which would be a significant additional cost.

6/20/24: In specific response to the question regarding reducing the number of containers to what they used prior, the issue is the size of the containers.

Photographs of the containers from prior to the removal of the Viaduct show fewer containers than are now used. However, the previous containers were larger containers

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able to be serviced using the front loader arms of a garbage truck. The area below the Viaduct was directly accessible by garbage trucks.

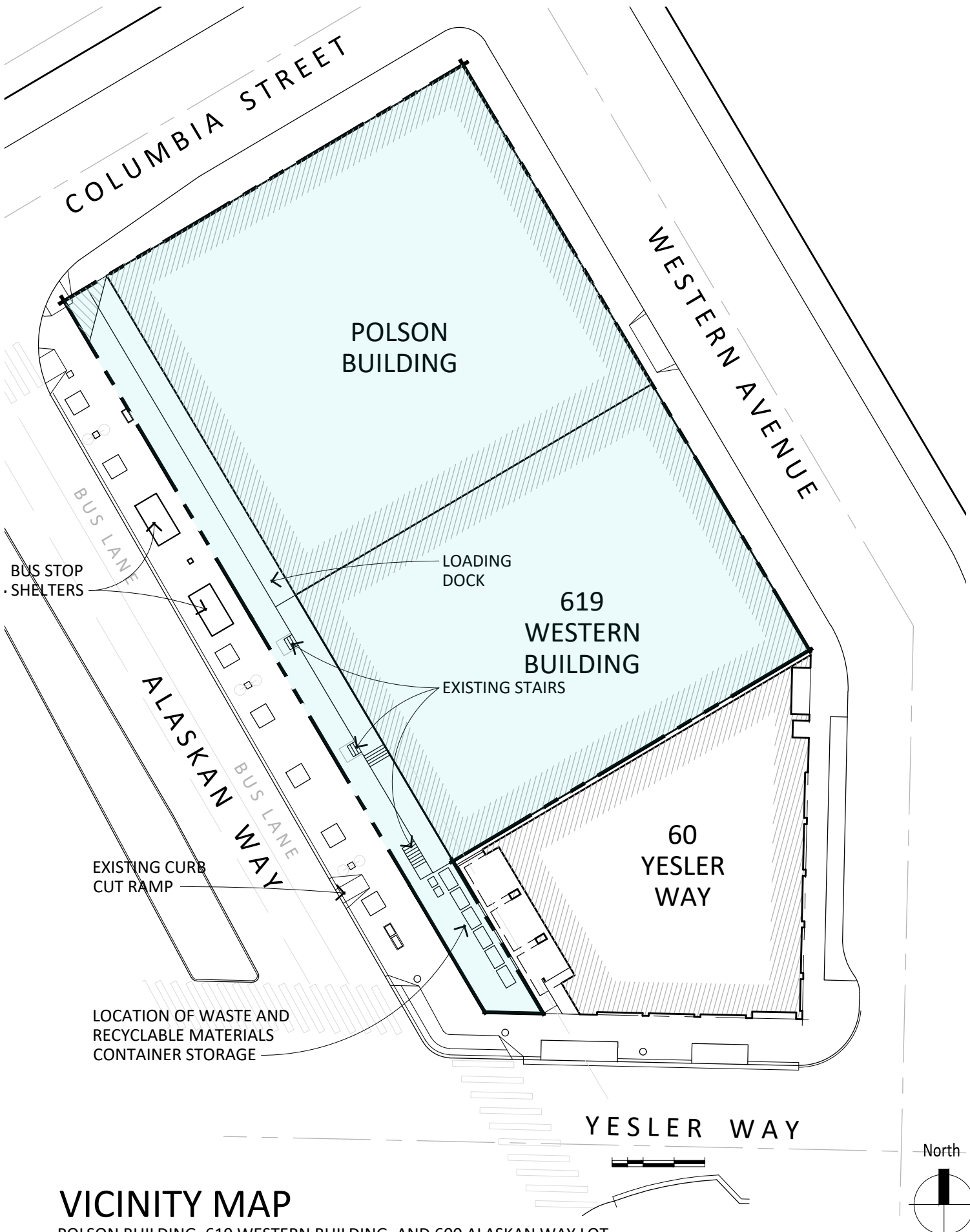
When a waste container needs to be moved to a garbage truck, the maximum size allowed (SDOT) is a 2-yard container. The current waste containers are the maximum 2-yard container size. This is why more containers are present currently than in the past. The overall capacity of the waste containers has not changed.

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ATTACHMENTS:

- EXHIBIT A – Site Vicinity Plan
- EXHIBIT B – Extended Site Plan showing area along Alaskan Way
- EXHIBIT C – Photo Survey of Existing Building Elevations
- EXHIBIT D – Enlarged Site Plan for Area adjacent to Western Building
Revised Plan showing screening on four sides.

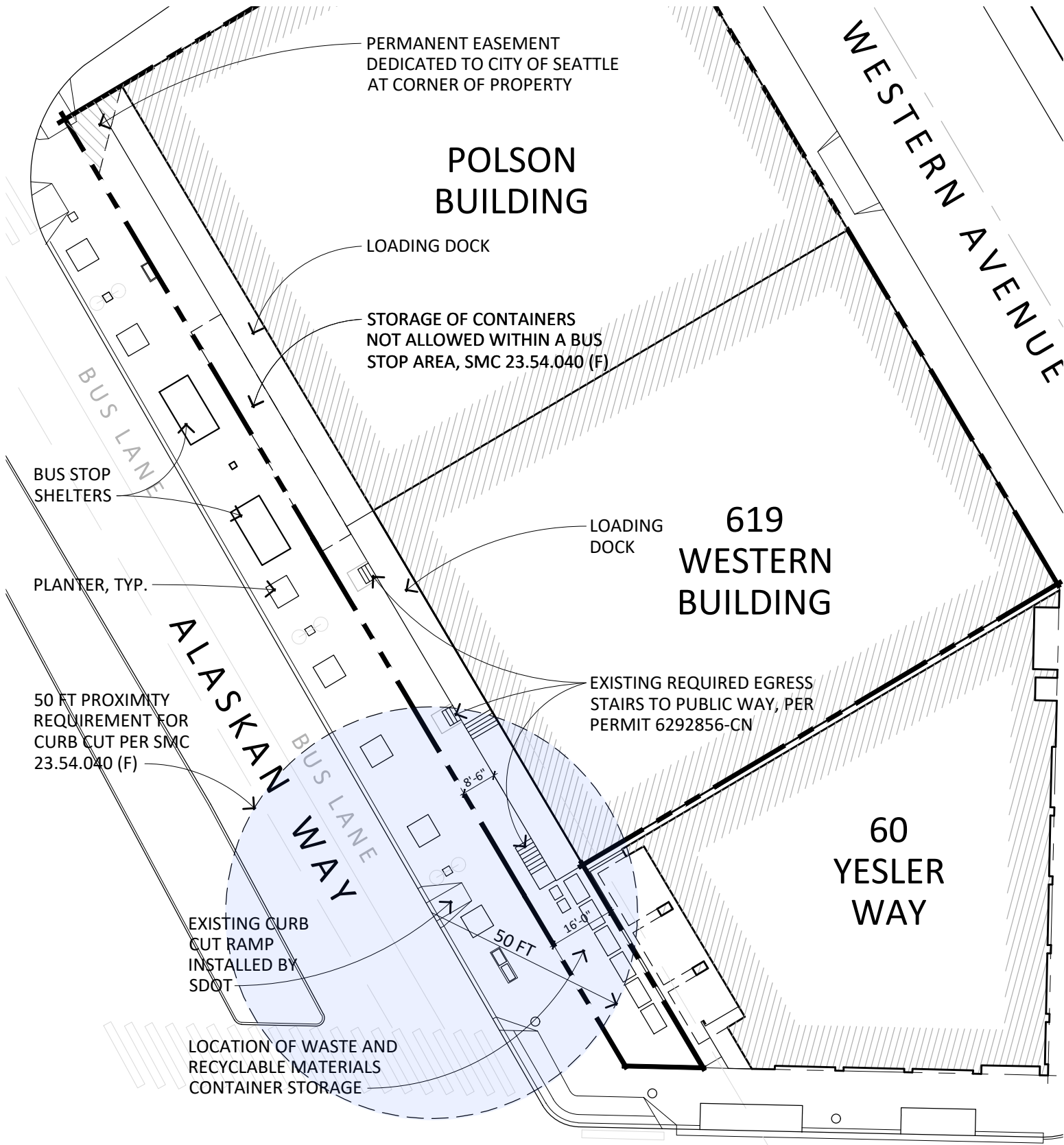
EXHIBIT A



VICINITY MAP

POLSON BUILDING, 619 WESTERN BUILDING, AND 600 ALASKAN WAY LOT

EXHIBIT B



PERMANENT EASEMENT
DEDICATED TO CITY OF SEATTLE
AT CORNER OF PROPERTY

**POLSON
BUILDING**

LOADING DOCK

STORAGE OF CONTAINERS
NOT ALLOWED WITHIN A BUS
STOP AREA, SMC 23.54.040 (F)

WESTERN AVENUE

**619
WESTERN
BUILDING**

LOADING DOCK

EXISTING REQUIRED EGRESS
STAIRS TO PUBLIC WAY, PER
PERMIT 6292856-CN

**60
YESLER
WAY**

BUS STOP
SHELTERS

PLANTER, TYP.

50 FT PROXIMITY
REQUIREMENT FOR
CURB CUT PER SMC
23.54.040 (F)

ALASKAN WAY

EXISTING CURB
CUT RAMP
INSTALLED BY
SDOT

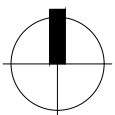
LOCATION OF WASTE AND
RECYCLABLE MATERIALS
CONTAINER STORAGE

YESLER WAY



SCALE: 1/32" = 1'-0"

North



EXPANDED SITE PLAN

EXHIBIT C

PHOTO SURVEY OF EXISTING BUILDINGS

Both the 619 Western Building and the Polson Building were constructed in 1910 as warehouse/industrial buildings, with utilitarian designs. Each building is six stories tall, both having a single level basement used for parking.

The Polson Building parking garage is below the entire first floor, accessible via ramp within the building to the street level at Western Avenue via a large coiling door. A parking garage area encompassing a portion of the basement of the 619 Western Building was added to the building during the 2014 renovations. This garage area is accessible at the basement level from the Polson Building garage area.

The exterior shell of both buildings is reinforced concrete, the interior construction is heavy timber. The buildings share a common concrete demising wall. A defining feature of both buildings is the large amount of window glazing.

The 2014 renovations to the 619 Western Building were completed using Federal National Park Service Tax Credits.

Both the 619 Western Building and the Polson Building contribute to the historic fabric of the Pioneer Square Historic District. Modifications to provide interior storage areas for waste and recycling containers would be detrimental to the historic character of the buildings.

The following pages are photos of existing facades for both buildings.

EXHIBIT C



Looking north on Alaskan Way

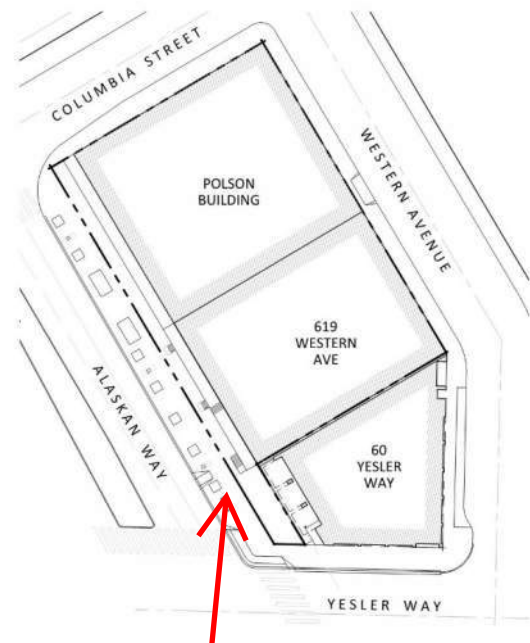


EXHIBIT C



Looking east at the northwest corner of Polson Building.

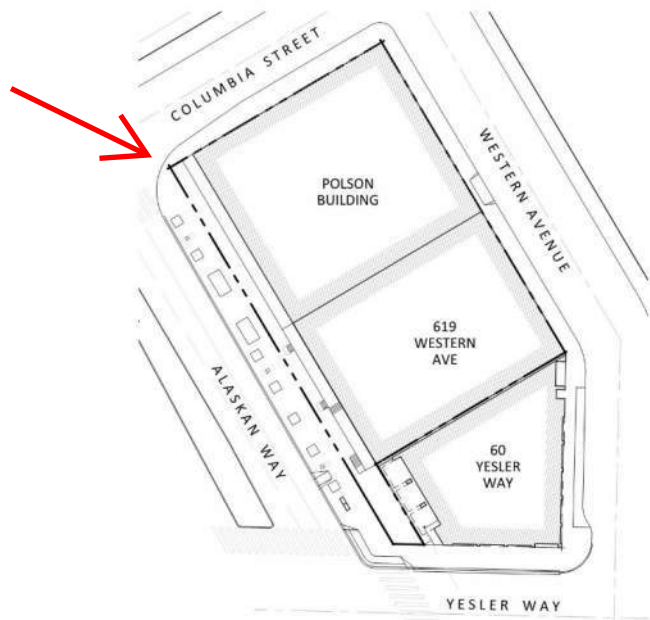


EXHIBIT C



Columbia Street elevation of the Polson Building.



EXHIBIT C



Partial west elevation of the Polson Building.

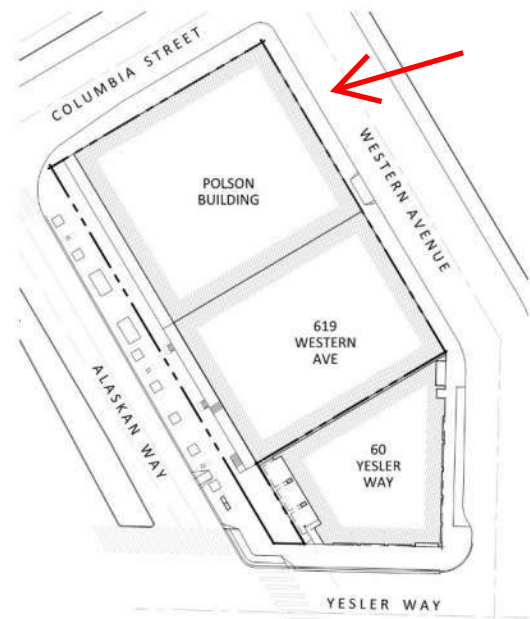


EXHIBIT C



Polson Building looking north on Western Avenue.

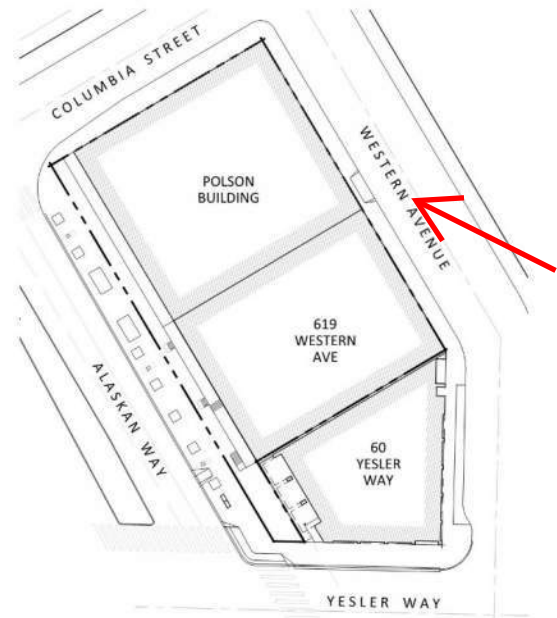


EXHIBIT C



619 Western building from Western Avenue.

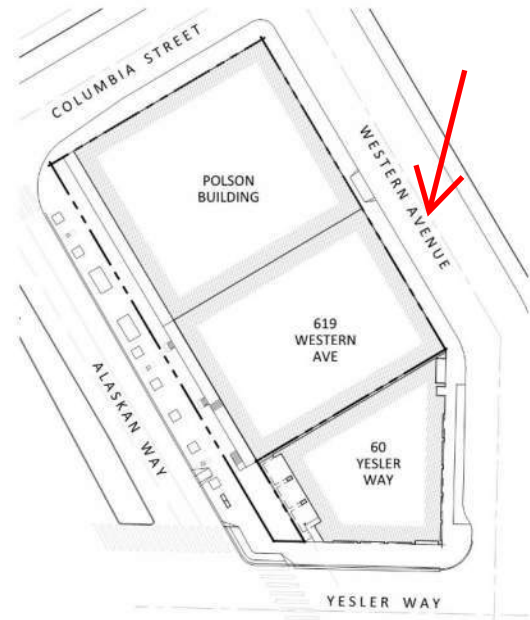
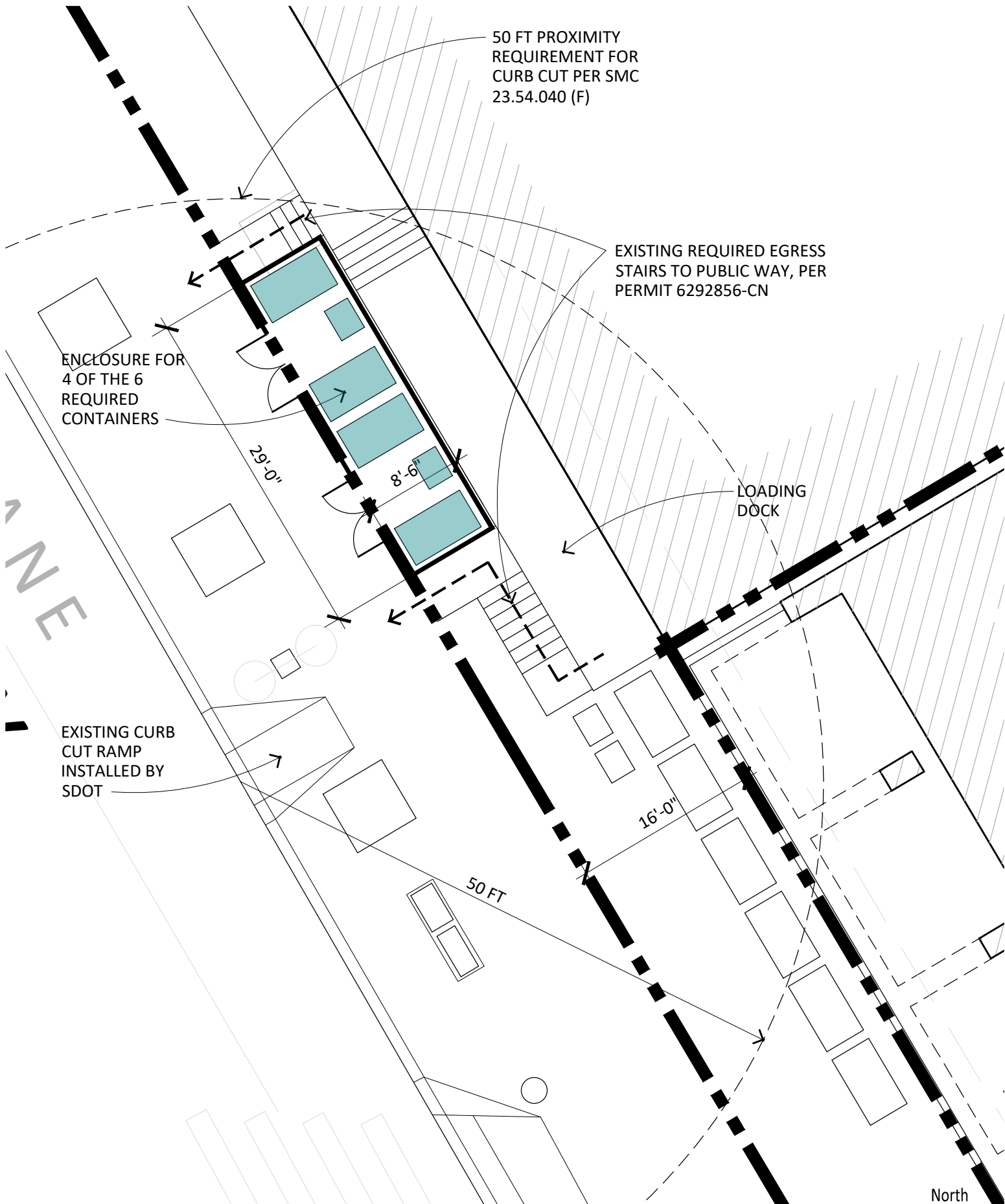


EXHIBIT D



50 FT PROXIMITY
REQUIREMENT FOR
CURB CUT PER SMC
23.54.040 (F)

EXISTING REQUIRED EGRESS
STAIRS TO PUBLIC WAY, PER
PERMIT 6292856-CN

ENCLOSURE FOR
4 OF THE 6
REQUIRED
CONTAINERS

LOADING
DOCK

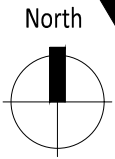
EXISTING CURB
CUT RAMP
INSTALLED BY
SDOT

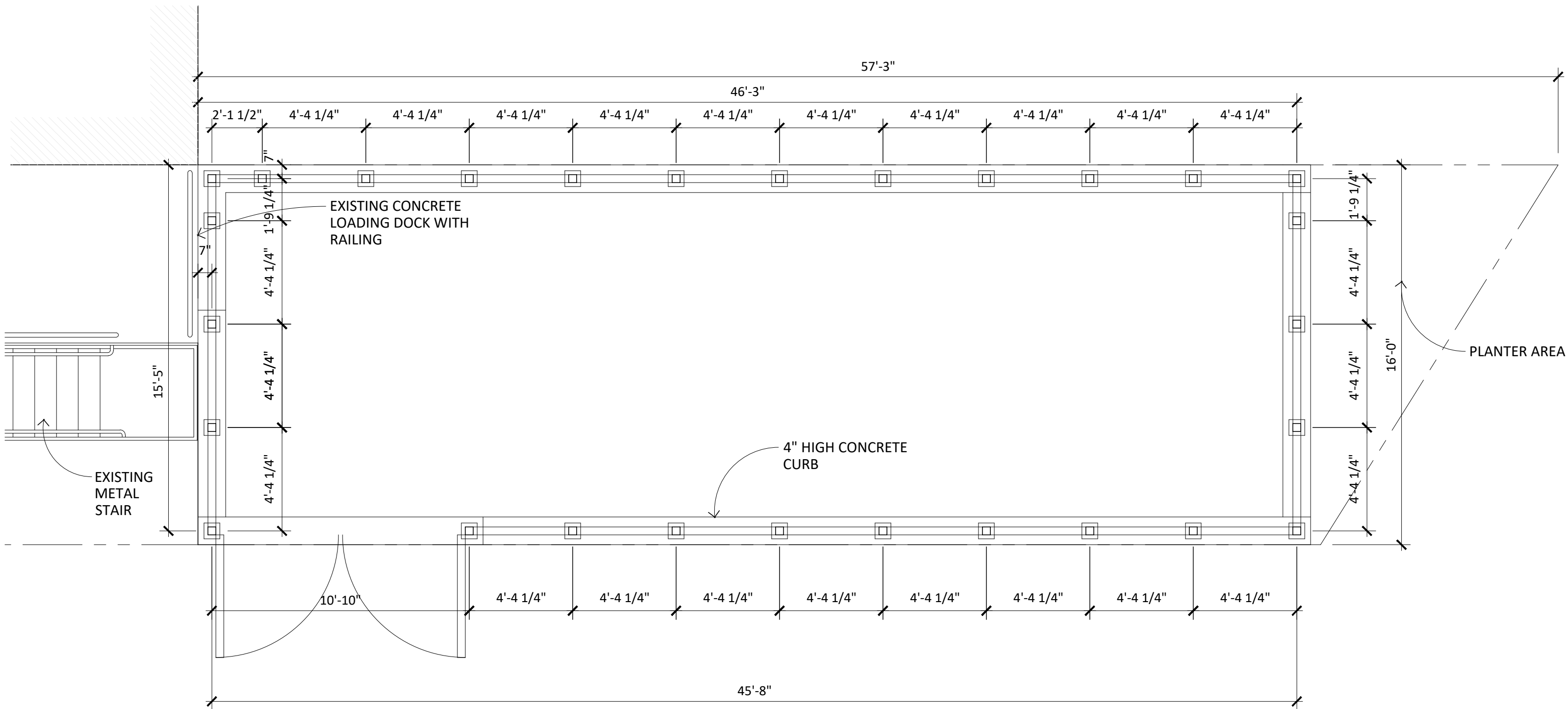
NE

EXPANDED SITE PLAN

CONTAINERS SHOWN AT AREA ADJACENT TO WESTERN BUILDING

SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"



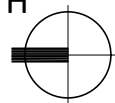


TRASH CONTAINER ENCLOSURE

5/28/24

1/4" = 1'-0"

NORTH



WESTERN BUILDING

Seattle, Washington

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