

January 27, 2026

Wheaton Planning and Zoning Board
303 West Wesley Street
Wheaton, IL 60187

RE: ZA #26-03/ Special Use/ 510 Irving Avenue/ Wheaton College

Dear Members of the Board:

Attached to this memorandum is an application requesting a special use permit pursuant to Article 14.1.3 of the Wheaton Zoning Ordinance to allow the construction and use of a one-story addition on the north side and a three-story addition on the south side of the existing Wheaton College Library constructed in the 1970's, following the demolition of the 1950's portion, located at 510 Irving Avenue.

The application has been submitted by the property owner, Wheaton College, 501 College Avenue, Wheaton, IL 60187.

Zoning Analysis

Proposal:

An application requesting a special use permit to Article 14.1.3 of the Wheaton Zoning Ordinance to allow the construction and use of a one-story addition on the north side and a three-story addition on the south side of the existing Wheaton College Library constructed in the 1970's, following the demolition of the 1950's portion, located at 510 Irving Avenue.

Applicant:

The application has been submitted by the property owner, Wheaton College, 501 College Avenue, Wheaton, IL 60187.

Subject Property:

510 Irving Avenue, Wheaton, IL 60187

Zoning Classification:

I-1 Institutional District

Surrounding Conditions:

North: Wheaton College Properties/I-1 Institutional District
East: Wheaton College Properties/I-1 Institutional District
South: Wheaton College Properties/I-1 Institutional District
West: Wheaton College Properties/I-1 Institutional District



WHEATON MAYOR PHILIP J. SUESS

CITY MANAGER MICHAEL DZUGAN

CITY COUNCIL: ERICA BRAY-PARKER | LEAH BRICE | SCOTT BROWN | BRADLEY CLOUSING | LYNN ROBBINS | SCOTT WELLER

Planning Department Comments

Background

The Wheaton College Library, part of the Wheaton College campus, is situated on the west side of Irving Avenue, between Kenilworth and Union Avenues. The closest residential properties are located at the northeast corner of Irving and Kenilworth Avenues.

Site Plan and Landscaping

A small, one-story addition is proposed on the north side of the existing building. A three-story addition is further proposed on the south side of the existing building, following the demolition of the 1950's portion. The total square footage to be demolished is 26,830 square feet and the total square footage to be added is 28,578 square feet, resulting in a small net increase. The existing library would be fully renovated as part of this project and the existing Wheaton College parking lot to the north of the library will remain unchanged.

The project is fully code compliant with the bulk regulations contained in Article 14.2 of the Wheaton Zoning Ordinance. All new mechanical equipment will be fully screened from view. A new loading dock, which is part of the one-story addition on the north side of the building, will also be fully screened from view and moved closer to the truck access points, reducing truck back-up noise.

New landscaping is planned around the north addition, which includes a shade tree and two types of deciduous shrubs. New landscaping is further planned around the south addition, which includes shade trees, ornamental trees, deciduous shrubs, evergreen shrubs, perennials, ground cover, and ornamental grasses.

Floor Plan and Building Elevations

The one-story addition includes a loading dock and electrical room on Level 1. The three-story addition includes classrooms, group study spaces, and a production space on the Lower Level; classrooms, consultations rooms, and a writing center on Level 1; and a reading room on Level 2.

Per the building elevations, the building will be clad with a combination of stone veneer and composite metal panels. However, no color elevations have been provided. At the public hearing, the applicant shall provide a building elevation showing the proposed colors and materials selections.

Special Use Permit

A special use permit is required to add an addition to an existing College or University building. According to Article 5.10D of the Wheaton Zoning Ordinance, the applicant must provide sufficient evidence at the public hearing that the following special use permit will be met:

1. The establishment, maintenance, or operation of the special use shall not be detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, comfort, convenience, and general welfare.
2. The special use shall not be injurious to the uses and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, not substantially diminish property values within the neighborhood.

3. The establishment of the special use shall not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses already permitted.
4. Adequate utilities, access ways, drainage, and other necessary facilities shall be provided.
5. Adequate measures shall be taken to provide ingress and egress designed to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.
6. The special use shall comply with the objectives of the Wheaton Comprehensive Plan.
7. The special use shall conform to the applicable requirements of the district in which it is located as well as any other applicable requirements of this ordinance, except as may be varied by the Planning and Zoning Board or City Council.

Engineering Department Comments

The subject site does not contain a floodplain nor a wetland pursuant to the regulatory maps used for such determinations.

The proposed development triggers the City of Wheaton requirement to provide detention for the project. A preliminary stormwater report has been provided as a part of the planning and zoning submittal, and the proposed development will have all required detention subtracted from the Wheaton College Regional Detention Facility which still has excess storage available for the project.

The proposed development does not appear to meet the trigger to provide a Best Management Practice (BMP) to reduce pollutants in their stormwater discharge.

No traffic report was provided as a part of the submittal. The proposed building addition is not expected to generate any significant vehicular traffic nor affect the adjoining City roadway system. Additionally, no parking is being changed by the project.

The preliminary engineering plan shall be subject to further staff review prior to the issuance of a site development permit.

Staff Recommendation

Provided that the applicant sufficiently addresses the special use standards at the public hearing, staff is supportive of granting the special use request, subject to the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall provide a building elevation showing the proposed colors and materials selections at the public hearing; and
2. The preliminary engineering plan shall be subject to further staff review prior to the issuance of a site development permit.

Respectfully submitted,



Joseph E. Tebrugge, PE
Director of Engineering



Tracy L. Jones, AICP
Staff Planner

Attachments

Wheaton College Library Renovation & Addition

Scope Narrative

November 21st, 2025

Wheaton College proposes a renovation and addition to the existing Library building located at 510 Irving Avenue. Construction is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2027 thru the summer of 2028. Representatives from Wheaton College, architect of record SCB, and officials from the City of Wheaton Building Department have met on several occasions over the last year to discuss this project. As part of regular efforts to keep neighbors informed of campus projects, a letter from the College to neighbors within proximity to the extents of the site of the project was sent out for awareness in October of 2025, in addition to the communication that will come as part of this Special Use Permit process. The College Trustees recently provided preliminary approval for construction to start in the spring of 2027. Wheaton College requests that the ordinance extends the Special Use Permit approval until the summer of 2027 to align with the anticipated start of construction.

Project Overview

The existing Wheaton College Library consists of two connected buildings. This includes the south building from the 1950's referred to as the Nicholas Building and a north building constructed in the 1970's previously referred to as the Buswell Building. The intent of this project is to demolish the original 1950's south building and replace it with a newly constructed addition. The new addition would connect directly to the remaining north building which would be fully renovated as part of the construction. The resulting new Library will be more energy efficient with an improved exterior envelope and new mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. The new layout and aligned connection between the addition and renovated area will greatly improve the accessibility within the building and the site has been designed to improve access. The primary intent of this project is to create a building with capacity and efficiency to hold our library collection and allow for growth, while serving students better with improved access to library services, a variety of study spaces, and modern classroom spaces.

Exterior Design and Site

The exterior design of the building addition applies materials that are consistently used throughout the campus in a conservatively modern expression. The gross square footage of the whole project is nearly the same as the existing buildings (± 700 SF), minimizing impacts to stormwater, and neighboring property. Improvements include removing the loading dock on the far West side of the building and relocating it to the North, which minimizes the distance that trucks need to back up to get to the dock and allows for green space and future pedestrian gateway where the drive currently exists. There is no intent to change the College-owned portion of Irving Avenue at this time, but it will be affected by utility connections during construction.

Application Comments

Item 10: Wheaton College has reviewed this project with the Planning department and confirmed that PACE coordination is not required for this project.

Item 11: A demolition Permit Application will be submitted at the appropriate time per the intended construction schedule described above.

Item 13: This project spans multiple parcels. Separately, Wheaton College intends to pursue consolidation of multiple parcels including those affected by this project and has reviewed this with the Director of Engineering.

Item 18: Traffic Report is not required for this project per the Director of Engineering. Access to public roads will not be affected by this project.

Compliance with Article 5.10.D of the Zoning Ordinance

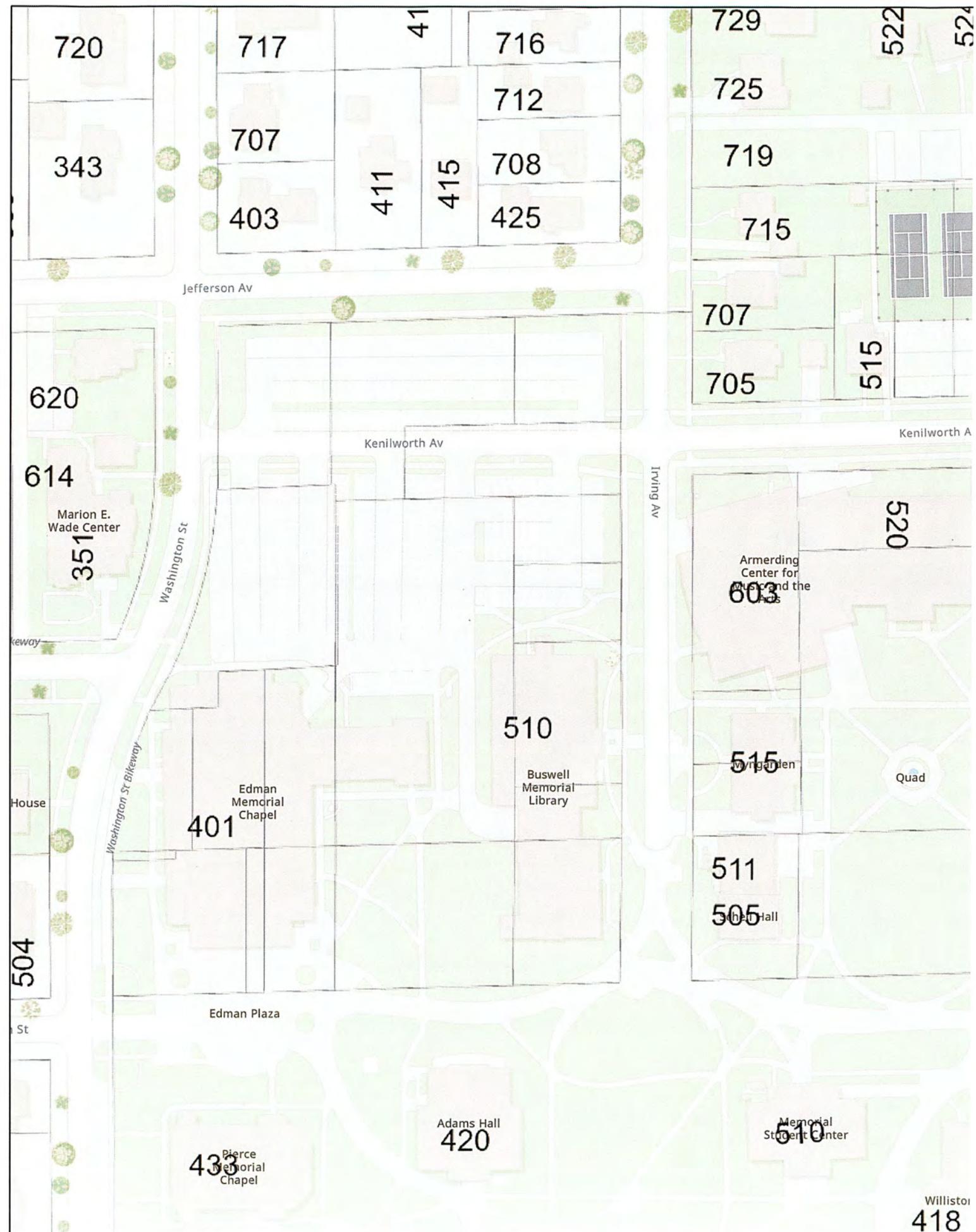
1. *The establishment, maintenance, or operation of the special use shall not be detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, comfort, convenience, and general welfare;*
 - i. This project will improve building access, infrastructure, and energy efficiency without negatively impacting the neighboring campus or residential neighborhood.
2. *The special use shall not be injurious to the uses and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, not substantially diminish property values within the neighborhood;*
 - i. The nearest neighboring private properties are to the North of the extents of the project. The proposal is adhering to all required building and landscape setbacks, all mechanical equipment will be screened from view, and the dock/trash area will be screened and moved closer to the truck access points reducing back-up noise.
3. *The establishment of a special use shall not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses already permitted;*
 - i. The proposed use is consistent with the zoning direction the city has planned for the immediate neighborhood and will not impede future development or improvement.
4. *Adequate utilities, access ways, drainage, and other necessary facilities shall be provided;*
 - i. All of these systems will be provided in compliance with the City requirements. The new building will connect to nearby public utilities. The storm water storage needs of the project are provided for by existing capacity in the College's regional storm water basin.
5. *Adequate measures shall be taken to provide ingress and egress designed to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets;*
 - i. The project has no alterations to public streets, and existing ingress and egress into the parking lot to the north will be unchanged.
6. *The proposed use shall comply with the objectives of the Wheaton Comprehensive Plan;*

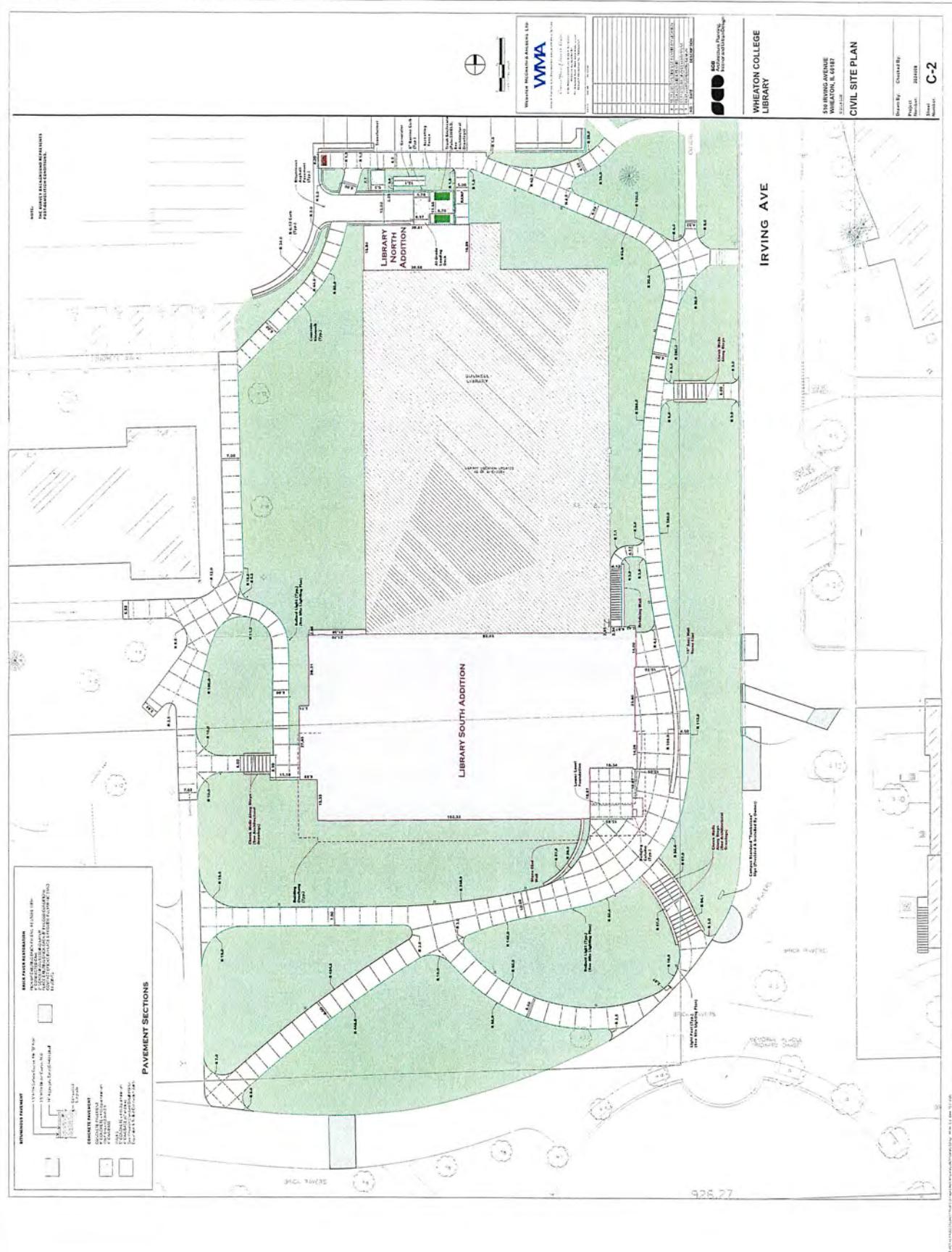
- i. The I-1 zoning will not change for this development. Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan (p. 59), "The campus is located within an I-1 Institutional zoning district, with boundaries configured to accommodate the College's current facilities and potential expansion into adjacent areas." The College has held a meeting for neighbors near this project to review the plans and to listen to their comments and concerns, as well as reviewed the project with City Officials.

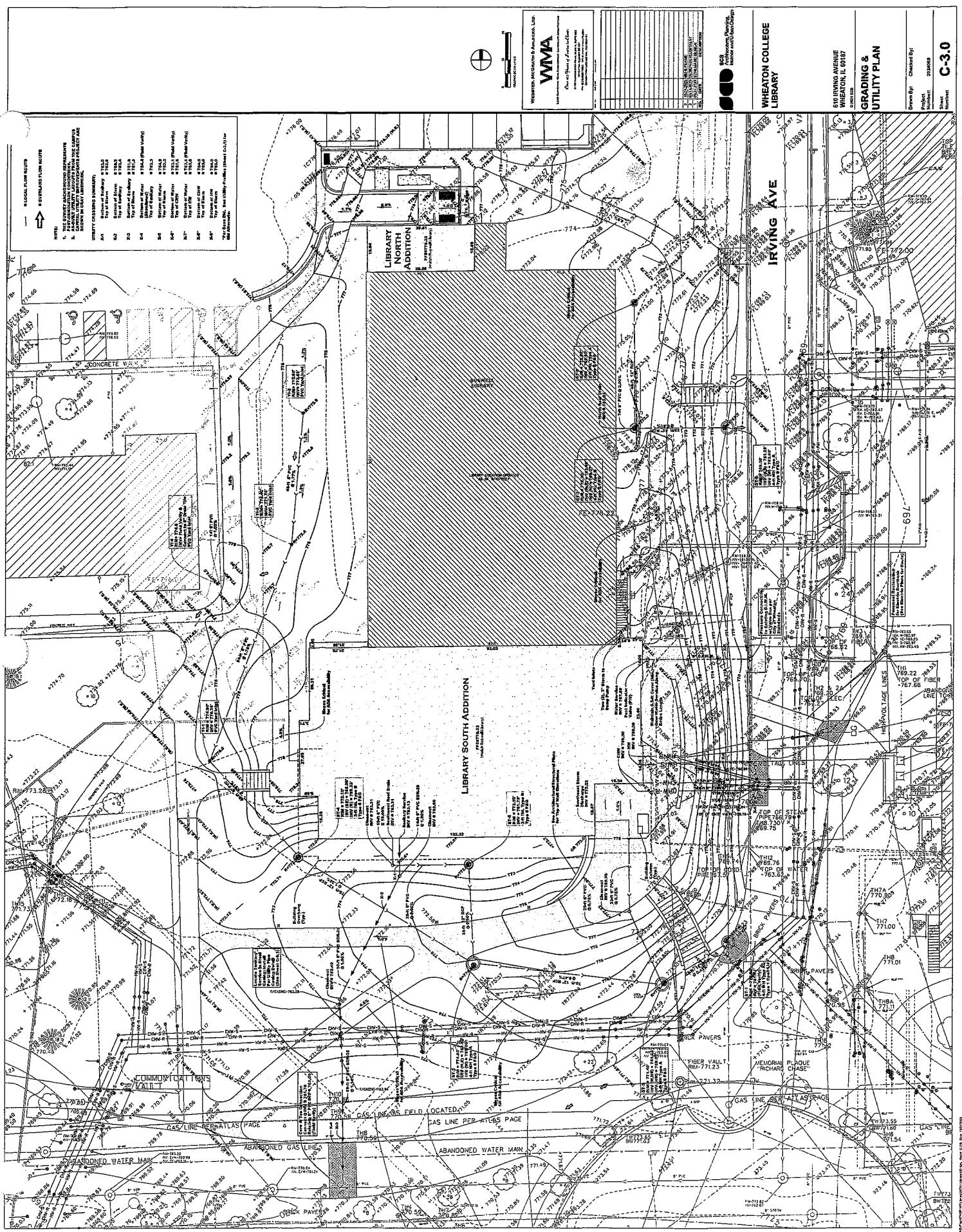
7. *The special use shall conform to the applicable requirements of the district in which it is located, as well as any other applicable requirements of this ordinance, except as may be varied by the Board or City Council.*

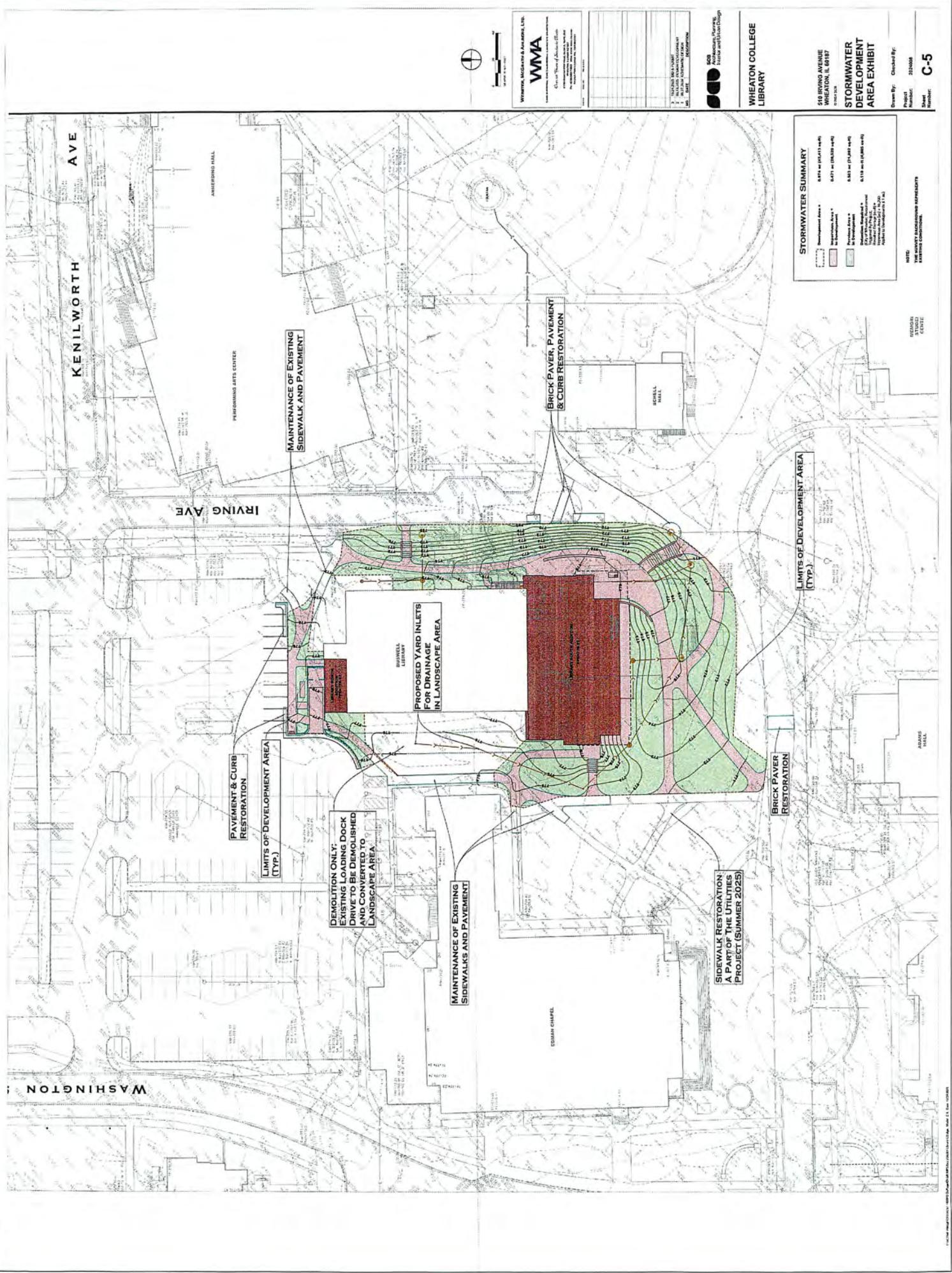
- i. The design of the proposed Library renovation and addition is intended to blend well with the existing character of the Wheaton College campus. There are no zoning variances requested for this application.

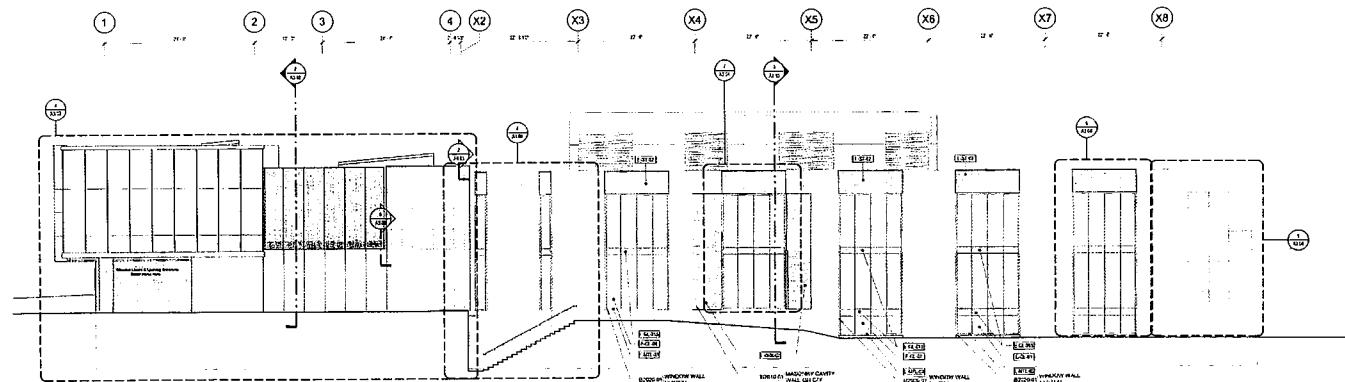
Wheaton Website Map





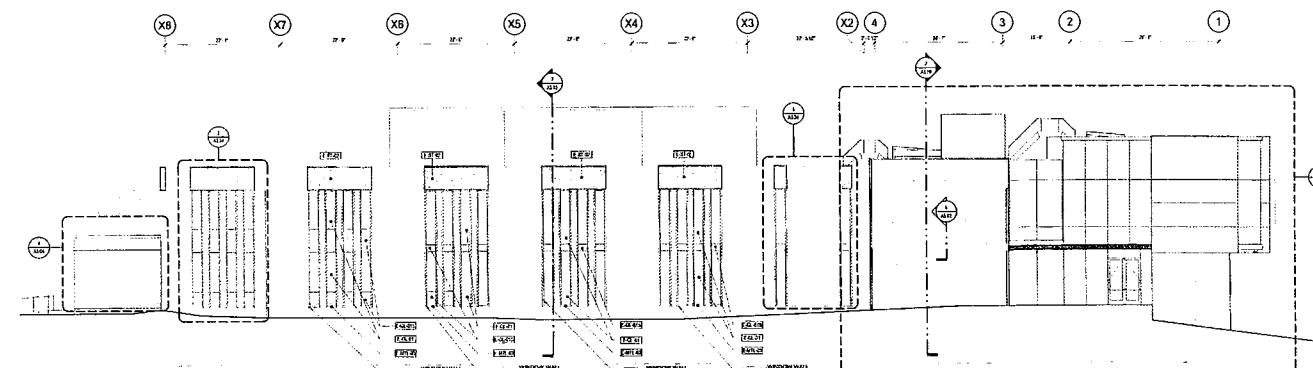






2 EAST ELEVATION

2 SCALE: 1/2" - 100



1 WEST ELEVATION

1 SCALE: 12° · 1

WHEATON COLLEGE
LIBRARY & LEARNING
COMMONS

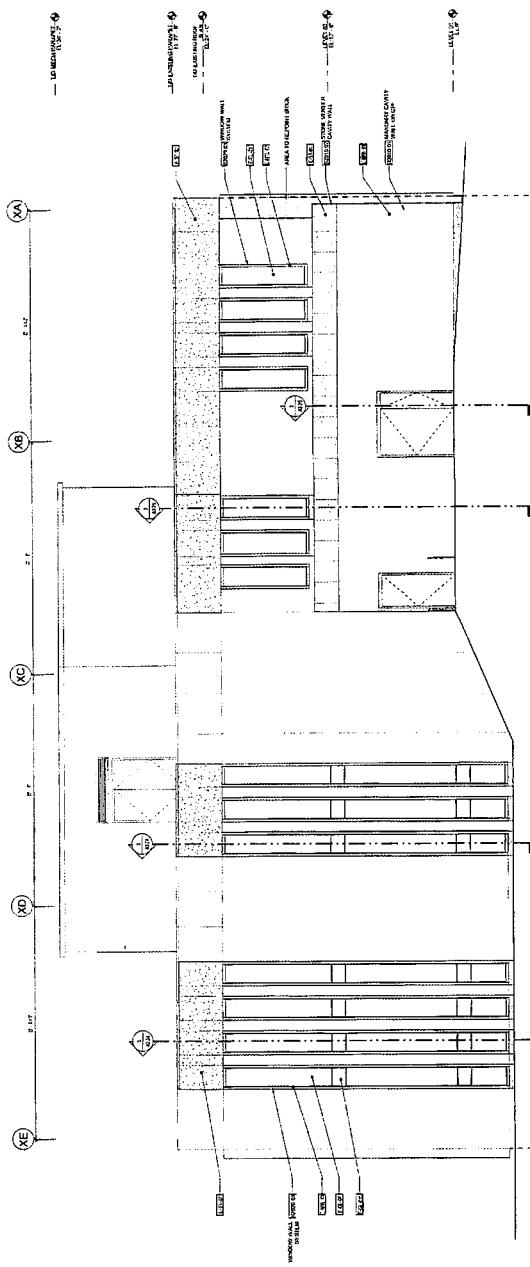
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WHEATON, IL 60187

BUILDING ELEVATIONS

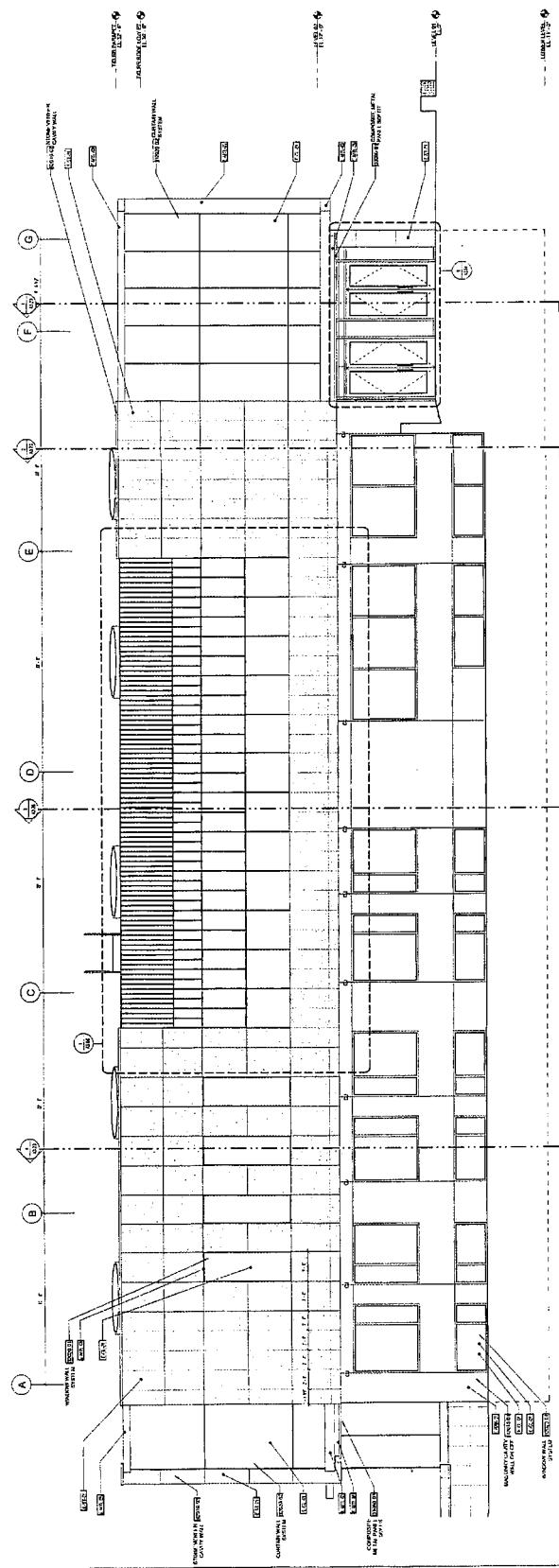
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2 NORTH ELEVATION



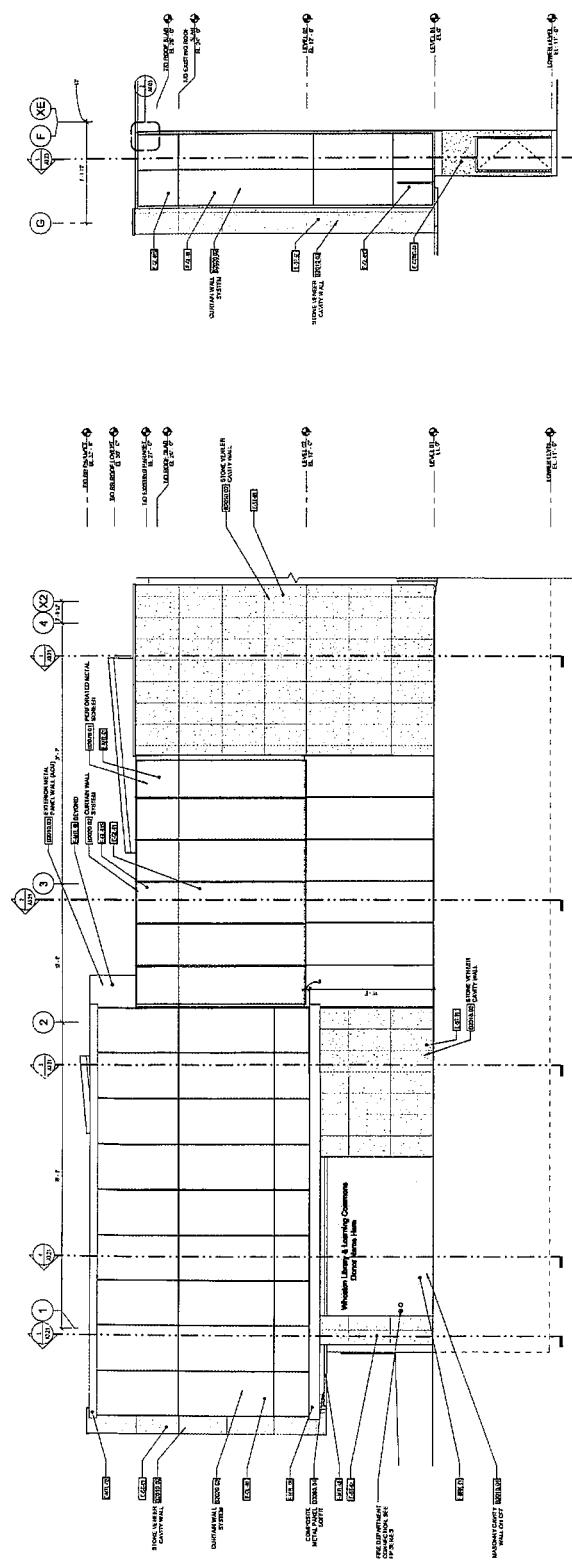
1 SOUTH ELEVATION

WHEATON COLLEGE
LIBRARY & LEARNING
COMMONS

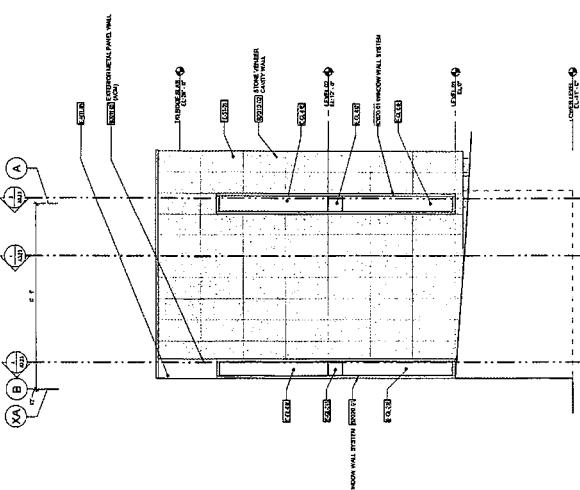
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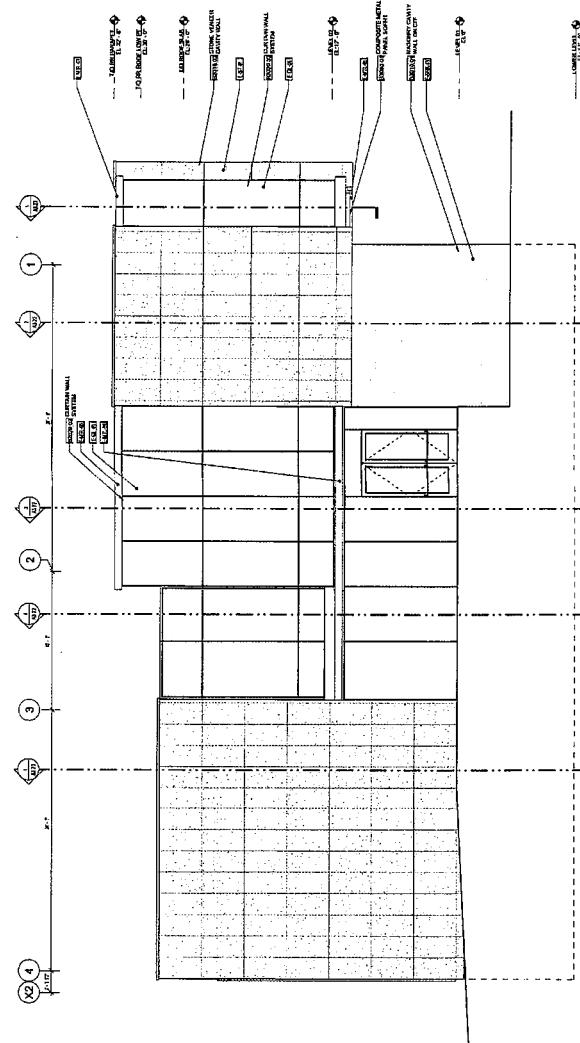
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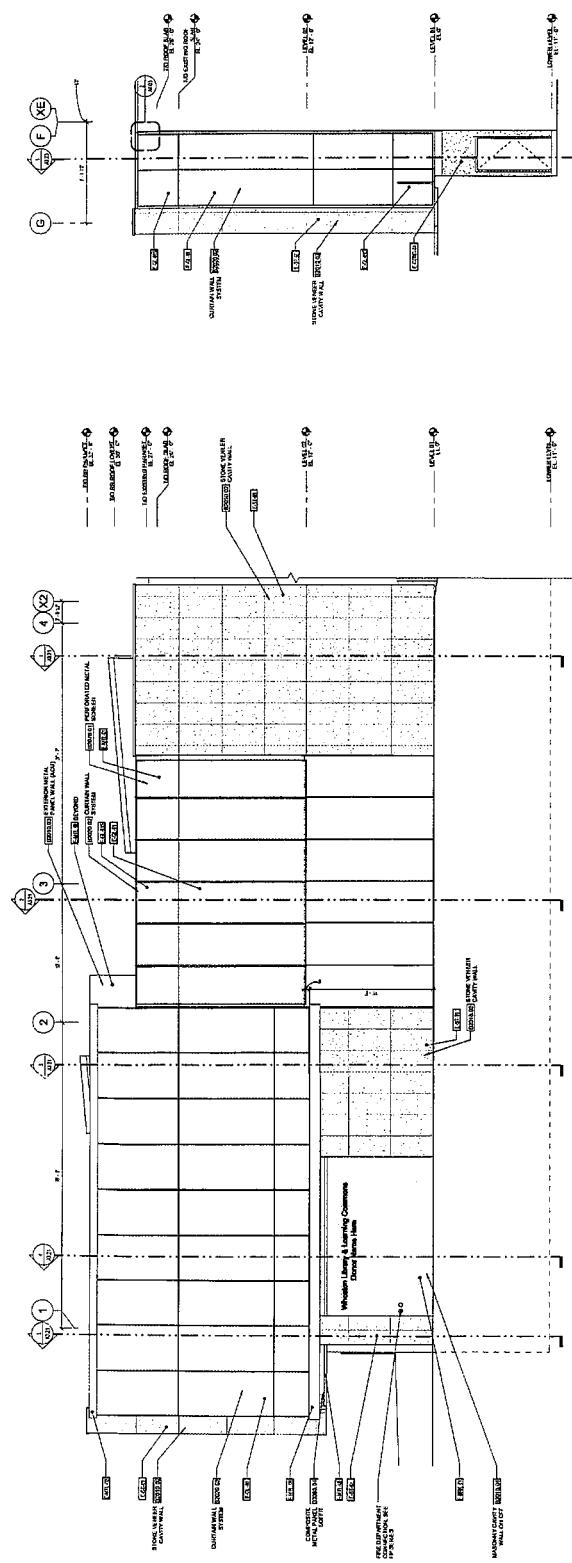
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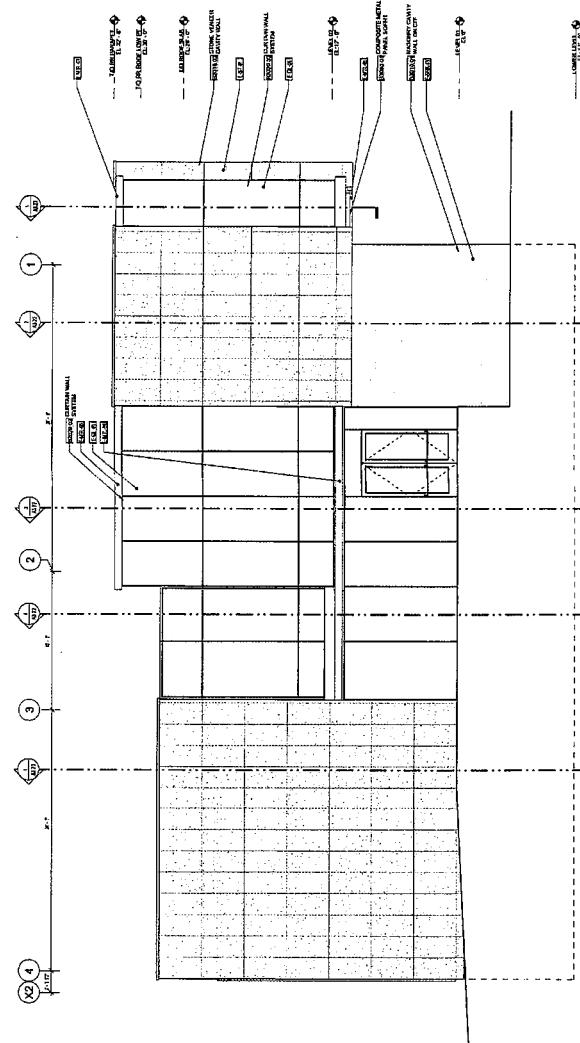
2 PARTIAL NORTH ELEVATION A



1 WEST - ENLARGED ADDITION ELEVATION
SCALE 1" = 1'-0"



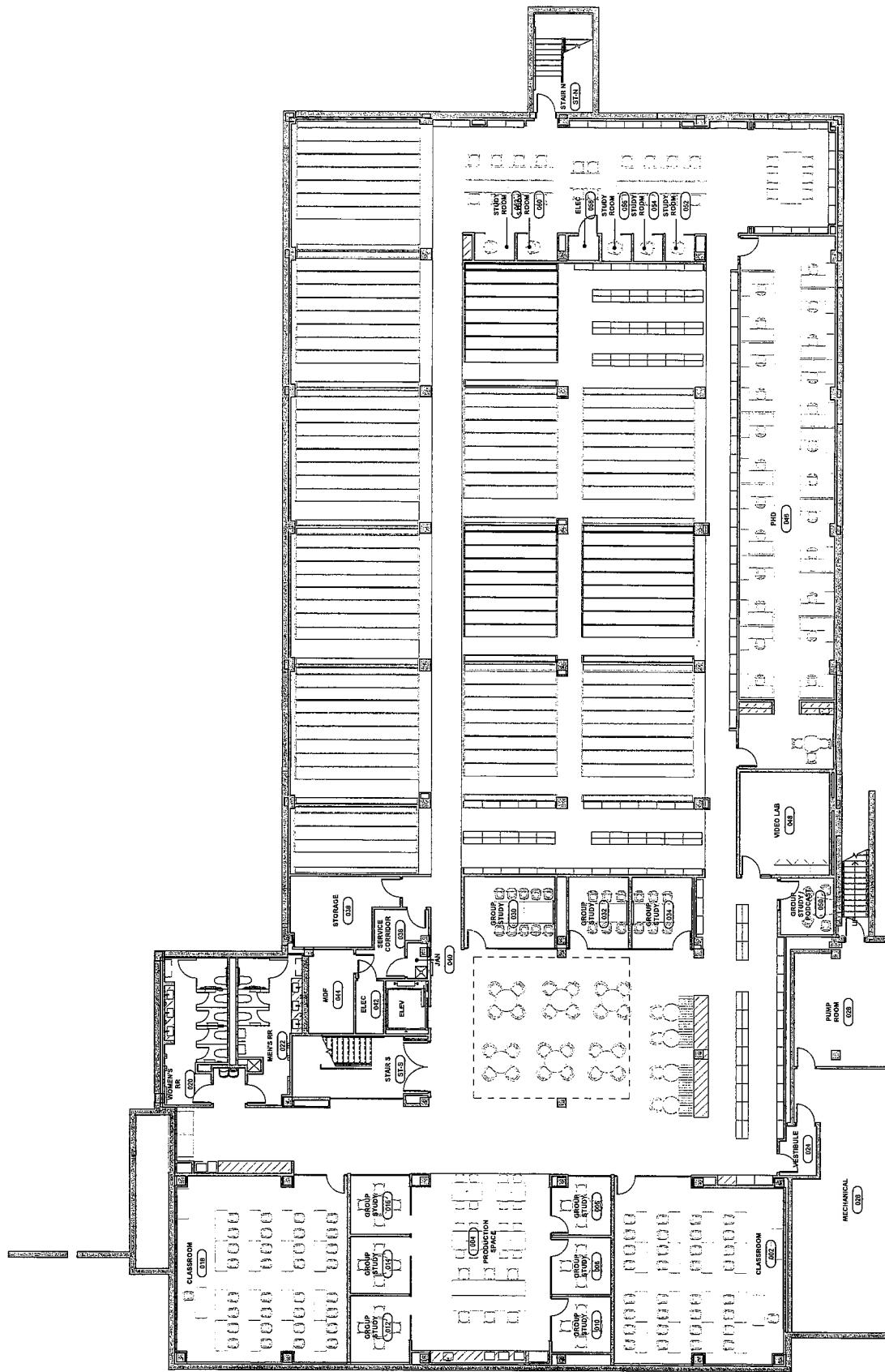
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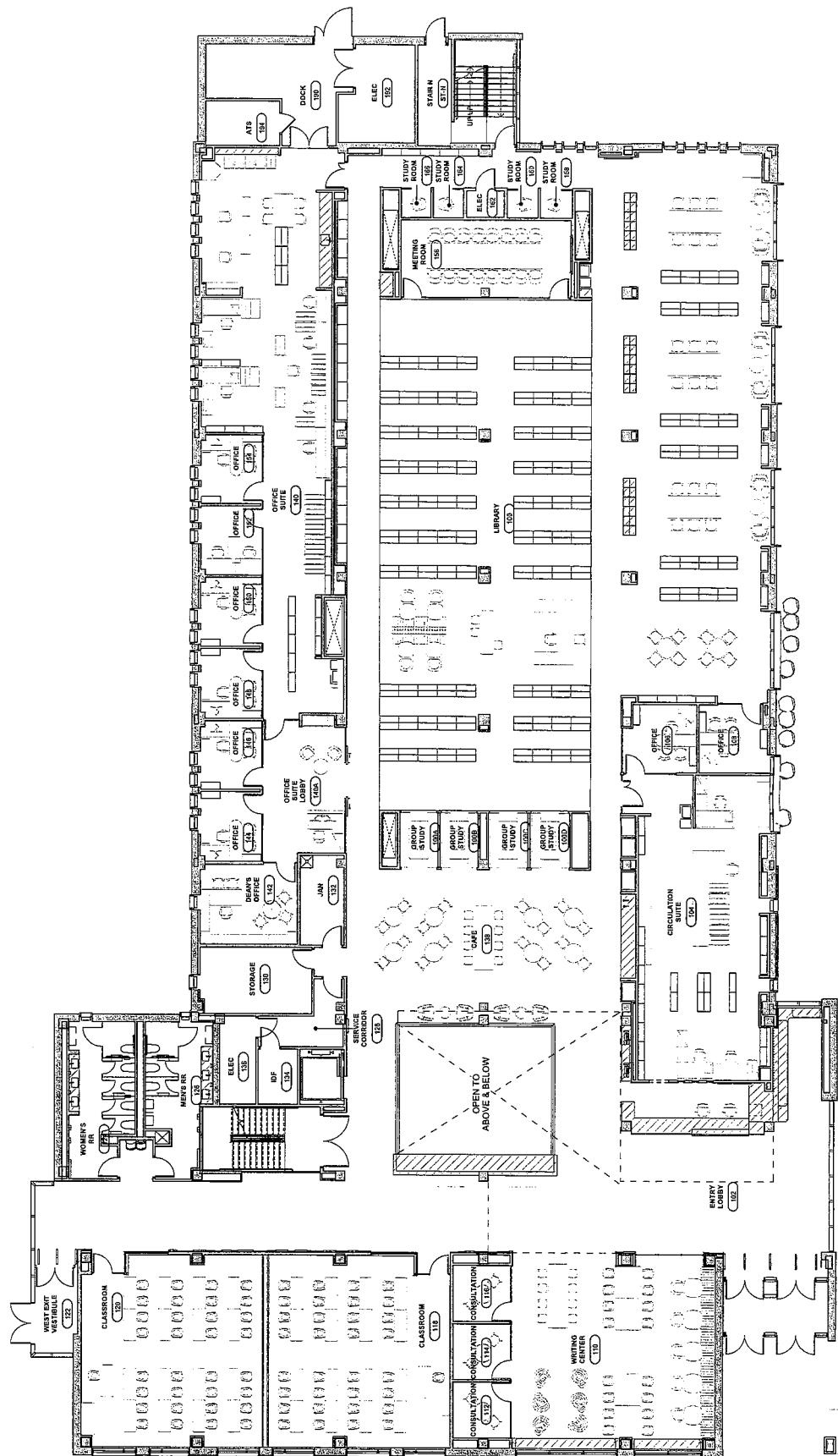
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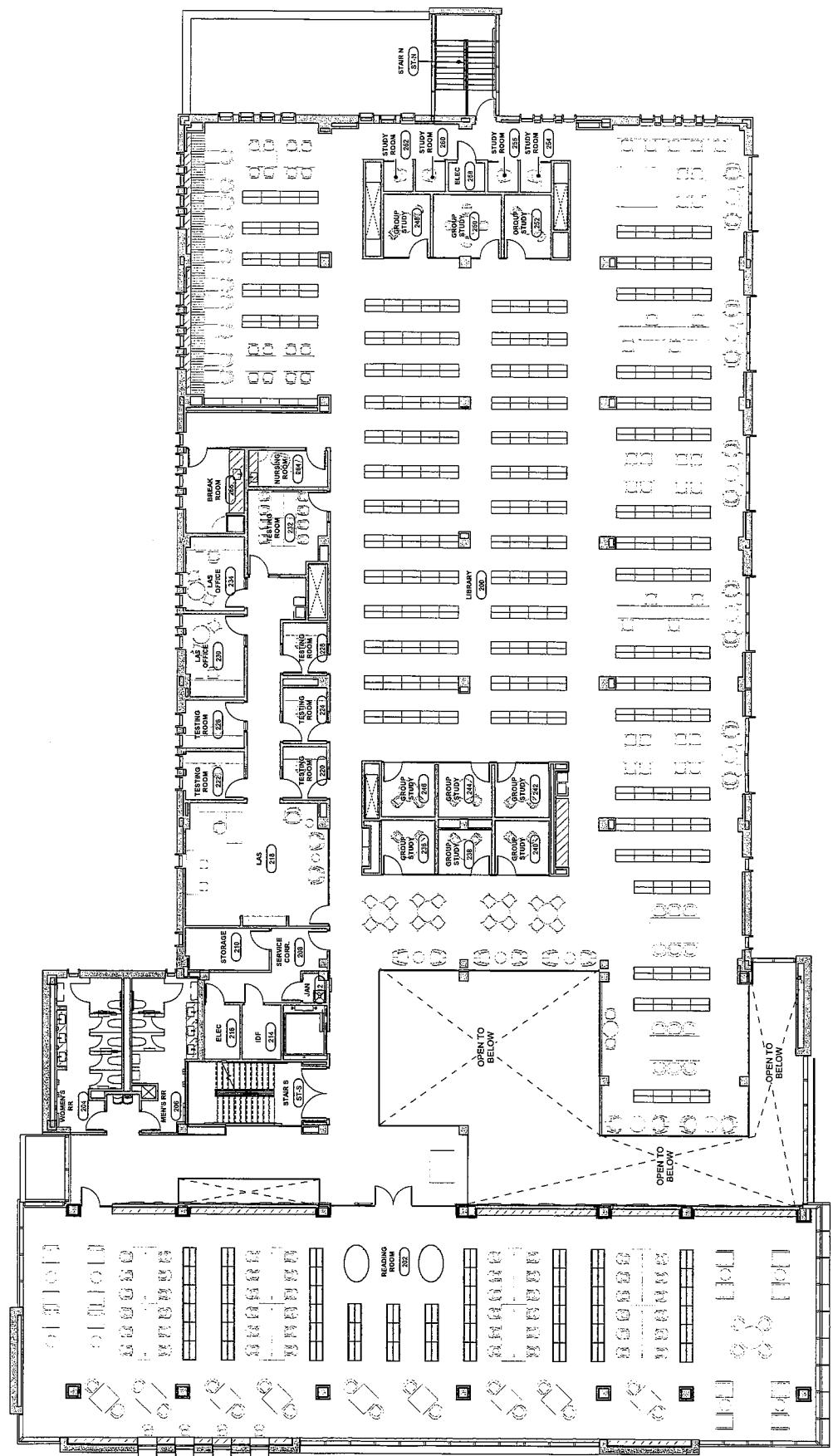
1000-1000



Lower Level



Level 01



Level 02