

**OFFICE OF PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ANALYSIS FOR A CASINO OVERLAY SITE PLAN REVIEW (CITY COUNCIL)**

**PROPERTIES BOUNDED BY MAIN STREET, UNION STREET, STATE STREET AND EAST
COLUMBUS AVENUE
CASINO OVERLAY SITE PLAN REVIEW**

General Information

Petitioner:	Blue Tarp reDevelopment, LLC
Request:	For a Casino Overlay Site Plan Review to facilitate the location of licensed casino and casino complex with the boundaries established by the City of Springfield for casino gaming activities as outlined under the Casino Overlay Regulations (Article 8, Section 8.5) at the property bounded by State Street, Main Street, Union Street and East Columbus Avenue.
Proposed use of the property:	Casino and casino complex
Parcel Size:	Approximately 14 acres
Site Visit:	1-4-16
City Council Hearing Date:	1-4-16/1-19-16/1-20-16

Staff Analysis

Neighborhood characteristics:

The parcel is located within the Metro Center neighborhood. This high density section of the City has a mix of commercial, cultural and residential uses.

Overview:

Blue Tarp reDevelopment has submitted an application for a Casino Overlay Site Plan Review for the proposed casino development to be located on the property generally bounded by State Street, Main Street, Union Street and East Columbus Avenue. As per the Springfield Zoning Ordinance, the City Council is the approving body for a Site Plan Review application for a development which falls under the Casino Overlay District. The Casino Overlay District text was approved by the City Council in May 2013, with the boundaries of the District approved in December 2015.

As noted in the Zoning Ordinance, the Casino Overlay District's purpose is to facilitate the location of a licensed casino and casino complex within the boundaries established by the City of Springfield and the State of Massachusetts for casino gaming activities. The Casino Overlay District focuses on urban entertainment and recreational activities that will enhance the area as a desirable location for tourists, conventions, and urban life. The district also encourages pedestrian and transit-oriented linkages between the casino and casino complex and other activities and venues within the City. The Casino Overlay District regulations are designed

to ensure that the casino and casino complex contributes positively to the built environment, that the operation of the casino and casino complex will help to enhance, expand, and stabilize employment and the local economy while simultaneously ensuring effective public services and a high quality of life for nearby businesses, institutions and residents. As per the Zoning Regulations, the Site Plan Review process follows the procedures outlined in Article 12, Section 12.3; however, as noted above, the City Council is the approving body as opposed to the Planning Board.

As noted in the Casino Overlay District regulations, in addition to the Site Plan Review approval, this proposed development is also subject to the provisions of a Host Community Agreement (HCA) which was approved by the City Council in May 2014 and amended in June 2015. The HCA established a baseline site plan, design elevations, uses, program, signage concept, lighting concept, landscaping and streetscape plan and related information for the development.

Please note, that in addition to the Office of Planning & Economic Development's staff analysis, a full independent review has also been completed by The Chicago Consultants Studio, Inc. (CCS). A copy of their report has been attached. These urban planners have extensive experience with casino development and have also played a key role in the evaluation of the original proposals submitted by the competing casino developments during the City's RFQ/P process. They also assisted in the drafting of the Casino Overlay District regulations and the negotiating and drafting of the HCA.

Further, all plans have been fully reviewed by the Department of Public Works (DPW) as well as their traffic consultant from Fuss & O'Neill. As per the Site Plan Review procedures, copies of the plans were also distributed to City departments for comments. Copies of the comments and responses by the developer have also been attached. Comments were also received by abutters to the proposed development. Those comments were also forward to the developer with copies sent to City Council.

Site Plan Analysis:

As the Council is aware, the developer has submitted plans for the construction of a casino complex on the property generally bounded by State Street, Main Street, Union Street and east Columbus Avenue. In addition to the casino gaming area (126,262 s.f.), the development includes a number of other elements. These elements include a 251 room/4-star hotel, retail opportunities (31,250 s.f.), restaurants and food outlets (73,107 s.f.), banquet area (73,705 s.f.), bowling alleys, movie theaters and outdoor skating rink. The development also includes a 3,375 space parking garage.

After a full review of the plans submitted, the staff believes that the plans submitted meet the underlying Casino Overlay District regulations and firmly believe that the proposed development will have a beneficial impact on not only this area but on the City as a whole.

With regards to the submitted plans, the staff would like to highlight the following:

Hotel:

While the staff does recognize that the current plan does propose modifications to the plan that was originally presented, most notably the reconfiguration of the hotel from a high rise hotel along State Street to a mid-rise hotel along Main Street, the staff fully concurs with the opinion noted in the report completed by CCS. Specifically, the staff agrees that "...moving the hotel function to the Main Street frontage is actually a very positive enhancement in that it more fully engages the project with Main Street and energizes the urban fabric and pedestrian environment". They go on to state that "...we firmly believe that the overall massing and scale of the casino development, developed as a whole and integrated into the Springfield urban fabric, is a

better resolution than the original design and in no way reduces the visual excitement of the project nor the level of quality or attractiveness of the hotel”.

Residential:

As part of the relocation of the hotel to Main Street, the developer has now also proposed to move the market-rate housing to an off-site location. The market-rate housing component (54-units) has always been a key piece to the overall development as the City continues to strive to bring more market-rate units downtown. The staff firmly believes that these new residential units will not only complement the housing developments currently occurring in the downtown area, such as the Silver Brick Lofts, but more importantly, will help foster the further development of additional market-rate housing units in the downtown.

Further, the staff also believes that by expanding the overall development “footprint” this will help to energize the “Implementation Blueprint” outlined in the HCA, which envisions the expansion and collateral impacts that a development of this size can obtain.

It should be noted that, to date, only 195 State Street has been identified as a possible location for new market rate units. However, the sale of this building has not yet been finalized and the total number of units to be located in this building has yet to be determined. A full detailed plan on all the proposed residential units should be required as part of the approval of the site plan.

Retail/Food:

With regards to the retail and restaurant components of this project, as noted above, the plans submitted indicate that there will be a total of 31,250 square feet of retail space and 73,107 square feet of restaurant/food outlet space. This includes a number of spaces along Main Street and State Street as well as spaces within the proposed Armory Market Place. One of the key components of the Armory Markey Place is the redevelopment of the former Howard Street Armory. As the Council is aware, this was a structure that was significantly damaged during the 2011 tornado.

As part of the overall site plan review process, the staff and CCS have had numerous discussions about the potential layout of these spaces and will continue to engage the developer in these discussions as the retail and food components solidify and tenants are identified. The staff would like to stress that it is very pleased that 101 State Street, which is at the corner of Main Street and State Street, will now be utilized for street level retail operations. This was not part of the original proposal.

Further, it is very important to stress that unlike a typical casino development, which requires a patron to enter the casino in order to access the retail and food establishments, all the proposed retail and food operations will be able to be accessed directly from Main Street, State Street and Howard Street, without the need to actually enter the casino floor. The staff believes strongly that this is a unique and important design aspect that will, again, help energize the streetscape and enhance pedestrian activity.

Parking Garage:

As noted above, the developer intends to construct a 3,375 space parking garage to be located along Union Street in the area formally occupied by the Zanetti School. The proposed garage will have eight (8) levels with entrances off Union Street and Bliss Street.

Due to the large scale of this proposed garage, the staff and CCS have been having ongoing discussions regarding the overall treatment of the facades of this building. The original elevations submitted indicated that

additional architectural details were going to be added to the Bliss Street side of the garage but that the East Columbus Avenue/Union Street facades were less detailed and lacking in architectural interest. After numerous meetings with the developer, a number of positive changes are being proposed which will address the concerns listed above. It is the understanding of the staff that these changes are still being worked on and that final plans will be submitted as part of the Site Plan Review hearings. It would be the staff's recommendation that any plans submitted at the hearings be incorporated into the final approval.

Bus Drop Off Area:

Another proposed change to the original design is the relocation of the bus drop off/pick up area. In the original plans with the hotel on State Street, a more formal entrance with a porte-cochere was to be located along the newly developed MGM Way. Buses were originally going to be parked within the proposed garage. With the relocation of the hotel to Main Street and the reconfiguration of the internal functions of the parking garage, the buses will now be directed to drop off and pick up along MGM Way. In the original plans submitted, the staff had strong concerns that this area lost much of its pedestrian qualities and did not match the urban design found in the rest of this proposal.

Again, after several internal discussions with the developer a number of positive changes were made and ones in which the staff believes brings back the pedestrian nature of this area while still accommodating the need for bus drop off and pick up. The new plans now show a new entrance articulated with an elegant fixed awning as well as additional pavement treatment that make this space much more welcoming than originally designed.

Landscaping:

As part of the site plan submission, the developer submitted a detailed landscaping plan. This plan was reviewed by the staff as well as CCS. Due to the fact that the plan shows new plantings within Da Vinci Park, the plans were also submitted to the Park Department/City Forester for review. Comments on the plans were submitted by the City Forester which will need to be addressed as the plans progress.

Overall, the staff is very pleased with what has been proposed. However, we understand that additional reviews will be required as the plans evolve. It should also be noted that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the developer and the Parks Department which relates to the number of street trees that had to be removed. As part of the MOU, the developer is required to work directly with the City Forester to ensure the adequate replacement of the street trees that were removed.

One of the most significant amenities of the landscaping plan is the roof top gardens located on the second level of the development. The staff firmly believes that this is a truly unique amenity that is not found elsewhere in the City. These roof gardens will be fully assessable to hotel guests, conference attendees and casino patrons. These areas will also provide a direct visual link to the entertainment plaza below.

Building Elevations/Materials:

Again, as part of the site plan submission, the staff requested that the developer identify the proposed exterior materials to be used in this development. Understanding that specific details of what each building will be constructed of have not yet been completed, the developer has submit a materials matrix which identifies a menu of materials to be used in this development. While further details need to be provided, the staff does believe this materials matrix helps to ensure that this development will be completed with quality materials which will match the urban character of Springfield while also being able to withstand the rigors of this northern climate.

In addition to the materials, the staff has also been having ongoing discussion about the overall massing and articulation of the proposed buildings and facades. As the Council is aware, the developer had to undergo a very rigorous historic review process with not only the Springfield Historical Commission (SHC) but also the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) as well. As a result of this review, a number of historic buildings and facades will remain. In addition, the developer has also agreed to replicate the former YMCA façade along the new entertainment plaza. The staff firmly believes that this façade, as well as the other buildings/facades being saved helps to preserve the historic character and fabric of this area and contributes positively to the overall development.

Day Care:

As the Council is aware, as part of this overall development, a day care operation is required. In the original plans submitted, the day care was going to be located onsite, on the corner of Howard Street and East Columbus Avenue. The plans now show that the day-care operation will now be located off-site.

In discussions with the developer, it has been indicated that the day care will be located on a portion of the vacant property located at the corner of Main Street and Union Street. This was the former location of the Zorzi Building which was demolished as a result of the 2011 tornado. While this site has been identified as a possible location, no plans have been submitted. Due to the fact that this is such a prominent location, the staff wants to ensure that the design of this day care operation is in context with the surrounding properties. As such, the staff would strongly recommend that as a condition of this approval, the developer be required to submit a full set of site plans to the Office of Planning & Economic Development, prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.

Signage:

As anticipated in the Casino Overlay District regulations, due to the unique signage associated with a casino, the Casino Overlay District regulations allows for a wide range of signage and building lighting not contemplated in the underlying zoning.

As part of the developer's site plan submission, a letter was submitted specifically requesting that the review of signage be waived at this time as "...MGM [Springfield] has not yet determined the size, scope and type of signage appropriate for the development". Although some renderings and elevations, submitted as part of the site plan review submission, show proposed signage, it needs to be stressed that these are only conceptual in nature and done for illustrative purposes only. A full detailed sign plan indicating locations, sizes, materials, etc., will need to be submitted to the City Council for a full review and approval prior to the issuance of any sign permits.

Recommendation

As stated above, the staff is very pleased with what has been presented. After a full detailed review of the plans submitted, by not only the staff but also the planning consultants from CCS, it is the staff's recommendation that the plans meet the underlying Casino Overlay District regulations and the Site Plan, as presented, should be approved, with conditions.



November 18, 2015

By First Class Mail and Email

Phil Dromey
Office of Planning and Economic Development
City of Springfield 70 Tapley Street
Springfield, MA 01104

Re: Casino Overlay District Site Plan Review Application

Dear Phil:

Blue Tarp reDevelopment, LLC d/b/a MGM Springfield ("MGM") is in receipt of your October 26, 2015 letter regarding MGM's Casino Overlay District Site Plan Review Application (the "Application"). Your letter indicated that the Application did not address the "signage and specialty lighting concept" as detailed in Section 8.5 of the Springfield Zoning Ordinance (the "Ordinance"). We previously discussed with your office that our signage and lighting plans would follow at a later date closer to opening as we continue to refine those aspects of the development. Based on further discussions subsequent to submission of our Application, we now understand that you require a formal request to the Application be permitted to proceed with the Site Plan Review process notwithstanding the fact that the "signage and specialty lighting concept" was not included with the Application and will be submitted at a future date. Please accept this letter requesting the same.

Due to the unique nature of the Project¹ and considering that Operations Commencement is not expected to occur until Fall 2018, MGM has not yet determined size, scope, and type of signage appropriate for the Project. Pursuant to Section 12.2.32 of the Ordinance, "[t]he Office of Planning and Economic Development may waive specific submission requirements for a Site Plan Review application upon demonstration by the applicant that a requirement is not necessary or it inapplicable to the applicant's project." The Ordinance provides in addition that, "[d]isapproval of a request in the Site Plan review for a particular specialty signage or lighting component shall not be cause to disapprove the Site Plan Review or the Use and the applicant would still have the right (if the other Site Plan Review criteria were met and approved as per Section 8.5.32) to proceed with the development without the requested specialty signage or with amended specialty signage approved by the City." Ordinance, at Section 8.5.34. MGM is requesting that the Office of Planning and Economic Development ("OPED") proceed with the Application without the complete signage plan so that it may proceed with the development of the Project without delay. An

¹ Capitalized terms not explicitly defined herein shall have the same means as in the Host Community Agreement.

MGM Springfield
One Monarch Place, Suite 910
Springfield, MA 01144
413-273-5000



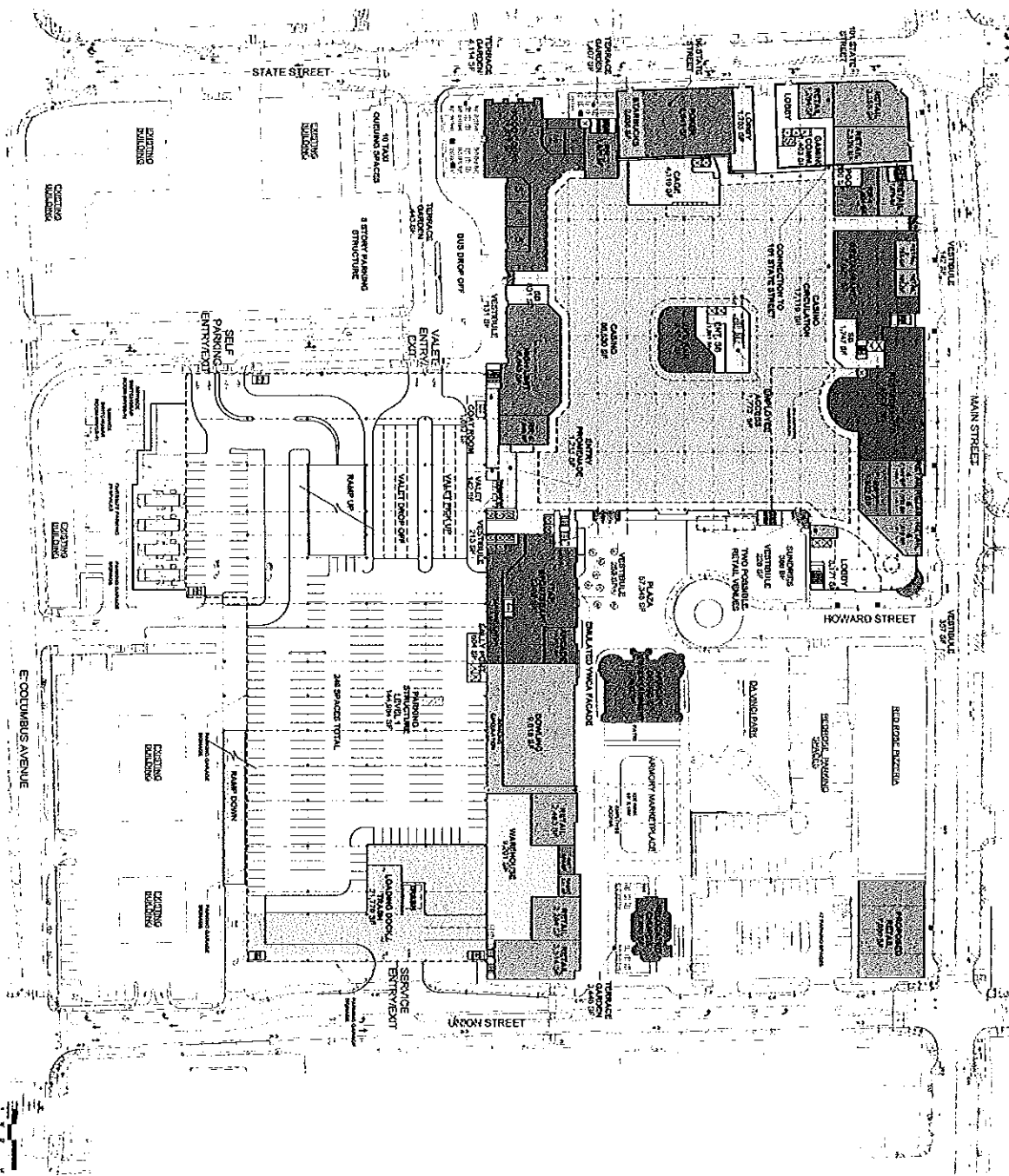
appropriate signage plan, as required by the Ordinance, will follow once it is fully developed. MGM will continue to keep OPED apprised of its progress in that regard.

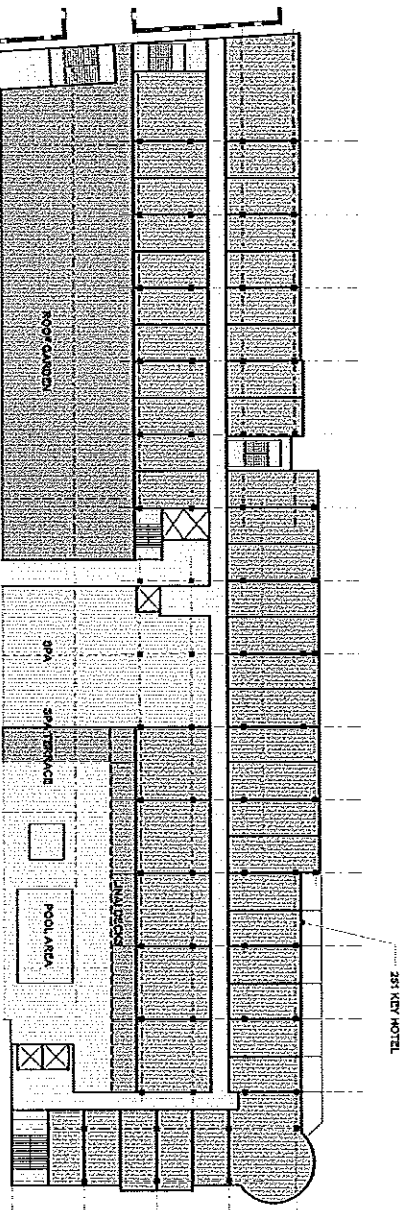
Should you have any questions regarding the Application, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

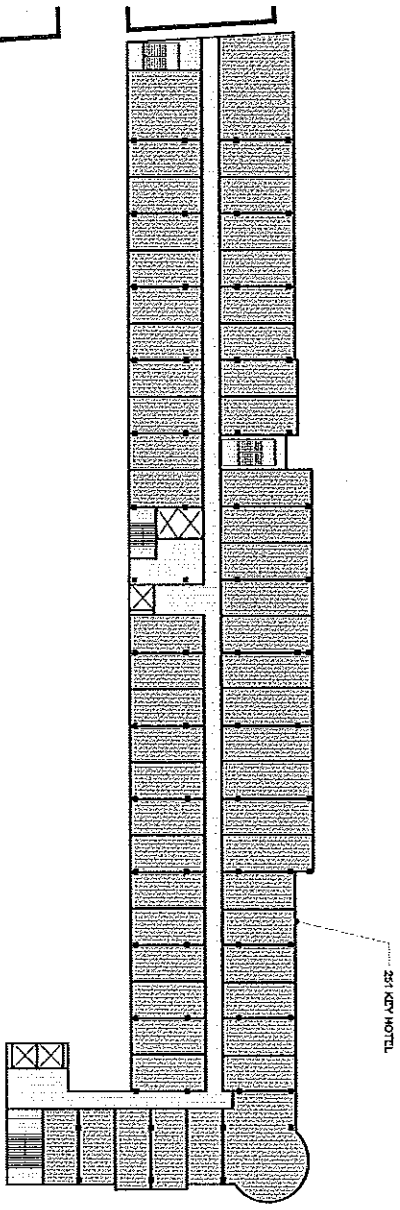
Seth Stratton
Vice President & General Counsel

cc: Brian Packer
Frank P. Fitzgerald, Esq.

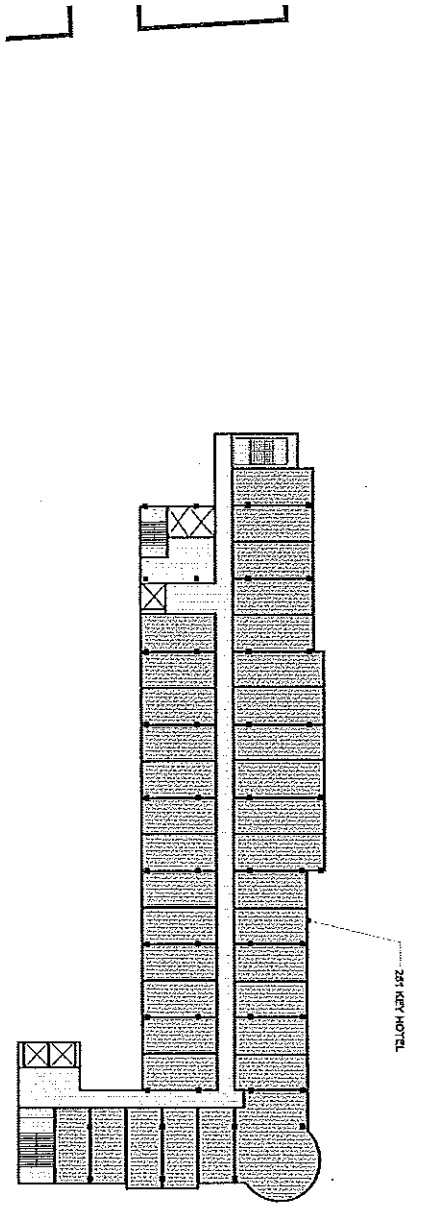




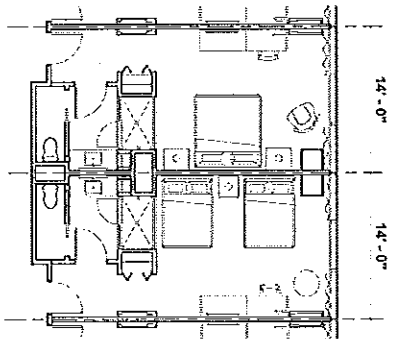
251 ENLARGED LEVELS 3, 4 AND 5 HOTEL FLOOR PLAN



251 ENLARGED LEVEL 6 HOTEL FLOOR PLAN



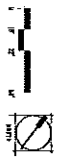
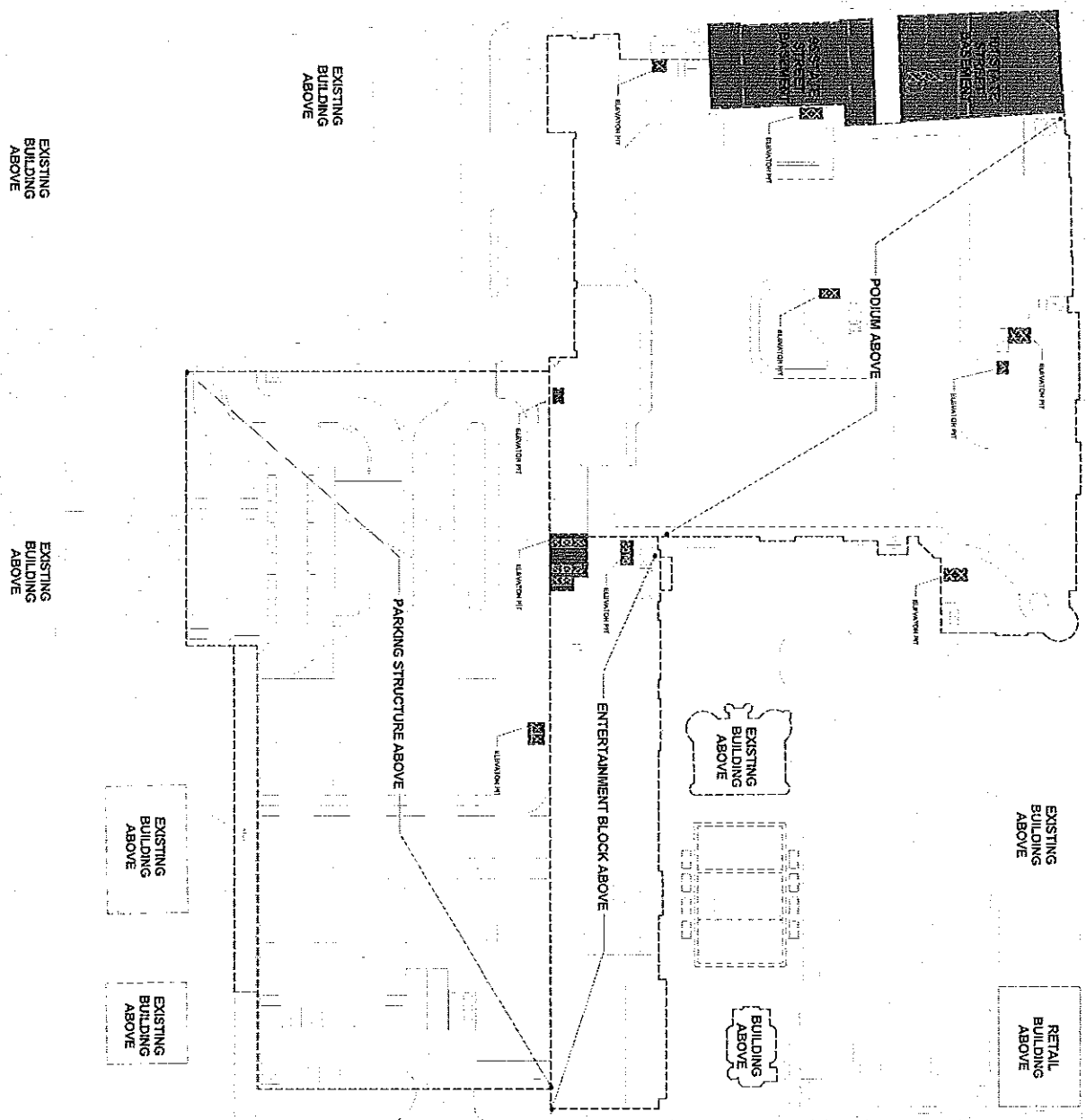
251 TYPICAL ROOM PLANS

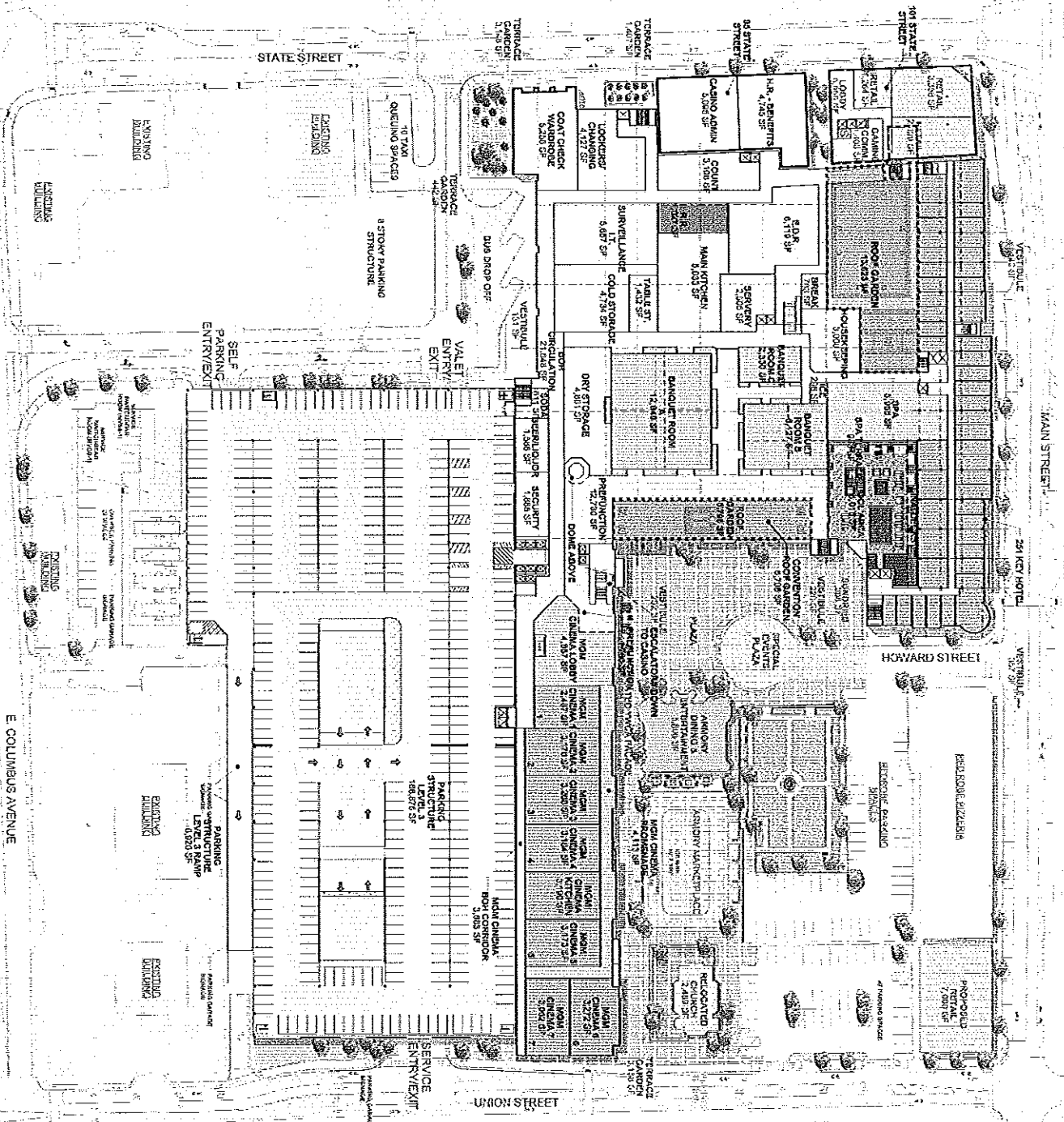


MGM SPRINGFIELD GUEST ROOM MATRIX

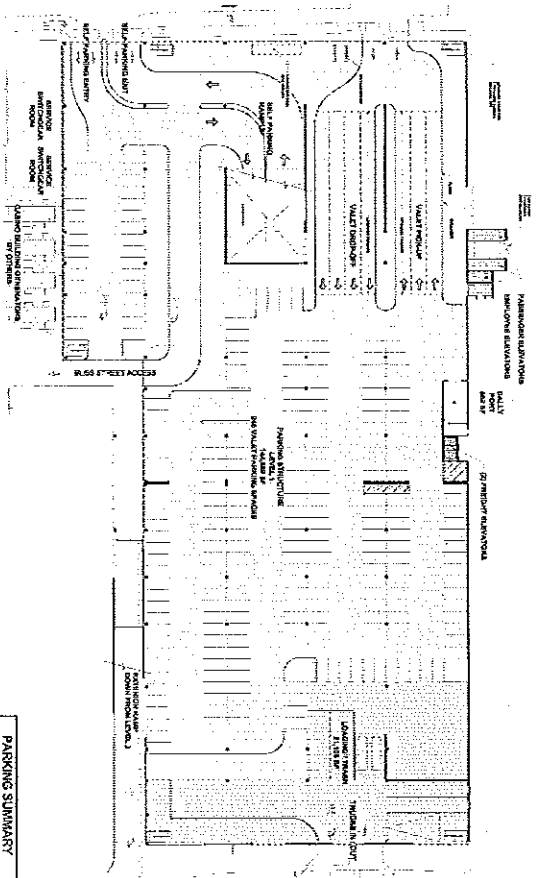
LEVEL	1 BAY	1 BAY PLUS	2 BAY	2.5 BAY	TOTAL
LEVEL 2	27	11	7	2	47
LEVEL 3	42	11	1	2	56
LEVEL 4	42	11	1	2	56
LEVEL 5	42	11	1	2	56
LEVEL 6	28	6	0	1	35
TOTAL	182	50	10	9	251





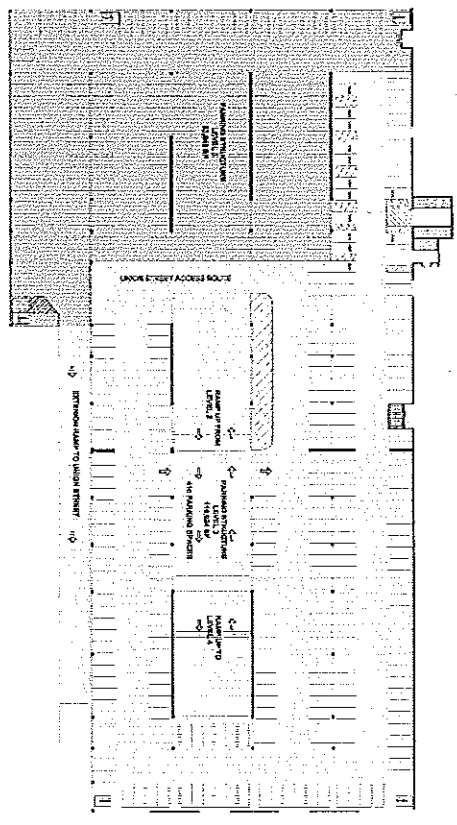


E. COLUMBUS AVENUE

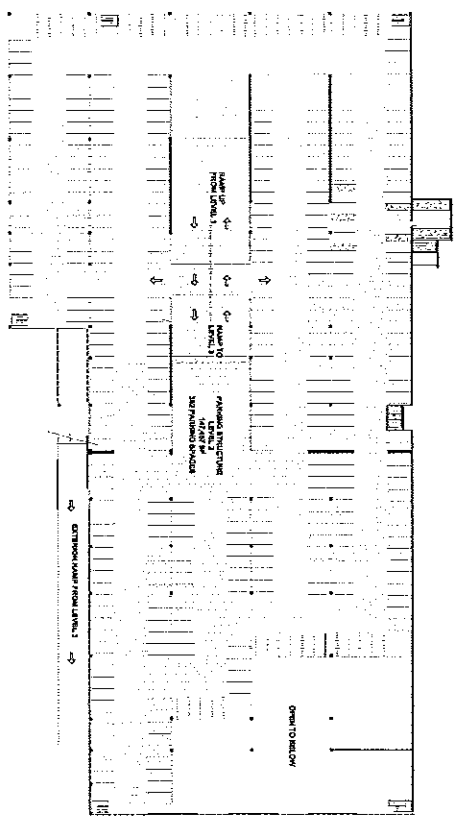


GARAGE LEVEL ONE

PARKING SUMMARY	
LEVEL 1	242 SPACES
LEVEL 2	202 SPACES
LEVEL 3	413 SPACES
LEVEL 4	444 SPACES
LEVEL 5	443 SPACES
LEVEL 6	443 SPACES
LEVEL 7	443 SPACES
LEVEL 8	443 SPACES
TOTAL	3,213 SPACES

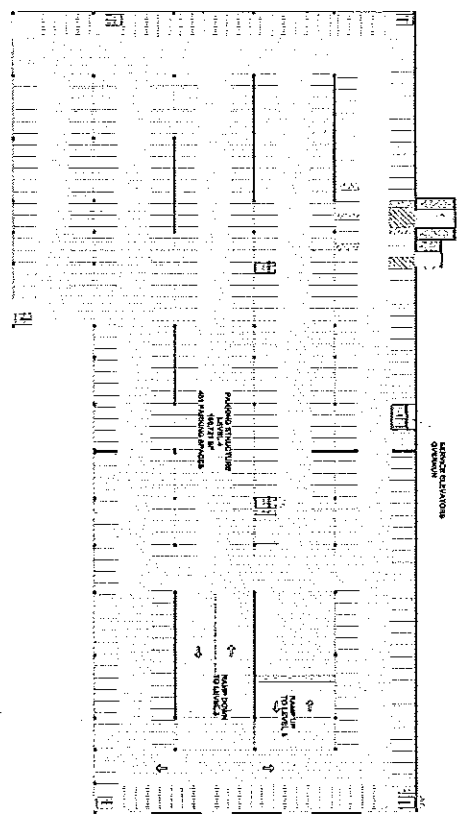


GARAGE LEVEL THREE



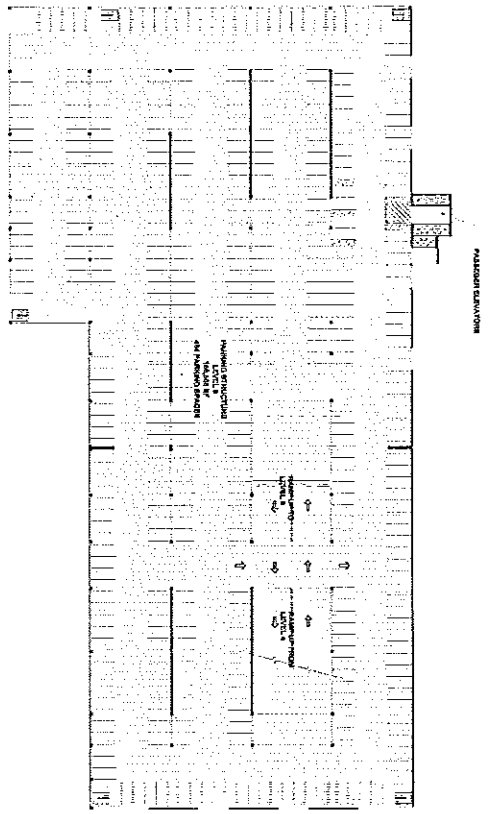
GARAGE LEVEL TWO

STRUCTURAL NOTE
 ALL STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS SHALL BE CONFORM TO THE LATEST EDITIONS OF THE IBC AND ACI 308R-02.
 ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN FEET AND INCHES.



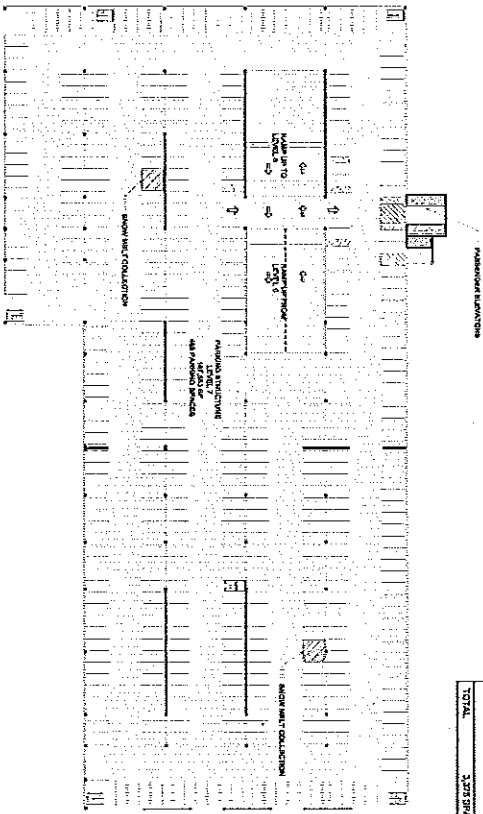
GARAGE LEVEL FOUR



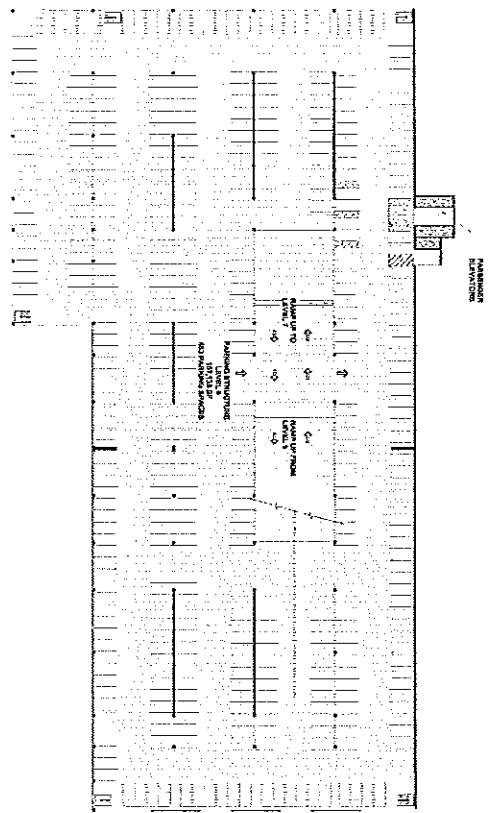


GARAGE LEVEL FIVE

PARKING SUMMARY	
LEVEL 1	246 SPACES
LEVEL 2	202 SPACES
LEVEL 3	419 SPACES
LEVEL 4	481 SPACES
LEVEL 5	424 SPACES
LEVEL 6	403 SPACES
LEVEL 7	408 SPACES
TOTAL	2,283 SPACES

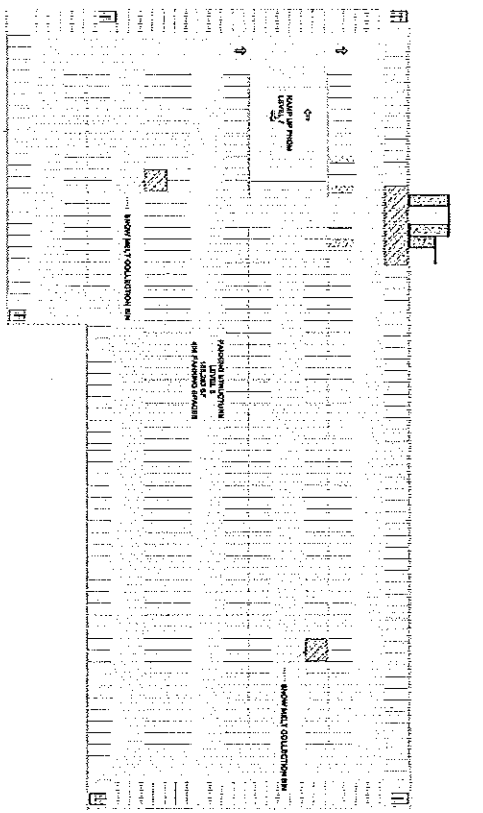


GARAGE LEVEL SEVEN



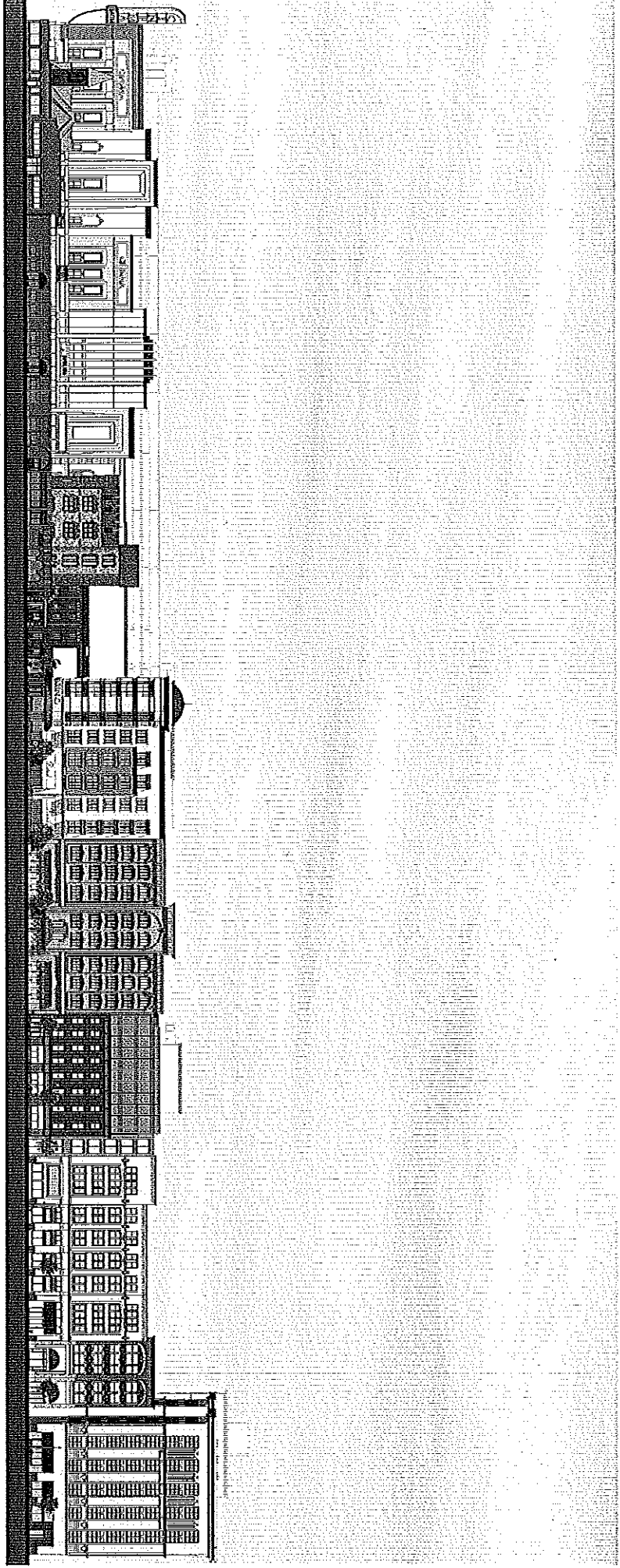
GARAGE LEVEL SIX

STRUCTURAL NOTE
 ALL CONCRETE SHALL BE CAST IN PLACE AND SHALL BE REINFORCED AS SHOWN ON THE DRAWINGS.



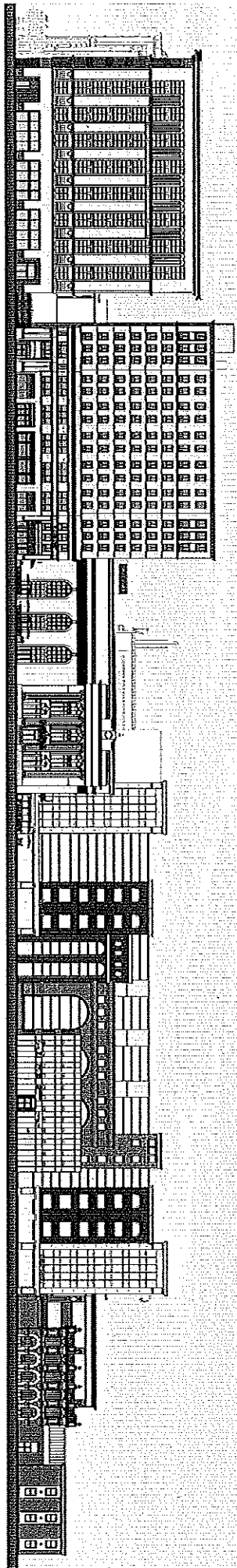
GARAGE LEVEL EIGHT





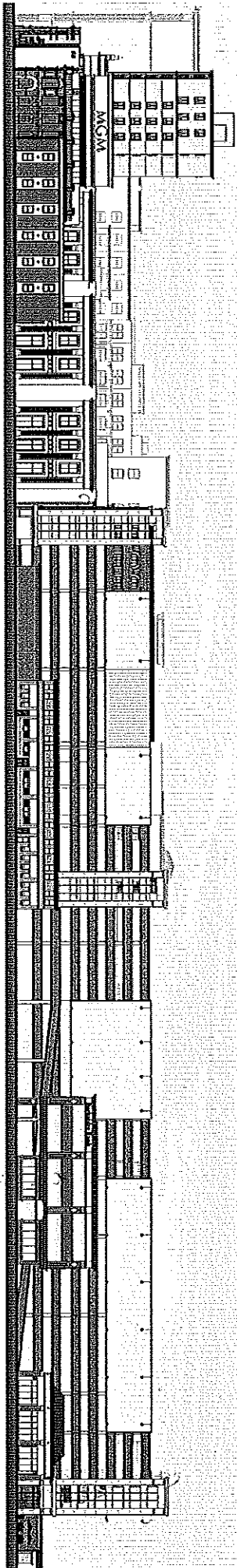
MGM SPRINGFIELD

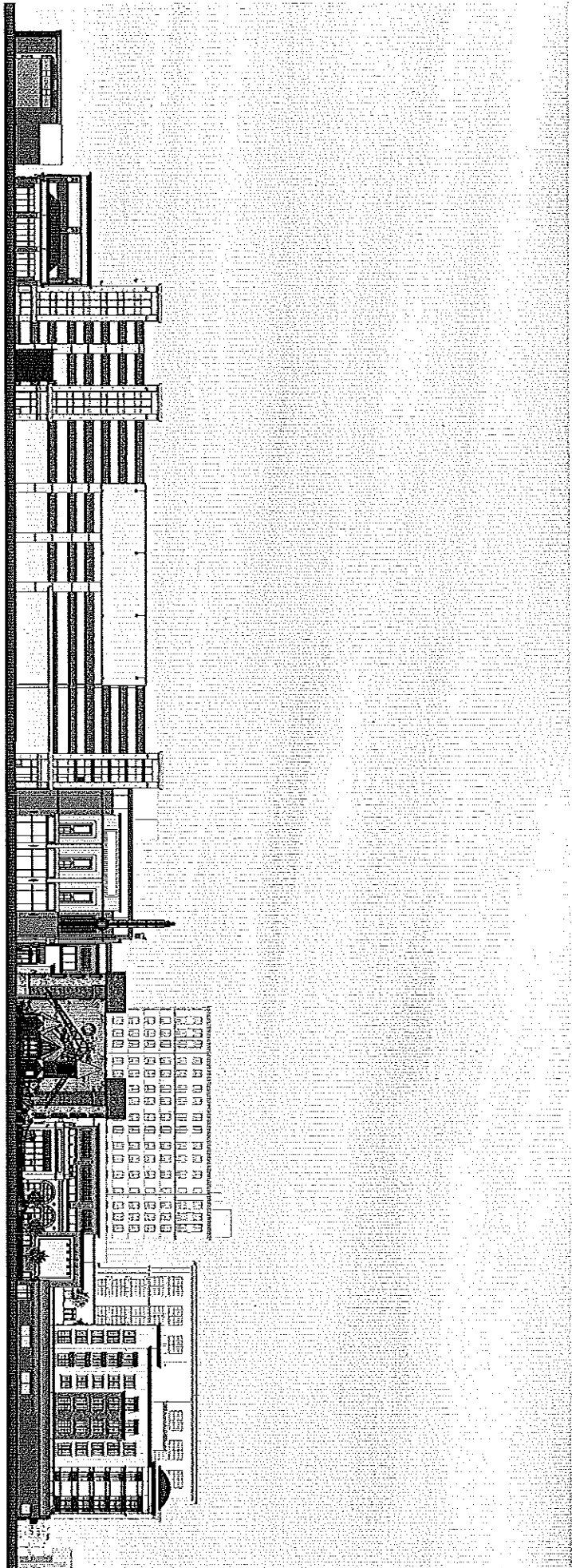
STATE STREET ELEVATION



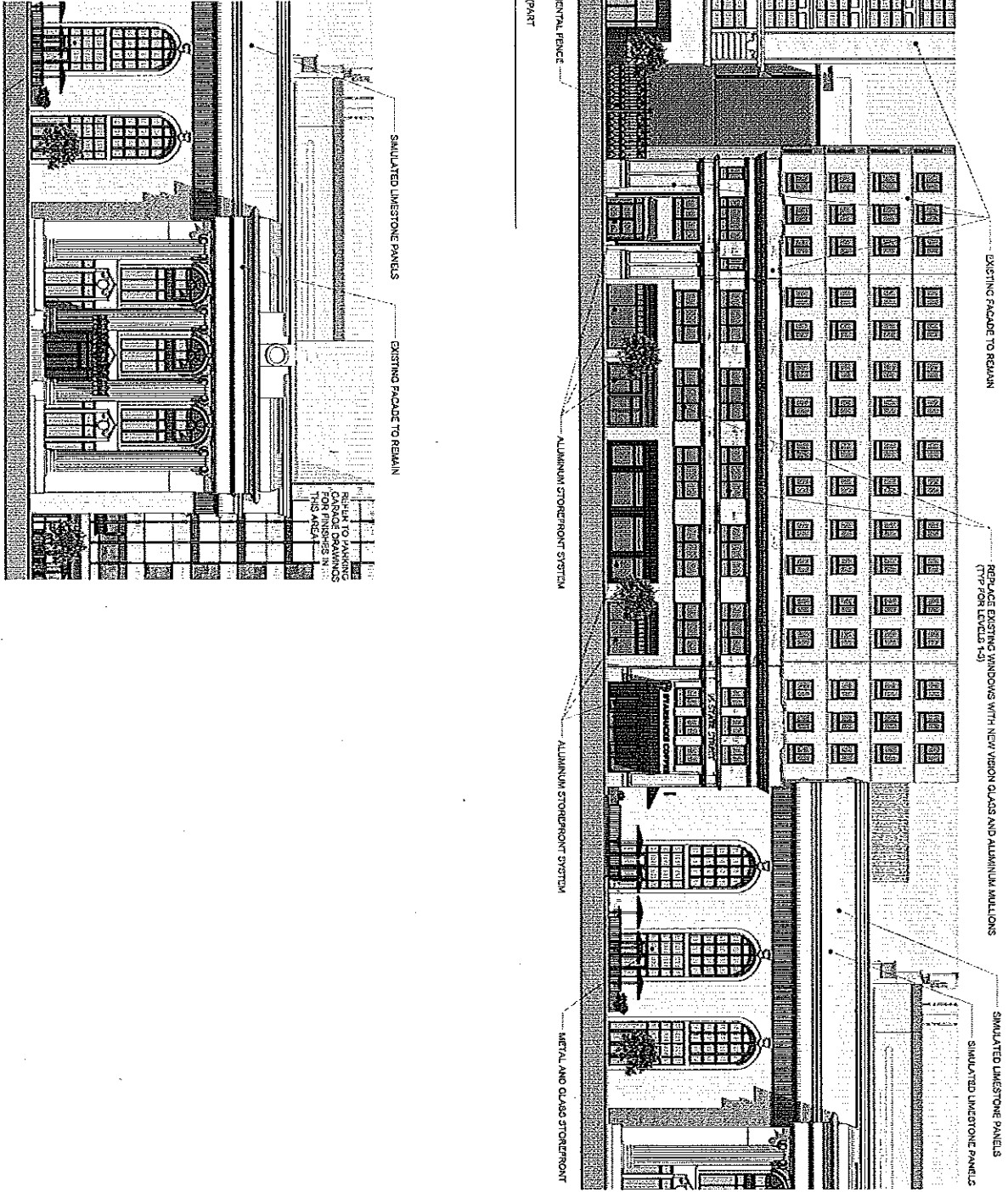
MGM SPRINGFIELD

COLUMBUS AVENUE ELEVATION

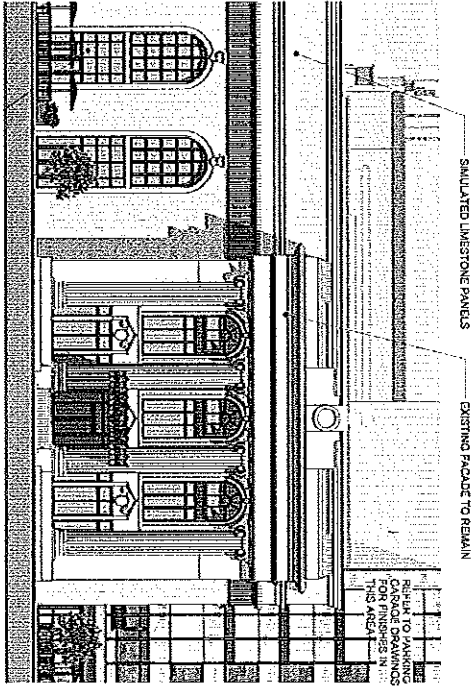


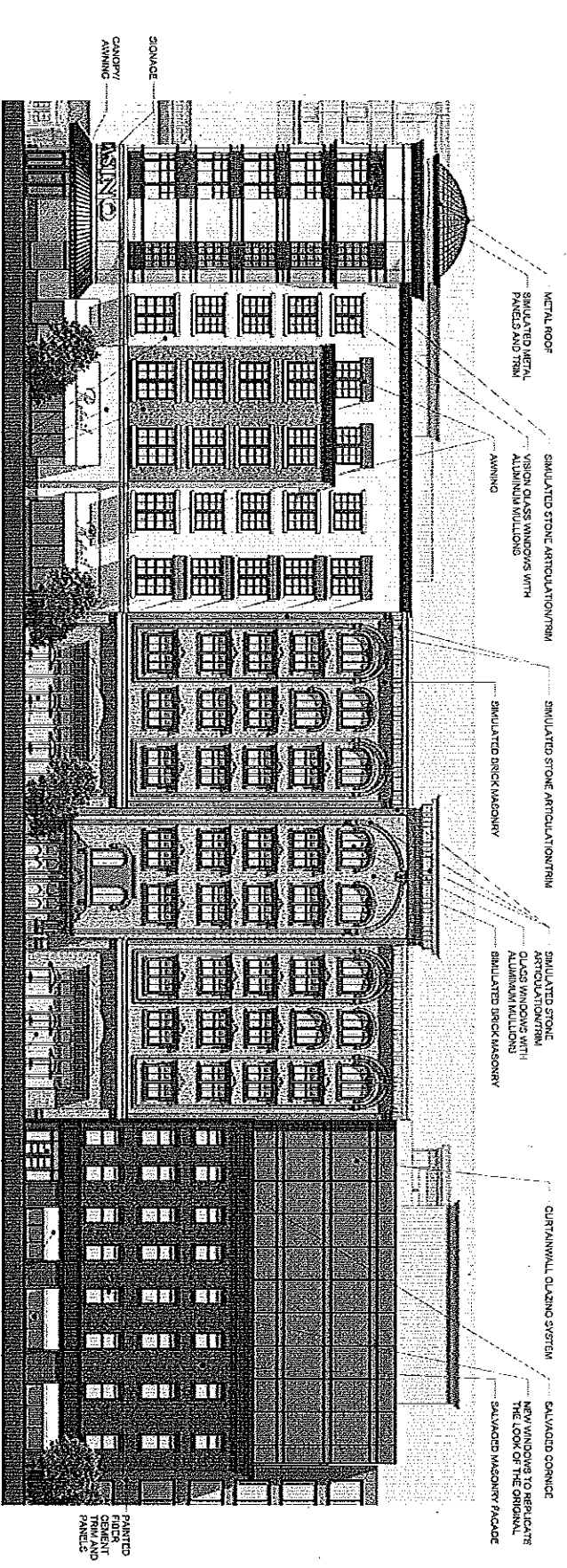


1 OF 2
ENLARGED STATE STREET ELEVATION (PART)



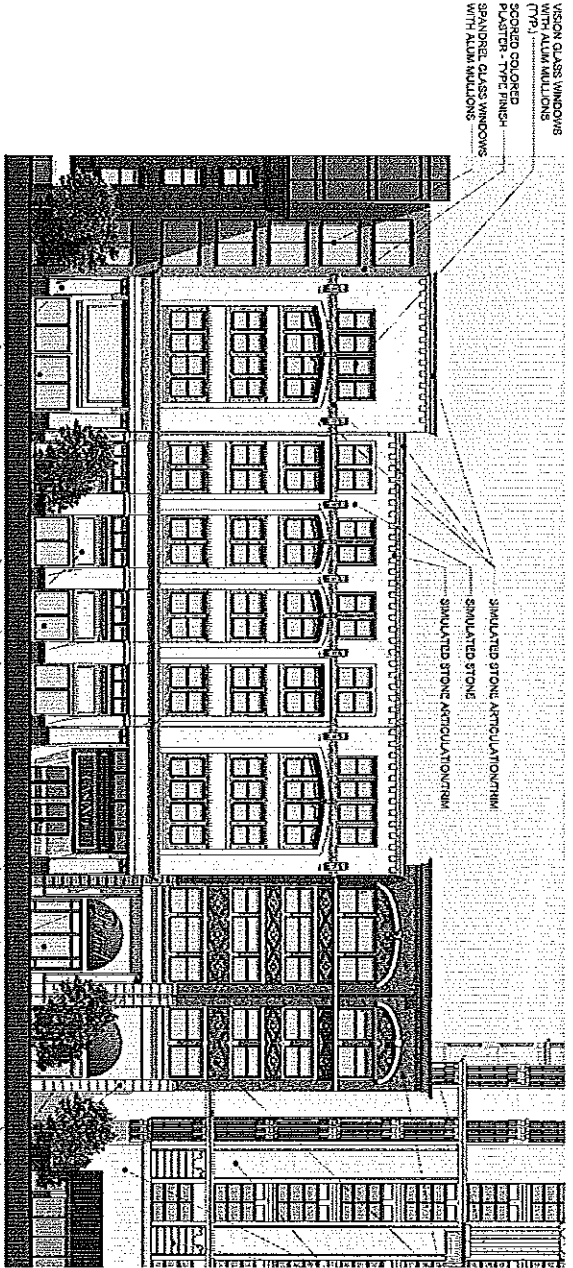
2 OF 2
ENLARGED STATE STREET ELEVATION (PART)





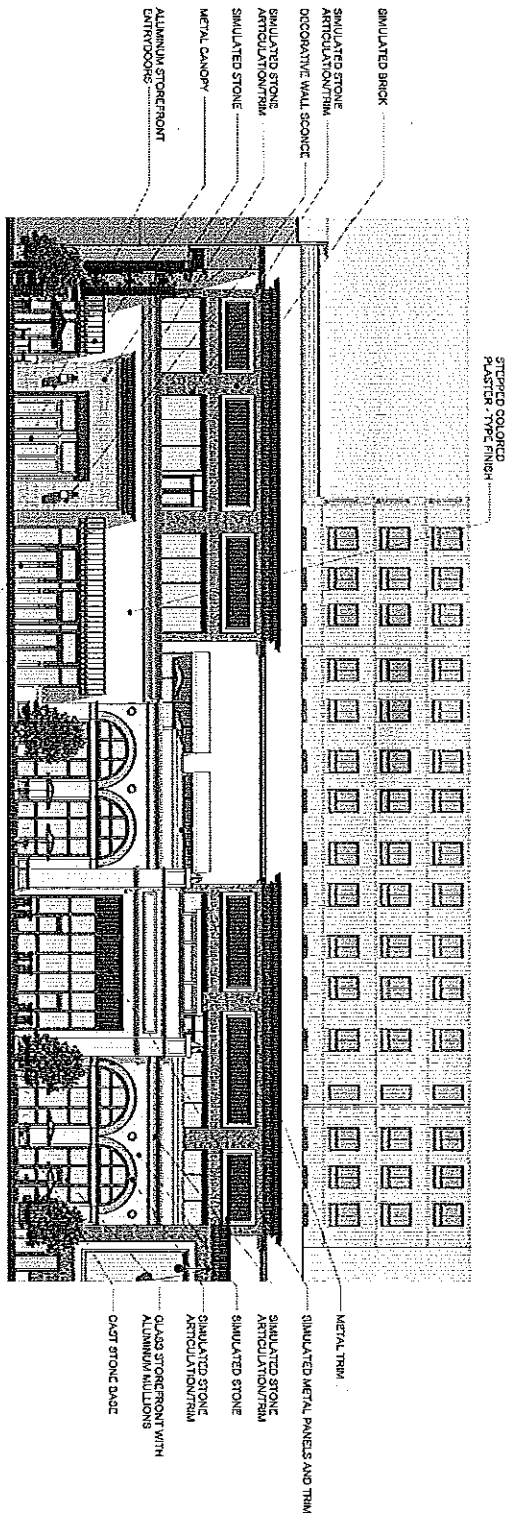
METAL ROOF
SIMULATED METAL PANELS AND TRIM
VISION GLASS WINDOWS WITH ALUMINUM MULLIONS
AWNING
SIMULATED STONE ARTICULATION TRIM
SIMULATED STONE ARTICULATION TRIM
SIMULATED BRICK MASONRY
SIMULATED STONE ARTICULATION TRIM
GLASS WINDOWS WITH ALUMINUM MULLIONS
SIMULATED BRICK MASONRY
CURTAINWALL GLAZING SYSTEM
SALVAGED CORNICE
NEW WINDOWS TO REPLICATE THE LOOK OF THE ORIGINAL
SALVAGED MASONRY FACADE

ENLARGED MAIN STREET ELEVATION (PART 1)
SIGNAGE
CANOPY AWNING
SIMULATED BRICK MASONRY
SIMULATED STONE OR PLASTER STOREFRONT SYSTEM
SIMULATED STONE ARTICULATION TRIM
SIMULATED STONE
SIMULATED STONE ARTICULATION TRIM
STOREFRONT LUNNY DOORS
ALUMINUM STOREFRONT SYSTEM
ALUMINUM STOREFRONT ENTRY DOORS
GLASS ENTRY DOORS
ALUMINUM STOREFRONT MASONRY
ALUMINUM STOREFRONT SYSTEM
PAINTED FLOOR TRIM AND PANELS

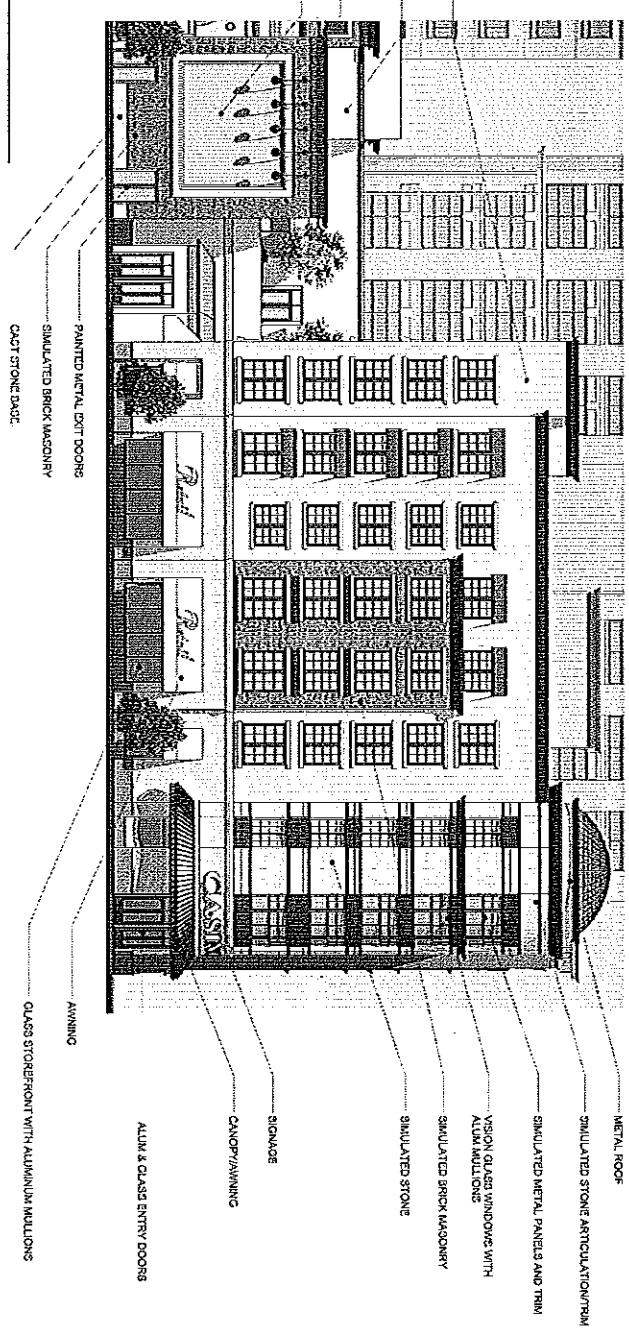


VISION GLASS WINDOWS WITH ALUM MULLIONS (TYP)
SCORED COLORED PLASTER - TYPE FINISH
SPANDREL GLASS WINDOWS WITH ALUM MULLIONS
ENLARGED MAIN STREET ELEVATION (PART 2)
STOREFRONT ENTRY DOORS
ORPC COLUMN
GLASS STOREFRONT WITH ALUMINUM MULLIONS
AWNING
CAST STONE BASE
GLASS STOREFRONT WITH ALUMINUM MULLIONS
AWNING
STOREFRONT ENTRY DOORS
SIMULATED STONE
SIMULATED METAL EXIT DOORS
EXISTING FACADE TO REMAIN
SIMULATED MASONRY ARTICULATION TRIM
SIMULATED BRICK MASONRY

1 ENLARGED HOWARD STREET ELEVATION
(PART 1 OF 2)

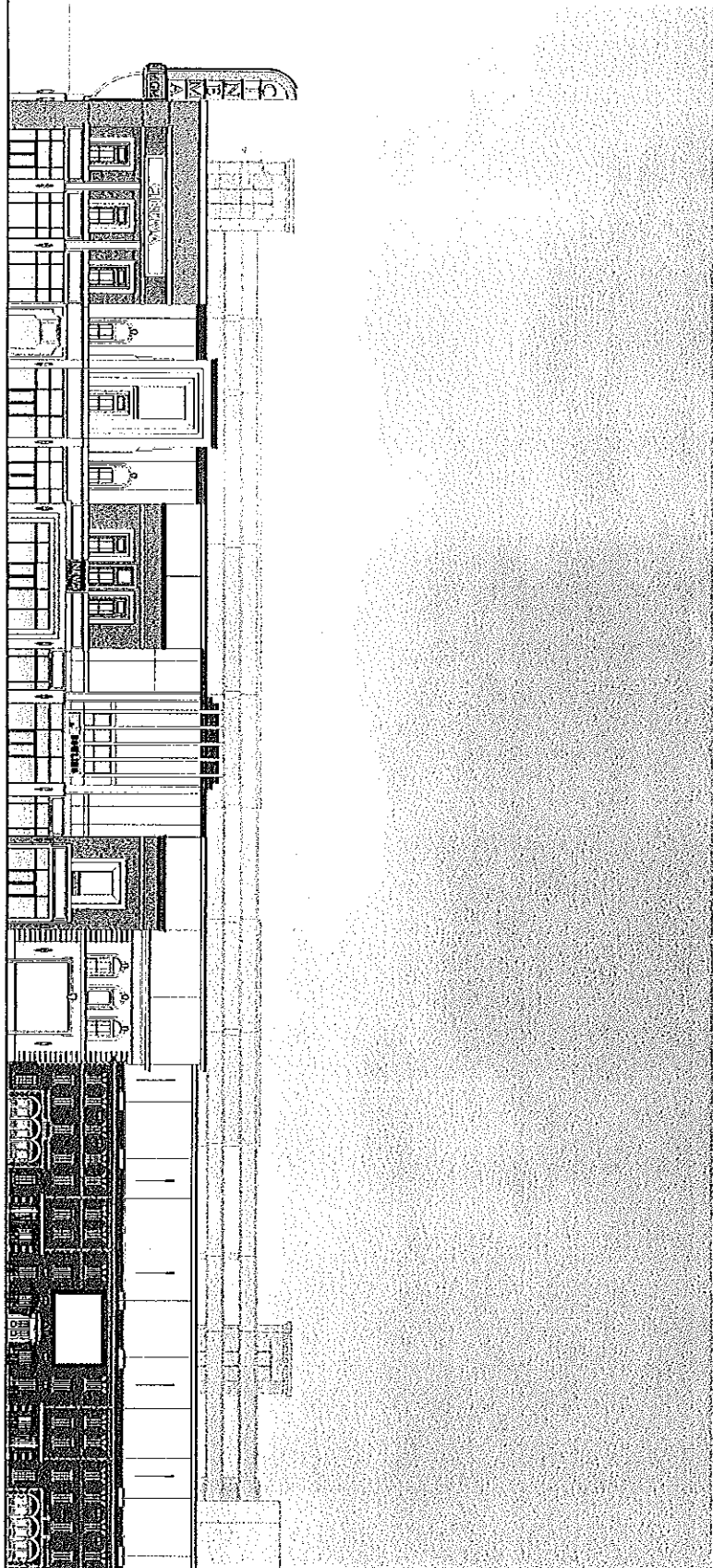


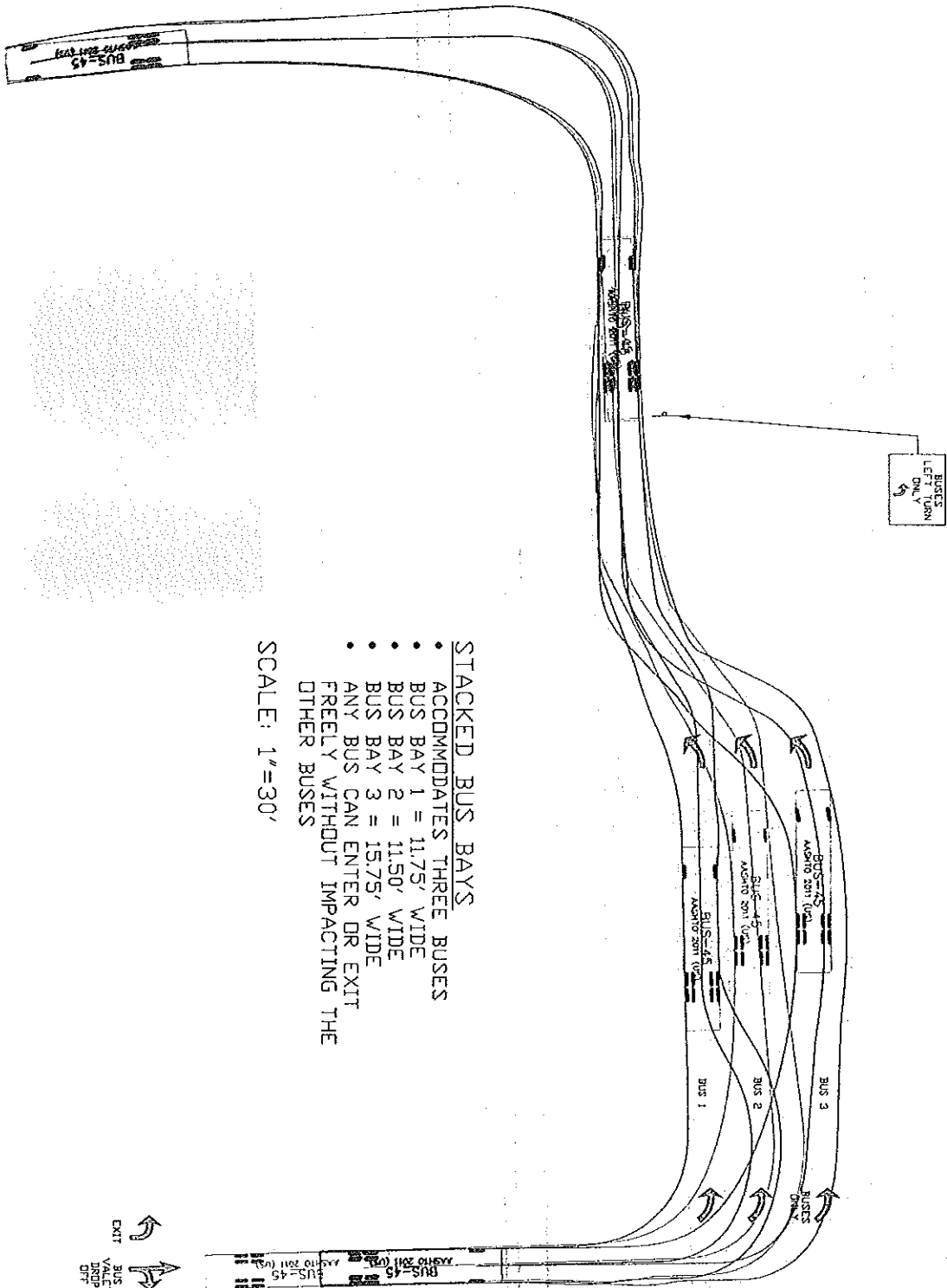
2 ENLARGED HOWARD STREET ELEVATION
(PART 2 OF 2)



MGM SPRINGFIELD

OVERALL ENTERTAINMENT BLOCK ELEVATION



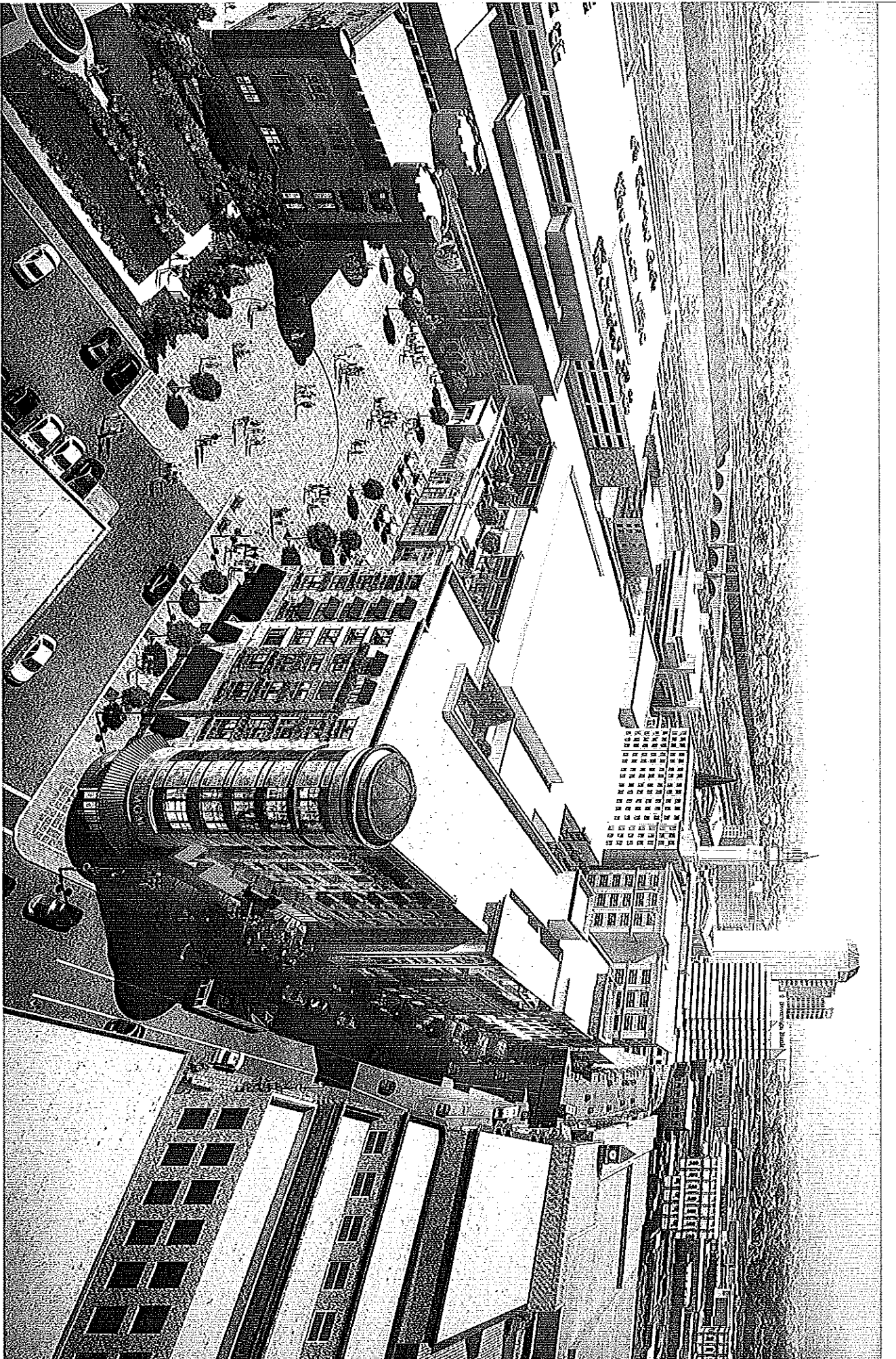


STACKED BUS BAYS

- ACCOMMODATES THREE BUSES
- BUS BAY 1 = 11.75' WIDE
- BUS BAY 2 = 11.50' WIDE
- BUS BAY 3 = 15.75' WIDE
- ANY BUS CAN ENTER OR EXIT FREELY WITHOUT IMPACTING THE OTHER BUSES

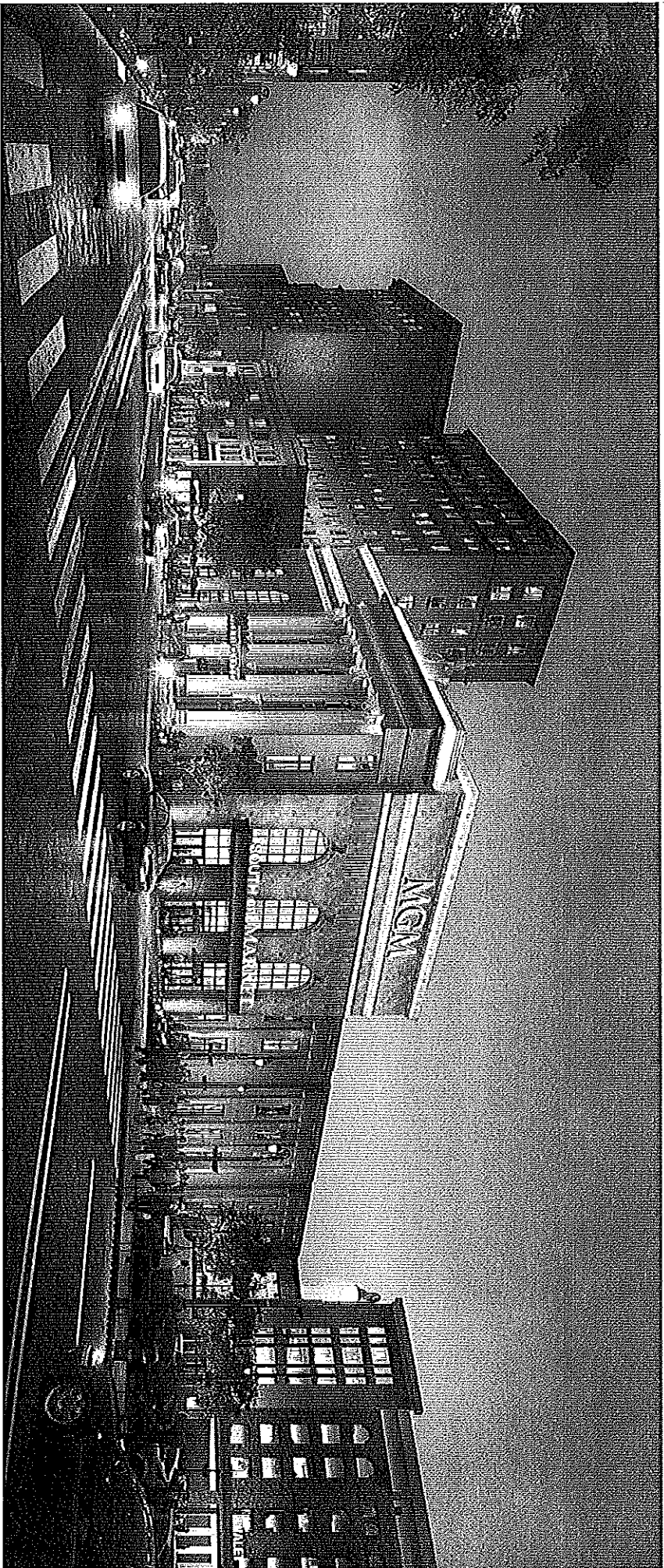
SCALE: 1"=30'





MGM  SPRINGFIELD

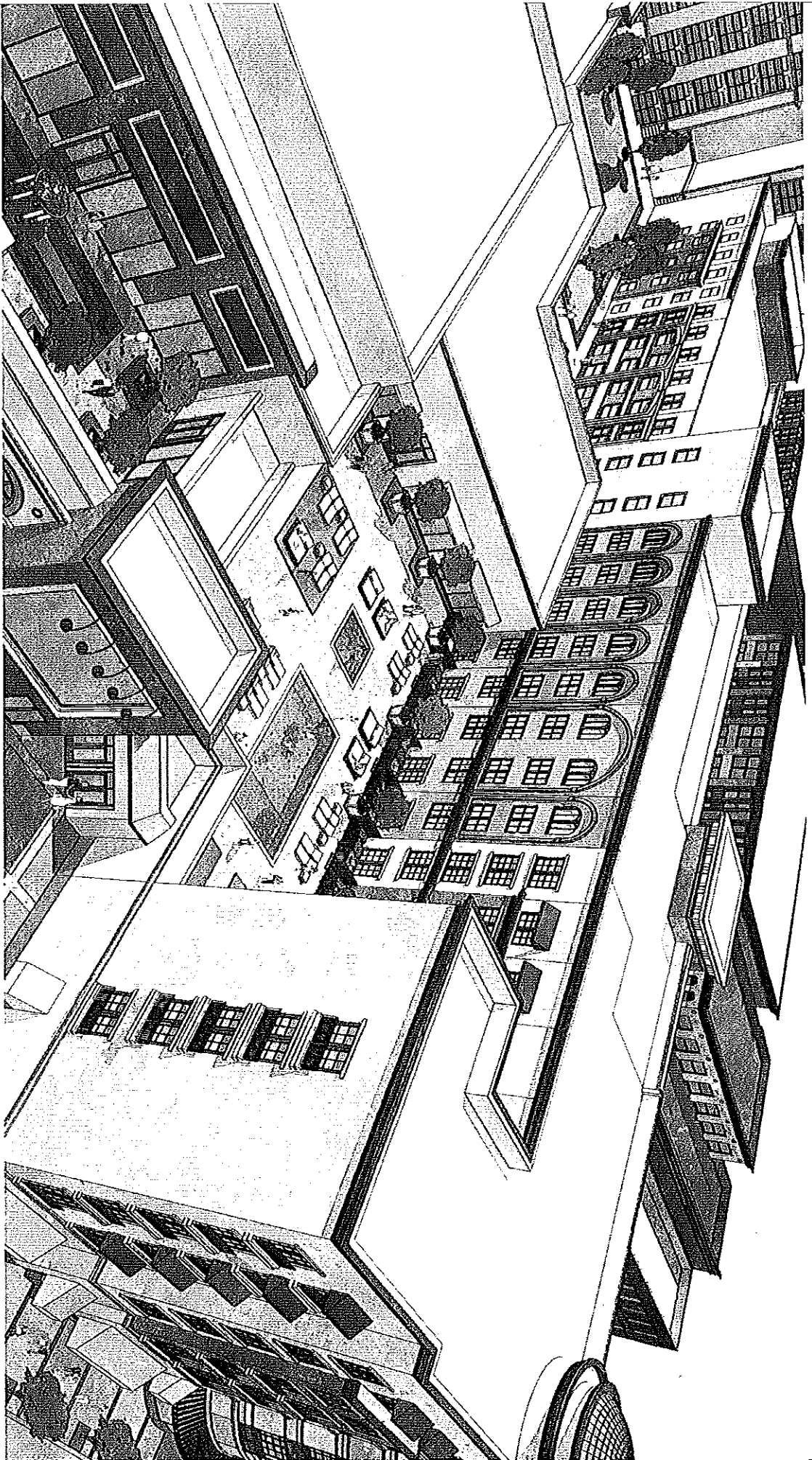
VIEW OF MAIN AND HOWARD STREET



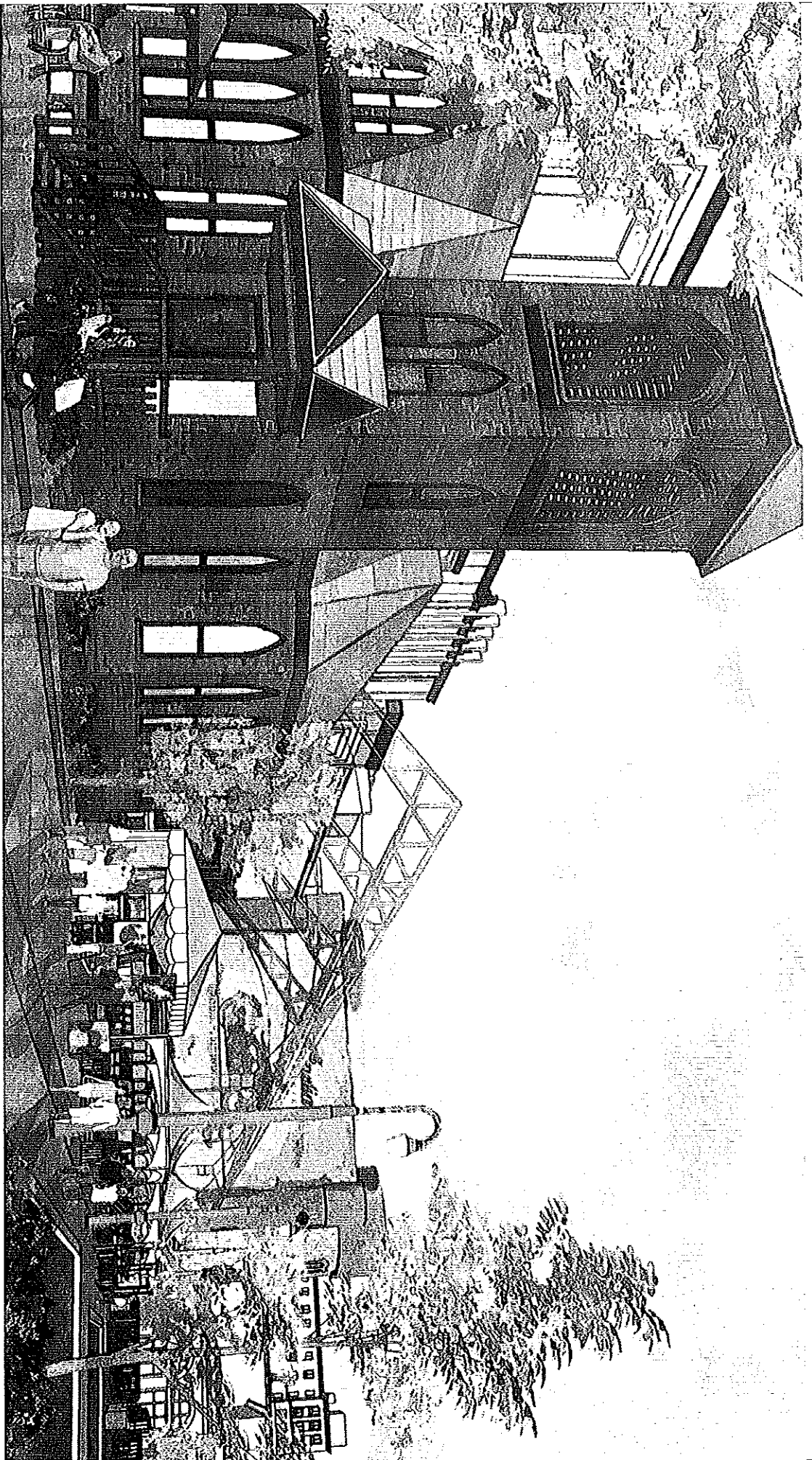
MGM SPRINGFIELD

VIEW OF STATE STREET AND MGM WAY

MGM SPRINGFIELD

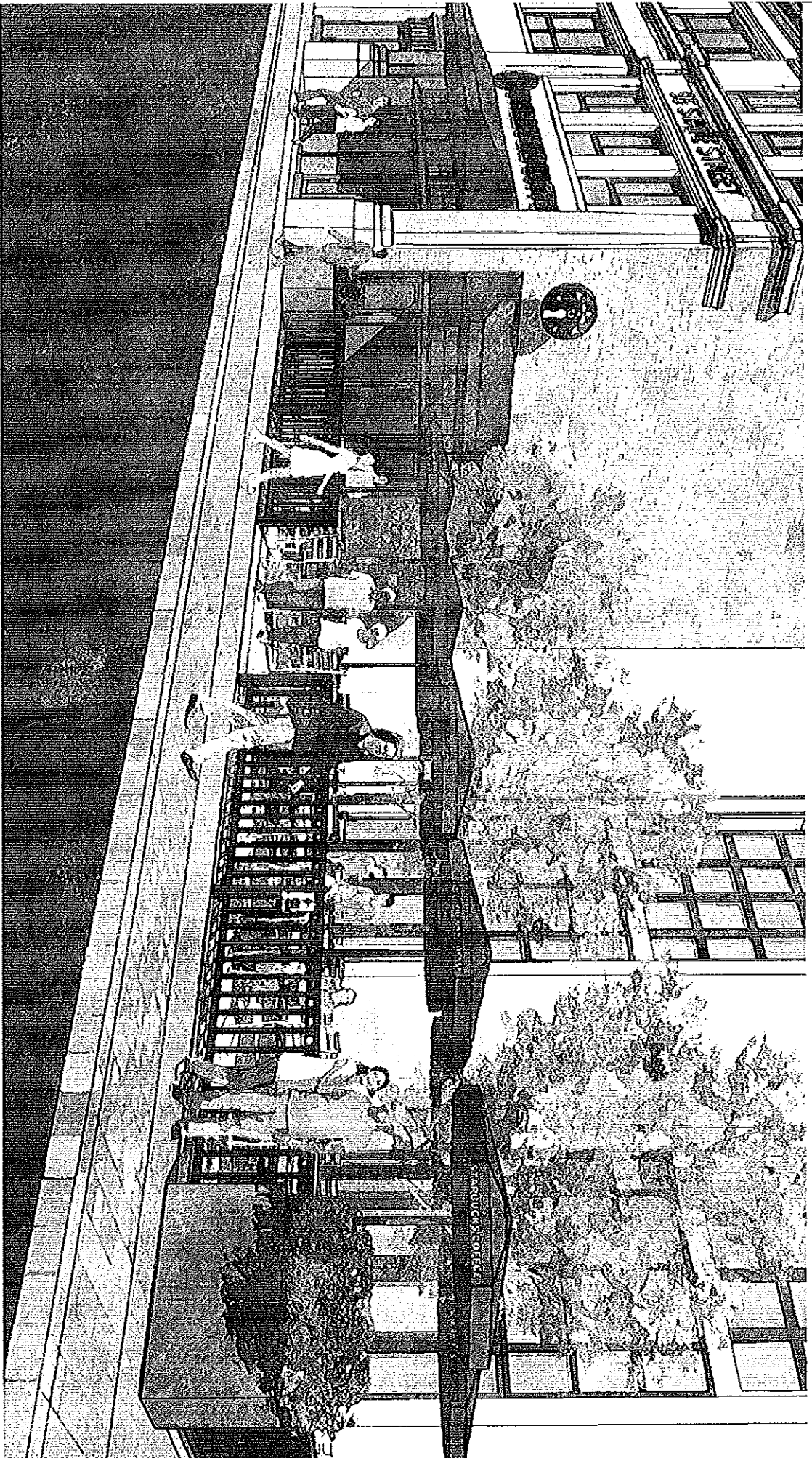


POOL DECK



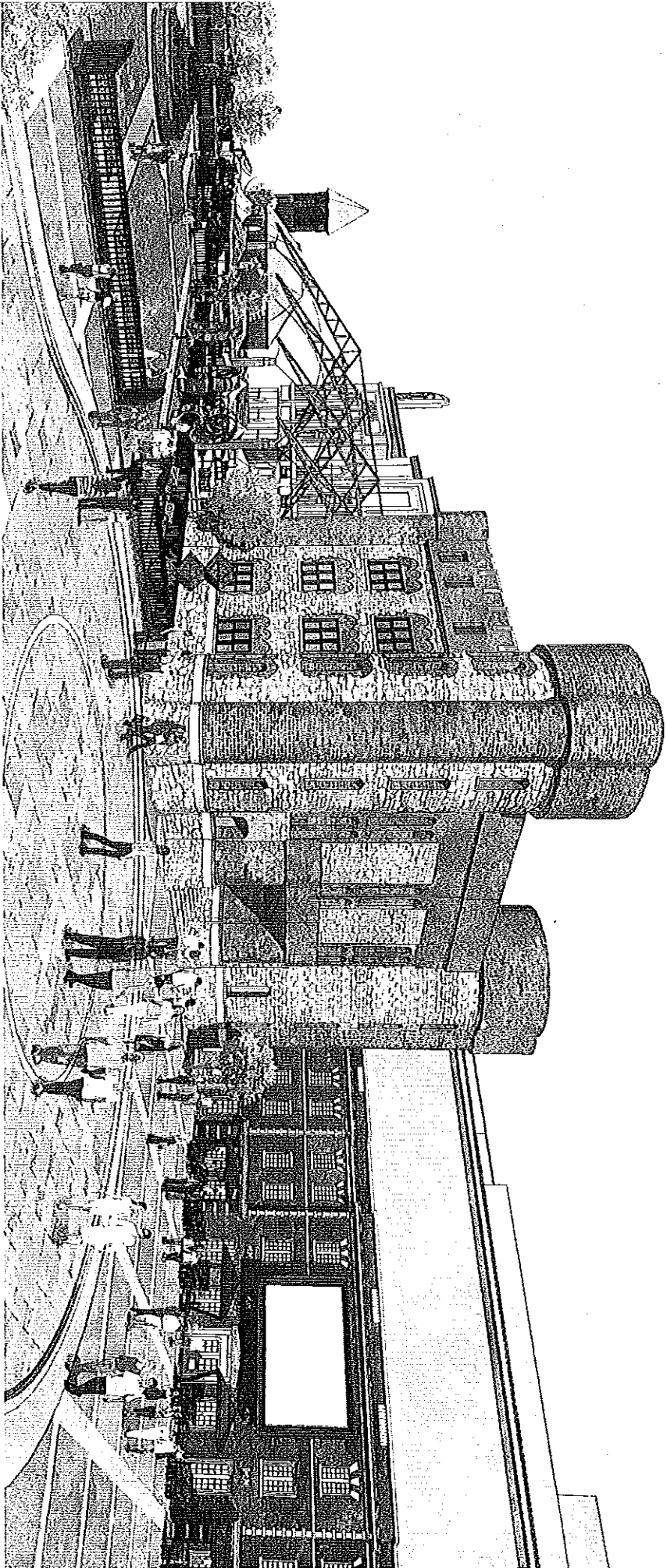
MGM  SPRINGFIELD

ENTERTAINMENT PLAZA



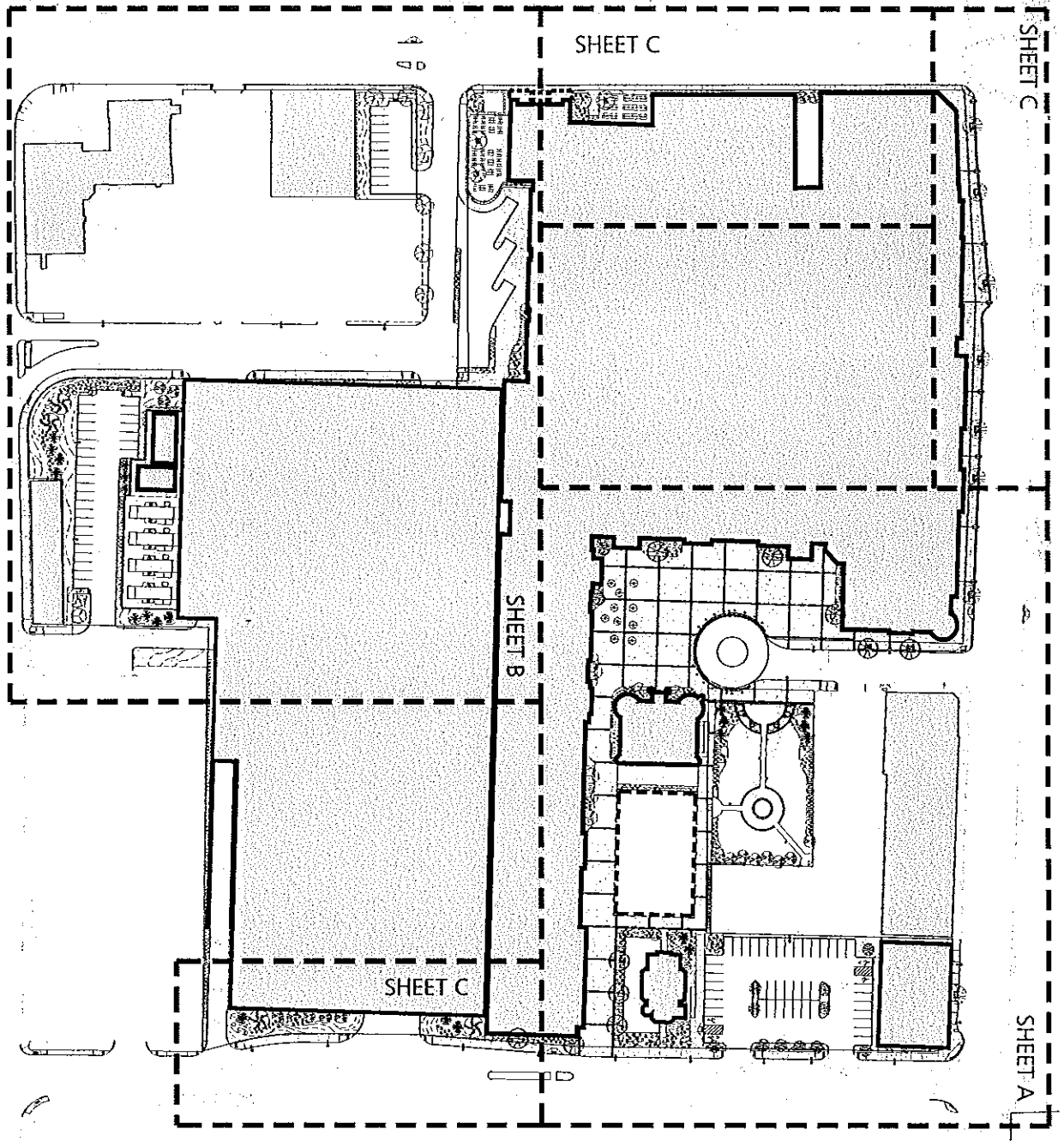
MGM  SPRINGFIELD

STATE STREET VIEW



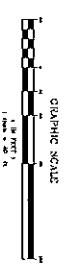
MGM  SPRINGFIELD

EVENT PLAZA



LEGEND:	
	Existing Impervious Area
	Building
	Proposed Land Area
	Square Concrete
	Asphalt Paved Rd
	Permeable/Resonant
	Existing Trees
	Proposed/Remove Trees
	Existing Plantings
	Proposed Plantings

1. The location of existing underground utilities are shown as indicated by the owner's utility records. The location of existing underground utilities shown on this plan are shown as indicated by the owner's utility records. The location of existing underground utilities shown on this plan are shown as indicated by the owner's utility records.
2. The location of existing underground utilities are shown as indicated by the owner's utility records. The location of existing underground utilities shown on this plan are shown as indicated by the owner's utility records.



	SPRINGFIELD, MA	
PROJECT:	MGM SPRINGFIELD - SITE PLAN	
DRAWING TITLE:	LANDSCAPE OVERALL PLAN	
SHEET NO.:	LA	

Project Site

Court St

State St

Cross St

Bliss St

Main St

Peabody La

Park St

Willow St

Howard St

W. Columbus Av

E Columbus Av

I-91

I-91

Union St

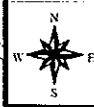
Wilcox St

William St



SPRINGFIELD
GIS

City of Springfield, Massachusetts



DATA SOURCE:

Casino Overlay District
City Council Site Plan Review