

MEMORANDUM

To: CRA Board
From: Carlos Peralta
Date: December 18, 2019
Re: 325 Main Street Google Signage Proposal

INTRODUCTION

Staff and the Design Review Committee (the “Committee”) hosted a second public meeting on December 4th in the Community Room located at the Cambridge Police Department. Committee members, CRA Board Chair Kathy Born and Assistant Secretary Barry Zevin were joined to discuss Google’s 325 Main Street signage proposal, by the City of Cambridge Planning Board members Hugh Russell, Tom Sieniewicz, and City Staff members Urban Design Project Planner Suzannah Bigolin, Project Planner Liza Paden. The proposed signage was presented by Eric Mo and Michael Tilford of Boston Properties (BXP), Beth Whittaker and Chris Johnson of Merge Architects, and Eric Gunther and Wade Aaron of SosoLimited.

DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

BXP provided the Committee with a revised proposal which included modifications to the proposal made following the feedback provided during the Committee’s initial review session on October 1st. The latest proposal included one penthouse sign consisting of a recessed edge-lit “G” facing southeast and a non-illuminated street-level sign which spells out the name Google. The 325 Main Street lobby display wall consisting of bricks and interactive display panels was also presented.

Design specifications for the penthouse “G” sign include:

- Measurements: 15’ diameter and 6” thick
- Illumination: Recessed edge-lit (front face of sign is not illuminated)
- Color: The “G” will be painted red, yellow, green and blue.
- Material: Aluminum

BXP provided the Committee with two options of the penthouse sign. Option one revealed a mullion through the center of the “G”. Option two displayed the mullion completely removed in the location of the “G” sign. The Committee and Planning Board members recommended keeping the mullion as shown in option one, but agreed that eliminating the center portion of the mullion to create an interruption in the center of the sign presents an enhanced design.

The Committee and BXP discussed an email delivered to the CRA by a resident of Kendall Square requesting requirement for the penthouse sign to be turned off after 10PM each evening. The Committee advised BXP to perform a night time lighting study and report back to the CRA on the hours that the buildings located in Kendall Square turn their lights off, to help inform the CRA Board’s decision. BXP also suggested they could dim the sign during the nighttime hours.

Designs specifications for the exterior “Google” street-level sign include:

- Measurements: 4’H x 16’L and 4” thick letters spelling the name Google
- Illumination: Non-Illuminated
- Color: Painted White
- Material: Aluminum

The Committee asked BXP to consider adding color to the “Google” sign similar to the penthouse sign. BXP expressed that they would articulate the sentiments of the Committee to their client.

In the October 1st Committee meeting, the Committee suggested the addition of exterior street-level wayfinding signage. BXP presented options for a branded column that has the potential to include transit, community and other forms of informative material.

Additional designs presented included the day/night renderings of the proposed signage, images of 325 Main Street from Longfellow Bridge and an image from Boston, across the Charles River. BXP also provided the Committee with a Main Street faced retail signage examples. These images delivered context to how future retail signage will relate with the proposed 325 Main Street street-level sign.

The final design element involves an animation of the interactive display wall located within the interior lobby area of the 325 Main Street lobby. The installation included LED tickers that are woven into the gaps created by the brick wall. The Committee expressed concerns with the lack of transparency the wall creates and asked that the design team examine options that creates more transparency. The Committee requested the design team provide the following items for evaluation to support their understanding of the interactive display wall:

- Samples of the bricks that will be used to create the wall
- Drawings or animation in plan view of the lobby
- Example of the brick wall with larger openings to reduce the barrier effect created by the initial design.

BXP has confirmed that they will work to enhance the design and report back to the CRA.

MOTION

To approve Google’s signage proposal consistent with the December 13, 2019 submission, including the penthouse building identity sign and street-level wayfinding sign for 325 Main Street, within the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Plan – Parcel 4

ATTACHMENTS

Google CAMbridge Signage Proposal (submitted December 13, 2019)



325 Main Street Google Exterior Signage

December 18, 2019

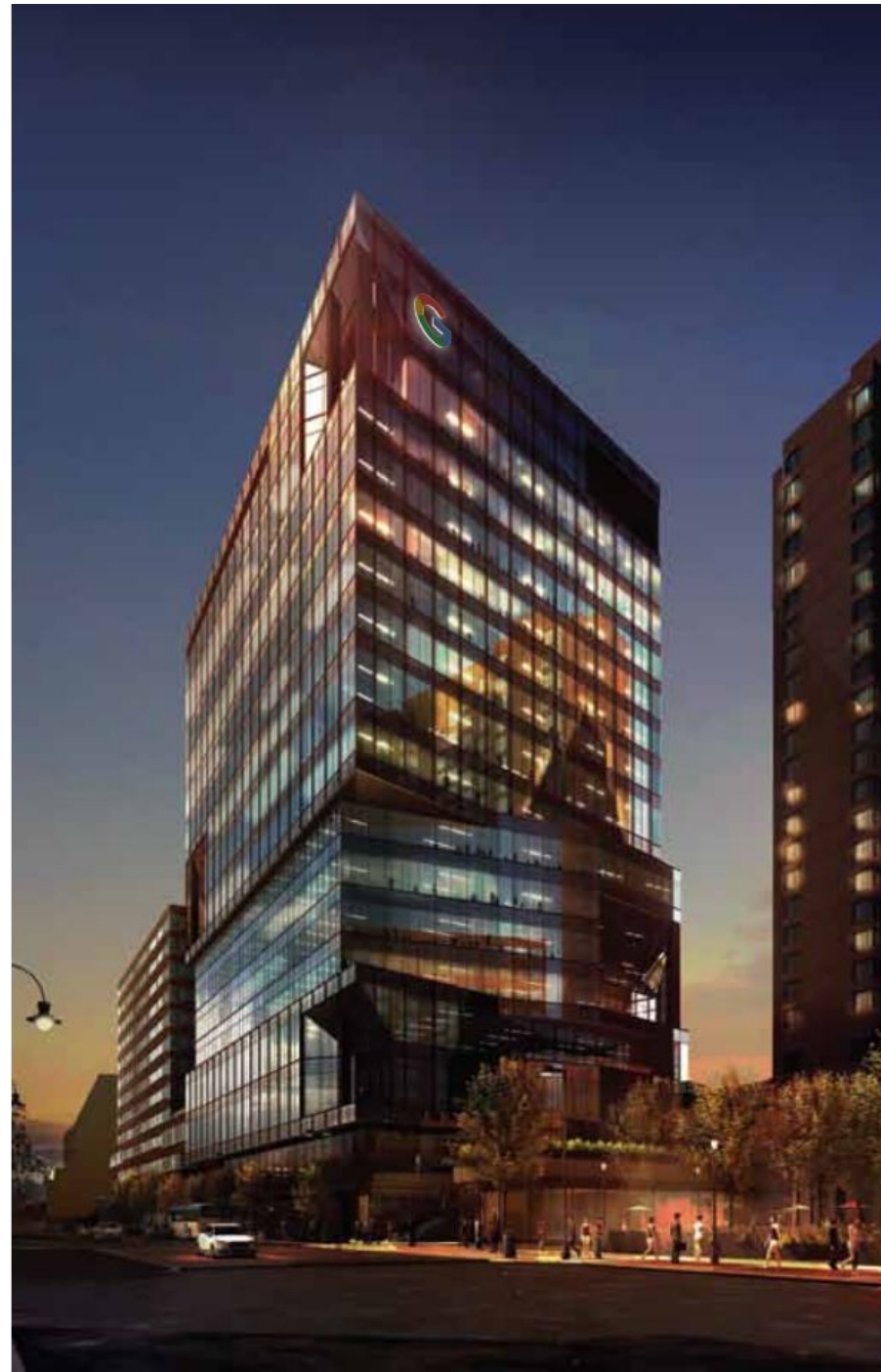
bxp Boston
Properties

Outline

- Penthouse “G” Sign
- Main Street Public Lobby Entry Refinements
- Main Street “Google” Sign
- Google Lobby Art Installation

Penthouse "G" Sign

Exterior Penthouse Sign: 15'H Recessed Edge Lit Illuminated G Sign

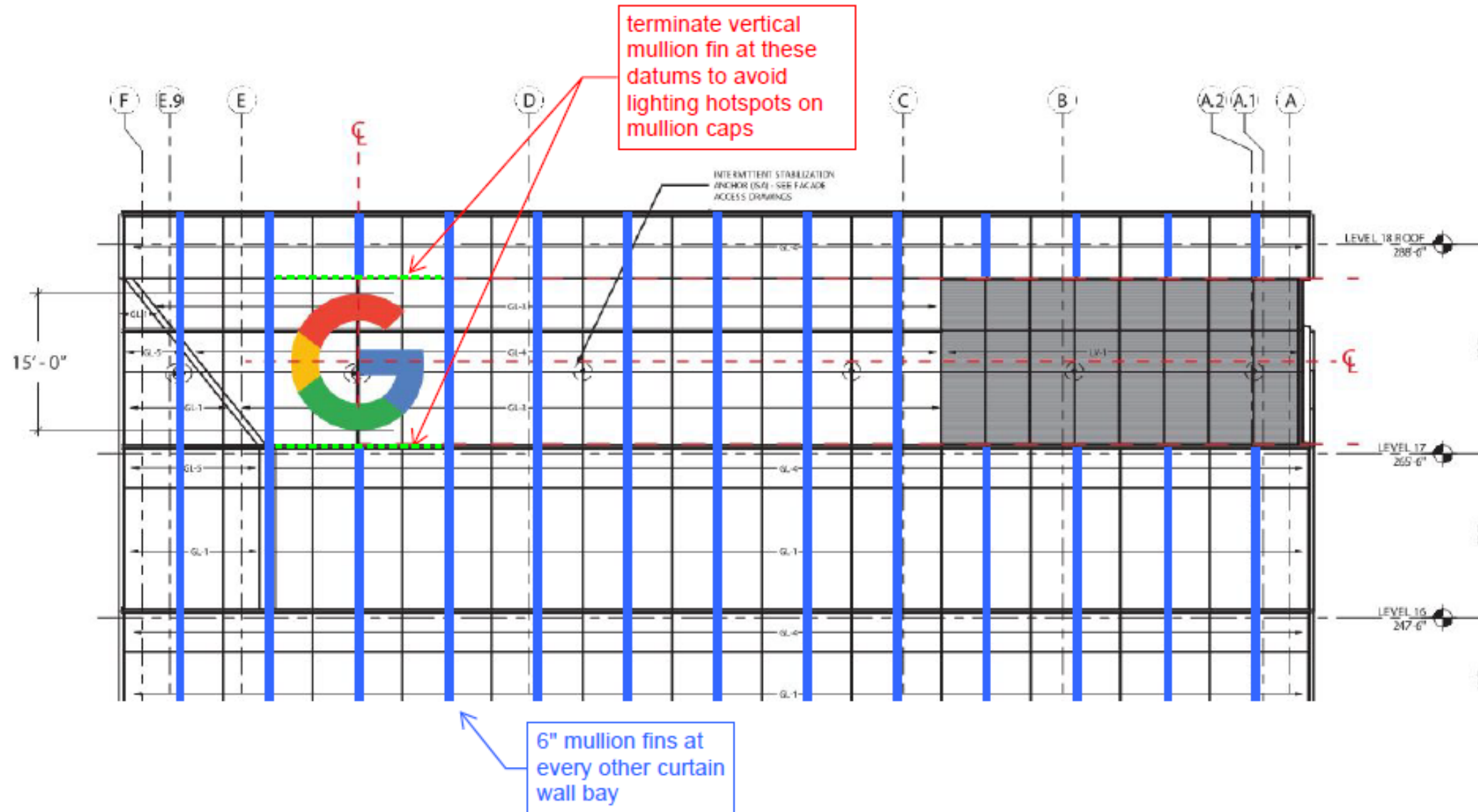


Option 2 Description:

- 15' diameter G
- Recessed edge lit sign, note front face of sign is not illuminated
- 6" thick painted aluminum logo, painted logo to match Google colors with a satin finish, transitions between colors to be crisp lines.
- All hardware to be exterior grade and concealed from the front face of the G logo
- Support steel and outriggers painted to match color of curtain wall mullions

Penthouse "G" Sign – Elevation

Exterior Penthouse Sign : 15'H Recessed Edge Lit Illuminated G Sign



15' diameter G; recessed edge lit sign, note front face of sign is not illuminated

Penthouse "G" Sign – Renderings

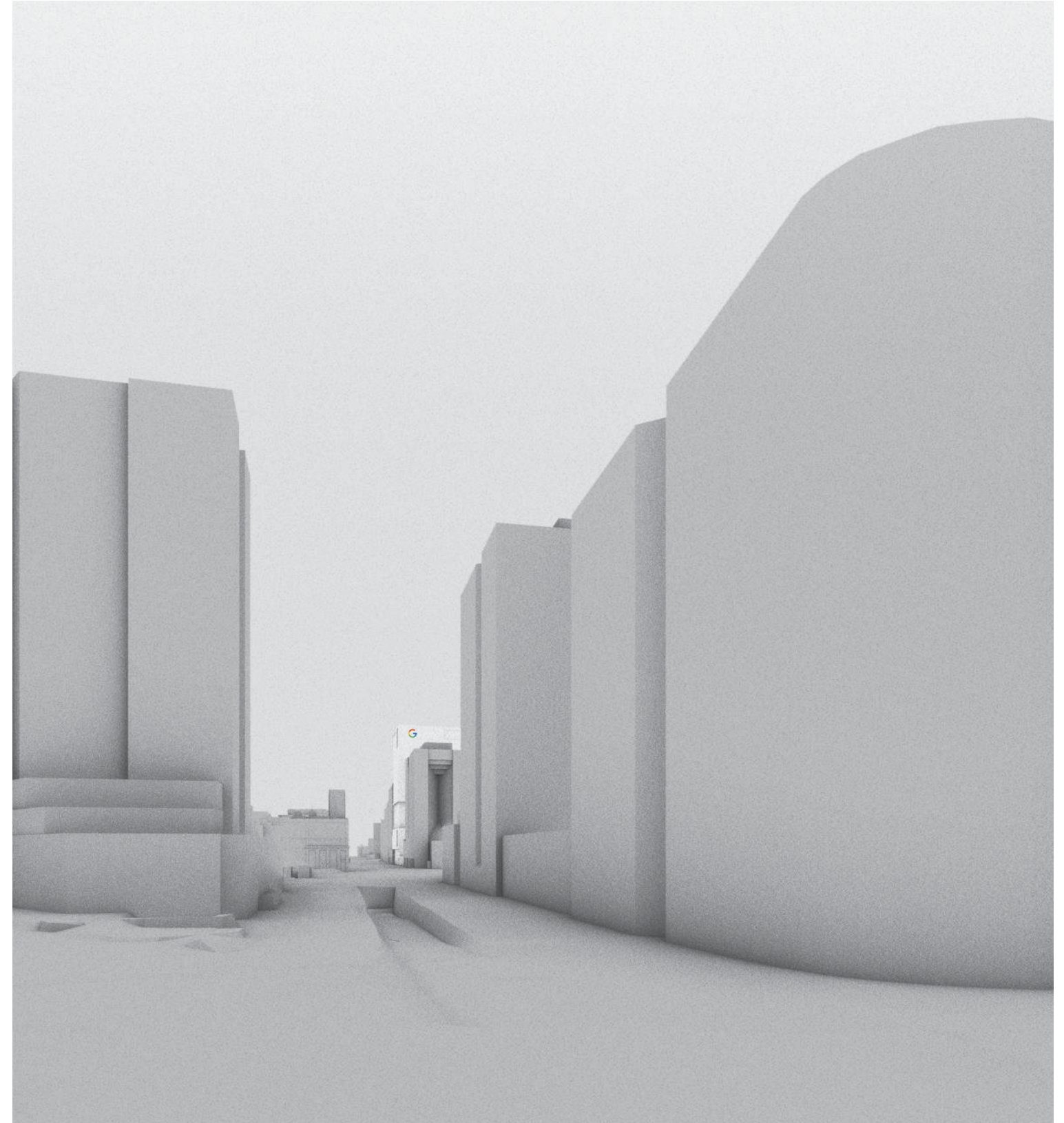
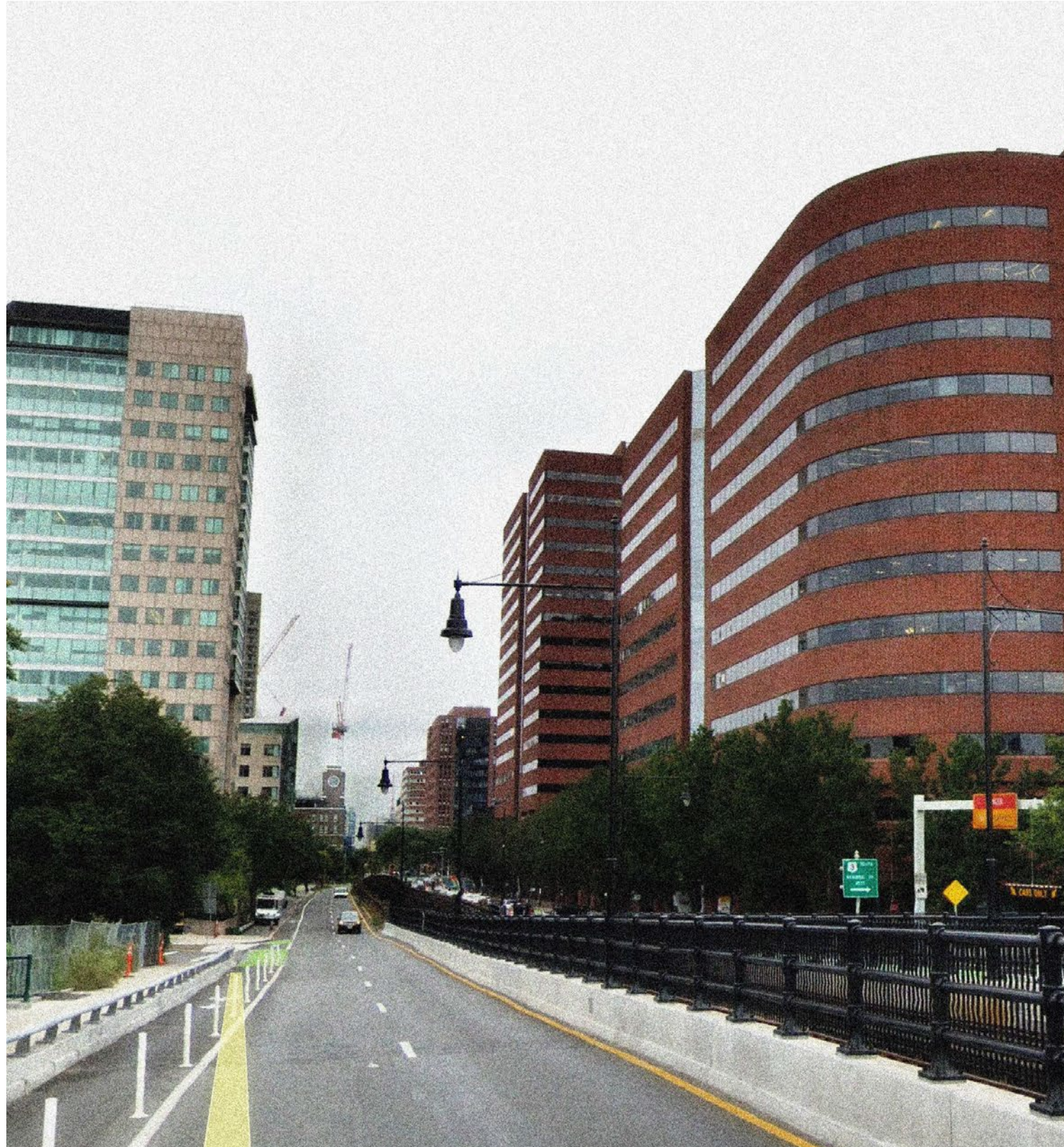


Daytime – SE Corner of New 325 Main from Main Street



Nighttime – SE Corner of New 325 Main from Main Street

Penthouse "G" Sign – Views from Longfellow Bridge



Penthouse "G" Sign – Views from Longfellow Bridge



Penthouse "G" Sign – Light Studies

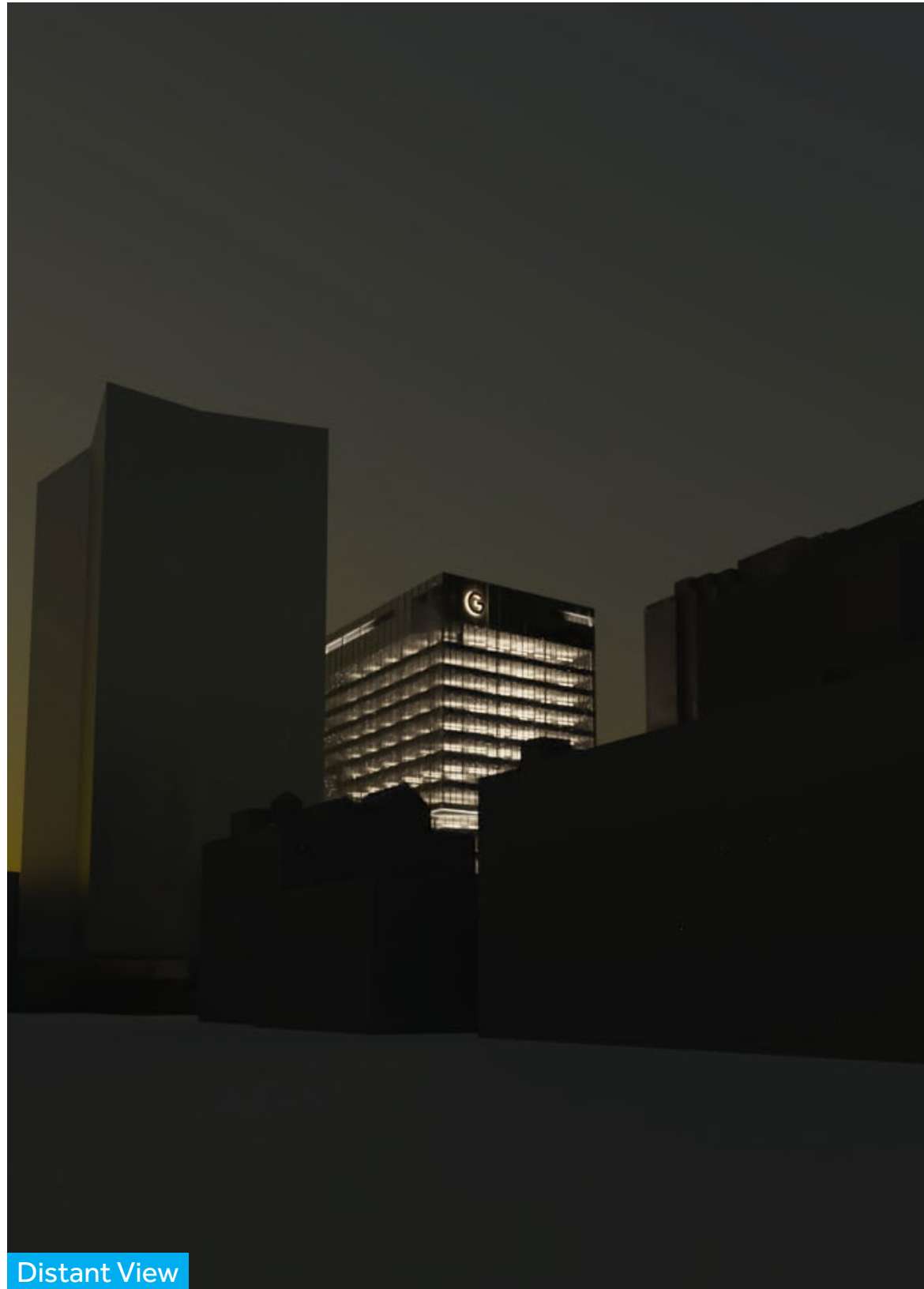


View from Below

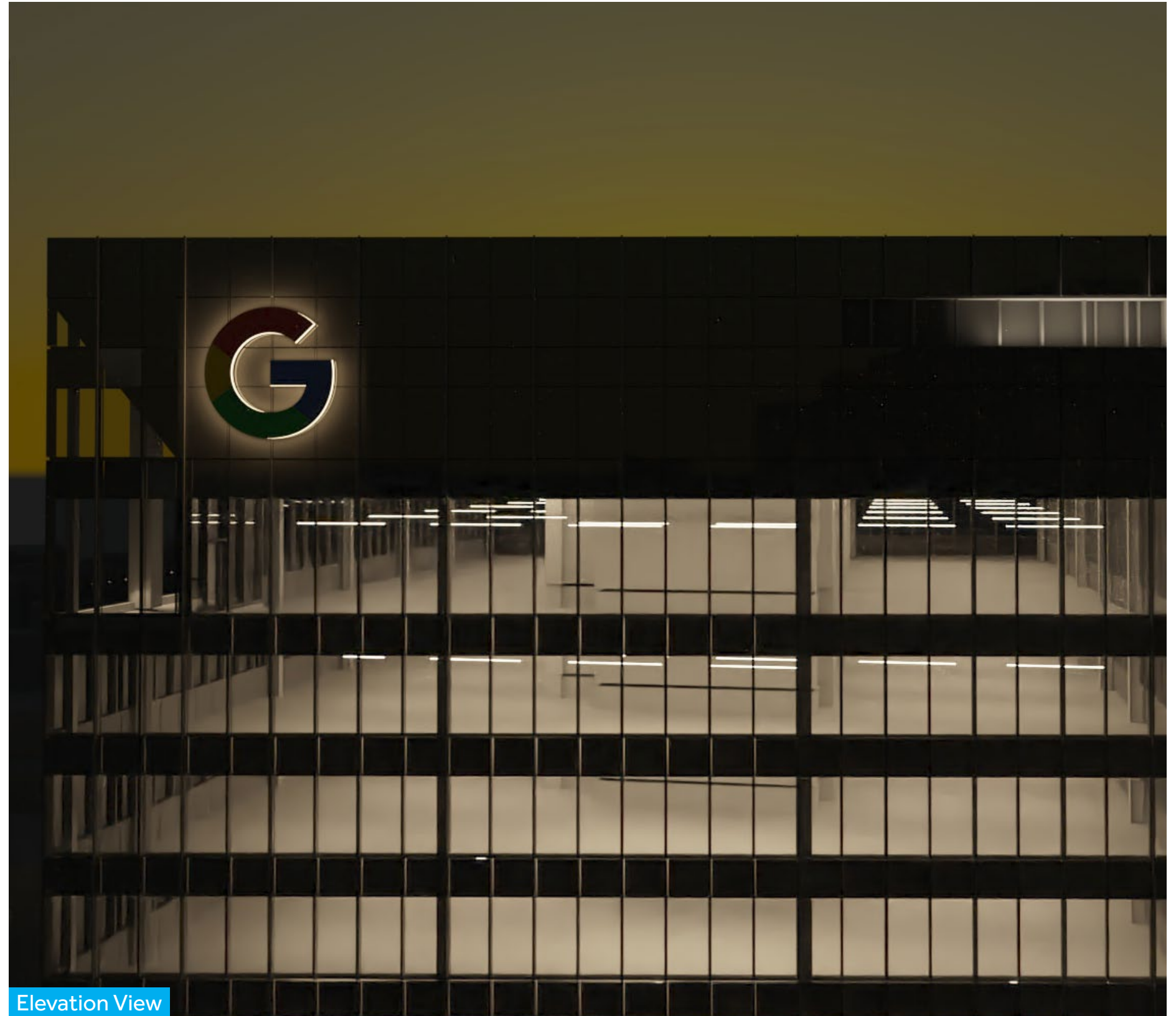


Close-up Detail View

Penthouse "G" Sign – Light Studies



Distant View

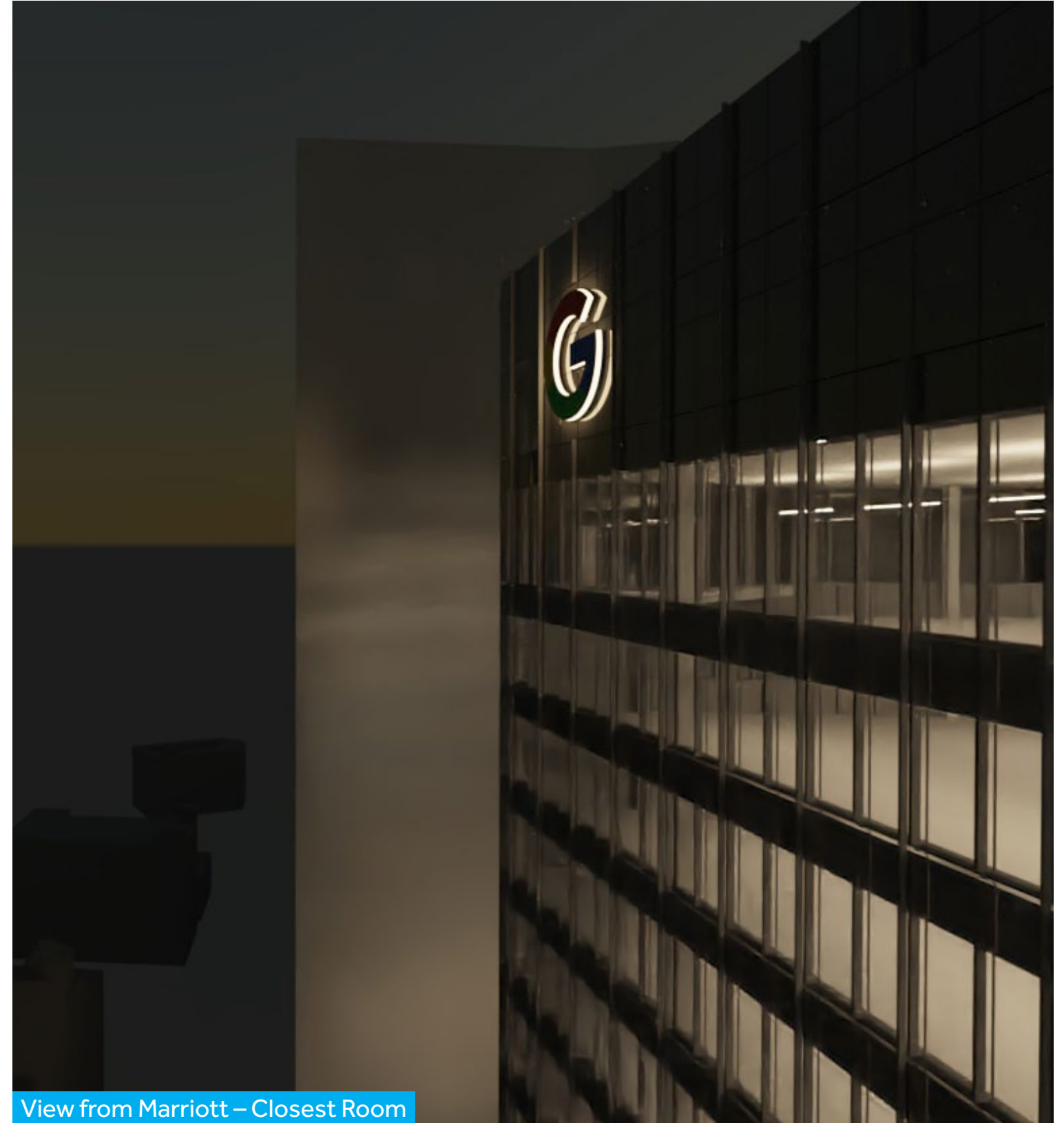


Elevation View

Penthouse "G" Sign – Light Studies



View from Marriott – Farthest Room



View from Marriott – Closest Room

Kendall Square – Penthouse Signage Lighting Survey

Main Street Public Lobby Entry Refinements



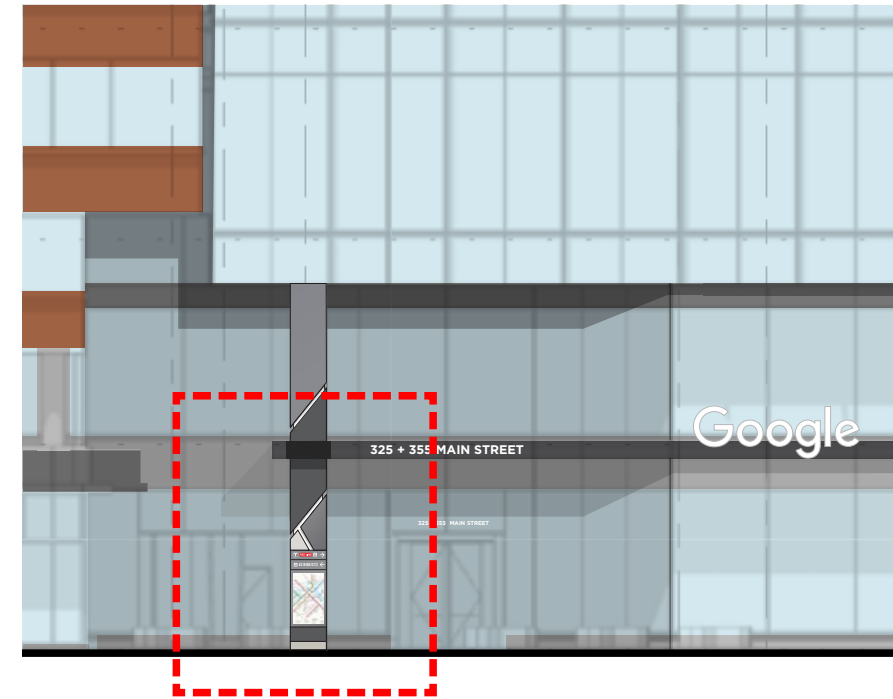
Spandral band between Floors 1 & 2 replaced with vision glass at public lobby section of Main Street elevation

Main Street Public Lobby Entry Refinements



Main Street Public Lobby Entry Refinements

ENTRY COLUMN SIGNAGE **OPTION 1**



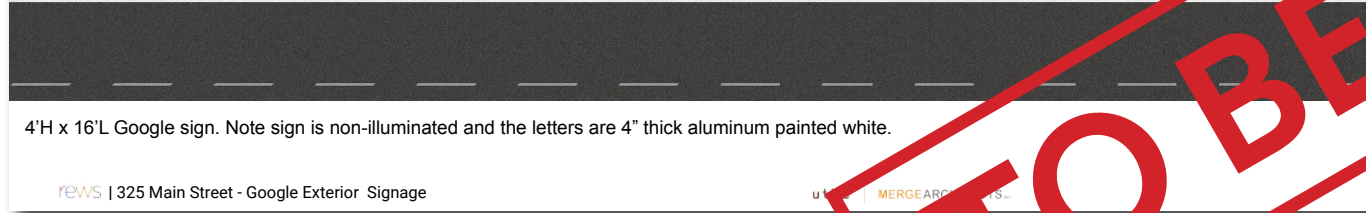
Existing Kendall Square Branded Column Wrap with Wayfinding and Transit Screen at Pioneer Way

Main Street "Google" Sign

Exterior Street Level Sign - 4'H Non-Illuminated Google Sign



Exterior Street Level Sign - 4'H Non-Illuminated Google Sign



4'H x 16'L Google sign. Note sign is non-illuminated and the letters are 4" thick aluminum painted white.

reWS | 325 Main Street - Google Exterior Signage

utile | MERGEARCHITECTS



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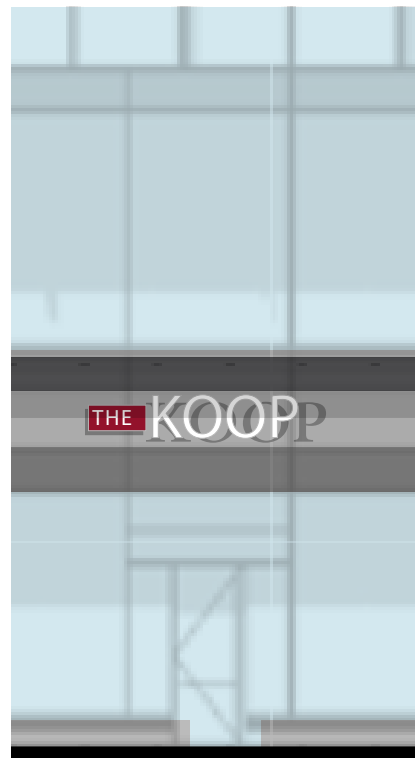
reWS | 325 Main Street - Google Exterior Signage

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TO BE UPDATED

Main Street "Google" Sign – Elevation w/Retail Signage

FACADE RETAIL SIGNAGE



A

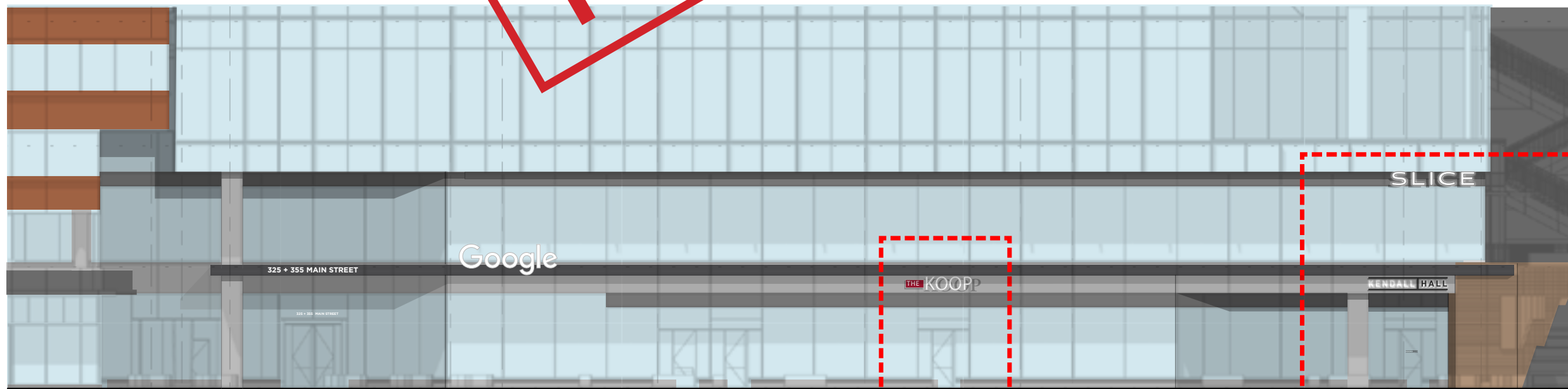


B



B—Side View

TO BE UPDATED



A

B

Main Street "Google" Sign – Renderings



Main Street "Google" Sign – Renderings

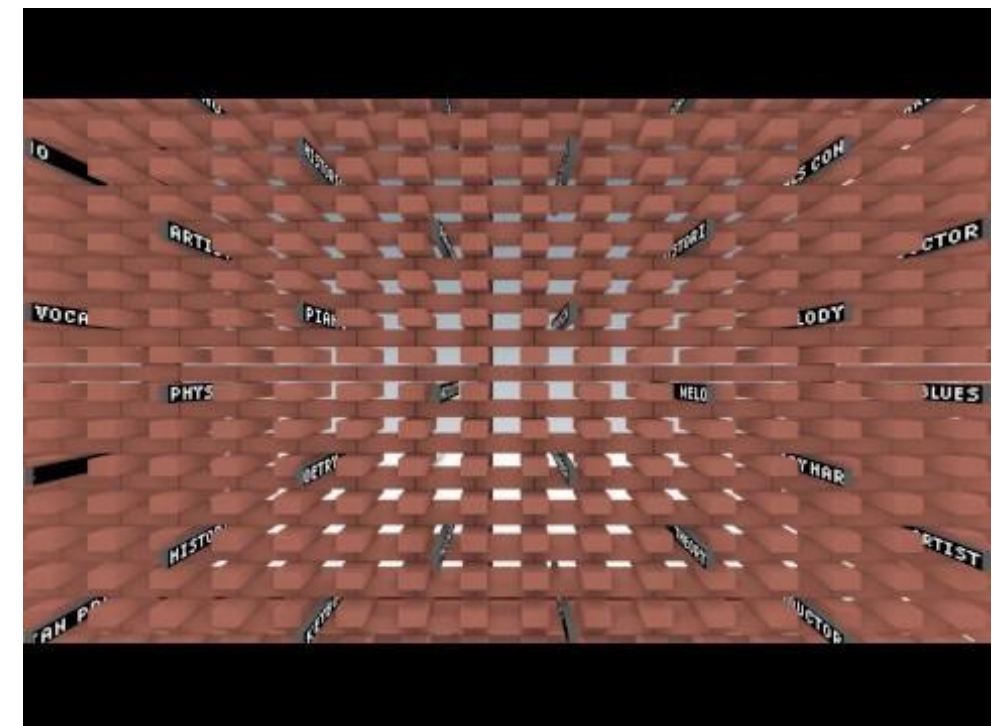
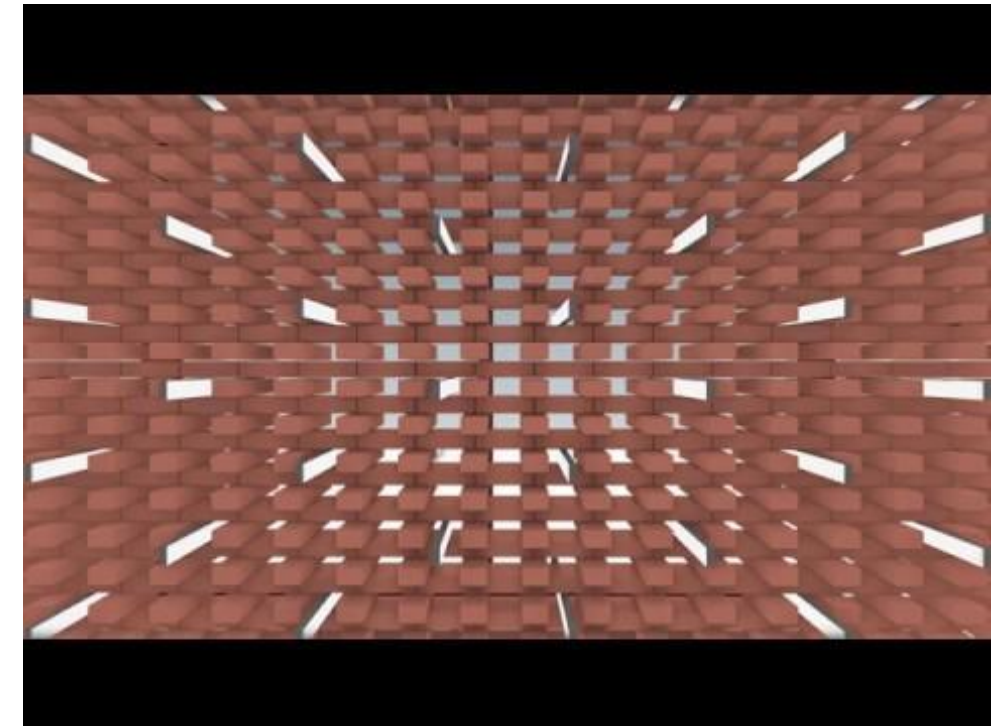


Google Lobby Art Installation

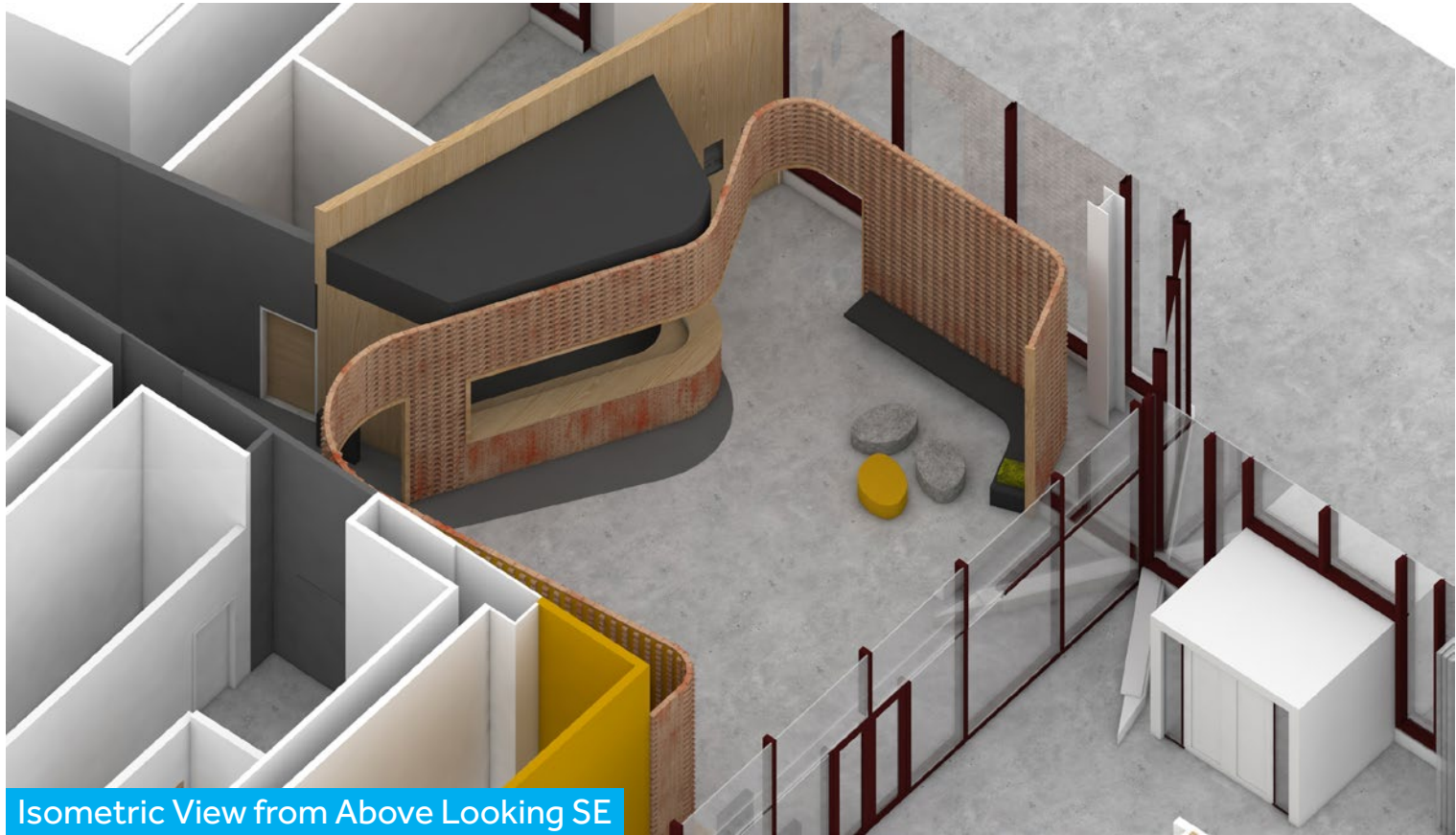
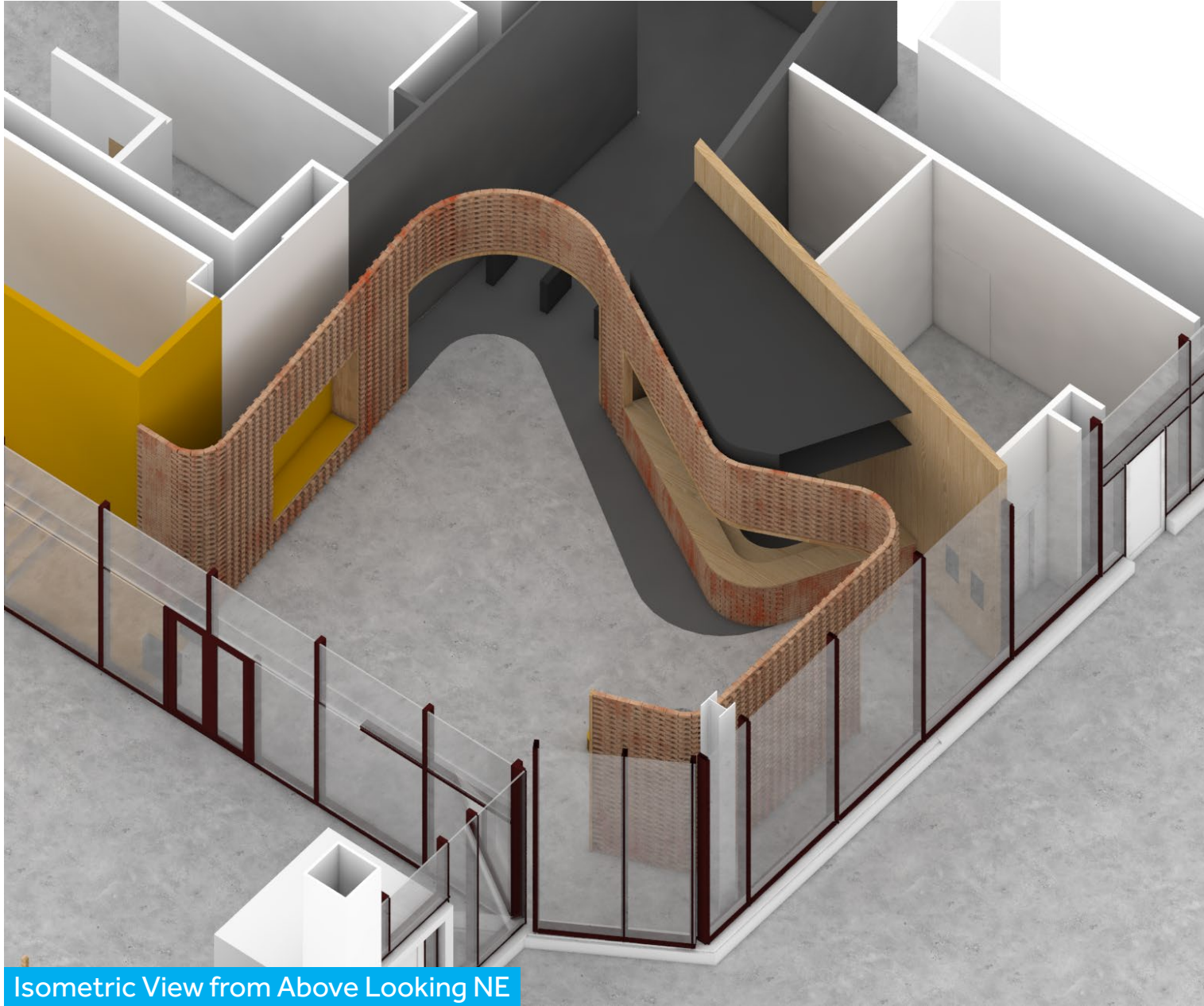
Interior Embedded Signage - 16"x 2" Woven Tickers



An independent display technology, LED tickers, weaves through the gaps and along the faces of the wall, echoing the angles of the turning bricks.



Google Lobby Art Installation



Google Lobby Art Installation – Animation



Questions?

Google Lobby Art Installation – Main St. Transparency

5.2.3 GROUND FLOOR FACADES

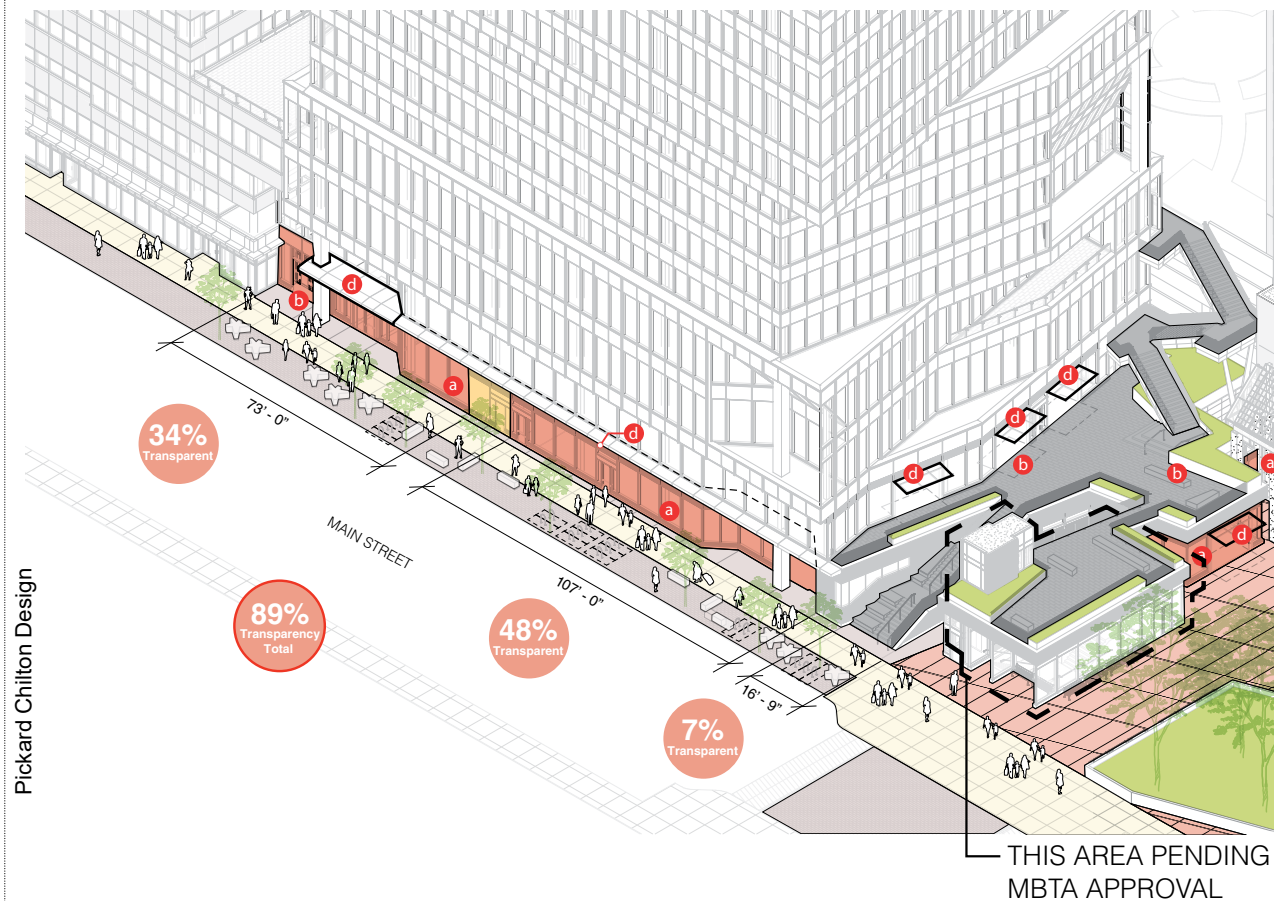
– Façades

Goal: Design ground floor façades of building to **reduce the distinction between exterior and interior space to extend the effective public realm indoors and reveal indoor activity on the street.**

Measures:

- Transparent materials** and interior lighting should be used to maximize visibility of street level uses. Transparency is most important in the portion of the facade between about 2 feet to about 10 feet above the sidewalk level, i.e. where people are likely to look in. **Incorporate 60 to 75 percent transparent glazing** in the ground level façade **along major public streets** and 40 to 60 percent transparent glazing in the ground level façade **along secondary streets.**
- Active ground level spaces should have strong, interactive connections with adjacent public sidewalk/plaza space using strategies such as extensive transparent glazing, interactive media or public art, **large operable doors and windows**, or **associated outdoor seating.**
- Blank walls exceeding 20 feet in length should be avoided.**
- Awnings and canopies** are encouraged to provide shelter and enliven ground floor facade.
- Mechanical/utility rooms and service/loading areas** are not appropriate along the major streets and should be **located on secondary streets.**

Kendall Square Design Guideline
Pickard Chilton Design



- Transparent materials used to maximize visibility of street level uses.
- Large operable doors and windows or associated outdoor seating.
- No blank walls exceeding 20 feet.
- Awnings and canopies provide shelter and enliven ground floor facade.
- No mechanical/utility rooms or service/loading areas located along major street.

Google Lobby Art Installation – Main St. Transparency

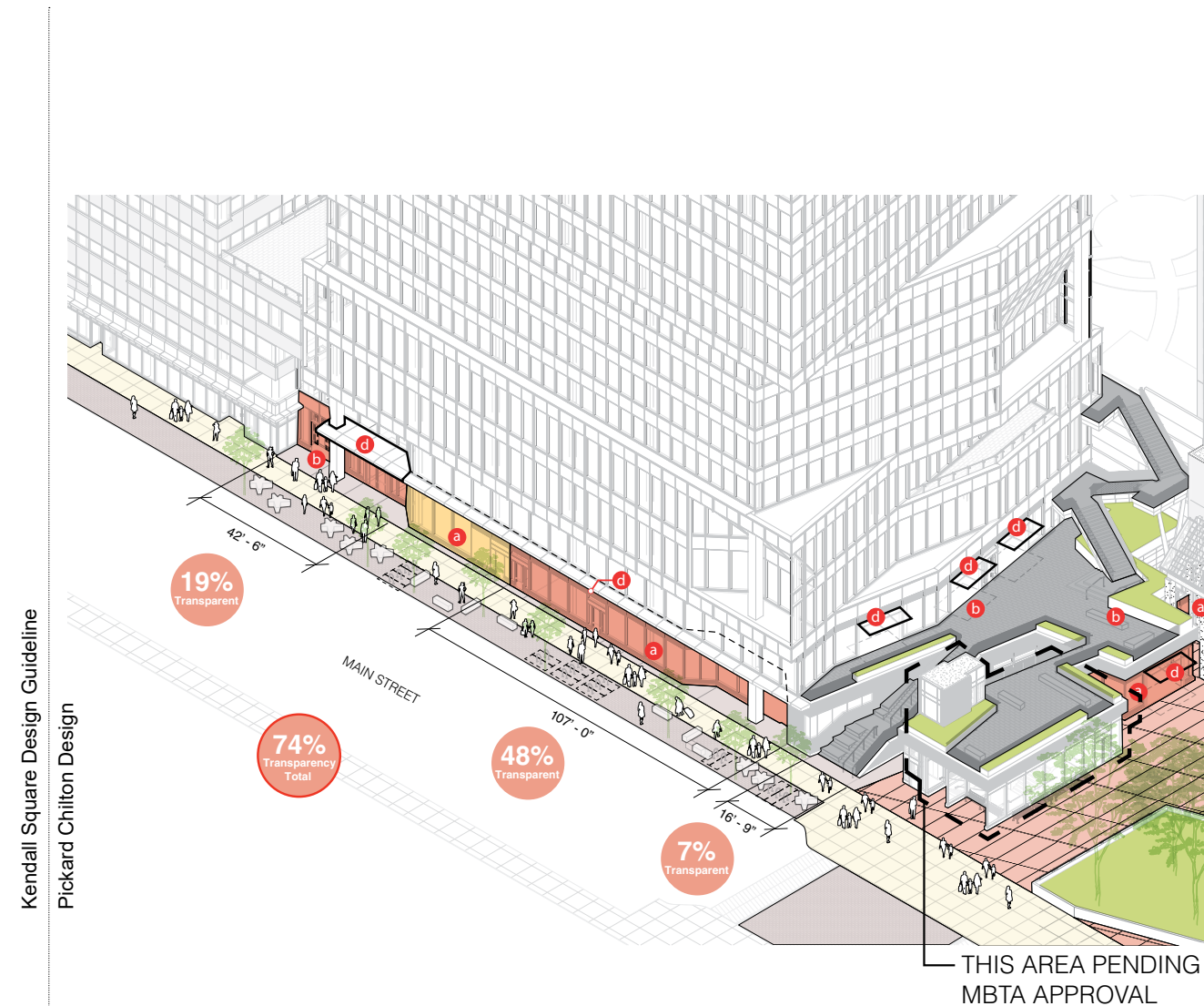
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