Docket Item #10

Case Number: CD-CPC-2026-00074

Data Center High-Rise Development Plan– 934 Central Street

Request: Development Plan which also serves as a Special Use Permit for a 20-story Data Center

August 5, 2026

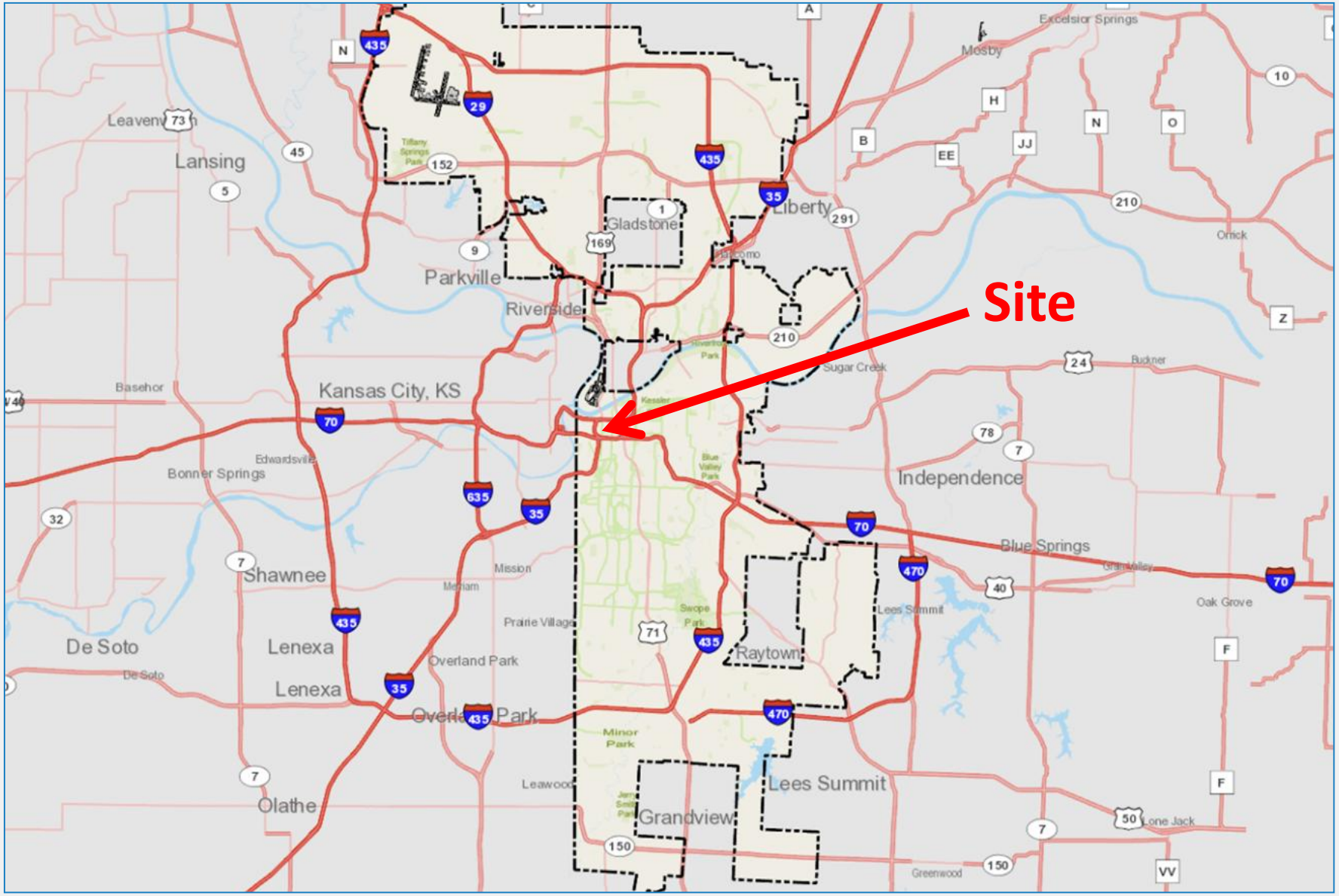
City Plan Commission

Location

Address:
934 Central Street

Council District:
4th

Area Plan:
Greater Downtown



Location

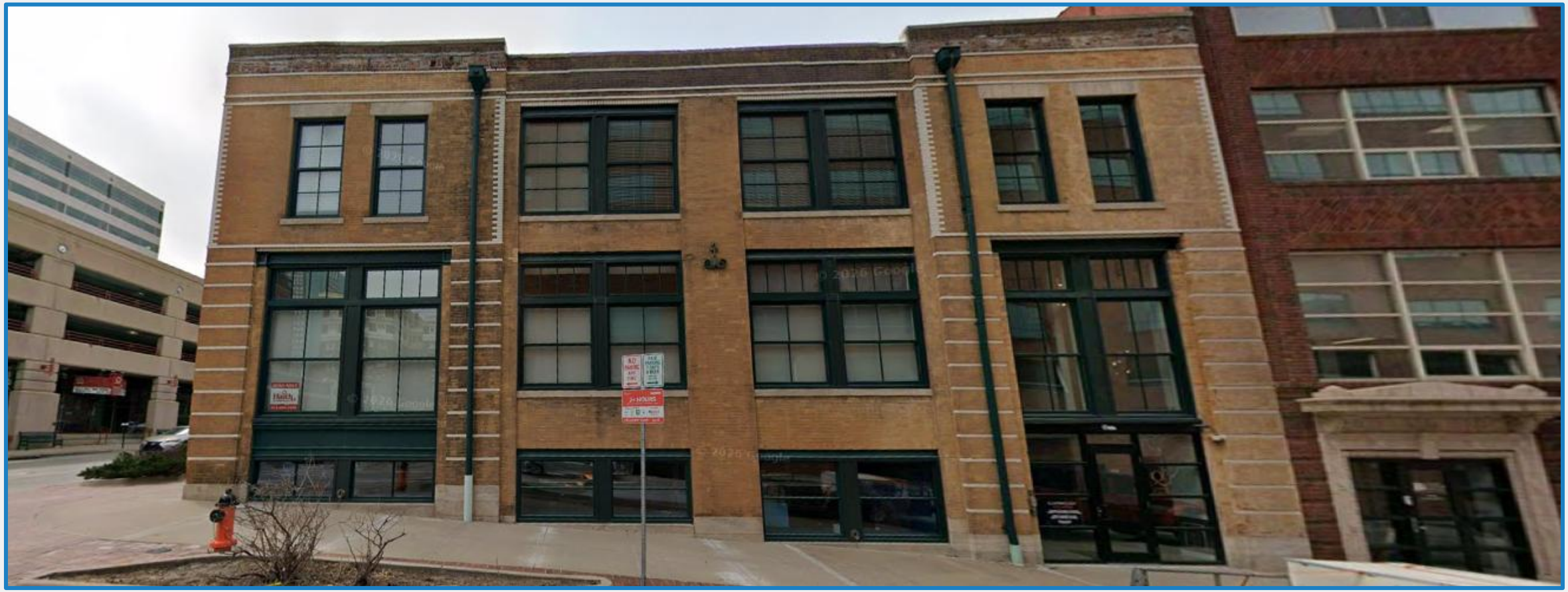
Address:
934 Central Street

Council District:
4th

Area Plan:
Greater Downtown

Looking North from West 10th Street (June 2024)
Western Newspaper Union Building

Looking West from Central Street (March 2026)
Western Newspaper Union Building

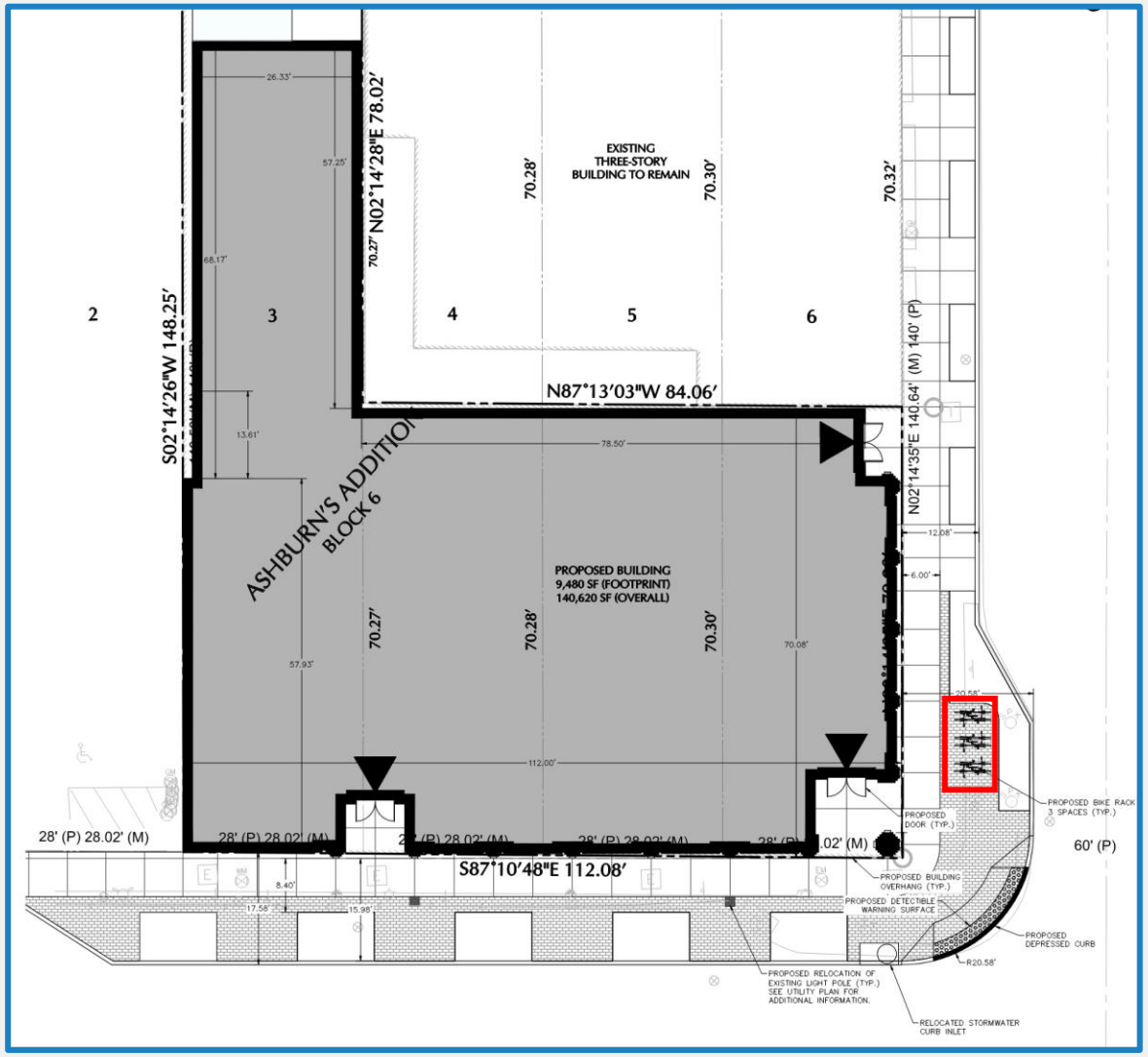


Site Zoning and Approval Requirement

- Site is zoned DC-15 (Downtown Core).
- Data Centers require a Special Use Permit (SUP) in Downtown zoning districts.
- A Development Plan is required for buildings exceeding 40,000 square feet.
- Pursuant to Section 88-517-09-D, a Development Plan application may also serve as approval for the required Special Use Permit.
- The proposed use was evaluated against the Special Use Permit criteria in Section 88-525-09.

Proposed Development

- Demolition of Western Newspaper Union Building listed on National Register of Historic Places
- 20 Stories (384 Feet Tall)
- 140,880 SF with a Floor Area Ratio of 14.0
- 100% lot coverage
- 50% ground-floor retail/Eating and Drinking Establishment
- Data center on remaining floors
- No vehicle parking
- 6 bicycle spaces



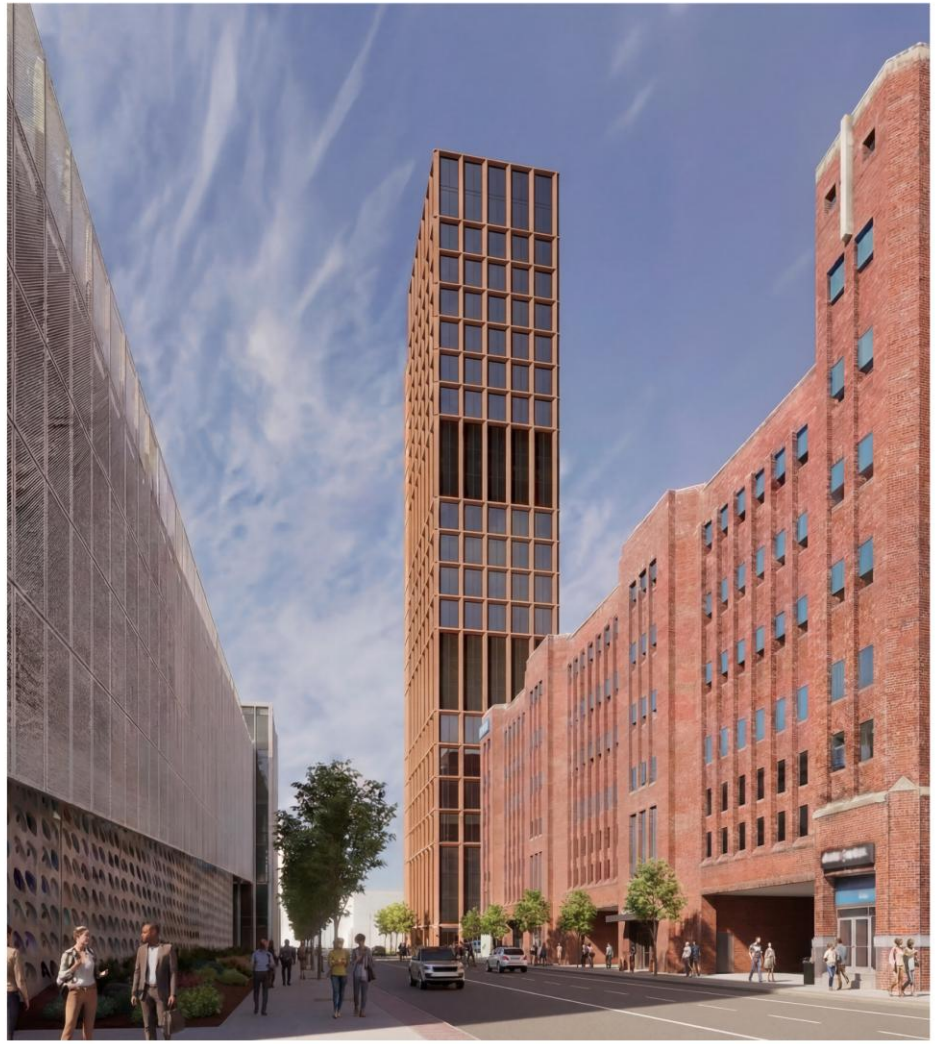
Renderings

- Primarily brick and glass exterior with several stories dedicated to venting

- Potential architectural lighting at the building crown to be studied further by applicant.

2 RENDERING - GROUND LEVEL - CENTRAL ST.

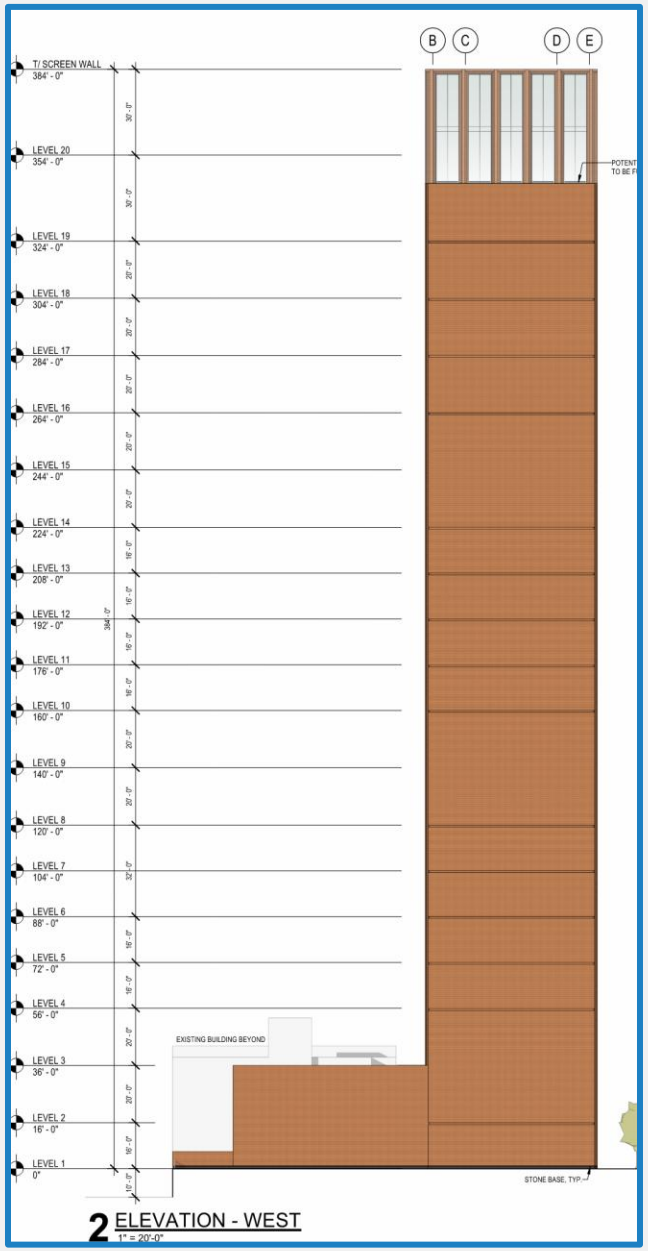
3 RENDERING - GROUND LEVEL - 10TH ST.



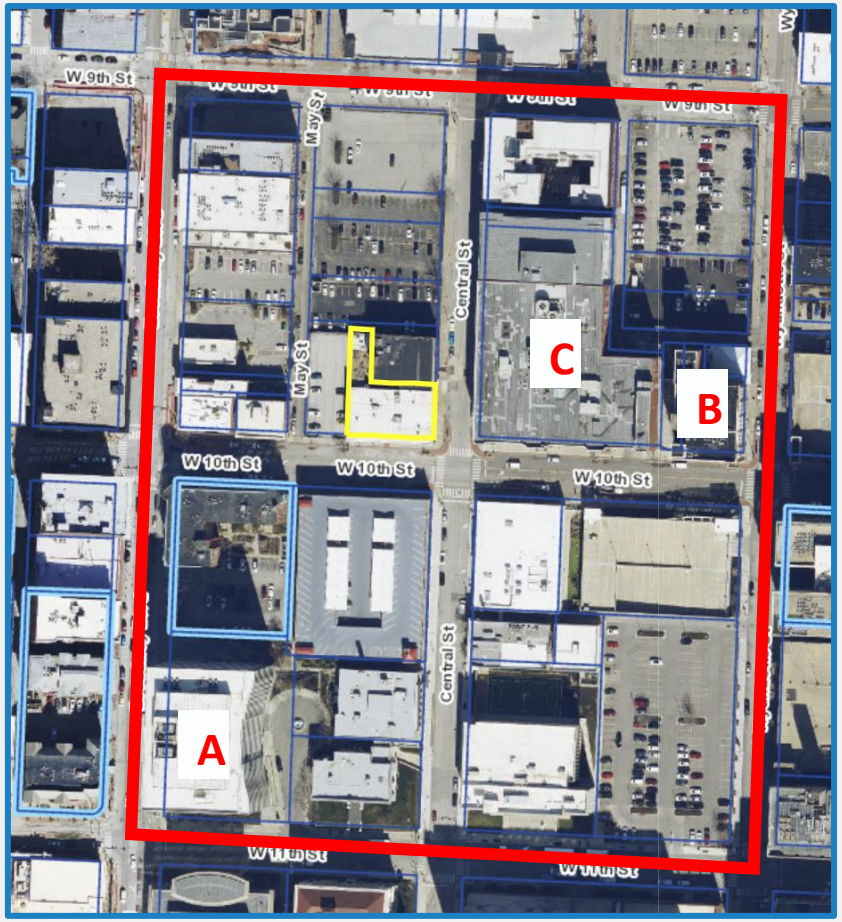
1 RENDERING - WEST VIEW

West Elevation

- West elevation is primarily brick, with no transparency until the 20th floor.
- Over 330 feet of largely uninterrupted brick façade creates substantial building massing along the west elevation.
- Staff requested additional transparency or architectural treatments to reduce the perceived scale and break up the massing.
- The applicant indicated the west elevation could not be substantially revised due to the internal layout and functional requirements of the proposed use.
- Banding is proposed every story with the exceptions of stories which have venting on the other elevations



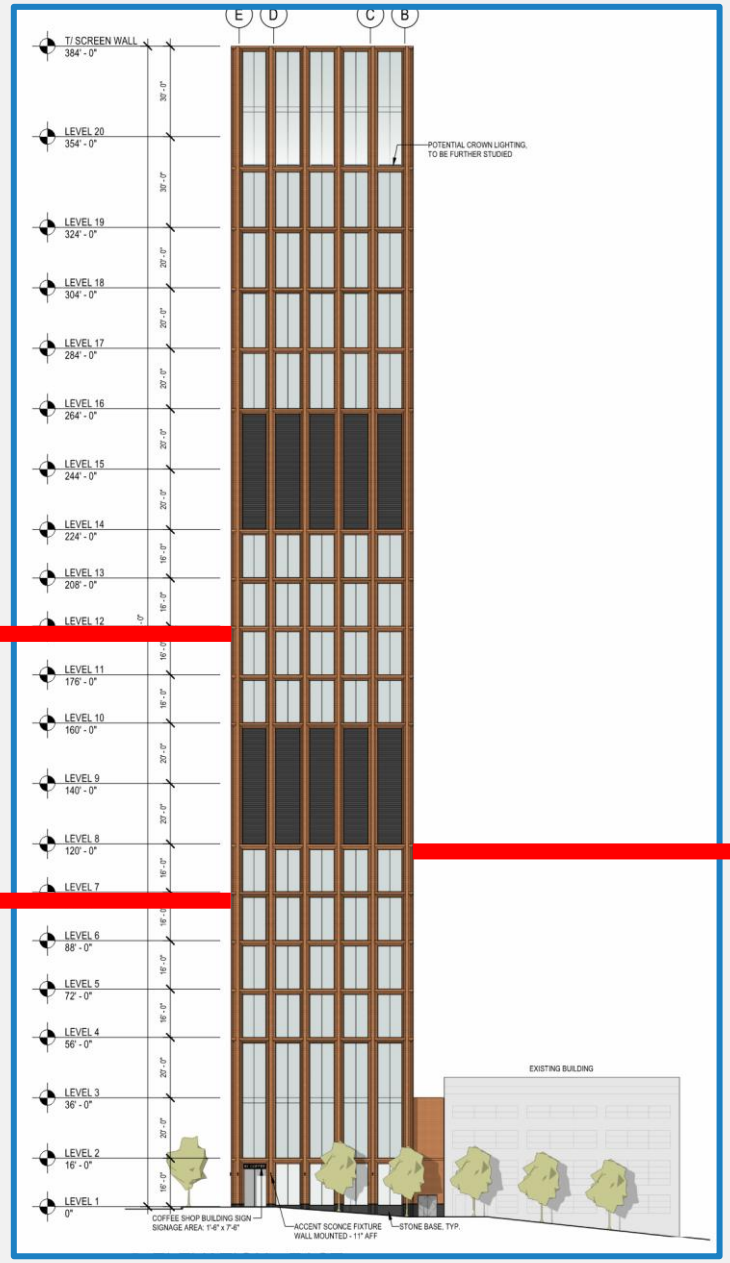
Building Height



A- Broadway Square
12 Stories

C- 210 W 10th Street
7 Stories

B- 934 Wyandotte St
8 Stories

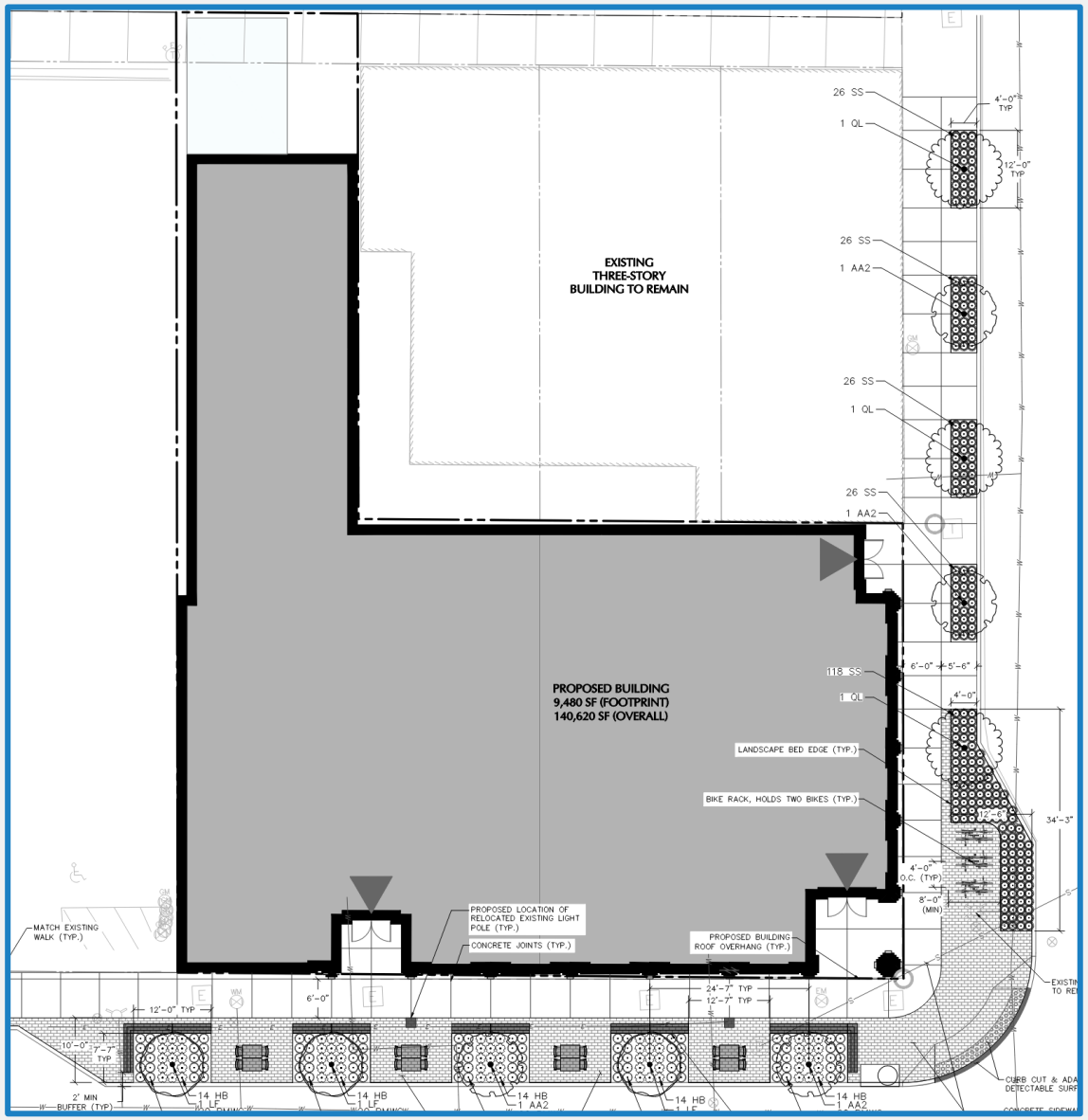


Most development within two blocks is six stories or less.

Landscape Plan

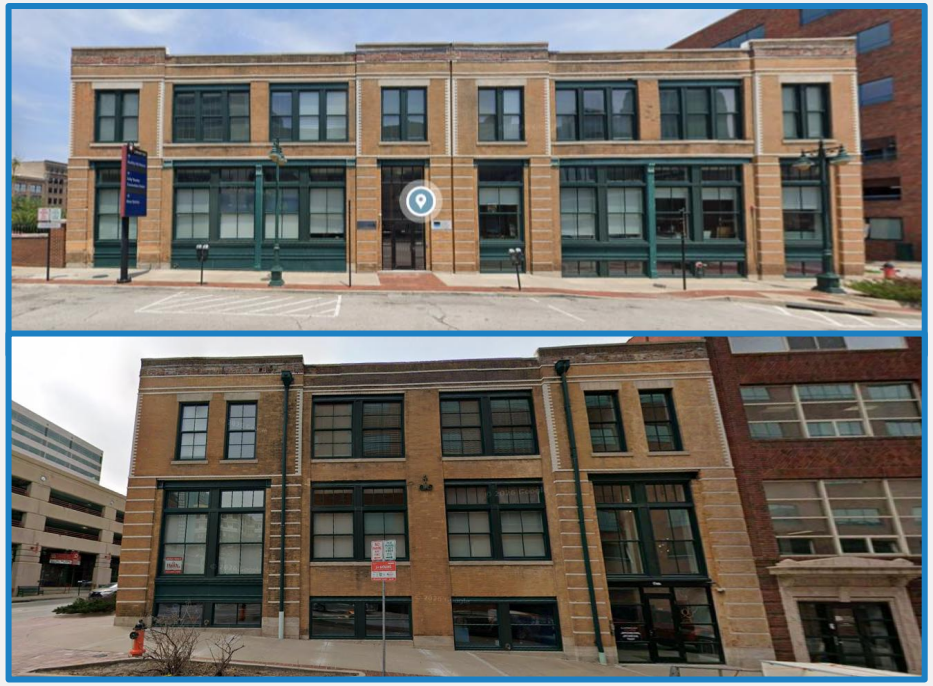
- Landscape shown is within the public right of way due to zero lot line development.

- The following are provided on the Landscape Plan
  - 10 street trees
  - 70 deciduous shrubs
  - 100 evergreen shrubs
  - 222 ornamental grasses



Demolition of Existing Building

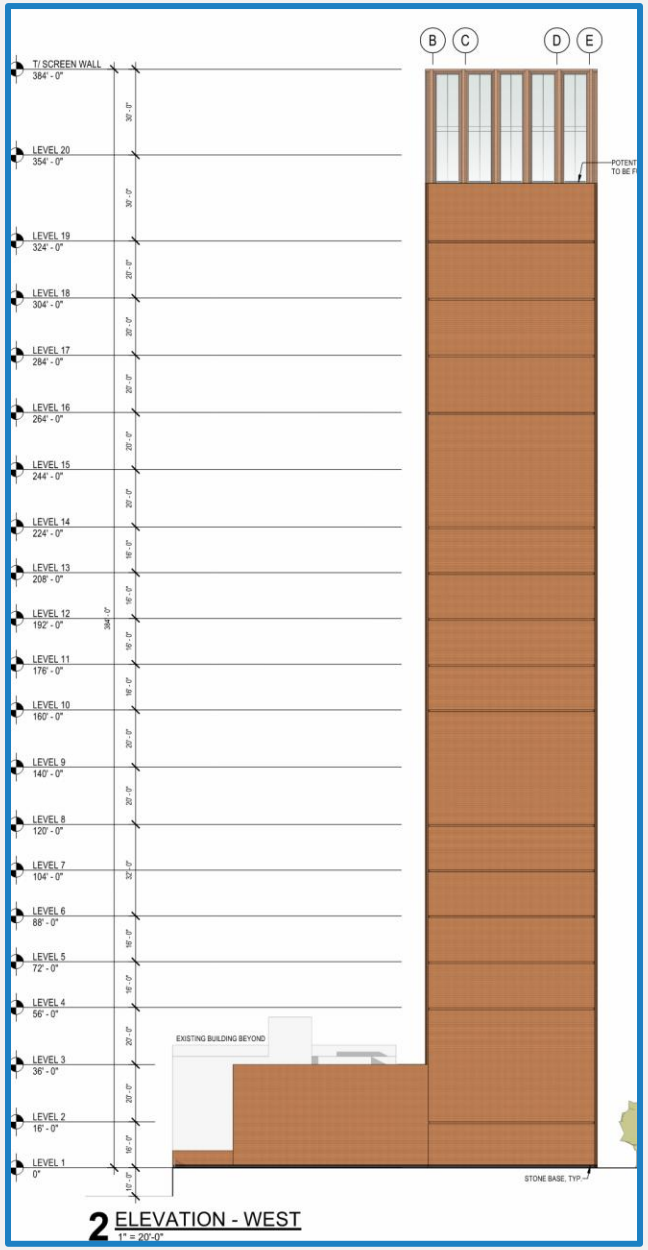
- **KC Spirit Playbook: LOW**
- **Greater Downtown Area Plan: LOW**



- **History, Arts and Culture**
  - Preserving or enhancing historic buildings or landmarks
- **Sustainability**
  - Recognize and support downtown infill development and reuse of historic buildings as a sustainable approach to development
- **Identity**
  - Historic buildings (whether designated or not) contribute to the area identity and should be preserved and integrated into new development when feasible
  - Encourage the preservation and adaptive reuse of area historic buildings

Design

- **KC Spirit Playbook: LOW**
- **Global and Development Form Guidelines**
  - Preserve and reuse historic structures and new buildings should incorporate similar materials to adjacent historic buildings and should be designed to complement the historic character of the area.
  - Development should generally occur on surface parking lots and vacant lots before tearing down existing buildings.



Data Center Use

- **Greater Downtown Area Plan: LOW**

1. Create A Walkable Downtown
2. Double The Population Downtown and Focus Density
3. Double Employment and Increase Visitors Downtown
4. Retain and Promote Safe, Authentic Neighborhoods
5. Promote Sustainability

- **GDAP Primary Goals**
  - Double population and focus on density
    - Does not attract or retain new residents
  - Double employment and increase visitors
    - Despite scale, the project does not generate substantial jobs
  - Promote Sustainability
    - Significant heat generation

Special Use Permit Requirements: 88-525-09-B

Is in the interest of the public convenience and will not have a significant adverse impact on the general welfare of the neighborhood or community.

The proposed development is not in the interest of the public convenience and would have a significant adverse impact on the surrounding neighborhood and community. The **demolition of the historic Western Newspaper** Union Building and construction of a 20-story data center would significantly **change the established character and scale of the area**. The data center may also create **impacts related to noise and heat**, and the project has received substantial concern from the community with more than 400 letters submitted in opposition.

Key Points

- Demolition of a building listed on the National Register of Historic Places
- Potential noise/heat concerns
- 450+ opposition letters

Special Use Permit Requirements: 88-525-09-C

Is compatible with the character of the surrounding area in terms of site planning and building scale and project design.

The proposed 20-story building is not compatible with the established building scale of the surrounding area. Development within a **two-block radius is generally six stories or less**, with the Broadway Square building being approximately 12 stories in height. The proposed building would be **significantly taller than the surrounding development** and would introduce a substantially greater building mass into the area. Additionally, the demolition of the historic Western Newspaper Union Building would **remove an existing structure that contributes to the established architectural and historic character of the area.** While the proposed brick materials are generally contextual, the overall scale and massing of the proposed building is not compatible with the character of the surrounding area.

Key Points

- 20 Story Building
- Surrounding area is predominantly six stories or less
- Demolition of a National Register Historic Place
- Building massing significantly exceeds the existing neighborhood character

Special Use Permit Requirements: 88-525-09-D

Is compatible with the character of the surrounding area in terms of operating characteristics, such as hours of operation, outdoor lighting, noise, and traffic generation.

The proposed data center represents a significant change in use and intensity from the existing historic building and surrounding development. The scale and operational characteristics of a 20-story data center, including its continuous operation, mechanical equipment, cooling systems, and associated service and maintenance activities, have the potential to introduce impacts that are not characteristic of the surrounding area. The use is not compatible with the surrounding mixed-use neighborhood and community.

Key Points

- Data Center Operational 24/7
- Potential Impact of Mechanical and Cooling Systems
- Not compatible with existing neighborhood character

Special Use Permit Requirements: 88-525-09-E

Will not have a significant adverse impact on pedestrian safety or comfort.

The proposed development is not expected to adversely impact pedestrian safety, as no new curb cuts are proposed, which will minimize vehicular and pedestrian conflicts. However, the potential impacts of noise and heat from the proposed data center on pedestrian comfort are unknown.

Key Points

- No concern on pedestrian safety
- Impact to pedestrian comfort due to potential heat and noise impacts.

Public Engagement Summary

Public Engagement Meeting

- Held July 20, 2026
- Within the Downtown Neighborhood Association area
- 87 attendees

Public Testimony Letter

- 475 opposition letters received
  - 35 of which received after staff report submittal- available on CompassKC
- No letters of support received
- Received Downtown Neighborhood Association and Historic Kansas City letters in opposition

Primary Issues Raised

- Loss of historic building
- Scale and massing
- Data center operational impacts
- Consistency with adopted plans

Staff Recommendation Docket Item #10

Development Plan

Case No. CD-CPC-2026-00074 **Denial**

934 Central Data Center High-Rise