

University of Colorado

CU Design Review Board Processes and Procedures

Revised October 2022



University of Colorado
Boulder | Colorado Springs | Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus

FOUR CAMPUSES UNITED
ALL FOUR:ONE

■ Message from the President

Among the forces that have shaped the University of Colorado's four campuses over the decades is a rich history of thoughtful and innovative planning and design. Tasked with preserving this history, the university's Design Review Board plays a critical role in ensuring every major renovation and new building honors CU's academic heritage and fits into the overall context of each campus.

Established in 1968, the CU Design Review Board is the second oldest in the nation boasting an impressive roster of past members who have left a lasting legacy on the university. Each generation of appointed board members provides expert advice on the planning and design of major renovations and new construction projects on CU's four campuses. These esteemed architects are entrusted to promote the highest and best planning, design and sustainability standards for the university.

The Board's purview is centered on site development and the exterior built environment. Members work collaboratively with our talented campus architects, and offer recommendations that adhere to approved campus master plans and planning and design guidelines.

I am tremendously grateful for the Design Review Board's stewardship of the university's legacy of design and construction excellence, and for its exceptional service to CU.



Todd Saliman, President
University of Colorado



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Introduction

The CU Design Review Board (DRB) is a six-member committee of design experts appointed by the university president. The DRB is comprised of professional architects, a landscape architect, and an architect or engineer with an expertise in sustainable building design. All members serve at the pleasure of the president and reflect the highest standards of professional practice on behalf of the University of Colorado.

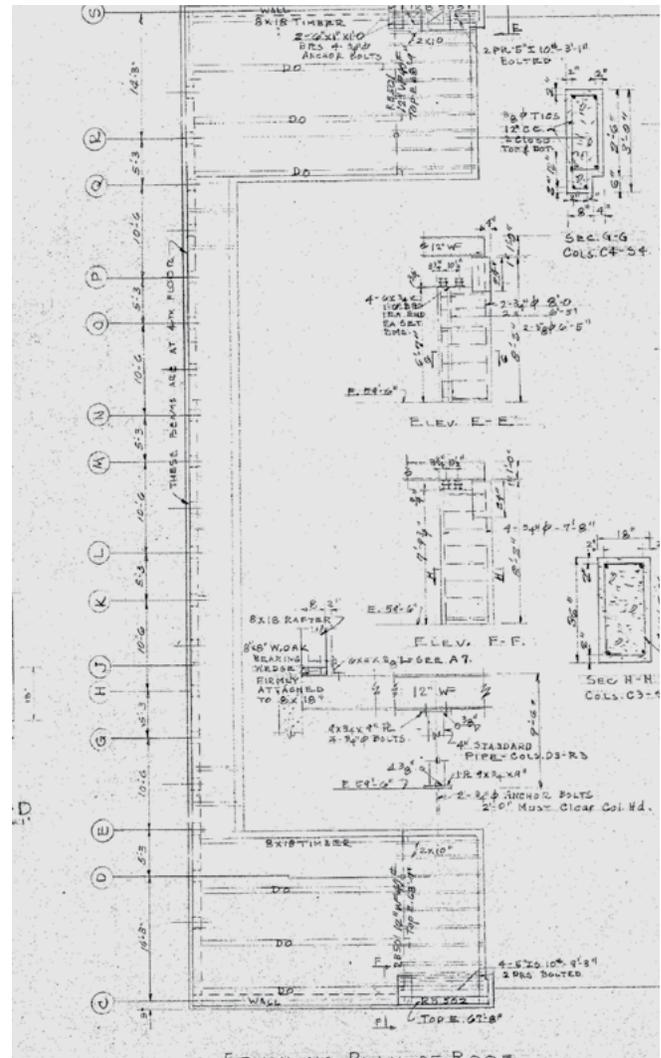
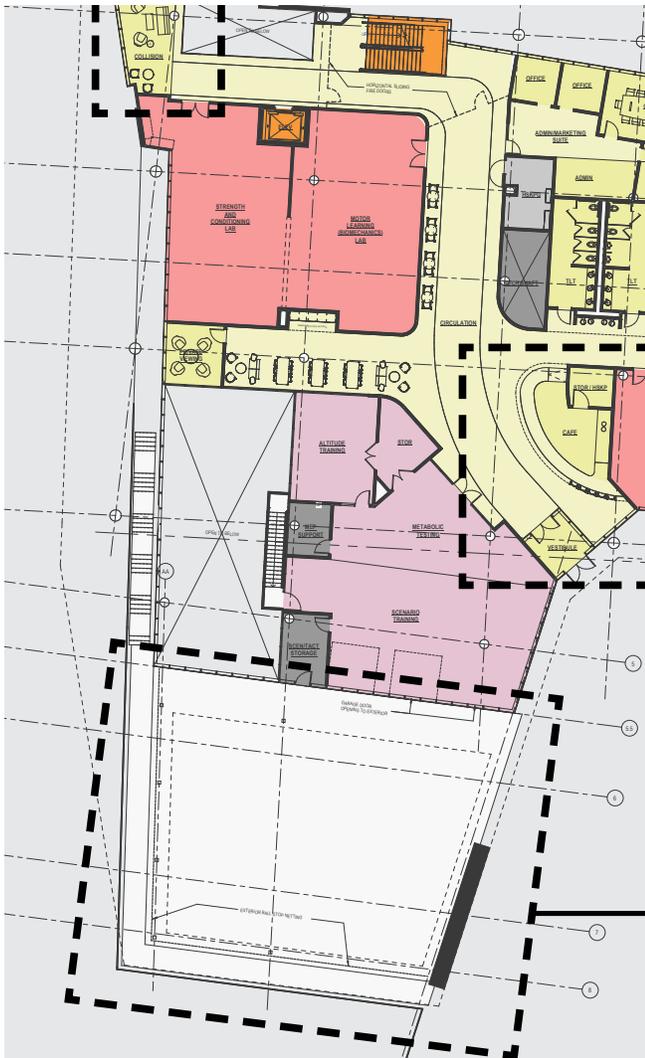
The DRB is charged with helping to maintain the University of Colorado's commitment to planning and design excellence.

Specifically, the DRB is charged with:

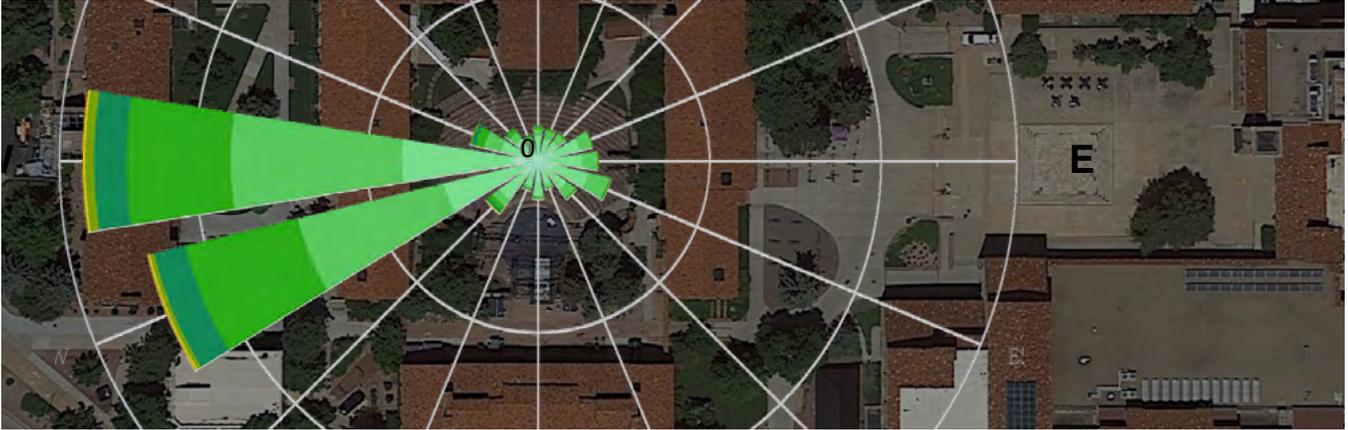
- Reviewing and advising campus officials on campus master plans and land-use plans, with particular focus on the aesthetic, functional, and physical characteristics of the campus.
- Reviewing and consulting on the design of all aspects of site development and the exterior built environment to ensure the consistency of new construction, renovations, and additions with the campus master plan and design guidelines.

Additionally, the DRB may:

- Serve on a design team selection committee, upon request by a campus architect.
- Provide technical assistance in the review of new and revised master plans, design guidelines, and special projects.



See CU Administrative Policy Statement 3002, Capital Construction Planning and Projects, Appendix 3 for a full description of the DRB charge.



Mission and Goals

Mission

To inspire planning and design excellence that adds lasting value in the University of Colorado built environment.

Goal

To collaborate with campus professionals and project design teams in a respectful manner and provide expert guidance leading to exceptional projects.

Scope of DRB Review

The DRB examines all site development and exterior architectural components of projects on the university's campuses. The DRB is actively involved in design review from the initial stage of pre-design through design development. Below are the specific project-related items subject to DRB review:

- Consistency and continuity of design with campus character in support of and to advance campus master plans, energy master plans, and design guidelines;
- Urban design, building site and context, massing, expansion, materials selection, and architectural design and character;
- Campus landscapes, including design, plant selection, and location;
- Vehicular circulation routes, patterns, parking lot locations, and parking ratios;
- Pedestrian circulation routes, patterns, amenities, and materials;
- Site furnishings, lighting, and signage and wayfinding design, location and quantity;
- Campus infrastructure systems as they relate to site development; and
- Building performance, and sustainable and integrated design methods and materials as they relate to the above. **It is the opinion of the DRB that every CU project should strive to exceed the minimum sustainability guidelines set by the state.**



Administration

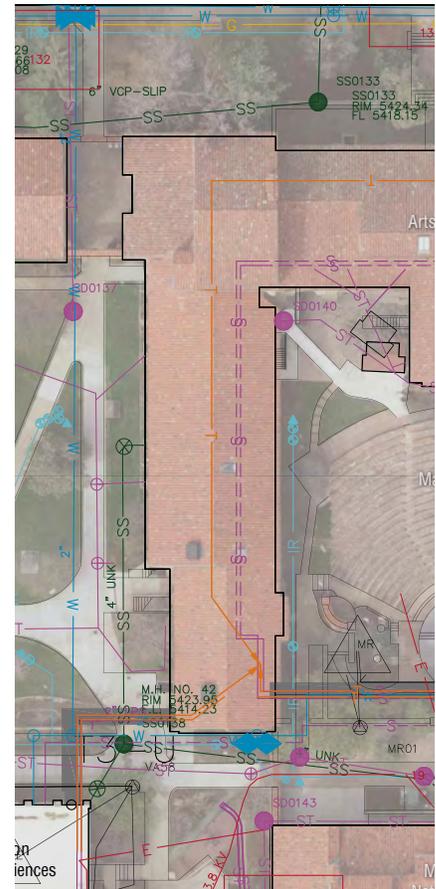
A. Management

The vice president for budget and finance and chief financial officer, or their designee, is responsible for the administration and management of the DRB and reports directly to the president of the university on all DRB matters. This individual serves as an ex officio member of the DRB.

B. The Role of the DRB Chairperson

The chair of the DRB is appointed by the president of the University of Colorado and works closely with the vice president or their designee.

- The chair oversees all DRB meetings, formal and informal, and strives to set a constructive tone for interactions with campus representatives and design teams.
- The chair meets regularly with the designated CU staff administrator, and on occasion with the president, to refine and resolve project design issues as defined by scope and budget.
- The chair reviews agendas, meeting records, DRB meeting schedules, and, as needed, any board-related documents before issuance to project teams or to the public.
- The chair considers requests for expedited project review on a case-by-case basis ahead of regularly scheduled meetings.
- The chair appoints a member of the DRB as acting chair in the event of their absence.
- The chair guides and mediates the actions of the DRB with respect to university Administrative Policy Statement 3002.



C. The Role of the Campus Architect

The campus architect, or their designee, serves as the liaison to the DRB. The campus architect, in consultation with the DRB chair and the CU staff administrator, determines whether project review is required for projects involving site development or exterior architectural components. Review is always required for major renovations and new buildings.

The campus architect coordinates DRB review with the CU system office and submits planning and design work products for review, including documents demonstrating conformance with the campus master plan and design guidelines.

At the request of the campus architect, the DRB chair may – in special circumstances – eliminate or combine one or more of the phases of project review. Any request to expedite or eliminate one or more of the phases of project review must be discussed with the DRB chair ahead of a formal meeting and must also be considered by the full DRB.

In consultation with the DRB chair and the CU system office, the campus architect may request a DRB member participate in the review and selection of the design team for major campus projects or in other special reviews or project workshops.

Process

A. Meetings

The DRB meets monthly. The default meeting location is the CU system office, but the DRB attempts to meet at least once a year at each of the four campuses. The campus architect is responsible for scheduling project review and coordinating document submittals with the CU system office. The DRB meeting record is posted on the DRB website and distributed to campus architects.

In special circumstances, the campus architect may request an interim workshop to advance project design. The interim workshop will be coordinated with the campus architect, CU staff administrator, and the chair of the DRB.

If there is a significant passage of time between review of various project design phases, the DRB chair, CU staff administrator, or the campus architect may request a project update at an intervening meeting.

The record of DRB proceedings is used as the formal documentation of recommendations and actions taken by the DRB. Meeting notes are published and distributed to appropriate campus liaisons and project representatives following a DRB meeting. The campus architect is responsible for communications, clarifications, and distribution of the meeting minutes to appropriate university personnel and the design team, at their discretion.

B. DRB Meeting Format

Prior to the monthly meeting, a preconference call is held with the DRB and the campus architect. During the preconference call, the project is reviewed, and the campus architect is encouraged to share any issues or concerns with the project or the review process. The DRB may provide feedback during the preconference call that results in modifications to the design submittal ahead of the DRB meeting.

A DRB meeting typically consists of three parts:

- The design team presents the proposed project to the DRB.
- The design team and campus architect respond to DRB questions and requests for clarification.
- The DRB recesses to discuss the submittal and upcoming vote with the campus architect and the design team is excused.
- The DRB reconvenes and communicates its summary critique and recommendations to the design team.

C. DRB Review

Typically, the DRB reviews projects at each of the following four phases of design:

- Pre-design
- Concept design
- Schematic design
- Design development

Formal DRB approval of concept, schematic, and design development submittals is required before moving to the next phase.

Following review, the DRB may make a motion to approve the design submittal, approve the design submittal with conditions, deny the design submittal, refer the design submittal to the president with comment, or continue the design submittal review to a future meeting.

D. Materials Submittal

DRB review is based on presentations and materials submitted by the design team. All submittals are evaluated based on three broad categories:

- Site Context and Landscape Architecture;
- Architecture; and
- Sustainability.

Campus architects are responsible for ensuring that submittals accurately describe a project in appropriate detail.

Submittals are due from the design team to the campus architect a minimum of seven working days before a scheduled DRB meeting.

- If the campus architect determines that a submittal is inadequate, they may choose to delay submittal to the DRB for review until a future meeting.

Upon review and approval of the submittal packet by the campus architect, the documents are then submitted to the CU system office a minimum of four working days before a scheduled DRB meeting.

Following review by the vice president or their designee, the documents are then distributed to the DRB members.

- All submissions are made electronically.

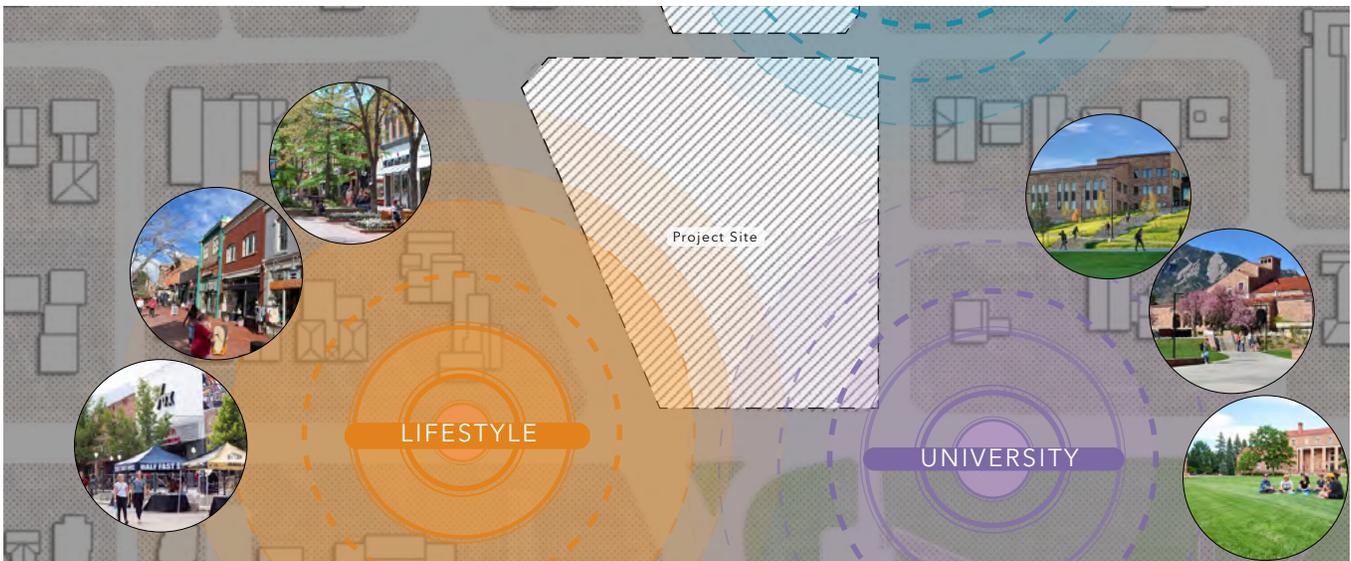
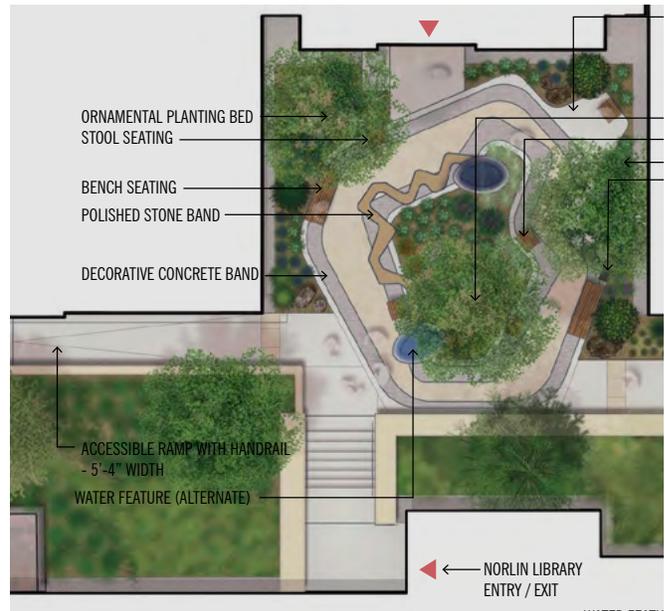
Process (Cont.)

E. Appeals Process

If a campus disagrees with a formal DRB action, the campus may appeal that decision to the president through the vice president for budget and finance or their designee.

- Before a formal appeal, a chancellor may choose to bring the matter to the attention of the vice president or the president.

- An appeal must be made within 30 days of a DRB decision. The campus architect, through the appropriate vice chancellor, shall advise the vice president or their designee on design directions that vary from the DRB's recommendations.
- Before resolving such an appeal, the president shall consult with the DRB chair, CU staff administrator, and the campus chancellor.
- The president's decision on a campus appeal shall be final.



Review: Pre-Design

The pre-design meeting is critical to understanding new projects and should:

- Introduce campus staff and the design team;
- Explain the project history, budget, program, and schedule;
- Review the project goals and desired outcomes;
- Illustrate the project context, on-site and off-site influences, and relationship to the campus master plan;
- Share project- and site-related constraints and challenges;
- Identify project opportunities; and
- Define the extent of sustainability strategies and goals that will be incorporated into the project planning and design process.

The campus architect and design team may determine the format of the pre-design meeting based on the size, scale, and complexity of the project. The DRB will offer its initial impressions of the project and make suggestions to assist in the preparation of the conceptual design submittal.

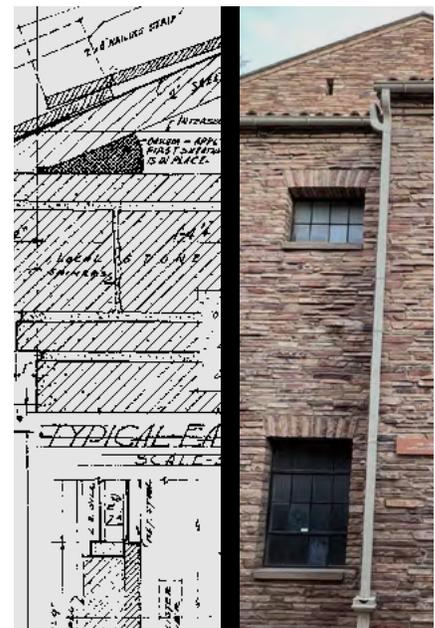
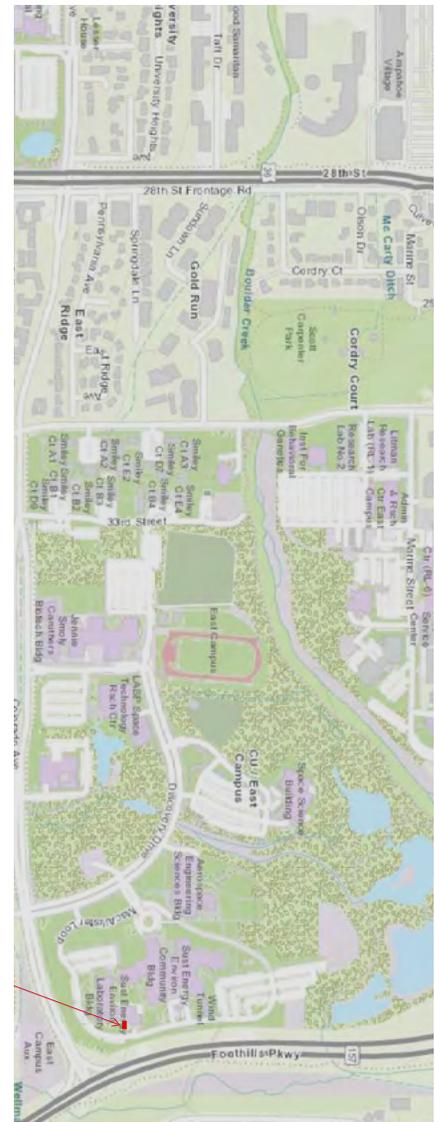
Formal DRB approval is not required at pre-design. The DRB may, however, require that additional project information be provided prior to considering the conceptual design.

Review: Conceptual Design

The conceptual design submittal should reflect the feedback received during pre-design and show several high-level building massing and site design alternatives. Specifically, the conceptual design submittal should:

- Quantify and qualify all existing and proposed site constraints;
- Determine a reasonable site and building development program based on site and budget constraints;
- Evaluate alternative site and building concepts and options that achieve the development programming objectives and site constraints;
- Illustrate how the proposed site development and improvements conceptually relate to the proposed architectural improvements;
- Demonstrate and document an initial sustainability strategy, including energy production and consumption, low-impact development, carbon emissions, and other best practices; and
- Identify and document (including studies) the decisions that resulted in the preferred conceptual design direction (to be further refined and detailed in the schematic design submittal).

Formal DRB approval is required before a project can advance to the next phase of review.



Review: Schematic Design

The schematic design submittal offers the design team the opportunity to detail its preferred building design, site plan, and sustainability plan. It should refine the preferred conceptual design scheme and be highly detailed. Specifically, the schematic design submittal should:

- Establish a strong building design and site plan that further enhances the built environment;
- Demonstrate how the design will achieve the program goals within the defined budget and schedule;
- Refine the building design and site plan to achieve greater sustainability, energy efficiency, and reduced life-cycle costs;
- Illustrate site development improvements and their relationship to existing and proposed landforms, including the visual context; pedestrian connections and linkages; vehicular, service and emergency access; and defined hardscape and landscape improvements;
- Include multiple elevations, perspectives, and cross-sections;
- Show sample materials, as needed;
- Address site and building lighting and signage; and
- Provide three-dimensional models to clarify the design concept, as needed.

Formal DRB approval is required before a project can advance to the next phase of review.

Review: Design Development

Design development is the final phase of DRB review. It is the last opportunity for the DRB to review specific project planning and design details. The review will ensure that the provisions noted during the schematic design review are incorporated into the submittal.

The DRB does its best not to suggest substantive changes at the design development phase for practical, cost, and scheduling reasons.

The design development submittal should:

- Prepare a final record set of plans, drawings, and support documents.
- Make adjustments and modifications to the schematic design submittal based on the DRB review;
- Develop, in detail, the site and building design;
- Show final materials selection;
- Demonstrate integration of sustainable strategies in the design of the project; and

If the design development phase is approved with conditions, the design team is expected to provide the DRB a final design document that illustrates and describes the resolution of the conditions leading to final approval. The final design packet shall be submitted (electronically) to the DRB within 45 days of final approval.

At the conclusion of the design development presentation, the design team will be asked to briefly summarize all unresolved and outstanding site, architectural, and sustainability issues that were identified through the design development process.

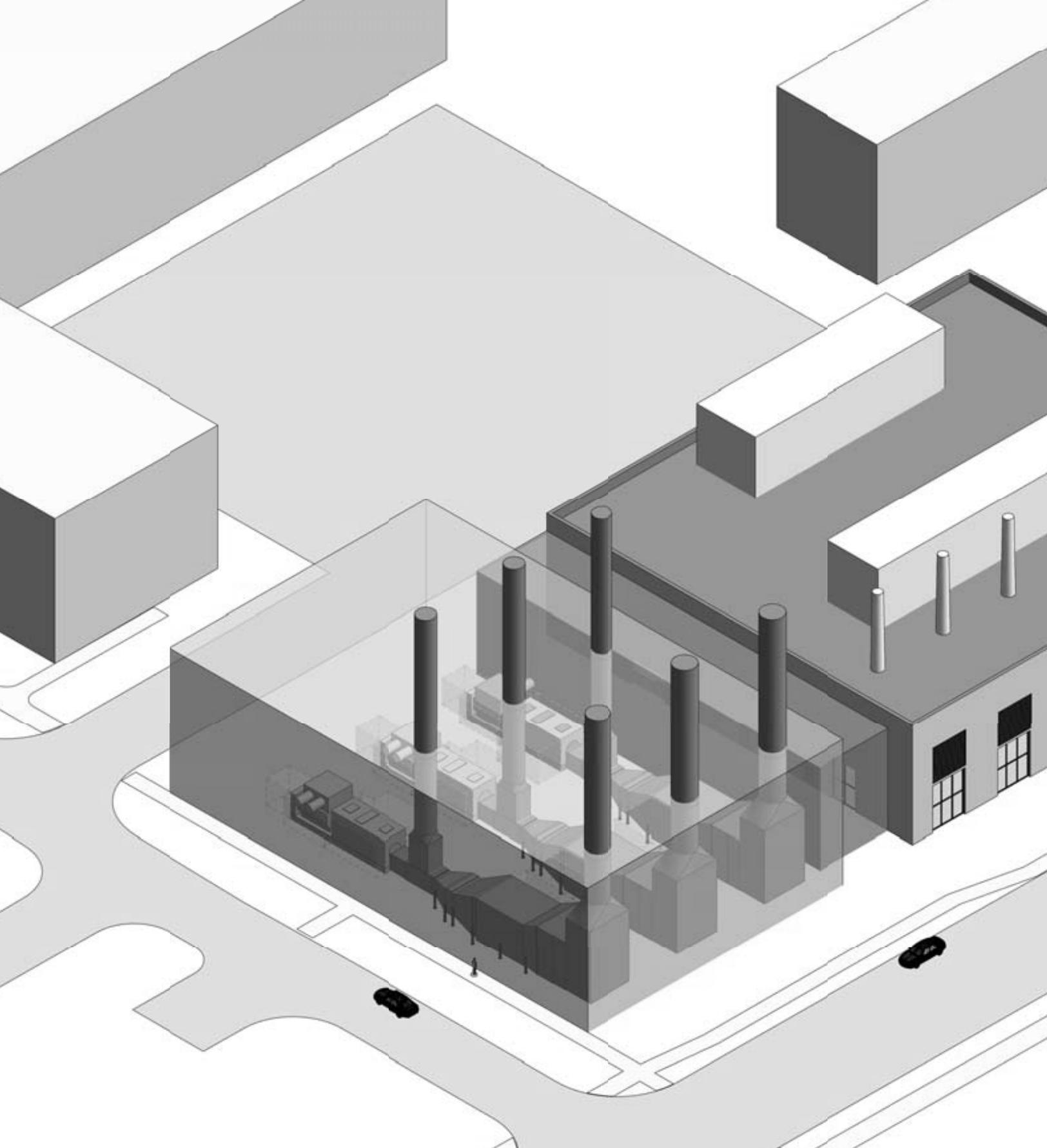
Formal DRB approval is required.

Review: Additional Notes

The DRB purview does not include the following:

- Budget
- Schedule
- Approval Processes
- Contracting Methodology
- Code Requirements
- Interior Design

Where applicable, please refer to the most recent AIA standard forms and criteria for schematic and design development professional services guidelines.



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