

**The Redevelopment of Lake Anne, Reston, Virginia**  
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Thesis submitted to the faculty of  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for a degree of

**Master of Landscape Architecture**

The Washington Architectural Consortium  
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# **The Redevelopment of Lake Anne, Reston, Virginia**

## ***Darryl R. Wright***

### **Abstract**

Lake Anne is the showcase of the first "new town" developed in the United States after World War II. Built in the early 1960's, Lake Anne is now 35 years old. Although, it was built as the model for a new way to live and work; time has affected its economic viability. Deterioration, through age, changed real estate market preferences and the way people live today, have created an opportunity to revitalize Lake Anne. This study offers a view of the future possibilities for Lake Anne.

## Acknowledgment

As author of this thesis, I would like to express grateful thanks to my thesis committee. Professors Ron Kagawa, Marco Frascari and Paul Emmons steered me toward the completion of this thesis with their insight, knowledge and encouragement. Also, I express my appreciation to Trish Rekas and Caryl Clippinger for their computer skills in helping make this an acceptable presentation.

I could not possibly overlook Pat Mac Intyre for help with my drawing skills, nor Patrick Kane, planner and architect, who has believed in Reston from the beginning, and who is still Reston's prime booster. No one, can study Reston without acknowledging Robert Simon for his courage and genius in developing the premier planned community of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. To all of these people and others I may have inadvertently overlooked, I am eternally grateful.

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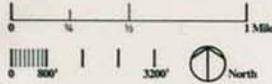
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## Introduction

Lake Anne is the showcase of the first “new town” developed in the United States after World War II. Built in the early 1960’s, Lake Anne is now 35 years old. Although, it was built as the model for a new way to live and work; time has affected its economic viability. Deterioration, through age, changed real estate market preferences and the way people live today, have created an opportunity to revitalize Lake Anne. This study offers a view of the future possibilities for Lake Anne.



# Reston Street Map



TOWN OF HERNDON

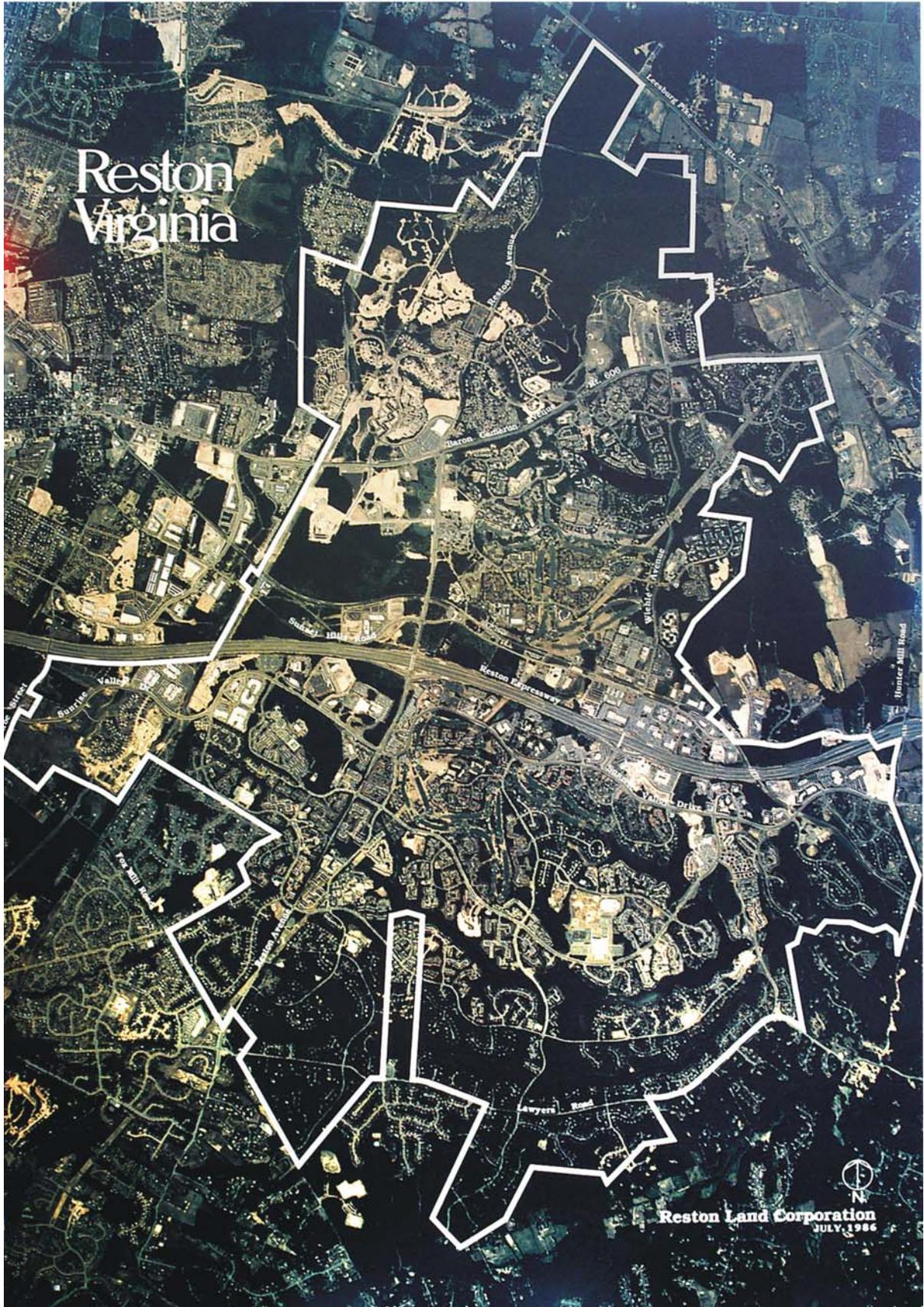


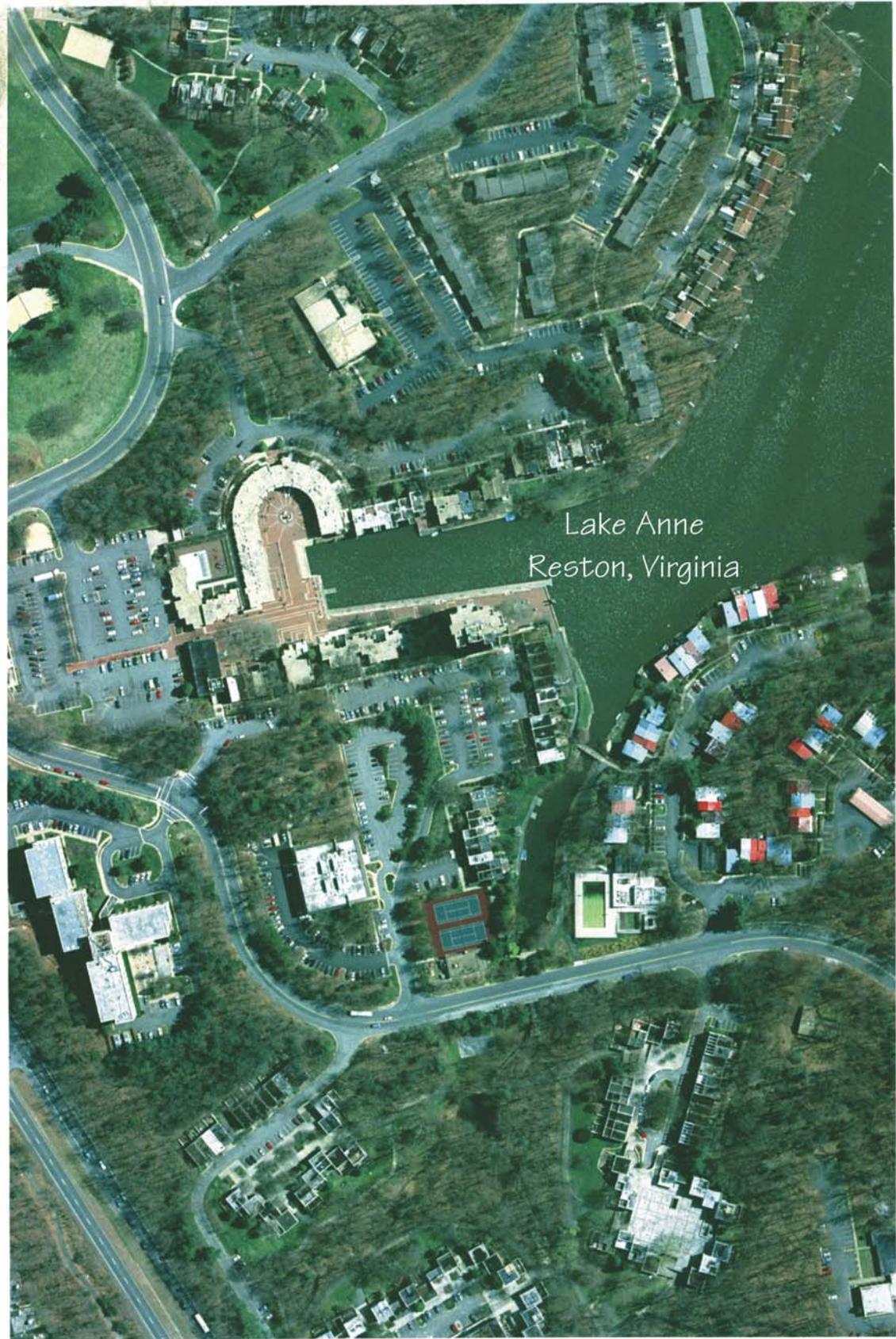
Reston Land Corporation

A Mobil Company  
(703) 742-6400

September 1991

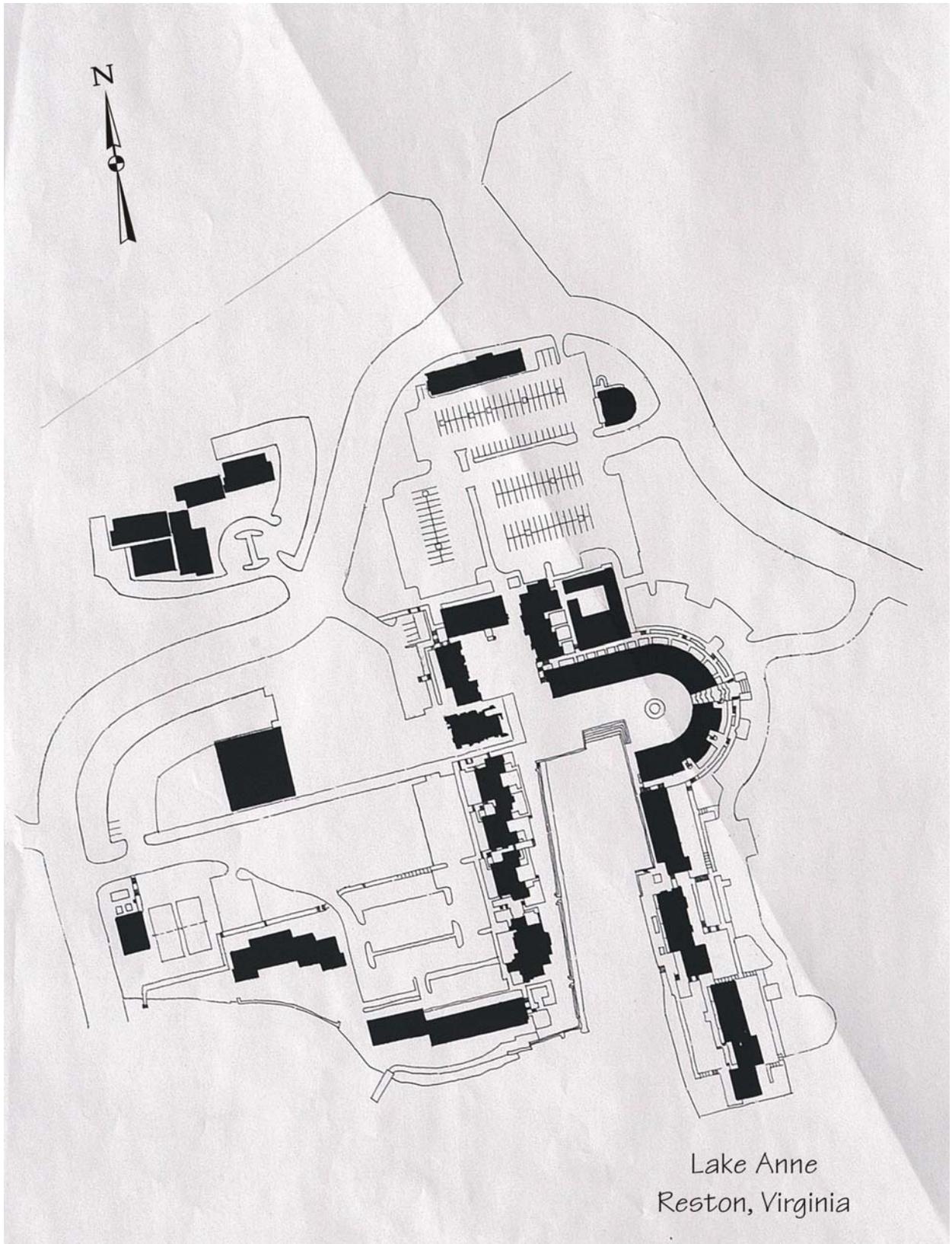






Lake Anne  
Reston, Virginia





Lake Anne  
Reston, Virginia

## Analysis

### Location

For this study, Lake Anne should be described as Washington Plaza, Fellowship House Apartments and townhouse cluster and open land between Washington Plaza and North Shore Drive.

### Function

Lake Anne was built as an urban space. The original concept provided more housing to provide the “critical mass” required to support the businesses at Washington Plaza. These housing units were not built. The lack of residents living near Washington Plaza has economically stressed retail business in the Plaza.

Built looking inward, Washington Plaza was designed for pedestrian use. The back of Washington Plaza is turned toward Baron Cameron Avenue. Visibility from an automobile is minimal, and the view is further blocked by an office building built at the parking entrance to Washington Plaza. Changing lifestyles have created a need for new configurations of housing design. Older residents and “empty nesters” who have a long term connection with Lake Anne have no alternative housing available to them.

Fellowship House, a Lutheran Church-sponsored apartment for the elderly, has a substantial waiting list. Also, Fellowship House is isolated from Washington Plaza by North Shore Drive. Elderly residents have difficulty crossing North Shore Drive.

There is a parking area on the west side of Washington Plaza that is under used. This is “lost space.”

Lake Anne is a special place. The importance of Lake Anne as a model for future development in the United States is well documented. This study proposes no changes to

Lake Anne, but rather suggests possible redevelopment sites to achieve the original design goals of Robert Simon, the innovative developer of Reston, Virginia.

1. That the widest choice of opportunities be made available for the full use of leisure time. This means that the New Town should provide a wide range of recreational and cultural facilities as well as an environment for privacy.
2. That it be possible for anyone to remain in a single neighborhood throughout his life, uprooting being neither inevitable nor always desirable. By providing the fullest range of housing styles and prices—from high rise efficiencies to six-bedroom townhouses and detached houses—housing needs can be met at a variety of income levels, and at different stages of family life. This kind of mixture permits residents to remain rooted in the community—if they so choose—as their particular housing needs change. As a byproduct, this also results in the heterogeneity that spells a lively and varied community.
3. That the importance and dignity of each individual be the focal point for all planning, and take precedence over large scale concepts.
4. That people may be able to live and work in the same community.
5. That commercial, cultural and recreational facilities be made available to the residents from the outset of the development—not years later.
6. That beauty—structural and natural—is a necessity of the good life and should be fostered.
7. That Reston be a financial success.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Netherton, Nan. *A new town in the Old Dominion*, 1989, Dunning Co. Publishers

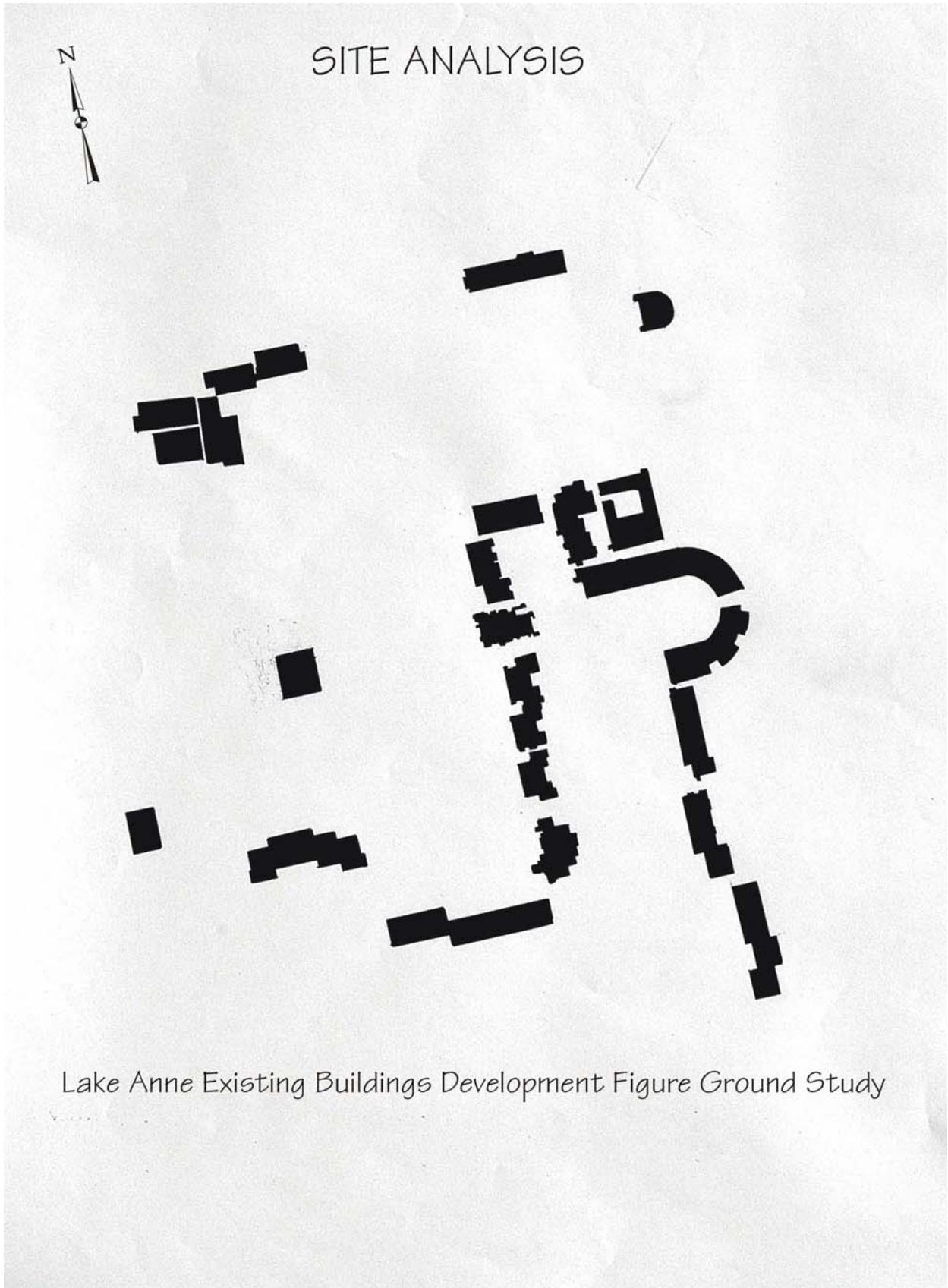
# SITE ANALYSIS



Lake Anne — Existing Topographic

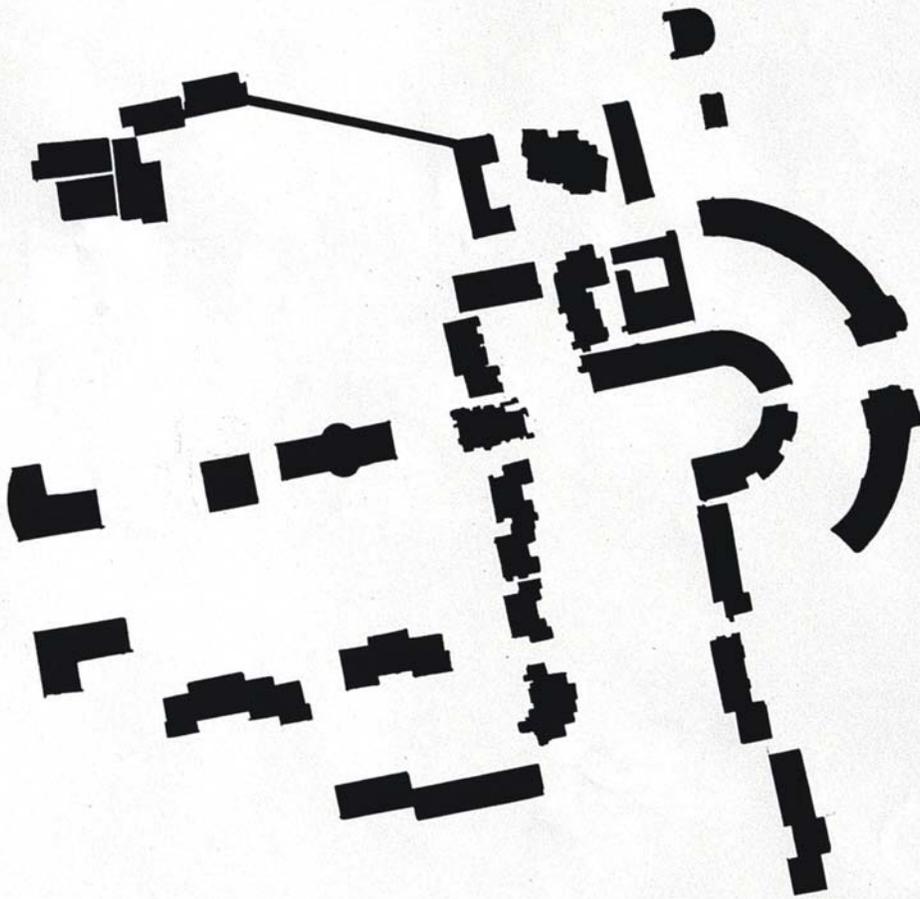


Lake Anne Proposed Development, Topographic



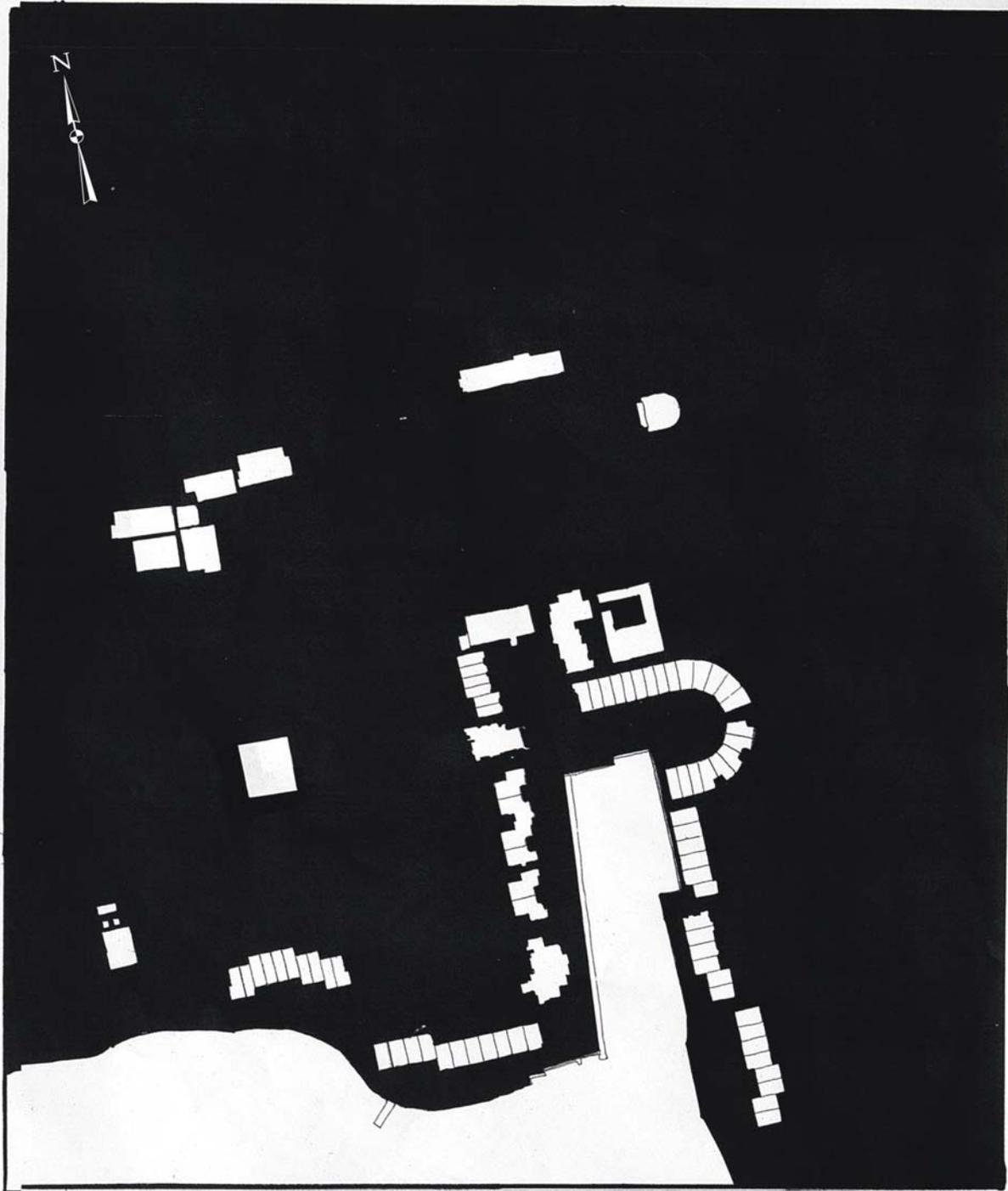


## SITE ANALYSIS



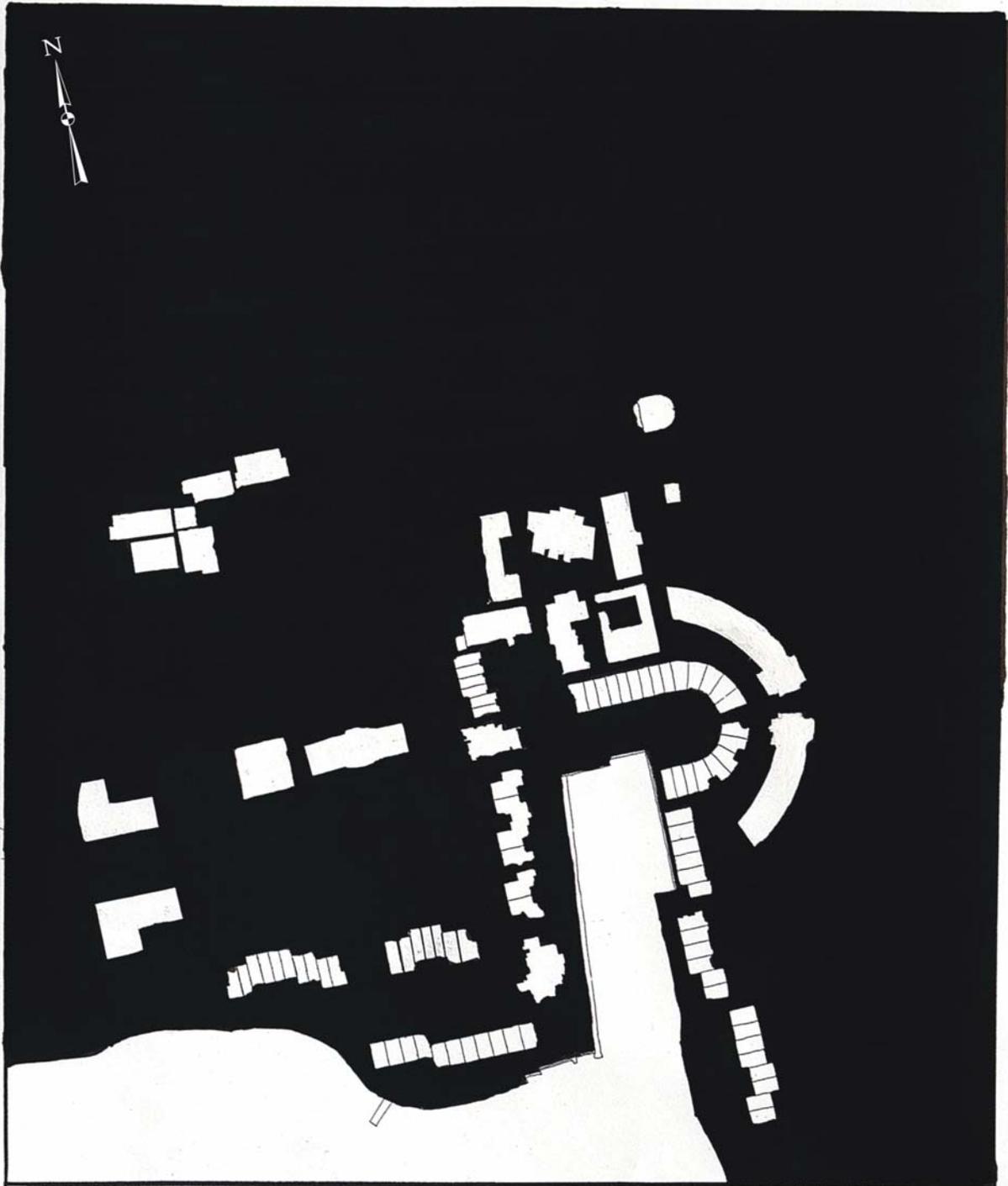
Lake Anne Proposed Building Development Figure Ground Study

# SITE ANALYSIS



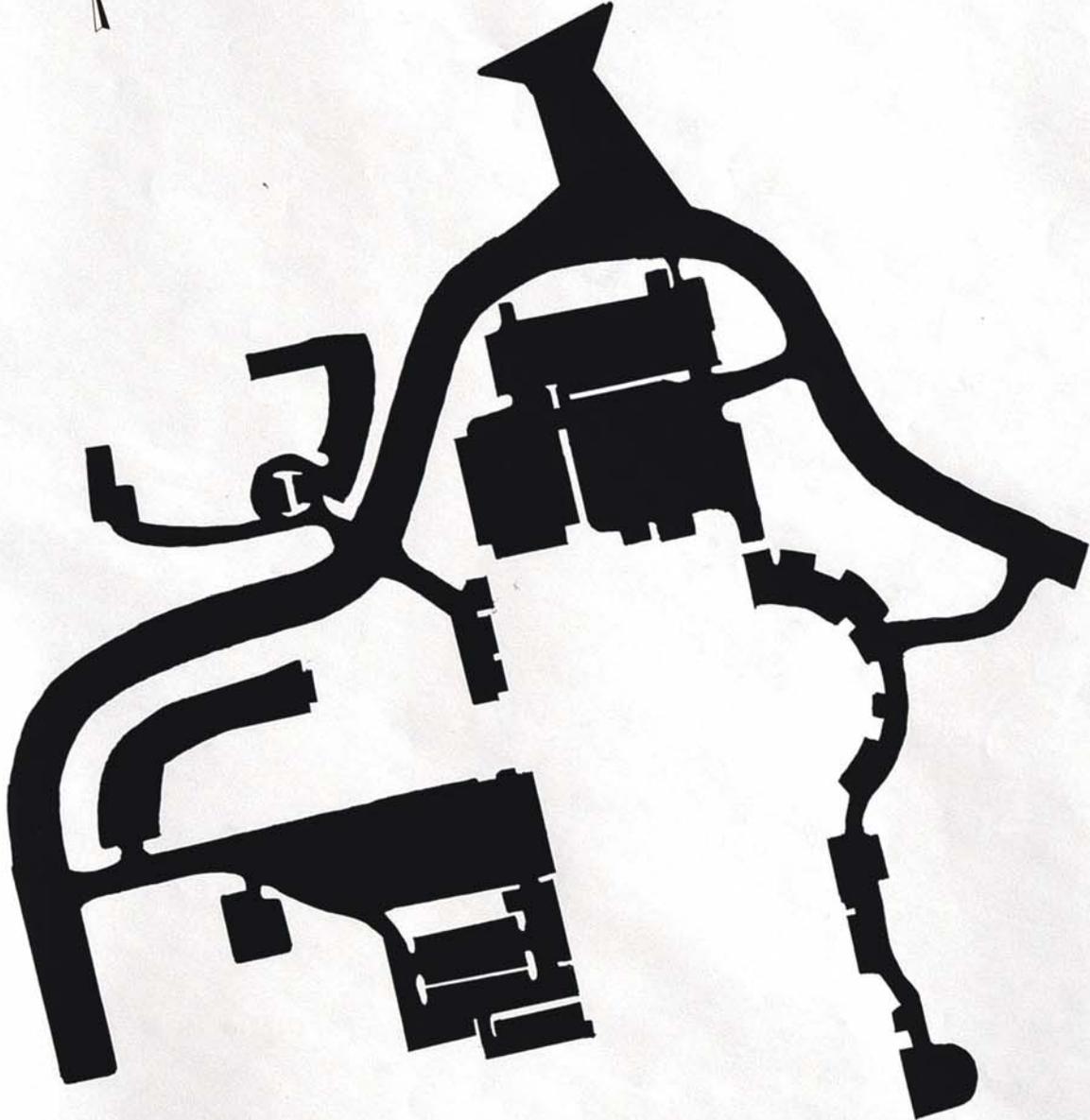
Lake Anne Existing Development  
Ground Figure Study

# SITE ANALYSIS



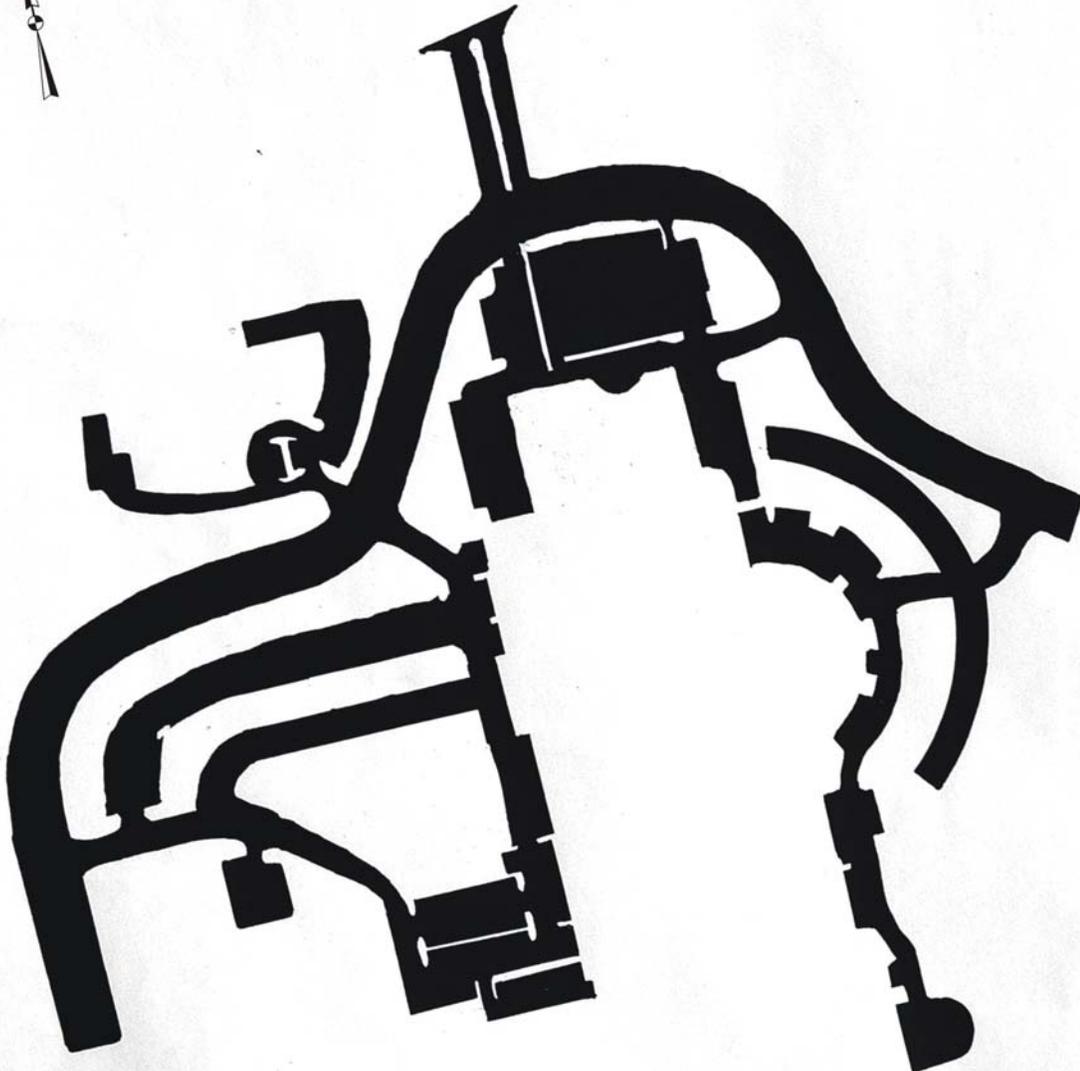
Lake Anne Proposed Development  
Ground Figure Study

SITE ANALYSIS

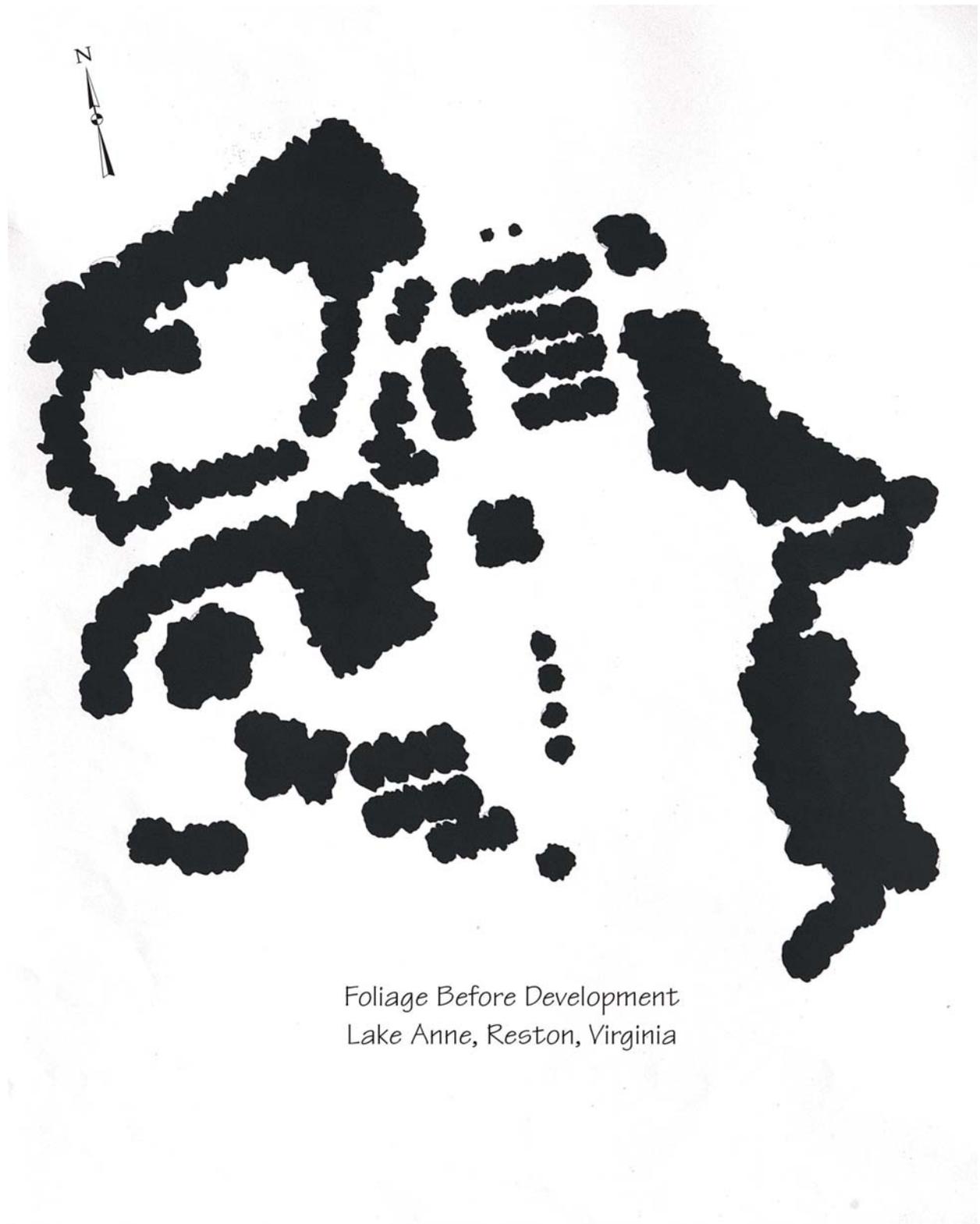


Lake Anne Paved Surface Existing Development

SITE ANALYSIS



Lake Anne Paved Surface Proposed Development



Foliage Before Development  
Lake Anne, Reston, Virginia

## SITE ANALYSIS

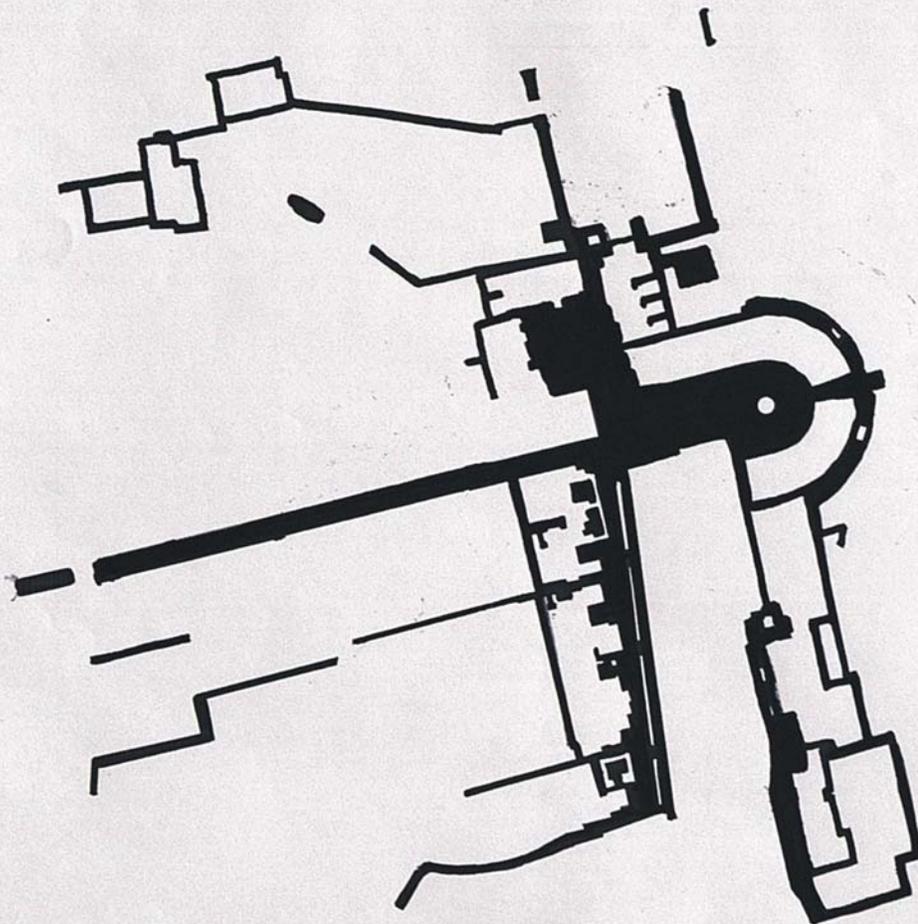
# SITE ANALYSIS



Lake Anne Foliage Proposed Development

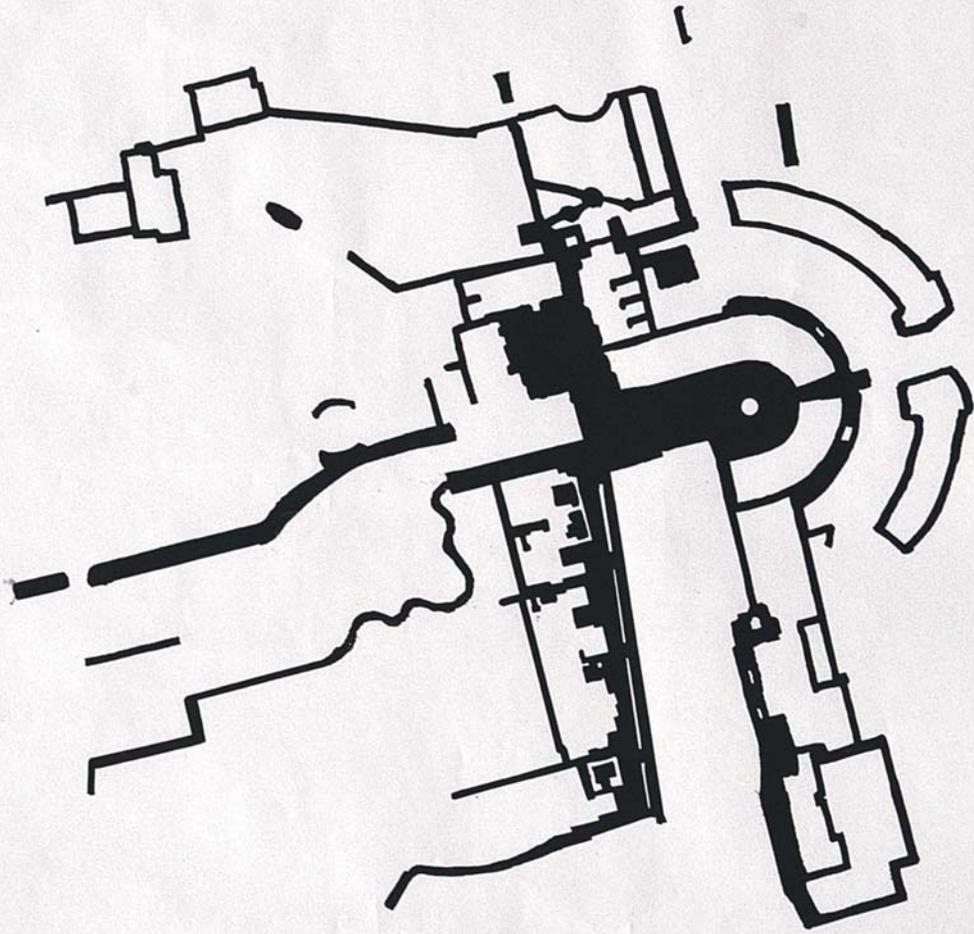


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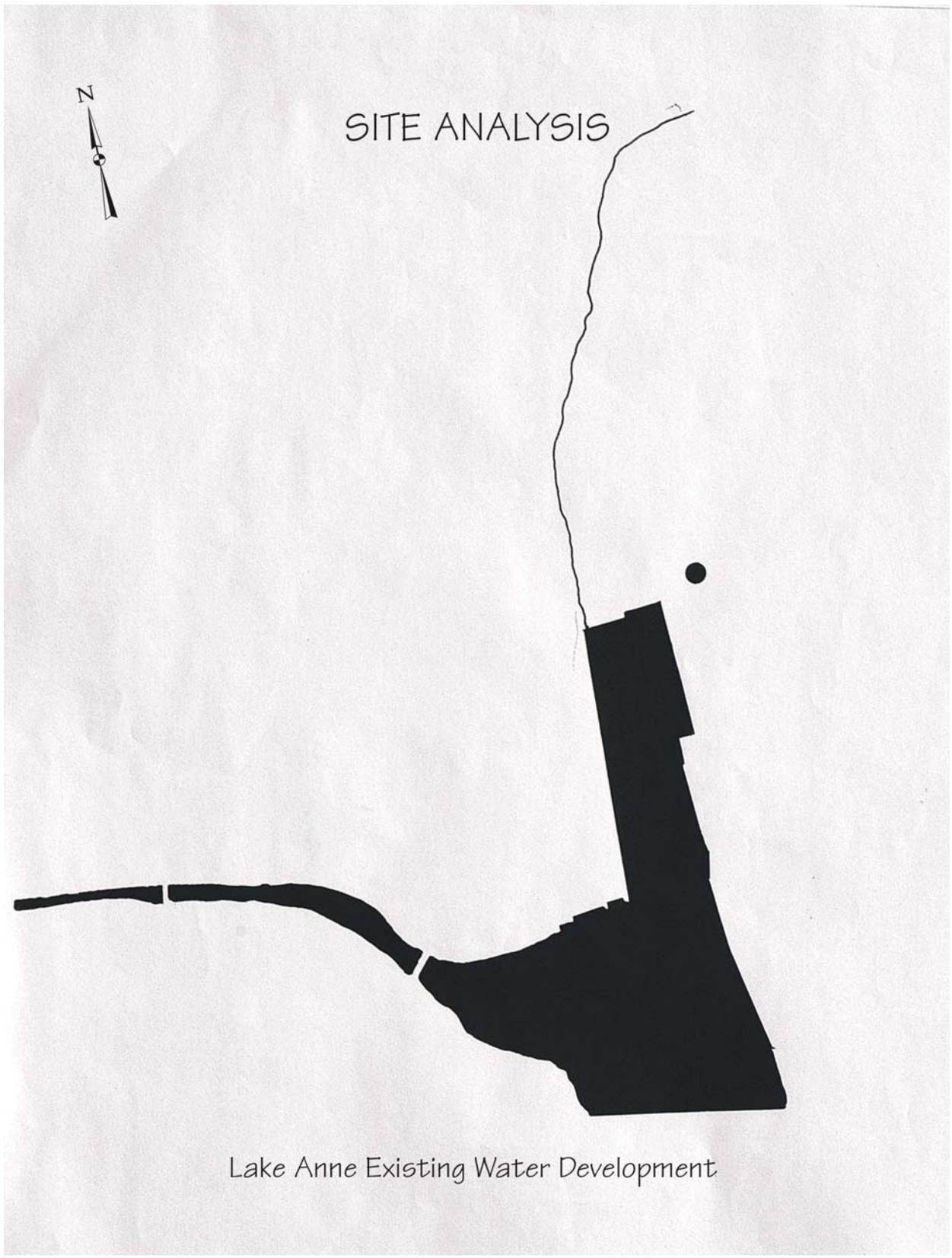


*Pedestrian Access Existing Development*

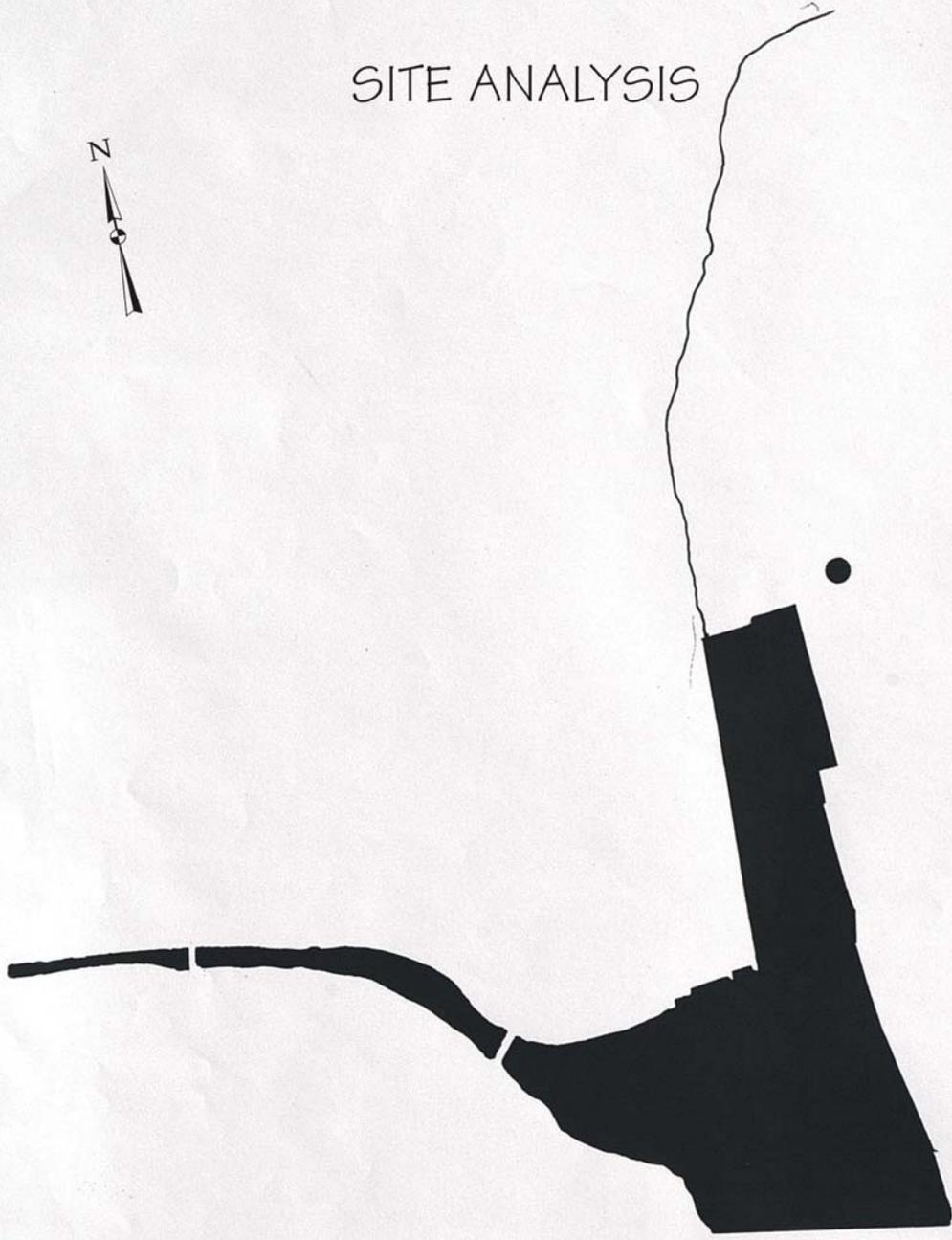
# SITE ANALYSIS



Lake Anne Pedestrian Access Proposed Development



# SITE ANALYSIS



Lake Anne Proposed Water Development

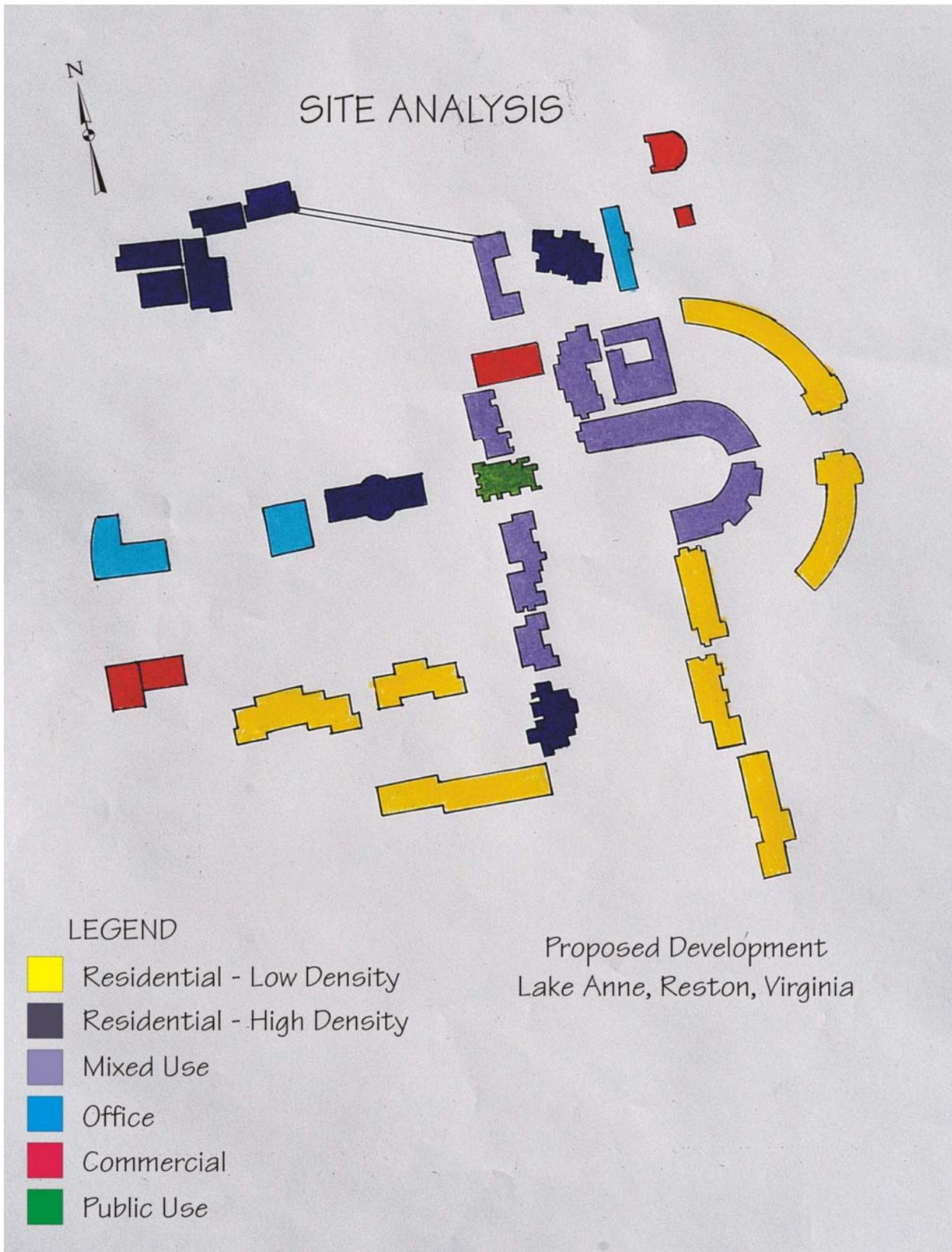
# SITE ANALYSIS USES OF DEVELOPMENT



## LEGEND

-  Residential - Low Density
-  Residential - High Density
-  Mixed Use
-  Office
-  Commercial
-  Public Use

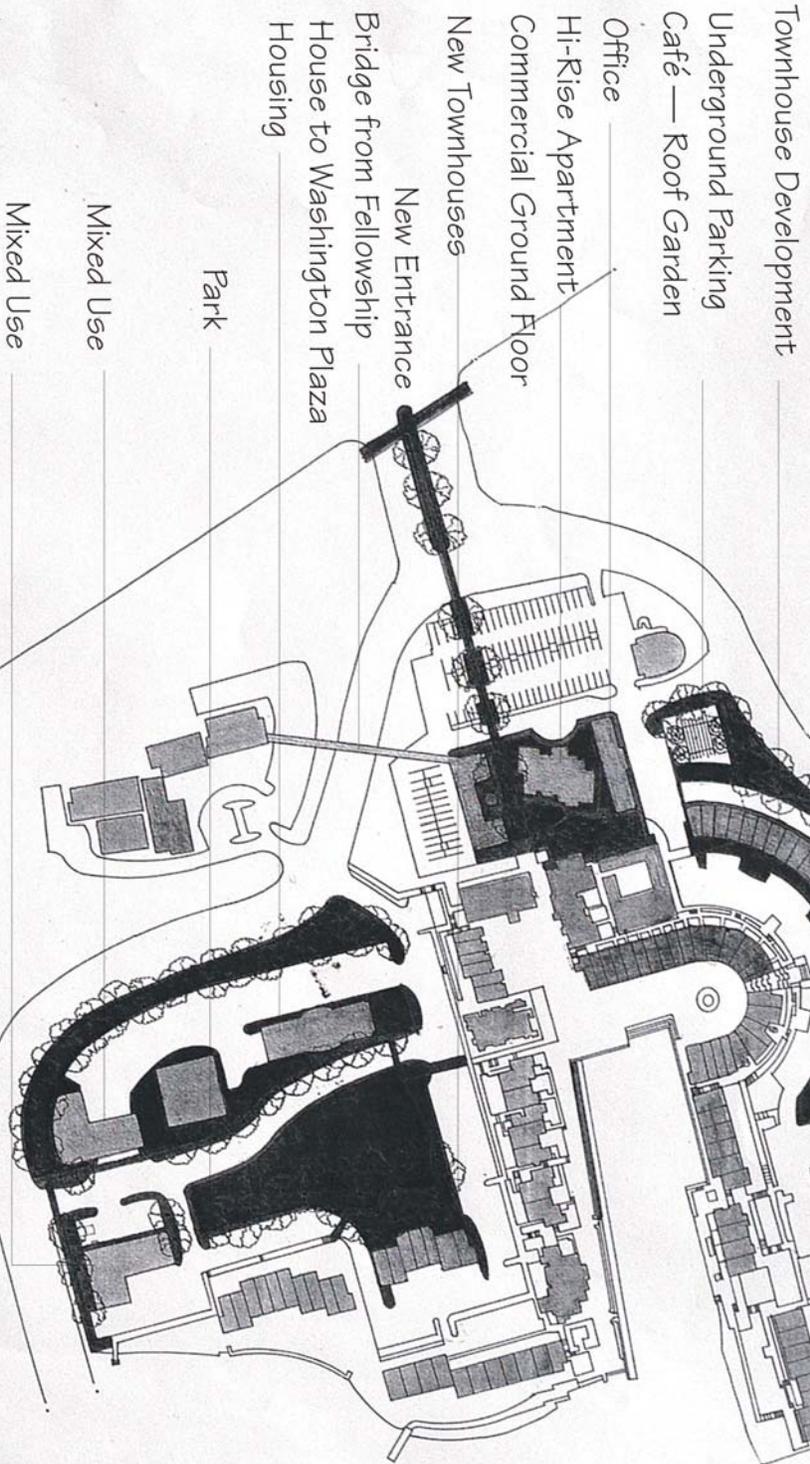
EXISTING DEVELOPMENT USE  
Lake Anne, Reston, Virginia



## Proposal

- Develop new housing alternatives for first time buyers and older residents.
- Provide mixed-use development in parking lot at entrance to Washington Plaza.
- Build bridge from Fellowship House to Washington Plaza.
- Provide underground parking with commercial plaza on roof.
- Remove and relocate office building on north side of Washington Plaza for better visibility of Plaza.
- Relocate entrance to Plaza to give a “front door” entrance to Lake Anne with greater visibility.
- Building housing on vacant land between Baptist church and Washington Plaza  
Professional building in west parking area.
- Build additional housing in parking area west of Washington Plaza.
- Build park and plant additional trees to compensate for any loss caused by redevelopment.
- Construct roof gardens and eco roofs on all flat roofed buildings at Lake Anne.
- Build mixed-use buildings at west North Shore entrance to west parking area to establish a west entrance to Washington Plaza.
- Special attention to conservation program to prevent age-related deterioration of existing buildings.
- Provide opportunities for residents to meet and engage in causal social activities.

# MASTER PLAN



1" = 20'

LAKE ANNE  
RESTON, VIRGINIA



LAKE ANNE, RESTON, VIRGINIA  
ELEVATION



New Parking, Café, Housing Proposed Development

- Café
- Roof Garden
- Parking—New Housing
- Housing
- Underground Parking

Not to Scale



Housing

Parking, New Housing

Roof Garden

Underground Parking

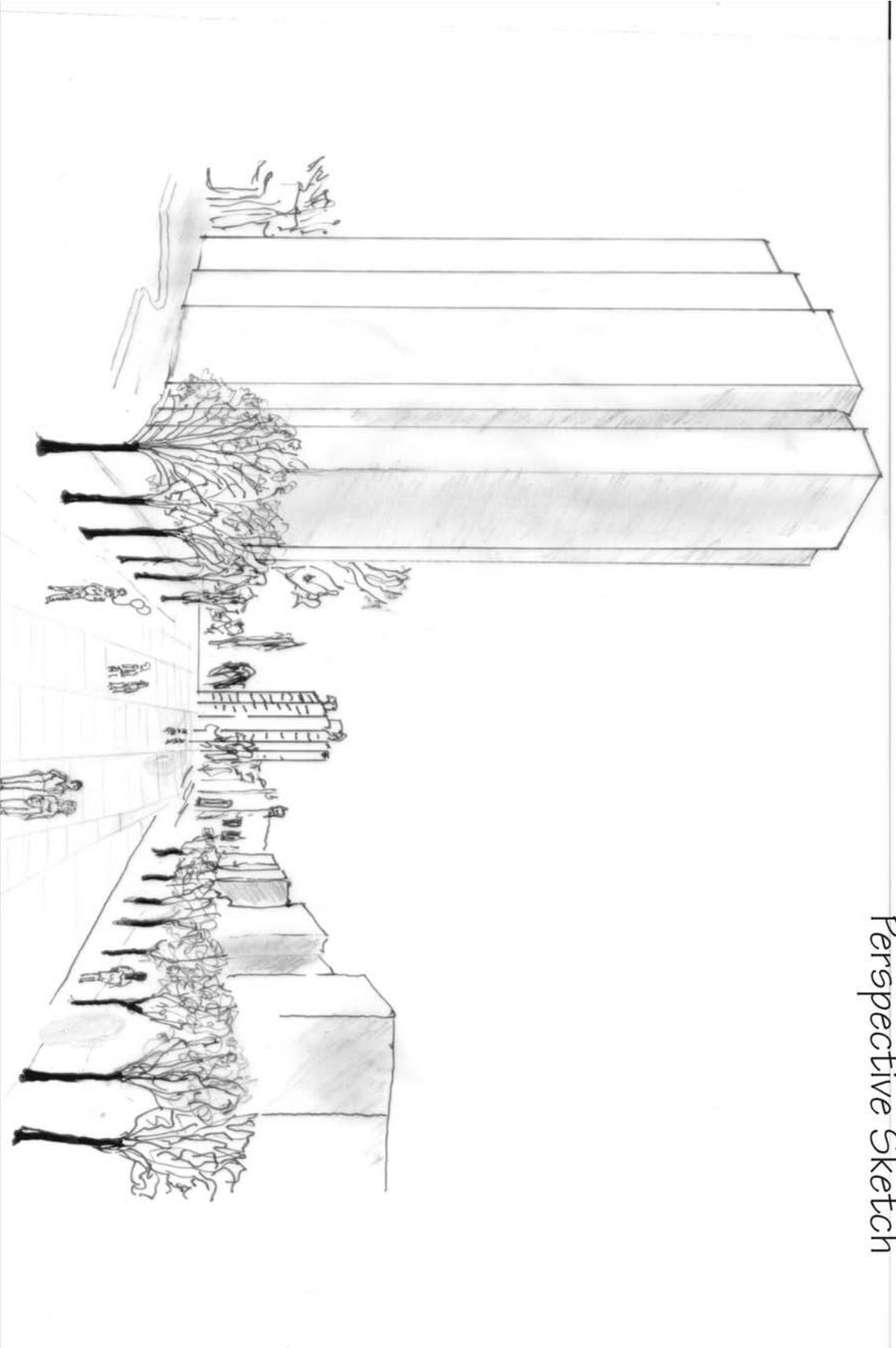
Café

Not to Scale

### New Development

Washington Plaza, Lake Anne, Reston, Virginia

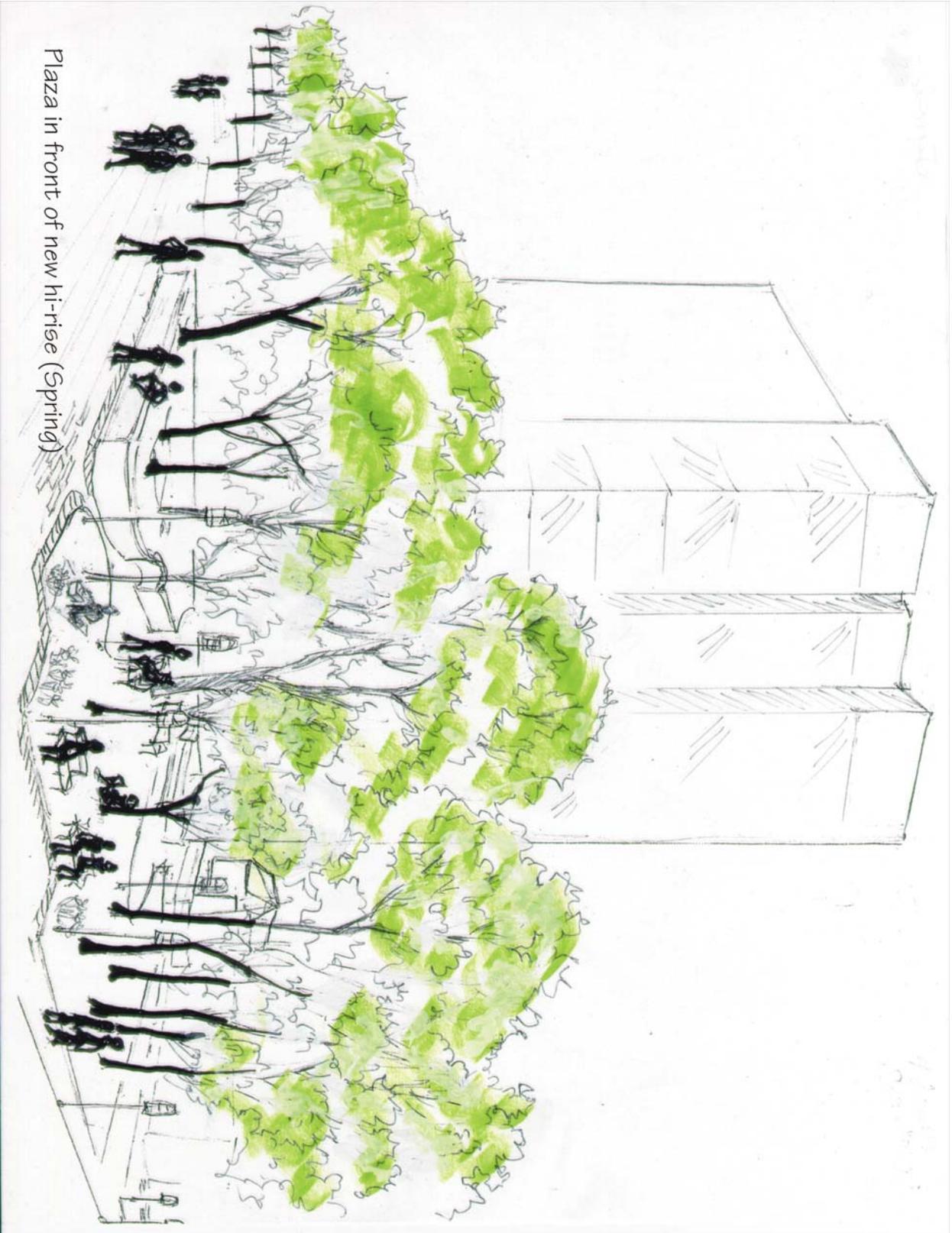
Perspective Sketch



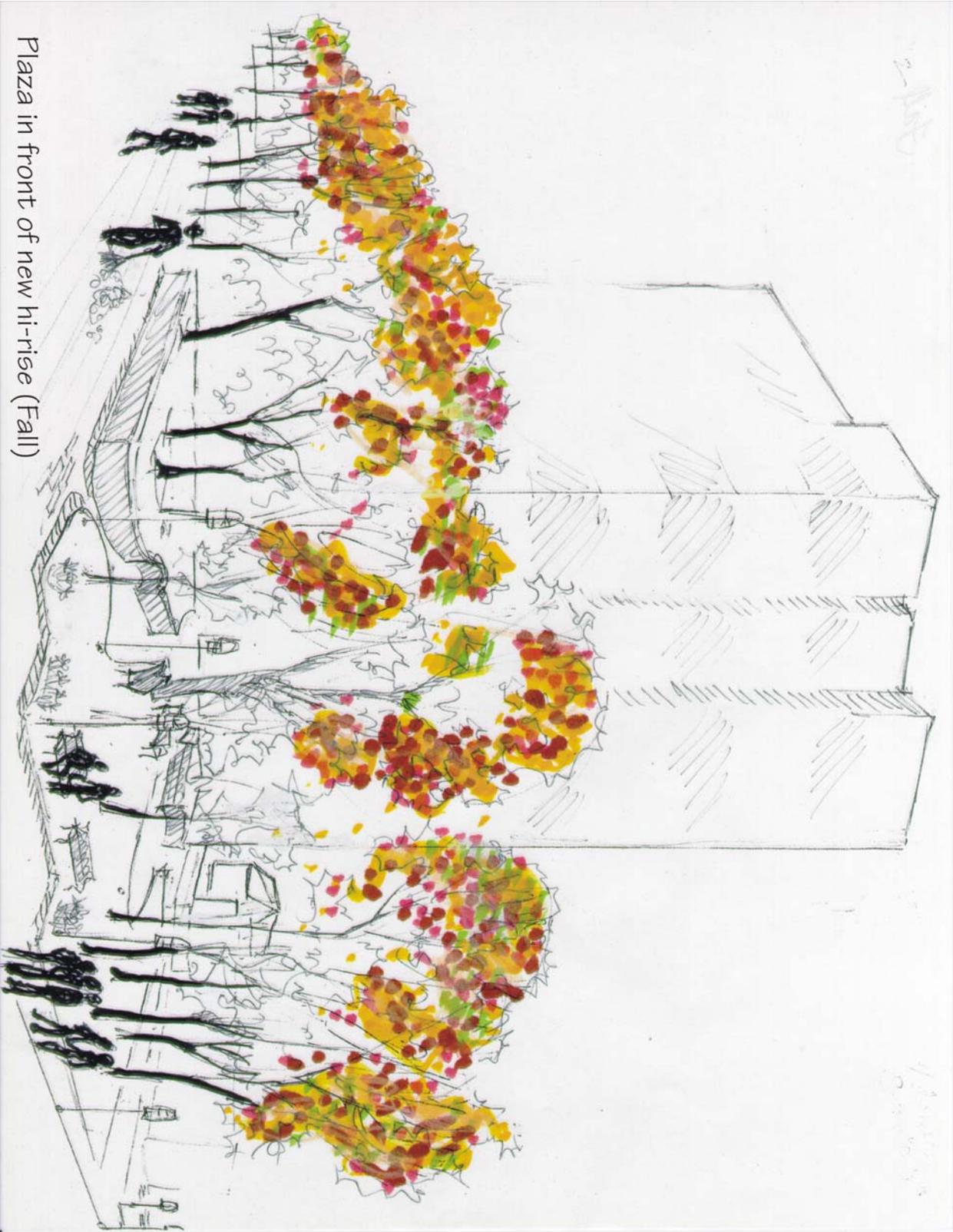
View of Heron House and Lake Anne from new entrance



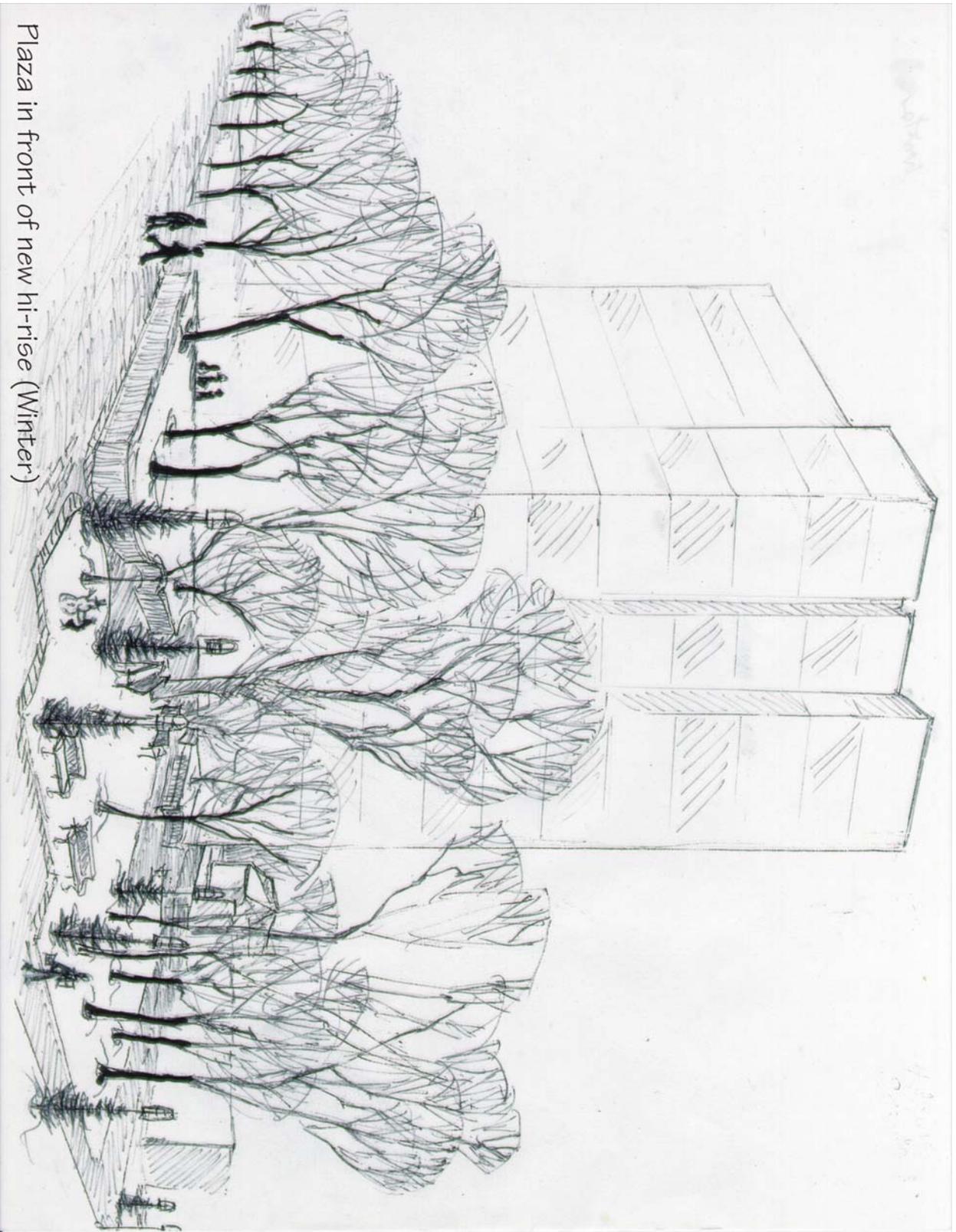
View looking toward Washington Plaza from west parking area



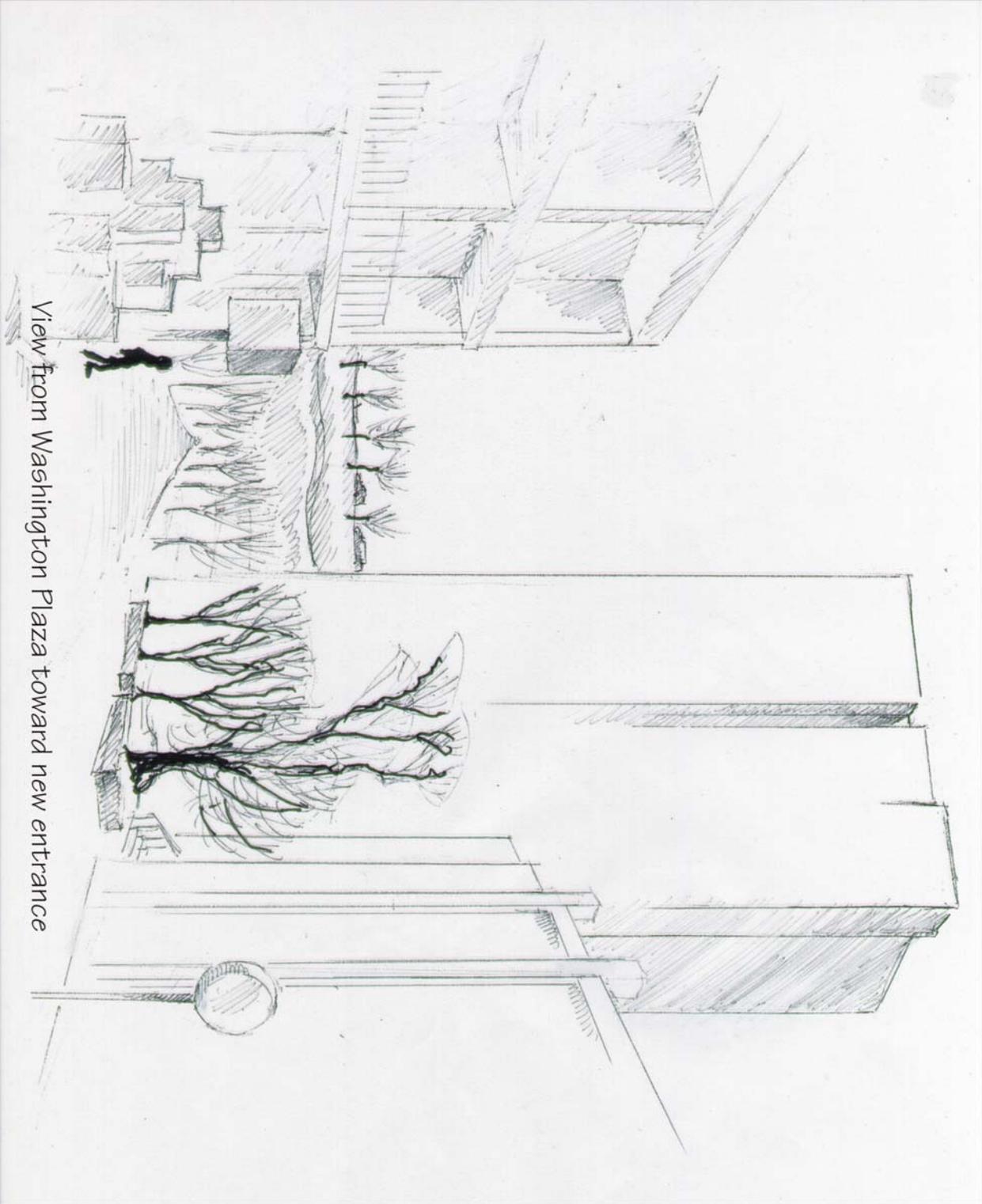
Plaza in front of new hi-rise (Spring)



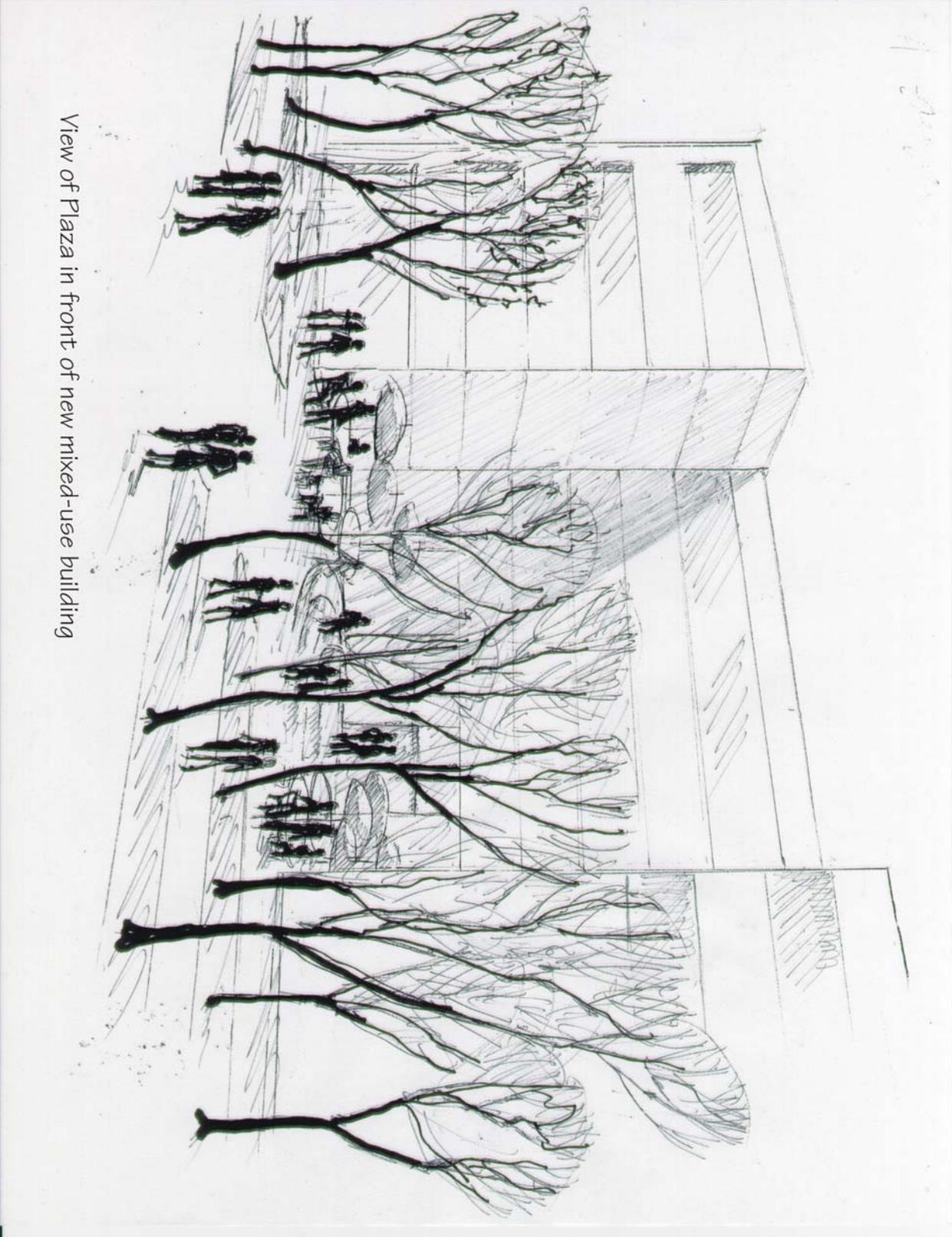
Plaza in front of new hi-rise (Fall)



Plaza in front of new hi-rise (Winter)



View from Washington Plaza toward new entrance



View of Plaza in front of new mixed-use building

## The Importance of Vegetative Roofs

Storm water runoff in urban areas is a major environmental challenge. A roof planted in vegetation can absorb as much as 75 percent of the storm water hitting the roof surface of a building.<sup>2</sup> The sponge effect of a vegetative roof not only absorbs the storm water runoff, it slows it down.

Heat island effect of urban areas is another major concern of city planners and architects. Plants mitigate the heat build-up of a roof thereby lowering air temperature and also, the internal temperature of a building.

Green roofs use “lost space” to enhance the environment of an urban area. Topping a building with a roof garden/vegetative roof expands the environmental experience of urban dwellers. Roof gardens offer alternative opportunities for another connection to nature. The existing buildings in Washington Plaza present that opportunity. Roof gardens/vegetative roofs should be part of the architecture of any new construction in the Lake Anne Redevelopment Plan.

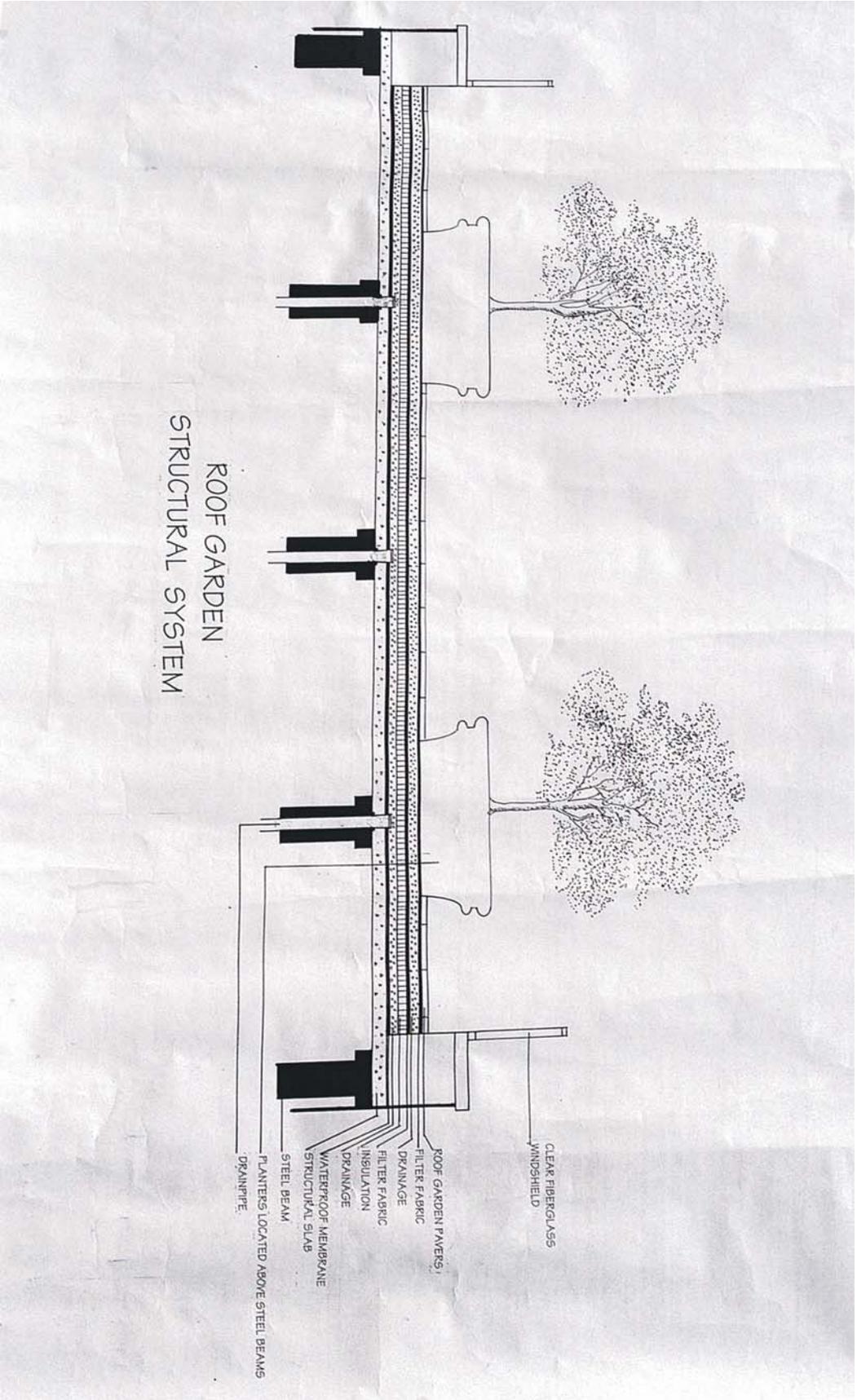
Further information on Vegetative Roof Gardens see:

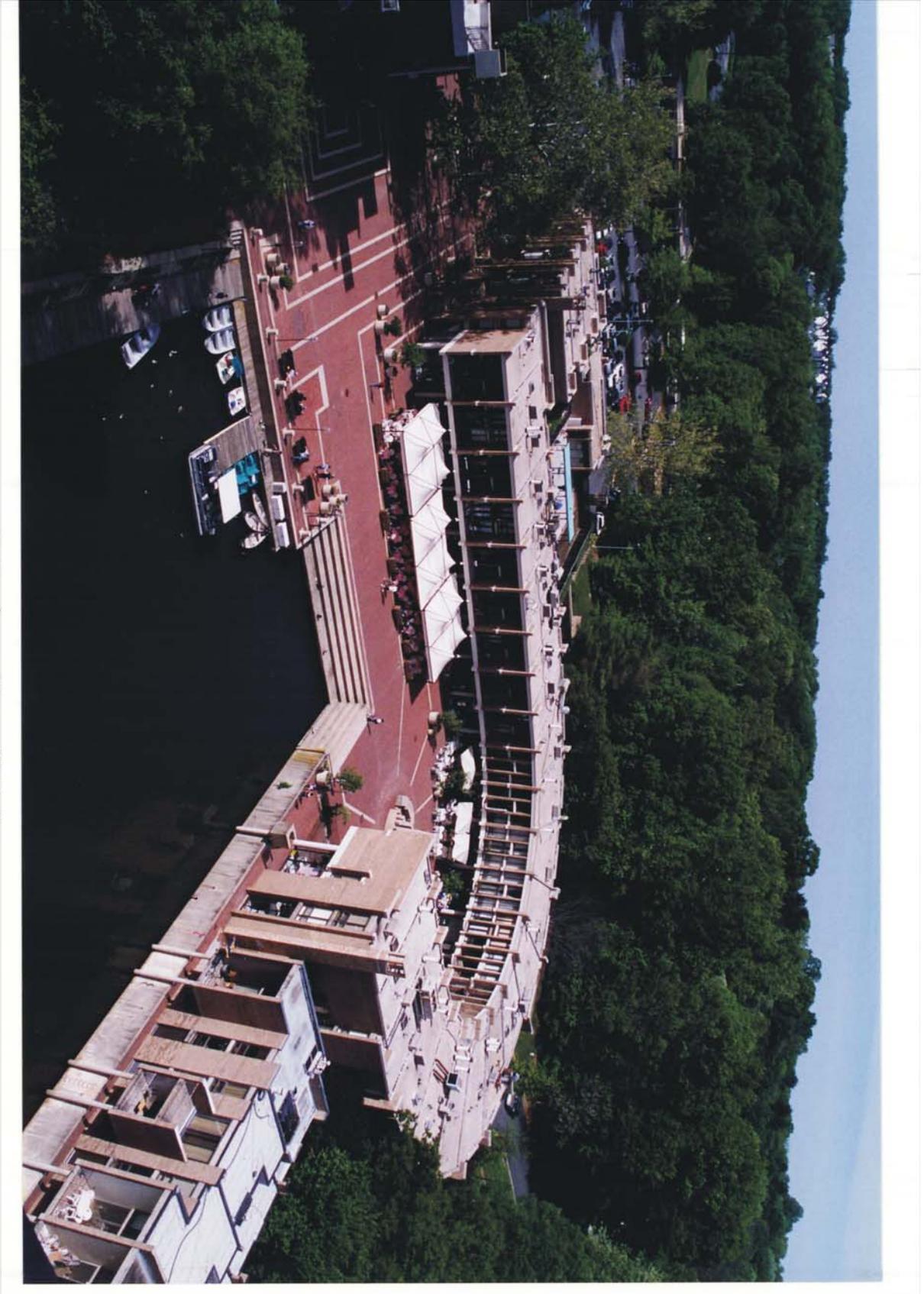
Osmundson, Theodore, FSLA, *Roof Gardens*. W.W. Norton Co. 1999.

Solomon, Nancy B., AIA. “Vegetation Systems Atop Buildings Yield Multiple Environmental Benefits.” *Architectural Record*, March, 2003, pp 149.

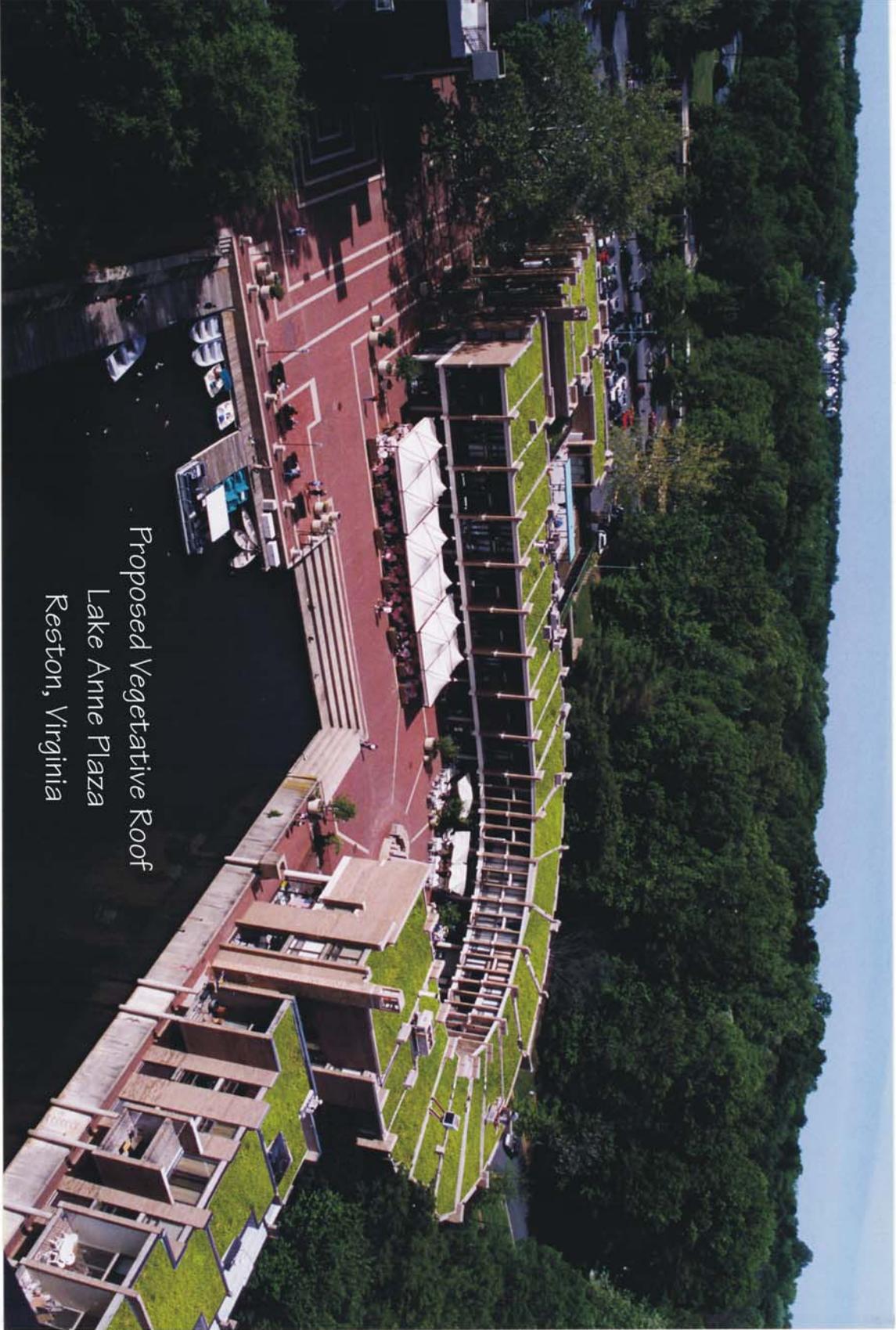
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<sup>2</sup> American Hydrotech, Inc., *Garden Roofs*. Chicago, Illinois.





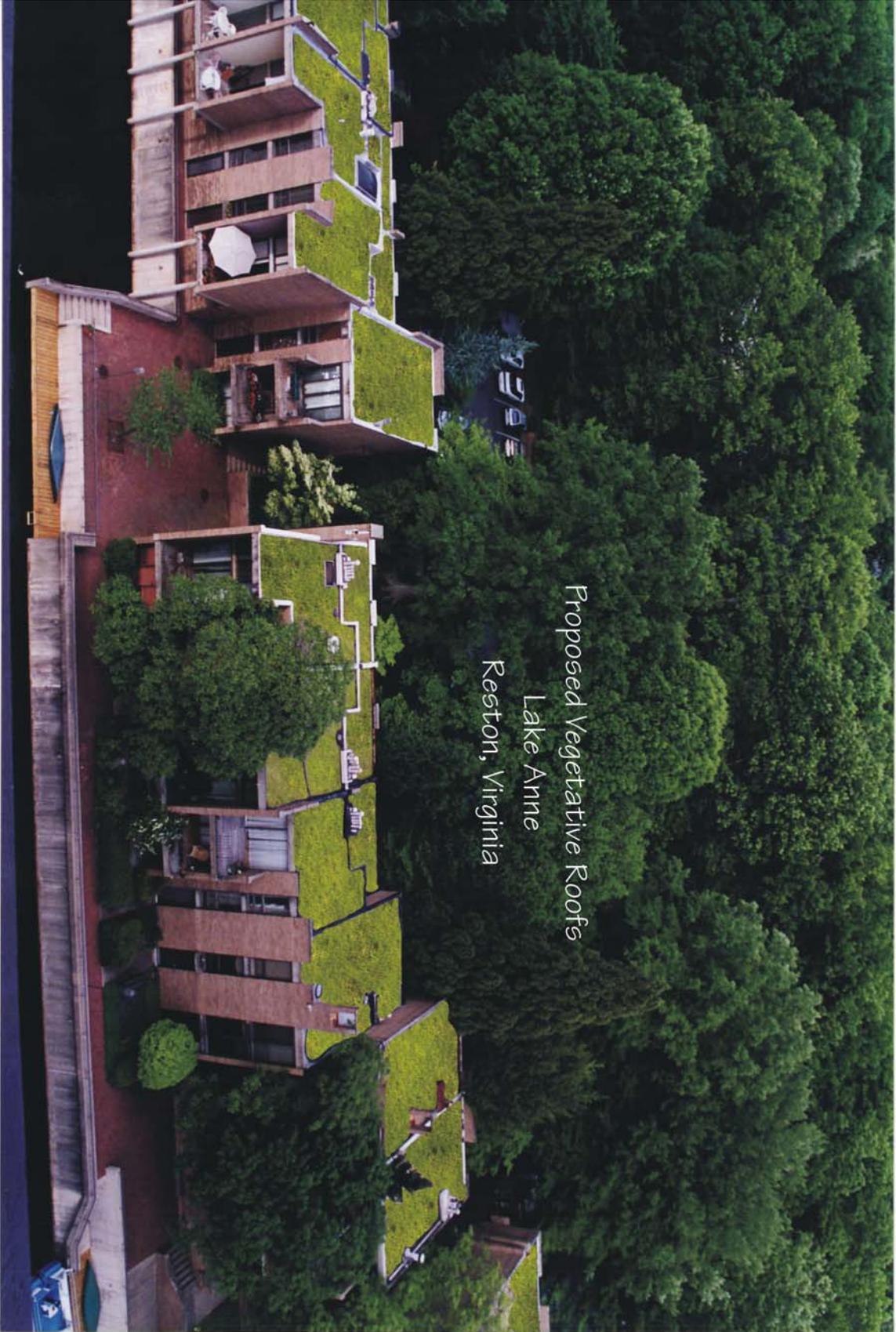
Lake Anne Plaza Existing



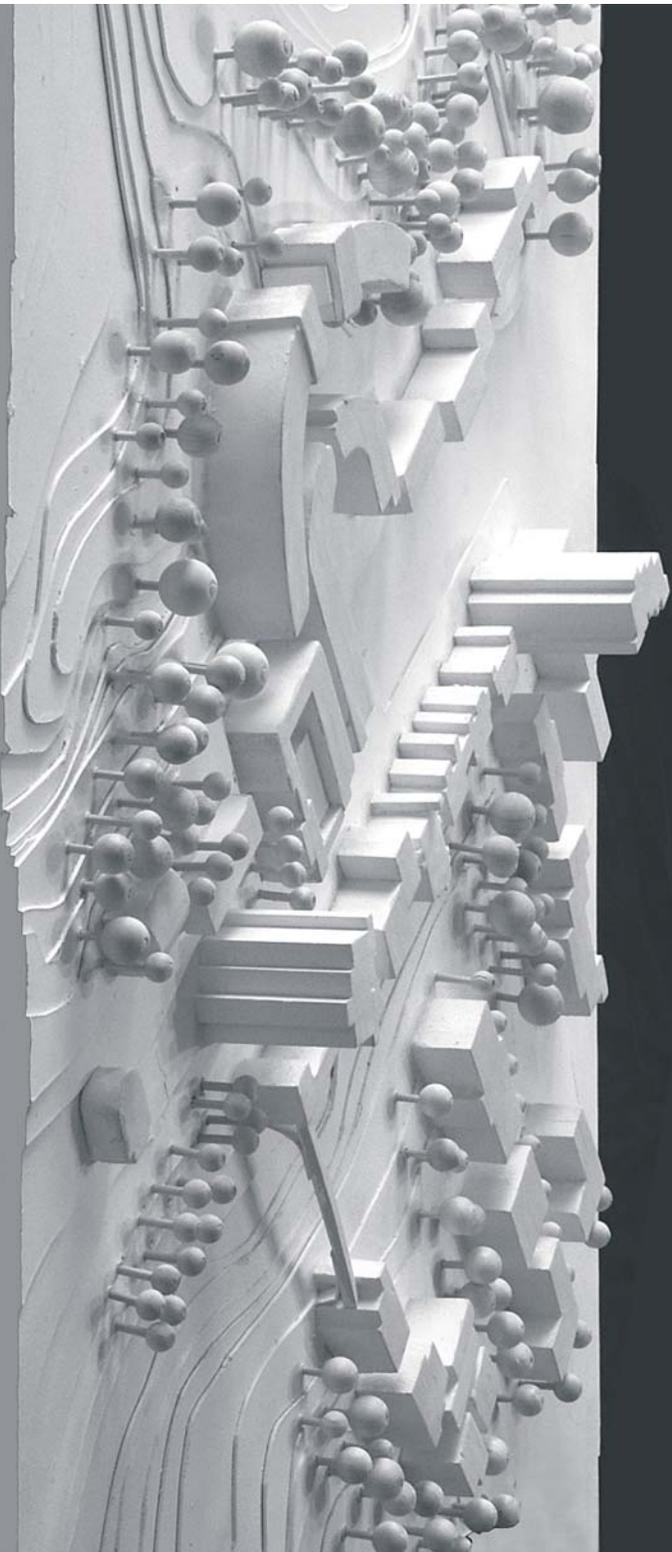
Proposed Vegetative Roof  
Lake Anne Plaza  
Reston, Virginia



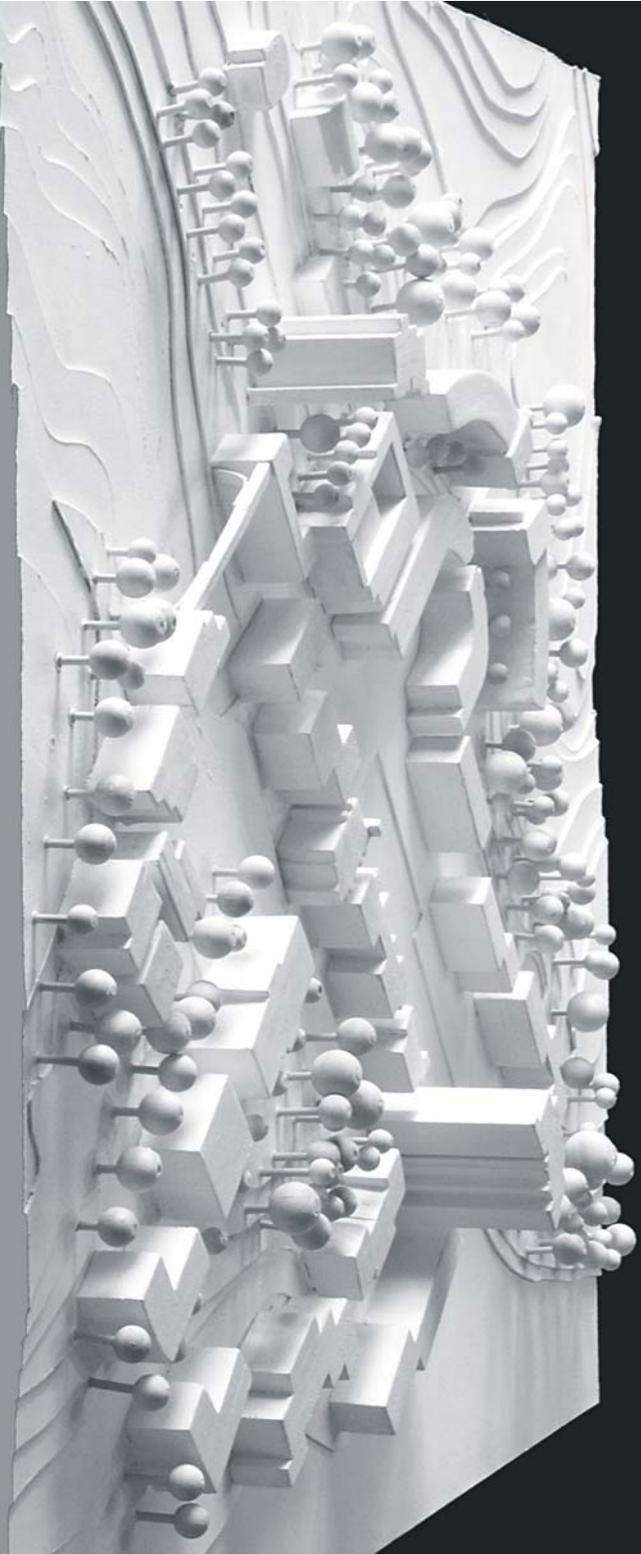
Lake Anne Plaza—Existing



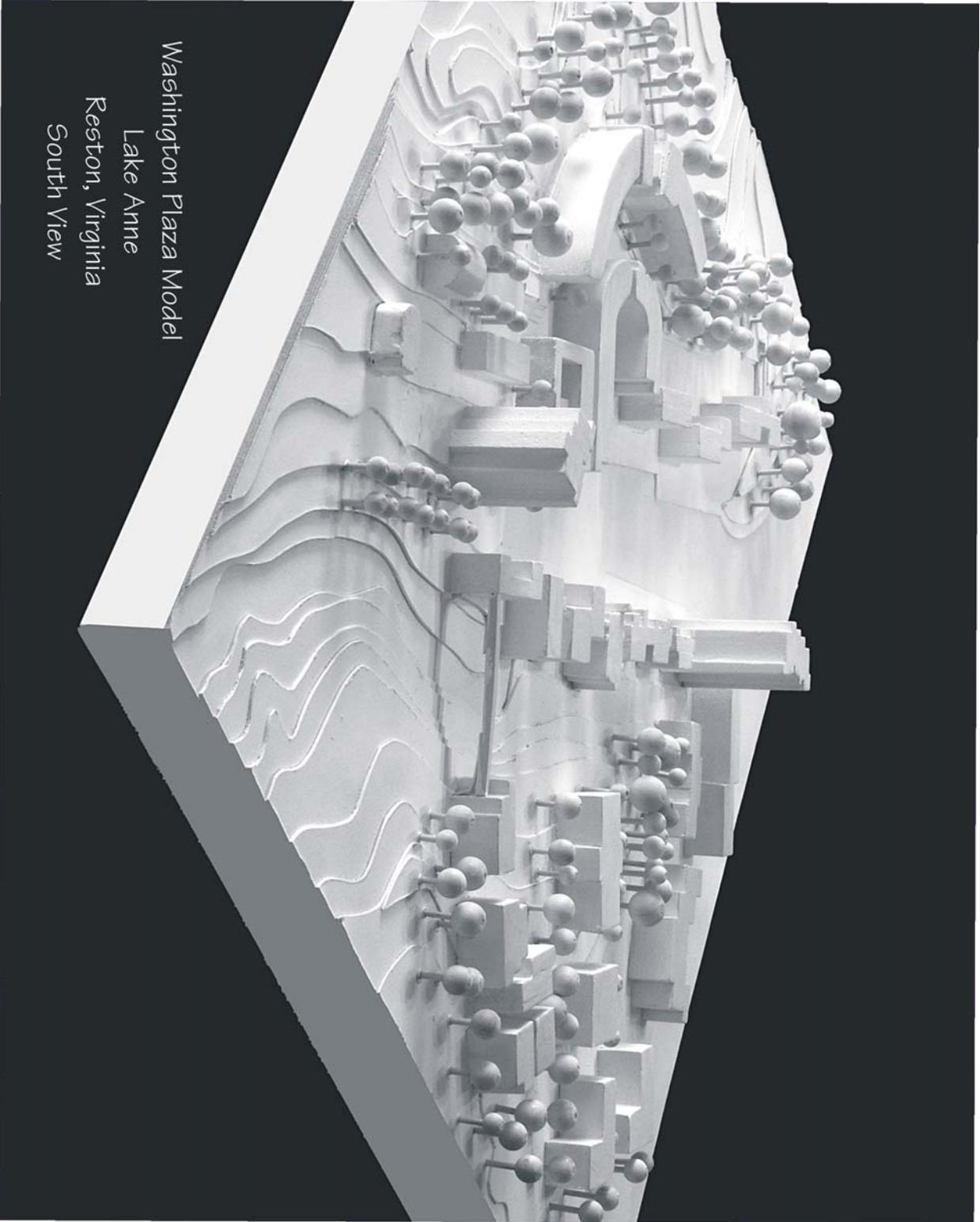
Proposed Vegetative Roofs  
Lake Anne  
Reston, Virginia



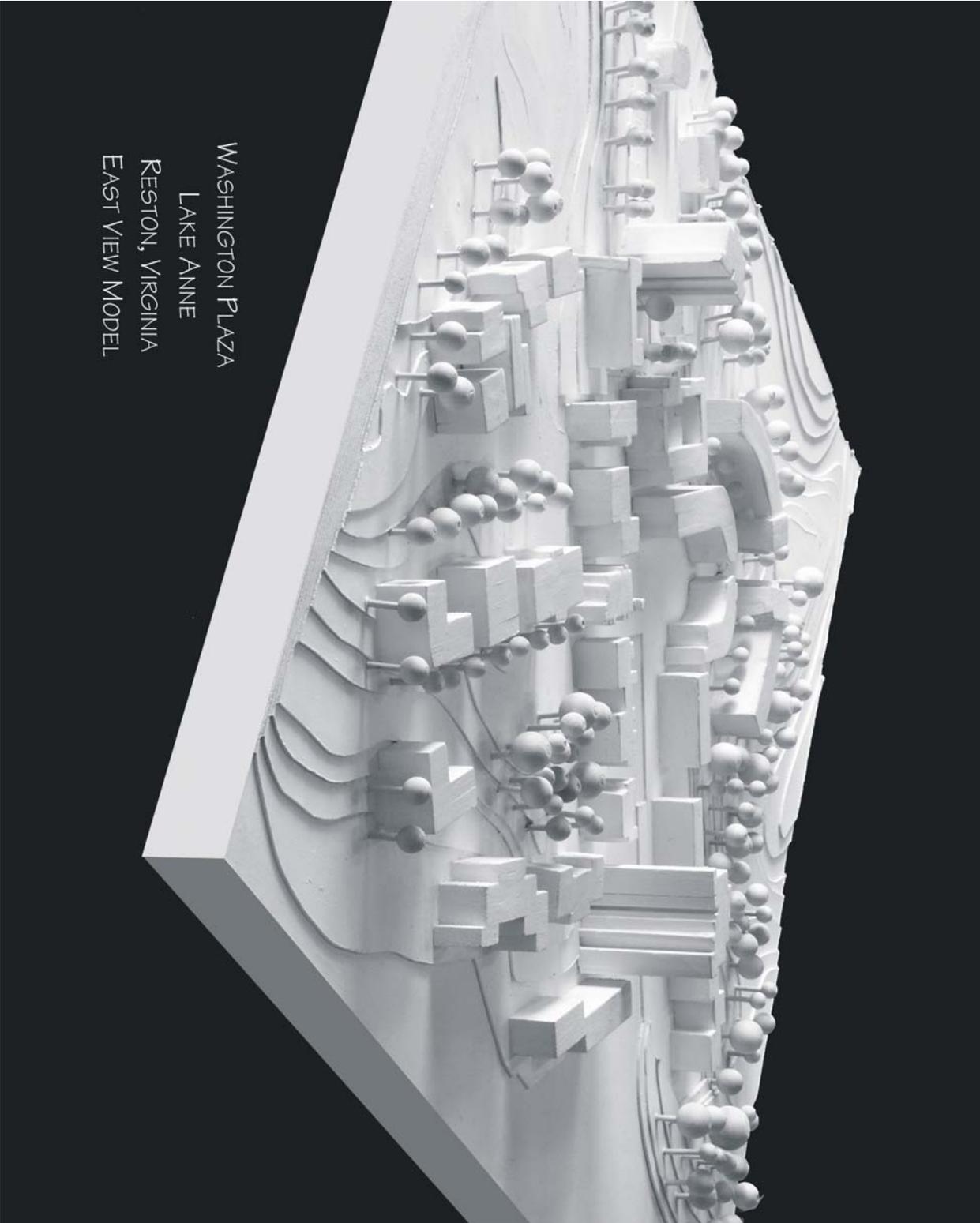
Washington Plaza Model  
Lake Anne  
Reston, Virginia  
Southwest View



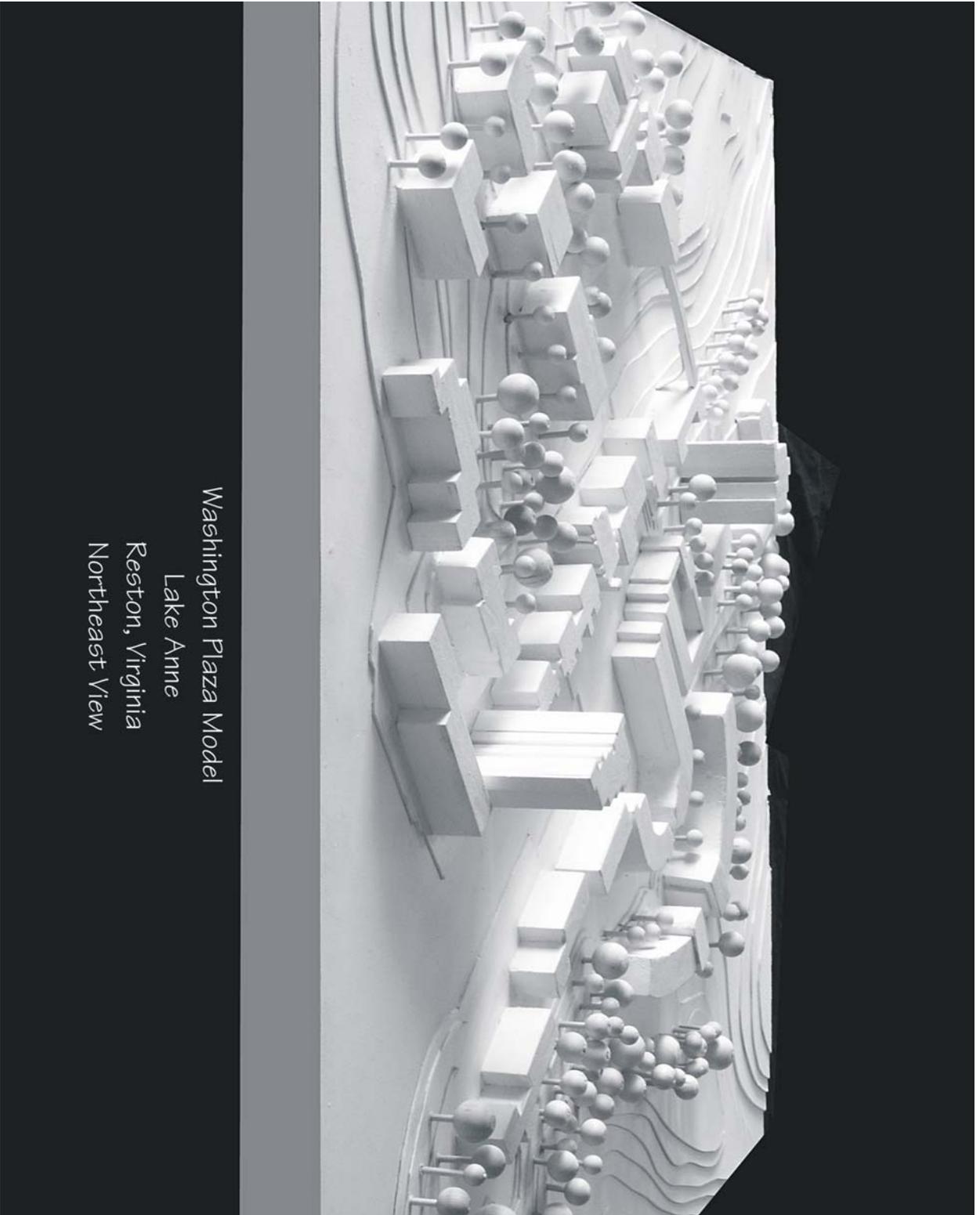
Washington Plaza Model  
Lake Anne  
Reston, Virginia  
Northeast View



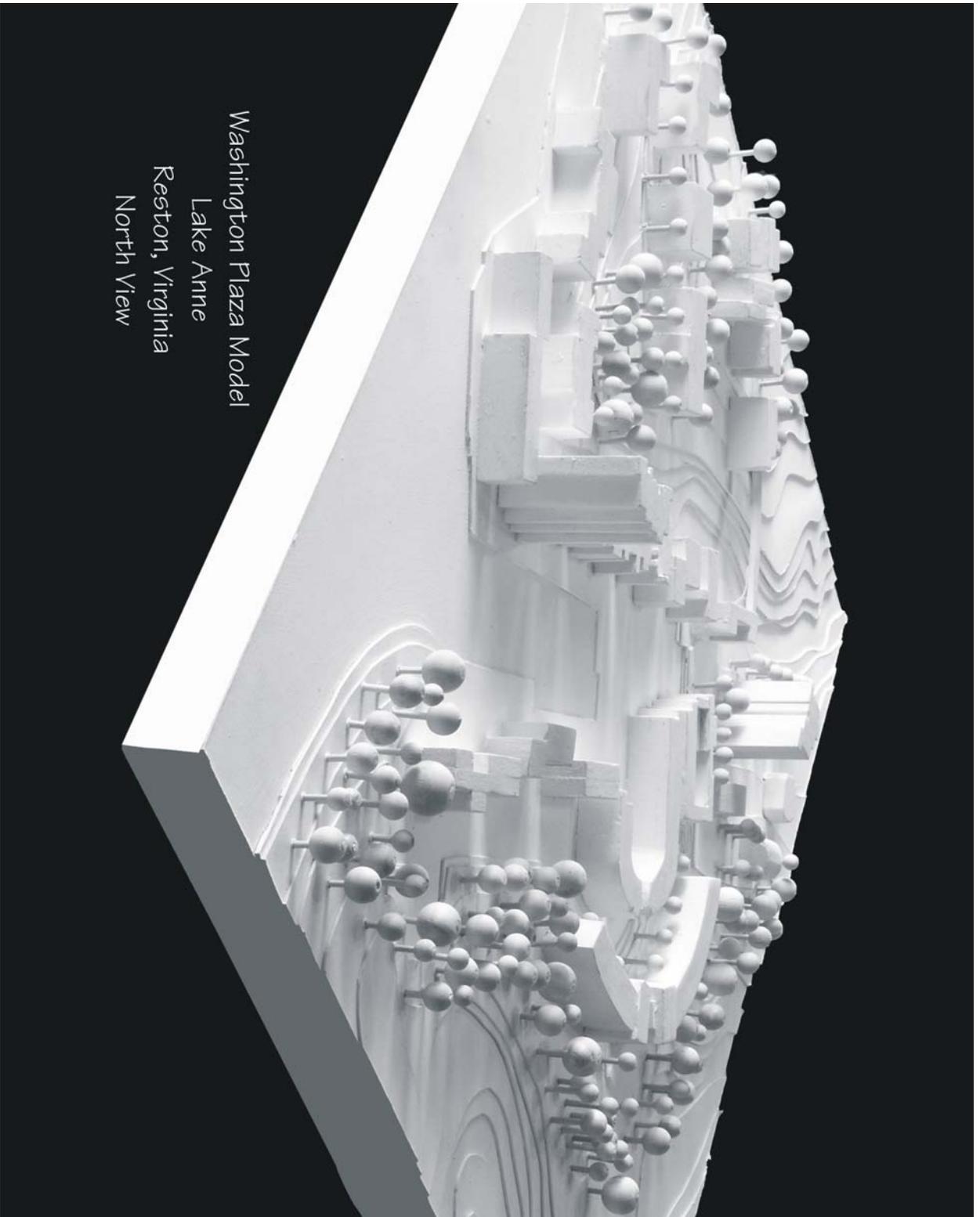
Washington Plaza Model  
Lake Anne  
Reston, Virginia  
South View



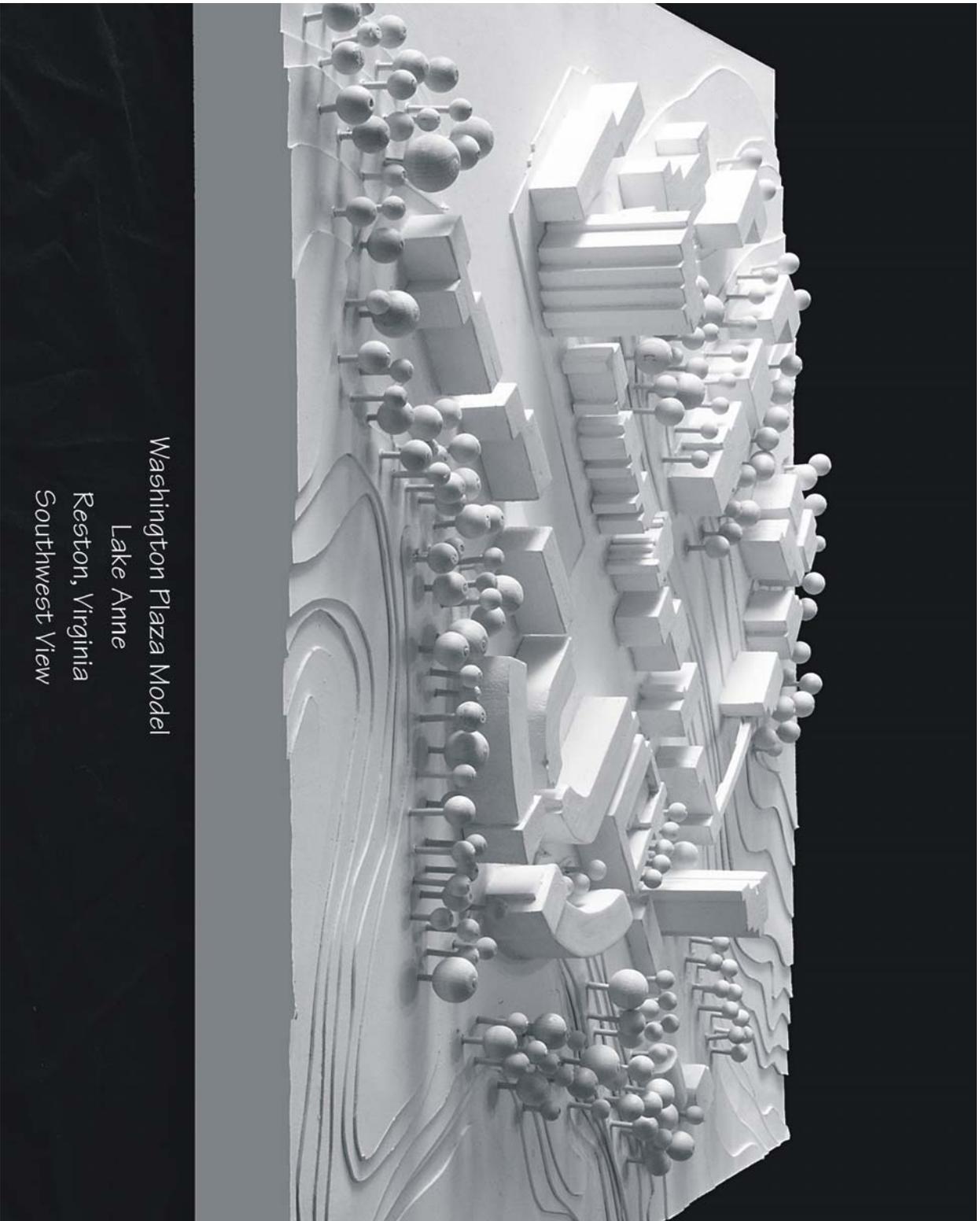
WASHINGTON PLAZA  
LAKE ANNE  
RESTON, VIRGINIA  
EAST VIEW MODEL



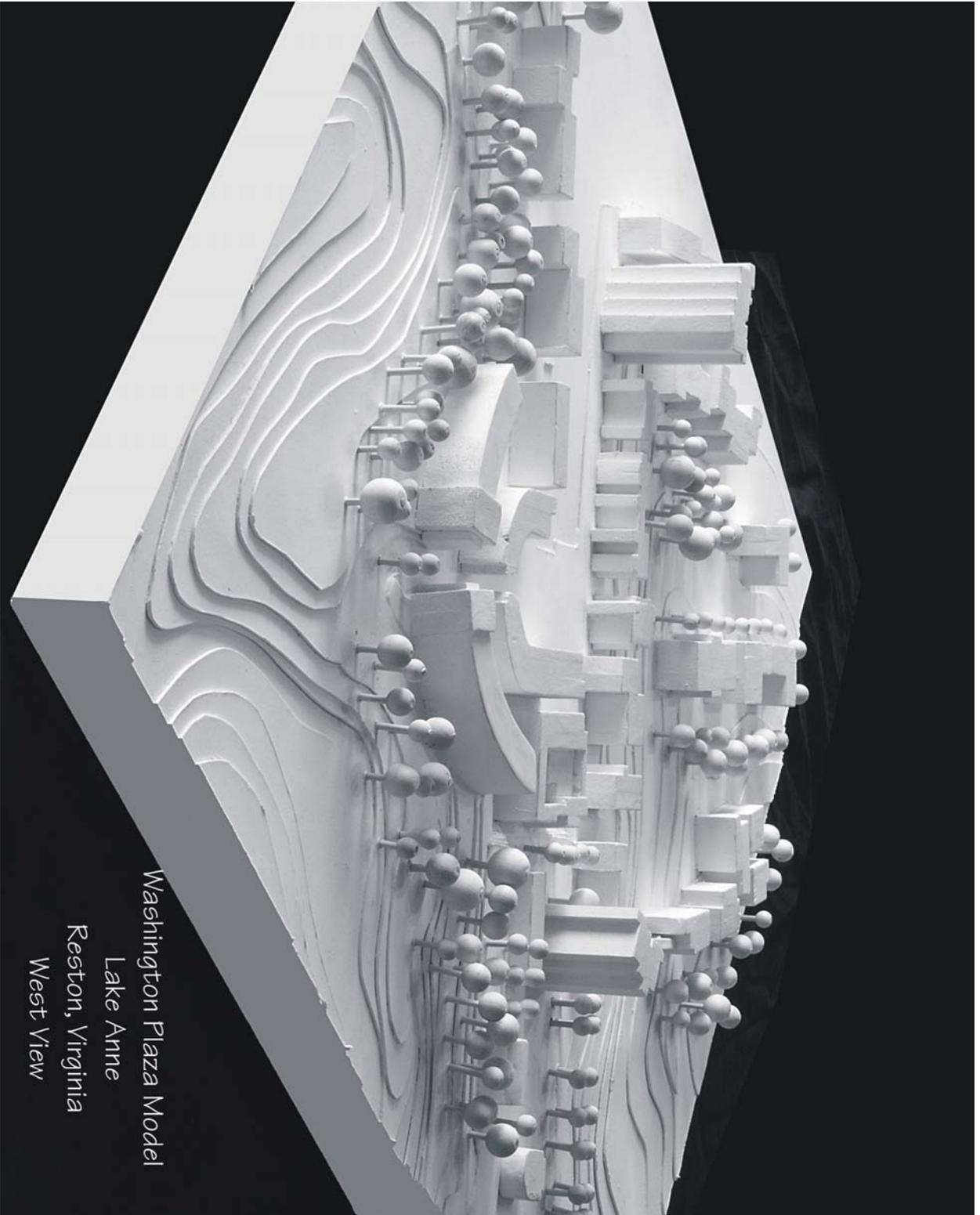
Washington Plaza Model  
Lake Anne  
Reston, Virginia  
Northeast View



Washington Plaza Model  
Lake Anne  
Reston, Virginia  
North View



Washington Plaza Model  
Lake Anne  
Reston, Virginia  
Southwest View



Washington Plaza Model  
Lake Anne  
Reston, Virginia  
West View

## End Notes

Reston Plats (4), courtesy Reston Land Corporation, pages 5-8.

Vargas, LLC Courtesy aerial photo reproduced for education purposes only, page 9.

Photo, page 10. See note above.

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