

How does it look from the street?

The proposed bulk controls result in more sky and light at the street level.

Mid-rise Development



No bulk controls



Draft Plan Controls:
Setbacks only



Current Proposal:
Setbacks with apparent mass reductions



Bigger Sky

The streetwalls open up and people on the street see and feel more of the sky.

What's different?

More sunlight

Sculpted building tops shape and provide more light on the ground

Vision

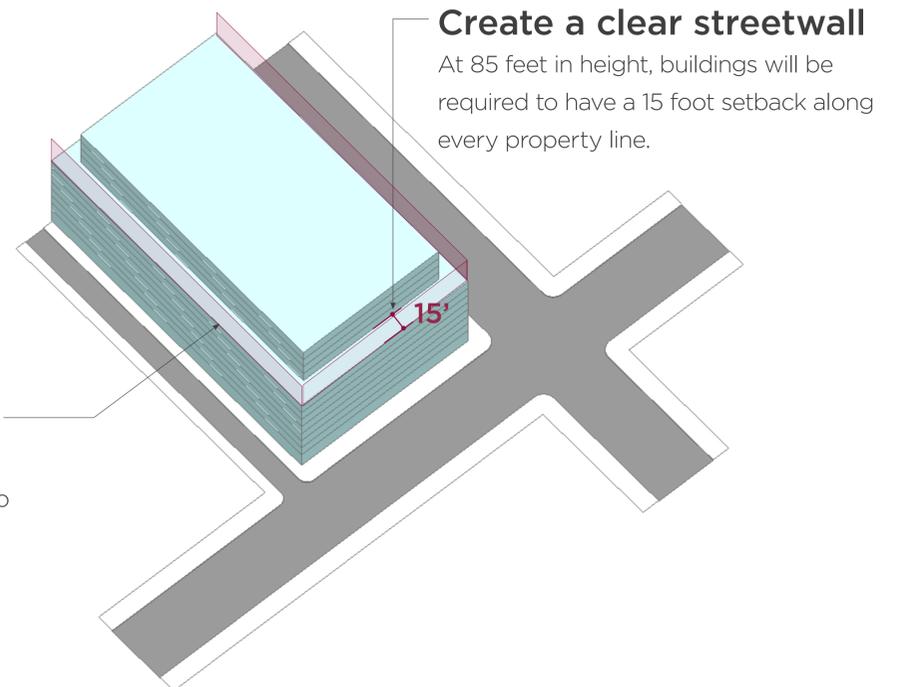
The vision of the Central SoMa Plan is to support substantial density while maintaining significant light, air, and sun access to the streets.

Mid-rise Development

Central SoMa is primarily designed to be a mid-rise district, with buildings of 85 feet to 160 feet. To support this density while still supporting light, air, and sun access to the streets, the Plan proposes to:

Simultaneously provide openness to the sky and architectural diversity

Between 85 to 160 feet in height, buildings will be required to substantially reduce what is visible from the street. Individual buildings will have architectural flexibility on how to achieve this goal.

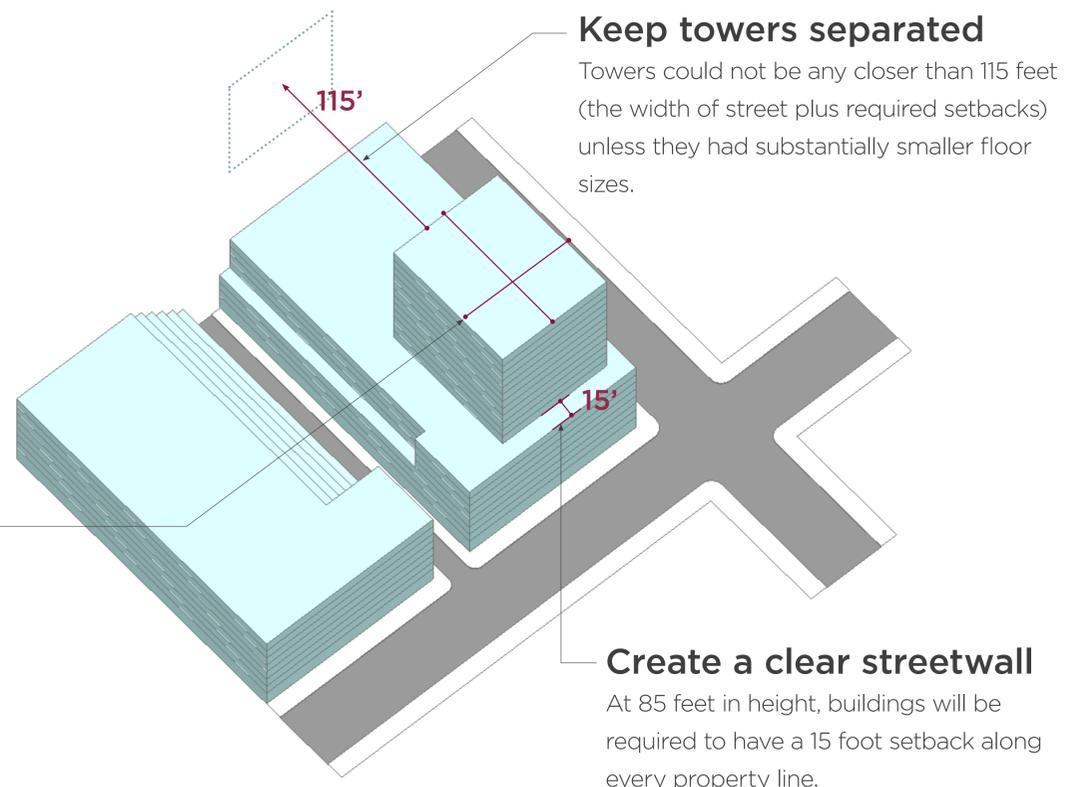


High-rise Development

Central SoMa will allow a handful of buildings taller than 160 feet, to punctuate important intersections (such as at the Caltrain station). To support height at these locations while still supporting light, air, and sun access to the streets, the Plan proposes to:

Ensure thinner towers than in downtown

The maximum floor size will be 15,000 square feet for office uses, and residential and hotel uses could not exceed 12,000 square feet. The maximum length of any side of a tower will be 150 feet.



Alleys and Small Streets

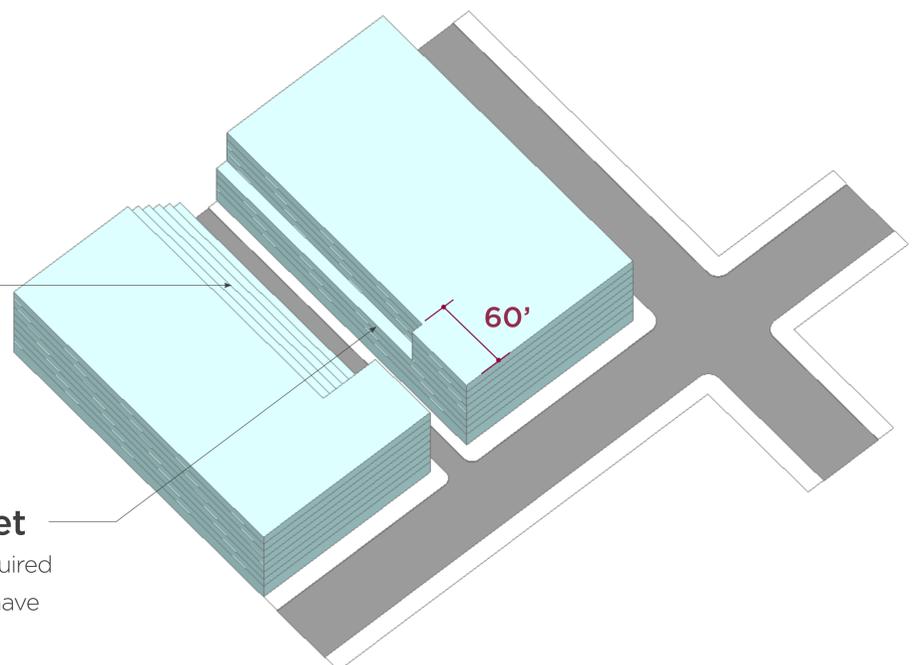
Small streets and alleys in Central SoMa offer special neighborhood character. To maintain this character by supporting light, air, and sun access to these streets, the Plan proposes to:

Ensure sun access to the north side of the street

Development on the south side of small streets and alleys will be required to step back at a 45 degree angle from the street (in keeping with current Planning Code requirements). This requirement will be extended to the south side of "north-south" alleys in addition to "east-west" alleys.

Ensure light and air to the south side of the street

Development on the north side of small streets and alleys buildings will be required to substantially reduce what is visible from the street. Individual buildings will have architectural flexibility on how to achieve this goal



What kinds of buildings would result?

The *apparent mass reduction* encourages architects to be more creative in how they reduce what is visible from the street

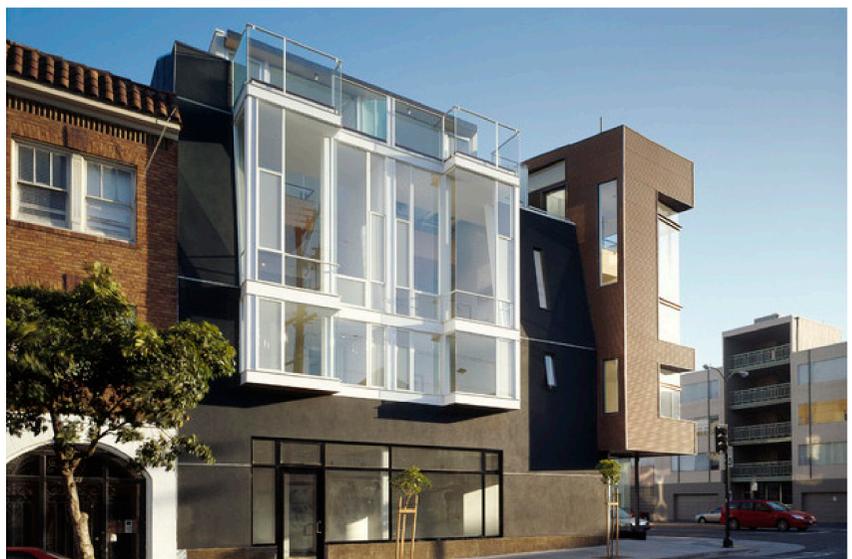


This project includes both high-rise and low-rise development. The large setback and mass reduction allows the new buildings to reflect the scale of the historic ones across the street.

Many projects on Market Street vary their front facades providing both a beautiful and interesting scene for pedestrians and significant interior space for offices and retail.

This project adds a new building to a historic one by pushing the mass farther back and giving deference to its street facade and character.

Large setbacks help break long walls

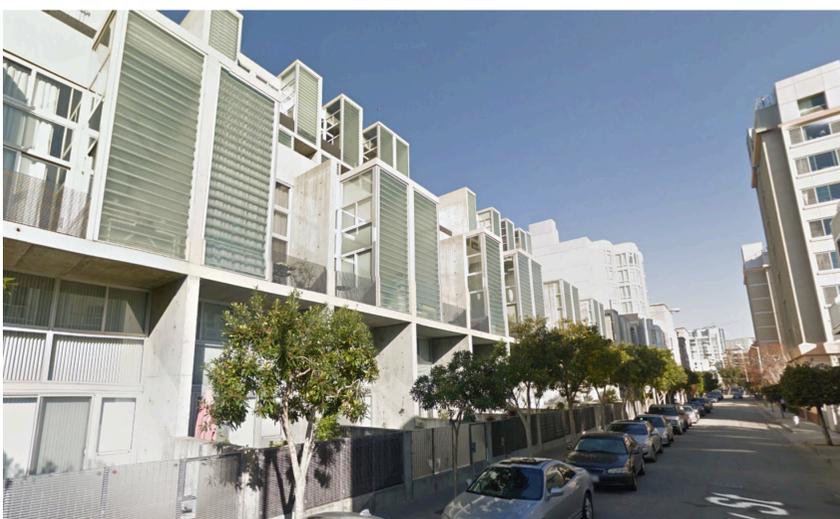


The apparent mass reduction allows architects flexibility so that the tops of the buildings do not always need to be reduced by itself. The sculpting at the top can connect creatively to other aspects of the facade.

While the corner is strongly pronounced, this project layers the top floors back in interesting and shaped ways, opening up the edge to the street.

This project breaks the scale of the top of the building to give a finer sense of its residential use.

Smaller sculpting creates elegant building tops



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High-rise Development



No bulk controls



Draft Plan/Current Proposal:
Setbacks and floorplate area controls

Alleys and Small Streets



No bulk controls



Draft Plan/Current Proposal:
Sun angle and setbacks

Getting Technical: how does the *apparent mass reduction* work?

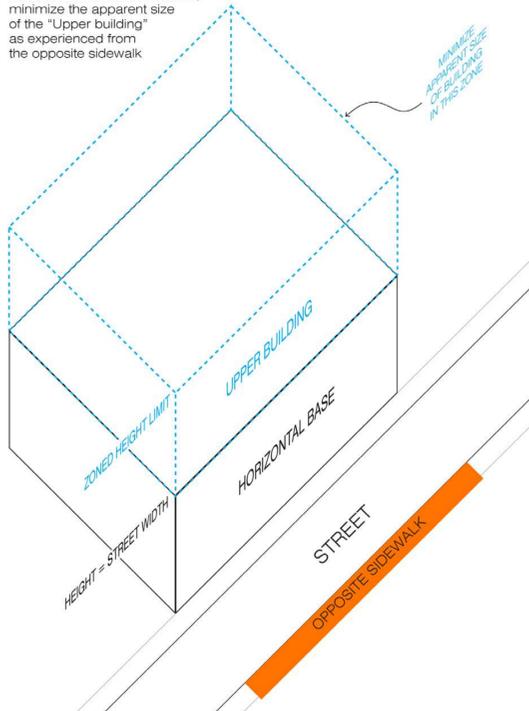
An *apparent mass reduction* reduces the visual impact of density and allows architects more design flexibility than traditional setbacks.

Measuring the reduction

While the apparent mass reduction is a small effort in calculation, this can be done easily in software commonly available to architects:

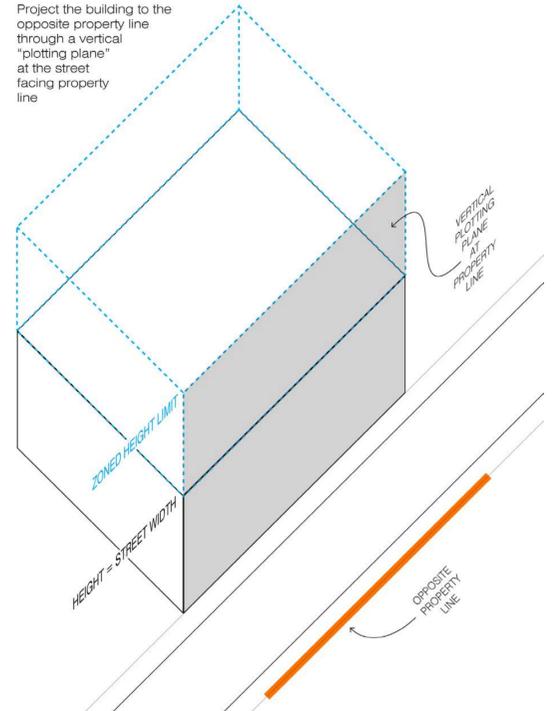
1. To test a design, first draw lines from the opposite of the street lot lines to points or corners on the building above 85'.
2. Then make a plane from the project property line along the street up to the remaining height of the building.
3. Where those lines intersect that plane, draw connecting lines to show the "projected" face of the building.
4. By comparing the full plane with the plane just made, one can calculate the percent reduction.

Goal: where building height exceeds the width of the street, minimize the apparent size of the "Upper building" as experienced from the opposite sidewalk



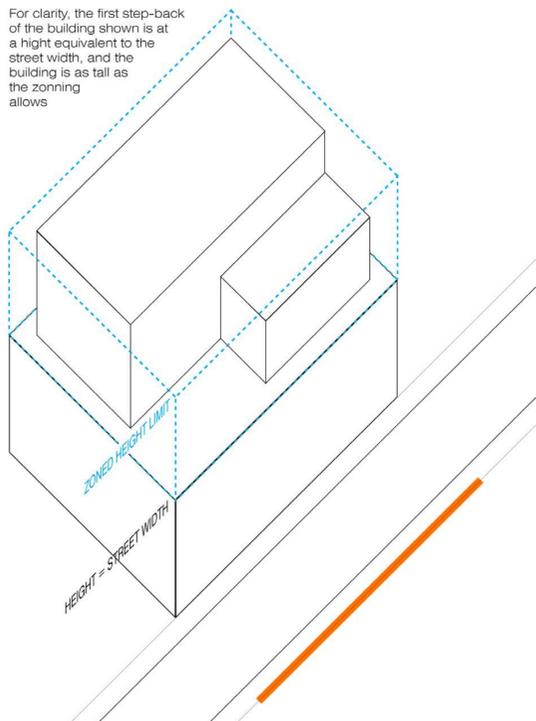
Method:

Project the building to the opposite property line through a vertical "plotting plane" at the street-facing property line

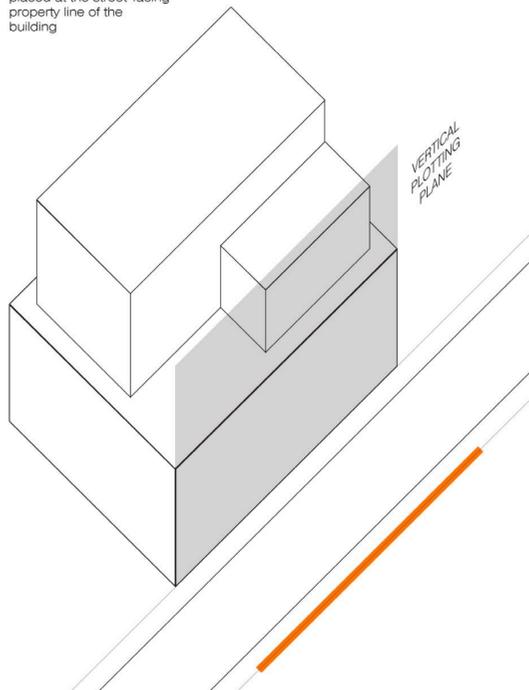


Example

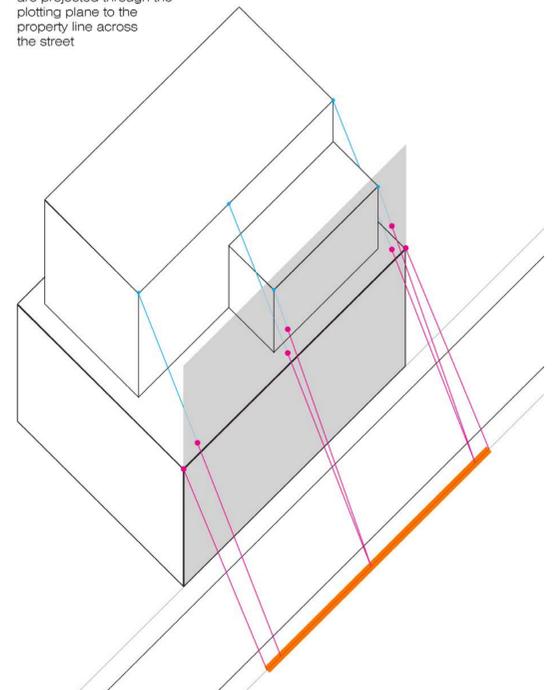
For clarity, the first step-back of the building shown is at a height equivalent to the street width, and the building is as tall as the zoning allows



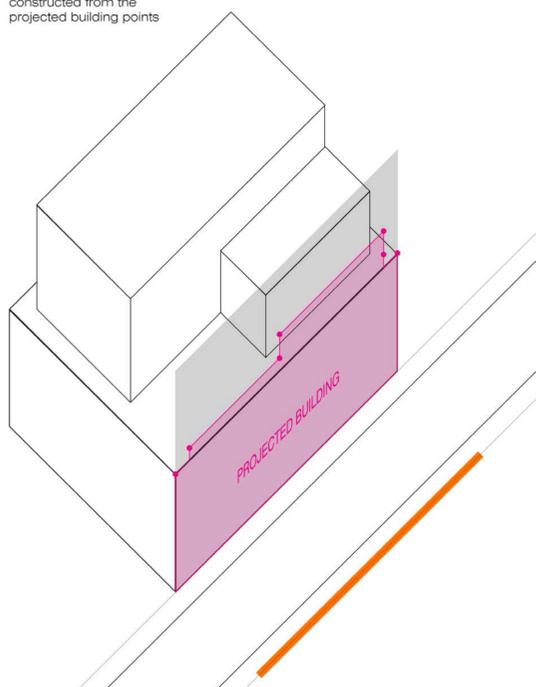
A vertical plotting plane is placed at the street-facing property line of the building



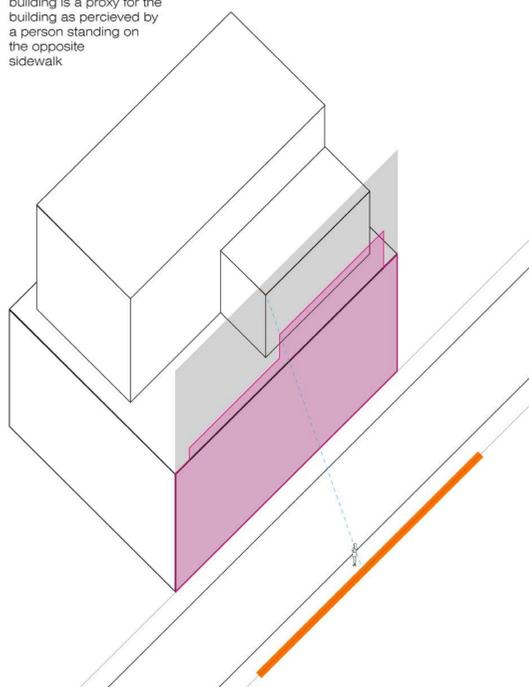
Building edges and vertices are projected through the plotting plane to the property line across the street



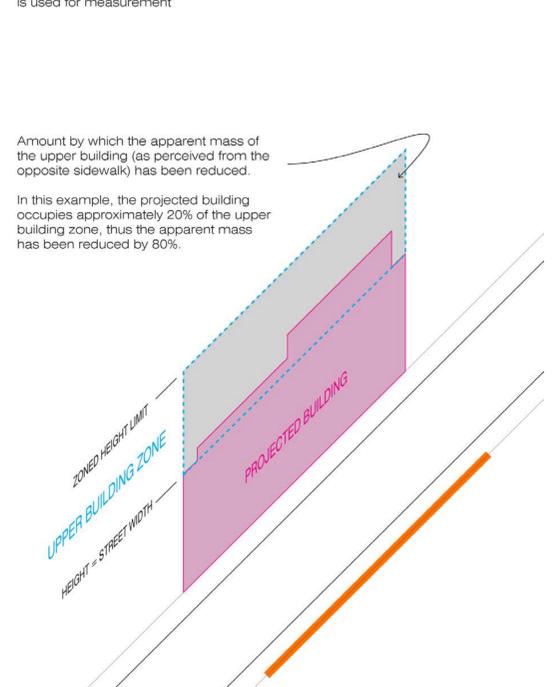
An image of the building is constructed from the projected building points



The projected image of the building is a proxy for the building as perceived by a person standing on the opposite sidewalk



The projected image of the building is used for measurement

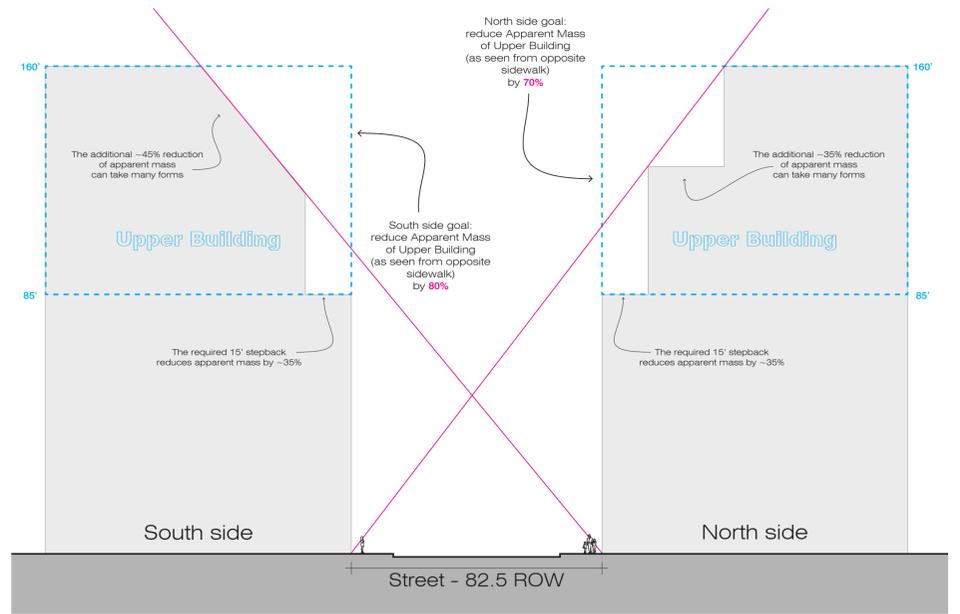
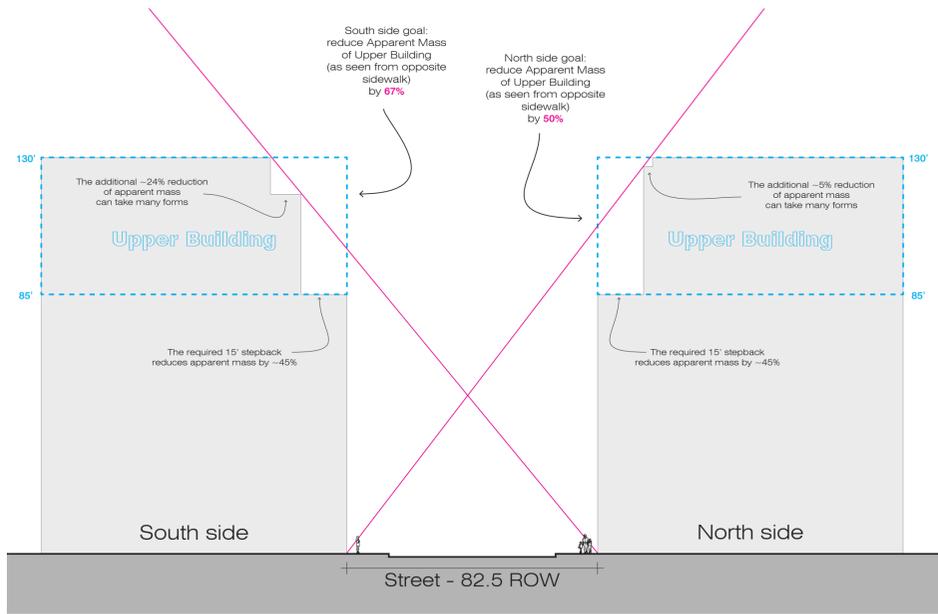


Amount by which the apparent mass of the upper building (as perceived from the opposite sidewalk) has been reduced.
In this example, the projected building occupies approximately 20% of the upper building zone, thus the apparent mass has been reduced by 80%.

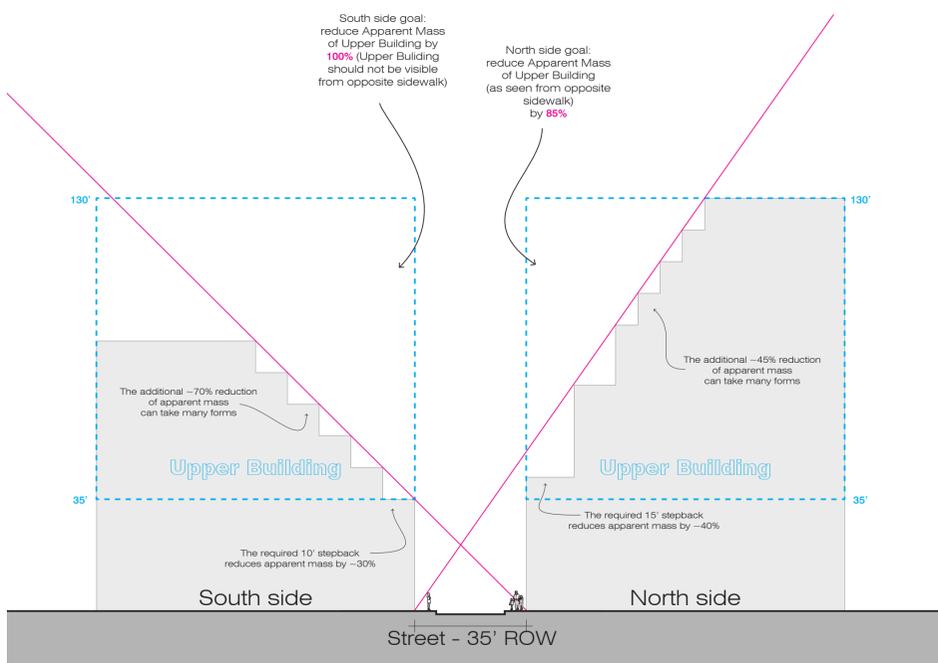
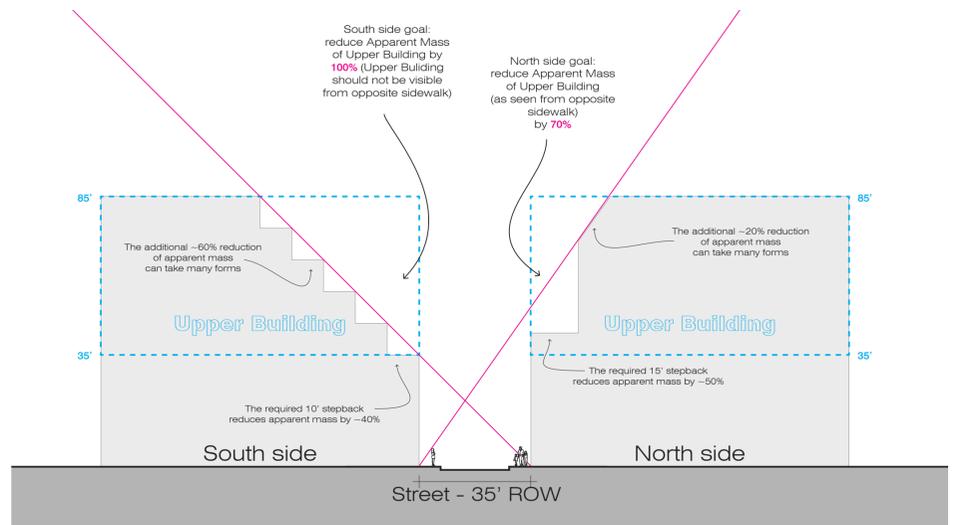
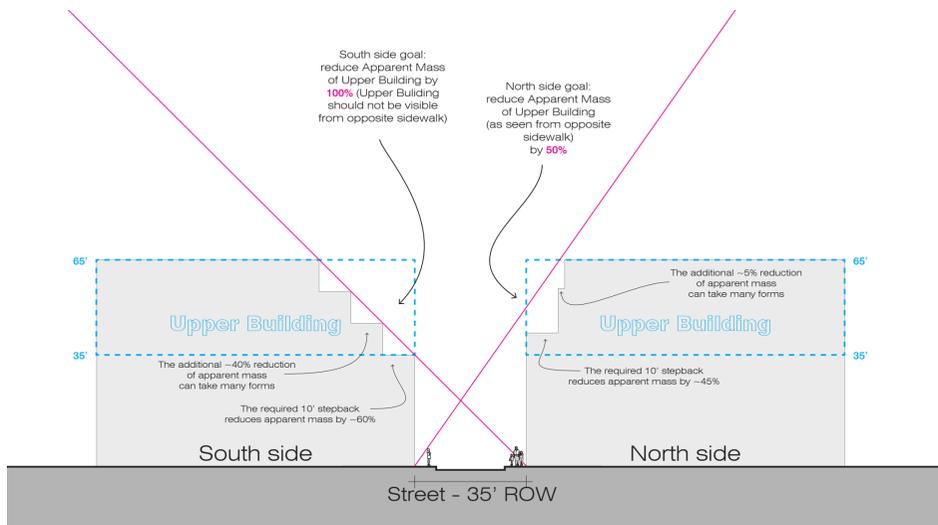
Getting Technical: which parts of the building are reduced?

The amount of reduction required depends on site orientation.

On Major Streets



On Small Streets and Alleys



While the reductions are shown as “stepbacks,” this is only a graphic device to express the building edge, not design expectations.