

## **PROJECT NARRATIVE**

### **3 MLK Jr. Hotel**

**March 5, 2024**

3 MLK Jr. Hotel is a proposed transformative development situated at 3 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd and 512 Indian Street, within the MLK Jr./Indian Street Corridor. The area's evolution has been punctuated by significant architectural milestones, including the rehabilitation and reuse of the old power station into the Plant Riverside District, the establishment of new hotels, and construction of large scale multi-story residential complexes such as the Olmstead and the Baxley, alongside the new contemporary SCAD Tower. The proposed 3 MLK Jr. Hotel, spanning two parcels totaling 0.4 acres within the Savannah Downtown Local Historic District will serve as the gateway to the western end of River Street and Indian Street, connecting the area to the downtown core and marking the area's transition from an industrial to a dynamic mixed-use urban landscape.

The form of the new building along Indian Street embodies innovation, sustainability, and functionality while also drawing inspiration from the history of the site's industrial past and proximity to the shipping industry. It is comprised of a new 5-story structure integrated with a two story rooftop addition to the existing building at 3 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. The façade of the new 5-story structure along Indian Street is delineated into base, middle, and top sections, in keeping with the surrounding larger developments while taking a more contemporary design language. The topmost story has a deep setback from the main Indian street facade. A deep sideyard setback from the neighboring 522 Indian St (SCAD's Hamilton Hall) is integrated into the design in order to provide a landscaped side courtyard and intentionally reveal the historic buildings exquisite brick detailing that is currently obscured from view. The setback of the addition over the existing contributing structure at 3 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

creates a differentiation from the existing historic facade and a distinct a visual separation between the two and combined they anchor the corner of the block.

The prevailing expression which gives the design its strong identity, its sawtooth roof form and its associated projections and recesses in plan, nods to Savannah and the immediate site's history while looking towards the future. It mirrors both the form of roofs in industrial buildings in Savannah associated with the city's role in the rail industry as well as the rhythmic pattern of passing ships heading to port. The form also symbolizes our commitment to sustainability as an expression of both active and passive design. The sloped portions of the roof are oriented towards the south with integrated solar panels. The northern facing portions of the roof will allow northern light to filter into the buildings interior. The projections and recesses in plan act as fins that shield the large windows from southern and western light and heat gain while also allowing northern light to reflect into the interior. The resulting form provides a strong rhythm to the longer building facades, uniting form and function.

The intricate contours of the parcel have significantly shaped the hotel's layout and circulation. Embracing this complexity, our development prioritizes inclusivity and accessibility, exemplified by the introduction of a public sidewalk at the southwest intersection of MLK Jr. Blvd. and River Street creating an active streetscape and better connection between the east and west ends of the intersection.

Aligned with the Historic District Design Manual and Zoning Ordinances, the hotel creates captivating street-level experiences that blend with Historic Savannah's tapestry, fostering growth for the western riverfront. Commercial vibrancy thrives on both levels, featuring a proposed coffee bistro on Indian Street and a full-service restaurant and hotel lobby above River Street. Hotel guestrooms occupy non-street level floors, with a 2-story addition offering an open-air rooftop amenity area, inviting guests to indulge in vistas of the Savannah River and River Street.

Following multiple consultations with MPC staff and local organizations, the architectural design has evolved to a contemporary homage to Savannah's maritime and trade legacy while also embodying its renowned hospitality, reflecting the city's resilient spirit.