THOMPSON-NICOLA
REGIONAL DISTRICT
The Region of BC's Best

Operations

BOARD REPORT

TO: Chair and Board of Directors **DATE:** January 22, 2026

FROM: Jamie Vieira, General Manager of Operations

SUBJECT: Proposed Kamloops Search and Rescue Hall

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT, staff be directed to initiate a process to seek public assent through an Alternate Approval Process (AAP) for the following:

1. **Establishment of a new Regional Search and Rescue Service contributing up to $100,000 annually to fund a portion of the operating and maintenance costs of the new joint hall building; and**

2. **Borrowing up to $6.3 million to contribute towards the construction of a joint hall for Kamloops Search and Rescue and Kamloops Fire Rescue.**

Jamie Vieira,
General Manager of Operations

Approved for Board Consideration
CAO

Prepared by: Mike Knauff, Emergency Program Coordinator

PURPOSE:

To seek Board approval to initiate a public assent process for authorization to borrow funds and establish a new regional Search and Rescue Service.

SUMMARY:

This report presents a plan to build a shared hall for Kamloops Search and Rescue (KSAR) and Kamloops Fire Rescue (KFR) at 4420 Devick Road. The project would require the creation of a new regional service to cover borrowing for capital costs and operating expenses, which would include all ten (10) Electoral Areas and eleven (11) member municipalities.

The estimated cost is $9,454,035, with cost sharing between the City of Kamloops (CoK) and the Thompson-Nicola Regional District (TNRD) proportionate to the space within the facility. The City will pay 25% of the capital costs and the TNRD will be responsible for the remaining 75%. KSAR has also committed to raising $1.4 million, which will go toward TNRD's share. This means TNRD would need to finance approximately $6.3 million through borrowing.
Public approval is required for both borrowing and establishing the regional service, with the recommended method being an Alternate Approval Process (AAP). The estimated annual budget for capital borrowing and operating costs is $622,143, which would result in a residential tax rate of approximately $1.11 per $100,000 of assessed property value.

BACKGROUND:

KSAR requires a permanent facility to support its training, mobilization, and equipment storage needs. Currently, KSAR operates from a City of Kamloops-owned building on Mission Flats Road; however, the City has notified KSAR that it must relocate due to alternative plans for the property. While KSAR appreciates the use of the current site, it is inadequate for their operations, as it lacks space and does not provide office or training facilities.

In late 2023, KSAR approached the TNRD Board to request assistance in establishing a new, purpose-built Search and Rescue Hall in Kamloops that would serve both as a regional training centre and a base for KSAR's operations.

In November 2023, the Board instructed staff to collaborate with KSAR to identify suitable land for a new search and rescue hall in the Kamloops area and to develop a funding strategy for potential financial support from the TNRD. City of Kamloops-owned property at 4420 Devick Road was identified through an assessment process to be the most suitable location available for a joint KFR and KSAR Hall.

Subsequently, at the July 17, 2025 TNRD Board meeting, the Board directed that a formal request be made to both the City of Kamloops and KSAR to confirm their support for the project, including commitments regarding financial and land contributions.

DISCUSSION:

Location

The property at Devick Road has a Provincial reverter that requires the use of the property to include a firehall. The City of Kamloops real estate division has confirmed with the Province that a joint KFR—KSAR hall would be suitable use. Given the reverter, sale of the property or a strata model is not possible. A long-term lease and operating agreement between the TNRD and COK is the planned operating model.

The City of Kamloops has confirmed that property will be provided for the project at no cost and the City will directly fund 25% of the capital costs of the new facility, which is equivalent to the space allocated to KFR Station 5.

Construction Cost

Following the preliminary design work that was done in 2024, an updated design and cost estimate was completed of the proposed hall that incorporates both KFR's and KSAR's requirements. The updated design and site plan are included as attachments. Both KFR and KSAR have confirmed that the proposed design meets their operational needs for a facility.

Figure 1. Rendering of joint KFR & KSAR Hall on Devick Road in Rayleigh

The estimated total construction cost for the proposed joint facility is $9,454,034. The funding arrangement between the City of Kamloops and the TNRD is structured as a cost-share model, reflecting the proportionate space requirements and anticipated usage of shared areas within

the facility. Under this model, the City of Kamloops will be responsible for 25% of the total construction cost, primarily allocated to the firehall component, amounting to $2.363 million. The TNRD will be accountable for the remaining 75%, which equates to $7.090 million, designated for the KSAR component.

Kamloops Search and Rescue (KSAR) has engaged Global Philanthropic Inc. to conduct a feasibility study aimed at raising donations to support the new facility. As part of their commitment to the project, KSAR has pledged to raise up to $1.4 million through a combination of ongoing fundraising activities and, if required, existing organizational savings. This ambitious fundraising campaign is already underway, demonstrating KSAR's dedication to contributing significant financial support. The $1.4 million KSAR plans to contribute will be allocated towards the TNRD portion of the capital costs (75% of the project).

Table 1. Capital funding contribution by agency

Agency	Capital Funding Contribution
City of Kamloops	$2,363,508
Kamloops Search and Rescue	$1,400,000
Thompson Nicola Regional District	**$**5,690,526
Estimated Total Project Cost	**$9,454,034**

Borrowing Requirement

The Regional Search and Rescue service is presently funded only as a grant-in-aid service, with no capital assets or reserves allocated to it. Since the TNRD has no capital reserves suitable for this project or dedicated funding streams, the TNRD's capital contribution will need to be funded through long term borrowing.

Long term borrowing must be approved through public assent process. This process would set the maximum amount that is approved for borrowing, therefore it is being recommended that the maximum amount include a contingency of 10% of the TNRD portion. Please note a contingency is already included in the construction class D estimate. This additional 10% contingency brings the required borrowing amount to $6,259,579**.** For ease of communication this amount has been rounded up to $6.3 million as the maximum amount the TNRD would seek approval through public assent to borrow.

Operating Costs

In addition to funding for construction, this project will require a regional service to be created to fund the ongoing operations and maintenance costs. A similar facility recently built in the Regional District of North Okanagan for Vernon Search and Rescue incurred $38,000 in operations and maintenance in 2024 including utilities, janitorial, alarm monitoring, general repair and maintenance, and snow removal. Current TNRD facilities average $10 per square foot in operations costs; 75% of the costs for the proposed 15,000 sq ft facility could be as high as $112,250 in operating costs per year. Further development of the building design is required to produce more detailed maintenance costs; however, staff are comfortable recommending a maximum annual operating budget of $100,000 for the TNRD/ KSAR portion (75%).

The City will cover operating costs for the KFR portion of the facility. Shared operating costs will be divided 25% to the City and 75% to the TNRD, matching the capital cost split. All KSAR-related expenses (training, deployments, equipment, etc.) are solely KSAR's responsibility.

Regional Service

The proposed service which would fund the TNRD portion of the borrowing and annual operating cost is a region-wide service which would be funded by all ten (10) Electoral Areas and all eleven (11) member municipalities.

As detailed in previous reports and presentations to the Board from KSAR, the proposed facility would be a regional benefit acting as a training center to support other search and rescue (SAR) groups within the TNRD. In addition, KSAR is regularly deployed throughout the TNRD, supporting other TNRD SAR groups and providing service where no other SAR groups operate. For example, there were recent deployments in Pritchard (Electoral Area "L"), Vavenby (Electoral Area "A") and Walhachin (Electoral Area "I").

In 2024, the TNRD Board received letters of support for a dedicated facility for KSAR from all other search and rescue groups that operate within the TNRD (Wells Gray, Barriere, Logan Lake, Merritt and South Cariboo). The facility will also be used for the delivery of other emergency training courses and could function as a backup Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) for the TNRD if required.

Public Assent Process

The Board is required to select the most appropriate method for obtaining elector approval - Alternative Approval Process (AAP) or Assent Voting (Referendum) - when considering service establishment and loan authorization bylaws. Considering the regional district's size and the need to obtain elector approval across the entire region, staff recommend the Board authorize staff proceed with an AAP.

Key advantages of the AAP for this specific public assent process include:

- Cost Efficiency – An AAP is far less costly than a referendum, as it avoids expenses related to advertising, rental of voting locations (general and advance voting days), staffing, ballots, and voting materials.

- Timeliness – Following Ministry of Municipal Affairs approval, electors have a 30-day period to submit response forms. If electoral approval is achieved, the Board may adopt the service establishment and loan authorization bylaws.

- Accessibility and Convenience – Elector response forms are only required from those opposed to the adoption of the bylaws. Note: The Ministry of Municipal Affairs recommends the development of a policy to allow for submission of electronic response forms as the methods for submitting these forms are not covered in legislation.

To proceed with an AAP, approval from the participating areas must be obtained through a Board resolution passed by a two-thirds majority, as required under section 342(4) of the *Local Government Act*. The Board must also provide three readings to both the service establishment bylaw and the loan authorization bylaw. Once third reading is complete, the Board report and bylaws will be circulated to member municipalities for information, and a request for approval will be submitted to the Inspector of Municipalities.

Following approval by the Inspector of Municipalities, staff will prepare the elector response form, establish the submission deadline, estimate the number of eligible electors, and proceed with the development of a communications plan.

If 10% or more of eligible electors submit valid opposition forms by the specified deadline (which must be at least 30 days after public notice), the Board will need to decide whether to proceed with a full assent voting process (referendum). If the Board opted to proceed, a referendum must be scheduled within 80 days following the AAP deadline.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

If approved by public assent, borrowing for capital costs of the joint hall would occur through the Municipal Finance Authority (MFA) and be repaid via taxation over 20 years. The annual borrowing cost is estimated to be $522,143 based on current MFA interest rates. Annual operating and maintenance costs are estimated at $100,000. After 20 years, taxation for debt repayment will end, and only operating costs will require ongoing taxation.

The estimated residential tax rate, if approved by public assent, is $1.11 per $100,000 of assessed value. Table 2 shows the estimated tax rates for all TNRD property classes, considering both the annual cost of borrowing (over 20 years) plus the yearly operating and maintenance expenses.

Table 2. Estimated Tax Impact by Property Class

Taxation Impact Calculator - KSAR Service (Region-Wide)

Operating Costs	100,000
Debt Payments[3]	522,143
Total Cost of Service	**622,143**

Assessment Class	Property Assessment[2]	Tax Rate Per $100,000[1]	Portion of Costs
Residential	36,959,988,170	1.11	65.88%
Utilities	1,515,285,836	3.88	9.45%
Supportive Housing	22	-	0.00%
Major Industry	340,965,200	3.77	2.07%
Light Industry	308,270,150	3.77	1.87%
Business and Other	4,688,391,513	2.72	20.47%
Managed Forest Land	430,900	3.33	0.00%
Rec/Non Profit	96,472,001	1.11	0.17%
Farm	50,692,457	1.11	0.09%
Totals	**43,960,496,249**		

1 - Per $100,000 of property assessment value
2 - Based on the BC Assessment 2025 Revised Roll
2 - $6,300,000 in debt over 25-years

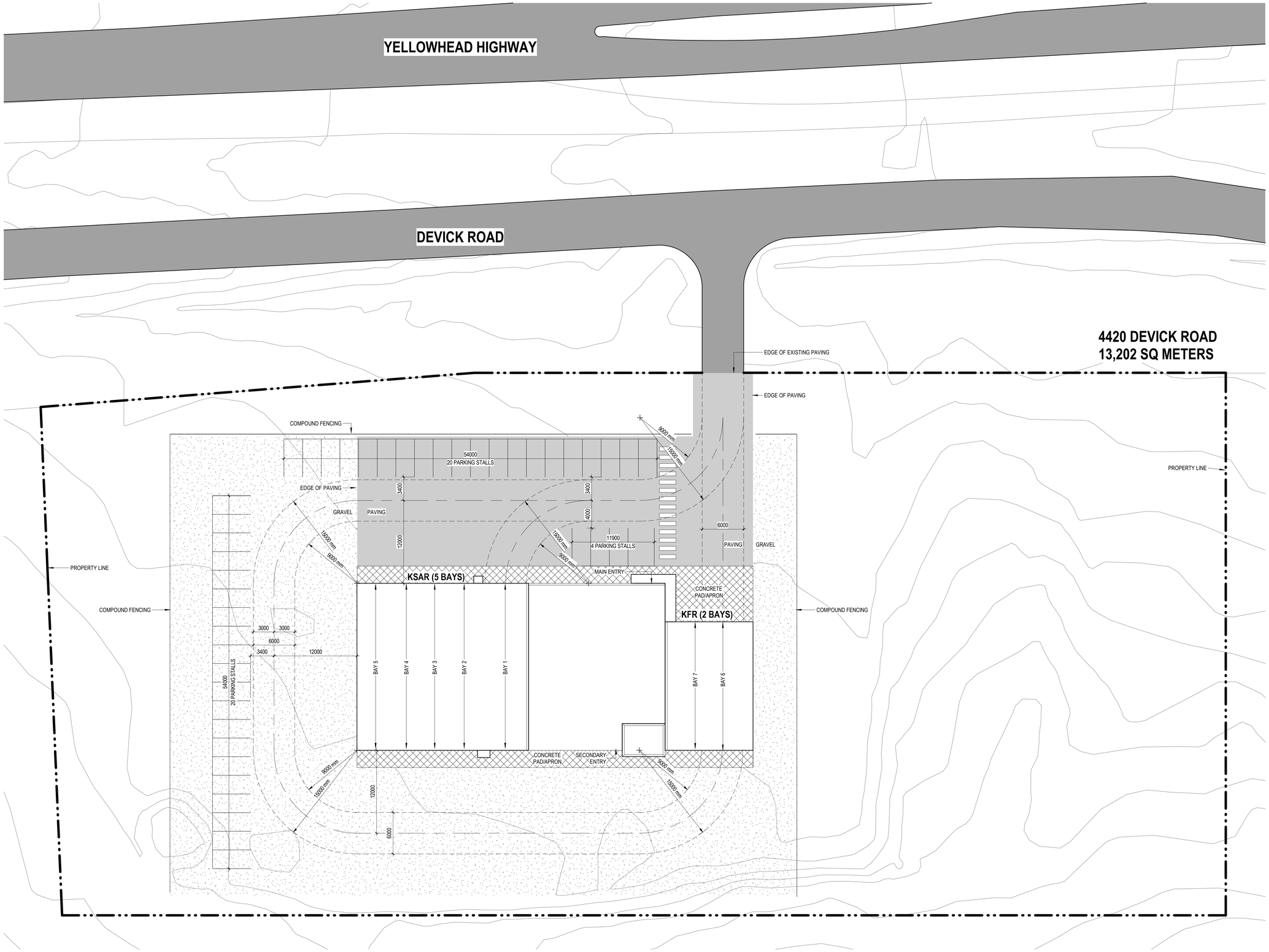
ALIGNMENT TO THE 2023-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN:

This report is consistent with the following Strategic Focus Area and Priorities set out in the Board's Strategic Plan:

- Emergency Planning & Response
  - Emergency Management partnerships
  - Strengthening community resilience
  - Training/ development and education

Attachments:

1. KFR #5 & KSAR Site Plan
2. KFR #5 & KSAR Conceptual Design
3. KFR #5 & KSAR Hall Rendering



1 A100 **SITE PLAN**
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City of Kamloops

KSAR Facility and Firehall

Project No.:144325064

File Name: N/A

NP	BC	GL	2025.06.11
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Title

OVERALL SITE PLAN

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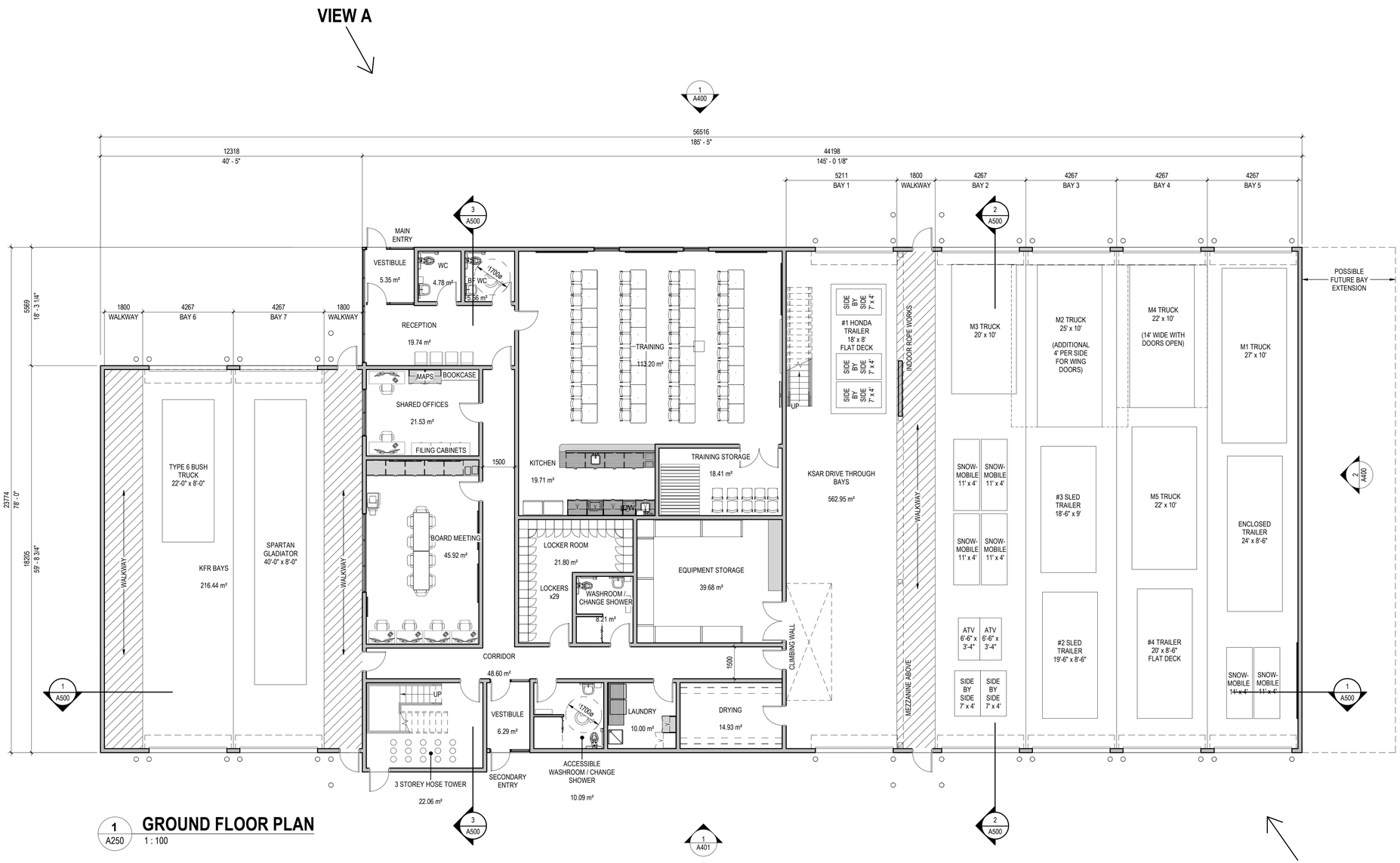

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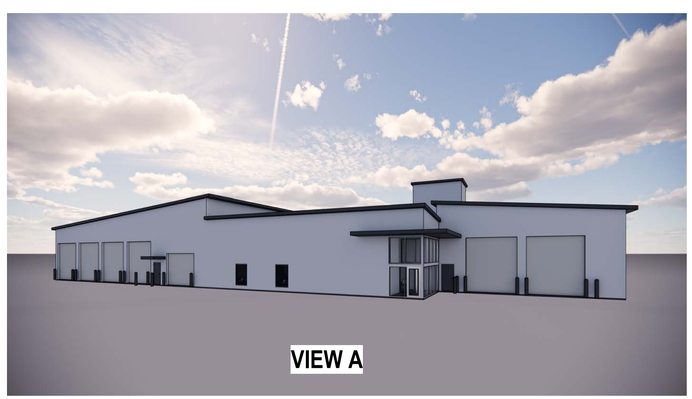

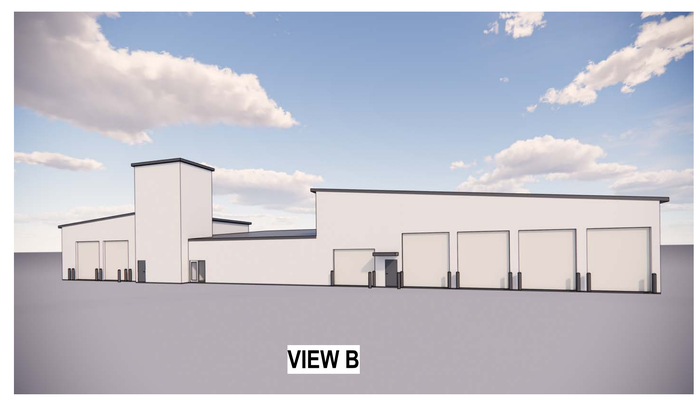

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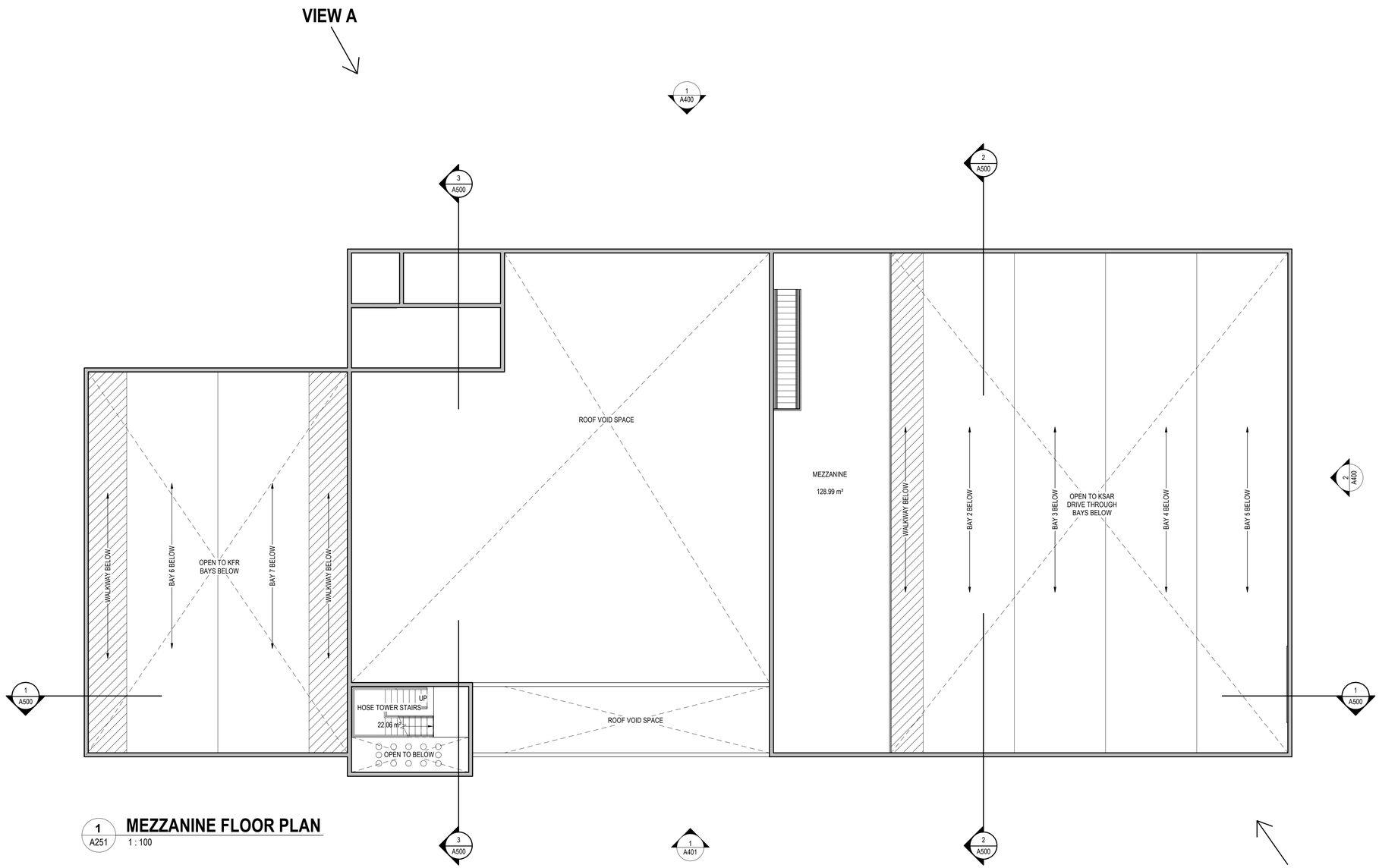

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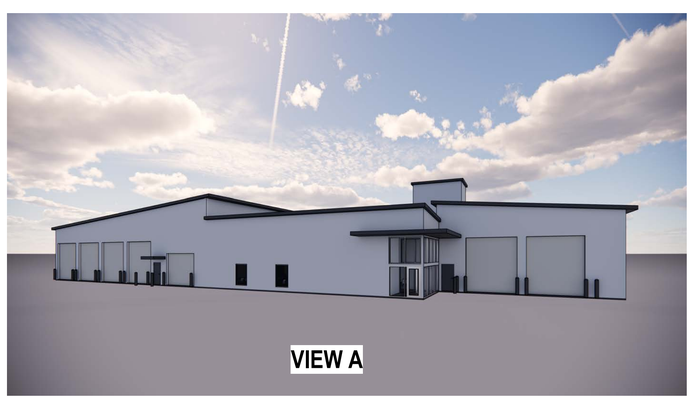

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OVERALL PLAN - MEZZANINE

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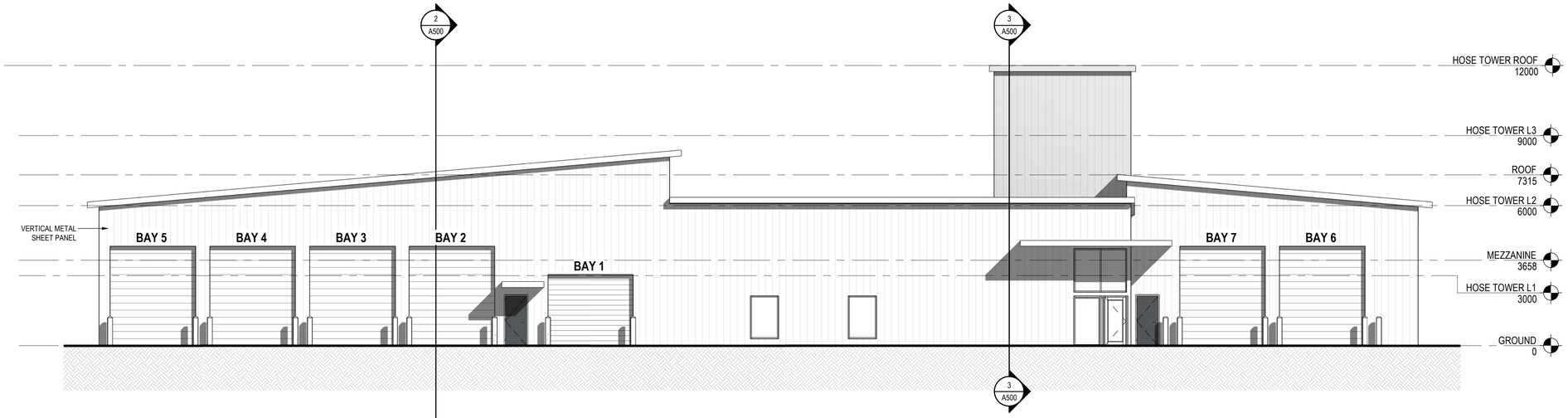

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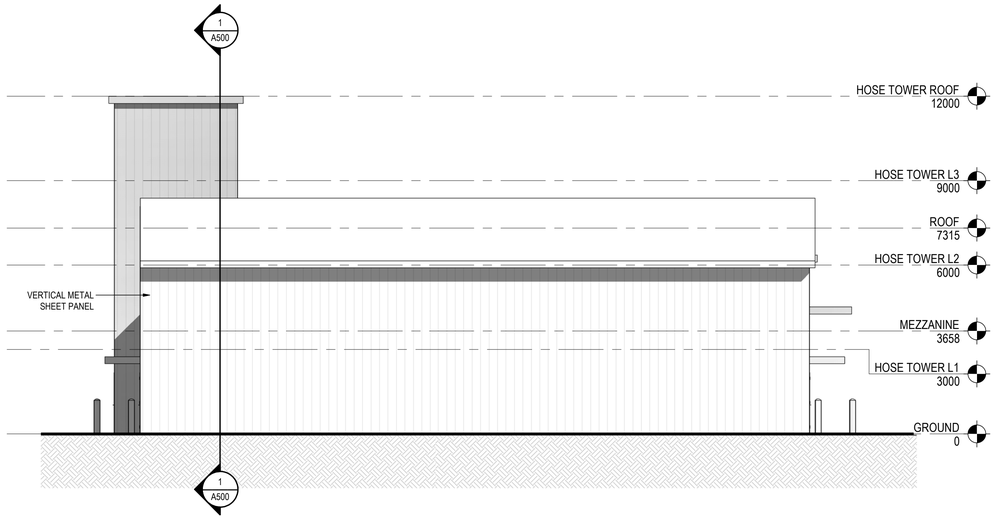

2 A400 **EXTERIOR ELEVATION 2**
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EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS

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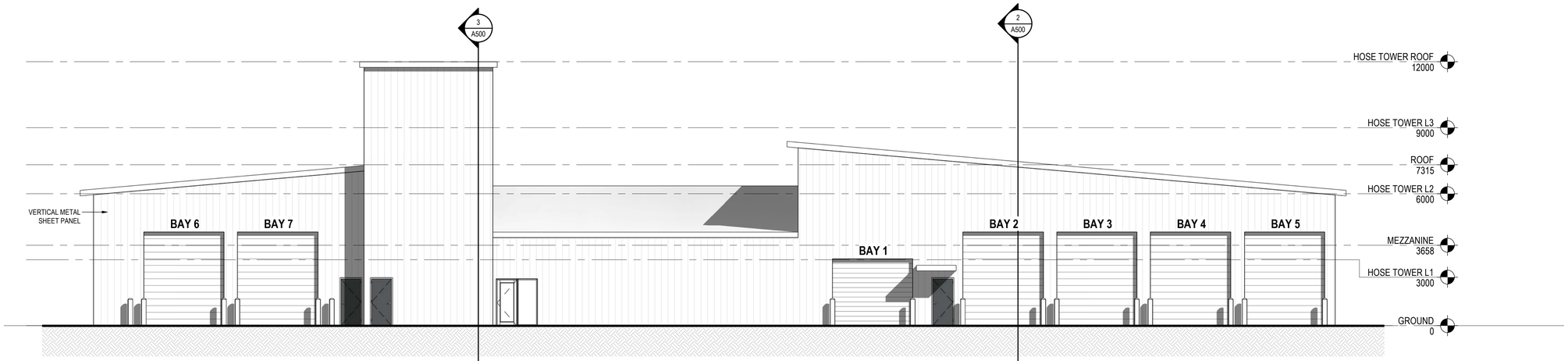

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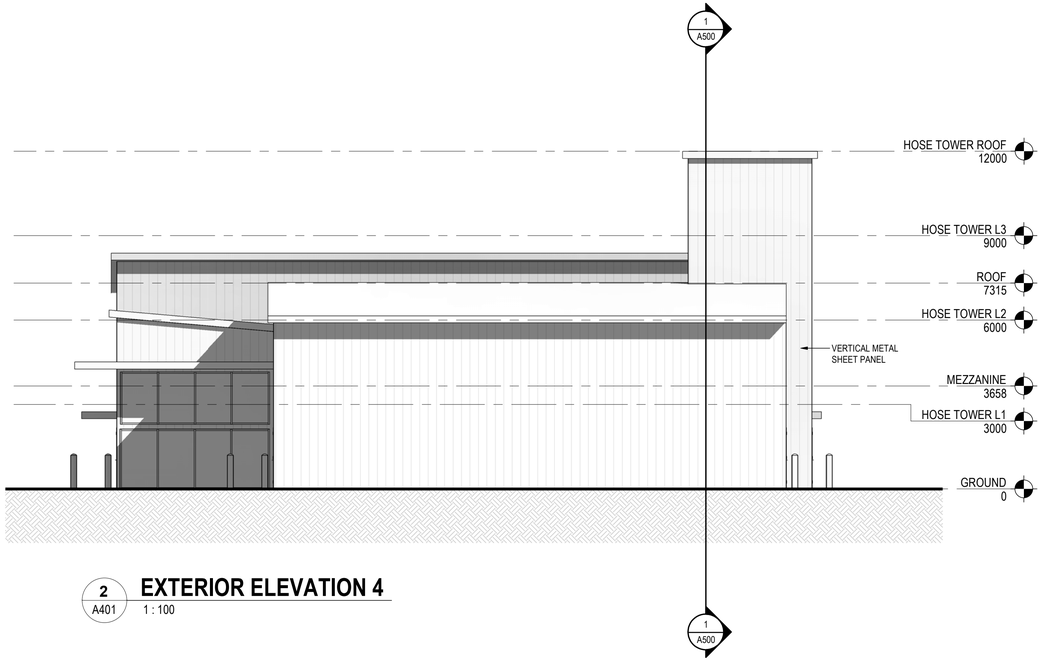

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KSAR Facility and Firehall

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EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS

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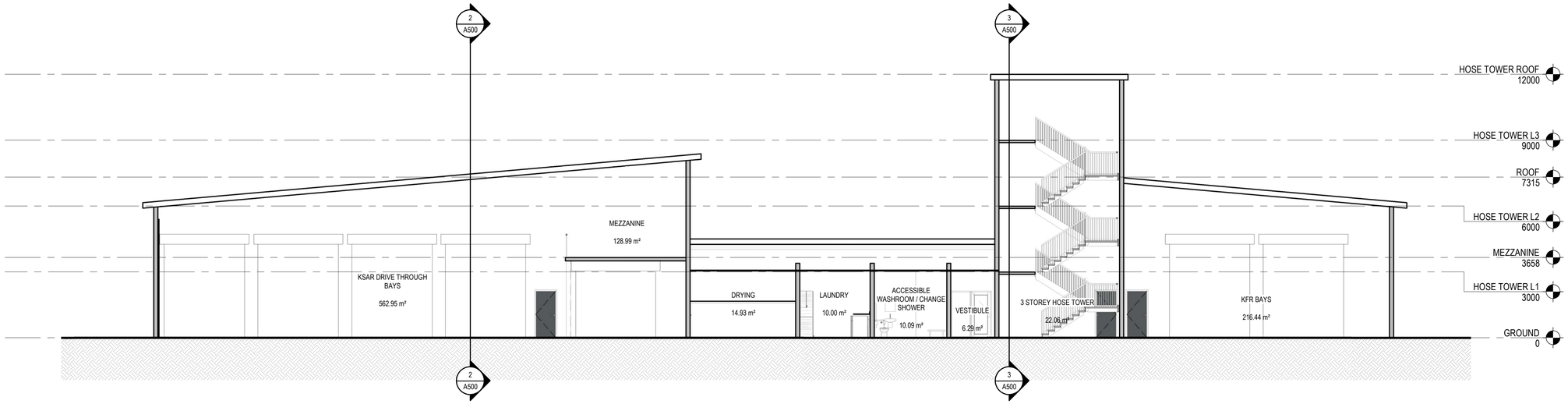

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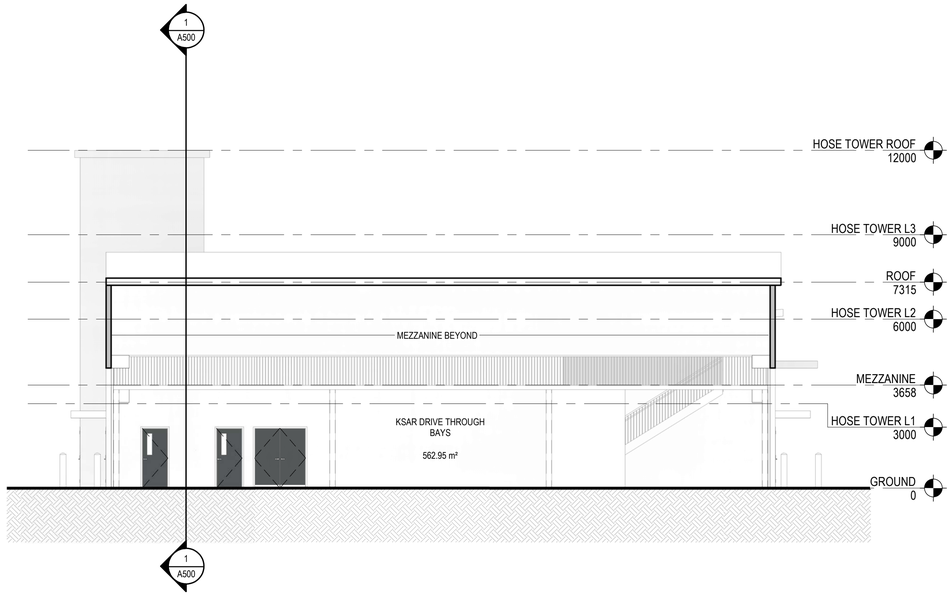

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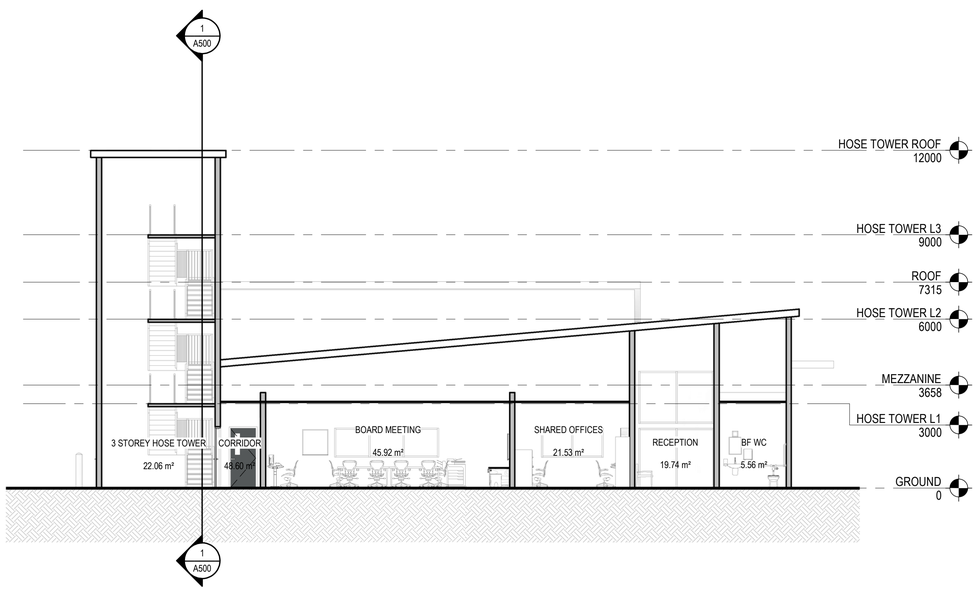

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BUILDING SECTIONS

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KAMLOOPS FIRE RESCUE
STATION 5
KAMLOOPS
EST 1884
FIRE RESCUE
KAMLOOPS SEARCH & RESCUE
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