

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

project must be reviewed by multiple agencies, including Department of State Hospitals, the State Fire Marshal, the City of Norwalk, and Los Angeles County Public Works' Building and Safety, to ensure compliance with current codes and regulations.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project:

County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors

Name of Person or Agency Carrying out Project:

Los Angeles County Public Works, on behalf of the County of Los Angeles

Exempt Status (check one):

- Ministerial (Sec. 21065; 15378 (a) and (b) (5))
 - Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080 (b) (3); 15269 (a))
 - Emergency Project (Sec. 21080 (b) (4); 15269 (c); County of Los Angeles Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Section 401)
 - Categorical Exemption (Sec. 15301 (a), (d), and (h); 15302 (c); 15303 (d); 15304 (b) and (f); 15311 (a) and (b); and 15331; County of Los Angeles Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Appendix G, Classes 1, 2, 3, 4, and 11)
 - Statutory Exemption (Sec. 15183; Assembly Bill 2162, Government Code Sec. 65650 to 65656; Assembly Bill 1907, Sec. 21080.60)
 - Common Sense Exemption (Sec. 15061 (b) (3))
-

Reasons why project is exempt:

The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under the following exemptions:

Emergency Project

- **Statutory Exemption for Emergency Projects (California Public Resources Code Section 21080 (b) (4); State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15269 (c), and the County of Los Angeles Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Section 401):** On January 10, 2023, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to proclaim a local emergency for homelessness in the County of Los Angeles. According to a memorandum, entitled "Los Angeles County Homeless Emergency" that was prepared by Dr. Heidi Behforouz, Medical Director of Housing for Health at Los Angeles County Department of Health Services. The continued growth of homelessness in Los Angeles County, along with "the rising comorbid complexities of undertreated medical, mental health, and substance use disorders facing this population, coupled with its disproportionate reliance on public social services, make homelessness a public health emergency." Under the project, the interim and permanent housing facilities would provide the services necessary to prevent individuals from becoming homeless again and provide resources for successful reentry into the community, thus mitigating the ongoing state of emergency of homelessness. Therefore, the project is exempt from CEQA under the Statutory Exemption for Emergency Projects.

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Categorical Exemptions

- **Class 1 Categorical Exemption (State CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15301 (a), (d), and (h); and the County of Los Angeles Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Appendix G, Class 1), Existing Facilities:** The project involves minor improvements to existing structures and the exterior courtyard on the project site, with no expansion of the existing building footprints and no substantial changes to the existing uses of the structures and exterior courtyard. Because the project would include the operation, repair, maintenance, leasing, and minor alteration of existing public structures, facilities, equipment, or topographical features, and involves negligible or no expansion of use, the project is exempt from CEQA under a Class 1 Categorical Exemption, Existing Facilities.
- **Class 2 Categorical Exemption (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15302 (c) and the County of Los Angeles Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Appendix G, Class 2), Replacement or Reconstruction:** The project involves minor improvements to existing structures and the exterior courtyard on the project site, including the replacement and/or reconstruction of utility systems, remodeling the interior of the buildings, completing hazardous material abatement, replacing or repairing windows, providing anchorage for seismic stability, and renovating an existing elevator and ramps. Because the project includes the replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced, the project is exempt from CEQA under a Class 2 Categorical Exemption, Replacement or Reconstruction.
- **Class 3 Categorical Exemption (State CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15303 (d) and (e); and the County of Los Angeles Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Appendix G, Class 3), New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures:** The project involves minor improvements to existing structures and the exterior courtyard on the project site, including extending utilities to the existing buildings, providing exterior lighting, adding a new paved walkway, renovating an existing elevator and ramps, and installing fencing. Because the project consists of the construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure; and would not exceed the maximum allowable structures on the legal parcel, the project is exempt from CEQA under a Class 3 Categorical Exemption, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures.
- **Class 4 Categorical Exemption (State CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15304 (b) and (f); and the County of Los Angeles Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Appendix G, Class 4), Minor Alterations to Land:** The project involves minor improvements to the project site, including new landscaping in the exterior courtyard and minor trenching and backfilling where the surface is restored to complete utility improvements. Because the project consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees, the project is exempt from CEQA under a Class 4 Categorical Exemption, Minor Alterations to Land.
- **Class 11 Categorical Exemption (State CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15311 (a) and (b); and the County of Los Angeles Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Appendix G, Class 11), Accessory Structures:** The project involves minor improvements to the project site, including adding signage, constructing a small parking lot adjacent to and south of an existing parking lot, providing exterior lighting, adding a new paved walkway, renovating an existing elevator and ramps, and installing fencing, which would be accessory to the existing institutional

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facilities. Because the project consists of construction, or placement of minor structures accessory to existing institutional facilities, the project is exempt from CEQA under a Class 11 Categorical Exemption, Accessory Structures.

- **Class 31 Categorical Exemption (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15331), Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation:** The project involves minor improvements to existing structures and the exterior courtyard on the project site, which is located in the MSH Historic District. The eight buildings on the project site are contributing elements to the Historic District, and the project may require repairs to some deteriorated historic features both inside and outside of the buildings in order to comply with current fire resistive ratings, and building codes and regulations. However, the project would not result in adverse effects on the MSH Historic District because the SOI Standards would be incorporated into the project design. Because the project would include maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of historical resources in compliance with the SOI Standards, the project is exempt from CEQA under a Class 31 Categorical Exemption, Historical Resource/Rehabilitation.

State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300.2, lists exceptions to the use of categorical exemptions. None of the exceptions in Section 15300.2 (a) through 15300.2 (f) apply to the project. The project would be implemented within an urbanized, highly developed, heavily disturbed area that has been used as a mental health facility since the 1920s. The project would not have an impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern. Significant cumulative impacts are not anticipated from successive projects on the MSH campus. The project would not result in a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. The project would not result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. The MSH campus is not listed as an open or active hazardous waste site pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the California Government Code. The SOI Standards will be incorporated into the project design, and thus, the project would not cause an adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Statutory Exemption

- **Statutory Exemption for Projects Consistent with a Community Plan or Zoning (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15183):** This exemption applies when a project is consistent with a community plan adopted as part of a general plan, a zoning action, or a general plan of a local agency; and an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was certified by the lead agency for the zoning action, the community plan, or the general plan. The project would be consistent with the City of Norwalk General Plan, for which an EIR was certified. The project involves minor improvements to existing structures on the project site, with no expansion of the existing building footprint and no substantial changes to the existing uses of the structures and exterior courtyard. Therefore, no project-specific significant effects that are peculiar to the project site would result from the project. In addition, the project would not result in significant effects that were not analyzed in the prior EIR; would not result in potentially significant off-site impacts and cumulative impacts which were not discussed in the prior EIR for the General Plan; and would not result in previously identified significant effects as a result of substantial new information, which was not known at the time the EIR was certified, are determined to have a more severe adverse impact than discussed in the prior EIR. Therefore, the project is exempt from CEQA under the Statutory Exemption for Projects Consistent with a Community Plan or Zoning.

By-Right Exemptions

- **By-Right Exemption for Supportive Housing (Assembly Bill 2162, Government Code, Sections 65650 to 65656):** Assembly Bill 2162 states that supportive housing shall be a use by right in zones where multifamily and mixed uses are permitted, including nonresidential zones permitting multifamily uses, if the proposed housing development satisfies certain requirements related to serving lower income households, providing supportive services, and providing kitchen

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or cooking facilities. The land use and zoning designation of the MSH campus, including the project site, is institutional. The City's approved 2021-2029 Housing Element states that the Municipal Code allows uses in the institutional zone that provide economic development opportunities promoting employment, education, and business training resources, or services to the public as determined by the City of Norwalk; and proposed residential uses could be permitted within this zone, since these uses would provide a service to the public in the form of affordable housing to address the state's housing crisis. Therefore, the project would provide supportive housing in a nonresidential zone permitting multifamily uses. The project also meets the requirements of providing facilities for lower income households, supportive services, and kitchen or cooking facilities. Therefore, the project is exempt from CEQA under the By-Right Exemption for Supportive Housing.

- **By-Right Exemption for Emergency Shelters and Supportive and Affordable Housing (Assembly Bill 1907, Public Resources Code, Section 21080.60):** Assembly Bill 1907 states that CEQA does not apply to any activity approved by or carried out by a public agency in furtherance of providing emergency shelters, supportive housing, or affordable housing, or any action to provide financial assistance in furtherance of providing emergency shelters, supportive housing, or affordable housing. The project meets the various requirements of the exemption, including serving as a "Low Barrier Navigation Center," which is a Housing First, low-barrier, service-enriched shelter focused on moving people into permanent housing that provides temporary living facilities while case managers connect individuals experiencing homelessness to income, public benefits, health services, shelter, and housing. The project is in a nonresidential zone permitting multifamily uses and an infill site; the proposed supportive housing meets the eligibility requirements of Assembly Bill 2162; and the proposed facilities qualify as affordable housing. Therefore, the project is exempt from CEQA under the By-Right Exemption for Emergency Shelters and Supportive and Affordable Housing.

Common Sense Exemption

- **Common Sense Exemption (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15061 (b) (3)):** The Common Sense Exemption states that a project is exempt from CEQA if it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment. The project would be implemented within an urbanized, highly developed, heavily disturbed area that has been used as a mental health facility since the 1920s. The project involves minor improvements to existing structures on the project site, with no expansion of the existing building footprints and no substantial changes to the existing uses of the structures and exterior courtyard. In addition, the project would not result in adverse effects on the MSH Historic District because the SOI Standards would be incorporated into the project design. Therefore, the project has no potential to cause a significant effect on the environment and is exempt from CEQA under the Common Sense Exemption.

Documentation in support of the CEQA exemptions applicable to the project is available by contacting Los Angeles County Public Works, Project Management II, located at 900 South Fremont Avenue, 5th Floor, Alhambra, CA 91803.

Lead Agency Contact Person:
Vache Garabedian

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(626) 277-1659

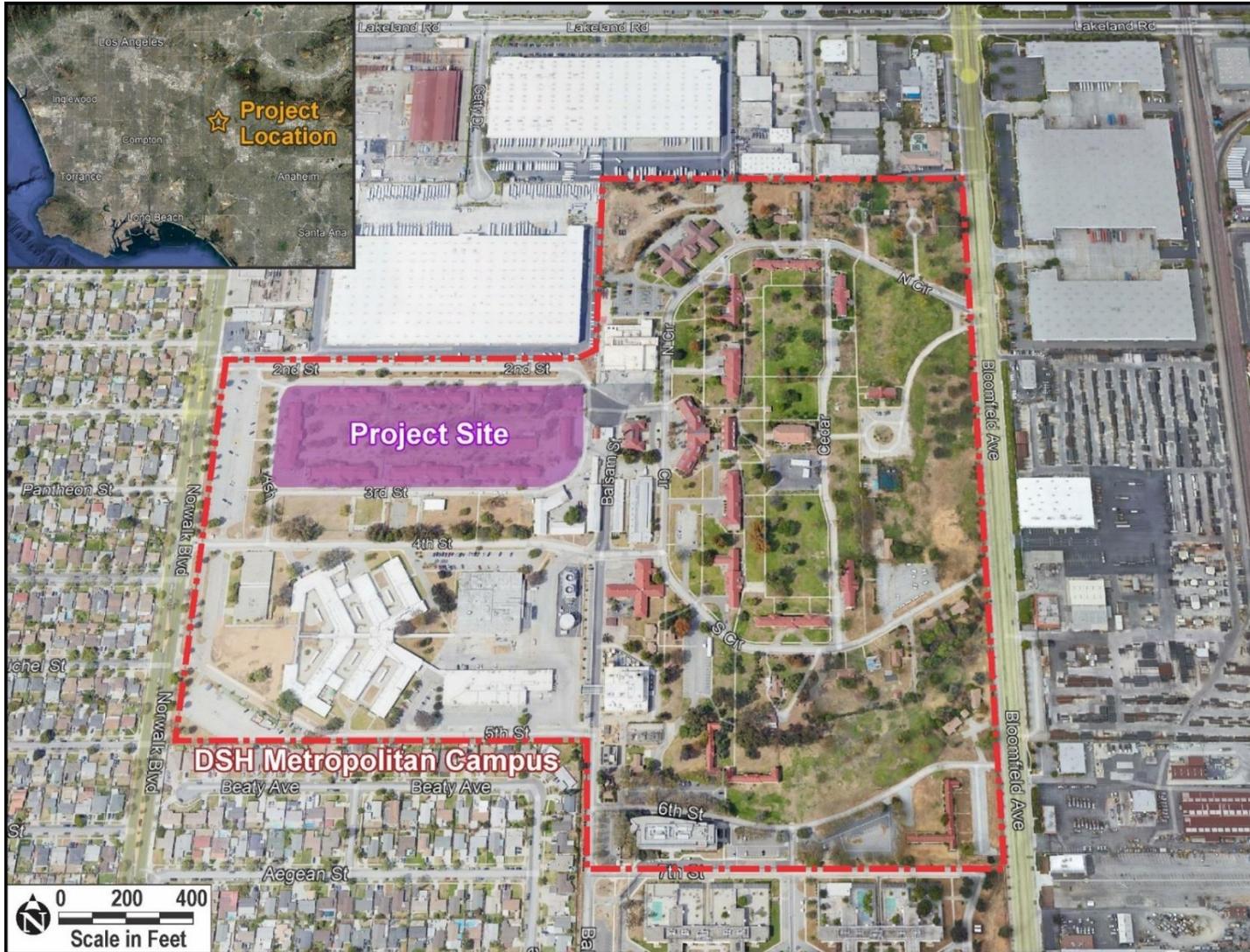

Signature

10/24/24
Date

Capital Projects Manager
Title

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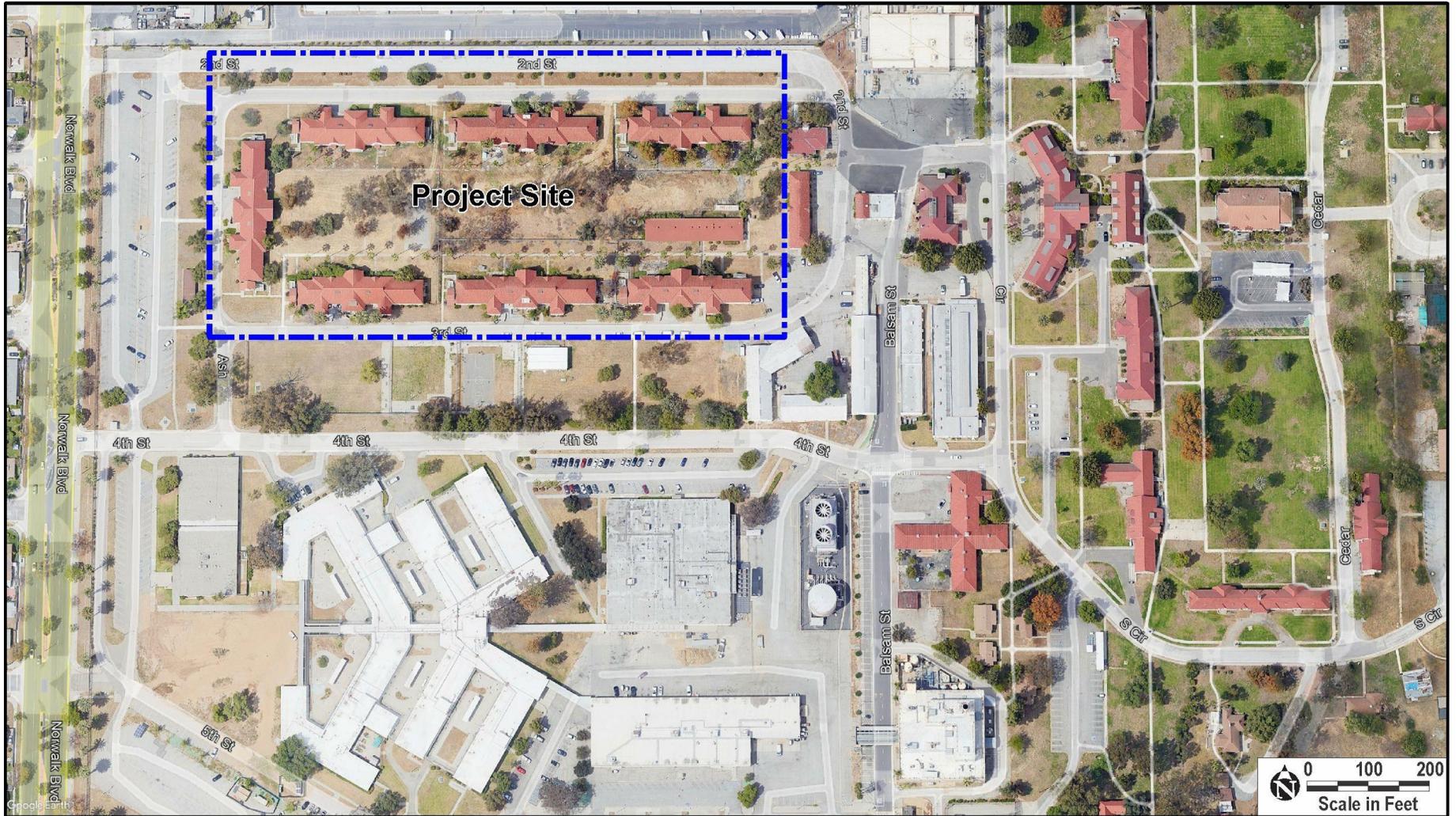
Figure 1. Project Location Map



Acronyms: DSH = California Department of State Hospitals; Metropolitan = Metropolitan State Hospital

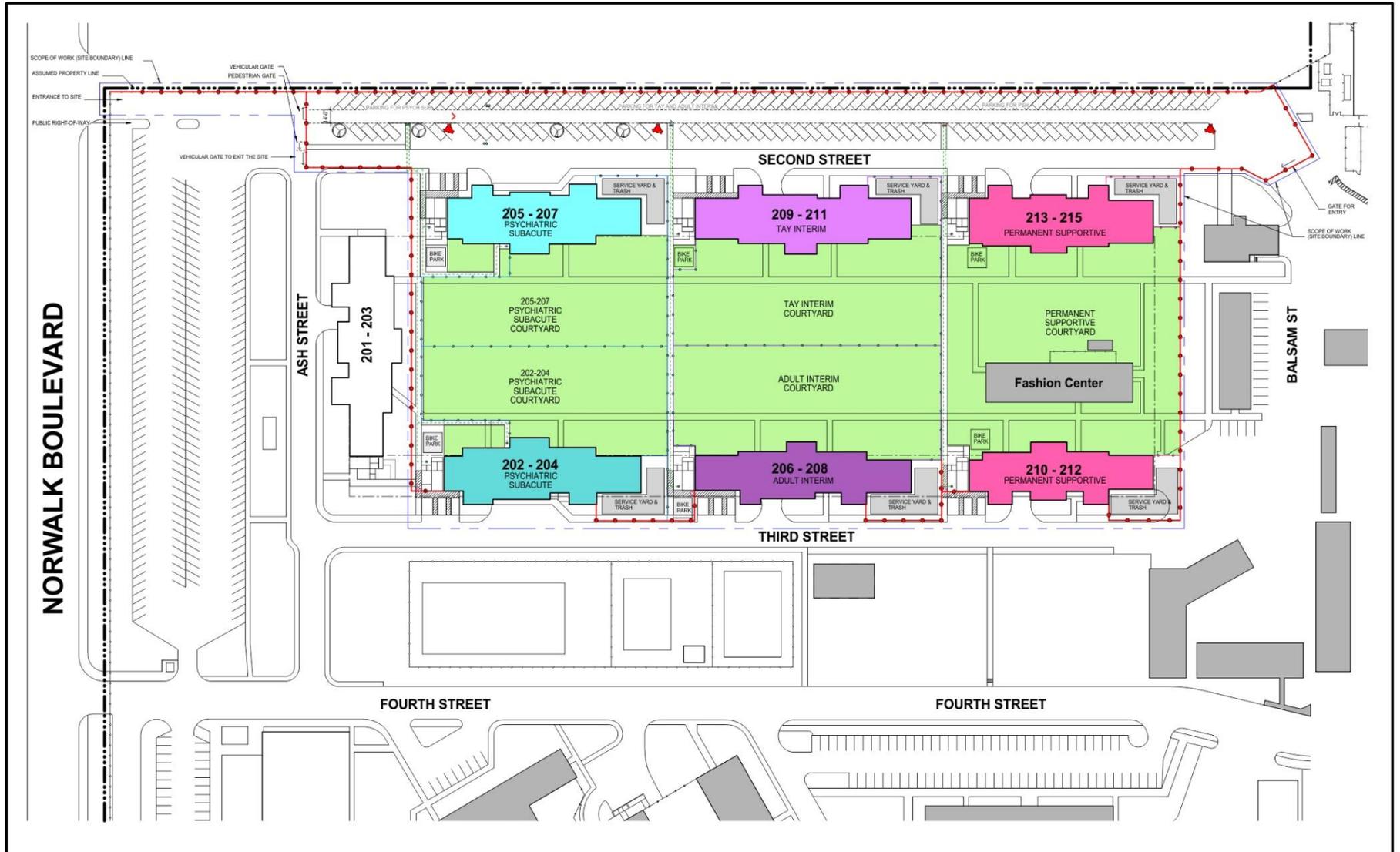
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Figure 2. Project Site Map



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Figure 3. Site Layout Map



Acronyms: Psych Sub = Psychiatric Subacute Services; TAY = Transitional Age Youth Interim Housing; PSH = Permanent Supportive Housing