



Planning & Development Division
Planning & Economic Development Department

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File Number	PL 23-146	Contact	Jenn Moses, jmoses@duluthmn.gov	
Type	Special Use Permit – Residential Care	Planning Commission Date	September 12, 2023	
Deadline for Action	Application Date	August 10, 2023	60 Days	October 9, 2023
	Date Extension Letter Mailed	September 1, 2023	120 Days	December 8, 2023
Location of Subject	1111 N 11 th Avenue E			
Applicant	Chum/Stepping on Up	Contact	Joel Kilgour	
Agent	John Erickson, DSGW	Contact		
Legal Description	PID: 010-2790-03170	Sign Notice Date	August 22, 2023	
Site Visit Date	September 2, 2023	Number of Letters Sent	78	

Proposal

Applicant is proposing to use a portion of the existing church to house up to 12 youth with a communal dining and living area and 24 hour staff.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval, with conditions.

	Current Zoning	Existing Land Use	Future Land Use Map Designation
Subject	R-1	Church	Traditional Neighborhood
North	R-1	Residential	Traditional Neighborhood
South	R-1	Residential	Traditional Neighborhood
East	R-1	Residential	Traditional Neighborhood
West	R-1	Park	Open Space

Summary of Code Requirements

Sec. 50-37.10 – Special Use Permits: Planning Commission shall approve the application or approve it with modifications, if it is determined that the application meets the following criteria:

1. The application is consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan;
2. The application complies with all applicable provisions ... including any use-specific standards ..., and is consistent with any approved district plan for the area.
3. The Commission may deny any application that would result in a random pattern of development with little contiguity to existing or programmed development or would cause anticipated negative fiscal or environmental impacts.

Sec. 50-20.1 – Residential care facility: Shall provide landscaping as required for multi-family residential abutting single-family residential.

Comprehensive Plan Governing Principle and/or Policies and Current History (if applicable):

Governing Principle #1 – Reuse previously developed land. This is a remodel of a previous child care center.

Governing Principle #10 – Take actions that enhance the environment, economic, and social well-being of the community. This project will help homeless youth ages 18-24.

Governing Principle #14 – Integrate fairness into the fabric of the community. Chum's Stepping on Up program works to ensure all have access to housing.

Housing Policy #2 – Provide affordable, attainable housing opportunities.

Future Land Use

Traditional Neighborhood: Characterized by grid or connected street pattern ... limited commercial, schools, and churches.

History

The building was built in 1959. This portion of the church was previously used as a child care.

Review and Discussion Items:

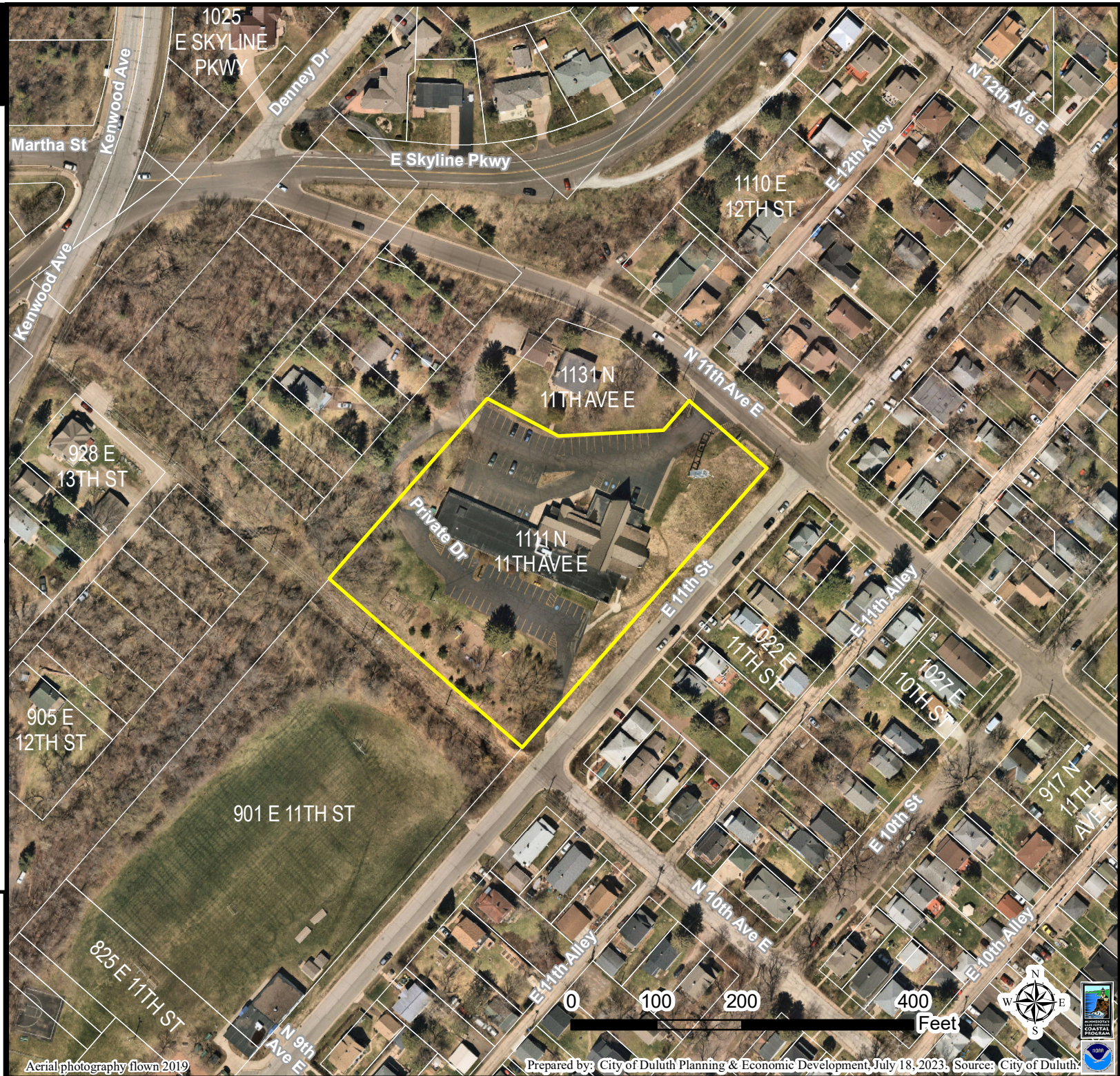
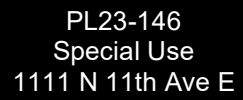
Staff finds that:

- 1) Applicant proposes to convert a portion of the building to a residential care facility that would house a maximum of 12 previously homeless young adults (ages 18-24), with 24-hour staffing and services.
- 2) As demonstrated with the governing principles and policies above as well as the residential nature of the neighborhood, this proposal meets the goals of the comprehensive plan.
- 3) UDC Sec. 50-24 (Parking and loading). The church has 65 existing parking spaces, which are only fully utilized during Sunday morning services or special events. No changes to the parking lot are proposed as part of this project, and the proposed use will share parking with the church. Parking usage will be less for the proposed use than its previous use as a child care.
- 4) UDC Sec. 50-25 (Landscaping and Tree Preservation). The church building is buffered from neighboring properties by wooded areas and steep slopes. The portion of the building proposed for the housing use is furthest away from the residential neighborhood along 11th Street. Staff finds that no additional buffering or landscaping is needed.
- 5) UDC Sec. 50-26 (Screening, Walls and Fences). Any new garbage, recycling, or other containers, or any exterior mechanicals, will be screened per UDC requirements. No walls or fences are proposed as part of this project.
- 6) UDC Sec. 50-29 (Sustainability Standards) and UDC Sec. 50-30 (Building Design Standards). These do not apply as this is reuse of an existing building and site.
- 7) UDC Sec. 50-31 (Exterior Lighting). New exterior lighting may be required at exits per the building code; any lighting will meet UDC requirements.
- 8) As demonstrated by the above findings, this proposal meets all application provisions of the UDC.
- 9) The proposed facility is not anticipated to have any negative impact on the community. Staff will be onsite 24/7, and the portion of the building used for housing is located furthest away from residences and roads; the small size of the facility also minimizes any potential impacts such as noise.
- 10) One comment from a neighbor was received in support of the project. No other public, agency, or other City comments were received.

Staff Recommendation

Based on the above findings, Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the special use permit with the following conditions:

- 1) The project be limited, constructed, and maintained consistent with plans and documents submitted with the application.
- 2) Maximum number of people housed shall be 12.
- 3) Screening and exterior lighting will be confirmed at the time of building permit application.
- 4) Any alterations to the approved plans that do not alter major elements of the plan may be approved by the Land Use Supervisor without further Planning Commission; however, no such administration approval shall constitute a variance from the provisions of Chapter 50.



The City of Duluth has tried to ensure that the information contained in this map or electronic document is accurate. The City of Duluth makes no warranty or guarantee concerning the accuracy or reliability. This drawing/data is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. The drawing/data is a compilation of records, information and data located in various City, County and State offices and other sources affecting the area shown and is to be used for reference purposes only. The City of Duluth shall not be liable for errors contained within this data provided or for any damages in connection with the use of this information contained within.

Aerial photography flown 2019

Prepared by: City of Duluth Planning & Economic Development, July 18, 2023. Source: City of Duluth.

- Duluth 2035 Comprehensive Plan
 - Guiding Principles
 - 1- Reuse previously developed land
 - The proposed remodel was originally a childcare center but was underutilized. The remodel will be housing youth all year round and will make use of the existing structure, windows and plumbing to minimize time and cost.
 - 9- Support private actions that contribute to the public realm
 - The owners of the space, Peace Church, are generously choosing to rent out this area to provide as many as 12 people at a time with a safe space to stay, work and socialize.
 - 10- Take actions that enhance the environment, economic and social well-being of the community
 - The community will benefit from helping youth at a critical point in their lives get back on their feet. This fosters an environment where these people are allowed independence and a chance to grow without having to worry about housing. Eventually they will leave and be able to give back to these communities by renting or purchasing property, buying from businesses, and other things that come from being a citizen of a community.
 - No negative impact on the community
 - The housing remodel is located away from all roads and residences in the area, as well as shielded by numerous trees and other plants.
 - The housing will be monitored 24/7 by two staffers and cameras and the two means of egress are located in the far corners of the building.

Overview: Homelessness in Duluth and the Stepping On Up Plan



Duluth, like virtually every community in the country, is facing a sharp increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness. Our current response system was built for fewer people and shorter stays. There are now far more people in need of shelter than there are existing shelter beds, and waitlists for subsidized housing can be one to two years. This means that hundreds of people rely on crowded shelters, tents, doorways, cars, or couch surfing for significant portions of their lives. St Louis County has one of the highest rates of chronic homelessness in the state: chronic homelessness is defined as homelessness that persists for a year or more, or four separate incidents over three years. Chronic homelessness can have long lasting consequences to a person's mental and physical health and dramatically reduce their ability to maintain permanent housing when they finally achieve it.

- **There are 155 emergency shelter beds in Duluth. This includes all emergency homeless shelters, youth homeless shelters and domestic violence shelters. All Duluth shelters are at or beyond capacity.**
- **By official count, 284 people were unsheltered in St. Louis County in January 2020. Unsheltered means living outside, in vehicles, skywalks or other places not meant for human habitation.**
- **A more accurate measure of unsheltered homelessness is how many people check in at the CHUM Warming Center: nearly 600 unique individuals over the 2022-2023 winter season.**

[Stepping On Up](#) is a multi-agency, multi-sector collaborative plan to address this bottleneck and re-imagine our homeless response systems to reflect current needs. The plan was built around these guiding principles:

1. Everyone deserves a safe and affordable place to call home that is appropriate to their own cultural and developmental needs
2. Integration into the broader community and into communities of support of a person's own choosing (faith, cultural, vocational) increase the odds that they will be able to maintain stable housing
3. Criminalizing homelessness or trying to hide homelessness are not a good use of our collective resources and have detrimental effects on people's health
4. The public health and safety problems caused by chronic unsheltered homelessness must be addressed and mitigated urgently
5. Communities most impacted by homelessness must play key roles in plan design and leadership
6. A collaborative and systematic approach by providers and local government is needed
7. Existing nonprofit and public services are not able to address this issue alone, it must be an all-in effort that includes business, educational, healthcare, faith, community, labor and other sectors

The Stepping On Up plan will assure that when people experience homelessness, their homelessness will be brief with a clear pathway to stability. Stepping On Up will be implemented in three stages over 5 years beginning in Spring of 2023. Chum serves as fiscal sponsor for Stepping On Up, with partner agencies scaling up and adding programs in alignment with the Stepping On Up plan as capacity and funding allows.

Phase 1: Outdoor villages and outreach coordination

Respond to immediate health and safety concerns by increasing street outreach presence, providing for basic needs, and establishing authorized outdoor villages for those living in vehicles and tents.

Phase 1 Successes to date:

- Safe Bay site for families living in vehicles opened at Damiano Center, staffed by Chum
- Safe Storage facility opened at Damiano Center with support from HDC
- Laundry Love open weekly to provide free laundry service, operated by volunteers from five area faith communities and financial support from Leadership Duluth
- Additional street outreach worker hired at HDC, one more position funded and posted at Chum
- Planning underway for a staffed, service rich outdoor village

Phase 2: Shelter Next indoor villages

Create 100 new emergency "Shelter Next" beds at scattered-site, indoor villages where people can work to stabilize their lives toward a goal of permanent supportive housing. This is a reimagining of shelter for our current realities and based on best, people-centered practice. Simple, individual or double rooms provide dignity and a safe space for personal belongings. Other important elements of Phase 2 sites:

- Communal dining and living areas
- 24 hour staff **and** coordinated service provision between agencies to ensure people have access to recovery, mental health, lifeskills, cultural and vocational support
- Located away from downtown with access to nature and public transportation
- Volunteer and community engagement as appropriate (and desired by residents) to break the cycle of isolation
- Prioritize conversion of existing non-residential structures

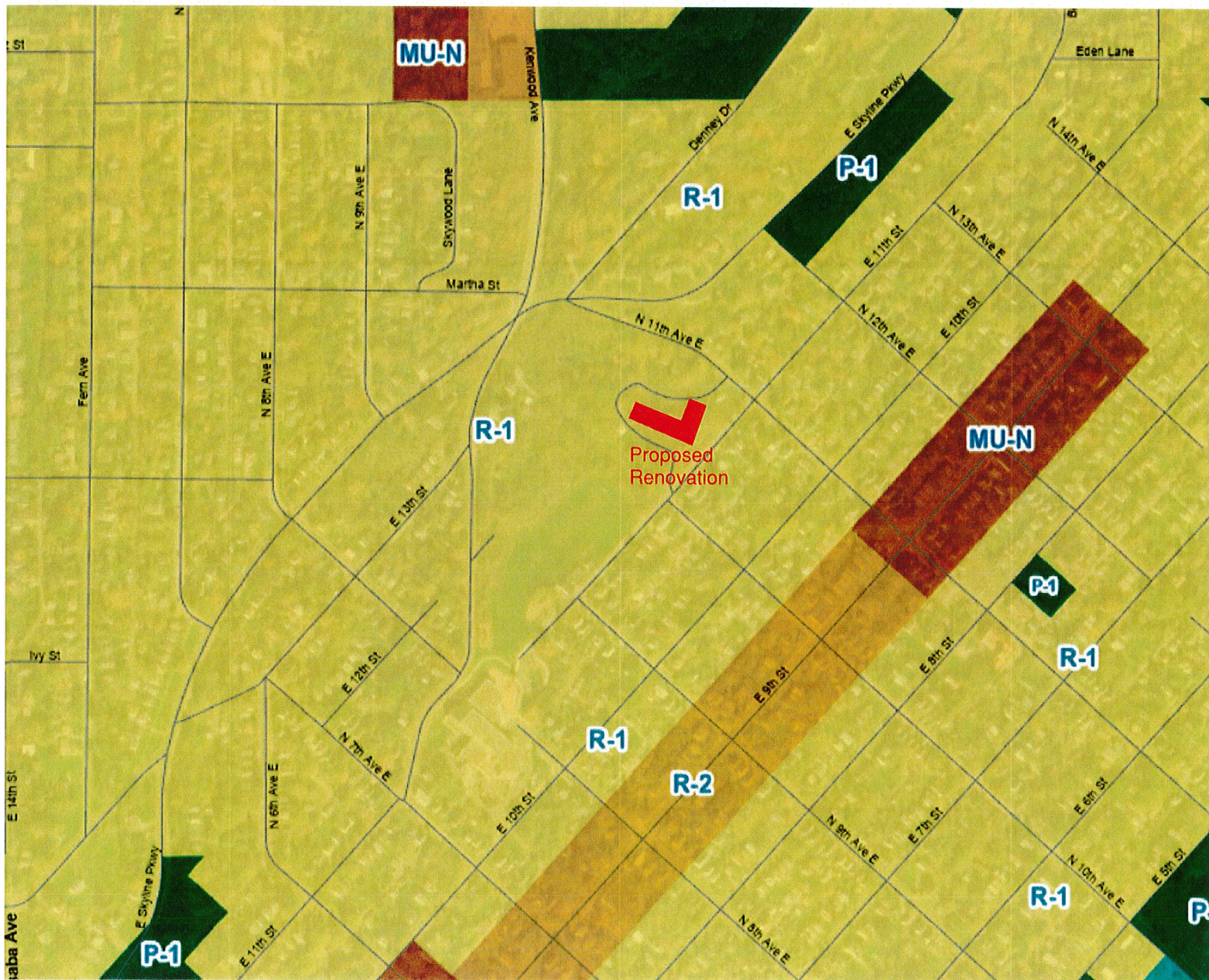
Two sites are currently in development: one serving youth (18-24 years old) and one for people reentering society from incarceration.

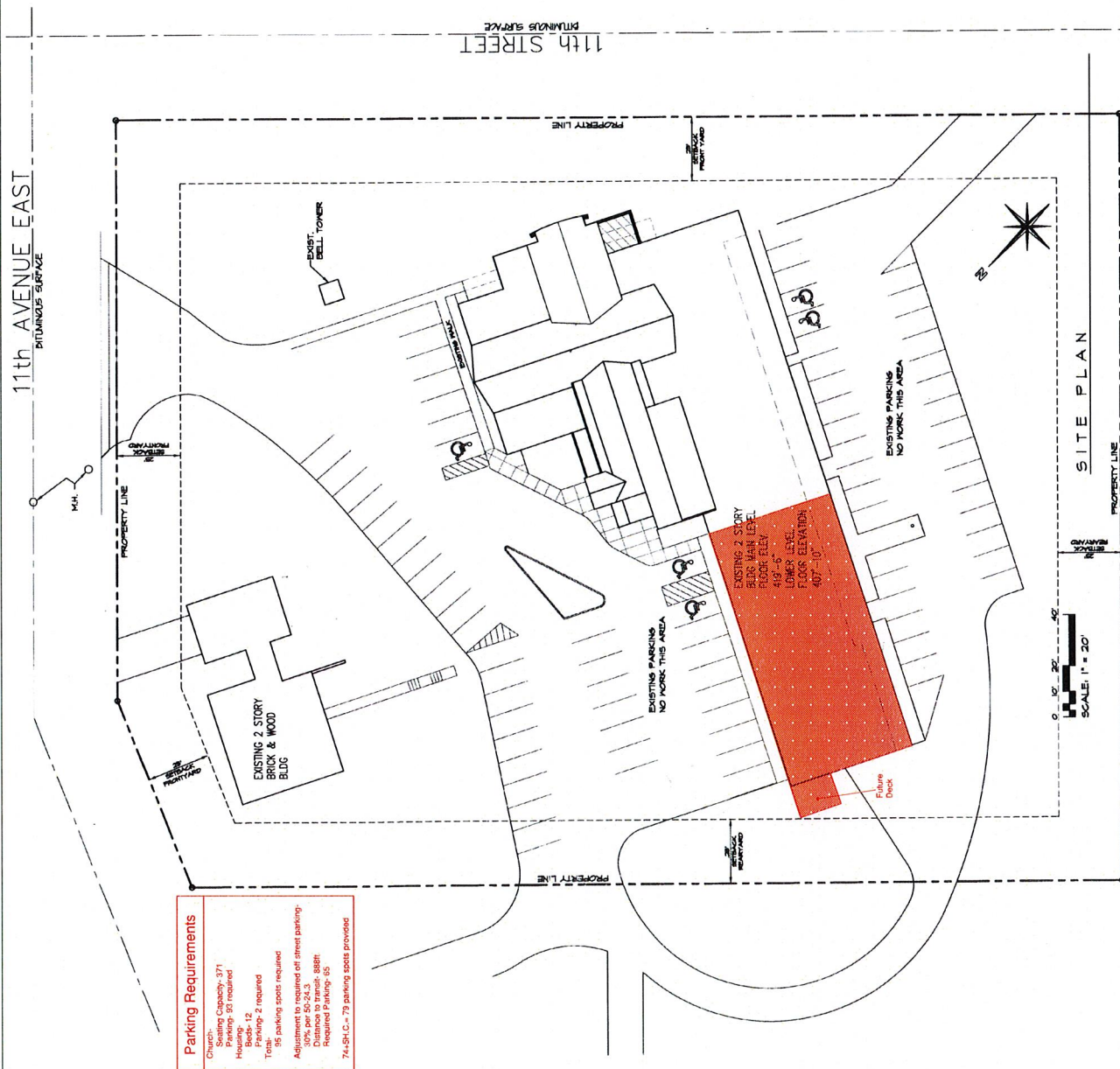
Phase 3: Permanent, community-oriented housing

The primary cause of homelessness is lack of housing. There is a need for units across the income spectrum in Duluth, but the need is greatest for those with the fewest resources. We cannot depend entirely on private development or even traditional, multifamily projects that can require years of planning and fundraising. Phase 3 buildings will:

- Be new construction or repurposing of non-residential buildings to add to Duluth's housing stock
- Use creative, more cost effective models such as hotel/motel conversion, tiny houses and micro apartment units
- Be small scale (12-40 units per development) in multiple neighborhoods outside of the downtown core but with access to public transportation
- Include a deep level of support and service provision to ensure residents are successful and able to continue a path toward their own defined goals
- Continue with personalized and meaningful community engagement, each site with its own Good Neighbor committee and support from outside volunteers and community groups to advance resident goals, whether those goals are supporting recovery, cultural activities or planting a garden

One Roof will be breaking ground this summer on the first pilot project in this phase, which will house 24 people who have experienced chronic homelessness.





1 LEVEL 2 FLOOR PLAN
1/8" = 1'-0"