



NEVADA COUNTY COURTHOUSE HIGHEST AND BEST USE STUDY

FINAL REPORT

March 1, 2025

NELSON



TABLE OF CONTENTS

01	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
02	STUDY OVERVIEW
03	DEVELOPING A VISION
04	PROJECT APPROACH
05	MARKET REVIEW
06	ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
07	COMMUNITY MEETING
08	NARROW DOWN OPTIONS
09	KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION
10	GOING FORWARD
11	APPENDIX



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

01



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY


The NELSON team was contracted by Nevada County and collaborated with the County, Nevada City, local businesses, special interest groups and the at-large community to develop a study that provides valuable information for the Highest and Best Use for the existing Nevada City Courthouse and Annex Building that will become vacant in 2030.

With input from the above-mentioned groups the NELSON team researched the current market, market patterns, and architectural characteristics of the site to develop the Study. Market research shows housing is the most viable solution for the area. The team studied many different configurations and housing types and determined that apartment housing clearly provided the best opportunities to be successful. Other housing types were not viable.

Cost estimates, architectural test fits, and a proforma indicated that reusing or demolishing the existing courthouse was not viable. The costs far outweighed the potential financial returns. However, using the same approach, the Annex building showed promise as either an adaptive re-use or to be demolished and replaced with apartment housing. This information led the team to the final recommendation: split the site into two (2) parcels, the Courthouse site and the Annex Building site.

The Annex Building site has a strong potential for a developer to build apartment housing. The Courthouse site could be used for the local community's benefit.

The content of this study can be used by the County in negotiations and in reaching out to potential users and developers of the site.



STUDY OVERVIEW

02

Primary Study Collaborators

Nevada County

Trisha Tillotson
Heidi Hall
Alison Lehman
Kimberly Parker
Steve Monaghan
Justin Drinkwater
Craig Griesbach

Nevada City

Gary Petersen
Doug Fleming
Sean Grayson
Stuart Baker

NELSON Worldwide, Architecture

David Crotty
Greg Lehman
Stefan Vogelmann
Casey Adams
Shawn Nguyen

Strategic Economics, Market Research

Dena Belzer
Chris Holcomb

Architectural Resources Group, Historic Architecture

Alice Valania

MGAC, Cost Estimating

Rick Lloyd
Zaif Ismail



HIGHEST AND BEST USE STUDY

Current Courthouse Building



Current Annex Building





PROJECT BACKGROUND

Project Background

The current Nevada County Courthouse, operated by The Judicial Council of California, is in Nevada City, California. The Judicial Council plans to build a replacement courthouse in Nevada County, which will lead to vacating the existing courthouse in Nevada City. This will leave the existing Nevada City Courthouse empty. Nevada County is concerned about the potential impact to the local community and economy. To address this, the County engaged the NELSON Worldwide team to conduct a study to determine the highest and best use for the existing courthouse complex after the court's departure.



HIGHEST AND BEST USE STUDY

What is Highest and Best Use?*

Community & Leadership Collaboration

It is essential to have the community and community leaders support the strategy for using the Courthouse site. The Study's recommendation must support the overall community goals and help create a vibrant environment for the long-term health of the area.

Market Analysis

The Study's recommendation must be financially viable for today and into the future.

Architectural Analysis

The existing site has unique characteristics that will greatly impact and inform possible solutions. These characteristics must inform the Study's recommendation.

*This is not a master plan or solution.

THE VALUE OF PLANNING AHEAD

We have 5 years, why now?

Avoid planning for unrealistic uses

Understanding the highest and best use today will allow the community to avoid wasting time and resources on options that will not work.

More information less surprises

This type of planning is very complex. Understanding the current market and its patterns along with the opportunities and restrictions of the site allows for a more effective and ultimately more successful approach.

Find the best use to develop a path forward

Once the highest and best use is determined it allows the County to develop an approach strategy to realize the final solution. This will be time consuming.

Provide ample time and information to negotiate with the State & coordinate with other entities

The entire process is very time consuming. Having a basic understanding of the desired approach allows the County to take a measured and thoughtful approach to negotiating and communicating with interested parties.





DEVELOPING A VISION

03



Developing a Vision

Following the kick-off meeting the team held a visioning session with the Steering Committee. The objective of the visioning session was to develop preliminary ideas prior to engaging with the community. The session focused on issues related to the current courthouse site, it's role in the community, and identifying opportunities and challenges.

The outcome of this meeting was defining the courthouse site's role in the community, brainstorming a range of potential uses, developing evaluation criteria, and defining a North Star. These results would be presented to the community for further development and comment.

Describe

Current State

These are the results with the largest words being the highest priority to the group.



NEVADA CITY

The Steering Committee was asked to **“Describe the ideal future for the city”** A lengthy list was created from their responses, with some phrases emerging as higher priorities.

These are the results with the largest words being the highest priority to the group.



GOALS

WHAT CAN WE STRIVE FOR?

The group went into detail describing what would be important to the community. The discussion developed into creating a long list of project goals. After developing the long list of goals we reorganized the thoughts into larger categories that encapsulated the concepts. Here is the list of larger categories:

Public Value/Economics	City Values/Mission	Equity, Access, and Inclusion
Longevity /Future Proof	Wellness	Safety/Neighborhood
Sustainability/Net Zero	Character/Aesthetics	



PRIORITIES

WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT?

After we created the project goals, the group transformed these into project priorities. The eight initial categories were consolidated into three main groups. We discussed these groups and determined that the Public Value/Economics or project viability was the clear driver and is essential to the project success. The next priority was City Values/Mission, this was not nearly as important, but included the desire to keep the historic value of the building intact. Lastly, Equity, Access, and Inclusion were discussed, but the importance of this category was insignificant compared to the project viability, since these elements are inherent in other categories.

Public Value/Economics

- Longevity/Future Proof
- Sustainability/Net Zero

Recieved 15/21 votes

City Values/Mission

- Wellness
- Character/Aesthetics

Recieved 6/21 votes

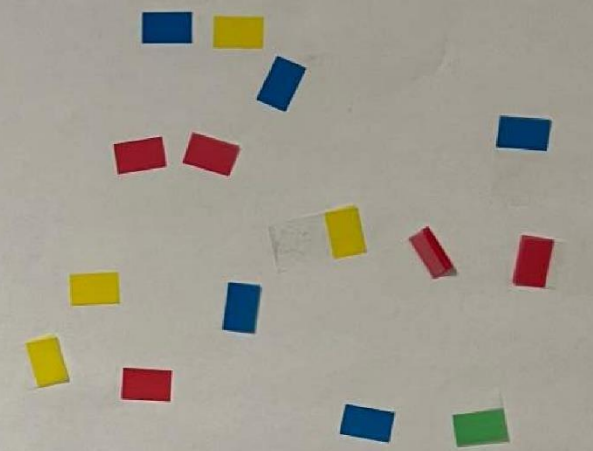
Equity, Access, and Inclusion

- Safety/Neighborhood

Recieved 0/21 votes

PUBLIC VALUE ECONOMICS

- DATA DRIVEN
- CANNIBIS
- TOURIST MAGNET
- TAX BOOST
- HOUSING
- ECONOMIC DIVERSITY
- REGIONAL ATTRACTION
- LONG TERM STABILITY
- CANNABIS
- BUSINESS INTEREST



LONGEVITY · FUTURE PROOF

- L.T. STABILITY OF USES
- ENERGY
-

SUSTAINABILITY · NET ZERO

- RESILIENCE
- \$ ENERGY SAVINGS
- LONG TERM · LOW MAINTENANCE

SUCCESS

WHAT DEFINES SUCCESS?

The steering committee was asked two questions to help the Design Team define what the success of this project looks like.

What are you afraid of?

- Vacant “zombie” building
- Divided community engagement
- Unpopular use
- Something trendy or dated
- A disruptive use or timeline
- Lack of longterm feasibility
- Poor public process

What are you hopeful for?

- Increased/valuable economic activity
- Renewed community vibrancy
- Community pride
- A look that honors the historic context
- National attraction
- Successful city/county partnership
- Investment magnet




NORTH STAR

The Steering Committee was tasked with crafting a statement that encapsulated the final goal of the project. This is what they developed.

“A beautiful and vibrant space that is viable, sustainable and generates community pride.”





PROJECT APPROACH

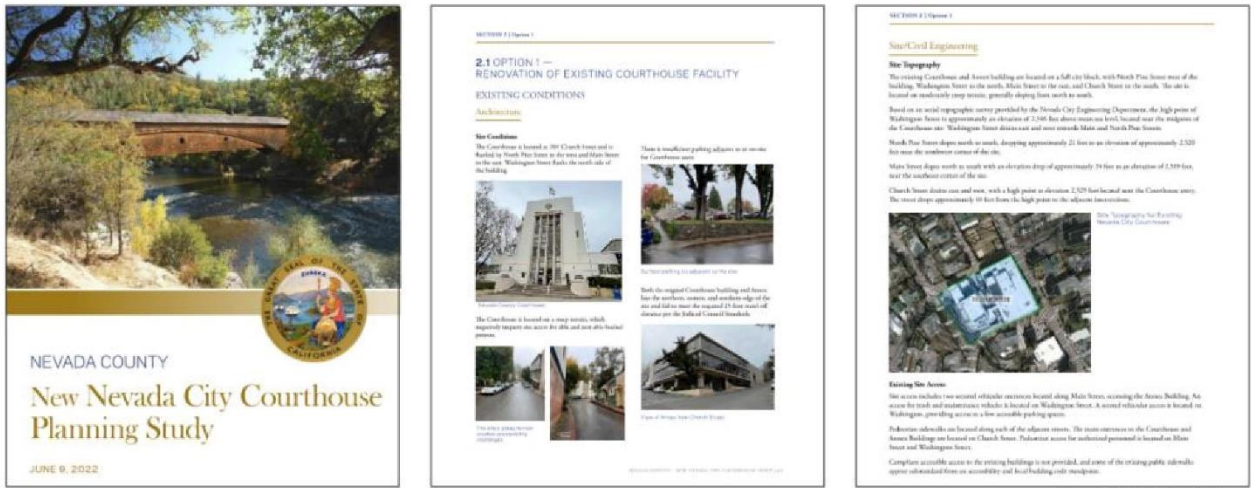
04

PROJECT APPROACH

1.0 KICK OFF MEETING



1.1 PROJECT INITIATION: SUMMARY REPORT



1.2 STEERING COMMITTEE VISIONING SESSION & SITE TOUR

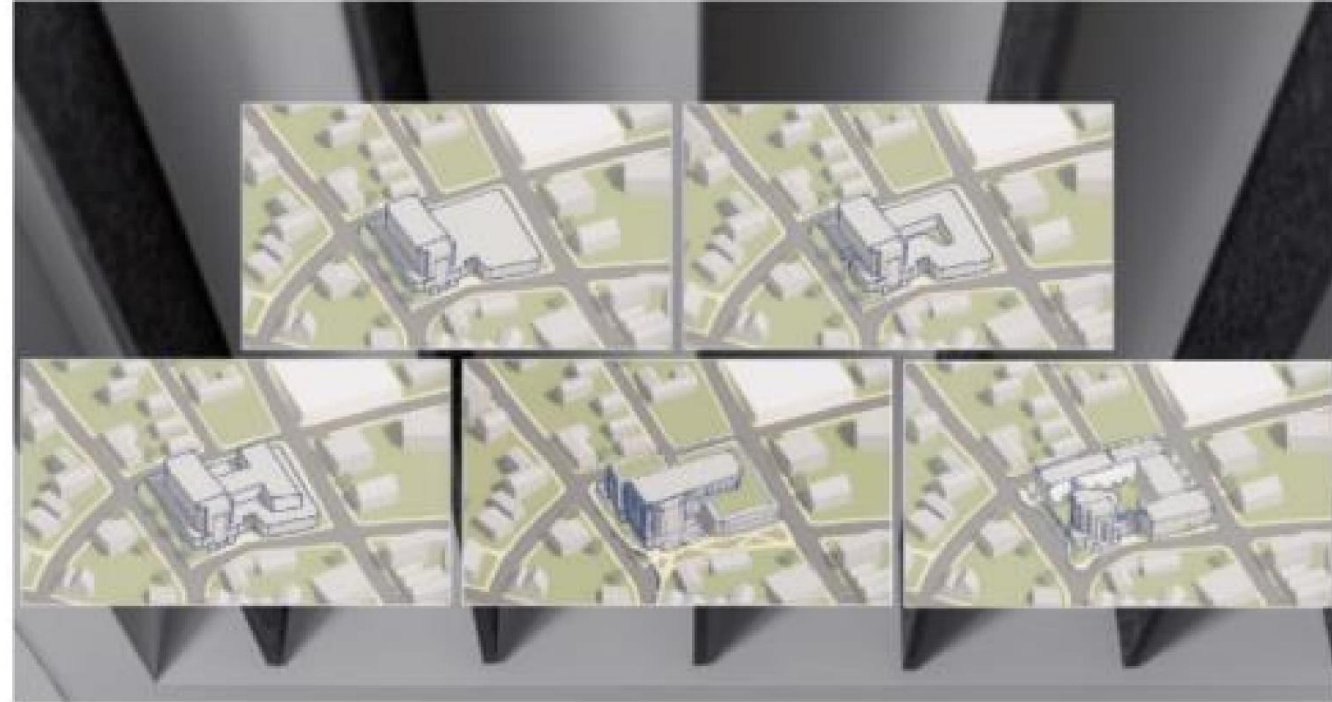


1.3 INDUSTRY & STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH



PROJECT APPROACH

1.4 STEERING COMMITTEE PROGRESS MEETING



1.5 COMMUNITY OUTREACH PLANNING



1.6 COMMUNITY MEETING

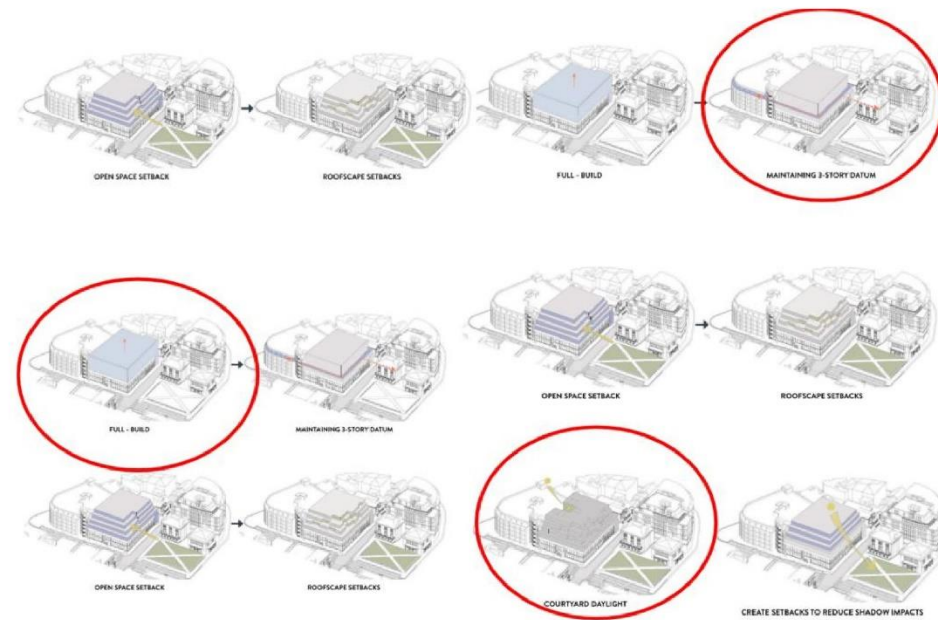


1.6 STEERING COMMITTEE FOLLOW UP MEETING



PROJECT APPROACH

2.1 DEVELOP BROAD RANGE OF CONCEPTS & NARROW DOWN TO LIKELY OPTIONS



2.3 DEVELOP THREE OPTIONS



2.2 STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING



2.4 STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING



PROJECT APPROACH

3.1 DESIGN TEAM EVALUATES THREE OPTIONS

CRITERIA		Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score
Courthouse Function							
Safety and Security	30%	60	18	95	29	100	30
Program Requirements	25%	55	14	100	25	100	25
Circulation Patterns	15%	60	9	100	15	100	15
Functional Adjacencies	15%	55	8	100	15	100	15
Building Efficiencies	15%	60	9	100	15	100	15
Score			58		99		100
Site Function							
Safety and Security	20%	35	7	80	16	100	20
Site at Program Location	20%	70	14	70	14	95	19
Access to Site	20%	50	10	70	14	70	14
Site Functionality	20%	50	10	80	16	95	19
Accessibility	20%	20	4	50	10	90	18
Score			45		70		90
Local Community Goals							
Public Image of Building	20%	100	20	90	18	20	4
Economic Impact	30%	100	30	100	30	25	8
Historic Aspects / 338	15%	100	15	80	12	25	4
Useful Life of Building	15%	90	14	100	15	20	3
Broader Regional Goals	20%	85	17	85	17	70	14
Score			96		92		32

3.3 SECOND COMMUNITY MEETING



3.2 STEERING COMMITTEE FOLLOW UP MEETING

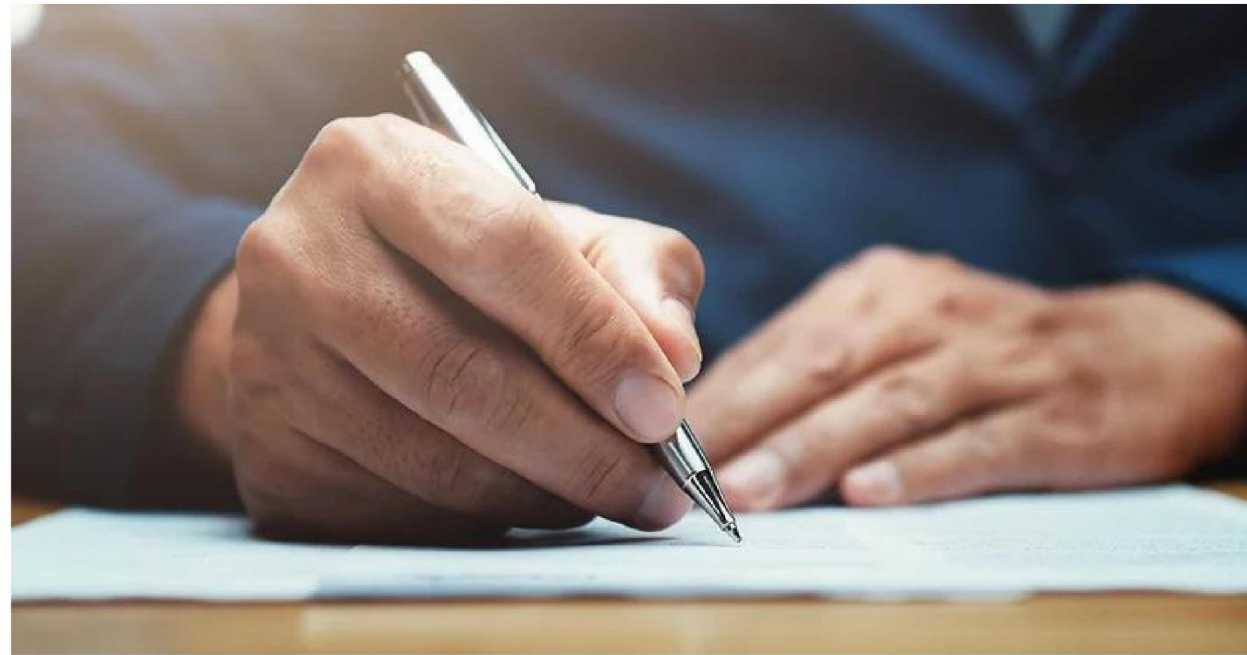


3.4 STEERING COMMITTEE FOLLOW UP MEETING



PROJECT APPROACH

4.1 DRAFT REPORT?



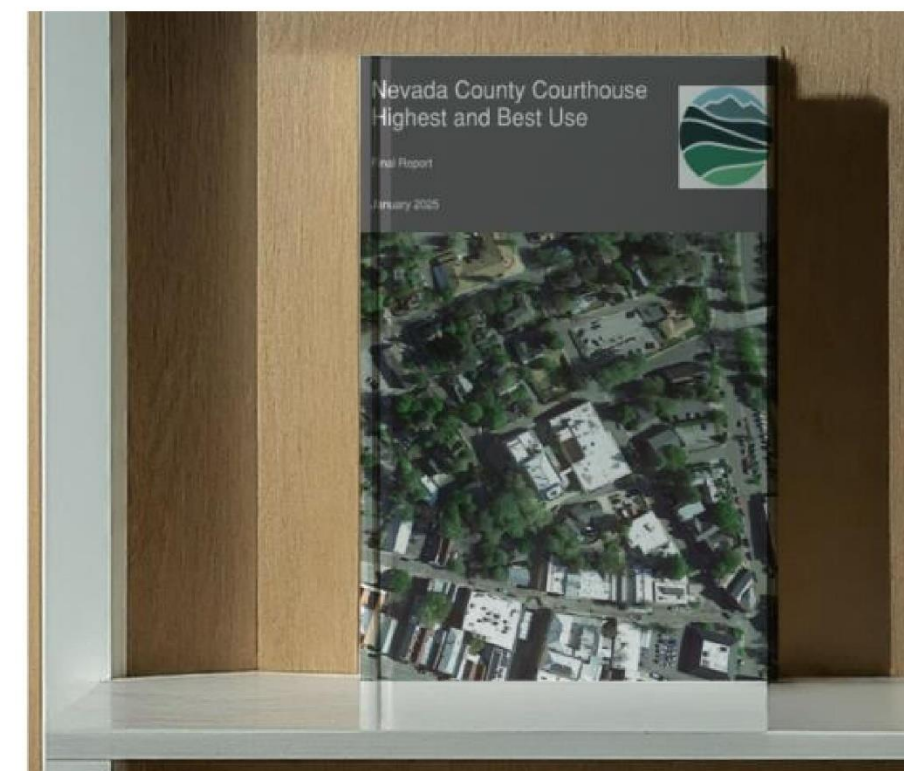
4.2 STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING?



4.3 FINAL REPORT



4.4 PRESENTATION TO CITY AND COUNTY





IDENTIFY A RANGE
OF OPTIONS:

MARKET REVIEW

05



MARKET ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

Market Analysis Purpose:

- Screen a long list of future uses & test what could be viable given:
 - Site conditions
 - Nevada City's current market

The list of possible site uses includes:

Residential

Office

Cannabis Industry

Retail or Grocery

Hospitality

Parking

Institutional

- Museum
 - Government Administration
 - University Campus
- Health or Wellness
- Sports or Recreation

Note: This list is based on the Courthouse Steering Committee Visioning Workshop, July 2024 and stakeholder input.

MARKET ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

Subject Matter Expert Interviews

Highland Commercial Real Estate

Lock Richards

Nevada City Chamber of Commerce

Stuart Baker

Nevada County Economic Development Department

Kimberly Parker

Nevada County Economic Resource Council

Gil Mathew

Sierra Business Council

Kristin York

Tintle Inc.

Gary Tintle

Additional Engagement

Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital

Scott Neeley

Economic Research



State of California
Department of Finance



CoStar™



SITE OVERVIEW

Site Characteristics

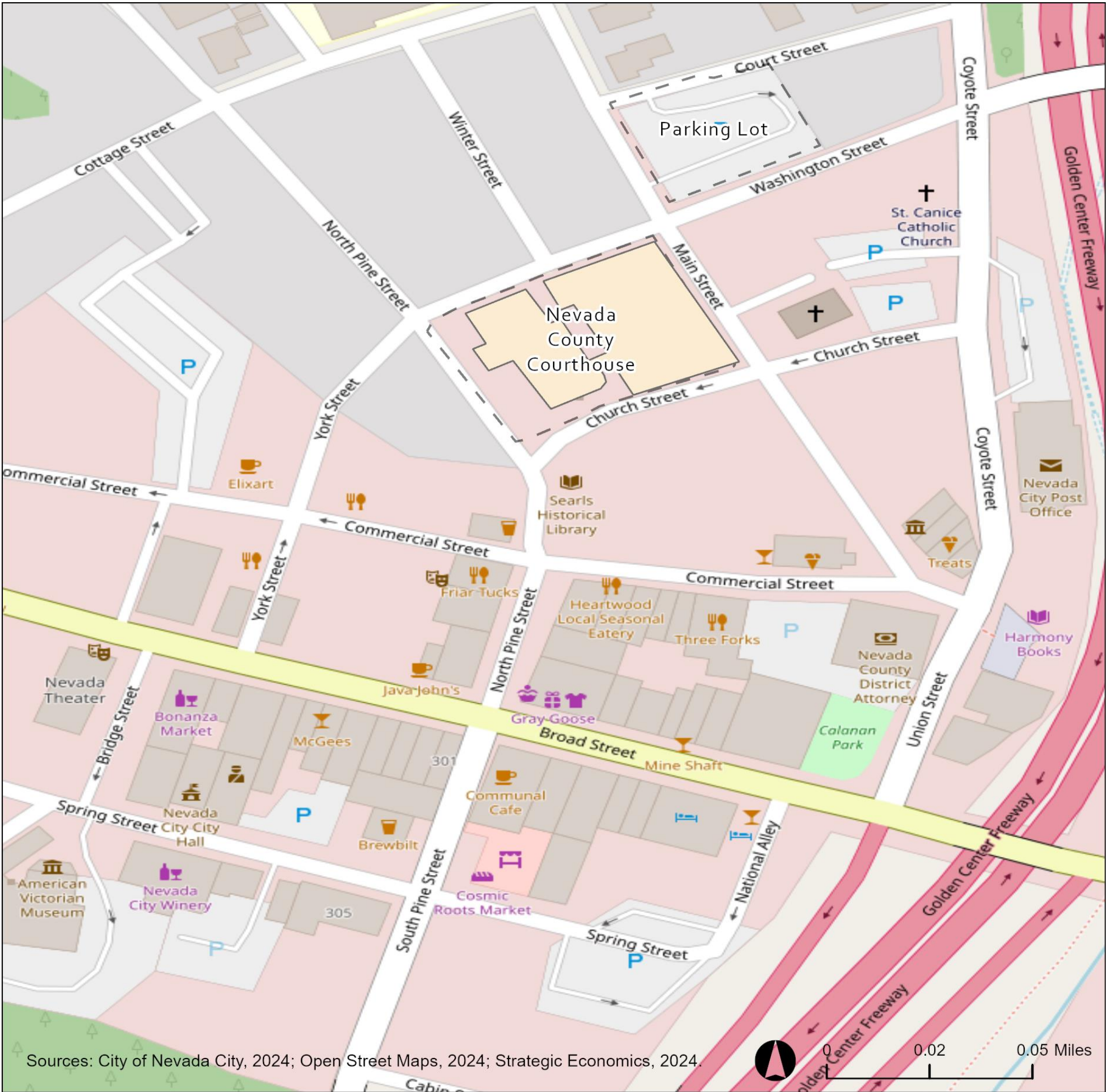
- 1-acre site
- 80,000 square foot historic courthouse + annex
- 0.5-acre satellite lot

Site Constraints

- Not located on main retail strip
- Hill makes walking access difficult
- Constrained for on-site parking

Site Assets

- Architectural significance
- Cultural significance & prominent location
- Part of Nevada City Downtown Historic District
- Adjacent to vibrant downtown



POPULATION GROWTH TRENDS

Nevada County's population has not grown significantly over the past ten years

- Declined by more than 1,000 residents from 2020 to 2022

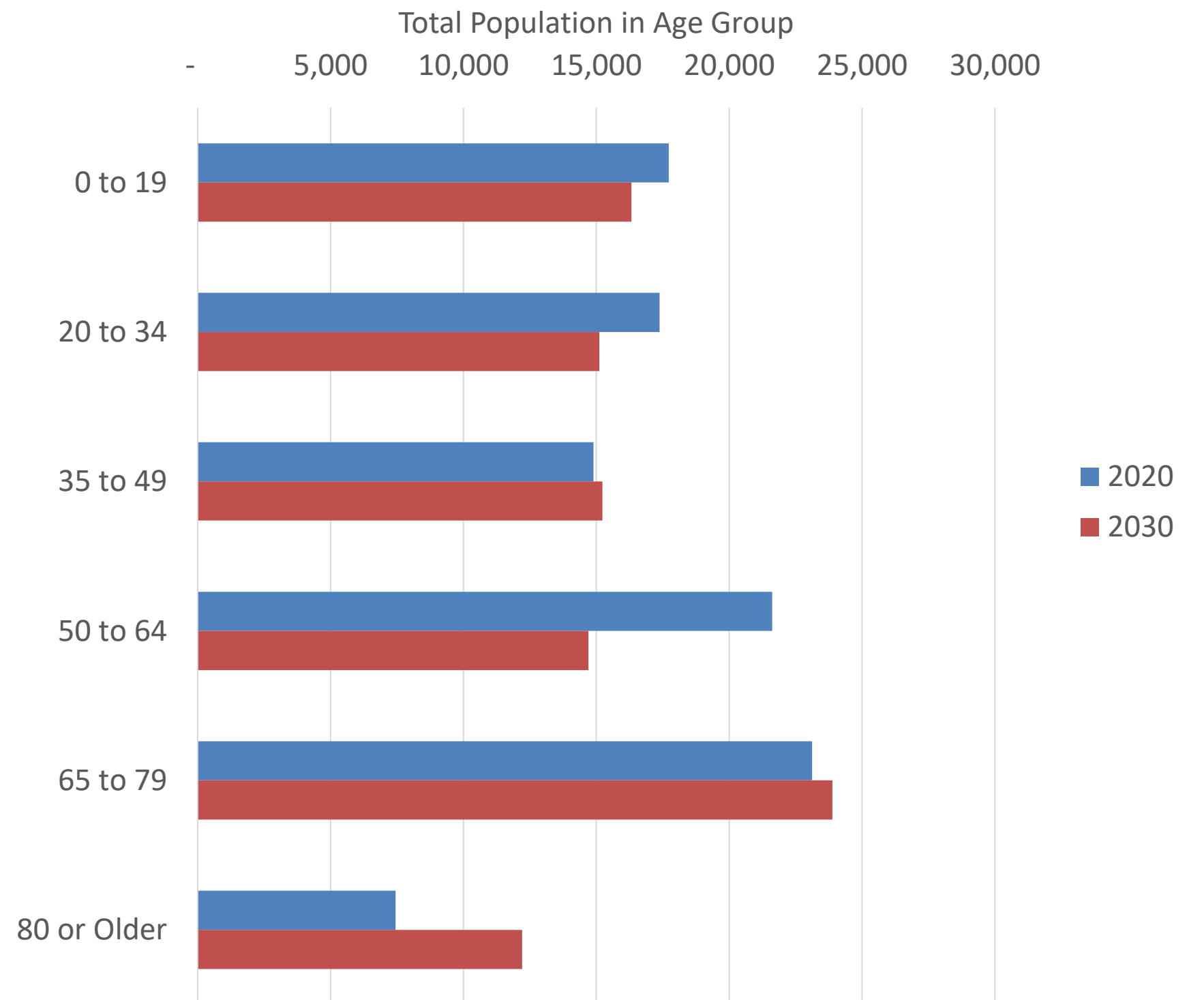
Nevada County is projected to shrink by 5,000 residents by 2030

- Already one of the oldest populations in the state
- Workforce is shrinking

Nevada County is an attractive location for artists, the creative class, and retirees.

- Attractions: access to nature and relatively affordable housing
- Some remote workers moved to Nevada County during the pandemic.
- Broadband access can be challenging in some locations

Population Forecast by Age, 2020 - 2030



Source: California Department of Finance, 2019; Strategic Economics, 2024.

JOB GROWTH PROJECTIONS

Nevada County’s top employment sectors are government jobs, healthcare, and education

Leisure and construction sectors are growing most quickly.

Outlook for technology and professional services sectors is mixed.

- Shrinking workforce
- Limited regional professional services growth

Projected job growth: Leisure and Hospitality

Regional Job Forecast, 2020 - 2030



Source: California EDD, 2022; Strategic Economics, 2024.
Region includes Colusa, Glenn, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas, Sierra, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Trinity Counties.

COMMUTING PATTERNS

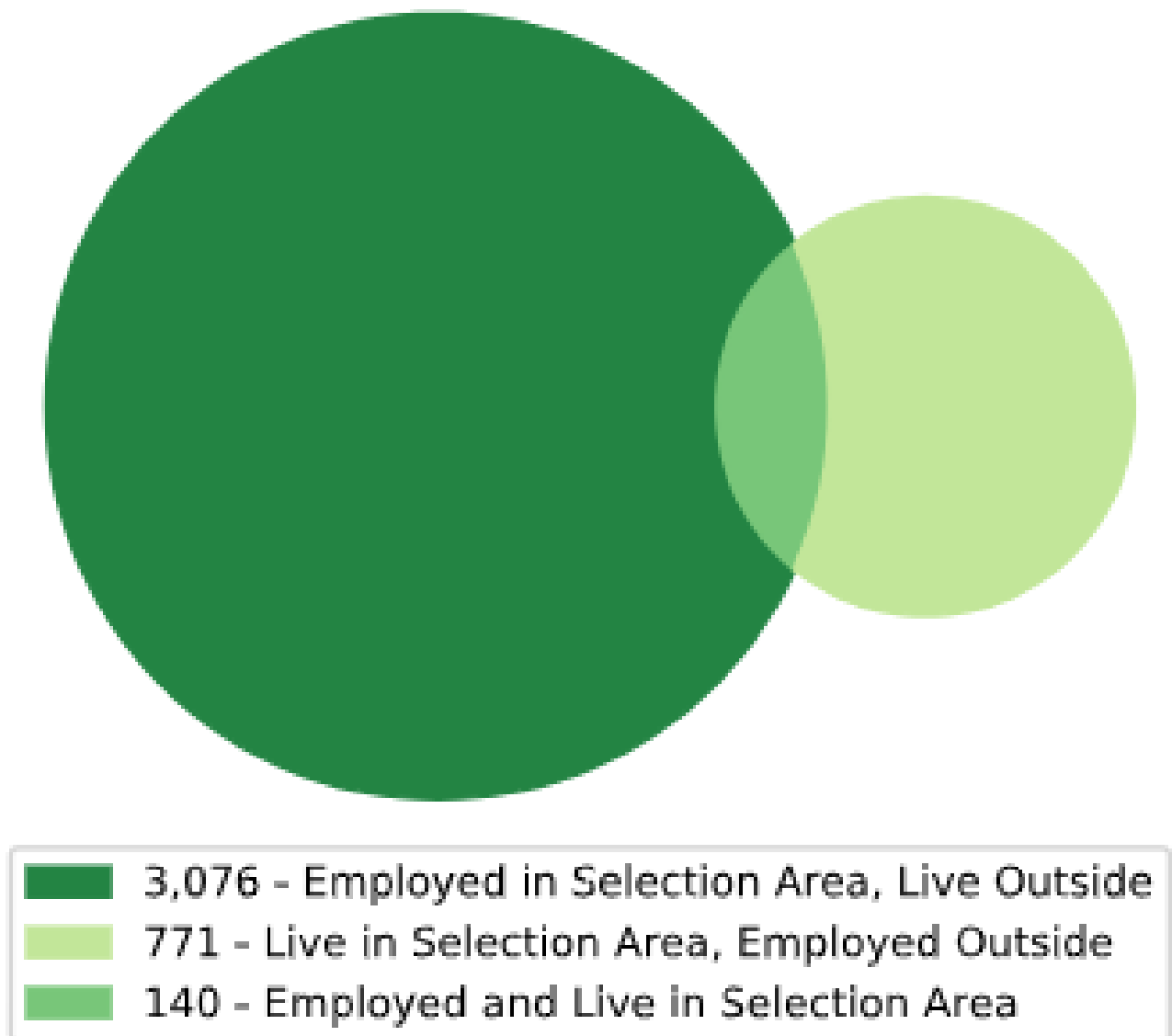
More than 3,000 workers commute into Nevada City from elsewhere daily.

- Nevada City only has 771 out-commuters
- 33 percent of Nevada City workers live outside of Nevada County.

Compared to those who commute out of Nevada City, workers commuting into Nevada City are more likely to:

- be between the ages of 30 and 54,
- work in service industries, and
- make more than \$3,333 monthly

Nevada City Commuting Inflow-Outflow, 2021



Source: LEHD, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

HOUSING OUTLOOK

Median home prices increased in Nevada City by \$100,000 from 2020 to 2024.

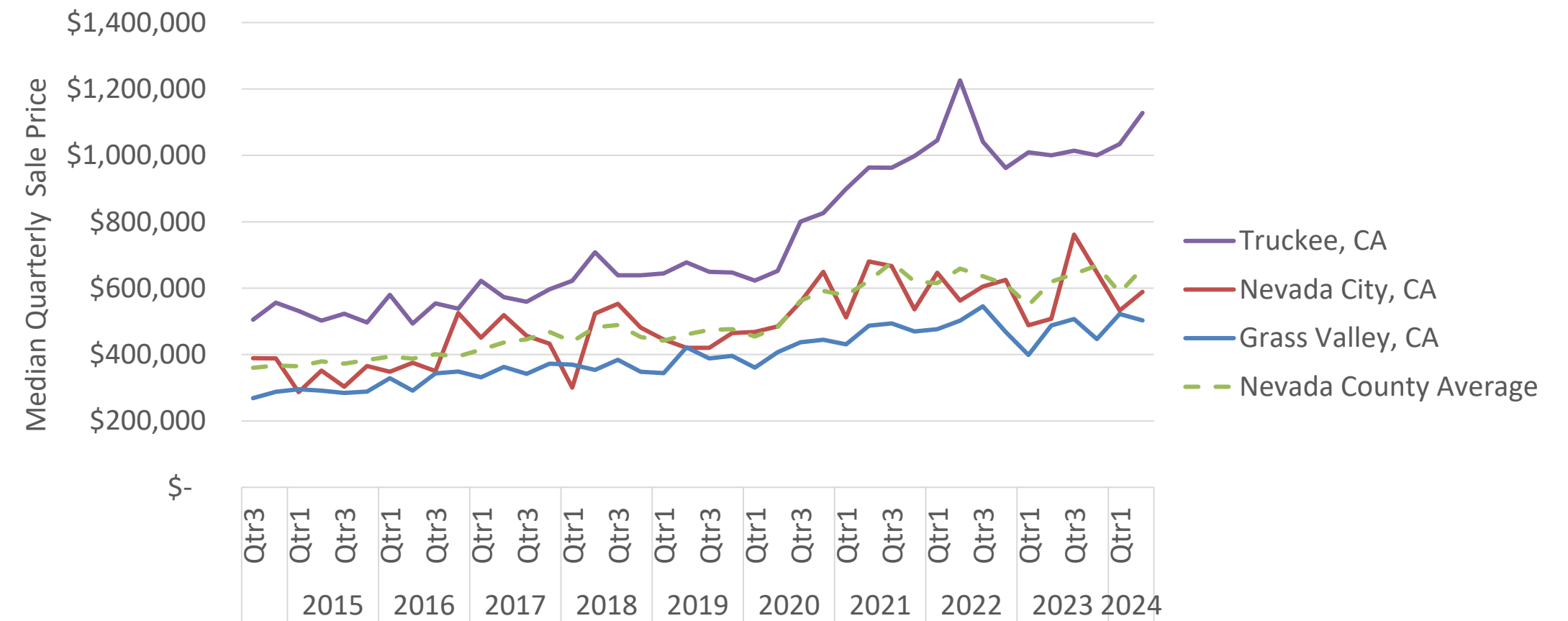
During the same time, home prices in Truckee nearly doubled.

Local experts indicate that there is strong demand for homes in Nevada City

Multifamily demand is high.

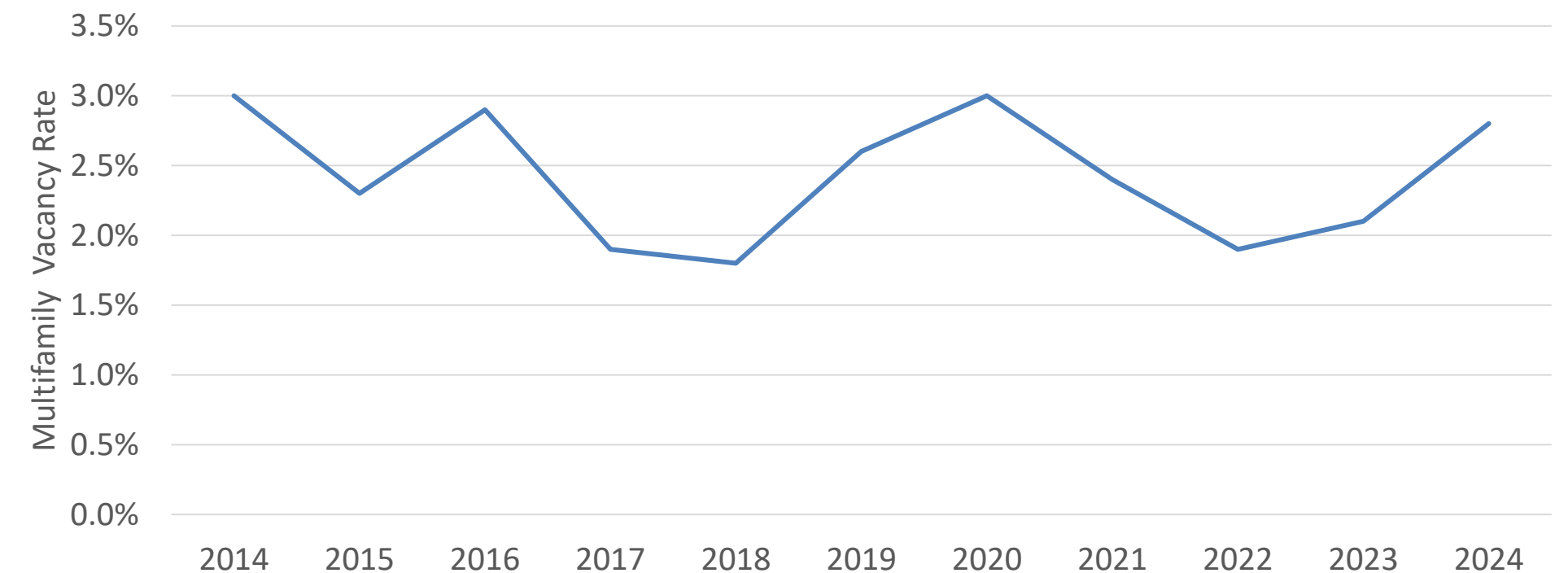
- Vacancy rates have remained below 3% for the past 10 years
- Stakeholders indicate high demand for 1 to 2-Bedroom apartments in Downtown Nevada City.

Nevada County Median Home Sales Prices by Jurisdiction, 2014 to 2024



Source: Redfin, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

Multifamily Vacancy Rate in Nevada County, 2014 to 2024

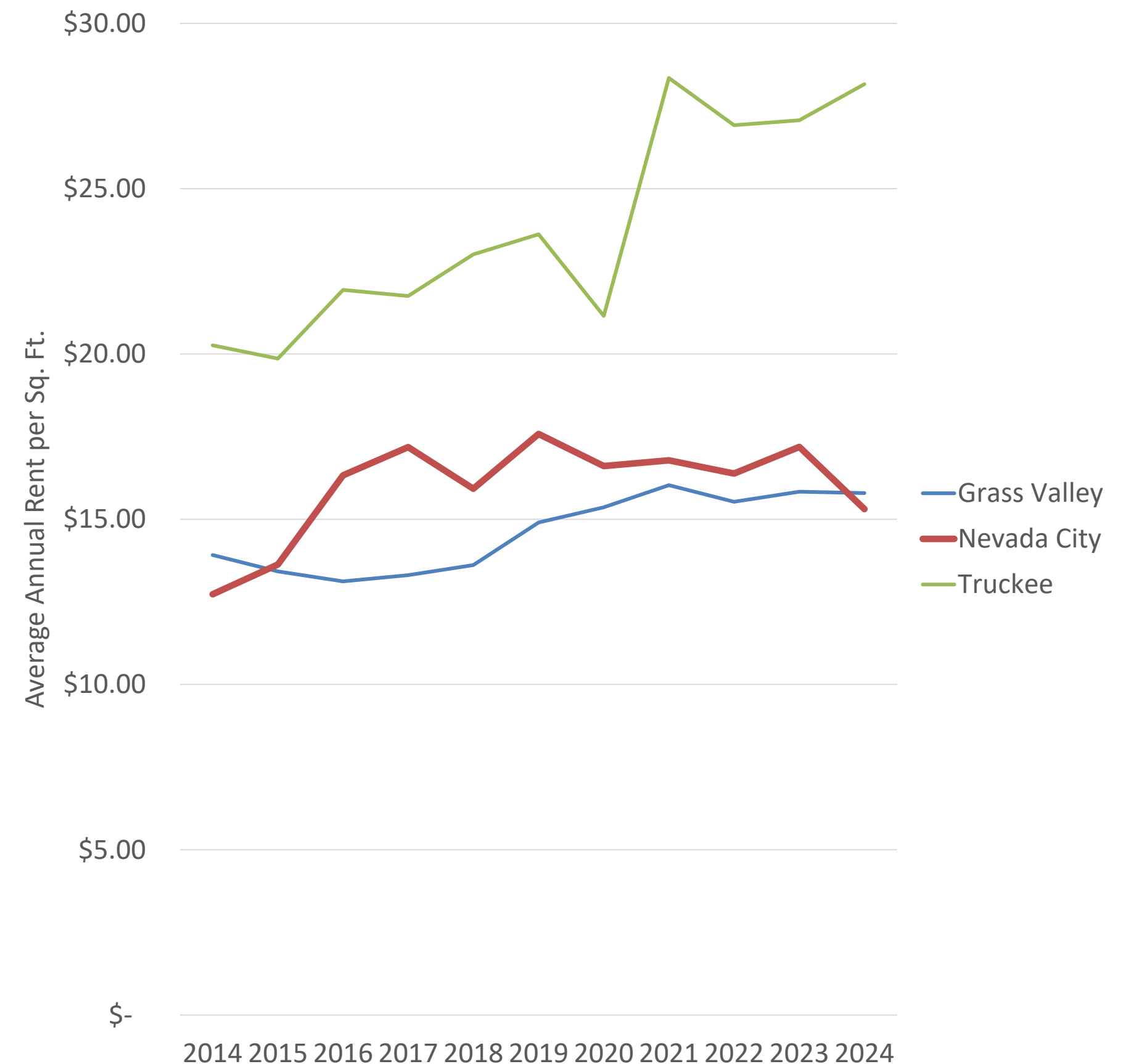


Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

OFFICE OUTLOOK

- Nevada City had a net loss of more than 45,000 square feet of occupied office space since the beginning of 2020.
- Nevada City office buildings command lower rents than those in Truckee, and just dipped below Grass Valley
- Most office tenants would prefer to locate in business park locations, rather than in Downtown.

Average Annual Office Rent in Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Truckee by Year Built, 2024



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

Note: Refers to direct, full-service gross rent.

RETAIL OUTLOOK

Because of site-specific factors, the courthouse may not be as strong of a candidate for retail uses as market data suggests.

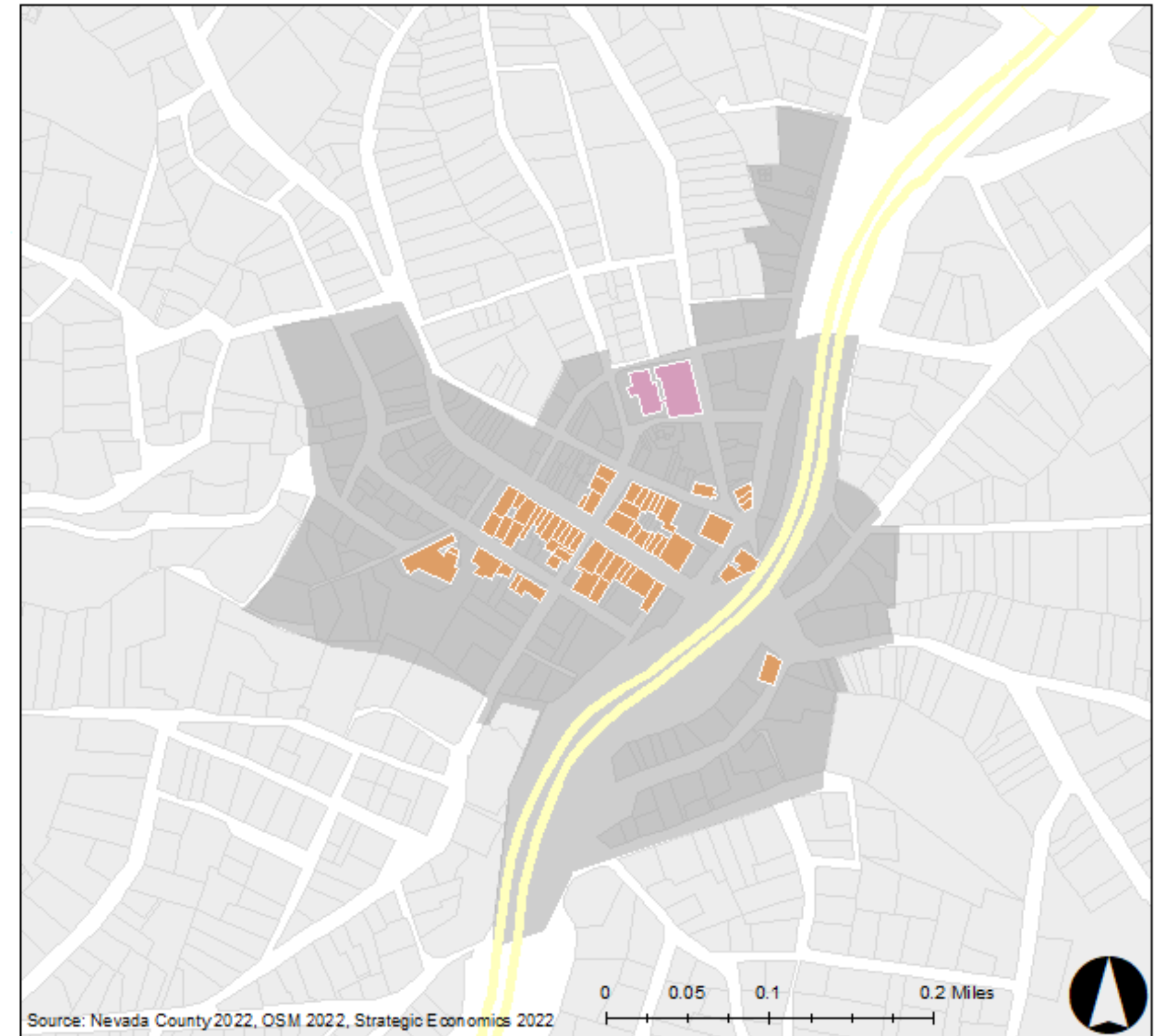
Retail demand is also likely to decrease with population decline and the relocation of the courthouse

- Relocating the courthouse could lead to a six percent reduction in downtown sales.

Any viable retail use of the site would need something to drive visitors to the site

- A grocery store could do this, but market is likely saturated
- One alternative could be a food hall or food incubator

Nevada County Courthouse Location in Proximity to Historic Retail Buildings



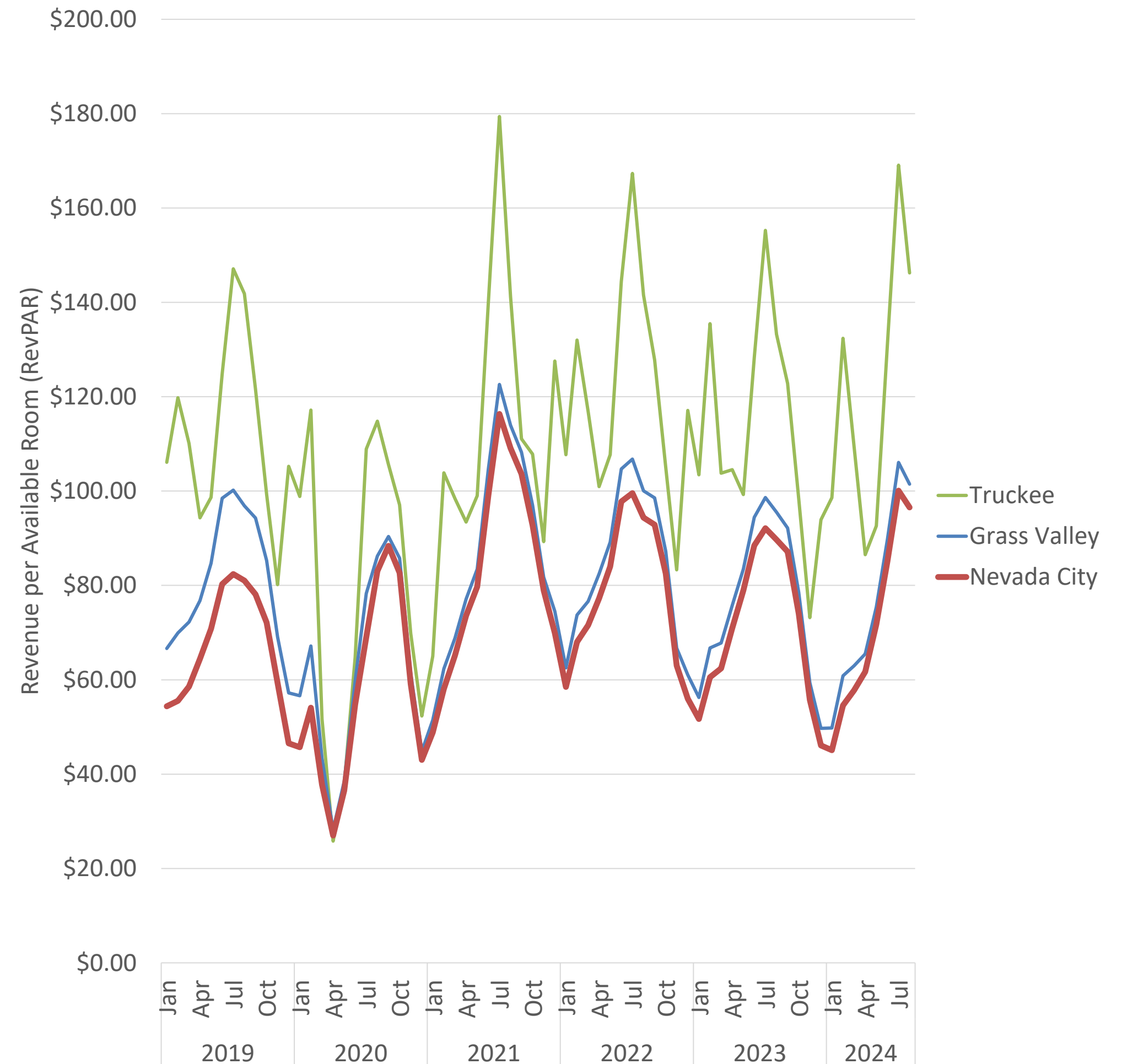
- Nevada City Historical District
- Nevada County Superior Court
- Legacy Retail/Mixed Use Buildings

Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

HOSPITALITY OUTLOOK

- Nevada City hotel demand dips significantly during the winter
- Nevada City hotels command lower rates than Truckee hotels.
- Overall, demand for hotels in Nevada City has increased compared to pre-pandemic conditions.
- Stakeholders indicate that Nevada City may be able to support additional hotel rooms.
- However, Nevada City is not a strong draw for business trips or corporate groups, and there is not much demand for new event space.

Nevada County Hotel RevPAR by City, 2019 to 2024



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

OTHER USES OVERVIEW

"Other Uses" are those that would use their space to support a mission or function, rather than to make a return on invested capital.

These uses would need an operator or project sponsor to lead the re-use effort

The other uses analyzed in this section include the following:

- Government Offices
- Nonprofit Offices
- Museum
- Educational Institution
- Medical Office or Hospital
- Recreation Facility
- Wellness Center



OTHER USES OUTLOOK

Government Offices

- No clear source of demand for government uses.

Nonprofit Offices

- Similar outlook as any other office use.

Educational Institution

- Private: would need significant financial investment
- Public: would take significant time
- Either: would likely need to see population growth.



OTHER USES OUTLOOK

Hospital or Physician Office

- Building re-use would require significant expense; would prefer greenfield site

Wellness or Other Medical Office

- More adaptable to courthouse building
- Unlikely to require substantial space

Recreation Facility

- Could attract visitors
- Not suited to the layout and dimensions of the building



DRIVING SITE USES

WHAT LAND USE COULD BE FINANCIAL DRIVERS OF COURTHOUSE REDEVELOPMENT?

Two uses identified as possible site drivers.

HOUSING

Pros

- Strong local and regional demand
- Could bring workforce, weekday shoppers to downtown

Cons

May be difficult to match with re-use of existing building

Possible Product Types

Senior Housing; Market Rate Multifamily

HOTEL

Pros

- Some recent growth in hotel demand
- Unique use for historic building

Cons

Mixed evidence for demand from market perspective

Possible Product Types

Hotel & Health Spa; Hotel on just courthouse portion



SUPPORTIVE SITE USES

WHAT LAND USE COULD BE SUPPORTIVE OR SECONDARY USES ON THE SITE?

FOOD INCUBATOR/MARKET

Description

- Mixed-use building w/ food production & market facilities
- Unique retail alternative to attract visitors

Outlook

Would require public private partnership

Would need an operator and public champion

WELLNESS OR MEDICAL OFFICE

Description

- Small offices for wellness providers or non-physician health
- Could be paired with hospitality or other use

Outlook

Questions about adaptability to current building, overall demand

MUSEUM OR NON-PROFIT USE

Description

- A small portion of the site: museum or non-profit community center facility
- Could be paired with hospitality or housing

Outlook

Unclear – lack of a project sponsor

MARKET FINDINGS SUMMARY

KEY FINDING: Housing is the highest and best use for the courthouse site.

- There is strong local and regional demand for housing.

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

- A hotel use could be viable, but it might be difficult to find a willing developer for this use.
- Market, wellness, or non-profit uses would only be successful as secondary or supportive uses on the site





IDENTIFY A RANGE
OF OPTIONS:

ARCHITECTURAL
REVIEW

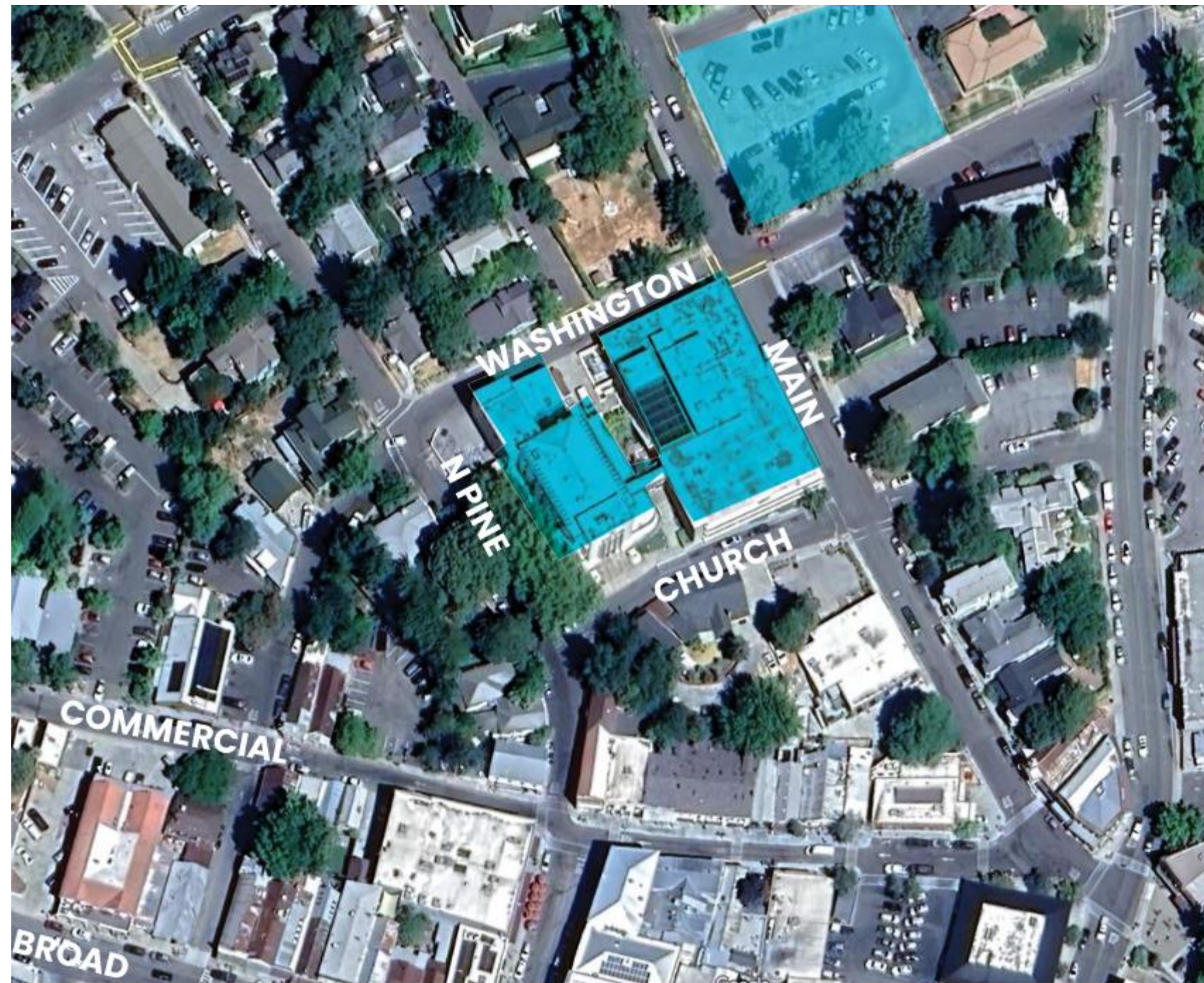
06

EXISTING SITE

Description

The Courthouse is located at 201 Church Street and is flanked by North Pine Street to the west and Main Street to the east. Washington Street flanks the north side of the building.

The accompanying parking lot is at the northeast side of Washington Street and Main Street.



Nevada County Courthouse



View of Annex from Church Street



The site's steep terrain creates accessibility challenges



No building setbacks from residential uses.

EXISTING SITE

SITE SETBACKS

17.40.060 Development standards.

Setbacks: The following minimum requirements shall be observed in the GB zone except where increased for conditional uses:

- A. Lot area for single-family dwellings and multiple dwellings same as in the R2 zone;
- B. Front yard, none;
- C. Side Yards.
 - 1. Interior, none, except when abutting residential zones, then not less than nine feet,
 - 2. Corner, none, except when abutting residential zones, then not less than nine feet;
- D. Rear yard, none, except when abutting residential zones, then not less than nine feet.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is the measurement of a building's floor area in relation to the size of the lot/parcel that the building(s) is/are located on. FAR is expressed as a decimal number, and is derived by dividing the total area of the building by the total area of the parcel (building area + lot area).

Floor Area Ratio: No language can be found in the Nevada City Zoning Ordinance that limits the FAR in a GB Zone.

Any single-family lot within the R1 and/or RR zoning designations may be developed with an area not exceed a floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.5.

N.C. Municipal Code 17.09.010 – Limitations on development.

No more than thirty-five (35) residential units whether single-family or multifamily shall be approved on any one (1) parcel of property or on two (2) or more parcels of property adjacent to each other and under the same ownership within any twelve (12) month period. Applications will be accepted for development of over thirty-five (35) units on the same parcel of property or on two (2) or more parcels of property under the same ownership within twelve (12) months of each other but no more than thirty-five (35) units shall be approved during any twelve (12) month period. However, more than thirty-five (35) units may be approved by the city council if a finding is made that it will be in the public good to approve additional units in light of all the circumstances of the project and will promote the public health, safety or welfare.



EXISTING SITE

TOPOGRAPHY & HEIGHT

- **Height:** The height regulation is maximum forty feet.

"Height of building" means the vertical distance measured from the average level of the highest and lowest point of that portion of the lot covered by the building to the topmost point of the roof excluding chimneys, elevators, ventilation and air-condition equipment and parapet walls."

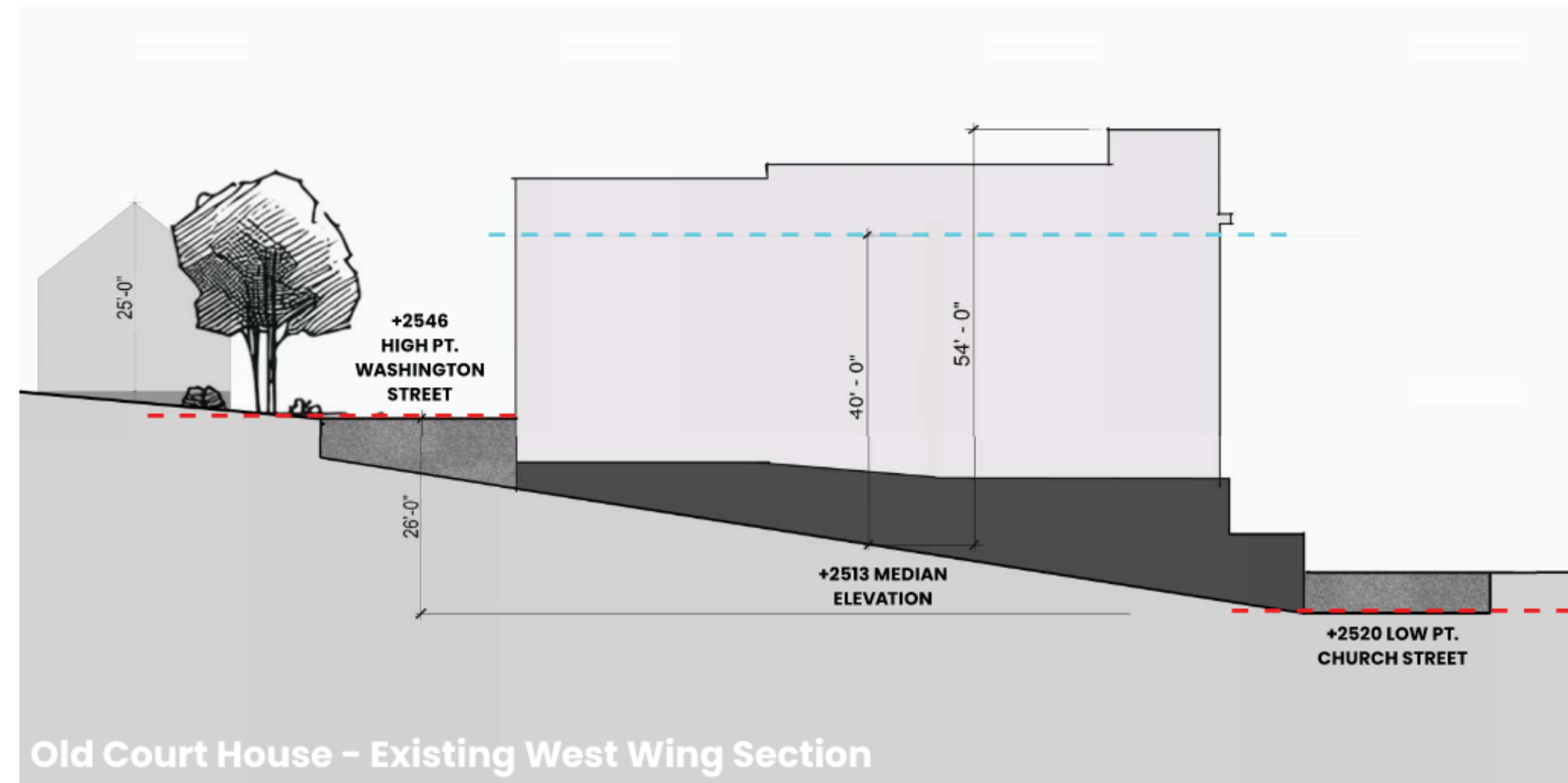
The existing Courthouse and Annex building are located on a full city block, with North Pine Street west of the building, Washington Street to the north, Main Street to the east, and Church Street to the south. The site is located on moderately **steep terrain**, generally **sloping from north to south**.

Based on an aerial topographic survey provided by the Nevada City Engineering Department, the high point of Washington Street is approximately an elevation of 2,546 feet above mean sea level, located near the midpoint of the Courthouse site. Washington Street drains east and west towards Main and North Pine Streets.

North Pine Street slopes north to south, dropping approximately 21 feet to an elevation of approximately 2,520 feet near the southwest corner of the site.

Main Street slopes north to south with an elevation drop of approximately 24 feet to an elevation of 2,519 feet, near the southeast corner of the site.

Church Street drains east and west, with a high point at elevation 2,529 feet located near the Courthouse entry. The street drops approximately 10 feet from the high point to the adjacent intersections.



EXISTING SITE

PARKING EXPANSION

The remote surface parking lot can be considered for parking as-is. Structured parking could be built on site or it could be used as additional development space.



APPROACH TO TESTING THE SITE

WE LOOKED AT A WIDE RANGE OF OPTIONS



Minor Intervention



Demo Courthouse



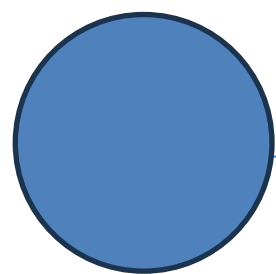
Demo Annex



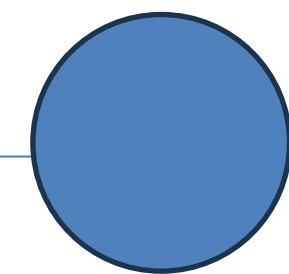
Keep Tower Only



Demolish All



Minor Changes



Major Changes

DEVELOP OPTIONS

APARTMENT UNIT TEMPLATE

Standard apartment unit sizes were used to develop the options for the site test fits. These standard “blocks” have flexibility but illustrate a reasonable apartment layout for different unit sizes.



1 BR 26' X 32': 832 SF

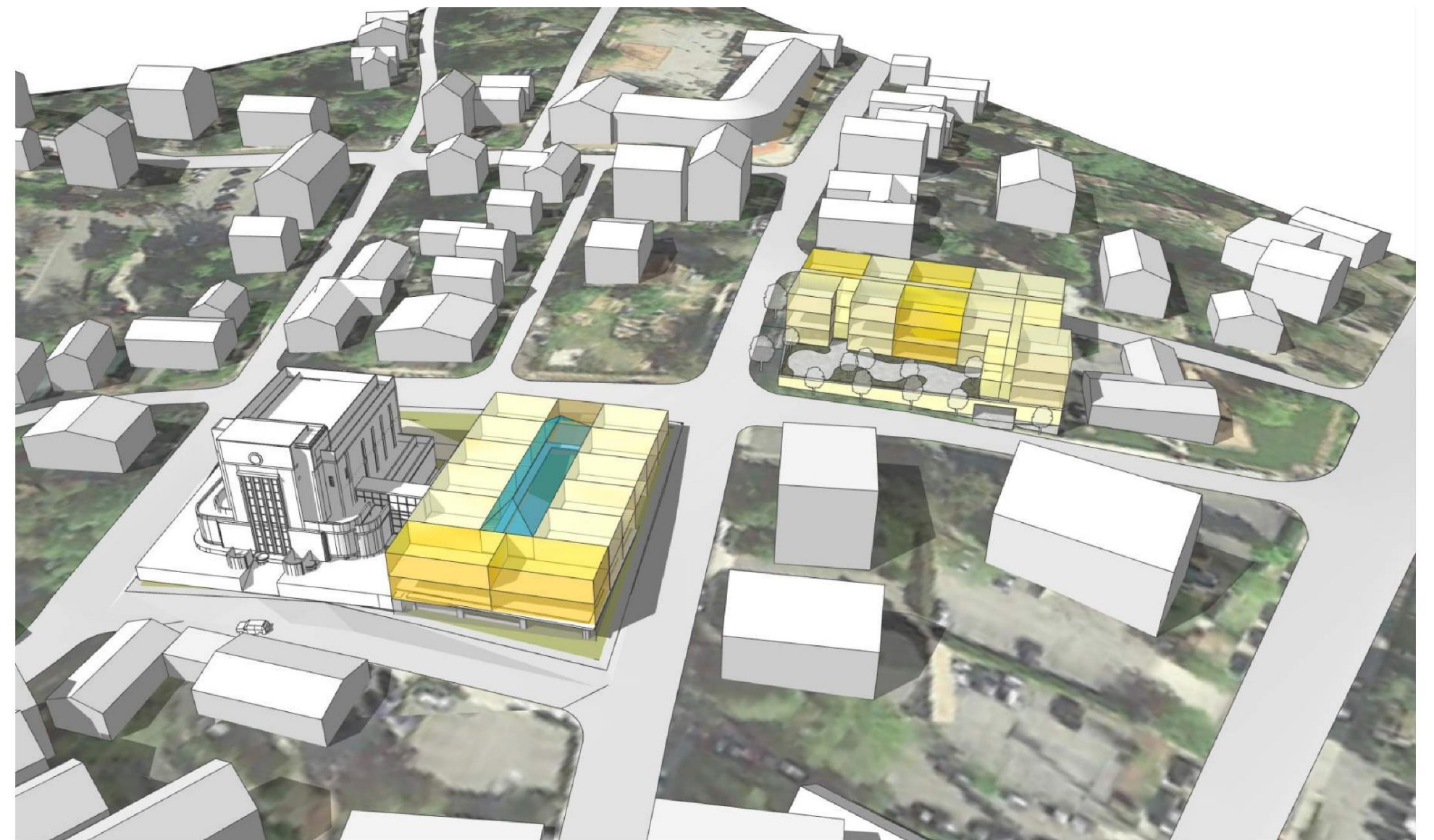
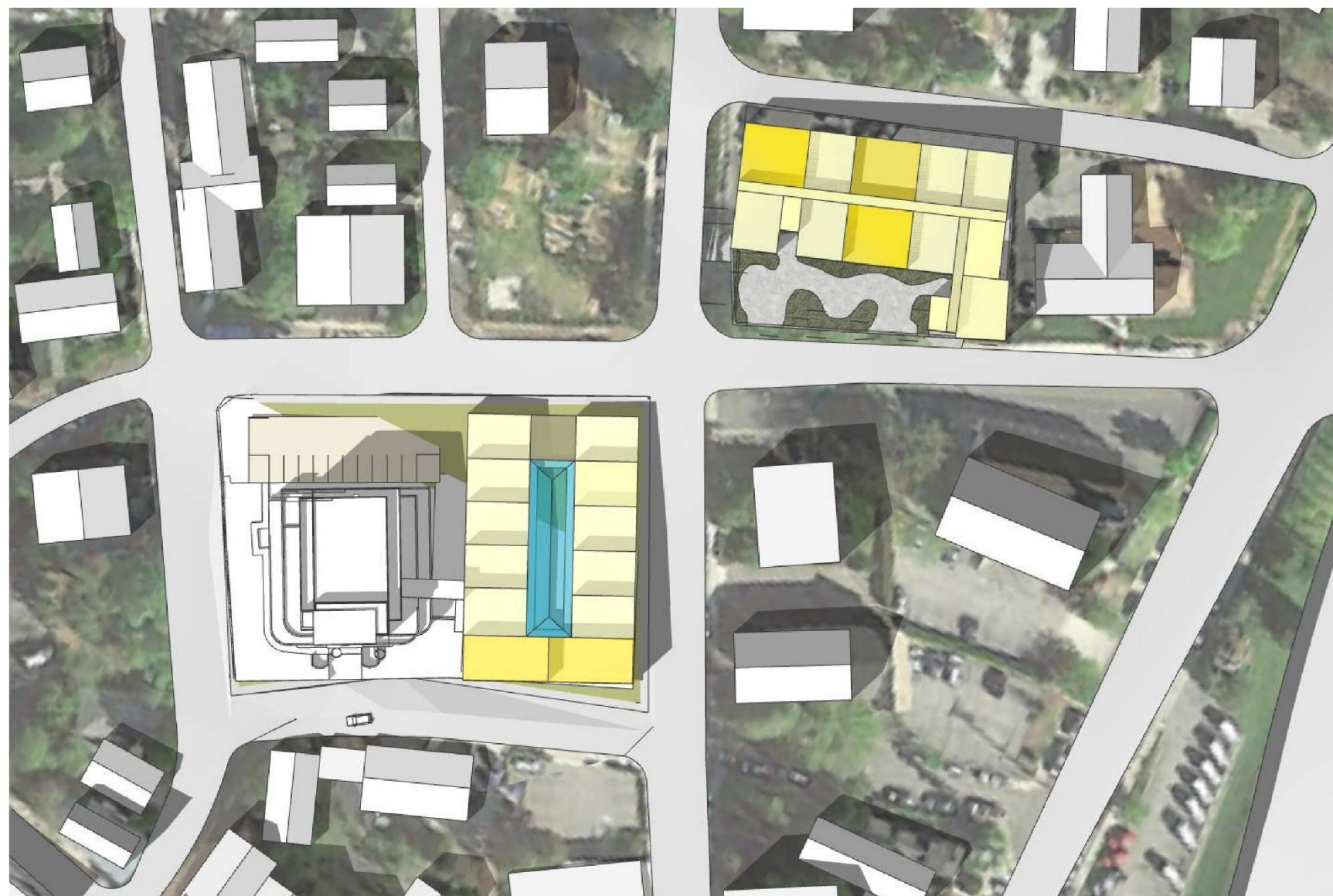


2 BR 36' X 32': 1152 SF

DEVELOP OPTIONS

SITE TEST FIT OPTIONS

Using the standard unit sizes developed, we studied many different configurations. We looked to maximize the number of units but needed to balance that with providing the appropriate number of parking spaces. This option shows remodeling both structures into apartment units. Additionally, we looked at building apartments on the adjacent parking lot.



DEVELOP OPTIONS

SITE TEST FIT OPTIONS

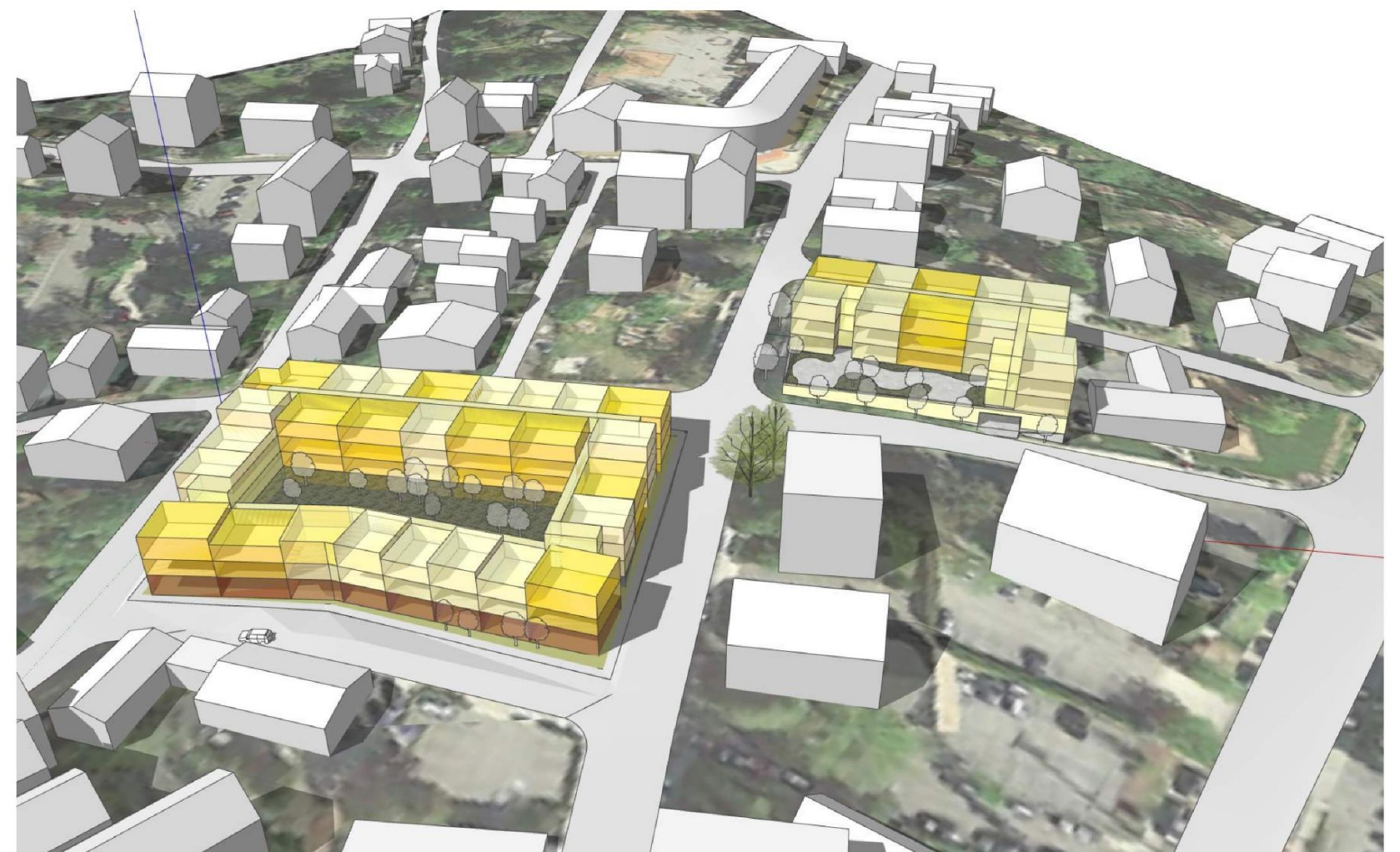
This option shows remodeling the existing courthouse into apartments and demolishing the Annex building and replacing with apartments. This diagram shows the adjacent parking lot being used for apartments.



DEVELOP OPTIONS

SITE TEST FIT OPTIONS

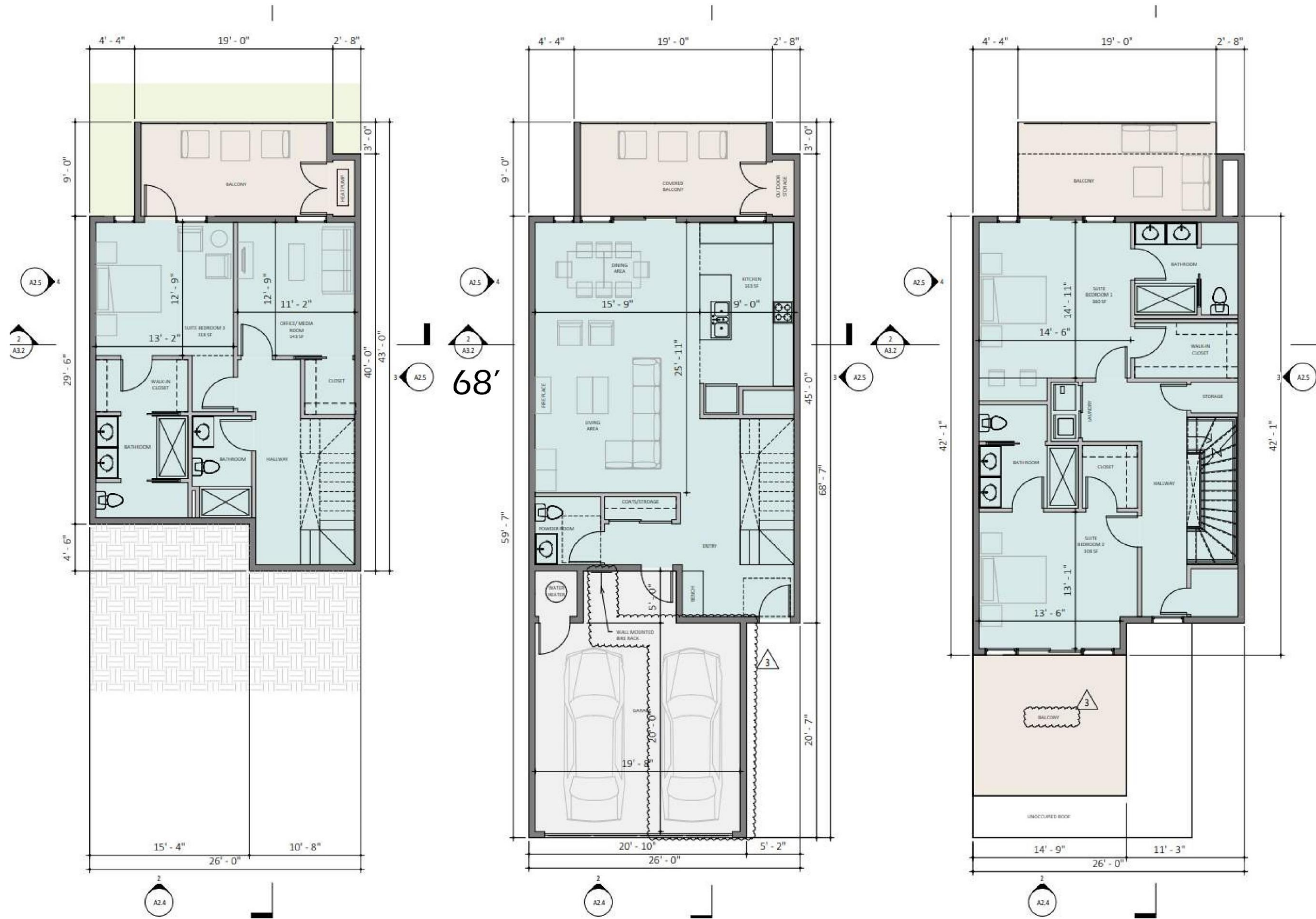
This option shows demolishing all structures and replacing with new apartments.



DEVELOP OPTIONS

TOWNHOUSE UNIT TEMPLATE

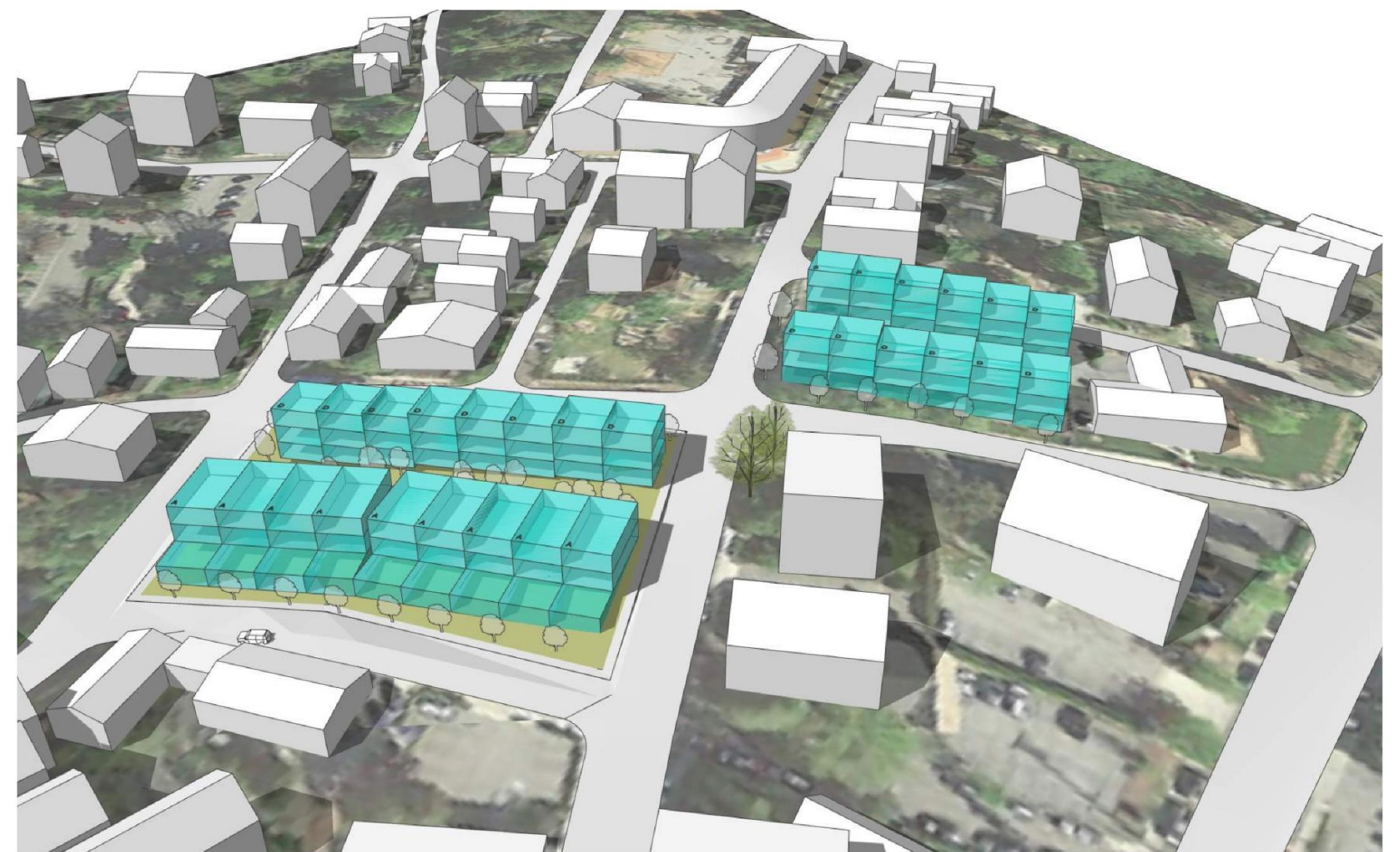
In addition to apartments, we looked at townhouses. Standard townhouse unit sizes were used to develop the options for the site test fits. These standard “blocks” have flexibility but illustrate a reasonable apartment layout for different unit sizes.



DEVELOP OPTIONS

SITE TEST FIT OPTIONS

This option shows demolishing all structures and replacing with townhouses. Townhouses turned out to be the least financially viable option and were dropped out of consideration.





COMMUNITY MEETINGS

07

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Meeting Description

The NELSON team and Steering Committee Members meet with the community two times during the development of the study. The first meeting was to listen to their thoughts about the Courthouse site and its reuse. Although there was not 100% consensus within the feedback, there was enough general agreement to incorporate community feedback into the Study. The team presented and received feedback on:

- The overall project goals developed with the Steering Committee (as described within this study).
- The approach to determining the Highest and Best Use (as described within this study).
- Preliminary Market Analysis feedback.
- Architectural approach to the Study.

The second meeting was to share the results of the NELSON team's analysis, get feedback, and explain next steps, including the publication of this Study.



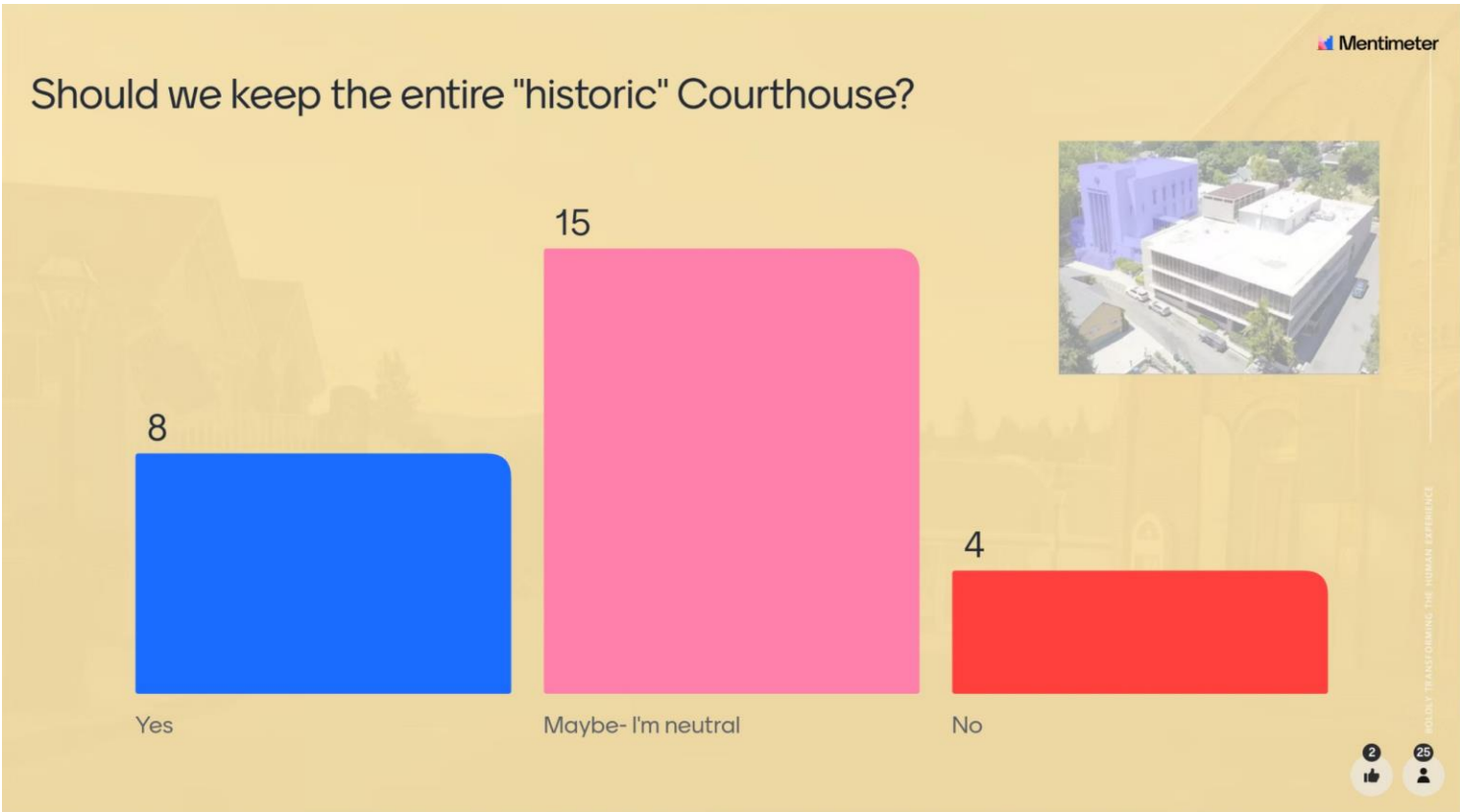
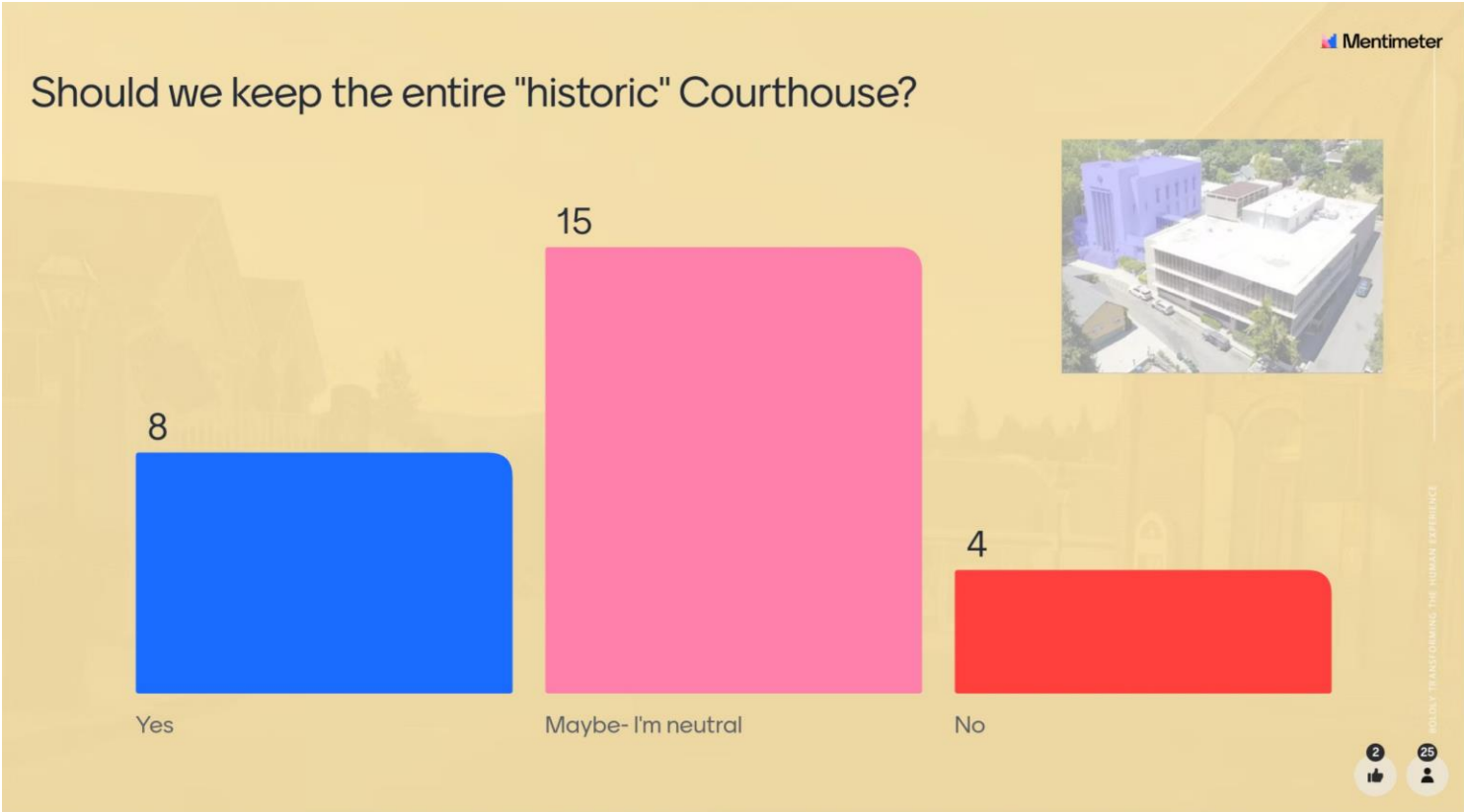
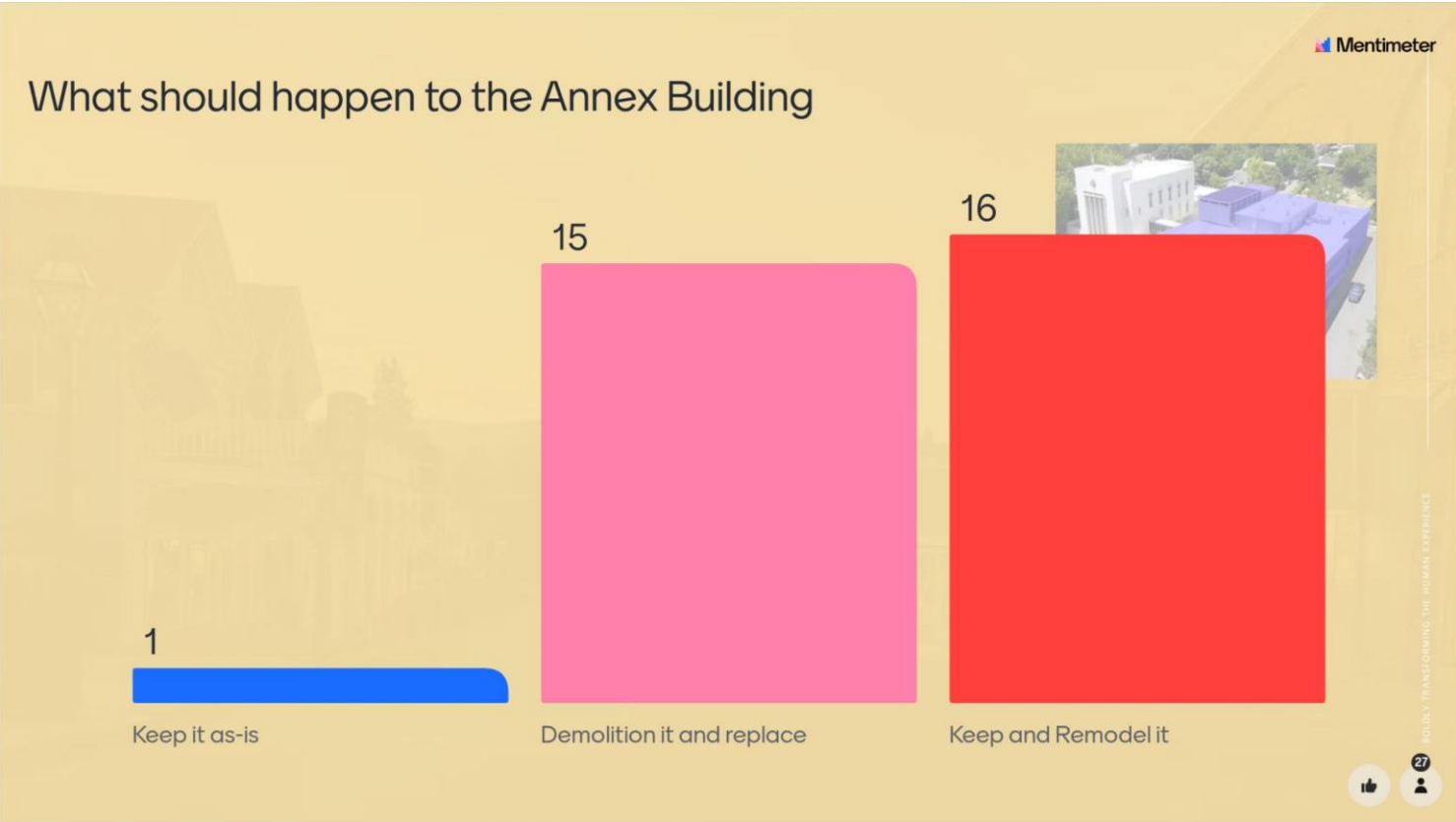
Community Key Elements

- Feasibility is key
- Keep historic courthouse if possible - but not necessary
- Community wants meaningful input on the future development
- Project should provide some benefit to the community
- Housing possibly mixed with another use is preferred

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Selected Survey Results

The community was provided and responded to various survey questions. Here are a few of the results. The entire survey is included in the Study’s Appendix.



COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Selected Survey Results



NARROW DOWN OPTIONS

08

SELECTED OPTIONS

APPROACH – LOOKING AT ALL ALTERNATIVES



Minor
Intervention



Demo
Courthouse



Demo Annex



Keep Tower Only



Demolish All

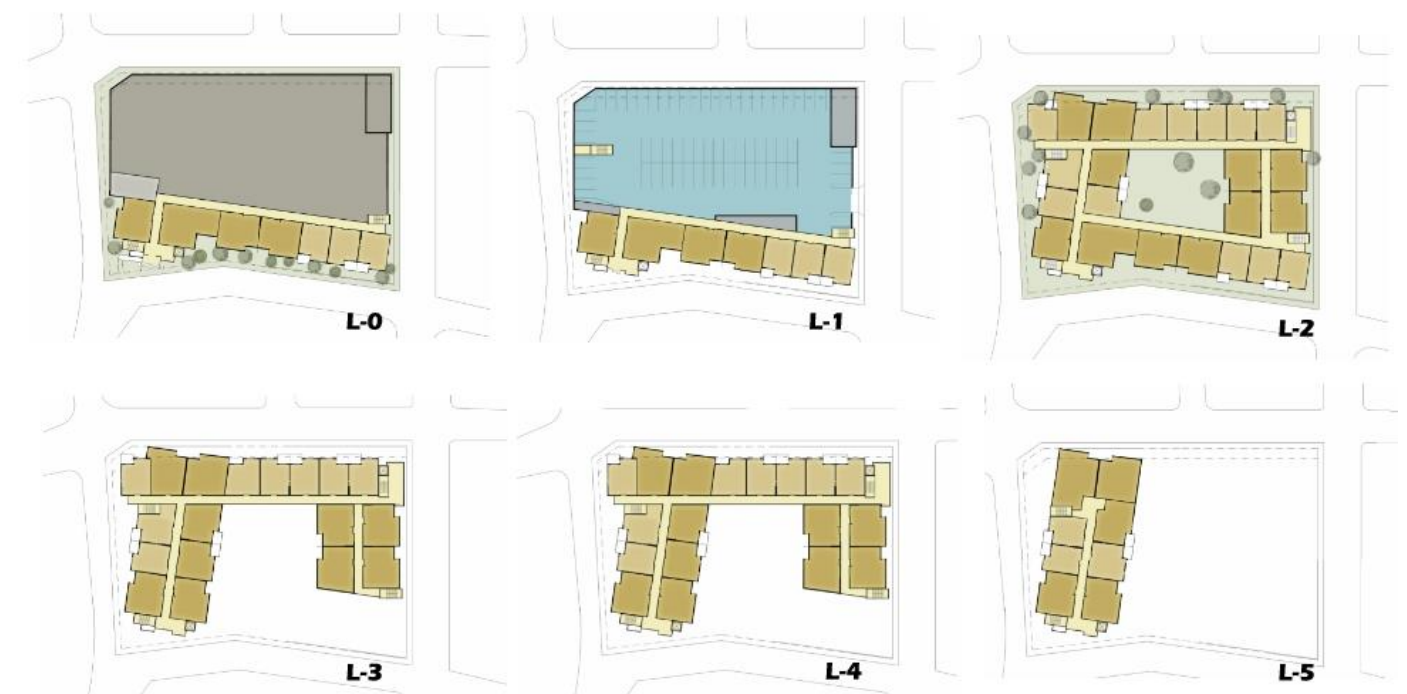


Although we studied more options than is indicated here. This graphic illustrates the range of options we investigated.

EACH OPTION – TYPICAL APPROACH



For each option, we modeled the concept, including floor plans to determine total units and types of units (1 BR, 2 BR, etc.) The options include ample parking for the complex. This concept is used to develop a high-level cost estimate and pro forma, which determines financial feasibility.



OPTION 1

HISTORIC TOWER



Option 1 studies keeping only the existing courthouse tower and demolishing the courthouse itself (behind the tower) and the annex building. New construction would take place on the remaining available site.

OPTION 2

NEW TOWER



Option 2 demolishes all existing buildings and then builds new apartments on the site. The existing tower would be replaced by a new tower that doesn't replicate the design but provides similar massing.

OPTION 3

DOUGHNUT



Option 3 demolishes all existing building and then builds new apartments on the site as efficiently as possible.

OPTION 4

RE-USE ANNEX



Option 4 keeps the Courthouse (mostly) intact and renovates the existing Annex Building into apartments.

OPTION 5

REPLACE ANNEX



Option 5 keeps the Courthouse (mostly) intact, demolishes the Annex Building and builds new apartments on the former Annex site.

Cost & Feasibility Analysis

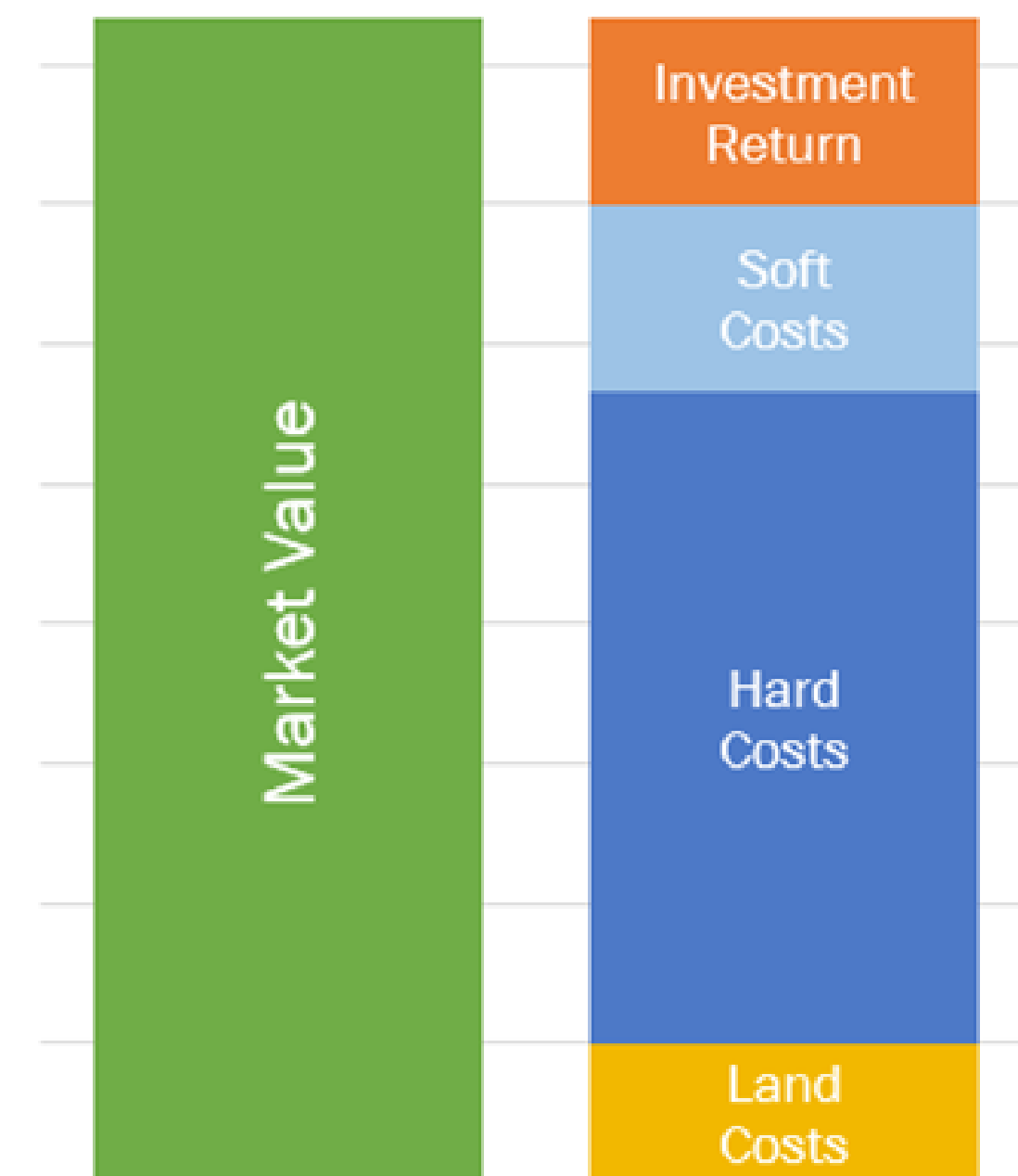
APPROACH

- Estimate project costs using independent cost estimator and comparable project costs provided by developers and contractors.
- Estimate project value using current market rents and capitalization rates.
- Build pro forma model to evaluate costs and value.
- Use sensitivity analysis to generate high and low estimates for costs and value.

Basics of Measuring Project Feasibility

- Development projects are financially feasible when revenues exceed project costs, including investment return.
- Developers only build when projects “pencil” (are financially feasible).
- Costs and revenues are dynamic.

Figure 1: Evaluating Real Estate Project Feasibility



Projected Construction Hard Costs

Hard Construction Costs

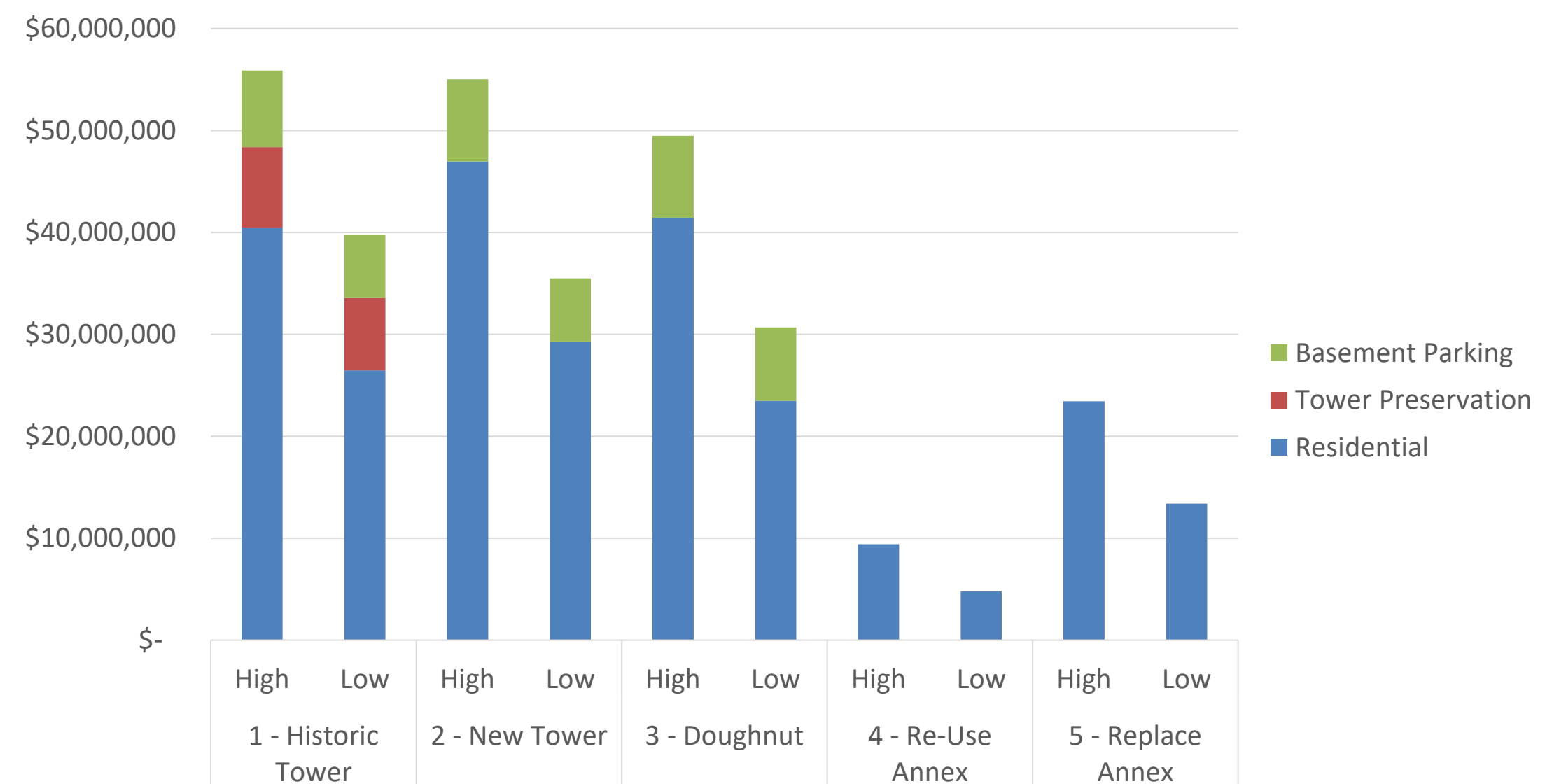
Includes:

- Underground Parking
- Tower Preservation (Option 1)
- New Residential Construction
- Two cost estimates:
 - High: Detailed Cost Estimate
 - Low: Rough average of similar prior projects in the Bay Area

Takeaways

- Historic Tower most expensive
- All options would cost at least \$30 million, not including demolition, soft costs (architecture & engineering, fees, financing), etc.

Figure 2: Project Hard Cost Estimates



Sources: MGAC, 2025; Developer & General Contractor Interviews, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2025.

Note: Options 4 and 5 were not included in detailed cost estimates. High costs for these options used assumptions from the detailed cost estimate as a guide.

Total Project Cost Estimates

Total Project Costs

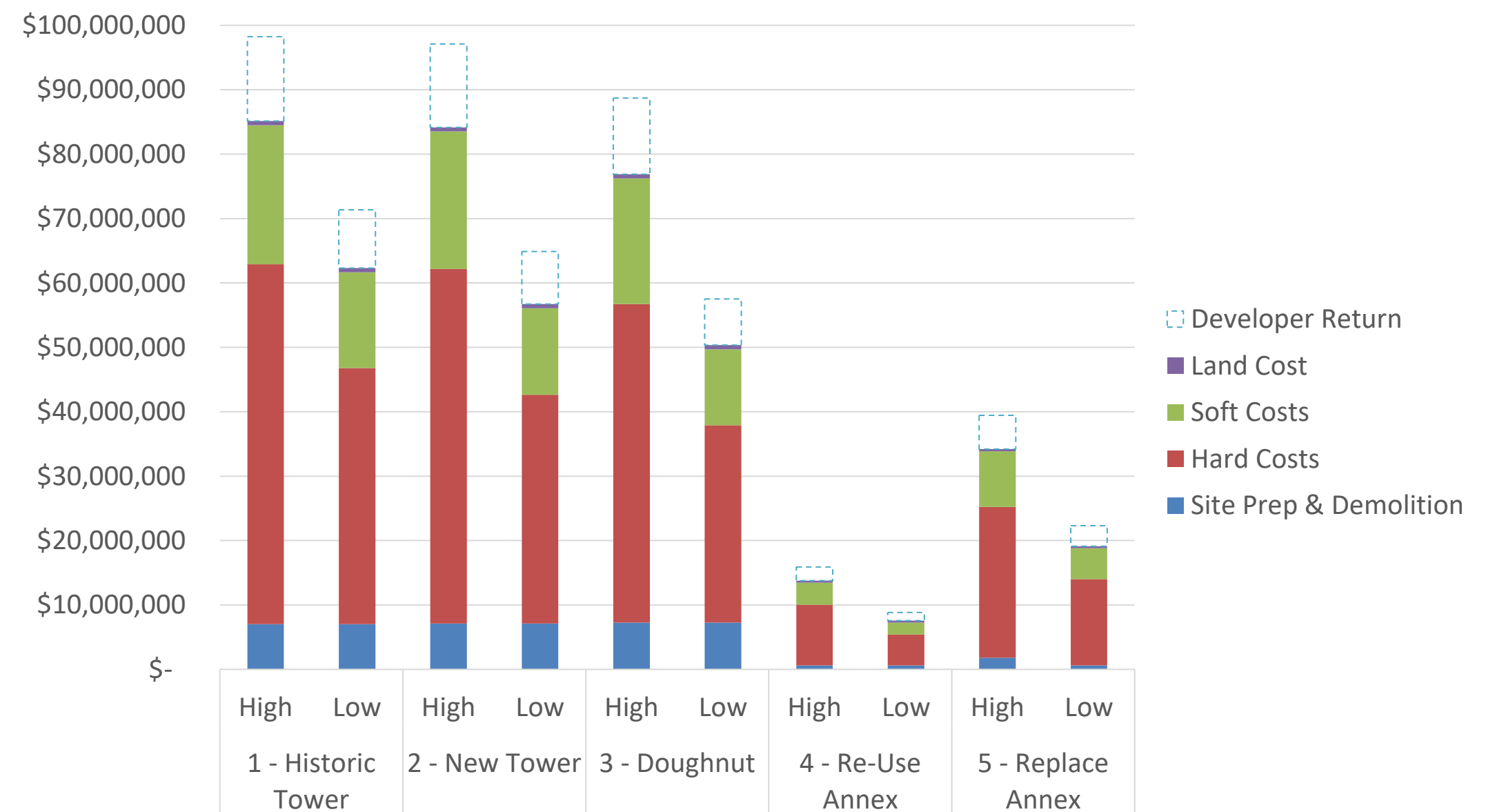
Includes:

- Site Prep & Demolition
- Hard Costs
- Soft Costs: Architecture, Engineering, Taxes, Fees, Legal, & Financing Costs
- Land Costs
- Developer Return (modeled based on current interest rates & standards for return on investment)

Takeaways

- In today's environment, it is very hard to accurately estimate construction costs, so costs are shown as a range.
- Costs will change in 5 years, but it's hard to say how: interest rates, construction costs, return expectations all fluctuate.

Figure 3: Total Project Cost Estimates



Sources: MGAC, 2025; Developer & General Contractor Interviews, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2025.

Total Project Value Estimates

Total Project Value

Includes:

- Gross revenue from rent
- Lost rent due to vacancy
- Annual operating costs
- Projected “capitalized value” or sale price of property based on annual net operating income

Figure 4: Total Project Value Calculations

	1 - Historic Tower		2 - New Tower		3 - Doughnut		4 - Re-Use Annex		5 - Replace Annex	
	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
Annual Revenue										
Gross Rent	\$2,158,800	\$1,730,400	\$2,312,100	\$1,848,000	\$2,143,800	\$1,682,400	\$792,900	\$594,900	\$1,460,400	\$1,096,500
Less Vacancy	-\$107,940	-\$86,520	-\$115,605	-\$92,400	-\$107,190	-\$84,120	-\$39,645	-\$29,745	-\$73,020	-\$54,825
Less Operating Expenses	<u>-\$647,640</u>	<u>-\$519,120</u>	<u>-\$693,630</u>	<u>-\$554,400</u>	<u>-\$643,140</u>	<u>-\$504,720</u>	<u>-\$237,870</u>	<u>-\$178,470</u>	<u>-\$438,120</u>	<u>-\$328,950</u>
Net Operating Income	\$1,403,220	\$1,124,760	\$1,502,865	\$1,201,200	\$1,393,470	\$1,093,560	\$515,385	\$386,685	\$949,260	\$712,725
Total Project Value										
Cap Rate	<u>5.50%</u>	<u>6.00%</u>	<u>5.50%</u>	<u>6.00%</u>	<u>5.50%</u>	<u>6.00%</u>	<u>5.50%</u>	<u>6.00%</u>	<u>5.50%</u>	<u>6.00%</u>
Total Capitalized Value	\$25,513,091	\$18,746,000	\$27,324,818	\$20,020,000	\$25,335,818	\$18,226,000	\$9,370,636	\$6,444,750	\$17,259,273	\$11,878,750

Sources: CoStar, 2024; Apartments.com, 2024; Developer Interviews, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2025.

Notes:

Gross rent reflects a range of current market rents for similar apartment products in Nevada City, Grass Valley, and Truckee. High estimates use Truckee as a market comparison. Assumes 5% annual vacancy and 30% annual operating costs after initial stabilization period.

Total Project Costs vs. Project Value

Feasibility Outlook

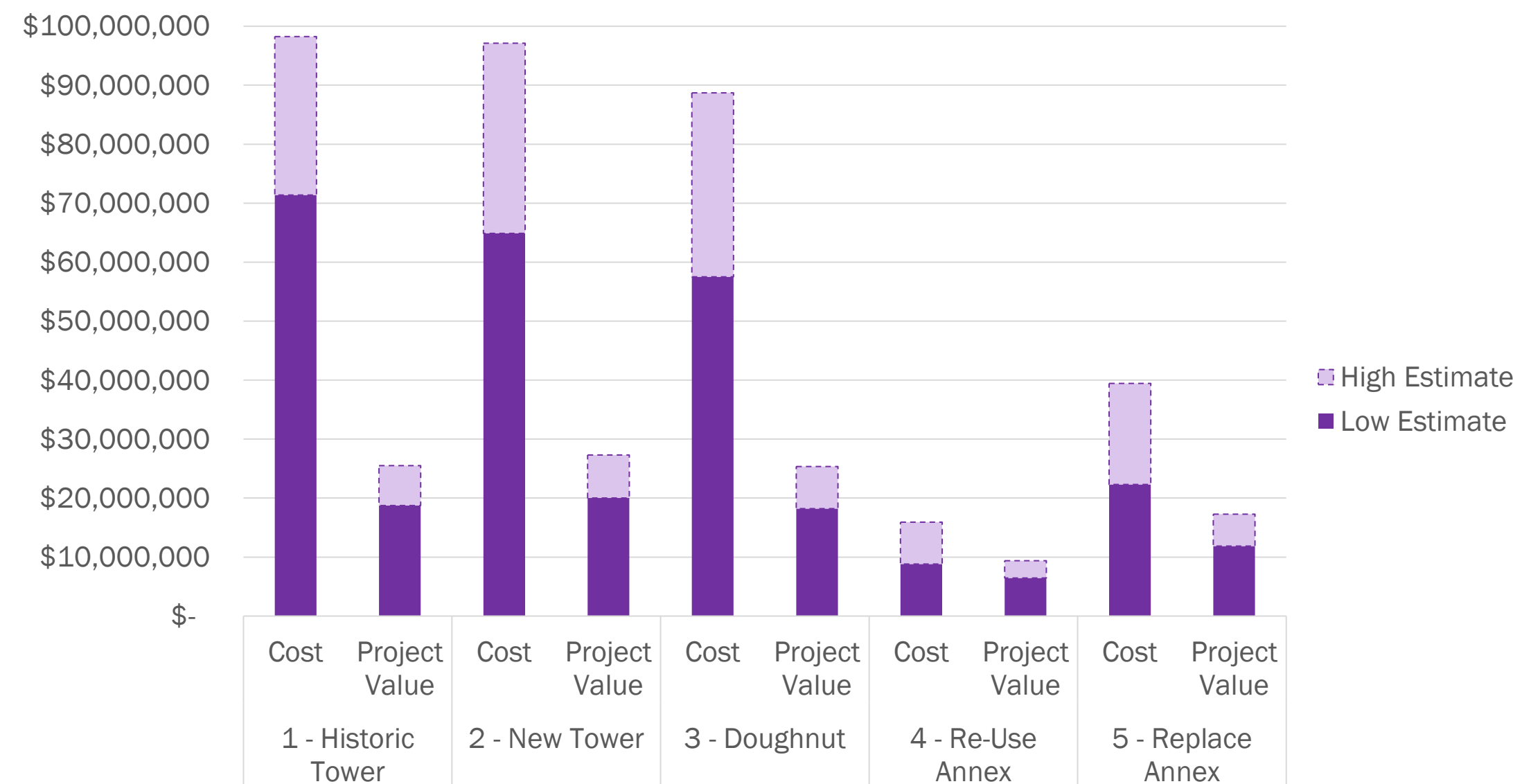
Includes:

- Site, Demolition, Hard Costs, Soft Costs, & Land
- Project Value: Net Operating Income with Current Capitalization Rates
- Developer Return

Takeaways

- These are just estimates: an actual developer might find ways to optimize the building to generate more revenue.
- Prospects might look slightly better in the future if interest rates or costs come down.
- Currently only options four and five are in the range where low costs and high project value would make projects feasible.

Figure 5: Feasibility Outlook



Sources: MGAC, 2025; Developer & General Contractor Interviews, 2024; CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2025.

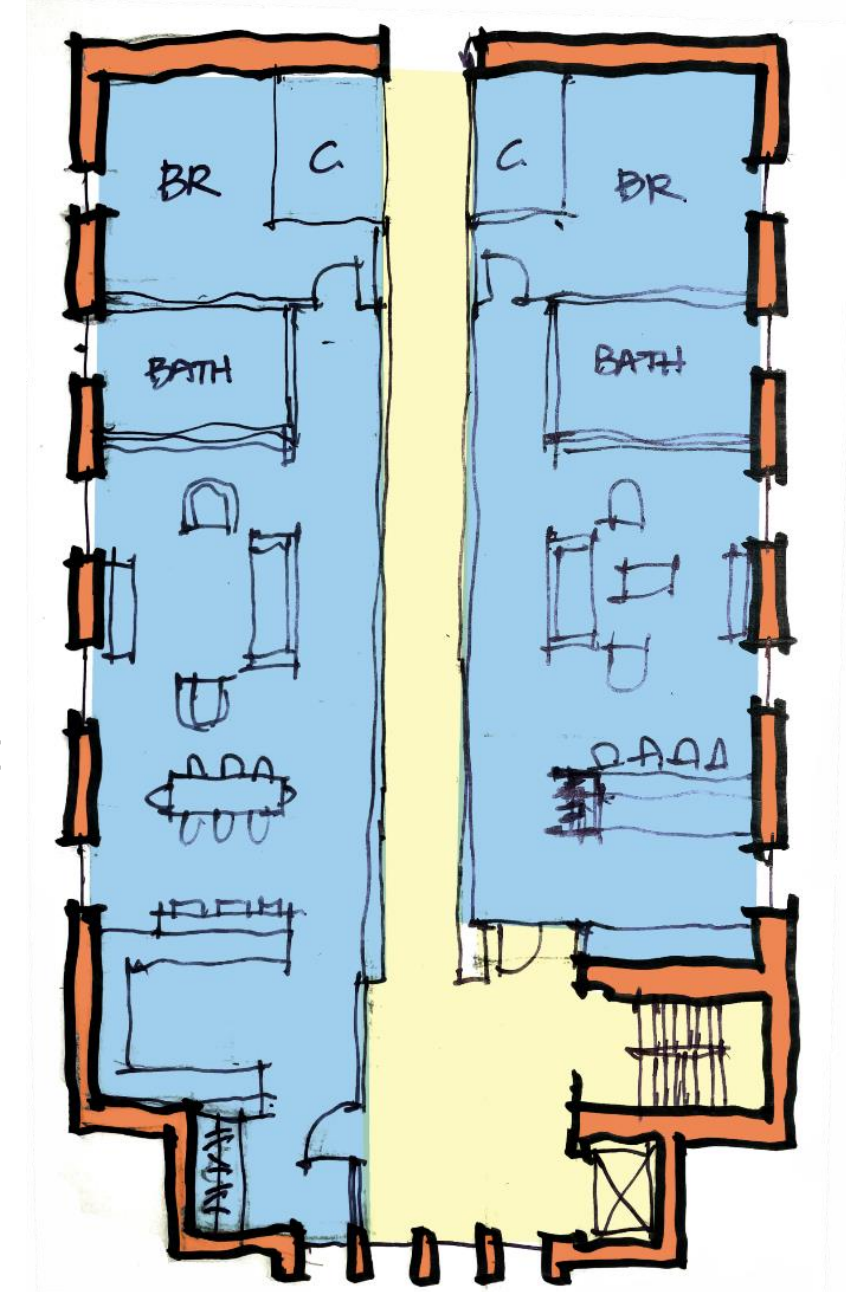


KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

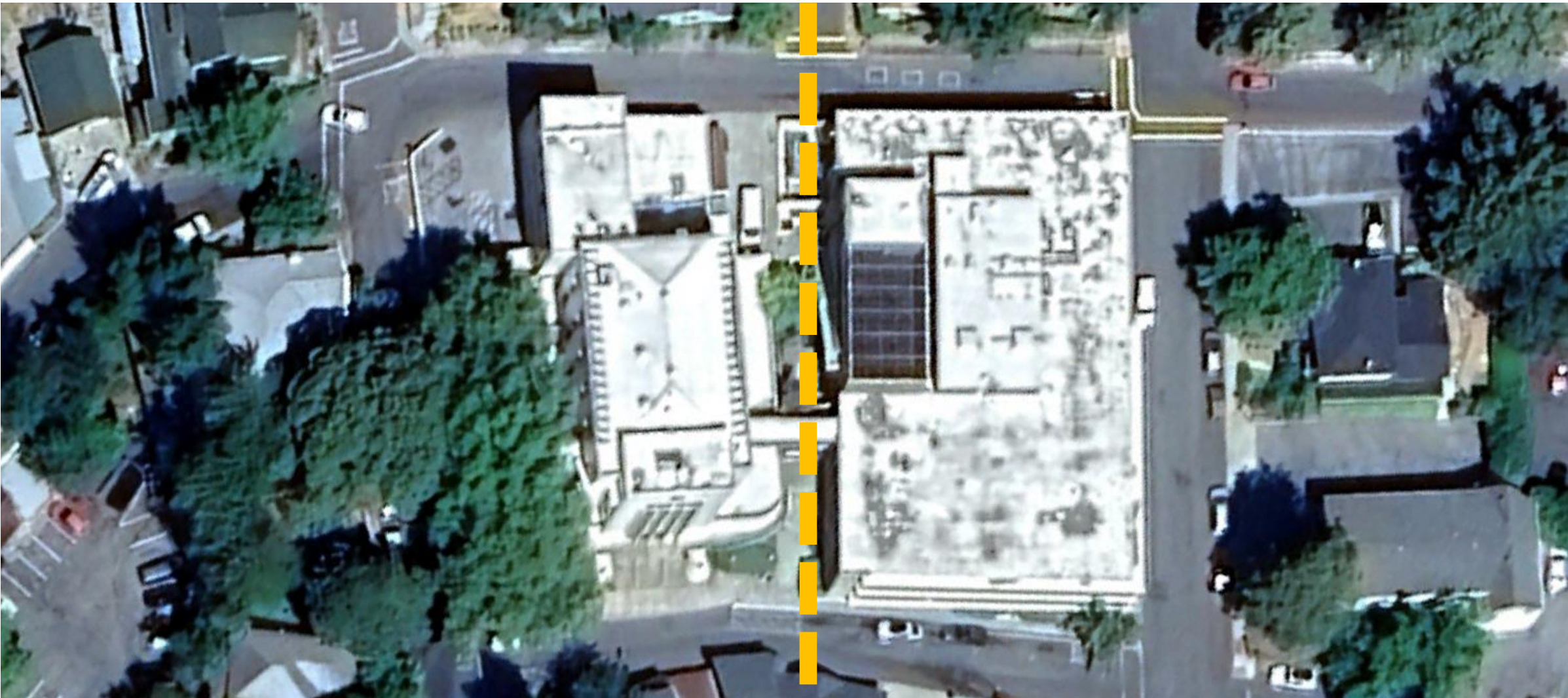
09

KEY FINDINGS

- Reusing the historic Courthouse building for housing is not financially viable because housing units cannot be efficiently laid out within the existing building envelope.
- Redeveloping the entire site, including the Courthouse and the Annex, is financially infeasible due to the site's steep slope and the cost to provide adequate parking. Underground parking would be required to accommodate this approach, however, the bedrock under the Courthouse building makes excavation for parking prohibitively expensive.
- However, the Annex building could be either adaptively reused for housing, or the portion of the site occupied by this building could be redeveloped. In either case, this would require using the parking spaces located under the existing building and, potentially, spaces on the County-owned parking lot to accommodate future development.



HIGHEST and BEST USE RECOMENDATIONS



Courthouse side:
Stabilize Building for Potential Reuse

Annex side:
Market Potential

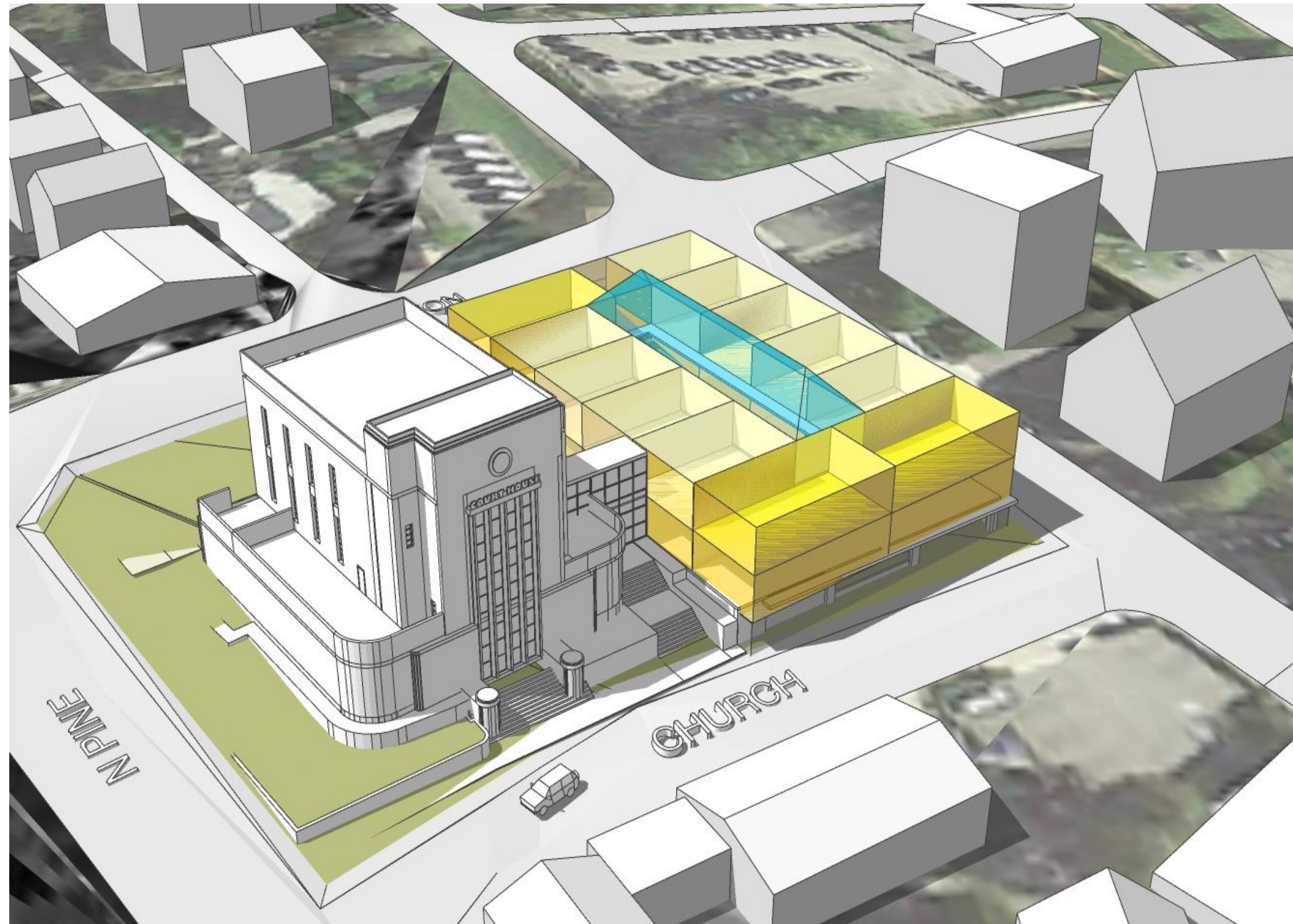
The market analysis, architectural studies, cost estimate, and pro forma examination indicate that the historic Courthouse building will be very expensive and difficult to re-use for any commercial purpose, especially housing. Demolishing the building would also be expensive and would likely only result in creating a parking, open space, or parking, none of which are consistent with community goals for this location.

However, the Annex building, where the ground level on the south end of the site has already been excavated for parking, has strong reuse or redevelopment potential, especially if the County owned parking lot could be used as dedicated parking for any future development at this site.

Recommendations:

1. Divide the current site into two parcels, one for the Courthouse and the other for the Annex building.
2. Stabilize the Courthouse building and retain it as a future community or non-profit facility.
3. Use a developer solicitation process to determine how Annex building could be reused or redeveloped for housing.

HIGHEST & BEST USE OPTIONS



Annex Reuse

Retain and reuse the Courthouse
Remodel and re-skin the existing building



Annex Redevelopment

Retain and reuse the Courthouse
Demolish the existing building and build on
new structure in its place

COMMUNITY GOALS & STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

NorthStar

A beautiful and vibrant space that is viable, sustainable and generates community pride.

The Highest & Best Use recommendation conforms to the community's wishes, goals, and feedback. The recommendation keeps the historic tower and courthouse intact and provides a feasible solution for apartments on the Annex site. The community should be kept aware of any project developments.

Community Feedback

- Feasibility is key
- Keep historic courthouse if possible – but not necessary
- Need meaningful input on the future development
- The project should benefit the community
- Housing is preferred possibly mixed with another use





GOING
FORWARD

10

NEXT STEPS for the Courthouse Site Reuse Process

Although the Courthouse and Annex building site will not become available for at least five years, the County and City can use this time to pre-position both buildings for future reuse. Having a clear strategy this early in the process will also enable the County to establish a productive working relationship with both the Judicial Council of California (JCC) and the City of Nevada City. The following provides a potential list of steps or actions the County can take to continue its forward momentum so that when the buildings do become fully under the County's control, there is no unnecessary delay in advancing each building towards its final use/reuse.

Immediate Next Steps:

- Consider entering into some type of Memorandum of Understanding or other type of agreement with the JCC to acknowledge the reuse/redevelopment strategy identified through this Highest and Best Use study that gives the County the ability to start applying for grants and to consider other funding mechanisms to pay for stabilizing the condition of the historic Courthouse building.
- As appropriate take the necessary steps to subdivide the existing Courthouse site into two individual parcels.
- Meet with the state Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to ascertain the opportunity to obtain an exemption from the Surplus Lands Act (SLA) for the historic Courthouse parcel based on the building's unsuitability for housing.
- If HCD supports the County's request, then the County and JCC should determine the process, including timing for executing the SLA exemption process for the Courthouse only. The Annex building is expected to go through the full SLA process.
- Establish an ongoing Courthouse reuse working group or steering committee composed of representatives from Nevada County and Nevada City to perform the following tasks:
 - Assess the Courthouse building to determine the cost to stabilize and secure the building so that after court related activities are relocated, the building does not continue to deteriorate. Building stabilization also allows for the possibility that the building may remain vacant for an extended period of time but could be reused as funds become available.
 - Work to identify an entity to manage the long-term Courthouse reuse, including working with the community to establish a new entity to take on this role.
 - Begin raising funds to support the entity and/or the building reuse retrofit process through grants and other sources.



THANK YOU.

NEVADA COUNTY COURTHOUSE HIGHEST AND BEST USE STUDY

FINAL REPORT
March 1, 2025

NELSON



STRATEGICECONOMICS



APPENDICES

Summary of NCC Reports
NCC Market Study
Residential Floor Plan Studies
Community Meeting 1 Meeting Minutes
A Grassroots Proposition
Community Emails, Letters, Reports

11

Summary of June 9, 2022

“NEW NEVADA
CITY COURTHOUSE
PLANNING STUDY”

for The Judicial Council of California

01

CONTEXT
BACKGROUND

On June 9, 2022 the Judicial Council of California published the “New Nevada County Courthouse Planning Study”. The purpose of the Study was to “analyze the feasibility and compare the advantages and disadvantages of three options for the Nevada County Superior Court in Nevada County. The first option (i) analyzes the the feasibility of renovating the existing Nevada County Courthouse...”. The analysis of the existing building provides our team with some valuable information and insight into the conditions of the existing buildings and site infrastructure. The following is the NELSON design team’s summary of the report. Please note, the majority of the following summary are direct quotes from the report.

EXISTING BUILDING FINDINGS

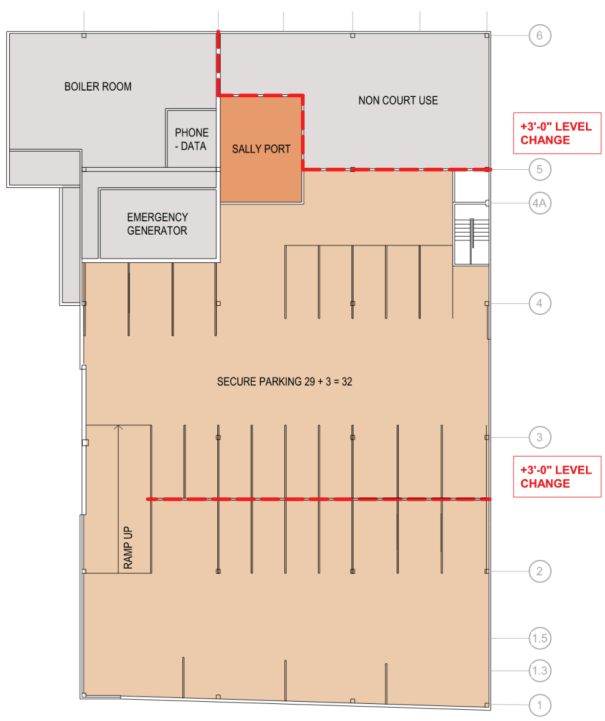
The Nevada County Courthouse was constructed in phases over a hundred-year period from 1864 to 1964. Following original construction in 1864, the courthouse underwent several additions and alterations between 1868 and 1913 before it was thoroughly remodeled by the architect George C. Sellon in 1937, with funding from the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The annex was designed by the architecture firm Mau & Barnum and constructed in 1964 to provide additional space for County offices and the jail. During a site visit in February 2022, the Team confirmed that the courthouse does not convey its exterior or interior pre-1937 appearance, but does retain the vast majority of exterior materials, many interior features, and some spatial arrangement from the 1937 remodel. At the Annex, exterior building materials appear largely unchanged from the 1964 construction, and the interior, including more commonplace materials and finishes in line with its office use, has undergone some alterations but retains some spatial arrangement and features from its original construction.

ARCHITECTURE
SITE CONDITIONS

The Courthouse is located at 201 Church Street and is flanked by North Pine Street to the west and Main Street to the east. Washington Street flanks the north side of the building. The Courthouse is located on a steep terrain, which negatively impacts site access for able and non-able-bodied persons. There is insufficient parking adjacent to or on-site for users.

BUILDING CONDITIONS

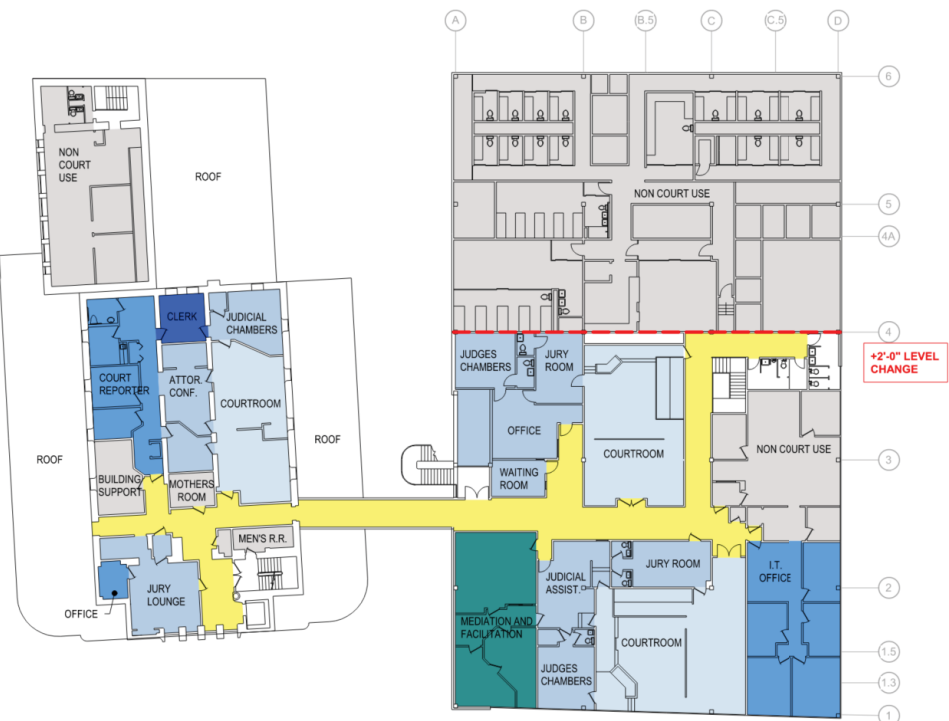
The courthouse and annex are comprised of three stories and two stories, respectively. Level 1 includes the clerk’s offices, two courtrooms, judicial chambers, administration spaces, law library, and a central holding area. Level 2 houses three courtrooms, judicial chambers, mediation and facilitation, conference rooms, offices, and the I.T. Department. Level 3 includes one courtroom, judicial chambers, and offices. The court occupies a little over a third of the space in existing buildings, with the balance being underutilized or shared by Nevada County programs. The Court’s current space is considered unsafe and functionally deficient. Operational challenges include severe safety concerns associated with seismic deficiencies, non-compliance with ADA standards, and no sprinkler system.



Existing Plan - Lower Level



Existing Plan - Level 1



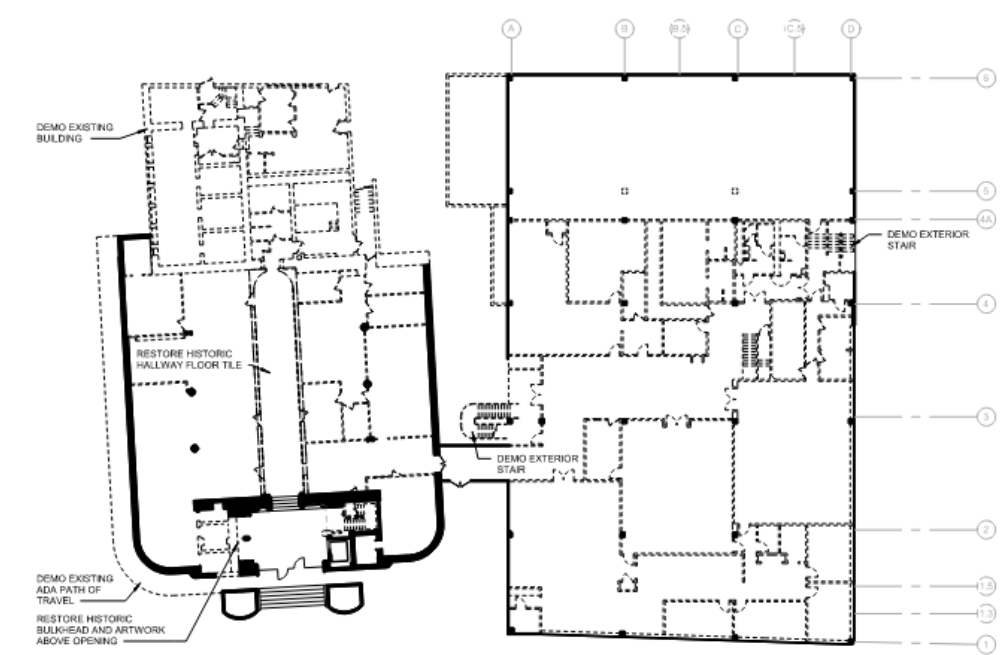
Existing Plan - Level 2



Existing Plan - Level 3

OPTION 1
ARCHITECTURE

After exploring various alternatives, the Team determined that a complete renovation of both the existing Courthouse building and Annex is the most viable approach for this option. The structural system and building envelope will be retained. The remaining spaces within both buildings will be demolished and replaced, including interior walls and buildings systems. Due to the irregular layout and sub-optimal functionality of the northern-most portion of the existing Courthouse building, the Team determined that the most cost-effective and functional solution is to demolish that portion of the building and replace it with new construction.



Demolition Plan

SITE

The site for Option 1 improves upon the existing Courthouse conditions. Washington Street will be closed off to vehicular traffic and open to emergency vehicles. The path of travel for non-able-bodied persons is indicated along the west of the site along North Pine Street. Vehicular access to Secure Parking is to the east of the site on Main Street.

BUILDING MASSING

The building massing for Option 1 is nearly identical to the existing Courthouse conditions with the exception of the northern-most portion of the existing Courthouse building, which is a hybrid 1-level/3-level building. Option 1 replaces this portion of the existing Courthouse building with a new 3-level building of a similar footprint.



Site Diagram



Axonometric Massing Diagram

FLOOR PLANS

The path of travel for non-able-bodied persons is indicated along the west of the site and leads to an additional entryway parallel to the main entrance. The existing Courthouse building is linked to the annex via the existing corridor.

The Level 1 Annex is organized into a horizontal layer of program and circulation spaces.

The Level 1 roof of the existing Courthouse building will be replaced and allows for the opportunity to include rooftop amenities and/or a green roof on Level 2.

Option 1 replaces the roofs on both the existing Courthouse building and Annex, including building systems equipment and the demolition of the existing penthouse on the annex roof.

BUILDING SECTION

Option 1 encompasses the renovation of the existing Courthouse. As a result, this option includes several level changes on all floors of the Annex building. Ramping is included in Level 1 to improve accessibility and compensate for two 3-foot level changes. Ramping is included in Level 2 to improve accessibility and compensate for two 2-foot level changes.



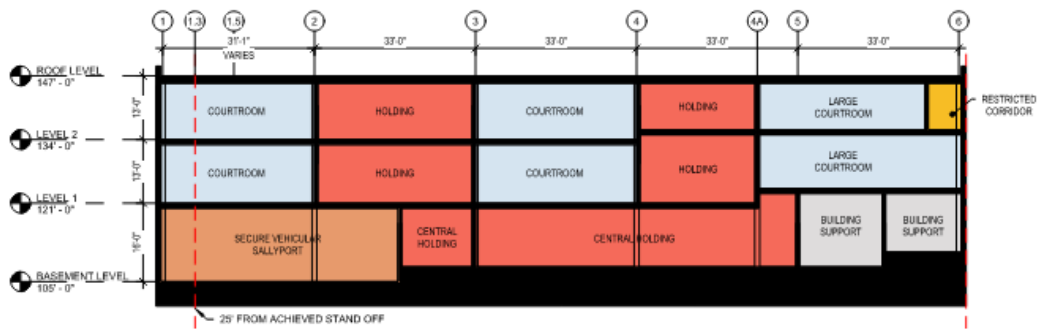
Massing Diagram - View from Main Street



Massing Diagram - View from North Pine Street



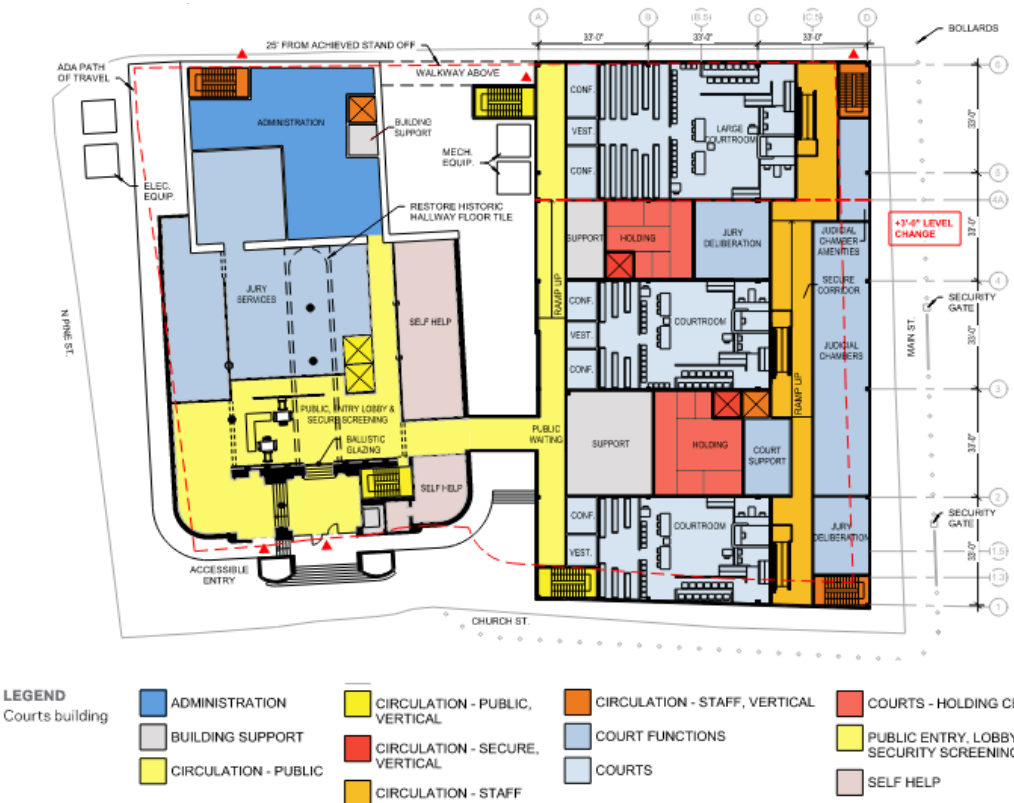
Massing Diagram - View from Winter Street



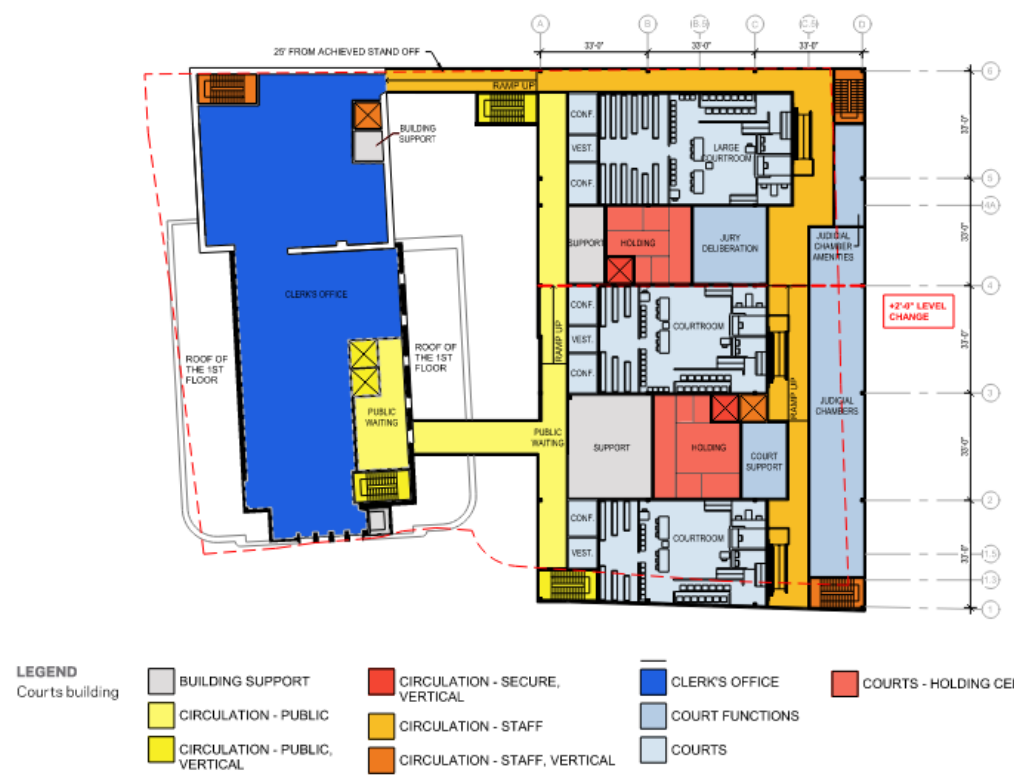
Building Section



Floor Plan - Basement



Floor Plan - Level 1



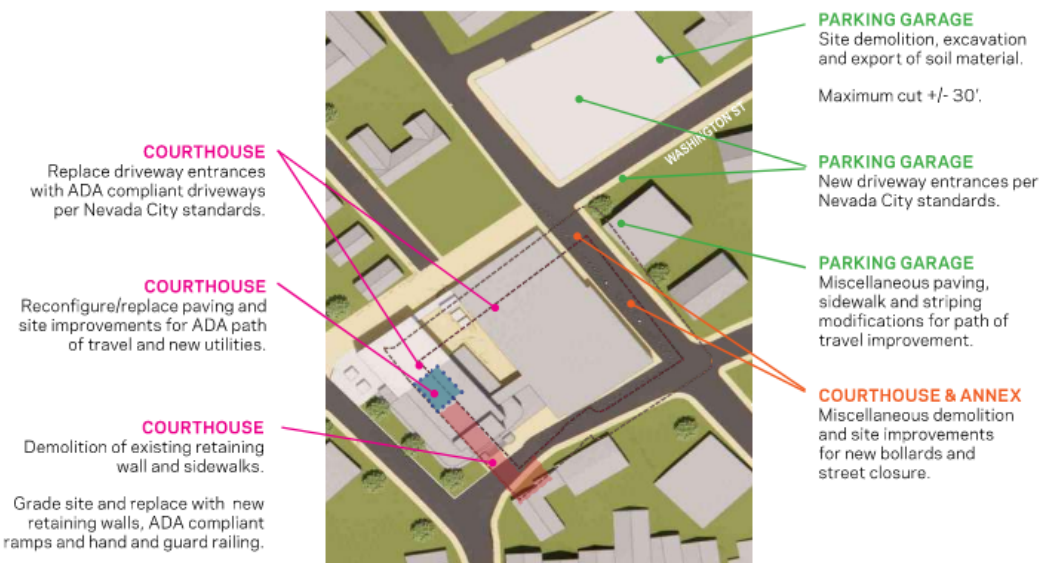
Floor Plan - Level 2



Floor Plan - Level 3



Floor Plan - Roof Plan



Site Improvements Concept

MECHANICAL AND PLUMBING ENGINEERING

CONCEPT DESIGN

Central Utility Plant

The buildings will be served from a new central utility plant with indoor water-cooled chillers, two (2) 150-ton units anticipated, and gas-fired boilers, three (3) 1,000 MBH output units anticipated. The utility plant will be located similar to the current units. The cooling towers will be located outdoors in a similar location to the existing one.

Air-Handling Systems

The Courthouse building will be served from a new (approx. 25,000 cfm) air-handling unit located on the roof of the reconstructed north addition. The Annex building will be served from two (2) new (approx. 25,000 cfm) air-handling units located on the roof.

HVAC Distribution

Duct distribution will be via vertical shafts to terminal vav boxes. Hot water reheat will be provided for perimeter boxes. The annex building has multiple level changes that will require distribution ductwork to be configured to avoid crossing where there is no space. This results in additional shafts vs. other options. Ductwork will be lined downstream of fans and vav boxes for noise control. No smoke control systems are anticipated to be required. Hydronic heating hot water and chilled water system piping will be steel or copper piping and designed for low-pressure loss.

HVAC Controls

A new HVAC Building Management System (BMS) control system will be provided to serve all mechanical systems. The system will be compliant with the JCC BMS specification requirements with all points graphically displayed on the front-end computer system.

Central Plumbing Equipment

A central gas water heater and circulation pump will distribute domestic hot water to the fixtures at both buildings.

Plumbing Fixtures

Low-flow, wall-hung commercial grade fixtures will be used with 1.28 gallons per flush for water closets, 0.125 gallons per flush urinals. All toilet room fixtures will be sensor operated. Hold Room areas will be provided with stainless steel institutional combination toilet / lavatory fixtures.

Piping Systems

The existing roof drainage system is anticipated to be re-used. New domestic water piping will be provided to all fixtures and sized in accordance with CPC and ASPE requirements. New water piping will be extended to site main connection points. A new natural gas service connection is anticipated to be required. Gas piping will be extended to serve the boilers and domestic water heaters in the basement. New fire sprinkler piping will be extended from the site water main. It is anticipated that two risers will be required, one for each building. All areas of the building and attached overhangs will be fully protected with an automatic wet fire sprinkler system in accordance with NFPA-13 requirements. Sprinkler heads will be semi-recessed or concealed type. Hold Room areas will be provided with institutional heads.

Comparison to Other Options

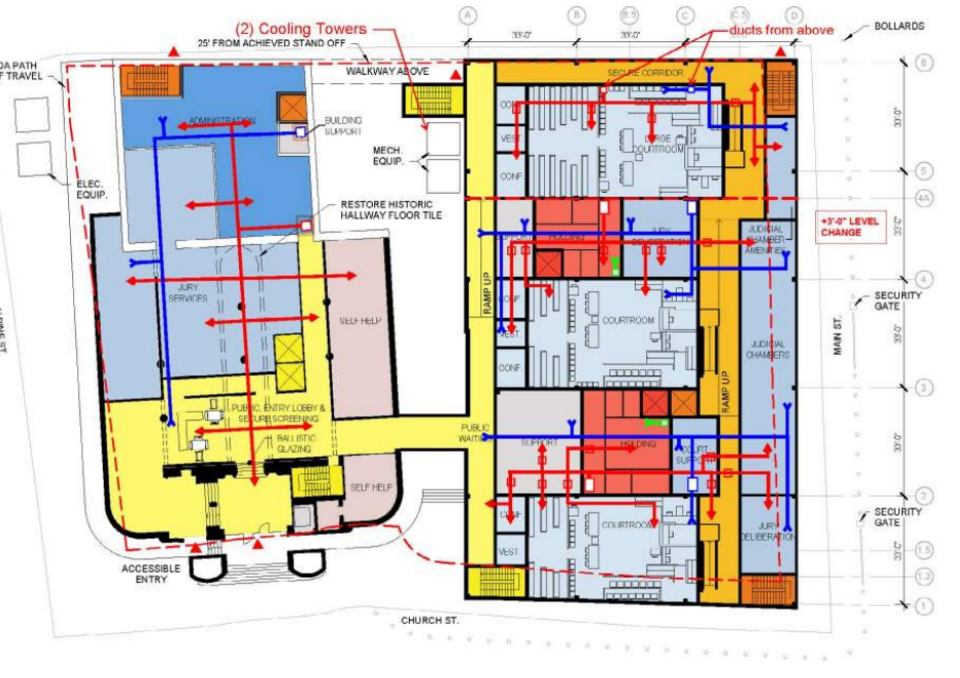
- Each of the options uses similar mechanical systems and equipment.
- Option 1 reuses the existing building shell, which is likely not to be as energy efficient as the other options with new construction.
- Option 1 will require three (3) main air-handling units which will result in increased costs with additional points of connection and additional maintenance with the additional equipment.
- Option 1 has existing level changes at the annex building that will result in additional ductwork and duct shafts to reach the various areas, and difficulty routing ductwork in tight ceiling space areas.
- Option 1 has chillers in the basement that may require an additional area way for future chiller removal.
- Option 1 is two buildings requiring two fire risers and associated site backflow preventors, riser room spaces, fire alarm connections and riser appurtances.
- Option 1 will have all new fire sprinkler piping which will be difficult to route with the existing building level changes, possibly resulting in exposed piping at certain locations.
- Option 1 has an existing roof drainage system that can possibly be re-used. Electrical Engineering



Mechanical and Plumbing Plan - Basement Level



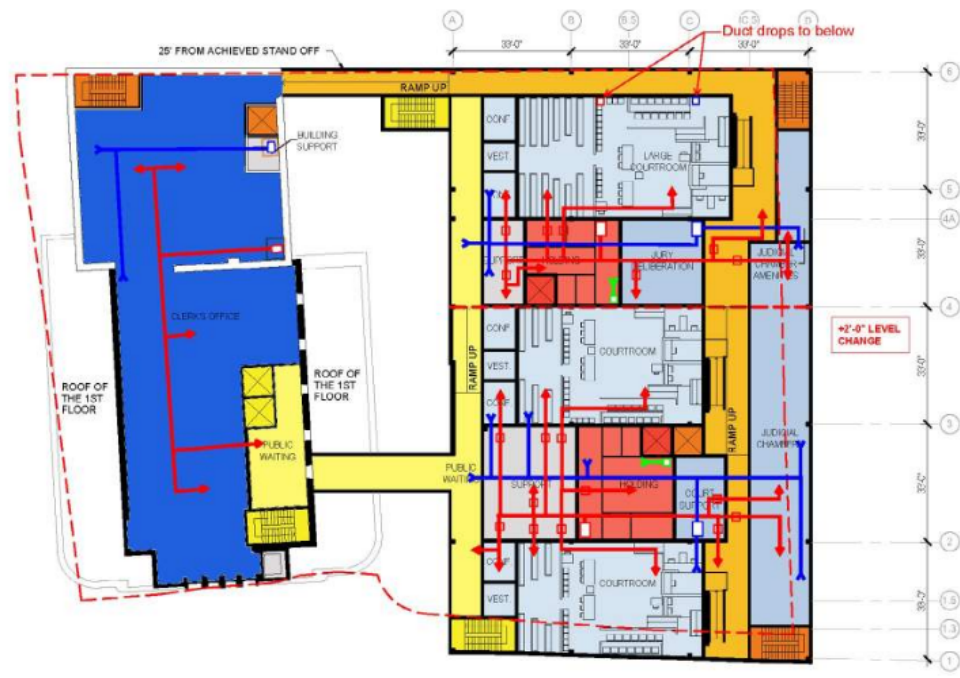
Mechanical and Plumbing Plan - Level 3



Mechanical and Plumbing Plan - Level 1



Mechanical and Plumbing Plan - Roof Level



Mechanical and Plumbing Plan - Level 2

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

The California Trial Court Facilities Standards (CTCFS) are referenced throughout this narrative and should be utilized as a basis of design.

APPROACH

Demolition

The entire electrical system shall be demolished. This includes incoming power service, switchgear, panels, conduit and wire, devices, light fixtures, etc.

SITE

Power

Provide utility power to the building by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) via a new pad mounted utility transformer. Currently, the primary power comes out of the underground 3-way junction switch on Washington Street. It serves a pad mounted transformer in the loading area vault/ pit. This transformer and its feeder will be demolished. A new connection shall be provided from the existing 3-way junction to the new PG&E transformer, which shall be located outside the building on the Northwest corner. Transformer shall be provided by the PG&E and be installed per their standards. Provide duct structure (conduits, pullboxes, trenching, etc.) as required. The power shall step down to building voltage (277/480V) via the utility pad mounted transformer. From the transformer, provide five 5” feeder conduits into the 1600A, 277/480V, 3 phase, 4-wire main switchboard per PG&E Standards. Service feeder conductors will be provided by PG&E.

POWER DISTRIBUTION

Normal Power

As described above, the building will have a 1600A, 277/480V, 3 phase 4 wire main switchboard (MSB), located in the basement main electrical room. The MSB will contain the PG&E meter, the main circuit breaker and the feeder circuit breakers. Feeders will be provided from the MSB to the satellite electrical rooms, serving the lighting panels and the step-down transformers for the 120/208V panels.

Provide spare load and breaker capacity per the CTCFS.

Loads shall be desegrated per Title 24 and the CTCFS. Each load category shall be metered per system and floor as described in CTCFS, Section 15B.

Standby/Emergency Power

Provide a generator to provide standby/emergency power to the building. Assume the generator is 100kW/125kVA. The following items shall be considered:

- Location: The CTCFS requires that the generator be located at least 50 feet from the power source. In this scheme, this will be very difficult. We anticipate the generator will be located near the PG&E transformer, which violates this requirement. Alternatively, the area between the buildings could be assessed for the generator location.
- Based on the location and proximity to residences, the generator shall be provided with sound attenuated enclosure.

- Provide a permanent load bank.

UPS Power

The building will not be provided with a central system.

Provide UPS power per the CTCFS, utilizing in-rack UPS units.

BMS Interface

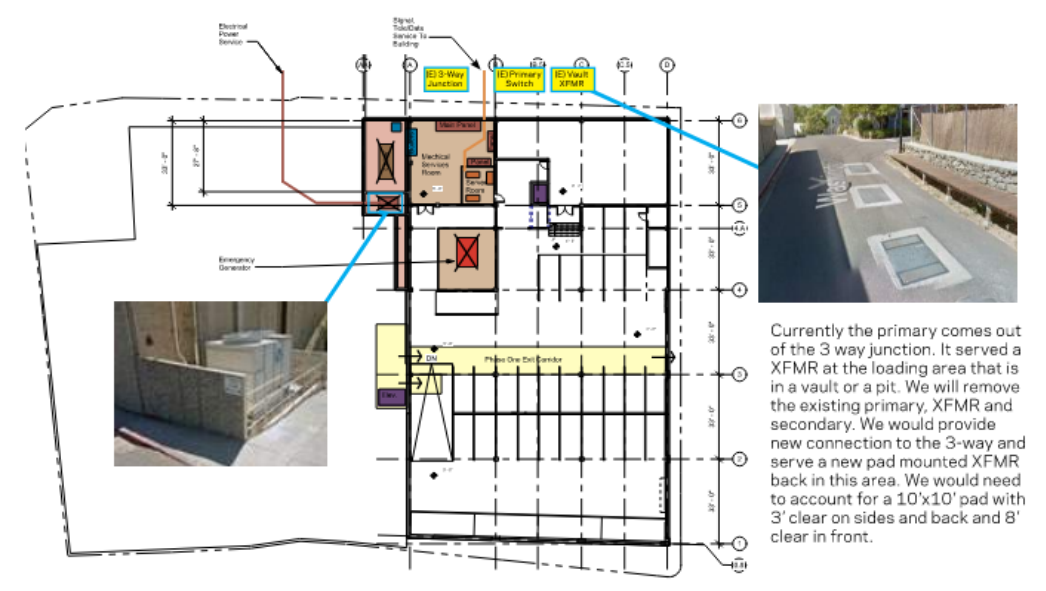
Provide BMS interface per CTFCS and as described below:

- Electrical / power meters
- Emergency / standby generator
- UPS
- Fire alarm
- Lighting controls

Lighting and Lighting Controls

Lighting Illumination Levels:

The lighting system will provide illumination levels in accordance with CTCFS Table 16.1.



Existing PG&E Infrastructure

Light Fixtures:

Provide interior light fixtures per CTCFS , Section 16.C.

Typical Exterior light fixtures per CTCFS , Section 16.C.

Consider utilizing the protective bollards on the East side of the building as a light source.

Controls:

Provide lighting controls as described in the CTCFS, Section 16.D.

Fire Alarm

The fire alarm and notification system shall be UL listed, California State Fire Marshal approved, and manufactured by firms regularly engaged in manufacturing fire detection, alarm, and communications systems; of types, sizes, and electrical characteristics required; and whose products have been in satisfactory use in similar service for not less than five years. The fire alarm system shall be a fully addressable system. The system shall include voice notification, with automatic voice messaging.

Refer to CTCFS, Section 20 for additional information.



New PG&E Infrastructure

SITE/CIVIL ENGINEERING

SITE TOPOGRAPHY

The existing Courthouse and Annex building are located on a full city block, with North Pine Street west of the building, Washington Street to the north, Main Street to the east, and Church Street to the south. The site is located on moderately steep terrain, generally sloping from north to south.

Based on an aerial topographic survey provided by the Nevada City Engineering Department, the high point of Washington Street is approximately an elevation of 2,546 feet above mean sea level, located near the midpoint of the Courthouse site. Washington Street drains east and west towards Main and North Pine Streets.

North Pine Street slopes north to south, dropping approximately 21 feet to an elevation of approximately 2,520 feet near the southwest corner of the site. Main Street slopes north to south with an elevation drop of approximately 24 feet to an elevation of 2,519 feet, near the southeast corner of the site. Church Street drains east and west, with a high point at elevation 2,529 feet located near the Courthouse entry. The street drops approximately 10 feet from the high point to the adjacent intersections.

EXISTING SITE ACCESS

Site access includes two secured vehicular entrances located along Main Street, accessing the Annex Building. An access for trash and maintenance vehicles is located on Washington Street. A second vehicular access is located on Washington, providing access to a few accessible parking spaces.

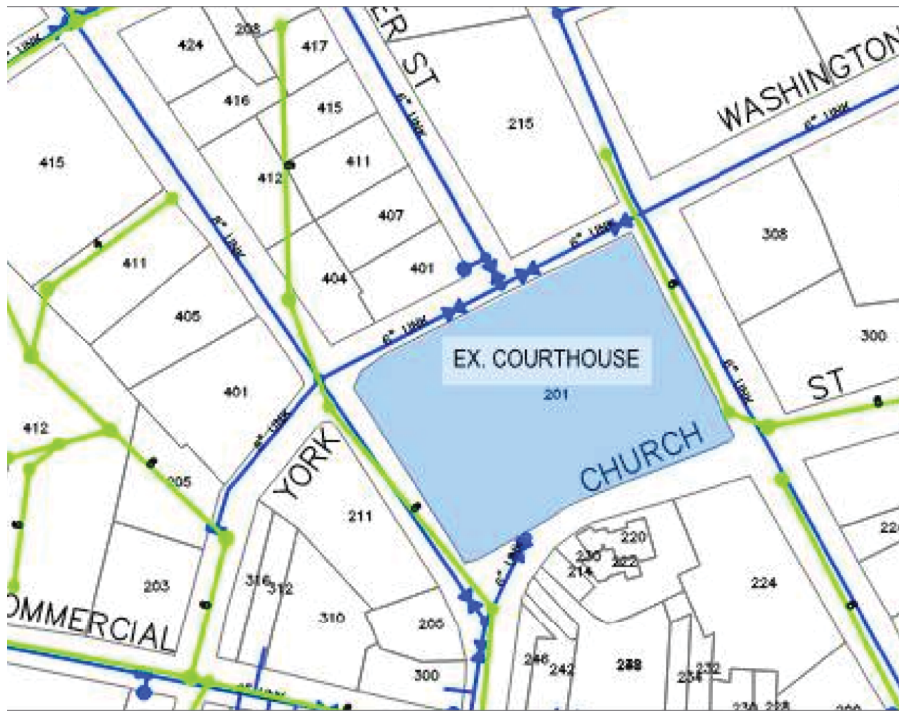
Pedestrian sidewalks are located along each of the adjacent streets. The main entrances to the Courthouse and Annex Buildings are located on Church Street. Pedestrian access for authorized personnel is located on Main Street and Washington Street.

Compliant accessible access to the existing buildings is not provided, and some of the existing public sidewalks appear substandard from an accessibility and local building code standpoint.

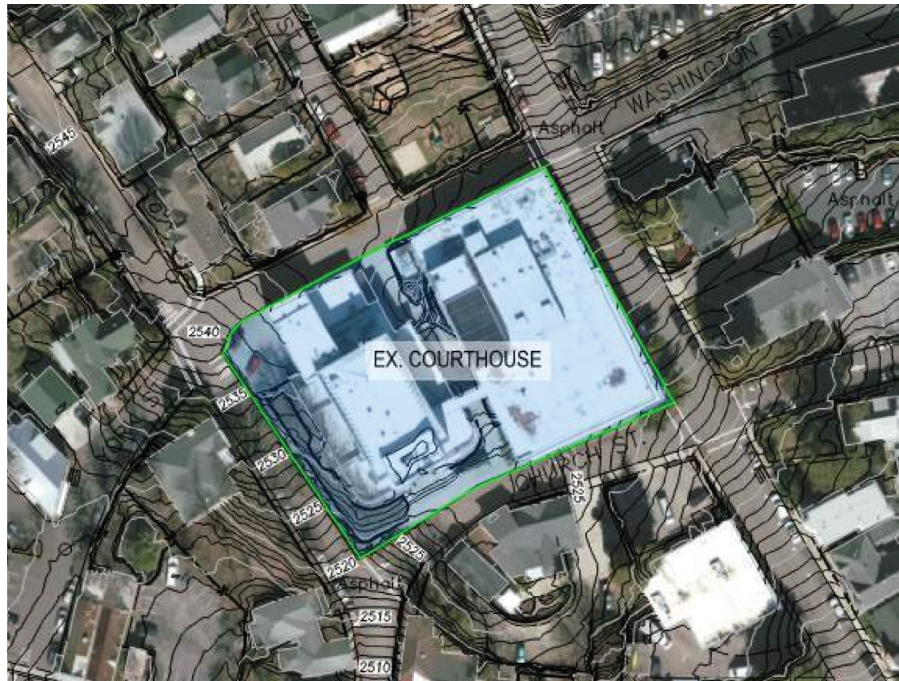
EXISTING UTILITIES

All utilities shall comply with the applicable Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) within the City of Nevada City or the County of Nevada.

All proposed utility systems, any necessary design calculations and applicable County or City permits shall be designed by the Design-Build entity. All proposed utilities connections to existing



Site Topography for Existing Nevada City Courthouse



Existing Sewer and Water Infrastructure Map - Existing Courthouse Site

infrastructure, verification of existing utilities, survey of existing underground utility locations, sizes and inverts shall be the responsibility of the approved Design-Build entity.

The existing Courthouse is connected to water, sewer, and drainage infrastructure. The figure below shows the size and approximate location of the Nevada City's sewer and water infrastructure near the Courthouse site.

Based on information provided in studies previously prepared for the site, the existing utilities serving the site are believed to have adequate capacity for the building.

EXISTING SANITARY SEWERAGE SYSTEM

Nevada City provides sanitary sewer collection for the Courthouse site. Infrastructure adjacent to the site consists of gravity mains owned and operated by the City. Sewer laterals serving buildings are the responsibility of the property owner to maintain.

Existing sewer manholes are located at the intersections of Church and North Pine Streets, and Church and Main Streets.

EXISTING STORM DRAINAGE SYSTEM

Nevada City uses Caltrans standard specifications for roads, drainage, and sidewalks. Publicly maintained storm drainage is located within the vicinity of the site.

The public storm drain system does not include any treatment system prior to draining into local waterways.

Based on a site visit performed by the team, **underground storm drainage appears to exist within North Pine Street**, as evident by existing manholes marked as storm drain.

EXISTING DOMESTIC WATER AND FIRE DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

According to a utility map provided by Nevada City, 6-inch water mains exist in Washington and Main Streets, and an 8-inch main runs alongside the site in North Pine Street. A 6-inch water line feeding an existing fire hydrant from the main in North Pine is located in a portion of Church Street. The static pressure of the existing public water system is believed to range from 65 to 80 pounds per square inch (psi) based on previous studies done for the site. Since these studies were performed several years ago, the current pressure should be verified.

The Courthouse and Annex buildings have separate, metered domestic water connections. These services connect to the existing main in Washington Street.

A public fire hydrant exists near the Courthouse entrance on Church Street and is the sole hydrant immediately adjacent to the site. Two other hydrants are within proximity to the site, across the street from the site on Washington and Main streets.

The existing buildings do not have a fire suppression sprinkler system.

EXISTING GAS DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

Natural gas is currently provided by Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E). Gas service is served from Washington Street into the areaway between the buildings entering the Annex. Natural gas is then piped to the existing Courthouse.

SITE / CIVIL ENGINEERING

SITE ACCESS, PARKING, AND SITE IMPROVEMENTS

New accessible paths will be required for the Courthouse and Annex buildings, per California Building Code. Improvements shall meet applicable State and Federal requirements.

Because of the site’s terrain, new accessible ramps and handrails, and reconfiguration of existing stairs and hardscape are anticipated to be required.

The existing buildings contain several exterior doors accessing the adjacent public sidewalk. Some modifications to the existing sidewalk may be needed to adjust grades and slopes to comply with current codes.

The existing public sidewalk and driveway aprons adjacent to the buildings do not comply with current standards in some locations. Upgrades to provide compliant dimensions for sidewalks and bring driveway entrances up to current standards may be required.

A new parking garage will provide new parking including accessible stalls for the facility, located on an adjacent property north of the existing courthouse site. The parking is expected to be provided on a multi-story garage with access to each level provided by two separate entrances. Significant excavation will be required to construct the garage, and the new facility will retain soil depths of approximately 20 to 25 feet.

Based on an existing geotechnical report prepared for the courthouse site, weathered rock and boulders are expected to be encountered during excavation.

An ADA access route connecting the parking garage to the courthouse facility will be provided.

PROPOSED UTILITIES

Sanitary Sewer

It is anticipated that the new sanitary piping related to building renovations would connect into the existing laterals from the buildings to the adjacent streets or Main Street and North Pine Street. The existing sanitary sewer laterals connecting the building to the public mains drain by gravity.

The new parking garage will require a sewer connection serving garage drainage, connecting to public mains. The system will include a sand/oil separator.

Storm Drainage

Storm drainage requirements are prescribed by Nevada County Land Use and Development Code. Projects in the City

are typically required to install detention and treatment facilities to mitigate peak increases in stormwater runoff. Per Nevada County Code, where determined necessary, retention/detention facilities shall be designed to protect downstream users and ensure that the water surface returns to its base elevation within 24 hours after the storm event.

Stormwater treatment and detention shall be provided to meet Nevada City stormwater requirements.

If the site improvements result in an acre or more of disturbed area, the project will require a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) be processed with the State of California to obtain coverage under the Construction General Permit prior to construction.

Domestic Water and Fire

The Courthouse and Annex buildings will require a new fire suppression sprinkler system. The new system shall conform with the Nevada City Code of Ordinances, California Fire Code, and NFPA 13.

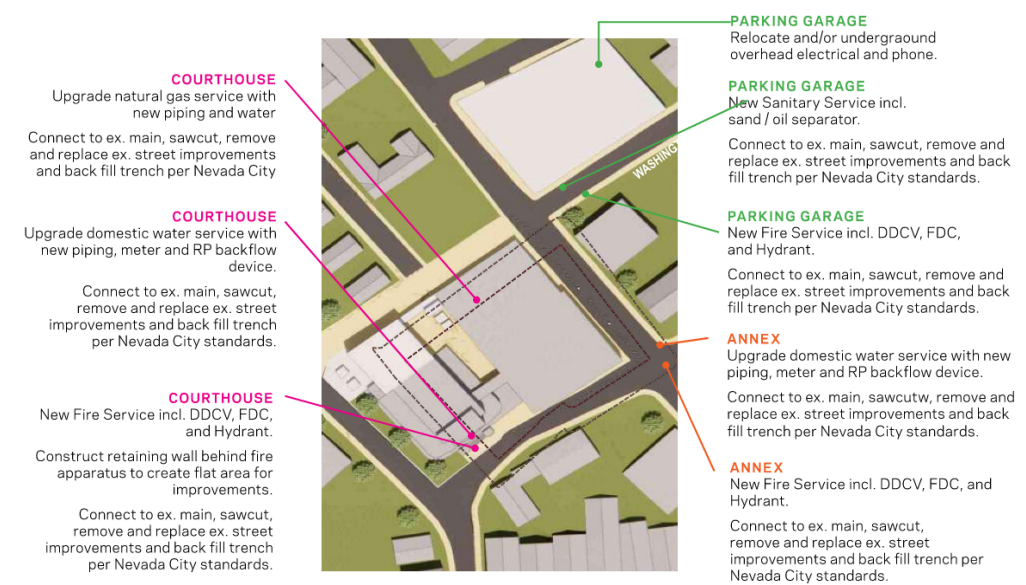
Private fire service mains shall conform with NFPA 24, capable of supplying the required fire flow for fire protection.

The fire service will require a new fire department connection (FDC). FDC’s shall be installed in accordance with the NFPA standard applicable to the system design, and shall be located unobstructed from a fire lane. A fire hydrant shall be located near the FDC per Nevada City Fire and California Fire Code requirements.

Additional fire hydrants will be required in order to provide coverage around the building per Nevada City Fire and California Fire Code.

Gas Distribution

The existing gas service will be upgraded for the Courthouse and Annex buildings, including replacing piping and meters adequately sized for the buildings.



Site Utilities Concept

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING

The existing Nevada County Courthouse consists of an assembly of six interconnected or abutting structures on a sloped city block site. The original Courthouse was constructed circa 1864. The other primary building, the Annex building, was constructed circa 1964. The structures utilize a variety of construction materials and have undergone numerous improvements, alterations, and additions over their history.

Based on available soil reports, excavation at the site is anticipated to be difficult due to weathered rock and boulders which will likely be encountered and require removal.

Additionally, some moderately compressible soils near the surface will require over excavation and re-compaction to reduce the magnitude of anticipated settlements.

EXISTING COURTHOUSE

The existing Courthouse is a three-story rectangular building constructed of the following:

- Its sheet metal roof is supported by gable steel trusses spanning to the perimeter 16-in thick unreinforced brick masonry walls
- Second and third floors are 4-1/4-inch-thick concrete slabs supported by steel beams spanning to the perimeter unreinforced brick masonry walls as well as interior brick corridor bearing walls.
- Perimeter walls at the second level are 20 inches thick.
- Perimeter walls at the first level are 3-foot-thick granite block. Much of the longitudinal perimeter walls were removed during the construction of the 1937 addition (see below)
- First level floors are concrete slab on grade
- Original foundations are granite block
- Seismic bracing of the unreinforced brick masonry parapets was added at some point.

EXISTING COURTHOUSE JAIL ADDITION

The Jail Addition was added prior to 1900 and was originally a 2-story structure. Sometime later a third story was added. The building is rectangular in plan. Floor levels in this addition do not align with the floor levels in the Original Courthouse. Its construction includes:

- A sheet metal roof supported by sawn lumber joists
- Roof joists are supported by interior wood stud partitions and



perimeter 13-inch thick unreinforced brick masonry walls

- Diagonal board sheathing supported by sawn lumber joists at the third floor
- The third floor joists are supported by steel beams and pipe columns and perimeter 13-inch thick unreinforced brick masonry walls
- The second floor consists of a 3-inch thick concrete slab supported on steel beams supported on a longitudinal interior unreinforced masonry bearing wall and perimeter granite block walls
- Foundations are granite block founded approximately 24 inches below grade

EXISTING COURTHOUSE 1937 ADDITION

The 1937 Addition to the original courthouse includes one-story east and west wings along the length of the original building and a four-story front façade/entry structure. The east and west wings of this addition removed significant portions of the first level perimeter walls of the original courthouse and re-supported them on the addition framing. Its construction includes:

- Concrete slab roofs and floors supported by steel beam framing encased in concrete
- Steel beams are supported through riveted connections to steel columns
- Steel columns are supported by shallow concrete foundations, some of which are unreinforced
- Perimeter walls of the addition are lightly reinforced concrete. Where walls abut the existing structure, grouted dowels were installed
- Floor slab at grade is reinforced concrete

EXISTING COURTHOUSE MECHANICAL ROOM AND OFFICE ADDITION

The Mechanical Room and the Office Addition are one-story structures that sit to the east of the Jail Addition. The construction of these buildings includes:

- Reinforced concrete slab roofs
- Reinforced concrete walls bearing on shallow concrete foundations
- Floor slab at grade is reinforced concrete

EXISTING COURTHOUSE STAIR ADDITION TO THE JAIL ADDITION

The Stair Addition to the north end of the Jail Addition is a three-story rectangular concrete building. This addition has three walls and its east and west walls and floors are presumably connected to the Jail Addition. The construction of this building includes:

- Reinforced concrete slab roofs
- Reinforced concrete walls bearing on shallow concrete foundations
- Floor slab at grade is reinforced concrete
- Internal stairs are reinforced concrete

ANNEX BUILDING (1964)

The Court Annex is a three-story rectangular building with a penthouse. The construction of this building includes:

- Reinforced concrete waffle slabs at roof and floor supported by concrete columns.
- Portion of roof structure at the original penthouse has a 6-inch-thick reinforced concrete slab with #4 bars each way top and bottom supported by reinforced concrete beams
- Concrete columns are rectangular and supported on shallow reinforced concrete foundations
- The original penthouse and the enclosed rooftop exercise yard are steel framed with a 3-inch deep, 18-gauge metal deck roof diaphragm and steel tension rod lateral resisting elements
- The security viewing enclosure adjacent to the exercise yard relies on concrete masonry units
- The ground level has a 5-inch thick concrete slab on grade with #4 reinforcing bars at 15 inches on centers each way

IDENTIFIED DEFICIENCIES WITH EXISTING BUILDINGS

Prior studies and reports have identified the following structural issues for each of the courthouse complex structures. These structures do not comply with 2022 building codes. They also have significant structural deficiencies and are constructed using brittle and weak structural materials that have performed poorly during past earthquakes.

EXISTING COURTHOUSE (1864)

- Structural deficiencies identified in prior studies include:**
- **Building lacks vertical resisting elements at the first level for North-South seismic loads**
 - **Removal of large portions of the transverse wall at the north end of the building**
 - **Incomplete load path from diaphragms to perimeter walls**
 - **Lack of diaphragm chords for transverse seismic loads**
 - **Lack of collectors for longitudinal seismic loads at diaphragm steps and recesses**
 - **Weak diaphragms**
 - **Unreinforced perimeter and interior walls; at these walls, the brick pilaster support for the roof hip steel truss has cracks and is detaching from the remainder of the wall; there are also cracks reported at the tops of the brick piers at the north side of the building**
 - **Unreinforced brick masonry chimney: large cracks were previously identified**
 - **Unbraced suspended lath and plaster ceilings at courtrooms**



EXISTING COURTHOUSE JAIL ADDITION (1890’S)

Structural deficiencies identified in prior studies include:

- Lack of wall anchors or shear transfer between the diaphragms and the masonry walls

- Adjacent buildings may pound against the Jail Addition

EXISTING COURTHOUSE 1937 ADDITION

Structural deficiencies identified in prior studies include:

- Diaphragms do not provide a complete load path to the shear walls due to lack of chords and collectors at steps and recesses in diaphragm

- The end concrete wall of the addition may pound against the Jail Addition

EXISTING COURTHOUSE MECHANICAL ROOM AND OFFICE ADDITION (1960’S)

Structural deficiencies identified in prior studies include:

- The building does not have its own gravity and lateral system; it lacks walls on two sides; one side relies on the granite wall of court building for gravity and lateral

- It has no shear wall along the north and west sides

- The shear transfer into the granite wall of the court building on the south is assumed inadequate

- The free-standing CMU wall at the east side is a falling hazard

- The office addition wood roof is anticipated to lack wall anchorage and shear transfer connections

EXISTING COURTHOUSE STAIR ADDITION TO THE JAIL ADDITION (1960’S)

Structural deficiencies were not specifically identified in prior studies; however, deficiencies likely include:

- Poor interconnection between this building and the 1890’s Jail Addition at both the walls and the floors

ANNEX BUILDING (1964)

Structural deficiencies identified in prior studies include:

- Deficient concrete frame detailing, particularly at the columns, for seismic force resistance
- Parking Garage short column configuration
- Courthouse Walkway: interaction effects from the two



adjacent buildings

- Unknown attachment of the CMU Security Viewing Enclosure, blocks may be a falling hazard, detailing of attachments are unknown

- Tilt-up Panels on the building perimeter do not meet story drift and attachment requirements

- Insufficiently braced and supported lath and plaster ceilings

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING APPROACH

The approach for Option 1 includes removing the additions from the north end of the existing Courthouse as well as removing partitions and rooftop spaces from the Courthouse Annex to allow for the reconfiguration of the spaces. This option requires substantial repair, retrofit and strengthening of the remaining existing structures. The primary challenge for this concept is providing sufficient lateral resistance for the existing heavy and weak/brittle structures.

CONCEPT DESIGN

Existing Courthouse

Option 1 removes the sheet metal roof diaphragm of the existing Courthouse and replaces it with a modern metal deck supported by the existing steel trusses. The steel trusses require strengthening including welding of additional angles onto the chords and webs of each truss. Additional steel diagonal angle bracing is also required at the bottom chord to serve as an additional structural diaphragm. Continuous channels are bolted through the walls along the perimeter of the roof and additional structural steel drags are required extending from the

corners of the front concrete tower façade all the way to the new administration building. Truss modifications and re-framing may also be necessary at the new elevator shafts if overrun height is necessary.

This option also removes the brick north wall of the existing Courthouse including the brick chimney from corner to corner. The remaining walls require temporary shoring and bracing until the replacement administration building is constructed. This wall is replaced with a wall from the Administration Addition.

The remaining perimeter walls of the Existing Courthouse are retrofitted using the CenterCore technique having full height vertical cores drilled down the walls and subsequently reinforced and grouted. These cores are required at approximately 5 feet on center along all of the perimeter walls. The reinforcing from these cores continues down into new reinforced concrete shear walls at the first level. The CenterCore reinforcing are welded at its base to the built-up beam that currently supports the upper-level masonry. The first-level concrete walls are approximately 16 inches thick and installed between the existing steel columns. The walls extend from the north to the south end of the building but will have openings for the walkways shown on the architectural exhibits. These walls extend vertically from their approximately 6-foot-wide reinforced concrete foundation grade beams up to the existing built-up steel girder at Level 2. The wall reinforcing is welded to both the existing built-up girder and to the existing columns.

The existing interior face of the front wall of the Existing Courthouse requires 12 inches of shotcrete from floor to floor through the height of the building. Hooked reinforcing dowels are epoxied diagonally into the existing unreinforced brick masonry at 2 feet on center across the face of the wall and embedded at least three quarters through the thickness. A 4-foot-wide reinforced concrete foundation is required along this wall length also doveled into the existing foundation materials.

Steel angles are installed continuously along the perimeter of each floor level to strengthen the connection of the diaphragms to the perimeter walls. These angles are bolted through the exterior wall and through the floor slab. Additionally, the floors require new steel angle cross ties across the entire width of the building at approximately 20 feet on center maximum and at each floor level.

Where the central brick corridor partitions are removed, they are replaced with structural steel beams. These beams will likely consist of W18 beams supported by 6-inch square HSS posts

at 20 feet on center. The HSS posts carry the floor loads down to grade where they are supported on new concrete spread footings beneath the new concrete slab on grade floor.

Additional W16 steel framing is required around the new elevators at each floor level. This framing requires support from the replaced corridor columns and also HSS columns at the corners of the elevator shafts as well as the perimeter brick masonry walls. Similarly, the new stairway includes new perimeter steel framing to HSS columns at the stair corners and at the landing edges. The stair consists of structural steel framing supporting concrete filled metal deck landings and concrete filled metal pan stairs.

All hollow clay tile and unreinforced masonry partitions within the building are removed and replaced with metal stud partitions.

Administration Replacement Addition

The Administration Replacement Addition requires removal of the assembly of structures to the north of the existing Courthouse. These include the 1890’s Jail Addition and the 1960’s Jail Addition Stair, Mechanical Room and Office Addition. The new structure has reinforced concrete walls and a concrete filled metal deck with structural steel framed floor system. If at least two interior columns are allowed down the center of the space, the floor framing may consist of W30 girders spanning approximately 30 feet from the outside walls to the interior columns with W18 beams likely spaced at 10 feet on center maximum and spanning between the girders and to the exterior walls. Additional framing is needed at the perimeters of the stair and elevator penetrations as well as at drag connections from the existing Courthouse. Typical floors have 4½-inch thick concrete fill over 3-inch metal deck for a total slab thickness of 7½-inches. Level 1 consists of a 5-inch-thick concrete slab on grade.

The roof assembly is comprised of concrete over metal deck, rigid insulation and surface roofing material. The steel framing slopes to the roof drains to minimize crickets and tapered insulation. The roof deck is comprised of 4-inch normal weight reinforced concrete fill over 2-inch metal deck (total slab thickness of 6-inches) spanning a maximum of 8 feet to composite steel wide-flange beams. This provides a 1½-hour fire rating without any sprayed-applied fire-proofing at the underside of the metal deck. Typical roof beams are W18 members spanning approximately 30 feet. Framing specifically supporting the perimeter of the rooftop AHU are required and are similar to the W18 beams at the remainder of the roof. Roof girders are W24 members spanning approximately 30 feet. Beams, girders, and columns are fireproofed throughout the building.

The perimeter walls of the Administration Replacement Addition are typically approximately 10 inches thick reinforced concrete, but the wall replacing the north wall of the Existing Courthouse must be 12 inches thick and doveled into each of the Existing Court floor levels as well as have connections at the roof level. These walls are founded on approximately 4-foot-wide concrete foundations.

Existing Courthouse 1932 Addition

This addition requires structural steel drag members to the lobby shotcrete wall of the Existing Courthouse as well as to the new south wall of the Administration Addition. Additional concrete shear walls are required at the partition separations at Jury Services and at the Self-Help area to help reduce the existing diaphragm spans.

Annex Building

At the roof level, the existing mechanical penthouse and the exercise yard are removed. In preparation for mechanical units at the roof level, strengthening of the concrete slab and beam system as well as the waffle slab in the area of the units is required. This can be accomplished with bonded carbon fiber strips longitudinally along the bottom of the existing beams along with carbon fiber stirrup wraps along the lengths of the existing beams. This strengthening is required for all beams bounded by Grids 4, 5, B and C. Ideally, the mechanical unit to the south of Grid 3 can be moved to land on the slab and beam system roof where strengthening for its support will match the north unit.

Additionally, on Grids B and C between Grids 4A and 6, strengthening of the waffle slabs is required to install transfer beams in the roof structure to allow removal of columns from Courtroom 2A. Similar to the mechanical unit strengthening, this entails application of bonded carbon fiber strips longitudinally along the bottom of the existing beams along with carbon fiber stirrup wraps along the lengths of the existing beams for their entire length. It is also necessary to increase the depths of these two beams by creating doveled beam curbs above the roof. The doveled beam curbs are approximately 2 feet tall and 12 inches wide. These members should be installed prior to the fiber wrap so that the fiber can be doveled through the roof slab to engage these curbs.

On Grids B and C, between Grids 4A and 6, strengthening of the waffle slab is required to install transfer beams in the floor to allow removal of columns from Courtroom 2A. This strengthening entails application of bonded carbon fiber strips longitudinally along the bottom of the existing beams along with carbon fiber stirrup wraps along the lengths of the existing beams for their entire length similar to the level above.

Strengthening of the columns is also required at Grids B/6 and C/6. This strengthening likely entails wrapping the columns with carbon fiber and doweling those wraps through the back side of the column where it abuts the wall so that the wraps can be continued around the entire column. This strengthening is at the Levels 2 and 3.

Where new columns are installed at Grids B/4A and C/4A, those columns are likely 18 inches square reinforced concrete with bars doveled through the floors to the levels below and down to new column reinforced concrete column spread footings on grade.

At the new stairs in the corners of the Annex, the concrete waffle slab floor framing must be strengthened for each of the penetrations. The stairs shafts are constructed of reinforced concrete to allow for additional lateral force resistance at the stair shafts as well as support for the interrupted waffle slab framing. Along the edges of the stair openings, new concrete beams are cast with dowels into the adjacent framing. These stairwells require substantial foundations at their base since they will serve for lateral resistance as well.

Additional 8-inch-thick concrete shear walls are required at the parking level of the annex. These must be aligned with the 3-foot grade change between the Secure Vehicular Sallyport and the Central Holding. This wall must be considered full length on this line, with the exception of an opening at the pedestrian ramp that will be provided. This wall requires a reinforced concrete foundation for its full length. The pedestrian ramp is likely constructed of concrete walls and a 4-inch-thick concrete ramp slab.

Strengthening of the waffle slab is also required at the overbuild corridor ramps. The overbuild ramps is constructed of 4-inch-thick concrete slabs with 4-inch wide turn down ribs over foam waste-forms.

At the roof level and the floor levels, out of plane anchors between the perimeter walls and the waffle slab diaphragms are needed. This anchorage consists of threaded rods drilled through the exterior walls and into the waffle slab edge beam. These ties are spaced no greater than 8 feet on center along the entire perimeter.

Existing concrete columns that are not a part of the perimeter walls require carbon fiber confinement wrapping for their full heights at each level.

Concrete retaining walls are required at the new parking level elevation changes and elevator pits. These retaining walls are likely 8 inches thick with two layers of reinforcing doveled into the concrete slabs.

New Elevated Walkway to the Annex Building

The New Elevated Walkway between the Annex and the Administrative Office Addition is framed with structural steel. The roof of the walkway likely has W18 longitudinal steel beams along the north and south sides of the walkway and W8 transverse beams spaced at approximately 8 feet on center supporting a metal deck roof. The floor consists of W30 longitudinal beams and W10 transverse beams supporting a concrete filled metal deck floor. The longitudinal beams are supported by three pairs of 8-inch square HSS columns. These occur where the walkway abuts the Administrative Office, at the end of the North Exterior Access Stair and at the face of the Annex Building. The Walkway has a longitudinal seismic separation from the Administration Building but connects rigidly to the Annex building using bolted connections anchored into the floor slab of the Annex. The Walkway has seismic restraint provided by both the Administrative Addition and the Annex for forces in the north south direction.

New North Exterior Access Stair

This stair is constructed of reinforced and solid grouted 8-inch CMU masonry walls along its perimeter. These walls extend down to shallow reinforced concrete foundations, which are a single 12-inch-thick mat under the entire stair that extends out beyond the stair walls by 1-foot minimum on the three sides where there is not a conflict with the existing Annex. The stairs inside the tower are concrete-filled treads supported by steel stair stringers with concrete-filled metal deck landings. The roof of the stair is framed with metal deck spanning across the stair and supported by perimeter ledger angles bolted into the perimeter walls.

TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERING

PEDESTRIAN ACCESSIBILITY

Located in Downtown Nevada City, the current site is impacted by aging infrastructure, including sidewalks. This is exacerbated by the sidewalk slopes and in many cases the narrow concrete sidewalks are raised above the roadways with handrails. Many intersections near the existing site lack adequate ADA accessible provisions, including curb ramps and truncated domes that provide physical warnings to people with visual disabilities.

As documented in the ADA Accessibility Survey Report for Nevada County Courthouse and Annex (2015), there are numerous onsite deficiencies for pedestrian accessibility in regards to ADA Accessible Parking stalls, walkways, ramps, stairwells, and elevators.

Despite the infrastructure barriers, Downtown Nevada City has many pedestrian destinations within a short distance of the courthouse. This allows employees, jurors, and visitors to frequent coffee shops or restaurants nearby, and many people without physical impairments are able to get to these destinations without driving. Both the existing infra-structure barriers and pedestrian destinations are maintained in Option 1.

BICYCLE ACCESSIBILITY

Bicycle accessibility is limited. There are currently no dedicated bicycle facilities in Downtown Nevada City. In addition, the steep topography downtown hinders comfortable bicycle riding when taking the lane for those who are not very confident riders.

TRANSIT ACCESSIBILITY

The courthouse is currently accessible via transit and located less than 500 feet from stops at City Hall serving routes 1 and 7. Route 1 serves Grass Valley to Nevada City with 1-hour headways. Route 7 serves regional travel from North San Juan to Grass Valley with 5- to 6-hour headways.

VEHICLE CIRCULATION

Currently, there are many deficiencies related to vehicle circulation, including pick-up and drop-off operations. Today, Church Street is most frequently utilized for pick-up and drop-off. This would be maintained in Option 1, but improved through bollards or other security measures to improve vehicular stand off to courts.

CONCEPT DESIGN

Transit Accessibility

Existing transit would be maintained as described in the existing conditions. The Team recommends adding a bus stop that coordinates with the improved accessible path of travel.

Vehicle Circulation

Currently, there are many deficiencies related to vehicle circulation, including pick-up and drop-off operations. Today, Church Street is most frequently utilized for pick-up and drop-off. This would be maintained in Option 1 but improved through bollards or other security measures to improve vehicular stand off to courts.

The courthouse will continue to serve multiple different types of vehicles, including passenger vehicles for staff and jurors, and highly secure vehicles for incarcerated individuals on trial. As such, the parking and pick-up/drop-off must cater to these unique uses. Visitors, such as jurors, will have the option to pick-up and drop-off near the site but may be more willing to walk a further distance. Certain staff, such as judges, may require secure pick-up/drop-off close to or on-site. Secure vehicles for incarcerated individuals may require enhanced security and on-site pick-up and drop-off.

Vehicle Miles Traveled

On September 27, 2013, Governor Jerry Brown signed SB 743 into law and started a process intended to fundamentally change transportation impact analysis as part of CEQA compliance. These changes include elimination of auto delay, level of service (LOS), and other similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion as a basis for determining significant impacts. The California Natural Resources Agency has issued amendments and additions to the CEQA Guidelines reflecting these changes (<http://resources.ca.gov/ceqa/>). The changes eliminate auto delay for CEQA purposes and identify vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the preferred CEQA transportation metric. Implementation strategies are provided for Nevada County in the report titled, Senate Bill 743 Vehicle Miles Traveled Implementation Prepared for Nevada County Transportation Commission (2020).

VMT accounts for the number of vehicle trips generated and the length or distance of those trips. For transportation impact analysis, VMT is commonly expressed as total VMT, total VMT per service population (residents and employees), home-based VMT per resident (or capita), and home-based work VMT per employee for a typical weekday. VMT can help identify how projects (land development and infrastructure) influence

accessibility (i.e., lower VMT may indicate increased multimodal access to places and people) and emissions, so its selection is aligned with the objectives of SB 743.

In the absence of more detailed site and land use plans, VMT was reviewed at a qualitative level for each option. Under Options 1 there would likely be little to no change from existing baseline conditions. Many employees and visitors would still have the option to walk or ride transit to access nearby eateries or run other errands downtown. Staff and visitors that may be dropped off at the courthouse may benefit from drivers chaining trips, and potentially carpooling before going to their next destination.

Sustainability

APPROACH

Option 1 is considered a major renovation and the new construction scorecard version 4.1 is used in this scenario.

For this Option, the LEED “Energy and Atmosphere” category is most negatively impacted due to the reuse of the existing shell and windows. The “Optimize Energy Performance” credit is worth 18 points and it is anticipated that remodeling the existing courthouse will result in an overall improvement in energy performance of just 10%, which is only worth 2 points via Option 1, energy performance compliance (whole building energy simulation). Another negative result for selecting Option 1, in terms of the LEED scorecard, is that the original shell is reused, and no points are attained for daylighting and installing new solar tubes. The annex building may have an additional layer of ballistic glazing. Installing solar photovoltaic (PV) panels over the entire roof area of the annex will result in at least 3 points if the PV provides over 10% of the demand.

The LEED “Materials and Resources” category is positively impacted by Option 1 for the “Building Life-Cycle Impact” credit since the option to reuse materials will encourage adaptive reuse and optimize the environmental performance of products and materials. A total of 5 points can be attained for reusing 75% of the shell. Maintaining the existing building structure, envelope, and interior nonstructural elements is a large factor for Option 1 and results in lower embodied carbon (the emissions from manufacturing, transportation, and insulation of building materials). For existing buildings, portions deemed structurally unsound or hazardous can be excluded from the credit calculations.

The “LEED for Neighborhood Development Location” credit can be attained since the courthouse is located within the boundary of a

development certified under LEED for Neighborhood Development (i.e. exhibit a wide range of sustainable features, such as walkability, transit access, sensitive land protection, connectivity, and shared infrastructure). The “High-Priority Site and Equitable Development” is a new LEED credit and it is highly recommended which would include an equity plan that addresses how social equity is taken into account. The Team anticipates that it will be likely that the “Surrounding Density and Diverse Uses” credit will be attainable given the location. This will support neighborhood and local economies, promote walkability and low or no carbon transportation, an reduce vehicle distance traveled for all. This will also improve public health by encouraging daily physical activity.

Conducting a life cycle assessment of the project’s structure and enclosure that demonstrates a minimum of 10% reduction, compared with a baseline building, in at least three of the six impact categories listed below, one of which must be global warming potential is worth 3 points alone.

1. Global warming potential (greenhouse gases)
2. Depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer
3. Acidification of land and water sources
4. Eutrophication
5. Formation of tropospheric ozone
6. Depletion of nonrenewable resources

The team recommends demonstrating the LEED “Building Life-Cycle Impact Reduction” credit by calculating the percentage of reusable area to attain up to 5 points.

In summary, it is anticipated that Option 1 requires additional funding for LEED credits as it falls short on points under the “Energy and Atmosphere” category, which offers the most weight towards LEED certification.

HISTORIC SUMMARY

In 2022, ARG prepared a preliminary historic evaluation to inform the feasibility of reuse for the Judicial Council of California in evaluating the site for continued use as a Courthouse. The report does not constitute a full Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); rather, it is intended to provide sufficient research and evaluation to make a preliminary finding as to the potential historic significance of the property and develop a list of character-defining features that may warrant preservation under a potential rehabilitation scheme.

Sections of the document include the existing historic status of the property; historic background information about the property; a review of existing conditions observed during a February 2022 site visit; preliminary findings regarding the historic significance of the property using the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) criteria; character-defining features of the property; proposed project discussion and recommendations for further study.

EXISTING HISTORIC STATUS

The Nevada City Downtown Historic District National Register nomination was drafted in 1985 and includes ninety-six contributing buildings in downtown Nevada City, including the Nevada County Courthouse (1937) and Nevada City City Hall (1937).¹ Upon review by the Department of the Interior, the nomination was approved with the exception of the Nevada County Courthouse and Nevada City City Hall, which were determined not eligible as district contributors due to their age (less than fifty years old).² The federal reviewer noted that further documentation would be prepared by the State Historic Preservation Officer: research conducted at the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) North Central Information Center and with the Registration Unit of the California State Office of Historic Preservation indicates that documentation was not prepared.³ As such, the Nevada County Courthouse is not a contributor to the National Register-listed Nevada City Downtown Historic District and is therefore not currently listed on the National Register or the California Register of Historical Resources. The National Register of Historic Places Evaluation/Return Sheet is included in Appendix A.

The Nevada City Local Historic District was established in 1968 and has broad boundaries which encompass the courthouse.

⁴ Nevada City does not have a formally established local historic register; buildings listed on the National Register are de facto understood as city historic landmarks. However, all buildings constructed prior to World War II are protected under local building regulations. ⁵ As such, no part of the courthouse building is de facto understood as city historic landmark; the west portion of the building (“the courthouse”) is protected under local building regulations; and the east portion of the building (“the annex”) is not protected under local building regulations.

Because the Nevada County Courthouse is not listed in or formally determined eligible for listing in the California Register, nor included in a local register of historical resources, **no portion of the building is currently considered a significant historical resource for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines (Section 15064.5). However, all portions of the building were constructed more than fifty years in the past and as such are age-eligible for historic resource status under CEQA.**

HISTORIC BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Based on a review of existing historic research about the development of Nevada City and available historic photographs, it appears that a two-story courthouse was constructed at the present site of the west portion of the Nevada County Courthouse (“courthouse”) in 1864 (Figure 1). ⁶ A two-story addition was constructed at the north side of the building at some point between 1868 and 1880 to house a jail. ⁷ A third floor was added to the south portion of the building in 1900 (Figure 2). ⁸ By 1907, historic photographs indicate that the south and west sides of the lot were demarcated by a granite block retaining wall and a low concrete wall with single-light standards. In 1913, a third story was added to the north portion of the building (Figure 3). ⁹ Additional research conducted by ARG did not uncover any architect associated with these early phases of construction.

In 1935, architect George C. Sellon drafted plans to expand the footprint of the existing building with a one-story addition at the west elevation to house public counters; offices for the clerk and



Figure 1. Nevada County Courthouse, 1868
(www.courthousehistory.com)



Figure 2. Nevada County Courthouse, ca. 1907 showing granite wall and third story at south Portion of building,
(www.courthousehistory.com)



Figure 3. Nevada County Courthouse, 1921, showing third story at the north portion of the building
(Ca. State Library)

auditor; supervisors’ rooms; a private office; vault; and restroom.

¹⁰ In 1936, Nevada County received funding from the Work Relief Programs & Small Public Works branch of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) for courthouse expansion. ¹¹ By August 1936, construction of the one-story west wing was nearing completion, and new construction was also underway at a four-story addition to the south (front) of the building and one-story east wing, also designed by Sellon. ¹² Although research did not uncover Sellon-drafted plans for these areas of new construction, a 1938 article published in Architectural Record included some floor plans, along with Sellon’s narrative description of changes to the building. ¹³ As Sellon described, the north portion of the building, where the jail was located, was remodeled at the interior and received new windows; and a new one-story volume was added to the northeast portion of the building to serve as the office for the sheriff and a jail tank. Sellon summarized the comprehensive Art Moderne-style renovations as changing the “whole character of the building,” leaving “little resemblance to the Courthouse of early gold mining days” (Figure 4). ¹⁴ Sellon’s 1938 Architectural Record article is included in Appendix B.

George C. Sellon (1881-1954) served as California’s first appointed state architect from 1907 to 1909, after which he continued a very prolific career spanning nearly fifty years. ¹⁵ He designed multiple courthouses in California, schools and college campus buildings, veteran’s buildings, prisons, and privately owned residential and commercial buildings, including the California-Western States Life Insurance Company, Headquarters Building (1925), often described as Sacramento, California’s first skyscraper.

In 1964, the annex was constructed to provide additional space for County offices and the jail (Figure 5). ¹⁶ The Mid-Century Modern style building was designed by the architecture firm of Mau & Barnum. The building was later adapted to court use following the relocation of County offices to the Rood Center on Highway 49.

¹⁷ Malcolm O. Mau (1921 – 1997) and Wesley J. Barnum (1925 – 1998) practiced together in Sacramento from at least 1954. ¹⁸ The firm is associated with some residential development in Sacramento. ¹⁹ Further research is required to develop a biography of this firm. A review of available drawings for alterations completed since the annex was completed in 1964 indicate that the entry and receiving areas of the Sherriff’s department were remodeled in 1985 by Falconi & Associates; Courtroom 5, on the third floor of the courthouse building, was remodeled in 2000 (architect unknown); and the second floor of the courthouse building was remodeled in 2001 by Daggett Designs.



Figure 4. Nevada County Courthouse after Sellon alterations, 1937 (Sacramento Bee, 1937)



Figure 5. Annex, 1985 (National Register Nomination)

REFERENCES

1 Tyson, Edwin L., “National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form, Nevada City Downton Historic District,” June 5, 1985.

2 Bub—ry [illegible], William B., United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, “National Register of Historic Places Evaluation Return Sheet, Nevada City Downtown Historic District,” September 23, 1985.

3 Email correspondence between ARG and Paul Rendes, Coordinator, North Central Information Center (NCIC), March 15, 2022; email correspondence between ARG and Amy H. Crain, State Historian II, Registration Unit, California State Office of Historic Preservation, February 18, 2022.

4 Nevada City Historical Society, “A Brief History of the Creation of Ordinance 338 – Better Known as the Historic District Ordinance,” 2021, accessed March 16, 2022 at Planning and Historic Preservation in Nevada City – Nevada City, CA (nevadacityca.gov).

5 Nevada City Municipal Code, 15.12.010 – Review Standards, accessed March 16, 2022 at Title 15 – BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION | Code of Ordinances | Nevada City, CA | Municode Library.

6 Tyson, “National Register Nomination Form, Nevada City Downton Historic District.”

7 Historic Environment Consultants, “Nevada City Courthouse Project, Historic Structures Study,” 2011, 11, published as “Appendix E, New Nevada City Courthouse Draft Environmental Impact Report,” State Clearinghouse No. 2011032009, July 2011.

8 Historic Environment Consultants, “Nevada City Courthouse Project, Historic Structures Study,” 12.

9 Historic Environment Consultants, “Nevada City Courthouse Project, Historic Structures Study,” 12.

10 George C. Sellon, “Alternations & Additions to Nevada County Court House, Nevada City, California,” May 1, 1935.

11 The Living New Deal, “Nevada City – the Nevada County Courthouse,” website of the Living New Deal, accessed March 17, 2022 at <https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/nevada-city->

[courthouse-nevada-city-ca/](https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/nevada-city-courthouse-nevada-city-ca/).

12 “Courthouse Annex,” Sacramento Bee, August 26, 1936, 9.

13 Sellon, George C., “California Gold Rush County Streamlines its Courthouse,” Architectural Record, July 1938, 46–48.

14 Sellon, “California Gold Rush County Streamlines its Courthouse.”

15 Pacific Coast Architectural Database, “George Clinton Sellon,” website of Pacific Coast Architectural Database, accessed March 17, 2022 at <https://pcad.lib.washington.edu/person/4236/>.

16 Ross Drulis Cusenbery, “Nevada County Courthouse Phase II Feasibility Study,” prepared for Judicial Council of California, December 2015, 3–01.

17 Ross Drulis Cusenbery, “Nevada County Courthouse Phase II Feasibility Study,” 3–01.

18 Sacramento City Directory, 1954.

19 Gretchen Steinberg, Sacramento Modern, “SacMod’s List of Notable MCM Places in the City of Sacramento,” 2017, accessed March 17, 2022 at https://sacramento.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=21&clip_id=4068&meta_id=504879.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

ARG completed a site visit to the Nevada County Courthouse on February 14, 2022 and observed the exterior of the building; the setting of the building within downtown Nevada City; associated landscape features at the site; and building interiors with the exception of some courthouses in the annex and the north portions of the courthouse and the annex, which serve as former and current holding facilities.

The intention of the visit was to gather information about the building’s architectural character, and to ascertain what building materials remain in place from the building’s phases of construction, ranging over a hundred-year period from 1864 to 1964.

At the courthouse, exterior building materials that predate the 1937 renovation were observed at the granite retaining wall surrounding the site; the low concrete wall that surrounds the building’s footprint at the south and west; and at the west wall of the north portion of the building, where ca. 1864 granite wall and some potentially original fenestration openings remain in place (Figure 6, 7). A comparison between pre-1937 historic photographs of the courthouse exterior and current photographs confirm that the courthouse does not convey its pre-1937 appearance. No building materials that predate the 1937 renovation were observed at the interior of the courthouse (north portion of the interior was not directly observed).

The exterior of the courthouse appears to retain all building materials from the 1937 renovation with the exception of replacement aluminum sliding windows in the west wall of the north portion of the building; replacement fixed aluminum frame windows on the east wall of the south portion of the building (second floor); and construction of a one-story CMU wall and enclosure at the east wall of the north portion of the building (Figure 8-11). **A comparison between historic photographs of the exterior of the courthouse after its 1937 renovation and current photographs confirms that the courthouse retains and conveys its 1937 appearance. Character-defining exterior features of the courthouse are listed in a following section.**

The interior of the courthouse retains some spatial arrangement and building materials installed during the 1937 renovation, although some areas and materials have been updated. Many original interior features that remain in place reflect the Art Moderne style of the renovation and are composed of high-



Figure 6. Granite retaining wall and low concrete wall at west side of the site, view east (ARG, 2022)

quality materials that reflect the importance of the building as a county courthouse (Figure 12-13). Character-defining interior features of the courthouse are listed in a following section.

At the annex, exterior building materials appear largely unchanged from the 1964 construction, with the exception of chain-link fencing at the exterior perimeter of the basement garage; potential additions/alterations to the penthouse roof volume; and potential installation of exterior egress and HVAC equipment at the west wall of the north portion of the building (Figure 15-18). A comparison between historic photographs of the exterior of the annex taken in 1985 (oldest currently available photograph) and current photographs confirms that the annex retains and conveys its 1964 appearance. Character-defining exterior features of the annex are listed in a following section.



Figure 7. Granite wall at west side of north portion of the courthouse building, view southeast (ARG, 2022)



Figure 8. Primary (south) facade, view north, showing the courthouse building following 1937 alterations (ARG, 2022)



Figure 9. East facade, view southwest fenestration pattern and material, including replacement second-floor windows and CMU enclosure (ARG, 2022)



Figure 10. North (rear) facade, view southwest, showing the 1937-constructed sheriff's office at left and pre-1937 jail at right, with 1937 alterations (extent of alterations unknown) (ARG, 2022)

The interior of the annex retains some spatial arrangement and building materials that appear likely to have been installed when the building was constructed in 1964, although some areas and materials have been updated (Figure 19-21). While original floor plans for the building were not available for this phase of this report, the annex was constructed to provide additional space for County offices and the jail. The annex's interior building materials reflect the building's original office use and generally reflect commonplace office finishes and materials. Character-defining interior features of the annex are listed in a following section.



Figure 11. Primary (south) and east facades, view northwest, showing 1937-constructed elements including first-floor volumes and entry details, and 1964-constructed connecting corridor to the Annex (at right) (ARG, 2022)



Figure 14. Recessed circular light fixture (ARG, 2022)



Figure 15. Annex, west facade, south portion showing courtyard between courthouse and annex, view northeast (ARG, 2022)

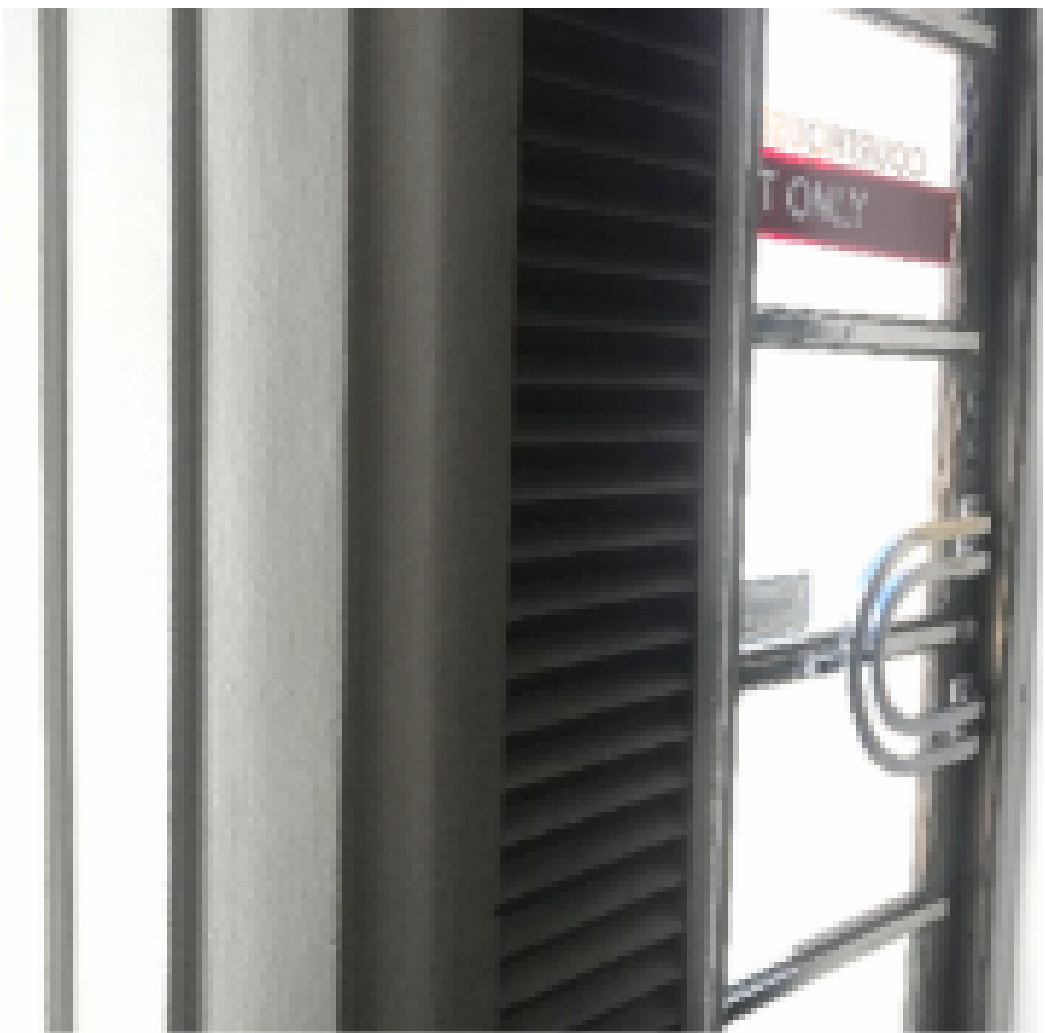


Figure 12. Detail at entry foyer including chrome door hardware and horizontally ridged vertical embellishments (ARG, 2022)



Figure 13. Detail at entry foyer including chrome lighting and vertically scored vertical embellishments (ARG, 2022)



Figure 16. Annex, south and east facades showing parking entry, view northwest (ARG, 2022)



Figure 17. Annex, north facade, view southeast (ARG, 2022)

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

ARG has made the following preliminary findings regarding the Nevada County Courthouse's eligibility for listing in the California Register. An evaluation for Nevada City City Historic Landmark is not included; **the presumption is that the building would be considered eligible as a landmark based on findings of California Register eligibility.**

Under Criterion 1 (Association with historic events or patterns of events), the courthouse portion of the building appears eligible for the California Register as the locus of Nevada County legislative activity since shortly after the founding of Nevada County in 1851. While court activities have taken place at this site since 1855, the period of significance for this finding would be 1937-1970, reflecting the earliest year to which the courthouse



Figure 18. Annex, west facade, north portion, showing HVAC, penthouse, and exterior egress, view southwest (ARG, 2022)



Figure 19. Annex, interior lobby (ARG, 2022)



Figure 20. Annex, primary public stairwell (ARG, 2022)



Figure 21. Annex, typical courtroom finishes and seating (ARG, 2022)

retains integrity through a reasonable point in the development history of the building after which the building would need to demonstrate exceptional significance, which was not uncovered through research. **The annex does not appear eligible for the California Register under Criterion 1, because it was constructed as offices and jail and has no significant association with the county's legislative activity during the historic period.**

Under Criterion 2 (Association with historically significant persons or groups), the courthouse does not appear eligible for California Register. Preliminary research did not identify anyone who worked in the building during the productive period of their career and made substantial contributions to the history of the region, state or nation.

Under Criterion 3 (Architecture), both the courthouse and the annex appear eligible for the California Register. The comprehensive 1937 renovation of the courthouse embodies the distinctive characteristics of Art Moderne style architecture. It is also the work of architect George C. Sellon who appears likely to be considered a master architect in the California context. The period of significance for this finding is 1937, the year the renovations were complete. The annex embodies the distinctive characteristics of Mid-Century Modern style architecture, as applied to the office building typology. It appears to be one of the rare examples of this architectural style in Nevada City and the region more broadly. The period of significance for this finding is 1964, the year construction was complete.

Evaluation under Criterion 4 (Information Potential) is beyond the scope of this report.

CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

Character-defining features are those elements which give a building its visual character. Such features can be elements of style, materials, and construction, as well as feeling and association with significant events and people. Character-defining features are important in conveying the significance of a historic resource; a building that no longer retains the character-defining features from its period(s) of significance does not have sufficient integrity to convey its importance. Based on the preliminary findings of significance under California Register Criteria 1 and 3, ARG would describe

the following features as character-defining. These features are further specified as being of primary and secondary importance; non-contributing features and features that may need additional research are included here as well.

COURTHOUSE EXTERIOR

PRIMARY IMPORTANCE:

- Granite retaining wall surrounding the south and west perimeter of the site;
- Low concrete wall surrounding the south and west perimeter of the building;
- South approach to the primary entrance including curved concrete steps, pipe railings, scalloped cheekwalls, and integrated circular planters atop cheekwalls;
- Footprint and massing of south portion of the building;
- Smooth cladding and embossed and/or recessed cladding details of south portion of the building including vertical scoring, false rustication, and recessed corners at upper perimeter to primary and side elevations;
- Façade detailing at the south portion of the building including freestanding letters spelling out "Courthouse," clock, and flagpole;
- Pattern of fenestration at the south portion of the building, including continuous horizontally oriented windows at the first floor, and vertically oriented double- and triple-height windows with faceted bronze hoods at upper floors;
- Fenestration material and operation at the south portion of the building, including fixed, hopper, and awning metal sash windows;
- One-story volume at the northeast portion of the building, including massing, cladding, façade arrangement, pattern of fenestration, and window material and operation.

SECONDARY IMPORTANCE:

- Footprint, massing, cladding and fenestration of the north portion of the building. While this portion of the building is the earliest constructed, it has undergone several alterations and additions and does not convey its original appearance.

NON-CONTRIBUTING/ADDITIONAL RESEARCH NEEDED:

- Metal fire escape at west façade;
- One-story CMU wall and enclosure at the east wall of the north portion of the building.

COURTHOUSE INTERIOR

PRIMARY IMPORTANCE:

- Spatial arrangement of first floor elements including double-height entry foyer, central corridor, and stairwell;
- Spatial arrangement at upper floors including stairwell, central corridor, and, at third floor, courtroom;
- Designed features and building materials in the foyer and stairwell, including chrome door hardware, stair handrails, drinking fountains, lighting fixtures, and display cabinets; fluted engaged columns; vertical embellishments with vertically scored and horizontally ridged detail; terrazzo flooring; circular portal openings at stair landings; courthouse progression mural; and additional original materials (recommended to be further investigated);
- Glazed wood doors with brass hardware and chrome headers at central corridors;
- Recessed lighting fixtures where they remain; and
- Fixtures and finishes at the third-floor courtroom which were installed in 1937 (to be further investigated).

SECONDARY IMPORTANCE:

- Curved surrounds at windows and doorways;
- Wood display frames in first floor corridor. These may be relocated elements from the earlier courthouse; the renovation of the courthouse has diminished the association these items have with their current surroundings.

NON-CONTRIBUTING/ADDITIONAL RESEARCH NEEDED:

- Tile flooring at first floor corridor;
- Spatial arrangement of side “wings” at the first floor, which have been reconfigured;
- Elevator, which was modernized in the 1970s.

ANNEX EXTERIOR

PRIMARY IMPORTANCE:

- Low concrete wall with integrated plater surrounding the south and east perimeter of the site;
- Fully glazed enclosed two-story corridor connecting courthouse and annex, comprising fixed windows, opaque spandrels, and aluminum frames;
- Two-story height and massing, including volume of corridor

- that connects to the courthouse;
- Areas of composite rock cladding at the west, east and north facades, with vertical breaks;
 - Anodized metal sconce lighting;
 - Continuous glazing at the connecting corridor, and at south and east façades, with aluminum hardware;
 - Projecting concrete floorplates which provide strong horizontal articulation; and
 - Continuous shaded glazing with aluminum hardware, mounted to projecting floorplates at the south and east façades.

SECONDARY IMPORTANCE:

- South approach to the enclosed corridor entrance, including straight concrete stair and courtyard;
- Entrance doors to the south side of the enclosed corridor;
- Narrow, vertically oriented fixed metal frame fenestration at the north portion of the building;
- Two-story glass wall and entrance doors at the west façade (appears to have been altered);
- Recessed entrance at the east façade.

NON-CONTRIBUTING/ADDITIONAL RESEARCH NEEDED:

- Chain-link fencing at the exterior perimeter of the basement garage;
- Penthouse roof volume; and
- Two flights of exterior egress and HVAC equipment at the west façade.

ANNEX INTERIOR

PRELIMINARY FINDING OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE:

- Central circulation corridor at the first floor;
- Open stair from first to second floors.

Preliminary finding of Secondary importance:

- Location, features, and finishes of courtrooms.

PRELIMINARY FINDING OF NON-CONTRIBUTING/ADDITIONAL RESEARCH NEEDED:

- Location, features, and finishes of office and support rooms.

PROPOSED PROJECT

It is expected that the HRE will result in the buildings being eligible for listing in the California Register. A resource is not required to be formally listed in order to be considered a resource under CEQA. Thus, with a determination of eligibility, there are a few considerations for the reuse.

The work may use the California State Historical Building Code (CHBC) which can assist in the rehabilitation effort by providing guidance and allowance of alternative means of meeting code requirements in a historic building. “The CHBC’s standards and regulations are intended to facilitate the rehabilitation or change of occupancy so as to preserve their original or restored elements and features, to encourage energy conservation and a cost effective approach to preservation, and to provide for reasonable safety from fire, seismic forces or other hazards for occupants and users of such buildings, structures and properties and to provide reasonable availability and usability by the physically disabled.”20

The project will be evaluated per The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation (The Standards). The Standards are a set of treatment guidelines developed by the National Park Service which aim to enable historic properties to continue to convey their historic significance while acknowledging the need for alterations or additions to meet continuing or changing uses. The Standards are used at the federal, state, and often the local level to provide guidance regarding the suitability of a proposed project that could affect a historic resource. There are ten Standards for Rehabilitation. A project that has been determined to conform with the Standards can generally be considered to be a project that will not cause a significant adverse impact to a historic resource for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (14 CCR Section 15126.4(b)(1)).

Rehabilitation assumes that at least some repair or alteration of the historic resource will be needed to provide for an efficient contemporary use. These repairs and alterations must not damage or destroy materials, features, or finishes that are important in defining the resource’s historic character. Certain treatments, if improperly applied, may cause, or accelerate physical deterioration of the resource.

The project should follow the approach hierarchy documented in the “Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings:” • Identify,

- Retain, and Preserve Historic Materials and Features;
- Protect and Maintain Historic Materials and Features;
 - Repair Historic Materials and Features; Replace Deteriorated Historic Materials and Features;
 - Design for Replacement of Missing Historic Features;
 - Alterations/Additions for the New Use.

Rehabilitation is defined by the National Park Service ‘as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values’.21 The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation are listed below:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials.

Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

The use of The Standards and the CHBC allow for a building to continue to have integrity while also providing flexibility for a new use on the site. The proposed uses should consider the character defining features and maintaining those in accordance with The Standards.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The 2022 report made recommendations for further study that would be taken in an HRE to determine the full history and significance of the buildings. These recommendations included:

A preliminary history of the court’s activity was researched using the archives of the Sacramento Bee and Google Scholar Case Law, which did not uncover any significant judges or cases with origins in the Nevada County Courthouse. While precedent-setting legal cases are generally decided in state appeals courts, state supreme court, or federal court, additional research could be conducted to determine whether any such cases may have originated in the Nevada County Courthouse, which may confer Criteria 1 or 2 significance on the building.

Additional research is required to better understand the career of

the architecture firm Mau & Barnum and whether they might be considered master architects in the local or state context.

The interior of the north portion of the courthouse was not investigated during a site visit. This is the oldest portion of the building, and it would be useful to know if any pre-1937 features and finishes remain in place. A review of historic floorplans and 1937 updated floorplans indicate interiors of this area of the building were renovated in 1937, and the area may have also been later renovated.

Building permit research could assist in the determination of some of the original versus altered interior features at the annex.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ARG. Email correspondence with Paul Rendes, Coordinator, North Central Information Center (NCIC), March 15, 2022; email correspondence with Amy H. Crain, State Historian II, Registration Unit, California State Office of Historic Preservation. February 18, 2022.

Bub—ry [illegible], William B., United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service. “National Register of Historic Places Evaluation Return Sheet, Nevada City Downtown Historic District.” September 23, 1985.

Historic Environment Consultants. “Nevada City Courthouse Project, Historic Structures Study.” 2011. Published as “Appendix E, New Nevada City Courthouse Draft Environmental Impact Report.” State Clearinghouse No. 2011032009, July 2011.

Living New Deal. “Nevada City – the Nevada County Courthouse.” Website of the Living New Deal. Accessed March 17, 2022 at https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/nevada-city-courthouse-nevada-city-ca/.

Nevada City Historical Society. “A Brief History of the Creation of Ordinance 338 – Better Known as the Historic District Ordinance.” 2021. Accessed March 16, 2022 at Planning and Historic Preservation in Nevada City – Nevada City, CA (nevadacityca.gov).

Nevada City Municipal Code, 15.12.010 – Review Standards. Accessed March 16, 2022 at Title 15 – BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION | Code of Ordinances | Nevada City, CA | Municode Library.

Pacific Coast Architectural Database. “George Clinton Sellon.” Website of Pacific Coast Architectural Database. Accessed March 17, 2022 at https://pcad.lib.washington.edu/person/4236/.

Ross Drulis Cusenbery. “Nevada County Courthouse Phase II Feasibility Study.” Prepared for Judicial Council of California, December 2015.

Sacramento Bee.

Sacramento City Directory.

Sellon, George C. “Alternations & Additions to Nevada County Court House, Nevada City, California (drawing set).” May 1, 1935.

Sellon, George C., “California Gold Rush County Streamlines its Courthouse.” Architectural Record, July 1938.

Steinberg, Gretchen, Sacramento Modern. “SacMod’s List of Notable MCM Places in the City of Sacramento.” 2017. Accessed March 17, 2022 at https://sacramento.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=21&clip_id=4068&meta_id=504879.

Tyson, Edwin L., “National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form, Nevada City Downtown Historic District.” June 5, 1985.

APPENDIX A - NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Ref 85002520

WASO Form - 177
("R" June 1984)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Nevada City Downtown Historic District
Nevada County
CALIFORNIA

Substantive Review

Working No. 100 1 4 1985
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/2/86
Date Due: 9/2/85 - 9/2/85
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 9-23-85
☐ RETURN
☐ REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☒ NR decision

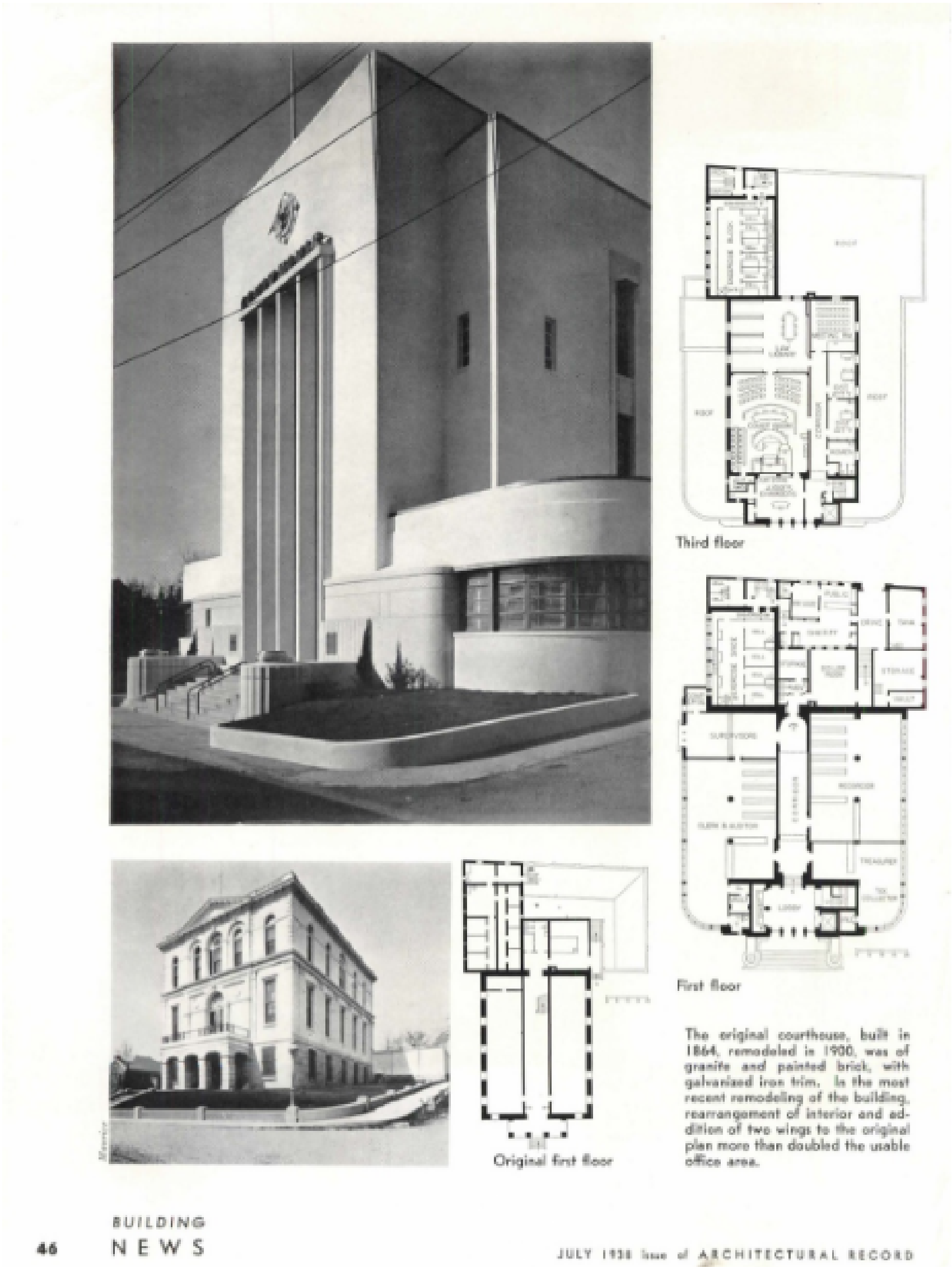
Reviewer's comments:
Good nomination except for the fact two properties - City Hall and Nevada Co. Courthouse - cannot be considered as contributing without statement to justify exception to the criteria as less than 50 years old properties. NPS plans to show acceptance at a later date and demonstrate individual significance of properties.

Recommendation: Accept A, C
Reviewer: Andrew
Discipline: Historic
Date: 9/23/85
see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name _____
2. Location _____
3. Classification
Category _____ Ownership _____ Status _____ Present Use _____
Public Acquisition Accessible
4. Owner of Property _____
5. Location of Legal Description _____
6. Representation in Existing Surveys
Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no
7. Description
Condition ☐ excellent ☐ deteriorated ☐ good ☐ ruins ☐ fair ☐ unexposed
Check one ☐ unaltered ☐ altered
Check one ☐ original site ☐ moved date _____
Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance
☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

APPENDIX B - 1938 ARCHITECTURAL RECORD ARTICAL BY GEORGE C. SELLON (3 PAGES)





View from northwest showing jail section

CALIFORNIA GOLD RUSH COUNTY STREAMLINES ITS COURTHOUSE

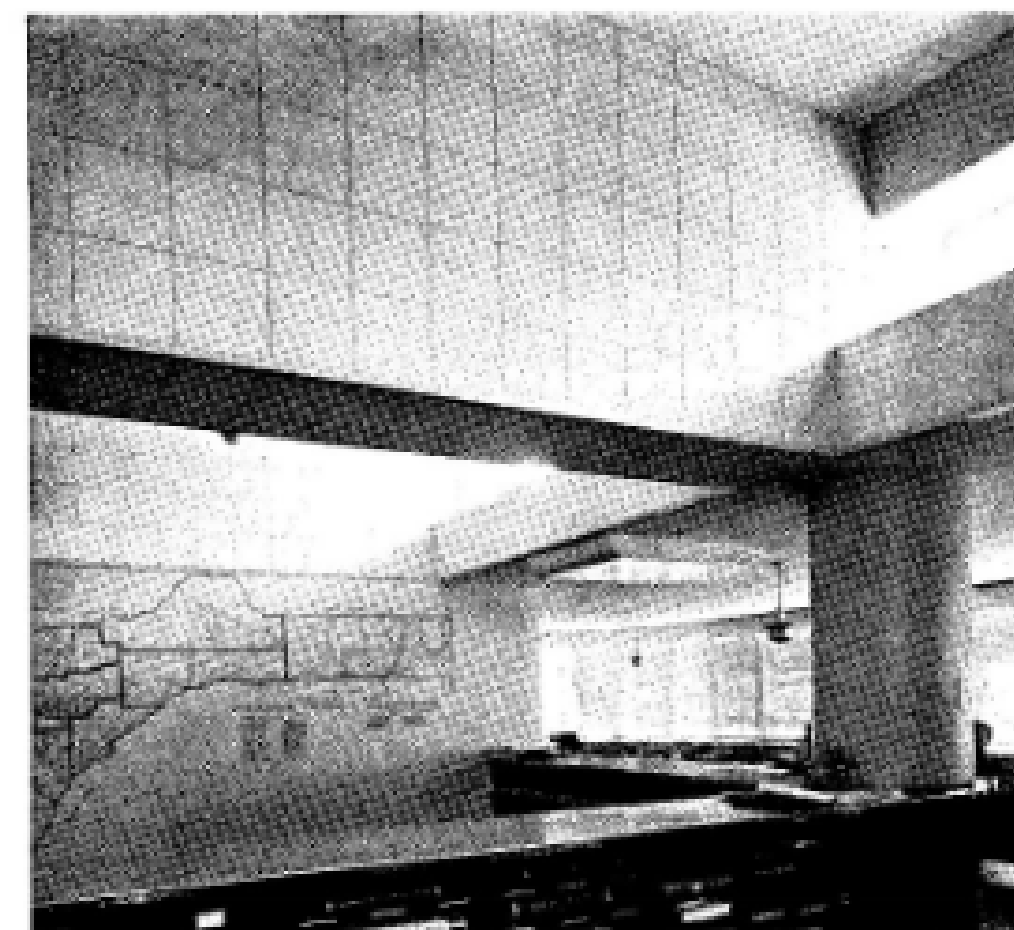
GEORGE C. SELLON
Architect

NEED FOR MORE and modern office space prompted the remodeling of the old Courthouse at Nevada City, California, erected in 1864 when California was still a mecca for gold prospectors, and Victorian was the prevailing architectural style. Still the center of a heavy gold mining district, Nevada City found its physical equipment for law enforcement inadequate, and again remodeled its courthouse—for the second time in 35 years.

In providing additional office space, the whole character of the building was changed so that the present structure bears little resemblance to the Courthouse of early gold mining days. The elaborate galvanized-iron roof, and the granite and brick walls have been replaced by copper copings and smooth concrete surfaces. The original courthouse, built for impregnability, had three-story granite walls up to the second floor, and interior partitions of brick. By removing the east and west walls (superstructure was supported by steel) and adding two-story wings on each side of the building, ample work space was obtained on the first floor. The granite walls at the north end of the original building

have been retained and serve as an effective barrier between jail and office sections; at the south end, the granite wall has been incorporated into the construction of the main lobby which projects beyond the old building line. The frame construction of the jail interior was changed to steel and concrete, and cells were modernized and equipped with Invisigard windows on exterior walls. A new office for the sheriff and a jail tank were built on the north front.

The interior underwent similar changes; all the old trim was removed, and new walnut trim and doors installed. Windows were changed from wood to steel. New furniture, of oriental woods, upholstered in blue leather, was designed by the architect especially for the building. Floors in public spaces are terrazzo; other floors are linoleum except in the Judge's Chamber, Courtroom, and Supervisor's Room, where carpet is used. All ceilings are covered with acoustical tile; lighting is indirect. Modernization included installation of an air-conditioning system to serve the entire building, and new plumbing and electrical systems. Total cost of the work came to \$210,000.



NEVADA COUNTY COURTHOUSE



COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE (above, left): Clerestory windows light the inner section of the first-floor office space. SUPERVISOR'S ROOM (below, left): walls, gray-green with cream striping; ceiling, cream; carpet, dark apricot. LOBBY (below): walls, gray-green; ceiling, burnished aluminum leaf; floor, terrazzo in green and red design; light fixtures and all trim, satin aluminum.



HISTORIC PRESERVATION

APPROACH

Option 1 will be evaluated per the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation (the Standards). The Standards are a set of treatment guidelines developed by the National Park Service which aim to enable historic properties to continue to convey their historic significance while acknowledging the need for alterations or additions to meet continuing or changing uses. The Standards are used at the federal, state, and often the local level to provide guidance regarding the suitability of a proposed project that could affect a historic resource. A project that has been determined to conform with the Standards can generally be considered to be a project that will not cause a significant adverse impact to a historic resource for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (14 CCR Section 15126.4(b)(1)).

The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation

The Standards (Department of Interior regulations, 36 CFR 67) pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior, related landscape features and the building’s site and environment as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction. The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

The rehabilitation of the Nevada City Courthouse would continue the current use of the property as a courthouse. As such, Option 1 complies with Standard 1.

2 . The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

As currently designed, Option 1 retains a substantial proportion of the character-defining features of the Courthouse and Annex buildings. At the Courthouse, Option 1 retains most exterior features of primary importance, including the massing, fenestration, and façade detailing of the south and side elevations, as well as the granite and concrete retaining walls around the building. Likewise, Option 1 retains most exterior features of primary importance at the Annex, including the

glazed corridor connecting the two buildings, and the Annex’s distinctive continuous glazing and areas of composite rock cladding. New exterior construction included in Option 1 is generally located and scaled appropriately in a manner not to compete with or diminish the historic expression of the architecture of the Courthouse and Annex; however, the design of the new addition to the north side of the courthouse could be improved by the addition of a small setback or recessed hyphen on the east façade, between the massing of the original building and the massing of new construction. This change would enable the building to continue to convey its historic massing.

Option 1 will demolish one exterior feature of primary importance at the Courthouse, namely the one-story volume at the northeast portion of the building, constructed as part of the 1937 renovations to serve as the office for the sheriff and a jail tank. Option 1 also includes substantial changes to the interior of the primary entry foyer. This area includes the building’s most dense concentration of features of primary importance, ranging from its spatial arrangement in relation to the central corridor and stairwell, to designed features and materials, including terrazzo flooring (foyer and stairwell); chrome door hardware, stair handrails, drinking fountains, lighting fixtures, and display cabinets; fluted engaged columns; vertical embellishments with vertically scored and horizontally ridged detail; circular portal openings at stair landings; and the courthouse progression mural. Alterations within the foyer and central first-floor circulation corridor of the Courthouse, and the removal of the building’s original stairwell represent substantial changes to an area dense with primary character-defining features.

At the Annex, Option 1 does not remove historic materials or alter features and spaces that characterize the building. Option 1 includes substantial changes to interior features at the Annex; however, findings regarding the importance of interior features at the Annex are preliminary, and interior alterations are not likely to have a substantial impact on the ability of the Annex to convey its historic significance.

As currently designed, Option 1 does not comply with Standard 2. Revisions to Option 1 that incorporated differentiation between the massing of new and old construction at the north side of the east façade, and that retained a greater amount of historic fabric within the foyer and central corridor, could improve the project’s ability to comply with Standard 2.

3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

Option 1 does not include the construction of any conjectural features or incorporate any architectural elements from other buildings. As such Option 1 complies with Standard 3.

4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be re-tainedand preserved.

There have been no changes to the Nevada County Courthouse that have acquired historic significance outside of the period(s) of significance in their own right. As such, Option 1 complies with Standard 4.

5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the property shall be preserved.

As currently designed, Option 1 retains most of the distinctive features, finishes, and examples of craftsmanship that constitute features of primary importance of the exterior of the Courthouse, including the array of façade detailing of the south and side elevations which enable the building to convey its Art Moderne style architecture, as well as the south approach to the primary entrance, which also includes many Art Moderne style features, and the granite retaining walls around the building, which reflect craftsmanship dating to the building’s earliest construction. Likewise, Option 1 retains the more reserved distinctive features, finishes, and examples of craftsmanship that constitute features of primary importance of the exterior of the Annex, including the distinctive continuous glazing and areas of composite rock cladding. New exterior construction included in Option 1 is generally located in a manner that retains the vast majority of the buildings’ features, finishes, and examples of craftsmanship.

As previously introduced in the discussion of Standard 2, Option 1 includes substantial changes to the interior of the primary entry foyer. This area includes the building’s most dense concentration of distinctive features, finishes, and examples of craftsmanship of primary importance, including designed features and materials such as terrazzo flooring (foyer and stairwell); chrome door hardware, stair handrails, drinking fountains, lighting fixtures, and display cabinets; fluted engaged columns; vertical embellishments with vertically scored and horizontally ridged detail; circular portal openings at stair landings; and the courthouse progression mural. Alterations within the primary entry foyer of the Courthouse, and the removal of the building’s original stairwell, represent substantial changes to an area dense with primary distinctive features, finishes, and examples of craftsmanship.

At the Annex, Option 1 does not remove distinctive features, finishes, and examples of craftsmanship. Option 1 includes substantial changes to interior features at the Annex; however, findings regarding the importance of inte-rior

features at the Annex are preliminary, and interior alterations are not likely to have a substantial impact on the ability of the Annex to convey its historic significance.

As currently designed, Option 1 does not comply with Standard 5. Revisions to Option 1 that retained a greater amount of historic fabric within the primary entry foyer and stairwell could improve the project’s ability to comply with Standard 5.

6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

The Courthouse is in fair condition allowing most historic and character-defining features to be repaired rather than replaced. Where replacement of a historic feature is determined to be necessary, Option 1 will comply with Standard 6 presuming that new features match historic features in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

Option 1 may include surface cleaning of the Courthouse and Annex. When surface cleaning is determined to be necessary, Option 1 will comply with Standard 6 presuming no harsh chemical or physical treatments that may damage historic features of the building are used, and that the historic features of the building are cleaned using the gentlest means possible.

8. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

Option 1 may include excavation and as such may encounter archaeological resources. If any archaeological resources are discovered during the course of the project, Option 1 will comply with Standard 8 presuming work is halted and local, county, and state protocols regarding archaeological resources are followed.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

As currently designed, Option 1 includes new additions and exterior alterations that retain a substantial proportion of the historic materials that characterize the Courthouse and Annex. At the Courthouse, demolition is focused at the north portion of the building, including the one-story volume at the northeast portion of the building, which is considered a feature of primary importance, and the three-story volume which formerly housed the jail, which is considered a features of secondary importance due to extensive alterations. Construction of a new three-story volume at the north portion of the building will have a similar footprint as the demolished portions of the building, and is sited in a way to preserve most of the Courthouse’s historic materials and its historic massing and appearance. At the primary (south) façade, insertion of a new entry door at the primary (south) façade is offset in a way to minimize its impact on the overall design of the primary façade.

The massing of new construction at the north side of the Courthouse building could be improved by the addition of a small setback or recessed hyphen on the east façade, between the massing of the original building and the massing of new construction. This change would enable the building to continue to convey its historic massing. Additionally, the design of the new addition should be compatible in style with the existing building, and its mass and shape should read as secondary to the historic structure.

As previously introduced, Option 1 includes demolition that will cause substantial changes to the interior of the primary entry foyer. This area includes the building’s most dense concentration of features of primary importance, ranging from its spatial arrangement in relation to the central corridor and stairwell, to designed features and materials, including terrazzo flooring (foyer and stairwell); chrome door hardware, stair handrails, drinking fountains, lighting fixtures, and display cabinets; fluted engaged columns; vertical embellishments with vertically scored and horizontally ridged detail; circular portal openings at stair landings; and the courthouse progression mural. Alterations within the foyer and central first-floor circulation corridor of the Courthouse, and the removal of the building’s original stairwell represent substantial changes to an area dense with primary character-defining features.

At the Annex, Option 1 does not include any new additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction that affect exterior features of primary importance, and planned changes will have limited impact to exterior features of secondary importance. Option 1 includes substantial changes to interior features at the Annex; however, findings regarding the

importance of interior features at the Annex are preliminary, and interior alterations are not likely to have a substantial impact on the ability of the Annex to convey its historic significance.

As designed, Option 1 does not comply with Standard 9. Revisions to Option 1 that incorporated differentiation between the massing of new and old construction at the north side of the east façade, and that retained a greater amount of historic fabric within the foyer and central corridor, could improve the project’s ability to comply with Standard 9.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Shall the construction of Option 1 be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the Courthouse building would be impaired, due to the demolition of one exterior feature of primary importance, namely the one-story volume at the northeast portion of the building, and the demolition of a dense concentration of interior features of primary importance at the entry foyer and the interior stairwell. While the one-story volume, located at the rear façade of the building and constructed largely of concrete, could potentially be satisfactorily reconstructed in the future if so desired, the historic material quality and skilled period workmanship reflected in the foyer and stairwell are essentially unreproducible.

General Recommendations for Rehabilitation

Original or historic building materials, also known as historic fabric, contribute to the significance of a building because they inform the degree of architectural integrity a building retains. Repairs should be visually consistent to retain character-defining features and physically compatible to minimize loss of and damage to historic building materials. All repairs should comply with The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings (The Standards) and on the Code of Ethics of the American Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC).

The Standards provide general information for stewards of historic resources to determine appropriate treatments. They are intentionally broad in scope to apply to a wide range of circumstances and are designed to enhance the understanding of basic preservation principles. The Standards are neither technical nor prescriptive but are intended to promote responsible preservation practices that ensure continued protection of historic resources.

Furthermore, the Code of the Ethics of AIC calls for treatments

to be “suitable to the preservation of the aesthetic, conceptual, and physical characteristics of the cultural property.” In some cases, non-intervention is the most appropriate treatment for the preservation of a feature or structure. The Code of Ethics also requires an “informed respect for the cultural property, its unique character and significance, and the people or person who created it.” In the case of the Nevada City Courthouse, previous additions and alterations that complement the historic building should also be respected.

In general, any repair, restoration, rehabilitation, replication, or maintenance should have a minimal impact on the historic fabric of the Nevada City Courthouse. Deficiencies threatening life and safety, or that may cause further deterioration should be corrected immediately. The value of any other improvements should be weighed against potential impacts to the building’s historic integrity.

Recommendations

- Clean surfaces using the gentlest means possible. Per the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, a cleaning program should not strive to achieve completely clean surfaces or a “like new” appearance. A certain level of patina on a historic building is acceptable and the attempted removal of soiling and staining to a “like new” level tends to damage the substrate being cleaned. Typically, removing 85 percent or less of soiling or staining is recommended.
- Inspect exterior plaster surfaces by sounding in order to locate hollow spots indicating poor bonding to the substrate. Repair debonded plaster, cracks, and spalls.
- Rehabilitate historic doors to remain
- Rehabilitate historic windows
- Replace all building sealant
- Repaint building to match historic colors as determined by paint analysis.
- Restore historic finishes in primary character defining features to remain

ECONOMIC STUDY

REPORT PURPOSE

Strategic Economics was engaged to evaluate the role of the Nevada County Courthouse within Nevada City’s economy in order to identify its monetary contributions to local business activity. The current Nevada County Courthouse is a focal point for the local business community, as a prominent employer and distinctive building within downtown Nevada City. Because of this role, the local community requested that the economic implications of a potential courthouse relocation be considered as part of any evaluation of courthouse alternatives. For this purpose, Strategic Economics was engaged to evaluate the role of the existing courthouse within the Nevada City economy and how each of the potential options might impact economic activity within the city. This economic impact evaluation was conducted as part of the broader evaluation of three courthouse alternatives: renovating the existing courthouse; replacing the existing courthouse; or relocating the courthouse to a new site.

REPORT OVERVIEW

Given that the courthouse replacement options did not represent a significant new input to the Nevada City economy, a standardized economic impact assessment model was not applicable to measuring the economic differences among the three courthouse replacement options. Economic impact analyses are often structured to measure the impact of very large new public investment, and the impacts are typically reported for a relatively large geography, such as a county. In this case, all three options for the courthouse would represent the same facility size and activities and all three would retain these activities in Nevada City.

The most salient difference among the three options was their location. Options 1 and 2 would retain the courthouse in its historic location while Option 3 would entail moving the courthouse to a site in the vicinity of the Nevada County Government Center located on Maidu Avenue.

According to local stakeholders and key informants, the primary benefit to having the courthouse at its current location is the easy walk to downtown. Courthouse employees and visitors patronize many downtown businesses, especially during the times of day, days of the week, and seasons of the year when there are fewer tourists and other local visitors to downtown. Based on this economic relationship, the economic impact analysis focused on

the potential impact the three replacement options would have on downtown Nevada City businesses—as measured by retail sales activity.

To understand more specifically what impact the current courthouse has on downtown businesses, Strategic Economics conducted a series of focus groups and stakeholder interviews. Participants were asked to estimate the “order of magnitude” percentage of their business represented by courthouse employees and visitors. Because different types of businesses had varying levels of customer spending from the courthouse, the analysis was structured to reflect those differences as well.

To help further calibrate the stakeholder estimates of the courthouse on their business, Strategic Economics also gathered information from other studies, and compiled case studies of communities elsewhere in California that have experienced similar courthouse relocations.

REPORT METHODOLOGY

The economic impact analysis was conducted in four parts:

1. Strategic Economics reviewed the existing Nevada City economy, analyzed trends in seasonal retail spending, identified the role of downtown Nevada City within the city’s economy, and reviewed the real estate and business context within which the courthouse operates.
 - a. Quarterly sales tax collections data were used to identify the extent to which the courthouse may help balance downtown sales tax activity in a tourism-dependent economy.
2. Stakeholder meetings and interviews were conducted to gather insights on opinions about the courthouse and collect data about fluctuations in businesses’ sales throughout the day by time of the week.
 - a. As part of these interviews, stakeholders were asked to respond to a structured interview protocol and provide data about fluctuations in their businesses’ sales by time of day and day of the week.
3. Strategic Economics conducted case studies and literature review to identify lessons from other courthouse or large institution relocations.

4. Lastly, Strategic Economics combined the findings from the previous three sections into the economic impact analysis, based on a combination of the quantitative data related to downtown sales activity and business owner accounts related to how the court impacts their daily sales.

- a. This analysis was also informed by other research topics such as building vacancy, tourism, and pedestrian accessibility.
- b. However, the primary economic impact calculation focused exclusively on the quantitative data related to the courthouse’s impact on business sales.

PROJECT FINDINGS

The following key takeaways were revealed throughout the first three parts of analysis:

- The courthouse is an important economic generator for downtown Nevada City and helps balance business revenue, which fluctuates seasonally because of tourism, the other major economic generator for downtown.
- Downtown Nevada City is a vital part of the city’s identity, with its cultural district and historic district designations.
 - A prominent concern among stakeholders in Nevada City and the comparison community of Sonora was the potential vacancy or re-use of the courthouse building in the event of a courthouse move. This was not a concern in the comparison community of Susanville, where the old courthouse has been used by the County Government and is currently undergoing renovations.
- The pandemic has resulted in the closure of some restaurant and retail establishments in downtown Nevada City, as well as reducing demand for office space.
- Based on their business accounts and anecdotal estimations, downtown restaurant owners estimated that approximately 15 percent of weekday restaurant sales are attributable to the courthouse, and nearly 11 percent of annual sales.
- Based on the economic impact analysis, the presence of the courthouse currently accounts for approximately \$2.4 million in annual sales for downtown Nevada City Businesses.
 - Moving the courthouse is projected to result in an estimated 8.4 percent reduction in sales for downtown Nevada City restaurants, and 6.3 percent of restaurant sales citywide. While it should be emphasized that this is an estimate, it could lead to significant economic impacts for the city.

- More than 75 percent of Nevada City’s total restaurant sales come from downtown.

- Restaurants make up around 17 percent of Nevada City’s total sales.

- In total, the direct economic impacts of a courthouse move would be nearly \$1.8 million in lost sales, or roughly 5.8 percent of all downtown sales.

- While impacts of this scale would not decimate downtown businesses, they could further disrupt a market that has already faced challenges with the pandemic and the Great Recession. For example, approximately 40 percent of all downtown retail establishments closed in 2020 or 2021.

- These negative impacts could be substantially alleviated through successful redevelopment of the existing courthouse building, though the extent of this alleviation would depend on the type of building use.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Option 1 would continue to support approximately 8.5 percent of downtown business activity (\$2.6 million).

By combining the preservation of the existing art-deco façade with a renewed institutional commitment to downtown Nevada City, Option One would have a net-neutral on downtown. In addition, the building would retain its historic character, thus continuing to contribute to the existing historic district as well as providing a visual anchor to the Cultural District.

OPTION 2
ARCHITECTURE

The Existing Conditions for Option 2 are identical to Option 1.

APPROACH

The approach to Option 2 involves the demolition and replacement of the existing Courthouse with a new building. Option 2 has the benefit of a completely new building footprint that enables the design to be customized to meet ever changing needs.

SITE

Option 2 mitigates some of the constraints of the original site to efficiently accommodate a new building, including the various grade changes described in Option 1. Option 2 includes a raised Plaza on the ground level to improve overall site access and to accommodate access for non-able-bodied users. The Plaza also provides the opportunity to activate the space and install landscaping and/or public art. This opportunity is not included in Option 2.

This study assumes the project will acquire an approximate 2,000-square foot lot on which a two-level parking structure would be built.

The path of travel for non-able-bodied persons is indicated along the east of the site and is linked to the Plaza. Vehicular access to parking is to the east of the site.

BUILDING MASSING

The building massing for Option 2 is substantially different from the existing Courthouse. The new building rises three stories tall with one story below-grade and features a tower entry that is taller than the rest of the building. This tower emulates the existing entry of the original Courthouse, establishing a civic presence and welcoming entry experience, while retaining the historic fabric of the current conditions. The tower and single-story main entrance extend from the rest of the building to the south.

FLOOR PLANS

Option 2 reduces the grade changes at the Basement Level from two changes to one and eliminates all grade changes above-ground.



Site Diagram



Axonometric Massing Diagram



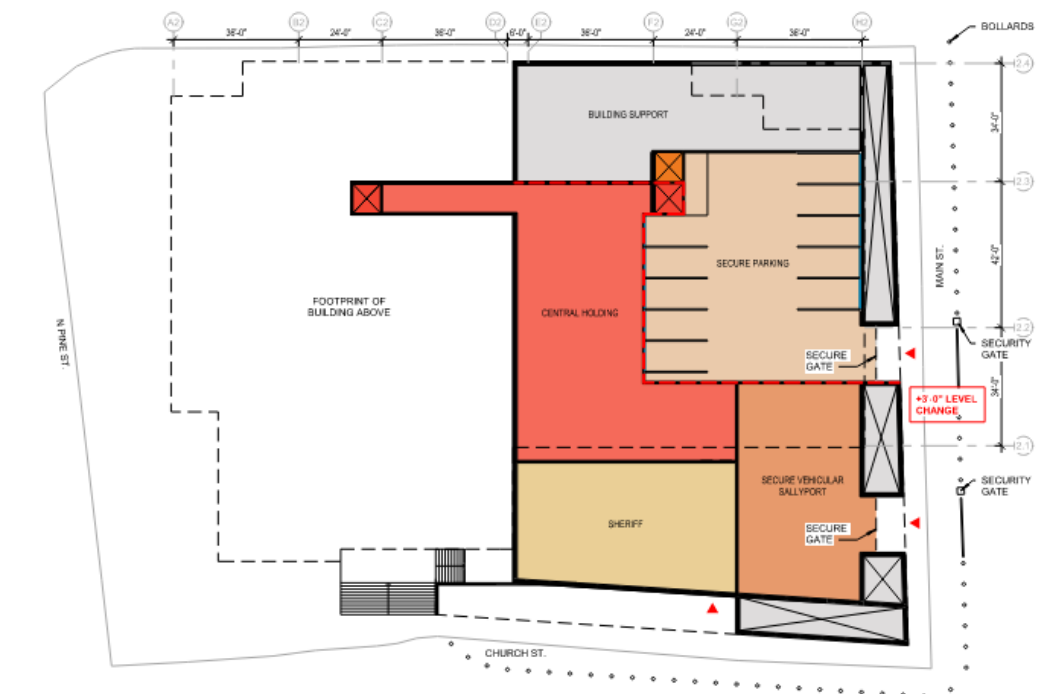
Massing Diagram - View from Main Street



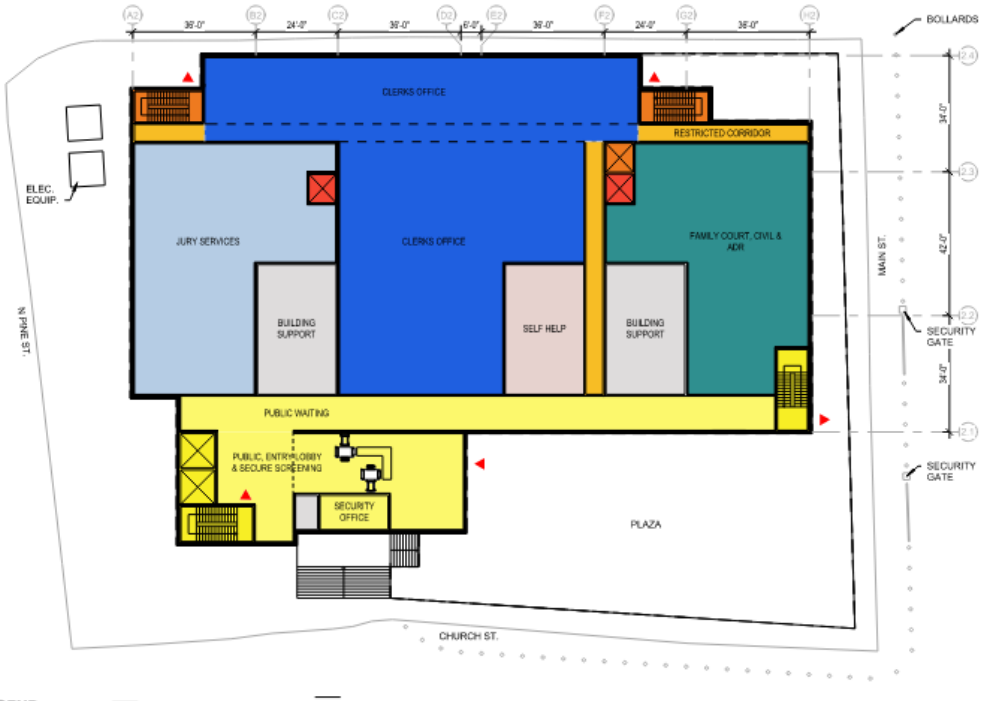
Massing Diagram - View from North Pine Street



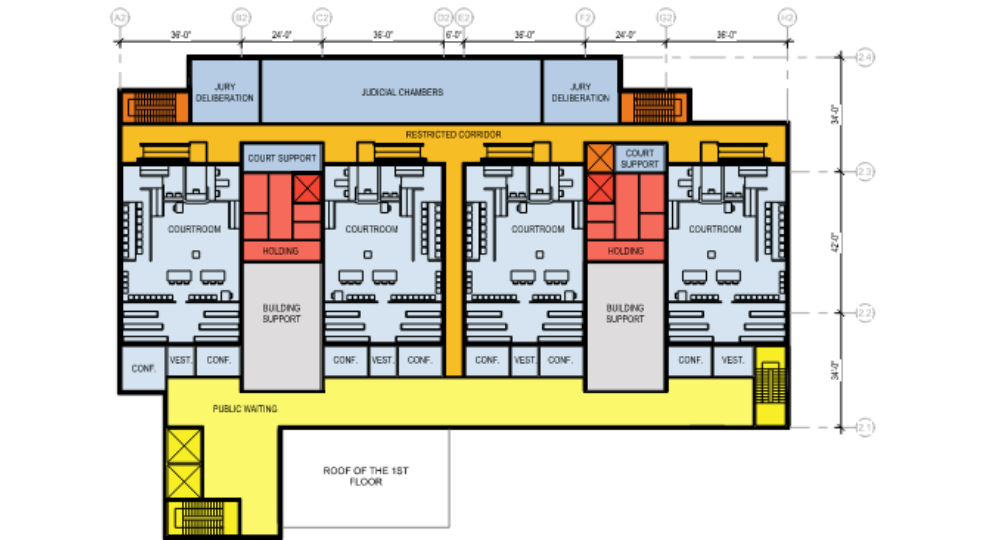
Massing Diagram - View from Winter Street



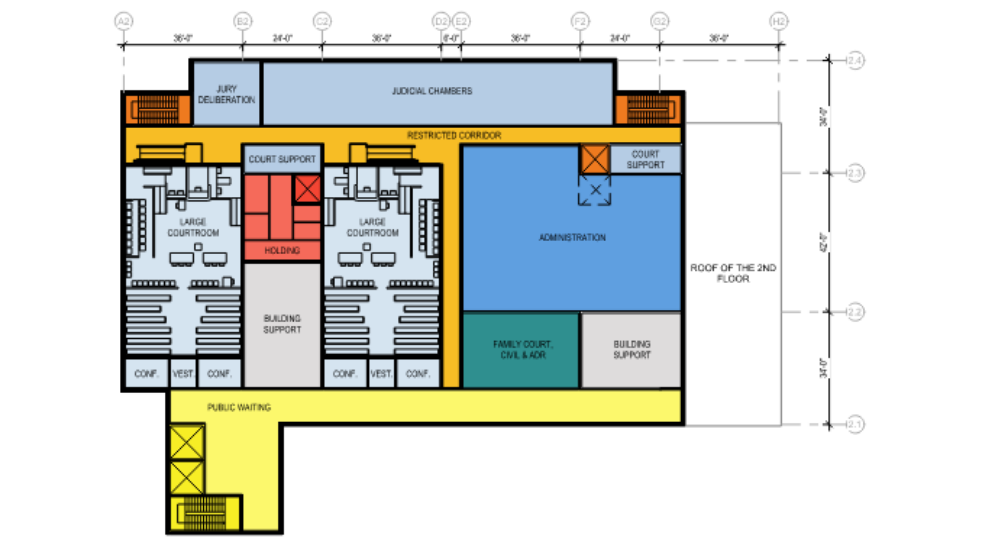
Floor Plan - Basement



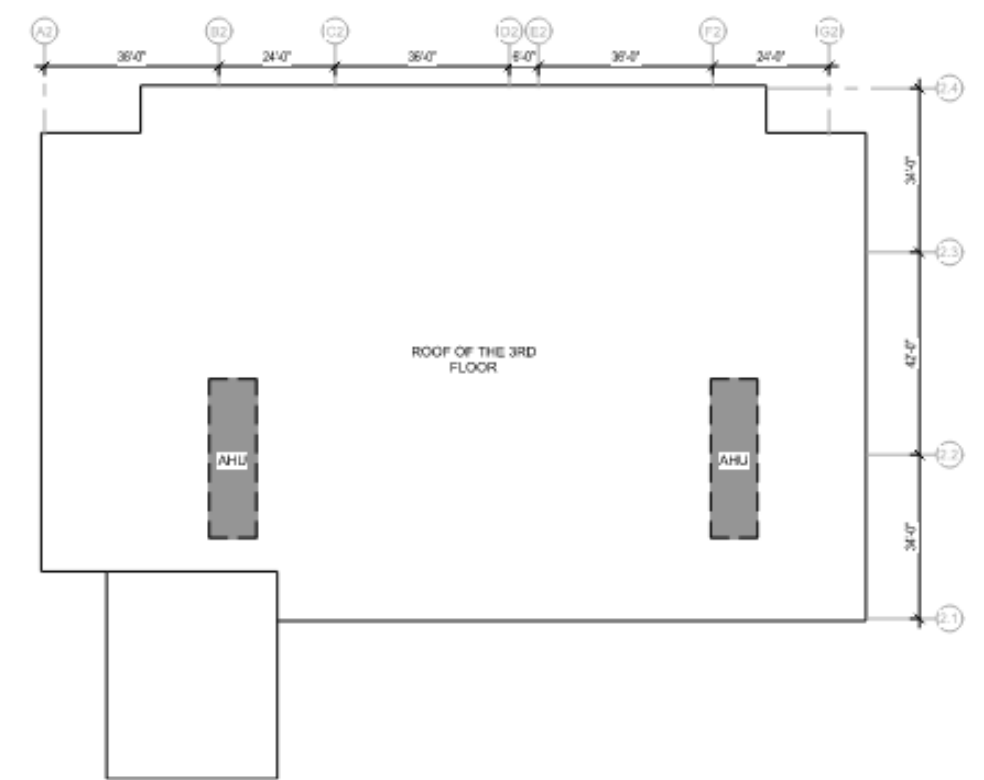
Floor Plan - Level 1



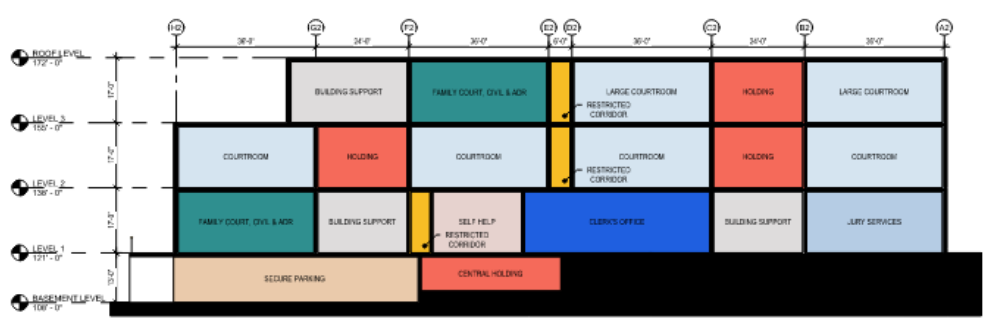
Floor Plan - Level 2



Floor Plan - Level 3



Floor Plan – Roof Plan



Building Section

SITE/CIVIL ENGINEERING

The Existing Conditions for Option 2 are identical to Option 1.

SITE ACCESS, PARKING AND SITE IMPROVEMENTS

New accessible paths will be required for the Courthouse building, per California Building Code. Improvements shall meet applicable State and Federal requirements.

Because of the site’s terrain, new accessible ramps and handrails are anticipated to be required.

An accessible path of travel from the new parking garage to the Courthouse will be located along Main Street. The path of travel will be raised above grade relative to Main Street, providing access to the main entry on Church Street. Existing sidewalks near the building will be replaced to allow for construction of the building.

The existing parking area near the Washington and Pine Street intersection will be converted into a utility yard for new electrical equipment. The accessible parking spaces within this

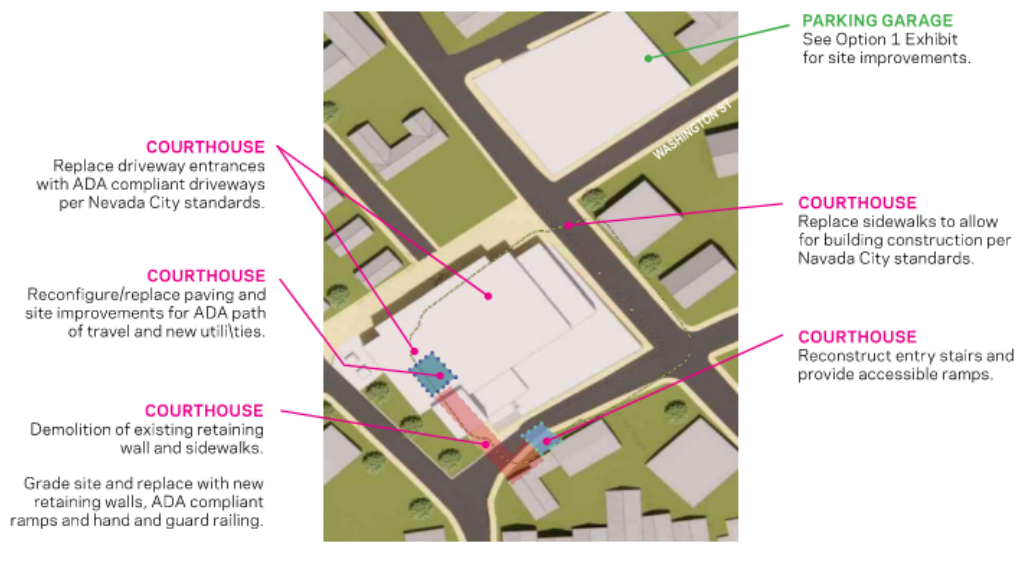
area will be relocated into the new parking garage.

A new parking garage will provide new parking including accessible stalls for the facility in an yet to be determined location. The parking is expected to be provided on a multi-story garage with access to each level provided by two separate entrances. Significant excavation will be required to construct the garage, and the new facility will retain soil depths of approximately 20 to 25 feet.

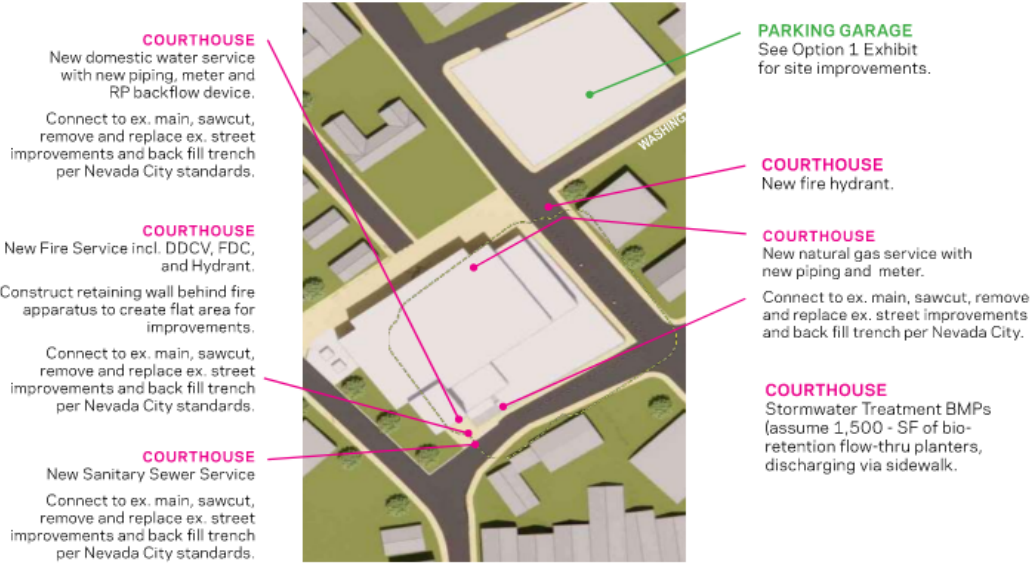
Based on an existing geotechnical report prepared for the courthouse site, weathered rock and boulders are expected to be encountered during excavation.

Washington Street will be closed to vehicular traffic adjacent to the site. Removable bollards or other improvements will be placed on either end of the street that can be removed for fire access.

New bollards offset 10 feet from the face of curb along Main Street will be required.



Site Improvements Concept



Site Utilites Concept

PROPOSED UTILITIES

SANITARY SEWER

The new Courthouse will require a sanitary sewer connection connecting to the existing public infrastructure in nearby streets. The system is anticipated to flow via gravity and will be sized to accommodate the sewer demands of the building in accordance with the California Plumbing Code.

The new parking garage will require a sewer connection serving garage drainage, connecting to public mains. The system will include a sand/oil separator.

STORM DRAINAGE

Storm drainage requirements are prescribed by Nevada County Land Use and Development Code.

Projects in the City are typically required to install detention and treatment facilities to mitigate peak increases in stormwater runoff. Per Nevada County Code, where determined necessary, retention/detention facilities shall be designed to protect downstream users and ensure that the water surface returns to its base elevation within 24 hours after the storm event.

Stormwater treatment and detention shall be provided to meet Nevada City stormwater requirements.

Additional stormwater treatment goals may be necessary, up to treatment of the 98th Percentile storm runoff in order to achieve Rainwater Management (SS C4) LEED points.

If the site improvements result in an acre or more of disturbed area, the project will require a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) be processed with the State of California to obtain coverage under the Construction General Permit prior to construction.

DOMESTIC WATER AND FIRE

The new Courthouse will require a new fire suppression sprinkler system. The new system shall conform with the Nevada City Code of Ordinances, California Fire Code, and NFPA 13.

Separate fire service connections will be required for the new Courthouse and parking garage. The connections will include a Double Detector Check Valve assembly at the connection to the public main and Fire Department Connection.

Private fire service mains shall conform with NFPA 24, capable of supplying the required fire flow for fire protection.

The fire service will require a new fire department connection (FDC). FDC’s shall be installed in accordance with the NFPA standard applicable to the system design and shall be located

unobstructed from a fire lane. A fire hydrant shall be located near the FDC per Nevada City Fire and California Fire Code requirements.

Additional fire hydrants will be required in order to provide coverage around the building and near Fire Department Connections per Nevada City Fire and California Fire Code.

The Courthouse building will require a new domestic water service connecting to the public water system within the street. The new service will include a meter and reduced pressure backflow assembly at the connection to the public main, adequately sized for the building. Meter and backflow locations should be coordinated with Nevada City.

GAS DISTRIBUTION

A new gas service will be required for the new Courthouse building including piping and meters adequately sized for the buildings. The improvements shall be in accordance with PG&E standards. The meter location will require coordination with PG&E.

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING

For Option 2, the existing structures are removed from the site to allow for preparation of the existing city site for construction of the new facilities. Demolition and removal of existing facilities are required along with preparation of the site for construction of the new facility.

The existing site has substantial grade elevation differences across its area. The site elevations is partly mitigated by changes in floor elevation and partly by alignment of building levels with the uphill side of the site, as well as by site excavation and use of retaining walls to protect interior spaces and exterior improvements.

Based on available soil reports, excavation at the site is anticipated to be difficult due to weathered rock and boulders which will likely be encountered and require removal. Additionally, some moderately compressible soils near the surface require over excavation and recompaction to reduce the magnitude of anticipated settlements.

Protection of streets, utilities and other offsite improvements including shoring are required along the edge of the site as the excavation is performed and new perimeter site retaining walls are installed.

APPROACH

The structural approach for Option 2 is to maximize the site by installing perimeter retaining walls where needed to establish off site and on-site grades suitable for the improvements. These retaining walls are incorporated into the Plaza-level structural system. Above this level, the approach is to provide a straightforward and efficient structural system to meet the 2020 California Trial Court Facilities Standards and accommodate the needs of the other design disciplines in one building structure.

CONCEPT DESIGN

Option 2 utilizes reinforced concrete slabs, retaining walls and foundations at the Basement and the Plaza level and a steel moment resisting frame structure for the levels above.

The Basement Level includes 12-inch-thick reinforced concrete walls and retaining walls along the perimeter with integral concrete pilasters aligned with the steel frame columns above. Interior walls are 8-inch-thick reinforced concrete walls dividing the secure spaces. The floor at the ground level is a 5-inch-thick reinforced concrete slab on ground tied into necessary short retaining walls for the grade differences.

The Plaza-level slab over parking below has mild reinforcing and is approximately 10 to 12 inches thick. It has integral concrete beams to transfer out the gravity frame lines above to perimeter and interior walls below. Beams may also be necessary where planters or thickened seating areas occur at the plaza level above. The perimeter of the Plaza has an integral cast in place concrete guardrail / wall that is approximately 6 inches thick along its elevated edges. The west half of the plaza level is on-grade and consists of a concrete slab on grade installed over 4 inches of crushed rock over vapor retarder with shallow spread footings and grade beams at the framed resistance lines above. Some additional retaining walls may be required at the south stairways and at the elevator pits.

The three levels of structural system above the Plaza level are anticipated to consist of a structural steel framed system with Special Steel Moment-Resisting Frames (SSMRF) for resisting lateral forces. An advantage of this system is its flexibility from the architectural perspective while providing a high performance, ductile lateral force resisting system. The SSMRF system provides an open floor plate by not requiring interior structural walls and allows for the most flexibility future space planning. The SSMRF system also integrates optimally with mechanical, electrical, and telecommunications systems, allowing associated ductwork and conduits located above the

ceilings to run more freely. All of the special requirements of a courthouse building, including progressive collapse prevention, are met with this open system.

To accommodate the long spans required due the geometry of the courtrooms, the steel framing option consists of reinforced composite concrete floor decks. Typical floors have 4½-inch-thick concrete fill over 3-inch metal deck for a total slab thickness of 7½ inches. This slab section spans to structural steel floor beams and provides the required two-hour fire rating without applying fireproofing to the underside of the deck. The slab system provides appropriate vibration characteristics due to the mass and stiffness of the composite metal deck and concrete. The beams are likely W18 beams spaced at 10 feet on center maximum and spanning about 30 feet. The girders are likely W27 or W30 members spanning approximately 22 feet to 39 feet.

Elevated Floors at Mechanical Equipment Rooms are likely comprised of 7-inch normal weight concrete fill over 3-inch metal deck (total slab thickness of 10 inches) spanning a maximum of 10 feet to composite steel wide-flange beams. This provides a three-hour fire rating without any sprayed-on fireproofing at the underside of the metal deck and satisfies the acoustical recommendations for mechanical equipment above and below occupied spaces. Beams, girders, and columns are fireproofed throughout the building.

The main roof assembly is likely comprised of concrete over metal deck, rigid insulation and surface roofing mate-rial.The steel framing slopes to the roof drains to minimize crickets and tapered insulation. The roof deck is likely comprised of 4-inch normal weight reinforced concrete fill over 2-inch metal deck (total slab thickness of 6 inches) spanning a maximum of 8 feet to composite steel wide-flange beams. This provides a 1½ hour fire rating without any sprayed-applied fireproofing at the underside of the metal deck. Typical roof beams are W16 or W18 members spanning approximately 30 feet. Roof girders are W21 or W24 members spanning approximately 22 feet to 39 feet. Beams, girders, and columns are fireproofed throughout the building.

The lateral force resisting frames are located along the building perimeter and at an interior building line near the mid-length of the building. Three frames are anticipated on each of the building sides with two frames at the center gridline in the transverse direction (Grid D3). The lateral resisting frames are likely comprised of W33 beams and W24 columns. Roof moment frame beams shall be no deeper than W30 members. The SSMRF members at the perimeter satisfy the progressive collapse requirements at the perimeter of the building. Steel beams and girders would be utilized as collector and chord members

throughout the structure.

Alternate-path analysis methods for demonstrating a structure’s resistance to progressive collapse shall conform to Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC) 4-023-03. These requirements will work efficiently with the ductile structural steel moment frames located around the perimeter of the structure as noted previously. Additional steel columns can be added around the perimeter to help mitigate the effects on the structure. In addition, a Threat Assessment study is provided that will inform whether a performance-based design is required for a direct blast load, the level of protection shall meet the Protective Design Center PDC-TR 06-08 Single Degree of Freedom Structural Response Limits for Antiterrorism Design requirements.

MECHANICAL AND PLUMBING ENGINEERING

YARD AREA

All available site area is anticipated to be used with little available space for a mechanical yard. It is anticipated that the outdoor cooling towers will need to be located on the roof.

SITE PRESSURE

Site pressure is reported to be between 65 and 80 psi. It is assumed that a domestic water booster pump and fire pump will not be required.

CONCEPT DESIGN

CENTRAL UTILITY PLANT

The new building will be served by a new central utility plant with indoor water-cooled chillers, and gas-fired boilers, anticipated at a similar location to the current units in the basement. Equipment sizing is anticipated to be similar to Option 1.

AIR-HANDLING SYSTEMS

The building will be served by two new (approx. 38,000 cfm) air-handling units located on the roof.

HVAC DISTRIBUTION

Duct distribution will be via vertical shafts to terminal vav boxes. Hot water reheat will be provided for perimeter boxes. Ductwork will be lined downstream of fans and vav boxes for noise control. No smoke control systems are anticipated to be required. Hydronic heating hot water and chilled water system piping will be steel or copper piping and designed for low-pressure loss.

HVAC CONTROLS

A new HVAC Building Management System (BMS) control system will be provided to serve all mechanical systems. The system will be compliant with the JCC BMS specification requirements

with all points graphically displayed on the front-end computer system.

CENTRAL PLUMBING EQUIPMENT

A central gas water heater and circulation pump distributes domestic hot water to the fixtures at both buildings.

PLUMBING FIXTURES

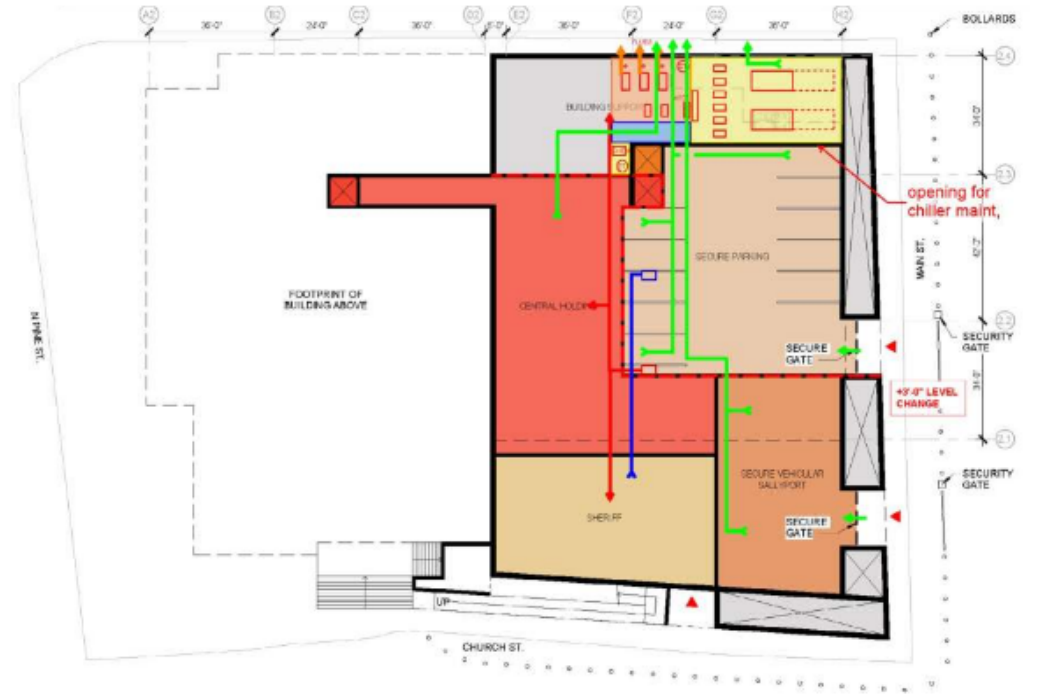
Low-flow, wall-hung commercial grade fixtures are used with 1.28 gallons per flush for water closets, 0.125 gallons per flush urinals. All toilet room fixtures are sensor operated.

PIPING SYSTEMS

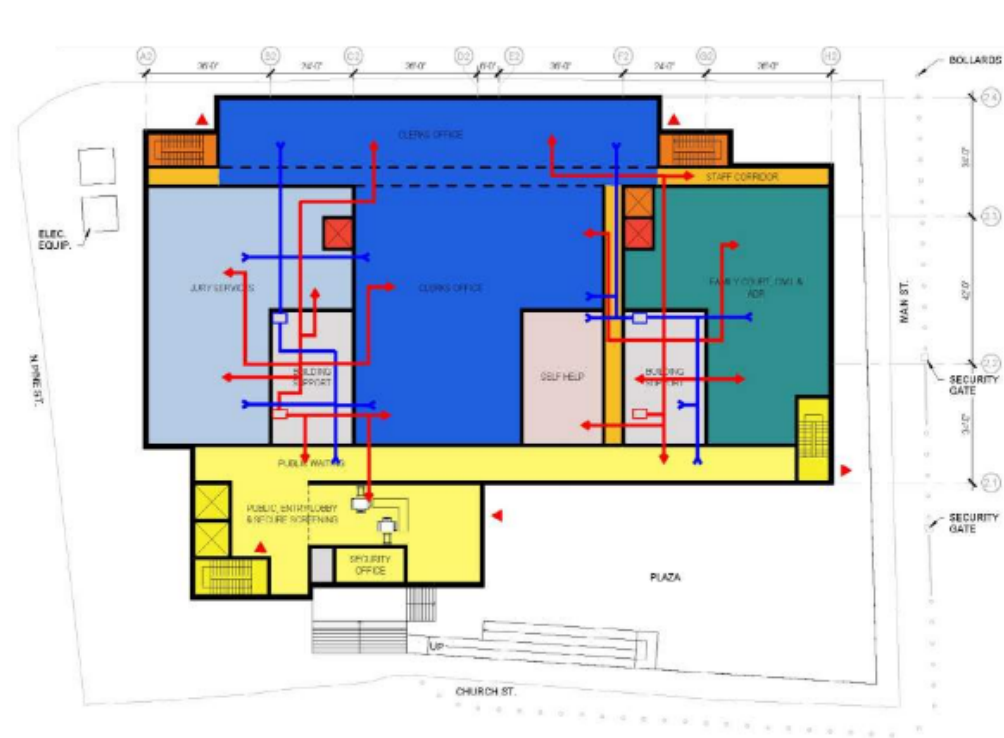
The roof drainage system, designed for a 2-inch per hour rainfall rate, is provided along with overflow piping. Domestic water piping is provided to all fixtures and sized in accordance with CPC and ASPE requirements. Domestic water piping is extended to site main connection points. Natural gas piping is extended to serve the boilers and domestic water heater in the basement. Fire sprinkler piping is extended from the site water main. All areas of the building and attached overhangs are fully protected with an automatic wet fire sprinkler system in accordance with NFPA-13 requirements. Sprinkler heads are semi-recessed or concealed type.

COMPARISON WITH OTHER OPTIONS

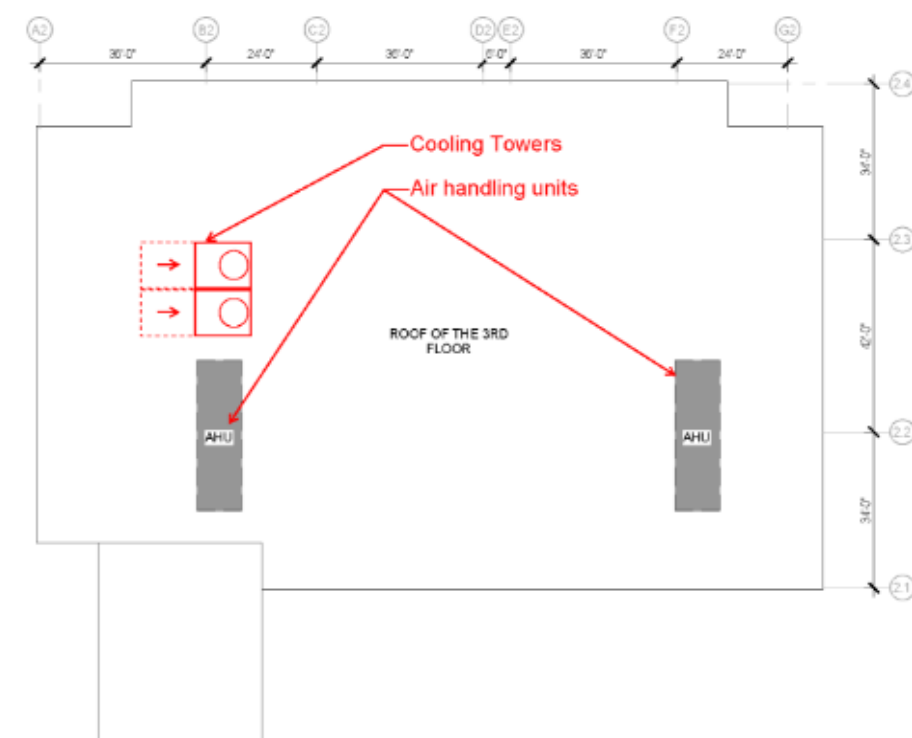
- Each of the options uses similar mechanical systems and equipment.
- Option 2 has a building shell that is new construction and therefore likely to be more energy efficient than Option 1.
- Option 2 can optimize air-handler placement and sizing only requiring (2) units rather than (3) required with Option 1.
- Option 2 uses all available site area, so that the cooling towers are likely required to be located on the roof, resulting in more pumping energy and additional rooftop structural weight.



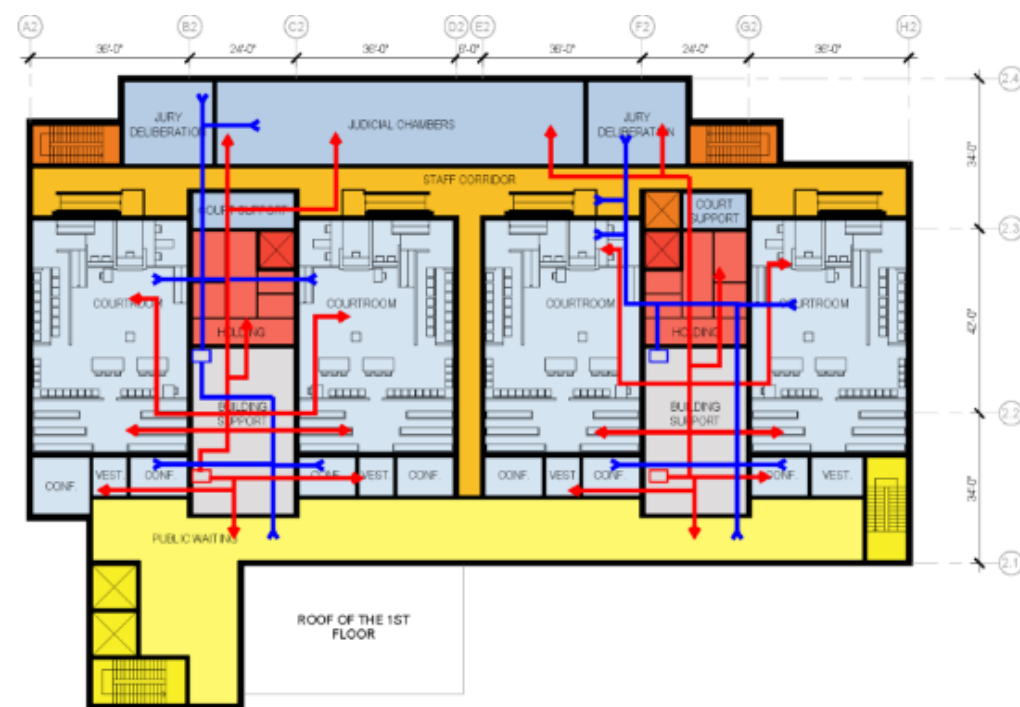
Mechanical and Plumbing Plan - Basement Level



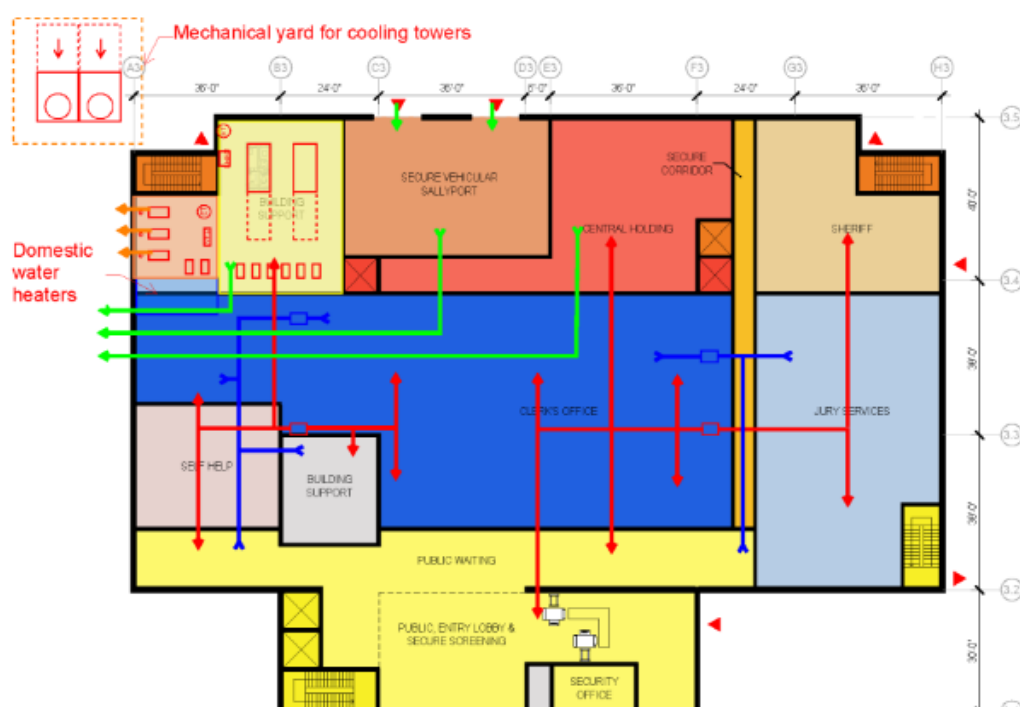
Mechanical and Plumbing Plan
- Level 1



Mechanical and Plumbing Plan
- Roof



Mechanical and Plumbing Plan
- Level 2



Mechanical and Plumbing Plan
- Level 3

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

The Existing Conditions for Option 2 are identical to Option 1.

APPROACH

DEMOLITION

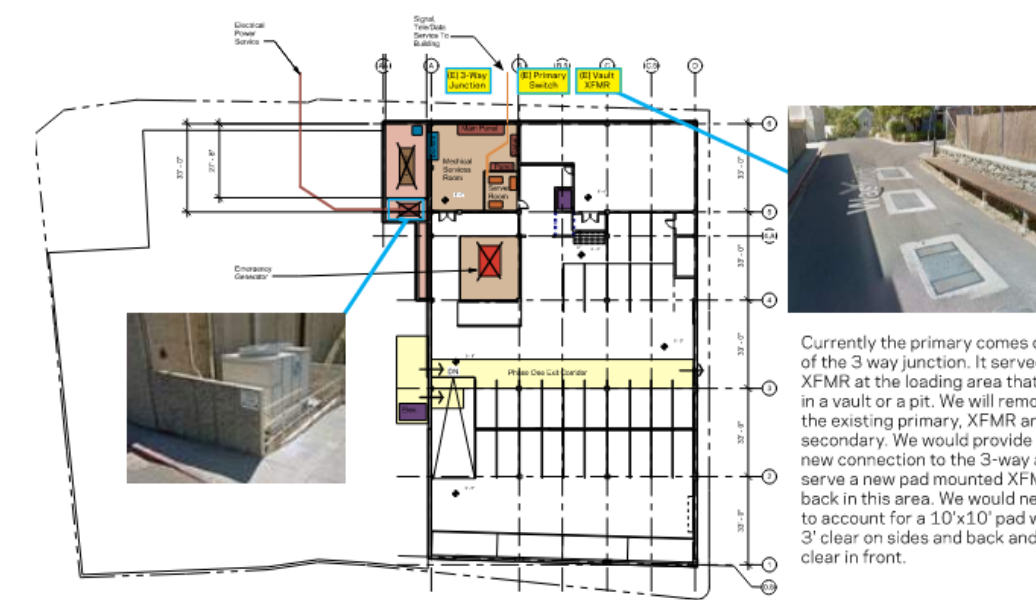
The entire electrical system shall be demolished. This includes incoming power service, switchgear, panels, conduit and wire, devices, light fixtures, etc.

SITE

POWER

Provide utility power to the building by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) via a new pad mounted utility transformer. Currently, the primary power comes out of the underground 3-way junction switch on Washington Street. It serves a pad mounted transformer in the loading area vault/pit. This transformer and its feeder will be demolished.

A new connection shall be provided from the existing 3-way junction to the new PG&E transformer, which shall be located outside the building on the Northwest corner. Transformer shall be provided by the PG&E and be installed per their standards. Provide duct structure (conduits, pullboxes, trenching, etc.) as required. The power shall step down to building voltage (277/480V) via the utility pad mounted transformer. From the transformer, provide five 5" feeder conduits into the 1600A, 277/480V, 3 phase, 4-wire main switchboard per PG&E Standards. Service feeder conductors will be provided by PG&E.



Existing PG&E Infrastructure

POWER DISTRIBUTION

NORMAL POWER

As described above, the building will have a 1600A, 277/480V, 3 phase 4 wire main switchboard (MSB), located in the basement main electrical room. The MSB will contain the PG&E meter, the main circuit breaker and the feeder circuit breakers.

Feeders will be provided from the MSB to the satellite electrical rooms, serving the lighting panels and the step-down transformers for the 120/208V panels.

Provide spare load and breaker capacity per the CTCFS.

Loads shall be desegregated per Title 24 and the CTCFS. Each load category shall be metered per system and floor as described in CTCFS, Section 15B.

STANDBY/EMERGENCY POWER

Provide a generator to provide standby/emergency power to the building. Assume the generator is 100kW/125kVA. The following items shall be considered:

- Location: The CTCFS requires that the generator be located at least 50 feet from the power source. In this scheme, this will be very difficult. We anticipate the generator will be located near the PG&E transformer, which violates this requirement. Alternatively, the area between the buildings could be assessed for the generator location.

- Based on the location and proximity to residences, the generator shall be provided with sound attenuated enclosure.

- Provide a permanent load bank.

UPS POWER

The building will not be provided with a central system. Provide UPS power per the CTCFS, utilizing in-rack UPS units.

BMS INTERFACE

Provide BMS interface per CTCFS and as described below:

- Electrical / power meters
- Emergency / standby generator
- UPS
- Fire alarm
- Lighting controls

LIGHTING AND LIGHTING CONTROLS

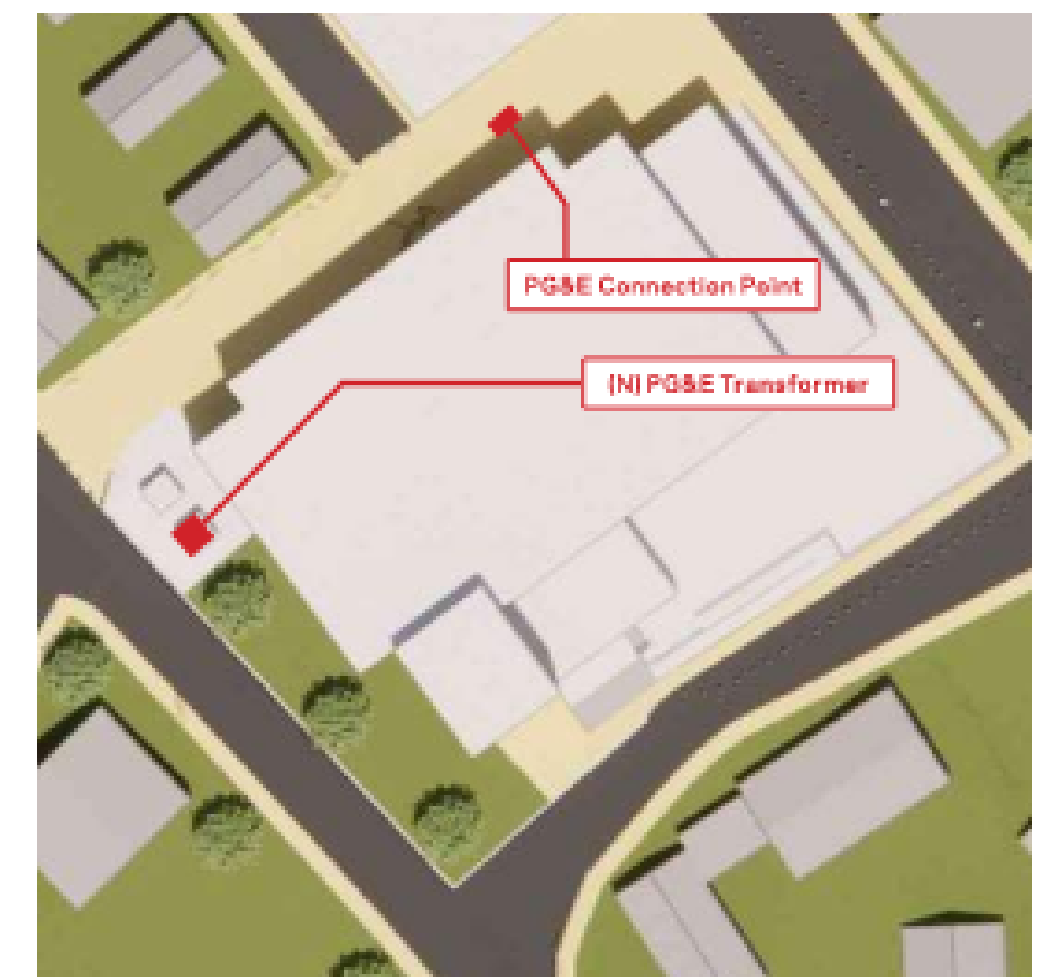
LIGHTING ILLUMINATION LEVELS:

The lighting system will provide illumination levels in accordance with CTCFS Table 16.1.

LIGHT FIXTURES:

Provide interior light fixtures per CTCFS, Section 16.C.

Typical Exterior light fixtures per CTCFS, Section 16.C. Consider utilizing the protective bollards on the East side of the building as a light source.



New PG&E Infrastructure

CONTROLS:

Provide lighting controls as described in the CTCFS, Section 16.D.

FIRE ALARM

The fire alarm and notification system shall be UL listed, California State Fire Marshal approved, and manufactured by firms regularly engaged in manufacturing fire detection, alarm, and communications systems; of types, sizes, and electrical characteristics required; and whose products have been in satisfactory use in similar service for not less than five years. The fire alarm system shall be a fully addressable system. The system shall include voice notification, with automatic voice messaging.

Refer to CTCFS, Section 20 for additional information.

TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERING

The Existing Conditions for Option 2 are identical to Option 1.

Option 2 considers a scenario where the existing courthouse is demolished and reconstructed at its existing location at 201 Church Street.

PEDESTRIAN ACCESSIBILITY

As described under Option 1, the current site is impacted by aging infrastructure and physical barriers to people walking. Similar to Option 1, the existing pedestrian accessibility and pedestrian destinations are maintained in Option 2. However, by providing a new accessible path of travel along Main Street, the Courthouse’ accessible path of travel is improved compared to Option 1.

BICYCLE ACCESSIBILITY

Bicycle accessibility is limited under Option 2. There are currently no dedicated bicycle facilities in Downtown Nevada City. In addition, the steep topography downtown hinders comfortable bicycle riding when taking the lane for those who are not very confident riders.

TRANSIT ACCESSIBILITY

The courthouse is currently accessible via transit and located less than 500 feet from stops at City Hall serving routes 1 and 7. Route 1 serves Grass Valley to Nevada City with 1-hour headways. Route 7 serves regional travel from North San Juan to Grass Valley with 5- to 6-hour headways. Under Option 2, existing transit would remain unchanged.

VEHICLE TRAVEL

PARKING

As under Option 1, Nevada City is considering some changes to parking strategies to improve parking provisions under Options 2. With the options provided, there is the potential for substantially improved parking access over existing conditions.

VEHICLE CIRCULATION

Vehicle Circulation under Option 2 would be very similar to that under Option 1. Pick-up and drop-off procedures would likely be slightly improved through enhanced site plan considerations. Vehicle Miles Traveled Similar to Option 1, under Option 2 there would likely be little to no change from existing baseline conditions. Many employees and visitors would still have the option to walk or ride transit to access nearby eateries or run other errands downtown. Staff and visitors that may be dropped off at the courthouse may benefit from drivers chaining trips, and potentially carpooling before going to their next destination.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Existing Conditions for Option 2 are identical to Option 1.

APPROACH

By building the new courthouse on previously developed land, the project attains LEED credits under the “Location and Transportation” category at no cost. Regarding the new courthouse electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, CAL-Green requires designated parking for any combination of low-emitting, fuel efficient, or carpool/van pool vehicles as referenced in table A5.106.5.1.1. The Mandatory Tiers require designated parking for 10% (Tier 1) and 12% (Tier 2) of total parking as referenced in the table in the code. LEED requires 5% designated carpool parking above and beyond the parking reduction requirements for any off-street parking. LEED also gives options for EV Charging Stations, and Liquid, gas or battery facilities (one must be chosen) that CALGreen mandatory measures do not address.

The LEED categories that will differ the most for this Option are “Energy and Atmosphere”, “Water Efficiency”, and “Indoor Environmental Quality”. Installing all new systems for the new courthouse building in Option 2 is positively impacted under the LEED “Energy and Atmosphere” category “Optimize Energy Performance” credit (up to 18 points) and it is expected that the new courthouse will have a much higher overall improvement of energy performance compared to Option 1. Energy Performance Optimization is attained by demonstrating a Performance Cost Index (PCI) below the Performance Cost Index Target. For each energy source serving the building, the GHG emission factors must be identical for the Baseline and Proposed building models. For project percent improvement for the cost metric, on-site renewable energy may be subtracted from proposed energy cost prior to calculating proposed building performance per ASHRAE Standard 90.1. The new windows used for Option 2 have increased insulation that reduces the HVAC load by at least 5% and results in lower operational carbon (the emissions from a building’s energy consumption). California Energy Code requires a minimum wall insulation of R-19 or greater on new construction. As stated under Option 1, installing solar photovoltaic (PV) panels over the entire roof area of the annex results in at least 3 points if the PV provides over 10% of the demand.

To attain the LEED “Indoor Environmental Quality” category (16 points possible) “Enhanced Indoor Air Quality Strategies” credit, it is recommended that the team install permanent entryway systems at least 10 feet (3 meters) long in the primary direction of travel to capture dirt and particulates entering the building at

regularly used exterior entrances. Acceptable entryway systems include permanently installed grates, grilles, slotted systems that allow for cleaning underneath, rollout mats, and any other materials manufactured as entryway systems with equivalent or better performance. Each ventilation system that supplies outdoor air to occupied spaces must have particle filters or air-cleaning devices with minimum efficiency reporting value (MERV) of 13 or higher, in accordance with ASHRAE Standards. The “Acoustical Performance” credit is costly to achieve since it requires an evaluation of the HVAC background noise levels, sound isolation, reverberation time, and sound reinforcement/masking systems.

The “Outdoor Water Use Reduction” credit under LEED “Water Efficiency” category (11 possible points), can be attained by saving an additional 20% of water to reach a total of 50% outdoor water reduction using smart scheduling technologies (EPA WaterSense Water Budget Tool). Additional points can be attained on the cooling tower and condensers by conducting a one-time potable water analysis.

Similar to Option 1, the “LEED for Neighborhood Development Location” credit can be attained since the courthouse is located within the boundary of a development certified under LEED for Neighborhood Development. The “High-Priority Site and Equitable Development” new LEED credit and “Surrounding Density and Diverse Uses” credit will also be attainable as in Option 1.

HISTORIC SUMMARY APPROACH

Option 2 intends to maintain the historic court functions on the downtown site in Nevada City while providing these functions in a new facility. This option proposes complete demolition of the Courthouse and Annex Buildings. The massing of the replacement building can mimic the existing building’s massing (e.g. tower entry) to provide a reminder of the original building.

PROJECT COMPLIANCE

Option 2 will not retain the Courthouse or Annex buildings and will therefore result in complete loss of the original buildings.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DOCUMENTATION

As Option 2 will remove the buildings and site as currently constructed, the structures should be documented before any changes that would cause a loss of integrity or loss of continued eligibility. The documentation shall adhere to the Secretary

of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Architectural and Engineering Documentation. The level of documentation shall be proportionate with the level of significance of the resource – possibly HABS Level II for Nevada City Courthouse. The documentation shall be made available for inclusion in the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) or the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) Collections in the Library of Congress and the California Historical Resources Information System, as well as local libraries and historical societies.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Option 2 would contribute approximately 8.5 percent of downtown business activity (\$2.6 million) and that any diminution in tourism activity due demolition of existing courthouse would be minimal.

The economic impact of replacing the existing courthouse with a new modern facility is unclear. This option retains the key spatial relationship between the courthouse and downtown, enabling people to continue to walk back and forth so it is assumed that there would be no change in the economic support that the courthouse related activities contribute to downtown businesses. However, some local stakeholders are concerned that removing the original facadewould detract from the integrity of the historic district, and thus create a decline in tourism activity and related expenditures. There is no evidence in the literature or in the experience from other small California cities to suggest that such an impact could occur. In fact, the literature reinforces the benefit to retaining the primary use or a similar reuse at the site without reference to historic character or a related decline in tourism-related activity.

A complete Economic Impact Report is included in the Appendix (see Section 3.2).



NELSON



Market Analysis
Findings

NEVADA COUNTY
COURTHOUSE
HIGHEST AND BEST USE STUDY




The background of the slide is a grayscale photograph of a building, likely a government or institutional structure, with a prominent entrance and a flagpole. A semi-transparent blue overlay covers the upper two-thirds of the image, providing a background for the text.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1) Introduction
 - Project Background
 - Market Analysis Overview
 - Site Overview
- 2) Market Growth Trends
- 3) Residential Market
- 4) Office Market
- 5) Retail Market
- 6) Hospitality Market
- 7) Other Uses
- 8) Summary and Conclusions

INTRODUCTION 01

A photograph of the Nevada County Courthouse, a large, light-colored building with a prominent entrance featuring columns. The word "COURTHOUSE" is visible above the entrance. An American flag flies on a tall pole to the left of the building. The sky is clear blue, and there are green trees to the left of the courthouse. The text "PROJECT BACKGROUND" is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif capital letters.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The current Nevada County Courthouse, operated by The Judicial Council of California, is located in Nevada City, California. The Judicial Council plans to build a new courthouse in Nevada County, which will leave the existing Nevada City Courthouse empty. Nevada County owns the courthouse facility (subject property), including the historic building, the annex building, and the associated underground parking. The County intends to sell the subject property but is also concerned about finding a user or users for the property that will have a positive impact on the local community and economy. To address this, the County has engaged the NELSON Worldwide team to conduct a study to determine the highest and best use for the existing courthouse complex after the court's departure.



MARKET ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

Strategic Economics was commissioned to conduct a real estate market analysis for the subject property. **The purpose of this initial analysis was to screen a long list of future uses that to test what could be viable given site conditions** and Nevada City's current market.

The list of possible site uses includes:

Residential

Office

Cannabis Industry

Retail or Grocery

Hospitality

Parking

Institutional

- Museum
- Government Administration
- University Campus

Health or Wellness

Sports or Recreation

Note: This list is based on the Courthouse Steering Committee Visioning Workshop, July 2024 and stakeholder input.

MARKET ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

Analysis included both economic data and interviews with subject matter experts.

Subject Matter Expert Interviews

Highland Commercial Real Estate

Lock Richards

Nevada City Chamber of Commerce

Stuart Baker

Nevada County Economic Development Department

Kimberly Parker

Nevada County Economic Resource Council

Gil Mathew

Sierra Business Council

Kristin York

Tintle Inc.

Gary Tintle

Economic Research

- California Association of Realtors
- California Department of Finance
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- California Employment Development Department
- CoStar
- Redfin
- US Census – LEHD

Additional Engagement

Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital

Scott Neeley



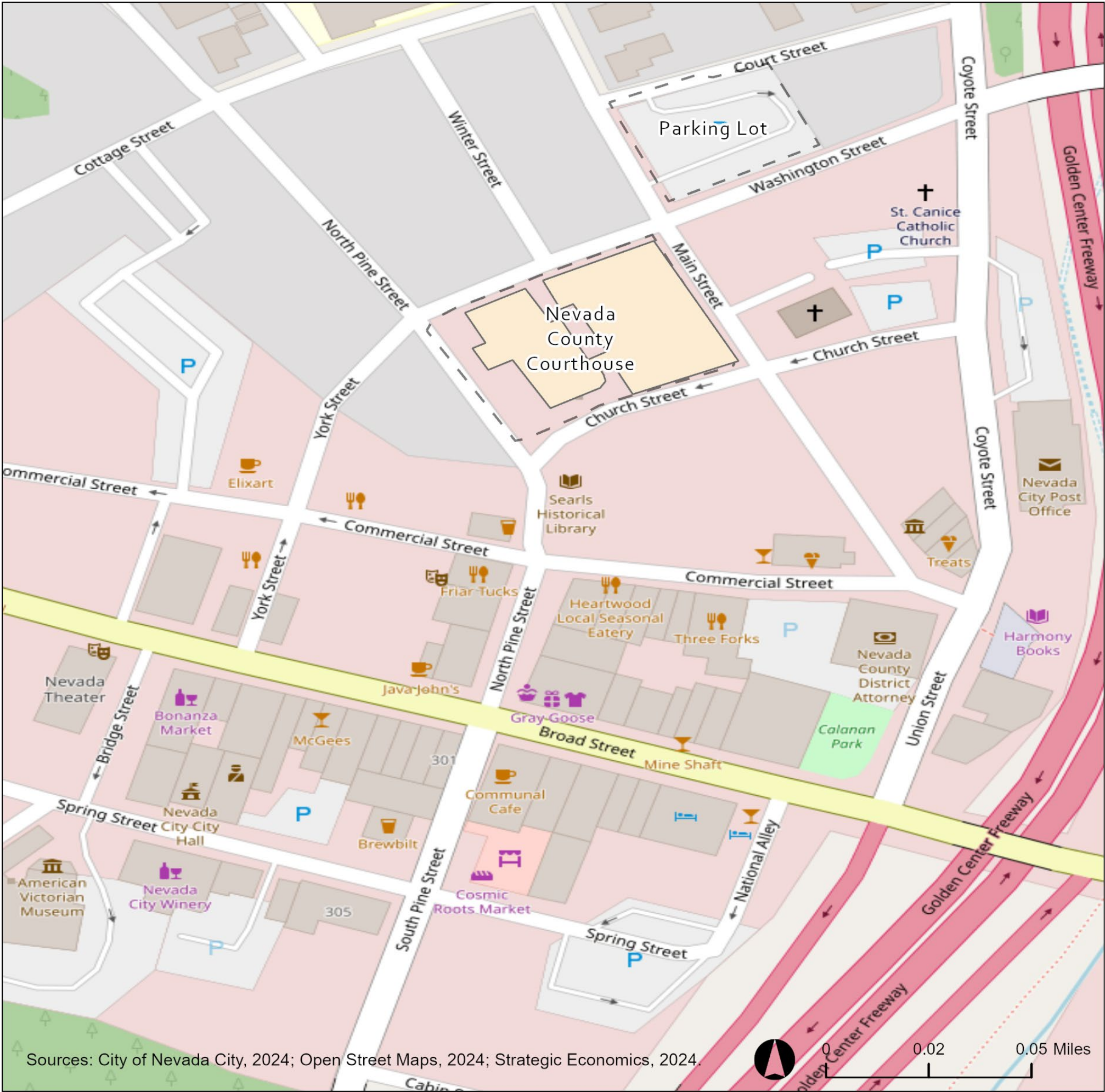
Figure 1: Nevada County Courthouse Location

SITE OVERVIEW

The courthouse is an 80,000 square foot courthouse + annex facility is situated on an approximately one-acre site. This site is located on the north side of downtown Nevada City. Also included in the study is a 0.5-acre satellite lot, labeled as “Parking Lot” in Figure 1.

The courthouse is located up a hill from Nevada City’s main retail thoroughfare – Broad Street. The hill makes walking access somewhat difficult from the core of downtown. The site is also parking constrained, with 38 on-site parking spaces in a half level-down garage. In addition, the site is not readily visible or accessible from the freeway.

The courthouse is both architecturally and culturally important for the city. Its historic art-deco façade and location on a hill makes it a cultural landmark for residents and visitors. The courthouse is a key element of Nevada City’s Downtown Historic District and is close to many restaurant and retail options for those who are willing to walk.



MARKET GROWTH TRENDS

02

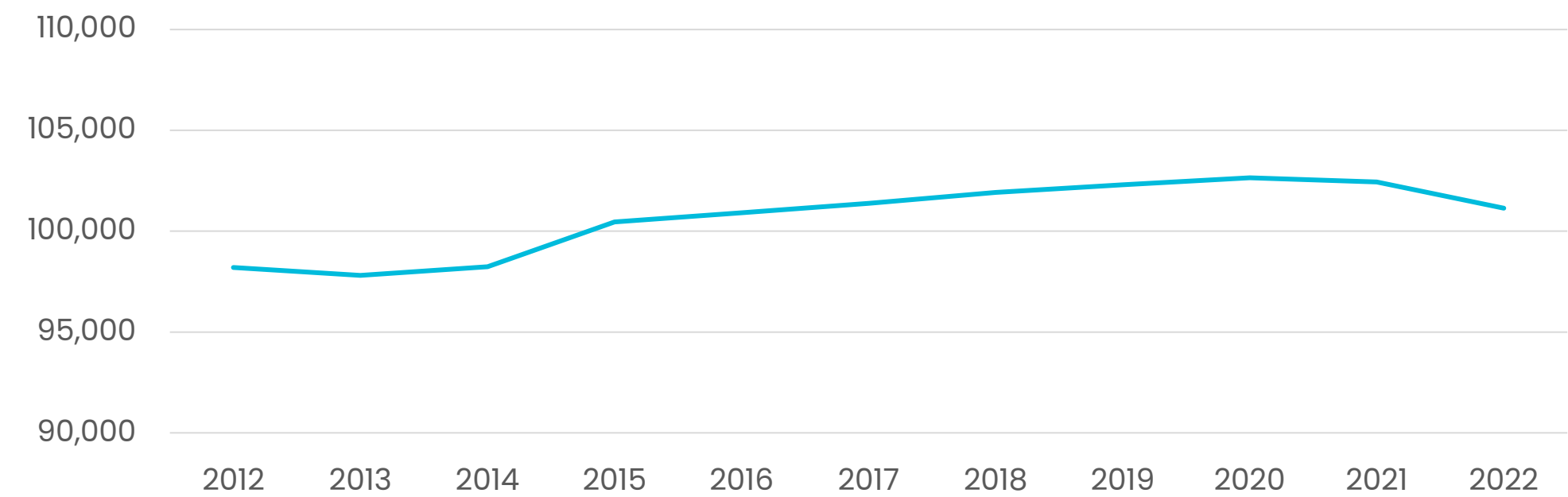
POPULATION GROWTH TRENDS

Nevada County’s population has not grown significantly over the past ten years and declined from 2020 to 2022. The County is home to 101,000 residents, around three percent more than in 2012. However, the County’s population declined by more than 1,000 residents from 2020 to 2022, as shown in Figure 2. Most of the County’s residents are currently living outside of incorporated cities including Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Truckee.

Nevada County is projected to decline in population as its residents age in the coming decades. As shown in Figure 3, the State projects that Nevada County will lose 5,000 residents by 2030. Nevada County already has one of the oldest populations by median age in the state, and its population is expected to continue aging over the coming years. This also means a shrinking workforce; by 2030, the State projects that 37 percent of Nevada County residents will be 65 or older.

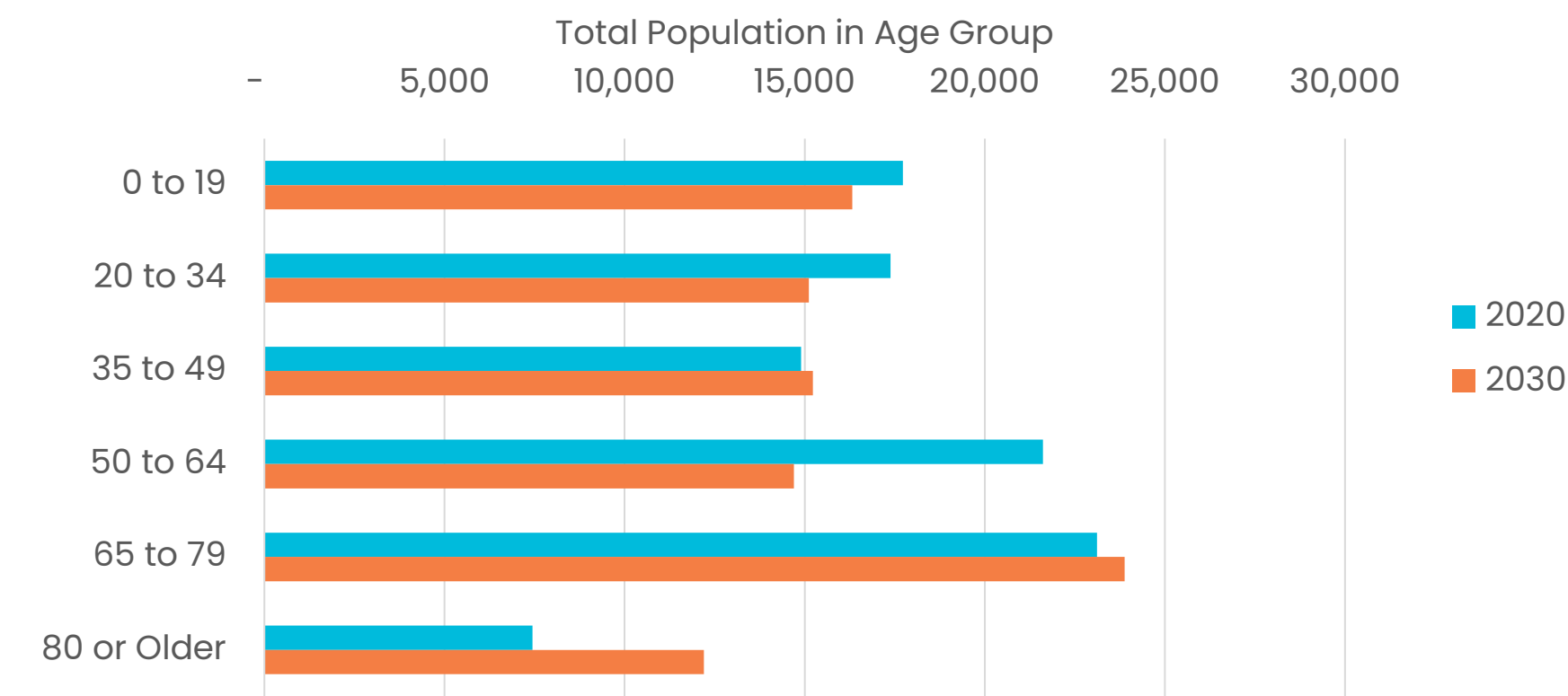
Nevada County is an attractive location for artists, the creative class, and retirees. Local experts indicated that Nevada County is an attractive place for migrants from elsewhere in California due to its access to nature and relatively affordable housing. Some remote workers did move to Nevada County during the pandemic—contributing to the population peak shown in Figure 2. However, stakeholders indicated that broadband access can be challenging in some locations, limiting remote-work potential.

Figure 2: Nevada County Total Population, 2012 – 2022



Source: California Department of Finance, 2019; Strategic Economics, 2024.

Figure 3: Population Forecast by Age, 2020 – 2030



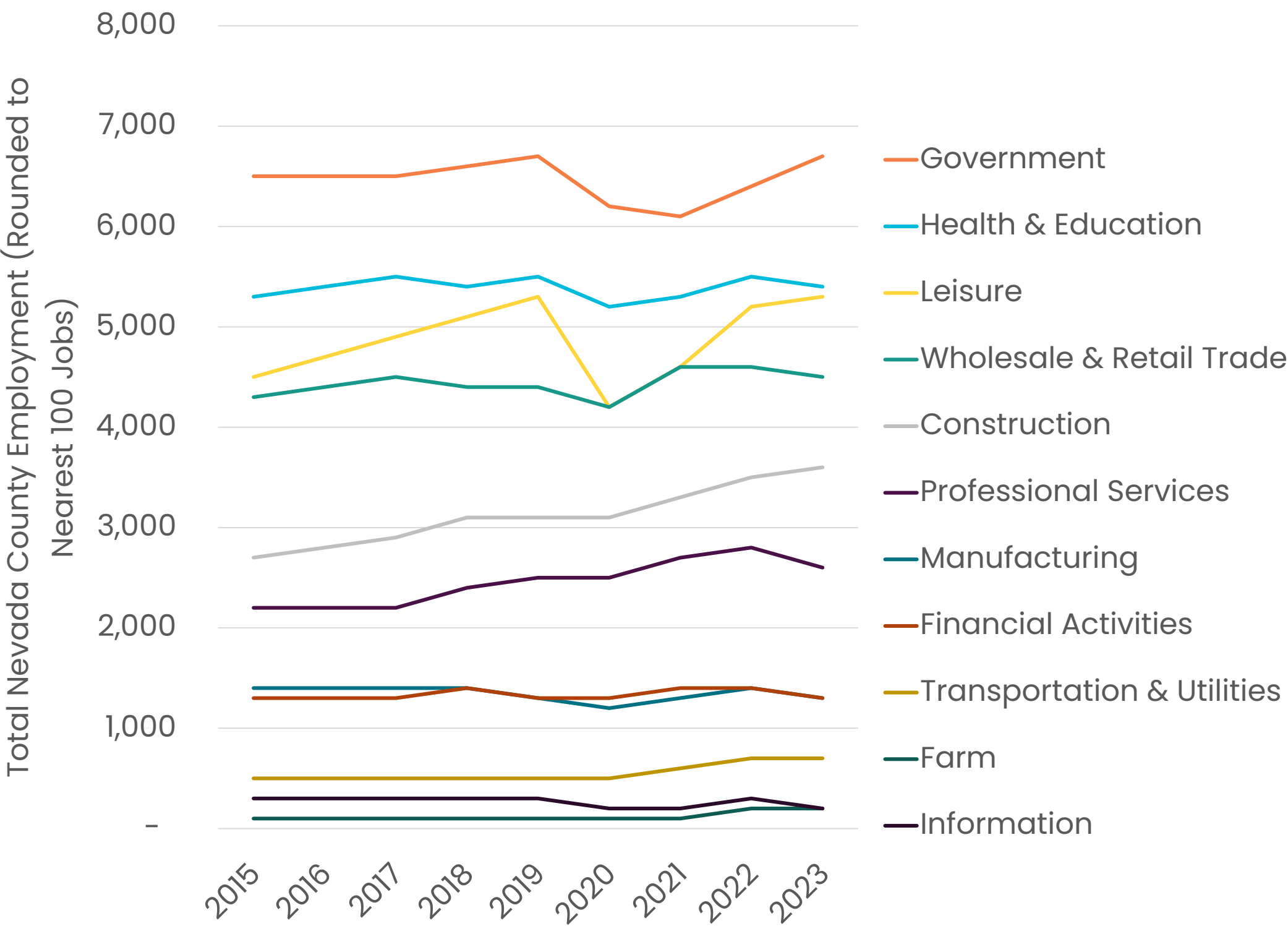
Source: California Department of Finance, 2019; Strategic Economics, 2024.

JOB GROWTH TRENDS

Nevada County’s top employment sectors are government jobs, healthcare, and education, but its leisure and construction sectors are growing most quickly. As shown in Figure 4, most of the county’s top employment sectors grew in total jobs from 2015 to 2023. Of these sectors, the leisure sector was most impacted by the pandemic but has made a robust recovery. Nevada City’s leisure sector has been boosted by the recent renovation of the National Exchange Hotel.

Several local economic development plans target future growth for technology and professional services sectors, but the outlook for these sectors is mixed. Nevada County does have a highly-educated population and some history with technology businesses, such as Telestream and Grass Valley Group. However, both of these companies eventually left the community, and other tech companies have not replaced them. Ultimately, there may be potential for some small business growth, but Nevada County lacks some important characteristics of successful tech locations, such as the presence of higher-education institutions, a growing workforce, and a strong office sector.

Figure 4: Nevada County Job Growth Trends, 2015 – 2023

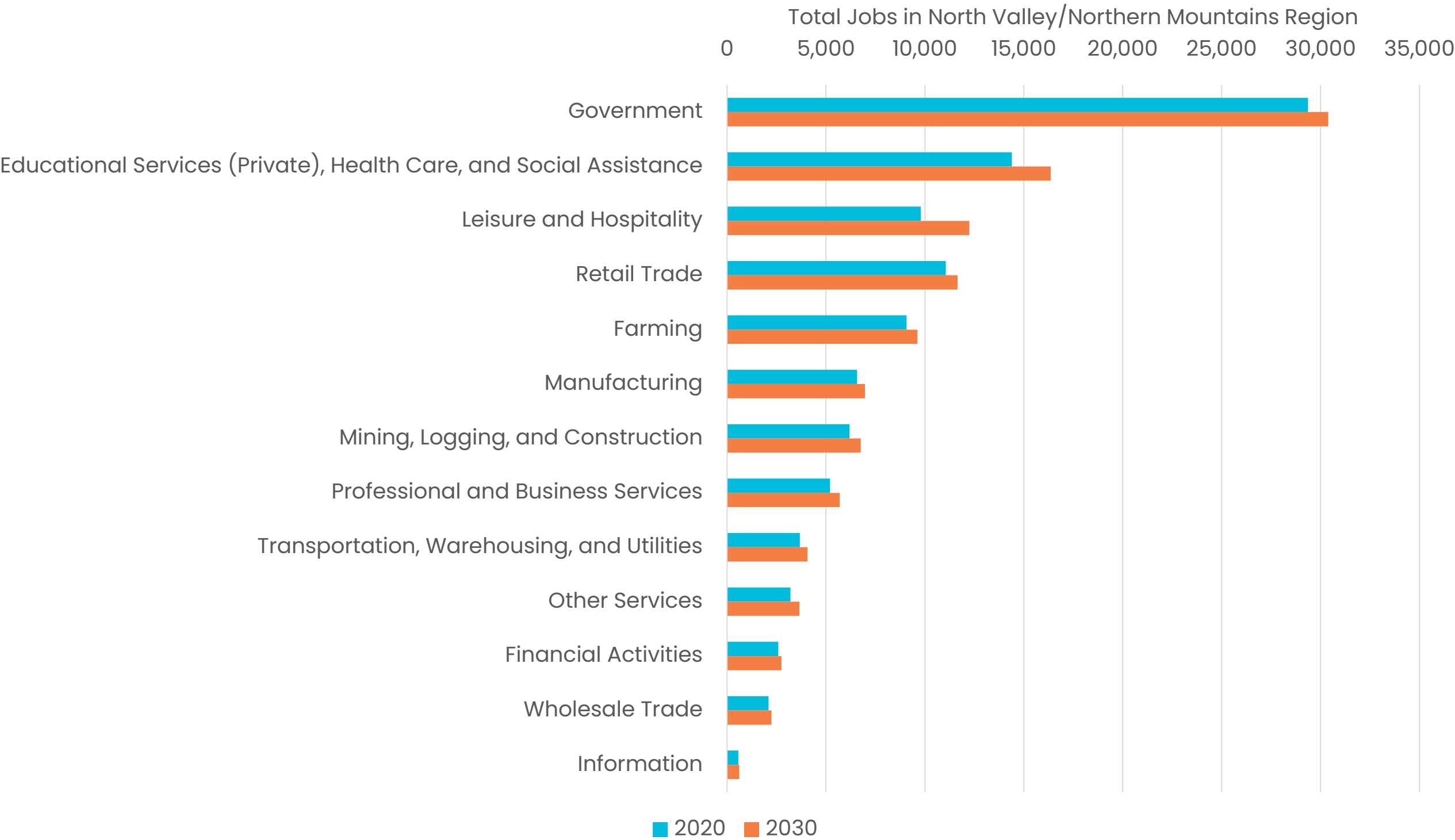


Source: California Department of Transportation, 2023; Strategic Economics, 2023

JOB GROWTH PROJECTIONS

Figure 5: Regional Job Forecast, 2020 – 2030

Much of the region’s projected job growth over the next ten years is expected to come from Leisure and Hospitality. Figure 5 shows projected job growth for the North Valley/Northern Mountains region of California from 2020 to 2030. This region includes 10 counties, and more than 100,000 jobs. The region is expected to add nearly 2,500 leisure and hospitality jobs, a 25 percent increase over a ten-year period. Other sectors with large projected growth rates include educational services and health care; transportation, warehousing, and utilities; and other services – which includes repair, maintenance, personal services, and nonprofit organizations.



Source: California EDD, 2022; Strategic Economics, 2024.
Region includes Colusa, Glenn, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas, Sierra, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Trinity Counties.

COMMUTING PATTERNS

More than 3,000 workers commute into Nevada City from elsewhere daily. Figure 6 compares in-commuters to out-commuters for Nevada City. Far more workers commute into Nevada City than those who live within the city and commute elsewhere. Of the 3,216 workers who work in Nevada City, 33 percent, or more than 1,000 workers, live outside of Nevada County.

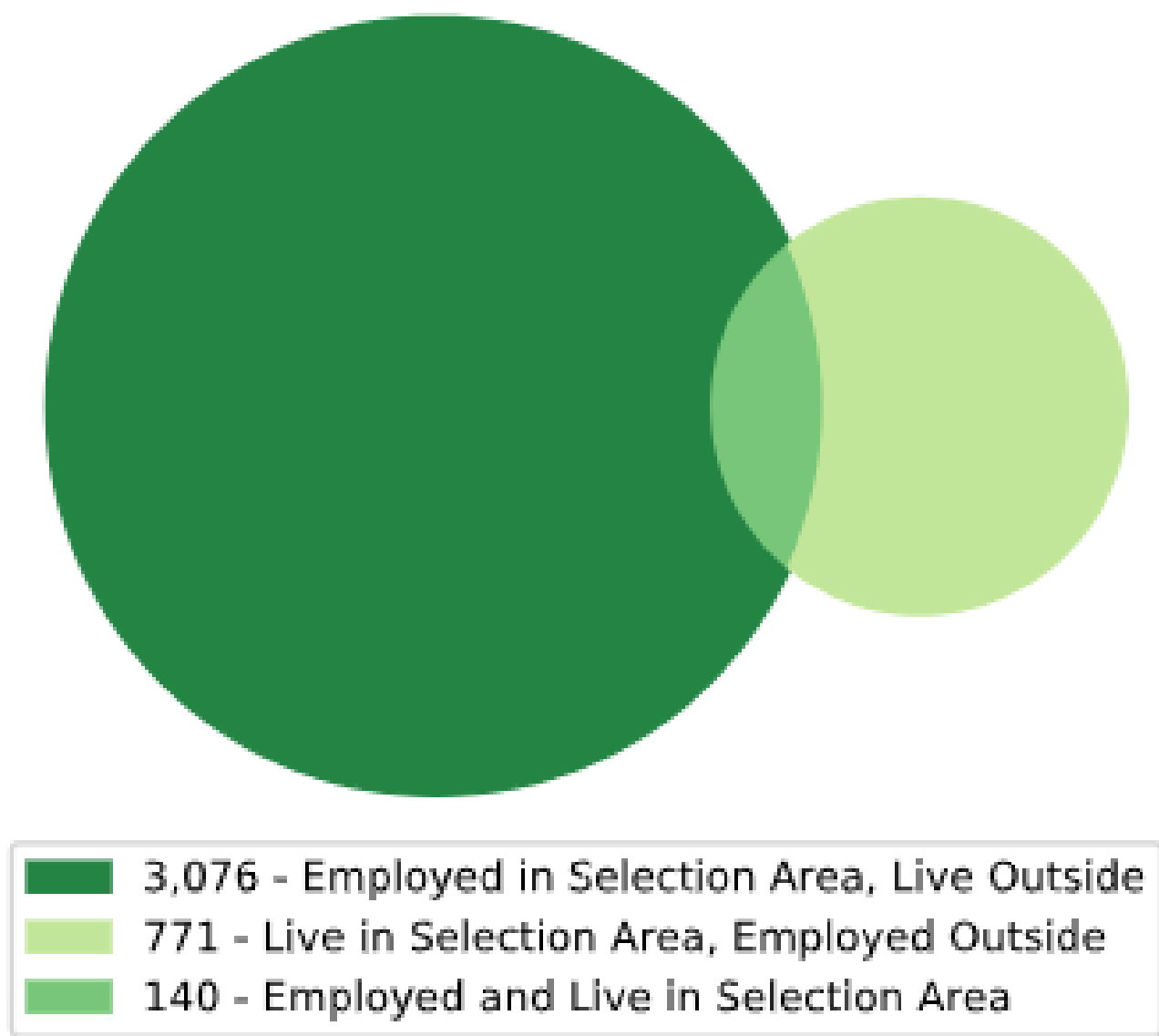
Compared to those who commute out of Nevada City, workers commuting into Nevada City are more likely to:

- be between the ages of 30 and 54,
- work in service industries, and
- make more than \$3,333 monthly

Figure 7: Demographics of In- vs. Out-Commuters to Nevada City, 2021

	Share of Out-Commuters	Share of In-Commuters
Aged 29 or younger	17%	13%
Aged 30 to 54	48%	59%
Aged 55 or older	34%	28%
Earning \$1,250 per month or less	12%	13%
Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	29%	26%
Earning More than \$3,333 per month	59%	62%
In the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	19%	10%
In the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	14%	15%
In the "All Other Services" Industry Class	67%	74%

Figure 6: Nevada City Commuting Inflow-Outflow, 2021



Source: LEHD, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

RESIDENTIAL MARKET

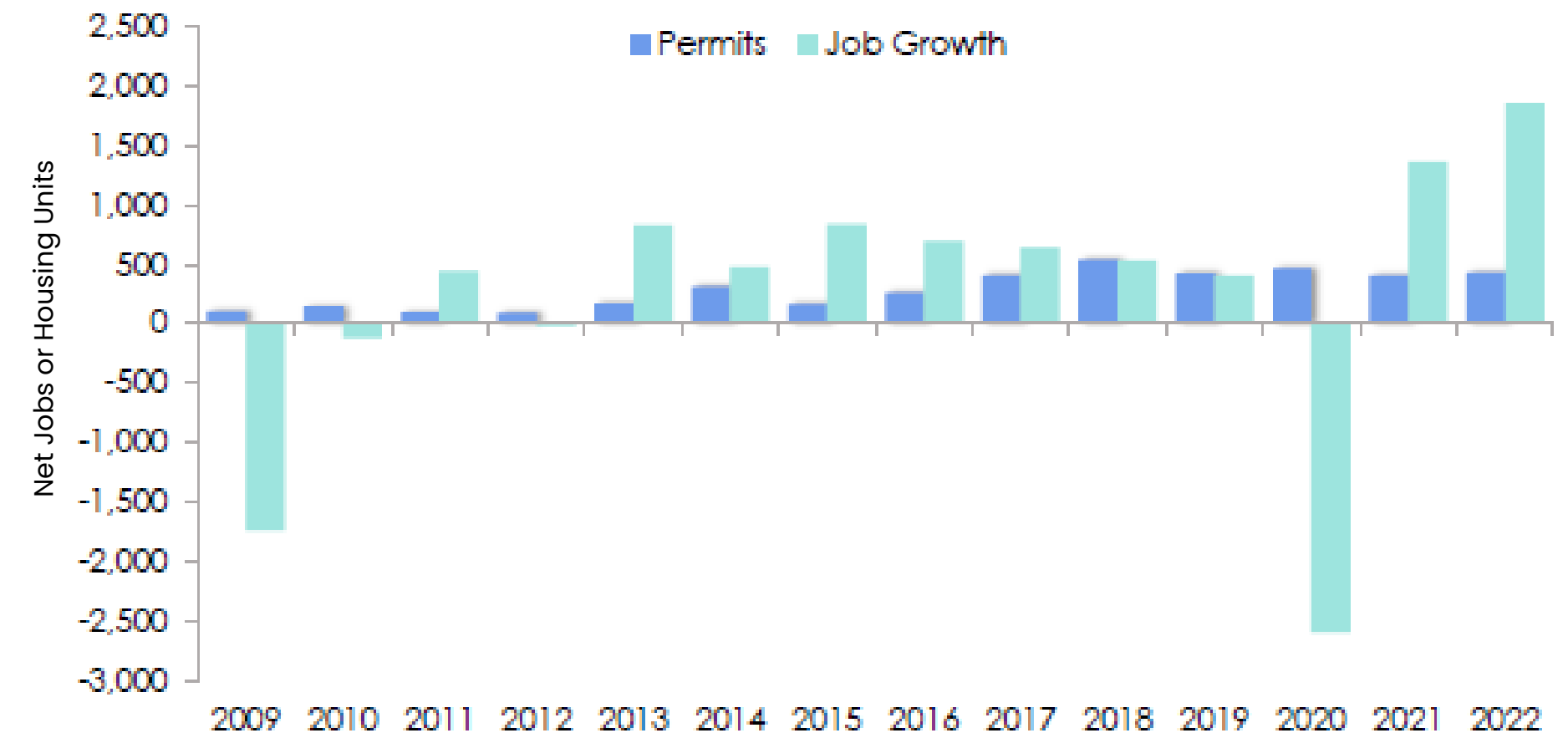
03

HOUSING PRODUCTION & INVENTORY

Countywide job growth has outpaced housing growth for seven of the past ten years. Figure 8 shows the annual net change in total Nevada County jobs compared to new housing permits from 2009 through 2022.

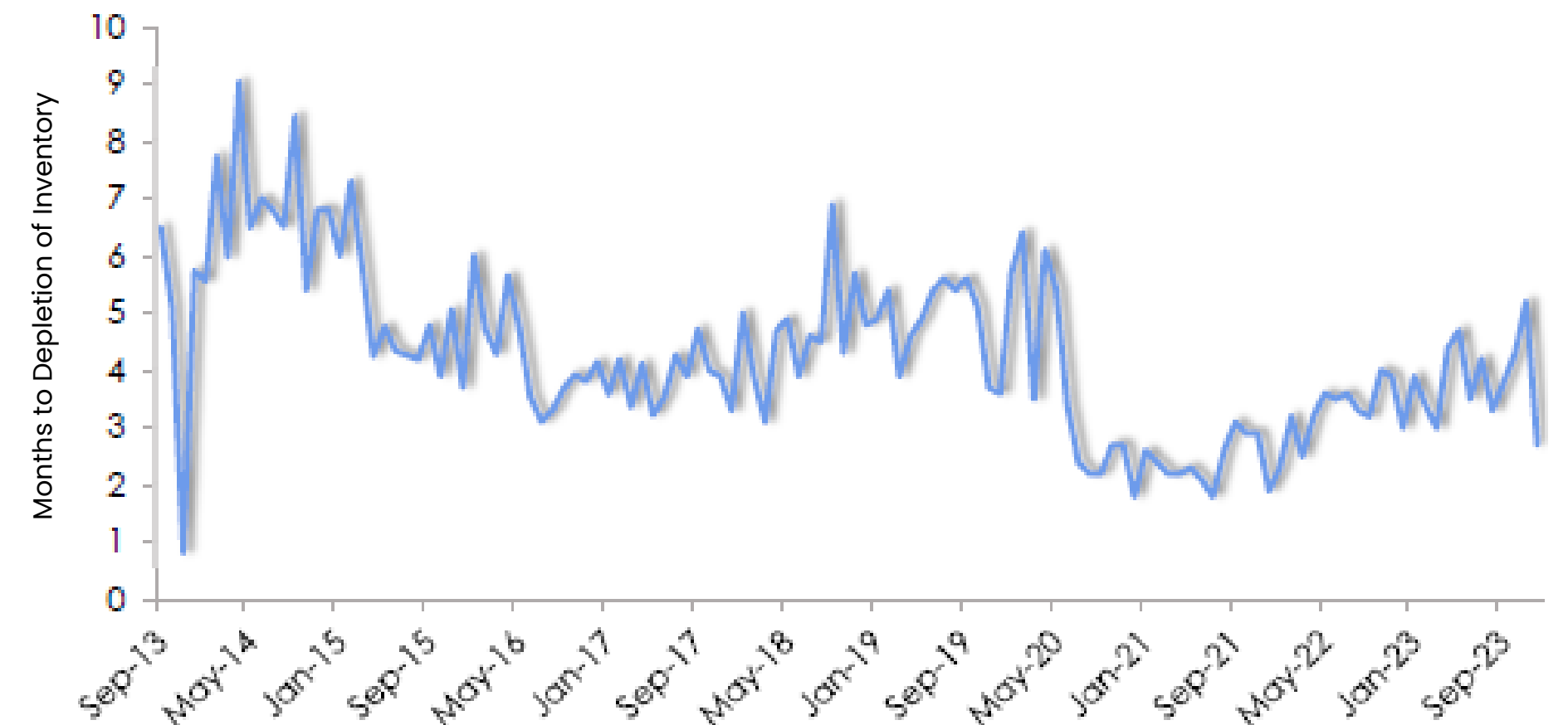
This has led to a shrinking inventory of available homes across the County, including substantial reductions in inventory during the pandemic. Figure 9 shows the unsold inventory index for Nevada County—a figure that indicates how many months it would take to deplete the county’s currently unsold inventory at the end of each month, given the number of homes sold that month. As the county’s population grew over the past ten years, and job growth outpaced housing production, the county’s housing inventory decreased from six months of inventory on average in 2013 to approximately three months of inventory in 2023. This figure shows a notable drop in inventory during 2020, when Nevada County received an influx of migrants from other parts of California.

Figure 8: Nevada County Job Growth vs. Housing Growth



Source: California Association of Realtors, 2024.

Figure 9: Unsold Inventory Index, Nevada County, 2023



Note: The Unsold Inventory Index represents the number of months it would take to deplete the remaining inventory at the end of a particular month with the sales rate of the month in consideration. Inventory includes listings with "Active", "Pending", and "Contingent" (when available) statuses.

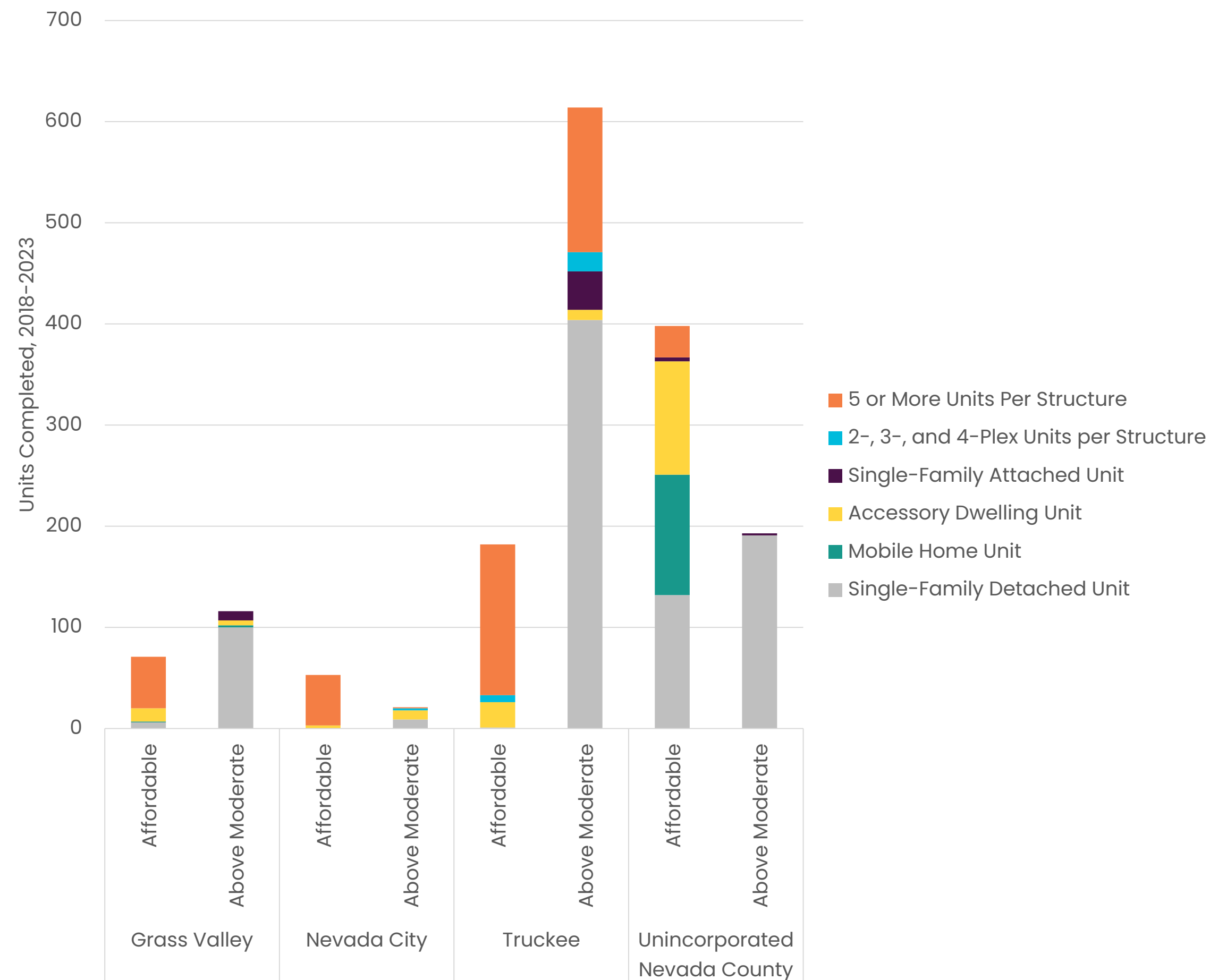
Source: California Association of Realtors, 2024.

NEVADA CITY HOUSING PRODUCTION

Nevada City has completed very few market rate housing units since 2018. Figure 10 shows the total number of completed housing units, by unit type, in Grass Valley, Nevada City, Truckee, and Unincorporated Nevada County from 2018 through 2023. Apart from 50 multifamily affordable units completed in Nevada City in 2022, only 24 total housing units have been completed in Nevada City over the past five years.

In the same five-year period, nearly 200 units have been completed in Grass Valley, 800 units in Truckee, and 600 units in Unincorporated Nevada County. The majority of these units were single family homes, but Truckee has also added more than 300 multifamily units, and Unincorporated Nevada County has added more than 100 accessory dwelling units during this time.

Figure 10: Nevada County Job Growth vs. Housing Growth



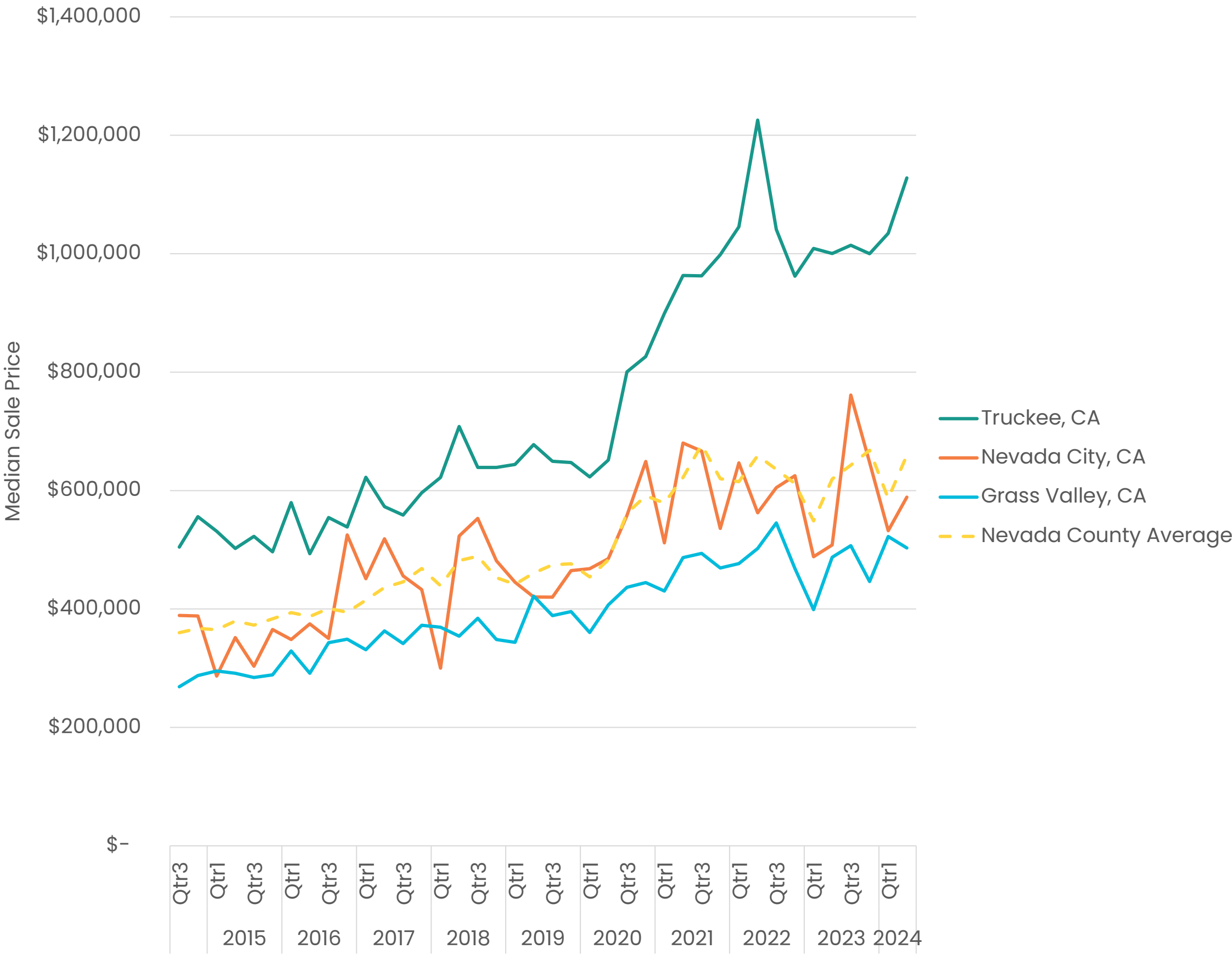
Source: California HCD, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

HOME SALES PRICES

Home sales prices have increased throughout Nevada County over the past ten years, but particularly in Truckee since the onset of the pandemic. Figure 11 shows the median home sales price for Nevada County jurisdictions for each quarter from mid-2014 through mid-2024. Over the past four years, the median home sales price nearly doubled in Truckee, increasing from \$623,000 in Q1 of 2020 to \$1,128,000 in Q2 of 2024. The median home price also increased by more than \$100,000 in Nevada City during this time.

Local experts indicate that there is strong demand for homes in Nevada City, but that any new development in the Downtown could not expect to garner Truckee-level prices. Local economic development and real estate experts indicated that condos and townhomes could both be viable products in Downtown. However, there are large geographic and cultural differences between the eastern and western parts of Nevada County, and thus demand for housing in Nevada City is not heavily influenced by drivers of demand in Truckee.

Figure 11: Nevada County Median Home Sales Prices by Jurisdiction, 2014 to 2024



Source: Redfin, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

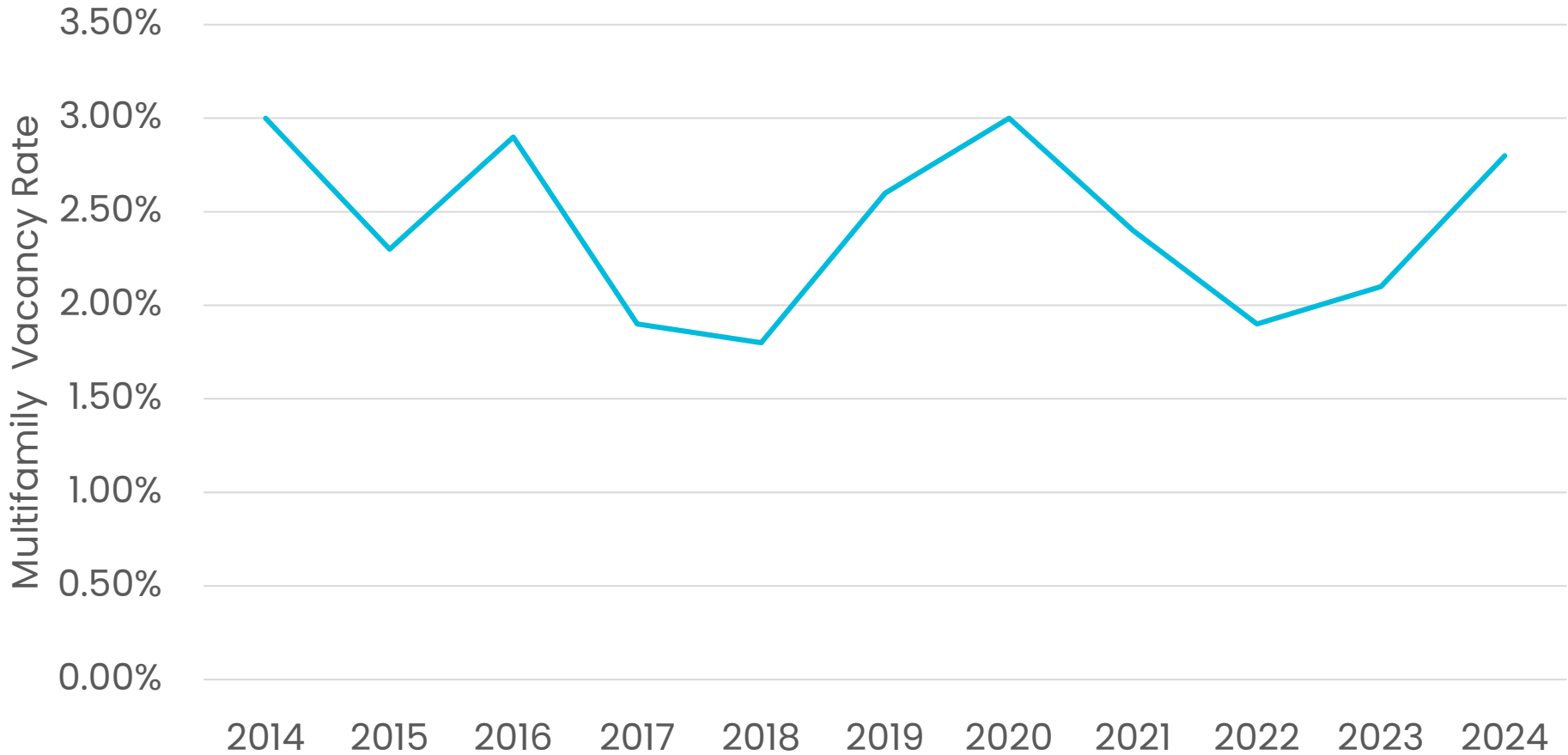
MULTIFAMILY DEMAND

Multifamily housing vacancy rate is relatively low in Nevada County and has remained below three percent for the past ten years. Figure 12 shows the total multifamily vacancy rate across Nevada County from 2014 through 2024. Vacancy oscillated between two and three percent for the majority of the past ten years and the market averaged net absorption of more than forty units (around one percent of all units) annually for the same time period.

Rents are increasing by around three percent annually, with a slight uptick in recent years. Figure 13 shows average rent per square foot for multifamily units in Nevada County from 2014 through mid-2024. The average annual increase in multifamily rent was around two percent from 2014 to 2016, around three percent from 2017 to 2020, and around four percent from 2021 to 2024.

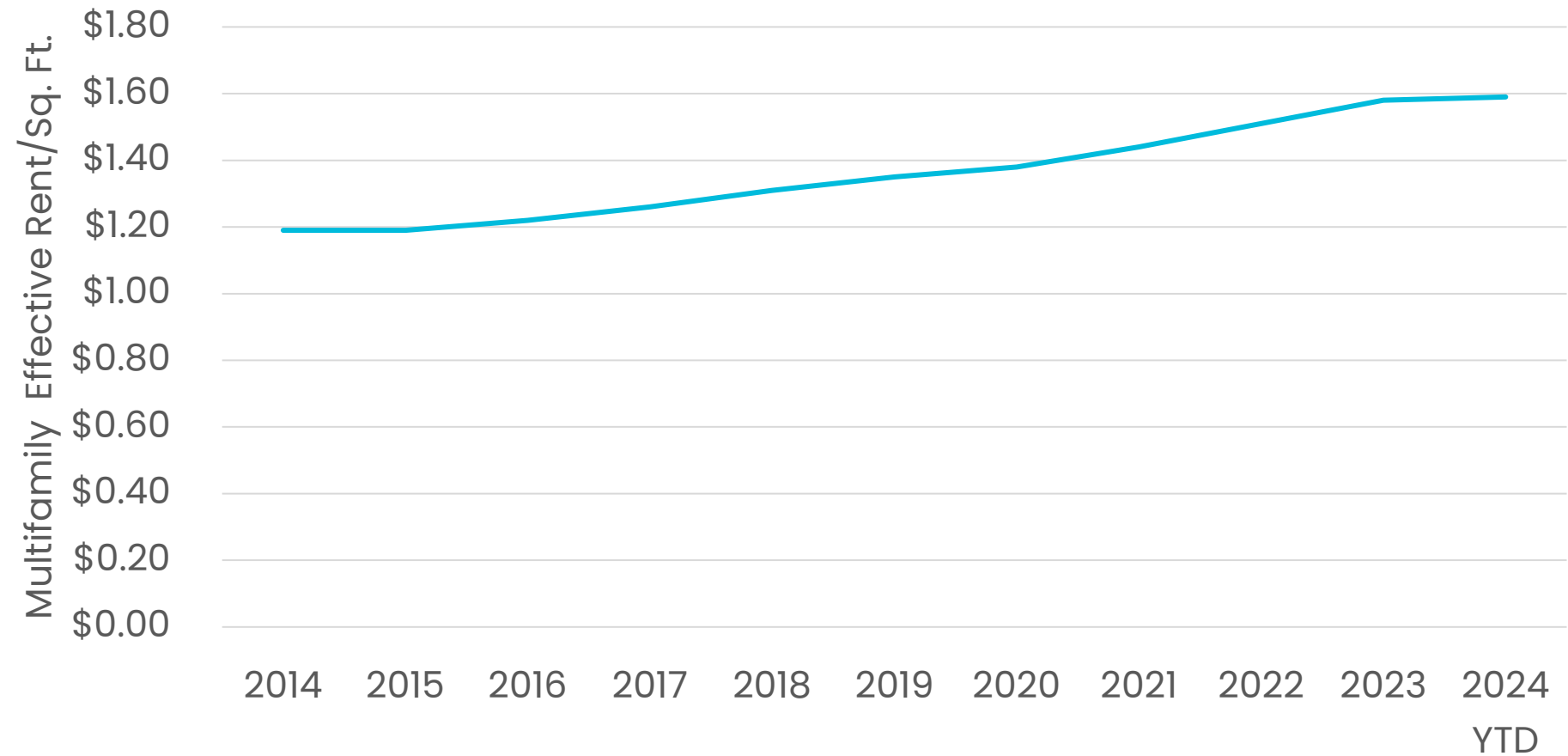
Stakeholders indicate high demand for 1 to 2-Bedroom apartments in Downtown Nevada City. This housing could be targeted to working households, or to households looking for a second home. Some local experts suggested senior housing could also be viable, but experts had mixed opinions about the viability of the courthouse site for that use, due to accessibility concerns.

Figure 12: Multifamily Vacancy Rate in Nevada County, 2014 to 2024



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

Figure 13: Average Multifamily Effective Rent in Nevada County, 2014 to 2023



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

OFFICE MARKET

04

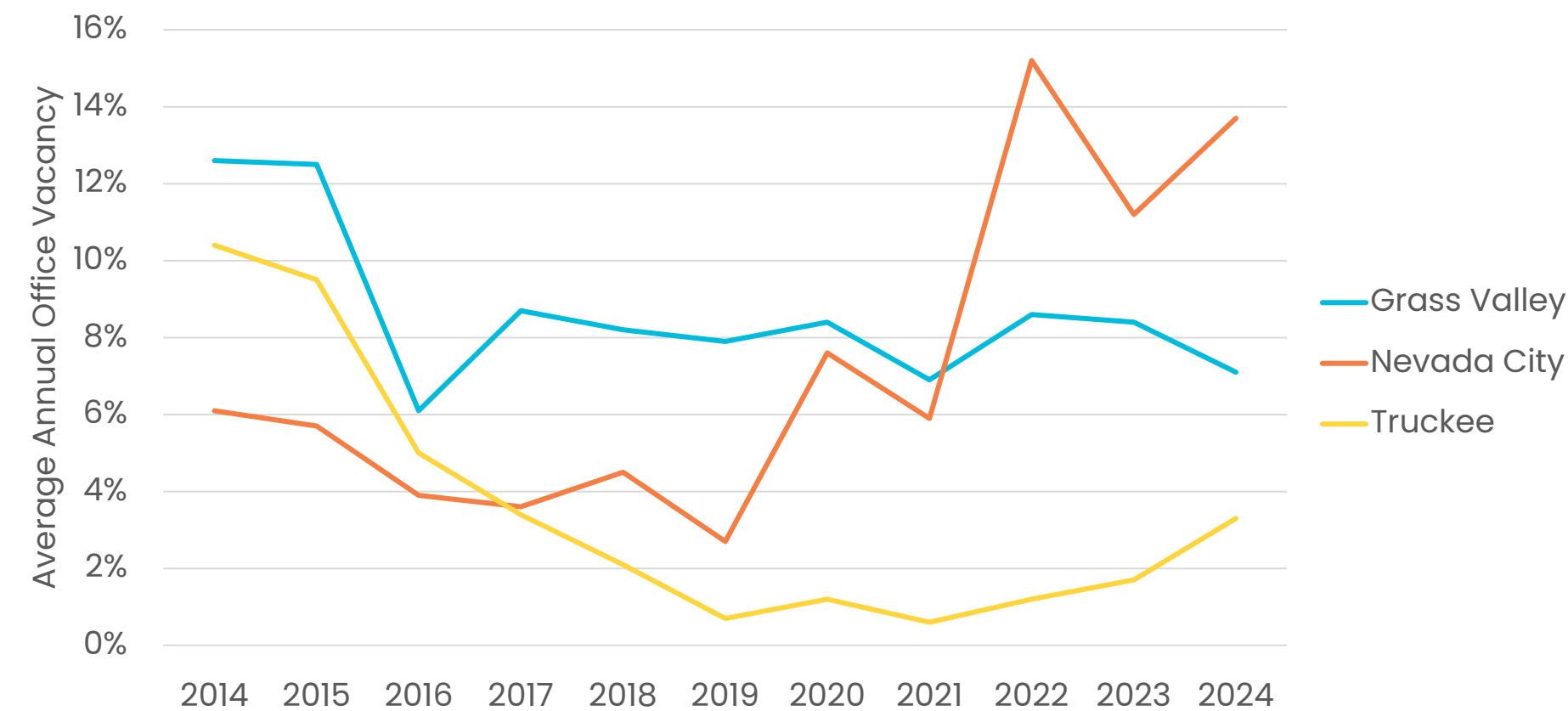
OFFICE SUPPLY

Nevada City has 423,000 square feet of office space, and 60,000 square feet is currently vacant. Figure 14 shows annual average office vacancy rates in Nevada City, Grass Valley, and Truckee from 2014 to 2024. While office vacancy has been very low in Truckee over the past decade, office vacancy in Nevada City has risen steadily from three percent in 2019 to nearly 14 percent in 2024.

Adding the 80,000 square foot courthouse building to Nevada City’s vacant office space would more than double its vacancy rate, to nearly 33 percent.

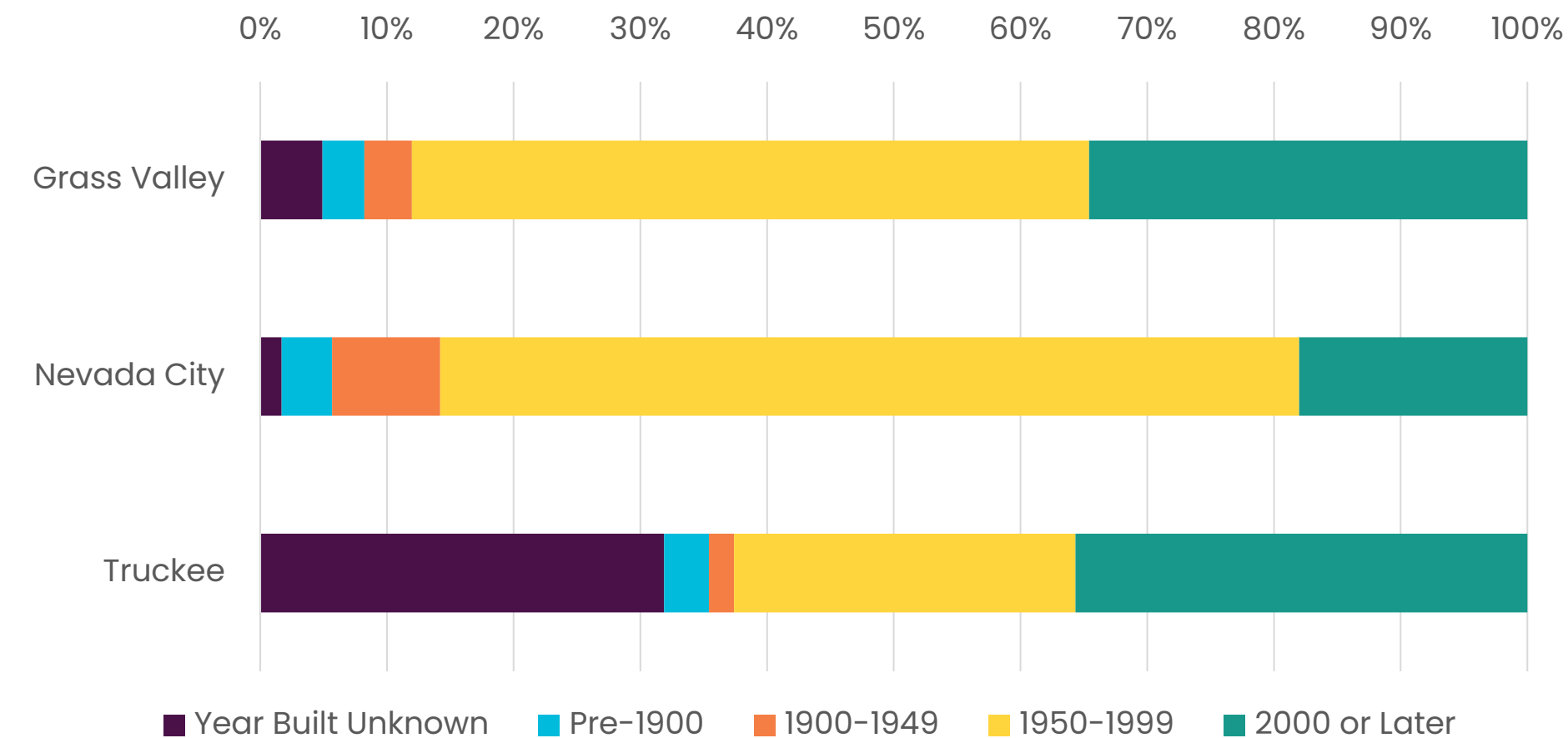
Nevada City has had very little recent office development compared to Grass Valley and Truckee. Figure 15 shows the age of office buildings in each community, based on the original decade each building was constructed. Less than 20 percent of Nevada City’s office space was constructed since 2000. In comparison, more than 30 percent of office space in both Grass Valley and Truckee was built in the past 25 years—a possible indication of stronger demand for new office construction in those two markets.

Figure 14: Nevada County Annual Average Office Vacancy, 2014 – 2024



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

Figure 15: Office Buildings in Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Truckee by Year Built, 2024



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

OFFICE DEMAND

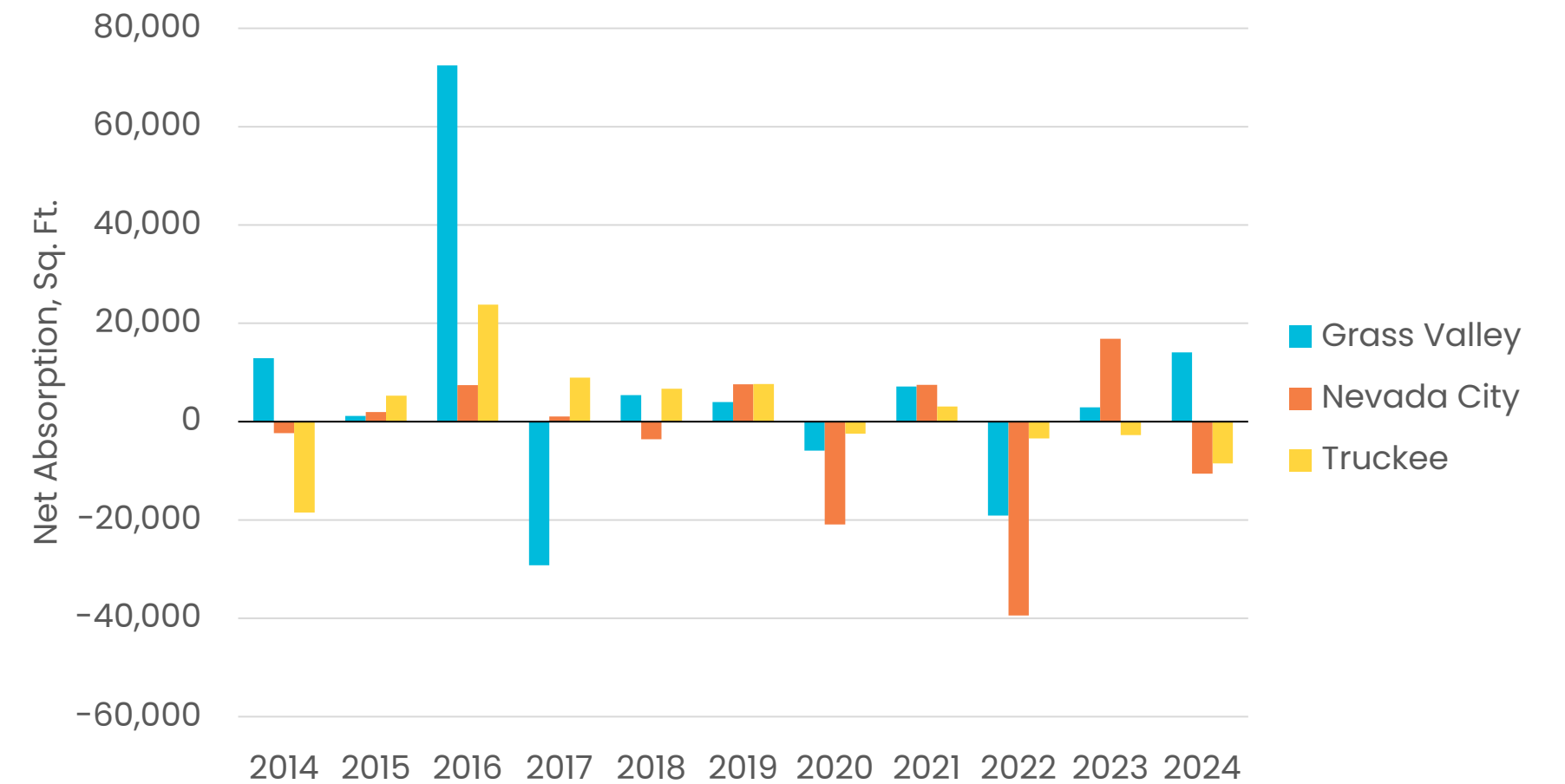
Nevada City had a net loss of more than 45,000 square feet of occupied office space since the beginning of 2020. Figure 16 shows annual net absorption of office space in Nevada County communities from 2014 to 2024. This figure describes the net change in office occupancy by square feet and can provide an indication of future demand for new office supply. Office demand across Nevada County has been relatively stagnant over the past five years, but particularly in Nevada City, where occupancy decreased by 40,000 square feet in 2022 alone.

Nevada City office buildings command lower rents than those in Truckee and have dipped below those in Grass Valley in 2024. Figure 17 shows annual average office rents for each Nevada County city. There is a clear difference in rents achieved by properties in Truckee from those in both Nevada City and Grass Valley. Furthermore, office rents have declined by 13 percent in Nevada City since 2019.

The region's economic growth trends and history present limited prospects for future office growth. Across the region, professional service jobs are not expected to grow significantly, and previous experience indicates that information and tech company growth in Nevada City is often capped. Once companies reach a certain size, they typically need access to a larger pool than what is available in Nevada County.

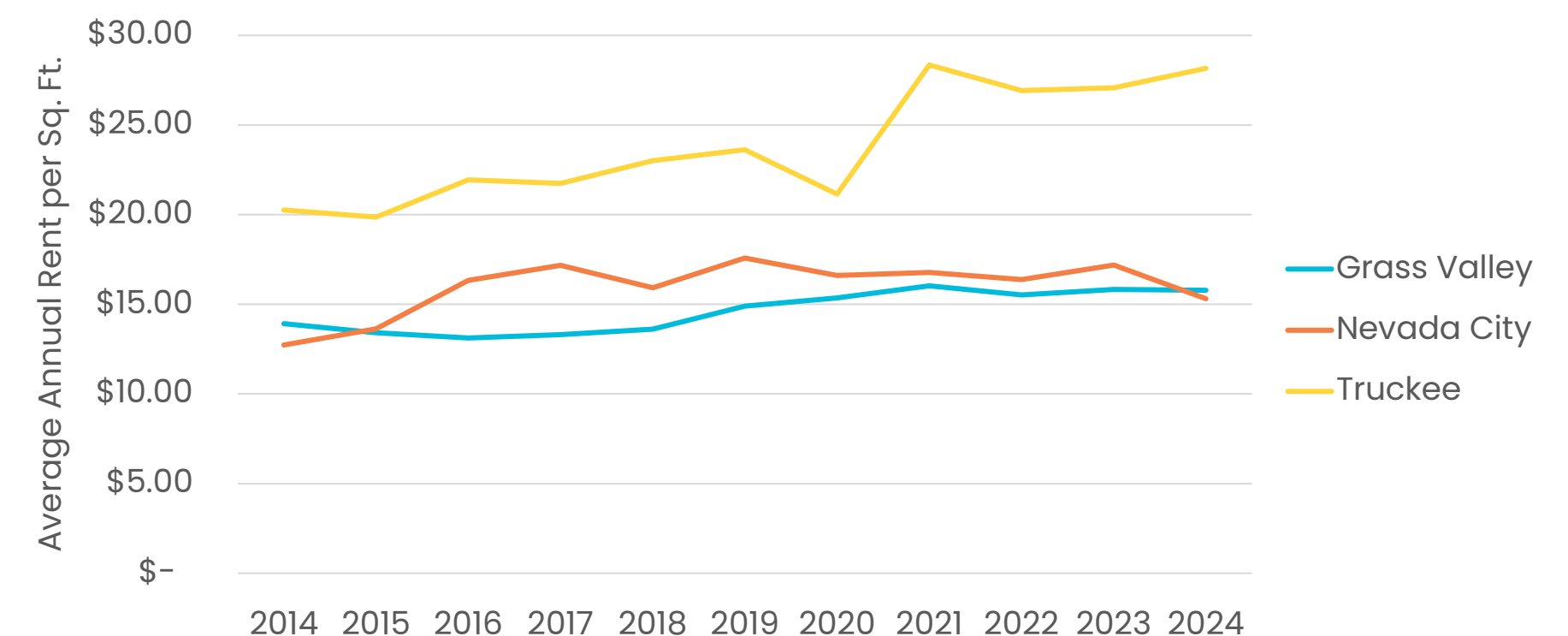
The courthouse's site constraints also make office an unlikely fit for courthouse reuse. Stakeholders indicate that most office tenants would prefer to locate in business park locations, rather than in Downtown. The parking size of its current building also poses a challenge for its re-use: stakeholders report that office spaces that are 500 square feet or smaller are easier to lease in Nevada City.

Figure 16: Nevada County Net Absorption for Office Space, 2014 - 2024



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

Figure 17: Average Annual Office Rent in Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Truckee by Year Built, 2024



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.
Note: Refers to direct, full-service gross rent.



RETAIL MARKET

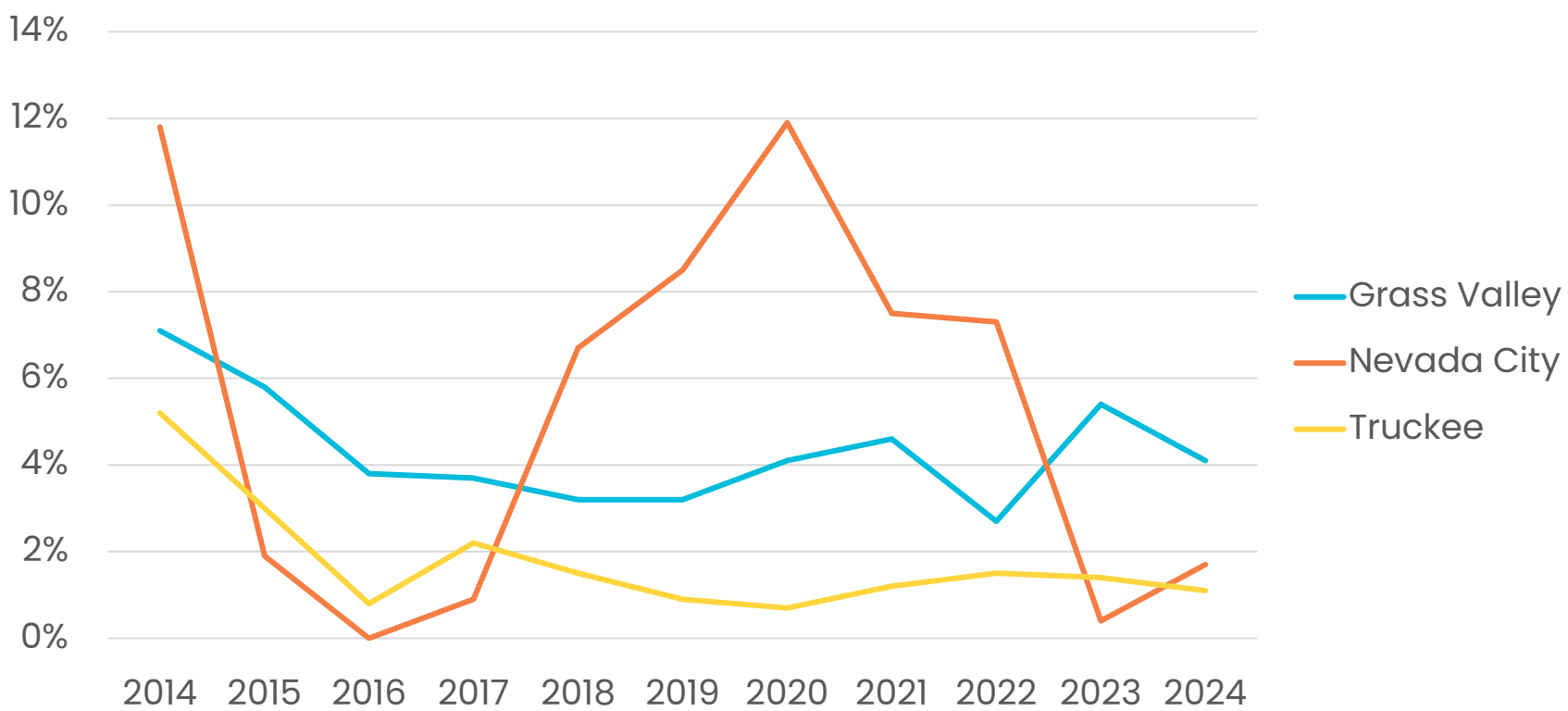
05

RETAIL SUPPLY

After a surge of vacancies during the pandemic, retail vacancy rates in Nevada City are currently very low, at less than two percent. Figure 18 shows average annual retail vacancy for Nevada County cities from 2014 through mid-2024. In 2020, at the height of the pandemic, retail vacancy in Nevada City increased to 12 percent. However, this was followed by a market correction, and vacancy decreased substantially as rents decreased and businesses returned. Currently, Nevada City has 6,000 square feet of vacant retail space, Grass Valley has 90,000 square feet, and Truckee has 14,000 square feet of vacant retail.

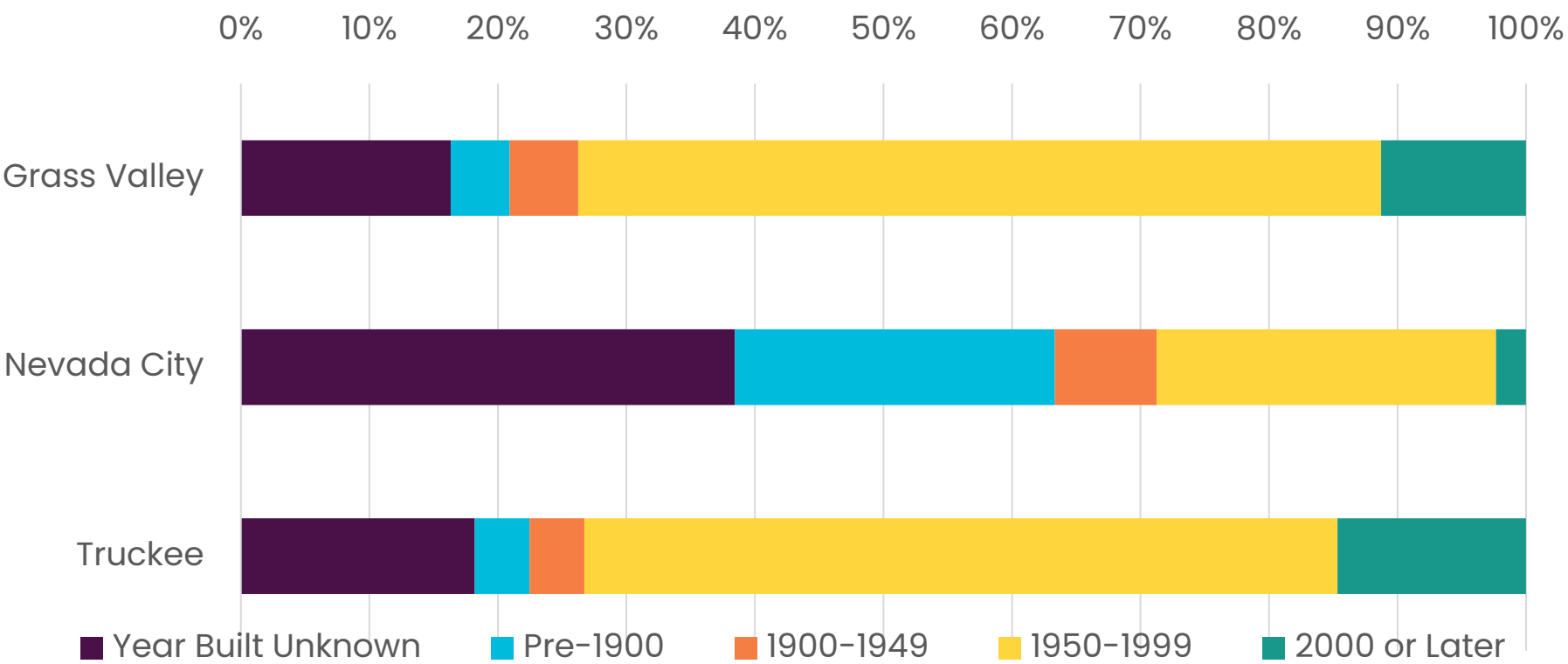
Nevada City has had very little recent retail development compared to Grass Valley and Truckee. Figure 19 shows the age of retail buildings in each community, based on the original decade each building was constructed. Less than five percent of Nevada City’s retail space was constructed since 2000. In comparison, more than 10 percent of retail space in both Grass Valley and Truckee was built in the past 25 years. Nevada City stakeholders indicated that the city prides itself on its historic downtown and boutique retail offerings, which may limit the appeal of any potential new retail developments in the Downtown area.

Figure 18: Nevada County Annual Average Retail Vacancy, 2014 – 2024



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

Figure 19: Retail Buildings in Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Truckee by Year Built, 2024



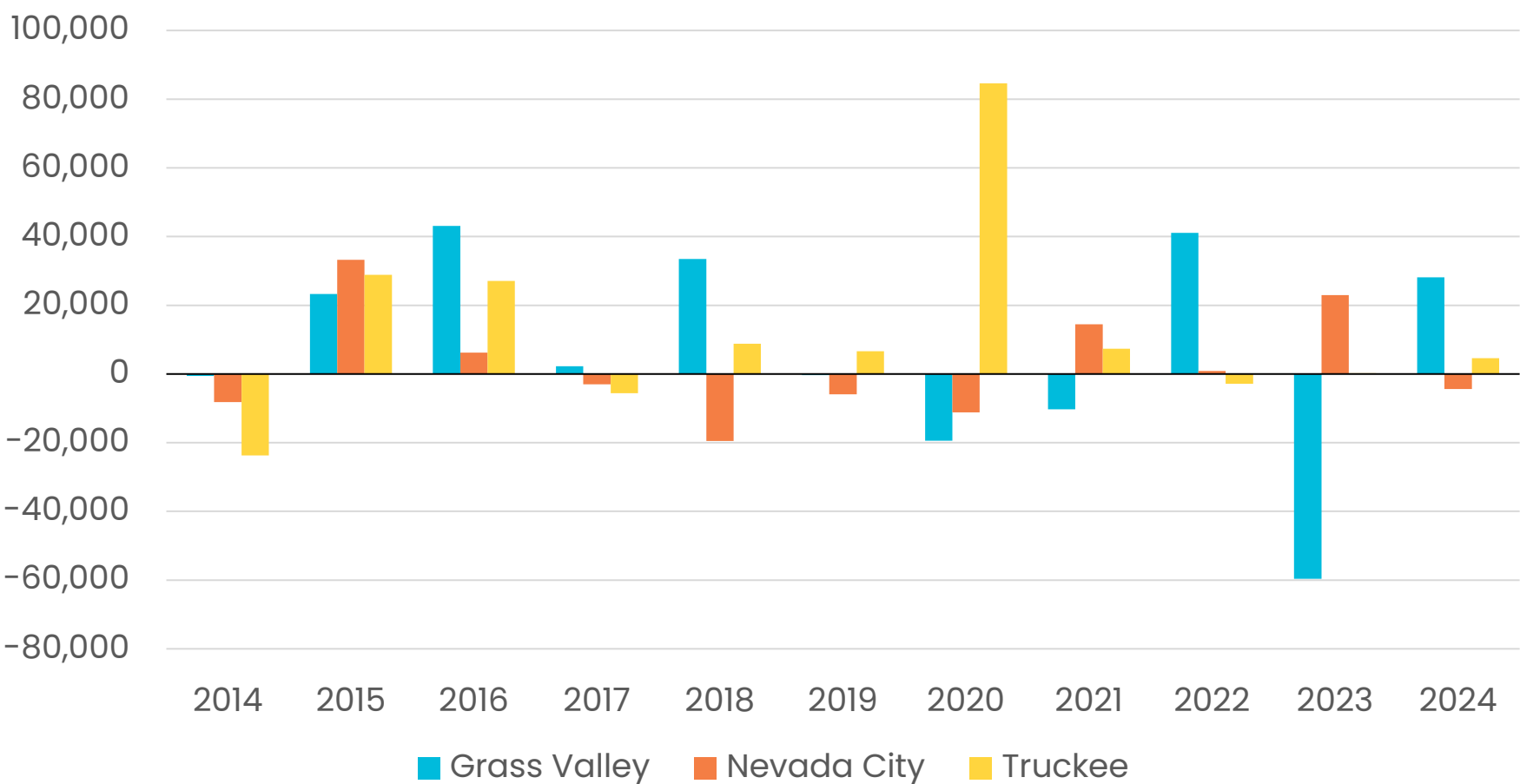
Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

RETAIL DEMAND

Despite retail challenges during the pandemic, Nevada City has had positive net absorption over the past five years. Figure 20 shows annual net absorption of retail space in Nevada County cities from 2014 to 2024. This figured describes the net change in retail occupancy by square feet and provides an indication of future demand for new retail space.

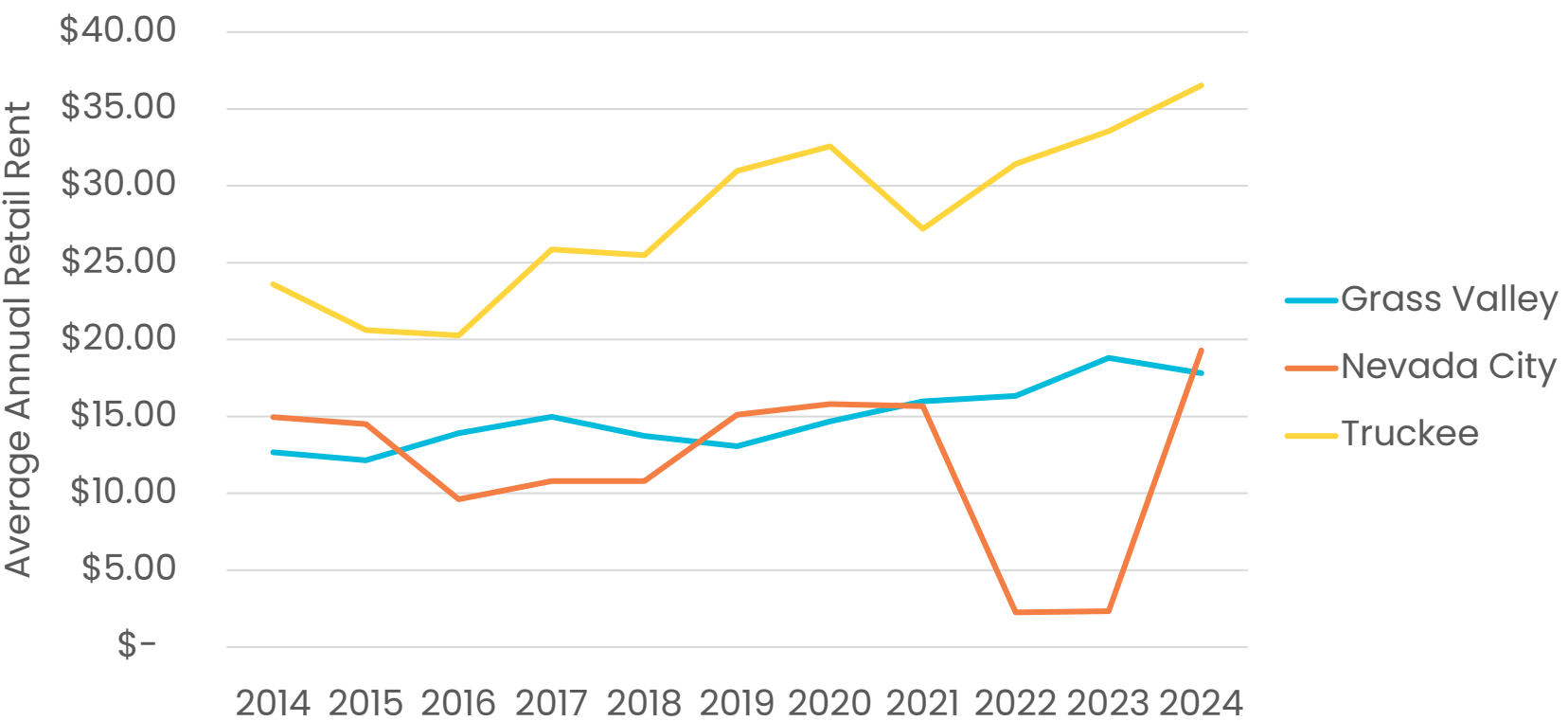
Nevada City has a much smaller retail inventory than either Grass Valley or Truckee, so small changes in its leasing activity can make a large impact on its retail market data. For example, Nevada City had only 1,000 square feet of leasing activity for which rent data was available in 2022 and 2023. Thus, the rapid reduction in rents in those years—shown in Figure 21—may be a market reaction to the city’s increased vacancy but is also based on very little market information.

Figure 20: Nevada County Net Absorption for Retail Space, 2014 – 2024



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

Figure 21: Average Annual Retail Rent in Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Truckee by Year Built, 2024



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

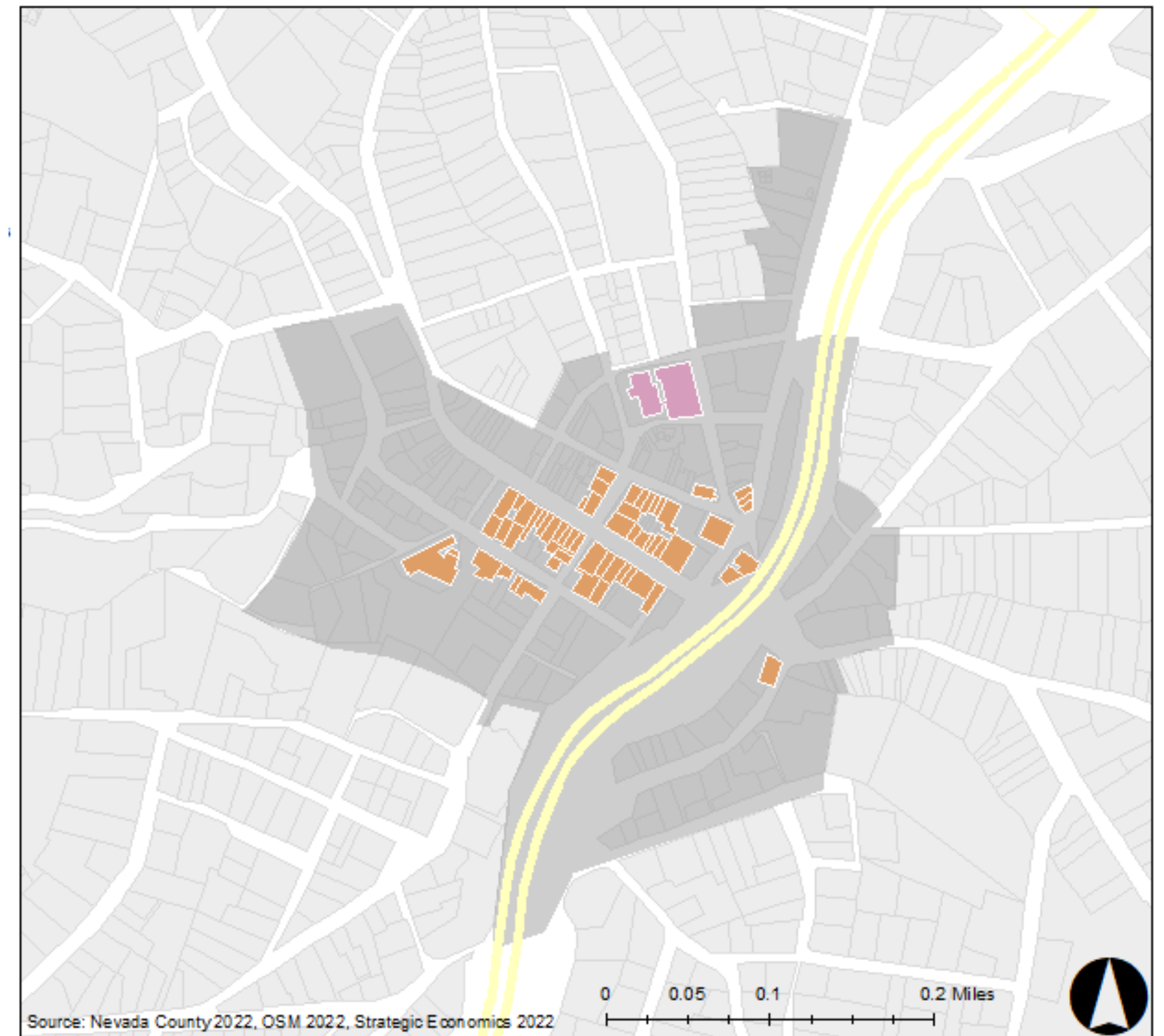
RETAIL OUTLOOK

Because of location-specific factors, the courthouse may not be as strong of a candidate for retail uses as market data suggests. For example, local stakeholders indicate that the courthouse's distance from Nevada City's main retail strip, and the presence of a large hill, make it a less attractive retail location than the rest of Downtown Nevada City. Similarly, the courthouse facility is much larger than the spaces occupied by boutique retailers in Nevada City's downtown. Most retailers that would use spaces of the size of the courthouse facility would prefer to be in a less parking-constrained location with better freeway access.

Furthermore, Downtown Nevada City's retail demand is in part, driven by courthouse visitors and employees, so demand for retail space may decrease with the relocation of the courthouse. Strategic Economics previously estimated that courthouse staff and visitors account for 11 percent of annual downtown restaurant sales and eight percent of annual downtown retail sales, and that relocating the courthouse would lead to a six percent reduction in downtown sales. Nevada City's declining population means that future population growth is unlikely to offset these declines in retail demand.

Local experts indicate that any viable retail re-use of the site would need to provide a unique enough experience to drive visitors to its inconvenient location. One suggested use that could serve such a purpose is a grocery store. However, stakeholders indicated that the grocery store market in Nevada City is already saturated, and a small market in the Downtown area recently closed. An alternate variant of this concept that may be more viable for drawing visitors to the site could be a food hall or food incubator. Such a facility could present a tourism draw while offering small business space for farmers markets, value-added food processing, retailers, and wineries. However, this concept would likely need to be executed as a public-private partnership, given the costs involved.

Figure 20: Nevada County Courthouse Location in Proximity to Historic Retail Buildings



- Nevada City Historical District
- Nevada County Superior Court
- Legacy Retail/Mixed Use Buildings

Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

HOSPITALITY MARKET

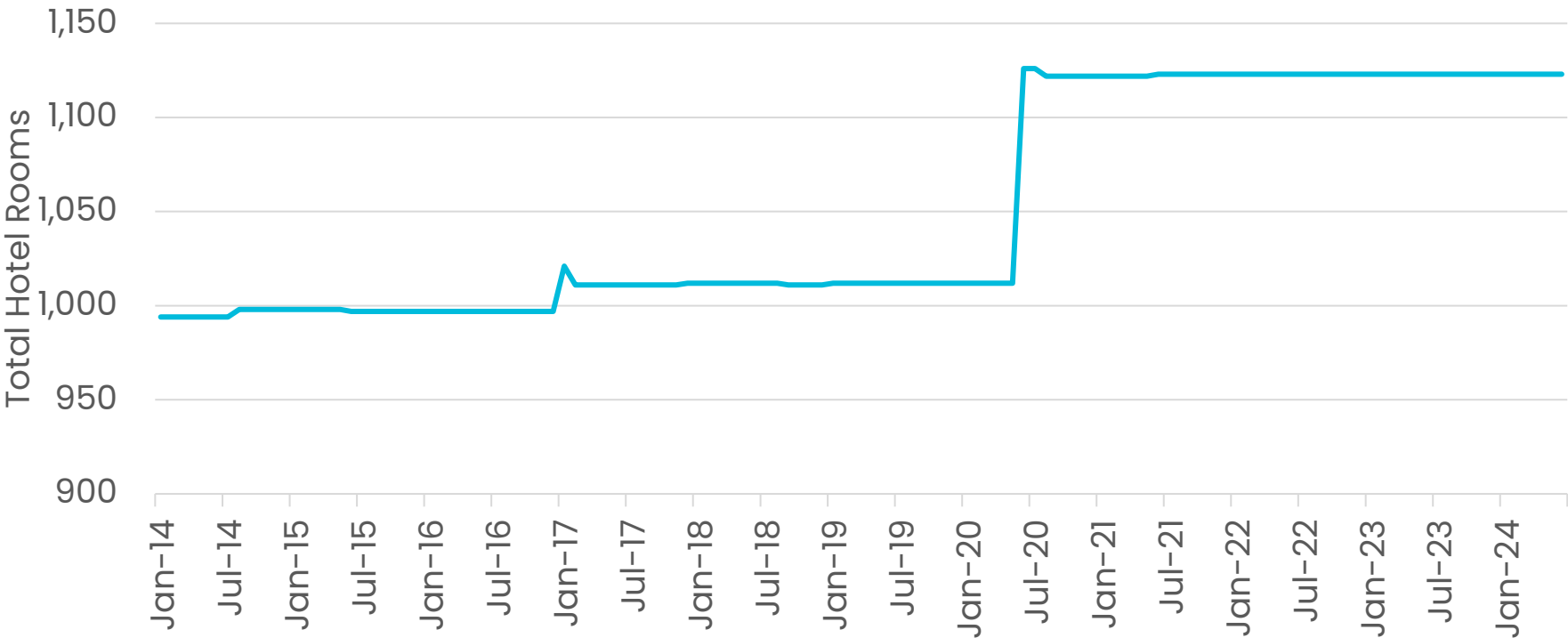
06

HOSPITALITY SUPPLY

Nevada County’s hotel room supply grew by around 10 percent over the past ten years, with most new supply added in Truckee. Figure 23 shows the county’s total room inventory from 2014 to 2024. Recent new additions include 114 rooms at SpringHill Suites in Truckee, while recent renovations include the National Exchange Hotel in Nevada City and the Holbrooke Hotel in Grass Valley.

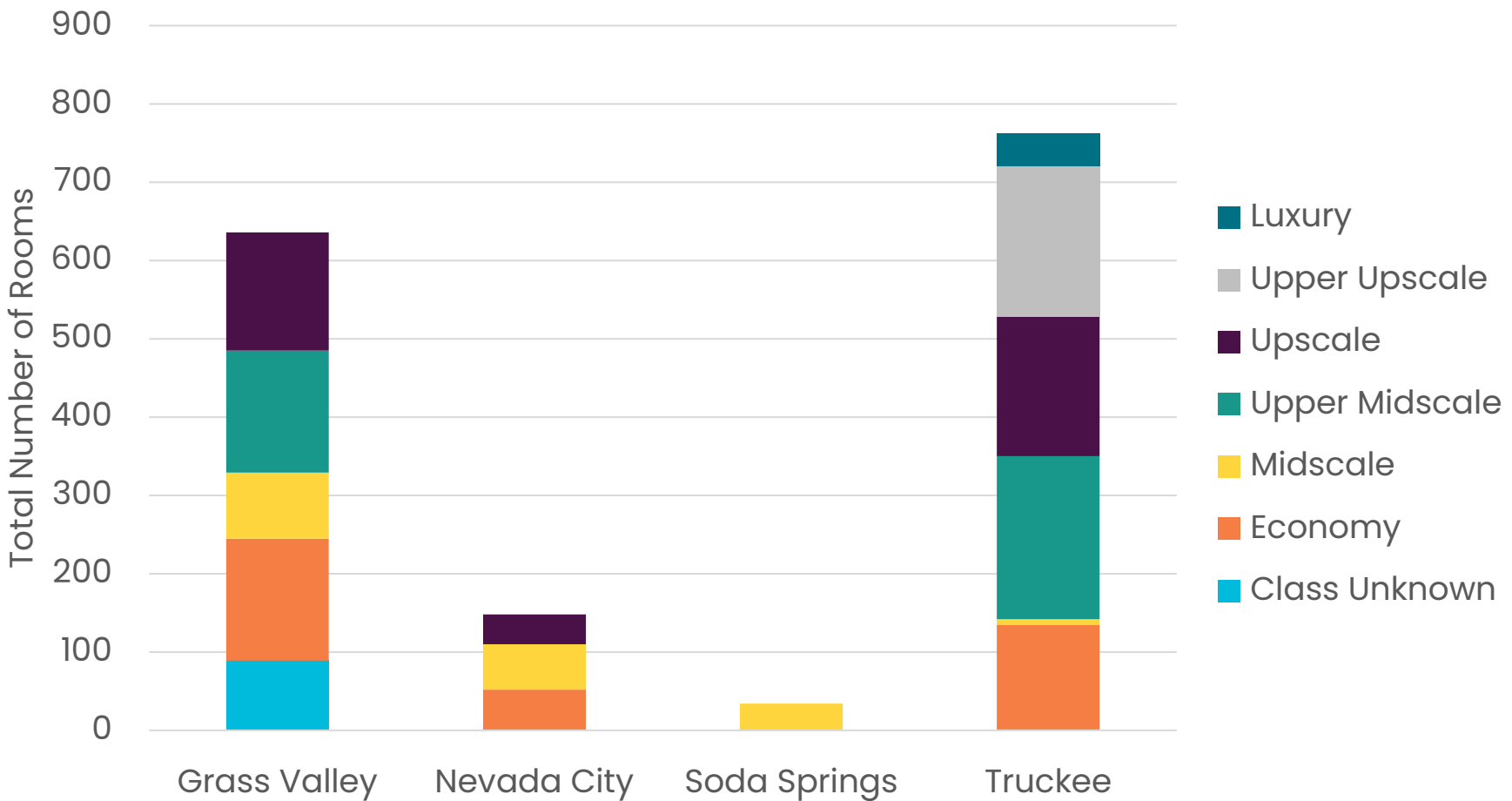
The renovation of the National Exchange Hotel in Nevada City increased the city’s higher-end hotel offerings, providing more options for visitors who want to spend the night in the city. Figure 24 compares the distribution of hotels in each Nevada County community by hotel class. This figure demonstrates that Nevada City still lacks upper midscale, upper upscale, and luxury hotel offerings—which are quite common in Truckee and Grass Valley.

Figure 23: Total Nevada County Hotel Room Inventory, 2014 to 2024



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

Figure 24: Total Hotel Rooms in Nevada County by Class, 2024



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

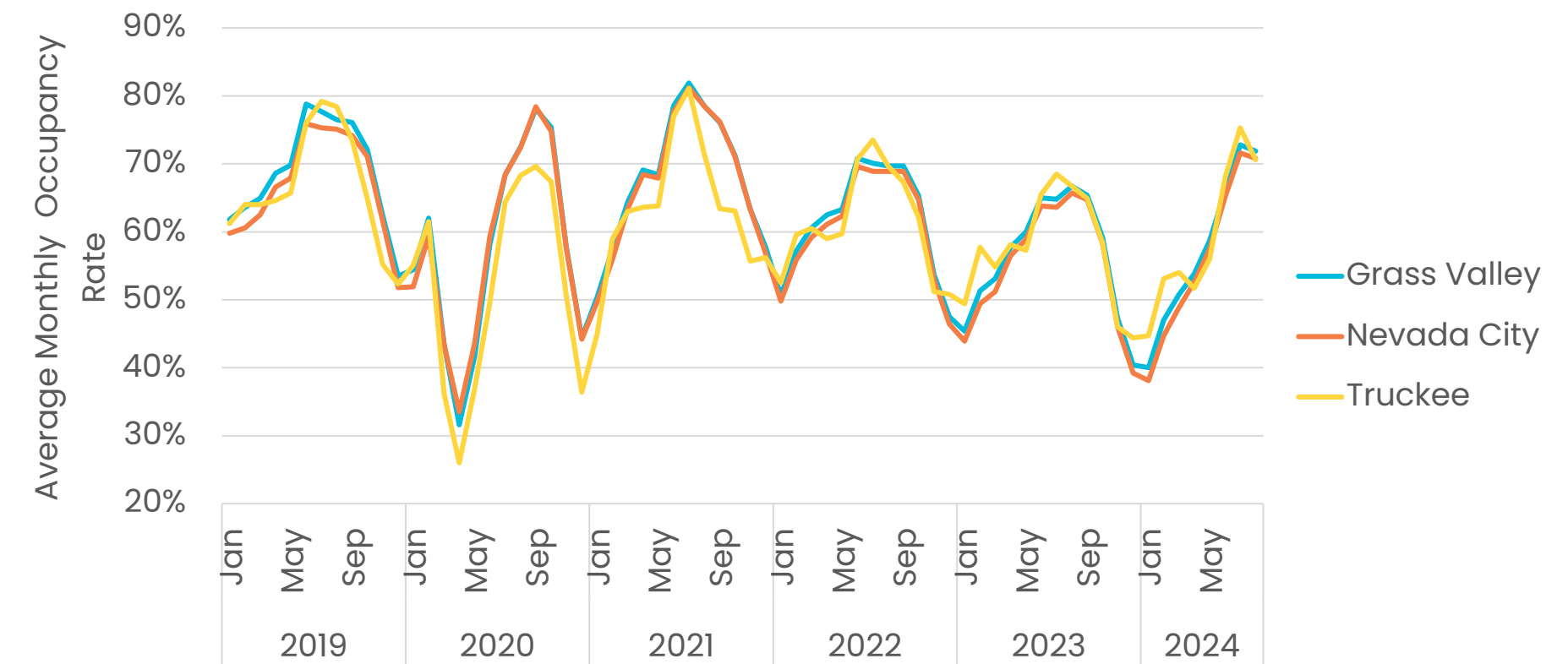
HOSPITALITY DEMAND

Nevada City's hotel demand has significant seasonal fluctuations, as demand peaks in July and August and declines in the winter months. Nevada City's hotel stays are driven more by outdoor recreation, the arts, and individual visitors to events—rather than corporate stays which have more stability throughout the year.

Nevada City's hotels recovered occupancy quickly after the pandemic in 2020 but have since had lower occupancy rates than they did in 2019—adjusting for seasonal trends. Figure 25 shows monthly hotel occupancy rates in Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Truckee from 2019 through August of 2024. Occupancy rates in all three cities have followed similar trends over the past five years, with a large surge in 2021. While summer demand remains high, winter demand has declined more and more with each subsequent year.

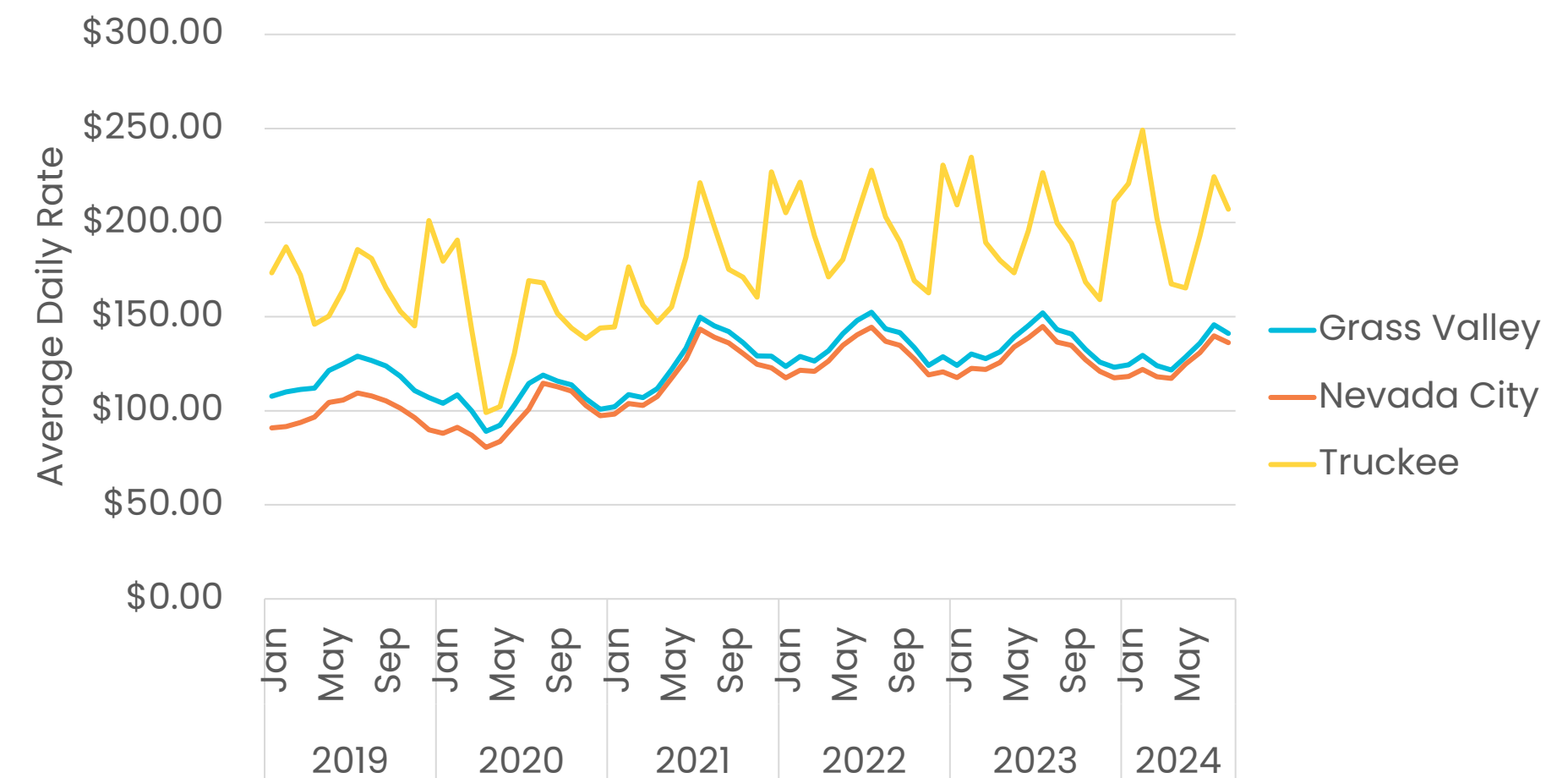
Hotels in Truckee command higher daily rates than those in Nevada City. Figure 26 compares average daily room rates in Nevada City with those in Grass Valley and Truckee. Overall, average daily room rates have increased in Nevada City compared to pre-pandemic levels. Though this may partially be explained by the recent renovation of the National Exchange Hotel, average daily rates have risen across the County.

Figure 25: Nevada County Hotel Room Occupancy by City, 2019 to 2024



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

Figure 26: Hotel Average Daily Rate in Nevada County by City, 2024



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

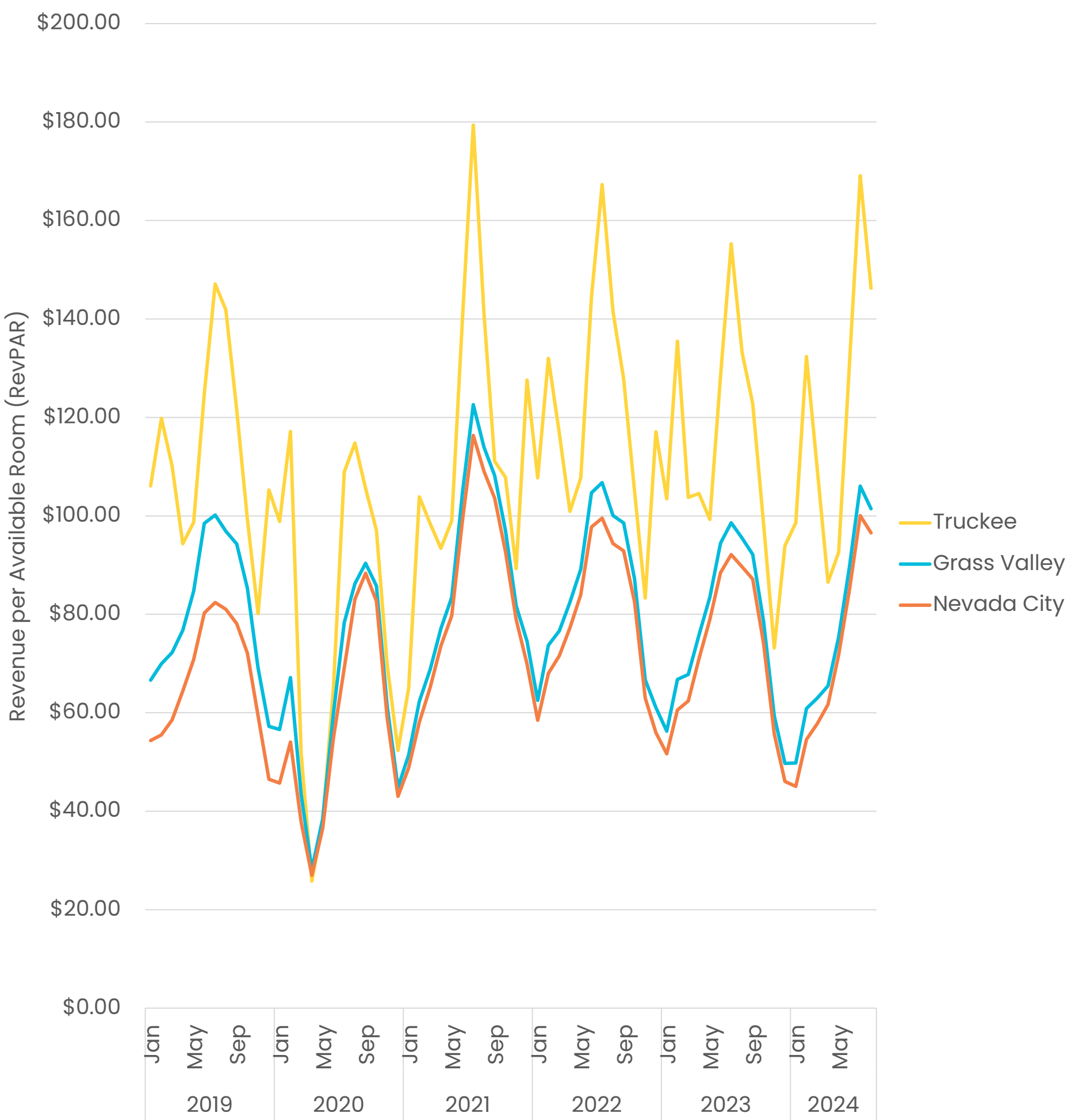
Figure 27: Nevada County Hotel RevPAR by City, 2019 to 2024

HOSPITALITY OUTLOOK

Overall, demand for hotels in Nevada City has increased compared to pre-pandemic conditions. Figure 27 shows the revenue per available room (RevPAR) for hotels in each Nevada County community from 2019 to 2024. This figure combines occupancy with average daily rates to show overall revenue trends. Nevada City’s RevPAR is clearly higher than it was in 2019 and is now much closer to on par with Grass Valley. However, Truckee is a much more in-demand location than either Nevada City or Grass Valley.

Stakeholders indicate that Nevada City may be able to support additional hotel rooms. Local experts indicated that recent renovations at the National Exchange Hotel provided more high-end lodging offerings, enticing more tourist to convert their day trips into overnights.

However, Nevada City is not a strong draw for business groups, and there is not much demand for new event space. Nevada County maintains a list of all meeting and conference locations in the county. Of the 58 locations on the list, 43 percent are located in Grass Valley, and an additional 36 percent are located in eastern Nevada County. Furthermore, conversion of a 40,000 square foot facility to an event center is currently underway in Grass Valley.



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.



OTHER USES 07

OTHER USES OVERVIEW

Land uses analyzed in the "Other Uses" category are those that would use the space to support a mission or function, rather than to make a return on invested capital.

These uses tend to be specialized and would need an operator or project sponsor to lead the re-use effort if dedicating the entire courthouse site to this specialized use. In some cases, the sponsor would bring their own capital to finance the reuse. In other cases, the project sponsor would require public or philanthropic support—mostly in the form of grants or low interest loans.

The other uses analyzed in this section include the following:

- Government Offices
- Nonprofit Offices
- Museum
- Educational Institution
- Medical Office or Hospital
- Recreation Facility
- Wellness Center



GOVERNEMENT OR NONPROFIT OFFICES

Currently there is no clear source of demand for re-use of the courthouse as a government office. Based on interviews with local stakeholders, it does not seem likely that either the City or the County would be interested in expanding their facilities—at least on the scale of the current courthouse building—in the near future. Furthermore, the California Department of Transportation projects a slight decline in Nevada County’s total government jobs between 2023 and 2040.

Non-profit users of the courthouse would face similar challenges as any other office-oriented use, such as parking constraints, facility size, and lack of freeway access. Nevada County does have a strong non-profit sector, Nevada City has a strong non-profit sector, and a group of like-minded non-profit organizations could occupy the current courthouse if leadership coalesced around doing so. Such a proposal could provide economies of scale and collaboration opportunities for local non-profits. However, local experts indicated that there is no clear demand for this presently, and such a concept would likely require public investment to achieve financial viability. Non-profit users would also face challenges with site constraints and access, much like any other office use. Lastly, concentrating non-profits in one location would do little to offset Nevada City’s already high office vacancy.



MUSEUM OR EDUCATION USES

An education facility on the site would likely have public support but offers less promise from a demand perspective. Nevada County's declining population means that it is an unlikely location for future public-school investment. Local experts indicate that the State's university investment planning process is also likely to be more than ten years long, meaning that Nevada City would already need to be under consideration for a public institution to be a viable courthouse use. Private universities would take significant financial investment and are also likely to be dissuaded by Nevada County's declining population.

A museum use could be a good fit for the site's constraints but there is no clear leadership group or interested party with financial backing in the area looking to take on such a project. Stakeholders suggested that a unique museum, such as one celebrating Nevada City's gold rush heritage, could be a good fit with the existing building and the site's location. However, local stakeholder interviews did not identify any clear interested parties or candidates to lead such an initiative. As such, any public investment to dedicate the site to this use would be taking a significant financial risk. However, this use could be considered as a secondary use on the site, potentially occupying a small increment of space.



Worcester County Courthouse, Massachusetts—which is being repurposed for a museum and housing use. Source: Public Domain, Wikimedia Commons, 2011.

MEDICAL, RECREATION, OR WELLNESS USE

While healthcare is a growing sector for Nevada County, prospects for the courthouse as a sole-purpose medical facility are likely limited. Based on conversations with local medical industry experts, the high costs of healthcare facility construction likely limits potential for the courthouse to be used as a medical facility. Furthermore, the prospect of a building re-use limits potential further, as doctor or hospital tenants would need the facility to meet high standards for health codes.

Part of the courthouse could potentially be used for wellness or smaller medical offices, such as massage therapists or chiropractors, but there is likely insufficient demand for this to be anything more than a supportive use. These uses have less stringent health code and construction requirements than doctors' offices or hospitals and would connect with Nevada County's growing holistic health industry. However, given the surplus of office spaces in Nevada City already, this use is unlikely to be more than a supportive use for the site.

A sports or recreation facility could provide a unique attraction for Nevada City, but is a poor fit for the existing building's constraints and does not have clear market demand. Stakeholders suggested that repurposing the courthouse as a community center with recreation elements could draw visitors to the courthouse. However, the building's existing clear heights and floorplates are not suited for recreational uses, and there is no clear interested party for a community-focused facility. Furthermore, the closure of Yuba Club gym in Nevada City in the past five years may indicate insufficient demand for this type of facility.



Alamosa County Courthouse, Colorado—which is being repurposed for medical uses.
Source: Jeffrey Beall, Wikimedia Commons, 2012.

SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

08

POTENTIAL MARKET-DRIVEN SITE USES

LAND USE COULD BE FINANCIAL DRIVERS OF COURTHOUSE REDEVELOPMENT

Strategic Economics identified two primary land uses that are most supported by market demand data and site characteristics as financial drivers for the courthouse site: housing and hotels. These uses could be supported by a variety of other uses, such as wellness, food processing, or another institution.

HOUSING

Pros

- Strong local and regional demand
- Could bring workforce, weekday shoppers to downtown

Cons

May be difficult to match with re-use of existing building

Possible Product Types

Senior Housing; Market Rate Multifamily, town houses

HOTEL

Pros

- Some recent growth in hotel demand
- Unique use for historic building

Cons

Mixed evidence for demand from market perspective, may take a long time to find a developer willing to build a hotel

Possible Product Types

Hotel & Health Spa; Hotel on just courthouse portion



SUPPORTIVE SITE USES

LAND USES that COULD BE SUPPORTIVE OR SECONDARY USES ON THE SITE

FOOD INCUBATOR/MARKET

Description

- food production facilities and some market facilities
- Could provide a unique retail alternative to attract visitors

Outlook

Would likely need to be executed as a public private partnership

Would need an operator and strong public champion

WELLNESS OR MEDICAL OFFICE

Description

- Small offices for wellness providers or non-physician health providers
- Could be paired with hospitality or other use

Outlook

Promising, but questions about adaptability to current building, overall demand

MUSEUM OR NON-PROFIT USE

- A small portion of the site could be used as a museum or non-profit community center facility
- Could be paired with hospitality or housing

Outlook

The outlooks for these uses is unclear based on lack of a project sponsor

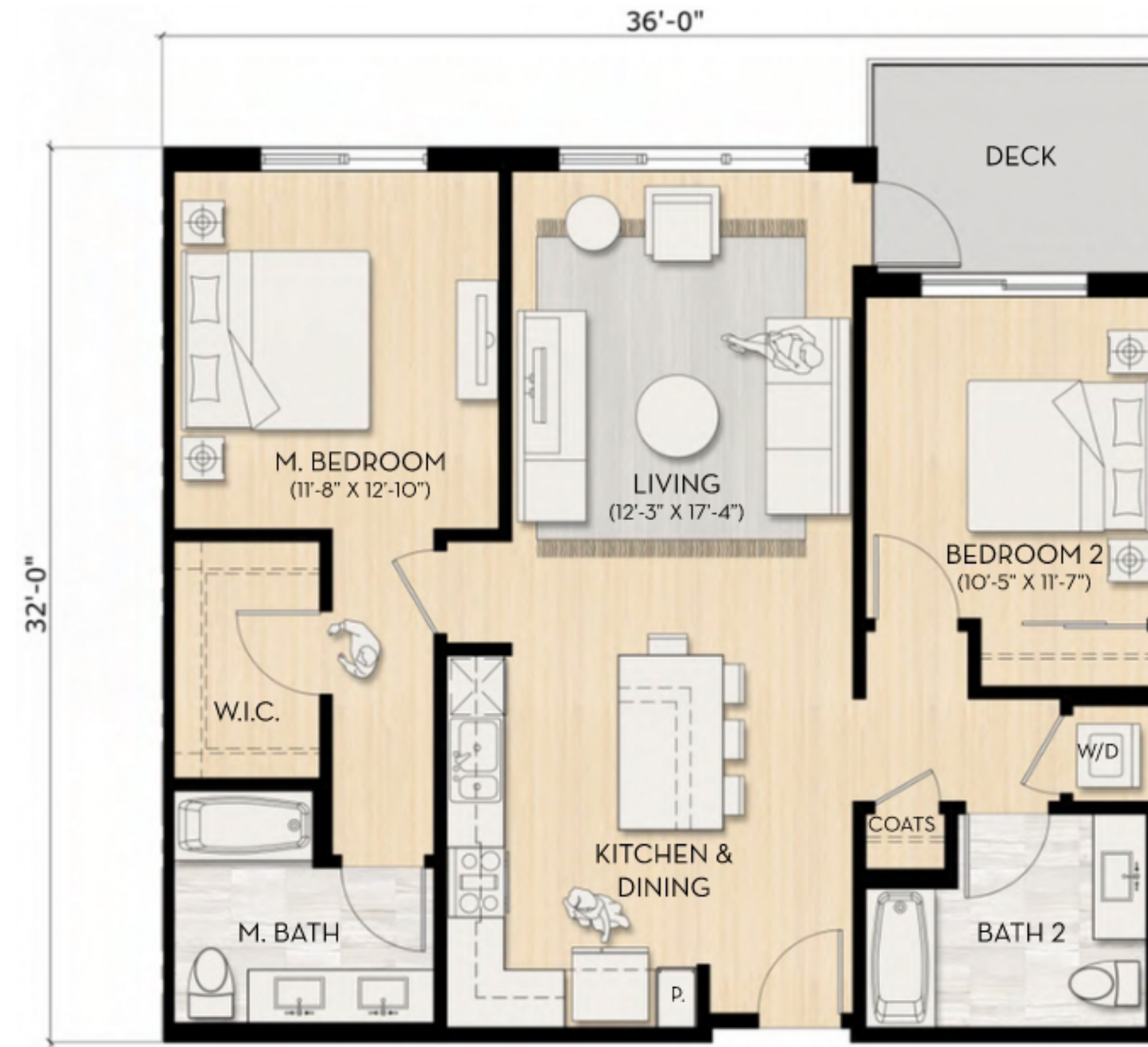


NEVADA COUNTY COURTHOUSE

ARCHITECTURAL STUDIES - RESIDENTIAL



1 BR 26' X 32': 832 SF



2 BR 36' X 32': 1152 SF

APARTMENT - UNIT SIZES

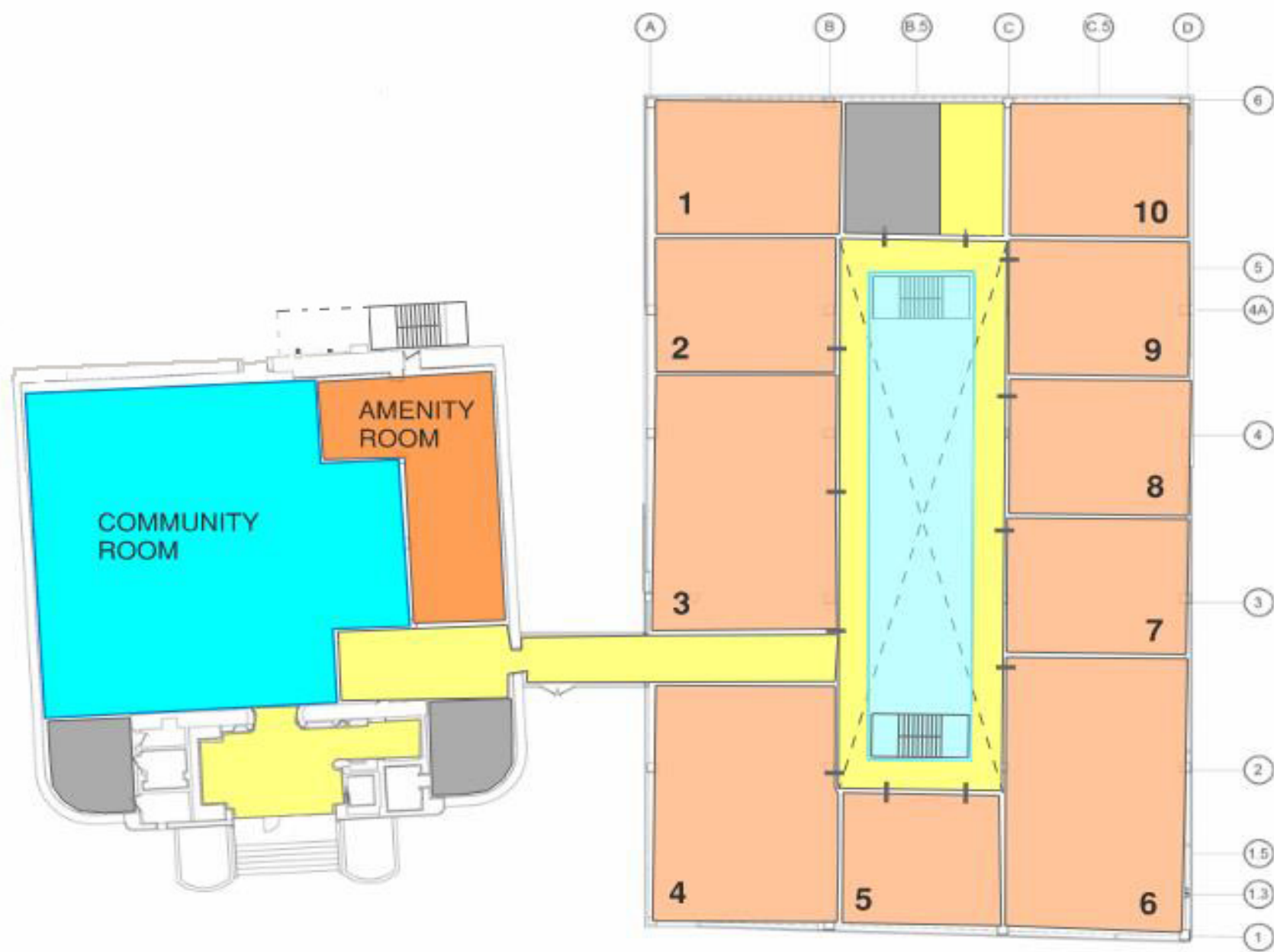


<u>Total units: 24</u>	<u>Required parking: 30</u>	<u>Provided Parking: 32</u>
- 1 br 18	18	32 existing below grade
- 2 br 6	12	
- 3 br 0	0	

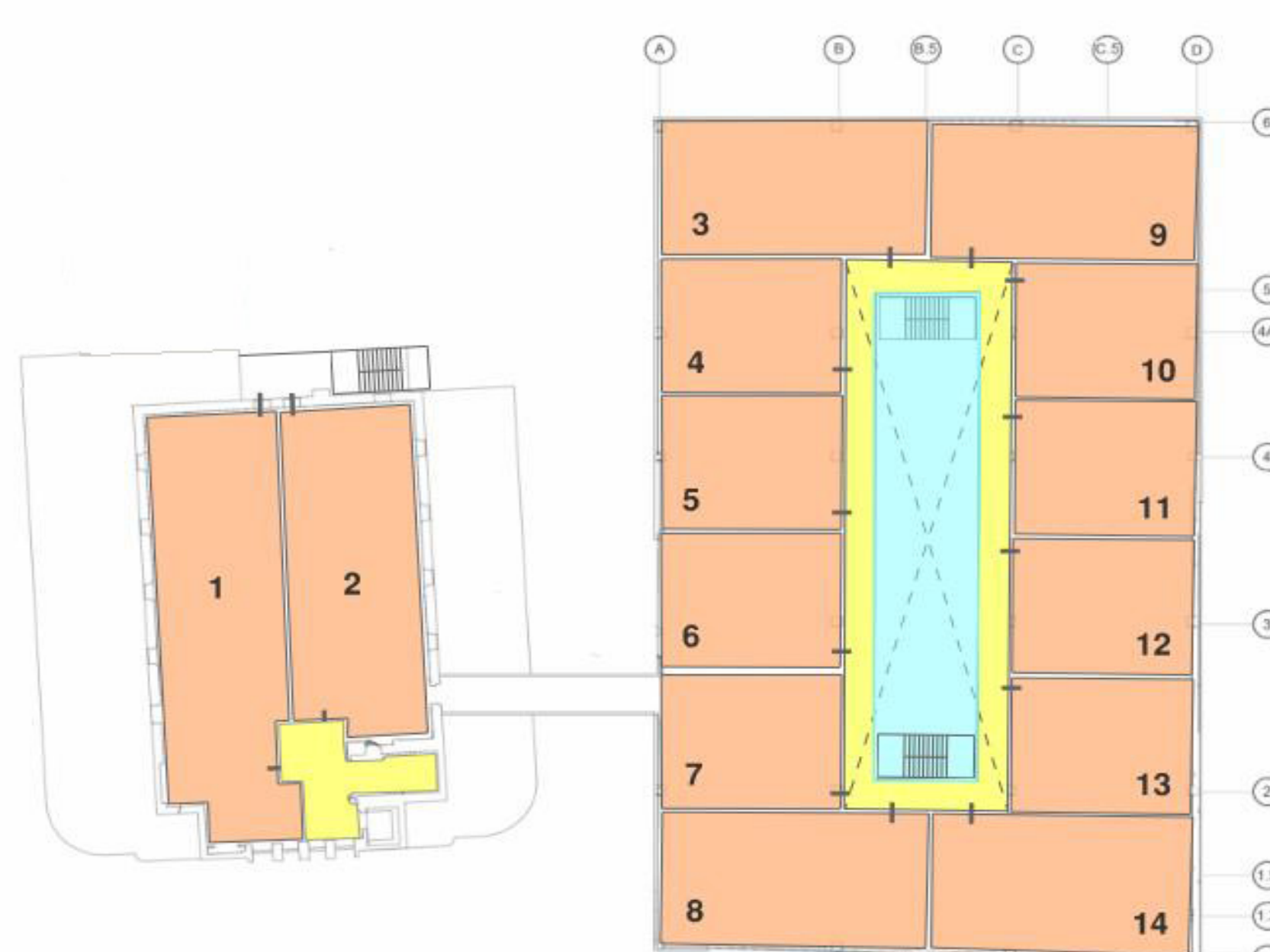
Total new construction area:

Total building remodel:	COURTHOUSE:	15,830 sf
	ANNEX:	32,440 sf

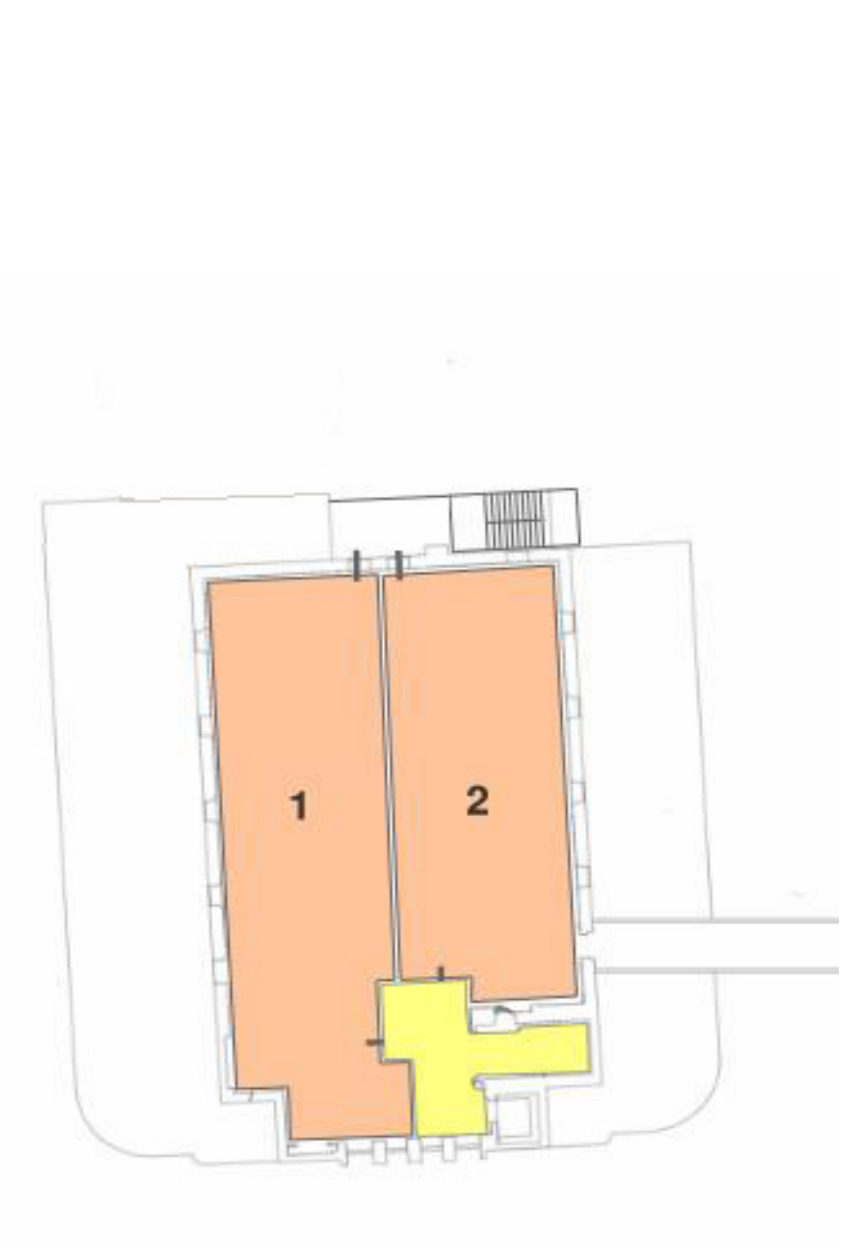
APARTMENTS - ANNEX REMODEL



Level 1



Level 2

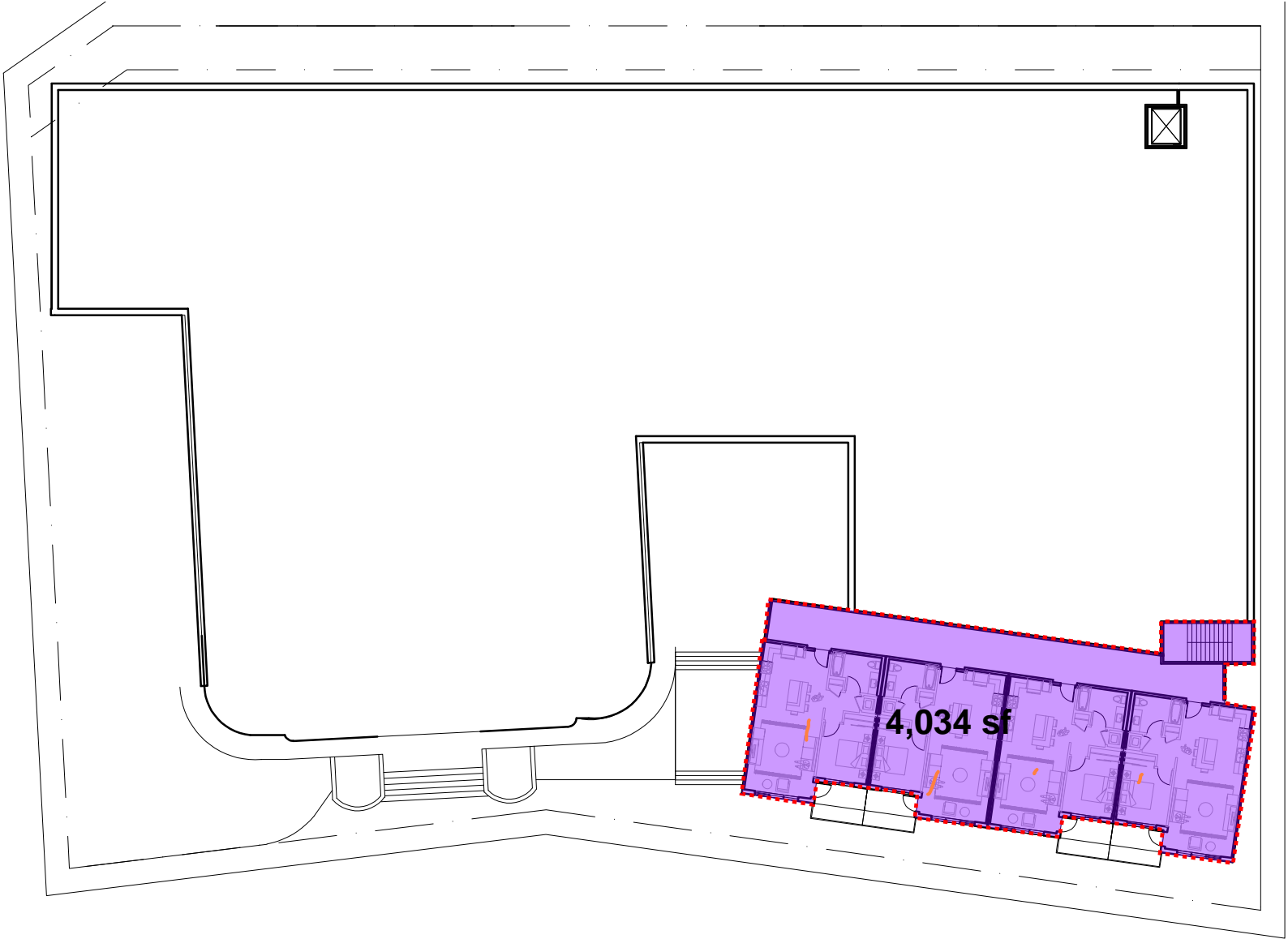


Level 3



Nevada City Courthouse - Keep tower scheme

12.23.24



TOTAL PROJECT

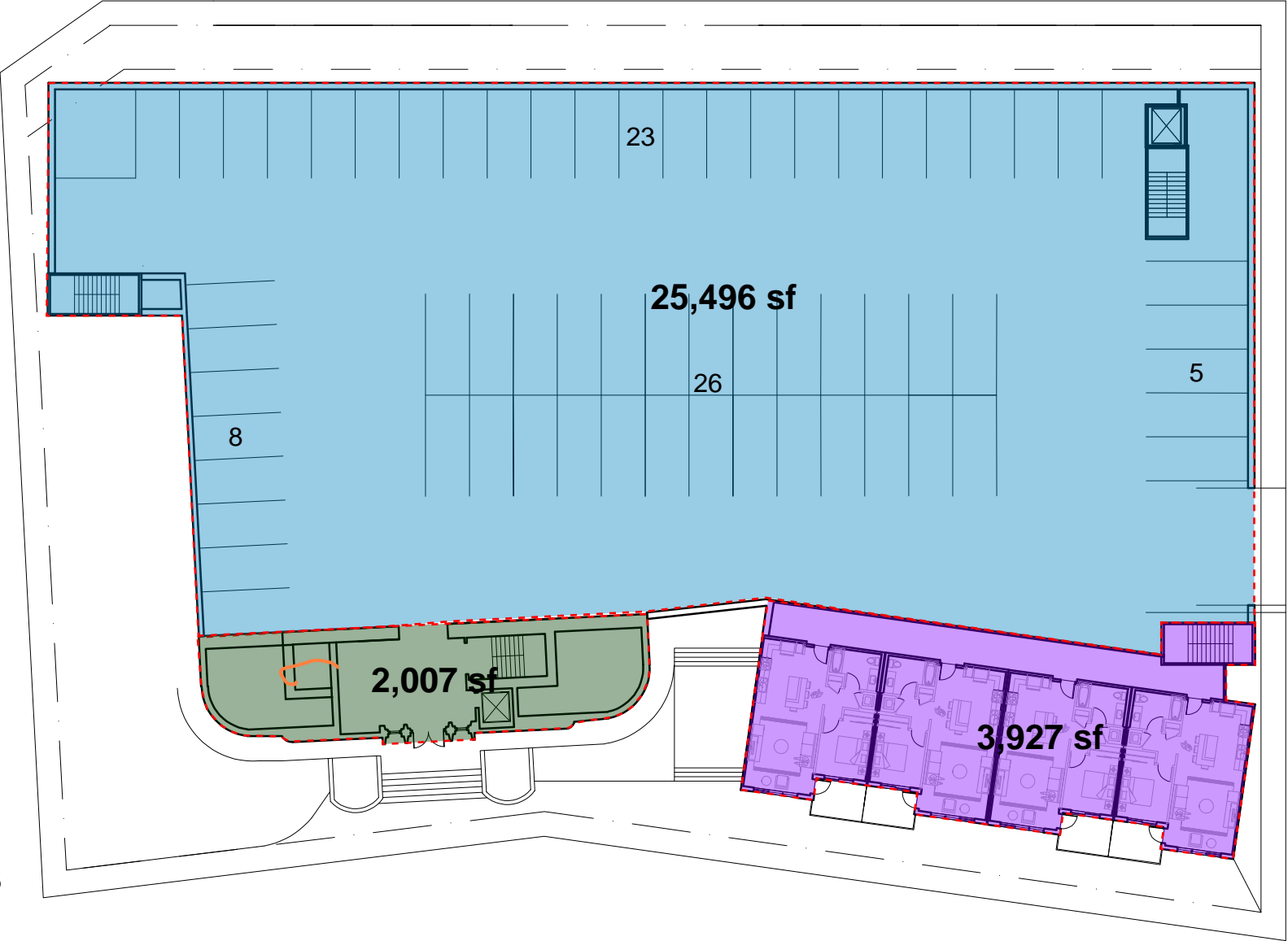
	1BR	2BR
L0	4	0
L1	4	0
L2	11	9
L3	11	9
L4	7	9
L5	0	6
TOTAL	37	33

PARKING REQUIRED: 37 + 66 = 103

PARKING:
ON SITE: 62
OFF SITE: 42
TOTAL: 104

LEVEL 0	
1BR	4
2BR	0
UNITS	4

LO



PARKING: 62 on site

TOTAL PROJECT

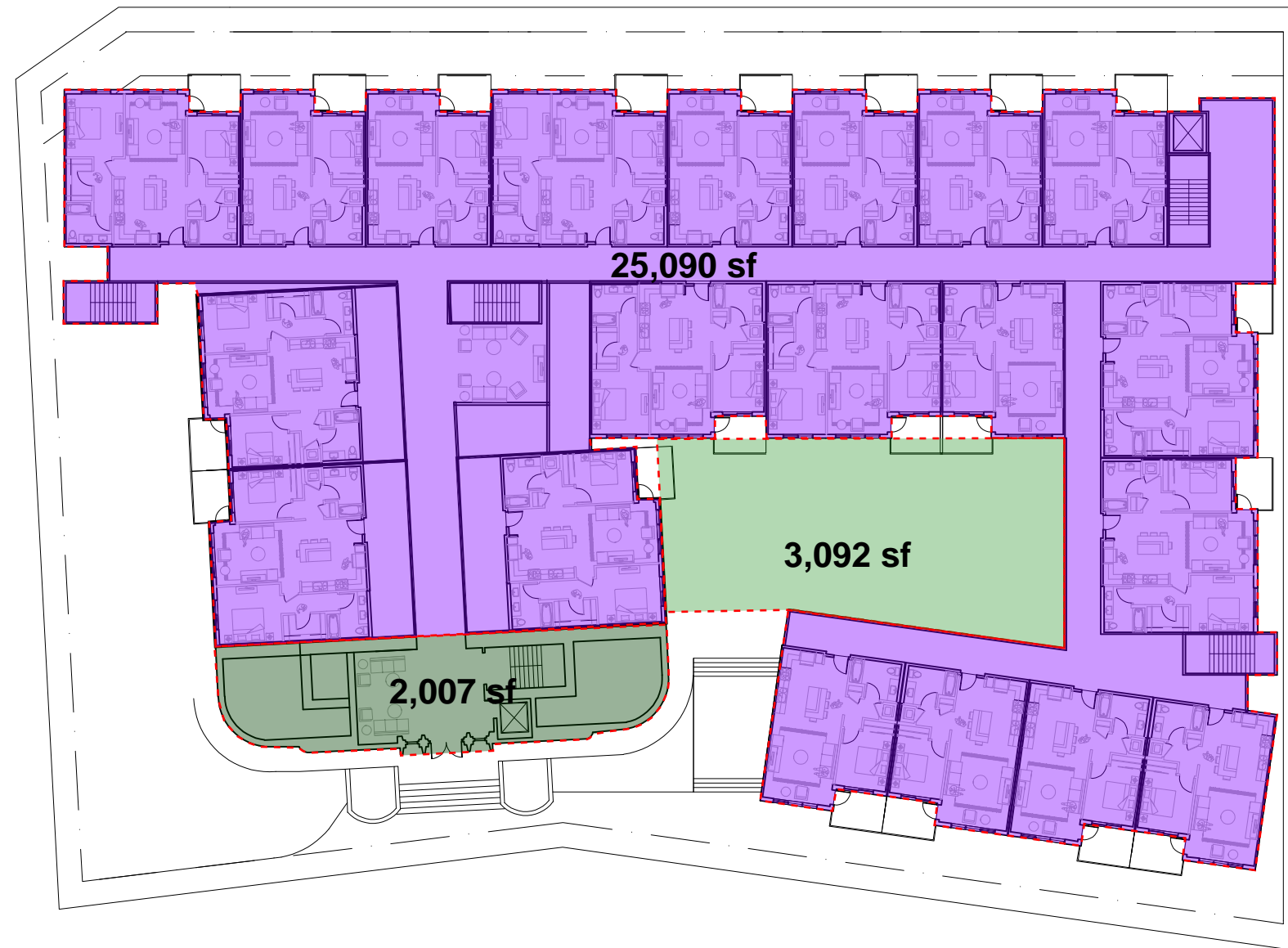
	1BR	2BR
L0	4	0
L1	4	0
L2	11	9
L3	11	9
L4	7	9
L5	0	6
L6	0	6
TOTAL	37	39

PARKING REQUIRED: 37 + 78 = 115

PARKING:
ON SITE: 62
OFF SITE: 42
TOTAL: 104

<u>LEVEL 1</u>	
1BR	4
2BR	0
UNITS	4

L1



LEVEL 2	
1BR	11
2BR	9
UNITS	20

L2



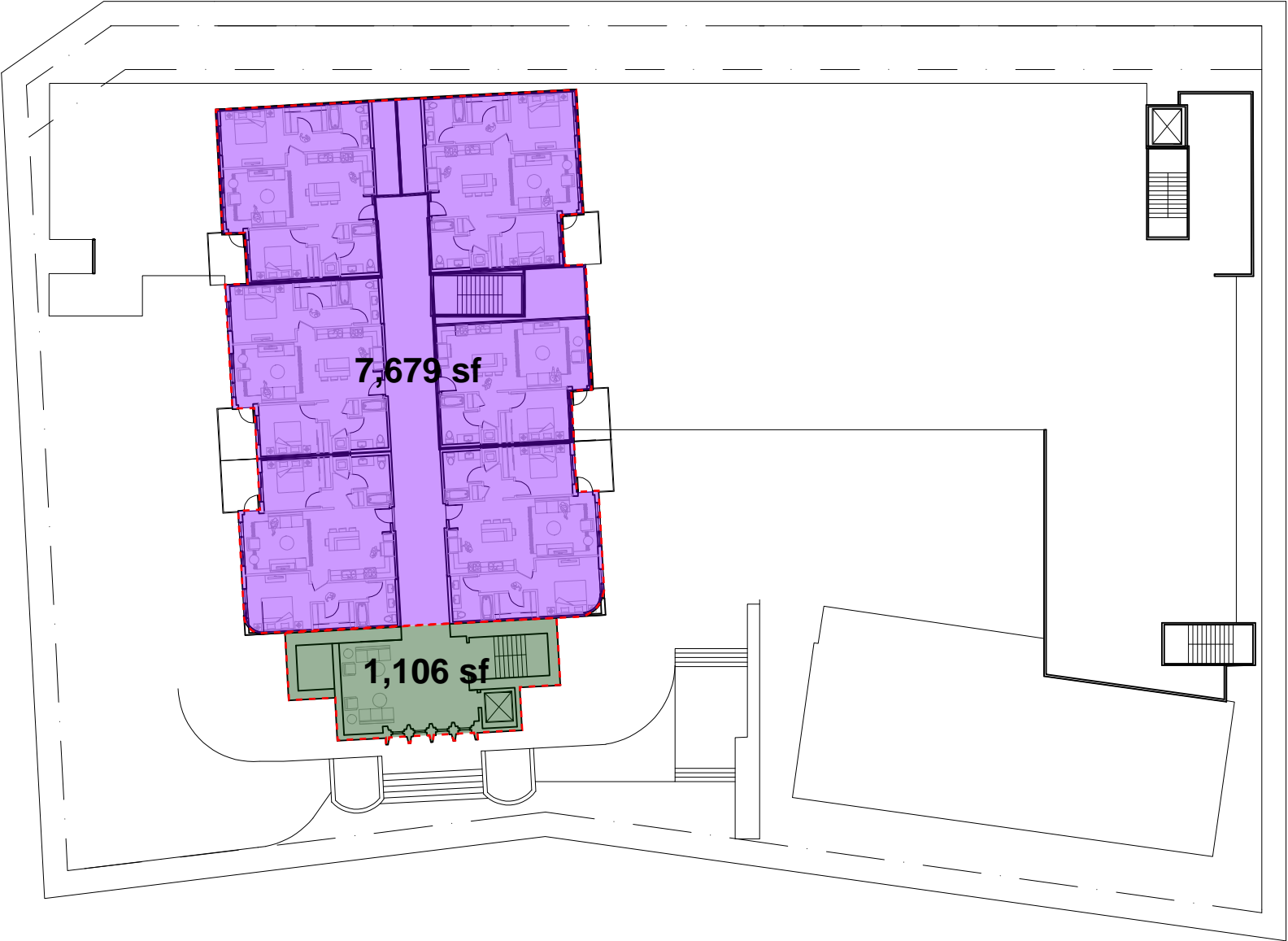
LEVEL 3	
1BR	11
2BR	9
UNITS	20

L3



<u>LEVEL 4</u>	
1BR	7
2BR	9
UNITS	16

L4



<u>LEVEL 4</u>	
1BR	0
2BR	6
UNITS	6

<u>LEVEL 4</u>	
1BR	
2BR	6
UNITS	6

L5

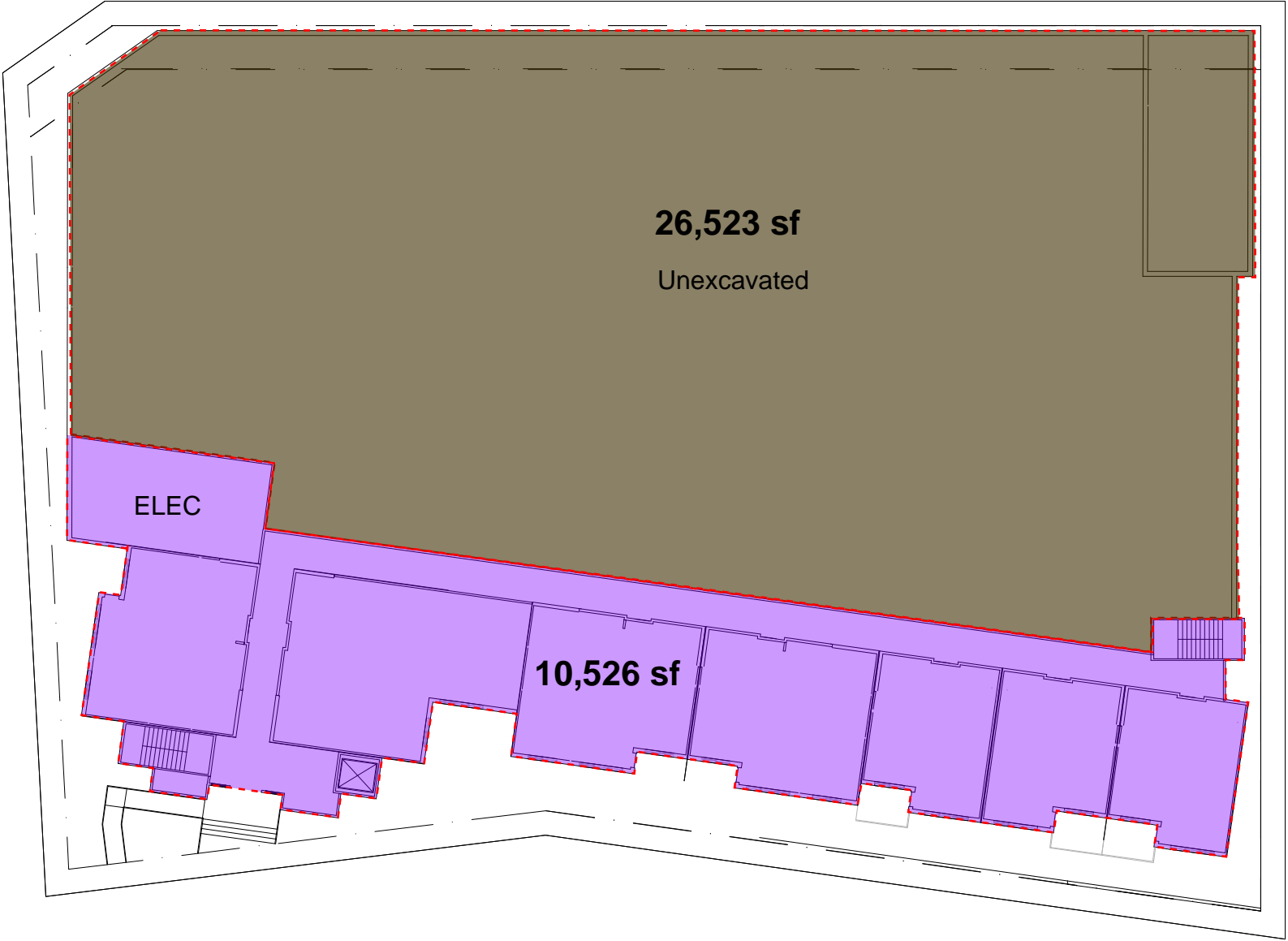


Nevada City Courthouse - New Tower Scheme

12.31.24



Overlay - Old vs New Tower Locations



TOTAL PROJECT

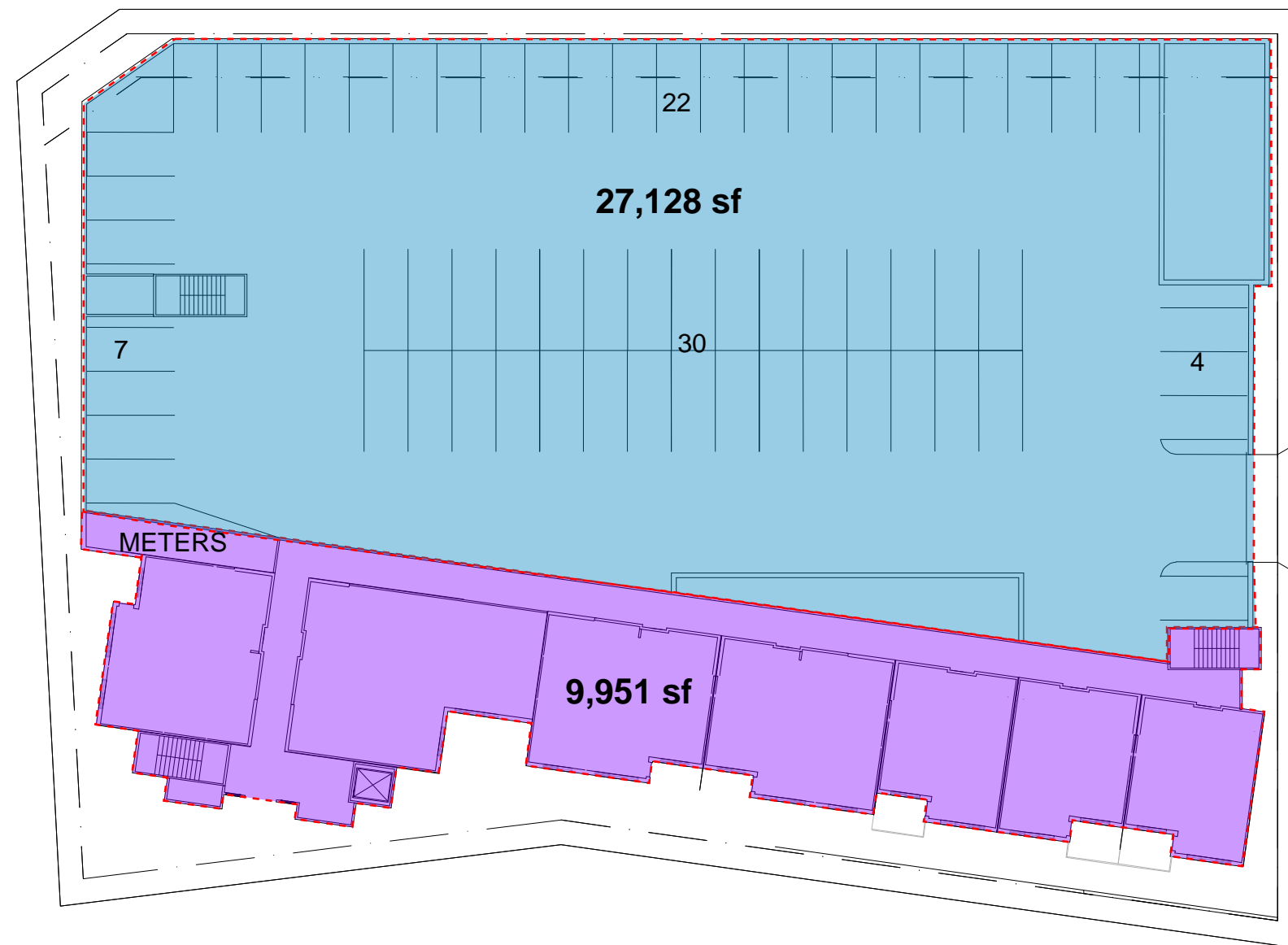
	1BR	2BR
L0	3	4
L1	3	4
L2	12	11
L3	10	8
L4	10	8
L5	3	5
TOTAL	41	40 = 81

PARKING REQUIRED: 41 + 80 = 120

PARKING:
ON SITE: 62
OFF SITE: 42
TOTAL: 104

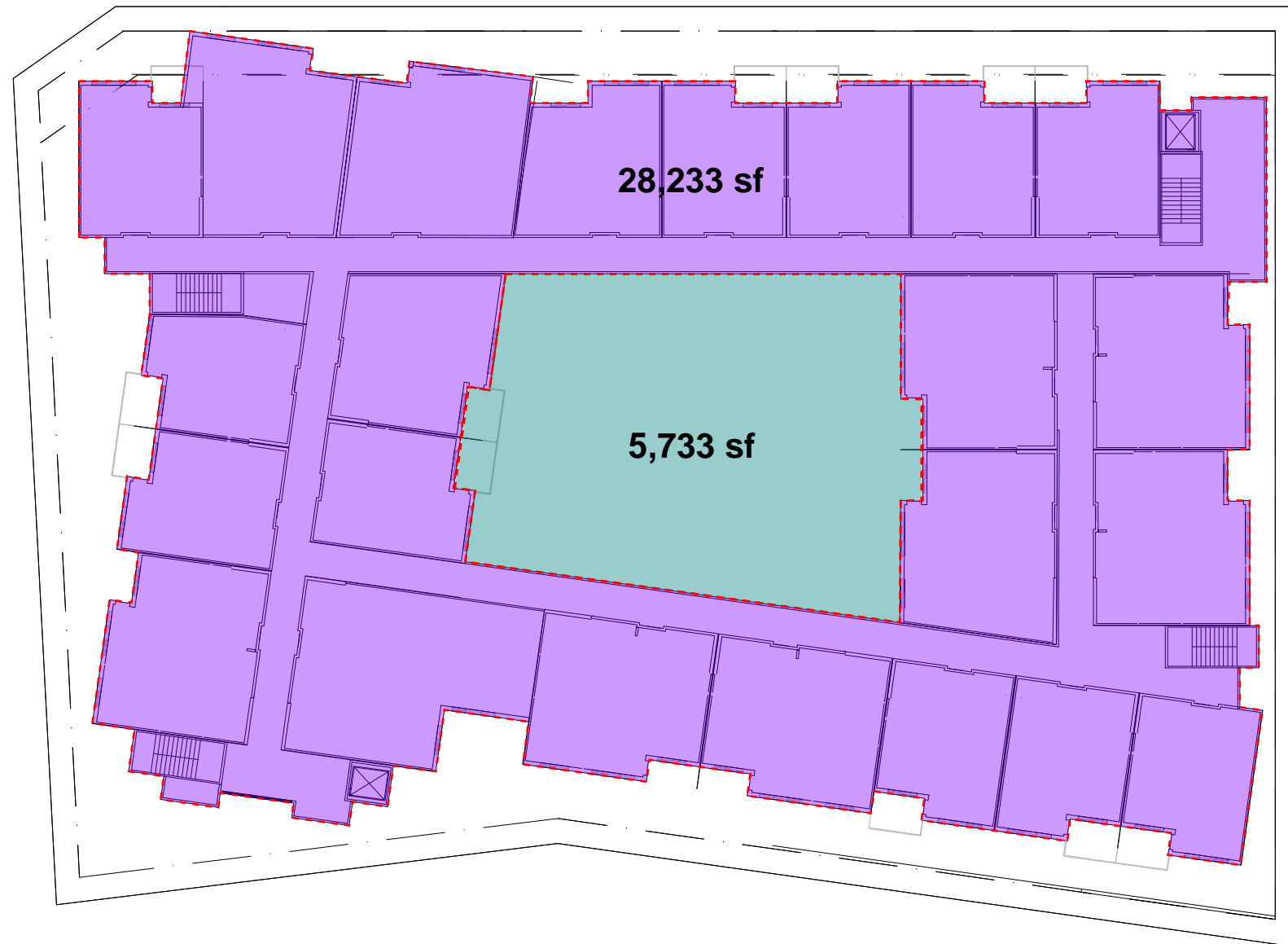
LEVEL 0	
1BR	3
2BR	4
UNITS	7

LO



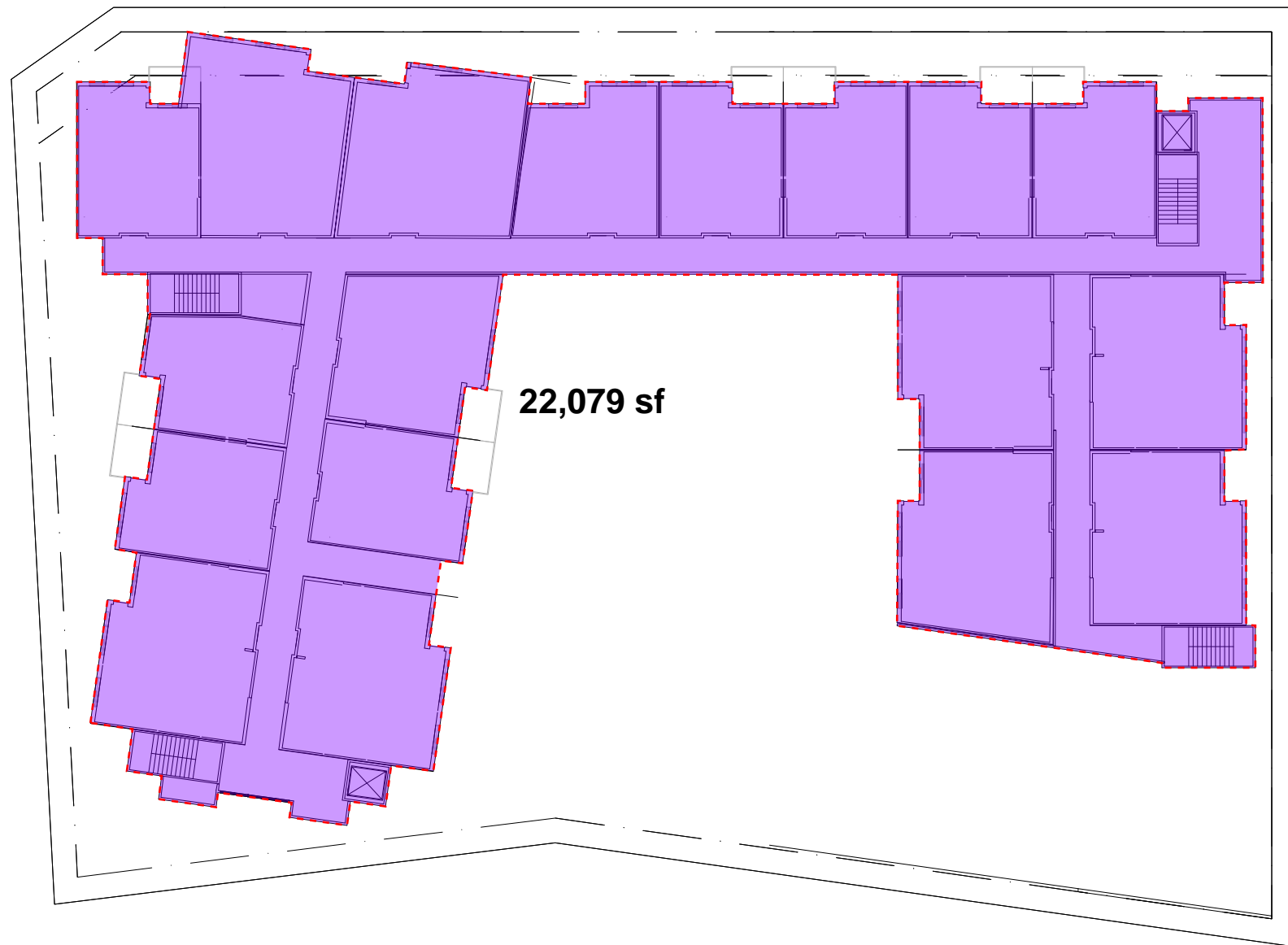
LEVEL 1	
1BR	3
2BR	4
UNITS	7

L1



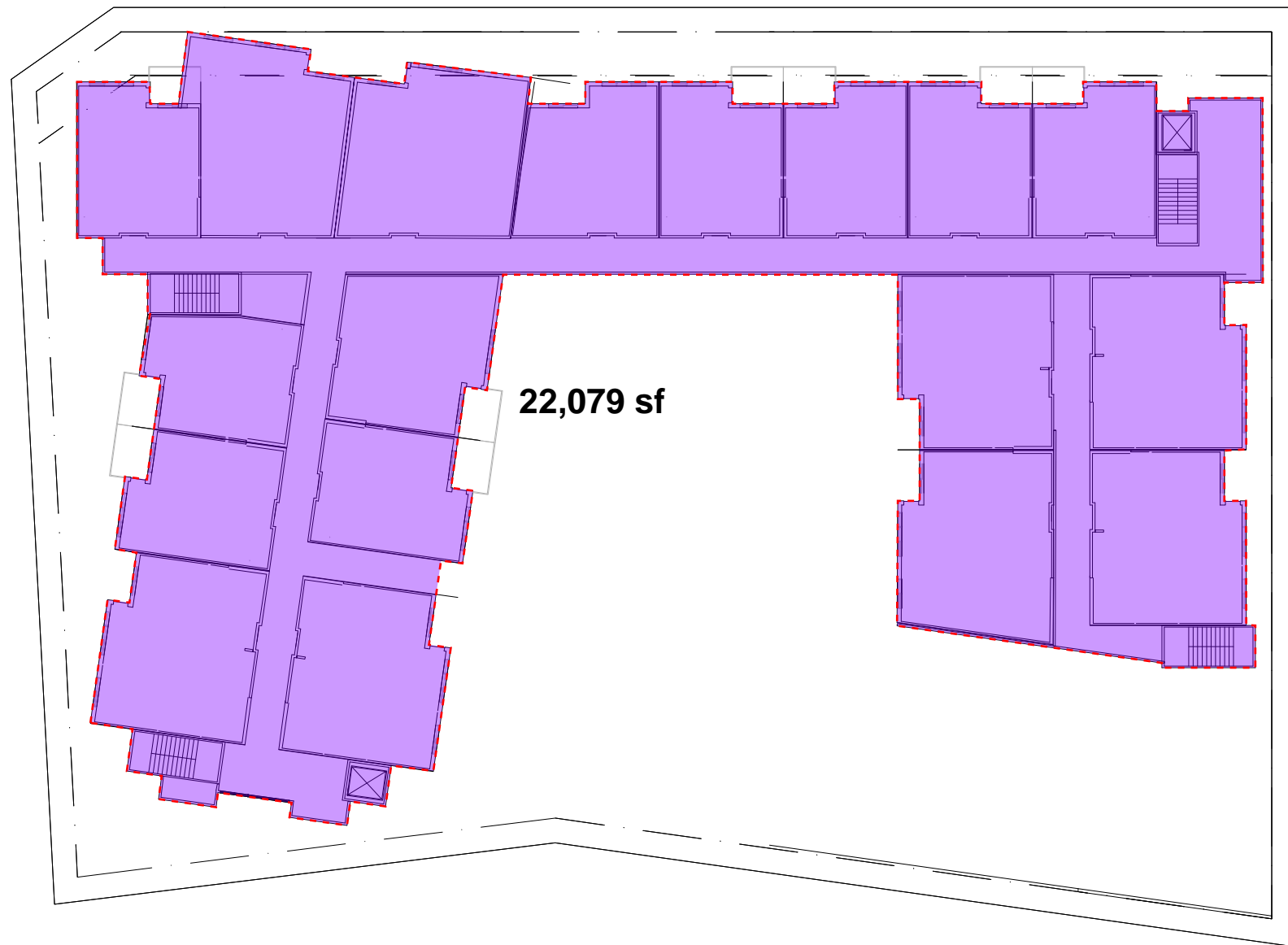
LEVEL 2	
1BR	12
2BR	11
UNITS	23

L2



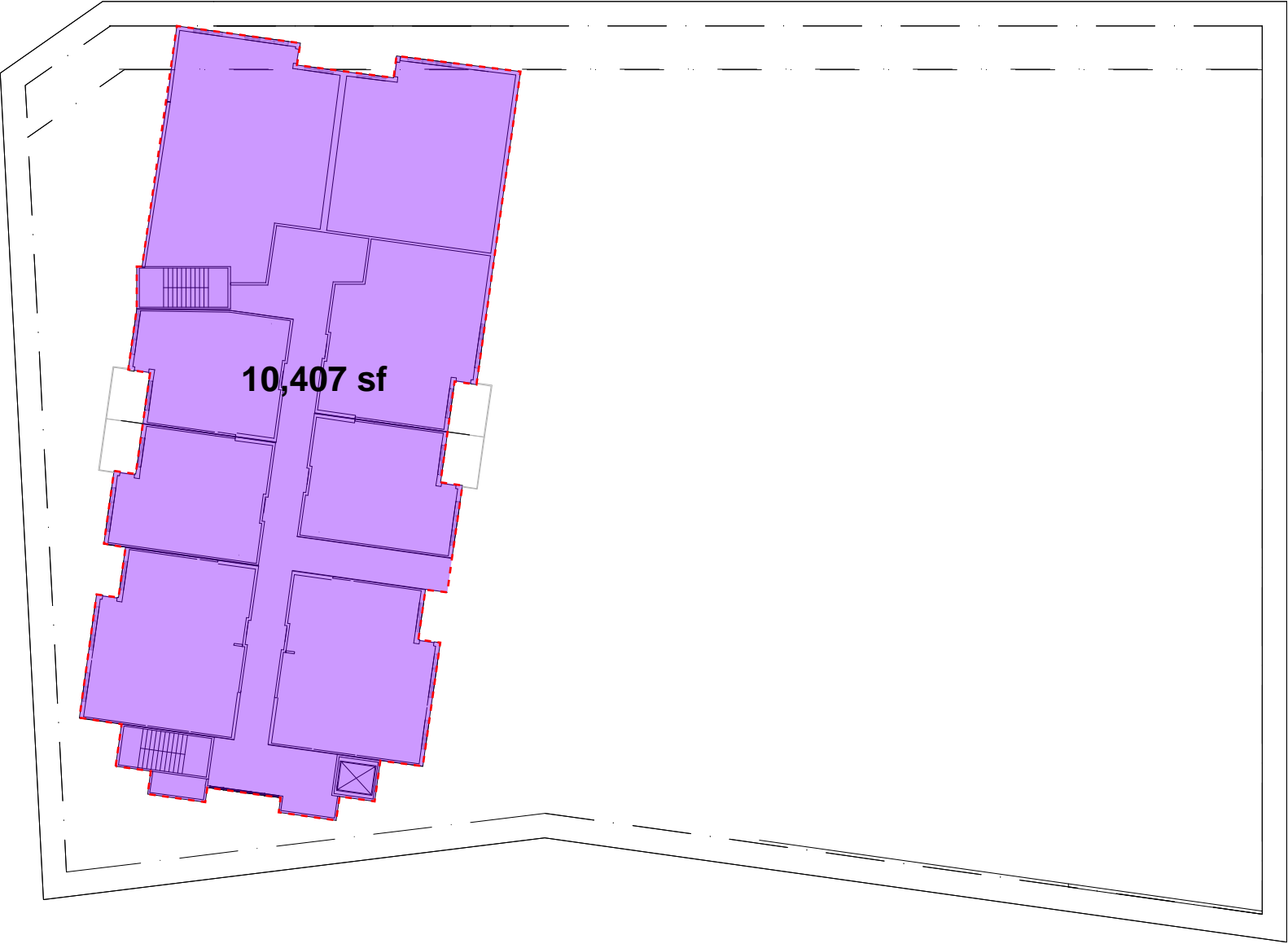
LEVEL 3	
1BR	10
2BR	8
UNITS	18

L3



LEVEL 4	
1BR	10
2BR	8
UNITS	18

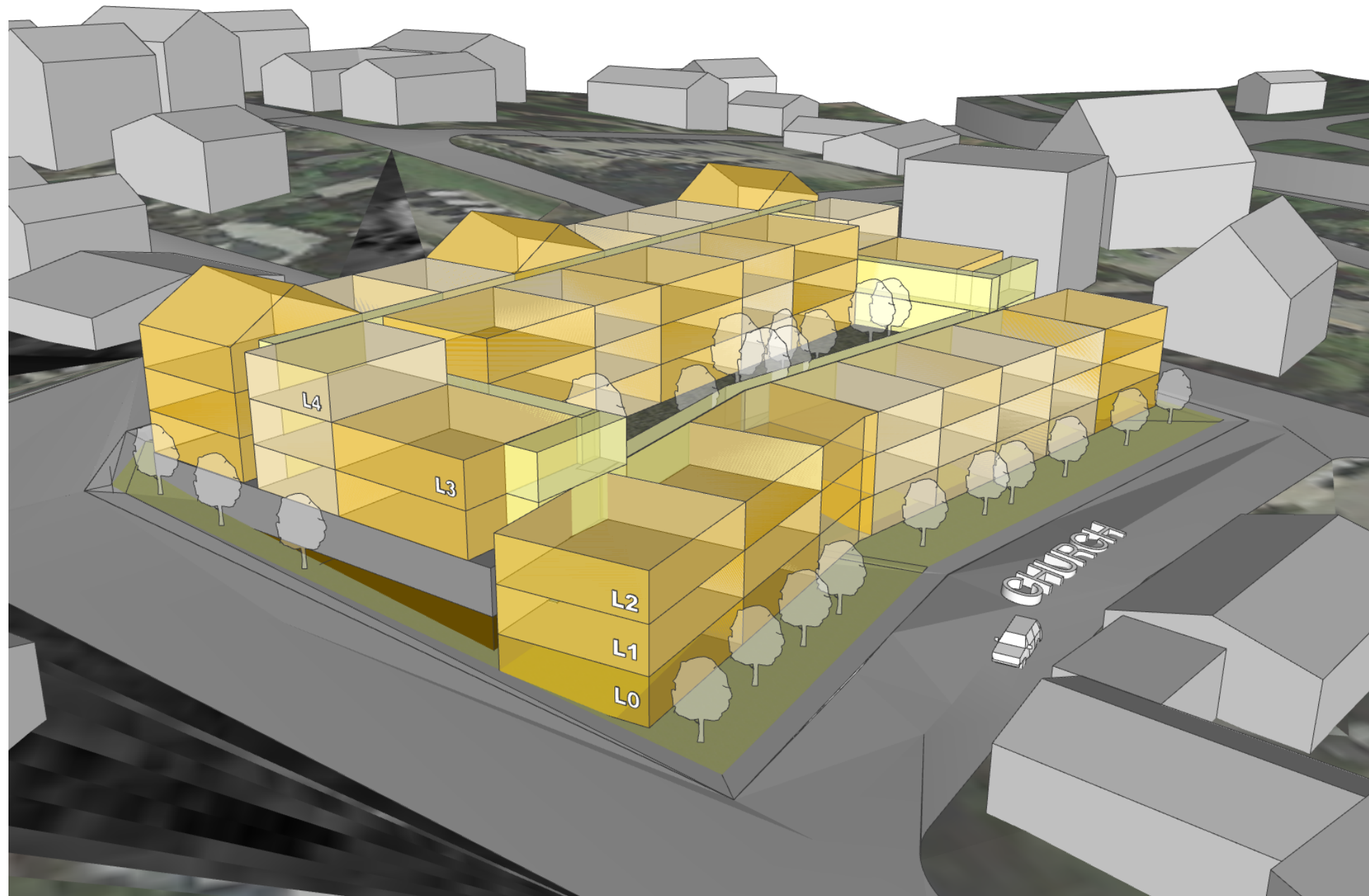
L4



10,407 sf

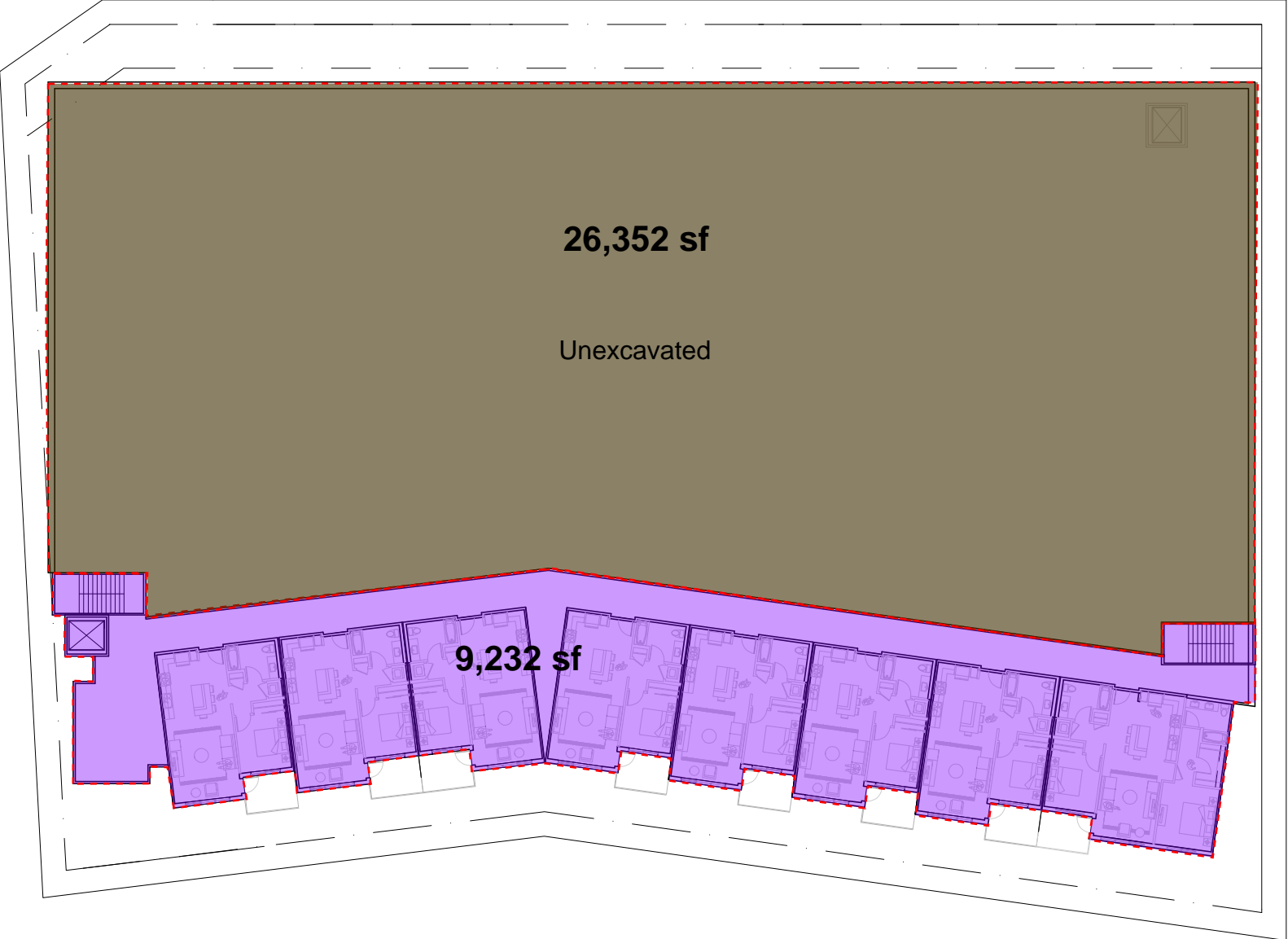
<u>LEVEL 5</u>	
1BR	3
2BR	5
UNITS	9

L5



Nevada City Courthouse
Clear the site/doughnut scheme

12.26.24



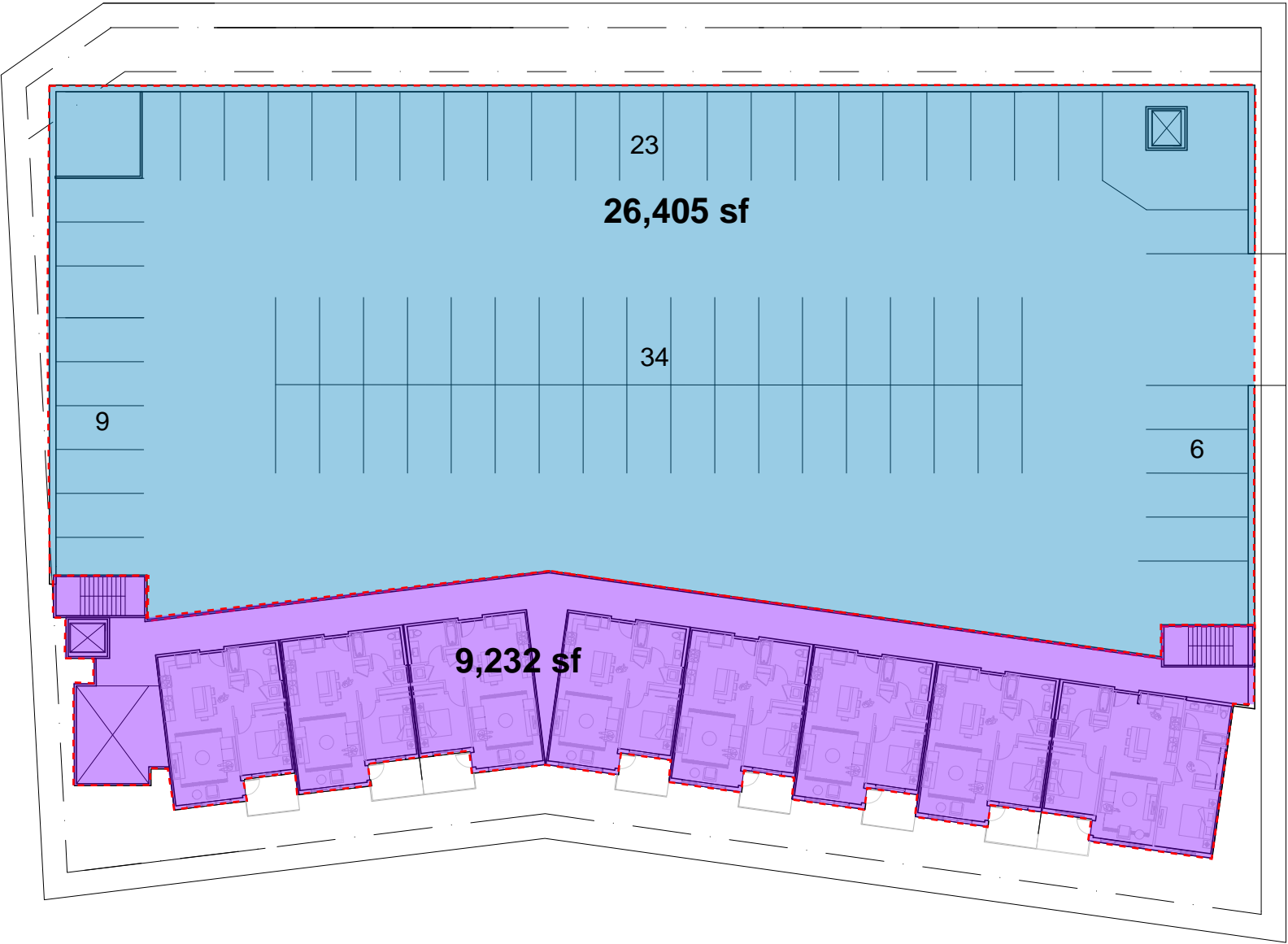
LEVEL 1	
STUDIO	0
1BR	7
2BR	1
UNITS	8

LO

IF WE ADDED 1 FLOOR
TOTAL PROJECT

	STUDIO	1BR	2BR
L0	0	7	1
L1	0	7	1
L2	1	15	8
L3	1	8	8
L4	1	7	7
L5	1	7	7
TOTAL	4	51	32 = 72

PARKING REQUIRED: 4 + 51 + 64 = 119



TOTAL PROJECT

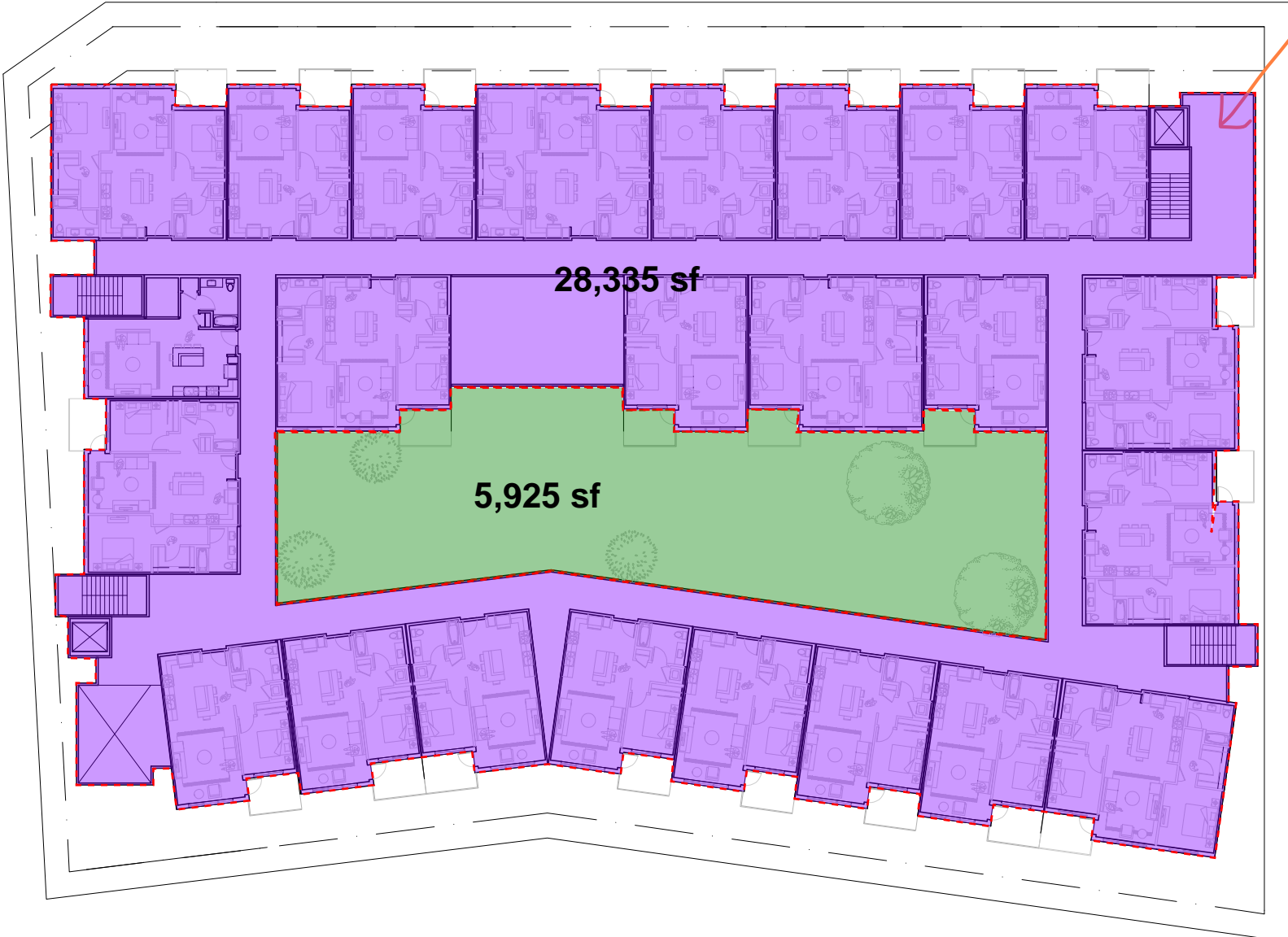
	STUDIO	1BR	2BR
L0	0	7	1
L1	0	7	1
L2	1	15	8
L3	1	8	8
L4	1	7	7
L5	0	0	0
TOTAL	3	44	25 = 72

PARKING REQUIRED: 3 + 44 + 50 = 97

PARKING	72 on site
PROVIDED	42 remote
TOTAL	114 spaces

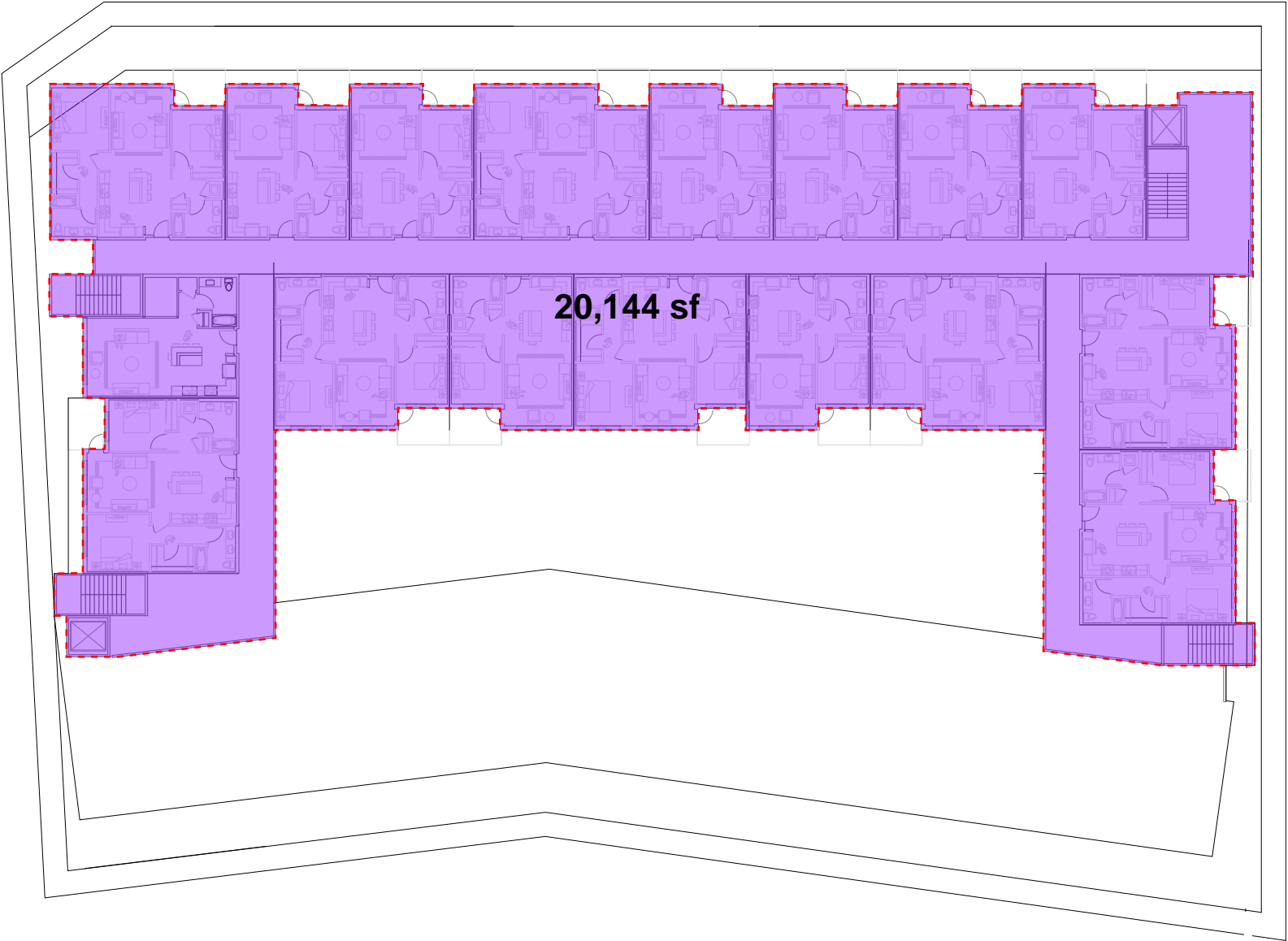
LEVEL 1	
STUDIO	0
1BR	7
2BR	1
UNITS	3

L1



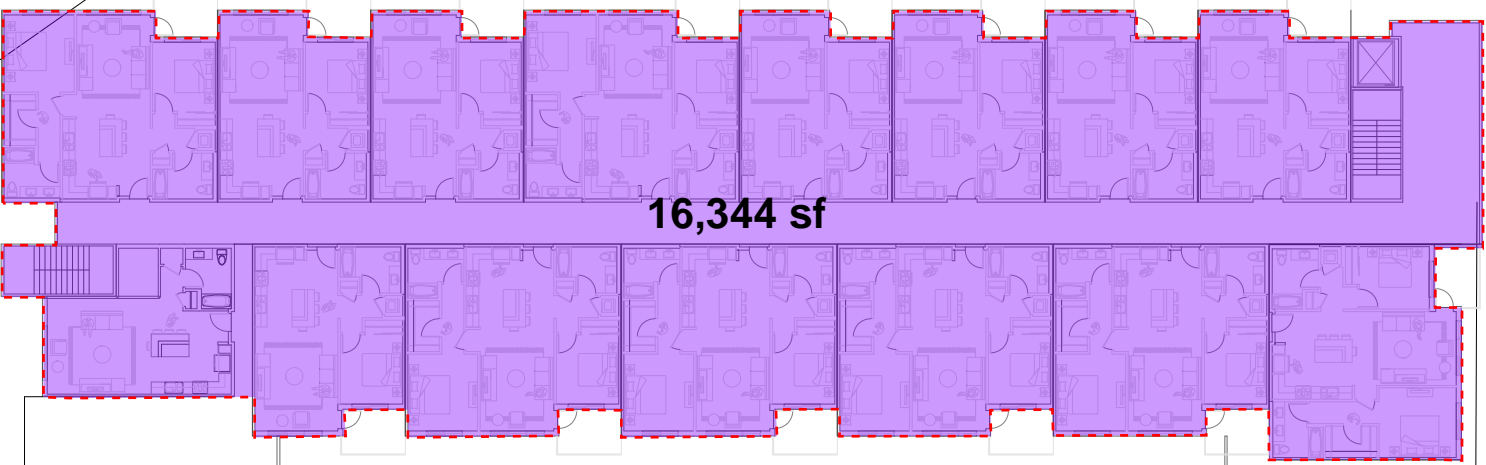
<u>LEVEL 3</u>	
STUDIO	1
1BR	15
2BR	8
UNITS	24

L2



<u>LEVEL 3</u>	
STUDIO	1
1BR	8
2BR	8
UNITS	17

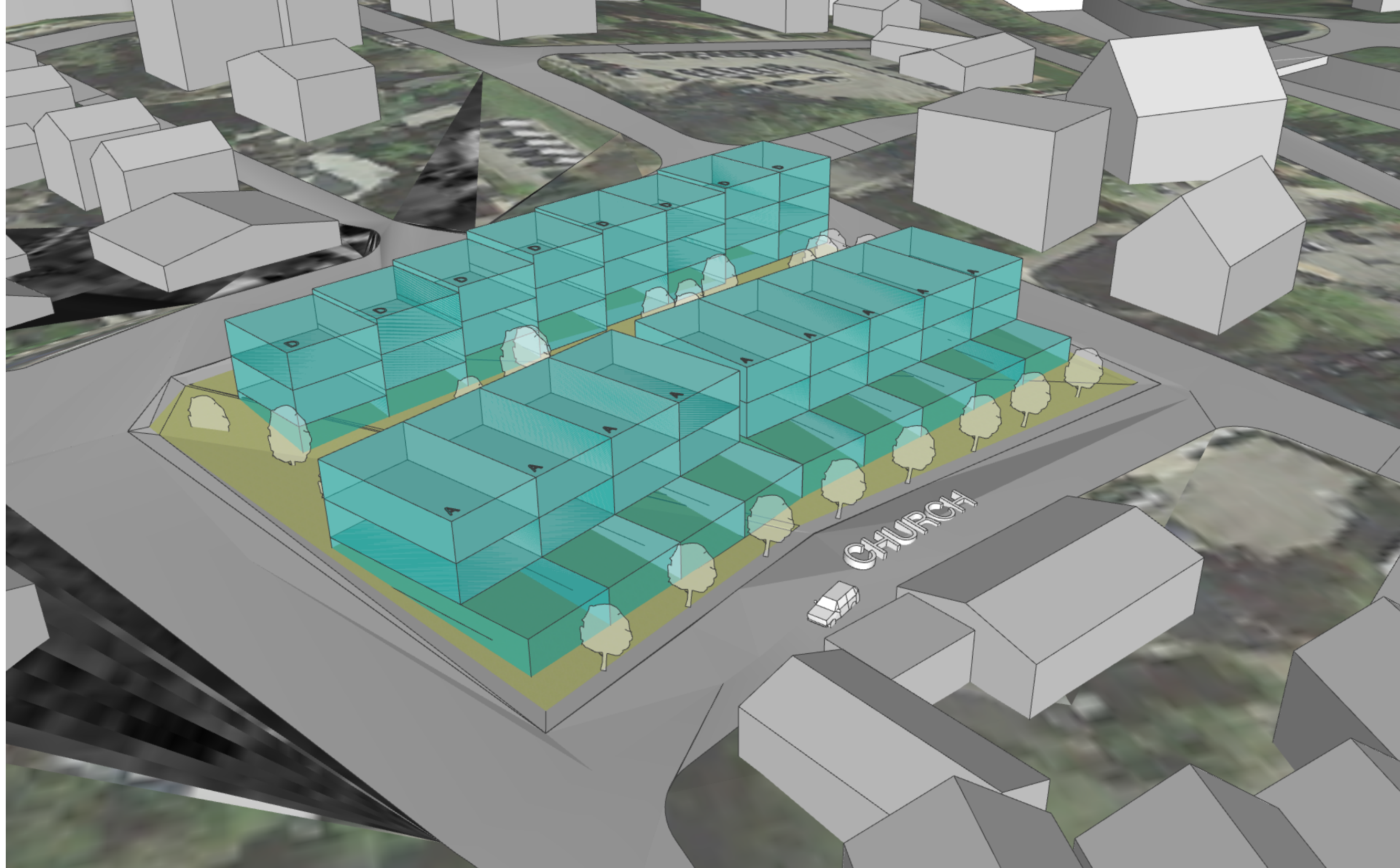
L3



STUDIO	1
1BR	7
2BR	7
UNITS	15

L4

TOWNHOMES



Townhomes:
 - Type A: 9
 - Type D: 8

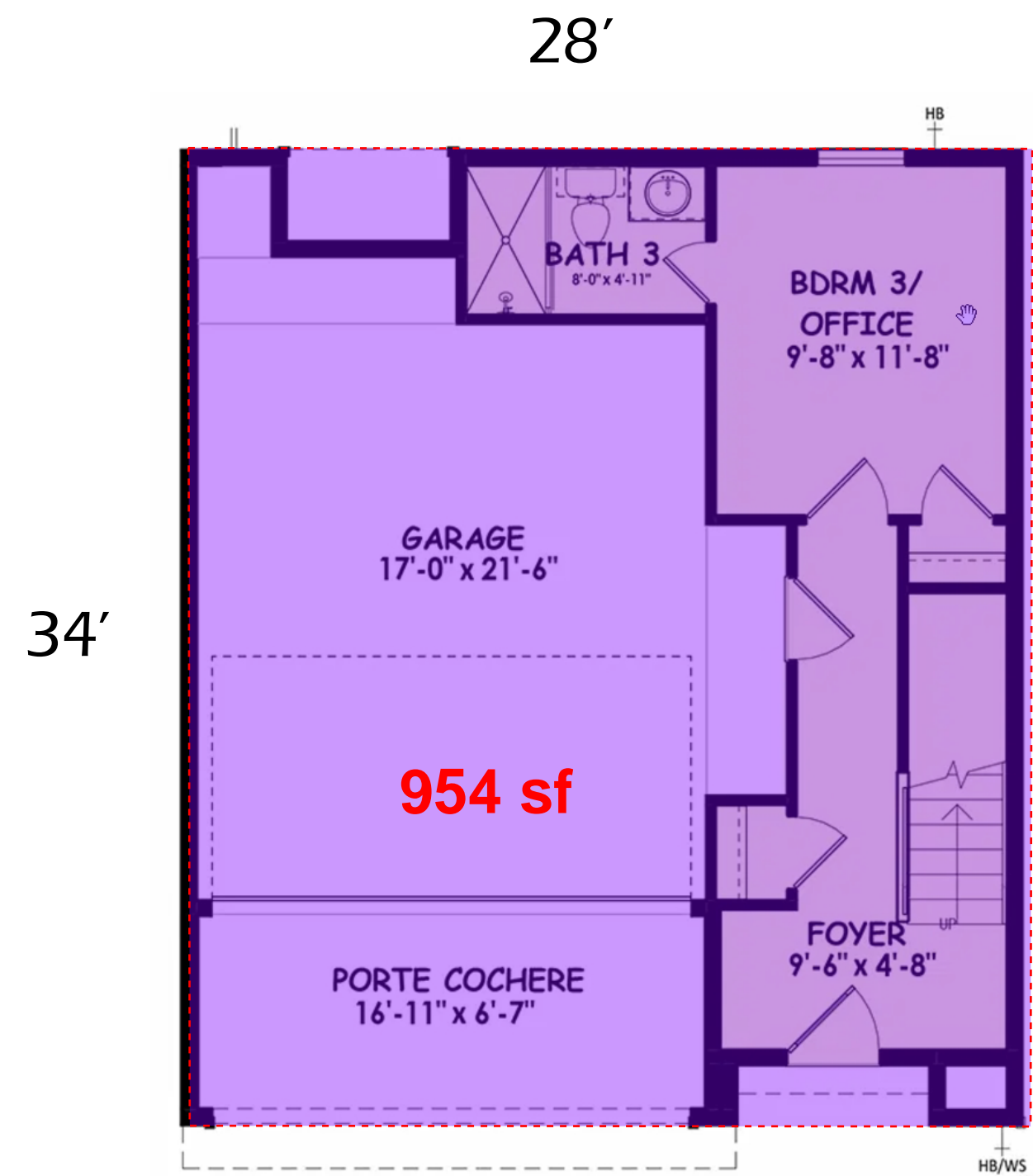


Nevada City Courthouse - Townhomes

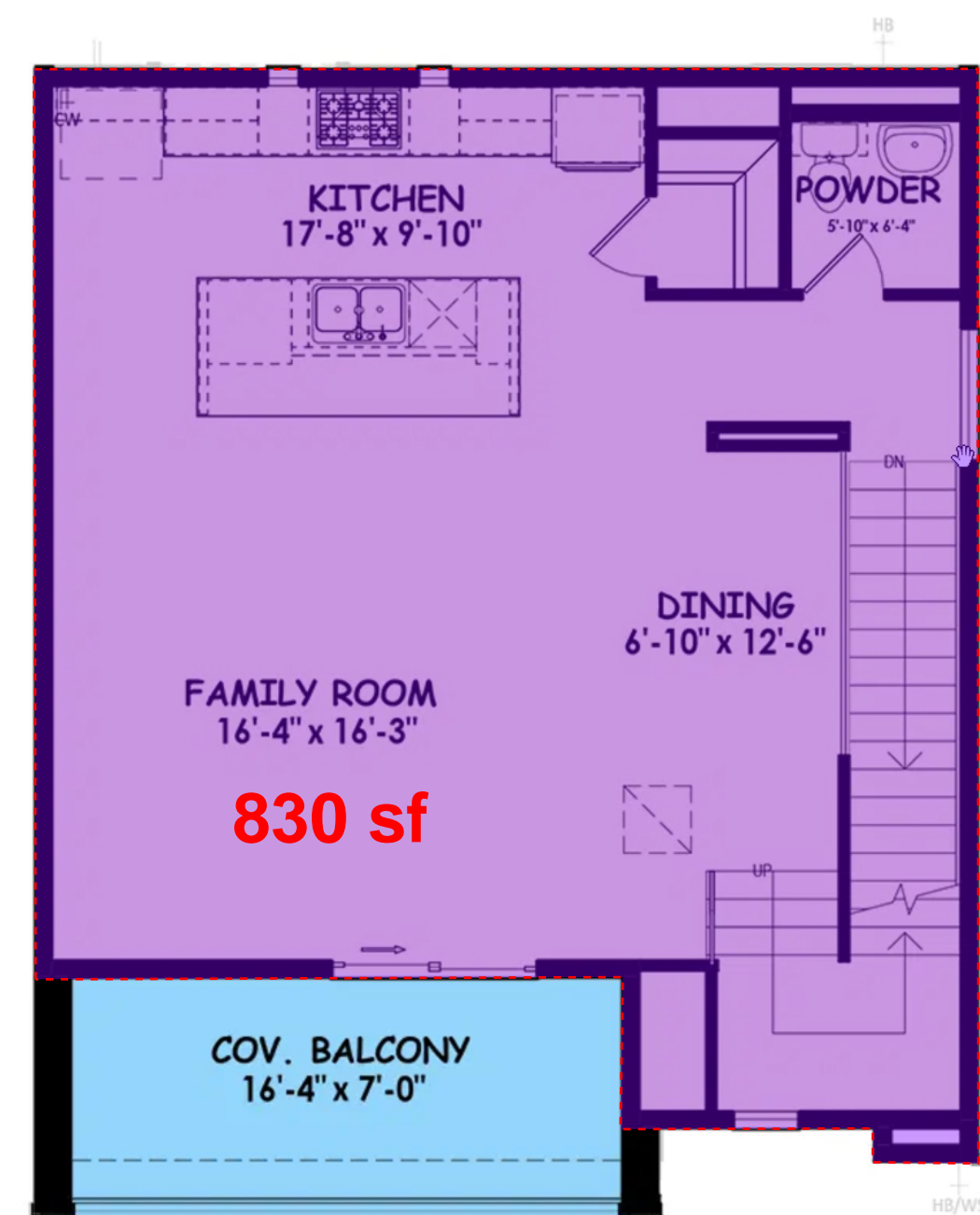
12.23.24



TOWNHOME PLANS - TYPE A



TOTAL GSF = 2,751 SF



TOWNHOME PLANS - TYPE D



Community Meeting and
Meeting Notes
October 22, 2024

NEVADA COUNTY COURTHOUSE HIGHEST AND BEST USE STUDY

NELSON





MEETING GOAL

- Update community
- Receive community feedback

AGENDA

1. Project introduction
2. Real Estate Market assessment
3. Design approach
4. Evaluation
5. Next Steps / Final Thoughts



PROJECT INTRODUCTION

01

- Background
- Project Description
- Look For / Avoid
- North Star
- Discussion



Background

- *Courthouse currently in use*
- *Symbol and economic driver for the Community*
- *CA is moving forward with a plan to relocate the court to a new location.*
- *Construction is scheduled to begin in 2026/ 2027*
- *Many Studies have been completed by various parties*
- *This study is specific to determining the highest and best use for the Courthouse once it becomes vacant.*

Project Description

The County seeks to identify realistic reuse plans for the facility (including the development of the surface parking area adjacent to the Courthouse). The reuse plan would need to address the community's architectural and design concerns, including the desire to preserve the historic facade and other building elements. (Although located in Nevada City's historic district, the Courthouse does not have either state or federal historic designations.)

Look for

- Increased/valuable economic activity
- Renewed community vibrancy
- Community pride
- A look that honors the historic context
- National attraction
- Successful city/county partnership
- Investment magnet

Avoid

- Vacant “zombie” building
- Divided community engagement
- Unpopular use
- Something trendy or dated
- A disruptive use or timeline
- Lack of longterm feasibility
- Poor public process

GOALS

- **Economically Viable**
- **Meets Community Values**

STEERING COMMITTEE



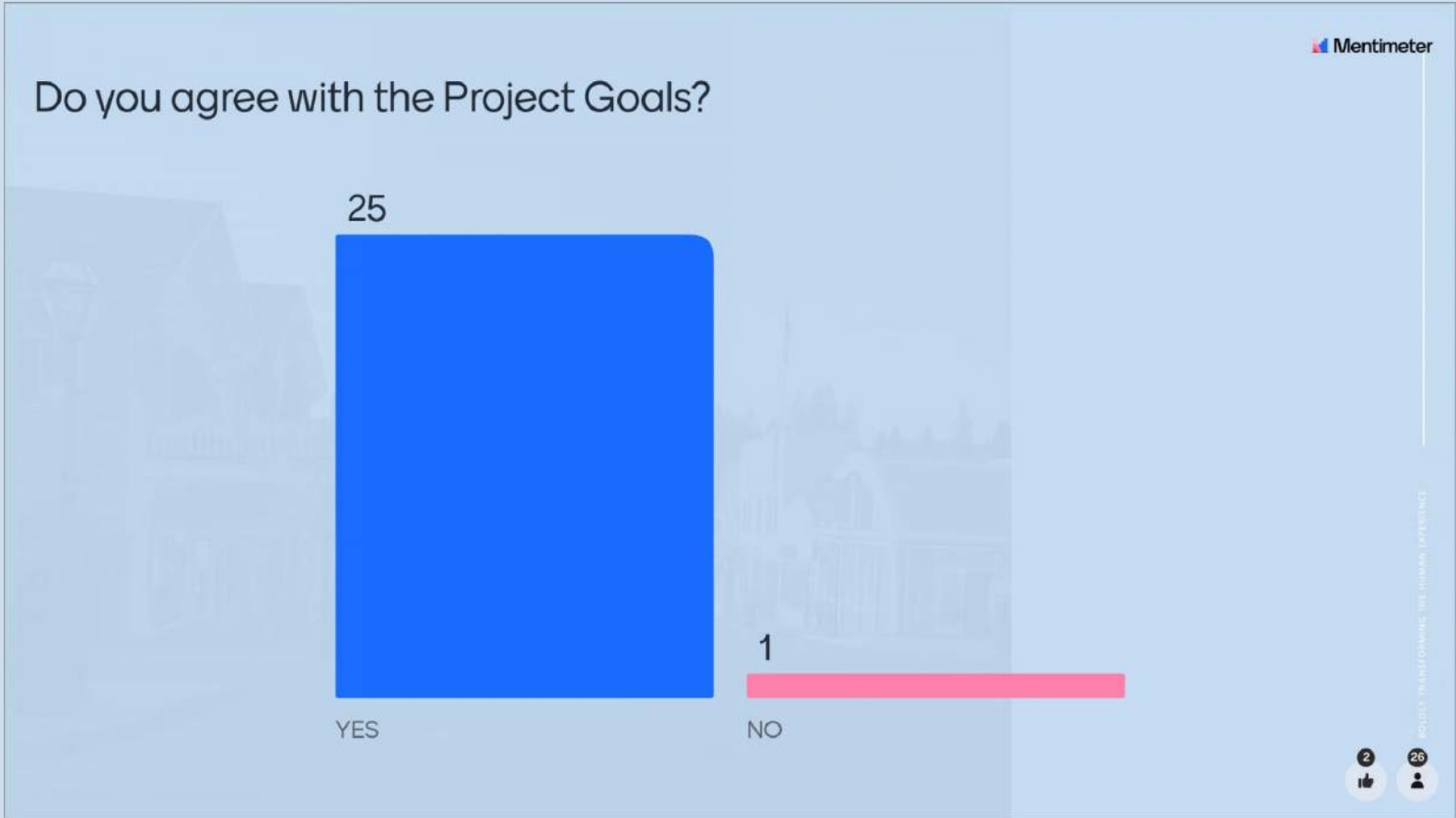
NORTH STAR

A beautiful and vibrant space that is viable, sustainable and generates community pride.



PROJECT INTRODUCTION FEEDBACK 01





How can we improve the Project Goals?

Consider people over profits

Mentimeter

1

23

ROBUST TRANSFORMING THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

CONCLUSIONS TO INTRODUCTION SECTION

Our key takeaways

The community overwhelmingly agreed with the project goals established by the Steering Committee.

When asked how the Project Goals could be improved, the key feedback we interpret as:

- The community wants to make sure their input is heard and seriously considered.
- Some members of the community don't want the requirement for financial viability to overrule uses that are in the community's best interest.
- Be sensitive to issues of parking and keeping downtown businesses strong.

MARKET ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

02

- Market analysis process & site context
 - Market growth trends
- Housing, office, retail, and hospitality findings
 - Other possible uses
 - Summary of findings
 - Discussion



MARKET ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

Market Analysis Purpose:

- Screen a long list of future uses & test what could be viable given:
 - Site conditions
 - Nevada City's current market

The list of possible site uses includes:

Residential

Office

Cannabis Industry

Retail or Grocery

Hospitality

Parking

Institutional

- Museum
 - Government Administration
 - University Campus
- Health or Wellness
- Sports or Recreation

Note: This list is based on the Courthouse Steering Committee Visioning Workshop, July 2024 and stakeholder input.

MARKET ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

Subject Matter Expert Interviews

Highland Commercial Real Estate

Lock Richards

Nevada City Chamber of Commerce

Stuart Baker

Nevada County Economic Development Department

Kimberly Parker

Nevada County Economic Resource Council

Gil Mathew

Sierra Business Council

Kristin York

Tintle Inc.

Gary Tintle

Additional Engagement

Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital

Scott Neeley

Economic Research



State of California
Department of Finance



SITE OVERVIEW

Site Characteristics

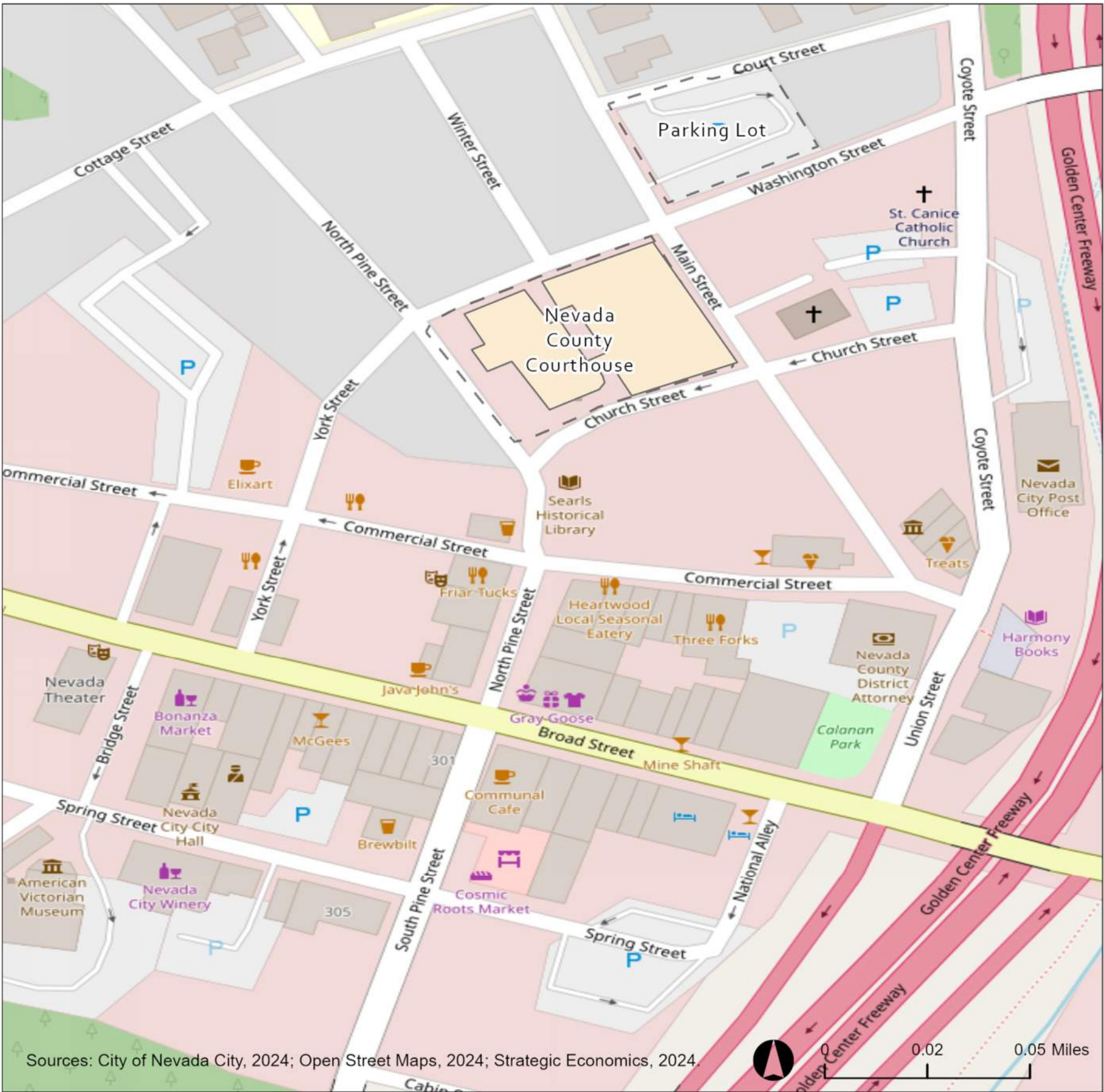
- 1-acre site
- 80,000 square foot historic courthouse + annex
- 0.5-acre satellite lot

Site Constraints

- Not located on main retail strip
- Hill makes walking access difficult
- Constrained for on-site parking

Site Assets

- Architectural significance
- Cultural significance & prominent location
- Part of Nevada City Downtown Historic District
- Adjacent to vibrant downtown



Sources: City of Nevada City, 2024; Open Street Maps, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

POPULATION GROWTH TRENDS

Nevada County's population has not grown significantly over the past ten years

- Declined by more than 1,000 residents from 2020 to 2022

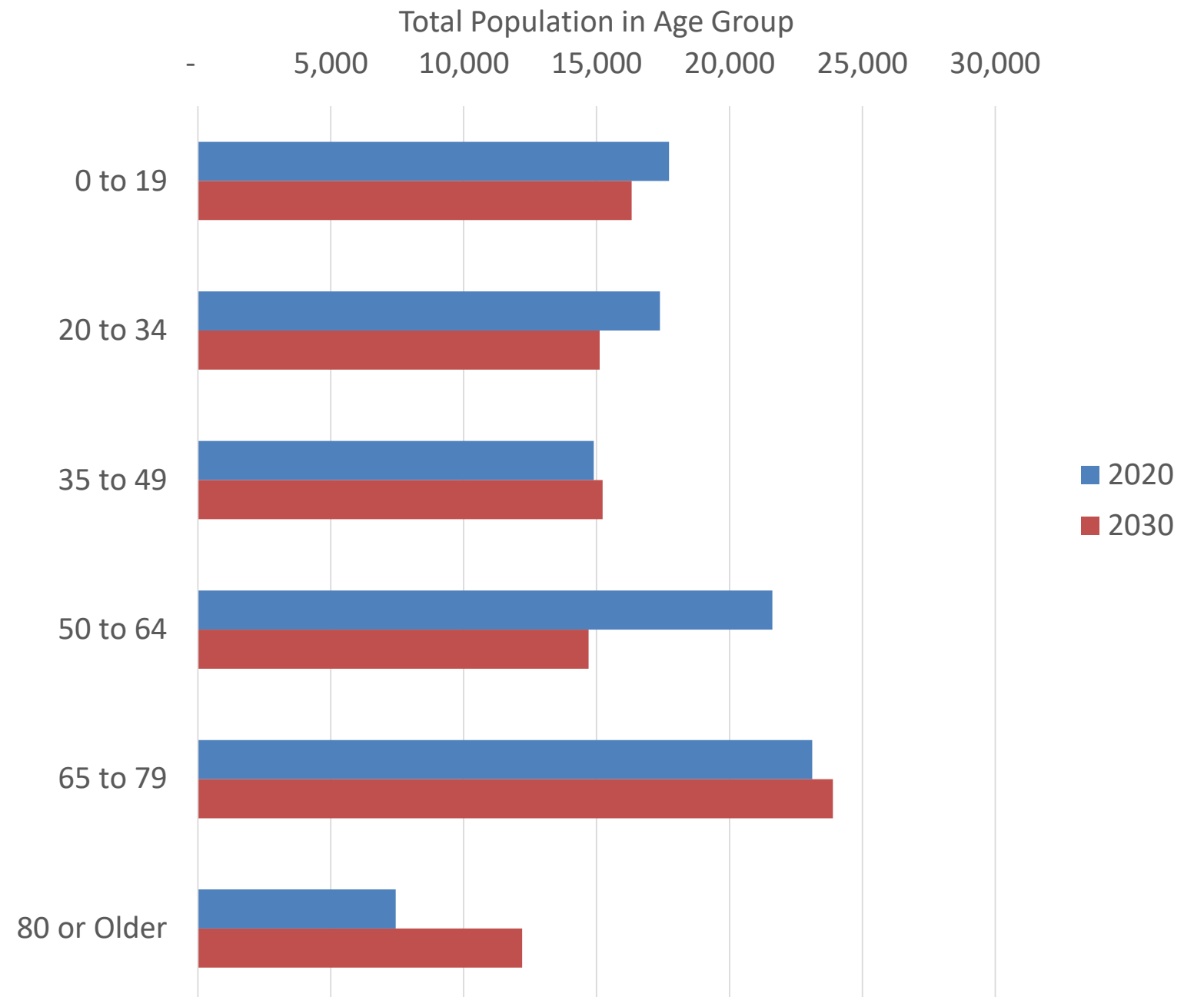
Nevada County is projected to shrink by 5,000 residents by 2030

- Already one of the oldest populations in the state
- Workforce is shrinking

Nevada County is an attractive location for artists, the creative class, and retirees.

- Attractions: access to nature and relatively affordable housing
- Some remote workers moved to Nevada County during the pandemic.
- Broadband access can be challenging in some locations

Population Forecast by Age, 2020 - 2030



Source: California Department of Finance, 2019; Strategic Economics, 2024.

JOB GROWTH PROJECTIONS

Nevada County’s top employment sectors are government jobs, healthcare, and education

Leisure and construction sectors are growing most quickly.

Outlook for technology and professional services sectors is mixed.

- Shrinking workforce
- Limited regional professional services growth

Projected job growth: Leisure and Hospitality

Regional Job Forecast, 2020 - 2030



Source: California EDD, 2022; Strategic Economics, 2024.
Region includes Colusa, Glenn, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas, Sierra, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Trinity Counties.

COMMUTING PATTERNS

More than 3,000 workers commute into Nevada City from elsewhere daily.

- Nevada City only has 771 out-commuters
- 33 percent of Nevada City workers live outside of Nevada County.

Compared to those who commute out of Nevada City, workers commuting into Nevada City are more likely to:

- be between the ages of 30 and 54,
- work in service industries, and
- make more than \$3,333 monthly

Nevada City Commuting Inflow-Outflow, 2021



Source: LEHD, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

HOUSING OUTLOOK

Median home prices increased in Nevada City by \$100,000 from 2020 to 2024.

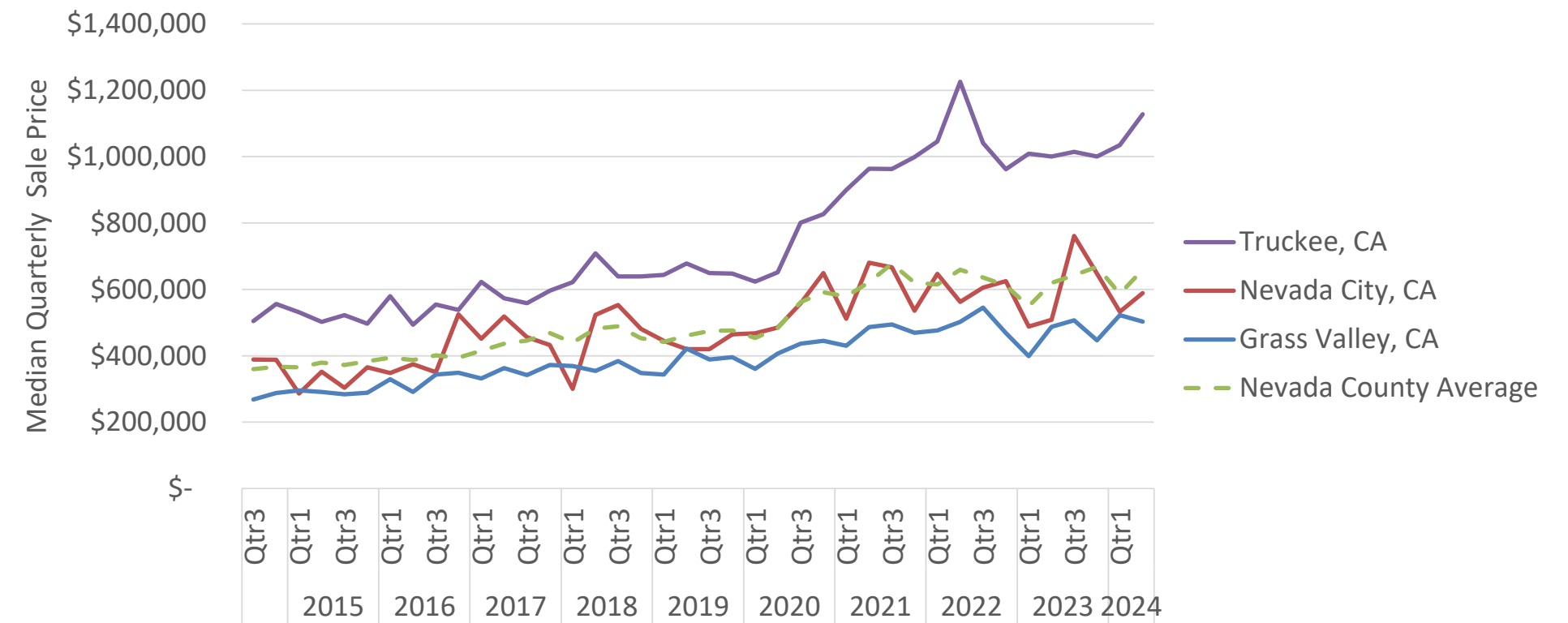
During the same time, home prices in Truckee nearly doubled.

Local experts indicate that there is strong demand for homes in Nevada City

Multifamily demand is high.

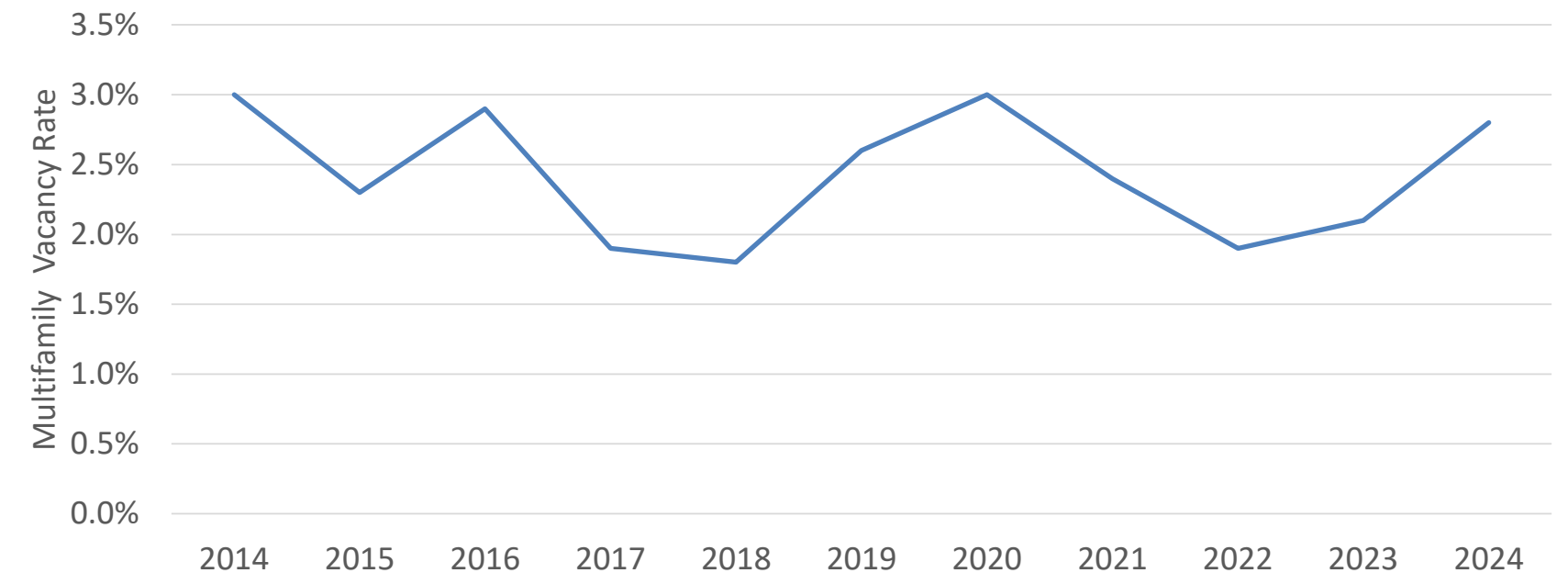
- Vacancy rates have remained below 3% for the past 10 years
- Stakeholders indicate high demand for 1 to 2-Bedroom apartments in Downtown Nevada City.

Nevada County Median Home Sales Prices by Jurisdiction, 2014 to 2024



Source: Redfin, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

Multifamily Vacancy Rate in Nevada County, 2014 to 2024



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

OFFICE OUTLOOK

- Nevada City had a net loss of more than 45,000 square feet of occupied office space since the beginning of 2020.
- Nevada City office buildings command lower rents than those in Truckee, and just dipped below Grass Valley
- Most office tenants would prefer to locate in business park locations, rather than in Downtown.

Average Annual Office Rent in Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Truckee by Year Built, 2024



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

Note: Refers to direct, full-service gross rent.

RETAIL OUTLOOK

Because of site-specific factors, the courthouse may not be as strong of a candidate for retail uses as market data suggests.

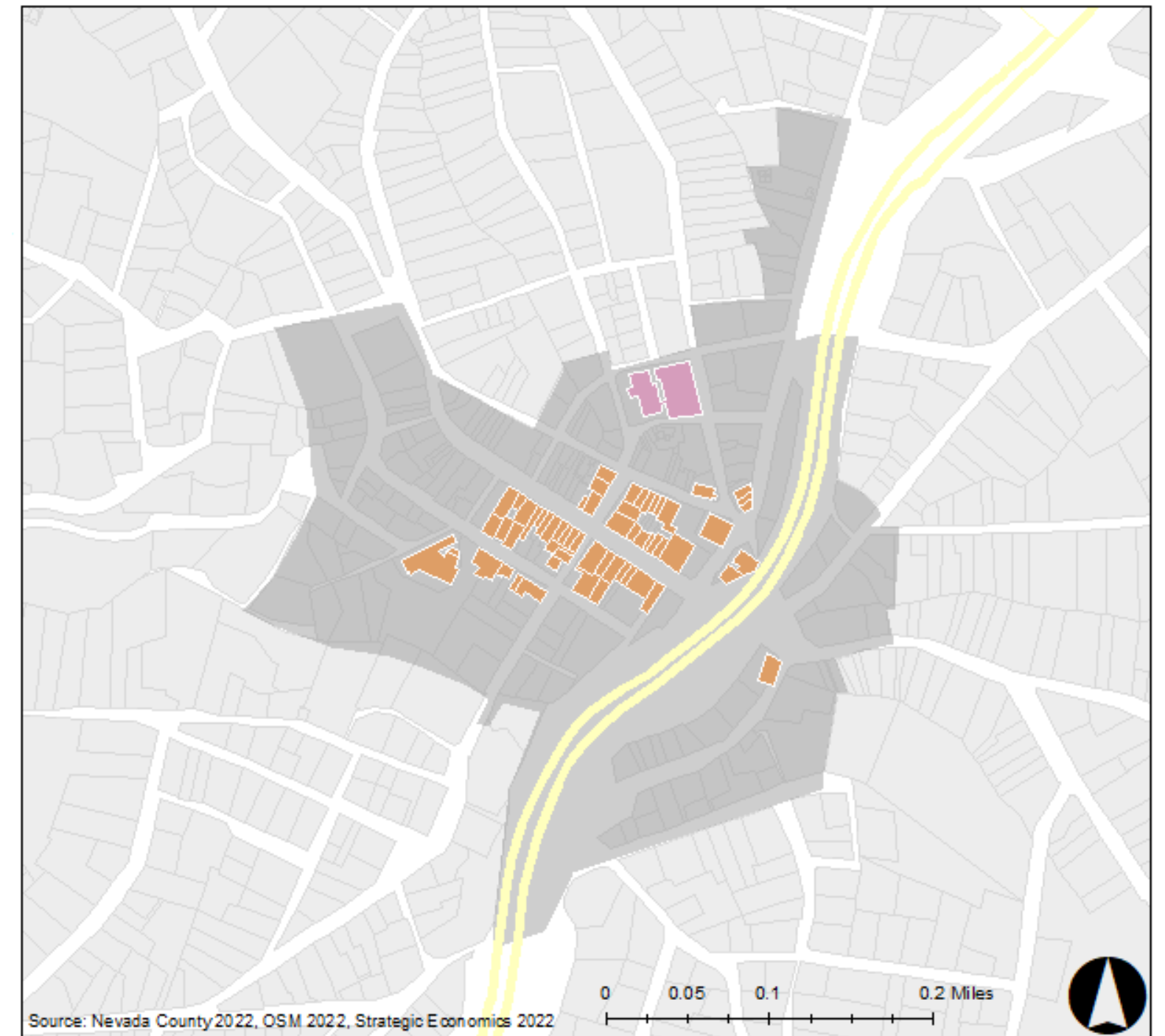
Retail demand is also likely to decrease with population decline and the relocation of the courthouse

- Relocating the courthouse could lead to a six percent reduction in downtown sales.

Any viable retail use of the site would need something to drive visitors to the site

- A grocery store could do this, but market is likely saturated
- One alternative could be a food hall or food incubator

Nevada County Courthouse Location in Proximity to Historic Retail Buildings



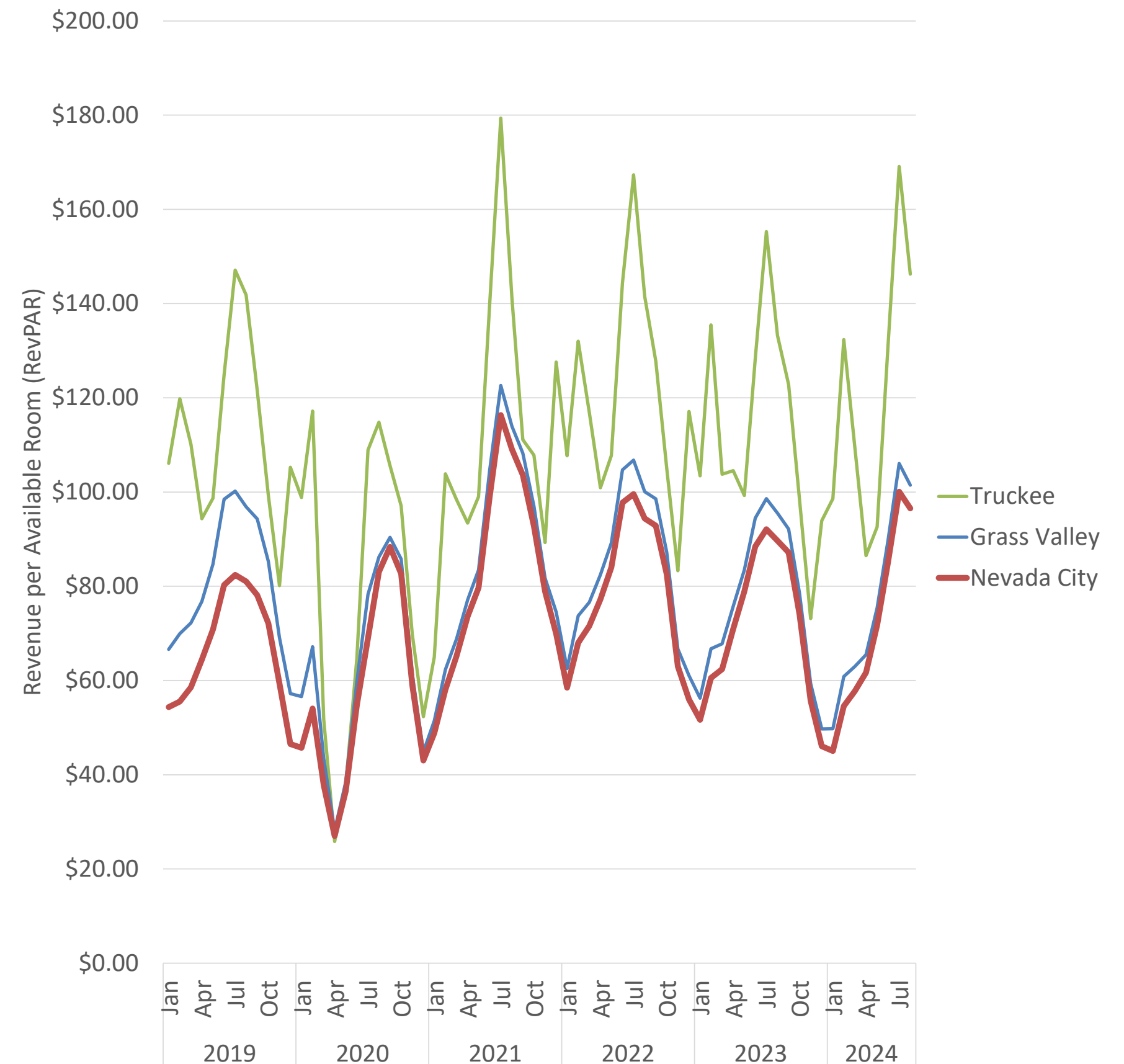
- Nevada City Historical District
- Nevada County Superior Court
- Legacy Retail/Mixed Use Buildings

Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

HOSPITALITY OUTLOOK

- Nevada City hotel demand dips significantly during the winter
- Nevada City hotels command lower rates than Truckee hotels.
- Overall, demand for hotels in Nevada City has increased compared to pre-pandemic conditions.
- Stakeholders indicate that Nevada City may be able to support additional hotel rooms.
- However, Nevada City is not a strong draw for business trips or corporate groups, and there is not much demand for new event space.

Nevada County Hotel RevPAR by City, 2019 to 2024



Sources: CoStar, 2024; Strategic Economics, 2024.

OTHER USES OVERVIEW

"Other Uses" are those that would use their space to support a mission or function, rather than to make a return on invested capital.

These uses would need an operator or project sponsor to lead the re-use effort

The other uses analyzed in this section include the following:

- Government Offices
- Nonprofit Offices
- Museum
- Educational Institution
- Medical Office or Hospital
- Recreation Facility
- Wellness Center



OTHER USES OUTLOOK

Government Offices

- No clear source of demand for government uses.

Nonprofit Offices

- Similar outlook as any other office use.

Educational Institution

- Private: would need significant financial investment
- Public: would take significant time
- Either: would likely need to see population growth.



OTHER USES OUTLOOK

Hospital or Physician Office

- Building re-use would require significant expense; would prefer greenfield site

Wellness or Other Medical Office

- More adaptable to courthouse building
- Unlikely to require substantial space

Recreation Facility

- Could attract visitors
- Not suited to the layout and dimensions of the building



DRIVING SITE USES

WHAT LAND USE COULD BE FINANCIAL DRIVERS OF COURTHOUSE REDEVELOPMENT?

Two uses identified as possible site drivers.

HOUSING

Pros

- Strong local and regional demand
- Could bring workforce, weekday shoppers to downtown

Cons

May be difficult to match with re-use of existing building

Possible Product Types

Senior Housing; Market Rate Multifamily

HOTEL

Pros

- Some recent growth in hotel demand
- Unique use for historic building

Cons

Mixed evidence for demand from market perspective

Possible Product Types

Hotel & Health Spa; Hotel on just courthouse portion



SUPPORTIVE SITE USES

WHAT LAND USE COULD BE SUPPORTIVE OR SECONDARY USES ON THE SITE?

FOOD INCUBATOR/MARKET

Description

- Mixed-use building w/ food production & market facilities
- Unique retail alternative to attract visitors

Outlook

Would require public private partnership

Would need an operator and public champion

WELLNESS OR MEDICAL OFFICE

Description

- Small offices for wellness providers or non-physician health
- Could be paired with hospitality or other use

Outlook

Questions about adaptability to current building, overall demand

MUSEUM OR NON-PROFIT USE

Description

- A small portion of the site: museum or non-profit community center facility
- Could be paired with hospitality or housing

Outlook

Unclear – lack of a project sponsor

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS NEXT STEPS

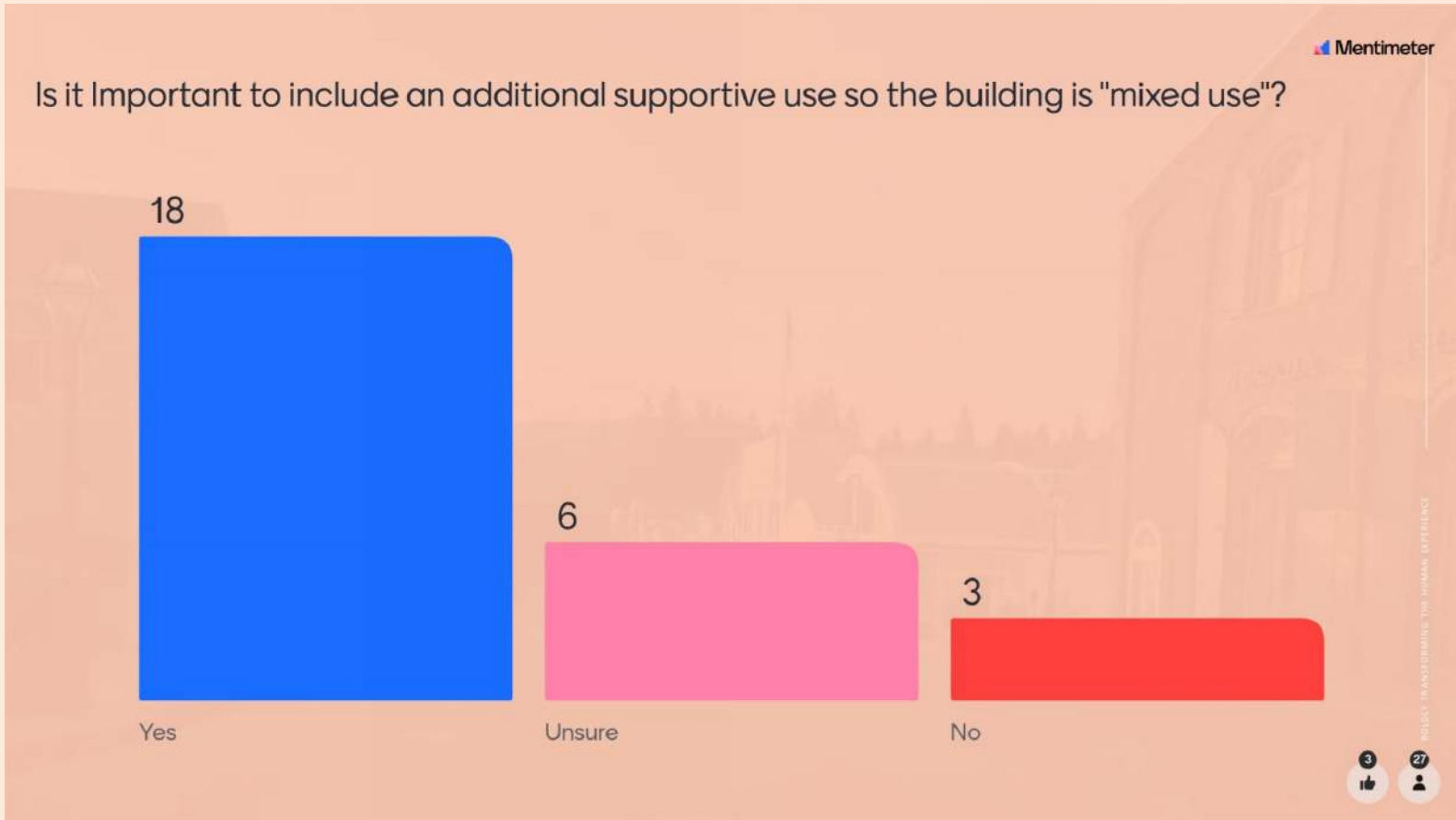
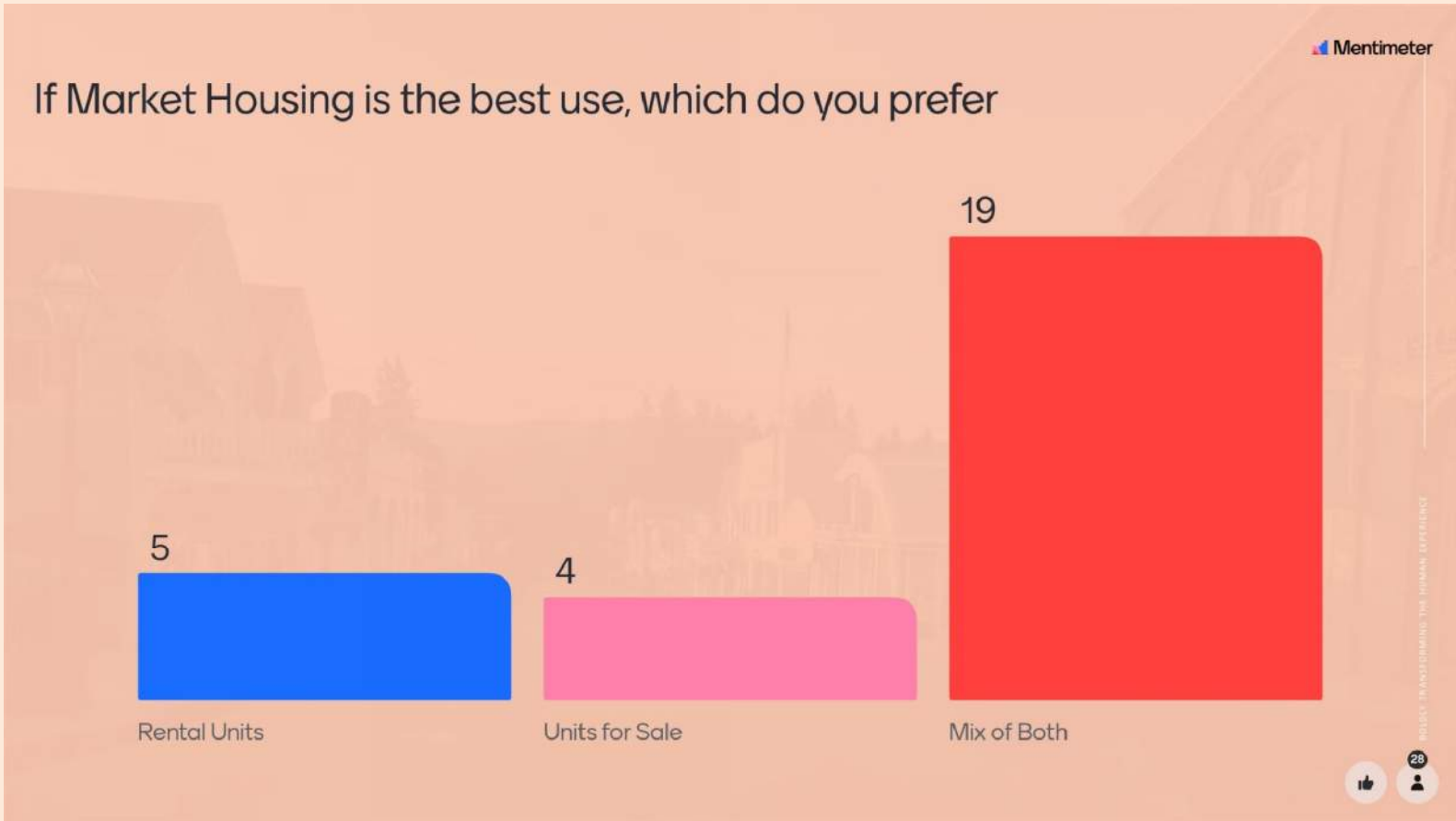
1. DEVELOP PROJECT CONCEPTS
2. EVALUATE FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF CONCEPTS
 - Additional Interviews
 - Cost Estimates
 - Rough Order of Magnitude Costs and Revenue



MARKET ANALYSIS FEEDBACK

02



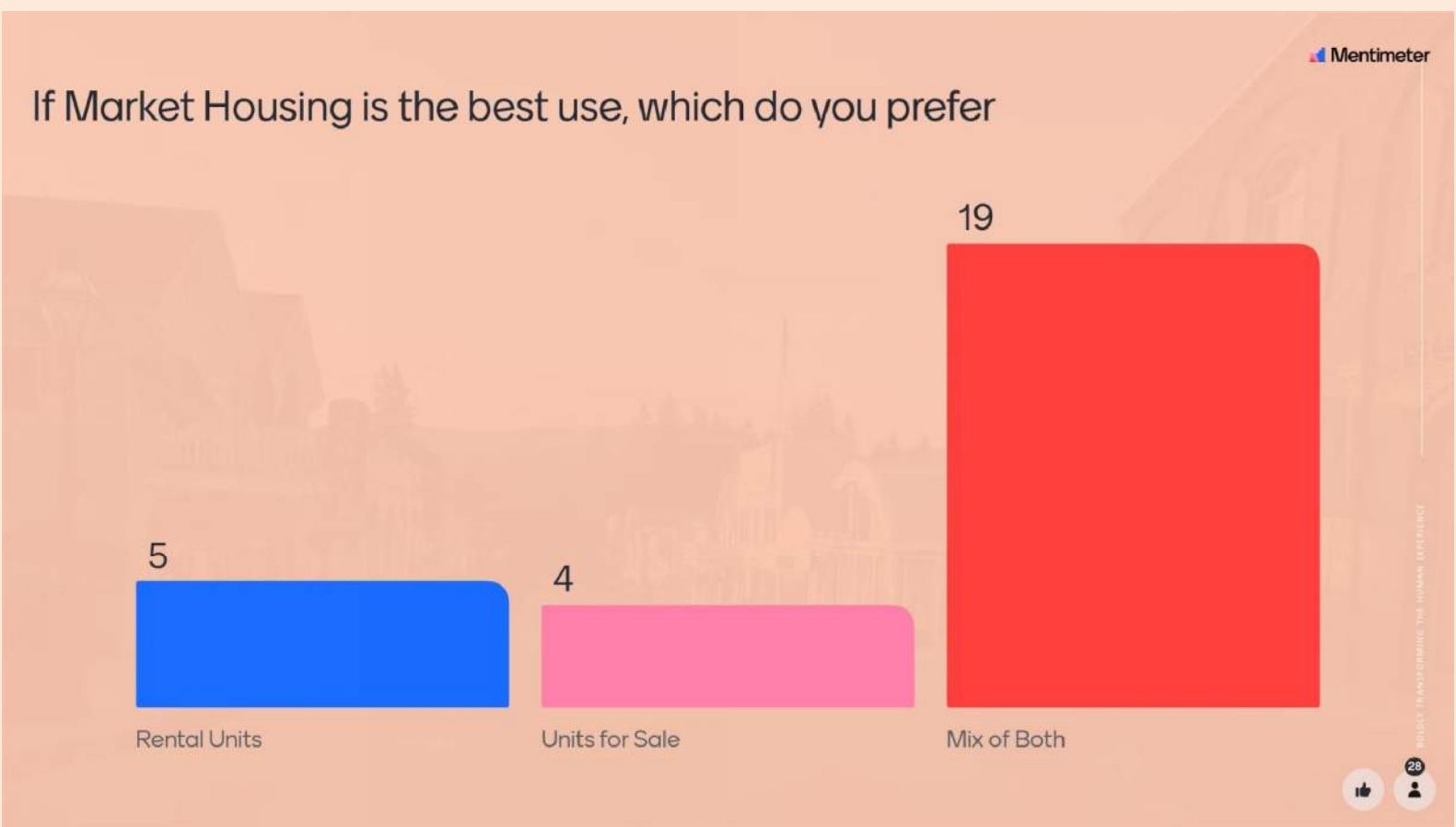


Mentimeter Link- use QR code below or see link above



Mentimeter

3



CONCLUSIONS TO MARKET ASSESSMENT

SECTION

Our key takeaways

The market analysis indicates that the best use for the building is housing, with the small possibility of a hotel. The hotel is risky from a market perspective and less desirable to the community. What remains unclear is whether housing would be financially feasible at the site. While the community would prefer some kind of mixed-use, the community understands that retail or office spaces are not viable uses.

- The community likes the idea of a mix of rental and ownership housing units.
- A hotel, or a hotel/housing mix, is not a community priority.
- Meeting participants would like to see a mixed-use element to the reuse.

Suggested uses include:

- youth center
- library
- arts space
- a park or open space
- a museum



DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

03

- Existing Site
- Site Test Fits
- Approach to a Solution

EXISTING SITE

KEY ZONING METRICS:

ZONE: GB-HD (General Business - Historic District)

ACCEPTABLE USES:

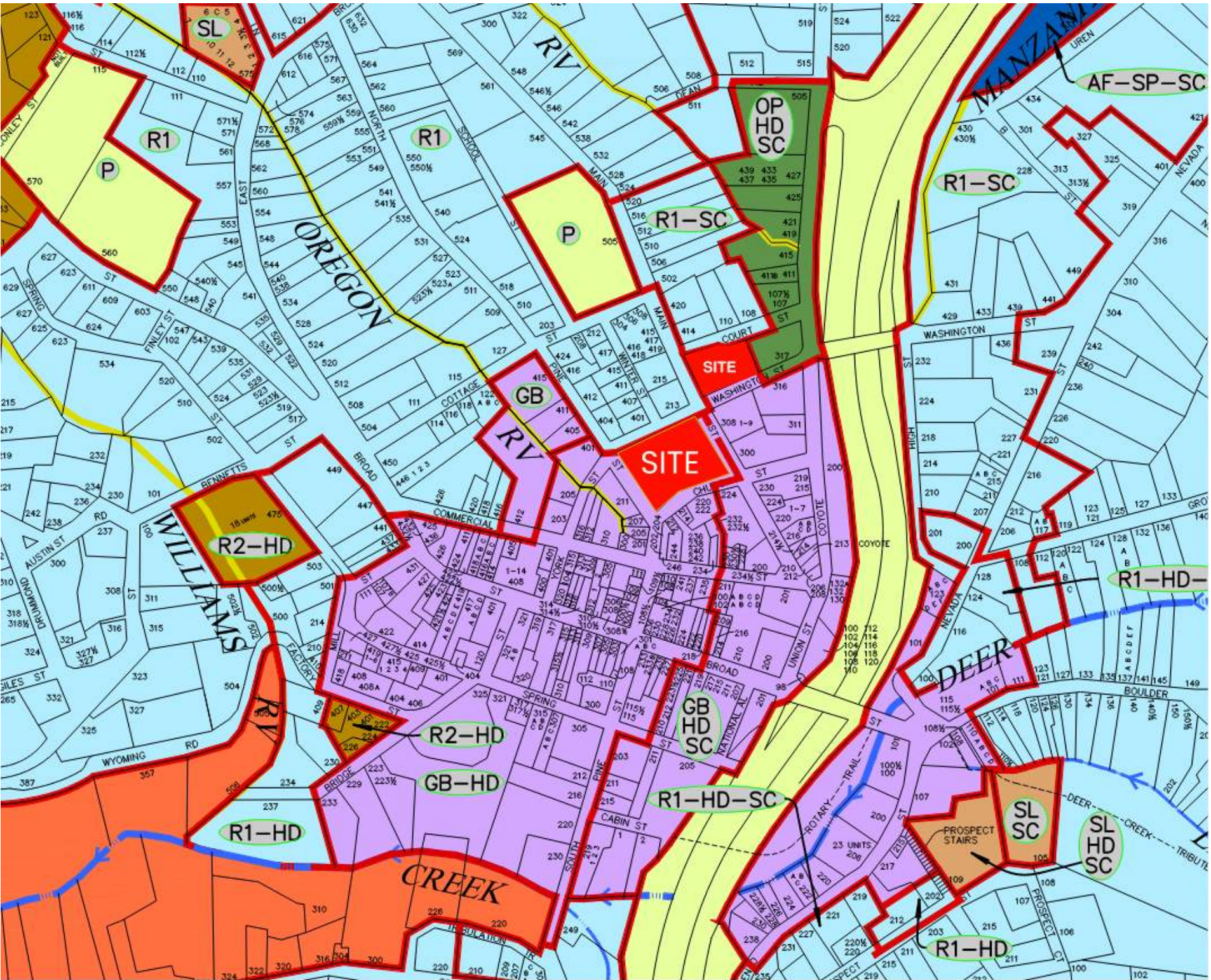
- All residential uses as permitted in the R1 and R2 zones
- Offices on the second floor and above, stores and shops supplying commodities or performing services
- Restaurants, Hotels and Motels
- Mixed residential uses at a maximum density of 4 (four) units per acre may be included within any building devoted to a nonresidential use
- Any other similar business or service enterprise, except offices on the ground floor.

BULK REGULATIONS

- **Height:** The height regulation is forty feet.

"Height of building" means the vertical distance measured from the average level of the highest and lowest point of that portion of the lot covered by the building to the topmost point of the roof excluding chimneys, elevators, ventilation and air-condition equipment and parapet walls."

- **Setbacks:** Minimum 9' when abutting a residential zone
- **Site coverage:** 100% coverage is allowed in the GB District.
- **Landscaping:** Following Nevada City Development performance standards
- **Parking:** Parking space requirements will be established by the planning commission or city council based on similar uses outlined in existing regulations.
- **HOUSING:** 2 spaces for each dwelling unit.
- **MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING:**
 - Studio: one space per unit
 - 1 BR unit: one space per unit
 - 2 BR unit: two space per unit
 - 3 BR or more units: two spaces per unit
- **HOTEL:** 1 space for each guest room, plus 2 spaces for managers quarters + additional for meeting spaces.
- **COMMERCIAL / OFFICE:** 8 spaces for the first 1,000gsf, plus 1 space for each 250 gsf thereafter.



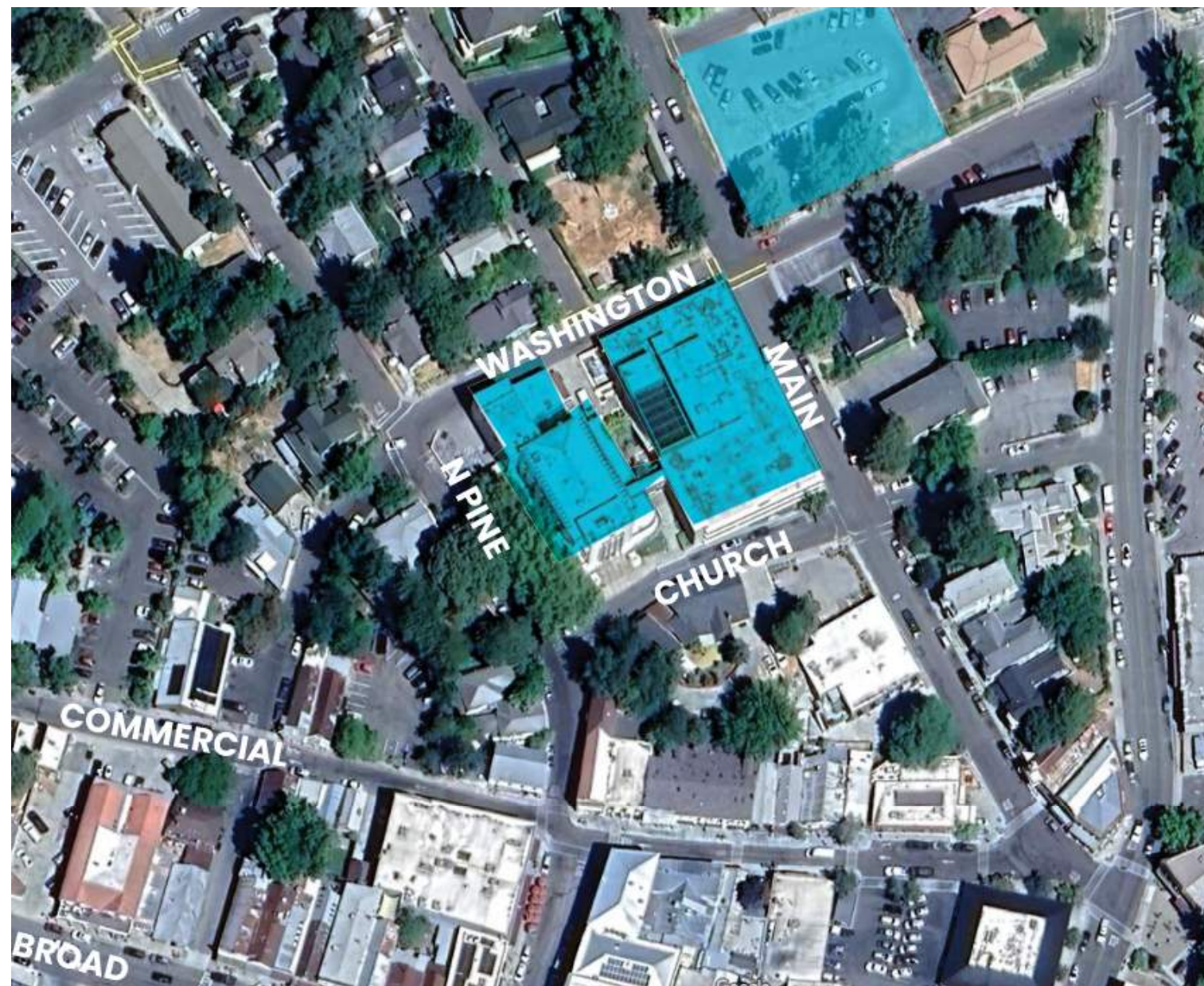
AF – Agricultural Forestry	LI – Light Industry	RR – Rural Residential
EC – Employment Center	OP – Office and Professional	R1 – Single Family Residential
GB – General Business	OS – Open Space	R2 – Multiple Family Residential
LB – Local Business	P – Public	R3 – High Density Residential
		SL – Service Lodging

EXISTING SITE

Description

The Courthouse is located at 201 Church Street and is flanked by North Pine Street to the west and Main Street to the east. Washington Street flanks the north side of the building.

The accompanying parking lot is at the northeast side of Washington Street and Main Street.



Nevada County Courthouse



View of Annex from Church Street



The site's steep terrain creates accessibility challenges



No building setbacks from residential uses.

EXISTING SITE

SITE SETBACKS

17.40.060 Development standards.

Setbacks: The following minimum requirements shall be observed in the GB zone except where increased for conditional uses:

- A. Lot area for single-family dwellings and multiple dwellings same as in the R2 zone;
- B. Front yard, none;
- C. Side Yards.
 - 1. Interior, none, except when abutting residential zones, then not less than nine feet,
 - 2. Corner, none, except when abutting residential zones, then not less than nine feet;
- D. Rear yard, none, except when abutting residential zones, then not less than nine feet.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is the measurement of a building's floor area in relation to the size of the lot/parcel that the building(s) is/are located on. FAR is expressed as a decimal number, and is derived by dividing the total area of the building by the total area of the parcel (building area + lot area).

Floor Area Ratio: No language can be found in the Nevada City Zoning Ordinance that limits the FAR in a GB Zone.

Any single-family lot within the R1 and/or RR zoning designations may be developed with an area not exceed a floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.5.

N.C. Municipal Code 17.09.010 – Limitations on development.

No more than thirty-five (35) residential units whether single-family or multifamily shall be approved on any one (1) parcel of property or on two (2) or more parcels of property adjacent to each other and under the same ownership within any twelve (12) month period. Applications will be accepted for development of over thirty-five (35) units on the same parcel of property or on two (2) or more parcels of property under the same ownership within twelve (12) months of each other but no more than thirty-five (35) units shall be approved during any twelve (12) month period. However, more than thirty-five (35) units may be approved by the city council if a finding is made that it will be in the public good to approve additional units in light of all the circumstances of the project and will promote the public health, safety or welfare.



EXISTING SITE

TOPOGRAPHY & HEIGHT

- **Height:** The height regulation is maximum forty feet.

"Height of building" means the vertical distance measured from the average level of the highest and lowest point of that portion of the lot covered by the building to the topmost point of the roof excluding chimneys, elevators, ventilation and air-condition equipment and parapet walls."

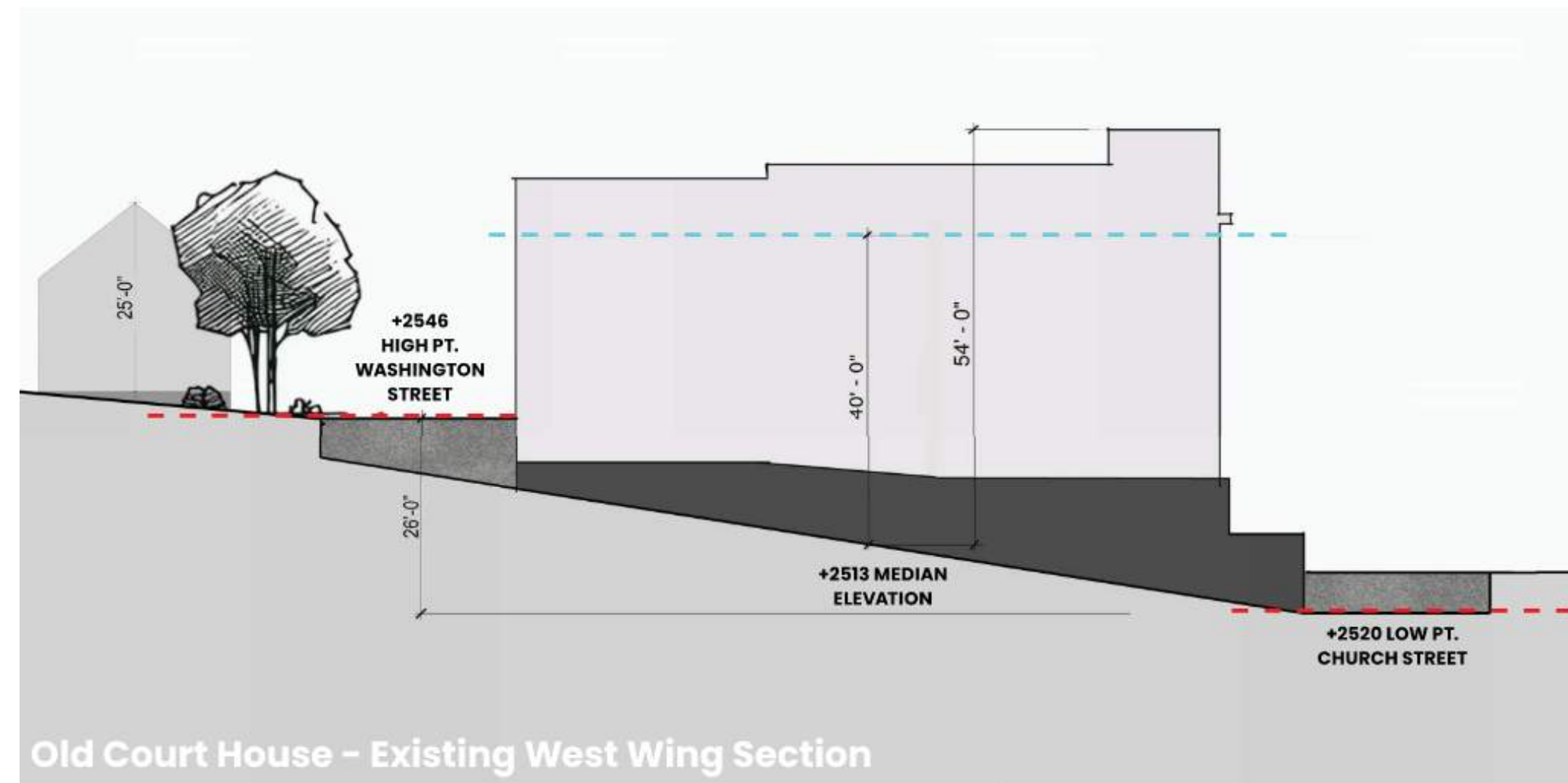
The existing Courthouse and Annex building are located on a full city block, with North Pine Street west of the building, Washington Street to the north, Main Street to the east, and Church Street to the south. The site is located on moderately **steep terrain**, generally **sloping from north to south**.

Based on an aerial topographic survey provided by the Nevada City Engineering Department, the high point of Washington Street is approximately an elevation of 2,546 feet above mean sea level, located near the midpoint of the Courthouse site. Washington Street drains east and west towards Main and North Pine Streets.

North Pine Street slopes north to south, dropping approximately 21 feet to an elevation of approximately 2,520 feet near the southwest corner of the site.

Main Street slopes north to south with an elevation drop of approximately 24 feet to an elevation of 2,519 feet, near the southeast corner of the site.

Church Street drains east and west, with a high point at elevation 2,529 feet located near the Courthouse entry. The street drops approximately 10 feet from the high point to the adjacent intersections.



EXISTING SITE

PARKING

EXISTING PARKING AVAILABLE: 75 spaces

PARKING REQUIREMENTS PER ZONING:

HOUSING: 2 spaces for each dwelling unit.

- 75 space / 2 = 37 possible dwelling units

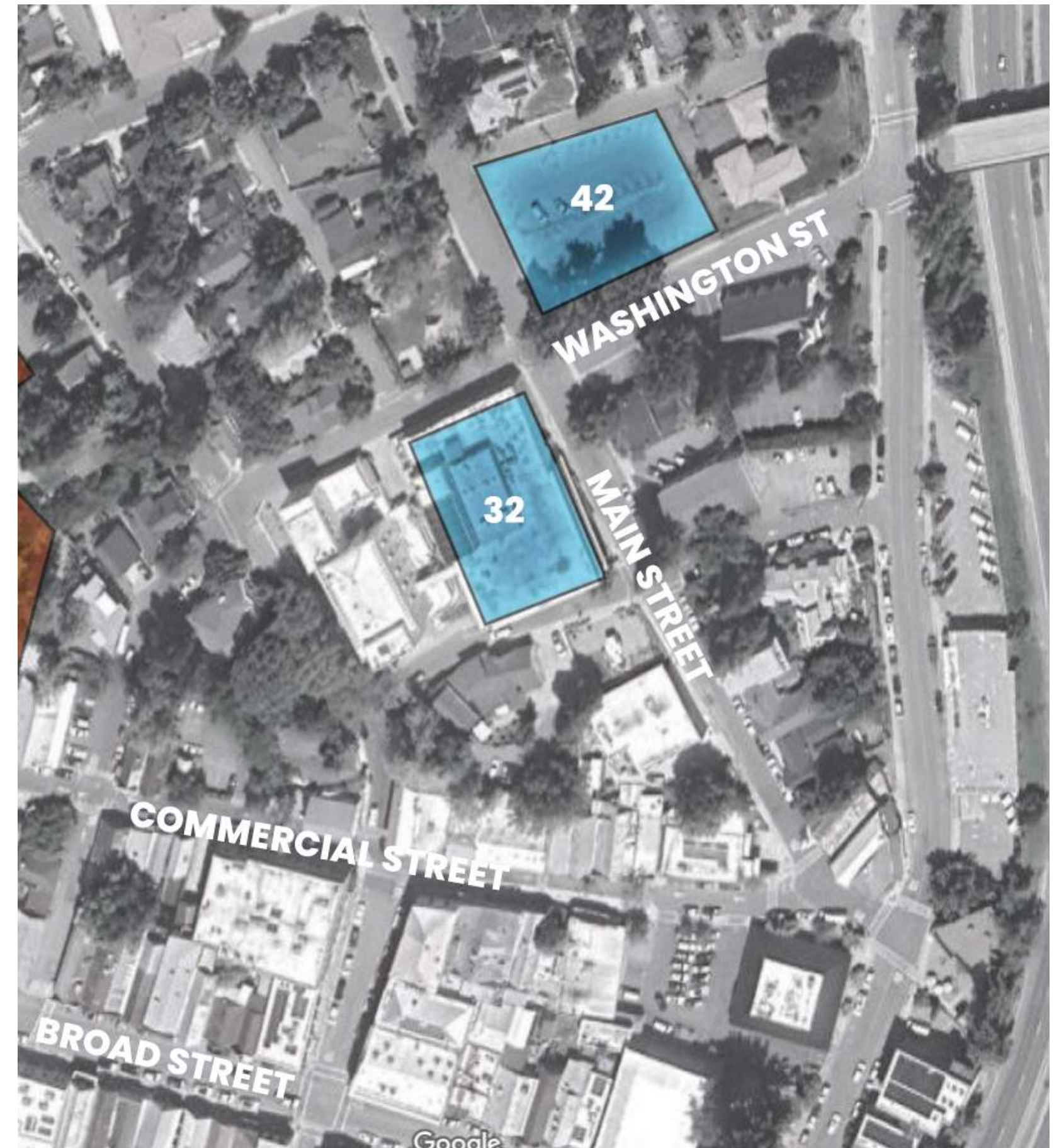
HOTEL: 1 space for each guest room, plus 2 spaces for managers quarters + additional for meeting spaces.

- 75 spaces = 75 guest rooms (no meeting rooms)
(National Exchange Hotel has 38 rooms.)

COMMERCIAL / OFFICE: 8 spaces for the first 1,000gsf, plus 1 space for each 250 gsf thereafter.

- 75 spaces would allow for 17,750 sf of office.

- Note that the current building of 54,000 sf would demand parking of $8 + 212 = 220$ spaces.



EXISTING SITE

PARKING EXPANSION

The remote surface parking lot can be considered for parking as-is. Structured parking could be built on site or it could be used as additional development space.



SITE TEST FITS

WIDE RANGE OF OPTIONS



Keep All
(except rear)

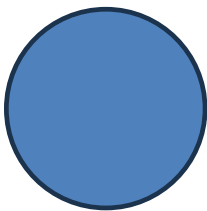
Minor
Intervention

Demo
Courthouse

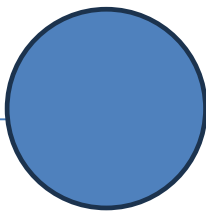
Demo Annex

Keep Tower
Only

Demolish All



Minor Changes



Major Changes

SOLUTION APPROACH

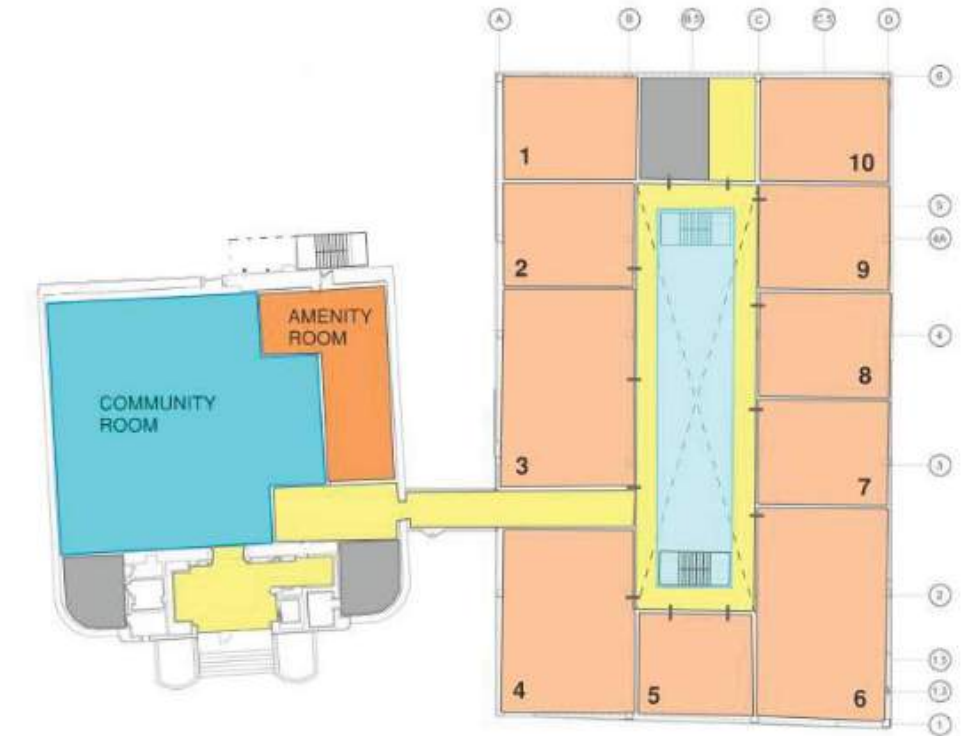
THIS IS AN EXAMPLE – NOT A SOLUTION

Total Housing Units: 26

Required parking: 39 spaces



ANNEX SCHEME – PERSPECTIVE



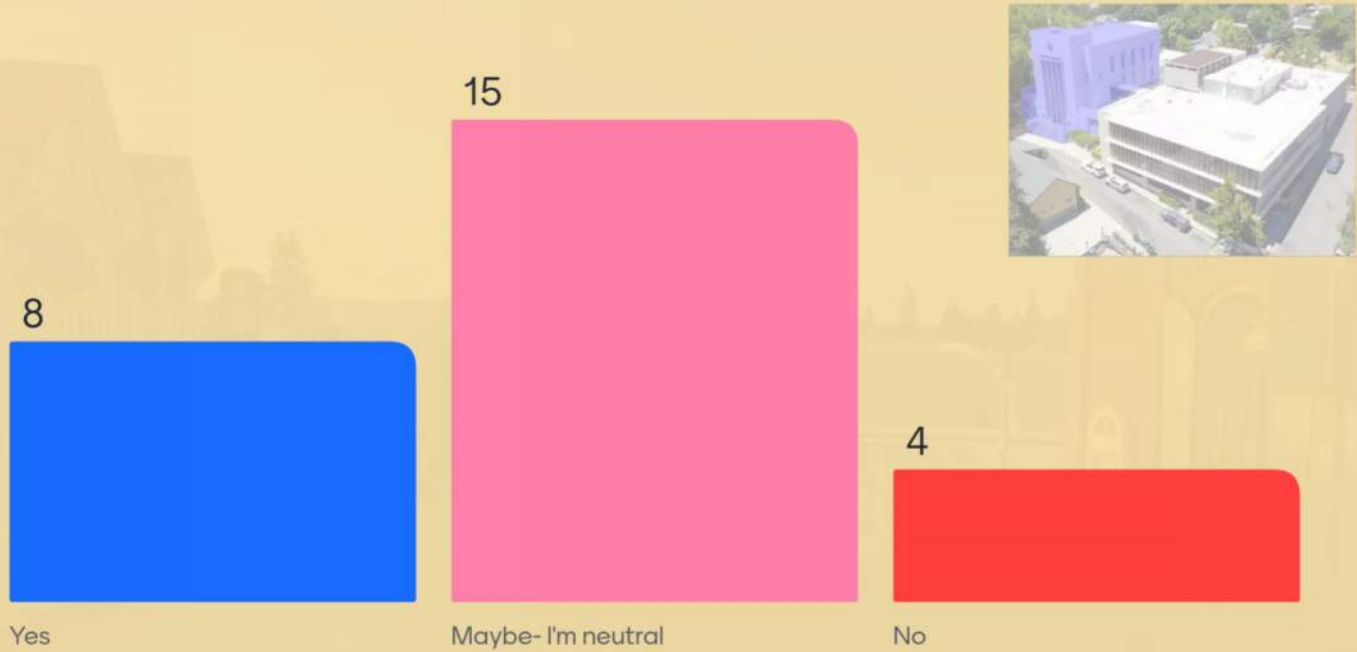
ANNEX SCHEME – SITE PLAN

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FEEDBACK

03



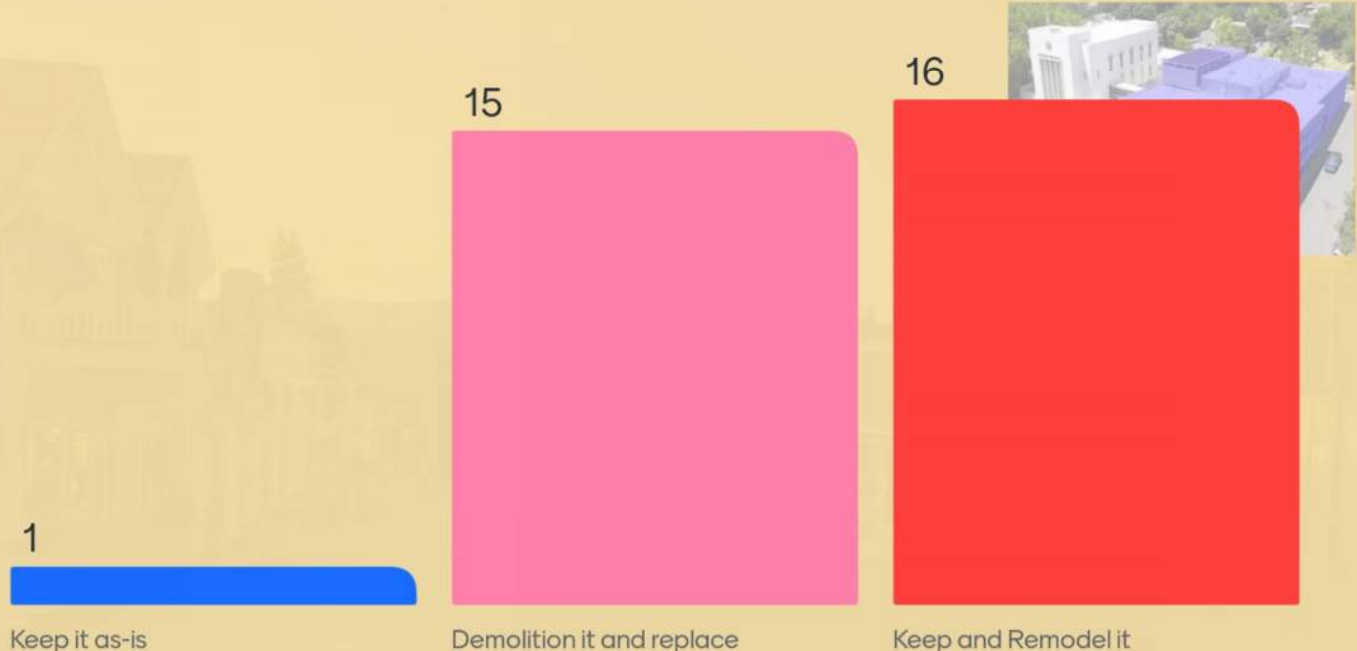
Should we keep the entire "historic" Courthouse?



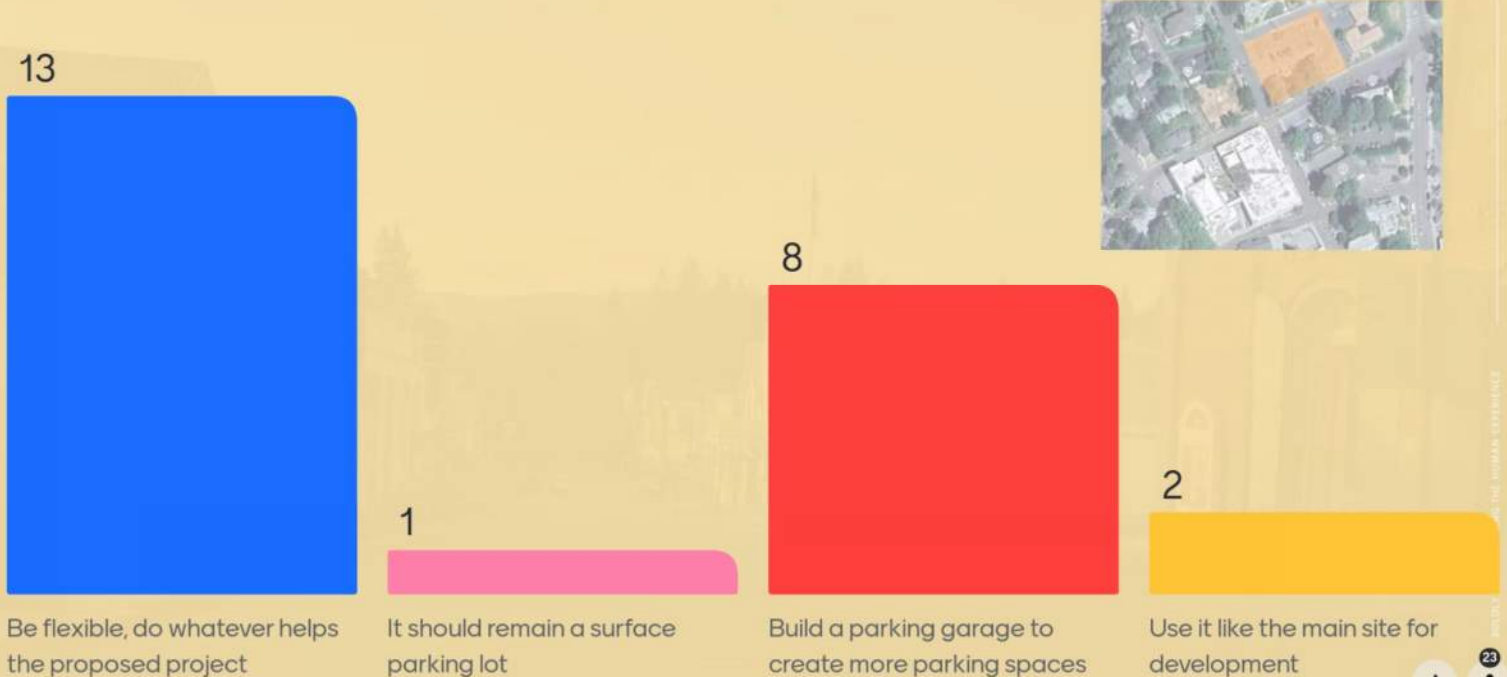
Is it OK to keep ONLY the Courthouse Tower?



What should happen to the Annex Building



What should happen to the existing surface parking lot?



Mentimeter

What else should we consider for the design?

Gondola to the top of Sugarloaf Mountain

Benefit to the downtown community (kids, families, non-bars)

A space for youth to gather for arts , culture and education.

Turning the facilities into a public library.

UFO Research center

Workforce housing

City managed public parking

An open space park that retains historical elements and provides local public use

1

27

Mentimeter

What else should we consider for the design?

Makerspace Community meeting room spaceYouth spaceOperated by County

Definitely keep both buildings.

Youth useRock climbing gym in tower

Keeping in alignment with Nevada City charm

I want to see more community oriented considerations including a children's museum and or makerspace. Community involvement should be a considered a necessary aspect of this project

Not tall all the way across the site.

Model the floor level to be a mixed-use space modeled after WAL public market in Sac. Combination of open seating/meeting, small kitchen/restaurant court, retail, and gallery space.

The annex would make a great luxe penthouse on the top floor to help pay for workforce housing on the lower floors. The historic courthouse should contain a small public area with historic information

1

27

Mentimeter

What else should we consider for the design?

Community usage, e.g. arts, music, library. Something to increase the vibrancy of the city and retain younger citizens.

Consider making it artist housing with studio space. We have a vibrant arts community, but artists are increasingly unable to live and work here. Lean into great light.

Historic context, which needs to be defined and how it blends with Nevada city's.

Would love to keep the building and make it into housing or artist space or library

Keep in mind that variances and in-lieu parking may be available. Maximize use of the space and include green space in design please.

Decrease the height behind the tower. It already over shadows the city. Even the off site parking options should keep height limitations in mind as we don't want 'city vibes'

Don't limit the developer who is paying for it

A going concern that serves the community at large. A cooking school or other that attracts younger people and brings in revenue. If not we need housing.

1

27

Mentimeter

What else should we consider for the design?

I believe both buildings should be preserved and mixed use encouraged.

Community space like a museum, plus extra parking.

Issues of fire safety, pedestrian passage, feasibility of multistory parking on existing juror lot, visibility from highway, traffic flow through town

1

27

CONCLUSIONS TO DESIGN SECTION

Our key takeaways

- There were mixed reviews in keeping the historic courthouse. The community seemed interested in keeping the historic courthouse if that was needed.
- The community was 50/50 on keeping (and remodeling) or demolishing the annex
- Overall, the community seems onboard with doing whatever is most feasible for the city, despite historic significance.
- When it came to the existing surface lot, the consensus was either to make more parking (possible parking garage) or to use it to help the project in whatever way needed

EVALUATION 04

EVALUATION CRITERIA

EVALUATE EACH OPTION

It is best practice to develop the criteria prior to developing the options to help ensure your values are followed and not prejudices.

OPTION EVALUATIONS		OPTION 1			Notes
		Score	Weight	Total	
Values	Community Support		20%	0	Does the community support this, is this politically supported
	Balance of Historic and Proposal		5%	0	Balance historic character and overall context
Viability	Financial Feasibility		35%	0	Viable Use, Construction Cost
	Market Viability		25%	0	Is there Market Demand for the scenario
	Longevity/Adaptability		10%	0	Can the option remain viable for the future. Adaptable
	Impact on Local Businesses		5%	0	Does this support or hurt existing businesses
Totals			100%	0	

EVALUATION FEEDBACK

04



Mentimeter

List any important evaluation criteria that we have not included.

None

Impact on the current neighborhood (private homes, apartments)

Does it meet the needs of the local community?

Good breakdown

Nothing

No it seems complete

Alignment with the City's goals and strategy

Community need

1

20

WOLLY TRANSFORMING THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

Mentimeter

List any important evaluation criteria that we have not included.

Timeline- how quickly can something be done.

None

Global warming

Environment

Alignment with city's strategic plan

Impact to the downtown community beyond businesses, for example on residents and on kids

Weighted value for Parks and Community spaces are not listed, ie social and arts improvement

Community support should be more heavily weighted, our community has a lot needs that we could address

1

20

WOLLY TRANSFORMING THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

Mentimeter

List any important evaluation criteria that we have not included.

The value of re-use and considerations of sustainability and climate change.

Housing housing

Value to direction of public good. Non profit housing, services to aging population, service to the state of california plus jobs.

Impact on tax payers

Overall community impact, including parking, traffic etc.

Environmental impactTimelineNumber of seats on gondola

Parking for the gondola!

1

20

WOLLY TRANSFORMING THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

Mentimeter

To achieve highest & best use which critieria should be the most valuable?

1stCommunity Support

2ndFinancial Feasibility .

3rdLongevity / Adaptability

4thMarket Viability

5thImpact on Local Businesses

6thBalance of Historic and Proposal

1

20

WOLLY TRANSFORMING THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

CONCLUSIONS TO EVALUATION SECTION

Our key takeaways

- When asked how the evaluation criteria could be improved, the community members once again focused on higher impact to kids and public spaces, while many agreed that the Steering Committee's criteria was right on track.
- While the community seemed less interested in the economics of the project at the beginning of the presentation, they ranked it highly by the end.
- Community Support was ranked the most important factor.
- Some comments referenced the desire to consider environmental/sustainability factors in the evaluation.

FINAL THOUGHTS

05



COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Mentimeter

Please write any final thoughts, ideas, or feedback.

Great process- thank you

Make it possible for developers

A process that reaches more community residents for input.

Thank you. Seeing how you use our comments at the next meeting will be important

Great work so far. Very organized and clear presentation on a very challenging site.

Parking and affordable housing.

Parking is not to be over looked. If a business of some sort is going to take that spot, then we need parking solutions.

Excellent process great useful explanation of complex data

25

BOLDLY TRANSFORMING THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

Mentimeter

Please write any final thoughts, ideas, or feedback.

Housing, housing, housingGlobal, warming, global warming

Many, many community members want a library.

Maximize use of the site/1 ac of land. Consider subdividing property for multiple uses: hotel/housing

It just needs to make sense for the community as a whole. I know it takes money to rehab the building. I think we need space for youth and community and not necessarily for profit.

We need affordable housing, parking, and space for youth!

Excellent presentation and answers to challenging question.

Can this site have an impact on bringing younger workers and residents in to keep the population from being hollowed out?

Please no monstrosity buildings!! love the feedback about youth. Perhaps single family apartments with youth friendly, public use on the ground floor.I'd like to see the tower remain in tact.

25

BOLDLY TRANSFORMING THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

Mentimeter

Please write any final thoughts, ideas, or feedback.

Many community members support a library.

Livable, smart communities are green communities, please keep sustainability in mind

How do we get the State to put their hands in their pockets and fund a subsidized facility that is of use to youth and young workers.

Or subdividing to include public uses: park, community center, parks

Need more State financing since they created this problem for the City. Housing affordable by design.

Multi-use would provide the most active use of this historic building. Please re-use the space rather than tear down. There was no mention of a youth hostel, that might be a good addition to housing.

CEQA can become a tool of NIMBY groups, as can historical aesthetics. It will be important for any developer to anticipate and strategize successfully around those forces.

I'm excited that housing is an option. If we go that direction we need to ensure that it's affordable for people who work here. We don't need any second homes for people who are rarely here.

25

BOLDLY TRANSFORMING THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

Mentimeter

Please write any final thoughts, ideas, or feedback.

Rock climbing in tower is actually a brilliant idea. Could generate income or be used by residents.

Smart growth,

This building offers an iconic anchor to the viewshed and that should be preserved.

Library and housing please!

Basement level housing and parking

Smart region planning

Community space or museum with parking to encourage people conduct business downtown. Also could a pedestrian bridge be put over 20 to connect the Rood/Helling to downtown?

I'd like the approvers and stewards of this community to take a hard line on finding a win win vs just selling. A library annex downtown with a multi use purpose

25

BOLDLY TRANSFORMING THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

Mentimeter

Please write any final thoughts, ideas, or feedback.

Keeping just the tower is ridiculous.

Please look into the financial feasibly of a children's museum and/or makerspace and keeping the buildings as community oriented spaces

A multi use community, library or arts space or would be an excellent use. I'm also interested in having the space offer mixed use that provides a public park, and a parking garage on the adjacent lot

Mitigate global warming

Turn it into a great, open grassy park with a Stonehenge courthouse edifice for historical character. Then put a garage in the side lot

Don't forget, parking minimums can be changed. Residential could also be marketed to non-car owners.

25

CONCLUSIONS TO FINAL THOUGHTS SECTION

Our key takeaways

- Overall, the community appears to be open to the idea of housing, especially if there is a mixed-use element to it, with some members still pushing for youth spaces. Many of the community members gave the impression that the project is currently moving in the right direction, and some insisted on parking considerations.
- There were several comments from the community about more public (non-revenue generating) uses, such as a library, a park or a youth center. The committee needs to provide the design team with direction on how to address these ideas.

NEXT STEPS

05

We will develop 3 solutions, focusing primarily on housing.

Solutions will take different approaches to the existing buildings
and the satellite parking lot.



THANK YOU

COMMUNITY MEETING

Nevada County Courthouse: Highest & Best Use

October 22 2024

A GRASSROOTS PROPOSITION:

REPURPOSE THE NEVADA CITY COURTHOUSE COMPLEX AS A CULTURAL CENTER.

1. Executive Summary

- **Proposal Overview:** The concept reimagines the historic courthouse as a community cultural center. It would provide a history museum honoring the region's natural, indigenous and modern history, house the Madelyn Helling Library collections, provide practice and performance space for artists, and establish a much-needed local youth center. The Helling Way site would be repurposed as a climate resilience center to provide emergency services during wildfires and extreme weather events.
- **Purpose:** Preserve an important historical landmark while creating a vibrant community hub for literacy, education, and cultural engagement. Develop a safe and accessible Climate Resilience Center.
- **Key Benefits:** Revitalizes the downtown area for community members and tourists alike, supports local businesses, enhances pedestrian and motorist safety, and improves access to library and cultural services. Original Helling site becomes available for retrofit into a Climate Resilience Center. Saves an iconic and historic building from demolition or abandonment.

2. Historical Context and Significance of the Courthouse Complex

- **Architectural Significance:** The courthouse holds immense value as a historical landmark. According to Section 1.4 of the 2022 New Nevada City Courthouse Planning Study. "Both the Courthouse portion of the building and the Annex appear eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3 (Architecture), because they embody the distinctive characteristics of Art Moderne style architecture and Mid-Century Modern style architecture, respectively; the Courthouse portion of the building is also the work of a master architect, George C. Sellon."
- **Community Connection:** Preserving the building honors the city's past while integrating it into the future through community use. This proposal significantly improves residents' access to public amenities and cultural resources. This space would provide much needed cultural and youth space to the city's residents and visitor's.

3. Courthouse Site Analysis and Condition Assessment

- **Building Condition:** An approximately 80,000ft² structure in need of preservation and purpose. See Section 2, Option 1 of the 2022 New Nevada City Courthouse Planning Study.

- **Location and Accessibility:** Situated in the commercial district, it provides easy access for most school children and walkability for most of the City of Nevada City community. Accessible by vehicle and public transportation. See Section 2, Option 1 of the 2022 New Nevada City Courthouse Planning Study.
- **Parking:** Ample existing parking for this usage with potential for expansion. In addition to the underground parking garage, which could provide docents and staff with secured parking, there is an opportunity for a second structure at the jurors' lot. Section 2, Option 1 of the 2022 New Nevada City Courthouse Planning Study proposed a 2 story parking garage with +/- 94 spaces. There is potential for an enclosed skybridge to ease access to and from the parking structure to the annex building, improving ease of entry and ADA accessibility. This lot could be dedicated to patrons of the facility.

4. Proposed Reuse Plan for the Courthouse Complex

- **Usage:** Conversion of the historical Nevada City Courthouse into a state of the art, vastly expanded public library and cultural center. The complex would host facilities for the growing Madelyn Helling collections and services, as well as a new Nevada County Historical Museum which would not only focus on Nevada County's gold rush and natural history, but would elevate the stories of the native and earliest stewards of the land. The Madelyn Helling Library would retain its name in honor of the late librarian.

This relocation would expand the library's capacity to cater to local youth, including a dedicated public youth center. This makes indoor space available to Nevada City's school children. This would be a safe, positive and more walkable destination than the Helling's current location. Children would have after school access to youth led programming, education, entertainment, group activities, mentorship and peer to peer support. In addition, this space would provide an indoor public gathering space for Nevada City residents and visitors. This vision includes a dedicated, community owned art gallery where local and visiting artists can display their work. Adjacent to the visual arts space, an acoustic performance and recording space would provide space for local and visiting musicians to showcase their talent. The complex would serve as a visual and functional reminder of Nevada County's adaptability through time, its celebration of the arts, and its commitment to a thriving population.

- **Design Approach:** Preserve the courthouse facade and annex, adapt the interior for public cultural functions while respecting the facilities' historical value. Modernize the structure's interior, while preserving historically relevant architectural elements. Utilize Section 2, Option 1 of the 2022 New Nevada City Courthouse Planning Study as a model to retrofit structures for seismic code compliance and reuse as much of the original facilities as possible. Reach ADA compliance through design and retrofit, adapting facilities to be fully inclusive. The first floor would be dedicated to library and museum services, the second floor, youth and community spaces, and the third to gallery and music space.
- **Visitor Impact:** The building, serving both community and tourist's interest, would further patronage to surrounding businesses. The facility hosting such a diversity of interests is

sure to attract a diversity of patrons. The main branch of the Nevada County Library reports between 200-500 visitors daily. A more central and accessible library would surely attract greater visitorship. The Empire Mine State Historic Park boasts an average daily visitation of over 250 guests, the proposed museum would likely receive a similar crowd of enthusiasts. The Center for the Arts in Grass Valley hosts around 50,000 patrons every year, a comparable number could be expected at this venue. In turn, these visitors support local businesses, making the downtown a more community oriented, vibrant, and resilient space. The reuse of this complex ensures a steady stream of patrons to the downtown area, and could increase annual visitation into downtown by over 240,000.

5. Helling Way Site Analysis

- **Building History:** The Madelyn Helling Library is a single story, approximately 16,700ft², public library facility. The structure was purpose built in 1991, and designed in a contemporary style. Apart from being named in Helling's honor, the structure does not hold architectural or historical significance. The Madelyn Helling Library is the main branch of the Nevada County library system.
- **Location and Accessibility:** Located adjacent to the Eric W. Rood Administrative Center, in close proximity to the junction of highway 20 and 49. Highly accessible by motor vehicles, and public transportation. This location is not easily walkable for many in the downtown, nor the surrounding community.
- **Parking:** Miriad potential for parking expansion to accommodate facility needs.

6. Proposed Reuse Plan for the Helling Way Site

- **Usage:** Conversion of the original Madelyn Helling Library site into The Nevada County Climate Resilience Center.
- **Design Approach:** This facility and its grounds would be retrofitted and hardened to serve as a permanent, dedicated evacuation location at the confluence of two of Western Nevada County's highways. This resource would be on standby as an always ready refuge in the case of extreme weather, natural disaster or public emergency. The building would house a commercial kitchen to prepare food during catastrophe, and maintain an inventory of resources to serve local and regional evacuees, or people experiencing extremes in weather. Further, the center could offer on-site showers and day services, including kitchen access, to Nevada County's unhoused population. These efforts could be managed by the Health and Human Services Department. The Proximity to the Rood Center provides for seamless coordination between Nevada County leadership and the Office of Emergency Services. Access to the Rood Center also provides convenient staging grounds for emergency response and mobile command vehicles, including adequate space for a helipad.
- **Community Safety:** In the last decades weather patterns have become less predictable, and more extreme. Nevada County, and California as a whole, have been enduring an accelerating climate crisis. Wildfires have evolved into megafires, and snowstorms have

grown in severity. The Board of Supervisors is committed to community safety and resilience, this proposal helps solve the puzzle they and their agencies are faced with in order to secure the community's resilience, safety, and future adaptability.

7. Project Feasibility

- **Financial Plan:** Measure A sales tax, TOT, General Fund, pledge drives, apply for 501(c)(3) status or partner with local nonprofits and government agencies to make available many potential grants for libraries, communities, museums, historical places, youth, humanitarian aid, resilience and climate adaptability. A grassroots appeal to the Judicial Council of California to keep Nevada City vibrant and to support toxic remediation efforts. Once complete, leverage gallery and acoustic space, hosting artists and performers who draw locals and visitors to patronize these facilities. Public ownership provides a no-cost land allocation option, this allows more funding to be directed into the completion of these projects.
- **Timeline:** Estimated phases for design, permits, and construction following community approval and government adoption.

8. Sustainability and Community Impact

- **Sustainability:** Reuses an existing historical building and a contemporary structure, reducing environmental impact through reuse, and by promoting walkability for Nevada City residents. Repurposes the Helling site for use as a Climate Resilience Center, reducing the need for new construction or demolition. Ample space to expand solar power at the Helling Way location and the courthouse complex. Public ownership provides a no-cost land allocation option.
- **Community Benefits:** Supports education, provides more library space, increases access to youth services, arts, history, culture and vibrancy, enhances the downtown Nevada City area, and supports local businesses through halo effect spending. Serves as a visitor attraction, both for its architectural significance and aesthetic prominence, and through its cultural offerings. Acts as a community hub for both youth and community at large. Close proximity to the Doris Foley Library for Historical Research and the Firehouse #1 Museum, creating a library sub-district within the downtown. Makes way for a Nevada County climate resilience center in close proximity to the Nevada County Rood Administrative Center. Improved motorist and pedestrian safety through decreased traffic congestion around Highway 20/49 junction improving safety. Designates secure parking for library staff and a majority of patrons. Locates the crucial climate resilience center on the outskirts of downtown Nevada City so traffic could be routed away from the city during natural disasters or public emergencies.

9. Stakeholder Support and Partnerships

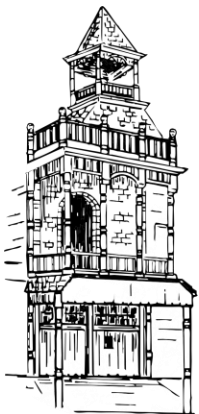
- **Local Government:** Potential for county and city support.
- **Partners:** Potential for partnership with local nonprofits and community groups.
- **Community:** There is broad community support for libraries, evidenced by county-wide Measure A's supermajority approval in 2016. Gallup polls repeatedly show libraries are America's most utilized cultural resource. Community concern for climate and public emergencies.

10. Conclusion

- **Summary:** The repurposing of the courthouse as a cultural center preserves our history, supports education, enhances the downtown area, and promotes sustainable development. Retrofitting the Helling site provides space for the Climate Resilience Center, supporting people in need and potentially saving lives.
- **Next Steps:** Seek governmental and public understanding, support and adoption, find partnerships or seek non-profit status, secure funding, finalize designs.

If you would like to learn more, please contact us at

ncculturalcenter@gmail.com



THE NEVADA COUNTY
**Historical
Society** EST. 1944

Celebrating and Preserving
the History of
Nevada County, California

161 Nevada City Hwy., Nevada City, CA 95959
info@nevadacountyhistory.org
www.NevadaCountyHistory.org

January 5, 2025

Re: ReUse of the Nevada County Courthouse

The following report is prepared pursuant to a request from the Nevada City Courthouse ReUse Committee comprised of County and City representatives and is presented to said Committee as well as their consultants in order that they may understand the Historical Society's perspective and interest in preserving and repurposing the Nevada County Courthouse from a historical and community standpoint. The Courthouse complex is comprised of three components: The Courthouse; the Annex Building; and the Court Street parking lot. All references to the Courthouse in this report refer only to the original courthouse built in 1856, rebuilt in 1864, added onto in 1900, and then remodeled and added onto in 1936, in the Art Moderne Style as we know it today.

With respect to the Annex Building, local historian and librarian Ed Tyson summed it up well in his report on the city buildings for the City's historical district designation. He wrote, "This three-story reinforced concrete, glass, and steel building neither conforms with early Nevada City architecture nor the Art Moderne style of the County Courthouse". His assessment coincides with that of the Historical Society. Conversely, the Historical Society would hope that any future replacement structure for the Annex Building would conform with early Nevada City architecture or of the Art Moderne style reflected in both the County Courthouse and City Hall buildings.

For all the reasons stated in this report, it is the Historical Society's hope and expectation that the Courthouse not be lost but be preserved and converted to uses that would benefit the entire Nevada County Community for many generations to come.

Respectfully submitted by,

The Nevada County Historical Society

Nevada County ~ at the heart of California's golden history

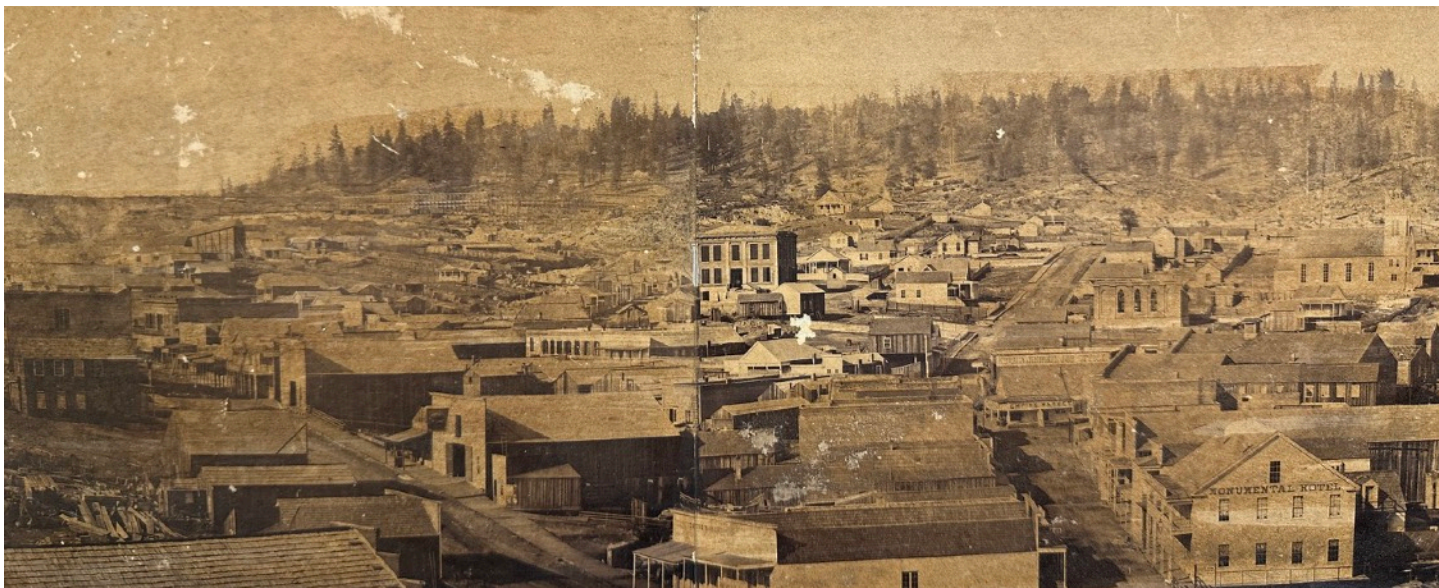


Firehouse No. 1 Museum
214 Main Street
Nevada City, CA 95959
(530) 265-5468

**Nevada County
Narrow Gauge Railroad Museum**
#5 Kidder Court
Nevada City, CA 95959
(530) 470-0902

North Star Mining Museum
933 Allison Ranch Rd.
Grass Valley, CA 95945
(530) 273-4255

Searls Historical Library
161 Nevada City Hwy.
Nevada City, CA 95959
(530) 265-5910



- Lithograph of Nevada City, taken in 1857

The Nevada County Courthouse

CONTENTS

Cover.....	1
Historical Significance	2
Exhibits, Fixtures and Original Materials.....	4
Architectural & Historical Timeline.....	
1851-1856.....	6
1856-1863.....	6
1864-1900.....	8
1900-1936.....	12
1936-1964.....	15

*** All Photos seen in this article are property of Searls Library unless otherwise stated.**





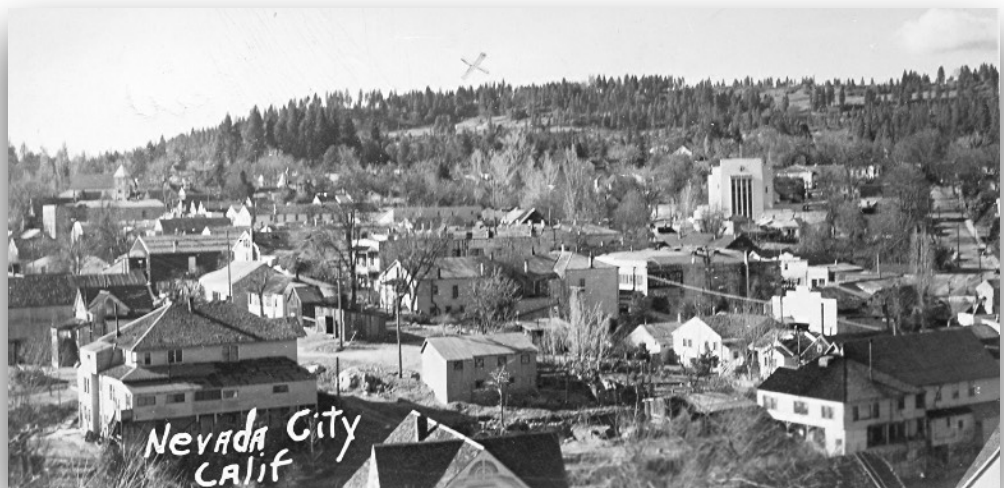
Historical Significance

In this age of rapid change, one constant has remained in Nevada County – the majestic courthouse perched on a hill overlooking Nevada City. Seen immediately as one approaches the County Seat; it has served as a North Star to Nevada County residents for over 160 years. The building at 201 Church Street in Nevada City is more than just a structure. It represents our past, present, and future. As John Steinbeck said, “How will we know it’s us, without our past?” This site has been integral to our citizens’ lives and has belonged to the public for the past 160 years. With the decision finally made to move court services to another location, the fate of this historic building is now the topic of further discussion. As a part of this decision-making process, it is important to look at what the building represents in the continuum of Nevada County history.

The original courthouse structure is a many-layered representation of the people and events that have shaped Nevada County. Unknown to most, the 1864 structure remains under the current 1937 façade. Each reiteration of the building holds a unique and prominent place in our local and national history. As we peel back the layers we see the importance of those layers. The 1937 remodel represents the important partnership between the County and the Federal Government as we all worked together to climb out of the financial ruin of the Great Depression. The 1864 structure represents the resilience and determination of the citizens as they rebounded

from the harsh reality of destructive fires and the nation’s continuing Civil War. The original 1857 building represents the optimism of a newly created County and the hopes and dreams of the hard-working native peoples, merchants, miners, and farmers struggling to survive the harsh environment. The layers, when combined are the citizens of Nevada County today; diligent, determined, resilient, weathering financial and environmental storms, and optimistic about our future. The importance of preserving this building for future generations cannot be overstated. Steve Berry wrote, “A concerted effort to preserve our heritage is a vital link to our cultural, educational, aesthetic, inspirational, and economic legacies – all of the things that quite literally make us who we are.” Nevada County is fast losing its legacies, but we cannot afford to lose this cornerstone of our history and identity.

Arguments can be made about the ‘cost of preservation,’ ‘best use,’ ‘need for housing,’ and more. But each of these is an excuse for not wanting to take on the challenging work of preserving our past, or worse yet, not caring about our past. By now we have learned from our past and our successes and failures when it comes to Historic Preservation. We are living today with the results of when we stood up for historic values and when we did not. The places we have lost are gone forever. We cannot see or feel them defining Nevada County or use them for the benefit of the citizens and visitors. One example of a resource lost forever is the right of way for the rails, which could be used today by bicyclists and pedestrians. While the successes, such as saving the NorthStar House, enhance our county. Bill Falconi, a long-time City Engineer for Nevada City wrote, “When buildings are in need of much repair it is nearly always easier to and less expensive to demolish and start from the ground up. However, the analysis does not stop here. Historic preservation and repair is a state of mind, of attitude, and of commitment. One must want to walk through the doors of historic preservation with his eyes open



ready to participate.” We need to have that commitment to our County’s history and historic buildings now. If the building were to be torn down it would be to the long term detriment of Nevada County as a whole. Nevada City would feel the immediate ramifications. It serves as the visual backdrop to the town. To have the building torn down and replaced by housing, no matter what configuration, would be a blight on this town that serves as the County seat. The effects would be more disastrous than when the freeway split the town in two.

More than Nevada City residents would experience this loss. We tend to forget that this historic building does not belong to the City of Nevada City. It belongs to all the citizens of Nevada County. Those residents would also feel the loss. The building represents the highs and lows and the good and bad of Nevada County’s past and present. Generations of Nevada Countians have passed through the doors of this building. Early arrivals from other countries obtained their naturalization papers here. Later generations have registered to vote, paid taxes, gotten birth, marriage, and death certificates, building permits, or reported to jury duty. As William Murtagh said, “At its best, preservation engages the past in a conversation with the present over a mutual concern for the future.” If the building were to be destroyed our future generations would have no touchstone with which to remember the past to plan the future.

Not only Nevada County residents would feel the loss. Visitors from other California counties, states, and around the world would experience the visual blight that would result. Other places and countries recognize the importance of preserving historic structures, how they create a sense of community, and how they bind together generations and cultures. The reopening of Notre Dame is a good example. After a disastrous fire and with five years of painstakingly, accurately rebuilding what was destroyed and preserving what did not burn, this beautiful, historic structure is again open to the public from around the world. Within a short drive is another

example of preservation - the old Placer County Courthouse in Auburn. Rather than demolishing it and building something new, it has been beautifully restored and repurposed for use by the public. Even closer to home is the example set by Nevada City when they restored City Hall, another 1930s-era WPA Art Moderne project like the County Courthouse.

The Nevada County Historical Society’s position is that first, and foremost, the historic building must be preserved for future generations. The current 1937 façade is a nationally recognized example of the Art Moderne style of architecture that was the first modern style to gain nationwide popularity. Additionally, the building should remain in use for the entire general public, not housing which would serve less than .01% of our citizens. “Growth is inevitable and desirable, but destruction of community character is not. Housing can be built on other more appropriate land. One use could be galleries or offices representing the development of Nevada County such as a gallery for the Nisenan, the Chinese, gold, ranching, farming, lumber, high-tech, and cannabis. Another use could be for the many non-profits and organizations that keep Nevada County running but are struggling to find meeting places. There could also be a floor devoted to a community event space. Rather than looking at this historic structure as an albatross needing to be disposed of, we should look at it as an opportunity for public engagement and creative solutions to restore and repurpose it.

This building does not belong to the State of California, the County, or Nevada City. It belongs to all of us. It has been placed in trust for our future generations and those decision makers that hold the future of this historic structure in their hands must exercise their obligation to protect this trust. That means deciding, regardless of financial considerations, which is in the best interest of the whole public and that will protect this historic building for future generations to enjoy for the next 160 years. “If we do not care about our past, we cannot hope for the future ... I care desperately about saving old buildings.” Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis



Exhibits, Fixtures, and Original Building Materials

A. Exhibits

Over the years the County has been the benefactor of numerous items of significant local historical artifacts and photographs donated by such prominent local families as the Searls family and the Collins family. Many of these artifacts and photographs have resided as exhibits in the Courthouse for decades and have provided countless visitors with viewing pleasure and historical insight.

Facing the impending move of the court into a new courthouse and the development plans/options for the re-use of the existing courthouse, the question is raised as to what is to become of these exhibits, the artifacts contained therein, and the many historic photographs.

The main exhibits are those found in the security entry area and main lobby. Not to diminish the importance of any of the other exhibits, the following are of the greatest local historical significance:

(1) The Collins Family exhibit is in the glass cabinets to your left as you enter the courthouse and was donated in the 1960s by Mrs. Edna Collins Gordon, ancestor of Brigadier General James Collins. General Collins not only served his country but served Nevada County as County Treasurer from 1849 until his death in 1864. He is buried in the Pine Grove Cemetery.



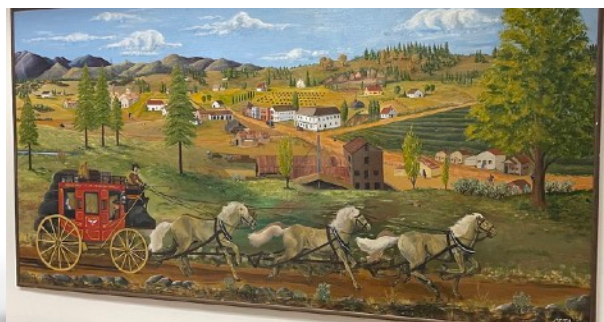
(2) The Searls Family exhibit in the main lobby is the firearm collection of Fred Searls, son of Niles Searls and was donated to the County around the same time that the Searls Law Office across from the Courthouse was donated to the Society.



(3) Two other items of particular local significance found in the main lobby are the Native Sons of the Golden West banners made in the 1880s. One for the Quartz Parlor and the Hydraulic Parlor which were displayed during parades.



(4) Another item of probably little known but tremendous significance is the mural of the stage coach which is identified as a CETA project. Between 1974 and 1981, CETA (“Comprehensive Employment and Training Act”) employed artists for various public projects. In Nevada County, the individuals “employed” were high school students with a supervisor. A mural of similar nature hangs on the wall in the Mt. St. Mary’s Academy building on Church Street in Grass Valley. The mural in Mt. St. Mary’s identifies the students and supervisor and it is likely that the mural in the Courthouse was done by the same individuals.



So again, what will happen to these important historical exhibits and photographs when the courthouse is moved to its new location? One possibility is that some or all of the exhibits and photographs are relocated to the new courthouse. Another possibility is that the old courthouse is preserved (which the Society strongly favors and advocates for) and some or all of the exhibits remain in the old courthouse, either on display in their current location or a museum space dedicated to the public such as the current Family Law Center room. The problem for both of these approaches, particularly the latter and particularly for the Collins and Searls collections, is that staffing and security would be required.

Another possibility is that the Society becomes the recipient of some or all of the exhibits and photographs (or with respect to the photographs, the opportunity to scan and preserve them). Having acquired the former National Guard Armory building in 2014, the Society has the space and the security necessary for the housing of the exhibits. Not only does the Society have the Armory Building in which the Searls Library resides but also the Mining Museum, the Railroad Museum, and the Firehouse Museum where the exhibits could be safely stored and made accessible to the public for viewing during open hours. Lastly, it must be noted that the Society has close historical ties to the Searls Family in particular and in general, has become the primary repository for artifacts, documents, and other cultural items with historical significance relating to Nevada County. Over the years, countless items of historical importance have been donated to the Society from both private individuals such as the Searls and Sargent Families, private companies such as Newmont Mining Company, and public agencies such as the City of Nevada City, the City of Grass Valley, the County of Nevada, and the Nevada Irrigation District. Precedent has certainly been set for the donation of the exhibits and photographs to the Society.

It is the Society's position that the best solution is for some of the exhibits and photographs which do not require supervision and security be retained on display in the old courthouse. The exhibits that do require supervision and security and/or have a special connection to the Society be donated to the Society for safekeeping and display to the public. Lastly, that some of the exhibits and photographs be moved to the new courthouse for display. In particular, those exhibits and photographs which have direct bearing on the old courthouse such as the display of past and present judges.

B. Fixtures

One of the characteristics of Art Moderne was simplicity, lack of adornment, curves and horizontal lines; all in contrast to Art Deco and other architectural styles of those times. Particularly, in the entry area and the lobby, these characteristics can be seen in the fixtures; specifically, the entry doors, the water fountains, the lighting, and interior trim and molding. For all the reasons stated above, the Society's is in favor of and strongly advocates for the preservation of the old courthouse in its entirety or if absolutely necessary, only the removal of the rear portion where the jail used to be. Retaining the old courthouse would not only provide the opportunity to preserve the historic structure but also provide the opportunity to preserve the fixtures within the structure as depicted, by example, of the photographs on the top right.



C. Original Building Materials

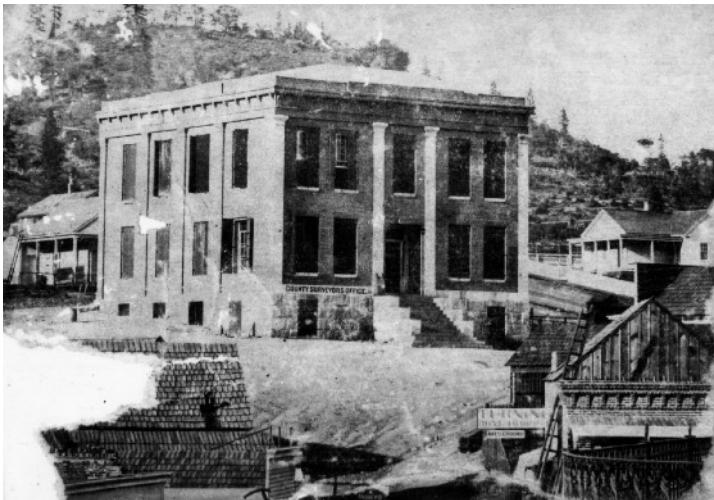
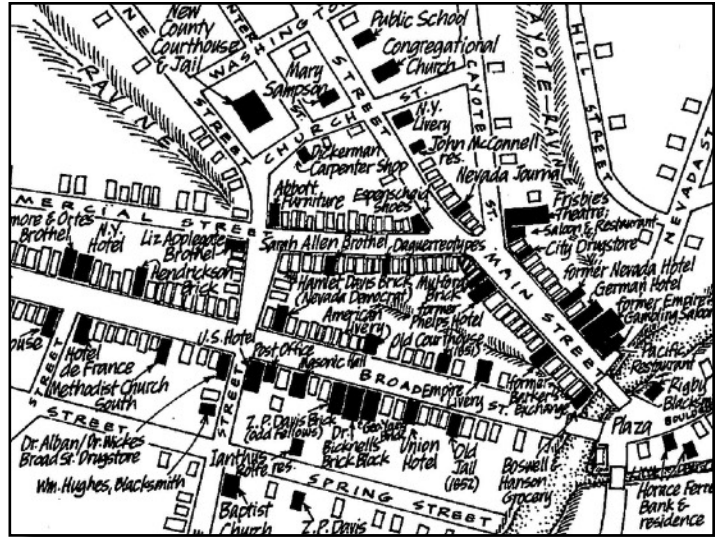
While the Society advocates that the entire old courthouse be restored and retained for the future use of our citizens, it recognizes it may be determined that the rear section which housed the original jail may be removed. In the event that such removal may occur then the old granite blocks could and should be preserved for future use; either at the new courthouse for landscaping or other projects. Those blocks were hand cut and set in place over 150 years ago by local artisans. In addition, within the old jailhouse area there remain brick walls and steel bars. Efforts should be made to preserve these as well. Both the granite blocks and brick and steel bars are depicted in the photos below and are of sufficient historical significance to warrant preservation and re-use.



1851 - 1856

Map of Nevada City as it appeared before the fire of July 1856, that destroyed most of the town. Among the destruction was the new courthouse and jail finished earlier that year. The fire-gutted courthouse was rebuilt within its surviving outer walls.

*Looking at Broad Street you are able to see the location of the previous courthouse with the old jail across the street.
(Comstock Bonanza Map)



1856 - 1863

The county was formed in early 1851 with the first court house and jail being built on Broad street later that same year. In 1856 a larger building was constructed at the present site, on the corner of Church and Pine streets, but it was destined to have a short life. Later that same year the building was burned in the "Great Fire" of July 19, 1856 and all of the county records were destroyed.

The first record available of a supervisors meeting is that of August 5, 1856, immediately following the "Great Fire", that destroyed 400 buildings in Nevada City, with three supervisors present: Chairman James Walsh, Charles Marsh and George Powers. On that day the board asked for bids to rebuild the court house and jail. A short time later a contract was awarded to Bain and Israel to the amount of \$18,500.

This Courthouse was built in 1856 and stood for seven years before it was gutted by the devastating fire of November 1863. All books, records, and papers were saved and the building was rebuilt the following year.





TERRIBLE CONFLAGRATION.—Nevada is again in ashes! An alarm of fire was sounded at quarter to 12 o'clock on Sunday morning.

Nevada Daily Transcript - Nov. 10, 1863

NEVADA IS AGAIN IN ASHES!(above) was the headline of the newspaper following the fire that burnt down most of Nevada City. With many buildings in town reporting a total loss, initial reports stated that “The walls of the Court House are standing and only the rear wall cracked”. Before the blaze reached the courthouse “Sheriff Knowlton with great precaution, procured a guard and delivered the jail of it’s prisoners... They are safe at the Sheriff’s house.”. To keep operations and duties ongoing, the County Supervisors had rented the Baptist church. Judges and others would find other temporary locations for the offices such as “County Judge, Hon. A. C. Niles, has taken an office in Kidd’s Building, corner Broad and Pine Streets”.

NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS! Is what the advertisement read in the newspaper just one day later on Nov. 11. The supervisors took a look at the courthouse walls finding them in “good condition” and proposed to “put in the wood work again as soon as possible” with an optimistic view it could be rebuilt right away. That optimism would change soon after the windy rainstorm just days later. “The front and rear walls of the Court House came down with a crash during the night of Sunday and Monday. The other two walls look decidedly pokers and must probably be taken down if they do not fall...The wind and rain combined seem to conspire to destroy what the fire has left.”. Accepting that the walls could no longer be repaired, the Board of Supervisors withdrew their current proposals and decided that the work would not be done until the close of the rainy season for safety reasons.

COST TO REBUILD - Due to the courthouse project being delayed discussions focused on the cost and design of a new courthouse, possibly even less

expensive than the previous courthouse that just burned. “If the National can cipher out how a wooden court house on the site of the old one will cost less than a brick one, when the bricks and foundation walls are ready for use on the spot, we would like to see that little operation in arithmetic.”. With the cost of everything being debated another question to be answered is ... how will this be paid for?

FROM GOLD TO GREENBACKS? - “No contractor will put in a bid unless on a greenback basis, in order to provide against all contingencies. If the legislature does not give assurance to the people that the current question is to remain as it is, there will be great uncertainty in embarking in all kinds of business, and uncertainly paralyzes industry and results detrimentally to the State.”. - *Nevada Daily Transcript* - Dec. 18, 1863. Due to the financial crisis of the Civil War at this time, Greenbacks were a type of paper currency issued by the United States as legal tender for most purposes but were not backed by existing gold or silver reserves. Over the following weeks many opinions were voiced to act urgently to rebuild using some of remaining standing walls. One man argued, “Those walls are two feet thick and are firm and substantial as any the county will build... Had a contract been let to rebuild it three weeks ago, or had a lot of hands been set at work on the ruins, the building might have had a roof on to-day and would have been safe”. Some materials from the ruins already being used elsewhere in the city. All that remained of the bell was dug out of the ruins, citing the balance melted in the fire. “The city hall is completed and the Marshal has taken possession and is as cosy as you please. The place where he keeps his preserves, just in the rear is going to be lined with boiler iron, the old iron from the cells of the Court House...”. Two months would go by with only talks of something happening with the courthouse but no action in result. Feb. 12, 1864 - *Nevada Daily Transcript* reads “Wind and Damage — On Wednesday last... The side walls of the Court House which were left standing after the fire were blown down.”.

“THE COURT HOUSE GROUNDS — Workmen are actively engaged in clearing away the rubbish and excavating the basement of the old Court House. A railroad has been built across Pine street to run the dirt into the creek.”. After hiring M. F. Butler, architect from San Francisco to draw a plan and specifications for a new Court House and Jail it seemed to the town that the rebuild had finally began on April 6, 1864. A tax levy had previously been announced for the fiscal year of 1864 “on all property, real and personal... on each one hundred dollars the sum of... Twenty-five cents Court House Fund.”. A man by the name of William Bettis was appointed as supervisor for the project at a rate of \$7 per day. A. S. Hart & Co won the bid to construct it for a total sum of \$22,360 with an agreement that contract is to be completed in six months.

1864 - 1900

ARCHITECTURAL PLAN - "The proposed building will be two stories in height, the basement of the old Court House making the first story. The exterior and the interior will be far superior to the old building. The main entrance is through an open arcade, into a spacious hall, on the right of which, in the order named, will be the Collector and Surveyor, the Recorder and the District Attorney's offices. On the left the County Clerk and Treasurer's office. The Recorder, County Clerk and Treasurer's offices are to be provided with fire proof vaults.— From the basement hall a stairway leads to the second story. The north east corner of the upper story will be the court room, 26.5 by 37 feet, entrance by double sliding doors from the hall. Separated from the court room by a hall is the Grand Jury and Supervisor's room; adjoining this, towards the front of the building, is the County Judge's office; on the opposite of the main hall is to be the office of District Judge, and adjoining this is a room for trial juries. The Sheriff's office is to be in the back part of the building with an entrance from the main hall and a door opening to the court room. The jail is to be above ground, and with no entrance except through the office of the Sheriff. It is to be divided by a partition wall into two parts. One for the desperate cases is to be provided with cells of heavy boiler iron. Those who may be imprisoned for petit offenses will occupy the other portion of the jail, and any intercourse between them will be impossible. The plans reflect great credit to Mr. Butler."

CONSTRUCTION - The old foundation wall in front was found to be in such a "dilapidated condition", that it will be necessary to lay a new one. To do this at as little expense as possible, the Supervisors have ordered the front wall to be erected some ten or twelve feet nearer the street. The granite walls began to rapidly rise on the new solid foundation. "The ground upon which the new walls are built is almost as solid as bed rock, and in addition to this it has been pounded until it is almost beyond possibility that it should settle any more." - *Nevada Daily Transcript* - June 08, 1864. Following articles were nothing but praise for the new construction. "The finest quality of rock that can be found is being used in the counteraction of the walls." "The granite used in their construction is the best that can be procured, and the blocks are large and all of them secured with mortar... every effort is being used to make the new structure one that will stand for years."

BREAK DOWN - Like many construction projects, some issues would arise. "As a team loaded with granite blocks for the Court House was crossing the bridge at the foot of

Nevada street yesterday, the planking gave way, letting a wheel of the wagon through, and rolling a block of granite weighing about a ton and a half out upon the bridge. The stone went through the bridge until one end of it struck the ground. A force of men were sent down from the Court House and soon got the block out." - *Nevada Daily Transcript*, July 1, 1864.

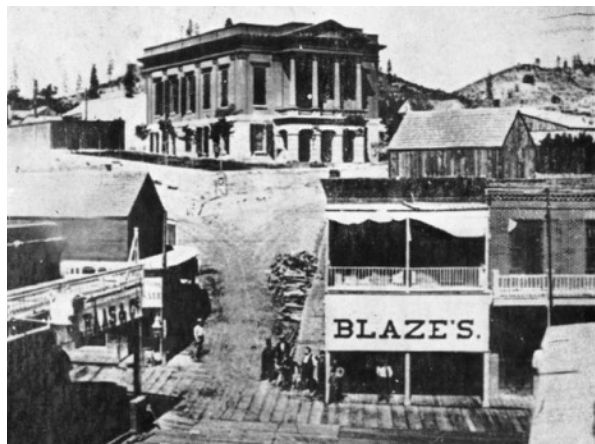


Above Photo taken in 1877. A clear view of the foundation of the courthouse that was moved forward from the previous. Also showing some of the 22 locust shade trees planted in April, 1865. Looking closely on the far left you are able to see the jail yard wall, 12 feet high, extending out from the jail and around the back of the building.

THE LAST BRICK - Yesterday afternoon the walls of the Court House were completed and the last brick laid. The workmen who have been employed had a grand demonstration in honor of the event. The American flag was run up on a staff from the highest point on the building, and the workmen collected on the roof and gave three rousing cheers for the flag... A larger keg was conspicuously upon the top of the wall... Cheers for the "last brick", and divers other things were given, and the jollification concluded." - *Sept. 21, 1864 - Nevada Daily Transcript*. The next 6 weeks to apply the finishing touches, a magnificent center piece intended for the court room arrived from



San Francisco, measuring 5 feet 2 inches in diameter. The work is of plaster of Paris, gorgeously carved with figures. A chandelier is to be suspended from the center of this. "Although, we will venture to say, there never has been a more substantial building put up in this State."



EVERY MAN VOTE TWICE - The first official business that would take place in the building was the election for President and Vice President. "The polls will be held at the new Court House to-day and we hope every man who attends the polls will cast two votes. One for "Uncle Abe" and one for the benefit of the wounded soldiers." - Nov. 8, 1864 - *Nevada Daily Transcript*.

A FEW OF MANY FACES - Many different characters have found themselves at this Courthouse building over its 160 year and counting lifespan. From Presidents and Politicians, to Military Leaders to Pioneers, to Attorneys and Businessman, to Actors and Writers, to the average working man and woman, and of course what the jail was built for, criminals.

(1.) Sam Clemens, Looking at the picture above, it is a view from the side of one the buildings on Pine street looking up at the courthouse. A name you can't miss is the name "BLAZE'S", a saloon that a man named Samuel Clemens would frequently visit when coming into town. According to town chatter, Samuel, or as

many know him by his pen name, Mark Twain, would get drunk at Blaze's Saloon and stay at the National Hotel. Wandering up Broad Street, down Pine, to the courthouse and many others "evaluating the true Nevada Cityan and forming true and justified viewpoints about the fine people of Nevada City".

(2.) George Hearst, former U.S. Senator, businessman and patriarch of the Hearst business dynasty first found his wealth in Nevada County. Being involved with early mining and local businesses George Hearst found himself often called into the halls of the Courthouse, as seen above in the 1867 newspaper court announcements.

(3.) General James Collins, one of Nevada County's first Treasurers and appointed Brigadier General by Governor Stanford. The Illinois legislature presented him with a sword for his services commanding a regiment in the Mexican War. At the time of his death in 1864 he was acting Treasurer of Nevada County and General of the 4th Brigade, California State Militia. The completion of the Courthouse earlier that year, being one of his last contributions. "Higher positions indeed he might have filled but for his modesty and invincible repugnance to the practice of seeking office" was read in his obituary.

(4.) Aaron A. Sargent, U.S. Senator and congressman, journalist, lawyer, county district attorney, and Ambassador to Germany. Responsible for introducing an amendment which would later become the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, giving women the right to vote. Sargent also was author to the first Pacific Railroad Act. In response to the appointment of Ambassador of Germany in March, 1882, the people of Nevada County celebrated "Sargent Jollification". "When the guns were being fired on York street yesterday in honor of Sargent, the concussion was so great as to shatter numerous panes of glass in the Courthouse..."

(5.) Hon. Niles Searls, Attorney, Nevada County District Attorney, Judge of the 14th District, including Nevada, Sierra, and Plumas, and 14th Chief Justice of California. Described in his obituary as "...one of the pioneers of Nevada City and for nearly half a century one of the most prominent figures in the history of this part of California." A railroad meeting was held at the Courthouse in Jan. 1874 forming a committee to create the Nevada County Narrow Gauge with Judge Searls elected Chair.

(Left) Photo taken in 1893. You can see the bell on top of the jail. Built by Sheffield manufacturing, weighing 484 pounds it was considered as "one of the best bells ever brought to the city" with an excellent tone. The bell was rang to notify the town when official proceedings were occurring. The chain-gang (prisoners) under the supervision of Deputy Sheriff Jones were responsible for breaking up the grounds and planting the clover seed. Clothing the lot "in a magnificent suit of green".



RAID ON THE COURTHOUSE -

"The city was to be sacked, the banks were to be robbed, the arms of the Nevada Light Guard were a prize for lawless men intent on raising the standard of insurrection on the Pacific Coast." "Sheriff K. Had received information during the day, from one of his attaches, who had visited the famous locality of Allison Ranch, that the secessionists of that place and Grass Valley contemplated a raid on Nevada. The direful news was whispered about among the brave and faithful, and the stifled cry "to arms" passed from mouth to mouth. The Sheriff was sure his information was correct." "Guards

were set, and the measured tread of sentinels was heard during the suspense of that awful night. The stars shone out as beautifully and bright as if they were not soon to have their light reflected from a mirror of blood. The Court House was surrounded by a cordon of braves, some prepared for the most desperate encounters with six-shooters, revolvers, hatchets and knives." Captain Kidd, a banker was pressed into the service, the Sheriff had "fortified himself with Democratic Whiskey", for it was expected the bulge blast for a charge would be heard at any moment. As the night went on only silence followed, seeing his fellow men in distress "Blaze" sent up to the courthouse a bottle of cocktails. "The "wee sma

hours ayont the twal" came and went, but no enemy." "And thus ended the "Big Scare", that will live in the memory of the men of Nevada many generations to come...". The following days the newspaper described more information about the incident. Information was "that parties from Allison Ranch were going to release Josiah and Robert Dodge and E. W. Garvey from the county jail, with the intention of lynching Josiah Dodge". The reason behind this was for the murder of Mark T. Hammock in James Ahearn's saloon on Allison Ranch but this supposed plan never occurred.

TERRIBLE CATASTROPHE! - On July 27, 1867, R. H. Farquhar, County Clerk, was instantly killed and his brother was considerably injured from an explosion

in the courthouse. "A terrible explosion of gas took place in the County Clerk's office...About 9am, a dull report, which sounded like the report of a heavy blast beneath the surface was heard throughout the town". "An explosion of gas in combination with atmospheric air, had taken place in the fire proof vault in the Clerk's office, and books, records and furniture were scattered in every direction. The twenty inch brick wall between the vault and office was standing out from three to five inches. The window frames and lights were broken, and the entire outer frame of the window opening to the front of the Court House was thrown out upon the lawn.". With most of the force of the explosion

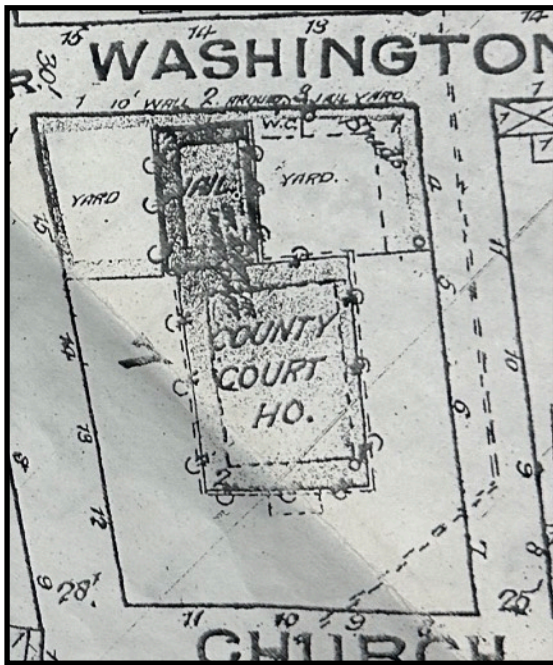
pushing out of the open vault door, no serious damage was done to the county records. The documents in the inner vault were entirely uninjured. "The old vaults we're so much damaged that they had to be torn entirely out and new ones built."

AND THERE WAS LIGHT -

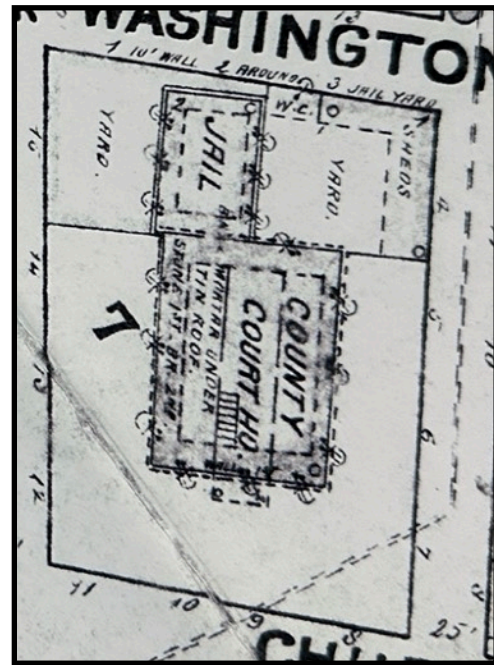
"Nevada City Illuminated by Electricity—the First Test Proves Satisfactory. At eight o'clock and ten minutes Friday evening the Brush dynamo-electric machine attached to the engine at Allan's Foundry was put in motion, and within an imperceptible space of time the two lamps in the Foundry, the one on the flag staff in front of Pennsylvania Engine House, and the three on the Court House were aglare." - *The Daily Transcript* - May 08, 1881.



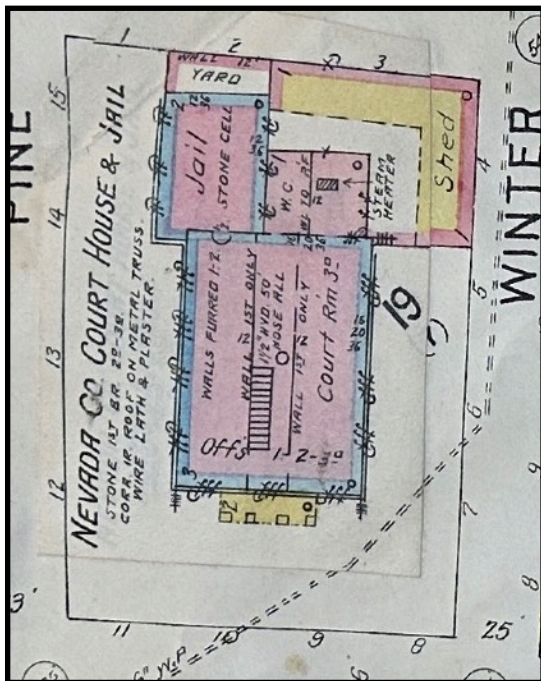
THE COURTHOUSE FLAG - (Center Photo) "The American flag which Supervisor Buffington ordered for the county courthouse...is 22 feet long, has 42 stars and is a beauty." Messrs. Miller and Dumler can be shown raising the "flag on the roof of the courthouse—which is 50 feet high—a liberty pole 50 feet in length.". C. J. Adams, the photographer, took this photograph on Sept. 9, 1889 during the admission day celebration showing, "the Courthouse and the vast throng of people around it at the instant the big American flag was unfurled to the breeze." The Native Sons of the Golden west responsible for making all the preliminary arrangements for the formal flag raising.



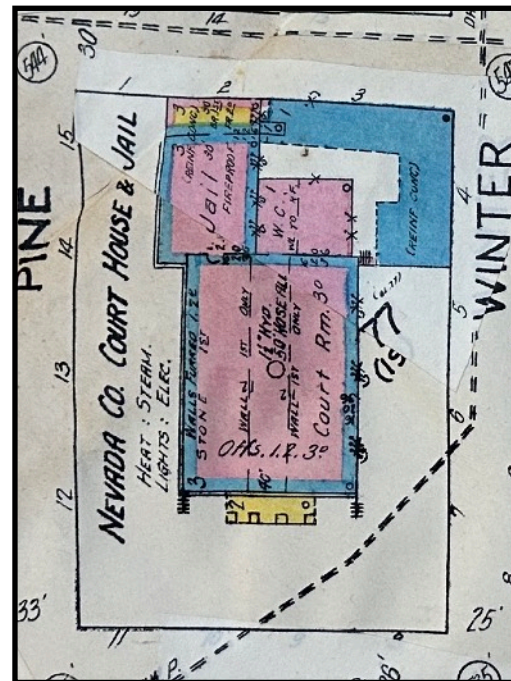
Sanborn Map - July 1885



Sanborn Map - Jan 1891



Sanborn Map - October 1898



Sanborn Map - March 1912

* Sanborn maps were created and designed to assist fire insurance agents in determining the degree of hazard associated with a particular property containing great detail of the size, shape, and materials used for construction. Above you are able to see some of these design and layout changes of the courthouse from 1885 to 1912. Notice the jail yard that was once in the back of the building surrounded by 10 foot walls.

1900 - 1936

OUT OF SPACE - The next major remodel of the Courthouse would not come until the turn of the century, in 1900. Planning started in late 1899 and a new building separate from the Courthouse to act as the new jail was to be built. The current jail space was to be changed into offices. Approved by the supervisors and an architectural design plan created by Mooser & Son of San Francisco, the project was set to begin in April, 1900. "The new building will be located at on the county's lot at the corner of Pine and York streets, across Pine street from the Courthouse. -*The Union* - Nov. 26, 1899.

NO NEW COUNTY JAIL - Failing to provide the public an opportunity to voice their opinions on the new jail project resulting in "the Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to rescind the order made last November calling for bids for the construction... There was considerable opposition among tax-payers to the proposed improvement, and petitions against it had been circulated throughout the county for signatures..."



TO IMPROVE THE COURTHOUSE - "Now that the proposition of building a new and modern jail has been abandoned, the Board of Supervisors has decided to go ahead and have the Courthouse enlarged and improved." -*The Union* - Jan. 10, 1900. New plans were adopted for an estimated \$30,000 and construction would begin as soon as possible. The following article details all that will be done in the construction. "The

front and side exteriors of the old building will remain as at present, excepting that the wooden front of the portico including the wooden columns, will be removed and in their place will be substituted an iron railing in front of the porch. The third story front will be carried out on the same classic lines as now prevail in the front, and will have the five windows. Galvanized iron cornices and fireproof sheet steel roof are contemplated. All partitions are to be steel, covered with steel laths.

First floor—This is to be devoted entirely to the Recorders' and Clerk's offices, the Clerk's being on the west side of the main hall and the Recorder's on the east. All partitions will be taken out, each of these officials having but one room, each 17x64 feet in dimensions.

Second floor—The offices of the Assessor and of the Treasurer will occupy the full front of the building. The assessor is to have two rooms, one 18x24, and the other 12x18 feet. The Treasurer is to have one room, 21x24 feet, with a brick vault for the safe. The Surveyor is to be in the middle room of the east side, and have 14x18 feet floor-room. The Supervisors' room is to take the place of the present courtroom, being 18x27 feet. The Sheriff remains in the same part of the building as now, but is to have two offices, one 18x16, the other 11x12. There will also be a ladies' toilet on this floor.

Third floor—This floor will have the courtroom, which is to be 32x38 and be located in the southwesterly corner. The judges chamber will be





immediately over his present quarters and be 18x14 feet. The law library adjoins the Judge's chamber, and next to that will be the jury room, 14x16 feet. In the northwest corner The District Attorney will have a suite of offices, one 19x13 and the other 12x13. In the other corner over the Sheriff's offices will be that of the Superintendent of Schools, 11x19, and the gentlemen's toilet. The staircases are towards the rear of the building. They are entirely iron, with perforated risers and treads. The platforms are of cement. The newel posts and balustrades are of cast iron." -*The Union - Feb. 14, 1901.*

PREPARATION - Pacific Construction Company of San Francisco would be awarded the construction contract with architects, Mooser & Son as supervisors. County offices would temporarily make offices in buildings around Nevada City and "the records and other papers will be stored in the second story of The Owl Saloon building, this being considered fireproof." What better place to store all the county records than the Saloon? I'm sure location was the deciding factor though due to it being right down the hill from the courthouse(as seen in the picture on the previous page). While the county officers were moving things in the Courthouse, they noticed their sign had been stolen.



Only minutes later, the Sheriff would be surprised to find his sign when walking out to the backyard. It seems the dog house had received a new title of "Sheriff's Office" which read the sign that was nailed to it. "Of course he took the joke good-naturedly".

CONSTRUCTION - Construction began April 29, 1900 with the Sheriff putting a nail through his foot on just the second day. Described as "quite the force" of workers were making quick progress of tearing out partition walls and preparing for the third story install. Cement, bricks, iron and steel work would arrive over the following weeks to town by the carload at the railroad depot. While the brick layers were working on the new third story, a man by the name of, John O'Brien, was hit on the head with a brick that fell from the third story. Fortunately he would survive but with a large gash in his head. The following week the timbers holding the big wheel for the elevator being used for hoisting material to the third story broke in half. This time "no one was underneath or they would surely have been killed" -*The Transcript - June 27, 1900.* The following week after this occurred, someone would find themselves underneath. While working, Rolfe Buffington, narrowly escapes a fatal accident. As bricklayers lowered a 6x6 timber, 12 feet long, the knot on the rope slipped and struck him across the face "badly smashing it". The contracts for the new furniture would be awarded to Yawman Erbe Manufacturing Co., to build the new metallic furniture and fixtures and C.F. Webber & Co for wood furniture. With the steel roof in place, the floors being tiled, and the furnace being installed the construction is nearing completion. The furnace was said "to have no equal in this county and will thoroughly heat the entire building". James Tilley and David Kiley of the Vulcan Iron works, San Francisco to construct the new iron stairways. "The stairways which are five feet, eight inches in width, consisting of four flights, with two landings, with a seven inch rise between the steps". A Narrow Escape—I said nearing completion, meaning the accidents were not over yet. A plank attached to a swinging rope being used by the painters fell "and came near precipitating C. H. Harrison to the ground, a distance of fifty feet. He felt the plank slipping, however, and caught hold of the rope and lowered himself down to the window." "Most of the furniture for the Courtroom on the third floor has been put in. There are sixty opera chairs for spectators, and the portion for the use of the Court officials is partitioned off by a neat railing. In the jury box there are twelve revolving chairs." -*The Transcript - Nov. 26, 1900.*

LET'S HAVE A TOWN CLOCK - A group of prominent citizens, led by M. L. Marsh and J. M. Hadley, pushed forth an effort to have a large dome town clock built on the roof of the new courthouse. Garnering much support from the community and many subscribers to the "town clock fund", the clock began to look more of a reality. William Mooser,

Courthouse architect presented a plan of how a clock would look. Estimated at a cost of \$6500, "the dome would be placed in the center of the building on the lower side toward the business portion of town. The bell of the clock would weigh 1300 pounds., and would strike every hour. The clock complete weighs 2 tons. The 4 dials will be 6 feet in length.". This plan would end up falling apart, as the expenses were just to great for the county to afford.

THE COURTHOUSE VAULT -

The new steel vault arrived at the depot May 07, 1901, from St. Louis. "It weighs 11,100 pounds, is of the most modern design and burglar proof. It is claimed that it is impossible to effect an entrance into the vault in less than eight hours' time." From the depot, the new vault was loaded on Baker's wagon and taken to the Courthouse. It required over three hours to put it on the wagon and used four horses to pull it. The vault was taken into the Courthouse through the second story window and took two days to accomplish this. "It is about seven feet high and five feet square and the safe is inclosed in walls of cement. In order to get into the strong-box where the bulk of the coin in the Treasurer's possession is kept it is necessary to open three heavy steel doors, the outer one being fire-proof, while the two inside ones are made from the finest chilled steel and are burglar proof. The first two doors are equipped with large up-to-date bank combinations and it would require even an expert at the business some time to open the doors without the knowledge of the combination. On the door of the strong box, which has walls of steel four inches thick, entirely inside the safe proper, there is a time lock with three clock movements and even when the time lock responds it is necessary to manipulate an automatic opener to get into the vault. The strong box is large enough to hold about \$300,000 in gold, which is more than the treasury ever contains at any one time."

THE JAIL YARD WALL - A new park was to be built on the county lot where the previously planned new jail was to go, on the corner of York and Pine Streets across from the Courthouse. *This location later became home to the Carnegie Library and today known better as the Doris Foley Library.* "The county's lot on Pine and York streets is separated from that owned by the two orders named by a creek, the banks on both sides leading down to the water, and a large hollow is made in which trash and rubbish of all kinds has accumulated...Mr. Martin stated that if the City and the two orders would build a culvert to convey the water of the creek through the lot, he would furnish the rock...It is proposed to improve and beautify that part of town in



a way that will benefit the whole community. The fence at the west side of the Courthouse will be torn down the full length of the lot and graded off so as to make a sloping lawn. The debris that will necessarily be removed will be filled in the hollow and Pine street brought on a level with York street." This hollow was referred to as "Oregon Ravine". Looking at the picture below, you can see where the creek appeared and where the culvert was to be built. John Blodgett was responsible for building said culvert, that spanned a length of 230 feet.

ANOTHER STORY TO MAKE NEEDED

ROOM - In April, 1913 the Supervisors decided it was time to build an additional story of the jail to make it three stories just as the courthouse had been for over a decade. The expansion was planned to "be divided off into a couple of rooms for insane patients and provision will also be made for a large and commodious jury room for the accommodation of jurors who may be detained for long hours deliberating



upon a case.” -*The Union* - April 10, 1913. Oscar Brown and Francis Colvin were given the contract for a cost of \$3,337 and they were able to complete the construction of the third story in October, later that year.

THE COURTHOUSE BOYS - Most of the workers comprising the construction crew who built the courthouse where from out of town but a friendship was found between them and the of people of the town. “The Courthouse boys are always to the front when anything is going on, and no crowd of outside men ever came to Nevada City who took such an interest in local affairs.” According to some, the courthouse boys could rival any crew in Tug-o-War at the local picnics. During the construction the town even helped give the men a banquet with food and rooms at the National Hotel. The men were given a break from work and asked to invite their families they were able to spend time with them. “It was of great sadness” for some local residents when the Courthouse was complete as the men would be leaving back home. A few of these “Courthouse boys” returned not long after to call this their new home.

1936 - 1964

SUPERVISORS PLAN COURTHOUSE

ADDITION - With the WPA program being announced to the country in 1935, the County Supervisors put forward a plan to the WPA engineer in San Francisco for a new remodel of the courthouse to allow for more space. The WPA (Works Progress Administration) was an ambitious employment and infrastructure program created by President Franklin Roosevelt. An estimated 8.5 million Americans were put to work over its 8 year existence. It was part of the New Deal plan to lift the country out of the Great Depression by reforming the financial system and restoring the economy back to the levels pre-depression. The WPA would also work with the already in place, State Emergency Relief Act (SERA) to complete this construction. George C. Sellon, from Sacramento, was selected as the architect for this remodel. On April 5, 1935 - *The Union* describes, “The proposed plans to contemplate an addition to the front of the courthouse and wings on the east and west sides. The offices of the clerk and recorder, county treasurer and tax collector are allocated to the first floor, each with considerably enlarged floor space. Provision is also made for an office for the supervisors on this floor.—On the second floor provision is made for the offices of the superintendent of schools, justice court of Nevada Township, county assessor and sheriff.—On the third floor, under the plans, would be the court room, the judge’s chambers, law library, offices for horticultural commissioner, county health nurse, county reporter, probation officer, and district attorney.—The



improvement long desired by many people—an elevator—is provided for, its lower terminal being off the entrance on the first floor.” The beginning construction work would cost an estimated \$19,000, “of which \$8,000 for materials, etc., would be provided by the county and \$10,5000 by the SERA for labor.

WORK TO START AT ONCE - In June, “Dirt continues to fly in excavating work started Thursday on the wing being added to the south and west end and side of the Nevada County courthouse...This addition is one story high and will be 20x100 feet giving space for the supervisors room and an additional space for the county clerk’s office.” “The location of the trenches and the forms for concrete work give a visualization of the size of the new unit”. Seen in the picture on the top, you are able to see some of these forms that were used. The picture below, shows the completion of the outside structure of the new west wing. The wing would not be fully completed until over a year later.

"The annex is strictly modern in every respect. It is built for coolness in the summer time and warmth in the winter. Abundant light flows in through the metal ash windows." -*Nevada County Nugget* - July 24, 1936.

EAST AND SOUTH WINGS WILL BE BUILT

- The courthouse project faced many delays from the start due to budget constraints of the WPA funding. The workers were on a week to week basis if they would receive funding to pay for their labor costs that week, putting the construction at frequent standstills. Due to this reason, the rest of the construction would be sought to be paid for by the county. Lindgren and Swinnerton of San Francisco would be the contractor in charge of this next stage of construction for an estimated cost of \$67,500. "The new additions will consists of the south and east wing, and include an elevator, which will be placed in the new south wing, on the front of the present building".

COURTHOUSE GRANITE TO SUPPORT NEW STREET FILL

- The granite archway and lower walls, constructed of Nevada County granite quarried from its hills in the late 1850's, were removed from the front of the building and were originally planned to be moved to Pioneer Park. "It was planned to take them to Pioneer Park where the four big pillars were to be used for an ornamental entrance to the park, to be a sort of memorial to the old courthouse which the pioneers erected with the fond idea that it would endure forever. Instead the granite from the destruction was used to support new street fills in town. "...on Spring street...grading a 100 yard stretch to fill a steep incline just south of the beautiful private park of R. J. Bennett. Large slabs of granite from court house are being laid on the lower side of the street and plans are to excavate in the rear of the city hall lot for a shop, the earth to be used in the fill." -*Nevada County Nugget* - Aug 24, 1936.

FRONT WALL OF COURT HOUSE BEING REMOVED-

Shown in the photo above, "Scaffolding has been erected across the front of the big building to start removing the front commencing at the base and working up. On the east side immense steel beams 21x22 inches with a heavy steel plate are supporting the wall." -*Nevada County Nugget* - Sep. 25, 1936. With great and rapid progress being made, "The difference between WPA construction work and that done under contract is aptly illustrated in all three buildings, and particularly the courthouse, which is to be completed in



167 working days and the contractor is well within this schedule". In just a few months, in November 1936, the last of the concrete was poured and the three story scaffolding larger than the building was removed meeting its original completion deadline.

HISTORIC COURTHOUSE REBUILT; MODERNIZED

- With the interior construction and furnishing being completed, the courthouse would be finished in the middle of 1937. "Yesterday's court house, a three-story structure about 90 feet long by 54 feet wide, typified the architecture of California's days of gold...Today's is reinforced concrete building, ultra-modern in design, construction and equipment...the latest features of metropolitan architecture." "Three additions have been built to the old structure—a new front, 54 feet by 20 feet and four stories high, and one-story wings, 87 feet by 200 feet on both sides. The whole interior has been remodeled. AS a result of all this, the floor space has been increased from 13,000 to 26,000 square feet. All the offices, court rooms and meeting chambers have been considerably enlarged and the county jail, occupying the rear portion of building, has been expanded and improved to meet federal specifications. The SERA started one wing and the WPA finished it. Lindgren and Swinerton, contractors, erected the other wing and the new front and did the remodeling. George C. Sellon, Sacramento architect, planned and directed the entire job. In equipment and furnishings the new court house is up to the minute. It boasts the first automatic elevator in the county. It has an electric ventilating system and is piped for future air conditioning. A modern furnace has replaced a dilapidated wood burner. Scientifically designed lighting assures eye comfort and greater efficiency." -*Nevada County Nugget* - Nov. 05, 1937.

Excerpt from Architectural Record Magazine - July 1938 Issue.

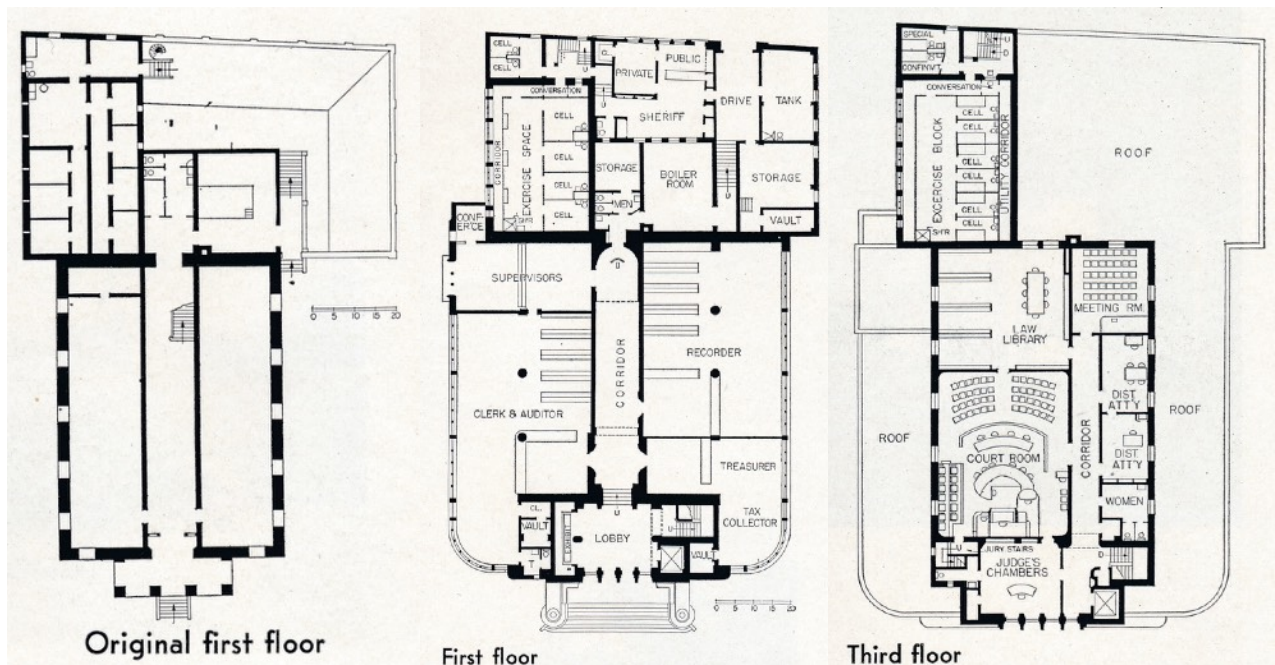
George C. Sellon - Architect

"NEED FOR MORE and modern office space prompted the remodeling of the old Courthouse at Nevada City, California, erected in 1864 when California was still a Mecca for gold prospectors, and Victorian was the prevailing architectural style. Still the center of a heavy gold mining district, Nevada City found its physical equipment for law enforcement inadequate, and again remodeled its courthouse—for a second time in 35 years.

In providing additional office space, the whole character of the building was changed so that the present structure bears little resemblance to the Courthouse of early gold mining days. The elaborate galvanized-iron trim, and the granite and brick walls have been replaced by copper copings and smooth concrete surfaces. The original courthouse, built for impregnability, had three foot granite walls up to the second floor, and interior partitions of brick. By removing the east and west walls (superstructure was supported by steel) and adding one-story wings on each side of the building, ample open work space was obtained on the first floor. The granite walls at the north end of the original building have been retained and serve as an effective barrier between jail and office sections; at the south end, the granite wall has been incorporated into the construction of the main lobby which projects beyond the old building line. The frame construction of the jail interior was changed to steel and concrete, and cells were modernized and equipped with Invisigard windows on exterior walls. A new office for the sheriff and a jail tank were built on the north front.



The interior underwent similar changes; all the old trim was removed, and new walnut trim and doors installed. Windows were changed from wood to steel. New furniture, of oriental woods, upholstered in the blue leather, was designed by the architect especially for building. Floors in public spaces are terrazzo; other floors are linoleum except in the Judge's Chamber, Courtroom, and Supervisor's Room, where carpet is used. All ceilings are covered with acoustical tile; lighting is indirect. Modernization included installation of an air-conditioning system to serve the entire building, and new plumbing and electrical systems. Total cost of the work came to \$210,000."



Greg Lehman

From: cheriecoliver@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:31 AM
To: Trisha Tillotson
Subject: Nevada County Courthouse - Adaptive reuse

You don't often get email from cheriecoliver@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email is from an external sender. If you are not expecting this email or don't recognize the sender, consider deleting.

Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. If you have more questions search for Cybersecurity Awareness on the County InfoNet.

Dear Ms. Tillotson,

I cannot come to the meeting tonight, but would like to provide my input to the courthouse issue.

I agree with the recommendations from the neighbors group and Historical Society:

Keep the courthouse structure, making internal changes to accommodate public use, especially event space and meeting space.

However, I would point out that the downtown lacks parking. So my additional suggestion would be: Demolish the Annex - and replace with a parking structure, no more than 2 stories, set back from the road frontage with some park-like landscaping.

Also keep the current Jury parking lot, maybe with some changes to increase capacity.

Thanks for all your work on this project.

Cherie Oliver

Grass Valley resident / member NC Historical Society

Greg Lehman

From: Ron Custer <roncuster@ymail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 8:33 AM
To: Trisha Tillotson
Subject: Court house

You don't often get email from roncuster@ymail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email is from an external sender. If you are not expecting this email or don't recognize the sender, consider deleting.

Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. If you have more questions search for Cybersecurity Awareness on the County InfoNet.

Please consider keeping the courthouse as a museum or something to preserve the history of its place in Nevada County.

Thank you for your consideration, Ron Custer

A resident of this County for seventy-five years.

To: Trisha Tillotson <Trisha.Tillotson@nevadacountyca.gov>

Subject: Please Keep Our Nevada County Courthouse

You don't often get email from trailrunner777@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email is from an external sender. If you are not expecting this email or don't recognize the sender, consider deleting.

Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. If you have more questions search for Cybersecurity Awareness on the County InfoNet.

Dear Ms. Tillotson,

I am unable to be at the meeting where the future of the Nevada County Courthouse will be discussed. Therefore, I would like to express, in this email, my desire that this beautiful, historic building would not be destroyed or used for housing. I would prefer to see it remodeled to a venue that can be used for many different purposes. I can see it being used as a concert hall or music school. I do know the millions of dollars that it will take to keep this structure, but in the long run I believe it would be worth it.

Just so you know, I am a long-time resident. I have visited Nevada County since the early 1950s and moved here in 1970. All three of my kids were raised here, beginning in 1971, and went to school here. So I have history here and used the court house for various reasons many times.

I would be very disappointed to see this piece of our local history demolished!

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Jan Hagel
11792 Hidden Valley Rd
Grass Valley, CA. 95949
530-333-7759

End Report