



County Council Presentation

LAC Women's Army Corps Dormitory

07-12-2022

ATTACHMENT A



LOS ALAMOS
where discovery and innovation meet



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COUNTY BOARDS + COMMITTEES

Parks + Recreation

Historic Preservation

Transportation

STAKEHOLDERS

Manhattan Project
National Historical Park

Tourism Implementation
Task Force

Historical Society

Fire Marshal

Valles Caldera + Bandelier
National Monument

Community Services

Economic Development

Sustainability Task Force

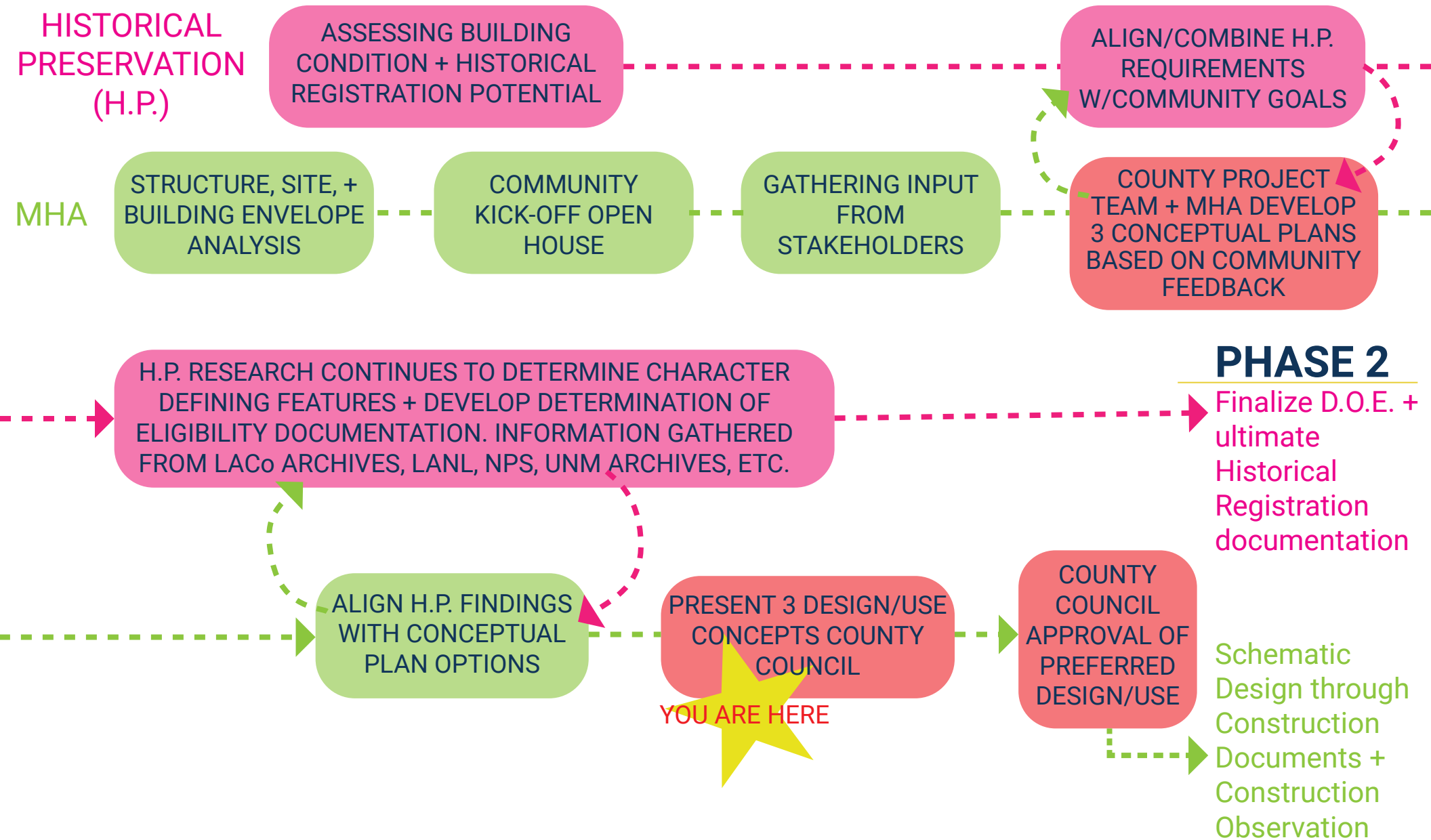
Chamber/MainStreet

Neighbors and Community at large

Stakeholders

LAC Women's Army Corps Dormitory

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The Process

LAC Women's Army Corps Dormitory

Input-gathering stakeholder meetings were held the first week of December 2021.

*bold items were recurring suggestions

NEIGHBORHOOD FEEDBACK

- Restore/Rehab building
- Summer employee **housing**
- Historical museum dedicated to the WAC**
- Park Service/Visitor Center
- Preserve/restore a dorm room for visitors**
- Incorporate WAC into existing walking tour**/make site pedestrian friendly
- Connect WAC with the Urban Trail**
- Maintain quiet neighborhood feel
- Housing use may increase neighborhood activity/cause parking issues
- County to maintain landscape
- No bus parking, but bus drop-off is okay**

TOURISM TASK FORCE FEEDBACK

- LA Museum of Art Concept
- Restore as a boutique hotel
- Restore as **housing** for Bandelier National Park employees
- Learning Lab for youth associated with the history museum/display LAC historical artifact collection
- Historical museum dedicated to the WAC**
- Change entrance to north west door as that was the original entrance
- 24/7 exterior exhibits**
- Engage Creative district and local artists: each dorm room could be dedicated to one member of the WAC
- Incorporate WAC into existing walking tour**
- Provide outdoor gathering space on site
- No bus parking, bus drop-off is okay;** electric buses
- Security and cameras should be considered

HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD FEEDBACK

- Temporary **housing** for nursing students
- General temporary **housing**
- Historical museum dedicated to the WAC**
- Preserve/restore a dorm room for visitors**
- Bronze statue of WAC women
- 24/7 exterior exhibits**
- Connect WAC with the Urban Trail**
- Parks Service/Visitor Center use may be hard to find as it is not in the center of town
- Historical research conducted should include Los Alamos Historical Society input.

Public Input Gathered

LAC Women's Army Corps Dormitory

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MHA and the County met with the community and stakeholders. The following project mission statement was developed from the feedback received:

PROJECT MISSION STATEMENT

First and foremost, the W.A.C. Dorm is a piece of Los Alamos history; it is one of two authentic Manhattan Project era buildings still standing and relatively unaltered. While some site improvements are needed for accessibility, rehabilitating the building exterior with the intention of achieving National Historic Register status and inclusion in the MNHP and walking tour are the highest priorities for Los Alamos County. The County intends to have the building listed on the NRHP either individually or, preferably, as a contributing resource to the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory National Historic Landmark District.

The interior of the building will be updated to accommodate the modern, mixed-use functions. The interior renovation will strike a balance between modern efficiency and historical sensitivity, preserving the nostalgia of the W.A.C. Dormitory while serving the needs of a 21st century community. This mixed-use, flexible approach will transform the W.A.C. Dormitory into a national tourist destination, acting as a hub for the community; the W.A.C. will be a place for possible neighborhood gatherings, educational activities, and local exhibit space.

Project Mission Statement

LAC Women's Army Corps Dormitory

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WAC DORM (CURRENTLY OUTSIDE PARK)

EXISTING MANHATTAN PROJECT NAT'L HISTORICAL PARK WALKING TOUR

FULLER LODGE

1 This grand building was built in 1928 as the Ranch School dining hall. It also served as nurses, staff, and guest quarters. Named for Edward P. Fuller, a staff member at the Ranch School, it is made of 771 massive pine logs, personally selected by architect John Gaw Meem and Ranch School director A.J. Connell. Fuller Lodge still serves as a public cultural event center.

MEMORIAL ROSE GARDEN

2 In 1947, the rose garden was started here by members of the Los Alamos Garden Club. At that time there was no cemetery, so rose bushes were planted in memory of those who died in Los Alamos. The garden club actively maintains the Rose Garden. It also serves as a popular place for weddings and other ceremonies. A Blue Star Memorial Byway site, and a Los Alamos National Laboratory memorial to those killed in the line of duty are located here.

ROMERO CABIN

3 Homesteading began on the Pajarito Plateau in the late 1800s. The Romero family built this cabin in 1913 on a nearby mesa. Like all homesteads on the plateau, it was acquired by the U.S. government for the Manhattan Project. In 1984, the cabin was moved downtown and rebuilt in 2010. It is open to the public on select days and during guided tours.

FIRE CACHE

4 Local homesteader Severo Gonzales Sr. built this stone building in the 1920s for the Los Alamos Ranch School to house firefighting equipment. Fires have always been a danger on the Pajarito Plateau due to droughts, log construction, and even wood burning stoves. The building is made of stone from the nearby Ancestral Pueblo Site.

THE BIG HOUSE

5 Across the street from the Romero Cabin was the site of the original main building for the Los Alamos Ranch School. The Big House design inspired the style of Fuller Lodge and other Ranch School structures. Students slept there year-round on screened porches as part of a physically, as well as academically, challenging education. The Big House contained a library and, during the war years, the non-broadcast radio station, KRS. In 1943, it also housed some of the first scientists who shared its one bathroom.

ANCESTRAL PUEBLO SITE

6 In roughly 1225 CE, this site was home to a group of Tewa-speaking people; ancestors of Pueblo groups now living along the Rio Grande. They built with blocks of tuff, the welded volcanic ash common in this area. Some rooms were for cooking and sleeping, while others were for storage.

BATHTUB ROW

7 These cottages were built for the Ranch School as residences and classrooms. Having the only bathtubs in town, these homes quickly acquired the name "Bathtub Row." J. Robert Oppenheimer lived in the house at the corner of Bathtub Row and Peach Street. This home is a private residence, and visitors are not allowed.

BATHTUB ROW (CONTD.)

7 The house next to the Oppenheimer house, now known as the Hans Bethe House, displays Cold War exhibits as part of the History Museum campus.

PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

8 The building near the corner of 15th and Nectar Streets was built as the Manhattan Project East Cafeteria. It is one of the few GI buildings left from WWII. Used by the growing post-war community as a recreation hall, it started serving as a playhouse in 1971, operated by the Los Alamos Little Theatre, a non-profit drama troupe.

POWER HOUSE

9 The building housing the diesel generators for the Los Alamos Ranch School was built in the early 1930s. In 1944, George Kistiakowsky, an explosives expert, and his new bride moved into it. As a joke, his friends carved a half-moon in the door of the attached shed the Army built. It is now used as administrative office space for the National Park Service.

HOPPER FIREPLACE

10 These rocks were part of the fireplace in the homestead cabin of William Mackwood "Mack" Hopper, who settled here in 1908. The chimney, probably made of stone from an Ancestral Pueblo site and put together with a mud/clay mortar, was rebuilt in 2016 for the Los Alamos Historical Society as an Eagle Scout project.

TOUCH THE SKY SCULPTURE

11 In May 2000, the county and adjacent lands were devastated by the 40,000-acre Cerro Grande wildfire. Nearly 400 Los Alamos homes were destroyed. This sculpture was erected a year later, commemorating the fire and community re-building.

ASHLEY POND

12 Ashley Pond began as a natural depression in the landscape. The Ranch School ensured its water supply by constructing a pipeline from a dam in Los Alamos Canyon. It was named for Ashley Pond Jr., the founder of the Los Alamos Ranch School, whose students could not resist the geographical pun. The boys used it for summer and winter sports. Blocks of ice were cut from the pond in the winter and stored in the Ice House. Ashley Pond Park contains a number of sculptures that are part of the county art collection curated by the Art in Public Places Board.

ICE HOUSE MEMORIAL

13 Today a memorial stands at the site of the Ranch School Ice House. During WWII, the nuclear core of the "Gadget" (the prototype atomic bomb) was assembled here and then transported to Trinity Site, 230 miles south near Socorro, NM. It was successfully detonated on July 16, 1945. During the Manhattan Project and for twenty years after, the technical area laboratories surrounded Ashley Pond (see cover photo). These buildings were removed by the mid-1960s.

POST OFFICE

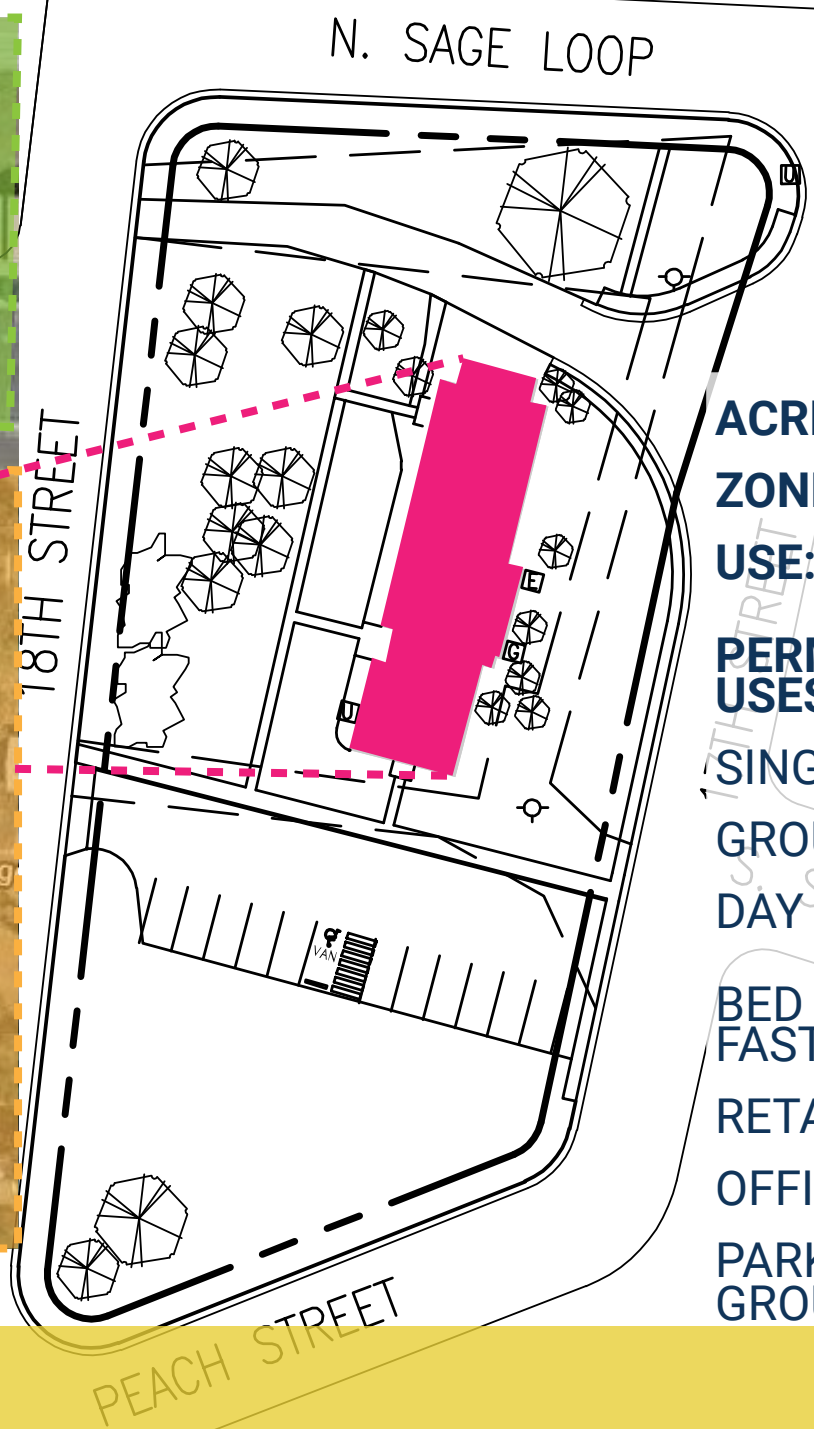
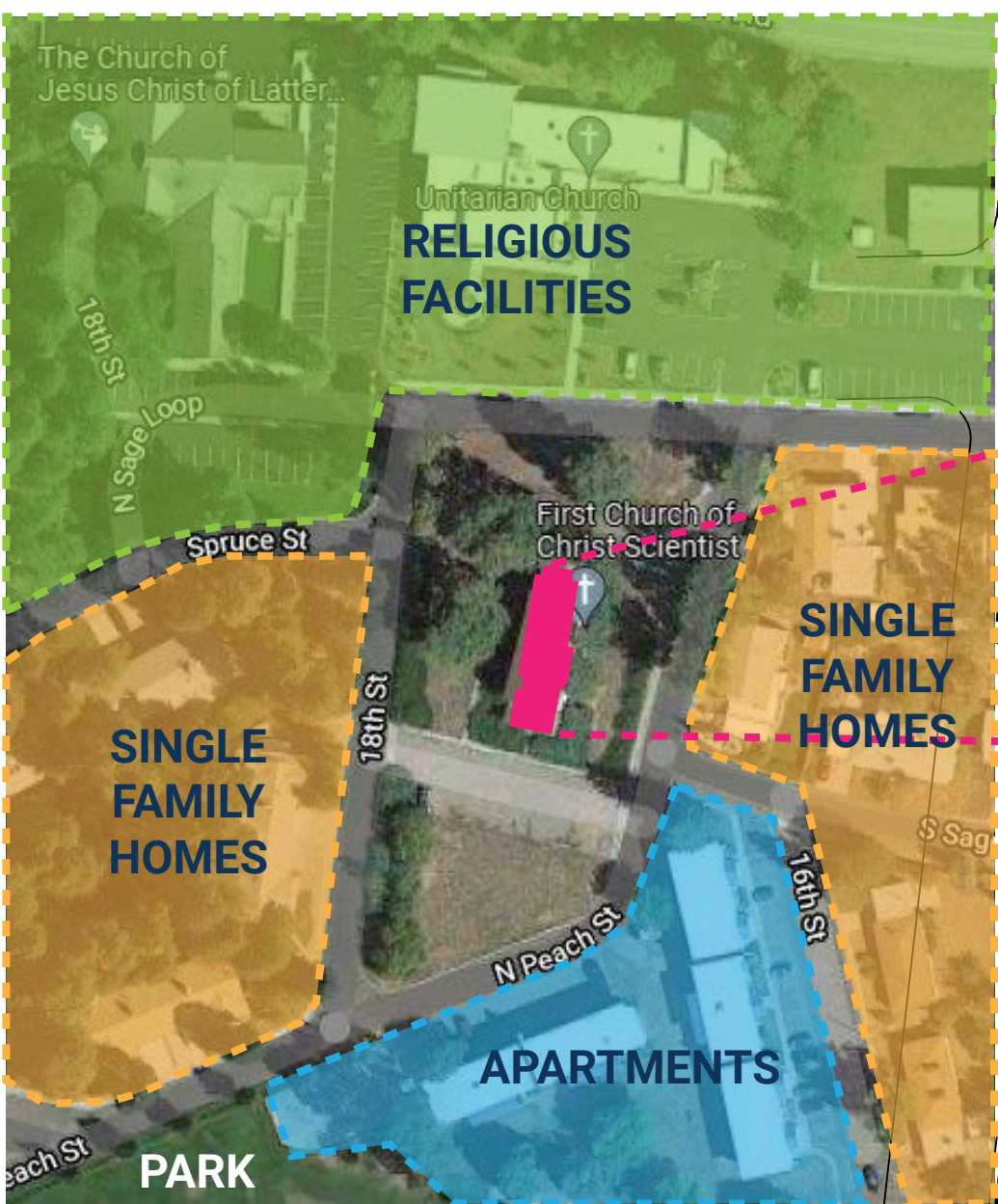
14 During WWII, mail to Los Alamos residents was simply addressed to P.O. Box 9662, Santa Fe, New Mexico. This Post Office, designed and built as part of the Community Center, opened at this location in 1948 on the site of the Ranch School Trading Post. Recently the Post Office was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Site Context

LAC Women's Army Corps Dormitory

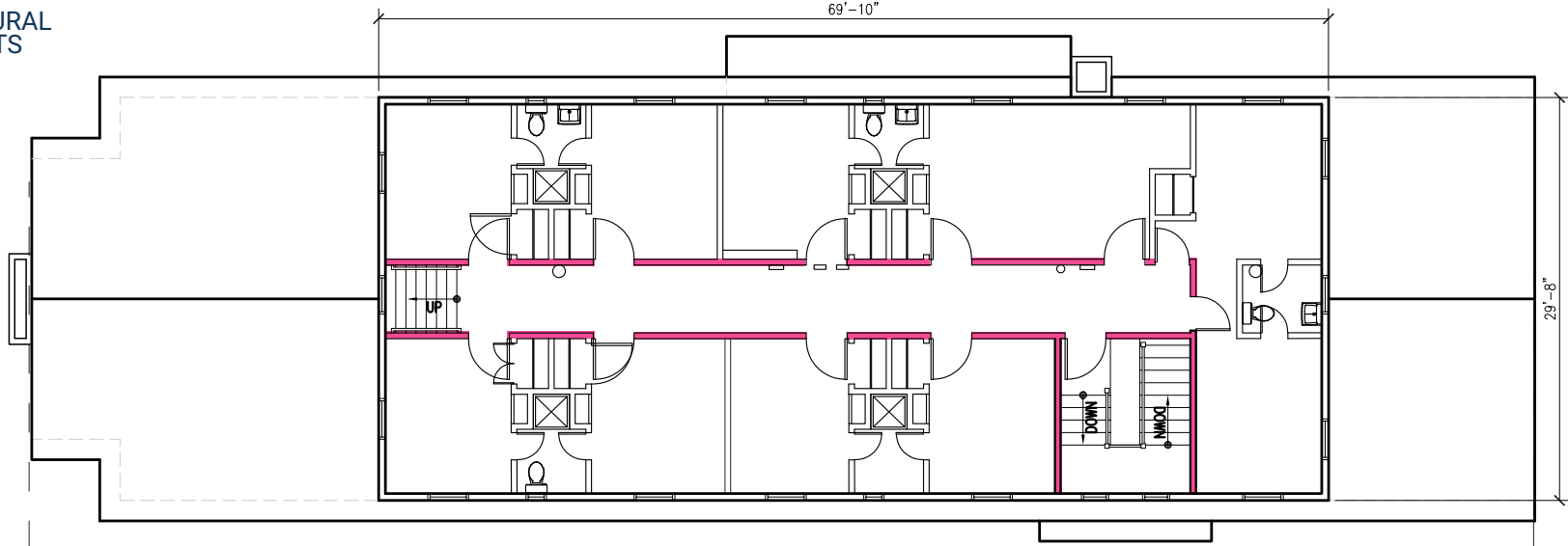
ATTACHMENT A



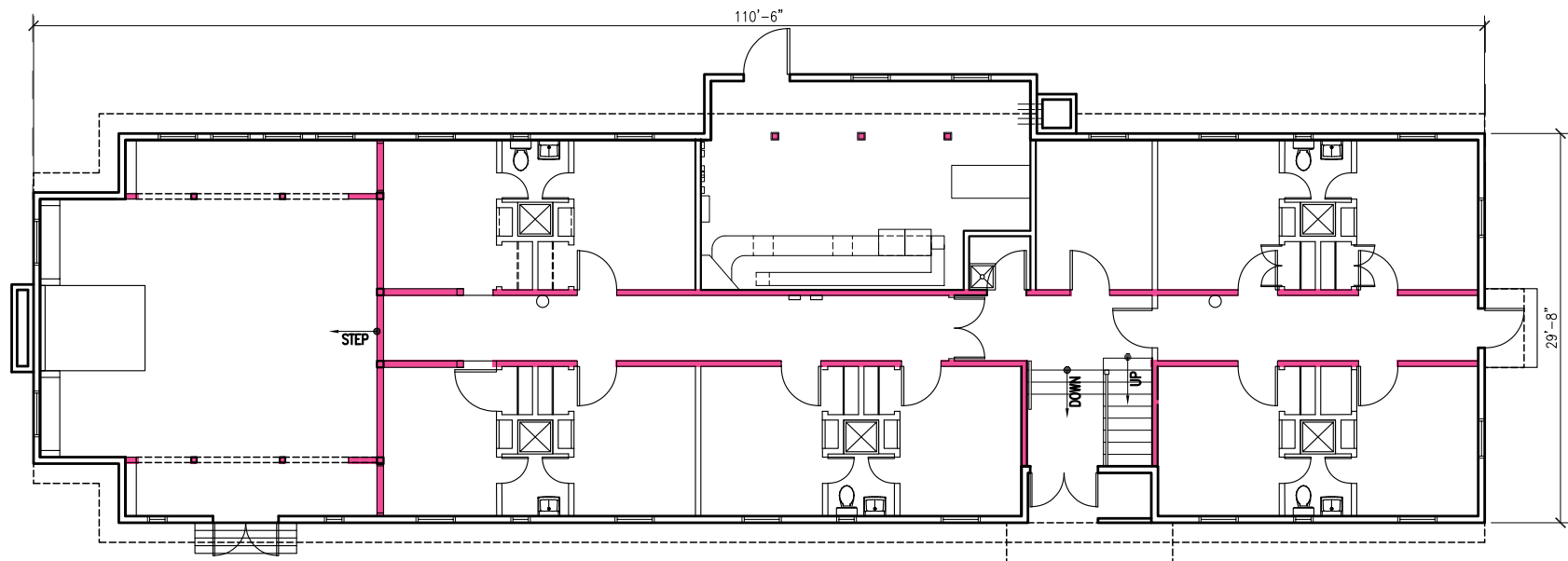
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- ZONE:** R-1-8
- USE:** ASSEMBLY
- PERMISSIVE USES:**
 - SINGLE FAMILY
 - GROUP HOME
 - DAY CARE
 - BED & BREAK-FAST
 - RETAIL
 - OFFICES
 - PARKS & PLAY-GROUNDS

Site Context

LAC Women's Army Corps Dormitory



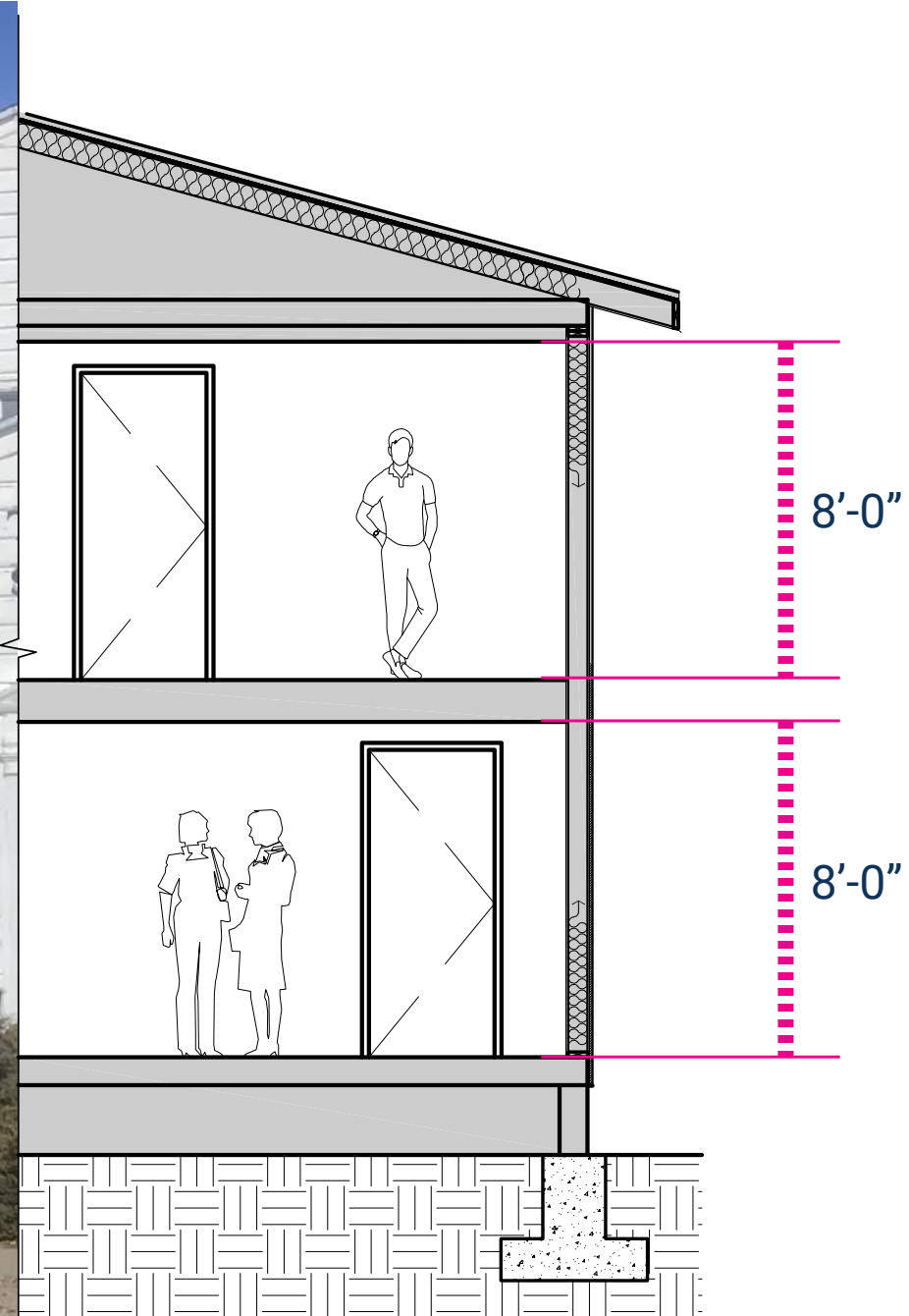
North Existing Second Floor 2,073 sf



North Existing First Floor 3,300 sf

Existing Conditions

LAC Women's Army Corps Dormitory



Existing Conditions

LAC Women's Army Corps Dormitory

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The County authorized the systematic research and summary report as the first step in the path to nomination and acceptance on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). A draft report was complete in June 2022.

The report evaluates the historical significance of the WAC Dormitory to determine if the building is eligible for listing in the NRHP. The evaluation identifies the important aspects and features of this historic property with regard to the historic context, character-defining architectural features, and short- and long-term management recommendations.

THE PATH TO HISTORICAL REGISTRATION STATUS

In consultation with the County and National Park Service historians, it was determined that the project would apply for a Determination of Eligibility (DOE), as it is the most expeditious route to understanding if the property is significant relative to its place in history, and if its characteristics make it a good representative of properties associated with that aspect of the past. The proposed Conceptual Design Options for the property can then be measured against the findings so that the design conforms to the recommended rehabilitation treatments.

Once the DOE is achieved, the County can move forward confidently with construction knowing that the improvements will not negatively impact nomination to the NRHP.

Historical Preservation Findings

LAC Women's Army Corps Dormitory

SOURCES

from NRHP Evaluation & Preservation Plan

A site visit to Los Alamos on May 9 - 12, 2022 was conducted to document the property and collect relevant data. To develop the historic context and prepare the evaluation, research was conducted at the Los Alamos County Historical County Archives and the University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research and Special Collections.

Contact for additional information was made with:

- Los Alamos National Laboratory
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District
- National Park Service (NPS), Southwest Regional Office
- Department of Energy, Los Alamos Office

Information was obtained from the following individuals:

- Minesh Bacrania - provided a high-resolution photograph of the elevations.
- Ruth Helmick Lier - provided information on her residence in the dormitory after World War II.

Research was conducted at the following websites:

- NPS National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Inventory
- Los Alamos National Laboratory publications
- Atomic Heritage Foundation
- DOE (DOE) Manhattan Project
- National Archives and Records Administration

Historical Preservation Findings

LAC Women's Army Corps Dormitory

EXTERIOR CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES

- Original circulation patterns indicated by the placement of the sidewalks.
- Mature trees.
- Rectangular shape of the building, with smaller second story.
- Gabled shingle roof.
- Exterior white painted clapboard wood siding
- Wood-sashed multi-paned, double hung windows.
- Two west side double door entrances.
- Exterior wooden double doors.
- Projecting mechanical room.
- Two brick chimneys.



Historical Preservation Findings

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INTERIOR CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES

- Interior layout or rooms.
- Separation of the private and public spaces.
- Repetitive size of each bedroom including amenities.
- Wood floors and interior doors.
- Layout and fixtures in bathrooms.
- Access to rooms from central hall.
- Lounge, with columns and carved capitals and all wood amenities.
- Original fixtures, including lights, mirrors, etc.



Historical Preservation Findings

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FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

NEW STRUCTURES:

Any new additions or structures on the property will be differentiated from the old; however, also be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and setting. Any additional structures should be separated if at all possible. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be done in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and setting would be unimpaired.



Historical Preservation Findings

LAC Women's Army Corps Dormitory

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CONCLUSIONS

The best way to preserve a building is to occupy it.

Giving the WAC Dormitory a new use and purpose is the best preservation strategy. The historical integrity should be maintained as much as possible, but providing a functional space for occupants will allow the building to last another 80 years.

- **The WAC Dormitory will be seeking National Register of Historic Places status under**
 - Association with an event(s) that made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of history, specifically with the Manhattan Project.
 - Design/Construction that has remained standing designed World War II Temporary housing unit built for the Manhattan project at Los Alamos.
- **This project will be a Rehabilitation,** under the Secretary of Interiors Standards for Treatment.
- **When considering conceptual floor plans,** note that not all original design elements must be saved. However, removal should be as minimal and purposeful as possible such that alterations do not destroy the overall character defining spaces, materials, and finishes.

Historical Preservation Findings

LAC Women's Army Corps Dormitory

COST IMPLICATIONS

REQUIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Regardless of the chosen plan or use, there are building and site upgrades required to meet current building, energy, and accessibility codes.

BUILDING

- NEW SEWER, WATER, & FIRE SUPPRESSION LINES
- NEW ROOF
- REHABILITATE SIDING
- UPDATE MECHANICAL
- NEW ELECTRICAL
- REHABILITATE WINDOWS/STORM WINDOW
- NEW GYPSUM BOARD & INSULATION
- ACCESSIBILITY: NEW LIFT & INTERIOR RAMP

SITE

- NEW SEWER, WATER, & FIRE LINES
- ACCESSIBILITY: NEW SIDEWALKS, STAIRS, & RAMPS
- NEW CURBS, GUTTERS, AND DRIVES
- NEW PARKING LOT
- NEW LANDSCAPING & IRRIGATION

Rehabilitation & Improvements to the existing building & site

Range in cost from \$2.6 to \$3.1 million

If chosen:

New Pavilion Restrooms

720 sf heated space x
\$600/sf = \$432,000

New Pavilion Patio

900 sf of covered space x
\$100/sf = \$90,000

¹ Conceptual cost estimate is 30% higher than the May 2020 conceptual cost estimate

² If less area is built out, the conceptual cost estimate decreases. Note the cost and square footage do not share linear scalability.

³ The construction industry is experiencing inflation and unpredictability

Conceptual Scope + Costs

LAC Women's Army Corps Dormitory

CONCEPTUAL FLOOR PLANS

1. NPS + VISITOR CENTER (INTERIOR RESTROOMS)
- 1a. NPS + VISITOR CENTER (EXTERIOR RESTROOMS)
2. NPS + VISITOR CENTER + EXHIBITS
3. NPS + VISITOR CENTER + EXHIBITS + HOUSING

Conceptual Floor Plans

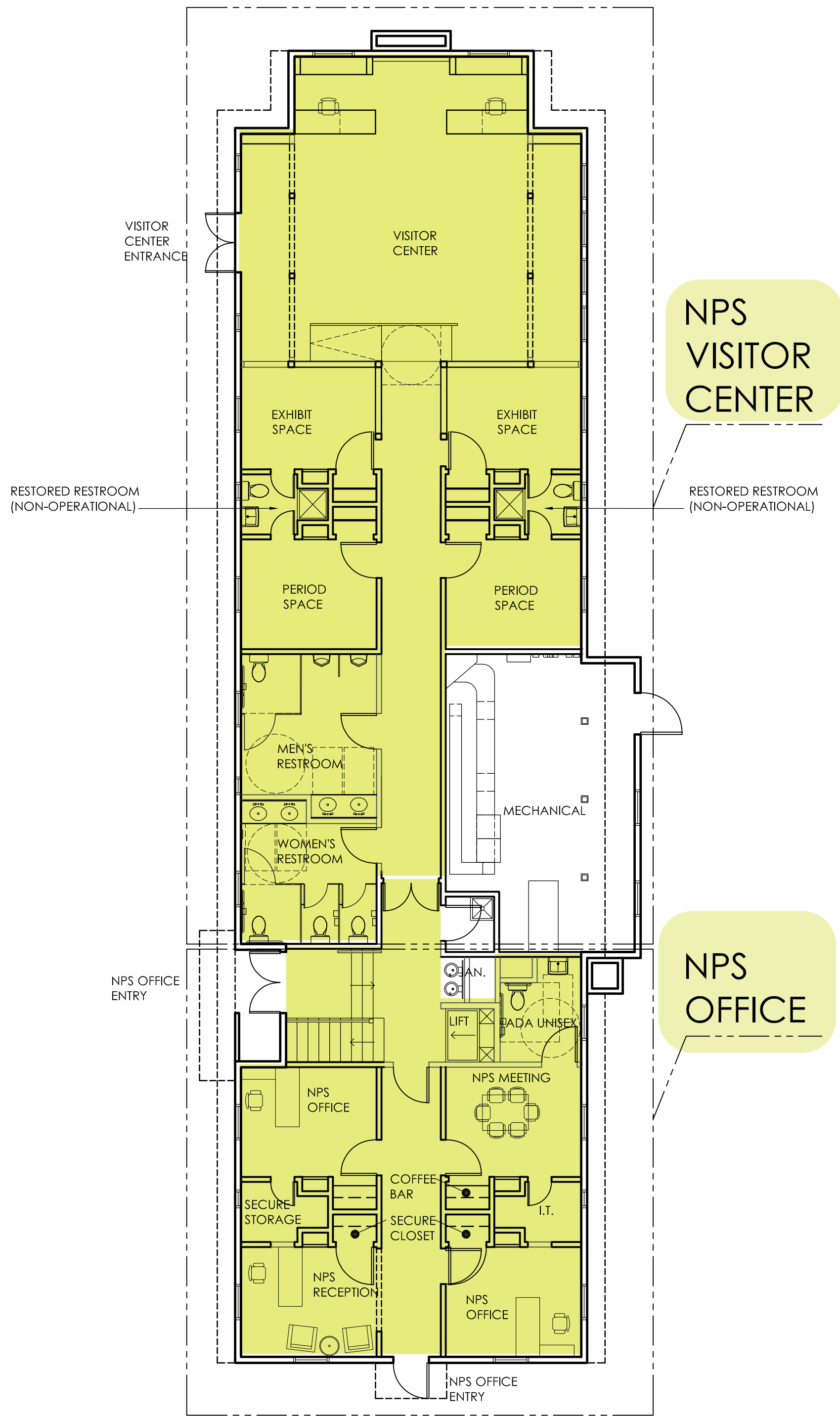
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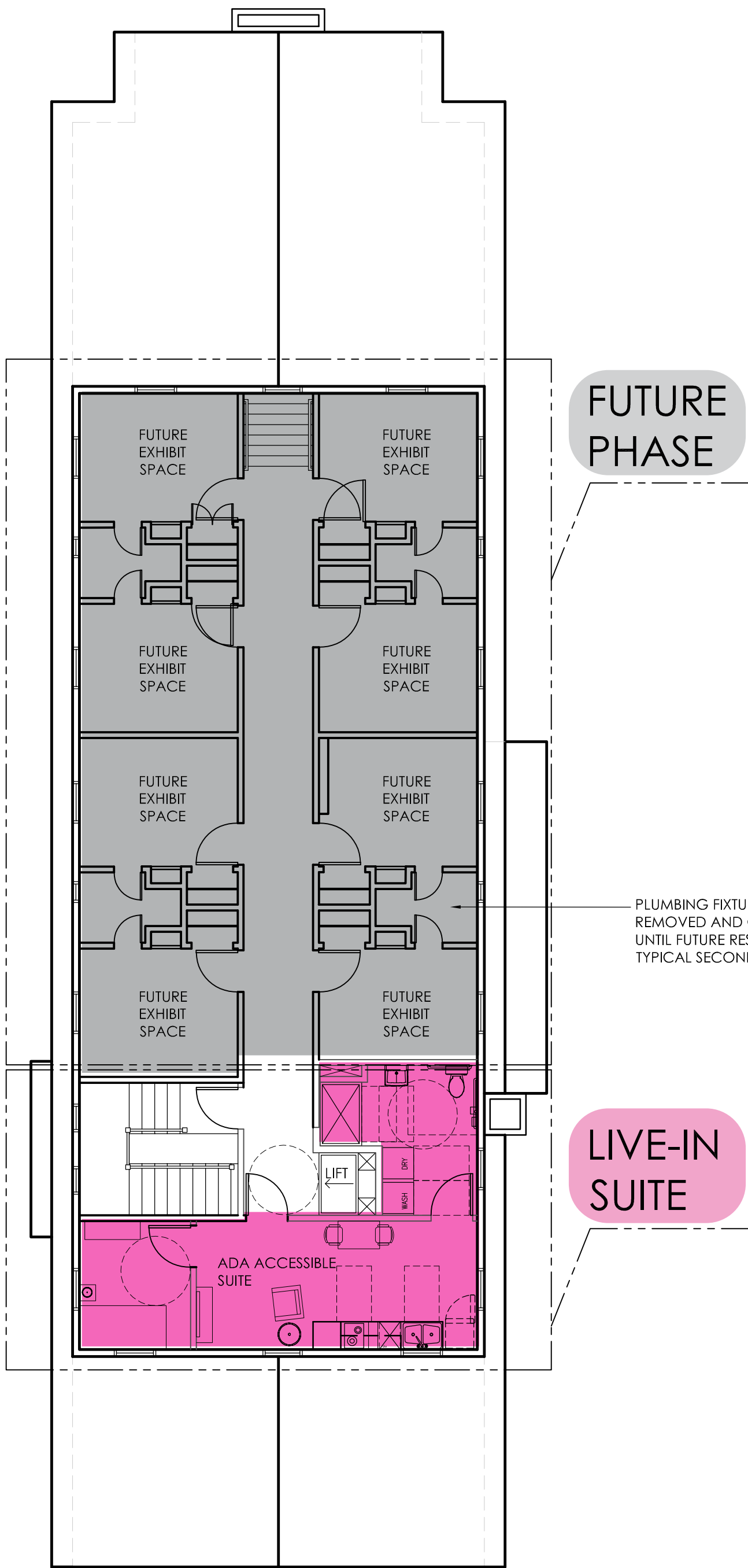
OPTION 1 | NPS + VISITOR CENTER

INTERIOR RESTROOMS

PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COST: \$2,600,000



1 First Floor Renovation Plan
Scale: 1/8"=1'-0"



2 Second Floor Renovation Plan
Scale: 1/8"=1'-0"



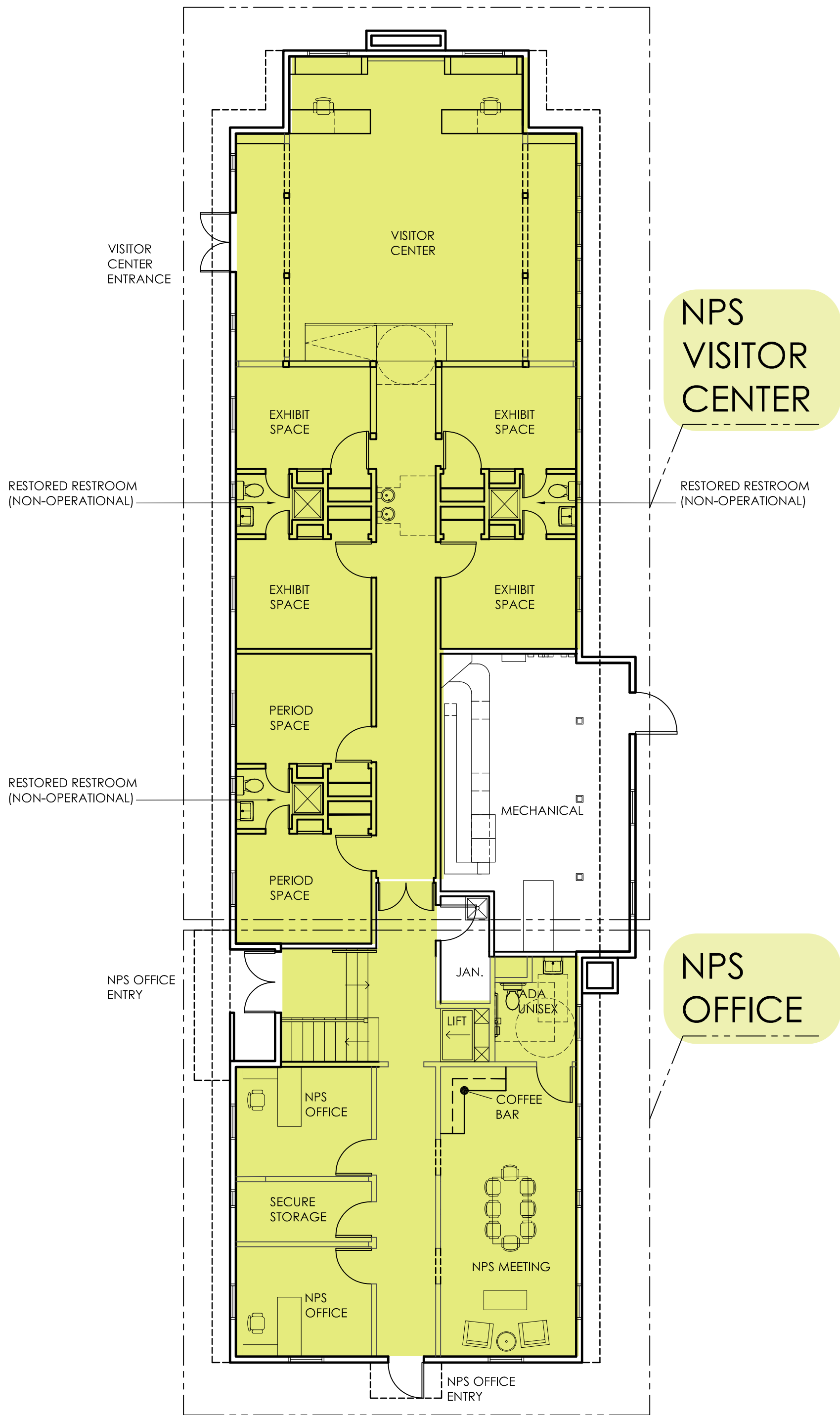
3 First Floor Site Renovation Plan
Scale: 1/16"=1'-0"



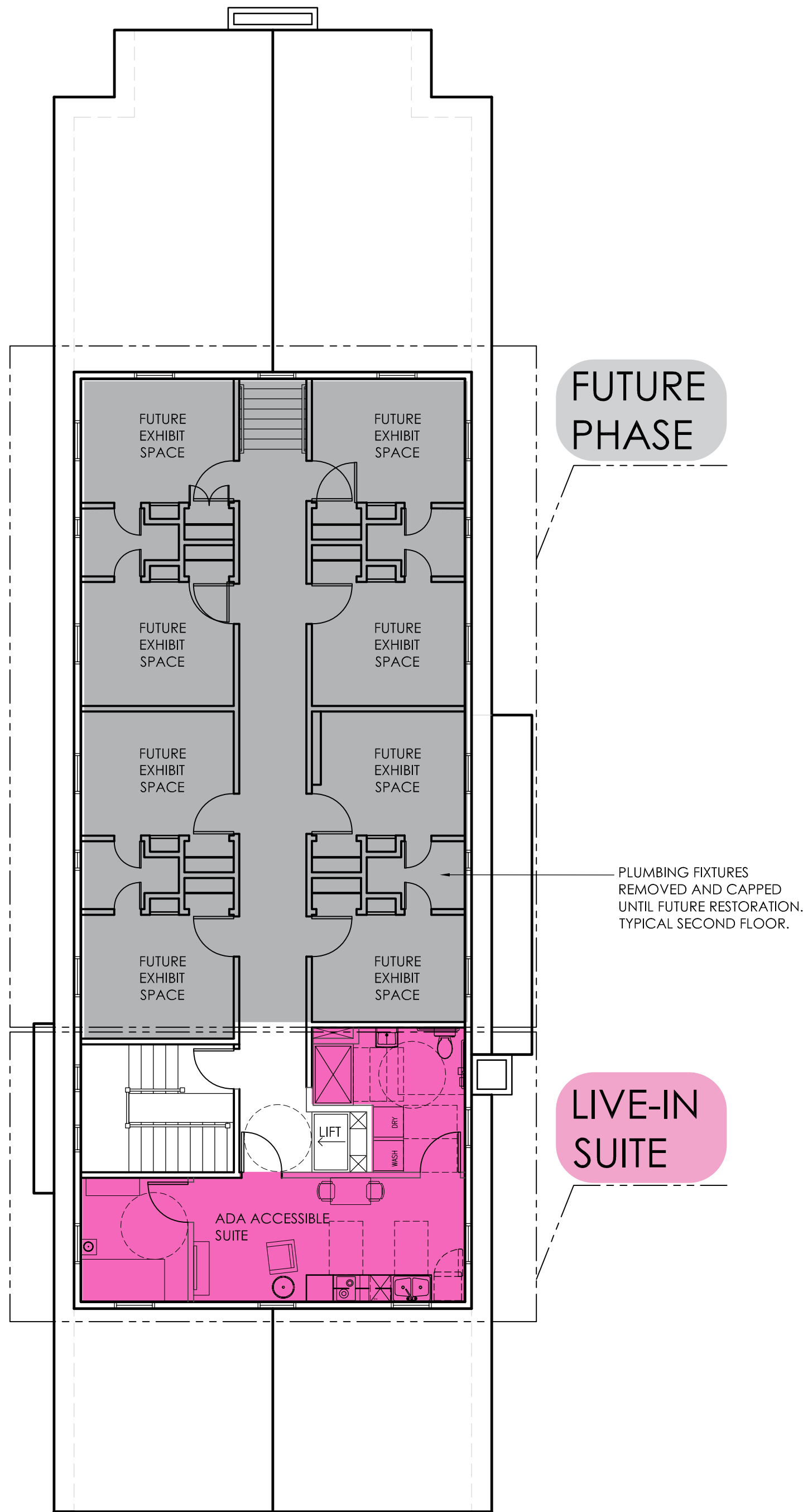
OPTION 1a | NPS + VISITOR CENTER

EXTERIOR RESTROOMS

PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COST: \$3,100,000



1 First Floor Renovation Plan
Scale: 1/8"=1'-0"



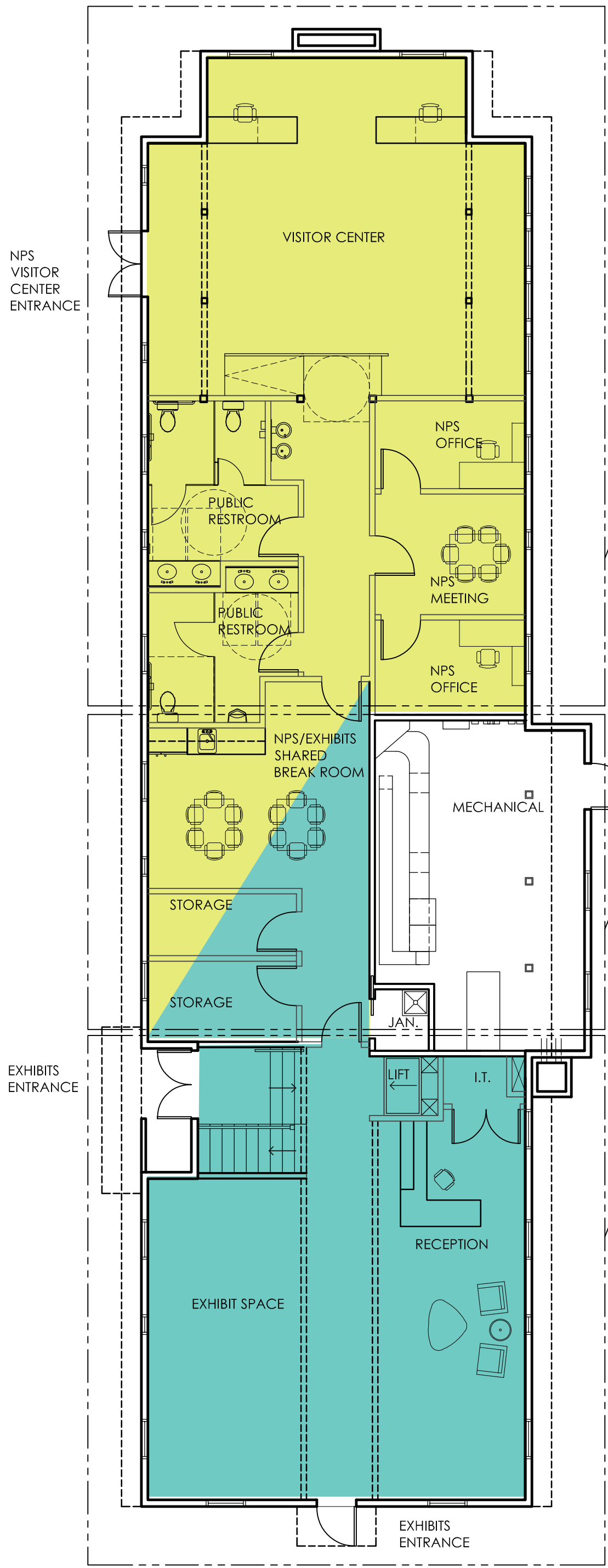
2 Second Floor Renovation Plan
Scale: 1/8"=1'-0"



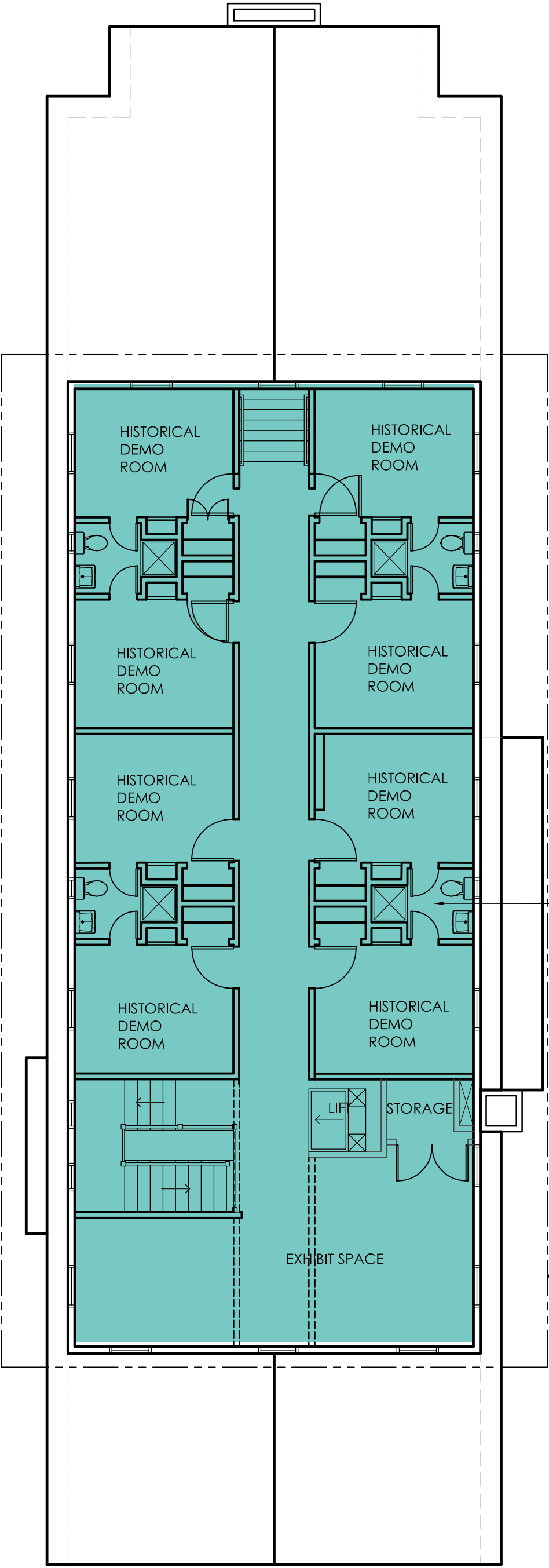
3 First Floor Site Renovation Plan
Scale: 1/16"=1'-0"

OPTION 2 | NPS + VISITOR CENTER + EXHIBITS

PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COST: \$2,700,000



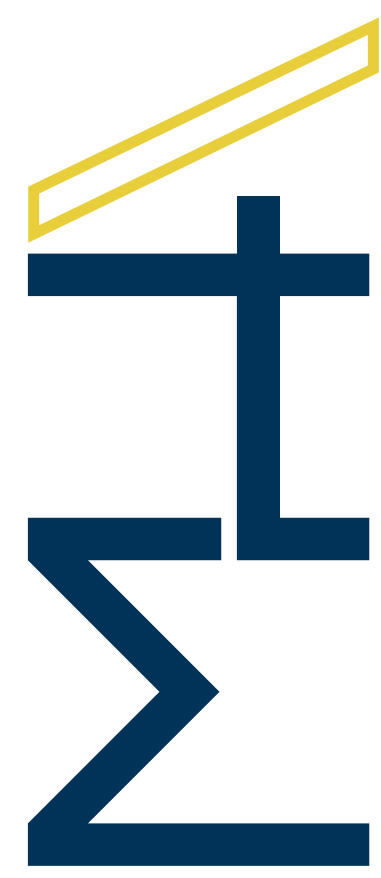
1 First Floor Renovation Plan
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2 Second Floor Renovation Plan
Scale: 1/8"=1'-0"

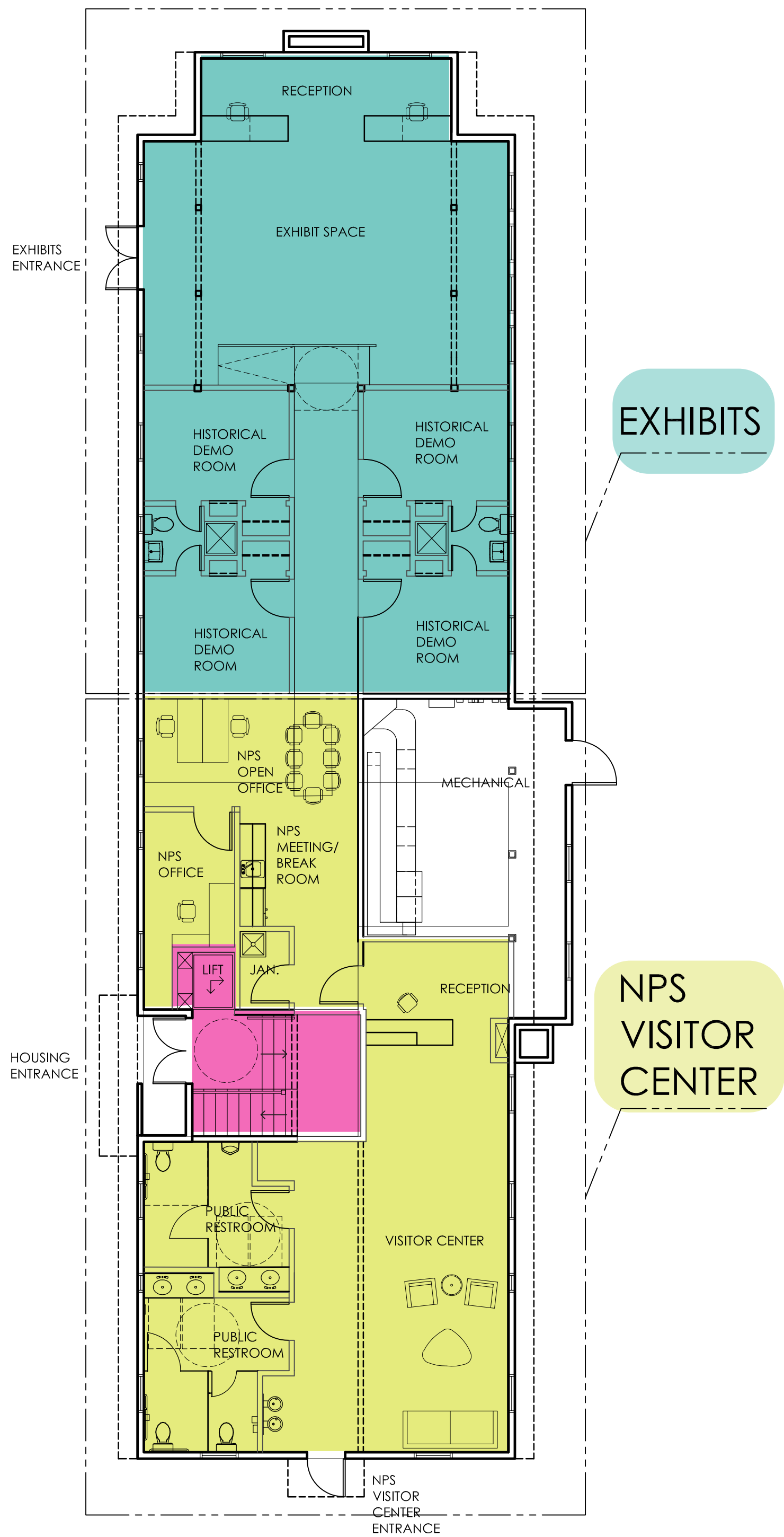


3 First Floor Site Renovation Plan
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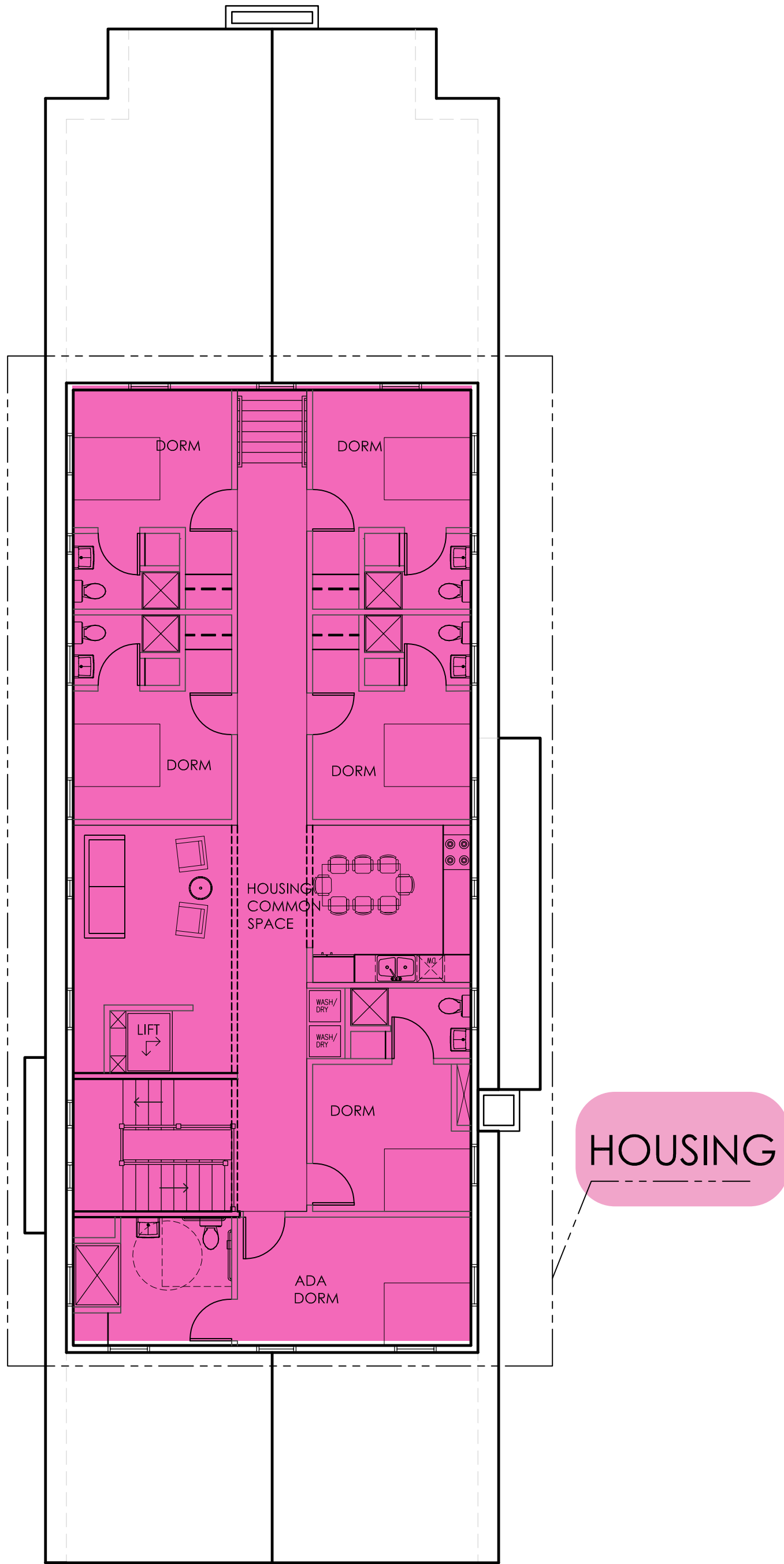


OPTION 3 | NPS + VISITOR CENTER + EXHIBITS + HOUSING

PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COST: \$2,900,000



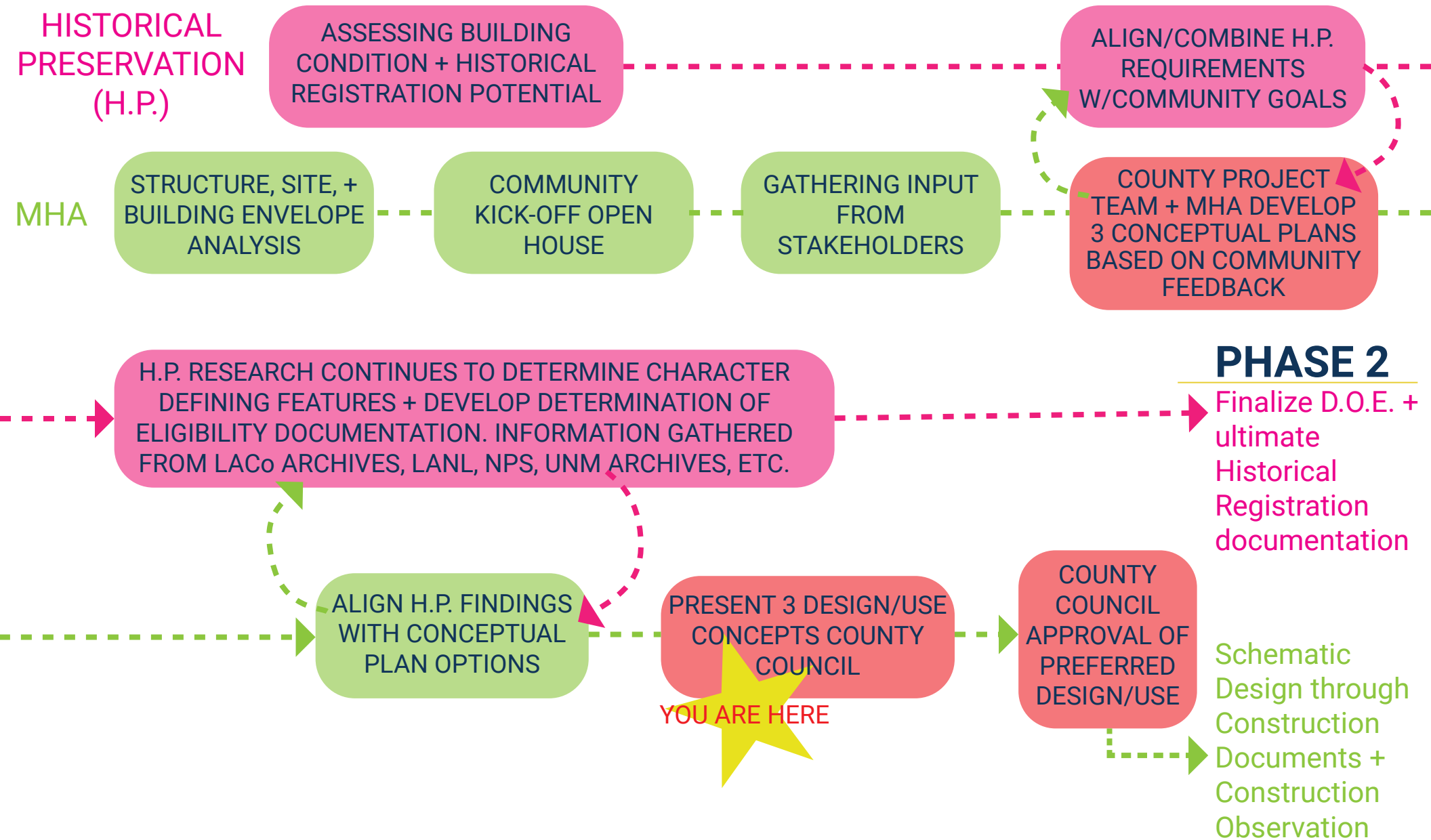
1 First Floor Renovation Plan
Scale: 1/8"=1'-0"



2 Second Floor Renovation Plan
Scale: 1/8"=1'-0"



3 First Floor Site Renovation Plan
Scale: 1/16"=1'-0"



The Process

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