

## TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

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**To:** Brian Froelich, AICP, Senior Planner, City of Capitola  
**From:** Jeanney Keo, Transportation Planner  
Dennis Pascua, Transportation Services Manager  
**Subject:** Trip Generation and Vehicle Miles Traveled Screening Analysis for the 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue Apartments Project, City of Capitola  
**Date:** February 8, 2024  
**cc:** Stephanie Strelow, Dudek  
**Attachments:** Figure 1 – Project Location  
Figure 2 – Site Plan

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The following technical memorandum provides a trip generation and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) screening analysis for the proposed 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue Apartments Project (project), located in the City of Capitola (City). This analysis has been prepared consistent with the trip generation methodology from the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) and VMT guidelines per the City of Capitola's SB 743 Implementation Guidelines (June 2020).

Per Senate Bill 743 (SB 743), the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) amended the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines to provide an alternative to the level of service (LOS) metric for evaluating transportation impacts. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) requires the VMT metric for determining the significance of transportation impacts. Under the current CEQA guidelines, LOS, or vehicle delay, is not used to determine transportation impacts, and VMT has been adopted as the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts.

The following analysis was conducted to determine whether further transportation (VMT) analysis would be required for the proposed project, and as below, the proposed project would not require further transportation analysis due to it being a 100% affordable housing project and its relatively low trip generation estimates.

### 1 Project Description

The project is the construction of a 100% affordable housing project consisting of four apartment buildings totaling approximately 61,215 square feet (SF) with a total of 52 dwelling units (DU). The project site is a vacant parcel located on the east side of 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue, south of existing private railroad tracks (planned pedestrian/bicycle Coastal Rail Trail) within the City. Regional access to the project area is provided by California State Route 1 to the north, while local access to the project site is provided by 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue to the east, Capitola Road to the north, and Portola Drive to the south. A mid-block crosswalk on 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue, on the eastern boundary of the site, will be restored and maintained by the project. Figure 1 illustrates the project's location and Figure 2 illustrates the project's site plan.

## 2 Existing Setting

The project site is vacant and is located in the southwest portion of the City in a predominantly residential neighborhood consisting of existing mobile home parks, and single- and multi-family homes. There is some commercial development behind the project to the east, along 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue. The following describes the existing transportation setting.

### Roadways

The following roadways are in the vicinity of the project site:

**38<sup>th</sup> Avenue** is a two-lane, undivided, north-south roadway classified as a Collector in the City's General Plan. On-street parking is not permitted along this roadway and there are no designated bike facilities, but there are paved, continuous sidewalks along the west side, and periodically along the east side of the roadway. There is a midblock crosswalk that provides connection to the southeastern portion of the project site. The posted speed limit is 25 miles per hour (MPH). 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue provides access to Capitola Road, Brommer Street, and Portola Drive.

**41<sup>st</sup> Avenue** is a four-lane, majority-divided, north-south roadway classified as an Arterial in the City's General Plan. On-street parking is permitted along both sides of the roadway south of the railroad tracks, and not permitted north of the tracks. There is a Class II (striped) bike lane, as well as paved, continuous sidewalks along both sides of the roadway. The posted speed limit is 35 MPH. 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue provides access to Highway 1.

**Capitola Avenue** is a four-lane, divided, east-west roadway classified as an Arterial in the City's General Plan. On-street parking is not permitted along the roadway and there is a Class II (striped) bike lane, as well as paved, continuous sidewalks along both sides of the roadway. The posted speed limit near the project site is 25 MPH.

**Portola Drive** is a four-lane, undivided, east-west roadway classified as an Arterial in the City's General Plan. The eastern portion of Portola Drive provides primary vehicular access to the public beaches and the Capitola Village area. On-street parking is permitted in sections along the roadway, and there is a Class II (striped) bike lane, as well as paved, continuous sidewalks along both sides of the roadway. The posted speed limit is 30 MPH.

### Transit Facilities

Bus transit service and paratransit service in the City of Capitola is provided by Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit (Metro), which serves the entirety of Santa Cruz County. The closest bus stops to the project site are located on both sides of 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue, adjacent to the project site. These stops are served by Route 3A/3B and the nearest transit hub is located at 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Capitola Road, approximately 0.5 miles from the project site.

There are three bus routes that serve the project site: Route 2, Route 3A/3B, and Route 55. Route 2 provides service between Capitola and Watsonville and runs on weekdays from 6:15 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. with 30-minute headways, and on weekends from 8:15 a.m. to 8:45 p.m. also with 30-minute headways. Route 3A/3B provides service between Capitola and the University of California, Santa Cruz, and runs on weekdays from 5:55 a.m. to 10:25 p.m. with 60-minute headways, and on weekends from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. with 60-minute headways. Route 55 provides service between Capitola and Rio Del Mar and runs on weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 7:45 p.m. with 100-minute headways, and on weekends at 9:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., and 5:00 p.m.

## Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The City of Capitola’s General Plan Mobility Element (2019) includes several bicycle classifications and provides a comprehensive and updated overview of the City’s current and future recommendations to enhance multi-modal facilities:

**Class I Bike Paths:** Class I multi-use paths (frequently referred to as “bicycle paths”) are physically separated from motor vehicle travel routes, with exclusive rights-of-way for non-motorized users like bicyclists and pedestrians.

**Class II Bicycle Lanes:** Bicycle lanes are one-way route types that carry bicycle traffic in the same direction as the adjacent motor vehicle traffic. They are typically located along the right side of the street (although can be on the left side) and are between the adjacent travel lane and curb, road edge, or parking lane. They are not physically separated from motor vehicle traffic.

**Class III Bicycle Routes:** A bicycle route is a suggested bicycle path of travel marked by signs designating a preferred path between destinations. They are recommended where traffic volumes and roadway speeds are fairly low (35 mph or less). They do not have pavement marking and are not separated from traffic, rather are a share the road facility.

There are no existing bicycle facilities adjacent to the project site along 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue, but a Class II Bicycle Lane exists on 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue. Per the Mobility Element, the proposed facilities in the vicinity of the project include Class II facilities along 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue. As noted above, the majority of adjacent streets to the project site provide sidewalks. Per the Mobility Element, streets with missing sidewalks are to be addressed by the City via the Capitol Improvement Program.

Additionally, the County of Santa Cruz expects to expand the Coastal Rail Trail (County of Santa Cruz) along the railroad tracks along the northern boundary of the project site, expanding pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the vicinity. The Coastal Rail Trail Segments 10 and 11 is an approximately 4.5 mile ADA-accessible bicycle/pedestrian path that generally extends along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL) corridor, from 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the City of Santa Cruz, to State Park Drive in the Seacliff neighborhood in the County of Santa Cruz. Segment 10 will run along the northern border of the project site, providing bicycle and pedestrian connectivity with local schools, parks, beaches, community recreation centers, and multiple residential and commercial neighborhoods. These two segments are fully funded, and a schedule for construction is expected to be released in the Spring of 2024.

## 3 Trip Generation

### 3.1 Proposed Project

Table 1 provides a summary of trip generation estimates for the project based on trip rates from Trip Generation, 11th Edition (2021), for an Affordable Housing land use (ITE Code 223).

**Table 1. Project Trip Generation Summary**

Land Use	ITE Code	Size/Units	Daily	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
				In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
<b>Trip Rates and Trip Generation</b>									
Affordable Housing <sup>1</sup>	223	Per DU	4.81	0.15	0.36	0.50	0.27	0.19	0.46
<b>Project Trip Generation</b>									
<b>38<sup>th</sup> Avenue Apartments</b>		52 DU	250	8	18	26	14	10	24
<b>Total Trips</b>			<b>250</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>24</b>

**Notes:** DU = dwelling unit

Some of the totals may not match exactly due to rounding.

<sup>1</sup> Trip rates from the Institute of Transportation Engineers, Trip Generation, 11th Edition, 2021. Land Use Code 223 – Affordable Housing.

As shown in Table 1, the proposed project would generate approximately 250 daily trips, with 26 trips (8 inbound and 18 outbound) in the AM peak hour, and 24 trips (14 inbound and 10 outbound) in the PM peak hour.

The City’s General Plan seeks to maintain the established LOS C (General Plan Policy MO-3.3) or better at intersections throughout the City of Capitola, and would require new developments to pay its fair share of costs for any transportation improvements (General Plan Policy MO-3.5) needed as a result of the project’s traffic adding significant impacts to the local roadways.. Significant impacts for intersections are created when traffic from the proposed project causes the LOS to fall below the City LOS threshold and causes any impacted intersections to deteriorate further per the criteria indicated. Consistent with the significant impact criteria documented in the City of Capitola General Plan, the City considers LOS C as the standard, but accepts a lower standard as the minimum acceptable at signalized and unsignalized intersections within the Village Area, along Bay Avenue, and along 41st Avenue where LOS D is the minimum acceptable standard. Based on the relatively low project peak hour trip generation estimates above, the proposed project would not have a measurable effect to existing LOS.

## 4 VMT Screening Analysis

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 states that “generally, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts,” and define VMT as “the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project.” It should be noted “automobile” refers to on-road passenger vehicles, specifically cars and light trucks. Heavy-duty truck VMT does not need to be included in the analysis, per Senate Bill 743 requirements. Other relevant considerations may include the effects of the project on transit and non-motorized traveled.

The City’s SB 743 Implementation Guidelines provide details on appropriate screening thresholds that can be used to identify when a proposed land use project is anticipated to result in a less than significant VMT impact without conducting a more detailed analysis. A land use project would need to only meet one of the seven screening thresholds to result in a less than significant finding. The seven VMT screening criteria are: 1) Small Projects; 2) Projects Near High Quality Transit; 3) Local-Serving Retail; 4) Affordable Housing; 5) Local Essential Service; 6) Map-Based Screening; and 7) Redevelopment Projects.

Based on the screening criteria, the project would meet the Affordable Housing criteria and therefore would screen out of further VMT analysis and can be presumed to have a less than significant impact to VMT:

- **Affordable Housing<sup>1</sup>:** The proposed project is a 100% affordable residential development in an infill location, thus, according to the City's guidelines, shall be assumed to have a less than significant impact on transportation.

## 5 Conclusions

Based on the trip generation analysis above, the proposed project would generate approximately 250 daily trips, with 26 trips in the AM peak hour, and 24 trips in the PM peak hour. Based on the relatively low project peak hour trip generation estimates above, the proposed project would not have a measurable effect to existing LOS.

Based on the VMT screening analysis above, the project is a 100% Affordable Housing development that can be expected to shorten commutes and overall reduce VMT. Therefore, the proposed project would be screened out from conducting further VMT analysis and is presumed to have a less than significant VMT impact and the project would not require any mitigation.

## 6 References

City of Capitola. 2019. *City of Capitola General Plan*.

City of Capitola. 2020. *City of Capitola SB 743 Implementation Guidelines*.

County of Santa Cruz. 2023. *Coastal Rail Trail Segments 10 and 11 Project*. Accessed February 2024. [www.dpw.santacruzcounty.us/Home/TransportationRoads/CoastalRailTrail.aspx](http://www.dpw.santacruzcounty.us/Home/TransportationRoads/CoastalRailTrail.aspx)

ITE (Institute of Transportation Engineers). 2021. *Trip Generation Manual*. 11th ed.

OPR (California Governor's Office of Planning and Research). 2018. *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA*. December 2018. Accessed May 2020. [http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743\\_Technical\\_Advisory.pdf](http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf).

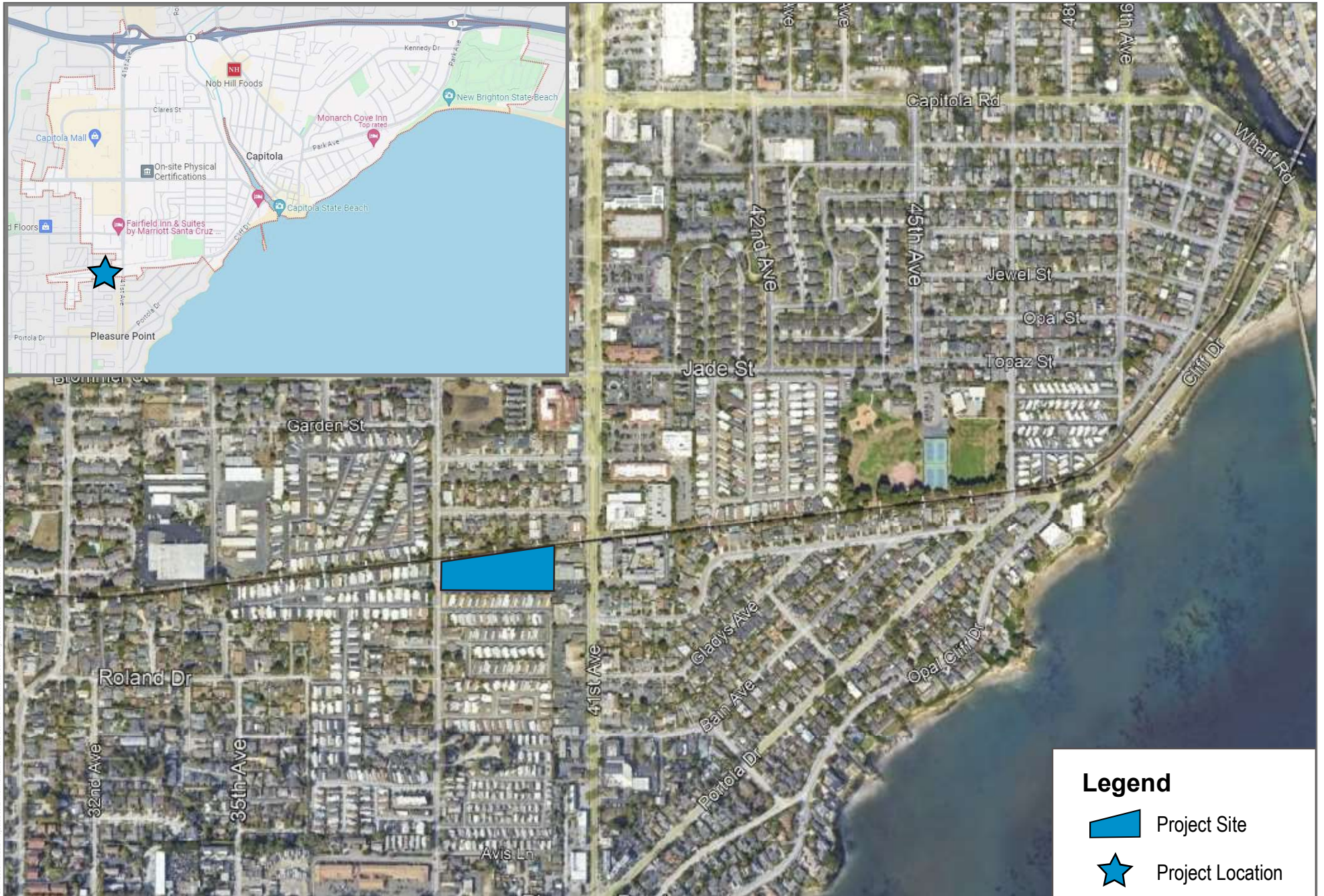
Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit (Metro). 2024. *Schedule*. [www.scmttd.com/en/routes/schedule](http://www.scmttd.com/en/routes/schedule)

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<sup>1</sup> The OPR Technical Advisory provides data to support the conclusion that adding affordable housing to infill locations generally improves jobs-housing match, in turn shortening commutes and reducing VMT. Accordingly, the recommended screening criteria provide that projects that are 100% affordable residential development, or the residential component of a mixed-use development, in infill locations shall be assumed to have a less than significant impact on transportation. (SB 743 Implementation, 2020)

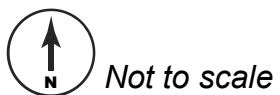
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**Figure 1**  
Project Location



SOURCE: Google Maps, 2024

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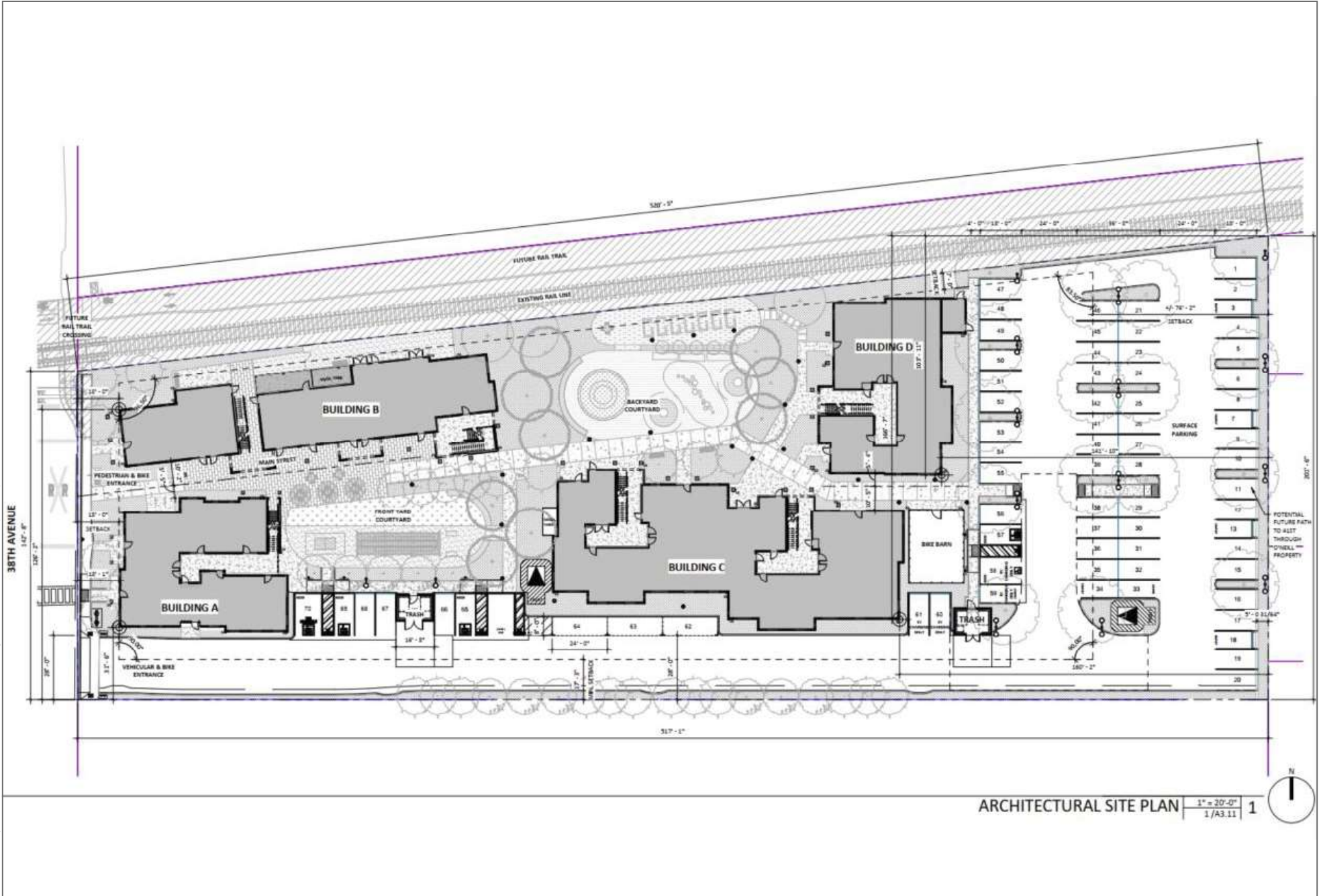
**FIGURE 1**  
Project Location  
38th Avenue Apartments Project

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## **Figure 2**

Site Plan





SOURCE: Architects FORA, 2023



**FIGURE 2**  
 Project Site Plan  
 38th Avenue Apartments Project