

MINNETONKA PLANNING COMMISSION
June 14, 2018

Brief Description	Concept plan review for Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office at 14300 Co. Rd 62.
Action Requested	Discuss concept plan with the applicant. No formal action required.

Background

Hennepin County is proposing to build a new Medical Examiner's Office on the County Home School property located at 14300 Co. Rd 62. The current office is located in downtown Minneapolis. All operations from the downtown location would be moved to the Minnetonka site. The Medical Examiner's Office also serves Dakota and Scott Counties.

As proposed, the 68,510 square-foot building would be sited on the eastern portion of the 161-acre Home School site. The building, parking and access road would occupy approximately 10 acres of the property. As a public facility, access would be open to all. A new roadway would be constructed at the southwestern site access at County Road 62, but separated from the access to the Home School.

The building would include office, autopsy and conference spaces. The county anticipates the facility would also serve as a teaching and training facility for students, university faculty and practitioners. There would not be a crematorium in the building.

The immediate area has a mix of existing land uses. Glen Lake Golf Course, also owned by Hennepin County, is located to the west. Single family neighborhoods and Glen Lake are located to the north. To the east and south are industrial uses. Major transportation corridors also define the eastern and southern borders - County Road 62, the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional trail and Soo Line railroad.

The site is zoned Planned Unit Development District and guided as Institutional use in the 2030 comprehensive plan.

Key Issues

City staff has identified the following considerations for any development of the subject properties:

- **Site Plan:** The proposed building location on the undeveloped eastern portion of the site would require construction of a number of roadway, utility and building pad area improvements. These improvements will likely result in tree removals, large amounts of grading and large retaining walls for the roadway.
- **Impact to Site Character:** The eastern upland area of the site contains valued woodland and prairie natural resources. A tamarack wetland is also located east of this upland area along the regional trail. The proposed facility would introduce development of this natural area. Minimizing site impacts should be a goal of the project. Additional

plan perspectives of the proposed office will be needed to evaluate building siting and character.



- **Planned Unit Development:** The zoning of the site is planned unit development. Further site development will need to demonstrate public purpose.

Review Process

Staff has outlined the following review process for the proposal. At this time, a formal application has not been submitted.

- **Neighborhood Meeting.** The developer held a neighborhood meeting on June 7, 2018. Five people attended the meeting raising a few questions about the project schedule, uses within the building and if future housing development was planned for the site.
- **Planning Commission Concept Plan Review.** The planning commission Concept Plan Review is intended as a follow-up to the neighborhood meeting. The objective of this meeting is to identify major issues and challenges in order to inform the subsequent review and discussion. The meeting will include a presentation by the developer of conceptual sketches and ideas, but not detailed engineering or architectural drawings.

No staff recommendations are provided, the public is invited to offer comments, and planning commissioners are afforded the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback without any formal motions or votes.

- **City Council Concept Plan Review.** The city council Concept Plan Review is intended as a follow-up to the planning commission meeting and would follow the same format as the planning commission Concept Plan Review. No staff recommendations are provided, the public is invited to offer comments, and council members are afforded the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback without any formal motions or votes.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends the planning commission provide comment and feedback on the identified key issues and others the planning commission deems appropriate. The discussion is intended to assist the applicant with future direction that may lead to the preparation of more detailed development plans.

Originator: Loren Gordon, AICP, City Planner

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Next Steps

- **Formal Application.** If the developer chooses to file a formal application, notification of the application would be mailed to area property owners. Property owners are encouraged to view plans and provide feedback via the city's website. Through recent website updates: (1) staff can provide residents with ongoing project updates, (2) residents can "follow" projects they are particularly interested in by signing up for automatic notification of project updates; (3) residents may provide project feedback on project; and (4) and staff can review resident comments.
- **Neighborhood Meeting.** Prior to the planning commission meeting and official public hearing, an additional public meeting would be held with neighbors to discuss specific engineering, architectural and other details of the project, and to solicit feedback. This extends the timing that has historically been provided in advance of the planning commission review to allow more public consideration of the project specifics.
- **Council Introduction.** The proposal would be introduced at a city council meeting. At that time, the council would be provided another opportunity to review the issues identified during the initial concept plan review meeting, and to provide direction about any refinements or additional issues they wish to be researched, and for which staff recommendations should be prepared.
- **Planning Commission Review.** The planning commission would hold an official public hearing for the development review and would subsequently recommend action to the city council.
- **City Council Action.** Based on input from the planning commission, professional staff and general public, the city council would take final action.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Applicants.** Applicants are responsible for providing clear, complete and timely information throughout the review process. They are expected to be accessible to both the city and to the public, and to respect the integrity of the public process.
- **Public.** Neighbors and the general public will be encouraged and enabled to participate in the review process to the extent they are interested. However, effective public participation involves shared responsibilities. While the city has an obligation to provide information and feedback opportunities, interested residents are expected to accept the responsibility to educate themselves about the project and review process, to provide constructive, timely and germane feedback, and to stay informed and involved throughout the entire process.
- **Planning Commission.** The planning commission hosts the primary forum for public input and provides clear and definitive recommendations to the city council. To serve in that role, the commission identifies and attempts to resolve development issues and

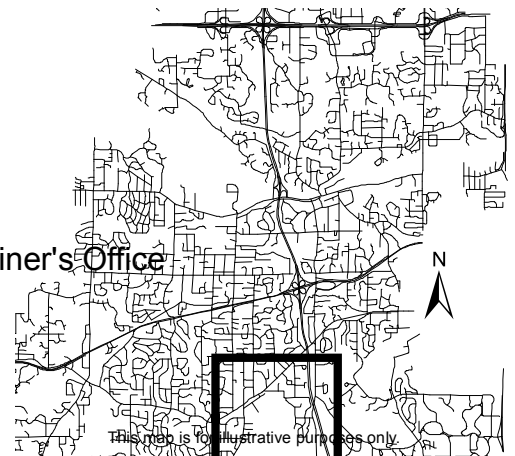
concerns prior to the council's consideration by carefully balancing the interests of applicants, neighbors, and the general public.

- **City Council.** As the ultimate decision maker, the city council must be in a position to equitably and consistently weigh all input from their staff, the general public, planning commissioners, applicants and other advisors. Accordingly, council members traditionally keep an open mind until all the facts are received. The council ensures that residents have an opportunity to effectively participate in the process.
- **City Staff.** City staff is neither an advocate for the public nor the applicant. Rather, staff provides professional advice and recommendations to all interested parties, including the city council, planning commission, applicant and residents. Staff advocates for its professional position, not a project. Staff recommendations consider neighborhood concerns, but necessarily reflect professional standards, legal requirements and broader community interests.



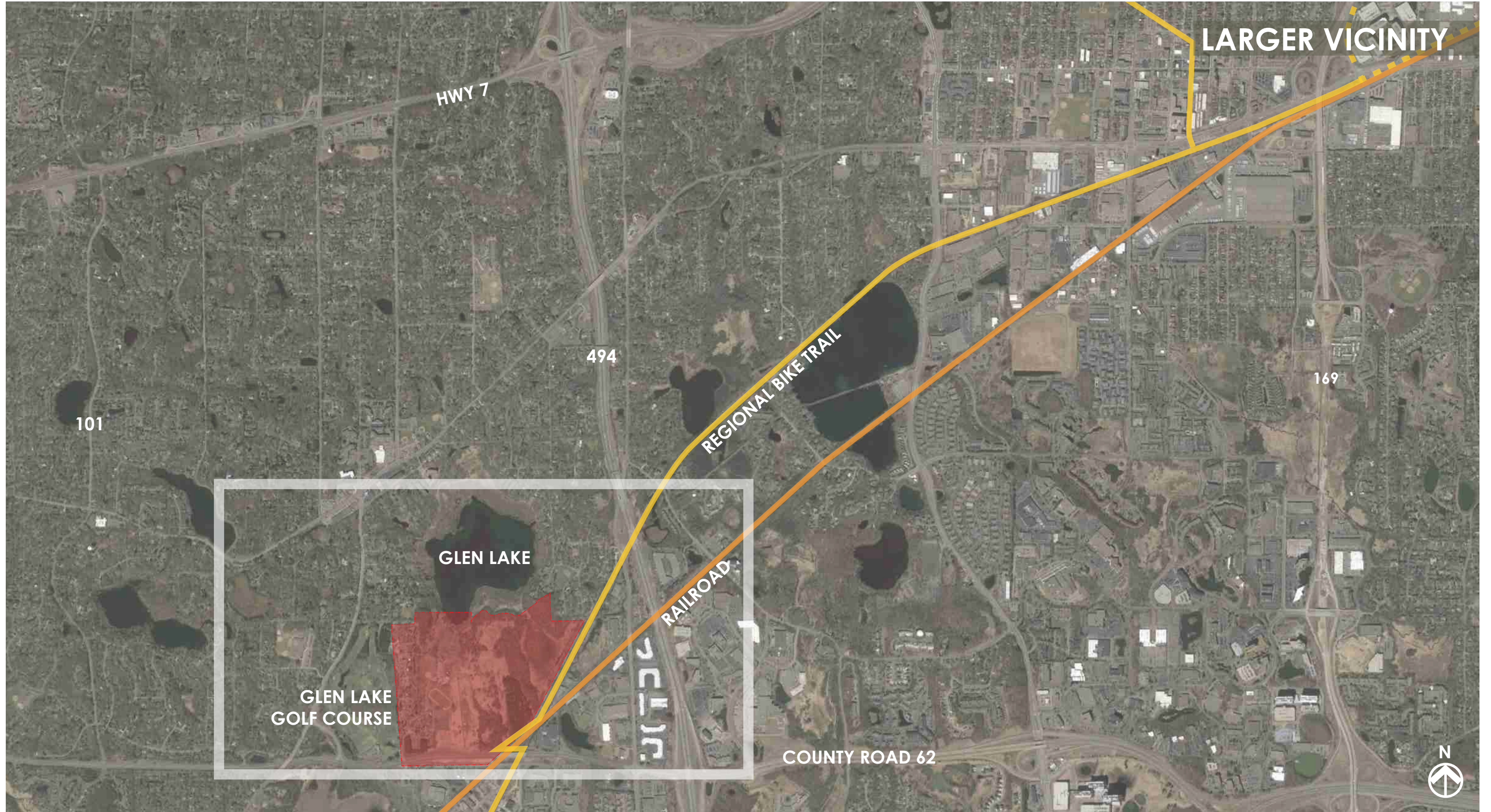
Location Map

Project: Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office
Address: 14300 Co Rd 62





**NEW REGIONAL
MEDICAL EXAMINER'S
FACILITY**



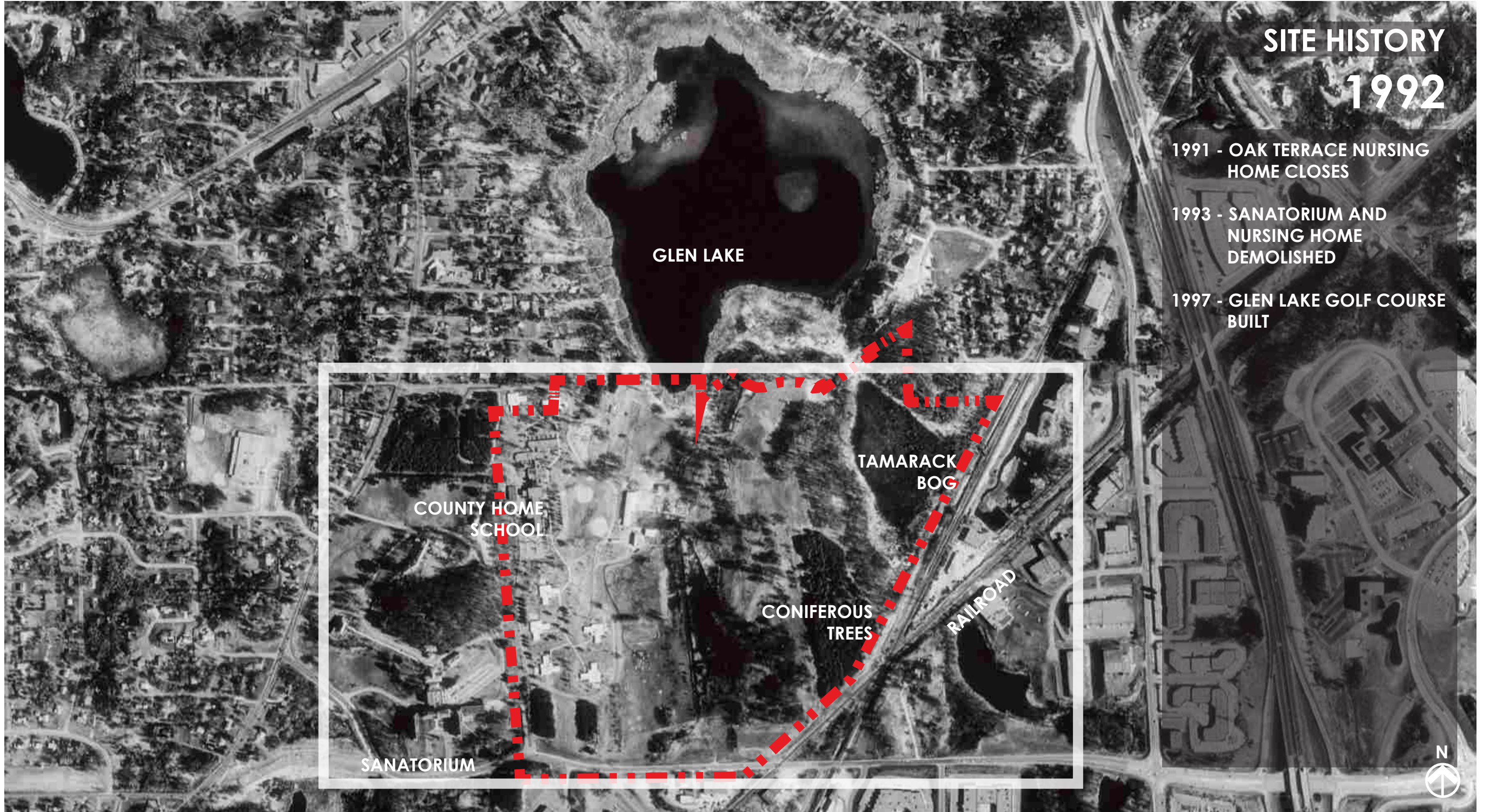




SITE HISTORY

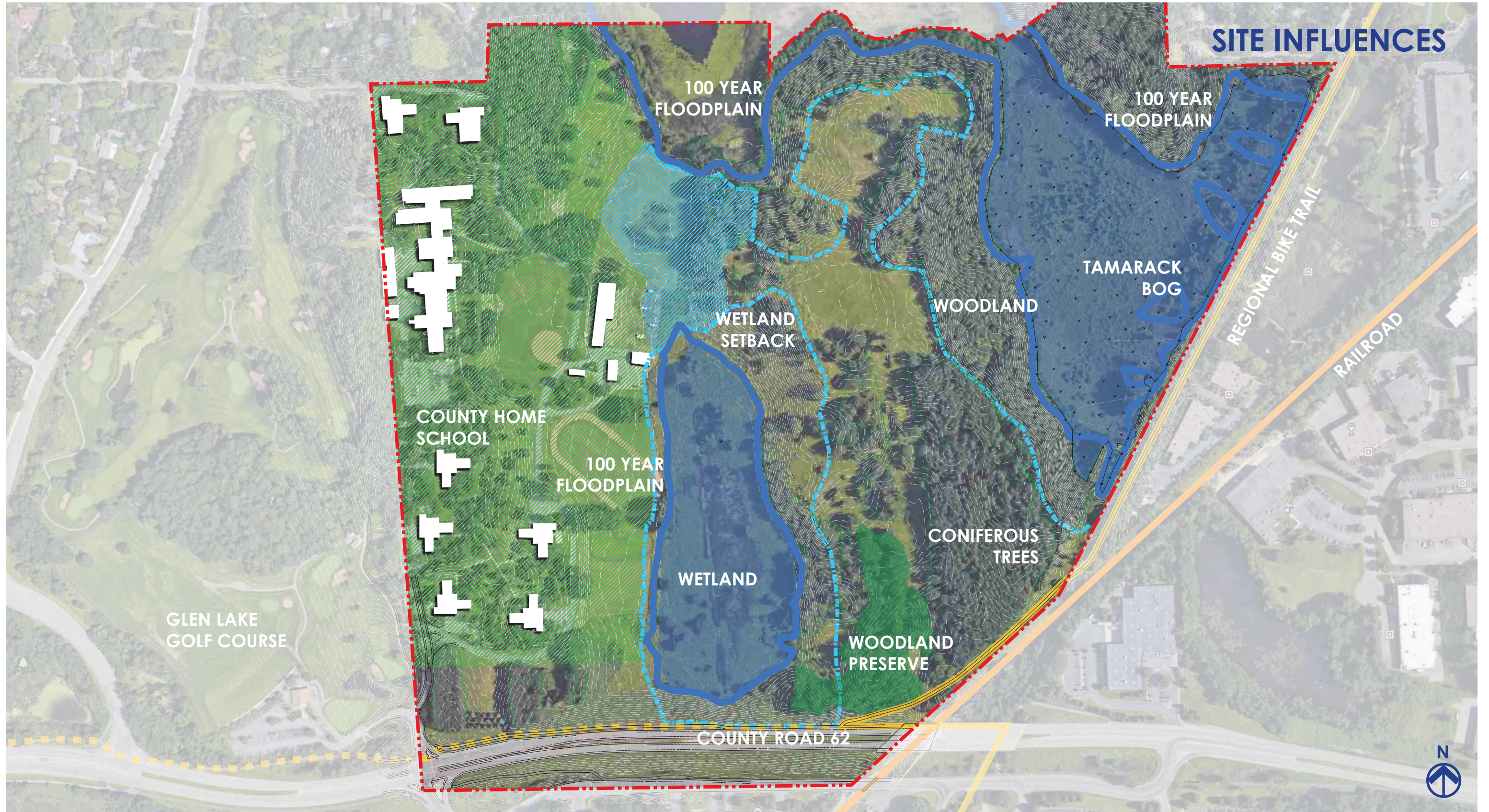
1967

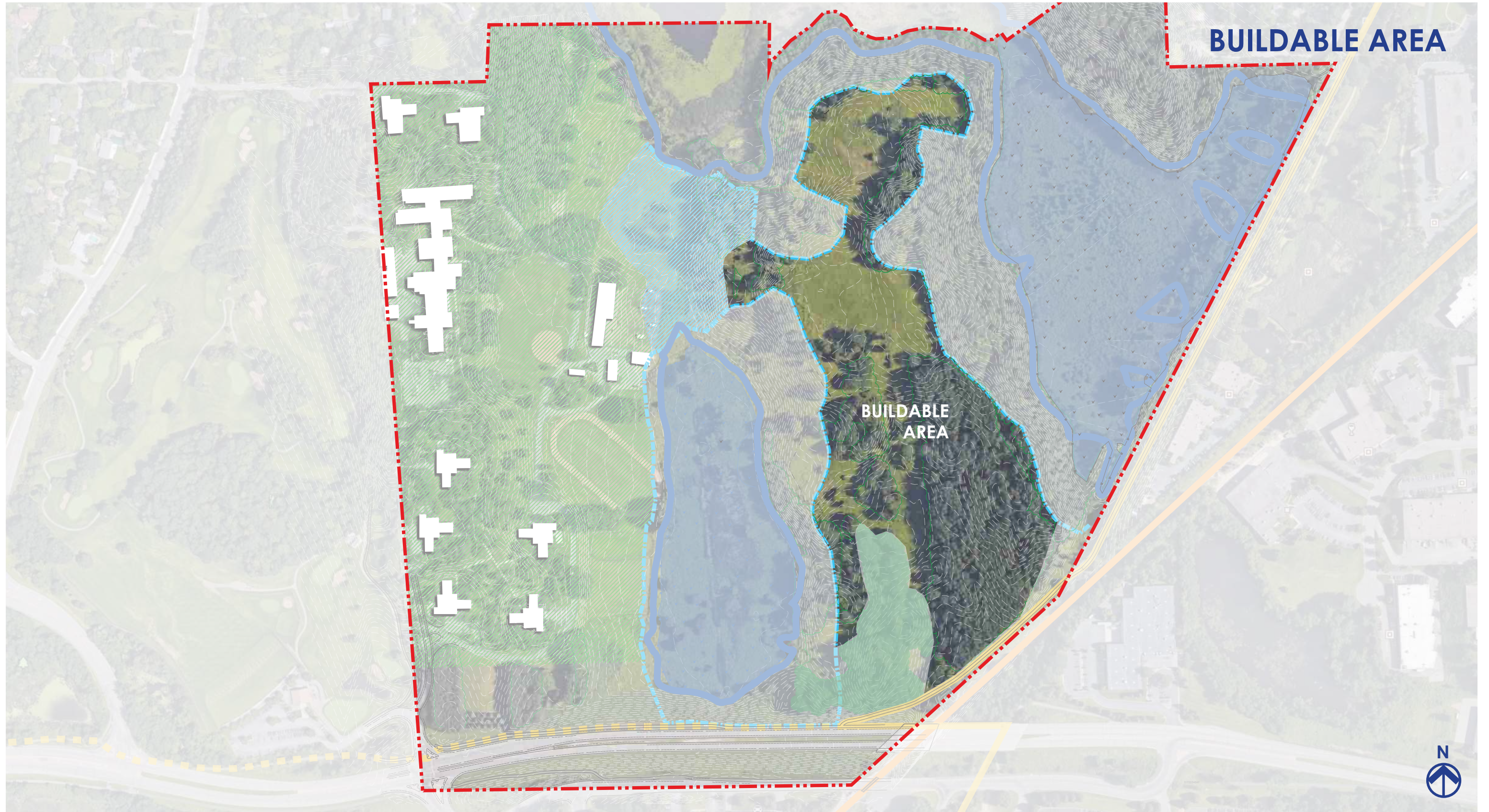
- 1961 - OAK TERRACE NURSING HOME JOINS GLEN LAKE SANATORIUM
- 1968 - PINE TREE STAND PLANTED
- 1976 - GLEN LAKE SANATORIUM CLOSES



SITE HISTORY
1992

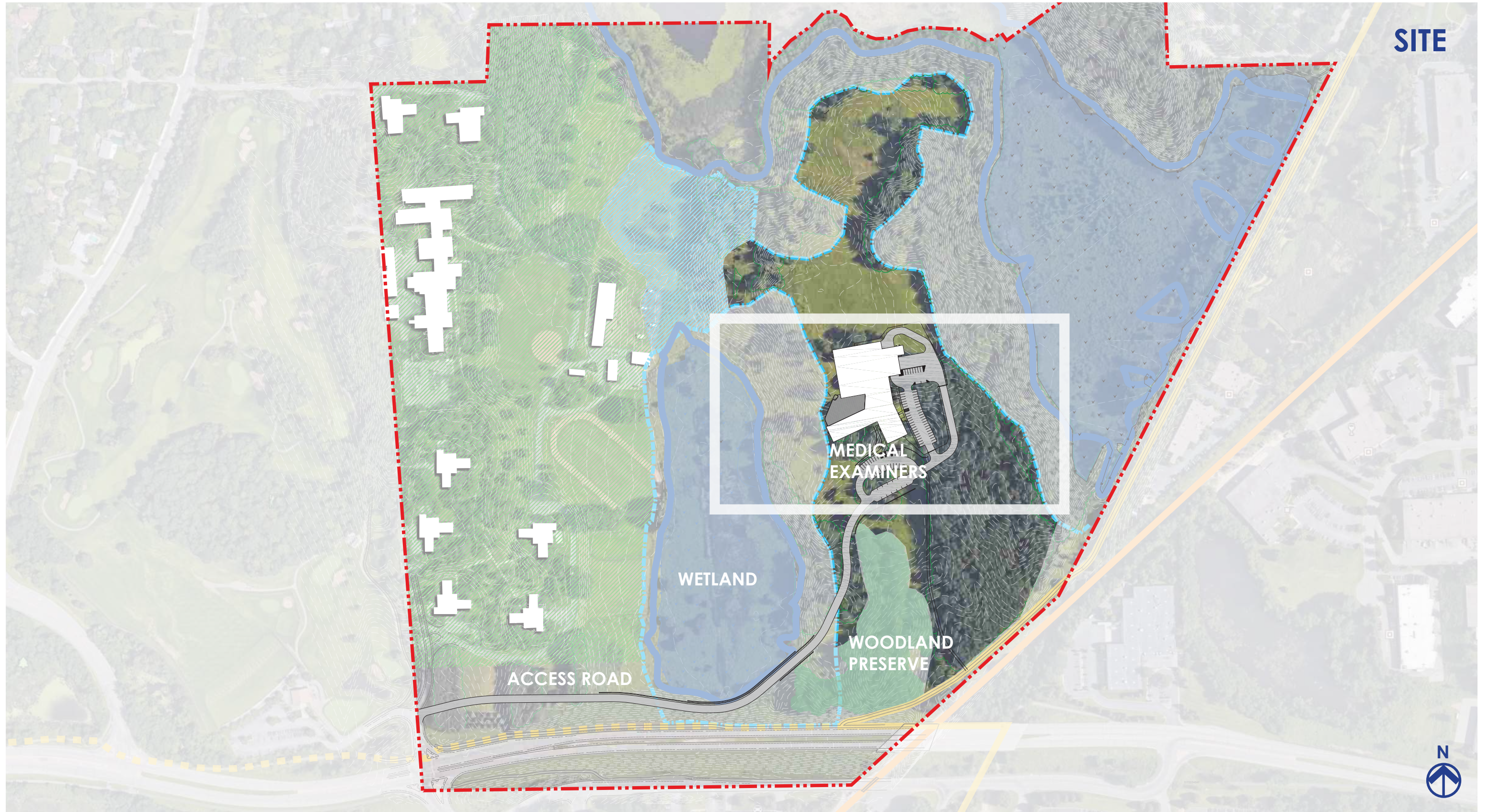
- 1991 - OAK TERRACE NURSING HOME CLOSES
- 1993 - SANATORIUM AND NURSING HOME DEMOLISHED
- 1997 - GLEN LAKE GOLF COURSE BUILT



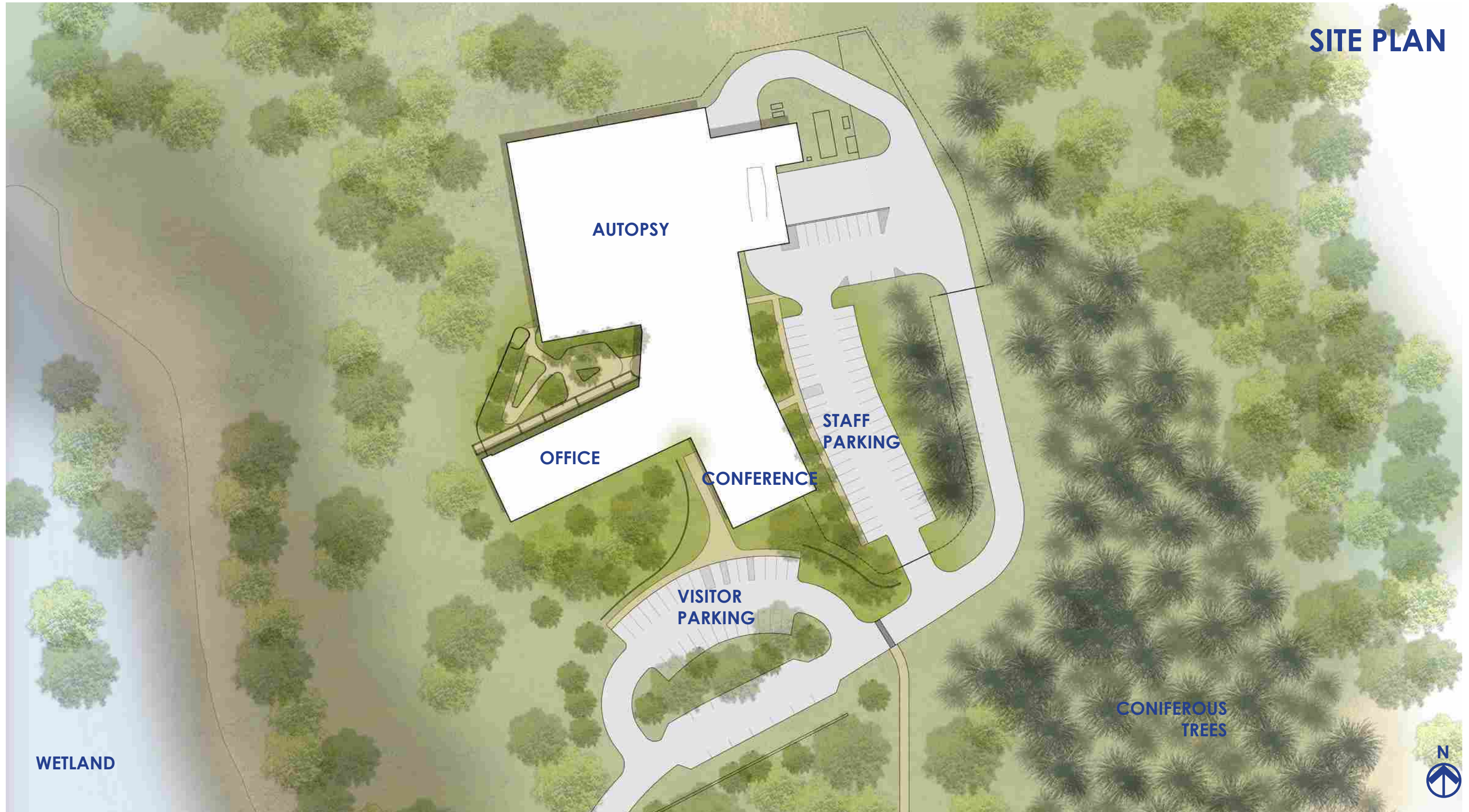


BUILDABLE AREA

BUILDABLE AREA



SITE PLAN

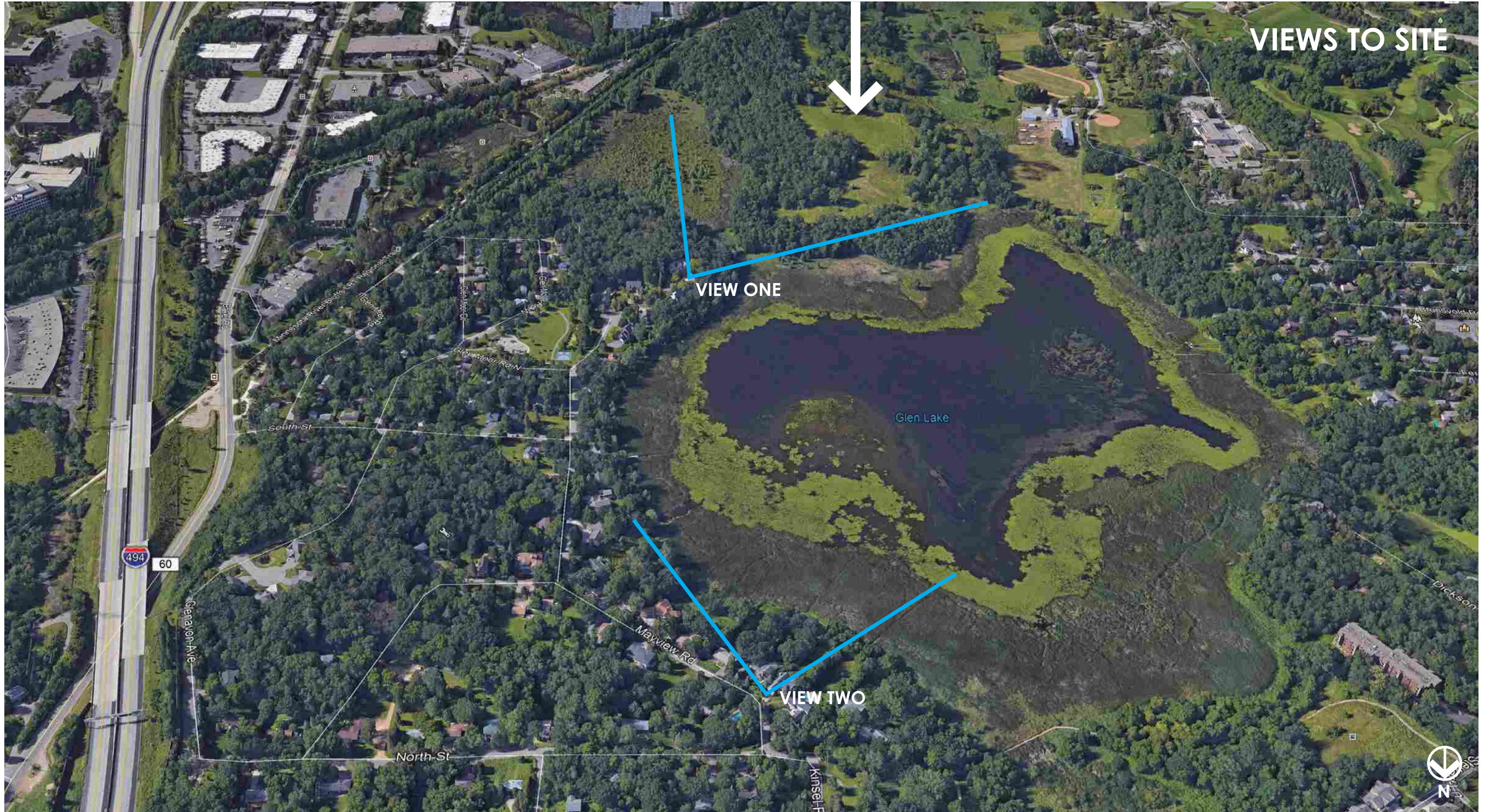




VIEW ONE TO SITE



SITE IS BEHIND TREES

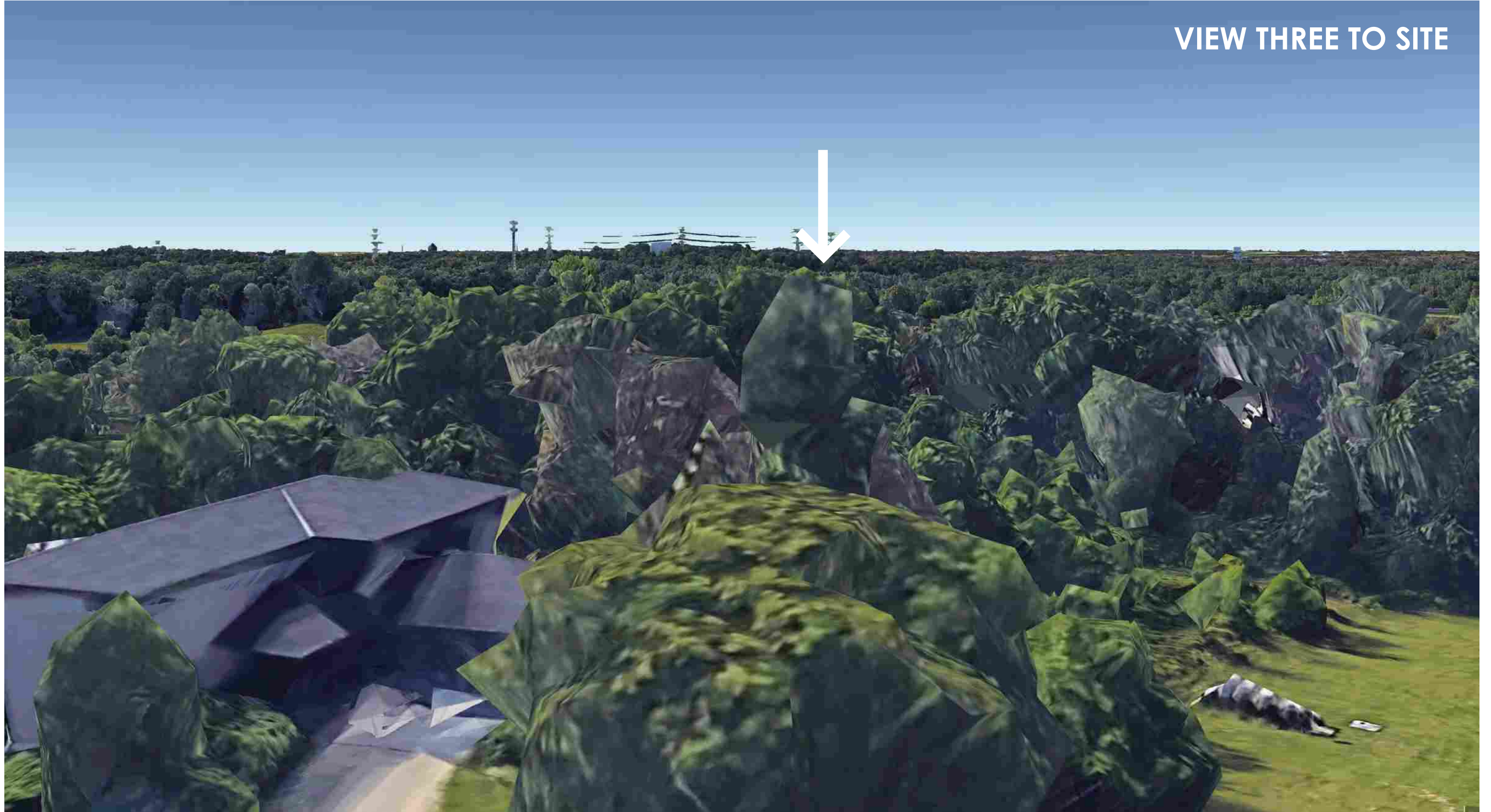


VIEW TWO TO SITE





VIEW THREE TO SITE





PROJECTS FACTS

BUILDING SIZE:

AUTOPSY WING INCLUDING SALLY PORT	35,570 GSF
ADMINISTRATION WING/CONFERENCE CENTER	25,600 GSF
SECOND LEVEL	7,340 GSF
TOTAL AREA	68,510 GSF

BUILDING INCLUDES:

AUTOPSY TABLES	10
ISOLATION/BSL-3 AUTOPSY TABLES	2
OFFICES	21
OPEN WORKSTATIONS	37

BUILDING SITE:

CHS CAMPUS	161 ACRES
MEDICAL EXAMINER BUILDING SITE	8 ACRES
MEDICAL EXAMINER SITE ACCESS	2 ACRES
MEDICAL EXAMINER SITE TOTAL	10 ACRES

SITE INCLUDES:

STAFF PARKING	55 STALLS
VISITOR/CONFERENCE PARKING	29 STALLS
CONFERENCE OVERFLOW PARKING	13 STALLS
TOTAL PARKING	94 STALLS