

D5. The Master Plan

Master Plan Design Concepts

The Greenway

The plan defines a simple and clear connective path that links each existing neighborhood and their 'Veteran Life' hubs or community centers. This landscaped, multi-modal Greenway will support efficient cross-campus transportation – from the recreational areas to the north, through the neighborhoods and center site, through the historical neighborhoods, and to the medical campus to the south. Planning for all modes and abilities, including pedestrians, wheelchair users, and cyclists, is essential to maximize the benefits and overall success of the Greenway. (See "Figure D.24 The Greenway")

The natural flow of the Greenway will form a simple, coherent design framework on which the north campus can be unified from a disconnected group of buildings to an easily navigable community.

VA WLA Campus





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Figure D.24 The Greenway

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Master Plan Framework

Framework Summary

Reflecting VA's commitment to creating a "vibrant, welcoming, and sustainable" campus, the Master Plan offers a series of strategic recommendations that support the goal of 'keeping people well' through a healing environment, an attractive public realm, and a well-connected site plan that can accommodate future growth. Over time, this urban design framework should facilitate the development of a highly accessible, inviting, nurturing, and easily navigable community that attracts Veterans to the broad range of services and opportunities that will support their reintegration into civilian life.

This urban design framework will also guide the campus development to ensure that it achieves the desired programmatic relationships, distribution of uses, scale, and design character. Key elements that will contribute to a unique sense of place and animate the campus include:

- Actively programmed open spaces that provide a restorative setting for visitors, residents, and staff.
- Private residential courtyard plazas that build on the historic Mission-style landscape setting of the campus in contemporary forms that facilitate healing.
- Community-supporting Veteran Life amenities in each neighborhood that adjoin the Greenway.
- Walkable connections that provide a safe, attractive, and comfortable streetscape.
- Neighborhoods that focus on the diverse needs of the individuals who will inhabit and visit the campus.

Implementation Methods

Gateways and Access Points

Connections between the West Los Angeles Campus and the broader community

Vehicular Circulation

The flow of vehicles, safely and efficiently through the site, as well as a gateway to surrounding communities

Pedestrian Circulation

The flow of people on foot, safely and comfortably through the site

Open Space

Variety of scale and character of landscape spaces to facilitate Veteran socializing and healing

Parking and Wayfinding

Establishing a sense of arrival and clear navigation throughout the campus as individuals transition from vehicular to pedestrian movement

New and Existing Buildings

Functional use of each building on campus to serve Veteran needs

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Gateways

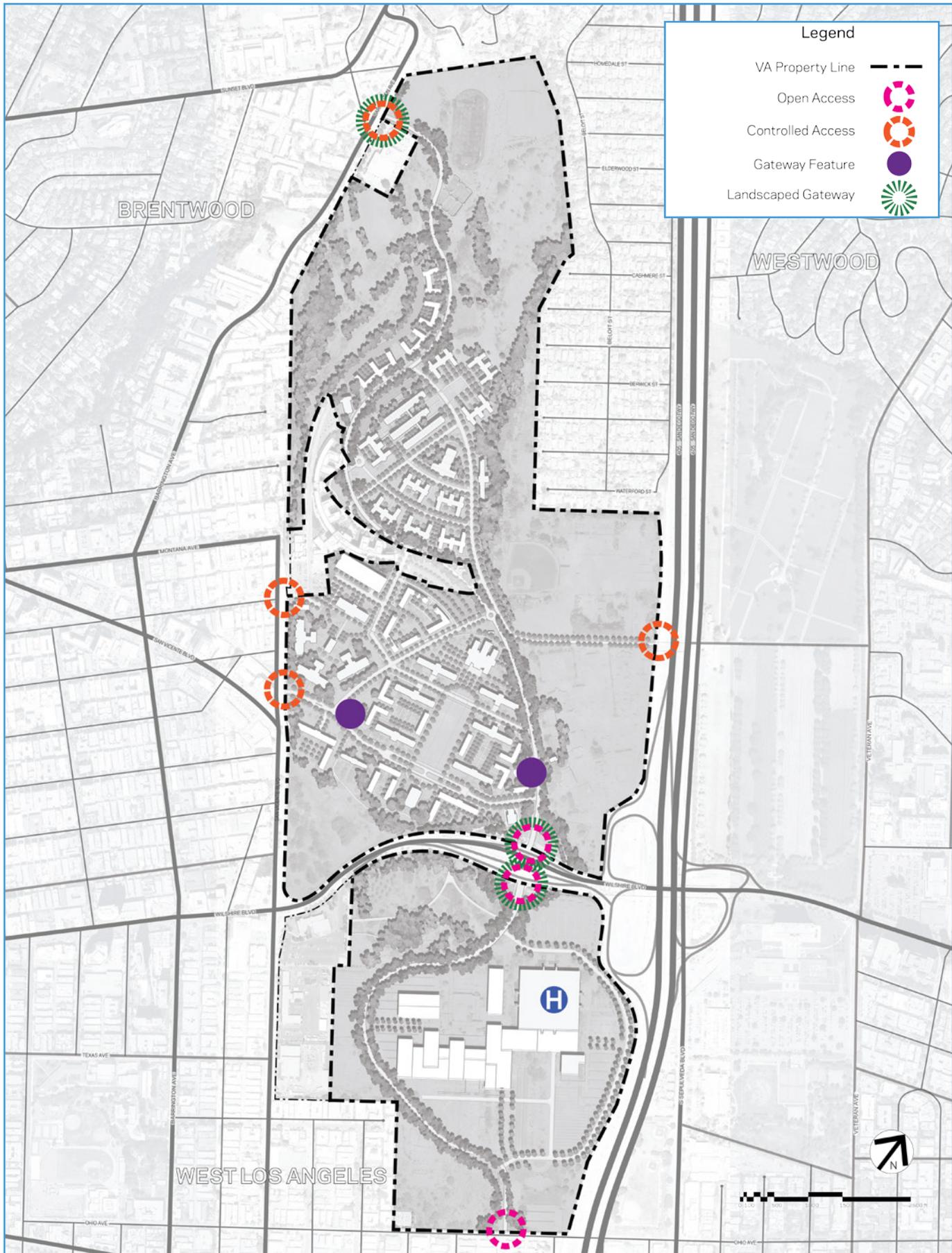
Creating attractive and inviting gateways at the Wilshire Boulevard and San Vicente campus entrances will greet residents and visitors as they enter the historic West Los Angeles VA Campus via car, bike, shuttle, or on foot. A favorable first impression for new arrivals onto the campus will be enhanced by focusing on landscaped vistas with mature and iconic trees and accents of seasonal color. The roadway that travels through these landscaped 'gateways' shall contain islands, short medians, bump-outs, street corners, planters, monuments, and markers to enhance the pedestrian experience.

Access Points

There are four controlled vehicular access points onto the north campus:

- Wilshire Boulevard - North
- San Vicente Boulevard at Eisenhower Avenue
- Constitution Avenue
- Barrington Avenue
- Two additional vehicle access points provide for access to the south medical campus
 - Wilshire Boulevard - South
 - Sawtelle Boulevard at Ohio Avenue

1. Creation of controlled access points onto campus limits unnecessary local through traffic and increases security
 - a. Kiosks placed at control points
 - b. Elements placed to slow traffic
 - c. Manned or electronic access control
 - d. Ability to vary level of security overtime as need fluctuates
2. Creation of primary roadway as the addressing street
3. Neighborhood centers and key buildings located off of primary roadway
4. Secondary roadways provide parking and service access
5. Definition of bicycle circulation system
 - a. Primary roadway with dedicated bike lane
 - b. Secondary and tertiary roadways with shared bike routes



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Figure D.26 Gateways & Access Points

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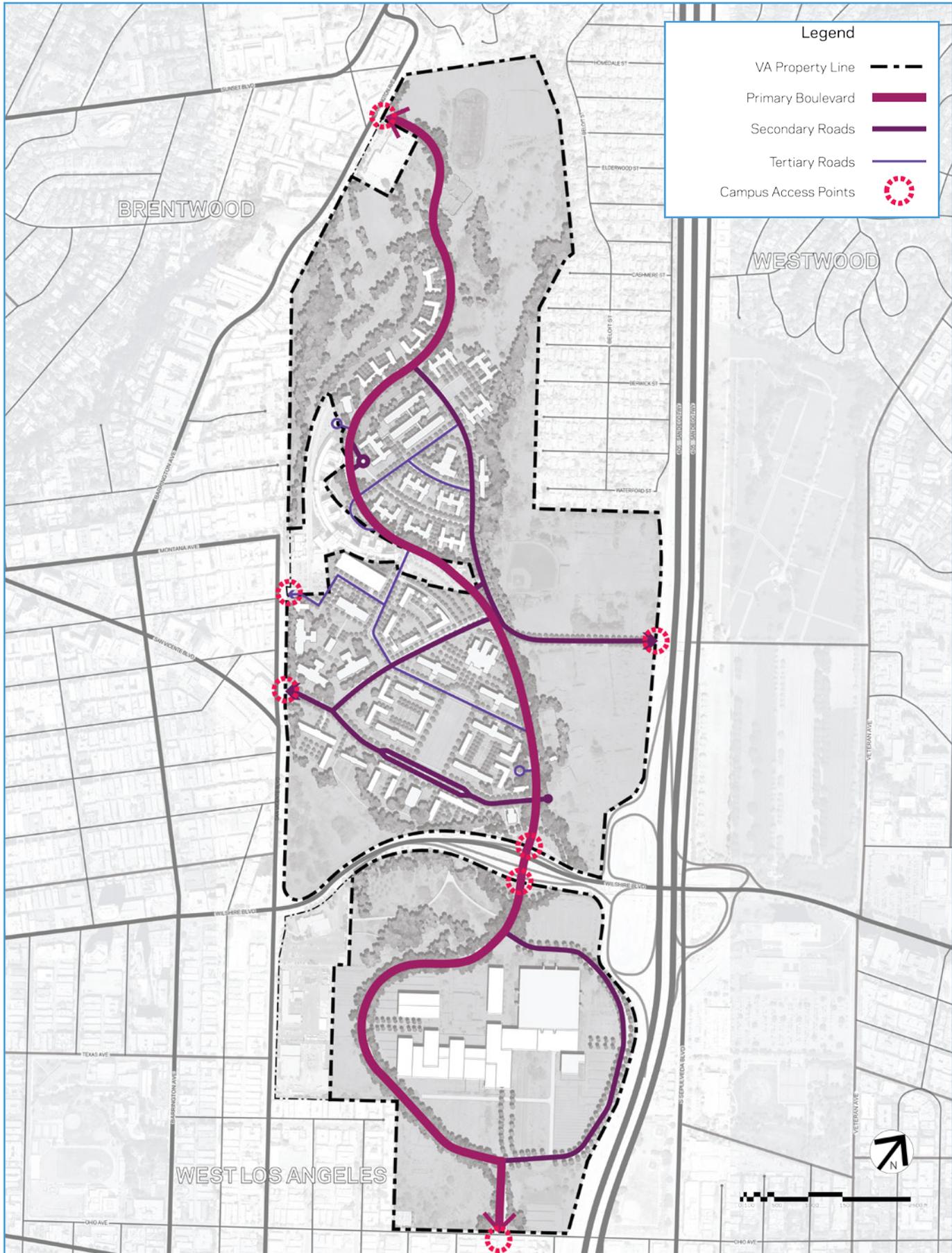
Master Plan Framework

Vehicular Circulation

Vehicular circulation will be improved through the creation of hierarchy and a simplification of the roadway network. Each neighborhood has a relationship with the primary road, the Greenway, which serves as a transit route and connection to the rest of the campus. In addition it also includes drop-off areas and limits accessible surface parking. (See "Figure D.27 Vehicular Circulation")

Traffic improvements beyond those governed by jurisdictional agencies' codes will be designed in accordance with the published VA standards and local criteria.

- a. Appropriate traffic-calming devices may be implemented, such as speed humps/bumps/tables, bulb-outs, additional median islands, or other VA-approved devices intended to reduce traffic speeds along the campus internal roadways.
- b. A fully controlled traffic system that unifies the north and south campus circulation, including a pedestrian circulation element, would be provided.
- c. Integrated pedestrian facilities adequately serving the needs of patients, residents, employees, and visitors would be provided.
- d. Site ingress and egress adequately serving the future site traffic demands would be provided.
- e. Internal circulation and facilities adequately serving the needs of emergency, service, and delivery vehicles would be provided. Internal circulation adequately serving the parking facilities would also be provided.
- f. Street lighting for internal roadways serving the campus would be consistent with all jurisdictional agencies' standards for roadway illumination.



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Figure D.27 Vehicular Circulation

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Bicycle Circulation

Both VA and the federal government have issued physical fitness guide points that are reflected in the plan, as the public health benefits for both cyclists and the general community have been widely acknowledged. The West Los Angeles Campus hosts bicycle and pedestrian-oriented events on campus every year, including the popular VA2K Walk and Roll event.

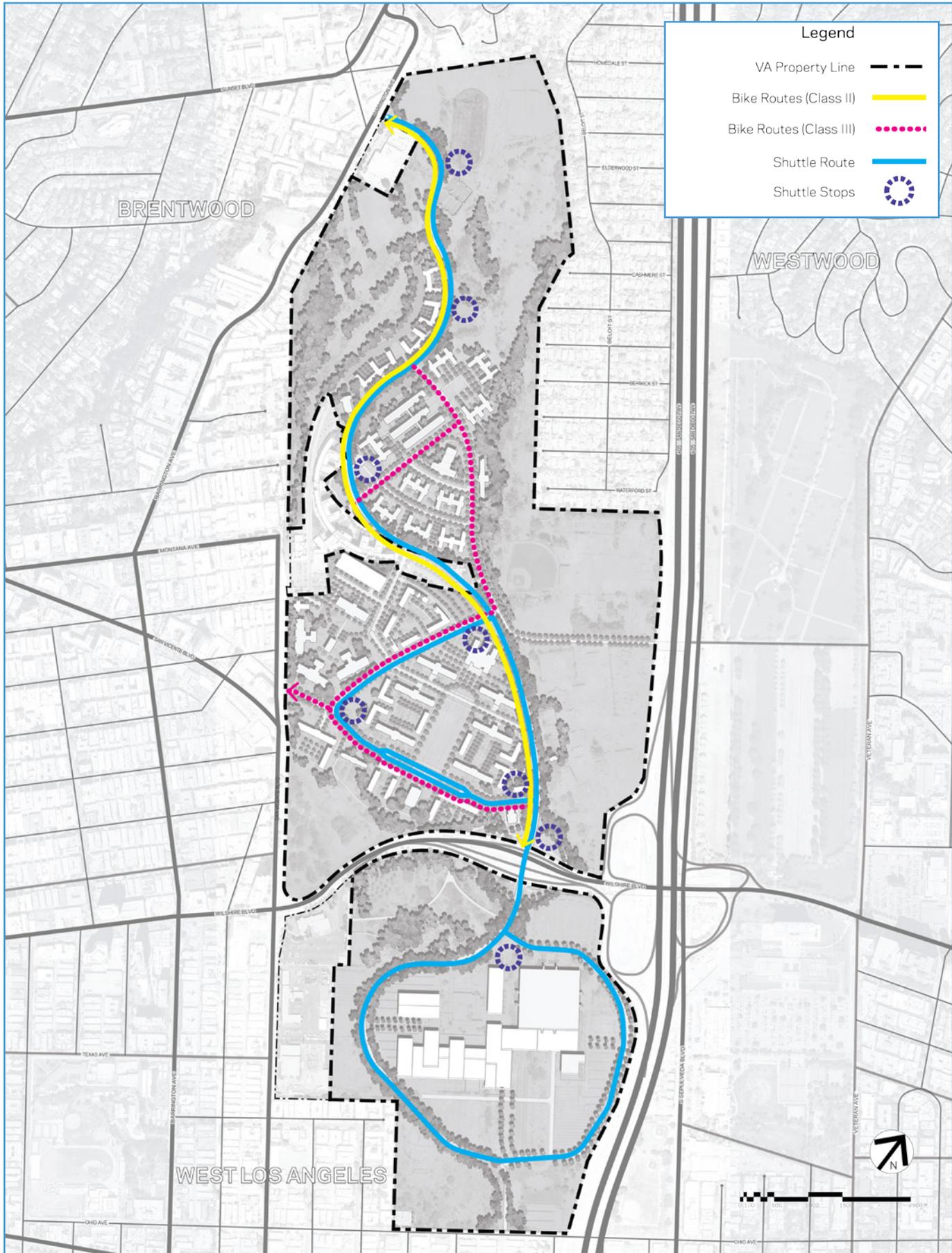
The primary circulation route, the Greenway, will contain a bike lane on either side of the roadway (Class II) as a designated bike route. Other roads on campus will not contain designated bicycle lanes (Class III), but will allow bikes on the roadway, and will have sharrows where appropriate. Bicycle parking is to be located at each community center and at other key locations on campus, including in residential apartments and health services destinations. (See “Figure D.28 Bicycle and Shuttle Circulation”).

1. Traffic improvements beyond those governed by jurisdictional agencies’ codes shall be designed in accordance with the published standards and criteria typically governing Complete Streets designs, including the latest editions of the Caltrans Highway Design Manual (Chapter 1000 Bicycle Transportation Design) and the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CaMUTCD, Section 9C).
 - a. Bike routes should offer a higher degree of service than alternative streets. Routes should provide:
 - i. through and direct travel for bicycle-demand corridors
 - ii. connect discontinuous segments of bike lanes
 - iii. provide traffic actuated signals for bicycles to give greater priority to bicyclists
 - iv. street parking has been removed or restricted in areas of critical width to provide improved safety
 - v. surface imperfections have been corrected (utility covers adjusted to grade, potholes filled, etc.)
 - vi. maintenance of that route will be at a higher standard than other comparable streets

- b. Wide sidewalks are not bikeways, do not meet design standards for bicycle routes, and may not meet the safety needs of both pedestrians and cyclists.
- c. Shared transit and bikeways should only be considered under these special, closed-campus circumstances, to provide bikeway continuity if:
 - i. the shuttle operating speed is 25 miles per hour or below
 - ii. if the grade of the roadway is 5% or less.

Shuttle Circulation

The primary circulation route, the Greenway, will allow a shuttle to run from the medical center, throughout the full campus. Stops are planned at each of the neighborhood community centers on the Greenway, approximately a four-minute walk apart



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Figure D.28 Bicycle and Shuttle Circulation

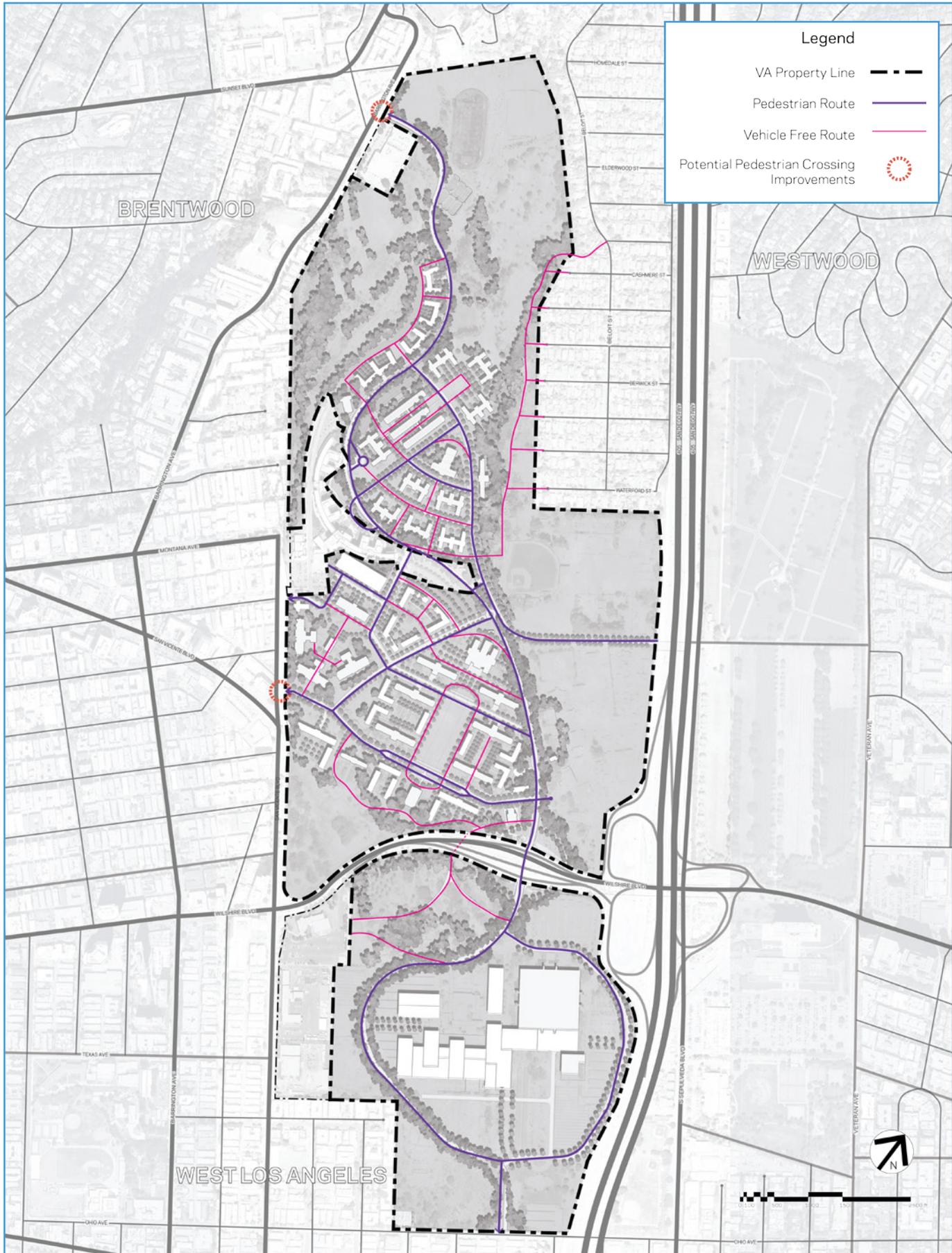
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Pedestrian Circulation

The goal is to provide a safe, direct, and accessible pedestrian circulation network that allows for a pleasant walking and wheelchair experience for all ages and levels of ability. (See “Figure D.29 Pedestrian Circulation”)

1. The typical two- to four-minute (600-foot to 1,200-foot) walking distance of an able-bodied person informed the placement of amenities and community centers.
2. There are five controlled pedestrian access points onto campus
 - a. Wilshire Boulevard
 - b. San Vicente Boulevard
 - c. Bingham Avenue
 - d. Constitution Avenue
 - e. Barrington Avenue
3. A network of pedestrian paths provides an intuitive way to navigate the site
 - a. Create a hierarchy of pedestrian paths
 - i. Primary path along Greenway
 - ii. Secondary circulation system along secondary roadways
 - iii. Pedestrian links through green open spaces
 - iv. Tertiary pedestrian paths connect secondary systems
4. Multiple paths provide variety and flexibility with circulation
5. Upgrades to pedestrian lighting network
6. Improve pedestrian circulation through the reducing grades
7. Provide community centers approx. 1,200 feet or a four-minute walking distance apart
8. Separation of pedestrian and vehicular circulation
9. Clear and safe marked crosswalks
10. Reduction of pedestrian crossing distance at marked crosswalks
11. Pedestrian links to shuttle stops
12. Improve ADA path of travel
 - a. Upgrades to accessible ramps
 - b. Reduction of steep grades



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Figure D.29 Pedestrian Circulation

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Walking Distances

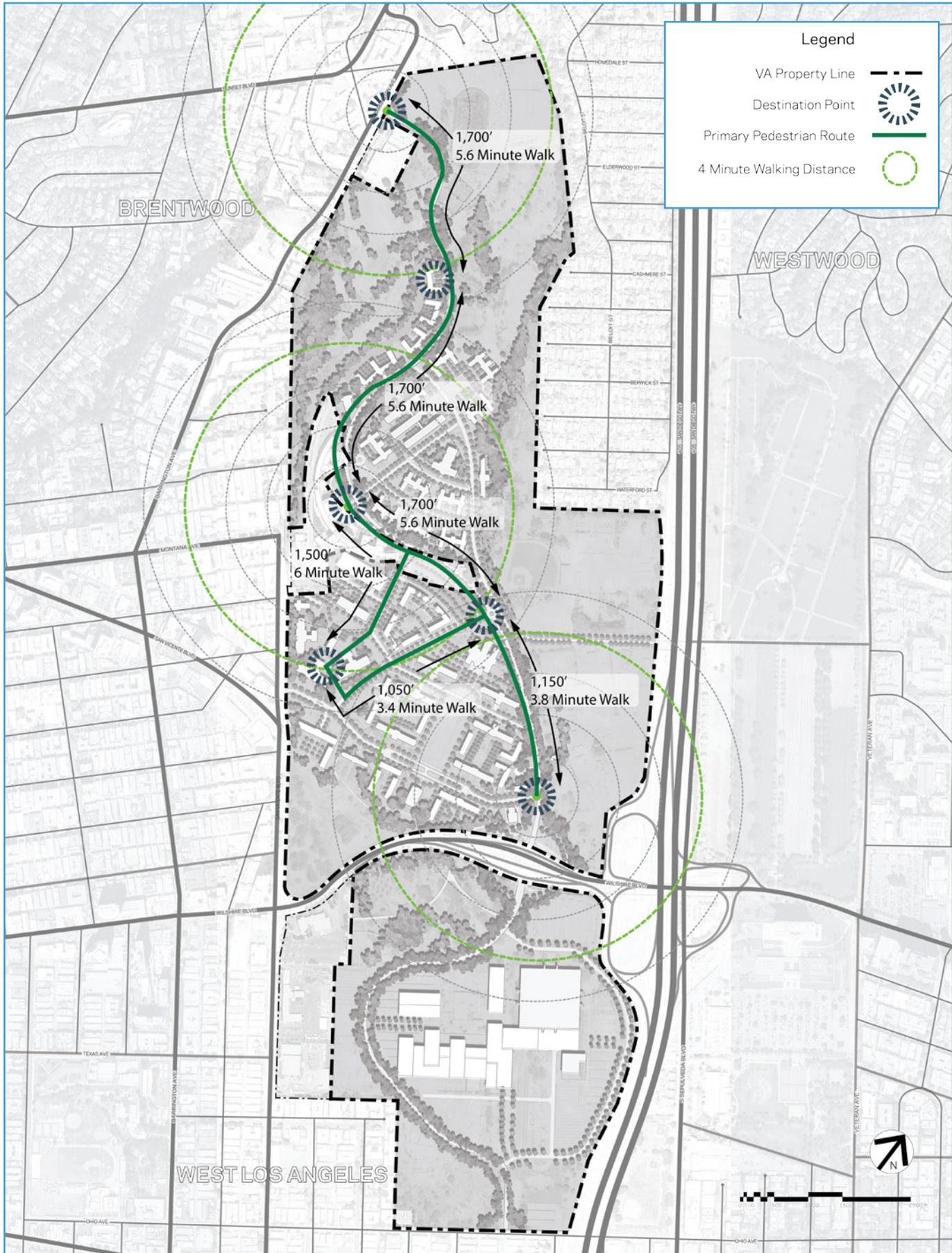
A network of well-defined, secure walking routes between inter-neighborhood destinations will support transportation, fitness, and recreation needs while also contributing to lower incidences of serious medical issues. The physical and mental health benefits of walking and walkable communities are well documented by the Surgeon General, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and numerous other health agencies. The Master Plan supports walkable, accessible, safe, and appealing pedestrian routes on campus to connect the neighborhoods and their community centers.

Table D-1 Walking Distances

	Time (Minutes)	Distance (Feet)
Grant East to Pershing	3.8	1,150 ft
Pershing to Dewey	3.4	1,050 ft
Dewey to Vandergrift	6	1,800 ft
Pershing to Vandergrift	5.6	1,700 ft
Vandergrift to MacArthur (northern extent)	4.2	1,250 ft

An Accessible Campus





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Figure D.30 Walking Distances

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Building Numbering, Building 206



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Signage and Wayfinding on Campus

Improved wayfinding will make the campus easier to navigate and more accessible for Veterans and visitors. A well-designed system of signage will reduce visual clutter on campus, enhance perceptions of safety, create a welcoming environment, and emphasize unique and interesting aspects of the campus. The system should:

- Reinforce site identity and borders
- Identify key entry points into the site
- Define routes for vehicular traffic to key buildings and parking areas
- Define paths for pedestrians between buildings
- Create awareness of and promote landmark or historic destinations

Wayfinding signage would be consistent with the current signage program and encompass the following elements:

Monument Signage

To identify entrances, provide a gateway, and convey campus identity in an attractive form that will be legible during both day and night.

- a. Located at primary vehicular entries at Wilshire Boulevard and San Vicente Boulevard

Entry Kiosk Character

To establish secure boundaries of campus.

- a. Rehabilitate existing guard kiosk at San Vicente Boulevard
- b. Brick kiosk reminiscent of the kiosk located on San Vicente Boulevard

Campus Map

Content to include building numbers, security and access information, and campus parking and roadways.

- a. Located at primary vehicular entries at Wilshire Boulevard and San Vicente Boulevard

Pedestrian Wayfinding

- a. Intended to direct pedestrians to destinations around campus
- b. Located at key pedestrian decision points on the pedestrian pathways
- c. Located adjacent to parking areas
- d. Located at pedestrian access points on campus
- e. Located near source of ambient light for viewing at night

Vehicular Wayfinding

Intended to direct pedestrians to destinations around campus.

- a. Located at key vehicular decision points
- b. Located at vehicular access points on campus
- c. All text and graphics to be applied as reflective vinyl, for viewing at night with large fonts

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Open Spaces

A series of vibrant and engaging open spaces will cater to the specialized needs of the Veteran population. The neighborhoods have been developed around the existing historic open spaces as well as the developmental constraints presented by topographical challenges, placing a premium on open-space frontage for as many residential units as possible.

Open spaces of varying scales would support the growth and comfort of individual Veterans as they progress through their healing process. Visualizing green spaces and the outdoors from within the residential units is known to help calm, heal, and support transitions. All neighborhoods would center on a residential-scaled landscaped plaza, green, or other socializing space. Additionally, spaces for larger community and ceremonial events are designated throughout the campus. These spaces are arranged to minimize fences and gates and to maximize visibility and a sense of security. (See “Figure D.31 Open Spaces”).

Active Recreation Spaces

Recreation spaces, many of which are part of the existing campus, provide Veterans with the opportunity to participate in diverse activities.

- a. Baseball facilities
- b. Synthetic track and field
- c. Swimming Pool
- d. Tennis Courts
- e. Golf Course

Community Level Open Spaces

These larger spaces have been preserved to allow for larger community events.

- a. Parade Ground
- b. Memorial Garden
- c. Wellness Garden

Neighborhood Open Spaces

These are provided for neighborhood-scale gathering and intermediate-level open spaces.

- a. Associated with the community centers, typical character are spaces as follows:
 - i. Japanese garden serves as a neighborhood open space
 - ii. Buildings 205, 208, and 209 Quad
 - iii. Grant East and West Greens created by the new quad formed by the existing buildings and the new construction.

Residential Gardens

Residential gardens provide intimate opportunities for individuals and small groups to engage with the outside environment.

- a. Each building will have residential garden spaces for use of the residents.
- b. Created as intimate spaces to aid in Veteran recovery and healing

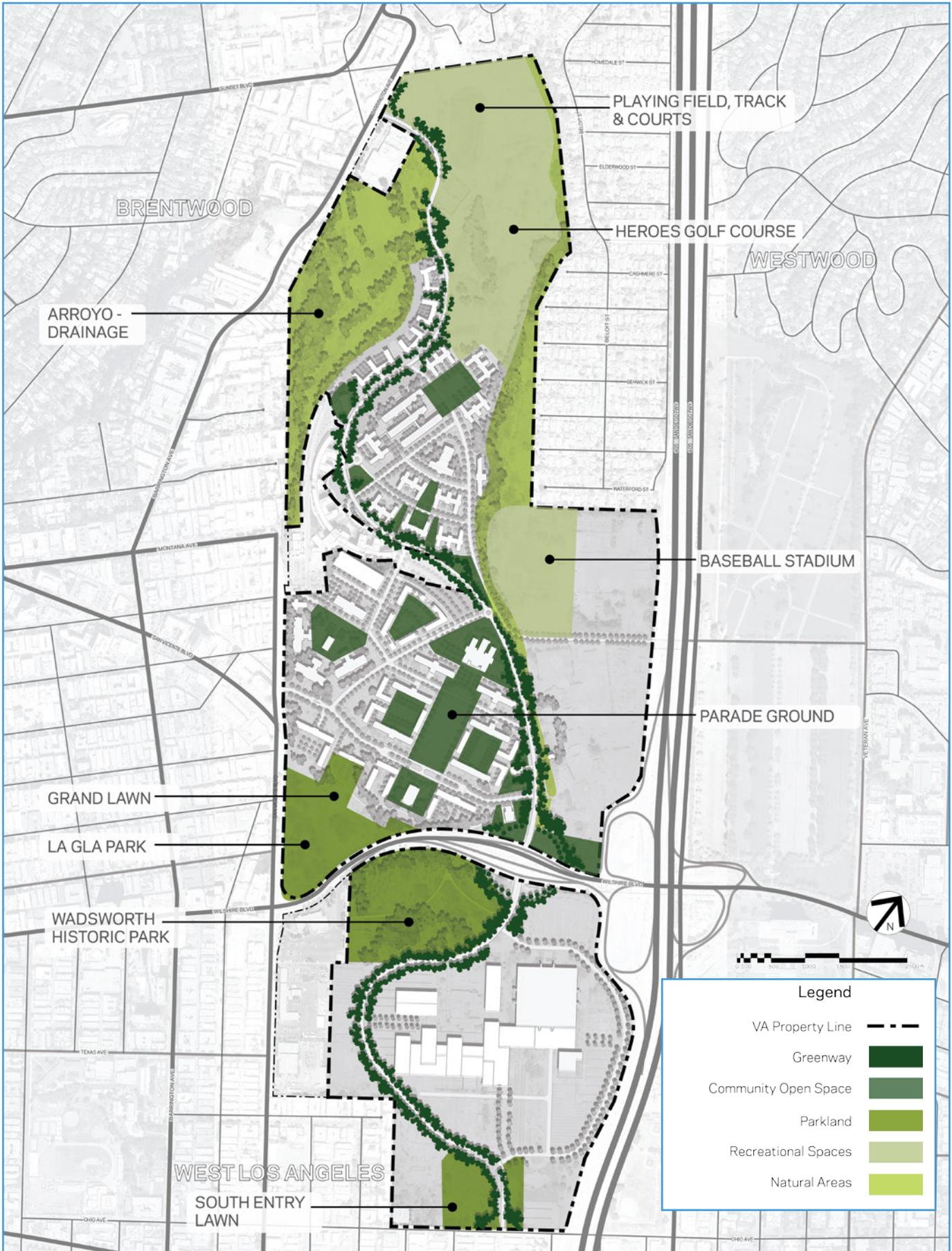


Figure D.31 Open Spaces

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Parking

Careful placement of building structures, thoughtful assignment of parking and service functions, and well-defined sight vistas will ease wayfinding and benefit the relationship between campus activities. An intelligent, thoughtful, and well-planned local parking strategy and wayfinding system will remain at the heart of the campus. Transforming the historic campus from an area that is visually dominated by parking to an attractive, park-like setting will greatly increase the WLA VA Campus' sense of place and community. (See "Figure D.32 Onsite Parking")

The parking plan intends to provide sufficient parking space for Veteran and staff use on the north campus, minimize encroachment on the neighborhoods and their open spaces, prioritize landscaping along the Greenway, support alternative modes of transportation such as bicycles and shuttle buses, create a pedestrian-friendly campus, and is responsive to Veteran needs for accessibility and convenience.

The parking study is scheduled to be completed in December of 2015. At that time, recommendations for parking will be made, however general good parking management strategies include:

- Restricting on-campus residents to resident-only lots
- Concentrate visitor and staff parking in areas served by shuttles

Therefore, the Master Plan suggests that the VA explore Campus Permit Groups as a way to regulate parking on-site. Groups may contain employees/staff, Veteran resident groups by neighborhood, or Visitors, among others.

Parking in the Neighborhoods

Each residential neighborhood would contain appropriate parking within safe proximity and convenience to building entries. The plan provides parking for one to .75 spaces for every resident, with the type of parking dependent on the specific neighborhood.

Surface Parking

Neighborhoods with more open area would allow some surface parking, landscaped with generous shade trees, screen walls, and berms. Well-lighted pathways and handicapped access would be provided.

Street Parking

Parallel and perpendicular parking would supplement surface parking. Street parking would not be provided on the circulation Greenway.

Structured Parking

In an effort to maintain a vibrant and engaging community, the master planning process identified the use of structured parking. Centrally located, parking structures are proposed at the center of the site to serve several adjacent neighborhoods. The exterior of the structures would be designed with finishes that are compatible with the surrounding housing. Additionally, the character of the Grant, and Dewey Neighborhoods would benefit from minimizing surface parking and proving an underground solution.

Service Entries

Service areas support uses from the storage of trash and recycling for pickup, to loading docks and staff parking. Service functions should be located away from visibility on streets, sidewalks, open spaces, or residential courtyards. Service areas can be screened with opaque walls, fencing combined with evergreen plant material, or appropriate landscaping, which would include any type of tall and dense vegetation listed on the approved planting list.

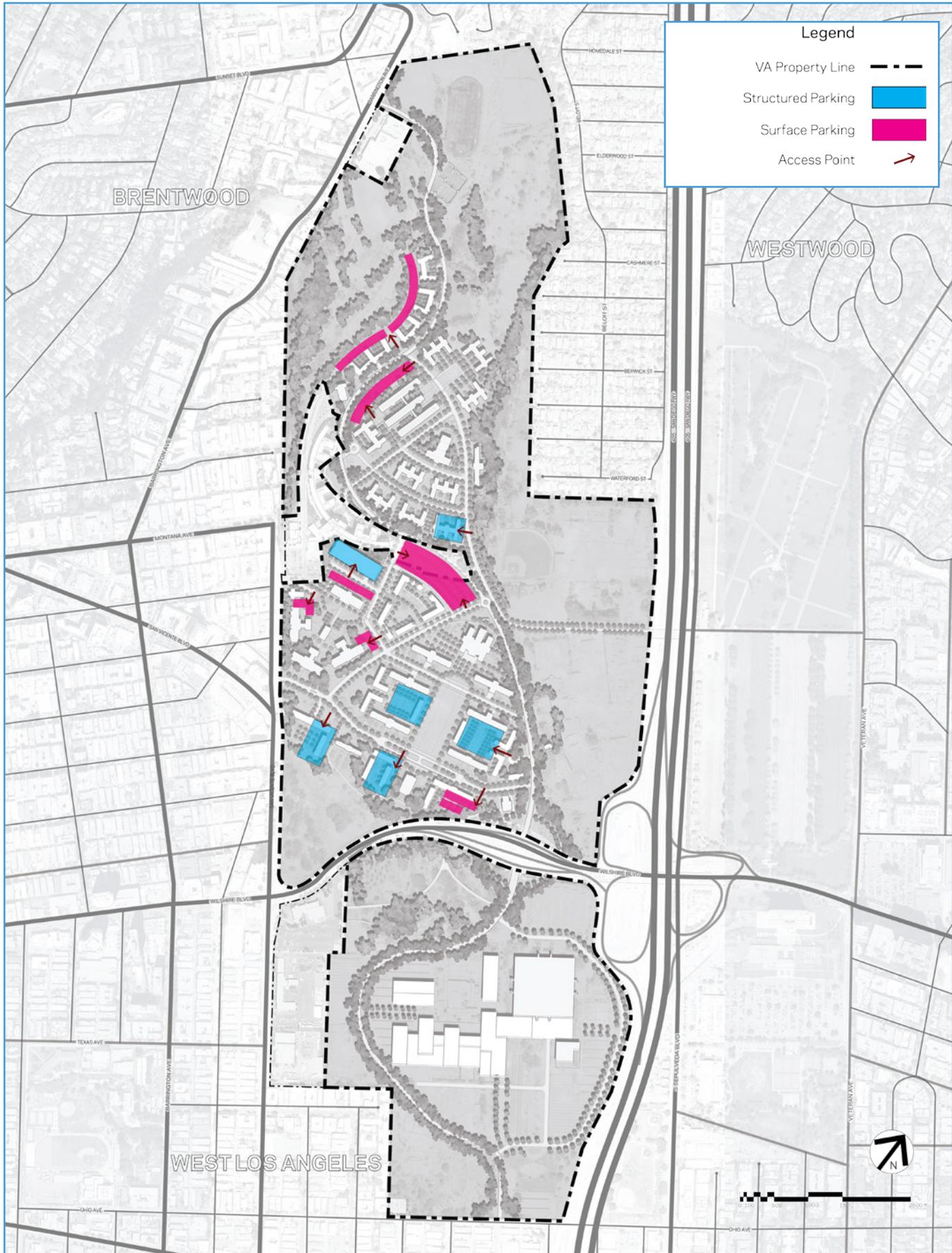


Figure D.32 Onsite Parking

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Proposed and Existing Buildings

The construction of new buildings will support the health, wellness, recreation, and social needs of the resident Veteran populations. (See “Figure D.33 Buildings”).

To accommodate new development, the land use framework reinforces the organization of the campus into a system of neighborhood zones, with clear identities created for each. (For proposed neighborhoods see “Figure D.22 Neighborhoods” on page 195).

Removed or Relocated Buildings and Functions

In the making of this physical site plan, some existing buildings were assumed that they could be demolished, pending compliance with applicable law including NEPA and National Historic Preservation Act, as the need for additional housing on campus grew.

These buildings include:

MacArthur Neighborhood

Building 231 - Support & Logistics

Building 336 - Shared

Building 339 - Shared

Patton Neighborhood

Building 259 - Mental Health

Vandergrift

Building 233 - Support & Logistics

Pershing Neighborhood

Building 199 - Vacant

Building 236 - Support & Logistics

Dewey Neighborhood

Building 337 - Research

Grant Neighborhood

Building 12 - Support & Logistics

Building 226 - Shared

Building 301 - Shared

Building 306 - Support & Logistics

Building 215G - Support & Logistics

Building 506 - Shared

South Campus

Building 304 - Ambulatory

Building 345 - Ambulatory

Building 401 - Mental Health

Building 402 - Mental Health

Building 507 - Ambulatory

A comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the existing site and facilities provided valuable insights into how effectively the campus is currently delivering care and services to Veterans. These assessments guided the development of all proposed development strategies.

Appropriate Level and Types of Veteran Housing

Recommendations include the strategic addition of permanent supportive housing as well as transitional housing. These residential communities will be supported by ambulatory care services and short-term residential treatment services that provide state-of-the-art primary care, mental health and addiction services, with a particular focus on chronically homeless Veterans of the Los Angeles region as well as severely disabled, female Veterans, and aging Veterans.

The structure of new housing would be based on state-of-the-art homelessness and urban planning sciences, consistent with best practices and evidence-based approaches under the Housing First model. VA's objective under that model is for Veterans to have an attractive choice to decide whether to pursue housing on or off campus, while noting that permanent on-campus housing is intended for the most needy, most vulnerable Veterans. The housing would be carefully planned to help ensure a safe, dignified community environment that functions effectively, both independently and in coordination with the other care and services provided on campus and within the surrounding communities.

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Distribution of Housing, Scale, and Design Character

The housing types proposed in this Master Plan accommodate the diversity of the Veteran community. The distribution of each housing type is informed by a progressive housing and service model that is flexible, individualized and Veteran-focused. Residents with the greatest need for medical support will be housed closest to the medical center and those with less need for support can be located more remotely.

For all of the neighborhoods, the referenced unit sizes are: Studios are approximately 400 sf, one bedrooms 500 sf and two bedrooms with 600 sf. The plan is designed on a module, so there is flexibility to adjust the mix of unit type and sizes as required over time.

Transitional and Bridge

Bridge and transitional housing residents are the population with the greatest need for access to the medical center. This Veteran group is currently housed in 1920s-era, three-story, double-loaded corridor buildings. Though originally built as housing, these buildings can be perceived as out of date and institutional. In their current form, they do not create a sense of community and healing.

As improvements are made, these buildings must accommodate more community-shared spaces and take greater advantage of available outdoor landscapes. The scale and character of the south transitional housing area can better serve this sensitive population with the construction of new infill buildings to create more residential-scale courtyards, balconies, terraces, and a variety of community socialization spaces. The neighborhood community center for the transitional neighborhood will be within the existing former “mess hall,” Building 13, which also connects this area to the Greenway.

Permanent Supportive Housing

The existing buildings in the center part of the north campus are more appropriately scaled for long-term housing. This area will be composed of neighborhoods that can house Veterans. The forms of the existing structures are more varied, with exterior courtyards and multiple entries. These buildings can easily accommodate small residential groups. The character is consistent with neighborhood streets and courtyard housing found in the surrounding area.

A sense of community can also be established with the addition of indoor-to-outdoor connectivity, gardens, and streetscape improvements. An unbuilt area, currently used as surface parking, would form a new neighborhood with the same scale and similar characteristics as the adjacent existing structures. Neighborhood community centers throughout this area would be located on the lower levels of the residential buildings. These amenities would be at the center of each neighborhood, as well as on the campus Greenway.