

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT STAFF REPORT

August 24, 2026

ZBA-65-26

GENERAL INFORMATION

Petitioner

Cathy Thornton

Requested Action and Purpose

Petition for a special exception to allow the short-term rental of a property.

Location and Existing Zoning

901 17th Ave. MRU-H. (Council District 4)

Size and Existing Land Use

Approximately 1.01 acres, mixed residential.

Surrounding Land Use and Zoning

North: Single-family residence, MRU-H

East: Single-family residence, MRU-H

South: Single-family residence, DHE-H

West: Commercial, DHE-H

Applicable Regulations

Sec. 25-39 – Special Exception Use Permit

d. Decision-Making Standards for Special Exception Use Permit

The Zoning Board of Adjustment may approve a special exception use permit application only upon finding the proposed special exception use:

1. Complies with all applicable district-specific standards in Article IV :Zoning Districts;
2. Complies with all applicable standards in Article V : Use Regulations;
3. Complies with all relevant subdivision standards in the Subdivision Regulations;
4. Will not have a substantial adverse impact on vehicular and pedestrian safety;
5. Will not have a substantial adverse impact on vehicular traffic;
6. Is compatible with the character of surrounding development and the neighborhood;
7. Will not have a substantial adverse impact on adjoining properties in terms of noise, lights, glare, vibrations, fumes, odors, litter, or obstruction of air or light;
8. Will not have a substantial adverse impact on the aesthetic character of the area where it is proposed to be located; and
9. Will not have a substantial adverse impact on public safety or create nuisance conditions detrimental to the public.

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT STAFF REPORT

August 24, 2026

Sec. 25-101.c.4.iv.d General Standards

1. Short-term rentals shall comply with all building and fire codes, and comply with all provisions of this Ordinance, including Article VI Division 2, Off-Street Parking, Bicycle Parking, and Loading Standards, and Article VI Division 10, Signs and Billboards.
2. Short-term rentals shall comply with the standards in Sec. 10.8-13, Noise in residential districts, of the City Code.
3. Off-street parking spaces may be provided on driveways or within a parking area on the property.
4. The property shall contain a dwelling able to be occupied.
5. Commercial events or other large events such as concerts or weddings are prohibited on the property.
6. The rental of units for a period of less than 24 hours is prohibited

Sec. 25-101.c.4.iv.g Decision Criteria

When deciding on an application for a special exception use permit to operate a short-term rental use, the Zoning Board of Adjustment shall consider the following factors, in addition to the general decision-making standards in Sec. 25-39.d:

1. Whether the property is permanently occupied and leased in its entirety to one party for periods of at least 30 consecutive nights;
2. Whether the short-term rental use is proposed to be or will be the primary or accessory use of the dwelling;
3. If a short-term rental is proposed for a site that has been previously used for a short-term rental, the number of complaints, violations, and other departures from the standards of this Ordinance and the City Code that have occurred on the property; and
4. As part of its evaluation on the character of surrounding development and the neighborhood and other potentially adverse impacts of the use, the characteristics of the neighborhood and surrounding properties including the underlying zone district, surrounding land uses, the number of nearby short-term rental uses, the topography, access, and similar factors.

SUMMARY

The petitioner is requesting a special exception to allow the short-term rental of a dwelling. TapAway LLC will be the primary contact and will be available 24hrs a day in case of an emergency. The petitioner currently manages over 50 short-term rentals. The house is equipped with exterior cameras, smart locks, and noise monitors. The house is not owner occupied. When not rented, the house will remain vacant or be used by the owners. The house has 5 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms. The petitioner is requesting 8 adults and 4 vehicles.

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT STAFF REPORT

August 24, 2026

Office of Urban Development, Planning Division: If approved, staff recommends 6 adults / 3 vehicles based on existing driveway /off-street parking and occupancy as it relates to parking.

Office of Urban Development, Codes and Development Services Division: No violations found or complaints received.

Office of Urban Development, Building and Inspections Division: No comment

Office of the City Engineer: No comment

Fire and Rescue Department, Fire Administration: No comment

ZBA Petition for Short-Term Rental

This application is for a request to the Zoning Board of Adjustment to approve a Special Exception to operate a short-term rental. Prior to submitting this form, a business license must be submitted to the Revenue Division.

Have you submitted a business license to the Revenue Division?

Yes

Property Information:

Site Address:

901 17th Ave, Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401

Property Owner Name:

Cathy Thornton

Numer of Bedrooms:

5

Number of Bathrooms:

3

Total Square Footage of Residence:

2356

Is this the Owner's Primary Residence?

No

If yes, where will the property owner stay when the home is being rented? If no, please explain how this property will be used when it is not being rented on a short-term basis.

Untitled

The property will be used by the owners or stay vacant when not rented as a STR.

Applicant Information:

Applicant Name:

Cathy Thornton

Supplemental Information:

On-street parking is prohibited while the dwelling is being rented on a short-term basis. Parking must be located on driveways or within a parking area on the property. No more than two vehicles may be parked tandem (one vehicle behind the other). Typically, two adults are allowed per vehicle.

How many vehicles are you requesting to park in your driveway or designated parking area during the short-term rental? How many adults are you requesting to rent to at one time?

Untitled

4 cars/8 adults

Who will be the primary contact in case of an emergency? Where are they located in relation to the property? Will they be available 24 hours a day?

Untitled

TapAway, LLC-Tanner Ashcraft will be managing the property.

What is the petitioner's experience managing short-term rentals? (ex. how many properties, location, any issues, etc.)

Untitled

None- we will have a management company

What security measures are in place for renters to prevent violations of City ordinances and protect the neighborhood? (ex. cameras, keypad locks, noise detection systems, etc.) Attach a copy of your rules and regulations for renters along with this application at the bottom of the form.

Untitled

exterior cameras, noise monitors, smart locks

Supporting Documents:

Rules and Regulations:

TAPAWAY - Fox's Den.pdf

Photos of Parking Area:

Tuscaloosa parking.jpeg

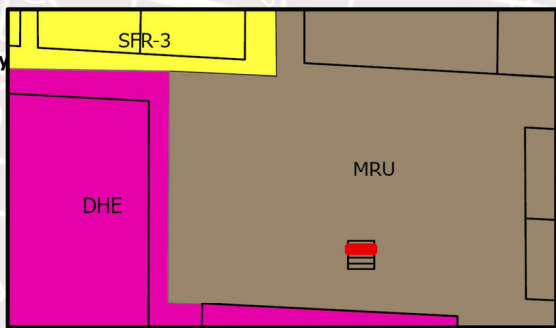
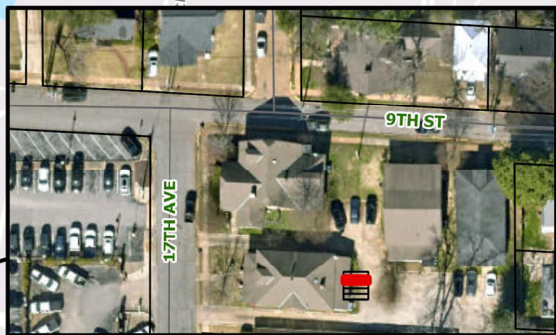
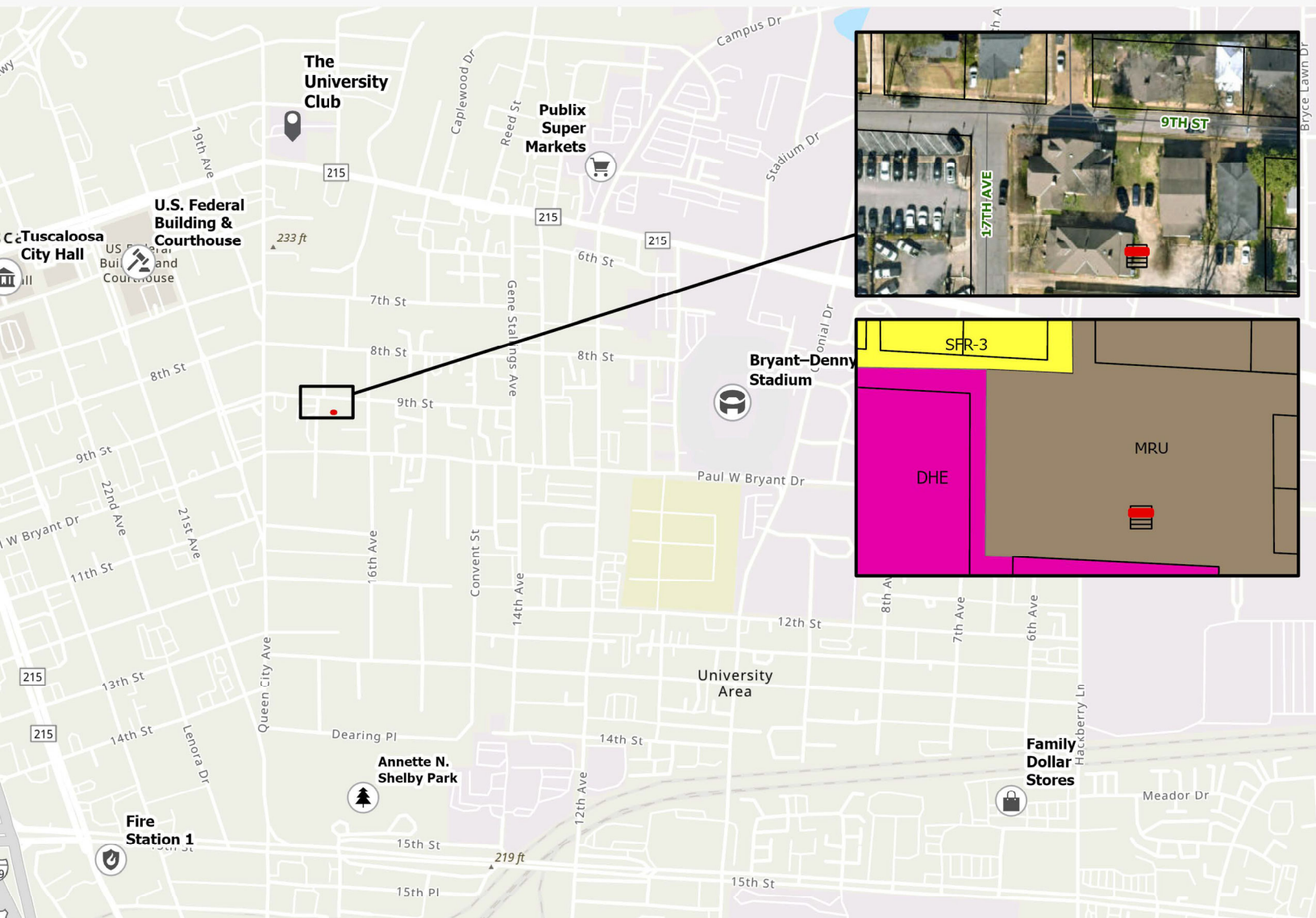
Additional Documents:

Once submitted, a staff member will contact the applicant using the email provided on this form. If more documents are required, the staff member will clarify what is required in that email. By submitting this application, you recognize the city will send public notification and place a sign on the property with information for the public.



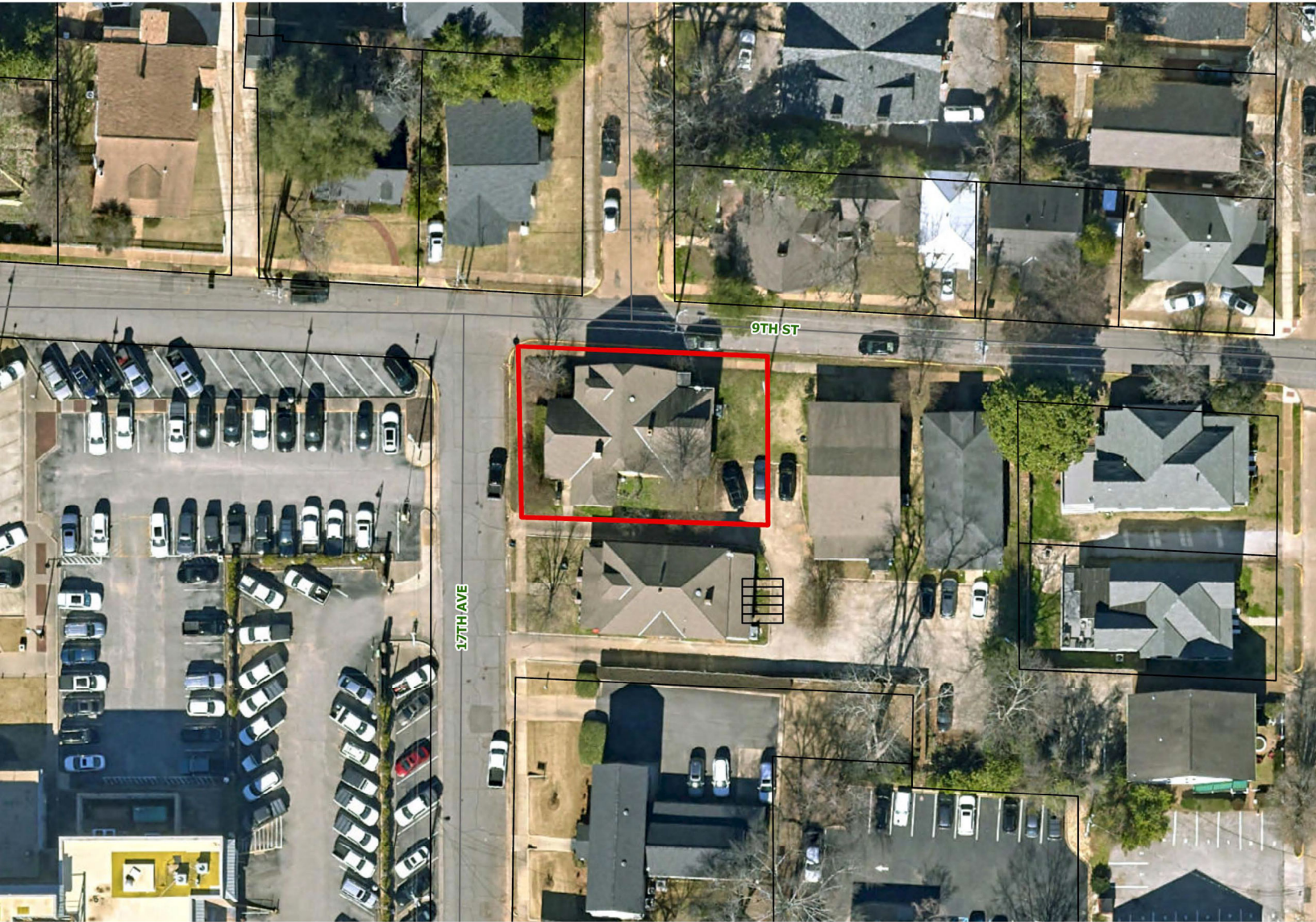
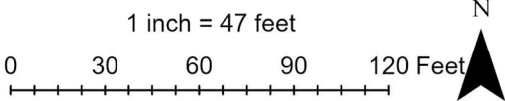
901 17th Avenue

0 390 780 1,170 1,560 Feet





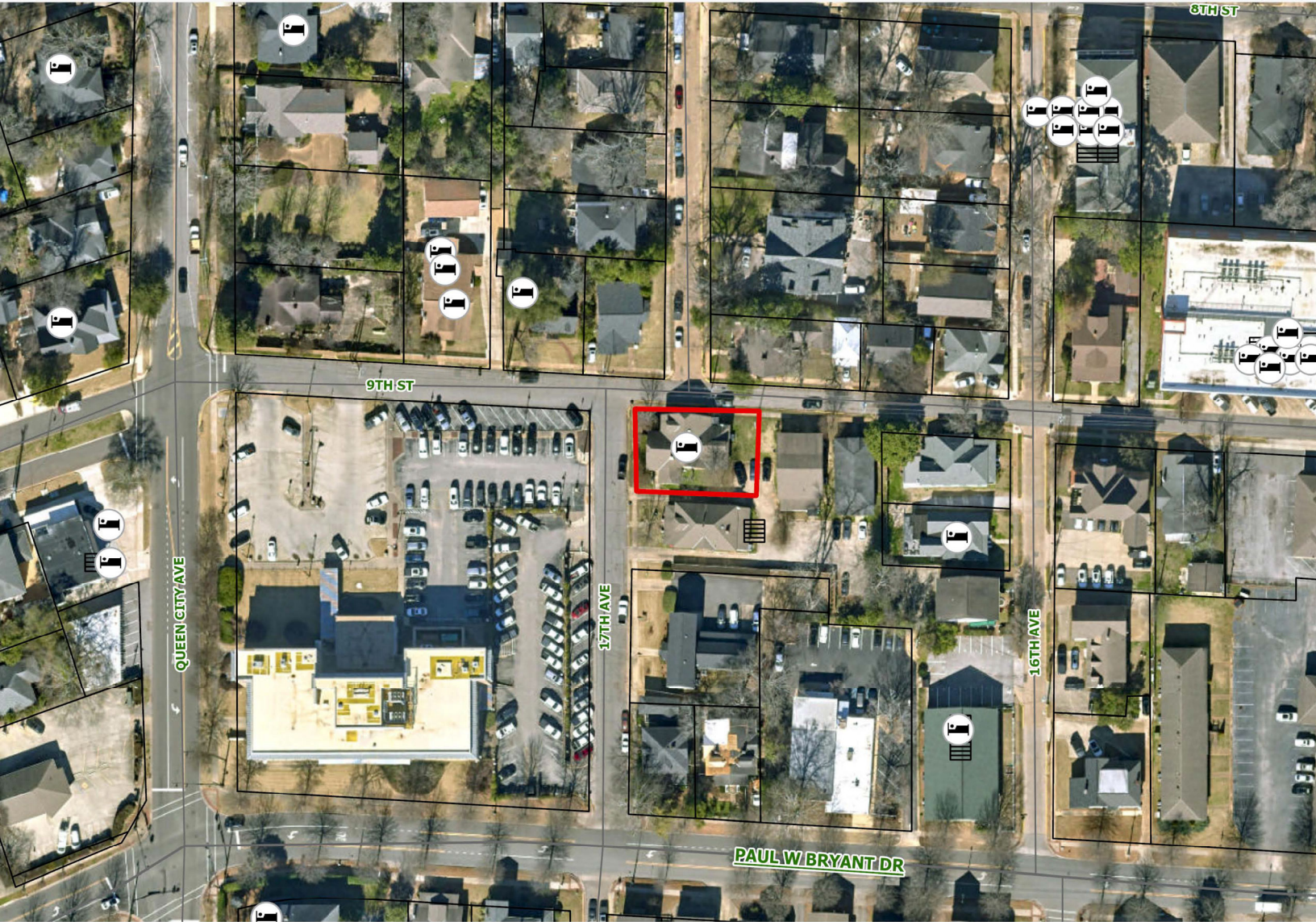
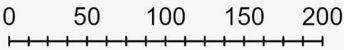
901 17th Avenue





901 17th Ave

1 inch = 95 feet







1700

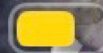
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Siri



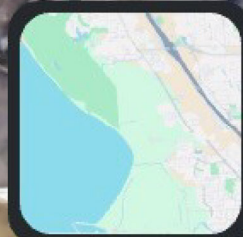
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901 17th A



1607



905

