

POLICY REGULATING THE USE OF COUNTY PROPERTY FOR FREE SPEECH ACTIVITIES

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners recognizes and supports the rights of the people to engage in free speech activities, including leafleting, displaying signs, picketing and other activities involving the advancement, communication or expression of views, ideas, or grievances on County-owned properties. The Board of County Commissioners will protect freedom of speech, petition, and peaceful assembly as set forth in the United States Constitution. Free speech activities will neither be restricted based upon the content, subject matter, or viewpoint of the message conveyed nor limited simply because the message may be offensive to others.

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners also recognizes that public property must be used for its primary purpose of conducting the lawful functions of government without undue interference. Consistent with federal law, the Board maintains the ability to regulate free speech activities on County-owned properties with reasonable, content-neutral, time, place, and manner restrictions. This includes the designation of public forums where public assemblies are allowed.

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners does hereby designate the following areas of County-owned property as public forums for free speech activities because these areas have been traditionally used as public forums for such activities. All other County-owned properties are not public forums.

- Certain portions of the unrestricted, public access grounds of the Oklahoma County Courthouse, located at 321 Park Avenue in Oklahoma City, and Courthouse Annex, located at 320 Robert S. Kerr in Oklahoma City, as outlined in yellow in Attachment 1. These areas are described as the north side of the County Courthouse Annex building, excluding the uncovered sidewalk; the east side of the Oklahoma County Courthouse, excluding the restricted alley; the south side of the Oklahoma County Courthouse; and the west side of the Oklahoma County Courthouse, excluding the restricted alley. Areas depicted in green are not County-owned property.
- Certain portions of the unrestricted, public access grounds of the Oklahoma County Detention Center, located at 201 North Shartel in Oklahoma City, as outlined in yellow in Attachment 2. These areas are described as the parking lot and lawn located at the public entrance on the east side of the Oklahoma County Detention Center. Areas depicted in green are not County-owned property.
- Certain portions of the unrestricted, public access grounds of the Oklahoma County Juvenile Justice Center, located at 5905 N. Classen Court, in Oklahoma City, as outlined in yellow in Attachment 3. These areas are described as the parking lot and lawn located

at the public entrance on the east side of the Oklahoma County Juvenile Justice Center. Areas depicted in green are not County-owned property.

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners declares that both the interiors and exteriors of County-owned buildings are not open to the public for the purpose of free speech expression and are expressly reserved for the exclusive functioning of County government and the Courts. Signs, banners, or other materials (to include but not be limited to white boards, sandwich boards, placards, posters, flyers, handbills, announcements, notices, brochures, etc.) affixed to the walls or surfaces of County-owned buildings or structures, including the walls and surfaces of the Oklahoma County Courthouse, Courthouse Annex, and Oklahoma County Detention Center, are prohibited. This prohibition does not apply to signs, banners, or other materials affixed to the walls or surfaces by the Board of County Commissioners, an Elected Official, or their employees in the performance of their official duties.

WHEREAS, in order to protect the safety of those participating in or observing free speech activities and to maintain public areas for the use of the public and the functioning of County government and the Courts, the following apply to all acts or expressions of free speech conducted in the designated public forums. Free speech activities may not:

- Be conducted in an unlawful manner.
- Be conducted within 25 feet of any building entrance or exit during times when the building is open and operating public business.
- Interfere with the flow of pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
- Create an imminent safety, security or health hazard.
- Use any amplified sound (i.e. bullhorn, portable amplifier, portable speaker, drumming, etc.) during times when the Courthouse and Courthouse Annex is open and operating public business.
- Create excessive noise that disrupts the functioning of the Court, as determined by any judge of the District Court, during times when the Courthouse and Courthouse Annex is open and operating public business.
- Be conducted in a manner that damages public property.

WHEREAS, the Oklahoma County Sheriff is charged with the statutory duty to provide security for the Courthouse and Courthouse Annex and to keep the peace in all areas of the County. Therefore, it may be necessary for the Oklahoma County Sheriff and his deputies to communicate this policy to citizens seeking to engage in First Amendment protected activities. Citizens who chose to violate this policy after being informed thereof may be ejected from the premises. Assemblies that pose an imminent danger to public safety may be required to disperse immediately and without prior warning. Citizens whose activities violate state law or municipal ordinance may be arrested without prior warning.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Oklahoma County Board of County Commissioners does hereby adopt the above and foregoing Policy Regulating the Use of County Property for Free Speech Activities.

APPROVED this _____ day of _____, 2020.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Chairman

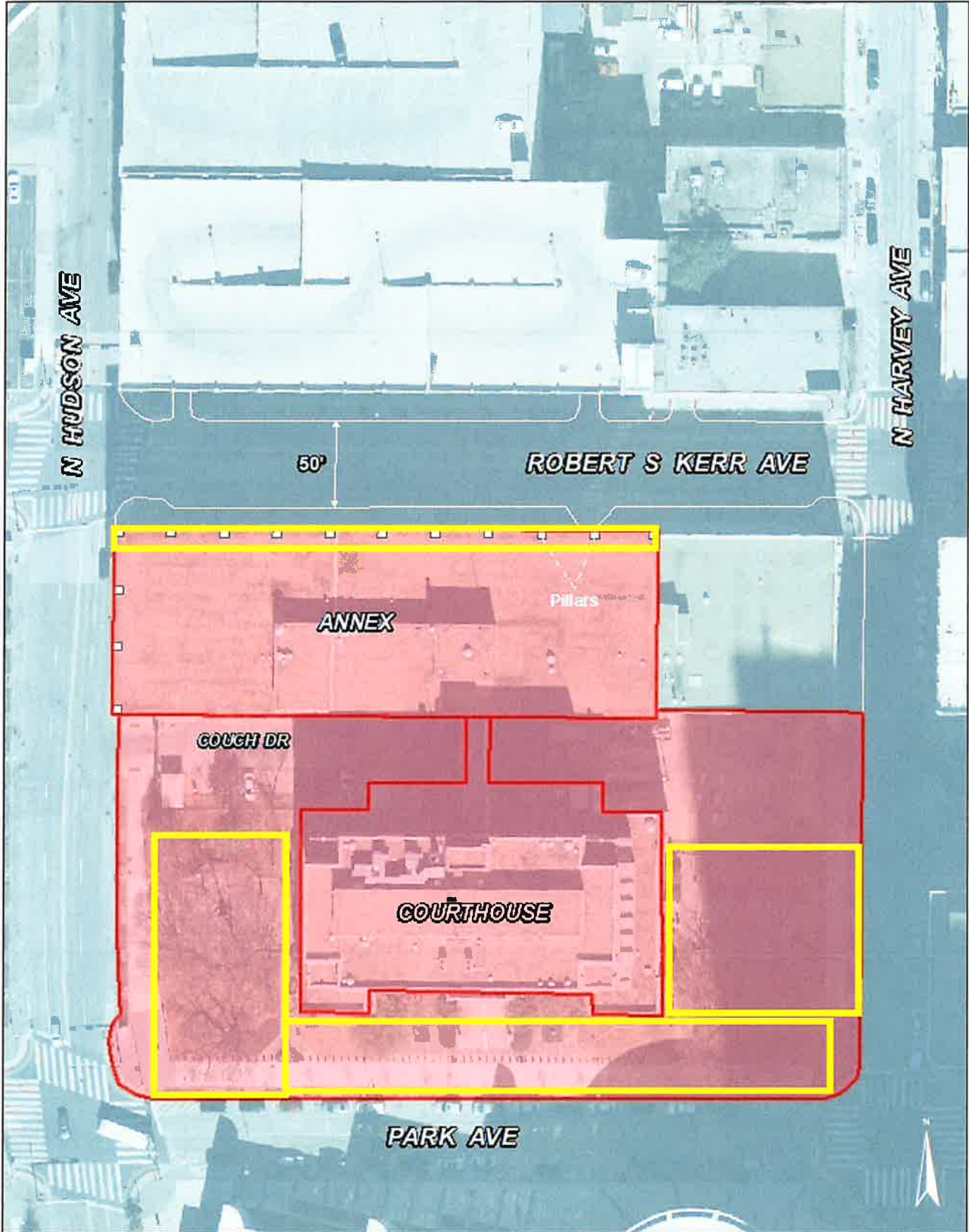
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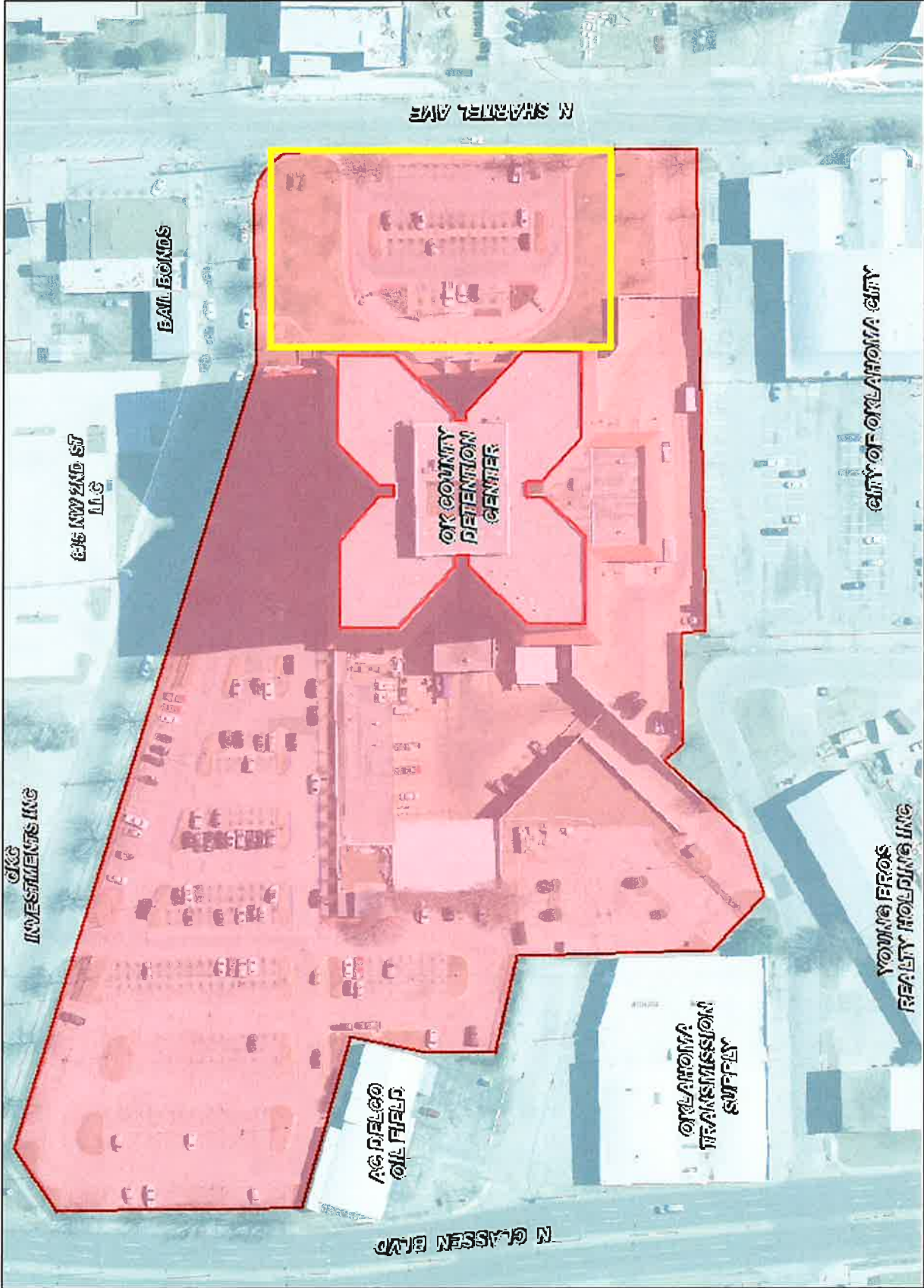
ATTEST:

David B. Hooten, County Clerk

County Property Annex & Courthouse



Oklahoma County Detention Center



Oklahoma County Juvenile Center

