

PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA

CHAIRPERSON:
Chris Gomez



VICE CHAIRPERSON:
Marvin Hansen

COMMISSIONERS: Mary Beatie, Chris Gomez, Marvin Hansen, Sarrah Peariso, Adam Peck

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2021
VISALIA CONVENTION CENTER
LOCATED AT 303 E. ACEQUIA AVE. VISALIA, CA
MEETING TIME: 7:00 PM

Citizens may appear at the Planning Commission meeting in person and will be asked to maintain appropriate, physical distancing from others and wear a mask or face shield pursuant to the Governor's Executive Orders and public health guidance during the COVID-19 situation.

1. CALL TO ORDER –
2. THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE –
3. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS – This is the time for citizens to comment on subject matters that are not on the agenda but are within the jurisdiction of the Visalia Planning Commission. You may provide comments to the Planning Commission at this time, but the Planning Commission may only legally discuss those items already on tonight's agenda.
The Commission requests that a five (5) minute time limit be observed for Citizen Comments. You will be notified when your five minutes have expired.
4. CHANGES OR COMMENTS TO THE AGENDA –
5. CONSENT CALENDAR - All items under the consent calendar are to be considered routine and will be enacted by one motion. For any discussion of an item on the consent calendar, it will be removed at the request of the Commission and made a part of the regular agenda.
 - a. Finding of Consistency No. 2020-02: A request by Self-Help Enterprises and Mogavero Architects to modify the approved building plans and street frontage improvements associated with a residential mixed-use development originally approved through Conditional Use Permit No. 2019-40, located at 300 E. Oak Avenue (APN: 094-283-001).
6. PUBLIC HEARING – Brandon Smith, Senior Planner
Recommendation on the adoption of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) thresholds and implementation guidelines prepared pursuant to Senate Bill 743 and the requirements of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, California Public Resources Code Section 21099 and CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064.3(b) and 15064.7.

7. CITY PLANNER/ PLANNING COMMISSION DISCUSSION –

- a. Next Planning Commission Meeting is Monday, February 22, 2021.
- b. Joint City Council and Planning Commission tentatively set for March 17, 2020.
- c. Presentation to City Council on Committee/Commission reviews.

The Planning Commission meeting may end no later than 11:00 P.M. Any unfinished business may be continued to a future date and time to be determined by the Commission at this meeting. The Planning Commission routinely visits the project sites listed on the agenda.

For Hearing Impaired – Call (559) 713-4900 (TTY) 48-hours in advance of the scheduled meeting time to request signing services.

Any written materials relating to an item on this agenda submitted to the Planning Commission after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection in the City Office, 315 E. Acequia Visalia, CA 93291, during normal business hours.

APPEAL PROCEDURE

THE LAST DAY TO FILE AN APPEAL IS THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2021 BEFORE 5 PM

According to the City of Visalia Zoning Ordinance Section 17.02.145 and Subdivision Ordinance Section 16.04.040, an appeal to the City Council may be submitted within ten days following the date of a decision by the Planning Commission. An appeal form with applicable fees shall be filed with the City Clerk at 220 N. Santa Fe, Visalia, CA 93291. The appeal shall specify errors or abuses of discretion by the Planning Commission, or decisions not supported by the evidence in the record. The appeal form can be found on the city's website www.visalia.city or from the City Clerk.

THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2021

City of Visalia



To: Planning Commission

From: Brandon Smith, Senior Planner
Phone: (559) 713-4636
E-mail: brandon.smith@visalia.city

Date: February 8, 2021

Re: Finding of Consistency No. 2020-02: A request by Self-Help Enterprises and Mogavero Architects to modify the approved building plans and street frontage improvements associated with a residential mixed-use development originally approved through Conditional Use Permit No. 2019-40, located at 300 E. Oak Avenue (APN: 094-283-001).

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that Planning Commission make a Finding of Consistency allowing modifications to the design of the residential mixed-use development (known as The Lofts at Fort Visalia), previously approved per Conditional Use Permit No. 2019-40 (original site plan is attached as Exhibit "C"). The modifications are listed in Exhibit "A" and include concessions requested under the State Density Bonus Law as described in Exhibit "B".

DISCUSSION

Conditional Use Permit No. 2019-40 was approved on December 9, 2019, allowing the construction of a three-story residential mixed-use development that includes 3,500 square feet of commercial uses, art gallery space, offices, computer lab, and laundry room. The development will be located on the block located on the north side of Oak Avenue between Bridge and Santa Fe Streets, the site known as the Old Lumberyard and the historic location of Fort Visalia. The development has been named The Lofts at Fort Visalia.

The development is currently in the process of securing funding through a combination of low-income housing tax credits and government funding, and during this time the project's drawings are being finalized. Further design development and additional technical input have resulted in several minor changes to the plans. The project proponents, together with staff, believe that the changes result in an overall improved functionality of the residential uses and their amenities as well as an improved design.

On-site changes to Building.

A comprehensive list of the building's modifications is listed in Exhibit "A" and illustrated in the site plan, floor plans, and elevation plans attached as Exhibits "D", "E", and "F". The applicant has also clarified in their list of changes that the project's actual unit count is 80 units rather than 81 units as stated in the original report and operating conditions, and notes that the project had always been designed with 80 units.

The most notable changes listed by the proponent in Exhibit "A" are summarized as follows:

2. Increase of office / gallery space from 4,078 sq. ft. to 5,200 sq. ft. (27% increase from original).
- 3 & 4. Building reconfiguration resulting in a separate building centrally located in the interior courtyard. Residential units in the new building are extracted from the interior-facing west wing. Some upper-story interior-facing west wing units remain, and "tuck-under" parking is located at ground floor beneath some residential units (see Exhibits "C" and "D").
9. Building setback changes changing from a range between 7'-9" to 23'-0" to a standardized 10'-0" setback along three frontages.
17. Elevation changes, corresponding to the new building layout, reallocating wall surfaces, and a more cohesive use of materials including stucco on recessed areas. There is more use of historic thin brick on three elevations, predominately on the south-facing elevation that now includes a brick cornice with metal coping.

Off-site changes in Public R.O.W.

The proponent is requesting changes in the public right-of-way adjacent to the project site (items #10 through 13 in Exhibit "A") that deviate from established Engineering improvement standards. These changes to sidewalk width, tree spacing, and bulb-outs / extended curbing, are described in Exhibit "B" as development concessions and, unless certain findings can be made, shall be granted in accordance with State law for projects providing threshold requirements for low-income households. The City Engineer has commented on and approved these requests on the condition of submittal with full details for formal review and approval by the Engineering Division.

Staff's recommendation is to approve the changes as listed in Exhibits "A" and "B" and depicted in Exhibits "D", "E", and "F", with the understanding that the off-site changes will need to be submitted and further reviewed by Engineering staff as additional design details become available in the future.

This recommendation is based on the finding that the changes do not result in any significant change to the original plan or its operating conditions as approved by Planning Commission on December 9, 2019, and therefore the changes are consistent with the original Conditional Use Permit.

ATTACHMENTS

- Exhibit "A" – List of changes to the approved CUP No. 2019-40 site plan
- Exhibit "B" – Letter requesting development concessions under Density Bonus Law
- Exhibit "C" – Existing Site Plan under CUP No. 2019-40
- Exhibit "D" – Revised Site Plan
- Exhibit "E" – Revised Floor Plans
- Exhibit "F" – Revised Elevations
- Aerial Map

11/30/2020

Paul Bernal
City Planner/Acting Community Development Director
315 E. Acequia Ave.
Visalia, CA 93291

Re: List of Changes
Conditional Use permit No. 2019-40; Resolution No, 2019-71

Dear Mr. Bernal,

As per your request, please find below a list of the proposed changes to approved resolution referenced above in response to some of the comments we received and as a result of further design development and additional technical input. We believe that the project is stronger and an even better fit to the community as a result of these changes.

NUMBER OF UNITS

1. The number of overall units was reduced from 81 to 80. We are trying to correct an error in the summary, as it has always been designed as an 80 unit project, but mislabeled as 81. The original site plan and table shows 80 dwelling units, but the planning report calls out 81. We are proposing a unit count of 80 dwelling units.

OFFICE AND GALLERY SPACES

2. Increase from 4,078 sq. ft.* (2,284 sq. ft. of gallery space and 1,794 sq. ft. of office space) to currently proposed 5,200 sq. ft. gross (3,250 sq. ft. gallery space and 1,950 sq. ft. of office space). This increase, mostly in the gallery space, is in direct response to collaborative effort between Self Help Enterprises and the Arts Consortium and related community groups who worked together to provide a much needed larger, more functional gallery space for art gallery and educational activities which will benefit the community-at-large.

* Point of clarification: Application letter calls for 3,500 sq. ft. of gallery, offices, computer lab and laundry room. However, sheet 1 site plan calls out 4,078 sq. ft. of community room and offices combined.

BUILDING CONFIGURATION

3. The building configuration has changed from a 3-story, U shaped, double loaded corridor building to a 3-story, U shaped, mostly single loaded corridor building and a free standing 3-story, 16-unit, walk-up building in the interior of the project which separates the surface parking area to the west from the pedestrian courtyard to the east.
4. The west wing has been redesigned from a double loaded to a primarily single loaded configuration, with exceptions at four locations. "Tuck-under" is a building configuration with residential sits over "open" parking, resulting in a more compact and efficient use of space as well as a more aesthetically pleasing auto court with some of the parking stalls hidden from view.
5. A centrally located elevator (and elevator machine room) has been located in close proximity to the convenience stair near the main entry of the project.
6. The trash room size increased in response to conditions of approval comments and coordination with Public Works staff.
7. Bike parking stalls have been added to the auto court in response to conditions of approval comments (formal response to COA will follow separately in different timeframe).

PARKING STALLS

8. Number of parking stalls remains the same, but the number of EV parking has increased from 2 to 3 (10% of total required EV by building code), and the ADA parking stalls from 2 to 3, by adding 1 covered van ADA parking as per ADA regulations.

BUILDING SETBACKS

9. Setbacks have been standardized along the north, east and west street rights-of-way to make better use of the site as follows:
 - a. North decrease from 12'-7 up to 23 ft to an even 10 feet.
 - b. East: increased from 7-9 to 10 feet
 - c. West: decrease from 12 ft to 10 feet
 - d. South: 14'6 – stays the same

These proposed setbacks exceed minimum zoning requirements for this parcel.

STREET ALIGNMENTS, SIDEWALK WIDTH & STREET WIDTHS

10. East Oak Avenue curb is to remain in its current alignment, i.e., no longer proposes to extend to the south to align with adjacent north-west corner of Oak Street and Garden Street. The sidewalk is widened to 13 ft between tree grates (edge of patio to edge of curb) and 7'6" at tree grates (between tree hole and edge of patios), out of which 6'-10" of sidewalk falls inside our property line. Street trees are now proposed to be in tree grates in order to increase total sidewalk area.
11. North Garden, East School Avenue and North Bridge Street: An increase in sidewalk width from 5 ft to 7 ft minimum (2'-10" to 3ft fall inside our property line), and planting strip width reduction to 5'-6" feet. This sidewalk dimensions allow a minimum of 2'-6" planting buffer between the edge of the residential patios and the sidewalk. The planting strip for street trees is 5'-6" is a minimum recommended width for street trees.
12. Spacing for all street trees is proposed to be at a maximum spacing of 30 feet on center along the curb side. Exact tree species and planting strip design to be further developed during design development.
13. An additional bulb-out at the corner of East Oak Avenue and North Bridge Street and extended curbing along East School Avenue (both corners), to meet the spirit of the downtown plan for increased pedestrian safety.
14. All curb radiuses now meet City Standards.

GRADING

15. Additional stairs, ramps and terraces have been incorporated to address grading transitions between the proposed building slab elevation and the abutting sidewalks, the following locations in particular,
 - a. at the main entrance to the project at the corner of East Oak Street and North Bridge Street, a raised plaza with stairs and ramp access
 - b. Exit stair to the north-west
 - c. Utility rooms to the south-east.
16. Trash discharge for the project, still in its original location, has been redirected through the parking lot towards East School Avenue as a result of further coordination with civil engineer and City of Visalia Public Works due to the differences in grading between edge of slab and sidewalk along North Garden Street. Coordination is still in progress.

BUILDING ELEVATIONS

17. Changes include:

- a. Further refinement on the color palette throughout and the use of historic thin brick on the south, and some of the east and west elevations.
- b. North elevation: The three 3-story masses along the north elevation provide a more balanced and continuous building presence with eyes on the street and active ground level units and patios and two openings into the project, one with a view to the courtyard and the other one to the auto court. The surface parking, previously visible from the street is now completely hidden from public view. Allocation of wall surface for murals to help activate this elevation and create opportunities for local artists to engage in the project.
- c. West elevation – a more cohesive use of materials with stucco on the recessed areas.
- d. East elevation – a more cohesive use of materials with stucco on the recessed areas.
- e. South elevation
 - i. added a number of elements to reinforce a more traditional and historic façade using gathered windows at key locations, more decorative elements harking to the historic nature of Visalia such as window sills, sunshades with metal plates, balcony metal screens and a strongly expressed cornice brick face detail clearly delineating the top with a mostly continuous shadow line.
 - ii. Double walls along this elevation will allow true punched openings with up to 3.5”-4” recesses, and brick detailing turning the corners to truly depict old brick construction.
 - iii. Developed breezeway design that resolves architecturally the tension between the historic nature and the evolving and diverse artistic community by using traditional materials in innovative ways. These materials are used to create a window from the public to the private, become a backdrop for the public plaza on the south east of East Oak Street, provide a level of privacy to the residents as well as mark the importance residential entry to the whole project.
 - iv. Gallery volume for the Arts Consortium is now expressed more prominently with additional height.

Sincerely,

Madeleine Zayas, Project Manager, for Renner Johnston, PIC
Mogavero Architects



A Nonprofit Housing and Community Development Organization

December 3, 2020

Brandon Smith, Senior Planner
City of Visalia
315 E. Acequia Ave
Visalia, CA 93291

RE: The Lofts at Fort Visalia Request for Development Concessions under Density Bonus Law, Government Code Section 65915-65918

Dear Mr. Smith,

Self-Help Enterprises (SHE), in conjunction with its 'Finding of Consistency' submission for its Lofts at Fort Visalia project, formally requests development concessions pursuant to California Government Code Section 65915-65918.

Summary of Project

SHE is proposing an affordable multifamily housing development located at 300 E. Oak Avenue in Visalia. The project will include 80 units, a centrally located community room/art gallery space, and an outdoor courtyard with recreational space. One unit will be designated for the on-site manager. This project will provide multifamily housing units targeted to low-, very-low, and extremely-low income households. The project will be funded through the low-income housing tax credit program, which will require a 55-year affordability covenant.

Density Bonus Request

SHE is developing all units in this project for households below 80% of the county median income. Therefore, the development will meet the threshold income requirements of state Density Bonus Law (Government Code Section 65915). The referenced Density Bonus Law section entitles Self-Help Enterprises to development concessions to ensure project feasibility. In preparing for final approval, SHE respectfully requests your consideration and approval of three development concessions detailed below. Pursuant to Government code, the project is eligible for at least three development concessions because at least 30 percent of the total units will be restricted for lower income households.

Development Concession Requests

1. **Sidewalk Width:** SHE requests a development concession from the 10ft standard for sidewalks to 7ft on North Garden, East School Avenue and North Bridge Street in order to provide adequate space for planting strips and create a softer residential feel for ground-level units.
2. **Tree Spacing:** SHE requests a development concession from 25ft standard to 30ft to accommodate larger street trees.
3. **Bulb-outs and Extended Curbing:** SHE requests a development concession to provide bulb outs along East Oak Avenue and extended curbing along East School Avenue (both corners), to meet the spirit of the downtown plan for increased pedestrian safety.

It is our request that the development concessions are not subject to legislative action for approval, and that these items be approved in conjunction with the "Finding of Consistency" hearing at Planning Commission.

It you have any additional questions regarding this request, please contact me at BetsyG@selfhelpenterprises.org or (559) 802-1653. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to providing affordable housing solutions for the low-income residents of Visalia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Betsy McGovern-Garcia". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B' and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Betsy McGovern-Garcia
Director of Real Estate Development

Exhibit "C"

PARKING SPACE COUNT

STD	26 SPACES
EV	2 SPACES
VAN ADA	1 SPACE
STD ADA	1 SPACE
TOTAL	30 SPACES

RESIDENTIAL UNIT COUNT

1 BEDROOM UNITS	50
2 BEDROOM UNITS	22
1 BEDROOM LOFTS	7
2 BEDROOM LOFTS	1

NON-RESIDENTIAL AREA TABULATION

OFFICES	1794 SF
COMMUNITY ROOM	2284 SF



Scale 1"=40' on 11x17

PARKING SPACE COUNT	
Accessible Parking	1
Accessible Van Parking	2
EV Parking	3
Standard Parking	24*
TOTAL	30

*INCL. 6 COMPACT STALLS

RESIDENTIAL UNIT COUNT	
UNIT	QTY
1 BR LOFT	4
1 BR UNIT	51
2 BR LOFT	1
2 BR UNIT	24
TOTAL	80

GALLERY SPACE	3,250 SF
OFFICE SPACE	1,950 SF
TOTAL	5,200 SF

Exhibit "D"



As-Printed: Tuesday, December 1, 2020, 13:01

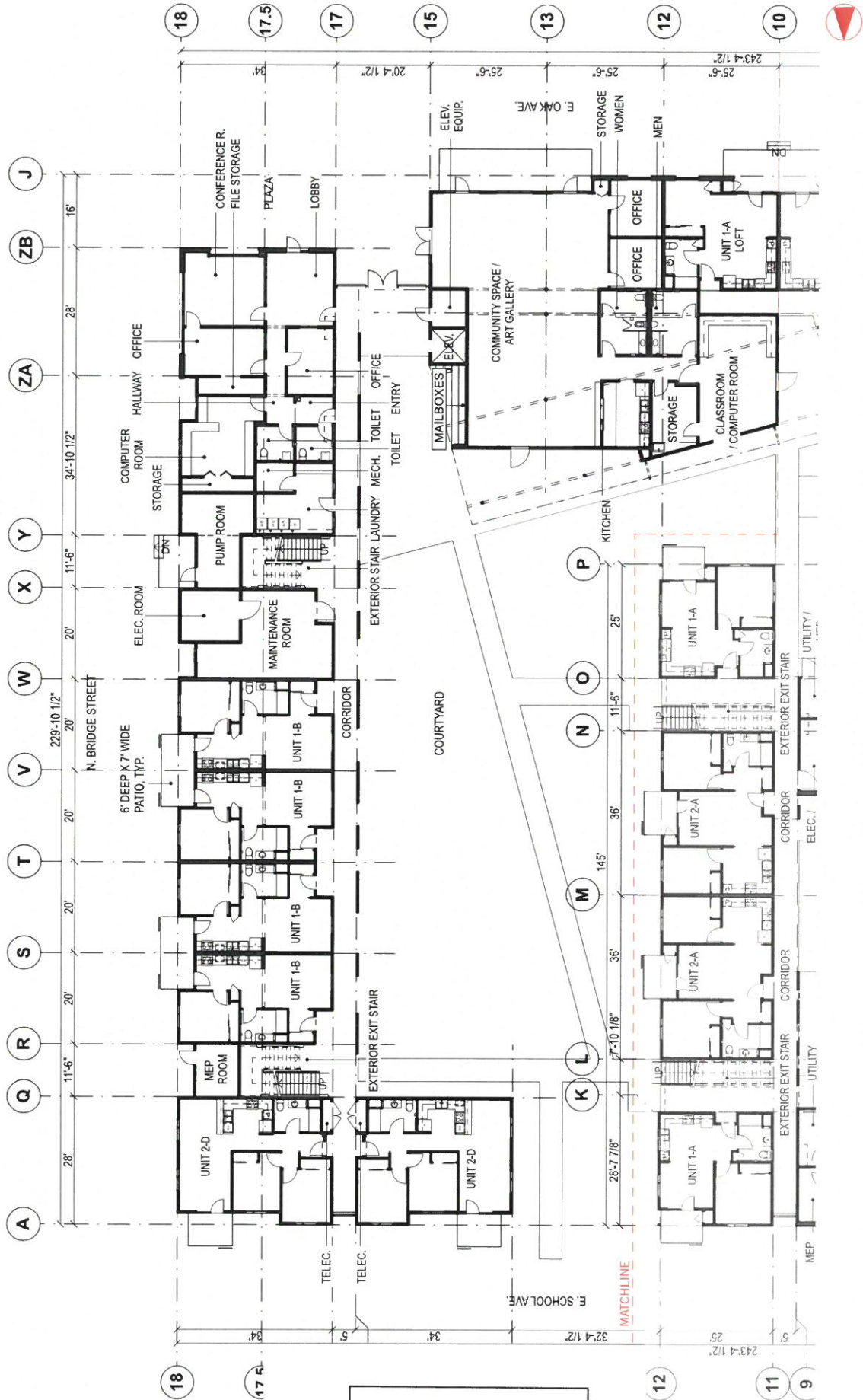
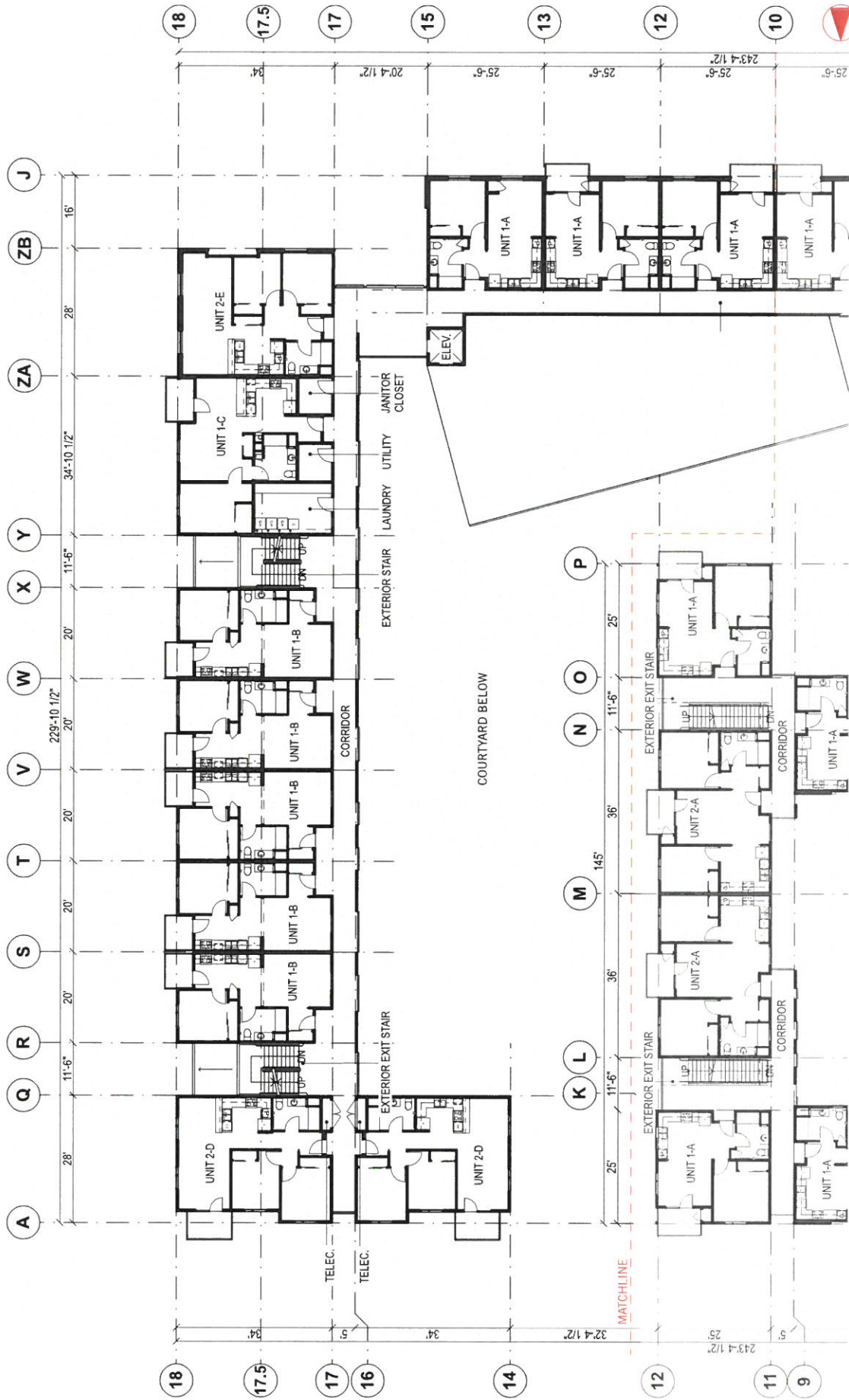


Exhibit "E"

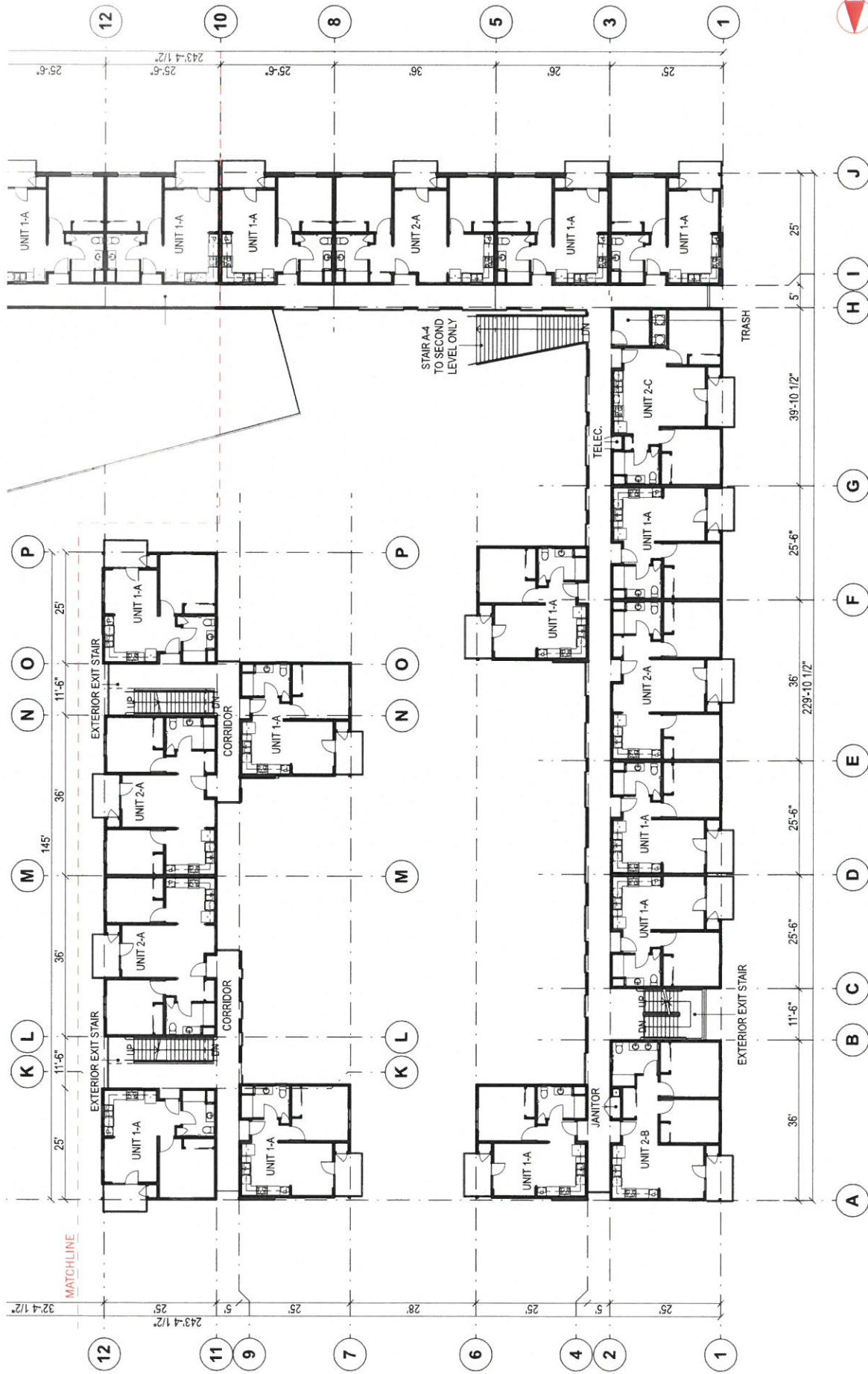
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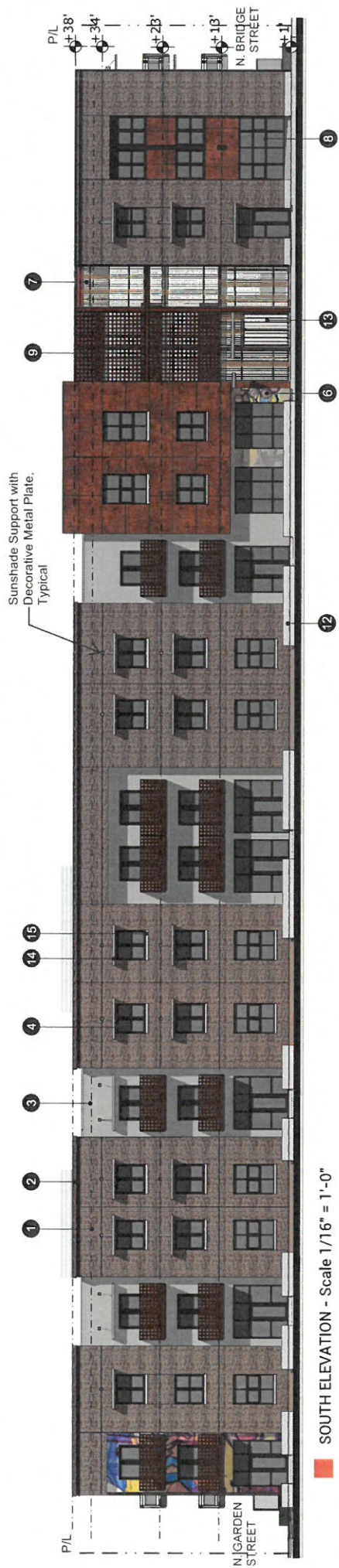
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BMdbud MA-BM-Serve-23 loca - BMdbud Base for ARCHICAD 23/217001 - East Oak Visalia-Printed Monday, November 30, 2020 11:30 AM



■ SOUTH ELEVATION - Scale 1/16" = 1'-0"

- 1. Brick Face
- 2. Brick Cornice with Metal Coping
- 3. Stucco
- 4. Vinyl Windows, typ.
- 5. Hardi Board Siding
- 6. Painted Mural, by Others
- 7. Engineered Wood or Painted Metal Slats
- 8. Window Wall
- 9. Decorative Metal Screen
- 10. Metal Screen Guardrail
- 11. CMU wall
- 12. Concrete wall
- 13. Metal Gate
- 14. Metal Sunshades
- 15. Window Sill
- 16. H.M. Utility Door

Exhibit "F"



■ WEST ELEVATION - Scale 1/16" = 1'-0"

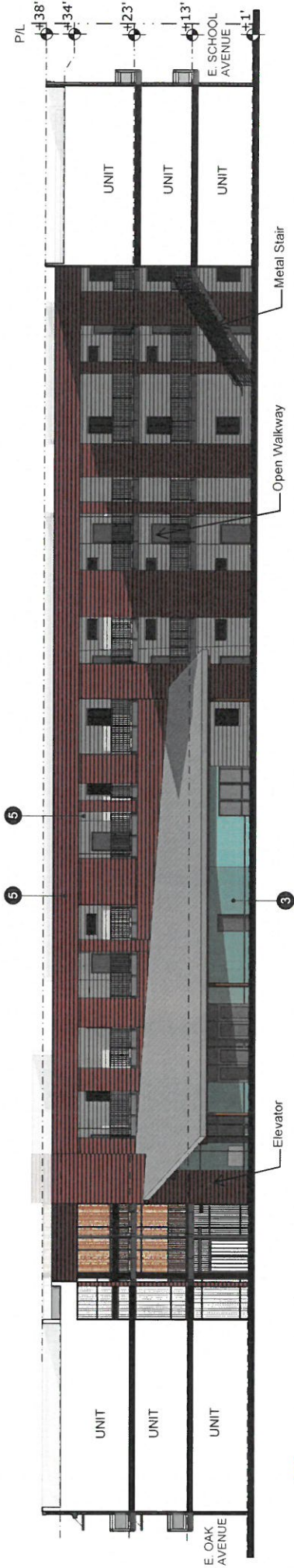


EAST ELEVATION - Scale 1/16" = 1'-0"

- 1. Brick Face
- 2. Brick Cornice with Metal Coping
- 3. Stucco
- 4. Vinyl Windows, Typ.
- 5. Hardi Board Siding
- 6. Painted Mural, by Others
- 7. Engineered Wood or Painted Metal Slats
- 8. Window Wall
- 9. Decorative Metal Screen
- 10. Metal Screen Guardrail
- 11. CMU wall
- 12. Concrete wall
- 13. Metal Gate
- 14. Metal Sunshades
- 15. Window Sill
- 16. H.M. Utility Door

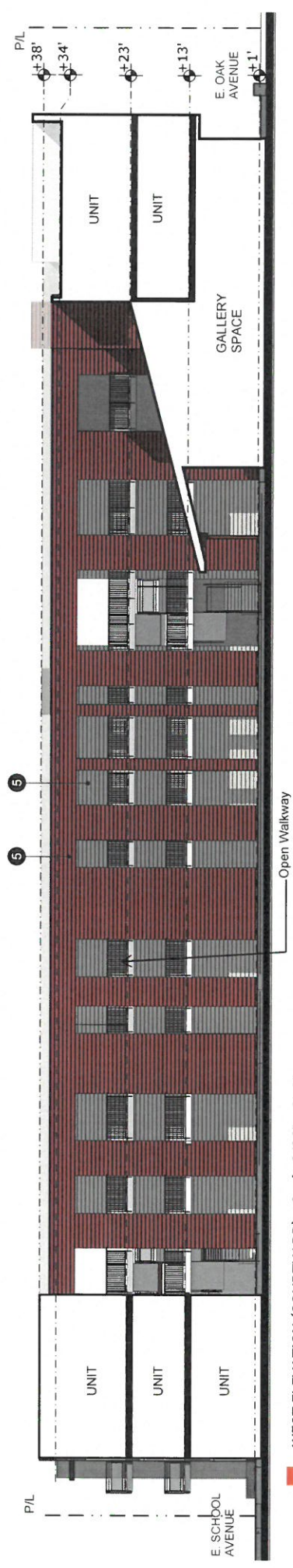


NORTH ELEVATION - Scale 1/16" = 1'-0"

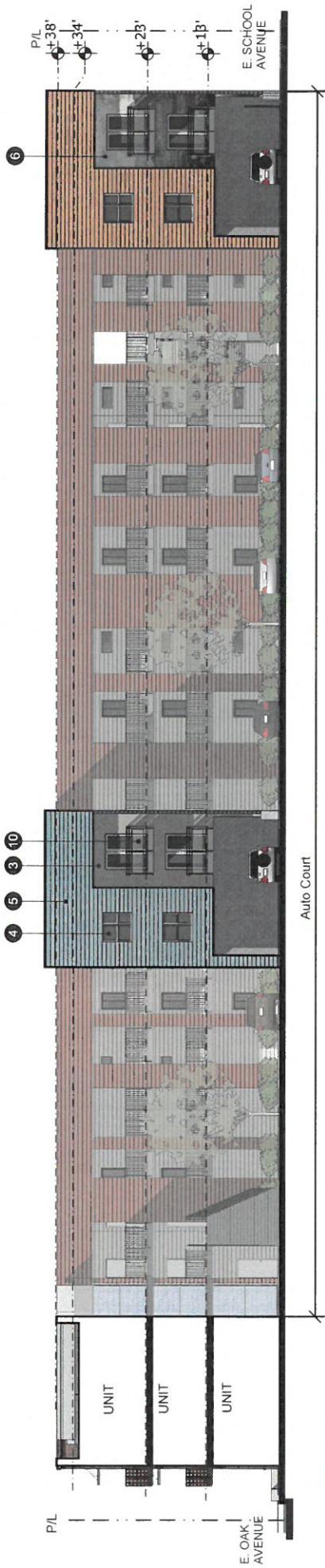


■ NORTH ELEVATION (COURTYARD) - Scale 1/16" = 1'-0"

- 1. Brick Face
- 2. Brick Cornice with Metal Coping
- 3. Stucco
- 4. Vinyl Windows, typ.
- 5. Hardi Board Siding
- 6. Painted Mural, by Others
- 7. Engineered Wood or Painted Metal Slats
- 8. Window Wall
- 9. Decorative Metal Screen
- 10. Metal Screen Guardrail
- 11. CMU wall
- 12. Concrete wall
- 13. Metal Gate
- 14. Metal Sunshades
- 15. Window Sill
- 16. H.M. Utility Door



■ WEST ELEVATION (COURTYARD) - Scale 1/16" = 1'-0"



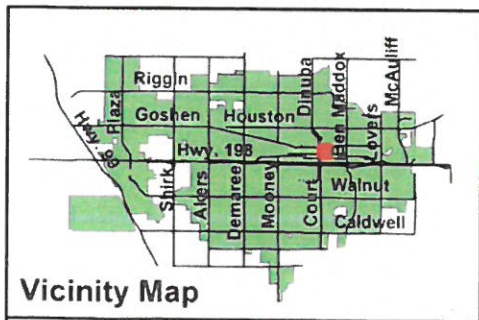
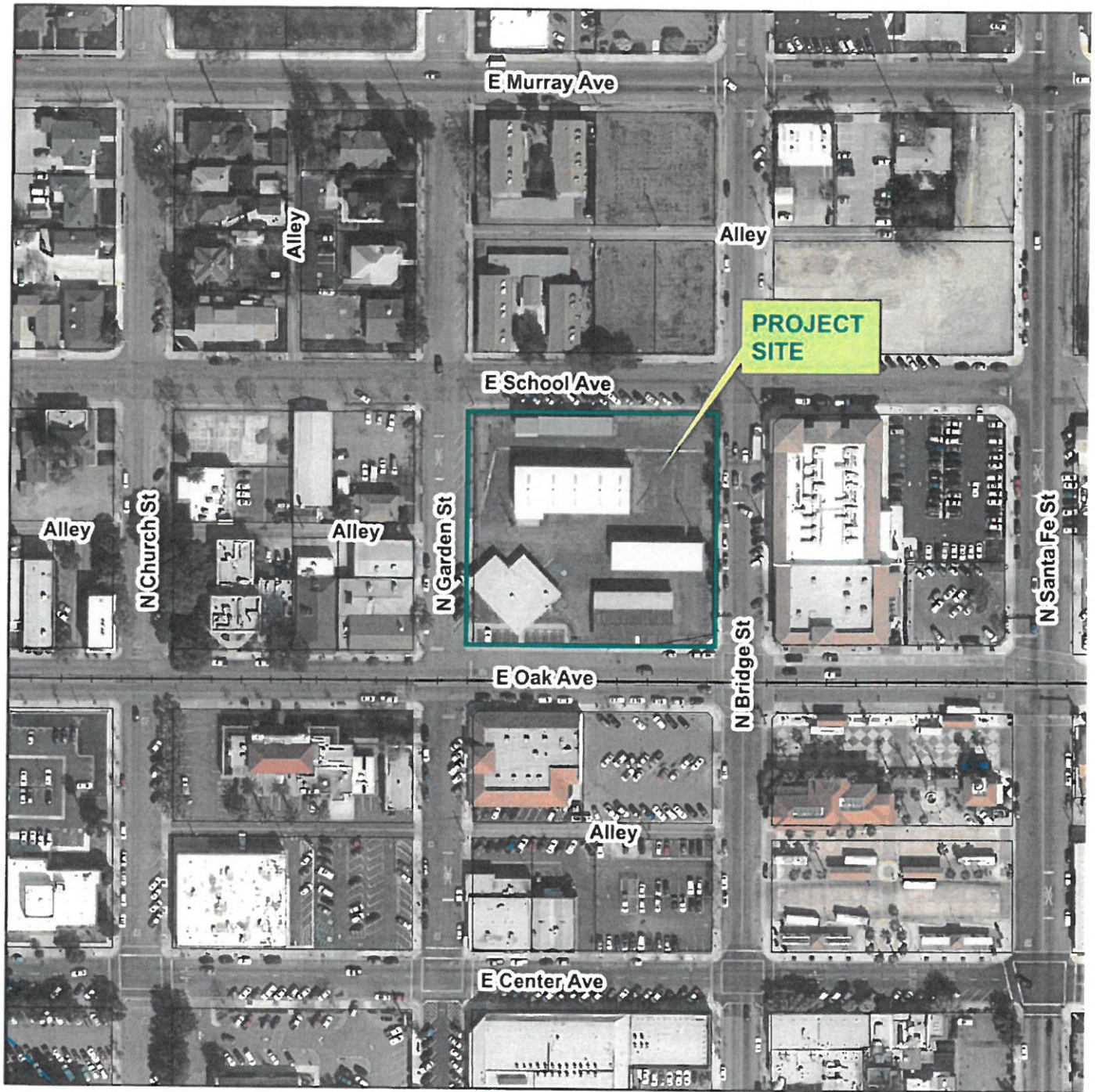
AUTOCOURT EAST ELEVATION - Scale 1/16" = 1'-0"



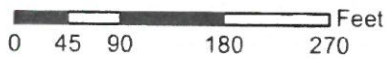
AUTOCOURT WEST ELEVATION - Scale 1/16" = 1'-0"

- 1. Brick Face
- 2. Brick Cornice with Metal Coping
- 3. Stucco
- 4. Vinyl Windows, typ.
- 5. Hard Board Siding
- 6. Painted Mural, by Others
- 7. Engineered Wood or Painted Metal Slats
- 8. Window Wall
- 9. Decorative Metal Screen
- 10. Metal Screen Guardrail
- 11. CMU wall
- 12. Concrete wall
- 13. Metal Gate
- 14. Metal Sunshades
- 15. Window Sill
- 16. H.M. Utility Door

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. CUP 2019-40



AERIAL MAP



WATERWAYS
RAILROADS
CITY LIMITS