

Architectural Review and Historic Preservation Board Agenda Report

Meeting Date 9/18/19

DATE:	September 5, 2019	File: AR 19-19
TO:	Architectural Review and Historic Preservation Board	
FROM:	Dexter O'Connell, Associate Planner (530-879-6810) dexter.oconnell@chicoca.gov	
RE:	Architectural Review 19-19 (Orwitz Lassen and El Paso Apartments 2751 El Paso Way. APN 007-410-009	3)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Architectural Review and Historic Preservation Board adopt the required findings contained in the agenda report and approve the proposed project, subject to the recommended conditions.

Proposed Motion

I move that the Architectural Review and Historic Preservation Board adopt the required findings contained in the agenda report and approve Architectural Review 19-19 (Orwitz Lassen and El Paso Apartments), subject to the recommended conditions therein.

BACKGROUND

The applicant proposes to construct four two-story apartment buildings with a total of 17 residential units. The site is on the southeast corner of East Lassen Avenue and El Paso Way (See **Attachment A**, Location Map). The site is designated Medium Density Residential on the City's General Plan Land Use Diagram and is zoned R2-AOC (Medium Density Residential with Airport Overflight Zone C Overlay). The resultant density for the project would be 14 dwelling units per acre (du/ac), which is consistent with the allowable range of 6 to 14 du/ac for the R2 zoning district.

The site plan illustrates the layout and orientation of the buildings, as well as the location of the trash enclosure, site amenities and parking (see **Attachment B**, Site Plan). Building One is located at the street corner of the property, with its staircase front towards the drive and its less-imposing rear towards El Paso Way. Buildings Two and Three are identical in all respects except color, and are located alongside each other at the southwest property line, oriented toward the parking area. Building Four, the largest building, extends along the entire length of the southeast property line, opposite Lassen Avenue, and is also oriented toward the parking area and community space.

Architecture for the two buildings is distinguished by its thoughtfully-utilitarian style, in which real effort went into creating a coherent and creative complex. Each building would feature a mixture of hipped and gabled roof styles, and distinctive flourishes in both materials and color (see **Attachment E**, Colored Elevations). Exterior walls would be in a variety of finishes including stucco, hardi-plank, and stone (see **Attachment F**, Color and Materials Sample Panel). Exterior doors would be in a variety of appropriate accent colors, but window frames would be black vinyl trimmed by white (Sherwin-Williams "Alabaster") accents on all buildings. Roof material would be black composite shingles. All units would have a covered patio except the two second-floor units in Building One, which would feature a covered porch instead.

The project includes a total of 35 off-street parking spaces, which meets the requirements of Chico Municipal Code Section 19.70.040 for this use, including guest parking. Bicycle parking would be provided in a unit-by-unit rather than central style. It would be located primarily towards the rear of the units and readily available to residents.

Parking lot lights would be scattered through the parking area and mounted at 11 feet in height. Mechanical units would be located behind Buildings Two, Three, and Four, and adjacent to Building One, screened from view by appropriate fencing. A concrete block trash enclosure, covered as required, is proposed within the parking area, central to the site.

The landscape plans call for a variety of species with moderate water demands (see **Attachment D**, Landscape Plan). A mixture of trees, shrubs, and perennials is proposed around the two buildings and the site perimeter. Parking lot shade is provided by a mix of tree species, including Chinese pistache and Celebration maple, and is estimated to reach 55 percent at full tree maturity. As of staff's site visit of August 26, 2019, no trees exist on the site, and no tree removal is proposed.

DISCUSSION

Design Guideline 1.2.32 requires proposals to "use building materials that reinforce a sense of... place," and this proposal both reinforces and creates a new sense of place at the intersection of Lassen Avenue and El Paso Way. The proposal will improve the aesthetics of a major corridor, Lassen Avenue, traversing the city (CD-2.3) and create a sense of place in an area with few outstanding architectural exemplars. Placemaking (CD 4.1.3) in this area of Northeast Chico is limited, and this project's distinctive appearance will make it a positive landmark for this area and for future projects to take inspiration from. It provides a unique and colorful identity while also being a fundamental part of its neighborhood.

The Orwitz Lassen and El Paso Apartments achieve a unified identity through avoidance of bland colors and use of a rich and varied palate (DG 4.2.31) of at least eight bright and engaging colors across the four buildings of different sizes in the proposed complex.

The project is consistent with General Plan goals and policies that encourage compatible infill development (LU-1, LU-4, and CD-5), providing adequate supply of rental housing to meet a wide range of renters and future needs throughout the city (H.3, H.3.2, and H.3.4) and directing growth into complete neighborhoods with a land use mix and distribution intended to reduce vehicle trips and support walking, biking and transit use (LU-3.1).

The courtyard-style orientation gives a relaxed and homey North African feel to the proposal. Garages are oriented away from the street (DG 4.1.62) and in fact not a single one empties directly out onto a right-of-way. The proposed placement of structures, both residential and carport, helps to minimize the views of automobiles, (DG 1.1.14) while also minimizing potential traffic choke points.

The proposed primary access point (on El Paso Way) makes use of an existing curb cut, the first of many references to the character and context of the neighborhood. For safety, a second emergency access point screened with three bollards is proposed on East Lassen Avenue. The buildings are at the same scale (DG 1.2.13) as the adjacent Willow Creek Apartments, two-story structures of varied medium sizes. The components are representative of individual dwelling units (DG 4.2.11) through materials, colors, and the fact that multiple structures are proposed. The overall plan measures up to the character, scale, and quality expected of new architecture in the City of Chico by the Chico Municipal Code and by the Design Guidelines.

REQUIRED FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL

Environmental Review

The project has been determined to be categorically exempt under Section 1.40.220 of the Chico Municipal Code, and pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15332 (Infill Development Projects). This exemption applies to infill projects which: are consistent with the general plan and zoning; are on sites less than five acres in size within the City limits; substantially surrounded by urban uses; have no value as habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species; would not create any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality; and can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

Architectural Review

According to Chico Municipal Code Section 19.18.060, the Architectural Review and Historic Preservation Board shall determine whether or not a project adequately meets adopted City standards and design guidelines, based upon the following findings:

1. The proposed development is consistent with the General Plan, any applicable specific plan, and any applicable neighborhood or area plans.

The project is consistent with General Plan goals and policies that encourage compatible infill development (LU-1, LU-4, and CD-5), providing adequate supply of rental housing to meet a wide range of renters and future needs throughout the city (H.3, H.3.2, and H.3.4) and directing growth into complete neighborhoods with a land use mix and distribution intended to reduce vehicle trips and support walking, biking and transit use (LU-3.1). The project includes new landscaping with low to moderate water needs, consistent with sustainability policies that promote water conservation and energy efficiency (SUS-4.2). There are no specific plans or neighborhood plans applicable to the site.

Additionally, and most importantly in the context of this project, the proposal will improve the aesthetics of a major corridor, Lassen Avenue, traversing the city (CD-2.3) and create a new and enhanced sense of place (CD 4.1.3). Placemaking in this area of Northeast Chico is limited, and this project's distinctive appearance will make it a positive landmark for this area and for future projects to take inspiration from.

2. The proposed development, including the character, scale, and quality of design are consistent with the purpose/intent of this chapter and any adopted design guidelines.

There are many buildings in Chico which avoid visual monotony while establishing a unified identity (DG 4.2.21, 4.2.22). The Orwitz Lassen and El Paso Apartments not only achieve that unified identity, their avoidance of bland colors and use of a rich and varied palate (DG 4.2.31) of at least eight bright and engaging colors across the four buildings of different sizes in the proposed complex help to define it as a unique and interesting place with a distinctive sense of itself. This same theme is imbued within the complex itself by varied materials (DG 1.2.32) and distinctive entrances (DG 4.2.41, 4.2.42) which clearly define individual units (DG 4.2.13) while making it clear that they are part of a coherent, cohesive, and creative whole.

Distinctive feel and color of the bright buildings is the order of the day in the proposed complex, to the slight detriment of common open space. There is, however, a

picnic area with a proposed grill and shade structure (DG 4.1.45) that brings the proposal into consistency with the design guidelines. The common open space has pedestrian access (DG 4.1.42, 4.1.43) and is physically central in the complex. This facilitates a surveillance context that enhances complex safety (DG 1.1.35) and encourages individuals to make fuller use of the open space than if it was set to the side or rear of the proposed structures. Additionally, lighting is designed to minimize glare and spillover impacts (DG 1.5.14) while still maintaining a safe atmosphere central to the complex.

The courtyard-style proposal gives a relaxed and homey North African feel to the proposal, and provides several design advantages as well. Garages are oriented away from the street (DG 4.1.62) and none empties directly out onto a right-of-way. While some may be visible from either side, the accent doors, large windows, and visually-striking building color and material schemes draw the eye from the drab garages, (DG 4.1.12) which fade into the background. The proposed placement of structures, both residential and carport, helps to minimize the views of automobiles (DG 1.1.14), including those ones which will be parked in the open lot. The shared driveway (DG 4.1.32) offers two access points for seventeen units, essential for safety but also minimizing potential traffic choke points.

Both proposed access points make use of existing curb cuts, the first of many references to the character and context of the neighborhood. The buildings are at the same scale (DG 1.2.13) as the adjacent Willow Creek Apartments, two-story structures of varied medium sizes. The components are representative of individual dwelling units (DG 4.2.11) through materials, colors, and the fact that multiple structures are proposed. The overall plan measures up to the character, scale, and quality expected of new architecture in the City of Chico by the Chico Municipal Code and by the Design Guidelines.

3. The architectural design of structures, including all elevations, materials and colors are visually compatible with surrounding development. Design elements, including screening of equipment, exterior lighting, signs, and awnings, have been incorporated into the project to further ensure its compatibility with the character and uses of adjacent development.

Nestled into one of the City's neighborhoods which could be anywhere in America and which is defined most prominently by a fading ad for a self-storage facility and a well-treed Chevron across the street, the proposed Orwitz Lassen and El Paso Apartments represent not only compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood, but an upgrade in quality for design and placemaking. Elevations are similar to the neighboring Willow Creek Apartments, a set of structures two stories tall, with typically six units per building. While the variation in units in this proposed complex is broader, the general shape of the structures and their massing is very similar. Additionally, some of the features, like exterior stairs and recessed porches, are also found on the adjacent apartments.

The property across El Paso Way from this proposed development is occupied by an eclectic, well-maintained, and very colorful manufactured home community. Many of the homes in that community use similarly bright color schemes to those proposed in this development. The colorful manufactured home park is a key location contributing to a community feel in the neighborhood in terms of its uniqueness.

Materials are typical of the area. The bungalow court across the street features both rock accents and hardi-plank siding, and the Willow Creek Apartments feature stucco similar to that which will be partially worn by Building Four. There is a small agroindustrial building behind a single-family residence adjacent to the bungalow court, but this project does not take materials cues from that structure.

Design elements have been checked carefully to ensure compatibility. No signs or protruding awnings are proposed, and exterior lighting is minimal and tasteful. Equipment and refuse screening is consistent with best practices of other new multi-family developments in the City of Chico.

4. The location and configuration of structures are compatible with their sites and with surrounding sites and structures, and do not unnecessarily block views from other structures or dominate their surroundings.

None of the developments in the immediate surroundings of the intersection of Lassen Avenue and El Paso Way (excepting one older single-family house with an agroindustrial structure behind it) are oriented to the street in a meaningful way. The proposed Orwitz Lassen and El Paso Apartments have minimal street interaction and orientation as well, but in most other respects their design is not only compatible with but a genuine improvement on the surrounding structures.

Physically, the buildings are similar in size and stature to the Willow Creek Apartments south of them on El Paso, and to other two-story structures in the area. In terms of height and mass, they will not dominate their surroundings from a distance. However, in bringing their flashy colors and interesting accents and limited-but-present street contact to the neighborhood, these buildings will raise the quality of the surroundings and encourage a higher quality of future development and redevelopment.

The individual aspects of the project which may at first seem discordant, like the bright colors and busy rooflines are echoed in the bright colors of the nearby manufactured housing park and the variation in roof type seen on the other side of Lassen Avenue.

Considered together, the aspects of the project are in conformance with their surroundings and do not unnecessarily alter the character of the area or block any views of meaningful or important landmarks.

5. The general landscape design, including the color, location, size, texture, type, and coverage of plant materials, and provisions for irrigation and maintenance, and protection of landscape elements, have been considered to ensure visual relief, to complement structures, and to provide an attractive environment.

Landscape design includes a fair number of trees and bushes, including trees that break up the visual monotony of the large wall section of Building One. The trees, shrubs, and other plantings are located throughout the development, but primarily around Building One, which is the portion of the development that interacts most with the street. This compliments the proposed structures and enhances the visual environment of an already-attractive development. The current parcel is overgrown with weeds and shrubs, and features a heavily-rutted vehicular desire path, so no long-term existing landscape element protection is proposed, nor is it necessary. Parking lot shading is adequate and a partially-shaded, shared recreational area will also contribute towards providing an attractive residential environment.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

- 1. All approved building plans and permits shall note on the cover sheet that the project shall comply with AR 19-19 (Orwitz Lassen and El Paso Apartments).
- 2. All wall-mounted utilities and roof or wall penetrations, including vent stacks, utility boxes, exhaust vents, gas meters and similar equipment, shall be screened by appropriate materials and colors. Adequate screening shall be verified by Planning staff prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy.
- 3. All painting shall be done as shown and field-verified by Planning staff prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy.
- 4. All new electric, telephone, and other wiring conduits for utilities shall be placed underground in compliance with CMC 19.60.120.

PUBLIC CONTACT

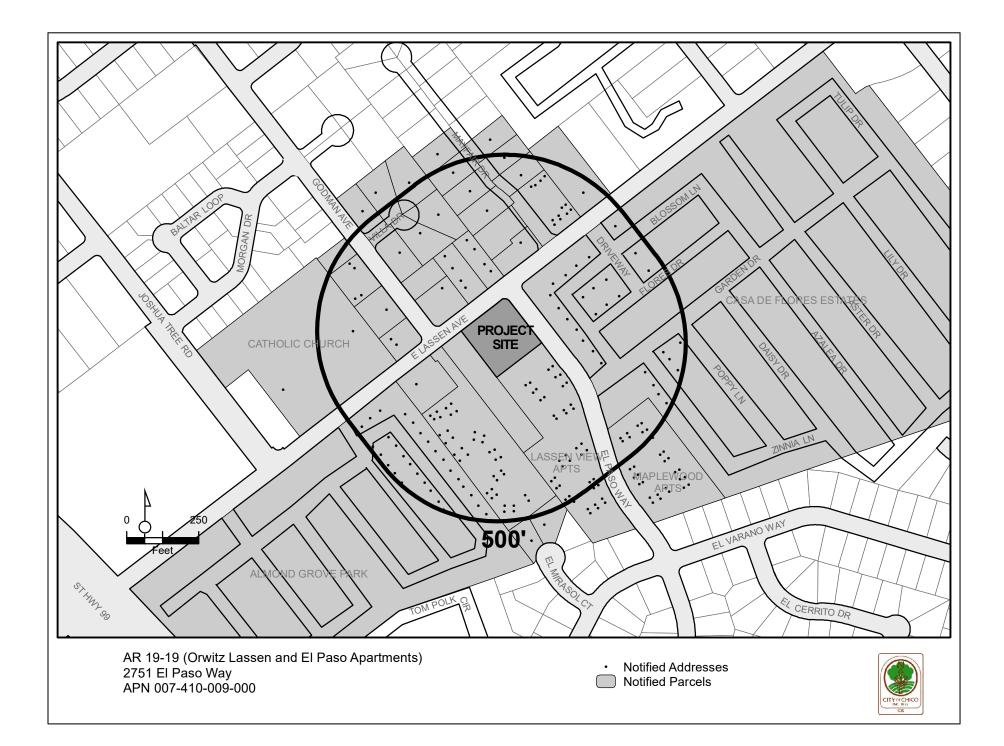
Ten days prior to the 9/18/2019 meeting date, a notice was published in the Chico Enterprise Record, notices were mailed out to all property owners and tenants within 500 feet of the project site, and a notice was placed on the project site. The meeting agenda was posted at least 10 days prior to the Architectural Review and Historic Preservation Board meeting.

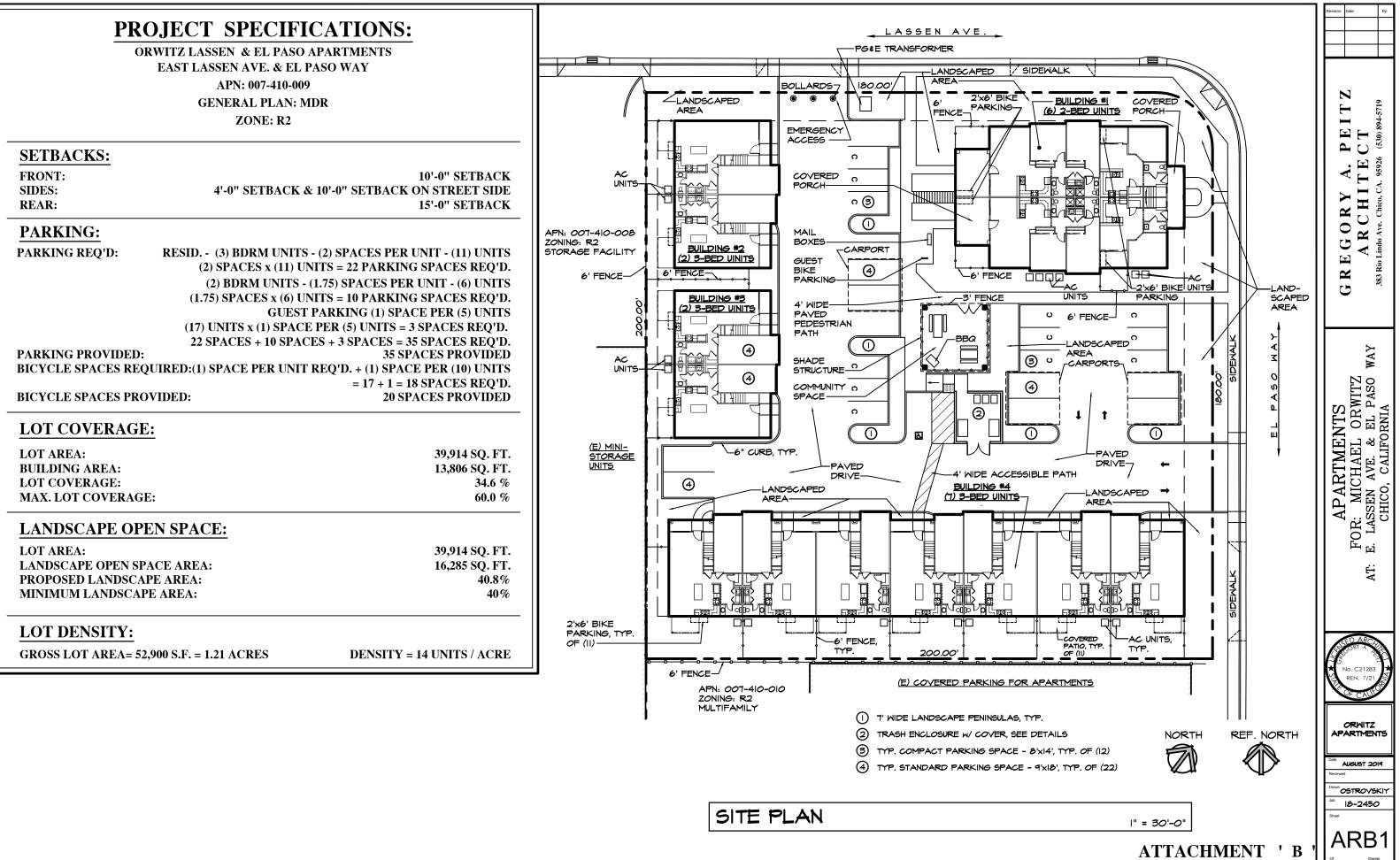
ATTACHMENTS

- A. Location Map
- B. Site Plan
- C. Floor Plans
- D. Landscape Plan
- E. Colored Architectural Elevations
- F. Color and Materials Sample Panel

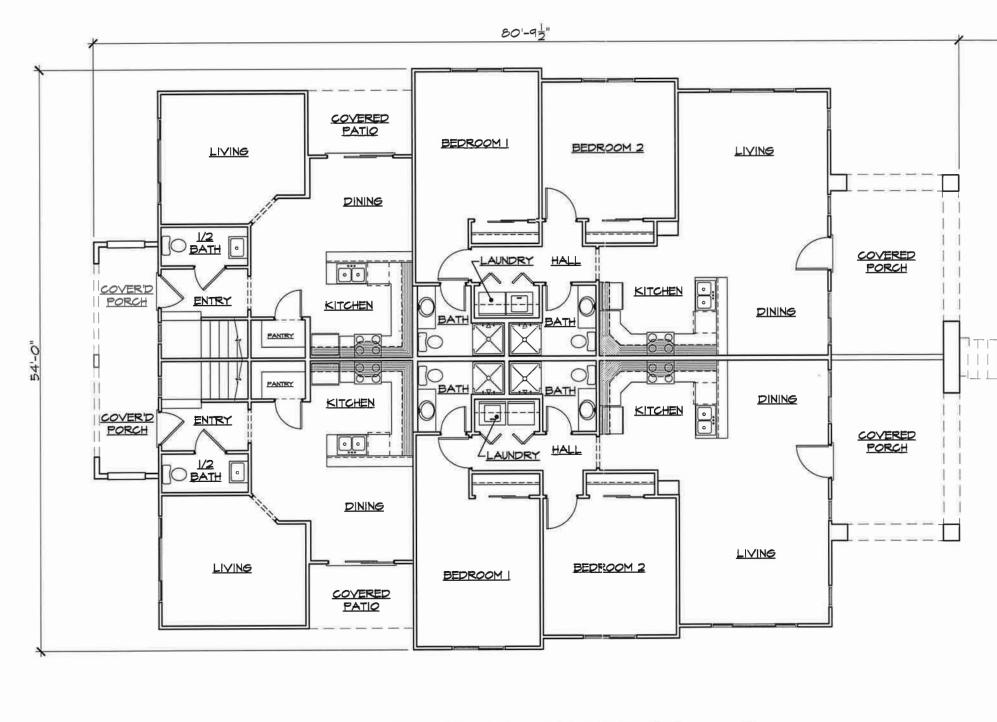
DISTRIBUTION

Greg Peitz. 383 Rio Lindo Ave, Chico, CA 95926. gregpeitz@sbcglobal.net OSM Investment Co. 1516 S. Bundy Dr. Suite 300, Los Angeles, CA 90025 File: AR 19-19 (Orwitz Lassen and El Paso Apartments)





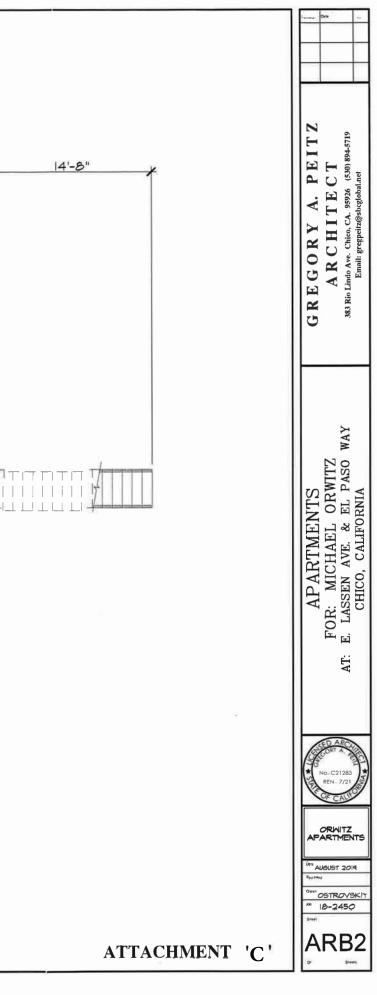
BUILDING 1



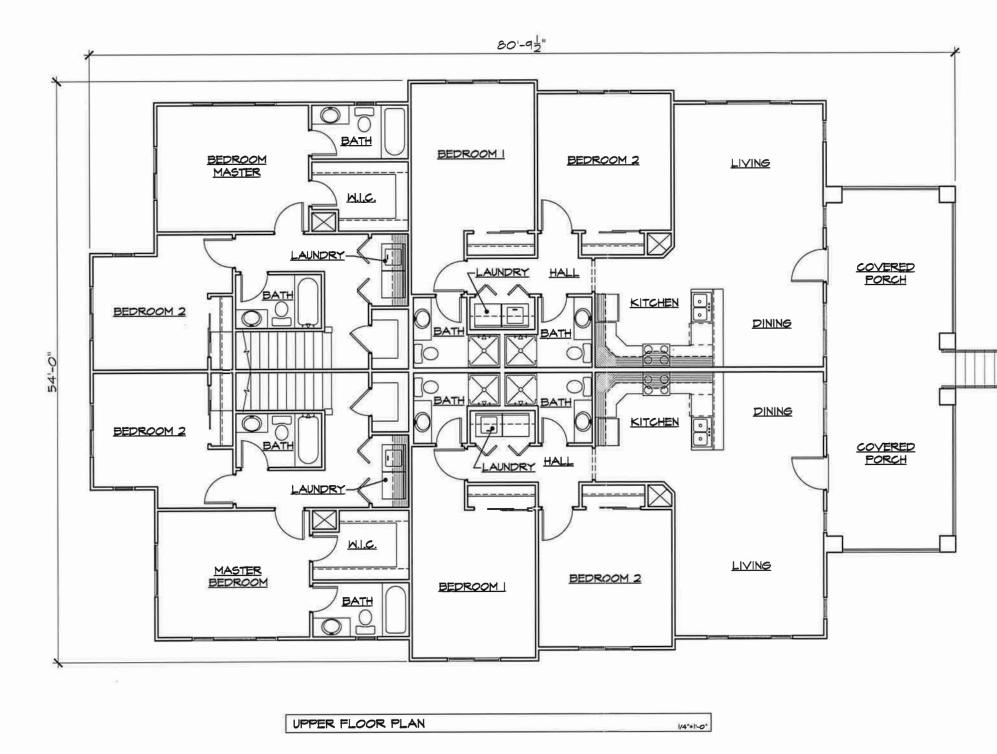
LOWER FLOOR PLAN

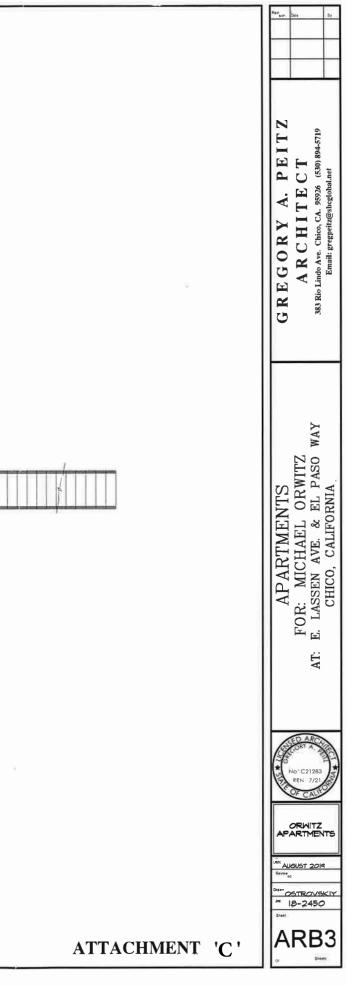
1/4"=1'-0"

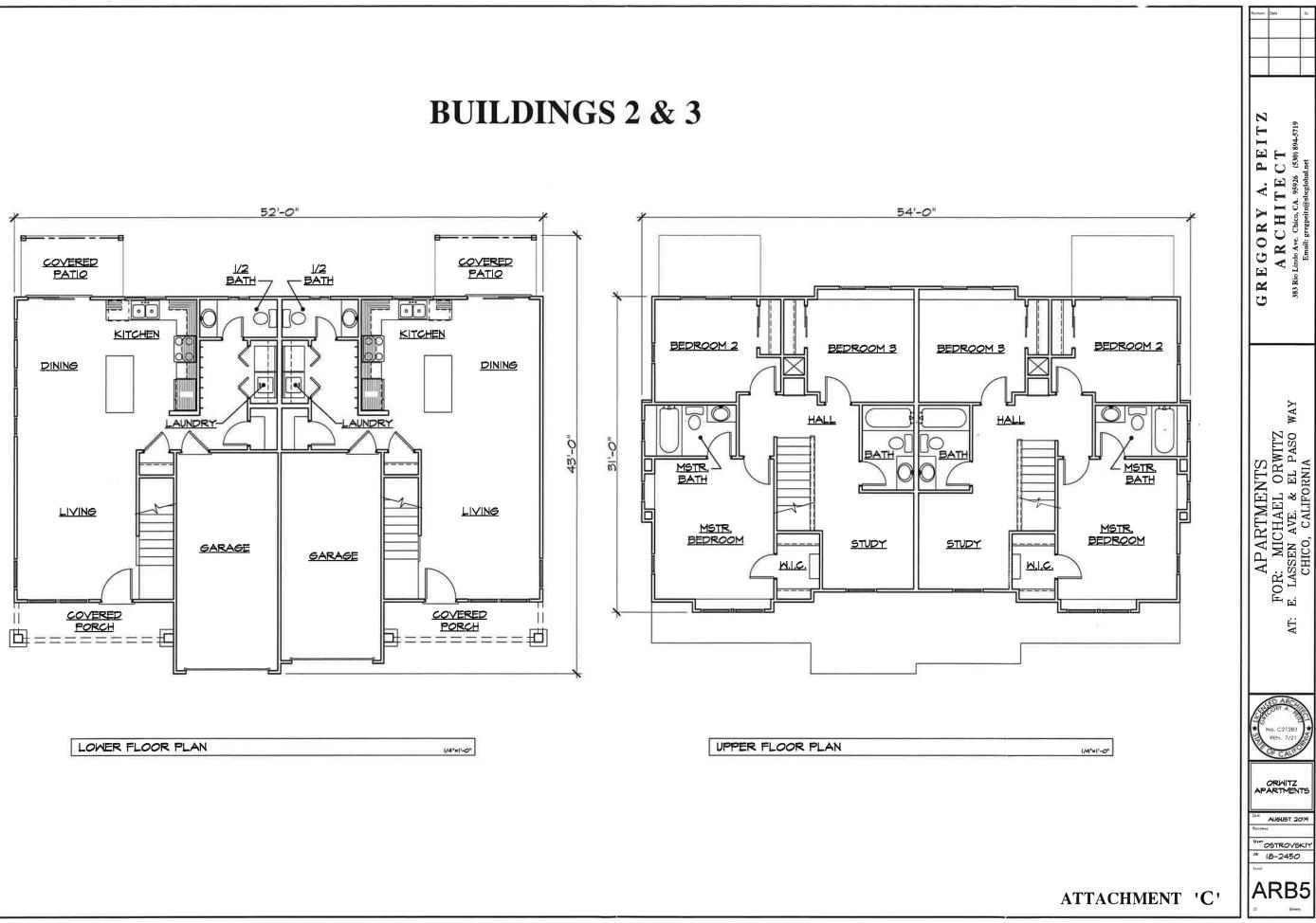
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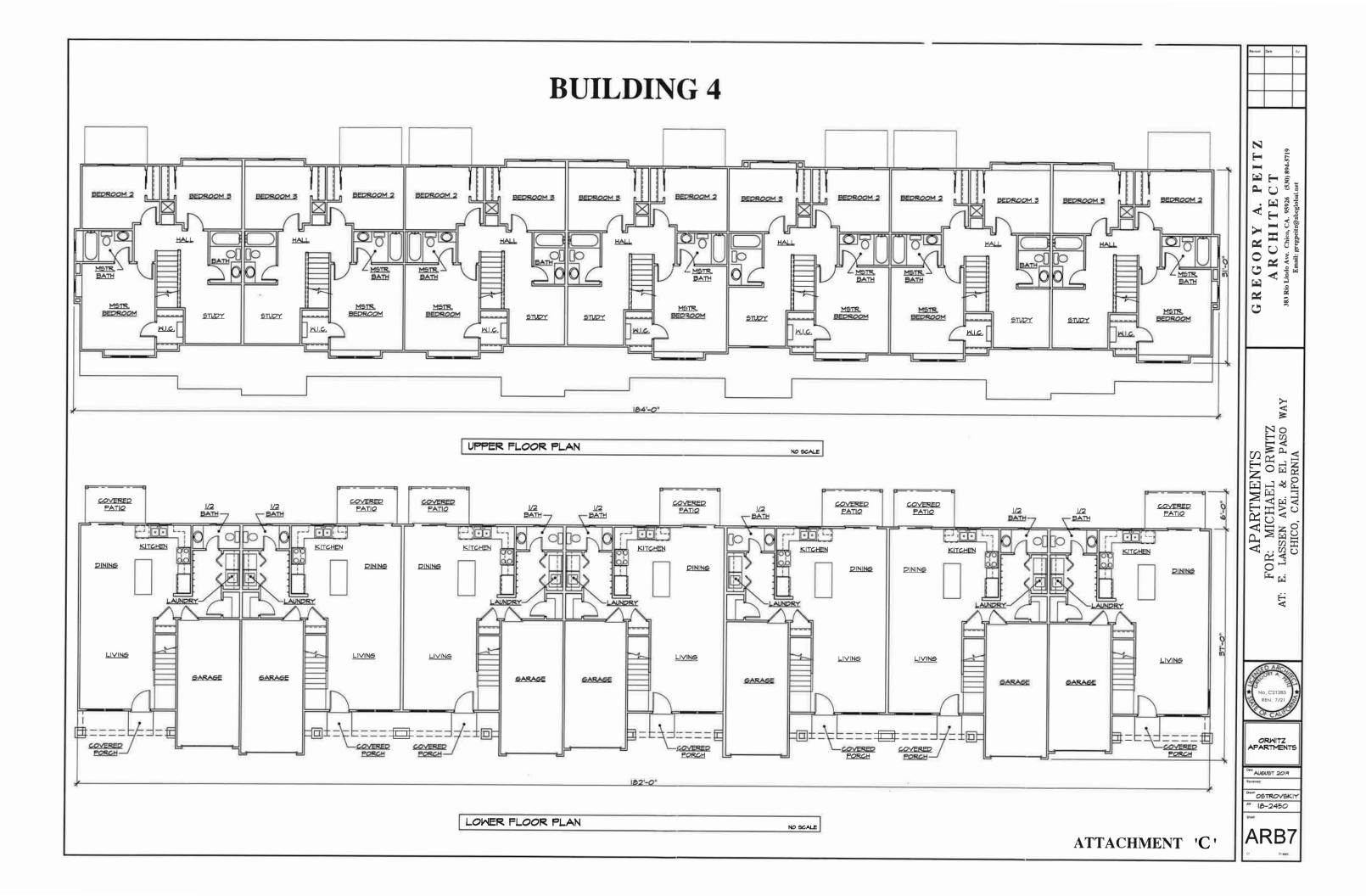


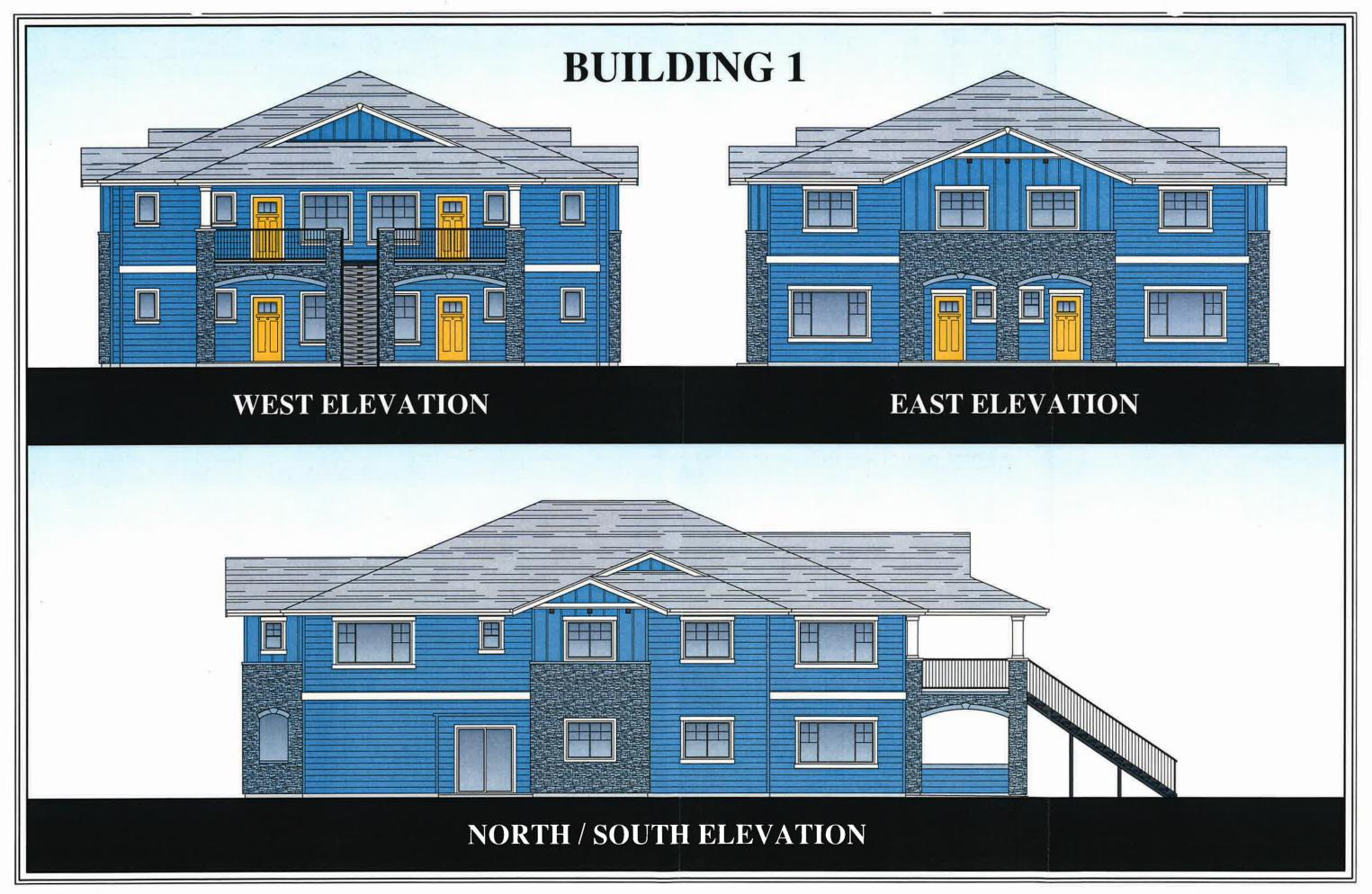
BUILDING 1

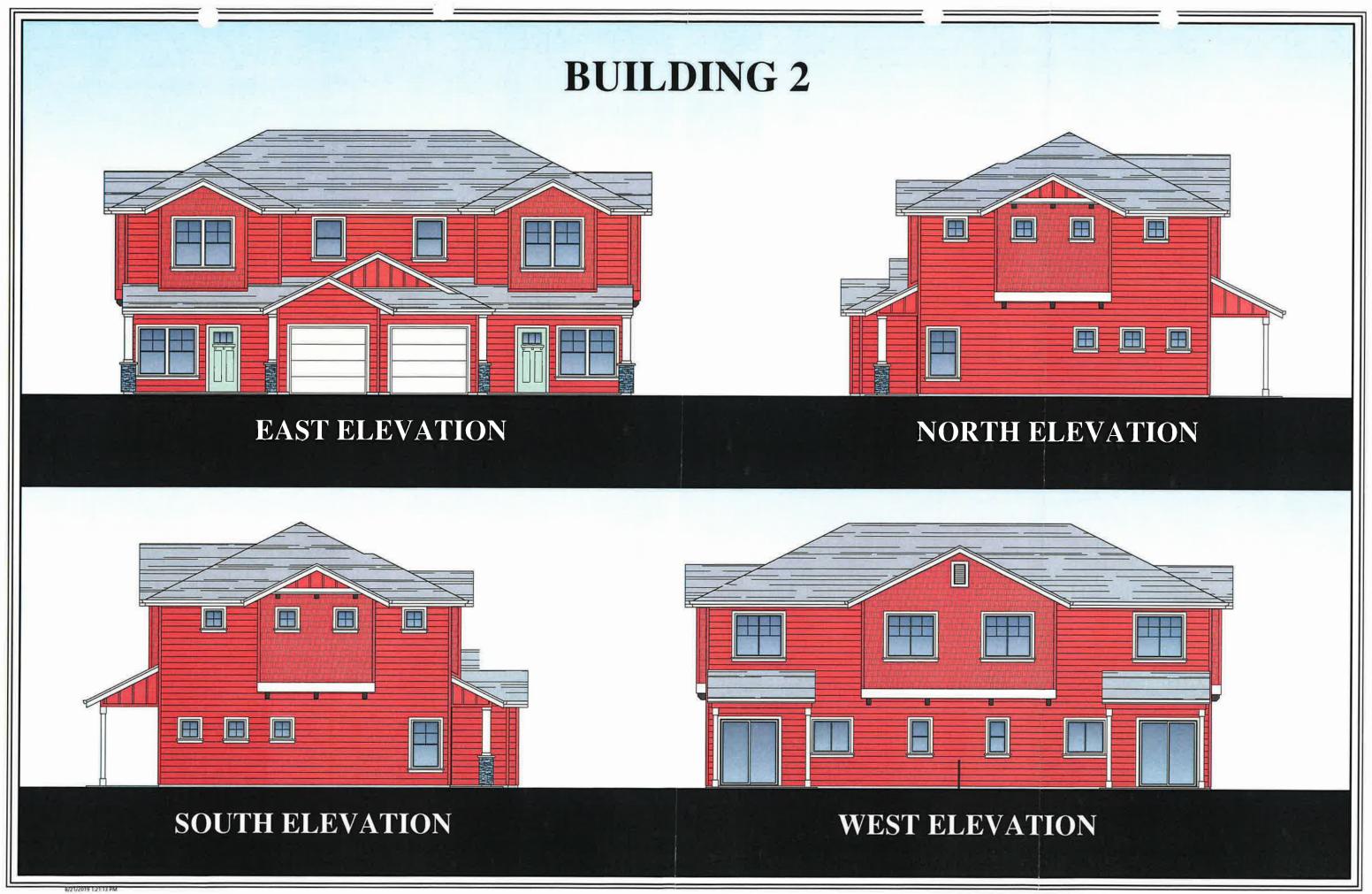




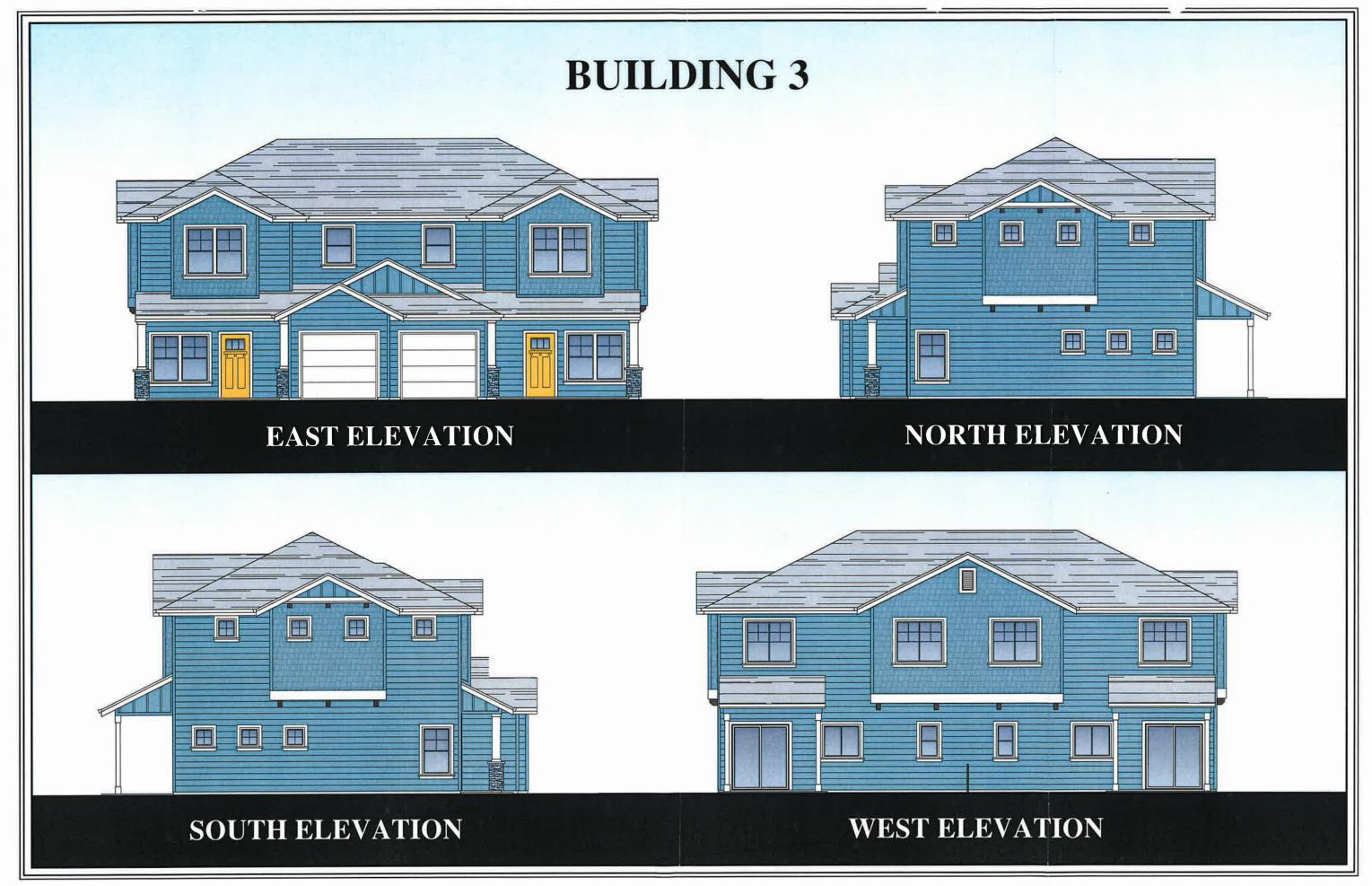




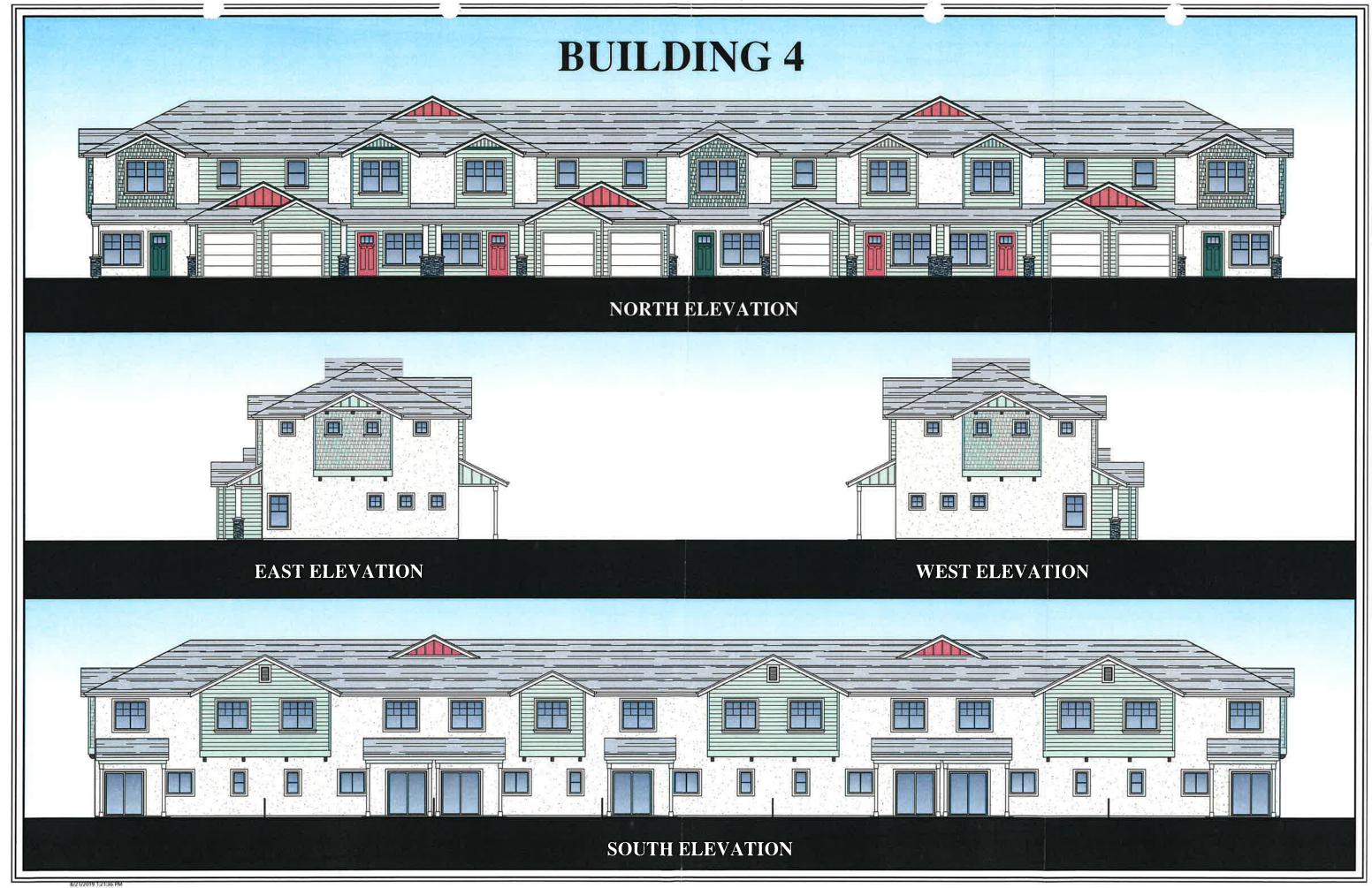




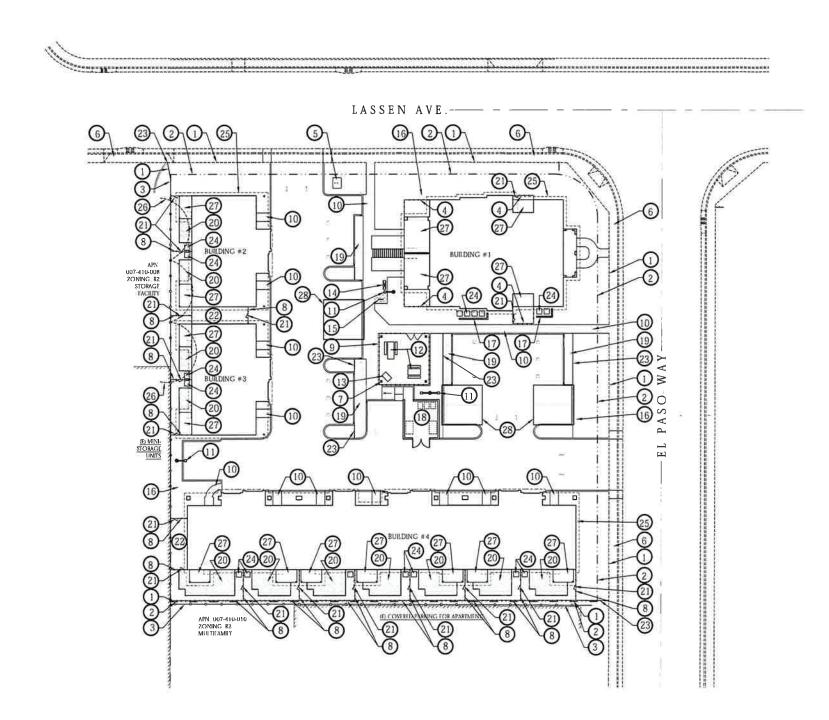
ATTACHMENT D



ATTACHMENT D



ATTACHMENT D



APARTMENTS AT LASSEN AND EL PASO PRELIMINARY LANDSCAPE SITE PLAN

Prepared for:

ISM MANAGEMENT COMPANY LLC/ OSM INVESTMENT COMPANY

WATER USE AWA = (Eto) (0 7) (LA) (0 62) - AWA 148.816 Gallons per Year 517 = Reference Evapotranspiration (ETo) 0 45 = ET Adjust ment Factor (percent) 10 317 = Landscape Area (LA) (square fact) 0 52 = Conversion factor (inches to galloni ated Water Use for Hydrozones (EWII) EWU = (Etc) (PF) (HA) (0.52) / (E) Whe The second secon IE = Impation Efficiency per Sc 0 22904 acres 78363 64 0 007805 Acres

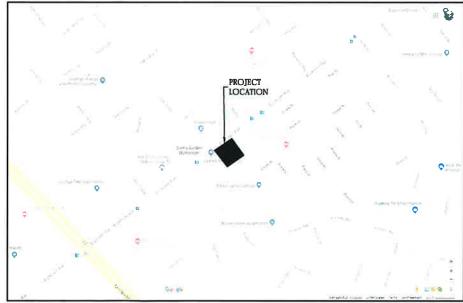
SCREENING NOTE

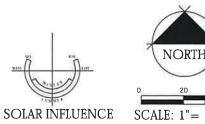
MOST HVACS ARE LOCATED IN PRIVATE BACKYARDS AND NOT VISIBLE TO THE PUBLIC. HVACS VISIBLE TO EL PASO WAY ARE TO BE SCREENED WITH EVERGREEN LANDSCAPE AND A LOW SCREEN WALL TO MATCH BUILDING ARCHITECTURE.

LANDSCAPE IRRIGATION

LANDSCAPE IS LOW WATER USE SHRUBS IRRIGATED BY MEANS OF A LOW VOLUME DRIP IRRIGATION SYSTEM AND MEDIUM WATER USE TREES IRRIGATED WITH BUBBLERS. ALL IRRIGATION WILL BE OPERATED BY MEANS OF AN AUTOMATIC IRRIGATION CONTROLLER.

THE IRRIGATION SYSTEM WILL UTILIZE A FLOW SENSING/ MASTER VALVE ASSEMBLY THAT WILL SHUT THE SYSTEM DOWN IN THE EVENT OF A LINE BREAK SO AS TO PREVENT WASTING WATER AND DAMAGE TO LANDSCAPE. IT WILL ALSO FEATURE AN EVAPOTRANSPIRATION/ RAIN/ FREEZE SENSOR WHICH ADJUSTS THE IRRIGATION SCHEDULE BASED UPON REAL-TIME CONDITIONS IN ORDER TO PROVIDE THE MINIMUM AMOUNT OF IRRIGATION FOR OPTIMAL PLANT GROWTH





SCALE: 1'' = 20'-0'

PLAN LEGEIND

SYMBOL	DESCRIPTION		
	LIMIT OF WORK		
2	PROPERTY LINE		
3	EXISTING FENCE TO REALAIN		
4	3 FOOT HIGH, BOARD ON BOARD, CEDAR FENCE WITH CAP		
5	PGE TRANSFORMER SHOWN FOR REFERENCE ONLY. SEE PLANS BY OTHERS		
6	EXISTING CITY SIDEWALK SET CIVIL ENGINEER'S PLANS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION		
\overline{O}	STEEL OVERHEAD STRUCTURE WITH METAL ROOT (MATCH CARPORTS) SEE DESIGN DEVELOPMENT SHEET.		
8	6 FOOT HIGH CEDAR PRIVACY FENCING WITH MATCHING GATES PER PLAN. BOARD ON BOARD WITH 2 X 6 CAP. SEE DESIGN DEVELOPMENT SHEET.		
9	3 FOOT HIGH TUNULAR STEEL FENCING WITH 1/2" PICKETS AT 4" O.C. WITH MATCHING GATES PER PLAN, COLOR. GLOSS BLACK SEL DESIGN DEVELOPMENT SHEET,		
10	INTERIOR CONCRETE WALKWAYS SEE CIVIL ENGINEER'S PLANS		
1)	AREA LIGHT. 12 FOOT HIGH LED 'SHOEBOX' STYLE LIGHT WITH GLARE CUTOFFS. SEE DESIGN DEVELOPMENT SHEFT.		
12	CONCRETE PICNIC TABLES SEE DESIGN DEVELOPMENT SHEFT		
13	PARK STYLE CHARCOAL GRILL SEE DESIGN DEVELOPMENT SHEET		
14	CLUSTER MAILBOX SEE DESIGN DEVELOPMENT SHEET		
15	GUEST BIKE PARKING. RACK REQUIRING 2 POINTS OF CONTACT 2 BIKES POWDER COAT BLACK SEE DESIGN DEVELOPMENT SHEET		
16	BUILDING SETBACK		
17	UTILITY SCREEN WALL 3 FOOT HIGH TO MATCH BUILDING STYLE AND COLOR		
18	TRASH ENCLOSURE SHOWN FOR REFERENCE ONLY SEE ARCHITECT'S PLANS		
19	COBBLE LINED DETENTION BASIN WITH BIO-FILTRATION PLANTINGS		
20	INTERLOCKING PAVERS		
21	MAINTENANCE ACCESS GATES		
22	1'- 1-1/2' CRUSHED ROCK OVER WEFD BARRIER		
23	STEEL HEADER		
24	HVAC		
25	NEW UTILITIES SEE ARCHITECT'S PLANS		
26	CANOPY OF EXISTING TREES TREES LOCATED ON NEIGHBORING PROPERTY		
27	CONCRETI PATIO		
28	CARPORT BY OWNER		

VICINITY MAP

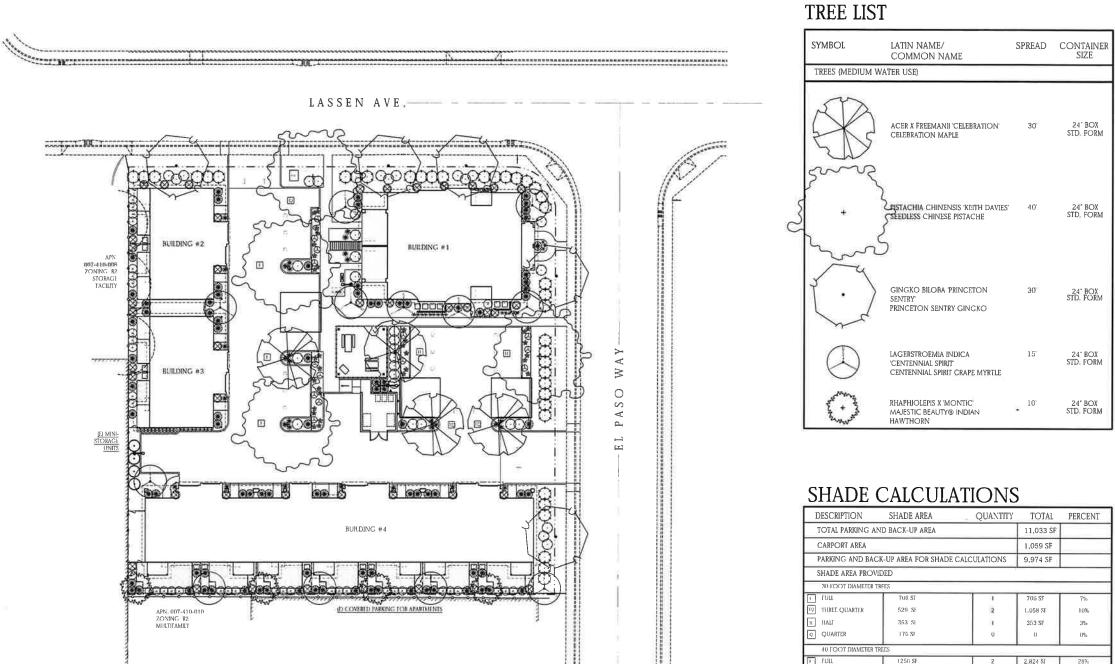
ATTACHMENT: " E "

Prepared by:

DATE AUGUST 20, 2019 PROJECT NUMBER 2152 DRAWN: JBB



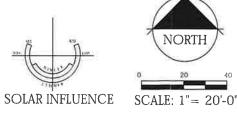
BRIAN FIRTH LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT, INC. 1 627 BROADWAY, SUITE 220, CHICO, CALIFORNIA 95928 PHONE: (530) 899-1130 www.BFLAdesign.com



APARTMENTS AT LASSEN AND EL PASO PRELIMINARY LANDSCAPE PLANTING PLAN

Prepared for:

ISM MANAGEMENT COMPANY LLC/ OSM INVESTMENT COMPANY





THREE QUARTER 942 SF HALF 628 SJ 628 ST 314 SF QUARTER 314 SI TOTAL SHADE AREA PROVIDED 5.571 SF

PARKING LOT LANDSCAPE

DESCRIPTION	AREA	PERCENT
PARKING LOT PAVING	11. 033 SF	
PARKING LOT LANDSCAPE	962 SF	8%

SHRUB LIST

SYMBOL	latin Name/ Common Name	SPREAD	CONTAINER Size				
SHRUBS (LC	SHRUBS (LOW WATER USE)						
\bigcirc	PYRACANTHA 'APACHE' Apache Firethorn	6"	5 GAL				
\odot	MYRTUS COMMUNIS TRUE MYRTLE	7	5 GAL				
*	DIETES BICOLOR FORTNIGHT LILY	3	5 GAL				
\otimes	NANDINA DOMESTICA 'COMPACTA' COMPACT HEAVENLY BAMBOO	4"	5 GAL				
\otimes	NANDINA 'NANA PURPUREA' Dwarf nandina	2"	1 GAL				
*	TULBAGHIA VIOLACEA SOCIETY GARLIC	2'	1 GAL				
\bigcirc	CISTUS X PULVERULENTUS 'SUNSET Magenta rock rose	4*-5*	5 GAL				
(\mathbf{x})	SALVIA GREGGII 'FURMAN'S RED' FURMAN'S RED AUTUMN SAGE	4"	5 GAL				
*	ACHILLEA X'MOONSIIINE" MOONSIIINE YARROW"	2	1 GAL				
*	JUNCUS PATENS CALIFORNIA GRAY RUSI J	2'+	1 GAL				
0	ERIGERON KARVINSKIANUS SANTA BARBARA DAISY	3'+	I GAL				
GROUNDC	GROUNDCOVER						
	TEUCRIUM CHAMAEDRYS PROSTRATUM COMPACT CREEPING GERMANDER	2' OC	1 GAL				
	JUNIPERUS CONFERTA SHORE JUNIPER	6' OC	1 GAL				
VINES		REMARKS					
•	PARTHENOCISSUS TRICUSPIDATA VETCHII BOSTON IVY	TRAIN TO TRASH ENCLOSURE WALL					

SOILS STATEMENT

STANDARD SOIL AMENDMENTS WILL BE APPLIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MODEL WATER EFFICIENT LANDSCAPE ORDINANCE AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF AN ANALYTICAL SOILS TESTING LABORATORY.

TOP DRESSING

0%

6%

3%

55%

ALL NON-TURF LANDSCAPE AREAS SHALL RECEIVE A 3" MINIMUM LAYER 5/8" BROWN LAVA ROCK TOP DRESSING UNLESS AN ALTERNATE TOP DRESSING HAS BEEN SPECIFIED ON THE PRELIMINARY LANDSCAPE SITE PLAN.

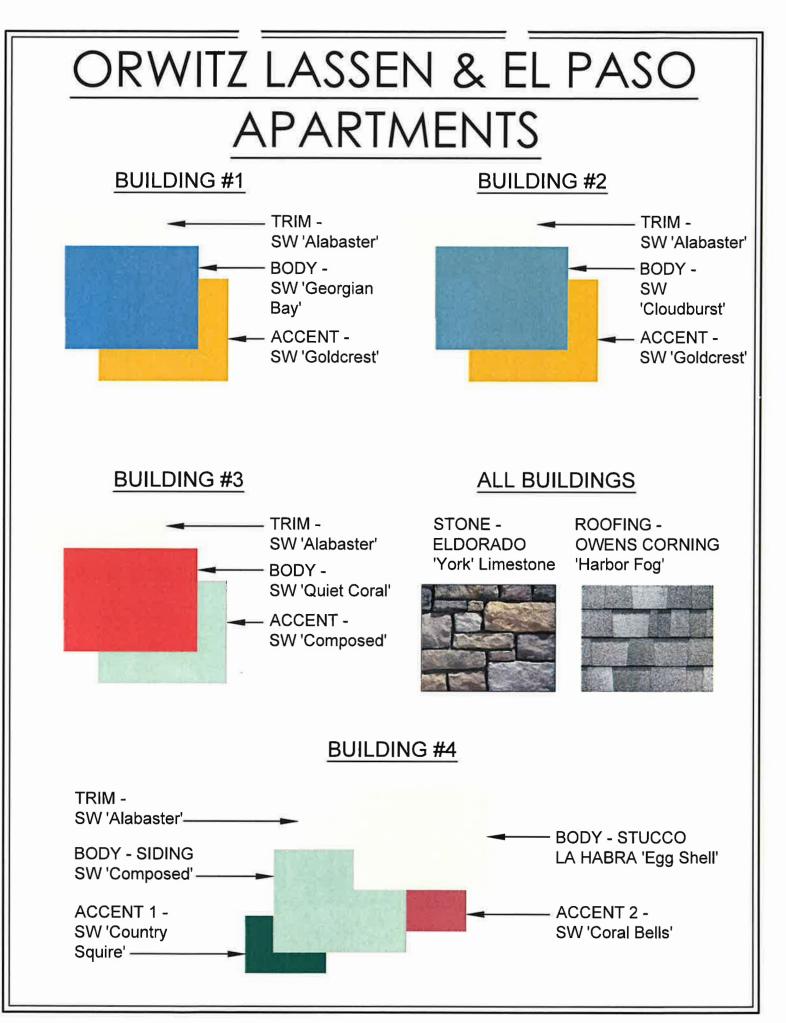
ATTACHMENT: "E"

Prepared by:

DATE AUGUST 20, 2019 PROJECT NUMBER 2152



BRIAN FIRTH LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT, INC G27 BROADWAY, SUITE 220, CHICO, CALIFORNIA 95928 PHONE: (530) 899-1130 www.BFLAdesign.com



ATTACHMENT F