

# Los Angeles Unified School District

## Office of Environmental Health and Safety

ALBERTO M. CARVALHO  
Superintendent of Schools

CARLOS A. TORRES  
Director, Environmental Health and Safety

JENNIFER FLORES  
Deputy Director, Environmental Health and Safety

### NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

THIS NOTICE WAS POSTED  
ON May 01 2025  
UNTIL June 02 2025  
REGISTRAR – RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK

2025 088390  
  
FILED  
May 01 2025  
Dean C. Logan, Registrar – Recorder/County Clerk  
Electronically signed by CARINA CHEN

**To:** County Clerk and Registrar-Recorder  
County of Los Angeles  
12400 Imperial Highway  
Norwalk, CA 90650

**From:** LAUSD OEHS  
333 S. Beaudry Avenue  
21<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

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**Project Title:**

Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELOP) Greening with Removal of Portable Classroom Buildings Project at Seven (7) Los Angeles Unified Campuses

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**Project Locations – Specific:**

1. Coldwater Canyon Elementary School, 6850 Coldwater Canyon Avenue, North Hollywood, CA
2. Dorris Place Elementary School, 2225 Dorris Place, Los Angeles, CA
3. Fishburn Avenue Elementary School, 5701 Fishburn Avenue, Maywood, CA
4. Harbor City Elementary School, 1508 W. 254th Street, Harbor City, CA
5. Liberty Boulevard Elementary School, 2728 Liberty Boulevard, South Gate, CA
6. Rowan Avenue Elementary School, 600 S. Rowan Avenue, Los Angeles, CA
7. Sylmar Elementary School, 13291 Phillippi Avenue, Sylmar, CA

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**Project Location – City:**

Various

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**Project Location – County:**

Los Angeles

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**Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:**

The proposed Project (Project) consists of the design and construction of outdoor learning spaces including installation of trees, plants, natural turf, and decomposed granite and removal of single-story portable classrooms on seven Los Angeles Unified School District (District or LA Unified) elementary school campuses. The Projects will be individually designed on each Campus, but will include a mix of the following components:

- Removal of portable classroom building and asphalt footprint and installation of green/natural landscaped areas (grass, irrigation, and trees) or hardscaped area.
- Abatement of hazardous materials as necessary
- Disconnection of high-voltage and low-voltage utilities, and sewage and water lines

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333 South Beaudry Avenue, 21<sup>st</sup> Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90017 • Telephone (213) 241-3199 • Fax (213) 241-6816

*Our Mission: To ensure a safe and healthy environment for students to learn, teachers to teach, and employees to work.  
Our Vision: To eliminate all environmental health and safety risks at schools.*





The table below describes the components of the Project proposed for each Campus:

School	Planting (Shrubs)	Trees	Turf	Decomposed Granite	Asphalt Removal	Building and Classroom Removal
Coldwater Canyon ES	X	X	X	X	X	1 bungalow (2 classrooms)
Dorris Place ES	X	X	X	--	X	1 bungalow (2 classrooms)
Fishburn Avenue ES	X	X	X	X	X	2 portable buildings (4 classrooms)
Harbor City ES	X	X	X	--	X	1 bungalow (2 classrooms)
Liberty Boulevard ES	X	X	X	X	X	1 building (2 classrooms)
Rowan Avenue ES	X	X	X	--	X	2 bungalows (4 classrooms)
Sylmar ES	X	X	X	--	X	2 portable buildings (4 classrooms)

On September 27, 2022, the Board of Education adopted the Equitable Funding and Expansion of Green Spaces across District Campuses resolution which emphasizes that any future portable removal efforts must also include the integration of green or natural spaces. On June 25, 2024, the Board of Education adopted the 2024-25 Budget for LA Unified. This budget included ELOP funding to provide expanded learning opportunities for before school, after school, summer, or intersession learning programs that are student-centered and focused on developing the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs and interests of students through hands-on, engaging learning experiences. The budget includes specific allocations for some ELOP items, such as \$10 million for playground restoration projects and \$12.1 million for campus lighting projects, as well as additional ELOP funds of nearly \$231 million.

The Project will be implemented per all applicable local and State regulations, as well as all District Standards and Specifications, such as those provided in LA Unified's Subsequent Program Environmental Impact Report for the School Upgrade Program (Subsequent PEIR).<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the Project is to facilitate removal of portable classrooms pursuant to State and District policies and to provide outdoor learning experiences. The Project will not cause an increase in student capacity or enrollment and would not result in an increase in the intensity of use. The beneficiaries of the Project include students and staff at each of the respective schools and the community at large who may request access to the facilities and grounds of the Campuses pursuant to the Civic Center Act (CA Ed. Code Sections 38130 - 38139).

<sup>1</sup> LAUSD OEHS, "School Upgrade Program Final Subsequent Program Environmental Impact Report (SPEIR)," <https://www.lausd.org/ceqa>, adopted by the Board of Education on December 12, 2023.



**Name of Public Agency Approving the Project:**

Los Angeles Unified School District

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:**

Los Angeles Unified School District

**Exempt Status: (check one below)**

- ☐ Ministerial [Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080(b)(1); CEQA Guidelines Section 15268<sup>2</sup>]:
- ☐ Declared Emergency [PRC Section 21080(b)(3); CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(a)]:
- ☐ Emergency Project [PRC Section 21080(b)(4); CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(b)(c)]:
- ☒ Categorical Exemption (PRC Section 21084; CEQA Guidelines Sections 15300 -15333):
- *CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities*
  - *CEQA Guidelines Section 15304 – Minor Alterations to Land*
- ☐ Statutory Exemption:

**Reasons why project is exempt:**Section 15301 Existing Facilities

Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination.

Construction of the Project will result in the planting of new trees and shrubs on improved ground surface areas and removal of portable classroom buildings and asphalt within their existing building footprints at existing Campuses. As such, the Project would constitute operation, repair, maintenance, and minor alteration of existing public facilities involving no expansion of the facilities' use. All proposed Project components would involve minor alterations to existing Campuses and will occur within the area occupied by existing facilities at each Campus. The Project components will not present a new or expanded use of the Campuses. Therefore, the Project constitutes minor alterations to existing school sites that result in no expansion of use and meets the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.

Section 15304 – Minor Alterations to Land

Class 4 consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes.

Construction of the Project will result in the planting of new trees and shrubs on improved ground surface areas and removal of portable classroom buildings and asphalt within their existing building footprints at existing Campuses. As such, removal of scenic trees will not be required as a part of the Project. The Project will include the installation of new vegetation, irrigation, and decomposed granite as part of the ELOP Projects. Therefore, the Project meets the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15304.

<sup>2</sup> CEQA Guidelines can be found at California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000 – Section 15387.





### Section 15300.2 – Exceptions

Section 15300.2 of the CEQA Guidelines, Exceptions, provides conditions under which categorical exemptions are inapplicable. Review of these Projects indicates that they would not violate any of the exceptions, as described below.

1. *The projects would occur in certain specified sensitive environments or locations;*

The Project sites are located within fully developed Campuses within urbanized communities.<sup>3</sup> None of the Campuses have been designated as biologically sensitive locations. The nearest threatened or endangered species is the Coastal California gnatcatcher located approximately 2.3 miles southeast of Harbor City Elementary School. The nearest sensitive environment to the Project site is the Harbor Lake Regional Park Significant Ecological Area located approximately 0.8 miles east of Harbor City ES.<sup>4,5</sup> As such, the Project will not impact sensitive environments or locations.

2. *Cumulative impacts would be considerable because successive projects of the same type would occur at the same place over time;*

The Campuses are active school sites and there will likely be ongoing maintenance activities and minor Project to keep them operational. There are currently no known successive projects of the same type or scale planned for any one of the Campuses. As the Project would not result in any lasting impacts once construction of the Project is complete, the Project would not contribute to cumulative impacts when considered with expected successive projects. Therefore, no cumulative impacts will result from the Project and successive projects of the same type and at the same place over time.

3. *There is a reasonable possibility that the activity would have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.*

There are no known unusual circumstances that would have a significant effect on the environment. The upgrades associated with the Project are comparable to other modernizations and improvements that are being completed throughout the District under the School Upgrade Program. The removal of trees is not anticipated as part of the proposed scopes of work. However, should the Project be altered to include the removal of trees, LA Unified's Office of Environmental Health & Safety (OEHS) must be notified immediately. District policy requires consultation with an arborist to determine if the trees are a protected native species. Additionally, written approval from the school principal will be required before any trees can be removed. If tree removal is scheduled to occur between February 1 and August 31, a nesting bird survey would be performed prior to removal activities, per standard condition (SC) of approval SC-BIO-3 of the Standard Conditions of Approval for District Construction, Upgrade, and Improvements Projects.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), *2019 Annual Land Use (ALU v.2019.2)*, <https://arcg.is/1SqNkm>, accessed April 2025.

<sup>4</sup> United States Fish and Wildlife Service Critical Habitat Portal, <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/report/table/critical-habitat.html>, accessed April 2025.

<sup>5</sup> Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, [https://rpgis.isd.lacounty.gov/Html5Viewer/index.html?viewer=GISNET\\_Public.GIS-NET\\_Public](https://rpgis.isd.lacounty.gov/Html5Viewer/index.html?viewer=GISNET_Public.GIS-NET_Public), accessed April 2025.

<sup>6</sup> LAUSD OEHS, "Standard Conditions of Approval for District Construction, Upgrade, and Improvements Projects," available at [https://www.lausd.org/cms/lib/CA01000043/Centricity/domain/135/ceqa/2023\\_Standard\\_Conditions\\_UPDATE\\_Final.pdf](https://www.lausd.org/cms/lib/CA01000043/Centricity/domain/135/ceqa/2023_Standard_Conditions_UPDATE_Final.pdf).





The Project will include minor ground-disturbing activities. These activities are not considered unusual circumstances for the classes of projects under which an exemption is claimed. All Project related ground disturbing activities would comply with SC-AQ-1, SC-AQ-2, SC-AQ-3, and SC-AQ-4. As the Project involves the removal of pavement, soil sampling and testing has or will be conducted and a determination memorandum will be created for all Campuses prior to demolition and removal of the paving materials. Excavated soils will only be reused onsite if they are placed beneath paved areas. If construction or earthmoving activities require import or export of soils and materials, OEHS must be notified to provide oversight to ensure that these activities are conducted in compliance with the requirements of District Specification 01 4524, relevant provisions of South Coast Air Quality Management District Rule 1466, and other applicable environmental agency rules and requirements.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, as set forth in SC-CUL-7, SC-CUL-9, SC-CUL-10, and SC-CUL-11 and in District protocols, construction activities must be stopped immediately and OEHS notified upon discovery of subsurface features, such as buried resources (i.e., paleontological resources, archaeological resources), tanks or seepage pits, or stained/odoriferous soils.<sup>8</sup> Lastly, any construction and demolition waste shall be recycled to the maximum extent feasible per SC-USS-1.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the Project will not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

4. *The project may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway;*

The closest designated state scenic highway is the Angeles Crest Scenic Byway, which is located approximately 9.8 miles north of Dorris Place Elementary School.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, the proposed Project will not result in damage to scenic resources or similar resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway.

5. *The project is located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code; or*

None of the Project sites are located on sites that are included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, the Project will have no impacts related to being located on a hazardous waste site.

6. *The project may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource.*

Three campuses (Dorris Place ES, Rowan Avenue ES, and Sylmar ES) have been determined eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources and the National Registry of Historic Places. The main buildings on the Dorris Place ES and Rowan Avenue ES campuses are individually eligible, while the Sylmar ES campus is eligible as a historic district. The Project entails landscaping and irrigation in areas on the grounds of existing campuses and removal of existing portable buildings

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<sup>7</sup> LAUSD OEHS, "Section 01 4524 Environmental Import/Export Materials Testing", [http://www.laschools.org/documents/file?file\\_id=219798234&show\\_all\\_versions\\_p=t](http://www.laschools.org/documents/file?file_id=219798234&show_all_versions_p=t)

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, [https://gis.planning.lacounty.gov/GIS-NET3\\_Public/Viewer.html](https://gis.planning.lacounty.gov/GIS-NET3_Public/Viewer.html). Accessed April 2025.

<sup>11</sup> California Department of Toxic Substances Control. DTSC Databases. Available at: <https://dtsc.ca.gov/dtscs-cortese-list/>. Accessed April 2025.



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that are not considered to be individually eligible historic resources or contributors to a historic district. The proposed modifications are limited to spaces that are not considered character-defining and will comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation due to their compatibility and reversibility (Standards 9 and 10). The Project was reviewed by LA Unified's Historic Preservation Specialist and Coordinator to ensure compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Secretary's Standards) and LA Unified's Design Guidelines and Treatment Approaches for Historic Schools (Guidelines). The Historical Preservation Specialist and Coordinator has determined that the Project complies with the Secretary's Standards and LA Unified's Guidelines, meets the requirements specified in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(3), and will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. Therefore, the Project will not have the potential to adversely impact historical resources.

Prepared By:

Bryan Ramos Fernandez, AICP  
CEQA Project Manager/Contract Professional

Phone and Email:

(213) 241-4210  
cp-bryan.fernandez@LAUSD.net

Signed by:

Carlos A. Torres,  
CEQA Officer of the Los Angeles Unified School District

Date:

Attachment: Exhibit A – Site Plans



2025 088390

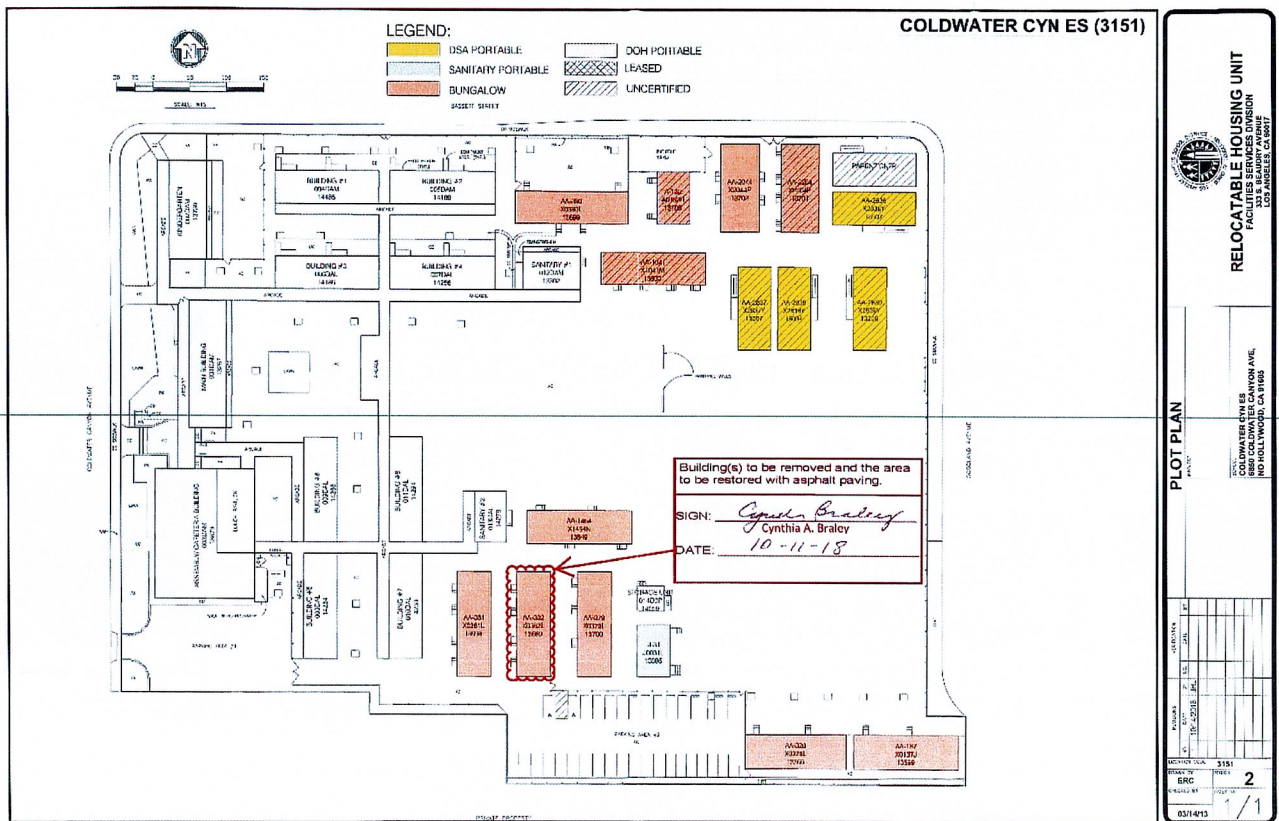


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# EXHIBIT A – COLDWATER CANYON ES SITE PLAN (not to scale) PORTABLE REMOVAL



NORTH



2025 088390



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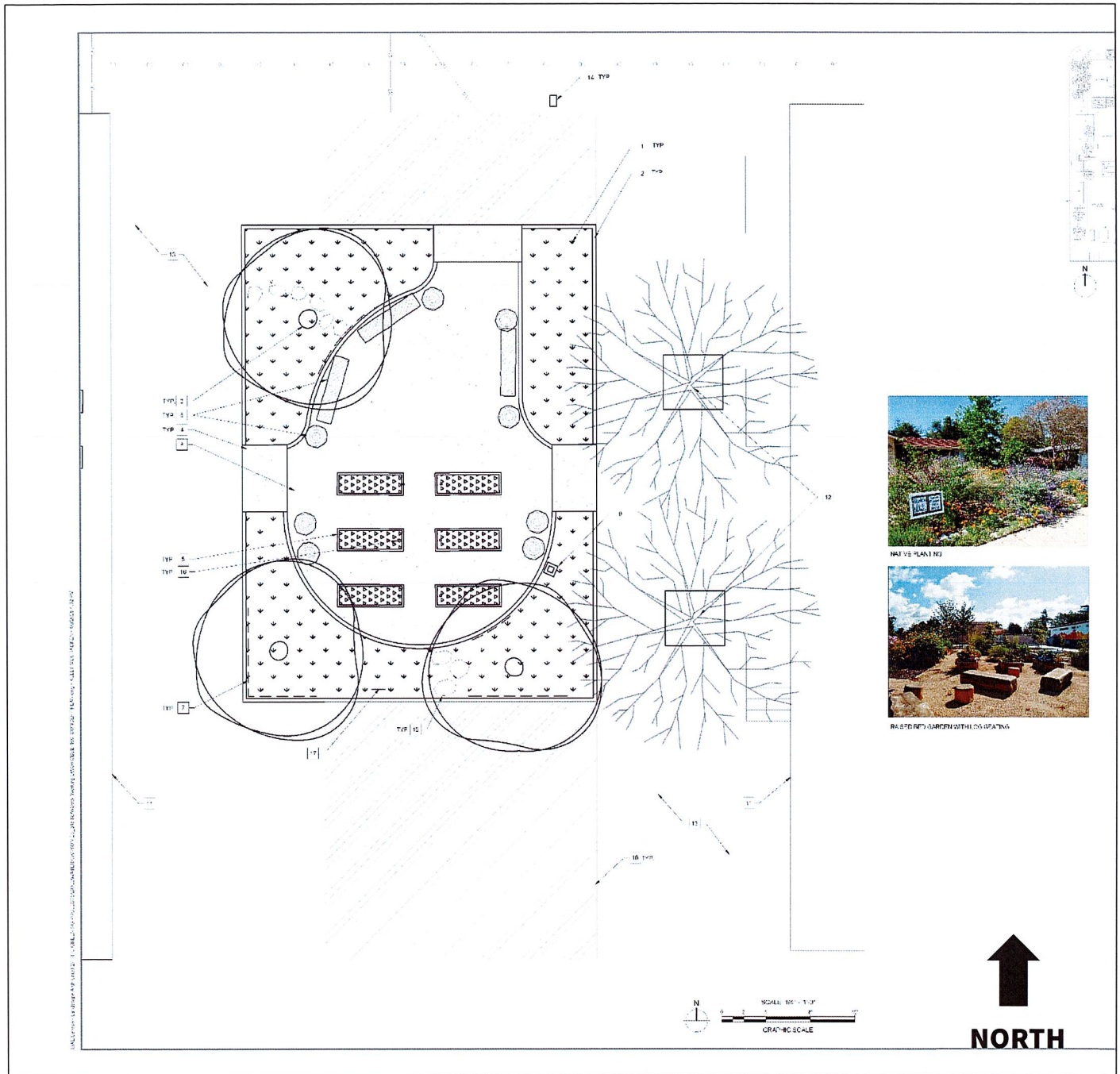
THIS NOTICE WAS POSTED

ON May 01 2025

UNTIL June 02 2025

REGISTRAR - RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK

## EXHIBIT A - COLDWATER CANYON ES SITE PLAN (not to scale) GREENING





2025 088390

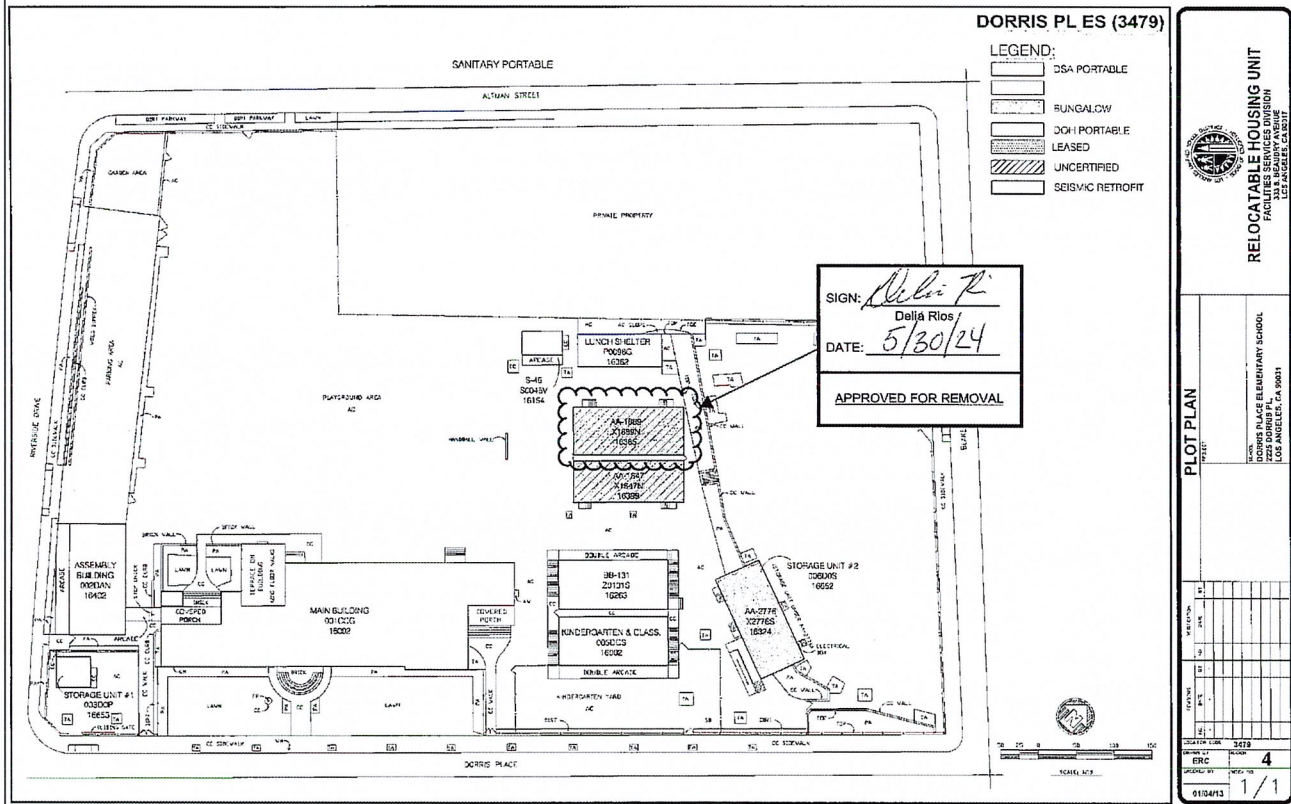


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## EXHIBIT A – DORRIS PLACE ES SITE PLAN (not to scale) PORTABLE REMOVAL





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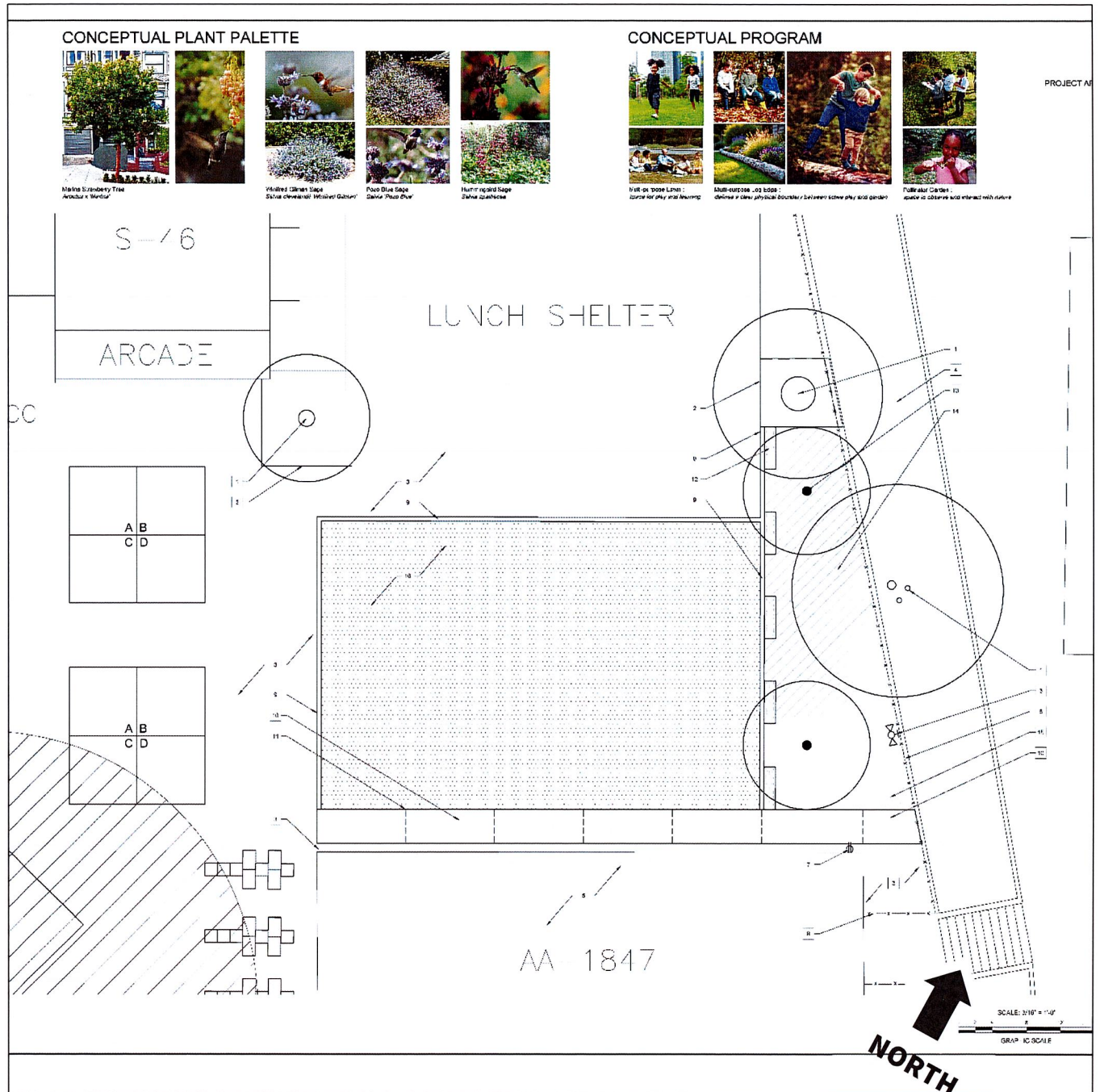


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## EXHIBIT A – DORRIS PLACE ES SITE PLAN (not to scale) GREENING





Dean C. Logan, Registrar - Recorder/County Clerk

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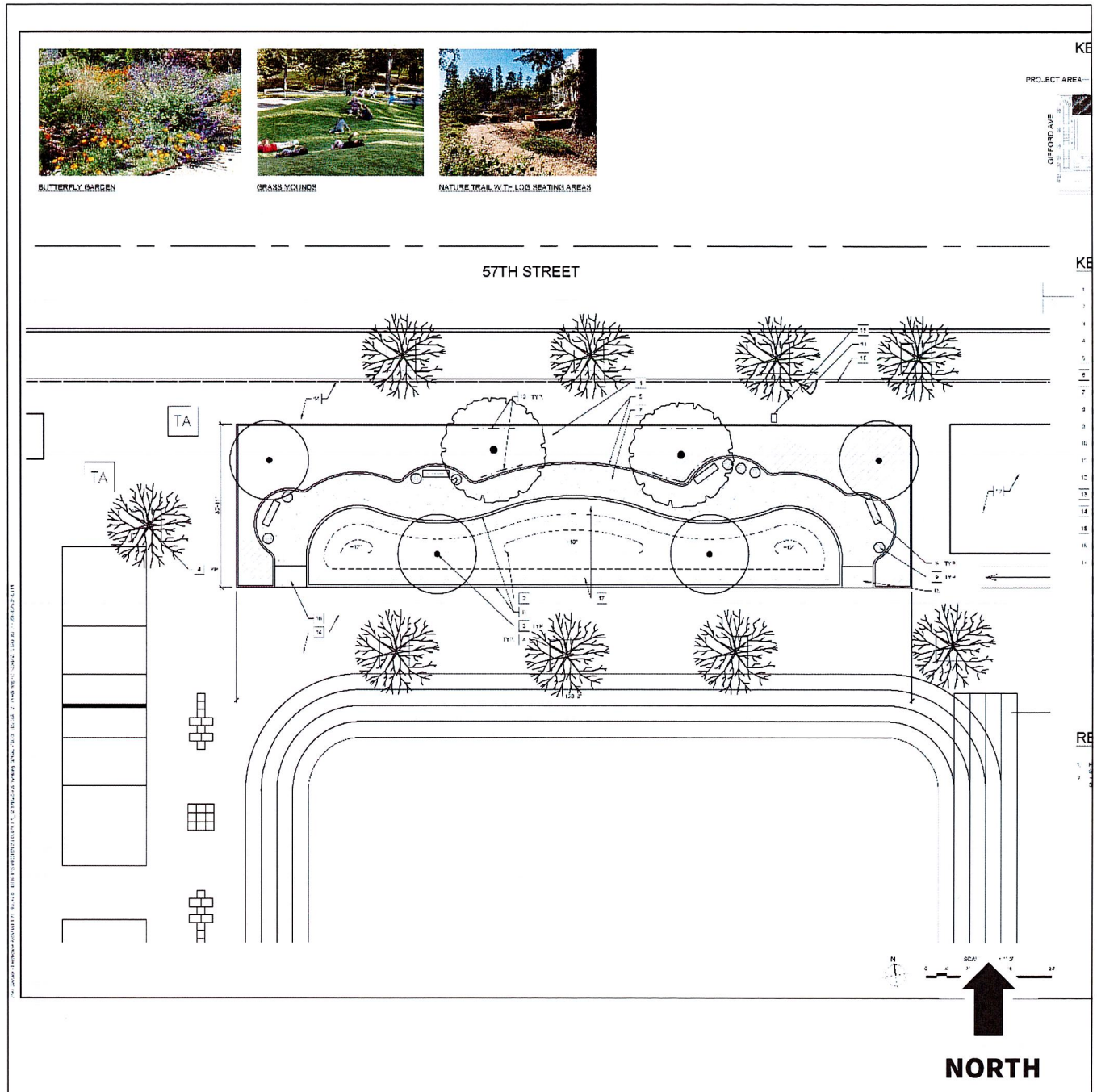
Electronically signed by CARINA CHEN



[illegible]

Dean C. Logan, Registrar – Recorder/County Clerk

**EXHIBIT A – FISHBURN AVENUE ES SITE PLAN (not to scale)**  
**GREENING**





2025 088390

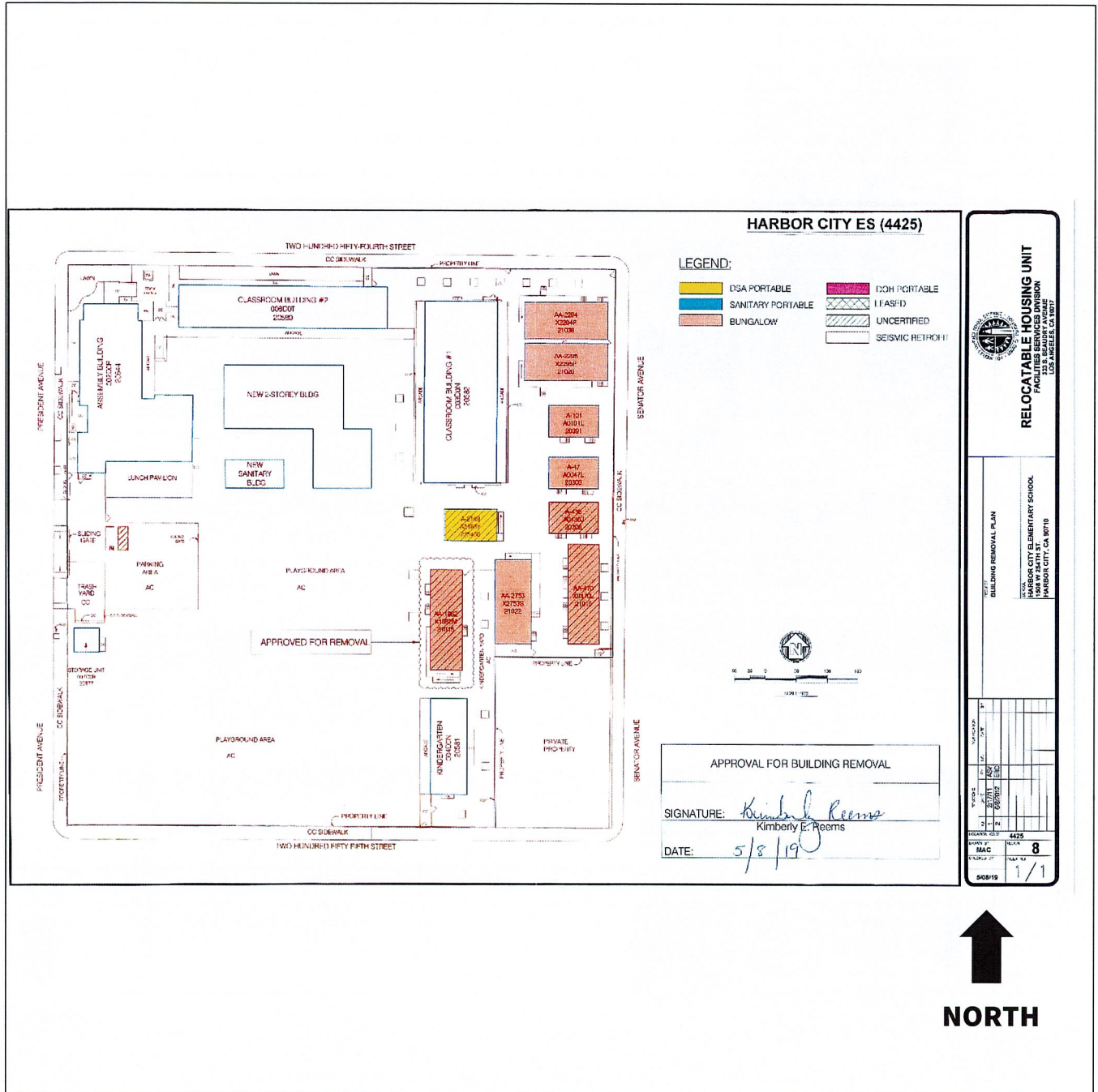


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## EXHIBIT A - HARBOR CITY ES SITE PLAN (not to scale) PORTABLE REMOVAL





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## EXHIBIT A – HARBOR CITY ES SITE PLAN (not to scale) GREENING

### PLANT PALETTE CONCEPT



RED AND BLUE  
Quercus laevis



RED AND BLUE  
Echinacea purpurea



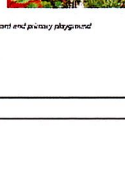
RED AND BLUE  
Echinacea purpurea



RED AND BLUE  
Echinacea purpurea



RED AND BLUE  
Echinacea purpurea



RED AND BLUE  
Echinacea purpurea

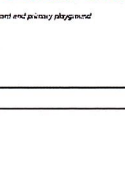
### PROGRAM CONCEPT



NATURAL OPEN SPACE  
with program space for play and informal outdoor learning

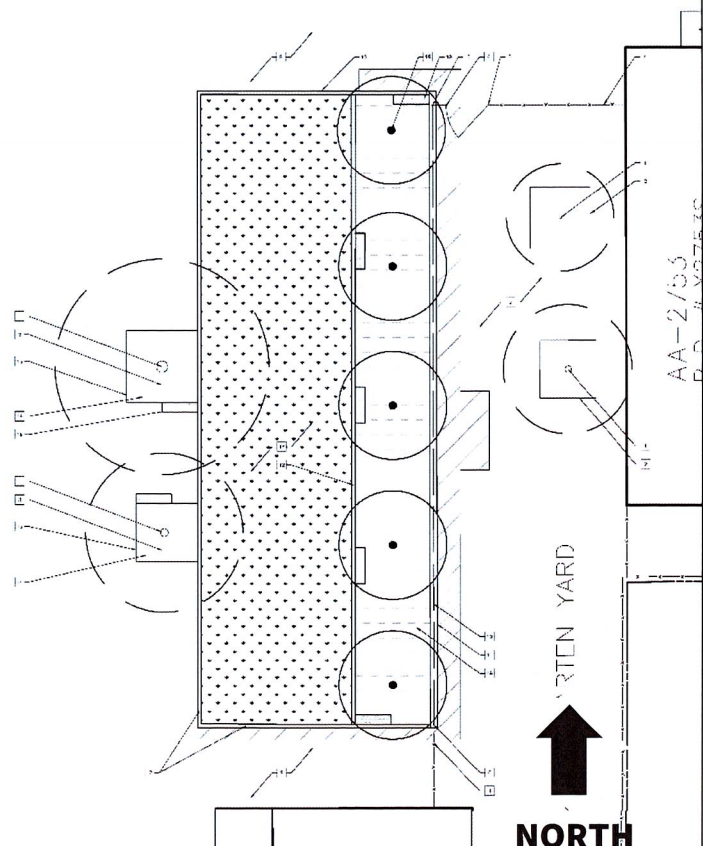


RED AND BLUE  
Echinacea purpurea



RED AND BLUE  
Echinacea purpurea

DSA BUILDING  
DSA #A03 105972



NORTH

AA-2/03



2025 088390

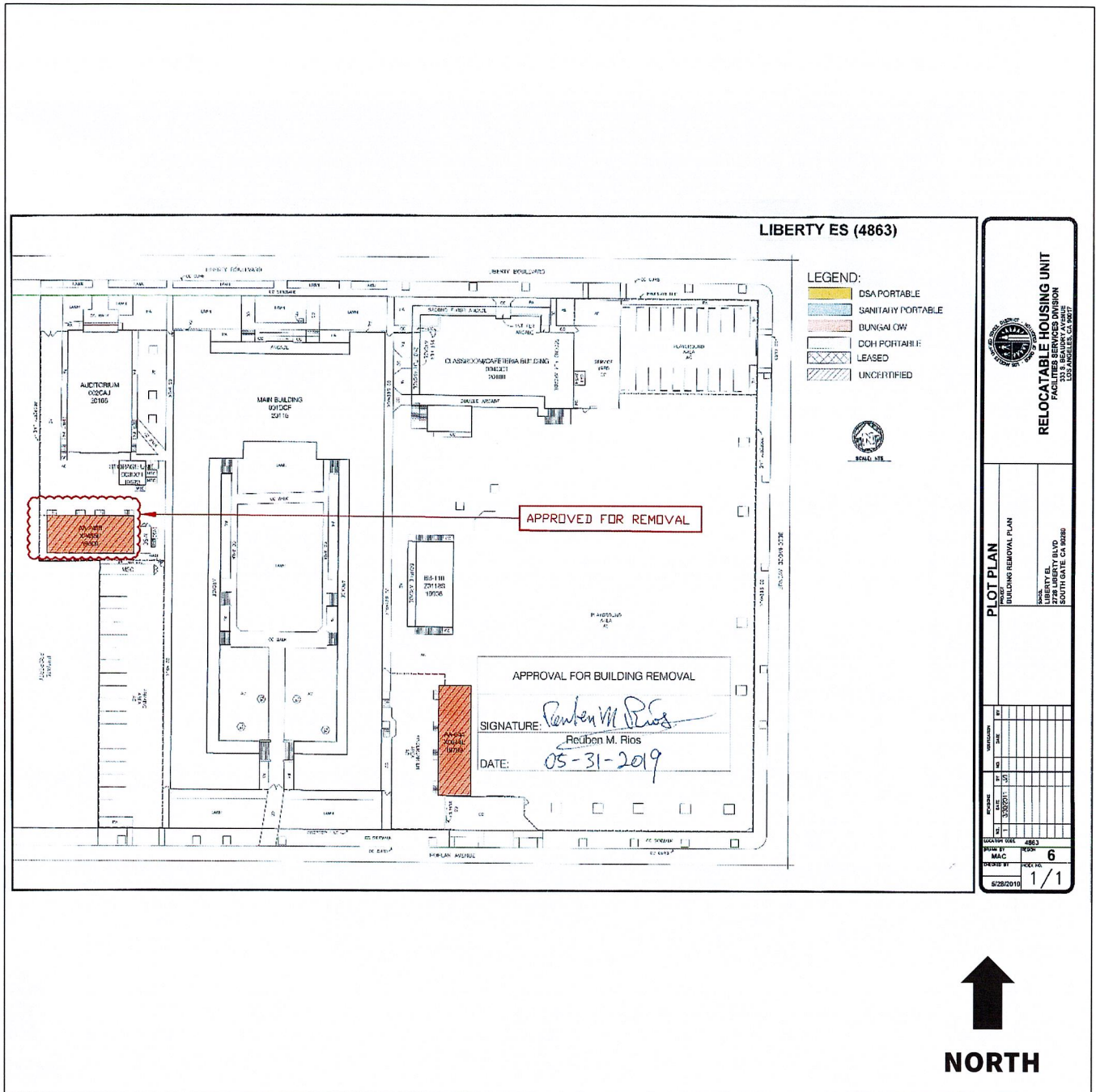


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## EXHIBIT A - LIBERTY BOULEVARD ES SITE PLAN (not to scale) PORTABLE REMOVAL





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## EXHIBIT A – LIBERTY BOULEVARD ES SITE PLAN (not to scale) GREENING



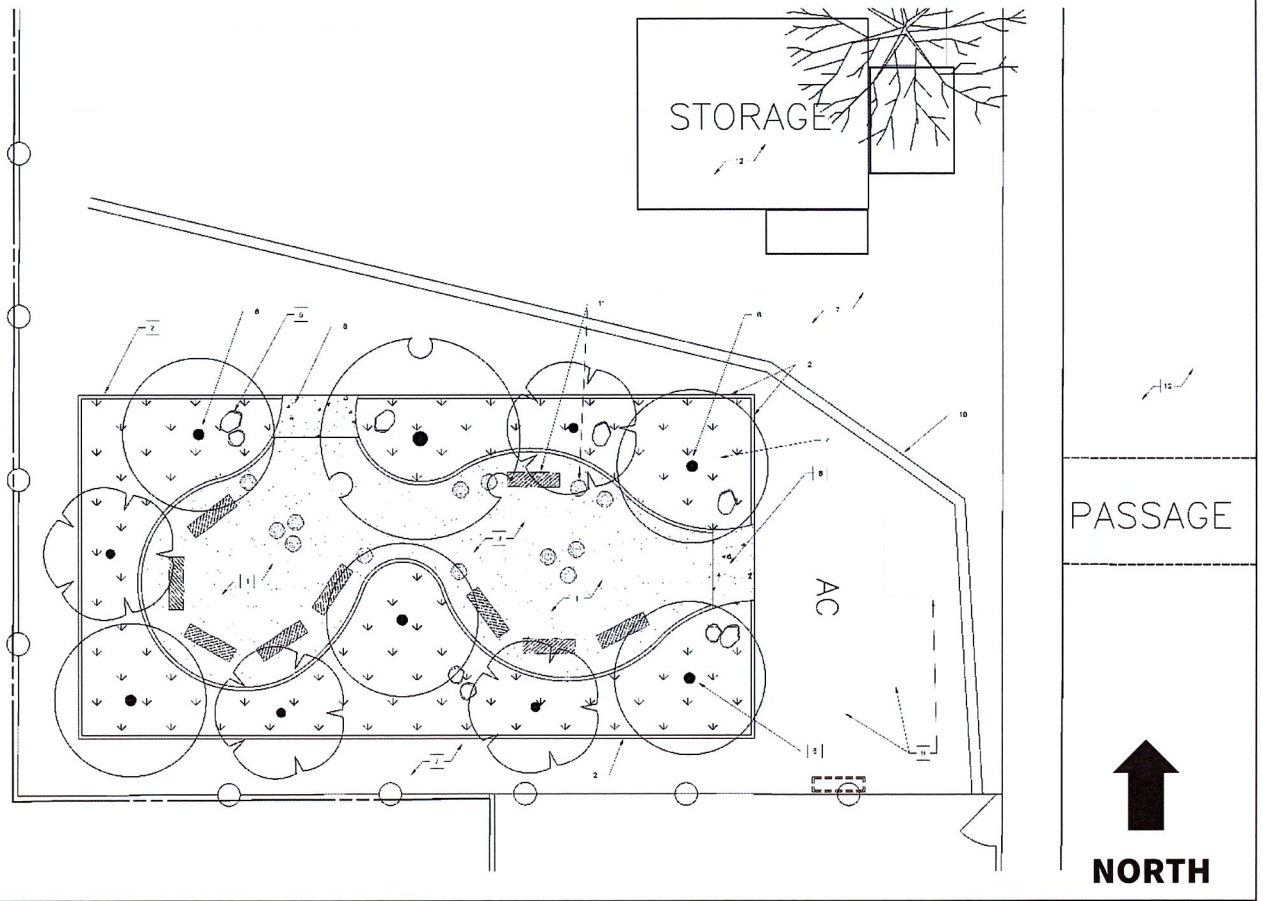
OUTDOOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



NATIVE AND LOW WATER USE PLANTS

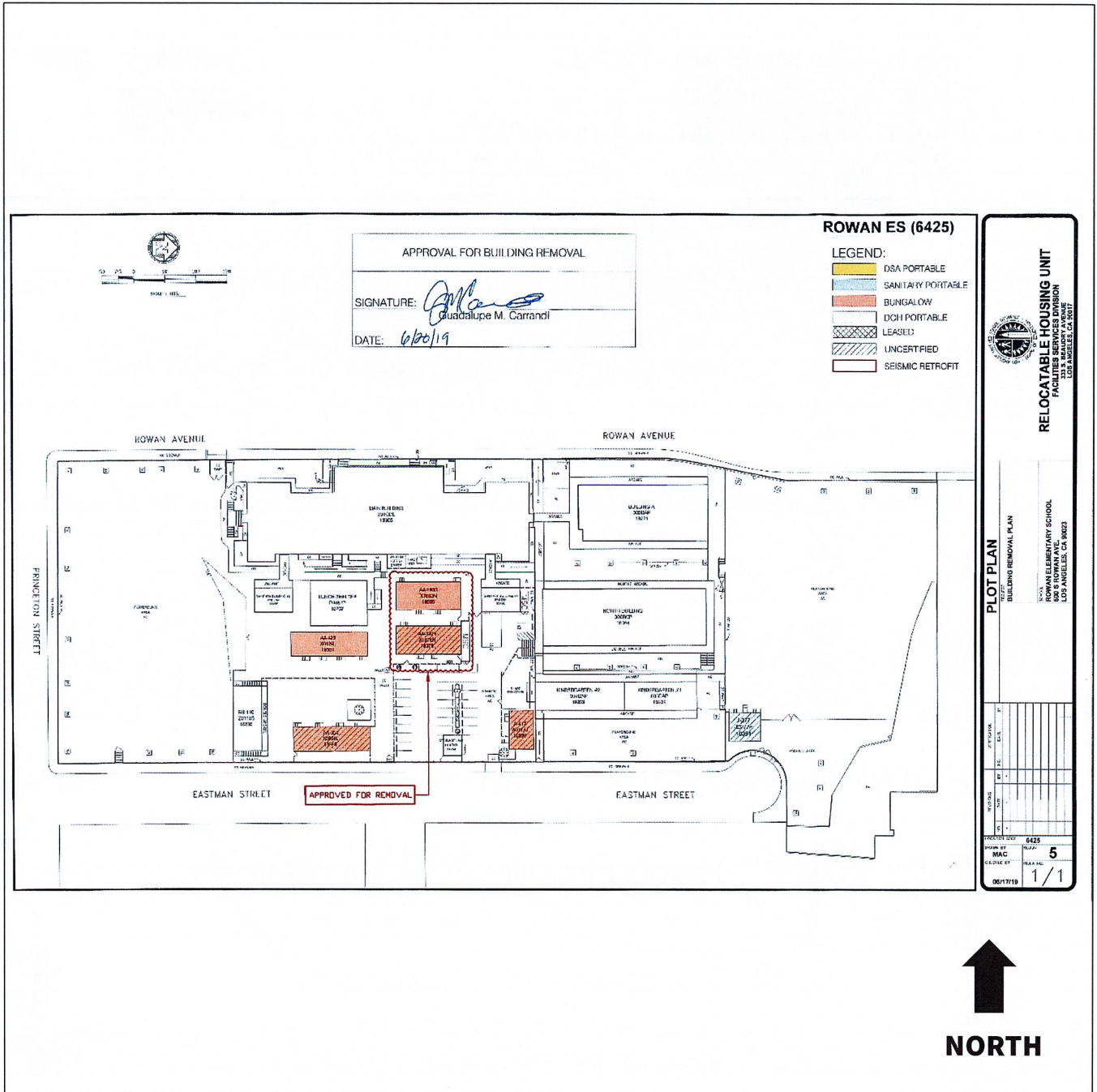


PALO VERDE TREE





# EXHIBIT A – ROWAN AVENUE ES SITE PLAN (not to scale) PORTABLE REMOVAL









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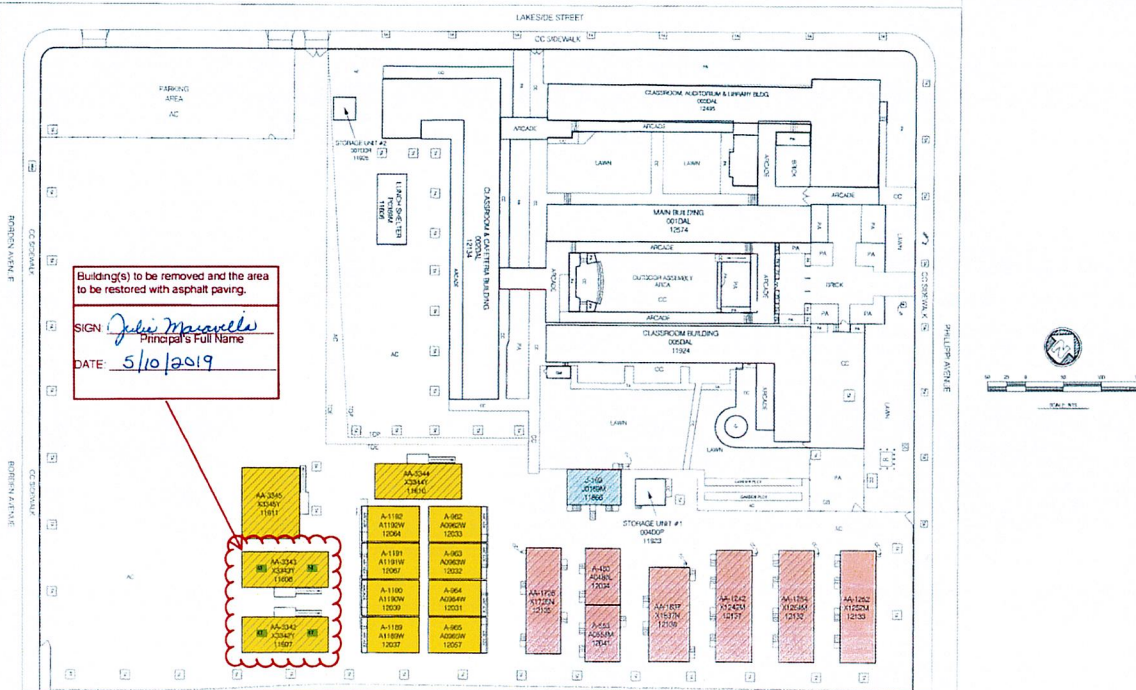
Electronically signed by CARINA CHEN

## EXHIBIT A – SYLMAR ES SITE PLAN (not to scale) PORTABLE REMOVAL

### LEGEND

DSA PORTABLE	DOH PORTABLE
SANITARY PORTABLE	LEASED
BUNGALOW	UNCERTIFIED

SYLMAR ES (7014)



**RELOCATABLE HOUSING UNIT**  
FACILITIES SERVICES DIVISION  
11331 PHILLIPS AVE  
SYLMAR, CA 91787

SYLMAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
11331 PHILLIPS AVE  
SYLMAR, CA 91787

7014

ASV

2

1/1





[illegible]

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**EXHIBIT A – SYLMAR ES SITE PLAN (not to scale)**  
**GREENING**

