

# **Appendix 4.1-4**

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## Oak Woodland Report

# Oak Woodland Report (OWR)

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## Hope Gardens Sequoia Building Project

**December 2022 (updated February 2023, June 2024, October 2024, January 2025)**

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# 1. Introduction

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This Oak Woodland Report (OWR) includes an assessment of oak woodlands at Hope Gardens Family Center by South Environmental and is in support of the Union Rescue Mission Sequoia Building Project (project) located at 12249 Lopez Canyon Road in an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County, California (project site) for Environmental Assessment No. RPPL2020003232. The project includes the demolition of the existing Sequoia Lodge building, a 25-living unit residential building at Hope Gardens, and the construction of a new 117-living unit multi-use building on top of the existing development pad (known hereinafter as the development site), new driveways, and parking areas. The purpose of this management plan is to support permitting efforts for the project with the County of Los Angeles, including Oak Tree Permit No. RPPL2020000706 and CUP No. RPPL2020000694, and the main scope of this report includes a description of oak woodland present, an analysis of potential impacts to the woodland from the proposed project, and options for mitigation with a best alternative presented.

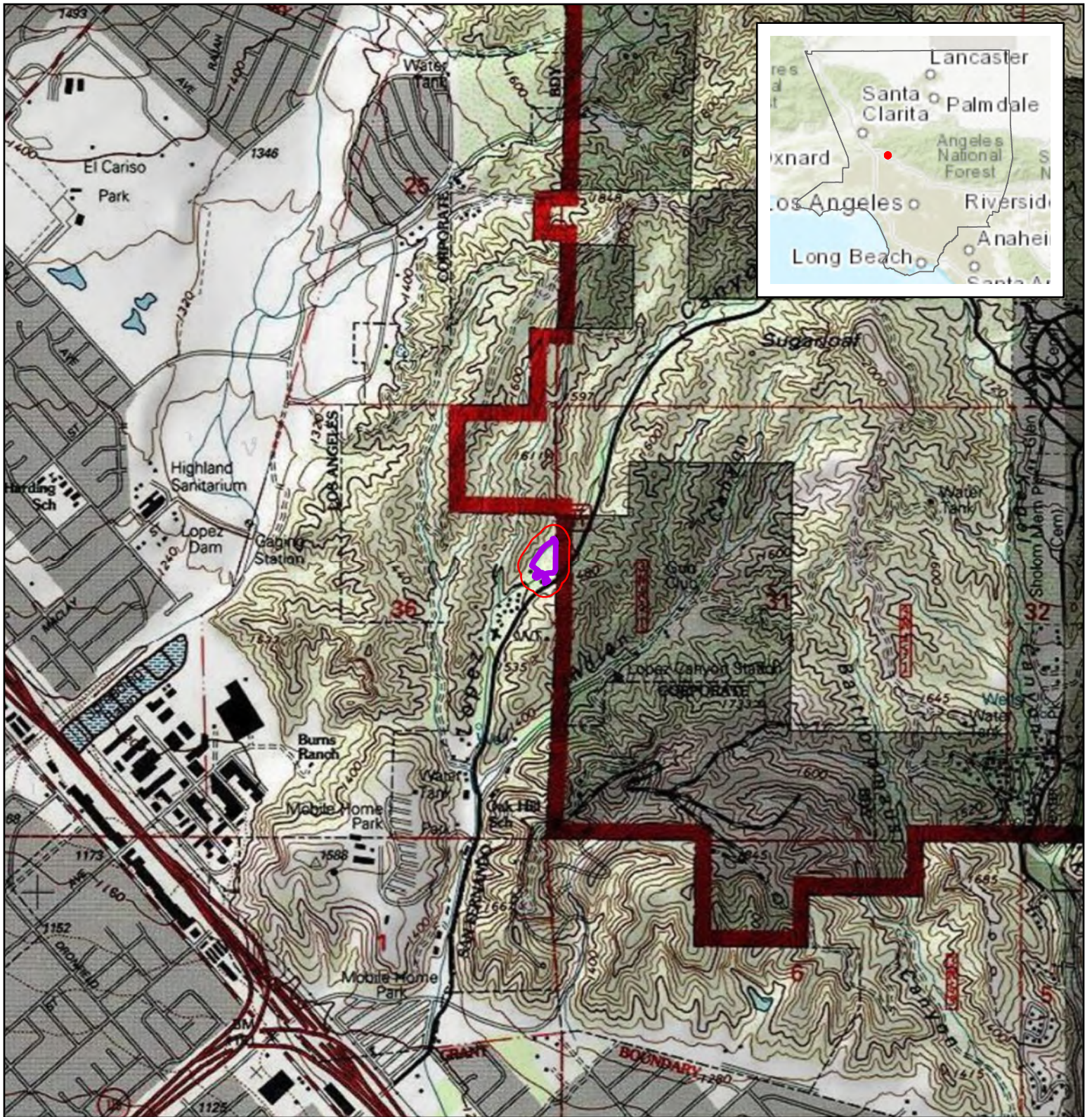
## 1.1 Project Description

### *Location and Setting*

As shown in Figure 1 below, the project is in unincorporated Los Angeles County approximately 1.0 mile north of Interstate 210 and the Sylmar neighborhood of the City of Los Angeles. The project is within the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) San Fernando 7.5 Minute Topographical Quadrangle, and within Section 36 of Township 03 North (03N) and Range 15 West (15W), and Section 31 of Township 03N and Range 14W. As shown in Figure 2 below, the development site is set within a canyon along Lopez Canyon Road on the northerly portion of the larger Hope Gardens campus, which is set within a woodland of mature native and landscaped trees. The areas adjacent to the east and west of Hope Gardens include undeveloped native coastal scrub and non-native grassland habitats on steep mountain slopes. The survey area includes a 200-foot buffer around the development site, and the eastern portion is within the Angeles National Forest, which occurs immediately adjacent to the east of the Sequoia building and approximately 400 feet north.

### *Topography and Climate*

Directly north of the development site, Lopez Canyon is a northeast to southwest bearing erosional valley that has been eroded, in part, by a braided ephemeral stream. The unnamed ephemeral channel is mostly culverted with concrete where it traverses the development site. Regionally, Lopez Canyon has a broad southwestern dipping slope, and the development site dips in that same southwestern direction. The highest elevation for the development site is 1439 feet



Source: ESRI USA Topo Maps and World Topo Map 2022

Hope Gardens Sequoia Building Project

## Figure 1. Project Location

- Development Site
- Survey Area (200-Foot Buffer)

Project Site is within unincorporated, California, in Los Angeles County on the USGS San Fernando 7.5-minute quadrangle map in Section 31 of Township 03 North and Range 14 West and Section 36 of Township 03 North and Range 15 West

Center Coordinate (Decimal Degrees):  
 Latitude: 34.3027184N Longitude: -118.3969850W



0 1,000 2,000 Feet

Scale: 1:24,000

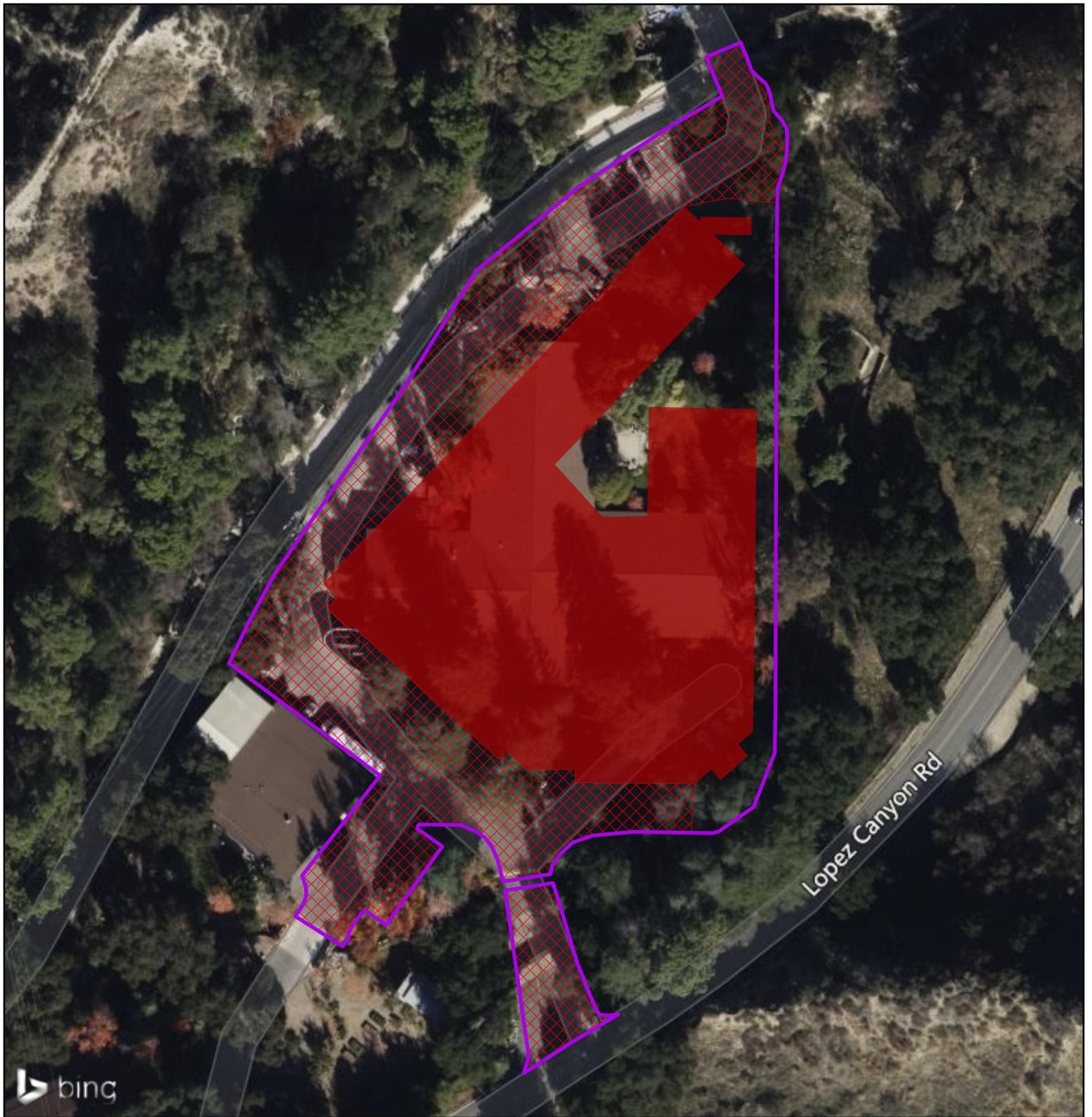




above mean sea level (amsl) along the northeast border, and the lowest elevation for the development site is along the southwestern border at an elevation of 1415 feet amsl. The climate in the region is hot and dry, with average summer high temperatures in the low-90s and average winter lows in the upper-30s and lower 40s. Average yearly rainfall is 0.83-inches; the wettest months are November-March, with almost no precipitation between June-September.

## Proposed Development

The project includes the demolition of the Sequoia Lodge building and the construction of a new multi-use residential building consisting of living units, reception area, case manager area counseling offices, administrative offices, security office, dental/medical examination rooms, day care center, computer lab, classroom, multi-purpose room, kitchen, communal dining, and a courtyard; resurfacing and widening of driveways and parking areas; and an enhancement of the landscaping. The proposed development areas are shown in Figure 3 below and in the attached Site Plan. The development will occur in areas that are currently developed with the Sequoia Lodge building, driveways, and parking areas, and these areas will be updated with the new development, paving, and landscaping.




Source: BING Aerial Imagery 2022

Hope Gardens Sequoia Building Project

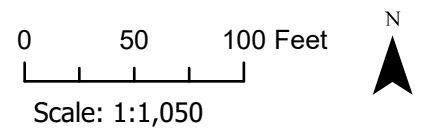
### Figure 3. Proposed Development

 Development Site

#### Proposed Development

 Paving and Resurfacing

 Sequoia Building Footprint



## 2. Methodology

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### 2.1 Prior Field Survey

South Environmental certified arborist Matthew South conducted a survey on May 2, 2019, and June 11, 2020, of trees of the genus *Quercus* (oak) on the property. The site was revisited by South Environmental arborists on October 18, 2022, to reassess the trees to confirm the prior survey findings. During the survey all protected oak trees consisting of trees with a trunk diameter of 8 inches or greater or with two trunks with diameters totaling at least 12 inches when measured at 4.5 feet above grade (protected oak) were recorded within 200-feet of proposed construction. The survey adhered to the guidelines outlined in the County of Los Angeles Oak Tree Ordinance.

During the survey, each protected oak was marked on the north side with a unique identification number and the location of the trunk was recorded using a Trimble R1 high-accuracy (sub-meter) GPS unit. The arborist evaluated the physical structure and health of each protected oak, and a photograph was taken of each tree surveyed. Another survey was conducted on June 11, 2020, at the request of Los Angeles County foresters, to confirm the trunk diameters of oaks proposed for impacts.

### 2.2 Oak Tree Mapping

The **trunk locations and canopy** of each tree recorded during the field survey were mapped using ESRI ArcGIS Pro mapping software. Per the Oak Tree Ordinance, the **Tree Protected Zone** (TPZ) includes the area within 5-feet extended from the trees canopy or 15-feet from the trunk, whichever is greater. The TPZ was also digitized using ESRI ArcGIS Pro mapping software (South Environmental 2022).

### 2.3 Oak Tree Community

#### *Community Alliance Type and Sensitive Natural Community*

During the tree surveys conducted in 2019 and 2020 by South Environmental, data were also collected to classify and characterize the plant communities of the site. This information was supplemented with plant community data from a South Environmental field visit in the Fall of 2022. Below, an assessment of the plant communities on the site is presented based on these surveys and a literature review.

The primary plant community on the site is oak woodland which is located in areas in all directions from the Sequoia Building. This community is characterized by California Native Plant Society

(CNPS) Manual of California Vegetation Online as a Coast Live Oak Woodland (*Quercus agrifolia* Forest & Woodland Alliance) (CNPS 2024). The CNPS Membership Rules that this community is defined by includes *Quercus agrifolia* at greater than 60% relative cover in the tree canopy (CNPS 2024). This corresponds to the *Quercus agrifolia* Association which has a Global and State Rank of 5 (CNPS 2024). The community is dominated by mature coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) and is co-dominated by red river gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*). Other tree species present were Canary Island pine (*Pinus canariensis*). The shrub understory is made up of a few widely scattered native plants. Among others, the shrub canopy includes laurel sumac and California buckwheat. The ground cover is dense with non-native forbs and grasses. Among others, the ground cover includes ripgut brome and black mustard (*Brassica nigra*).

Coast Live Oak Woodland in this area has a global rarity rank of "5" and a state rarity rank of "5" and is not considered a sensitive natural community as a result. However, portions of the oak woodlands surrounding an ephemeral drainage at the site are a sensitive riparian community but have been disturbed by fuel modification, landscaping, and development. CEQA Appendix G asks if the project would have "a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community" and while the Coast Live Oak Woodlands does not meet the typical definition of CDFW Sensitive Natural Community due to its G5/S5 rarity rank, portions surrounding the river are considered a riparian habitat and would be considered sensitive as a result.

The "stand alone" oaks from the arborist survey — #13, #15, and #16 — do not form part of oak woodland as per the definition of the Management Plant Guide. However, all areas within the study area (development site and a 200-foot buffer) were mapped as Coast Live Oak Woodland.

### *Areas Established as Oak Woodland*

As per the language and figures of the Management Plan Guide (Page 3-5, Figure 3), not all oaks on the site "make up 10% or greater relative cover". The arborist report carried out by South Environmental shows the oaks with numbers 13, 15, and 16 as "stand alone" oaks (South Environmental 2022), And therefore they do not constitute oak woodland as per the definition of the guide. These oaks therefore would not be subject to special oak woodland protection. All other oaks on the site form part of an oak woodland as per the definition of the Management Plan Guide.

### *Water Resources*

The development site is located within the Los Angeles watershed (HUC8) and within the Lower Big Tujunga Creek sub-watershed (HUC12). There are three unnamed ephemeral channels that traverse the oak woodland on the site. These channels were recently subject to a jurisdictional

delineation (JD) conducted by South Environmental in the Fall of 2022. The JD characterized the channels and assessed the potential impact on them and associated oaks from the project.

Unnamed ephemeral channel #1 runs from northeast to southwest adjacent to the east of oak woodland. Unnamed ephemeral channel #2 runs north to south through the central portion of oak woodland to the east of Sequoia Building. And unnamed ephemeral channel #3 runs through oak woodland to the south of Sequoia Building (Figure 3; South Environmental 2022). Unnamed ephemeral channel #1 is culverted with concrete and masonry; unnamed ephemeral channel #2 is culverted with concrete and natural boundaries; and unnamed ephemeral channel #3 is culverted with concrete.

The three unnamed ephemeral channels are protected at the state and federal levels. The channels were classified by South Environmental as *Non-Wetland Waters of the U.S. and State* because of their ultimate connection to the Pacific Ocean (i.e., tributaries of Traditional Navigable Waters). There are no wetland waters of the U.S. or state on the development site. The three channels have some presence of oak woodland and are considered as "CDFW riparian habitat" under the overall regulatory measure of *Non-Wetland Waters of the State*.

## 3. Regulations

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### 3.1 State of California

#### *California Oak Woodlands Conservation Act (AB 242)*

The California Oak Woodlands Conservation Act was approved by the Governor of California in 2001. The legislation requires that each county develop an Oak Woodlands Conservation Management Plan in order to qualify for funding for oak woodland conservation throughout the state. The Management Plan for the County of Los Angeles was adopted in 2011. In line with meeting funding requirements, the Management Plan includes the following overarching measures “1) preservation, where oak woodlands remain intact and functional, 2) conservation, where woodlands are integrated into land development; and 3) mitigation, where loss of oak woodlands in one area is mitigated off-site through restoration, creation, or purchase for preservation in another area.” A central idea behind this document is to eventually incorporate its tenets into other planning documents such as the Los Angeles County General Plan.

#### *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Senate Bill 1334*

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is a statute that requires state and local agencies to identify the significant environmental impacts of their actions and to avoid or mitigate those impacts, if feasible. CEQA applies to certain activities of state and local public agencies. A public agency must comply with CEQA when it undertakes an activity defined by CEQA as a “project.” A project is an activity undertaken by a public agency or a private activity which must receive some discretionary approval (meaning that the agency has the authority to deny the requested permit or approval) from a government agency which may cause either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect change in the environment.

An Initial Study (IS) is prepared when a proposed action is determined to be a “project” under CEQA. The IS is a checklist that asks specific questions about the project’s level of environmental impacts in many categories, including biological resources. The checklist includes a series of questions to determine the projects level of potential impacts in each of the categories. The CEQA Checklist includes the following questions regarding biological resources:

- *Would the project:*
  - *Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*

- *Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?*
- *Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?*
- *Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?*
- *Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance*
- *Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?*

Potential level of impact choices includes: No Impacts, Less Than Significant Impact, Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated, and Potentially Significant Impact. For projects that have no impact or less than significant impact a Negative Declaration is prepared, for those with Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated prepare a Mitigated Negative Declaration, and for those with a Potentially Significant Impact prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

### *Senate Bill 1334 (Conversion of Oak Woodlands)*

In 2004 the California legislature approved Senate Bill 1334 (Conversion of Oak Woodlands), amending the CEQA to specifically address impacts to California's oak woodlands. The legislation requires counties to assess whether projects under their jurisdiction will have significant impacts to oaks and oak woodlands. The legislation provides mitigation guidelines for these impacts, including the preservation of other oak woodlands through conservation easements, planting of replacement trees, and mitigation fees to be paid to a state or local mitigation fund. A notable exemption to this law is for the "conversion of oak woodlands on agricultural land that includes land that is used to produce or process plant and animal products for commercial purposes." Applying SB1334 in Los Angeles County to mitigation requires calculating oak woodlands values.

## 3.2 County of Los Angeles

### *Oak Tree Ordinance*

The Oak Tree Ordinance was enacted in 1982 and was designed to protect individual standing oak trees. It was designed as an initiative to "recognize oak trees as significant historical, aesthetic and ecological resources, and as one of the most picturesque trees in Los Angeles County." The Ordinance stipulates that "a person shall not cut, destroy, remove, relocate, inflict damage, or encroach into the protected zone of any tree of the oak tree genus" if the tree meets a particular

size requirements. If this is not possible as in the cases of development, then a permit is necessary. Heritage oaks are classified as having a diameter at breast height of 36 inches or trees having significant historical or cultural importance. The Ordinance requires mitigation for loss of individual oak trees, but does not assess or mitigation for the loss of oak woodland as habitat.

### *General Plan*

The General Plan of the County of Los Angeles includes the “Land Use and Conservation and Open Space Elements” component where there are policies that protect oak stands. The General Plan stipulates that “Developments in hillside areas on slopes of 25% or greater should preserve distinct visual characteristics and natural resources such as oak trees.” It further stipulates that approval of residential development plans be contingent upon preservation of distinct visual aspects, including oak stands,

## 4. Impacts Analysis

### 4.1 Impacts to Individual Oak Trees

Impacts to individual oak trees was assessed in the Oak Tree Report (South Environmental 2022). Impacts were assessed by digitizing the development site (the Sequoia building) and overlaying them onto the digitized tree trunks, canopies, and TPZs. Intersection of a protected oak trunk with the project features would result in removal of the tree and intersection of the project features with the TPZ would result in encroachment. The level of encroachment to a single protected oak is reported as a percent of that oak’s entire TPZ expected to be impacted by the development (South Environmental 2022).

A total of 57 protected coast live oak were identified in the survey area and marked with an identification number (ID#s 1-57), including one heritage oak (#26). The locations of the trunks, canopies, and the TPZs for all trees surveyed are shown in Figure 1. For data and assessment of the structure and health of the oak trees on the property refer to the Oak Tree Report (South Environmental 2022).

The proposed redevelopment of the Sequoia building would result in the removal of 4 protected oak trees, and encroachment into the TPZ of 12 oaks. No heritage trees will be removed or encroached upon. The tree removals are necessary for the upgrades to roads and buildings proposed by the project. These results are summarized below in Table 1 below and shown in Figure 3 (South Environmental 2022).

**Table 1. Summary of Impacts to Oaks**

Tree #	Health Rating	Heritage Oak	Trunk distance to Construction (ft)	Impact
#11	4	N	0	Removal
#12	4	N	23	~10% TPZ Encroachment
#13	5	N	0	Removal
#15	1	N	0	Removal
#16	5	N	0	Removal
#17	4	N	3	~98% TPZ Encroachment
#18	4	N	6	~50% TPZ Encroachment
#19	4	N	2	~60% TPZ Encroachment
#20	4	N	5	~40% TPZ Encroachment
#22	4	N	13	~20% TPZ Encroachment
#23	3	N	12	~20% TPZ Encroachment
#25	4	N	2	~75% TPZ Encroachment

#35	4	N	33	~ 3% TPZ Encroachment
#36	4	N	19	~ 5% TPZ Encroachment
#50	5	N	3	~50% TPZ Encroachment
#51	4	N	12	~20% TPZ Encroachment

\*Data from *Oak Tree Survey Report* (South Environmental 2022)

Of the 4 oaks that will be removed, 3 of them (#11, #13, and #16) are in good health (4, or 5 health rating). Oak #15 is dead/dying (health rating of 1) and we recommend it be removed to avoid any future conflicts. Heritage Oak #26 will not be impacted by the project because it is off the project site and not in jeopardy from project activities.

The project proposes asphalt resurfacing and fencing installation on the eastern edge of the project that encroaches within the TPZ of 12 oaks. Resurfacing of asphalt and installation of fencing would occur within areas in the TPZ and near the potential root zone of the oaks and could inadvertently damage the root zones during installation. Asphalt resurfacing would occur within the TPZ and within 15-feet of the trunks of oaks #17, #18, #19, #20, #22, #23, #25, #50, and #51. Asphalt resurfacing would also occur within the TPZ, but beyond 15-feet of the trunks of oaks #12, #35, and #36. For the purposes of this report, encroachment of 30% or greater into the trees TPZ or excavation or grading within 15-feet of the trunk of an oak has the potential to result in the death or significant decline of the tree when these impacts reduce the canopy or root zone in these areas. However, these 12 oaks are within areas that are already developed and the oaks are maintained and managed by pruning and have an existing fence in this location. The proposed resurfacing and fence installation would not damage the roots of the trees as the roots of the trees would not be within the existing paved areas where the resurfacing and fencing would occur. Therefore, there would not be a reduction in root zone and potential impacts to the roots are minimal. Similarly, the canopy of these oaks would be unaffected because they are currently managed and pruned to allow for vehicle traffic and no new pruning of the canopy would be necessary to complete the construction of the project, and future tree care will be the same as the current. Because the project would not result in the loss of root zone or canopy (these would be near 0% for all the trees) these impacts would not be significant and no significant impacts would be expected to occur as a result.

Due to the proximity of the construction to the trees it is possible that these oaks could be inadvertently impacted during construction by machinery, and protective fencing should be installed to protect the trunks. Further, an arborist should monitor work within or adjacent to the TPZ of these oaks to ensure no inadvertent impact were to occur. These recommendations are described in the mitigation measures in the oak tree report. Finally, the mitigation measures also state that these trees would need replacement if they were inadvertently impacted and decline or die as a result of the construction, which would ensure there is compensation for the loss in the event that they were to be inadvertently impacted.

## 4.2 Impacts to Oak Woodland

The impact on individual coast live oak trees was assessed in the Oak Tree Survey Report which was a result of on the ground data collection in 2019 and 2020, and then revisited in 2022 to confirm conditions (South Environmental 2022). To assess potential impacts from the project to the oak at the level of community or woodland, the "*Los Angeles County Oak Woodlands Conservation Management Plan Guide*" was referred to for guidance. The Management Plan Guide was developed to implement portions of the "*Oak Woodlands Conservation Management Plan*" which implements the California Oak Woodlands Conservation Act (AB 242).

On page 8 of the Management Plan Guide under the subtitle "Determination," seven topics are presented as an outline of the required information for an Oakland Woodland Report from the project applicant. South Environmental provides this information in the order the topics are presented as follows:

**1.) A description of the baseline condition of the oak woodland, including the species of oak trees present, the density of trees (number/acre), a demographic assessment of the trees (e.g. size or age range and the proportion of trees in young, mature, and declining classes), the vegetation type of the understory (e.g. scrub, grass/herb, barren, ornamental, etc.), the presence or potential use of the site by special-status species, and the spatial relationship to other woodland stands in the vicinity (e.g., immediately adjacent and fully integrated, isolated by urban development, etc.);**

The oak trees present on the site are large, mature coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*). Many are >30-in diameter at breast height and there is one heritage oak (#26; South Environmental 2022). The density of the oaks varies among areas around the Sequoia Building but there are approximately 10 large oak trees per acre. Little regeneration in the form of seedlings or saplings was observed due primarily to dense invasive cover at ground level which outcompetes the oaks for light and soil nutrients and landscaping around existing structures and appurtenant facilities at Hope Gardens. A considerable acorn mast was observed in the trees and on the ground. The shrub understory is sparse in most places and consists of a few native (e.g., California buckwheat) and non-native shrubs or trees (e.g., red river gum).

There is very little potential for either special-status plant or wildlife species to be present within or to use the area. The oak woodland is disturbed because of the presence of non-native species especially at the ground level, but also to some degree at the shrub and tree level. In general, special-status plants and animals do not inhabit disturbed areas that are close to developments but could use areas outside the developed portions of the development site. Because of the dense cover at the ground level, the potential for special-status plants to occur is unlikely or low, at best. There is California buckwheat which is of a genus (*Eriogonum*) that serves as host plant to the

special-status species Crotch's bumblebee (*Bombus crotchii*). However, the shrubs are few and far between and if the bumblebee were present in the area, it would likely inhabit the adjacent shrubland where there is a greater *Eriogonum* presence. Several wildlife species that use woodland are unlikely to be found because they are either considered extirpated or have rarely been observed in the area.

There is a continuation of oak woodland outside of the development site in all directions. The largest concentration of woodland is to the east before Lopez Canyon Road and to the west on a sloped area. Beyond the sloped area further to the west is another stand and going north there is oak woodland within the unnamed ephemeral stream channel. To the east beyond Lopez Canyon Road is shrubland and the woodland is largely located within the Hope Gardens campus and adjacent surrounding areas.

**2.) A determination of the habitat value/integrity of the woodland (See Table 1 of Management Plan Guide);**

Based on the **Existing Conditions** in Table 1 of the Management Plan Guide, the majority of the oak woodland was assessed as **"Moderately Degraded"**. The description from the Management Plan Guide of woodland with this condition is as follows: "Even though the site has been altered, oak woodlands persist and retain some of their functions. Natural regeneration is possible, wildlife use still occurs, and some level of ecosystem services is still present. Most oak woodlands in the County fall within this category". The oaks woodlands on the site is largely within irrigated planters and along the edges of existing paved areas, landscaped areas, and within proximity to the developments. These woodlands have been altered but retain some of their functions and are capable of regeneration in some areas.

There is a small stand of trees in the northeast that is assessed as **"Intact"**. Woodlands assessed as Intact includes oaks in the northeast that partially occur on the Hope Gardens property but are also contiguous with the intact oak woodlands to the east within the Angeles National Forest. The description from the Management Plan Guide of woodland with this condition is as follows: "Site is currently in a 'wild' state where all ecological functions such as groundwater infiltration, shade, habitat, nutrient cycling, carbon sequestration, wind/noise/dust abatement, and the stand is self-sustaining and regenerating. Understory of grasslands may be dominated by invasive exotic grasses and forbs. Fire exclusion or frequency may have altered native woodland. Woodland supports associated flora and fauna and are free from destructive land practices that limit long-term persistence." This stand of oaks is regularly pruned on the west side where they overhang the existing parking lot, but they are otherwise undisturbed and intact.

**3.) An analysis of impacts to the oak woodland and their severity (See Tables 2 and 3 of Management Plan Guide);**

Based on the **Impact Severity** in Table 2 of the Management Plan Guide, the impact to the oak woodland was assessed as “**Low**” which is described as follows: “regeneration potential is being maintained across the site; understory oak associates present or can be restored; expansion of developed areas is centralized; new road and stream crossings not being considered. In the absence of special circumstances, statutes, or ordinances, this may represent a non-significant impact.” The trees that will be impacted are set within a developed landscape and provide only minimal opportunities for wildlife that is found near developments and would not support special-status species. In addition, the areas that are proposed for impacts do not have the potential for new oaks to regenerate due to the level of development, and these areas are not a natural woodland due to the level of landscaping, irrigation, and pruning, as well as the impacts from the existing developments.

The woodlands in the northeast that are assessed as Intact will be avoided by the project. The proposed development would resurface the existing paved areas but not expand them. No new grading of areas beneath the trees would occur and impacts to the root zones would be avoided. The Intact woodlands that overhang the paved areas are regularly maintained by pruning and would continue to be maintained the same way following the completion of the project. Because there are no new paved areas or grading beneath the Intact woodlands and there is no new pruning or trimming that would be required, there would be no impact to the Intact woodlands on the site. No impacts to the root zones or canopy are anticipated, and the trunks will be protected by fencing to ensure impacts are avoided. This is consistent with the “Low” Impact Severity in Table 2 for Intact Woodland which is described as follows: “Minimal disturbance to stand structure and composition and habitat features resulting in no increased edge habitat or fragmentation; road and stream crossings are not being considered; activities will not result in the introduction of exotic or invasive species.”

**Table 2. Potential Impact and the Significance Level on Oak Woodland Assessed as Moderately Disturbed at Hope Gardens \*From the Plan Management Guide: LTS = *Less Than Significant***

<b><u>Impact</u></b>	<b><u>Impact Severity and Level of Significance</u></b>		
	<b><u>Low</u></b>	<b><u>Mod</u></b>	<b><u>High</u></b>
Net loss of oak woodland acreage.	LTS		
Increased habitat fragmentation.	LTS		
Loss of vertical and horizontal structural complexity.			

Loss of understory species diversity, locally uncommon or rare species or associations.			
Loss of food sources for wildlife	LTS		
Loss of nesting, denning, burrowing, hibernating and roosting structures.	LTS		
Loss of habitats and refugia for sedentary species and those with special habitat requirements, i.e. mosses, lichens, rocks, native grasses, and fungi.	LTS		
Road construction, grading, trenching, activities affecting changes in grade, other road-related impacts.	LTS		
Stream crossings, culverts, and road associated erosion and sediment inputs.	LTS		
Loss of riparian function, reduced bank stability and increasing sedimentation or water temperature that impacts native fishes and other aquatic species.			
Road building activities that aggravate existing conditions	LTS		
Changes in environmental conditions that prevent existing residual trees from natural regeneration.			
Proposed project designs that result in construction that poses barriers to wildlife or fish passage.			
Proposed project designs that result in the probable introduction or expansion of invasive plants and animals	LTS		
Loss of individual heritage trees that are recognized and/or protected by ordinance or statutes.			
Loss of appropriate recruitment sites for recognized and/or protected heritage tree species.	LTS		
Loss of individual trees where the natural occurrence and range of the species has been dramatically reduced and altered resulting in decreased recruitment/restoration potential for the species.			
The removal of even a few individual trees that represents a significant portion of the existing population of that species.			
Loss of ecosystem services such as groundwater recharge, erosion protection, water quality protection, temperature moderation.	LTS		
Changes to carbon sequestration potential.	LTS		

Loss of view-shed, aesthetics, amenity value, public recreation opportunities, historic or cultural resources.			
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**4.) An analysis of recreational or aesthetic value of the woodland based on the presence of trails, location within a viewshed visible from parks or scenic highways, etc;**

There are trails and dirt roads (e.g., Boy Scout Mountain Way) within 0.50-mile of the to the west and dirt roads within 0.50-mile to the east (e.g., Kagel-Indian Canyon Mountainway). Viewsheds of the site would be available along these roads. However, the trails in the immediate area are not established trails within the Angeles National Forest. In general, these trails and dirt roads increase in elevation to the north and would provide viewsheds of the property. Hikers or campers walking north from the property into Angeles National Forest along an unnamed ephemeral channel could climb adjacent hills to the west from which the oak woodland would be visible.

**5.) An analysis of alternative project options that includes an explanation of why avoidance of the oak woodland was not feasible.**

The project was designed to replace an existing building on the Hope Gardens campus. This is the least impactful project as it will put the new building in predominantly the same footprint as the old building and will update the paved surfaces to meet the new County regulations. The impacts to individual oaks are those that are located within the landscaped areas and development edges, and are not within a natural woodland. The woodland outside the Hope Gardens development will not be impacted significantly and the placement of the new building in the location of the prior building’s footprint minimizes the impact to the woodland to the greatest extent possible.

**6.) Impact of introduced pests and disease on the oak woodland.**

The Oak Tree Report of South Environmental (2022) reported an overall good health of the oak trees in the woodland. A total of 47 trees (82%) scored 4 or 5 for health, eight trees scored 3 for health, and two trees (#15 and #26) scored 1 for health because they were nearly dead. Four trees showed signs of the fungal disease “heart rot” whereby the heartwood of a tree is decayed. One tree showed signs of insect infestation. Otherwise, there were no widespread signs of either pest or pathogen outbreaks. There were minimal signs of damage (shot holes, mining, border chewing). Some necrotic spotting was observed, but was not widespread and the trunks were generally free of cankers. Signs of burned trunks were common, but many of the trees are mature and capable of withstanding fires. The heritage tree (#26) had an entirely burned and hollow trunk and was dying, but was not a result of pests or disease.

**7.) A summary of ecosystem services provided by oak woodlands as described by the Plan and how those services may change with development of the proposed project.**

Below are ecosystem values of oak woodlands according to the Plan and an analysis of those services as applied to the oak woodland on the property. Mitigation for these impacts is presented in Section 5 below.

**Habitat:** The oak woodland provides habitat for mammals, reptiles, birds, insects and potentially amphibians. The canopy cover provides nesting habitat for many species of birds including those that are known to nest in species of the *Quercus* genus. And the bark provides ample foraging habitat for insect eating birds such as woodpeckers. Mammals such as raccoon and squirrel consume the acorns which can be a critical element of an animal's diet. The bark and detritus provide foraging and egg-laying and development habitat for insects. With the proposed removal of several oak trees, there would be a reduction in the amount of habitat available to wildlife. However, there are enough oak trees in the area that their removal would not have a sizeable impact on the amount of oak tree habitat available to wildlife because the loss is to oaks set within the development site and surrounding landscaped areas. The oaks within the adjacent undeveloped woodland (i.e., higher habitat value) will not be impacted by the project.

**Erosion:** The trees in the oak woodland stabilize the soil and provide detritus which traps moisture. Furthermore, the leaves slow the rate at which water reaches the ground producing runoff. The detritus also allows for more water infiltration into the soil. Bare or paved ground result in quicker and greater amount of runoff. The removal of several oak trees would result in more runoff into the unnamed ephemeral channels. However, there are enough oak trees in the woodland that the impact on erosion would be minimal. The lost oaks are set in planters in the parking areas and at road edges and much of the area beneath them is paved. The loss of these oaks will be replaced with paving or the project construction and erosion will not occur.

**Carbon Sequestration:** The leaves of the oak woodland absorb carbon resulting in the removal of carbon from the atmosphere, or carbon sequestration. The removal of several trees would result in less carbon sequestration. However, there is an abundance of vegetation, especially in terms of other species (e.g., eucalyptus), in the oak woodlands and the impact on carbon sequestration would be minimal.

**Pollutants:** Plants such as oaks absorb pollutants through their leaves such as volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and carbon monoxide. They also take up pollutants in the soil, helping to purify it. The removal of several oaks would thus result in greater pollutants in the air and soil.

**Temperature Moderation:** Trees including oaks provide shade which helps lower the temperature during hot days. The removal of several trees would result in greater temperatures around the areas where the trees were removed.

**Watershed Function:** The detritus around oak trees helps keep water cleaner through purifying the water of pollutants. If oaks are replaced by concrete or asphalt, there will be quicker runoff

and likely more contaminated runoff from chemicals found in developed areas, for example, from cars.

### *Water Resources*

As discussed, there are three drainages on the site which were classified as *Non-wetland Waters of the U.S. and State*. Several of the oaks that will be removed are within the CDFW riparian zone of the concrete channelized stream adjacent to the project, and the removal of these trees will require permitting. These impacts will be mitigated by replacing the trees at a 2:1 ratio and by also protecting the remaining trees in place. Also, some temporary impacts will occur when a bridge over the concrete channel is replaced. However, the project will avoid permanent impacts to the channel and implement BMPs to avoid runoff or pollutants from entering the streambed. Permitting is required to implement the portions of the project within CDFW riparian areas. Implementation of the permitting measures will ensure that the project impacts will be minimized and mitigated.

## 5. Mitigation for Project Impacts

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### 5.1 Mitigation for Individual Oaks

According to the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance, the property owner for a development site is required to replace Ordinance-protected oak trees that are removed with mitigation oak trees at a 2:1 ratio. The proposed project will result in removal of 4 protected oaks and encroachment into the TPZ of 12 additional protected oaks. However, South Environmental assessed that encroachment would not result in the death of any of these oaks if certain measures are followed as contained in the Oak Tree Survey Report. Key to mitigation will be the replacement of the 4 lost oaks at a ratio of 2:1 and therefore a total of 8 replacement trees. In the event the encroached trees die or severely decline in health, the project would replace those trees at 2:1 as well as confirmed during a 5-year monitoring period. For a full discussion of mitigation for the oaks to be removed at the site, refer to the Oak Tree Survey Report (South Environmental 2022).

### 5.1 Mitigation for Oak Woodland

The California Public Resources Code indicates that a project must be assessed for whether it would “result in a conversion of oak woodlands that will have a significant effect on the environment.” Based on the Plan Management Guide for woodlands which is used to implement the Code, the impact to the oak woodland at the site was assessed as “Less Than Significant” for all of several woodland integrity indicators. The indicators assess potential impact to qualities or features considered important to the integrity and health of the oak woodland. Because the Management Guide indicates that projects which are assessed with a “Less than Significant” impact do not need to be mitigated, there would be no mitigation necessary based on the Code.

The impact to CDFW jurisdictional riparian habitat will require permitting. Measures in the permits should include best management practices to avoid additional indirect impacts to the streambed or water quality. If these measures are implemented, then no permits are likely necessary from the USACE and RWQCB; however, concurrence letters from both agencies are recommended to verify the agencies agree no impacts to their features would result from the project. These mitigation measures should include, at a minimum:

- Project activities within 50-ft of drainage features shall be planned when no surface water is present. No work should occur after rain events or when there is forecast of 50% chance of rain.
- The contractor shall clearly delineate the plant removal limits and prohibit any trimming or disturbance outside these boundaries.

- Trimmed materials shall be removed from the development site and disposed of off-site in a responsible manner.
- Project-related vehicles and equipment shall not enter the streambed and, when possible, shall be staged at least 50-feet outside of jurisdictional areas on paved surfaces.
- During construction, heavy equipment and vehicles shall be operated in accordance with standard Best Management Practices (BMPs). All equipment used in the workspace shall be properly maintained such that no leaks of oil, fuel, or residues will take place. Provisions shall be in place to remediate any accidental spills.
- Materials shall be stored at least 50-ft from drainage features, as feasible, or equipment will utilize secondary containment.
- Construction parking and staging will occur in previously disturbed and developed areas that are greater than 50-feet from jurisdictional areas.

### **Compensatory Mitigation**

The project impacts are limited to the removal or permanent damage (encroachment) to 6<sup>1</sup> coast live oaks that are within CDFW riparian areas, and the temporary impacts to the bridge north of the development site that goes over the unnamed channel that will be resurfaced and returned to the existing conditions following the project. The project oak tree report requires that oak trees be planted at a 2:1 for each removal. We recommend replacement plantings of the coast live oaks planned per the project's Oak Tree Report and associated Oak Tree Permit be planted along the channels within riparian areas on the Hope Gardens property. This replacement of riparian habitat would be considered suitable compensation for the impacts to riparian trees. Alternative offsite mitigation considered suitable would be through purchase of mitigation credits for impacts to coast live oak riparian woodlands at a 2:1 and would be subject to County review and approval.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that the project overall will remove 4 oaks and encroach 12 oaks, and the above reference to 6 oaks includes only those trees within the riparian zone that is CDFW jurisdiction per the jurisdictional delineation report.

## 6. References

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- California Native Plant Society (CNPS). 2024. A Manual of California Vegetation Online: <https://vegetation.cnps.org/>
- Los Angeles County Oak Woodlands Strategic Alliance. 2014. Oak Woodlands Conservation Management Plan Guide, Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, Los Angeles, California.
- South Environmental. 2022. Oak Tree Survey Report: Hope Gardens Sequoia Building Project, Pasadena, California

## 7. Certification Statement

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The signature below certifies that the information provided regarding protected oak trees within this report is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and is based on the results of a survey of each tree that was conducted by qualified arborist Matthew South on May 2, 2019, June 11, 2020, and October 28, 2022. If you have questions regarding the methodology or findings of the report you can contact me by email at [msouth@southenvironmental.com](mailto:msouth@southenvironmental.com).

Sincerely,



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Matthew South  
Principal Biologist  
South Environmental  
Mobile: 303.818-3632

# Appendix A: Oak Tree Data

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**Table A-1. Oak Tree Data**

ID#	Species	Height ft.	DBH in.	Canopy Measurements (feet)								Sym	Aesth	Disease	Pest	Vigor	Health	Recommendations and Notes
				N	NE	E	SE	S	SW	W	NW							
1	Coast	25	11	3	2	5	8	12	15	5	15	3	UC				4	
2	Coast	35	30	12	6	0	18	21	20	23	28	3	UC				4	
3	Coast	35	26	12	25	24	24	25	20	22	18	3	UC				4	
4	Coast	35	23,20	24	20	18	35	30	28	30	24	4					5	2 large trunks
5	Coast	40	35	1	5	8	35	35	30	10	6	3	UC				5	2 trunks 1 dead
6	Coast	45	21,18,17,15	28	30	30	25	18	15	30	30	5					5	up against building, 4 main trunks
7	Coast	26	17	8	10	15	18	15	18	15	15	4					4	
8	Coast	25	15	8	10	12	18	15	12	12	10	4				Bark	4	included bark at branch union
9	Coast	30	15	4	8	15	15	18	12	10	8	4					4	
10	Coast	25	13	8	13	15	10	10	8	8	8	4					4	other plants growing at the base
11	Coast	35	33,28,24	35	30	20	35	35	25	35	35	3	UC				4	mirrors installed on trunk
12	Coast	35	22,21	25	20	28	18	23	25	25	20	4					4	2 large trunks
13	Coast	25	15	12	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	5			B		5	
14	Coast	15	19	0	1	10	30	35	25	12	15	3	UC, HB	HR		Bark, Dead, thinning	3	underneath the canopy of 2 other oaks
15	Coast	12	27,26	10	5	1	0	0	10	5	10	1	BB,UC,HB			NTG, Dead, thinning	1	topped, 2 huge trunks, 1 is dead, other has new growth but poor health, beneath power lines
16	Coast	18	14	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	5					5	near parking lot
17	Coast	22	15	6	2	2	2	15	15	15	15	4					4	
18	Coast	30	22	12	5	5	25	25	20	20	20	4					4	
19	Coast	8	13	0	0	5	20	22	20	12	0	2	UC,HB			thinning	3	

ID#	Species	Height ft.	DBH in.	Canopy Measurements (feet)								Sym	Aesth	Disease	Pest	Vigor	Health	Recommendations and Notes
				N	NE	E	SE	S	SW	W	NW							
20	Coast	18	9	3	2	10	15	15	18	6	3	3	UC				4	
21	Coast	22	8	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	4					5	
22	Coast	22	11	20	15	5	2	5	10	22	24	4					4	
23	Coast	20	16	22	10	0	0	5	15	15	20	3	UC	HR			3	position was corrected in database on 9/29/2020 to show trunk location outside of the impact area. Verified by the attached photographs.
24	Coast	15	10	20	5	3	2	1	1	5	18	3	UC				4	likely burned on bark
25	Coast	25	13	12	4	3	1	1	5	20	25	3	UC				4	
26	Coast	28	60	28	12	15	20	25	28	20	20	5	BB	CR,HR		Bark, thinning, Dead, LC	1	hollow inside, burned throughout won't survive, heritage oak
27	Coast	22	15	10	10	10	15	15	10	12	15	4	BB			Bark, Dead	3	burned
28	Coast	28	9	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	4				Dead, thinning	3	burned
29	Coast	45	34,31,30	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	5	BB			Dead, thinning	4	burned
30	Coast	40	28,20	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	5	BB			Dead	4	burned
31	Coast	45	22,20	30	20	15	15	20	25	25	30	4	BB					burned
32	Coast	40	19	28	25	25	10	10	5	5	20	4					4	
33	Coast	45	26,24	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	5				thinning	4	
34	Coast	20	13	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	5			Parasite		4	on a fence at the road edge vine growing through it
35	Coast	40	29,28,25,23	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	5	HB				4	burned
36	Coast	25	10	8	2	2	2	10	15	15	18	3	UC				4	

ID#	Species	Height ft.	DBH in.	Canopy Measurements (feet)								Sym	Aesth	Disease	Pest	Vigor	Health	Recommendations and Notes
				N	NE	E	SE	S	SW	W	NW							
37	Coast	15	18	0	10	18	25	25	20	5	0	2	UC				4	
38	Coast	40	15	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	4					4	
39	Coast	25	10	5	5	15	15	15	15	15	5	4					4	vine on trunk
40	Coast	25	9	5	5	10	10	10	10	5	5	4					4	
41	Coast	20	8	2	2	5	10	10	10	5	2	3	UC				4	vines
42	Coast	20	8	0	0	0	5	15	15	10	0	2	UC				4	
43	Coast	30	9	10								5					5	
44	Coast	20	10	0				20				3	UC				4	
45	Coast	30	20	5			20	20	20	10	10	4					4	
46	Coast	25	10	5	15	15	15	5	0	5	5	3	UC			Bark	3	burned and wounded trunk
47	Coast	30	29	15								4					4	2 trunks
48	Coast	30	24	0	0		15	22	25	30	0	3	UC				4	
49	Coast	35	25,13,12	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	5					4	
50	Coast	20	10	10	5	5	10	10	10	10	10	4					5	
51	Coast	20	11	10	10	10	15	15	15	15	10	4					4	
52	Coast	30	13	10	10	5	12	15	15	15	10	3					4	
53	Coast	25	8	0	0	5	18	15	10	10	0	3	UC				4	
54	Coast	25	15	15								5					3	on road edge on cliff, exposed roots up to 6 ft
55	Coast	30	21	20								4		HR			4	
56	Coast	45	28,25,13	25	20	25	35	40	20	12	20	4				Dead, thinning	4	burned, included bark
57	Coast	30	22	22	3	5	10	12	20	20	20	3		HR		dead, thinning	3	burned, root rot and heart rot visible

## Appendix B: Photograph Exhibit

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Oak #1



# Oak #2



# Oak #3



Oak #4



# Oak #5



# Oak #6



# Oak #7



# Oak #8



# Oak #9



# Oak #10



# Oak #11



# Oak #12



# Oak #13



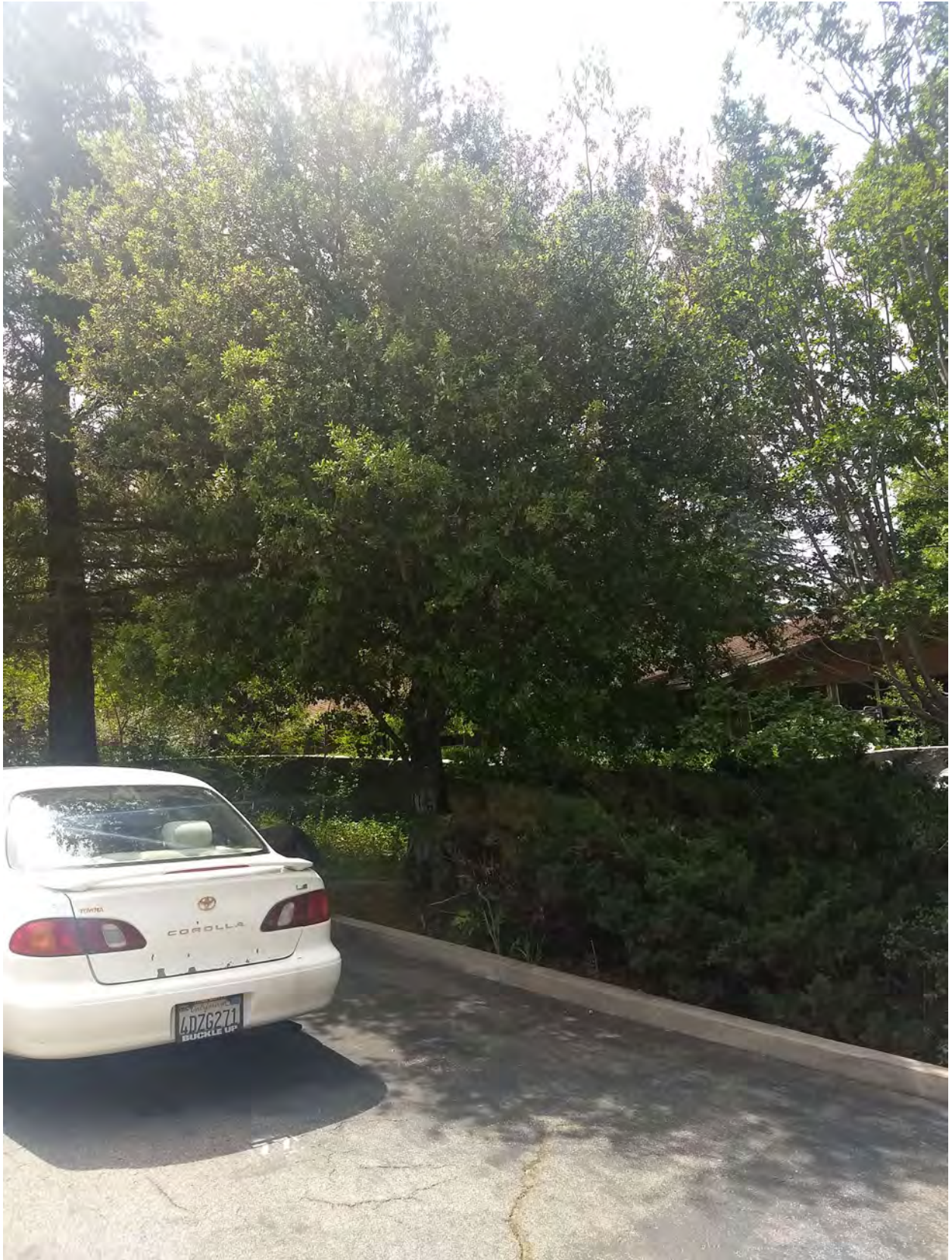
Oak #14



# Oak #15



# Oak #16



# Oak #17



# Oak #18



Oak #19



Oak #20



Oak #21



Oak #22



Oak #23



Oak #24



# Oak #25



## Oak #26 (Hollow Trunk)



# Oak #26



Oak #27



# Oak #28



Oak #29



Oak #30



# Oak #31



Oak #32



# Oak #33



# Oak #34



# Oak #35



Oak #36



# Oak #37



Oak #38



Oak #39



# Oak #40



# Oak #41



Oak #42



# Oak #43



# Oak #44



# Oak #45



Oak #46



# Oak #47



Oak #48 (on R off photo)



Oak #49



# Oak #50



# Oak #51



# Oak #52



# Oak #53



Oak #54



Oak #55



# Oak #56



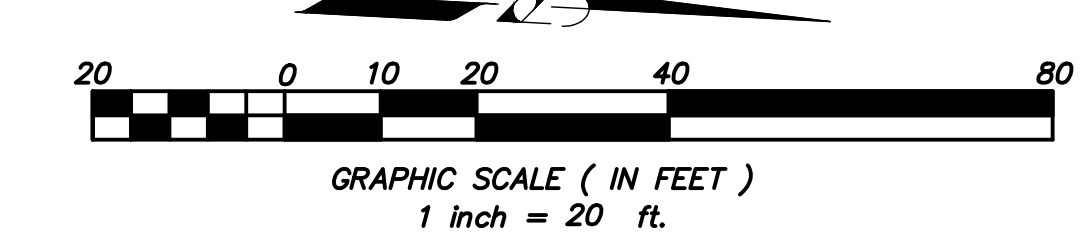
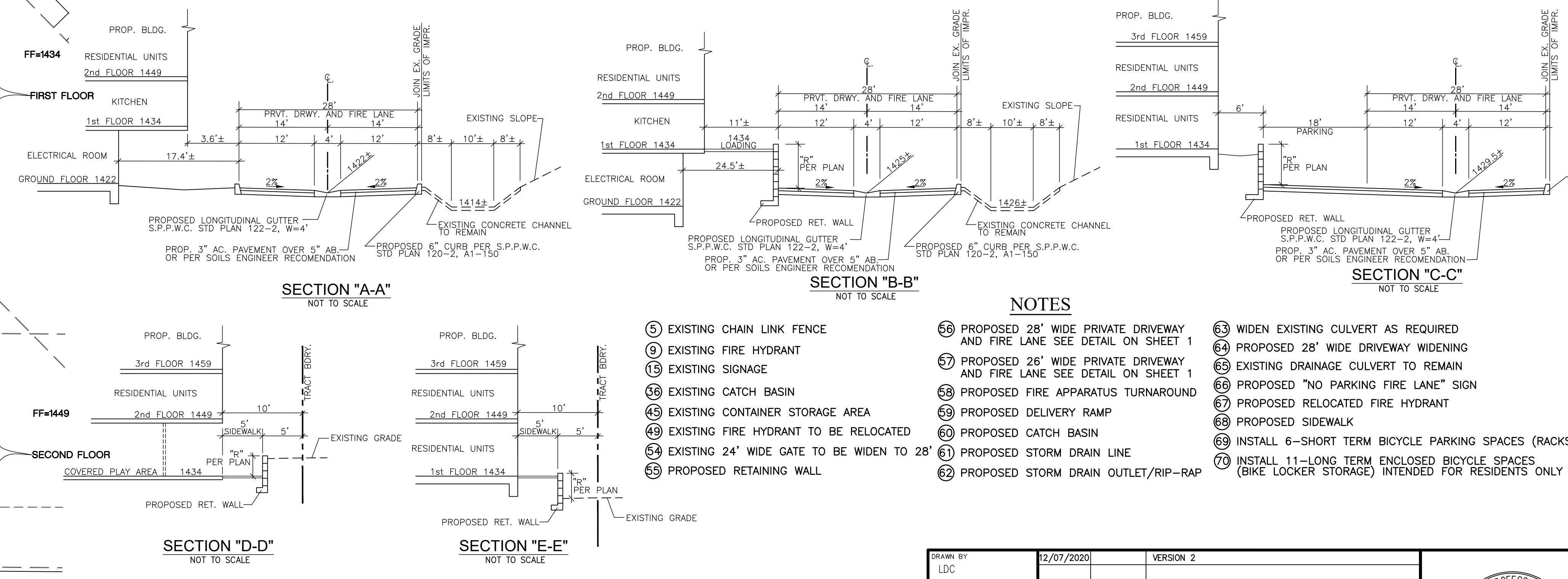
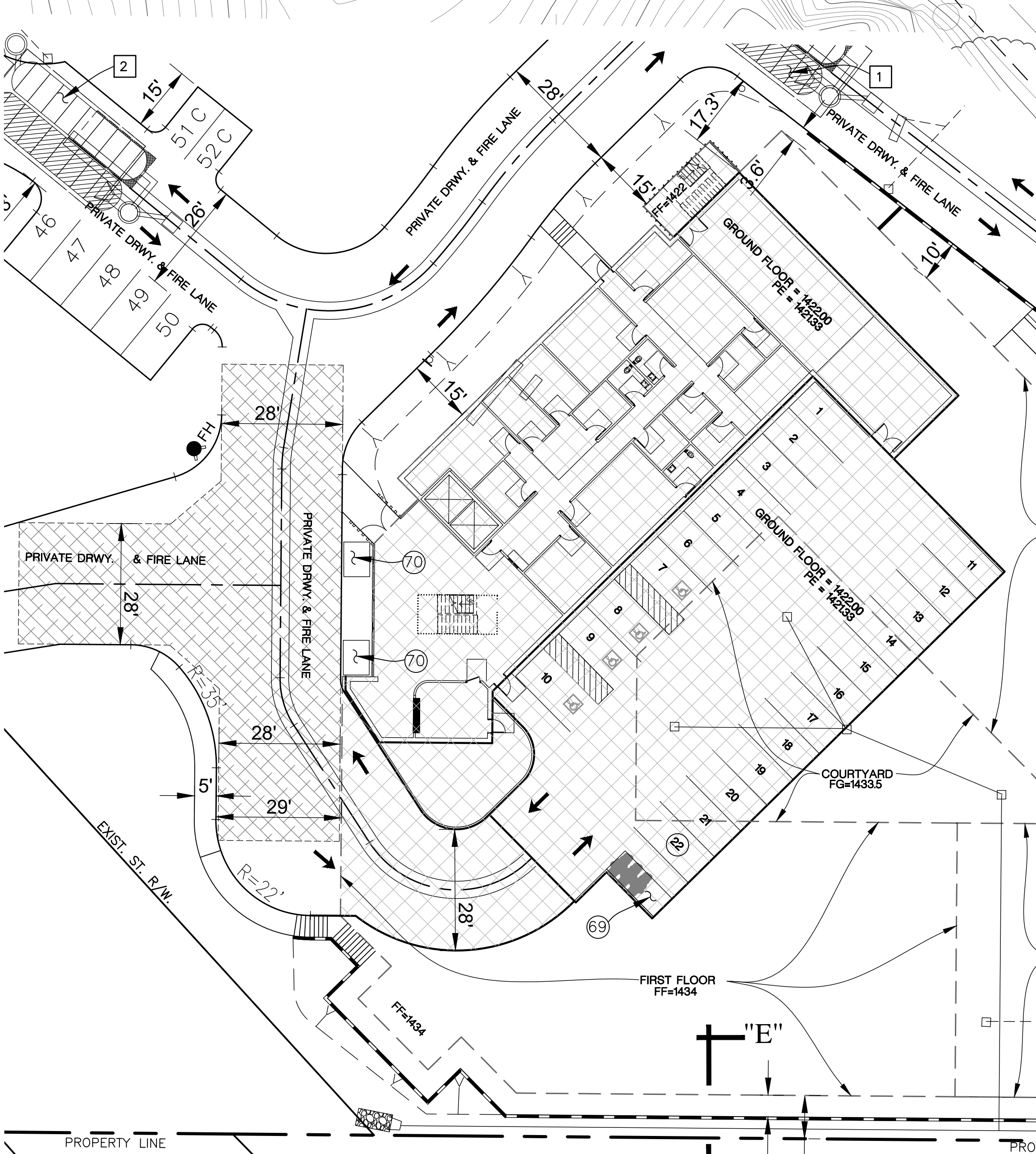
Oak #57



# Appendix C: Site Plan

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# PROPOSED SITE PLAN / UNDERGROUND PARKING / L.I.D.



- L.I.D. NOTES:**  
 BMPs 1 & 2 BELOW COMPRISE OF STORMTECH MC-4500 CHAMBERS AND END CAPS IN CONFIGURATIONS AS NOTED
- 1 TWO ROWS OF 6 CHAMBERS EA. (12 TOTAL) W/ 2 END CAPS EA. ROW, WITH 12" STONE BASE.
  - 2 TWO ROWS OF 8 CHAMBERS EA. (16 TOTAL) W/ 2 END CAPS EA. ROW, WITH 12" STONE BASE.

- NOTES**
- EXISTING CHAIN LINK FENCE
  - EXISTING FIRE HYDRANT
  - EXISTING SIGNAGE
  - EXISTING CATCH BASIN
  - EXISTING CONTAINER STORAGE AREA
  - EXISTING FIRE HYDRANT TO BE RELOCATED
  - EXISTING 24" WIDE GATE TO BE WIDEN TO 28"
  - PROPOSED RETAINING WALL
  - PROPOSED 28" WIDE PRIVATE DRIVEWAY AND FIRE LANE SEE DETAIL ON SHEET 1
  - PROPOSED 26" WIDE PRIVATE DRIVEWAY AND FIRE LANE SEE DETAIL ON SHEET 1
  - PROPOSED FIRE APPARATUS TURNAROUND
  - PROPOSED DELIVERY RAMP
  - PROPOSED CATCH BASIN
  - EXISTING STORM DRAIN LINE
  - PROPOSED STORM DRAIN OUTLET/ RIP-RAP
  - WIDEN EXISTING CULVERT AS REQUIRED
  - PROPOSED 28" WIDE DRIVEWAY WIDENING
  - EXISTING DRAINAGE CULVERT TO REMAIN
  - PROPOSED "NO PARKING FIRE LANE" SIGN
  - PROPOSED RELOCATED FIRE HYDRANT
  - PROPOSED SIDEWALK
  - INSTALL 6-SHORT TERM BICYCLE PARKING SPACES (RACKS)
  - INSTALL 11-LONG TERM ENCLOSED BICYCLE SPACES (BIKE LOCKER STORAGE) INTENDED FOR RESIDENTS ONLY

DATE	CHANGED	REVISION
12/07/2020		VERSION 2



**OWNER/DEVELOPER:**  
**UNION RESCUE MISSION**  
 545 S. SAN PEDRO ST. LOS ANGELES, CA 90013  
 Ph: (213) 347-6300

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:**  
 A.P.N. 2846-001-017, 2846-001-018  
 A.P.N. 2846-001-019, 2846-001-020

**CUP EXHIBIT "A"**  
**HOPE GARDEN SEQUOIA BUILDING**  
**UNION RESCUE MISSION**  
 12249 LOPEZ CANYON ROAD

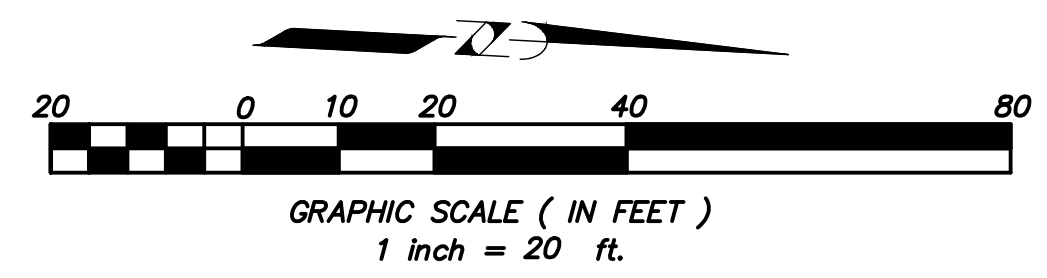
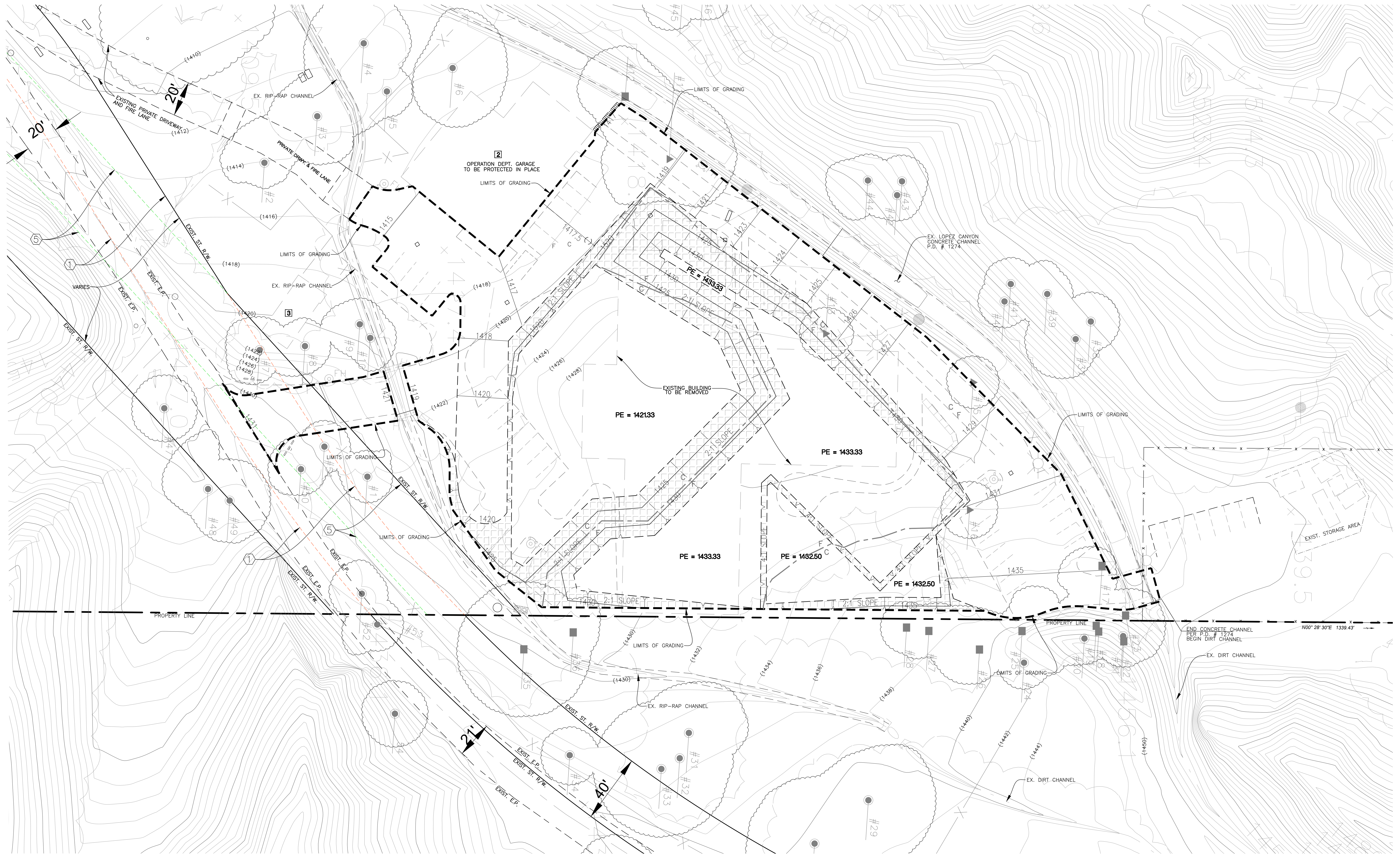
IN THE UNINCORPORATED TERRITORY OF COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES,  
 STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

**PREPARED BY:**  
**LAND DESIGN CONSULTANTS, INC.**  
 Land Planning, Civil Engineering, Surveying & Environmental Services  
 800 Royal Oaks Dr., Suite 140, Monterey, California 91016  
 Ph: (650) 576-7000, Fax: (650) 576-7373  
 http://www.ldca.com

**LDC**  
 Project No. 17019-005  
 SHEET 3 OF 6

Robert R. Sims, R.C.E. No. 21649  
 09/26/2022  
 DATE

# PROPOSED SITE PLAN / ROUGH GRADING



**OWNER/DEVELOPER:**  
**UNION RESCUE MISSION**  
 545 S. SAN PEDRO ST. LOS ANGELES, CA 90013  
 Ph: (213) 347-6300

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:**  
 A.P.N. 2846-001-017, 2846-001-018  
 A.P.N. 2846-001-019, 2846-001-020

**CUP EXHIBIT "A"**  
**HOPE GARDEN SEQUOIA BUILDING**  
**UNION RESCUE MISSION**  
**12249 LOPEZ CANYON ROAD**  
 IN THE UNINCORPORATED TERRITORY OF COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES,  
 STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

**PREPARED BY:**  
**LAND DESIGN CONSULTANTS, INC.**  
 Land Planning, Civil Engineering, Surveying & Environmental Services  
 800 Royal Oaks Dr., Suite 140, Monrovia, California 91016  
 Ph: (626) 576-7000, Fax: (626) 576-7373  
 http://www.ldca.com

**REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER**  
 ROBERT R. SIMS  
 No. 21649  
 EXP. 9-30-23  
 CIVIL  
 STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Project No. 17019-005  
 SHEET 4 OF 6

DATE	CHANGED BY	REVISION
02/07/2020		VERSION 2

C:\Users\jvank\OneDrive\Documents\Temp\Map\Public\_L1419\02.dwg - Sep 26, 2022 3:08 pm MSB