



# **PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: SEPTEMBER 26, 2005

*24.9.*  
ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: PLANNING APPLICATION PA-05-20  
2884 LA SALLE AVENUE

DATE: SEPTEMBER 15, 2005

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: MEL LEE, AICP, SENIOR PLANNER  
(714) 754-5611

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## **DESCRIPTION**

The applicant is requesting approval of a variance from off-street parking requirements (16 spaces required; 13 spaces proposed), in conjunction with a design review for the construction of a two story, 4-bedroom rental unit, for a total of 5 rental units on the property.

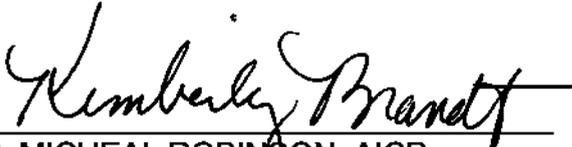
## **APPLICANT**

The applicant is Blair Ballard Architects, representing the owner of the property, Brad Prescott.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Deny by adoption of Planning Commission resolution.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MEL LEE, AICP  
Senior Planner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
R. MICHEAL ROBINSON, AICP  
Asst. Development Services Director

**PLANNING APPLICATION SUMMARY**

Location: 2884 La Salle Ave. Application: PA-05-20

Request: Variance from off-street parking requirements (16 spaces required; 13 spaces proposed), in conjunction with a design review for the construction of a two story, 4 bedroom rental unit, for a total of 5 rental units on the property

**SUBJECT PROPERTY:**

**SURROUNDING PROPERTY:**

Zone:	<u>R3</u>	North:	<u>(Across Flood Channel) R2-MD and R1, Residences</u>
General Plan:	<u>High Density Residential</u>	South:	<u>R3, Residences</u>
Lot Dimensions:	<u>Irregular</u>	East:	<u>(Across Alley) I&amp;R, School</u>
Lot Area:	<u>11,400 SF</u>	West:	<u>(Across La Salle Av) R3, Residences</u>
Existing Development:	<u>4 Attached Multiple Residential Units (2 Story)</u>		

**DEVELOPMENT STANDARD COMPARISON**

<u>Development Standard</u>	<u>Required/Allowed</u>	<u>Proposed/Provided</u>
<b>Lot Size:</b>		
Lot Width	100 FT	52 FT*
Lot Area	12,000 SF	11,400 SF*
<b>Density:</b>		
Zone	1 du/2,178 SF	1 du/2,280 SF
General Plan	1 du/2,178 SF	1 du/2,280 SF
<b>Building Coverage (New &amp; Existing Buildings):</b>		
Buildings	NA	4,747 SF (42%)
Paving	NA	1,123 SF (15%)
Open Space	4,560 SF (40%)	5,530 SF (48%)
TOTAL		11,400 SF (100%)
<b>Building Height (New Building):</b>		
Building Height	2 Stories/27 FT	2 Stories/25 FT
Chimney Height	NA	NA
First Floor Area (Including Garages)	NA	1,922 SF
Second Floor Area	NA	1,123 SF
Ratio of First Floor to Second Floor**	80%	58%
<b>Setbacks (New Building)</b>		
Front	20 FT	68 FT
Side (left/right)	5 FT (1 Story), 10 FT Avg. (2 Story)**	6 FT (1 Story) 29 FT Avg. (2 Story)
Rear (Garages Off Alley)	5 FT	5 FT
Rear Yard Lot Coverage	NA	NA
<b>Parking:</b>		
Covered	5	11
Open	11	2
TOTAL	16 Spaces	13 Spaces***
Driveway Width:	NA	NA

NA = Not Applicable or No Requirement

\*The lot is legal nonconforming

\*\*Residential Design Guideline

\*\*\*Does not meet code – variance requested

CEQA Status Exempt, Class 3

Final Action Planning Commission

## BACKGROUND

The subject site contains a 2-story, 4-unit apartment building (fourplex) originally constructed in 1964. The 4 units consist of a bachelor unit, a 1-bedroom unit, a 2-bedroom unit, and a 3-bedroom unit. Eight parking spaces, which take access from a public alley (6 garage spaces and 2 open spaces on the south side of the building) are provided for the units. The parking for the units are legal nonconforming under current code (11 spaces are required).

## ANALYSIS

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project consists of a new, detached, 2-story, 4-bedroom residential unit and attached 5-car garage. Code requires 5 parking spaces for the new unit, which is provided via the attached garages, which, like the existing garage parking spaces for the fourplex, also take access from the public alley. In addition to the proposed garage spaces, a new open parking space between the new unit and the existing fourplex will be provided. However, as indicated earlier, the existing fourplex is legal nonconforming with regard to on-site parking (11 spaces required; 8 spaces existing). One open parking stall on the south side of the fourplex will be removed to accommodate a new walkway adjacent to the existing building, leaving a total of 7 spaces provided.

The portion of the site where the new unit is proposed to be located is currently vacant. Code Section 13-204 (Nonconforming Provisions) does not allow additions or alterations to nonconforming properties if the addition or alteration occupies the only portion of a site that can accommodate required parking. If additional on-site parking spaces were to be provided elsewhere on the lot (such as in the southerly front yard portion of the property) it could reduce the amount of open space below the 40% required by code. Because the proposed unit, by virtue of being constructed on the vacant portion of the lot, will eliminate the possibility that the project will ever be able to accommodate code compliant parking, the applicant is requesting approval of a variance.

### Variance Request

Staff's primary concern with allowing a reduction in required parking is that the majority of on-site spaces are provided within garages. If the garages were used for purposes other than for storing cars (such as for storage of household items) it could force residents to park along the street. Because many of the multiple family residences in the immediate area were also built in the early 1960's, the majority do not comply with current parking requirements. Therefore, allowing a further parking reduction for this project could exacerbate the on-street parking situation.

If the Commission were to approve the variance, staff recommends, as a condition of approval (condition no. 14) that the garages be solely utilized for the parking of vehicles and that storage of items within the garages not be permitted. Also, dividing walls between the individual garages for the new unit would not be permitted. The property

manager and/or property owner would be responsible for the enforcement of this condition.

Design Review

The proposed unit complies with the City's Residential Design Guidelines (the second floor is less than 80% of the first floor, and the north (side yard) second floor setback exceeds the 10 foot average setback recommended in the Design Guidelines. However, if the variance for parking is not approved, the Design Review for the unit cannot be approved. If the variance is approved, the applicant has proposed exterior upgrades to the existing fourplex to match the proposed unit. This has also been incorporated as a condition of approval (condition no. 8).

ALTERNATIVES

If the project is not approved, the applicant could not construct the development as proposed. The applicant could not submit substantially the same type of design for six months. If the appropriate variance findings are made the project could be approved, and the applicant could construct the unit as proposed.

CONCLUSION

Because the site does not provide adequate on-site parking per code, and the proposed unit would occupy the only portion of a site that could accommodate required parking, staff recommends denial of the project.

- Attachments:
1. Draft Planning Commission Resolution
  2. Exhibit "A" - Draft Findings
  3. Exhibit "B" - Draft Conditions of Approval
  4. Applicant's Project Description and Justification
  6. Location Map
  7. Plans/Photos

cc: Deputy City Mgr.-Dev. Svs. Director  
Senior Deputy City Attorney  
City Engineer  
Fire Protection Analyst  
Staff (4)  
File (2)

Blair Ballard Architects  
Attn: Ed Temir and Brad Prescott  
1590 S. Coast Highway Suite 18  
Laguna Beach, CA 92651



**RESOLUTION NO. PC-05-**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE  
CITY OF COSTA MESA DENYING PLANNING APPLICATION  
PA-05-20**

THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF COSTA MESA HEREBY  
RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, an application was filed by Blair Ballard Architects, representing Brad Prescott, with respect to the real property located at 2884 La Salle Avenue, requesting approval of a variance from off-street parking requirements (16 spaces required; 13 spaces proposed), in conjunction with a Design Review for the construction of a two story, 4 bedroom rental unit, for a total of 5 rental units on the property; and

WHEREAS, a duly noticed public hearing was held by the Planning Commission on September 26, 2005.

BE IT RESOLVED that, based on the evidence in the record and the findings contained in Exhibit "A", the Planning Commission hereby **DENIES** PA-05-20 with respect to the property described above.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED this 26<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2005.**

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Chair, Costa Mesa  
Planning Commission

STATE OF CALIFORNIA )  
 )ss  
COUNTY OF ORANGE )

I, R. Michael Robinson, secretary to the Planning Commission of the City of Costa Mesa, do hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was passed and adopted at a meeting of the City of Costa Mesa Planning Commission held on September 26, 2005, by the following votes:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS

NOES: COMMISSIONERS

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS

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Secretary, Costa Mesa  
Planning Commission

## EXHIBIT "A"

### FINDINGS

- A. The proposed project does not comply with Costa Mesa Municipal Code Section 13-29(e) because:
1. The proposed development is not compatible or harmonious with uses within the general neighborhood. Specifically, if the garages were used for purposes other than for storing cars (such as storage of household items) it could force residents to park along the street. Because many of the multiple family residences in the immediate area do not comply with requirements for on-site parking, a further parking reduction for this project could exacerbate existing on-street parking.
  2. Safety and compatibility of the design of the buildings, parking areas, landscaping, luminaries, and other site features including functional aspects of the site development such as automobile and pedestrian circulation have been considered.
- B. The information presented does not comply with Costa Mesa Municipal Code Section 13-29(g)(1) with regard to the variances because there are no special circumstances applicable to the property that would justify approval of the variances from on-site parking. Specifically, the portion of the site where the proposed unit is located is currently vacant. Code Section 13-204 (Nonconforming Provisions) does not allow additions or alterations to nonconforming properties if the addition or alteration occupies the only portion of a site that can accommodate required parking. The proposed unit, by virtue of being constructed on the vacant portion of the lot, will eliminate the possibility that the project being able to accommodate code compliant parking.
- C. The information presented complies with Costa Mesa Municipal Code Section 13-29(g)(1) with regard to the design review because the project complies with the City of Costa Mesa Zoning Code and meets the purpose and intent of the Residential Design Guidelines, which are intended to promote design excellence in new residential construction, with consideration being given to compatibility with the established residential community. The residence conforms to all development standards and the residential design guidelines. Approval of the design review will allow a use, density, and intensity, which is in accordance with the General Plan designation for the property. Specifically, with the exception of parking, the residence complies with all applicable residential development standards. The number of units on the property will not exceed the maximum number of units allowed under the City's General Plan. However, because the variance for parking cannot be approved, the design review for the unit cannot be approved.
- D. The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the CEQA Guidelines, and the City environmental procedures, and has been found to be exempt from CEQA.

**EXHIBIT "B"****CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL (If Project Is Approved)**

- PIng.
1. Address assignment shall be requested from the Planning Division prior to submittal of working drawings for plan check. The approved address of individual units, suites, buildings, etc, shall be blueprinted on the site plan and on all floor plans in the working drawings.
  2. Prior to issuance of building permits, applicant shall contact the U.S. Postal Service with regard to location and design of mail delivery facilities. Such facilities shall be shown on the site plan, landscape plan, and/or floor plan.
  3. Street addresses shall be displayed on the front of each unit and on a complex identification sign visible from the street. Street address numerals shall be a minimum 6 inches in height with not less than ½-inch stroke and shall contrast sharply with the background.
  4. The subject property's ultimate finished grade level may not be filled/raised unless necessary to provide proper drainage, and in no case shall it be raised in excess of 30 inches above the finished grade of any abutting property. If additional fill dirt is needed to provide acceptable on-site stormwater flow, an alternative means of accommodating that drainage shall be approved by the City's Building Official prior to issuance of any grading or building permits. Such alternatives may include subsurface tie-in to public stormwater facilities, subsurface drainage collection systems and/or sumps with mechanical pump discharge in-lieu of gravity flow. If mechanical pump method is determined appropriate, said mechanical pump(s) shall continuously be maintained in working order. In any case, development of subject property shall preserve or improve the existing pattern of drainage on abutting properties.
  5. The applicant shall contact Comcast (cable television) at 200 Paularino, Costa Mesa, (888.255.5789) prior to issuance of building permits to arrange for pre-wiring for future cable communication service.
  6. The conditions of approval, ordinance and code provisions of PA-05-20 shall be blueprinted on the face of the site plan.
  7. The applicant shall contact the Planning Division to arrange Planning inspection of the site prior to the release of occupancy/utilities. This inspection is to confirm that the conditions of approval and code requirements have been satisfied.
  8. Building elevations visible from street and surrounding properties shall have enhanced architectural details and window treatments under the direction of Planning staff. Exterior upgrades to the existing fourplex shall match the new unit.
  9. No exterior roof access ladders, roof drain scuppers, or roof drain downspouts shall be permitted.
  10. Cornices and other architectural elements shall be wrapped around to the side and rear of building facades.
  11. Existing mature vegetation shall be retained wherever possible. Should

it be necessary to remove existing vegetation, the applicant shall submit a written request and justification to the Planning Division. A report from a California licensed arborist may be required as part of the justification. Replacement trees shall be of a size consistent with trees to be removed, and shall be replaced on a 1-to-1 basis. This condition shall be completed under the direction of the Planning Division.

12. Show method of screening for all ground-mounted equipment (backflow prevention devices, Fire Department connections, electrical transformers, etc.). Ground-mounted equipment shall not be located in any landscaped setback visible from the street, except when required by applicable uniform codes, and shall be screened from view, under the direction of Planning Staff.
13. Construction, grading, materials delivery, equipment operation or other noise-generating activity shall be limited to between the hours of 7 a.m. and 8 p.m., Monday through Friday, and between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. on Saturday. Construction is prohibited on Sundays and Federal holidays. Exceptions may be made for activities that will not generate noise audible from off-site, such as painting and other quiet interior work.
14. Garages shall be solely utilized for the parking of vehicles. Storage of items within the garages shall not be permitted. The property owner and/or manager shall be responsible for the enforcement of the above requirements. Dividing walls between the individual garages for the new unit shall not be permitted.
15. All garages shall be equipped with automatic garage door openers.
- Eng. 16. Maintain the public right-of-way in a "wet-down" condition to prevent excessive dust and promptly remove any spillage from the public right-of-way by sweeping or sprinkling.

**CITY OF COSTA MESA PLANNING APPLICATION**  
**PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION**

1. Project Address:

2884 LA SALLE AVE, COSTA MESA

2. Fully describe your request:

VARIANCE REQUEST TO ALLOW AN EXISTING  
NON-CONFORMING PARKING SITUATION TO  
REMAIN.

3. Justification:

A. For a Conditional Use Permit or Minor Conditional Use Permit: On a separate sheet, describe how the proposed use is substantially compatible with uses permitted in the same general area and how the proposed use would not be materially detrimental to other properties in the same area.

B. For a variance or Administrative Adjustment: On a separate sheet, describe the property's special circumstances, including size, shape, topography, location or surroundings that deprive the property of privileges enjoyed by other properties in the vicinity under the identical zoning classification due to strict application of the Zoning Code.

4. This project is: (check where appropriate)

In a flood zone.

In the Redevelopment Area.

Subject to future street widening.

In a Specific Plan Area.

Includes a drive-through facility.

(Special notice requirements, pursuant to GC Section 65091 (d))

5. I have reviewed the HAZARDOUS WASTE AND SUBSTANCES SITES LIST reproduced on the rear of this page and have determined the project:

Is not included in the publication indicated above.

Is included in the publication indicated above.

Blair Ballard Architects / Donna  
Signature ~~Owner's~~ agent ~~Owner~~

Date 8/15/05

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CITY OF COSTA MESA  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

AUG 16 2005

BBA  
blair ballard  
architects  
1590  
south coast hwy.  
laguna beach, calif.  
suite 18  
92651 • 494•8093  
fax • 714•494•2772

August 15, 2005

To: City of Costa Mesa

**Justification for Variance at 2884 LaSalle Avenue in Costa Mesa**

This is a variance request to allow an existing non-conforming parking situation to remain.

The proposed submittal is for the addition of one new apartment to an existing four unit apartment building. The existing apartments were built prior to the current zoning requirements. There are a total of seven (7) parking spaces provided for these units (6 covered and 1 uncovered). If these apartments were built today, they would require 13 parking spaces. The proposed new four (4) bedroom apartment unit requires four (4) parking spaces and we are providing six (6) spaces ( 5 covered and 1 uncovered). Therefore, this project will be an improvement to the parking situation for the existing apartments.

The special circumstances that deprive this property of privileges enjoyed by other properties in the vicinity, under identical zoning classification due to the strict application of the zoning code, are the lot size, shape, and location. This lot is situated on a street corner and is roughly pie shaped, not rectangular, as is typical in this neighborhood. The size of the lot, the size and location of the existing apartment building, and the location of the existing alley that provides access to the parking limit the number and placement of the new parking spaces.

In summary, we are requesting a variance for an existing condition. The new unit does not require any variances and provides improvement to the existing parking situations.

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AUG 16 2005

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# ZONING/LOCATION MAP

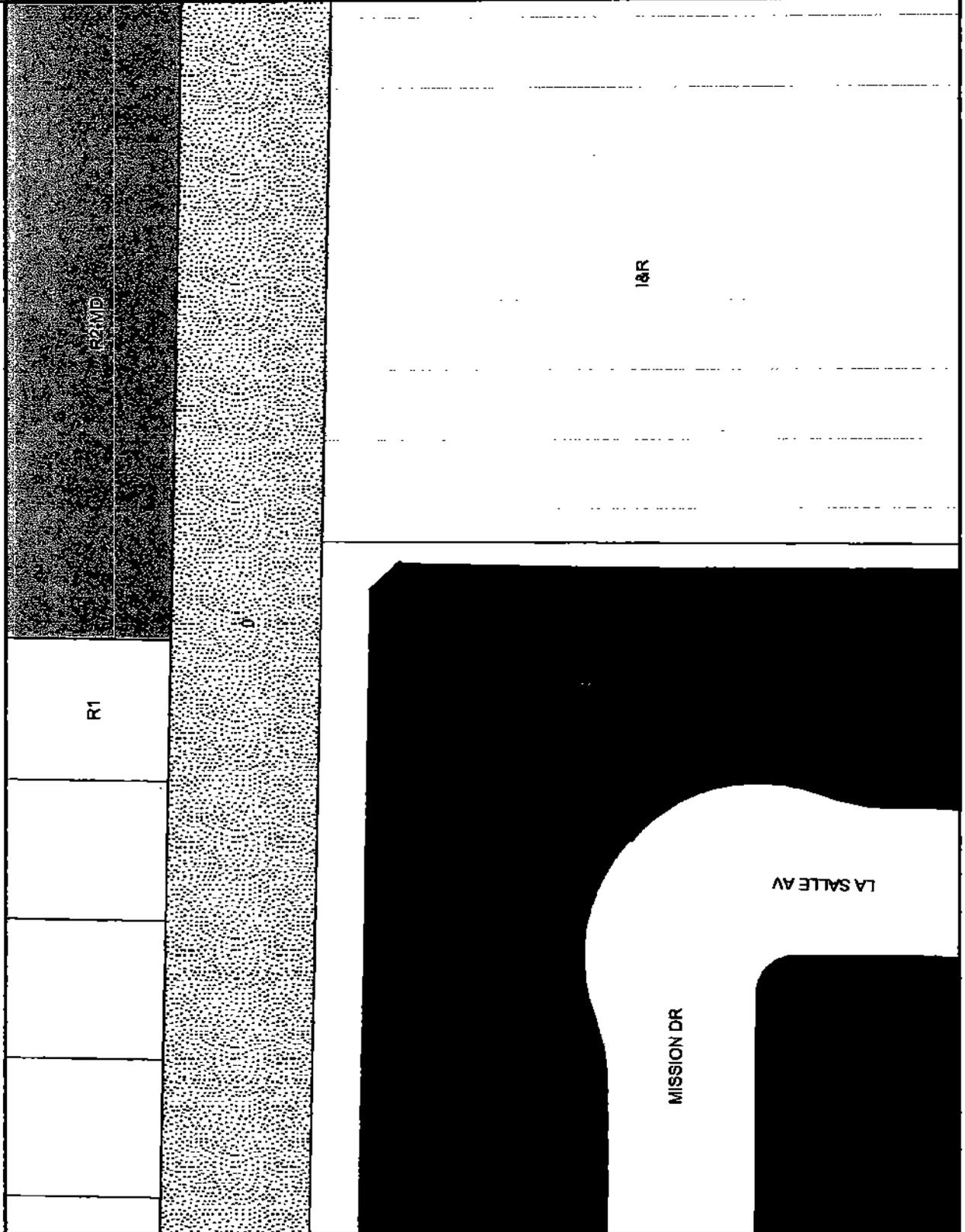
PA-05-20

**Legend**

Street Names  
Parcel Lines  
Zoning

AP  
C1  
C1-S  
C2  
CL  
I&R  
I&R-S  
MG  
MP  
P  
POC  
POI  
PDR-HD  
PDR-LD  
PDR-MD  
PDR-NCK  
R1  
R2-HD  
R2-MD  
R3  
TC  
Parcels

North Arrow  
Locator Map

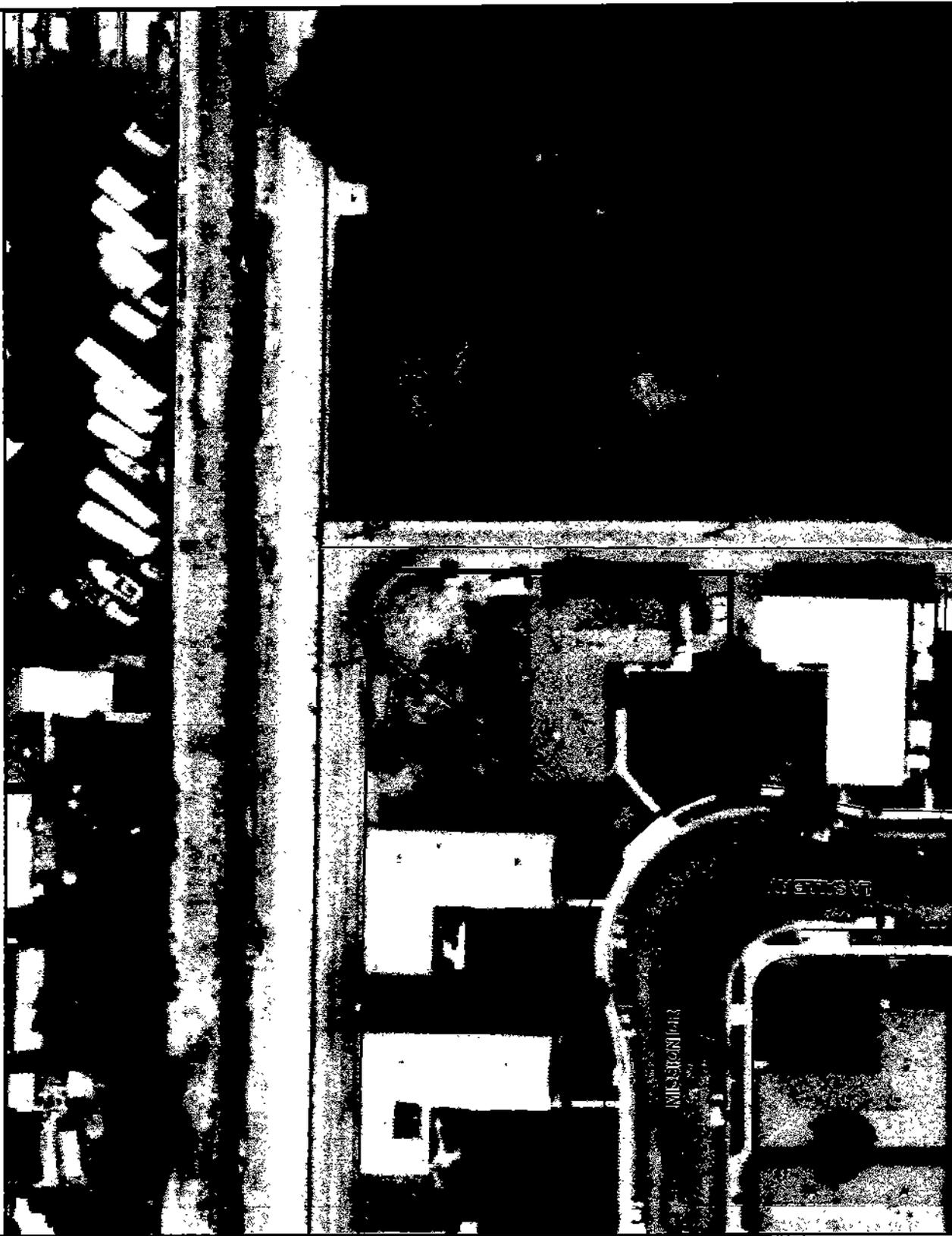
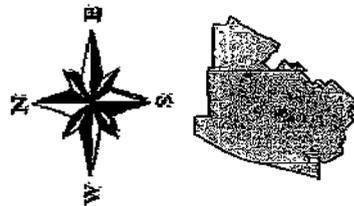


12

# 2884 La Salle

## Legend

- Street Names
- Parcel Lines
- Ortho Photography
- Parcels

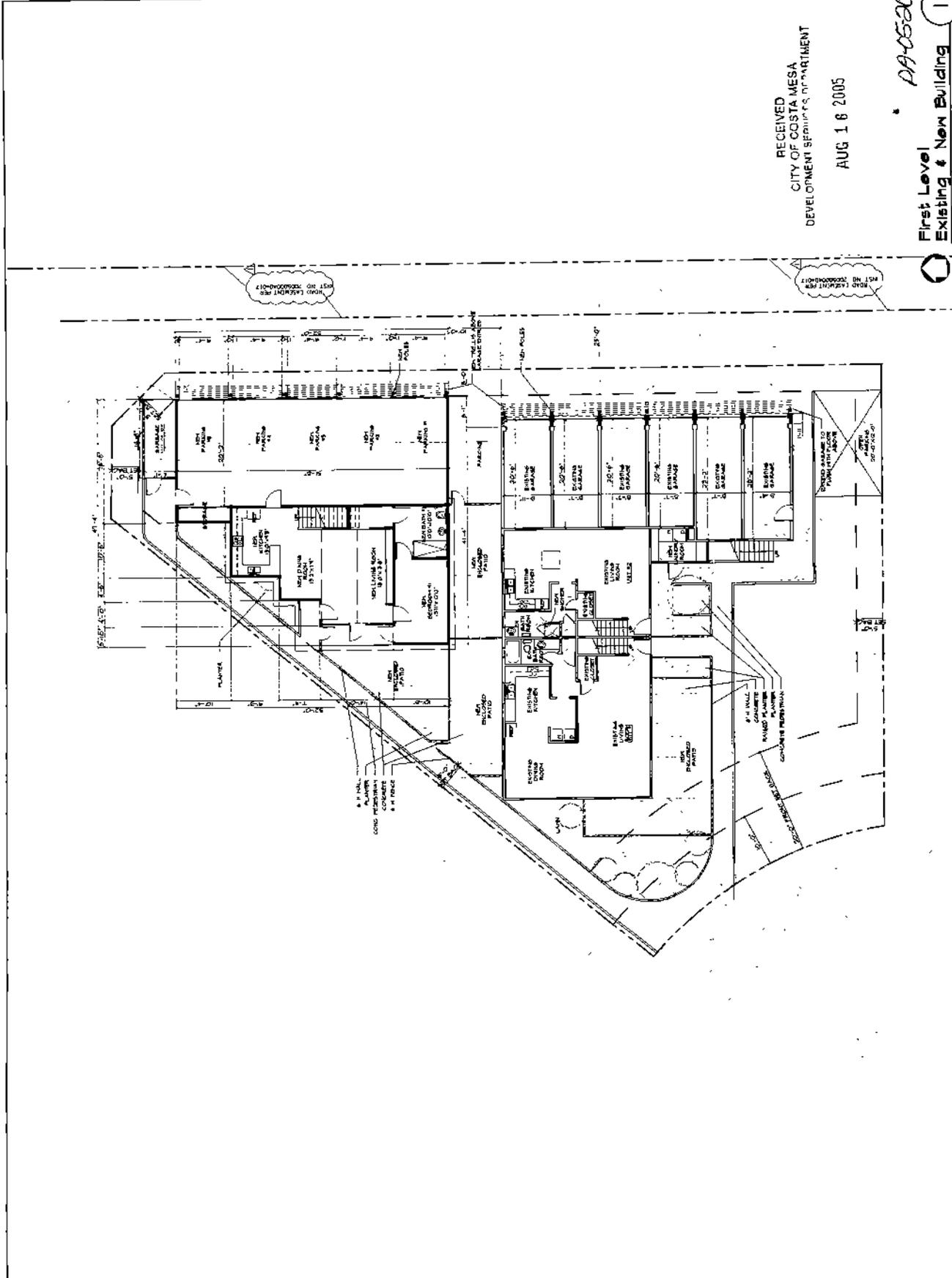






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PA-0520  
First Level  
Existing & New Building 1  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

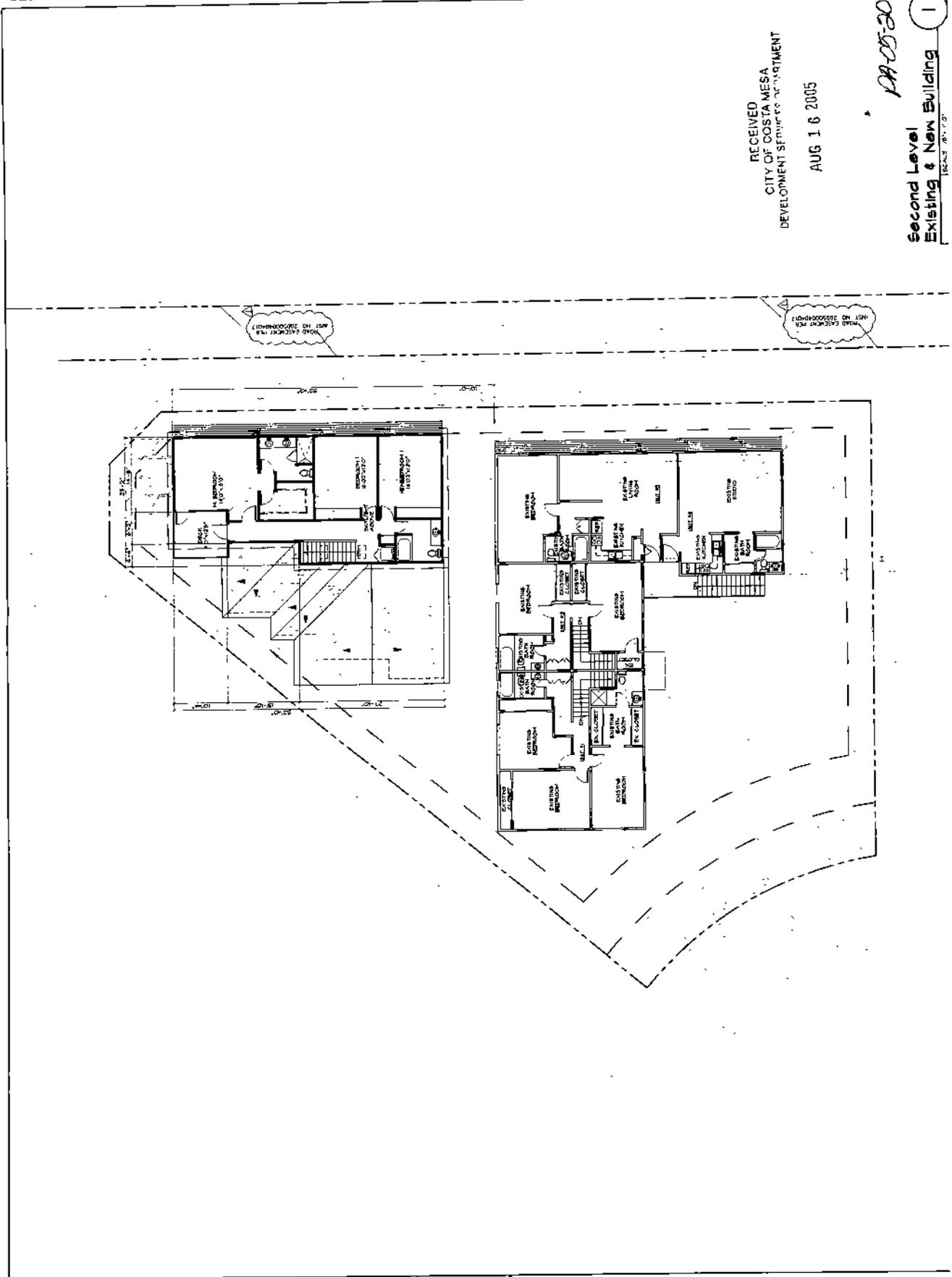


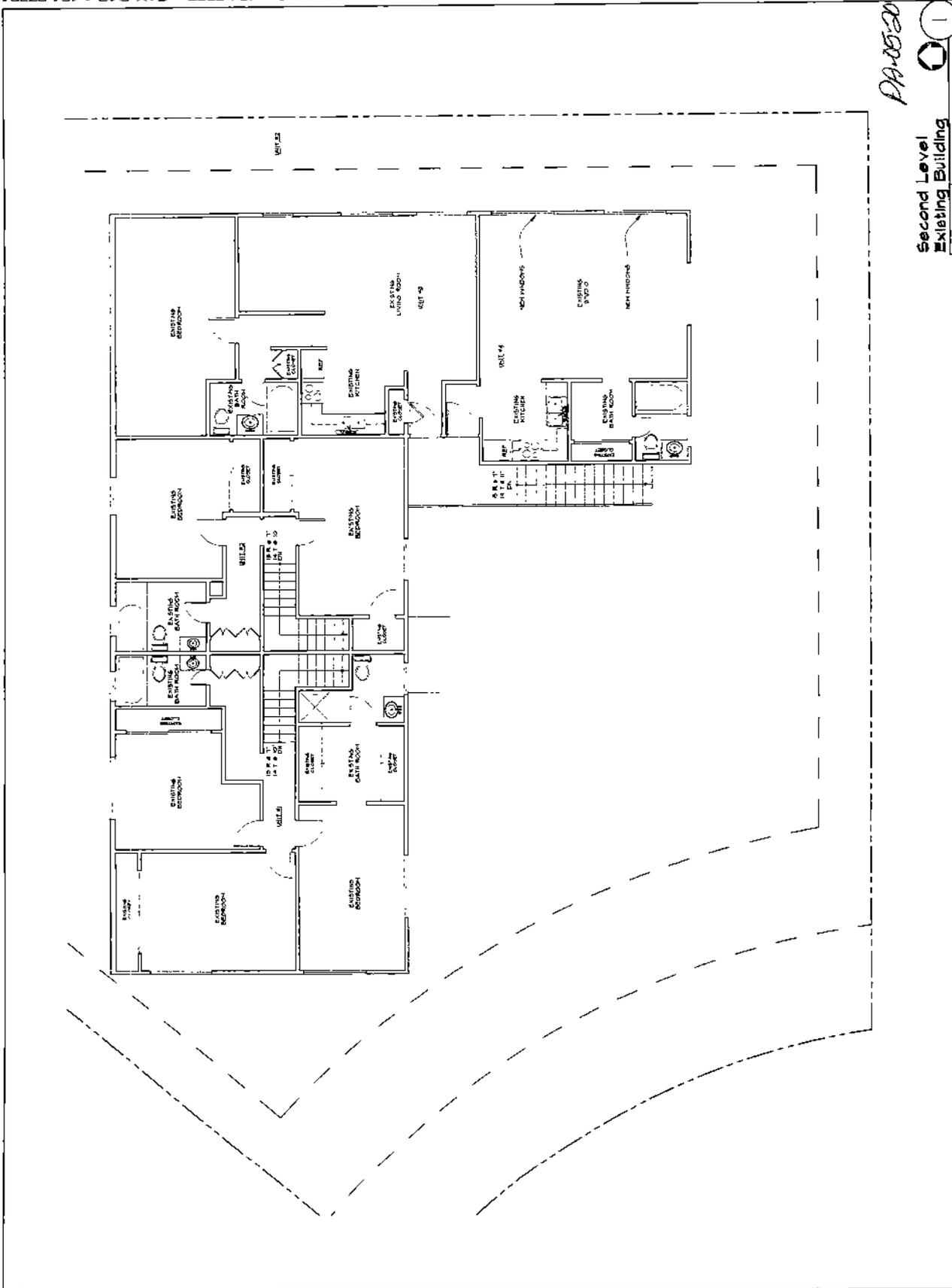


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PA-05-20

Second Level  
 Existing & New Building

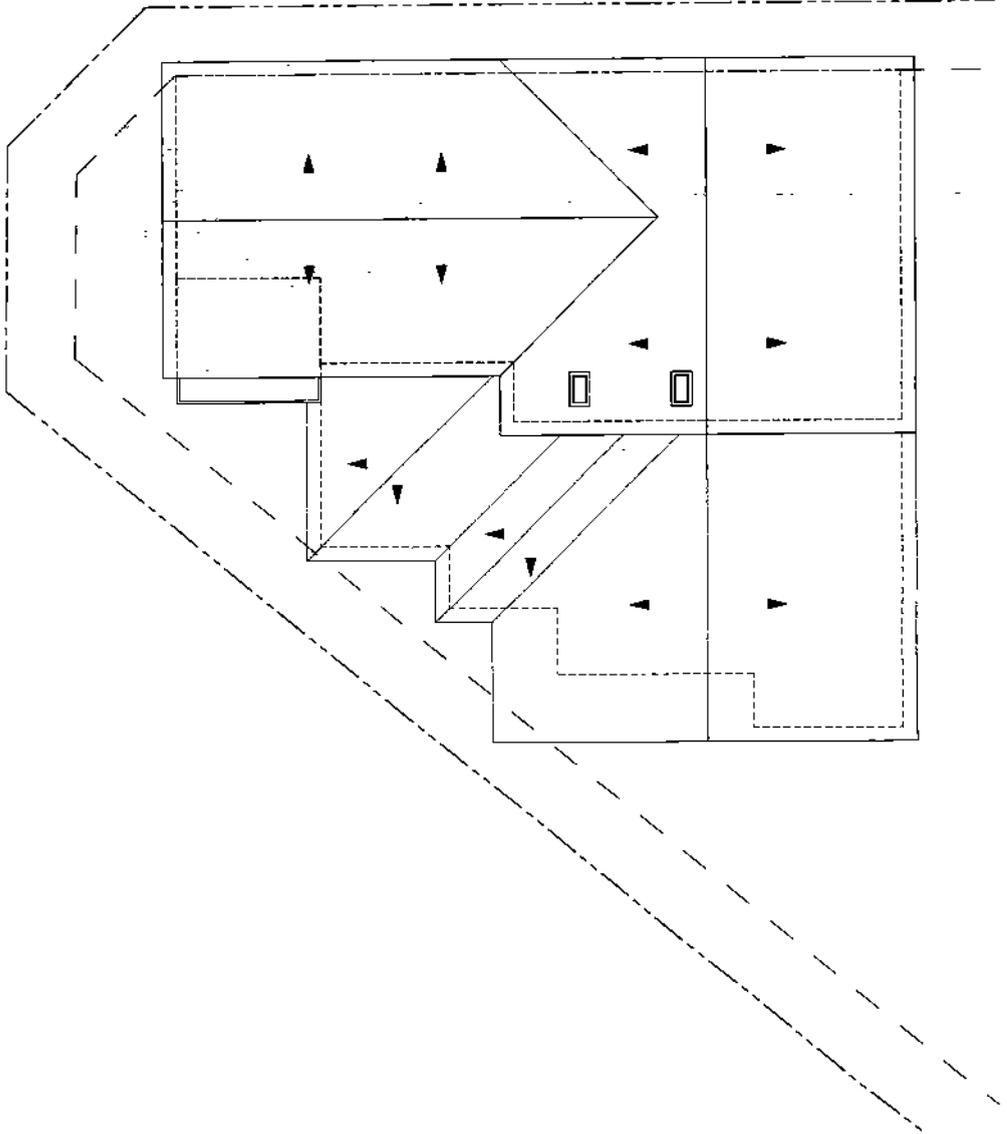


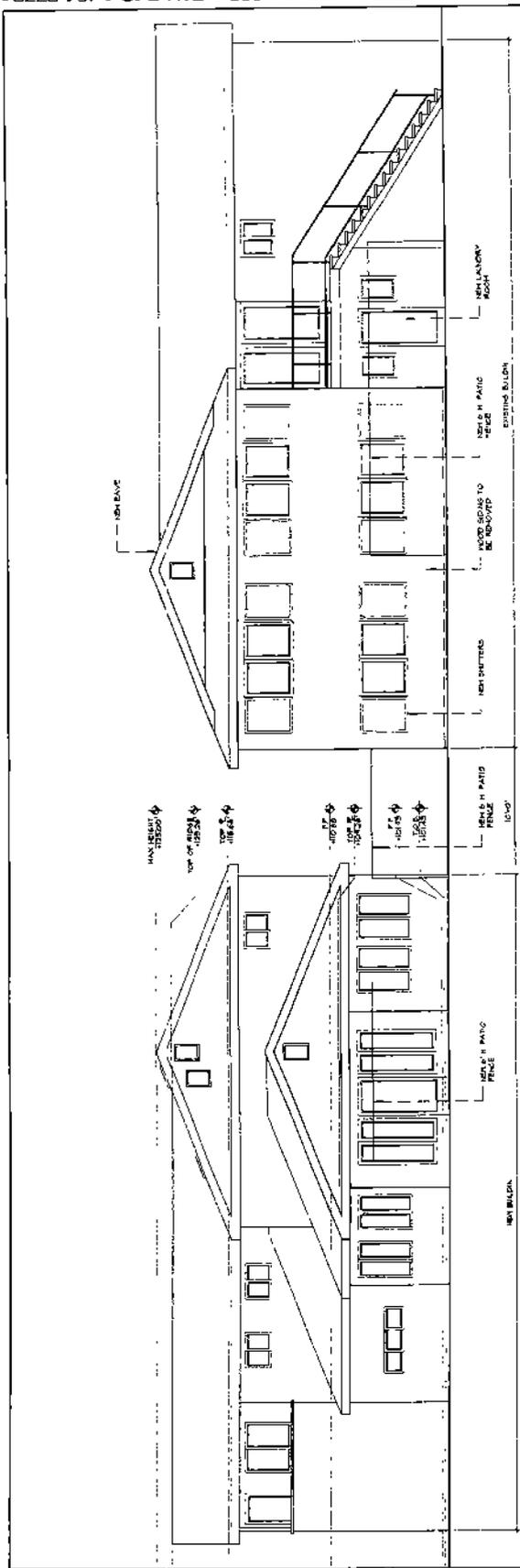


APPENDIX 1  
 Second Level  
 Existing Building

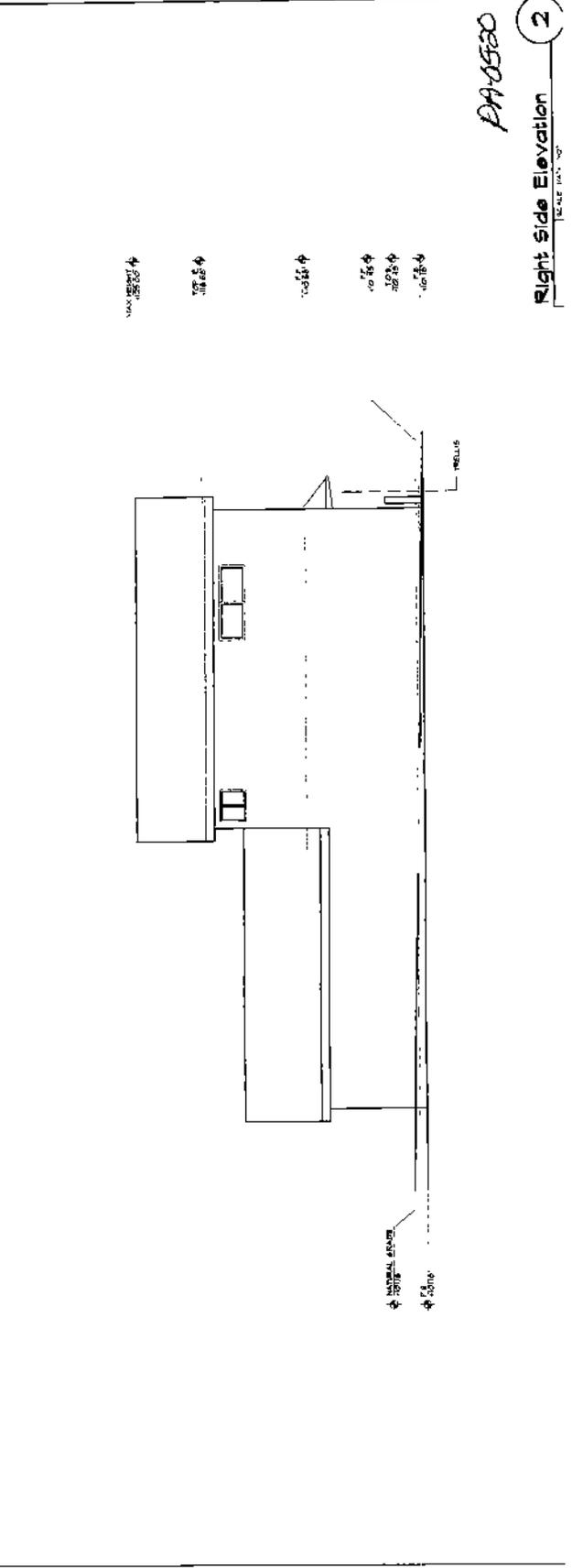
PA-0530

Roof Plan  
New Building  
10/24/10



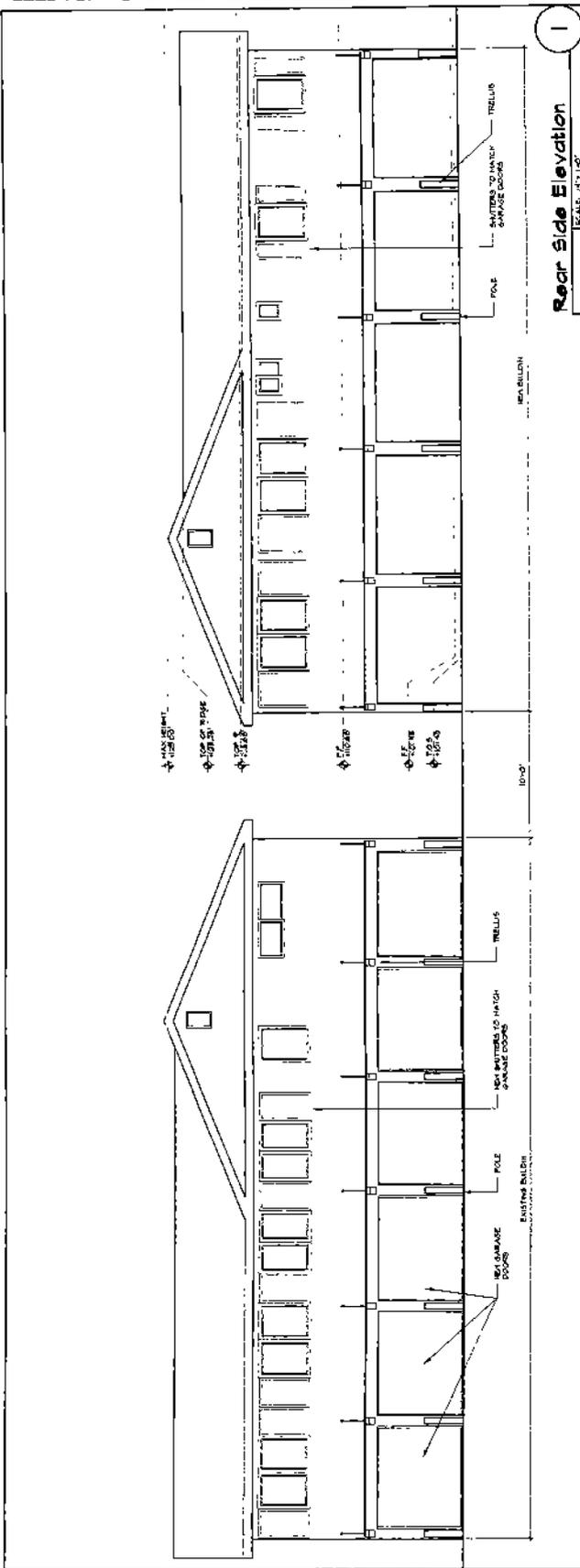


1  
**Front Side Elevation**  
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

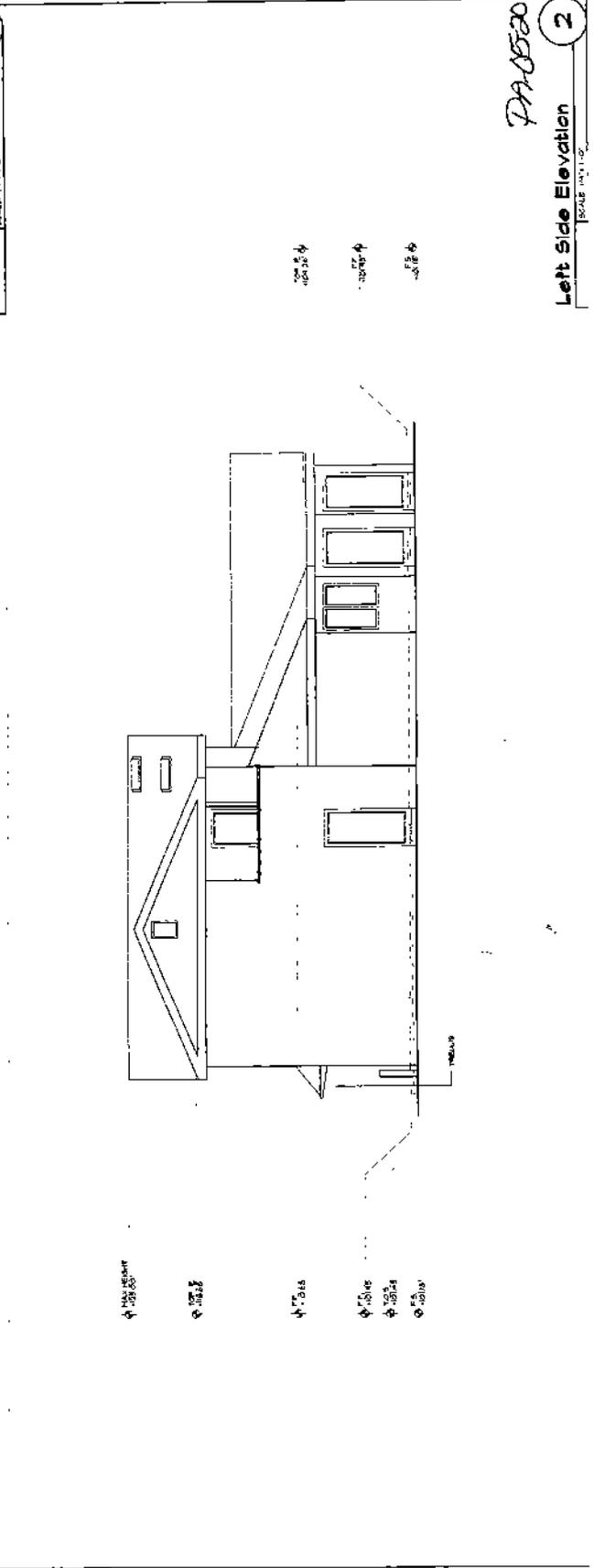


2  
**Right Side Elevation**  
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

PA-0530



**1**  
 Rear Side Elevation  
 SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



**2**  
 Left Side Elevation  
 SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

PA0520