

DATE: December 11, 2023

SUBJECT: Request for Letters of Interest - Architecture/Engineering Team Selection
Palmer Repurposing project – University Park Campus
University Park, PA

TO: Architectural Firms

The Pennsylvania State University (PSU) is excited to begin the Architecture/Engineering (A/E) Team selection process for the Palmer Repurposing project. The project is the renovation, repurposing, and system upgrades of the former Palmer Museum of Art Building located on Curtin Road on the University Park campus. PSU is utilizing its standard qualification-based A/E Team selection process for this project.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Palmer Museum of Art was originally constructed in 1969 and is named after James and Barbara Palmer. The original building was renovated, significantly expanded, and given a completely new facade and orientation, in 1991 by the architect Charles W. Moore in association with the firm of Arbonies King Vlock. The 1991 project transformed a formerly charmless brick box into what it is today. In spring of 2024, the Palmer Museum of Art will permanently move into a new purpose-built museum, located in the Arboretum of Penn State. The vacating of the museum function(s) is what necessitates the Palmer Repurposing project defined herein.

The existing art museum building is 51,013 GSF and is approximately 19,000 ASF of art galleries, art storage, art holding/prep/conservation, and the office/security/administrative functions of the museum. This project defines a complete change of space/use/function and full renovation/adaptive re-use/transformation of the facility, in addition to building system upgrades and building enclosure upgrades as required and defined herein. **The Palmer Repurposing project has a total project cost of \$40.4M, which includes a total construction cost of \$28M.**

This project aims to transform the use/function of the facility, address differed maintenance backlog, and preserve and extend the life of the building. The renovated facility will create as many large General Purpose Classrooms (GPCs) and related GPC circulation and support spaces, as possible. As the available budget and space with the building allow, the remainder of the renovated building will be transformed into the following space/room types: art storage; informal learning space (aka open student study space); specialized classrooms and/or art studio spaces for the college of Arts and Architecture.



Photo above: Front view of existing building

GPCs are classrooms that are scheduled by the Office of the University Registrar and are allocated to all academic units with the goal of maximizing occupancy and optimizing usage. The reduction of classrooms already leads to classes that cannot be scheduled due to lack of space, a situation which will worsen with growing enrollments. The current GPC inventory includes only 24 rooms with a capacity over 150, with those classrooms being heavily utilized with no open periods.

Within the GPC inventory are chemistry-physics (CHEM-PHYS) prep classrooms that have a lab bench at the front and reasonable proximity to the prep room, which is currently a temporary trailer adjacent to the Forum Building. Current CHEM-PHYS prep classrooms are large, with capacities around 350, and are in high demand by other departments that also need large classroom spaces; we only have four classrooms with a capacity of over 350. CHEM-PHYS-prep classrooms can be used for any class but are given priority in scheduling chemistry and physics classes, which make it almost impossible for the other departments to get assigned to these classrooms. There are also inefficiencies when smaller sections are given priority in these larger rooms because of the equipment needs. Creating additional CHEM-PHYS prep classrooms, including smaller ones, would allow the GPCs in the Forum Building to be used by other departments and allow chemistry and physics to be in a space that is more suitable to their needs.

One of the challenging aspects of the project is how to accommodate the existing art storage and related art loading/prep spaces that are currently located in the building. The 2,326 ASF existing art storage space, and related spaces, remain required/critical spaces, even with the opening of the new Palmer Art Museum. Keeping the existing art storage space in the repurposed Palmer is complicated by a variety of factors, including: The change of use for the remainder of the building away from art and museum used with different temperature and humidity controls; the existing building enclosure issues; the need to upgrade building systems in the art storage area; the need to keep the art storage up and running during construction; and the huge amount of art within the storage. Regardless of the future relocation of the building's loading dock, the museum collections staff will continue to need regular access to the dock and to art storage. The museum's 32' box truck with liftgate will be the primary vehicle accessing the dock. The selected A/E team will need to help drive our decision making on the permanent home for this art storage, in the repurposed Palmer or elsewhere.



Photos above: Existing lobby space

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

See below for the most current Project Objectives that have been fine-tuned since the creation of the “*Palmer Arts Backfill Program*” document. PSU will share the “*Palmer Arts Backfill Program*”, which includes more information on the following topics, at the Request for Proposal (RFP) stage:

- Design to a total project budget of \$40.4M. Maximize the building and system renovation/renewal within the budget constraints. While the program defined multiple funding and renovation scenarios, the established budget is now anticipated to cover the reprogramming/repurposing/renovation of the entire facility.
- Develop a space program for the renovation/transformation of the existing building that creates as many General Purpose Classrooms (GPCs) and related GPC circulation and support spaces, as possible, prioritizing large classrooms. Note that 1,000 ASF is the minimum size GPC desired in the project.

For the remainder of the renovation, as possible within the space and budget available, provide space(s) for the following space/room types:

- Create the number and size of GPC classroom(s) that support chemistry-physics (CHEM-PHYS) prep, as required by PSU. Also, create a permanent home for CHEM-PHYS classroom prep space within the repurposed Palmer. The temporary trailer, where this function is currently housed, may be removed from Forum should this project budget support that scope/effort.
- Art Storage. See subsequent goal for more info.
- Informal learning space (aka open student study space), as required to support the new GPC spaces and as required to allow for class changes.
- Specialized classrooms and/or art studio (art creation) spaces for the college of Arts and Architecture (A&A).
- Evaluate cost benefit of the art storage space remaining in the renovated facility versus evaluating alternate (aka off-site) solutions for art storage. The selected A/E Team will work closely with PSU to define the final strategy and location for art storage. Maintaining existing art storage in the renovated building include the following considerations:
 - Ability to maintain the temperature and humidity of the art storage as a part of this renovation, especially as the remainder of the building changes function away from art storage and museum spaces. This needs investigation early in the design process.
 - Access and loading dock. It is possible that leaving the existing art storage in the building will necessitate an adding loading area be added to the building, opposite of the Stuckman Family Building loading area. The art storage requires delivery access from a 32’ box truck with liftgate.
 - Impact to the building envelope deficiencies
 - Cost and time for an art move, or multiple moves.
 - Swing space and/or phasing requirements related to art moving, temporary moves, etc.
 - Security considerations, including considerations related to the remainder of the building changing away from secure museum spaces.
- Maintain existing exterior aesthetic of the building, and entrance plaza, while correcting exterior building envelope deficiencies. Building envelope deficiencies exist unrelated to the existing Art Storage spaces, but the deficiencies are exacerbated by the existence of the Art Storage in the building. More information about the building envelope deficiencies will be shared in the Request for Proposal (RFP).

- Honor/respect the overall character of the existing/original lobby interior as a part of this renovation and adaptive re-use of the building. The angled, faux textured stone columns in the lobby are considered an integral part of the building's design and one of several important components that contribute to architect Charles Moore's vision of the space. Similarly, multiple large-scale scalloped blue decorative wall features and mirrored light features adorned with multi-colored tile, are distinctive to the 1991 Charles Moore design. As a part of this project, we will consider a range of design options for the lobby to test the level of transformation for the lobby aesthetic versus the extent of existing building character that should remain. Any changes to key architectural elements will be made in close consultation with the University Architect. As a part of the lobby transformation, it is goal to continue to utilize the lobby space as a publicly available space. So, in the test fit plans, the lobby is shown as open student study use.
- Completely renew and/or replace mechanical and electrical building systems. Replace sprinkler system. System replacements are required both due to the advanced age of systems and the change of use/function of the building. As possible within the project budget, completely renew and/or replace plumbing systems, focusing on systems with high probability of failure.
- Make the campus and site improvements related to transformation and change of use of the facility. Site considerations include the following:
 - If art storage remains in the completed building, how to accommodate the loading as the remainder of the building changes use. This could require a new loading area be added. Related: Potential decommissioning of the existing loading area.
 - Determine the use of, and improvements required for, the building's entry plaza and the former sculpture garden (to the West and South of the building).
 - Provide and/or maintain site pathways to, from, and between the Forum Building and the repurposed Palmer to allow for full movement of CHEM-PHYS teaching prep carts.



Photo above: Former sculpture garden

PROJECT SCHEDULE

PSU will execute the Architect-Engineer contract shortly after the completion of the A/E selection process in March 2024. The programming phase will begin immediately and is anticipated to take 3-4 months. The design/documentation phases will follow, taking roughly 12 total months. Final plan approval, bidding and construction phases follow and will take 18 to 20 months. More information on the project schedule is expected to be shared as a part of the Request for Proposal (RFP) for this project.

PROJECT DELIVERY METHOD

The selected A/E Team will begin the project by finalizing the project objectives and authoring a final program, in conjunction with Penn State. This will include confirmation of the required spaces, sizes (including required classroom seat counts), and room-specific requirements. An initial program document titled “*Palmer Arts Backfill Program*” was created internally by PSU as an initial roadmap for the project. The initial program includes project and existing building conditions, space considerations, and site considerations. Excerpts from that document were used in the creation of this Request for Letters of Interest document. PSU will share the “*Palmer Arts Backfill Program*” at the Request for Proposal (RFP) stage. Additionally, as a part of the initial program, several ‘test fit’ floor plans were created in order to begin to establish the ideal classroom and room sizes that this renovation can accommodate. The existing floor plans and these ‘test fit’ floor plans are shared as a part of this initial phase of the A/E Selection process.

In parallel to establishing the program, the design team will be aligning scope to the project budget. After the programming phase, the project will follow the standard design phases – SD, DD, CD and CA Phases in accordance with Penn State’s standard 1-P agreement.

The successful A/E Team will work in conjunction with PSU’s selected third-party Construction Manager throughout the design and construction phases. There is the potential for the project to include PA Department of General Services (DGS) funding, therefore the project construction may be delivered with multiple prime contracting. If DGS funding is utilized on the project, PSU will still manage the design/construction process in a manner similar to non-DGS funded PSU projects.

[The Owner’s “Form of Agreement 1-P”](#) will be used for this project. The prime firm (contract holder) of the awarded A/E Team will sign the 1-P Form of Agreement found at the following link. By submitting a letter of interest, firms pledge to agree to the Agreement’s terms and conditions without exception or modification.

ARCHITECTURE/ENGINEERING (A/E) TEAM SELECTION PROCESS AND SCHEDULE

The University will perform a three-step A/E Team selection process for this project with three assessments: Letters of Interest (LOI), Request for Proposals (RFP), and In-Person Interviews. Each assessment will be separate and distinct. The result selects the full A/E design team, including the architectural team, engineering team, and specialty consultants. Firms may decide the makeup of the full or partial team at this initial LOI phase. However, the next step will require the long-list of teams to identify the entire design team, including all consultants.

A/E Team Selection Schedule:

- Letters of Interest are due from lead firms by Noon, Eastern Standard Time (EST), **January 8, 2024**.
- The Screening Committee will review the received Letters of Interest and determine the long-list of firms that will continue to the next step in the A/E Selection process.
- The Long-listed firms will be invited to respond to a Request for Proposal, which will be posted to the OPP Procurement website by the end-of-day **January 22, 2024**.
- Proposals from the long-listed teams are due at Noon, Eastern Standard Time (EST), **February 13, 2024**.

- The Screening Committee will choose three firms from the RFP respondents. The short-list results and interview notice will be posted on the OPP website by the end-of-day, **March 1, 2024**.
- On **March 22, 2024**, in-person interviews will occur at The Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center in State College, PA. This date will not change, so please plan accordingly.
- The A/E Team selection process results will be posted on the OPP website in **April 2024**. We plan to start immediately after contract negotiation to align with the project schedule.

LETTER OF INTEREST SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

If your firm/team is interested in pursuing this project, please submit a Letter of Interest that, at the least, includes the following:

1. A brief statement detailing the firm/team's profile (size, characteristics, unique qualifications, etc.) and interest in this project. There is no requirement to identify the entire A/E team at this initial stage of the process. You can note any engineering and/or specialty consultants to the extent that is helpful to your submission. Firms that wish to include an architectural partner at this stage of the process should describe their partners anticipated role on the project.
2. Outline the firm/team's experience in the planning/design/execution of facilities of similar higher education programs, scope, size, and complexity. Highlight your design and technical experience doing renovations and adaptive re-use of existing buildings. Discuss your experience performing facade and building enclosure improvements of existing buildings, ideally for projects with similar environmental conditions (art, art storage, classrooms). Highlight your experience programming/designing/delivering projects made up of the space types that make up this renovation, including:
 - a. Large general purpose classrooms. Our project will have multiple types and sizes, including some classrooms with front-of-house demonstration and/or chemistry-physics (CHEM-PHYS) prep spaces.
 - b. Art storage. Indicate experience/understanding delivering the required environmental conditions for art storage, inclusive of temperature, humidity, and vapor drive between art storage and adjacent spaces (and the exterior).
 - c. Open student study space or informal learning.
 - d. Specialized classrooms and/or art studio (art creation) spaces for the college of Arts and Architecture.
3. Include images (captions encouraged) and brief narratives of the firm/team's most relevant design experience related to this particular project. Highlight projects with renovation/transformation/adaptive re-use of historic and/or iconic existing buildings.
4. Narrate the firm/team's vision of what, beyond purely functional issues, constitutes the essence of this type of facility. Then, discuss some of the uniqueness and critically important issues specific to this project.

***Note: As applicable throughout the Letter of Interest, provide professional credit to architectural partners (including design architect, architect of record, and academic planning partners) for all projects discussed within the proposal and for all project images shown.**

Submit a PDF version of the Letter of Interest by Noon, Eastern Standard Time (EST), **January 8, 2024**. Limit the submission to five (5) total letter-size pages, single-sided. A cover letter, if included, must be within the five (5) total pages. Send a PDF of the submission electronically to gak21@psu.edu and cws4@psu.edu by the submission deadline. Include the team's primary contact name and email address for duration of the A/E selection process. No hardcopies of your submission are requested nor required.

DISCLAIMERS, CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-DISCLOSURE

PSU encourages A/E teams to visit the site during this selection process. Guided site/building tours are not provided at this step in the A/E Selection process, but will be scheduled later with the long-listed or short-listed teams.

Participation in this A/E Team selection process is voluntary and at no cost or obligation to PSU. PSU reserves the right to waive any informality in any submissions and reject any submission or portion thereof. PSU reserves the right to modify dates as it deems necessary.

A/E Teams may not make news releases about this project without prior approval from PSU and then only in coordination with PSU. In addition, all information, documents, and correspondence shared within the A/E selection process are to remain confidential and, as such, are not to be made public in any manner.

Penn State appreciates your interest in this project. Please contact myself or the Facility Project Manager, Chad Spackman, (cws4@psu.edu or 814-865-9454) with any questions regarding this A/E Selection.

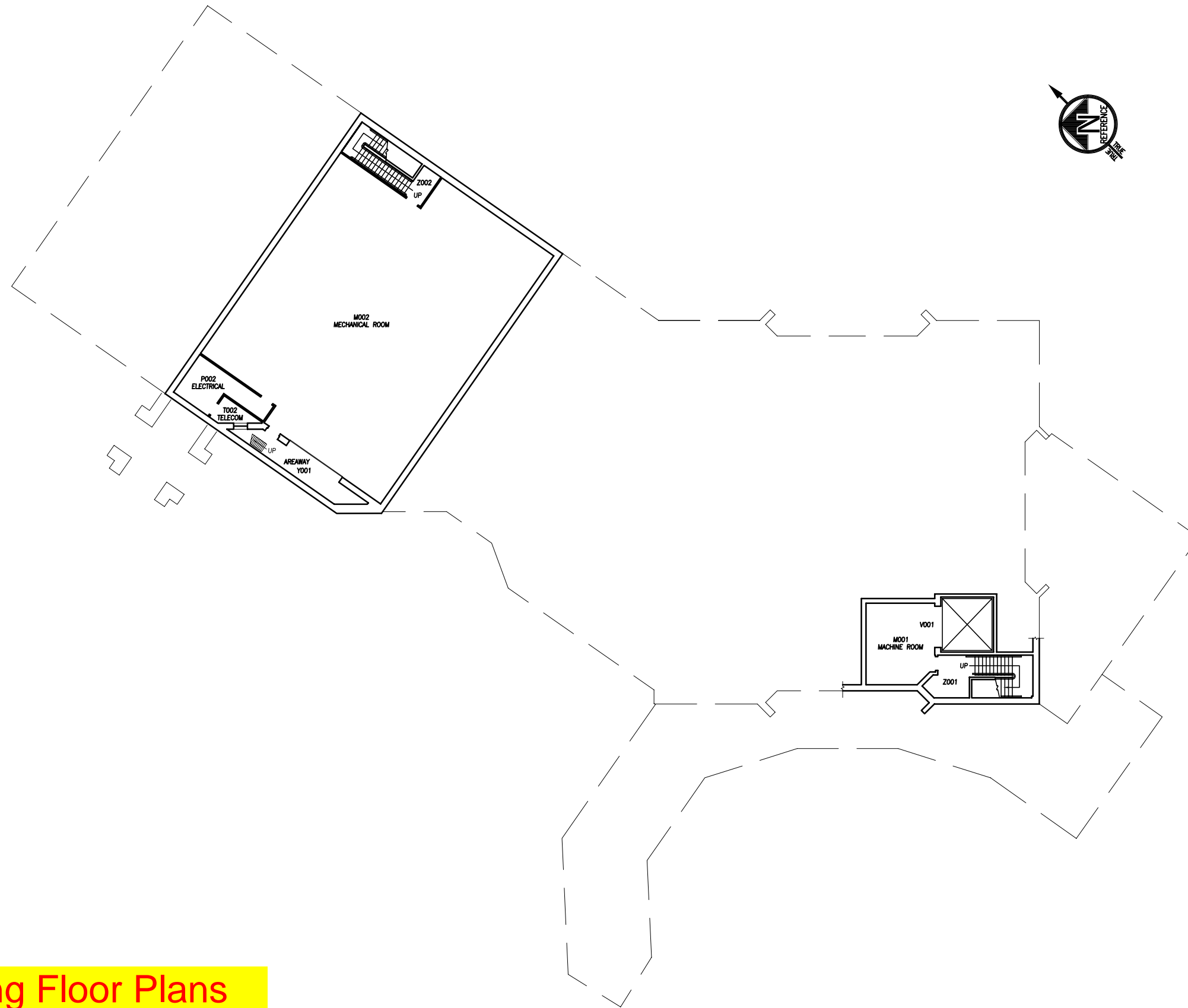
Kindest Regards,



Greg Kufner, AIA, NCARB
University Architect
The Pennsylvania State University
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Email: gak21@psu.edu

Chad Spackman, Facilities Project Manager
Direct: (814) 865-9454 | Mobile: (814) 826-8460
Email cws4@psu.edu

cc: Palmer Repurposing - Screening Committee



Existing Floor Plans

PALMER MUSEUM OF ART

PSU BUILDING NAME

BASEMENT PLAN

BUILDING FLOOR LEVEL

UNIVERSITY PARK CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY PARK, PA

PSU CAMPUS LOCATION

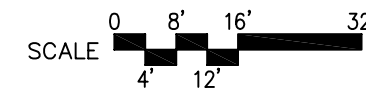
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06/23/92
CREATION DATE

11/22/11
REVISED DATE

Campus block plans are for referential use only. Drawings are not to be used for architectural or engineering purposes.

0755-000

BUILDING NUMBER

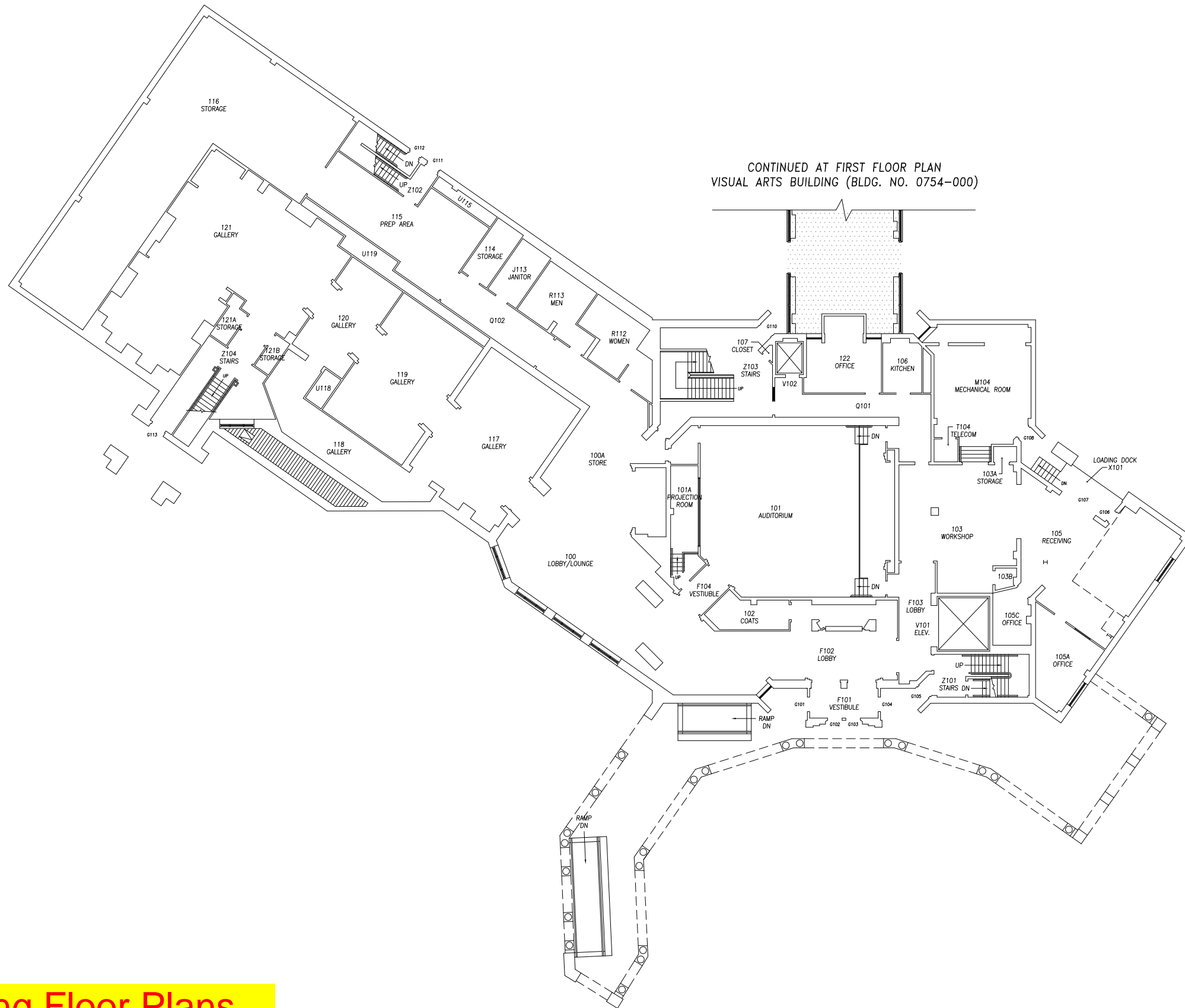
1 OF 6
SHEET NUMBER

BS

FLOOR LEVEL



CONTINUED AT FIRST FLOOR PLAN
VISUAL ARTS BUILDING (BLDG. NO. 0754-000)



Existing Floor Plans

PALMER MUSEUM OF ART

PSU BUILDING NAME

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

BUILDING FLOOR LEVEL

UNIVERSITY PARK CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY PARK, PA

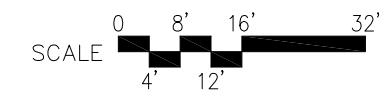
PSU CAMPUS LOCATION



PennState

Physical Plant

PLANNING | DESIGN | PROPERTIES



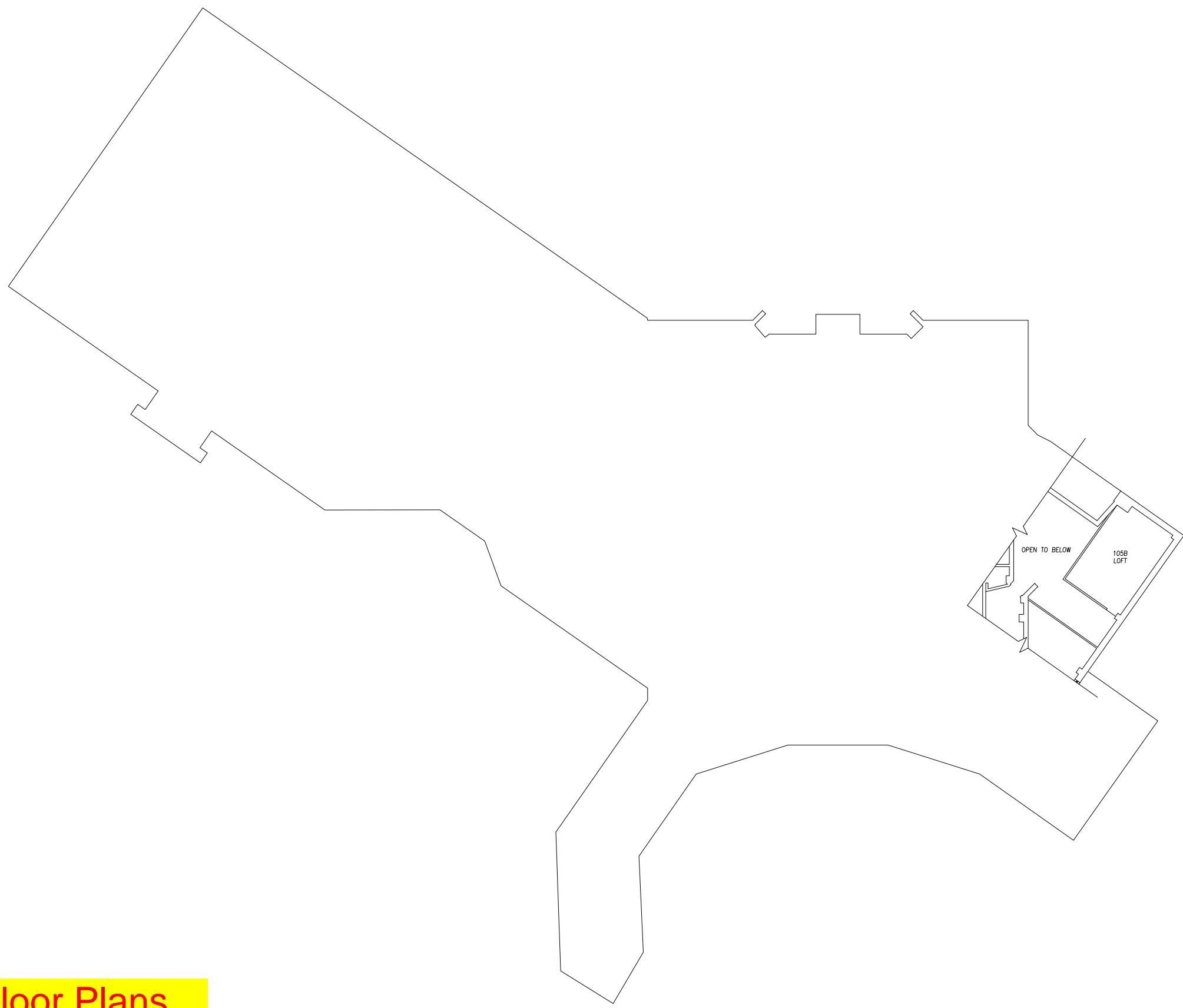
6/23/92 CREATION DATE 12/13/18 REVISED DATE

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2 OF 6 SHEET NUMBER

1 FLOOR LEVEL



Existing Floor Plans

PALMER MUSEUM OF ART
PSU BUILDING NAME

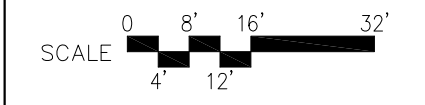
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BUILDING FLOOR LEVEL

UNIVERSITY PARK CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY PARK, PA
PSU CAMPUS LOCATION



PennState
Physical Plant

PLANNING | DESIGN | PROPERTIES



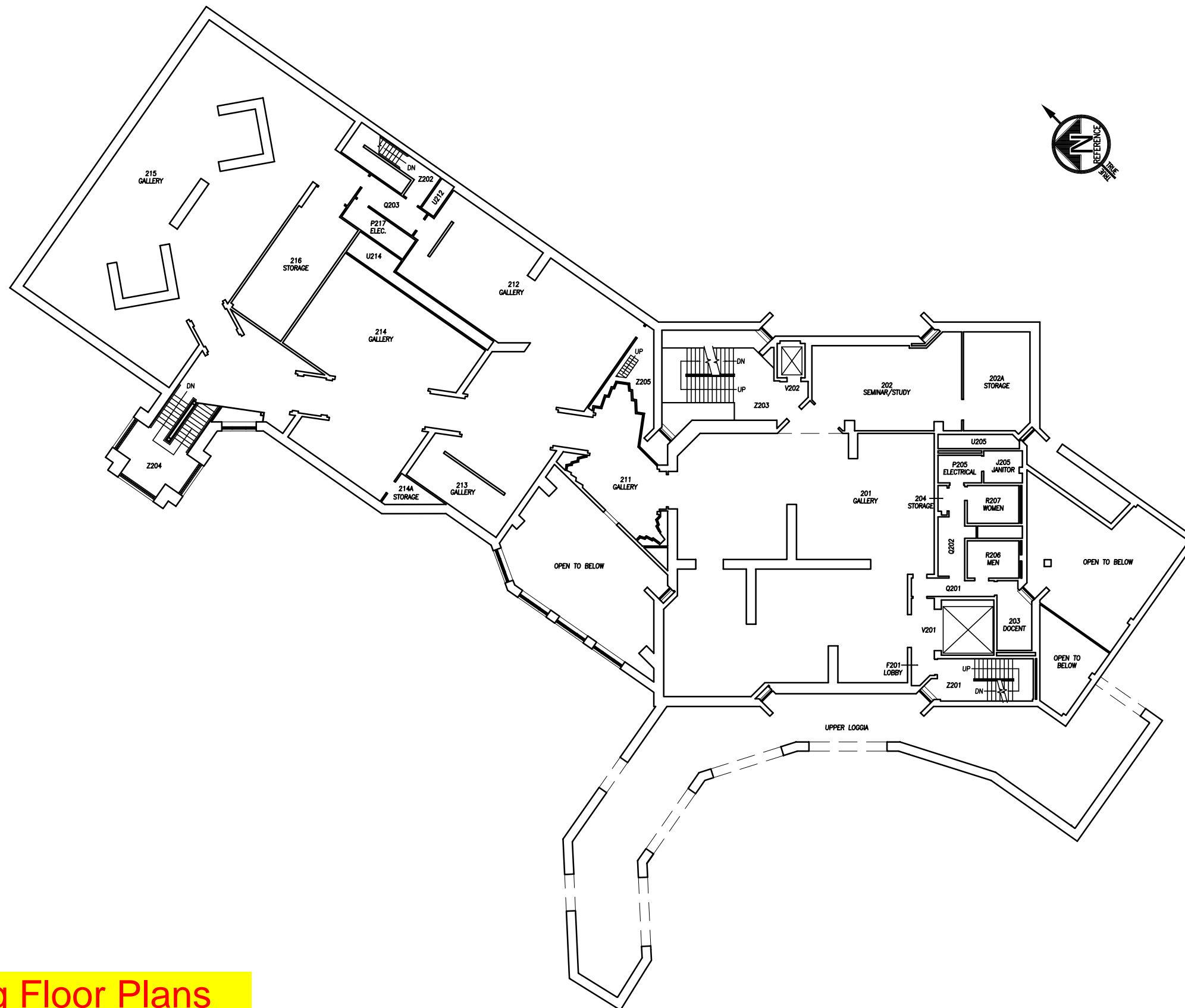
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CREATION DATE REVISED DATE

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BUILDING NUMBER

3 OF 6
SHEET NUMBER

LF
FLOOR LEVEL



Existing Floor Plans

PALMER MUSEUM OF ART

PSU BUILDING NAME

SECOND FLOOR PLAN

BUILDING FLOOR LEVEL

UNIVERSITY PARK CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY PARK, PA

PSU CAMPUS LOCATION

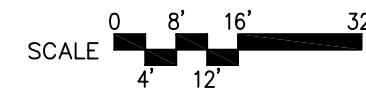
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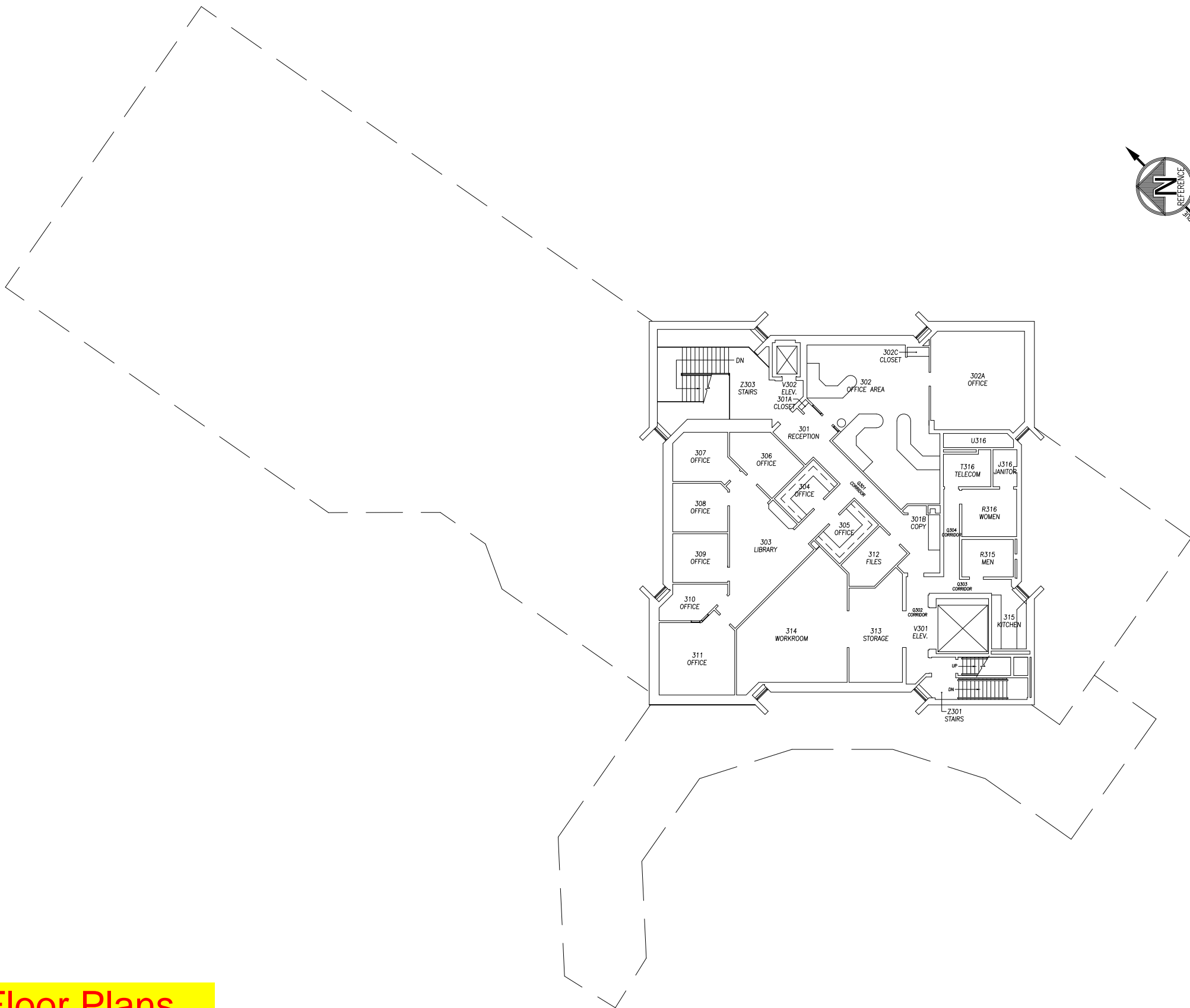
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BUILDING NUMBER

4 OF 6
SHEET NUMBER

2

FLOOR LEVEL



Existing Floor Plans

PALMER MUSEUM OF ART

PSU BUILDING NAME

THIRD FLOOR PLAN

BUILDING FLOOR LEVEL

UNIVERSITY PARK CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY PARK, PA

PSU CAMPUS LOCATION



PennState

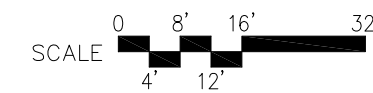
Physical Plant

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CREATION DATE

09/08/17
REVISED DATE

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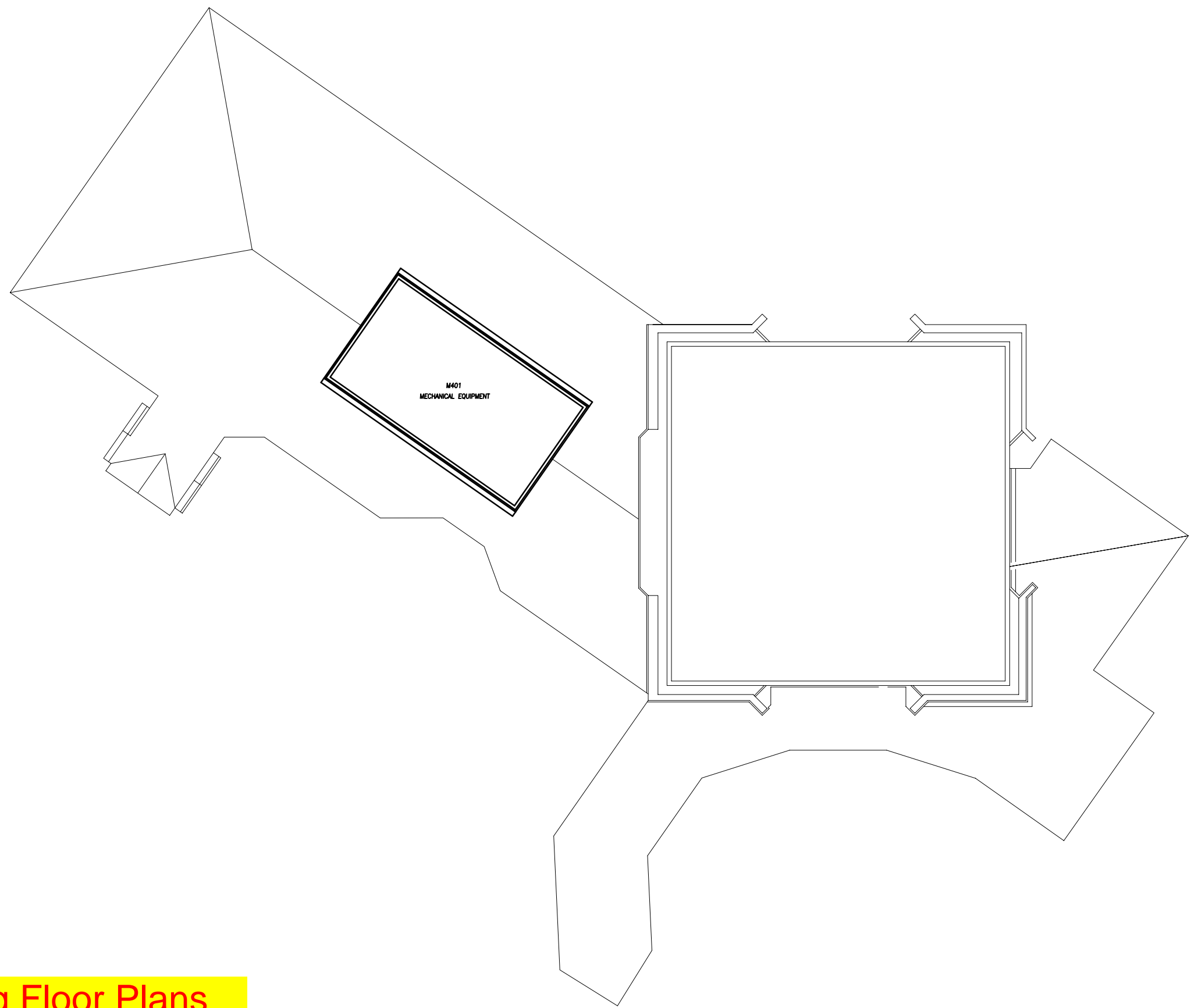
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BUILDING NUMBER

5 OF 6
SHEET NUMBER

3

FLOOR LEVEL



Existing Floor Plans

PALMER MUSEUM

PSU BUILDING NAME

ROOF PLAN

BUILDING FLOOR LEVEL

UNIVERSITY PARK CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY PARK, PA

PSU CAMPUS LOCATION

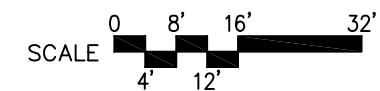
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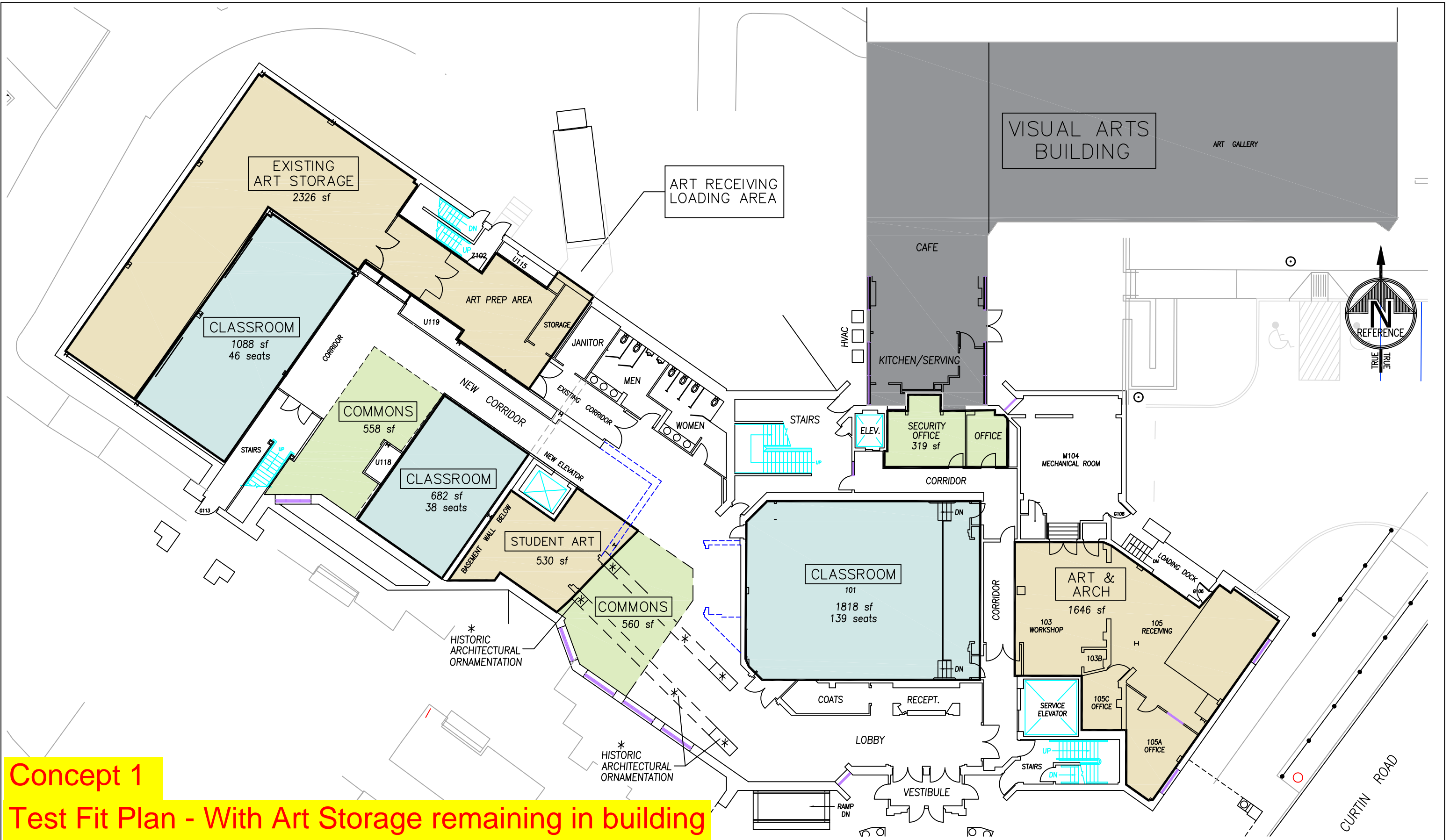
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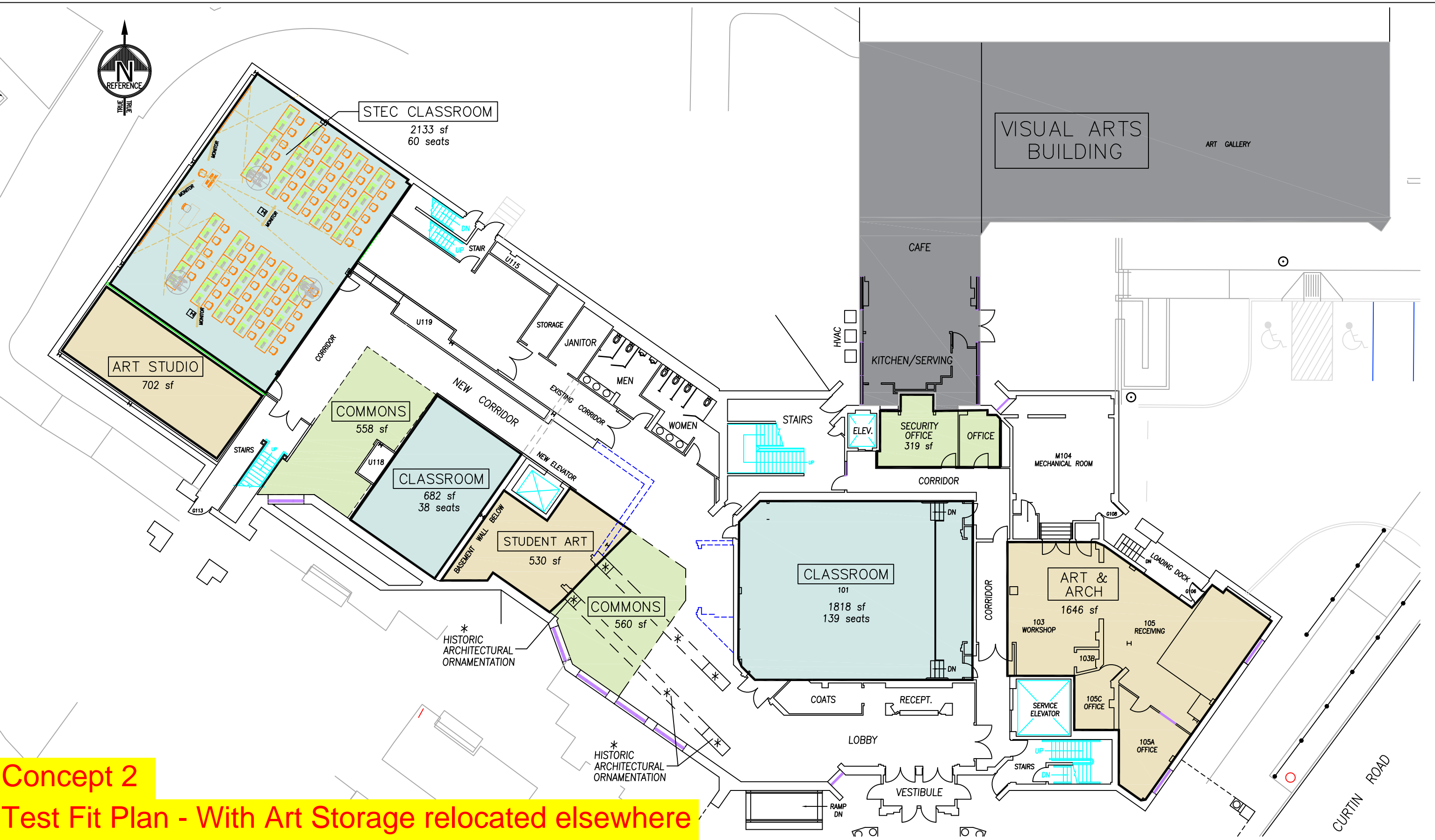
6 OF 6
SHEET NUMBER

RF
FLOOR LEVEL



Concept 1
Test Fit Plan - With Art Storage remaining in building

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Concept 2
Test Fit Plan - With Art Storage relocated elsewhere

PALMER BUILDING - Backfill Program

PSU BUILDING NAME
FIRST FLOOR PLAN
BUILDING FLOOR LEVEL
UNIVERSITY PARK CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY PARK, PA
PSU CAMPUS LOCATION



PennState
Physical Plant

PLANNING | DESIGN | PROPERTIES

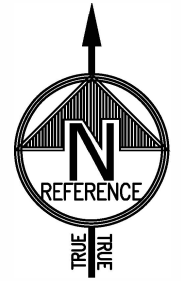
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0755-000
BUILDING NUMBER

1 OF 3
SHEET NUMBER

1
FLOOR LEVEL



260 - SEAT
CLASSROOM LAB
2732 sf

60-SEAT
CLASSROOM LAB
1055 sf

COMMONS
352 sf

CHEM PREP
760 sf

A&A
514 sf

ART STUDIO.
915 sf

CLASSROOM
1226 sf
110-120 seats

ART STUDIO.
932 sf

Concept 2
Test Fit Plan - With Art Storage relocated elsewhere

PALMER BUILDING - Backfill Program

PSU BUILDING NAME
SECOND FLOOR PLAN
BUILDING FLOOR LEVEL
UNIVERSITY PARK CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY PARK, PA
PSU CAMPUS LOCATION



PennState
Physical Plant

PLANNING | DESIGN | PROPERTIES

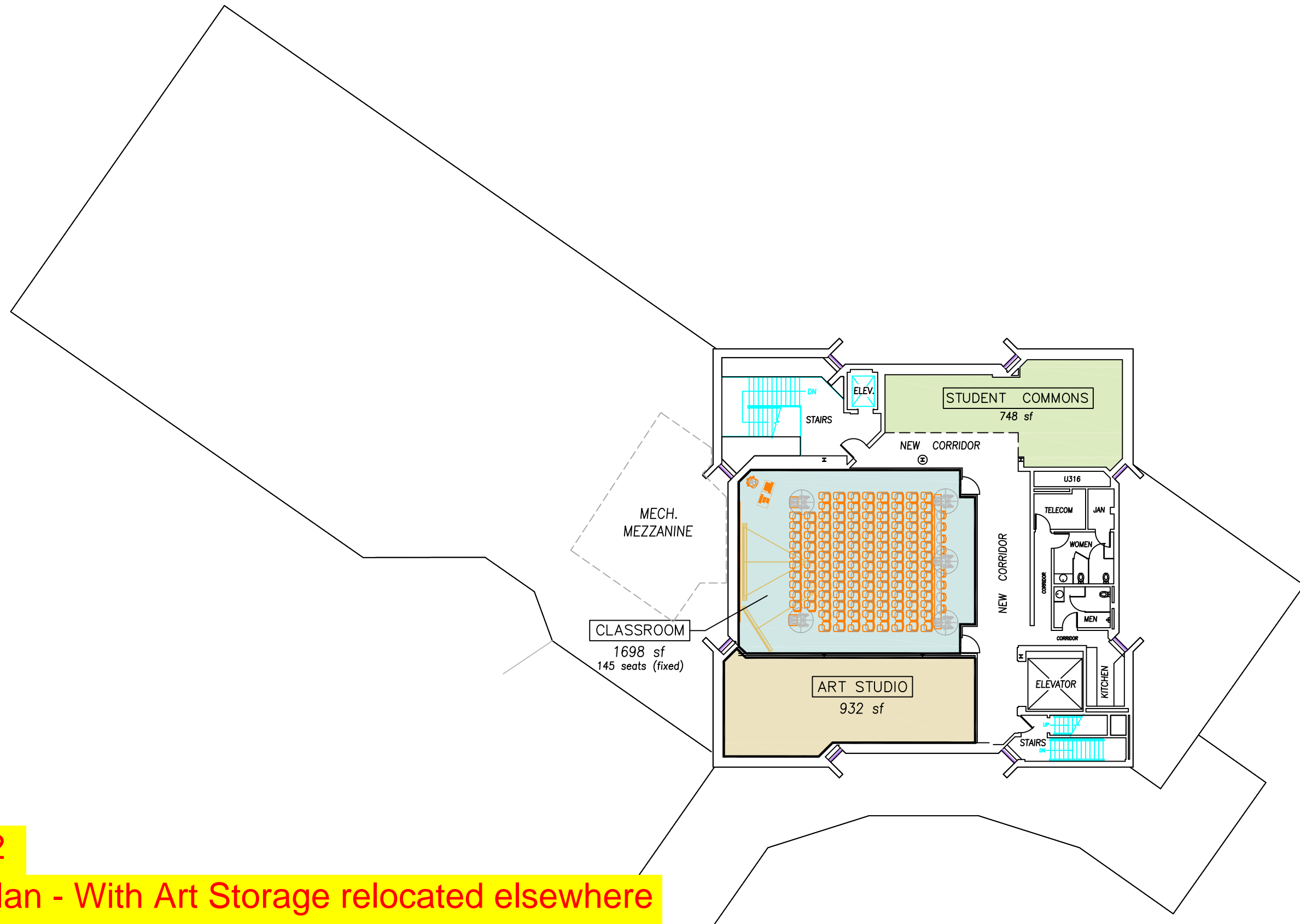
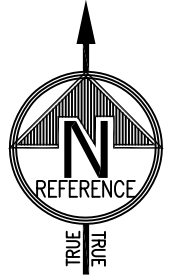
06/01/23
CREATOR DATE
8/7/23
REVISED DATE

0755-000
BUILDING NUMBER
2 of 3
SHEET NUMBER
2
FLOOR LEVEL

0755-000
BUILDING NUMBER
2 of 3
SHEET NUMBER
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FLOOR LEVEL

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BUILDING NUMBER
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BUILDING NUMBER
2 of 3
SHEET NUMBER
2
FLOOR LEVEL



Concept 2

Test Fit Plan - With Art Storage relocated elsewhere

PALMER BUILDING - Backfill Program

PSU BUILDING NAME
THIRD FLOOR PLAN
BUILDING FLOOR LEVEL
UNIVERSITY PARK CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY PARK, PA
PSU CAMPUS LOCATION



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PLANNING | DESIGN | PROPERTIES

6/1/2023
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3
FLOOR LEVEL