

# Report Evaluating Proposed Minnewawa-International Elementary School Site Conformity with State Site Selection Standards

February 14, 2019

## **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The proposed elementary school site is located southeast of the intersection of N. Minnewawa and E. International Avenues and is approximately 22.7 gross acres in size (approximately 18 net acres). The County of Fresno Assessor's Office identifies the site to include Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 580-080-16S (19.68 acres) and a portion (approx. 3 acres) of APN 580-080-02S (19.7 acres). The site is currently vacant and is within the City of Clovis Sphere of Influence and planned Heritage Grove Urban Center area.

## **SCHOOL SITE SELECTION STANDARDS EVALUATION (EDUCATION CODE 17211)**

### **General**

California Education Code Section 17211 requires that prior to commencing acquisition of real property for a new school site or an addition to an existing school site, the Board shall evaluate the site at a public hearing using site selection standards established by the State Department of Education. The Department of Education's site selection standards are in Title 5, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 1 of Division 13, School Facilities Construction. These standards are presented below, together with evaluation of whether the site complies with the standards.

### **State Site Selection Standards**

#### ***Acreage and Enrollment (Section 14010 (a))***

Standard: The net usable acreage and enrollment for a new school site shall be consistent with the numbers of acres and enrollment established in the 2000 Edition, "School Site Analysis and Development," published by the California Department of Education and incorporated into this section by reference, in toto, unless sufficient land is not available or circumstances exist due to any of the following:

- (1) Urban or suburban development results in insufficient available land even after considering the option of eminent domain.
- (2) Sufficient acreage is available but it would not be economically feasible to mitigate geological or environmental hazards or other site complications, which pose a threat to the health and/or safety of students and staff.
- (3) Sufficient acreage is available but not within the attendance area of the unhoused students or there is an extreme density of population within a given attendance area requiring a school to serve more students on a single site. Choosing an alternate site would result in extensive long-term bussing of students that would cause extreme financial hardship to the district to transport students to the proposed school site.
- (4) Geographic barriers, traffic congestion, or other constraints would cause extreme financial hardship for the district to transport students to the proposed school site.

*(Section 14010 (b))* If a school site is less than the recommended acreage required in subsection (a) of this section, the district shall demonstrate how the students will be provided

an adequate educational program including physical education as described in the district's adopted course of study.

**Evaluation:** Based upon the 2000 edition of "School Site Analysis and Development" published by the California Department of Education, the recommended acreage for an elementary school site that would accommodate an enrollment of 750 students, is approximately 14 net usable acres. Since the proposed site, at approximately 18 net acres, would not be less than the recommended acreage, the site complies with this standard.

***Power Lines (Section 14010 (c))***

**Standard:** The property line of the site, even if it is a joint use agreement as described in subsection (o) of this section, shall be at least the following distance from the edge of respective power line easements:

- (1) 100 feet for 50-133 kV line.
- (2) 150 feet for 220-230 kV line.
- (3) 350 feet for 500-550 kV line.

**Evaluation:** The report prepared for the site entitled *Geologic and Environmental Hazards Review (Title V) for a New Elementary School Site, North Minnewawa Avenue and East International Avenue, Clovis, Fresno County, California* (June 2018) (hereinafter referred to as "Geologic and Environmental Hazards Evaluation") indicates the site is not within the specified distances from a high voltage power line easement. Therefore, the site complies with this standard.

***Railroad Tracks (Section 14010 (d))***

**Standard:** If the proposed site is within 1,500 feet of a railroad track easement, a safety study shall be done by a competent professional trained in assessing cargo manifests, frequency, speed, and schedule of railroad traffic, grade, curves, type and condition of track need for sound or safety barriers, need for pedestrian and vehicle safeguards at railroad crossings, presence of high pressure gas lines near the tracks that could rupture in the event of a derailment, and preparation of an evacuation plan. In addition to the analysis, possible and reasonable mitigation measures must be identified.

**Evaluation:** The site complies with this standard. Based on the Geologic and Environmental Hazards Evaluation, the site is not within 1,500 feet of a railroad track easement.

***Road and Freeway Safety and Noise (Section 14010 (e))***

**Standard:** The site shall not be adjacent to a road or freeway that any site-related traffic and sound level studies have determined will have safety problems or sound levels which adversely affect the educational program.

**Evaluation:** Based on the CEQA Initial Study for the project, the site complies with this standard.

***Earthquake Faults (Section 14010 (f))***

**Standard:** Pursuant to Education Code sections 17212 and 17212.5, the site shall not contain an active earthquake fault or fault trace.

**Evaluation:** The site complies with this standard. Based on the Geologic and Environmental Hazards Evaluation, the site does not contain an active earthquake fault or fault trace and is not located within an earthquake fault zone.

***Flooding (Section 14010 (g))***

**Standard:** Pursuant to Education Code sections 17212 and 17212.5, the site is not within an area of flood or dam flood inundation unless the cost of mitigating the flood or inundation impact is reasonable.

**Evaluation:** According to the Geologic and Environmental Hazards Evaluation, the project site is within Zone X of the applicable Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map, which is defined as areas of 0.2% (500-yr) annual chance flood. The project site is also located within the estimated boundary of inundation for the Big Dry Creek Dam, located approximately 2.3 miles southeast of the site. In the unlikely event of dam failure, flood waters would reach the site in less than 1 hour. Based on information provided by the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District (FMFCD), improvements to mitigate seepage issues were performed on the dam and completed in February 2014. These improvements are expected to maintain the integrity of the dam. Additionally, the dam is consistently monitored by FMFCD staff, and if dam integrity issues are identified mitigation steps would be taken. Along with FMFCD, DWR - Department of Safety of Dams and the US Army Corps of Engineers perform occasional inspections to ensure dam integrity. The Clovis General Plan Draft PEIR discusses risks related to dam inundation within the Plan Area (which includes the project site). Regarding the risk of dam inundation at Big Dry Creek Reservoir, the Draft PEIR notes the reservoir has only ever reached half of its full capacity (30,000 acre-feet) due to seepage concerns and lack of inflow. The Draft PEIR determined that potential dam inundation impacts in the Plan Area would be less than significant given compliance with City requirements for flood risk reduction in General Plan Update Environmental Safety Element Policy 1.1. The District Administration is not aware of any information or factors that would indicate an unreasonable mitigation cost. Therefore, the site complies with this standard.

***Above-Ground Storage Tanks and Pipelines (Section 14010 (h))***

**Standard:** The site shall not be located near an above-ground water or fuel storage tank or within 1,500 feet of the easement of an above-ground or underground pipeline that can pose a safety hazard as determined by a risk analysis study, conducted by a competent professional, which may include certification from a local public utility commission.

**Evaluation:** Based on the Geologic and Environmental Hazards Evaluation, the site is not within 1,500 feet of any high-pressure natural gas pipelines, and no aboveground water and/or fuel storage tanks were observed on or adjacent to the site during the course of Padre's site reconnaissance conducted on May 30, 2018.

High-volume water pipelines are located within 1,500 feet of the project site: two operated by Fresno Irrigation District (FID), two operated by the Garfield Water District (GWD) and one privately owned irrigation pipeline. Therefore, a High-Volume Water Pipeline Risk Analysis was prepared by J. House Environmental, Inc. to evaluate the risk posed by these pipelines. Based on location and topography, the Pipeline Risk Analysis determined that the two FID pipelines and the private pipeline would not pose a risk to the school site, and therefore were not further analyzed in the report. The two GWD pipelines were analyzed in greater detail and the Pipeline Risk Analysis concluded that these pipelines would not pose a significant risk due to the low likelihood of pipeline failure and the depth of water (not expected to exceed 0.5 to 1.0 feet) in the unlikely event of failure.

Based on the above, the site complies with this standard.

***Liquefaction and Landslides (Section 14010 (i))***

Standard: The site is not subject to moderate to high liquefaction or landslides.

Evaluation: The site complies with this standard. According to the Geologic and Environmental Hazards Evaluation, the potential for liquefaction is considered low based estimated depths to high groundwater (>50 feet) and the potential for landslides or the failure of natural slopes to affect the project site is considered very low.

***Site Shape (Section 14010 (j))***

Standard: The shape of the site shall have a proportionate length to width ratio to accommodate the building layout, parking and playfields that can be safely supervised and does not exceed the allowed passing time to classes for the district.

Evaluation: The site complies with this standard. The length to width ratio of the site will accommodate building layouts, parking, and playfields that can be safely supervised and that do not exceed the allowed passing time to classes for the District.

***Road Access (Section 14010 (k))***

Standard: The site shall be easily accessible from arterial roads and shall allow minimum peripheral visibility from the planned driveways in accordance with the Sight Distance Standards established in the “Highway Design Manual,” Table 201.1, published by the Department of Transportation, July 1, 1990 edition, and incorporated into this section by reference, in toto.

Evaluation: The site complies with this standard. The site will be developed with substantial frontage on streets designated as collector roads (Minnewawa and International Avenues) that connect to arterial streets to allow for easy accessibility. Future site design will take into account the minimum peripheral visibility standards from the planned driveway in accordance with the Sight Distance Standards established in the “Highway Design Manual”.

***Student Road Crossing Safety (Section 14010 (l))***

Standard: The site shall not be on major arterial streets with a heavy traffic pattern as determined by site-related traffic studies, including those that require student crossings unless mitigation of traffic hazards, and a plan for the safe arrival and departure of students appropriate to the grade level has been provided by the city, county or other public agency in accordance with the “School Area Pedestrian Safety” manual published by the California Department of Transportation, 1987 edition, incorporated into this section by reference, in toto.

Evaluation: The site complies with this standard. Minnewawa and International Avenues are designated and will be developed as collector streets. The planned circulation in the site’s vicinity emphasizes multimodal transportation and includes bike lanes, pedestrian paths and trails. No major arterial streets with a heavy traffic pattern are adjacent to the site, nor is the crossing of major arterial streets by students anticipated to be necessary to access the school.

***Zoning Compatibility (Section 14010 (m))***

Standard: Existing or proposed zoning of the surrounding properties shall be compatible with schools in that it would not pose a potential health or safety risk to students or staff in accordance with Education Code section 17213 and Government Code section 65402 and available studies of traffic surrounding the site.

Evaluation: The site complies with this standard. The site selection study and CEQA Initial Study reviewed surrounding zoning and general plan designations in relation to the site and determined that such designations would not pose a potential health or safety risk to students or staff.

***Attendance Area Walking Distance (Section 14010 (n))***

Standard: The site shall be located within the proposed attendance area to encourage student walking and avoid extensive bussing unless bussing is used to promote ethnic diversity.

Evaluation: The site complies with this standard. The site is appropriately located within its ultimate attendance area based on the site selection study.

***Joint Use of Public Facilities (Section 14010 (o))***

Standard: The site shall be selected to promote joint use of parks, libraries, museums, and other public services, the acreage of which may be included as part of the recommended acreage as stated in subsection (a) of this section.

Evaluation: The site complies with this standard because it will be available for after-school community recreation use.

***Convenient Public Services (Section 14010 (p))***

Standard: The site shall be conveniently located for public services including but not limited to, fire protection, police protection, public transit, and trash disposal, whenever feasible.

Evaluation: The site complies with this standard. The provision of public services to the project site and surrounding properties is planned by the City of Clovis due to the site being located within the City's planned Heritage Grove Urban Center.

***Environmental Factors (Section 14010 (q))***

Standard: The district shall consider environmental factors of light, wind, noise, aesthetics, and air pollution in its site selection process.

Evaluation: The site complies with this standard. Based on the site selection study and CEQA Initial Study, there do not appear to be any environmental factors that would negatively affect the use of the site for a school.

***Easements (Section 14010 (r))***

Standard: Easements on or adjacent to the site shall not restrict access or building placement.

Evaluation: The site complies with this standard. The District Administration is not aware of any easements will restrict access points or building locations.

***Costs and Complications (Section 14010 (s))***

Standard: The cost and complications of the following shall be considered in the site selection process and should not result in undue delays or unreasonable costs consistent with State Allocation Board standards:

- (1) Distance of utilities to the site, availability, and affordability of bringing utilities to the site.
- (2) Site preparation including grading, drainage, demolition, hazardous cleanup, including cleanup of indigenous material such as serpentine rock, and off-site development of streets, curbs, gutters and lights.
- (3) Eminent domain, relocation costs, severance damage, title clearance, and legal fees.
- (4) Long-term high landscaping or maintenance costs.

- (5) Existence of any wildlife habitat that is on a protected or endangered species list maintained by any state or federal agency, existence of any wetlands, natural waterways, or areas that may support migratory species, or evidence of any environmentally sensitive vegetation.

Evaluation: The site complies with this standard for the following reasons:

- (1) Based the site selection study and the fact that the project site is within the City of Clovis' planned Heritage Grove Urban Center area, there are no anticipated issues related to the availability and affordability of bringing utilities to the site.
- (2) Based upon the CEQA Initial Study, the Geologic and Environmental Hazards Evaluation and the District Administration's knowledge of the project site, no undue delays or unreasonable costs are anticipated for site preparation including grading, drainage, demolition, hazardous cleanup, including cleanup of indigenous material such as serpentine rock, and off-site development of streets, curbs, gutters and lights.
- (3) The District Administration does not anticipate any undue delays or unreasonable costs associated with eminent domain, relocation costs, severance damage, title clearance, and legal fees.
- (4) Based on the CEQA Initial Study and Geologic and Environmental Hazards Evaluation, no on-site soils or other conditions are evident which would cause long-term high landscaping or maintenance costs.
- (5) Based on the CEQA Initial Study, there does not appear to be any evidence of wetlands or natural waterways on the project site, nor does the site contain protected or endangered species or environmentally sensitive wildlife habitat or vegetation.

***Hazardous Waste Disposal (Section 14010 (t))***

Standard: If the proposed site is on or within 2,000 feet of a significant disposal of hazardous waste, the school district shall contact the Department of Toxic Substance Control for a determination of whether the property should be considered Hazardous Waste Property or Border Zone Property.

Evaluation: The project site complies with this standard. As stated in the Geologic and Environmental Hazards Evaluation, "according to the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) website, the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) GeoTracker website, and California DTSC EnviroStor website, there are no solid waste facilities/landfill facilities (SWF/LF) and/or hazardous waste transportation, storage, or disposal facilities located within a one-mile radius of the Project Site."