



SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS

EUGENE BRUCKER EDUCATION CENTER ♦ 4100 Normal Street, San Diego, CA 92103-2682 ♦

Office of the Superintendent

Executive Summary Board Date: June 12, 2001

SUBJECT: Certification of Environmental Impact Report and Selection of Site for the Acquisition and Construction of the Proposed Central Area Elementary School.	X	OPEN/ACTION
		INFORMATION
		CONSENT

Recommendation(s):

The superintendent recommends that the Board of Education:

1. Conduct a Public Hearing to evaluate the proposed Central Area Elementary School Preferred Site using site selection standards established by the State Department of Education.
2. Adopt a resolution, which finds that the property for the Central Area Elementary School Preferred Site meets the standards for school site selection pursuant to Education Code Section 17251(b) and Section 14010 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. (Attachment P).
3. Certify that: (1) the Final EIR has been prepared in compliance with CEQA; (2) the Final EIR was presented to the Board of Education which reviewed and considered the information contained in the Final EIR prior to approving the project; and (3) the Final EIR reflects the district's independent judgment and analysis.
4. Adopt the Candidate Findings set forth in Attachment G for each significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR for the Central Area Elementary School Preferred Site.
5. Adopt the Statement of Overriding Considerations set forth in Attachment H for each significant environmental effect found to be unavoidable in the Final EIR for the Central Area Elementary School Preferred Site.
6. Adopt the Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program set forth in Attachment I for the Central Area Elementary School Preferred Site in order to ensure that the mitigation measures and project revisions identified in the Final EIR are implemented.
7. Authorize that the project be carried-out as defined in the Final EIR for the Central Area Elementary School (SCH 1999091102).
8. Certify that the Central Area Elementary School project will have a de minimis effect on fish and wildlife pursuant to Section 711.4 of the of the Fish and Game Code (Attachment Q).
9. Authorize staff to file the Notice of Determination with the Recorder/County Clerk of San Diego County, California (Attachment R).

10. Certify that there are no available alternative school district-owned sites for the project deemed usable for school purposes by the California Department of Education.
11. Authorize staff to commence with the appraisal process, relocation plan, and other related procedures required to acquire properties for the Central Area Elementary School Preferred Site.

Summary of Previous Board of Education Discussion and Action:

None

Summary of Key Issue(s):

Prior to acquiring property for construction and operation of the proposed new Central Area Elementary School, the district must comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and other requirements imposed by California Education Codes, Code of Regulations, Government Codes and Public Resources Codes. The results of the investigations and subsequent findings are presented in this report for Board of Education consideration.

The new school is scheduled to be available for the 2005-2006 school year.

Fiscal Analysis:

Site acquisition and construction of the proposed Central Area Elementary School will be funded from Proposition MM general obligation bond sale proceeds at an estimated cost of \$28.8 million.

Chief Operating Officer

Chief of Staff

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS
Office of the Superintendent

CERTIFICATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
AND SELECTION OF SITE
**FOR THE ACQUISITION AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE
PROPOSED CENTRAL AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**
June 12, 2001

Introductory Statement

Prior to acquiring property for construction and operation of the proposed new Central Area Elementary School, there are numerous conditions that the district must satisfy. The district must comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), conduct various investigations, evaluate the property at a public hearing, and make certain findings pursuant to applicable California Education Codes, Government Codes, Public Resource Codes, and California Code of Regulations. The results of the investigations and subsequent findings are presented in this report for Board of Education consideration.

Background

On November 3, 1998, San Diego voters approved Proposition MM, which authorized the sale of up to \$1.51 billion in general obligation bonds to repair, renovate, upgrade and expand existing schools; and to acquire property and construct 13 new elementary schools including the proposed new Central Area Elementary School.

The proposed new Central Area Elementary School will provide enrollment relief to the existing Central Elementary School and allow students currently transported to overflow schools to attend a neighborhood school. The proposed school will be designed to serve 700 students but would be master planned to accommodate up to 900 students, and would facilitate district achievement of the standards contained in the Long-Range Facilities Master Plan (LRFMP). The proposed project is located in the City Heights Community of the Mid-City Communities Planning Area (see Attachments A and B).

Community Outreach/Involvement:

A community meeting was held at Monroe Clark Middle School on Saturday, March 13, 1999, which initiated the process for the five new schools targeted for the Mid-City area including the Central Area Elementary School. Notification of this meeting was mailed to all recognized area community planning groups, public agencies, and other interested parties that had participated in district planning and site selection activities in the past. Flyers noticing the meeting were also sent home with students attending area schools.

The March 13, 1999, meeting included a general informational session regarding the site selection process, and the criteria for evaluating and choosing elementary school sites. Meeting participants provided potential general location alternatives for each of the five new schools, based on their knowledge of the area and reference data which included locations of existing schools and maps depicting land use and student population density/distribution.

Following the March 13 meeting, a Site Selection Task Force was convened, consisting of individuals representing Central Elementary School, the City Heights Area Planning Committee, the city's Planning and Park and Recreation departments and the district's Facilities Development Department and Institute for Learning, and other interested parties. Based on the information collected from the March 13 meeting and site areas identified by district staff, the task force identified a Preferred Site, a potential expansion area for the Preferred Site, and four alternative sites for the new school. These sites were analyzed in the EIR and are referred to as the Preferred Site (with or without the expansion area) and alternative sites one through four respectively (see Attachment C).

Site Discussion

The Draft EIR for the proposed Central Area Elementary School was distributed for public review on July 17, 2000. Letters announcing the availability of the document were mailed to all residents and property owners within the study sites and a 300-foot buffer around each site. The 45-day public review period ended on August 30, 2000. Twenty-four (24) letters, containing approximately 130 comments, were received within the public review period from both public and private entities and area residents.

Although the EIR evaluated all five sites, including the potential expansion area, the analysis and comparisons presented in this report are limited to the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) and Alternative Site One. Alternative sites two, three and four were removed from further consideration by district staff for various reasons. The primary reason is that they are all located on the same side of SR-15 and/or University Avenue as the existing Central Elementary School, which would force large numbers of students to cross those arteries to attend school and return home. For alternatives three and four, an additional reason was the greater potential loss of housing units and attendant higher acquisition and relocation costs. Finally, the locations of alternative sites two, three and four do not offer the proximity to existing or planned park facilities as the Preferred Site and, to a lesser extent, Alternate Site One do.

The Preferred Site for the new school consists of 6.9 gross acres (1.5-city blocks), which includes the property bounded by Wightman Street on the north, Landis Street on the south, 38th Street on the west and the alley between 39th Street and 40th Street on the east. The boundary excludes a city-owned property (.25 acres) at the southwest corner of the site. In the event the district would deem it necessary to expand the Preferred Site, the district identified a 2.2 acre (.5-city blocks) expansion area immediately east of the site that is bounded by Wightman Street on the north, Landis Street on the south, the alley between 39th Street and 40th on the west, and 40th Street on the east. Alternative Site One encompasses 1.5 city blocks (7.4 gross acres) bounded by Wightman Street on the north, the alley between 37th Street and 38th Street on the east, Landis Street on the south and Cherokee Avenue on the west.

Existing land uses within the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) and Alternative Site One consist solely of residential uses. Specifically, the Preferred Site

includes 18 single-family and 113 multi-family for a total of 131 dwelling units; the Preferred Site (with expansion area) includes 21 single-family and 142 multi-family for a total of 163 dwelling units; and Alternative Site One includes 34 single-family and 52 multi-family for a total of 86 dwelling units. A comparison of major site characteristics applicable to the Preferred Site (with and without the expansion area), and Alternative Site One is provided on Attachment D.

The following sections of this report summarize the various research and analyses conducted by district staff.

A. State Requirements

A state-funded school district, before acquiring title to real property for school use, must obtain written approval from the California Department of Education using the following procedures pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 14011.

1. Consultation with School Facilities Planning Division (SFPD):

Title 5, 14011 (a) and (b) requires the district to consult with a field representative from the School Facilities Planning Division (SFPD) to review and evaluate sites under final consideration and obtain a “School Facilities Planning Division Field Site Review,” form SFPD 4.0, which lists the site options in order of merit according to the site selection standards delineated in Title 5, Section 14010.

District Staff met with the SFPD field representative on August 10, 1999, to visit the sites for the proposed project. Subsequently, the State provided the district with written field site reviews that ranked the sites from 1 (highest rating) to 5 (lowest rating) as follows:

<u>Site</u>	<u>CDE Rating</u>
Preferred Site	2
Alternative Site One	1

The reasons cited by the SFPD field representative for ranking the Preferred Site number 2, included a smaller acreage size and potential drainage and grading problems.

2. Pupil Information and Site Size:

Title 5, Section 14011(c) requires the district to prepare a statement reporting the grades to be served, pupil transportation, ultimate enrollment at the site and size of the site as justified by the district’s Facilities Master Plan.

A “School Facilities Planning Division School Site Report,” form SFPD 4.02, was prepared for the Preferred Site, as required by the state (see Attachment E). This form provided miscellaneous information relative to the site, concerning the range and organization of grades to be served, the transportation of pupils, and the ultimate maximum pupil enrollment to be housed on the site. If the board selects another site, staff will prepare a form consistent with the site selected.

The district’s Educational Specifications for Elementary Schools states that “The district has determined that the new sites will likely be seven to nine acres each, which is a minimal size for the planned enrollment.” They also state that “deviations from

this guide are anticipated due to variations in site size, shape, and topography, and the needs of each school and community it serves.” Planning consequences of the various site scenarios are outlined below:

The Preferred Site (excluding the expansion area and city-owned parcel located adjacent to the site at the northeast corner of 38th St. and Landis St.) consists of approximately 6.9 acres. The city-owned parcel is approximately .25 of an acre. The site is adequately sized to meet facilities standards (building area, parking area, and hardcourt) for an enrollment of 700 students. To provide a joint use area of 2.0 acres, the city owned parcel would need to be included in the field area. To expand the enrollment beyond 700 students, classrooms would need to be placed on existing hardcourt area, thereby reducing the hardcourt to below the district elementary school standard of 1.1 acres.

The Preferred Site (with expansion area) consists of approximately 8.7 acres. The site is more than adequately sized to meet facilities standards (hardcourt, parking area, building area) for an enrollment of 700 students. There is also adequate space to offer a field area of 2+ acres for joint use development. Additionally, there is space to include an area for master planning classroom expansion to accommodate an enrollment of 900 students without reducing the hardcourt area below the district elementary school standard of 1.1 acres. This space could initially be developed as extra hardcourt area or left vacant.

Alternative Site One consists of approximately 7.4 acres. The site is adequately sized to meet facilities standards (hardcourt, parking area, building area) for an enrollment of 700 students. There is also adequate space to offer a field area of 2.0 acres for joint use development. To expand the enrollment beyond 700 students, classrooms would need to be placed on the original hardcourt area, which would reduce the hardcourt area below the district elementary school standard of 1.1 acres. There is no opportunity to expand the land base of this site without another street closure to the west (Cherokee Avenue). The property to the east (38th Street canyon area) is city-owned and planned for future development as park area and a child care center.

3. Maps:

Title 5, Section 14011(d) requires preparation of maps showing present and proposed school sites, significant roads or highways, unsanitary or hazardous installations, such as airports and industries, and the pupil attendance area to be served.

The district has provided a copy of the districtwide map to the California Department of Education, which shows all existing school sites, as well as a map of the proposed school sites (see Attachment C), which was included in the EIR. There are no hazardous industries in the vicinity of the Preferred Site. Attachment C shows the possible pupil attendance boundary, which is also indicated as the study area in the EIR. This attendance boundary may change due to demographics at the time the school is built. The map requirements have been satisfied.

4. School/Park Planning:

Title 5, Section 14011(e) requires the district to meet with appropriate local government, recreation and park authorities to consider possible joint use of the grounds and buildings and to coordinate the design to benefit the intended users.

Staff from the City of Park and Recreation Department have been involved with the site selection process throughout its duration. City staff supported the plan to enter into a joint-use agreement for design, implementation, and maintenance of a turf playfield on the field area of the proposed school site (regardless of the site ultimately chosen).

City staff supports the Preferred Site in general, due to its larger interface with the expanded Park de la Cruz and proximity to the Copley YMCA. City staff supports acquisition of the adjacent expansion area as well, because the larger site provides an opportunity for development of a joint use turf field larger than the minimum city standard size of 2.0 acres. If the expansion area is not included in the school site acquisition, development of a joint use turf field larger than 2.0 acres is unlikely due to space constraints on the Preferred Site.

District staff has pursued the concept of expanding the Preferred Site through inclusion of a city-owned parcel of approximately .25 acres at the northeast corner of 38th Street and Landis Street. To date, the city has not supported this concept due to the city's plans to include this parcel in the expansion of Park de la Cruz and the significant shortfall of public parkland in the City Heights neighborhood (reference Attachment F).

5. Planning Commission Report:

Title 5, Section 14011(f) requires the district to send a written notice to the City Planning Commission of the proposed acquisition and to request a written report of the investigations and recommendations for each proposed site with respect to conformity with the adopted general plan as required by Public Resources Code Section 21151.2 and Government Code Section 65402. If a report is received from the Planning Commission within 30 days that does not favor acquisition of the property, the district shall not acquire title until 30 days after receiving the Planning Commission report.

The City was informed of the proposed project through the environmental review process. Three letters were received from the City's Environmental Review Manager

of the Planning and Development Review Department, dated October 15, 1999, July 24, 2000 and August 30, 2000. Comments from these letters were generally associated with recreational resources, residential relocation, transportation and circulation, and providing appropriate agency contacts to be included in the environmental document distribution.

The district sent City Planning Commission Chairman, Mark Steele, a letter on November 20, 2000. This letter addressed the district's intent to acquire the Preferred Site property (including the expansion area) and gave the Planning Commission an opportunity to investigate the site and make recommendations concerning site acquisition. On March 13, 2001, a subsequent letter was sent to the City Planning Commission relevant to the Preferred Site (without the expansion area). No response from the Planning Commission has been received to date. The Title 5 requirement has been satisfied.

6. Geological Hazards:

Title 5, Section 14011(g) requires the district to comply with Education Code Sections 17212 and 17212.5 with particular emphasis upon an engineering investigation made of the site to preclude locating the school on terrain that may be potentially hazardous. A geological study and a soils analysis must be conducted to provide an assessment of the nature of the site and the possibility for earthquake or other geological damage if the prospective school site is located within (1) the boundaries of any Earthquake Fault Zones, referred to as Special Studies Zone prior to January 1, 1994; or (2) an area designated as geologically hazardous in the safety element of the local general plan.

Based on geotechnical reports prepared by Southern California Soils & Testing, Inc. and Geotechnical Consultants, Inc., the Preferred Site (with or without the expansion area) and Alternative Site One are not located within an earthquake fault zone. Furthermore, the sites are located within Geologic Hazard Category 52, which includes "level areas, gently sloping to steep terrain, favorable geologic structure, low risk," and are not considered geologically hazardous by the City's General Plan.

6.7. Environmental Impact Report

Title 5, Section 14011(h) requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

The EIR for the Proposed Central Area Elementary School evaluated the following environmental issues: land use/recreational resources; housing; population and displacement; cultural resources; traffic and transportation; noise; hazards and hazardous materials; hydrology/water quality; geology and soils; paleontological resources; visual quality/community character; public services; public utilities; and air quality. The EIR also addressed cumulative impacts; other required considerations which include growth inducing impacts and effects found not to be significant; and alternatives that would reduce or avoid significant impacts of the proposed project.

The Draft EIR for the proposed Central Area Elementary School was distributed for public review on July 17, 2000. The 45-day public review period ended on August 30, 2000. Approximately 24 letters, consisting of 130 comments, were received within the public review period from both public and private entities and residents. Responses to the comments received during the public review period were incorporated into the Final EIR.

Although the environmental impacts associated with the Preferred Site (with or without the expansion area) and Alternative Site One were found to be similar, the Final EIR found Alternative Site One to be the “environmentally superior” site because: 1) it would avoid the significant and unmitigated impact associated with the loss of one historical resource that is located within the Preferred Site and one that is located within the expansion area; and 2) it only has approximately 86 dwelling units that would be removed compared to the Preferred Site which has approximately 131 dwelling units, and the Preferred Site (including the expansion area) which has approximately 163 dwelling units.

The Candidate Findings (Attachment G); Statement of Overriding Considerations (Attachment H); and the Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program (Attachment I) for the Central Area Elementary School have been prepared in support of the Preferred Site (without the expansion area). If acquisition of the expansion area, or any other alternative site analyzed in the EIR is selected by the Board of Education, the preparation of new Candidate Findings; Statement of Overriding Considerations; and Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program would be necessary.

The Final EIR for the proposed Central Area Elementary School has been prepared in compliance with CEQA (Public Resources Code Section 21000, et seq) and the procedures for implementation of CEQA set forth in the Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA (California Code of Regulations,

Section 15000, et seq). The district is the lead agency for the purpose of preparing the Final EIR (SCH # 199091102) for the proposed Central Area Elementary School, as defined by Section 15051 of the State CEQA guidelines.

Copies of the Final EIR and Technical Appendices for the Central Area Elementary School (SCH # 1999091102) have been provided to the board office for review by the Board of Education prior to the public meeting. Additional copies of the Final EIR are also available in the district's Facilities Management and Board Recording offices, City Heights – Weingart Library and the San Diego Public Library for public review.

8. Hazardous Waste/Air Emissions:

Title 5, Section 14011(i), requires the district to comply with Education Code Section 17213 which prohibits the district from purchasing a school site unless it finds that the site is not (1) a current or former hazardous waste disposal site, unless the hazardous waste has been removed; (2) a hazardous substance release site identified by the State's Department of Health Services; or (3) a site which contains pipelines which carry hazardous substances, acutely hazardous materials, or hazardous waste unless the pipeline is a natural gas pipeline supplying gas to the school or neighborhood.

Based on the Phase I Environmental Site Assessments conducted on the Preferred Site and Alternative Site One, the sites (1) are not current or former hazardous waste disposal sites; (2) are not hazardous release sites; and (3) do not contain pipelines which carry hazardous materials unless the pipeline is a natural gas line which is used only to supply natural gas to that school or neighborhood.

Section 17213 also requires the district to consult with the Air Pollution Control District to identify any facilities within one-quarter mile of the site which might reasonably be anticipated to emit hazardous air emissions, or handle hazardous substances, materials or waste.

During the preparation of the EIR, the district reviewed approximately 14 federal, state and local regulatory databases, and consulted with the Air Pollution Control District, requesting the identification of facilities within one-quarter mile of the sites, which might reasonably be anticipated to emit hazardous air emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste. Consultation with these agencies identified that such facilities existed in the past and also currently exist. However, the EIR concluded that these sites would have a low likelihood to pose a threat to human health or the environment, and therefore, impacts would not be significant based on the following: (1) the facilities were determined to be "soils only" cases without indication of hazardous material release, which

would not impact the site, and (2) the facilities would not impact the site through compliance with existing laws regulating hazardous materials and emissions.

9. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA):

Title 5, Section 14011(j) requires the district to comply with Education Code Sections 17210.1, 17213.1, and 17213.2. The Education Codes cover the requirements and processing of a Phase I ESA and any additional investigations.

In accordance with these requirements, Phase I ESAs were prepared for the Preferred Site (including the expansion area) and Alternative Site One by Southern California Soils and Testing, Inc. (SCS&T). The Phase I ESAs were completed in May 2000 and October 2000, respectively. SCS&T concluded that with the exception of asbestos containing building materials (ACBM) and lead-based paint, no recognized environmental conditions were identified at either site. The ACBM and lead-based paint will be mitigated during demolition following site acquisition.

Both Phase I ESAs were submitted to CDE for transmittal to DTSC for review and approval. On October 18, 2000, DTSC completed their review of the Phase I ESAs for the Preferred Site and concurred with the Phase I ESA conclusions (see Attachment J.) DTSC recommended that the district evaluate all potentially impacted structures and appropriately mitigate the lead based paint and ACBM. They will require post demolition soil samples to be analyzed for lead to confirm that historical and/or demolition activities have not impacted the site. The soil sample results and proper ACBM abatement certification will be submitted to DTSC in a Preliminary Environmental Assessment report. Upon the successful completion and mitigation of the asbestos and lead issues DTSC expects to be able to issue a “no further action letter” for all environmental issues associated with this site. The district will need to enter into a voluntary oversight agreement to enable DTSC to oversee this process.

On October 27, 2000, DTSC completed their review of the Phase I ESA for Alternative Site One (Attachment K). DTSC’s comments were essentially the same as those stated above for the Preferred Site.

Following DTSC’s review, the San Diego Unified School District requested and received contingent site approval for the Preferred Site from the California Department of Education as documented in their letter to the district dated April 16, 2001 (see Attachment L).

10. Airports:

Pursuant to Title 5, Section 14011(k), the district is required to evaluate proposed new school sites relative to airports, existing and planned, within two miles of the proposed site as required by Education Code 17215. District staff has provided the State Department of Education written notice that there are no existing or planned airports within two miles of the Preferred Site or Alternative Site One.

11. Site Standards:

Education Code Section 17211 requires the Board of Education to evaluate the State Department of Education Site Selection Standards at a public hearing using the site selection standards described in Title 5, Section 14010. Evaluations of the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) and Alternative Site One are provided below. The public will have an opportunity at the public hearing to comment on the following standards.

14010 (a):

The 2000 Edition of the “School Site Analysis and Development” published by the California Department of Education recommends 11 – 12 net usable acres as noted on the School Facilities Planning Division Field Site Review for the Preferred Site. The actual net acreages for the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) and Alternative Site One are 6.2, 8.1 and 6.4 respectively.

14010 (b):

The 2000 Edition of the “School Site Analysis and Development” Manual published by the California Department of Education provides site size recommendations based on the assumption that “single-story buildings and campus style layouts likely will continue to be the predominant design style for California schools in most communities.” The site size requirements provided are therefore based on this assumption. The San Diego Unified School District Educational Specifications – Elementary Schools states in part that “Due to the high cost and rarity of available land in urban areas, smaller sites are necessary.” It further states that “Strategies for efficient site utilization should be considered, such as two-story structures where possible, and staggered lunches and recesses to maximize use and reduce congestion on the playground areas. The optimal enrollment of 700 students would net a site size of approximately 6.5 acres without accommodating increased enrollment.” The net area for the Preferred Site is 6.2 acres, which will allow the district to provide for all of the educational requirements with the exception that the field area will be slightly undersized. There is a small city owned parcel (.25 ac.) at the southwest corner of the site which would make up the difference in field area if the city allows this to be a part of a joint-use field area. The Preferred Site (with expansion area) and Alternative Site One contain sufficient acreage to provide for all of the educational requirements.

14010 (c):

As documented in the Phase 1 ESA, the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) and Alternative Site One are at least the following distances from the edge of respective power line easements:

- 100 feet for 50 –133 kV line.
- 150 feet for 220-230 kV line.
- 350 feet for 500-550 kV line

14010 (d):

The Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) and Alternative Site One are at least 1,500 feet from a railroad track easement.

14010 (e):

As documented in the EIR, the results of a traffic study and noise study concluded that with appropriate mitigation measures, the adjacent roads and/or freeways will not cause safety problems or sound levels which will adversely affect the educational program at the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) and Alternative Site One.

14010 (f):

As documented in the Geological Hazard Assessment neither the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) or Alternative Site One contain an active earthquake fault or fault trace.

14010 (g):

As documented in the Geological Hazard Assessment neither the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) or Alternative Site One are within the 500 year flood area. None of the sites are within a dam flood inundation area.

14010 (h):

As documented in the Phase I ESA, neither the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) or Alternative Site One are within 1,500 feet of an aboveground or underground pipeline. None of the sites are located near an above-ground water or fuel storage tank.

14010 (i):

As documented in the Geological Hazard Assessment, neither the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) or Alternative Site One are expected to be subject to high liquefaction or landslides.

14010 (j):

Once a final site is selected and approved by the Board, the actual design of the new school and grounds will be completed. However, the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) and Alternative Site One are all roughly

square shaped which will allow for proper building layout, parking, and playfields that can be safely supervised and will not exceed the allowed passing time to classes for the district.

14010 (k):

The Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) and Alternative Site One all have proper access from arterial roads. As documented in the EIR, the actual design for the school and grounds is not yet completed and therefore the location and layout of the driveways has not been determined. Design of the driveway sight distances will be performed 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 other appropriate guidance.

14010 (l):

Neither the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) or Alternative Site One are located on major arterial streets with heavy traffic patterns. As documented in the EIR, the actual design for the school and grounds is not yet completed and therefore specific traffic safety measures have not been determined. Design of the school and off-site improvements will include these considerations and specific safety measures will be developed cooperatively with City of San Diego officials in accordance with the School Area Safety Manual published by the California Department of Transportation and other appropriate guides.

14010 (m):

As required by Education Code Section 17213 and as documented in the Phase I ESA, neither the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) or Alternative Site One are: the site of a current or former hazardous waste disposal site or solid waste disposal site; a hazardous substance release site; a site which contains one or more pipelines, situated aboveground or underground, which carries hazardous substances, acutely hazardous materials, or hazardous wastes or located within ¼ mile of facilities which might reasonably be expected to emit hazardous waste emissions which would constitute an actual or potential endangerment of public health to persons who would attend or be employed at the school. In accordance with Public Resources Code 21151.2 and Government Code Section 65402, the City of San Diego Planning Commission was notified by letter of the district's intent to acquire the Preferred Site and construct the new elementary school. No response has been received to date. As documented in the EIR the actual design for the school and grounds is not yet completed and therefore specific traffic safety measures have not been determined. Design of the school and off-site improvements will include these considerations and specific safety

measures will be developed cooperatively with City of San Diego officials in accordance with the School Area Safety Manual published by the California Department of Transportation and other appropriate guides.

14010 (n):

The Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) and Alternative Site One are centrally located in or near the neighborhood from which students would be drawn which will encourage student walking and avoid the need for extensive vehicular transportation of students.

14010 (o):

The Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) and Alternative Site One would have the opportunity for development of a joint-use play area. The location of the Preferred Site (with or without expansion area) provides a link between the proposed new school and the eastern end of the of Park de la Cruz Neighborhood Park.

14010 (p):

As documented in the EIR, the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) and Alternative Site One would all have adequate public services.

14010 (q):

As documented in the District Education Specifications and the CDE Site Selection Guidelines environmental factors of light, wind, noise, and aesthetics must be considered in the site selection process and this has been done for the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) and Alternative Site One. As documented in the Phase I ESA there are no sites located within a quarter of a mile that are expected to constitute an actual or potential danger of public health of students or staff.

14010 (r):

Existing easements will not restrict access or building placement on either the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) and Alternative Site One.

14010 (s):

The cost and complications of utility supply, site preparation, acquisition of property, long term landscaping and maintenance costs, and existing biological resources have been considered in the site selection process and are not expected to result in undue delays or unreasonable costs.

14010 (t):

As documented in the Phase I ESA, neither the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) or Alternative Site One are within 2,000 feet of a significant disposal of hazardous waste.

In addition to the state standards identified above, the California Department of Education has published a “School Site Selection and Approval Guide” to help school districts (1) select school sites that provide both a safe and supportive environment for the instruction program and learning process; and (2) gain state approval for the selected sites.

The guide includes a set of site selection criteria which are broken down into 12 categories: safety, location, environment, soils, topography, size and shape, accessibility, public services, utilities, cost, availability of the property, and public acceptance. The California Department of Education has indicated that these guidelines are not all inclusive and that the district can revise them or add other considerations, as appropriate, for local circumstances. District staff evaluated each factor for the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area), and Alternative Site One and copies of the “Site Selection Criteria” worksheets are provided in this report as Attachments M, N and O.

Resolution:

The state standards for school site selection are set forth in Section 14010 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. District compliance with these standards has been discussed above (reference Item 11, Site Standards). Attached is a resolution (Attachment P) which finds that the Central Area Elementary School Preferred Site property meets the standards for school site selection pursuant to Education Code Section 17251(b) and Section 14010 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. If the Board of Education selects another site for acquisition, a Resolution specific to that site will need to be prepared and approved by the Board.

12. Request for Exemption from standard in Section 14010:

Title 5, Section 14011(n) authorizes the district to submit a request to the California Department of Education for an exemption to the school site selection standards required by Title 5, 14010, including a description of the mitigation that overrides the standard.

The Central Area Elementary School Preferred Site meets the California Department of Education’s standards for safety and educational adequacy and therefore does not require any exemptions.

13. Certification of School Site Availability:

Pursuant to Title 5, Section 14011(o), there are no available alternative school district-owned sites for the project deemed usable for school purposes by the California Department of Education.

B. Architectural Evaluation

District architects compared the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area), and Alternative Site One. Based on its location, the Preferred Site would have better design options for the following reasons.

1. The location adjacent to the proposed Park de La Cruz and Copley YMCA would offer enhanced opportunity for joint use with the city and would provide for a connected community complex for use by the public.
2. As a result of the development of the proposed Park de la Cruz facilities, southbound 38th Street and westbound Landis Street will terminate at cul-de-sacs, providing for a safer environment for the students since these streets will carry no through traffic past the school sites.
3. The Preferred Site offers a potential expansion area to the east in case the school would need more space in the future. Alternative Site One does not provide for this option because the parcel to the east of the site is owned by the city and planned for a child care facility, and expansion on other sides of the site would require another street closure. The city may not agree on additional street closures for traffic and circulation reasons.
4. The topography at the Preferred Site gently slopes downward to meet the Copley YMCA and the proposed Park de la Cruz, which would allow for better architectural design at this site compared to Alternative Site One.

C. Cost Comparison

A comparison of the estimated costs associated with acquisition of land and construction of the Central Area Elementary School on the Preferred Site, Preferred Site (with expansion area) and Alternative Site One have been summarized below. The costs are indicated in “millions.”

DESCRIPTION	PREFERRED SITE (6.9 Acres – 131 Dwelling Units)	PREFERRED SITE W/EXPANSION (8.9 Acres – 163 Dwelling Units)	ALTERNATIVE SITE ONE (7.4 Acres – 86 Dwelling Units)
Site Acquisition	\$14.4	\$17.8	\$12.7
Construction	11.0	11.5	11.2
Non-Construction	3.4	3.9	3.3
TOTAL ESTIMATE COSTS	\$28.8	\$33.2	\$27.2

The acquisition cost estimates are based on recent sales of comparable properties in the area where possible. Subject property appraisals will begin after the board selects a site.

Construction and nonconstruction costs were based on standard unit costs for a 700 – 900 student elementary school.

D. Conclusion

District staff recommends the approval of the Preferred Site (without the expansion area) for the following reasons:

1. The community identified the Preferred Site as being the “preferred” location during the task force site selection process.
2. The Preferred Site is immediately adjacent to the proposed Park de la Cruz, which will provide a recreational benefit to students at the proposed site.
3. The Preferred Site offers a potential expansion area in the event the site would need to be expanded in the future and additional funding becomes available.
4. The Preferred Site offers better and safer design options as indicated in Section B, “Architectural Evaluation,” of this report.

Instructional Implications

Proposition MM was designed to improve classroom health, safety and instruction in every neighborhood school by various methods including the building of new schools. Certification of the site for acquisition will allow for timely construction of the proposed new Central Area Elementary School.

Facilities Implications

The Central Area Elementary School project is part of the Proposition MM program and will serve 700-900 students. The project would serve to provide enrollment relieve to the existing Central Elementary School and would also assist the district in achieving the standards contained in the Long-Range Facilities Master Plan (LRFMP).

Budget Implications

Site acquisition and construction of the proposed Central Area Elementary School will be funded from Proposition MM general obligation bond sale proceeds. The cost for acquisition and development of the Preferred Site is estimated to be \$28.8 million, which is within the original Proposition MM program budget for this elementary school. Please see the “Cost Comparison” section of this report for a breakdown of estimated costs.

Public Support and Engagement Implications

Proposition MM was approved by San Diego voters in November 1998, to improve classroom health, safety, and instruction in every neighborhood school by various means, including the construction of 13 new elementary schools. The community expects the district to complete Proposition MM projects in a timely manner. Construction of the Central Area Elementary School will support the district's commitment to meet community expectations.

The City Heights Area Planning Committee supported acquisition of the Preferred Site. The city's Park and Recreation Department and the Cherokee Heights Neighborhood Association supported acquisition of the Preferred Site, including the expansion area. The San Diego Housing Commission supports any effort by the district to reduce the loss of affordable housing.

Policy Implications

This report is consistent with board policies E-2050, E-2100, E-2250, E-2300, E-2350, E-2400, E-2500 and E-4000. No revision of administrative procedure is required.

Recommendations

The superintendent recommends that the Board of Education:

1. Conduct a Public Hearing to evaluate the proposed Central Area Elementary School Preferred Site using site selection standards established by the State Department of Education.
2. Adopt a resolution, which finds that the property for the Central Area Elementary School Preferred Site meets the standards for school site selection pursuant to Education Code Section 17251(b) and Section 14010 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. (Attachment P).
3. Certify that: (1) the Final EIR has been prepared in compliance with CEQA; (2) the Final EIR was presented to the Board of Education which reviewed and considered the information contained in the Final EIR prior to approving the project; and (3) the Final EIR reflects the district's independent judgment and analysis.
4. Adopt the Candidate Findings set forth in Attachment G for each significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR for the Central Area Elementary School Preferred Site.
5. Adopt the Statement of Overriding Considerations set forth in Attachment H for each significant environmental effect found to be unavoidable in the Final EIR for the Central Area Elementary School Preferred Site.

6. Adopt the Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program set forth in Attachment I for the Central Area Elementary School Preferred Site in order to ensure that the mitigation measures and project revisions identified in the Final EIR are implemented.
7. Authorize that the project be carried-out as defined in the Final EIR for the Central Area Elementary School (SCH 1999091102).
8. Certify that the Central Area Elementary School project will have a de minimis effect on fish and wildlife pursuant to Section 711.4 of the of the Fish and Game Code (Attachment Q).
9. Authorize staff to file the Notice of Determination with the Recorder/County Clerk of San Diego County, California (Attachment R).
10. Certify that there are no available alternative school district-owned sites for the project deemed usable for school purposes by the California Department of Education.
11. Authorize staff to commence with the appraisal process, relocation plan, and other related procedures required to acquire properties for the Central Area Elementary School Preferred Site.

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