

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS
Office of the Superintendent

CERTIFICATION OF AN ADDENDUM TO
A CERTIFIED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
FOR THE ACQUISITION AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE
PROPOSED 52nd STREET AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
August 5, 2003

Introductory Statement

On June 10, 2003, the Board of Education certified the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed new 52nd Street Area Elementary School, and selected Alternative Site A for acquisition and construction of the new school. In addition, the Board directed District staff to study the possibility of acquiring additional property and reporting back to the Board in July. Section 15164 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, states that an addendum to a previously certified Environmental Impact Report (EIR) may be prepared if (a) "... some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for the preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred" or (b) "... only minor technical changes or additions are necessary or none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for the preparation of a subsequent EIR or adopted negative declaration have occurred." Based on the Board of Education's direction at the June 10, 2003 Board meeting, District staff has studied the possibility of acquiring additional property and has prepared an addendum to the previously certified EIR for the 52nd Street Area Elementary School, which addresses these changes.

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 52nd Street Area Elementary School.

The proposed new 52nd Street Area Elementary School will provide enrollment relief to the existing Jackson and Marshall elementary schools. 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 Mid-City Community Planning Area.

On June 10, 2003, the Board of Education certified the Final Environmental Impact Report for the proposed new 52nd Street Area Elementary School and selected Alternative Site A for acquisition and construction of the new school. In addition, the Board directed District staff to study the feasibility of acquiring additional property south of Polk Avenue, including potentially the first row of parcels south of Polk Avenue. Based on this direction District staff considered the feasibility of four potential expansion areas. These included the first row of parcels south of Polk Avenue, a section of parcels south of Polk Avenue and west of 51st Street, a section of

parcels south of Polk Avenue and east of 51st Street, and a section of parcels south of Polk Avenue and east of 51st Street with two parcels from Alternative A removed.

Based on a review of the sites with regard to usable acreage gained, topography, environmental impacts including housing, and cost implications the proposed expanded site configuration referred to as Alternative Site A Expanded (Attachment A) is the most feasible. The Alternative Site A Expanded project area contains all of the properties located within Alternative Site A with the exception of 4165-4169 Altadena Street and 4162 51st Street, which would be removed from the proposed project site. Alternative Site A Expanded also includes a portion of Polk Avenue and the properties bounded by Polk Avenue on the north, 52nd Street on the east, Otilie Place on the south, and 51st Street on the west. A comparison of major site characteristics applicable to Alternative Site A and Alternative Site A Expanded is provided as Attachment B.

Because the entire area located within Alternative Site A Expanded was evaluated within the previously certified Final EIR for the new 52nd Street Area Elementary School, the existing setting, environmental impacts, and mitigation measures presented in the Final EIR are directly applicable to the Alternative Site A Expanded project. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15164 (a), an Addendum to the previously certified EIR (Attachment C) has been prepared for Alternative Site A Expanded. The revised project will not create new significant environmental effects or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant effects. The CEQA Findings (Attachment D); Statement of Overriding Considerations (Attachment E); Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program (Attachment F), Resolution (Attachment G), De Minimis Impact Findings (Attachment H), and Notice of Determination (Attachment I) for Alternative Site A Expanded are attached to this report.

Site Discussion

The Draft EIR for the proposed 52nd Street Area Elementary School was distributed for public review on November 15, 2002. In response to the City of San Diego's concerns regarding the cumulative loss of affordable housing and the continued significant cost growth for site acquisition, the District considered a smaller project site (Alternative Site A) at the Preferred Site location. The Final EIR, which included Alternative Site A, was certified by the Board on June 10, 2003 and Alternative Site A was approved for acquisition and construction of the new school. Subsequently, at the Board's direction, District staff studied the possibility of adding additional parcels south of Polk Street to the Alternative Site A project development site in order to create a larger school site.

Alternative Site A – The Alternative Site A project area encompasses approximately 4.8 gross acres within two city blocks bound on the north by property south of Orange Avenue, on the south by Polk Avenue, on the east by 52nd Street, and on the west by Altadena Street. Development of Alternative Site A would involve the partial closure of 51st Street between Orange Avenue and Polk Avenue, partial closure of the alleyways between Altadena Street and 52nd Street, displacement of an estimated 526 residents, and the demolition of approximately 155 (4 single-family and 151 multi-family) dwelling units.

Alternative Site A Expanded – The Alternative Site A Expanded project area encompasses approximately 6.2 gross acres (Attachment A). Alternative Site A

Expanded contains all of the properties located within Alternative Site A with the exception of 4165-4169 Altadena Street and 4162 51st Street, which would be removed from the proposed project site. Alternative Site A Expanded also includes a portion of Polk Avenue between 51st Street and 52nd Street and all of the properties bounded by Polk Street on the north, Otilie Place on the south, 52nd Street on the east, and 51st Street on the west. Development of Alternative Site A Expanded would involve the partial closure of 51st Street between Orange Avenue and Polk Avenue, partial closure of Polk Avenue between 51st Street and 52nd Street, partial closure of the alleyways between Altadena Street and 52nd Street, displacement of an estimated 573 residents (47 more residents than Alternative Site A), and the demolition of approximately 169 dwelling units (14 more dwelling units than Alternative Site A.)

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 (CEQA). The Draft EIR for the proposed 52nd Street Area Elementary School was distributed for public review on November 15, 2002. The EIR evaluated the following environmental issues: land use, planning and recreation; population and housing; cultural resources; traffic and transportation; noise; hazards and hazardous material; hydrology/water quality; geology and soils; aesthetics; and public services and utilities. 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. In response to the City of San Diego's concerns regarding the cumulative loss of affordable housing and the continued significant cost growth for site acquisition, the District considered a smaller project site (Alternative Site A) at the Preferred Site location. The Final EIR, which included Alternative Site A, was certified by the Board on June 10, 2003 and Alternative Site A was approved for acquisition and construction of the new school.

At the Board meeting on June 10, 2003, the Board directed District staff to study the feasibility of acquiring additional property south of Polk Avenue in order to create a larger school site. Based on this direction, District staff recommends the proposed expanded site configuration referred to as Alternative Site A Expanded (Attachment A).

The District has prepared an addendum to the previously certified EIR for the 52nd Street Area Elementary School (Attachment C), which addresses Alternative Site A Expanded. An addendum to the previously certified EIR is the appropriate CEQA document for this action because the previously certified EIR for the project analyzed all environmental impacts associated with all property within Alternative Site A Expanded. Alternative Site A Expanded does not require major revisions to the previous EIR due to new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.

Resolution

The state standards for school site selection are set forth in Section 14010 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. Attached is a resolution (Attachment G), which finds

that the 52nd Street Area Elementary School Alternative Site A Expanded 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.

Architectural Evaluation

District architects evaluated Alternative Site A Expanded and have determined that inclusion of the additional parcels will:

1. Provide an additional 1.4 acres of property for school development.
2. Allow for an on-site DG or grass play area, which also could be used for joint use.

Cost Comparison

The additional costs for Alternative Site A Expanded have been estimated at \$5.8 million.

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 non-construction costs were based on standard unit costs for a 700 – 900 student elementary school.

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. Approval of Alternative Site A Expanded for acquisition will allow for timely construction of the proposed new 52nd Street Area Elementary School.

Facilities Implications

The 52nd Street Area Elementary School project is part of the Proposition MM program and will serve 700-900 students. The project would serve to provide enrollment relief to the existing Jackson and Marshall Elementary Schools 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 52nd Street Area Elementary School on the previously approved Alternative Site A was budgeted at \$43.5M. The additional site acquisition and construction cost for Alternative Site A Expanded is budgeted at \$5.8M for a revised total project budget of \$49.3M. The relatively high cost of this project is driven by the cost of the land and site preparation. This estimated total cost would greatly exceed the amount originally forecast for the 52nd Street Area project in the Proposition MM program.

It is recommended that the \$5.8M in additional costs for the 52nd Street Area Elementary School be funded from Proposition 47 State Matching Funds rather than Proposition MM funding. This

will allow the project to proceed, while protecting the Proposition MM New Schools budget alternatives approved by the ICOC and by the Board on February 4, 2003

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 52nd Street Area Elementary School will support the District's commitment to meet community expectations.

The recognized community planning group, the City Heights Area Planning Group continues to support Alternative Site 1 as their recommended site. Some community members have expressed that Alternative Site A Expanded is acceptable. The Independent Citizens Oversight Committee (ICOC) supports the staff recommendation for Alternative Site A Expanded, provided that the additional costs are funded from a source other than Proposition MM.

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

Should the Board of Education decide to acquire additional property the superintendent recommends that the Board of Education:

1. Conduct a Public Hearing to evaluate the Alternative Site A Expanded project area for the proposed 52nd Street Area Elementary School using site selection standards established by the State Department of Education.
2. Adopt a resolution, which finds that the 52nd Street Area Elementary School Alternative Site A Expanded 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. (Attachment G).
3. Certify that: (1) the Addendum to the Previously Certified EIR for the 52nd Street Area Elementary School (Attachment C) has been prepared in compliance with CEQA; (2) the Addendum to the Previously Certified EIR was presented to the Board of Education which reviewed and considered the information contained in the Addendum prior to approving the project; and (3) the Addendum to the Previously Certified EIR reflects the District's independent judgment and analysis.
4. Adopt the Findings set forth in Attachment D for each significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR for the 52nd Street Area Elementary School - Alternative Site A Expanded.

5. Adopt the Statement of Overriding Considerations set forth in Attachment E for each significant environmental effect found to be unavoidable in the Final EIR for the 52nd Street Area Elementary School - Alternative Site A Expanded.
6. Adopt the Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program set forth in Attachment F for the 52nd Street Area Elementary School - Alternative Site A Expanded project in order to ensure that the mitigation measures and project revisions identified in the Final EIR are implemented.
7. Certify that the 52nd Street Area Elementary School - Alternative Site A Expanded project will have a de minimis effect on fish and wildlife pursuant to Section 711.4 of the California Department of Fish and Game Code (Attachment H).
8. Authorize staff to file the Notice of Determination for the 52nd Street Area Elementary School Final EIR Addendum with the Recorder/County Clerk of San Diego County, California (Attachment I).
9. Authorize that the project be carried-out as defined in the Addendum to the Previously Certified EIR for the 52nd Street Area Elementary School –Alternative Site A Expanded
10. Dedicate \$5.8 million of State School Facilities Matching funds to the 52nd Street Area Elementary School – Alternative Site A Expanded.
11. Authorize staff to commence with the appraisal process, relocation plan, and other related procedures required to acquire the necessary property for the proposed 52nd Street Area Elementary School – Alternative Site A Expanded.

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