



County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

Planning Commission Staff Report Agenda Item No. 5 August 23, 2018

SUBJECT: General Plan Conformity Application – Clovis Unified School District Proposed Elementary School

Acquire approximately 25 acres of property for a new elementary school site (with related facilities) in the AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District.

LOCATION: The proposed site is located on North Locan Avenue between Shields and Garland Avenues, adjacent to the City of Fresno (SUP. DIST. 5) (APN 310-230-24 and -34).

OWNER: George and Alice Raab
APPLICANT: Clovis Unified School District

STAFF CONTACT: Marianne Mollring, Senior Planner
(559) 600-4569

Chris Motta, Principal Planner
(559) 600-4227

RECOMMENDATION:

- Determine that the proposed site acquisition is in conformance with the County General Plan and its policies relating to city fringe areas; and
- Direct the Secretary to prepare a Resolution documenting the Commission's action.

EXHIBITS:

1. Location Map
2. Existing Zoning Map
3. Existing Land Use Map
4. Aerial Photograph of Proposed School Site
5. Site Plan

ZONING AND LAND USE DESIGNATIONS:

Criteria	Designation
General Plan Designation	Agriculture in the Fresno County General Plan
City of Fresno General Plan Designation	Urban Neighborhood (16-30 Dwelling Units/acre) Southeast Development Area (SEDA)
Zoning	AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size)

SITE AND PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS:

Criteria	Existing	Proposed
Parcel Size	15.52 acres (APN 310-230-24) 9.56 acres (APN 310-230-34)	An approximately 25-acre portion will be developed as an elementary school site
Project Site	Vacant land	Elementary School campus
Nearest Residence	Adjacent to proposed elementary school site, to the north, on the east side of Locan	Fresno General Plan proposes residential and mixed-use land uses around the entire site
Surrounding Development	Fallow agricultural land and single-family residential lots	Elementary School campus

SURROUNDING PROPERTIES:

Surrounding Parcels			
	Size:	Use:	Zoning:
North:	Less than one-acre to three-acre parcels	Single-family subdivision and rural single-family residential	AE-20
South:	Five- to ten-acre rural residential/agricultural parcels	Fallow agricultural land and single-family home sites	AE-20
East:	One-acre to approximately five-acre parcels	Single-family rural residential home sites and vacant land	AE-20 and R-R
West:	Less than one-acre parcels	Single-family subdivision	Fresno RS-4 and -5

PROCEDURAL CONSIDERATIONS/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Public Resources Code Section 21151.2 requires a school district to notify the local Planning Agency having jurisdiction of its intention to acquire title to property for use as a school site. The Code requires the Planning Agency to investigate and evaluate the proposed acquisition and submit a written report of the investigation, together with recommendations to the Governing Board of the school district within thirty (30) days of the request. If the report does not favor the acquisition of the property for a school site, or for an addition to a present school site, the Governing Board of the school district shall not acquire title to the property until thirty (30) days after the Commission's report has been received.

Similarly, State Government Code Section 65402 requires a school district, prior to authorizing construction of a public building, disposing of any real property, or acquiring property, to submit the location, purpose, and extent of such acquisition, disposition, or public building to the Planning Agency having jurisdiction for its review as to conformity with the local General Plan. Section 65402 further states that the Planning Agency shall render its report as to conformity with said adopted General Plan or part thereof within forty (40) days after the matter was submitted to it, or such longer period of time as may be designated by the legislative body.

Staff notes that school sites are exempt from the County's Zoning Code per State Government Code.

On August 1, 2018, the Clovis Unified School District (District) submitted an application for determination of General Plan Conformity on an approximately 25-acre site for the purpose of establishing a new elementary school. The proposed site is located on the east side of North Locan Avenue, between Shields and Garland Avenues in the City of Fresno Southeast Development Area (SEDA) portion of the Fresno-Clovis metropolitan area, and is within the City of Fresno's Sphere of Influence. The proposed school site is adjacent to urban residential development to the north and west, located in the City of Fresno.

The District has stated that the new site is necessary to serve the student population growth generated by urban development in the cities of Fresno and Clovis. The school would be in regular session on weekdays from late August to early June with additional special events and classes during evenings, on weekends, and during the summer recess. The planned grade levels and enrollment would typically serve approximately 750 students in kindergarten through sixth grade. The school would have approximately 50 employees, including administrators, faculty, and support staff, and would have administrative offices, classrooms, a multi-purpose building, and physical education facilities. According to the District, the school site would be acquired when required school site approval processes are completed.

The District has stated that the school would be designed with vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian access to the surrounding circulation systems. The City of Fresno's water and sewer systems are proposed to serve the school, and the location and design of the water and sewer facilities would be subject to review and approval by the City of Fresno. The Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District (FMFCD) would be the storm water drainage services provider for the project and the location and design of storm water drainage facilities would be subject to review and approval by FMFCD.

Adopted Public Land Use Policy: The City of Fresno General Plan designates the proposed school site and adjoining land Urban Neighborhood, Low-Density Residential, and Corridor/Center Mixed Use. Schools are a permitted use in all single-family residential areas per the Fresno General Plan. The siting of a school at this location is consistent with the City of

Fresno General Plan, Goal 8 (Develop Complete Neighborhoods); however, the City of Fresno General Plan Land Use Map does not show a school location at this site.

Access: The Fresno General Plan designates Locan Avenue as a Collector, which is currently a two-lane road, improved to City of Fresno roadway standards, west of the centerline. The school site will have street frontage on Locan Avenue and will be constructing the road to City standards.

ANALYSIS/DISCUSSION/GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:

Relevant Policies:	Consistency/Considerations:
<p>Policy LU-G.1: Cities have primary responsibility for planning within their LAFCo-adopted Spheres of Influence; they are responsible for urban development and the provision of urban services within those Spheres.</p>	<p>The proposed school site is within the City of Fresno Sphere of Influence and is designated for residential development in the City of Fresno General Plan.</p>
<p>Policy PF-I.1: County shall encourage school districts to provide quality educational facilities to accommodate projected student growth in locations consistent with Land Use Policies in the General Plan.</p>	<p>The District is attempting to accommodate growth projections and neighborhood needs with acquisition of this school site.</p>
<p>Policy PF-I.6: Discourages the siting of schools in agricultural areas due to the growth-inducing potential of these facilities and conflicts with farming practices.</p>	<p>Although it is acknowledged that the proposed site is located on agricultural land, it is in an area designated for future urban development by the City of Fresno and is rapidly developing with residential uses. Additionally, the proposed site is not classified as Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance. The site is adjacent to the city limits of the City of Fresno to the north and west, which is developed with residential subdivisions, and a developed rural residential subdivision to the northeast.</p>
<p>Policy PF-I.7: County shall include schools among those public facilities and services considered an essential part of development; County shall work with residential developers and school districts to ensure needed school facilities are available to serve development.</p>	<p>The District has submitted the General Plan Conformity Application as part of the early process of site acquisition for development of an elementary school; analysis of this request has taken into consideration not solely existing land use patterns in the site's vicinity, but anticipated land uses based on the City and County General Plan policies that address urban fringe areas.</p>

GENERAL PLAN POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

The proposed school site and immediate surrounding area are within the City of Fresno's Sphere of Influence and are designated for residential land uses and mixed use.

A fundamental policy directive of the County's General Plan is to direct urban growth to the cities and unincorporated communities. County General Plan Policy LU-G.1, related to city fringe areas, states that cities have primary responsibility for planning within their LAFCo-adopted Spheres of Influence and they are responsible for urban development and the provision of urban services within those Spheres. The City of Fresno has declined to annex this site, at this time, and did not comment on the proposed school site.

As previously mentioned, the subject area is zoned for exclusive agricultural land uses (AE-20). Current zoning in this area is illustrated in Exhibit 2. General Policy PF-I.6 discourages the siting of schools in agricultural areas due to the growth-inducing potential of these facilities and conflicts with farming practices. In this case, however, the area is within the City of Fresno Sphere of Influence and is rapidly urbanizing with single-family residential neighborhoods and is planned for urban uses. The subject school is being located at this site to accommodate the planned growth in the area.

Fresno County General Plan Policy PF-I.1, related to the locating of school facilities, states that the County shall encourage school districts to provide quality educational facilities to accommodate projected student growth in locations consistent with Land Use Policies in the General Plan. Policy PF-I.7 states that the County shall include schools among those public facilities and services that are considered an essential part of the development service facilities that should be in place as development occurs, and shall work with residential developers and school districts to ensure that needed school facilities are available to serve new residential development. This proposal is consistent with this policy.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

The proposed school site is not subject to an Agricultural Land Conservation Contract under the provisions of the Williamson Act, nor is the site within the vicinity of a public or private-use airport. Thus, the proposed site is not in conflict with these provisions and land uses.

REVIEWING AGENCY/DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:

Staff received comments from the following agencies/departments: Policy Planning Unit, Zoning Section, and Building and Safety Section of the Development Services and Capital Projects Division, Water and Natural Resources Division and Design Division of the Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning; and County of Fresno Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division. Comments did not express any concerns regarding General Plan conformity.

CONCLUSION:

County staff can find the proposed elementary school site consistent with General Plan policy, based on analysis provided in this report.

PLANNING COMMISSION MOTIONS:

Recommended Motion (Finding of Consistency)

- Find that the proposed site acquisition is in conformance with the County General Plan and its policies relating to city fringe areas and siting of schools, and
- Direct the Secretary to prepare a Resolution documenting the Commission's action.

Alternative Motion (Finding of Non-Consistency)

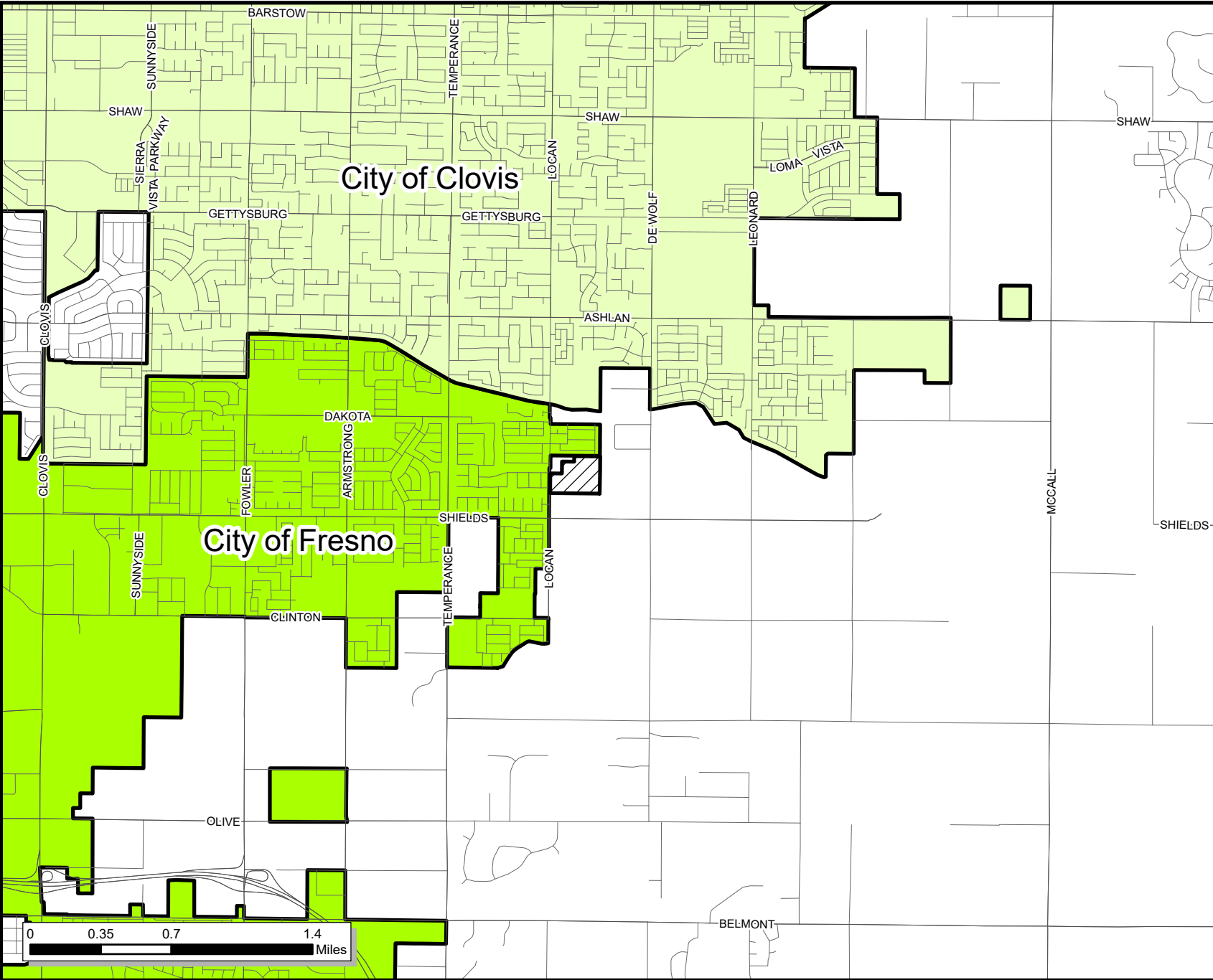
- Move to determine that the proposed site acquisition does not conform to the County General Plan (state the basis for not making the General Consistency Finding); and
- Direct the Secretary to prepare a Resolution documenting the Commission's action.

MM:ksn

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LOCATION MAP

General Plan Conformity - Clovis Unified School District



LEGEND

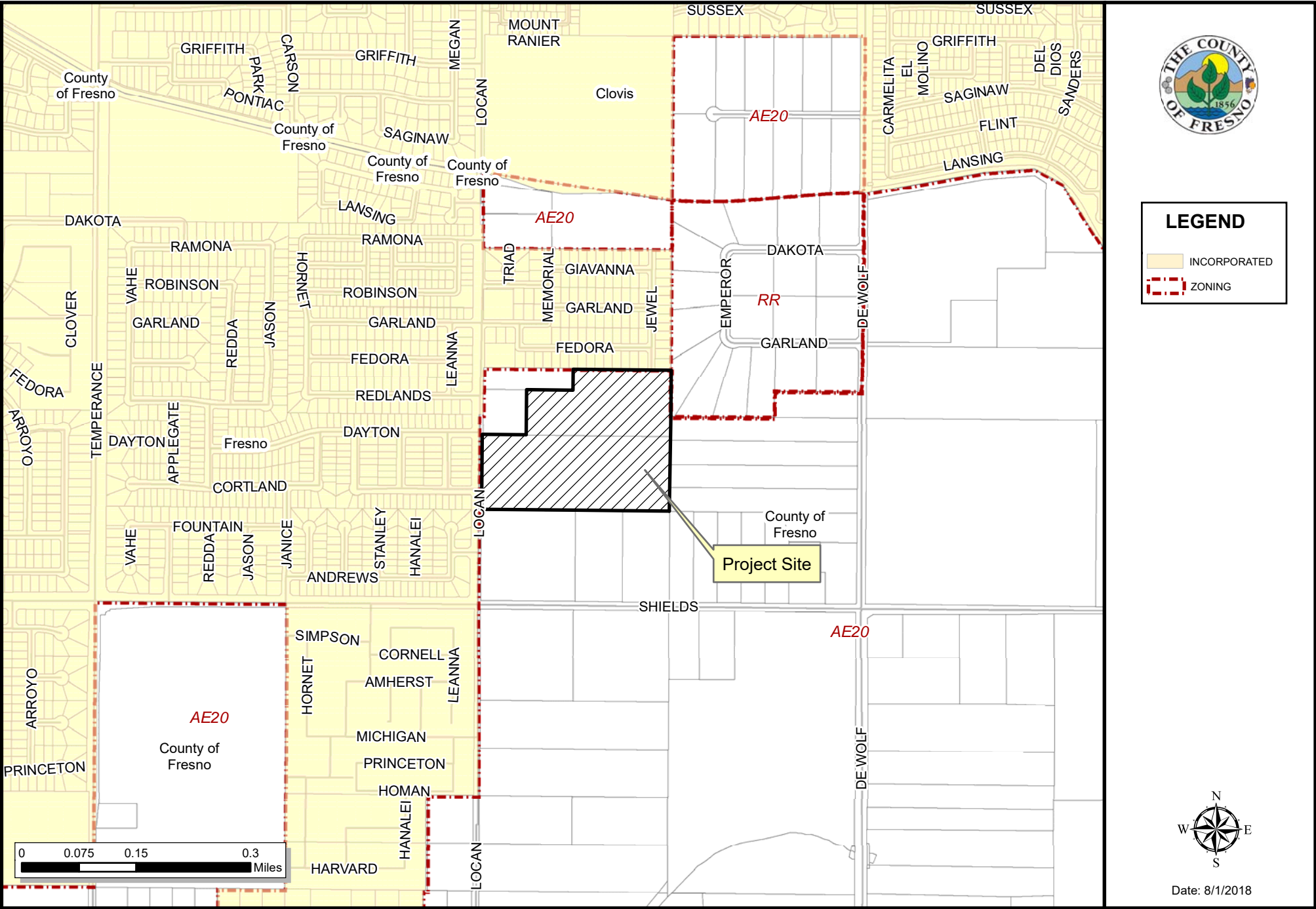
 School Site



Date: 8/8/2018

EXISTING ZONING

General Plan Conformity - Clovis Unified School District



LEGEND

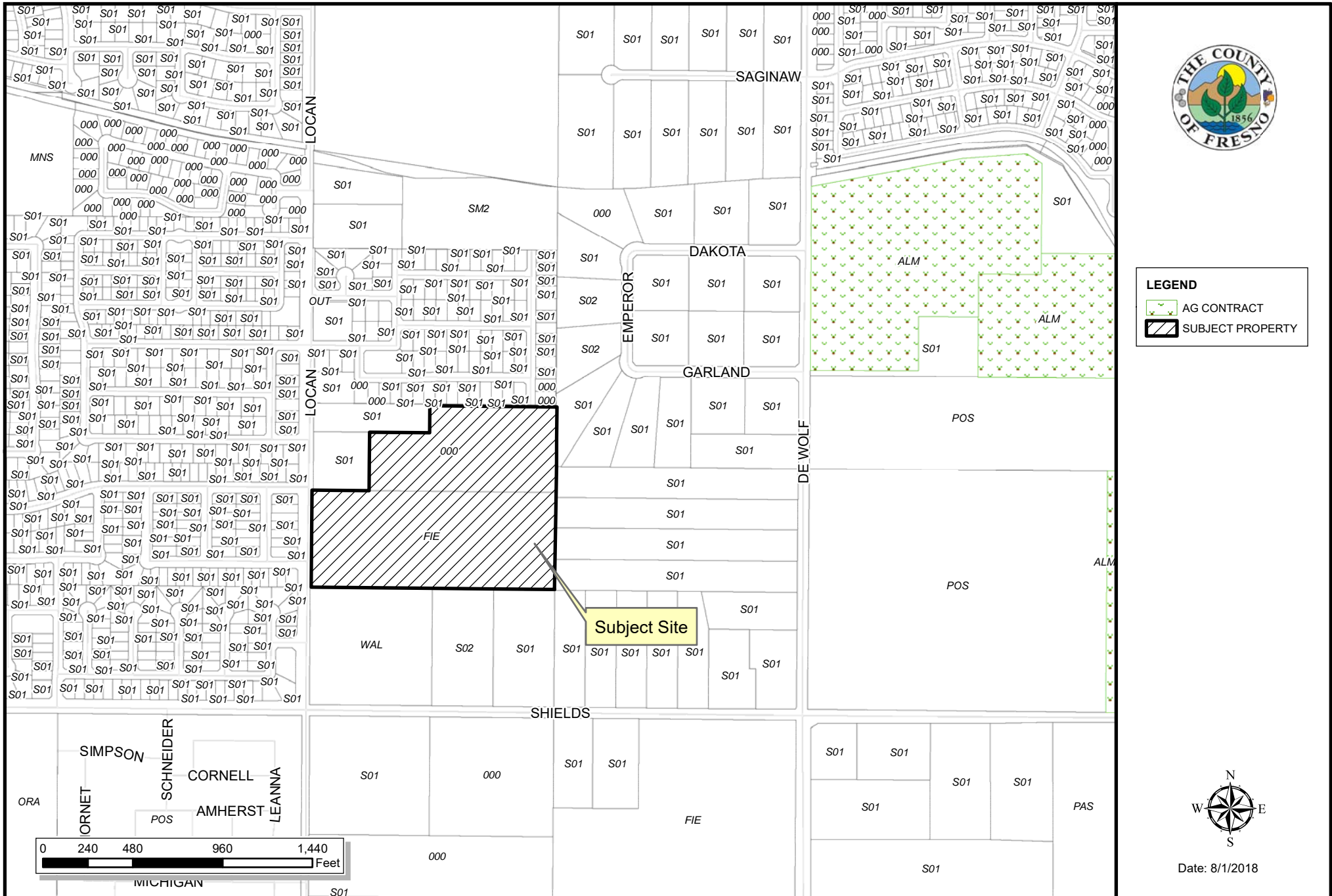
- INCORPORATED
- ZONING





Date: 8/1/2018

EXISTING LAND USE MAP

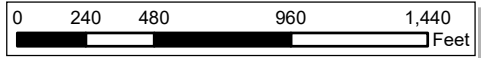
General Plan Conformity - Clovis Unified School District



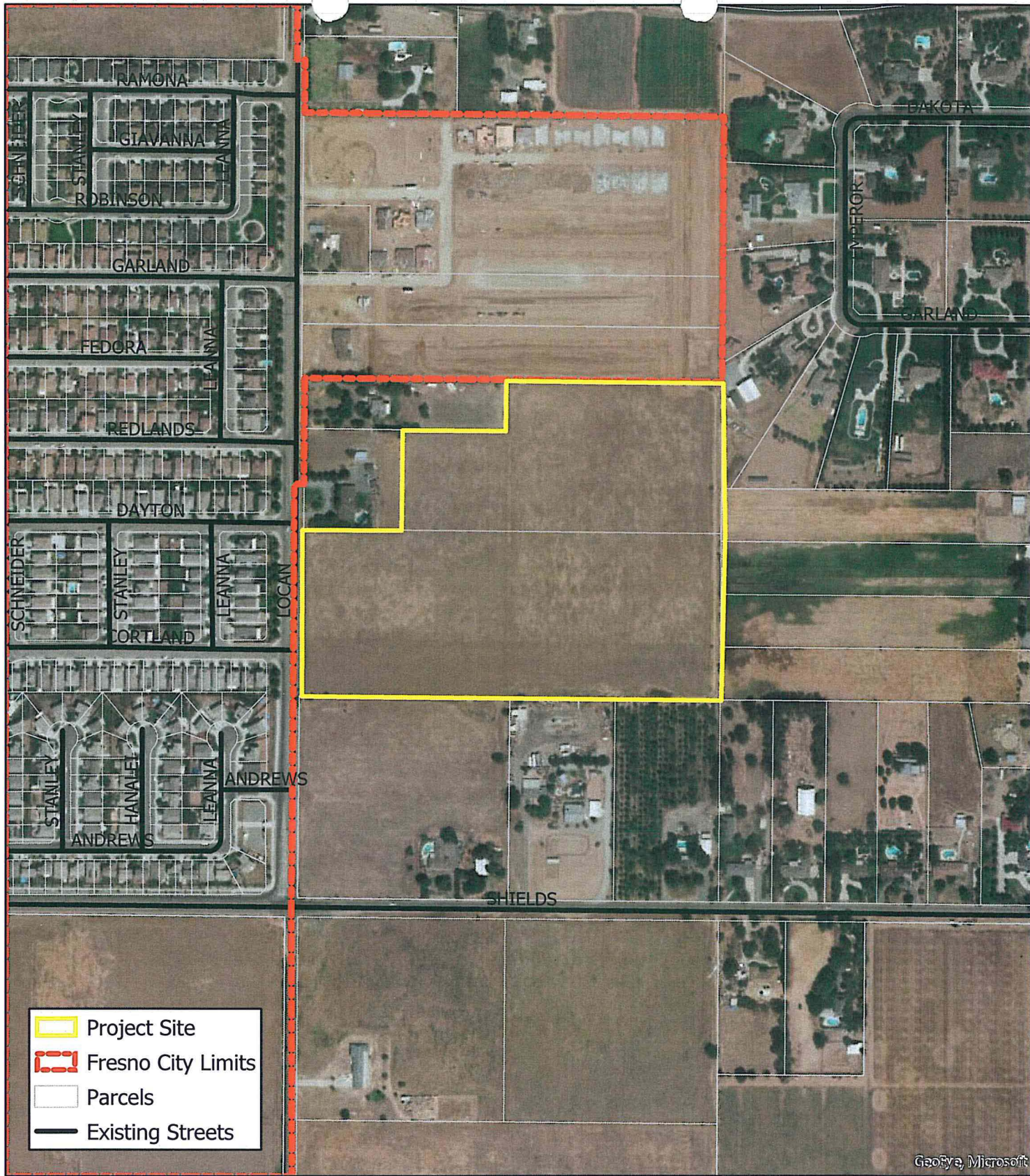
LEGEND

-  AG CONTRACT
-  SUBJECT PROPERTY

Subject Site



Date: 8/1/2018



Project Site

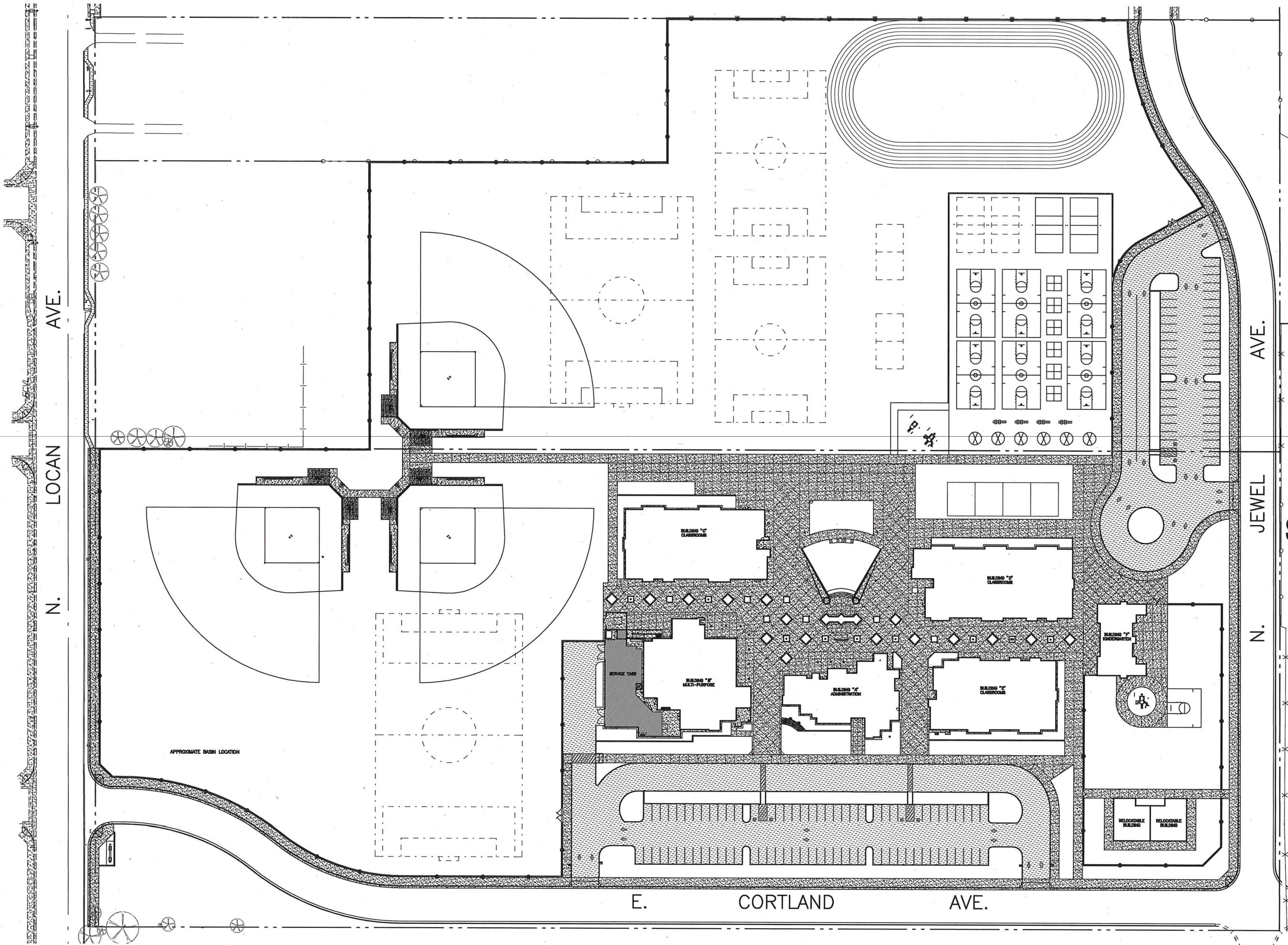
Shields-Locan Elementary School Project
 Clovis Unified School District

Exhibit 4

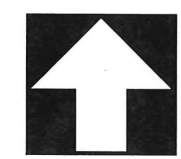
ODELL Planning & Research, Inc.
 Environmental Planning • School Facility Planning • Demographics



EXHIBIT 4



**SHIELDS/ LOCAN
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL**



1"=100'

**Blair,
Church
& Flynn**

CONSULTING ENGINEERS

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