



County of Fresno

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

Planning Commission Staff Report Agenda Item No. 4 March 7, 2019

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

Acquire approximately 22.7 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 at the southeast corner of North Minnewawa Avenue and East International Avenue, approximately 1.25 miles north of the nearest city limits of the City of Clovis (SUP. DIST. 5) (APN 580-080-16S, -02S).

OWNER: International 40, LLC
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

ZONING AND LAND USE DESIGNATIONS:

Criteria	Designation
Fresno County General Plan Designation	Agriculture in the adopted Fresno County General Plan
City of Clovis General Plan Designation/Heritage Grove Specific Plan	Medium-Density Residential
Zoning	AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size)

SITE AND PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS:

Criteria	Existing	Proposed
Parcel Size	19.68 acres (APN 580-080-16S) A portion of a 20-acre parcel (APN 580-080-16S)	An approximately 22.7-acre elementary school site
Project Site	Agricultural (vacant)	Elementary School campus
Nearest Residence	170 feet northwest of the proposed site	N/A
Surrounding Development	Orchard, vacant land, rural residential	N/A

SURROUNDING PROPERTIES:

Surrounding Parcels			
	Size:	Use:	Zoning:
North:	77.50-acre parcel	Vacant	AE-20
South:	42.66-acre parcel	Orchard	AE-20
East:	19.70-acre parcel	Vacant	AE-20
West:	24.41-acre parcel	Vacant	AE-20

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 January 25, 2019, the Clovis Unified School District (District) submitted an application for determination of General Plan Conformity on an approximately 22.7-acre site for the purpose of establishing a new elementary school. The proposed site is located at the southeast corner of North Minnewawa Avenue and East International Avenue, approximately 1.25 miles north of the nearest city limits of the City of Clovis, within the City of Clovis Sphere of Influence. The proposed school site is in the City of Clovis Heritage Grove Specific Plan area and planned for future residential development. The timing for the construction of the school is estimated to be in approximately five years to coincide with planned residential development in the area and funding availability.

The District has stated that the new site is necessary to serve the planned student population growth generated by urban development. 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, 28 classrooms, a multi-purpose building, and physical education facilities/outdoor play areas.

The school would be designed with vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian access to the surrounding circulation systems. According to the City of Clovis Heritage Grove Specific Plan, Minnewawa will be developed as a thematic street (Academic Boulevard), which includes a segregated pedestrian trail and bike path, including a public transportation route that provides connectivity between educational facilities. The City of Clovis' 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 Clovis.

The Enterprise Canal runs westerly adjacent to the southern property line of the proposed site, and development of the site will be subject to Fresno Irrigation District (FID) requirements. FID requirements could include piping, easements, bank improvements, drive approaches, and channel stabilization.

The Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District (FMFCD) would be the storm water drainage service provider for the project, and the location and design of storm water drainage facilities would be subject to review and approval by FMFCD. FMFCD reviewed the project, which lies within the District's Drainage Area "BY2." The District's Master Plan can accommodate the General Plan land

use. A drainage fee is due at the time of development and is estimated to be \$272,136.00.

Adopted Public Land Use Policy: The City of Clovis General Plan and Heritage Grove Specific Plan designate the proposed school site as Medium-Density Residential. Schools are a permitted use in all single-family residential areas per the Clovis General Plan. The Clovis Unified School District expects the site to be annexed by the City of Clovis at the time of development.

Access: The Clovis General Plan designates Minnewawa Avenue and International Avenue as Collectors. The Fresno County General Plan designates Minnewawa Avenue as an Arterial and International Avenue as a Local street. The school site will have street frontage on Minnewawa Avenue and International Avenue, and roads will be constructed to City of Clovis standards at the time of development.

ANALYSIS/DISCUSSION/GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:

Relevant Policies:	Consistency/Considerations:
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.	The proposed school site is within the City of Clovis Sphere of Influence and is designated for medium-density residential development in the City of Clovis General Plan. The project was referred to the City of Clovis, which had no comment on the project.
Policy LU-A.13: The County shall protect agricultural operations from conflicts with non-agricultural uses by requiring buffers between proposed non-agricultural uses and adjacent agricultural operations.	Although designated agricultural by the County General Plan, the proposed site is in the City of Clovis Sphere of Influence and in an area planned for future urban development by the City as medium-density residential. It is expected that this area will develop incrementally in accordance with the City of Clovis General Plan and become urbanized, thus displacing agricultural uses. Clovis General Plan Policy 3.7 requires new development near rural residential and agricultural uses to bear the major responsibility of achieving land use compatibility and buffering.
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.	The District is attempting to accommodate growth projections and neighborhood needs with acquisition of this school site.
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.	It is the intent of Policy PF-I.6 to discourage establishment of school facilities in agricultural areas because school facilities attract urban growth such as new residential developments, which could result in premature annexation of land as well as adversely affecting the surrounding farming operations. It is acknowledged that the proposed site is in an

Relevant Policies:	Consistency/Considerations:
	area designated for future urban development by the City of Clovis and is planned to be developed with residential uses over the next decade.
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.	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.
Policy HS-E.2: The County shall ensure that new development, including public infrastructure projects, does not create safety hazards such as glare from direct or reflective sources, smoke, electrical interference, hazardous chemicals, or fuel storage in violation of adopted safety standards.	The District proposes to purchase approximately 22.7 acres of land for the development of an elementary school. An elementary school is not expected to create glare, smoke, electrical interference, or have hazardous chemicals or fuel storage on site.

GENERAL PLAN POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

The proposed school site and immediate surrounding area are within the City of Clovis Sphere of Influence and are designated for residential land use. The site is also within the City of Clovis Heritage Grove Specific Plan area. The Fresno County General Plan designates the site and surrounding area as agricultural and subject to Countywide goals, objectives, and standards.

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.

According to City of Clovis General Plan Policy 3.7 - Urban Village Neighborhood Concept: Residential developments in Urban Centers must contribute to and become a part of a neighborhood by incorporating a central park feature, a school complex, a hierarchy of streets, pedestrian pathways, or other neighborhood amenities. Clovis General Plan Table LU-2, regarding existing or proposed school sites, states that public and private schools are a permitted use in all single-family residential areas.

The City of Clovis has not started annexation of this site 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 Clovis Sphere of Influence and planned for medium-density single-family residential neighborhoods. The subject school is being located at this site to accommodate planned student 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. Thus, the proposed site is not in conflict with related provisions and land uses.

REVIEWING AGENCY/DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:

Staff received comments from the following agencies/departments: Policy Planning Unit, Site Plan Review Unit, Building and Safety Section, and Design Division of the Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning; County of Fresno Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division; Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District; Fresno Irrigation District; State Water Resources Control Board; and Fresno County Fire Protection District. The comments did not express any concerns regarding General Plan conformity.

CONCLUSION:

County staff finds 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)

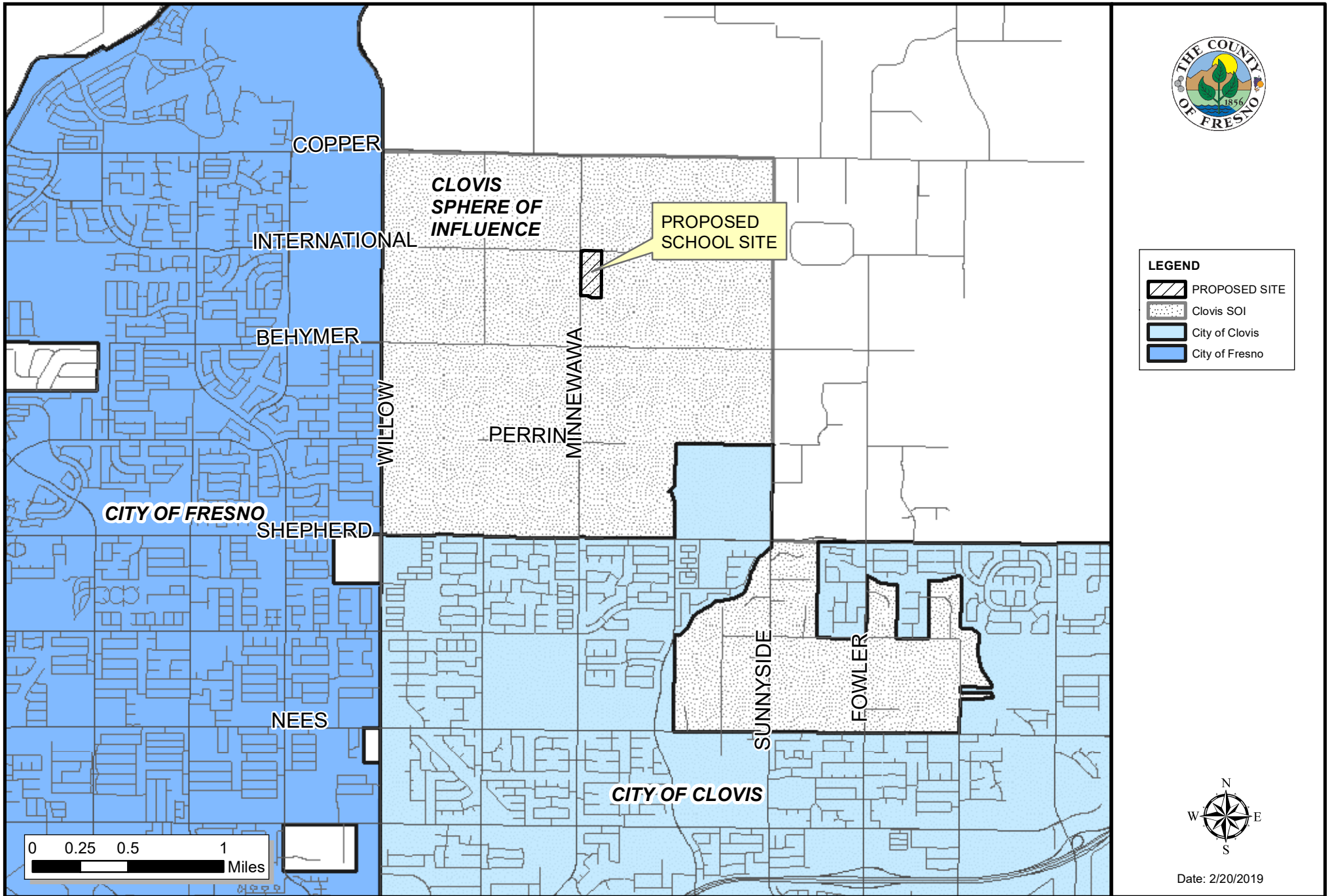
- Move to determine that the proposed site acquisition does not conform to the County General Plan (state the basis for not making the General Plan Consistency Finding); and
- Direct the Secretary to prepare a Resolution documenting the Commission's action.

MM:ksn

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LOCATION MAP

General Plan Conformity - Clovis Unified School District



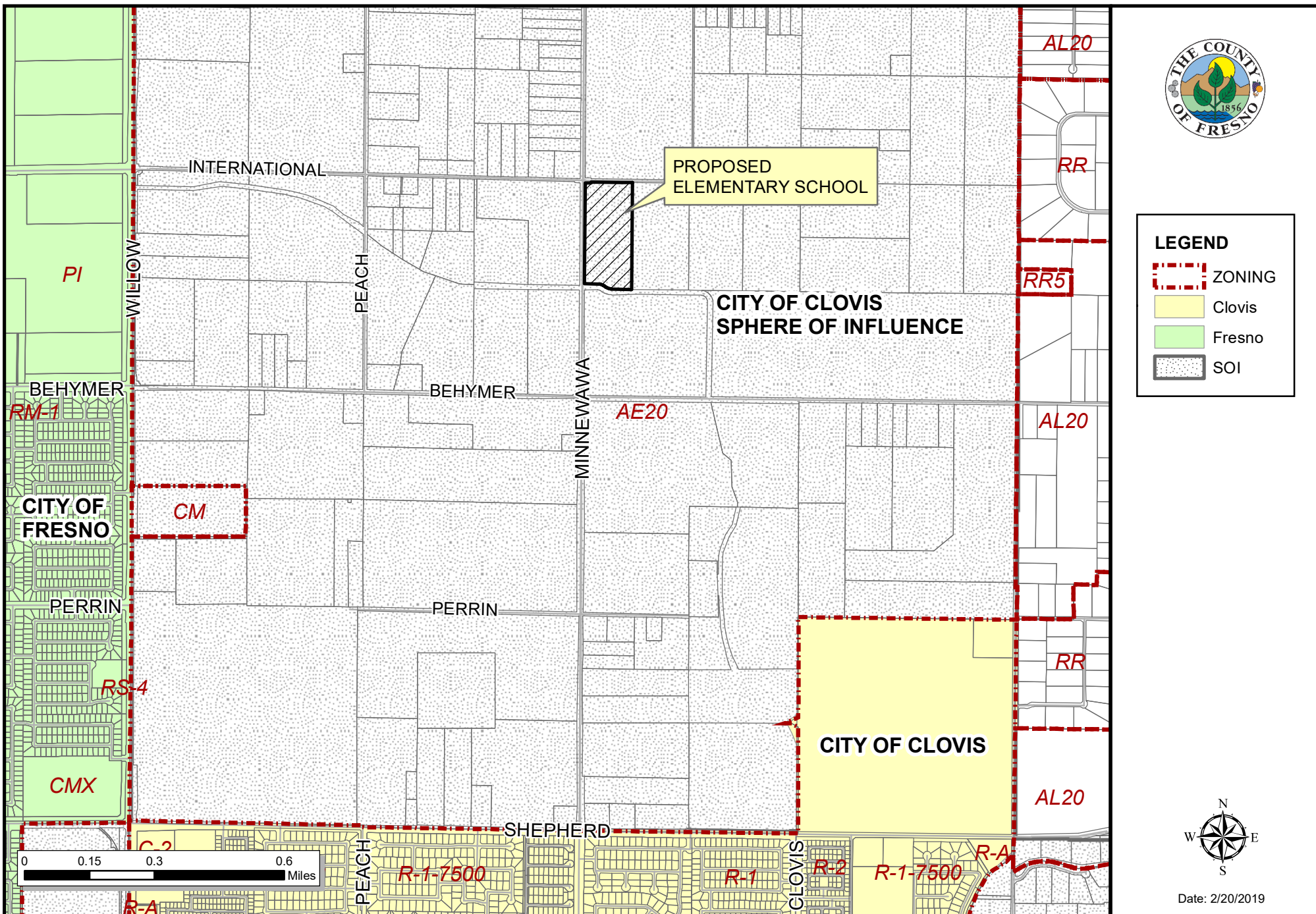
LEGEND	
	PROPOSED SITE
	Clovis SOI
	City of Clovis
	City of Fresno



Date: 2/20/2019

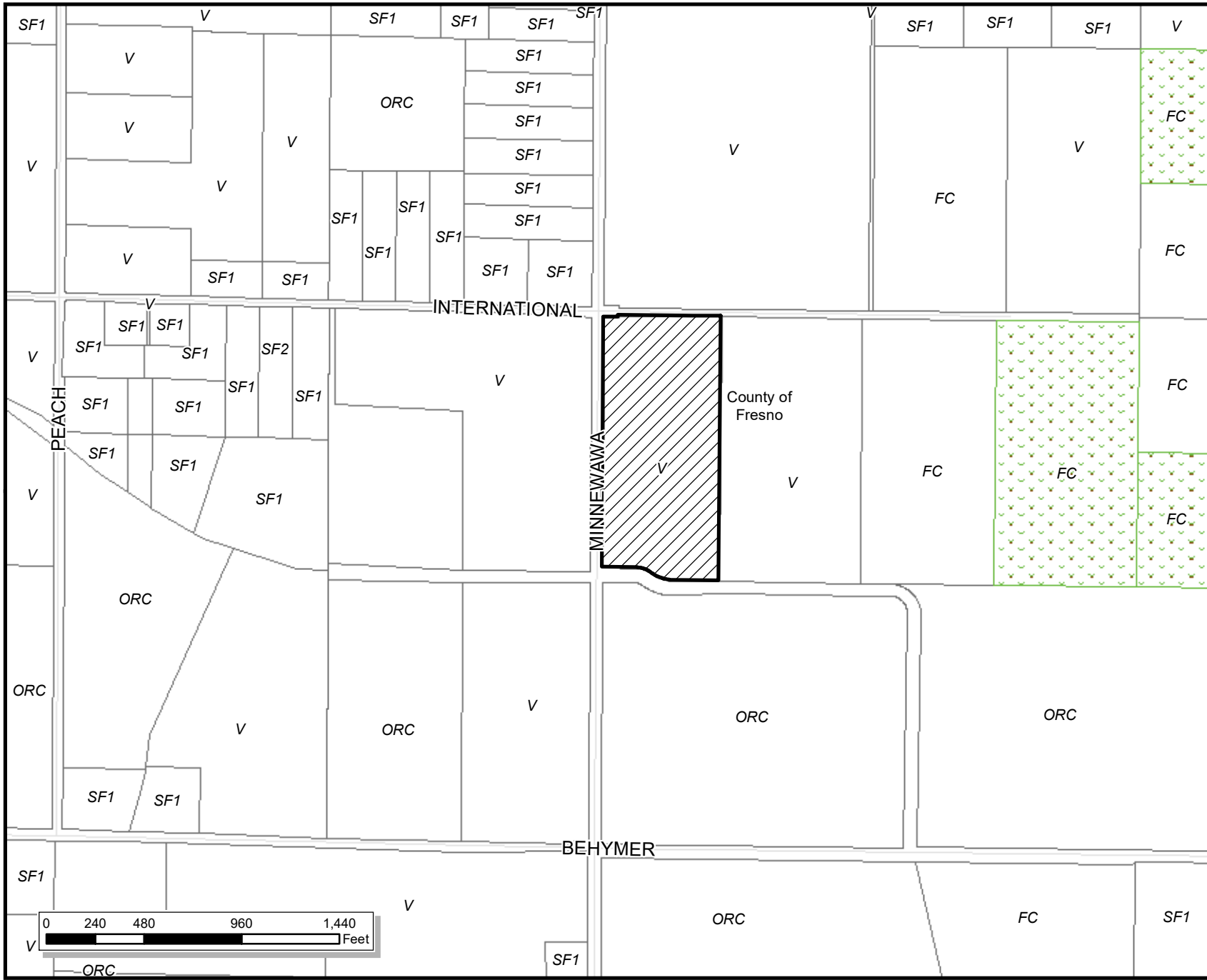
EXISTING ZONING

General Plan Conformity - Clovis Unified School District



EXISTING LAND USE MAP

General Plan Conformity - Clovis Unified School District



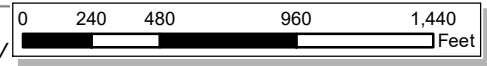
LEGEND

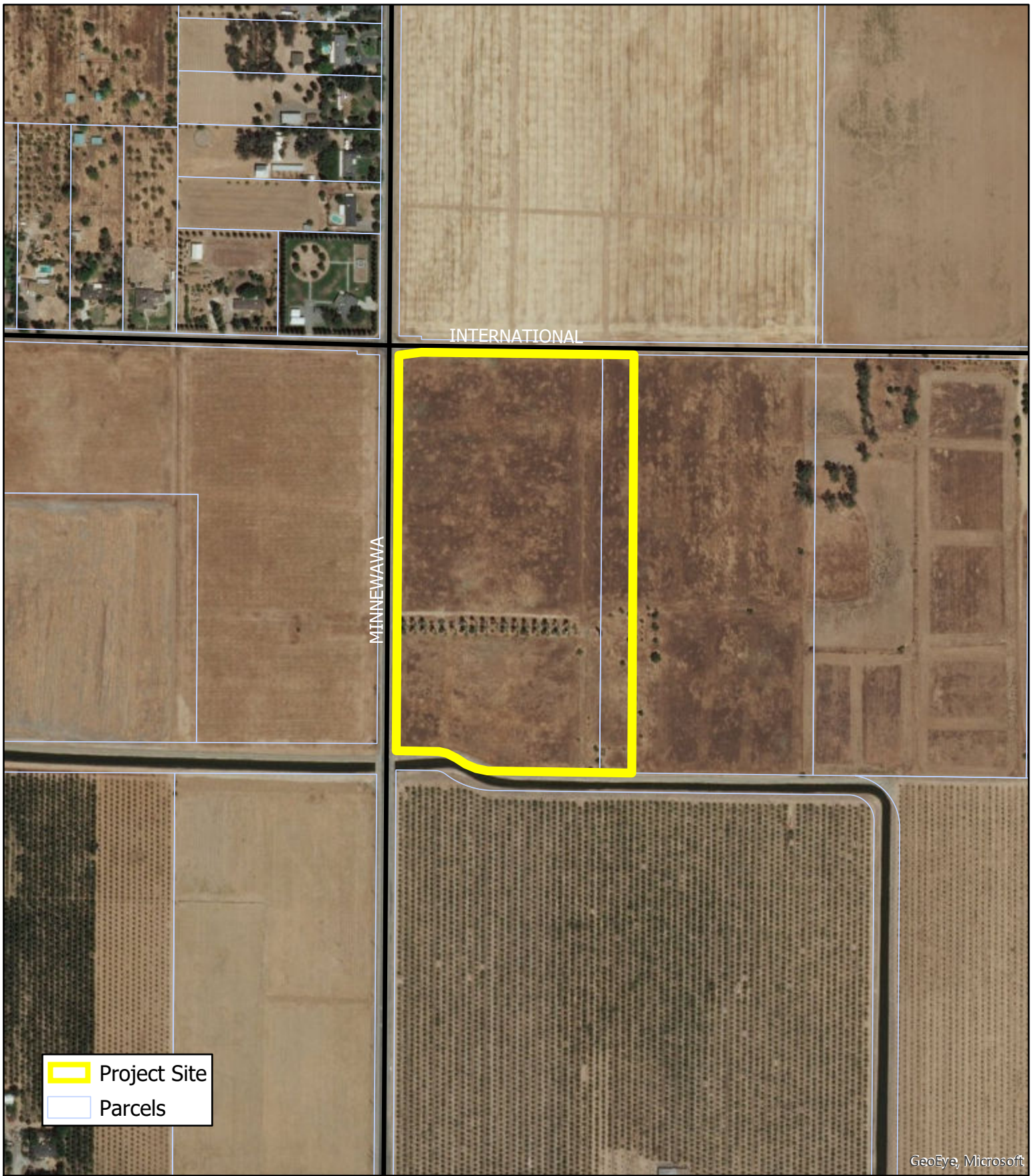
- AG CONTRACT
- SUBJECT PROPERTY

- CP# - OFFICE COMM./PROF
- FC - FIELD CROP
- GRZ - GRAZING
- I - INDUSTRIAL
- ORC - ORCHARD
- SF# - SINGLE FAMILY
- V - VACANT
- VIN - VINEYARD



Date: 1/25/2019

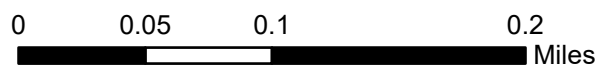




Project Site

Minnewawa-International Elementary School Project
 Clovis Unified School District

EXHIBIT 4



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