

Riverdale Joint Unified School District

**REQUEST FOR PRELIMINARY COMMENT
Riverdale High School Facility Improvement Project**

To:

Responsible, Trustee and Interested Agencies
Interested Persons

From:

Riverdale Joint Unified School District
Jeff Percell
Superintendent
PO Box 1058
Riverdale, CA 93656
Telephone: (559) 867-8200
Email: jpercell@rjUSD.org

Date: January 13, 2025

Purpose: The Riverdale Joint Unified School District (District) proposes undertaking the Riverdale High School Facility Improvement Project (project). The purpose of this Request for Preliminary Comment is to invite responsible agencies, trustees, and interested parties, to submit written comments on any concerns they may have on potential environmental effects. The District will consider the comments in preparing a California Environmental Quality Act Initial Study for the project and determining whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Report for the project or to adopt a Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration. You will have the opportunity to comment again after you have reviewed the completed environmental documents.

Comments: Please send any comments in response to this Request for Preliminary Comment to Jeff Percell, Superintendent (contact information provided above). **The deadline for submission of comments is February 12, 2025.**

Project Location and Description: The project site is located at 3086 West Mt. Whitney Avenue, Riverdale, California on 24.8 acres east and north of the intersection of S. Hazel Avenue and Stathem Street in the unincorporated community of Riverdale, Fresno County, California (APN: 053-130-12T and 053-130-82T). The location of the project site is displayed in Figures 1 and 2, and a preliminary site plan is included as Figure 3.

The Riverdale Joint Unified School District (District) proposes renovating the football/soccer and track stadium, reconstruct a parking lot, constructing new community multi-use athletic fields, reconstructing the Agriculture Barn Education Facility (Ag Barn), and improve a section of S. Hazel Avenue. Work would be completed in three phases. The exact division of work to be completed in each phase is not entirely known at this time and would depend on available funding and construction costs. Phase 1 would renovate the existing high school football/soccer and track stadium, reconstruct a parking lot, and expand the existing campus stormwater basin. Phase 2 would construct three new multi-use athletic fields and demolish the existing ag barn building. Phase 3

would construct a new Agriculture Education Barn facility, a small bathroom building, reconstruct S. Hazel Avenue, and add sidewalk and parking on the east side of Hazel Avenue. Details of each phase are described as follows:

Phase 1 – Football/Soccer Stadium and Track Remodel:

Phase 1 site is on approximately 7.5 acres, excluding the unknown area for possible stormwater basin expansion. The remodeled football/soccer stadium and track would comprise approximately 5.5 acres. Stadium remodeling would include removing the existing soil berms and trees surrounding the track, demolition of stadium seats (with approximately 2,000 home and 500 visitor bench seats), construction of new aluminum stadium bleacher stands (with 1,500 home seats and 500 visitor seats). The football/soccer field would be regraded, planted with turf grass, and receive new irrigation systems. Other improvement would include the installation of a 9-lane rubber-surface 400-meter track and track and field facilities (including long jump, triple jump, high jump, shot put, and discus), stadium perimeter fencing, and landscaping improvements surrounding the new stadium and track. A new 1,400 sqft +/- building to house a training room, snack bar, ticket window, and toilet facilities would be constructed. Eight existing 70 feet tall stadium lights would be removed and four 70 feet to 90 feet tall stadium lights would be added. The existing public bathroom would be demolished and a new 520 sqft bathroom building would be constructed immediately south of the existing parking lot. Phase 1 may include reconstruction of the existing 1.6 acre north campus parking lot. This work could be completed during Phase 2 depending on available funding. If the parking lot is not constructed during Phase 1, then three (3) to five (5) accessible parking stalls would be added at the east end of the existing parking lot (See Figure 3).

Phase 1 would install new utilities, including electrical, sewer, water, storm drain, and irrigation. All utilities would connect to existing campus utility systems. Approximately 660 feet of overhead electrical utilities spanning west to east from S. Hazel Avenue along the north side of the parking lot to the north side of the stadium would be removed and replaced with underground electrical lines. Trenching for the undergrounding of electrical lines would disturb an approximate 0.3-acre area of soil. A new electrical transformer and irrigation control station would be installed at the west end of the parking lot, or the southwest corner of the existing practice baseball/softball fields located immediately north of the stadium.

Storm drain utilities would connect to the existing campus underground stormwater conveyance system, which discharges to the existing campus stormwater retention basin located about 1,500 ft north of the intersection of Stathem St. and S. Hazel Ave., on the west side of S. Hazel Avenue. This basin may need to be expanded to the south or a second basin could be constructed east of S. Hazel Avenue and connected via an underground pipe. Whether or not the basin would be enlarged, and the exact size and location of the possible expanded expansion is not yet known. Hydrologic analysis will be completed prior to the approval of the project to determine what exact basin improvements would be necessary, if any. To estimate potential environmental impacts of the possible expanded stormwater basin, an area of 1.25 acres of existing farmland would be cleared and dug. Additionally,

based on pending hydraulic analysis, the existing stormwater main under S. Hazel Avenue may need to be excavated, removed, and replaced with an upsized pipe for approximately 1,300 feet starting from the intersection of Stathem St. and S. Hazel Avenue extending north. If the existing stormwater main under Hazel Avenue must be upsized, additional stub-out stormwater pipeline connections would likely be constructed along Hazel Avenue for the future curb and gutter drain inlets and the Ag Barn proposed for Phase 3.

Soil removed from the existing soil berms surrounding the stadium and the stormwater basin would be moved and stockpiled to an area (1.7 acres) located east of the existing Ag Barn. This soil would be stored until it is used as fill for Phase 2, the new Multi-Use Community Athletic Fields.

Phase 2 – Multi-Use Community Athletic Fields:

Phase 2 site is on approximately 10.8 acres. Phase 2 would include grading and planting turf grass on about 6 acres of new athletics fields, located north of the existing parking lot and west of the existing baseball/softball practice fields. The multi-use fields would include six to eight 30-ft tall pole ‘practice’ lights, electrical systems, irrigation systems, and a tree row at the north perimeter of the new fields. To construct the new multi-use fields, the existing 5,070 sq-ft Ag Barn and greater Ag Barn facility and school community farm would be demolished/cleared. Farther north, approximately 2.6 acres of agriculture land, (owned and leased out by the District), also planted in corn, would be cleared. New connections for irrigation water would be constructed to the existing water line under S. Hazel Avenue. Approximately 685 feet of new electrical conduit would be constructed from the intersection of Stathem St. and S. Hazel Avenue extending north to power the multi-use fields. An additional 180 feet of stub-out electrical conduit may also be constructed extending further north to be used for the future Phase 3 Ag Barn.

Phase 2 would also include turf grass rehabilitation for the existing 4.55-acre practice baseball/softball fields north of the stadium. The existing turf grass would be stripped and replaced with new turf grass, and new irrigation spray heads would be installed.

Phase 3 – New Ag Barn Facility:

Phase 3 would construct a 3-acre site for a new Ag Barn located across S. Hazel Avenue from the existing Maintenance Operations Facility. As planned, the Ag Barn building is approximately 18,470 sq-ft and would be used for housing animals for educational purposes. The size of the Ag Barn building may be reduced to align with available funding. The surrounding facility would include about 12 parking stalls, concrete sidewalks, gravel access roads, and landscaped areas. Based on available funds, chicken hutches, a shade structure, orchards, and a pasture field may be constructed. Approximately 3 acres of land currently planted as corn fields (owned and leased out by the District) would be cleared to construct the new Ag Barn Facility. Sewer, water, electrical, and stormwater utility connections would be made to mains located under S. Hazel Avenue.

Phase 3 would also include road improvements to Hazel Avenue, starting at the intersection of Stathem St. and Hazel Ave., extending 970 feet north. This area, approximately 1.38 acres, along S. Hazel Ave. would be demolished and reconstructed with new stormwater drain inlets and 62 parking stalls placed on the east side of S. Hazel Ave. These parking stalls would be oversized for large vehicle parking, 10-feet wide x 20-feet deep. Approximately 865 feet of new sidewalk would be constructed on the east side of S. Hazel Avenue. A 700 sq-ft +/- community toilet building would be constructed at the northwest corner of the new multi-use fields and connected to the existing sewer main under Hazel Avenue. The toilet building will serve the community fields and the Phase 3 Ag Farm.

Potential Issues to be addressed

Conversion of Prime Farmland

Expansion of existing stormwater basin & wetland vegetation

Consistency with Riverdale Community Plan

Consistency with Fresno County General Plan

Historical Resources

Tribal Cultural Resources

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gasses

Water Quality

Geologic and Seismic Hazards

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Affects to nesting migratory birds

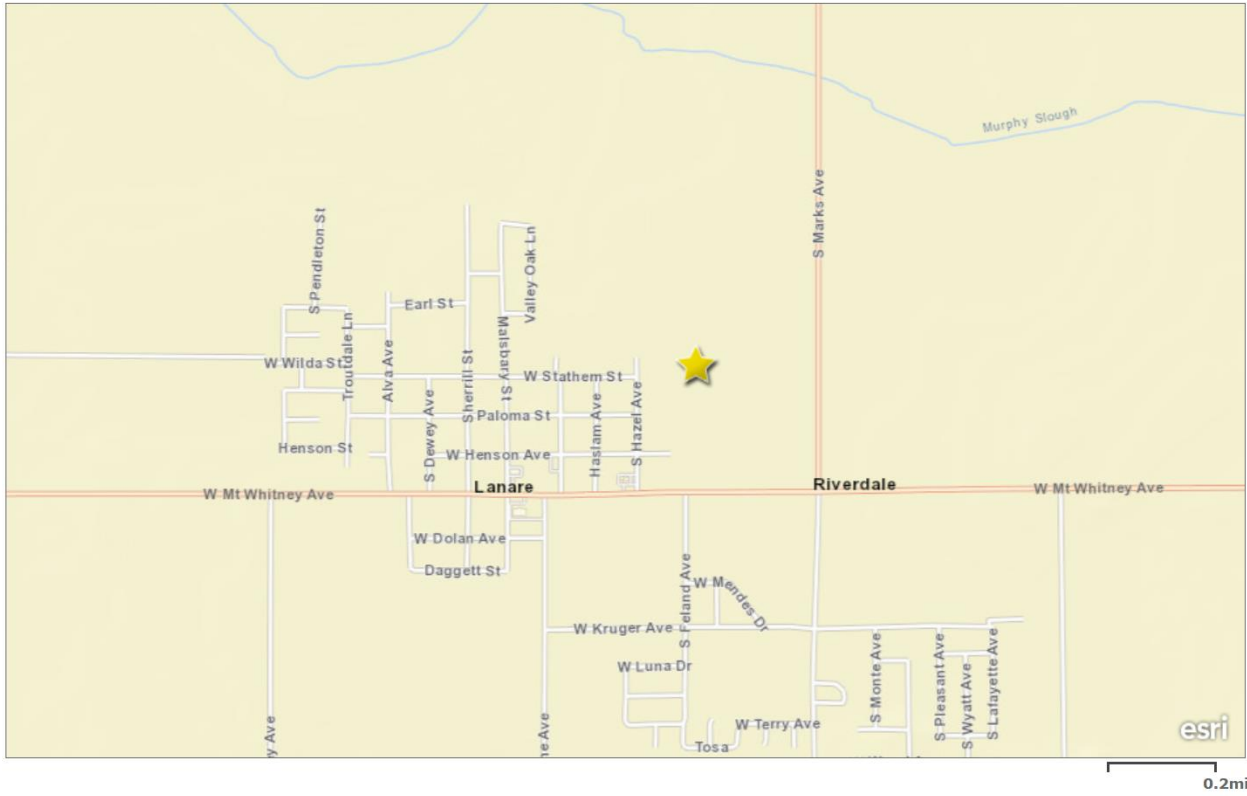
Utility Capacity/Usage (waster, sewer, electrical, stormwater)

Traffic

Noise

Light/glare

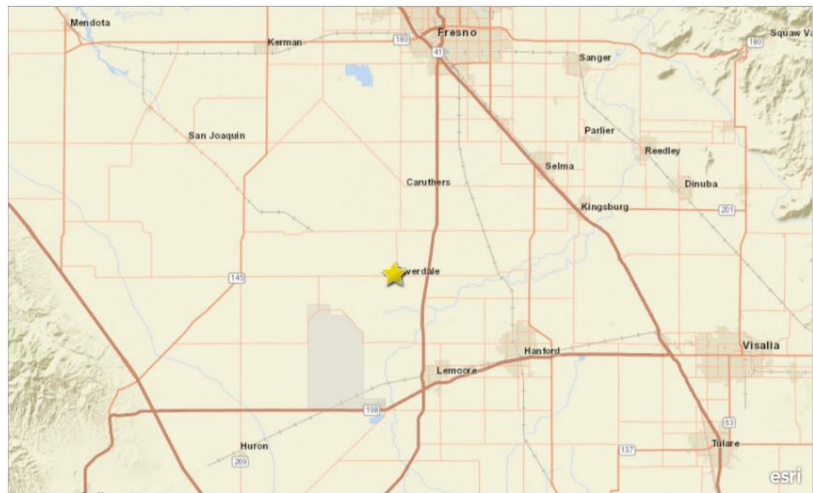
Figure 1: Regional Location



Fresno County Dept. PWP, Bureau of Land Management, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, NGA, USGS



Project Location



Esri, HERE, Garmin, NGA, USGS, NPS

Figure 2: Location Maps

Figure 3: Initial Site Maps