Appendix J Traffic/Transportation Impact Analysis

Appendix

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TRAFFIC/TRANSPORTATION IMPACT ANALYSIS

FOR THE PROPOSED

SANTA FE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL EXPANSION

PORTERVILLE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Prepared for

PORTERVILLE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
&
PLACEWORKS

Prepared by

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I.
INTRODUCTION AND STUDY METHODOLOGY

This report summarizes the results of a traffic/transportation impact analysis that was conducted for the Santa Fe Elementary School expansion project proposed by Porterville Unified School District at 286 East Orange Avenue in Porterville. The school site is located on the northeast side of Orange Avenue between A Street and Plano Street. The project location is shown on Figure 1 and the proposed site plan is shown on Figure 2.

The project includes the installation of 11 new classrooms to accommodate TK, pre-K, and kindergarten students. The project also includes an expansion of the existing parking lot adjacent to Orange Avenue, a new parking lot at the northwest corner of the school site, and a new drop-off/pick-up zone adjacent to the new parking lot. The school currently houses approximately 822 students and the project would increase the capacity to 1,091 students.

An analysis has been prepared to evaluate the traffic/transportation impacts of the proposed school expansion project. The methodology for the traffic study, in general, was to address the transportation issue areas of the CEQA environmental checklist, which includes an evaluation of the project's impacts on 1) transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, 2) vehicle miles traveled (VMT), 3) increased hazards or incompatible uses, and 4) emergency access. An inventory was taken of the streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, and public transit routes in the vicinity of the school site, which included physical features such as the number of lanes, types of traffic control devices, and crosswalk locations. Safety and operational characteristics of the school's driveways, parking areas, and drop-off/pick-up areas were also addressed. The increased volumes of traffic that would be generated by the expanded school were also quantified.

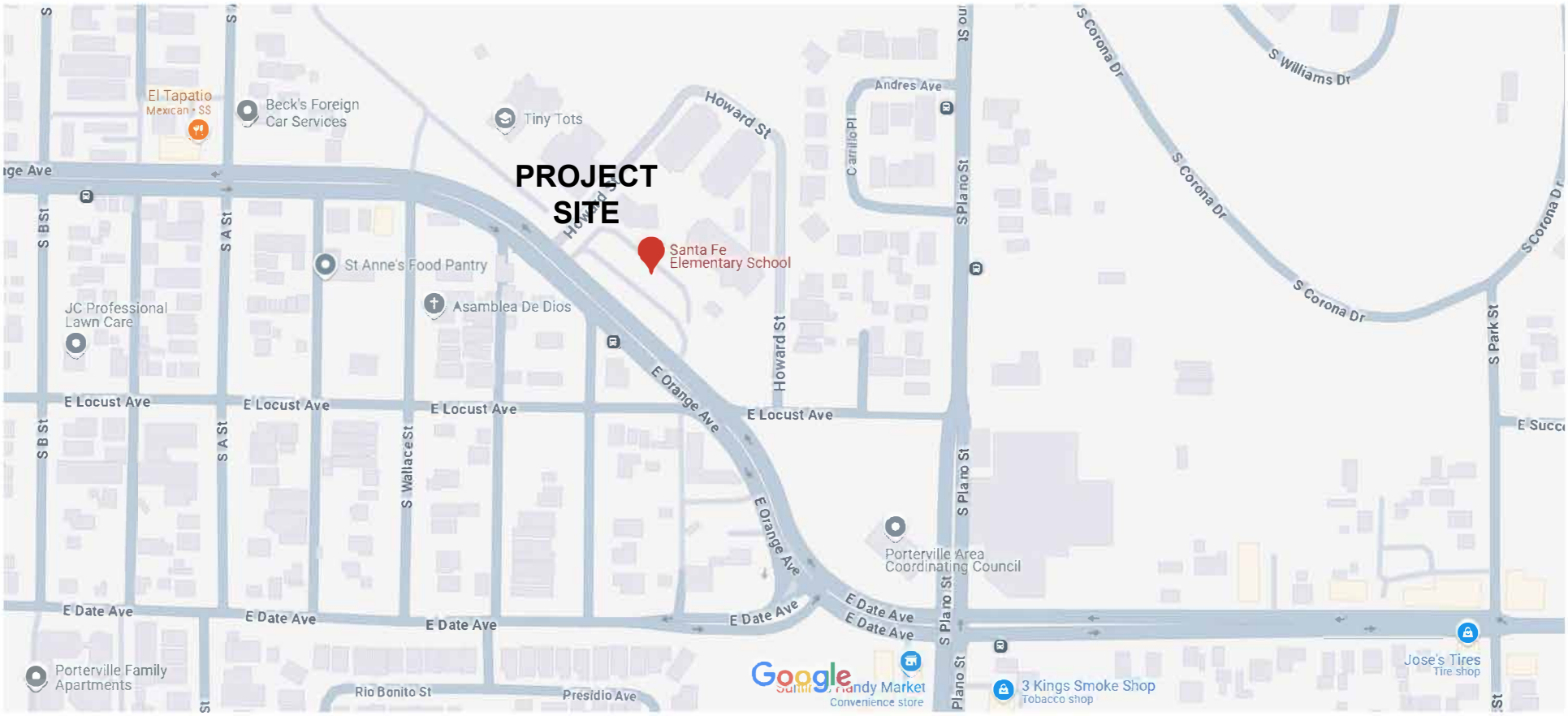


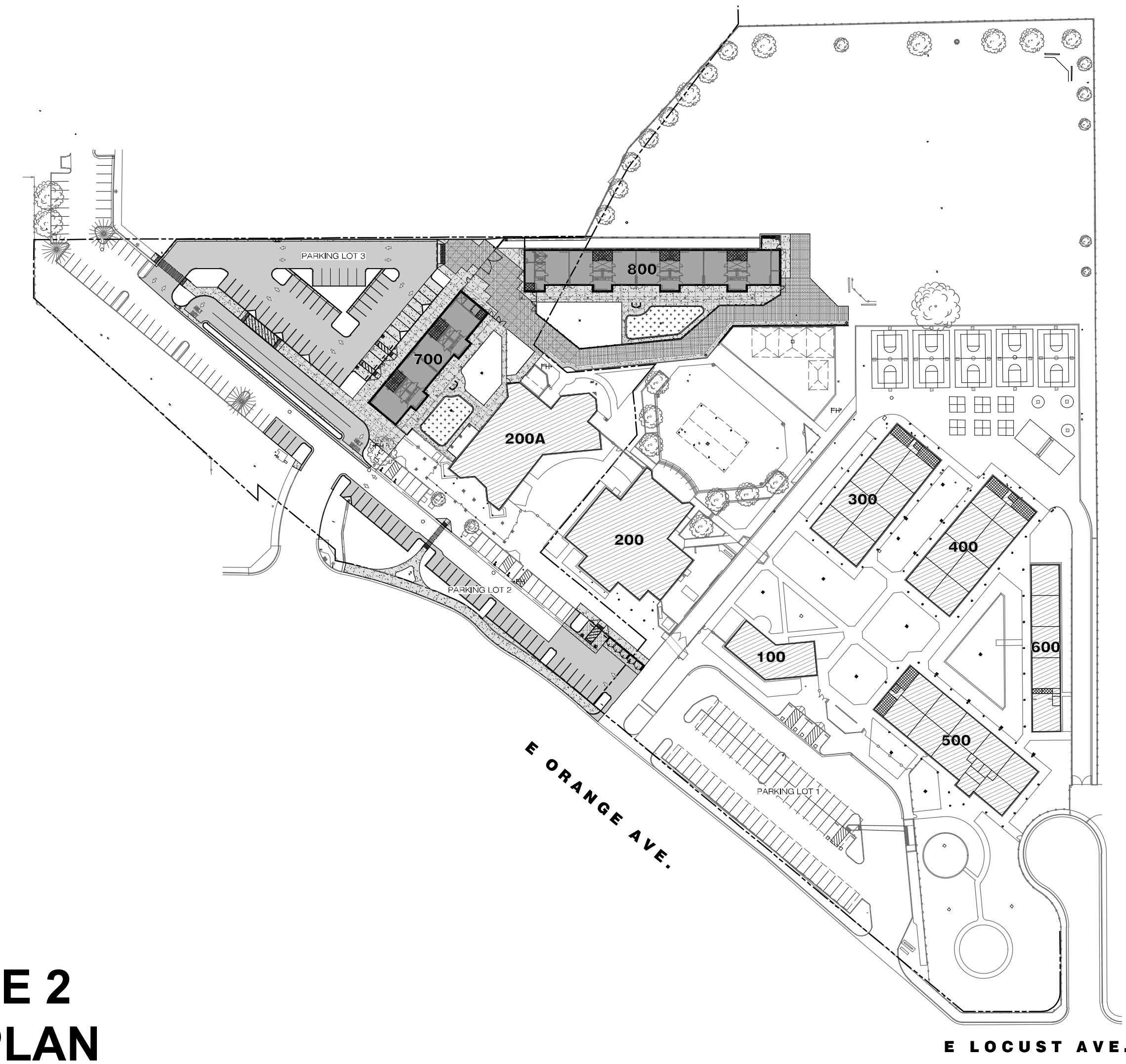
FIGURE 1
LOCATION MAP

APPROVALS

FILE # 54-76 | APPLICATION # 02-121996

NOTES AND LEGEND :

- NEW BUILDING
- EXIST. BUILDING
- ACCESSIBLE RESTROOMS
- PROPERTY LINE
- FH FIRE HYDRANT/ SHUT-OFF VALVE



north

FIGURE 2
SITE PLAN

SITE PLAN

SCALE: 1" = 60'-0"

BUILDING SUMMARY

NOTE: SUMMARY BASED ON CONFORMANCE TO STATE BUILDING, TITLE 24, PART 2, C.B.C. NO MAJOR RE-CONSTRUCTION, ADDITIONS OR CHANGES IN USE ARE PROPOSED IN THIS PROJECT. THESE BUILDINGS WILL MAINTAIN THEIR CURRENT FUNCTIONS, CAPACITY & USE.

BLDG.	DESCRIPTION	OCCUPANCY TYPE	CONSTR. TYPE	AREA (s.f.)	D.S.A. #	MODERNIZED
100	ADMINISTRATION	B	V-N	3,417	02-103538	
200	GYMNASIUM/ MULTI-USE	A2, B, S2	V-1	10,956	02-103538	02-120885
300	CLASSROOMS	E1	V-N	8,480	02-103538	
400	CLASSROOMS	E1	V-N	8,480	02-103538	
500	KINDERGARTEN	E1	V-N	10,520	02-103538	
600	KINDERGARTEN	E1	V-N	5,316	02-108500	
200A	LIBRARY/CLASSROOMS	A3, E1	V-N	10,080	02-102527	
	SHADE STUCTURE	A-3	II-B	2,560	02-120885	
	PARKING SOLAR CANOPY	S-2	II-B	4,981	02-113226	
	PARKING SOLAR CANOPY	S-2	II-B	6,907	02-113226	

ACCESSIBLE PARKING :

PARKING LOT 1: 71 EXISTING PARKING STALLS PER DSA# 02–103538/02–108500. 3 ACCESSIBLE PARKING STALLS REQUIRED. 6 ACCESSIBLE PARKING STALLS INCLUDING 2 VAN ACCESSIBLE STALLS PROVIDED, 6>3 THEREFORE OK.

PARKING LOT 2: 112 EXISTING PARKING STALLS PER DSA# 02–102527, REDUCED TO 105 PARKING STALLS PER THIS APPLICATION. 5 ACCESSIBLE PARKING STALLS REQUIRED. 6 ACCESSIBLE PARKING STALLS INCLUDING 1 VAN ACCESSIBLE STALL PROVIDED, 6>5 THEREFORE OK.

PARKING LOT 3: 49 PARKING STALLS PER THIS APPLICATION. 2 ACCESSIBLE PARKING STALLS REQUIRED. 2 ACCESSIBLE PARKING STALLS INCLUDING 1 VAN ACCESSIBLE STALL PROVIDED, 2=2 THEREFORE OK. 1 VAN ACCESSIBLE EV CHARGING STATION, 1 STANDARD ACCESSIBLE EV CHARGING STATION, 5 EV CAPABLE STALLS

LICENSED ARCHITECT
MICHAEL J. SCOTT JR.
No. C-34290
REN. 05-31-25
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

DATE: DECEMBER 31, 2023

NEW PRESCHOOL AND TK/KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS AT SANTA FE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PORTERVILLE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
286 E ORANGE AVENUE, PORTERVILLE, CA 93257

REVISIONS

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TITLE

PROJECT 23076

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II.
EXISTING TRAFFIC/TRANSPORTATION CONDITIONS

The street network in the vicinity of the project site, which includes sidewalks and bike lanes, an inventory of the types of traffic control devices and crosswalk locations, and the nearby bus transit routes are described below.

Street Network

The streets that provide access to the proposed project area include Orange Avenue, A Street, Wallace Street, Locust Avenue, Howard Street, and Plano Street. The following paragraphs provide a brief description of the characteristics of these streets.

Orange Avenue

Orange Avenue is a four lane east-west street that abuts the southwest side of the school campus. Parking is prohibited along both sides of the street between A Street and Plano Street except for a short segment of the block across the street from the school site, which accommodates on-street parking in front of residences. Sidewalks are in place on both sides of the street and there are no bike lanes. The speed limit on Orange Avenue is 35 miles per hour (mph), but with a reduced school speed limit of 25 mph when children are present.

There are four driveways on the northeast side of Orange Avenue that provide access to school. One is an entry driveway at the southeast end of the existing main parking lot and another is the exit driveway from this parking lot. The third driveway leads to a maintenance/emergency access road located at mid-campus adjacent to the main parking lot. The fourth driveway, which is a northerly extension of Wallace Street, provides access to the secondary parking lots adjacent to Orange Avenue.

A Street

A Street is a two lane north-south street located approximately 350 feet west of the school campus. It has bike lanes, sidewalks, and parking on both sides of the street, although the bike lanes on A Street end at Walnut Avenue one block north of Orange Avenue and at Locust Avenue one block south of Orange Avenue. There is a driveway on the east side of A Street north of Orange Avenue that provides access to the northwest corner of the school site. The speed limit on A Street is 25 mph.

Wallace Street

Wallace Street is a two lane north-south street that intersects with Orange Avenue in alignment with the school's west driveway. It has sidewalks and parking on both sides of the street and there are no bike lanes. It is, however, designated as a bike route. The speed limit on Wallace Street is 25 mph.

Locust Avenue

Locust Avenue is a two lane east-west street located one block south of the school site. It has bike lanes, sidewalks, and parking on both sides of the street except for the short block between Orange Avenue and Plano Street. This block has no sidewalks and no bike lanes, and parking is accommodated on the shoulder. The speed limit on Locust Avenue is 25 mph.

Howard Street

Howard Street is a short two lane north-south street that abuts the southeast corner of the school campus. It ends at a cul-de-sac adjacent to the school and provides access to a school maintenance/emergency access driveway. It has sidewalks and parking on both sides of the street and there are no bike lanes. The speed limit on Howard Street is 25 mph.

Plano Street

Plano Street is a four lane north-south street located approximately 450 feet east of the school campus. It has intermittent sidewalks on both sides of the street, no on-street parking, and there are no bike lanes. The speed limit on Plano Street is 40 mph.

Traffic Control and Crosswalks

The existing traffic control devices at the study area intersections are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
EXISTING TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES & CROSSWALKS

Intersection	***Traffic Control***	***Crosswalks***
Orange Avenue / A Street	Stop Signs on A Street	None
Orange Avenue / Wallace Street	Traffic Signal	On All 4 Legs
Orange Avenue / Locust Avenue	Stop Signs on Locust Ave	On E, W, and S Legs
Orange Avenue-Date Avenue / Plano Street	Traffic Signal	On All 4 Legs
Locust Avenue / Howard Street	Stop Sign on Howard Street	On N Leg
Locust Avenue / Plano Street	Stop Sign on Locust Ave	None

Bus Transit Service

Porterville Transit operates several bus routes in the vicinity of the school site. Route 4 runs along Orange Avenue and on Plano Street south of Orange Avenue. It has a bus stop adjacent to Santa Fe Elementary School. Route 3 runs along Plano Street and on Date Avenue east of Plano Street. Route 1 runs along Olive Avenue, which is approximately one-third mile north of the school site, and on Plano Street north of Olive Avenue.

III.
TRAFFIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

This section summarizes the analysis of the proposed project's impacts on study area traffic/transportation conditions. First is a discussion of the significance standards followed by a discussion of project generated traffic volumes and the impact on daily traffic volumes. This is followed by an analysis of the impacts associated with non-motorized transportation (pedestrians and bicycles) and the findings relative to the CEQA transportation issues.

Standards of Significance

With regard to the CEQA thresholds of significance, Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project could:

a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities,

b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b), which addresses vehicle miles traveled (VMT),

c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment), or

d) Result in inadequate emergency access.

Project Generated Traffic

The volumes of traffic that would be generated by the existing and expanded school were determined in order to estimate the impacts of the proposed project. The trip generation rates and the anticipated volumes of traffic that would be generated by the expanded school are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2
PROJECT GENERATED TRAFFIC

Facility	***AM Peak Hour***			***Daily Traffic***
	Total	***Inbound***	***Outbound***	
TRIP GENERATION RATES				
Elementary School (vehicle trips per student)	0.75	54%	46%	2.27
GENERATED TRAFFIC VOLUMES				
Existing School (822 students)	616	333	283	1,870
Proposed School (1,091 students)	818	442	376	2,480
Net Increase (269 students)	202	109	93	610

The trip generation rates shown in Table 2 are from the Institute of Transportation Engineers *Trip Generation Manual* for the elementary school land use category. Although the trip generation rates and traffic volumes shown in Table 2 for the school are based on the number of students, the data represent the total number of vehicle trips generated by the school, including staff/faculty vehicles, drop-off/pick-up activities, visitors, and deliveries.

Table 2 indicates that the project would generate a net increase of 202 vehicle trips during the morning peak hour (109 inbound and 93 outbound) and 610 trips per day. The morning peak hour is shown because the traffic volumes generated by an elementary school are substantially greater during the morning peak hour than the afternoon peak hour.

It should be noted that the traffic volumes shown in Table 2 do not necessarily introduce new traffic to the overall roadway network but instead represent the traffic that would be re-directed to this school site from other existing schools where the students would otherwise attend, because the number of students attending school in the district is a function of the school-age population and the demand for educational facilities. Most of the school-related traffic would be traveling on the roadway network regardless of the status of the proposed project. It has been assumed for the traffic analysis, however, that the additional site-generated traffic would be new traffic on the roadway network.

Impacts on Daily Traffic Volumes

The impacts of the project on daily traffic volumes are shown on Table 3 for Orange Avenue. The existing conditions scenario and the year 2027 baseline scenario are shown. The daily traffic volume on Orange Avenue west of the school site, for example, would increase from 4,600 vehicles per day (vpd) to 4,970 vpd for the existing conditions scenario, which is an increase of 370 vehicles per day. The year 2027 was used for the future baseline scenario because it is anticipated to be the first full year that the expanded school would be occupied. Construction is expected to be completed in 2026. The year 2027 traffic volumes were estimated by expanding the existing traffic volumes by 3 percent.

TABLE 3
PROJECT IMPACT ON DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Street/Location	***Without Project***	***Project Traffic***	***With Project***
EXISTING CONDITIONS AS BASELINE			
Orange Avenue – West of School Site	4,600	370	4,970
Orange Avenue – East of School Site	4,600	240	4,840
YEAR 2027 AS BASELINE			
Orange Avenue – West of School Site	4,740	370	5,110
Orange Avenue – East of School Site	4,740	240	4,980

Non-Motorized Transportation and Transit

The proposed project would generate a minor increase in demand for non-motorized travel as some students and employees may elect to travel to and from the school site as pedestrians or on bicycles. Nearly all of the streets in the school vicinity have sidewalks. At the school's west driveway at the Orange Avenue/Wallace Street signalized intersection, there are yellow school crosswalks on all four sides of the intersection with pedestrian WALK signals and pedestrian push buttons to activate the signals. Pedestrian crosswalks are also in place at the Orange Avenue/Locust Avenue, Orange Avenue-Date Avenue/Plano Street, and Locust Avenue/Howard Street intersections. These features facilitate pedestrian travel to and from the school and would not be noticeably impacted by the relatively minor increase in students at the school associated with the project.

Bike lanes are provided on A Street and Locust Avenue and Wallace Street is a designated bike route. In addition, bike racks are provided on the school campus. These bike facilities would not be adversely impacted by the increased number of students at the school.

With regard to public transit, it is not anticipated that ridership on the bus routes cited previously would be noticeably affected by the school expansion project.

Findings Relative to CEQA Transportation Issues

The proposed project involves the expansion of the existing Santa Fe Elementary School to increase the number of students from 830 existing students to a capacity of 1,000 students, which is an increase of 170 students. For the transportation analysis, Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities,

b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b), which addresses vehicle miles traveled (VMT),

c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment), or

d) Result in inadequate emergency access.

The findings regarding each of these issues are presented in the following sections.

Issue: Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.

CEQA Finding: No Impact

The Circulation Element of the City of Porterville General Plan includes various policies that outline the overall goal of guiding circulation system planning and emphasizing the need to

consider all modes, not just automobile circulation. It states that there is an objective of having a multi-modal transportation system. The list of policies in the Circulation Element includes promoting safe and efficient vehicular circulation; providing a wide variety of transportation alternatives and modes; improving accessibility to shops, schools, parks, and employment centers; protecting neighborhoods by discouraging through-traffic on local streets; promoting the use of public transit for daily trips to schools and work; promoting the use of bicycles; and promoting pedestrian activity.

The proposed school expansion project is consistent with the policies presented in the Circulation Element. The project would not conflict with any objectives, policies, or programs of the General Plan and it would not adversely affect the performance of any roadway, transit, or non-motorized (pedestrian and bicycle) transportation facilities.

Based on the traffic analysis, the discussion of non-motorized transportation and transit, and a review of the Circulation Element of the City's General Plan, the proposed project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.

Issue: Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b), which addresses vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

CEQA Finding: Less Than Significant Impact

Vehicle delays and levels of service (LOS) have historically been used as the basis for determining the significance of traffic impacts as standard practice in California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents. On September 27, 2013, SB 743 was signed into law, starting a process that fundamentally changed transportation impact analyses as part of CEQA compliance. SB 743 eliminated auto delay, LOS, and other similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion as the sole basis for determining significant impacts under CEQA. As part of the current CEQA Guidelines, the criteria "shall promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses" (Public Resources Code Section 21099(b)(1)). Pursuant to SB 743, the California Natural Resources Agency adopted revisions to the CEQA Guidelines on December 28, 2018, to implement SB 743. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 describes how transportation impacts are to be analyzed after SB 743. Under the Guidelines, metrics related to "vehicle miles traveled" (VMT) were required beginning July 1, 2020, to evaluate the significance of transportation impacts under CEQA for development projects, land use plans, and transportation infrastructure projects. State courts ruled that under the Public Resources Code Section 21099, subdivision (b)(2), "automobile delay, as described solely by level of service or similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion shall not be considered a significant impact on the environment" under CEQA, except for roadway capacity projects.

The City of Porterville has adopted the County of Tulare "SB743 Guidelines" as the model for VMT impacts within the city. The County of Tulare guidelines present screening criteria that can be used to determine if a project would have a less than significant transportation impact and would not require a detailed VMT analysis. Screening Criteria 3.2.1, Small Projects, states that projects

that generate less than 500 trips per day can be presumed to have a less than significant impact. In addition, Screening Criteria 3.2.3, Local-Serving Public Facilities, states that projects in this category would have a less than significant impact on VMT. While the proposed project would generate an estimated 610 vehicle trips per day, which is above the threshold of 500 trips cited in Screening Criteria 3.2.1 of the guidelines, this does not represent new traffic on the roadway network because students that would attend this school would likely have attended another school in the District if the project were not implemented. So there would be little or no net increase in VMT associated with the project. Additionally, the proposed project is a public elementary school, which is specifically listed in Screening Criteria 3.2.3 as a local-serving public facility that would have a less than significant VMT impact. The proposed project would, therefore, have a less than significant impact on VMT according to the guidelines.

Issue: Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).

CEQA Finding: Less Than Significant Impact

The proposed project would not provide any on- or off-site access or circulation features that would create or increase any design hazards or incompatible uses. Access to the school site would continue to be provided by the existing driveways on the northeast side of Orange Avenue and on the east side of A Street. In addition, a new access drive to the expanded west parking lot would be provided from the on-site maintenance road that connects to Orange Avenue at mid-campus. All street improvements in the public right-of-way would be designed and constructed consistent with the City of Porterville standards and all improvements within the project site would be consistent with the criteria of the California Division of the State Architect.

The increased levels of traffic, the increased number of pedestrians, and the increased number of vehicular turning movements that would occur at the driveways and at the nearby intersections would result in an increased number of traffic conflicts and a corresponding increase in the probability of an accident occurring. These impacts would not be significant, however, because the streets, intersections, and driveways are designed to accommodate the anticipated levels of vehicular and pedestrian activity. These streets and intersections have historically been accommodating school-related traffic on a daily basis for the existing school. The proposed project would add more vehicles to the roadway network, but the additional vehicles would be compatible with the design and use of the affected streets. The proposed project would not result in any major safety or operational issues relative to access and circulation.

As the existing street network could readily accommodate the anticipated increase in vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle activity, the proposed project would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses.

Issue: Result in inadequate emergency access.

CEQA Finding: No Impact

The existing and proposed access and circulation features at the school, including the driveways,

on-site roadways, parking lots, and fire lanes, would accommodate emergency ingress and egress by fire trucks, police units, and ambulance/paramedic vehicles. In addition to the existing access features, a new drop-off/pick-up area and a new parking lot would be provided at the campus. These facilities would provide access to the school grounds, the buildings, and all other areas of the project site, including the playfields and hard courts. The design and any modifications to the access features are subject to and must satisfy the District's requirements and would be subject to approval by the Fire Department and the California Division of the State Architect. The proposed project would not, therefore, result in inadequate emergency access.

IV.
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND CONCLUSIONS

The key findings of the traffic impact analysis are presented below.

- The proposed school expansion project would generate a net increase of 202 vehicle trips during the morning peak hour (109 inbound and 93 outbound) and 610 trips per day.
- The increase in traffic volumes generated by the school expansion would result in a minor increase in traffic volumes on Orange Avenue.
- CEQA threshold of significance "a" asks if the proposed project would conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. The analysis indicates that there would be no impact because:

  - The proposed project would not adversely affect the performance or safety of any roadway, transit, or non-motorized transportation facilities (pedestrians and bicycles) and would not conflict with any adopted plans, policies, or programs relative to these transportation modes.

  - The Circulation Element of the City of Porterville General Plan includes various policies that outline the objective of promoting safe and efficient vehicular circulation; providing a wide variety of transportation alternatives and modes; improving accessibility to shops, schools, parks, and employment centers; protecting neighborhoods by discouraging through-traffic on local streets; promoting the use of public transit for daily trips to schools and work; promoting the use of bicycles; and promoting pedestrian activity. The proposed project is consistent with the policies presented in the Circulation Element and would not conflict with any objectives, policies, or programs of the General Plan.

- CEQA threshold of significance "b" asks if the proposed project would conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b), which addresses vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The analysis indicates that the VMT impact would be less than significant because the proposed project is a local-serving public facility. Screening Criteria 3.2.3, Local-Serving Public Facilities, of the County of Tulare "SB743 Guidelines" states that projects in this category would have a less than significant impact on VMT. The project can be screened from any further VMT analysis as it would not have a significant impact relative to VMT.
- CEQA threshold of significance "c" asks if the proposed project would substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment). The analysis indicates that the streets, intersections, and driveways are designed to accommodate the anticipated levels of vehicular and pedestrian activity and that the streets have historically been accommodating the traffic generated by the existing school. The expanded school would be compatible with the neighborhood and would not result in any major hazards for vehicular traffic, pedestrians, or bicyclists. The proposed project would not, therefore, substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses and the impacts would be less than significant.

- CEQA threshold of significance “d” asks if the proposed project would result in inadequate emergency access. The existing and proposed access and circulation features at the school, including the driveways, on-site roadways, parking lots, and fire lanes, would readily accommodate emergency ingress and egress by fire trucks, police units, and ambulance/paramedic vehicles. Emergency vehicles would be able to access the school grounds, the buildings, and all other areas of the school, including the play fields, via on-site travel corridors. The proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access and there would be no impact.