

215 Locust Street

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# Ceiba College Prep

— General Plan / Zoning Map Change  
& Special Use Permit (App #1737) —

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CITY COUNCIL | February 28, 2023

# Overview

- Proposed project
- Procedure
- Discussion
- CEQA
- Findings
- Public comment
- Recommendation



# Proposed Project

- **Project:** Allow permanent establishment of a 525-student charter school
- **Applicant:** Ceiba College Preparatory Academy
- **Grades:** 6 – 12

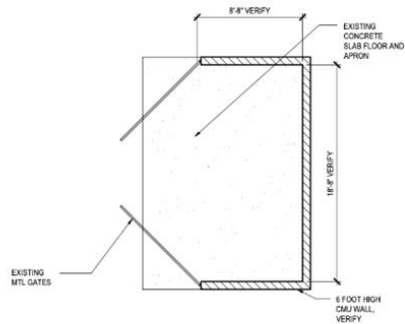


# Project Location

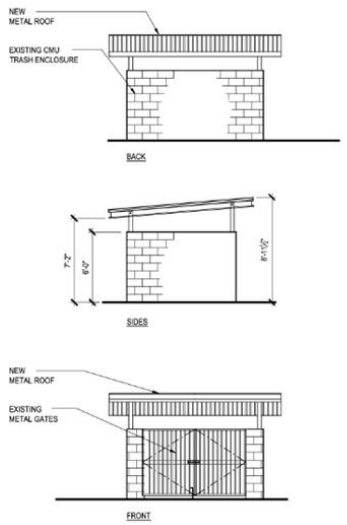
- **Address:** 215 Locust Street (formerly 260 W Riverside Dr)
- **Site size:** 2.1± acres
- **APN:** 017-161-51
- **Facilities:** 27,000± sf building w/ 8,500± sf mezzanine
- **Previous use(s):**
  - Storage (for Nordic Naturals)
  - Shipping facility (for DHL International)





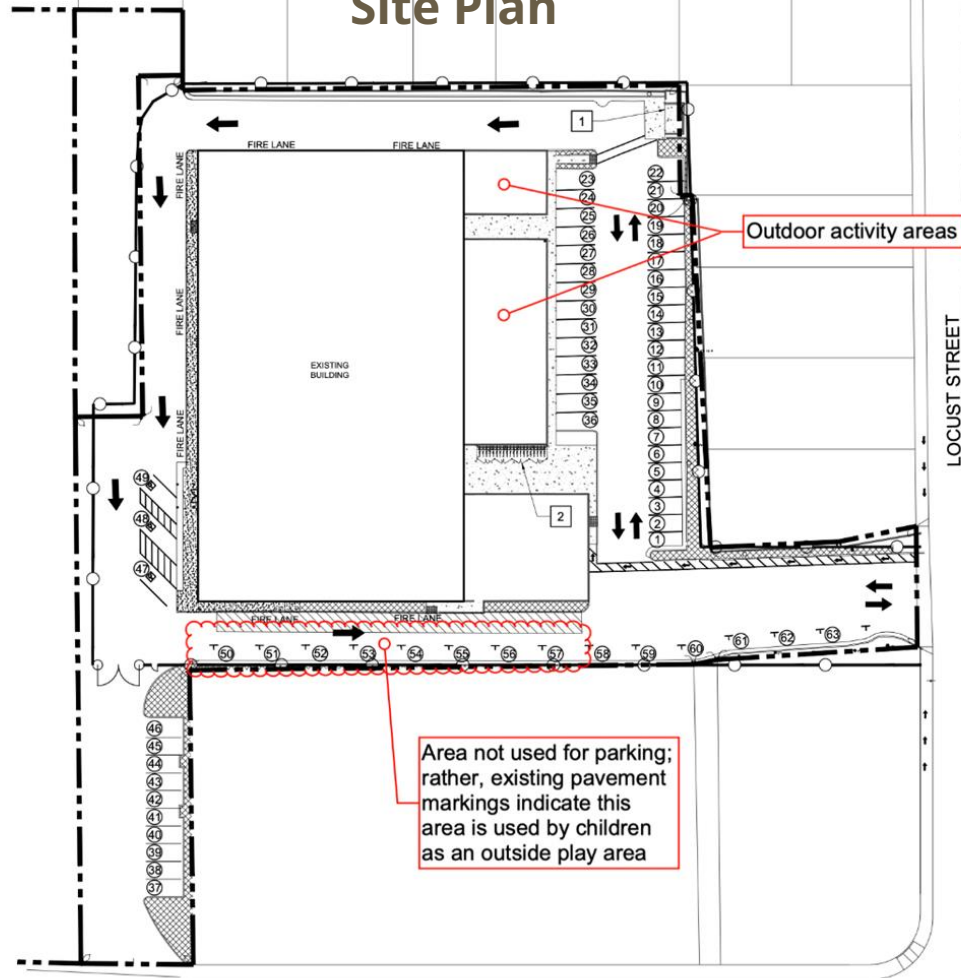


**1 EXISTING TRASH ENCLOSURE**  
SCALE: 3/16"=1'-0"



**2 TRASH ENCLOSURE ELEVATIONS**  
SCALE: 3/16"=1'-0"

# Site Plan



## KEY NOTES

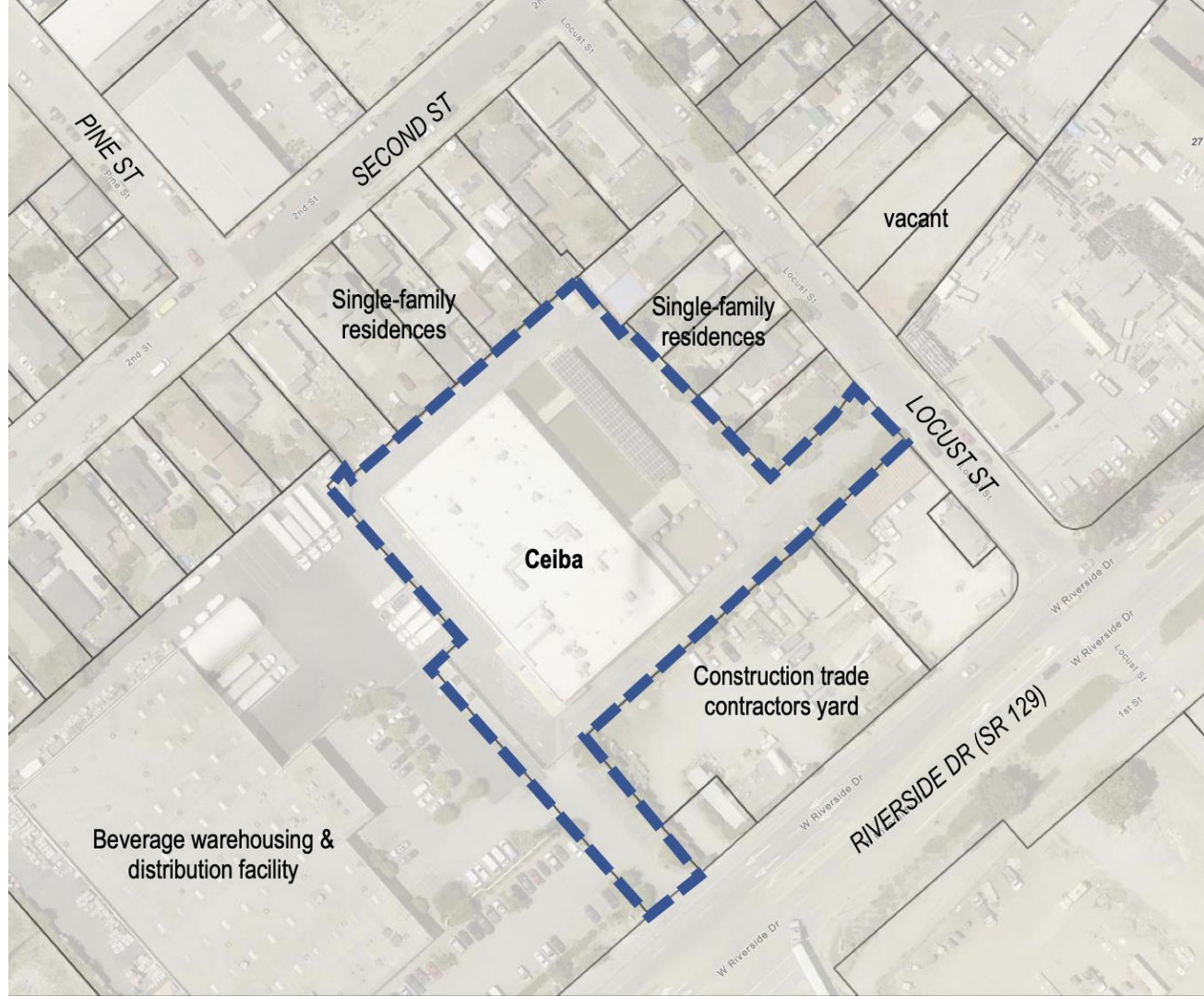
- THE KEY NOTES THAT FOLLOW APPLY TO THE DRAWING(S) ON THIS SHEET ONLY. REFER TO FOLLOWING SHEETS FOR NOTES THAT ARE APPLICABLE TO THOSE DRAWINGS.
- EXISTING CMU TRASH ENCLOSURE WITH METAL LOCKABLE GATES. OWNER TO INSTALL NEW STEEL POST/JOIST ROOF STRUCTURE WITH STEEL DECK ROOF. SEE DETAIL THIS SHEET
  - EXISTING BICYCLE STORAGE RACKS WITH NEW CHAIN LINK FENCING ENCLOSURE W/ (4 PAIR) FULL FRONTAL ENTRY GATES AT REAR OF BICYCLES - ENTRY GATES TO STORAGE YARD TO BE OPENED PRIOR TO START OF SCHOOL HOURS, LOCKED DURING SCHOOL HOURS AND REOPENED AT END OF SCHOOL HOURS THEN RELOCKED FOR THE NIGHT

## LEGEND

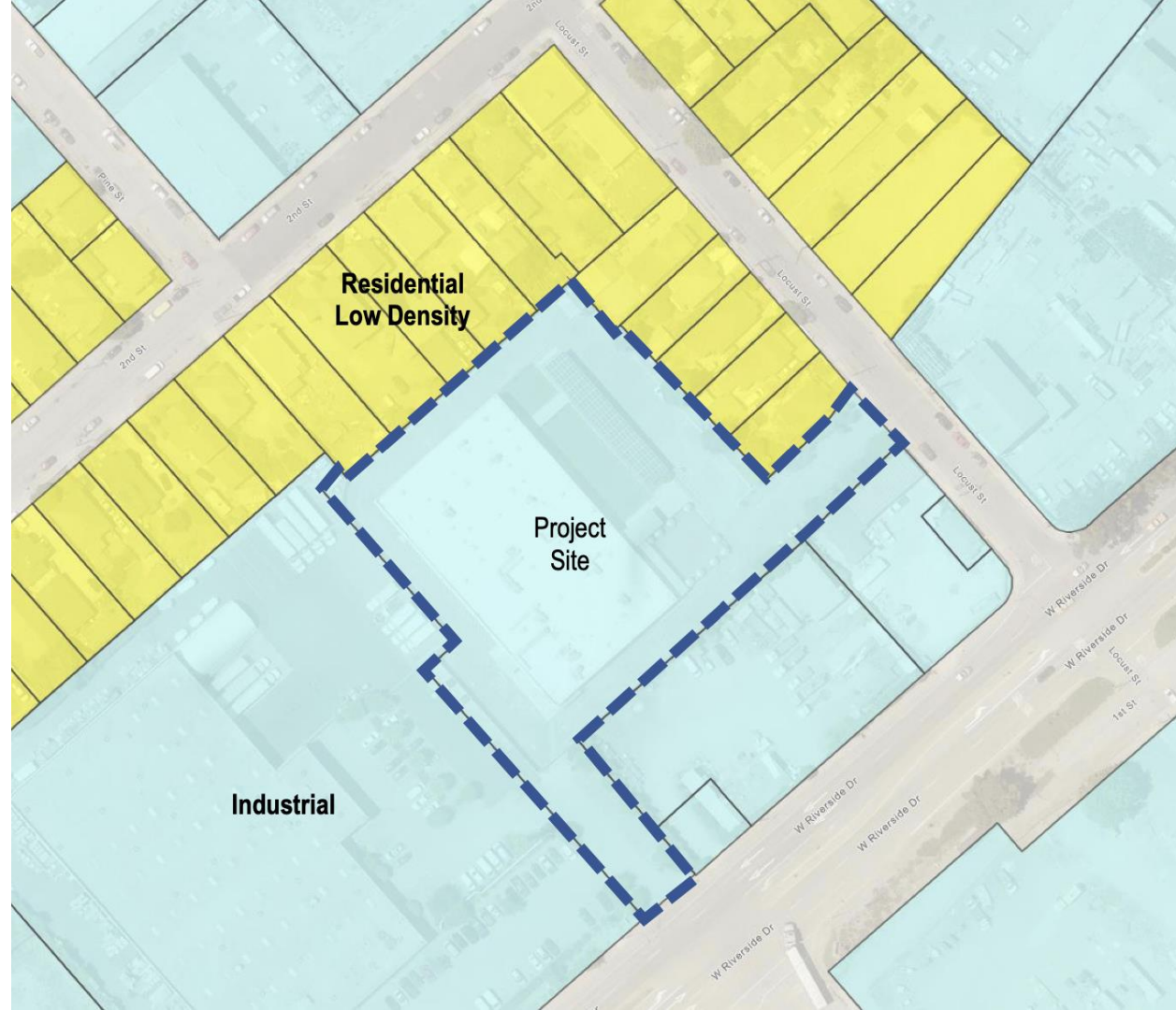
#	(BY PARKING SPACE (INTERNAL))
FIRE LANE	FIRE LANE PAVEMENT MARKING WITH CURBS AS OCCUR PAINTED RED.
	10'-0" DROP OFF AND PICK UP ZONE.
	PEDESTRIAN FLOW.
	VEHICLE FLOW.
	PROPERTY LINE
	EXISTING FENCE LINE
	PLANTING AREA



# Project Location



# Existing Land Use Designation

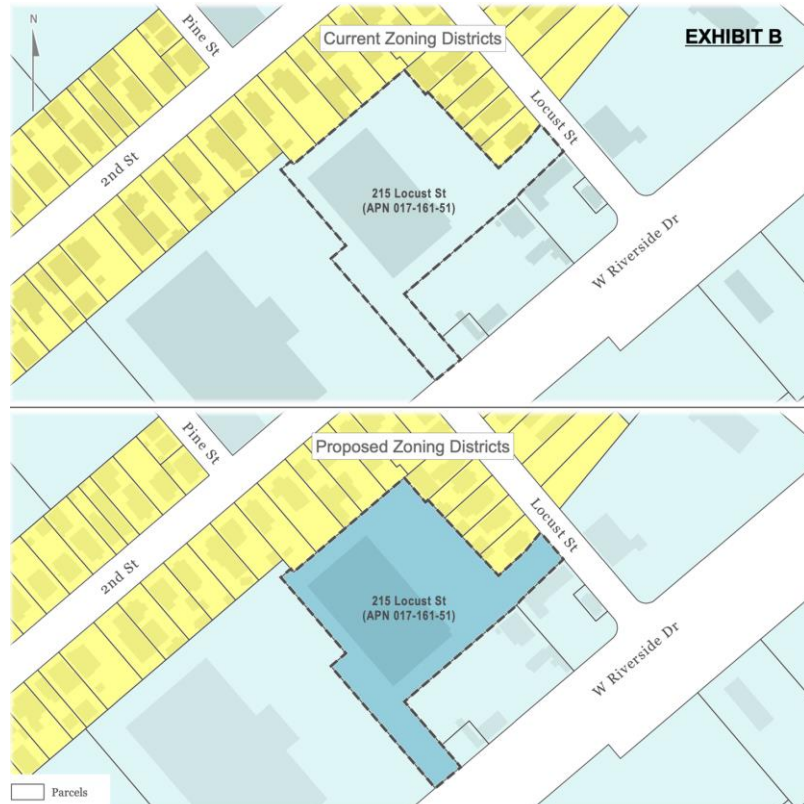
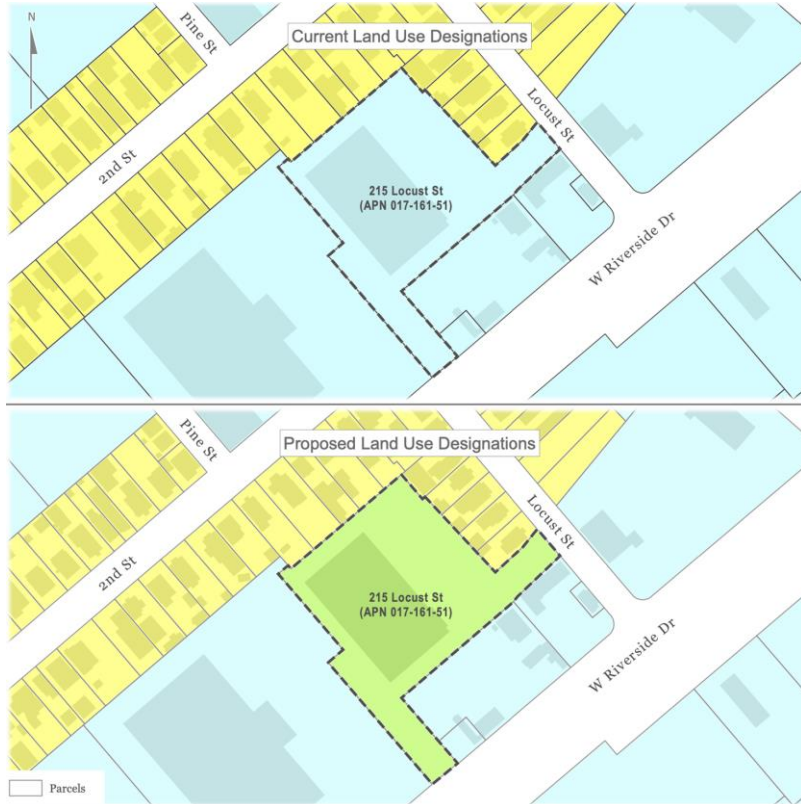




# Project Approvals

- **General Plan Map (aka Land Use Diagram) Amendment**
  - Existing: Industrial
  - Proposed: Public/Quasi-Public
- **Zoning Map Amendment**
  - Existing: IG (General Industrial)
  - Proposed: N (Institutional)
- **Special Use Permit with Environmental Review**

# General Plan & Zoning Map Changes



# Procedure

- **General Plan Map** may be amended by Council whenever the public necessity, the general community welfare, and good zoning practices permit such amendment. WMC § 14-12.700
- **Zoning Map** may be amended according to the same procedures. WMC § 14-12.802



# Procedure

- **Special Use Permit** required for school use in a N District.  
WMC § 14-16.802(a)(6)
- **Environmental Review** required for projects subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

# Discussion

- Compatible use
- General Plan consistency
- Zoning consistency
- Parking
- Site access / circulation
- Accessible path of travel
- Safe routes to school
- Flood proofing
- Environmental review

# Compatible Use

- Schools not often located in industrial areas
- Existing businesses do not represent heavy industrial uses
- Conditions of approval are intended to address complaints
  - Traffic congestion during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up times
  - Odors from the trash enclosure
  - Use of nearby vacant land for recreational activities
  - See Conditions 27, 28, 29, 30, 41 and 50



# General Plan: Children & Youth Element

- **Policy 7.A Planning for Children, Youth, and Families** – The City of Watsonville is committed to providing and promoting a safe, secure, protective, healthy, and stimulating community environment for its children, youth, and families...
- **Policy 7.E Educational and Training Systems** – The City of Watsonville shall collaborate with the Pajaro Valley [Unified] School District, area community college districts, private schools, and the University of California in order to maximize educational, developmental, and learning opportunities for all children, youth, and parent...

# General Plan: Transportation & Circulation Element

- **Policy 10.A Street & Highway Improvements** – The City shall pursue a program of regularly scheduled maintenance and street improvements, accompanied by the planned extension of roadways to serve new development
- **Policy 10.M Pedestrian Circulation** – Recognize the importance of pedestrian travel, alone, or in combination with other travel modes, and to encourage walking

# General Plan: Transportation & Circulation Element

- **Policy 10.O Walkway Aesthetics & Safety** – Pedestrian walkways should be designed to promote walking by providing a safe and aesthetically pleasing path of travel
- **Policy 10.P Pedestrian Access** – Access for pedestrian travel shall be maintained where it already exists and provided where it does not, in order to prevent or eliminate barriers to pedestrian travel



# General Plan: Public Safety Element

- **Policy 12.D Flood Hazard Reduction** – The City shall pursue the protection of new and existing development from the impacts of flooding up to the 100-year event

# General Plan: Land Use Element

- **Policy 4.D** – The City shall promote modernization of existing industrial plants and the location of new industrial facilities on lands planned for industry in *Watsonville 2005*
- **Implementation Measure 4.3.4 Industrial Reserve** – The City shall maintain a reserve of industrial land sufficient to meet the long-term job creation goals and to enable the City to maximize economic opportunities consistent with the City's Comprehensive Economic Development Action Plan

# General Plan Consistency

- The project would provide:
  - Educational services to 500+ children
  - Opportunities for academic development
- The project is required to:
  - Install street improvements
  - Enhance the site's walkway
  - Flood proof the existing building
- The project represents:
  - A small conversion of industrially designated land
  - Minimal changes to the City's industrial base

# Zoning Consistency

- Consistent with allowed uses with issuance of a SUP
- Conforms with minimum development standards for setbacks

# Parking

- Inconsistent with minimum parking requirements
- No room to add sufficient parking onsite
- Study confirms inadequate supply



HEXAGON TRANSPORTATION CONSULTANTS, INC.

## Memorandum



**Date:** November 4, 2021

**To:** Ms. Elizabeth Sanborn Falcon, Benchmark Realty Advisors

**From:** Katie Riutta, Ollie Zhou



**Subject:** Parking Study for Ceiba College Preparatory Academy in Watsonville, California

# Parking-related Conditions

- Mandatory travel behavior change (#43)
- Carpool matching program (#44)
- Incentives or promotional events (#45)
- Bicycle program (#46)
- Promotions and marketing (#47)
- Preferential carpool / vanpool parking spaces (#48)
- Transit subsidies (#49)

Conditions intended to reduce school's parking demand and spillover effects on nearby streets



# Site Access / Circulation

- Two driveway approaches
- Only one off Locust St may be used by parents & their children (#27)
- School shall prepare a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plan (#28)
- Enhance school responsibility required to address congestion (#29)
- Improve crossing guard training (#30)



## DRIVING - CONDUCIR



Turn **right** into Ceiba.

Gire a la derecha en Ceiba.

Turn **right** out of Ceiba.

Gire a la derecha para salir de Ceiba.

Turn **right** onto Riverside Drive.

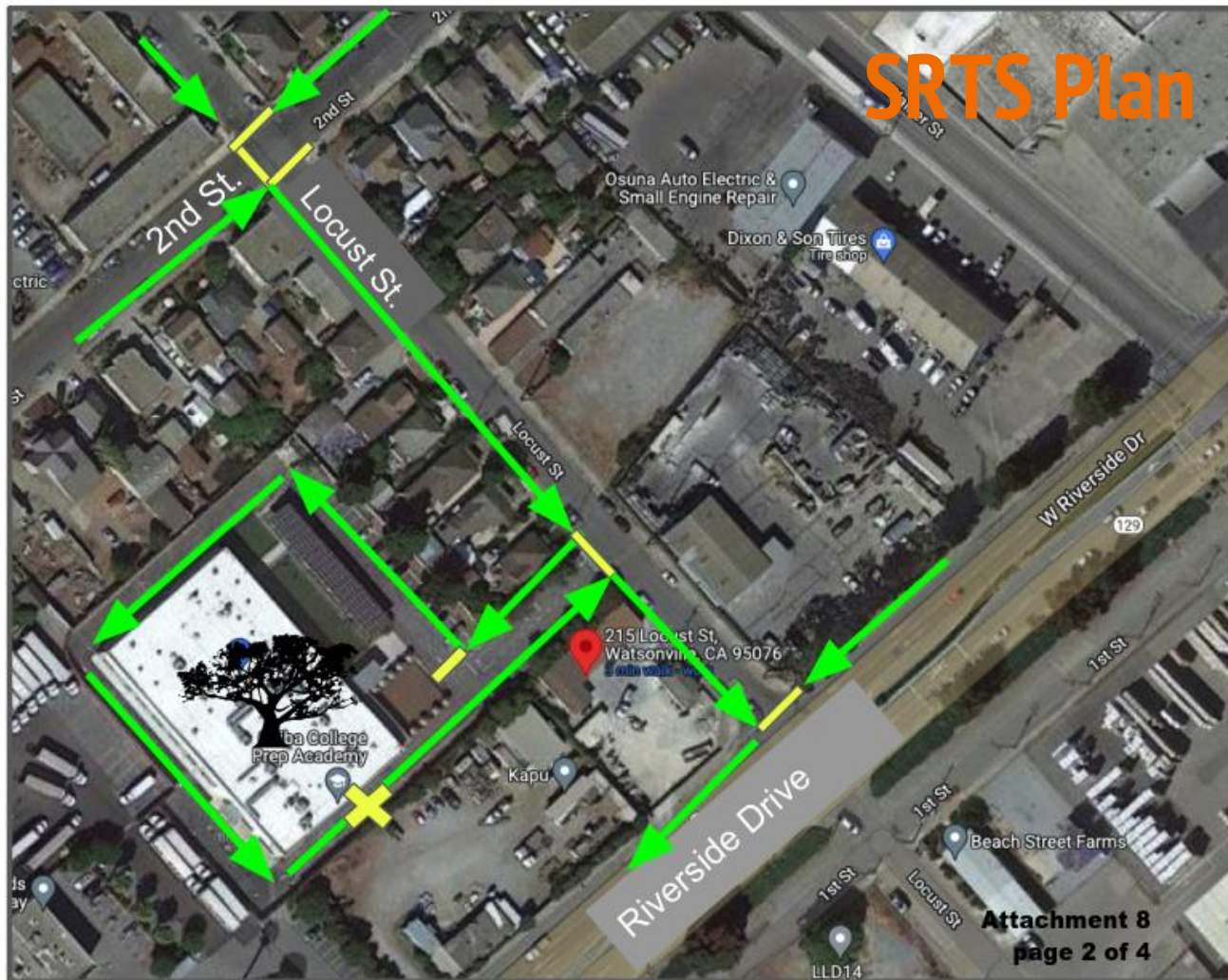
Gire a la derecha en Riverside Drive.

Please be extra cautious at the cross walks and follow the crossing guards at all times.

Por favor, extreme las precauciones en los pasos de peatones y siga a los guardias de cruce en todo momento.

Student drop-off and pick-up

Dejar y recoger a los estudiantes



# SRTS Plan

Attachment 8  
page 2 of 4



## All Duty Locations:

- Vehicles cannot double park; or park next to a parked car on the side of the street
- Vehicles must complete the drop off, pick-up procedure around the school (They should not drop off or pick up on Locust)

### A (Riverside & Locust):

- Right turns only in and out of Locust/Riverside
- Group students before crossing

### B (Ceiba Driveway):

- Right turns only into and out of Ceiba
- Group students before they cross driveway

### C (2nd St and Locust):

- Traffic flow is priority, group students to wait to walk until the traffic goes through
- If traffic on Locust is backed up, radio for B and C to let cars through
- No drop offs on Locust

### D (Driveway entering building):

- Traffic flow is priority, group students to wait to walk until the traffic goes through

### E (2nd St and Walker):

- Traffic flow is priority, group students to wait to walk until the traffic goes through



# Accessible Path of Travel

- Entry didn't separate pedestrians from cars
- Possible modifications include:
  - Raised curb and paving
  - Railings
  - Detectable warning 36" wide



Image date: Aug. 16, 2021



# Accessible Path of Travel



Image date: Feb. 8, 2023

# Safe Routes to School

- Complete Streets to Schools Plan (2020) main goals:
  - Improve safety and comfort
  - Reduce congestion
- Identified detailed recommendations
- Conditions require enhancements at:
  - Locust Street and Second Street
  - Walker Street and Second Street
  - Pine Street and Second Street
  - Pine Street and W Beach Street

## Recommended Infrastructure Improvements around Ceiba College Prep

The following table lists recommendations for Ceiba College Prep, and the following map shows their locations in relation to the school.

Location	Recommendation (where feasible, upon further review)
Riverside Drive/Hwy 129	Install S1-1 with W16-6P school zone signs as appropriate.
Riverside Drive/Hwy 129 at Locust Street	Install high-visibility crosswalk across Locust Street, with curb extensions on both sides of the new crosswalk. Upgrade ramps to meet current standards.
Riverside Drive/Hwy 129 at Menker Street	Install high-visibility crosswalk across Menker Street, with curb extensions on both sides of the new crosswalk. Upgrade ramps to meet current standards.
Riverside Drive/Hwy 129 at Walker Street	Install high-visibility crosswalk on northwest leg of intersection.
Locust Street between Beach Street and Riverside Drive/Hwy 129	Install sidewalk to close sidewalk gaps. Trim overgrown vegetation. Install pedestrian-scale lighting. Long-term: Remove sidewalk obstructions and consolidate or remove driveways where feasible.
School driveway	Widen painted path on north side of driveway to at least eight feet. Trim vegetation to clear pedestrian space. Long-term: Install raised sidewalk.
Locust Street	Install S1-1 with W16-9P School Advance Crossing signs as appropriate.
Locust Street at 2nd Street	Install high-visibility crosswalks on all legs. Install curb extensions on all corners and upgrade ramps to meet current standards.
Walker Street at 2nd Street	Install high-visibility crosswalks on all legs. Install curb extensions to reduce crossing distance across 2nd Street. Upgrade ramps to meet current standards. Short-term: Paint red curb 20' from each corner to prevent parking encroachment.
2nd Street between Rodriguez Street and Pine Street	Study the feasibility of Safe Routes to Schools Corridor treatments, especially near school.
Walker Street between Beach Street and Riverside Drive/Hwy 129	Refresh yellow center lines.
Walker Street between W Lake and Beach Street	Fill sidewalk gaps on west side.
Walker Street at Beach Street	Install ADA-compliant facilities. Reconfigure intersection to shorten both crossings of Walker by installing pedestrian refuge islands and/or curb extensions at SE and NW corner. Add marked crossing on east side of Beach Street. Upgrade ramps to meet current standards. Study additional pedestrian improvements when rail trail segment is constructed.
	See citywide recommendations for 2nd Street/Maple Avenue, Rodriguez Street, and Riverside Drive.



# Condition #31: Pedestrian Crossing Upgrades

Street crossings nearby to the school site shall be upgraded to include **high-visibility crosswalks** along with appropriate in-street signs per CA MUTCD standards. School Administration staff shall submit an Encroachment Permit to the City of Watsonville within 12 months of the approval of the Special Use Permit for upgrading the following location(s) to provide high-visibility crosswalks and appropriate signage:

- Locust Street and Second Street;
- Walker Street and Second Street;
- Pine Street and Second Street; and
- Pine Street and W. Beach Street. (PWD)

## Condition #32: Accessible Ramps on Nearby Streets

School Administration staff shall submit an Encroachment Permit to the City of Watsonville within 12 months of the approval of the Special Use Permit for **upgrading ramps** at the above location(s), as necessary, to meet current Americans with Disability Act (ADA) standards.

In addition, School Administration staff shall submit an Encroachment Permit to the City of Watsonville within 12 months of the approval of the Special Use Permit for **filling in sidewalk gaps** along the east side of Locust Street between the school driveway and Riverside Drive. (PWD)



# Environmental Review

- Project is exempt from CEQA because...
- No change, expansion or intensification of existing use (*CEQA Guidelines § 15301*)
- Allowing school use on permanent basis would not result in a significant effect on the environment (*CEQA Guidelines § 15061(b)(3)*)



LAW OFFICES OF YOUNG, MINNEY & CORR, LLP  
THE CHARTER LAW FIRM

SARAH J. KOLLMAN ESQ.  
PARTNER • ATTORNEY AT LAW  
skollman@mycharterlaw.com

JUNE 14, 2021

Sent via E-mail to  
[suzi.merriam@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:suzi.merriam@cityofwatsonville.org)

Suzi Merriam  
Community Development Director  
City of Watsonville  
250 Main St.  
Watsonville, CA 95076

Re: CEQA Review of 260 W. Riverside Drive Conditional Use Permit  
Amendment, Zoning Change, and General Plan Amendment

Dear Ms. Merriam:

Our office represents CEIBA College Preparatory Academy ("CEIBA") in its efforts to secure the entitlements necessary to purchase and continue operating its public charter school at 260 W. Riverside Drive. CEIBA is also represented in these matters by Elizabeth Sanborn Falcon of Benchmark Realty Advisors.

It is our understanding that the Planning Division is requiring CEIBA to (1) amend its currently operative Conditional Use Permit to make it permanent rather than temporary, (2) change the zoning of the parcel from General Industrial (IG) to Institutional (N), and (3) amend the general plan to reflect the zoning change. It has come to our attention that the Planning Division believes CEQA review may be warranted due to the nature of these entitlements.

While CEIBA is ready and willing to take all reasonable steps to secure these entitlements, conducting a CEQA review in addition to the foregoing is neither reasonable nor required by law. CEIBA's conversion of its current, temporary use into a permanent use and conforming its zoning to reflect that use—without any accompanying construction or expansion/intensification of the use—does not constitute a "project" subject to CEQA and would be categorically exempt from review under 14 CCR § 15301 even if it were.

There are two issues here that we hope to clarify with this letter.

The first is that CEIBA's use permit is and will remain exempt from CEQA. CEIBA has no plans to change, intensify, or expand the use of its school site, so changing the timeframe of its use permit should not affect its exemption. As you may recall, CEIBA applied for its special use

# Public Comments

The following individuals have written *in opposition* to the project:

- Fay Hilt, Pajaro Valley Electric
- Mark Clough, Pajaro Valley Electric
- Anka Bulaich, resident
- Nick Bulaich, resident
- Marta Bulaich, resident
- Guadalupe Flemate and Mara Rodriguez, resident
- Mr. and Mrs. Johnny Howard Clark Jr., resident
- Paul Lauesen, resident
- Mark DeBolske, Riva Marble & Granite



# Public Comments

The following individuals have written *in opposition* to the project:

- Peter Bobeda, Pajaro Valley Cold Storage Co.
- Mark Pista, Pajaro Valley Cold Storage Co.
- Ronald Chauvel, Chauvel & Glatt
- Edward Kelly, K&M Enterprises
- John Martinelli, Martinelli & Company
- Chrsi Dixon, Mizkan America, Inc.
- James C. Jeffery, III, Traffic & Civil Engineering Consulting Services
- Grant P. Johnson, TE, Prism Engineering
- James T. Wells, PhD, PG, LEA Environmental
- Bill Seligmann, Law Offices of Wm. R. Seligmann



# Public Comments

The following individuals have written *in support* to the project:

- Takashi Mizuno, resident
- David Ray, teacher
- William Farr, resident
- Jennifer Fernandez, resident
- Lesley Gin, resident
- Maria Angeles, resident
- Monica Fernandez, resident
- Adrian Moran, student
- Carmen Kotto, teacher
- Victoria Bañales, resident
- Maura Lenor, resident
- Jesse Fernandez, resident

# Required Findings

- Conditions intended to address previously identified issues
- Evidence provided in support of required Findings
- As conditioned, the City Council may make the required General Plan Map Amendment, Zoning Map Amendment, and Special Use Permit findings in **support** of the project
- The project is exempt from further environment review per CEQA Guidelines §§ 15301; 15061(b)(3).

# Recommendation

As conditioned, staff recommends that the City Council:

1. Approve a General Plan Map Amendment and Zoning Map Amendment
2. Approve a Special Use Permit (App #1737) to allow the permanent establishment of a 525-student charter school for grades 6-12 in an existing 27,000± sf building with an 8,500± sf mezzanine on a 2.1± acre site located at 215 Locust Street (APN 017-161-51)