Appendix G Geological and Environmental Hazards Assessment (GEHA)

Appendices

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PERFORMING ARTS THEATER, ACCEL CENTER, AND LIBRARY PROJECT

Tulare County Office of Education

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared for the Tulare County Office of Education (COE) for the Performing Arts Theater, Academic Collaborative for Exceptional Learners (AcCEL) Center, and Library Project (proposed project) near the intersection of Avenue 264/Liberty Road and N Mooney Boulevard in unincorporated Tulare County. The COE is seeking to gain clearance under the California Environmental Quality Act and to support CDE/Title 5 and DTSC school site requirements for the proposed project. This study provides an assessment and supporting documentation of State school facility standards applicable to State-funded new school sites.

In addition to the standards addressed herein, other health and safety requirements are under the purview of the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). Also, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires lead agencies to address the environmental impacts of a project on the environment. These are separate and distinct from the issues addressed in this study, which deal with a site's ability to provide a safe and healthy environment for school use. Documentation of the project's environmental impacts under CEQA and the health and safety evaluation per DTSC are provided under separate cover.

1.2 PROJECT LOCATION

The project site currently includes a fallow agricultural field on parcel 149-030-005 (15.23 acres) and a paved driveway and parking area, disturbed land, fencing, and landscaping/grass turf on parcel 149-030-008 (0.4 acres) for a total of approximately 15.63 acres. The project site is west and south of the COE Liberty Campus at 11535 Avenue 264/Liberty Road in unincorporated Tulare County, California. A former farmhouse and associated outbuildings in the southern portion of the project site have since been demolished.

Local access to the project site is provided by N. Mooney Boulevard/California State Route (SR) 63 and Avenue 264/Liberty Road. Regional access to the project site is provided by SR-99 and SR-198. Public transit access to the project site is provided by the Tulare County Regional Transit Agency (TCRTA) which provides bus transit services. TCRTA route C40 is the nearest route to the project site with a bus stop located at the corner of Avenue 264/Liberty Road and N. Mooney Boulevard. Figure 1, *Regional Location,* Figure 2, *Local Vicinity,* and Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, show the project site in its regional and local contexts.

1.3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project would consist of three main components which would include a new performing arts theater, AcCEL Center, and a library.

The AcCEL Center and library would be built in the northwest corner of the project site. The AcCEL Center would provide instruction to students who have multiple or profound disabilities and are able to function best

in a sheltered environment. The AcCEL Center and library would be bordered by Avenue 264/Liberty Road to the north, the existing COE campus to the east, farmland to the south, and farmland and commercial uses to the west. The AcCEL Center and library would be served by two ingress and egress driveways that would provide access to a shared parking lot consisting of 70 parking spaces which include eight Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) parking spaces. A trash storage area would be located on the eastern side of the parking lot. The AcCEL Center and library would be fenced.

The single-story performing arts theater extending up to 60 feet in height would be built in the southeast corner of the project site and would consist of approximately 31,000 square feet. The performing arts theater would be bordered by the existing COE campus to the north, N. Mooney Boulevard to the east, and farmland to the south and west. The performing arts theater would be served by two driveways off N. Mooney Boulevard and would provide access to a parking lot consisting of 568 parking spaces.

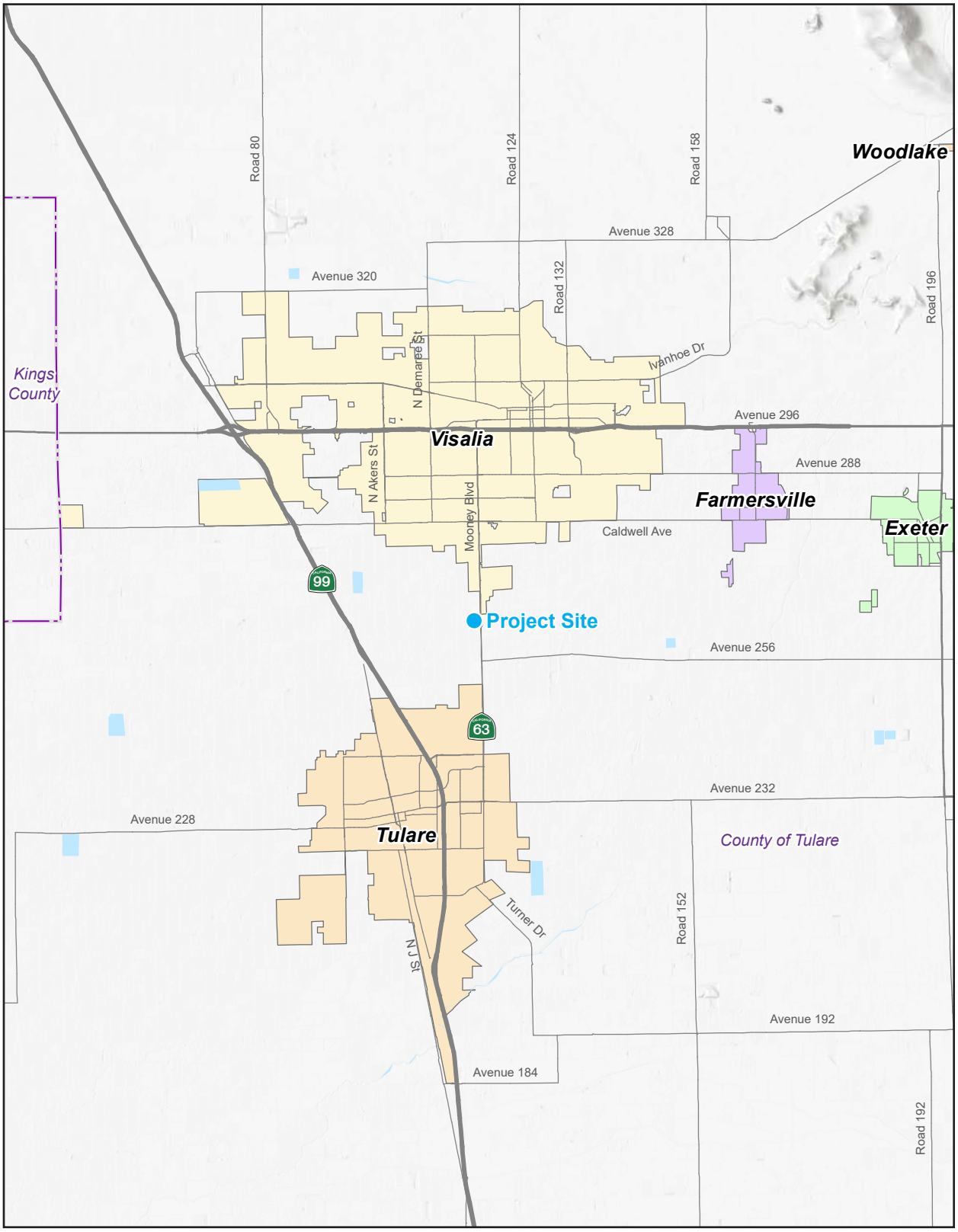
Project construction would occur in two phases. Phase One would consist of the construction of the AcCEL Center and library and is anticipated to start construction around May 2026 with an end date of June 2027. Phase Two would consist of the construction of the performing arts theater which is anticipated to start construction in January 2028 with an end date of January 2030.

1.4 CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on a review of information sources contained in this report, the following environmental health and safety hazards were identified to potentially pose a significant hazard:

- There is one high-pressure natural gas distribution pipeline and several large volume (≥ 12-inch diameter) water pipelines within 1,500 feet of the school site. A Pipeline Safety Hazard Assessment (PSHA) was prepared to address potential hazards from these pipelines. The PSHA determined there are no significant hazards or safety issues associated with these pipelines.
- The project site was previously used for agriculture. Therefore, there is the potential for organochlorinated pesticides (OCPs) and arsenic/lead to be present in shallow soil at the site. In addition, there is the potential for OCPs from the application of termiticides and lead-based paint to be present around the perimeter of the former residence on the property. A Preliminary Endangerment Assessment (PEA) will be prepared in consultation with DTSC to determine if any residual chemicals in the soil would pose a risk to students or staff at the proposed school site and appropriate remedial action will be taken, as warranted.
- Also, naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) may be present at the project site as there is an outcrop of ultramafic rock at a distance of 9.65 miles northeast of the site. Because of the potential for weathering and airborne transport of NOA, DTSC requires sampling for NOA if a school site is within 10 miles of a potential NOA source. Soil sampling for NOA will be conducted as part of the PEA process.

Figure 1 - Regional Location



County Boundary

Note: Unincorporated county areas are shown in white.

Source: Generated using ArcMap 2025.

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Scale (Miles)

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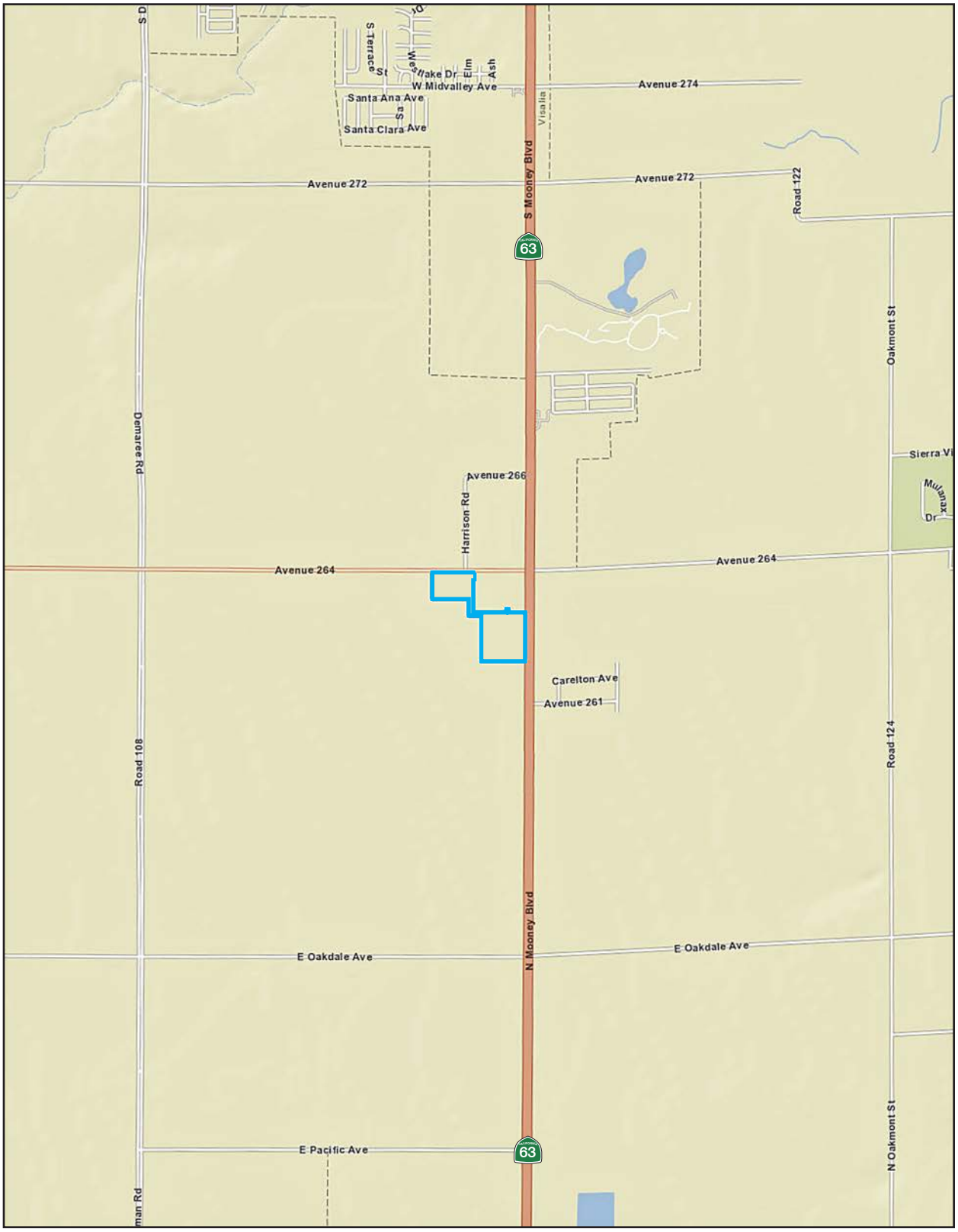
Figure 2 - Local Vicinity



Project Boundary

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Scale (Feet)

Source: Generated using ArcMap 2025.

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Figure 3 - Aerial Photograph

Project Boundary

Assessor Parcel Boundaries

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Scale (Feet)

Source: Nearmap 2025.

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2. Environmental Checklist

2.1 STATE STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL FACILITIES

The State of California's standards for school site selection are found in Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 14010, and additional codes and regulations applicable to school facilities are located in the Education, Government and Public Resources Codes. The following checklist provides a list of questions and code citations related to State-funded new school facilities.

STATE STANDARDS CHECKLIST FOR STATE-FUNDED SCHOOL FACILITIES—
SCHOOL SITE APPROVAL
(Documentation for SFPD 4.0, 4.01-4.03, School Site Approval)

Topic	Code References
Air Quality	
Is the boundary of the proposed school site within 500 feet of the edge of the closest traffic lane of a freeway or busy traffic corridor? If yes, would the project create an air quality health risk due to the placement of the school?	Ed. Code §17213(c)(2)(C); CCR Title 5 §14010(q)
Would the project create an air quality hazard due to the placement of a school within one-quarter mile of: (a) permitted and non-permitted facilities identified by the jurisdictional air quality control board or air pollution control district; (b) freeways and other busy traffic corridors; (c) large agricultural operations; and/or (d) a rail yard, which might reasonably be anticipated to emit hazardous air emissions, or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous material, substances, or waste?	Ed. Code § 17213(b); CCR Title 5 §14010(q)
Geology and Soils	
Does the site contain an active earthquake fault or fault trace, or is the site located within the boundaries of any special studies zone or within an area designated as geologically hazardous in the safety element of the local general plan?	Ed. Code, §17212 and §17212.5; CCR Title 5 §14010(f)
Would the project involve the construction, reconstruction, or relocation of any school building on the trace of a geological fault along which surface rupture can reasonably be expected to occur within the life of the school building?	Ed. Code §17212.5
Would the project involve the construction, reconstruction, or relocation of any school building on a site subject to moderate-to-high liquefaction, landslides, or expansive soils?	CCR, Title 5 §14010(i) School Site Selection and Approval Guide, Appendix H
Are naturally occurring asbestos minerals located at the site?	School Site Selection and Approval Guide, Appendix H
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	
Does the proposed school site contain one or more pipelines, situated underground or aboveground, which carry hazardous substances, acutely hazardous materials, or hazardous wastes, unless the pipeline is a natural gas line that is used only to supply natural gas to that school or neighborhood?	Ed. Code §17213(a)(3)

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Is the proposed school site located near an aboveground water or fuel storage tank or within 1,500 feet of an easement of an aboveground or underground pipeline that can pose a safety hazard to the site?	CCR, Title 5 § 14010 (h)
Is the school site in an area designated in a city, county, or city and county general plan for agricultural use and zoned for agricultural production, and if so, do neighboring agricultural uses have the potential to result in any public health and safety issues that may affect the pupils and employees at the school site? *(Does not apply to school sites approved by CDE prior to January 1, 1997.)*	Ed. Code § 17215.5
Is the property line of the proposed school site less than the following distances from the edge of respective power line easements: (1) 100 feet of a 50–133 kV line; (2) 150 feet of a 220–230 kV line; or (3) 350 feet of a 500–550 kV line?	CCR, Title 5 § 14010 (c)
Does the project site contain a current or former hazardous waste disposal site or solid waste disposal site and, if so, have the wastes been removed?	Ed. Code § 17213(a)(1)
Is the project site a hazardous substance release site identified by the state Department of Health Services in a current list adopted pursuant to §25356 for removal or remedial action pursuant to Chapter 6.8 of Division 20 of the Health and Safety Code?	PRC § 21151.8 (a)(1)(B); Ed. Code § 17213(a)(2)
If prepared, has the risk assessment been performed with a focus on children's health posed by a hazardous materials release or threatened release, or the presence of naturally occurring hazardous materials on the schoolsite?	Ed. Code § 17210.1(a)(3)
If a response action is necessary and proposed as part of this project, has it been developed to be protective of children's health, with an ample margin of safety?	Ed. Code § 17210.1(a)(4)
Is the proposed school site situated within 2,000 feet of a significant disposal of hazardous waste?	CCR, Title 5 § 14010 (t)
Is the site within 300 feet of an active oil or natural gas well?	Fire Code § 3406.3.1
Hydrology and Flooding	
Is the project site subject to flooding or tank/dam inundation or street flooding?	Ed. Code § 17212 and 17212.5; CCR, Title 5 § 14010 (g) School Site Selection and Approval Guide, Appendix H
Land Use and Planning	
Would the proposed school conflict with any existing or proposed land uses, such that a potential health or safety risk to students would be created?	Ed. Code § 17213; Gov't. Code § 65402; CCR, Title 5 § 14010 (m)
Are there easements on or adjacent to the site that would restrict access or building placement?	CCR, Title 5 § 14010(r)
Is the school site proportionate in its length to width ratio to accommodate the building layout, parking and playfields that can be safely supervised and does not exceed the allowed passing time to classes for the district?	CCR, Title 5 § 14010(j)
Is the site located within the proposed attendance area to encourage student walking and avoid extensive bussing unless bussing for ethnic diversity?	CCR, Title 5 § 14010(n)
Has the district considered environmental factors of light, wind, noise, aesthetics, and air pollution in its site selection process?	CCR, Title 5 § 14010(q)
Is the site within a designated Farmland Security Zone?	Government Code § 51296.5
Noise	
Is the proposed school site located adjacent to or near a major arterial roadway or freeway whose noise generation may adversely affect the educational program?	CCR, Title 5 § 14010 (e)
Public Services	
Does the site promote joint use of parks, libraries, museums, and other public services?	CCR, Title 5, § 14010 (o)
Is the site conveniently located for public services, including but not limited to fire protection, police protection, public transit and trash disposal wherever feasible?	CCR, Title 5, § 14010 (p)
Transportation/Traffic	
Are traffic and pedestrian hazards mitigated per Caltrans' Traffic Control for School Areas?	CCR, Title 5 § 14010 (l)

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Is the site easily accessible from arterials and is the minimum peripheral visibility maintained for driveways per Caltrans' Highway Design Manual?	CCR, Title 5 § 14010 (k)
Is the proposed school site within 1,500 feet of a railroad track easement?	CCR, Title 5 § 14010 (d)
Is the proposed school site within two nautical miles, measured by air line, of that point on an airport runway or potential runway included in an airport master plan that is nearest to the site? *(Does not apply to school sites acquired prior to January 1, 1966.)*	Ed. Code § 17215 (a)&(b)

School building "means and includes any building used, or designed to be used, for elementary or secondary school purposes and constructed, reconstructed, altered, or added to…" (Ed. Code § 17283).
Note: Any documentation related to the California Environmental Quality Act is provided under separate cover.

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3. Environmental Analysis

Section 2.1 provided a checklist of the State of California's health and safety standards for school sites. This section provides documentation and evaluation of applicable standards and mitigation measures where appropriate.

3.1 AIR QUALITY

3.1.1 Is the boundary of the proposed school site within 500 feet of the edge of the closest traffic lane of a freeway or busy traffic corridor? If yes, would the project create an air quality health risk due to the placement of the school?

No Significant Hazard. Public Resources Code Section 21151.8(b)(9) and Education Code Section 17213(d)(9) define a "freeway or other busy traffic corridors" as roadways that on an average day have traffic in excess of 50,000 vehicles in a rural area or 100,000 vehicles in an urban area or 100,000 average daily trips (ADT). N. Mooney Boulevard (SR-63), which bounds the project site to the east, has an annual average daily traffic (AADT) count of 21,500 vehicles per day and therefore is not considered to be a busy traffic corridor (Caltrans 2022). Avenue 264 has an AADT of 5,534 vehicles per day and also is not considered to be a busy traffic corridor (TCAG 2025). Therefore, there are no freeways or busy traffic corridors within 500 feet of the site (Google Earth Pro. 2025).

3.1.2 Would the project create an air quality hazard due to the placement of a school within one-quarter mile of: (a) permitted and non-permitted facilities identified by the jurisdictional air quality control board or air pollution control district; (b) freeways and other busy traffic corridors; (c) large agricultural operations; and/or (d) a rail yard, which might reasonably be anticipated to emit hazardous air emissions, or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous material, substances, or waste?

No Significant Hazard. Based on information obtained from the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (Valley Air) grid search, there are no permitted facilities located within one quarter-mile of the project site (Valley Air 2025). Additionally, there are no rail yards within 0.25 mile of the project site (Google Earth Pro 2025), and the site is not within a quarter mile of a freeway or busy traffic corridor (see Section 3.1.1). However, the project site was previously used for agriculture and the surrounding area also includes agricultural uses.

In 2018, the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) adopted Rule 16-004, Pesticide Use Near School Sites, which prohibits pesticide application within a quarter mile of a public K-12 school during school hours from 6 AM to 6 PM (DPR 2025a). In addition, no fumigant use is permitted within 36 hours prior to the start of a school day. Schools must also receive annual notification of any planned pesticide use within the 0.25-mile buffer zone. The DPR also has a new program called "Spray Days" and a new website with maps that show when farmers plan to apply the pesticides and what type are being applied. It enables people or schools

to enter an address and sign up to receive an email or text message alert at least 24 hours before farmers apply restricted pesticides in the area where they live or attend school (DPR 2025b).

The California Pesticide Information Portal (CalPIP) was accessed to determine the pesticide usage for agricultural crops within a 0.25-mile radius of the project site (CalPIP 2025). According to the latest information on the website (2022), the crops with applied pesticide usage include almonds, wine grapes, and walnuts. The applied chemicals were all ground applications; no aerial spraying was conducted. Since the chemicals were not applied from 6 AM to 6 PM (school hours) per Rule 16-004 and there was no aerial spraying which could impact the proposed school site, the existing agricultural uses in the surrounding area would not create an air quality hazard at the school site. In summary, there were no significant air quality hazards within a 0.25-mile radius of the proposed school site.

3.2 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The project site is located in the southeastern portion of the Great Valley Geomorphic Province (California State Parks 2025). The Great Valley Geomorphic Province is a north-south trending valley that is approximately 400 miles long by 50 miles wide. The valley is an alluvial plain filled with nearly flat-lying sediments. The southern portion of the Great Valley Geomorphic Province encompasses the San Joaquin Valley; and is bounded by the Sierra Nevada foothills to the east, and Coastal Ranges to the west. The surface of the San Joaquin Valley is composed primarily of unconsolidated Pleistocene and alluvial sediments. The project site is part lies within the southern portion of the San Joaquin Valley within the Tulare Basin (Visalia 2014a).

The project site is located within the San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin, more specifically the Kaweah subbasin. This is considered to be a high priority subbasin with critical overdraft and declining water levels (DWR 2025). The groundwater sustainability report (GSP) submitted to the Department of Water Resources is considered to be incomplete, which triggers state intervention procedures. According to groundwater monitoring data from a nearby remediation site that is approximately 0.5-mile north of the project site, the depth to groundwater is more than 100 feet below ground surface (SWRCB 2025). Therefore, groundwater is unlikely to be encountered during construction at the site.

According to the Web Soil Survey, the soil type at the project site consists of Nord fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slope and Yettem sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slope. These soil types are considered well drained soils, with a hydraulic soil group A for the Yettem sandy soil and hydraulic soil group B for the Nord fine sandy loam (USDA 2025).

3.2.1 Does the site contain an active earthquake fault or fault trace, or is the site located within the boundaries of any special studies zone or within an area designated as geologically hazardous in the safety element of the local general plan?

No Significant Hazard. Based on a review of the California Geological Survey (CGS) Fault Activity Map of California, the project site is not located on or within the vicinity of an active earthquake fault or fault trace and the site is not within or immediately adjacent (i.e., within a few hundred feet) to an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. The closest active fault to the project site is the Kern Canyon Fault Zone approximately

50 miles to the east (DOC 2025a). In addition, the Safety Element of the General Plan characterizes Tulare County as having very low ground shaking potential (Tulare County 2016).

3.2.2 Would the project involve the construction, reconstruction, or relocation of any school building on the trace of a geological fault along which surface rupture can reasonably be expected to occur within the life of the school building?

No Significant Hazard. As stated in Section 3.2.1, no active faults are located on or in the immediate vicinity of the site and the site is not within or immediately adjacent (i.e., within a few hundred feet) to an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone (DOC 2025a).

3.2.3 Would the project involve the construction, reconstruction, or relocation of any school building on a site subject to moderate-to-high liquefaction, landslides, or expansive soils?

No Significant Hazard.

Liquefaction

Liquefaction refers to loose, saturated sand, or gravel deposits that lose their load-supporting capability when subjected to intense shaking. Liquefaction potential varies based upon three main contributing factors: 1) cohesionless, granular soils having relatively low densities (usually of Holocene age); 2) shallow groundwater (generally less than 50 feet); and 3) moderate to high seismic ground shaking. According to the Department of Conservation map of liquefaction zones, the project site is not in an area mapped as being susceptible to liquefaction (DOC 2025b). Also, shallow groundwater is not present beneath the site and the soil at the site is not considered to be cohesionless or granular, which is conducive to liquefaction.

In addition, all structures would be built to adhere to the 2022 California Building Code (CBC), or the most recent version, which provides minimum standards to protect property and public welfare by regulating design and construction to reduce the effects of adverse soil conditions. Therefore, liquefaction would not have a significant impact.

Landslides

Landslides are a type of erosion in which masses of earth and rock move down slope as a single unit. Susceptibility of slopes to landslides and other forms of slope failure depend on several factors. These factors are usually present in combination and include steep slopes, condition of rock and soil materials, the presence of water, formational contacts, geologic shear zones, and seismic activity.

The project site is relatively flat and there are no steep slopes in the vicinity of the site. The site is not in a landslide zone, according to the Department of Conservation's landslide map (DOC 2025c). The map in the Safety Element of the Tulare General Plan also shows that the project is not within a landslide susceptibility area (Tulare County 2016). Additionally, all structures would be built to grading and construction specifications provided in the geotechnical report as well as adherence to the 2022 CBC, or the most recent version, which provides minimum standards to protect property and public welfare by regulating design and construction to reduce the effects of adverse soil conditions. Therefore, no significant hazards would occur associated with landslides.

Expansive Soils

Expansive soils swell when they become wet and shrink when they dry out, resulting in the potential for cracked building foundations and in some cases, structural damage to the buildings. As discussed above, the USDA Web Soil Survey identified that the underling soil includes Nord fine sandy loam and Yettem sandy loam, which are considered to have a low shrink and swell potential (USDA 2025, Visalia 2014c).

In addition, all structures would be built to adhere to the 2022 CBC, or the most recent version, which provides minimum standards to protect property and public welfare by regulating design and construction to reduce the effects of adverse soil conditions. Also, the Division of the State Architect (DSA) would review the project plans and ensure that all potential building issues have been adequately addressed. Therefore, impacts associated with expansive soils would not be significant.

3.2.4 Are naturally occurring asbestos minerals located at the site?

Potentially Significant Hazard. Asbestos is a naturally occurring silicate mineral of the amphibole group that has historically been utilized for a variety of purposes including insulation, fireproofing materials, automotive brakes, and wallboard materials. Asbestos is characterized as a carcinogen. Naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) is associated with ultramafic and serpentine rocks.

Based on a review of the geologic map for the Fresno Quadrangle (Matthews and Burnett 1965), there is an outcrop of ultrabasic intrusive rock that potentially could be a source of NOA that is approximately 9.65 miles northeast of the project site. DTSC guidance for school sites with the potential for NOA to be present requires sampling and analysis for NOA during the PEA process (DTSC 2004). Therefore, there is the potential for NOA to be present on the project site due to airborne transport from the weathering and deposition of NOA-containing rock. The PEA that is being prepared for the project site will include soil sampling and analysis for NOA to determine if this is an issue of concern.

3.3 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

3.3.1 Does the proposed school site contain one or more pipelines, situated underground or aboveground, which carry hazardous substances, acutely hazardous materials, or hazardous wastes, unless the pipeline is a natural gas line that is used only to supply natural gas to that school or neighborhood?

No Significant Hazard. There are no petroleum or chemical pipelines on the site based on a review of the National Pipeline Mapping System online mapping database (NPMS 2025).

However, the Southern California Gas Company was contacted and confirmed that an 8-inch natural gas distribution pipeline is located along the east side of N. Mooney Boulevard. The pipeline is approximately 90 east from the property boundary. A Pipeline Safety Hazard Assessment (PSHA) was subsequently prepared to determine the potential impacts of the natural gas pipeline to students and staff at the proposed school site (PlaceWorks 2025a). The results of the PSHA determined that the pipeline would not pose a risk to students or staff at the proposed school site and no mitigation measures are required.

3.3.2 Is the proposed school site located near an aboveground water or fuel storage tank or within 1,500 feet of an easement of an aboveground or underground pipeline that can pose a safety hazard to the site?

Aboveground Water or Fuel Storage Tanks

No Significant Hazard. Based on a review of Google Earth Pro (2025), there are no large aboveground water tanks or fuel storage tanks within a 1,500-foot radius of the project site.

Hazardous Substance Pipelines

No Significant Hazard. As stated in Section 3.3.1, one high-pressure natural gas distribution pipeline was identified within a 1,500-foot radius (Southern California Gas Company 2025). A PSHA was subsequently prepared to determine if there were any significant hazards or safety issues associated with the identified high-pressure natural gas pipeline. The results of the PSHA determined that the pipeline would not pose a risk to students or staff at the proposed school site and no mitigation measures are required (PlaceWorks 2025a).

Water Pipelines

No Significant Hazard. The California Water Service Company (Cal Water) was contacted to determine if any large diameter water pipelines (defined by CDE as 12-inches in diameter or greater) were located within 1,500 feet of the site. Six 12-inch water pipelines were identified and the potential for flooding at the proposed school site was evaluated in the PSHA. The results of the evaluation indicated that the pipelines did not pose a risk of significant flooding at the proposed school site (PlaceWorks 2025a).

3.3.3 Is the school site in an area designated in a city, county, or city and county general plan for agricultural use and zoned for agricultural production, and if so, do neighboring agricultural uses have the potential to result in any public health and safety issues that may affect the pupils and employees at the school site? (Does not apply to school sites approved by CDE prior to January 1, 1997.)

No Significant Hazard. The project site is within unincorporated Tulare County with a zoning designation of AE-20, which is Exclusive Agricultural Zone – 20 Acre Minimum (Tulare County 2025a). Additionally, areas to the west and south of the project site have the same land use and zoning designation. The parcel east of the project site across N. Mooney Boulevard is zoned General Commercial (C-2). Parcels to the north across Avenue 264/Liberty Road are zoned Residential (R-1) and AE-20.

Although neighboring agricultural uses have the potential to create health and safety issues at the proposed school site, the implementation of Rule 16-004, Pesticide Use Near School Sites, which prohibits pesticide application within a quarter mile of a public K-12 school during school hours, would mitigate any potential issues due to pesticide drift (DPR 2025a). Also, according to CalPIP, the agricultural properties within a 0.25-mile radius of the proposed school site are primarily orchards growing almonds, wine grapes, and walnuts (CalPIP 2025). All of the applied chemicals are ground applications with no aerial spraying, which minimizes the potential for pesticide drift. Since the chemicals are not applied during school hours and there is no aerial spraying, the agricultural zoning of adjacent parcels does not pose a significant hazard.

3. Environmental Analysis

3.3.4 Is the property line of the proposed school site less than the following distances from the edge of respective power line easements: (1) 100 feet of a 50–133 kV line; (2) 150 feet of a 220–230 kV line; or (3) 350 feet of a 500–550 kV line?

No Significant Hazard. According to Southern California Edison (SCE), there are no SCE transmission lines that are 50 kilovolt (kV) or greater within 100 feet of the site (Appendix A). There are 12 kV power lines along Avenue 264/Liberty Road and N. Mooney Boulevard, but these lines are below the voltage that requires CDE setback distances. Therefore, there are no high voltage power lines that would impact the project site.

3.3.5 Does the project site contain a current or former hazardous waste disposal site or solid waste disposal site and, if so, have the wastes been removed?

No Significant Hazard. The following environmental databases were searched to determine if the project site was listed as a current or former hazardous waste or solid waste disposal site:

- GeoTracker. State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB 2025)
- EnviroStor. Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC 2025a)
- EnviroMapper.US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA 2025)
- Solid Waste Information System (SWIS). California Department of Resources Recovery and Recycling (CalRecycle 2025).
- Cortese List. Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC 2025b)

None of the databases identified the project site as being a current or former hazardous waste disposal site or solid waste disposal site.

3.3.6 Is the project site a hazardous substance release site identified by the state Department of Health Services in a current list adopted pursuant to §25356 for removal or remedial action pursuant to Chapter 6.8 of Division 20 of the Health and Safety Code?

No Significant Hazard. Based on a review of the Cortese list provided by DTSC (2025b), the project site is not identified as a hazardous substance release site.

3.3.7 If prepared, has the risk assessment been performed with a focus on children's health posed by a hazardous materials release or threatened release, or the presence of naturally occurring hazardous materials on the school site?

Potentially Significant Hazard. A Preliminary Endangerment Assessment will be completed as part of the proposed project due to former agricultural use at the site and the potential for organochlorine pesticides (OCPs) arsenic, and lead to be present in soil. Also, the former structures on the property will be evaluated for the potential for lead-based paint, termiticide and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) to be present in soil. The potential presence of naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) will also be evaluated as part of the PEA.

The PEA will be conducted under the jurisdiction of DTSC as required for new school sites. If the results of the PEA indicate that concentrations of chemicals in soil exceed residential cleanup levels, then corrective action will be conducted in consultation with DTSC.

3.3.8 If a response action is necessary and proposed as part of this project, has it been developed to be protective of children's health, with an ample margin of safety?

Potentially Significant Hazard. As stated in Section 3.3.7, a PEA will be prepared to determine if chemicals of concern are present in site soil and a response action will be conducted, if needed, in consultation with DTSC. Any soil that exceeds residential exposure levels will be removed from the site, which will be protective of children's health, with an ample margin of safety.

3.3.9 Is the proposed school site situated within 2,000 feet of a significant disposal of hazardous waste?

No Significant Hazard. As stated in Sections 3.3.5, the project site is not within 2,000 feet of a significant disposal of hazardous waste (DTSC 2025a, 2025b; USEPA 2025; SWRCB 2025, CalRecycle 2025).

3.3.10 Is the site within 300 feet of an active oil or natural gas well?

No Significant Hazard. According to the Department of Conservation Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (CalGEM) Well Finder, the project site is not within 300 feet of an active oil or natural gas well (CalGEM 2025). The closest oil well is located approximately 1.2 miles northeast of the project site. The well is identified as plugged and was formerly operated by Jordan Oil & Gas Company.

3.4 HYDROLOGY AND FLOODING

The school site ranges in elevation from about 308 to 323 feet above mean sea level (msl) at north latitude 36.267690 and west longitude -119.315275. No water bodies are located in the vicinity of the proposed school site. Cameron Creek is the closest waterway to the project site and is approximately 0.66-mile to the north. The project site is currently fallow agricultural land that is graded with a bare surface. The current drainage direction is to the southwest. Rainfall at the project site currently infiltrates into the exposed surface areas. However, development of the site will include the installation of an on-site drainage network and connection to the County's drainage system.

3.4.1 Is the project site subject to flooding or tank/dam inundation or street flooding?

No Significant Hazard. The project site is not within a 100-year flood zone. The project site is within Zone X, which is designated as an area of minimal flood hazard (FEMA 2025). Additionally, the project site is not within a dam inundation zone (DWR 2025; Army COE 2014). Therefore, the project will not expose people or the new school buildings to adverse effects associated with flooding.

3.5 LAND USE AND PLANNING

3.5.1 Would the proposed school conflict with any existing or proposed land uses, such that a potential health or safety risk to students would be created?

No Significant Hazard. As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, the project site is currently undeveloped vacant land that was formerly used for agricultural purposes. The project site is within unincorporated Tulare County with a zoning designation of AE-20, which is Exclusive Agricultural Zone – 20 Acre Minimum (Tulare County 2025a). The parcel adjacent and east of the project site is also zoned AE-20 but is occupied by the COE Liberty Campus. Therefore, the proposed land use would be compatible with the adjacent land use.

The areas to the west and south of the project site are also zoned AE-20 and are currently used for agricultural purposes. As discussed in Section 3.1.2 and 3.3.3, the adjacent agricultural uses would not pose a significant health or safety risk to students at the proposed school site. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with the existing land uses and would be consistent with the local educational uses.

3.5.2 Are there easements on or adjacent to the site that would restrict access or building placement?

No Significant Hazard. Based on the Tulare County parcel map, there are no easements on the project site. However, the parcel bounding the project site to the south contains an 18-foot private access roadway easement. The proposed project would be staged and constructed within the project boundaries. Therefore, no easements that would restrict access or building placement are located on or adjacent to the site and there is no significant hazard to the project.

3.5.3 Is the school site proportionate in its length to width ratio to accommodate the building layout, parking and playfields that can be safely supervised and does not exceed the allowed passing time to classes for the district?

No Significant Hazard. The school will be developed with footprint proportionality and ease of student access in mind. Therefore, there is no significant hazard to the project.

3.5.4 Has the district considered environmental factors of light, wind, noise, aesthetics, and air pollution in its site selection process?

Light and Wind

No Significant Hazard. The project site would be exposed to standard climate conditions experienced by Tulare County, which is generally characterized as Mediterranean with hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters. The winds are predominantly from the west from March to October and from the east from October to March with an average wind speed of 5.1 mph (Weather Spark 2025). The proposed project would not include high-rise buildings and therefore would not be impacted by prevailing winds. As applicable, the operation of the proposed project would consider these environmental conditions. Lighting of athletic fields is not included as part of the proposed project and residences are not in close proximity to the project site. Therefore, the project would not expose site occupants or surrounding residents to adverse light or wind conditions.

Noise

No Significant Hazard. Noise monitoring was conducted around the project site by PlaceWorks in January 2025 (PlaceWorks 2025b). The results of the noise monitoring and modeling are presented in the Initial Study, which also contains an appendix with the noise results. A detailed discussion of the results of the noise monitoring are provided in Section 3.6.1

Aesthetics

No Significant Hazard. Project development would not degrade the existing visual character of the site. The project site is in an area with various land uses which includes agricultural, rural residential, commercial, public institutional, Office, Heavy/Service Commercial, and Light Industrial (Visalia 2014b). The building of the proposed project would be consistent with the surrounding land uses. The character and quality of the site would not be incompatible with the nearby structures.

Air Pollution

No Significant Hazard. As stated in Section 3.1.2, no permitted facilities are located within a quarter mile of the project site (Valley Air 2025). There are no rail yards or industrial facilities nearby (0.25 miles), and the site is not within a quarter mile of a freeway or busy traffic corridor.

The land surrounding the site includes agricultural uses. As discussed in detail in Section 3.1.2, DPR adopted Rule 16-004, Pesticide Use Near School sites, which prohibits pesticide application within a quarter mile of a public K-12 school during school hours (DPR 2025a). Therefore, the existing surrounding agricultural uses would not create an air quality hazard at the school site.

3.5.5 Is the site within a designated Farmland Security Zone?

No Significant Hazard. The project site is not within a Williamson Act agricultural preserve and is not 100 acres or more in size (Tulare County 2025b). In addition, the site is not within a Farmland Security Zone. Therefore, the development of the project site would not present any significant issues.

3.6 NOISE

3.6.1 Is the proposed school site located adjacent to or near a major arterial roadway or freeway whose noise generation may adversely affect the educational program?

No Significant Hazard. The project site is bounded by N. Mooney Boulevard (SR-63) to the east, which is a 4-lane divided arterial roadway in the vicinity of the project site. Caltrans reports that in 2022, N. Mooney Boulevard at the intersection with Avenue 264/Liberty Road had average annual daily traffic of 21,500 vehicles per day with a peak month of 22,500 vehicles per day (Caltrans 2022).

PlaceWorks conducted a noise monitoring study in January 2025 with three short-term (15-minute) measurement locations and two long term (24-hour) measurement locations. The three short-term monitoring stations were located north of Avenue 264/Liberty Road in a residential area; between the project site and the

existing COE Liberty Campus; and south of the project site near N. Mooney Boulevard. The two long-term monitoring stations were just west and south of the existing COE Liberty Campus. Most of the ambient noise was from traffic along N. Mooney Boulevard. The ambient noise levels at the long-term locations were recorded as 63.1 dBA L_{dn} at LT-1, and 64.6 dBA L_{dn} at LT-2, which is located closer to N. Mooney Boulevard.

The County of Tulare General Plan Noise Element, states that areas exposed to existing or projected noise levels that exceed 60 dB L_{dn} at the exterior of buildings are considered noise impacted. New development of noise sensitive land uses, including schools, would be required to reduce noise levels to 60 dB L_{dn} or less within outdoor activity areas and 45 dB L_{dn} or less within interior spaces (Tulare County 2025c). Where it is not possible to reduce exterior noise levels within outdoor activity areas to 60 dB L_{dn} with the best available noise reduction technology, an exterior noise level of up to 65 dB L_{dn} will be allowed.

The preliminary site plan shows that the exterior of the nearest building in the southern portion of the project site (i.e., the theater) would be set back approximately 130 feet from N. Mooney Boulevard and therefore the project noise level at this location would be less than 60 dB L_{dn}, since there is a logarithmic decrease in sound with distance from the source. In addition, the building in the northern portion of the site will be set back about 150 feet from the long-term monitoring location LT-1 and about 90 feet from Avenue 264/Liberty Road and therefore exterior noise levels at this location would also be less than 60 dB L_{dn}. Including project traffic that will result in additional vehicle trips to the site, noise levels are still estimated to be below 60 dB L_{dn}. Also, the project will be constructed in accordance with the 2022 CBC, which requires that interior noise levels attributable to exterior sources must not exceed 45 dB L_{dn} in any habitable room, and the DSA would review the project plans to ensure that all potential noise issues have been adequately addressed. Therefore, impacts associated with noise issues at the project site would not be significant.

3.7 PUBLIC SERVICES

3.7.1 Does the site promote joint use of parks, libraries, museums, and other public services?

No Significant Hazard. The project includes a library that is accessible to contracting districts, schools, and educators. The performing arts theater would include performances and would be open to the public. No impacts to nearby public facilities and services would occur as a result of the proposed project. No significant impacts would occur as a result of the proposed project.

3.7.2 Is the site conveniently located for public services, including but not limited to fire protection, police protection, public transit and trash disposal wherever feasible?

No Significant Hazard. The project site is conveniently located for public services and will have regularly scheduled trash collection by Waste Management and access to public transit. The City of Visalia through a joint use agreement with the County of Tulare provides fire protection services to the project site, Fire Station 52 is approximately 2.45 miles north of the site. The Tulare County Fire Department Station 63 is approximately 2.64 miles southwest of the site. The Tulare County Sheriff's Department station is approximately 4.0 miles northwest of the project site. The TCRTA provides transit access via the C40 bus line with a stop at the Avenue 264/Liberty Road and N. Mooney Boulevard intersection. The TCRTA also offers a

shared ride, on-demand service, also known as microtransit, which will transport passengers to a given destination within the TCRTA service zones.

3.8 TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

3.8.1 Are traffic and pedestrian hazards mitigated per Caltrans' Traffic Control for School Areas?

No Significant Hazard. A traffic study is being conducted for this project and will be provided in the Environmental Impact Report. The traffic study will evaluate the project's impact on transit, roadways, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities and the proposed safety and operational characteristics of the proposed access/circulation features. An inventory will be conducted of the streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, and public transit routes in the vicinity of the proposed project and the volume of traffic generated by the project will be quantified. It is anticipated that the proposed project would not adversely affect the performance or safety of any 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 access and circulation features of the project are subject to Tulare County's design standards for parking lots, including those on school properties and CDE guidance on school site design, including adequate parking for staff, visitors, and students. The project is subject to approval by COE and DSA. As applicable, the design guidelines in Caltrans' Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), Part 7, Traffic Control for School Areas, will be incorporated into the project's traffic and transportation design (Caltrans 2025).

3.8.2 Is the site easily accessible from arterials and is the minimum peripheral visibility maintained for driveways per Caltrans' Highway Design Manual?

No Significant Hazard. The project site is easily accessible and adjacent to Avenue 264/Liberty Road to the north and N. Mooney Boulevard to the east. Improvements to the driveways would be designed to meet the requirements of the Caltrans Highway Design Manual and minimum peripheral visibility will be maintained.

3.8.3 Is the proposed school site within 1,500 feet of a railroad track easement?

No Significant Hazard. Based on a review of Google Earth aerial maps and the United States Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration's interactive map that outlines rail networks, the site is not located within 1,500 feet of a railroad track easement (USDOT 2025). The nearest rail line is the San Joaquin Valley Railroad Loma Spur, which is approximately 1.5 miles east of the project site.

3.8.4 Is the proposed school site within two nautical miles, measured by air line, of that point on an airport runway or potential runway included in an airport master plan that is nearest to the site? (Does not apply to school sites acquired prior to January 1, 1966.)

No Significant Hazard. Based on a review of Google Earth aerial maps, the site is not within two nautical miles of an existing airport or proposed airport runway. The nearest airport is the Visalia Municipal Airport located approximately 4.2 nautical miles northwest of the project site.

3. Environmental Analysis

3.9 EXEMPTIONS TO SITING STANDARDS

3.9.1 Is the district seeking any exemptions to the standards found in CCR, Title 5, § 14010(c-i), (l), (m), (q), (c), (t)?

No Significant Hazard. The COE will not be seeking any exemptions to the standards found in CCR Title 5 Section 14010.

3.9.2 If so, has mitigation been identified that demonstrates that the standard may be overridden without compromising a safe and supportive school environment?

No Significant Hazard. The proposed project would comply with all CCR Title 5 standards.

4. References

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4. References

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4. References

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5. List of Preparers

5.1 LEAD AGENCY

Tulare County Office of Education
6200 S. Mooney Boulevard
Visalia, CA 93277
559.733.6601

5.2 PLACEWORKS

PlaceWorks
3 MacArthur Place, Suite 1100
Santa Ana, CA 92707
Tel: 714.966.9220
Email: info@placeworks.com

Steve Bush, PE
Senior Engineer

Angel Castro
Project Planner

5. List of Preparers

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Appendix A Agency Information

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From: San Joaquin Valley APCD CA Public Records
To: Madeline Miller
Subject: Your San Joaquin Valley APCD, CA public records request #25-189 has been closed.
Date: Wednesday, February 26, 2025 10:06:05 AM

San Joaquin Valley APCD, CA Public Records

Record request #25-189 has been closed. The closure reason supplied was:

The District has processed your request for information regarding your Public Records Request. A search of the District's databases has returned no records on file for this specific location. Your request has been fulfilled.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at Public.RecordsCoordinator@valleyair.org or 559-230-6036

You may now access the ***Permits to Operate for facilities by utilizing the following link to our Permits Information Portal: https://www.valleyair.org/PublicPermits. In the future please refer to the webpage for Permit Records. Note, if you are unable to find any permits utilizing the portal, then permit records do not likely exist for that location/facility. For assistance utilizing the Permits Information Portal webpage, please contact our Small Business Assistance office at one of the following phone numbers:

(209) 557-6446 (Modesto Office)
(559) 230-5888 (Fresno Office)
(661) 392-5665 (Bakersfield Office)

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON
An EDISON INTERNATIONAL℠ Company

Phil Hung, P.E.
EMF Program Manager
Fullerton Service Center
1851 W Valencia Dr
Fullerton CA 92833
Phone: (626) 633-3415
E-mail: phil.hung@sce.com

SCE Voltage Identification Report of Proposed or Existing School Site

Request Received: **02/28/2025** Received By: **Phil Hung**

Requesting Entity: __ School ____District __**X**__Consultant ___ School Representative:

Steve Bush
sbush@placeworks.com
(510) 848-3815 ext. 3316

Nature of Request: Voltage ID ___**X**___ Msmt. Req. _____ Information _____

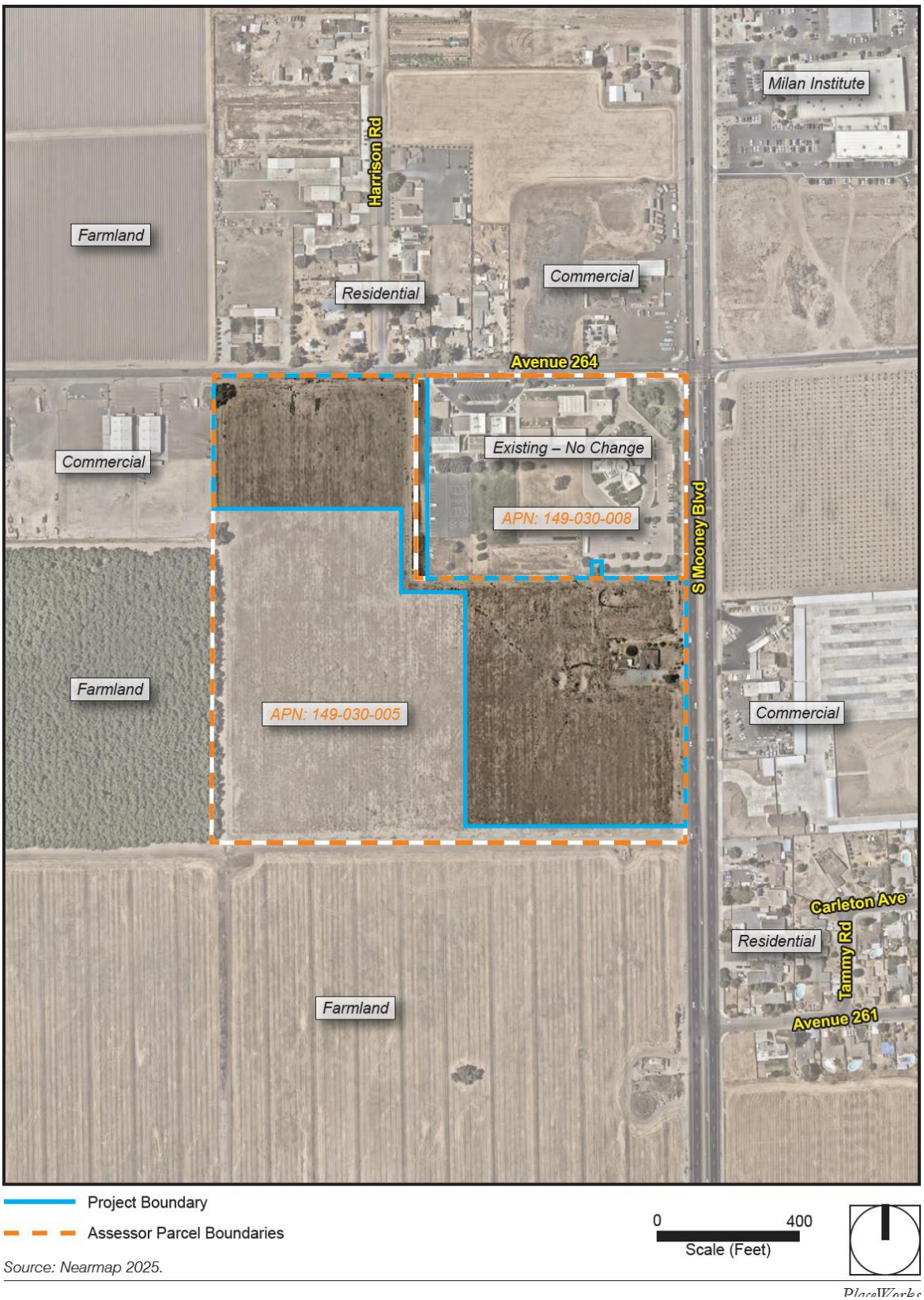
Other: _____

Site Name: **YMCA Liberty School Expansion**
Site Address: **11535 Avenue 264**
City: **Tulare, CA 93274**
County: **Tulare**
Cross Streets: **S. Mooney Blvd.**

Client: **Tulare County Office of Education**
6200 S Mooney Blvd.
Visalia, CA 93277

Photo(s):

Aerial View



Street Views

Looking East on Avenue 264

Looking North on N. Mooney Blvd.

Date of Site Visit: **03/07/2025 (Google Maps)**
Support Action(s) Taken: **SCE system database lookup**

SCE Facilities Identified Within California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 5 Prescribed Distances:

- **There are no SCE facilities of 50 kV or higher within the CDE Title 5 setback distances**
- **There are overhead distribution circuits on Avenue 264 and on N. Mooney Blvd.**

Date(s) responded to Requestor:
02/28/2025: Acknowledged, (E-mail)
03/10/2025: Supplied Information (E-mail)

Outlook

RE: Pipeline Information Request for YMCA Liberty School Expansion, in unincorporated Tulare County, CA

From Pham, Deanna D <DPham@socalgas.com>
Date Wed 4/9/2025 10:01 AM
To Steve Bush <sbush@placeworks.com>
Cc Coria, Christopher <CCoria@socalgas.com>

1 attachment (436 KB)
PIR YMCA.pdf;

You don't often get email from dpham@socalgas.com. Learn why this is important

Hello Steve,
Apologies for the error. I have attached the edited PIR letter. Thank you.

Deanna Pham
Distribution Engineering Intern
Chatsworth HQ

From: Steve Bush <sbush@placeworks.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 9:48 AM
To: Pham, Deanna D <DPham@socalgas.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Pipeline Information Request for YMCA Liberty School Expansion, in unincorporated Tulare County, CA

Hi Deanna,
Thank you for the response. Can I ask a favor, that you re-send the letter and remove the following phrase from the last paragraph:

"... Located at Saugus Union School District"...

The school site is being evaluated by Tulare County Office of Education. Probably just a carry over from a previous PIR letter.

Thank you again,

STEVE BUSH, PE
Senior Engineer II

PLACEWORKS
510.848.3815 x3316
Celebrating 50 years of creating great places!

From: Pham, Deanna D <DPham@socalgas.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 9:19 AM
To: Coria, Christopher <CCoria@socalgas.com>; Salazar Lopez, Adrian <ASalaza2@socalgas.com>; Guzman, Claire L. <CLGuzman@socalgas.com>; Steve Bush <sbush@placeworks.com>
Subject: RE: Pipeline Information Request for YMCA Liberty School Expansion, in unincorporated Tulare County, CA

You don't often get email from dpham@socalgas.com. Learn why this is important [aka.ms]

Hello,

Please find the attached document containing pressure information for the HP pipeline located near 11535 Avenue 264, Visalia, CA 93277. Feel free to reach out if you have any additional questions.

Deanna Pham

Distribution Engineering Intern

Chatsworth HQ

From: Coria, Christopher <CCoria@socalgas.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 3, 2025 10:56 AM
To: Salazar Lopez, Adrian <ASalaza2@socalgas.com>; Pham, Deanna D <DPham@socalgas.com>
Subject: FW: Pipeline Information Request for YMCA Liberty School Expansion, in unincorporated Tulare County, CA

Adrian,

Can you show Deanna how to complete this letter response for Title V? And add to delta?

11535 Avenue 264, Visalia, CA 93277

Christopher Coria, P.E.

Distribution Engineering Team Lead

Chatsworth HQ

Work: 747.463.1130

Cell: 818.590.4507

From: Steve Bush <sbush@placeworks.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 3, 2025 10:34 AM
To: Coria, Christopher <CCoria@socalgas.com>; Guzman, Claire L. <CLGuzman@socalgas.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Pipeline Information Request for YMCA Liberty School Expansion, in unincorporated Tulare County, CA

Hi Christopher,

The original response is attached that shows the provided map and letter. The school is at 11535 Avenue 264, Visalia, CA 93277.

Thanks,

STEVE BUSH, PE

Senior Engineer II

PLACEWORKS

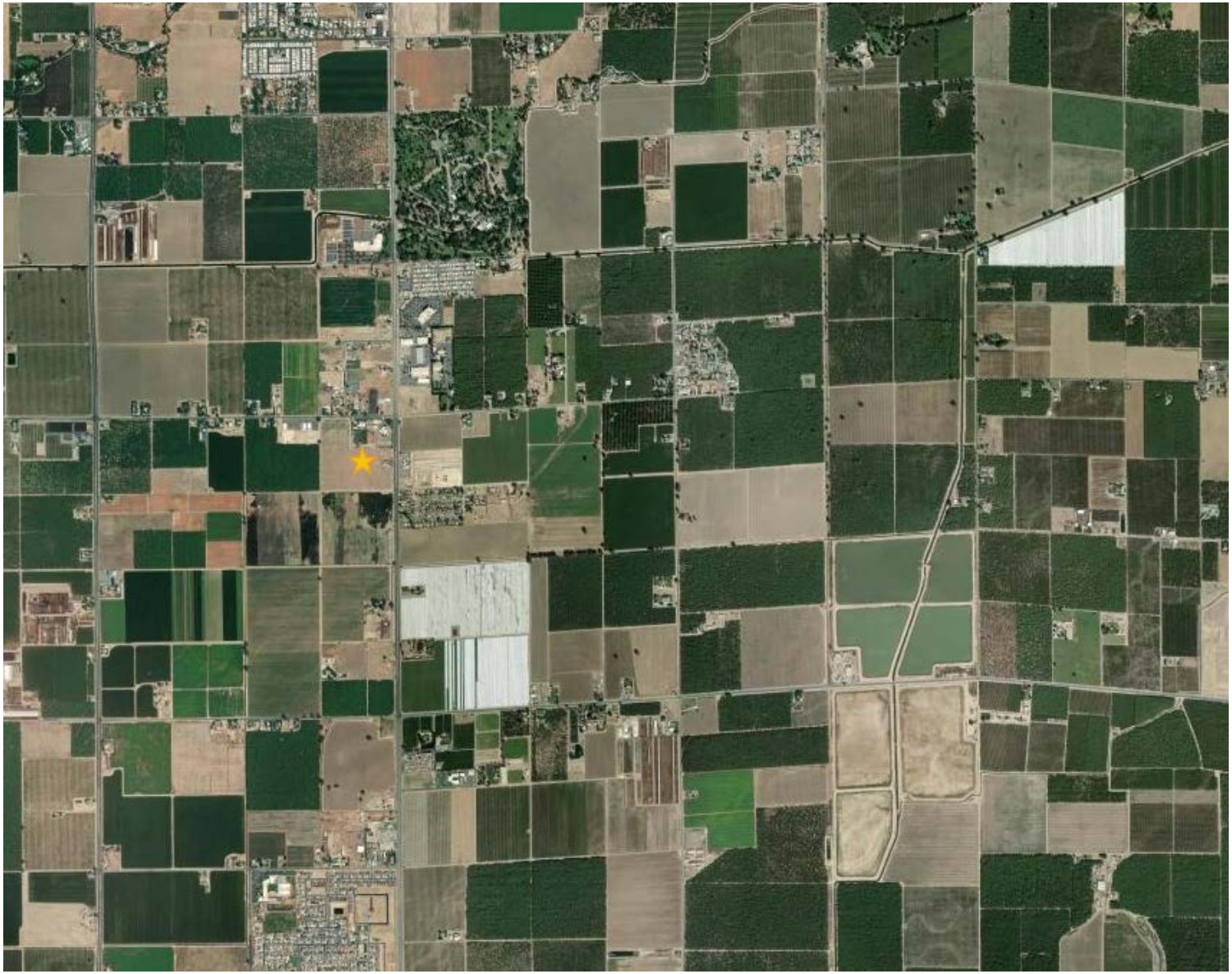
510.848.3815 x3316

Celebrating 50 years of creating great places!

From: Coria, Christopher <CCoria@socalgas.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 3, 2025 9:59 AM
To: Steve Bush <sbush@placeworks.com>; Guzman, Claire L. <CLGuzman@socalgas.com>
Subject: RE: Pipeline Information Request for YMCA Liberty School Expansion, in unincorporated Tulare County, CA

Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration

NATIONAL PIPELINE MAPPING SYSTEM



Legend

- Gas Transmission Pipelines
- Hazardous Liquid Pipelines

500 m
1000 ft

Pipelines depicted on this map represent gas transmission and hazardous liquid lines only. Gas gathering and gas distribution systems are not represented.

This map should never be used as a substitute for contacting a one-call center prior to excavation activities. Please call 811 before any digging occurs.

Questions regarding this map or its contents can be directed to npms@dot.gov.

Projection: Geographic

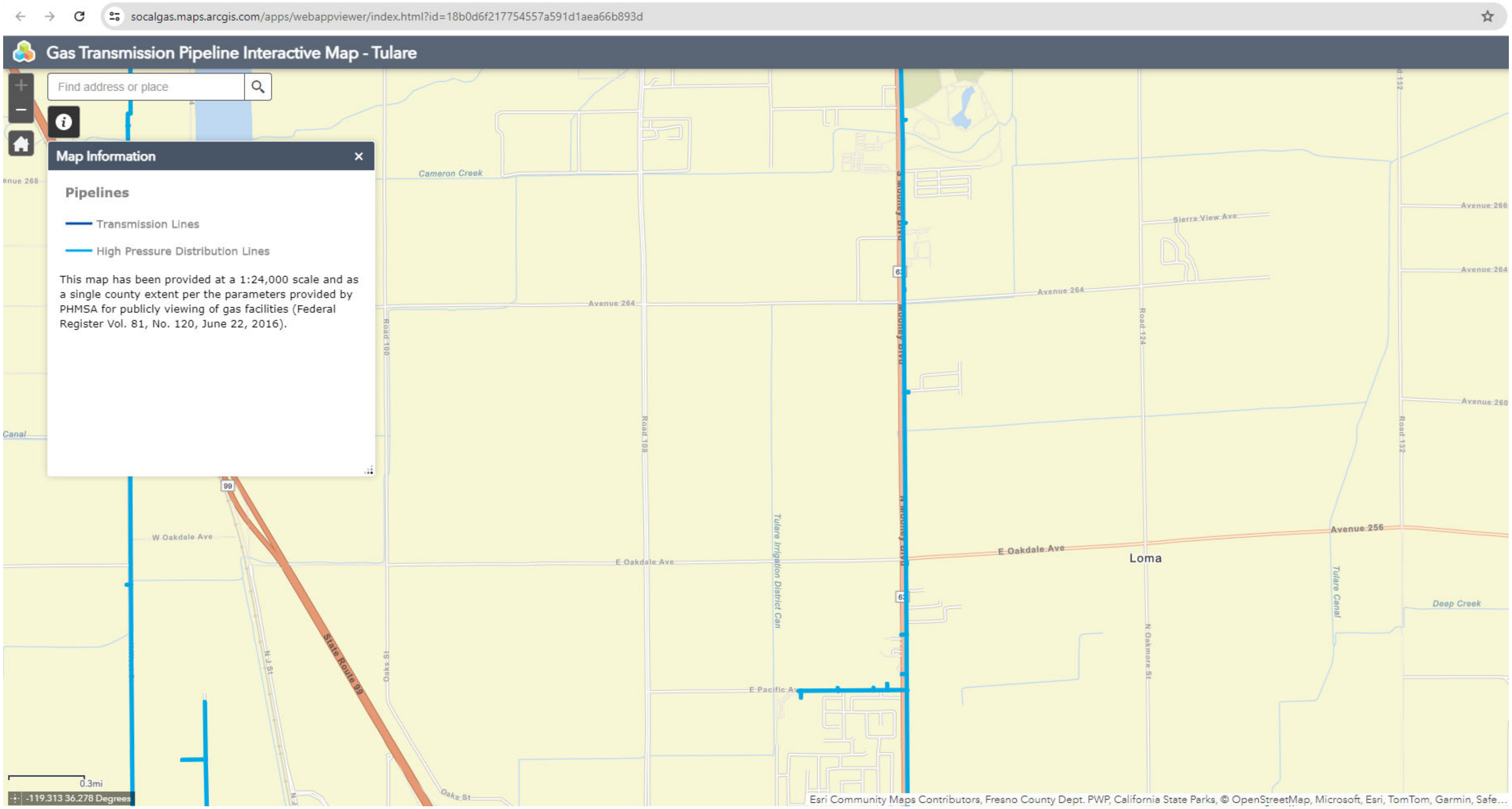
Datum: NAD83

Map produced by the Public Viewer application at www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov

World Imagery map service data is attributed to Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community.

Date Printed: Feb 14, 2025

811 Know what's below. Call before you dig


socalgas.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=18b0d6f217754557a591d1aea66b893d
Gas Transmission Pipeline Interactive Map - Tulare
Find address or place
Map Information
Pipelines
Transmission Lines
High Pressure Distribution Lines
This map has been provided at a 1:24,000 scale and as a single county extent per the parameters provided by PHMSA for publicly viewing of gas facilities (Federal Register Vol. 81, No. 120, June 22, 2016).
Cameron Creek
Sierra View Ave
Avenue 266
Avenue 264
Avenue 260
Avenue 256
Road 100
Road 108
Road 124
Road 132
W Oakdale Ave
E Oakdale Ave
Loma
Tulare Irrigation District Can
Tulare Canal
Deep Creek
State Route 99
E Pacific Ave
N Oakmore St
Oaks St
Canal
0.3mi
-119.313 36.278 Degrees
Esri Community Maps Contributors, Fresno County Dept. PWP, California State Parks, © OpenStreetMap, Microsoft, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, Safe...