



NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Lead Agency: Santa Paula Unified School District
Facilities and Construction Department
201 S. Steckel Drive
Santa Paula, CA 93060

Date: **December 18, 2024**

Contact: Douglas Henning, Facilities and Construction Manager

Project Title: Isbell Middle School Modernization Project EIR

Project Location: Isbell Middle School is located at 221 South 4th Street, Santa Paula, CA 93060. The Project Site includes Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 103-0-220-535 and is bounded by East Main Street to the north, South 7th Street to the east, Harvard Boulevard to the south, and South 4th Street to the west.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Isbell Middle School currently serves approximately 700 students in grades 7-8. The school is situated on a 14-acre site in Santa Paula, with frontages on S. 4th Street and Harvard Boulevard. The District proposes to modernize Isbell Middle School to meet current educational needs and improve safety for students, staff and visitors while preserving the historic character of the school. The Project would involve replacing existing buildings, including the main building, multi-purpose/cafeteria building, portable classrooms, and other structures, with new, safer, and more efficient buildings. The modernized campus would include a new administrative building, multi-purpose room (MPR), and seven new classroom buildings. The Project would also include parking and circulation improvements including expanding the parking lot along Harvard Boulevard and establishing a student loading zone.

The school's student capacity will increase from 700 to 750, with no planned increase in staff. The school will continue to operate at normal hours, with adult education classes in the evening.

The Project would be implemented in phases, starting with the construction of interim housing facilities comprised of 19 portable units on the northern portion of the Project Site. The existing main building, manual arts/woodshop building, western storage room, and restroom building would then be demolished, with these functions operating out of the interim housing facilities, while the new administrative and MPR building is built. Once construction of the new administrative and MPR building is complete, the existing multi-purpose/cafeteria building would be demolished to allow for the expansion of the southern parking lot and campus circulation improvements. The final phase would include the removal of the existing portable classroom buildings to facilitate the construction of the seven (7) new permanent classroom buildings, followed by removal of the interim housing facilities from the campus.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FINDINGS: The potential impacts of the Project were determined to be less than significant for the following topics: Aesthetics, Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, and Hazards and Hazardous Materials. The potential impacts of the Project were determined to be less than significant for the following topic with the mitigation measures identified in the Draft EIR: Noise and Vibration. The potential impacts of the Project were determined to be significant and unavoidable for the following topic: Cultural (Historic) Resources.

The Project would result in a significant impact because it would remove all the contributing buildings on the property resulting in the loss of its eligibility as a local historic landmark. Mitigation measures have been identified to reduce the impact of the proposed Project on the historic resources present on the Project Site. The historic resource documentation required by the mitigation measures would mitigate this impact to the fullest extent feasible but would not mitigate impacts to a point where clearly no significant impact on the environment would occur. *Alternative 2 – Renovate Existing Main Building*, is identified as the environmentally superior alternative as it would avoid the significant impact to historic resources that would result from the Project.

COMMENTING ON THE DRAFT EIR: Consistent with the requirements of Sections 15087 of the State CEQA Guidelines, this Draft EIR is being released on December 18, 2024 for public review through February 3, 2025. During this period, public agencies, organizations, and other parties may submit written comments on the Draft EIR to the Santa Paula Unified School District. Written responses to all comments received will be provided in the Final EIR.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY: The Draft EIR is available to view at the Blanchard Community Library, the Santa Paula Unified School District Office, and on the District’s website:

Blanchard Community Library
119 N. 8th Street
Santa Paula, CA 93060

Santa Paula Unified School District Office
201 S. Steckel Drive
Santa Paula, CA 93060

<https://www.santapaulausd.org/departments1/business-services/isbell-middle-school-modernization-project-information>

HOW TO COMMENT: Please provide written comments to Douglas Henning, Facilities and Construction Manager, Santa Paula Unified School District Office, 201 S. Steckel Drive, Santa Paula, CA 93060 or email dhennig@santapaulausd.org. **Comments must be received prior to the close of the 45-day public review period at 5:00 p.m. on February 3, 2025.**

Douglas Henning
Facilities and Construction Manager