

USACE Reference Number – NWS 2018-696

La Center School District

New Middle School Site

ALTERNATIVE SITES ANALYSIS

Applicant: La Center School District

Location: 2001 NE Lockwood Creek Road, La Center Washington

Legal Description: Attached

WRIA: 27, East Fork Lewis River

Watershed: East Fork Lewis River

Zoning: LVR7.5

ComPlan: UL

Assessment by: Keith Bloom CCM, LEED AP and Kevin Grosz P.W.S

Preliminary Mitigation Report Date: January 24, 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

This report details the Alternatives Analysis (AA) prepared for the La Center School District (Applicant) by Olson Environmental Engineering. The La Center School District (LCSD) is proposing to construct a new middle school to accommodate the community's rapid expansion. The new school is proposed to be developed on approximately 17 acre site located on the eastern boundary of the city on what, for decades, has been an agricultural 'hay' field.

The applicant is proposing directly impacting 2.34 acres of 3.05 acres of wetlands upon total build out of the project area. The project will be constructed through a single building cycle over a one year period.

Wetland impacts greater than 0.5 acres require an individual permit (IP) under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). A component of the IP is preparation of an AA under the guidelines of Section 404(b)(1) guidelines of the CWA.

A comprehensive wetlands mitigation plan has been developed and submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

2. PURPOSE/NEEDS

The purpose for this project is to provide new facilities to support primary and secondary education. The Applicant seeks to develop approximately 9.85 acres of a 17.32 acre site for construction of a new Middle School in La Center, Washington.

The city of La Center, Washington is experiencing rapid growth due to the community's proximity to growing metropolitan Portland, OR. With that growth comes the pressure of new students in an existing, limited educational infrastructure. The district's middle and elementary schools are overcrowded and in need of modernization and expansion. Currently the two schools are 'co-housed' on a crowded campus. All room to expand the existing middle school site has been captured and the school is beyond capacity to the point that the baseball field now houses modular classrooms as student population growth continues. If the district is to provide the best opportunity for student safety,

education and community responsibility it must continue to expand educational facilities with the increased demands placed upon the district.

Per WAC 392-342-020, it is recommended that a middle school with approximately 600 students have a minimum of 16 usable acres for facility, physical education activities, service access, and safe travel to and from school including drop-off for parents and busses. The Applicant is proposing to construct an approximately 77,275 square foot building that will be two levels with a maximum height of 50 feet. The main level will be 53,048 square feet and the second level is proposed to be 24,227 square feet. The City of La Center's Municipal Code (LCMS 18.130070) has a building height restriction of 35 feet in Low Density Residential District. The Applicant requested and received a variance from the City to allow the building to be constructed to a 50-foot height. The development of the site will include the main building which includes classrooms, a gymnasium, fitness room, band room, drama/stage auditorium, offices, reception and security area, conference and work rooms, art room, cafeteria and kitchen, staff lounge, health station, and student support area. Associated infrastructure and amenities that will be constructed at the school site include two new approaches for site access, stormwater facilities, parking for buses, staff, visitors, and events, waste containment facilities, sanitary sewer pump station, half-width road improvements for NE Lockwood Creek Road, a physical education field, outdoor playfield, 100-meter dash strip, and landscaping.

The district's limited real estate holdings made land acquisition the highest priority. The La Center School District conducted an enrollment study in October, 2017 that details the need for additional capacity for the La Center Schools.¹ Throughout the process the La Center School District pursued the available opportunities for new school sites, including considering the district's own holdings, evaluating any land for sale and pursuing local property owners in the event they may consider selling a parcel to the school district. The school district is forced to compete against private developers for available land in the La Center area. As the school district serves only La Center, considering locating in other communities isn't feasible.

After exhaustive search, the district was able to purchase a parcel of land that was not on market. The district superintendent approached the property holder and negotiated a sale that benefited the entire community. The district purchased the subject site with an eye on fulfilling the schools capital needs for middle school growth.

3. PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT SITE

The preferred site for the middle school development is located at 2001 NE Lockwood Creek Road, in La Center, WA. (Sheets 1 & 2) The Approximate latitude and longitude are 45.85897297N/-122.64978970W. The site consists of vacant land south of NE Lockwood Creek Road and does not contain any existing structures or impervious surfaces. Portions of the site have a noted presence of wetlands with a combination of non-hydric and hydric soils. Preliminary site evaluation indicates the wetlands are Category III and IV wetlands.

The site is primarily an open grassland field with a combination of non-native pasture grasses, nuisance woody vegetation and sparse native vegetation. The site has been used as agricultural/hayfield and historically as livestock pasture. A row of tree exists along the south boundary of the site consisting of black spruce, and black cottonwood. The northern area of the site consists of tall sweet vernal grass, false rye grass, colonial bent grass, reed canary grass, spreading bent grass, and velvet grass. Vegetation

in the upland areas along NE Lockwood Creek Road consists of black cottonwood, cascara, Nootka rose, Himalayan blackberry, trailing blackberry, and reed canary grass. Sparse vegetation along the west property line consists of hazelnut, Nootka rose, bitter cherry, and volunteer willow.

The site is generally described as gently sloping, with the steepest slope on the site as 6.5 percent. Slopes range from 1 percent to 6.5 percent, progressively flattening as grades move from north to south and from east to west. The site is outside the flood hazard area and does not have a shoreline designation. Per Clark County GIS Maps, the site is within a Category 2 Critical Aquifer Recharge Area. Multiple portions of the site have a noted presence of wetlands with a combination of non-hydric and hydric soils. The site does not have any mapped steep slopes, areas of potential instability, or severe erosion hazard areas. Liquefaction is noted as very low. The site is identified with Priority Habitat of Riparian Habitat Conservation Area. The site has a high archaeological probability, but it does not contain any mapping indicators that the site is a historic site.

The site is ideally located to serve the growing educational needs of the La Center School District. However this was not the first site considered for school expansion. It became available after a request was made to property owner to purchase for school district. This has become the preferred and most efficient site to meet the district's needs.

3.1 Historic And Existing Conditions

Historically the project area has been used for agricultural purposes, primarily in the recent past it has been a hay field. The earliest aerial images on the Clark County GIS site show this site under tillage since at least 1955. Currently the site is vacant land that is predominantly an open field. Forest or other shrub communities cover approximately 5 to 10% of the total acreage along the edges. A cultural resources survey was performed across the site in the summer of 2018. (Report Attached) An area of lithic tool making activity was unearthed. The limits of the evidence was surveyed and defined. Project designers provided a buffer around the area and the site will be preserved in place.

Wetlands/Non-Wetlands/Stream

Eight wetlands have been identified and delineated on the project area as shown in Sheet 3. A description of the wetlands and wetland functional assessment are included in the previously submitted wetland delineation and preliminary mitigation report(s). A Type Ns stream is located near the northwest corner of the property off site. The site plan has been designed to not impact the 75-foot riparian buffer for this stream.

4.0 ALTERNATIVE SITES

Alternative sites available for schools are limited in La Center by urban growth boundaries, but primarily by availability and topography. Nearly all available real estate in the municipal service area of La Center has been locked up by developers. There were/are few sites available that are large enough to accommodate the program for a modern middle school. The La Center School district exhausted all options in seeking appropriate sites. The following sites were considered or pursued.

4.1 Alternative Site Number 1 (Sheets 4 & 5).

35301 NW 14th Ave, La Center, WA aka Bolen Rd property.

This site is part of the school district's real property holdings. The subject property consists of a 17 acre, rectangular parcel located north and east of the intersection of NW 14th Ave and Bolen Street in La Center, WA. The approximate latitude and longitude are N 45°52' 26" and W 122°41' 5" and the legal description as a portion of the NE ¼ of Section 33, T5N, R1E, Willamette meridian.

The property is undeveloped except for a single family home and associated outbuildings located in the northern portion of the site. The property generally consists of sloped topography bounded by NE 14th Ave to the west, NW Bolen Street to the south, and existing agricultural and residential parcels to the north and east. Elevations range from Approximately 280 feet above mean sea level near the southern site boundary and 260 feet near the northeast to the low spot in the northwest corner at approximate elevation 210 AMSL.

There is a 70' drop on the site from south to north. The wetlands on site and extreme topography make this site unfeasible for middle school development.

Further to feasibility the City of La Center and La Center's master utility plan do not include the provision for sewer and water in this vicinity until at least 2032.²

The size of the Alternative Site is approximately 17 acres, but based on the Wetland Delineation Report prepared by Ecological Land Services in 2006 for the site, there are wetlands and streams on the north side of the site affecting the developable area (Sheet 5). By protecting these sensitive areas, this creates an area less than half of the original site available for site improvements. And per coordination with the project architect, this remaining area is deemed too small for the required space for the desired middle school and associated amenities. Based on this determination, the school district has designated this site for development of an elementary school. In addition to the smaller available area, according to the Clark County's GIS mapping there is approximately 70 feet of elevation drop across the site. In order to accommodate the required middle school building, this would require walls, terracing of the site, or other means to create a feasible footprint for the building, which would exceed the allocated budget to implement or require space in a site that is already too small.

Based on the above mentioned constraints, the evaluated site has been deemed too small and expensive to develop a middle school.

During pursuit of potential land to site new school on the district contacted local property owners who had larger parcels within the district's limits. These properties were explored by the district, property owners were contacted. The following represents the few remaining, developable land holdings within the city and property owners who were contacted about potential sales of property to the school district. Drawings were not provided as the properties were not for sale.

4.2 Alternative Site No. 2 - No Address, La Center, WA. Tax Parcel Number 209053000, NE ¼ S02 T4N R1E, Corner of NE 24th and NE 339th St. La Center, WA. Property Owned by Mr. Fred Hantho. Although the property lay outside the UGB, District representatives reached out to property owner. Mr. Hantho advised that the property was not for sale.

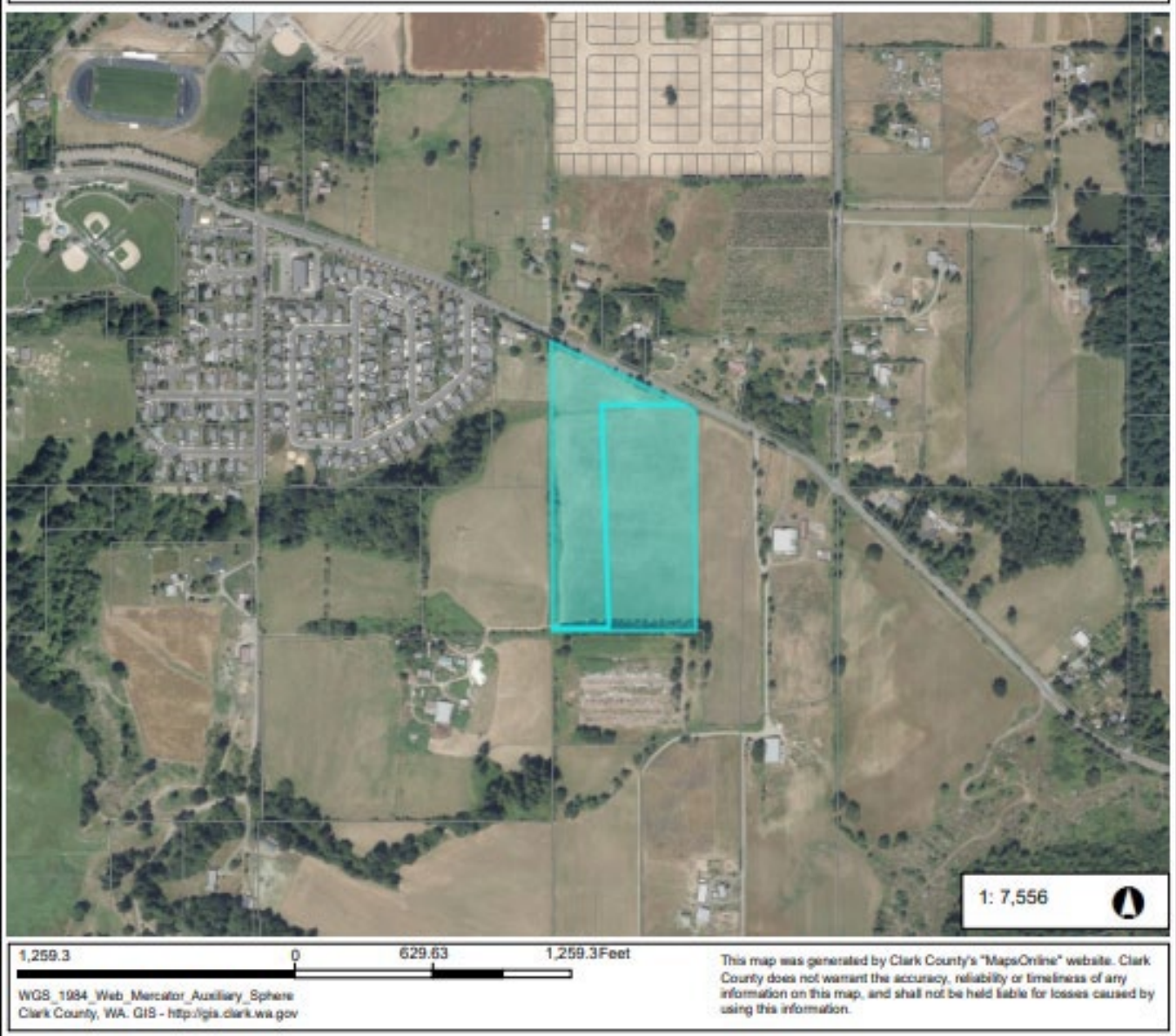
4.3 Alternative Site No. 3 - 1819 NE 339th St. La Center, 98629, Tax Parcel Number 209048000, lot #16, 53 and 76 of S 02 T4N R1EWM The property is a 12 Acre parcel owned by Manning. Mr. Manning advised that the property is not for sale.

4.4 Alternative Site No. 4. - 33105 NE Ivy Ave, La Center, WA, 98629. Tax Parcel No. 209059000, Lot #34 of Section2 T4N R1EWM, Approx. 12 AC. Property Owned by Minahan. Mr. Minihan advised that the property is not for sale.

4.5 Alternative No. 5. No Build- This is not an option for the school district or city.

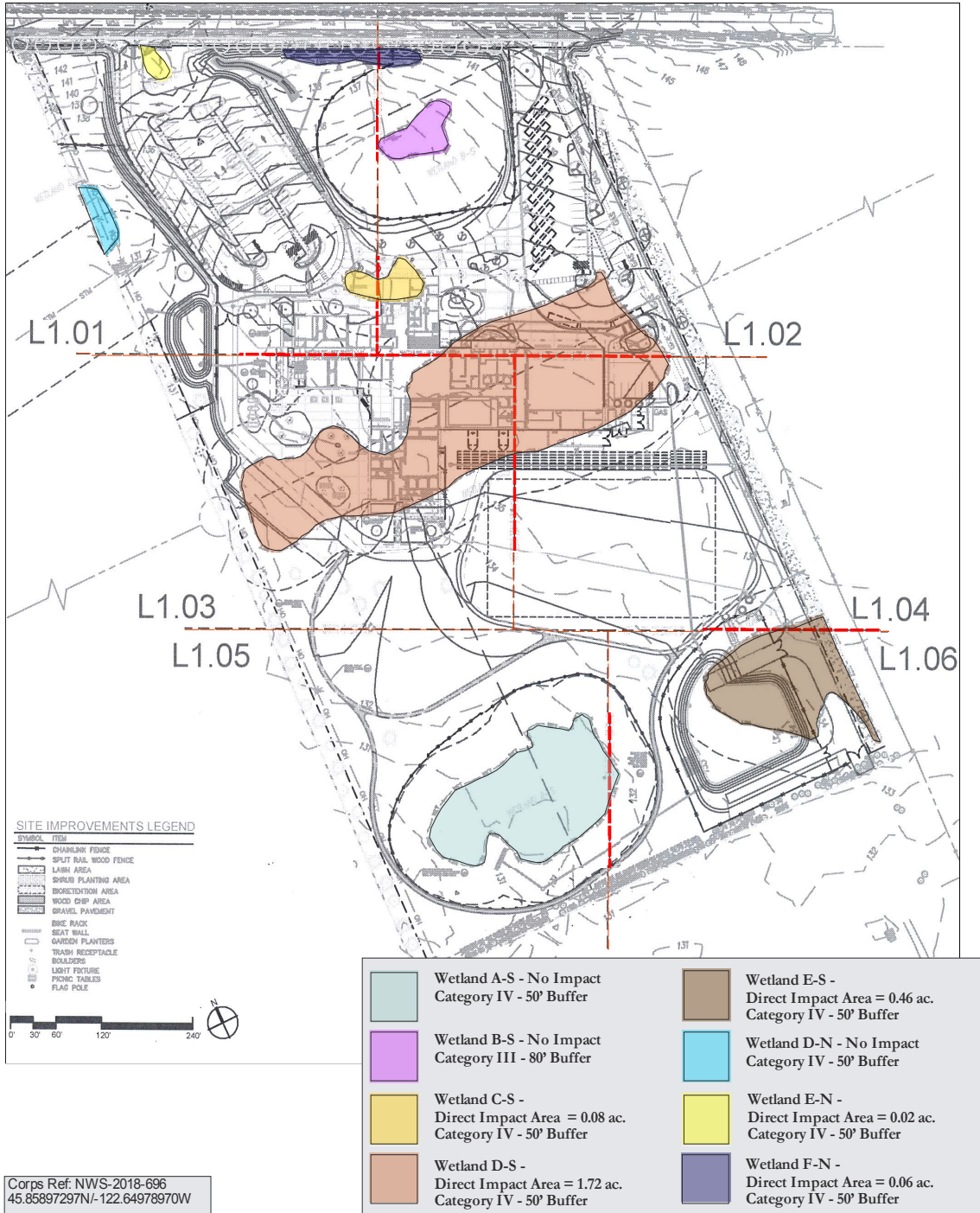
5.0 REFERENCES

1. Enrollment projection Estimates, October 9, 2017.
2. City of La Center General Sewer Plan, Prepared by Wallis Engineering, Dated March 2013.
3. La Center School District Boundary Map

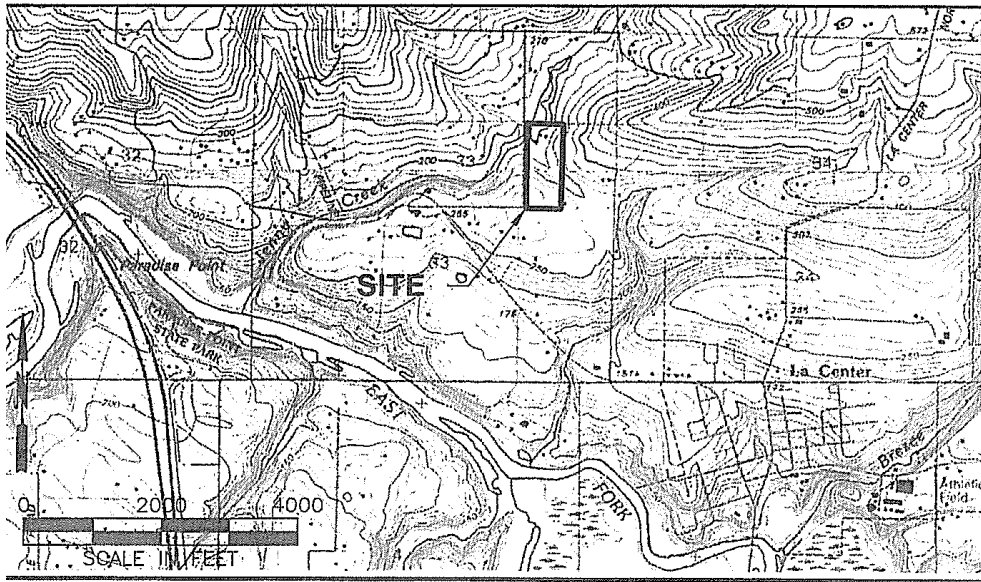
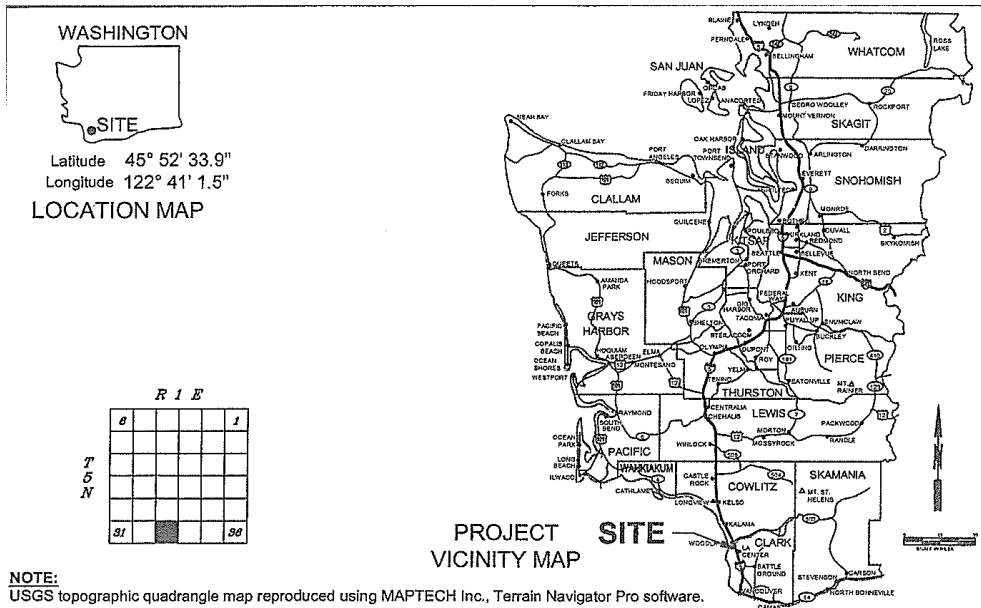


<p>REFERENCE: NWS 2018-696</p> <p>APPLICANT: La Center School District</p> <p>ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Myron Prouty 2. Gravitate Capital, LLC 	<p>LOCATION: 2001 NE Lockwood Creek Rd La Center, WA</p> <p>LAT/LONG: 45.85897297N/-122.64978970W</p> <p>DATE: 01/24/2019</p>	<p>PROPOSED PROJECT: La Center Middle School</p> <p>IN: East Fork of Lewis River</p> <p>NEAR/AT: La Center</p> <p>County: Clark</p> <p>STATE: WA</p>
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Sheet 2. 2016 Aerial Photograph of Study Area

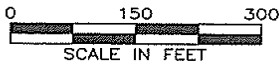


Sheet 3. Proposed Middle School Site Plan & Existing Wetlands.



<p>REFERENCE: NWS 2018-696</p> <p>APPLICANT: La Center School District</p> <p>ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Washington State 2. Gary Alanko 	<p>LOCATION: 35301 NW 14th Ave La Center, WA</p> <p>LAT/LONG: 45.87523032N/-122.68464935W</p> <p>DATE: 01/24/2019</p>	<p>PROPOSED PROJECT: La Center Middle School</p> <p>IN: East Fork of Lewis River</p> <p>NEAR/AT: La Center</p> <p>County: Clark</p> <p>STATE: WA</p>
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Sheet 4. Alternative #1 Site Location.

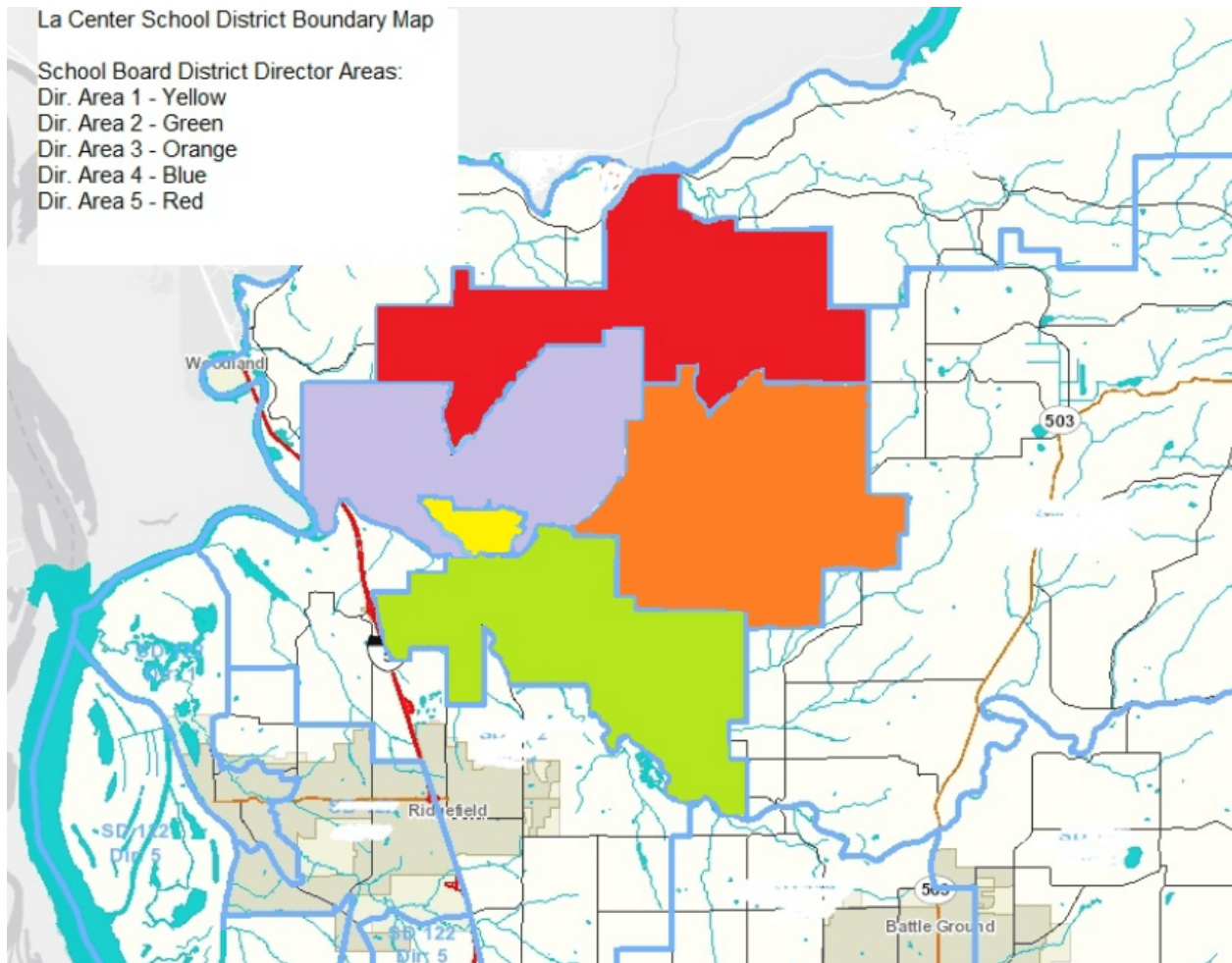


NOTE:

1. A division in land use intensity is proposed on-site. Wetlands are located outside of the proposed scope of development and therefore the on-site wetland buffers are considered Low land use intensity.
2. Base map provided by Minister-Glaeser Surveying, Inc.

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Sheet 5. Alternative #1 Existing Conditions.



REFERENCE: NWS 2018-696	LOCATION:	PROPOSED PROJECT:
APPLICANT:	La Center, WA	La Center Middle School
La Center School District	LAT/LONG:	IN: East Fork of Lewis River
ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERS:	DATE: 01/24/2019	NEAR/AT: La Center
1. XXXX XXXXX		County: Clark
2. XXXX XXXXX		STATE: WA

Sheet 6. La Center School District Boundary Map