

PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
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## OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

February 18, 2022

John Binnert, Cottonwood Classical  
7801 Jefferson St. NE  
Albuquerque NM, 87109

**Project #2020-003646**  
**SI-2022-00047- Site Plan- Major Amendment**

### **LEGAL DESCRIPTION:**

FBT Architects, agent for Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School, requests a Site Plan- Major Amendment for all or a portion of Tracts 5-B-1-A-2-A & 5-B-1-A-1-A-1 Plat of Tracts 5-B-1-A-1-A, 5-B-1-A-2-A & 5-B-1-B-1, Journal Center Subdivision, zoned NR-BP, located at 7801 Jefferson St. NE, between Tiburon St. NE and Headline Blvd. NE, approximately 11 acres (D-17-Z)  
Staff Planner: Megan Jones

On February 17, 2022, the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) voted to APPROVE Project #2020-003646, SI-2022-00047, Site Plan- Major Amendment, based on the following Findings and subject to the following Conditions of Approval:

### FINDINGS – SI-2021-00047

1. The request is for a Site Plan-EPC for Tracts 5-B-1-A-2-A & 5-B-1-A-1-A-1, Journal Center Subdivision, located at 7801 Jefferson St. NE, between Tiburon St. NE and Headline Blvd. NE, containing approximately 10.78 acres (the “subject site”).
2. The subject site is zoned NR-BP (Non-Residential-Business Park), a zoning designation received upon adoption of IDO in May 2018. The subject site was formerly zoned IP (Industrial Park).
3. The subject site includes 3 tracts, 5-B-1-A-1-A, 5-B-1-A-2-A & 5-B-1-B-1. Only Tracts 5-B-1-A-1-A, 5-B-1-A-2-A are included in this request.
4. The request requires Site Plan-EPC approval because the subject site is over 5 acres and the expansion increases the gross floor area over 25 percent of the originally approved gross floor area.
5. The subject site is within the Journal Center 2 and required approval from the Journal Center Architectural Review Committee (JCARC) before City of Albuquerque approval. The JCARC has provided a letter approving the submitted Site Plan.

6. The applicant wishes to expand the Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School by adding a 24,300 SF gymnasium/classroom with associated site work including the separation of the existing Drive Access that functions as the parent drop off/pick up loop and bus loop between Tiburon St. and Headline Blvd. NE.
7. The subject site is located in an Area of Change as designated by the Comprehensive Plan and is part of the North I-25 Community Planning Area (CPA).
8. The subject site is located on a Multi-modal and Premium Transit Corridor, Jefferson St NE. and within 800' of the Journal Center Employment enter.
9. The Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan and the Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO) are incorporated herein by reference and made part of the record for all purposes.
10. The request is consistent with the following Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies from Chapter 4: Community Identity

Goal 4.1.2– Character: Identity and Design

This request would help to facilitate the continued identity and cohesiveness of the surrounding Journal Center subdivision by expanding the existing Cottonwood Classical Charter School to be utilized for both existing/future students and the surrounding community. The gymnasium and classroom addition follows the building design guidelines of the Journal Center Master Development Plan, therefore aligning with the character of the surrounding business spark. In addition, the site is subject to the IDO NR-BP Zone District Dimensional Standards (Table 2-5-3), Landscaping, Buffering and Screening design standards (14-16-5-6), and Parking and Loading standards (14-16-5-5). These will help to ensure appropriate character of building design and scale so that the surrounding Journal Center Subdivision is not adversely affected.

11. The request is consistent with the following Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies from Chapter 5: Land Use

- A. Policy 5.1.1 – Desired Growth: Capture regional growth in Centers and Corridors to help shape the built environment into a sustainable development pattern.

The request would generally facilitate the capture of regional growth in Centers and Corridors by allowing the existing school to expand at this location. The subject site is located within 800' of the Journal Center Employment Center and along Jefferson Street NE, both a Multi-Modal and Premium Transit Corridor as designated by the Comprehensive Plan. The request would facilitate development that would continue to reinforce these corridors. Additionally, subject site is located in an Area of Change which allows for development that benefits the surrounding community and will allow the school to capture students from the surrounding and greater Albuquerque Metro. The gymnasium and classroom addition, along with the associated green space would allow the school to meet the needs of current and future students and their parents/guardians, staff, and faculty as well as help to shape the built environment into a sustainable development pattern.

- B. Policy 5.2.1 Land Uses: Create healthy, sustainable, and distinct communities with a mix of uses that are conveniently accessible from surrounding neighborhoods.

The request would continue to create a healthy and sustainable community because it would facilitate further development in an area with a mix of uses including office, industrial, heavy manufacturing, and multi-family residential while providing an educational use to the immediate and surrounding community that is conveniently accessible from surrounding neighborhoods. The gymnasium expansion will also be available for community use after school hours and on weekends. The development made possible by the request would contribute to the distinct character of the surrounding Journal Center subdivision.

- C. Goal 5.3 – Efficient Development Patterns: Promote development patterns that maximize the utility of existing infrastructure and public facilities and the efficient use of land to support the public good.

The request furthers this Goal because the expansion of the school to include a gymnasium and associated landscaping on the on the south and west side of the existing development would be served by existing infrastructure and public facilities. The development made possible by the request would promote efficient development patterns and use of land.

- D. Policy 5.3.5 – School capacity: Discourage zone changes from non-residential to residential or mixed-use zones when affected public schools have insufficient capacity to support the anticipated increase of students based on proposed dwelling units.

The request generally furthers this policy because the gymnasium and classroom addition would increase student capacity for the existing school located within the Journal Center subdivision, a business and industrial park area zoned NR-BP.

- E. Goal 5.6 – City Development Areas: Encourage and direct growth to Areas of Change where it is expected and desired to ensure that development in and near Areas of Consistency reinforces the character and intensity of the surrounding area\*.

The subject site is located in an Area of Change, near the Journal Center, where growth is expected and desired. The request would encourage enable and direct growth to it.

- F. Policy 5.6.2 – Areas of Change: Direct growth and more intense development to Centers, Corridors, industrial and business parks, and Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas where change is encouraged.

The intent is to direct growth and more intense development to Centers, Corridors, and industrial and business parks. The expansion of the existing school would further this policy as it is located in the Journal Center Business and Industrial Park where more intense development and growth is encouraged and along Jefferson Street, a Major and Premium Transit Corridor.

12. The request meets the Site Plan-EPC Review & Decision Criteria in IDO Section 14-16-6-6(J)(3) as follows:
  - A. 14-16-6-6(J)(3)(a) As demonstrated by the policy analysis of the site plan, the request is consistent with applicable Comprehensive Goals and Policies.
  - B. 14-16-6-6(J)(3)(b) The subject site is zoned NR-BP; therefore, this criterion does not apply.
  - C. 14-16-6-6(J)(3)(c) With the application of conditions of approval, the site plan would comply with all applicable provisions of the IDO.
  - D. 14-16-6-6(J)(3)(d) The proposed expansion of the school to add an additional 24,300 SF gymnasium and classrooms is utilizing existing infrastructure and public utilities found on and adjacent to the property. The City's existing infrastructure has adequate capacity for the proposed development. The applicant has provided a recorded private easement that grants the property owner sewer access to both Tracts 5-B-1-A-1-A-1 & 5-B-1-A-2-A. This recorded easement will be included in the ABCWUA Water Availability Statement.
  - E. 14-16-6-6(J)(3)(e) The proposed building expansion is located in the center of the site to the south of the existing development, which meets all Non-residential Zone District Dimensional Standards per IDO Table 5-1-3 and all Buffering and Landscaping requirements per IDO 14-16-5-6. The applicant has designed the existing development and proposed expansion and associated site work to mitigate significant adverse impacts on the surrounding area to the maximum extent practicable..
  - F. 14-16-6-6(J)(3)(f) The subject property is within the Journal Center Master Development Plan and meets all requirements within the Plan including building design, heights, setbacks, materials, planting types, and fencing standards. The applicant has received full approval from the Journal Center Architectural Review Committee for the proposed Site Plan Major Amendment. The request meets all standards applicable to the NR-BP zone district per IDO 14-16-2-5-(B).
  - G. 14-16-6-6(J)(3)(g) The subject property is not within the Railroad and Spur Area and no cumulative impact analysis is required. Therefore, the above criterion does not apply.
13. The affected, registered neighborhood organizations is the North Valley Coalition, District 4 Coalition of Neighborhood Associations, and Alameda North Valley Association which were notified as required. Property owners within 100 feet of the subject site were also notified, as required.
14. A pre-submittal neighborhood meeting was offered and a facilitated meeting was offered with no requests or no known objections. Pre-submittal work sessions were held with the Journal Center Architectural Review Committee (JCARC) to discuss design standards and a meeting was held to review the original submitted Site Plan drawings dated September 17, 2021
15. Applicant should coordinate with the Albuquerque Police Department regarding comments provided for Crime Prevention through Environmental Design.
16. Conditions of approval are needed to ensure that applicable IDO regulations are met and to provide clarification.

17. The applicant has demonstrated that there were no requests for a public meeting concerning this project.
18. As of this writing, Staff has not received any comment in support or opposition to the request.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL – SI-2021-00047

1. The EPC delegates final sign-off authority of this site development plan to the Site Plan-Administrative Process as per IDO Section 6-5(G)(1). The reviewer will be responsible for ensuring that the EPC Conditions have been satisfied and that other applicable City requirements have been met.
2. The applicant shall coordinate with the Staff planner prior to submitting for BP.
3. Parking
  - A. Required bicycle parking will need to meet IDO compliance before receiving a building permit.
  - B. Bicycle parking location and quantities provided shall be clarified on the Site Plan.
4. Lighting: A light pole detail shall be provided specifying heights, material, and color.
5. Landscaping: Buffalo Juniper species shall be a female only plant type per IDO 5-6(C)(4)(g) for Pollen Control.
6. Architecture:
  - A. Applicant shall clarify which design standards are being followed for building height.
  - B. Applicant shall list that colors are to be determined pursuant to the Journal Center design Standards for any building, fencing, light poles, etc.
7. CONDITIONS FROM TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT SERVICES:
  - A. The trash enclosure will have to be relocated so the refuse vehicle is not driving over the walkway, and is not located in the bus drop off zone. Any trees that overhang the trash enclosure will have to be relocated.
  - B. The dimension of the double trash enclosure will have to be a minimum of 24' in width (inside wall to inside wall) and 9'-6" in length (from the inside of the rear wall to the face of the block). Each gate will have to measure a minimum of 12' clear in the open position.
  - C. A site plan approved for access signed by the Solid Waste Department will be required.
  - D. List parking calculations.

8. CONDITIONS FROM THE ALBUQUERQUE BERNALILLO COUNTY WATER UTILITY AUTHORITY (ABCWUA):

The provided utility plan depicts a new sewer connection on the west side of the project. This sewer service is shown as serving multiple parcels. This is not allowed by ABCWUA ordinance. The two separate lots shall either have separate water/sewer services or a replat combining the lots will be required.

9. CONDITIONS FROM THE SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

- A. If food is prepared or distributed, a sanitary drain will have to be installed in the trash enclosure.
- B. The trash enclosure will have to be relocated so the refuse vehicle is not driving over the walkway, and is not located in the bus drop off zone.
- C. Any trees that overhang the trash enclosure will have to be relocated.
- D. The dimension of the double trash enclosure will have to be a minimum of 24' in width (inside wall to inside wall) and 9'-6" in length (from the inside of the rear wall to the face of the block).
- E. Each gate will have to measure a minimum of 12' clear in the open position.
- F. A site plan approved for access signed by the Solid Waste Department will be required.

10. CONDITIONS FROM PNM

- A. Applicant will coordinate with PNM regarding any existing easements that have to be revisited and/or new easements that need to be created for any electric facilities as determined by PNM.
- B. Any existing and/or new PNM easements and facilities need to be reflected on this Site Plan.
- C. Perimeter and interior landscape design should abide by any easement restrictions and not impact PNM facilities. Any trees within or near PNM easements should comply with IDO Section 5-6(C)(10). Shrubs and ground cover and smaller trees are generally acceptable within PNM easements.

**APPEAL:** If you wish to appeal this decision, you must do so within 15 days of the EPC's decision or by **March 4, 2022**. The date of the EPC's decision is not included in the 15-day period for filing an appeal, and if the 15<sup>th</sup> day falls on a Saturday, Sunday or Holiday, the next working day is considered as the deadline for filing the appeal.

For more information regarding the appeal process, please refer to Section 14-16-6-4(U) of the Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO), Administration and Enforcement. A Non-Refundable filing fee will be calculated at the Land Development Coordination Counter and is required at the time the appeal is filed. It is not possible to appeal an EPC Recommendation to the City Council since this is not a final decision.

You will receive notification if any person files an appeal. If there is no appeal, you can receive Building Permits at any time after the appeal deadline quoted above, provided all conditions imposed at

the time of approval have been met. Successful applicants are reminded that other regulations of the IDO must be complied with, even after approval of the referenced application(s).

Sincerely,

for Alan M. Varela,  
Planning Director

AV/CL/MJ

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