



Agenda Item 6.1

STAFF REPORT

Planning Commission

DATE: May 23, 2023

TO: Planning Commission

SUBJECT: BASIS Dublin Independent School Conditional Use Permit and Site Development Review Permit (PLPA-2023-00011)
Prepared by: Linda Ajello, AICP, Senior Planner

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The property owner, Jerry Hunt of VP RPG Dublin, LLC, submitted an application on behalf of BASIS Independent School to operate a private school serving up to 800 middle and high school students, construct façade improvements to the existing 81,985 square foot office building which will be converted to a school, and construct a 9,134 square foot gymnasium building, outdoor recreational play field, trash enclosure, and associated site improvements. The Planning Commission will consider the requested approval of a Conditional Use Permit and Site Development Review Permit for this project.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt the Resolution approving a Conditional Use Permit and a Site Development Review Permit for a private school at 7950 Dublin Boulevard.

DESCRIPTION:

Background

The Project site is located at the southeast corner of Dublin Boulevard and San Ramon Road at 7950 Dublin Boulevard. The subject property is comprised of two parcels, approximately 3.7 acres, and is developed with a commercial office building and surface parking lot. Primary access to the site is provided from Dublin Boulevard with secondary access from Regional Street on drive aisles through adjacent properties. The Project site has a General Plan and Downtown Dublin Specific Plan (DDSP) land use designation of Transit-Oriented District and is within the Downtown Dublin Zoning District (DDZD). Refer to Figure 1 for the project location and Table 1 for surrounding land uses.

Figure 1: Project Location



Table 1: Surrounding Land Uses

Location	Zoning	General Plan Land Use	Current Use
North	DDZD	Downtown Dublin – Transit-Oriented Development District	Starbuck’s Coffee and Sleep Number Mattress Store
South	DDZD	Downtown Dublin – Transit-Oriented Development District	Holiday Inn Hotel
East	DDZD	Downtown Dublin – Transit-Oriented Development District	Earl Anthony Bowl and Commercial Uses
West	PD and C-1	Single-Family Residential and Retail Office	Single-family homes and Shell Service Station

On April 14, 2020, the Community Development Director approved a Site Development Review Permit to remodel the exterior of the existing Corrie Center office building, modify the landscaping, and upgrade the parking area to meet current accessibility requirements.

The Applicant subsequently received approval of a demolition permit and started work but did not complete the effort to improve the façade. There is an existing Code Enforcement case related to the exterior maintenance of the building.

On April 28, 2020, the Planning Commission approved a Site Development Review Permit and Minor Use Permit for the Cambria Hotel project (Resolution No. 20-06) consisting of a 138-room hotel in the surface parking lot on the south side of the Corrie Center office building. Two appeals were subsequently filed on the project. On June 2, 2020, the City Council held a public hearing and denied the appeals (Resolution No. 49-20) and upheld the original approval by the Planning Commission, and approved a Community Benefit Agreement (Resolution No. 50-20). Construction of this project has not moved forward.

Proposed Project

The Applicant is proposing to operate a private school serving up to 800 children in grades 6-12 called BASIS Independent School within the existing Corrie Center office building. Private schools are classified as Civic/Cultural/Institutional Uses and permitted in the DDSP with approval of a Conditional Use Permit. The existing 81,985 square foot office building will undergo façade renovations and an interior remodel to accommodate the school use. The Project also includes the construction of a 9,164 square foot gymnasium, new outdoor recreational play field, and associated site improvements. The Project includes the following entitlements for consideration by the Planning Commission:

- ***Site Development Review Permit*** – Site Development Review Permit to allow a façade remodel of the existing office building, and construction of the gymnasium and outdoor recreational play field, a trash enclosure, and associated site and landscape improvements.
- ***Conditional Use Permit*** – Conditional Use Permit to allow the operation of a private school (Institutional Use).

The draft resolution approving the Site Development Review Permit and Conditional Use Permit is included in the staff report as Attachment 1.

Analysis

Site Development Review Permit

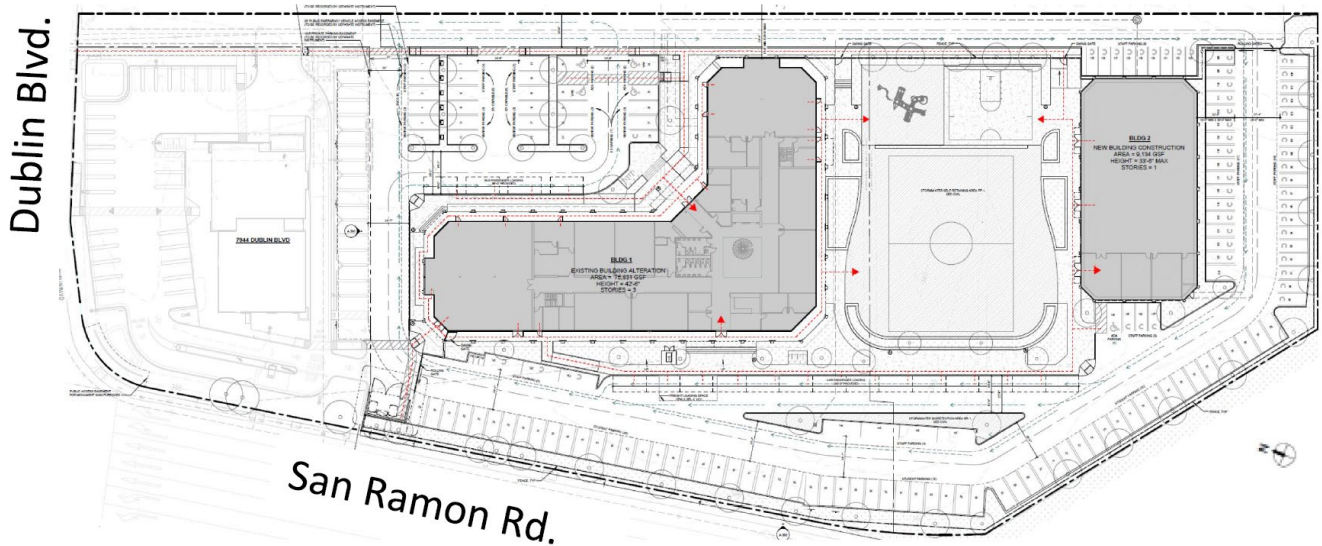
Site Layout.

Primary access to the site is through a shared driveway and access easement from Dublin Boulevard. Secondary access is provided through a shared driveway and access easement from Regional Street. Vehicular access to the on-site parking and the student drop-off and pick-up area is proposed on the south side of the lot, circulating one-way around the west side of the building where the student drop-off/pick-up is located and exiting on the north side of

the building via a shared access easement with the adjacent properties. The existing driveways off Dublin Boulevard and Regional Street will remain unchanged. A new trash enclosure is proposed at the northwest corner of the site with appropriate access from the nearby commercial building, and all site paths will be designed for accessible egress from the building exits to the public way.

The proposed 9,164 square foot gymnasium, outdoor recreational play field and sports field would be constructed upon a section of the existing surface parking lot located on the south side of the office building. Please refer to Figure 2 below, and Attachment 2, Sheet A-200.

Figure 2: Proposed Site Plan



Architecture

The architectural vision for the Transit-Oriented District as outlined in the DDSP states that new buildings “will complement the existing uses with designs that are compatible with adjacent structures and the district as a whole.” In addition, buildings shall use high-quality materials while utilizing creative and unique designs.

The project site contains a three-story, approximately 81,895 square foot, concrete tilt-up office building and an associated surface parking lot constructed in the late 1970’s. Façade improvements to the existing building include new paint, a new painted smooth metal roof parapet, and new smooth metal panel canopies at the building entries. The new one-story gym has been designed to emulate the renovated building, using a rectangular form with 45-degree corners, painted concrete pilasters and bays with concrete panels and aluminum storefront openings between them, along with similar painted smooth metal panel parapet and canopy elements, as shown in Figure 3.

Colors and textures of all surfaces will respect the surrounding commercial context of light grays with gray accents at the buildings' vertical pilasters and parapets. Red highlights conveying the BASIS brand will also be provided at the entry canopies and sides of pilasters at both buildings. The proposed gym will incorporate custom exterior mounted metal artwork panels on the north side of the building to face the outdoor recreational play field internal to the site. Please refer to Figure 3 below, and Attachment 2, Sheet A-302.

Figure 3: Proposed West Elevation



Landscaping

The landscape design will refresh and supplement the existing landscaping and parking islands with native trees, screening shrubs, groundcover, and a dark gray painted ornamental metal fence that will be installed around the perimeter of the site to blend into the surrounding context. The artificial turf playfield will include benches, elevated planters with seat walls and gathering areas, both as a visual feature and as a useful site amenity. The overall landscape concept is on Sheets L1-L2 of the plans (Attachment 2).

Conditional Use Permit

The Conditional Use Permit process allows the City to review the operating characteristics of unique uses, and place conditions of approval on the project, to ensure compatibility with surrounding uses. The operating characteristics of the proposed project have been reviewed for issues related to traffic, circulation, parking, and outdoor activities. Conditions of

Approval have been included where appropriate to ensure compatibility with the surrounding uses (Attachment 1).

Operating Characteristics

BASIS Independent School is a private school with several campuses across the US, including campuses in Fremont and San Jose. The Dublin campus' curriculum will be for grades 6-12, with a maximum enrollment of 800 students (380 high school and 420 middle school) and 100 staff members. The academic school year begins in mid-August and ends in early June. The school will operate Monday through Friday, with the campus opening at 7am. BASIS also offers a range of summer programs from mid-June to early August, Monday through Friday. Summer programs are broken into two sessions: am session from 8:30 am to 11:30; and pm sessions from 12:30 pm through 3:30 pm. As part of the BASIS Independent Schools Traffic and Parking Management Plan (see Attachment 3), and Conditions #20 and 21 (Attachment 1), when school enrollment is between 1 and 400 students, the school will administer a single or staggered start period times between 7:00am and 9:00am and a single or staggered end period time between 2:30pm and 4:30pm. When the school enrollment is between 400 and 800 students, the school will administer staggered start period times between 7:00am and 9:00am and staggered end period times between 2:30pm and 4:30pm. Extra-curricular activities and event hours shall be Monday through Friday between 5:00pm and 10:00pm and Saturday and Sunday between 7am and 10:00 pm BASIS anticipates the Dublin campus to be completed and operating for the 2025/2026 academic year.

The existing 3-story office building will undergo structural and cosmetic upgrades to adapt the office building to a school use. Level 1 will be renovated to create building entries on the east and west sides of the building, main administration spaces, large dining and multi-purpose/black box theater spaces, and classrooms. Level 2 will primarily house general classrooms and media/library reading rooms, and Level 3 will provide chemistry, biology, and physics labs, music classrooms, and art classrooms. Administration and office spaces will occupy the building's center on each floor, while the media/library reading room areas, will be located on level 2 at the ends of each wing. In total, the interior improvements will result in 38 classrooms, 1 large dining space and 1 large multi-purpose/black box theater space, 2 media/library reading rooms, and administrative, office, and building support functions.

The new gymnasium will include an entry lobby, locker rooms, a storage room, and a fire service room at the west end of the building, as well as an equipment platform/mezzanine directly above the support spaces to house the building's mechanical equipment.

Traffic and Site Circulation

Cars and buses will enter the site from a shared driveway access from Dublin Boulevard and continue for approximately 700 feet before turning right and continue through the site's one-way perimeter loop starting on the side end of the parcel. This perimeter loop provides

vehicular access to the passenger drop off area along a 280-foot vehicle loading aisle leading to the school's entrance on the west side of the building, before merging back into the perimeter loop and continue around the building and back to the access drive. Buses will follow the same route but then turn into the 96-foot one-way bus loading aisle on the east side of the building, stop for unloading or loading, and continue out to the off-site access drive.

The City prepared a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) to evaluate potential impacts associated with the proposed school (Attachment 4). The analysis utilized traffic data collected from the BASIS Independent School campus located in San Jose which has a similar number of students and staff as proposed at the Dublin campus. To estimate the daily and p.m. peak hour trip generation, the published standard rates from the Institute of Engineers (ITE) in *Trip Generation Manual*, 11th Edition, 2021, were used. The TIS noted that the new gymnasium and recreational sports field would not be open to the public and as such would not independently generate any new vehicle trips. Trip reductions attributable to private bus use, carpooling and alternate transportation modes (walking, biking, or using transit) are assumed to be included since the trip generation estimate is based on observations conducted at another similar BASIS campus.

Based on the findings of the TIS, the City's Traffic Engineer determined that, upon written request by the City, further study may be required upon the completion of the first full academic year and at the time of maximum enrollment. If either study reveals that the number of trips generated by the project during the a.m. peak hour, school p.m. peak hour or p.m. peak hour exceeds the threshold analyzed in the Local Transportation Analysis, the Public Works Department shall require a contribution of \$10,000 for traffic signal modifications. In addition, modifications to the Traffic and Parking Management Plan including Transportation Demand Management or other measures to reduce vehicle trips may be required. Condition of Approval #139 is included in the Planning Commission Resolution to address these recommendations (Attachment 1).

Parking and Loading

Parking requirements for the proposed school are regulated by the City of Dublin Zoning Ordinance (Section 8.76.080.D). The parking requirements for the project are the sum of the different uses. The following table illustrates the number of parking spaces that are required for the use.

Table 2: Parking

Use	Parking Requirement	No. of Classrooms	No. of Students	No. Required
High School	1 per classroom, plus 1 per every 4 students, plus 60 lineal feet of street loading area for every 200 students	24	380	119 spaces
Elementary, Middle, Junior High	2 per classroom, plus 60 lineal feet of street loading area for every 100 students	14	420	28 spaces
Total Required				147 Spaces
Total Proposed				147 Spaces

The Applicant proposes a total of 147 parking spaces which is consistent with the Zoning Ordinance requirement, as shown in Table 2. In addition, 38 short-term and 7 long-term bicycle parking spaces will be provided. The 7 long-term spaces will be in a secure bicycle storage room.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), together with the State CEQA Guidelines and City of Dublin CEQA Guidelines and Procedures require that certain projects be reviewed for environmental impacts and when applicable, environmental documents be prepared. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission find the project is categorically exempt from the requirements of CEQA in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) and 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures). The project involves the renovation of the existing commercial building and construction of a detached gymnasium (accessory structure) not exceeding 10,000 square feet within an existing surface parking lot.

NOTICING REQUIREMENTS/PUBLIC OUTREACH:

Two City-led Community Meetings were held on April 19 and 20, 2023, to provide Dublin residents with information about the proposed BASIS Independent School project. Notices for both meetings were sent out to all interested parties, posted on the City’s website, and distributed through social media.

In accordance with State law, a public notice was mailed to all property owners and occupants within 300 feet of the proposed project to advertise the project and the upcoming public hearing. A public notice also was published in the *East Bay Times* and posted at several locations throughout the City. The project was also included on the City’s development projects webpage. A copy of this Staff Report has been provided to the Applicant.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) Planning Commission Resolution Approving the Site Development Review Permit and Conditional Use Permit for the BASIS Independent School Project

- 2) Exhibit A to Attachment 1- BASIS Independent School Project Plans
- 3) BASIS Independent School Traffic and Parking Management Plan
- 4) Traffic Impact Study prepared by W-Trans, dated March 21, 2023