



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Hearing Officer

DATE ISSUED: September 2, 2026 REPORT NO. HO-26-050

HEARING DATE: September 9, 2026

SUBJECT: THE CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL Process Three Decision

PROJECT NUMBER: [PRJ-1109086](#)

OWNER/APPLICANT: DSTC Venture LLC, The Cambridge School

SUMMARY

Issue: Should the Hearing Officer approve a Conditional Use Permit to allow construction of The Cambridge School's new Pre-Kindergarten through 12th-grade campus at the southwest corner of [Camino Del Sur and Coyote Bush Drive](#) within the Black Mountain Ranch Community Plan area?

Proposed Actions:

1. ADOPT ADDENDUM No. 1109086 to Environmental Impact Report (EIR No. 96-9702 / SCH No. 1997111070) and ADOPT the Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program;
2. APPROVE Conditional Use Permit No. PMT-3265502.

Fiscal Considerations: None with this action. All costs are recovered through a deposit account funded by the applicant.

Code Enforcement Impact: None.

Housing Impact Statement: The project proposes the development of a new Pre-Kindergarten through 12th-grade private school campus and does not include any residential units. The site is designated Employment under the Black Mountain Ranch Subarea Plan and zoned Community Commercial (CC-4-5), which allows educational uses over 300 students with a Conditional Use Permit. Because no dwelling units are proposed, the project does not affect the community plan's residential density and results in no change to housing capacity or housing inventory within the Black Mountain Ranch Community Plan area.

Community Planning Group Recommendation: On July 1, 2026, Black Mountain Ranch Community Planning Group recommended approval of the project by a vote of 12-0-1 (Attachment 1).

Environmental Impact:

[Addendum No. 1109086](#) to the previously certified Black Mountain Ranch (Subarea I) Subarea Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR No. 96-9702 / SCH No. 1997111070) was prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Statute and Guidelines consistent with Section 15164 since only minor technical changes and additions were necessary. A Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program for Paleontological Resources will be implemented. (Attachment 8)

BACKGROUND

The 6.52-acre project site (Attachment 2) consists of three previously graded, vacant parcels located at the southwest corner of Camino Del Sur and Coyote Bush Drive within the Black Mountain Ranch Community Plan area (Attachment 3). The site is designated Employment by the [Black Mountain Ranch Subarea Plan \(Subarea Plan\)](#) (Attachment 4) and zoned Community Commercial (CC-4-5), with applicable overlays including the Urban Village Overlay Zone (UVOZ) and Complete Communities Mobility Choices (Zone 4).

The project site is also governed by an existing discretionary permit (PTS No. 142244; Planned Development Permit No. 497493 and Site Development Permit No. 497494) covering a 62-acre area, which allows a mix of residential, office, commercial, and community-serving uses. The site was mass-graded as part of a prior development, resulting in a generally level building pad that slopes gently toward the northeast. Sidewalks and pedestrian improvements front the property, and the surrounding neighborhood consists of developed residential, commercial, and employment uses envisioned in the Subarea Plan. Existing public roadways, Camino Del Sur, Coyote Bush Drive, and Templeton Street, frame the site and provide direct vehicular and pedestrian access. The site is currently vacant, contains no sensitive habitat and is not located within or adjacent to the MHPA.

DISCUSSION

Project Description:

The project proposes the construction of a new Pre-Kindergarten through 12th-grade (Pre-K-12) private school campus, known as The Cambridge School, on a 6.52-acre site comprising three vacant, previously graded parcels at the southwest corner of Camino Del Sur and Coyote Bush Drive. The proposed campus would include a 182,868-square-foot, three-story classroom building, a 10,904-square-foot one-story multipurpose building, and a semi-subterranean two-level parking structure totaling 128,624 square feet, with a track and sports field constructed on the parking deck (Attachment 11).

The three-story classroom building would reach a maximum height of 63 feet at its tower peak, with parapets ranging from 53 to 57 feet, 5 inches, while the multipurpose building would include roof heights of up to 35 feet. The sports field would include bleachers along the western side, athletic lighting, and a scoreboard, all enclosed with sports mesh fencing. The project would accommodate up to 663 students and 125 staff members. The school would operate during typical weekday academic hours, with occasional weekend daytime athletic events and an annual Saturday graduation ceremony.

Vehicular and pedestrian circulation would be served by two new driveway connections: a 30-foot-wide, two-way driveway from Templeton Street providing access to the surface parking lot on the west side of the campus, and a 24-foot-wide driveway along Coyote Bush Drive providing direct access to the parking structure. Additionally, a 28-foot emergency-only access with a rolled curb and a secured gate (with knox box) would be provided along Templeton Street. Existing sidewalks along all frontages would remain. The project would upgrade the existing single curb ramp to two directional curb ramps per current City standards at the southwest corner of Camino Del Sur and Coyote Bush Drive, and northwest corner of Camino Del Sur and Coyote Bush. The project would also install and privately maintain pedestrian-scale lighting within private property adjacent to the project's frontages on Camino Del Sur, Coyote Bush Drive, and Templeton Street consistent with Climate Action Plan requirements. The campus improvements include the installation of stormwater modular wetlands, underground hydromodification detention systems and upgraded curb ramps.

Additionally, based on a sight distance analysis prepared by the project's registered civil engineer, the project would install signage prohibiting right-turn-on-red movements for northbound right-turns (Coyote Bush Drive) at the intersection of Camino Del Sur and Coyote Bush Drive.

The project's architectural treatment, concrete tilt-up panels, high-performance glazing, architectural tile cladding, steel accents, and landscape screening, is designed to complement surrounding development and meet the subarea plan Design Standards for the North Village. The project also integrates urban design features consistent with the Subarea Plan, including screening parking facility facades, providing pedestrian-scaled outdoor spaces, and enhancing connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods. All rooftop equipment would be fully screened, and segmental retaining walls along northern portions would be softened with climbing vines.

Permits Required:

The project is a Process Three decision requiring action by the Hearing Officer. The following permit is required:

A Conditional Use Permit (CUP) is required because the enrollment for a K-12 school facility in the CC-4-5 zone that exceeds 300 students requires discretionary approval per SDMC Section [141.0407\(b\)\(3\)\(D\)](#). (Attachment 5 and 6)

The project complies with all applicable provisions of the Community Commercial (CC-4-5) zone. Schools are permitted as a limited use in the underlying CC-4-5 zone. The proposed campus would serve up to 663 students and 125 staff, and because enrollment for a Pre-K-12 facility in this zone would exceed 300 students, the project requires a Conditional Use Permit pursuant to SDMC section 141.0407(b)(3)(D) and the Conditional Use Permit Regulations [SDMC section 141.0407(b)(5)].

Consistent with SDMC Section 141.0407(b)(5), the project includes a development plan and incorporates design and architectural elements to reduce building bulk and enhance compatibility with adjacent commercial and residential uses. Additionally, the project provides 386 parking spaces, of which 132 are required pursuant to SDMC [142.0530](#), Table 142-05G, to accommodate both full classroom use. During after-school events, a maximum of two assembly areas shall be used

simultaneously. A minimum of 383 parking spaces is required when two events (at maximum capacity) occur simultaneously.

The project also meets height, bulk, setback, pedestrian access, parking, and landscaping requirements of the Land Development Code, including the Urban Village Overlay Zone per SDMC section [132.1101](#), the Design Standards for the Black Mountain Ranch Subarea Plan North Village area, the Complete Communities mobility and pedestrian infrastructure standards, stormwater and fire access. No deviations from zoning, development regulations, or overlay zone standards are proposed or required.

Community Plan Analysis:

The project site is designated Employment in the Black Mountain Ranch Subarea Plan and implemented by the CC-4-5 zone, which allows Pre-K-12 educational facilities that exceed 300 students with a Conditional Use Permit. The proposed Cambridge School campus is consistent with this land use designation and supports Subarea Plan goals for providing community-serving institutional uses within the North Village of the Black Mountain Ranch Community Planning area.

The project furthers community objectives related to creating a walkable, transit-supportive, mixed-use village by orienting building entries toward public streets, locating parking behind structures, enhancing pedestrian lighting, and implementing frontage improvements. The architectural design, building massing, and site layout follow the North Village Design Guidelines, including articulated facades, landscaped screening, and small-scale open spaces, all of which reinforce community identity and compatibility with surrounding residential, mixed-use, and employment areas. The project is consistent with the Subarea Plan policies pertaining to land use, mobility, urban design, environmental protection, and community character.

Environmental Analysis:

Staff reviewed the proposed project and determined that the project is within the scope of the Black Mountain Ranch (Subarea I) Subarea Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR No. 96-9702 / SCH No. 1997111070) certified by City Council on July 28, 1998, per Resolution R-290525. The project also relies on the Complete Communities: Housing Solutions and Mobility Choices EIR (SCH No. 2019060003) for traffic/transportation issues and was certified on November 17, 2020, per Resolution R-313279. Based upon a review of the current project, none of the conditions described in Sections 15162 and 15164 of the State CEQA Guidelines apply.

No changes in circumstances have occurred, and no new information of substantial importance has manifested that would result in new significant or substantially increased adverse impacts as a result of the project. Therefore, an Addendum and Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program has been prepared in accordance with Section 15164 of the CEQA State Guidelines. The Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program contains mitigation for Paleontological Resources. (Attachment 7 and Attachment 8)

Conclusion:

All identified issues have been resolved through established mitigation and regulatory compliance, and the project is consistent with the Community Plan and Land Development Code. The proposed development will provide community-serving educational facilities and meet all applicable findings. Staff recommends approval of the project.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve a resolution adopting Addendum No. 1109086/SCH No. 1997111070 and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; Approve Conditional Use Permit PMT-3265502, with modifications.
2. Deny a resolution adopting Addendum No. 1109086/SCH No. 1997111070 and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; Deny Conditional Use Permit PMT-3265502, if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.

Respectfully submitted,



Sara Osborn
Development Project Manager
Development Services Department

Attachments:

1. Community Planning Group vote
2. Location Map
3. Aerial Map
4. Community Plan Land Use Map
5. Draft Permit Resolution with Findings
6. Draft Permit with Conditions
7. [Environmental - Addendum](#)
8. Draft Environmental Resolution with MMRP (Addendum)
9. Ownership Disclosure Statement
10. Project Plans