



City of Huntington Beach Planning Department  
**STAFF REPORT**

**TO:** Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Scott Hess, AICP, Director of Planning  
**BY:** Jennifer Villasenor, Associate Planner *JV*  
**DATE:** May 13, 2008

**SUBJECT: GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE NO. 08-001 (LeBard School Site)**

**APPLICANT:** City of Huntington Beach/Huntington Beach City School District

**PROPERTY**

**OWNER:** Huntington Beach City School District, 20451 Cramer Lane, Huntington Beach, CA 92646

**LOCATION:** 20451 Cramer Lane, Huntington Beach, CA 92646 (East of the intersection of Brookhurst Street and Indianapolis Avenue)

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**STATEMENT OF ISSUE:**

General Plan Conformance No. 08-001 represents a request by the City of Huntington Beach and the Huntington Beach City School District (HBCSD) to determine if disposition and acquisition of the LeBard School site is in compliance with the goals and policies of the General Plan.

Staff's Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of General Plan Conformance No. 08-001 for the following reasons:

- ◆ The proposed disposition of the LeBard School site by the HBCSD complies with the goals and policies of the General Plan.
- ◆ Acquisition of all or part of the LeBard School site, should the City decide to acquire it, complies with the goals and policies of the General Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Motion to:

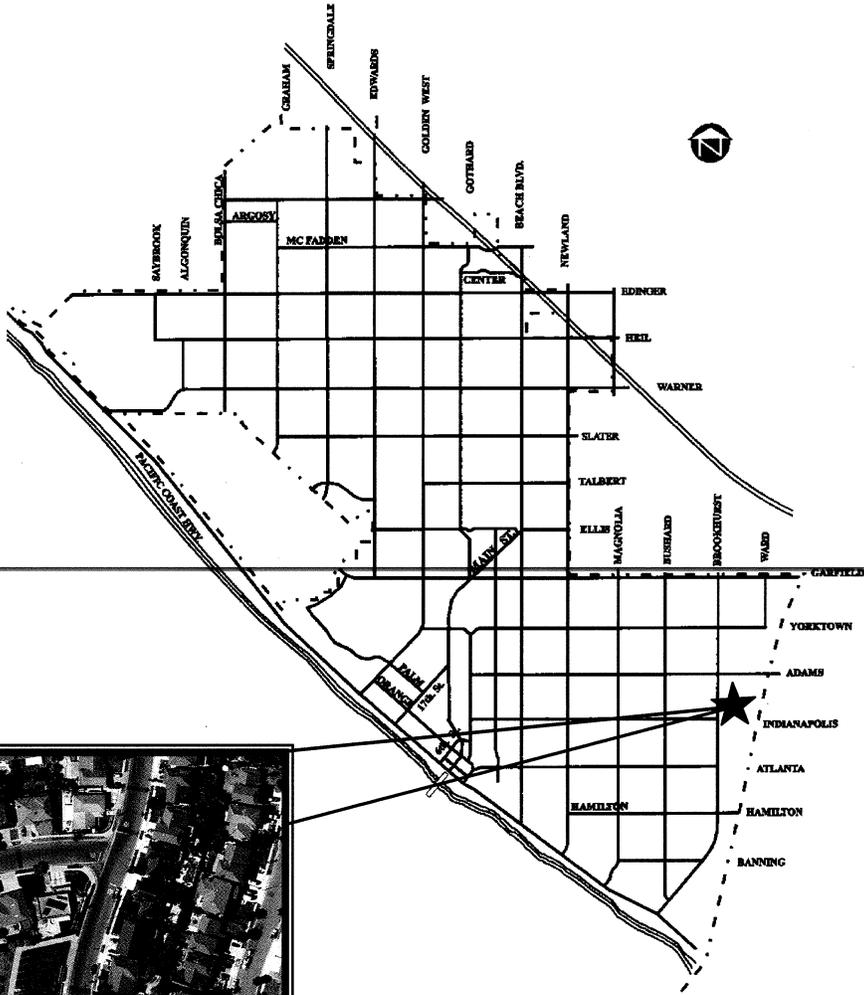
“Adopt Resolution No. 1620 approving General Plan Conformance No. 08-001 with findings.”

**ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):**

The Planning Commission may take alternative actions such as:

- A. “Continue General Plan Conformance No. 08-001 and direct staff accordingly.”
- B. “Deny General Plan Amendment No. 08-001 with findings for denial.”

**PROJECT  
SITE**



**VICINITY MAP**

***GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE # 08-001  
(LEBARD SCHOOL – 20451 CRAIMER LANE)  
THE CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH***

**PROJECT PROPOSAL:**

General Plan Conformance No. 08-001 represents a request, pursuant to Section 65402 of the California Government Code, by the City of Huntington Beach to determine if acquisition of the LeBard School site is in compliance with the goals and policies of the General Plan should the City decide to acquire the site.

On April 7, 2008 the City Council approved a resolution authorizing City staff to pursue acquisition of all or part of the site. Subsequent to the April 7<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting, the HBCSD submitted a letter to the Planning Department requesting that a General Plan Conformance for the disposition of the LeBard School site be processed in conjunction with the City’s General Plan Conformance for acquisition of the site.

The 10.12 acre site has not been used by the HBCSD for public education for many years; however, it is currently being utilized as the District’s Education Center offices. The site is also used for organized youth sports as well as by residents of the surrounding neighborhood for general recreation and open space purposes.

**ISSUES:**

**Subject Property And Surrounding Land Use, Zoning And General Plan Designations:**

LOCATION	GENERAL PLAN	ZONING	LAND USE
Subject Property:	P (Public)	PS (Public/Semi-Public)	Closed school site; District Education Center; Recreational & sports playing fields
North, South and West of Subject Property:	RL (Residential – Low Density)	RL	Single-family residential uses
East of Subject Property:	OS-P (Open Space – Parks)	OS-PR (Open Space – Parks & Recreation)	LeBard Park

**General Plan Conformance:**

The proposed disposition and acquisition of the LeBard School site is consistent with the goals and objectives of the City’s General Plan and the Land Use Element designation of Public on the subject property. The proposed project is consistent with this designation and the goals and objectives of the City’s General Plan as follows:

A. Land Use Element

LU Policy 13.1.6: “Encourage surplus schools and other public properties to be made available first for other public purposes, such as parks, open space, adult or child care, and secondarily for reuse for private purposes and/or other land uses and development.”

This policy is consistent with State law in that the City and other public entities have priority to purchase or lease surplus school property. As a result, the City of Huntington Beach has opted to exercise the first opportunity right to consider purchasing and reusing the site for public purposes, such as a park or open space, with the City Council’s recent authorization to pursue acquisition of the site. Should the City and other public entities with priority decline the offer to purchase the LeBarb School site, the development of the site for private purposes with other land uses may be considered along with the approval of a general plan amendment and zoning map amendment.

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B. Recreation and Community Services Element

RCS Policy 5.1.1: “Review the parks and recreation facilities relationship with the local schools. The review should include:

- a. the concept of providing both school recreation facilities and park facilities at the same site;
- b. information submitted by the school districts regarding the financial and fiscal impacts to the school districts in preserving closed schools for park purposes without adequate compensation to the school district;
- c. the determination of each school’s contribution in providing recreational opportunities to the neighborhood; and
- d. the identification of an “alternative” plan to provide the recreational opportunities in the event of a school closure.”

The City of Huntington Beach does not operate any recreational programs at the subject site, but the Sea View Little League utilizes the playing fields year-round. The Surplus School Property Purchasing Plan, updated in November 2007, indicates that relocation of the existing playing fields to another City park would likely displace other recreational opportunities at that park. Community Services staff is evaluating alternative plans for the existing youth sports group if the property is sold and the existing recreational and open space is not preserved.

**Zoning Compliance:** Not applicable.

**Urban Design Guidelines Conformance:** Not applicable.

**Environmental Status:**

The General Plan conformance review is categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15306, Class 6 of the California Environmental Quality Act, which states that information collection which does not result in major disturbance to an environmental resource is exempt from any environmental review.

**Coastal Status:** Not applicable.

**Redevelopment Status:** Not applicable

**Design Review Board:** Not applicable.

**Subdivision Committee:** Not applicable.

**Other Departments Concerns and Requirements:**

No comments regarding General Plan Conformance No. 08-001 have been received from other City departments or agencies.

**Public Notification:**

~~General Plan Conformances are non public hearing items and do not require legal notification.~~ However, pursuant to the General Plan Land Use Element implementation program for surplus school sites (I-LU 26), a notice of the Huntington Beach City School District's intent to dispose of the LeBard School site was sent to all residents residing within ¼ mile of the site. The notice included information regarding the proposed General Plan Conformance as well as the date of the Planning Commission meeting scheduled to consider the subject General Plan Conformance.

**Application Processing Dates:**

**DATE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION:**

April 9, 2008 (Date of Request)

**MANDATORY PROCESSING DATE(S):**

May 19, 2008 (40 days from date of request)

**ANALYSIS:**

Section 65402 of the Government Code provides that no real property shall be disposed of or acquired until the location, purpose and extent of the disposition or acquisition has been submitted to and reported upon as to its conformity with the City's adopted General Plan. Consistent with State law, staff has identified policies from the Land Use and Recreation and Community Services Elements in which the proposed disposition and acquisition are in conformance with the General Plan. These policies are described in the General Plan Conformance section of this staff report.

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve General Plan Conformance No. 08-001 because the disposition and acquisition of the LeBard school site is consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Suggested Findings of Approval – GPC No. 08-001
2. Planning Commission Resolution No. 1620
3. Letter from the Huntington Beach School District Requesting General Plan Conformance, dated April 9, 2008
4. Environmental Board Letter, dated March 14, 2008

SH:MBB:jv

# **ATTACHMENT NO. 1**

## **SUGGESTED FINDINGS OF APPROVAL**

### **GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE NO. 08-001**

#### **SUGGESTED FINDINGS FOR PROJECTS EXEMPT FROM CEQA:**

The Planning Commission finds that the project will not have any significant effect on the environment and is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15306, Class 6 of the CEQA Guidelines because the project involves information collection which does not result in major disturbance to an environmental resource.

#### **SUGGESTED FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL – GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE NO.08-001:**

1. The proposed disposition and acquisition of the LeBard School site is consistent with the following goals and policies of the General Plan:

##### *A. Land Use Element*

LU Policy 13.1.6: “Encourage surplus schools and other public properties to be made available first for other public purposes, such as parks, open space, adult or child care, and secondarily for reuse for private purposes and/or other land uses and development.”

This policy is consistent with State law in that the City and other public entities have priority to purchase or lease surplus school property. As a result, the City of Huntington Beach has opted to exercise the first opportunity right to consider purchasing and reusing the site for public purposes, such as a park or open space, with the City Council’s recent authorization to pursue acquisition of the site. Should the City and other public entities with priority decline the offer to purchase the LeBard School site, the development of the site for private purposes with other land uses may be considered along with the approval of a general plan amendment and zoning map amendment.

##### *B. Recreation and Community Services Element*

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- b. information submitted by the school districts regarding the financial and fiscal impacts to the school districts in preserving closed schools for park purposes without adequate compensation to the school district;
- c. the determination of each school’s contribution in providing recreational opportunities to the neighborhood; and
- d. the identification of an “alternative” plan to provide the recreational opportunities in the event of a school closure.”

The City of Huntington Beach does not operate any recreational programs at the subject site, but the Sea View Little League utilizes the playing fields year-round. The Surplus School Property Purchasing Plan, updated in November 2007, indicates that relocation of the existing playing fields to another City park would likely displace other recreational opportunities at that park. Community Services staff is evaluating alternative plans for the existing youth sports group if the property is sold and the existing recreational and open space is not preserved.

**INDEMNIFICATION AND HOLD HARMLESS CONDITION:**

The owner of the property which is the subject of this project and the project applicant if different from the property owner, and each of their heirs, successors and assigns, shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless the City of Huntington Beach and its agents, officers, and employees from any claim, action or proceedings, liability cost, including attorney's fees and costs against the City or its agents, officers or employees, to attack, set aside, void or annul any approval of the City, including but not limited to any approval granted by the City Council, Planning Commission, or Design Review Board concerning this project. The City shall promptly notify the applicant of any claim, action or proceeding and should cooperate fully in the defense thereof.

RESOLUTION NO. 1620

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH  
FINDING THAT THE DISPOSITION AND ACQUISITION OF THE LEBARD SCHOOL SITE IS  
IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE GENERAL PLAN  
(GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE NO. 08-001)

WHEREAS, the Government Code of the State of California, Section 65402, provides that a local agency shall not acquire real property, nor dispose of any real property, nor construct a public building or structure in any county or city until the location, purpose, and extent of such activity has been reported upon as to conformity with the adopted General Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Huntington Beach City School District (HBCSD) has declared its intention to dispose of the LeBard School Site, located at 20451 Craimer Lane (East of the intersection of Brookhurst Street and Indianapolis Avenue).

WHEREAS, the City of Huntington Beach has declared its intention to acquire all or a portion of the 10.12-acre site.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Commission of the City of Huntington Beach as follows:

SECTION 1: Under California law, the City of Huntington Beach has the opportunity to purchase and maintain use of the site for public purposes, such as a park or open space.

SECTION 2: The City has entered into negotiations with the HBCSD for the acquisition of all or part of the 10.21-acre LeBard School site for the purpose of preserving playing fields, open space and parkland for recreational uses.

SECTION 3: Should the City, or other entities with priority, decline to purchase the LeBard School site, the development of the site for other uses may be considered upon the approval of a general plan amendment and zoning map amendment.

SECTION 4: The disposition and acquisition of the LeBard School site is in conformance with the goals and policies of the City's adopted General Plan.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Planning Commission of the City of Huntington Beach at a regular meeting held on the thirteenth day of May 2008.

AYES:

NOES:

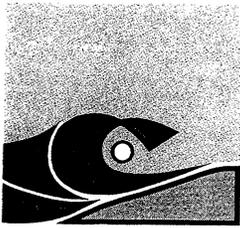
ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Scott Hess, Secretary

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Planning Commission Chairperson



# HUNTINGTON BEACH CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

20451 Cramer Lane, Huntington Beach, California 92646 (714) 964-8888

City of Huntington Beach

APR 09 2008

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Michael Curran  
Assistant Superintendent  
Administrative Services

April 8, 2008

Mr. Scott Hess, Planning Director  
City of Huntington Beach  
2000 Main Street  
Huntington Beach, CA 92648

**RE: Sale of the LeBard Site**

Dear Mr. Hess:

It is my understanding that the City of Huntington Beach will be processing a general plan conformance regarding the sale of our LeBard site. Because it is the intention of our district to sell the LeBard site to the City of Huntington Beach, I am requesting that said general plan conformance take place at the same time such a sale would be consummated, if in fact this does occur.

Thank you for your attention in this matter and please call me with any questions you may have regarding this request.

Sincerely,

Michael Curran  
Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services  
Huntington Beach City School District

ATTACHMENT NO. 3

MAR 14 2008



# CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH

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## ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD

March 14, 2008

Honorable Mayor and City Council Members  
City of Huntington Beach  
2000 Main St  
Huntington Beach, CA 92648

Subject: Huntington Beach City School District (HBCSD) Closed School Sites

Honorable Mayor and City Council Members,

At the March 6, 2008 Environmental Board meeting, the members approved and directed me to send a letter regarding the four closed HBCSD sites; LeBard, Kettler, Burke and Gisler. The Environmental Board believes it is of paramount importance to preserve these public lands as community and neighborhood education, open space and recreational areas. The Board recommends the City purchase these locations as they become available per the Naylor Act and the City 2007 Surplus School Property Purchasing Plan. Further, the Board recommends the City purchase entire closed school site properties. The Environmental Board considers this approach to be in the best interest of the city and community.

Private development at any one of these four locations would adversely impact the character of each neighborhood. These publicly owned school/open space/recreation facilities are an integral part of the master planned neighborhood tracts that were built throughout the southeast Huntington Beach. Preservation of these four sites is consistent with the City's General Plan designation to maintain these areas as public lands. In addition, preservation would achieve the City Strategic objective stated in the 2007 Surplus School Property Purchasing Plan, "to ensure compatible land use within surrounding neighborhood to meet community needs. In addition, the plan will help preserve the quality of our neighborhoods, maintain open space, and provide for the preservation of historic neighborhoods".

Private development of these locations would also negatively impact the youth of our city. The City 2007 Surplus School Property Report states that these four sites now have 23 established year-round youth sports fields assigned to them. To the Board's knowledge there are not adequate alternate existing sites available in southeast

ATTACHMENT NO. 4.1

Huntington Beach or other locations. Moving the fields to an alternate location may require displacement of other existing sports fields which is not equitable.

The recent HBCSD decision has saved the Gisler and Burke sites for the time being. The school district is preparing to surplus for sale the LeBard and Kettler sites. The Board understands the City Council will discuss, during closed session on March 17, 2008, the purchase of 10.12 acres (entire acreage) of the LeBard site located at 20451 Craimer Lane.

The Environmental Board strongly encourages the City to move forward with purchasing the entire 10.12 acres of the LeBard site. In addition to the reasons ~~previously stated, purchasing the property would be consistent with the Santa Ana Blue Ribbon Committee report approved by the City Council and Community Services Commission.~~ The LeBard location is listed as one of the priority access points to the Santa Ana River which links the trail system to the beach.

Looking ahead to the potential purchase of the Kettler location, the Environmental Board strongly encourages the City to move forward with purchasing the entire 9.8 acres of the Kettler site. The Board recommends that the City purchase and integrate the site into the planned renovation of the Edison Community Center and Park. This property would be a natural extension of the park. It is also understood that environmental and/or site constraints may preclude possible private development of this location. This situation further supports maintaining the entire property as a park/open space and recreation area.

Sincerely,



Craig A. Justice  
Chair, Huntington Beach Environmental Board