

SAUGUS UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

**ASSET MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT FOR
SANTA CLARITA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL [OR A PORTION THEREOF]
(27177 SECO CANYON ROAD, APN: 2810-032-902)
SAUGUS, CALIFORNIA 91350**

**Presented to the Governing Board on
August 19, 2025**

**Submitted by:
Asset Management Advisory Committee**

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Asset Management Advisory Committee Findings and Recommendations Report (“Report”) is intended to assist the Saugus Union School District (“District”) Governing Board (“Board”) in evaluating potential use and disposition options for District owned real property.

This Report contains recommendations to the Board from the District appointed Asset Management Advisory Committee (“Advisory Committee”) on utilization and disposition of the District-owned property, Santa Clarita Elementary School located at 27177 Seco Canyon Road, Saugus, California 91350 (APN: 2810-032-902). The Santa Clarita Elementary School property may be referred to herein individually as “SCES” or the “Property.”

With the presentation of this Report to the Board, the Advisory Committee’s duty to provide the District with recommendations regarding the Property is fulfilled, subject to further Board inquiries and requests for information or if the Board elects to seek further recommendations from the Advisory Committee regarding additional District owned properties.

II. ASSET MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A. Asset Management Advisory Committee: Statutory Mandate

California Education Code section 17388 states “[t]he governing board of any school district may, and the governing board of each school district, prior to the sale, lease, or rental of any excess real property, except rentals not exceeding 30 days, shall, appoint a district advisory committee to advise the governing board in the development of districtwide policies and procedures governing the use or disposition of school buildings or space in school buildings which is not needed for school purposes.”

Further, Education Code section 17389 requires the Advisory Committee be composed of not less than seven (7) or more than eleven (11) members, representative of the following: “(a) The ethnic, age group, and socioeconomic composition of the district; (b) The business community, such as store owners, managers, or supervisors; (c) Landowners or renters, with preference to be given to representatives of neighborhood associations; (d) Teachers; (e) Administrators; (f) Parents of students; and (g) Persons with expertise in environmental impact, legal contracts, building codes, and land use planning, including, but not limited to, knowledge of the zoning and other land use restrictions of the cities or cities and counties in which surplus space and real property is located.”

Pursuant to Education Code section 17390 the Advisory Committee must do all of the following:

- (a) Review the projected school enrollment and other data as provided by the district to determine the amount of surplus space and real property.
- (b) Establish a priority list of use of surplus space and real property that will be acceptable to the community.
- (c) Cause to have circulated throughout the attendance area a priority list of surplus space and real property and provide for hearings of community input to the committee on acceptable uses of space and real property, including the sale or lease of surplus real property for childcare development purposes pursuant to Section 17458.
- (d) Make a final determination of limits of tolerance of use of space and real property.
- (e) Forward to the district governing board a report recommending uses of surplus space and real property.

B. Asset Management Advisory Committee: Formation and Membership

On March 26, 2024, the Board approved Resolution 2023-2024 No. 61 “Establishing the Saugus Union School District Asset Management Advisory Committee and Approving Bylaws for the Committee” (“Resolution 2023-2024 No. 61”). On June 25, 2024, members were appointed to the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee is comprised of the following nine (9) members, meeting the representation requirements of Education Code section 17389:

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. | James Shea | Community Representative |
| 2. | Lisa Eichman | Business Community Representative |
| 3. | Bob Aholt | Landowner/Renter Representative |
| 4. | Peter Gaytan | District Administrator Representative |
| 5. | Kevin Kim | Person of Expertise Representative |
| 6. | Jennifer Larson | Parent/Guardian Representative |
| 7. | Al Reano | District Composition Representative |
| 8. | Kathi Lund | Community Representative |
| 9. | Brandon Holtzclaw | District Teacher Representative |

Officers of the Advisory Committee are James Shea, Chairperson and Lisa Eichman, Vice Chairperson. The Secretary position was delegated to District staff, Shellie Gibson, Administrative Assistant, Business.

The following individuals provided resources and assistance to the Advisory Committee on the District’s behalf:

1. Colleen Hawkins, Ed.D., Superintendent
2. Nick Heinlein, Assistant Superintendent of Business
3. Shellie Gibson, Administrative Assistant, Business
4. Sarine A. Abrahamian, Esq., Legal Counsel, Orbach Huff & Henderson LLP

Between July 22, 2024, and May 7, 2025, the Advisory Committee met ten (10) times:

- | | | |
|---------------|---|--|
| Meeting One | – | Monday, July 22, 2024 |
| Meeting Two | – | Wednesday, August 7, 2024 |
| Meeting Three | – | Wednesday, September 18, 2024 |
| Meeting Four | – | Wednesday, October 30, 2024 (Joint Meeting with Board) |
| Meeting Five | – | Wednesday, December 11, 2024 |
| Meeting Six | – | Wednesday, February 12, 2025 |
| Meeting Seven | – | Wednesday, March 5, 2025 |
| Meeting Eight | – | Wednesday, April 2, 2025 |
| Meeting Nine | – | Wednesday, April 30, 2025 (Public Hearing) |
| Meeting Ten | – | Wednesday, May 7, 2025 |

All Advisory Committee meetings were open to the public and conducted pursuant to the Ralph M. Brown Public Meeting Act. (Gov. Code § 54950, et seq.)

On April 30, 2025, at 6:30 p.m., the Advisory Committee held a public hearing to receive community input concerning its findings and recommendations. The District notified the public ten (10) days in advance of the hearing by posting the Notice:

1. outside District Administrative Offices;
2. outside the Principal's Office of each District School;
3. in the newspaper [The Signal, April 17, 2025];
4. on the District Advisory Committee webpage.

There were approximately 47 community members in attendance to observe the meeting and hearing, and 7 public comments were made.

C. Asset Management Advisory Committee: Property and Process

Under AB 300, which requires the Department of General Services ("DGS") to survey the State's public school buildings for earthquake safety and to submit a report of its findings to the State Legislature, SCES's buildings were identified as needing seismic retrofitting and upgrades. The District was required to address these concerns by developing a plan 1) regarding needed modernization work/replacement, and 2) to fund repairs or seek funding for repairs.

On March 3, 2022, at a Governing Board study session, the facilities challenges at SCES and options to address the significant challenges posed by the SCES Property, including the need for seismic retrofitting to meet earthquake safety standards were discussed. At that time, SCES was projected to need \$24 million in improvements to ensure that it would meet state safety standards for earthquakes. SCES's declining enrollment was also discussed.

Following the 2021-2022 school year, the District halted acceptance of transfer students, and new kindergarten or transitional kindergarten students at SCES. Phasing out grade levels at SCES was a key first step in reducing the student enrollment and gradually closing the school.

In September 2022, the California Governor signed into law Assembly Bill ("AB") 1912, codified in Education Code section 41329, which requires a school district under financial distress (as defined in Ed. Code §41329 (b)) to conduct an equity impact analysis utilizing a developed set of metrics ("AB 1912 Metrics") when considering school closures or consolidations, and to seek public input on those metrics prior to adopting a final recommendation.

On April 11, 2023, the California Attorney General issued "Guidance Regarding Laws Governing School Closures and Best Practices for Implementation in California" ("AG Guidance"), which advises all school districts, not just those that meet the definition of "under financial distress," to assess the AB 1912 Metrics when considering school closures or consolidations. AG Guidance provides, "[f]or districts that are considering closures but do not fall under AB 1912's mandate, following AB 1912 and the best practices identified in this guidance will reduce a district's legal risk, improve community trust, and parent engagement, and begin to remedy the continuing harms of segregation."

Although the District did not meet the definition of a district "under financial distress" under Education Code section 41329(b), starting in Spring/Summer of 2023, the District followed AG Guidance in developing a consolidation plan for SCES, in accordance with Education Code section 41329, and conducted an equity impact analysis. This analysis assessed the potential effect that closing and consolidating SCES would have on the District, its students, and the community. The process included consideration of various factors such as enrollment data, school site capacity, long-term repair needs, and per-student operating costs.

Prior to the regularly scheduled Board meeting on October 10, 2023, the public was provided with a draft Equity Impact Analysis Report ("Report") that analyzed and presented information in compliance with AB 1912, including the Closure Criteria and AB 1912 Metrics. At the October 10, 2023 meeting, an open session presentation was given regarding the Report, and a public hearing was held to receive public input from the community regarding the draft Report and the AB 1912 Metrics analyzed in the Report, pursuant to the requirements of AB 1912. On October 17,

2023, a community outreach meeting was held, and, during a Board meeting on October 24, 2023 a public hearing was held to further solicit input and comments from the community.

On November 14, 2023, the Board adopted Resolution 2023-2024 No. 36, which authorized the District to proceed with the SCES Closure and Consolidation Project, which involved consolidating SCES with Charles Helmers Elementary School, James Foster Elementary School, and Highlands Elementary School.

On March 26, 2024, the District adopted Resolution 2023-2024 No. 61, establishing this Advisory Committee to explore options for the use and disposition of the SCES Property. The Advisory Committee was authorized and instructed to analyze the Property and present recommendations to the Board for consideration.

On July 22, 2024, the Advisory Committee met for the first time. During its first meeting, the Advisory Committee reviewed the Advisory Committee Bylaws and was introduced to the SCES Property. The Property is shown on the aerial map included in Exhibit A: Aerial Property Map, July 2024, Before Removal of Portables, attached hereto, outlined in yellow.

The Advisory Committee received and reviewed relevant background information pertaining to the Advisory Committee's process, the Property, and District data, including, without limitation:

- The Advisory Committee's role and responsibilities in analyzing, evaluating, and making recommendations to the Board on the use or disposition of District-owned property;
- The step-by-step process for the disposition of District property once it has been declared surplus by the Board;
- Historic and projected District-wide enrollment and attendance area data; and
- Maintenance costs on the Property

All information provided to the Advisory Committee, as well as meeting schedules, agendas, minutes, and presentations may be found on the District website: <https://www.saugusd.org/asset-management-advisory-committee>.

III. PROPERTY OVERVIEW

A. Property Characteristics

The SCES Property consists of approximately 9.3 total acres, 405,083 sq. ft. including recreational space, in the City of Santa Clarita, California. The Property is zoned "PI (Public / Institutional)" and is situated within a residential neighborhood surrounded by open space and properties zoned for residential use. Specifically, the Property is bounded as follows:

To the north	–	Open Space (OS)
To the east	–	Urban Residential (UR2)
To the west	–	Open Space (OS)
To the south	–	Urban Residential (UR3)

The "PI (Public / Institutional)" zoning designation allows the Property to be used for civic and governmental offices, public works yards, public or private schools, libraries, day care centers, airports, hospitals and supporting medical facilities, museums, fire stations, police stations, landfills, and prisons.

B. Property Valuation

The District has not yet conducted an appraisal/valuation of the Property. This will be completed in the future at the Board's direction.

IV. ADVISORY COMMITTEE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Pursuant to the Advisory Committee's review of District goals and Property information, and pursuant to Education Code sections 17388 and 17390, the Advisory Committee makes the following recommendations to the Board, which can be undertaken simultaneously to ensure the best value for the Property is achieved. Exhibit C: Community Comment Charts presented by Advisory Committee Chairperson James Shea December 11, 2024.

1. The Advisory Committee recommends that the Property not be used or developed for future residential or commercial purposes.
2. The Advisory Committee recommends that the Board pursue both short-term and long-term leasing options with the aim to optimize the Property's value while prioritizing uses that balance the best interests of the District, District student programs, and the priorities expressed by the broader community of Saugus-area stakeholders.
3. The Advisory Committee recommends that the Board consider partnering with local public agencies and/or nonprofit organizations to develop, operate, and maintain programs or services on the Property that support children and the community. Examples may include educational initiatives such as early childhood education centers, afterschool academic support programs, and youth wellness centers.
4. The Advisory Committee recommends that the Board consider the development of public-facing community facilities that provide cultural, civic, and recreational benefits to children and the community. These may include a library, community arts space, or multipurpose community center that complement existing local resources.
5. The Advisory Committee recommends that the Board explore the development of community green space or recreational fields that offer opportunities for park expansion, open space, athletic programming, and other community activities. Potential partners may include youth sports organizations, public agencies, or recreation-focused nonprofits.
6. The Advisory Committee recommends that the Board preserve and maintain the architectural integrity and landscaping of the site, including its mid-century modern character and natural features, including Valley Oak Trees, to the greatest extent feasible. Exhibit B: Aerial Property Map, January 2024 with Valley Oak Trees indicated.
7. The Advisory Committee recommends that the Board act expeditiously and thoughtfully to prevent the Property from sitting vacant, which may lead to blight, security concerns, and deferred maintenance. The Board should prioritize near-term planning efforts that activate the site in alignment with the above recommendations.

ATTACHMENTS

- EXHIBIT A:** Aerial Property Map – July 2024
- EXHIBIT B:** Aerial Property Map – January 2025
- EXHIBIT C:** Community Comment Charts – December 11, 2024

Exhibit C was gathered at the Community Meeting regarding the Santa Clarita Elementary School property that was held on 10/30/2024. The Community Meeting was a joint meeting between the Board and the Advisory Committee. During the meeting, the community completed comment cards related to specific questions, participated in table discussions, and shared their thoughts about the future disposition of the Property. The attendees were given separate cards for each of the following three questions:

- 1. Which action should the Advisory Committee recommend and why? a. Status Quo - Keep b. Surplus - Sell; Long-term lease for up to 99 years under surplus statute c. Alternative Use - Joint Use/Short-term lease (up to 5 year max subject to certain exceptions), Joint Occupancy/Long-term lease (up to 99 year max), Fee generating (up to 35 year max), Community Recreation Act and Exchange
- 2. Should ongoing revenue generation be a priority?
- 3. How best can the Property continue to serve the community?

The number of individual response cards received for question #1 was 148, question #2 was 130 and question #3 was 137. All 415 response cards received were scanned for Advisory Committee/District records and entered into a spreadsheet for ease of review and analysis. In preparation for the 12/11/24 Advisory Committee meeting, to facilitate the Committee's analysis and discussions regarding the community member's responses, Advisory Committee Chairperson Shea compiled the raw data provided by the District into pie chart graphs as shown in Exhibit C.

EXHIBIT A

AERIAL VIEW OF SANTA CLARITA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BEFORE REMOVAL OF PORTABLES (AS OF JULY 2024)



EXHIBIT B

AERIAL VIEW OF SANTA CLARITA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AFTER REMOVAL OF PORTABLES (AS OF JAN. 2025)



Oak Tree Species

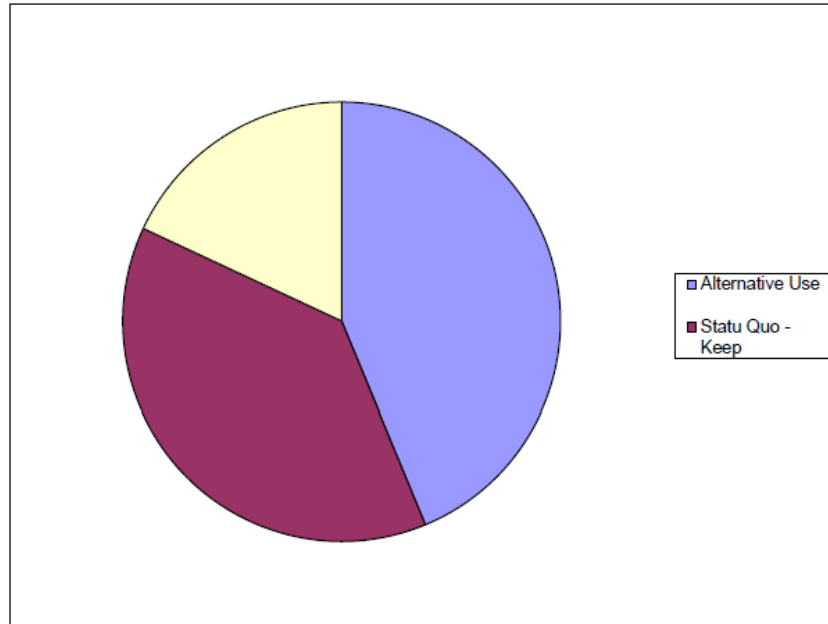
EXHIBIT C

COMMUNITY COMMENT CHARTS PRESENTED BY ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON JAMES SHEA DECEMBER 11, 2024

Question #1

Which action should the Committee recommend and why?

Alternative Use	63
Statu Quo - Keep	55
Surplus - Sell	26

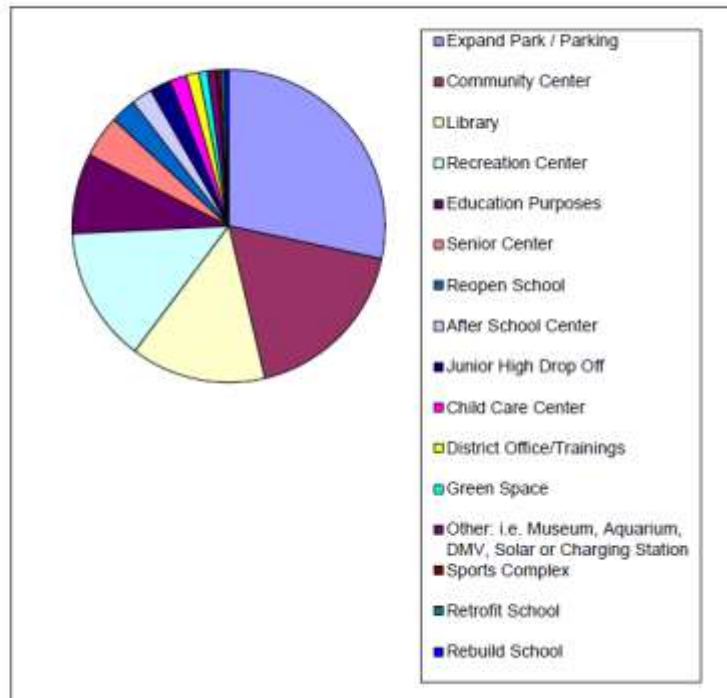


Question #1

Which action should the Committee recommend and why?

Alternative Use

Expand Park / Parking	65
Community Center	41
Library	32
Recreation Center	32
Education Purposes	19
Senior Center	10
Reopen School	6
After School Center	5
Junior High Drop Off	5
Child Care Center	4
District Office/Trainings	3
Green Space	2
Other: i.e. Museum, Aquarium, DMV,	2
Solar or Charging Station	2
Sports Complex	1
Retrofit School	1
Rebuild School	1

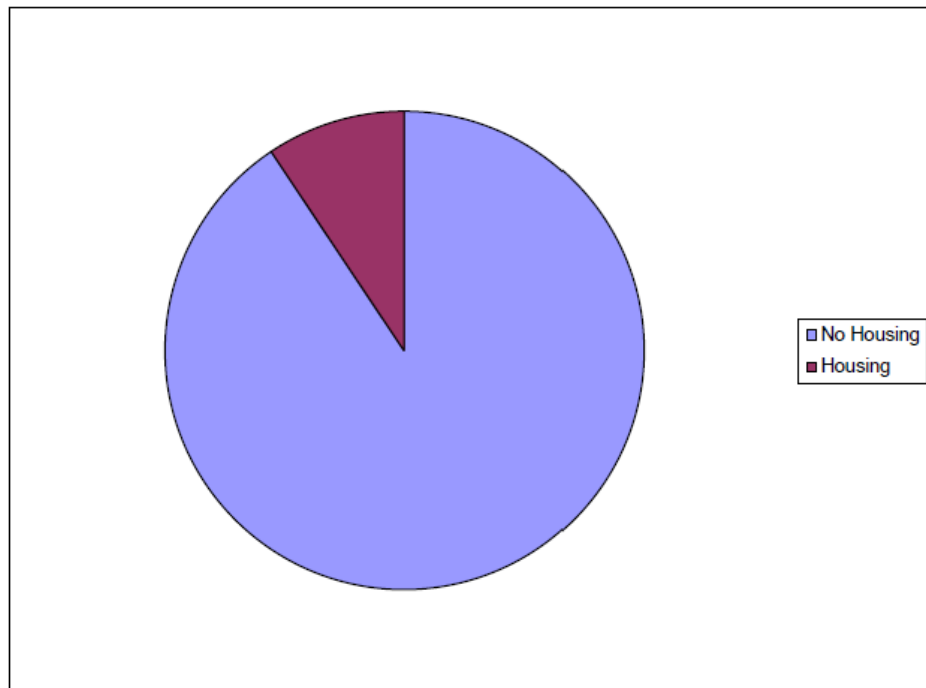


Question #1

Which action should the Committee recommend and why?

Housing or No Housing

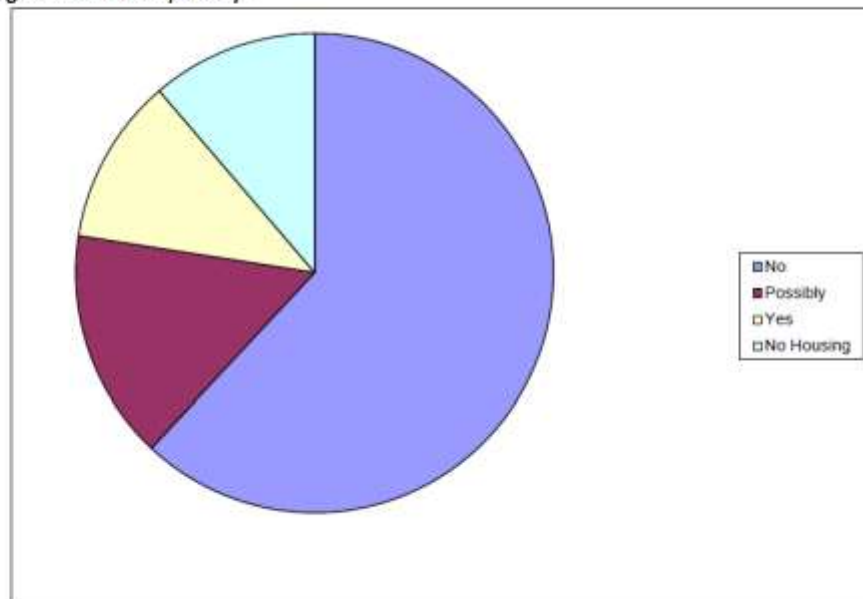
No Housing	29
Housing	3



Question #2

Should ongoing revenue generation be a priority?

No	88
Possibly	22
Yes	16
No Housing	16

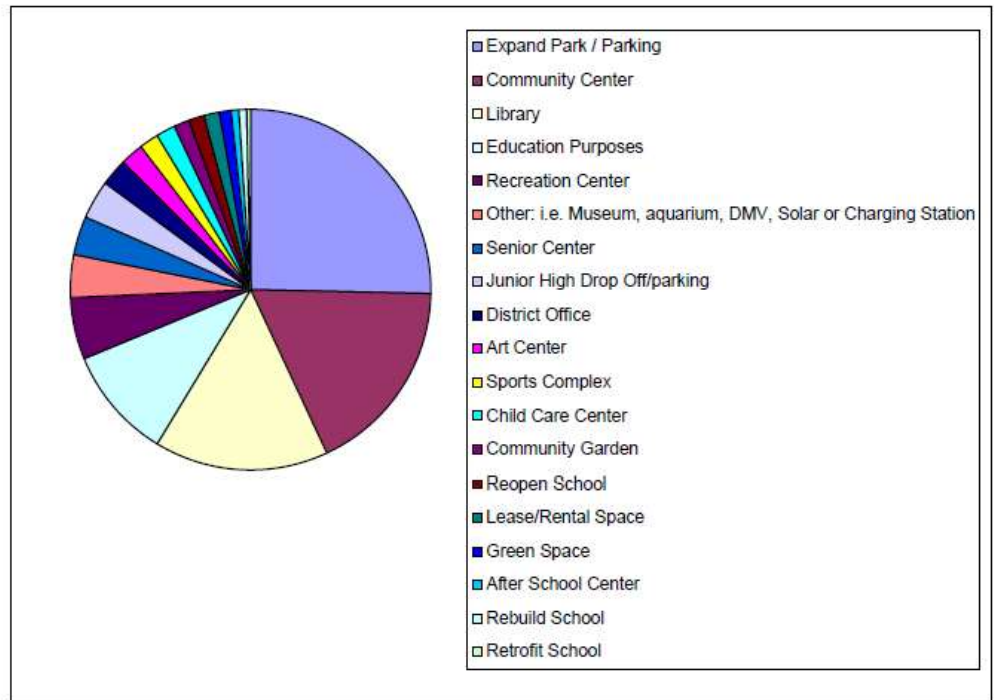


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Question #3 How best can the property continue to serve the community?

Alternative Use

Expand Park / Parking	73
Community Center	51
Library	45
Education Purposes	29
Recreation Center	16
Other: i.e. Museum, aquarium, DMV, Solar or Charging Station	11
Senior Center	10
Junior High Drop Off/parking	10
District Office	7
Art Center	6
Sports Complex	5
Child Care Center	5
Community Garden	4
Reopen School	4
Lease/Rental Space	4
Green Space	3
After School Center	2
Rebuild School	2
Retrofit School	1



Question #3 How best can the property continue to serve the community?

Housing/No Housing

No Housing	22
Housing	2

