



# **PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT**

VII.6

MEETING DATE: SEPTEMBER 10, 2007

ITEM NUMBER:

**SUBJECT: PLANNING APPLICATION PA-07-25  
1620 ADAMS AVENUE**

**DATE: AUGUST 30, 2007**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: MEL LEE, AICP, SENIOR PLANNER  
(714) 754-5611**

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## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant is requesting approval of a conditional use permit to allow a K through 8 private school (Kline School) with an outdoor play area.

## **APPLICANT**

The applicant is Susan Kline, representing Girl Scouts Council of Orange County, the owner of the property.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Approve by adoption of Planning Commission resolution, subject to conditions.

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MEL LEE, AICP  
Senior Planner

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R. MICHAEL ROBINSON, AICP  
Asst. Development Services Director

**PLANNING APPLICATION SUMMARY**

Location: 1620 Adams Avenue Application: PA-07-25  
 Request: Conditional use permit to allow a K through 8 private school with an outdoor play area.

**SUBJECT PROPERTY:**

**SURROUNDING PROPERTY:**

Zone: <u>C1</u>	North: <u>C1, parking lot</u>
General Plan: <u>General Commercial</u>	South: <u>(Acr. Adams Ave.),PDR-MD, residential uses</u>
Lot Dimensions: <u>Irregular</u>	East: <u>C1, commercial uses</u>
Lot Area: <u>47,341 SF</u>	West: <u>C1, commercial uses</u>
Existing Development: <u>9,172 SF main building, 800 SF modular building (to be removed), and surface parking</u>	

**DEVELOPMENT STANDARD COMPARISON**

<u>Development Standard</u>	<u>Required/Allowed</u>	<u>Proposed/Provided</u>
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<b>Lot Size:</b>		
Lot Width	120 FT	150 FT
Lot Area	12,000 SQ FT	47,341 SF (1.08 Ac)
<b>Floor Area Ratio:</b>		
Moderate Traffic FAR	.30 (14,202 SF)	.19 (9,172 SF)
<b>Building Height:</b>		
	2 Stories/30 FT	1 Story/20 FT 9 IN
<b>Setbacks (Building):</b>		
Front (Adams Ave.)	20 FT	20 FT
Side (left/right)	15 FT/0 FT	27 FT/10 FT
Rear	0 FT	98 FT
<b>Parking:</b>		
Standard	N/A	25
Handicapped	N/A	1
TOTAL:	N/A	26 Spaces

N/A = Not Applicable or no requirement

CEQA Status Exempt, Class 1 (Existing Facilities)

Final Action Planning Commission

## **BACKGROUND**

The site is the former location of The Girl Scouts Council of Orange County and is bounded by commercial uses and parking areas. On January 28, 1991, Planning Commission approved Conditional Use Permit PA-91-16 to allow an 800 square foot modular building behind the main building along the easterly property line. The conditional use permit also memorialized the existing reciprocal access and parking agreement, recorded in 1972, between the subject property and the parking area to the north of the subject property, which is also shared with the properties occupied by a dance studio at 1640 Adams Avenue and a medical office building at 1650 Adams Avenue.

## **ANALYSIS**

The applicant is proposing to relocate Kline School, an accredited K through 8 private school, from their former location at 320 E. 18<sup>th</sup> Street to this location, for which a conditional use permit is required. The facility was used by The Girl Scouts Council of Orange County as an administrative headquarters and for meeting purposes. Kline School, which has operated at the 320 E. 18<sup>th</sup> Street location since 1987, began looking for a new location when their agreement for off-site parking with the adjacent church property was terminated in 2006. Interim, on-street parking for staff and pick-up and drop-off for students was allowed via minor conditional use permit ZA-06-48, which expired in August 2007.

For the proposed location, staff parking and pick-up and drop-off for students will be conducted on-site. The maximum enrollment would be 120 students. There are currently 36 on-site parking spaces, five of which are covered by the 800 square foot modular building approved under PA-91-16. The modular building will be removed and the parking area replaced with an outdoor play yard. Staff has included conditions of approval requiring the design for the outdoor play area to comply with City standards.

26 on-site parking spaces will remain available for staff, which exceeds the 8 full time staff members and other visitors anticipated for the school. As a result, there should be no parking problems associated with the use.

## **GENERAL PLAN CONFORMITY**

The existing building does not exceed the maximum floor area ratio (FAR) for the site. The use is permitted in the C1 zone, with a conditional use permit, and is therefore consistent with the General Plan.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

If the conditional use permit were denied, it would prevent the use from being established for the property. The applicant could not submit substantially the same type of application for six months.

**ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

The project is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act under Section 15301 for Existing Facilities.

**CONCLUSION**

It is staff's opinion that the proposed use will not create any adverse impacts on surrounding properties. Therefore, staff supports the request.

Attachments:       Draft Planning Commission Resolution  
                          Exhibit "A" - Draft Findings  
                          Exhibit "B" - Draft Conditions of Approval  
                          Applicant's Project Description and Justification  
                          Zoning/Location Map  
                          Plans

cc:                    Deputy City Manager - Dev. Svs. Director  
                          Deputy City Attorney  
                          City Engineer  
                          Fire Protection Analyst  
                          Staff (4)  
                          File (2)

Susan Kline  
320 East 18<sup>th</sup> Street  
Costa Mesa, CA 92627

Girl Scouts Council of Orange County  
9500 Toledo Way  
Irvine, CA 92618

File: 091007PA0725	Date: 082307	Time: 3:00 p.m.
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**RESOLUTION NO. PC-07-**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE  
CITY OF COSTA MESA APPROVING PLANNING  
APPLICATION PA-07-25**

THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF COSTA MESA HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, an application was filed by Susan Kline, representing Girl Scouts Council of Orange County, owner of real property located at 1620 Adams Avenue, requesting approval of a conditional use permit to allow a K through 8 private school (Kline School) with an outdoor play area.; and

WHEREAS, a duly noticed public hearing was held by the Planning Commission on September 10, 2007;

BE IT RESOLVED that, based on the evidence in the record and the findings contained in Exhibit "A", and subject to the conditions contained in Exhibit "B", the Planning Commission hereby **APPROVES** Planning Application PA-07-27 with respect to the property described above.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Costa Mesa Planning Commission does hereby find and determine that adoption of this resolution is expressly predicated upon the activity as described in the staff report for PA-07-25 and upon applicant's compliance with each and all of the conditions contained in Exhibit "B". Should any material change occur in the operation, or should the applicant fail to comply with the conditions of approval, then this resolution, and any recommendation for approval herein contained, shall be deemed null and void.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED this 10th day of September, 2007.**

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Donn Hall, Chair  
Costa Mesa Planning Commission



**EXHIBIT "A"****FINDINGS**

- A. The proposed project complies with Costa Mesa Municipal Code Section 13-29(e) because:
1. The proposed use is compatible and harmonious with uses on surrounding properties.
  2. Safety and compatibility of the design of the parking areas, landscaping, luminaries, and other site features including functional aspects of the site development such as automobile and pedestrian circulation have been considered.
  3. The project is consistent with the General Plan.
  4. The planning application is for a project-specific case and does not establish a precedent for future development.
- B. The information presented substantially complies with Costa Mesa Municipal Code section 13-29(g)(2) in that the proposed use is substantially compatible with developments in the same general area. Granting the conditional use permit will not be detrimental to the health, safety and general welfare of the public or other properties or improvements within the immediate vicinity. Specifically, staff parking and pick-up and drop-off for students will be conducted on-site. The proposed outdoor play area is required to comply with City standards. Parking problems associated with the use are not anticipated because 26 on-site parking spaces will be available for staff members and other visitors. Granting the conditional use permit will not allow a use, density or intensity, which is not in accordance with the general plan designation for the property.
- C. The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the CEQA Guidelines, and the City environmental procedures, and has been found to be exempt from CEQA under Section 15301 for Existing Facilities.
- D. The project is exempt from Chapter IX, Article 11, Transportation System Management, of Title 13 of the Costa Mesa Municipal Code.

**EXHIBIT "B"****CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

- Plng. 1. The conditional use permit herein approved shall be valid until revoked. However, the conditional use permit shall expire at the end of one (1) year unless a business license is obtained and/or the business legally commences or the applicant applies for and is granted an extension of time. The conditional use permit may be referred to the Planning Commission for modification or revocation at any time if the conditions of approval have not been complied with, if the use is operated in violation of applicable laws or ordinances or, if in the opinion of the Development Services Director or his designee, any of the findings upon which the approval was based are no longer applicable. Nothing in this condition shall exempt the applicant from complying with any time limits applied to any construction authorized by this application.
2. This approval shall replace the approval for the 800 square foot modular building approved under PA-91-16. The reciprocal access and parking allowed under PA-91-16 remains in effect.
3. The use shall be conducted, at all times, in a manner that will allow the quiet enjoyment of the surrounding neighborhood. The applicant and/or business owner shall institute whatever security and operational measures are necessary to comply with this requirement.
4. A copy of the conditions of approval for the conditional use permit must be kept on premises and presented to any authorized City official upon request. New business/property owners shall be notified of conditions of approval upon transfer of business or ownership of land.
5. The project is subject to compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws. A copy of the applicable Costa Mesa Municipal Code requirements has been forwarded to the applicant for reference.
6. The applicant shall contact the Planning Division to arrange a Planning inspection of the site prior to commencement of the use. This inspection is to confirm that the conditions of approval and code requirements have been satisfied.
7. If parking shortages or other parking-related problems arise, the business operator shall institute whatever operational measures necessary to minimize or eliminate the problem.
- Play Areas 8. Stationary play equipment shall be located on turf, sand, or other treated surface to the satisfaction of the Development Services Director. Outdoor play areas shall include a combination of both hard and soft surfaces.
9. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall submit a final playground plan for review and approval, which includes detailed playground specifications of manufactured play equipment. The playground plan shall depict safety fall zones, safety surfacing materials and construction specifications, manufacturer and model numbers of equipment and equipment deck heights. On a project-

specific basis, the Planning Division shall require that the playground plan adequately serve the anticipated number of users and their activities.

10. Prior to occupancy, the applicant shall submit a letter stating that the play equipment installation has been inspected by a person authorized by the manufacturer, that the equipment has been installed per manufacturer's specifications, and that it complies with the minimum playground safety regulations adopted by the State of California (California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 4, Chapter 22).
11. Nighttime school activities in the outdoor play yard areas shall be subject to review and approval by the Development Services Director.
12. There shall be no nighttime lighting, except for security purposes, of outdoor play areas after school hours. Any lighting under the control of the applicant shall be directed in such a manner so as to not unreasonably interfere with the quiet enjoyment of nearby residences.
13. Chain link fence visible from a public street or residential property is prohibited.
14. The outdoor play area shall be enclosed with a six-foot high fence or wall with a lock or latching device that is not accessible to children. All fences or walls shall provide for safety with controlled points of access.

**1620 ADAMS AVENUE  
COSTA MESA, CA 92626**

### **APPLICATION REQUEST**

Kline School requests approval to operate a Private School specializing in Technology and the Arts for up to 120 children in Kindergarten through Grade Eight.

### **BACKGROUND**

In August, 1987, Kline School purchased the Newport Community School property located at 320 East 18<sup>th</sup> Street in Costa Mesa. Over the next eight years, they provided an individualized learning experience for children ages 5-10. In 1995, Kline School got permission from the First Baptist Church of Costa Mesa to develop an abandoned parcel of land north of, and adjacent to, the school property for modular classrooms. The school assumed full responsibility for the purchase and installation of the building, as well as made major landscape improvements. Over the next ten years, Kline School expanded its program and modified its mission by offering Orange County families a high academic and technologically advanced educational program for children ages 5 to 13.

Over the course of the 2005-06 school year, Kline School entered into negotiations with the Lighthouse Coastal Community Church (formerly the First Baptist Church of Costa Mesa) to renew its long-term parking lot lease agreement. The Church Elders and Pastor Leigh Harrison insisted upon a 150% rent increase. Even though Kline School's rent steadily increased over the years at an average annual rate of 15% per year, the school made a final effort by offering a 33% rental increase for one year. Unfortunately, the church declined the offer and gave the school a perfunctory letter terminating the lease and in effect gave a 45-day notice to remove the modular classrooms and cease use of the church property. Kline School removed the modular classrooms and investigated alternatives for parking and students drop-off and pick-up arrangements for the start of the new school year.

In the Summer, 2006, Kline School requested permission from the Zoning Administrator and Planning Commissioners to receive and dismiss students curbside and to park four to five staff vehicles street side for an interim period pending relocation to a new school site. On August 14, 2006, the Planning Commission recommended approval of a Conditional Use Permit for the 2006-07 school year. It expired on August 1, 2007.

### **DESCRIPTION/JUSTIFICATION**

On Friday, July 27, 2007 Kline School entered into negotiations to purchase the Girl Scouts of America building located at 1620 Adams Avenue in Costa Mesa. This property meets four important requirements for a new location:

- 1.) Structure: The 9,172 square foot building presents more than sufficient classroom space to serve 50 currently enrolled Kline School students and offers room to increase enrollment in the future to a maximum of 120 students.
- 2.) Parking: There are currently 36 parking stalls of which five are covered by a 24' x 40' foot modular building. Additionally, there is one designated space for the handicapped. This parking area would be more than sufficient for a staff of 8 full time employees plus visitors.
- 3.) Playground: After removing the modular building and converting 7 parking spaces on the northeast side of the parking lot, there would be room to install a state-of-the art playground without compromising the need for staff and visitor parking.
- 4.) Drop-off/Pick-up Zone There is a designated safe zone to receive and dismiss students which would keep the flow of traffic moving onto and off of the property in a smooth and deliberate manner.

### **Fully describe your request**

Kline School requests approval to operate a Private School specializing in Technology and the Arts for up to 120 children in Kindergarten through Grade Eight.

### **Justification**

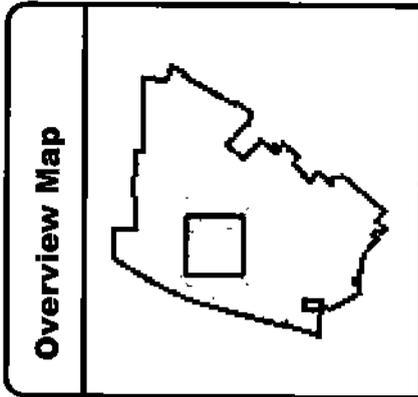
The 1620 Adams Avenue property is zoned *C1 Local Business District*. As such, this district is intended to meet the local business needs of the community by providing a wide range of goods and services in a variety of locations throughout the city. The permitted and conditional uses are aimed toward reducing impacts on surrounding properties especially in those areas where residential uses are in the vicinity.

The Girls Scouts Council of Orange County operated from the 1620 Adams Avenue building for decades. The property was used as administrative headquarters, as well as a site for youth activities. With a membership of 25,000 girls and 13,000 volunteers, the property was active. Operating a school from this site would be in keeping with the properties long history of providing services for youth.

To the west of the property is a two-way driveway and next to that is the Arthur Murray Dance Studio. Their hours of operation are Monday-Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. To the east of the property is a driveway and parking lot. Adjacent to the parking is a 24-Hour Fitness Center. To the north of the site is a huge parking lot. A small school is compatible with the surrounding properties and would likely reduce impact due to the school's hours and size of the operation.

- 1.) The school is open at 7:30 a.m. and closes at 5:00 p.m.

- 2.) The school would closely monitor a strict drop-off and pick-up procedure.
  - a.) In the morning between 7:30 and 8:05 a.m., cars would turn right off Adams Avenue and proceed to the rear or north side of the building to a designated safe drop-off and pick-up zone. Students would be received by staff. Parents would then proceed out of the parking lot and exit using the same driveway on to Adams Avenue.
  - b.) In the afternoon between 2:50 and 3:10 p.m., cars would follow the same procedure above.
  - c.) Those families participating in the extended day care program would pull into the designated safe zone area and park briefly to collect their child(ren) between 4:00 and 5:00 p.m.
- 3.) There is more than ample parking (25 spaces) for staff and visitors, plus a designated handicapped parking space.
- 4.) Kline School has a 20-year history of serving students in and around Costa Mesa and is committed to providing quality education and community service for decades more.
- 5.) The program is one-of-a-kind. There are no K-8 schools in Orange County utilizing Technology in the classroom at the level that is used at Kline School. Students have a computer on their desktop 100% of the time. The computer is used as an instructional tool, learning device, and a critical communication source for staff, students, and their parents.
- 6.) Kline School reaches out to serve the Community. They demonstrate their philanthropy as leaders of the Sanitary District's Telephone Recycling program. Other recipients of their annual service projects include: Costa Mesa Senior Center, Share Our Selves, Head Start and UNICEF. They also respond to critical times by raising thousands of dollars to help victims after 911, as well as the Tsunami and Katrina disasters.
- 7.) Kline School is one of 14 schools in Orange County and the only one in Costa Mesa, accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. W.A.S.C. is one of six regional accrediting associations in the United States who monitor schools to ensure they are providing high quality learning opportunities through a continual self-improvement process.
- 8.) Kline School is a federally approved site and may accept nonimmigrant students. It is one of a handful of Kindergarten through Grade 8 Schools in Orange County with Homeland Security clearance and is enrolled in the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVIS).

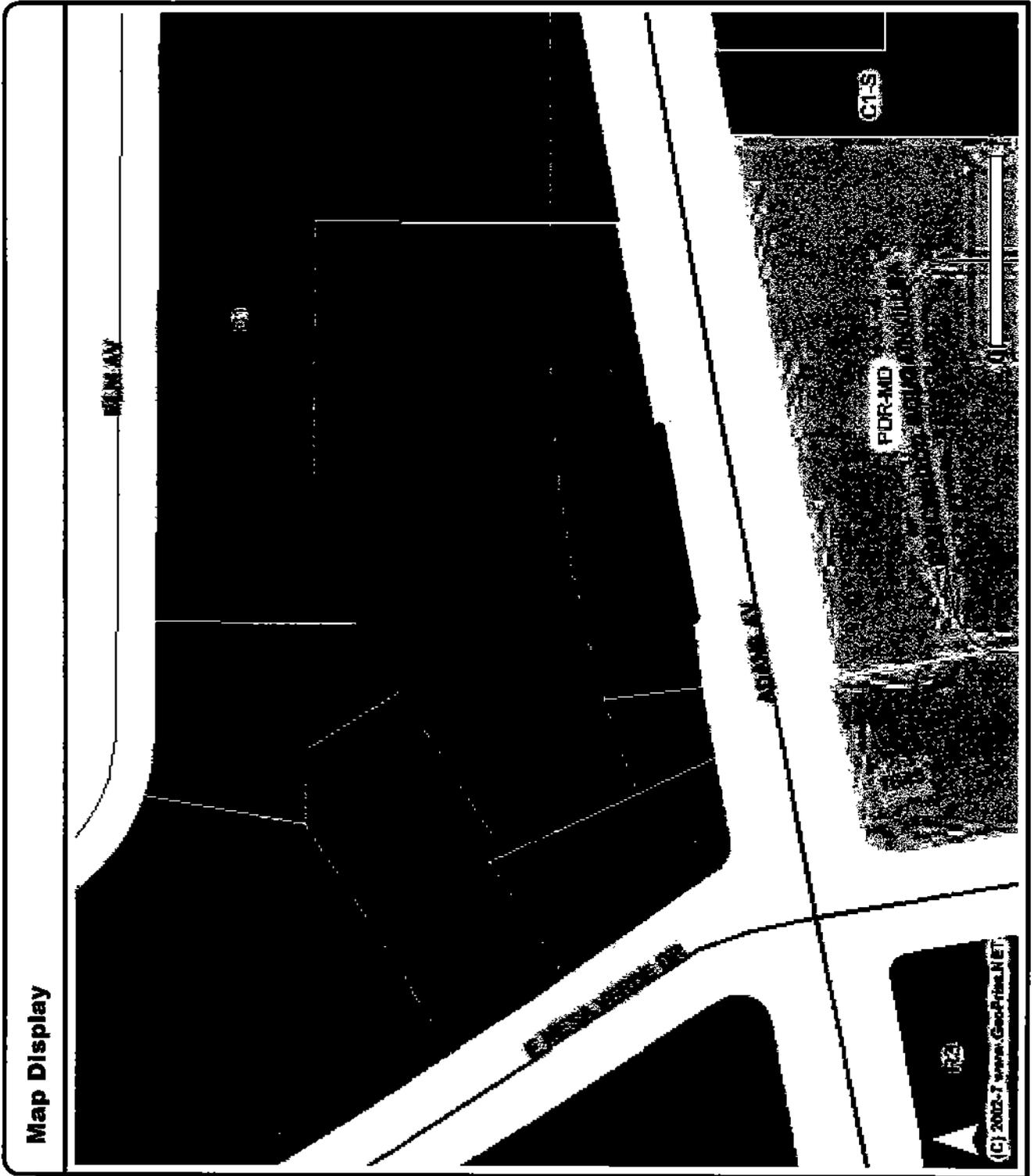
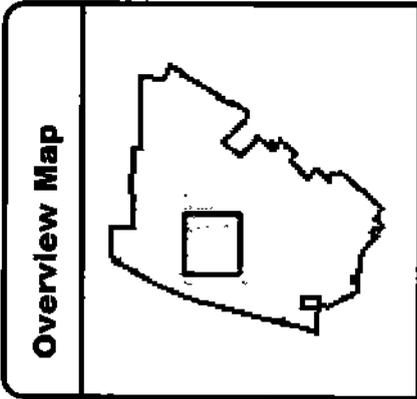


**Legend**

Address Medium	SECONDARY Waterway Lines
Address Points	Hydrology Channels
Freeway	Street Names
Roads	
Collector Freeway	
Major	
Newport BLYD	
Primary (cont)	

**City of Costa Mesa**

CITY OF COSTA MESA - [Created: 8/22/2007 8:23:45 AM] [Scale: 154.67] [Page: 8.5 x 11 / Landscape]



**Legend**

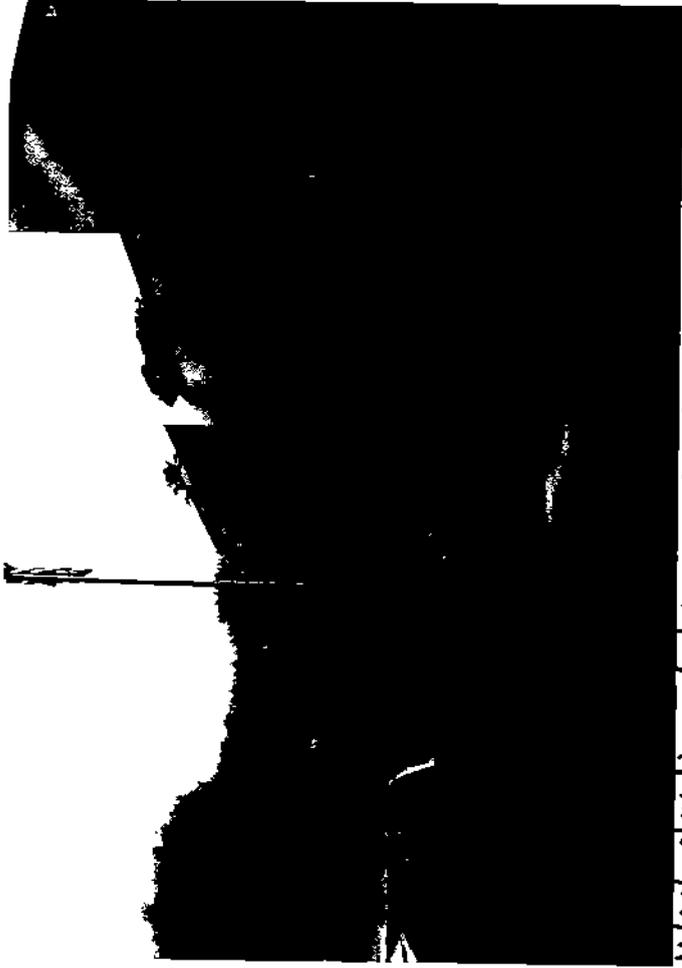
Address Medium	Primary Secondary Waterway Lines
Address Points	Hydrology Channels
Freeway	Street Names
Roads	
Collector	
Freeway Major	
Newport BLVD (cont)	



5 Student drop-off @ rear/north elevation



West elevation



West elevation, looking north along entry drive



Accessible entry from Van accessible stall

PA-07-25 (File copy)



South / Adams avenue elevation

16



East elevation

PARKING REGULATIONS  
SEE STANDARD  
VAN ACCESSIBLE  
CITY OF COSTA MESA

17



SITE and ROOF PLAN 1620-2

