



July 22, 2025

Simin Zakavand  
Associate Planner  
City of San Mateo  
Community Development Department  
330 West 20th Avenue  
San Mateo, CA 94403

Subject: PA-2025-012, The Carey School Planning Application - 2033 La Salle Drive, APN 039-040-080

Dear Simin Zakavand:

Attached, please find an updated project description, response matrix and attachments addressing the City of San Mateo's incompleteness letter dated June 11, 2025, regarding The Carey School's early childhood planning application.

The matrix includes the relevant letter references, the City's comments, our responses, and the corresponding planning response references for clarity. We appreciate the City's Development Review Board meeting with us on July 1, 2025 and providing clarity on the items addressed in our response. We value the City's collaboration over the last several months and believe we have addressed all open issues. Given the time constraints of our LOI to secure the property for the new childcare center, at the latest we would appreciate being scheduled for an October 2, 2025 Planning Commission meeting followed by a November 3, 2025 City Council 1st reading and November 17, 2025 2nd reading.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or need further information.

Sincerely,

Neely Norris  
Head of School  
The Carey School

# **The Carey School Early Childhood Center Project Description**

**2033 La Salle Drive, San Mateo, CA 94403**

**APN: 039-040-080**

Updated: July 22, 2025

The Carey School is excited to submit this project description and associated plans with our development application to construct a new early childhood center in San Mateo, CA (“City”). The Carey School (“TCS”) is a Preschool through 5th grade private school located in San Mateo. The K-5 school is located off of La Salle Drive on the TCS campus, while the Preschool is currently located in a leased building located at 3900 Alameda de Las Pulgas at the Transfiguration Church. Over the last several years, TCS has been providing quality child care in the City and “...recognizes the importance of quality child care and the role child care and preschool programs play in the development of our families’ children while also supporting the economic well-being of our community.” (City of San Mateo Website, <https://www.cityofsanmateo.org/4670/Child-Care-Facilities-Fund>). As a result of this commitment for quality care, TCS has entered into an option to purchase the property adjacent to the TCS campus with the intention of redeveloping the site into a new early childhood center that will expand the capacity of the preschool program to accommodate up to 75 children (an increase of 35 students from the current 40) immediately adjacent to the existing campus.

In the recently adopted 2040 General Plan, the City reaffirmed its commitment to prioritizing innovative approaches to increase the supply of child care spaces within the City. TCS’ Early Childhood Center aspires to meet the goals and policies outlined in the General Plan and TCS looks forward to partnering with the City to achieve this vision (2040 General Plan, Chapter 7 Public Services and Facilities Element, Pages 169-172).

**GOAL PSF-6 Foster the healthy development and education of children of all abilities, incomes, and backgrounds.**

- **Policy PSF 6.2** Child Care Needs. Support the provision of child-care programs and facilities to meet the needs of children of all abilities, incomes, and backgrounds through 2040.
- **Policy PSF 6.3** Provision of Child Care. Encourage public and private agencies and employers to provide child-care services and facilities.
- **Policy PSF 6.5** Child Care Centers in Residential and Employment Areas. Encourage child care centers in residential neighborhoods where they meet City standards and at employment centers.

## Site and Project Description

TCS is seeking to obtain approvals to construct a new Early Childhood Center. TCS is located at 1 Carey School Lane in San Mateo ("Project"). On August 9, 2024, TCS entered into an option agreement with the owners of 2033 La Salle Drive, San Mateo, CA ("Project Site") to the North of the existing school in order to purchase the existing single family home and convert it into a new early childhood (preschool) center. This option agreement expires on December 31, 2025. Even though the Project would be owned and operated by TCS, it is requesting approval as a stand alone project that will not affect the current operations or its current K-5 enrollment.

The Project Site is currently occupied by a 2,427-square-foot, one-story, single-family residence with an approximately 640 square foot accessory dwelling unit and 891 square feet of multiple accessory structures, on a 26,380-square-foot parcel. There are residential neighbors immediately to the north, residential neighbors across La Salle Drive to the west, Serra High School to the east, and the main Carey School campus to the south, directly across an unnamed creek.

The Project would demolish the existing residence and accessory structures to replace them with an Early Childhood Center, consisting of an 1-story, approximately 5,908-square-foot building, and an approximately 126-square-foot trash enclosure, consistent with the proposed Q8 overlay. The new building, designed for up to 75 preschool-aged children, ages 2-5 years old, will have six classrooms and a total of 16 teachers. The building will also include ancillary and support spaces, including a reception area, office, and a teacher workroom. An outdoor play area, in compliance with State Daycare Licensing requirements and a teaching garden will be included.

Approximately 10 trees will be removed to redevelop the site. These will be replaced with 29 new trees, including seventeen 24-inch box trees and twelve 36-inch box trees. The larger trees will be planted along the perimeter of the site, providing a green buffer and a filtered view to the Project Site. The proposed landscape plan will fully comply with C3 stormwater management requirements, and the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO) requirements, including drought-tolerant materials and plants appropriate for the Project's climate zone.

Site improvements will also include new 7-foot-height perimeter fencing (with the top 1-foot portion being 50 percent open) and a new, at-grade, onsite parking lot with one-way access and an integrated pick-up/drop-off passenger loading zone to allow for streamlined access to the site and a safer pick-up/drop-off process.

The Project complies with R1-B setbacks including 15-foot front-, side-, and rear-yard setbacks; a 20-foot watercourse setback measured from the top of creek bank; and the maximum allowable floor area for a parcel of this size in the Q8 overlay zone.

The design approach of the Project is to provide a design that best supports the school's unique early childhood programmatic needs, while also respecting the context of the neighborhood.

The U-shaped building allows for the three sides of the building to provide a protected area for the play yard to the south, with the building rotated so that it provides visual and acoustic separation of the play yard from the residential neighbors to the north and west. The low-slung massing of the 1-story building, with gently sloping roofs that slope away from the street and neighbors, minimizes the scale of the building at the street and the property lines shared with residential neighbors. The stucco building, which is 11'-6" tall at its lowest point near neighbors, and 15'-0" tall at its highest point at the center of the parcel, is consistent with the scale and materiality of its residential neighbors.

An unnamed creek exists to the south of the Project Site. TCS engaged HT Harvey and Associates, qualified biologists, to study the site, conduct a site visit, document an appropriate riparian setback and advise the project team to ensure that the Project is sufficiently setback and designed to avoid the creek. A copy of their memo is included as Attachment 1. This is consistent with the 2040 General Plan, GOAL COS-3 which states "Protect and improve San Mateo's creeks as valuable habitat and components of human and environmental health." (2040 General Plan, Chapter 6, Conservation, Open Space and Recreation Element, Page 138).

TCS agrees to provide maintenance access to the track rack that will allow the City's annual maintenance. TCS does not believe that a dedicated public utility easement is warranted for this minimal access and proposes a maintenance agreement be executed by the parties prior to issuance of the Building Permits that will delineate where access is required.

### **Traffic and Parking**

TCS engaged Kimley Horn to prepare a traffic memo including a parking assessment. The traffic and parking memo also includes an analysis of the ECC operations and staggered drop off pick up schedule to minimize any neighborhood concerns related to traffic. At the DRB meeting on July 1, 2025, Kimley Horn, on behalf of TCS, discussed the proposed approach and findings of the traffic and parking study. The Traffic and Parking Evaluation Memorandum for 2033 La Salle Drive dated July 22, 2025 including all findings is included as Attachment 19. The Parking License Lease Agreements with 1900-2000 Alameda are attached as Attachments 20 and 21.

### **Neighborhood Meeting**

On January 9, 2025, TCS hosted a neighborhood meeting by Zoom following the City's Planning Application Guide requirements. A neighborhood meeting notice was mailed to residents within 1000 feet of the Project Site on December 6, 2024.

Meeting Recording:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Tn5pZRsB2MfY54Y9OWm6n8sXUUXQDcMc/view?usp=sharing>

Please see Attachment 2 to access the Meeting Notes, Attachment 3 to access the attendees and contact information, and Attachment 4 to review the follow up letters sent to the meeting

attendees. Additionally, Attachment 16 includes an updated list of contact information for the neighborhood meeting participants requested by the City.

## **Entitlements**

The project site is located in a Residential Low land use category of the General Plan. The site is currently zoned R1-B and “public and private educational facilities” are a compatible use in the R1-B zoning designation with a Special Use Permit (SUP) ([Section 27.18.030 Special Uses](#) of the San Mateo Zoning Code).

The Project is a private early childhood center that provides educational and developmental services to preschool age children to prepare them to enter elementary school. The foundation of the program includes a robust educational curriculum. TCS is the operator of the Center, and is a private school, not under any public administration (Section 27.04.400, Private School). See Attachment 5 for more information on TCS previously circulated. A sample curriculum and daily school schedule was previously included as Attachment 6.

The following approvals are being requested to entitle and construct the proposed Early Childhood Center:

- Reclassification to add the Q8 Overlay to allow for the development pursuant to standards and regulations reflecting the unique characteristics of the site, SMMC Section 27.08.020; 27.60.100, 180
- Special Use Permit for the substantial removal of the existing single family residence- SMMC Section 27.18.035(b)
- Special Use Permit for the proposed Early Childhood Center “private educational facility” on the project site
- Site Plan Architectural Review (SPAR) for the design of the new building on the project site.
- Site Development Planning Application (SDPA) for grading SMMC Section 23.40.040

We look forward to continuing to work with the City of San Mateo to bring additional child care services to the City, including spots for subsidized care. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact Neely Norris at (650) 345-2044 / [nnorris@careyschool.org](mailto:nnorris@careyschool.org) or Kohar Kojayan at (925) 785-6053 / [kohar@kohplanning.com](mailto:kohar@kohplanning.com).

## **Attachments**

### Previously Transmitted

*Attachment 1 - HT Harvey Memo (provided to City February 14, 2025)*

*Attachment 2 - Neighborhood Meeting Notes (provided to City February 14, 2025)*

*Attachment 3 - Neighborhood Meeting Attendees (provided to City February 14, 2025)*

*Attachment 4 - Neighbor Follow Up Letters (provided to City February 14, 2025)*

*Attachment 5 - The Carey School Brochure (provided to City February 14, 2025)*

*Attachment 6 - ECC Curriculum and Daily Schedule (provided to City February 14, 2025)*

*Attachment 7 - Incompleteness Letter Response Matrix dated May 12, 2025*

*Attachment 8 - Redline Section 27.60/180 (h) - Q8 Overlay Zoning Text Modifications*

*Attachment 9 - Housing Crisis Act Memo dated April 22, 2025*

*Attachment 10 - Sewer Analysis dated May 12, 2025*

*Attachment 11 - Storm Water Checklist dated May 12, 2025*

*Attachment 12 - Geotechnical Report dated February 11, 2025*

*Attachment 13 - CEQA Exemption Memo dated May 12, 2025*

*Attachment 14 - Recology Approval Letter dated May 13, 2025*

Currently Transmitted

Attachment 15 - 2nd Incompleteness Letter Response Matrix dated July 22, 2025

Attachment 16 - Updated Neighborhood Meeting Attendees Contact Information

Attachment 17 - CEQA Exemption Memo dated July 14, 2025 (updated from previous submittal  
- no city response received on previously transmitted version)

Attachment 18 - Housing Crisis Act Memo revised July 17, 2025

Attachment 19 - Traffic and Parking Evaluation Memorandum for 2033 La Salle Drive prepared  
by Kimley Horn dated July 22, 2025

Attachment 20 - Parking License Agreement dated July 25, 2018

Attachment 21 - Amended Parking License Agreement dated February 6, 2025