

Tulare County Office of Education

Committed to Students, Support & Service

Tim A. Hire
County
Superintendent
of Schools

P.O. Box 5091
Visalia, California
93278-5091

(559) 733-6300
tcoe.org

Administration
(559) 733-6301
fax (559) 627-5219

Business Services
(559) 733-6474
fax (559) 737-4378

Human Resources
(559) 733-6306
fax (559) 627-4670

Instructional Services
(559) 302-3633
fax(559)739-0310

Special Services
(559) 730-2910
fax (559) 730-2511

Main Locations

**Administration
Building & Conference
Center**
6200 S. Mooney Blvd.
Visalia

Doe Avenue Complex
7000 Doe Ave.
Visalia

**Liberty Center/
Planetarium &
Science Center**
11535 Ave. 264
Visalia

NOTICE OF PREPARATION NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

Performing Arts Theater, AcCEL Center, and Library Project Preparation of Environmental Impact Report and Public Scoping Meeting

Lead Agency: Tulare County Office of Education

Project Applicant: Tulare County Office of Education

Notice of Preparation Review Period: Wednesday, April 23, 2025, to Friday, May 23, 2025 (30 days)

Scoping Meeting: Thursday, May 15, 2025, from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm

The purpose of this Notice of Preparation (NOP) is to (1) serve as a public notice pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082 that an EIR will be prepared; (2) advise and solicit comments and suggestions regarding the scope and content of the EIR to be prepared; and (3) provide notice of the public scoping meeting. The COE is seeking your input regarding the scope and content of the EIR, including input on potentially significant environmental effects, mitigation measures, or project alternatives that should be explored in the EIR. If you represent a public agency, the COE seeks input as to the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project.

Due to time limits mandated by state law, public agencies, members of the public, or any other interested parties are requested to respond to this NOP in writing no later than 30 days from the date of this NOP. The COE will accept written comments regarding this NOP through **5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 23, 2025**. Please send all written comments, including emailed comments, to Jeff Ramsay at the address below.

Project Location: The project site consists of approximately 15.63 acres located near the southwest corner of Avenue 264/Liberty Road and N Mooney Boulevard in unincorporated Tulare County (36°16'01.9"N 119°18'57.4"W) (see Figure 1, *Regional Location*). It should be noted that the project site lies within the Urban Area Boundary (UAB) for the City of Tulare.¹ The project site is owned by the COE and consists of a portion of two parcels with Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APN) 149-030-005 and 149-030-008.

¹ UABs establish areas around incorporated cities where the County and cities may coordinate plans and policies relating to street and highway construction, public utility systems, and future right of way preservation, affecting the orderly development of urban fringe areas.

The project site has an associated address 26487 N Mooney Boulevard, Tulare, CA, 93274 (see Figure 2, *Local Vicinity*). Regional access to the project site is provided by California State Route 99 (SR-99) and California State Route (SR-198). SR-99 runs south to northeast, and SR-198 runs west to east. Public transit access to the project site is provided by the Tulare County Regional Transit Agency (TCRTA) which provides bus transit services. TCRTA route C40 is the nearest route to the project site. The nearest TCRTA transit stop is located at the corner of Avenue 264/Liberty Road and N Mooney Boulevard.

Existing Conditions: The project site currently includes a fallow agricultural field on parcel 149-030-005 (15.23 acres) and a paved driveway and parking area, disturbed land, fencing, and landscaping/grass turf on parcel 149-030-008 (0.4 acres) for a total of approximately 15.63 acres (See Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*). The project site has a Tulare County General Plan land use designation of “Valley Agriculture” and has a zoning designation of Exclusive Agricultural Zone – 20 Acre Minimum (AE-20).

The project site is bordered by Avenue 264/Liberty Road to the north, an existing COE campus and S Mooney Boulevard to the east, farmland to the south, and farmland and commercial to the west. Residential uses are to the north across Avenue 264/Liberty Road and commercial and agricultural uses are to the east across Mooney Boulevard. The COE campus to the east includes the Bright Start Program, Hearing Center, Behavioral Health Services, Visually Impaired Program, Alternative Achievement Program, and Planetarium & Science Center.

Description of Proposed Project: The proposed project would consist of three main components which would include a new performing arts theater, an AcCEL Center, and a library.

The AcCEL Center and library would be built in the northwest corner of the project site. The AcCEL Center would provide direct instruction to students who generally have multiple or profound disabilities, and/or are able to function best in a more sheltered environment. The AcCEL Center and library would be bordered by Liberty Road to the north, existing COE campus to the east, farmland to the south, and farmland and commercial uses to the west (see Figure 4, *Conceptual Site Plan*). The AcCEL Center and library would be served by two ingress and egress driveways that would provide access to a shared parking lot consisting of 70 parking spaces which include 8 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) parking spaces. A trash storage area would be located on the eastern side of the parking lot. The AcCEL Center and library would be fenced.

The AcCEL Center would consist of one building, consisting of approximately 24,442 square feet, and include a shade structure, landscaping, walkways, and a basketball court. The library would consist of two buildings which would total approximately 12,000 square feet and would be landscaped throughout. The entire perimeter of the AcCEL Center and library would be fenced with gates providing pedestrian access from the parking lot (see Figure 4). All buildings would be single-story no more than 30 feet in height.

The single-story performing arts theater with fly space extending up to 60 feet in height would be built in the southeast corner of the project site and would consist of approximately 31,000 square feet. The performing arts theater would be bordered by existing COE campus to the north, N Mooney Boulevard to the east, and farmland to the south and west. The performing arts theater would be served by two driveways off N Mooney Boulevard and would provide access to a parking lot consisting of 568 parking spaces.

The performing arts theater capacity would be approximately 500 seats and events would occur in the evenings throughout the year. The performing arts theater would also include 15 employees. The proposed library would have a capacity of 100 persons and would have five staff members. The AcCEL Center would have a capacity

of 80 students and 20 staff members. The hours of operation for the library and AcCEL Center would be Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm.

The proposed project also includes paved drive aisles that provides internal vehicle circulation between the proposed parking lots and the existing parking lot that serves the Planetarium & Science Center. The internal drive aisles extend along the west, south, and east sides of the northwestern portion of the project site, curve around the existing COE campus, and connect to the proposed parking lots associated with the proposed theater and existing Planetarium & Science Center. Landscaping would line the internal drive aisles. The internal drive aisles would be gated to control access. Refer to Figure 4, *Conceptual Site Plan*.

Project construction would occur in two phases. Phase one would consist of the construction for the AcCEL Center and library. Phase two would consist of the construction of the performing arts theater. Phase one is anticipated to start approximately May 2026 and end approximately June 2027. Phase two is anticipated to start approximately January 2028 and end approximately January 2030.

Potential Environmental Effects: The COE will prepare a comprehensive EIR that evaluates all potentially significant environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of the proposed project. The EIR will explain the potentially significant effects of the proposed project as well as the reasons that other effects are not potentially significant. An initial study is not required to determine that an EIR will be prepared, and an initial study was not prepared for the proposed project.

In accordance with Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, the COE has prepared this NOP to provide agencies, organizations, and interested parties with information describing the proposed project and its potential environmental effects. Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the 20 environmental topics that may be analyzed in an EIR are:

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Aesthetics | Greenhouse Gas Emissions | Public Services |
| Agriculture & Forestry Resources | Hazards & Hazardous Materials | Recreation |
| Air Quality | Hydrology & Water Quality | Transportation |
| Biological Resources | Land Use & Planning | Tribal Cultural Resources |
| Cultural Resources | Mineral Resources | Utilities & Service Systems |
| Energy | Noise | Wildfire |
| Geology & Soils | Population & Housing | |

The COE has determined that the proposed project could potentially affect 19 of the 20 environmental topic areas identified in Appendix G. These 19 topical areas are aesthetics, agriculture and forestry resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation, tribal cultural resources, utilities and service systems, and wildfire. These impacts will be analyzed in detail in the EIR. The EIR will also address mandatory findings of significance. The EIR will address the short- and long-term effects of the proposed project on the environment. Feasible mitigation measures will be proposed for impacts that are determined to be potentially significant and reasonable alternatives will be considered. A mitigation monitoring program will also be developed for any mitigation measures required by the COE. The proposed project is expected to have no impact on mineral resources and therefore the EIR will not present a detailed analysis of the project's impact on this topic.

Document Availability: The 30-day public review period for the NOP is from **Wednesday, April 23, 2025**, to **Friday, May 23, 2025**. In accordance with the time limits mandated by State law, if there are any concerns about the scope and content of the information to be addressed in EIR, written comments may be submitted via email or by mail to the addresses below. All written comments should be submitted at the earliest possible date but must be submitted no later than **5:00 pm on Friday, May 23, 2025**. Public agencies should identify the contact person for your agency in your written comments.

Public Comments: Please submit your comments to:

Jeff Ramsay, Director, General Services

- **Mailing Address:**
Tulare County Office of Education
6200 S. Mooney Boulevard
Visalia, CA 93277
- **Email Address:** jeff.ramsay@tcoe.org

Public Scoping Meeting: A public scoping meeting will be held on Thursday, May 15, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., to solicit input from any interested parties on the scope and content of the EIR, in conformance with Section 21083.9 of the California Public Resources Code. The public scoping meeting is intended to receive input from interested parties and no decisions about the project will be made at the public scoping meeting. Though staff will summarize the issues raised verbally at the public scoping meeting, anyone wishing to make formal scoping comments on the scope of issues or content of the EIR should also do so in writing. You may also send a written response to this NOP to the email and address listed above by **5:00pm on Friday, May 23, 2025**, without attending the scoping meeting.

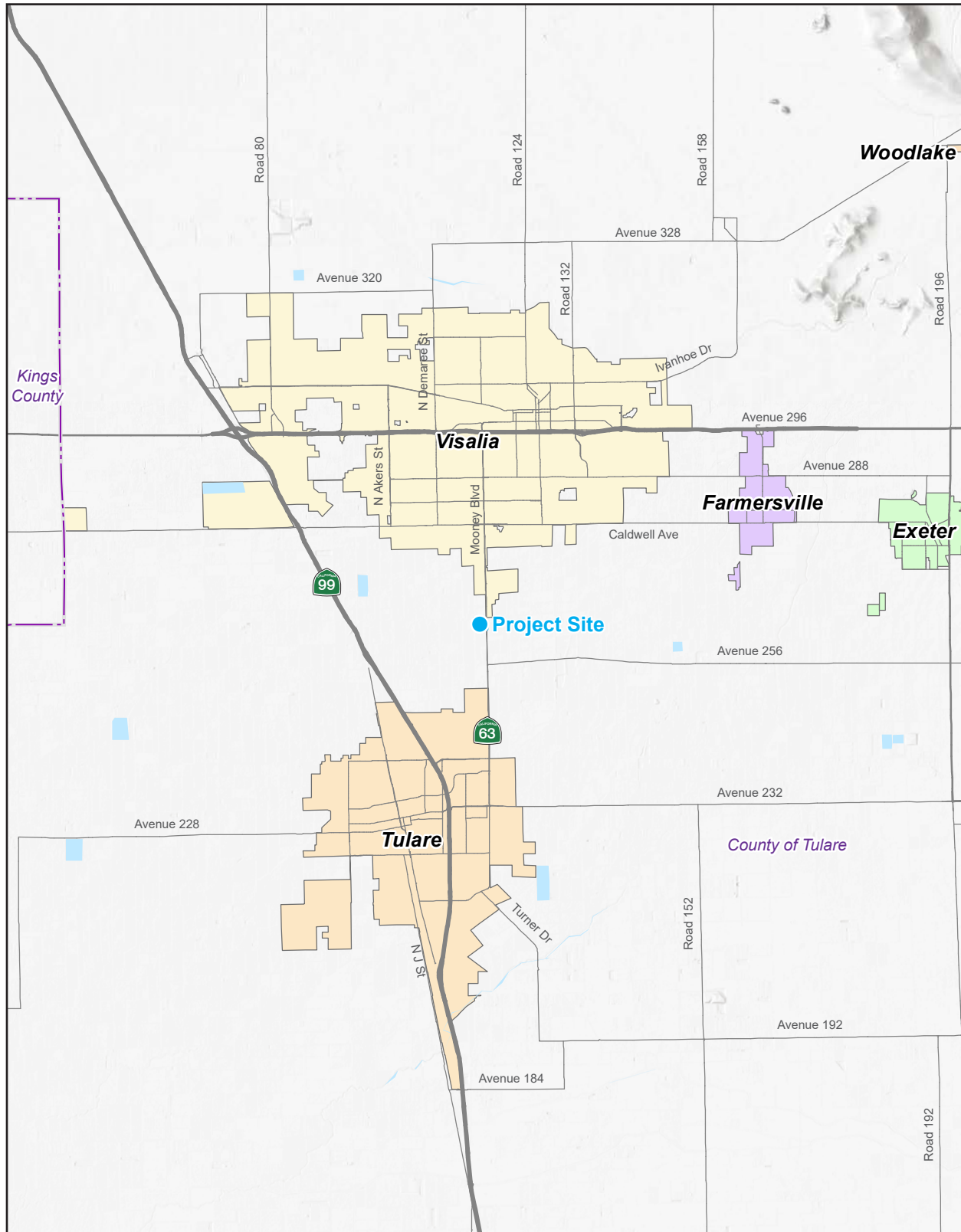
A copy of the materials presented at the scoping meeting will be posted to the COE's website: <https://tcoe.org/GeneralServices/notices> following the meeting.

The public scoping meeting will be held at the location identified below.

Location: 6200 South Mooney Boulevard, Visalia, CA, 93277

More Information: Questions concerning the matter should be directed to Jeff Ramsay, Director, General Services, at 559-733-6601 or jeff.ramsay@tcoe.org.

Figure 1 - Regional Location



--- County Boundary

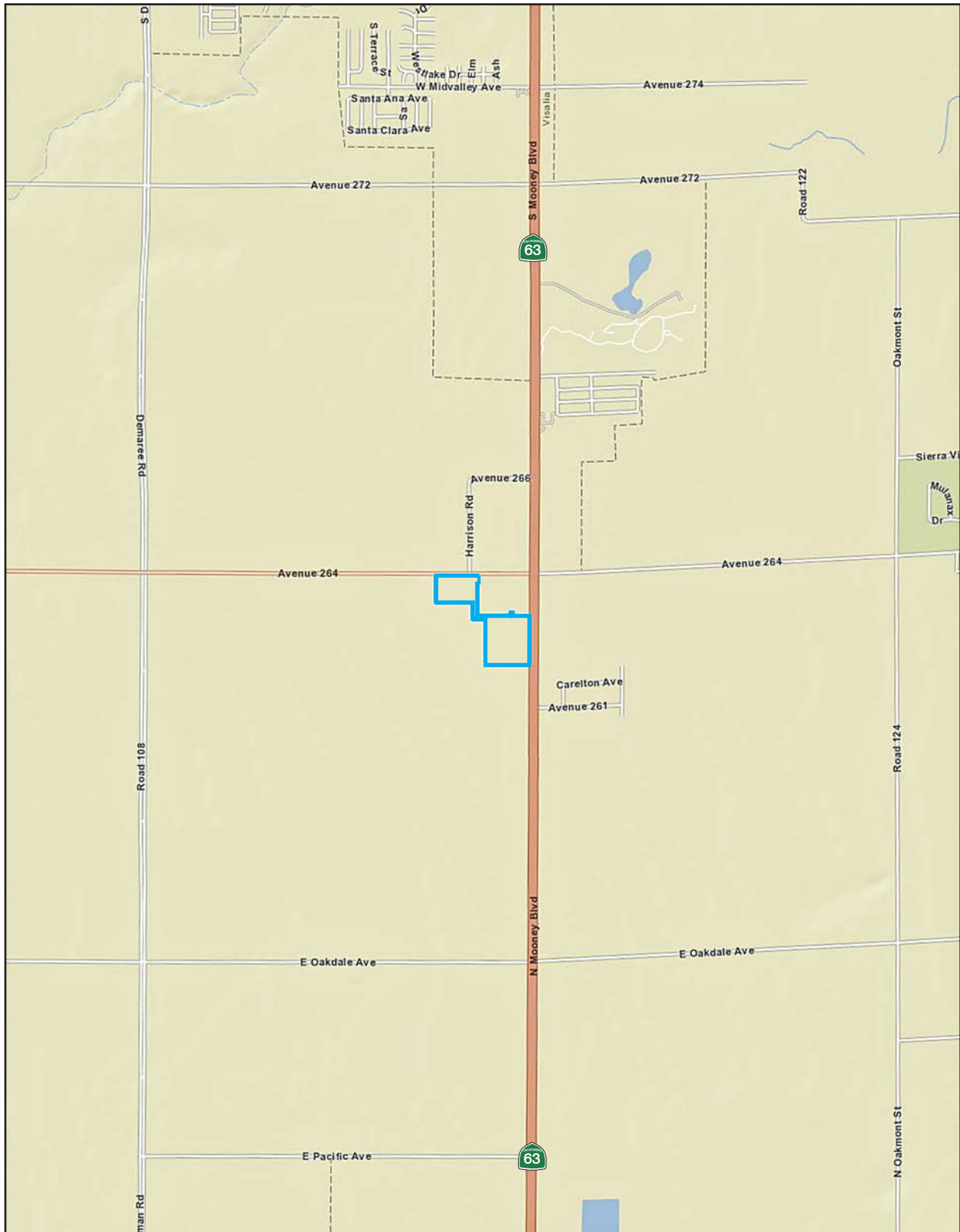
Note: Unincorporated county areas are shown in white.

Source: Generated using ArcMap 2025.

0 3
Scale (Miles)



Figure 2 - Local Vicinity



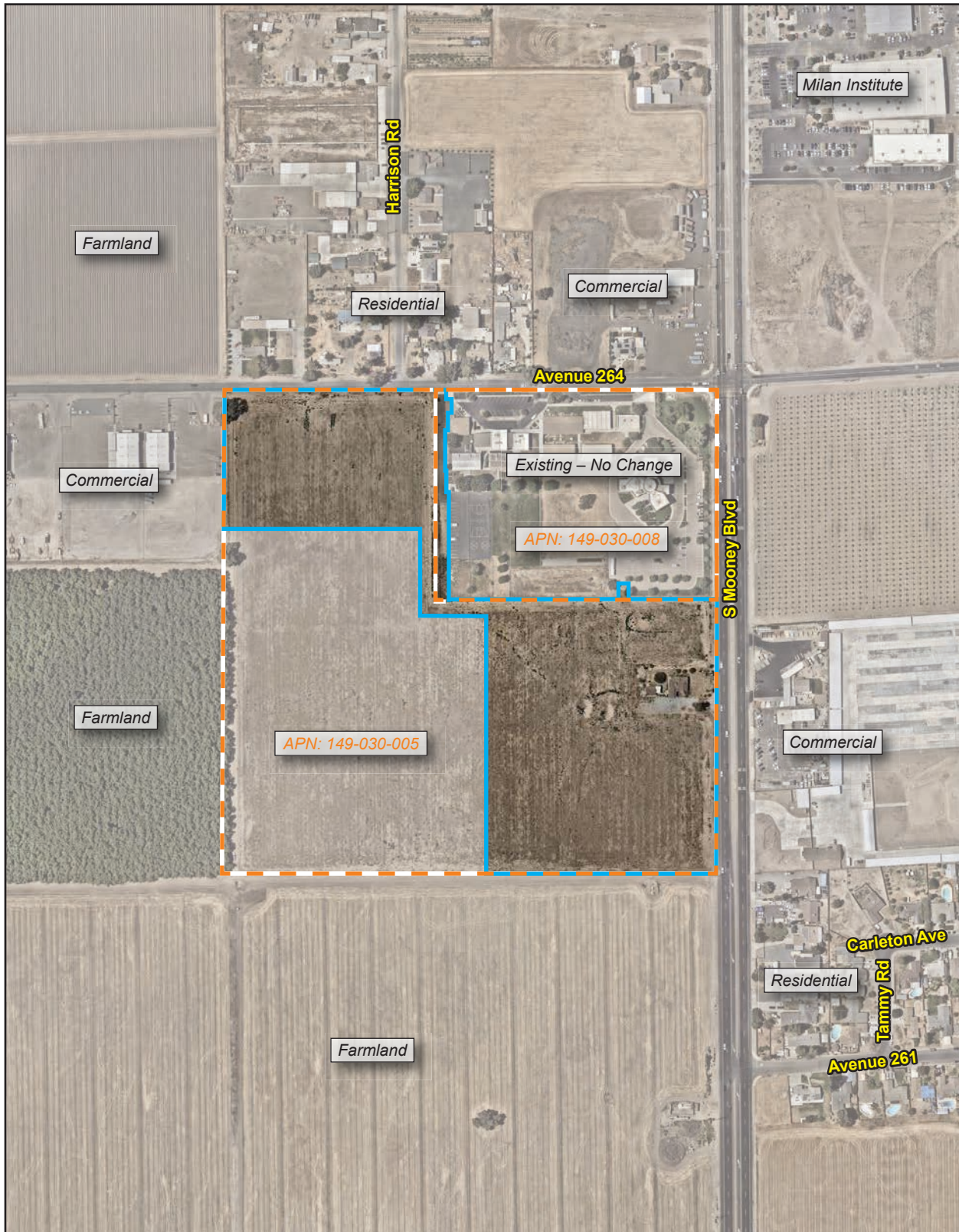
Project Boundary

0 2,000
Scale (Feet)



Source: Generated using ArcMap 2025.

Figure 3 - Aerial Photograph



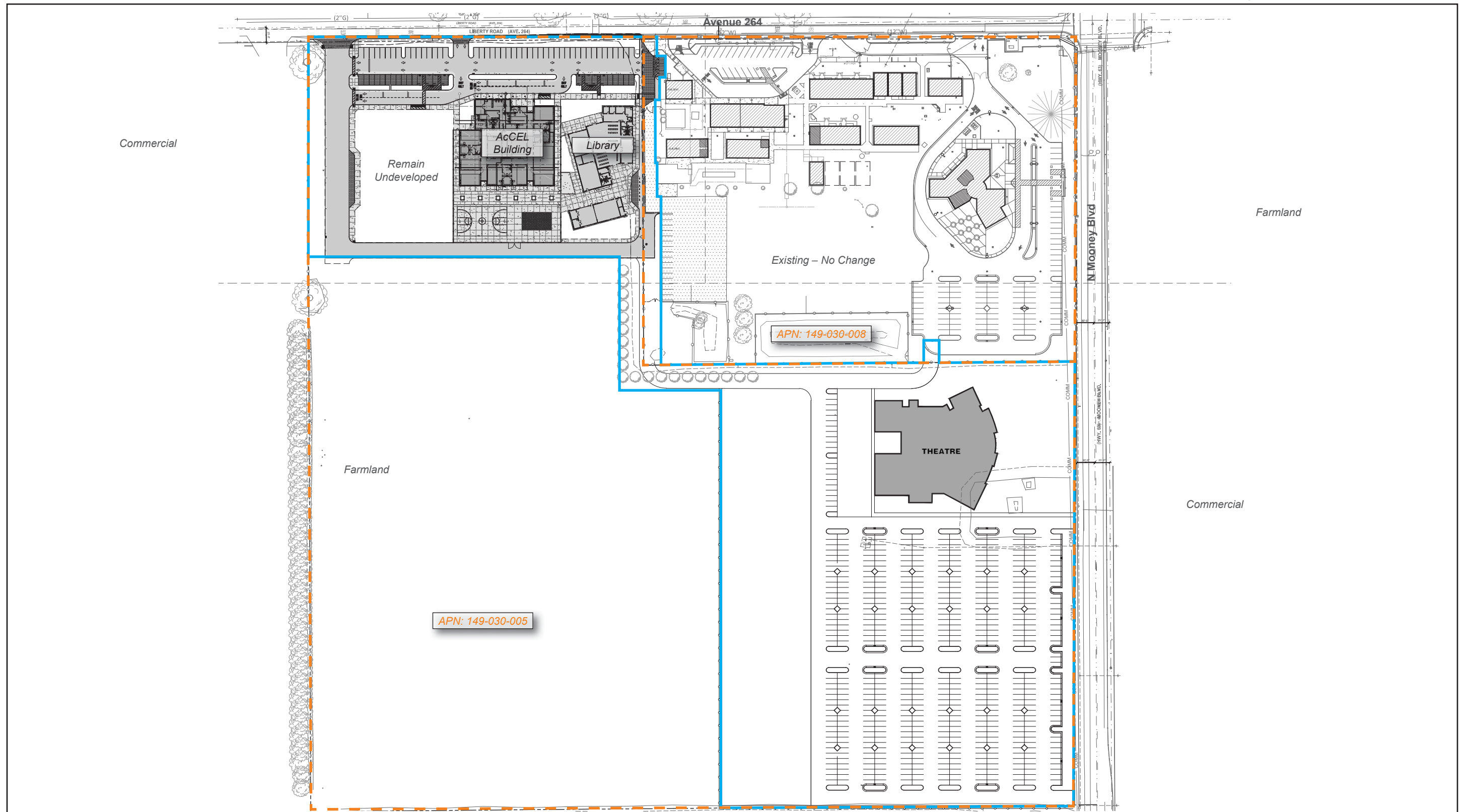
- Project Boundary
- - - Assessor Parcel Boundaries

0 400
Scale (Feet)



Source: Nearmap 2025.

Figure 4 - Conceptual Site Plan



- Project Boundary
- Assessor Parcel Boundaries

Source: 2024.

0 160
Scale (Feet)

