

# CONTRA COSTA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT'S BRENTWOOD EDUCATION CENTER

March 5-6, 2012

## ACTION

Presentation: Frederick E. Harris, Assistant Vice Chancellor, College Finance & Facilities Planning

## ITEM 3.2

### Issue

This item requests state approval of the Brentwood Education Center in the Contra Costa Community College District. California Code of Regulations, title 5 section 55180(b) defines an Educational Center as “a postsecondary operation established and administered by an existing college or district at a location away from the campus of the parent institution” which:

Is planned to continue for ten or more years

Generates at least 500 FTES annually

Has an on-site administrator

Offers programs leading to certificates and/or degrees conferred by the parent institution

Has been approved by the Board of Governors

### Background

Community college services in Contra Costa County date back to 1949 when county voters approved establishment of West Contra Costa Community College. The Contra Costa Community College District serves all of Contra Costa County covering a geographic area of about 686 square miles making it one of the largest community college districts in the state. The district is made up of three colleges, Contra Costa College, Diablo Valley College and Los Medanos College and the San Ramon Valley Educational Center collectively serving more than 42,000 students. Los Medanos College was opened in 1974 to address the significant education needs and potential growth of eastern Contra Costa County serving the communities of Pittsburg and Antioch.

The district began serving eastern Contra Costa County in 1989 when Los Medanos College offered courses at Liberty Union High School District's Adult Education Center in Brentwood. Space restrictions at the Adult Education Center, limited courses and enrollments resulted in demand that went beyond the capacity of that small, initial outreach center. Brentwood and surrounding communities began to grow from sleepy Delta farming towns to suburban enclaves for Bay Area commuters seeking affordable housing.

In 2001, the district partnered with the City of Brentwood to open the Los Medanos College Brentwood Education and Technology Outreach Operation at its present location near the

intersection of Highway 4 and Sand Creek Road in a building that was once a supermarket. With more than 5,000 students taking advantage of the center's expanding education offerings; capacity pressures are already beginning to lessen student appeal of the outreach center. Students routinely struggle to find parking and there is a shortage of classroom space during peak and evening hours.

Combined with a steady pace of growth in eastern Contra Costa County, the district finds it likely that an ever-increasing amount of students will be turned away from courses at the center unless a more expansive permanent educational center is established. To address this overcrowding, the district acquired a 17 acre parcel in southwestern Brentwood with funds from Local Measure A, passed by Contra Costa County voters in 2006, which allocated funds to build new facilities to accommodate growth, refurbish aging facilities and purchase classroom equipment. A combination of local and state funds is proposed for the Phase I construction of a 27,940 assignable square foot facility scheduled to open in Fall 2017. The proposed center will be located within the Vineyards at Marsh Creek subdivision, a mixed use development situated on 481 acres of land only about 4 miles from the current leased facility.

The district submitted an updated Letter of Intent (LOI) to the Chancellor's Office in September 2009 for the proposed Brentwood Education Center site to be re-located 2,400 feet from the site detailed in the original 2005 LOI. The Chancellor's Office approved the LOI in October 2009 and the California Postsecondary Education Commission followed with their approval in February 2010. The Needs Study was submitted to the Chancellor's Office in August 2011.

## **Analysis**

### **Population and Enrollment Projections**

Since the 1990s, thousands of residents from nearby Bay Area coastal cities in search of affordable housing have migrated inland, swelling the population ranks of communities throughout the eastern part of the Contra Costa Community College District service area. Since 1990, Contra Costa County's population has increased 32 percent, putting it among the fastest growing counties in California. For the time period 1990 – 2009, Pittsburg's population grew by 33 percent; Antioch's population grew by 62 percent while Brentwood's population soared by 586 percent during the same period. The number of new residents in Brentwood has increased by over 44,000 between 1990 and 2009 bringing the population total to nearly 52,000 residents.

Since 2002-03 the current outreach center has consistently generated over 500 FTES annually. By 2008-09 enrollment had more than doubled to 1,216 FTES. Table 1 shows recent enrollment projections for the Brentwood Education Center developed by the Contra Costa Community College District Research Office and approved by the Department of Finance Demographic Research Unit.

**Table 1**

**Enrollment\*, WSCH and FTES Growth Driven Projections for the Brentwood Education Center**

Year	Enrollment	WSCH	Full Year FTES
2009-10	4,375	18,600	1,240
2010-11	4,685	19,515	1,301
2011-12	5,061	21,165	1,411
2012-13	5,416	22,270	1,516
2013-14	5,685	23,925	1,595
2014-15	5,956	25,125	1,675
2015-16	6,212	26,250	1,750
2016-17	6,445	27,285	1,819
2017-18	6,691	28,365	1,891

Technical Notes:

\*Enrollment reflects unduplicated headcount added across each term of academic year.

Weekly Student Contact hours reflects projected annual average.

Sources: CCCCD Research Office, Los Medanos College Budget Office.

**Alternatives to the Proposed Brentwood Education Center**

The Contra Costa Community College District considered several potential sites, but the establishment of a permanent education center in Brentwood emerged as the most viable, cost-effective option. The Brentwood Education Center site was selected based on its proximity to the State Route 4 bypass and ease of accessibility, parcel size, site and utilities development, environmental factors, and cost. The district considered the following alternatives:

*Expansion of existing institutions*

The main intent of the Brentwood Educational Center is to more effectively service the cities of eastern Contra Costa County including Brentwood, Antioch and Oakley. State Highway 4, the area's main east-west traffic is gridlocked in traffic much of the day requiring students to spend a considerable amount of time commuting to Los Medanos College. Topographical features like Mt. Diablo and the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta put neighboring community college campuses like Solano and Chabot practically out of reach. With existing campuses within the district facing capacity pressures, the district is unable to accommodate projected enrollment growth. Therefore, expanding Los Medanos College and other campuses in the district is not a viable solution for addressing the needs of the eastern Contra Costa County service area.

*Increased use of existing space*

The district has explored options on expanding services with their existing space in the current Brentwood Outreach Center and Los Medanos College, but both are extensively utilized. Instructional services at the Brentwood outreach operation are offered throughout the day, on weekends and during summer months. Although the center has achieved some space efficiencies through weekend and summer offerings, enrollment demand continues to grow and create capacity

issues. Parking limitations at the current outreach center is another factor that affects accommodation of increasing enrollment demand. Increasing use of existing space at the leased outreach center was not possible and the most viable solution was to build a new permanent facility to service the needs of eastern Contra Costa County.

### *Use of nontraditional modes of instructional delivery*

The district's educational master plan recognizes that an effective educational delivery system includes high technology-based distance education, as well as traditional brick and mortar facilities. Los Medanos College continues to expand the depth and breadth of online courses. While online courses are available to all, many of the first generation college students and adult learners who live in eastern Contra Costa County are in need of basic educational skills, which are more effectively addressed by a traditional classroom setting.

### *Analysis of Alternate Sites*

Another parcel reviewed as a potential site was a 30-acre parcel in the Cowell Ranch area of southwestern Brentwood donated by the Cowell Foundation. The site proved to be less desirable than the Vineyards at Marsh Creek site which was directly across the highway from the Cowell Ranch site. The district was able to negotiate a reduced cost solution for the state and district at the Vineyards at Marsh Creek site using local Measure A bond money to purchase the property creating site-acquisition and infrastructure cost savings of millions of dollars.

### **Academic Planning and Program Justification**

Chancellor's Office staff in the Academic Affairs Division reviewed the district's needs study and found significant justification for opening the new center. The district's Educational and Facilities Master Plans are used as a foundation for meeting the educational needs of its community and students. Academic planning for the proposed Brentwood Center will be guided by the mission of Los Medanos College and will focus primarily on growing the disciplines currently offered at the outreach center. The Brentwood Outreach Center offers courses in Math, English, Spanish and the natural science in addition to vocational education in a number of professions in demand in the labor market. Growth in general education and transfer courses planned for the new center include expanding the full programs in Math, English and Spanish with labs and technical staff, expanding environmental science with possible specializations in Agriculture or Viticulture, adding chemical/physical and biological sciences labs to the Science area to meet the needs of students wishing to enter allied health occupations and expanding the music, drama and art areas with lecture/theatre/multi-use space to order to facilitate a fine arts curriculum. Programs and courses in vocational education will include Certificates in Clerical, Real Estate and Accounting, a Child Development program with a potential child care facility, adding to the Administration Justice and Fire Science programs by dedicating specialized classrooms and labs and offer possible EMS/EMT and CNA programs. The district will also initiate planning efforts for developing new career occupational programs in such areas as Gerontology, Certified Nursing Assistant, Medical Assisting, and Retail Management. Other academic related initiatives include the establishment of an AM College that provides students the opportunity to enroll a 3-unit course one morning a week on

Fridays and the possibility of featuring an expanded Weekend College to include Saturday morning courses in General Education/Transfer and Occupational education.

This emphasis on high demand vocational courses, transfer preparation, and basic science laboratory courses meets the recommendations of the Legislature and Chancellor Scott's goal of focused efforts in transfer, career technical and basic skills.

### **Student Services, Outreach, and Serving the Disadvantaged**

Staff from the Student Services and Special Programs Division in the Chancellor's Office reviewed the student support services described in the needs study and concluded that it contains sufficient justification for the proposed educational center.

The service area of the proposed Brentwood Education Center is diverse both in race and ethnicity and socio-economic stature. New affordable housing and retirement communities have brought well educated double income families and economically stable retirees into the eastern County area of traditionally lower income residents. The demographic makeup of service area is approximately 30 percent Hispanic, 6 percent African American, 6 percent Asian and 55 percent white with the remainder a multicultural mix of Native American, Alaskan native, Pacific Islander and other races.

The center is located in proximity to some of the lowest income residents of eastern Contra Costa County, particularly the residents of Oakley. While the Brentwood Education Center has a mission and focus to serve the needs of all residents within the service area, the particular needs of immigrant and moderate income residents with respect to adult basic learning and vocational skills is apparent at the current Outreach Center and will be expanded at the permanent Brentwood Center.

The planning and development of student services for the proposed Brentwood Education Center will reflect the philosophy of Los Medanos College, "...that student services are an integral part of the student's educational experience from the initial recruitment through the attainment of educational goals." A large number of students in the eastern County are first-generation students and in order to increase their educational success the Brentwood Outreach Operation offers an array of on-site student services that will be expanded at the proposed education center. Current services offered include Financial Aid, Admissions and Records, academic counseling, Disabled Students Programs and Services, EOPS, Tutoring, on site bookstore services at the beginning of each semester and assessment testing for English and Math courses. On site academic advising for students seeking transfer to CSU East Bay and UC Davis is also available each semester. The district has a plan to offer more comprehensive services within the first five years of the proposed center's opening including a full complement of counseling services for both day and evening coverage, permanent and full-time financial aid and EOP&S staff assigned to the center, on-site Disabled Students Program and Services personnel available on an appointment basis, on-site child care services and expanded student government and club activities that allow for student involvement in special activities related to leadership, community relations, career/major interest groups and volunteerism.

## **Support and Capital Outlay Budget Projections**

The Chancellor's Office Fiscal Services Unit has reviewed the Brentwood Education Center Needs Study and has made the following determinations. In 2009-10 the district reported 1,320 full-time equivalent students (FTES) for the proposed Brentwood Education Center at its current Outreach Center. That suggests sufficient student demand exists within eastern Contra Costa County area and is consistent with the district's contention that Brentwood and surrounding cities should readily support the center with at least the 1,000 FTES needed for state approved centers to receive apportionment funding.

The Contra Costa Community College District has adopted a new allocation model based on SB 361 that aligns expenditures to revenues as part of the overall financial plan to maintain fiscal stability. The district's Governing Board has required and maintained a 10 percent reserve through board policy and procedure. At the end of the 2009-10 fiscal year the district's Unrestricted General Fund balance was \$28.5 million which is a 16.8 percent reserve over expenditures. Anticipated cost increases for staffing and operations will be offset by increased base apportionment and FTES income due to Los Medanos College and Brentwood Education Center enrollment. Projected support costs are estimated to be \$4.6 million for Phase I and \$6.5 million for Phase II.

The district intends to supplement their Measure A local funds with state capital outlay funds to finance the proposed center's Phase I costs associated with plans and working drawings (\$1.93 million), construction (\$20.3 million), and equipment purchases (\$2.5 million). The district used all local funds to acquire the site. Of the approximately \$24.5 million overall to acquire the site and construct Phase I, local contributions will be approximately \$7.4 million (30%). The district plans to fund Phase II entirely with state capital outlay funds in future years. In the event that state capital outlay funding is not available for Phase I and/or Phase II, the district has several alternative plans to consider. One plan would be to enter into a lease-leaseback agreement with a private developer, and the other would be to seek local voter approval for a general obligation bond to fund construction of the center.

## **Geographic and Physical Accessibility and Environmental Impact**

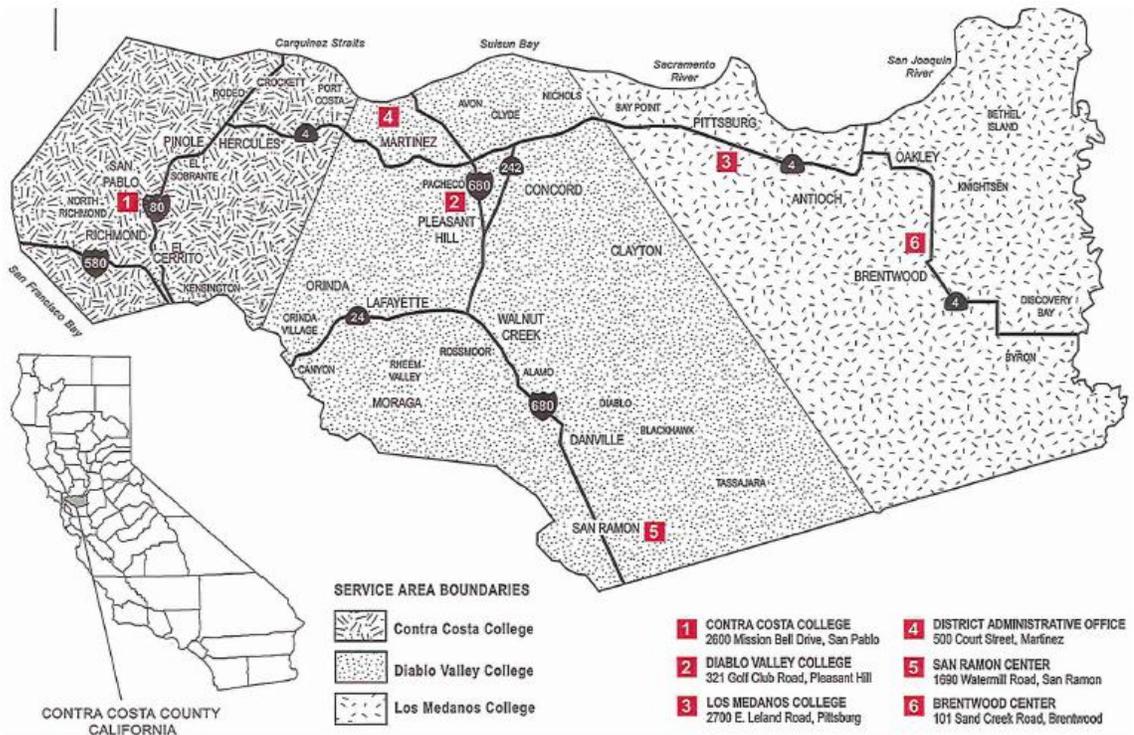
The proposed Brentwood Education Center is located in southwestern Brentwood, on a 17 acre site located within the Vineyards at Marsh Creek development area. The area is currently being developed as mixed use development on 481 acres of land which will include active adult units, single-family executive homes, multi-family units, commercial office and retail space. Situated off the recently completed Highway 4 bypass, the site is located only 3.7 miles from downtown Brentwood and the existing outreach center. In addition to providing a relief from traffic congestion for students by being off the new Highway 4 bypass, the proposed center will also provide sufficient parking facilities with designed spaces to accommodate disabled students, both of which are in short supply at the current outreach center.

The Tri Delta Transit Authority provides public transportation bus service throughout the East County, including Los Medanos College and the current Brentwood Outreach Center. Currently there is no existing bus service to the proposed Brentwood Education Center site. However the

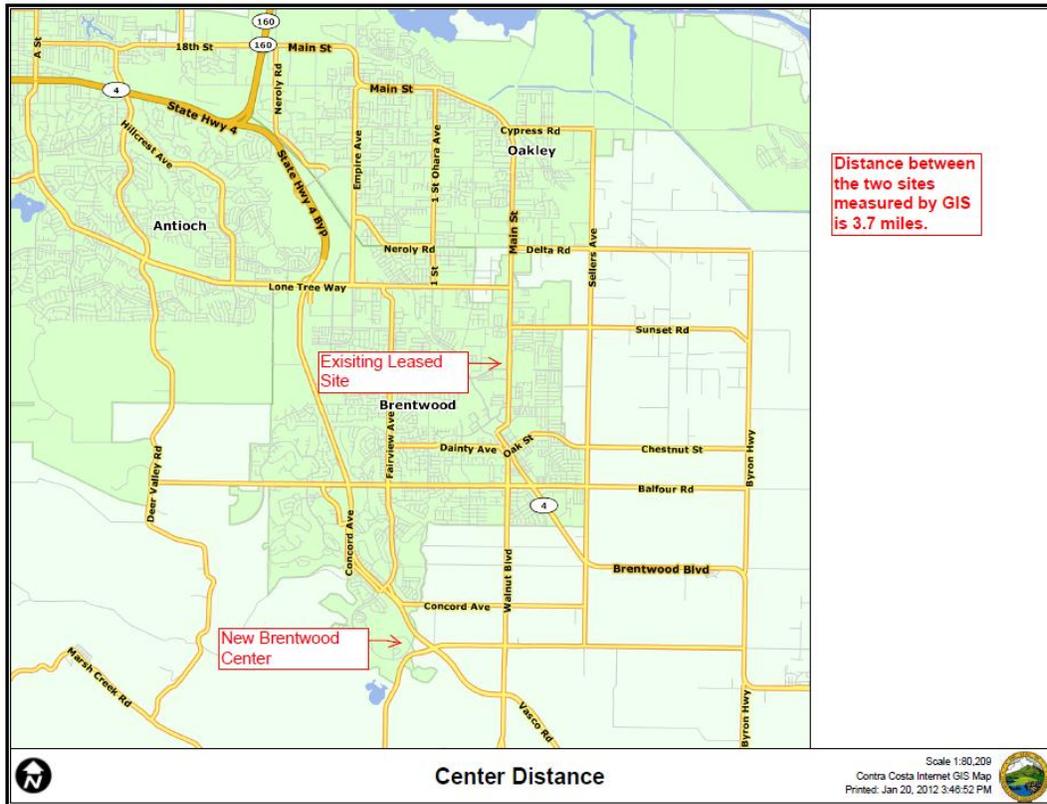
district will begin negotiations with Tri Delta Transit planners to provide a readily accessible bus stop at or very near the new center once the permanent center receives state approval.

As part of the acquisition of the Vineyard site of the proposed center a preliminary Geologic Hazard Evaluation of the site was conducted, which concluded that the site was suitable for the proposed Center development. An Environmental Assessment report in 2010 also concluded that no Recognized Environmental Conditions were identified for the property. A supplemental EIR conducted in 2011 identified potential unavoidable impacts in the form of temporary construction related and ongoing vehicle related emissions that could result from project implementation. However the district is pursuing different efficiency measures to mitigate the impacts of water, energy, solid waste and transportation use as part of the project.

### Contra Costa Community College District Service Areas



## Location of Existing Brentwood Outreach Site and Proposed Education Center



### Effects on Other Institutions

The proposed Brentwood Education Center is supported by many local civic officials and all of the contiguous, neighboring postsecondary institutions as evidenced by letters of support. Neighboring community college districts providing letters of support include Chabot-Las Positas CCD, San Joaquin Delta CCD, Solano CCD, Peralta CCD, and Marin CCD. Evidenced by the letters of support received the proposed center will not impact the neighboring community colleges' existing and projected enrollments or lead to unnecessary duplication of programs. Since San Joaquin Delta's proposed Mountain House Education Center is closest to the proposed center (30 miles and 42 minutes driving time), the two districts have been engaged in joint planning and dialogue to ensure that no duplication of programs will occur.

### Recommended Action

The Board of Governors approves the Brentwood Education Center as a state-approved educational center.

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