

Community Meeting Oxford Elementary School

October 3, 2019

Here Today:

Brent Stephens, Superintendent

John Calise, Executive Director of Facilities

Trish McDermott, Public Information Officer

Judy Appel, Board of Education

Outcomes for this Meeting:

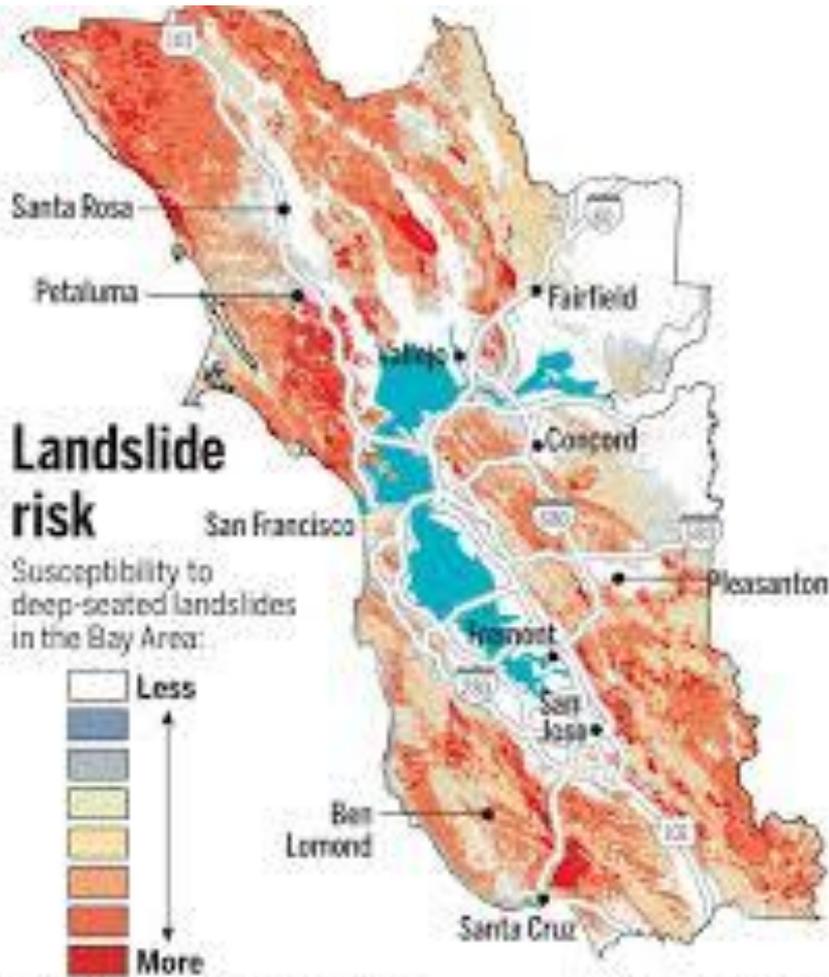
- Understand in a common way the key findings of the Alan Kropp report
 - What it says
 - What it doesn't say
 - How AKA arrived at its conclusions
- Share and hear feedback on options for short-term action
- Share and hear feedback on options for long-term action
 - How have other communities dealt with this?
- Share and hear feedback on our proposed next steps

In April 2019, Alan Kropp & Associates met with BUSD to share their initial findings, namely that there was some movement along and across the planes. Because of previously published information about landslide hazard zones in the Berkeley hills, this was an expected finding.

For example, this description of the Berkeley hills already describes the presence of past landslides:

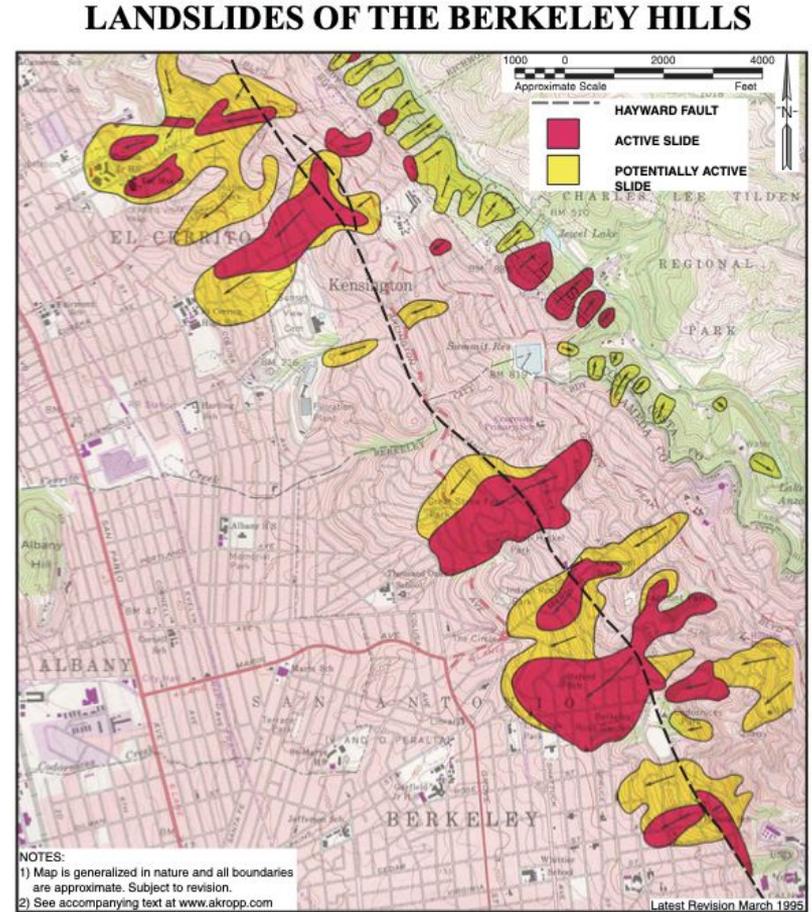
In the Berkeley Hills there are four large, slow moving, deep-seated landslides. All the landslides extend through residential areas and move on the order of cm/year, each covering an area of roughly 0.25-1.00. These slides are located in a rapidly uplifting zone adjacent to the Hayward fault (Figure [2.13](#)). A lot of damage to homes, breakage of underground utility pipes, and confusion over property lines was caused by landslides over the years, although deformation on these landslides is typically small and slow.

Bay Area Landslide Risk California Geological Survey



Here is another example of a landslide map that is available to the public:

The map to the right was published in 1995 by Alan Kropp and Associates



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The City of Berkeley maintains its own website on “seismic hazard zones”.

Members of the community can access this information at this [link](#).

What the report says

Delivered in September 2019, The Alan Kropp & Associates Landslide Deformation Study Report indicated a triggering event, such as an earthquake, would create a significant risk to the Oxford neighborhood, potentially precluding emergency vehicles from accessing the neighborhood and Oxford Elementary School, while also preventing the evacuation of students and staff.

The level of this risk was greater than what was originally anticipated due to the complexity of the Keith Avenue landslide combined with the school's proximity to the Hayward Fault. While the risk is based on the magnitude of a potential future earthquake, it is still clearly a risk the district must address.

Key Report Findings

- The study confirmed the Oxford Elementary School site is located within the actively-moving Keith Avenue Landslide Complex.
- An extensive compilation of past data indicates this landslide mass generally moves at an average rate of about one inch per year, with significant variations related to annual rainfall patterns; this movement will continue.

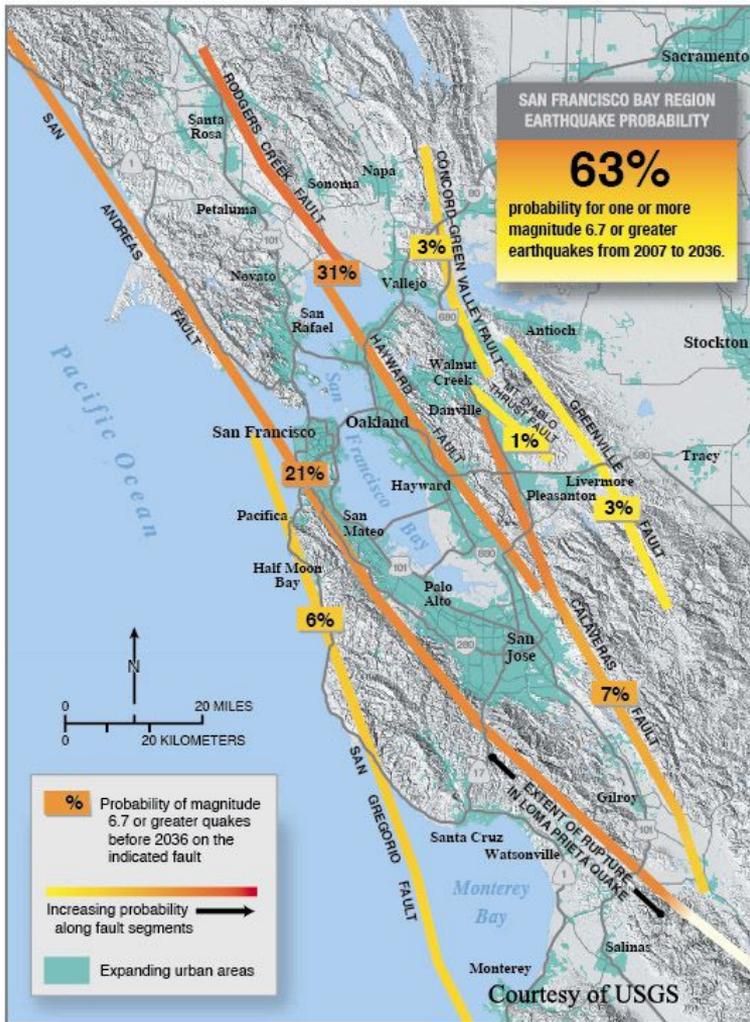
- The existing school buildings appear to be in relatively good condition considering they are approximately 60 years old. The buildings, pavement areas, and the existing retaining wall do not appear to have been significantly distressed by landslide movement. The lack of building distress, and limited observed surficial damage on the school property and in the surrounding area, probably indicate that the school property and the immediate surrounding area are moving as a relatively coherent block since these features were originally constructed.
- Based on calculations of the additional magnitude of landslide movement that would occur during an earthquake, the Oxford Elementary School campus would likely have a total movement which might range from as little as 2 feet to as much as 20 feet.

- Without major site reconstruction, a high safety hazard would result at the Oxford Elementary School site.
- With some substantial remedial schemes, it may be possible for an entirely reconstructed school campus to achieve reasonable performance, but still experience localized, non-structural damage.
- The risk to the neighborhood during an earthquake is significant; this may preclude emergency vehicles from accessing the neighborhood and school, and may prevent evacuation of children. This could lead to an extended period of isolation. This is already made worse by the narrow streets in that neighborhood.

- The active Keith Avenue Landslide (also known as the North Berkeley Slide) is very large; even if the school were built on a mat foundation, there will still be a debris field around the school, or coming at the school.
- Even with a mat foundation, the school will have to be rebuilt after a landslide.
- Seismologists anticipate that a large earthquake will occur in the next 20-30 year window (see slide 15)

How We're Thinking About This Report

1. Is Oxford school safe? Yes. It continues to meet all the requirements of the law.
2. Is the risk to Oxford higher than schools in other areas? Yes, the report indicates that it is.
3. What decisions could be made about Oxford, and on what timeline?



The AKA report describes “risk” and does not assess “safety”.

This means thinking about probability, based on the best information we have available to all of us.

For example, the UC Berkeley Seismology Lab has published this map to express the probability of a 6.7 quake between 2007 to 2036. They don’t know that this will happen, just as we can’t know what would happen in the Oxford neighborhood in the event of a large earthquake.

Has this happened in other communities?

A few examples include:

- Berkeley, Hillside Elementary School
- Alameda, Lum Elementary School
- El Cerrito, Portola Middle School



Hillside School, Berkeley USD

In 1983, the school district closed Hillside^[Z] because of a declining school age population, and because it sits near or on the Hayward Fault. In 2012, the Berkeley Unified School District sold it to the German International School of Silicon Valley (GISSV), which used it for their Berkeley campus until 2017—then vacating it because of earthquake safety concerns. (WIKIPEDIA)



El Cerrito, Portola Middle School

In an initial geologic hazard screening study, AKA found that the existing school buildings were located on the toe of a large urban landslide. Through these analyses it was determined that safety concerns associated with the landslide could not be readily mitigated and that future school development would need to occur at an alternate nearby site. (Alan Kropp Associates)



Donald Lum Elementary School, Alameda

“Lum closed in June 2017 after a structural engineer testing soil for the construction of a new building on the campus discovered it was subject to liquefaction, putting classrooms at risk during a major earthquake.

The tough decision came despite appeals from parents who questioned the findings and who wanted the school to stay open.” (East Bay Express, 2018)

Next Steps

1. Continue to share the report with the school community, the City of Berkeley, the press, and members of the larger Berkeley community
 - October 3, 2:30, Oxford Staff Meeting
 - October 3, outreach to local press and other local agencies
 - October 3, 6:00, Oxford Parent Meeting
 - October 4, establish website page for ongoing updates, access to the full AKA report, and links to resources; establish BUSD email "oxfordfeedback@berkeley.net"
 - October 15, 6:00, Oxford Parent Meeting #2 (neighbors invited)
 - October 23, Board meeting: Presentation of staff recommendations and parent/teacher feedback to the Board
 - November 4 (tentative), "Technical Panel" Meeting at Oxford with Alan Kropp and other experts, for parents and community members interested in the details

Next Steps

2. Assure the community that Oxford will remain open for at least the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year

Next Steps

3. Begin to assess options for the 2020-2021 school year, including the almost-completed West Campus school at 1222 University.

- Staff Reports and Public Discussions at Board of Education meetings
- Community Engagement at Oxford

October, 2019 - January, 2020

Next Steps

4. Discussions about the long-term status of Oxford will likely take place after any decisions about a new temporary location. This discussion could take place in a number of public forums, including meetings of the Board of Education and - possibly - a special committee to be formed especially for this purpose.

Long-term decision-making would take place no earlier than the 2020-2021 school year.

Hypothetically, this decision would center on either renovating or closing the Oxford campus.

Resources (available online tomorrow)

BUSD Website, Oxford Geological Report webpage

Community Letter from the Superintendent

Link to the full Oxford Geological Study by Alan Kropp & Associates

Link to this slide deck

Oxford Geological Survey, Community Survey

