

Los Angeles Unified School District

Office of Environmental Health and Safety

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ORIGINAL FILED

FEB 09 2018

LOS ANGELES, COUNTY CLERK

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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To: County Clerk and Registrar-Recorder
County of Los Angeles
12400 Imperial Highway
Norwalk, CA 90650

From: LAUSD OEHS
333 South Beaudry Avenue
21st Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017

Project Title:

Birmingham Community Charter High School Installation of Relocatable Buildings and Synthetic Turf Replacement

Project Location – Specific:

The Birmingham Community Charter High School (BCCHS) Synthetic Turf Replacement Project ("Project") will be located on the BCCHS campus at 17000 Haynes Street in the Reseda-West Van Nuys community in the City of Los Angeles. BCCHS is part of the approximately 109-acre Balboa Education Complex (Complex). The Complex is bound by Vanowen Street to the north; Balboa Boulevard to the east; Victory Boulevard to the south, and single family residences (along Aldea Avenue) the west.

Project Location – City:

Los Angeles

Project Location – County:

Los Angeles

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Project will entail the installation of seven (7) new relocatable buildings, as well as the replacement of the existing grass football field at BCCHS with synthetic turf. The new relocatable buildings include four (4) 24'x40' classrooms, two (2) 12'x40' restrooms, and one (1) 12'x40' office. These relocatable buildings will be placed in various locations across the campus, including alongside existing relocatable buildings on the western edge of the campus and adjacent to the soccer and baseball fields along Haynes Street. The purpose of the new relocatable buildings is to better accommodate BCCHS' existing student population and to house traveling teachers. The relocatable buildings will not be used to increase the school's occupancy.

The Project will also replace approximately 95,000 square feet of natural grass sod on the existing football field with a new synthetic turf surface. All infill and materials will meet the District's guidelines and specifications for synthetic turf athletic fields. The Project will not require export of soils; all sod and soil that is removed during installation will be retained on-site.

333 South Beaudry Avenue, 21st Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90017 • Telephone (213) 241-3199 • Fax (213) 241-6816

*Our Mission: To ensure a safe and healthy environment for students to learn, teachers to teach, and employees to work.
Our Vision: To eliminate all environmental, health, and safety risks at schools.*

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The Project will be implemented pursuant to all District Standards and Specifications,¹ as well as all applicable State, federal, and local regulations. The beneficiaries of the Project include BCCHS students, faculty, staff, families, school supporters, the City, and the community at large who may request access to the athletic field pursuant to the Civic Center Act (CA Ed. Code Sections 38130 - 38139).

Name of Public Agency Approving the Project:

Los Angeles Unified School District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:

Los Angeles Unified School District

Exempt Status: (check one below)

- Ministerial [Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080(b)(1); CEQA Guidelines Section 15268²]:
- Declared Emergency [PRC Section 21080(b)(3); CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(a)]:
- Emergency Project [PRC Section 21080(b)(4); CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(b)(c)]:
- Categorical Exemption (PRC Section 21084; CEQA Guidelines Sections 15300 -15333):
- *CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities*
 - *CEQA Guidelines Section 15302 – Replacement or Reconstruction*
 - *CEQA Guidelines Section 15304 – Minor Alterations to Land*
 - *CEQA Guidelines Section 15314 – Minor Additions to Schools*
- Statutory Exemption:

Reasons why project is exempt:

Section 15301 - Existing Facilities

Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination.

The Project consists of the installation of new relocatable buildings and upgrades to an existing field located on an existing school campus. Specifically, the Project will include the placement of four (4) 24'x40' relocatable classrooms, two (2) 12'x40' relocatable restrooms, one (1) 12'x40' relocatable office, and the installation of a new synthetic turf surface on the existing BCCHS football field. The Project will not generate growth or require the addition or construction of new or expanded facilities. The Project will not present a new or expanded use of the athletic field or campus. Therefore, the Project fulfills the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.

Section 15302 - Replacement or Reconstruction

Class 2 consists of replacing or reconstructing existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced.

¹ LAUSD OEHS, "School Upgrade Program Final Environmental Impact Report," <http://achieve.lausd.net/ceqa>, Adopted by the Board of Education on November 10, 2015.

² CEQA Guidelines can be found at California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000 - Section 15387.

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As previously noted, the Project will entail removing and replacing the existing sod on the BCCHS football field with a new synthetic turf surface. Following the Project, the football field will have the same purpose, function, capacity, and use as the current field. The Project is not designed to and will not result in an increase or alteration of the current use, function, or capacity of the existing athletic field or campus. Therefore, the Project fulfills the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15302.

Section 15304 – Minor Alterations to Land

Class 4 consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes.

The installation of synthetic turf on the BCCHS football field will require short-term construction. The Project will require limited grading and ground disturbance once the existing sod is removed; however, the grading activities will be limited in scope, duration, and location. The removal of trees will not be required as a part of the Project; therefore, the Project satisfies the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15304.

Section 15314 – Minor Additions to Schools

Class 14 consists of minor additions to existing schools within existing school grounds where the addition does not increase original student capacity by more than 25% or ten classrooms, whichever is less. The addition of a portable building is included in this exemption.

The Project will entail the placement of seven (7) new relocatable buildings on the existing BCCHS campus, including four (4) 24'x40' classrooms, two (2) 12'x40' restrooms, and one (1) 12'x40' office. The purpose of the new relocatable buildings is to better accommodate BCCHS' existing student population and to house traveling teachers. The relocatable buildings will not be used to increase the school's occupancy. The installation of the relocatable units will not require major construction activities or demolition, as they will be delivered to the campus preassembled. Although the installations may require wood foundations and utilities which may include minor trenching, the anticipated construction related activities and equipment associated with these efforts will be limited in size, duration, and scope. The Project will not result in an increase of capacity greater than 25% or 10 classrooms; as such, the Project constitutes minor alterations to existing schools. Therefore, the Project satisfies the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15314.

Section 15300.2 – Exceptions

Section 15300.2 of the CEQA Guidelines, Exceptions, provides conditions under which categorical exemptions are inapplicable. Review of the Project indicates that it will not violate any of the exceptions, as described in the following section.

1. The project will occur in certain specified sensitive environments or locations;

The Project will occur on an existing campus that is located within an urban setting. The surrounding uses are primarily residential with single and multi-family homes, commercial uses, and open space.³ The campus and the surrounding area have not been designated as a biologically sensitive site or location and do not contain sensitive resources or habitat that will be impacted by the Project.⁴ The nearest critical habitat is designated as such for the

³ City of Los Angeles. ZIMAS. Available at: <http://zimas.lacity.org/>. Accessed December 2017.

⁴ US Fish and Wildlife Service. FWS Maps. Available at: <https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/location/index>. Accessed December 2017.

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California Gnatcatcher and is located more than 7.8 miles northwest of the site.⁵ As such, the Project will not have the potential to impact any sensitive environments or locations.

2. *Cumulative impacts will be considerable because successive projects of the same type will occur at the same place over time;*

The Project will not result in significant cumulative environmental impacts. As an active school campus, it is anticipated that projects such as routine maintenance activities or upgrades will occur on the campus in the future. There are currently two other known successive projects of the same type or scale being contemplated for the Complex: the Balboa Education Complex Wellness Center Project and the Balboa Education Complex Traffic Circulation Improvement Project. As it stands, these projects have not yet been approved and there is no anticipated timeline for implementation. However, even if they are implemented successively to the proposed Project, cumulative impacts would be less than considerable as they are different types of projects that would occur in different portions of the 109-acre Complex. Additionally, none of these projects would increase the student enrollment capacity of the Complex. Therefore, no cumulative impacts will result from the Project and successive projects of the same type occurring at the same place over time.

3. *There is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances;*

There are no known unusual circumstances that would have a significant effect on the environment. The Project entails the installation of new relocatable buildings and a new synthetic turf field surface and does not constitute an expansion of use. There will be minor ground-disturbing activities associated with installation of the relocatable buildings and the synthetic turf. Therefore, consideration must be given to the management of excavated soil. LAUSD will prepare a Preliminary Environmental Assessment-Equivalent (PEA-E) and complete soil sampling for chemicals of potential concern including: lead, arsenic, and organochlorine pesticides (OCPs). Due to the location of the campus in an area that is designated as a high radon zone, LAUSD will also incorporate radon design standards into the plans for the Project.⁶ Should construction or earthmoving activities require import or export of soils and materials, it will require oversight by LAUSD's Office of Environmental Health & Safety (OEHS) to ensure that these activities are conducted in compliance with the requirements of District Specification 01 4524, relevant provisions of South Coast Air Quality Management District Rule 1466, and the applicable environmental agency rules and requirements.⁷

Furthermore, as set forth in LAUSD's School Upgrade Program Environmental Impact Report Standard Conditions (SC) of Approval SC-CUL-13, SC-CUL-15, and SC-CUL-18, construction activities must be stopped immediately and OEHS notified upon discovery of subsurface features, such as buried resources (i.e., paleontological resources, archaeological resources), tanks or seepage pits or stained/odoriferous soils.⁸

4. *The project may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources within a highway officially designated as a scenic highway;*

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ LAUSD. 2016. Radon Zone Map. Based in part off information provide California Department of Public Health (CDPH). 2016. Indoor Radon Program (2/26/16).

⁷ LAUSD. District Specification 01 4524 Reference. Available at: http://www.laschools.org/documents/file?file_id=219798234&show_all_versions_p=t

⁸ LAUSD OEHS, "School Upgrade Program Final Environmental Impact Report," <http://achieve.lausd.net/ceqa>, Adopted by the Board of Education on November 10, 2015.

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The campus is located more than 17.5 miles southwest of State Route 2 (SR 2), the nearest officially designated State scenic highway.⁹ The Project will not be visible from SR 2. Therefore, the Project will not result in damage to scenic resources or similar resources within a highway that is officially designated as a scenic highway.

5. *The project is located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code; or*

The Project will occur on an existing school campus which is not included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.¹⁰ Therefore, the Project will not have an impact related to being located on a hazardous waste site.

6. *The project may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource.*

Originally opened in 1952, the Balboa Complex was evaluated as part of an historic resources survey conducted in 2002 and was assigned a California Historical Resource Status Code of 6Z, which indicates that the property appears ineligible for listing in the California Register.¹¹ However, a follow-up reconnaissance level survey conducted by the OEHS Historic Preservation Specialist in 2016 found that the BCCHS campus may now be classified as 3CD, which indicates that the property appears eligible for the California Register as a contributor to an eligible district (which would consist of the entire Balboa Complex).¹²

The Project consists of the installation of new relocatable buildings and replacement of a natural grass field with synthetic turf.. No permanent development or alterations to the existing campus are a part of this Project. As such, the Project does not have the potential to cause a substantial adverse change to a historic resource.

Prepared By:

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Signed by:



Date:

2/8/18

Robert Laughton
CEQA Officer of the Los Angeles Unified School District



⁹ California Department of Transportation. California Scenic Highway Mapping System. Available at:

http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16_livability/scenic_highways/index.htm. Accessed December 2017.

¹⁰ California Department of Toxic Substances Control. DTSC Databases. Available at: <http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/database/>. Accessed December 2017.

¹¹Heumann & Associates and Anne Doehne, Science Applications International Corporation, March 2002, "Historic Schools of the Los Angeles Unified School District," a presentation prepared for LAUSD Facilities Services Division (March 2002).

¹² LAUSD OEHS. Email communication with OEHS Historic Preservation Specialist. 9 December 2016. Recon level survey of Birmingham HS and Maclay HS.

