

Los Angeles Unified School District

Office of Environmental Health and Safety

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NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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FEB 14 2018

LOS ANGELES, COUNTY CLERK

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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:

Dixie Canyon Elementary School – DOH Removal and Replacement

Project Location – Specific:

The Dixie Canyon Elementary School – DOH Removal and Replacement (Project) will be located on the 5.0-acre Dixie Canyon Elementary School (ES) campus.¹ Dixie Canyon ES is located at 4220 Dixie Canyon Avenue, in the Sherman Oaks neighborhood of the City of Los Angeles. The campus is bordered by alleys to the north, east, and south. Dixie Canyon Avenue borders the campus to the west. The immediately surrounding area includes a parochial school (St. Francis De Sales) to the north of the campus, commercial properties to the south, and residential uses to the east and west. The Project will primarily occur within the eastern portion of the campus.

Project Location – City:

Los Angeles

Project Location – County:

Los Angeles

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Project was identified to ensure compliance with Education Code section 17292 requirements to eliminate the use of Department of Housing (DOH) relocatable (also referred to as portable) buildings. The Project includes the removal of two classrooms located in one DOH portable building. The DOH building that will be removed from the campus will be replaced with two interim classrooms and a portable sanitary building on the campus.

The Project will also include minor utilities upgrades as required to support the new facilities and the restoration of landscape, hardscape, and playground, as applicable, where the DOH portable building will be removed.

¹ Also referred to as "Dixie Canyon Community Charter" and "Dixie Canyon avenue Elementary School".

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Pre-construction activities began in the 4th quarter of 2017 and the portable building will be removed and replaced by Q3 2018 and the entire Project will be completed by Q4 2018. While no new students are expected as a part of this Project, Dixie Canyon ES is experiencing growth in its neighborhood enrollment so the District will define, design, and assess a long-term permanent solution for the campus while the Project is in construction.

The Project will be constructed per DSA-approved design specifications. The Project will be implemented per all applicable local and State regulations, as well as all District Standards and Specifications; such as those provided in LAUSD's Program Environmental Impact Report for the School Upgrade Program (Program EIR),² which was completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance. The beneficiaries of this Project include the District's students and staff as well as families, school supporters and the community at large who may request access to the Campus facilities and grounds 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 15268³]:
- 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 – Minor Additions to Schools*
 - *CEQA Guidelines Section 15303 – New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures*
 - *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 will entail site minor alterations related to portable buildings located on an existing elementary school campus. The removal and replacement of the DOH portable building will not expand the use of the campus. The Project is designed to ensure compliance with Education Code section 17292 and support the existing enrollment and educational programs at the campus and it is not designed to increase student enrollment. The Project will be constructed completely within the

² LAUSD. 2015. School Upgrade Program Final Environmental Impact Report, <http://achieve.lausd.net/ceqa>. Adopted by the Board of Education on November 10, 2015.

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

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boundaries of the existing campus and will not require or result in the expansion of use beyond the campus. Therefore, the Project satisfies the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.

Section 15303 – New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures

Class 3 consists of construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure.

The Project entails the removal of two classrooms and the placement of two interim classrooms and a sanitary building on an existing school campus. The new temporary buildings will require connection to the existing utilities and may require minor improvements to the landscape, hardscape, and playground where the DOH portable building will be removed. The remaining structures on the campus will not be impacted or altered as a result of the Project. Therefore, the Project satisfies the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15303.

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 10 classrooms, whichever is less. The addition of portable classrooms is included in this exemption.

The Project entails demolition of two classrooms and installation of two interim classrooms to replace these classrooms on an existing campus. The Project is not expected to result in an increase in student enrollment as the interim classrooms will serve to replace the classrooms located in the DOH portable building that will be demolished. 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.

I. 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-residential setting. The campus is bordered by alleys to the north, east, and south. Dixie Canyon Avenue, a collector road, borders the campus to the west. The immediately surrounding area includes a parochial school (St. Francis De Sales) to the north of the campus, commercial properties to the south, and residential uses to the east and west.⁴ Although the Los Angeles River is located approximately 0.10 mile north/northeast of the campus, neither the campus nor the immediate surrounding area have been designated as a biologically sensitive site or location and does not contain sensitive resources or habitat that will be impacted by the Project.⁵ The Project will be limited to the campus and the immediately surrounding major arterial roads and haul routes (e.g., Woodman Avenue, Moorpark Street, Ventura Boulevard, Fulton Avenue, Coldwater Canyon Avenue, and Dixie Canyon Avenue) where vehicles may infrequently access the site throughout construction. The nearest critical habitat is designated as such for

⁴ City of Los Angeles. ZIMAS. Available at: <http://zimas.lacity.org/>. Accessed November 2017.

⁵ US Fish and Wildlife Service. FWS Maps. Available at: <https://ecos.fws.gov/>. Accessed November 2017.

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Braunton's milk-vetch and is located more than 10 miles southwest of the campus.⁶ 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 be expected to 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. Additionally, Dixie Canyon ES is experiencing growth in its neighborhood enrollment so the District will define, design, and assess a long-term permanent solution for growth at the campus, through a subsequent project. The subsequent project will be evaluated by the District once it is defined and approved for due diligence activities by the Board of Education. As it stands, the Project is not expected to result in significant impacts and due to its minor temporary scope, would not contribute to potential cumulative impacts. Therefore, no cumulative impacts will result from the Project and successive projects of the same type and 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 associated with the Project that will have a significant effect on the environment. The Project will require ground disturbance and soil excavation associated with construction of the new building, installation of utility lines, installing landscaping, and replacing asphalt. Therefore, consideration must be given to the management of excavated soil. LAUSD prepared a Preliminary Environmental Assessment-Equivalent (PEA-E) Scoping Document and completed soil sampling for chemicals of potential concern: lead, arsenic, and organochlorine pesticides (OCPs).⁷ The Project would comply with the soil sampling, evaluation, and recommendations provided in the PEA-E Scoping Document and any subsequent studies, as warranted. 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.⁸ Construction or earthmoving activities that require import or export of soils and materials 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 and the applicable environmental agency rules and requirements.

LAUSD will ensure that all construction related activities comply with the applicable LAUSD Standard Conditions of Approval (SCs) which include but are not limited to:⁹ SC-USS-1, which requires that any construction waste will be recycled to the maximum extent feasible.¹⁰ Furthermore, as set forth in SC-CUL-13, SC-CUL-15, SC-CUL-18 and SC-CUL-19 of the Program EIR, construction activities must be stopped immediately and OEHS notified upon discovery of subsurface features, such as buried resources (i.e., paleontological resources and/or archaeological resources), tanks or seepage pits or stained/odoriferous soils.¹¹

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ TetraTech. 2018. Preliminary Endangerment Assessment Equivalent Scoping Document Dixie Canyon Elementary School, Sherman Oaks, California 91423. Pasadena, CA.

⁸ LAUSD. 2016. Radon Zone Map. Based in part off information provide California Department of Public Health (CDPH). 2016. Indoor Radon Program (2/26/16).

⁹ LAUSD. 2015. School Upgrade Program Final Environmental Impact Report, <http://achieve.lausd.net/ceqa>. Adopted by the Board of Education on November 10, 2015.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ LAUSD. 2015. 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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Therefore, no reasonable possibility exists that the Project will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

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;*

The Dixie Canyon ES campus is located more than 13 miles southwest of State Route 2 (SR 2), the officially designated State scenic highway.¹² 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.¹³ 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.*

Dixie Canyon ES opened in 1949. The core campus is composed of nine single story wood frame permanent buildings and structures (including the lunch shelter) which were built between 1949 and 1961. There are also 10 portable buildings that were added to the campus between 1949 and 1998. The campus was surveyed by the District's Historic Resources Specialist in 2017 and was determined to not be an eligible historic resource.¹⁴ Specifically, the District assigned the campus a California Historical Resources Status Code of 6Z, noting that the campus was found to be ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historic Resources, or local designation through survey evaluation.¹⁵ The DOH portable building is not a historic resource. 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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Phone and Email:

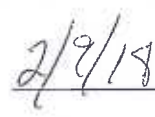
(213) 241-3417
Eimon.Smith@LAUSD.net

Signed by:



Robert Laughton
CEQA Officer of the Los Angeles Unified School District

Date:



¹² 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 November 2017.

¹³ California Department of Toxic Substances Control. DTSC Databases. Available at: <http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/database/>. Accessed November 2017.

¹⁴ LAUSD. 2017. Historic Resources Inventory. Los Angeles, CA.

¹⁵ LAUSD. 2017. Historic Resources Inventory. Los Angeles, CA.