

# Los Angeles Unified School District

## Office of Environmental Health and Safety

AUSTIN BEUTNER  
Superintendent of Schools

VIVIAN EKCHIAN  
Deputy Superintendent

CARLOS A. TORRES  
Director, Environmental Health and Safety

### NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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FEB 15 2019

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  
21<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

**Project Title:**

Hillside Elementary School Asphalt Replacement, Landscape, and Path of Travel Upgrades

**Project Location – Specific:**

The Hillside Elementary School Asphalt Replacement, Landscape, and Path of Travel Upgrades Project (Project) will be located on the 3.03-acre Hillside Elementary School (Hillside ES) campus. Hillside ES is located at 120 E Ave 35, Los Angeles, CA 90031. The Project will occur in the northwestern portion of the campus.

**Project Location – City:**

Los Angeles

**Project Location – County:**

Los Angeles

**Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:**

The Project will replace approximately 55,000 square feet of deteriorated asphalt paving in the playground areas and provide a new drainage system for the site. The scope includes construction of site drainage, planter areas, bioswale, and underground infiltration. The site drainage shall be designed to comply with the LAUSD Storm Water Technical Manual and State Water Board requirements as well as meet the intent of the Los Angeles County Low Impact Development (LID) Manual.<sup>1</sup> The Project also consists of modifying the ramp and handrails adjacent to the parking area and along the path of travel as well as modifying existing accessible parking signage.

The Project will be implemented pursuant to all District Standards and Specifications, such as those provided in LAUSD's Program Environmental Impact Report for the School Upgrade Program (Program EIR),<sup>2</sup> as well as all applicable State, federal, and local regulations. The beneficiaries of the Project include Hillside ES students, faculty, staff, families, school

<sup>1</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, "Low Impact Development Standards Manual"

<https://dpw.lacounty.gov/kld/lib/fp/Hydrology/Low%20Impact%20Development%20Standards%20Manual.pdf>, Accessed December 2018

<sup>2</sup> 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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*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.*



supporters, 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 15268<sup>3</sup>];
- 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*
- 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 replace approximately 55,000 square feet of deteriorated asphalt paving in the playground areas and provide a new drainage system for the site. The scope includes construction of site drainage, planter areas, bioswale, and underground infiltration. The Project also consists of modifying the ramp and handrails adjacent to the parking area and along the path of travel as well as modifying existing accessible parking signage. 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 playground area 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.

As previously noted, the Project will replace approximately 55,000 square feet of deteriorated asphalt paving in the playground areas and provide a new drainage system for the site. The Project also consists of modifying the ramp and handrails adjacent to the parking area and along the path of travel as well as modifying existing accessible parking signage. The Project will not result in an increase or alteration of the current use, function, or capacity of the playground area or campus. Therefore, the Project fulfills the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15302.

Section 15304 – Minor Alterations to Land

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

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

The Project will provide a new drainage system for the site. The scope includes construction of site drainage, planter areas, bioswale, and underground infiltration. The Project will not remove healthy, mature, scenic trees. Therefore, the Project fulfills the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15304.

#### 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.<sup>4</sup> The surrounding uses are residential and commercial. The campus has not been designated as a biologically sensitive site or location and does not contain sensitive resources or habitat that will be impacted by the Project. The nearest significant ecological area (SEA) is Griffith Park which is located approximately 4.31 miles north of the campus.<sup>5</sup> The nearest critical habitat is designated as such for the coastal California gnatcatcher and is located approximately 7.4 miles southeast of the site.<sup>6</sup> As such, the Project will not impact 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 maintenance activities or upgrades will occur on the campus in the future. However, there are currently no known successive projects of the same type or scale planned for the campus. As it stands, the Project will not result in potentially significant 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 that would have a significant effect on the environment. The Project will replace approximately 55,000 square feet of deteriorated asphalt paving in the playground areas and provide a new drainage system for the site. The scope includes construction of site drainage, planter areas, bioswale, and underground infiltration. The Project does not constitute an expansion of use. There will be minor ground-disturbing activities associated with replacement of approximately 55,000 square feet of asphalt paving in the playground areas. The Office of Environmental Health & Safety (OEHS) will be notified to provide oversight to ensure that these activities are conducted in compliance with the requirements of District Specification 01 4524,<sup>7</sup> relevant provisions of South Coast Air Quality Management District Rule 1466, and other applicable environmental agency rules and requirements. Furthermore, as set forth in LAUSD's School Upgrade Program

<sup>4</sup> City of Los Angeles. ZIMAS. Available at: <http://zimas.lacity.org/>. Accessed November 2018.

<sup>5</sup> Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, [http://gis.planning.lacounty.gov/GIS-NET3\\_Public/Viewer.html](http://gis.planning.lacounty.gov/GIS-NET3_Public/Viewer.html), accessed November 2018.

<sup>6</sup> United States Fish and Wildlife Service Critical Habitat Portal, <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/report/table/critical-habitat.html> accessed November 2018.

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.laschools.org/documents/file?file\\_id=219798234&show\\_all\\_versions\\_p=t](http://www.laschools.org/documents/file?file_id=219798234&show_all_versions_p=t)



EIR Standard Conditions (SC) of Approval SC-CUL-13, SC-CUL-15, SC-CUL-18, and SC-TCR-1, construction activities must be stopped immediately and OEHS notified upon discovery of subsurface features, such as buried resources (i.e., paleontological, archaeological, and tribal cultural resources), tanks or seepage pits or stained/odoriferous soils.<sup>8</sup>

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 Project site is located approximately 9.8 miles southwest of State Route 2 (SR 2), the nearest officially designated State scenic highway.<sup>9</sup> 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.<sup>10</sup> 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.*

LAUSD's historic preservation specialist determined the Hillside ES campus is ineligible as a historic resource.<sup>11</sup> The campus consists of multiple functional buildings with no architectural features associated with particular style. Research did not reveal any significant association between the campus and the development of alternative educational approaches or any other historical events or personages significant to national, state, or local history. Therefore, the Project would have no impact to a historic resource.

Prepared By:

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Signed by:

Carlos A. Torres  
CEQA Officer of the Los Angeles Unified School District

Date:

12/13/18

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

<sup>9</sup> Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, [http://gis.planning.lacounty.gov/GIS-NET3\\_Public/Viewer.html](http://gis.planning.lacounty.gov/GIS-NET3_Public/Viewer.html). Accessed November 2018.

<sup>10</sup> California Department of Toxic Substances Control. DTSC Databases. Available at: <http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/database/>. Accessed November 2018.

<sup>11</sup> LAUSD OEHS. 2018 "Hillside ES DPR523A Primary Record, DPR523B Building, Structure, Object, and DPR523L Continuation Sheet."