

Los Angeles Unified School District

Office of Environmental Health and Safety

AUSTIN BEUTNER
Superintendent of Schools

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NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

2018 304917



FILED

Dec 07 2018

Dean C. Logan, Registrar - Recorder/County Clerk

Electronically signed by DEMETRIA ATKINS

THIS NOTICE WAS POSTED

ON December 07 2018

UNTIL January 07 2019

REGISTRAR - RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK

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

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

Project Title:

Kester Elementary School – Shade Structure and ADA upgrades

Project Location – Specific:

Kester Elementary School (ES or Campus) is located at 5353 Kester Avenue, Sherman Oaks, CA 91411. The Site is a 8.2-acre property bounded on the north by Clark Street, Lemonia Avenue on the west, Weddington Street on the south, and Kester Avenue on the east. The surrounding neighborhood primarily consists of single-family residences to the north, south, and west and multi-family residences to the east. The Project will occur on the eastern side of the Campus.

Project Location – City:

Los Angeles

Project Location – County:

Los Angeles

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Project entails installing one shade structure over the existing play structure in the Kindergarten Yard and a second shade structure in the lunch area. Also, the Path of Travel to the shade structures will be made ADA compliant.

The Project will not cause an increase in student capacity or enrollment and will not result in an increase in the intensity of use. The Project will be constructed per Division of State Architect approved design specifications. The Project will be implemented per all applicable local and State regulations, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 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).¹ The beneficiaries of the Project include students and staff at Kester ES and the

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



community at large who may request access to the 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 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 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 scope of the Project entails installing one shade structure over the existing play structure in the Kindergarten Yard, a second play structure in the lunch area. Also, the Path of Travel to the new shade structures will be made ADA compliant. All of the proposed activities will occur within the area occupied by existing facilities at the school sites. The Project will not require the addition or construction of any new or expanded facilities. The improvements will not present a new or expanded use of the site. Therefore, the Project constitutes minor alterations to an existing school site that result in no expansion of use and meets the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.

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 scope of the Project entails installing one shade structure over the existing play structure in the Kindergarten Yard and a second play structure in the lunch area. Also, the Path of Travel to the new shade structures will be made ADA compliant.

Section 15300.2 Exceptions

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

- I. *The project will occur in certain specified sensitive environments or locations;*

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



This exception only applies to Class 3, 4, 5, 6 or 11 exemptions. Therefore, it does not apply to the Project.

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. However, there are currently no known successive projects of the same type or scale planned for the Campus. As it stands, the Project is not expected to result in significant impacts. 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 will have a significant effect on the environment. The removal of trees is not anticipated as part of the proposed scope of work. However, should the Project be altered to include the removal of trees, then LAUSD's Office of Environmental Health & Safety (OEHS) must be notified immediately. District policy requires consultation with an arborist to determine if the trees are a protected native species. Additionally, written approval from the school principal will be required before any trees can be removed. If vegetation removal is scheduled to occur between February 1 and August 31, a nesting bird survey would be performed prior to removal activities, per standard condition (SC) of approval SC-BIO-3 of the Program EIR.³ Compliance with District specifications will ensure that there is not a reasonable possibility that the Project will have a significant effect on the environment due to unforeseen circumstances

There may be some minor ground-disturbing activities associated with the Project that will occur, but such activities are not considered unusual circumstances for the classes of projects under which this exemption is claimed. Nevertheless, consideration must be given to the management of excavated soils associated with earthwork activities for the Project. Excavated soils will only be reused onsite if they are placed beneath paved areas. If construction or earthmoving activities require import or export of soils and materials, the OEHS must be notified to provide oversight to ensure that these activities are conducted in compliance with the requirements of District Specification 01 4524,⁴ 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 SC-CUL-13, SC-CUL-15, SC-CUL-18, and SC-CUL-19⁵ 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. Construction and demolition waste shall be recycled to the maximum extent feasible per SC-USS-1 of the Program EIR.⁶ Therefore, the Project will not 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 state scenic highway;*

³ LAUSD OEHS, "School Upgrade Program Final Environmental Impact Report," <http://achieve.lausd.net/ceqa>. Adopted by the Board of Education on November 10, 2015.

⁴ http://www.laschools.org/documents/file?file_id=219798234&show_all_versions_p=t

⁵ LAUSD OEHS, "School Upgrade Program Final Environmental Impact Report," <http://achieve.lausd.net/ceqa>. Adopted by the Board of Education on November 10, 2015.

⁶ *Ibid.*



The closest designated state scenic highway to the Project is the State Route 2, located approximately 16 miles northeast of Kester ES.⁷ This is a sufficient distance from this resource to be outside of the view shed, so the Project will not impact the characteristics that contribute to its scenic eligibility. Therefore, the Project will not result in damage to scenic resources or similar resources within a highway officially designated as a state 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 that is not included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.⁸ Therefore, the Project will have no impacts 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.*

The Campus is over 45-years old, meeting the age criterion for consideration as an historic resource under CEQA guidelines. District surveys found that Kester ES appeared eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources as an individual property.⁹

The scope of the Project entails installing a shade structure over the existing play structure in the Kindergarten Yard and a second play structure in the lunch area. Also, the Path of Travel to the new shade structures will be made ADA compliant. It will not remove, destroy, or obstruct any historic character-defining features and will be undertaken in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings (Secretary's Standards)* and the *Los Angeles Unified School District Design Guidelines and Treatment Approaches for Historic Schools (LAUSD Design Guidelines)*.⁹ To ensure that the Project complies with the *Secretary's Standards* and *LAUSD Design Guidelines*, the Project will also be subject to internal review by OEHS at the schematic, 50 percent/design development phase, and 100 percent construction drawings phase.

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(3), a project that conforms to the *Secretary's Standards* is generally considered to be a project that will not cause a significant adverse impact and material impairment (14 CCR Section 15126.4(b)(1)). If a project meets the *Secretary's Standards*, the project can, in most cases, be considered categorically exempt from CEQA (14 CCR Section 15331) and qualify for a Notice of Exemption. The work shall conform with the *Secretary's Standards* and the *LAUSD Design Guidelines*, therefore the Project meets the requirements specified in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(3), will not materially impair the significance of a historic resource, and will not result in an impact to the environment.

Should the scope of the Project be altered from the scope of work described above, standard District procedure requires that OEHS must be notified immediately to ensure that these activities are conducted in compliance with the *Secretary's Standards* and will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

⁷ http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/index.htm. October 9, 2009

⁸ California, State of, Department of Toxic Substances Control, Envirostor Database, <http://www.envirostor.dts.ca.gov/public/search.asp>, accessed November 21, 2018.

⁹ LAUSD OEHS. 2018. LAUSD Historic Resource Inventory Database.



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