

Los Angeles Unified School District

Office of Environmental Health and Safety

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NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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ORIGINAL FILED

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:

Manual Arts High School Wellness Center

Project Location – Specific:

The Manual Arts Wellness Center (Project) will be located on the 16.39-acre Manual Arts High School campus. Manual Arts High School is located at 4131 South Vermont Avenue in the City of Los Angeles, CA. The campus is bound by West 40th Place to the north; South Vermont Avenue to the east; West 43rd Street to the south; and Walton Avenue to the west. The Project will occur in the northeastern 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 entail constructing and operating a new wellness center on the northeastern portion of the campus. The wellness center will be a free-standing, approximately 2,600 square-foot (sq ft), one-story, permanent building that will be constructed adjacent to an existing wellness center that operates out of a modular building. The site currently contains seven portable buildings that are slated for removal from the campus and are located to the north and northeast of the existing wellness center building. These portable buildings will be removed prior to construction of the wellness center. The surrounding area will be improved to provide landscaping and frontage to the wellness center and expanded on-site parking. Additionally, minor interior alterations of the existing wellness center will be completed.

The Project is designed to provide health care access for students, their families, and to the community and will expand upon the services that are currently provided in the existing wellness center. Specifically, the Project will provide free and low-cost comprehensive medical, behavioral, and dental services to students, families, and the community.

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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Construction of the Project will be complete within approximately 18 months once the design is approved. No increases in student enrollment or campus growth are proposed as part of this Project.

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, 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 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 –be served by the wellness center.

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 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 improvements and minor alterations such as: the removal of portable buildings, the installation of landscaping, and the expansion of parking on an existing high school campus. While the Project is designed to support the services provided by the existing wellness center, the Project is not designed to increase student enrollment or result in the growth of enrollment or capacity of the student population or campus. The Project will be constructed completely within the boundaries of the existing campus and will not require or result in the expansion of use beyond the campus. The remaining campus will not be adversely impacted or altered as a result of the Project. Therefore, the Project satisfies the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.

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.

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

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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.

As previously noted, the Project entails constructing one new 2,600 sq ft building, upgrades, and retrofitting a portion of an existing campus. The new building will require installation and connection of new utilities to the existing facilities for the campus. The existing permanent buildings on the campus will not be altered or modified as a part 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 ten classrooms, whichever is less. The addition of portable classrooms is included in this exemption.

The Project entails construction of a new small building and improvements to a portion of an existing campus. The Project is not designed to increase the student enrollment or capacity and does not include the addition of any new classrooms (or the commiserate space that would be associated with 10 classrooms, 9,600 sq ft). 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-residential setting. The surrounding uses are primarily residential with single and multi-family homes and commercial uses.³ Neither the campus nor the 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.⁴ The nearest critical habitat is designated as such for the coastal California gnatcatcher and is located approximately 11 miles east of the campus.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 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

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

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

⁵ Ibid.

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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 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 minor ground disturbance and soil excavation associated with construction of the new building, installation of utility lines, and replacing asphalt. 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: lead, arsenic, and organochlorine pesticides (OCPs). 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.⁶

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:⁷ SC-USS-1, which requires that any construction waste will be recycled to the maximum extent feasible.⁸ 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, archaeological resources), tanks or seepage pits or stained/odoriferous soils.⁹ 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 Manual Arts High School campus is located approximately 16 miles southwest of State Route 2 (SR 2), the officially designated State scenic highway.¹⁰ 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.¹¹ Therefore, the Project will not have an impact related to being located on a hazardous waste site.

⁶ LAUSD. District Specification 01 4524 Reference. Available at: http://www.laschools.org/documents/file?file_id=219798234&show_all_versions_p=t

⁷ LAUSD. 2015. School Upgrade Program Final Environmental Impact Report, <http://achieve.lausd.net/ceqa>. Adopted by the Board of Education on November 10, 2015.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ 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 March 2017.

¹¹ California Department of Toxic Substances Control. DTSC Databases. Available at: <http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/database/>. Accessed March 2017.

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

Manual Arts High School was opened and named in 1910.¹² The initial campus was constructed in 1913 and it was largely reconstructed in the 1930s following the 1933 Long Beach earthquake.¹³ The Boiler Room (1912) is the only remaining building on the campus that precedes the Long Beach Earthquake. The current campus was composed in a Moderne style and includes, the Science Building (1935), Administration Building (1936), Auditorium and Practice Gymnasium Buildings (1937), the Cafeteria and Albert Wilson Hall (1938). The remaining permanent buildings were constructed between the 1950s and the 1980s. According to a Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) form completed for the campus, this property appears to meet the criteria for listing in both the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register Status Code 2S2).^{14,15}

The new construction will occur in the northeast portion of the campus off of Vermont Avenue. Specifically, the new wellness center will be constructed immediately adjacent to the existing wellness center, north of the Administration Building (1936) and east of the Business Education Building (1955). As such and as a part of the Project, the Design-Build team will include a qualified historic architect. The historic architect will provide ongoing input through the design process (beginning with development of design materials/concepts) to ensure that the siting, mass/scale, character/detailing of the new construction, as well as related site plan features/landscaping, are compatible with (but differentiated from) the adjacent historic resource(s). The historic architect will provide input to ensure ongoing compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's (SOI) Standards and LAUSD requirements and guidelines for the treatment of historical resources.^{16, 17} The OEHS Historic Preservation Specialist will review project drawings and participate in design team meetings in order to ensure ongoing compliance with applicable standards.

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(3), a project that has been determined to conform with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* or the *SOI Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* 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 Project will conform with the SOI Standards and does not entail components that will adversely impact the historic significance of the campus. As such, the Project does not have the potential to cause a substantial adverse change to a historic resource.

¹² LAUSD. Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Form for Manual Arts High School dated March 15, 2002.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

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

¹⁶ National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, DC. 1995. *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, with Guidelines for Rehabilitating, Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.*

¹⁷ LAUSD. 2015. Los Angeles Unified School District Design Guidelines and Treatment Approaches for Historic Schools. Los Angeles, CA.

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Signed by:



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Date:

