

Los Angeles Unified School District

Office of Environmental Health and Safety

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NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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MAY 15 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:

South Shores Magnet School for the Visual and Performing Arts –Portable Replacement Project

Project Location – Specific:

The South Shores Magnet School for the Visual and Performing Arts (South Shores) Portable Replacement Project (herein referred to as the "Project") will be located on the two-tiered 8.9-acre South Shores campus (Campus). South Shores is located at 2060 W. 35th Street in San Pedro, and is bound by a hillside to the north and west, 35th Street to the south and Abalone Avenue to the east. The Campus is in a residential area near the southern end of the Palos Verdes Peninsula, overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The major street near the school is West 25th Street approximately 0.13 miles north of the Campus.

Project Location – City:

Los Angeles (San Pedro)

Project Location – County:

Los Angeles

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Project will replace temporary portable buildings with permanent facilities. The Project will entail: the removal of seven portable/relocatable buildings containing 12 classrooms; the construction of one permanent building with 12 classrooms, and support spaces; construction of a new food service facility; placement of interim classrooms and facilities during construction; Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance components to provide access to the interim and new facilities, including a new ramp to the upper tier of the Campus; infrastructure upgrades as required to support the new facilities; installation of a new site-wide fire alarm system; and restoration of the landscape, hardscape, and playground areas where portables have been removed.

The primary purpose of the Project is to replace portable buildings with permanent buildings. The Project will be implemented per all applicable local and State regulations, as well as all District Standards and Specifications; such as

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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.*

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those provided in LAUSD's Program Environmental Impact Report for the School Upgrade Program.¹ The Project will be constructed per Division of State Architect approved plans. The Project would not cause an increase in student capacity or enrollment and would not result in an increase in the intensity of use. The beneficiaries of the Project include students and staff at South Shores and the community at large who may request access to the school facilities and grounds pursuant to the Civic Center Act (CA Ed. Code Sections 38130 - 38139). Construction of the Project is anticipated to take approximately two years.

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 15311 – Accessory 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 includes infrastructure upgrades, restoration of landscape, hardscape, and playground areas where portables have been removed, and ADA access components to provide access to the interim and new facilities. These improvements constitute minor alterations of the existing facilities at South Shores. The Project will be installed completely within the boundaries of the existing Campus and will not require or result in the expansion of use beyond the existing Campus. Therefore, the Project fulfills the requirements for a Class 1 Categorical Exemption.

Section 15302 Replacement or Reconstruction

Class 2 consists of replacement or reconstruction of 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, including but not limited to:

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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- Replacement or reconstruction of existing schools and hospitals to provide earthquake resistant structures which do not increase capacity more than 50 percent.
- Replacement or reconstruction of existing utility systems and/or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of capacity.

The Project will replace classrooms in portable buildings with an equivalent number of classrooms in permanent buildings at South Shores. Interim classrooms will be used during construction of the new permanent buildings. The new permanent buildings will have substantially the same purpose as the portable buildings being replaced and there will be no expansion of capacity. The Project also includes ADA access components, infrastructure upgrades, and installation of a new site-wide fire alarm system. These components of the Project qualify as the replacement or reconstruction of existing school structures and facilities. Therefore, the Project fulfills the requirements for a Class 2 Categorical Exemption.

Section 15311 Accessory Structures

Class 11 consists of construction or placement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities, including, but not limited to, on premise signs and small parking lots.

The Project includes ADA access components and installation of a new site-wide fire alarm system. These components of the Project qualify as the construction or placement of minor structures accessory to existing school facilities. Therefore, the Project fulfills the requirements for a Class 11 Categorical Exemption.

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 includes the construction of permanent classrooms and the placement of interim portable classrooms during the construction of the permanent classrooms. These components of the Project qualify as minor additions to schools. The interim classrooms will be used to offset the classrooms not in use during construction. The interim classrooms will be removed once construction is complete and will not increase the student capacity or the number of classrooms. The permanent facilities installed will not increase the student capacity or the number of classrooms at South Shores. Therefore, the Project fulfills the requirements for a Class 14 Categorical Exemption.

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 would be located on the existing Campus. The Campus is fully developed and situated within an urban community.³ The Project site has not been designated as a biologically sensitive location. The nearest sensitive environment to the Project site is a Critical Habitat area for Coastal California gnatcatcher, located approximately 0.3 miles from the northwest of the Campus.^{4,5} Therefore, the Project will not impact sensitive environments or locations.

³ City of Los Angeles Planning Department, *Zoning and Information Management System*, <http://zimas.lacity.org/>, accessed December 2017.

⁴ Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, http://gis.planning.lacounty.gov/GIS-NET3_Public/Viewer.html, accessed December 2017

⁵ United States Fish and Wildlife Service Critical Habitat Portal, <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/report/table/critical-habitat.html> accessed December 2017

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

LAUSD is planning to implement portable replacement projects at other LAUSD campuses. So, while there will be successive projects of the same type, they will not occur at South Shores. Therefore, there will be no cumulative impacts because of 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 associated with the Project that will have a significant effect on the environment. The Project will likely result in the removal of three Western Sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*) trees. The Western Sycamore is a Southern California native tree species that is Protected in the City of Los Angeles. LAUSD will follow the City of Los Angeles' procedures for protected tree removal as established in the City's Protected Tree Ordinance or an equivalent LAUSD process. As such, each protected tree to be removed will either be relocated to another location on the Campus or will be replaced within the Campus by at least two trees of a protected variety as defined in the Los Angeles Municipal Code. If replacement trees are planted, the size of each replacement tree shall be a 15-gallon, or larger, specimen, measuring one inch or more in diameter at a point one foot above the base, and not less than seven feet in height, measured from the base.⁶ With adherence to the City of Los Angeles' procedures for protected tree removal or an equivalent LAUSD process, there would be no significant effect on the environment related to the removal of protected trees. If tree 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 Environmental Impact Report for the School Upgrade Program (Program EIR).⁷ Therefore, compliance with the provisions of LAUSD's Program EIR and District policies would ensure that there is not a reasonable possibility that the Project would have a significant effect on the environment due to unforeseen circumstances.

The Project will require ground disturbance associated with grading, infrastructure upgrades, landscaping, hardscaping, and foundation installation. These activities are not considered unusual circumstances for the classes of projects under which an exemption is claimed. Nevertheless, consideration must be given to the management of pavement removal and excavated soils associated with earthwork activities for the Project. As the Project involves the removal of pavement, soil sampling and testing for characterization is required prior to demolition and removal of the paving materials. 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 Office of Environmental Health & Safety (OEHS) must be notified to provide oversight 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 other applicable environmental agency rules and requirements.⁸ Furthermore, as set forth in standard conditions of approval 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

⁶ City of Los Angeles, "Ordinance No. 177404 (Protected Tree Ordinance)," https://cityplanning.lacity.org/Code_Studies/Other/ProtectedTreeOrd.pdf, 2006.

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

⁸ http://www.laschools.org/documents/file?file_id=219798234&show_all_versions_p=t

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resources), tanks or seepage pits or stained/odoriferous soils.⁹ Lastly, any construction and demolition waste shall be recycled to the maximum extent feasible per standard condition of approval SC-USS-1 of the Program EIR.¹⁰ Therefore, the Project would 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 scenic highway;*

South Shores is located approximately 35 miles south of State Route 2 (SR 2), the nearest officially designated State scenic highway.¹¹ The Campus is not visible from and does not provide views to SR2. Therefore, the Project will not result in damage to scenic resources or similar resources within a highway that is 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 which is not included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.¹² 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.*

The South Shores Campus was constructed in 1958 and therefore meets the 45-year age criterion for consideration as a historic resource. A reconnaissance survey in 2017 found that the school is not eligible for listing in the California Register and is therefore not considered a historical resource pursuant to CEQA.¹³ The Campus and their buildings do not meet the standards described in the Los Angeles Unified School District Historic Context Statement, 1870-1969 for eligibility under any applicable criteria related to LAUSD, nor do they represent an outstanding or distinctive example of architectural design or the work of a master architect. Research conducted to date did not reveal that the Campus was the site of a significant event or pattern of development or that the Campus was associated with a person of significance in the community, state, or nation. Therefore, the Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in a historic resource.

⁹ LAUSD OEHS, "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 http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16_livability/scenic_highways/; accessed December 2017.

¹² http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Cortese_List.cfm, accessed December 2017.

¹³ LAUSD OEHS, "Historic Resources Inventory," December 2017.

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Signed by:



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Date:

5/8/18