

Los Angeles Unified School District

Office of Environmental Health and Safety

ALBERTO M. CARVALHO
Superintendent

CARLOS A. TORRES
Director, Environmental Health and Safety

JENNIFER FLORES
Deputy Director, Environmental Health and Safety

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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JUN 22 2022

DEAN C. LOGAN
REGISTRAR-RECORDER/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:

Venice High School New Gate Installation

Project Location – Specific:

The Venice High School New Gate Installation Project ("Project") will be located on the Venice High School campus. Venice High School is located at 13000 West Venice Boulevard in the City of Los Angeles. The campus is bound on the north by Venice Boulevard, on the northeast by residential properties which face Lyceum Avenue, on the southeast by Zanja Street, and on the northwest by Walgrove Avenue. The Project will specifically occur at the entrance of the campus between the Administrative Building, the East Building, and the West Building.

Project Location – City:

Los Angeles

Project Location – County:

Los Angeles

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Project will entail the installation of a new wrought-iron fence and gate at the campus entrance between the Administrative Building and the East and West Buildings.

There will be no increase in capacity, enrollment or intensity of use as a result of the Project. The Project will be constructed per Division of State Architect (DSA) approved design specifications. The Project will be implemented pursuant to all applicable State, federal, and local regulations and all applicable LAUSD specifications, standards, and/or guidelines, including those in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the updated Standard Conditions of Approval for District Construction, Upgrade, and Improvement Projects as adopted by the Board of Education in February 2019.¹ 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 facilities and grounds pursuant to the Civic Center Act (CA Ed. Code §§38130-38139).

¹ LAUSD OEHS, "Standard Conditions of Approval for District Construction, Upgrade, and Improvements Projects". Adopted by the Board of Education on February 5, 2019.

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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Should the Project be altered from the improvements that are described above, LAUSD's Office of Environmental Health & Safety (OEHS) must be notified immediately to ensure that these activities are conducted in compliance with the required standards.

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 15303 – New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures*
- ☐ Statutory Exemption:

Reasons why project is exempt:

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 numbers of structures described in this section are the maximum allowable on any legal parcel.

As discussed in the project description, the Project will entail the installation of a new wrought-iron fence and gate at the campus entrance between the Administrative Building and the East and West Buildings. Therefore, the Project meets the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15303 (Class 3).

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. Venice High School is primarily surrounded by residential properties and there are commercial properties located to the north/northwest. 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.³ The Project is anticipated to occur during the avian nesting season (February 1 – August 31), as such LAUSD's Office of Environmental Health and

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

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

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Safety would determine whether nesting birds or bats are present in any of the trees, buildings, or structures that will be removed. If nesting birds or bats are present, standard condition (SC) SC-BIO-3 which identifies measures for construction related disturbances near or directly to bird or bat nesting sites.⁴ 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. There is an interior ceiling restoration effort in the Venice High School Auditorium that is ongoing. A campus-wide comprehensive modernization project is also under construction at the campus. However, the limited scope and schedule associated with the Project, combined with the on-going work will not have the potential to result in or create new or greater impacts. The Project will occur in an area where no other projects are currently occurring. The Project will be scheduled as to not impede the existing efforts. Additionally, this Project will not result in any operational impacts or any significant impacts. There are no other known successive projects of the same type or scale planned for the campus. 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 upgrades associated with the Project are comparable to other modernizations and improvements that are being completed throughout the District under the School Upgrade Program. 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, 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 tree removal is scheduled to occur between February 1 and August 31, a nesting bird survey would be performed prior to removal activities, per LAUSD's Standard Conditions of Approval (SC) SC-BIO-3 of the Standard Conditions of Approval for District Construction, Upgrade, and Improvements Projects as adopted by the Board of Education in February 2019.⁵

If construction or earthmoving activities require import or export of soils and materials, OEHS must be notified to provide oversight to ensure that the import and/or export of soils are conducted in compliance with the requirements of District Specification Section 01 4524.⁶ Any variances for compliance with Specification Section 01 4524 and SCAQMD Rule 1466 must be approved by OEHS.

Furthermore, as set forth in SC-CUL-7, SC-CUL-9, SC-CUL-10, and SC-CUL-11, construction activities must be stopped immediately and OEHS notified upon discovery of subsurface features, such as buried resources (i.e.,

⁴ LAUSD OEHS, "School Upgrade Program Final Environmental Impact Report," <http://achieve.lausd.net/ceqa>, Adopted by the Board of Education on November 10, 2015.

⁵ LAUSD OEHS, "Standard Conditions of Approval for District Construction, Upgrade, and Improvement Projects". Adopted by the Board of Education on February 5, 2019.

⁶ LAUSD OEHS, "01 4524 Environmental Import/Export Material Testing". Available at: http://www.laschools.org/documents/file?file_id=219798234&show_all_versions_p=t

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paleontological resources, archaeological resources), tanks or seepage pits, or stained/odoriferous soils.⁷ Lastly, any construction and demolition waste shall be recycled to the maximum extent feasible per SC-USS-1.⁸ 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;*

Venice High School is located within approximately 21 miles southwest of State Route 2 Angeles Crest Highway (SR2), an officially designated State scenic highway.⁹ 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.¹⁰ 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.*

Venice High School opened in 1911. Venice High School is assigned a California Historical Resource Status Codes of "3S" and "3CS," which means that it appears eligible for the National Register and California Register through survey evaluation.¹¹ The District's Historic Preservation Specialist and Coordinator provided review and guidance on the proposed design to ensure that the Project is in conformance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings*.¹²

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.

Secretary's Standards conformance review was completed by OEHS's Historic Preservation Specialist for Venice HS to ensure compliance with applicable guidelines (the *Secretary's Standards* and *Los Angeles Unified School District Design Guidelines and Treatment Approaches for Historic Schools (LAUSD Design Guidelines)*). The *Secretary's Standards* conformance reviews found that the Project conforms to the *Secretary's Standards* at

⁷ LAUSD OEHS, "Standard Conditions of Approval for District Construction, Upgrade, and Improvements Projects". Adopted by the Board of Education on February 5, 2019.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ 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 February 2022.

¹⁰ California Department of Toxic Substances Control. DTSC Databases. Available at: <http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/database/>. Accessed February 2022.

¹¹ LAUSD. 2015. Character-Defining Features Memorandum (CDFM) for Venice High School, 13000 Venice Boulevard, Los Angeles, California, 90064. Los Angeles, CA.

¹² 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*.

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Venice HS.¹³ As the work at the school shall conform with the *Secretary's Standards* and the *LAUSD Design Guidelines*, OEHS' Historical Preservation Specialist has determined that the Project meets the requirements specified in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(3) and will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Should the scope of the Project activities be altered from the components that are 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 would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Prepared By:

Christy Wong
CEQA Project Manager/Contract Professional

Phone and Email:

(213) 241-3394
cp-christy.wong@LAUSD.net

Signed by:



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

Date:

6/9/2022

¹³ LAUSD OEHS. 2022. "Venice HS SOIS Compliance Review"