

# Los Angeles Unified School District

## Office of Environmental Health and Safety

ALBERTO M. CARVALHO  
Superintendent of Schools

CARLOS A. TORRES  
Director, Environmental Health and Safety

JENNIFER FLORES  
Deputy Director, Environmental Health and Safety

### NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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OCT 24 2023

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 S. Beaudry Avenue  
21<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

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**Project Title:**

Athletic Facilities Upgrade at Reseda Charter High School

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**Project Location – Specific:**

Reseda Charter High School – 18230 Kittridge Street, Reseda, California 91335

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**Project Location – City:**

Los Angeles

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**Project Location – County:**

Los Angeles

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

The proposed project (Project) will upgrade the existing athletic field areas of Reseda Charter HS (Campus). On the existing athletic field area of Reseda Charter HS, the Project will remove and replace the existing decomposed granite track with a new synthetic running track and renovate the existing natural grass football/soccer field with new sod and irrigation and associated stormwater mitigation (Exhibit A). The Project will also relocate and remove existing minor accessory structures, including sanitary buildings and ticket booths. The activity would affect approximately 147,205 square feet of the existing athletic field area. The Board of Education approved the project's budget of \$9,117,846 on June 20, 2023.

Minor work includes improvements to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal requirements including those of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), Division of State Architect (DSA), California Environmental Quality (CEQA), and Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC).

The Project will be implemented pursuant to all applicable State, federal, and local regulations and all applicable Los Angeles Unified School District (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 Improvements Projects (SC) as adopted by the Board of

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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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Education on February 2019. LAUSD's SCs, design guidelines, and best management practices are designed to be incorporated into the Project design in order to avoid or limit potential adverse impacts associated with the District's projects.

The beneficiaries of the Project include Reseda Charter HS students, faculty, staff, families, school supporters, and the community at large who may request access to the Campus pursuant to the Civic Center Act (CA Ed. Code Sections 38130 - 38139). The proposed athletic facilities upgrades will support the schools' physical education program, competitive athletic programs and allow the schools to host athletic events and other school community events. The upgraded athletic facilities, once completed, will provide modern high-performance athletic facilities that support physical educational programs, student athletic achievement, and competitive athletic programs. In 2022-23, the athletic program of Reseda Charter HS included 561 athletes and 13 athletic teams.

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**Name of Public Agency Approving the Project:**

Los Angeles Unified School District

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**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:**

Los Angeles Unified School District

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**Exempt Status: (check one below)**

- ☐ Ministerial [Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080(b)(1); CEQA Guidelines Section 15268<sup>1</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 15303 – New Construction Minor Alterations*
  - *CEQA Guidelines Section 15311 – Accessory Structures*
- ☐ 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 proposed Project will upgrade existing athletic field facilities to accommodate synthetic running track, natural grass football/soccer field, and other associated upgrades, including landscape, hardscape, and infrastructure. Therefore, the Project fulfills the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.

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<sup>1</sup> CEQA Guidelines can be found at California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000 - Section 15387.



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#### 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.

The proposed Project will include relocation and removal of existing minor accessory structures, demolition and removal of existing decomposed granite track and natural grass football/soccer field to upgrade the athletic field area of the Campus. The proposed Project will not result in an increase or alteration of the current use, function, or capacity of the existing Campus. Therefore, the Project fulfills the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15302.

#### 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 to the structure.

The proposed Project will include the removal and relocation of small accessory structures such as sanitary buildings and ticket booths and installation of ADA-compliant path of travel improvements. Therefore, the Project satisfies the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15303.

#### Section 15311 – Accessory Structures

Class 11 consists of construction or replacement 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 proposed Project will include the removal and relocation of small accessory structures such as sanitary buildings and ticket booths and installation of ADA-compliant path of travel improvements. These structures are minor accessories to the existing school Campus. Therefore, the Project satisfies the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15311.

#### 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 site is a fully developed Campus within the heavily urbanized area of San Fernando Valley surrounded by residential neighborhoods, and open spaces and parks that are not an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.<sup>2</sup> The nearest significant

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<sup>2</sup> City of Los Angeles Planning Department, *Zoning and Information Management System*, <http://zimas.lacity.org/>, accessed September 2023.



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ecological area (SEA) is the Santa Monica Mountains SEA located 2.6 miles south of Reseda Charter HS.<sup>3</sup> The nearest sensitive environment to the Project site is the Coastal California gnatcatcher habitat, located approximately 7 miles northeast, and Braunton's milk-vetch habitat located approximately 7 miles west and southwest.<sup>4,5</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 would occur at the same place over time;*

The Campus is an active school site and there will likely be ongoing maintenance activities and minor projects on the Campus to keep the schools operational. There are currently no known successive projects of the same type or scale planned for the Campus. As the Project would not result in any lasting impacts once construction of the Project is complete, the Project would not contribute to cumulative impacts when considered with expected successive projects. 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 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. All tree trimming and removal conducted on District property is required to adhere to the procedures described in the LAUSD OEHS Tree Trimming and Removal Procedure.<sup>6</sup> 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 standard condition (SC) of approval SC-BIO-3 of the Program EIR.<sup>7</sup>

The Project may include minor ground-disturbing activities. 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. If construction or earthmoving activities require import or export of soils and materials, 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

<sup>3</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 September 2023.

<sup>4</sup> United States Fish and Wildlife Service Critical Habitat Portal, <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/report/table/critical-habitat.html> accessed September 2023.

<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 September 2023.

<sup>6</sup> LAUSD OEHS, "Tree Trimming and Removal Procedure," <https://achieve.lausd.net/ceqa>

<sup>7</sup> LAUSD OEHS, "School Upgrade Program Final Environmental Impact Report," <https://www.lausd.org/CEQA>, Adopted by the Board of Education on November 10, 2015.



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environmental agency rules and requirements.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, as set forth in SC-CUL-6, SC-CUL-7, SC-CUL-10, and SC-CUL-11 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.<sup>9</sup> Lastly, any construction and demolition waste shall be recycled to the maximum extent feasible per SC-USS-1 of the Program EIR.<sup>10</sup> 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;*

The closest designated state scenic highway to the Project site is the Topanga Canyon State Scenic Highway, a 2.5-mile portion of State Route 27 (SR-27), which is located approximately 8.3 miles southeast of Reseda Charter HS.<sup>11</sup> The Project would not result in the removal of historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or other scenic resources. 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 site is not located on any site that are included on any list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.<sup>12</sup> 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.*

Reseda Charter HS is over 45 years old, meeting the state of California's threshold for review as potential historic resources and requiring evaluations for historic eligibility. However, LAUSD's Historic Preservation Specialist identified Reseda Charter HS as ineligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR).

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 will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

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<sup>8</sup> LAUSD OEHS, "Section 01 4524 Environmental Import/Export Materials Testing", [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)

<sup>9</sup> LAUSD OEHS, "School Upgrade Program Final Environmental Impact Report," <https://www.lausd.org/CEQA>, Adopted by the Board of Education on November 10, 2015.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</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 September 2023.

<sup>12</sup> California Department of Toxic Substances, [http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Cortese\\_List.cfm](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Cortese_List.cfm), accessed September 2023.

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Prepared By:

Bryan Ramos Fernandez, AICP  
CEQA Project Manager/Contract Professional

Signed by:

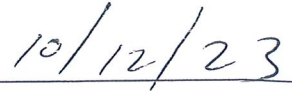


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Date:



Attachment: Exhibit A – Site Plan



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EXHIBIT A -SITE PLAN (not to scale)

