

**Notice of Exemption**

**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

County Clerk

County of: San Bernardino  
385 North Arrowhead, 2nd Floor  
San Bernardino, CA 92410

**From:** (Public Agency): Fontana Unified School District  
9680 Citrus Avenue  
Fontana, CA 92335

(Address)

**DATE FILED & POSTED**

Posted On: 09/06/2019

Removed On: 10-15-2019

Receipt No: 36-D1062019-619

Project Title: Sierra Lakes Elementary School Parking Lot Expansion

Project Applicant: Fontana USD

Project Location - Specific:

5740 Avenal Place - southern end of campus

Project Location - City: Fontana Project Location - County: San Bernardino

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The District proposes to expand its existing turnaround to create a new parking lot and additional driveway in the southern end of the Sierra Lakes ES campus. The new parking lot will include a total of 72 parking spaces, ADA accessible curb ramp, sidewalk, parking lot asphaltic concrete paving, fencing and gates, signage, and lighting fixtures.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Fontana Unified School District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Timothy DeLand, Director of Facilities Planning

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

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Class 3, CCR §15303, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures; Class 11, CCR §15311, Accessory Structures
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_

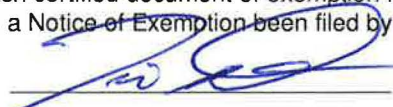
Reasons why project is exempt:

The project involves expansions of existing turnaround to create a new parking lot and additional driveway in the southern end of the Sierra Lakes Elementary School campus. The new parking lot will include a total of 72 parking spaces, ADA accessible curb ramp, sidewalk, parking lot asphaltic concrete paving, fencing and gates, signage, and lighting fixtures. No expansion of existing school capacity or changes in facility use would occur; therefore, the project is exempt from CEQA under Section 15303 and 15311. The proposed project was also reviewed for possible exceptions under Section 15300.2 and found that the exceptions do not apply. See Attachment to Notice of Exemption for further explanation of the evaluation, which is available for review at the FUSD's Facilities Department.

Lead Agency  
Contact Person: Timothy DeLand Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 909-357-7528

**If filed by applicant:**

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project?  Yes  No

Signature:  Date: 8/20/19 Title: Director

Signed by Lead Agency  Signed by Applicant

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.  
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: SEP 06 2019

**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**

Revised 2011

**Attachment to Notice of Exemption**  
**SIERRA LAKES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PARKING LOT EXPANSION**  
**Fontana Unified School District**  
**SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**

The Fontana Unified School District (District) proposes to expand its existing turnaround to create a new parking lot and additional driveway at Sierra Lakes Elementary School (Sierra Lakes ES). This supplemental information provides justification for the Categorical Exemption pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines under California Code of Regulations, Title 14 § 15301.

## **1. EXISTING CONDITIONS**

### **PROJECT LOCATION**

The project site is at Sierra Lakes ES at 5740 Avenal Place, in the City of Fontana, in San Bernardino County. Regional access to the campus is from State Route 210 (Foothill Freeway), approximately 0.87 mile to the south; and Interstate 15, approximately 1.5 mile to the west of the campus. The Sierra Lakes ES campus is bordered by Summit Avenue to the north, Citrus Avenue to the west, Avenal Place to the southeast, and the Patricia Marrujo Park to the south (see Figure 1, *Regional Location and Figure 2, Local Vicinity*).

### **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Sierra Lakes ES is a Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade public school with a 2018/2019 enrollment of 644 students, according to the California Department of Education (CDE) (CDE 2019). The campus is currently developed with 24 permanent classrooms, a library, cafeteria/multipurpose room with a stage area, six portable classrooms, administration offices, staff/visitors parking/drop-off areas, a multipurpose field, hardcourts, pedestrian walkways, and landscaped areas (FUSD 2019). Main vehicular access to the Sierra Lakes ES student loading zone and parking lots is provided via a driveway on Avenal Place (see Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*).

### **GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING**

The General Plan Land Use designation is Public Facilities (P-PF) (Fontana, 2018). The Sierra Lakes ES is part of the Sierra Lakes Specific Plan and it is zoned as School under the Specific Plan (Fontana 2005).

### **SURROUNDING LAND USES**

The Sierra Lakes ES campus surrounded by suburban development and vacant land. Single-family homes border the campus directly to the east and southeast along with the Patricia Marrujo Park directly to the south. To the east across Citrus Avenue is a semi-underground concrete water storage tank and to the north across Summit Avenue is vacant land.

## **2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The District proposes to expand its existing turnaround along Citrus Avenue to create a new parking lot and additional driveway in the southern end of the Sierra Lakes ES campus (see Figure 4, *Site Plan*). The new parking lot will include a total of 72 parking spaces, ADA accessible curb ramp, sidewalk, parking lot asphaltic concrete paving, fencing and gates, signage, and lighting fixtures. Trenching to power the new parking lot lighting will be brought in from the main electrical service locate on the southeast corner of the main campus buildings. Improvements would occur on campus, and no off-site improvements would be included as part of the project. The project does not involve an increase in student capacity and is intended to improve parking occupancy at the campus.

## CONSTRUCTION

The expansion of the parking lot will be implemented in Fall 2019. School administration and the construction contractor will work together to coordinate and stay informed about construction activities, location, and schedule. All construction equipment and workers would be located within the boundaries of the campus and would not interfere with school operations. Contractors will adhere to construction noise regulations to avoid disruption to campus operations. No subterranean construction would occur; as no new building construction would occur.

### 3. REASONS WHY THE PROJECT IS EXEMPT

The project is exempt from further environmental review under the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code §§ 21000 et seq.) because it is consistent with Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures, and Class 11 Accessory Structures, as explained below.

- » **Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures (CEQA Guidelines § 15303)** consists of the 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.
- » **Class 11, Accessory Structures (CEQA Guidelines § 15311)** consists of construction, or placement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities, including but not limited to:
  - (a) On-Premise signs;
  - (b) Small parking lots;
  - (c) Placement of seasonal or temporary use items such as lifeguard towers, mobile food units, portable restrooms, or similar items in generally the same locations from time to time in publicly owned parks, stadiums, or other facilities designed for public use.

The project involves the expansion of its existing turnaround to create a new parking lot with 72 spaces on the existing Sierra Lakes ES campus. The new parking lot will include the construction of small new equipment and facilities such as lighting, fences and gates, new sidewalk, and associated stripping and signage. No new building construction will occur. No changes in the Sierra Lakes ES occupancy capacities or square footage increases will occur, and no off-campus improvements will occur. Existing uses of the facility as an elementary school would stay the same under the proposed project.

### 4. REVIEW OF EXCEPTIONS TO THE CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION

The project has been reviewed under CEQA Guidelines § 15300.2 - Exceptions, for any characteristics or circumstances that might invalidate findings that the project is exempt from CEQA. Each exception is listed below followed by an assessment of whether that exception applies to the project.

- (a) **Location.** Classes 3,4,5,6 and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project would be located—a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.

The project site is on an existing school campus surrounded by developed residential uses, open space, and vacant land. The campus has buildings, asphalt hardcourts and parking lots, concrete driveways and walkways, turf playfields, and ornamental landscaping. Due to the school's developed nature and frequent human disturbance, it does not contain any sensitive biological species or habitat. No mapped wetlands exist on the site (FWS 2019). A water storage facility exists directly to the west of the site across Citrus Avenue. Additionally, there is no evidence of hazardous materials or substances (see section (e) below). Therefore, this exception does not apply to the project.

**(b) Cumulative Impacts.** All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.

No other cumulative projects are ongoing at the project site. Additional District projects are currently underway at nearby schools; however, there are no other known successive projects—planned, approved, or under construction—of the same type at or near the school that when combined with the project would result in a cumulative environmental impact. This exception does not apply to the proposed project.

**(c) Significant Effects.** A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

The project site is on a currently occupied elementary school campus and surrounded by residential development, open space, and vacant land. There is no reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. Proposed improvements will not alter the capacity of the campus or existing uses. The construction manager will execute construction activities per current local, state, and federal laws, regulations, construction Best Management Practices, District standards and guidelines. Operation of the elementary school would not change. Facility improvements have been designed to enhance pick-up and drop-off circulation and increase parking capacity on-site. This exemption does not apply to the proposed project.

**(d) Scenic Highways.** A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which 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.

There are no designated State scenic highways near the Sierra Lakes ES campus. According to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) California Scenic Highway Mapping System, the closest eligible state scenic highway is State Route 138, approximately 11 miles to the northeast (Caltrans 2019). The project would not affect this highway due to intervening development and the types of surface improvements proposed. The project would not affect scenic resources along any officially designated or eligible scenic highways. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed project.

**(e) Hazardous Waste Sites.** A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5.

California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the compiling of lists of the following types of hazardous materials sites: hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action; hazardous waste discharges for which the State Water Quality Control Board has issued certain types of orders; public drinking water wells containing detectable levels of organic contaminants; underground storage tanks with reported unauthorized releases; and solid waste disposal facilities from which hazardous waste has migrated.

Five environmental databases were searched for hazardous materials sites on the site and within a quarter mile radius:

» GeoTracker. State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB 2015)

- » EnviroStor. Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC 2019)
- » EJScreen. US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA 2018)
- » EnviroMapper. US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA n.d.)
- » Solid Waste Information System. California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle 2019)

The database search did not return any sites within a 0.25-mile (1320 feet) radius. The project site is not identified on any of the databases; therefore, the project site is not identified as a hazardous materials site pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and the project would not create a hazard to the public. This exception does not apply to the proposed project.

- (f) **Historical Resources.** A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of historical resources. Under Public Resource Code § 21084.1, a historical resource is a resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources. Additionally, historical resources included in a local register of historical resources are presumed to be historically or culturally significant, and a lead agency can determine whether the resource may be an historical resource.

The Sierra Lakes ES was built in 2002 (FUSD 2019). There are no historic resources on or within a 0.25-mile radius of the campus that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NPS 2014), the California Register of Historical Resources (OHP n.d.), or as a California State Historical Landmark (OHP n.d.). Project implementation would not cause significant impacts to historical resources, and the historical resources exception would not apply to this project.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The proposed project at Sierra Lakes Elementary School is exempt from CEQA review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303 and 15311. As substantiated in this document, the proposed project would not meet the conditions specified in § 15300.2, Exceptions, of the CEQA Guidelines, and the project is categorically exempt under Class 3 and 11.

## 6. REFERENCES

- California Department of Education (CDE). 2019. DataQuest. Enrollment Report. 2018-2019 Enrollment by Grade. Sierra Lakes Elementary Report (36-67710-6119986).  
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- California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle). 2019. SWIS Facility/Site Search.  
<https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SWFacilities/Directory>
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2011, September 7. California Scenic Highway Mapping System.  
[http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16\\_livability/scenic\\_highways/index.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16_livability/scenic_highways/index.htm).
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State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). 2015. GeoTracker.  
<https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/map/?CMD=runreport&myaddress=5740+Avenal+Pl%2C+Fontana%2C+CA+92336>.

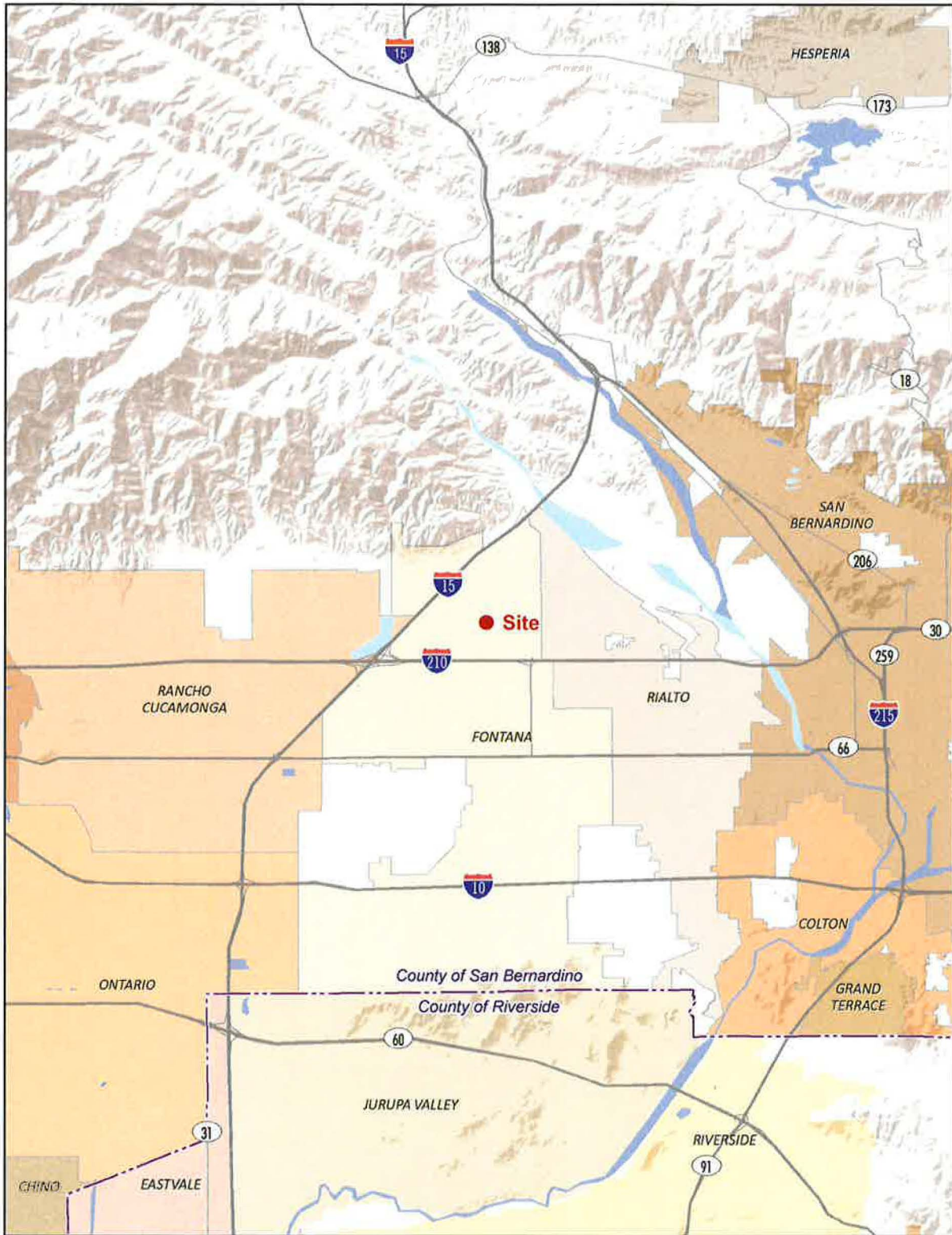
US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). 2018. EJSCREEN. <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>.

US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). n.d. EnviroMapper for EnviroFacts.  
<https://www3.epa.gov/enviro/index.html>.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS). 2019, May 5. National Wetlands Inventory – Wetlands Mapper.  
<https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/data/mapper.HTML>.



Figure 1 - Regional Location



Note: Unincorporated county areas are shown in white.

Source: ESRI, 2019



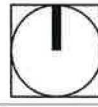


Figure 2 - Local Vicinity



--- School Boundary  
 — Project Boundary

0 2,000  
 Scale (Feet)



Source: ESRI, 2019

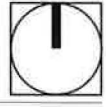


Figure 3 - Aerial Photograph



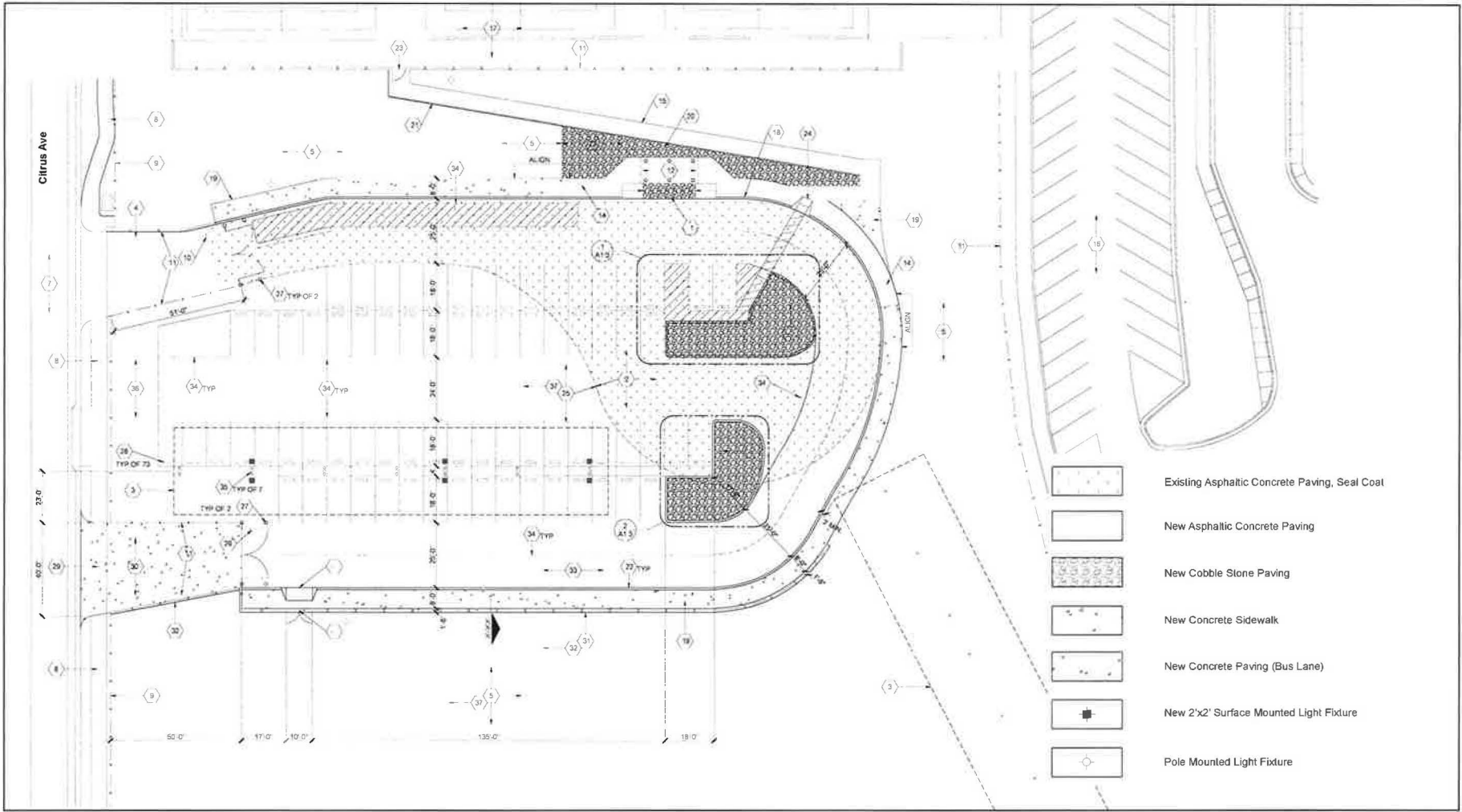
- School Boundary
- Project Boundary

0 200  
Scale (Feet)



Source: ESRI, 2019

Figure 4 - Site Plan



Source: Architecture 9, 2019

0 35  
 Scale (Feet)

