

Attachment to Notice of Exemption

CHAFFEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE RANCHO CUCAMONGA CAMPUS MODERNIZATION

Chaffey Community College District

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

The Chaffey Community College District (District) proposes to construct a brand new 75,300 square foot Library/Learning Commons building, as well as construct a 5,500 square foot addition to the Michael Anderson Campus Center (MACC) that would house a new kitchen and food serving space at its main campus in Rancho Cucamonga (Rancho Cucamonga Campus). 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 the Chaffey College Rancho Cucamonga Campus at 5885 Haven Avenue, in the City of Rancho Cucamonga, in San Bernardino County. Regional access to the campus is from State Route 210 (Foothill Freeway), approximately 0.49 mile to the south and Interstate 15, approximately 5 miles to the east of the campus. The Rancho Cucamonga Campus is bordered by Wilson Avenue to the north, Haven Avenue to the west, Banyan Street to the south, and residential uses to the east. (see Figure 1, *Regional Location* and Figure 2, *Local Vicinity*).

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Rancho Cucamonga Campus is one of the three Chaffey College locations. Chaffey College is a two-year public community college with a 2015/2016 enrollment of 28,280 students with 23,324 students at the Rancho Cucamonga Campus (Chaffey College 2016). The campus is currently developed with instructional buildings, offices, administration buildings, library, campus center, child development center, gymnasium, science labs, theater, parking lots, a football field, baseball and softball fields, soccer field, pool, tennis courts, pedestrian walkways, and landscaped areas. Main vehicular access to the Rancho Cucamonga Campus and parking lots is provided via Haven Avenue and Wilson Avenue (see Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*).

GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING

The project site is zoned Low Medium Residential and has a general plan land use designation of Schools (Rancho Cucamonga 2020a, 2020b). Under the City of Rancho Cucamonga Municipal Code, public colleges/universities are allowed under Low Medium Residential zoning upon issuance of a conditional use permit (Rancho Cucamonga 2020c).

SURROUNDING LAND USES

The Rancho Cucamonga Campus is primarily surrounded by residential uses. Single-family homes border the campus directly to the east. To the north across Wilson Avenue, west across Haven Avenue, and south across Banyan are single-family homes and Banyan School to the south.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The District proposes to construct a brand new 75,300 square foot Library/Learning Commons building and a 5,500 square foot addition to the Michael Anderson Campus Center (MACC) that would house a new kitchen and food serving space at the Rancho Cucamonga Campus. Many of the existing buildings on campus were constructed prior to its opening in 1960 which result in a lack sufficient space and a limitation on the use of innovation teaching methods and technologies. Built in 1959, the existing library will be vacated and a new Library/Learning Commons building will

be constructed to provide more space with electronic media support and improve accessibility and energy efficiency. The 5,500 square foot addition to the MACC would include a 2,750 square foot serving area and 2,750 square feet kitchen which include shared breakrooms and storage/processing space. 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 modernize the campus to serve the existing needs.

CONSTRUCTION

Construction of the proposed improvements will be implemented in Fall of 2021 and is anticipated to last approximately 18 months. 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 1 Existing Facilities, and Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures, as explained below.

- » **Class 1, Existing Facilities (CEQA Guidelines § 15301)** 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 existing or former use. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of use.
- » **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.

The project involves the vacating the existing library building and construction of a new Library/Learning Commons building and the construction of a kitchen and food serving space to the existing MMAC. The proposed improvements will include the minor alterations to the existing structures, with negligible expansion of the existing uses. Existing uses of the facility as a community college 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 community college campus surrounded by developed residential uses. The campus has buildings, asphalt hardcourts and parking lots, concrete driveways and walkways, 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. A riparian habit is identified on southern end of the campus near the parking lot and undeveloped land (FWS 2019). However, the proposed construction activities would not encroach on the riparian habitat, and standard best management practices would ensure that no impact occurs to the habitat. 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.

Campus wide improvements and construction projects are planned at the project site as part of the Rancho Cucamonga Master Plan Update. Campus wide improvements on the project site are planned to begin in Spring 2023, which would not overlap with the proposed project. An EIR would be prepared to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the Master Plan Update. Additionally, District wide projects currently underway at other campus locations of the Chaffey Community College. Construction schedules at other District school improvement sites could overlap with campus wide improvements at the project site, and with the proposed project. Therefore, there would be no significant impacts that could be combined to create a cumulative impact due to implementation of the proposed project. Similar projects at nearby schools would not have an impact on the proposed project as projects would be executed independently, and the proposed project, when combined with cumulative District projects, would not create a cumulative impact under CEQA. Cumulative impacts would not apply. 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 community college campus and surrounded by residential development. There is no reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. The air quality technical memorandum has been prepared to address the potential air quality and GHG emissions impacts associated with the proposed project and concluded that no significant impact would occur. The proposed project will not increase the capacity of the campus, nor change access to the campus. The proposed project is part of a larger modernization project ongoing at the project site. The construction manager will execute construction activities per current local, state, and federal laws, regulations, construction Best Management Practices, District standards and guidelines. The proposed project will support ongoing campus improvements This exemption does not apply to the proposed project.

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 Rancho Cucamonga 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 12.5 miles to the northeast (Caltrans 2020). 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.

(d) 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 2020)
- » 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 2020)

The database search did not return any sites within a 0.25-mile (1,320 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.

- (e) 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.

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 the Chaffey College Rancho Cucamonga campus is exempt from CEQA review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 and 15303. 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 1 and 3.

6. REFERENCES

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