

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: County of Los Angeles
County Clerk
Environmental Filings
Attn: Ms. Darla Neal
12400 Imperial Highway, Room 2001
Norwalk, California 90650
(562) 462-2122

From: County of Los Angeles
Department of Parks and Recreation
Planning & CEQA Section
1000 South Fremont Avenue Unit #40
A-9 West, Third Floor
Alhambra, California 91803

Project Title: The Arboretum Visitor Plaza Project

Project Location - Specific: Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden
301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA 91007

Project Location - City: Arcadia

Project Location - County: Los Angeles

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Arboretum Visitor Plaza Project (project) will create a new arrival and entrance experience for visitors to the LA County Arboretum and Botanic Garden. The project will improve accessibility and include new landscaping that prioritizes stormwater management through the use of rain gardens to receive and cleanse runoff. Specifically, the proposed project is comprised of the following components:

- The Arrival Plaza will expand the current entrance and include featured plantings that highlight regionally iconic plants.
- The Welcome Pavilion will restore the historic 1956 gatehouse with four admission ticket windows, including one ADA accessible window, and give more prominence and access to the membership office.
- The Welcome Plaza will be improved to include enhancements, such as a visitor information kiosk, adjacent seating, restrooms, and beverage hospitality, to better connect visitors with the educational experiences, botanical diversity, and family adventures of the Arboretum landscape.
- The South Lot Improvements will create accessible parking and an accessible path of travel from the existing South Parking Lot to the new Arrival Plaza.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Los Angeles County

Name of Public Agency Carrying Out Project: Los Angeles County

Exempt Status (check one):

Article 19. Categorical Exemptions

- Categorical Section 15301
Class 1 (a) (d) (h)
- Categorical Section 15303
Class 3 (e)
- Categorical Section 15304
Class 4 (a) (b)

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- County CEQA Guidelines Categorical Exemption
Class 1 (c) (d) (j)
- County CEQA Guidelines Categorical Exemption
Class 3 (b)
- County CEQA Guidelines Categorical Exemption
Class 4 (a) (c)

Reasons why project is exempt:

The project is consistent with State Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA. The expansion of current entrance and landscaping; and restoration of the historic 1956 gatehouse with four admission ticket windows, including one ADA accessible window are consistent with Section 15301 Class 1, which provides for repair, maintenance or minor alteration of existing public facilities. This includes but is not limited to Class 1(a) interior and exterior alterations, (d) for restoration or rehabilitation of deteriorated or damaged structures, facilities, or mechanical equipment to meet current standards of public health and safety and (h) for maintenance of existing landscaping.

The enhancements including a visitor information kiosk, adjacent seating, restrooms, and beverage hospitality are consistent with Section 15303 Class 3 which provides for construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures. This includes but is not limited to Class 3 (e) for small new structures.

The South Lot Improvements which include creation of accessible parking and an accessible path of travel from the existing South Parking Lot to the new Arrival Plaza and new landscaping that prioritizes stormwater management are consistent with Section 15304 Class 4 which provides for minor alteration to land. This includes but is not limited to Class 4 (a) for grading on land with a slope of less than 10 percent and (b) for new gardening or landscaping.

The project is also consistent with the County CEQA Guidelines. The expansion of current entrance and landscaping; and restoration of the historic 1956 gatehouse with four admission ticket windows, including one ADA accessible window are consistent with Class 1 which provides for repair, maintenance or minor alteration of existing public facilities. This includes but is not limited to Class 1 (c) for restoration or repair of buildings, structures, equipment, and appurtenances required because of accumulated maintenance not performed, (d) for interior and exterior alterations, and (j) for maintenance of existing landscaping.

The enhancements including a visitor information kiosk, adjacent seating, restrooms, and beverage hospitality are consistent with Class 3 which provides for construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures. This includes but is not limited to Class 3 (b) for accessory structures.

The South Lot Improvements which include creation of accessible parking and an accessible path of travel from the existing South Parking Lot to the new Arrival Plaza and new landscaping that prioritizes stormwater management are consistent with Class 4 which provides for minor alterations to land. This includes but is not limited to Class 4 (a) for grading on land with a slope of less than 10 percent and (c) for new gardening or landscaping.

The proposed use of Classes 3 & 4 Categorical Exemptions does not include activities that are excepted from the exemptions as defined in Section 15300.2 (a) of the CEQA Guidelines. Specifically, the specified activities do not impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern designated, precisely mapped, or officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.

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The County has considered the cumulative impact of the proposed activities and determined that the cumulative impact of the specified activities will not result in significant impacts on the environment that would constitute an exception to Classes 3 & 4 Categorical Exemptions as described in Section 15300.2 (b) of the CEQA Guidelines.

The County has considered the potential for significant impacts on the environment resulting from the specified activities and determined that there are no unusual circumstances that would result in significant effects on the environment constituting an exception to Classes 3 & 4 Categorical Exemptions as described in Section 15300.2 (c) of the CEQA Guidelines.

The specified activities will not result in damage to scenic resources, such as trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings or similar resources or involve work within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway that would constitute an exception to Classes 3 & 4 Categorical Exemptions as described in Section 15300.2 (d) of the CEQA Guidelines and Section 21084 (c) of the CEQA Statutes.

The specified activities do not involve work on a site included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code relating to solid and hazardous wastes and do not constitute an exception to Classes 3 & 4 Categorical Exemptions as described in the Section 15300.2 (e) of the CEQA Guidelines and Section 21084 (d) of the CEQA statutes.

The specified activities would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as specified in section 21084.1 of the CEQA Statutes and do not constitute an exception to Classes 3 & 4 Categorical Exemptions as described in Section 15300.2 (f) of the CEQA Guidelines and Section 21084.1 of the CEQA Statutes.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Julie Yom

(Area Code) Telephone/Ext. (626) 588-5311

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, Julie Yom, AICP

5/13/21

Date

Park Planner

Title

