

**LBUSD Stanford Middle School Portables Project
Notice of Exemption (NOE)**

The Long Beach Unified School District (District), as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), proposes to install refurbished portable classrooms at Stanford Middle School in order to improve classroom conditions, provide up-to-date equipment for student use, and create a safe educational environment.

Project Location

Stanford Middle School is located at 5871 E. Los Arcos Street, Long Beach, California 90815. Stanford Middle School is located on an approximately 15.16-acre property and encompasses approximately 113,000 square feet of existing permanent and portable buildings.

Description of Project

Goals and objectives under Measure E address four key areas which consists of repairs, technology, air conditioning and safety. The objective of the Project is for the District to provide 11 refurbished portable standard classrooms, one refurbished portable office, and one new portable restroom building, including Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ramps. The portable classrooms will initially serve as interim housing during the Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) upgrade project, and then will become classrooms used for permanent use after upgrades are completed and the aging portables on campus are removed. No increase in students or staff would result from the Proposed Project. The net increase in portable buildings after completion of the separate HVAC project (which includes removal of 10 portable classrooms) will be one additional portable classroom and one additional portable office. Overall, the goal is to improve classroom conditions, provide up-to-date equipment for student use, and create a safe educational environment.

The Project scope includes:

- Installation of eleven 24'x40' refurbished portable standard classrooms, one 24'x40' refurbished portable office, and one 12'x40' new portable restroom building
- Providing accessibility upgrades to path of travel, parking, and restrooms as required to meet current code and DSA requirements
- Removal and relocation of existing storage containers located in the Project area
- Removal of one existing tree along Albury Avenue and 5 trees within the campus interior
- Installation of fencing surrounding the additional portable classrooms

Reasons Why Project Is Exempt:

The proposed activity is a project subject to CEQA. However, it is exempt from further environmental analysis under Class 1, *Existing Facilities* (CEQA Guidelines §15301), Class 2, *Replacement or Reconstruction* (CEQA Guidelines §15302), Class 11 *Accessory Structures* (CEQA Guidelines §15311), and Class 14 *Minor Additions to Schools* (CEQA Guidelines §15314). Class 1 categorical exemption 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. Class 2 consists of the replacement or reconstruction of 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 of the structure replaced. Class 11 consists of construction, or placement of minor structures

accessory to existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities. Class 14 consists of minor additions to existing schools within existing school grounds where the addition does not increase original student capacity by more than 25% or ten classrooms, whichever is less.

The Proposed Project will result in installation of 11 refurbished portable classrooms, one refurbished portable office, and one portable restroom, relocation of existing storage containers, addition of new fencing for classrooms, ADA compliance upgrades, and path of travel improvements. After completion of the Stanford Portables Project, the District would begin the separate Stanford HVAC Project which would include the removal of 10 existing portable classrooms. The net increase in portable buildings after completion of the separate HVAC project will be one additional portable classroom and one additional portable office. The improvements will not involve an increase in student capacity, and will include repairs, maintenance, reconstruction, and minor additions to an existing school campus. The Proposed Project will not result in significant environmental impacts and is exempt from further review under the conditions in Article 19. Therefore, the application of Class 1, Class 2, Class 11, and Class 14 categorical exemptions is appropriate for the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project does not have the potential to trigger any of the exceptions identified in CEQA Guidelines §15300.2. Consequently, as documented below, the Proposed Project is exempt from further CEQA review.

- (a) **Location.** The improvements will occur entirely within the existing campus, which is located in an urbanized community. The existing conditions on and around the middle school are disturbed and paved ground and are not considered environmentally sensitive. Minor ground disturbance would occur during construction but will be limited to the existing school property on previously disturbed surfaces. The Proposed Project will not impact environmentally sensitive areas or an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern. This exception does not apply to the Proposed Project.
- (b) **Cumulative Impact.** Once Proposed Project has been approved by the District's Board of Education, project construction activities could begin in Spring 2023 and be completed within 6 months. Details of any other future projects are not yet clearly defined and thereby cannot be further evaluated at this time. Further, the majority of impacts associated with the Proposed Project will be temporary (the construction timeframe) and are limited to the immediate vicinity of Stanford Middle School. As such, no other cumulatively considerable projects have been identified that could incrementally contribute to the impacts associated with the Proposed Project. This exception does not apply to the Proposed Project.
- (c) **Significant Effect.** The portable classroom, office, and restroom installation; the ADA compliance upgrades; addition of fencing, removal of six trees on campus, storage container relocation, and other upgrades are not considered an unusual circumstance as campus updates are not unusual for school sites. All upgrades associated with the Proposed Project would be installed on or within existing facilities. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not appear visually incompatible with existing equipment and accessories on the Project site. Normal operations will be similar and consistent with current uses within the Project boundary.

The Proposed Project is located within a disturbed, urbanized environment in Long Beach. The campus vegetation is limited to ornamental landscaping, and it is anticipated that no candidate, sensitive, or special status species are anticipated to exist on or around the elementary school. With the removal of the trees, the District would follow standard best practices, including conducting a nesting bird survey if the tree removals are to occur during nesting bird season. The minor accessibility upgrades would result in minor ground disturbing

activities. The Proposed Project and will not impact any scenic vistas within the immediate area.

Therefore, no reasonable possibility exists that the Proposed Project would have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. Therefore, this exception does not apply to this Project. Please refer to the Initial Study Checklist (IS Checklist) for further details on potential impacts.

- (d) **Scenic Highways.** The nearest highways to the Proposed Project site are Interstate 405 (I-405) and Pacific Coast Highway, California State Highway 91 and California State Highway 19. I-405 runs approximately .18 miles north of the site, Highway 91 is located 5.3 miles north of the site, and Highway 19 is located 1.34 miles west of the site. Although portions of California State Highway 1 are classified as eligible for state scenic highway designation, the section nearest the Proposed Project site is not identified as being eligible or officially designated; and California State Highway 19 is not classified as eligible for state scenic highway designation (Caltrans 2019). Therefore, no impact to scenic highways would occur, and this exception does not apply to the Project.
- (e) **Hazardous Waste Sites.** Due to the time of original construction (1952) and campus expansion that has occurred since, it is likely that Stanford Middle School contains asbestos-containing materials (ACM)/asbestos-containing building materials (ACBM) and lead-based paint (LBP). However, the construction activities would primarily be in outdoor areas and would be monitored and comply with federal and state law to prevent exposure to hazardous material and reduce potential impacts during construction and operation to a level below significant. The Proposed Project site is not on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65862.5 (SWRCB 2022; DTSC 2022); therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in an impact associated with known hazardous materials sites. This exception does not apply to the Notice of Exemption.
- (f) **Historical Resources.** As part of the District-Wide Cultural Resources Assessment, PCR services concluded that Stanford Middle School is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion A, B, C and the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) under Criterion 1, 2, 3.

References:

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2019. California Scenic Highway Mapping System. Online URL: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16_livability/scenic_highways/

State Water Resources Control Board. 2022. GeoTracker Database. Online URL: <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov>

Department of Toxic Substances Control. 2022. EnviroStor Database. Online URL: <http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/>

Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD). 2017. Cultural Resource Assessment for Long Beach Unified School District. Online URL: <http://lbschoolbonds.net/pdfs/lbusd-part1-historic-resources-report-20170206-web.pdf>