

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: Office of Planning and Research
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County Clerk
County of Los Angeles
12400 Imperial Hwy, Rm 2001
Norwalk, CA 90650

From: Los Angeles County
Department of Health Services
238 E. 6th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90014

PROJECT TITLE: West Los Angeles Armory Shelter

PROJECT LOCATION -- Specific: 1300 Federal Avenue, Los Angeles CA 90025

PROJECT LOCATION – City: unincorporated island
entirely surrounded by City of Los Angeles

PROJECT LOCATION – County: Los Angeles

DESCRIPTION OF NATURE, PURPOSE, AND BENEFICIARIES OF PROJECT: On August 9, 2022, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, acting on behalf of the County of Los Angeles, authorized the Department of Health Services to 1) enter into a lease agreement with the State Department of General Services; 2) enter into funding agreements to carry out construction, 3) enter into a lease agreement with future operators. The project includes the construction and operation of a three-story, approximately 167-bed, 64,800 square foot shelter in the southwest corner of the site. A 160-bed winter shelter operated in the West Los Angeles Armory building for more than 10 years (ending operations in April 2020) would be discontinued on completion of the new shelter. The ground floor would include parking (approximately 49 spaces), security, storage (including bicycle storage), a trash room, loading area and electrical/mechanical space as well as an outdoor dog run to the south of the building. The second floor would include a women's dormitory (48 beds), women's washroom, an administrative area including 12 private offices, kitchen, dining room, library and three outdoor patios. The third floor would include a couple's dormitory and associated toilets and showers (30 beds for 15 couples), a men's dormitory (89 beds), multi-purpose room, recreation room, men's washroom, and two small outdoor patios. The building would include landscaping, low-level security and facility lighting on the exterior. The shelter would be considered a low-barrier navigation center as it would 1) offer services to connect people to permanent housing, 2) be linked to a system that coordinates participant intake, assessment and referrals, 3) comply with applicable codes, 4) have a system for entering client information, and 5) implement best practices to reduce barriers to entry (presence of partners, pets, storage of possessions, privacy). The facility would operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Outdoor patios and the dog run would be used 7 am to 11 pm daily. Construction would take approximately 16 months. A power line that crosses the site could be undergrounded and up to three utility poles removed or relocated; if relocated the building height and/or footprint may need to be modified. In addition to the shelter, a small parking structure (approximately 150 feet by 180 feet and two stories tall) would be constructed in the northeast corner of the Armory site to only replace parking area lost as a result of the shelter. The National Guard is requiring the parking garage as a condition of the lease with the County; it would include approximately 50 spaces would be lost at the shelter site and the parking garage itself would require the removal of a similar number of spaces.

NAME OF PUBLIC AGENCY APPROVING PROJECT: Los Angeles County

NAME OF PERSON OR AGENCY CARRYING OUT PROJECT: Los Angeles County

EXEMPT STATUS:

Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)91); 15268).

Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(a))

Emergency Project (Sec 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

Categorical Exemption: Class 2 Replacement or Reconstruction (Garage), Class 3 New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures (Garage), CEQA Guidelines Section 15303.

Statutory Exemption: Government Code Section 65660 – Low Barrier Navigation Centers

REASONS WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT: See attachment which is incorporated herein.

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT PERSON: Sarah Mahin, Deputy, Management Programs, LADHS **Telephone:** (213) 833-5350

IF FILED BY APPLICANT: Not Applicable

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: Sarah Mahin **Date:** August 9, 2022 **Title:** Deputy, Management Programs, LADHS

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing at OPR: Not applicable

West Los Angeles Armory Shelter Summary of Reasons Why Project is Exempt Attachment

Detailed documentation of the applicable exemptions and the inapplicability of the exceptions to the use of categorical exemptions (Section 15300.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines) is available for review at Department of Health Services, 238 E. 6th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90014. A summary of this documentation is provided below.

Government Code Sections 65660 and 65662 -- Low Barrier Navigation Center

CEQA does not apply to any action taken to approve a low barrier navigation. The project would meet the definition of a low-barrier navigation center. The project would 1) offer services to connect people to permanent housing, 2) be linked to a system that coordinates participant intake, assessment, and referrals, 3) comply with applicable codes, 4) have a system for entering client information, 5) implement best practices to reduce barriers to entry (presence of partners, pets, storage of possessions, privacy). A low-barrier navigation center is a use by right -- the site is in a nonresidential zone where the County may permit any public use (Government Code Section 65662). The National Guard is requiring the parking garage with replacement parking as a condition of the lease with the County that would allow the construction and operation of the shelter.

CEQA Section 21080(b)(4), CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(c) -- Emergency Project

Homelessness in the County of Los Angeles experienced a large increase from 2016 to January 2020 – prior to the pandemic. The County’s total homeless population increased to 66,436 in 2020 up approximately 12.7% from 2019. On October 30, 2018, the LA County Board of Supervisors declared a shelter crisis to address homelessness in unincorporated LA County. This project would provide an emergency shelter that would provide temporary housing and services to help transition people to permanent housing. The emergency shelter would help prevent further emergency for those served by the shelter and generally help in mitigating the emergency conditions associated with the shelter crisis.

State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15202 and 15303 – Class 2 Replacement or Reconstruction, and Class 3 - - New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures Categorical Exemption (Garage Portion of Project)

The project includes construction of a small parking garage that would provide replacement parking for that displaced by the shelter (and construction of the garage itself) in the northeast corner of the site. The parking structure would be approximately 150 feet by 180 feet and two stories tall and would replace parking area lost as a result of the shelter; construction could occur simultaneously with the construction of the shelter.

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 - Exceptions to the Use of Categorical Exemptions (Garage Portion of Project)

None of the exceptions to exemptions, found at Section 15300.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines would apply to invalidate the Class 3 categorical exemption. Based on the record, the County has determined the following: (a) the site is not located in a sensitive environment; (b) the project would not create significant cumulative impacts by contributing to impacts of successive projects of the same type in the same place; (c) there is no potential for the project to result in a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances; (d) the project would not result in damage to a scenic resource; (e) while the site is on a list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code (Leaking Underground Storage Tank) the case is closed; (f) the project would not include changes to the existing West Los Angeles Armory buildings (constructed in 1964) and therefore would not change the significance of any historical resource.