

Anaheim High School Track & Field Project Notice of Exemption (NOE)

The Anaheim Union High School District (District), as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), proposes to improve athletic facilities by providing an all-weather track & artificial turf field facility, with tiered bleachers, field lighting, and a press box.

Project Location

Anaheim High School is located at 811 W. Lincoln Avenue, Anaheim, CA 92805. Anaheim High School is located on a 35-acre property comprised of 15 permanent buildings and 17 portable buildings.

Description of Project

The cement bleachers built by the track in 1928 were condemned/demolished in 2019 and must be replaced. The Project consists of the replacement of the existing playfield with artificial turf and synthetic all-weather track, new irrigation system, and goalposts, field lighting, stormwater drainage improvements in the field by the introduction of rainwater collection chambers/retention basins, portable tiered bleachers, solar/shade canopies over the bleachers, new wall-mounted scoreboard, and path-of-travel improvements including concrete paving, fencing, and landscaping. The upgraded facility will offer enhanced exterior learning opportunities and increased safety for sports and student assemblies.

The Proposed Project will consist of the following upgrades:

- Replacement of the existing playfield with artificial turf and synthetic track including infiltration systems
- Replacement of goalposts
- Installation of field lighting
- Addition of metal solar shade structures with low voltage systems and solar panels
- Installation of tiered bleachers under the shade structures with lighting and Wi-Fi
- Addition of a new wall-mounted scoreboard
- Addition of an observational press box/band tower
- Provision of landscaping and access improvements
- Storm/rainwater retention system
- Flagpole
- Drinking fountains

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 the improvement of the existing track and field area at the existing high school. 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 high school are disturbed and paved ground and are not considered environmentally sensitive. 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 the Proposed Project has been approved by the District's Board of Education, project construction activities could begin in early 2023 and be completed within 12 months. The majority of impacts associated with the Proposed Project will be temporary (the construction timeframe) and are limited to the immediate vicinity of Anaheim High School. In addition, the area around the Project site is completely built-out, and no known projects have been identified in the area that would cause potential impacts. 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 activities associated with the upgrading of the existing track and field 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 Anaheim. 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. The majority of work associated with the Proposed Project would occur on the existing track and practice field area and would result in minor ground disturbing activities. Thus, the Proposed Project and will not involve the removal of any native vegetation or scenic trees, nor would it 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 5 (I-5) and California State Highway 91. I-5 runs approximately 0.4 mile west of the site and Highway 55 is located 2.8 miles east of the site. A portion of California State Highway 91, approximately 5.9 miles east of the Project site, is designated as a state scenic highway (Caltrans 2022); however, due to distance and intervening topography, the Project site is not within view of the scenic portion of the highway. The Proposed Project site is located in a developed, urban area with all work associated with the Proposed Project being located on the interior of the campus, away from West Lincoln Avenue. Therefore, no impact to scenic highways would occur, and this exception does not apply to the Project.
- (e) **Hazardous Waste Sites.** The Proposed Project will not include any significant structural renovations that would result in the accidental release of hazardous materials to the environment. Because work would all be completed on the existing track area of the school, no asbestos containing materials or lead containing materials are expected to be discovered. 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.** Anaheim High School is located on a 35-acre property comprised of 15 permanent buildings and 17 portable buildings. The school was established in 1896 with the current Art Deco main building, library, Cook Auditorium, gymnasium, and shop buildings completed in 1936 after the 1933 Long Beach Earthquake. Additional construction occurred in 1957 and 1972. A new two-story classroom building was completed in 2008 adding 47 standard classrooms and two science labs. A childcare relocatable was added in 2004 and 15 relocatable classrooms and restrooms were added in 2008. The Proposed Project is located within the Anaheim Colony Historic District which includes multiple architectural styles, with most homes in the area being built between 1910 to 1935 (City 2004). This district aims to preserve and protect existing buildings within the District. Work associated with the Proposed Project would be completed on the existing field and would not involve any improvements on the existing permanent buildings.

References:

Caltrans

2022. Scenic Highway Mapper. Accessed August 16, 2022 at:
https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46c_c8e8057116f1aaca

California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)

2022. Envirostor Database. Accessed August 16, 2022 at:
<https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/map/>

City of Anaheim (City)

2004. Final Anaheim General Plan and Zoning Code Update Environmental Impact Report. Accessed September 20, 2022 at:
<https://www.anaheim.net/DocumentCenter/View/2207/Cover-and-Table-of-Contents?bidId=>

State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)

2022. Geotracker Database. Accessed August 16, 2022 at:
<https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/map/>