



NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-0344

From: California State University, Long Beach
1250 N. Bellflower Boulevard
Long Beach, California 90815

Project Title: Hillside North Student Housing Project

Project Applicant: California State University, Long Beach

Project Location-Specific:

The project site is located on the California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) campus in the eastern portion of the City of Long Beach, California. The CSULB campus encompasses 322 acres and is bounded by East Atherton Street to the north, Palo Verde Avenue to the east, East 7th Street to the south, and Bellflower Boulevard to the west. Within the CSULB campus boundary, the project site is located in the Hillside College residential complex in the western portion of the campus. The Hillside College complex is bounded by Parking Lot G4 to the north, Merriam Way to the east, Beach Drive to the south, and Determination Drive to the west.

Project Location – City: Long Beach **Project Location – County:** Los Angeles

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

CSULB proposes to construct three new 5-story student housing buildings totaling approximately 108,000 square feet and containing 424 beds. The buildings would be configured to maximize beds and would include a mix of approximately 237 single- and double-occupancy units. The building would include shared kitchens, study space, a multi-purpose room, and satellite offices for student-support program Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). Landscaped informal green space areas will be provided to maximize outdoor common areas that will be shared by campus residents. Additionally, the existing Hillside Commons Dining Hall (the dining hall) would be renovated and expanded to accommodate the additional student residents to be housed in the new buildings. The renovations include an expanded kitchen/server area, interior dining hall, Grab-N-Go, private dining area, washrooms on the west side of the dining hall, and a new exterior dining patio on the southeast side of the dining hall. The new addition would connect to the existing dining hall, which would remain in place. A new entrance would be provided on the west side of the building. The dining hall renovations and expansion would result in approximately 1,600 net new square feet. The proposed project would be served by the existing student parking areas on the campus; therefore, no additional parking would be provided.

CSULB is seeking Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification for the proposed building, with several sustainable design features proposed, including photovoltaic panels, the use of reclaimed water for water closets and irrigation, and the implementation of bioretention planters to comply with low impact development (LID) requirements. Additionally, CSULB is pursuing Net Zero Energy principles for the proposed project and aims to exceed building energy code requirements by ten percent.

Construction of the proposed project is anticipated to take approximately 24 months to complete, commencing in June 2024 and concluding in June 2026.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: The Trustees of the California State University

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: California State University, Long Beach

The project is exempt from CEQA under the following authority:

Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15332 Class 32

Reasons why project is exempt:

As discussed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15332, a Class 32 exemption consists of a project characterized as in-fill development meeting the following conditions:

- a) The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations.
- b) The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.
- c) The project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species.
- d) Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.
- e) The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

The proposed project would include development of three new student housing buildings with 424 beds and the renovation and expansion of the existing Hillside Commons dining facilities, consistent with the CSULB Campus Master Plan, which identifies the site for development of new residential buildings with 424 beds and for dining facilities. Additionally, the proposed project would include sustainability features compliant with CSULB LID requirements and would be consistent with the CSULB Design Standards Manual. The project site is located in an urban environment within the boundaries of the CSULB campus in the City of Long Beach, and is surrounded by CSULB facilities. No native vegetation, riparian habitat, or other sensitive natural community or habitat is present on the project site that could support endangered, rare, or threatened species. Additionally, the project site does not contain any watercourse, greenbelt, or open space suitable for wildlife movement.

The proposed project would serve the existing CSULB student population on the campus, and operation of the proposed project is not anticipated to result in an increase in traffic trips, ambient noise levels, or air quality emissions. Additionally, the proposed project would include sustainable design features and aims to exceed building energy code requirements by ten percent in accordance with CSULB sustainability plans. The proposed sustainable features would increase energy and water efficiency, which would minimize air quality emissions, water usage, and wastewater generation. Furthermore, the proposed project would include the implementation of bioretention planters to comply with CSULB's LID requirements, which would result in beneficial impacts to water quality.

The proposed project would require relocation of an existing water line. Additionally, operation of the new student housing buildings and renovated dining hall would result in a net increase in utility demand and usage over existing conditions at the project site. However, CSULB is seeking LEED Silver certification for the proposed building, with several sustainable design features proposed, including the use of photovoltaic panels, the use of reclaimed water for water closets and irrigation, and the implementation of bioretention planters to collect storm water flows from the site to comply with LID requirements. Additionally, CSULB is pursuing Net Zero Energy principles for the proposed project and aims to exceed building energy code requirements by ten percent, in accordance

with CSULB sustainability plans. The proposed sustainable features would increase energy and water efficiency, which would decrease the demand for these utilities. Additionally, as the proposed project would not induce population growth, either directly or indirectly, no increase in the demand on public services would occur. As such, the proposed project would be adequately served by all required utilities and existing public services.

As shown, the proposed project is consistent with criteria a through e under CEQA Guidelines Section 15332. As such, the proposed project qualifies for the Class 32 Urban In-Fill Categorical Exemption.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Anne Collins-Doehne **Area Code/Telephone:** (562) 951-4161

Signature: *Anne Collins-Doehne* **Date:** September 25, 2023

Title: Director of Land Use Planning & Environmental Review

Signed by Lead Agency