

COUNTY CLERK'S USE	<b>CITY OF LOS ANGELES</b> OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK ROOM 395, CITY HALL LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012  <b>CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT</b> <b>NOTICE OF EXEMPTION</b> (Articles II and III – City CEQA Guidelines)	CITY CLERK'S USE
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Submission of this form is optional. This form shall be filed with the County Clerk, 12400 E. Imperial Highway, Norwalk, CA 90650, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21152 (b). Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21167 (d), the filing of this notice starts a 35-day statute of limitations on court challenges to the approval of the project.

<b>LEAD CITY AGENCY</b> City of Los Angeles – Department of Transportation, Mail Stop 753 100 S. Main St. Los Angeles, CA 90012	<b>COUNCIL DISTRICT</b> 9 (Councilmember Curren D. Price Jr.)
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<b>PROJECT TITLE</b> ATP Cycle 5 - Carver Middle School, Ascot Elementary School, and Harmony Elementary School	<b>LOG REFERENCE</b> T.G. Pg 674 D3/E3/F3, 674 D4/E4/F4
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**PROJECT LOCATION**  
 Avalon Blvd on the west, 42<sup>nd</sup> St on the north, Compton Ave on the east, 49<sup>th</sup> St on the south

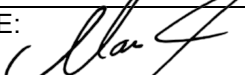
**DESCRIPTION OF NATURE, PURPOSE, AND BENEFICIARIES OF PROJECT:** This project will increase pedestrian safety and access by providing curb extensions, raised crosswalks, new crosswalks, HAWK signal, Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon, ADA compliant curb ramps, Leading Pedestrian Intervals, Accessible Pedestrian Signals, speed humps, speed feedback signs, and continental crosswalks.

<b>CONTACT PERSON</b> Marco Arroyo	<b>AREA CODE</b> 213	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> 972-4976	<b>EXT.</b>
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<b>EXEMPT STATUS: (Check One)</b>			
	<b>CITY CEQA GUIDELINES</b>	<b>STATE CEQA GUIDELINES</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	MINISTERIAL	Art. II, Sec. 2b	Sec. 15268
<input type="checkbox"/>	DECLARED EMERGENCY	Art. II, Sec. 2a (1)	Sec. 15269 (a)
<input type="checkbox"/>	EMERGENCY PROJECT	Art. II, Sec. 2a (2)	Sec. 15269 (b) & (c)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION	Art. III, Sec.1 Class 1 Cat. 3 & 15	Sec. 15301 (c)
<input type="checkbox"/>	OTHER (See Public Resources Code Sec. 21080 (b) and set forth state and City guideline provision.)		

**JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT EXEMPTION:** CEQA Article III, Class 1, Section 3, consists of the operation, repair, maintenance or minor alteration to existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that previously existing. The project includes minor public alterations of land, including curb extensions, continental crosswalk installation, and signal installations. There will be no expansion of use and no removal of a scenic resource. None of the limitations set forth in State CEQA Guidelines 15300.2 apply (see attached narrative).

**IF FILED BY APPLICANT, ATTACH CERTIFIED DOCUMENT OF EXEMPTION FINDING.**

SIGNATURE: 	TITLE: Transportation Engineer	DATE 01/04/2023
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FEE: \$ \$75.00	RECEIPT NO.	REC'D BY	DATE
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DISTRIBUTION: (1) County Clerk, (2) City Clerk, (3) Agency Record

# ATTACHMENT A: CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION NARRATIVE

## I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project includes pedestrian safety and access measures adjacent to and the surrounding communities of Carver Middle School, Ascot and Harmony Elementary School in the City of Los Angeles. Proposed project components include curb extensions, raised crosswalks, new crosswalks, HAWK signal, Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon, ADA-compliant curb ramps, Leading Pedestrian Intervals, Accessible Pedestrian Signals, speed humps, speed feedback signs, and continental crosswalks. General project boundaries are Avalon Blvd on the west, 42<sup>nd</sup> St on the north, Compton Ave on the east, 49<sup>th</sup> St on the south.

## II. PROJECT HISTORY

This project is located in the community surrounding Carver Middle School, Ascot Avenue, and Harmony Elementary Schools in the City of Los Angeles. The City of Los Angeles is proposing to increase pedestrian safety and access by providing new crosswalks, curb extensions, Accessible Pedestrian Signals, Leading Pedestrian Intervals, HAWKs, Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons, Speed Feedback Signs, speed humps, and ADA compliant ramps. The project area borders Avalon Blvd on the west, 42<sup>nd</sup> St on the north, Compton Ave on the east, and 49<sup>th</sup> St on the south. Neighborhood residents and schoolchildren regularly frequent the area. The area is also in close proximity to the University of Southern California and the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum.

## III. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

### Basis for Categorical Exemption

This is a Safe Routes to School project that consists of improvements to existing streets to address safety around local schools and the surrounding community. Improvements include but are not limited to curb extensions at strategic locations to provide safer crossing for students and constituents of the neighborhoods, new crosswalks, installing rapid flashing beacons, accessible pedestrian signals, highly-intensity-activated crosswalk (HAWK), and speed flashback signs as further pedestrian safety measures. These components are categorically exempt under Class 1(3) and (15) of the City CEQA Guidelines and Class 1 Section 15301(c) of the State CEQA Guidelines since these elements include the operation, repair, maintenance or minor alteration of an existing street and the addition of traffic signage, signal, and pavement markings.

### Considerations of Potential Exceptions to use a Categorical Exemption

The City CEQA Guidelines provide that these activities are exempt from CEQA except where the activity will involve removal of a scenic resource, including but not limited to a stand of trees, a rock outcropping, historic building or mature, scenic trees.

The State CEQA Guidelines provide that these activities are exempt from CEQA except where the project may impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies. The following narrative substantiates through facts why these exceptions do not apply.

The State CEQA Guidelines (CCR Sec 15300.2) limit the use of categorical exemptions in the following circumstances:

**1. Location.** Exemption Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may be significant in a particularly sensitive environment. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply to all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.

The project is exempt under Class 1 (existing facility), therefore, this exemption has no application here.

**2. Cumulative Impact.** This exception applies when, although a particular project may not have a significant impact, the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.

While other similar projects are occurring elsewhere in the City, they have been determined to be happening in different neighborhoods, locations, and times. Also, the project itself is minor in scale, and there are no known projects that could involve cumulatively significant impacts. Therefore, this exception has no application here.

**3. Significant Effect.** This exception applies when, although the project may otherwise be exempt, there is a reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect due to unusual circumstances.

#### **Aesthetics**

This exception applies when a project may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a visual resource. As stated in the Section I. *Project Description*, the project only consists of installing modified crosswalks, curb extensions, Accessible Pedestrian Signals, Leading Pedestrian Intervals, HAWKs, Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons, Speed Feedback Signs, speed humps, and ADA-compliant ramps in the vicinity of Carver Middle School, Ascot Avenue, and Harmony Elementary Schools in the City of Los Angeles. The locations consist of corridors with existing traffic signals, crosswalks, roadway markings and features. As such, this exception does not apply.

#### **Noise**

The work shall be performed in accordance with Ordinance No. 144.331, "Noise Regulation" in Chapter XI of the Los Angeles Municipal Code of March 1982. As such, this exception does not apply.

#### **Biological Resources**

The proposed project does not involve the loss or alteration to any biological resources. As such, this exception does not apply.

#### **Traffic/Transportation**

The work shall be performed in accordance with work area traffic control handbook (WATCH). City construction crews will coordinate with schools and the Department of Transportation according to WATCH and provide flaggers when required. When the activity site encroaches upon a sidewalk, walkway or crosswalk area, pedestrians shall be provided advance warning if they are detoured away from the activity site. Advance notification of sidewalk closures shall be provided according to WATCH. At least one lane of traffic in each direction will be maintained at all times.

Standard conditions and construction practices are anticipated for this project. No unusual construction noise or traffic effects are anticipated. The project elements are expected to result in reducing conflicts of vehicles and pedestrians by providing greater protective crossing control, and will not materially alter transportation patterns that would result in an impact under CEQA. No reasonable possibility has been identified that the project will have a significant effect due to unusual circumstances. As such, this exception does not apply.

**4. Scenic Highway.** A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway.

The proposed Project is not within sight of any scenic features or a state designated scenic highway. Therefore, this exception has no application here.

**5. Hazardous Waste Site.** This exception applies when a project is located on a site listed as a hazardous waste site under Government Code Section 65962.5.

As of September 22, 2022, the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) data management system (<http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov>) does not reflect sites of concern in the immediate area in which the project will take place.<sup>1</sup>All project work will be limited to minor curb ramp upgrades, raised crosswalk installation, striping, signal and signage changes, and road work within existing right-of-way. Therefore, this exception has no application here.

**6. Historical Resources.** This exception applies when a project may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

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<sup>1</sup> California Department of Toxic Substance Control, EnviroStor Hazardous Waste and Substance Site List <http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/> Accessed September 22, 2022

City standard construction specifications require the contractor to cease excavation and to notify the construction manager if any cultural resource materials are uncovered. In turn, the construction manager contacts the Bureau of Engineer Environmental Management Group to have the find evaluated and handled in accordance with applicable requirements. The proposed Project would occur on existing streets and with no more than two feet in depth of excavation. The depth of demolition and excavation is not anticipated to exceed the depth of previously disturbed soil.

In case of any historical artifacts being encountered, City Engineer Standard Specifications, Section 6-3.2, (Greenbook, 2012) states: "If discovery is made of items of archaeological or paleontological interest, the Contractor shall immediately cease excavation in the area of discovery and shall not continue until ordered by the Engineer." Therefore, during activities in which there will be ground disturbances (i.e., digging, drilling, etc.) if any evidence of archaeological, cultural, or paleontological resources are found, all work within the vicinity of the find shall stop until a qualified archaeologist can assess the finds and make recommendations. No excavation of any finds should be attempted by project personnel unless directed by a qualified archaeologist. Construction activities may continue in other areas. If the discovery proves significant under CEQA (Section 15064.5f; Public Resources Code or PRC 21082), additional work such as testing or data recovery may be warranted.

The discovery of human remains is always a possibility during ground disturbances; State of California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the Los Angeles County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98. The Los Angeles County Coroner must be notified of the find immediately. If the human remains are determined to be prehistoric, the Coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission, which will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendent (MLD). The MLD shall complete the inspection of the site within 48 hours of notification and may recommend scientific removal and nondestructive analysis of human remains and items associated with Native American burials.

In case of unforeseen discovery of cultural resources, measures are in place to manage unanticipated cultural resource finds or discovery of human remains. Therefore, no substantial adverse impact to cultural resources is anticipated.