

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

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

County Clerk

County of: LOS ANGELES

12400 Imperial Hwy.

Norwalk, CA 90650

From: (Public Agency): EL MONTE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
3540 N. Lexington Ave.

El Monte, CA 91731

(Address)

Project Title: Norwood Elementary Greening Project

Project Applicant: El Monte City School District

Project Location - Specific:

4520 Whistler Ave. El Monte, CA 91732

Project Location - City: El Monte

Project Location - County: Los Angeles

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Project includes renovating the grounds of Norwood Elementary, a nearly six-acre former school campus. Improvements include the removal of no more than three existing structures and the construction or replacement of walkways/pathways, landscaping, irrigation, softball fields, stormwater management infrastructure, permeable pavers, playground equipment, fitness equipment, site furnishings, shade structures, and signage. The project will include removal of asphalt, reconfiguration of an existing parking lot, and work, including stormwater improvements, within the right of way. The property is owned by the El Monte City School District, and the project will be funded through a grant from the Los Angeles County Safe, Clean Water Program with the Trust for Public Land. The Project will bring lasting benefits to the local community, enriching the lives of our youth, nurturing the environment, and fostering a brighter future for all.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: El Monte City School District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: El Monte City School District

Exempt Status: (check one):

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Class 1 Section 15301; Class 3 Section 15303; Class 4 Section 15304
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

Section 15301: Class 1— repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing structures, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. District will be improving an already developed property, with no increased capacity.
Section 15303: Class 3— installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; accessory structures in urbanized area, including play equipment and shade structures.
Section 15304: Class 4— minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. New gardening or landscaping, including the replacement of existing conventional landscaping with water efficient or fire-resistant landscaping.
Sec. 15061(b)(3): Common Sense Exemption— it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the proposed project involves any activity that may have a significant effect on the environment.

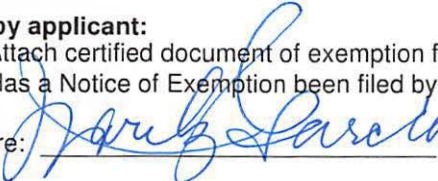
Lead Agency

Contact Person: Matthew Law

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 626-453-3780

If filed by applicant:

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:  Date: 10/21/2024 Title: Superintendent

■ Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____



Agenda Item Details

Meeting	Oct 21, 2024 - EL MONTE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Category	L. ACTIONS
Subject	5. Consideration of Adoption of Resolution 24-25:12 CEQA Exemption
Access	Public
Type	Action
Recommended Action	It is recommended that the Board adopt Resolution 24-25:12 finding the proposed Norwood Elementary Greening Project to be exempt under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Public Content

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The proposed resolution seeks Board approval for the Norwood Elementary Greening Project, which aims to revitalize the nearly six-acre school site into a dynamic community green space and learning hub for the community. The project will introduce new landscaping, playground equipment, fitness areas, stormwater management features, permeable pavers, and updated walkways, while also reconfiguring the parking lot and enhancing site furnishings and shade structures. These improvements are designed to promote outdoor activity, support environmental sustainability, and provide long-term benefits to both students and the broader community. The project qualifies for exemption from CEQA under multiple categories, as it involves minor alterations to an existing site with no significant environmental impact. The proposed enhancements will not affect scenic or historical resources, hazardous sites, or cumulative environmental factors. Funded by a grant from the Los Angeles County Safe, Clean Water Program in partnership with the Trust for Public Land, the project represents a thoughtful investment in fostering a healthier, greener future for the El Monte community.

It is recommended that the Board adopt Resolution 24-25:12 finding the proposed Norwood Elementary Greening Project to be exempt under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

[Resolution 24-25 12 - CEQA Exemption.pdf \(190 KB\)](#)

[Notice of Exemption - Norwood Greening Project\(4304986.1\).pdf \(152 KB\)](#)

Administrative Content

Motion & Voting

It is recommended that the Board adopt Resolution 24-25:12 finding the proposed Norwood Elementary Greening Project to be exempt under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Motion by Cesar Peralta, second by Lisette Mendez Garcia.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yes: Jennifer Cobian, Elizabeth Rivas, David S Siegrist, Lisette Mendez Garcia, Cesar Peralta

RESOLUTION NO. 24-25:12

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE EL MONTE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT: (1) FINDING THE PROPOSED NORWOOD ELEMENTARY GREENING PROJECT TO BE EXEMPT UNDER CEQA AND ADOPTING CATEGORICAL EXEMPTIONS; (2) APPROVING THE PROJECT; AND (3) AUTHORIZING FILING OF NOTICE OF EXEMPTION UPON PROJECT APPROVAL

WHEREAS, the El Monte City School District (the "District"), proposes to undertake the Norwood Elementary Greening Project at 4520 Whistler Ave., El Monte, CA 91732 (the "Project") as further described below; and

WHEREAS, as more specifically described in the attached Notice of Exemption ("NOE", attached hereto at Exhibit "A" and incorporated herein by reference), the proposed Project includes renovating the grounds of Norwood Elementary, a nearly six-acre former school campus. Improvements include the removal of no more than three existing structures and the construction or replacement of walkways/pathways, landscaping, irrigation, softball fields, stormwater management infrastructure, permeable pavers, playground equipment, fitness equipment, site furnishings, shade structures, and signage. The project will include removal of asphalt, reconfiguration of an existing parking lot, and work, including stormwater improvements, within the right of way. The property is owned by the District, and the Project will be funded through a grant from the Los Angeles County Safe, Clean Water Program with the Trust for Public Land. The Project will bring lasting benefits to the local community, enriching the lives of our youth, nurturing the environment, and fostering a brighter future for all.; and

WHEREAS, the District must comply with the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") for the proposed Project, unless the Project is exempt from CEQA; and

WHEREAS, the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, categorically exempts certain projects, including projects consisting of:

- Class 1 - 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 existing or former use (§ 15301);
- Class 3 - construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structures (§ 15303);
- Class 4 - minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes (§ 15304);
- **Common Sense Exemption:** It can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the proposed Project involves any activity that may have a significant effect on the environment (§15061(b)(3)); and

WHEREAS, based on the record, as further explained below, the proposed Project meets the criteria for, and thus is exempt from CEQA under the respective exemption(s), as set forth in the table below:

Proposed Project	Applicable Exemptions
Norwood Elementary Greening Project	CatEx: Class 1, Class 3, Class 4, Common Sense Exemption

WHEREAS, the proposed Project meets the criteria for, and thus is categorically exempt from CEQA, under each respective categorical exemption Class set forth in the table above; and

WHEREAS, the CEQA Guidelines also set forth exceptions to the categorical exemptions (§ 15300.2); and

WHEREAS, based on the record, the Project is not subject to any of the exceptions to categorical exemptions, including, without limitation, because:

- The Project is located on a developed school site and would not impact a designated environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern;
- There are no other projects of the same type in the same place as the Project that would result in cumulative impacts;
- There is no indication of unusual circumstances that would cause a significant environmental impact related to the Project;
- The Project would not result in damage to scenic or natural resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway because the Project would be located on an existing developed and operating school site, and does not result in an encroachment of any incompatible land use, does not detract from scenic views or scenic quality, and includes proper siting;
- The Project is not located on a hazardous waste site; and
- The Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of Education of the El Monte City School District hereby finds, determines, declares, orders, and resolves as follows:

1. That the foregoing recitals are true and correct, and incorporated herein.
2. That the Norwood Elementary Greening Project meets the criteria for, and thus is categorically exempt from CEQA under, Class 1, Class 3, Class 4, as well as the common sense exemption.
3. That none of the exceptions to the categorical exemptions apply to the Project.
4. That all applicable CEQA requirements have been fulfilled for the Project.
5. That the exemptions from CEQA set forth herein respective to the Project are hereby adopted.
6. That all actions required to be taken by applicable law related to the approval of the Project have been taken. Therefore, the Board hereby approves the Project as more specifically identified in the attached NOE. This action constitutes an "approval" as defined under section 15352(a) of the CEQA Guidelines for the Project.

7. That the following NOE, attached hereto as Exhibit "A", is approved and incorporated herein by reference: Notice of Exemption for the Norwood Elementary Greening Project.
8. That District staff is hereby authorized and directed to file and post the attached NOE for the Project, consistent with this Resolution, with all appropriate public agencies or entities.
9. That the District's Superintendent and/or designee is hereby authorized to take all further action necessary to otherwise carry out, give effect to, and comply with the terms and intent of this Resolution.

APPROVED, PASSED, AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Board of Education of the El Monte City School District held this 21st day of October, 2024.


AYES: 5

NOES: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

ABSENT: 0


Reynalberto Rivas
President, Board of Education

ATTEST:

Sarah Garcia
Secretary, Board of Education

Attachment:

-Exhibit A: Notice of Exemption for the Norwood Elementary Greening Project