

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento CA 95814

County Clerk
County of San Luis Obispo
1055 Monterey Street, Room D120
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

FROM: Thomas Butler, Superintendent, Atascadero Unified School District: Lead Agency / Applicant

The project or activity identified below is determined to be exempt from further environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as defined in the State Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA.

Project Title: Atascadero High School Parking Lot Modernization Project

Project Location: 1 High School Hill Road, Atascadero, CA 93422 **AP Nos.:** 030-361-002

Project Location - City: Atascadero **Project Location - County:** San Luis Obispo

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of the Project:

Atascadero High School is located on a 46.61-acre site in the City of Atascadero just south of Highway 101 and West of CA State Route 41. AHS opened in 1921, originally named Margarita Black Union High School. The school includes classrooms, science labs, auto shop, woodshop, music room and theater. The campus also includes a library, a cafeteria, gymnasium, swimming pool and administrative offices. Sports areas include football, baseball, basketball, tennis, and other hard-court games. The school facilities and grounds are well maintained.

The proposed project consists of construction and modernization of parking lot A and a new accessible path including stairs and ramps, ornamental fence with gates, chain-link vehicle gates and site retaining wall. An existing parking lot will be removed for construction. In addition, seven EV charging stations will be added to the existing parking stalls near the library. The existing parking lot to be removed contains 114 parking spaces. The proposed parking lot will contain 139 parking spaces, for a net increase of 25 parking spaces.

Improvements to the existing parking lot A include the following alterations: 1) removal and replacement of existing parking lot; 2) add accessible path with stairs and ramps to campus; 3) pole mounted lights for increased visibility and security; 4) EV charging stations; 5) retaining wall; and 6) miscellaneous improvements including fencing and striping.

The modernization project will benefit the school by improving access to the site for school operations and extracurricular activities. General improvements to the pedestrian circulation will aid in accessibility to the structures. The project does not include any new building area. Grading area of disturbance will occur over approximately 50,000 s.f. of surface area. 17 existing trees will be removed, with 53 new trees planted on site. No structural demolition is proposed.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Atascadero Unified School District
Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Alan Kroeker Architect

Exempt Status: *(check one)*

- Ministerial
- Statutory Exemption
- Categorical Exemption
- Emergency Project
- Declared Emergency

Cite Specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guideline Sections:

§ 15311; Class 11 consists of construction, or placement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities, including but not limited to:

- (a) On-premise signs
- (b) Small parking lots
- (c) Placement of seasonal or temporary use items such as lifeguard towers, mobile food units, portable restrooms, or similar items in generally the same locations from time to time in publicly owned parks, stadiums, or other facilities designed for public use.

Reasons why project is exempt:

The project proposes no net addition of additional structural square footage to the existing school campus. Since no classrooms or capacity are being added, this modernization does not generate additional students.

The Atascadero High School is for students in grades 9-12. The modernization upgrades are within the exemption requirements. Timing for modernization would be phased within the academic year so no disruption to operations are anticipated. Modernization of the parking lot would only result in enhancements of services to the existing student population and does not provide greater capacity for students or enrollment.

Short term impacts such as construction noise, truck trips, and dust generation are reviewed but are conditioned so that the extent of the impact is less than what the State defines as significant. There are no other short-term impacts of the project which are not addressed and mitigated by standard construction conditions and/or regulations of the City of Atascadero.

There is no substantial evidence that there are unusual circumstances (including future activities) resulting in (or which might reasonably result in) significant impacts which threaten the environment. The exceptions to the categorical exemptions pursuant to Section 15300.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines are:

- (a) Location. 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 in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply in 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 within the above class 11 of categorical exemptions, and is not in a particularly sensitive environment.

(b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.

The project is not one of many successive projects of the same type in the same place. Therefore, the cumulative impact exception does not apply.

(c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

The circumstances under which the proposed project is requested and under which construction is proposed are not unusual. No known sensitive resources are located in the area. Therefore, the significant effect exception does not apply.

(d) Scenic Highways. 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. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.

The project site is not located within or visible from any officially designated scenic highway and the project does not damage any scenic resource. Therefore, the scenic highways exception does not apply.

(e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

The proposed project is not located on a site that is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. Therefore, the hazardous waste sites exception does not apply.

(f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

The proposed development would have no impact on any known historical resource. Therefore, the historical resources exception does not apply.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Thomas Butler, Superintendent, Atascadero Unified School District
Phone: 805-462-4200

Signature: 
District Representative

Acceptance Date: 11.19.24

Note: *A copy of this form must be posted at the School Office 6 days prior to a decision on the project. Upon project approval, this form must be filed with the County Clerk and posted by the County Clerk for a period of 30 days to begin a 35-day statute of limitations on legal challenges.*

Distribution: School Office
County Clerk
Alan Kroeker Architect
UPC Project File