

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: Napa
1127 1st St., Suite A
Napa, CA 94559

From: (Public Agency): St Helena Unified School District
465 Main St.
St Helena, CA 94574
(Address)

Project Title: St Helena Primary School PV Solar Project

Project Applicant: St Helena Unified School District

Project Location - Specific:

1701 Grayson Avenue, St Helena

Project Location - City: St Helena

Project Location - County: Napa

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The project would consist of installation of 220 photovoltaic (PV) modules on a single 20' x 55' canopy in a school parking lot adjacent to Grayson Avenue. Approximately eight trees would be removed for the project, none of which would be native trees over 25 years old. Four EV chargers and associated electrical improvements also would be installed in the parking lot. The project would assure reduced electrical rates for the District into the future.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: St Helena Unified School District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: St Helena Unified 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: _____
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Section 21080.35

Reasons why project is exempt:

The project would qualify for exemption under the CEQA rooftop/parking lot statutory exemption (CEQA Statutes, Section 21080.35), which applies to rooftop and parking lot photovoltaic systems, with associated equipment not occupying more than 500 sq. ft. and not containing protected plants. None of the exceptions to the exemption would apply (See attached Discussion).

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Ms. Kay Vang, CBO Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (707) 967-2701

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: 3/5/2025 Title: Chief Business Officer

Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

ST HELENA PRIMARY SCHOOL PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEM PROJECT NOTICE OF EXEMPTION DISCUSSION

Project Description

Existing Facilities

The St Helena Primary School, located at 1701 Grayson Avenue, St Helena, is owned and operated by the St. Helena Unified School District. The school is in the southwestern area of the Napa County town of St. Helena, in an area of transitioning from residential uses to agricultural uses (vineyards). Single-family residences are located across So. Crane Avenue to the west, vineyards are across the street from the school to the north and south, and St Helena High School campus lies to the east of the Primary School.

Proposed Project

The project would consist of installation of 220 photovoltaic (PV) modules on a single 20' x 55' canopy in a parking lot adjacent to Grayson Avenue. Approximately eight trees would be removed for the project, none of which are over 25 years old, as the school was constructed in 2000. The solar array would have a clearance minimum of 13.5 feet. Four EV chargers also would be installed in the parking lot. Inverters, switching and cabling would be installed to connect these systems to the existing electrical facilities on campus. The purpose of this project is to provide renewable electricity to the grid and reduce energy costs to the District.

The project would be constructed over between June and December 2025. No new or expanded uses of the school facilities are proposed as part of this project.

Exemption Analysis

The project would qualify for exemption under the CEQA rooftop/parking lot statutory exemption (CEQA Statutes, Section 21080.35). This exemption applies to rooftop and parking lot photovoltaic systems located on the same parcel as the existing buildings, with associated equipment not occupying more than 500 sq. ft. and not containing protected plants.

This exemption does not apply if the associated equipment would otherwise require one of the following:

- (1) An individual federal permit pursuant to Section 401 or 404 of the federal Clean Water Act ([33 U.S.C. Sec. 1341](#) or [1344](#)) or waste discharge requirements pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Division 7 (commencing with [Section 13000](#)) of the Water Code).

(2) An individual take permit for species protected under the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 ([16 U.S.C. Sec. 1531 et seq.](#)) or the California Endangered Species Act (Chapter 1.5 (commencing with [Section 2050](#)) of Division 3 of the Fish and Game Code).

(3) A streambed alteration permit pursuant to Chapter 6 (commencing with [Section 1600](#)) of Division 2 of the Fish and Game Code.

(e) This section does not apply if the installation of a solar energy system at an existing parking lot involves either of the following:

(1) The removal of a tree required to be planted, maintained, or protected pursuant to local, state, or federal requirements, unless the tree dies and there is no requirement to replace the tree.

(2) The removal of a native tree over 25 years old.

(f) This section does not apply to any transmission or distribution facility or connection.

Conclusions

The project is within the parameters of the Section 21081.53 exemption and none of the exceptions to that exemption would apply. No trees would be removed for the project and none of the permits identified in the exemption would be required.

