

Notice of Exemption

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

JAN 17 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Project Title: Gymnasium Complex Drop and Replace, Seismic Replacement Project

Project Applicant: Redwoods Community College District

Project Location - Specific: College of the Redwoods, Eureka Main Campus, 7351 Tompkins Hill Road

Project Location - City: Eureka

Project Location - County: Humboldt

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

Redwoods Community College District ("RCCD") has approved a Project to replace the existing Gymnasium and Field House buildings that do not conform to code requirements for seismic safety, earthquake resistant construction, structural stability, accessibility and fire/life/safety. The existing buildings, constructed in 1968-1971, are constructed on top of surfacing, active faults and consequently, in accordance with the Alquist-Priolo Act of 1972, represents an unacceptable seismic hazard. There is no feasible method to retrofit the current buildings to mitigate this hazard. The project demolishes the current 35,877 Assignable Square Foot Gym building and the 22,560 Assignable Square Foot Field House building and will replace both with new structures located on the campus at sites cleared of seismic hazards as defined by the Act. The replacement buildings will not increase student capacity or number of classrooms but will provide a safe, code compliant learning environment.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Redwoods Community College District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Redwoods Community College 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: Existing Facilities – 14 CCR 15301; Replacement or Reconstruction - 14 CCR 15302; New Construction – 14 CCR 15303; Accessory Structures – 14 CCR 15311; Minor Additions to Schools – 14 CCR 15314; Common Sense Exemption – 14 CCR 15061(b)(3).
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reasons why project is exempt: Multiple exemptions apply to the project, as the proposed new building represent replacement of a pre-existing structure. Further, the District is entitled to combine several exemptions to find an entire project exempt. (*Surfrider Found. V. California Coastal Comm'n* (1994) 26 Cal.App.4th 151)

- Class 1 – 14 CCR 15301 – "consists of the...minor alteration of existing public or private structures...involving negligible or no expansion of use..." The Project involves no expansion of the current campus use, therefore this exemption applies.
- Class 2 – 14 CCR 15302 – "consists of the replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced..." Per case law, this exemption applies even where the replacement structure will be in a slightly different location and slightly different size than the original structure. (*Dehne v. County*

of *Santa Clara* (1981) 115 Cal. App. 3d 827). The size and location of the Gymnasium Complex will only change slightly, therefore this exemption applies.

- Class 3 – 14 CCR 15303 – “consists of construction...of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures...” This exemption includes, but is not limited to, the construction of “accessory (appurtenant) structures including garages, carports, patios, swimming pools, and fences.” The upgrade of the utility building is a small construction project, therefore this exemption applies.
- Class 11 – 14 CCR 15311 – “consists of construction, or replacement of minor structures accessory to...existing...institutional facilities...” The utility building is an accessory structure to the Eureka Campus, and the upgrade of this utility building is a small construction project that falls within this exemption.
- Class 14 – 14 CCR 15312 – “consists of minor additions to existing schools within existing school grounds, where the addition does not increase original student capacity by more than 25% or ten classrooms, whichever is less.” The replacement of the existing Physical Education and Field House buildings will not increase original student capacity; therefore this exemption applies.
- The Common Sense Exemption. 14 CCR 15061(b)(3): Common Sense Exemption. A project is exempt from CEQA where “it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment.” Here, the replacement of the existing Gymnasium Complex will have no significant effect on the environment.

Lead Agency Contact Person:

Julia Morrison, Chief Financial Officer
Redwoods Community College District
7351 Tompkins Hill Rd
Eureka, CA 95501

Signature: _____

Julia Morrison

Date: _____

1/16/20

Title: Vice President, Administrative Services

☒ Signed by Lead Agency ☐ Signed by Applicant

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Attachment A
College of the Redwoods
Gymnasium Complex Drop and Replace, Seismic Replacement Project
Project Description

Alquist-Priolo Act of 1972 requires that areas of seismic concern be identified throughout the State in a comprehensive way. The Act charges the State Geologist with coordinating the studies and this effort is ongoing today.

Recently, College of the Redwoods became aware that several of its existing structures fell within the Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone. As such, The District prepared a facilities master plan which relocates these functions away from these hazards to a safer space on campus.

As the Redwoods Community College District resides in an area that is economically challenged the Master Plan is phased and prioritized to allow continued education while mitigating possible loss of life.

After consultation with State Licensed Geologists, it was determined that the existing COR Physical Education and Field House buildings were found to be of the highest priority as they sit on top of Seismic faults. As such, it was determined that there is no economically feasible method to retrofit the current building and State funding was requested. This State funded project will replace the 35,877 Assignable Square Foot Physical Education building and 22,560 Assignable Square Foot Field House with new structures well away from all known faults. The site has been vetted and approved by the California Geological Survey. Without this project, the District faces the distinct possibility of a catastrophic disaster with both loss of facilities and life as the structure cannot withstand the seismic forces predicted.

Natural Gas System

Two major PG&E transmission mains transverse the site and are routed beyond the campus. The site natural gas system serving the campus taps off the PG&E mains through pressure reduction stations and smaller gas lines serve meters and regulators at individual buildings. The new Gymnasium Complex will be fed off new Polyethylene piping. New earthquake safety valves will be provided at building services. Selective demolition of utility elements will be necessary to complete the demolition of the old building.

Electrical Power, Telecommunications, Security, Fire Alarm, Control, and Site Lighting Systems

The existing electrical power, telecommunications, security, fire alarm, control, and site lighting systems are extended throughout the campus through buried conduits, buried duct banks, direct buried cables, and above ground systems to serve buildings and other uses. These existing systems supporting existing buildings and uses will be upgraded and replaced with similar updated systems throughout campus. A replacement electrical switch gear facility of approximately 1,000 sf will be constructed behind the existing but not currently used Life Science building to provide an upgraded electrical distribution system for the campus. Other related system improvements will be made throughout campus both through new buried conduits interconnecting existing facilities and through electrical and related modifications within existing buildings. Selective demolition of existing building and utility elements will be necessary to complete the upgrades. The nature and extent of replacements will depend on the condition and character of existing facilities and availability of budget and will extend throughout developed areas of campus to serve existing buildings. The new Gymnasium Complex will be connected to these new services.

HVAC Upgrades

A new Utility appurtenance will be constructed at each building site to accommodate the new energy efficient Boilers and HVAC. The new equipment will typically be installed in a similar fashion as the existing equipment throughout the Campus, although some alternations may be necessary to accommodate the modern systems. The nature and extent of the HVAC upgrades will depend on the findings of the design process and available budget.

Seismic Upgrades

Seismic upgrades will be accomplished by building the new buildings on space already approved by the CGS. These new buildings will be located on the site of our current baseball field and the site of our old Stadium. Based on studies completed under LACO project number 6351.19, reports one through seven, the CGS concluded that all of "the fault

rupture issues at this site are adequately identified in the referenced reports and additional information with respect to faulting is not needed".

Miscellaneous Building and Site Modifications

In the course of the Utility Infrastructure Replacement - Seismic Strengthening Project, a number of minor miscellaneous modifications will be made to the existing buildings and developed site in support of the overall project. These will include minor ADA improvements or other minor alternations or upgrades to existing buildings or the project site or other existing utilities or systems to complete the overall project requirements.

Water Conservation

A water catchment system will be integrated part of the roof system and will be used to water all of the landscape and trees surrounding the new Physical Education building.

Hazardous Materials Management

In the course of the demolition of the old Physical Education building, and old Field House, certain hazardous materials may be present in building materials or systems to be demolished. A survey will be conducted to identify potential hazardous materials and an abatement plan in compliance with applicable laws and practices will be developed.

Attachment B
College of the Redwoods
Gymnasium Complex Drop and Replace Project

Reasons why Project is Exempt

Class 1 Existing Facilities

Class 1 consists of the 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 use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination. The overall project is geared toward replacing existing infrastructure serving existing developed areas. Therefore, the upgraded facilities are being installed as a seismic project to replace noncompliant facilities that have reached the end of their useful lives without expanding uses See Class 2 and 3 discussion below. Some of the existing infrastructure will be subject to minor alteration such as the location of utilities serving campus buildings and the minor alternations associated with the seismic strengthening of existing buildings.

Class 2 Replacement or Reconstruction

Class 2 consists of replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced. The Gymnasium Complex Drop and Replace Project provides new structures to provide exactly the same purpose and capacity as the existing building. The new buildings will not result in increased capacity or Gross Square Footage as the current Physical Education, or Field House buildings

Class 3 New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures

Class 3 consists of construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small 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 structure. The Gymnasium Complex Drop and Replace Project requires minor internal modification to the Utility building serving the Student Services building and the Theatre. Other utility system upgrades may also require the construction or conversion of small structures. The new buildings will require the construction or alteration of existing small structures and the installation of equipment at the developed sites.

Class 4 Minor Alterations to Land

Class 4 consists of 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 or agricultural purposes. The installation of the new Gymnasium building will require trenching and installation of new utilities to interconnect existing structures and systems. This will require minor removal of brush and small trees in some areas. All disturbed areas will be revegetated. In addition, the new Gymnasium building may require minor grading of the existing developed site. The new Field House is being constructed on a site that has already been disturbed as a result of the Demolition of the old Community Stadium building. All disturbed areas will be revegetated. In addition, the new Field House building will require minor grading of the existing developed site.

Class 11: Accessory Structures

Class 11 consists of construction or replacement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities. In addition, the replacement electrical switch gear room discussed under Class 3 is also applicable under Class 11.

Exceptions to Exemptions Not Applicable

None of the Exceptions to Exemptions Apply to the Gymnasium Complex Drop and Replace Project as further described below:

Location: A project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. The Gymnasium Complex Drop and Replace Project work is occurring in the developed

areas of campus to serve the existing structures and purposes. The environment where the work is being completed is already previously disturbed and developed and so the environment is not particularly sensitive.

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. Replacing seismic compromised buildings is a normal part of campus management and the effects of such work accumulated over time does not result in significant impacts. These are the eighth and ninth buildings being replaced for non-compliance with State statues for Life Safety.

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. There are no unusual circumstances that apply to this project as the work that will be completed is typical of any new building project and there is nothing unusual about the circumstance or context of the work being performed.

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 exception does not apply as Highway 101 near College of the Redwoods is not an officially designated state scenic highway and the proposed work does not adversely affect scenic resources.

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 California Department of Toxics Control EnviroStor Database was compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code and it lists the small arms firing range on campus. According to the database, soils from the active firing range were found to contain bullets and bullet fragments and one of the four soil samples collected was found to exceed the California Human Health Screening Level for lead. The firing range itself is outside of any areas of project improvements and therefore this exception does not apply to the subject project.

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. This exception does not apply as the work that is proposed is to replace an existing building built in 1974 and will not result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of any historical resource.