

2020040172

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: Marin
3501 Civic Center Drive, #234
San Rafael, CA 94903

From: (Public Agency): Novato Unified School District
1015 Seventh Street Street
Novato, CA 94945

(Address)

Project Title: Loma Verde Elementary School HVAC System Replacement Project

Project Applicant: Novato Unified School District

Project Location - Specific:

Loma Verde School, 399 Alameda de La Loma, Novato, CA 94945

Project Location - City: Novato Project Location - County: Marin

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

Replace the Administration Building HVAC system with a new heat pump system, including new ducts, coils, and fans. Remove existing HVAC system.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Novato Unified School District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Michael Woolard, Facilities Director

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- Existing Facilities- Section 15301
- ☒ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: 15061(b)(3)

Reasons why project is exempt:

Replacement of existing HVAC system with new system of the same size and function would be consistent with Class 1 Exemption repair and maintenance provisions; also, project would clearly have no potential significant impacts, so would comply with General Rule Exemption.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Michael Woolard Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (415) 493-4588

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: M Woolard Date: 4/1/2020 Title: Facilities Director

☒ 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: _____

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

APR 16 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Revised 2011

LOMA VERDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HVAC SYSTEM REPLACEMENT PROJECT CEQA EXEMPTION DISCUSSION

Project Description

Existing Facilities

Loma Verde Elementary School, located at 399 Alameda de La Loma in Novato is owned and operated by the Novato Unified School District. The school is in a single-family residential neighborhood, with single family houses abutting the school campus. The school's field is adjacent to the Loma Verde Open Space unit of the Marin County Parks and Open Space District. The proposed project would be located in the administration building (Building A), near the school's entry area parking lot.

Proposed Project

This project consists on replacing the existing mechanical units at the Loma Verde Elementary School administration building. The units would be replaced with high wall-mounted ductless indoor units at each room and the heat pump condenser unit would be added on a 4' by 9' concrete pad on the ground outside the building. A rooftop heat pump unit of similar size also would be installed on the building's existing roof. New HVAC piping, fans and vents would be installed in each of the eight rooms in the building.

The old HVAC equipment would be removed of and disposed of in an appropriate disposal facility.

The project would be constructed over a 4-month period, from May through September 2020.

Categorical Exemption Analysis

The project would be subject to the Class 1 and General Rule exemptions, as discussed below.

Class 1 Exemption

The CEQA Class 1 Exemption (Class 1-Existing Facilities [CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301]) applies to operation, repair, and maintenance of existing facilities, including mechanical equipment, where there is no increase in capacity, expansion, or change of use. The proposed project would consist of replacement of the existing deficient HVAC system with a heat pump system. Therefore, this exemption would apply.

Analysis of Possible Exceptions to Class 1 Exemption

The exemption is subject to the following exceptions:

- **Cumulative Impact.** This exception would apply if the project were to contribute to

significant impacts to a resource in combination with other proposed new development nearby. No other substantive projects are proposed for the school campus in 2020. The project area is a fully-developed residential and commercial neighborhood, and no substantial offsite cumulative development is likely to occur. Therefore, no potentially significant cumulative impacts would occur.

- **Scenic Highways.** This exception would apply if the project were to result in damage to scenic resources within a State-designated Scenic Highway corridor. The project would not be visible or alter any views from off-campus areas. In addition, there are no State Scenic Highways in the project area. The project site is not visible from a designated scenic highway, and is not visible from any roadway, therefore this exception would not apply.
- **Hazardous Waste Sites.** There are no listed hazardous materials/hazardous waste sites listed on or in the vicinity of the project site (https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/map/?global_id=41490049 accessed March 17, 2020).
- **Historical Resources.** This exception would apply if the project were to potentially significantly adversely affect an historical resource. The proposed project includes no changes to the existing building. The rooftop and ground-level equipment would be minor and not affect the building's architectural characteristics. Therefore the project would not have the potential to adversely affect any historical resources.
- **Significant Effect.** The exception would apply if the project would have the potential for a significant effect to the environment due to unusual circumstances. Unusual circumstances may include historic structures, hazardous materials contamination, protected species or habitats, and other similar conditions. There are no unusual circumstances on the existing developed site and there is no potential for significant effect, therefore this exception would not apply.

General Rule Exemption

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, the activity is not subject to environmental review. In such cases, the activity is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. (See CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3)). CEQA Categorical Exemption exceptions do not apply to this exemption. As described above, the proposed project does not have any potential to result in a significant impact to the physical environment. Therefore, this exemption would apply.

Conclusions

As discussed above, the project is within the parameters of the Class 1 Exemption and none of the exceptions to that exemption would apply. In addition, as described above, there is no potential for any significant impacts, so the CEQA General Rule Exemption also would apply to the proposed project.