

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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

☐ County Clerk  
County of San Bernardino  
385 N. Arrowhead Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
San Bernardino, CA 92415

From: Chaffey Joint Union High School District (Lead Agency)  
211 West Fifth Street  
Ontario, CA 91762

**Project Title:** School Modernization Project at Rancho Cucamonga High School

**Project Location – Specific:** 11801 Lark Drive

**Project Location – City:** Rancho Cucamonga

**Project Location – County:** San Bernardino

**Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:** Chaffey Joint Union High School District (District) is planning to modernize five single-story modular buildings, three two-story classroom buildings, and three three-story classroom buildings, located on the Rancho Cucamonga High School campus in Rancho Cucamonga, CA. The plans include the replacement of entry door hardware, flooring, marker boards, tack boards, acoustical ceiling tiles, vinyl fabric wall panels, room signage and new interior paint. Metal shades structures will be installed in the central quad, east quad and pool deck. Additional details are in the Attachment.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Chaffey Joint Union High School District

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Chaffey Joint Union High School District

Exempt Status: (check one below)

- ☐ 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. Section 15301 and 15303 of CEQA Guidelines, Class 1 and Class 3
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

SEP 25 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

**Reasons why project is exempt:** See Attachment

**Contact Person:**

**Area Code/Telephone/Extension:**

Robert Slagle, Director Operations Chaffey Joint Unified School District

(909) 988.8511

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption findings
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project ☐ Yes ☐ No

Date Received for Filing: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Director of Operations & Planning

## **Attachment to Notice of Exemption**

### **School Modernization Project at Rancho Cucamonga High School**

**Chaffey Joint Union High School District**

#### **SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**

The Chaffey Joint Union High School District (District) proposes to modernize five single-story modular buildings, three two-story classroom buildings, and three three-story classroom buildings at Rancho Cucamonga High School (HS). This supplemental information justifies the Categorical Exemption pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines under California Code of Regulations, Title 14 §§ 15314.

## **1. EXISTING SETTING**

### **PROJECT LOCATION**

The existing campus is approximately 37.09-acres and the proposed project involves the modernization of a total of 11 existing buildings across the campus. The northern portion of the existing campus is comprised of portable classrooms, permanent buildings, paved parking lots, and hardtop pavement. The southern portion of the existing campus is comprised of a football stadium, tennis courts, four baseball diamonds, and another paved parking lot. The project site is located at 11801 Lark Drive, Rancho Cucamonga, in San Bernardino County (APNs 108901101, 108901102, 108901103). The City of Rancho Cucamonga is located north of the City of Ontario, west the City of Fontana and the City of Rialto, east of the City of Upland, and south of the San Gabriel Mountains (see Figure 1, *Regional Location*, and Figure 2, *Local Vicinity*).

### **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Rancho Cucamonga HS has a 2019/20 enrollment of 3,397 students in grades 9th through 12th (CDE 2020). The campus consists of three parking lots and access driveways via Lark Drive to the north, Victoria Park to the south, and Rochester Avenue to the east. Four baseball diamonds are located to the south, a football stadium and tennis courts are in the middle of the campus, and there are buildings and hardtop surfaces located to the north. See Figure 3, *Modernization Project for the location and phase of the planned modernizations*. The campus opened in 1992.

### **SURROUNDING LAND USES**

The school is in a residential neighborhood and is bounded by residential dwellings to the west, Victoria Park to the south, Lark Drive to the north, and Rochester Avenue to the east, as shown in Figure 3 *Aerial Photograph*. Residential homes, primarily single-family, are present across the bordering streets to the north, west, and south. To the east of Rochester Avenue there is a catch basin.

## **2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT**

The project consists of the modernization of five single-story modular buildings, three two-story classroom buildings, and three three-story classroom buildings at Rancho Cucamonga High School. The plans include the replacement of entry door hardware, flooring, marker boards, tack boards, acoustical ceiling tiles, vinyl fabric wall panels, room signage and new interior paint. Metal shades structures will be installed in the central quad, east quad and pool deck. The work will be implemented in Phases for logistics and access and to continue operations at the school during the modernization project. Figure 4 shows the areas that will be modernized and the planned phases for the work.

Implementation of the proposed modernization would not lead to an increase or a decrease in the number of classrooms or student capacity. The design and construction of the building would comply with the California Building Standards Code (CBSC) California Code of Regulations, Title 24, for fire, life, safety, and access. The modernization plans have been reviewed and approved by a project inspector in compliance with the Division of the State Architect's (DSA).

### 3. REASONS WHY THE PROJECT IS EXEMPT

The proposed project is exempt from further environmental documentation under the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code §§ 21000 et seq.) categorical exemption Class 1:

Class 1, Existing Facilities (CEQA Guidelines § 15301) 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 project involves modernization of 11 existing buildings on the campus. These modernization efforts would not result in any increase in classrooms or student capacity. Therefore, the proposed project meets the criteria for an exemption under CEQA Guidelines § 15314.

The proposed project is exempt from further environmental documentation under the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code §§ 21000 et seq.) categorical exemption Class 3:

Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures (CEQA Guidelines § 15303) 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 project involves the addition of metal shades structures to be installed in the central quad, east quad and pool deck. These additional structures are limited and small structures. Therefore, the proposed project meets the criteria for an exemption under CEQA Guidelines § 15314.

### 4. REVIEW OF EXCEPTIONS TO THE CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION

The proposed project has been reviewed under CEQA Guidelines § 15300.2, Exceptions, for any characteristics or circumstances that might invalidate findings that the project is exempt from CEQA. Each exception is listed below followed by an assessment of whether that exception applies to the proposed project.

- (a) **Location.** Classes 3,4,5,6 and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project would 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 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 exemption applied to the proposed project is Class 1 exemption; therefore, consideration of location under classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 does not apply.

- (b) **Cumulative Impacts.** 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 proposed improvements are the only known and planned improvements at the school campus during the planned construction. There are no other known successive projects—planned, approved, or under construction—of the same type at and/or near the project site that when combined with the proposed project would result in a cumulative environmental impact. Although the District plans to modernize two buildings, Building J and the Multipurpose Room, at Etiwanda High School. Etiwanda High School is approximately 1.7-miles east of the project site in the City of Rancho Cucamonga. This exception does not apply to the proposed project.

- (c) **Significant Effects.** 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 determination whether this exception applies involves two distinct questions: (1) whether the project presents unusual circumstances, and (2) whether there is a reasonable possibility that a significant environmental impact will result from those unusual circumstances. The lead agency considers the second prong of this test only if it first finds that some circumstance of the project is unusual based on the court case *Berkeley Hillside Preservation v City of Berkeley* (2015) 60 C4th 1086, 1104.

There is no reasonable possibility that the proposed project would have a significant effect on the environment as planned or under “unusual circumstances”. The site is already developed with a school and is located in a built-out residential neighborhood in the City of Rancho Cucamonga; therefore, impacts to sensitive biological receptors, cultural resources, or scenic views would not occur. Similarly, because the project would not change the capacity of the school or alter transportation routes or drop-off zones, there would be no impacts on population, public services, recreation, utilities, and transportation systems. Due to the project scale, air, noise, and transportation impacts during the construction would be temporary and less than significant and would be governed by local ordinances for construction projects. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed project.

- (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.

The existing school site and surrounding environs are generally developed, and the campus does not contain any scenic resources, including historical buildings, rock outcroppings, or tress of biological or exceptional aesthetic significance. There are no state scenic highways in the vicinity of the project site. The nearest officially designated scenic highway is State Route (SR) 2 (Angeles Crest Scenic Highway) on the north side of the San Gabriel Mountains and approximately 12 miles from the northern city boundary (Cal Trans 2011). Considering the distance, intervening development, and topography between the project site and this roadway, the project site would not be recognizable, and no impact is anticipated. This exception does not apply to the proposed project.

- (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. Hazardous materials sites pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 include all hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action pursuant to Section 25187.5 of the Health and Safety Code (HSC), all land designated as hazardous waste property or border zone property pursuant to former Article 11 (commencing with Section 25220) of Chapter 6.5 of Division 20 of the HSC, all information received by the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) pursuant to Section 25242 of the HSC on hazardous waste disposals on

public land, and all sites listed pursuant to Section 25356 of the HSC. Five environmental lists were searched for hazardous materials sites on the school campus and within a 500-foot radius:

- » GeoTracker. State Water Resources Control Board
- » EnviroStor. Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)
- » EJScreen and EnviroMapper. US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- » Solid Waste Information System (SWIS). California Department of Resources Recovery and Recycling (Cal Recycle).

The project site is located on a school site that received a No Action Required determination from the Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) in 2014. As part of a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment done for that project, it was determined that the project site was not listed on any of the dozens of federal, state, and local agency databases searched, including those identified under Section 65962.5 of the California Government Code. Therefore, the proposed project would not create hazards related to the disturbance of, or exposure to, a hazardous waste site.

- (f) **Historical Resources.** A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of historical resources. Under Public Resource Code § 21084.1, a historical resource is a resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources. Additionally, historical resources included in a local register of historical resources are presumed to be historically or culturally significant, and a lead agency can determine whether the resource may be an historical resource.

The project site is located on an existing school site. The project site has consisted of school grounds since 1992. Prior to 1992 the site was undeveloped land. No structures were located on the project site prior to 1992 and the project site was not used for agricultural purposes prior to construction of the school. No historical resources are located on the site. There are no historic resources reported on or adjacent to the project site based on a review of those listed on the California Register of Historic Resources (COHP 2020) and the National Register of Historic Places (NPS 2020). Project implementation would not cause significant impacts to historical resources, and the historical resources exception would not apply to this project site.

## CONCLUSION

As substantiated in this document, the proposed project would not meet the conditions specified in Section 15300.2, Exceptions, of the CEQA Guidelines, and the project is categorically exempt under Class 1 and Class 3.

## 5. REFERENCES

California Department of Education (CDE). 2020, August 31 (accessed). DataQuest Home, Enrollment Report, 2019-2020 Enrollment by Grade, Rancho Cucamonga High School Report.

<https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dqcensus/enrgrdlevels.aspx?aggllevel=School&year=2019-20&cde=36676523630571>

California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (Cal Recycle). 2020 SWIS Facticity/Site Search, LEA Jurisdiction, San Bernardino County.

<http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/SWFacilities/Directory/SearchList/List?COUNTY=San+Bernardino>.

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2011, September 7. California Scenic Highway Mapping System. [http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16\\_livability/scenic\\_highways/](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16_livability/scenic_highways/).

Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). 2020 EnviroStor. <http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/>.

National Park Service. 2020. National Register of Historic Places. <https://www.nps.gov/Nr/research/>,  
<https://www.nps.gov/maps/full.html?mapId=7ad17cc9-b808-4ff8-a2f9-a99909164466>

Office of Historic Preservation (OHP). 2020. California Historical Resources, San Bernardino County. <http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/ListedResources/?view=county&criteria=36>.

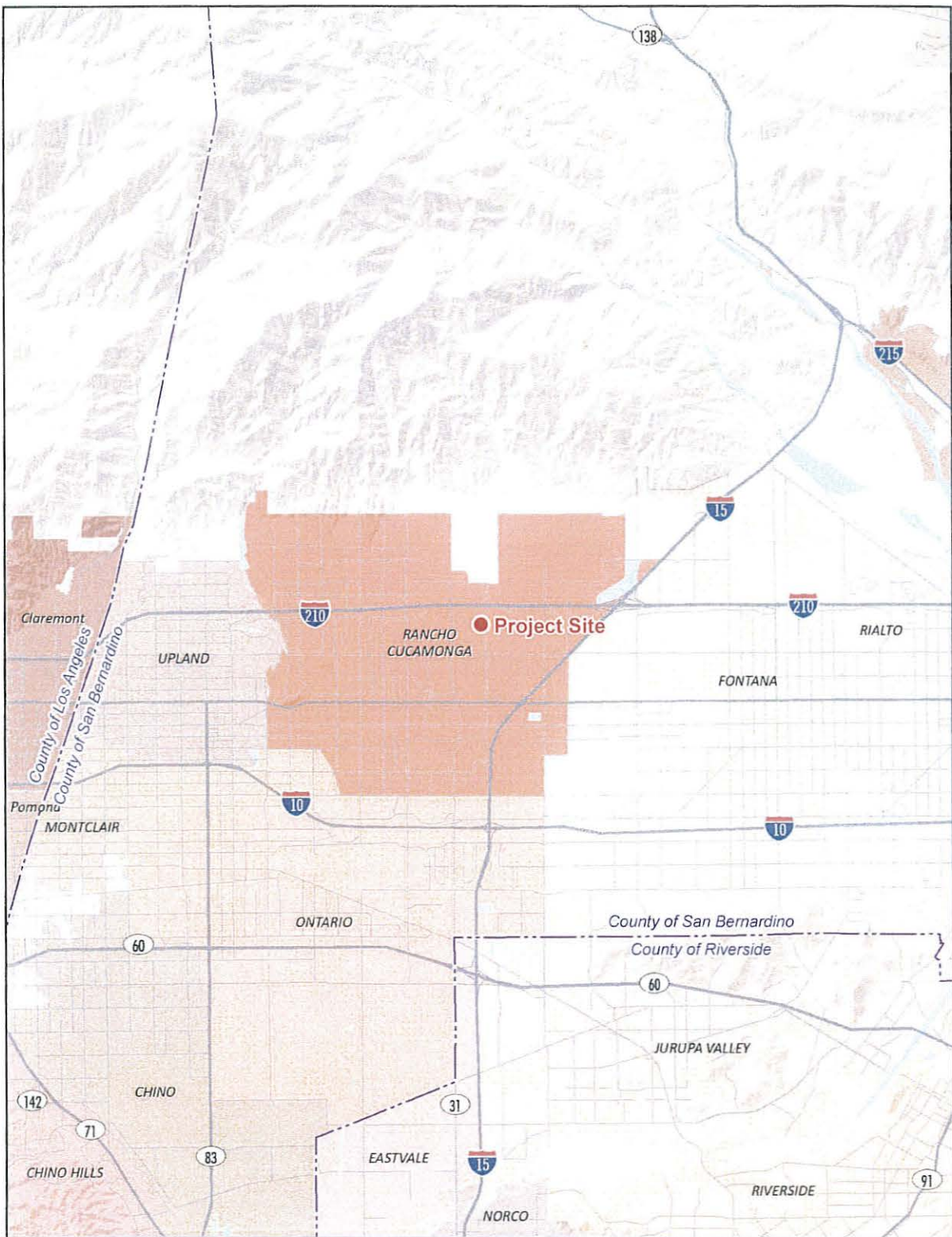
State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). 2020. GeoTracker. <http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>.

US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). 2020. EJSscreen. <https://ejsscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>.

US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). 2020. EnviroMapper for EnviroFacts. <https://www3.epa.gov/enviro/index.html>



Figure 1 - Regional Location

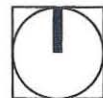


--- County Boundary

Note: Unincorporated county areas are shown in white.

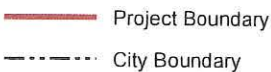
Source: ESRI, 2020

0 3  
Scale (Miles)



PlaceWorks





A horizontal scale bar with a dark blue background. The left end is labeled '0' and the right end is labeled '2,000'. Below the bar, the text 'Scale (Feet)' is centered.





Figure 3 - Aerial Photograph



Project Boundary

0 350  
Scale (Feet)



Source: ESRI, 2020



Figure 4 - Phases 1-9

