

**LBUSD Gant ES HVAC and Modernization Project
Notice of Exemption (NOE)**

The Long Beach Unified School District (District), as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), proposes to continue the bond measure improvements at Minnie Gant Elementary School through the proposed all-campus HVAC and modernization project.

Project Location

Minnie Gant Elementary School is nested in a residential area north of California State University Long Beach. The campus accommodates students from grades TK through 5 and is located on approximately 9.1 acres at 1854 N. Britton Drive, Long Beach, CA 90815. Minnie Gant Elementary School was originally built in 1949 with Building D added in the 1960's. The campus consists of 42,399 square feet of single-story, permanent buildings A through D and 10,560 square feet of relocatable buildings (portables).

Description of Project

This project consists of renovation of all the existing buildings on campus. Scope includes:

- HVAC installation in all classrooms, offices and support spaces (including Auditorium, Cafeteria and Kitchen) located in permanent buildings on site.
- Accessibility upgrades to path of travel, parking, restrooms and drinking fountain per current building code.
- Utility systems upgrades (e.g. electrical, low voltage, water, sewer, etc.) as required to support HVAC installation.
- Hardware upgrades (e.g. LED lighting, Extron audio-visual system, overhead projectors, etc.).
- Upgrades to building finishes (e.g. new ceilings, flooring, painting)
- New tactile signage required throughout the campus for rooms and exits. The entire campus will undergo building/room re-numbering per current District standards.
- Window and/or door replacement as required.
- Campus-wide Fire Alarm upgrades.
- Seismic upgrades, if required, per DSA IR EB-4
- Certification of DSA Legacy A# 03-65156 (Various sites including Bixby, Gant, Birney, McKinley Elementary Schools)
- Measure Q site improvements including a potential outdoor learning environment within the campus, replacing lunch shelter with a new lunch shelter, colored paving upgrades and a potential new drop off area on the west side of campus along Britton Drive at Gant Elementary School.

Project Schedule

The Proposed Project is expected to occur over a 6-month period, approximately between Spring 2024 and Fall 2024. Construction activities will take place between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday on an as needed basis.

Reasons Why Project Is Exempt:

The proposed activity is a project subject to CEQA. However, it is exempt from further environmental analysis under a Class 1, *Existing Facilities* (CEQA Guidelines §15301), Class 2, *Replacement or Reconstruction* (CEQA Guidelines §15302), Class 4 *Minor Alterations to Land* (CEQA Guidelines §15304), and Class 14 *Minor Additions to Schools* (CEQA Guidelines §15314).

- Class 1 categorical exemption 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.
- Class 2 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 of the structure replaced.
- Class 4 consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees.
- Class 14 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 Proposed Project will result in installation of HVAC and modernization of the existing campus. The improvements will not involve an increase in student capacity, and include minor additions to an existing school campus. Therefore, the application of Class 1, Class 2, Class 4, and Class 14 categorical exemptions is appropriate for the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project does not have the potential to trigger any of the exceptions identified in CEQA Guidelines §15300.2. Consequently, as documented below, the Proposed Project is exempt from further CEQA review.

- (a) **Location.** The improvements will occur entirely within the existing campus, which is located in an urbanized community. The existing conditions on and around the elementary school consist of disturbed and paved ground, which is not considered environmentally sensitive. Minor ground disturbance would occur during construction but will be limited to the existing school property on previously disturbed surfaces. The Proposed Project will not impact environmentally sensitive areas or an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern. This exception does not apply to the Proposed Project.
- (b) **Cumulative Impact.** Details of the future projects are not yet clearly defined and thereby cannot be further evaluated at this time. Evaluation of any potential impacts of the future modernization projects will be completed in a separate environmental analysis. The Proposed Project will not result in any significant cumulative impacts in combination with any future projects which will be implemented on separate schedules from each other. Further, the majority of impacts associated with the Proposed Project will be temporary (the length of construction) and are limited to the immediate vicinity of Minnie Gant Elementary School. As such, no other cumulatively considerable projects have been identified that could incrementally contribute to the impacts associated with the Proposed Project. This exception does not apply to the Proposed Project.
- (c) **Significant Effect.** The HVAC and modernization of the campus is not considered as an unusual circumstance as campus updates are not unusual for school sites. All upgrades associated with the Proposed Project would be installed on or within existing facilities. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not appear visually incompatible with existing equipment and

accessories on the Project site. Normal operations will be similar and consistent with current uses within the Project boundary.

The Proposed Project is located within a disturbed, urbanized environment and will not involve the removal of any sensitive vegetation or scenic trees, nor would it impact any scenic vistas within the immediate area.

Therefore, no reasonable possibility exists that the Proposed Project would have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. Therefore, this exception does not apply to this Project.

- (d) **Scenic Highways.** The nearest highway is Highway 1 (Pacific Coast Highway) which is within one mile of the Proposed Project site; however, the Project site is separated from the Pacific Coast Highway by residences and commercial businesses. The Proposed Project would not be visible from Pacific Coast Highway and therefore would not result in damage to scenic resources within an officially designated state scenic highway. Therefore, no impact to scenic highways would occur, and this exception does not apply to the Project.
- (e) **Hazardous Waste Sites.** The Proposed Project would not result in any significant native soil disturbance that would expose school occupants or construction workers to any potentially hazardous soil materials. There are no listed hazardous waste sites located immediately adjacent to the project area. No significant impact to hazardous waste would occur. This exception does not apply to the Notice of Exemption.
- (f) **Historical Resources.** As part of the District-Wide Cultural Resources Assessment, PCR services recommended that Project site is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Therefore, the Proposed Project will have no adverse effect to the character defining features of the historic resource.

References:

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2023. California Scenic Highway Mapping System. Online URL:
<https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aaca>

Department of Toxic Substances Control. 2023. EnviroStor Database. Online URL:
<http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/>

State Water Resources Control Board. 2023. GeoTracker Database. Online URL:
<https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/revised2017spu.pdf>