

Notice of Exemption

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

County Clerk of the Board, Riverside
2724 Gateway Drive
Riverside, CA 92507

From: Desert Sands Unified School District
47-950 Dune Palms Road
La Quinta, CA 92253

Shadow Hills High School Wrestling Room Addition Project

Project Title

39-225 Jefferson Street (Assessor's Parcel Numbers 691-000-26 and 691-000-27)

Project Location – Specific

Indio

Riverside

Project Location – City

Project Location – County

The District proposes a new, 2,900-square-foot wrestling room addition to Building 3 (Student Services) at Shadow Hills High School. The room addition would include a wrestling mat, waiting space, one unisex restroom, and a storage closet. Access to the new room would be available from the inside of the existing Building 3 and from the exterior of the building. The girls wrestling program would relocate their practices and games to the proposed building extension. The proposed improvements may be available for community use when not used by the school or District.

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project

Desert Sands Unified School District

Name of Public Agency Approving Project

Desert Sands Unified School District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project

Exempt Status:

- ☒ Categorical Exemption: Section 15303 (Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures), 15304 (Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land) and 15314 (Class 14, Minor Additions to Schools)

Class 3 applies to the Project as it involves the construction of a new 2,900-square-foot accessory room to support the existing girls wrestling program at an existing high school campus. Class 4 applies to the Project as all areas disturbed by the Project would be restored with new pavement, building space, and/or landscaping to minimize erosion and allow continued school operations. No scenic or mature trees would be removed by the Project. Class 14 applies to the Project as the proposed wrestling room is an accessory facility to the existing high school campus and would not increase the number of classrooms or the enrollment capacity of Shadow Hills High School. No additional school-sponsored programming is proposed that would increase athlete participation or spectator attendance beyond existing conditions. Therefore, the school enrollment capacity would remain the same as under existing conditions. Additionally, none of the exceptions listed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply to the Project.

Reasons why project is exempt

Patrick Cisneros, Director Facilities Services

(760) 771-8516

Lead Agency Contact Person

Area Code/Telephone

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

Signature: _____

Date: 9-10-24

Title: DIRECTOR, FACILITIES

☒ Signed by Lead Agency ☐ Signed by Applicant

FILED / POSTED

County of Riverside
Peter Aldana
Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder

E-202400977
09/11/2024 09:26 AM Fee: \$ 50.00
Page 1 of 10

Removed: By: Deputy



CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION EVALUATION REPORT

Shadow Hills High School Wrestling Room Addition Project

July 2024

This Categorical Exemption Evaluation Report documents the eligibility of the Desert Sands Unified School District's (District) proposed new wrestling room addition project at Shadow Hills High School (Project) to be exempt from expanded environmental review, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under California Public Resources Code Section 21084 and California Code of Regulations, Title 14 (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15061(b)(2) and 15300 et seq.

1. Location

The Project is proposed in the middle of the Shadow Hills High School campus at 39-225 Jefferson Street in the central region of the City of Indio, Riverside County, California. The school is west of Jefferson Street and south of Avenue 39. Regional access is provided by Interstate 10 (I-10), approximately 0.7 miles southwest of the school. Shadow Hills High School comprises two parcels: Assessor's Parcel Numbers 691-000-26 and -27.¹ *Figure 1, Project Site and Regional Location*, shows the location of the school and Project site.

2. Existing Setting

a. Existing Uses

Shadow Hills High School operates a traditional high school program serving students in grades nine through twelve. During the 2023-24 school year, the school enrolled 1,702 students.²

The campus comprises approximately 50 acres. The site is relatively flat with elevations ranging between approximately 50 feet above mean sea level (amsl) in the northeast corner and 60 feet amsl along the western perimeter.³ The school was built in 2009 and has been well-maintained over the years. As shown in *Figure 1*, school buildings are in the northern portion of the campus and recreational uses (indoor and outdoor) are generally in the southern. Parking is along the northeastern portion and western perimeter of the campus.

The Project site is approximately 2,900 square feet in the center of the campus. It is developed with ornamental landscaping, including natural turf with grass, shrubbery, and three small shade trees.

b. Surrounding Land Uses

Shadow Hills High School is in a developing residential community. Across the school, both north of Avenue 39 and east of Jefferson Street, is vacant land. Adjacent to the west of the campus is Desert Ridge Academy, which is a District-operated high school that provides special programs for grades nine through twelve. South of the campus is a mix of low-density residential and light industrial uses. Multifamily and single-family residential uses are farther west, north, east, and southeast of the campus, north of I-10,

¹ Riverside County Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder Portal, accessed July 9, 2024, <https://rivcoview.rivcoacr.org/#/Property-Search>.

² California Department of Education, DataQuest, 2023-24 Enrollment Data, accessed July 9, 2024, <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/SearchName.asp?rbTimeFrame=oneyear&rYear=2023-24&cName=desert&Topic=Enrollment&Level=District&submit1=Submit>.

³ Google Earth, accessed July 10, 2024.

Categorical Exemption Evaluation Report
Shadow Hills High School Wrestling Room Addition

which forms the southern attendance boundary of Shadow Hills High School. School uses surround the Project site. The Project site is

- West of Building 3 - Student Services (Building 3),
- South of a small courtyard and classroom building,
- East of an asphalt basketball court and landscaping that separates classroom buildings from the basketball courts, and
- North of an existing walkway and swimming facilities.

c. Land Use and Zoning

The City of Indio Land Use Map designates the Project site as Public and Institutional (P-I).⁴ The P-I land use is reserved for public, educational, and institutional uses and is encouraged to provide usable public open space.⁵ The Project site has a corresponding zoning district of P-I with permitted public and open space uses, including school uses.⁶

3. Project Description

a. Project Characteristics

The District proposes a new, approximately 2,900-square-foot wrestling room addition. As shown in *Figure 2, Site Plan*, the Project would extend the existing Building 3 westward. The new room would include a wrestling mat, waiting area, a unisex restroom, and a storage closet. Access to the wrestling room would be from the interior of the existing Building 3, as well as from the basketball courts and existing pathway between Building 3 and swimming facilities. All improvements would be designed and constructed to comply with the 2022 Title 24 California Building Standards Code, which includes the Building Code (Part 2), Energy Code (Part 6), and Green Building Code (Part 11), as well as with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and District design and construction standards.

b. Operation

The Project would not change existing programs at Shadow Hills High School. Currently, the girls wrestling program shares a room with the dance team in Building 3. The girls wrestling program would relocate their practices and games to the proposed building extension. The proposed improvements would be available for community use in accordance with the Civic Center Act, similar to other facilities at the campus.⁷

c. Construction

Construction would begin in the summer of 2025 and last approximately six to nine months. The majority of construction would be conducted during the fall through summer months when school is not in session.

⁴ City of Indio, Land Use Map, accessed July 9, 2024, <https://www.indio.org/home/showpublisheddocument/904/637874287851600000>.

⁵ City of Indio, General Plan, Chapter 3, Land Use and Urban Design, accessed July 9, 2024, <https://www.indio.org/home/showpublisheddocument/3327/638053914862030000>.

⁶ Pursuant to California Government Code Section 53094 et seq., the governing board of a school district may render city or county zoning ordinances and general plan requirements inapplicable. The District's Board of Education may exempt the Project and campus from any zoning ordinances or regulations of the City of Indio, including, without limitation, the City's Municipal Code, General Plan, and related ordinances and regulations that otherwise would be applicable.

⁷ Education Code Section 38134, et seq.

Categorical Exemption Evaluation Report
Shadow Hills High School Wrestling Room Addition

As needed, the construction contractor would coordinate with school administrators to limit disruptions during school test days. The proposed improvements would be available for use starting in January 2026.

Construction staging would occur either on the basketball court adjacent to the Project site or, less likely, on the turf located south of the basketball court. The construction and staging areas would be fenced with screening to limit trespassing and vandalism. Any existing storm drain inlets surrounding these areas would be protected.

d. Best Management Practices and Regulatory Compliance

The Project will implement the following construction best management practices (BMPs) and adopted regulations:

- **Construction Noise.** The District will adhere to the City of Indio's construction work hours provided in the City Municipal Code. Per Section 95C.08(B)(3), construction can be conducted from Monday to Friday, between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.; on Saturday, from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; and on Sunday and government holidays: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.⁸
- **Migratory Bird Treaty Act.** To avoid potential direct and/or indirect impacts to active bird nests and/or nesting birds located within the ornamental vegetation, the District will comply with the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game Code (CFGF) and conduct preconstruction clearance surveys, prior to ground disturbance, as follows:

MBTA/CFGF Preconstruction Clearance Surveys – If construction commences during the bird breeding season (February 15–September 15), a qualified biologist must be retained to conduct a nesting bird survey. The survey must be conducted three days prior to the start of any work occurring within 50 feet of any tree. If an active nest is found, no work may occur within 25 feet of the nest until nesting activity has ceased. If construction activities cease for more than seven days, a new nesting bird survey must be prepared.

- **Clean Air Act.** Under federal and state law, the California Air Resources Board oversees the compliance of the federal Clean Air Act through State Implementation Plans. Local districts, including the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), enforce air pollution regulations. These regulations are primarily meant to ensure that the surrounding (or ambient) air meets federal and state air quality standards and would also reduce potential impacts to water quality.

Rule 402 (Nuisance) – This rule prohibits the discharge “from any source whatsoever in such quantities of air contaminants or other material which cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public, or which endanger the comfort, repose, health, or safety of any such persons or the public, or which cause, or have a natural tendency to cause, injury or damage to business or property.” This rule does not apply to odors emanating from agricultural operations necessary for the growing of crops or the raising of fowl or animals.

Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust) – This rule requires fugitive dust sources to implement best available control measures for all sources and prohibits all forms of visible particulate matter (PM) from crossing any property line. This rule is intended to reduce coarse PM (PM₁₀) emissions from any

⁸ City of Indio, California Code of Ordinances, Chapter 95C: Noise Control, Section 95C.08(B)(3), accessed July 9, 2024, <https://www.nonoise.org/regulation/ordinance/indio,%20California.pdf>.

Categorical Exemption Evaluation Report
Shadow Hills High School Wrestling Room Addition

transportation, handling, construction, or storage activity that has the potential to generate fugitive dust. Potential PM₁₀ suppression techniques include the below.

- Portions of a construction site to remain inactive longer than a period of three months will be seeded and watered until grass cover is grown or otherwise stabilized.
- All material transported off-site will be either sufficiently watered or securely covered to prevent excessive amounts of dust.
- The area disturbed by clearing, grading, earthmoving, or excavation operations will be minimized at all times.
- Where vehicles leave a construction site and enter adjacent public streets, the streets will be swept daily or washed down at the end of the workday to remove soil tracked onto the paved surface.

Rule 1113 (Architectural Coatings) – This rule requires manufacturers, distributors, and end users of architectural and industrial maintenance coatings to reduce reactive organic gases (ROG) emissions from the use of these coatings, primarily by placing limits on the ROG content of various coating categories.

4. Applicability of Categorical Exemption

The CEQA Guidelines include classes of projects that have been determined to not have a significant effect on the environment and that can be categorically exempt from extended environmental review. The Project qualifies for a categorical exemption under Classes 3, 4, and 14, as further discussed below.

Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures

Class 3 consists of the 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 numbers of structures described in this section are the maximum allowable on any legal parcel. Class 3 includes accessory structures such as garages, carports, patios, swimming pools, and fences. (CEQA Guidelines § 15303)

The Project consists of the construction of a 2,900-square-foot addition to be used for Shadow Hills High School's existing girls wrestling program. The wrestling room is a small, accessory structure to the existing multipurpose building and would not change existing school operation. The Project meets the requirement of Class 3.

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, including minor trenching and backfilling where the surface is restored. (CEQA Guidelines § 15304[f])

The Project would involve the construction of a 2,900-square-foot wrestling room. The proposed improvements would disturb soils and require removal of existing ornamental landscaping, including natural turf with grass, shrubbery, and three small shade trees. The existing vegetation was planted when the school was built in 2009. The trees are not considered mature or scenic. All areas disturbed by the

Categorical Exemption Evaluation Report
Shadow Hills High School Wrestling Room Addition

Project would be restored with new pavement, building area, and/or landscaping to minimize erosion and allow continued school operations. The Project meets the requirements of Class 4.

Class 14, Minor Additions to School

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 percent or ten classrooms, whichever is less. The addition of portable classrooms is included in this exemption. (CEQA Guidelines § 15314)

The proposed wrestling room is an accessory facility to the existing high school campus and would not increase the number of classrooms or the enrollment capacity of Shadow Hills High School. No additional school-sponsored programming is proposed that would increase athlete participation or spectator attendance beyond existing conditions. Therefore, the school enrollment capacity would remain the same as under existing conditions. The Project meets the requirements of Class 14.

5. Exceptions to Categorical Exemptions

CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2, Exceptions, lists conditions under which categorical exemptions are inapplicable. The discussion below addresses whether these conditions apply.

a. Location

Section 15300.2(a) of the CEQA Guidelines states that Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of whether a project is located in a uniquely sensitive environment of hazardous or critical concern that has been designated, precisely mapped, or officially adopted pursuant to federal, state, or local laws. According to *Berkeley Hills Watershed Coalition v. City of Berkeley*, (2019) 31 Cal.App.5th 880, this exception concerns effects of the project on the environment, not the impact of the existing surrounding environmental conditions on the project or its future users.

According to the City of Indio General Plan and California Department of Conservation, the Project site is not within any areas of unique sensitive environment of hazardous or critical concern, including 100-year floodplain, Alquist-Priolo Fault zone, Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, liquefaction hazard zone, or noise contour, as mapped and/or designated by federal, state, or local agencies.⁹ This exception does not apply to the Project.

b. Cumulative Impact

Exemptions are inapplicable when there is a significant cumulative impact of “successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time” (CEQA Guidelines § 15300.2[b]).

The District does not currently have any other planned projects at Shadow Hills High School. The District’s 2022 Long Range Facilities Master Plan identifies priorities for site work, new construction major reconfiguration, and modernization of Shadow Hills High School;¹⁰ however, there are no plans for

⁹ City of Indio, Indio General Plan, September 2019, accessed July 15, 2024, <https://www.indio.org/home/showpublisheddocument/3321/638053330127130000>; California Department of Conservation, Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation, accessed July 15, 2024, <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/EQZApp/app/>.

¹⁰ Desert Sands Unified School District, 2022 Long Range Facilities Master Plan, accessed July 15, 2024, <https://www.dsusd.us/common/pages/DownloadFileByUrl.aspx?key=xqWQTtHLLpVtq5XqTLmmhHQD28zXZk70LwK5ch%2bh9bCdRNWMPNX1hgkBgdsFkOzLpY762sl2AdtcEkJbZnG0fMGgyNmbbi28dDmrOFjc5hvl3QS4N1EAq%2bp>

Categorical Exemption Evaluation Report
Shadow Hills High School Wrestling Room Addition

implementation of the identified projects at this time. Any assumptions regarding the identified improvements would be speculative in nature. Additionally, each project would be required to implement construction BMPs and comply with state and local regulations to limit construction-related environmental effects. Moreover, the Project is relatively minor in scope and the improvements would occur within the perimeter of the new extended building footprint. Therefore, any potential overlap of the Project's construction activities with future projects at Shadow Hills High School would not cause cumulatively considerable environmental effects. CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2(b) does not apply to the 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 of 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 the unusual circumstances. The lead agency considers the second prong of this test only if it finds that some circumstance of the project is unusual. (*Berkeley Hillside Preservation v City of Berkeley* (2015) 60 C4th 1086, 1104)

The Project would not present unusual circumstances or special environmental constraints during planning, construction, or operation that may lead to a significant environmental impact. The existing school has operated on the Project site since 2009. The Project would comply with all applicable California laws and regulations related to public school construction. Construction methods would be typical for public schools in the state. The Project will comply with the current California Building Code and the ADA and would be plan-checked by the Division of the State Architect. The Project would implement construction BMPs, as listed in Section 3.d, to reduce potential impacts to biological resources, water quality, air quality, and community noise. The Project does not propose new school-sponsored events or programs at the new wrestling room, and the frequency of school-sponsored events and any environmental effects caused by the Project would not be substantially different than the existing uses and activities at Shadow Hills High School. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the Project.

d. Scenic Highways

A categorical exemption cannot be used for a project that may damage scenic resources—including but not limited to trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources—within an officially designated state scenic highway.

The closest officially designated state scenic highway is a segment of State Route 74, approximately 7.5 miles southwest of the Project site.¹¹ Due to the distance, Project implementation would not have the ability to devalue the highway. This exception does not apply to the Project.

e. Hazardous Waste Sites

Subsection 15300.2 of the CEQA Guidelines states that a categorical exemption shall not be used for a project on a site that is on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the California Government

HY44yfrp3wG0jwKBxKwjTWK9XD5qErB29MUKCNMg87ilx70XLI541NzCapLz8WbLvSxsMXdZ9md9FBQ2kP8PQf1PJ2K u2TUyPPIEuvOx9HBvj%2bPOd7P9SE3W.

¹¹ California Department of Transportation, California State Scenic Highway System Map, accessed July 15, 2024, <https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aacc>.

Categorical Exemption Evaluation Report
Shadow Hills High School Wrestling Room Addition

Code, which requires the Secretary of the California Environmental Protection Agency to compile lists of hazardous materials sites and waste facilities, also known as the "Cortese List." A computer search of the data resources that provide information regarding facilities or sites identified as meeting the Cortese List requirements, including from the Department of Toxic Substances Control and State Water Resources Control Board,¹² determined that the Project site is not listed on any of the databases compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5. Project implementation would not expose hazardous waste to the environment. Therefore, CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2(e) does not apply to the Project.

f. Historical Resources

A categorical exemption cannot be used for a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, as specified in Public Resources Code Section 21084.1, which defines a historical resource as one listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources and local register of historical resources.

The Project site is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places, California Historical Resources, California Historical Landmarks, or California Office of Historic Preservation's Built Environment Resources Directory.¹³ Additionally, the City of Indio does not classify Shadow Hills High School as a historic structure or site in the City's list of historical resources.¹⁴ Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed Project.

6. Conclusion

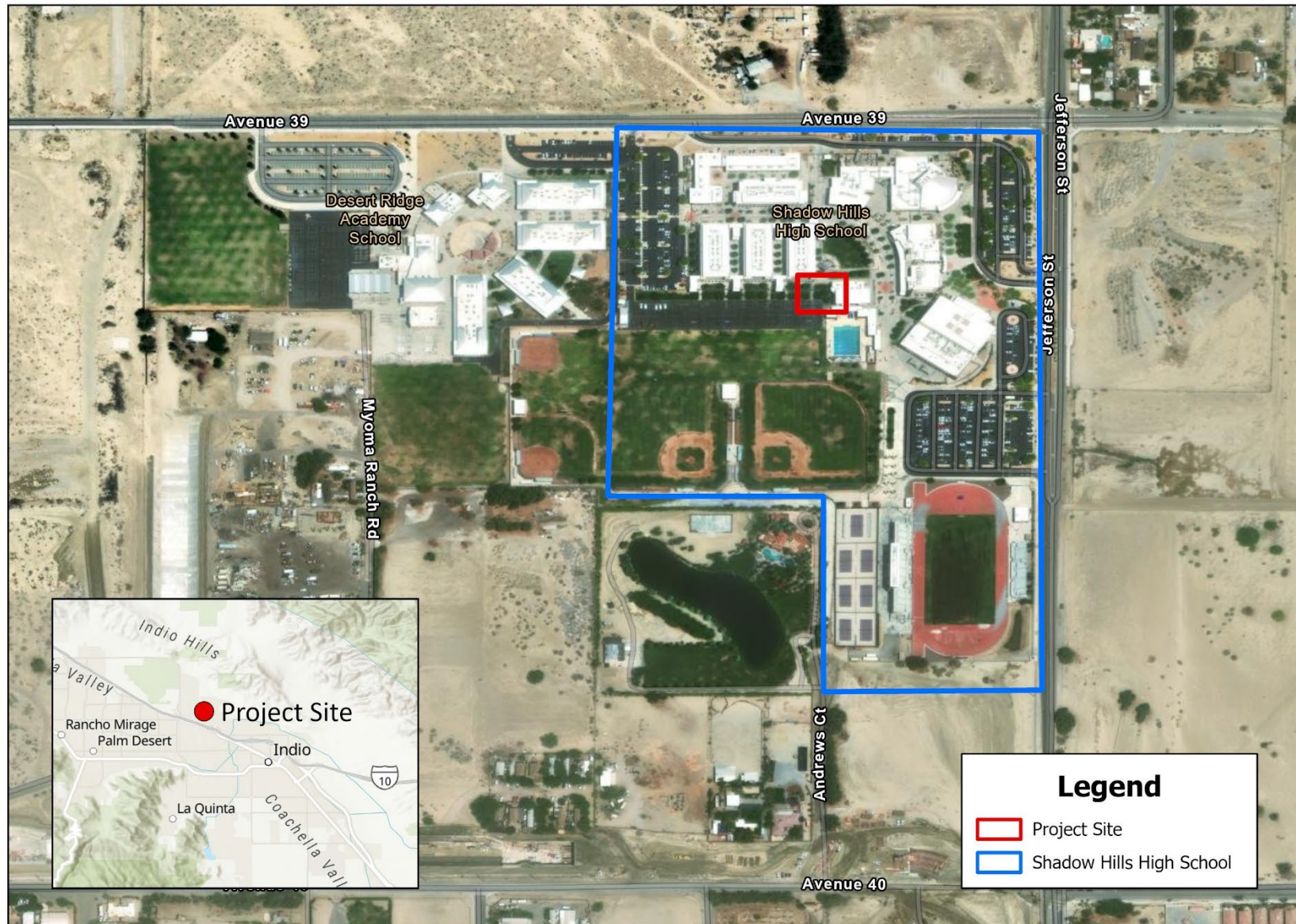
As documented herein, the proposed Project meets the requirements of Class 3, *New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures*, Categorical Exemption Class 4, *Minor Alterations to Land*, and Class 14, *Minor Additions to Schools*, and none of the conditions listed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2, *Exceptions*, apply. Therefore, the Project is exempt from extended environmental review in accordance with the provisions of CEQA.

¹² Department of Toxic Substances Control, EnviroStor, Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List (Cortese), accessed July 15, 2024, [https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/search?cmd=search&reporttype=CORTESE&site_type=CSITES,FUDS&status=ACT,BKLG.COM&reporttitle=HAZARDOUS+WASTE+AND+SUBSTANCES+SITE+LIST+%28CORTESE%29](https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/search?cmd=search&reporttype=CORTESE&site_type=CSITES,FUDS&status=ACT,BKLG.COM&reporttitle=HAZARDOUS+WASTE+AND+SUBSTANCES+SITE+LIST+%28CORTESE%29;); California State Water Resources Control Board, GeoTracker, accessed July 15, 2024, <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/map/?myaddress=California&from=header&cqid=2956220328>

¹³ National Park Services, National Register of Historic Places, accessed July 15, 2024, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/database-research.htm#table>; Office of Historic Preservation, California Historical Resources, accessed July 15, 2024, <https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/ListedResources/?view=county&criteria=33>; Office of Historic Preservation, California Historical Landmarks, accessed July 15, 2024, https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21427; Office of Historic Preservation, Built Environment Resource Directory, accessed July 15, 2024, https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21452.

¹⁴ City of Indio, Final Environmental Impact Report for the City of Indio General Plan Update, 2019, <https://www.indio.org/home/showpublisheddocument/924/637874293008870000>.

Categorical Exemption Evaluation Report
Shadow Hills High School Wrestling Room Addition



Categorical Exemption Evaluation Report
Shadow Hills High School Wrestling Room Addition

