

ON December 12 2024UNTIL January 13 2025

City of La Puente

15900 E. Main Street La Puente, CA 91744 Telephone (626) 855-1500 Fax (626) 961-4626

REGISTRAR – RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: County Clerk
County of Los Angeles
Environmental Filings
12400 East Imperial Hwy
Norwalk, CA 90650

FROM: City of La Puente
15900 East Main Street
La Puente, CA 91744

Project Title: Veterans Memorial Park

Project Location (Specific):

Project Location (City):

Project Location (County):

15900 E. Main Street, La Puente, CA 91744

La Puente

Los Angeles

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The project aims to revitalize and enhance an existing open space area within the City Hall grounds, transforming it into a Veterans Memorial Park. The design consists of various elements honor the service and sacrifice of veterans, creating a peaceful and reflective environment adjacent to City Hall. Key features of the project include a Wall of Honor, a statue, a Service Wall, a Memorial Timeline, a Great Lawn, an entry sign, service flags, and pathways that guide visitors through the park. In addition, the park will be enriched with green spaces, seating areas, and landscaping, incorporating new plant material and greenery to foster a sense of place and honor to veterans. This project seeks to combine an existing functional public space with a meaningful tribute and recognition, offering an accessible and serene location for reflection, remembrance, and appreciation.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project:

City of La Puente

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:

Juan Galvan, MPA, Associate Planner

Exempt Status: (Check One)

- ☐ Ministerial (14 Calif. Admin. Code §15268)
- ☐ Declared Emergency (14 Cal. Admin. Code §15269(a))
- ☐ Emergency Project (14 Cal. Admin. Code §15269(b) & (c))
- ☐ Statutory Exemption. (14 Cal. Admin. Code §§15260 et seq.)
- ☒ Categorical Exemption. (14 Cal. Admin. Code §§15300 et seq.)

State class and section number: Class 1: 15301, Class 2: 15302, Class 4: 15304, Class 11: 15311

Reason why Project is Exempt:

See attached narrative.

Contact Person:

Juan Galvan, MPA

Phone No.: (626) 855-1538

Date Received for Filing:

Signature:

Date:

2024 251761



FILED
Dec 12 2024

**Veterans Memorial Park
Notice of Exemption (NOE)
15900 E. Main Street**

The City of La Puente (“La Puente”), as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”), proposes to revitalize an existing open space area within the City Hall grounds, transforming it into a Veterans Memorial Park (“Project”).

Project Location

La Puente City Hall is located at 15900 E. Main Street, La Puente, CA 91744. The proposed area is located on the west side of the City Hall grounds, between Central Avenue and Main Street and encompasses approximately 19,763 square feet.

Description of Project

The Project aims to transform an existing open space area at City Hall into a Veterans Memorial Park, honoring veterans' service and sacrifice to the Country. The design will create a peaceful environment with key features such as a Wall of Honor, a statue, a Service Wall, a Memorial Timeline, a Great Lawn, entry sign, service flags, and pathways. The park will also include green spaces, seating, and landscaping to promote a special sense of place and respect. This Project will provide a functional and meaningful space for reflection, remembrance, and appreciation.

Reasons why Project is exempt

The proposed Project involves the renovation, reuse, and rehabilitation of an existing open space area at City Hall, enhancing it into a space to honor veterans.

The Project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301: Class 1 – Existing Facilities. This exemption applies because the Project involves repair, rehabilitation, and maintenance activities with no expansion of the current use or footprint. Class 1 exemptions specifically pertain to the operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alterations of existing public or private structures and facilities, where there is negligible or no expansion of the existing use or capacity.

The subject property, an existing open space area, is in need of rehabilitation and improvement and will be altered into a Veterans Memorial Park. While the function of the space will remain as open space for recreational purposes, the Project will enhance and restore the area to improve its accessibility, aesthetics, and historical significance. Importantly, the Project will not introduce any new uses or increase the intensity of activities, but rather aims to modernize and enhance the existing facilities to better serve the community.

Therefore, the proposed work primarily constitutes renovation and restoration of the existing City Hall grounds, aligning with the Class 1 exemption under CEQA for projects that involve minor alterations or improvements to existing facilities.

The Project is also categorically exempt under Section 15302: Class 2 – Replacement or Reconstruction. This exemption applies because the Project involves replacing and reconstructing the existing exterior facility without expanding the current use or capacity.



The subject property, currently an underutilized open space area, is in need of rehabilitation and will be improved as a Veterans Memorial Park. The Project aims to revitalize the area while preserving its core function as an open space for community recreation, gathering and reflection. The transformation will include the replacement of outdated landscaping with more sustainable and aesthetically appealing plantings, the reconstruction of hardscape areas and walkways to enhance accessibility, and the incorporation of modern amenities to better accommodate visitors. All improvements will be designed with a focus on ensuring universal access, safety, and functionality.

Importantly, the Project will not introduce new uses or increase the intensity of activities within the space. Instead, the focus will be on enhancing and modernizing the existing infrastructure to improve its quality and usability. The primary objective is to create a meaningful and respectful environment that both honors veterans and serves the broader community's recreational and cultural needs. These improvements aim to foster an inviting, accessible setting that encourages community engagement while supporting the long-term preservation of the park's historical significance.

Therefore, the proposed work aligns with the Class 2 exemption under CEQA for projects involving the replacement or reconstruction of existing facilities, which include minor alterations or improvements that do not expand the use or capacity of the site. The Project will primarily involve the replacement and reconstruction of the City Hall grounds, ensuring both improved functionality and preservation of the area's cultural value.

The Project is also categorically exempt under Section 15304: Class 4 – Minor Alterations to Land. This exemption applies because the Project involves minor public alterations to land and vegetation that do not require the removal of healthy, mature, or scenic trees.

The subject property, currently an underutilized public open space area, is in need of rehabilitation and will be modified into a Veterans Memorial Park. While the space will continue to serve as open space for recreational purposes, the Project will make minor alterations to the area's landscaping. These alterations will include the introduction of water-efficient drought tolerant plants and other sustainable landscaping improvements to enhance the space's aesthetic and environmental value.

Therefore, the proposed work aligns with the Class 4 exemption under CEQA, as it involves minor changes to the existing landscape that improves the site's sustainability, without disturbing healthy, mature, or scenic trees. The Project will enhance the property while preserving its environmental and visual integrity.

The Project is also categorically exempt under the CEQA Guidelines Section 15311: Class 11 – Accessory Structures. This exemption applies because the Project involves the construction or replacement of minor structures accessory to existing public facilities. Specifically, Class 11 exemptions apply to on-premises signs, statues, monuments, service flags, and benches designed for public use.

The subject property, currently an existing open space area, requires rehabilitation and will be improved as a Veterans Memorial Park. While the space will continue to serve as open space for recreational purposes, the Project will enhance the area by upgrading the existing signage and installing new veteran memorial features, such as a Wall of Honor, a statue, a Service Wall, a Memorial Timeline, an entry sign, and service flags. These additions will not introduce new uses

or increase the intensity of activities, but instead focus on modernizing and enriching the existing facilities to better serve the community.

Therefore, the proposed work aligns with the Class 11 exemption under CEQA, as it involves the replacement of existing signage and the construction of new memorial features, all of which are accessory structures that complement the existing City Hall grounds.

The proposed Project will not result in significant environmental impacts and is exempt from further review under the conditions in Article 19. Therefore, the application of Class 1, Class 2, Class 4, and Class 11 categorical exemptions are 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 Project site has not been designated as a biologically sensitive site or a location and does not contain sensitive resources or habitat that will be impacted by the Project. The Project will occur on an existing public open space that is located within an urban setting, where the surrounding area is developed and does not include environmentally sensitive features.
- (b) **Cumulative Impact.** The Project will be expected to result in significant cumulative environmental impacts. There are no known successive projects of the same type or scale planned for the site.
- (c) **Significant Effect.** The proposed Project is located within a disturbed, urbanized area in La Puente. It will involve the removal of existing vegetation, which will be replaced with water-efficient plantings and other sustainable landscaping improvements, while preserving the existing mature trees. The Project will also enhance the site by upgrading existing signage and installing new veteran memorial features, such as a Wall of Honor, statue, Service Wall, Memorial Timeline, entry sign, and service flags. Given the nature of the Project and its location, there is no reasonable possibility that it would have a significant environmental impact due to unusual circumstances. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the Project.
- (d) **Scenic Highways.** The Project is located entirely within La Puente and will not impact any scenic highways. Therefore, there will be no effect on scenic highways, and this exception does not apply to the Project.
- (e) **Hazardous Waste Sites.** The Project is located within an existing public open space, which is not on any list of hazardous waste sites. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the Project.
- (f) **Historical Resources.** The Project site has not been identified as a historic resource by local or state agencies, nor has it been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, or any local register. Additionally, the site was not identified as a potential historic resource based on the City's HistoricPlacesLA database. The Project will retain the current use of the public open space, with the proposed work focusing on the renovation, reuse, and rehabilitation of the existing City Hall grounds, transforming it into a dedicated Veterans Memorial Park. Given these factors, the Project will not result in a substantial adverse change to the significance of any historic resource, and this exception does not apply.