

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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

From: Saugus Union School District
24930 Avenue Stanford
Santa Clarita, CA 91355

County Clerk
County of Los Angeles
12400 Imperial Hwy
Norwalk, CA 90650

North Park Elementary School Playground Improvements Project
Project Title

23335 Sunset Hills Drive
Project Location - Specific

Santa Clarita
Project Location - City

Los Angeles
Project Location - County

The District proposes to remove and replace the asphalt hardcourts and three ball walls on the North Park ES playground, and add a new accessible path of travel in the northern portion of the campus. Additionally, the proposed project will remove the asphalt of the kindergarten play-ground located at the southeastern corner of the campus, and replace it with concrete paving . Student capacity at North Park ES will not change as a result of the proposed project.

The proposed project construction will occur over approximately 2 months, beginning in June 2025 and ending in August 2025.
Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project

Saugus Union School District
Name of Public Agency Approving Project

Saugus Union School District
Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project

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. State type and section number: Class 1, Existing Facilities (CEQA Guidelines § 15301); Class 3, New Construction of Conversion of Small Structures (CEQA Guidelines § 15303); Class 14, Minor Additions to Schools (CEQA Guidelines § 15314).
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

The proposed removal and replacement of the hardcourts, ball walls, and asphalt at the kindergarten playground are exempt from CEQA under Class 1, Existing Facilities (Section 15301) because construction of the proposed project will consist of minor exterior alterations within the school's existing playground, and all proposed improvements will occur within the boundaries of the fully developed and operational North Park ES campus. Additionally, the proposed new paving and play equipment will be a permanent replacement for the existing asphalt and structures that will be removed; thus, the proposed project will not result in the expansion of existing campus or change the use of the project site. Therefore, the project is exempt from CEQA under Section 15301.

The proposed replacement of hardcourts and ball walls are exempt from CEQA under Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures (Section 15303). The proposed project will consist of the removal and replacement of three ball walls and asphalt paving, which will serve the existing student population at North Park ES and will not increase student capacity on the campus. Therefore, the proposed project is exempt from CEQA under Section 15303.

The proposed addition of new paving, ball walls, and accessible path of travel are exempt from CEQA under Class 14, Minor Additions to Schools (Section 15314), as the proposed additions will be within the school campus, on the northern and southeastern portions of the campus within the existing play areas. The proposed additions will not increase student capacity, as the new paving and play equipment will be replacing the existing asphalt and equipment. Therefore, the project is exempt from CEQA under Section 15314.

The proposed project will not alter or expand the existing school use, alter the school boundaries, increase student capacity, or increase the number of classrooms on the campus. The proposed project will only make minor modifications to the existing campus, and no off-campus improvements will occur.

The proposed project was also reviewed for possible exceptions under Section 15300.2 and found that the exceptions do not apply.

Reasons why project is exempt

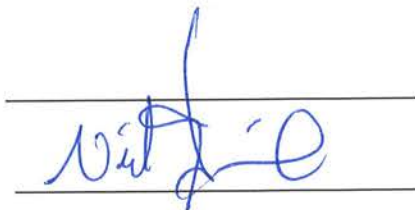
Kathie Pisano, Facilities Project Manager (661) 294-5300
Contact Person: Area Code/Telephone/Extension:

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: Assistant Superintendent of Business

Attachment to Notice of Exemption
North Park Elementary School Playground Improvements Project
Saugus Union School District
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

The Saugus Union School District (SUSD or District) proposes improvements to the North Park Elementary School campus (North Park ES or campus) that will include the removal and replacement of the asphalt hardcourts and three ball walls, addition of a new accessible path of travel, and the removal of asphalt and replacement with concrete paving at the kindergarten playground (proposed project). This supplemental information provides justification for the Categorical Exemption pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines under California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Sections 15301, 15303, and 15314.

1. EXISTING CONDITIONS

1.1 Project Location

The North Park ES campus is at 23335 Sunset Hills Drive in the City of Santa Clarita (Assessor Parcel Number [APN] 2810-053-902) in Los Angeles County, California (project site) (see Figure 1, Project Location). The campus is bound by North Park Drive to the east, Sunset Hills Drive to the south, Chesebrough Park to the west, and residential properties to the north (see Figure 2, Aerial View). Vehicular access to the campus is provided via Sunset Hills Drive, and regional access to the campus is provided via Interstate 5 (I-5), approximately 4 miles to the west, and State Route 14 (SR-14), approximately 6 miles to the southeast. The campus has a land use and zoning designation of Public/Institutional (PI).

1.2 Surrounding General Plan Land Use Designations

The North Park ES campus is surrounded by Urban Residential (5 dwelling units per acre [du/a]) (UR2) zones to the east and south. Urban Residential (11 du/a) (UR3) zones border the project site to the north and northwest, and properties to the west of the project site are zoned Open Space (OS). Land use designations surrounding the site are consistent with zoning designations (City of Santa Clarita 2023).

1.3 Saugus Union School District

The District provides school services to the City of Santa Clarita and includes 15 elementary schools. SUSD had a districtwide enrollment of 9,191 students in the 2024-2025 school year (CDE 2025).

1.4 North Park Elementary School

According to the California Department of Education (CDE), North Park ES serves students in grades Kindergarten (K) through 6th, and had an enrollment of 441 students for the 2024-2025 school year (CDE 2025).

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The District proposes to remove and replace the asphalt hardcourts and three ball walls on the North Park ES playground, and add a new accessible path of travel in the northern portion of the campus. Additionally, the proposed project will remove the asphalt of the kindergarten playground located at the southeastern corner of the campus, and replace it with concrete paving. Student capacity at North Park ES will not change as a result of the proposed project (see Figure 3, Proposed Project Plans).

2.5 Construction

The proposed project construction will occur over approximately 2 months, beginning in June 2025 and ending in August 2025. All construction equipment and workers will be within the boundaries of the project site and contractors will adhere to Section 11.44.080, Special Noise Sources—Construction and Building, of the City of Santa Clarita Municipal Code, to avoid disruption to campus operations. The proposed project will not increase the net total number of classrooms on the campus and will not increase the school's student capacity. All project improvements will occur on campus, and no off-site improvements will be included as part of the proposed project.

3. REASONS WHY THE PROJECT IS EXEMPT

The proposed project is exempt from further environmental review under the requirements of CEQA (California Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq.) because it is consistent with Class 1, 3, and 14 exemptions.

- » **Class 1, Existing Facilities (CEQA Guidelines Section 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 existing or former use. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of use. Examples include (a) interior or exterior alterations involving such things as interior partitions, plumbing, and electrical conveyances, and (l) demolition and removal of individual small structures including accessory (appurtenant) structures, including garages, carports, patios, swimming pools, and fences.

The proposed removal and replacement of the hardcourts, ball walls, and asphalt at the kindergarten playground are exempt from CEQA under Class 1, Existing Facilities (Section 15301) because construction of the proposed project will consist of minor exterior alterations within the school's existing playground, and all proposed improvements will occur within the boundaries of the fully developed and operational North Park ES campus. Additionally, the proposed new paving and play equipment will be a permanent replacement for the existing asphalt and structures that will be removed; thus, the proposed project will not result in the expansion of existing campus or change the use of the project site. Therefore, the project is exempt from CEQA under Section 15301.

- » **Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures (CEQA Guidelines Section 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 numbers of structures described in this section are the maximum allowable on any legal parcel.

The proposed replacement of hardcourts and ball walls are exempt from CEQA under Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures (Section 15303). The proposed project will consist of the removal and replacement of three ball walls and asphalt paving, which will serve the existing student population at North Park ES and will not increase student capacity on the campus. Therefore, the proposed project is exempt from CEQA under Section 15303.

- » **Class 14, Minor Additions to Schools (CEQA Guidelines Section 15314)** 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 10 classrooms, whichever is less. The addition of portable classrooms is included in this exemption.

The proposed addition of new paving, ball walls, and accessible path of travel are exempt from CEQA under Class 14, Minor Additions to Schools (Section 15314), as the proposed additions will be within the school campus, on the northern and southeastern portions of the campus within the existing play areas. The proposed additions will not increase student capacity, as the new paving and play equipment will be replacing the existing asphalt and equipment. Therefore, the project is exempt from CEQA under Section 15314.

The proposed project will not alter or expand the existing school use, increase student capacity, and will only make minor modifications to the existing campus. No off-campus improvements will occur.

4. REVIEW OF EXCEPTIONS TO THE CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION

The proposed project has been reviewed under CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2, Exceptions, for any characteristics or circumstances that might invalidate findings that the proposed 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 in all instances, except where the project may have an 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 project site is on an existing elementary school campus that includes classroom buildings, athletic fields and facilities, parking lots, concrete walkways, and ornamental landscaping. Due to the school's developed nature and frequent human disturbance, it does not contain any sensitive biological species or habitat. No mapped riparian habitats or wetlands exist on or near the project site. The nearest riparian habitat is a Riverine habitat approximately 0.6 miles west of the project site (USFWS 2025). All proposed project improvements will occur within the boundaries of the existing campus. Additionally, there is no evidence of hazardous materials or substances on the campus (see Section (e), Hazardous Waste Sites). The project site is not considered to be a particularly sensitive environment. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed project.

(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.

There are no other planned projects proposed on the campus at this time. Significant cumulative impacts are not anticipated to occur with the implementation of the proposed project. The proposed project is the only known and planned improvements to the campus. The project site is generally flat as it has been previously developed, and the proposed project does not include subterranean levels nor extensive earthwork. Other projects within the District include improvements projects at Rosedell Elementary School and Plum Canyon Elementary School. The closest project to the proposed project is the improvements project at Rosedell Elementary School, approximately two miles east. While construction timeline for the proposed project and other District projects would overlap, each project would be in different stages of construction and construction of each project would be executed individually. Additionally, each project would be limited to their

respective project sites. Construction work would be scheduled to have minimal impacts on students and surrounding community to the extent possible. Therefore, similar projects at nearby schools will not have an impact on the proposed project and the project site. When combined with proposed cumulative District projects, the proposed project will not create a cumulative impact under CEQA. Therefore, 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 project site is on a currently occupied elementary school campus. There is no reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. Proposed improvements will not change access and circulation of the surrounding area. The construction manager will execute construction activities per current local, State, and federal laws, regulations, construction best management practices (BMPs), and District standards and guidelines. Therefore, this exemption 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.

There are no designated State scenic highways near the campus. According to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) California Scenic Highway Mapping System, the closest eligible State scenic highway is State Route 210 (SR-210) from Post Mile (PM) R44.019 to PM R55.263, approximately 3 miles southwest of the campus; and the closest officially designated scenic highway is State Route 24 (SR-24), from PM 27.163 to PM 82.265, approximately 24 miles southeast of the campus (Caltrans 2025). All proposed project improvements will occur within the boundaries of the existing campus and are not visible from those segments due to distance; thus, the proposed project will not affect any scenic highways. Additionally, due to the distance between the project site and these highways, the proposed project would not 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. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed project.

- (e) Hazardous Waste Sites.** A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project on a site that is included on any list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.

California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the compiling of lists of the following types of hazardous materials sites: hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action; hazardous waste discharges for which the State Water Quality Control Board has issued certain types of orders; public drinking water wells containing detectable levels of organic contaminants; underground storage tanks with reported unauthorized releases; and solid waste disposal facilities from which hazardous waste has migrated.

Four environmental databases were searched for hazardous materials sites on the site and within a quarter-mile radius:

- » EnviroStor. Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC 2025a)
- » GeoTracker. State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB 2025)
- » EnviroMapper. US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA 2025b)
- » Solid Waste Information System. California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle 2025)
- » Department of Toxic Substance Control Cortese List (DTSC 2025b)

The search of the databases did not identify the project site or any sites within a 0.25-mile radius to contain hazardous materials. Additionally, the project site is not identified on the DTSC Cortese List as a hazardous site. Thus, the project site is not identified as a hazardous materials site pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and the project will not create a hazard to the public. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed project.

(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 Section 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 a historical resource.

North Park ES is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places, a California Historical Landmark, California Point of Historical Interest, nor is there a listed historic resource within a 0.25-mile radius of the project site (NPS 2025; OHP 2025a, 2025b). Neither the school nor any adjoining property are listed as historic resources or potential historic resources by the City of Santa Clarita. No historical resources have been identified on-site during preparation of the Notice of Exemption. Therefore, the historical sites exception does not apply to the proposed project.

5. CONCLUSION

The proposed project at North Park ES is exempt from CEQA review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301, 15303, and 15314. As substantiated in this document, the proposed project will not meet the conditions specified in Section 15300.2, *Exceptions*, of the CEQA Guidelines, and the project is categorically exempt under Class 1, 3, and 14.

6. REFERENCES

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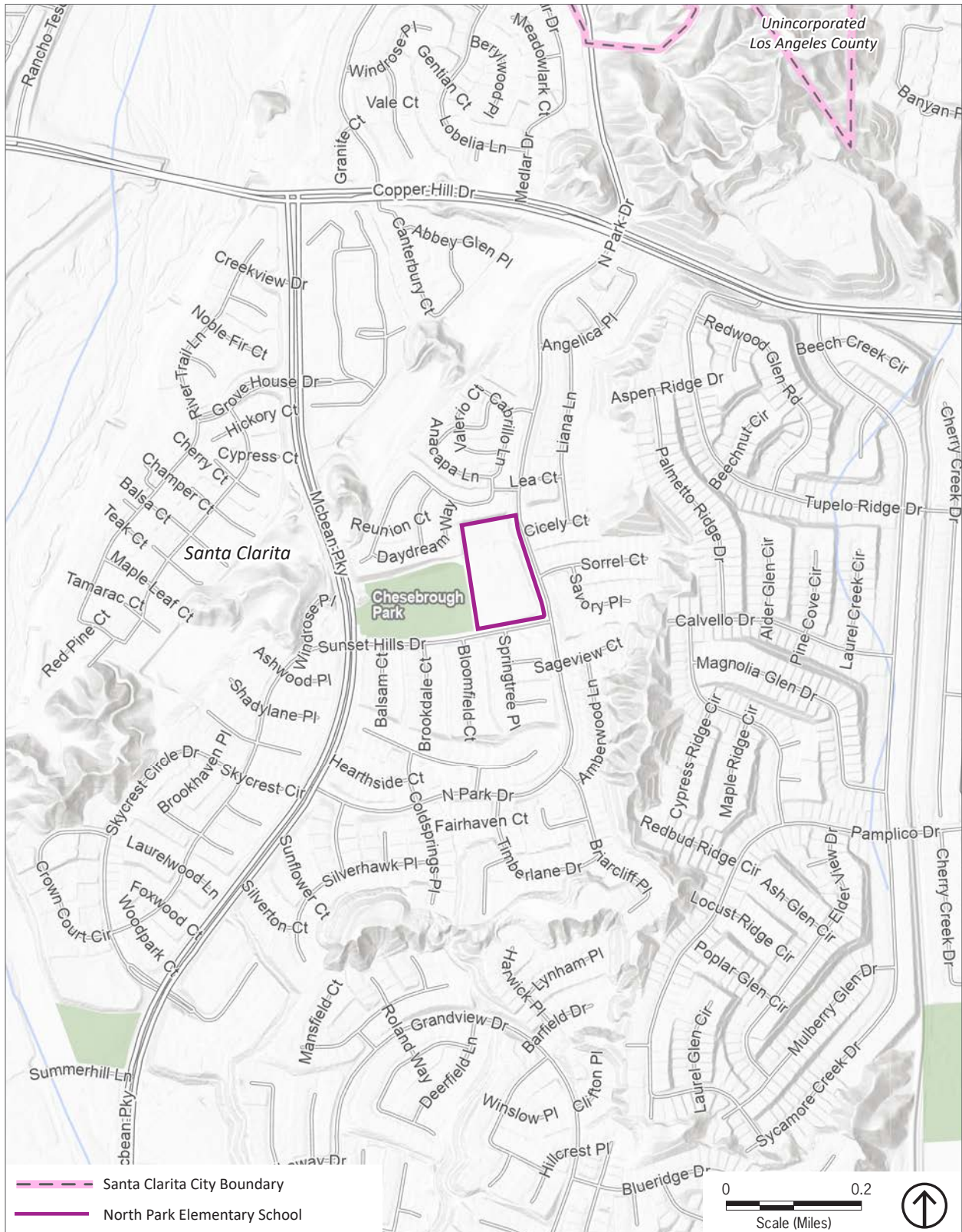
State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). 2025. GeoTracker.
<http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>.

_____. 2025b. EnviroMapper for EnviroFacts. <https://www3.epa.gov/enviro/index.html>.

FIGURES

- Figure 1** Project Location
- Figure 2** Aerial View
- Figure 3** Proposed Project Plans

NORTH PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAY COURTS PROJECT
SAUGUS UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT



Source: Generated using ArcMap 2025.

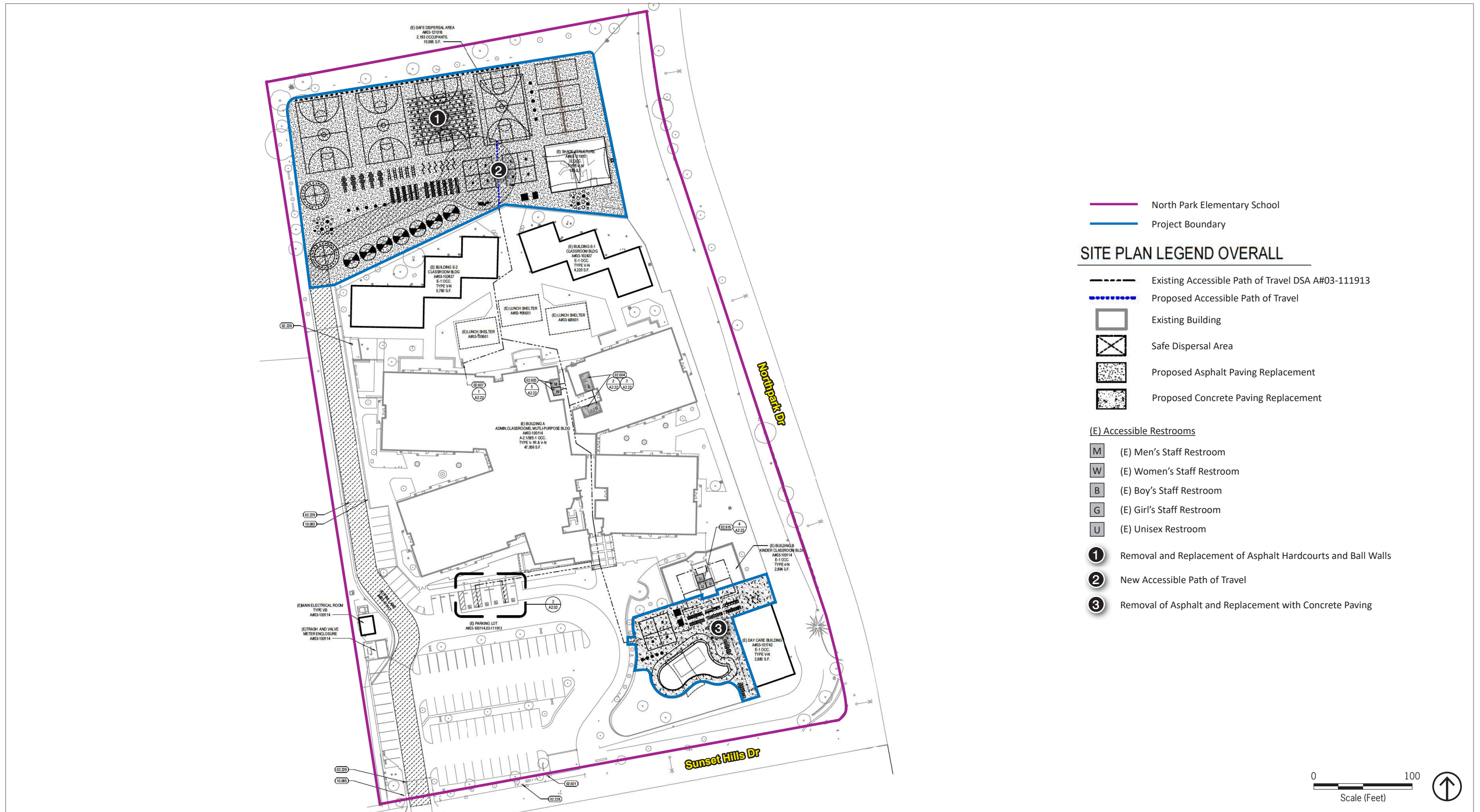
Figure 1
Project Location

NORTH PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAY COURTS PROJECT
SAUGUS UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT



Source: Nearmap 2025.

Figure 2
Aerial View



Source: SGH Architects 2025.

Figure 3
Proposed Project Plans