

**Foothill-De Anza Community College District**

---

# **FHDA FACULTY AND STAFF HOUSING ACQUISITION PROJECT**

---

**August 2025 | CEQA Exemption Memorandum**



August 2025 | CEQA Exemption Memorandum

# FHDA FACULTY AND STAFF HOUSING ACQUISITION PROJECT

for Foothill-De Anza Community College District

**Foothill-De Anza Community College District**

Contact: Joel Cadiz, Executive Director, Facilities and Operations  
12345 S. El Monte Road  
Los Altos Hills, California 94022  
650.949.6150

*Prepared by:*

**PlaceWorks**

Contact: Amber Sharpe, Senior Associate  
2040 Bancroft, Suite 400  
Berkeley, California 94704  
510.848.3815 x3333

[www.placeworks.com](http://www.placeworks.com)

# 1. INTRODUCTION

---

This section describes the standards for determining a significant effect on the environment from the proposed Faculty and Staff Housing Acquisition Project (proposed project) by the Foothill De Anza Community College District (District) pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

## 1.1 EXEMPTIONS

Once it is determined that an activity is a project subject to CEQA, it is then determined whether the project is exempt from CEQA. Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b), a project is exempt from CEQA if:

1. The project is exempt by statute (see, e.g., Article 18, commencing with Section 15260).
2. The project is exempt pursuant to a categorical exemption (see Article 19, commencing with Section 15300) and the application of that categorical exemption is not barred by one of the exceptions set forth in Section 15300.2.
3. The activity is covered by the common-sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.
4. The project will be rejected or disapproved by a public agency. (See Section 15270(b)).
5. The project is exempt pursuant to the provisions of Article 12.5 of Chapter 3.

The proposed project would be exempt as a “common sense” exemption under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) because implementation of the proposed project would not have the potential to cause a significant effect on the environment, as further discussed below in Section 3, *Findings Concerning CEQA Exemption*.

**EXMEPTION MEMO**

## **2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

---

### **2.1 REGIONAL LOCATION**

The project site is in the city of Mountain View, in the northwestern part of Santa Clara County. Mountain View is surrounded by the San Francisco Bay to the north, the city of Sunnyvale to the east, the city of Los Altos to the south, and the city of Palo Alto to the west. It is approximately 30 miles south of the city and county of San Francisco and approximately seven miles northwest of the city of San José.

### **2.2 PROJECT SITE**

The project site is an approximately 1.78-acre parcel, which is owned by Mountain View Whisman School District (“MVWSD”) and located at 699 North Shoreline Boulevard in the city of Mountain View. The 1.78-acre site consists of 144 Below-Market-Rate (“BMR”) units. The BMR units are a part of a larger 716-unit apartment development (“The Sevens development”), which includes a 7.90-acre parcel consisting of 572 market rate residential units, located immediately to the east of the 1.78-acre site. The Sevens development is surrounded by government, light industrial, and residential uses to the north, West Middlefield Road to the east, a place of worship, commercial, and residential uses to the south, and North Shoreline Boulevard to the west. The project site is approximately four miles east of Foothill College at 12345 El Monte Road in Los Altos Hills and approximately six miles north of De Anza College at 21250 Stevens Creek Boulevard in Cupertino.

### **2.3 LAND USE AND ZONING DESIGNATIONS**

The project site is assigned Assessor’s Parcel Number (APN) 153-24-027. The project site has a high-density residential General Plan land use designation and is in the Planned Community/Precise Plan zoning district.

## 2.4 PROPOSED PROJECT

### 2.4.1 Project Background

The City of Mountain View certified the Final Environmental Impact Report (Certified EIR) for The Sevens project and approved the project on May 19, 2019.<sup>1</sup> The Certified EIR included an analysis of environmental impacts of development of a 716-unit apartment complex including the 572 market rate units at 777 West Middlefield Road and the 144 BMR units located at the 699 North Shoreline Boulevard (i.e., The Sevens development). MVWSD, as lessee under a ground lease with The Sevens developer as lessor, constructed the 144 BMR units, consisting of studios, one-, and two- bedroom units, of which 123 are dedicated to MVWSD staff housing and 21 are dedicated to City of Mountain View employees. In accordance with the city of Mountain View approvals for The Sevens project, construction of the 144 BMR units began in 2022<sup>2</sup> and was completed in 2025. The 144 BMR units, including the 123 units dedicated to MVWSD staff, have been opened to residents as of February 2025.<sup>3</sup>

The District has been seeking affordable housing options for District faculty and staff. The District includes two campuses, Foothill College and De Anza College, and serves the communities in Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Stanford, Sunnyvale, and parts of Saratoga and San José.

### 2.4.2 Proposed Purchase Agreement

As described, 123 of the 716 apartment units at The Sevens development are BMR units, owned MVWSD, and are currently designated for MVWSD faculty and staff. The District proposes to purchase a thirty-five (35) percent co-tenancy interest of the 144 MVWSD-owned BMR units, which will include fifty (50) of the existing 123 below market rate units, 50 parking spaces located in The Sevens parking garage, and The Sevens amenities as set forth in the Covenants, Conditions, Restrictions and Easements recorded December 06, 2022 as Instrument Number 25411919 of Official Records. The 50 units would be designated specifically for District faculty and staff from Foothill and De Anza Colleges.

---

<sup>1</sup> City of Mountain View, 2019, 777 West Middlefield Road Project Environmental Impact Report, State Clearinghouse Number 201803207.

<sup>2</sup> Mountain View Whisman School District, Staff Housing Roadmap, [https://www.mvwsd.org/district\\_business/facilities/staff\\_housing/staff\\_housing\\_roadmap](https://www.mvwsd.org/district_business/facilities/staff_housing/staff_housing_roadmap), accessed August 21, 2025.

<sup>3</sup> Mountain View Whisman School District, 2025, July 11, Staff Housing Update, [https://www.mvwsd.org/district\\_business/facilities/staff\\_housing/staff\\_housing\\_update](https://www.mvwsd.org/district_business/facilities/staff_housing/staff_housing_update), accessed August 21, 2025.

**EXEMPTION MEMO**

## **3. FINDINGS CONCERNING CEQA EXEMPTION**

---

### **3.1 CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15061(B)(3): COMMON SENSE EXEMPTION**

The proposed project is exempt as a “common sense” exemption under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) because the proposed project involves the purchase of 35 percent co-tenancy interest of 144 existing BMR units to be used by the District for faculty and staff housing. The District does not propose to make any physical changes to the site or existing development; as such, there would be no possibility that the proposed project would have a significant effect on the environment.

### **3.2 ANALYSIS IN SUPPORT OF FINDINGS**

This document has been prepared to serve as the basis for compliance with CEQA as it pertains to the proposed project, and to demonstrate that the proposed project qualifies for an exemption. The proposed project would provide the District with a 35 percent co-tenancy interest in the MVWSD-owned BMR units as described above. The proposed project does not include any construction or other physical changes to the project site that would have the potential to have a significant effect on the environment. Further, there would not be a change in use at the project site. The Certified EIR for the 716-unit The Sevens development, including 144 BMR units, evaluated the impacts of adding residents to the site. The Certified EIR analysis did not assume that the affordable units would be occupied by employees or staff of a specific school district. The reallocation of 50 affordable units from MVWSD staff to District faculty and staff would not increase the number of residents above the number assumed for these units in the Certified EIR. In addition, as noted, the project site is approximately four miles east of Foothill College and six miles north of De Anza College. The Certified EIR assumed residents would travel an average of 10.80 miles per vehicle trip from home to work each day.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with the assumed home-to-work distance that would be traveled per day. As previously discussed, the proposed project is strictly a purchasing agreement that would allow the District to acquire BMR housing for its faculty and staff and not result in any direct or indirect physical changes to the environment.

---

<sup>4</sup> City of Mountain View, 2019, 777 West Middlefield Road Project Final Environmental Impact Report, Appendix 3.2-1 *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Analysis* Details, Section 4.3 Trip Type Information, page 117.