

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency): Hartnell Community College District
411 Central Avenue
Salinas, CA 93901

County Clerk

County of: Monterey

168 West Allisal Street, 1st Floor

Salinas, CA 93901

(Address)

Project Title: Hartnell Main Campus Buildings F, G & H Renovations Project

Project Applicant: Hartnell Community College District

Project Location - Specific:

Hartnell Community College, 411 Central Avenue, Salinas, CA 93901

Project Location - City: Salinas

Project Location - County: Monterey

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Hartnell Community College District plans to renovate the interior of Building F, G, & H at the Main Campus. The renovation of the one 48,048 square-foot building will be mainly interior refresh. The square footage will not be increasing and the building will continue to accommodate current programs.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Hartnell Community College District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Hartnell Community College District

Exempt Status: (check one):

- 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: Existing Facilities (Article 19, Section 15301)
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

The project consists of the interior renovation of one building (Building F, G, H) of the Hartnell College Main Campus and would not increase the square footage of the building nor increase the student capacity. See attachment.

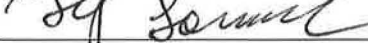
Lead Agency

Contact Person: Joseph Reyes

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 831-755-6814

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature:  Date: October 15, 2025 Title: Consultant to District

Signed by Lead Agency ■ Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____



Hartnell Main Campus Buildings F, G & H Renovations Description and Evidence for Categorical Exemption

Project Description

The proposed project consists of an interior refresh renovation of 48,048 square-foot Building F, G, & H at the Main Campus at Hartnell Community College located at 411 Central Avenue in Salinas. The building square-footage and student capacity will not be increasing and the building will continue to accommodate current programs.

Categorical Exemption and Evidence

The proposed project qualifies for a categorical exemption under Article 19, Section 15301 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

15301. Existing Facilities: Class 1 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 types of “existing facilities” itemized below are not intended to be all-inclusive of the types of projects which might fall within Class 1. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of use.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- (a) Interior or exterior alterations involving such things as interior partitions, plumbing, and electrical conveyances;
- (b) Existing facilities of both investor and publicly owned utilities used to provide electric power, natural gas, sewerage, or other public utility services;
- (c) Existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities (this includes road grading for the purpose of public safety), and other alterations such as the addition of bicycle facilities, including but not limited to bicycle parking, bicycle-share facilities and bicycle lanes, transit improvements such as bus lanes, pedestrian crossings, street trees, and other similar alterations that do not create additional automobile lanes);
- (d) Restoration or rehabilitation of deteriorated or damaged structures, facilities, or mechanical equipment to meet current standards of public health and safety, unless it is determined

that the damage was substantial and resulted from an environmental hazard such as earthquake, landslide, or flood;

- (e) Additions to existing structures provided that the addition will not result in an increase of more than:
 - (1) 50 percent of the floor area of the structures before the addition, or 2,500 square feet, whichever is less; or
 - (2) 10,000 square feet if:
 - (A) The project is in an area where all public services and facilities are available to allow for maximum development permissible in the General Plan and
 - (B) The area in which the project is located is not environmentally sensitive.
- (f) Addition of safety or health protection devices for use during construction of or in conjunction with existing structures, facilities, or mechanical equipment, or topographical features including navigational devices;
- (g) New copy on existing on and off-premise signs;
- (h) Maintenance of existing landscaping, native growth, and water supply reservoirs (excluding the use of pesticides, as defined in Section 12753, Division 7, Chapter 2, Food and Agricultural Code);
- (i) Maintenance of fish screens, fish ladders, wildlife habitat areas, artificial wildlife waterway devices, streamflows, springs and waterholes, and stream channels (clearing of debris) to protect fish and wildlife resources;
- (j) Fish stocking by the California Department of Fish and Game;
- (k) Division of existing multiple family or single-family residences into common-interest ownership and subdivision of existing commercial or industrial buildings, where no physical changes occur which are not otherwise exempt;
- (l) Demolition and removal of individual small structures listed in this subdivision:
 - (1) One single-family residence. In urbanized areas, up to three single-family residences may be demolished under this exemption.
 - (2) A duplex or similar multifamily residential structure. In urbanized areas, this exemption applies to duplexes and similar structures where not more than six dwelling units will be demolished.
 - (3) A store, motel, office, restaurant, or similar small commercial structure if designed for an occupant load of 30 persons or less. In urbanized areas, the exemption also

applies to the demolition of up to three such commercial buildings on sites zoned for such use.

- (4) Accessory (appurtenant) structures including garages, carports, patios, swimming pools, and fences.
- (m) Minor repairs and alterations to existing dams and appurtenant structures under the supervision of the Department of Water Resources.
- (n) Conversion of a single-family residence to office use.
- (o) Installation, in an existing facility occupied by a medical waste generator, of a steam sterilization unit for the treatment of medical waste generated by that facility provided that the unit is installed and operated in accordance with the Medical Waste Management Act (Section 117600, et seq., of the Health and Safety Code) and accepts no offsite waste.
- (p) Use of a single-family residence as a small family day care home, as defined in Section 1596.78 of the Health and Safety Code.

Evidence and Findings

The proposed project includes the interior renovation of 48,048 square-foot Building F, G, & H. The building square-footage and student capacity will not be increasing and the building will continue to accommodate current programs.

For these reasons, the proposed project is categorically exempt as the interior renovation is characterized as a minor alteration of an existing public structure and facility, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use.

Exceptions to Categorical Exemptions

Section 15300.2 of the CEQA Guidelines lists exceptions that would prohibit a project from qualifying for a Categorical Exemption, even if the project satisfies the requirements for one or more of the exemption classes. The Hartnell Community College District's CEQA consultant, EMC Planning Group, conducted an independent review and evaluation of the proposed project, and conducted independent research. Based on its review, EMC Planning Group concluded that none of the exceptions listed in CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 (a-f) apply to the proposed project (discussed below). Therefore, a Categorical Exemption is appropriate pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301.

- (a) **Location.** Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to 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 all instances, except where the project may 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.

***Discussion.** The project qualifies for Class 1 exemption and therefore, the location exception does not apply to the project.*

- (b) **Cumulative Impact.** 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.

***Discussion.** The community college district is not planning successive projects of the same type in the same place. Therefore, there is no cumulative impact that would be significant.*

- (c) **Significant Effect.** 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.

***Discussion.** Neither the community college district nor the community college district's consultants are aware of any unusual circumstances associated with the project such that the project would result in a reasonable possibility of resulting in a significant effect on the environment.*

- (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. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.

***Discussion.** According to the City of Salinas General Plan, the project site is not identified as being within a scenic resource area. According to the Caltrans Scenic Highway System Map website, the project site is located approximately three miles north of the nearest officially designated State of California scenic highway (segment of State Route 68 terminating at the Salinas River). However, a segment of State Route 68 from US Highway 101 to the Salinas River is considered an "eligible" scenic route, which is located approximately 0.64 miles east of the proposed project site. The proposed project site is not visible from State Route 68. Additionally, the proposed project consists of an interior renovation. Therefore, no scenic highways, or scenic resources, would be affected as a result of the project.*

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

***Discussion.** The proposed project is not located on a site that is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. The site is not located on the California Environmental Protection Agency's Cortese List (Health and Safety Code Section 25187.5). The State Water Resources Control Board's GeoTracker (Health and Safety Code Section 25295 and Water Code Sections 13273*

and 13301) indicates two closed/completed Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) cleanup sites at the campus. Cleanup was completed and the cases are closed. GeoTracker does not indicate any hazardous sites within the campus. The project site is not listed on the California Environmental Protection Agency's list of solid waste sites identified by the Water Board with waste constituents above hazardous waste levels outside the waste management unit (Health and Safety Code Section 116395).

- (f) **Historical Resources.** A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Discussion. According to the City of Salinas list of designated historic resources, the project site does not contain any historical resources and all proposed changes are limited to interior renovations, all within existing school grounds. Therefore, the proposed project would not cause a change in the significance of a historical resource.

Sources

California Department of Toxic Substances Control. 2025. "EnviroStor – Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List (Cortese)." Accessed on October 10, 2025.

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

———. 2025. "EnviroStor Map." Accessed on October 10, 2025.

<https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/map/>

California Department of Transportation. "California State Scenic Highways". Accessed on October 10, 2025. <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways>

California Environmental Protection Agency. 2025a. "List of solid waste disposal sites identified by Water Board with waste constituents above hazardous waste levels outside the waste management unit (PDF)." Accessed on October 10, 2025. <https://calepa.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2016/10/SiteCleanup-CorteseList-CurrentList.pdf>

———. 2025b. "List of "active" CDO and CAO from Water Board (MS Excel, 1,453 KB)." Accessed October 10, 2025. <https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/>

———. 2025c. "List of hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action pursuant to Section 25187.5 of the Health and Safety Code, identified by DTSC." Accessed on October 10, 2025. <https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/section-65962-5a/?emrc=63f01af3d8806>

California State Water Resources Control Board. 2025a. "Geo Tracker: Leaking Underground Storage Tank Sites." Accessed on October 10, 2025.

<https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/map/?CMD=runreport&myaddress=411+central+ave%2C+salinas>

———. 2025b. “Hartnell College (T0605300375).” Accessed October 10, 2025.

https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/profile_report.asp?global_id=T0605300375

———. 2025c. “Hartnell College (T0605374952).” Accessed October 10, 2025.

https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/profile_report.asp?global_id=T0605374952

City of Salinas. 2002. *City of Salinas General Plan*.

———. *List of Historic Resources*. Accessed October 10, 2025.

<https://www.salinas.gov/files/sharedassets/city/v/1/community-development/current-planning/1.-surveyed-historic-resources-list-spreadsheet-salinas-state-national.pdf>

Google Earth. 2025.