

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: Office of Land Use and Climate
Innovation, State Clearinghouse
1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: Department of Toxic Substances Control
Site Mitigation and Restoration Program
700 Heinz Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94710

Project Title: Berkeley Santa Fe Trackbed to Park Removal Action Workplan

Project Location: Blake Street to Ward Street along Acton Street, Berkeley, CA 94702

County: Alameda

Project Applicant: City of Berkeley

Approval Action Under Consideration by DTSC: Removal Action Workplan

Statutory Authority: California Health and Safety Code, Division 45

Project Description: The project consists of implementing a Removal Action Workplan (RAW) associated with the Berkeley Santa Fe Trackbed to Park Conversion Project being undertaken by the City of Berkeley's Department of Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront. The project is located on approximately 1.32 acres in Berkeley, California on four noncontiguous parcels identified as Alameda County Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) 54-1790-28, 54-1794-28, 54-1793-27, and 54-1735-20 (Site). The project includes the excavation and off-Site disposal of approximately 4,640 cubic yards (6,495 tons) of soil impacted with arsenic, mercury, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) such that there are no future restrictions on development and Site use.

Background: The Site is currently vacant land that was historically part of the Santa Fe Railroad right-of-way (ROW). There are no buildings associated with the Site, and the Site surfaces consist of mostly uncovered soils. The Site is located within an urbanized area consisting primarily of residential development. The City of Berkeley plans to develop the Site into a recreational area which will include a community garden, dog park, children's play area, and teaching garden.

The City of Berkeley previously filed a Notice of Exemption for the Berkeley Santa Fe Trackbed-to-Park Conversion Project with the Alameda County Clerk-Recorder's Office in July 2021, which covered construction of a park, including gardens, a playground, dog park, pathways, and other related amenities at the Site. The current NOE covers remediation activities set forth in the RAW which were subsequently determined to be necessary for Site redevelopment.

Project Activities:

The activities set forth in the RAW consist of excavation and off-Site disposal of impacted soils. Excavation depths will range between 2 feet and 6 feet below ground surface (bgs) at the Site. In total, approximately 4,640 cubic yards (6,495 tons) of soil will be removed from the Site and transported to an appropriate, permitted off-site facility for disposal. A similar volume of clean backfill will be imported.

The RAW activities will be undertaken using conventional grading equipment, such as loaders, backhoes, and/or other appropriate equipment. Assuming each truck carries 18 tons, up to 357 truckloads will be required to transport the impacted soil.

It is anticipated that work will require approximately 3 to 5 weeks for completion. Sitework will be conducted on weekdays between 7:00AM and 5:00PM, unless otherwise required by a permit.

The RAW includes a Community Air Monitoring Plan (CAMP) to protect community health and ensure compliance with regulatory standards by minimizing the amount of fugitive emissions (i.e., dust) released during the removal action. The CAMP describes air monitoring protocols that must be

performed during soil activities when fugitive emissions could be released. These protocols are designed to protect the community and ensure that Site workers react quickly to make appropriate changes to emission control measures, as needed. The RAW also includes a Transportation Plan to minimize potential health safety, and environmental risks resulting from the movement of material and/or equipment during Site remediation. The Transportation Plan's truck route was selected in coordination with the City to minimize impacts on local traffic and sensitive receptors (e.g., schools, residential areas).

It is noted that the RAW includes an analysis assessing the air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with remediation of the Site. Based on modeling for the project using CalEEMod, the project's emissions of criteria pollutants and GHGs are below applicable thresholds.

Although not anticipated, in the event subsurface cultural or historical resources are discovered in the course of project activities, work will be suspended while a qualified archaeologist or other cultural or historical specialist makes an assessment of the area and arrangements are made to protect or preserve any resources that are discovered. If human remains are discovered, no further disturbance will occur in the location where the remains are found, and the County Coroner will be notified pursuant to the Health and Safety Code, Chapter 2, Section 7050.5.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Department of Toxic Substances Control

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: City of Berkeley

Exempt Status: Common Sense Exemption [CCR Title 14, Sec. 15061(b)(3)]

Reasons Why Project is Exempt:

Based on information presented above as well as information contained in the RAW, DTSC has determined with certainty that there is no possibility that the activities in question may have a significant effect on the existing environment because the project would not result in "a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance."

The administrative record for this project is available to the public by appointment at the following location:

Department of Toxic Substances Control
Site Mitigation and Restoration Program
700 Heinz Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94710

Additional project information is available on EnviroStor:

https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=60003466

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Approver's Signature:

Date: 10/31/2025

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