

Notice of Exemption

To: County Clerk County of Orange Public Services Division Santa Ana, CA 92702	From: City of Newport Planning Division 100 Civic Center Drive Newport Beach, CA 92660 (949) 644-3200	
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Project Title: Fire Station No.1 and Balboa Branch Library Landscape Changes Appeal

Project Applicant: Public Works Department, City of Newport Beach

Attention:

Project Location – Specific: 100 East Balboa Boulevard, Newport Beach, CA, 92261

Project Location – City: Newport Beach **Project Location – County:** Orange

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project: An appeal of the Community Development Director's July 3, 2025, decision to approve minor changes to Coastal Development Permit (CDP) No. PA2024-0140. The CDP was previously approved by City Council on September 24, 2024, for the demolition and reconstruction of the City's Fire Station No.1 and Balboa Branch Library. The City Council also approved the removal of two diseased Special City Landmark trees located within the property. The minor changes approved by the Community Development Director modified the previously approved landscaping plans by proposing replacement of tree species to further support nesting birds such as great blue herons. The minor changes consist of replacing the Catalina Ironwood trees along Island Avenue and the California Sycamore trees along East Bay Ave with Western Sycamore trees. Additionally, the planting areas within the parking lot along East Bay Avenue will feature a Sweetshade tree and an Australian Willow tree, replacing the originally proposed California Sycamores. The alteration of the parking layout given the revised landscape changes will result in the loss of one surplus parking space.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: City of Newport Beach

Name of Person or Agency Carrying out Project:

City of Newport Beach

Tom Sandefur, Assistant City Engineer

City Hall, Second Floor, Bay D

100 Civic Center Drive

Newport Beach, CA 92660

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:**
Class 2 (Replacement or Reconstruction) under Section 15302
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number:** _____

Reasons why project is exempt: Class 2 exemption applies to the replacement or reconstruction of existing structures where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure being replaced and substantially have the same purpose and capacity. In this case, the originally approved CDP identifies the demolition and reconstruction of the fire station and library, including the removal of two diseased Special City Landmark trees. The project is substantially conforming to the scope of the approved CDP, which is the replacement or reconstruction of an existing library and fire station with a new library and fire station on the same project site. Therefore, the intent of Class 2 is still being met and the project's minor changes to landscaping and parking will not affect the Class 2 exemption.

The exceptions to this categorical exemption under Section 15300.2 are not applicable. The project's landscape changes do not impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern, does not result in cumulative impacts, does not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances, does not damage scenic resources within a state scenic highway, is not a hazardous waste site, and is not identified as a historical resource.

Lead Agency

Contact Person/Title:

City of Newport Beach
Community Development Department
Laura Rodriguez, Assistant Planner **Contact Phone No./Ext:** 949-644-3216

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:  **Title:** Assistant Planner **Date:** November 10, 2025

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.

04/04/2019