



CEQA and COASTAL DETERMINATIONS and NOTICE OF APPROVAL

Project: Improvements to Storage Lot at 1550 W Palm Street by San Diego Unified Port District
Location: 1550 West Palm Street, San Diego, CA 92101
Parcel No.: 016-071
Project No.: 2024-087
Applicant: Jacob Baker, Management Analyst, Engineering-Construction, San Diego Unified Port District, 3165 Pacific Highway, San Diego, CA 92109; 619-821-6308
Date Approved: 6/11/2025

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project would involve improvements to an existing vehicle and equipment storage lot in order to use the site as a cruise terminal truck staging and security screening lot by the San Diego Unified Port District (District) in the city of San Diego, California. Work to specifically complete the proposed project would involve clearing out the existing lot through the removal of approximately three (3) palm trees, (including two (2) Queen palms (*Syagrus romanzoffiana*) and one (1) Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*)) and the demolition of minor structures including the existing guard booth, various curbs, concrete pads, concrete masonry unit walls, and landscape islands. Work would also include widening the existing entrance and exit gates, repairing pavement, replacing and installing irrigation systems, installing two (2) 6 feet x 8 feet guard booths, and re-striping the pavement, with ongoing inspections, maintenance, repairs, and replacement as needed. Construction of the proposed project is anticipated to occur in approximately late 2025 and would take approximately one (1) month to complete. The proposed project would not involve closures of the sidewalk or roads adjacent to the site, and all staging would occur within the footprint of the site. Construction equipment is anticipated to include jackhammers, saws, tractors with hydraulic hammers, dump trucks, forklifts, compactors, and concrete trucks. Construction hours would be Monday through Friday from approximately 7am-3:30pm.

With tree removal activities, if the bird breeding and nesting season cannot be avoided and removal must occur between February 15 and September 1, the District proposes that a breeding and nesting bird survey would be conducted prior to tree removal activities. If an active nest is located, all work within 500 feet of the nest would be postponed until such nest is vacated and the juveniles have fledged and when there is no attempt of a second nesting.

The three (3) trees to be removed for the proposed project would be replaced with three (3) Pygmy Date Palms (*Phoenix roebelenii*) or another drought-tolerant and/or water wise, non-invasive tree species.

Following construction and during typical operations, the proposed project would accommodate approximately twenty (20) 53-foot-long trucks which would be temporarily staged and screened for security purposes prior to delivering their supplies to the cruise ship terminals. Trucks would enter the lot, go through security screening, and exit the lot between approximately 6am-3pm during the cruise ship season (end of September through the beginning of June). Outside of the cruise ship season, the staging lot is anticipated to be empty, except for occasional truck security screening and staging for off-season cruises.

Due to its nature and limited scope, construction of the proposed project would generate a minor amount of vehicle trips and would require limited use of equipment. Therefore, impacts related to air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and transportation and traffic are not anticipated to occur. Furthermore, the District would be responsible for complying with all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding construction demolition debris, hazards and hazardous materials, and stormwater.

The following categorical determinations are based on the project submittal and all project information known to the District as of the date of this determination.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

CATEGORICAL DETERMINATION

Categorical Exemptions: CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Class 1)/District Guidelines for Compliance with CEQA Section 3.a: Existing Facilities; CEQA Guidelines Section 15302 (Class 2)/District Guidelines for Compliance with CEQA Section 3.b: Replacement or Reconstruction; CEQA Guidelines Section 15303 (Class 3)/District Guidelines for Compliance with CEQA Section 3.c: New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures; and CEQA Guidelines Section 15304 (Class 4)/District Guidelines for Compliance with CEQA Section 3.d: Minor Alterations to Land

- 3.a. Existing Facilities: Includes operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that previously existing, including but not limited to:
- (1) Repair, maintenance or minor alteration of existing mooring facilities, floats, piers, piles, wharves, bulkhead, revetment, buoys, or similar structures; marine terminal facilities; airport facilities; and commercial industrial, or recreational facilities.
 - (12) Maintenance of existing landscaping, native growth, and water supply reservoirs.

AND/OR

- 3.b. Replacement or Reconstruction: Includes replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure being replaced. This exemption includes, but is not limited to:
- (2) Replacement or reconstruction of marine terminal facilities, and marine-oriented commercial, industrial, and public and commercial recreational facilities, including buildings, piers, piles, wharves, marine ways; railroads; airport facilities, runways, taxiways, aprons, and ancillary structures to those facilities; electrical and mechanical systems and equipment; where the new structure will be on essentially the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced.

AND/OR

- 3.c. New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures: Includes construction of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and conversion of existing small structures from one use to another with minor modifications to the exterior of the structure.
- (2) Accessory (appurtenant) structures and mechanical equipment including, but not limited to, garages, sheds, railway spur tracks, pilings, temporary trailers, industrial equipment enclosures, fences, parking, on-site roadways, walkways and health and safety devices.

AND/OR

- 3.d. Minor Alterations to Land: Includes minor alterations in the condition of land, water and/or vegetation not involving removal of mature, scenic trees, including, but not limited to:
- (5) New gardening or landscaping.

The proposed project is determined to be Categorically Exempt pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines and the Sections of the District's *Guidelines for Compliance with CEQA* as identified above because it would involve improvements to an existing vehicle storage lot to accommodate cruise terminal truck staging and screening that would involve a negligible expansion of use beyond that previously existing and would not result in a significant cumulative impact due to the continuation of the existing use, would consist of the reconstruction of an existing facility that would have substantially the same purpose and capacity, would consist of construction and location of new, small structures, and would result in no permanent effects on the environment. The District has determined none of the six exceptions to the use of a categorical exemption apply to this project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2).

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15062, a 35-day statute of limitations for this CEQA exemption shall apply from the date a Notice of Exemption is posted with the San Diego County Clerk, or a 180-

day statute of limitations for this CEQA exemption shall apply if no Notice of Exemption is filed.

CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT

PORT MASTER PLAN CONSISTENCY

Planning District: 2 - Harbor Island/Lindbergh Field (Precise Plan Figure 9)

Land Use Designation: Airport Related Commercial

The proposed project conforms to the certified Port Master Plan because it would involve improvements to an existing vehicle storage lot to accommodate cruise terminal truck staging and screening, consistent with the existing certified Land Use designation. The proposed project would not change the use of the site nor would it interrupt or expand the existing conforming uses of the site.

CATEGORICAL DETERMINATION

Categorical Exclusions: Section 8.a: Existing Facilities; Section 8.b: Replacement or Reconstruction; Section 8.c: New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures; and Section 8.d: Minor Alterations to Land

8.a. Existing Facilities: The operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that previously existing, including but not limited to:

- (8) Maintenance and control of existing vegetation.
- (9) Demolition and removal of individual small structures, except where structures are of historical, archaeological, or architectural significance.
- (12) Interior and exterior remodeling of airport facilities, marine terminal facilities, existing marine-oriented industrial structures, and commercial or recreational facilities.

AND/OR

8.b. Replacement or Reconstruction: Replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located essentially on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced.

AND/OR

8.c. New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures: Construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures and installation of small, new equipment and facilities, involving negligible or no change of existing use of the property, including but not limited to:

- (3) Accessory structures, including, but not limited to, on-premise signs, small parking lots, fences, walkways, swimming pools, miscellaneous work buildings, temporary trailers, small accessory piers, minor mooring facilities, buoys, floats, pilings, or similar structures; and seasonal or temporary use items such as lifeguard towers, mobile food units, portable restrooms, or similar structures.

AND/OR

8.d. Minor Alterations to Land: Minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve the removal of mature, scenic trees, including but not limited to:

- (2) New gardening or landscaping.

The proposed project is determined to be Categorically Excluded pursuant to the Sections of the District's *Coastal Development Permit Regulations* as identified above because it would involve improvements to an existing vehicle storage lot to accommodate cruise terminal truck staging and screening that would involve negligible expansion of use beyond that previously existing, would be located essentially on the same site as the structure replaced and would have substantially the same

purpose and capacity as the structure replaced, and would involve negligible change of existing use of the property.

Pursuant to California Coastal Act Section 30717, there is a 10-working-day period to appeal this "Coastal Act Categorical Determination of Exclusion" to the California Coastal Commission.

CALIFORNIA PUBLIC TRUST DOCTRINE

The proposed project complies with Section 87.(a)(1) of the Port Act, which allows for the establishment, improvement, and conduct of a harbor, and for the construction, reconstruction, repair, maintenance, and operation of wharves, docks, piers, slips, quays, and all other works, buildings, facilities, utilities, structures, and appliances incidental, necessary, or convenient, for the promotion and accommodation of commerce and navigation. The Port Act was enacted by the California Legislature and is consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine. Consequently, the proposed project is consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine.

SCOTT CHADWICK
President/CEO

Determination by:
Justin Huitema
Assistant Planner
Development Services

Signature: Justin Huitema
Date: 6/11/2025

Assistant/Deputy General Counsel

Signature: Rebecca Harrington
Date: 6/11/2025