



**CEQA and COASTAL DETERMINATIONS
and
NOTICE OF APPROVAL**

Project: Replacement of Ficus Trees along North Harbor Drive and Shelter Island Drive
Location: Intersection of North Harbor Drive and Liberator Way, San Diego, CA 92101
1079 Harbor Island Drive, San Diego, CA 92101
Parcel No.: 008-002, 007-009
Project No.: 2024-122
Applicant: Kurt Brickley, Manager of Operations and Maintenance, Guest Experiences, San Diego Unified Port District, 3165 Pacific Highway, San Diego, CA, 92101, 619-994-2969
Date Approved: 12/27/2024

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project would involve the removal and replacement of three (3) Ficus trees by the San Diego Unified Port District (District) in the city of San Diego, California. Two (2) of the Ficus trees are located adjacent to the Bayshore Bikeway, approximately 300 feet west of the intersection of North Harbor Drive and Liberator Way. The third Ficus tree is located in the center median of Harbor Island Drive.

The two (2) existing Ficus trees along Bayshore Bikeway are proposed to be removed due to their roots lifting the adjacent concrete sidewalk, potentially posing a safety risk. Work would also involve replacing the Ficus trees with four (4) 15-gallon size Canary Island Pine trees (subject to nursery availability).

The third Ficus tree on Harbor Island Drive is proposed to be removed due to infrastructure conflicts with an existing water conveyance system bordering the tree. The tree would be replaced with two (2) 15-gallon size Naked Coral trees (subject to nursery availability).

District landscape service providers would remove the three (3) trees in approximately early 2025 using a tower/bucket truck, chipper, stump grinder, hand tools, and associated tree removal equipment. The tree removal operations would begin and conclude on the same day, with ongoing maintenance as needed. Within 60 days following tree removals, the stumps would be grinded down, which takes approximately half a day of work. Tree replacement would be completed by the summer of 2025. Work hours for the proposed project would be Monday-Friday from 7am-3:30pm. There are no anticipated impacts to parking stalls nor anticipated street closures for the proposed project. However, there are partial closures anticipated for Bayshore Bikeway during tree removal activities, so a flagger and grounds crew would direct pedestrians around the work site. Barricades and traffic cones would also be incorporated into the working areas.

Both proposed replacement tree species are drought-tolerant and/or water wise, non-invasive tree species, and would reflect the palette of trees and shrubs which already exist elsewhere on Tidelands.

The District would conduct all tree removals outside of the migratory bird breeding and nesting season, and no removal work would occur between February 15 and September 1. 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

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:

(12) Maintenance of existing landscaping, native growth, and water supply reservoirs.

The proposed project is determined to be Categorically Exempt pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines and the Section of the District's *Guidelines for Compliance with CEQA* as identified above because it would consist of the removal and replacement of trees and associated tree maintenance that would involve 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. 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: Industrial Business Park, Open Space

The proposed project conforms to the certified Port Master Plan because it would involve the removal and replacement of trees and associated tree maintenance consistent with the existing certified Land Use designations. 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

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.

The proposed project is determined to be Categorically Excluded pursuant to the Section of the District's *Coastal Development Permit Regulations* as identified above. This is appropriate for the proposed project because it would consist of the removal and replacement of trees and associated tree maintenance that would involve negligible expansion of use beyond that previously existing.

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)(5) of the Port Act, which allows for the construction, reconstruction, repair, maintenance, and operation of public buildings, public assembly and meeting places, convention centers, parks, playgrounds, bathhouses and bathing facilities, recreation and fishing piers, public recreation facilities, including, but not limited to, public golf courses, and for all works, buildings, facilities, utilities, structures, and appliances incidental, necessary, or convenient for the promotion and accommodation of any of those uses.

RANDA CONIGLIO
Acting President/CEO

Determination by:

Justin Huitema
Assistant Planner
Development Services

Signature: Justin Huitema
Date: 12/27/2024

Assistant/Deputy General Counsel

Signature: Rebecca Harrington
Date: 12/27/2024