



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

Project: Turf Restoration at Ruocco Park by the San Diego Unified Port District
Location: 585 Harbor Lane, San Diego, CA 92101
Parcel No.: 018-000
Project No.: 2024-127
Applicant: Kurt Brickley, Manager of Operations & Maintenance, Guest Experiences, San Diego Unified Port District, 3165 Pacific Highway, San Diego, CA, 92101; 619-994-2969
Date Approved: 12/30/2024

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project would involve turf maintenance at Ruocco Park by the San Diego Unified Port District (District) in the city of San Diego, California. The District is proposing to conduct turf maintenance in preparation for higher anticipated public use during the summer. Physical work to complete the proposed project would involve mowing the existing turf, aerating the soil, and planting new grass within the circular turf area of Ruocco Park. Following seed distribution, the District would install temporary orange safety fencing around the perimeter of the circular turf area of Ruocco Park to allow for the new grass to establish and successfully germinate. The existing irrigation system would be used to water the newly planted grass. The triangular turf and landscaped area of Ruocco Park would remain open for public use for the entirety of the project (see Exhibit 1).

All proposed work is scheduled to occur in the Winter with the intention of performing maintenance during the park's less frequently used months. Construction of the proposed project is anticipated to start in approximately January and would take approximately two (2) months to complete, with ongoing maintenance as needed. The adjacent promenade, public restrooms and comfort station, park benches, and public parking lot would remain open for public use for the entirety of the proposed project. Equipment required to complete the proposed project is limited to mowers, a tow behind roller aerator, a mechanical tractor, and seed distributors, and no project staging area would be required. Signage related to the temporary park closure and the nature of the closure would be posted a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to commencement of work.

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 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:

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

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. These are appropriate for the proposed project because it would consist of turf maintenance that would involve no expansion of use beyond that previously existing, would not result in a significant cumulative impact due to the continuation of the existing use, would not involve the removal of mature, scenic trees, 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: 3 - Centre City Embarcadero (Precise Plan Figure 11)

Land Use Designation: Park/Plaza

The proposed project conforms to the certified Port Master Plan because it would involve turf maintenance 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 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.

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. These are appropriate for the proposed project because it would consist of turf maintenance during the winter that would involve no expansion of use beyond that previously existing and would not involve the removal of mature, scenic trees.

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. 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.

RANDA CONIGLIO
Acting President/CEO

Determination by:
Justin Huitema
Assistant Planner
Development Services

Signature: Justin Huitema
Date: 12/30/2024

Assistant/Deputy General Counsel

Signature: Shiraz Tangri
Date: 12/30/2024

Exhibit(s):
1. Project Area

Exhibit 1. Project Area



Project area outlined in red.