



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

Project: Tree Removal and Replacement by San Diego Unified Port District at National City Bayfront
Location: 1400 Tidelands Avenue, National City, CA 91950
Parcel No.: 026-002
Project No.: 2025-009
Applicant: Kurt Brickley, Manager, Operations and Maintenance, Guest Experiences, San Diego Unified Port District, 3165 Pacific Highway, San Diego, CA 92101; (619) 686-6378
Date Approved: 2/3/2025

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project would involve removing and replacing one (1) Crape Myrtle tree at the Port General Services Building in the city of National City, CA. The Crape Myrtle to be removed is located in a landscaped area on the southeastern corner of the building. The existing tree’s root system has migrated into the gas line trench backfill sand and has encroached within the working clearances of the gas meter, established by both the Uniform Plumbing Code and the SDG&E Installation Guidelines, thus posing a potential risk to gas meter operations. Work for this project would also include planting two (2) Rose trees, for a total of three (3) replacement trees. The replacement Crape Myrtle and Rose trees would be located adjacent to the existing site, in an area more suited for healthy growth and with greater root ball space. Both tree species proposed for replanting shall be drought-tolerant and/or water wise, non-invasive plant species, and would reflect the palette of trees and shrubs which already exist elsewhere on Tidelands.

The proposed project is anticipated to occur in approximately February 2025 with tree removal operations beginning and concluding on the same day, with ongoing maintenance if needed. Stump removal would occur within 30 days of tree cutting and replanting would be completed within two weeks of tree removal. Public access would be maintained at all times as there would be no lane/path closures or parking spaces affected during removal and replanting activities. Work would be confined to the existing landscaped areas. Equipment needed to complete the proposed project would consist of a chainsaw to cut the tree at grade and a small stump grinder for stump removal. Additionally, Dig Alert would be consulted due to the proximity of the medium pressure gas line to the project site.

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 Exemption: 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(s) of the District’s *Guidelines for Compliance with CEQA* as identified above because it

would involve negligible or no expansion of use beyond that previously existing. 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: 5 - National City Bayfront (Precise Plan Figure 15)

Land Use Designation: Marine Related Industrial

The proposed project conforms to the certified Port Master Plan because it would involve removal and replacement of an existing tree and the associated maintenance which is consistent with the existing certified Land Use designation(s). 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 Exclusion: 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(s) of the District's *Coastal Development Permit Regulations* as identified above because it would involve negligible or no 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. 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:
Kelly Cunningham
Assistant Planner
Development Services

Signature: _____ *Kelly Cunningham*
Date: _____ 2/3/2025

Assistant/Deputy General Counsel

Signature: _____ *Shiraz Tangri*
Date: _____ 2/3/2025