



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

Project: Removal of Queen Palm Trees by San Diego Unified Port District on Shelter Island  
Location: 1500 Shelter Island Drive, San Diego, CA 92106  
Parcel No.: 001-014  
Project No.: 2025-120  
Applicant: Kurt Brickley, Manager, Operations & Maintenance, San Diego Unified Port District,  
 3165 Pacific Highway, San Diego, CA 92101, 619-686-6378  
Date Approved: 10/2/2025

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposed project would involve removal of dying Queen Palm trees (palm trees) and replacement with Pink Trumpet trees by the San Diego Unified Port District (District) in the City of San Diego, California. Currently, two (2) palm trees on the western edge of Shelter Island are in danger of falling due to damaged trunks caused by a fungal disease commonly known as "Pink Rot".

The palms shall be replaced with Pink Trumpet Trees (*Handroanthus impetiginosus*) in a 24" box. Removal of the palm trees would take place in October of 2025 and is expected to take one (1) business day. Planting of the replacement trees is anticipated to occur in late 2025. The trees would be ground at the time of removal while the District's Field Operations Department is conducting additional routine landscaping. Standard equipment such as chainsaws, associated work vehicles, and hand tools would be used for tree removal. Maintenance of the trees would be ongoing, as-needed, including replacement of the Pink Trumpet trees in the event of tree failure.

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, 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.

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**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; 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

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 Section(s) of the District's *Guidelines for Compliance with CEQA* as identified above because it would involve no 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 result in no permanent effects on the environment, and would not involve the removal of mature, scenic trees. 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: 1 - Shelter Island/La Playa (Precise Plan Figure 4);

Land Use Designation: Open Space

The proposed project conforms to the certified Port Master Plan because it would involve removal of dying palm trees and replacement with ornamental trees in the vicinity, 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 Exclusions: Section 8.a: Existing Facilities; Section 8.d: Minor Alterations to Land

8.a. Existing Facilities: The operation, repair and 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

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 Section(s) of the District's *Coastal Development Permit Regulations* as identified above because would involve no expansion of use beyond that previously existing and it would not involve the removal of mature, scenic trees.

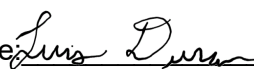
Pursuant to California Coastal Act Section 30717, there is a 10-working-day period to appeal this "Coastal Act Categorical Determination of Exclusion" to the California Coastal Commission.

### **CALIFORNIA PUBLIC TRUST DOCTRINE**


The proposed project complies with Section 87.(a)(7) of the Port Act, which allows for the establishment and maintenance of those lands for open space, ecological restoration and habitat restoration. 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:  
Luis Duran  
Senior Planner  
Development Services

Signature:   
Date: 10/2/2025

Assistant/Deputy General Counsel

Signature:   
Date: 10/2/2025