

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: County of Los Angeles
County Clerk
Environmental Filings
Attn: Ms. Darla Neal
12400 Imperial Highway, Room 2001
Norwalk, California 90650
(562) 462-2122

From: County of Los Angeles
Department of Parks and Recreation
Planning & CEQA Section
1000 South Fremont Avenue Unit #40
A-9 West, Third Floor
Alhambra, California 91803

Project Title: Kenneth Hahn Operation of Pedestrian Gates at Cloverdale Avenue and Padilla Place Project

Project Location - Specific: Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area
4100 South La Cienega Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90056

Project Location - City: Los Angeles

Project Location - County: Los Angeles

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The project involves the operation of two pedestrian gates (the "Gates"), during park hours, constructed at Cloverdale Avenue and Padilla Place to provide non-exclusive public access to Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Los Angeles County

Name of Public Agency Carrying Out Project: Los Angeles County

Exempt Status (check one):

Categorical Exemptions

- State CEQA Guidelines Categorical Exemption, Section 15301 (Class 1); County CEQA Guidelines Categorical Exemption Class 1
- State CEQA Guidelines Categorical Exemption, Section 15303 (Class 3); County CEQA Guidelines Categorical Exemption Class 3
- State CEQA Guidelines Categorical Exemption, Section 15304 (Class 4); County CEQA Guidelines Categorical Exemption Class 4
- State CEQA Guidelines Categorical Exemption, Section 15311 (Class 11); County CEQA Guidelines Categorical Exemption Class 11
- State CEQA Guidelines Categorical Exemption, Section 15323 (Class 23); County CEQA Guidelines Categorical Exemption Class 23

Reasons why project is exempt:

The proposed project is consistent with State Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA. The project is consistent with Section 15301 Class 1 which consists of "the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of an existing use." (CEQA Guidelines, § 15301.) The project is also consistent with the County CEQA Guidelines. The project is

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consistent with the County Class 1 Exemption which provides 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. The operation of the pedestrian Gates would qualify as a minor alteration of an existing public structure, involving negligible or no expansion of the existing use. The existing vehicular gates are currently used by key holders for recreational use of the Park, and there is no evidence to suggest opening the pedestrian Gates will significantly increase that existing use, either by these key holders or other members of the public because: 1) similar public Park entrances are used infrequently; and 2) most of the active recreational Park amenities are located approximately one-mile or 25 to 30-minute hike away from the new Gates. It is expected the Gates would be primarily used by existing neighbors who are not key holders and, currently, can only access the Park by driving or walking to other entrances two to three miles away.

The project is consistent with Section 15303 Class 3 which consists of "construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure. ... Examples of this exemption include, but are not limited to:

...

(e) Accessory (appurtenant) structures including garages, carports, patios, swimming pools, and fences. ... (CEQA Guidelines, § 15303.) The project is consistent with the County Class 3 Exemption which provides for construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures. The pedestrian Gates are small new facilities along an existing fence line and are directly adjacent to other existing gates. Their construction and operation involved only minor modifications, including: cutting and removing a section of the fencing, adding hinges and installing the pedestrian Gates, adding a locking mechanism to the Gates, adding a concrete transition to the existing sidewalk at the Cloverdale entrance, and patching small holes in the asphalt path to the Padilla entrance.

The project is consistent with Section 15304 Class 4 which consists of "minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agricultural purposes. Examples include, but are not limited to:

...

(e) Minor temporary use of land having negligible or no permanent effects on the environment...; ... (CEQA Guidelines, § 15304.) The project is consistent with the County Class 4 Exemption which provides for minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water and/or vegetation which do not involve the removal of mature scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes. The operation of the pedestrian Gates qualifies as a minor alteration to land. The Department anticipates that any alterations to the condition of the land would be minor because the number of people using the Park would not substantially increase as a result of the pedestrian Gates.

The project is consistent with Section 15311 Class 11 which consists of "construction, or placement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities." (CEQA Guidelines, § 15311.) The project is consistent with the County Class 11 Exemption which provides for construction of replacement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities. The pedestrian Gates qualify as accessory structures under this exemption. The Gates are minor structures accessory to the Park. The pedestrian Gates were constructed within the existing fencing/vehicular gates at both locations. Each pedestrian Gate is approximately 3' 6" (42 inches) in width and 6' 8" (80 inches) in height. A concrete transition was added to the existing sidewalk at the Cloverdale entrance and small holes in the asphalt path to the Padilla entrance were patched. Institutional facilities include government operated facilities for public purposes, including public parks.

The project is consistent with Section 15311 Class 23 which consists of "the normal operations of existing facilities for public gatherings for which the facilities were designed, where there is a past history of the facility being used for the same or similar kind of purpose. For purposes of this section, 'past history' shall

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mean that the same or similar kind of activity has been occurring for at least three years and that there is a reasonable expectation that the future occurrence of the activity would not represent a change in the operation of the facility.” (CEQA Guidelines, § 15323.) The project is consistent with the County Class 23 Exemption which provides for normal operations of existing facilities for public gatherings for which the facilities were designed, where there is a past history of the facility being used for the same kind of purpose, including parks. The operation of the pedestrian Gates qualifies as normal operation of existing facilities under this exemption. The entrances at these locations have been used by pedestrians for at least three years. Specifically, adjacent property owners with gate keys have accessed the Park from these locations for nearly 75 years. Future operation of the Gates will continue to allow for pedestrian access the Park and does not represent a change in the operation of the Park. Additionally, the number of Park visitors is not expected to increase as a result of the operation of the Gates. The Department expects these entrances will be used by people living in the surrounding neighborhoods, who currently are unable to access the Park from their neighborhoods because only a limited number of people currently have keys to the existing vehicular gates.

As discussed below, the proposed use of the Class 1, 3, 4, 11, and 23 Categorical Exemptions does not include activities that are excepted from the exemptions as defined in Section 15300.2 (a) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. The proposed operation of the pedestrian Gates falls under the Class 3, Class 4, and Class 11 Categorical Exemptions. There is no particularly sensitive environment in the vicinity of the pedestrian Gates. There are no environmental resources of hazardous or critical concern designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies. The Park lies within the Baldwin Hills area which is not located in a Significant Ecological Area (SEA), as designated by the County of Los Angeles. The Baldwin Hills are also not located within the boundaries of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) or Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP). Thus, the “location” exception does not apply to the pedestrian Gates.

Categorical exemptions are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant. The Department has no planned future proposals to operate publicly-accessible pedestrian gates in the same location as the pedestrian Gates, and there have been no past proposals for similar publicly-accessible pedestrian gates at these locations. Thus, there is no possibility of a significant cumulative impact from successive projects of the same type in the same place.

A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. There is nothing unusual about the size, scale or scope of the pedestrian Gates as compared to other projects that typically fall within the CEQA exemptions identified above. Based on all available information regarding potential for environmental resources, no site conditions have been identified that are unusual, or that would cause or contribute to an unusual circumstance, and there is no evidence that the project would have a significant effect on the environment.

A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. There are no officially designated scenic routes/highways proximate to the Park. Thus, the proposed operation of the pedestrian Gates would not damage such a resource.

A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. The opening of the pedestrian Gates would not involve construction or ground disturbance. There are no locations within the Park, including the

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pedestrian Gates area, included on the California Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites List, compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the California Government Code.

A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. There are no historic resources within the geographic boundaries of the pedestrian Gates area. The Gates are located at an area of the Park where there are no existing buildings and there are no historic structures. The nearest historic structures to the Park, the Village Green multi-family residential community (5300 Rodeo Road) and the Collins-Furthmann Mansion (3691-3801 Lenawee Avenue), are located over 1.5 miles away and would not be affected by the opening of the pedestrian Gates. Therefore, the proposed pedestrian Gates would not cause an adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Sean Woods

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Signature

3/29/22
Date

Chief of Planning
Title