



State of California - Department of Fish and Wildlife  
**2023 ENVIRONMENTAL FILING FEE CASH RECEIPT**  
 DFW 753.5a (Rev. 01/01/23) Previously DFG 753.5a

RECEIPT NUMBER: 37-06/29/2023-0470
STATE CLEARING HOUSE NUMBER (if applicable)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE. TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY.

LEAD AGENCY DEL MAR UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT	LEAD AGENCY EMAIL	DATE 06/29/2023
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COUNTY/STATE AGENCY OF FILING SAN DIEGO	DOCUMENT NUMBER 37-2023-0470
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PROJECT TITLE  
DEL MAR HILLS ACADEMY MODERNIZATION PROJECT

PROJECT APPLICANT NAME DEL MAR UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT	PROJECT APPLICANT EMAIL	PHONE NUMBER 858-755-9301
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PROJECT APPLICANT ADDRESS 11232 EL CAMINO REAL	CITY SAN DIEGO	STATE CA	ZIP CODE 92130
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PROJECT APPLICANT (Check appropriate box)

Local Public Agency   
  School District   
  Other Special District   
  State Agency   
  Private Entity

**CHECK APPLICABLE FEES:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Impact Report (EIR)	\$3,839.25	\$	0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Mitigated/Negative Declaration (MND)/(ND)	\$2,764.00	\$	0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Certified Regulatory Program (CRP) document - payment due directly to CDFW	\$1,305.25	\$	0.00

- Exempt from fee  
      Notice of Exemption (attach)  
      CDFW No Effect Determination (attach)  
 Fee previously paid (attach previously issued cash receipt copy)

<input type="checkbox"/> Water Right Application or Petition Fee (State Water Resources Control Board only)	\$850.00	\$	0.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County documentary handling fee		\$	50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		\$	0.00

**PAYMENT METHOD:**

- Cash   
  Credit   
  Check   
  Other

TOTAL RECEIVED \$ 50.00

SIGNATURE X	AGENCY OF FILING PRINTED NAME AND TITLE San Diego County Clerk, DANIEL BUTLER, Deputy
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Payment Reference #: CHECK# 3222



**SAN DIEGO COUNTY CLERK  
CEQA FILING COVER SHEET**

**FILED**

Jun 29, 2023 10:42 AM  
JORDAN Z MARKS  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY CLERK  
File # 2023-000517  
State Receipt # 37062920230470

THIS SPACE FOR CLERK'S USE ONLY

Complete and attach this form to each CEQA Notice filed with the County Clerk

TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY

Project Title

DEL MAR HILLS ACADEMY MODERNIZATION PROJECT

Check Document being Filed:

- Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) or Negative Declaration (ND)
- Notice of Exemption (NOE)
- Other (Please fill in type):

**FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE SAN DIEGO  
COUNTY CLERK ON** June 29, 2023  
**Posted** June 29, 2023 **Removed** JUL 29 2023  
**Returned to agency on** JUL 31 2023  
**DEPUTY** Maidal Gomez

**M. Gomez**

Filing fees are due at the time a Notice of Determination/Exemption is filed with our office. For more information on filing fees and No Effect Determinations, please refer to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 753.5.

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To:  Office of Planning and Research  
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121  
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: Del Mar Union School District

11232 El Camino Real

San Diego, CA 92130

County Clerk  
County of San Diego

1000 Pacific Highway, Suite 200

San Diego, CA 92101

Del Mar Hills Academy Modernization Project

Project Title

Del Mar Hills Academy: 14085 Mango Drive

Project Location - Specific

San Diego

Project Location - City

San Diego

Project Location - County

Del Mar Union School District (District) is proposing to modernize Del Mar Hills Academy's existing classrooms and administration building. The modernization will remain within the building envelope. Modernization efforts will include code upgrades for fire sprinklers, seismic, accessibility, and security; infrastructure improvements for heating and cooling systems, lighting, and technology; and modification to the on-site circulation pattern to provide for emergency vehicle access and an enhanced drop-off/pick-up experience. Students, staff and the general public will benefit from the enhanced educational facility.

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project

Del Mar Union School District

Name of Public Agency Approving Project

Del Mar Union School District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project

Exempt Status: (check one below)

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Class 1 Existing Facilities, and Class 2 Replacement or Reconstruction

Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_

The District is proposing to modernize Del Mar Hills Academy by modernizing the existing classrooms and administration building. Modernization efforts will include code upgrades; infrastructure upgrades, ADA access improvements; and classroom, administrative, and food service upgrades. The project will also include reconfigured parking and fire lane, minor enhanced front office entrance improvements, ADA access ramps to front entry and fields, removal of portables on the eastern hardcourts, and other improvements. The project will not involve expansion, an increase in classrooms or student capacity nor an increase in parking spaces. Existing uses of the campus will stay the same under the proposed project. The closure of Del Mar Heights School resulted in the temporary transfer of Del Mar Heights students to portable buildings at Del Mar Hills Academy. When the Del Mar Heights School reopens, those K-3 students will return to their original school. Depending on the construction schedule, Del Mar Hills Academy students will relocate to the portable buildings and remaining permanent structures to allow for modernization of the campus. Once the improvements are complete, the portables will be removed. The proposed modernization of the existing administration and classrooms building and the proposed changes to vehicular access parking are exempt under CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301 and 15302. The proposed project was also reviewed for possible exceptions under Section 15300.2 and found that the exceptions do not apply. Additional documentation supporting this conclusion is available at the District office.

Reasons why project is exempt

Chris Delehanty, Assistant Superintendent,  
Business Services

858.755.9301 x3671

Contact Person:

Area Code/Telephone/Extension:

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption findings
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project  Yes  No

Date Received  
for Filing:

Signature:



Title: Assistant Superintendent, Business Services

**Attachment to Notice of Exemption  
Del Mar Hills Academy Modernization Project  
Del Mar Union School District  
Supplemental Information**

The Del Mar Union School District (District) proposes to modernize Del Mar Hills Academy by modernizing the existing administration and classrooms building. This supplemental information provides justification for the Categorical Exemption pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines under California Code of Regulations, Title 14, sections 15301, 15302, 15303, 15304, 15311 and 15314.

## **1. EXISTING CONDITIONS**

### **PROJECT LOCATION**

Del Mar Hills Academy is located at 14085 Mango Drive in the City of San Diego, San Diego County (see Figure 1, *Regional Location*). The school is in a residential neighborhood. The Interstate 5 (I-5) freeway is approximately 200 feet to the east (Figure 2, *Aerial Photograph*).

### **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Del Mar Hills Academy opened in 1974 and is currently developed with permanent administration and classroom building, a multipurpose building, portable classrooms, a parking lot in the southeast corner of the site, hardcourts, pedestrian walkways, and landscaped planters. There are currently a total of 442 students on campus—288 Del Mar Hills Academy students, and 154 Del Mar Heights students who have been temporarily relocated to Del Mar Hills Academy (see Section 2, *Project Description*, below for more details on the temporary relocation). Classrooms for Del Mar Hills Academy students in grades K-6 are in the permanent building, and classrooms for Del Mar Heights students in grades K-3, who have been temporarily relocated to Del Mar Hills Academy, are in the portable buildings.

Main vehicular access to the elementary school student loading zone is provided at the south end of the campus via Mango Drive. All vehicles accessing the school enter from the southwestern portion of the site, via Mango Drive. Vehicles can proceed into the parking lot on the east side or loop around to the student drop-off/pick-up zone near the administration and classrooms building entrance. The majority of students arrive at and depart the school by car, while additional modes of transportation include biking and walking.

### **SURROUNDING LAND USES**

The Del Mar Hills Academy campus is in a residential community and is bordered by the Boys & Girls Clubs of San Dieguito to the north, residences, and Mango Drive to the south and west, and I-5 to the east.

## **2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The District is proposing to modernize Del Mar Hills Academy by modernizing the existing classrooms and administration building. Modernization efforts will include code upgrades; infrastructure upgrades; ADA access improvements; and classroom, administrative, and food service upgrades. The project will also

include reconfigured parking and fire lane, minor enhanced front office entrance improvements, ADA access ramps to front entry and fields, removal of portables on the eastern hardcourts, and other improvements. Figure 3, *Proposed Site Plan*, shows the proposed locations of the improvements at the project site.

Approval to demolish and rebuild the 61-year-old Del Mar Heights School resulted in the closure of the campus and the transfer of its students to Del Mar Hills Academy. Students from both schools attended Del Mar Hills Academy during the 2020-2021 through 2022-2023 school years. When the Del Mar Heights School reopens, those K-3 students will return to their original school. Depending on the construction schedule, Del Mar Hills Academy students will relocate to the portable buildings and remaining permanent structures to allow for modernization of the campus. Once the improvements are complete, the portables will be removed. The locations of Del Mar Heights School and Del Mar Hills Academy are shown in Figure 1.

### **3. REASONS WHY THE PROJECT IS EXEMPT**

The project is exempt from further environmental review under the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code §§ 21000 et seq.) because it is consistent with Class 1 Existing Facilities, Class 2 Replacement or Reconstruction, Class 3 New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures, Class 4 Minor Changes to Land, Class 11 Accessory Structures, Class 14 Minor Additions to School, as explained below.

- » Class 1, Existing Facilities (CEQA Guidelines § 15301) 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 use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of an existing use.
- » Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction (CEQA Guidelines § 15302) consists of replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity of the structure replaced.
- » Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15303) 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.
- » Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15304) consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes.
- » Class 11, Accessory Structures (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15311) consists of construction or placement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities, including but not limited to: A. On-premises signs;...



- » Class 14, Minor Additions to Schools (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15314) consists of minor additions to existing schools within existing school grounds where the addition does not increase original student capacity by more than twenty-five (25) percent or ten (10) classrooms, whichever is less.

The proposed modernization of the existing administration and classrooms building are exempt under CEQA Guidelines §15301 and §15302. The proposed changes to ADA access ramps are exempt under CEQA Guidelines §15303. The proposed changes to vehicular access, and fire lane are exempt under CEQA Guidelines § 15304. The proposed changes to the front entry and parking lot are exempt under CEQA Guidelines §15311. The minor additions to the school without adding student capacity are exempt under CEQA Guidelines §15314.

#### **4. REVIEW OF EXCEPTIONS TO THE CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION**

The proposed project has been reviewed under CEQA Guidelines § 15300.2 for any characteristics or circumstances that might invalidate findings that the project is exempt from CEQA. CEQA Guidelines § 15300.2 identifies six possible exceptions to categorical exemptions.

##### **A. Location**

Categorical exemption 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. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply in all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies. (§ 15300.2a)

The proposed Class 1 and Class 2 categorical exemptions do not fall within the classes that may be subject to an exception due to location. Nevertheless, this exception is addressed.

The project site has been a school campus since 1974. The entire campus, including the area that will be disturbed by the proposed modernization efforts, do not contain sensitive biological habitats. The campus has buildings, asphalt hardcourts and parking lots, concrete driveways and walkways, and ornamental landscaping. Due to the school's developed nature and frequent human disturbance, it does not contain any sensitive biological species or habitat. No mapped wetlands exist on the site (FWS 2022). Additionally, there is no evidence of hazardous materials or substances (see Section E, *Hazardous Waste Sites*, below). Therefore, this exception does not apply to the project.

##### **B. Cumulative Impacts**

All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant. (Section 15300.2b)

Del Mar Heights School closed and students were transferred to Del Mar Hills Academy in 2020. When Del Mar Heights School reopens, those K-3 students will return to their original school. Depending on the construction schedule, the Del Mar Hills Academy students will relocate to the portable buildings and the

remaining permanent structures to allow for modernization of the campus. Once the improvements are complete, the portables will be removed. Routine upgrade projects underway at other schools in the District will not have an impact on the proposed project, and the proposed project, when combined with cumulative District projects, will not create a cumulative impact under CEQA.

### **C. Significant Effects**

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. (Section 15300.2c)

The project site is a currently occupied elementary school campus that opened in 1974. There is no reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. Proposed improvements will not alter the capacity of the campus or existing uses. The construction manager will execute construction activities per current local, state, and federal laws and District standards and guidelines, and would implement construction Best Management Practices (BMPs). The Del Mar Hills Modernization Project is limited to the modernization of the existing uses within the school boundary. The area of ground disturbance is limited, and there is no natural habitat or other unique, sensitive resources on the campus. The basic school use has not changed since 1974.

#### **Transportation Changes**

With the current configuration, all vehicles accessing the school enter the campus from the southwestern portion of the site via Mango Drive. Vehicles approaching the school either proceed straight into the parking lot, which is in the southeast corner of the site or loop around to the student drop-off/pick-up zone, near the administration and classrooms building entrance.

The proposed improvements include a reconfigured parking lot in the southeast corner of the site, widened parking lot to create a fire lane that extends through the end of the southeast parking lot, and the removal of parking spaces along the drop-off/pick-up zone. The existing parking spaces at the southeastern boundary of the site may be removed to accommodate the proposed fire lane and turnaround (see Figure 3). No additional parking spaces would be added.

#### **Findings Regarding Revised Parking, Access, and Drop-off/Pick-up Zones**

There are several benefits associated with the proposed modifications to the parking lots, circulation patterns, and drop-off/pick-up zones at the school, as outlined below:

- It will ensure less congestion in the drop-off/pick-up zones as there will no longer be cars parked in this zone.
- It will reconfigure and consolidate parking spaces within the southeastern portion of the site, which will provide separation between the drop-off/pick-up zones and the parking lot.
- It will reconfigure the fire lane and extend it to the end of the southeastern parking lot, which will provide emergency vehicles enhanced egress and ingress to the site and provide a wider turn radius.



There are no negative ramifications associated with the proposed modifications relative to vehicular access, pedestrian circulation, and safety.

Review of any environmental issues related to possible unique conditions found that none exist that will pose an environmental, safety, or health condition (see Section A, *Location*, above). No significant effects are anticipated because of the modernization of the Del Mar Hills Academy campus.

#### **D. Scenic Highways**

A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project 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. (Section 15300.2d)

According to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) California Scenic Highway Mapping System, the nearest officially designated state scenic highway is the segment of State Route 52 from Santo Road to Mast Boulevard along Mission Trails Regional Park, approximately 12 miles southeast of the project site. The closest eligible state scenic highway is I-5, approximately 200 feet east of the school (Caltrans 2018). The project will not affect this highway due to the elevations of the existing buildings not changing, the topographic rise between the school and the freeway, and existing trees and vegetation along the freeway blocking views of the school site. The project will not affect scenic resources along any officially designated or eligible scenic highways. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed project.

#### **E. Hazardous Waste Sites**

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. (§ 15300.2e)

California Government Code § 65962.5 requires designated agencies to compile lists of the certain types of hazardous materials sites: hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action; hazardous waste discharges for which the State Water Quality Control Board has issued certain types of orders; public drinking water wells containing detectable levels of organic contaminants; underground storage tanks with reported unauthorized releases; and solid waste disposal facilities from which hazardous waste has migrated.

Based on review of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) GeoTracker website and Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) EnviroStor website, the project site is not on any list compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5, nor is it within 2,000 feet of a significant disposal of hazardous waste that creates a significant existing or potential hazard (SWRCB 2022; DTSC 2022).

The database search identified one site within a 0.25-mile radius: the Del Mar Cleaners on 2644 Del Mar Height Road, 745 feet south of the project site (SWRCB 2022). The soil vapor survey and risk assessment conducted indicated a potential risk for tetrachloroethene (PCE) vapors. Based on site efforts completed, including site ventilation system upgrades, it was concluded that there does not appear to be a significant risk to human health or the immediate environment from the release of PCE at the project site. The cleanup status for this case has been listed as “completed and closed” as of October 25, 2005.

The project site is not identified on any of the sites; therefore, the project site is not identified as a hazardous materials site pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and the project will not create a hazard to the public. This exception does not apply to the proposed project.

#### **F. Historic Sites**

A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of historical resources. Under Public Resource Code § 21084.1, a historical resource is a resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources. Additionally, historical resources included in a local register of historical resources are presumed to be historically or culturally significant, and a lead agency can determine whether the resource may be an historical resource.

There are no historic resources on the campus that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, or as a California State Historical Landmark (NPS 2022; OHP 2022). Project implementation will not cause significant impacts to historical resources, and the historical resources exception will not apply to this project site.

#### **G. Conclusion**

The proposed project at Del Mar Hills Academy is exempt from CEQA review pursuant to CEQA guidelines 15301 and 15302. As substantiated in this document, the proposed project will not meet the conditions specified in § 15300.2, Exceptions, of the CEQA Guidelines, and the project is categorically exempt under Class 1 and Class 2.

## **5. REFERENCES**

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2018. California State Scenic Highway System Map. <https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aaca>.

Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). 2021. EnviroStor. <http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/>.

National Park Service (NPS). 2022. National Register of Historic Places. <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/database-research.htm>.

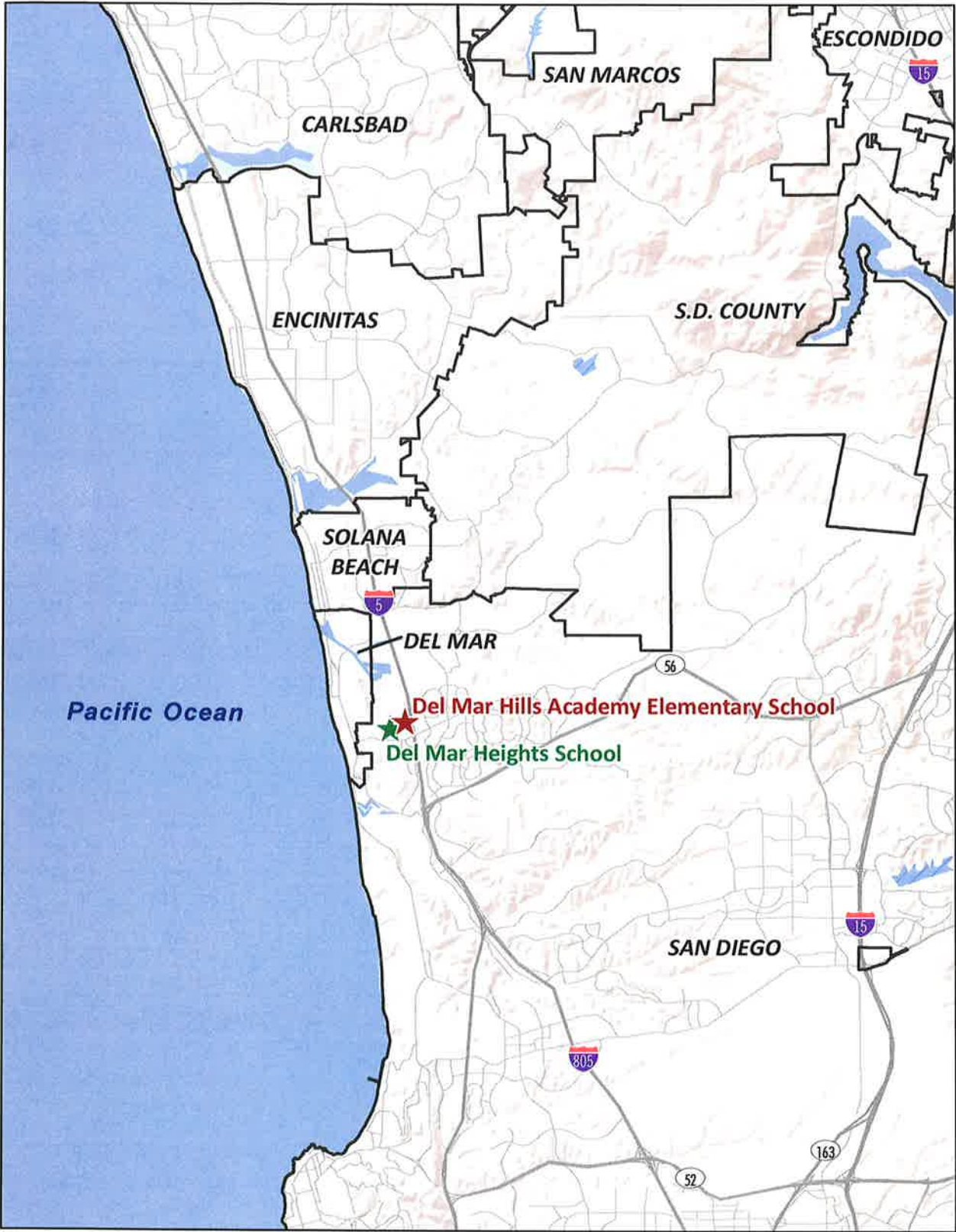
Office of Historic Preservation (OHP). 2022. California Historical Resources. <http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/ListedResources/?view=county&criteria=33>.

\_\_\_\_\_. 2022. California Historical Landmarks – San Diego. [https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=21478](https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21478).

State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). 2022. GeoTracker. <http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS). 2022. National Wetlands Inventory – Wetlands Mapper.  
<https://fwsprimary.wim.usgs.gov/wetlands/apps/wetlands-mapper/>.

Figure 1 - Regional Location



Source: ESRI, 2022

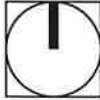
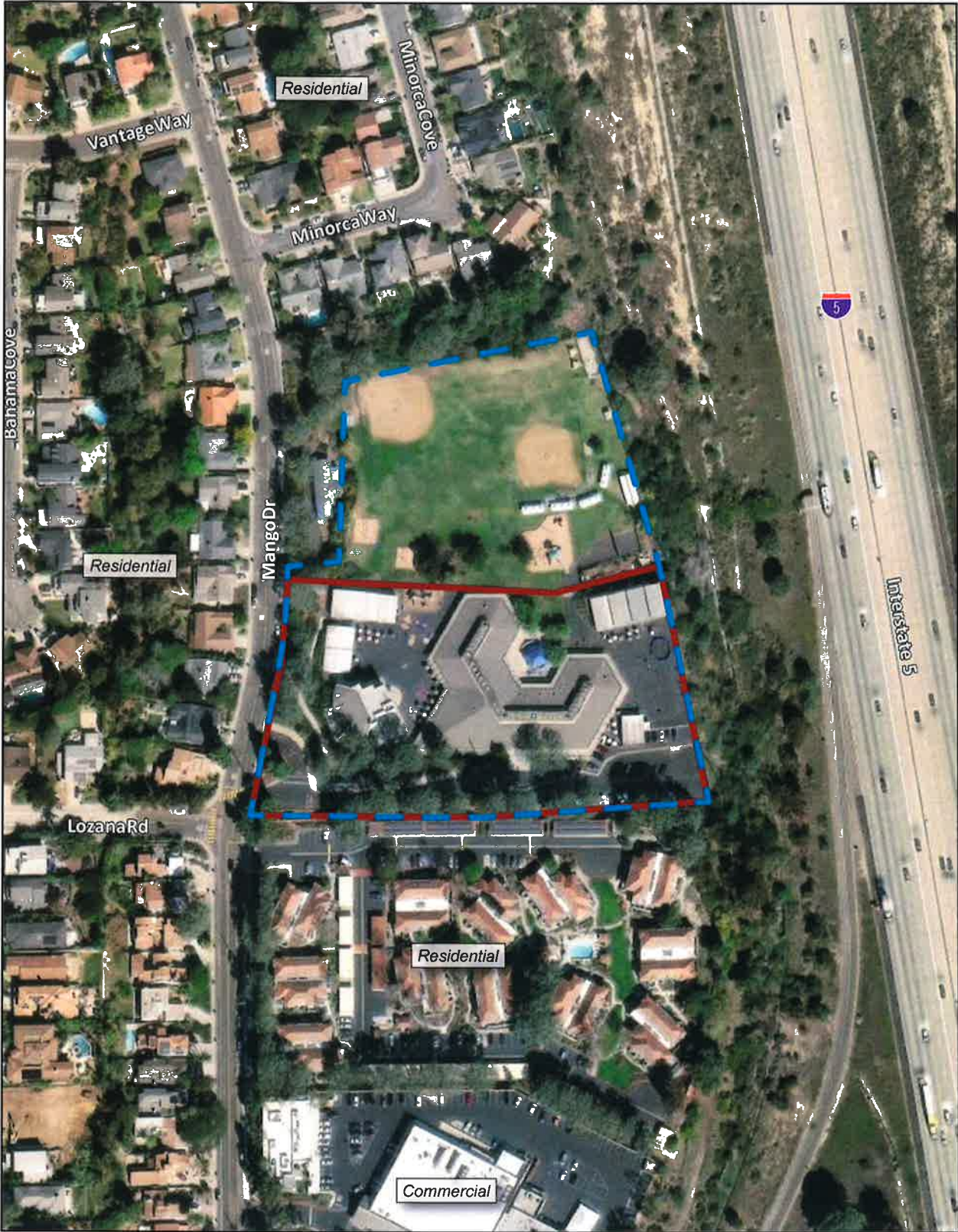




Figure 2 - Aerial Photograph



— — — — — School Boundary  
————— Project Boundary

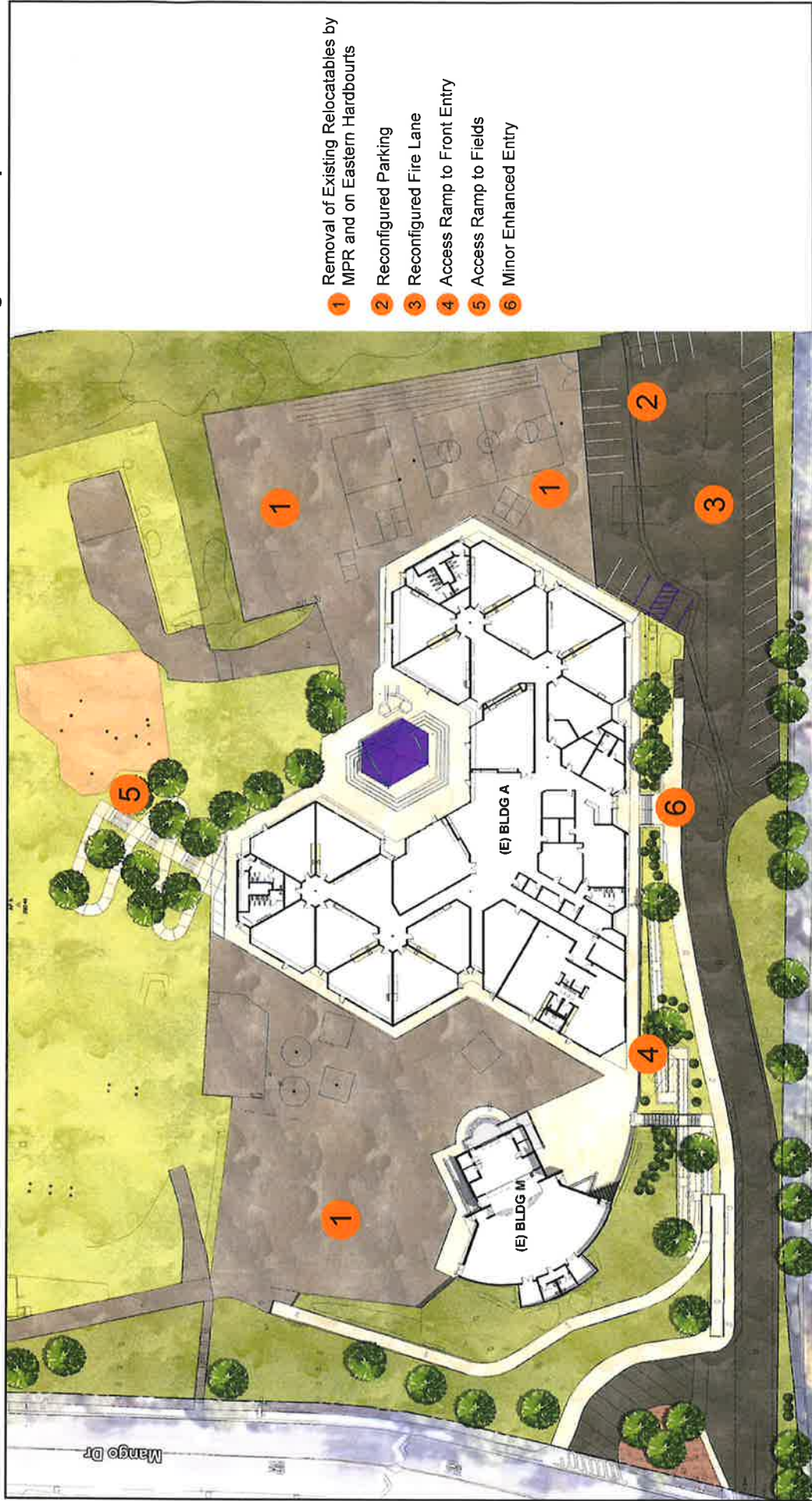
Source: ESRI, 2022

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Scale (Feet)



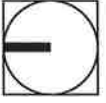


Figure 3 - Proposed Site Plan



- 1 Removal of Existing Relocatables by MPR and on Eastern Hardbouts
- 2 Reconfigured Parking
- 3 Reconfigured Fire Lane
- 4 Access Ramp to Front Entry
- 5 Access Ramp to Fields
- 6 Minor Enhanced Entry

0 80  
Scale (Feet)





San Diego County



Transaction #: 7234611  
Receipt #: 2023225535

JORDAN Z. MARKS

Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk  
1600 Pacific Highway Suite 260  
P. O. Box 121750, San Diego, CA 92112-1750  
Tel. (619) 237-0502 Fax (619) 557-4155  
[www.sdarcc.gov](http://www.sdarcc.gov)

Cashier Date: 06/29/2023  
Cashier Location: SD

Print Date: 06/29/2023 10:43 am

Payment Summary

Total Fees:	\$50.00
Total Payments:	\$50.00
Balance:	\$0.00

Payment

CHECK PAYMENT #3222 \$50.00

Total Payments \$50.00

Filing

CEQA - NOE FILE #: 2023-000517 Date: 06/29/2023 10:42AM Pages: 13

State Receipt # 37-06/29/2023-0470

Fees: Fish & Wildlife County Administrative Fee \$50.00

Total Fees Due: \$50.00

Grand Total - All Documents: \$50.00