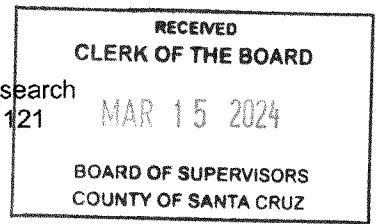


CDFW # 44-03152024-077

CITY OF SANTA CRUZ

Notice of Exemption



To: [X] Clerk of the Board
County of Santa Cruz
Governmental Center
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

[X] Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: City of Santa Cruz Water Department, 212 Locust Street, Suite C, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Project Title: U4 Tank Replacement Project

Project Address: Empire Grade, between Heller Drive and Cave Gulch
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Assessor's Parcel No.: 062-041-49

City of: NA County of: Santa Cruz

Project Description: The City of Santa Cruz Water Department (SCWD) is proposing to replace the existing 400,000 gallon potable water steel storage tank known as University Reservoir No. 4 (U4 tank) that serves the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) campus and local westside City of Santa Cruz customers. The Project includes decommissioning and removal of the existing storage tank and construction of a new steel storage tank of the same capacity on the existing foundation. To meet system demands for the University and protect water supply pumps while the main reservoir is being replaced, a 45,000 gallon maintenance tank and a 1,500 gallon surge pressure vessel will be installed. The project also includes pump control upgrades and fire hardening of the roof of the U6 pump station which is located at the same site. Maintenance work at the site will include replacing fencing and existing drainage infrastructure, adding new level spreaders for each drainpipe, and installing new curb and gutter. Maintenance of the quarter mile access road will include minor resurfacing and repairs. Two road pullouts will be paved, and the full access road will be resurfaced once construction is complete. Minor vegetation management will be performed for site access. UCSC will provide an easement to the City for the facility and the City and UCSC will finalize a work agreement prior to construction.

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: City of Santa Cruz Water Department

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: City of Santa Cruz

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial Project (Public Resources Code §21080(b)(1); 14 Cal Code Regs §15268).
[X] Categorically Exempt (14 Cal Code Regs §15301, §15302).
Declared Emergency (Public Resources Code §21080(b)(3); 14 Cal Code Regs §15269(a)).
Emergency Project (Public Resources Code §21080(b)(4); 14 Cal Code Regs §15269(b)(c)).
Statutory Exemption (Code/Section NA).
The project clearly will not have a significant effect on the environment (14 Cal Code Regs §15061(b)(3)).

3/15/24
4/19/24

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project is exempt per CEQA Guidelines Section §15301 – Class 1 (Existing Facilities) “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.” It is also exempt per CEQA Guidelines Section §15302 – Class 2 (Replacement or Reconstruction) categorical exemption. This exemption “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 as the structure replaced.”

The Class 1 (Existing Facilities) and Class 2 (Replacement or Reconstruction) exemptions are applicable to the project because the U4 tank and U6 pump station are existing facilities, originally constructed in 1965, and this project will replace the U4 tank with a new tank of the same capacity, including required accessory structures for maintenance, and will restore and rehabilitate deteriorated facilities with negligible or no expansion of existing use. The Project will result in the following:

- Replacement of U4 tank in the same location and with the same foundation, capacity, and function.
- Replacement of underground piping.
- Fire hardening the U6 pump station roof and replacement of pumping control equipment.

The proposed project will also involve the construction of a maintenance tank and a surge pressure vessel within the facility’s developed area. The maintenance tank will allow the U4 tank to meet current industry standards of public health and safety and allow the City to maintain potable water service to UCSC during construction. The surge pressure vessel will provide protection from pressure spikes in the pipelines. The maintenance tank and surge pressure vessel are a negligible expansion of existing use needed to meet modern industry requirements.

Additional minor reconstruction and alterations include replacing fencing and drainage infrastructure, minor repairs and an overlay of the existing access road, and paving about 900 square feet of unpaved surfaces within the fenced facility and 1,300 square feet at two access road pullouts. The installation of a new curb, gutter, catch basins, and a level spreader for each drain pipe will improve site drainage. Except for the installation of level spreaders covering about 200 square feet, all work will be confined to previously disturbed areas. Vegetation management along the access road and adjacent to the facility will include overhead tree limbing for construction access.

Construction activities will be performed using best management practices. The City of Santa Cruz Operations and Maintenance Habitat Conservation Plan is applicable to the project, and the City will follow its provisions to protect flora and fauna and limit erosion from the site.

The exceptions included in CEQA Guidelines §15300.2 have been reviewed and none are applicable to the project. While the site is located within upland critical habitat for California red legged frog, this proposed project has been evaluated for its potential impacts to biological resources, and no aquatic resources, sensitive communities, or other sensitive biological resources (including but not limited to cave dwelling species, plants, amphibians, wood rats, bats, and nesting birds) are anticipated to be impacted by the proposed project. Furthermore, no cumulative impacts or significant effects due to unusual circumstances are anticipated at the project site, and no impacts to scenic highways or historic resources will occur. The site is not included on any list compiled for hazardous waste sites.

**Lead Agency**

**Contact Person:** Heidi Luckenbach **Phone:** (831) 420-5214

**Department:** City of Santa Cruz Water Department **Address:** 212 Locust St., Suite C,  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

**Signature:**  **Date:** 3/14/2024

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

**Title:** Water Director

**If filed by applicant:**

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a notice of exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project?  Yes  No

Date Received for filing at County Clerk: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_