

FILED

AUG 23 2022

Bill Emlen, Clerk of the
Board of Supervisors of
the County of Solano,
State of California
Deputy *Amee Johnson*

CEQA: California Environmental Quality Act

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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

From: Vallejo City Unified School District
665 Walnut Avenue
Vallejo, CA 94592

☒ County Clerk
County of Solano
675 Texas Street, Suite 6500, 6th Floor
Fairfield, CA 94533

Portable Classrooms Project- Griffin Academy
Project Title

233 Hobbs Avenue
Project Location - Specific

Vallejo
Project Location - City

Solano
Project Location - County

To accommodate its growing student body, Griffin Academy proposes the placement of interim classrooms. The proposed project includes the installation of seven portable classrooms, a restroom portable, and paved surface on the northwest side of the campus just south of the parking lot. The proposed project also removes six existing parking spaces and adds 22 parking spaces to the parking lot (a net increase of 16 parking spaces). The proposed project would require the removal of five non-protected trees, a portion of the grassy field and a paved drive aisle. The proposed project would be constructed for the 2022-2023 school year. Griffin Academy students and staff and the surrounding community would benefit from the proposed project's new classrooms and additional parking spaces.

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project

Vallejo City Unified School District
Name of Public Agency Approving Project

Griffin Technology Academies (c/o Nick Driver)
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));

Document Posted From
08-23-2022 to _____

Deputy Clerk of the Board

CEQA: California Environmental Quality Act

Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: §15332 Class 32, Infill Development Projects

☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Section 15332 allows for developments on infill sites that are consistent with general plan and zoning designations and regulations; located within city limits on a site that is 5 acres or less; has no habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species; would not result in significant effects to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality; and would be served by all required utilities and public services. The project involves the installation of seven portable buildings, a restroom portable, and the addition 16 net new parking spaces on an existing school campus located at 233 Hobbs Avenue in Vallejo California. The proposed project would accommodate the growing student body. The proposed project would meet all of the Class 32 requirements. Additionally, the proposed project was also reviewed for possible exceptions under Section 15300.2 and found that the exceptions do not apply.

See Attachment to Notice of Exemption for further explanation of the evaluation, which is available at the Vallejo City Unified School District Office, 665 Walnut Avenue, Vallejo, CA 94592.

Reasons why project is exempt

Mitchell Romao, Chief Operations Officer

707.556.8921 x50064

Contact Person:

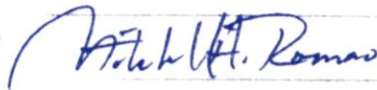
Area Code/Telephone/Extension:

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

Asst. Supt. Operations

Vallejo City Unified School District

**Regular Board of Education Meeting
08/03/2022 05:00 PM**IN PERSON - 665 Walnut Avenue, Vallejo, CA 94592
Governing Board Room

Printed : 8/9/2022 2:25 PM PT

ITEM : 7.r. Resolution No. 3030 Making Certain Findings Related to CEQA & Authorizing Staff to File a Notice of Exemption for Portable Classrooms Project - Griffin Academy (ROMAO)**Agenda Item Type**

Operations/Consent

Prepared By

Mitchell Romao, Assistant Superintendent, Operations

Reviewed By

William Spalding, Superintendent

Speaker

Mitchell Romao

Recommended Action

It is recommended that the Governing Board Approve Resolution No. 3030 Making Certain Findings Related to CEQA and Authorizing Staff to File a Notice of Exemption for the Portable Classrooms Project - Griffin Academy.

Description

Vallejo City Unified School District ("District") entered into an Amended and Restated Master Lease with GTA on June 2, 2021 in which the District authorized GTA to lease real property owned by the District, including the property located at 233 Hobbs Ave. in Vallejo, California ("Hobbs Campus") for the specific use of the Griffin Academy Middle and Griffin Academy High Schools ("Lease"). Pursuant to the Lease, GTA must obtain the District's approval and authorization prior to constructing any improvements on the Hobbs Campus.

GTA is the nonprofit public benefit corporation that operates the Griffin Academy Middle and Griffin Academy High Schools. GTA formerly operated under the name of MIT Academy. GTA desires to install seven portable classrooms and one portable restroom on a new paved surface on the northwest side of the Hobbs Campus, south of the parking lot. The proposed project ("Project") is intended to accommodate an increase in 158 students for the 2022-2023 school year. GTA also seeks to remove six parking spaces and add 22 parking spaces to the parking lot (a net increase of 16 parking spaces), with the additional parking being added to the south and west sides of the parking lot. The Project would require the removal of five trees, vegetation along the west side of the development area, a portion of grassy field, and a paved drive aisle used by authorized personnel. Further, the Project would occur within the site's boundaries and no off-campus work would take place.

District staff, in consultation with legal counsel, worked with GTA and its environmental consultant to analyze the Project in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") and found that the Project falls within a categorical exemption. Specifically, the Project is exempt from further environmental review under CEQA because it is consistent with the conditions for a Class 32, Infill Development Projects (Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, section 15332) categorical exemption, and does not meet any of the exceptions to this exemption. As detailed in the Notice of Exemption Attachment, attached as Exhibit A to Resolution No. 3030, the Project satisfies the Class 32 categorical exemption because: (a) the Project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with the applicable zoning designation and regulations; (b) the Project occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses; (c) the Project site has no value as a habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species; (d) approval of the Project would not result in any significant effects related to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality; and (e) the site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

Further, none of the exceptions to this exemption specified in Section 15300.2 of the CEQA Guidelines

apply for the reasons set forth in the Notice of Exemption Attachment.

Thus, the Project is exempt from CEQA review. Upon determining that the Project is exempt from CEQA, the District may file a Notice of Exemption with the County Clerk pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, section 15062, and the State Clearinghouse.

Fiscal Impact

GTA shall be responsible for reimbursing the District for all fees and costs associated with the technical and legal review of this matter.

Supporting Documents

[Resolution 3030 Approve NOE for Portable Classroom Project GTA Hobbs](#)

VALLEJO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
RESOLUTION NO. 3030

**MAKING CERTAIN FINDINGS RELATED TO CEQA AND AUTHORIZING STAFF
TO FILE A NOTICE OF EXEMPTION FOR PORTABLE CLASSROOMS PROJECT –
GRIFFIN ACADEMY**

WHEREAS, Griffin Technology Academies, a California non-profit public benefit corporation ("GTA"), operates charter schools authorized by the Vallejo City Unified School District ("District"), including Griffin Academy Middle School and Griffin Academy High School, pursuant to Education Code sections 47600 et seq.;

WHEREAS, GTA leases real property, including facilities located thereon, from the District pursuant to that certain Amended and Restated Master Lease dated June 2, 2021 ("Lease"), which includes the former Hobbs Elementary School campus, located at 233 Hobbs Avenue in Vallejo, California ("Hobbs Campus").

WHEREAS, GTA desires to install seven portable classrooms and one portable restroom on a new paved surface on the northwest side of the Hobbs Campus, south of the parking lot, to accommodate an increase in 158 students for the 2022-2023 school year. In addition, GTA seeks to remove six parking spaces and add 22 parking spaces to the parking lot (a net increase of 16 parking spaces), with the additional parking being added to the south and west sides of the development area, a portion of grassy field, and a paved drive aisle used by authorized personnel (collectively, the "Project").

WHEREAS, GTA shall be responsible for carrying out the Project, subject to District approval;

WHEREAS, the District analyzed the Project in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act as set forth in the California Public Resources Code section 21000, *et seq.* and State CEQA Guidelines ("CEQA") and has found that the Project falls under a categorical exemption from CEQA;

WHEREAS, the Project is exempt from further environmental review under CEQA because it is consistent with the conditions for a Class 32, Infill Development Projects, and does not meet any of the exceptions to this exemption;

WHEREAS, Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, section 15332, provides a Class 32 categorical exemption from CEQA for projects meeting the conditions of this section, which include the following: (1) the project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations; (b) the proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses; (c) the project site has no value as a habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species; (d) approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality; and (e) the site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

WHEREAS, none of the exceptions to this exemption specified in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, section 15300.2, apply for the reasons set forth in the Notice of Exemption Attachment, attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference; and

WHEREAS, upon determining that the Project is exempt from CEQA, the District is entitled to file a Notice of Exemption with the County Clerk pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, section 15062 and the State Clearinghouse.


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Board of the Vallejo City Unified School District that:

1. The foregoing recitals are hereby adopted as true and correct.
2. The District has considered whether the Project will have a significant impact on the environment and has determined that no such impact exists based on its independent review and analysis.
3. The Project is exempt from further environmental review under CEQA because it is consistent with the conditions for a Class 32, Infill Development Projects (14 C.C.R. § 15332) categorical exemption.
4. None of the exceptions specified under 14 C.C.R. § 15300.2 apply to the Project.
5. The District Superintendent or his designee is instructed to file a Notice of Exemption from CEQA, including the Notice of Exemption Attachment, consistent with this Resolution, attached hereto as Exhibit A with the Solano County Office of the County Clerk and the State Clearinghouse.
6. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

PASSED and ADOPTED this 3rd day of August 2022, by the Vallejo City Unified School District Governing Board, Solano County, California, by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

3
0
0
2


Board President
Vallejo City Unified School District

Attest:



Board Secretary

EXHIBIT A

Notice of Exemption

Attachment to Notice of Exemption
Portable Classrooms Project– Griffin Academy

Vallejo City Unified School District

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Griffin Academy is a charter school authorized by the Vallejo City Unified School District (District) and operated under the authority of an independent board known as Griffin Technology Academies (GTA). GTA proposes the placement of seven portable classrooms and one bathroom portable on the northwest side of the campus. The proposed project also includes the removal of six parking spots and the addition of 22 parking spots (for a net increase of 16 parking spots) to the existing parking lot. This supplemental information provides justification for the Categorical Exemption pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines under California Code of Regulations, § 15332, Infill Development Projects.

1. EXISTING CONDITIONS

PROJECT LOCATION

The Griffin Academy campus is located at 233 Hobbs Avenue in the City of Vallejo in Solano County, California (project site). Regional access to the campus is from State Route 29 (SR-29), approximately 0.5 mile to the northwest of the campus, SR-37, approximately 0.6 mile west of the campus, and Interstate 80 (I-80), approximately 1.3 miles east of the campus. The campus is bordered by Hobbs Avenue to the north, Richardson Park to the east, a single-family residential neighborhood to the south, and a single-family residential property to the west. The development area, where the improvements would occur, is located on the northwest side of the Griffin Academy campus. See Figure 1, *Local Vicinity*, and Figure 2, *Aerial Photograph*.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project site is currently developed with two school buildings and four portable classroom buildings (including the large portable classroom building that was recently moved onsite). The existing campus includes a total of 15 classrooms, an administration office, a multi-purpose room, restrooms, surface parking, hardtops, three undeveloped grassy areas, and landscaping. The campus is surrounded by a chain link fence, which controls access to the campus. The development area, located on the northwest side of the project site, currently contains a paved drive aisle used by authorized personnel, grassy area, and five trees (one *Fraxinus oxycarpa*, i.e., Raywood, and four young *Quercus agrifolia*, i.e., Coast Live Oak). A chain link fence runs between the parking lot and the grassy area. Griffin Academy serves students from the sixth grade through the tenth grade and has 392 students.

GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING

The campus is zoned Public and Semi-Public and has a General Plan land use designation of Public Facilities and Institutions.

SURROUNDING LAND USES

The campus is primarily surrounded by single-family residential uses. Single-family residences are located to the north (across Hobbs Avenue), south, and west of the campus. Richardson Park is to the east of the campus. A line of trees and a fence separate the campus and Richardson Park. A railroad right-of-way is located just beyond the residential uses to the west. See Figure 2, *Aerial Photograph*.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Griffin Academy would add an 11th grade to its curriculum for the 2022-2023 school year. An enrollment capacity of approximately 550 students is anticipated for the 2022-2023 school year with the addition of grade 11, which would result in a net increase of 158 students. To accommodate its growing student body, Griffin Academy proposes the installation of seven portable classrooms, a restroom portable, on a new paved surface on the northwest side of the campus just south of the parking lot. The proposed project would also expand the existing parking lot by removing six existing parking spaces and adding 22 parking spaces to the parking lot (a net increase of 16 parking spaces). The additional parking spaces would be added to the south and west sides of the parking lot. The proposed project would require the removal of five trees (one *Fraxinus oxycarpa*, i.e., Raywood, and four young *Quercus agrifolia*, i.e., Coast Live Oak), vegetation along the west side of the development area, a portion of grassy field and a paved gated drive aisle used by authorized personnel. The proposed project would be constructed for the 2022-2023 school year. See Figure 3, *Site Plan*.

CONSTRUCTION

The proposed project would occur within the school campus boundary and no off-campus work would occur. School administration and the construction contractor will work together to coordinate and stay informed about construction activities, location, and schedule. Contractors will adhere to noise regulations to minimize campus disturbances.

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 the conditions for a Class 32, Infill Development Projects, and does not meet any of the exceptions, as explained below.

REVIEW OF CLASS 32, INFILL DEVELOPMENT, CONDITIONS

Class 32, Infill Development Projects (CEQA Guidelines § 15332). Class 32 consists of projects characterized as infill development meeting the conditions described in this section.

- a) **The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations.**

The General Plan and Zoning Ordinance designate the project site for public facilities and institutional uses. The project site currently operates as a school campus. The proposed project would not change the existing uses, nor would it change the designations of the site. The proposed project would accommodate the growing student body by installing additional interim portable classrooms, a restroom portable, and additional parking spots. Therefore, the campus would continue to be consistent with the General Plan and zoning designations.

- b) **The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.**

The project site is located at 233 Hobbs Avenue in the City of Vallejo in Solano County, California. State Route (SR) 37 and Interstate (I) 80 are approximately 0.6 mile west and 1.3 miles east of the project site, respectively. The project site is bordered by Hobbs Avenue to the north, Richardson Park to the east, a single-family residential neighborhood to the south, and a single-family property to the west. The campus is approximately 4.9 acres, and the development area is approximately 0.7 acre. As such, the proposed project is within the City limits, surrounded by urban uses, and is less than five acres.

- c) **The project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species.**

The project site is developed with two school buildings and four portable classrooms (including the large portable classroom building that was recently moved onsite). The existing campus includes a total of 15 classrooms, an administration office, a multi-purpose room, restrooms, surface parking, hardtops, three undeveloped grassy areas used for outdoor activities (such as physical education), and landscaping. The development area contains five trees that would be removed with the construction of the proposed project (one *Fraxinus oxycarpa*, i.e., Raywood, and four young *Quercus agrifolia*, i.e., Coast Live Oak). Neither of these species are protected by the City of Vallejo (Vallejo, 2018, 2022) nor are they listed as endangered, threatened or rare (CDFW 2022). As the project site is developed, occupied, and surrounded by urban uses, it has no value as habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species. It does not contain suitable habitat for any candidate, sensitive, or special status plant or wildlife species. The project site does contain trees, landscaping, and grassy areas that could potentially be used for breeding and nesting by migratory birds, however, the proposed project would be required to comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act which would protect migratory birds.

- d) **Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.**

Traffic

A Vehicle Miles Travel (VMT) Memorandum was prepared for the proposed project by Kittelson & Associates. The memorandum, dated July 15, 2022, is attached to this supplement as Attachment 1.

Senate Bill 743 (SB 743) was signed into law in September 2013. Senate Bill 743 (Steinberg, 2013) requires changes to the CEQA Guidelines regarding the analysis of transportation impacts. Historically, CEQA transportation analyses of individual projects determined impacts in the circulation system in terms of roadway delay and/or capacity at specific locations. SB 743 changes included the elimination of auto delay, level of service (LOS), and other similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion as a basis for determining significant impacts and identified VMT as the most appropriate metric to evaluate a project's significant transportation impacts. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 describes how transportation impacts are to be analyzed under SB 743. It states that in general transportation impacts are best measured by evaluating the project's vehicle miles traveled. For land use projects, VMT exceeding an applicable threshold of significance may indicate a significant impact.

City of Vallejo CEQA Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines

The City of Vallejo revised its transportation impact analysis guidelines (TIA Guidelines) in July 2020 to conform with the SB 743 legislation. These guidelines have established three screening criteria to screen projects from a project-level assessment. These three criteria include:

1. Transit Priority Area (TPA) – Projects located within a TPA may be presumed to have a less than significant impact absent substantial evidence to the contrary.
2. Low VMT Area Screening – Residential and office projects located within a low VMT generating area of the city may be presumed to have a less than significant impact absent substantial evidence to the contrary. Low VMT areas are defined as those areas have an efficiency metric of:

- Residential: VMT per resident less than 26.0
 - Office/Employment: VMT per employee less than 31.5
3. Project Type Screening – Certain uses can be presumed to have a less than significant impact absent substantial evidence to the contrary as their uses are local serving in nature. Examples include local-serving schools, parks, day care centers, local serving retail, and project generating less than 110 daily vehicle trips.

Projects that do not screen out based on one if these criteria are required to perform a detailed VMT analysis. Four thresholds have been established in the determination of significance for projects undergoing a detailed VMT analysis. These thresholds include:

- Threshold 1: Project Generated VMT (Residential and Office/Industrial Projects) - Baseline - Project-generated Residential Tour VMT per resident (for residential projects), Home-Based-Work Tour VMT per employee (for office/industrial projects) or Total VMT per service population (for mixed-use projects) is no higher than the baseline citywide Residential Tour VMT per resident, Home-Based-Work Tour VMT per employee, or Total VMT per service population.
- Threshold 2: Project Generated VMT (Residential and Office/Industrial Projects) – Cumulative – Project-generated Residential Tour VMT per resident (for residential projects), Home-Based-Work Tour VMT per employee (for office/industrial projects), or Total VMT per service population (for mixed-use projects) is no higher than the cumulative citywide Residential Tour VMT per resident, Home-Based-Work Tour VMT per employee, or Total VMT per service population. This threshold does not apply if it can be demonstrated that VMT rates are declining at the time of the analysis.
- Threshold 3: Project's Effect on VMT (Residential and Office/Industrial Projects) – Cumulative – The Project reduces or has no effect on the citywide total VMT under cumulative conditions.
- Threshold 4: Project-Generated VMT and Project's Effect on VMT (Other Project Types) - VMT thresholds for other project types (for example, institutional, destination hotel, or cultural projects) would be developed using considerations unique to the individual project. The thresholds will incorporate the principles of Thresholds 1 – 3, i.e., projects that are not expected to generate VMT above a relevant baseline level and/or are not expected to increase VMT in the cumulative condition would be considered to have a less than significant impact with respect to VMT.

The City's TIA Guidelines do not have specific guidelines related to charter schools. The City's TIA Guidelines develop thresholds with the intent to hold new development VMT generation at or below citywide VMT generation levels.

As discussed above, the TIA Guidelines lists several land use types that may be "screened out" of a detailed VMT analysis, as they can be presumed to have a less than significant impact absent substantial evidence of the contrary. These land uses include local-serving K-12 public schools. The TIA guidelines recommends that as much substantial evidence as possible be provided for the local-serving nature of a given project. Since the proposed project is a charter school and is not a local-serving public school, the following is provided to demonstrate that the proposed project would generate VMT below the City's average and therefore result in a less than significant VMT impact.

For this analysis, a service population metric is used to consider trips for both employees and students combined since these are the two groups primarily accessing the proposed project. This VMT per service population was then compared to the City of Vallejo VMT/capita. VMT/capita was used as the comparison

because there is insufficient data to calculate VMT/service population for all schools in the City, and the TIA Guidelines do not provide VMT/service population thresholds. Since most trips to a school are home-based trips as students are transported to/from school, VMT/capita is the most similar comparison available.

Consistent with the City of Vallejo Guidelines, the threshold of significance is set at no increase in VMT which aligns with the City's goal of holding new development VMT generation at or below citywide VMT generation levels. Therefore, a significant impact to VMT would occur if the proposed project would:

- Result in the VMT per service population (students plus employees) exceeding the VMT per capita within the City of Vallejo which is 26.0 VMT per resident in 2015 and 26.6 in 2040.

VMT Analysis and Results

An analysis was conducted to quantify the VMT per service population (students and employees) for the school. Student and employee home address data were provided for the 2021-2022 school year; the spatial distribution of these currently enrolled students and employees is expected to remain stable in the future and was used to estimate the distribution of the students and employees for the proposed project.

Existing student enrollment and total service population for the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years is provided in Table 1.

Table 1 Student Enrollment and Total Service Population

School Year	Grades Served	Student Enrollment	Total Service Population
2021-2022	6 – 10	392	422
2022-2023	6 – 11	550 ¹	593

¹Student enrollment value for 2022-2023 SY represents estimate enrollment capacity. Actual enrollment may be lower.

²The number of employees is assumed to grow at the same rate as the student population (1 employee per about 13 students). Source: Kittelson & Associates, 2022.

Daily VMT per service population was calculated using the following equation:

- Average trip length: Average of one-way driving distances between students' and employees' home addresses and the school sites, based on 2021-2022 school year. Trip lengths were calculated using an ArcGIS Online tool – routes for each student and employee home address to/from the campus were determined based on minimizing travel time.
- Daily trips: Daily trip generation of the project for 2022-2023 school year, calculated using ITE trip generation rates for Land Use 536 (Private School K-12). This land use was the most similar to the proposed project and was more conservative than using other ITE rates for middle schools or high schools.

Table 2 provides the daily VMT per service population for the school based on the equation.

Table 2 VMT Summary

	Average Trip Length (miles)	Daily Trip Generation ¹	Total Service Population (Students + Employees)	VMT efficiency metric ²
Griffin Academy (2022-2023 SY)	4.13	1,364	593	9.50
City of Vallejo	N/A	N/A	N/A	26.0 to 26.6

¹ Trip Generation based on daily weekday trip rate of 2.48 for ITE land use code 536

² For the City of Vallejo the VMT/resident ranges from 26.0 in 2015 to 26.2 in 2040.

Source: Kittelson & Associates, 2022.

Conclusion

As shown in Table 2, the average trip lengths associated with student and employees with the school are short, below 5 miles. The anticipated daily VMT per service population for the school of 9.5 is below the City of Vallejo VMT per capita of 26.0 under existing conditions and 26.6 under cumulative conditions. Since this analysis is centered on a "per service population" metric, the value determined for the school is expected to remain stable regardless of the school's actual student attendance, assuming (1) the ratio of students to employees remains the same and (2) the relative spatial distribution of students and employees remains similar. Based on this analysis, the proposed project would not result in a significant VMT impact.

Noise

The proposed project involves the placement of 8 total portables, expansion of the parking lot, and the paving of a portion of the northwest side of campus for the proper base for the portables. The removal of trees, a portion of a grassy field, and a paved drive aisle will be required as part of implementing the project. The proposed demolition and paving activities are expected to generate the highest noise levels as it will require the most powerful equipment.

Construction noise levels would create a temporary increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project. However, the proposed project would be required to comply with Vallejo Municipal Code Chapter 16.502.03, *Construction Management*, and Chapter 16.502.09, *Noise*, which outline the requirements for the management of construction activities and establish the principles and context for noise limits, standards for noise exposure and land use compatibility, and requirements for reasonable noise attenuation measures. The construction would comply with daytime and nighttime decibel limits based on the type of construction equipment, distance of construction activities from sensitive receptors, site terrain, and other project features. Based on the above, project-related construction noise would be typical of construction noise in the area and would not have significant noise impacts during construction.

Existing operational noise comes from sources such as people talking, using outdoor common areas, property maintenance, and vehicles entering and leaving the project site. These existing noise sources contribute to the total noise environment within the direct vicinity of the project site. The proposed project would accommodate up to 158 new students. The addition of these students would contribute to operational noise. However, these types of noise sources are typical of school uses and the surrounding residential and park uses that already exist on the project site and in the vicinity of the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not introduce noise levels that are uncharacteristic of the area. The proposed project would not have significant noise impacts during operation.

Air Quality

The project site is within the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). BAAQMD is directly responsible for reducing emissions from area, stationary, and mobile sources in the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin (SFBAAB) to achieve National and California AAQS. The SFBAAB is a nonattainment area for California and National ozone (O₃), California and National particulate matter (PM) 2.5, and California PM₁₀ AAQS.

Construction Emissions

While the development area is approximately 0.7 acre. Construction activities would include site preparation (such as tree and fence removal), grading, paving and striping, installation of the portables, and utility hook up. Construction activities produce combustion emissions from various sources, such as on-site heavy-duty construction vehicles, vehicles hauling materials to and from the site, and motor vehicles transporting the construction crew. Site preparation and grading activities produce fugitive dust emissions (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) from demolition and soil-disturbing activities. Construction activities associated with the project, i.e., site preparation, grading, paving, and installation, would result in emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), NO_x, carbon monoxide (CO), PM₁₀, and fine PM_{2.5}. Air pollutant emissions from construction activities on site would vary daily as construction activity levels change.

Placement of the 7 portable classrooms and one portable bathroom will require minimal site work as they are prefabricated and would not require extensive excavation nor construction on-site. Additionally, the paving and construction would involve minimal grading as the project site is already largely flat. Since earthwork and construction would be minimal over an area of less than one acre, the proposed project would not result in substantial emissions of criteria pollutants. The proposed project would further be required to implement BAAQMD's regulations and rules that control criteria air pollutants. As a result, the project would not exceed the BAAQMD screening levels sizes and criteria air pollutant impacts.

The amount of dust generated during construction would be highly variable and is dependent on the amount of material being disturbed, the type of material, moisture content, and meteorological conditions. If uncontrolled, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} levels downwind of actively disturbed areas could possibly exceed State standards. The proposed project would be required to control fugitive dust during construction in accordance with VMC Chapter 16.502.03, *Construction Management*. For example, in accordance with VMC Section 16.502.03(a), during the construction of the project, all portions of the site would be required to be watered as necessary to reduce emissions of dust and other particulate matter, and all stockpiles shall be covered. Further, the proposed project would be required to implement the Bay Area Air Quality Management District Basic Control Measures included in the latest version of BAAQMD's CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, as subsequently revised, supplemented, or replaced, to control fugitive dust (i.e., particulate matter PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀) during demolition, ground disturbing activities and/or construction. The project applicant would be required include these measures in the applicable construction documents, prior to issuance of the first permit. As a result, the proposed project is required to implement the applicable VMC requirements and BAAQMD's best management practices. BAAQMD considers all impacts related to fugitive dust emissions from construction to be *less than significant* with implementation of BAAQMD's best management practices.

Operation Emissions

Typical long-term air pollutant emissions are generated by area sources (e.g., landscape fuel use, architectural coatings, and asphalt pavement), energy use, and mobile sources (i.e., on-road vehicles). The proposed project would not generate a substantial demand for landscaping nor architectural coatings, since the portables would be prefabricated. Additionally, the proposed project would reduce the amount of grassy surfaces onsite, which would reduce the amount of landscape fuel needed to maintain the grassy area. As such, the proposed project would not generate substantial air pollutant emissions from area sources.

As with the existing campus, the proposed project would use electricity for its classrooms. No natural gas use is proposed. The proposed project's electricity use would be typical of portable classrooms. The electricity use of seven portable classrooms and a restroom portable would not cause excessive or substantial energy use.

As discussed under the *Traffic* subheading above, by the 2022-2023 school year, the Griffin Academy is anticipated to generate 1,364 daily trips. Of these 1,364 daily trips, the proposed project would contribute 370 trips (which would support the addition of 158 students, or approximately 27 percent). The average trip length for the Griffin Academy with the proposed project would be 4.13 miles and the VMT efficiency metric is 9.50. The VMT efficiency metric of 9.50 is well below the City's VMT efficiency metric of 26.0 to 26.6. Therefore, the trips associated with the Griffin Academy and the proposed project would not generate a substantial amount of air emissions from vehicle sources.

The proposed project is designed to accommodate the existing school demand and is not associated with population growth in the surrounding area. As such the impacts from project-related operation activities to the regional air quality would be less than significant.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

A project does not generate enough GHG emissions on its own to influence global climate change; therefore, this analysis evaluates the project's contribution to the cumulative environmental impact associated with GHG emissions. For projects where there is no applicable GHG reduction plan, cumulative GHG emissions impacts are based on the state's GHG reduction goals for development projects identified by BAAQMD adopted in April 2022 *Justification Report: CEQA Thresholds for Evaluating the Significance of Climate Impacts From Land Use Projects and Plans* (Justification Report).

Development of the proposed project would contribute to climate change through direct and indirect emissions of GHG from the construction activities needed to implement the project, which would generate a short-term increase in GHG emissions, as well as a long-term increase in GHG emissions from on-road mobile sources, energy use, area sources, water use/wastewater generation, and solid waste disposal. As identified in the GHG Justification Report, short-term construction activities are one-time emissions that would not substantially contribute to GHG emissions impacts. For operational phase impacts, BAAQMD identified in their Justification Report that projects that implement the following Best Management Practices (BMPs) would contribute their fair of what will be required to achieve the state's long-term climate goals as shown in Table 1, Consistency Analysis with BAAQMD's GHG Best Management Practices. The proposed project is consistent with the land uses covered under the BAAQMD GHG Justification Report; and therefore, if the project implements the BMPs identified by BAAQMD then GHG emissions impacts would be considered less than significant. As shown in Table 3 the proposed project is consistent with BAAQMD's GHG Best Management Practices.

Table 3 Consistency Analysis with BAAQMD's GHG Best Management Practices

Sector	Consistency Analysis
Buildings	
a. The project will not include natural gas appliances or natural gas plumbing (in both residential and nonresidential development).	Consistent. The City of Vallejo has adopted the California Energy Code (Municipal Code Chapter 12.32) that requires all newly constructed buildings to be All-Electric Buildings. There would not be any natural gas appliances or propane plumbing installed as part of the proposed project.
b. The project will not result in any wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary electrical usage as determined by the analysis required under CEQA Section 21100(b)(3) and Section 15126.2(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines.	Consistent. The proposed project would comply with the most current CALGreen Building Code requirements and building efficiency standards to reduce unnecessary energy consumption. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in any wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary electrical usage.
Transportation	
a. Achieve compliance with electric vehicle requirements in the most recently adopted version of CALGreen Tier 2.	Consistent. CALGreen subsection A5.106.5.3.2, Tier 2 EV Charging, Table A5.106.5.3.2 requires a that parking lots or structure with 26 to 50 parking spaces to have 4 EV charging spaces. The proposed project would remove six parking spots and would add 22 parking spots for a net increase of 16 parking spots. The Griffin Academy campus parking lot would have a total of 49 parking spaces of new and existing parking spaces. The proposed project would comply with applicable provisions for EV charging spots.
b. Achieve a reduction in project-generated vehicle miles traveled (VMT) below the regional average consistent with the current version of the California Climate Change Scoping Plan or meet a locally adopted Senate Bill 743 VMT target, reflecting the recommendations provided in the Governor's Office of Planning and Research's Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA:	Consistent. The City of Vallejo has adopted Municipal Code Chapter 16.503, <i>Trip-Reduction Measures</i> , which applies to (1) New multi-unit development of ten units or more; (2) New non-residential development of ten thousand square feet or more; and (3) Employers with fifty or more employees at a single worksite within the city except for employers subject to Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) Regulation 13, Rule 1, Trip Reduction Requirements for Large Employers. The proposed project includes the installation of seven portable classrooms, a restroom portable, and a net increase of 16 parking spaces. The proposed project is not subject to the requirements since it does not meet any of the thresholds, as a result no transportation impacts related to VMT from the proposed project would occur under SB 743.

Source: BAAQMD. 2022, April 20. The Justification Report: CEQA Thresholds for Evaluating the Significance of Climate Impacts from Land Use Projects and Plans. <https://www.baaqmd.gov/-/media/files/planning-and-research/ceqa/ceqa-thresholds-2022/justification-report-pdf?la=en>.

Water Quality

Construction

As discussed above, the proposed project would require minimal grading and construction since the project site is generally flat and the buildings would arrive at the project site prefabricated. As such, grading and construction associated with sitework on the project site would result in minimal (less than one acre) and temporary disturbance of surface soils. Earthwork has the potential to result in erosion and sedimentation on project site, which could enter waterways. No water ways run through the project site nor are any located adjacent to the project site.

The proposed project would be required to comply with the requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) MS4 Permit. The NPDES MS4 Permit Program issued by the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, helps control water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants into receiving waters. Further, the project contractor would comply

with Chapter 12.41, *Stormwater Management and Discharge Control*, of the Vallejo Municipal Code which is intended to protect and enhance the water quality in the City's watercourses, water bodies, and wetlands. The proposed project would incorporate best management practices during construction to control runoff. Incorporation of these policies and the requirements contained within would reduce water quality impacts to less than significant. Project compliance with existing Codes and Regulations would result in less than significant impacts to water quality.

Operation

The proposed project is intended to serve the growing student population at Griffin Academy, which would add an 11th grade to its curriculum for the 2022-2023 school year. Operation of the expanded parking lot and the new classroom and restroom portables would not generate substantial new sources of pollutants that could enter waterways. Operations impacts would be less than significant.

- e) The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.**

Fire Protection

The project site is served by the City of Vallejo Fire Department. The proposed project would incrementally increase demands for fire protection services due to the increase in students at the project site. However, the increased demand for fire protection services would be minimal as typically residential uses have higher demands for fire protection than other uses (such as school uses). As such, the proposed project would be met with existing fire resources and would not result in the need for new or physically altered fire protection facilities. The proposed project would be required to comply with the California Fire Code and California Building Code. Additionally, building plans would be reviewed by the Division of State Architect to ensure adequate site access and fire safety requirements. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Police Protection

The project site is served by the City of Vallejo Police Department. The proposed project may incrementally increase demands for police protection services. The increased demand for police protection services would be minimal as typically residential uses have higher demands for police protection than other uses (such as school uses). As such, the increased demand for police protection services would be minimal and would not result in the need for new or physically altered police protection facilities. Impacts would be less than significant.

Schools

The proposed project would accommodate the increase in students at the project site and would not impact other schools in the City or within the District. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

Parks

Park demand is typically generated by residential uses. The proposed project would accommodate for an increase in students at the project site and would not result in an increase demand for parks. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Other Facilities

Library demand is typically generated by residential uses. The proposed project would accommodate for an increase in students at the project site and would not result in an increase demand for library services. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Wastewater/Sewer

The project site has wastewater connections which the proposed improvements would connect to. Wastewater generated by the proposed project would be accommodated within the existing wastewater connections and treatment facilities. Vallejo Flood and Wastewater District provides the City and project site with wastewater services. The Vallejo Flood and Wastewater District Sewer System Management Plan notes that their collection systems have adequate capacity for wet and dry weather flows (West Yost 2019). Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Stormwater Drainage

The project site is accommodated by storm drainage facilities which the proposed project would connect to, as needed. As noted above, the existing stormwater drainage facilities would be able to accommodate the proposed project. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Water Supplies

The City's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan notes that the City has reliable annual water supplies available for its service area through 2045 during normal conditions and with active management there will be enough to meet customer demands through multi-dry periods (Zanjero and Tully & Young 2021). The existing water supplies would be sufficient, and the proposed project would not result in depleting water supplies. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Solid Waste Disposal Facilities

The proposed project's contribution to solid waste would be minimal and would not significantly impact disposal facilities. Solid waste services are provided to the City of Vallejo and project site by Recology Vallejo. Recology Vallejo is a large volume transfer and processing facility that is permitted to have a maximum throughput of 600 tons per day and maximum permitted capacity of 775 tons per day (CalRecycle 2022). Due to the de minimis nature of the project on expanding operations at the project site and the limited increase in the number of students and staff, the project impacts would be less than significant.

Electricity/Natural Gas

The project site is currently served by electricity and gas lines. Under the new BAAQMD thresholds, projects must include no natural gas (including gas boilers). Therefore, no natural gas is proposed under the project. The proposed project does not anticipate significant service or system upgrades. Any increase in the demand for utilities would be less than significant.

REVIEW OF EXCEPTIONS TO THE CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION

The project has been reviewed under CEQA Guidelines § 15300.2 - Exceptions, for any characteristics or circumstances that might invalidate findings that the project is exempt from CEQA. Each exception is listed below and is followed by an assessment of whether that exception applies to the project.

- (a) **Location.** Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project would 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 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.

The proposed project seeks a Class 32 categorical exemption, and this exception does not apply. Nevertheless, the project site and development area are on an existing school campus surrounded by a developed community. The campus has buildings, asphalt hardcourts and parking lots, turf, and ornamental landscaping. Due to the school's developed nature and frequent human disturbance, the development area and project site do not contain any sensitive biological species or habitat. No mapped wetlands exist on the campus (FWS 2022). See section (e) below, for a discussion of hazardous materials and substances. 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.

Over the course of the proposed improvements at the project site, the District may propose projects at other locations within the District that could occur at the same time. The GTA is renovating and modernizing its Mare Island Technology Academy (MITA) campus, located at 2 Positive Place, approximately 1.3 miles north of the Griffin Academy campus. The renovation at the MITA campus would not change enrollment at the school. Additionally, the construction and modernization activities at MITA campus would not overlap with the installation of the portable buildings and parking lot improvements at the Griffin Academy campus. The renovation and modernization project at MITA would not have an impact on the proposed project. The proposed project, when combined with cumulative projects, would not create a significant cumulative impact under CEQA. This exception does not apply to the proposed project.

- (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.

The project site currently operates as a school and is within an urbanized area. Construction of the proposed project would require removal of five trees (one *Fraxinus oxycarpa*, i.e., Raywood, and four young *Quercus agrifolia*, i.e., Coast Live Oak). Neither of these species are protected by the City of Vallejo (Vallejo, 2018, 2022) nor are they listed as endangered, threatened or rare (CDFW 2022). There is no reasonable possibility that the proposed project would have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. Proposed improvements will not alter the existing uses. The construction manager will execute construction per current local, state, and federal laws, regulations; construction Best Management Practices; and District standards and guidelines. Implementation of the proposed project will not adversely affect circulation in and surrounding the campus, as substantiated above in Section 3(d), *Traffic*. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed project.

- (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.

There are no designated State scenic highways near the project site; SR-29, which is approximately 0.5-mile northwest of the project site is designated as Eligible for designation. The closest officially designated state scenic highways are SR-24, approximately 17 miles to the south of the project site, and SR-12, approximately 18 miles northwest of the project site (Caltrans 2022). The proposed project would 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 Government Code § 65962.5.

California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the compiling of lists of the following 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.

Five environmental data bases were searched for hazardous materials sites on the project site and within a quarter mile radius:

- » GeoTracker, State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB 2022)
- » EnviroStor, Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC 2022)
- » EJScreen, US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA 2022a)
- » EnviroMapper, US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA 2022b)
- » Solid Waste Information System, California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle 2022)

The project site is not identified on any of the databases. As shown in Table 4, *Listed Sites Approximately 0.25 Mile from the Site*, no hazardous waste site exists on the project site; 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. There are a number of closed cases and ongoing permits and reporting programs identified within 0.25 mile of the project site. No open remediation sites and no violations were noted for the permitted sites within 0.25 mile of the project site. The offsite locations will not pose a threat to the project site. This exception does not apply to the proposed project.

Table 4 Listed Sites Approximately 0.25 Mile from the Site

Site Address	Database	Identifier	Status / Notation	Proximity to Site
Vallejo Office Park, N. of Serano between Broadway and Sonoma	EnviroStor	Evaluation	No Further Action	Approx. 0.25 mile southwest
1850 Broadway (Vallejo Transit / Solano County Transit / Solano County Transit Operations)	GeoTracker	Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) Cleanup Site	Complete Case Closed	Approx. 0.25 mile northwest
	EnviroMapper	NPDES Permit	Stormwater Industrial / ICIS NPDES Non-Major	Approx. 0.25 mile northwest
	EnviroMapper	Emission Inventory System	Gasoline Station and Mixed-Mode Transit	Approx. 0.25 mile northwest
	EnviroMapper	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)	All other transit and ground passenger transportation	Approx. 0.25 mile northwest

1895 Broadway (Powell Brothers)	GeoTracker	LUST Cleanup Site	Complete Case Closed	Approx. 0.06 mile west
1720 Broadway (Hussey Estates)	GeoTracker	LUST Cleanup Site	Complete Case Closed	Approx. 0.2 mile south
850 Sereno Drive (Britton's Mini Mart II)	GeoTracker	LUST Cleanup Site	Complete Case Closed	Approx. 0.25 mile south
Unknown (Jnk Richardson)	GeoTracker	LUST Cleanup Site	Complete Case Closed	Approx. 0.22 mile south
975 Sereno Drive (Kaiser Clinic / Kaiser Foundation Hospital)	GeoTracker	LUST Cleanup Site	Complete Case Closed	Approx. 0.26 mile south
	EnviroMapper	California Environmental Reporting System (CERS)	Underground storage tank permit	Approx. 0.26 mile south
	EnviroMapper	RCRA	Specialty hospitals, general medical and surgical hospitals, hospitals of physicians	Approx. 0.26 mile south
	EnviroMapper	CA-EnviroView	Underground storage tank/ RMP reporter/ hazardous waste program	Approx. 0.26 mile south
1888 Broadway (Crown Hill Materials LLC)	EnviroMapper	NPDES Permit	Stormwater Industrial / ICIS NPDES Non- Major	Approx. 0.2 mile northwest
	EnviroMapper	CERS	RMP Reporter and Hazardous waste program	Approx. 0.2 mile northwest
	EnviroMapper	RCRA – Other building material dealers	Other hazardous waste activities	Approx. 0.2 mile northwest
2801 Tuolumne (Monarch Norcal Inc.)	EnviroMapper	Toxic release inventory System (TRIS)	Glass product manufacturing made for purchased glass	Approx. 0.2 mile northwest
	EnviroMapper	RCRA	Glass product manufacturing made for purchased glass and metal window and door manufacturing	Approx. 0.2 mile northwest
212 Willow Street (Paul & Kimberly Kingsley)	EnviroMapper	RCRA	All Other Waste Management Service	Approx. 0.2 mile northwest
1717 Broadway (Impact Automotive)	EnviroMapper	RCRA	General Automotive Repair	Approx. 0.2 mile south
1719 Broadway (Jn Autobahn Car Repair)	EnviroMapper	CERS	RMP Reporter and Hazardous waste program and EPCRA	Approx. 0.2 mile south
	EnviroMapper	RCRA	General Automotive Repair	Approx. 0.2 mile south
800 Sereno Drive (Kaiser Permanente Vallejo)	EnviroMapper	RCRA	Other Insurance Funds	Approx. 0.2 mile south

Source: SWRCB 2022; DTSC 2022; EnviroMapper 2022

- (f) **Historical Resources.** 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 buildings within the development area. Additionally, there are no historic resources on or within a 0.25 mile radius of the project site that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NPS 2022), the California Register of Historical Resources (OHP 2022), a California State Historical Landmark (OHP 2022), nor the City of Vallejo's General Plan. Project implementation will not cause significant impacts to historical resources, and the historical resources exception will not apply to this project.

4. CONCLUSION

The proposed project at Griffin Academy is exempt from CEQA review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15332. As substantiated in this document, the proposed project does not meet the conditions specified in § 15300.2, Exceptions, of the CEQA Guidelines, and the project is categorically exempt under Class 32.

5. REFERENCES

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