CEQA
Process

Laguna Beach High School Pool Modernization

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

March 20, 2025





Project Timeline

Mar. 2023

Initial Plan Concept

Presented to the Board of Education

Oct. 2024

Updated Design Concept

Presented to the Board of Education and Approved

Mar. 2025

CEQA Process

Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration adoption & file Notice of Determination

May 2025

DSA Plan Check

Complete construction documents and submit to the Division of the State Architect for Plan Review

Sept. 2025

Bid & Award

Bid and award construction contracts. Target Dec. 2025 for Board Approval

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CEQA Process

CEQA Hearing Process

- **Purpose -** serves the purpose of reviewing and addressing the environmental impacts of a proposed project before it moves forward. The hearing provides an opportunity for public input, agency review, and decision-making based on the environmental analysis.

- **Scope -** October 10th Board Approved Design Concept.

- **Structure -** follows a structured format designed to ensure that all stakeholders have an opportunity to provide input on the environmental review of a proposed project. The hearing is typically held by a lead agency (such as a city council, planning commission, or other government entity) responsible for overseeing the CEQA process.

March 20, 2025





Purpose

<u>The purpose of this meeting is to complete Part 4 of the CEQA Process</u>

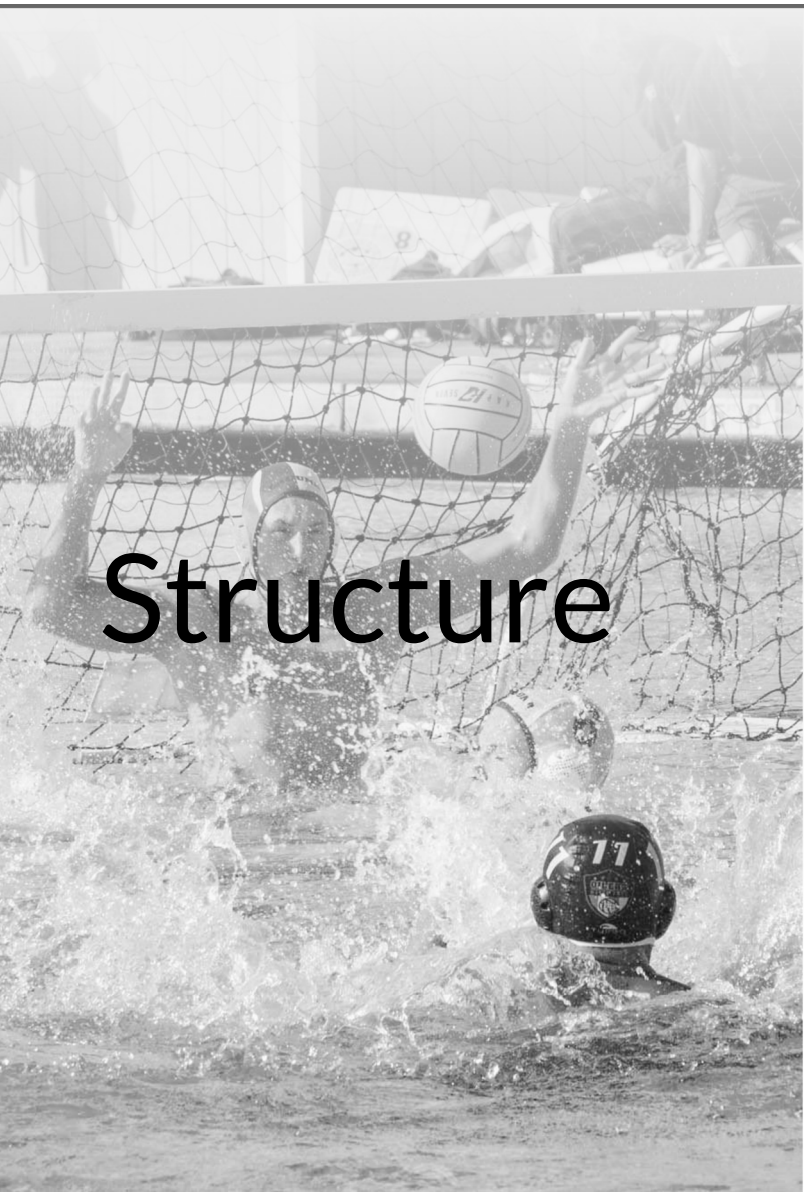
Part 1: Preliminary Review - Activity proposed is determined to be a project.

Part 2: Initial Study - Impacts reduced to less than significant levels.

Part 3: Prepare Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) - Circulates review 20-30 days and considers comments.

Part 4: Decision Making - Adopt Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and file Notice of Determination (NOD), 30 day statute of limitations begins

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Structure

1) Open Public Hearing;

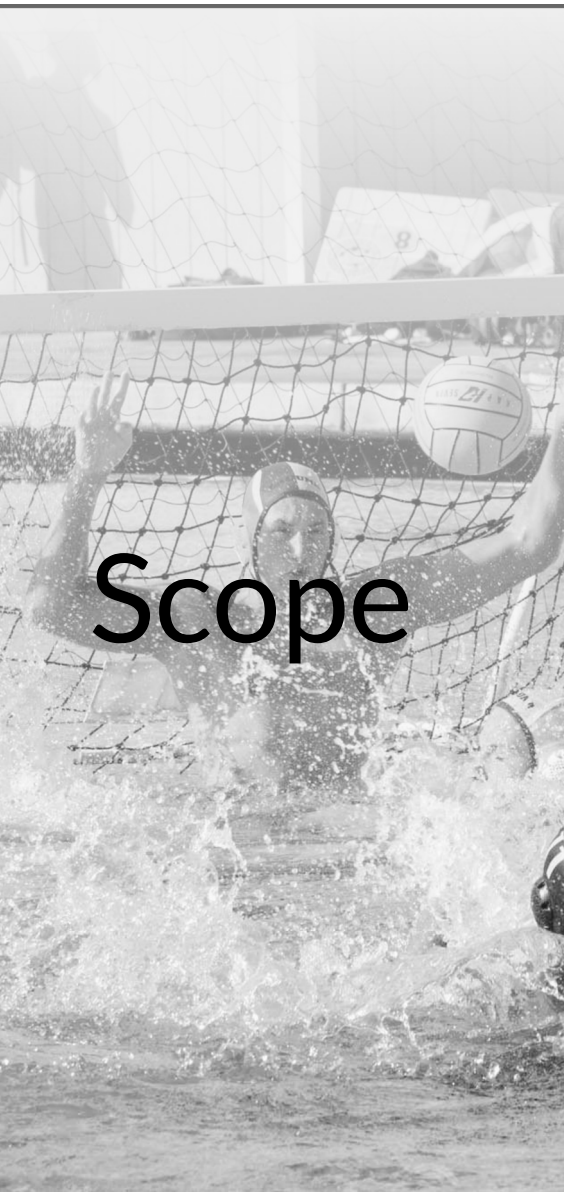
2) Staff & CEQA Consultant Presentation;

3) Public Comment Period;

4) Close Public Hearing;

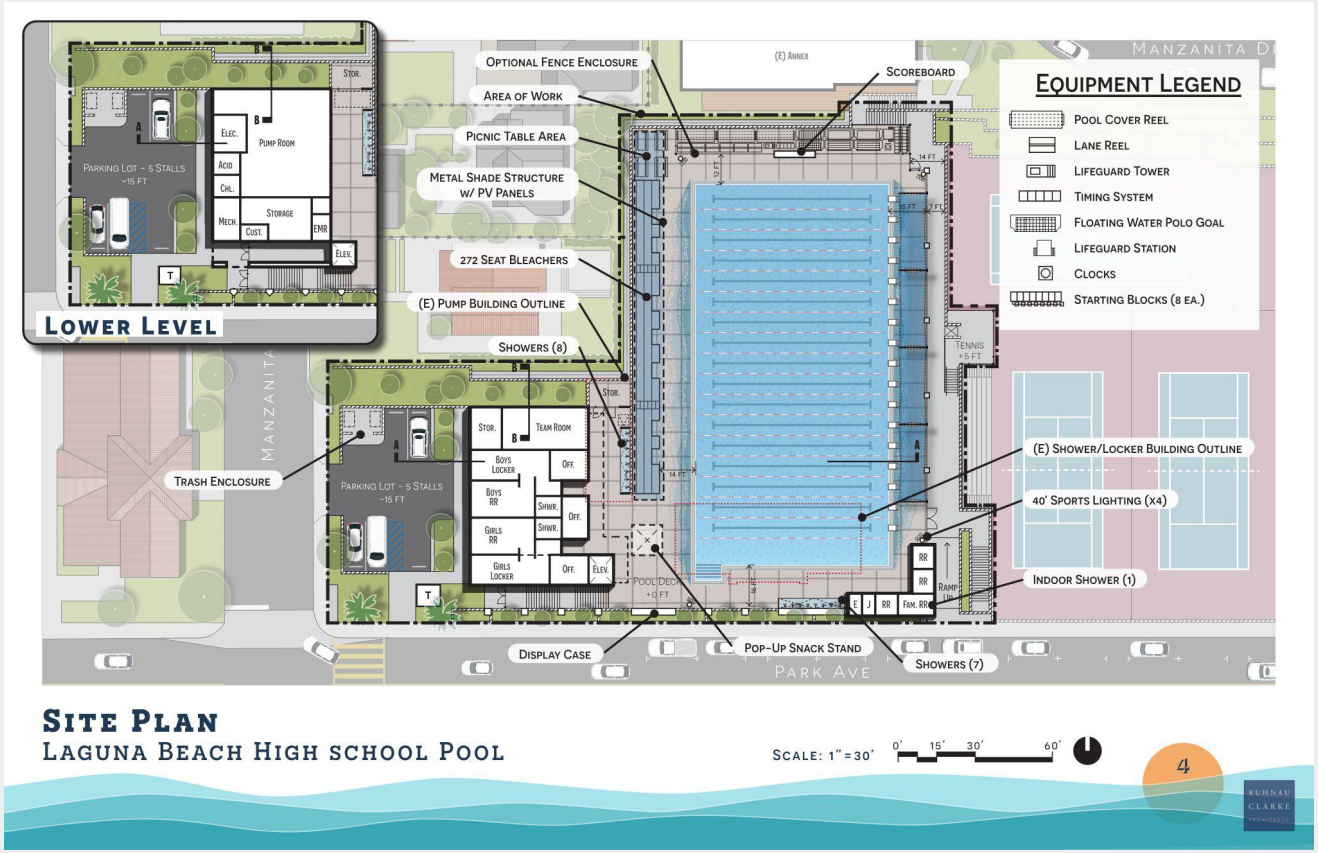
5) After considering all public comments and responses, adopt Resolution: Adopting an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Proposed LBHS Pool Modernization Project, Approve the Project, and Authorization to File a Notice of Determination.

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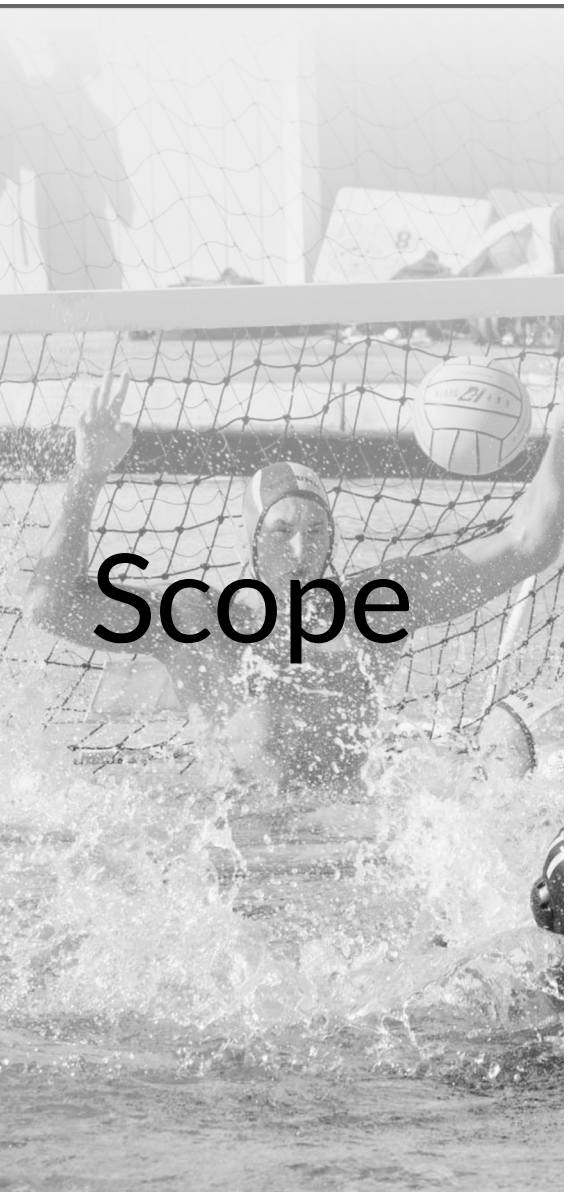


Scope

Oct. 10, 2024 Approved Design Concept

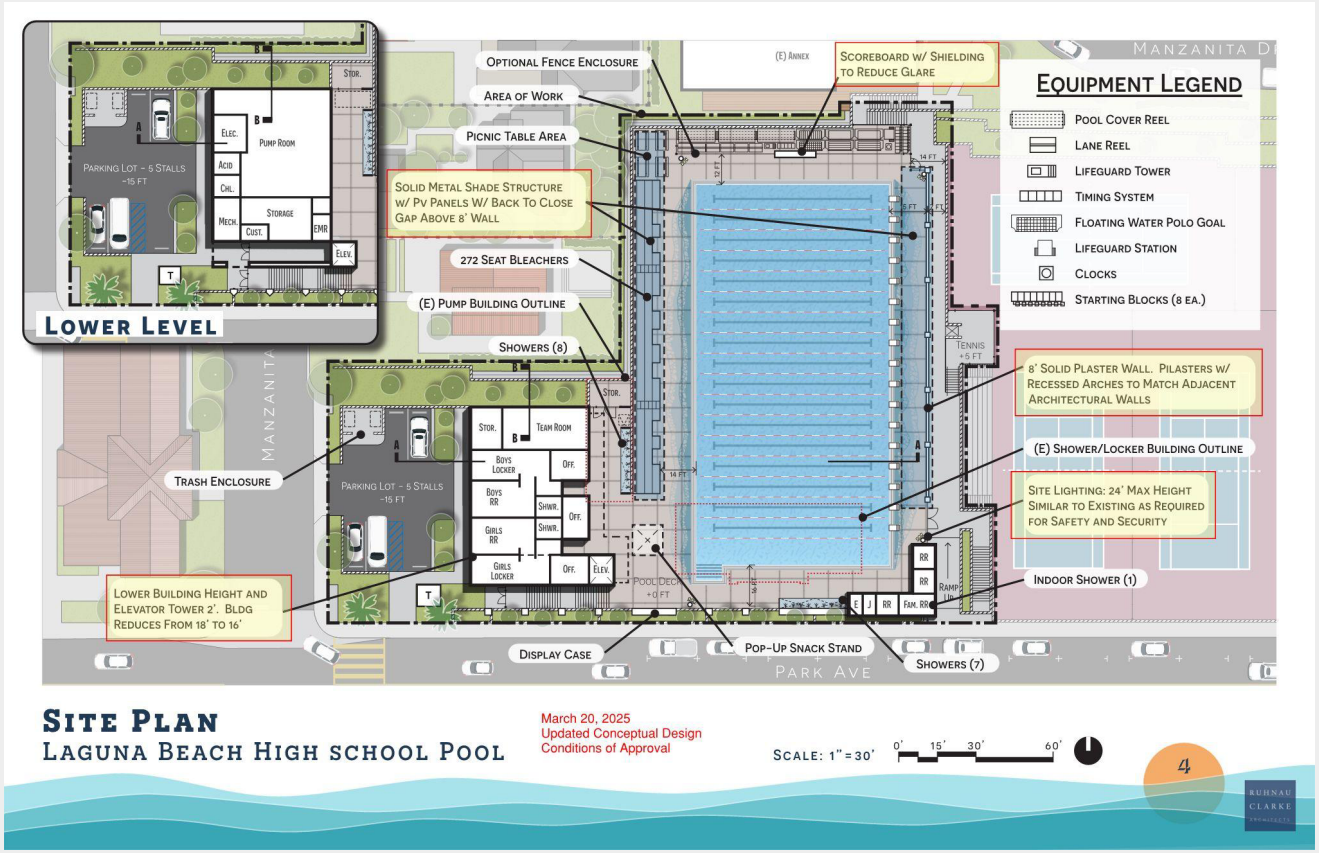


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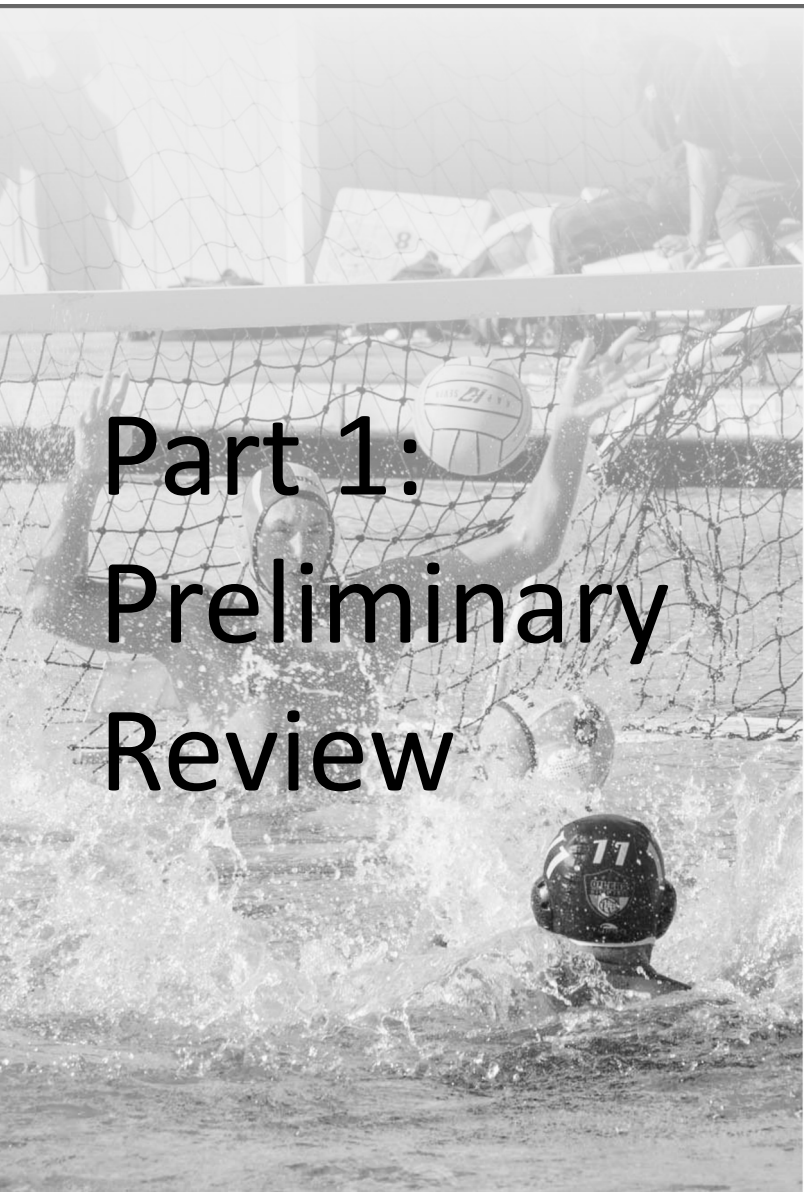


Scope

March 20, 2025 Updated Design Concept



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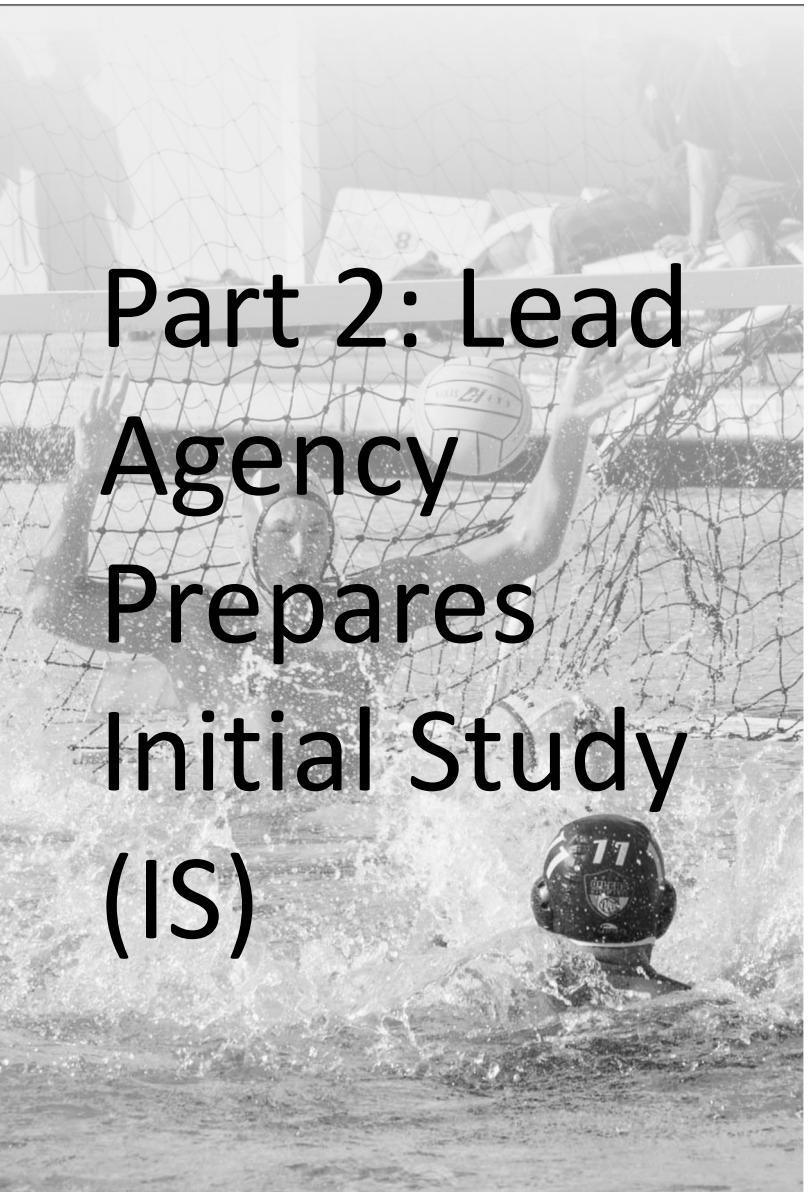
Part 1: Preliminary Review

- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) § 15378 defines a Project as:
  "the whole of an action, which has a potential for resulting in … a direct physical change in the environment … and that is … an activity directly undertaken by any public agency."

- On January 23, 2024, the Board published a Request for Qualifications/Proposal (RFP/Q) regarding preparation of environmental documentation for the Project.

- On March 14, 2024, UltraSystems (UEI) was selected as consultant to prepare the environmental documentation for the Project.

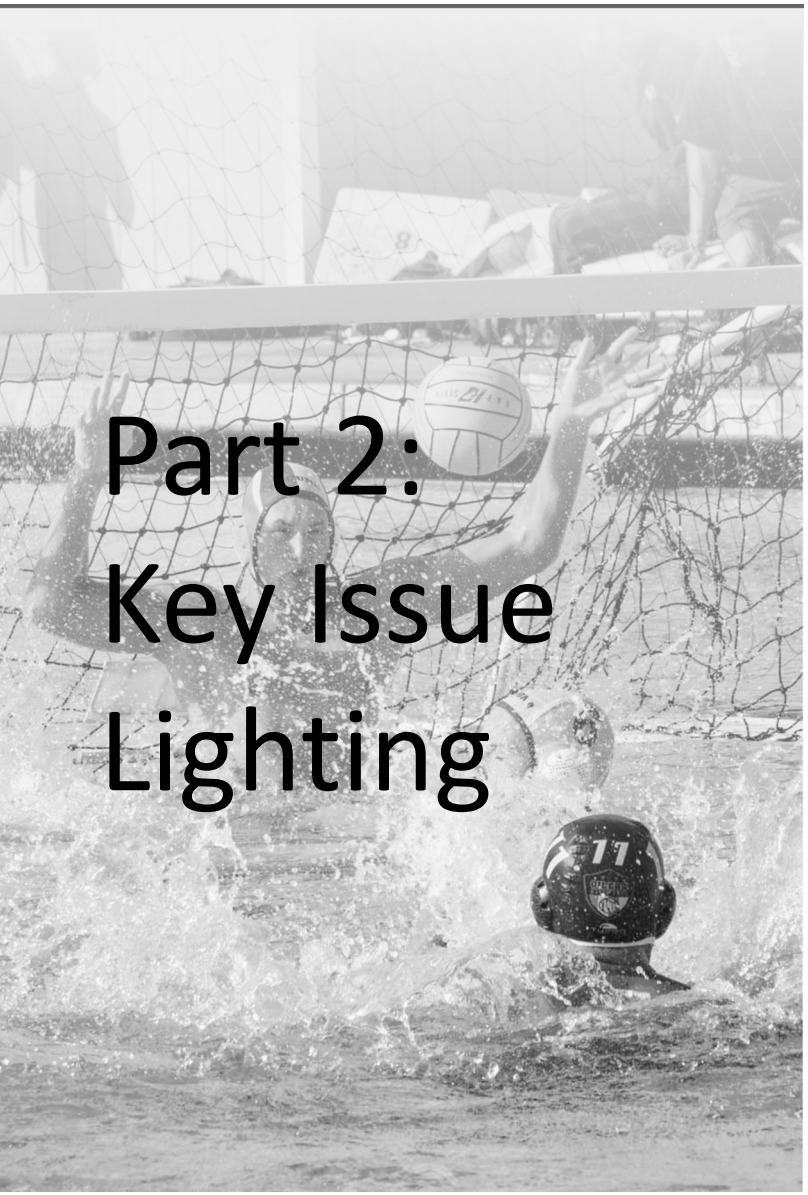
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Part 2: Lead Agency Prepares Initial Study (IS)

- CEQA § 15063 states that: "following preliminary review, the lead agency shall conduct an initial study to determine if the project may have a significant effect on the environment."
- On behalf of the District, UEI prepared the IS, following CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, which specifies 21 topical areas to be addressed, from Aesthetics to Wildfire.
- The IS concluded that impacts of the Project on the environment were Less Than Significant for 16 of the 21 topical areas examined.

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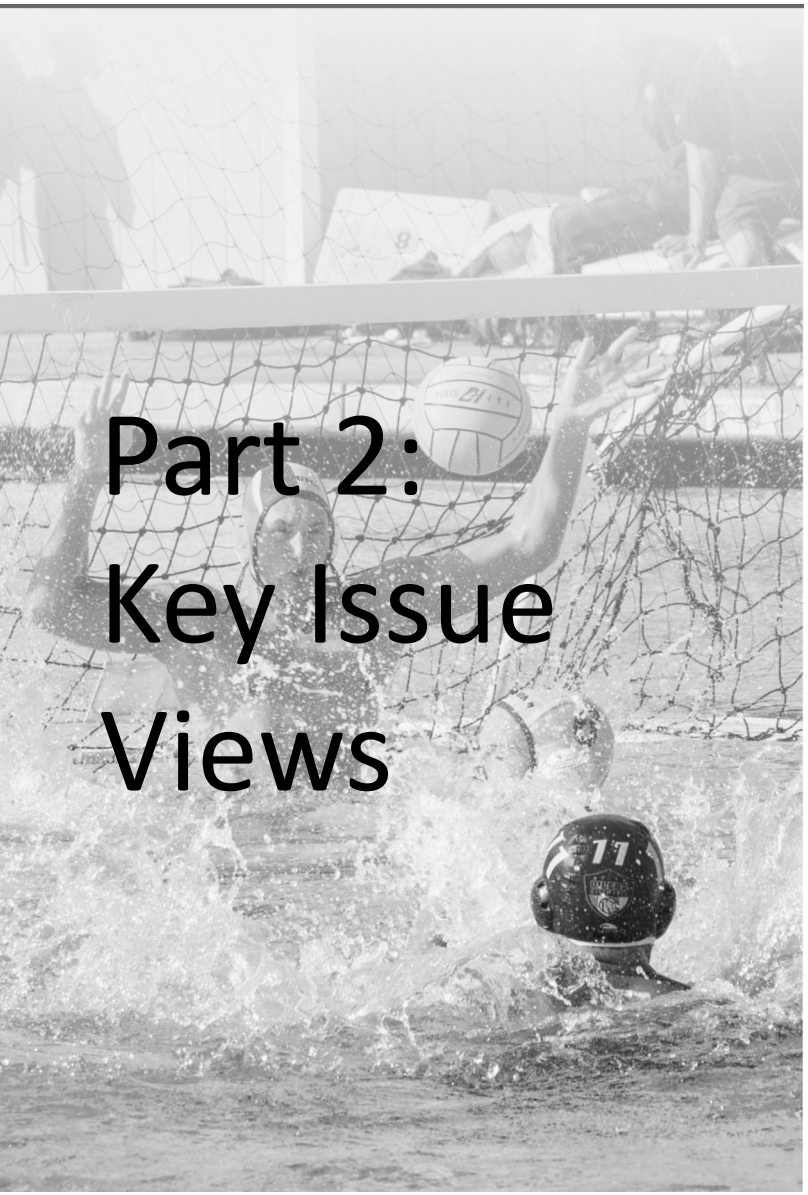


Part 2: Key Issue Lighting

- The Draft IS/MND denoted 40' light poles in Figure 3.3-3. Figure 3.3-3 was from a previous submittal and has been updated. The proposed project would include interior and exterior lighting similar to existing lighting for the pool and pool building, for visibility and security purposes (approximately 24'-0" high).

- Additionally, as noted in Section 3.3.5, the project will incorporate the most current available technology to minimize glare and light spillage. Timers or other control mechanisms would be implemented to regulate lighting hours and reduce spillover illumination.

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Part 2: Key Issue Views

Figure 3.3-10, the proposed trees are too tall:

- CEQA review requires analysis for “unique views, and views identified in local plans, from scenic highways, or of specific unique structures or landscape features.”

- The landscaping provided is conceptual. All landscaping would be required to comply with the California Department of Education, Codes and Regulations for School Facilities Design.

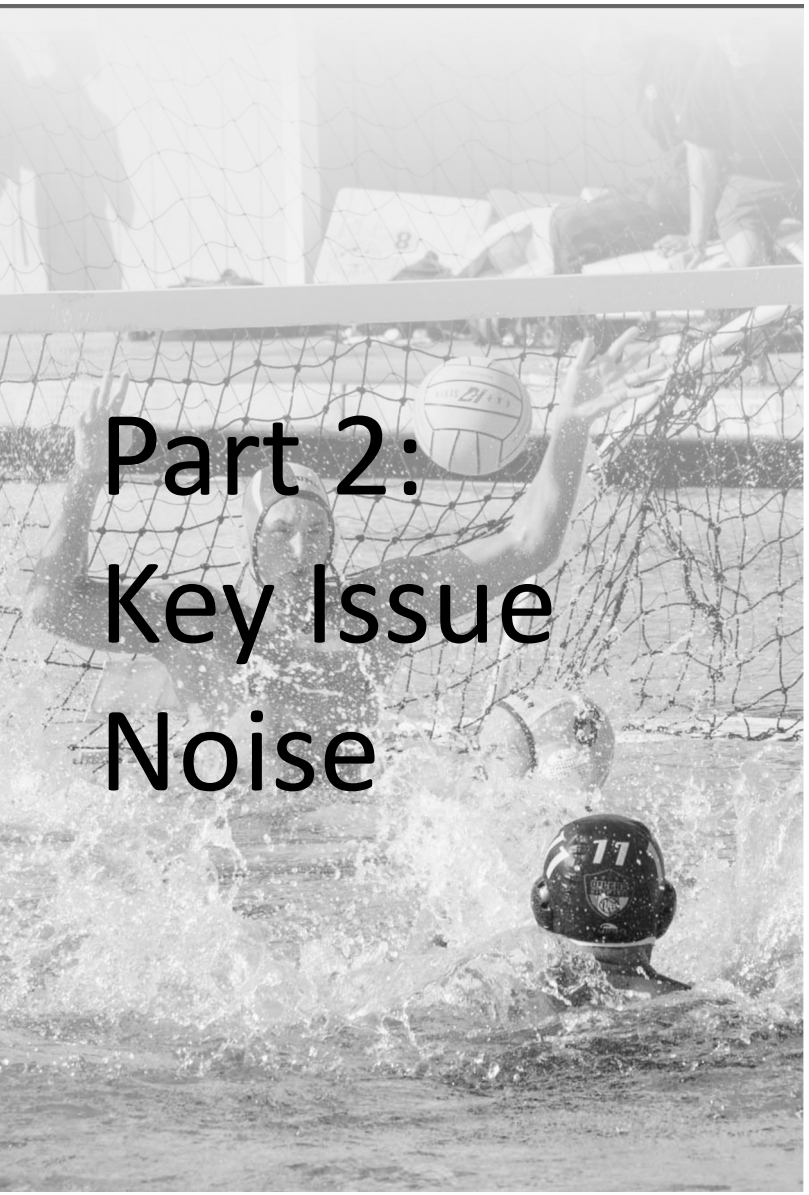
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Part 2: Key Issue Glare

- As part of the district's routine sustainable practices, the the scoreboard will be shielded and other architectural elements and screening techniques that absorb light and control glare would be included in the design for site lighting systems.

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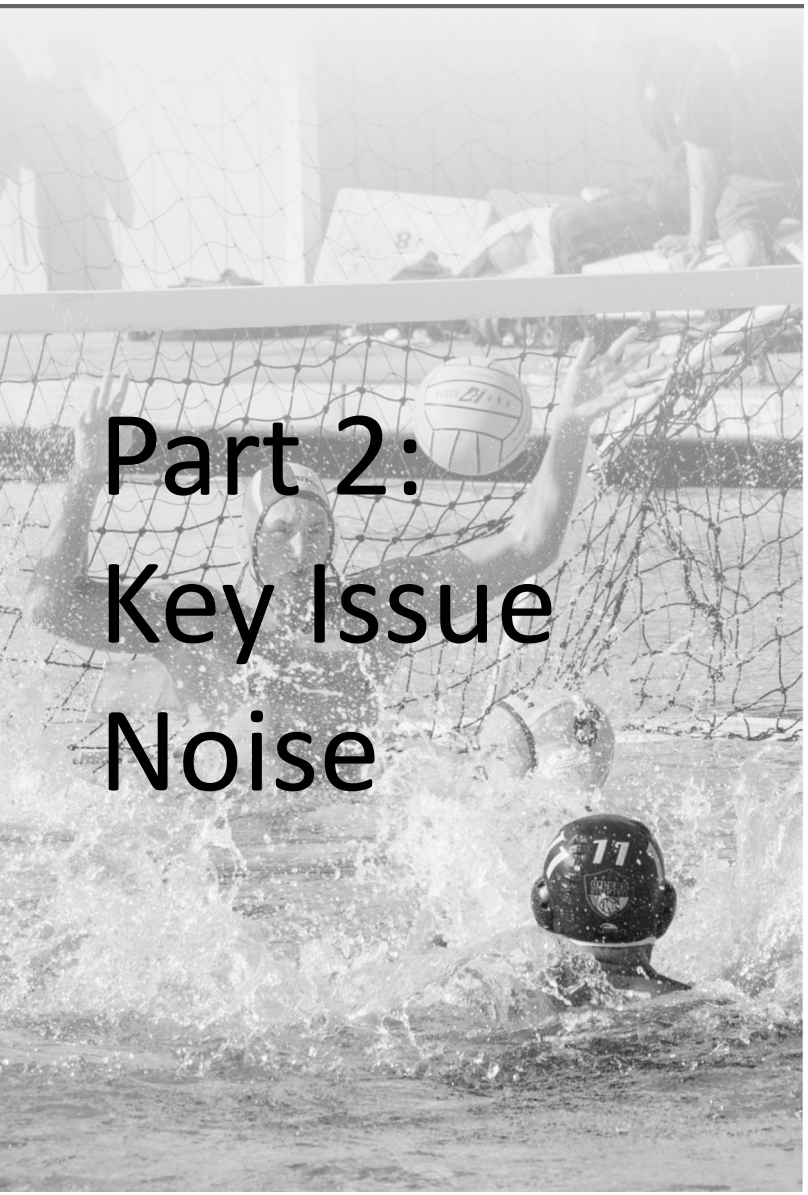


Part 2: Key Issue Noise

Water polo noise not measured or considered in projections:

- Pool facility noise was measured during water polo practice; fact inadvertently omitted from draft.
- Pool area noise 11.1 dBA (13 x) higher during water polo than during swimming.
- Added analysis of operating noise exposure during future water polo match, assuming four 125-dB shot clock horns; noise exposures (without existing barriers or intervening buildings) would be less than significant.
- Hourly average exposures in community would increase by 2 dBA (not noticeable to average ear)

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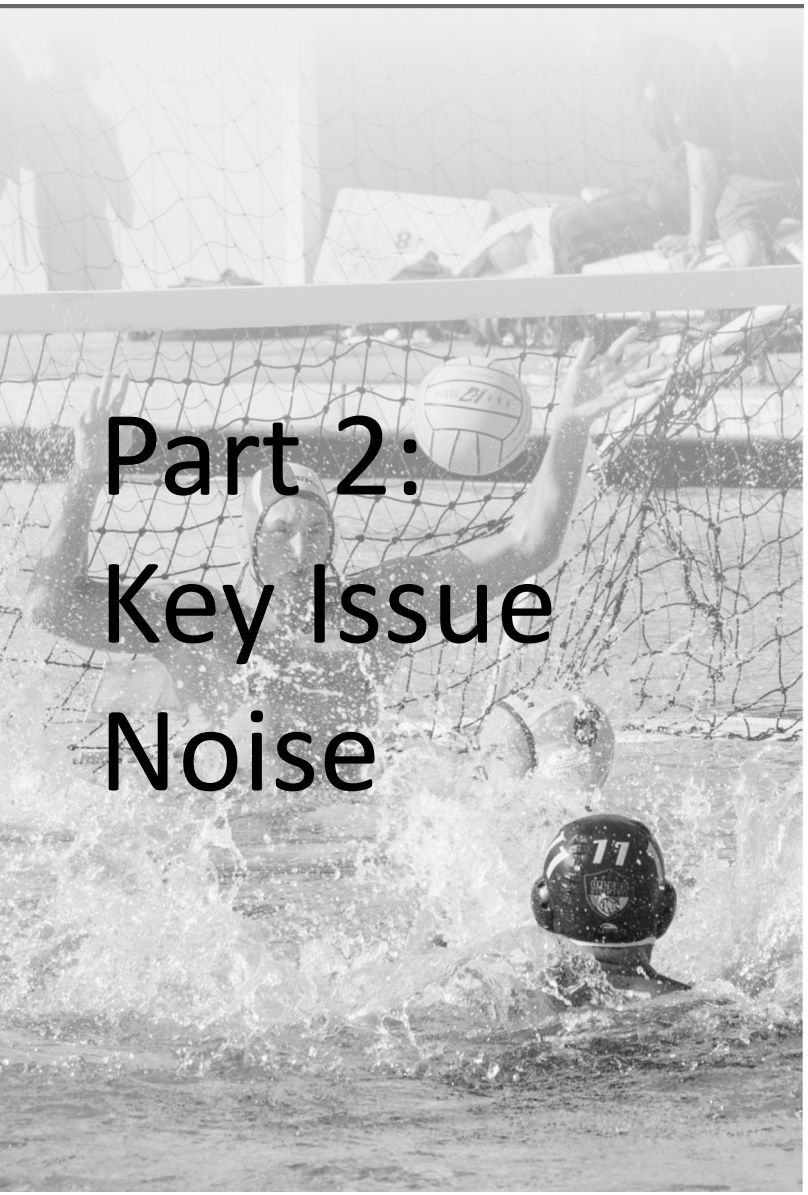


Part 2: Key Issue Noise

Did not include sensitive receptors north and northeast of tennis courts:

- Receptors in those locations added to construction and operations noise analysis.
- Whistles and shot clock horns are extremely loud (115-125 dB).
- True that cited noise levels are high and potentially harmful, but levels are typically stated for 1 meter (3.3 feet) distance; sound drops off rapidly with distance.
- A 125-dB horn sounding every five minutes causes an average hourly exposure of 67.5 dBA at 100 feet (99.9% drop)

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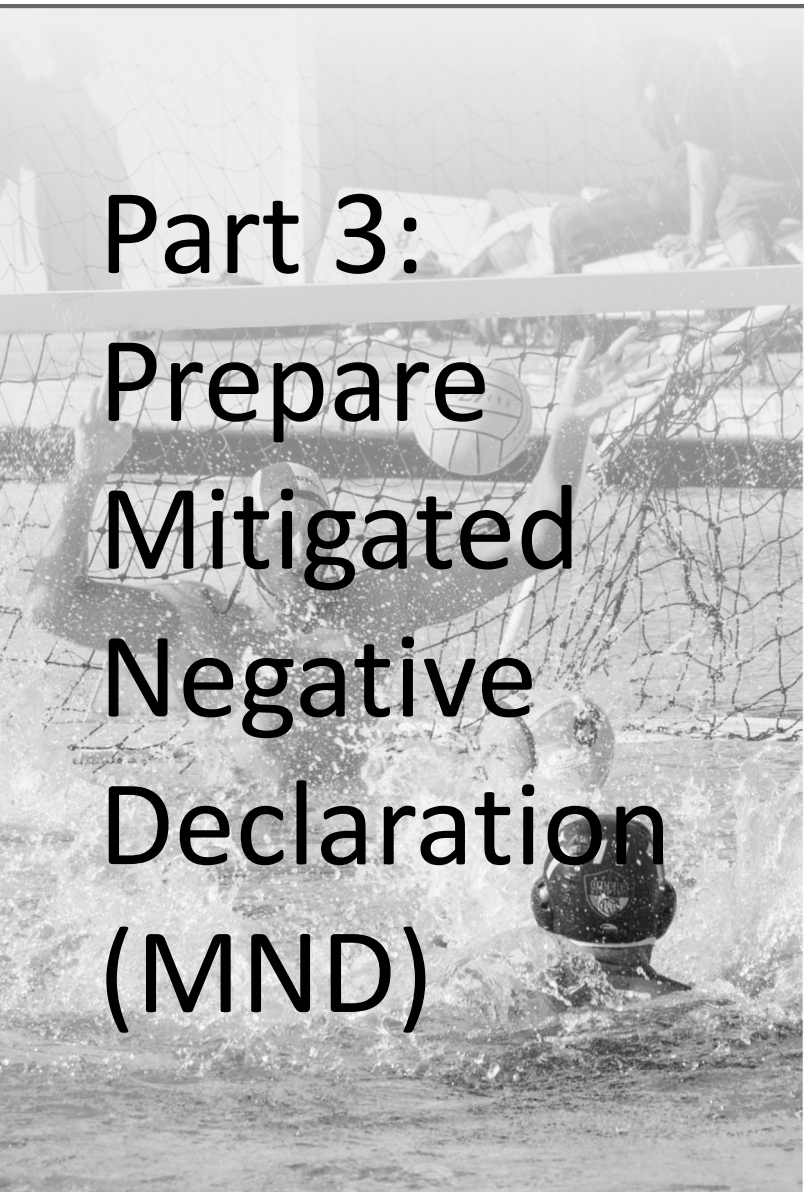


Part 2: Key Issue Noise

Noise from increased pool size not considered:

- We added analysis of swimming noise with 60% increase in lanes.
- Hourly average exposures in community would increase by 2 dBA (not noticeable to average ear).
- The final project design may include a permanent sound barrier with a solid shade structure covering on the east side of the pool in lieu of the pilaster fence and fabric shade structure shown in the conceptual design plan. A professional acoustic engineer will determine the required insertion loss to prevent significant noise impacts from occurring; the analysis should consider the frequency of major noise sources, such as whistles and shot clock horns. In addition, use of an angled canopy of sound attenuating material on the west side of the barrier should be considered so that both the west and east sides of the pool have the same sound attenuating design and performance.

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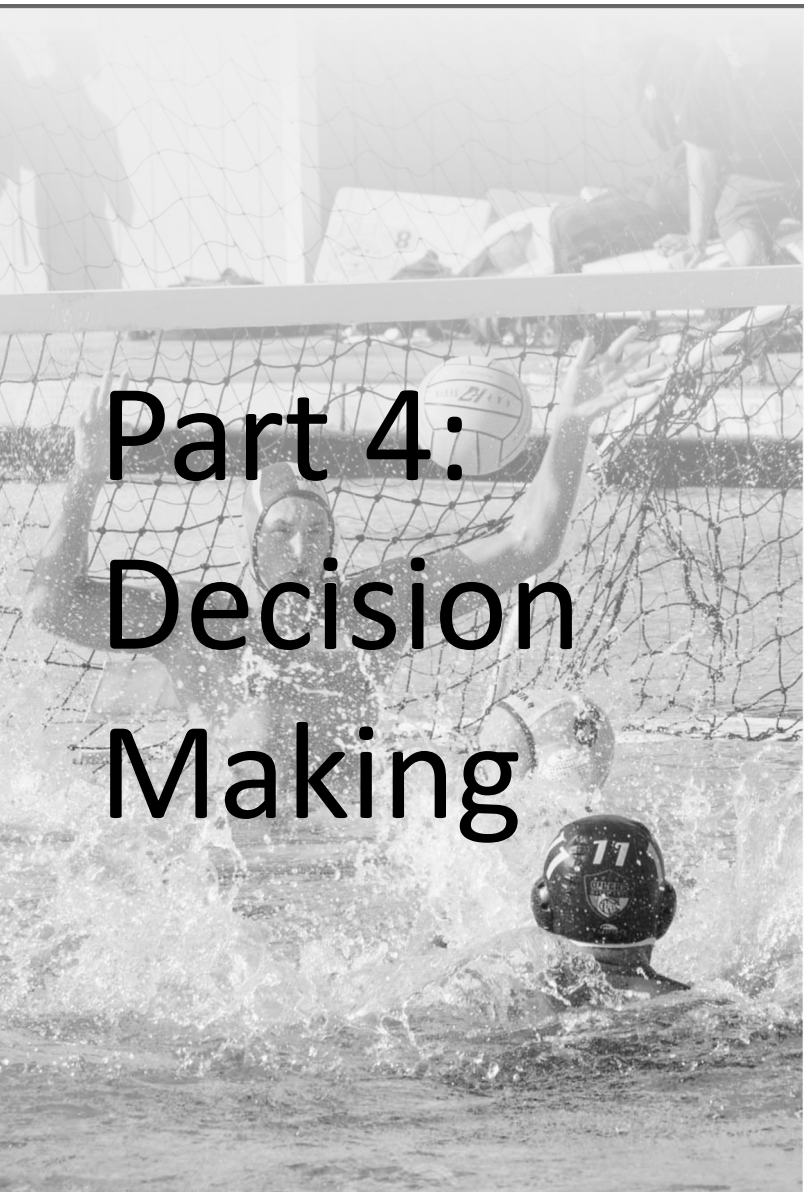


Part 3: Prepare Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)

- Based on analysis and conclusions reached in the IS, 4 topical issues were found to be "Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation is Incorporated."
  - Biological Resources
  - Cultural Resources
  - Geology/Soils
  - Tribal Cultural Resources

- For each indicated topical area, mitigation measures were developed that reduced impacts to a Less Than Significant level. These measures are provided in a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP).

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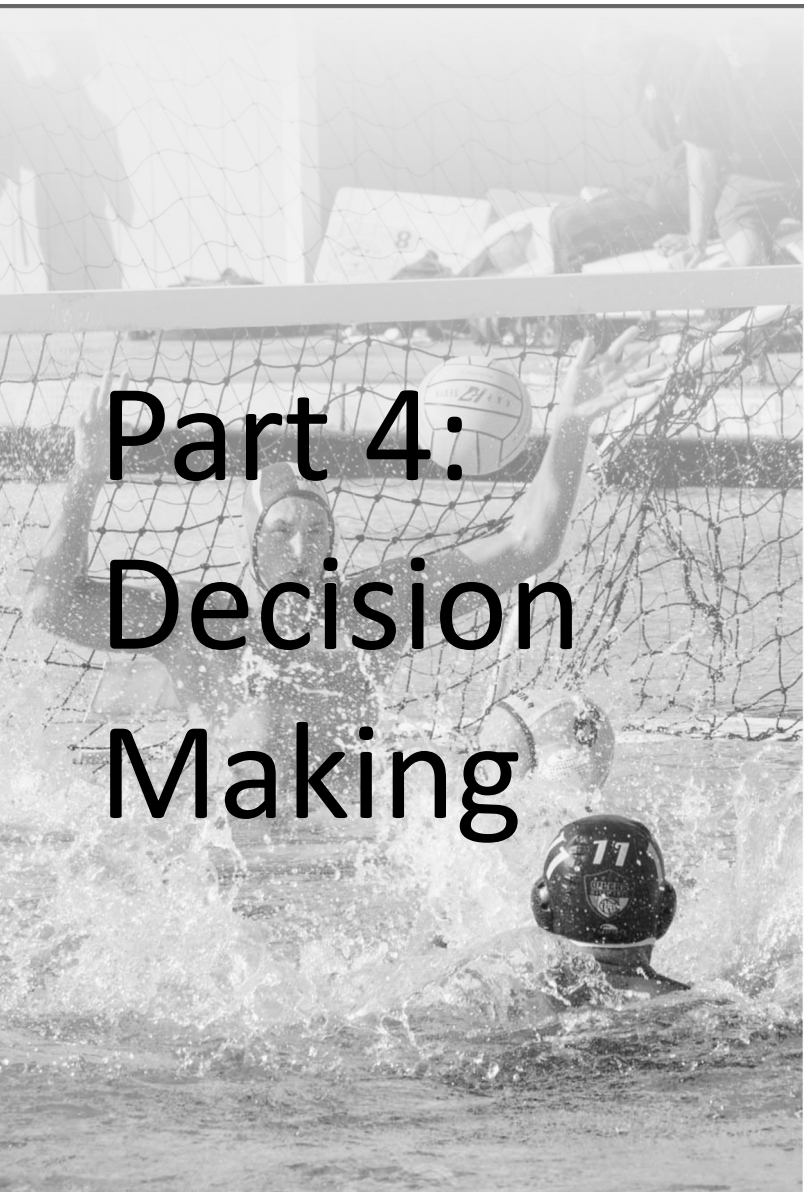


Part 4: Decision Making

- A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was prepared by UEI for LBUSD regarding the Laguna Beach High School Modernization project in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines.

- The Initial Study prepared in support of the MND identified potentially significant impacts which could be mitigated to less than significant levels. The mitigation measures are included in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) for the project and is part of the Final IS/MND.

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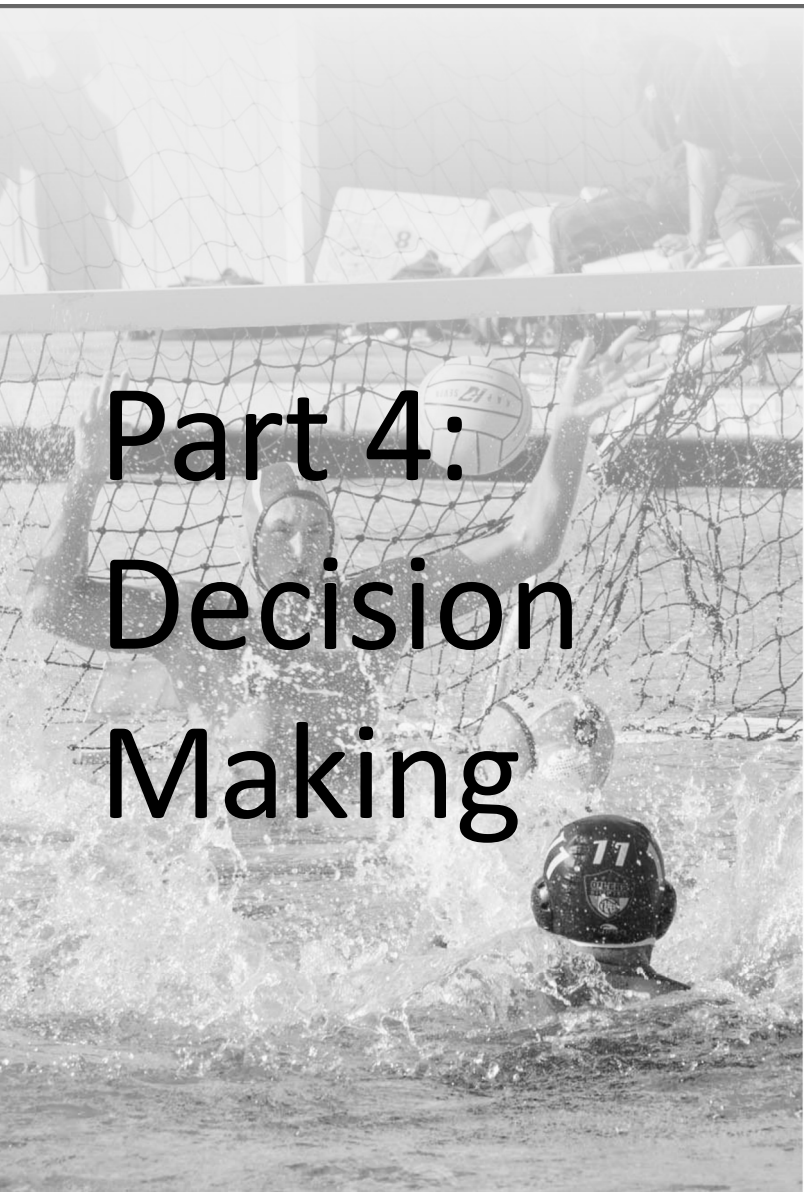


Part 4: Decision Making

- The Draft MND was circulated for public review for 30 days consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15073, starting on January 17, 2025 and ending on February 17, 2025. Twelve comment letters were received, and the majority of the concerns were about impacts pertaining to noise, lighting, views, energy and property values.

- All the comments have been fully responded to as required by CEQA. The comments received did not result in new information that would change the findings of the IS/MND analysis or require recirculation, pursuant to CEQA. The MND and supporting Initial Study, Responses to Comments, and MMRP constitute the Final IS/MND and CEQA documentation for the proposed project, and are available on the District's website at https://www.lbusd.org/departments/facilities/bids-and public-notices.

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Part 4: Decision Making

Recommendation:

- 1. Adopt a resolution adopting the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Laguna Beach High School Pool Modernization Project and the associated Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, in accordance with § 15074 of the State CEQA Guidelines; and

- 2. Direct staff to file a Notice of Determination (NOD) for the proposed project in accordance with § 15075 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

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Summary

- Following a conclusion that the Project required compliance with requirements under CEQA, a RFP/Q was issued and UEI was selected as the Lead Agency's environmental consultant.
- Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, an Initial Study (IS) was prepared. The study determined that the Project would have Less Than Significant impacts on 16 of the 21 topical issues that were studied.
- A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program was developed, incorporating mitigation measures that reduce impacts to Less Than Significant levels for each of 4 topic areas where impacts were determined to be Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated.
- The Board may adopt the IS/MND to comply with CEQA and may include additional conditions of approval.



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Thank you.

Questions?

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