

**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

**TO:** Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Santa Barbara County Public Works Department, Water Agency

The project or activity identified below is determined to be exempt from further environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as defined in the State and County Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA.

**APN:** 111-231-004

**Case No.** N/A

**Location:** 624 West Foster Road, Santa Maria, CA 93455

**Project Title:** Santa Maria Valley Sustainable Garden Project (Project)

**Project Description:** The Project will add improvements to the County’s Public Demonstration Sustainable Garden. The 0.7-acre garden provides the public with living, aesthetic demonstrations of resource efficient landscaping with educational signage displays. The garden features native, water-wise plants, efficient irrigation, lawn alternatives, mulching, composting, and dry bed swale. Repairs include replacement of existing features and installation of new irrigation system, plantings, decorative pavers and boulders, trellises and benches. The site will be cleared of dead and underperforming vegetation and maintained to ensure successful plant establishment.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** County of Santa Barbara

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Santa Barbara County Public Works Department, Water Agency

**Exempt Status:** (Check one)

- Ministerial
- Statutory Exemption
- Categorical Exemption
- Emergency Project
- Declared Emergency

**Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guideline Section:** 15301 Existing Facilities. Class 1 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.

**Reasons to support exemption findings:** Consistent with this exemption, the proposed Project involves repair, maintenance and minor alternation of existing County owned public facilities that involve no expansion. There are no unusual circumstances which would create a possibility that there would be a significant effect. Therefore, this project can be found to be categorically exempt from CEQA.

There is no substantial evidence that there are unusual circumstances (including future activities) resulting in (or which might reasonably result in) significant impacts which threaten the environment. The exceptions to the categorical exemptions pursuant to Section 15300.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines are:

- (a) Location. 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 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.**

Project improvements to existing facility will be located at the same site with no expansion and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity. The Project will occur outside of any sensitive environment. Therefore, this exception does not apply.

- (b) Cumulative Impact. 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.**

Project improvements to existing facility involve no expansion of capacity. All areas of the project have been previously disturbed, no new impacts will result from the project, and there are no other identified projects which would contribute to cumulative impacts. Therefore, this exception does not apply.

- (c) Significant Effect. 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.**

Project improvements to existing facility will be at the same site of the existing facility with no expansion. The project will be conducted within areas that have all been previously disturbed and will not result in a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, this exception does not apply.

- (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. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.**

The Project is not located along a scenic highway and will not result in damage to any scenic resources; therefore, this exception does not apply.

**(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.**

The parcel covered by the Project is not listed as a hazardous waste site; therefore, this exception does not apply.

**(f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.**

The parcel covered by the Project is not identified as a historic resource; therefore, this exception does not apply.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Kalani Durham Phone #: (805) 568-3440

Signature:  Date: 6/23/21

Acceptance Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE FILED WITH CLERK OF THE BOARD