

# ATTACHMENT 1

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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

**FROM:** Julie L. Harris, Senior Planner, Planning & Development

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:** Not Applicable      **Case No.:** Not Applicable

**Location:** Countywide

**Project Title:** State CEQA Guidelines Compliance – Revisions to the *County of Santa Barbara Guidelines for the Implementation of CEQA* (County Guidelines) and *Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual* (ETM)

**Project Description:** The project includes minor procedural amendments to the County Guidelines and ETM to conform to procedural amendments to the State CEQA Guidelines that were prepared by the State Office of Planning and Research, and which took effect in 2019. The project also includes minor amendments to the ETM that revise quality of life guidelines and noise thresholds.

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

**Name of Person or Entity Carrying Out Project:** County of Santa Barbara

**Exempt Status:**

- Ministerial
- Statutory Exemption
- Categorical Exemption
- Emergency Project
- Not a Project

**Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guidelines Sections:** 15060(c)(3), 15378(b)(5), and 15308

Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(c)(3), an activity is not subject to CEQA if the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378. Pursuant to Section 15378(b)(5), organizational or administrative activities of governments that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment are not a project.

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15308 is a categorical exemption, which exempts “actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment.”

**Reasons to support exemption findings:** Section 15022 of the State CEQA Guidelines directs each public agency to adopt objectives, criteria, and specific procedures consistent with CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines. Section 15064.7(b) encourages each public agency to adopt thresholds of significance. In 1988, the Board of Supervisors adopted the County Guidelines and the ETM, replacing earlier versions of these documents. Since then, the County has periodically revised the County Guidelines and the ETM for a variety of reasons, including, for example, in response to a specific Board request, or when changes to the State CEQA Guidelines warrant an update to the County Guidelines for conformity (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15022(c)). The County Guidelines and the ETM have been revised several times since 1988.

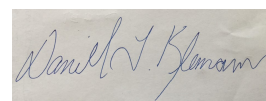
Consistent with the direction of the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15022, the procedural amendments to the County and ETM are exempt from environmental review pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(3) and 15378(b)(5) of the State CEQA Guidelines. Amending the procedures included in the County Guidelines and ETM to conform to recent amendments to the State CEQA Guidelines is an administrative activity that will not result in any direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical changes in the environment. Rather, the proposed revisions will clarify the County's environmental review procedures by bringing them into conformance with recent revisions to the State CEQA Guidelines which took effect in 2019.

The State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.7(b) encourages the adoption of thresholds of significance. Amendments to the quality of life guidelines and noise thresholds clarify the procedures for analyzing potential impacts to these resources, consistent with Section 15064.7(b). The action to adopt these amendments are exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15308, because they are "actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment." In addition, these amendments do not have the potential to result in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. The adoption of these threshold amendments is not related to any particular development project, and individual projects will be subject to compliance with CEQA, as applicable.

**Lead Agency Contact Person:** Dan Klemann, Deputy Director

**Phone #:** (805) 568-2072

**Department/Division Representative:** \_\_\_\_\_



**Date:** August 18, 2020

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

**Distribution:** Hearing Support Staff

**Date Filed by County Clerk:** \_\_\_\_\_