

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department of Public Works/Transportation Division
(Lead Department/Division)

Based on a preliminary review of the project the following activity is determined to be exempt from further environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970 (Pub. Res. Code Section 21000 et seq.), as defined in the State CEQA Guidelines and County Revised CEQA Guidelines.

APN(s) Varies County Wide **Project No.** N/A

LOCATION: County Right Of Way

PROJECT TITLE: Measure A Five-Year Program of Projects for Fiscal Years 2024-2025 through 2028-2029; All Supervisorial Districts

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

This item is on the Board agenda to Adopt the Measure A Local Program of Projects in Santa Barbara County. The current year's Program of Projects includes a funding allocation based on a recent Board policy from the March 14, 2023 hearing on Transportation operations funds.

In keeping with your Board's adopted resolution supporting the maintenance of existing infrastructure as the highest priority for Measure A funding, approximately \$7.5 million dollars of Measure A funds will be allocated for corrective maintenance, maintenance of the County's urban forest, and traffic operations. The remainder of the funding is used for Americans with Disabilities Act improvements, safety projects, grant matches, capital projects, transit, education and outreach, and alternative transportation improvements.

Measure A funds are distributed regionally amongst local agencies through the Ordinance and Investment Plan. Although roadway maintenance needs are generally tied to the number of lane miles agencies have, Measure A Local Streets and Roads funds are distributed by population under the Investment Plan. These formulas can only be changed by the Santa Barbara County Association of Government (SBCAG) with a supermajority. Distribution requirements of the Measure A Ordinance and Investment Plan also include additional constraints for the County:

- 1) Funds are distributed separately between north and south County based on formulas in the investment plan. These funds must be spent in their respective areas of the County.
- 2) Approximately 11% is taken off the top of the south County portion and goes directly to MTD for transit.
- 3) 10% of Measure A funding is spent on Alternative Transportation in both the north and south County.

Distribution within the north and south County is set by the Board of Supervisors. As a result of the Board Policy adopted March 14, 2023, the Department will allocate \$7.5 million for corrective maintenance, urban forestry, and traffic operations work. Remaining funds after maintenance and alternative transportation are recommended to be distributed by previously-

approved discretionary funding formulas. Attachment E shows the funding breakdown for the Measure A Program of Projects for FY 24-25 through FY28-29. This Program of Projects is revised annually based on revenue projections.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: County of Santa Barbara

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Public Works Transportation Division

Exempt Status: (Check one)

- Ministerial
- Statutory Exemption
- Categorical Exemption {15301(c)}
- Emergency Project
- Declared Emergency

Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guideline Section: 15301(c) Existing Facilities – “...consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that previously existing, including but not limited to: ... (c) Existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities (this includes road grading for the purpose of public safety), except where the activity will involve removal of a scenic resource including a stand of trees, a rock outcropping, or an historic building.

Reasons to support exemption findings: Consistent with this exemption, the proposed project involves the adopting of resolutions which are a critical funding component related to the operation and maintenance of the County roadway facilities. The project is part of a funding mechanism necessary to maintain the safe traveling condition of the highway facility as it was constructed. Further, there are no unusual circumstances which would create a possibility that there would be a significant effect. Therefore, the 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.**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 is a Class 1 exemption; 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.**

The project involves a resolution that is adopted annually indicating the Program of Projects for five fiscal years to satisfy a provision of Measure A for Fiscal Years 2023-2024 through 2027-2028. In addition, 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.**

The resolution that is adopted annually is a procedural element of the funding component required to maintain the roadway facility. The adopting of a resolution will have no impact 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 does not involve a scenic highway or a project which may result in damage to a scenic resource, removal of trees, rock outcropping or similar resource.

- (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.**

There are no hazardous wastes site locations on public roads. 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 roadways involved are not identified as a historical resource. In addition, the adopting of the resolution would not involve any structural modifications to existing facilities. Therefore, this exception does not apply.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Mostafa Estaji, Interim Deputy Director Public Works Transportation/Engineering Division, Phone: (805) 568-3060.

Department/Division Representative: Kalani Durham, Engineering Environmental Planner/Coordinator.

Acceptance Date: May 14, 2024

Distribution: Hearing Support Staff for posting

Kalani Durham

April 22, 2024

Kalani Durham

Department Representative

Date

NOTE: A copy of this document must be posted with the County Clerk of the Board after project approval to begin a 35 day statute of limitations on legal challenges.

Distribution: Date Filed by County Clerk: _____.