

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
FROM: Public Works Department

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(s): N/A - Roadways Case No.: Not Applicable

Location: Orcutt area on Bradley Road from Amethyst Drive to approximately 525 feet north of Larch Avenue in the 4th Supervisorial District

Project Title: Bradley Road Utility Undergrounding District from Amethyst Drive to North of Larch Avenue in Unincorporated Santa Maria; Fourth Supervisorial District

Project Description: The proposed project involves modifying the boundaries of a utility undergrounding district, undergrounding existing overhead utility facilities, and removal of the aboveground facilities along a 6,000 foot section of Bradley Road. The Board formed the Bradley Road utility undergrounding district from Amethyst Drive to Larch Avenue on June 2, 2009 pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 34 of the County Code. This project modifies the boundary of the undergrounding district to include the last segment of overhead facilities north of Larch Avenue and initiates the project by authorizing the Public Works director to enter into agreements with PG&E to complete the undergrounding. The underground facilities will be installed in trenches located within the existing improved/disturbed areas consisting of pavement, sidewalk and shoulder areas and will replace the existing overhead facilities.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Santa Barbara County Public Works Department

Exempt Status: (Check one)
 Ministerial Emergency Project
 Statutory Exemption Declared Emergency
 Categorical Exemption

Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guideline Section: CEQA Guidelines (CCR Section 15302 (c) and (d), "Replacement or reconstruction" pertaining to existing utility systems and the conversion of overhead utilities to underground.

Reasons to support exemption findings (attach additional material, if necessary): As established by the California Public Utilities Commission and pursuant to Chapter 34 of the County Code, the County may form utility undergrounding districts to underground existing overhead utilities as well as require future utilities be underground. CEQA Guidelines 15302 exempts replacement of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity. 15302(c) specifically exempts replacement of reconstruction of existing utility systems and/or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of use and 15302(d) exempts conversion of overhead electric utility distribution system facilities to underground including connection to existing overhead utility distribution lines where the surface is restored to the condition existing prior to the undergrounding. Consistent with these exemptions, the proposed project involves the removal of existing overhead utilities and placement of the utilities underground with no expansion of the use. The project will

enhance the aesthetic and safety features of Bradley Road especially at the Union Valley Parkway and Foster Road intersections. Some ground disturbance would be required to place the utilities underground, however the trenching will occur in previously develop/disturbed areas (outside of mapped habitat areas), removal of trees or vegetation is not required and the surface will be restored to its original condition.

Based on review of Planning and Development Department resource maps and communications with planning staff, the proposed section of Bradley Road to be included in the undergrounding district has not been specifically surveyed for cultural resources. However, no cultural resources were observed in prior surveys near the project area including the Union Valley Parkway, Orcutt Community Plan Key Site 30 (Union Oil/Bradley parcel) and along the Bradley Road corridor from Clark Avenue to Foster Road. In addition, due to the highly developed condition of the project area and because the undergrounding would occur within the existing Bradley Road corridor having been disturbed by grading of variable cut and fill depths and improved with pavement, sidewalk and shoulders, the potential to encounter significant cultural resources is expected to be low. No active hazardous materials sites were found in the immediate project area based on review of the Envirostor and Geotracker databases and review of Division of Oil and Gas and Geothermal Resource maps.

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.

A Class 2 exemption is applicable to this project so 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 would occur within a proposed undergrounding district designated by the County Board of Supervisors. No other cumulative projects of the same type are proposed within the undergrounding district boundaries. Therefore, no cumulative impacts are expected.

(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 undergrounding would pass next to Orcutt Community Plan Key Site 30 and a portion of the Key Site is designated as open space. However, the proposed project involves undergrounding existing utilities within existing developed/disturbed areas. No vegetation removal would be required, and based on review of available information no cultural resource sites or hazardous material sites are known to occur within the undergrounding district boundaries. There are no unusual circumstances associated with the project location, design or construction methods that are expected to 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 work area would occur within a portion of Bradley Road within a developed urban area. Bradley Road is not designated as a scenic highway and no other scenic resources would be impacted by the utility undergrounding. Removal of the aboveground utilities will enhance the aesthetic of Bradley Road especially at the Union Valley Parkway and Foster Road intersections. 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 project involves the undergrounding of existing overhead utilities within developed/disturbed areas. No active hazardous materials/waste sites were found in the immediate project area based on review of the Envirostor and Geotracker databases and review of Division of Oil and Gas and Geothermal Resource maps. 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 project involves the undergrounding of existing overhead utilities within developed/disturbed areas along an existing roadway having previously been graded and excavated. With the exception of the existing overhead utilities no structures are proposed for removal. No historical resources are anticipated to be disturbed. Therefore, this exception does not apply.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Martin Wilder, Utilities Manager Phone #: (805) 739-8755

Department/Division Representative: Joddi Leipner, Senior Engineering Environmental Planner
Date: September 30, 2014

Acceptance Date:

Date Filed at Planning and Development:

Date Filed by County Clerk:

Note: A copy of this form must be posted at P&D 6 days prior to a decision on the project. Upon approval, this form must be filed with the Clerk of the Board and posted by the Clerk of the Board for a period of 30 days to begin a 35 day statute of limitations on legal challenges.

