

## ATTACHMENT B: NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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

**FROM:** Ben Singer, Planning and Development 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:** Not Applicable.                      **Case Nos.:** 24GPA-00001, 24GPA-00002, 24ORD-00001, 24ORD-00002, & 24ORD-00003

**Location:** Countywide.

**Project Title:** Outdoor Lighting, Signs, and Miscellaneous Ordinance Amendments

**Project Description:**

Case No. 24GPA-00001 amends the following sections of the Land Use Element of the County Comprehensive Plan for consistency with the proposed ordinance amendments regarding outdoor lighting: Section E, Visual and Aesthetic Resources, of Chapter IV, Resources and Constraints, of the Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan; Section F, Visual/Open Space Resources, of Chapter IV, Resources and Constraints, of the Los Alamos Community Plan; and Section F, Visual Resources, of Chapter IV, Environmental Resources and Constraints, of the Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan; additionally, the Comprehensive Plan Amendment will delete Appendix H, Outdoor Lighting Ordinance, of the Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan.

Case No. 24GPA-00002 amends the following section of the Coastal Land Use Plan of the County Comprehensive Plan for consistency with the proposed ordinance amendments regarding outdoor lighting: Section F, Visual Resources, of Chapter IV, Environmental Resources and Constraints, of the Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan.

Case No. 24ORD-00001 amends Article 35.2, Zones and Allowable Land Uses; Article 35.3, Site Planning and Other Project Standards; Article 35.4, Standards for Specific Land Uses; Article 35.8, Planning Permit Procedures; Article 35.10, Land Use and Development Code Administration; and Article 35.11, Glossary; of Section 35-1, the County Land Use and Development Code, of Chapter 35, Zoning, of the Santa Barbara County Code to implement new regulations regarding outdoor lighting, signs, and sign structures, and make other miscellaneous changes.

Case No. 24ORD-00002 amends Division 35.2, Montecito Zones and Allowable Land Uses; Division 35.3, Montecito Site Planning and Other Project Standards; Division 35.4, Montecito Standards for Specific Land Uses; Division 35.7, Montecito Planning Permit Procedures; Division 35.9, Montecito Land Use and Development Code Administration; and Division 35.10, Glossary; of Section 35-2, the Montecito Land Use and Development, of Chapter 35, Zoning, of the Santa Barbara County Code to

implement new regulations regarding outdoor lighting, signs, and sign structures, and make other miscellaneous changes.

Case No. 24ORD-00003 amends Division 2, Definitions; Division 4, Zoning Districts; Division 5, Overlay Districts; Division 7, General Regulations; Division 11, Permit Procedures; Division 12, Administration; Division 13, Summerland Community Plan Overlay; Division 14, Goleta Community Plan and Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan Overlay Districts; Division 17, Gaviota Coast Plan (GAV) Overlay of Article II, the Coastal Zoning Ordinance (CZO), of Chapter 35, Zoning, of the Santa Barbara County Code to implement new regulations regarding outdoor lighting, signs, and sign structures, and make other miscellaneous changes.

Additionally, Section V.E, Signage, of the *Montecito Architectural Guidelines and Development Standards*, Section 6, Signs, of the *Los Alamos Bell Street Design Guidelines*, and Section 7, Signage and Lighting, of the *Old Town Orcutt Design Guidelines* are being amended for consistency with the adoption of these ordinance amendments.

**Exempt Status:**

- Ministerial
- Statutory Exemption
- Categorical Exemption
- Emergency Project
- No Possibility of Significant Effect

**Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guidelines Section:** CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) and 15265

**Reasons to support exemption findings:** The following provides a brief discussion of each proposed amendment and why it would be exempt from CEQA.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) states that “the activity is covered by the common sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.”

The Comprehensive Plan amendments consist of amendments to the Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan, Los Alamos Community Plan, and Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan within the Comprehensive Plan. The amendments remove redundancies and contradictions and update references for consistency with the amendments to the County Land Use and Development Code and Coastal Zoning Ordinance regarding outdoor lighting. The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments do not propose or approve any physical development or allow intensification of uses. Any project impacted by the proposed amendments would be reviewed for environmental

impacts separately as a part of the approval process of that project. As such, the proposed amendments would not result in changes to the physical environment and meet the criteria for the common sense exemption.

The ordinance amendments consists of three parts: outdoor lighting amendments, signs amendments, and miscellaneous amendments. The outdoor lighting amendments and signs amendments would standardize and refine regulations to apply a consistent, effective, and user-friendly set of requirements regarding outdoor lighting and signs countywide.

The outdoor lighting standards would apply to all new or replaced outdoor light fixtures or systems unless specifically exempted or required pursuant to any other applicable code or regulation.

The signs standards would apply to all new or replaced signs and sign structures unless specifically exempted or required pursuant to any other applicable code or regulation. There are increased allowances for freedom of speech and trademarks, and new exemptions for directional signs, historic plaques, informational signs, and “no trespassing” signs, among others. Additionally, there are new prohibited signs, including signs on trees or terrain, signs creating hazards, mobile billboards, and signs for prohibited uses, among others. The procedure for measuring sign area has also been updated to provide a clear and consistent method.

The miscellaneous amendments include minor corrections, changes to setback requirements for accessory structures, the removal of pool size requirements for pool cabañas, removal of noticing requirements for certain exemptions, and new enforcement language regarding advertisement of short-term rentals. The proposed ordinance amendments for outdoor lighting, signs, and miscellaneous changes do not propose or approve any physical development or allow intensification of uses. Any project impacted or allowed by the proposed ordinance amendments would be reviewed for environmental impacts separately as a part of the approval process of that project. As such, the proposed project would not result in changes to the physical environment, and the proposed project meets the criteria for the common sense exemption.

The amendments to the *Montecito Architectural Guidelines and Development Standards*, *Los Alamos Bell Street Design Guidelines*, and *Old Town Orcutt Design Guidelines* include limited changes for consistency with the sign amendments described above. The amendments remove redundancies and contradictions and update references. The proposed guidelines amendments do not propose or approve any physical development or allow intensification of uses. Any project impacted by the proposed guidelines amendments would be reviewed for environmental impacts separately as a part of the approval process of that project. As such, the proposed project would not result in changes to the physical environment, and the proposed project meets the criteria for the common sense exemption.

Outdoor Lighting, Signs, and Miscellaneous Ordinance Amendments  
Case Nos. 24GPA-00001, 24GPA-00002 24ORD-00001, 24ORD-00002, & 24ORD-00003  
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In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15265 statutorily exempts local government activities involving the preparation and adoption of local coastal program amendments from environmental review. The proposed outdoor lighting, sign, and miscellaneous amendments affect portions of the county within the Coastal Zone and constitutes an amendment to the County's Local Coastal Program. Therefore, the proposed Outdoor Lighting Comprehensive Plan Amendments, Outdoor Lighting, Signs, and Miscellaneous Ordinance Amendments, and amendments to the *Montecito Architectural Guidelines and Development Standards* are statutorily exempt from environmental review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15265.

**Lead Agency Contact Person:** Ben Singer

**Phone #:** (805) 934-6587

**Department/Division Representative:** 

**Date:** 2/11/2025

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

**Distribution:** Hearing Support Staff

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