

# 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):** County ROW.      **Project No.** 862417

**LOCATION:** First Supervisorial District.

**PROJECT TITLE:** Via Real Coastal Access Infill Sidewalk 862417.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** This item is on the agenda to approve the plans and specifications, award the construction contract for the Santa Barbara County Public Works Department in cooperation with the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG). The proposed project is designed to enhance roadway improvements along Via Real between Greenwell Avenue to the North Padaro Lane interchange to enhance the California Coastal Trail. The proposed project would widen the roadway to construct buffered Class II bike lanes and approximately 2,500 linear feet of new concrete infill sidewalk along the south side of Via Real. This project would maintain the existing equestrian/pedestrian trail on the north side of Via Real. Utility relocation is expected. No trees will be removed in County Right-of-Way. This exemption considers all further administrative activities for this project such as the Statement of Final Quantities.

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
- ☒ X Categorical Exemption {15301 (c)}
- ☐ Emergency Project
- ☐ Declared Emergency

**Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guideline Section:** 15301: Class 1, consisting 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 existing or former use for (c) existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities.

**Reasons to support exemption findings:** The proposed project is consistent with this exemption, this proposed project involves an activity directly related to the repair and maintenance activities within an existing road facility. The project allows for a public safety activity designed to maintain highway safety. The project also aims to improve pedestrian travel-way facilities for coastal access. The sidewalk construction will occur in previously disturbed right of way. Further, 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.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 is a Class 1 exemption; therefore, this exception does not apply as this area is not in a mapped environmentally sensitive habitat area or in an officially mapped area of severe geologic hazard or officially designated (by federal, state, or local government action) scenic area.

- (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 new sidewalk to improve public safety and coastal access. 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 project involves the routine infill of pedestrian facilities for improving coastal access and the safety of the traveling public. The project does not involve and is not located in any wetland or an officially designated environmentally sensitive habitat area, or in officially mapped areas of severe geologic hazard. Therefore, there are no unusual circumstances which would create a possibility that there would be a significant effect on the environment and 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, rock outcropping or similar 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.

There are no hazardous wastes site or permitted facilities are located in the area. 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 site involved is not identified as a historical resource. The project area was reviewed and it was determined there are no cultural or historical resources in the project area. Therefore, this exception does not apply.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Mostafa Estaji, Deputy Director, Public Works-Transportation Division, Phone: (805) 568-3064.

Department/Division Representative: Morgan M. Jones, Engineering Environmental Regulatory Compliance Manager III

Acceptance Date: **September 10, 2024**



**Morgan M. Jones**

Department Representative

August 19, 2024

Date

**NOTE:** To comply with County CEQA guidelines and a copy must be filed 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: \_\_\_\_\_.