

Attachment 1

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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

**FROM:** Mark Friedlander, Senior Planner  
Planning and Development Department (P&D)  
County of Santa Barbara

The 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:** N/A                      **Case No.:** N/A

**Location:** Unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County

**Project Title:** CEQA Transportation Impact Thresholds Update to Comply with Senate Bill 743

**Project Applicant:** P&D, Long Range Planning Division

**Project Description:** P&D is amending the Thresholds of Significance for Transportation Impacts, of the County *Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual* to comply with the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 743 (Steinberg, 2013) and the California Guidelines for the Implementation of CEQA (CEQA Guidelines) Section 15064.3. The amendment includes a methodology and metrics for estimating vehicles miles traveled (VMT), screening criteria, and thresholds of significance for assessing transportation impacts under CEQA. The provisions of the proposed amendment would apply to all projects located in the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County (county) that are subject to environmental review under CEQA.

**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:**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15060 (Preliminary Review) and Section 15378 (Project)

An activity is not subject to CEQA if it is not a “project” as defined in CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060 and 15378.

**Reasons to support exemption findings:**

Additional details regarding the amendments, including the thresholds of significance, are included in the County Planning Commission staff report dated August 4, 2020 and Board Agenda Letter dated September 15, 2020, herein incorporated by reference.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15060 (Preliminary Review) and Section 15378 (Project)

The proposed amendment is not subject to CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(3) and 15378(b)(5). CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(3) states that an activity is not subject to CEQA if the activity is not a “project” as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15378. CEQA Guidelines Section 15378 defines “Project” as an action “which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.” CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5) states that a project does not include “[o]rganizational or administrative activities of governments that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.”

The proposed amendment is an administrative activity that will not result in any direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect change in the physical environment. Rather, the amendment will update the County’s procedures for determining the significance of transportation impacts as required by SB 743 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3. The new thresholds of significance set forth the quantitative criteria and procedures that the County will use to determine the significance of transportation impacts under CEQA in future CEQA determinations. The amendment does not authorize any new development or activities that would result in a direct or indirect physical change in the environment. All future development projects requiring discretionary approvals must undergo their own environmental review, as applicable.

For these reasons, the amendment to Chapter 19 of the County *Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual* is not a project under CEQA and, therefore, is not subject to CEQA.

**Lead Agency Contact Person:** Mark Friedlander

**Phone #:** (805) 568-3532      **Department/Division Representative:** Aileen Bee

**Date:** September 2, 2020

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

**Distribution:** Hearing Support Staff

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