

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) N/A County owned Right of Way **Project No.** N/A

LOCATION: First and Third Supervisorial Districts

PROJECT TITLE: Midwest Guardrail System; County Project No. 820745; First and Third Supervisorial Districts

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Public Works requests the Board of Supervisors to approve the plans and specifications on file in the Public Works Department Office, for construction of Midwest Guardrail System; Award the construction contract, County Project No. 820745 in the amount of \$348,226 to the lowest responsible bidder, The JF Will Company, Inc, 2640 Industrial Parkway Suite 100, Santa Maria CA 93455. Authorize the Director of Public Works or designee to approve change orders for a contingency amount up to \$29,912 for the construction of Midwest Guardrail System for a total not to exceed authorization of \$378,138. This exemption considers all future administrative activities for this project such as a 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
- Categorical Exemption {15301(c)}
- Emergency Project
- Declared Emergency

Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guideline Section: 15301(c) Existing Facilities – Class 1 consists 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 use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency’s determination. The types of “existing facilities” itemized below are not intended to be all inclusive of the types of projects which might fall within Class 1. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of an existing use. Examples include but are 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).

Reasons to support exemption findings: Consistent with this exemption, the proposed project involves a routine upgrading of guardrails as an effective method for improving traffic safety. The proposed project would upgrade existing guardrail to current guardrail, Midwest Guardrail System allowing for a public safety activity designed to maintain a 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 replacing guardrails on public unincorporated roads. 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 a routine replacement of guardrail on public roads. 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, upgrading guardrails would not involve any structural modifications to existing facilities. Therefore, this exception does not apply.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Chris Sneddon, Deputy Director Public Works

Transportation/Engineering Division, Phone: (805) 568-3064

Department/Division Representative: Morgan Jones, Engineering Environmental Program Business Leader

Acceptance Date: **March 19, 2024**

Distribution: Hearing Support Staff for posting

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Morgan Jones
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Morgan Jones Department Representative Date

NOTE: A copy of this document must be posted at least 6 days prior to consideration of the activity by the decision-makers 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: _____.