

ATTACHMENT B: CEQA NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

Case Nos. 25ORD-00009, 25ORD-00010, 25ORD-00011, and 25ORD-00013

TO: Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Corina Martin, Planner
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 of Santa Barbara (County) guidelines for the implementation of CEQA.

APN(s): Not applicable.

Case Nos.: 25ORD-00009, 25ORD-00010, 25ORD-00011, and 25ORD-00013

Location: Countywide

Project Title: 2025 General Ordinance Amendment Package

Project Description:

Case No. 25ORD-00009 amend 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 35.7, Site Development Regulations; Article 35.8, Planning Permit Procedures; and Article 35.11, Glossary; of Section 35-1, the County Land Use and Development Code (LUDC), of Chapter 35, Zoning, of the Santa Barbara County Code, regarding revisions to the Agricultural Enterprise Ordinance, to implement necessary revisions to align the State Density Bonus Law provisions with changes to State law, and make other minor clarifications, corrections, and revisions to existing regulations and development standards.

Case No. 25ORD-00010 amends Division 1, In General, Division 2, Definitions; Division 4, Zoning Districts; Division 7, General Regulations; and Division 13, Summerland Community Plan Overlay; of Article II, the Coastal Zoning Ordinance (CZO), of Chapter 35, Zoning, of the Santa Barbara County Code, regarding expanding the list of allowable temporary uses to include art tours and similar activities, implement necessary revisions to align the State Density Bonus Law provisions with changes to State law, and make other minor clarifications, corrections, and revisions to existing regulations and development standards.

Case No. 24ORD-00011 amends Division 35.3 Montecito Site Planning and other Project Standards, Division 35.4, Montecito Standards for Specific Land Uses, and Division 35.10, Glossary, of Section 35-1, the Montecito Land Use and Development Code (MLUDC), of Chapter 35, Zoning, of the Santa Barbara County Code, regarding expanding the list of allowable temporary uses to include art tours and similar activities, implementing necessary revisions to the existing State Density Bonus Law Provisions (Government Code (GC) 65915), and make other minor clarifications, corrections, and revisions to existing regulations and development standards.

Case No. 25ORD-00013 repeals Ordinance No. 3916 and Chapter 35B, of the Santa Barbara County Code, that established the Montecito Growth Management Ordinance.

Exempt Status:

☐ Ministerial
☒ Statutory
☐ Categorical Exemption
☐ Emergency Project
☒ No Possibility of Significant Effect

Cite specific CEQA Guideline Section: CEQA Guidelines Sections 15061(b)(3), 15265.

Reasons to support exemption findings: The following provides a brief discussion of each proposed amendment and why it would be exempt from CEQA. Additional details regarding the proposed amendments are included in the County Board of Supervisors Board Agenda Letter dated February 3, 2026.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) is the “common sense exemption,” which applies to activities that do not have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Specifically, CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) states: “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.”

To comply with new State laws and implement Program 16 of the 2023-2031 Housing Element Update, the proposed amendment repeals the Montecito Growth Management Ordinance (MGMO) to comply with Senate Bill 330, Government Code (GC) Section 66300(b)(1)(B), which states that cities and counties “shall not enforce any moratorium or similar restriction or limitation on housing development...” The MGMO is such a restriction or limitation on growth in the Montecito Community Plan Area and does not comply with State law. The MGMO is not currently being implemented or enforced, nor has it had a meaningful impact on the pace of development since its initial adoption; therefore, baseline conditions will remain unchanged.

The proposed amendments to the CZO and MLUDC to allow art tours and similar activities would facilitate infrequent, temporary events involving no permanent effects on the environment. Given the limited size, frequency, and nature of these events, and the required compliance with specific standards, it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility of a significant effect on the environment.

The proposed minor amendments to the LUDC, MLUDC, and CZO would not allow any new uses; instead, they clarify, correct, and revise existing regulations and development standards. These amendments add and modify definitions, clarify size limits in net or gross square feet for accessory structures (including guest houses, artist studios, and pool houses/cabañas), revise corner lot setbacks, specify maximum number of ADUs allowed per lot, clarify Summerland floor area ratios, clarify that the gross floor area of structures that are permitted as an Agricultural Enterprise Use do not count towards a Development Plan threshold, and update Density Bonus Law provisions to align with recent changes in State Law. Therefore, the proposed LUDC, MLUDC, and CZO amendments are exempt from environmental review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that these minor amendments may have a significant effect on the environment, and, therefore, are not subject to CEQA.

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 CZO amendment affects portions of the county within the Coastal Zone and constitutes an amendment to

the County's Local Coastal Program. Therefore, the proposed CZO amendment is also statutorily exempt from environmental review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15265.

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Date: _____

Acceptance Date: _____

Distribution: Hearing Support Staff

Date Filed by County Clerk: _____