

Central Services
Joan Araujo, Director

Engineering Services
Christopher Cooper, Director

Roads & Transportation
Christopher Kurgan, Director

Water & Sanitation
Joseph Pope, Director

Watershed Protection
Glenn Shephard, Director

September 14, 2021

Board of Supervisors
County of Ventura
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Subject: **Declare Eight Projects for Public Works Agency, Roads and Transportation, in Unincorporated Ventura County (Bicycle Lane Projects, Roadside/Slope Repair Projects, Traffic Signal-Related Projects, and Bridge Projects) as Categorically Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act; Supervisorial Districts 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.**

Recommendations:

Declare eight projects for Public Works Agency, Roads and Transportation (PWA-RT), listed in Exhibit 1 (bicycle lane projects, repair/replacement projects, and traffic signal-related projects) as categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). These projects are located throughout unincorporated Ventura County as shown on Exhibit 2 – Location Maps.

Fiscal/Mandates Impact:

There are no additional costs associated with this Board action.

Discussion:

In the next two years, PWA-RT plans to design and construct eight capital improvement projects throughout the County which consist of minor improvements and repairs to the existing roadway system. None of these projects will have a significant effect on the environment and are exempt from the provisions of CEQA because they qualify as categorical exemptions under CEQA Guidelines. All eight projects will involve negligible or no expansion of existing uses; will result in no significant impact on the environment, either individually or cumulatively; and will improve public safety for cyclists, pedestrians, and/or the motoring public.



The projects and the basis for their respective CEQA exemptions are listed below:

Bike Lane Projects: *Rose Ave Bike Lanes (Collins to Simon Way), Rose Ave Bike Lanes (Central Ave to SR 118).* These two projects involve the construction of Class II bike lanes on existing Rose Avenue. These projects are exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guidelines, section 15304(h), which exempts from CEQA “[t]he creation of bicycle lanes on existing rights-of-way.”

Pedestrian Improvement Projects: *El Rio Pedestrian Improvements.* The purpose of this project is to improve safety and encourage students to walk to school by constructing safe walking routes (sidewalks). The project consists of the construction of sidewalks, curb ramps, crosswalks, curb and gutter, drainage improvements and driveway approach reconstruction. This project is categorically exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guidelines section 15301(c), as a minor alteration to “[e]xisting highways and streets.” Creation of new sidewalks will result in no or negligible additional expansion of use.

Roadside/Slope Repair Projects: *Lewis Road – Slope Protection.* This project will include grading and armoring the roadside slope to help stabilize it and to prevent erosion and rockfall. This project is exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guidelines section 15301(f) which exempts “[a]ddition of safety or health protection devices for use ... in conjunction with existing structures [or], facilities.”

Traffic Signal-Related Improvement Projects: *Systemic Countywide Signalized Intersection Improvements, and Systemic Rumble Strip and High Friction Surface Treatment.* The first of these two projects consists of installing Retroreflective Back-Plates to all traffic signal heads, installing Advance Dilemma Zone Detection at signal approaches, and applying High Friction Surface Treatment to all intersections. The second project consists of installing edgeline and centerline rumble strips to help reduce roadway collisions. These projects are exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guidelines section 15301(c) and (f), which exempt, respectively, minor alterations on “[e]xisting highways and streets... and similar facilities, including traffic control devices, and “[a]ddition of safety or health protection devices for use during construction of/or in conjunction with existing structures, facilities, or mechanical equipment, or topographical features including navigational devices.”

Bridge Projects: *Bradley Road Bridge Replacement & Grand Ave Bridge Replacement.* These two projects consist of replacing the existing concrete box culverts with new structures. These projects are exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guidelines section 15302, which exempts “[r]eplacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced.”



As in previous years, we request that your Board find these projects to be categorically exempt now – before the award of each contract for construction. This will allow PWA-RT to purchase right-of-way (temporary or permanent easements) as required for those projects during the design process and avoid delaying construction. The current County practice is to obtain CEQA clearance prior to proceeding with right-of-way acquisitions.

Upon your Board's action, a Notice of Exemption will be prepared and filed for each of these eight proposed projects.

This letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, the Auditor-Controller's Office, and County Counsel.

If you have any questions concerning this item, please contact the undersigned at (805) 654-2077.

Sincerely,



Director
Roads & Transportation

Attachments:

Exhibit 1 – Project Listing and Description
Exhibit 2 – Project Location Maps

