

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044
County Clerk
County of: Los Angeles
12400 Imperial Highway
Norwalk, CA 90650

From: (Public Agency): City of Rancho Palos Verdes
30940 Hawthorne Blvd
Rancho Palos Verdes,, CA 90275
(Address)

Project Title: Western Avenue Traffic Flow Improvements Project

Project Applicant: City of Rancho Palos Verdes

Project Location - Specific:

Western Avenue from 25th Street to Palos Verdes Drive, North

Project Location - City: Rancho Palos Verdes Project Location - County: Los Angeles

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

This is a traffic operations improvement project. The purpose of this project is to improve traffic flow and recurring congestion and operations during peak periods and when schools are in session.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: City of Rancho Palos Verdes

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: City of Rancho Palos Verdes

Exempt Status: (check one):

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
[X] Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: 15301 Class 1 (c)
Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reasons why project is exempt:

Project proposes to synchronize the traffic signals along the corridor through deployment of traffic signal adaptive technology and related detection and communications hardware and software, and implementation of other traffic operations strategies such as lengthening the Left Turn Pockets, and Flashing Yellow Arrow at key location.

Lead Agency
Contact Person: Ramzi Awwad Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 310-544-5252

If filed by applicant:

- 1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: [Signature] Date: 4/3/2025 Title: Director of Public Works

- Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR:

THIS NOTICE WAS POSTED
ON April 18 2025
UNTIL May 19 2025



REGISTRAR - RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK

Dean C. Logan, Registrar - Recorder/County Clerk
Electronically signed by TINA TRAN

Revised 2011



**2025 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FILING FEE
CASH RECEIPT**

DFW 753.5a (REV. 01/01/25) Previously DFG 753.5a

RECEIPT Number: 19 — 04/18/2025 — 202504181220005
STATE CLEARING HOUSE # (If applicable)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE. TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY.

LEAD AGENCY CITY OF RANCHO PALOS VERDES	LEAD AGENCY EMAIL	DATE 04/18/2025
COUNTY/STATE AGENCY OF FILING	DOCUMENT NUMBER 2025079313	

PROJECT TITLE
WESTERN AVENUE TRAFFIC FLOW IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

PROJECT APPLICANT NAME CITY OF RANCHO PALOS VERDES	PROJECT APPLICANT EMAIL	PHONE NUMBER
PROJECT APPLICANT ADDRESS 30940 HAWTHORNE BLVD	CITY RANCHO PALOS VERDES CA	STATE CA
		ZIP CODE 90275

PROJECT APPLICANT (Check appropriate box):

Local Public Agency School District Other Special District State Agency Private Entity

CHECK APPLICABLE FEES:

- Environmental Impact Report (EIR) \$4,123.50 \$ 0.00
- Mitigated/Negative Declaration (MND)(ND) \$2,968.75 \$ 0.00
- Certified Regulatory Program (CRP) document - payment due directly to CDFW \$1,401.75 \$ 0.00
- Exempt from fee
 - Notice of Exemption (attach)
 - CDFW No Effect Determination (attach)
- Fee previously paid (attach previously issued cash receipt copy)
- Water Right Application or Petition Fee (State Water Resources Control Board only) \$850.00 \$ 0.00
- County documentary handling fee \$ 75.00
- Other \$ 0.00

PAYMENT METHOD:

- Cash Credit Check Other

TOTAL RECEIVED \$ 75.00

SIGNATURE X	AGENCY OF FILING PRINTED NAME AND TITLE ITC
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MEMORANDUM

March 27, 2025

To:

Ramzi Awwad
Director of Public Works
City of Rancho Palos Verdes

From:

Alia Hokuki, AICP
Senior Project Manager
Psomas

Subject: Western Avenue Traffic Flow Improvements: CEQA Categorical Exemption Analysis and Findings

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was signed into law in 1970. The California Environmental Quality Act is a statute that requires state and local agencies to identify potential significant effects a “project” may have on the environment and any feasible mitigation that may be implemented to avoid or mitigate those impacts. A “project” is defined in Section 21065, Chapter 2.5, Division 13 of the California Public Resources Code as an activity which may cause either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, and consists of any of the following: an activity directly undertaken by any public agency; an activity undertaken by a person which is supported, in whole or in part, through contracts, grants, subsidies, loans, or other forms of assistance from one or more public agencies; or, an activity that involves the issuance to a person of a lease, permit, license, certificate, or other entitlement for use by one or more public agencies. A “significant effect on the environment” is defined in Section 21068 Chapter 2.5, Division 13 of the California Public Resources Code as a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in the environment. Furthermore, the government agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project which may have a significant effect upon the environment is defined as the “lead agency” in Section 21067, Chapter 2.5, Division 13 of the California Public Resources Code.

CEQA applies in situations where a governmental agency can use its judgment in deciding whether and how to carry out or approve a project. A project subject to such judgmental controls is called a “discretionary project.” Where the law requires a governmental agency to act on a project in a set way without allowing the agency to use its own judgment, the project is called “ministerial,” and CEQA does not apply. Once an application for a project is deemed complete, a lead agency must first determine whether an activity is subject to CEQA before conducting an initial study. An activity is not subject to CEQA if: the activity does not involve the exercise of discretionary powers by a public agency; the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment; or the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378.

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, a Notice of Exemption (NOE) may be filed if the City of Rancho Palos Verdes, in its capacity as the Lead Agency, determines that a proposed action or project is exempt from CEQA. According to the CEQA Guidelines, a NOE must contain the following information:

- A description of the proposed action or project;
- A finding that the proposed action or project is exempt, including a citation of the State CEQA Guidelines section or statute under which the project is found to be exempt; and,
- A brief statement in support of the finding.
- The Lead Agency authorized the preparation of this Notice of Exemption

This report was prepared in accordance with Section 21000 (et seq) - Division 13 of the California Public Resources Code and Section 15000 (et seq), Article 1, Chapter 3, Division 6, Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations. It is important to note that CEQA is not a process that determines whether or not a project should be approved and no recommendations can be made as to whether or not a lead agency should approve or deny a project application.

SECTION 15301 – EXISTING FACILITIES (CLASS 1) CRITERIA

Section 15301, Existing Facilities (Class 1), of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines applies to the proposed Western Avenue Traffic Flow Improvements Project (Project or proposed Project). 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 existing or former use. 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 use. Due to the nature of the proposed Project, more specifically, the Project would be eligible for a Class 1 exemption under Section 15301(c) of the State CEQA Guidelines as described below:

- c. Existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities (this includes road grading for the purpose of public safety), and other alterations such as the addition of bicycle facilities, including but not limited to bicycle parking, bicycle-share facilities and bicycle lanes, transit improvements such as bus lanes, pedestrian crossings, street trees, and other similar alterations that do not create additional automobile lanes.

The Project meets the condition above, as described below in Section 1.3, and therefore qualifies for Class 1 exemption.

1.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1.1 Project Location and Environmental Setting

The Project is located within the southern portion of the City of Los Angeles, specifically, within the western portion of the San Pedro neighborhood and the eastern portion of the City of Rancho Palos Verdes. The Project starts at the intersection of 25th Street and Western Avenue in the City of Los Angeles, extends approximately 4.3 miles north along Western Avenue, and terminates at the intersection of Palos Verdes Drive North and Western Avenue. The Project's regional and local vicinity are depicted in Exhibit 1.



Project Boundary
 Median Improvements

Regional Location and Local Vicinity

Western Avenue Traffic Flow Improvements Project



Exhibit 1



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The Project involves various signal and minor median alterations to extend existing left-turn lanes to the segment of Western Avenue extending north from the intersection of Western Avenue and 25th Street to the intersection of Palos Verdes Drive North traversing through the Cities of Los Angeles, Rancho Palos Verdes, and Lomita. The corridor is a State Route (SR) 213 under Caltrans jurisdiction with signalized intersections operated by Caltrans and the City of Los Angeles. The segment of Western Avenue that would be subject to the proposed improvements, from north to south, extends from Palos Verdes Drive North through 9th Street. It is fronted by a variety of uses, including single-family residential, multi-family residential, retail, offices, medical office uses, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) facilities, and Willenberg Special Education Center. Western Avenue is classified as an Arterial in the City's General Plan (City of Rancho Palos Verdes 2018a). Western Avenue is a four-lane highway divided by a raised center median, with two lanes of travel in each direction and dedicated left turn pockets provided at all of the Project intersections. Caltrans recently installed Class II Bike Lane in some portions within the Project Limits. Based on traffic counts collected during the planning phase of the project, in August 2023, the segment of Western Avenue north of Westmont Drive experienced approximately 30,700 daily vehicle trips, while the segment north Summerland Avenue experienced approximately 35,400 daily vehicle trips.

1.2 Project Purpose

The Project would involve the installation and construction of various signal operational, infrastructure, channelization, and minor median alterations involving left-turn pocket extensions along the Western Avenue corridor described further in the next section. The City has had the goal of improving traffic flow on Western Avenue for a number of years, as reflected in the Circulation element section of Western Avenue Specific Plan IV (City of Rancho Palos Verdes 2001). In addition, as mentioned in the 2018 General Plan, the entire segment of Western Avenue traversing through the City is currently operating at an unacceptable level of service (LOS). Therefore, the City developed a multi-jurisdictional solution to optimize traffic operations on the Western Avenue Corridor from 25th Street to Palos Verdes Drive North. This solution was outlined in the Comprehensive Traffic Study and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) analysis that was completed for the Project and resulted in preparation of the Project Design Scoping Document. Said documents were developed in collaboration with a Focus Group consisting of Caltrans and the Cities of Rancho Palos Verdes, Los Angeles, and Lomita. The Project Design Scoping Document highlighted all the physical, hardware and software improvements (such as adjusting an intersection's signal phasing and timing, installing Flashing Yellow Arrows, and implementing an Adaptive Traffic Signal Control System) recommended to improve traffic flow on Western Avenue within the Project limits. The recommended improvements identified in the Design Scoping Document include but are not limited to the following key components:

Signal Synchronization

- Implementation of an Adaptive Traffic Signal Control System at 13 signalized intersections (Palos Verdes Drive North to Weymouth Drive) and the required field detection, communications infrastructure, equipment, and connectivity to the Caltrans Transportation Management Center.
- The Consultant, in close coordination with the City and Caltrans, shall research and evaluate different Commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) options available in the market for

adaptive traffic signal systems, considering factors such as the software's features, compatibility with existing infrastructure, ease of integration, scalability, vendor support, cost commitment in line with project anticipated construction schedule, etc.

- Development of updated Signal Synchronization Scenarios and Timing Plans.

Modifications of Lane Configurations and Traffic Signal Phasing

- Extension of left-turn pockets at seven intersections.
- Modification of signal phasing at the Western Avenue/Crestwood Street intersection from split phasing to permitted phasing and the required lane restriping in the east-west direction.

Traffic Safety Enhancements

- Addition of Flashing Yellow Arrows and protected-permissive phasing at the intersection Western Avenue/Park Western Drive, and their appurtenant equipment.
- Installation of signage and pavement marking improvements at particular driveways at the Terraces at South Bay driveway and the Park Plaza Shopping Center, and at the intersection of Western Avenue/Summerland Avenue.

1.3 Proposed Western Avenue Traffic Flow Improvements

The proposed Project involves the construction/installation of the following improvements to Western Avenue (from north to south):

- Left-turn pocket extensions:
 - Avenida Aprenda – Existing northbound left-turn pocket is 80 feet. The pocket will be extended by approximately 85 feet;
 - Westmont Drive-Delasonde Drive – Existing southbound left-turn pocket is 110 feet. The pocket will be extended by approximately 100 feet;
 - Toscanini Drive – Existing northbound left-turn pocket is 85 feet. The pocket will be extended by approximately 100 feet;
 - Terraces Shopping Center – Existing northbound left-turn pocket is 90 feet. The pocket will be extended by approximately 70 feet;
 - 1st Street – Existing southbound left-turn pocket is 105 feet. The pocket will be extended to approximately 100 feet;
 - Park Western Drive – Existing southbound left-turn pocket is 175 feet. The pocket will be extended by approximately 55 feet; and,
 - 9th Street – Existing northbound left-turn pocket is 105 feet. The pocket will be extended by approximately 120 feet.
- Traffic signal modifications:
 - Installation of General Packed Radio Service (GPRS) modems for all 13 controllers;

- Installation of detector loops and/or video detection systems;
- Installation of advance loops for major intersecting streets with more than one lane; and,
- Installation of fiber optic communication line between 1st Street and Weymouth Place, and between 1st Street and Summerland Avenue to the north.
- CCTV camera upgrade - ethernet switch and wireless modem communication from field to the TMC for the Summerland Avenue intersection.
- Signal Phasing and Infrastructure modifications:
 - Western Avenue and Park Western Drive – Modification to the traffic signal phasing to include a Flashing Yellow Arrow (FYA), which allows drivers to make a left-turn after yielding to oncoming traffic. In the northbound direction, modify the traffic signal protected-permissive to include an FYA as well. This upgrade would require new signal poles and mast arms at the northeast and southwest corners of the intersection in order to accommodate new signal heads consisting of left-turn/FYA protected-permissive operation.
 - Western Avenue/Crestwood Street – Modification to the traffic signal phasing from split phasing in the east-west direction to permitted phasing, allowing the two directions to operate at the same time. The westbound approach lane striping could accommodate this modification, as the westbound consists of a dedicated left-turn lane. The eastbound approach can be re-striped to consist of one left-turn and one shared through/right-turn lane, which would require realigning the roadway centerline to the north by approximately two feet.

The Project's corridor on aerial image background is depicted in Exhibit 2.

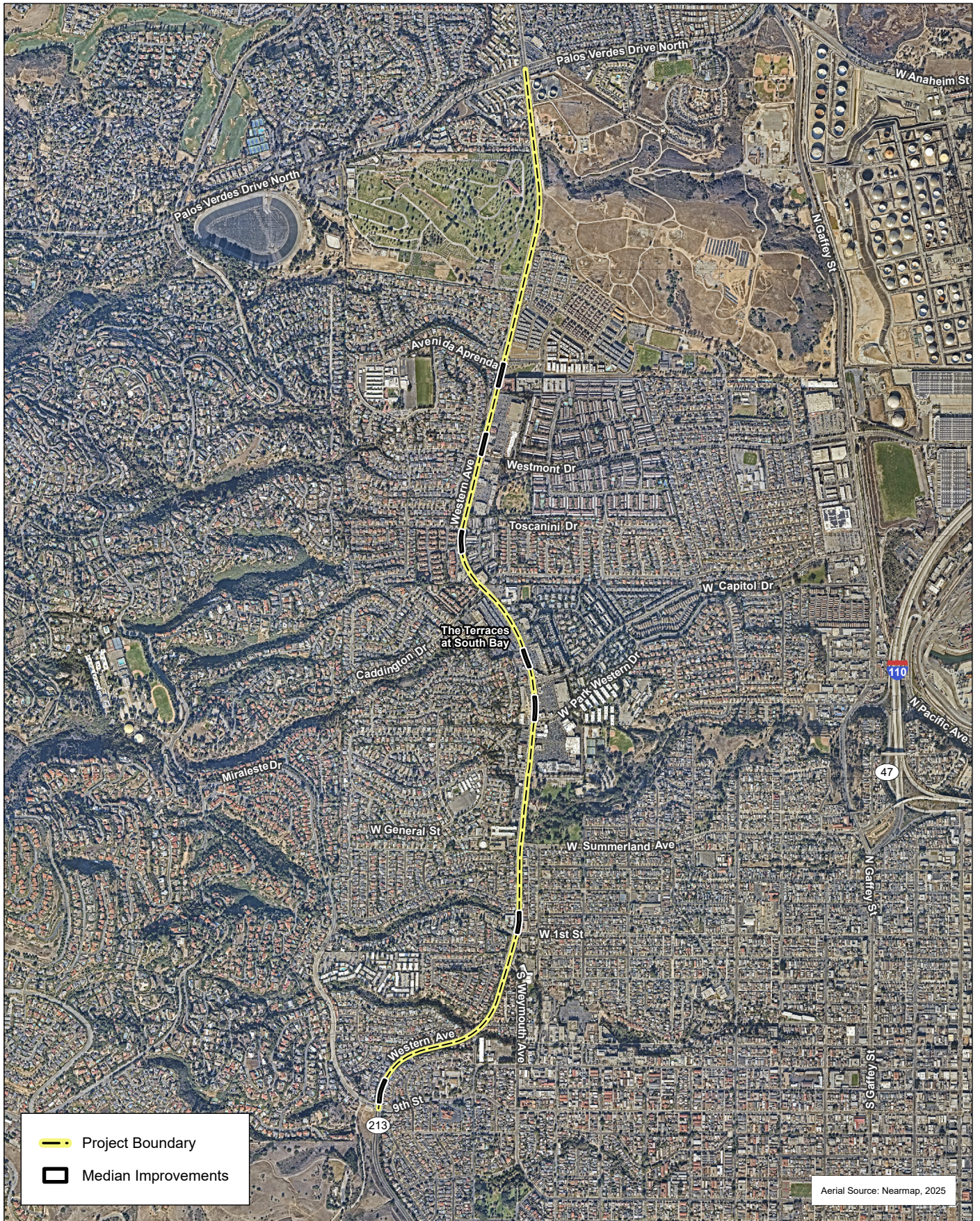
2.0 CITY OF RANCHO PALOS VERDES GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING GUIDELINES

The Project is located on public roadway right-of-way (ROW) along Western Avenue, within areas owned and maintained by Caltrans. The project corridor is not zoned, as roadways in the City do not have corresponding zoning designations. The adjacent properties are zoned for a variety of uses, including single-family residential (RS-5); multiple-family residential (RM-12), Commercial – General (CG), and Institutional (I). Furthermore, the Project would be consistent with the following policies listed in the most recent 2018 General Plan (City of Rancho Palos Verdes 2018a):

Encourage synchronization and coordination of traffic signals along arterials. The Project proposes signal timing and phasing improvements to alleviate congestion.

The Project involves temporary construction activities to provide the requested improvements mentioned above. These improvements would be made within the existing public right-of-way and would not create a permanent impact to existing or future planned land uses detailed in the City's General Plan. Additionally, no temporary access or staging outside of the street ROW would be required. Lastly, the Project's implementation would assist the City in meeting the goals outlined in the General Plan and Western Avenue Specific Plan IV. As such, there would be no conflict with City land use policies.

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Project Corridor on Aerial Imagery

Western Avenue Traffic Flow Improvements Project

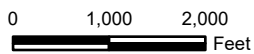


Exhibit 2



3.0 SECTION 15300.2–EXCEPTIONS CRITERIA

Categorical Exemptions are subject to additional conditions described in Section 15300.2, Exceptions, of the State CEQA Guidelines, as follows:

3.1 Location

- a) 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 to 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.

The Project is not considered under Classes 3, 4, 5, 6 or 11. This exception is not applicable to Class 1 Categorical Exemption. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the Project, as **it is exempt under Class 1 Categorical Exemption.**

3.2 Cumulative Impacts

- b) 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.

Based on a review of the City of Rancho Palos Verdes Community Development Department's Major Development Projects and the City Public Works Department's Public Works Projects pages, there is one planned project located within one-half mile of the project corridor, the "Green Hills Memorial Park Master Plan", located approximately one-quarter of a mile north of the project corridor at 27501 South Western Avenue (City of Rancho Palos Verdes 2025a and 2025b). Based on the most recent City documents related to this planned development project, construction has not yet begun but is anticipated to begin in the first quarter of 2025 and last approximately six to seven months. Additionally, Caltrans has programmed a pavement rehabilitation project for the same segment that is due to commence in 2026. The City of Rancho Palos Verdes is currently implementing bus shelter improvements which will be followed by median beautifications along Western Avenue, within the same project limits. Although it is possible for the Project to occur simultaneously with these planned development projects, the City Public Works Department would coordinate with Caltrans and the Community Development Department to ensure there are no conflicts. Due to the limited scope and nature of the Project, **significant cumulative impacts are not anticipated.**

3.3 Significant Effect

- c) 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 would not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances, as demonstrated in the discussion below. The project corridor encompasses segments of Western Avenue, as described previously. The proposed project

corridor is within an urban environment immediately surrounded by existing residential and commercial development, as well as park and recreational facilities.

No structural demolition would occur as part of this Project; however, the roadway would be temporarily disturbed during the construction phase as the Project would include extensions of left-turn lanes for approximately 100 feet at seven locations along Western Avenue; the installation of detector loops, video detection systems, a fiber optic communication line, new traffic signal poles; and the restriping of eastbound approach at Western Avenue and Crestwood Street. Implementation of the proposed Project would include these physical components, along with modification of existing facilities to facilitate interface and connection to new improvements and traffic safety enhancements, including the addition of Flashing Yellow Arrows and protected-permissive phasing, as well as the installation of signage and pavement marking improvements at driveways and at the intersection of Western Avenue and Summerland Avenue.

The City Public Works Department would coordinate with the Community Development Department and Caltrans on the Project, as appropriate, and would follow all requirements. Contractors would be required to take precaution to protect all existing facilities and utilities; shall not perform any work that would interfere or damage service; and shall provide all measures necessary to protect existing structures during construction (e.g., bracing, shoring) for all construction phases. The Project would be required to comply with all applicable 2024 Caltrans Standard Plans and Standard Specifications.

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The Project would result in limited short-term, construction-related air and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions related to the proposed modifications of traffic and roadway infrastructure. The types and numbers of construction equipment needed to construct the Project would be limited in number and the construction area would be small; therefore, construction activities are not expected to exceed regional or local significance thresholds established by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) or any applicable draft GHG thresholds promulgated by the SCAQMD Working Group. **The Project would not result in a wasteful or inefficient use of energy.** Further, operation of the Project would not result in any new vehicle trips or other environmental changes to existing conditions.

Biological Resources

The project corridor is fully developed and surrounded by residential, commercial, and recreational land uses, along with ornamental street landscaping, which provide minimal foraging habitat for common animal species typically found in urban areas. Consequently, the project corridor does not contain any habitat suitable for special status plant and animal species. Existing urban development is located between the proposed project corridor and the nearest critical habitat, and the Project would not extend into critical habitat boundaries at any point during construction. Therefore, the Project would not impact listed Threatened or Endangered plant or wildlife species, nor would it result in the removal of any designated critical habitat. As the Project is confined entirely within the public roadway ROW, the Project involves minor temporary construction activities, and does not extend into any riparian or wetland habitat, the Project would not have a significant impact on any riparian habitats or wetlands. Additionally,

the project corridor is in a developed urban area on public roadway ROW and does not function as a wildlife corridor or native wildlife nursesey site.

As described previously, the project corridor is located in a fully urban area and has been subject to past development associated with roadway construction and development of surrounding residential and commercial uses. **Project construction would not extend beyond previously disturbed areas.**

Geology and Soils

The Project would not result in the development of housing or other habitable structures that would expose people to risks associated with seismic shaking, ground failure, landslides, or other geotechnical issues present in Southern California. Also, during construction, the Contractor would be required to comply with all applicable safety laws, rules, ordinances and regulations and be in compliance with the California Building Code (ICC 2022).

Hydrology and Water Quality

The Project may temporarily affect existing draining patterns during construction; nevertheless, Contractors would be required to adhere to all applicable regulations outlined in Sections 13.10.060 and 13.10.065 of the Rancho Palos Verdes Municipal Code. In addition, the Applicant would be required to implement erosion control measures to manage sediment and other potential pollutants that could affect water quality, pursuant to Caltrans Encroachment Manual Chapter 400, as Western Avenue is designated as a State Route and is under the jurisdiction of Caltrans.

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) issued a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Statewide Storm Water Permit to Caltrans in 2012 (Order No. 2012-00-11-DWQ) (CAS000003), to regulate storm water discharges from Caltrans facilities. The Order contains three basic requirements: Caltrans must comply with the requirements of the Construction General Permit (CGP) or the Lake Tahoe Construction General Permit; Caltrans must implement a year-round program in all parts of the State to effectively control storm water and non-storm water discharges; and Caltrans storm water discharges must meet water quality standards through implementation of permanent and temporary construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) and other measures (Caltrans 2018).

To comply with the Order, Caltrans has developed a statewide Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP). The SWMP is the Caltrans policy document that describes how Caltrans conducts its storm water management activities (i.e., procedures and practices); provides descriptions of each of the major management program elements; discusses the processes used to evaluate and select appropriate BMPs; and presents key implementation responsibilities and schedules. All projects within the State right-of-way, regardless of who funds or administers the project, are required to comply with the SWMP. Caltrans uses the encroachment permit process as a quality assurance program to ensure project sponsors comply with storm water laws and regulations.

Furthermore, depending on the amount of Disturbed Soil Area (DSA) and other Project conditions, the Applicant may be required to provide an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (ESCP), a Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP), a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), and/or authorizing documents for dewatering activities (Caltrans 2018). Appropriate

Best Management Practices (BMPs) for construction-related materials, wastes, spills or residues would be implemented by the Project Applicant to minimize transport from the site to streets, drainage facilities, or adjoining property by wind, runoff, or tracking. The Project would comply with all local, State, and Federal Stormwater Pollution Prevention laws and any requirements of the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), Los Angeles Region. **Therefore, impacts hydrology and water quality would not be substantial or adverse as the Applicant would be required to comply with all applicable regulations pertaining to stormwater runoff, water pollution, and erosion control during Project construction.**

Noise

Construction of the Project would comply with the allowable thresholds and be limited to the hours as designated in Section 17.56.020(B) of the Rancho Palos Verdes Municipal Code. According to that Section of the Code, it is unlawful to carry on construction, grading, or landscaping activities, or to operate heavy equipment except between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. Monday through Friday, and between the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. on Saturday. No such activity shall be permitted on Sundays, or the legal holidays (within the city's permitted construction hours), unless a Special Construction Permit is approved by the Community Development Director. Although construction activity would be audible to some of the nearby residences, it would be temporary, occur during the least noise-sensitive hours of the day, and follow all local regulations stipulated by the City. Therefore, **construction noise would not be substantial or adverse.**

Public Services and Utilities

Removal and disposal of construction waste would comply with all CALGreen requirements and applicable law, as adopted by the City and codified in Section 8.20.390(b)(3), related to the disposal of construction and demolition debris.

There would be no impact to any public services or utilities during construction or long-term operation. Existing utilities shall be protected in place and water service and pressure to potable water distribution systems would be maintained throughout construction. During construction, the contractor shall provide and maintain traffic control devices at all times in accordance with the Project's traffic control plan, if deemed necessary and as directed by the City's representative. The Contractor would be required to maintain traffic movement along Western Avenue at the affected intersections. All nearby roads would remain open at all times during the work unless approved otherwise by the City engineer.

3.4 Scenic Highways

- d) 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 would not result in damage to scenic resources. According to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the nearest officially designated State scenic highway is located approximately 25 miles northwest of the project corridor along a portion of State

Route (SR) 27. Additionally, although not officially designated, a portion of the Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) approximately 9.7 miles east of the project corridor is an eligible State scenic highway (Caltrans 2025). Due to intervening topography, urban development, and distance, the project corridor is not visible from the said officially designated or eligible State scenic highway. Project construction would be temporary and confined entirely within the public ROW along Western Avenue. Following completion of the Project, these segments along Western Avenue would be restored to the proposed and improved conditions, which would not impact scenic resources. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the Project and no impacts would occur.

3.5 Hazardous Waste Site

- 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.

Government Code section 65962.5 requires the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) to develop at least annually an updated Cortese List, or list of Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites. The Cortese List is a planning document used by the State, local agencies, and developers to comply with CEQA requirements in providing information about the location of hazardous materials release sites relative to the project corridor.

The Cortese List in its current form consists of several databases. A search through the databases indicated that **the project corridor is not on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Cortese list (CalEPA 2025).**

3.6 Historical Resources

- 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.

Based on review of the City of Rancho Palos Verdes General Plan, the General Plan Update Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND), and the Office of Historic Preservation's (OHP) California Historical Resources and Built Environment Resource Directory (BERD), **the project corridor is not identified as a listed or eligible historic resource (City of Rancho Palos Verdes 2018a and 2018b; OHP 2025).** Additionally, there are no historic resources within the immediate vicinity of the project corridor and, as the Project involves traffic improvements occurring entirely within previously disturbed public ROW, the Project would not have the potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. As such, this exception does not apply to the Project and no impacts to historical resources would occur.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis and review of the proposed improvements along Western Avenue, it has been determined that the Project qualifies for a categorical exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Project falls within the scope of Section 15301, which exempts minor alterations to existing facilities, including transportation infrastructure, where there is negligible or no expansion of use beyond that previously existing. The Project would not have a significant effect on the environment, as the Project involves signal operation, enhancement, and channelization upgrades to improve safety, efficiency. No substantial evidence has been found to indicate that the Project would result in any significant adverse environmental impacts. The project is categorically exempt from further CEQA review.

REFERENCES

- California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA). 2022 California Emission Estimator Model (CalEEMod)TM Version 2022.1.1.20, Developed by Trinity Consultants.
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2025 (March 3, date accessed). California State Scenic Highway System Map. Sacramento, CA: Caltrans. <https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aaca>.
- . 2022. Traffic Census Program. Sacramento, CA: Caltrans. <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/census>.
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