



NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

From: Community Development – Planning Division
505 Forest Avenue Laguna Beach, California 92651

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1. **APPLICANT:** City of Laguna Beach, 505 Forest Ave. Laguna Beach, CA, 92651
2. **LEAD AGENCY:** City of Laguna Beach, 505 Forest Ave. Laguna Beach, CA, 92651
3. **PROJECT PLANNER:** Shaveta Sharma, Acting Principal Planner, ssharma@lagunabeachcity.net (949)715-0958
4. **PROJECT TITLE:** Further Study for Festival of Arts Sound Policy for Property at and around the Irvine Bowl
5. **PROJECT LOCATION:** 650 Laguna Canyon Road, Laguna Beach, CA, 92651 (APN: 496-101-02)].
6. **DESCRIPTION OF NATURE, PURPOSE AND BENEFICIARIES OF PROJECT:**
On July 8, 2025, the City Council considered suspending the Irvine Bowl Sound Policy for three days on November 7, 8 and 9, 2025 to allow the City's sound consultant, Rincon Consultants, Inc., the opportunity to measure and analyze sound from a real-life concert to better inform whether any changes to such Sound Policy are necessary; authorizing the additional scope of work proposed by Rincon Consultant's, Inc. to measure and analyze sound during a real-life concert on November 7, 8, and 9, 2025; and finding the actions exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15304.

On July 8, 2025, the City Council took all three recommend actions, subject to an increase in the do not exceed amount in the amount of \$15,000 for the further study by the consultant, and found the actions exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15304.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

The California Environmental Quality Act exempts minor alterations to land consisting of "minor public or private alternations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes." (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15304.) An example includes "minor temporary use of land having negligible or no permanent effects on the environment, including carnivals, sales of Christmas trees, etc. (Id., subdivision (e).) Here, the recommended actions consisting of the suspension of the Sound Policy for two days and the authorization to measure and analyze the sound are the "Project" in terms of CEQA. The Project falls within State CEQA Guidelines Section 15304 - Minor Alterations to Land (Class 4 categorical exemption) because it is a temporary change in allowable sound on public property as implemented by a private organization for two days and does not involve removal of any trees. It has no permanent effect on the environment because the change in allowable sound will only occur for two days from the hours of 9 a.m. and 10:30 p.m. and then the allowable sound limitations will revert back to the limit allowed in the existing Sound Policy. Further, the City's sound measurements from simulating a concert on June 13, 2025 support that a concert of soft rock will yield results within the City's existing Sound Policy limits. A concert is similar to a carnival because they both involve large crowds of people gathered at high-energy environments with multiple, often competing loud sounds, that usually last for only a few days, which is an example of what this categorical exemption is meant to address.

Further, none of the exceptions outlined in CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 apply. The Project site does not contain any environmentally sensitive areas. There will be no cumulative impact resulting from successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time, because the Project is limited to a duration of two days. There will be no damage to scenic resources, including trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway in that the Project is temporary. The Project will not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. The Project is not located on a hazardous waste site or any other wise included on a list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 according to the Cortese List. The Project will not result in significant adverse impacts to historical resources as defined by CEQA as the existing structures onsite are not listed or

eligible to listed on the California Register of Historical Resources or the City's Historic Register, nor are they discretionary historical resources. Thus, the Project falls within the Class 4 exemption.

Therefore, the City Council has determined that further environmental evaluation is not required because:

- The project is not subject to CEQA because it "does not involve the exercise of discretionary power," or "will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment," or, "is not a project as defined in Section 15378 of the CEQA guidelines." (Sections 15060(c)(1), (2) & (3)); or,
- "The activity is covered by the commonsense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. 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" (Section 15061(b)(3)); or,
- The project is statutorily exempt, Section _____, <name> (Sections 15260-15277); or,
- The project is categorically exempt per State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15304 (Class 4 – Minor Alterations to Land).

7. If filed by applicant: Attach Certificate of Determination (Form "A") before filing.

8. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving this project?

9. Was a public hearing held by the Lead Agency to consider the exemption?

Yes No If yes, the date of the public hearing was: July 8, 2005.



Date: July 10, 2025

Signature

Shaveta Sharma

Title: Acting Principal Planner

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.