

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

City of Los Angeles

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
100 SOUTH MAIN STREET, 9TH FLOOR
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

Submission of this form is optional. The form shall be filed with the County Clerk, 12400 E. Imperial Highway, Norwalk, California, 90650 and with the State Clearinghouse in the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation, if filed with the County Clerk, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21152(b). Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21167(d), the filing of this notice starts a 35-day statute of limitations on court challenges to the approval of the project.

The City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation Assistant General Manager determined that the project was categorically exempt from CEQA and approved the project on: 6/15/2026

Lead City Agency: City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation

Council District: 11

Project Title: Vista Del Mar Safety Project

Council File Number: N/A

Project Location: Vista Del Mar between Waterview Street and Imperial Highway

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The proposed project aims to address traffic safety by reducing excessive vehicle speeds and potential conflict points along Vista Del Mar between Imperial Highway and Waterview St. The project consists of the implementation of a median barrier along a 1.67 mile segment of Vista Del Mar between Waterview St and Imperial Highway; restricting vehicular turns at Vista Del Mar/Napoleon St to right-turn only; merging two travel lanes in the northbound direction on Vista Del Mar into a single lane for approximately 1,000 feet in front of Vista Del Mar Park, adding speed tables on Vista Del Mar between Waterview St and Imperial Highway; and making minor adjustments to parking between Napoleon St and Waterview St.

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project, If Other Than Lead City Agency:

Contact Person: Crystal Killian

Telephone Number: 213 549-6970

Exempt Status (check one):

- ☐ Ministerial (State CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15268)
☐ Declared Emergency (State CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15269)
☐ Emergency Project (State CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15269 (b) & (c))
☐ General Exemption (State CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15060)
☒ Categorical Exemption (Sec. 15300 *et seq.*)
 ☐ Class: 1C
☐ Other (Statutory Exemption: Public Resources Code Sec. 21080.20.5)

Justification for Project Exemption:

The project is exempt under State CEQA Guidelines. State CEQA Guidelines Class 1(c) states a project is categorically exempt if it involves the operation, repair, maintenance or minor alteration of existing highways and streets, sidewalks, and gutters involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that previously existing; and does not involve the removal of a scenic resource. None of the limitations set forth in State CEQA Guidelines 153000.2 apply. See attached narrative (Attachment A) for further discussion.

If Filed by Applicant, Certified Document of Exemption Finding:

The proposed project aims to address traffic safety by reducing excessive vehicle speeds and potential conflict points along Vista Del Mar between Imperial Highway and Waterview St. The project consists of the implementation of a median barrier along a 1.67 mile segment of Vista Del Mar between Waterview St and Imperial Highway; restricting vehicular turns at Vista Del Mar/Napoleon St to right-turn only; merging two travel lanes in the northbound

SIGNATURE:


Crystal Killian (Jun 16, 2026 13:59:40 PDT)

TITLE: Principal Transportation Engineer

DATE: 06/16/2026

FEE: \$25

Receipt Number:

Recorded By:

Date: 06/16/2026

Attachment A

Project: Vista Del Mar Safety Project

I. Project Description

The proposed project consists of the implementation of safety improvements along an approximately 1.67 mile segment of Vista Del Mar from Imperial Highway to Waterview St. This segment of Vista Del Mar runs along several public beaches and is just west of the Los Angeles International Airport. Immediately to the east of the project area is a large former residential neighborhood, which is currently inaccessible to the public and consists of vacant lots and roadways.

Specifically, the project includes the following elements:

- A median barrier along Vista Del Mar between Waterview St and Imperial Highway, consisting of concrete K-rail topped with approximately 4-foot-high metal fencing material
- Speed tables on Vista Del Mar between Waterview St and Imperial Highway

The implementation of the continuous median barrier will result in limiting vehicle movements from Napoleon St to Vista Del Mar to right-turn only, and prevent vehicles from turning left from Vista Del Mar onto Napoleon St. The design will also result in minor adjustments to on-street parking between Napoleon St and Waterview St, though there is no net loss or gain of parking. In order to maintain existing on-street parking on the east side of Vista Del Mar adjacent to the Vista Del Mar Park, the project design includes the merging of the two northbound travel lanes into a single lane for approximately 1,000 feet before reintroducing the second travel lane just north of the park.

The project is entirely within existing City right-of-way and involves no roadway widening or tree removals. It will redesign the roadway space to prioritize safety for people traveling along Vista Del Mar, particularly those accessing the adjacent beach areas.

II. Project History

Vista del Mar, in the coastal community of Playa del Rey, is one of the busiest high speed commuter roads in Council District 11, serving as a major connector for commuters traveling between the Westside and the South Bay; it is known for fast-moving traffic, with vehicles frequently exceeding the 40-mph speed limit. The roadway has a long history of vehicular and pedestrian safety issues.

The Council District 11 (CD11) office raised the urgent need for safety improvements on Vista Del Mar with a Council Motion on May 5, 2026 (CF # 26-0672), in which they requested that funds be transferred from the Coastal Transportation Corridor Fund No 447-94 to the Department of Transportation Fund 100-94 for the installation of median barriers and other traffic safety improvements on Vista Del Mar between Waterview St and Imperial Highway.

LADOT subsequently prepared a design plan for this street, which was finalized on June 15, 2026.

III. Environmental Review

A. Basis for Categorical Exemption

A project qualifies for a Class 1(c) categorical exemption under State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR Sec. 15301 (c)) if it consists of operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing streets, sidewalks, and gutters involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that previously existing; and does not involve the removal of a scenic resource (the City CEQA Guidelines further explain that a scenic resource is defined as “including but not limited to a stand of trees, a rock outcropping or an historic building.”) The project qualifies for these categorical exemptions because it consists of the operation and minor alteration of an existing street, Vista Del Mar; does not involve an expansion of use beyond those previously existing; and does not involve the removal of a scenic resource, including no removal of trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings (see below on Consideration of Potential Exceptions to use of a Categorical Exemption, Aesthetics and Scenic Highway sections).

Consideration of Potential Exceptions to use of a Categorical Exemption

The State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR Sec 15300.2) limit the use of categorical exemptions in the circumstances that follow. The narrative below substantiates through facts why these exceptions do not apply.

1. Location. Exemption 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 be significant in a particular sensitive environment. 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. This exception is known as the “location exception.”

Those project features covered under the Class 1 categories are not subject to the location exception.

2. Cumulative Impact. This exemption applies when, although a particular project may not have a significant impact, the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.

There are no other similar projects occurring in this same location at the same time. Given the limited nature of the project which involves only work on an existing roadway (Vista Del Mar) for a short length (1.67 miles) and no excavation, this project is not anticipated to result in a cumulative impact when included with successive projects in the same place and over time.

3. Significant Effect. This exception applies when, although the project may otherwise be exempt, there is a reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect due to unusual circumstances.

A. No Unusual Circumstances

There are no unusual circumstances for this project compared to other road improvement projects that typically qualify for categorical exemptions for existing facilities or minor alterations to land. This work is a typical minor alteration and improvement project for a street that falls under the Class 1 exemption.

B. No Significant Impacts

The project would not result in any significant impacts as set forth below.

i. Aesthetics

This exception applies when a project may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a visual resource. As stated in Section I: Project Description, the project only consists of adding a new median barrier and speed tables to the street; it would not impact any aesthetic resources. The Mobility Plan 2035 designates Vista Del Mar as a City scenic highway due to the scenic quality features of sand dunes and ocean views. The Westchester-Play Del Rey Community Plan includes the objective to “preserve coastal visual resources by protecting and enhancing scenic views of the ocean and wetlands from designated Scenic Highways, and public view sites.” The project does not propose any structures that would interrupt the scenic views.

ii. Noise

The work shall be performed in accordance with Ordinance No. 144.331, “Noise Regulation” in Chapter XI of the Los Angeles Municipal Code of March 1982. The City will restrict demolition, construction, and striping on Vista Del Mar in locations near sensitive uses (such as residences) to daytime hours and in accordance with the City’s noise regulations. The installation process would not be expected to exceed an ambient noise by more than 5 dBA for more than 10 continual days; thus, there will be less than significant noise impacts on the neighborhood immediately surrounding the project area. Furthermore, extensive noise analyses from similar streetscape improvement projects, such as the My Figueroa Project, have consistently determined that construction and operation impacts related to noise and vibration would be less than significant, requiring no mitigation measures.¹

iii. Biological Resources

The proposed project does not involve the loss of, an alteration to, nor an impact to any biological resources. It does not include the removal of existing trees, and the roadway work consists of minimally-impactful striping and installation of concrete median barriers and fencing material.

iv. Traffic/Transportation

The proposed project will not result in significant impacts to transportation. The proposed project installs a median barrier and speed tables on Vista Del Mar between Imperial Highway and Waterview Street. The new roadway striping for the median barrier will necessitate minor adjustments to on-street parking, restricting turns at Napoleon Street, as well as a short (approximately 1,000 linear feet) length of reduced travel lane capacity in the northbound direction, in front of Vista Del Mar Park.

The proposed project will not result in significant impacts to emergency access. The project meets all safety and access requirements agreed upon between LADOT and LAFD, ensuring that emergency response remains unimpeded.

In addition, substantial travel delay no longer qualifies as an exception under the Section 15300.2 (c) of the CEQA Guidelines that could disqualify a lane striping

¹ City of Los Angeles 2010 Bicycle Plan, 4.4 Noise and Vibration [Los Angeles 2010 Bicycle Plan](#)

project covered under a Class 1 or Class 4 exemption due to the adoption and rulemaking procedures of Senate Bill (SB) 743. Upon adopting SB 743 into law, the legislature and Governor directed the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to replace delay and capacity-based metrics such as level of service (LOS) when lead agencies are evaluating transportation impacts under CEQA. The legislature further found that new transportation analysis under CEQA was needed to promote the state's goals of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and traffic-related air pollution, promote the development of a multimodal transportation system (including bicycle lanes), and provide clean, efficient access to destinations. The California Natural Resources Agency certified and adopted the CEQA Guidelines in December of 2018, and are now in effect.²

In its document, 'Revised Proposal on Updates to the CEQA Guidelines on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA', the OPR recommended that a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita metric replace delay-based metric throughout the State when identifying transportation impacts under CEQA. OPR finds that a VMT per capita metric is in direct correlation with the state's goals of reducing GHG emissions and traffic-related air pollution, promoting the development of a multimodal transportation system, and providing clean, efficient access to destinations. OPR further finds that delay-based metric of LOS, in congruence with the legislative direction and intent, to be in conflict with achieving improved environmental outcomes, and is ill suited in defining environmental outcomes under CEQA, regardless of location.

In its 'Revised Proposal on Updates to the CEQA Guidelines on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA', OPR has further indicated that both active transportation projects (which include bicycle lanes), and transportation projects that reduce number of lanes should generally not lead to substantial increase in VMT, and further not be considered to contribute to a significant impact under CEQA. In the presumption of less than significant impacts for active transportation projects, OPR finds that streamlining active transportation projects align with three of the statutory goals of SB 743, which include reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing multimodal transportation networks, and facilitating mixed-use development.

In summary, the actions of the California Legislature in adopting SB 743, as well as the record of evidence and preliminary guidance as provided by OPR, Caltrans, and the Natural Resource Agency support the conclusion that travel delay is not considered an exception of hazardous and critical concern that would disqualify the application of a Class 1 or Class 4 Exemption pursuant to Section 15300.2 (c) of the CEQA Guidelines.

With respect to construction-related transportation impacts, the restriping of the work of restriping of the project corridor shall be performed in accordance with work area traffic control handbook (WATCH)³. City construction crews will coordinate with schools and the Department of Transportation according to WATCH and provide flaggers when required. When the activity site encroaches upon a sidewalk, walkway or crosswalk area, pedestrians shall be provided advance warning if they are detoured away from the activity site. Advance

² State of California, Natural Resources Agency, Final Adopted Text, December 2018.

<https://resources.ca.gov/ceqa/>

³ WATCHBOOK: Work Area Traffic Control Handbook 2024 Edition. Inspection available upon request.

[Work Area Traffic Control Handbook](#)

notification of sidewalk closures shall be provided according to WATCH. At least one lane of traffic in each direction will be maintained at all times.

v. Land Use Impacts

This proposed project is not anticipated to have land use impacts. The project is consistent with the City of Los Angeles General Plan, including the Mobility Plan 2035. The Project advances the Mobility Plan's goals by making Vista Del Mar a safer street that aims to reduce roadway crashes, especially those that result in severe injury or death. It does this by reducing excessive speeding and reducing the likelihood for conflict between vehicles and pedestrians and conflict between vehicles. It applies guidance from the City's adopted Complete Streets Design Guide by incorporating features that encourage slower vehicle speeds that are in line with the 25 mph target operating speed for Vista Del Mar, which is designated as an Avenue III in the Mobility Plan.

vi. Hazardous Waste and Historic Resources

The project would not have a significant impact on hazardous waste and historic resources, as set forth below in the other 15300.2 exception areas.

vii. Non-implicated impact Areas

The proposed project does not involve any activities that would impact agriculture, air, energy, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, water quality and supply, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, and public utilities (related to the need for new facilities), and wildfire, as it only involves non-excavation work on an existing roadway.

C. Conclusion

Standard conditions and construction practices are anticipated for this project.⁴ As set forth above, no unusual circumstances are present, and no reasonable possibility has been identified that the project will have a significant effect. As such, this exception does not apply.

4. 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.

While Vista Del Mar is a City-designated scenic parkway in Mobility Plan 2035, it is not designated as a state scenic highway. Nevertheless the project does not damage scenic resources.

There are no State-designated scenic highways at any of the project sites, on the project corridor, nor crossing the project corridor. In any case, the project does not include the removal of existing trees or median and would not impact any aesthetic, biological, or historic resources, as set forth previously. Therefore, this exception does not apply.

5. Hazardous Waste Sites. This exception applies when a project is located on a site listed as a hazardous waste site under Government Code Section 65962.5.

⁴ See LADOT Technical Reference Library, at <https://ladot.lacity.gov/businesses/technical-reference-library>

As of June 3 2026, the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) data management system (<http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov>) does not reflect any evaluation sites along the street on which the project will take place, including any sites listed under Government Code Section 65962.5, and the project site does not otherwise appear on any other lists under 65962.5.⁵ Therefore, this exception has no application here.

6. Historical Resources. This exception applies when a project may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. A search of the City's Declared Monuments showed that there are no designated Historic-Cultural Monuments near the project area.⁶

⁵ California Department of Toxic Substance Control, *EnviroStor* Hazardous Waste and Substance Site List, last accessed June 3, 2026, CalEPA Cortese List Data Resources, <https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/>; <https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/>

⁶ City of Los Angeles City Planning, "Historic-Cultural Monument (HCM) List," last accessed June 3, 2026, <https://planning.lacity.gov/preservation-design/historic-landmark-programs>.

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Final Audit Report

2026-06-16

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