

Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: Caltrans
1976 E Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd
Stockton, CA 95205

Project Title: Hilmar Complete Street

Project Applicant: Caltrans

Project Location - Specific: MER-165-PM-32.87/34.44

Project Location - City: Hilmar

Project Location - County: Merced

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to construct Complete Streets and drainage improvements on State Route (SR) 165 from postmile 32.87 to postmile 34.44 in the City of Hilmar, Merced County.

The project would install approximately 15,840 linear feet of new Class II buffered bicycle lanes. Pedestrian improvements would include construction of approximately 6,890 linear feet of new sidewalk, reconstruction of approximately 6,980 linear feet of existing sidewalk, installation of six new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant curb ramps, and upgrade of 31 existing curb ramps to current ADA standards. The project would also reconstruct 99 existing driveways within the project limits.

Roadway improvements would include widening shoulders using Hot Mix Asphalt (HMA) (Type A) to accommodate bicycle facilities. Traffic and safety enhancements would include upgrading five signal and lighting systems, upgrading three flashing beacon systems, upgrading two pedestrian hybrid beacon systems, installing two traffic monitoring stations, and installing approximately 1,348 linear feet of crosswalks at six locations.

Drainage improvements would include installation of 37 new culverts totaling approximately 3,871 linear feet, 18 drainage inlets, and 16 manholes with frames and covers. The project would also construct one retention basin and one stormwater lift station near postmile 34.21 to address localized flooding and stormwater management needs.

Construction activities would require temporary traffic control measures, which may include lane closures, one-way traffic control, and short-term detours to maintain traffic flow and ensure worker and public safety.

The project focuses on improving multimodal access and bringing pedestrian facilities into compliance with ADA standards as part of Complete Streets implementation. Improvements to existing nonstandard roadway features are not included in the project scope due to right-of-way constraints; these features are addressed separately in a Design Standard Decision Document (DSDD).

The purpose of the project is to improve mobility for roadway users and address stormwater issues within the project limits.

The project is needed to address stormwater issues and to bring the corridor within the project limits up to standard in compliance with the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Caltrans

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Caltrans

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));
- ☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Class 1(c) PRC 21084;14 CCR 15301
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

The project is Categorically Exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act under Class 1(c) PRC 21084; 14 CCR 15301, as the scope of work is a minor improvement to an existing facility. The project is not anticipated to affect any environmentally sensitive resources.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Laura Cook

Phone number: 209-662-2261

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: Laura M. Cook Date: 08/14/2026 Title: Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisory)

☒ Signed by Lead Agency ☐ Signed by Applicant

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.