

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

2400 Imperial Hwy

Norwalk, CA 90650

From: (Public Agency): City of Lancaster
44933 Fern Avenue
Lancaster, CA 93534

(Address)

Project Title: Sierra Gateway Neighborhood Plan

Project Applicant: City of Lancaster

Project Location - Specific:

Bound by 10th St (west), Avenue I (north), Division Street (east), Avenue J (south)

Project Location - City: Lancaster Project Location - County: Los Angeles

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

See attached.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: City of Lancaster

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: City of Lancaster

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: _____
- ☒ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Public Resources Code section 21080.085(a)

Reasons why project is exempt:

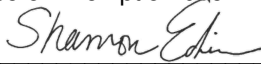
See attached.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shannon Edwin Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 661-723-6048

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:  Date: 9/18/26 Title: Associate 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.

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Gateway Neighborhood Plan (also referred to as the “Specific Plan”) implements Program H-5.2 of the City’s Housing Element. Program H-5.2 involves an to update the Lancaster Transit-Oriented Development Zones (adopted in 2015) to promote high-quality, walkable, mixed-use, and transit-oriented neighborhoods surrounding the Lancaster Boulevard core and the Metrolink station, as further detailed in Section 1.5, Relationship to the Lancaster Municipal Code, of the Specific Plan. The Housing Element also identifies several vacant parcels within the Specific Plan Area (“Plan Area”) as additional residential capacity for 193 very-low and low-income units, as defined by the Department of Housing and Community Development (Table H-5.22 and H-5.25).

The Plan Area includes several sites identified in the Housing Element as Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) sites. This includes 89 parcels totaling 7.56 acres that comprise the drainage basin located at the southwest corner of Division Street and Milling Street. As part of the Specific Plan preparation, it was determined that while these are designated RHNA sites, future development of these sites is unlikely given the high cost and engineering that would be required to accommodate and re-route the drainage that the basin currently supports for the area. Therefore, given that these sites would be highly unlikely to be developed as housing, as part of the Specific Plan, these sites would be rezoned from Neighborhood Medium (NM) to Public (P) with a future vision to utilize the area as open space. To ensure there is no net loss of Housing Element sites, the Housing Element includes a surplus sites inventory. There are several surplus sites in the Plan Area on vacant lots that would be suitable and feasible for future development. Per the Housing Element, the surplus sites in the Plan Area could accommodate 193 units. The rezone of the basin sites would remove an estimated potential of 129 units. This would represent a net of 64 units. Therefore, there would be no net loss of Housing Element sites designated for the Plan Area.

Reasons why project is exempt:

On June 14, 2022, the Lancaster City Council adopted Resolution No. 22-30, adopting the 2021-2029 Housing Element. The Housing Element identified implementation programs necessary for compliance, including but not limited to Program H-5.2 (Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing). The action to adopt the Sierra Gateway Neighborhood Specific Plan falls within the City’s efforts to affirmatively further fair housing in Lancaster. Pursuant to SB 131, a new statutory California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) exemption went into effect providing an exemption for actions needed to implement Housing Elements. The City’s proposed Specific Plan implements Program H-5.2 of the approved Housing Element pursuant to Government Code section 65583, and does not allow the construction of a distribution center, or oil and gas infrastructure. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.085(a).

While the Specific Plan has been found to be exempt under Public Resources Code Section 21080.085, Government Code 65352.3 requires that prior to the adoption of any amendment of a general plan, the City must conduct tribal consultations. Letters were sent to 10 tribal representatives as identified by the Native American Heritage Commission on March 9, 2026. Two responses were received from local tribal representatives within the 90-day comment period. These entities provided standard comments requesting that all future development and/or individual ground-disturbing activities that occur within the Plan Area comply with all tribal consultation requirements under CEQA. There is no development proposed with the adoption of the Specific Plan and all future development projects will be subject to tribal consultation requirements under CEQA.