

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044
1400 Tenth Street, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: California Energy Commission
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Project Applicant: Smartville, Inc.

Project Title: Power Electronics and Control for 2nd-Life Lithium EV Battery Pack Integration

Project Location:

Address	City	County
1495 Poinsettia Avenue, Suite 146	Vista 92081	San Diego
130 Brooks Street	Oceanside 92054	San Diego
9413 Voigt Drive	La Jolla 92093	San Diego

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

Amendment to grant agreement to change the recipient's facility site (also the project facility site) and add a demonstration site to the project. This project will design, construct and demonstrate an innovative integrated power electronics / energy storage system to serve the grid-tied energy storage market. The system will be rated for 120kW (power) and 500kWh (energy) and use repurposed EV packs (2nd-life battery). The recipient will conduct a one-year technology demonstration that will directly benefit either a disadvantaged community (DAC) or a low-income community. The Energy Commission made CEQA findings pertaining to this project, including finding it was categorically exempt under 14 CCR 15301, when the project was originally adopted by the Commission at the Business Meeting held on May 12, 2021. The change in project facility site and the addition of a demonstration site does not change the applicability of the exemption under 14 CCR 15301.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Energy Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Smartville, Inc.

Exempt Status: *(check one)*

- ☐ Ministerial Exemption (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(1); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15268);
- ☐ Declared Emergency (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(3); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(a));
- ☐ Emergency Project (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(4); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(b)(c));
- ☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number
Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15301
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number.
- ☐ Common Sense Exemption. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15061(b)(3))

Reasons why project is exempt:

The reasons for the CEQA categorical exemptions are as follows:

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

Cal. Code Regs. (CCR), Title 14, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) provides that projects which consist of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, and which involve negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination, are categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act.

1. This project will design and build an innovative integrated power electronics / energy storage system to serve the energy storage market. The proposed tasks for this project include development and testing of a novel power conversion topology, integration of the power electronics with a battery energy storage system consisting of repurposed electric vehicle battery packs, and pilot testing of the integrated system at an existing facility in Vista, CA. Initial development, testing, and integration will take place at an existing, fully permitted, facility located in San Diego County. The location is within an Office and Light Manufacturing zone in the City of Vista.

2. The project demonstration is planned to be performed using the Modular Assembly of Batteries (MoAB) unit (a stationary unit located at a facility in Vista, CA) to charge a mobile Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) unit (built under a separate project, ARV-21-015), where the mobile BESS unit will be transported to a designated parking location on a paved parking lot. This will occur at the demonstration sites in either Oceanside, CA or La Jolla, CA. While at the demonstration site, the mobile BESS unit will provide free mobile charging for electric vehicles, until the BESS unit needs to recharge. When the mobile BESS unit needs to recharge, it will be transported back to the facility in Vista, CA so that it can be recharged by the MoAB unit. If the MoAB unit is also made to be mobile, it will be transported to the demonstration site, just like the mobile BESS units, and then transported back to the facility in Vista, CA to recharge. The required use permits and licenses (if applicable) have already been obtained for the demonstration sites from the City of Oceanside and from the University of California (San Diego campus), and will be renewed as required during the course of the demonstration. No installation is needed for the mobile BESS unit. The demonstration will not require installation, or grid interconnection, or construction at the demonstration sites in Oceanside, CA or La Jolla, CA. The existing parking lots will continue operations with negligible or no expansion of the existing use.

This project does not involve impacts on any particularly sensitive environment; does not involve any cumulative impacts of successive projects of the same type in the same place that might be considered significant; does not involve unusual circumstances that might have a significant effect on the environment; will not result in damage to scenic resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway; the project sites are not included on any list compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5, and the project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. Therefore, none of the exceptions to categorical exemptions listed in CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 apply to this project, and this project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

For these reasons, the proposed work will not have any significant effect on the environment and is exempt under California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15301, Existing Facilities (14 CCR, Section 15301).

Public Agency

Contact Person: Benson Gilbert **Area code/Telephone/Ext:** 916-352-0595

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: Benson Gilbert **Date:** 10/15/26 **Title:** CAM

☒ **Signed by Public 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.