



**CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
DETERMINATION FORM (rev. 11/2020)**

Project Information

Project Name (if applicable): SLO 101 Gore Safety Improvements

DIST-CO-RTE: 05-SLO-101

PM/PM: 28.65/29.52

EA: 05-1N340

Federal-Aid Project Number: N/A

Project Description

This proposed project is located on Route 101 through the central corridor of the City of San Luis Obispo, between Broad Street and California Blvd from Post Miles 28.65 to 29.52. The project is being proposed by District 5 Traffic Safety to improve sight distance at 16 Gore areas. The following improvements intend to improve sight distance and reduce rear-end and sideswipe collisions due to merging and diverging movements: Installation of Contrasting Surface Treatment (CST), vegetation control, guide sign Relocations, and Route 101 Shoulder Widening.

Caltrans CEQA Determination (Check one)

- Not Applicable** – Caltrans is not the CEQA Lead Agency
- Not Applicable** – Caltrans has prepared an IS or EIR under CEQA

Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the project is:

- Exempt by Statute.** (PRC 21080[b]; 14 CCR 15260 et seq.)
- Categorically Exempt. Class 1.** (PRC 21084; 14 CCR 15300 et seq.)
 - No exceptions apply that would bar the use of a categorical exemption (PRC 21084 and 14 CCR 15300.2). See the [SER Chapter 34](#) for exceptions.
- Covered by the Common Sense Exemption.** This project does not fall within an exempt class, but it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment (14 CCR 15061[b][3].)

Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief

Lara Bertaina

1/20/21

Print Name

Signature

Date

Project Manager

Amy Donatello

1/20/21

Print Name

Signature

Date



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Caltrans NEPA Determination (Check one)

Not Applicable

Caltrans has determined that this project has no significant impacts on the environment as defined by NEPA, and that there are no unusual circumstances as described in 23 CFR 771.117(b). See SER Chapter 30 for unusual circumstances. As such, the project is categorically excluded from the requirements to prepare an EA or EIS under NEPA and is included under the following:

23 USC 326: Caltrans has been assigned, and hereby certifies that it has carried out the responsibility to make this determination pursuant to 23 USC 326 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated April 18, 2019, executed between FHWA and Caltrans. Caltrans has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under:

- 23 CFR 771.117(c): activity (c)(Enter activity number)
23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)(Enter activity number)
Activity Enter activity number listed in Appendix A of the MOU between FHWA and Caltrans

PENDING FTIP APPROVAL

23 USC 327: Based on an examination of this project and the supporting information, Caltrans has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under 23 USC 327. The environmental review, consultation, and any other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by Caltrans pursuant to 23 USC 327 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated December 23, 2016 and executed by FHWA and Caltrans.

Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief

Print Name Signature Date

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Print Name Signature Date

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion: Enter date
Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: Enter date

Briefly list environmental commitments on continuation sheet if needed (i.e., not necessary if included on an attached ECR). Reference additional information, as appropriate (e.g., additional studies and design conditions).



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Continuation sheet:

The following measures would reduce the construction effects of this project:

Hazardous Waste:

- Since soil is being disturbed with the project, a bid item must be included for a Lead Compliance Plan (LCP).
- If Treated Wood Waste (TWW) will be replaced as part of any guardrail removal/reconstruction, then include SSP 14-11.14 for proper management and disposal as a hazardous waste of the TWW.
- If thermoplastic or traffic stripe is to be removed by itself, the SSP that will apply on this portion of Highway 101 will be SSP 36-4. This requires preparation of a LCP but does not require the stripe debris to be disposed of as a hazardous waste. If the stripe is going to be removed as part of a cold plane or grinding operation where the stripe is being removed with the asphalt concrete, then use SSP 84-9.03C

Biology:

- No tree removal is currently anticipated; however, tree trimming is planned for Site 1 and Site 6B. If tree removal or tree trimming is required during the bird nesting season (February 1-September 30), prior to commencement of work, a qualified biologist will conduct a focused nest survey for active migratory bird and raptor nests in the trees to be removed or trimmed. If an active bird nest is found in a tree proposed to be removed or trimmed, Caltrans will coordinate with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to determine an appropriate buffer based on the habits and needs of the species. The nest area would be avoided until the nest is vacated and the juveniles have fledged and are no longer dependent on the nesting area.
- Contractor staging areas, equipment and material storage should be located in paved or previously cleared areas, or level areas where grading and vegetation clearing are not required. Before construction takes place, all work staging areas that are not located in existing pullouts or on previously disturbed ground surfaces must be selected and evaluated for any potential environmental impacts.

Air Quality:

- To minimize dust emissions from the project, Section 14-9.02 (Air Pollution control) of the 2015 Standard Specifications states that the contractor is responsible for complying with all local air-pollution-control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes that apply to work performed under the Contract, including those provided in Govt Code § 11017 (Pub Cont. Code § 10231).

Noise:

- Include the following general measures in the RE binder and implement as appropriate to further minimize temporary construction-noise impacts.
 - Notify the public in advance of the construction schedule when construction noise and upcoming construction activities likely to produce an adverse noise environment are expected. This notice shall be given two weeks in advance. Notice should be published in local news media of the dates and duration of proposed construction activity. The district 5 Public Information Office posts notice of the proposed construction and potential community impacts after receiving notice from the Resident Engineer.
 - Shield loud pieces of stationary construction equipment if complaints are received;
 - Locate portable generators, air compressors, etc. away from sensitive noise receptors as feasible;



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- Limit grouping major pieces of equipment operating in one area to the greatest extent feasible.
- Use newer equipment that is quieter and ensure that all equipment items have the manufacturers' recommended noise abatement measures, such as mufflers, engine covers, and engine vibration isolators intact and operational. Internal combustion engines used for any purpose on or related to the job shall be equipped with a muffler or baffle of a type recommended by the manufacturer; and,
- Consult District noise staff if complaints are received during the construction process.

Visual

- Preserve as much existing vegetation as possible. Prescriptive clearing and grubbing and grading techniques which save the most existing vegetation possible should be employed.
- No tree removal will occur, and any tree pruning shall be conducted under the direct supervision of an ISA Certified Arborist and shall minimize tree disfiguration and promote the healthy regrowth of the tree.
- Replacement planting shall include aesthetic considerations as well as the inherent biological goals. Revegetation shall be determined by District Five Caltrans Landscape Architecture.
- Paving beyond the gore shall include aesthetic treatment to be determined and approved by District Five Landscape Architecture.
- Vegetation control shall be stained with an earth tone color to blend with the native soil. The color shall be determined and approved by District Five Landscape Architecture.
- Following construction, re-grade and re-contour all new construction access roads, staging areas, and other temporary uses as necessary to match the surrounding topography.