



**CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
DETERMINATION FORM (rev. 06/2022)**

Project Information

Project Name: Clean CA Project – National City Community Improvements

DIST-CO-RTE: 11-SD-805

PM/PM: 10.1-10.3, 10.8-11.2

EA: 11-4C005/PID 1122000093

Federal-Aid Project Number: _____

Project Description

Caltrans proposes landscaping (plants and hardscape) improvements between East 16th Street and East Plaza Boulevard, just west of the eastbound entrance ramp onto southbound I-805 from eastbound Plaza Boulevard. The existing dirt area will be replaced with plants including trees and hardscape elements (rock and boulders). This work includes grading the slope, placing rocks and boulders, constructing enhanced fencing, irrigation and planting work to improve the appeal of the surrounding neighborhoods. The environmental commitments pertaining to Biological Resources, NPDES/Stormwater Compliance, Hazardous Waste/Materials, and Paleontological Resources are identified, below.

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 1c.** (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

Shay Lynn M. Harrison		7/27/2022
Print Name	Signature	Date

Project Manager

Wishing Lima		7/27/2022
Print Name	Signature	Date



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Caltrans NEPA Determination (Check one)

[X] 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, 2022, executed between FHWA and Caltrans. Caltrans has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under:

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

[] 23 USC 327: Based on an examination of this proposal and 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 May 27, 2022, and executed by FHWA and Caltrans.

Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief

Not Applicable

Print Name

Signature

Date

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Not Applicable

Print Name

Signature

Date

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion (if applicable): 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:

Biological Resources – Work should not occur during the migratory bird nesting season (February 15 to August 31). If work must occur during this timeframe, then a pre-construction survey shall be conducted by a qualified/District Biologist. Vegetated work areas require a survey for nesting birds within 7 days of clearing for work in this area.

NPDES/Stormwater Compliance – This project will be designed in conformance with the NPDES Permit Order 2012-0011-DWQ and Appendix E of the Caltrans Project Planning and Design Guide (PPDG). The Project Engineer needs to determine whether a Short Form Storm Water Data Report (SWDR) or a Long Form SWDR shall be prepared for the project. The Disturbed Soil Area (DSA) under or over one acre would determine whether a Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP) or a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) is required prior to the start of construction.

Hazardous Waste/Materials

Aerially Deposited Lead (ADL)

Environmental Engineering performed an XRF field survey in the project area. The survey showed the project area to be considered Unregulated with a 95% UCL statistical analysis lead concentration of 33.55 mg/Kg and is not regulated by DTSC as a hazardous substance or a hazardous waste. The soil does not require disposal at a permitted landfill facility and can have unrestricted on-site or off-site use. Therefore, NSSP 7-1.02K(6)(j)(iii) Unregulated Earth Material Containing Lead shall be followed. This specification requires sponsor approval, which has been submitted to Division of Environmental Analysis (DEA). This specification requires a lead compliance plan (LCP) as described under 7-1.02K (6)(j)(ii).

Lead Compliance Plan

An LCP, as described under standard specification 7-1.02K(6)(j)(ii) and prepared by a certified industrial hygienist (CIH), is required and must be provided by the Contractor and implemented for all workers handling hazardous or non-hazardous soil as well as removal/application of any hazardous or non-hazardous lead-based paint, thermoplastic, painted traffic stripe, and/or pavement marking. Regulations containing specific Cal/OSHA requirements when working with lead are included in Title 8 California Code of Regulations (CCR) § 1532.1.

Discovery of Unanticipated Asbestos & Hazardous Substances (Std Spec 14-11.02)

It is possible to discover previously unknown contamination and hazards during construction activities. Health and Safety Code § 25914.2 specifies that unanticipated hazardous substances encountered during construction cannot legally be tested and/or managed and removed by the prime contractor who discovered it. The District has a Hazardous Waste Emergency on-call Construction Response Contract managed by the Environmental Engineering branch that can be accessed to have appropriate testing and disposal performed.



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Paleontological Resources:

- 1) A qualified paleontologist (as defined in the Caltrans' Standard Environmental Reference) must be invited to the pre-construction (or tailgate) meeting to consult with the grading and excavation contractors concerning excavation schedules, paleontological field techniques, and safety issues. A qualified paleontologist is defined as an individual with a MS or Ph.D. in paleontology or geology who is familiar with paleontological procedures and techniques, who is knowledgeable in the geology and paleontology of San Diego County, and who has worked as a paleontological mitigation project supervisor in the county for at least one year.
- 2) A paleontological monitor must be on-site on a full-time basis during the original cutting of previously undisturbed deposits of high or moderate paleontological resource potential, and on-site on a part-time basis during the original cutting of previously undisturbed deposits of low paleontological resource potential (sedimentary deposits of younger alluvium), to inspect exposures for contained fossils. A paleontological monitor is defined as an individual who has experience in the collection and salvage of fossil materials. The paleontological monitor must work under the direction of a qualified paleontologist. As grading progresses, the qualified paleontologist and paleontological monitor will confer with the Resident Engineer regarding the level of effort needed and reduce the scope of the monitoring program to an appropriate level if it is determined that the potential for impacts to paleontological resources is lower than anticipated.
- 3) When fossils are discovered, the paleontologist (or paleontological monitor) will recover them. In most cases this fossil salvage can be completed in a short period of time. However, some fossil specimens (such as a complete large mammal skeleton) may require an extended salvage period. In these instances, the paleontologist (or paleontological monitor) will consult with the RE to temporarily divert, or halt grading, to allow recovery of fossil remains in a timely manner.
- 4) During the monitoring and recovery phases, the qualified paleontologist and/or the paleontological monitor will also routinely collect stratigraphic data (e.g., lithology, vertical thickness, lateral extent of strata, nature of upper and lower contacts, and taphonomic character of exposed strata). Collection of such data is critical for providing a stratigraphic context for any recovered fossils.
- 5) Fossil remains collected during monitoring and salvage must be cleaned (removal of extraneous enclosing sedimentary rock material), prepared, sorted (separating fossils of the different species), cataloged (scientific identification of species, assignment of inventory tracking numbers, and recording of these numbers in a computerized collection database), and curated as part of the mitigation program.
- 6) A final summary report that outlines the results of the mitigation program must be completed. This report will include discussion of the methods used, stratigraphic section(s) exposed and documented, fossils collected, and significance of recovered fossils.
- 7) Environmental Analysis Branch D requests funds to retain a qualified consultant for the implementation of the paleontological mitigation plans and associated consultant oversight hours during the construction phase of the Project.