



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

Project Information

Project Name (if applicable): SAC 80 Planting Rehab

DIST-CO-RTE: 03-SAC-080

PM/PM: 11.700/13.200

EA: 03-0J610_

Federal-Aid Project Number: 0319000302

Project Description

The project will rehabilitate Interstate 80 and Madison Avenue interchange with a tree dominated landscape and hearty groundcover on the slopes. The proposed planting will utilize a combination of trees, groundcover planting, and inert materials (gravel and mulch). Existing trees which are determined to be in good health will be preserved.

The project also proposes to upgrade the irrigation facilities for water conservation. Overhead spray irrigation will be minimized and bubblers and tree well sprinkler assemble will be utilized. This project will include a three-year plant establishment period to ensure proper plant growth and irrigation operation. **(Continued on page 3)**

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 (d).** (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

Maggie Ritter

Maggie Ritter

06/06/2024

Print Name

Signature

Date

Project Manager

Andrew Huang

Andrew Huang

06/14/2024

Print Name

Signature

Date



CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

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

- 23 CFR 771.117(c): activity (c)(22)
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

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

Maggie Ritter
Signature: Maggie Ritter
Date: 06/06/2024

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Andrew Huang
Signature: Andrew Huang
Date: 06/14/2024

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).



CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

Continuation sheet:

Continued from page 1:

In 1990, record freezing temperatures damaged much of the existing landscape. Since the 2011-2017 California drought, the irrigation system has been turned off, causing additional damage to the existing landscape plants. The irrigation system has remained inoperable and/or unused for at least 10 to 15 years, and many system components are most likely in need of replacement. In 2015, smart controllers were placed in this interchange, but the entire irrigation system needs to be redesigned to support a drought-tolerant landscape design, as requested by Maintenance. In addition to the replacement of irrigation system components, one or more booster pumps may also be necessary.

Other scope items include six (6) trash BMP locations and Maintenance Vehicle Pullouts (MVPs), which may be required for the access and maintenance of the trash BMPs. Roadside rehabilitation provides for replacement and rehabilitation of existing landscaping, and also provides erosion control to comply with National Pollution Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) permit requirements.

Purpose: The purpose of this SHOPP 20.XX.201.210 – Highway Planting Rehabilitation Program project is to provide replacement and rehabilitation of existing vegetation and irrigation system, to improve the aesthetic quality of the facility, integrate with the adjacent community and surrounding environments, and maintain Classified Landscape Freeway Status.

Need: Replacement highway planting is required to restore damaged landscape and improve the aesthetic quality of the highway.

Permits

No permits required for this project.

Biology

No effect. Project activities would be limited to removing dead and/or dying vegetation, replanting, and installing new irrigation systems within existing gore areas. Project areas consist of asphalt paved roadways, adjacent concrete, and gore areas circumscribed by interstate on- and off-ramps. These areas are routinely disturbed by vehicular traffic and grounds maintenance. Adjacent areas are highly developed. No impacts to any sensitive natural or biological resources are anticipated. No permits or mitigation would be needed.

The project ESL were surveyed for wetlands and Other Waters of the U.S. and State. Various stormwater or erosion features were observed within and adjacent to the project. These features, however, would not be considered jurisdictional. Additionally, this project would be limited to the replacement of landscaped vegetation, mulch, and irrigation systems and would not entail work within any culvert or drainage system. The project would not impact any wetlands or Waters of the U.S. or State.



CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

Standard measure 14-6.03A Species Protection. For construction activities occurring from February 1 through September 30, nesting bird surveys will be conducted no more than 5 days before removal of trees or other vegetation. Surveys are only valid for 10 days after they have been completed. If trees or vegetation are not removed within the 10 days, then another survey is required before they can be removed.

Cultural Resources

A Screened Undertaking Memo was prepared. In accordance with the Section 106 PA, this undertaking is determined to be a screened undertaking with no potential to affect historic properties. The undertaking is "*exempt from further review or consultation under Section 106.*" No further cultural resources work is required unless project plans change to include work not currently identified in the project description or to include additional areas not identified in current project plans.

Hazardous Waste

Based on this review, the potential for hazardous waste exists with respect to the following;

1) Lead-contaminated soil may exist within and near our R/W due to the historical use of leaded gasoline, leaded airline fuels, waste incineration, and et-cetera. The areas of primary concern in relation to highway facilities are soils along routes with historically high vehicle emissions due to large traffic volumes, congestion, or stop and go situations. Since soil disturbance will occur, an Aerially Deposited Lead (ADL) site investigation is required. This site investigation will determine if hazardous soils exist and what actions, if any, will need to occur during construction.

2) A Hazardous Materials Disclosure Document (HMDD) will be required for attachment to the Certificate of Sufficiency (COS) before any right of way can be acquired. To provide the HMDD, Design will need to provide our office with final R/W mapping as soon as it is available.

Since construction of the proposed project cannot avoid disturbing soils, a Site Investigation (SI) is required. A SI needs to be requested by the PE or PM and takes 2 to 5 months to complete since a task order has to be prepared, approved, and issued to a contractor. The contractor is then required to prepare work plans, health and safety plans, conduct site investigations, and prepare site investigation reports for Caltrans review and approval.

This project is not on the Cortese list. Should this project take place at locations other than those specified, another review will be required.

Right of Way

All work to occur within Caltrans' right of way.



CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

Traffic Noise, Air Quality, Energy and Greenhouse Gas (GHG):

- Noise - This project is considered a Type III project as defined in 23CFR772. Traffic noise impact is not predicted to occur from the proposed project; therefore, noise abatement is not considered.
- Air Quality – This project is exempt from all air quality conformity analysis requirements per Table 2 of 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §93.126, subsection “Other” (“Plantings, landscaping, etc.”). Conformity requirements do not apply.
- GHG - Long-term operational GHG emissions are not predicted to increase from the project. Therefore, impact regarding GHG is not expected and no further analysis is required.

Visual Impact Assessment

This project was determined to result in negligible visual changes to the environment and no public concern for the project was identified. A Statement of No Visual Resource Impact approved by the District Landscape Architect has been provided.

Water Quality

The project is Exempt from a Water Quality Assessment.