

## Notice of Exemption

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**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**From:** Caltrans  
1976 East Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd  
Stockton, CA 95205

Project Title: Broadband Middle Mile Network

Project Applicant: Caltrans

Project Location - Specific: ALP-89-PM-21.376/23.972

Project Location - City: Sorensens      Project Location - County: Alpine

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

**Purpose:** This Middle-Mile Broadband Network project will install the broadband infrastructure along the State Highway System (SHS) necessary to connect to a third-party operated Last Mile Broadband Network which will bring internet connectivity to homes, businesses, and community institutions.

**Need:** In July 2021, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law Senate Bill (SB) 156 to create an open-access middle-mile network to bring equitable high-speed broadband service to all Californians.

The lack of available middle-mile broadband infrastructure has been a major issue in connecting California's unserved and underserved communities. The statewide open-access middle-mile network included in SB 156 is a foundational investment to ensure every Californian has access to broadband Internet service that meets the connectivity needs of today, and well into the future. This project intends to support providing critical statewide broadband infrastructure to enhance access to and increase the affordability of high-speed internet for all Californians.

**Description:** This project would include the installation of approximately 10,000 miles of broadband infrastructure throughout California within the State Highway System, including Interstate routes.

Due to the varied topography and locations of the 10,000-mile broadband infrastructure across the State of California, the design would be dependent on project site features. Work would include the installation of subsurface broadband conduit and fiber, the installation of network repeater hubs at approximately 50-mile intervals, as well as the installation of vaults (Pull, Splice, and Buried) at various locations.

All work will take place within 30 feet of highway rights-of-way except where not feasible. The areas of project impact in most areas will be limited to the existing paved surfaces, disturbed shoulders, and maintained Caltrans right-of-way.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Caltrans

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Caltrans

**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: PRC 21080.51

**Reasons why project is exempt:**


This project is statutorily exempt from CEQA under California Code PRC 21080.51. The project will not affect any sensitive species or their habitat, cultural resources, or any other environmentally sensitive resources.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Jonathan Coley

Phone number: 209-479-4083

**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: 02/21/25 Title: Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisory)

- Signed by Lead 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.