



# NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

From: Community Development – Planning Division  
505 Forest Avenue Laguna Beach, California 92651

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1. **APPLICANT:** City of Laguna Beach, 505 Forest Ave. Laguna Beach, CA, 92651
2. **LEAD AGENCY:** City of Laguna Beach, 505 Forest Ave. Laguna Beach, CA, 92651
3. **PROJECT PLANNER:** Louie Lacasella, Senior Administrative Analyst, [llacasella@lagunabeachcity.net](mailto:llacasella@lagunabeachcity.net), (949) 497-0736
4. **PROJECT TITLE:** AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAGUNA BEACH, CALIFORNIA, ADDING CHAPTER 11.70 (SLOW STREETS PROGRAM) TO TITLE 11 (STREETS AND SIDEWALKS) OF THE LAGUNA BEACH MUNICIPAL CODE TO ESTABLISH THE SLOW STREETS PROGRAM AND FINDING THE ACTION IS STATUTORILY EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT PURSUANT TO PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE SECTION 21080.25
5. **PROJECT LOCATION:** Lower Forest Avenue, between the Forest Avenue/South Coast Highway intersection and the Forest Avenue/Glenneyre Street intersection
6. **DESCRIPTION OF NATURE, PURPOSE AND BENEFICIARIES OF PROJECT:**  
The Ordinance implements the provisions of California Vehicle Code Section 21101(f). It includes a process for designating a street as a slow street and a process for closing a street that has been designated as a slow street. A "slow streets program" authorizes local agencies to designate a street or street segment as a "Slow Street" for closure to vehicular traffic or to limit access and speed on a street using roadway design features, including, but not limited to, islands, curbs, or traffic barriers. This Ordinance is a part of the Promenade on Forest project (hereinafter referred to as "Project"), which proposes the development of a pedestrian promenade within the existing City right-of-way.

## ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

The Project is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") (Public Resources Code §21000 et seq.; 14 CCR § 15000 et seq.) pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.25(b), as amended by Senate Bill 922 (SB 922), which exempts "pedestrian and bicycle facilities that improve safety, access, or mobility, including new facilities, within the public right-of-way." (Pub. Resources Code, §21080.25(b)(1).) The Project qualifies for the statutory exemption as a pedestrian facility within the public right-of-way because it would involve the development of a pedestrian promenade within the existing City right-of-way, improving safety and mobility by providing a pedestrian-only facility that is separated from active roadways and improving access by providing new opportunities for residents and visitors to visit shops, restaurants, and City events on foot. This Ordinance implements the Project by formally and permanently closing the Project site to vehicular traffic.

On March 25, 2025, the City Council of the City of Laguna Beach introduced for first reading the Ordinance and found the Project statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.25(b).

- The project is not subject to CEQA because it "does not involve the exercise of discretionary power," or "will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment," or, "is not a project as defined in Section 15378 of the CEQA guidelines." (Sections 15060(c)(1), (2) & (3)); or,
- "The activity is covered by the commonsense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA" (Section 15061(b)(3)); or,
- The project is statutorily exempt; or,
- The project is categorically exempt per State CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15304 and 15301.

7. Was a public hearing held by the Lead Agency to consider the exemption?  
Yes  No  If yes, the date of the public hearing was: March 25, 2025.

*Louie Lacasella*

Louie Lacasella, Senior Administrative Analyst

March 27, 2025