



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, (949) 497-0736
4. **PROJECT TITLE:** Design Review 25-0319 and Coastal Development Permit 25-0318 (Implementing the Promenade on Forest project)
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 design review and a coastal development permit to convert a temporary pedestrian plaza occupying the street to a permanent installation implements the Promenade on Forest project (approved by City Council on March 25, 2025). The key elements of the Promenade on Forest project include seating for nearby restaurants (including outdoor dining) and the general public, removal of the existing curb and gutter, landscaping including new and replacement trees, enhanced paving, drainage improvements, and lighting. The project also includes the implementation of the Slow Streets program providing for the closure.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

On April 2, 2025, the City of Laguna Beach Planning Commission approved Design Review 25-0319 and Coastal Development Permit 25-0318, which implements the Promenade on Forest project ("Project"). Therefore, Design Review 25-0319 and Coastal Development Permit 25-0318 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.

- 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: April 2, 2025.

Louie Lacasella

Louie Lacasella, Senior Administrative Analyst

April 7, 2025