



County of Santa Cruz

Department of Community Development and Infrastructure

701 Ocean Street, Fourth Floor, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Planning (831) 454-2580

Public Works (831) 454-2160

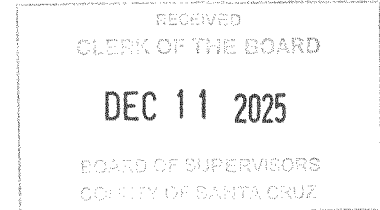
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44-12112025-184
155-25

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: Clerk of the Board
Attn: Juliette Rezzato
701 Ocean Street, Room 500
Santa Cruz, CA 95060



Project Name: Soquel Drive Multi-Modal transportation improvement project

Project Location: Approximately 2.4 miles of Soquel Drive between State Park Drive and Freedom Boulevard

Assessor Parcel No.: N/A

Project Applicant: County of Santa Cruz

Project Description: Construction of multimodal transportation improvements along the urban Soquel Drive corridor to enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety, accessibility, and connectivity while improving overall travel operations. The project will improve approximately 2.4 miles of Soquel Drive between State Park Drive and Freedom Boulevard within existing public right-of-way. Key components of the work include:

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities
 - Construction of new and improved bicycle lanes, including Class II and Class IV bikeways in both directions (up to 12,000 linear feet total).
 - Sidewalk construction and reconstruction (up to 6,000 linear feet) and installation of ADA-compliant curb ramps.
 - Pedestrian-crossing enhancements, such as Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons and upgraded crosswalks.
- Traffic Operations
 - Traffic-signal priority for Santa Cruz Metro Transit Agency buses.
 - Adaptive traffic-control signals for coordinated corridor operation.
- Roadway and Drainage
 - Roadway resurfacing and new striping and signage.
 - Lighting and signage upgrades for visibility and safety.
 - Drainage and erosion-control improvements within the existing roadway prism.
- Retaining and Aesthetic Treatments
 - Approximately 2,500 linear feet of retaining features with heights generally between 2 and 20 feet to fit new facilities within the corridor.
 - Use of textured finishes, color variation, and landscape planting where appropriate to help new elements blend with the surrounding environment.



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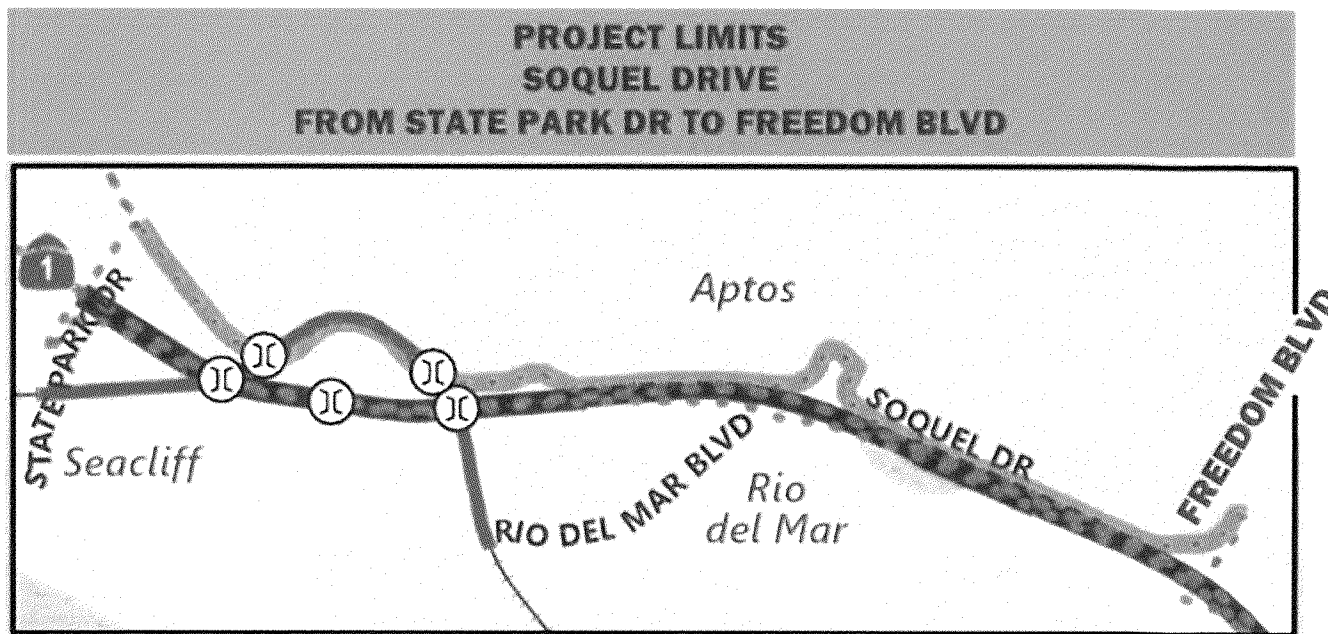
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All work will remain within existing County right-of-way, and any temporary construction easements will be restored after construction is complete. Minor erosion-control and storm-drain modifications will occur within the roadway prism using standard best-management practices.

The project will be implemented only with improvements that can be constructed within existing right-of-way and under the scope of this CEQA exemption. Any elements requiring additional right-of-way acquisition, new environmental review, or permitting beyond this description will be removed from the project scope. Areas that may contain sensitive vegetation will be verified during final design. If sensitive habitat is found, the design will be adjusted to avoid impacts, and all improvements will remain within the previously reviewed footprint.



Agency Approving Project: County of Santa Cruz

County Contact: Steve Wiesner

Telephone No. 831-454-2794

Date: November 21, 2025

This is to advise that the County of Santa Cruz Community Development and Infrastructure Department has determined the above-described project is exempt from CEQA under the following criteria:

Exempt status: (check one)

- ☐ The proposed activity is not a project under CEQA Guidelines Section 15378.
- ☐ The proposed activity is not subject to CEQA as specified under CEQA Guidelines Section 15060 (c).
- ☐ **The proposed activity is exempt from CEQA as specified under CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3).**
- ☐ Ministerial Project involving only the use of fixed standards or objective measurements without personal judgment.



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Categorical Exemption

Specify type:

- ☒ **Statutory Exemption** other than a Ministerial Project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15260 to 15285).
 Public Resources Code Section §21080.25
 Public Resources Code Section §21080(b)(10).

Reasons why the project is exempt

Public Resources Code Section 21080.25 provides a statutory exemption for pedestrian and bicycle facilities that improve safety, access, or mobility, including new facilities, within the public right-of-way. It also exempts transit priority projects, conversion of traffic lanes to high-occupancy vehicle lanes, bus use, part-time transit lanes, new or increased bus transit service, and zero-emission or near-zero-emission transit projects. As amended, Section 21080.25 specifies that the exemption for pedestrian and bicycle facilities must improve safety, access, or mobility, within the public right of way, in order to apply. The proposed project is consistent with this exemption.

Public Resources Code Section 21080(b)(10)

states that Projects for the **institution or increase of passenger or commuter services on rail or highways** are exempt from the environmental review process. Also, a project for the institution or increase of passenger or commuter services on rail or highway rights-of-way already in use.

DocuSigned by:

Mark Connolly

Signature: _____

Date: 11/24/2025

Title: Mark J. Connolly, Principal Planner

THIS NOTICE HAS BEEN POSTED AT THE CLERK
 OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OFFICE FOR A
 PERIOD COMMENCING 12/11/2025

AND ENDING 01/16/2026