

ATTACHMENT B: EXEMPTION

TO: Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Development Review Division, Planning and Development

Based on a preliminary review of the project, the following activity is determined to be exempt from further environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as defined in the State and County Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA.

APNs: 075-193-003,-018,-036,-037,-026,-024,-008,-009,-010,-005,-013,-012

Case Nos.: 08DVP-00000-00020 & 08CDP-00000-00187

Location: 6700 Block of Del Playa Drive, Isla Vista

Project Title: Walter Capps Memorial Park

Project Description: The Santa Barbara County Parks Department requests approval of a Final Development Plan and Coastal Development Permit to construct the Walter Capps Memorial Park on 12 contiguous blufftop parcels totaling approximately 1.2 acres. The new park would provide both active and passive recreational uses for members of the Isla Vista Community. The project site is currently vacant and owned by Santa Barbara County.

The proposed project would include the construction of a public restroom of approximately 200 square feet in size and 10 feet in height. The restroom would contain two stalls and a central storage closet for mechanical equipment and supplies. A trellis would be attached to the front of the restroom structure and bicycle parking would be provided between the restroom and Del Playa Drive. Approximately 1,610 cubic yards of grading (260 cubic yards of cut and 1,350 cubic yards of fill) would be necessary to prepare the site for development and direct stormwater runoff away from the bluff face. No trees would be removed as part of the project.

New landscaping would include native, drought-tolerant species along the bluff edge and the eastern and western property lines, and open lawn/meadow areas throughout the remainder of the site. The lawn area on the western half of the site would be underlain with a subgrade "EPIC" liner to catch and store stormwater and excess irrigation water. Landscaping would be irrigated using drip irrigation along the bluff and perimeter of the site, while spray systems controlled by irrigation cylindroids would be used for the center lawn/meadow areas. The drip irrigation along the bluff would be used temporarily to establish the plants and then removed after two years. Moisture sensors would be installed to ensure the bluff-top area is not over-irrigated. A split-rail fence (with appropriate signage to warn park users of the bluff edge location) would be located approximately 5 feet from the bluff edge along the entire ocean frontage to maintain pedestrian activities away from the bluff edge. The fence would periodically be moved back as needed in response to ongoing bluff erosion.

The project also includes the construction of paved walking paths composed of flagstone and decomposed granite, as well as minor accessory structures such as stone benches and seating areas, a drinking fountain, interpretive signs and a timber bridge. Also included in the project

would be the construction of a new sidewalk along Del Playa consistent with the requirements of the Public Works Department Roads Division. Only minimal security lighting associated with the restrooms is proposed. The Goleta Water District would provide water and the Goleta West Sanitary District would provide sewer service. No on-site parking is proposed.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: County of Santa Barbara

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Juan Beltranena

Exempt Status: (Check one)

Ministerial

Statutory

Categorical Exemption

Emergency Project

No Possibility of Significant Effect [§15061(b,3)]

Cite specific CEQA Guideline Section: 15303(e) [New Construction]

Reasons to support exemption findings: The project can be found exempt from environmental review under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15303(e) [New Construction]. Section 15303(e) is intended to exempt the construction of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures including garages, carports, patios, swimming pools and fences. The project is consistent with the requirements of this categorical exemption and does not have the potential to create any significant environmental impacts. Further, the project would not trigger any of the exceptions to the exemptions listed under CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. Therefore, no further environmental review is required.

There is no substantial evidence that there are unusual circumstances (including future activities) resulting in (or which might reasonably result in) significant impacts which threaten the environment. The exceptions to the categorical exemptions pursuant to Section 15300.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines are:

- (a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located -- a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.**

The project site is located along the coastal bluff in the 6700 block of Del Playa Drive in the Isla Vista community. The sandy beach below the subject property represents the only Environmentally Sensitive Habitat area near the project site that could be affected by project implementation. However, the site would be re-contoured to direct all surface drainage toward the street where it could be carried to the ocean in a non-erosive manner via stormdrains. Additionally, moisture sensors would be placed in several locations along the

blufftop area to detect the moisture content of the surrounding soils and ensure that irrigation occurs only when necessary. The moisture sensors would also detect leaks or failures in the irrigation system and alert maintenance staff of the need for repair. All plantings located within the blufftop area would be irrigated with a temporary drip system for a period of two years. Once the drought-tolerant plantings in this area are successfully established, the drip system would be removed. The native meadow in the eastern portion of the site would also be irrigated through establishment only. Therefore, the project would not impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern.

(b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.

The proposed project would improve an existing, undeveloped, blufftop open space into a public park. There is one additional undeveloped open space along the Isla Vista blufftop that is identified for improvement to a public park (located on the 6800 block of Del Playa Drive) and several existing blufftop parks. However, development of these properties to public parks would not present any significant, adverse cumulative impacts. Therefore, this exception does not apply.

(c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

The proposed project would improve an existing, undeveloped, blufftop open space into a public park. The site would be re-contoured to effectuate drainage away from the bluff edge and toward the existing stormdrain system located within Del Playa Drive. All plantings located within the bluff-retreat zone, with the exception of the turf area, would be drought-tolerant species irrigated for a period of up to two years. After the plants are established, the irrigation would be removed. The turf area located in the western portion of the site would be partially located within the 75-year bluff retreat zone. However, the turf would be underlain with a subterranean "EPIC" system that would prevent any irrigation or stormwater from entering the soil below the turf. Additionally, moisture sensors would be placed in several locations along the blufftop area to detect the moisture content of the surrounding soils and ensure that irrigation occurs only when necessary. As such, surface and subsurface drainage would not contribute to the erosion of the onsite bluff face or the instability of the onsite bluff itself. There are no unusual circumstances associated with the project or the project site. Therefore, this exception does not apply.

(d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.

The project does not impact scenic resources. The subject parcel is not located on a scenic highway. Therefore this exception does not apply.

- (e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.**

There are no known hazardous or toxic sites on the subject parcel. Therefore this exception does not apply.

- (f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.**

The parcel is currently vacant and there are no known historical resources on the subject parcel. Therefore this exception does not apply.

Department/Division Representative

Date

Note: A copy must be filed with the County Clerk of the Board after project approval and posted by the Clerk of the Board for a period of 30 days to begin a 35 day statute of limitations on legal challenges.

distribution: Hearing Support Staff

Date File of Counter Clerk