

CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
BUREAU OF ENGINEERING  
1149 S. BROADWAY, 7th FLOOR  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90015  
CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT  
NOTICE OF EXEMPTION  
(Articles II and III – City CEQA Guidelines)

COUNTY CLERK'S USE

Submission of this form is optional. The form shall be filed with the County Clerk, 12400 E. Imperial Highway, Norwalk, California, 90650 and with the State Clearinghouse in the Office of Planning and Research, if filed with the County Clerk, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21152(b). Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21167(d), the filing of this notice starts a 35-day statute of limitations on court challenges to the approval of the project.

|   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <b>LEAD CITY AGENCY AND ADDRESS:</b><br>City of Los Angeles c/o Bureau of Engineering<br>1149 S. Broadway, 6th Floor, MS 939<br>Los Angeles, CA 90015 | <b>COUNCIL DISTRICT</b><br>2, 4, 7 |
|---|------------------------------------|

|   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| <b>PROJECT TITLE:</b> Various: Riverside Drive bridge over State Route 134 (W.O. E1909308), Sepulveda Blvd Tunnel under Mulholland Drive (W.O. E1909307), and Avenue 43 bridge over State Highway 110 (W.O. E1909310) | <b>LOG REFERENCE</b> |
|---|----------------------|

**PROJECT LOCATION:** Two bridges and one tunnel, including Riverside Drive bridge over State Route 134 (Bridge No. 53-1287) and Avenue 43 bridge over California State Highway 110 (Bridge No. 53-0427) and the Sepulveda Boulevard Tunnel under Mullholland Drive (53C0164) in the Hollywood, Brentwood – Pacific Palisades, and Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan Areas of the City of Los Angeles. See *Figures 1, 2, and 3: Project Location*. T.G. Page 564, Grid A4 for Bridge No. 53-1287; Page 561, Grid F7 for State Structure No. 53C0164; and Page 595, Grid B5 for Bridge No. 53-0427.

**DESCRIPTION OF NATURE, PURPOSE, AND BENEFICIARIES OF PROJECT:** The Bridge Repair Maintenance Group (Project) consists of minor repair and maintenance activities of 2 bridge deck surfaces and tunnel roadway, which include concrete spall repairs, crack repairs, asphalt patching, railing repairs, soot removal, expansion joint cover plate repairs, and/or surface cleaning. Project beneficiaries include community members and motorists by ensuring and extending the lifespan of the bridges for safety purposes. Please see the Project description continuation in the narrative for more details. The Bureau of Engineering (BOE) expects to approve the Project in December 2024.

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|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>CONTACT PERSON</b><br>Daniel Kim | <b>CONTACT INFORMATION</b><br>daniel.y.kim@lacity.org |
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**EXEMPT STATUS:**

|  |                        |            |
|--|------------------------|------------|
| STATE CEQA GUIDELINES  | CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION* | Sec. 15331 |
| PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE  |                        |            |
| GOVERNMENT CODE  |                        |            |
| * See Public Resources Code Sec. 21080 and set forth state and city guidelines provisions. |                        |            |

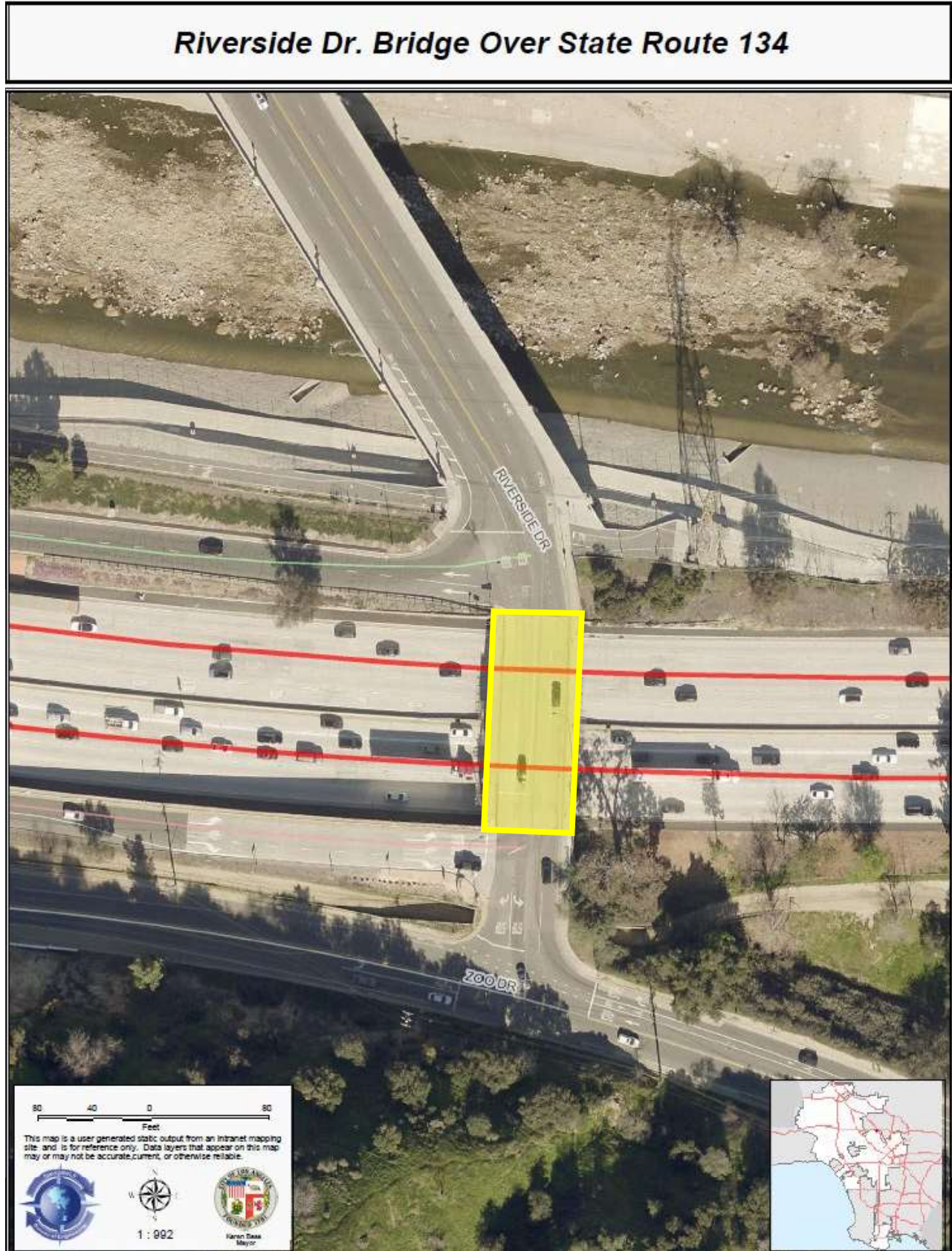
**JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT EXEMPTION:** This Project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Article 19, Section 15301, Class 1 (c) Existing Facilities. Additionally, the Project is exempt pursuant to *Los Angeles CEQA Guidelines* Article III, Section 1, Class 1, Existing Facilities, Category 3, and 4. *None of the limitations set forth in State CEQA Guidelines 15300.2 apply (see attached narrative).*

**IF FILED BY APPLICANT, ATTACH CERTIFIED DOCUMENT OF EXEMPTION FINDING**

|   |   |                         |      |
|---|---|-------------------------|------|
| SIGNATURE:<br><br><i>for Norman Mundy</i><br><br>Maria Martin | TITLE:<br>Environmental Affairs Officer<br>Environmental Management Group | DATE:<br><br>12/24/2024 |      |
| FEE: \$75.00  | RECEIPT NO.   | REC'D BY                | DATE |

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**Figure 1: Project Location**



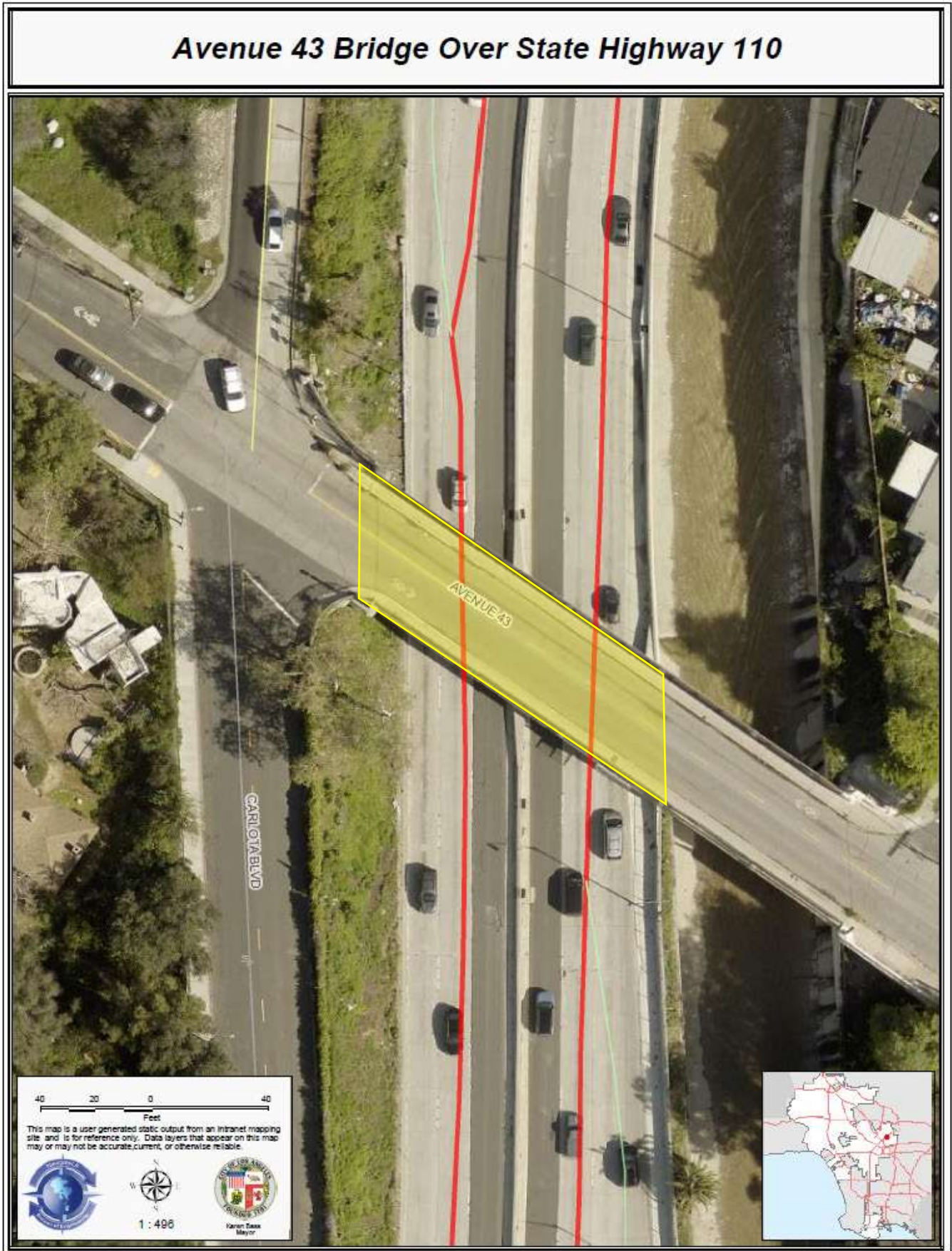
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**Figure 2: Project Location**



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**Figure 3: Project Location**



## CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION NARRATIVE

### I. DESCRIPTION OF NATURE, PURPOSE, AND BENEFICIARIES OF PROJECT, CONTINUED

The Project purposes the minor maintenance and repair activities of two (2) bridges and one (1) tunnel, limited to the top and/or underside of the bridge deck surfaces, roadways, or interior tunnel walls. Project activities include the minor repair of concrete spall, sealing cracks, asphalt patching, damaged railing, expansion joint cover plates, damaged tiles and concrete, and/or cleaning roadway and wall surfaces.

According to the Los Angeles Historic Resources Inventory database, the Project sites are designated or eligible to be designated as historical landmarks or located within a historical landmark zone. The Riverside Drive bridge over State Route 134 (built in 1938) is designated as a historic landmark since 2008. The Sepulveda Boulevard tunnel under Mulholland Drive (built in 1930) is classified as eligible for the National Register of Historical Places due to its significant physical architectural design with reinforced concrete tunnel with tile-lined interior and classical decorative motifs. Avenue 43 bridge over State Highway 110 is not designated as a historic resource; however, it is located within the Highland Park – Garvanza Historic Preservation Overlay Zone which is designated as a historic landmark. As such, character defining elements of the Project sites will not be altered during the Project.

The construction phase of the Project is scheduled from March 2025 to July 2025. Construction activities for each Project site are expected to last for a short duration of time (approximately two to three days at a time). Traffic control stage construction will be used to mitigate traffic impacts and construction. Temporary lane closures may be required to facilitate Project activities and temporarily slightly increase vehicular trips or traffic congestion during construction; however, all traffic control measures will be done in accordance with the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control (CA MUTCD), Work Area Traffic Control Handbook (WATCH), and any traffic control requirements set by the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT). No public right-of-way acquisition, subsurface excavation, and tree removal activities are expected to be conducted as part of the Project.

In the event unanticipated cultural resources are encountered during construction activities, the Project shall include the following project design features (PDFs) for compliance with applicable regulatory requirements or Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction, “Greenbook” that protect cultural resources as follows:

- **PDF-CUL-1:** Character defining elements of the bridges or roadways shall not be altered. The proposed repair plans, if any, shall be developed per the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving Historic Structures (Week & Grimmer, 1995). Materials, means, and methods of construction shall meet Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Preservation as codified in 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 67. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting or pressure washing, that may cause damage to historic materials shall not be used unless determined appropriate by a qualified architectural historian.
- **PDF-CUL-2:** An architectural historian or qualified consultant who meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualifications Standards for historic architecture, architectural history, and history shall approve all materials, means, and methods used in these repairs. PDF-CUL-1 shall be implemented under the advisement of this qualified expert.

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Unless otherwise stated, the proposed Project will be designed, constructed and operated following all applicable laws, regulations, ordinances and formally adopted City standards including but not limited to:

- City of Los Angeles Municipal Code
- Bureau of Engineering Standard Plans
- Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction “Greenbook,”
- City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works Additions and Amendments to the 2021 Edition of the Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction
- Work Area Traffic Control Handbook

## **II. PROJECT HISTORY**

The Project sites have been identified for the need of rehabilitation to restore the integrity of the bridge deck surfaces to ensure structure integrity, prevent water intrusion, and prolong the lifespan of the bridge deck surfaces.

## **III. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

### **A. Basis for Categorical Exemption**

The Project qualifies for exemption under State CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15331, Class 31 if it is limited to maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings (Weeks and Glimmer, 1995). These standards define preservation as the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction.

The Project is the minor maintenance and repair activities on or below the bridge deck surfaces, roadways, or interior tunnel walls that are associated with historic landmarks. No extensive replacement or new construction is expected. The proposed work, if any, would be consistent with the above referenced Secretary of the Interior’s Standards. As such, the Project is consistent with the application of this exemption.

### **B. Consideration of Potential Exceptions to use of a Categorical Exemption**

The State CEQA Guidelines (CCR Sec 15300.2) limit the use of categorical exemptions in the following circumstances:

**1. Location.** Exemption 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 be significant in a particularly sensitive environment. 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.

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This Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Article 19, Section 15331, Class 31. Therefore, this exception does not apply.

**2. Cumulative Impact.** This exception applies when, although a project may not have a significant impact, the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.

It is anticipated that the need for repair and maintenance of similar aged and/or deteriorated bridge deck surfaces or tunnel roadways may occur in the future; however, the Project is not expected to result in any cumulative impacts. Other similar projects are occurring elsewhere in the City and at different times. Given the nature of the Project and that the bridges are not within close proximity to each other, it is not anticipated to result in cumulative impact when included with successive projects in the same place over time. Therefore, this exception has no application to the Project. Therefore, this exception has no application to this Project.

**3. Significant Effect.** This exception applies when, although the project may otherwise be exempt, there is a reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect due to unusual circumstances.

### **Geology and Soils – Hillside Area**

Two Projects sites (Riverside Drive bridge and Sepulveda Boulevard tunnel) are located within a designated Hillside Grading Area. Various sites within the City are within a designated hillside grading area, which is an area that is regulated under the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Sections 12.03, 12.21, 12.21.1, 12.23, and 12.27 which govern the development of hillside lots for new construction, additions, and remodeling. Specific requirements regarding height, front and side yards, fire protection, lot coverage, parking street access, sewer connections, and grading are all defined and enforced under the above-mentioned LAMC sections.

Hillsides in the City, including the northeast, northern city limits of the North Valley, Santa Monica Mountains to the west, Echo Park/ Silver Lake, Griffith Park, Atwater Village, Mount Washington, Hollywood Hills in the central portions of the City, Baldwin Hills and Playa del Rey/ Playa Vista towards Los Angeles International Airport, and San Pedro to the southernmost limits are required to adhere to specific building codes and requirements.

The proposed Projects aim to enhance public safety by maintaining and repairing sound AC pavements, replacing damaged or missing railing sections, removing soot, repairing spalled concrete, replacing missing expansion joint cover plates, damaged tiles and concrete, and/or cleaning surfaces. No new structures for human habitation would be constructed. Similar maintenance and repair projects are common in the City and throughout areas deemed to be within the Hillside Grading Area, as such these repairs are not unusual circumstances. The Project would not potentially result in or increase vulnerability to damage caused by construction in the hillside areas. There is no reasonable possibility that the project would have a significant effect due to unusual circumstances. Therefore, this exception has no application to this Project.

### **Geology and Soils – Liquefaction Zone**

Two Project sites (Riverside Drive bridge and Avenue 43 bridge) lie within a designated liquefaction zone. This area is mapped for “historic occurrence of liquefaction, or where local geological, geotechnical, and groundwater conditions indicate a potential for permanent ground displacements,” or where “previous occurrence of landslide movement, or local topographic, geological, geotechnical, and subsurface conditions indicate a potential for permanent ground displacements,” according to the

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California Earthquake Hazards Zone Application, released by the California Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey. Portions of land in the City, including northern areas along the Santa Monica Mountains, areas along the central belt from Santa Monica to Lynwood, and areas in Southern Los Angeles along San Pedro Bay, are designated as susceptible to liquefaction.

The proposed Project will maintain and repair all unsound AC pavement, replace damaged/ missing sections of railing, remove soot, repair spalled concrete, replace missing expansion joint cover plates to enhance public safety. No new structures for human habitation will be constructed. Rehabilitation and maintenance projects are common in the City and throughout areas identified as liquefaction zones; therefore, these repair works do not represent unusual circumstances. The Project would not potentially result in or increase vulnerability to damage caused by liquefaction, and there is no reasonable possibility that the projects will have a significant effect due to unusual circumstances.

### **Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone**

All Project sites are located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Portions of the City of Los Angeles, including northern areas along the San Gabriel Mountains, the central belt from Santa Monica Mountains to Alhambra, and areas in southern Los Angeles, are designated as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. These regions are highly developed, with streets, sidewalks, residential areas, and commercial buildings, and it is not uncommon to find the need for maintenance and repair in these areas. As such, this is not an unusual circumstance. The proposed Project involve maintenance and repair work on the bridges and tunnel roadways to enhance public safety. There is no reasonable possibility that the projects will have a significant effect due to unusual circumstances. Therefore, this exception has no application to these projects.

### **Traffic and Transportation**

The Project may increase traffic impacts at the Project sites; however, any impacts are expected to be minimal and of short duration, as construction will occur between 7:00 to 4:00pm, Monday through Friday. Once maintenance repairs are completed, no increase in vehicle trips or traffic congestion is anticipated.

The Project will be carried out in accordance with the latest edition of the temporary traffic control provisions of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control (CA MUTCD), the Work Area Traffic Control Handbook (WATCH), and any traffic control requirements required by the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT). Maintenance repair crews are required to coordinate with schools and LADOT accordingly to provide flagmen when any mode of transportation (e.g., pedestrian, bicycle, automobile) is altered. For the closure of any traffic lanes, the Project shall comply with the aforementioned regulations and the Bureau of Engineering (Engineering) Master Specifications.

Minor bridge and tunnel roadway maintenance repair projects occur along the public right-of-way throughout the City; thus, this is not an unusual circumstance. No reasonable possibility has been identified that the projects would have a significant effect due to unusual circumstances. Therefore, this exception has no application to this Project.

### **Biological Resources – Santa Monica Mountains Zone**

Two Project sites (Riverside Drive bridge and Sepulveda Boulevard tunnel) are located within the Santa Monica Mountains Zone, a region designated as ecologically important to the City. The region is designated as a portion of the Santa Monica Mountains within the City. Due to concerns of potential wildlife corridors and ecological sensitivity, caution and clearance must be utilized during the construction activities.

A search of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Biogeographic Information and Observation System (BIOS) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) identified that the Project

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sites are located within an area of potential habitats for several sensitive, potential or endangered species. These include:

- **Birds:** Bank swallow and Southwestern willow flycatcher, which inhabit riparian woodlands (point of accuracy encompasses a broad 5-mile radius and not a specific source area)
- **Aquatic Species:** Western ridged mussels, found in lakes and streams
- **Reptiles and Mammals:** Western spadefoot (proposed threatened)
- **Plants:** *Mesa horkelia*

The scope of the Project is limited to minor maintenance and repair work, limited to on or below the bridge deck surfaces, roadways, or interior tunnel walls for a short duration of time at each Project site. Therefore, no activities are expected to significantly impact the above sensitive ecological resources.

Based on the above, the Project is not expected to significantly impact sensitive ecological resources. The need for repair and maintenance of similar aged and/or deteriorated bridge deck surfaces or tunnel roadways is a common and routine occurrence throughout the City. There is no reasonable possibility that the Project will have a significant effect due to unusual circumstances. Therefore, this exception has no application to this Project.

**4. Scenic Highway.** 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.

Per the *California State Scenic Highway System Map* and the *Mobility Plan 2035*, the Project sites are not within a state designated scenic highway or within sight of any state designated scenic highway. Therefore, this exception has no application to this Project.

**5. Hazardous Waste Site.** This exception applies when a project is located on a site listed as a hazardous waste site under Government Code Section 65962.5.

As of November 14, 2024, the Project sites are not listed as hazardous waste sites. Therefore, this exception has no application to this Project.

**6. Historical Resources.** This exception applies when a project may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

As previously mentioned, the Project sites are designated as a historical resource, eligible for listing as a historical resource, or located within a larger historical district. Preservation work is exempt under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15331, Class 31 only under the condition that all proposed work, Project concept, design, and means and methods of construction will meet Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation as codified in 36 CFR 67. No extensive or new construction or subsurface excavation activities are expected.

As indicated above, the Project is not anticipated to result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. With the implementation of PDF-CUL-1 and PDF-CUL-2 outlined above and compliance with all appropriate federal, state, and local laws and regulations, no significant impacts to cultural resources are expected. Therefore, no substantial adverse impact to cultural resources is anticipated, and as such this exception does not apply.

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#### IV. REFERENCES

BNI-Building News. Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction. Public Works Standards Inc., "Green Book".

BNI-Building News. *Work Area Traffic Control Handbook*. Available from [t](#)

California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3 (State CEQA Guidelines), available from <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/>

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). *California State Scenic Highway System Map*. Retrieved November 13, 2024, from <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways>

Historical Resources Evaluation Report, Caltrans Statewide Historic Bridge Inventory 2023 Update, prepared by JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, dated December 2023

City of Los Angeles Historic Resources Inventory. *HistoricPlacesLA*. Retrieved on November 13, 2024, <https://hpla.lacity.org/>

City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works Bureau of Engineering. *NavigateLA*. Retrieved on November 13, 2024, <https://navigatela.lacity.org/navigatela/>

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City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. *City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works Additions and Amendments to the 2021 Edition of the Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction*.

City of Los Angeles Environmental Quality Act Guidelines available from [https://planning.lacity.org/EIR/CEQA\\_Guidelines/City\\_CEQA\\_Guidelines.pdf](https://planning.lacity.org/EIR/CEQA_Guidelines/City_CEQA_Guidelines.pdf)

City of Los Angeles Municipal Code. <https://lacity.gov/government/city-charter-rules-and-codes>

Public Resources Code, Div. 13, Sections 21000-21189 (CEQA), available from <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/>