

This notice was posted on 12/11/2025  
and will remain posted for a period of thirty days  
through 01/11/2026

Deva Marie Proto, County Clerk  
BY: *Carrie Anderson*  
Carrie Anderson, Deputy Clerk



Doc No.49-12112025-483

## NOTICE OF CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION

County of Sonoma

2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
(707) 565-1900 Fax (707) 565-1103

Sonoma County proposes to carry out the following project. Pursuant to Section 23A of the Sonoma County Code, it has been determined that this project is categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):

<b>Project Title:</b> Objective Design Standards for Multi-Unit Housing, File No. ORD24-0007	<b>To:</b> County Clerk- Recorder Office	Office of Planning and Research
<b>Public Agency:</b> County of Sonoma	County of Sonoma	
<b>Project Applicant:</b> County of Sonoma	585 Fiscal Drive, Room 103	P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
<b>Applicant Address:</b> 2550 Ventura Ave, Santa Rosa, CA 95403	Santa Rosa, CA 95403	Sacramento, CA 95812-3044
<b>Project Location:</b> Countywide		
<b>Date of Approval:</b> 12/09/2025		

**DESCRIPTION OF NATURE, PURPOSE AND BENEFICIARIES OF THE PROJECT:** The ordinance includes amendments to Chapter 26 (Zoning Code) of the Sonoma County Code to establish Objective Design Standards (ODS) for multi-unit housing development projects. These standards will apply to all housing development projects as defined under the Housing Accountability Act, such as multifamily developments, certain mixed-use housing projects, condominiums, townhomes, and subdivisions, except for projects consisting solely of a single-family dwelling proposed with an accessory dwelling unit. Objective design standards will replace the subjective design standards historically applied during the design review process and build on existing objective design standards specific to individual use types and project sites. The standards address site design, structure design, and exterior lighting.

**EXEMPT STATUS:** CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) and Categorical Exemption under CEQA Guidelines Section 15308

**REASON WHY THIS PROJECT IS EXEMPT:**

The proposed amendments to Chapter 26 (Zoning Code) are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) (the common sense exemption) and Section 15308 (actions to protect the environment). CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) provides that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect (substantial adverse change) on the environment. It can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility the project will result in a direct or indirect adverse change in the environment because the code amendments do not make changes to allowed land uses or intensities and instead provide objective design standards where subjective standards previously applied, covering all the same topics and ensuring potential aesthetic impacts are addressed. Additionally, or alternatively, the ordinance is exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15308, which provides that actions by regulatory agencies to assure enhancement or protection of the environment are categorically exempt from CEQA. The proposed amendments would only enhance and improve protections of the environment because the objective standards are more specific and more restrictive than the current subjective design review standards, thus ensuring greater protections to aesthetic resources, and because the current subjective standards are often unenforceable under the HAA. Further, all projects currently reviewed under CEQA will continue to be subject to environmental review.

This Notice of Exemption is filed pursuant to the provisions of Section 15062 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

**Lead Agency Contact Person:**

**Isabella**

Digitally signed by  
Isabella Wotring  
Date: 2025.12.10  
14:59:35 -08'00'

**Wotring**

---

Isabella Wotring, Project Planner

Permit Sonoma

Comprehensive Planning Division

(707) 565-2618