City of Needles, California
Request for City Council Action

☒ CITY COUNCIL ☐ NPUA ☒ Regular ☐ Special

Meeting Date: June 23, 2026

Title: Resolution No. 2026-26 Determining the Needles OHMV Staging Area Project is Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Directing Staff to File a Notice of Exemption.

Background: The City of Needles has established California's only legislatively authorized Off-Highway Motor Vehicle (OHMV) Pilot Program pursuant to California Vehicle Code Section 38026.2. As part of the implementation of the City's OHMV Master Plan, the City is pursuing the development of an OHMV Staging Area that will provide organized access to the City's designated OHMV route network and surrounding Bureau of Land Management trail systems.

The proposed project consists of improvements to an existing dirt parking area, including trailer parking, ADA-accessible parking, a prefabricated restroom facility, informational kiosk, monument signage, traffic circulation improvements, landscaping, and associated site improvements. The project is intended to improve public safety, reduce informal roadside parking, protect natural resources by concentrating vehicle activity within a designated area, and enhance the visitor experience.

City staff evaluated the proposed project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and determined the project is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Sections 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures), 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land), and 15332 (In-Fill Development Projects). Staff further determined that none of the exceptions contained within CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply to the project.

The attached Resolution No. 2026-26 formally determines that the project is exempt from CEQA and authorizes staff to file a Notice of Exemption with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research and the San Bernardino County Clerk.

Fiscal Impact: There is no direct fiscal impact associated with the adoption of Resolution No. 2026-26. Adoption of the resolution is an administrative action required to document the City's CEQA determination. The proposed OHMV Staging Area Project is currently included in the City's application to the California State Parks Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program, which requests approximately $995,911 in grant funding. Project construction remains subject to future funding awards and City Council authorization.

Recommendation: Adopt Resolution No. 2026-26 determining the Needles OHMV Staging Area Project is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15303, 15304, and 15332 and directing staff to file a Notice of Exemption.

Submitted By: Patrick Martinez, City Manager

City Management Review: Patrick J Martinez Date: 6/18/2026

Other Department Approval (when required): _____ Date: _____