

RESOLUTION 2026-26

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEEDLES DETERMINING THE NEEDLES OHMV STAGING AREA PROJECT IS EXEMPT FROM CEQA AND DIRECTING STAFF TO FILE A NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

WHEREAS, the City of Needles is a remote, rural, and disadvantaged community with approximately 5,200 residents; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature recognized the City's geographic isolation and economic reliance on tourism and declared that a unified Off-Highway Motor Vehicle (OHMV) system would substantially support the local economy; and

WHEREAS, the City of Needles has established a legislatively authorized Off-Highway Motor Vehicle (OHMV) Pilot Program pursuant to California Vehicle Code §38026.2 and has adopted a 9.20-mile designated combined-use OHMV route network connecting Bureau of Land Management (BLM) trails to lodging, fuel, and service facilities within the City. The City has identified and designated an OHMV Staging Area within the OHMV route network to support the OHMV Pilot Program and provide organized access to Bureau of Land Management (BLM) trails and related recreational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Needles proposes to renovate an existing dirt parking lot and construct an OHMV staging area that will consolidate trailer parking, eliminate informal roadside access, protect soils and habitat by concentrating impacts, improve ADA accessibility, and provide sanitation facilities; and

WHEREAS, the Needles OHMV Staging Area Project includes construction of a paved parking area, ADA-accessible parking spaces, a prefabricated restroom, informational kiosks, signage, fencing, drainage improvements, landscaping, utility connections, and related site improvements on City-owned property identified as APN 0185-233-60; and

WHEREAS, the project aligns directly with the purpose of the OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program by supporting well-managed, high-quality OHV recreation while sustaining wildlife, soils, and habitat; and

WHEREAS, the City is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the proposed **Needles OHMV Staging Area Project** and staff have evaluated the Project as required under CEQA; and

WHEREAS, City staff have determined that the Needles OHMV Staging Area Project is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures), 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land), and 15332 (In-Fill Development Projects), and that none of the exceptions contained in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply; and

WHEREAS, the Needles City Council has independently reviewed and considered the administrative record, staff report, testimony, and all documentary evidence presented regarding the Project and the proposed Notice of Exemption; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the CITY COUNCIL of the City of Needles as follows:

- 1) Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Needles OHMV Staging Area Project is exempt from CEQA; and

- 2) Staff is directed to file the Notice of Exemption (NOE) for the Needles OHMV Staging Area Project with the State of California, Governor's Office of Planning and Research - State Clearinghouse, and the San Bernardino County Clerk.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 23rd day of June 2026 by the following roll call vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

Mayor

(Seal)

Attest:

City Clerk

Approved as to form:

City Attorney