

Impartial summary of referendum pursuant to California Elections Code § 9238(b)(2)(B), as approved by City Attorney:

IMPARTIAL SUMMARY OF ORDINANCE NO. 2026-6235

Ordinance No. 2026-6235, titled "AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SANTA BARBARA ADOPTING THE STATE STREET MASTER PLAN AND AMENDING TITLE 31 OF THE SANTA BARBARA MUNICIPAL CODE" (the "Ordinance") is the subject of this referendum petition. The Ordinance adopts the State Street Master Plan as the City's long-range policy document for the corridor of the 400 through 1300 blocks of State Street, together with adjacent paseos, plazas, parking facilities, and cross streets. The Ordinance also amends provisions of Title 31 of the Municipal Code relating to regulations concerning pedestrian usage, motor vehicle access, outdoor business facilities, administration, and design review within State Street from Victoria Street to Haley Street.

Existing Title 31 establishes the State Street Promenade as State Street between Victoria Street and Haley Street. The Ordinance changes the name to the State Street Paseo.

Existing Chapter 31.20 of Title 31 regulates vehicle use and provides that this area of State Street is intended primarily for pedestrians, bicycles, and other forms of wheeled personal transportation, but prohibits automobiles, motorcycles, and similar motor vehicles with certain limited exceptions. The Ordinance provides that the State Street Paseo is intended for use primarily by pedestrians, bicycles and electric bicycles, skateboards and scooters, while generally excluding trucks, buses, automobiles, motorcycles, and similar motor vehicles. Chapter 31.20 contains a sunset clause providing that the chapter will remain in effect until the earlier of the date of adoption of a master plan for downtown State Street or December 31, 2026, unless the sunset clause is amended or repealed. The Ordinance adopts the master plan and repeals the sunset provisions of Title 31, Chapter 31.20.,

Existing Chapter 31.30 of Title 31 regulates outdoor business facilities. Chapter 31.30 contains a sunset clause providing that the chapter will remain in effect until the earlier of the date of adoption of a master plan for downtown State Street or December 31, 2026, unless the sunset clause is amended or repealed. The Ordinance adopts the master plan and repeals the sunset provisions of Title 31, Chapter 31.30.

The Ordinance updates terminology from "State Street Promenade" to "State Street Paseo," retains authority for the City Administrator to adopt regulations for administration of the Paseo, establishes the design review pathway through the Historic Landmarks Commission for permanent streetscape improvements, and preserves the City Council's authority over any expansion of vehicle access during pedestrian-priority hours.

Specifically, the Ordinance provides that the State Street Paseo is closed to motor vehicles except: 1. Emergency service vehicles; 2. Vehicles providing shuttle services by a government agency or City contractor under terms and conditions established by the City Council; 3. Vehicles used for deliveries, maintenance, solid waste collection service, farmers' markets, construction activities, and special events, at times and under regulations established by the City Administrator; 4. One lane of one-way traffic on the 1200 block of State Street according to a design approved by the City Engineer and under regulations established by the City Administrator; and 5. Other limited usage within a 20-foot travel way consistent with the State Street Master Plan according to a design approved by the City Engineer and authorized by City Council resolution.

The Ordinance authorizes the City Administrator to establish regulations for use of the roadway portion of the State Street Paseo by pedestrians, bicycles, and other forms of wheeled transportation. Existing City regulations governing the operation of bicycles and electric bicycles apply within the State Street Paseo unless more restrictive supplemental regulations are adopted by the City Administrator. Skateboards, roller skates, in-line skates, and similar devices are permitted within the roadway portion of the Paseo subject to further regulation to be adopted pursuant to Title 31.

The Ordinance authorizes the Public Works Director to install and maintain traffic control signs, devices, fixtures, striping, and structures as approved by the City Engineer and the City Traffic Engineer to implement Title 31. Existing regulations governing the State Street Paseo will remain in effect unless amended or rescinded by the City Administrator or by the City Council.

The Ordinance retains the existing provisions of Title 31 relating to outdoor business facilities.

The Ordinance provides for enforcement of violations pursuant to Title 31, as well as pursuant to provisions of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code pertaining to the regulation of bicycles.

### **THE STATE STREET MASTER PLAN**

The State Street Master Plan adopted by the Ordinance establishes a framework for long term planning, activation, and improvement of the State Street Paseo. Under the Master Plan, existing vehicle access will remain until, pursuant to the State Street Master Plan, the street can operate under a to-be adopted time-based access schedule, with timing for bollards raised and bollards lowered to be determined by the City Council once the construction of the bollard system envisioned by the Master Plan is complete. When bollards are raised, State Street would generally be closed to vehicle traffic, pursuant to certain limited exceptions for shuttles and emergency access. When bollards are lowered, authorized vehicles would be allowed for deliveries, refuse collection, maintenance, and limited private vehicle access, subject to City regulations. The full text of the Master Plan can be found at the following links;

<https://statestreet.santabarbaraca.gov/>

Master Plan: <https://statestreet.santabarbaraca.gov/sites/default/files/2026-09/Adopted%20State%20Street%20Master%20Plan.pdf>

Appendices: <https://statestreet.santabarbaraca.gov/sites/default/files/2026-09/Adopted%20State%20Street%20Master%20Plan%20Appendices.pdf>

## **TEXT OF ORDINANCE NO. 2026-6235**

The following is the full text of Ordinance No. 2026-6235:

### **Ordinance No. 2026-6235**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SANTA BARBARA ADOPTING THE STATE STREET MASTER PLAN AND AMENDING TITLE 31 OF THE SANTA BARBARA MUNICIPAL CODE

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SANTA BARBARA DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

#### **Section 1.**

The State Street Master Plan as presented to the City Council at its meeting of September 1, 2026, on file with the City Administrator is adopted. The City Council may amend or supplement the adopted Master Plan by resolution. Before acting on an amendment that would materially affect permanent streetscape improvements of the State Street Paseo, the City Council shall refer the proposed amendment to the Historic Landmarks Commission for a report and recommendation pursuant to Section 31.30.060.

#### **Section 2.**

Title 31 of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code is renamed from State Street Promenade to State Street Master Plan.

#### **Section 3.**

Section 31.10.010 of Chapter 31.10 of Title 31 of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

##### **State Street Paseo.**

State Street between Victoria Street and Haley Street is designated as the State Street Paseo.

#### **Section 4.**

Chapter 31.10 of Title 31 of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code is amended by adding Section 31.10.020 which reads as follows:

##### **31.10.020 State Street Master Plan**

The State Street Master Plan refers the planning document approved by Ordinance No. \_\_\_\_\_, and any subsequent amendments to the plan approved by City Council resolution. The official copy of the State Street Master Plan and any

City Council-approved amendments shall be maintained by the City Clerk.

## **Section 5.**

Section 31.20.010 of Chapter 31.20 of Title 31 of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

### **31.20.010 General Prohibition.**

A. The State Street Paseo is intended for use primarily by pedestrians as defined in Vehicle Code Section 467, bicycles as defined in Vehicle Code Section 231, and other forms of wheeled personal transportation consistent with use of a multi-use area, such as skateboards and scooters, but excluding automobiles, motorcycles, and similar motor vehicles, except as provided in this Chapter and consistent with the State Street Master Plan. Under Vehicle Code Section 467, a pedestrian includes persons using electric personal assistive mobility devices, self-propelled wheelchairs, motorized tricycles, or motorized quadricycles as specified in that section. Under Vehicle Code Section 231, bicycles include an electric bicycle. As used in this section the term motor vehicle has the same meaning as defined in Vehicle Code Section 415 but does not include bicycles or mobility devices used by pedestrians.

B. The State Street Paseo is closed to motor vehicles, except:

1. Emergency service vehicles;
2. Vehicles providing shuttle services by a government agency or City contractor under terms and conditions established by the City Council;
3. Vehicles used for deliveries, maintenance, solid waste collection service, farmers' markets, construction activities, and special events, at times and under regulations established by the City Administrator.
4. One lane of one-way traffic on the 1200 block of State Street according to a design approved by the City Engineer and under regulations established by the City Administrator.
5. Limited usage within a 20-foot travel way consistent with the State Street Master Plan according to a design approved by the City Engineer and authorized by City Council resolution.

C. The City Administrator is authorized to establish regulations for use of the roadway portion of the State Street Paseo by pedestrians, bicycles, and other forms of wheeled transportation. The provisions of Chapter 10.52 of this Code, including all rules governing the operation of bicycles and electric bicycles, apply within the State Street Paseo unless more restrictive supplemental regulations are adopted by the City Administrator pursuant to this subsection. Notwithstanding Section 10.06.010 of this Code, skateboards, roller skates, in-line skates, and similar devices are permitted within the roadway portion of the Paseo, subject to regulation adopted under this subsection. In addition to enforcement under Chapter 31.40, violations of the regulations adopted under this subsection may be enforced in the manner provided in Section 10.52.060 of this Code.

D. The Public Works Director is authorized to install and maintain traffic control signs, devices, fixtures, striping, and structures as approved by the City Engineer and the City Traffic Engineer necessary or convenient to implement this

section, including signs advising of regulations adopted under subsection C.

E. Traffic regulations promulgated by the City Administrator under Ordinance No. 6055 will continue in effect unless amended or rescinded by the City Administrator as authorized by this section or by the City Council.

#### **Section 6.**

Section 31.20.020 of Chapter 31.20 of Title 31 of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

##### **31.20.020 Additional Area.**

The City Administrator, in consultation with the Fire Marshal and the City Traffic Engineer, may maintain modified traffic patterns on Victoria Street between State Street and Chapala Street.

#### **Section 7.**

Section 31.20.030 of Chapter 31.20 of Title 31 of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code is repealed.

#### **Section 8.**

Chapter 31.30 of Title 31 of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code is amended by adding Section 31.30.060 which read as follows:

##### **31.30.060 Historic Landmark Commission Review.**

A. A permanent installation consistent with the State Street Master Plan that materially affects the visual character, historic streetscape, or pedestrian use of the State Street Paseo shall be referred to the Historic Landmarks Commission pursuant to this Section before final approval. A proposal to promulgate or amend regulations relating to outdoor business facilities under this Section 31.30.020 will be referred to the Historic Landmarks Commission for a report and recommendation before final action. The Historic Landmarks Commission shall provide their reports and recommendations within 60 days following the date of referral. The City Administrator, or City Council for actions requiring City Council approval, may proceed to take final action if a report and recommendation is not received within 60 days after referral of the matter. Any action to amend the State Street Master Plan or to make a physical improvement that is not consistent with the Master Plan will be referred to the Historic Landmark Commission for a report and recommendation as required by the City Charter or Municipal Code. However, matters relating to street operation or use, travel modes, lane configuration, vehicle access hours, loading, transit routing, and circulation are not subject to review under this Section.

B. Permanent streetscape improvements subject to design review under this Section are fixed physical elements, such as paving materials and patterns, bollards, planters, seating, lighting fixtures, tree wells, railings, signage, and similar built features. Review will address design matters, such as materials, finishes, proportions, color, detailing, and compatibility with the district's architectural character.

**Section 9.**

Section 31.30.060 of Chapter 31.30 of Title 31 of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code is repealed.

**Section 10.**

This Ordinance is adopted as a municipal affair for the benefit, health, safety, and welfare of the people of Santa Barbara pursuant to the City's power under Vehicle Code Section 21101 and City Charter Sections 400, 401, and 505.

**Section 11.**

Sections 3 and 4 of Ordinance No. 6125 are repealed.

**Section 12.**

If any Section, subsection, subdivision, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Chapter or any part hereof is for any reason held to be unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Chapter or any part hereof. The City Council declares that it would have passed each Section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase hereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more Sections, subsections, subdivisions, paragraphs, sentences, clauses or phrases be declared unconstitutional.

**Section 13.**

The City Council finds that, on the basis of the whole record and by exercising its independent judgment, this Ordinance is not subject to environmental review pursuant to the State Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act Section 15061 (b)(3) (the “common sense exemption”) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the adoption of the State Street Master Plan does not approve any development project or other physical change to the environment. Rather, it is a planning document that establishes policies for the long-term management of existing facilities and improvements. Individual projects contemplated by the Master Plan will undergo separate environmental review as appropriate. The existing provisions of Title 31 of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code, as adopted by Ordinance No. 6125, were determined to be categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301 (existing facilities), 15303 (construction of small structures), and 15304(e) (minor, temporary uses of land). These same exemptions apply to the actions authorized by the amendments to Title 31 of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code under this ordinance. Nothing in this Ordinance approves final design, construction, or implementation of any particular permanent physical improvement or other project that may result in a physical change to the environment. The City will comply with the requirements of CEQA and Chapter 22.100 of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code before approval or implementation of any non-exempt individual project.

*The text of the Ordinance can also be viewed through the following link:*

<https://docs.santabarbaraca.gov/OnBaseAgendaOnline/Meetings/ViewMeeting?id=1188&doctype=1>