

# Notice of Exemption

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**To:**

Office of Planning and Research  
U.S. Mail: Street Address:  
PO Box 3044 1400 Tenth St., Rm 113  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044 Sacramento, CA 95812

County Clerk:  
County of Mendocino  
501 Low Gap Road  
Ukiah, CA 95482

**From:**

Mendocino County Planning & Building  
860 North Bush Street  
Ukiah, CA 95482  
Contact: Nash Gonzalez  
Phone: 707-234-6650

Project Title: Acquisition and conversion of an existing 29,905 sq. ft. 56-unit hotel to be used as transitional and permanent housing for individuals and families who are homeless and at risk of becoming homeless.

Project Applicant: County of Mendocino

Project Location - Specific: 555 South Orchard Avenue, within the City of Ukiah, CA

Project Location - City: Within the City of Ukiah, specifically located at 555 S. Orchard Ave., Ukiah, CA 95482.  
APN: 002-340-39-00 Project Location - County: MENDOCINO COUNTY

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project: Through the funding provisions of the Project Homekey Program, the County of Mendocino will purchase a 56-unit room Best Western Inn motel located at 555 South Orchard Avenue in Ukiah, California. Following the acquisition/purchase, the County intends to utilize the motel to provide transitional housing for individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. All rooms will remain in their initial configuration as studio-style units. While the initial purpose of the facility will be transitional housing, the County intends to upgrade at least 50% of the facility into permanent housing units with 10 years of acquisition.

Name of Public Agency Approving the Project: County of Mendocino

Name of Person or Agency Carrying out Project: Mendocino County – Recovery and Department of Health and Human Services.

Exempt Status: **(check one):**

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);  
 Declared Emergency (Sec. 21070(b)(3); 15269(a));  
 Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));  
 Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: (a) CEQA Guidelines section 15061(b)(3) the activity is not subject to CEQA, (b) CEQA Guidelines section 15301(a); CEQA Guidelines section 15326.  
 Statutory Exemption. State code number: AB 83 (2020) establishes a statutory exemption from CEQA (Health and Safety Code Sections 50675.1 and 50675.1.2)

Reasons why project is exempt: The project involves the acquisition of a 56-unit motel to be utilized by persons experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of becoming homeless, which may include lower income, and very low income households. Additionally, the motel is not being acquired by eminent domain, and the acquisition is paid exclusively utilizing public funds (Project Homekey Funds) from the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The original structure's footprint is not proposed to be expanded, only interior improvements are immediately to be done in order to support compliance with ADA requirements. The project is specifically exempt under the statutory exemption created for Project Homekey projects. In addition, the project is categorically exempt under several CEQA Guidelines provisions. Specifically, CEQA Guidelines section 15061(b)(3) provides that the project is exempt from CEQA where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the action will have a significant effect on the environment. The environmental impacts of the existing use of the property as transient hotel occupancy is generally similar to that of housing. The project is exempt under CEQA Guidelines section 15301 because it consists of the acquisition and operations and minor


alteration of an existing structure, with negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. The project is exempt under CEQA Guidelines section 15326 as it is the acquisition of an interest in housing units.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Nash Gonzalez Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 707-234-6650

**If filed by applicant:**

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project?  Yes  No

Signature:  Date: October 20, 2020 Title: Disaster Recovery Director

Signed by Lead Agency  Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.  
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_