

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**From:** Alexandra Cervantes  
Senior Facilities Analyst  
Judicial Council of California  
2860 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 400  
Sacramento, CA 95833

County Clerk:  
Sacramento County  
600 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Project Title:** Sacramento Juvenile Courthouse Renovation Project

**Project Applicant:** Judicial Council of California

**Project Location – Specific:** 9605 Kiefer Boulevard

**Project Location – City:** Sacramento

**Project Location – County:** Sacramento

**Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:**

The Judicial Council of California proposes to renovate the existing Sacramento Juvenile Courthouse at 9605 Kiefer Boulevard, Sacramento, CA 95827. Based on the Court Facility Plan developed as part of the 2019 Capital Projects Reassessment and the current conditions, the court does not have the existing facilities to accommodate new judgeships and support staff. Since 2019, a Juvenile Courthouse Renovation capital project has been planned for this exact need.

The three-story courthouse is owned by Sacramento County and totals 101,815 square feet with six (6) existing courtrooms. The renovation will consist of converting approximately 10,300 square feet of existing office space on the third floor into two (2) shelled out courtrooms modeled after the existing courtroom, as well as support spaces. This will increase the number of courtrooms in the building from six (6) to eight (8). Support space includes judge's chamber, holdings, clerical office, interview rooms, and court reporter's office. The renovation will provide the needed space for the for two (2) new judgeships and support staff.

The renovation is intended to accommodate new judgeships and support staff to improve service to the public for juvenile delinquency and dependency matters.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Judicial Council of California

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Judicial Council of California

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

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number:
  - Class 1, Existing Facilities (Section 15301)
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

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### Reasons why project is exempt:

#### Class 1, Existing Facilities (Section 15301)

*Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use.*

The proposed project would qualify for a Class 1 Categorical Exemption because the project is intended to improve public services for juvenile delinquency and dependency matters at an existing courthouse. Two (2) new courtrooms modeled after the existing courtrooms, as well as support spaces, would be built within the existing footprint of the facilities. The two (2) new courtrooms would serve the same purpose and capacity as the existing courtrooms they are modeled after. The support spaces include judge's chamber, holdings, clerical office, interview rooms, and court reporter's office to accommodate the two (2) new judgeships and support staff.

#### Exceptions to Categorical Exemption Analysis (Section 15300.2)

*(a) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.*

This exception does not apply to the proposed project. The proposed project's use and intensity is consistent with the current and surrounding uses of the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not be expected to contribute to significant cumulative impacts when considered along with other impacts or other reasonably foreseeable projects or when considered with the overall buildout under the City of Sacramento 2035 General Plan.

*(b) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.*

This exception does not apply to the proposed project. The project site is in an urbanized, extensively developed area of Sacramento. It is entirely built out with the courthouse and associated surface parking; the project site has limited green spaces with a few trees. The proposed renovation to the courthouse as described above would not result in unusual circumstances that would result in significant environmental effects. Furthermore, the proposed project would be subject to standard regulations addressing stormwater management for construction and operation, energy efficiency, and management and use of hazardous materials during construction and operation.

*(c) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.*

There are no State-designated scenic highways in Sacramento. The nearest listed route is the officially designated scenic Route 160, starting at the city boundary 10 miles southwest of the project site, extending to the county lines of Sacramento and Contra Costa Counties.<sup>1</sup> Considering the distance, intervening development, and topography between the project site and this roadway, the project site would not be

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<sup>1</sup> California Department of Transportation, 2022, Scenic Highways, <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways>, accessed December 14, 2022.

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recognizable, and no impact is anticipated. Therefore, no impacts related to scenic highways would occur and this exception does not apply to the project.

*(d) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.*

This exception does not apply to the proposed project. California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires various State agencies to compile lists of hazardous waste disposal facilities, unauthorized release from underground storage tanks, contaminated drinking water wells, and solid waste facilities from which there is known migration of hazardous waste and submit such information to the Secretary for Environmental Protection on at least an annual basis. This exception would apply only if the project site is included on any of the above referred to lists and therefore would pose an environmental hazard to surrounding sensitive uses. In meeting the provisions in Government Code Section 65962.5, commonly referred to as the “Cortese List,” database resources that provide information regarding identified facilities or sites include EnviroStor, GeoTracker, and other lists compiled by the California Environmental Protection Agency. According to EnviroStor, there are no federal Superfund, State response, voluntary cleanup, tiered permit, corrective action, hazardous waste permit, or monitoring wells on the project site.<sup>2</sup> The closest site of this nature is the State response Golden West Homes located approximately 1.3 miles northeast of the project site. On the GeoTracker website there are no recorded leaking underground storage tanks on the project site.<sup>3</sup> The closest site of this nature is the Highways & Bridges LUST Cleanup Site located approximately 0.1 miles northeast of the project site. Since 1998, this site has had the status “Completed – Case Closed.” As a result, this exception is not applicable to the project.

*(e) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.*

The Sacramento County Juvenile Courthouse is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places<sup>4</sup> or the California Register of Historical Resources.<sup>5</sup> The existing facility was completed in 2005 and is ineligible for listing in the California Register under the four criteria. The courthouse is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to local, State, or national cultural heritage nor is it associated with the lives of persons important to local, State, or national history. It does not embody characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction and does not have the potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, State, or nation. As such, the property does not appear to qualify as a historical resource under CEQA. As a result, this exception is not applicable to the project.

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<sup>2</sup> Department of Toxic Substances Control, 2022, EnviroStor, <https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/>, accessed December 14, 2022.

<sup>3</sup> State Water Resources Control Board, 2022, GeoTracker, <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>, accessed December 14, 2022.

<sup>4</sup> National Park Service, last updated June 2022, National Register Database and Research, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/database-research.htm>, accessed December 14, 2022.

<sup>5</sup> Office of Historic Preservation, 2022, California Historical Resources, <https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/ListedResources/?view=county&criteria=34>, accessed December 14, 2022.

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Lead Agency Contact Person: Alexandra Cervantes

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (916) 643 - 6924

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 12/14/2022

Title: Senior Facilities Analyst

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

*Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code. Date Received for filing at OPR:*

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*Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.*