

Riverside County
Facilities Management
3450 14th Street, Riverside, CA 92501

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

March 11, 2024

Project Name: Riverside County Innovation Center (RCIC) Boiler Replacement Project, Riverside,

Project Number: FM05430010042

Project Locations: 3450 14th Street, west of Lime Street, Riverside, California; Assessor's Parcel Number (APN): 219-330-035

Description of Project: The RCIC is located at 3450 14th Street. in Riverside, California, 92501 and is occupied by Facilities Management (FM), Riverside Information Technology (RCIT) and Purchasing Departments. On November 9, 2023, the second of two boilers went down, and it was determined both boilers needed to be completely replaced because of the age of the units. The replacement of the two boilers would also entail some modifications to the existing piping path for operational efficiency. The replacement of the boilers at RCIC is identified as the proposed project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The operation of the facility will continue to provide public services and will not result in an expansion of existing use. No additional direct or indirect physical environmental impacts are anticipated.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Riverside County

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Riverside County Facilities Management

Exempt Status: State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15301 Existing Facilities Exemption; Section 15302 Replacement or Reconstruction Exemption, and Section and 15061(b) (3), General Rule or "Common Sense" Exemption, Codified under Title 14, Articles 5 and 19, Sections 15061, 15301, and 15302.

Reasons Why Project is Exempt: The proposed project is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA specifically by the State CEQA Guidelines as identified below. The project will not result in any specific or general exceptions to the use of the categorical exemption as detailed under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. The project will not cause an impact to an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern nor would the project include unusual circumstances which could have the possibility of having a significant effect on the environment. The project would not result in impacts to scenic highways, hazardous waste sites, historic resources, or other sensitive natural environments, or have a cumulative effect to the environment. No significant environmental impacts are anticipated to occur with replacement of the two boilers at the RCIC.

- **Section 15301 –Existing Facilities:** This Class 1 categorical exemption includes the operation, repair, maintenance, leasing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures or facilities, provided the exemption only involves negligible or no expansion of the previous site’s use. The project, as proposed, is limited to the replacement of the two boilers at the RCIC and some piping improvements to keep the building operating efficiently. The use of the facility would continue to provide public services and would not result in a significant increase in capacity or intensity of use. Therefore, the project is exempt as it meets the scope and intent of the Categorical Exemption identified in Section 15301, Article 19, Categorical Exemptions of the CEQA Guidelines.
- **Section 15302 (c) –Replacement or Reconstruction:** This Class 2 exemption includes the replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced. Under (c), existing utility systems and/or facilities involving negligible, or no expansion of capacity are exempt. The project is limited to the replacement of two boilers in the same location and the same purpose and capacity. The project would entail some modifications and minor extensions to the existing piping path for operational efficiency but would not expand service or increase capacity or intensity of use. Therefore, the project is exempt as the project meets the scope and intent of the Categorical Exemption identified in Section 15302, Article 19, Categorical Exemptions of the CEQA Guidelines.
- **Section 15061 (b) (3) – “Common Sense” Exemption:** In accordance with CEQA, the use of the Common Sense Exemption is based on the “general rule that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment.” State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15061(b) (3). The use of this exemption is appropriate if “it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment.” *Ibid*. This determination is an issue of fact and if sufficient evidence exists in the record that the activity cannot have a significant effect on the environment, then the exemption applies and no further evaluation under CEQA is required. See *No Oil, Inc. v. City of Los Angeles* (1974) 13 Cal. 3d 68. The ruling in this case stated that if a project falls within a category exempt by administrative regulation or 'it can be seen with certainty that the activity in question will not have a significant effect on the environment', no further agency evaluation is required. With certainty, there is no possibility that the project may have a significant effect on the environment. The proposed improvements will not result in any direct or indirect physical environmental impacts. The use of the facility would remain unchanged, continuing to provide public services. Therefore, in no way, would the project as proposed have the potential to cause a significant environmental impact and the project is exempt from further CEQA analysis.

Based upon the identified exemptions above, the County of Riverside, Facilities Management hereby concludes that no physical environmental impacts are anticipated to occur and the project as proposed is exempt under CEQA. No further environmental analysis is warranted.

Signed:  Date: 3-11-2024

Mike Sullivan
County of Riverside, Facilities Management