

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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

September 24, 2024

Project Name: Registrar of Voters (ROV) Gateway First Amendment Election Security Upgrade Project

Project Number: FM08170013731

Project Locations: 2720 Gateway Drive, east of Valley Springs Parkway, Riverside, California, 92507; Assessor's Parcel Number (APN): 291-450-066

Description of Project: The ROV has been under lease at 2720 Gateway Drive, Riverside since December 12, 2017. This location serves as critical office space for the ROV since it is adjacent to the primary ROV county-owned building located at 2724 Gateway Drive which serves all Riverside County.

This First Amendment to Lease (Amendment) represents a request to enhance security around the County owned building and the leased building collectively. The project will entail installing a wrought iron perimeter fence around both properties. Installation of a fence on the County owned parcel will create secure parking for staff, and installing bollards around the front of both properties on Gateway Drive and Canyon Springs Parkway will provide a general vehicle deterrent. The Lessor has hereby granted permission to County to construct and maintain the improvements, for so long as the County remains a Lessee at 2720 Gateway Drive. County will contract for and provide funds for the fencing as contained in M.O. 3.15 from September 17, 2024. First Amendment to the lease to implement improvements to the security at the ROV Gateway facility is defined as the proposed project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The operation of the site will continue to provide public services at the existing facility and will not result in a significant 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; and Section 15061(b) (3), General Rule or "Common Sense" Exemption, Codified under Title 14, Articles 5 and 19, Sections 15061, and 15301.

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 the improvements to the security at the ROV 2720 Gateway Facility.

- **Section 15301 (d)–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 improvements to security at the Gateway Building are needed to maintain an appropriate level of safety for staff and patrons at the existing facility. The security improvements to the facility are minor alterations within the facility would not expand the capacity of the site and would result in the continuation of public services; therefore, the project is exempt as the improvements meet the scope and intent of the Categorical Exemption identified in Section 15301, 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 improvements to provide election security at the ROV Gateway building will not result in any direct or indirect physical environmental impacts.

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: 9-25-2024 _____

Mike Sullivan,
County of Riverside, Facilities Management