

**Riverside County**  
**Facilities Management**  
3450 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Riverside, CA 92501

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

November 26, 2024

**Project Name:** Indio Fairgrounds Shalimar Building Renovations

**Project Number:** FM03720013819

**Project Location:** 46263 Oasis, south of Highway 111, Indio, California 92201; Assessor's Parcel Number (APN): 614-040-006

**Description of Project:** On Saturday, June 8, 2024, Pickering Events our County Fairgrounds Operator (Operator), found that over the weekend, a restroom in the Shalimar Building (second floor) had been leaking for at least a day. The leaking caused flooding and damage throughout the west side of the building on both the upper and lower floors. The Operator's staff took immediate action to extract the water.

The areas affected by the water damage include the first and second floor restrooms, offices, hallways, ticket areas, and the interview room. The Operator has been impacted by the flooding and is unable to conduct their daily operations in the facility. Without this facility in operational order, Pickering Events and the County of Riverside could see a negative impact to future events held at the Indio Fairgrounds, as this facility is a crucial part for their daily operations.

This action seeks to pursue the timely and necessary Shalimar Building Remediation and Repair Project (Project) to affect the necessary repairs in time for the upcoming Riverside County Fair and National Date Festival (Fair). The renovations to the Shalimar Building at the Indio Fairgrounds 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 a change or expansion of existing use. No additional direct or indirect physical environmental impacts are anticipated.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Riverside County Facilities Management

**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 Categorical Exemption; 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 renovations in the Shalimar Building at the Indio Fairgrounds.

- **Section 15301 (b)–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 renovations within the Shalimar Building at the Indio Fairgrounds to address water damage that occurred to the first and second floor restrooms, offices, hallways, ticket areas, and the interview room. The improvements are minor in nature and needed to restore the full functional use of the facility. 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 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 renovations will not result in any direct or indirect physical environmental impacts. The improvements would occur within existing facility, would not alter the footprint and are being completed to create a compliant and safe health facility. The use of the facility for public services would remain unchanged. 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: 11-26-2024

Mike Sullivan,  
County of Riverside, Facilities Management