

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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

January 14, 2025

Project Name: Riverside County Administrative Center (CAC) Annex Boiler Replacement Project, Riverside

Project Number: FM03720014139

Project Locations: 4080 Lemon Street, south of 10th Street, Riverside, APN: 215-131-001, 215-131-002, 215-131-004, 215-131-011, 215-131-005, 215-131-010, 215-131-006, 215-131-009, 215-131-008, 215-131-007, 215-310-001

Description of Project: On December 5, 2024, Facilities Management maintenance team discovered the burner on the working Boiler 1 failed, and Boiler 2 had recently gone into disrepair causing a loss of heat to the CAC Annex Facility. Both units are beyond their useful life and can no longer be repaired and must be replaced. The existing boilers have been shut down as a means to mitigate any damages including potential flooding to the building. With the winter months approaching, we must resolve this issue to provide heat to all areas of the CAC Annex and avert any disruption to County operations.

Facilities Maintenance (FM) issued an emergency declaration pursuant to the authority delegated in Resolution 2003-23 by the Board of Supervisors (Board) to take immediate action so a HVAC company could be procured to provide emergency replacement of the boilers and restore the property to its pre-loss condition. The replacement of the boilers at the CAC 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 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 repairs to the boilers at the CAC.

- **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 existing boilers to keep the building functioning and 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 –Replacement or Reconstruction:** This Class 2 categorical exemption consists of 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), replacement or reconstruction of existing utility systems and/or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of capacity. The project, as proposed, is the replacement of two existing boilers of similar size and capacity. The system is an existing facility that supports the provision of public services and the replacement would have the same purpose as the existing infrastructure. Therefore, the project is exempt as it 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:** 1-14-2025

Mike Sullivan
County of Riverside, Facilities Management