

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044
County Clerk
County of: Riverside
77588 El Duna Court, Suit H
Palm Desert, CA 92211

From: (Public Agency): Desert Recreation District
45-305 Oasis Street
Indio, CA 92201
(Address)

Project Title: Cathedral City Parks Annexation Project

Project Applicant: Desert Recreation District

Project Location - Specific:

The Project is comprised of the City of Cathedral City which is within the Desert Recreation District

Project Location - City: Cathedral City Project Location - County: Riverside

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The proposed annexation would include a change in responsibility of organizations from the City to the DRD. The DRD currently provides park and recreation services in the region adjacent to the City, but not currently within the City, and is submitting an application to the Riverside County LAFCO to annex the territory within the City into the service area of the DRD.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Desert Recreation District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Kevin Kalman, General Manager

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));
[X] Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: 15319
Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reasons why project is exempt:

The Project is categorically exempt from the provisions of State CEQA Guidelines Section 15319 as a Class 19 project. Class 19 projects are those that involve annexations to a city or special district of areas containing existing public or private structures developed to the density allowed by the current zoning or pre-zoning of either the gaining or losing governmental agency whichever is more restrictive, provided, however, that the extension of utility services to the existing facilities would have a capacity to serve only the existing facilities.

Lead Agency
Contact Person: Kevin Kalman Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 760-347-0675

If filed by applicant:

- 1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: Kevin Kalman Date: June 24, 2025 Title: GENERAL MANAGER
Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR:

Attachment A

Cathedral City Parks Annexation

City of Cathedral City, Riverside County

Project Location – Specific

The Cathedral City Parks Annexation (Project) is comprised of the City of Cathedral City (City) and the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI), which is within the Desert Recreation District (DRD) SOI. Within the Coachella Valley region of Riverside County, the City is approximately 115 miles east from Los Angeles, 150 miles southwest from San Diego, and 60 miles east from the City of Riverside. The contiguous DRD boundary and SOI includes the City and the Cities of Palm Desert, Rancho Mirage, and Palm Springs and their SOIs that have been officially designated through the Riverside County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). Refer to **Exhibit 1: Desert Recreational District Boundary Regional Vicinity**, and **Exhibit 2, Cathedral City Boundary**.

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project

The Project proposes the annexation of the City's parks and recreation management services from the City to the authority of the DRD. This includes parks and recreational resources currently within the City's SOI. The Project exclusively consists of an annexation of resource management responsibilities and service area map changes. No development or other physical land modifications are proposed as a part of this Project. Refer **Exhibit 3, Annexation Area**.

Project Description

The proposed annexation would include a change in responsibility of organizations from the City and the City's SOI to the DRD. The DRD currently provides park and recreation services in the region adjacent to the City and the City SOI, but not currently within the City, and is submitting an application to the Riverside County LAFCO to annex the territory within the City into the service area of the DRD. DRD has maintained recreational services and programs around the Coachella Valley for over 70 years. The DRD covers over 1,800 square miles and provides recreational services to more than 380,000 residents, within the Greater Coachella Valley. The DRD is the largest park and recreation district in California and manages and assists in maintaining over 60 parks, trails, and recreation facilities.^{1 2 3}

The City currently manages recreational resources within the City and the City's SOI internally. As such, City resources must be allocated to provide park and recreation facility improvements and improvement funds are limited to funds procured by the City. Conversely DRD provides management resources to recreational resources to communities within its service area. Additionally, since the City is the only does not have its own local parks and recreation department, City residents have access to fewer parks and recreational amenities than residents in surrounding communities.⁴ The Project would allow DRD to act in lieu of an official city parks department provide management and maintenance support for City and City SOI recreational resources and offering improved parks and recreational services to the City residents, City SOI and surrounding communities. Through annexation from City to the DRD, recreational services

¹ Desert Recreation District. 2025. Parks. <https://www.myrecreationdistrict.com/parks> (Accessed June 16, 2025).

² Desert Recreation District. 2025. Parks. <https://www.myrecreationdistrict.com/trails> (Accessed June 16, 2025).

³ Desert Recreation District. 2025. Parks <https://www.myrecreationdistrict.com/facilities> (Accessed June 16, 2025).

⁴ Desert Recreation District. 2022. Cathedral City Parks and Recreation Frequently Asked Questions. https://www.myrecreationdistrict.com/sites/main/files/file-attachments/update_on_parks_recreation_in_indio_from_drdr_july_2022.pdf?1658791792.

will be maintained to the same standard as DRD recreational and park resources throughout the region. The Project does not propose the creation or removal of existing recreational resources or structures. While no physical development is proposed or would occur as a direct result of the proposed annexation, future recreational development associated with the DRD may occur within the City.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed Project is to annex the City and the City's SOI recreational services and facilities from the existing City management to the authority of the DRD. This would allow DRD to upgrade the condition of the City recreation services and facilities, by maintaining and offering improved parks and recreational services to the City residents and surrounding communities.

Beneficiaries of Project

The proposed Project would provide long-term management of park and recreational facilities and services to the territory within the City and City SOI, whether provided by the City or by DRD, pursuant to the contemplated LAFCO proceedings and annexation of the City's recreational facilities to the DRD. The Project would allow for additional recreational amenities for both the residents of the City and the surrounding communities. Therefore, the proposed Project would benefit the residents and visitors of the City, City SOI, and the DRD service area. Additional beneficiaries of the Project are the City, due to the reorganization of recreational management to be provided by the DRD, and DRD due to the expanded resources provided in the City and City SOI.

Environmental Analysis

The Project proposes the annexation of the City's recreational services and facilities from the existing City boundary as well as the City SOI to be within the management service area of the DRD service boundary. This Project does not directly propose the creation of new recreational facilities or removal/alteration of existing recreational resources or structures. No physical development would occur as a direct result of the annexation. The annexation would only include a change in responsibility of organizations from the City to the DRD. The Project also proposes no changes to recreational regulations which would necessitate modifications to recreational resources or structures. Therefore, no significant or adverse direct impacts to resources would occur because of this Project.

Reasons Why Project is Exempt

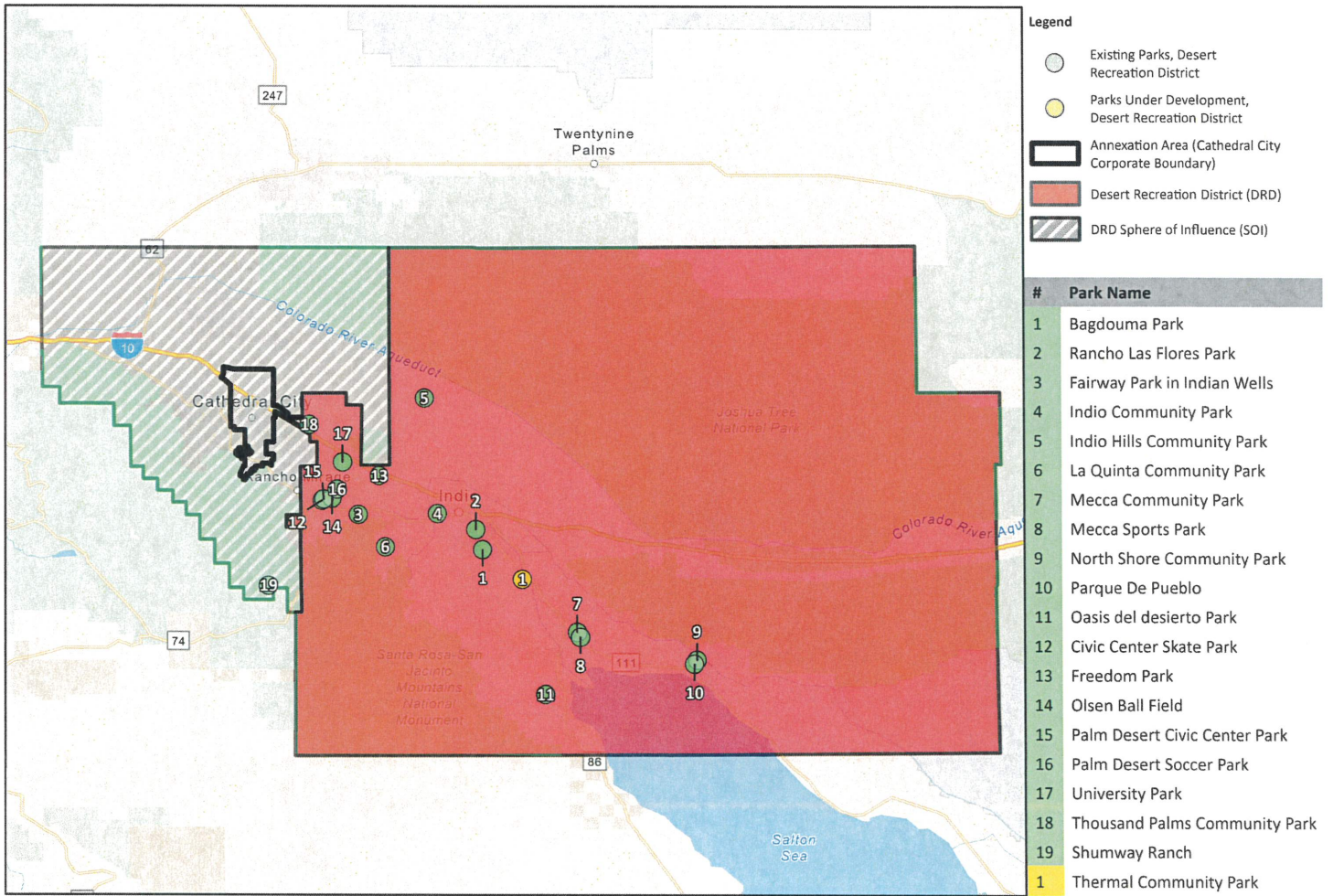
The proposed Project would be categorized as a Class 19 project. These projects are categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15319 which applies to annexations under the following conditions:

(a) Annexations to a city or special district of areas containing existing public or private structures developed to the density allowed by the current zoning or pre-zoning of either the gaining or losing governmental agency whichever is more restrictive, provided, however, that the extension of utility services to the existing facilities would have a capacity to serve only the existing facilities.

(b) Annexations of individual small parcels of the minimum size for facilities exempted by Section 15303, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures.

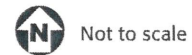
Additionally, the Project is categorically exempt from the provisions of State CEQA Guidelines Section 15320 as a Class 20 project. Class 20 projects are those that involve changes in the organization or reorganization of local governmental agencies where the changes do not change the geographical area in which previously existing powers are exercised.

The proposed Project is consistent with the annexation to a special district from and a city and changes in reorganization of local government where the changes do not change the geographical area in which previously existing powers exercised. Consistently, the Project only proposes the expansion of the DRD service boundary with no modifications to the physical resources within the City.

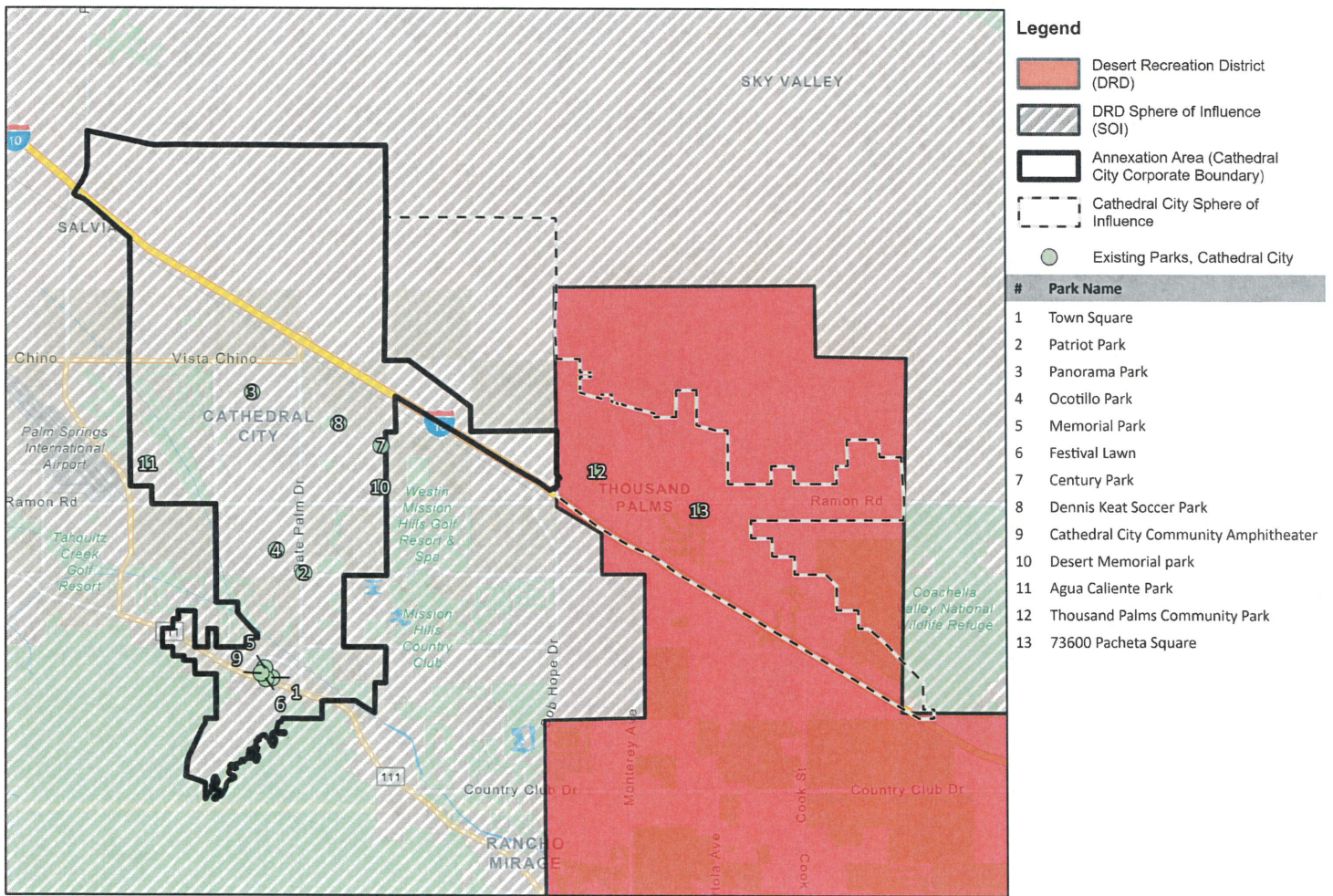


Sources: County of Riverside Cities, 2024; Desert Recreation District Parks, ND; ESRI World Navigation Map, 2025; and LAFCO, 2013.

EXHIBIT 1: Desert Recreation District Boundary
 Cathedral City Parks Annexation, City of Cathedral, Riverside County



Page intentionally left blank.

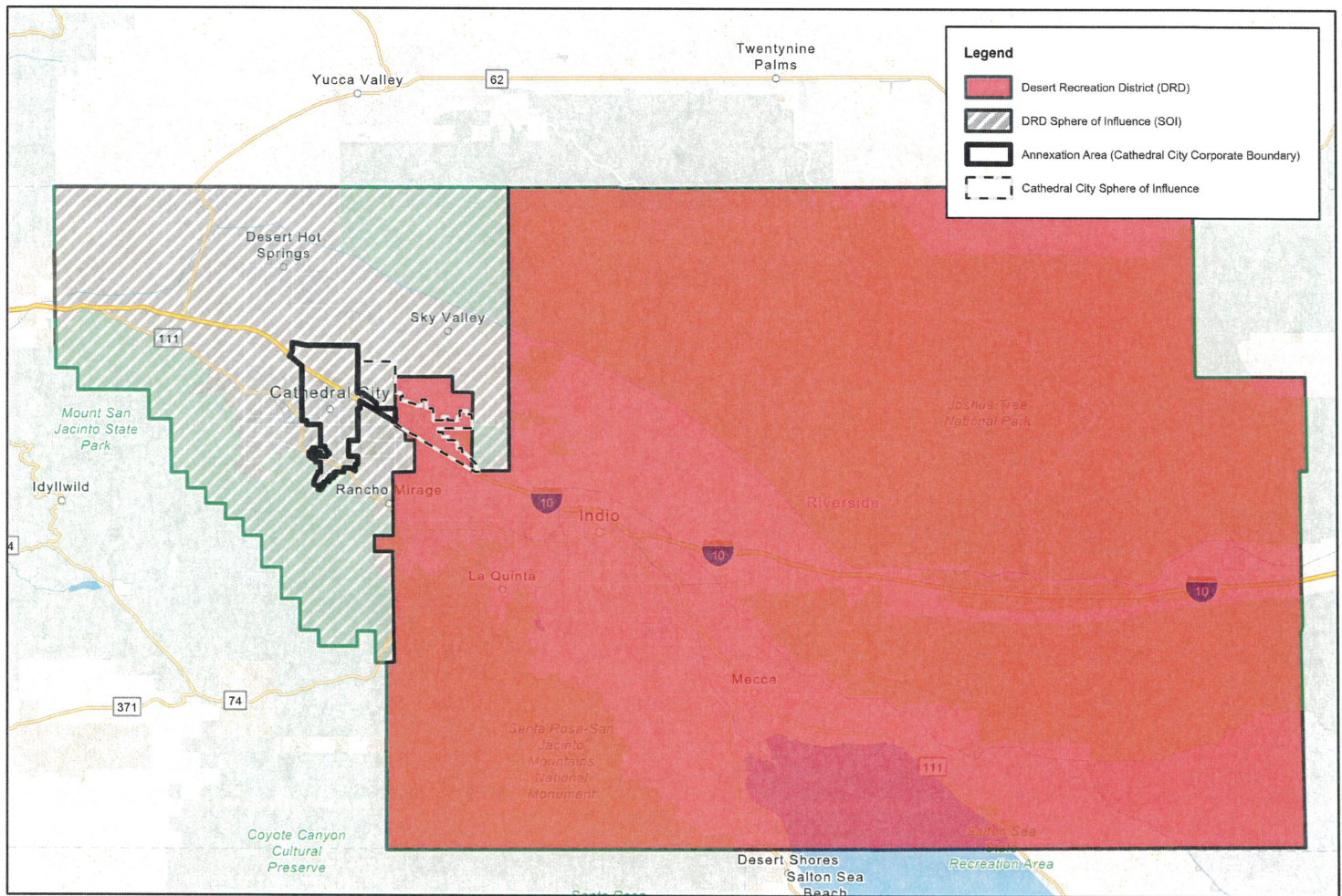


Sources: Cathedral City Parks, ND; County of Riverside Cities, 2022; ESRI Navigation Map, 2025; and LAFCO, 2013.

EXHIBIT 2: Cathedral City Boundary
 Cathedral City Parks Annexation, City of Cathedral, Riverside County




Page intentionally left blank



Sources: County of Riverside Cities, 2022; ESRI World Navigation Map, 2025; and LAFCO, 2013.

EXHIBIT 3: Annexation Area
Cathedral City Parks Annexation, City of Cathedral, Riverside County

 Not to scale

Kimley»Horn

Page intentionally left blank