

Riverside County
Facilities Management
3450 14th St., 2nd Floor, Riverside, CA 92501

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

June 11, 2025

Project Name: Highgrove Norton Younglove Community Center Tenant Improvements (Highgrove TI) Project

Project Number: FM08720014182

Project Location: 459 Center Street, east of Michigan Avenue, Riverside, CA 92507, Assessor's Parcel Number (APN): 255-080-041

Description of Project: The Highgrove Norton Younglove Community Center (Center) is located at 459 Center Street in Riverside, California, 92507. The Center opened its doors in 1996 to provide services to the poverty driven community. Throughout the years, the Center expanded and serves as a centralized cooling and warming center, provides senior lunch programs, food distribution, fitness programs and organizes seasonal activities for all age groups. The Norton Younglove Community Center has not received significant improvements for close to 30 years and is in need of modernization, safety and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance renovation.

On October 1, 2024 (Item 3.51), the Board of Supervisors (Board) District 1 approved the use of Non-EO Operations Fund for building improvements to the Highgrove Norton Younglove Community Center in the amount of \$230,816. On December 17, 2024 (Item 3.38), the Board District 1 approved the use of Highgrove Cannabis DA Funds in the amount of \$350,000 for the upgrades to the Center. The scope of work for the Highgrove Norton Younglove TI Project (Project) includes, but is not limited to, replacement of flooring in the restrooms with ceramic tile, the kitchen with quarry tile and the remainder of the facility with LVT; upgrading of the existing HVAC units and replacement of two wall AC units; retrofitting of the existing parking lot pole lights with LED heads, installation of the exterior floodlights to the back patio area; and installation of a new exterior digital messaging sign along the street. The tenant improvements at the existing Highgrove Community Center are identified as the project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). No direct or indirect physical environmental impacts are anticipated from the tenant improvements.

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 15311 Accessory Structures Exemption, and 15061(b) (3), General Rule or "Common Sense" Exemption, Codified under Title 14, Articles 5 and 19, Sections 15061, 15301 and 15311.

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 tenant improvements at the Highgrove Community Center.

- **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 minor interior improvements at an existing facility. The minor improvements within the existing footprint of the Highgrove Community Center would result in the continued provision 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 15311–Accessory Structures:** This Class 11 categorical exemption includes the construction, or placement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities. The project, as proposed, includes the a new sign on the perimeter of the site, replacement of existing lighting with LED lighting, and the addition of exterior floodlights to the bac patio area of the site to provide a visible, safe and secure public gathering place. This improvement would be appurtenant to the existing Community Center and will not substantially increase or expand the use of the site; therefore, the project is exempt as the project meets the scope and intent of the Class 11 Exemption identified in Section 15311, 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 the tenant improvements at the Highgrove Community Center will not result in any direct or indirect physical environmental impacts. The improvements would occur at an existing facility, would not alter the building footprint and are being completed to provide for safe and efficient operation of the public facility. The use of the facility 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:** 6-11-2025

Mike Sullivan, Senior Environmental Planner
County of Riverside, Facilities Management