



CONFORMED COPY

Copy of Document Recorded on
09/04/2025 10:57:33 AM
as 2025-E0069
Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder

NOTICE OF CEQA EXEMPTION

TO: X Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: City of Ukiah
300 Seminary Avenue
Ukiah, CA 95482

X County Clerk
500 Low Gap Road
Ukiah, CA, 95482

PROJECT TITLE: Adoption of an Ordinance to Establish an Administrative Use Permit Process, Reorganize Performance Standards, and Clarify Related Zoning and Animal Keeping Provisions in the Ukiah City Code.

PROJECT LOCATION: City of Ukiah

PUBLIC AGENCY DECIDING TO CARRY OUT PROJECT: City of Ukiah

DATE OF APPROVAL: September 4, 2025

NAME OF PROJECT APPLICANT: City of Ukiah

TO: X Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: City of Ukiah
300 Seminary Avenue
Ukiah, CA 95482

X Mendocino County Clerk- Recorder
501 Low Gap Road, STE 1020
Ukiah, CA 95482

CEQA EXEMPTION STATUS:

- Ministerial
- Declared Emergency
- Categorical Exemption
- Statutory Exemption Section
- X Other: CEQA Guidelines §15061(b)(3)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed ordinance establishes an Administrative Use Permit (AUP) process within the zoning code, completing Implementation Programs C, E, and I of the Ukiah 2040 General Plan Agriculture Element. While the ordinance is primarily intended to streamline local agricultural uses, the AUP framework may also serve as an effective zoning tool for other minor uses in the City's zoning code.

In recent years, and continuing into 2025, the City has experienced growing public interest in small-scale, neighborhood-serving agricultural activities such as backyard chickens, beekeeping, and community gardens. These uses are generally compatible with residential areas but have often required a Minor Use Permit when a proposal involves even minor deviations from adopted standards. The Minor Use Permit process includes public

noticing, interdepartmental review, and Planning Commission approval. It was developed for more complex land use proposals and has created barriers for lower-intensity activities.

The proposed ordinance addresses this issue by introducing a staff-level AUP process for small-scale agricultural and other low-impact uses that may require minor exceptions to performance standards. This process maintains neighborhood compatibility and public oversight while reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens. The ordinance also distinguishes between commercial livestock keeping and personal animal keeping and updates the zoning code to reflect appropriate permitting standards across zoning districts.

Existing performance standards currently located in Ukiah City Code (UCC) Division 9, Chapter 2, Article 15.6 (established by Ordinance No. 1167 in 2016) and Section 9182 of Article 16 ("Animals within the City") would be relocated to a new Article 23 of Division 9, Chapter 2, titled "Performance Standards for Administrative Use Permits." This consolidation places the applicable standards for a range of small-scale and neighborhood-serving uses in a single section of the zoning code, making them easier for staff and applicants to locate and apply.


An Administrative Use Permit may still be required when a proposed project does not fully comply with performance standards or when additional review is warranted due to site-specific context. In these cases, the Community Development Director may approve, conditionally approve, or deny the permit to ensure compatibility with surrounding uses.

The ordinance also includes a clarification to Section 4200 of Division 5, Chapter 2, which regulates livestock. The amendment specifies that the provisions of this chapter apply only to the commercial keeping of livestock for sale, breeding, production, or other business purposes. Noncommercial or personal animal keeping is regulated separately under Section 9381. This change clarifies the distinction between commercial livestock operations and personal animal keeping within residential and urban zones.

REASONS WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT: The proposed ordinance is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, also known as the "common sense" exemption. This exemption applies when it can be determined with certainty that the activity will not have a significant effect on the environment. The ordinance does not authorize new land uses or physical development and does not increase the intensity of development. It introduces procedural changes to the City's permitting process by allowing certain low-impact uses, which are currently subject to discretionary review through a Minor Use Permit, Minor Variance, or Minor Site Development Permit, to instead be reviewed through a ministerial and a Staff-level discretionary process. The ordinance does not alter any applicable environmental standards or regulations. As the ordinance streamlines existing procedures without resulting in physical changes or environmental impacts, the ordinance qualifies for the common sense exemption under CEQA.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Katherine Schaefers, Planning Manager
Phone Number: (707) 463-6203
Email: kschaefers@cityofukiah.com

This is to certify that the Notice of Exemption and other project related documents are available to the General Public at: Community Development Department, Planning Division, Ukiah Civic Center, 300 Seminary Avenue, Ukiah, CA 95482.

	09-04-2025	Planning Manager
Signature (Public Agency)	(Date)	(Title)