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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

October 24, 2025

Project Name: United States District Court (USDC) Perimeter Retaining Wall Waterproofing Project, Riverside

Project Number: FM08720014653

Project Location:3470 12th Street, east of Lemon Street, Riverside, California, 92501, Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 215-321-019

Description of Project: The USDC, located at 3470 12th Street in Riverside, provides court services to our residents. The court is experiencing erosion issues which is causing water intrusion to approximately 620 linear feet of the retaining wall which is located adjacent to Lemon Street. The scope of work to the USDC Perimeter Retaining Wall Project includes addressing the erosion at the plant beds (-11,300 square feet), water-proofing the existing retaining planter wall by utilizing a more sustainable material to prevent water intrusion; and replacing the existing plants with drought-tolerant plants to reduce water usage and maintenance. The improvements to the landscaping and perimeter retaining wall at the USDC 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 significant 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 Class 1 Existing Facilities Exemption; and 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 fencing and landscaping improvements at the existing USDC.

- **Section 15301-Existing Facilities Exemption:** 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, includes site improvements to the existing landscaped area and retaining wall surrounding the USDC. Minor landscaping and improvements to the retaining wall will be completed to prevent erosion and water intrusion into the retaining wall and adjacent building. The use of the facility would continue to provide public services to the community 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. The proposed improvements to the existing facility will not result in any direct or indirect physical environmental impacts. The improvements would require limited construction activity within the County owned property and would not alter the function or use of the site or have any external physical effects. The improvements are to limited minor landscaping and retaining wall improvements. The improvements would enhance the quality of public services and provide a safe and secure facility by reducing erosion and preventing water intrusion. The use and operation of the facility will be substantially similar to the existing use and will not create any new environmental impacts. 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:** 10-24-2025

Mike Sullivan,
County of Riverside, Facilities Management