FOR COUNTY CLERK USE ONLY

Riverside County
Office of Economic Development

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

September 30, 2026

Project Name: Riverside County Highgrove Street Landscaping Improvements Project

Project Number: MT31241

Project Locations: Center St. from Walker Ave. to Mt. Vernon Ave.; on Mt. Vernon Ave. from Main St. to Spring St.; and, on Spring St. from Garfield Ave. to Michigan Ave

Description of Project: The unincorporated community of Highgrove has longed for a neighborhood-serving grocery store. This project's goal is to provide a pathway for the community of Highgrove to successfully attract and support the development of grocery and complementary retail stores.

Implementation of corridor improvements include landscaping and tree planting in priority areas to improve curb appeal and signal investment readiness.

Initial right of way landscape improvements is on Center St. from Walker Ave. to Mt. Vernon Ave.; on Mt. Vernon Ave. from Main St. to Spring St.; and, on Spring St. from Garfield Ave. to Michigan Ave., totaling roughly 28,600 square feet of new landscaping enhancements. The landscaping improvements within the Highgrove community street rights-of-way are identified as the project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). No 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 Office of Economic Development

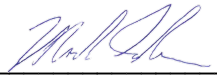
Exempt Status: State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15301(c) Existing Facilities Exemption; and Section 15061(b) (3), General Rule or "Common Sense" Exemption, Codified under Title 14, Articles 5 and 19, Sections 15061 and 15301.

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 landscaping improvements within the Highgrove community street rights-of-way.

- **Section 15301(c) –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. (c) includes existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities (this includes road grading for the purpose of public safety), and other alterations such as the addition of bicycle facilities, including but not limited to bicycle parking, bicycle-share facilities and bicycle lanes, transit improvements such as bus lanes, pedestrian crossings, street trees, and other similar alterations that do not create additional automobile lanes The project, as proposed, is the implementation of landscaping improvements within the Highgrove community street rights-of-way. The improvements would not add lanes or capacity to the streets and are being implemented to aesthetically improve the area. The use of the facility would continue to provide public circulation and would not result in a significant increase in capacity or intensity of use. The facility would continue to provide public services and the improvements t are exempt as they meet 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. With certainty, there is no possibility that the project may have a significant effect on the environment. The proposed landscaping improvements within the Highgrove community street rights-of-way will not result in any direct or indirect physical environmental impacts. The minor modifications would occur within the existing street rights-of-way and would not expand the footprint or substantially increase the capacity of the streets. 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 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:** 9-30-2026

Mike Sullivan, Senior Environmental Planner
County of Riverside

RIVERSIDE COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER

AUTHORIZATION
TO BILL
BY JOURNAL VOUCHER

Project Name: Highgrove Street Landscaping Improvements Project

Accounting String: 537080-24325-912601

DATE: September 30, 2026

AGENCY: Riverside County

THIS AUTHORIZES THE COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER TO BILL FOR FILING AND HANDLING FEES FOR THE ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENT(S).

NUMBER OF DOCUMENTS INCLUDED: One (1)

AUTHORIZED BY: **Mike Sullivan, Senior Environmental Planner**

Signature:

PRESENTED BY: **Benny Yeh, Facilities Project Manager, Office of Economic Development**

-TO BE FILLED IN BY COUNTY CLERK-

ACCEPTED BY: _

DATE: _

RECEIPT # (S) _

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County of Riverside
Office of Economic Development
3403 10th Street, Suite 400, Riverside, CA 92501

Date: September 30, 2026

To: Office of the County Clerk

From: Mike Sullivan, Senior Environmental Planner

Subject: **County of Riverside Office of Economic Development Project # MT31241**
Highgrove Street Landscaping Improvements Project

The Riverside County's Office of Economic Development is requesting that you post the attached Notice of Exemption. Attached you will find an authorization to bill by journal voucher for your posting fee.

After posting, please return the document to:

Mail Stop #2600
Attention: Mike Sullivan, Senior Environmental Planner,
3450 14th Street, Suite 307, Riverside, CA 92501

If you have any questions, please contact Mike Sullivan at 955-8009 or email at msullivan@rivco.org.

Attachment

cc: file