

CITY OF FRESNO
CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

THE PROJECT DESCRIBED HEREIN IS DETERMINED TO BE CATEGORICALLY
EXEMPT FROM THE PREPARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS
PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 19 OF THE STATE CEQA GUIDELINES.

APPLICANT: Patricia Diep, Project Manager
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PROJECT LOCATION: Fresno-Clovis Regional Wastewater Reclamation Facility
(City of Fresno Council District 3)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The City of Fresno, Capital Projects Department is proposing to improve the existing dewatering cake (sludge) pump by replacing three existing cavity pumps with two piston cake pumps, installing three shaftless screw conveyors, one new sludge cake hopper, and modifying the cake piping at the Fresno-Clovis Regional Wastewater Reclamation Facility's (RWRF) Dewatering Building.

This project is exempt under Sections 15301/Class 1 and 15302/Class 2 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. None of the exceptions to Categorical Exemptions set forth in the CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

EXPLANATION:

Class 1 exemptions, for projects pertaining to Existing Facilities, consist of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of use. Examples include but are not limited to: Existing facilities of publicly owned utilities used to provide electric power, natural gas, sewerage, or other public utility services; and restoration or rehabilitation of deteriorated or damaged structures, facilities, or mechanical equipment to meet current standards of public health and safety, unless it is determined that the damage was substantial and resulted from an environmental hazard such as earthquake, landslide, or flood.

Class 2 exemptions, for projects involving Replacement or Reconstruction, consist of replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced. Examples include but are not limited to: Replacement or reconstruction of existing utility systems and/or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of

capacity

The proposed project is consistent with the Class 1 and Class 2 exemptions because it will make minimal modifications to the sludge handling system in the existing dewatering building at the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant. The existing system has been experiencing operation and maintenance issues which require some improvements to be made to ensure reliability of the system by replacing three existing cavity pumps with two piston cake pumps, installing three shaftless screw conveyors, one new sludge cake hopper, and replacing the cake piping which will tie into the existing piping. These facilities will be located on the same site as the structures being replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced and will involve negligible expansion of existing use

None of the exceptions to Categorical Exemptions set forth in the CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300.2, Exceptions, identifies the following exceptions to using a categorical exemption. Based on an examination of the project and supporting information, the project would not result in any impacts to the environment that would cause an exception to applying the Class 1, Existing Facilities and Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction, Categorical Exemptions, to the project, as described below.

(a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.

Exception (a) does not apply because the project falls within the Class 1, Existing Facilities, and Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction Categorical Exemptions.

(b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.

Exception (b) does not apply. This project involves replacement of existing pumps, modifications of existing process piping and installation of cake dewatering appurtenances. All works are to be performed and completed inside the existing Dewatering Building at RWRf and will not cause cumulative impact to the environment because no similar projects in the same place are planned in the future. This is a discrete, one-time project to repair the existing infrastructure.

(c) Significant Effects. A categorical exemption shall not be used for any activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

Exception (c) does not apply. The project involves the removal of the existing cavity pumps, installation of three shaftless cake conveyors, installation of piston pumps, modification of

existing cake piping and installation of screw feeder. The project is entirely located within the existing Regional Wastewater Reclamation Facility and is a standard type of repair and maintenance for these types of facilities. The project site is not in an unusual location that would result in significant effect on the environment.

(d) Scenic Highways. *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway.*

Exception (d) does not apply. The project is not located on or near any scenic highways. The nearest officially designated State scenic highway is a portion of Route 180 east of Sanger, CA, approximately 21 miles away from the Project site. The nearest eligible State scenic highway is a portion of State Route 168 in northeast Fresno, approximately 8.5 miles away from the Project site.

(e) Hazardous Waste Sites. *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.*

Exception (e) does not apply. There are no known hazardous waste sites located at the project location per the most recently published list on the Envirostor database compiled and published by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control.


(f) Historical Resources. *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.*

Exception (f) does not apply. There are no known historical resources located at this project location.

None of the exceptions to Categorical Exemptions set forth in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply to this project. Furthermore, the proposed project is not expected to have a significant effect on the environment. Accordingly, a categorical exemption, as noted above, has been prepared for the project.

Date: May 21, 2026

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Submitted by: 

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