

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: Riverside County Office of Education
Operational Support Services
4383 Tequesquite Avenue
Riverside, CA 92501

County Clerk
County of Riverside
2724 Gateway Drive
Riverside, CA 92507

Project Title: Indio Conference Center Project

Project Location (Specific): 83625 Dr. Carreon Blvd., Indio CA 92201

Project Location (City): Riverside

Project Location (County): Riverside

Project Description: Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE) proposes to develop a new 33,000 square foot building with offices, conference center/meeting rooms, and storage/warehouse facility to store office and school supplies. The new building will be developed on vacant land adjacent to RCOE's existing office building. The project includes site improvements for expanded staff and visitor parking, solar carports, and expanded storm water management system.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE)

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: RCOE, Jessica Mears, Coordinator, Facilities Planning and Construction

Exempt Status:

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269 (a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption (Section 15332 - In-Fill Development Projects);
- Statutory Exemption (Code/Section _____);
- The project clearly will not have a significant effect on the environment (15061(b)(3)).

Reasons why project is exempt: The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) provides several "categorical exemptions" which are applicable to categories of projects and activities that the Lead Agency has determined generally do not pose a risk of significant impacts on the environment. The project is exempt under Section 15332 of the State CEQA Guidelines established for infill development projects. CEQA Guidelines Section 15332 states infill development is applicable to projects that meet five conditions. The reasons why the proposed project meets each condition follows:

- (a) *The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations.* The City General Plan designates the project site as Workplace and Employment District, which provides areas within the City for a wide variety of employment-generating activities, including office, industrial and light manufacturing, research and development, and supportive commercial. The project consists of a new building with conference center, offices, storage/warehouse facility, which are compatible uses in this zone. The design plans for the structure will be reviewed by the City and will be consistent with all applicable building standards and regulations set forth in the Zoning Code.
- (b) *The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.* The proposed project is 4.6 acres located in the City at the southeast corner of Calhoun Street and Dr. Carreon. The site is surrounded by existing urban uses that include industrial to the immediate east, single family residential to the south, Calhoun Street followed by single family residential to the west, and a storage facility and vacant commercial/industrial to the north. A photograph of the existing site is enclosed.
- (c) *The project has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species.* A photograph of the existing site is enclosed. The existing lot is vacant and comprised of flat dirt with sporadic patches of weedy grasses. There are no trees, wetlands, or natural habitat onsite. The surrounding properties are primarily developed and provide no sensitive habitat or habitat for special status species. Thus, the project site and surrounding properties have no value for endangered, rare or threatened species.
- (d) *Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.* The proposed building will be located approximately 230 feet from the closest residential uses, with the parking lot abutting the adjacent residential uses. The project would generate vehicular trips from staff and visitor vehicles traveling to the office

building, with minimal truck traffic associated with office-supply deliveries. All projects are required to comply City approval and any applicable street improvements that would be part of the project scope, which RCOE would be subject to pay its fair share of the street improvements. Construction of the project would take place during the allowed days and hours specified by the City's noise ordinance, resulting in no significant construction noise impacts. The proposed project uses would result in the generation of typical operational noise levels from a commercial development including vehicular traffic ingress/egress noises, vehicular door closure noises, and talking during conversations. These sources of noise are normal and expected, consistent with the existing adjacent RCOE office building, compliant with the zoning designation of the site, and would not result in significant noise impacts. No noise mitigation is required.

Similar to all development proposals, the project will comply with mandatory storm water drainage and water quality requirements including "Low Impact Development" measures, and thus, will not result in significant water quality impacts.

- (e) *The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.* The project is located in a developed area and can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

Exceptions: CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 identifies specific instances where exceptions to exemptions apply. The reasons why the exceptions do not exist for the proposed project follows each of the listed exceptions:

- (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 in 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.* Section 15300.2(a) does not apply to the Class 32 category of exemptions. Nonetheless, the project site is not located in area of sensitive or critical concern.
- (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.* Cumulative impacts related to development accommodated by the City's General Plan 2040 were found to have potential significant cumulative impacts in the General Plan EIR only in the areas of: agricultural resources, air quality, mineral resources, noise, and transportation/traffic. Agricultural resources - The project is located in an urban environment and is not an existing agricultural site; the potential for cumulatively significant impacts to agricultural resources does not exist. Mineral resources – According to the General Plan EIR, the project site is not identified in the General Plan as a MRZ-2 zone in the northeastern portion of the City. The project would not result in a mineral resources impact. Noise – The proposed office building is compatible with the urban environment and adjacent land uses, including industrial, commercial, and residential uses. Traffic - All projects are required to comply City approval and any applicable mandatory street improvements that would be part of the project scope. The project would be subject to its fair share of the street improvements, based on the trips generated by the project in comparison with the other cumulative development.
- (c) *Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.* There are no unusual circumstances associated with the proposed office building that would lead to a reasonable possibility the proposed project would result in a significant effect on the environment. Exception 15300.2 (c) does not apply.
- (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. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.* There are no scenic resources including trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. Exception 15300.2 (d) does not apply.
- (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.* The project site is not listed on any hazardous site lists compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. Exception 15300.2 (e) does not apply.
- (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.* The site is an undeveloped vacant dirt lot. No structures or historical resources existing onsite. Exception 15300.2 (f) does not apply.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Jessica Mears

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (951) 826-6516

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption filing.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature:  Date: 1/17/24 Title: Coordinator, Facilities Planning and Construction

- Signed by Lead Agency
 Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR:

Existing Site Photograph



Existing Aerial Photograph

