

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

**FROM:** City of Fresno Planning and Development Dept.  
2600 Fresno Street  
Fresno, California 93721-3604

**TO:** X Fresno County Clerk  
2220 Tulare Street – First Floor Lobby  
Fresno, California 93721

\_\_\_\_ Office of Planning & Research  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 212  
Sacramento, California 95812-3044

**Project Title:** Conditional Use Permit Application No. P23-02781

**Project Location:** 7333 North Cedar Avenue, Fresno, CA 93720 (Assessor's Parcel Number: 404-030-68); Located on the west side of North Cedar between East Alluvial and East Spruce Avenues.

**Project Location – City:** City of Fresno

**Project Location – County:** County of Fresno

**Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:** Conditional Use Permit Application No. P23-02781 proposes construction of a self-storage (Personal (Mini) Storage) facility on a ±4.21-acre vacant parcel. The project consists of three single-story buildings: one ±96,231 square-foot storage building including ±1,096 square feet of office space, and two additional ±6,051 and ±7,652 square-foot storage buildings, for a total square footage of ±111,783. On and off-site improvements include: 15 parking spaces, landscaping, fencing, curb, gutter, and sidewalks. The project doesn't include outdoor storage or an on-site manager's residence. The proposed hours of operation for the leasing office will be daily from 9:00 a.m. to 6 p.m. The storage units will be accessible daily from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. with a personal key code.

**Beneficiaries of The Project Would Be:** Nate Medhus of Abernathy Development, LLC.  
3301 River Drive South, Fargo, North Dakota 58104

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** City of Fresno

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Abernathy Development, LLC

**Exempt Status: (check one)**

- Ministerial - PRC § 21080(b)(1); CEQA Guidelines §15268  
 Declared Emergency - PRC § 21080(b)(3); CEQA Guidelines §15269(a)  
 Emergency Project - PRC § 21080(b)(4); CEQA Guidelines §15269(b) and (c)  
 **Categorical Exemption – CEQA Guidelines 15332/Class 32**  
 Statutory Exemption – PRC § \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason(s) Why Project Is Exempt:**

**This project is categorically exempt under Section 15332/Class 32 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines as follows:**

Under Section 15303/Class 32, the proposed project is exempt from CEQA requirements when the project is characterized as in-fill development meeting the following conditions:

- 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.*

By current standards, the subject site is identified as “in-fill” within an urban setting. This project is located on a site within the City limits and is consistent with the Fresno General Plan designation, policies, and zoning. The existing O/UGM (*Office/Urban Growth Management*) zone districts are consistent with the Employment – Office planned land use designations approved for this site by the Fresno General Plan, Woodward Park Community Plan, and the Fresno County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

- b) *The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.*

The State of California Governor’s Office of Planning and Research states that infill development refers to “building within unused and underutilized lands within existing development patterns, typically but not exclusively in urban areas. The proposed project is located within city limits, occurs on a vacant site of approximately 4.21-acres (less than the five-acre maximum).

- c) *The project has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species.*

The site is currently vacant. The Fresno Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) did not identify this site as habitat for rare or threatened species. Surrounding developments consists of existing offices, storage facility, church, and multi-family residential; therefore, it has no value as habitat 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 project was routed to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, the City of Fresno Public Utilities Department-Water Division, Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District, and no significant effects were identified relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality, as provided in detail below.

Traffic

Senate Bill (SB) 743 requires that relevant CEQA analysis of transportation impacts be conducted using a metric known as vehicle miles traveled (VMT) instead of Level of Service (LOS). VMT measures how much actual auto travel (additional miles driven) a proposed project

would create on California roads. If the project adds excessive car travel onto our roads, the project may cause a significant transportation impact.

The State CEQA Guidelines were amended to implement SB 743, by adding Section 15064.3. Among its provisions, Section 15064.3 confirms that, except with respect to transportation projects, a project's effect on automobile delay shall not constitute a significant environmental impact. Therefore, LOS measures of impacts on traffic facilities are no longer a relevant CEQA criteria for transportation impacts.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)(4) states that "[a] lead agency has discretion to evaluate a project's vehicle miles traveled, including whether to express the change in absolute terms, per capita, per household or in any other measure. A lead agency may use models to estimate a project's vehicle miles traveled and may revise those estimates to reflect professional judgment based on substantial evidence. Any assumptions used to estimate vehicle miles traveled and any revision to model outputs should be documented and explained in the environmental document prepared for the project. The standard of adequacy in Section 15151 shall apply to the analysis described in this section."

On June 25, 2020, the City of Fresno adopted CEQA Guidelines for Vehicle Miles Traveled Thresholds, dated June 25, 2020, pursuant to Senate Bill 743 effective on July 1, 2020. The thresholds described therein are referred to herein as the City of Fresno VMT Thresholds. The City of Fresno VMT Thresholds document was prepared and adopted consistent with the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064.3 and 15064.7. The December 2018 Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA (Technical Advisory) published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), was utilized as a reference and guidance document in the preparation of the Fresno VMT Thresholds.

The City of Fresno VMT Thresholds adopted a screening standard and criteria that can be used to screen out qualified projects that meet the adopted criteria from needing to prepare a detailed VMT analysis.

The City of Fresno VMT Thresholds Section 3.0 regarding Project Screening discusses a variety of projects that may be screened out of a VMT analysis including specific development and transportation projects. For development projects, conditions may exist that would presume that a development project has a less than significant impact. These may be size, location, proximity to transit, or trip-making potential. For transportation projects, the primary attribute to consider with transportation projects is the potential to increase vehicle travel, sometimes referred to as "induced travel."

Based upon the City of Fresno's adopted VMT thresholds and guidelines, screening of projects is permitted if a project qualifies as a low trip generator (less than 500 daily trips generated). The proposed personal (mini) storage facility project will generate 217 average daily trips with 17 trips during the morning peak hours and 17 daily trips during the afternoon peak hours, which is less than the established threshold. Given the adopted significance threshold criteria of the City of Fresno, staff determined that the proposed project can be screened out from further VMT

impact analysis and therefore would not result in any significant traffic impacts based upon the City of Fresno's adopted thresholds and guidelines for VMT analyses.

### Noise

The project is a personal (mini) storage use. Typical noise from the project would be transportation related noise from vehicles entering and exiting the facility. Therefore, the project would not result in a significant amount of noise compared to the other adjacent uses and would be conditioned to comply with any applicable noise standards of the Citywide Development Code.

### Air Quality

The project is conditioned to comply with any applicable regulations and conditions from the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District and the project is subject to review by the agency in regard to air quality during construction and operation. No significant air quality impacts were identified the air district.

### Water Quality

The site has been reviewed and conditioned by the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District, Fresno County Public Health, and the City of Fresno Public Utilities in regard to water quality. The surrounding properties have been substantially developed and therefore utilities and public services infrastructure exists in the area. Therefore, no significant water quality impacts were identified.

e) *The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.*

The project has been routed to various utilities and public service providers which have provided project conditions for development of the project. The site has been reviewed and conditioned by the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District, Fresno County Environmental Health Division, City of Fresno Public Works Department, City of Fresno Public Utilities Department, and the City of Fresno Fire Department.

In addition, given the surrounding properties and neighborhood have been substantially developed and utilities and public services already exist in the area, and as stated in the Findings for CEQA Section 15303 above, the site can be adequately served by all required utilities, including sewer, water, and solid waste, as well as public services.

The project has met the described conditions to be characterized as in-fill development and is therefore categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303/Class 3 and Section 15332/Class 32.

None of the exceptions to Categorical Exemptions set forth in the CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300.2 apply to the project. Furthermore, the proposed project is not expected to have a significant effect on

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the environment. A categorical exemption, as noted above, has been prepared for the project and the area is not environmentally sensitive.

**Lead Agency Contact Person:** Valeria Ramirez      **Telephone No.** (559) 621-8046

**Signature:**  **Date:** March 14, 2024  
**Printed Name and Title:**

Erik Young, Supervising Planner  
City of Fresno Planning and Development Department

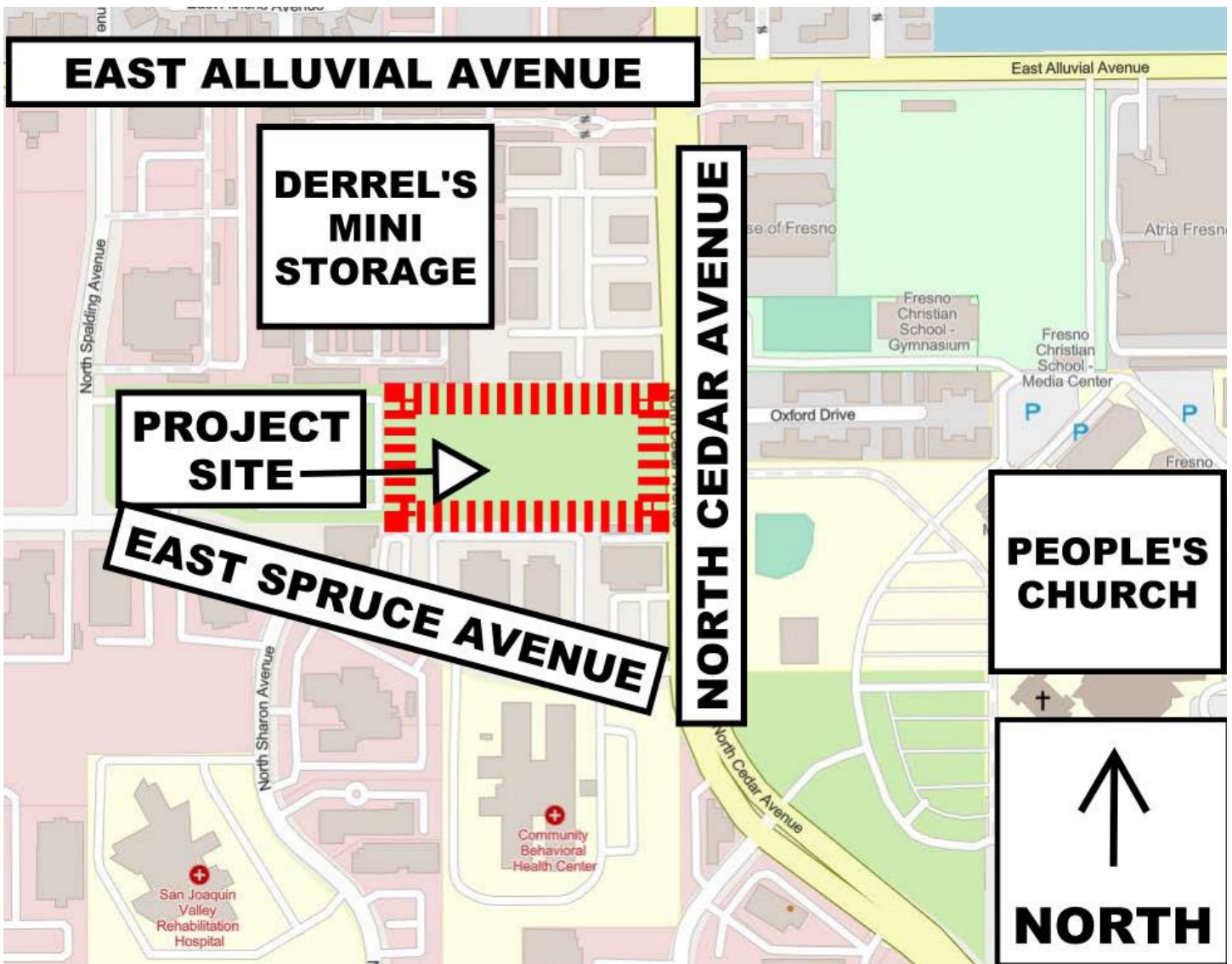
Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Enclosed:

- ❖ Site Location Vicinity Map
- ❖ Categorical Exemption Memo

### VICINITY MAP



**CITY OF FRESNO  
CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR  
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION NO. P23-02781**

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

**APPLICANT:** Kris Steward  
Plan Steward  
5716 Folsom Boulevard Suite 339  
Sacramento, CA 95819

**PROJECT LOCATION:** 7333 North Cedar Avenue, located on the west side of North Cedar between East Alluvial and East Spruce Avenues in Fresno, California.  
APN: 404-030-68

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Conditional Use Permit Application No. P23-02781 proposes construction of a self-storage (Personal (Mini) Storage) facility on a ±4.21-acre vacant parcel. The project consists of three single-story buildings: one ±96,231 square-foot storage building including ±1,096 square feet of office space, and two additional ±6,051 and ±7,652 square-foot storage buildings, for a total square footage of ±111,783. On and off-site improvements include: 15 parking spaces, landscaping, fencing, curb, gutter, and sidewalks. The project doesn't include outdoor storage or an on-site manager's residence. The proposed hours of operation for the leasing office will be daily from 9:00 a.m. to 6 p.m. The storage units will be accessible daily from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. with a personal key code. The site is zoned O/UGM (Office/Urban Growth Management).

**This project is exempt under Sections 15332/Class 32 (In-fill Development Projects) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines as follows:**

Section 15332/Class 32 (Class 32/In-Fill Development Projects) of the CEQA Guidelines exempts from the provisions of CEQA, projects characterized as in-fill development, which meet the following conditions:

- a) The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable gen policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations.

The proposed project (Personal (Mini) Storage) will meet all the provisions of the Fresno Municipal Code. The project is consistent with the Fresno General Plan designation, policies, and zoning. The existing O/UGM (Office/Urban Growth Management) zone district is consistent with the Employment-Office planned land use designation approved for this site by the Fresno General Plan, Woodward Park Community Plan, and the Fresno County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

- 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 (Personal (Mini) Storage) is located within the city limits, occurs on a vacant site of approximately 4.21 acres, which is less than the five-acre maximum, and is surrounded by offices.

- c) The project has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species.

The site is currently vacant. The Fresno Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) did not identify this site as habitat for rare or threatened species. Surrounding developments consists of existing offices, storage facility, church, and multi-family residential; therefore, it has no value as habitat 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 project was routed to the San Joaquin Air Pollution Control District, the city of Fresno Public Utilities Department-Water Division, Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District, and no significant effects were identified relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.

### Traffic

Senate Bill (SB) 743 requires that relevant CEQA analysis of transportation impacts be conducted using a metric known as vehicle miles traveled (VMT) instead of Level of Service (LOS). VMT measures how much actual auto travel (additional miles driven) a proposed project would create on California roads. If the project adds excessive car travel onto our roads, the project may cause a significant transportation impact.

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judgment based on substantial evidence. Any assumptions used to estimate vehicle miles traveled and any revision to model outputs should be documented and explained in the environmental document prepared for the project. The standard of adequacy in Section 15151 shall apply to the analysis described in this section.”

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### Noise

The project is a personal (mini) storage use. Typical noise from the project would be transportation related noise from vehicles entering and exiting the facility. Therefore, the project would not result in a significant amount of noise compared to the other adjacent uses and would be conditioned to comply with any applicable noise standards of the Citywide Development Code.

### Air Quality

The project is conditioned to comply with any applicable regulations and conditions from the

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District and the project is subject to review by the agency in regard to air quality during construction and operation. No significant air quality impacts were identified by the air district.

Water Quality

The site has been reviewed and conditioned by the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District, Fresno County Public Health, and the City of Fresno Public Utilities in regard to water quality. The surrounding properties have been substantially developed and therefore utilities and public services infrastructure exists in the area. Therefore, no significant water quality impacts were identified.

e) The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

The project has been routed to various utilities and public service providers which have provided project conditions for development of the project. The site has been reviewed and conditioned by the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District, Fresno County Environmental Health Division, City of Fresno Public Works Department, City of Fresno Public Utilities Department, and the City of Fresno Fire Department.

In addition, given the surrounding properties and neighborhood have been substantially developed and utilities and public services already exist in the area, and as stated in the Findings for CEQA Section 15303 above, the site can be adequately served by all required utilities, including sewer, water, and solid waste, as well as public services.

None of the exceptions to Categorical Exemptions outlined in the CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300.2 apply to the project. Furthermore, the proposed project is not expected to affect the environment significantly. A categorical exemption, as noted above, has been prepared for the project, and the area is not environmentally sensitive.

Date: March 6, 2024

Submitted by: *Erik Young*

Erik Young  
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Department  
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