

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

October 16, 2024

Project Name: Riverside County Treasurer Tax Collector (TTC) Lease Agreement with Yika El Centro, LLC, Temecula

Project Number: FM0411400002

Project Location: 40810 County Center Drive, Suite 110, Temecula, California, 92591, Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 910-110-090

Description of Project: On August 30, 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved Minute Order 3.85 authorizing Facilities Management Real Estate (FM-RE) to locate suitable office space for the TTC in the City of Temecula or surrounding area. The Real Estate Division issued a Request for Proposal (RFP), and Yika El Centro, LLC, a California limited liability company was selected for their existing building known as Highlands Business Center located in Temecula. The 4,352 square feet facility located at 40810 County Center Drive, Suite 110, Temecula will not only accommodate program space needs by providing more efficient workspace for employees, efficiently serve the large influx of taxpayers but will provide for future growth.

The attached Lease represents five-year term to commence upon completion of moderate interior tenant improvements. The requested tenant improvements include a new reception counter area to accommodate three staff, paint, and carpet throughout the suite. The work will be contracted and pay by Lessor and County will reimburse Lessor upon completion. The occupancy of the facility by TTC is anticipated to commence November 2024. The Lease Agreement Yika El Centro, LLC is identified as the proposed project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The proposed project would not result in an increase in capacity or physical expansion. No significant physical changes would occur as a result of the Lease Agreement.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Riverside County

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Riverside County Facilities Management

Exempt Status: State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, Class 1, Existing Facilities Exemption; Section 15061(b) (3), General Rule or "Common Sense" Exemption. Codified under California Code of Regulations Title 14, Article 5, Section 15061.

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 involve unusual circumstances that could potentially have 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 Lease Agreement and interior tenant improvements.

- **Section 15301 – Class 1 Existing Facilities Exemption:** This 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 Lease Agreement is a contractual action to permit the use of the existing facility, and includes interior tenant improvements to make the office space functional for TTC. No increase in building footprint or substantial increase in capacity would be created by the project. 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. With certainty, there is no possibility that the project may have a significant effect on the environment. The proposed Lease Agreement and interior tenant improvements will not result in any direct or indirect physical environmental impacts. The use and operation of the facility will be substantially similar to the existing use and will not create any new environmental impacts to the surrounding area. No impacts beyond the ongoing, existing use of the site would occur. 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.

Therefore, 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:** 10-17-2024
Mike Sullivan
County of Riverside, Facilities Management