

PLEASE POST FOR 30 DAYS

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**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

FROM: City of Fresno Planning and Development Department  
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

FILED  
NOV 08 2024  
TIME 9:24am  
By [Signature] FRESNO COUNTY CLERK  
DEPUTY

**Project Title:** Environmental Assessment No. P23-02578

**Project Location:** 7568 North Remington Avenue; located on the east side of North Remington Avenue between West Cromwell and West Alluvial Avenues in Fresno, California. (Palm Bluffs Corporate Center), (APN: 405-547-02)

**Project Location – city:** City of Fresno **Project Location- county:** County of Fresno

**Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:** Development Permit Application No. P23-02578 was filed by Nicholas Crawford of Crawford Architecture & Planning and pertains to ±0.97 acres of vacant property. The applicant proposes to construct a ±12,116 square-foot single-story multi-tenant office building consisting of ±3,886 square feet of built out tenant office space and ±8,230 square feet of office shell building. Additional on- and off-site improvements include landscaping, a new parking lot, paving, trash enclosure, bicycle rack, parking lot led light poles, curbs, adequate drainage, and new utilities. A portion of the site is developed with an existing driveway. The subject property is zoned IL/cz (*Light Industrial/conditions of zoning*).

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

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Nicholas Crawford  
Crawford Architecture & Planning  
(559) 977-9779  
[nicholas@crawfordap.com](mailto:nicholas@crawfordap.com)

**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 (In-fill Development Projects).**
- Statutory Exemption – PRC § \_\_\_\_\_

**Reasons why project is exempt:**

Section 15332/Class 32 (In-Fill Development Projects) of the CEQA Guidelines exempts projects characterized as in-fill development from the provisions of CEQA. The proposed project is consistent

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with the conditions of Section 15332/Class 32, as demonstrated in the attached Categorical Exemption Determination for Development Permit Application No. P23-02578.

**Lead Agency Contact Person:** Erik Young Supervising Planner  
City of Fresno Planning and Development Department

**Full telephone no.:** (559) 621-8009

**If filed/signed by applicant:**

Attach certified document of exemption finding  (check if attached)

Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project?  Yes  No

**Signature:** Erik Young **Date:** August 22, 2024

**Printed Name and Title:** Erik Young, Supervising Planner  
City of Fresno Planning and Development Department

**Signed by Lead Agency**  **Signed by applicant.**

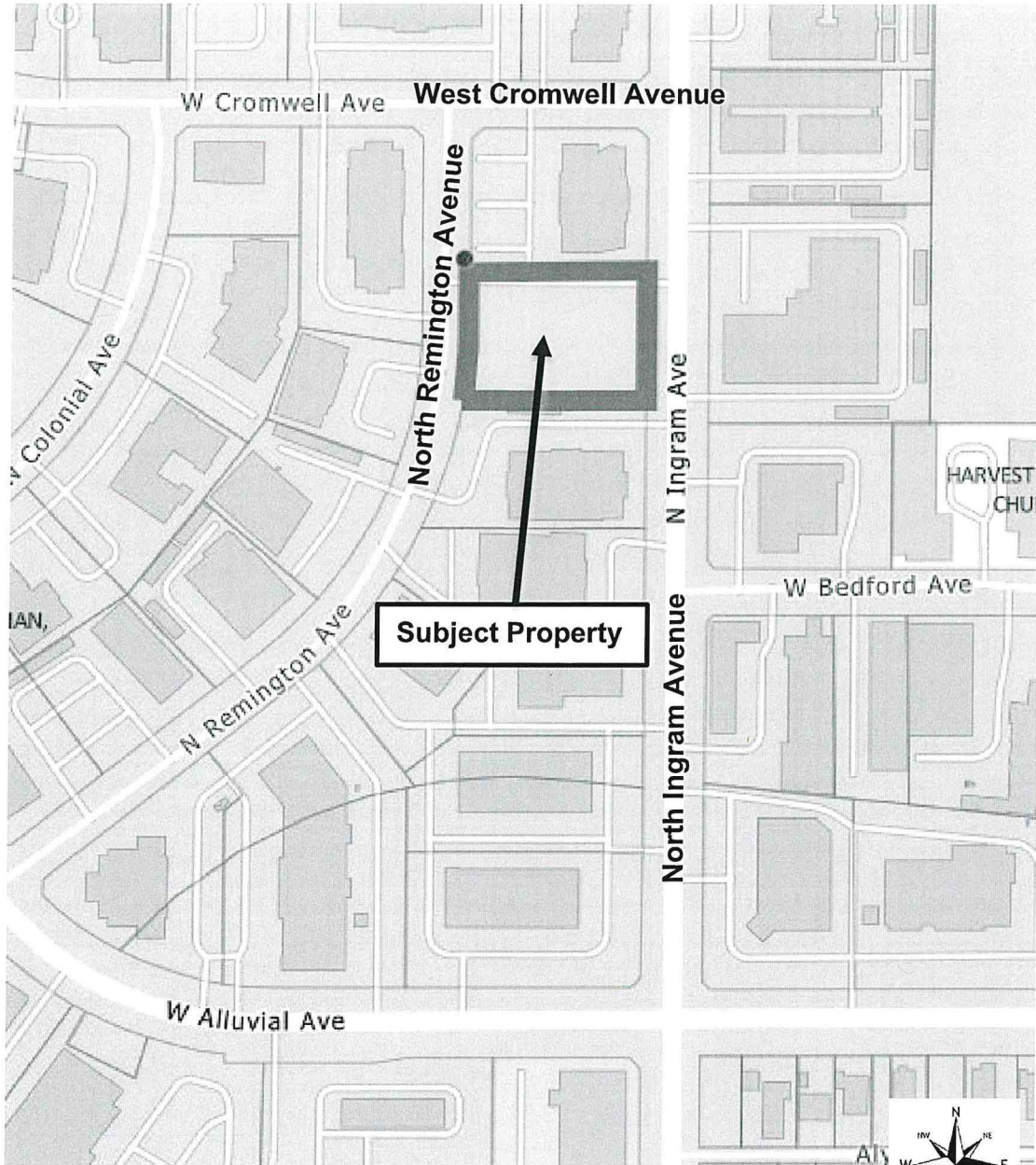
**Attachments:** Vicinity Map

Categorical Exemption Determination for Development Permit Application No. P23-02578

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## VICINITY MAP/SITE LOCATION

7568 North Remington Avenue



### Legend

Subject Property



Planning and Development Department  
2600 Fresno Street, Room 3043 · Fresno, CA 93721 · Phone (559) 621-8277

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**CITY OF FRESNO  
CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR  
DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION NO. P23-02578**

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:** Nicholas Crawford  
Crawford Architecture & Planning  
7122 East Garland Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93737

**PROJECT LOCATION:** 7568 North Remington Avenue; located on the east side of North Remington Avenue between West Cromwell and West Alluvial Avenues in Fresno, California.  
APN: 405-547-02 (Council District 2)

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Development Permit Application No. P23-02578 pertains to ±0.97 acres of vacant property. The applicant proposes to construct a ±12,116 square-foot single-story multi-tenant office building consisting of ±3,886 square feet of built out tenant office space and ±8,230 square feet of office shell building. Additional on- and off-site improvements include landscaping, a new parking lot, paving, trash enclosure, bicycle rack, parking lot led light poles, curbs, adequate drainage, and new utilities. A portion of the site is developed with an existing driveway. The subject property is zoned IL/cz (*Light Industrial/conditions of zoning*).

**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 general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations.*

The proposed project (Office Building) 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 IL (*Light Industrial*) zone district is consistent with the Employment – Light Industrial planned land use designation approved for this site by the Fresno General Plan, Bullard Community Plan, and the Fresno County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

The project site, situated within the Palm Bluffs Corporate Center, was formerly a landfill from 1954 to 1970. Environmental assessments of the closed landfill have identified only low levels of pollutants, with the State of California concluding that the risks are acceptable and that no further investigation or remediation is necessary. The "Post-Closure Land Use Plan Elements, Landfill Area, Calcot Ltd., Pinedale, California" report confirms that the landfill area can be adapted for

development.

The Post-Closure Plan, developed in accordance with California Code of Regulations Title 14, Division 7, Chapter 3, Article 7.8, and approved by relevant agencies—including the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB), Fresno County Community Health Department (FCCHD), California Environmental Protection Agency Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CRWQCB)—establishes development standards, mitigation measures, and restrictions for the landfill area.

These requirements are integrated into the conditions of zoning for the area. The project will adhere to all landfill post-closure measures, including site-specific geotechnical engineering reports and a landfill gas mitigation plan, which must be approved by the Fresno County Department of Health Services and CIWMB before construction. Additionally, the completion of a “Palm Bluffs Corporate Center Review Committee Lot Compliance Status Checklist” is mandated to ensure full implementation of environmental protections. As a result, the development is not expected to have significant negative environmental impacts, as it adheres to established environmental regulations and mitigation measures.

*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 (Offices) is located within the city limits, occurs on a vacant site of approximately 0.97 acres, which is less than the five-acre maximum, and is surrounded by office buildings.

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

The site is currently vacant. Surrounding developments consists of commercial tenant and office spaces; 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 Department of Public Utilities 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, signed in 2013, changes how transportation studies are conducted in California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents. Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) replaces motorist delay and level of service (LOS) as the metric for impact determination. 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 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 to be effective of 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."

Staff utilized the Fresno Council of Governments (COG) Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Screening Tool to determine the VMT for the proposed project. The adopted threshold of significance is 13%, which means that projects that generate VMT in excess of 13% than the existing regional VMT per capita or per employee would have a significant environmental impact; projects that meet the 13% threshold are determined to have a less than significant effect on regional VMT. According to the VMT screening tool, the proposed Office Building project is located within a low-VMT zone and is estimated to generate 17.27 VMT, lower than the 25.60 VMT (13%) threshold.

The proposed project was eligible to screen out because the project meets the criteria described in the adopted guidelines of including less than 500 Active Daily Trips (ADT). Furthermore, projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day generally may be assumed to cause a less-than significant transportation impact, which is lower than 13% VMT threshold. The proposed project also satisfies this criterion as per adopted guidelines.

Therefore, the proposed project would not result in any significant traffic impacts based on the City of Fresno's adopted thresholds and guidelines for VMT analyses.

### Noise

The project is a new office building development. The project site is located adjacent to existing commercial office building uses; 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 in the air district.

### Water Quality

The subject site, previously used by a lumber mill, military base, and Calcot cotton warehousing facility until the mid-1990s, was near an area with discovered groundwater contamination in 1988. The California Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) mandated investigations into potential contamination sources, determining that the contamination originated from The Vendo Company.

Groundwater investigations at Calcot (area of land including the subject site), including a monitoring well approximately 200 feet west of the subject site, detected trace amounts of TCE and methylene chloride in late 1993 and 1994, although these levels were below Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs). The well was destroyed in 1994, and DTSC determined in January 1996 that no further action was needed for the Calcot area. Although remediation efforts are ongoing, the contamination plume does not extend to the subject site or its immediate vicinity and is located over 1,500 feet away, with groundwater flow directed away from the site.

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment conducted on May 30, 2018, concluded that the contamination plume is not expected to adversely impact the site's development. The site's development must accommodate existing groundwater remediation efforts on adjacent properties, and groundwater monitoring will continue as required by DTSC.

Additionally, the site has been reviewed by the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District, Fresno County Public Health, and the City of Fresno Public Utilities, and has been conditioned for water quality protection. Given the developed infrastructure and utilities in the surrounding area, 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, 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. Although the subject site is located on a closed historic landfill, a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment was prepared for the project on May 30, 2018, and the report found that the project is not located on a site on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. The proposed project is required to comply with the provisions of the Post Closure Plan, and all on-site landfill post-closure measures have been incorporated into the conditions of approval for the project. Appropriate site-specific geotechnical engineering reports and a landfill gas mitigation plan are conditioned and subject to approval by the Fresno County Department of Health Services and the CIWMB prior to any construction. As a condition of zoning, the completion of a "Palm Bluffs Corporate Center Review Committee Lot Compliance Status Checklist" is mandatory and ensures all feasible environmental protections are fully implemented pursuant to the above noted mitigation measures. Therefore, the proposed project is not expected to affect the environment significantly. A categorical exemption, as noted above, has been prepared for the project.

Date: August 22, 2024

Prepared By: Brittany Martin

Submitted by:



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Planning & Development Department  
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