

ATTACHMENT 4: NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Alice McCurdy, Deputy Director, Planning and Development Department

The project or activity identified below is determined to be exempt from further environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as defined in the State and County guidelines for the implementation of CEQA.

APN: 075-020-037

Case Nos.: 10DVP-00000-00019, 10CUP-00000-00033, and 10CDP-00000-00082

Location: Two blocks south of the intersection of El Colegio Road and Camino Pescadero at 777 Camino Pescadero, Isla Vista.

Project Title: Santa Barbara Student Housing Cooperative Change of Use

Project Description: The applicant has requested to convert an existing office building of approximately 7,641 square feet (gross floor area) into a dormitory-style student housing facility with 12 bedrooms. The project includes interior and exterior alterations. The first floor will include a living room, kitchen, kitchen pantry, dining room, storage room, interior courtyard, two restrooms, utility and storage closets, and a meeting room for non-profit organizations. The second floor will include a communal kitchen, communal bathroom, breakfast room, and 12 bedrooms. The applicant will lease the bedrooms to a maximum 18 residents.

The interior alterations include a wheelchair lift, partitions, plumbing, and electrical conveyances. The exterior alterations include replacing existing windows and doors, adding new windows and doors, replacing existing curtain walls with standard wood framing and windows, and modifying the existing entrances. The exterior additions include a trash enclosure, accessible ramp, storage shed, two covered bicycle parking structures for 12 bicycles and two uncovered bicycle racks for 12 bicycles. Installing the wheelchair lift and modifying the entrances will decrease the floor area of the existing building by approximately 100 gross square feet. The project will not affect the height or overall footprint of the existing building.

The project also includes various landscape and hardscape improvements, including a parking space, walls, paths, patios, and trees, and shrubs. Constructing the accessible ramp and other hardscape improvements will require approximately 8.7 cubic yards of cut and 10 cubic yards of fill.

The Goleta Water District and Goleta West Sanitary District, respectively, provide public water and sewer service to the existing building. The project includes 27 parking spaces, including 12 on-site parking spaces and 15 off-site parking spaces. The off-site parking spaces are located in an existing parking lot and parking structure. The project site totals 0.51 acres and is zoned High Density Student Residential (SR-H) under the Coastal Zoning Ordinance.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Santa Barbara County

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Santa Barbara Student Housing Cooperative

Exempt Status: (Check one)

- Ministerial
 Statutory Exemption
 Categorical Exemption
 Emergency Project
 Declared Emergency

Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guideline Section: Section 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures)

Reasons to Support Exemption Findings: Section 15303 of the *Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act* (CEQA Guidelines) exempts the construction of limited numbers of new, small structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure. Qualified exemptions include “In urbanized areas, . . . apartments, duplexes and similar structures designed for not more than six dwelling units [Section 15303(b)] . . . Accessory (appurtenant) structures including garages, carports, patios, swimming pool, and fences [Section 15303(b)] . . .”

The proposed project qualifies for this exemption. It is in the urbanized area of unincorporated Isla Vista and consists of one dwelling unit (i.e., 12 bedrooms with a common kitchen and bathroom). The proposed project would convert an office building to a student housing facility and is limited to minor exterior alterations (e.g., replacing windows and doors, replacing curtain walls with wood framing, modifying entrances), interior alterations (e.g., new partitions, plumbing and electrical conveyances), and accessory structures (e.g., new trash enclosure, accessible ramp, bicycle racks, patios).

There is no substantial evidence that there are unusual circumstances (including future activities) resulting in (or which might reasonably result in) significant impacts which threaten the environment. The exceptions to the categorical exemption pursuant to Section 15300.2 of the CEQA Guidelines are:

- (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 [sic] 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.**

The project site is in an urbanized area and developed with an office building and parking lot. The surrounding development is predominantly medium to high density housing with some scattered non-residential uses such as a church and student center. The County's resource inventory maps do not designate or map any flora, fauna or other environmental resources of hazardous or critical concern on or adjacent to the project site.

- (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.**

Successive projects of the same type as the proposed project would not result in significant cumulative impacts. The project site is developed and used for commercial use. The proposed project would convert the office building into a student housing facility and would be limited to the minor exterior alterations, interior alterations, and new accessory structures within portions of the project site that have been previously disturbed.

As explained in the preceding paragraph (a), the proposed project would not have a significant impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern. As a result, the proposed project combined with future projects of a similar type (e.g., no significant alterations to existing structures, no significant impact on sensitive environmental resources) would not result in significant cumulative impacts.

- (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 that would cause the proposed project to have a significant effect on the environment. The proposed project would convert an office building into a student housing facility. This is a principal permitted use on the subject parcel under the Coastal Zoning Ordinance. The County's resource inventories do not designate or map any rare plants, sensitive wildlife habitat or any other biologically or environmentally sensitive habitats on or near the project site.

- (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.**

The project site is not visible from or located within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway.

- (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 included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code (hazardous and toxic waste sites). In addition, there is no evidence of historic or current use or disposal of hazardous or toxic materials on the project site.

(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 existing office building on the project site was constructed in the early 1970s. The County's resource inventories do not identify any historical resources on or near the project site.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Julie Harris, Senior Planner **Phone #:** (805) 568-3518

Department/Division Representative: _____ **Date:** _____

Acceptance Date: _____

Note: A copy of this form must be posted at P&D six days prior to a decision on the project. Upon project approval, this form must be filed with the County Clerk of the Board and posted by the Clerk of the Board for a period of 30 days to begin a 35 day statute of limitations on legal challenges.

Distribution: Case File
Hearing Support Staff

Date Filed by County Clerk: _____