ATTACHMENT C
NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

TO: Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Kathleen Volpi, Planning & 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: 075-092-009 **Case No.:** 24DVP-00005

Location: 6737 Sueno Road

Project Title: Mission Isla Vista Partners LP Housing Development

Project Applicant: Mission Isla Vista Partners LP

Project Description: The project is a request for a Development Plan submitted pursuant to Senate Bill 330 to allow for the demolition of an existing 1,620 square foot (SF) single-family dwelling and 455 SF garage, and the construction of three new, 3-story multi-family buildings totaling 15,093 net SF and 18,436 gross SF. The project includes 13 three-bedroom units and 3 two-bedroom units (totaling 45 bedrooms), a management office, and will have a maximum height of 36'-7". Two of the units will be very low income units pursuant to State Density Bonus Law and two will be moderate income units pursuant to Coastal Plan policy. The project includes 24 parking spaces, 48 bike lockers, and 52 bike racks to serve the development. Other site improvements include a new trash enclosure, an approximately 180 foot 8-foot tall masonry wall along the southern property line and a portion of the western property line, two 6-foot tall gates and fencing, cluster mailboxes and cluster parcel boxes, concrete flatwork and landscaping. Grading will include 415 cubic yards of cut and 75 cubic yards of fill. No trees are proposed for removal.

Public transit information, resources, and vouchers will be provided to all project tenants (unless the tenants already have a transit voucher through their school ID). The Applicant will evaluate the option to provide a car-share vehicle (such as zip-car) on-site. The Applicant will also voluntarily market the housing complex as a public-transit accessible site.

Existing onsite development, consisting of one residential structure, one garage and various shed and storage containers are proposed for demolition and removal. The project is requesting a 45% density bonus, resulting in an additional five units above the zoning density per acre, and three concessions. The concessions include an increase to the allowed bedroom density, a reduction in front, side and rear setbacks, and an increase to maximum height limit for the SR-M Zone District.

The parcel and project will be served by the Goleta Water District, the Goleta Sanitary District, and the County Fire Department. Access will be provided via Sueno Road. The property is 0.58-acres net, 0.65-acres gross, zoned SR-M-18 and is shown as Assessor's Parcel Number 075-092-009, located at 6737 Sueno Road in the Goleta Community Plan area, Second Supervisorial District.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: County of Santa Barbara

Name of Person or Entity Carrying Out Project: Lonnie Roy

Exempt Status:

_____ Ministerial
_____ Statutory Exemption
_____ Categorical Exemption
_____ Emergency Project
_____ Declared Emergency
__X__ Special Review of Housing Projects

Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guidelines Section: The proposed project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 21159.25, Exemption: Residential or Mixed-Use Housing Projects. Section 21159.25 applies to a residential or mixed-use housing project if all of the following conditions are met:

1) ***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 project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and applicable zoning designation. The subject parcel is designated RES-18.0, or Residential 18 units/acre. The subject parcel is zoned SR-M-18, or Medium Density Student Residential 18 units/acre or 1 unit per 2,420 gross SF. The SR Zone provides for residential development that is unique to a student-oriented community and provides for multiple residential development at moderate densities to mitigate potential adverse impacts on traffic, parking, open space, aesthetics, health, and safety and to encourage combining substandard lots to allow for a more efficient utilization of space. The site is a 0.65-acre or 28,608 gross SF parcel which allows for 11 units. The proposed project includes two very-low income affordable housing units which is eighteen percent of the total units. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65915, housing developments that propose fifteen percent of the total units as very-low income affordable housing units are eligible for a 50% density bonus. The applicant is requesting 5 additional units, a 45% density bonus. Assembly Bill 2097 amends Government Code §66005.1 to prohibit public agencies from imposing minimum automobile parking requirements on residential, commercial, or other development projects located within one-half mile of a major transit stop. A major transit stop is defined as a location with peak-hour transit service intervals of 20 minutes

or less. The subject property is located approximately 0.33 miles from the MTD El Colegio and Camino Corto transit stop, which meets the definition of a major transit stop. In accordance with this state law, no minimum parking requirements are imposed upon this project. While not required, the proposed project proposes 24 parking spaces, which meets the parking ratio required under State density Bonus Law (SDBL). As discussed in Sections 6.2 and 6.3 of the staff report, dated February 19, 2025, and incorporated herein by reference, the proposed project complies with all applicable, objective policies of the Comprehensive Plan, including the Goleta Community Plan and Coastal Land Use Plan, and Local Coastal Plan regulations. The project is consistent with objective policies regarding adequate services, biological resources, cultural resources, hillside and watershed protection, noise, and water resources. With the application of AB 2097 and SDBL density bonus and three concessions the project is consistent with requirements for the SR-M Zone District for height, building site coverage, setbacks, parking, bedroom density, and lot density.

2) ***(A) The public agency approving or carrying out the project determines, based upon substantial evidence, that the density of the residential portion of the project is not less than the greater of the following:***
   - ***I. The average density of the residential properties that adjoin, or are separated only by an improved public right-of-way from, the perimeter of the project site, if any.***
   - ***II. The average density of the residential properties within 1,500 feet of the project site.***
   - III. ***Six dwelling units per acre.***

(B) The residential portion of the project is a multifamily housing development that contains six or more residential units.

The project contains 16 residential units.

3) ***The proposed development occurs within an unincorporated area of a county on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by qualified urban uses.***

"Substantially surrounded" means at least 75 percent of the perimeter of the project site adjoins, or is separated only by an improved public right-of-way from, parcels that are developed with qualified urban uses. The remainder of the perimeter of the site adjoins, or is separated only by an improved public right-of-way from, parcels that have been designated for qualified urban uses in a zoning, community plan, or general plan for which an environmental impact report was certified. A "qualified urban use" means any residential, commercial, public institutional, transit or transportation passenger facility, or retail use, or any combination of those uses. The proposed development is located on a 0.65-acre lot in the unincorporated area of Santa Barbara County, and is bordered by

residential uses on 58 percent of the perimeter, Sueno Road on 21 percent of the perimeter and by a vacant lot, zoned REC, on the remaining 21 percent of the perimeter. Seventy-nine percent of the subject lot is surrounded with urban uses and therefore it qualifies as "substantially surrounded".

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

There is no environmentally sensitive habitat on the project site.

5) ***Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to transportation, noise, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, or water quality.***

The project will not result in significant effects related to transportation, noise, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, or water quality.

Transportation: According to the County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual, a significant transportation impact will occur when:

a) **Potential Conflict with a Program, Plan, Ordinance, or Policy**. A transportation impact occurs if a project conflicts with the overall purpose of an applicable transportation and circulation program, plan, ordinance, or policy, including impacts to existing transit systems and bicycle and pedestrian networks pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21099(b)(1). In such cases, applicants must identify project modifications or mitigation measures that eliminate or reduce inconsistencies with applicable programs, plans, ordinances, and policies. For example, some community plans include provisions that encourage complete streets. As a result, an applicant for a multi-family buildings may need to reduce excess parking spaces, fund a transit stop, and/or add bike storage facilities to comply with a community plan's goals and policies.

b) **Potential Impact to VMT.** The County expresses thresholds of significance in relation to existing, or baseline, county VMT. Specifically, the County compares the existing, or baseline, county VMT (i.e., pre-construction) to a project's VMT. Projects with VMT below the applicable threshold would normally result in a less than significant VMT impact and, therefore, would not require further analyses or studies. Projects with a VMT above the applicable threshold would normally result in a significant VMT impact and, therefore, would require further analyses and studies, and, if necessary, project modifications or mitigation measures. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 establish VMT as the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts under CEQA.

The County presumes that land use or transportation projects meeting any of the screening criteria will have less than significant VMT impacts and will not require further analysis. County thresholds identify Small Projects as a project that generates 110 or fewer average daily trips. The VMT thresholds of significance are for general use and

should apply to most projects subject to environmental review. However, the thresholds may not be appropriate for unique projects. In such cases, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.7(c) allows the County to use other thresholds "... on a case-by-case basis as provided in Section 15064(b)(2)." The OPR Technical Advisory recommended thresholds for land use projects including Residential, Employment, Regional Retail, Mixed-Use Projects, and Other Land Use types.

c) **Design Features and Hazards.** Threshold "c" considers whether a project will increase roadway hazards. An increase could result from existing or proposed uses or geometric design features. In part, the analysis should review these and other relevant factors and identify results that conflict with the County's Engineering Design Standards or other applicable roadway standards.

d) **Emergency Access.** Threshold "d" considers any changes to emergency access resulting from a project. To identify potential impacts, the analysis must review any proposed roadway design changes and determine if they will potentially impede emergency access vehicles.

Impact Discussion:

a) ***Potential Conflict with a Program, Plan, Ordinance, or Policy.*** The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) 2040 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SBCAG, 2013) and the County's Comprehensive Plan, zoning ordinances, capital improvement programs, and other planning documents contain transportation and circulation programs, plans, ordinances, and policies. A transportation impact occurs if a project conflicts with the overall purpose of an applicable transportation and circulation program, plan, ordinance, or policy, including impacts to existing transit systems and bicycle and pedestrian networks pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21099(b)(1).

The proposed project involves construction of 16 new three-bedroom apartments on a parcel zoned for moderate density student residential development. Pursuant to SDBL, the project site is located within ½ mile of a major transit stop and therefore no on-site parking is required. However, they have included 24 parking spaces on-site, 52 covered bicycle parking spaces and 48 uncovered bicycle parking spaces on-site. With the approval of the density bonus, the project meets the parking requirement for the SR-M Zone, and also proposes bicycle parking. The project will not result in conflicts with an applicable Program, Plan, Ordinance, or Policy related to transportation, and therefore, will result in an insignificant impact.

b) ***Potential Impact to VMT.*** The County presumes that land use projects meeting any of the screening criteria, absent substantial evidence to the contrary, will have less than significant VMT impacts and will not require further analysis. A single-component project

(e.g., residence, office, or store) only needs to meet one of the screening criteria. Using the County's VMT Tool, it was determined that the proposed project, which involves construction of 16 new apartments, will result in fewer than 110 average daily trips. The VMT Tool estimated an average of 92 daily trips. The project meets the screening criteria for small projects, and therefore, is presumed to have an insignificant impact related to VMT. Additionally, as discussed above, the project is located within a ½ mile of a major transit stop and is subject to the benefits of AB 2097. Even though no parking is required, the applicant has incorporated 24 parking spaces on-site. Finally, the applicant has incorporated significant on-site bicycle parking spaces and lockers and committed in the project description to provide public transit information, resources, and vouchers to all project tenants (unless the tenants already have a transit voucher through their school ID). The Applicant has also committed to voluntarily market the housing complex as a public-transit accessible site.

c) ***Design Features and Hazards.*** The proposed project involves construction of 16 new three-bedroom apartments, driveway, and site improvements. The proposed driveway improvements are designed to be consistent with the County's driveway standards, and will not result in hazards due to a geometric design feature. Public Woks Transportation has reviewed the project including sidewalk, and roadway improvements. They have approved a Design Exemption for the driveway placement under an Encroachment Permit (Permit No. 24-054-EN-0002) finding no hazards resulting from the design. Further, the proposed project involves construction of multi-family dwellings on a parcel zoned for residential development, and will not increase hazards due to incompatible uses. With the approval of the density bonus, the project is consistent with the allowed density for the site. Therefore, the project will not result in hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses, and impacts will be insignificant.

d) ***Emergency Access.*** The proposed driveway improvements included as part of the project are designed to comply with Santa Barbara County Fire Department standards and will not result in inadequate emergency access. Therefore, impacts related to emergency access are insignificant.

Noise: The project is for a multi-family residential use in a developed urban neighborhood. The residential use of the site would not result in a substantial increase to long-term noise levels in adjoining areas. The project will generate short-term construction related noise, but is conditioned to require limitations on construction hours (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.).

Air Quality:
Short-Term Construction Impacts. Project construction would require site preparation, grading, demolition, building construction, and paving activities, which would temporarily produce air pollutant emissions. Emissions of ozone precursors (NOx and ROC) during project construction would result primarily from the on-site use of heavy earthmoving

equipment. Due to the limited period of time that grading activities would occur on the project site, construction-related emissions of NOx and ROC would not be significant on a project-specific or cumulative basis. However, due to the non-attainment status of the air basin for ozone, the project is conditioned (Attachment B-1, Condition No. 30) to comply with measures recommended by the APCD, in their letter dated June 2024, to reduce construction-related emissions of ozone precursors to the extent feasible. Compliance with these measures is routinely required for all new development in the County.

Long-Term Operation Emissions. Long-term emissions are typically estimated using the CalEEMod computer model program. However, the proposed project, consisting of 16 new residential units is below threshold levels for significant air quality impacts, pursuant to the screening table maintained by the Santa Barbara County APCD. The screening table indicates that a housing project involving condominiums or apartments of fewer than 200 units will likely not exceed the air quality threshold. Therefore, the proposed project does not have a potentially significant long-term impact on air quality.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions: The project will construct 3 buildings with a combined 15,213 net SF and 16 multi-family units, which falls below the County adopted Screening Criteria of 55,000 square feet for multi-family housing and therefore will not generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that will have a significant effect on the environment. The County adopted screening criteria of 55,000 square feet for multi-family housing is based on a square footage metric that is in compliance with the Screening Threshold of 300 MTCO2e/year for non-industrial stationary source projects. Historical permit research indicates that multi-family housing projects of less than 55,000 square feet typically emit less than 300 MTCO2e/year, by the year 2030. Furthermore, there is no substantial evidence, based on the project type, which indicates anticipated emissions will exceed the screening criteria or conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

The 16-unit apartment complex will be constructed in an urban area on a relatively flat lot. One single-family dwelling and a detached garage totaling 2,005 SF will be demolished. Grading consists of 415 cubic yards of cut and 75 cubic yards of fill. Therefore, the project does not result in extensive demolition or grading. The building will meet current Title 24 Building Code requirements for energy efficient construction and appliances. Typical construction equipment will be used during demolition and construction, and site disturbance will be commensurate with the type and size of this multi-family residential project. The project's incremental contribution to a cumulative effect is not cumulatively considerable and the project's greenhouse gas emissions will have an insignificant impact on the environment.

Water Quality: The project will not have a significant impact on water quality. The nearest water body, the Pacific Ocean is located over 1,000 feet from the subject parcel. Pursuant

to the Tier 2 Stormwater Control Plan submitted, runoff from concrete walkways will drain to surrounding landscaped areas and permeable pavement on the driveway and parking areas. Curb areas, and buildings will drain to surrounding permeable pavement on the driveway and parking areas via gutter downspouts and storm drainpipes. All runoff draining to the permeable pavement will be collected in the underground storage system.

The project is located outside of any Flood Hazard Overlay or High Hazard Area and therefore is not subject to risks from flooding. The project will be supplied water from the Goleta Water District. The Goleta Water District has provided a preliminary water service determination letter that indicates they have adequate water to supply the proposed project. Therefore, the project will not significantly impact water supplies.

6) ***The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.***
The project site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services. The site is served by the Goleta Water District, the Goleta Sanitary District, and the Santa Barbara County Fire Department. The Goleta Water District issued a preliminary determination letter dated April 29, 2024, stating that there is sufficient water supply available to serve the proposed project. The Goleta Sanitary District issued a Sewer Service Availability letter dated January 8, 2024, stating that adequate sewage collection, treatment, and disposal capacity is currently available to serve the proposed project. The Santa Barbara County Fire Department reviewed the proposed project and provided a Memo dated March 14, 2024, clearing the project with standard conditions. Police protection services will be provided by the County Sheriff. The project will take access off of a 26-foot wide driveway off Sueno Road.

7) ***The project is located on a site that is a legal parcel or parcels wholly within the boundaries of an urbanized area or urban cluster, as designated by the United States Census Bureau.***

The project site is located on a legal parcel as shown on the Certificate of Compliance (16CC17). The parcel is located within the Census-designated Santa Barbara Urban Area.

The CEQA exemption does not apply to a residential or mixed-use housing project if any of the following conditions exist:

(a) The cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.

This exception does not apply because the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same location over time would not be significant. The project is located within an urban area where residential development is both common and consistent with local zoning ordinances. Additional development of this type, when

carried out in accordance with applicable zoning regulations and adopted policies, would not result in cumulatively significant impacts.

The County presumes that land use projects meeting established Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) screening criteria will have a less than significant impact on transportation, unless substantial evidence indicates otherwise. Based on analysis using the County's VMT Tool, the proposed project, which includes the construction of 16 new apartment units, is estimated to generate 92 average daily trips, which is below the 110-trip threshold for small project screening. Therefore, the project meets the County's screening criteria and is presumed to have a less-than-significant impact related to VMT. Additionally, the project is located within one-half mile of a major transit stop and is therefore subject to AB 2097, which prohibits public agencies from imposing minimum automobile parking requirements on residential, commercial, or other development projects in such areas. Nonetheless, the applicant has voluntarily incorporated several transportation demand management (TDM) measures into the project description to further reduce potential VMT impacts, including:

- Provision of 24 on-site vehicle parking spaces and 100 bicycle parking spaces;
- Distribution of public transit information and resources to all tenants, along with transit vouchers (except where tenants already receive such vouchers through a student ID);
- Evaluation of the feasibility of providing an on-site car-share vehicle (e.g., Zipcar);
- Marketing of the development as a transit-accessible housing option.

Given the urban setting, consistency with zoning, land use policies and compliance with state law (AB 2097), compliance with VMT screening criteria, and incorporation of trip-reducing measures, the project does not contribute to a cumulatively significant environmental impact. Therefore, this CEQA exception does not apply.

(b) There is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

This exception does not apply because there is no substantial evidence that the proposed project involves unusual circumstances, including future activities, resulting in or which might reasonably result in significant impacts which threaten the environment. The project will not be located in a sensitive resource area. There are adequate services to serve the proposed development.

(c) The project 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 exception does not apply because the project is not located within viewing distance of a state scenic highway. The nearest designated scenic highway is U.S. Highway 101, which is located over a mile away from the project site.

(d) The project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

This exception to the categorical exemptions does not apply since 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 of disposal of hazardous or toxic materials on the project site.

(e) The project may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

This exception to the categorical exemptions does not apply because no archaeological, historical or other cultural sites are known to exist on the property. A Phase I Cultural Resources Survey prepared by Leftwich Archeology, dated April 2024, found that the likelihood of undiscovered, significant cultural resources existing in the project area is very low. The survey included a record search of the Central Coast Information Center (CCIC), which showed that there were no prehistoric resources recorded within 0.25-miles of the project site. Additionally, a Phase 1 Historical Assessment, prepared by Long Preservation Services, dated April 2024, determined that there are no structures of historical significance located on the subject lot.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Kathleen Volpi

Phone #: 805-568-2033

Department/Division Representative: Kathleen Volpi

Date: August 27, 2025

Acceptance Date: _____

Distribution: Hearing Support Staff

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