

CITY OF SANTA CRUZ
Notice of Exemption

To: ☒ Clerk of the Board
County of Santa Cruz
Governmental Center
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

☒ Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: City of Santa Cruz, Planning and Community Development Department
809 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Project Title: Envision Peace Village Housing

Project Address: 900 High Street

Assessor's Parcel No.: 001-022-45

Project Location: City of Santa Cruz – see Figure 1 **County of:** Santa Cruz

Project Description: The project consists of a Major Modification to a previously approved application (CP22-0164), revising the previous density bonus request, increasing the total number of residential units from 40 to 47, altering the unit mix, and modifying the building design/envelope. The revised project includes construction of a five-story residential apartment building on a 2.23-acre site. The project would remove 14 heritage trees to construct the apartment complex and associated site improvements.

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Sibley Simon, Workbench

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: City of Santa Cruz

Exempt Status: (check one)

- ☐ Ministerial Project (Section 21080(b)(1); 15268).
- ☒ Statutory Exemption (Pub. Resources Code § 21083.3; CEQA Guidelines § 15183).
- ☐ Categorically Exempt (Section ____).
- ☐ Declared Emergency (Section 21080(b)(3); 15269(a)).
- ☐ Emergency Project (Section 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c)).
- ☐ The project clearly will not have a significant effect on the environment (15061(b)(3)).

Reasons why project is exempt: As part of the original approval, the City determined that the project was exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and CEQA Guidelines section 15183 (Projects Consistent with General Plan, Community Plan or Zoning), which provide for streamlined environmental review for projects consistent with a general plan for which an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared and certified. Subsection (d) of Public

Resources Code section 21082.2 further indicates that an effect of a project upon the environment shall not be considered “peculiar to the parcel or to the project...if uniformly applied development policies or standards” have been previously adopted by the city or county, with a finding based upon substantial evidence, that the development policies or standards will substantially mitigate that environmental effect when applied to future projects. Under these provisions of CEQA and CEQA Guidelines, the project was found to be consistent with the City’s *General Plan 2030*, and the City determined that the City’s General Plan 2030 EIR had adequately addressed most environmental issues related to the project. Some site-specific project impacts were analyzed and determined to be less than significant due to substantial mitigation resulting from General Plan policies, zoning regulations and/or development standards that are uniformly applied to development projects throughout the City. Therefore, no further environmental review was required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and section 15183 of the CEQA Guidelines, and the project was found to be exempt from further CEQA review. An “Environmental Checklist For Determination of Environmental Exemption” (dated November 2023) provides the review and documentation to support the City’s environmental determination for the approved project.

An updated CEQA review has been prepared where the proposed modifications have been analyzed. The City has considered whether there are changed circumstances or new information that was not available at the time the previous environmental determination was made that would support a new finding that the project would have new significant impacts that are peculiar to the project or parcel. The updated environmental analysis evaluates the modified project and identifies that the only changed circumstance is a potential downstream sewer conveyance capacity issue, where a section of pipe to the east would need to be up-sized. This improvement is included in the City’s adopted Capital Investment Program, with construction anticipated in 2028. To establish a sewer connection, the project must extend the sanitary sewer mainline within the public right-of-way to reach the project frontage. Additionally, the City requires sanitary sewer flow modeling for the proposed development. The project’s peak sanitary sewer flow (expressed in gallons per minute) will be submitted to verify sufficient capacity. Flow values may be derived using the City’s wastewater discharge table or by engineer-of-record calculations based on direct discharge to the sewer system.

Should capacity upgrades be identified, the project will be responsible for a fair share contribution based on the proportional impact of the project’s peak flow. Documentation of modeling outcomes and contribution calculations will be included in the final utility submittal package.

New information includes the recent update and adoption of the City’s Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) in 2026. The 2025 UWMP provides updated demand information that was updated in 2024, which included the approved project. The assessments conducted for the 2025 UWMP, which account for development and growth to the year 2050, found that water supply would meet projected demand under all conditions. Under the selected climate change condition, City water supplies would meet projected demand under normal/average year and single-dry year conditions in all years through 2050. Under the selected climate change condition in the five-consecutive-year drought condition, in 2030 a small shortage (four percent) could occur in the fifth year of the drought sequence, but after 2035, implementation of planned projects would provide adequate supply to meet projected demand through 2050. The 2025 UWMP indicates that while the City remains vulnerable to extreme drought, particularly in the near term, the planned projects that the

City is actively pursuing (and as described and explained in the 2025 UWMP) are expected to provide adequate supply to reliably meet projected demand through 2050. In the event that supplies fall short of demand resulting in a water shortage emergency, the Water Shortage Contingency Plan would be implemented, during which times, all water customers could be subject to water curtailment as enacted by the City. The conclusions of the 2025 UWMP do not result in more significant impacts related to water supply than identified in the 2020 UWMP, the General Plan 2030 EIR, or the review in the Environmental Checklist for the approved project.

In conclusion, the proposed modifications to the approved project, including an increase of seven apartment units, would continue to be consistent with the *General Plan 2030* and the evaluations included in the November 2023 "Environmental Checklist For Determination of CEQA Exemption." No new significant impacts or substantially more severe significant impacts would occur as a result of the proposed modifications. Similarly, there are no changed circumstances or new information that would support a new finding that the project would have new significant impacts that are peculiar to the project or parcel. Therefore, the previous environmental determination of the approved project would cover the proposed modifications.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Ryan Bane, Senior Planner

Phone: (831) 420-5141

Department: Planning & Community Development

Address: 809 Center Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Signature:



Date

8/17/26

- ☒ Signed by Lead Agency
☐ Signed by Applicant

Title: Senior Planner

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a notice of exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Date Received for filing at County Clerk: _____

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

FIGURE 1: VICINITY LOCATION

