



Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan Project

Initial Study

prepared by

City of Watsonville
Community Development Department
250 Main Street
Watsonville, California 95076
Contact: Justin Meek, Principal Planner

prepared with the assistance of

Rincon Consultants, Inc.
2511 Garden Road, Suite C-250
Monterey, California 93940

October 2022

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Initial Study

1. Project Title

Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan Project

2. Lead Agency Name, Address, and Contact Person

City of Watsonville
Community Development Department
250 Main Street
Watsonville, California 95076
Justin Meek, Principal Planner
831-768-3050

3. Project Location

Downtown Watsonville is located in the southern area of Santa Cruz County, approximately 14 miles southeast of the city of Santa Cruz, 16 miles northwest of the city of Salinas, and 22 miles northeast of the city of Monterey. The Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan Area (plan area) covers roughly 195.5 acres within Downtown Watsonville, with about 55.5 acres (28 percent) dedicated to streets and rights-of-way. Downtown is centered on Main Street and extends west to the edge of existing neighborhoods and the industrial district, south to Pajaro, and several blocks east to the existing neighborhoods. State Route (SR) 152 runs through the center of the plan area and operates along portions of Main Street and as a one-way couplet along E Lake Avenue and E Beach Street. Riverside Drive on the south end of the plan area is a part of SR 129. The plan area is shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

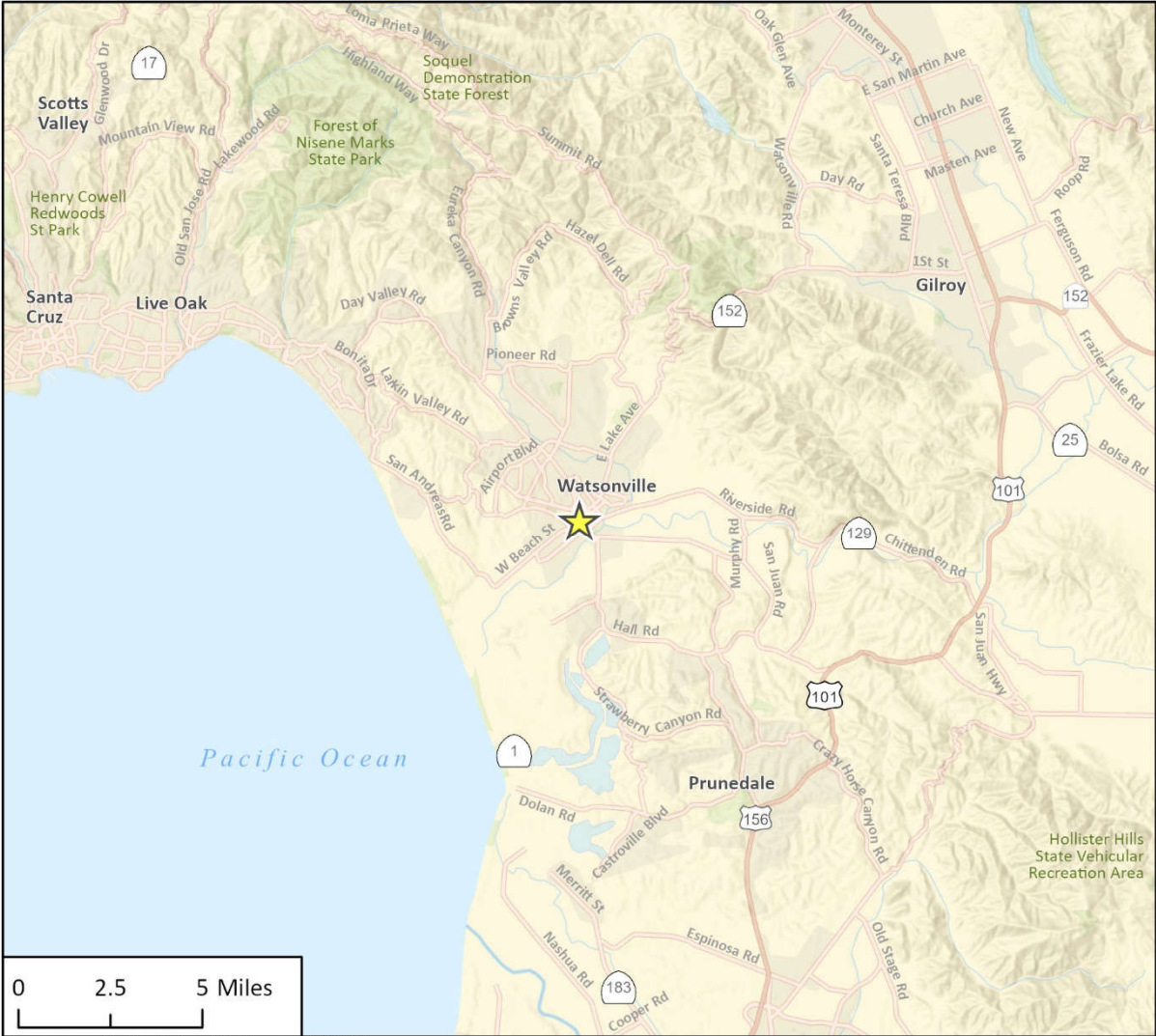
4. General Plan Designation

According to the 2005 General Plan Land Use Diagram (City of Watsonville 2019), the plan area is designated Central Commercial, General Commercial, Industrial, Public/Quasi-Public, Residential High Density, and Residential Low Density. The General Plan land use designations within the plan area are shown Figure 3.

5. Zoning

The Watsonville Zoning Ordinance is found in Chapter 14-16 of the Watsonville Municipal Code. According to the City of Watsonville Zoning Map, the plan area includes Central Commercial, Central Commercial Core Area, General Industrial, Institutional, Multiple Residential-High Density, Neighborhood Commercial, Office, Public Facilities, Single Family Residential-Low Density, and Thoroughfare Commercial zoning districts. The zoning districts within the plan area are shown Figure 4.

Figure 1 Project Vicinity Map



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Regional, Site, Land Use and Zoning Maps
Fig 1 Regional Location

★ Project Location

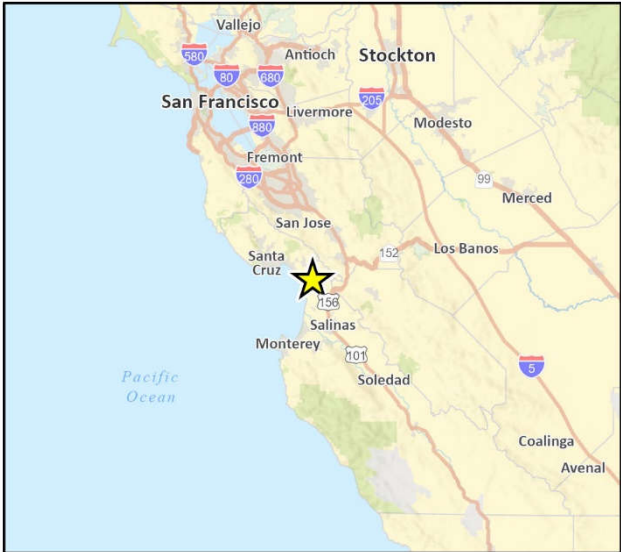


Figure 2 Plan Area Boundaries

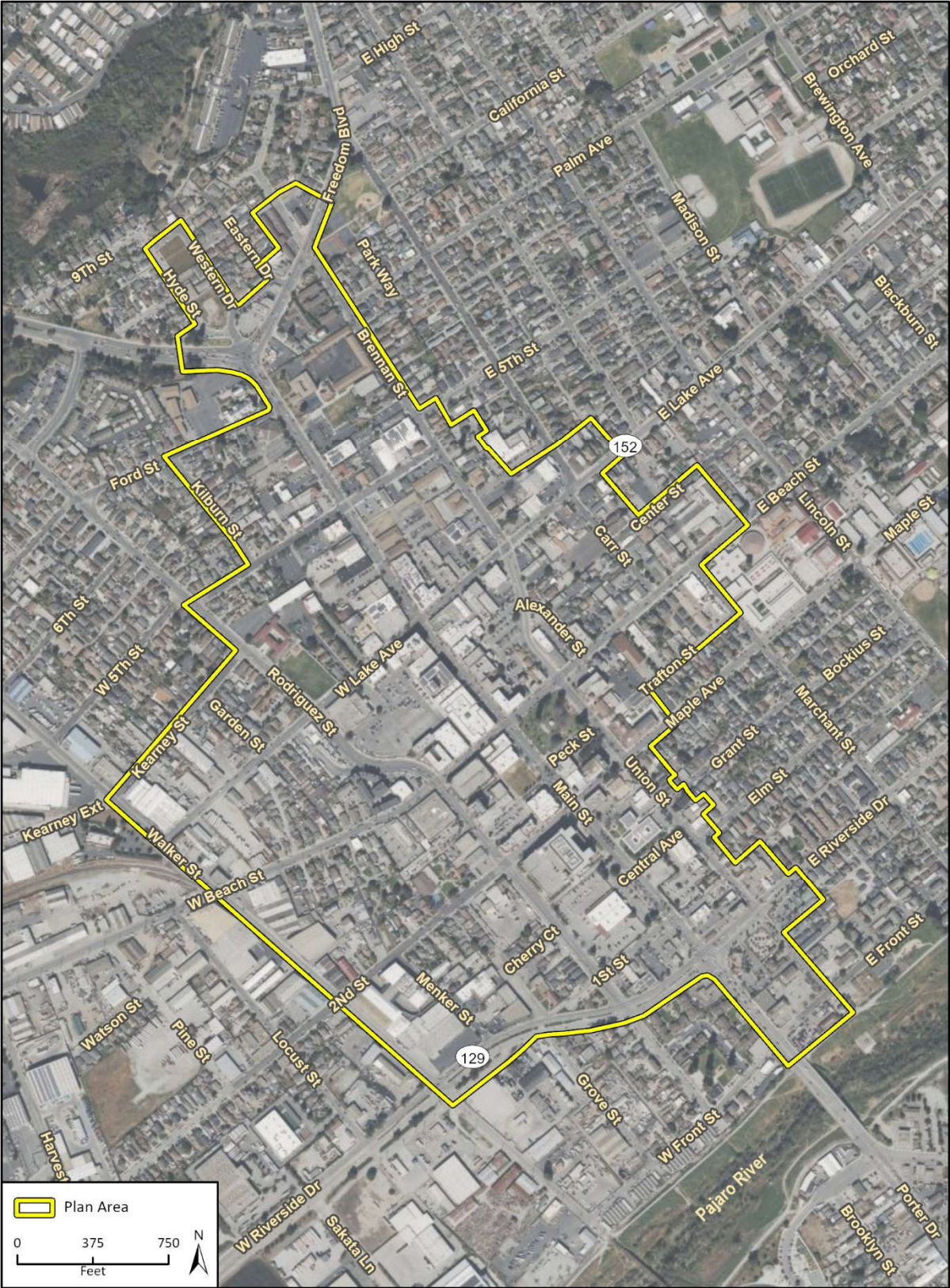


Figure 3 Existing General Plan Land Use Designations

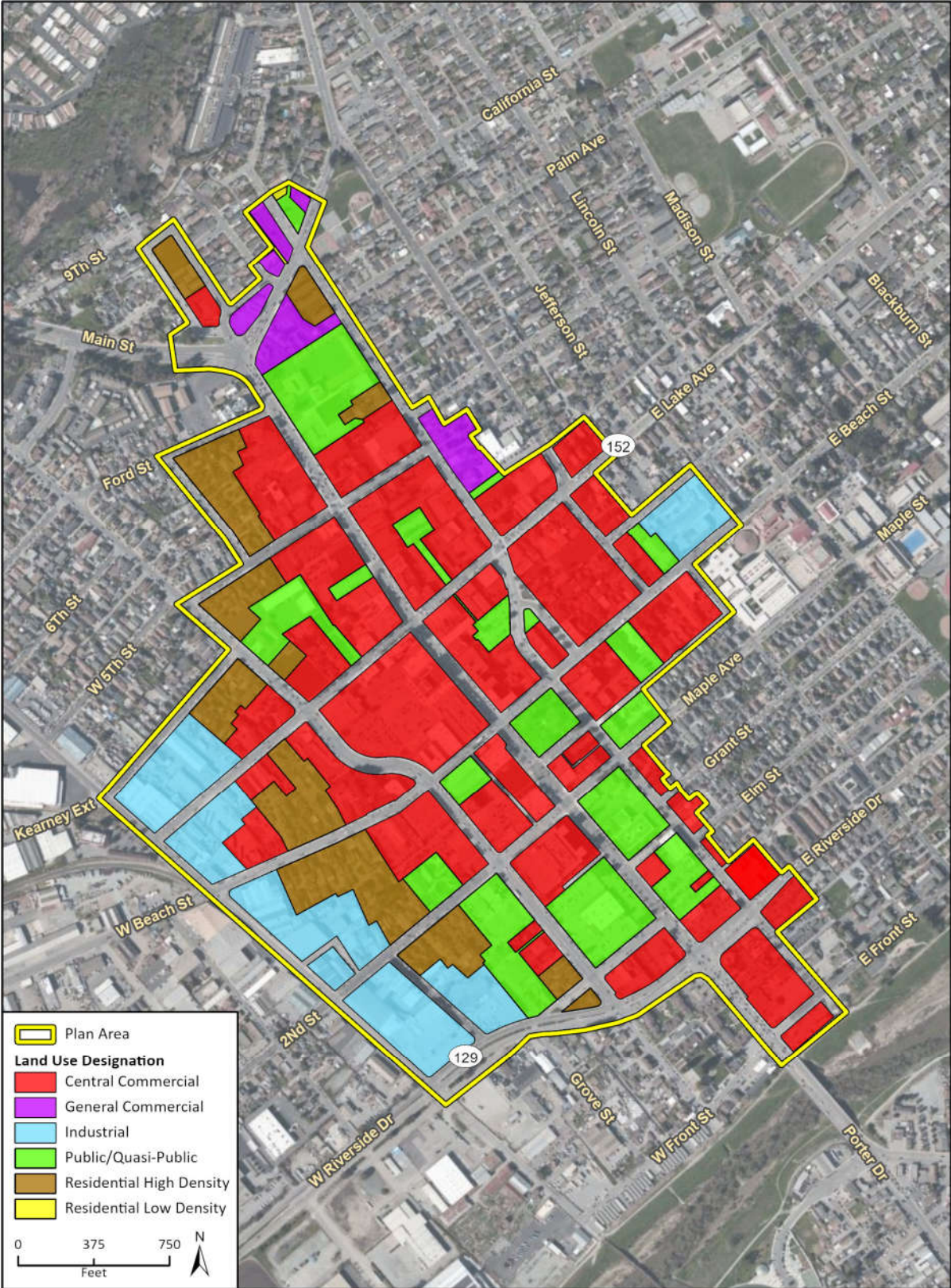
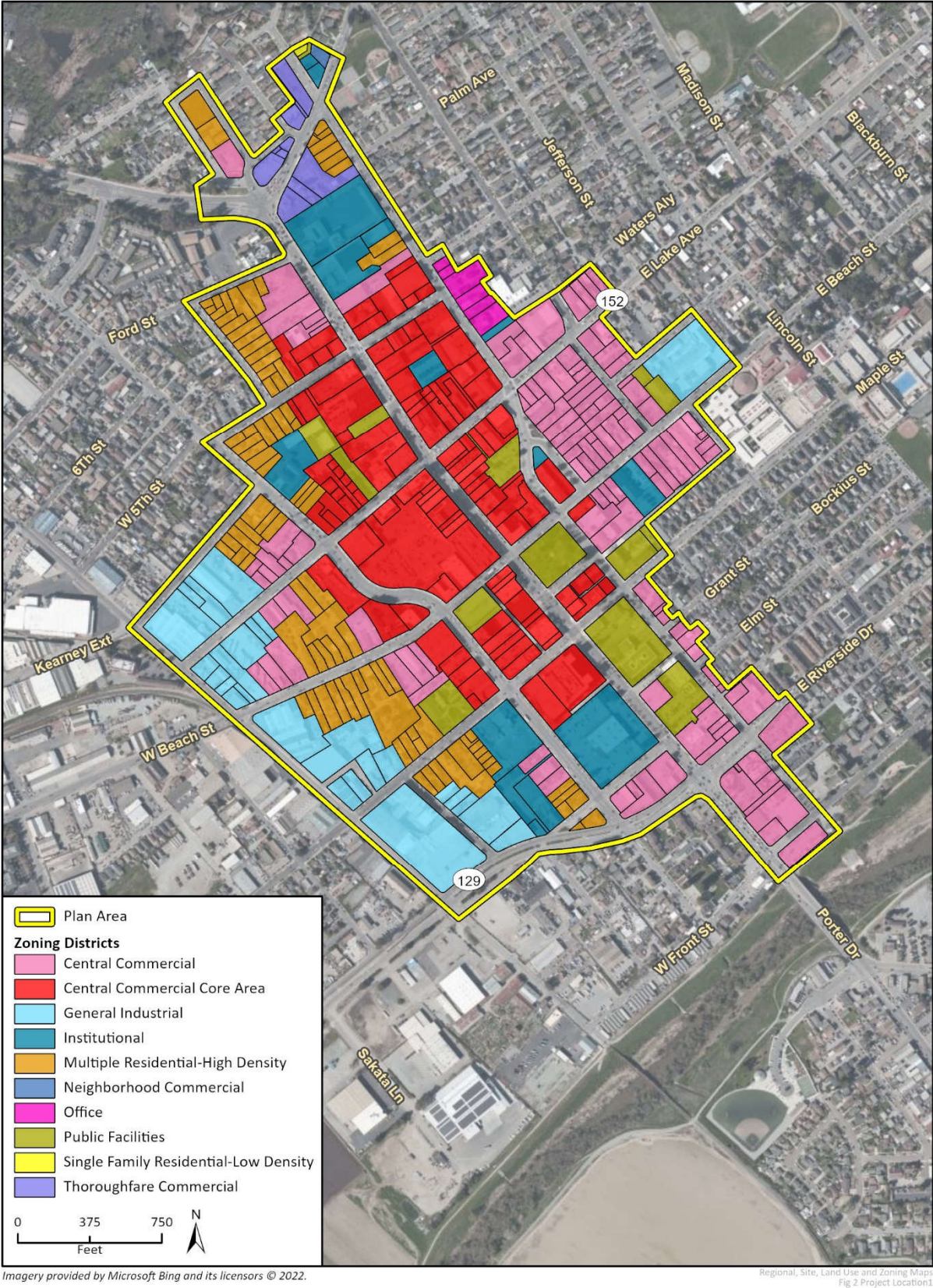


Figure 4 Existing Zoning Districts



6. Existing Setting and Surrounding Land Uses

The plan area includes a mix of uses which include retail, commercial, civic, religious, industrial, and residential. City Hall and the Police Station, Civic Plaza with Council Chambers, Library and County Courthouse, U.S. Post Office, and Cabrillo College are the major civic and institutional anchors in the downtown. The historic City Plaza is an important downtown public open space that supports civic and community activities. At the center of downtown is Main Street, along which many historic and large mixed-use buildings are located with ground-floors consisting of local retail and services while the upper levels accommodate office and residential uses. Along Walker Street, single-story industrial buildings provide employment.

The existing roadway network in the downtown area consists of a multitude of varying block lengths, several curvilinear streets, and some one-way streets. The downtown roadway network accommodates local access through SR 152 and SR 129 while they also serve as conduits of regional travel which includes heavy truck use.

7. Description of Project

The proposed Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan (DWSP, project) is a comprehensive land use and mobility plan which includes development and design regulations that support the DWSP's goals and policies and guides future public and private development in the plan area. The plan is a community vision and planning framework which serves as a guide for the city and other public agency decision-makers, community members and stakeholders over the next 20 to 30 years. The DWSP is intended to inform future public and private actions relating to the plan area's future development and ensure it is consistent with the community vision. The DWSP was developed in accordance with California planning law, City planning policies, and input from community members, property owners, decision-makers, and City staff. Along with the DWSP, the City's General Plan would be amended to ensure consistency between the General Plan and Specific Plan.

The DWSP encourages the development of higher-intensity and mixed-use neighborhoods by building on the existing downtown area. The plan includes pedestrian-friendly and complete streets with a mix of retail, services, amenities, employment, and residential uses that in an effort to revitalize downtown. Similarly, the Specific Plan also encourages compact development near transit to decrease automobile dependency, reduce both local and regional traffic congestion and related greenhouse gas emissions, and increase multimodal access to and from the downtown area.

The plan area is currently developed with primarily historic commercial buildings and established residential neighborhoods. Hence, future potential growth is likely to be directed to a limited number of vacant or under-utilized sites that could be redeveloped. As shown in Table 1, the Specific Plan estimates that roughly 231,151 square feet of commercial space, 376,827 square feet of industrial space, and 114,569 square feet of civic space would be added to the plan area as a result of the project. In addition, the DWSP anticipates that up to 3,886 new residential units would be added to the downtown area over the next 25 years.

Table 1 Growth Projections for Specific Plan Area

Land Use	Residential (du) ¹	Commercial (sf) ¹	Industrial (sf)	Civic (sf)
Residential	3,886			
Dining Establishments		150,248	7,537	
Retail		57,788		
Office/ Research		23,115	94,207	
Civic				114,572
Industrial			275,084	
Total	3,886	231,151	376,827	114,572

¹ du = dwelling unit; sf = square feet

Source: City of Watsonville 2022

Chapter 4 of the DWSP contains the mobility and transportation vision and strategies for the plan area. The DWSP provides standards, guidelines, and design concepts to implement the following in the plan area:

- Install improvements to enhance pedestrian safety and access, bicycle connectivity, and revitalize downtown streetscape.
- Provide bicycle infrastructure that connects downtown to key locations and provides a low stress environment for bicycle riding.
- Provide widened and enhanced facilities for walking.
- Enhance parking, travel demand, and curb management to support an environmentally and fiscally sustainable downtown that increases quality of life in Watsonville.

The DWSP includes several roadway improvements to support multimodal travel, increase safety, and improve access to local amenities and businesses. The future improvements are designed to reduce potential conflict points between motorists, people who walk, and people who bike within the plan area. For example, the DWSP envisions converting the existing couplet portion of SR 152 from a one-way street into a two-way street. Another example of mobility and transportation improvements included in the DWSP is a road diet on Main Street. The road diet would convert Main Street from a multi-lane roadway to a roadway with a single travel lane in each direction. The existing other travel lanes would be converted to parallel parking for vehicles and for expanded or new pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

8. Project Related Approvals, Permits, and Agreements

Because the Specific Plan is a conceptual vision for the downtown area and not a formal site plan or construction application, no permits are needed for its adoption. However, the City of Watsonville City Council must formally certify the EIR and adopt the Specific Plan, and then implement the vision and changes identified in the Specific Plan. Implementation of the Specific Plan would also require an amendment to the City's General Plan.

Individual projects pursuant to the DWSP would require permits and approvals such as, but not limited to, City of Watsonville demolition and building permits and design review. Future approvals from the City of Watsonville may require additional environmental review with the City of Watsonville as the lead agency.

9. Have California Native American Tribes Traditionally and Culturally Affiliated with the Project Area Requested Consultation Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1?

In accordance with Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and Senate Bill (SB) 18, the City of Watsonville sent a notification letter to six tribes and invited them to participate in consultation. The tribes that were sent a notification letter include: Amah Mutsun Tribal Band; Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista; Costanoan Ohlone Rumsen-Mutsun Tribe; Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan; Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the SF Bay Area; and the Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation. The City of Watsonville prepared and mailed letters on October 4, 2022. Under AB 52, Native American tribes have 30 days to respond and request further project information and request formal consultation. SB 18 provides 90 days for Native American tribes to respond to advise the City if they are interested in further consultation.

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

This project would potentially affect the environmental factors checked below, involving at least one impact that is “Potentially Significant” or “Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ☒ Aesthetics | ☐ Agriculture and Forestry Resources | ☒ Air Quality |
| ☒ Biological Resources | ☒ Cultural Resources | ☐ Energy |
| ☐ Geology/Soils | ☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions | ☒ Hazards & Hazardous Materials |
| ☐ Hydrology/Water Quality | ☐ Land Use/Planning | ☐ Mineral Resources |
| ☒ Noise | ☒ Population/Housing | ☐ Public Services |
| ☐ Recreation | ☒ Transportation | ☒ Tribal Cultural Resources |
| ☐ Utilities/Service Systems | ☐ Wildfire | ☒ Mandatory Findings of Significance |

Determination

Based on this initial evaluation:

- ☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions to the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☒ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- ☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “less than significant with mitigation incorporated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect (1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and (2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potential significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature

Justin Meek

Printed Name

Date

Principal Planner

Title

Environmental Checklist

1 Aesthetics

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	■	☐	☐	☐
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	■
c. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	■	☐	☐	☐
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?	■	☐	☐	☐

- a. *Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?*
- c. *Would the project, in non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?*
- d. *Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?*

Portions of Downtown Watsonville contain views of the Gabilan Mountain Range, Pajaro River, and Watsonville Slough. The plan area is currently developed with a mix of land uses including residential, commercial, and industrial uses. The character of Downtown Watsonville is distinguished by historic structures. As future planning and development efforts proceed under implementation of the DWSP, there is a potential for impacts to historical resources to occur which

could alter the existing visual character of the downtown area. In addition, future development under the DWSP would introduce new sources of light or glare which could adversely affect views. As a result, future development may affect visual character and quality, affect current scenic views, and create new sources of substantial light or glare. Impacts of the DWSP could be potentially significant and will be evaluated further in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- b. Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?*

Highway 1 and SR 152, which runs through the center of the plan area, are both eligible for state scenic highway designation. However, neither roadway is an officially designated state scenic highway. There are no other designated state scenic highways within or visible from the plan area (Caltrans 2019). Therefore, the DWSP would have no impact on scenic resources within a state scenic highway

NO IMPACT

2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)); timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526); or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

- a. *Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?*
- b. *Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?*
- c. *Would the project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)); timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526); or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?*

- d. Would the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?*
- e. Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?*

The plan area includes the following zoning districts: Central Commercial, Central Commercial Core Area, General Industrial, Institutional, Multiple Residential-High Density, Neighborhood Commercial, Office, Public Facilities, Single Family Residential-Low Density, and Thoroughfare Commercial. The plan area is not zoned for agricultural use, forest land, timberland, or timberland production. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning or cause the rezoning of agriculture or timberland property. According to the California Department of Conservation, the plan area is “urban and built-up land” and is not Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance (DOC 2018). In addition, there are no forest or agricultural uses or farmland adjacent to the plan area. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would have no impacts on Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance, and would not result in the conversion of forest land or farmland.

NO IMPACT

3 Air Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	■	☐	☐	☐
b. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	■	☐	☐	☐
c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	■	☐	☐	☐
d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	■	☐	☐	☐

Impact Analysis

- Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?*
- Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?*
- Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?*
- Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?*

The proposed project would result in increased emissions within the downtown area which could result in a cumulatively considerable increase of criteria pollutants or odors associated with traffic and industrial uses. In addition, the plan area includes potentially sensitive receptors which could be exposed to increased pollutant concentrations. The project could exceed significance thresholds as determined by the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD). Impacts could be potentially significant and will be evaluated further in the EIR.

POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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4 Biological Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☒	☐	☐	☐
d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☒	☐	☐	☐
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☒	☐	☐	☐
f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Impact Analysis

- a. *Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*
- b. *Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*
- c. *Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?*
- d. *Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?*
- e. *Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?*

Development facilitated by the DWSP would require demolition and construction of new residential and commercial structures, which could result in impacts to sensitive biological resources. The plan area consists of primarily urbanized land uses but is located within 250 feet of the Pajaro River. Future development facilitated by the DWSP could result in impacts to these areas or other biological resources in the area. Impacts of the proposed project could be potentially significant and will be evaluated further in the EIR.

POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- f. *Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?*

There are no adopted Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plans applicable to the plan area. The proposed project would not conflict with such plans. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

5 Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	■	□	□	□
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	□	■	□	□
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	□	□	■	□

- a. *Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?*

In October 2021, Rincon Consultants, Inc. prepared a Historic Research Survey Report which included research and a reconnaissance-level survey that identified three resource types within the survey area: designated resources, potentially eligible individual resources, and groupings of resources which may constitute a historic district or overlay/conservation zone pending further study. Future development pursuant to the DWSP could result in demolition or alteration of potentially historic structures, thereby causing a substantial adverse change in the significance of the resource. Impacts of the proposed project could be potentially significant and will be evaluated further in the EIR.

POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- b. *Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?*

The plan area is approximately 250 feet from the Pajaro River. Given the proximity to the river, the area has high sensitivity for archaeological resources, as prehistoric populations often congregated near water. Development facilitated by the Specific Plan would require excavation and grading below the existing ground surface. During these construction activities there would be potential for construction equipment to encounter and potentially damage or destroy subsurface archaeological resources. Future development facilitated by the Specific Plan would have the most potential to encounter subsurface resources as excavation required for construction could occur in undisturbed soil. Damage or destruction of archaeological resources would be a potential adverse change in the significance of archaeological resources. Accordingly, project impacts would be potentially significant, and mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures CUL-1, CUL-2, and CUL-3 would apply to construction facilitated by the project. With implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts to archaeological resources would be reduced to less than significant.

CUL-1 Archaeological Resources Investigation

At the time of application for discretionary land use permits that involve grading, trenching, or other ground disturbance in native soil with the potential for encountering unknown archaeological resources, the project applicant shall retain a qualified archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior standards in archaeology to complete a Phase 1 cultural resources assessment of the development site. A Phase 1 cultural resources assessment shall include an archaeological pedestrian survey of the development site, if possible, and sufficient background archival research and field sampling to determine whether subsurface prehistoric or historic remains may be present. Archival research shall include a current (no more than one-year old) records search from the Northwest Information Center (NWIC) and a Sacred Lands File (SLF) search conducted with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC).

Identified prehistoric or historic archaeological remains shall be avoided and preserved in place where feasible. Where preservation is not feasible, the significance of each resource shall be evaluated for significance and eligibility for listing in the CRHR through a Phase 2 evaluation. A Phase 2 evaluation shall include any necessary archival research to identify significant historical associations as well as mapping of surface artifacts, collection of functionally or temporally diagnostic tools and debris, and excavation of a sample of the cultural deposit to characterize the nature of the sites, define the artifact and feature contents, determine horizontal boundaries and depth below surface, and retrieve representative samples of artifacts and other remains.

Cultural materials collected from the sites shall be processed and analyzed in the laboratory according to standard archaeological procedures. The age of the materials shall be determined using radiocarbon dating and/or other appropriate procedures; lithic artifacts, faunal remains, and other cultural materials shall be identified and analyzed according to current professional standards. The significance of the sites shall be evaluated according to the criteria of the CRHR. The results of the investigations shall be presented in a technical report following the standards of the California Office of Historic Preservation publication "Archaeological Resource Management Reports: Recommended Content and Format (1990 or latest edition)" (<http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1054/files/armr.pdf>). Upon completion of the work, all artifacts, other cultural remains, records, photographs, and other documentation shall be curated at an appropriate curation facility. All fieldwork, analysis, report production, and curation shall be fully funded by the applicant.

If the resources meet CRHR significance standards, the City shall ensure that all feasible recommendations for mitigation of archaeological impacts are incorporated into the final design and permits issued for development. If necessary, Phase 3 data recovery excavation, conducted to exhaust the data potential of significant archaeological sites, shall be carried out by a qualified archaeologist meeting the SOI standards for archaeology according to a research design reviewed and approved by the City prepared in advance of fieldwork and using appropriate archaeological field and laboratory methods consistent with the California Office of Historic Preservation Planning Bulletin 5 (1991), Guidelines for Archaeological Research Design, or the latest edition thereof.

As applicable, the final Phase 1 Inventory, Phase 2 Testing and Evaluation, and/or Phase 3 Data Recovery reports shall be submitted to the City prior to issuance of construction permit. Recommendations contained therein shall be implemented throughout all ground disturbance activities.

CUL-2 Archaeological Resources Construction Monitoring

During construction of development envisioned in the Specific Plan, construction activities involving ground disturbance such as grading or excavation shall be monitored by a qualified archaeologist. Archaeological monitoring shall be performed under the direction of an archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology (National Park Service, 1983). Should the construction site be determined to have little if any potential to yield subsurface cultural resources deposits, the qualified archaeologist may recommend that monitoring be reduced or eliminated after consulting with the City and Native American representatives.

CUL-3 Unanticipated Discovery of Archaeological Cultural Resources

In the event that archaeological resources are unexpectedly encountered during ground-disturbing activities, work within 50 feet of the find shall halt and an archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for archaeology (National Park Service 1983) shall be contacted immediately to evaluate the find. If the resource is determined by the qualified archaeologist to be prehistoric, then a Native American representative shall also be contacted to participate in the evaluation of the resource. If the qualified archaeologist and/or Native American representative determines it to be appropriate, archaeological testing for CRHR eligibility shall be completed. If the resource proves to be eligible for the CRHR and impacts to the resource cannot be avoided via project redesign, a qualified archaeologist shall prepare a data recovery plan tailored to the physical nature and characteristics of the resource, per the requirements of CCR Guidelines Section 15126.4(b)(3)(C).

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

- c. *Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?*

The plan area is currently developed as an urbanized downtown center. There are no known cemeteries or burial sites on the plan area. However, there is potential for unknown human remains to be buried on the plan area, outside of known cemeteries. If any human remains are found during grading or other project construction activities, all provisions of California Health and Safety Code Sections 7054 and 7050.5 and Public Resources Code Sections 5097.9 through 5097.99, as amended per Assembly Bill 2641, must be followed in accordance with state law. California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, specifically, states that:

“In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains until the coroner of the county in which the human remains are discovered has determined, in accordance with Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 27460) of Part 3 of Division 2 of Title 3 of the Government Code, that the remains are not subject to the provisions of Section 27491 of the Government Code or any other related provisions of law concerning investigation of the circumstances, manner and cause of any death, and the recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible for the excavation, or to his or her authorized representative, in the manner provided in Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code. The coroner shall make his or her determination within two working days from the time the person responsible for the

excavation, or his or her authorized representative, notifies the coroner of the discovery or recognition of the human remains.

(c) If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to his or her authority and if the coroner recognizes the human remains to be those of a Native American, or has reason to believe that they are those of a Native American, he or she shall contact, by telephone within 24 hours, the Native American Heritage Commission.”

Mandatory adherence to state regulations would ensure impacts to human remains, if any, would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

6 Energy

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Impact Analysis

- a. *Would the project result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?*

Development facilitated by the DWSP would require energy in the form of petroleum-based fuels used to power off-road construction vehicles and equipment to plan area, construction worker travel to and from plan areas, and vehicles used to deliver materials to the site. Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) transmits and delivers electricity and natural gas to residents and businesses in the City of Watsonville, including the plan area. Watsonville is also served by Central Coast Community Energy (3CE), a community choice energy agency established by local communities which transmits a greater percentage of renewable energy via PG&E transmission lines. Residents and businesses may opt out and continue to receive electricity from PG&E. PG&E's 2018 power mix included 39 percent from renewable sources, 34 percent from nuclear, 15 percent from natural gas and other fuels, and 13 percent from large hydropower plants (PG&E 2020). Existing energy consumption within the plan area includes consumption of fossil fuels associated with the operation of residences and businesses, and fuel use associated with vehicles traveling to and from the downtown area.

Energy use during construction would be temporary in nature, and construction equipment used would be typical of similar-sized construction projects in the region. In addition, development within Downtown Watsonville would utilize construction contractors who demonstrate compliance with applicable California Air Resources Board regulations that restrict idling of heavy-duty diesel motor vehicles and govern accelerated retrofitting, repowering, or replacement of heavy-duty diesel on- and off-road equipment. Electrical power consumed during construction activities would be supplied from existing electrical infrastructure in the area. Overall, construction activities would require minimal electricity consumption and would not be expected to have any adverse impact on available electricity supplies or infrastructure. Construction activities would utilize fuel-efficient equipment consistent with state and federal regulations and would comply with state measures to

reduce the inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of energy. In addition, per applicable regulatory requirements, development under the DWSP would comply with construction waste management practices to divert construction and demolition debris. These practices would result in efficient use of energy necessary to construct the project. Furthermore, in the interest of cost efficiency, construction contractors would not utilize fuel in a manner that is wasteful or unnecessary. Therefore, future construction under the DWSP would not result in potentially significant environmental effects due to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy. Project construction impacts would be less than significant.

Operation of the future uses in the DWSP area would require energy use in the form of electricity, natural gas, and gasoline consumption. Natural gas and electricity would be used for heating and cooling systems, lighting, appliances, water use, and the overall operation of the residential and commercial uses in downtown. Gasoline consumption would be attributed to vehicular travel to and from the plan area.

Development facilitated by the DWSP would be required to comply with standards set forth in California Building Code (CBC) Title 24, which would minimize the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during operation. CALGreen (as codified in CCR Title 24, Part 11) requires implementation of energy-efficient light fixtures and building materials into the design of new construction projects. Furthermore, the 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards (CBC Title 24, Part 6) requires newly constructed buildings to meet energy performance standards set by the CEC. These standards are specifically crafted for new buildings to achieve energy efficient performance. The standards are updated every three years, and each iteration increases energy efficiency standards. Furthermore, the project would continue to reduce its use of nonrenewable energy resources as the percentage of electricity generated by renewable resources provided by PG&E continues to increase to comply with state requirements through Senate Bill 100, which requires electricity providers to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 60 percent by 2030 and 100 percent by 2045.

Buildout of the DWSP would increase energy use in the plan area compared to existing conditions. However, energy use would be in conformance with the latest version of CALGreen and the Building Energy Efficiency Standards. Additionally, the electricity and natural gas use would not result in a significant increase for PG&E. Therefore, the project would not result in wasteful or unnecessary energy consumption, and impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- b. Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?*

The City of Watsonville's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan and City of Watsonville General Plan contain several programs or policies that are designed to reduce energy consumption and implement more energy-efficient practices. Each of these planning documents incorporate State plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency by nature. Project consistency with applicable policies and strategies with these two documents is evaluated in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2 Project Consistency with the Watsonville 2030 Climate Action & Adaptation Plan

Measure	Consistency
Measure T2-A. New pedestrian improvements. Require new development projects, residential and nonresidential, to provide pedestrian improvements along street frontages; and strongly encourage connection to the nearest existing pedestrian facilities, such as sidewalks or trails. Developments shall also include internal pedestrian connections between all uses.	Consistent. Development facilitated by the DWSP would include internal pedestrian walkways that would connect to existing pedestrian facilities within Downtown Watsonville.
Measure E1-A. Natural gas reduction in new development. Require a 50 percent reduction in natural gas consumption compared to BAU in all new development through electric-only development and installation of electric or more efficient natural gas home heating and cooling systems, appliances, or water heaters. Explore implementation of an all-electric ordinance to achieve all electric new development by 2030.	Consistent. The DWSP would facilitate development that would include sustainable design required by Title 24 and CalGreen standards. Future development would be required to be solar-ready or include the installation of photovoltaic systems on all low-rise residential buildings, equal to the expected electricity usage, in accordance with Section 150.1(b)14 of the 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards.
Source: City of Watsonville Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (2021)	

Table 3 Project Consistency with the City of Watsonville General Plan

Policy/Measure	Consistency
Measure 9.J.1. Alternative transportation. As outlined in the Transportation and Circulation chapter, the City shall promote the use and development of alternative transportation modes intended to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels and other non-renewable energy resources.	Consistent. Development facilitated by the DWSP would be served by existing pedestrian facilities, bike lanes, and Santa Cruz METRO transit stops within Downtown Watsonville, which would promote multi-modal transportation options to and from the plan area. Moreover, the DWSP would facilitate denser development within the downtown area which often results in increased transit ridership and alternative transportation uses.
Measure 9.J.2. Development. The City shall encourage energy efficient design and design which utilizes solar opportunities in residential, commercial, and industrial development.	Consistent. The DWSP would facilitate development that would include sustainable design required by Title 24 and CalGreen standards. As discussed above within Table 2, future development would be required to comply with Section 150.1(b)14 of the 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards,
Measure 9.J.3. Land use and transportation. Development shall be encouraged to occur in locations and at intensities that facilitate the use of alternative transportation modes to the extent compatible with the community.	Consistent. The DWSP would facilitate denser development within the downtown area which is served by existing pedestrian facilities, bike lanes, and Santa Cruz METRO transit stops. Denser development and infill often results in increased transit ridership and alternative transportation uses.
Source: City of Watsonville 2005 General Plan (1994)	

As shown in Table 2 and Table 3, the DWSP would not conflict with the energy-related policies of the City's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan or City's General Plan. The proposed project would also be required to comply with the energy standards in the California Building Energy Efficiency Standards. Compliance with these regulations would avoid potential conflicts with adopted energy

conservation plans. Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency, and impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

7 Geology and Soils

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
1. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?	☐	☐	☒	☐
2. Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
4. Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

- a.1. Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?*
- a.2. Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?*
- a.3. Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?*
- a.4. Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?*
- c. Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?*

The nearest earthquake fault zones to the plan area are the Zayante-Vergeles fault zone and San Andreas fault zone, located approximately 1.7 miles and 5 miles east of the plan area boundary, respectively (USGS 2022). Further, according to maps prepared by the DOC, the plan area is not located within a known liquefaction zone (DOC 2022), or an area known to be susceptible to landslides (DOC 2020). While no faults, liquefaction zones, or landslide areas have been mapped within the city itself, the city and surrounding areas could still experience damage from earthquakes due to the high seismic shaking within the Coast Ranges geomorphic province. Development facilitated by the DWSP would therefore not exacerbate the risk of damage or injury during earthquake events.

A geotechnical investigation would be prepared for development facilitated by the project pursuant to the City of Watsonville Municipal Code (WMC), which would identify site-specific geologic and soil conditions. The geotechnical investigation would make recommendations to avoid and minimize risks related to potential existing geologic and soil hazards within the plan area. The City adopted the CBC and incorporated into the WMC in January 2020 as Chapter 2, Sections 8-2.01 through 8-2.05. Furthermore, future development within the plan area would not exacerbate the risk of loss, injury, or death as a result of existing geological and soils hazards within the downtown area. The City would ensure that the project would be designed and constructed consistent with the current CBC, thereby ensuring that appropriate investigations and design measures have been employed to effectively minimize or avoid potential hazards associated with redevelopment and/or new building construction. Therefore, pursuant to the WMC and the CBC, the measures of the geotechnical investigation would be incorporated into the design of the development facilitated under the proposed plan. Future development under the DWSP would not directly or indirectly result in potential substantial impacts associated with ground shaking, liquefaction, lateral spreading, or collapse, nor would it be located on an unstable geologic unit or known fault. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- b. Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?*

Grading and site preparation associated with project construction would remove vegetation cover and impervious surfaces, such as parking areas. Project grading would also loosen soils. The removal of soil cover and loosening of the soils would increase the potential for erosion and loss of topsoil. If

future development facilitated by the DWSP would disturb more than one acre of land, the applicant would be required to obtain coverage under the statewide National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity Construction General Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ (Construction General Permit), administered by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). The City of Watsonville Municipal Code Section 7.6.404 provides direction concerning erosion control, including keeping debris and dirt out of storm drain systems during construction, requiring submittal of a SWPPP, and requiring low impact development strategies or structural treatment control BMPs. Compliance with the NPDES permit and identified BMPs and with appropriate sections of the Watsonville Municipal Code would ensure that future development pursuant to the DWSP would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. Impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- d. Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?*

Expansive soils have the potential to cause damage to structures through soil movement as the soil changes volume in response to changes in the water content. The plan area is underlain by primarily by Conejo loam, which is a well-drained soil with moderate shrink-swell potential (United States Department of Agriculture 2022). The City of Watsonville Municipal Code requires preparation of a geotechnical investigation that identifies and provides recommendations for expansive soils. Development facilitated by the project would also comply with the CBC as applicable, which would ensure construction on potentially expansive soils is designed to withstand potential soil movement. Therefore, potential impacts from expansive soils would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- e. Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?*

Development facilitated by the DWSP would connect to the municipal wastewater system. The project would not require septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

NO IMPACT

- f. Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?*

Paleontological resources include the fossilized remains, traces, or imprints of organisms preserved in or on the earth's crust. Paleontological sensitivity is defined based on the underlying geologic formation. Areas with the highest sensitivity are those where geologic formations known to contain fossils are found close to the ground surface. According to the Environmental Resource Management Element of the Watsonville General Plan, the Pajaro Valley and City's Planning Area has historically yielded an array of paleontological resources and will likely yield future discoveries (City of Watsonville 1994). Accordingly, there always exists a possibility of encountering paleontological resources when conducting subsurface earthwork activities for development facilitated by the project, such as excavation for installation of utilities. Therefore, impacts could be potentially significant, and mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would apply to all

stages of construction facilitated by the project and would provide for the recovery, identification, and curation of previously unrecovered fossils, thereby reducing impacts to paleontological resources to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measures

GEO-1 Unanticipated Discovery of Paleontological Resources

In the event an unanticipated fossil discovery is made during project development, work in the immediate vicinity of the find shall be stopped, and a qualified professional paleontologist shall be retained to evaluate the discovery, determine its significance, and identify if mitigation or treatment is warranted. Significant paleontological resources found during construction monitoring shall be prepared, identified, analyzed, and permanently curated in an approved regional museum repository. Work around the discovery shall only resume once the find is properly documented and authorization is given to resume construction work.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Impact Analysis

- Would the project generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?*
- Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?*

In California, GHG emissions are regulated primarily through AB 32 and SB 375. AB 32, also known as the Global Warming Solutions Act, established a goal to reduce GHG emissions in the State to 1990 levels by 2020. SB 375 builds on AB 32 by requiring the California Air Resources Board to develop regional GHG reduction targets to be achieved from the automobile and light truck sectors for 2020 and 2035 in comparison to 2005 emissions.

The State of California also has stated longer term GHG reduction targets. Under Executive Order S-3-05 issued by Governor Schwarzenegger in June 2005, the State plans to reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. On May 29, 2015, Governor Brown issued Executive Order B-30-15, which furthers the goal of Executive Order S-3-05 by setting a mid-term target to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The Order also directs the California Air Resources Board to update the Climate Change Scoping Plan to include the 2030 target.

The Watsonville Climate Action and Adaptation Plan was developed in 2021 to reduce the community's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions below certain targets consistent with state regulations, such as AB 32 and SB 375. As the transportation sector contributes the greatest amount of GHG emissions, the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan calls for implementing a range of strategies to reduce the number and length of vehicle trips, including facilitating smart growth, increasing multimodal transportation facilities, managing better available parking, and supporting passenger rail service. As shown in Table 4Table 2 below, the DWSP would support these strategies through fostering high-density, infill development near transit, identifying pedestrian and bicycle enhancements, and revising parking and other development standards to reduce the transportation sector's GHG contribution by reducing single-occupant vehicle driving and encouraging alternative

modes of transportation. Because the DWSP would be consistent with the Watsonville Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, the DWSP would not generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment. Similarly, the DWSP would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Table 4 Project Consistency with the Watsonville 2030 Climate Action & Adaptation Plan

Measure	Consistency
Measure E1-A. Natural gas reduction in new development. Require a 50 percent reduction in natural gas consumption compared to BAU in all new development through electric-only development and installation of electric or more efficient natural gas home heating and cooling systems, appliances, or water heaters. Explore implementation of an all-electric ordinance to achieve all electric new development by 2030.	Consistent. The DWSP would facilitate development that would include sustainable design required by Title 24 and CalGreen standards. Future development would be required to be solar-ready or include the installation of photovoltaic systems on all low-rise residential buildings, equal to the expected electricity usage, in accordance with Section 150.1(b)14 of the 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards. Development envisioned in the DWSP would occur before and after 2030, as the DWSP guides development within the plan area into the future. Development constructed within the plan area would be subject to City ordinances applicable at the time of construction, potentially including a future ordinance prohibiting natural gas by means of an all-electric requirement.
Measure T1-A. Smart Growth Principles. Based on AMBAG growth projections, the City is projected to experience an approximately 10 percent increase in jobs and housing by 2030 compared to existing conditions, which would necessarily lead to an increase in jobs and housing density in Watsonville. Increased density would reduce VMT by locating people in closer proximity to workplaces and other destinations. The support measures below outline how this future growth would be accommodated in line with smart growth principles: • Include and advance transit-oriented development, active transportation connections, and smart growth concepts in the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan. • Continue and expand smart growth strategies, such as high-density development centered on transit and commerce at nodes throughout Watsonville. • Amend the Watsonville General Plan to create a new jobs-housing policy and sync with the next update to the Housing Element to provide more employment opportunities and an expanded range of housing options for all income levels. • Address overcrowding and cost-burdened households in the next update to the Housing Element in accordance with state law.	Consistent. Development facilitated by the DWSP would include active transportation facilities, such as internal pedestrian walkways that would connect to existing pedestrian facilities within Downtown Watsonville. The DWSP also envisions new bicycle facilities and routes in the plan area, such as a new signed bicycle route on Marchant Street between East Beach Street and the existing Levee Trail. Providing a bicycle route connection to the Levee Trail would allow active transportation modes of travel to other areas of Watsonville outside of the plan area. The DWSP would create new housing and employment in the downtown area of Watsonville, where transit is accessible and available. As shown in Table 1, the DWSP would add up to 3,886 residential units to downtown and hundreds of thousands of square feet of commercial and industrial spaces, which would serve commerce purposes. The housing envisioned in the DWSP would provide more variations and options for all income levels.
Measure T2-A. New pedestrian improvements. Require new development projects, residential and	Consistent. Development facilitated by the DWSP would include internal pedestrian walkways that would connect to

Measure	Consistency
nonresidential, to provide pedestrian improvements along street frontages; and strongly encourage connection to the nearest existing pedestrian facilities, such as sidewalks or trails. Developments shall also include internal pedestrian connections between all uses.	existing pedestrian facilities within Downtown Watsonville. The DWSP envisions more pedestrian spaces on key corridors or roadways, such as Main Street.
Measure T2-B. Pedestrian and Cyclist Multimodal Enhancements. Improve roadway segments, intersections, and bikeways to implement multimodal enhancements for pedestrian and cyclist comfort and safety along City-maintained public roads by improving five centerline miles of roadway segments and 100 intersections by 2030. Projects may include but not be limited to the following projects identified for Watsonville in the AMBAG 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)/SCS. ▪ Traffic calming and greenway features on 2nd Street/Maple Avenue and 5th Street from Lincoln Street to Walker Street ▪ Bike lane improvements to Rodriguez Street (Main Street to Riverside Drive) ▪ Addition of sharrows to Union/Brennan (Freedom Boulevard to Riverside Drive) ▪ Improvement to the crosswalks on Union Street/Brennan Street ▪ Pedestrian and bicycle enhancements on Main Street (Freedom Boulevard to Riverside Drive) and Freedom Boulevard (Green Valley Road to Davis Avenue) ▪ Exploration of implementing universal streets in the Downtown Area ▪ Complete streets improvements to Main Street (East Beach Street to Freedom Boulevard) ▪ Construction of pedestrian/bicycle bridge over Highway 1 ▪ Installation of a roundabout to replace the currently signalized intersection at Main Street (Highway 152)/Freedom Boulevard with safety considerations for bike/pedestrian improvements ▪ Freedom Boulevard reconstruction (Alta Vista Avenue to Green Valley Road) for pedestrian improvements	Consistent. The DWSP would improve numerous roadway segments, intersections, and bikeways in the plan area, including projects described or listed in the AMBAG 2040 MTP/SCS. For example, the AMBAG 2040 MTP/SCS project list includes bike lane improvements to Rodriguez Street, which is located in the plan area. The DWSP envisions Improved wider bicycle lanes, with an enhanced buffer between adjacent vehicular travel lanes and the bicycle lane, on Rodriguez Street between West Lake Avenue and West Beach Street. Another example is the complete streets improvements envisioned to Main Street in the DWSP, which is also listed in the AMBAG 2040 MTP/SCS. Chapter 4 of the DWSP contains a complete list of pedestrian and bicycle improvements, many of which are also included in the AMBAG 2040 MTP/SCS.
Measure T3-A. Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan Parking Strategies. Implement a parking program in the Downtown Area to encourage alternative modes of transportation when visiting Downtown. Expand the Downtown Parking District and incorporate parking management strategies in the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan to eliminate free parking.	Consistent. The DWSP includes numerous pedestrian and bicycle improvements that would encourage active transportation modes of travel as alternatives to driving and parking. Additionally, the DWSP would add more commercial space downtown, which is accessible by transit for people visiting retailers and restaurants, for example. The DWSP includes expanding the existing Downtown Parking District to coincide with the larger boundary of the plan area. The DWSP includes guidelines to price on-street parking depending on utilization or proximity to opportunity sites.

Measure	Consistency
Measure T5-A. Commute Trip Reduction Programs. Update the City’s Green Business Program to include commute trip reduction programs. Provide incentives and education to existing and future employers to participate in the program, particularly to implement commute trip reduction programs. The City shall track participating businesses to achieve a 20 percent participation City-wide. Commute trip reduction programs may include but not be limited to ride-sharing programs, subsidized transit, vanpool/shuttles, and alternative work schedules.	Consistent. Chapter 4 of the DWSP includes a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) component. The TDM component of the DWSP would result in commute trip reductions. For example, the TDM component envisions discounted transit passes for employees and residents as mitigation for development proposals within the plan area. Discounted transit passes would encourage the use of public transportation as an alternative to personal vehicles, reducing commute trips. The DWSP also includes guidelines, such as encouraging telecommuting or alternative work schedules to reduce commute trips.
Measure T5-B. End-of-Trip Facilities. Update Watsonville Municipal Code, Section 14-17.113, to require new non-residential development to provide end-of-trip facilities for employee use in addition to bicycle parking. End-of-trip facilities will include bike parking, bike lockers, showers, and personal lockers to the extent feasible.	Consistent. The DWSP includes standards and guidelines for end-of-trip facilities, including the those listed in Measure T5-B of the CAAP. For example, the DWSP envisions long-term bicycle parking facilities, such as bike lockers.
Measure T6-G. Local Shopping. Provide a variety of opportunities and incentives to encourage local shopping, with the goal of reducing average household grocery trip length by 1 mile. Programs will include identifying and removing barriers to urban agriculture to encourage residents to grow food and/or raise chickens and to expand and diversify alternative food access points (e.g., community-supported agriculture, community gardens, farmers markets). The City will identify vacant City-owned land suitable for growing food, establish community gardens where suitable, and make City-owned parking lots and public gathering spaces available for farmers markets and community-supported agriculture pick-up locations.	Consistent. The DWSP would add both residential units and commercial space to the plan area. This would place people in proximity to shopping within the local downtown area. The DWSP envisions retaining the existing weekly Farmers Market downtown at the Watsonville City Plaza. The DWSP envisions additional agricultural or farming events, such as community gardening opportunities.
Source: City of Watsonville 2021 BAU = Business as Usual Note: The City’s Climate Action and Adaptation Plan includes other measures that would reduce GHG emissions that are not included in this table. However, those measures are more specific to individual projects, such as retrofitting specific buildings or installing certain types of appliances. Therefore, those measures are not addressed in this table because this is a programmatic analysis of the DWSP.	

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous material sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☒	☐	☐	☐
e. For a project located in an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☐	☒

- a. *Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?*

Development facilitated by the DWSP may involve the use, storage, transport, and disposal of potentially hazardous materials and wastes. Land uses within the DWSP do not generally involve the use, storage, disposal, or transportation of significant quantities of hazardous materials. They may involve use and storage of some materials considered hazardous, though these materials would be primarily limited to solvents, paints, chemicals used for cleaning and building maintenance, and landscaping supplies. These materials would not be different from household chemicals and solvents already in wide use throughout the plan area. Residents and workers are anticipated to use limited quantities of products routinely for periodic cleaning, repair, and maintenance or for landscape maintenance/pest control that could contain hazardous materials. Those using such products would be required to comply with all applicable regulations regarding the disposal of household waste.

During project operation, potential industrial uses would be determined by those allowed by the Zoning Ordinance for General Industrial zoning district. The transport, use, and storage of hazardous materials during operation of the project would be conducted pursuant to all applicable local, State, and federal laws, including but not limited to Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations implemented by Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations, which describes strict regulations for the safe transportation of hazardous materials, and in cooperation with the County's Department of Environmental Health. As required by California Health and Safety Code Section 25507, any potential industrial businesses shall establish and implement a Hazardous Materials Business Emergency Plan for emergency response to a release or threatened release of a hazardous material. As required, the hazardous materials would be stored in locations according to compatibility and in storage enclosures (i.e., flammable material storage cabinets and biological safety cabinets) or in areas or rooms specially designed, protected, and contained for such storage, in accordance with applicable regulations.

Furthermore, under the California Hazard Communication Regulation, chemical manufacturers, distributors, or importers must provide Safety Data Sheets (formerly Material Safety Data Sheets) for each hazardous chemical to downstream users¹ to communicate information on these hazards. Future industrial uses of more than ten employees would be required to comply when employees may be exposed to hazardous substances found in the workplace under normal conditions of use as well as in reasonably foreseeable emergency conditions (i.e., a spill or release of a flammable chemical). Accordingly, a Safety Data Sheet would be stored on-site, either within the proposed buildings operating within the plan area for chemical and chemical products used or stored on the project site, such as cleaning products for ongoing maintenance of the proposed building interior. In the event a future applicant proposes to use or store hazardous materials on-site due to a unique or specific industrial process, the applicant would be required to obtain a Conditional Use Permit from the City, which would be subject to additional environmental review and mitigation, as applicable.

Depending on the specific land use, operation of the project would either not involve the routine use, storage, transportation, or disposal of substantial quantities of hazardous materials, or the use and handling of these materials would be in accordance with existing laws and regulations. These regulations would prevent the release of such materials into the environment. Impacts from project operation would be less than significant.

¹ Downstream users are companies or individuals that use chemicals.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- b. *Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?*

Project construction would include the temporary transport, storage, use, or disposal of potentially hazardous materials including fuels, lubricating fluids, cleaners, or solvents. If spilled, these substances could pose a risk to the environment and to human health. However, the transport, storage, use, or disposal of hazardous materials is subject to various federal, state, and local regulations designed to reduce risks associated with hazardous materials, including potential risks associated with upset or accident conditions. Hazardous materials must be transported under U.S. DOT regulations (U.S. DOT Hazardous Materials Transport Act, 49 Code of Federal Regulations), which stipulate the types of containers, labeling, and other restrictions to be used in the movement of such material on interstate highways. In addition, the use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials are regulated through the Resources Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is responsible for implementing the RCRA program, as well as California's own hazardous waste laws. DTSC regulates hazardous waste, cleans up existing contamination, and looks for ways to control and reduce the hazardous waste produced in California. DTSC does this primarily under the authority of RCRA and in accordance with the California Hazardous Waste Control Law (California H&SC Division 20, Chapter 6.5) and the Hazardous Waste Control Regulations (Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Divisions 4 and 4.5). DTSC also oversees permitting, inspection, compliance, and corrective action programs to ensure that hazardous waste managers follow federal and state requirements and other laws that affect hazardous waste specific to handling, storage, transportation, disposal, treatment, reduction, cleanup, and emergency planning. Compliance with existing regulations would reduce the risk of potential release of hazardous materials from spills and transport during construction.

If future development facilitated by the DWSP would disturb more than one acre of land, the applicant would be required to obtain coverage under the General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity (Construction General Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ) to comply with Clean Water Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements. Compliance with these requirements would include preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which would specify BMPs for rapid containment and cleanup of accidental hazardous materials spills or leaks, such as minor spills when refueling equipment on-site. Compliance with NPDES requirements, where applicable, and other relevant hazardous materials regulations would ensure that construction fluids and materials categorized as hazardous are not discharged to water or the environment.

Construction of future development facilitated by the DWSP could require demolition of existing structures, because the plan area is downtown and widely developed. The plan area contains some of the oldest buildings in Watsonville, including some constructed well before asbestos containing materials and lead paint were eliminated from building construction. During demolition of these buildings, either asbestos containing materials or lead paint, or both could be released in dust or workers could come into direct contact with these materials and substances. This would be a potential adverse health effects, as both asbestos and lead are well known to impact health. Impacts would be potentially significant and will be evaluated further in the EIR.

POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- d. *Would the project be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous material sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?*

The plan area contains multiple sites included on a list of hazardous material sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Some construction facilitated by the DWSP, especially excavation for new building foundations and buried utility connections could disturb contaminated soils and groundwater, potentially exposing construction works to hazardous materials. Impacts could be potentially significant and will be evaluated further in the EIR.

POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- c. *Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school?*

There are multiple schools within or within 0.25 mile of the plan area including: Radcliff Elementary School, La Manzanita School, Watsonville Prep School, Linscott Charter School, Watsonville High School, Central Christian School, and Moreland Notre Dame High School. However, as described above under *Operation* in Threshold Question a, project operation would not involve the use or storage of hazardous materials other than minor household chemicals. Though potentially hazardous materials such as fuels, lubricants, solvents, and oils could be used during project construction, the transport, use and storage of hazardous materials would be conducted in accordance with applicable State and federal laws, such as the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, the California Hazardous Material Management Act, and the CCR, Title 22. Compliance with applicable laws and regulations would ensure that impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- e. *For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?*

The Watsonville Municipal Airport is approximately two miles northwest of the plan area, and as such the northern portion of the plan area is the Watsonville Municipal Airport Influence Area (Watsonville Municipal Airport 2015). However, the project is not included within an airport safety zone as defined in the California Airport Land Use Planning Handbook (Caltrans Division of Aeronautics 2011) or within airport noise contours as determined by the Watsonville Municipal Airport Master Plan (Watsonville Municipal Airport 2020). Therefore, the project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the plan area. There would be no impacts in this regard.

NO IMPACT

- f. *Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?*

The proposed project would not interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or evacuation plan. It is not anticipated that future construction pursuant to the DWSP would require lane closures of SR 152, Freedom Boulevard, or SR 126; however, should a lane closure become necessary during construction, the closure would be intermittent and temporary. Further, a lane or partial road closure during construction would require a road closure plan in accordance with City requirements,

which would indicate how traffic would navigate the area while the roadway is closed. The City and Watsonville Fire Department would be aware of the road closure and have ample arrangements planned in the event of an emergency evacuation or response during project construction because the City must approve closure of City roads.

To prioritize a pedestrian-friendly environment, the DWSP envisions a road diet on Main Street within the Plan Area. The road diet would convert Main Street from a multi-lane roadway to a roadway with a single travel lane in each direction. The existing other travel lanes would be converted to parallel parking for vehicles and for expanded or new pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The road diet would also provide a center, two-way left-turn lane near busier intersections on Main Street. According to the US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, road diets do not result in inadequate emergency access or reduced emergency vehicle response times. Although a road diet results in fewer travel lanes on the roadway, the center, two-way left turn lane allows emergency vehicles to bypass traffic while other vehicles remain within travel lanes (Federal Highway Administration 2020). Additionally, the road diet envisioned in the DWSP would include parallel parking spaces next to the travel lanes, which would provide room for vehicles to pull aside and allow emergency vehicles to pass. In addition to parallel parking spaces, Main Street also has parallel streets, such as Rodriguez Street, that could be used for emergency vehicle travel and access. The DWSP also envisions converting the existing couplet² portion of SR 152 from a one-way street into a two-way street, which could improve emergency access and reduce response times via East Lake Avenue and East Beach Street. Therefore, the road diet that would be implemented under the DWSP would not result in inadequate emergency access. Accordingly, impacts of the DWSP would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- g. Would the project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?*

Downtown Watsonville is not within or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. The nearest state responsibility area or land classified as very high fire hazard severity zone is on the southern side of the Pajaro River, approximately two miles south of the plan area boundary (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2007). The plan area is bound by primarily existing development to the north, east, and west, and bordered SR 129 and the Pajaro River to the south. Therefore, the project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of wildland fire. There would be no impacts.

NO IMPACT

² A roadway couplet is a pair of one-way streets which carry opposing directions of traffic.

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10 Hydrology and Water Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
(i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
(ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a. Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

Excavation, grading, and other activities associated with construction facilitated by the project would result in soil disturbance that could cause water quality violations through potential erosion and subsequent sedimentation of receiving water bodies. Construction activities could also cause water quality violations in the event of an accidental fuel or hazardous materials leak or spill. If precautions are not taken to contain contaminants, construction activities could result in contaminated stormwater runoff that could enter nearby water bodies, which would degrade water quality. Construction activities resulting in ground disturbance of one acre or more are subject to the permitting requirements of the NPDES General Permit for Stormwater Discharges associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Construction General Permit Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ). The Construction General Permit requires the preparation and implementation of a SWPPP, which must be prepared before construction begins. The SWPPP includes specifications for BMPs implemented during project construction to minimize or prevent sediment or pollutants in stormwater runoff. Furthermore, individual projects would be required to comply with Chapter 6, Excavations, Grading, Filling, and Erosion Control, of Watsonville Municipal Code. Chapter 6 outlines permit requirements for excavation and grading activities and describes required erosion control activities for construction and operation. Compliance with the Municipal Code would ensure proper erosion control activities are implemented for projects of less than one acre in size.

The plan area is currently developed with retail, commercial, civic, religious, industrial, and residential uses and is dominated by impervious surfaces. The project would facilitate primarily infill development or redevelopment and would not substantially increase the amount of impervious surfaces in the plan area. However, development facilitated by the project such as new buildings and parking areas, would prevent precipitation from infiltrating the ground surface. Instead of infiltrating the ground surface, this precipitation could become stormwater runoff. Paved surfaces, such as the new travel lanes or parking areas would add contaminants to stormwater runoff, including oils and heavy metals from streets, debris from roof tops, detergents from vehicle and equipment cleaning, and bacteria from pet waste such as in residential areas where pets are more common. Even at low concentrations, oil, grease, and heavy metals such as lead, cadmium, and copper can be toxic to aquatic organisms. Bacteria from pet waste can have negative impacts to organisms in the receiving waters. Nutrients from fertilizers have been found to accelerate growth of nuisance vegetation and algae, resulting in a decrease in dissolved oxygen levels which effect the survival of fish, invertebrates, bacteria, and underwater plants. Dissolved oxygen is also critical for the decomposition of organic matter, a natural process in aquatic ecosystems. The pollutants of concern in Santa Cruz County and particularly in the Pajaro River watershed include sediment, nutrients, and bacteria.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, individual projects would be required to comply with Chapter 6, Excavations, Grading, Filling, and Erosion Control, of Watsonville Municipal Code. Chapter 6 of Watsonville Municipal Code requires stormwater from new development to be captured on the site of the development, such as in bioretention areas, where runoff could infiltrate the ground surface or undergo filtration and treatment prior to discharge into surface waters. The requirements for on-site retention established by Chapter 6 are mandatory and would require on-site treatment of stormwater or otherwise prevent increases in untreated runoff from entering surface waters or discharging via the City's storm drain system. This would prevent runoff from project development from substantially degrading water quality or violating waste discharge

requirements. Therefore, compliance with existing regulations would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- b. Would the project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?*

The County of Santa Cruz has mapped primary groundwater recharge areas across the County, including within incorporated Watsonville. According to the County of Santa Cruz mapping, groundwater recharge areas do not occur within the downtown area of Watsonville, including within the plan area (County of Santa Cruz 2022). The absence of mapped groundwater recharge areas within the plan area is consistent with existing conditions within the plan area. The plan area is currently developed with retail, commercial, civic, religious, industrial, and residential uses and is dominated by impervious surfaces. Therefore, the plan area is not ideal for substantial groundwater recharge due to relatively large area of impervious surface comprising the downtown area. However, development facilitated by the project such as new buildings and parking areas could be constructed within small areas of pervious surface that do exist in the plan area, such as existing landscaping. Development in these pervious areas would prevent precipitation from infiltrating the ground surface. Development envisioned in the DWSP would be subject to requirements of the City of Watsonville Municipal Code, including Chapter 6 of the Municipal Code. Chapter 6 of Watsonville Municipal Code requires stormwater to be captured on-site, such as in bioretention areas, where runoff could infiltrate the ground surface and contribute to recharge of underlying aquifers. Further, the plan area is underlain by the Pajaro Valley Groundwater Subbasin (subbasin). Groundwater recharges in the subbasin occurs through direct percolation of rainfall and streamflow seepage from the Pajaro River and its tributaries (Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency 2014). While a small portion of the plan area is adjacent to the Pajaro River, development facilitated by the project would be subject to stormwater control measures required by Watsonville Municipal Code and would not interfere with groundwater recharge of the Pajaro River.

The project would increase the number of residents and businesses in plan area, which could result in increased water demand and consumption. As described in Section 19, *Utilities and Services Systems*, water supplies within the plan area primarily originate from groundwater from the Pajaro Valley Groundwater Basin. In terms of groundwater supplies, a Water Supply Assessment was prepared for the project in October 2022. The assessment is included in this Initial Study as Appendix A. As described therein, the plan area is already served by the Watsonville water supply system, and development facilitated by the project would not result in a projected water demand exceeding water supply (Appendix A). Therefore, the project would not result in substantial depletion of the Pajaro Valley Groundwater Basin. Projected water demand and supply is discussed in detail in Section 19, *Utilities and Service Systems*. Therefore, the project's impacts on groundwater supplies and recharge would be less than significant, and the project would not impede implementation of a groundwater sustainability plan.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- c.(i) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of*

impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

- c.(ii) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?*
- c.(iii) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner that would create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?*
- c.(iv) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would impede or redirect flood flows?*

Drainage in the plan area generally follows the gently sloping topography of each parcel within the plan area. Existing stormwater drainage systems include curbs and gutters along existing roadways and within parcels of the plan area. Development facilitated by the project would involve grading and possible alterations to the existing topography of the sites. However, construction would primarily consist of infill development and redevelopment and would replace existing impervious surfaces. Precipitation within the plan area would run off the replaced impervious surfaces and be incorporated into existing surface runoff. Therefore, the project would not result in increased surface runoff that could result in flooding or exceed the capacity of existing stormwater drainage systems. Additionally, the project would not result in additional sources of polluted runoff.

As stated previously, construction facilitated by the project would be conducted in compliance with the State's Construction General Permit (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ). Preparation of the SWPPP in accordance with the Construction General Permit would require erosion-control BMPs at the construction areas. BMPs that are typically specified within the SWPPP may include, but would not be limited to, temporary measures during construction, revegetation, and structural BMPs. Therefore, the project would not result in substantial erosion or siltation during construction. Construction and operational permitting requirements, including the NPDES Construction General Permit would require erosion-control measures and the construction of on-site retention basins or bioretention facilities. These features would capture and treat stormwater runoff during construction and operation, ensuring no increase in erosion, siltation, surface runoff, or polluted runoff within the plan area.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Flood Hazard Layer Viewer, portions of the plan area are within or adjacent to known flood hazard areas, including areas with a 0.2 to 1 percent annual chance of a flood hazard near the Pajaro River and regulatory floodways along Watsonville Slough. However, the project would facilitate infill development or redevelopment in already developed areas of Watsonville; therefore, development facilitated by the project would not substantially change existing development patterns within mapped flood zones, and as such would not impede or redirect flood flows. Impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

d. *In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?*

As discussed above under threshold c.(i) – c.(iv), portions of the plan area are within or adjacent to known flood hazard areas along the Pajaro River and Watsonville Slough. These bodies of water would also be subject to seiche. The plan area is not within a mapped tsunami hazard zone (DOC 2022).

Development facilitated by the project located within flood hazard zones and alongside water bodies subject to seiche would increase the risk of pollutant release due to project inundation. Industrial and commercial development facilitated by the project would be primarily located in the southern portion of the plan area, which is mapped by FEMA as having a 0.2 to 1 percent annual chance of a flood hazard. The project would primarily facilitate infill development and redevelopment, and would therefore not substantially increase the risk of the release of pollutants. Further, as described in Section 9, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, hazardous materials in commercial or industrial uses would be transported, stored, used, and disposed of in accordance with applicable regulations. For example, development facilitated by the DWSP would be subject to the City of Watsonville Municipal Code. Section 9-2.502 of the Municipal Code prohibits the storage of materials which in the time of a flood are buoyant, flammable, explosive, or could otherwise be injurious to human, animal, or plant life. The project would also facilitate development of residential uses; however, residential uses do not typically store large quantities of potential pollutants, and typically contain household cleaning supplies and landscaping materials. Therefore, the project would not increase the risk of pollutant release due to project inundation, and impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

e. *Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?*

Development facilitated by the project would include site-specific connections to existing water supply infrastructure, in order to provide water supply service to individual developments. These facilities would consist of underground pipes connecting individual parcels in the plan area to existing water mains (larger underground water distribution pipes) that already exist throughout the plan area, primarily within paved roadways. These connections would be installed during the projects' construction periods, within the project-specific construction footprints. As such, any potential environmental effects associated with project-specific water supply connections are included construction-related impacts of future developments, as evaluated throughout this Initial Study. The project would not involve the relocation or construction of new or expanded water supply infrastructure, as water supply for the project would be provided by the City of Watsonville.

As described in the WSA (Appendix A) and discussed in detail in Section 19, *Utilities and Service Systems*, the City of Watsonville does not anticipate a shortfall in water supply in future normal, single dry, and multiple dry years. Because the project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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11 Land Use and Planning

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a. Would the project physically divide an established community?

The plan area is located within an urbanized area and surrounded by other urban land uses. The project would involve development of up to 3,886 residential units; 231,151 square feet of commercial use; 376,827 square feet of industrial use; and 114,569 square feet of civic use within the plan area. The plan area is currently developed with existing residential and commercial uses. Therefore, the addition of buildout of the DWSP would not generate additional barriers to community connectivity compared to existing conditions on the site. The Specific Plan does not include the construction of barriers such as roadways or other dividing features that would physically divide an established community. Therefore, the DWSP would have no impact.

NO IMPACT

b. Would the project cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

The proposed DWSP provides a land use and mobility plan along with development and design regulations to guide future public and private development projects in the plan area. The land use components of the DWSP would help the City achieve its objective of incorporating higher density commercial and housing opportunities by accommodating additional residential uses in a compact and active mixed-use environment through both new construction and adaptive reuse of historic or existing buildings. Because the plan area is mostly developed with commercial buildings and established residential neighborhoods, the DWSP directs future potential growth toward a limited number of vacant or under-utilized sites that could be redeveloped in the downtown area. This would prevent conflicts with land use plans, policies, and regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects. For example, locating new development on under-utilized infill sites in downtown would avoid conflicts with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, which is a regulation intended to prevent or avoid impacts to waters of the United States, such as rivers and jurisdictional wetlands.

The mobility components of the DWSP focus on the provision of multi-modal transportation options in the downtown area, such as vehicle, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian mode options. It includes

design concepts for downtown streets, as well as bicycle and pedestrian network improvements. In addition, the mobility component identifies mobility goals, such as the provision of complete streets, effective and sufficient parking, curb management, and travel demand management strategies. The mobility components and goals of the DWSP would encourage pedestrian and bicycle travel instead of vehicle travel, which would be consistent with regulations adopted to prevent environmental impacts, such as SB 743 pertaining to vehicle miles traveled. The mobility components of the DWSP would also further the goals of the City's *Trails & Bicycle Master Plan*, which was not necessarily adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect but would do so by providing more pedestrian and bicycle travel opportunities in lieu of vehicle travel, reducing air pollution.

Because the plan area is urbanized and the DWSP envisions development within urbanized area with fewer sensitive environmental resources, would reduce environmental impacts associated with vehicle use, and was developed in coordination with other applicable land use plans and policies, impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

12 Mineral Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

- a. *Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?*
- b. *Would the project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?*

The City's General Plan states that Watsonville is classified as MRZ-2 land by the State Board of Mining and Geology, which indicates the area has significant stone, sand, and/or gravel deposits (City of Watsonville 1994). However, the plan area contains no active mineral extraction operations. Additionally, the DWSP would facilitate development within the previously developed downtown of Watsonville and would not result in a loss of available minerals. Thus, the project would have no impact to mineral resources.

NO IMPACT

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13 Noise

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in:				
a. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	■	☐	☐	☐
b. Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	■	☐	☐	☐
c. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	■

Impact Assessment

- a. *Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?*
- b. *Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?*

The DWSP could generate temporary noise and vibration increases during construction through the use of heavy construction equipment, excavation, and vehicle trips associated with construction activities. In addition, the project could result long-term operational noise increases associated with residential and industrial uses, increased vehicle trips, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning. Impacts could be potentially significant and will be evaluated further in the Environmental Impact Report.

POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- c. *For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?*

The nearest airport to the plan area is the Watsonville Municipal Airport, located approximately two miles northwest of Downtown Watsonville. As discussed within Section 9, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, the plan area is not within the Watsonville Municipal Airport noise contours as determined by the Watsonville Municipal Airport Master Plan (Watsonville Municipal Airport 2020). Therefore, the project would not expose people residing or working in the plan area to excessive noise. There would be no impacts in this regard.

NO IMPACT

14 Population and Housing

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	■	□	□	□
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	□	□	□	■

- a. *Would the project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?*

The plan area is mostly developed with commercial buildings and established residential neighborhoods. The proposed Specific Plan would facilitate the future development of new business and housing in the downtown and future potential growth is likely to be directed to a limited number of vacant or under-utilized sites that could be redeveloped. The DWSP projects up to 3,886 residential units would be added to the plan area through the next 25 years (City of Watsonville 2022). According to the California Department of Finance E-5 Housing Estimates, the average persons per household for the city of Watsonville is 3.52 persons. Based on the estimation, the 3,886 residential units added under the Specific Plan would introduce approximately 13,679 people to the plan area through the next 25 years and could be considered substantial unplanned population growth. Impacts could be potentially significant and will be evaluated further in the EIR.

POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- b. *Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?*

The plan area currently contains a mix of housing. As of 2019, there were 711 households in the downtown area, a net increase of 54 since 2010, representing approximately 8 percent growth (City of Watsonville 2020). The Specific Plan is anticipated to facilitate the construction of up to 3,886 residential units over the next 25 years. However, the proposed DWSP includes strategies to prevent displacement, such as Policy 7.1 and Policy 7.2, which look to reinvest in existing affordable housing and stabilize existing neighborhoods. Furthermore, the intent of the DWSP is to create more housing units within Downtown Watsonville over the next 25 years, while maintaining existing neighborhoods through policies such as Policy 7.1 and Policy 7.2. Therefore, the proposed project would not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

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15 Public Services

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
1 Fire protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
2 Police protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
3 Schools?	☐	☐	☒	☐
4 Parks?	☐	☐	☒	☐
5 Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a.1. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered fire protection facilities, or the need for new or physically altered fire protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives?

The plan area is served by the Watsonville Fire Department, which is located within the plan area at 115 2nd Street, at the intersection of 2nd Street and Rodriguez Street. The DWSP would not expand the service area of the Watsonville Fire Department. However, implementation of the DWSP would increase the number of buildings and people residing within the plan area, which could result in more calls or request of services provided by the Watsonville Fire Department. The potential additional calls or requests for fire services resulting from implementation of the DWSP would be responded to by the existing fire station on 2nd Street. The development envisioned in the DWSP would change building massing in the plan area, but it does not envision high-rise structures that could require larger fire trucks with extended ladder ability. Because the DWSP would not expand the service area or create the need for larger fire equipment, no expansion of the fire station on 2nd Street would be required or is proposed.

The DWSP Chapter 3 of the DWSP, *Design Framework*, identifies the existing fire station site at 115 2nd Street as an opportunity site for redevelopment and reinvestment in the downtown area, and calls for the consolidation of fire and police services at the existing fire station site. If consolidated

the police would be located on a new building at the fire station site. The new building for the police would be constructed in an area that is currently used for parking and for conducting fire department exercises. Therefore, this modification the fire station site would not result in significant environmental impacts because the fire station site does not contain sensitive environmental resources but is instead characterized by parking areas and fire department training equipment. Impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

a.2. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered police protection facilities, or the need for new or physically altered police protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives?

The plan area is served by the Watsonville Police Department located at 215 Union Street in Watsonville, which is in the plan area. The DWSP would not expand the service area of the Watsonville Police Department. However, implementation of the DWSP would increase the number of people residing, working, or otherwise visiting the plan area, which could result in more calls or request for police services. The DWSP does not envision expanding the size of the police force. Therefore, the existing police force would provide police services and potentially respond to more calls for service within the plan area.

Although the DWSP does not envision expanding the Watsonville Police Department, it does envision relocating the police department. As described above under item a.1, Chapter 3 of the DWSP calls for the consolidation of fire and police services at the existing fire station site at 115 2nd Street. Specifically, a new police station would be constructed at the fire station site. The new police station would be adjacent to Rodriguez Street in an area that is currently used for parking and for conducting fire department exercises. Because the new police station would be constructed at the existing fire station site in areas characterized by parking areas and fire department equipment, sensitive environmental resources such as wetlands would not be impacted from the new police station. The existing police station at 215 Union Street would be an opportunity site for development, as envisioned in the DWSP and analyzed throughout this Initial Study. Therefore, the DWSP would result in less than significant environmental impacts associated with expanded or new police facilities.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

a.3. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered schools, or the need for new or physically altered schools, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives?

The proposed plan would facilitate the development of up to 3,886 residential units and roughly 13,679 people to Downtown Watsonville over the next 25 years. The school-aged residents within the plan area would likely attend the nearest Pajaro Valley Unified School District (PVUSD) schools, which are Radcliff Elementary School, E.A. Hall Middle School, and Watsonville High School. School-aged residents may also attend nearby private and charter schools, including Central Christian School, Moreland Notre Dame School, Linscott Charter School, and Ceiba College Preparatory Academy. According to the California Department of Finance population estimates, the population of Watsonville was approximately 50,669 as of January 2022 (California Department of Finance

2022). According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2021 population estimates, approximately 30.6 percent of Watsonville's population comprised of school-aged children (18 years old or younger) (US Census Bureau 2021). Applying this ratio of 30.6 percent school-aged children to the projected population increase due to the proposed project, the project would generate approximately 4,186 school-aged children.³ For this analysis, it is assumed that all school-aged children within the plan area would attend PVUSD schools. This additional student population would increase the service population and demand for PVUSD school services.

In accordance with Senate Bill 50, future projects under the DWSP would be required to pay development impact fees to PVUSD at the time of the building permit issuance. PVUSD would use collected funds towards new facilities to offset any impacts associated with new the development. Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65996, payment of these fees is deemed to fully mitigate cumulative CEQA impacts of new development on school facilities. Therefore, payment of state-mandated impact fees would reduce the project's potential impacts on school facilities, and expansion or construction of schools would result in impacts that are less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

a.4. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered parks, or the need for new or physically altered parks, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives?

The Watsonville Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan (City of Watsonville 2009) establishes a goal of maintaining five acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. With 143 acres of parkland and a population of approximately 50,669, the City currently maintains approximately 2.82 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, under the established goal. The DWSP would facilitate construction of up to 3,886 residential units and would result in the addition of approximately 13,679 new residents. The increase in the City's population would result in a ratio of approximately 2.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. However, the project would not result in substantial adverse physical effects or require the construction of new park facilities. Given the proximity of the Watsonville City Plaza, Marinovich Park and Community Center, Callaghan Park, Ramsay Park, and the Pajaro River Park, as well as the YMCA adjacent to the plan area, most residents would likely walk to existing parks, and given the nature of the downtown land uses, there would not be demand for new parks. Therefore, the DWSP would not result in substantial physical impacts resulting from new parks, and impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

a.5. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of other new or physically altered public facilities, or the need for other new or physically altered public facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives?

The plan area is served by the existing Watsonville Public Library located at 275 Main Street. The DWSP does not designate new land for a new library, nor does it propose updates to existing library facilities (City of Watsonville 2022).

³ 30.6 percent multiplied by 13,679 potential residents is approximately 4,186 residents under 18 years of age.

The DWSP would facilitate up to 3,886 residential units within the plan area through the next 25 years (City of Watsonville 2022). According to the California Department of Finance E-5 Housing Estimates, the average persons per household for the City of Watsonville is 3.52 persons. Based on the Department of Finance's estimation, the 3,886 residential units added under the DWSP would introduce approximately 13,679 people to the plan area through the next 25 years. Residents of the proposed project would utilize City library services. As described above, an estimated 570 people would be generated from the proposed project. The General Plan states that library services are adequate when there is 0.6 square feet of library facilities per resident of the City and one library staff person per 2,000 residents.

The existing City library is approximately 42,000 square feet with a staff of approximately 50 people (Nunez 2020). The library currently provides approximately 0.8 square feet of facilities per City resident and 2 library staff persons per 2,000 residents, based on the California Department of Finance's estimated 2022 population of 50,669 people (California Department of Finance 2022). Thus, the population of the City could increase by more than 20,000 people before adequate library services established by the General Plan are exceeded. Therefore, the library facility has excess capacity to serve the 13,679 residents that would be generated from the proposed project, and construction of new facilities would not be required. As the City Library has adequate capacity to serve the proposed project and the proposed project would not require construction of replacement facilities elsewhere, this would be considered a less than significant impact.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

16 Recreation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

- a. *Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?*

As discussed in Section 15, *Public Services*, the General Plan establishes a goal of maintaining five acres of parkland per 1,000 residents and currently maintains approximately 2.82 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. Future population growth under the DWSP would result in a ratio of approximately 2.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. However, the project would not result in substantial adverse physical effects or require the construction of new park facilities. Given the proximity of the Watsonville City Plaza, Marinovich Park and Community Center, Callaghan Park, Ramsay Park, and the Pajaro River Park, most residents would likely walk to existing parks, and given the nature of the downtown land uses, there would not be demand for new parks. The existing YMCA provides recreational facilities as well, and it is adjacent to the plan area boundary. Therefore, the DWSP would not result in substantial or accelerated physical deterioration of existing parks facilities, and impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- b. *Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?*

As discussed above in Section 15, *Public Services*, the plan area includes or is in close proximity to the Watsonville City Plaza, Marinovich Park and Community Center, Callaghan Park, Ramsay Park, and the Pajaro River Park. The DWSP does not envision new or expanded recreational facilities that would have an adverse physical effect on the environment. Impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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17 Transportation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	■	☐	☐	☐
b. Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	■	☐	☐	☐
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible use (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	■	☐
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	■	☐

- a. *Would the project conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?*
- b. *Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?*

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) indicates that land use projects would have a significant impact if the project resulted in vehicle miles traveled exceeding an applicable threshold of significance. Future development pursuant to the DWSP would create new land uses and vehicular trips in Downtown Watsonville, which could be inconsistent with existing programs, plans, ordinances, or policies addressing the circulation system. Impacts could be potentially significant and will be evaluated further in the EIR.

POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- c. *Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible use (e.g., farm equipment)?*

Development facilitated by the DWSP would consist primarily of infill development or redevelopment, which would utilize existing driveways providing access to parcels in the downtown area. Development facilitated by the DWSP would also include construction of new driveways proposed under individual development projects. The DWSP would not significantly alter roadways or traffic patterns within the downtown area.

Development and circulation plans for individual projects would be subject to review by the Watsonville Fire Department prior to issuance of building permits, which would ensure that

individual projects facilitated by the DWSP would not introduce sharp curves or dangerous intersections. Further, the DWSP would facilitate residential, commercial, and industrial development, uses that already exist within the downtown area; therefore, the DWSP would not introduce new types of vehicle traffic or incompatible uses. Impacts related to hazards or incompatible uses would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

d. Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

Development facilitated by the DWSP would be required to comply with the City's standards for emergency vehicle access (including providing adequate points of access, vertical clearance, and turning radius). Should development facilitated by the project require a lane closure of adjacent roadways, clear signage (e.g., closure and detour signs) would be provided to ensure vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists are able to adequately reach their intended destinations safely. In operation, future development applicants would be required to provide the City with a detailed plan demonstrating that each floor of the proposed buildings would be accessible by a fire aerial apparatus, fire hoses, and other emergency vehicles from surrounding roadways. Project plans for development facilitated by the DWSP would also be subject to review by the Watsonville Fire Department to ensure that adequate emergency access would be available prior to issuance of building permits.

The DWSP envisions a road diet on Main Street within the Plan Area to prioritize a pedestrian-friendly environment. The road diet would convert Main Street from a multi-lane roadway to a roadway with a single travel lane in each direction. The existing other travel lanes would be converted to parallel parking for vehicles and for expanded or new pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The road diet would also provide a center, two-way left-turn lane near busier intersections on Main Street. According to the US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, road diets do not result in inadequate emergency access or reduced emergency vehicle response times. Although a road diet results in fewer travel lanes on the roadway, the center, two-way left turn lane allows emergency vehicles to bypass traffic while other vehicles remain within travel lanes (Federal Highway Administration 2020). Additionally, the road diet envisioned in the DWSP would include parallel parking spaces next to the travel lanes, which would provide room for vehicles to pull aside and allow emergency vehicles to pass. In addition to parallel parking spaces, Main Street also has parallel streets, such as Rodriguez Street, that could be used for emergency vehicle travel and access. The DWSP also envisions converting the existing couplet portion of SR 152 from a one-way street into a two-way street, which could improve emergency access and reduce response times via East Lake Avenue and East Beach Street. Therefore, the road diet that would be implemented under the DWSP would not result in inadequate emergency access. Impacts of the DWSP would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

18 Tribal Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in a Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, or cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
a. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or	■	□	□	□
b. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	■	□	□	□

- a. *Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k)?*
- b. *Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource as defined in Public Resources Code 21074 that is a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1?*

While no tribal cultural resources are known by the City to occur on the plan area, tribal consultation would be required to identify potential known resources in the area. AB 52 was conducted on October 4, 2022 and no responses from tribes have been received to date. However, given there could be unknown subsurface resources that could be encountered and damaged during construction of development facilitated by the DWSP, impacts could be potentially significant and will be evaluated further in the EIR.

POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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19 Utilities and Service Systems

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐

- a. *Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?*

The proposed project would not require the relocation of water, wastewater treatment, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities. These utilities exist within the already developed downtown. Future development facilitated by the Specific Plan would connect to these existing utilities widely available and provided throughout the plan area. Therefore, the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities would not be required. As

discussed in items ‘b,’ ‘c,’ and ‘d,’ below, there is sufficient water supply, wastewater treatment capacity, and solid waste disposal capacity for the development envisioned in the DWSP. Impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- b. *Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?*

As discussed in Section 10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, a Water Supply Assessment was prepared for the project in October 2022. The assessment is included as Appendix A. The Water Supply Assessment utilized several sources, including the DWSP, the City’s existing 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, and the City’s Water System Master Plan, to determine if the City would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and development facilitated by the project.

The City of Watsonville Public Works Department provides water to the city, the downtown area, and unincorporated communities outside of Watsonville. The City currently has water supply rights of 21,900 acre-feet per year (AFY) of water; most of this water supply (21,000 AFY) consists of groundwater from the Pajaro Valley Groundwater Basin, with remaining supply (900 AFY) sourced from surface water sources. Historically, the City’s water demand falls below its allowable supply. In 2021, the City had a water demand of 6,750 acre-feet. Table 5 summarizes historic water demand by use in Watsonville from 2017 to 2021.

Table 5 Historic Water Demand by Use in Watsonville

Land Use	Water Demand (AFY)				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Single family residential	3,300	3,172	3,045	3,329	3,075
Multi family residential	833	794	855	839	809
Commercial	974	1,309	1,045	1,136	1,092
Industrial	429	407	633	535	614
Landscaping	387	422	429	471	419
Agricultural irrigation	771	798	857	729	699
Other	40	46	44	43	42
Total Demand¹	6,734	6,948	6,908	7,082	6,750

1 water demand is rounded to the nearest whole number. Numbers may not add due to rounding.

Source: Appendix A

As shown above in Table 5, the City’s water demand is generally one-third of the City’s water supply. The Water Supply Assessment utilized the project buildout that would be facilitated by the DWSP and water duty factors from the City’s Urban Water Management Plan to estimate the increase in water demand as a result of the project. Estimated water demand by land use is shown in Table 6.

Table 6 Estimated Water Demand of Specific Plan Uses

Land Use	Amount Proposed by DWSP	Units	Duty Factor (gallons/unit/day)	Annual Water Usage (AFY)
Commercial	231,151	sf		134
Dining	150,248	sf	0.740	125
Retail	57,788	sf	0.096	6
Office	23,115	sf	0.100	3
Industrial	376,827	sf		62
Dining	7,537	sf	0.740	6
Research and Development	56,523	sf	0.140	9
Office	37,683	sf	0.100	4
Other Industrial	275,084	sf	0.140	43
Public/Irrigation	114,572		0.062	8
Residential¹	1,517	Dwelling units	114	194
Total				397

1 The DWSP would facilitate the addition of 3,886 residential units; however, the City's Urban Water Management Plan projects that 2,345 dwelling units would be added to the City through 2040; therefore, the DWSP would facilitate the development of 1,517 net new dwelling units.

sf = square feet

Source: Appendix A.

As shown above, total additional water demand associated with implementation of the DWSP would be approximately 397 AFY. This represents total water demand at full buildout of the DWSP, which would occur over the planning horizon of 25 years or more. Table 7 shows the water demand associated with the DWSP in addition to baseline projected water demand from the City's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan.

Table 7 Projected Water Demand of the DWSP and the Urban Water Management Plan

	Water Demand (AFY)				
	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Total Urban Water Management Plan Projected Demand (normal year)	7,827	8,023	8,224	8,375	8,504
Additional DWSP Projected Demand (not included in Urban Water Management Plan)	397	397	397	397	397
Total Projected Water Demand	8,224	8,420	8,621	8,772	8,901

As shown above, total water demand in Watsonville with implementation of the DWSP would be less than half of the City's permitted supply during normal years. Table 8 below demonstrates that the City's supply would continue to exceed demand during single dry and multiple dry years.

Table 8 Water Supply and Demand in Normal, Single, and Multiple Dry Years

	Supply and Demand Without DWSP	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Normal Year	Supply totals	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900
	Demand totals	8,224	8,420	8,621	8,772	8,901
	Difference	+13,676	+13,480	+13,279	+13,128	+12,999
Single Dry Year	Supply totals	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900
	Demand totals	8,553	8,757	8,966	9,123	9,257
	Difference	+13,347	+13,143	+12,934	+12,777	+12,643
Second Dry Year	Supply totals	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900
	Demand totals	9,129	9,346	9,569	9,737	9,880
	Difference	+12,771	+12,554	+12,331	+12,163	+12,020
Third Dry Year	Supply totals	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900
	Demand totals	8,224	8,420	8,621	8,772	8,901
	Difference	+13,676	+13,480	+13,279	+13,128	+12,999
Fourth Dry Year	Supply totals	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900
	Demand totals	7,566	7,746	7,931	8,070	8,189
	Difference	+14,334	+14,154	+13,969	+13,830	+13,711

Source: Appendix A

As demonstrated in Table 5 through Table 8, the City of Watsonville's water supply typically exceeds its water demand, and the DWSP would not result in demand that exceeds the City's permitted supply. Therefore, the project would have sufficient water supplies available during normal, dry and multiple dry years, and impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- c. *Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?*

The plan area is located within the service area of the Watsonville Public Works and Utilities Department. The Department currently provides water to about 15,980 connections that serve approximately 66,000 customers within a service area that extends beyond the Watsonville City limits into Santa Cruz County. Although the City relies primarily on groundwater sources, during years of normal rainfall, the City utilizes a combination of surface water and groundwater supply sources. In addition, the City maintains more than 170 miles of collection pipelines and numerous pump stations to ensure that wastewater flows without interruption to the Watsonville Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF). The WWTF currently has the capacity to treat 12.1 million gallons per day (mgd), this facility currently treats an average of 6.7 million gallons of wastewater daily from residential, commercial, and industrial sources. As described above under item b, the project would generate an additional water demand of approximately 397 AFY, which converts to approximately 0.36 mgd. Not all water would become wastewater that is conveyed to the WWTF. For example, some water demand generated by the DWSP would be used for residential cooking, which is often

consumed rather than being conveyed to the WWTF. Nonetheless, even if the entire 0.35 mgd of water demand generated by the DWSP were to be conveyed to the WWTF for treatment, it would account for less than 1 percent of the WWTF's remaining total daily capacity.

Therefore, the WWTF has adequate capacity to serve the projected demand. Impacts to wastewater demand would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- d. *Would the project generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?*
- e. *Would the project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?*

The City's Public Works and Utilities Department, Solid Waste Division, handles solid waste management, including waste disposal and curbside recycling. Solid waste is currently taken to the City landfill, a Class III landfill located four miles outside of the City Limits on San Andreas Road. The City of Watsonville Landfill has a permitted capacity of 2,437,203 cubic yards, and currently has a remaining capacity of 1,417,561 cubic yards. The maximum daily throughput of the City's landfill is 275 tons per day (California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery [CalRecycle] 2019a).

Although solid waste is currently taken to the City landfill, the City is working on closure of the landfill. Upon its closure, residential and household solid waste will be taken to the Monterey Peninsula Landfill, located at 14201 Del Monte Boulevard, in the City of Marina, Monterey County. The maximum permitted capacity of the Monterey Peninsula Landfill is 49.7 million cubic yards, and a remaining capacity of approximately 48.6 million cubic yards. The maximum daily throughput of the Monterey Peninsula Landfill is 3,500 tons per day (CalRecycle 2019b). CalRecycle maintains solid waste generation rates for various land uses which were used to estimate solid waste generation for the DWSP as shown in Table 9.

Table 9 Estimated Project Solid Waste Generation

Land Use	CalRecycle Estimated Generation Rate (in lbs)*	Total Proposed Project	Estimated Solid Waste Generated per Day
Commercial	13 lbs per 1,000 square feet per day	231,151 square feet	3,005 lbs ³
Multi-Family Residential	8.6 lbs per day	3,886 residential units	33,420 lbs ⁴
Industrial	8.93 lbs per 1000 square feet per day	376,827 square feet	3,365 lbs ⁵
Public/Institutional	0.007 lbs of solid waste per day	114,569 square feet	802 lbs ⁶
Total			40,592 lbs

*lbs = pounds

¹ The average density of solid waste is approximately 527 pounds per cubic yard (Palanivel and Sulaiman 2014).

² The annual percent of remaining capacity assuming full buildout of the DWSP

³ 13 pounds of solid waste per day multiplied by 231 hundred square feet is approximately 3,005 pounds per day.

⁴ 8.6 pounds of solid waste per day multiplied by 3,886 residential units is approximately 33,420 pounds per day.

⁵ 8.93 pounds of solid waste per 1000 square feet per day multiplied by 376 hundred square feet is approximately 3,365 pounds per day.

⁶ 0.007 pounds of solid waste per day multiplied by 114,569 square feet is approximately 802 pounds per day.

Source: CalRecycle 2019a, 2019b

As shown in Table 9, development facilitated by the project would generate approximately 40,592 pounds of solid waste per day, or 20.3 tons per day. This is a conservative estimate that does not account for solid waste generated on-site currently, which would be eliminated and replaced by the proposed project. Future development facilitated by the DWSP would be required to comply with County and State plans and policies to reduce solid waste generation, including a requirement to divert at least 50 percent of solid waste and recyclables, as required by Assembly Bill 939.

As described above, solid waste in Watsonville is disposed of at the City of Watsonville Landfill and will eventually be disposed of at the Monterey Peninsula Landfill. Table 10 below compares the solid waste estimated to be generated by development facilitated by full buildout of the plan and the capacities of the solid waste facilities that would serve the project.

Table 10 Project Generated Solid Waste and Facility Capacity

Landfill Facility	Facility Daily Permitted Throughput (tons per day)	Project Percent of Daily Throughput	Permitted Capacity of Facility (cubic yards) ¹	Project Annual Percent of Remaining Capacity ²
City of Watsonville Landfill	275	7.4%	2,437,203	1.15%
Monterey Peninsula Landfill	3,500	0.6%	49,700,000	<0.1%

¹ The average density of solid waste is approximately 527 pounds per cubic yard (Palanivel and Sulaiman 2014).

² The annual percent of remaining capacity assuming full buildout of the DWSP

Source: CalRecycle 2019a, 2019b

As shown in Table 10, the project would generate a negligible percentage of the landfills' permitted capacities, remaining capacity, and daily throughputs. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact on landfill capacity. The plan's incremental increase in solid waste would not adversely affect solid waste facilities. Impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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20 Wildfire

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslopes or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☐	☒

- a. *If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?*
- b. *If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project, due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?*
- c. *If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?*

- d. *If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslopes or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?*

Downtown Watsonville is not within or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. The nearest state responsibility area or land classified as very high fire hazard severity zone is on the southern side of the Pajaro River, approximately two miles south of the plan area (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2020). The plan area is bound by primarily existing development to the north, east, and west, and bordered State Route 129 to the south. Therefore, the risk of wildfire on the plan area is low. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Does the project:				
a. Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c. Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☒	☐	☐	☐

- a. *Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?*

As described in Section 4, *Biological Resources*, the DWSP would have potentially significant impacts on special-status wildlife species. Additionally, as described in Section 5, *Cultural Resources*, the DWSP could involve the demolition of potentially historic structures. Impacts could be potentially significant and will be further evaluated in the EIR.

POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- b. *Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?*

Cumulative impacts could occur if the construction of other projects occurs at the same time as the proposed project and in the same geographic scope, such that the effects of similar impacts of multiple projects combine to create greater levels of impact than would occur at the project-level. For example, if the construction of other projects in the area occurs at the same time as project activities, combined air quality and noise impacts may be greater than at the project-level. The other major project planned in vicinity of the proposed project is the Freedom Boulevard Campus Master Plan, which envisions redevelopment of six County-owned buildings at 1430 Freedom Boulevard to be demolished and replaced with modernized facilities. The Freedom Boulevard Campus Master Plan is a multi-stage plan that would be implemented in phases over the course of many years. Therefore, construction of the development envisioned in the Freedom Boulevard Campus Master Plan could coincide with construction of the DWSP. Another project in the area is the Hillcrest Estates Residential Development Project off Ohlone Parkway, adjacent to the Watsonville Slough. Construction of the Hillcrest Estates Residential Development Project could also occur concurrent with construction of projects facilitated by the DWSP.

As discussed within Section 6, *Energy*, the DWSP would not result in a significant increase in energy demand and cumulative impacts would be less than significant. As discussed in Section 19, *Utilities and Service Systems*, there would be sufficient water supplies available to serve the project plus reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years. Therefore, cumulative impacts related to water supply and demand, as well as sustainable management of the groundwater basin from which potable water is sourced, would be less than significant. Additionally, as described in Section 20, *Wildfire*, the project is located in an urbanized area of Watsonville and would not exacerbate wildfire risks for surrounding areas. Cumulative impacts related to wildfire would be less than significant. Some of the other resource areas were determined to have no impact in comparison to existing conditions and therefore would not considerably contribute to cumulative impacts, such as Mineral Resources and Agriculture and Forestry Resources. Cumulative impacts in these issue areas would also be less than significant and not cumulatively considerable.

As described above, there is potential for the plan to result in impacts to the following resource sections: Aesthetics, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Land Use and Planning, Noise, Population and Housing, Transportation, and Tribal Cultural Resources. Cumulative impacts of the DWSP in combination with other cumulative projects will be further evaluated in the EIR.

POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- c. *Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?*

Effects to human beings are generally associated with Air Quality, Noise, Traffic Safety, Geology/Soils and Hazards/Hazardous Materials. As discussed in this Initial Study, implementation of the proposed project would result in potentially significant environmental impacts with respect to these issue areas, with the exception of geology and soils. Impacts related to air quality, noise,

traffic, and hazardous waste sites would be potentially significant and will be further evaluated in the Environmental Impact Report.

POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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Appendix A

Water Supply Assessment



CITY OF WATSONVILLE WATER SUPPLY ASSESSMENT FOR THE DOWNTOWN WATSONVILLE SPECIFIC PLAN

October 2022



Harris & Associates

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GLOSSARY

AFY	Acre Feet per Year
CDS	Coastal Distribution System
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CFP	Corralitos Filter Plant
CWC	California Water Code
DWSP	Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan, Plan
DU	Dwelling Unit
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
GPCD	Gallons per capita per day
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plan
MFR	Multi-Family Residential
MG	Million Gallons
MGD	Million Gallons per Day
Plan	Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan, DWSP
PV Subbasin	Pajaro Valley Groundwater Subbasin
PV Water	Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency
RWTF	Recycled Water Treatment Facility
SFR	Single Family Residential
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SB 221	Senate Bill 221 (Chapter 642, Statutes of 2001)
SB 610	Senate Bill 610 (Chapter 643, Statutes of 2001)
SQ FT	Square Feet
UWMP	Urban Water Management Plan
WSA	Water Supply Assessment
WSCP	Water Shortage Contingency Plan

1 INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to California Water Code (CWC) section 10910 *et seq.*, and based on the analysis detailed in this report and the representations by the plan proponents, the City of Watsonville has determined that its currently projected water supplies will be sufficient to meet the projected annual water demands associated with the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan (DWSP, Plan) during normal, single dry, and multiple dry years, provided that the City continues to proactively protect and augment water supply and manage water demand through the City's demand management measures and its Water Shortage Contingency Plan.

The City enjoys water supply rights of 21,900 acre-feet per year (AFY) but its water service area, which includes areas outside the City, uses significantly less. In 2021, water demand (metered water delivery) was 6,750 acre-feet.

The Plan will increase water demand by approximately 700 AFY over 2021 demand. The 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) included a portion of the DWSP demand; specifically, the UWMP utilized a "Medium Growth" scenario of 303 acre-feet based on preliminary estimates of the DWSP. The final DWSP included a higher growth scenario that translates into the additional 397 AFY.

1.1 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Several bills enacted in 2001 address the marriage of land use planning and water supply planning. Key among these were Senate Bill 610 (SB 610), which amended Water Code section 10910 *et seq.*, and Senate Bill 221 (SB 221), which added Government Code section 66473.7. Both bills, which took effect January 1, 2002, require that specific information about water availability be presented and considered by cities in connection with certain large projects.

SB 610 requires that any city or county that determines that a project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under section 21080 of the Public Resources Code shall prepare a Water Supply Assessment (WSA) to determine the sufficiency of water supply to meet water demand during normal, single dry, and multiple dry water years over a 20-year projection period. The DWSP is a mixed-use plan that includes more than 500 dwelling units; as such, the City has determined that it is a project subject to CEQA.

SB 221 requires that proposed subdivisions adding more than 500 dwelling units must also receive written verification of the available water supply from the project's water supplier. The DWSP does not involve the creation of a subdivision or a subdivision tract map, so no written verification is required to be provided to a developer.

The public water system that serves the area described by the project is the City of Watsonville, Public Water System #CA4410011.



This report serves as the WSA for the DWSP to meet the California Water and Government Code requirements.

1.2 SOURCES OF DATA

The following sources of data were utilized in developing this report:

- Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan, Chapters 1-3; Administrative Draft dated 5/22/2022
- Downtown Watsonville Growth Projections Approach; Memo from Raimi+Associates to Suzi Merriam and Justin Meek, City of Watsonville; Revised 8/17/22 and October 5, 2022
- Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan, Infrastructure; Draft dated April 19, 2022
- 2020 City of Watsonville Urban Water Management Plan; Prepared by Harris & Associates; July 2021
- City of Watsonville Water System Master Plan, Technical Memorandum 2, Future System Evaluation; Carollo; January 2020 Draft

1.3 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The City of Watsonville (City) is in the Pajaro Valley of Santa Cruz County and is approximately six square miles in size. Its jurisdictional boundaries are restricted by an urban growth boundary and airport land use restrictions. Because of these limitations on growth, the City is working to incorporate additional housing and economic opportunities through higher density infill along the City's major corridors, including the downtown area. The DWSP aims to establish a community vision, guiding principles, policies, standards, and a planning framework to guide the evolution of downtown developments. The DWSP will help achieve these objectives by accommodating additional residential uses in a compact and active mixed-use environment through both new construction and adaptive reuse of historic buildings.

The Plan area constitutes about 195.5 acres with about 55.5 acres dedicated to streets and rights-of-way. The Plan footprint is shown in Figure 1-1.

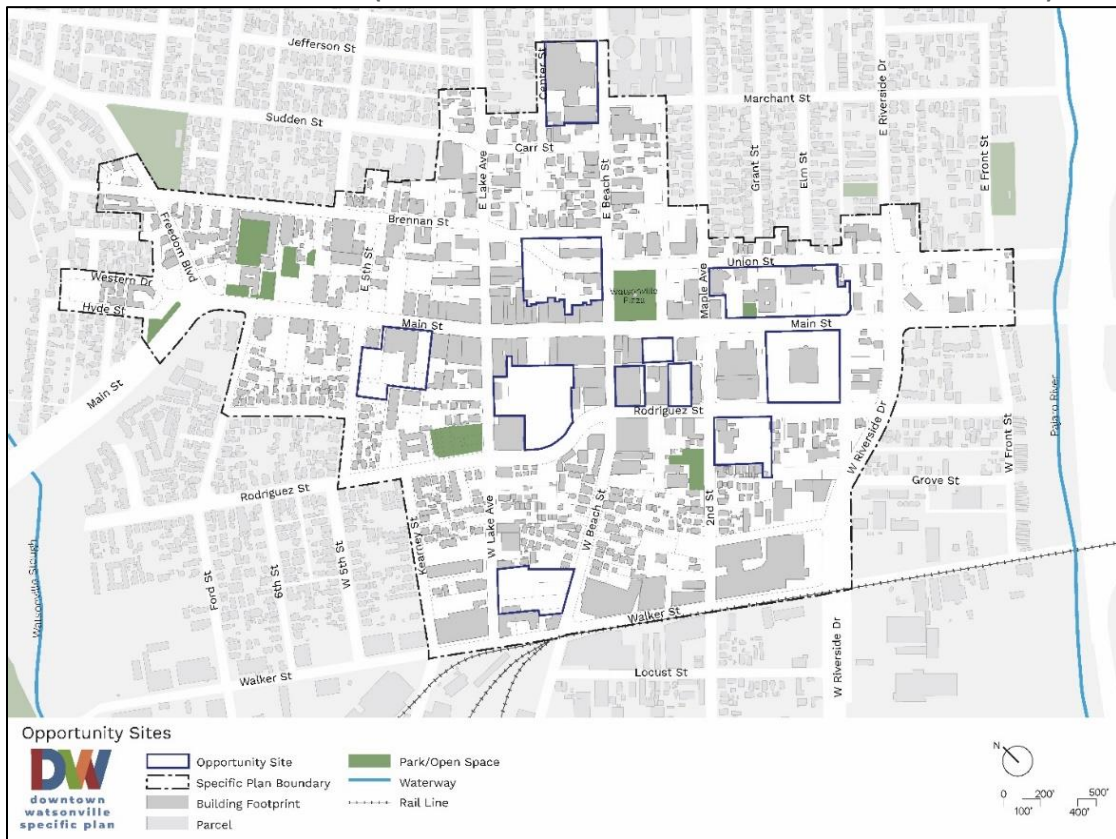
Whereas citywide residential stock is overwhelmingly single-family (approximately two-thirds), roughly 60 percent of the downtown residential stock is in multifamily structures. The DWSP promotes increased density/intensity mixed-use residential near public transportation and along Main Street and other main corridors. The DWSP includes commercial space to expand the City's economic base and encourage a socially and commercially viable downtown, specifically promoting mixed use ground floor commercial with housing above. The residential and commercial build out envisions revitalizing vacant historic buildings as well as in-fill development for new structures.



FIGURE 1-1: DOWNTOWN WATSONVILLE SPECIFIC PLAN BOUNDARIES



FIGURE 1-2: OPPORTUNITY SITES (SOURCE: DRAFT DOWNTOWN WATSONVILLE SPECIFIC PLAN)





The Plan identifies vacant and underutilized parcels as “opportunity sites” for catalytic projects to spark redevelopment and reinvestment in the downtown area (Figure 1-2). The Plan documents, in particular the Raimi + Associates “Downtown Watsonville Growth Projections Approach,” memo defines realistic development capacity for the DWSP based on proposed development standards for opportunity sites, City-owned parcels that could be redeveloped, and several underutilized sites that could be redeveloped. This development capacity, shown in Table 1-1, was utilized for this WSA.

TABLE 1-1: DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY (SOURCE: RAIMI+ASSOCIATES GROWTH PROJECTIONS MEMO)

	Dwelling Units	Square Feet
Residential	3,886	
Commercial		
Dining		150,248
Retail		57,788
Office		23,115
Total Commercial		231,151
Industrial		
Dining		7,537
R&D		56,523
Office		37,683
Industrial		275,084
Total Industrial		376,827
Public		114,572
TOTAL	3,886	722,550

1.4 CITY OF WATSONVILLE PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM

The City is located along the Monterey Bay between the cities of Santa Cruz and Monterey in Santa Cruz County (Figure 1-3). The City lies in the heart of the Pajaro Valley, surrounded by prime agricultural land and wetlands. Water is an integral component throughout the region’s environs. Five small lakes are located near the City’s northern and eastern boundaries.

The City is bounded by Corralitos Creek to the north, Salsipuedes Creek to the east, and the Pajaro River to the south. The Pajaro River forms the boundary between the Santa Cruz and Monterey counties. Several small creeks and sloughs meander through the City and extend to the south and west of Highway 1, forming what is referred to as the Watsonville Slough System. Figure 1-3 and Figure 1-4 shows the City’s location and City boundaries.



Regional map of Santa Cruz County, California, showing major highways, cities, and the Pacific Ocean. An inset map shows the location of Watsonville within the state of California. The map includes labels for Santa Cruz, Watsonville, Monterey, and the Pacific Ocean. A legend indicates the City of Watsonville. A scale bar shows 0 to 10 miles. Source: ESRI 2012.

Watsonville City Limits

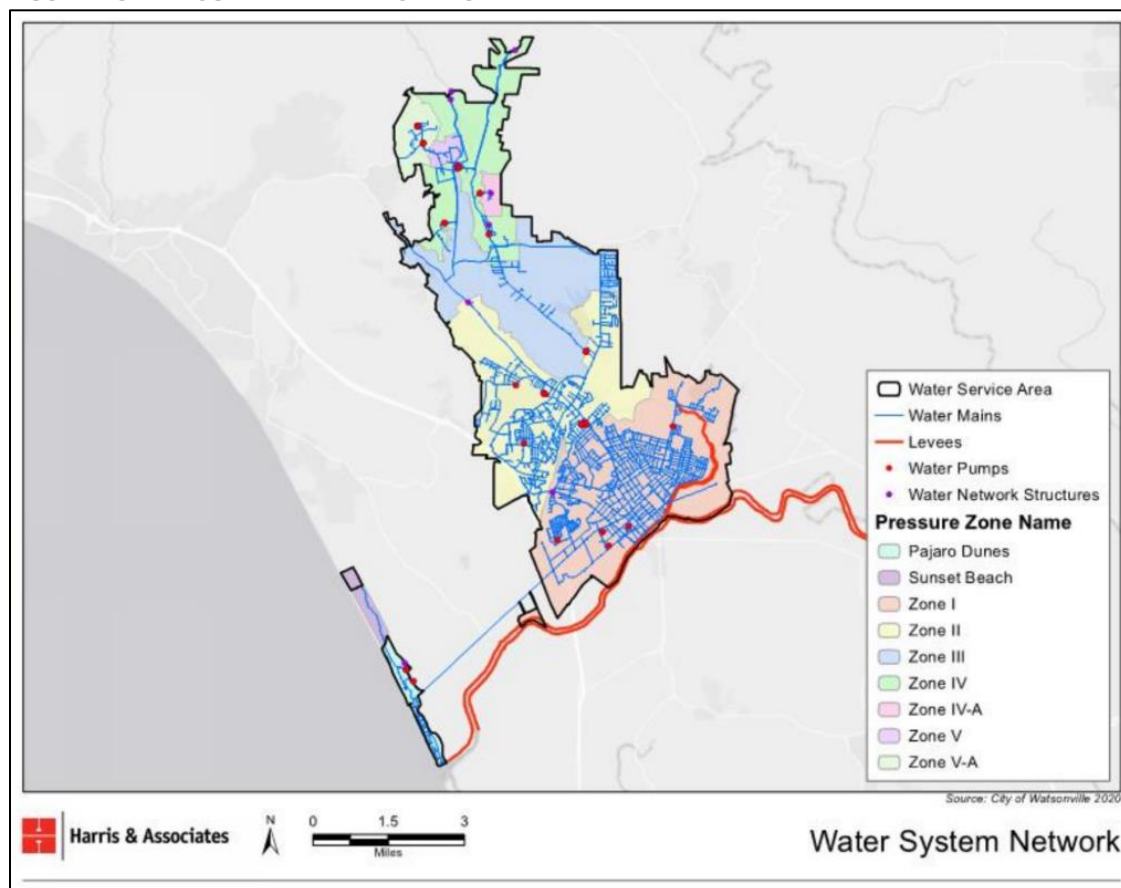
Source: City of Watsonville 2020



The City owns and operates a regional public water supply system that includes nine hydraulic pressure zones, 14 wells, eight reservoirs and water storage facilities, nine booster stations, over 190 miles of pipelines, and a slow sand filtration plant (the Corralitos Filter Plant). The system provides water to a service area that is larger than the city limits, extending into the unincorporated areas of Santa Cruz County (Figure 1-5). In 2020, this regional water system served an estimate population of 65,231 customers.

The City owns and operates a wastewater treatment facility. In addition, the City collaborated with the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency (PV Water) to develop and build an associated Recycled Water Treatment Facility (RWTF), which provides recycled water for crop irrigation in the coastal areas of South Santa Cruz and North Monterey counties. The RWTF protects groundwater supplies by providing an alternative to well extraction.

FIGURE 1-5: WATSONVILLE WATER SERVICE AREA





1.5 2020 WATSONVILLE URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

The City updates its UWMP every five years. The latest plan is the 2020 City of Watsonville Urban Water Management Plan.

The UWMP provides information on present and future water demands and supplies in order to assess the City's water resource reliability over the next 25 years. It also acts as a guide to maintain efficient use of urban water supplies, promote conservation programs and policies, and proactively plan and update the City's strategies to address potential water shortages and drought conditions.

The UWMP addresses water-planning fundamentals by:

- Preparing a detailed look at current and future water use, including assessing baseline data and examining other long-term planning documents for the region.
- Analyzing potable and non-potable water supplies, including reviewing water rights and contracts, ascertaining restrictions on water availability under certain regulatory and hydrological conditions, and assessing seismic risk to various water system facilities.
- Reviewing the range of potential impacts of climate change on water demand and supply.
- Analyzing water supply reliability by integrating the water use analyses with the water supply analyses to provide a water service reliability picture under normal conditions, single dry-year conditions, and five consecutive dry years through the year 2045.
- Preparing a Drought Risk Assessment by including integrated water supplies and projected water use in a hypothetical five-year drought condition.
- Developing a Water Shortage Contingency Plan that specifies opportunities to reduce demand and augment supplies under numerous water shortage conditions.

When the 2020 UWMP was developed, maximum development capacity estimates for the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan were not yet finalized. The UWMP utilized population growth estimates from the City of Watsonville Draft Water Master Plan. The Master Plan included a medium growth scenario for the DWSP, which amounted to 2,369 additional dwelling units. The DWSP now utilizes a maximum build out estimate of 3,910 dwelling units.

The UWMP included general growth rates for commercial, industrial, and public water connections. While these general growth rates may include some growth from the downtown area, the DWSP growth was not explicitly included and therefore was assumed to be zero in the UWMP for commercial, industrial and public water connections. These variances are shown in Table 1-2.



TABLE 1-2: UWMP VS. FINAL DWSP ESTIMATES FOR BUILDING UNITS

Building Type (units)	Included in UWMP	Included in DWSP (du)	Included in DWSP (sq ft)	Variance
Multi-Family Residential (dwelling units, du)	2,369	3,886		1,541
Commercial (sq ft)			231,151	231,151
Industrial (sq ft)			376,827	376,827
Public (sq ft)			114,572	114,572

For the purposes of this assessment, the variance figures in the table above are used to determine the additional water demand associated with the DWSP.

2 WATER DEMAND

2.1 HISTORICAL WATER DEMAND

In 2021, Watsonville delivered 6,749.7 AFY of water to its service area. Table 2-1 depicts historical water demand by type of user over the last five years. Water deliveries/demand estimates are based on water meter readings.

TABLE 2-1: HISTORICAL WATER DEMAND BY TYPE (AFY)

AFY	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Single-Family	3,300.0	3,172.0	3,045.0	3,329.0	3,074.8
Multi-Family	833.0	794.0	855.0	839.0	809.2
Commercial	974.0	1,309.0	1,045.0	1,136.0	1,091.9
Industrial	429.0	407.0	633.0	535.0	613.9
Landscape	387.0	422.0	429.0	471.0	418.9
Agricultural irrigation	771.0	798.0	857.0	729.0	698.8
Other	40.0	46.0	44.0	43.0	42.2
Total	6,734.0	6,948.0	6,908.0	7,082.0	6,749.7

The UWMP estimated average usage per connection at 87 gallons per day in 2020. However, this figure included residential, commercial, industrial, landscaping, and other users. When estimating usage per residential connection – both single family residential (SFR) and multi-family residential (MFR) – the average use was 57 gallons per day. Although MFR was likely to use less water per person – mostly due to reduced irrigation – there was no accurate method to estimate this separately from SFR.

TABLE 2-2: RESIDENTIAL USAGE PER PERSON PER DAY

	Annual Volume (Acre-Feet)	Annual Volume (Gallons)	Annual Volume (Gallons)
Single Family	3,329	1,084,757,979	1,084,757,979
Multi-Family	839	273,388,989	273,388,989
Commercial	1,136	370,166,736	n/a
Industrial	535	174,330,285	n/a
Landscape	471	153,475,821	n/a
Agricultural irrigation	729	n/a	n/a
Other	43	14,011,593	n/a
TOTAL	7,082	2,070,131,403	1,358,146,968
Population		65,231	65,231
Residential Usage: Gallons per Capita per Day		87	57



2.2 PROJECTED WATER DEMAND

Projected water demand estimates for residential were developed based on average usage per connection for MFR dwelling units. Per the DWSP and the Water Master Plan, each MFR was estimated to include two people per unit. Average water usage was estimated to be 57 gallons per capita per day (Table 2-2), or 114 gallons per dwelling unit per day. The DWSP estimates a maximum build out of 1,517 units more than included in the 2020 UWMP. The 1,517 units equates to an additional 194 AFY of residential water demand.

Water usage for commercial, industrial and public connections was estimated using square foot growth from the DWSP and water duty factors from the Water Master Plan. The results are presented in Table 2-3.

TABLE 2-3: PROJECTED WATER DEMAND FOR COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, AND PUBLIC USES

	Square Feet	Duty Factor (gal/sq ft/day)	Annual Water Usage (gal/yr)	Annual Water Usage (AFY)
Commercial				
Dining	150,248	0.740	40,581,985	125
Retail	57,788	0.096	2,024,892	6
Office	23,115	0.100	843,698	3
Total Commercial	231,151		43,450,574	133
Industrial				
Dining	7,537	0.740	2,035,744	6
R&D	56,523	0.140	2,888,325	9
Office	37,683	0.100	1,375,430	4
Industrial	275,084	0.140	14,056,792	43
Total Industrial	376,827		20,356,291	62
Public/Irrigation	114,572	0.062	2,592,764	8

Including residential, total additional water demand associated with the DWSP is 397 AFY (Table 2-4). This represents full build out, which would typically occur over the planning horizon of 25 years or longer. However, the WSA includes the full water demand figures starting in 2025. Water demand for the water service area ranges from 8,224 acre feet in 2025 to 8,901 acre feet in 2045 (Table 2-5).

TABLE 2-4: ADDITIONAL WATER DEMAND ASSOCIATED WITH THE DWSP

	Annual DWSP Water Usage (AFY)
MFR	194
Commercial	133
Industrial	62
Public	8
Total	397



TABLE 2-5: WATSONVILLE SERVICE AREA PROJECT DEMAND WITH FULL BUILD OUT OF DWSP (AFY)

	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Total UWMP Demand	7,827	8,023	8,224	8,375	8,504
DWSP Incremental Demand (Portion Not Included in UWMP)	397	397	397	397	397
Total Water Demand	8,224	8,420	8,621	8,772	8,901

2.3 DEMAND MANAGEMENT

The City recognizes the importance of water conservation and is committed to promoting and practicing the sustainable use of water resources. The City demonstrates this commitment through adoption of water efficiency and waste prevention ordinances, English/Spanish bilingual outreach and educational programs, financial incentive programs, implementation of water conservation at City properties, distribution system loss prevention, and numerous other water conservation measures. Details on these measures are provided in the UWMP.

The City also has a Water Shortage Contingency Plan (WSCP) to address drought or catastrophic water emergencies. The WSCP establishes six levels of drought and water conservation actions associated with each level. In addition, the City prepares an annual Water Supply and Demand Assessment that includes information on customer demand.

The City's efforts have been largely successful as it has reduced usage significantly. From 2001 to 2010, the City's service area used an average of 101 gallons of water per capita per day (gpcd). In 2020, that figure declined to 87 gpcd. Demand estimates throughout the UWMP and this WSA assume that the City continues its proactive water demand management and does not increase per capita usage.

3 WATER SUPPLY

The City's water supply consists mainly of groundwater, with periodic augmentation from surface water. During years of average or above average rainfall, the City utilizes a combination of surface water and groundwater supply sources; in other years, the City relies entirely on groundwater supply.

Table 3-1 shows the City's water rights by source. Table 3-2 provides actual water extractions by source for the past five years. Section 3.1 provides supporting information on the City's water supplies.

TABLE 3-1: WATER SUPPLY BY TYPE

	Projected Water Supply
Groundwater	21,000
Surface Water	900
Total Water Demand	21,900

TABLE 3-2: GROUNDWATER AND SURFACE WATER EXTRACTIONS, 2017-2021

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Groundwater	6,316	6,688	6,586	7,101	7,027
Surface Water	684	397	473	0	0
Total	7,000	7,085	7,059	7,101	7,027

3.1 SURFACE WATER SUPPLY

The City enjoys pre-1914 water rights (S010141 and S010142) on the Corralitos and Browns creeks, which are located north of the City limits. The surface water diversions flow to the Corralitos Filter Plant (CFP) and are treated via slow sand filtration and disinfection. The CFP operates seasonally, typically starting in late spring through the fall. During the rainy season, the CFP is usually shut down due to the high turbidity of the creek at the intake(s). High turbidity is not conducive to the efficiency of a slow sand filtration plant. When operational, the CFP treats up to 900 AFY, though it has a maximum design capacity of 2 million gallons per day (MGD). As shown in Table 3-2, no surface water was diverted during 2020 and 2021 due to insufficient streamflow during the CFP's operational season.

3.2 GROUNDWATER SUPPLY

The City pumps groundwater from 14 active wells, which can provide up to 21,000 AFY of water. The wells pump from the Pajaro Valley Groundwater Subbasin 3-002.01 (PV Subbasin). The Aromas Red Sands formation is considered the primary water-bearing geologic unit of the basin. Other layers with water deposits include the Purisima Formation, Terrace and Pleistocene Eolian Deposits, Quaternary alluvium, and Dune Deposits. The basal



gravel unit also has good hydraulic continuity with the underlying Aromas Red Sands Formation and is a major source of water for shallow wells in the Pajaro River floodplain.

Groundwater resources in the Subbasin have been managed by the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency (PV Water) since the agency's formation in 1984. PV Water is a state-chartered water management district formed to manage existing and supplemental water supplies to prevent further increase in, and to accomplish continuing reduction of, long-term overdraft. PV Water also works to provide and ensure sufficient water supplies for present and future anticipated needs within its boundaries, generally the greater coastal Pajaro Valley.

Under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) assessed and prioritized basins throughout California. The Pajaro Valley Subbasin received the maximum possible level of Priority Points (40), making it a High Priority Basin that was critically overdrafted. As such, the Act required a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) or an Alternative to a GSP to be developed for the Subbasin. In December 2016, PV Water submitted the 2014 BMP as an Alternative to a GSP to comply with SGMA (Appendix 1). In 2019, DWR approved the Alternative as functionally equivalent to a GSP; essentially, that it satisfied the objectives of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The Subbasin is not adjudicated, meaning that no court or board has adjudicated the rights of the City, landowners, or other agency to pump groundwater from the Subbasin.

3.3 WATER SUPPLY CHALLENGES

There is scientific evidence that global climate conditions are changing and will continue to change as a result of the continued build-up of greenhouse gases in the earth's atmosphere. Changes in climate can affect water supply and water quality through modifications in the timing, amount, and form of precipitation. Increased temperatures influence water supplies through evapotranspiration and increased water demands—particularly for agriculture. Climate change is also expected to affect storm intensity, flooding, riparian and aquatic habitat and ecosystems, and seawater intrusion.

In coastal aquifers such as the Pajaro Subbasin, as groundwater levels decrease, the pressure gradient between the saltwater and freshwater also changes. The lower the groundwater level becomes, the less pressure there is from freshwater within the aquifer to resist the intruding seawater. Reduced precipitation and stream runoff associated with drought events inhibits groundwater recharge. Natural recharge has not been sufficient to maintain groundwater levels in the PV Subbasin, and therefore, seawater intrusion has been an issue, particularly for farmers in the coastal area west of Watsonville.



3.4 MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION

Since its inception in 1984, PV Water has been working to address groundwater supply challenges. While the City's water supplies are not currently threatened by seawater intrusion, the City collaborates with PV Water to develop projects that artificially recharge groundwater or reduce agricultural reliance on groundwater. Artificial recharge captures and retains water in surface impoundments (dams, dikes, and infiltration areas) to allow water to percolate into the underlying basin.

Significant water supply projects and studies completed or under development by the City and/or PV Water include:

- Recycled Water Treatment Facility (RWF) – As noted earlier, the City collaborated with PV Water to develop and build the RWF to provide water for agricultural irrigation. The City operates and provides treated wastewater to the RWF. In 2020, the RWF provided 3,434 AFY of recycled water for local agricultural irrigation, thereby providing an alternative to well extraction.

In 2020, the City pumped 7,101 AF, or approximately 16 percent of the total groundwater pumped from the Subbasin. However, when supplemental water that the City delivered to the RWF was deducted, the City's share of groundwater pumped dropped to 14 percent.

- Increased Water Storage at City's Wastewater Treatment Plant – Agricultural demand for recycled water is highest during the day; however, recycled water is also produced during nighttime hours. This project added 1.5 million gallons (MG) of storage capacity, raising total RWF storage capacity to over two MG, and allowing an additional estimated 750 AFY of water supply to meet daytime agricultural water demand.
- Harkins Slough Managed Aquifer Recharge and Recovery Facility – This facility allows PV Water to divert, filter, store, and use water from Harkins Slough that would otherwise flow to the Monterey Bay.
- Coastal Distribution System (CDS) – The CDS consists of over 21 miles of pipeline capable of providing a blend of recycled water, Harkins Slough water, and inland groundwater to over 5,500 acres of agricultural land.
- Blend Wells – PV Water operates two production wells that augment the supplemental water supply and improve water quality.
- Modelling – PV Water collaborates with the US Geological Survey to perform modeling to assess the impact of climate change on water supplies in the Pajaro Valley. Additionally, PV Water maintains groundwater and surface water monitoring programs that collect and store data pertaining to surface and groundwater quality



and quantity. These programs track and analyze changes through time and inform water management and planning efforts.

- College Lake Integrated Resources Management Project – Scheduled for completion by 2025, this project includes a weir structure and intake pump station, treatment plant, and 5.5-mile pipeline to convey water from the RWF to supply 1,800–2,300 AFY to agricultural users. While still under design, components of the project will likely pass through the City and may connect to the RWF.
- Watsonville Slough System Managed Aquifer Recharge and Recovery Projects – These projects consist of upgrading and expanding the existing Harkins Slough pump station, developing Struve Slough as a water supply source, and constructing a recharge basin. The projects are scheduled for completion in 2025.

In addition to the above, the City may drill new well(s) as needed to maintain and replace aging wells. New wells can be placed within the Pajaro Valley and located hydraulically upstream of the seawater intrusion areas in order to reduce impacts on the groundwater basin.

4 CONCLUSION – WATER RELIABILITY

Water demand varies annually during droughts. Based on the City’s UWMP, water demand in Watsonville initially increases during a drought – likely due to increased irrigation – and then eventually declines, as shown below.

TABLE 4-1: WATER DEMAND FLUCTUATIONS DURING DROUGHT

	Water Demand as % of Normal Year
Normal Year	100%
Singe Dry Year	104%
Second Dry Year	111%
Third Dry Year	100%
Fourth Dry Year	92%

As noted in the UWMP, during prolonged drought, it is likely that the City would have to rely on groundwater. Surface water supply has typically not been available by the second year of a drought. The UWMP therefore only used groundwater to provide water reliability estimates during normal and extended year droughts.

The WSA utilizes the same assumptions; it updates the UWMP’s water reliability assessment to include additional demand associated with the DWSP. The results are shown in Table 4-2. In all scenarios, Watsonville’s water supply is sufficient to support the additional demand associated with the DWSP.

TABLE 4-2: WATER RELIABILITY IN A NORMAL, SINGLE, AND MULTIPLE DRY YEARS (AFY)

		2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Normal Year	Supply totals	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900
	Demand totals	8,224	8,420	8,621	8,772	8,901
	Difference	13,676	13,480	13,279	13,128	12,999
Single Dry Year	Supply totals	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900
	Demand totals	8,553	8,757	8,966	9,123	9,257
	Difference	13,347	13,143	12,934	12,777	12,643
Second Dry Year	Supply totals	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900
	Demand totals	9,129	9,346	9,569	9,737	9,880
	Difference	12,771	12,554	12,331	12,163	12,020
Third Dry Year	Supply totals	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900
	Demand totals	8,224	8,420	8,621	8,772	8,901
	Difference	13,676	13,480	13,279	13,128	12,999
Fourth Dry Year	Supply totals	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900	21,900
	Demand totals	7,566	7,746	7,931	8,070	8,189
	Difference	14,334	14,154	13,969	13,830	13,711

Notice of Preparation and Comments



CITY OF WATSONVILLE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
250 MAIN STREET • WATSONVILLE, CA 95076
TELEPHONE: (831) 768-3050 • www.cityofwatsonville.org

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

To: Distribution (refer to attached list)

Subject: Notice of Preparation – Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

Lead Agency:

Agency Name: City of Watsonville, Community Development Department
Street Address: 250 Main Street
City/State/Zip: Watsonville, California 95076
Contact: Justin Meek
Principal Planner
Telephone: 831-768-3050

Consulting Firm:

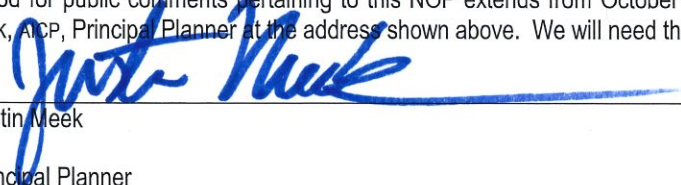
Name: Rincon Consultants, Inc.
Street Address: 2511 Garden Road, Suite C-250
City/State/Zip: Monterey, California 93940
Contact: George Dix
Senior Project Manager
Telephone: 831-999-3612

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) is hereby given that the City of Watsonville (City) will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan (see Attachment 1) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations Section 15060(d)). City staff is requesting comments from your agency on the scope and content of the project's environmental information that is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities. An Initial Study has been prepared for the project.

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(a), the City of Watsonville determined that an EIR would be required for this project subsequent to the preparation of an Initial Study. The EIR will evaluate the project for potential impacts on the environment. The Initial Study prepared for the project found less than significant impacts or no impact for the following environmental factors: agriculture and forestry resources, energy, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, public services, recreation, utilities and service systems, and wildfire. The proposed project could potentially affect the following environmental factors and each will be addressed in the EIR: aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, noise, population and housing, transportation, and tribal cultural resources. Cumulative impacts will consider impacts of relevant projects in and around the plan area combined with those of the project. An evaluation of project alternatives that could reduce significant impacts will be included in the EIR.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date and **not later than 30 days** after receipt of this notice. The review period for public comments pertaining to this NOP extends from October 27, 2022, to November 25, 2022. Please send your response to Justin Meek, ACP, Principal Planner at the address shown above. We will need the name for a contact person in your agency.

Signature:


Justin Meek

Title: Principal Planner
City of Watsonville

Telephone: 831-768-3050

Date: October 27, 2022

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Project Description	Attachment 5: Proposed Roadway Network Improvements
Attachment 2: Regional Location Map	Attachment 6: Proposed Public Realm Improvements
Attachment 3: Project Location Map	Attachment 7: Proposed Pedestrian Network Improvements
Attachment 4: Proposed Land Use Plan	Attachment 8: Proposed Bicycle Network

ATTACHMENT 1 – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Title: Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan

Project Location: Downtown Watsonville is located in the southern area of Santa Cruz County, approximately 14 miles southeast of the city of Santa Cruz and 16 miles north of the city of Salinas. The Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan Area (plan area) covers roughly 195.5 acres within Downtown Watsonville, with about 55.5 acres dedicated to streets and right-of-way. Downtown is centered on Main Street and extends west to the edge of existing neighborhoods and the industrial district, south to Pajaro, and several blocks east to the existing neighborhoods. State Route (SR) 152 runs through the center of the plan area and operates along portions of Main Street and as a one-way couplet along E Lake Avenue and E Beach Street. Riverside Drive on the south end of the plan area is a part of SR 129. One of the major intersections within the plan area is the intersection of Main Street and SR 129.

Project Description: The proposed project consists of the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan (DWSP). Generally, a specific plan is a regulatory tool that local governments use to implement their General Plan and to guide development in a localized area. The proposed DWSP has been developed to articulate a community vision and a planning framework for the downtown area that would serve as a guide for the City and other public agency decision makers, community members, and stakeholders over the next 20 to 30 years. The proposed DWSP provides a land use and mobility plan along with development and design regulations to guide future public and private development projects in the downtown area of Watsonville. Additionally, the DWSP includes an implementation strategy and mechanisms to ensure development is coordinated and satisfying the intent of the DWSP. Implementation of the DWSP would require an amendment to the City's General Plan.

The land use components of the DWSP would help the City achieve its objective of incorporating higher density commercial and housing opportunities by accommodating additional residential uses in a compact and active mixed-use environment through both new construction and adaptive reuse of historic or existing buildings. The DWSP envisions the addition of up to 3,886 new residential units; 231,151 square feet of commercial development, 376,827 square feet of industrial development, and 114,572 square feet of civic space within the downtown area over the next 25 years. Because the planning area is mostly developed with commercial buildings and established residential neighborhoods, the DWSP directs future potential growth toward a limited number of vacant or under-utilized sites that could be redeveloped in the downtown area.

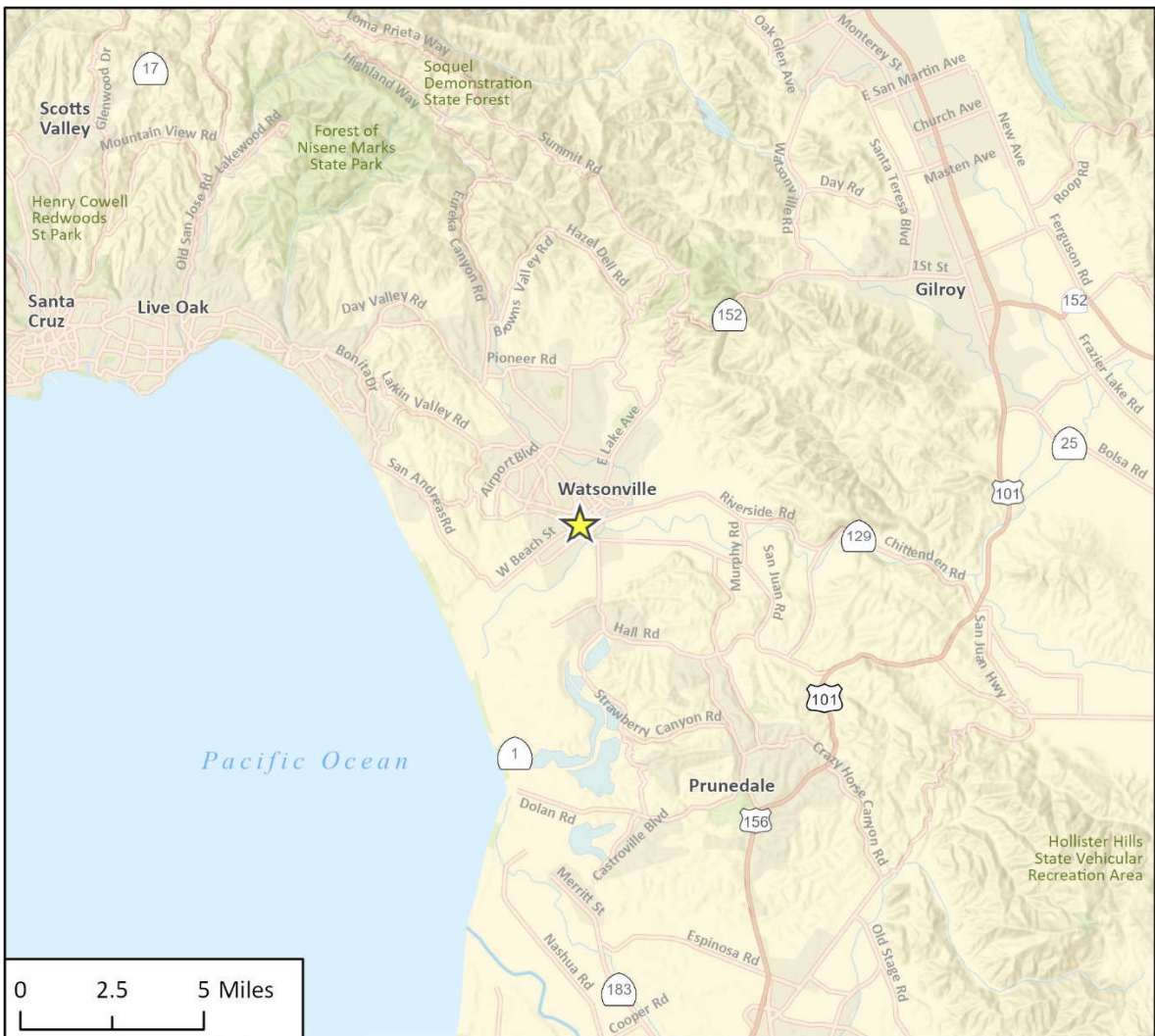
The mobility components of the DWSP focus on the provision of multi-modal transportation options in the downtown area, such as vehicle, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian mode options. It includes design concepts for downtown streets, as well as bicycle and pedestrian network improvements. In addition, the mobility component identifies mobility goals, such as the provision of complete streets, effective and sufficient parking, curb management, and travel demand management strategies.

Project Alternatives: The EIR will evaluate a reasonable range of project alternatives that, consistent with CEQA, meet most of the project objectives and reduce or avoid potential environmental effects, including a required No Project Alternative.

When the Draft EIR is completed, it will be available for review at the City's offices located at 250 Main Street, Watsonville, California 95076 and online at: <https://www.cityofwatsonville.org/1626/Downtown-Specific-Plan>. The City will issue a Notice of Availability of a Draft EIR at that time to inform the public and interested agencies, groups, and individuals of how to access the Draft EIR and provide comments.

If you have questions regarding this NOP, please contact Justin Meek, AICP, Principal Planner at (831) 768-3050 or via email at downtown.specific.plan@cityofwatsonville.org.

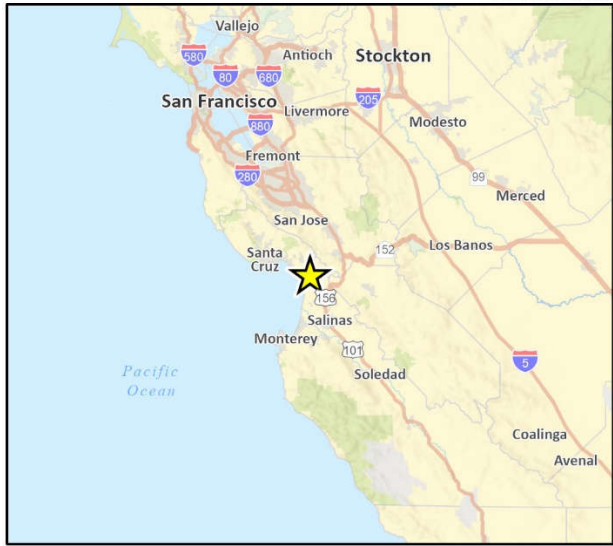
ATTACHMENT 2 – REGIONAL LOCATION



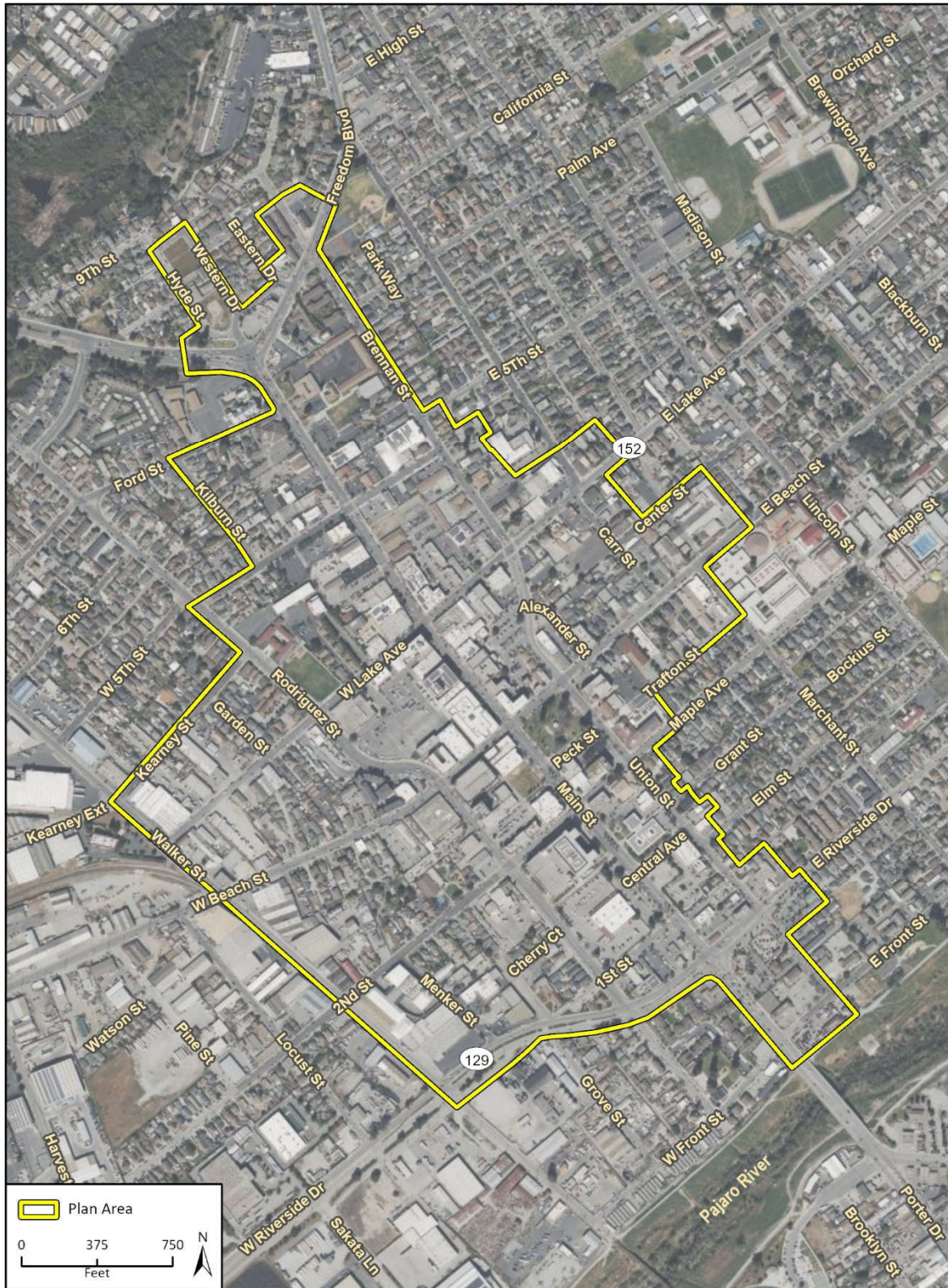
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Regional, Site, Land Use and Zoning Maps
Fig. 1. Regional Location

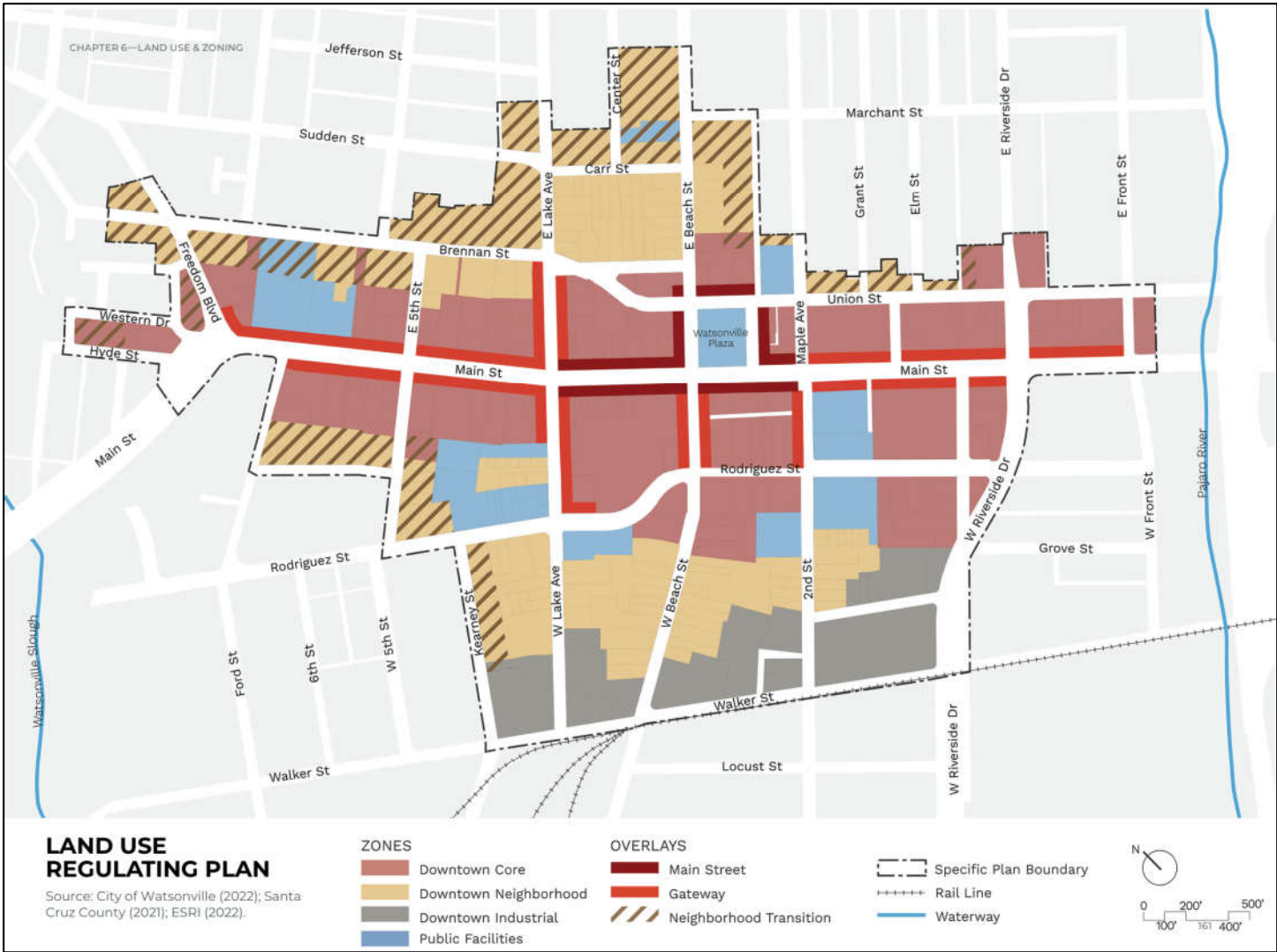
★ Project Location



ATTACHMENT 3 – PROJECT LOCATION



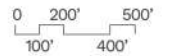
ATTACHMENT 4 – PROPOSED LAND USE PLAN



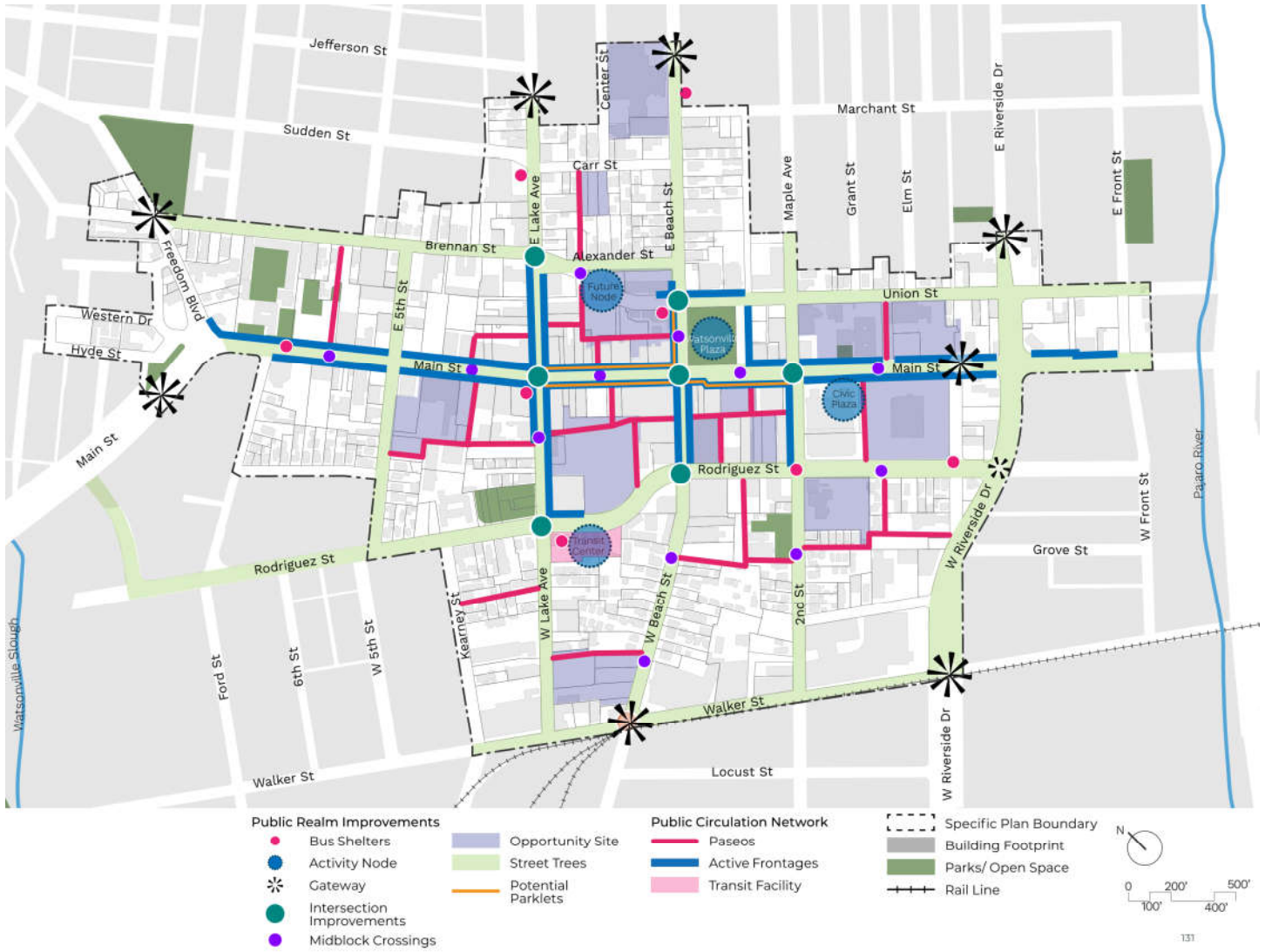
ATTACHMENT 5 – PROPOSED ROADWAY NETWORK IMPROVEMENTS



- Road Diet on Main Street
- Convert Lake Avenue to Two-way
- Convert Beach Street to Two-way
- Remove Segment from Caltrans SR-152
- Vacate Portion of Union Street
- Construct Roundabout at Freedom/Main
- Specific Plan Boundary
- Parks/ Open Space
- Rail Line
- Waterway



ATTACHMENT 6 – PROPOSED PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS



CHAPTER 4—MOBILITY AND TRANSPORTATION

Jefferson St
Sudden St
Freedom Blvd
Western Dr
Hyde St
Main St
Rodriguez St
Ford St
6th St
W 5th St
Kearney St
Walker St
Locust St
W Lake Ave
W Beach St
2nd St
W Riverside Dr
W Front St
Grove St
Pajaro River

Brennan St
E 5th St
Main St
Alexander St
Carr St
E Lake Ave
E Beach St
Maple Ave
Grant St
Elm St
Union St
Main St
Rodriguez St
Walker St
Locust St
W Lake Ave
W Beach St
2nd St
W Riverside Dr
W Front St
Grove St
Pajaro River

Watsonville Plaza

Existing Improvements
Paseos and Mid-Block Walkways
Midblock Crossings

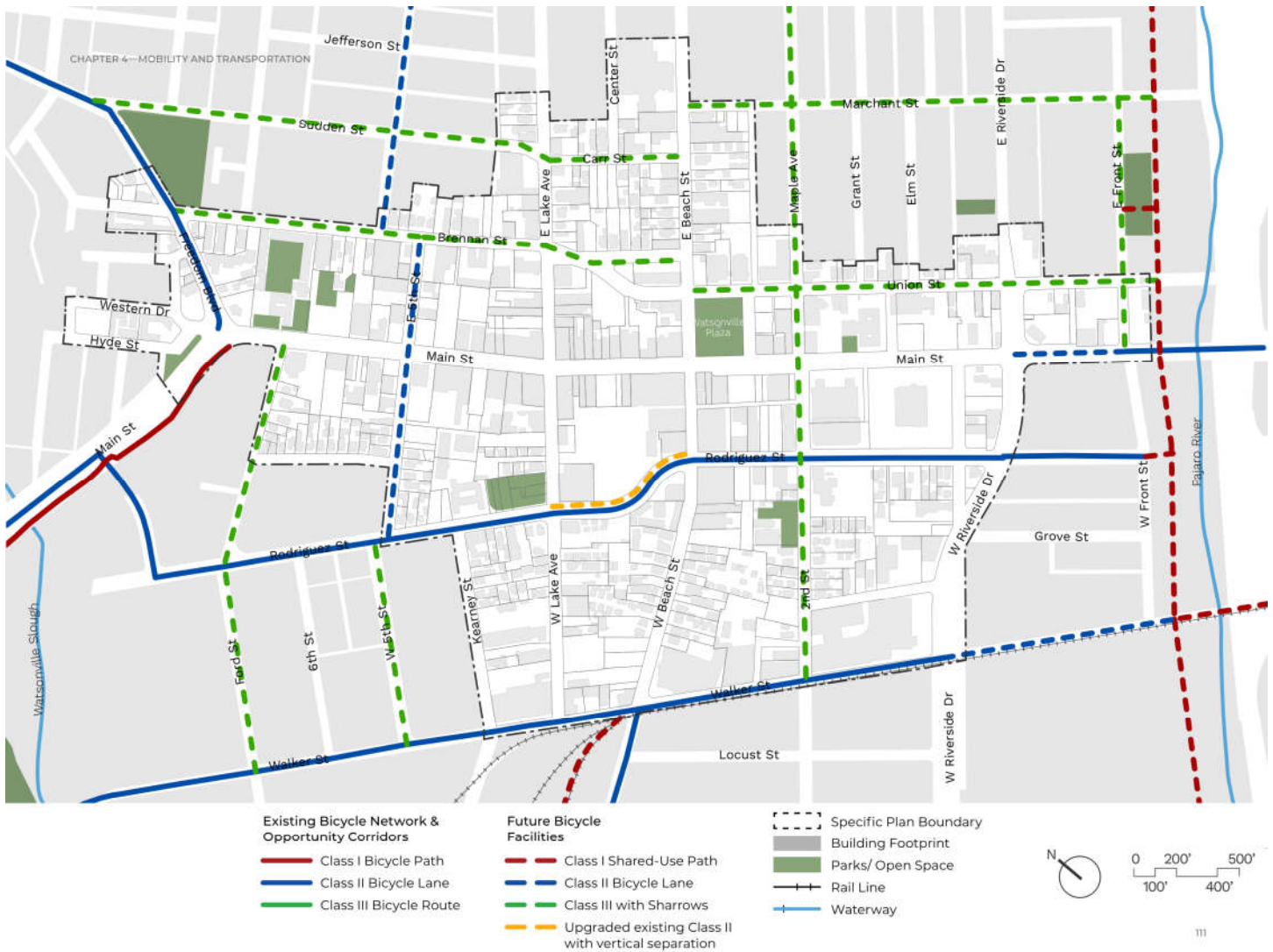
Future Improvements
Paseos
Intersection Improvements
Midblock Crossings

Specific Plan Boundary
Building Footprint
Parks/Open Space
Rail Line
Waterway

0 200' 500'
100' 400'

N

ATTACHMENT 8 – PROPOSED BICYCLE NETWORK



California Department of Transportation

CALTRANS DISTRICT 5
50 HIGUERA STREET | SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93401-5415
(805) 549-3101 | FAX (805) 549-3329 TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov



November 28, 2022

SCr/VAR
SCH#2022100602

Justin Meek, Principal Planner
City of Watsonville
Community Development Department
250 Main Street
Watsonville, CA 95076

COMMENTS FOR THE NOTICE OF PREPERATION (NOP) – DOWNTOWN WATSONVILLE SPECIFIC PLAN, WATSONVILLE, CA

Dear Mr. Meek:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), District 5, Development Review, has reviewed the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan NOP which will articulate a community vision and a planning framework for the downtown area that would serve as a guide for the City and other public agency decision makers, community members, and stakeholders over the next 20 to 30 years. Caltrans offers the following comments in response to the MND:

1. Caltrans supports local development that is consistent with State planning priorities intended to promote equity, strengthen the economy, protect the environment, and promote public health and safety. We accomplish this by working with local jurisdictions to achieve a shared vision of how the transportation system should and can accommodate interregional and local travel and development. Projects that support smart growth principles which include improvements to pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure (or other key Transportation Demand Strategies) are supported by Caltrans and are consistent with our mission, vision, and goals.
2. We admire the Specific Plan's future vision aligns with State goals specifically Senate Bill (SB) 743 focusing on downtown infill development with multi-modal transportation options and mobility goals. The non-motorized transportation options will help provide better downtown access for all users. This plan will help meet SB 743's goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, streamlining development near public transit and employment centers, and supporting a transportation system that moves people efficiently.

Justin Meek, Principal Planner
November 28, 2022
Page 2

3. Further, Caltrans looks forward to continuing working with the City of Watsonville on transportation concepts within State right-of-way. This includes the feasibility of converting the existing couplet portion of SR 152 from a one-way street into a two-way street.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed project. If you have any questions, or need further clarification on items discussed above, please contact me at (805) 835-6543 or email christopher.bjornstad@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Christopher Bjornstad

Chris Bjornstad
Associate Transportation Planner
District 5 Land Development Review



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
Bay Delta Region
2825 Cordelia Road, Suite 100
Fairfield, CA 94534
(707) 428-2002
www.wildlife.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



December 15, 2022

Mr. Justin Meek
City of Watsonville, Community Development Department
250 Main Street
Watsonville, CA 95076
Justin.meek@cityofwatsonville.org

Subject: Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan, Notice of Preparation of a Draft
Environmental Impact Report, SCH No. 2022100602, Santa Cruz County

Dear Mr. Meek:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) reviewed the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) from the City of Watsonville (City) for the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan (Project) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines.¹

CDFW is providing the City, as the lead agency, with specific detail about the scope and content of the environmental information related to CDFW's area of statutory responsibility that must be included in the DEIR (Cal. Code Regs., tit.14, § 15082, subd (b)).

CDFW ROLE

CDFW is a **Trustee Agency** with responsibility under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines § 15386 for commenting on projects that could impact fish, plant, and wildlife resources. CDFW is also considered a **Responsible Agency** if a project would require discretionary approval, such as permits issued under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) or Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA), the Lake and Streambed Alteration (LSA) Program, or other provisions of the Fish and Game Code that afford protection to the state's fish and wildlife trust resources.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

The Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan (DWSP), within the City's General Plan, would help the City of Watsonville achieve its objective of incorporating higher density commercial and housing opportunities by accommodating residential uses in a compact and active mixed-use environment through both new construction and adaptive reuse of historic or existing buildings. The Project would provide a land use and mobility plan along with development and design regulations to guide future public and private

¹ CEQA is codified in the California Public Resources Code in Section 21000 et seq. The "CEQA Guidelines" are found in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, commencing with Section 15000.

Mr. Justin Meek
City of Watsonville
December 15, 2022
Page 2 of 15

development projects in the downtown area of Watsonville. The Project would incorporate the following: 1) addition of up to 3,886 new residential units; 2) 231,151 square feet of commercial development; 3) 376,827 square feet of industrial development; 4) 114,572 square feet of civic space within the downtown area over the next 25 years; and 5) provision of multi-modal transportation options in the downtown area, such as vehicle, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian mode options. It includes design concepts for downtown streets, as well as bicycle and pedestrian network improvements.

The Project is located in Downtown Watsonville in the southern area of Santa Cruz County and covers roughly 195.5 acres, with about 55.5 acres dedicated to streets and right-of-way. Downtown is centered on Main Street and extends west to the edge of existing neighborhoods and the industrial district, south to the Pajaro River, and several blocks east to the existing neighborhoods. State Route (SR) 152 runs through the center of the plan area and operates along portions of Main Street and as a one-way couplet along E Lake Avenue and E Beach Street. Riverside Drive on the south end of the plan area is a part of SR 129. One of the major intersections within the plan area is the intersection of Main Street and SR 129.

The CEQA Guidelines require that the DEIR incorporate a full project description, including reasonably foreseeable future phases of the Project, that contains sufficient information to evaluate and review the Project's environmental impact (CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15124 & 15378). Please include a complete description of the following Project components in the Project description, as applicable:

- Footprints of permanent Project features and temporarily impacted areas, such as staging areas and access routes.
- Area and plans for any proposed buildings/structures, ground disturbing activities, fencing, paving, stationary machinery, landscaping, and stormwater systems.
- Operational features of the Project, including level of anticipated human presence (describe seasonal or daily peaks in activity, if relevant), artificial lighting/light reflection, noise, traffic generation, and other features.
- Construction schedule, activities, equipment, and crew sizes.

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

California Endangered Species Act and Native Plant Protection Act

Please be advised that a CESA Incidental Take Permit (ITP) must be obtained if the Project has the potential to result in take² of plants or animals listed under CESA or

² Take is defined in Fish and Game Code section 86 as hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt any of those activities.

Mr. Justin Meek
City of Watsonville
December 15, 2022
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NPPA, either during construction or over the life of the Project. If the Project will impact CESA or NPPA listed species, including but not limited to those identified in **Attachment 1: Special-Status Species from the CNDDDB within a 5-mile Radius of the Project Site**, early consultation with CDFW is encouraged, as significant modification to the Project and mitigation measures may be required to obtain an ITP. Issuance of an ITP is subject to CEQA documentation; the CEQA document must specify impacts, mitigation measures, and a mitigation monitoring and reporting program.

CEQA requires a Mandatory Finding of Significance if a Project is likely to substantially restrict the range or reduce the population of a threatened or endangered species (Pub. Resources Code, §§ 21001, subd. (c), 21083; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15380, 15064, & 15065). Impacts must be avoided or mitigated to less-than-significant levels unless the CEQA Lead Agency makes and supports Findings of Overriding Consideration (FOC). The Lead Agency's FOC does not eliminate the Project proponent's obligation to comply with CESA.

Lake and Streambed Alteration

CDFW requires an LSA Notification, pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 1600 et seq., for Project activities affecting lakes or streams and associated riparian habitat. Notification is required for any activity that may substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow; change or use material from the bed, channel, or bank (including associated riparian or wetland resources); or deposit or dispose of material where it may pass into a river, lake, or stream. Work within ephemeral streams, drainage ditches, washes, watercourses with a subsurface flow, and floodplains are generally subject to notification requirements. In addition, infrastructure installed beneath such aquatic features, such as through hydraulic directional drilling, is also generally subject to notification requirements. **The Project site is adjacent to the Pajaro River. Any impacts to Pajaro River or associated riparian habitat would likely require an LSA Notification.** CDFW, as a responsible agency under CEQA, will consider the EIR for the Project. CDFW may not execute a final LSA Agreement until it has complied with CEQA as the responsible agency.

Nesting Birds

CDFW has authority over actions that may disturb or destroy active nest sites or take birds. Fish and Game Code sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513 protect birds, their eggs, and nests. Migratory birds are also protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Fully Protected Species

Fully Protected species, including those listed in **Attachment 1**, may not be taken or possessed at any time (Fish & G. Code, §§ 3511, 4700, 5050, & 5515).

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ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

A site-specific analysis prepared by a qualified biologist should provide sufficient information regarding the environmental setting (“baseline”) to understand the Project’s, and its alternative’s (if applicable), potentially significant impacts on the environment (CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15125 & 15360).

CDFW recommends that a site-specific analysis provide baseline habitat assessments for special-status plant, fish, and wildlife species located and potentially located within the Project area and surrounding lands, including but not limited to all rare, threatened, or endangered species (CEQA Guidelines, § 15380). These documents should describe aquatic habitats, such as wetlands, vernal pools, and/or waters of the U.S. or State, and any sensitive natural communities³ or riparian habitat occurring on or adjacent to the Project site, and any stream or wetland set back distances the City or county may require. Fully protected, threatened or endangered, and other special-status species and sensitive natural communities that are known to occur, or have the potential to occur in or near the Project area, include but are not limited to, those listed in **Attachment 1**.

Habitat descriptions and the potential for species occurrence should include information from multiple sources, such as aerial imagery; historical and recent survey data; field reconnaissance; scientific literature and reports; the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s (USFWS) Information, Planning, and Consultation System; findings from positive occurrence databases such as the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB); the California Aquatic Resource Inventory (CARI); and sensitive natural community information available through the Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program (VegCAMP). Based on the data and information from the habitat assessment, site-specific analysis should adequately assess which special-status species are likely to occur on or near the Project site, and whether they could be impacted by the Project.

CDFW recommends that prior to Project implementation, surveys be conducted for special-status species with potential to occur, following recommended survey protocols⁴ if available.

Botanical surveys⁵ for special-status plant species, including those with a California Rare Plant Rank⁶, must be conducted during the appropriate season, including the blooming period for all species potentially impacted by the Project within the Project area and adjacent habitats that may be indirectly impacted by, for example, changes to

³ For sensitive natural communities see <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/VegCAMP/Natural-Communities#sensitive%20natural%20communities>

⁴ Survey and monitoring protocols and guidelines are available at <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Survey-Protocols>.

⁵ Please refer to CDFW protocols for surveying and evaluating impacts to rare plants, and survey report requirements at <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Plants>

⁶ <http://www.cnps.org/cnps/rareplants/inventory/>

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hydrology, and require the identification of reference populations. More than one year of surveys may be necessary given environmental conditions.

IMPACT ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

A site-specific analysis should discuss all direct and indirect impacts (temporary and permanent), including reasonably foreseeable impacts, that may occur with implementation of the Project (CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126, 15126.2, & 15358). This includes evaluating and describing impacts such as:

- Encroachments into riparian habitats, drainage ditches, wetlands, or other sensitive areas.
- Potential for impacts to special-status species or sensitive natural communities.
- Loss or modification of breeding, nesting, dispersal, and foraging habitat, including vegetation removal, alteration of soils and hydrology, and removal of habitat structural features (e.g., snags, rock outcrops, overhanging banks).
- Permanent and temporary habitat disturbances associated with ground disturbance, noise, lighting, reflection, air pollution, traffic, or human presence.
- Obstruction of movement corridors, fish passage, or access to water sources and other core habitat features.

A site-specific analysis should also identify reasonably foreseeable future projects in the Project vicinity, disclose any cumulative impacts associated with these projects, determine the significance of each cumulative impact, and assess the significance of the Project's contribution to the impact (CEQA Guidelines, § 15355). Although a project's impacts may be less-than-significant individually, its contributions to a cumulative impact may be considerable; a contribution to a significant cumulative impact, e.g., reduction of habitat for a special-status species, should be considered cumulatively considerable.

Based on the comprehensive analysis of the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the Project, the CEQA Guidelines direct the Lead Agency to consider and describe all feasible mitigation measures to avoid potentially significant impacts in the DEIR, which CDFW recommends is supported by a site-specific analysis, and mitigate potentially significant impacts of the Project on the environment (CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15021, 15063, 15071, 15126.4 & 15370). This includes a discussion of impact avoidance and minimization measures for special-status species, which are recommended to be developed in early consultation with CDFW, USFWS, and the National Marine Fisheries Service. Project-specific measures should be incorporated as enforceable Project conditions to reduce impacts to biological resources to less-than-significant levels.

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Fully protected species such as those listed in **Attachment 1**, may not be taken or possessed at any time (Fish & G. Code, §§ 3511, 4700, 5050, & 5515). Therefore, the DEIR supported by a site-specific analysis should include measures to ensure complete avoidance of these species.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CDFW offers the following comments and recommendations to assist the City in adequately identifying and/or mitigating the Project's significant, or potentially significant, direct, and indirect impacts on biological resources.

COMMENT 1: Riparian Setbacks

Issue: The Project has the potential to encroach into the riparian zone from development of new buildings and infrastructure near the Pajaro River. Encroachment in the riparian zone can negatively impact sensitive riparian species and can lead to increased pollutants and deleterious materials entering the stream.

Evidence the impact would be significant: Riparian trees and vegetation, and associated floodplains, provide many essential benefits to stream and aquatic species habitat (Moyle 2002, CDFW 2007), including thermal protection, cover, and large woody debris. Development adjacent to the riparian zone can result in fragmentation of riparian habitat and decreases in native species abundance and biodiversity (Davies et al. 2001, Hansen et al. 2005, CDFW 2007). An estimated 2 to 7 percent of California's riparian habitat remains intact and has not been converted to other land uses (Katibah 1984, Dawdy 1989). Riparian buffers help keep pollutants from entering adjacent waters through a combination of processes including dilution, sequestration by plants and microbes, biodegradation, chemical degradation, volatilization, and entrapment within soil particles. Narrow riparian buffers are considerably less effective in minimizing the effects of adjacent development than wider buffers (Castelle et al. 1992, Brosokske et al. 1997, Dong et al. 1998, Kiffney et al. 2003, Moore et al. 2005).

Recommendation: CDFW recommends the Project establish and the DEIR incorporate riparian buffer zones to limit development and vegetation clearing to outside of and away from riparian areas. CDFW is available to consult with the City to determine appropriate site-specific riparian buffers to reduce impacts to sensitive species and riparian habitat to less-than-significant.

COMMENT 2: Impervious surfaces

Issue: The Project could increase impervious surfaces at the Project site with the addition of roads and buildings. Impervious surfaces, stormwater systems, and storm drain outfalls have the potential to significantly affect fish and wildlife resources by altering the hydrograph of natural streamflow patterns via concentrated run-off.

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Evidence the impact would be significant: Urbanization (e.g., impervious surfaces, stormwater systems, storm drain outfalls) can modify natural streamflow patterns by increasing the magnitude and frequency of high flow events and storm flows (Hollis 1975, Konrad and Booth 2005).

Recommendations to minimize significant impacts: CDFW recommends that storm runoff be dispersed rather than concentrated to a stormwater outfall or other receiving waters. CDFW recommends implementation of low impact development (LID) and the use of bioswales and bioretention features to intercept storm runoff. CDFW also recommends incorporating permeable surfaces throughout the Project to allow stormwater to percolate in the ground and prevent stream hydromodification (see https://www.usgs.gov/science/evaluating-potential-benefits-permeable-pavement-quantity-and-quality-stormwater-runoff?qt-science_center_objects=0#qt-science_center_objects).

COMMENT 3: Artificial Lighting

Issue: The Project has the potential to increase artificial lighting from the addition of buildings and other development. Artificial lighting often results in light pollution, which has the potential to significantly and adversely affect fish and wildlife.

Evidence the impact would be significant: Night lighting can disrupt the circadian rhythms of wildlife species. Many species use photoperiod cues for communication such as bird song (Miller, 2006), determining when to begin foraging (Stone et al., 2009), behavior thermoregulation (Beiswenger, 1977), and migration (Longcore and Rich, 2004).

Recommendations to minimize significant impacts: CDFW recommends eliminating all non-essential artificial lighting. If artificial lighting is necessary, CDFW recommends avoiding or limiting the use of artificial lights during the hours of dawn and dusk, when many wildlife species are most active. CDFW also recommends that outdoor lighting be shielded, cast downward, and does not spill over onto other properties or upwards into the night sky (see the International Dark-Sky Association standards at <http://darksky.org/>) and limited to warm light colors with an output temperature of 2700 kelvin or less.

COMMENT 4: Noise

Issue: Site operations may result in a substantial amount of noise through road use, construction equipment, and other Project-related activities. This may adversely affect nesting birds and other wildlife species in several ways as wildlife responses to noise can occur at exposure levels of only 55-60 dB (Barber et al. 2009). (For reference, normal conversation is approximately 60 dB, and natural ambient noise levels are generally measured at less than 50dB.).

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Evidence the impact would be significant: Anthropogenic noise can disrupt the communication of many wildlife species including frogs, birds, and bats (Sun and Narins 2005, Patricelli and Blickley 2006, Gillam and McCracken 2007, Slabbekoorn and Ripmeester 2008). Noise can also affect predator-prey relationships as many nocturnal animals such as bats and owls primarily use auditory cues (i.e., hearing) to hunt. Additionally, many prey species increase their vigilance behavior when exposed to noise because they need to rely more on visual detection of predators when auditory cues may be masked by noise (Rabin et al. 2006, Quinn et al. 2017). Noise has also been shown to reduce the density of nesting birds (Francis et al. 2009) and cause increased stress that results in decreased immune responses (Kight and Swaddle 2011).

Recommended Measure 1: CDFW recommends including the following work restriction measure to restrict use of equipment to hours least likely to disrupt wildlife:

1. Work shall be restricted to daylight hours, one hour after sunrise to sunset.

Recommended Measure 2: CDFW recommends including the following Measures, if Project activities might occur during nesting bird season:

1. *Nesting Birds.* If Project activities will occur during nesting bird season (February 15 to September 15 for raptors; March 15 to August 30 for non-raptors), the Qualified Biologist shall conduct a focused survey for active nests within **5 days** prior to the initiation of Project-related activities. Surveys shall be conducted in all suitable habitat located at Project work sites and in staging and storage areas. The minimum survey radii surrounding the work area shall be the following: (1) **250 feet** for non-raptors; (2) **1,000 feet** for raptors.
2. *Active Nest Protections.* If active nests are found, the Qualified Biologist shall observe any identified active nests prior to the start of any construction-related activities to establish a behavioral baseline of the adults and any nestlings. Once work commences, all active nests shall be regularly monitored by the Qualified Biologist for a minimum of **two (2)** consecutive days to detect any signs of disturbance and behavioral changes as a result of the Project. In addition to direct impacts, such as nest destruction, nesting birds might be affected by noise, vibration, odors and movement of workers or equipment. Abnormal nesting behaviors which may cause reproductive harm include, but are not limited to, defensive flights/vocalizations directed towards Project personnel, standing up from a brooding position, and flying away from the nest. If signs of disturbance and behavioral changes are observed, work shall halt, and the Qualified Biologist shall either halt work until the nest is no longer active and increase protective buffer zones (see Mitigation Measure 3 below).
3. *Active Nest Buffers.* Active nest sites and protective buffer zones shall be designated as Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESAs), where no Project-related

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activities may occur and no personnel may enter. These ESAs shall be maintained (while occupied, or longer for multi-clutch and annually returning species such as raptors) during Project activities with the establishment of a fence barrier or flagging surrounding the nest site. Buffers shall remain in place throughout Project activities or until the nest becomes inactive, whichever comes first.

4. *Bird Protections During Vegetation Removal.* To the maximum extent possible, vegetation shall not be removed between **February 15 to September 15** to avoid impacts to nesting birds.

ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

CEQA requires that information developed in EIRs and negative declarations be incorporated into a database which may be used to make subsequent or supplemental environmental determinations (Pub. Resources Code, § 21003, subd. (e)). Accordingly, please report any special-status species and natural communities detected during Project surveys to CNDDDB. The CNDDDB online field survey form and other methods for submitting data can be found at the following link: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB/Submitting-Data>. The types of information reported to CNDDDB can be found at the following link: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB/Plantsand-Animals>.

FILING FEES

CDFW anticipates that the Project will have an impact on fish and/or wildlife, and assessment of filing fees is necessary (Fish & G. Code, § 711.4; Pub. Resources Code, § 21089). Fees are payable upon filing of the Notice of Determination by the Lead Agency and serve to help defray the cost of environmental review by CDFW.

CONCLUSION

CDFW appreciates the opportunity to comment on the NOP to assist the City in identifying and mitigating Project impacts on biological resources. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Serena Stumpf, Environmental Scientist, at (707) 337-1364 or Serena.Stumpf@wildlife.ca.gov; or Mr. Wesley Stokes, Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisory), at Wesley.Stokes@wildlife.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

B77F9A6211EF486
Erin Chappell
Regional Manager
Bay Delta Region

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Attachment 1: Special-Status Species from the CNDDDB within a 5-mile radius of the Project Site

ec: State Clearinghouse (SCH No. 2022100602)

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Attachment 1: Special-Status Species from the CNDDDB within a 5-mile Radius of the Project Site

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status
<i>Birds</i>		
<i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	tricolored blackbird	ST
<i>Charadrius nivosus nivosus</i>	western snowy plover	FT, SSC
<i>Riparia riparia</i>	bank swallow	ST
<i>Fish</i>		
<i>Eucyclogobius newberryi</i>	tidewater goby	FE
<i>Lavinia exilicauda harengus</i>	Monterey hitch	S3
<i>Amphibians</i>		
<i>Ambystoma californiense</i> pop. 1	Santa Cruz tiger salamander	FT
<i>Dicamptodon ensatus</i>	California giant salamander	SSC
<i>Ambystoma macrodactylum croceum</i>	Santa Cruz long-toed salamander	FE
<i>Rana boylei</i>	foothill yellow-legged frog	SE
<i>Rana draytonii</i>	California red-legged frog	FT, SSC
<i>Mammals</i>		
<i>Taxidea taxus</i>	American badger	SSC
<i>Reptiles</i>		
<i>Emys marmorata</i>	western pond turtle	SSC
<i>Anniella pulchra</i>	northern California legless lizard	SSC
<i>Invertebrates</i>		
<i>Bombus caliginosus</i>	obscure bumble bee	ICP
<i>Bombus occidentalis</i>	western bumble bee	ICP

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Scientific Name	Common Name	Status
<i>Bombus crotchii</i>	crotch bumblebee	ICP
<i>Coelus globosus</i>	globose dune beetle	S1S2
<i>Danaus plexippus</i> pop. 1	monarch - California overwintering population	FC, ICP
Plants		
<i>Arctostaphylos andersonii</i>	Anderson's manzanita	CRPR ⁷ 1B.2
<i>Arctostaphylos hookeri</i> ssp. <i>hookeri</i>	Hooker's manzanita	S2
<i>Arctostaphylos pajaroensis</i>	Pajaro manzanita	S1
<i>Centromadia parryi</i> ssp. <i>congdonii</i>	Congdon's tarplant	CRPR 1B.1
<i>Chorizanthe pungens</i> var. <i>pungens</i>	Monterey spineflower	S2
<i>Chorizanthe robusta</i> var. <i>robusta</i>	robust spineflower	FE, CRPR 1B.1
<i>Cordylanthus rigidus</i> ssp. <i>littoralis</i>	seaside bird's-beak	CRPR 1B.1
<i>Ericameria fasciculata</i>	Eastwood's goldenbush	CRPR 1B.1, S2
<i>Erysimum ammophilum</i>	sand-loving wallflower	CRPR 1B.2
<i>Gilia tenuiflora</i> ssp. <i>arenaria</i>	Monterey gilia	CRPR 1B.2
<i>Piperia yadonii</i>	Yadon's rein orchid	CRPR 1B.1
<i>Holocarpha macradenia</i>	Santa Cruz tarplant	FT, SE
<i>Horkelia cuneata</i> var. <i>sericea</i>	Kellogg's horkelia	CRPR 1B.1
<i>Horkelia marinensis</i>	Point Reyes horkelia	CRPR 1B.2

⁷ CRPR 1B plants are considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere. Further information on CRPR ranks is available in CDFW's *Special Vascular Plants, Bryophytes, and Lichens List* (<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=109383&inline>) and on the California Native Plant Society website (<https://www.cnps.org/rare-plants/cnps-rare-plant-ranks>).

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Scientific Name	Common Name	Status
<i>Monolopia gracilens</i>	woodland woollythreads	CRPR 1B.2
<i>Plagiobothrys chorisianus</i> var. <i>chorisianus</i>	Choris' popcornflower	CRPR 1B.2
<i>Plagiobothrys diffusus</i>	San Francisco popcornflower	SE

FE = federally listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA); FT = federally listed as threatened under ESA; FC = candidate for federal listing under ESA; SE = state listed as endangered under CESA; ST = state listed as threatened under CESA; CE= candidate for state listing as threatened or endangered; FP = state fully protected under Fish and Game Code; SSC = state species of special concern; ICP = state invertebrate of conservation priority; CRPR = California rare plant rank



Yana Garcia
Secretary for
Environmental Protection



Department of Toxic Substances Control

Meredith Williams, Ph.D.
Director
8800 Cal Center Drive
Sacramento, California 95826-3200



Gavin Newsom
Governor

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

November 18, 2022

Ms. Suzi Merriam
City of Watsonville
250 Main Street
Watsonville, CA 95076
Dwntown.Specific.Plan@cityofwatsonville.org

NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE
DOWNTOWN WATSONVILLE SPECIFIC PLAN – DATED OCTOBER 27, 2022
(STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER: 2022100602)

Dear Ms. Merriam:

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) received a Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan (Project). The Lead Agency is receiving this notice from DTSC because the Project includes one or more of the following: groundbreaking activities, work in close proximity to a roadway, presence of site buildings that may require demolition or modifications, importation of backfill soil, and/or work on or in close proximity to an agricultural or former agricultural site.

DTSC recommends that the following issues be evaluated in the Hazards and Hazardous Materials section of the EIR:

1. A State of California environmental regulatory agency such as DTSC, a Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), or a local agency that meets the requirements of [Health and Safety Code section 101480](#) should provide regulatory concurrence that EIR is safe for construction and the proposed use.
2. The EIR should acknowledge the potential for historic or future activities on or near the project site to result in the release of hazardous wastes/substances on the project site. In instances in which releases have occurred or may occur, further studies should be carried out to delineate the nature and extent of the

contamination, and the potential threat to public health and/or the environment should be evaluated. The EIR should also identify the mechanism(s) to initiate any required investigation and/or remediation and the government agency who will be responsible for providing appropriate regulatory oversight.

3. Refiners in the United States started adding lead compounds to gasoline in the 1920s in order to boost octane levels and improve engine performance. This practice did not officially end until 1992 when lead was banned as a fuel additive in California. Tailpipe emissions from automobiles using leaded gasoline contained lead and resulted in aerally deposited lead (ADL) being deposited in and along roadways throughout the state. ADL-contaminated soils still exist along roadsides and medians and can also be found underneath some existing road surfaces due to past construction activities. Due to the potential for ADL-contaminated soil DTSC, recommends collecting soil samples for lead analysis prior to performing any intrusive activities for the project described in the EIR.
4. If buildings or other structures are to be demolished on any project sites included in the proposed project, surveys should be conducted for the presence of lead-based paints or products, mercury, asbestos containing materials, and polychlorinated biphenyl caulk. Removal, demolition and disposal of any of the above-mentioned chemicals should be conducted in compliance with California environmental regulations and policies. In addition, sampling near current and/or former buildings should be conducted in accordance with DTSC's 2006 [Interim Guidance Evaluation of School Sites with Potential Contamination from Lead Based Paint, Termiticides, and Electrical Transformers](#).
5. If any projects initiated as part of the proposed project require the importation of soil to backfill any excavated areas, proper sampling should be conducted to ensure that the imported soil is free of contamination. DTSC recommends the imported materials be characterized according to DTSC's 2001 [Information Advisory Clean Imported Fill Material](#).
6. If any sites included as part of the proposed project have been used for agricultural, weed abatement or related activities, proper investigation for organochlorinated pesticides should be discussed in the EIR. DTSC recommends the current and former agricultural lands be evaluated in accordance with DTSC's 2008 [Interim Guidance for Sampling Agricultural Properties \(Third Revision\)](#).

DTSC appreciates the opportunity to comment on the EIR. Should you need any assistance with an environmental investigation, please visit DTSC's [Site Mitigation and Restoration Program](#) page to apply for lead agency oversight. Additional information regarding voluntary agreements with DTSC can be found at [DTSC's Brownfield website](#).

If you have any questions, please contact me at (916) 255-3710 or via email at Gavin.McCreary@dtsc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gavin McCreary". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gavin" and last name "McCreary" clearly distinguishable.

Gavin McCreary
Project Manager
Site Evaluation and Remediation Unit
Site Mitigation and Restoration Program
Department of Toxic Substances Control

cc: (via email)

Governor's Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse
State.Clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov

Mr. Dave Kereazis
Office of Planning & Environmental Analysis
Department of Toxic Substances Control
Dave.Kereazis@dtsc.ca.gov

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

October 27, 2022

Suzi Merriam
City of Watsonville
250 Main Street
Watsonville, CA 95076

Re: 2022100602, Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan Project, Santa Cruz County

Dear Ms. Merriam:

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) has received the Notice of Preparation (NOP), Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) or Early Consultation for the project referenced above. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code §21000 et seq.), specifically Public Resources Code §21084.1, states that a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. (Pub. Resources Code § 21084.1; Cal. Code Regs., tit.14, § 15064.5 (b) (CEQA Guidelines §15064.5 (b)). If there is substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before a lead agency, that a project may have a significant effect on the environment, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) shall be prepared. (Pub. Resources Code §21080 (d); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 5064 subd.(a)(1) (CEQA Guidelines §15064 (a)(1)). In order to determine whether a project will cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, a lead agency will need to determine whether there are historical resources within the area of potential effect (APE).

CEQA was amended significantly in 2014. Assembly Bill 52 (Gatto, Chapter 532, Statutes of 2014) (AB 52) amended CEQA to create a separate category of cultural resources, "tribal cultural resources" (Pub. Resources Code §21074) and provides that a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. (Pub. Resources Code §21084.2). Public agencies shall, when feasible, avoid damaging effects to any tribal cultural resource. (Pub. Resources Code §21084.3 (a)). **AB 52 applies to any project for which a notice of preparation, a notice of negative declaration, or a mitigated negative declaration is filed on or after July 1, 2015.** If your project involves the adoption of or amendment to a general plan or a specific plan, or the designation or proposed designation of open space, on or after March 1, 2005, it may also be subject to Senate Bill 18 (Burton, Chapter 905, Statutes of 2004) (SB 18). **Both SB 18 and AB 52 have tribal consultation requirements.** If your project is also subject to the federal National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.) (NEPA), the tribal consultation requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (154 U.S.C. 300101, 36 C.F.R. §800 et seq.) may also apply.

The NAHC recommends consultation with California Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of your proposed project as early as possible in order to avoid inadvertent discoveries of Native American human remains and best protect tribal cultural resources. Below is a brief summary of portions of AB 52 and SB 18 as well as the NAHC's recommendations for conducting cultural resources assessments.

Consult your legal counsel about compliance with AB 52 and SB 18 as well as compliance with any other applicable laws.

AB 52

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AB 52 has added to CEQA the additional requirements listed below, along with many other requirements:

1. Fourteen Day Period to Provide Notice of Completion of an Application/Decision to Undertake a Project:

Within fourteen (14) days of determining that an application for a project is complete or of a decision by a public agency to undertake a project, a lead agency shall provide formal notification to a designated contact of, or tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice, to be accomplished by at least one written notice that includes:

- a. A brief description of the project.
- b. The lead agency contact information.
- c. Notification that the California Native American tribe has 30 days to request consultation. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.1 (d)).
- d. A "California Native American tribe" is defined as a Native American tribe located in California that is on the contact list maintained by the NAHC for the purposes of Chapter 905 of Statutes of 2004 (SB 18). (Pub. Resources Code §21073).

2. Begin Consultation Within 30 Days of Receiving a Tribe's Request for Consultation and Before Releasing a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Environmental Impact Report: A lead agency shall begin the consultation process within 30 days of receiving a request for consultation from a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.1, subds. (d) and (e)) and prior to the release of a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration or Environmental Impact Report. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.1 (b)).

- a. For purposes of AB 52, "consultation shall have the same meaning as provided in Gov. Code §65352.4 (SB 18). (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.1 (b)).

3. Mandatory Topics of Consultation If Requested by a Tribe: The following topics of consultation, if a tribe requests to discuss them, are mandatory topics of consultation:

- a. Alternatives to the project.
- b. Recommended mitigation measures.
- c. Significant effects. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.2 (a)).

4. Discretionary Topics of Consultation: The following topics are discretionary topics of consultation:

- a. Type of environmental review necessary.
- b. Significance of the tribal cultural resources.
- c. Significance of the project's impacts on tribal cultural resources.
- d. If necessary, project alternatives or appropriate measures for preservation or mitigation that the tribe may recommend to the lead agency. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.2 (a)).

5. Confidentiality of Information Submitted by a Tribe During the Environmental Review Process: With some exceptions, any information, including but not limited to, the location, description, and use of tribal cultural resources submitted by a California Native American tribe during the environmental review process shall not be included in the environmental document or otherwise disclosed by the lead agency or any other public agency to the public, consistent with Government Code §6254 (r) and §6254.10. Any information submitted by a California Native American tribe during the consultation or environmental review process shall be published in a confidential appendix to the environmental document unless the tribe that provided the information consents, in writing, to the disclosure of some or all of the information to the public. (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (c)(1)).

6. Discussion of Impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources in the Environmental Document: If a project may have a significant impact on a tribal cultural resource, the lead agency's environmental document shall discuss both of the following:

- a. Whether the proposed project has a significant impact on an identified tribal cultural resource.
- b. Whether feasible alternatives or mitigation measures, including those measures that may be agreed to pursuant to Public Resources Code §21082.3, subdivision (a), avoid or substantially lessen the impact on the identified tribal cultural resource. (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (b)).

- 7. Conclusion of Consultation:** Consultation with a tribe shall be considered concluded when either of the following occurs:
- a.** The parties agree to measures to mitigate or avoid a significant effect, if a significant effect exists, on a tribal cultural resource; or
 - b.** A party, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.2 (b)).
- 8. Recommending Mitigation Measures Agreed Upon in Consultation in the Environmental Document:** Any mitigation measures agreed upon in the consultation conducted pursuant to Public Resources Code §21080.3.2 shall be recommended for inclusion in the environmental document and in an adopted mitigation monitoring and reporting program, if determined to avoid or lessen the impact pursuant to Public Resources Code §21082.3, subdivision (b), paragraph 2, and shall be fully enforceable. (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (a)).
- 9. Required Consideration of Feasible Mitigation:** If mitigation measures recommended by the staff of the lead agency as a result of the consultation process are not included in the environmental document or if there are no agreed upon mitigation measures at the conclusion of consultation, or if consultation does not occur, and if substantial evidence demonstrates that a project will cause a significant effect to a tribal cultural resource, the lead agency shall consider feasible mitigation pursuant to Public Resources Code §21084.3 (b). (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (e)).
- 10. Examples of Mitigation Measures That, If Feasible, May Be Considered to Avoid or Minimize Significant Adverse Impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources:**
- a.** Avoidance and preservation of the resources in place, including, but not limited to:
 - i.** Planning and construction to avoid the resources and protect the cultural and natural context.
 - ii.** Planning greenspace, parks, or other open space, to incorporate the resources with culturally appropriate protection and management criteria.
 - b.** Treating the resource with culturally appropriate dignity, taking into account the tribal cultural values and meaning of the resource, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - i.** Protecting the cultural character and integrity of the resource.
 - ii.** Protecting the traditional use of the resource.
 - iii.** Protecting the confidentiality of the resource.
 - c.** Permanent conservation easements or other interests in real property, with culturally appropriate management criteria for the purposes of preserving or utilizing the resources or places.
 - d.** Protecting the resource. (Pub. Resource Code §21084.3 (b)).
 - e.** Please note that a federally recognized California Native American tribe or a non-federally recognized California Native American tribe that is on the contact list maintained by the NAHC to protect a California prehistoric, archaeological, cultural, spiritual, or ceremonial place may acquire and hold conservation easements if the conservation easement is voluntarily conveyed. (Civ. Code §815.3 (c)).
 - f.** Please note that it is the policy of the state that Native American remains and associated grave artifacts shall be repatriated. (Pub. Resources Code §5097.991).
- 11. Prerequisites for Certifying an Environmental Impact Report or Adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration or Negative Declaration with a Significant Impact on an Identified Tribal Cultural Resource:** An Environmental Impact Report may not be certified, nor may a mitigated negative declaration or a negative declaration be adopted unless one of the following occurs:
- a.** The consultation process between the tribes and the lead agency has occurred as provided in Public Resources Code §21080.3.1 and §21080.3.2 and concluded pursuant to Public Resources Code §21080.3.2.
 - b.** The tribe that requested consultation failed to provide comments to the lead agency or otherwise failed to engage in the consultation process.
 - c.** The lead agency provided notice of the project to the tribe in compliance with Public Resources Code §21080.3.1 (d) and the tribe failed to request consultation within 30 days. (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (d)).

The NAHC's PowerPoint presentation titled, "Tribal Consultation Under AB 52: Requirements and Best Practices" may be found online at: http://nahc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/AB52TribalConsultation_CalEPAPDF.pdf

SB 18 applies to local governments and requires local governments to contact, provide notice to, refer plans to, and consult with tribes prior to the adoption or amendment of a general plan or a specific plan, or the designation of open space. (Gov. Code §65352.3). Local governments should consult the Governor's Office of Planning and Research's "Tribal Consultation Guidelines," which can be found online at: https://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/09_14_05_Updated_Guidelines_922.pdf.

Some of SB 18's provisions include:

1. **Tribal Consultation**: If a local government considers a proposal to adopt or amend a general plan or a specific plan, or to designate open space it is required to contact the appropriate tribes identified by the NAHC by requesting a "Tribal Consultation List." If a tribe, once contacted, requests consultation the local government must consult with the tribe on the plan proposal. **A tribe has 90 days from the date of receipt of notification to request consultation unless a shorter timeframe has been agreed to by the tribe.** (Gov. Code §65352.3 (a)(2)).
2. **No Statutory Time Limit on SB 18 Tribal Consultation**. There is no statutory time limit on SB 18 tribal consultation.
3. **Confidentiality**: Consistent with the guidelines developed and adopted by the Office of Planning and Research pursuant to Gov. Code §65040.2, the city or county shall protect the confidentiality of the information concerning the specific identity, location, character, and use of places, features and objects described in Public Resources Code §5097.9 and §5097.993 that are within the city's or county's jurisdiction. (Gov. Code §65352.3 (b)).
4. **Conclusion of SB 18 Tribal Consultation**: Consultation should be concluded at the point in which:
 - a. The parties to the consultation come to a mutual agreement concerning the appropriate measures for preservation or mitigation; or
 - b. Either the local government or the tribe, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached concerning the appropriate measures of preservation or mitigation. (Tribal Consultation Guidelines, Governor's Office of Planning and Research (2005) at p. 18).

Agencies should be aware that neither AB 52 nor SB 18 precludes agencies from initiating tribal consultation with tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with their jurisdictions before the timeframes provided in AB 52 and SB 18. For that reason, we urge you to continue to request Native American Tribal Contact Lists and "Sacred Lands File" searches from the NAHC. The request forms can be found online at: <http://nahc.ca.gov/resources/forms/>.

NAHC Recommendations for Cultural Resources Assessments

To adequately assess the existence and significance of tribal cultural resources and plan for avoidance, preservation in place, or barring both, mitigation of project-related impacts to tribal cultural resources, the NAHC recommends the following actions:

1. Contact the appropriate regional California Historical Research Information System (CHRIS) Center (https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=30331) for an archaeological records search. The records search will determine:
 - a. If part or all of the APE has been previously surveyed for cultural resources.
 - b. If any known cultural resources have already been recorded on or adjacent to the APE.
 - c. If the probability is low, moderate, or high that cultural resources are located in the APE.
 - d. If a survey is required to determine whether previously unrecorded cultural resources are present.
2. If an archaeological inventory survey is required, the final stage is the preparation of a professional report detailing the findings and recommendations of the records search and field survey.
 - a. The final report containing site forms, site significance, and mitigation measures should be submitted immediately to the planning department. All information regarding site locations, Native American human remains, and associated funerary objects should be in a separate confidential addendum and not be made available for public disclosure.
 - b. The final written report should be submitted within 3 months after work has been completed to the appropriate regional CHRIS center.

3. Contact the NAHC for:
 - a. A Sacred Lands File search. Remember that tribes do not always record their sacred sites in the Sacred Lands File, nor are they required to do so. A Sacred Lands File search is not a substitute for consultation with tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the project's APE.
 - b. A Native American Tribal Consultation List of appropriate tribes for consultation concerning the project site and to assist in planning for avoidance, preservation in place, or, failing both, mitigation measures.
4. Remember that the lack of surface evidence of archaeological resources (including tribal cultural resources) does not preclude their subsurface existence.
 - a. Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plan provisions for the identification and evaluation of inadvertently discovered archaeological resources per Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15064.5(f) (CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5(f)). In areas of identified archaeological sensitivity, a certified archaeologist and a culturally affiliated Native American with knowledge of cultural resources should monitor all ground-disturbing activities.
 - b. Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plans provisions for the disposition of recovered cultural items that are not burial associated in consultation with culturally affiliated Native Americans.
 - c. Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plans provisions for the treatment and disposition of inadvertently discovered Native American human remains. Health and Safety Code § 7050.5, Public Resources Code § 5097.98, and Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15064.5, subdivisions (d) and (e) (CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5, subds. (d) and (e)) address the processes to be followed in the event of an inadvertent discovery of any Native American human remains and associated grave goods in a location other than a dedicated cemetery.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at my email address:
Cody.Campagne@nahc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Cody Campagne
Cultural Resources Analyst

cc: State Clearinghouse