Existing Conditions – Transportation

July 2020

This section summarizes the existing transportation conditions within the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan study area. Multimodal transportation elements include the local and regional roadway network, transit network, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and parking system.

Existing Roadway Network

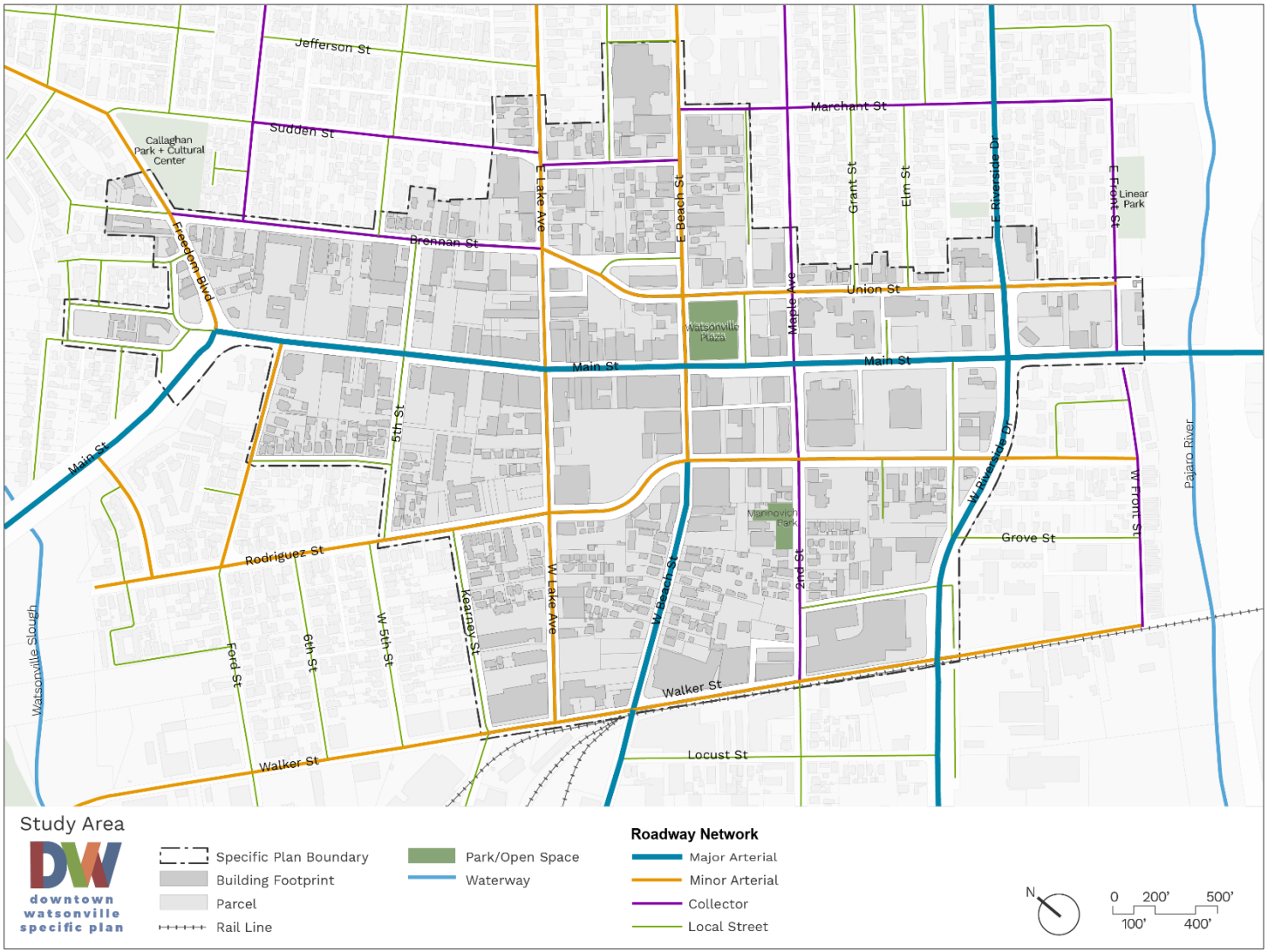
The existing roadway network is a hierarchical system of highways, arterials, and local streets developed to provide regional traffic movement and local access. State Route 152 and State Route 129 pass through downtown east to west serving as conduits of regional travel. State Route 152 continues as Main Street serving as the north-south spine of the network distributing traffic beyond the study area throughout the city and connecting to State Route 1. The roadway network in Downtown is not developed in a uniform grid, but rather features a multitude of varying block lengths and several curvilinear streets that are uncommon for a central business district.

Roadway Classifications

The following section provides a description of the functional classification of the facilities within the study area. A circulation network is composed of facilities that emphasize mobility or access to different degrees. The following types of facilities are defined in the Watsonville 2005 General Plan[1] as follows and are illustrated in Figure 1:

[1] Watsonville 2005 General Plan, Chapter 10: Transportation and Circulation, City of Watsonville (1990).

Figure 1 Existing Roadway Network



Freeway: Freeways are divided highways with limited access, designed for high speed, long-distance travel and large traffic volumes. While there are no designated freeways within the study area boundaries, both Riverside Drive and Main Street connect to State Route 1 (Cabrillo Highway), which serves as a four-lane freeway connecting Watsonville to other Santa Cruz County cities and beyond.

Highway: Highways are a network of roads designed to facilitate regional connections. In Downtown Watsonville, State Route 129 and State Route 152, maintained by Caltrans, provide regional connections between Downtown Watsonville and nearby cities such as Salinas, Hollister, Santa Cruz, and Monterey. Although State Route 129 and State Route 152 are part of the state's highway system, they are not classified as major arterials within Watsonville's city limits.[2] State Route 152 is carried by Main Street and eventually transitions to a one-way couplet with two travel lanes going northbound and southbound on East Lake Avenue and East Beach Street, respectively. State Route 129 is carried by Riverside Drive on the southeastern edge of the study area and provides connections to Highway 1 and U.S. 101.

Major Arterial: Major arterials are relatively high speed, long distance surface streets designed to move large volumes of traffic across the urbanized area and to provide access to the freeway. Major arterials typically consist of 12-foot travel lanes and where present, 8-foot parking lanes (Figure 2). In addition to facilitating regional access to Santa Cruz, Monterey, Salinas, and Gilroy, major arterials also provide cross-town connections. Some major arterials, namely Freedom Boulevard and Riverside Drive, have on-street parking, particularly on segments that border residences and neighborhood commercial development. Major arterials near thoroughfare commercial, shopping centers, and/or industrial areas do not have on-street parking. Main Street is unique in that it accommodates a landscaped median within the Caltrans right-of-way between Highway 1 and Freedom Boulevard. Except for the portion of Main Street that goes through downtown that is not within the Caltrans right-of-way, no other roadway has both a landscaped median and on-street parking. Designated Major Arterials in Downtown Watsonville include: Freedom Boulevard, W Beach Street, Main Street, and Riverside Drive.

[2] Watsonville 2005 General Plan, Chapter 10: Transportation and Circulation, City of Watsonville (1990).

Figure 2 Cross Section of Main Street (west of Beach Street)

Minor Arterial: Minor arterials are medium speed, medium capacity surface streets used primarily to move traffic within urbanized areas to and from residential areas to areas of employment or business. Many minor arterials have on-street parking, and these streets typically border residential neighborhoods. Designated Minor Arterials in Downtown Watsonville include Rodriguez Street, Walker Street, and sections of Ford Street, and Union Street.

Collector Street: A collector street is a relatively low speed, low volume street used for neighborhood circulation and access to private property. Collector streets are also used to collect traffic from local streets and redistribute them to the arterial network. The number of travel lanes on collector streets ranges from two and four lanes and with curb-to-curb widths varying from 40 to 44 feet (Figure 3). Designated collector streets in Downtown Watsonville include: Sudden Street, Brennan Street, Marchant Street, Maple Ave, Second Street, and Front Street.

Figure 3 Cross Section of Brennan St/Union St

Local Street: Local streets are low speed, low volume roadways that provide direct access to primarily residential areas and are characterized by multiple driveways and on-street parking. Local streets within the study area typically do not exceed 50 feet in right-of-way or have a painted centerline and are mostly found in residential neighborhoods abutting Downtown. Examples of designated local streets in Downtown Watsonville include 6th Street, 5th Street, Grant Street, Elm Street, and Grove Street.

Regional Road Network

Two state highways pass through the City of Watsonville on surface streets, Highway 152 and Highway 129. These highways bring high volumes of automobile and freight traffic through the City. There has been interest in rerouting Highway 152 away from the center of Watsonville and relinquishing the existing Highway 152 alignment to the City.

Highway 152

State Route (SR) 152 is an east-west highway in northern California, approximately 104.5 miles in length. SR 152 was originally included as part of the State Highway System as Legislative Route 32. Initially serving as a connector between Gilroy and Merced, SR 152 was extended further west from Gilroy to Watsonville in 1933. The highway serves as a key junction between several north-south routes including SR 1, U.S. 101 in Gilroy, SR 156 near Hollister, SR 33 near Los Banos, Interstate 5 (I-5) near Los Banos, SR 59 in El Nido, and SR 99 near Merced. The western portion of SR 152 begins near SR 1 as a series of local streets that run through Downtown Watsonville (Main Street and Beach Street) (Figure 4). East Lake Avenue carries SR 152 to the intersection of Casserly Road, after which it becomes a winding two-lane highway that traverses the Santa Cruz Mountains to the City of Gilroy.

Figure 4 Cross Section of Beach Street/SR 152

Highway 129

State Route 129 is a 14-mile east-west highway connecting State Route 1 in Watsonville with U.S. 101 near San Juan Bautista in San Benito County. SR 129 near SR 1 is part of the National Highway System, a network of highways that are considered critical to the country's economy, defense, and mobility by the Federal Highway Administration. It is also the designated east-west truck route per Watsonville's 2005 General Plan. It is carried by East Riverside Drive along the southeastern edge of the study area as a four-lane road to the Union Street intersection, east of which it tapers to a two-lane highway generally following the Pajaro River (Figure 5).

Figure 5 Cross Section of Riverside Drive/SR 129

Figure 6 identifies these highways as local truck routes within the study area.

Figure 6 Designated Truck Routes

Roadway Level of Service

The operational performance of the City's roadway system is expressed using "Levels of Service." Level of Service (LOS) is a measure of the quality of the overall operating characteristics of a street or highway as perceived by the motorist. Traffic conditions are typically measured through the evaluation of peak hour levels of service that characterize traffic conditions associated with varying levels of traffic. Levels of Service range from LOS A to LOS F. Watsonville requires street improvements when traffic volumes exceed LOS D on roadway segments and at signalized intersections except for those accepted to operate at less than LOS D in the 2004–2030 Major Streets Master Plan as updated in 2005. This level of service standard is not applicable at unsignalized intersections where peak hour operations may exceed LOS D, but a traffic signal is not warranted.

Table 1 Level of Service Definitions for Intersections

Level of Service[3]	Signalized Intersection Delay[4]	Unsignalized Intersection Delay
A	≤ 10	0-10
B	> 10-20	> 10-15
C	> 20-35	> 15-25
D	> 35-55	> 25-35
E	> 55-80	> 35-50
F	> 80	> 50

[3] Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) (2010)
[4] Controlled Delay per Vehicle (seconds / vehicle)

Figure 7 identifies the 2004 levels of service at several roadway segments and signalized intersections in Downtown Watsonville. Currently, all of the signalized intersections operate at LOS D or better during the AM peak and PM peak periods. The unsignalized intersection at Main Street (SR-152) and northbound Highway 1 ramps (directly northwest of the study area) operate at LOS E during the AM peak and LOS F during the PM peak for the worst approach from side streets.

Figure 7 Existing Levels of Service (LOS)[5]

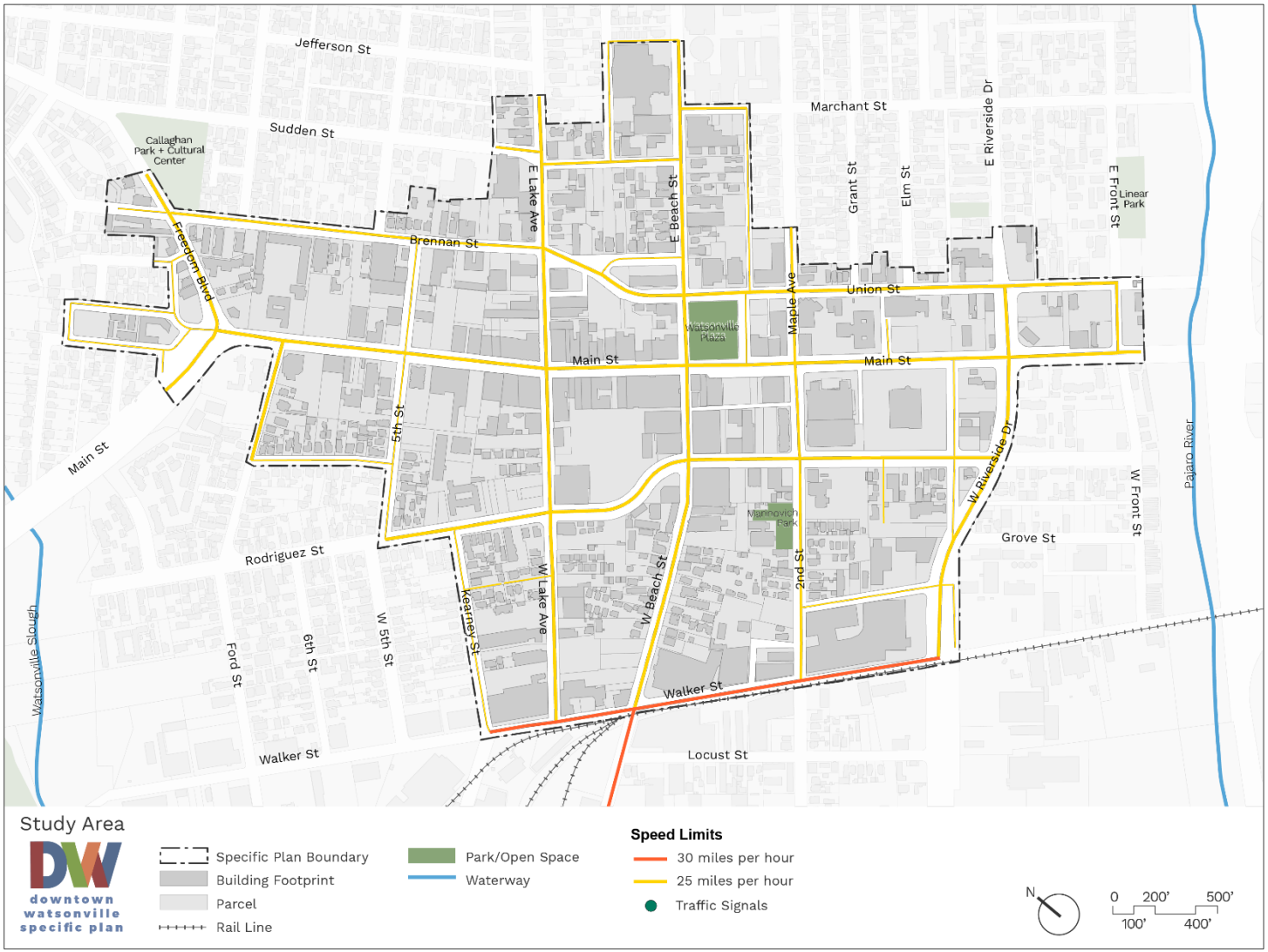
Type	Location	AM Peak		PM Peak	
		Two-Way Volume	LOS	Two-Way Volume	LOS
Segment	Beach Street (Walker to Harvest)	621	A	768	B
	Walker Street (Beach to Kearney)	541	A	545	A
Signalized Intersection	Main/Freedom	19	B	42	D
	East Lake/Main	14	B	11	B
	Main/Beach	13	B	19	B
	Main/Riverside	44	D	54	D
Unsignalized Intersection	Main/NB Hwy 1 On-Ramp/SB Hwy 1 Off-Ramp	49	E	>50	F

Traffic Signal Locations and Speed Limits

Figure 8 illustrates the locations of traffic signals within the study area, and the speed limits on posted streets. Most major arterials are populated with traffic signals spaced at one-quarter or one-eighth mile intervals. Speed limits within downtown are predominantly 25 miles per hour with higher-speed arterials generally sited in the industrial areas along and south of Walker Street.

[5] Watsonville 2005 General Plan, City of Watsonville, Transportation Circulation (2004).

Figure 8 Traffic Signals and Speed Limits



Existing Transit Network

In 1994, the Watsonville Transit Center opened in Downtown Watsonville on the corner of Rodriguez Street and W. Lake Avenue, providing a catalytic boost to the City's transit accessibility and viability as a location for inter- and intra-city transit connections. The Watsonville Transit Center is served by Santa Cruz METRO's fixed-route and paratransit services, in addition to a limited number of Monterey-Salinas Transit fixed-route and Greyhound bus services. An inventory of transit services in the City are provided below. Appendix A provides additional detail.

Santa Cruz METRO

The Santa Cruz Metropolitan District (SCMTD), or Santa Cruz METRO, provides transit service throughout Santa Cruz County. Initially serving Santa Cruz, Capitola, and Live Oak, Santa Cruz METRO expanded its network to Aptos and Watsonville in 1974. Santa Cruz METRO has 12 commuter buses, 69 demand-response vehicles, and a fleet of 64 buses6 consisting of diesel- and renewable natural gas (RNG)-powered vehicles, which serves approximately 5 million annual riders throughout a 446 square mile service area.7 Santa Cruz Metro is in the process of gradually upgrading its transit fleet to include new hybrid, zero emission electric, and compressed natural gas (CNG) buses.8

Santa Cruz METRO offers fixed-route and paratransit service, also known as METRO ParaCruz, and provides connections to the Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST), the Valley Transit Authority, Amtrak, and Greyhound. MST honors transfers from the Santa Cruz METRO system for passengers boarding MST lines at the Watsonville Transit Center and Santa Cruz METRO honors transfers from the MST system for one-way travel, except for the Highway 17 Express service. Fare policies are shown in Figure 9 and routes are described and mapped in Figure 10.

Figure 9 Santa Cruz METRO Fare Policy

	Adults (age 18+)	Youth (age < 17)	Discount Fare	Children (less 46'' tall)
Cash/1-Ride	$2	$2	$1	Rides free with a fare-paying passenger
Day Pass	$6	$6	$3	
3-Day Pass	$15	$15	$7.50	
7-Day Pass	$32	$32	$16	
31-Day Pass	$65	$48	$32	
15-Ride Day Pass	$27	$27	$13.50	

[6] Federal Transit Administration, National Transit Data Base: Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District 2018 Profile (2019). Retrieved from https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/transit_agency_profile_doc/2018/90006.pdf

[7] Santa Cruz METRO, FY14-FY18 Transit Fact Sheet (2019). Retrieved from http://www.scmtd.com/images/department/planning/FY14-FY18_Transit_Fact_Sheet_11.19.18.pdf

[8] Santa Cruz METRO, *Santa Cruz METRO to Feature New Gillig Bus at Open Streets Event* (2019). Retrieved from http://www.scmtd.com/images/department/news/10.10.19-Santa-Cruz-METRO-hosts-booth-at-Open-Streets.pdf

Fixed-Route Service

Santa Cruz METRO's fixed-route service is comprised of 25 bus routes serving Santa Cruz, Capitola, Live Oak, and Watsonville. Santa Cruz METRO also operates the Highway 17 Express Service between the City of Santa Cruz and the San Jose Amtrak Station. Eight of those routes operate within Watsonville, including four intra-city routes (72, 72W, 74S, and 75), three inter-city routes (69W, 69A, 71), and a commuter express route (91X) connecting Watsonville to the City of Santa Cruz. All routes that operate within Watsonville city limits terminate at the Watsonville Transit center on Rodriguez Street.

METRO ParaCruz

METRO ParaCruz is Santa Cruz Metro's ADA Complementary Paratransit service, which is a door-to-door shared ride service for people who are unable to use Santa Cruz METRO's fixed-route bus system due to a physical, cognitive, or psychiatric disability. ParaCruz riders must meet certain criteria in order to be eligible for this service. ParaCruz rides are scheduled in advance and frequently include picking up and dropping off customers along the way. Rides must be reserved at least one day in advance. ParaCruz provides service to any destination within Santa Cruz County that is within three quarter miles of an operating bus route. Hours of operation reflect the days and times that fixed-route bus service operates.

Monterey-Salinas Transit

Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) offers public transit service in Monterey County. Service is primarily to the greater Monterey and Salinas areas but extends as far north as Watsonville. Most lines originate at the Monterey or Salinas Transit Centers and serve many local shopping areas, job centers, tourist attractions, and residential neighborhoods.

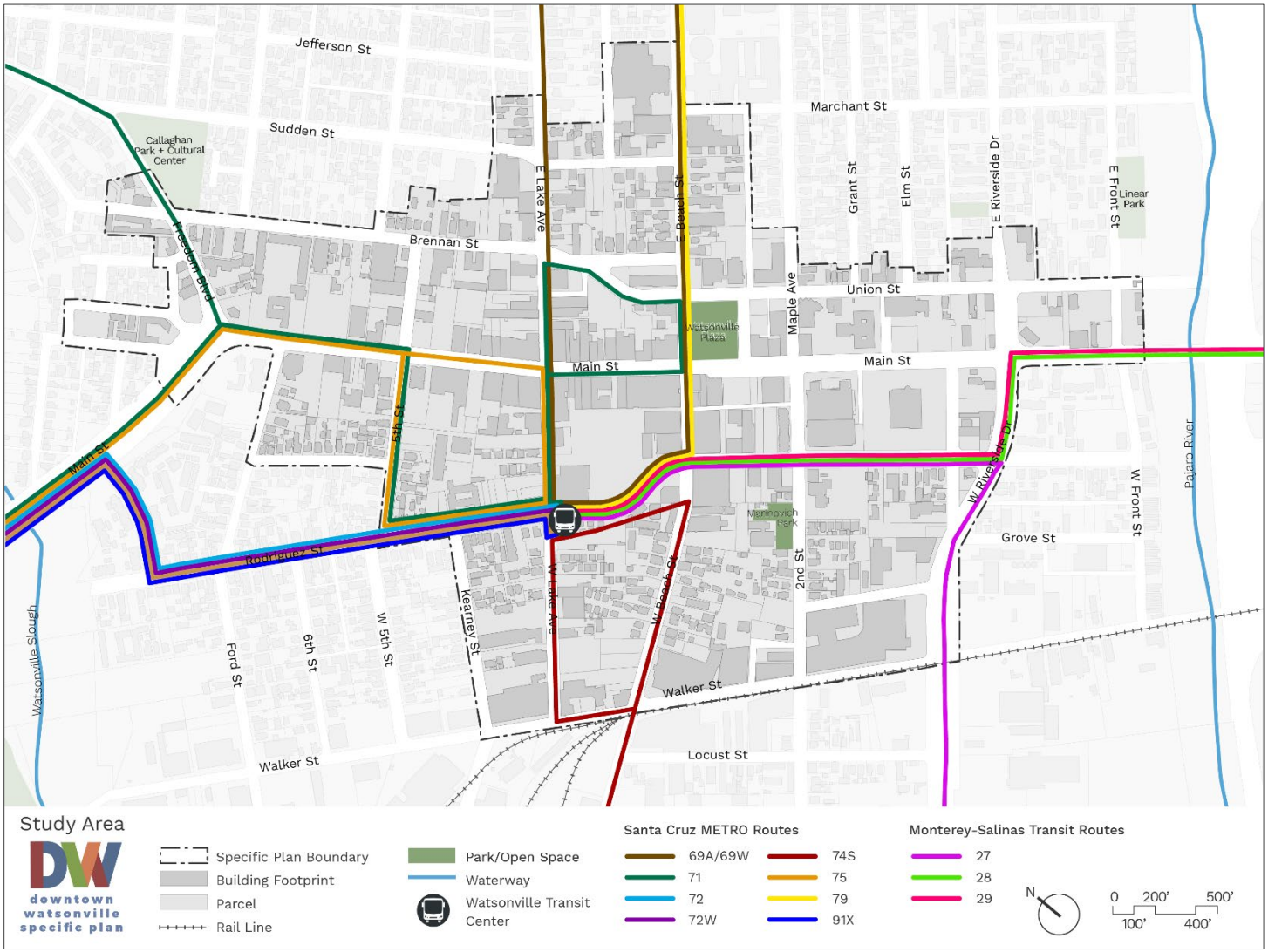
Paratransit and Demand-Responsive Transit

Monterey-Salinas Transit's offers the MST RIDES ADA paratransit program to customers who have a disability that prevents them from accessing regular fixed-route transit bus service. The MST RIDES service is provided within a service corridor that extends three quarter miles from any of MST's fixed-route bus routes. Service is door-to-door and available throughout the Monterey Peninsula, Carmel Valley, Salinas, and to the Watsonville Transit Center. Reservations must be made at least a day in advance. Fares vary based on distance traveled: one-way trips less than 2.7 miles are $1.50, one-way trips more than 2.7 miles are $2.50, and one-way trips more than 17 miles are $3.50.

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is an autonomous regional transportation planning agency that carries out various transportation responsibilities throughout Santa Cruz County that include, but are not exclusive to, establishing priorities for major infrastructural improvements, pursuing and allocating funding for major capital improvements, adopting policies to improve mobility, access, and air quality, and planning future projects and programs to develop a balance transportation system. In October 2012, the RTC acquired the 32-mile Santa Cruz Beach Rail Line (Branch Line) from Union Pacific using voter-approved funding (California Proposition 116). The rail line spans from Davenport to Watsonville, running parallel to Highway 1, and is located within one mile of more than 80 parks, 25 schools, and over half of the County's population. Since the corridor came into public ownership, the RTC has taken steps to activate the Santa Cruz Branch Line for passenger rail service. Planned improvements will provide connections to state and regional lines at Pajaro station, including those that serve the Bay Area and the future High-Speed Rail.

Figure 10 Existing Transit Network



Existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Network

Bicycling and walking are integral to Downtown Watsonville and provide essential first/last-mile connections to transit. In the past few years, the City of Watsonville adopted the Trails and Bicycle Master Plan (2012), Complete Streets Plan (2019), and Capital Improvement Plan (2019), demonstrating the City's desire to strengthen pedestrian and bicycle safety in the Downtown area.

Bikeway Facilities

The general purpose of the bikeway network is to encourage access within the City and adjoining communities, in addition to enhancing opportunities for recreation. In the past decade, Class II and Class III bikeways have been established along several major collectors and arterial roads with a focus on implementation in higher density urban areas. Many of these bikeways connect Downtown Watsonville to the broader Santa Cruz County bicycle network. Significant bikeway connections to Downtown include a Class II bicycle lane along Freedom Boulevard, a multi-class (I, II, III) on Green Valley Road just outside the study area, a Class II bicycle lane on Airport Boulevard, and a Class II bicycle lane on West Beach Road. The Class II bicycle lane on Freedom Boulevard is part of a contiguous, 9-mile route for cyclists traveling from Watsonville to Aptos. Four-foot wide bicycle lanes are also provided on both sides of the majority of Rodriguez Street and serve as a key first/last mile connection to the Watsonville Transit Center.

Bicycle travel within Downtown Watsonville is limited to several corridors and some Class II and Class III bicycle facilities are disconnected with few routes intersecting with others, which forces cyclists to share space with motor vehicles. Bicycle lanes along Beach Street are also inconsistent, changing between Class II and Class III within Downtown before discontinuing altogether north of Lincoln Street.

Most proposed bicycle facilities exist on major arterial roads to provide cyclists with easy connectivity to community destinations. Proposed facilities located within the study area will provide critical connections between bicycle facilities and further expand Downtown's existing network. Several of these major arterials, namely East Lake Avenue, Riverside, Brennan Street, and Union Street, have on-street parking with relatively high utilization rates. To reduce potential conflicts between bicyclists and motorists, it will be necessary for bicycle facilities to be designed beyond the standard for bicycle lanes. Colored bicycle lanes, buffers, and separated facilities are critical to support a safe environment for bicyclists to access local destinations. Approximately $200,000 has been allocated towards improving and implementing bicycle facilities citywide between 2019 and 2024.[9]

Planned facilities that rely on other funding sources are also underway, including the Costal Rail Trail Project outlined in the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST) Network Final Master Plan. Segments 18, 19, and 20 listed in the plan are currently underway. Segment 18 of the Coastal Rail Trail, a 1.2-mile continuous paved bicycle and pedestrian trail connecting Downtown Watsonville to the Watsonville Slough Wetlands Trail Network and the MBSST Network, is scheduled to be completed by

[9] City of Watsonville, FY 2019-2020 Capital Improvement Program Update (2019.

2022.[10] The proposed alignment for Segment 19 extends 0.47 miles from Walker Street to the north bank of the Pajaro River and will be part of the City of Watsonville's bicycle network. The proposed alignment for Segment 20, which is the final segment of the proposed MBSST Network, extends 0.74 miles from the north bank of the Pajaro River to Railroad Avenue in Monterey County.

The following section provides a description of the functional classification of bicycle facilities within the study area and are mapped in Figure 11. The three types of bicycle facilities used in Watsonville are as follows:

Bike Path (Class I) – Bike paths are typically separated from motor vehicle facilities in its own right-of-way, providing two-way bike travel on a single wide path. Main Street's Class I bike path is located on the edge of the study area from Freedom Boulevard to Pennsylvania Drive and provides key connections to several recreational areas near Downtown. Bike paths work best in areas with few crossings (i.e. along edges and in open spaces, such as riverfronts and greenbelts). Where bike paths cross motor vehicle routes, care must be taken to make the crossing as safe as possible for bicyclists. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) standard minimum width of a bike path is 8 feet.

Bike Lanes (Class II) – Bike lanes are striped lanes on roadways that are marked with signage, pavement striping, and pavement stencils. Bike lanes are on streets shared with motor vehicle traffic but mark an area outside of the travel lanes for bicyclists. Caltrans' recommended width for a bike lane against a curb is 5 feet. Where parallel auto parking occurs against the curb, Caltrans recommends a minimum of 12 feet from curb face to lane stripe, resulting in a bike lane width of 4 feet. There are 1.2 miles of Class II bike facilities in Downtown Watsonville that are located on Rodriguez Street, Walker Street, and Freedom Boulevard. Bike lanes on Walker Street and Rodriguez Street are striped green at areas near intersections. These upgrades were included as part of a bicycle safety project in 2019.

Bike Routes (Class III) – Bike routes, commonly known as "sharrows," Class III facilities are designated routes on streets with signs to help guide bicyclists on recommended routes. Class III bike routes are used on streets where auto traffic volumes and speeds do not warrant the use of other class facilities. Bicyclists share the road with auto traffic on Class III routes. The recommended minimum shared automobile and bicycle lane width is 14 feet. The 1.7 miles of Class III bike routes in Downtown Watsonville provide key north-south routes that connect to regional routes in the County.

Levee Trails – Levee trails are informal trails located on man-made embankments that are accessible to both pedestrians and bicyclists. Approximately 2.9 miles of levee trails extend along the northern bank of the Pajaro River and the Salsipuedes Creek. Primarily comprised of asphalt, portions of the levee trail that fall within Watsonville's jurisdiction are officially designated as publicly accessible trails. There is currently a lack of formal access points to the Levee Trail from Downtown Watsonville. Existing connections, including one under the bridge at Main Street and another on the southern edge of Linear

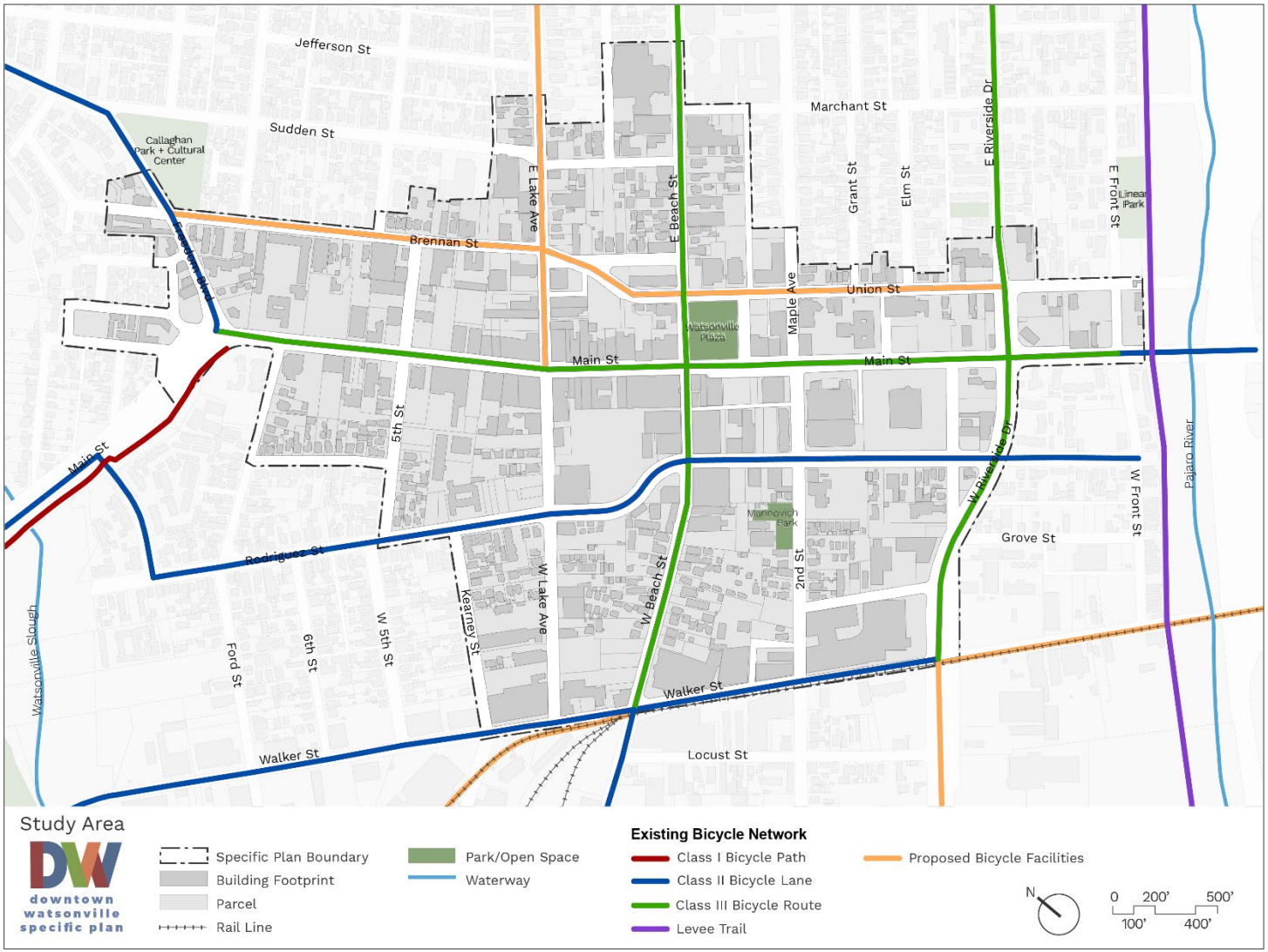
[10] Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, Project Fact Sheet: Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network Coastal Rail Trail (Segment 18), March 2020.

Park, are poor. The planned Coastal Rail Trail that will extend across the river to Pajaro along the railroad will serve as the only connection to the Levee Trail in the Downtown area once complete.

Bicycle Signage

Additional bicycle projects are under development to fill critical links in the bicycle network. This includes SCCRTC's Countywide Bicycle Wayfinding Signage Program, which seeks to direct cyclists along preferred and convenient bikeways and increase motorists' awareness of shared roadway facilities. The City of Watsonville is working closely with RTC to help deliver Phase 1 of the program, which will involve installing signs at over 300 locations throughout the County by 2021. Signs will be installed along several regional, local, and neighborhood routes that connect to Downtown.

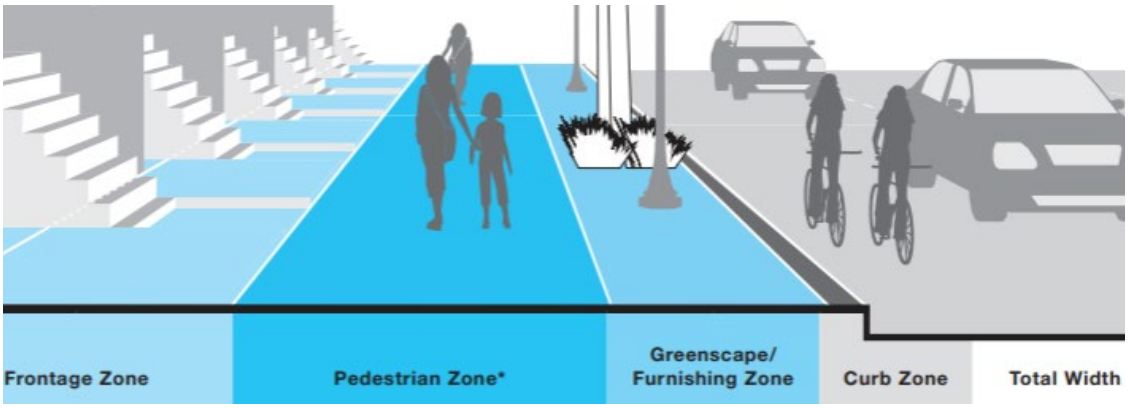
Figure 11 Existing Bikeway System



Pedestrian Network

All trips, whether by automobile, transit, or bicycle, begin and end with walking. Current street design standards include provision of sidewalks (7 feet wide) or a combination of planting strips and sidewalks (9 feet wide), which are relatively narrow for downtown commercial areas. Typically, an eight-foot wide pedestrian zone supports two people walking side by side or two wheelchairs passing each other, however, a ten foot or wider pedestrian zone can support higher volumes of pedestrian travel. Sidewalks that also include planting strips, trees, streetlamps and other furniture should be even wider to accommodate a clear path of travel outside of the furnishing zone. In downtown areas where storefronts bring more activity and foot traffic to doorways, the sidewalk should also be wide enough to accommodate the frontage zone. These sidewalk zones are illustrated below in Figure 12. Pedestrian facility elements include street trees for shade in the summer, pedestrian-scaled lighting, amenities such as street furniture, Americans with Disabilities (ADA) accessibility requirements, bus stops, and public spaces such as plazas, outdoor cafes, and rest areas.

Figure 12 Sidewalk Zones for downtown/commercial streets



SOURCE: NACTO

The built environment in Downtown generally creates a welcoming atmosphere for pedestrian activity. Downtown consists of a mix of land uses ranging from residential to central commercial to light industrial. The City has also made key investments that have resulted in significant safety improvements, including sidewalk and crosswalk upgrades, bulb outs, tactile warning devices, landscaped medians, and added signage. These improvements, while concentrated along a limited number of corridors, is a step in the right direction towards improving pedestrian visibility and comfort within an auto-centric Downtown.

Long-term investment is needed to minimize gaps within the existing network. At a majority of intersections, two crosswalks share a single ramp. Current best practice is to add a directional curb ramp to each leg of the crosswalk. Sidewalk widths in Downtown vary between four and 10 feet. With the inclusion of typical sidewalk features (e.g. utility cabinets, vegetation, signs, lighting), the four-feet wide sidewalks are not sufficiently wide to be ADA accessible.

Complete Streets

The California Department of Transportation defines a Complete Street as "a transportation facility that is planned, designed, operated, and maintained to provide safe mobility for all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, and motorists appropriate to the function and context of the facility."[11] In October 2019, the Downtown Watsonville Complete Streets Plan was accepted and approved by the City Council through Council Resolution. The Plan focuses on developing a safe and comfortable network of well-integrated, multimodal transportation facilities to accommodate all types of road users, including pedestrians, bicyclist, public transit riders, and motorists. The Plan's study area consists of the northern half of this Downtown Specific Plan's study area and includes Rodriguez Street, Main Street and Union Street/Brennan Street, and all intersecting cross streets between Riverside Drive and Freedom Boulevard. These streets fall within Watsonville's jurisdiction. Main Street, East Lake Avenue, and East Beach Street, however, are part of State Route 152. Any improvements proposed on State Route 152 require approval by Caltrans and any proposed lane reductions would require a traffic study.

The Plan identifies improvements that improve access to shopping and services for all users, attract new businesses to Downtown, and improve facilities for people living in Downtown. In general, the plan recommends:

- Improvements to enhance pedestrian safety and access, bicycle connectivity, and revitalize Downtown streetscape.
- Widen sidewalks up to 10 feet where space is available.
- Prioritize bicycle infrastructure along thoroughfares that connect Downtown to current and future key locations and destinations.
- Provide bicycle infrastructure on every Downtown street while prioritizing infrastructure that provides the lowest stress environment.
- Implement bicycle lanes with buffers, bicycle lanes, and sharrows when space is available.

While there are currently no examples of full corridor implementation of complete streets in Downtown Watsonville, the City has implemented various traffic calming measures and multimodal solutions on key corridors to provide safe mobility for different users. As part of the Main Street Improvement Project, the City implemented curb bulb-outs, upgraded curb ramps with tactile warning devices, installed street planters and landscaped medians, and implemented high-visibility crosswalks at First Street and Peck Street and at Second Street and Maple.

[11] California Department of Transportation. (October 2008). Deputy Directive 64-R1: Complete Streets – Integrating the Transportation System.

Existing Parking System

As the commercial, civic, and entertainment center of the city, parking is a vital component of the downtown study area. Watsonville established a parking district in the 1960's as a funding mechanism for the acquisition and maintenance of municipal parking lots. Properties within the parking district were not required to provide all of their parking on-site. By being part of the parking district, these properties were allowed to use municipal parking facilities towards meeting their parking demand.

Parking Facilities

Presently there are 16 municipal parking lots in Downtown (the entire Downtown is larger than the parking district) providing a total of 1,065 off-street parking spaces (Figure 13).[12] In addition, there are approximately 551 on-street parking spaces (Figure 14).[13] Combined, there are nearly 1,600 public parking spaces in Downtown. Private parking facilities provide another 1,450 parking spaces[14] and spaces are primarily reserved for customers or employees of specific land uses. The largest off-street public parking facilities are the Civic Plaza Garage at 275 Main Street (460 spaces) and the Beach Street Garage at 27 W. Beach Street (213 spaces). These two facilities are located a block away from each other in the central part of Downtown.

The City's parking permit program is currently the only source of user fees for the downtown parking system. Permit rates are $280 per annual permit and $30 per monthly permit. Daily parking permits, priced at $5 per day, are also available for the Civic Plaza Parking Garage. All public parking lots offer free, unlimited parking on Sundays and holidays.

There are a variety of parking space regulations in Downtown Watsonville. Aside from unregulated spaces, two-hour parking is the regulation type with the largest number of spaces (13 %). One-hour, two-hour, Accessible, and reserved parking spaces all make up a significant percentage (combined 28%) of spaces in the study area.

According to the Watsonville Downtown Parking Plan completed in 2017, nearly all parking facilities within Downtown are heavily underutilized (Figure 15). In general, a large parking surplus exists with a few areas of high demand and many underutilized parking lots and garages. The study found that current regulations discourage efficient use of existing off-street facilities and there is a notable lack of bicycle parking in the area. The study also found that the downtown parking district is insufficiently funded; the structure of the parking district should be adjusted to ensure that it is well-managed and fully funded.

[12] City of Watsonville, Economic Development Department, Downtown Parking. Accessed March 16, 2020. Retrieved from https://www.cityofwatsonville.org/416/Parking
[13] City of Watsonville, Watsonville Downtown Parking Study: Existing Conditions Summary (2017).
[14] Ibid 7.

Figure 13 Existing Off-Street Parking Supply

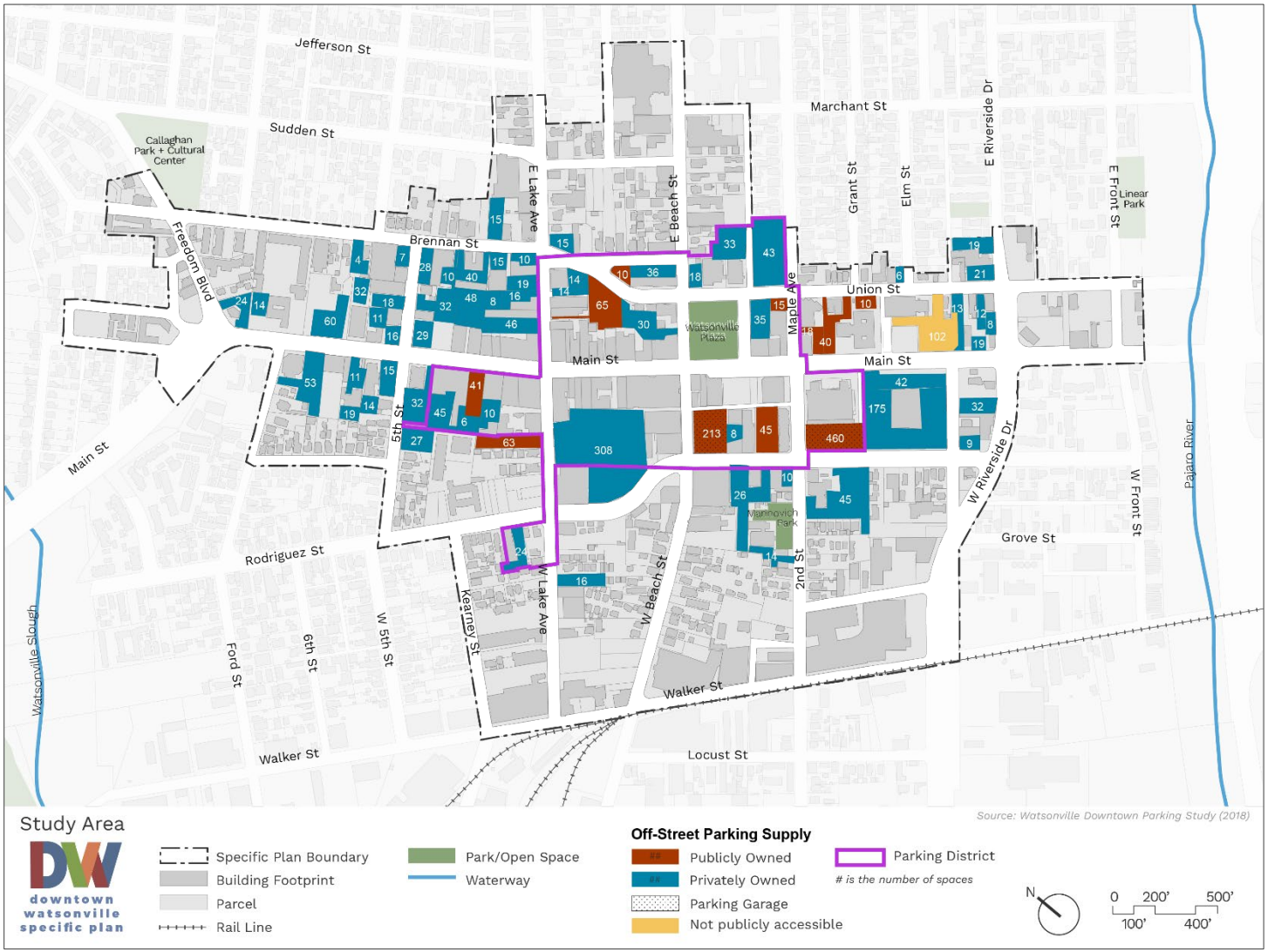


Figure 14 Existing On-Street Parking Supply

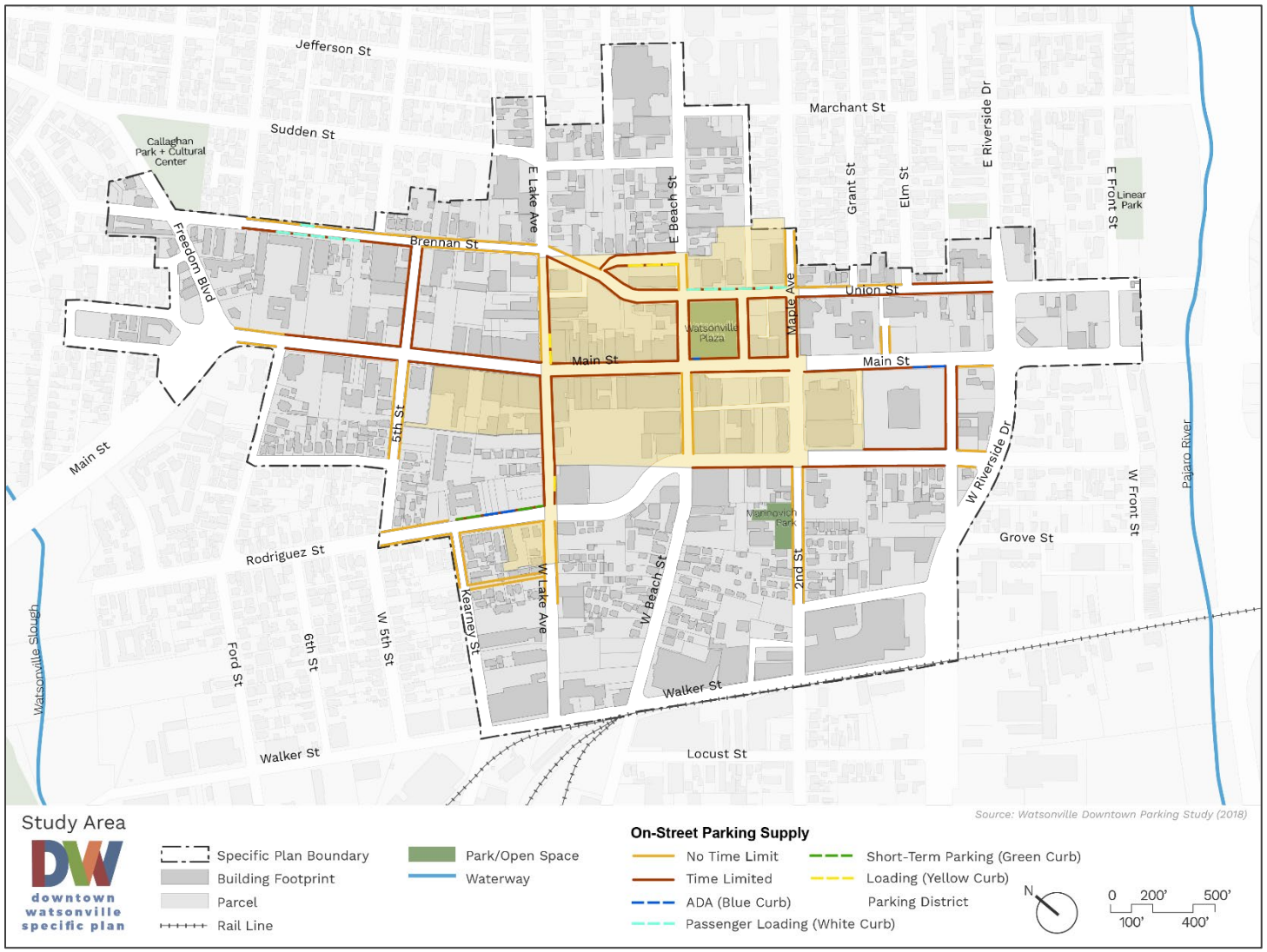
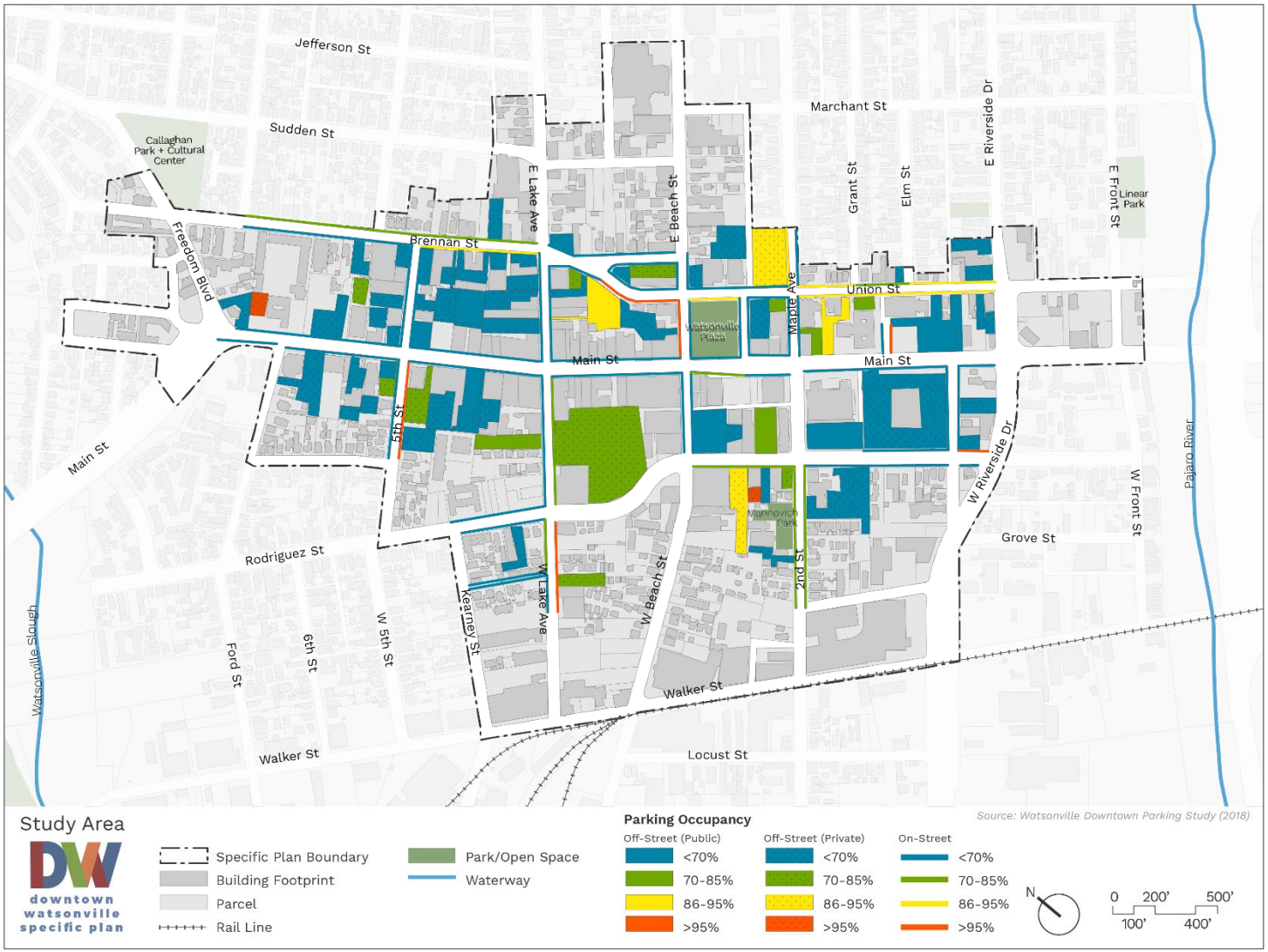


Figure 15 Existing Parking Utilization



Parking Standards

Minimum Parking Requirements

The City of Watsonville's Municipal Code outlines minimum off-street parking requirements for different land uses, including residential, commercial, and recreational parking. Off-street parking requirements by land use are provided in the Appendix. Many of Watsonville's parking standards are higher than the national standards, set by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), particularly for commercial and industrial uses. For example, parking requirements for multi-family dwelling units (two spaces per unit with additional guest spaces depending on the number of bedrooms and units in the building) and "food retail" stores (one space for every 200 square feet) are above ITE standards. The City also has a shared parking provision[15] that allows two or more non-residential uses on the same or different sites to meet parking requirements by sharing a common parking facility, thereby reducing overall construction costs. The shared facility must be within 150 feet from the primary entrance to the site.

Alternative Parking Provisions

The City's parking district policy and zoning code's accommodation of variances in areas with a substantial shared parking supply establishes a helpful precedent for flexibility on parking requirements. Parking alternatives may be permissible for off-street parking requirements if a property is part of a designated parking district, required parking for Commercial Districts is permanently provided within 150 feet of the site, and required parking for Industrial Districts is permanently provided within 400 feet of the site. Existing or proposed commercial buildings located in the Central Commercial District that are unable to meet current parking requirements for new businesses can request a variance from the Redevelopment Agency or its successor agency.

Bicycle Parking

Except for residential and agricultural areas, the City of Watsonville requires that bicycle parking spaces must be provided in addition to automobile parking. Projects must provide enough bicycle parking spaces to equal five percent of available vehicle parking spaces where 20 or more spaces are required.

Per current standards, each bicycle parking space should be a minimum of six feet in length and two feet wide and must have a bicycle rack capable of supporting bicycles of various sizes in a vertical position. Bicycle parking spaces should be clustered in lots and should not exceed 10 spaces each. These requirements will be re-evaluated during the Specific Plan development.

Loading Zones

Loading zones are spaces adjacent to a curb reserved for the exclusive use of vehicles during the loading or unloading of passengers or goods. Commercial vehicles are restricted from stopping at the curb for longer than 20 minutes while loading or unloading materials, and vehicles loading or unloading passengers are restricted to three minutes at the curb.

[15] City of Watsonville Municipal Code, Section 14-17.110 Cooperative parking facilities. Accessed March 16, 2020.

There are 17 passenger loading (white curb) spaces and 18 commercial loading (yellow curb) spaces in Downtown, which makes up 2 percent of the Downtown parking supply. Most of the commercial loading spaces are concentrated on East Lake Avenue and Brennan Street whereas most of the passenger loading spaces are located on Brennan and Union Street.

Issues & Opportunities

- **High vehicle speeds and auto-centric design detract from the comfort and safety of all modes – consider rerouting state highway connections and implementing traffic calming measures.** Downtown streets host considerable volumes of passthrough and heavy vehicle freight traffic with two State highways carried as surface streets in the study area. This also means that complete streets measures, such as lane reductions, narrowing of vehicle lanes, and design elements to reduce pedestrian crossing distances, on some key Downtown corridors may require traffic studies. Any substantive changes to the portion of State Route 152 that runs through downtown will require coordination with Caltrans as well as their review and approval.
- **In some locations the width and capacity of streets may be surplus to vehicular demand, leading to high vehicle speeds – implement speed reducing street designs.** There are opportunities for traffic calming and reallocation of space to improve comfort for all modes on these streets. Since the City has prepared a Complete Streets Plan with Caltrans funding, the City should explore potential grant funding opportunities for implementing street improvements consistent with this plan, which may include curb extensions, sidewalk extensions, roundabouts, chokers with midblock crossings, designated bike lanes, and parking lane planters. In some locations these measures may allow for relocation of utilities to increase the clear path of travel for pedestrians on sidewalks and provide an area for landscaping and other sidewalk amenities. A proposed roundabout at the intersection of Main Street and Freedom Boulevard, which is listed as one of several Non-SHOPP[16] projects for Fiscal Year 2021-22, may be eligible for future funding and partnership opportunities with Caltrans.
- **The vehicle-oriented nature of one-way Lake Avenue and Beach Street detracts from the Downtown environment – evaluate one-way to two-way conversions of Lake Avenue and Beach Street.** One-way streets have a history of damaging downtown retail. The higher speeds and vehicle-oriented design of one-way streets detract from the safety of all users, and drivers are less likely to notice pedestrians and storefronts or stop at adjacent retail. While there are exceptions, successful commercial activity is typically located on two-way streets.
- **Bicycle facilities are inconsistent and lack cohesion – complete the downtown bicycle network.** The City has made great strides in the last decade to implement more bicycle facilities. However, the network is disconnected with few routes intersecting each other and some facilities switching between Class II and Class III levels of protection. There is also a general lack of intersection treatments at points of conflict between bicycles and motor vehicles.

[16] Primarily funded through the State Highway Account, the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) is the State Highway System's "fix-it-first" program that funds the repair and preservation, emergency repairs, safety improvements, and some operational improvements on the State Highway System.

- **Provisions for pedestrians are not consistently in line with best practice – improve sidewalk design and pedestrian crossings.** In some locations, sidewalk widths are as narrow as four feet, detracting from a comfortable user experience and are not sufficient for ADA access when accounting for street furniture, utilities, and signage. Most intersections in Downtown have diagonal curb ramps serving two crosswalk legs, which is less favorable and safe than single directional perpendicular curb ramps for users with mobility impairments.
- **The Downtown parking supply is underutilized – consider opportunities to reallocate that space.** Low utilization of most off-street facilities and some on-street locations creates opportunities to explore the infill development potential of some lots, the relinquishment of on-street parking for protected bicycle facilities, and a revision of the municipal code to allow an increased number of bicycle parking spaces in a given location.
- **The Santa Cruz County Coastal Rail Trail is a major catalyst for expanded mobility in the region – identify opportunities to improve transit and bicycle connections to the corridor.** The 32-mile rail line is located within one mile of more than 80 parks, 25 schools, and over half of the County's population. Planned improvements will provide critical connections to state and regional lines at the proposed Pajaro/Watsonville Station, including those that serve the Bay Area and the anticipated High-Speed Rail. The City has worked collaboratively with the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission to implement bicycle facilities along the freight right-of-way, however, connections from Downtown's existing bicycle and pedestrian network to the corridor are limited.

APPENDIX A: Existing Transit Routes

Santa Cruz METRO

The Santa Cruz Metropolitan District (SCMTD), or Santa Cruz METRO, provides transit service throughout Santa Cruz County. Santa Cruz METRO offers fixed-route and paratransit service, also known as METRO ParaCruz, and provides connections to the Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST), the Valley Transit Authority, Amtrak, and Greyhound.

69W – Capitola Rd. / Cabrillo / Watsonville

Route 69W is an east-west route that provides service between the Watsonville Transit Center and the cities of Soquel, Live Oak, and Santa Cruz. Major destinations include Overlook Shopping Center, Watsonville Shopping Center, Aptos Branch Library, Cabrillo College, the Farm Park & Community Center, Capitola Mall Transit Center, and the Santa Cruz Metro Center (Pacific Station). From the Watsonville Transit Center, the 69W heads west on State Route 1 and continues west on Soquel Drive, Capitola Road, and Soquel Avenue towards the Santa Cruz Metro Center. Weekday service operates between 6:37 a.m. and 9:37 p.m. with one-hour headways. Weekend service operates between 7:50 a.m. to 7:48 p.m. with 30-minute headways.

69A – Capitola Rd. / Watsonville via Airport B

Route 69A is an east-west route that connects Watsonville to Soquel, Live Oak, and Santa Cruz. Service in Watsonville is primarily concentrated along Freedom and Airport Boulevard where key destinations such as Freedom Centre and Watsonville Community Hospital are served. Other major destinations include the Capitola Mall Transit Center, the Santa Cruz Metro Center, Whole Foods, and shopping plazas along Soquel Avenue. The 69A travels northwest from the Watsonville Transit Center on Freedom Boulevard, turns left on Airport Boulevard, travels on State Route 1 for several miles, and then continues west on Soquel Road where local service resumes. Weekday outbound service to Watsonville has one-hour headways and operates between 6:37 a.m. and 9:37 p.m. while weekend service has 30-minute headways and operates between 8:07 a.m. to 8:10 p.m. Weekday inbound service to Santa Cruz has average headways of 45 minutes and operates between 6:20 a.m. and 10:50 p.m. Inbound weekend service has 30-minute headways and operates from 7:50 a.m. to 7:48 p.m.

71 – Santa Cruz / Watsonville

Route 71 is a local route that provides connections to neighboring cities in the region, including Aptos, Soquel, Live Oak, and Santa Cruz. Major destinations include Ramsay Park Family Center, Callaghan Parkland Cultural Center, Airport & Freedom Centre, Rancho Del Mar Center, Cabrillo College, Dominican Hospital, and the Santa Cruz Metro Center (Pacific Station). From the Santa Cruz Metro Center, Route 71 travels east on Water Street before making several stops along Soquel Drive, which serves as a key commercial corridor for the Live Oak and Soquel communities. After traveling 8 miles along Soquel Drive, Route 71 travels southeast on Freedom Boulevard towards Downtown Watsonville where it terminates at the Watsonville Transit Center. Outbound weekday service to Watsonville operates between 6:45 a.m. to 12:45 a.m. with 30-minute headways while weekend service operates

between 7:15 a.m. to 12:45 a.m. with 30-minute headways until 3:45 p.m. Inbound service to Santa Cruz operates from 5:34 a.m. to 12:15 a.m. with 30-minute headways while weekend service operates between 6:10 a.m. to 9:10 a.m. with 30-minute headways until 3:10 p.m.

91X – Commuter Express Santa Cruz / Watsonville

Route 91X is a commuter express service connecting Downtown Watsonville to Aptos, Soquel, Live Oak, and the City of Santa Cruz. The 91X primarily travels west on State Route 1 and serves several major destinations including the Watsonville Square Shopping Center, Aptos Branch Library, Cabrillo College, and the Santa Cruz Metro Center (Pacific Station) where connections to the Greyhound network and local Santa Cruz METRO bus service are available. Inbound service to Santa Cruz operates on weekdays between 5:57 a.m. to 5:25 p.m. with average headways of 45 minutes. Outbound service to Watsonville operates on weekdays between 6:55 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with average headways of 35 minutes.

72 – Hospital / Pinto

Route 72 is a north-south route that provides service between Downtown Watsonville and Amesti. The route primarily serves community centers and shopping plazas, including Ramsay Park Family Center, Overlook Shopping Center, Watsonville Square Shopping Center, Freedom Branch Library, Airport & Freedom Centre, and Pinto Lake City Park. Service is available on weekdays from 6:45 a.m. to 6:45 p.m. with one-hour headways.

72W – Corralitos Weekend

Route 72W is a north-south route that shares a similar alignment with Route 72, however, service is limited to weekends. Key destinations include Ramsay Park Family Center, Watsonville Square Shopping Center, Freedom Branch Library, and the Corralitos Community Center. The route begins travels north on Green Valley Road then northwest on Amesti Road towards Corralitos Community Center on Corralitos Road before traveling southbound on Green Valley Road back to the Transit Center. Weekend service operates between 9:25 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. with two-hour headways.

74S – PVHS Watsonville Hospital

Route 74S is a north-south route that connects Downtown Watsonville to Freedom. Route 74S provides connections to several medical centers including Kaiser Permanente Watsonville Medical Center, Watsonville Community Hospital, Watsonville Center Urgent Care, and a Quest Diagnostics Center on Green Valley Road. Other key destinations include the Watsonville Square Shopping Center, New School Senior High School, Pajaro Valley High School, Airport & Freedom Centre, and the Pajaro Valley Unified School District. Service is restricted to weekdays, with one morning and one evening trip each day.

75 – Green Valley

Route 75 is a north-south route that connects Downtown Watsonville to Corralitos. Major destinations include Ramsay Park Family Center, Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Airport and Freedom Centre, Monte Vista Christian School, and Watsonville Square Shopping Center. The route begins at the Watsonville Transit Center and makes several stops along Main Street before continuing north on Green Valley Road

towards Monte Vista Christian School. Route 75 operates between 5:15 a.m. to 7:15 p.m. on weekdays with one-hour headways, and between 6:05 a.m. to 6:45 p.m. on weekends with one hour and 10-minute headways.

79 – East Lake

Route 79 is a north-south route that serves residential neighborhoods east of Freedom Boulevard. Major destinations served include East Lake Village Shopping Center, TS MacQuiddy Elementary School, Watsonville Health Center, Crestview Garden apartments, and Watsonville High School. The route begins at the Watsonville Transit Center, travels northwest on Main Street, turns right on Freedom Boulevard, travels east on Martinelli Street towards College Road before heading southbound on E Lake Ave and East Beach Street. Route 79 operates runs between 7:25 a.m. to 6:10 p.m. on weekdays with one-hour headways, and between 8:30 a.m. and 5:15 a.m. on weekends with 4-hour headways.

Monterey-Salinas Transit

Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) offers public transit service in Monterey County. Service is primarily to the greater Monterey and Salinas areas but extends as far north as Watsonville. Most lines originate at the Monterey or Salinas Transit Centers and serve many local shopping areas, job centers, tourist attractions, and residential neighborhoods.

Fixed-Route Transit

MST operates three regional fixed-route lines to Watsonville: Routes 27, 28, and 29. Fares for regional lines are $3.50 one-way and $1.75 for discounted fares.[17]

Route 27 Watsonville - Marina

Route 27 is a north-south route connecting Downtown Watsonville to Moss Landing, Castroville, and Marina. Key destinations include the Marina Transit Exchange, the Moro Cojo neighborhood, and the Watsonville Transit Center. Route 27 travels north on Del Monte Avenue from the Marina Transit Exchange onto State Route 1 where it continues north towards the Watsonville Transit Center. Outbound weekday service to Watsonville runs from 6:53 a.m. to 7:48 p.m. with 1-hour headways while inbound weekday service to Marina operates from 5:50 a.m. o 6:44 p.m. with 2-hour headways.

Route 28 Watsonville – Salinas via Castroville

Route 28 provides connections between Watsonville and Moss Landing, Castroville, Prunedale, and Salinas. Major destinations include the Salinas Amtrak/Greyhound Station, the Salinas Transit Center, the Watsonville Transit Center and several park and ride sites along State Route 1. Route 28 travels northwest on W Market Street from the Salinas Transit Center to Highway 183, then continues north on State Route 1 towards the Watsonville Transit Center. Select trips detour to Prunedale via Highway 156.

[17] Monterey-Salinas Transit offers discounted fares to youth (ages 18 and under), seniors (ages 65 and up), individuals with disabilities, Medicare Card holders, Veterans, and MST RIDES Paratransit Eligibility card holders.

Weekday service operates between 6:45 a.m. to 10:07 p.m. with 2-hour headways while weekend service operates between 6:45 a.m. to 10:07 p.m. with 2-hour headways.

Route 29 Watsonville – Salinas via Prunedale

Route 29 connects downtown Watsonville to Las Lomas, Prunedale, and Salinas. Key destinations include the Salinas Transit Center, Northridge Mall in Salinas, the Prunetree Center, and the Watsonville Transit Center. Route 29 provides limited local service along N Main Street and Prunedale Road before continuing north on San Miguel Canyon Road and Salinas Road towards the Watsonville Transit Center. Service operates between 5:45 a.m. to 6:50 p.m. on weekdays with 2-hour headways and between 7:34 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on weekends with 2-hour headways.