



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.

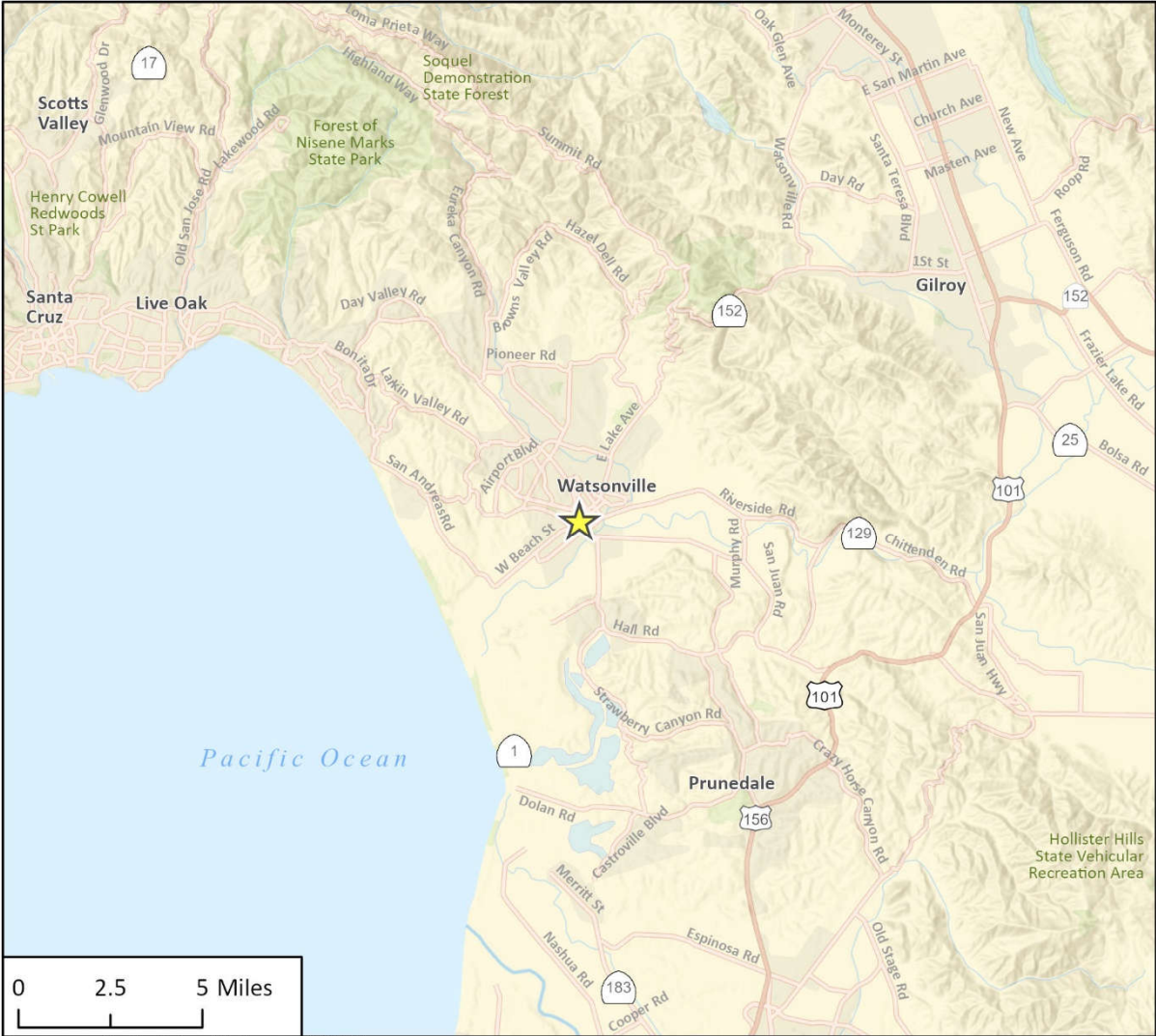
4. General Plan Designation

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

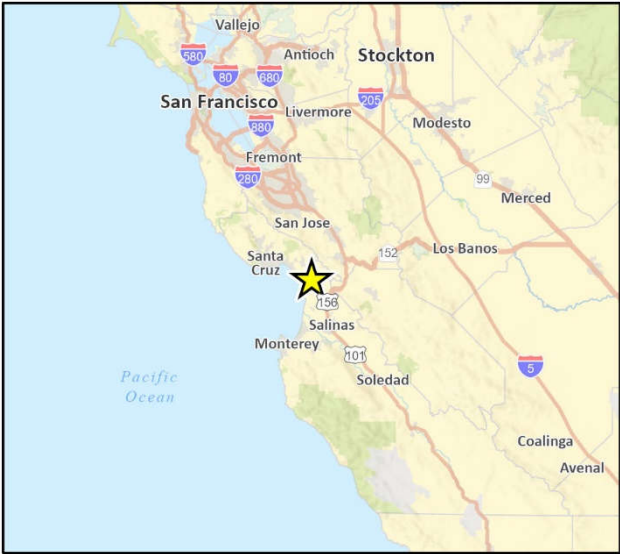


Figure 2 Plan Area Boundaries

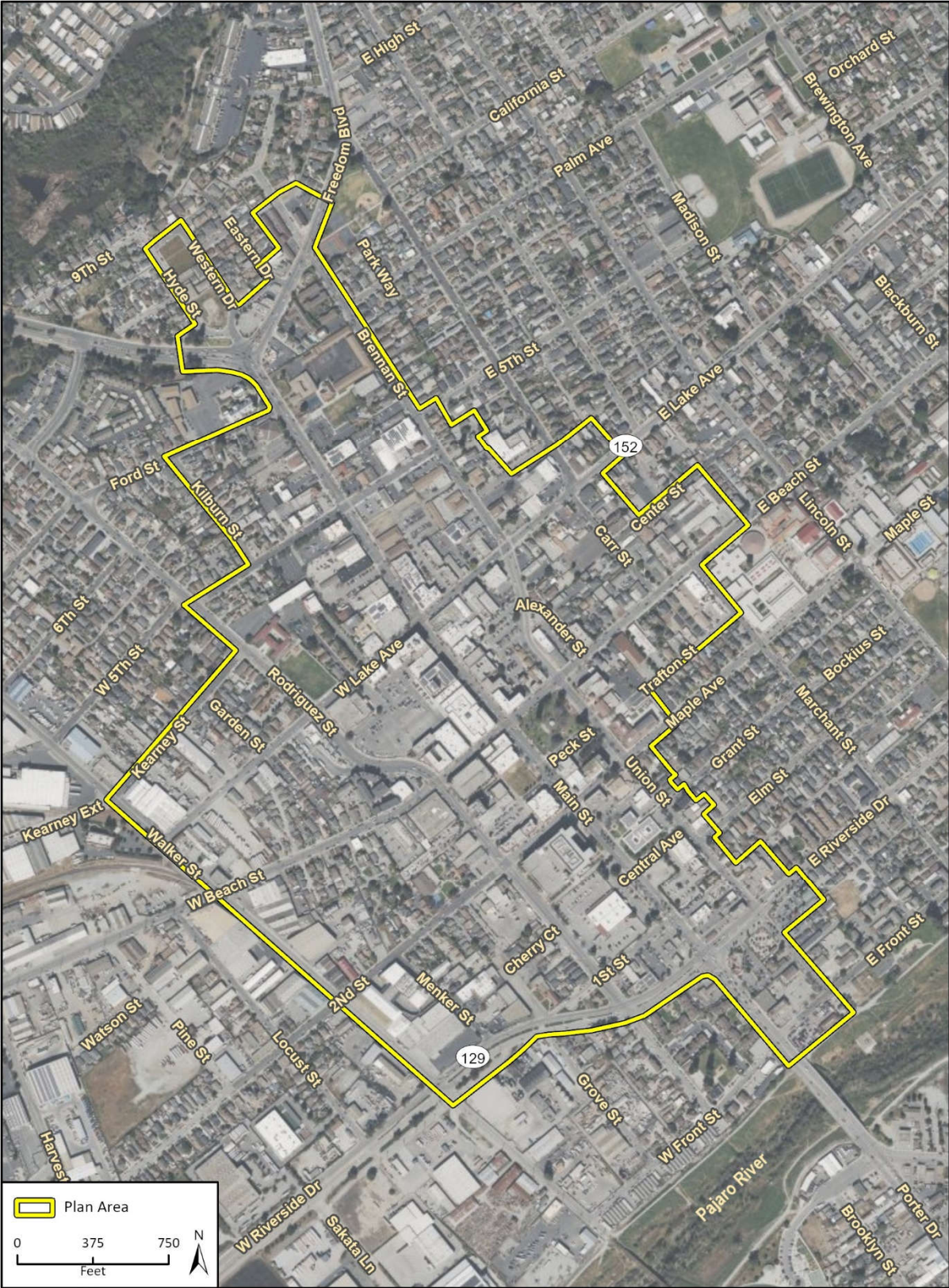


Figure 3 Existing General Plan Land Use Designations

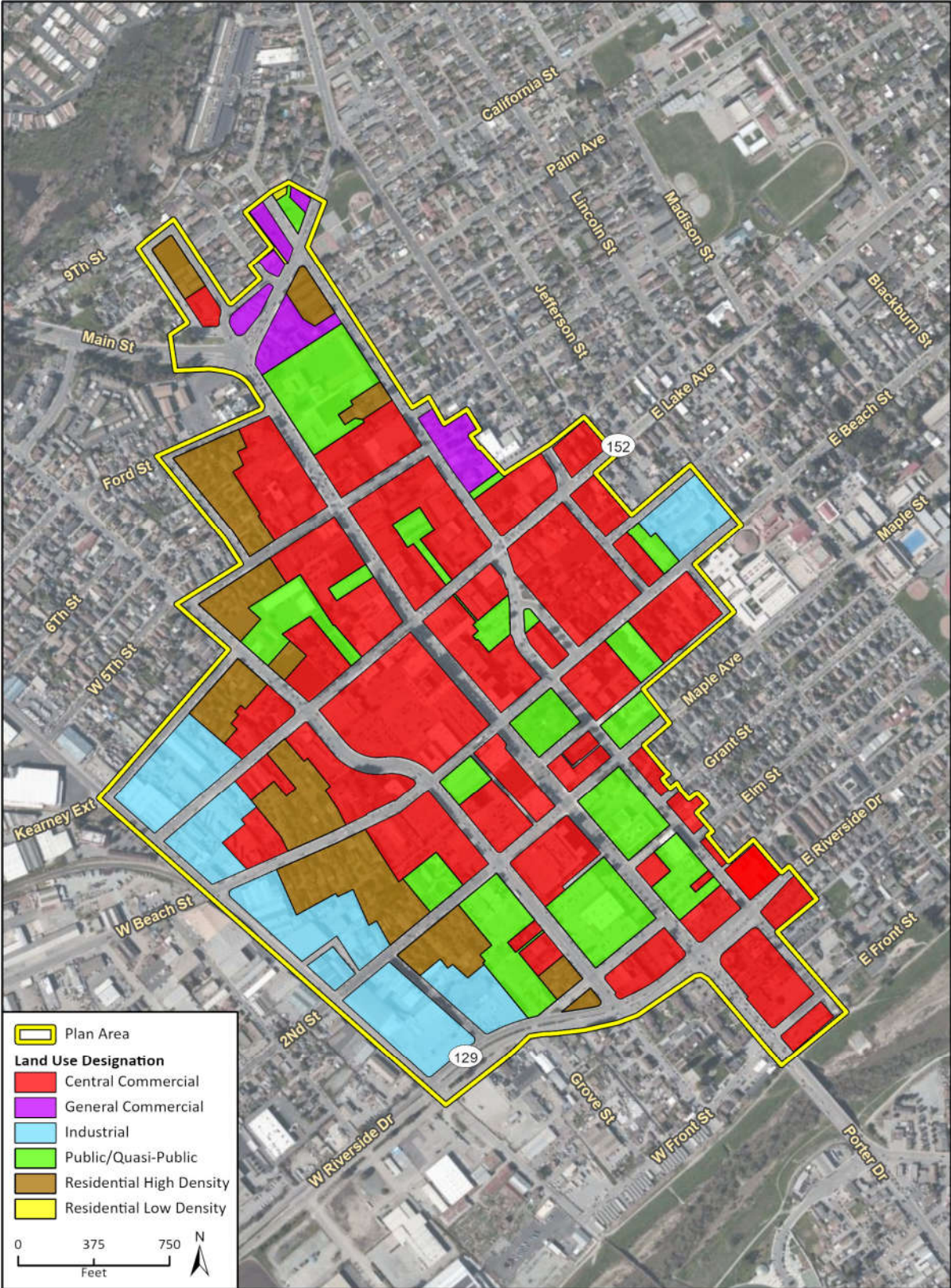
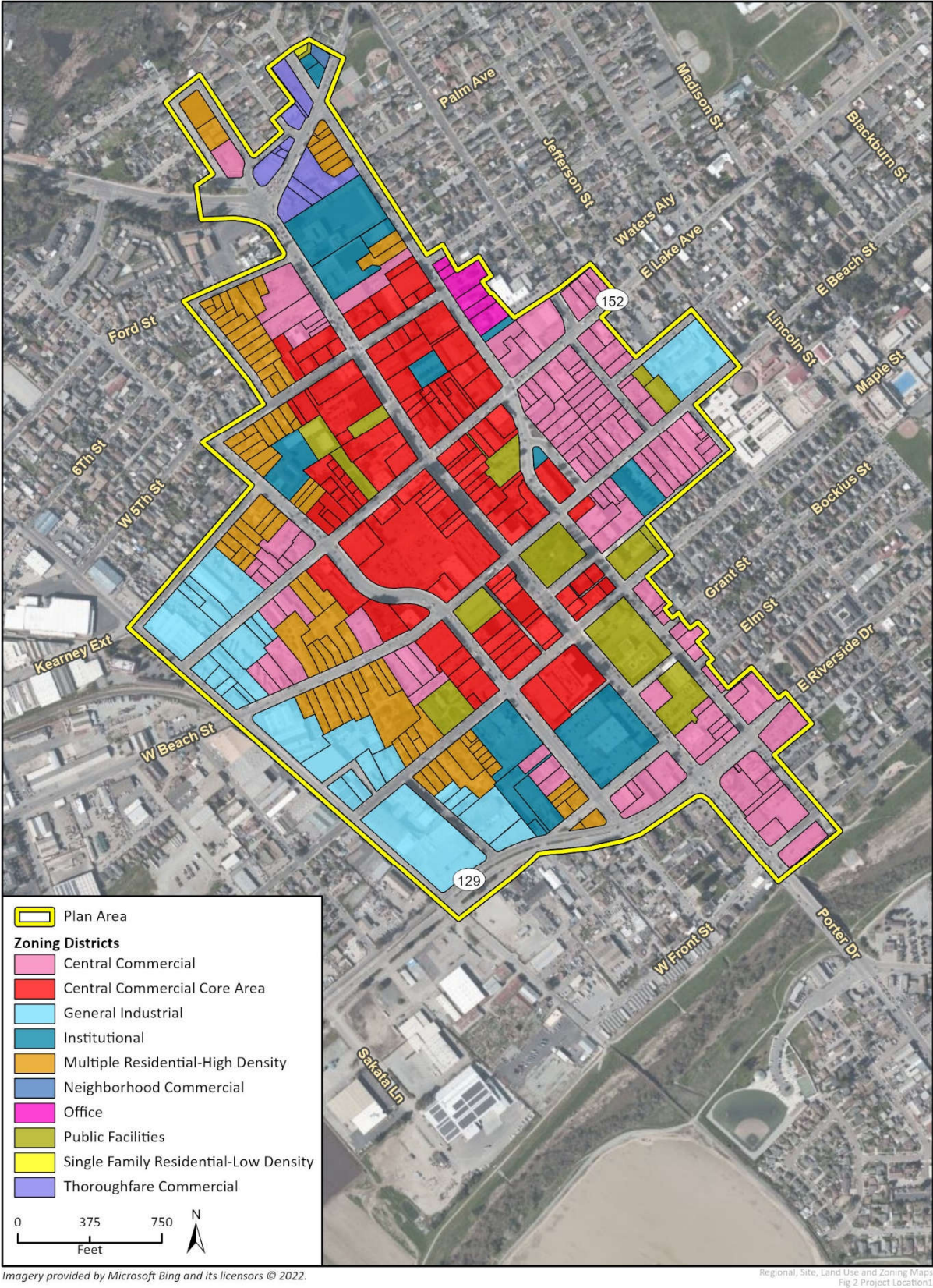


Figure 4 Existing Zoning Districts



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?*
- 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?*

Construction

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 impacts are less than significant.

Operation

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.

However, based on the programmatic nature of the DWSP, the proposed project would not routinely use, store, or dispose of hazardous materials. Therefore, project operation would not involve the routine use, storage, transportation, or disposal of substantial quantities of hazardous materials and would not result in the release of such materials into the environment. Impacts from project operation would be less than significant.

LESS THAN 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

¹ Downstream users are companies or individuals that use chemicals.

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. 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. As such, 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 project 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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