



Watsonville City Plaza Expansion and Revitalization Project

Initial Study – Mitigated Negative Declaration Final Draft

prepared by

City of Watsonville
Parks and Community Services Department
250 Main Street
Watsonville, California 95076
Contact: Nick Calubaquib, Director

prepared with the assistance of

Rincon Consultants, Inc.
200 Washington Street, Suite 207
Santa Cruz, California 95060

November 2019



RINCON CONSULTANTS, INC.
Environmental Scientists | Planners | Engineers
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Initial Study

1. Project Title

Watsonville City Plaza Expansion and Revitalization Project

2. Lead Agency Name and Address

City of Watsonville
Parks and Community Services Department
250 Main Street
Watsonville, California 95076

3. Contact Person and Phone Number

Nick Calubaquib, Director
Phone: 831-768-3240

4. Project Location

The Watsonville City Plaza Expansion and Revitalization project site is the Watsonville City Plaza at 350 Main Street (Assessor Parcel Number 017-112-01) in the City of Watsonville in Santa Cruz County, California. The plaza site is bordered by Main, East Beach, Union, and Peck streets in the City's historic center. Watsonville is located approximately three miles east of the Pacific Ocean and borders the northwest banks of the Pajaro River and the Monterey County line. The City is situated approximately 18 miles southeast of the City of Santa Cruz, and approximately 19 miles north of the City of Salinas. The project site is 2.3-acres, including the 1.4-acre Plaza and portions of surrounding Peck Street and Union Street adjacent to the Plaza.

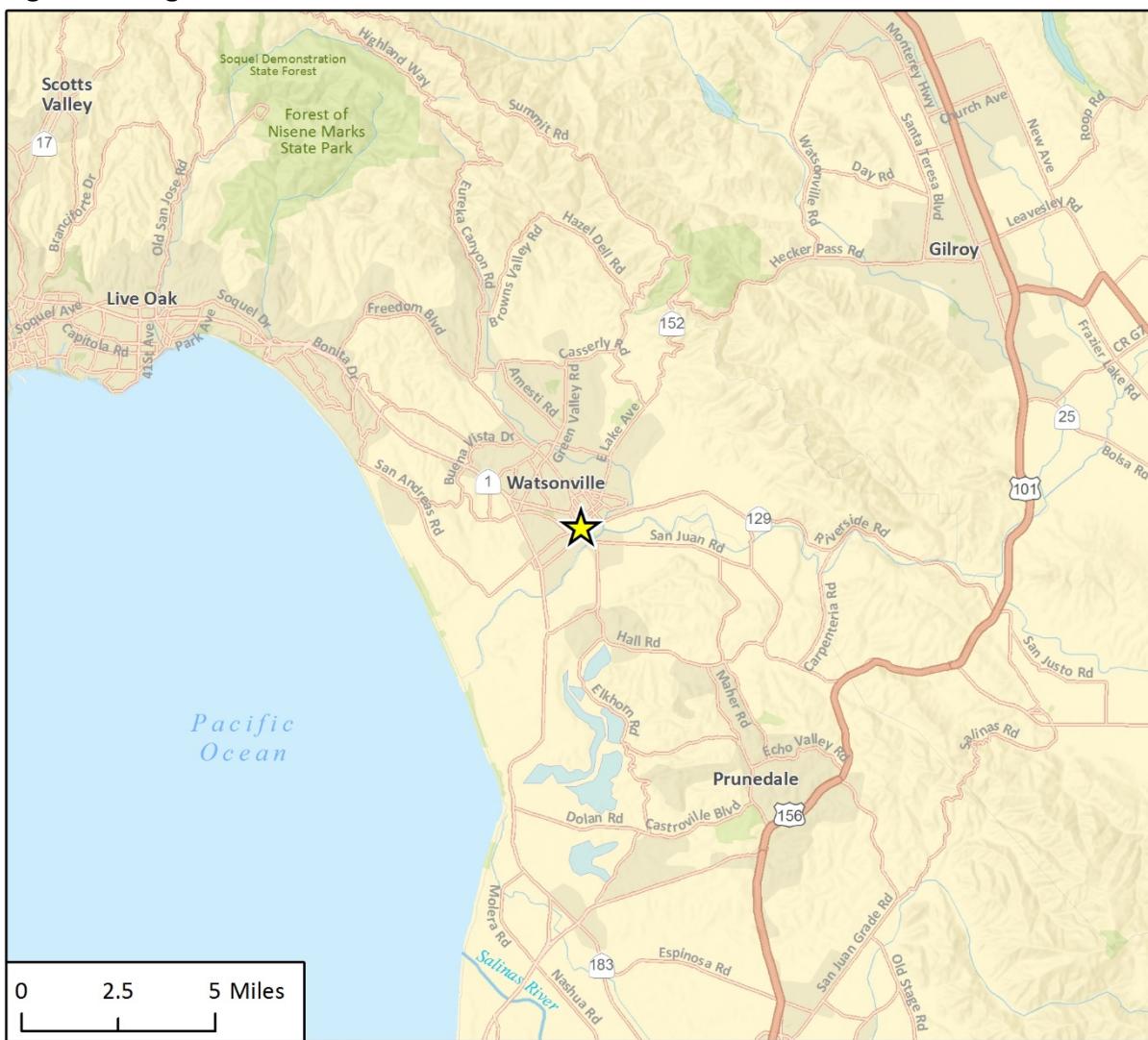
Figure 1 shows the regional location of the project site. Figure 2 shows the proposed project site and surrounding uses.

5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address

Nick Calubaquib
City of Watsonville
Parks and Community Services Department
250 Main Street
Watsonville, California 95076

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Figure 1 Regional Location



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Project Location

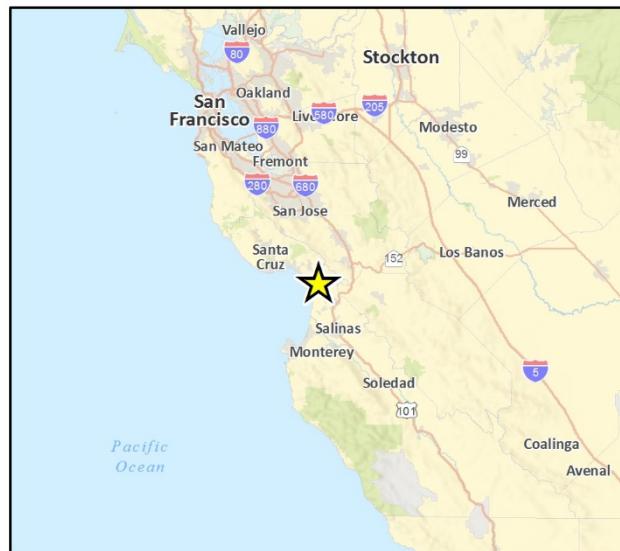


Fig 1 Regional Location

Figure 2 Project Location



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6. Setting and Surrounding Land Uses

The Watsonville City Plaza (Plaza) is a 1.4-acre plaza located in the southeastern portion of the City of Watsonville. The Plaza is rectilinear shaped (approximately 280'x240'), with the Peck Street and East Beach Street frontages longer than the Main Street and Union Street frontages. It is developed with turfied and planted areas, paved walkways, portable restrooms, park benches, lighting, a fountain, cannons, and a gazebo. The majority of the site is planted in turf grass, and is accented by numerous mature trees distributed throughout the site. Landscape planters are also prominent along the perimeter and surrounding the gazebo. Six paved walkways extend from the gazebo in all directions to the surrounding roadways. Figure 3 below provides photos of the project site.

The project site is located in an urbanized area, neighbored by two-, three-, and four-story structures. The site is bounded by Main Street and commercial uses to the southwest; East Beach Street, with commercial uses and office uses to the northwest; Union Street and educational facilities to the northeast; and Peck Street with commercial use to the southeast.

General Plan Designation

Public/Quasi-Public; categories of allowed uses under this designation include government or quasi-public buildings or facilities, public utility facilities, active and passive recreational facilities, schools, and hospitals.

Zoning

PF (Public Facilities); allowed uses within PF zones include recreational use, such as parkland,¹ subject to Design Review, per Watsonville Municipal Code Section 14-16.802(d)(5).

¹ "Park or playfield, for day use or with lighted facilities" is defined as follows per Watsonville Municipal Code Section 14-16.803(d)(5)(i): A recreational area providing parks and playfields. This includes publicly-owned and commonly-owned recreational facilities such as playgrounds, parks, game courts, swimming pools, and playing fields.

Figure 3 Site Photographs



Photograph 1. Gazebo, facing northeast



Photograph 2. Fountain located at western portion of plaza, facing west

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Photograph 3. Cannon monument located at southeast portion of the plaza, facing north



Photograph 4. View of Peck Street and plaza from the east

7. Description of Project

Project Purpose

The Plaza is locally considered by many to be the “heart of the city” and has been a locale for community gatherings and celebrations for well over a century. The purpose of the Watsonville City Plaza Expansion and Revitalization Project (project) is to revitalize and improve the Plaza’s function and appeal. The project would provide facilities improvements to the Plaza’s elements and renovate and preserve the site’s historic features. The project would also involve the expansion of the footprint of the Plaza to incorporate portions of the right-of-way of adjacent streets. This expanded footprint is intended to facilitate better accommodation of the weekly farmers market and other special events.

Proposed Project

The proposed project would involve a redesign of the Plaza, including the addition of a permanent restroom structure, additional seating areas, landscaping, lighting and signage improvements, and a permanent stage with a modular component for outdoor performances. The project would also include pedestrian and roadway improvements, including one bulb-out extension along Main Street at the pedestrian crossing at Peck Street and decorative permeable pavers within Peck Street and Union Street. A conceptual project design is provided below as Figure 4.

The Plaza was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1983. The proposed project includes restoration and preservation of the site’s historic features, which include a gazebo, bandstand, cannons, and water fountain.

The project would maintain the site’s main features, including the gazebo and the existing configuration of six pathways radiating outward to the street from the gazebo. Several benches, a flag pole, drinking fountain, water fountain, perimeter landscaping, and large trees would remain in place.

Project improvements are listed below and shown in Figure 4.

- Seismically retrofit and cosmetically refurbish the gazebo
- Repaving of gazebo surface and surroundings with permeable pavers and landscaping
- Refurbishment of the fountain area with a brick plaza, park benches, and interpretative signage
- Installation of 18-inch high permanent stage facing out from the gazebo toward Main Street with removable stage portion with paver pattern and guardrail.
- ADA-accessible spectator area, permeable pavers, and a sloped ramp with guardrails to the stage
- Installation of a game table area south of the gazebo
- Installation of a group picnic area east of the gazebo
- Installation of a historic/art element pedestal at the corner of Main Street and East Beach Street
- Repaving of existing pathways with brick accent
- Installation of a restroom near the corner of Union Street and Peck Street
- Resurfacing of Peck Street with permeable pavers
- Resurfacing of Union Street parking area with permeable pavers

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- Installation of a raised crosswalk with removable bollards at the corner of Main Street and Peck Street
- Modification and addition to the Peck and Main Street curb extension Planting of six 15-gallon sized trees, 14 smaller ornamental trees, and four large statured shade trees
 - 17 existing trees will be maintained on site, including three trees designated under Chapter 7-13, *Preservation of Historical Trees*, of the Watsonville Municipal Code (existing trees listed in Table 1)
 - 16 trees will be removed from the site, including nine unhealthy trees, and two trees will be relocated

Table 1 Existing On-site Tree Inventory

Species	Number	Action
<i>Acer palmatum</i>	1	Protect
<i>Cedrus atlantica 'Glauca'</i>	1	Protect
<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>	1	Protect
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	1	Protect
<i>Fagus sylvatica 'Purpurea'</i>	1	Protect
<i>Jacaranda mimosiflora</i>	1	Protect
<i>Magnolia soulangiana</i>	1	Protect
<i>Metasequoia glyptostroboides</i>	1	Protect
<i>Prunus 'Akebono'</i>	4	Protect
<i>Sequoia sempervirens</i>	1	Protect
<i>Sequoiadendron giganteum</i>	1	Protect
<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>	3	Protect
<i>Prunus 'Akebono'</i>	1	Relocate
<i>Prunus 'Mt. Fuji'</i>	1	Relocate
<i>Brahea edulis</i>	1	Remove
<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	1	Remove
<i>Picea abies</i>	1	Remove
<i>Pyrus calleryana</i>	1	Remove
<i>Taxus baccata</i>	2	Remove
<i>Trachycarpus fortunei</i>	3	Remove
<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>	1	Remove
<i>Ulmus spp.</i>	1	Remove
<i>Prunus 'Kwanzan'</i>	1	Remove
<i>Acer miyabei</i>	1	Remove
<i>Magnolia soulangiana</i>	2	Remove
<i>Malus spp. (crabapple)</i>	1	Remove

Source: City of Watsonville (2019)

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Figure 4 Watsonville City Plaza Conceptual Plan



Project Construction

Project construction would involve changes to the 1.4-acre Plaza and to surrounding streets. The site and the four adjacent streets would be temporarily disturbed for construction, construction staging, and other related activities. Pending the receipt of grant funding, construction is anticipated to begin in January 2021 and is expected to take approximately 10 months to complete.

Construction activities would generally involve site preparation, minor grading, construction, paving, and revegetation. Construction details are provided below in Table 2.

Table 2 Construction Details

Construction Details				
	Square Feet	Materials	Stalls	Additional Detail
Restroom	300-400	Prefabricated unit on a concrete foundation	2	Fully lighted and plumbed; 60-100 feet of trenching required for sewer connection
Stage and spectator area	1500	1,200 (concrete paving, 200 (paving accents), 450 (concrete ramp)	N/A	x
Pathway paving	15,200	4,000 (concrete paving – pedestrian), 4,600 (concrete paving with brick accent – pedestrian), 2,100 (brick paving), 1,500 (pervious pavers), 3,000 (decomposed granite)	N/A	x
Gazebo paving	3100	2,900 (permeable pavers), 200 (brick)	N/A	x
Fountain paving	350	350 brick paving	N/A	
Resurfacing of Peck Street and of Union Street parking area	13,000	Permeable pavers	N/A	x

Source: City of Watsonville (2019)

8. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required

The City of Watsonville is the sole agency with the authority to approve the proposed project, including issuing a Design Review Permit.

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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.

<input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Energy
<input type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils	<input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials
<input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise	<input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Services
<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems	<input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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.

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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

Date

Printed Name

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 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?

Setting

The project site is 2.3-acres which includes a 1.4-acre plaza and portions of adjacent streets. The site is maintained as a public space, with irrigated landscaping and benches for public seating and gathering. The Plaza contains several features of visual interest, including a gazebo, cannons, and a fountain. Several paved walkways traverse the Plaza and border the perimeter along the surrounding roadways. The border walkways include decorative brick along Main Street. The area surrounding the Plaza is an urbanized portion of downtown Watsonville. Surrounding structures include: a four-story masonry office building and surface parking located to the north front onto East Beach Street, a two-story building with a clocktower and gated plaza located to the north of the surface parking also fronting onto East Beach Street, two and three-story buildings with a connecting breezeway fronting onto Main Street, a surface parking lot located at the corner of Peck and Union Streets, and a single story building located south of the surface parking lot along Peck Street. A public park and two-story structures are located along Main Street.

a. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

The segments of East Beach Street and Main Street adjacent to the project site are both within scenic routes, as designated by the Urban Design and Scenic Resources chapter of the Watsonville 2005 General Plan. East Beach Street is a designated scenic route from Main Street to Beck Street, and Main Street is a designated scenic route from State Route 1 (SR 1) to the Pajaro River (City of Watsonville 1994).

The following General Plan goals and policies from the Urban Design and Scenic Resources chapter relate to the proposed project:

- **Goal 5.4 – Downtown:** preserve and enhance the visual appearance of Main Street from the Pajaro River Bridge to Freedom Boulevard.
- **Goal 5.9 – Scenic Corridors:** protect and enhance the views of and from the scenic streets and highways in Watsonville and the Planning Area.

The proposed project would involve a redesign of the existing Plaza and would not result in adverse effect on the scenic vistas from Main Street and East Beach Street. The project would seismically retrofit and cosmetically refurbish the existing gazebo and fountain, add a restroom structure, incorporate an elevated stage with sloped path of travel for ADA accessibility, install game table and group picnic area, resurface existing walkways within the Plaza, parking areas along Union Street, as well as Peck Street from Main Street to Union Street, remove some trees and vegetation, and add new plantings and trees throughout the Plaza.

The restroom facility would measure approximately 300-400 square feet and one-story in height. The stage and spectator area would cover approximately 1,500 square feet of ground. The stage would be elevated 18 inches from ground level. The proposed Plaza improvements would not substantially block or degrade views from designated scenic routes on East Beach Street and Main Street. Therefore, impacts related to scenic vistas would be less than significant.

LESS THAN 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?

State Route 152 (SR 152) includes a series of local roads within Watsonville, including East Beach Street, adjacent to the project site. SR 152 in Watsonville is listed as “eligible” under the California State Scenic Highway System (California Department of Transportation [Caltrans] 2019). The project would add a restroom and a stage/spectator area to the Plaza, which is visible from SR 152. These additions would cover about three percent of the Plaza’s square footage (1,900 square feet divided by 1.4 acres or 60,984 square feet). The project also includes restoration and refurbishment of historic features, including a fountain and gazebo, both visible from East Beach Street. Refer to Section 5, *Cultural Resources*, for further discussion of the site’s historic features. The project would result in a net increase of trees onsite.

The project would not substantially or adversely alter the views of the project site from the adjacent segment of SR 152. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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 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?*

The project site is in an urbanized area. The project would not result in a change of land use or require a zoning change. The purpose of the project is to revitalize a public space, including a net addition of trees and preservation of existing historic resources. Therefore, the project is consistent with General Plan Goals 5.4 and 5.9, listed above. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

d. *Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?*

The project site is lit by existing lampposts throughout the Plaza as well as streetlights on surrounding streets. Lighting within the Plaza is used for public safety and is not used for holding nighttime recreational events. The proposed project would retain the existing streetlights. The project would require removing, moving, and adding some light fixtures within the Plaza. However, overall lighting of the site would be similar before and after project buildout, and any proposed lighting would be required to meet City lighting standards. Compliance with lighting standards would reduce potential lighting impacts to a less than significant level. Therefore, the impact of new lighting would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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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, 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>a. Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, 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?</i></p> <p><i>b. Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?</i></p> <p><i>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?</i></p>				

The project site is zoned Public Facility (PF) and is a plaza within an urban area. Neither the site nor the surrounding area is designated or used for agricultural production. The nearest agricultural land

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use occurs approximately 0.5 mile southeast of the site. The project site is not under a Williamson Act contract.

The proposed project involves redesigning an existing plaza and would not require zoning changes. The project would not conflict with any agricultural land use or zoning, and would not change the environment in a way that would result in farmland conversion.

It is worth noting that the main Watsonville farmers market takes place weekly at the Plaza site. The farmers market is a popular event that supports the larger agricultural community by providing fresh agricultural products to the public in a festive environment. The proposed project would enhance the setting for the farmers market, which enhances both the economics and the public knowledge of the agricultural industry.

Taken together, there would be no adverse impact on agricultural resources.

NO IMPACT

- 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 forest land to non-forest use?*

The project site is in an urban area and there is no forest land on or in the vicinity of the site. Neither the site nor the surrounding area is designated or used for timber production or forest preservation. Sixteen trees on the site would be removed, seventeen trees would be protected and maintained on the site, two trees would be relocated, and 24 new trees would be planted on the site. The total number of urban landscaping trees on the site would increase by eight. There would be no impact.

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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Air Quality Standards and Attainment

The City of Watsonville is within the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB), which is comprised of Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito counties and is under the jurisdiction of the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD).² As the local air quality management agency, MBARD is required to monitor air pollutant levels to ensure that state and federal air quality standards are met and, if they are not met, to develop strategies to meet the standards. Depending on whether the standards are met or exceeded, the NCCAB is classified as being in “attainment” or “nonattainment.” The NCCAB is designated as nonattainment for the state standards for suspended particulate matter (PM₁₀) and ozone (California Air Resources Board [CARB] 2017). The NCCAB is in attainment of all other federal and state standards.

Air Quality Management

Because the NCCAB is designated as nonattainment for the state ozone and PM₁₀ standards, MBARD is required to implement strategies to reduce pollutant levels to recognized acceptable standards. In March 2017, MBARD adopted the *2012-2015 Air Quality Management Plan* (2015 AQMP) as an update to the 2012 AQMP. The 2015 AQMP is based on growth forecasts provided by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) and assesses and updates elements of the 2012 AQMP, including the air quality trends analysis, emissions inventory, and mobile source programs. The 2015 AQMP only addresses attainment of the state eight-hour ozone standard because in 2012, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) designated the

² MBARD was formerly called the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution District (MBUAPCD); accordingly, documents authored by the MBUAPCD are cited as authored by MBARD in this document.

NCCAB as in attainment for the current national eight-hour ozone standard of 0.075 parts per million (ppm). In October 2015, the national standard was reduced to 0.070 ppm. However, the NCCAB continues to be in attainment with the federal ozone standard (MBARD 2017).

The following MBARD rules (MBARD 2019) would limit emissions of air pollutants during project construction:

- **Rule 400 (Visible Emissions).** Discharge of visible air pollutant emissions into the atmosphere from any emission source for a period or periods aggregating more than three minutes in any one hour, as observed using an appropriate test method, is prohibited.
- **Rule 402 (Nuisances).** No person shall discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other materials which cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public; or which endanger the comfort, repose, health, or safety of any such persons or the public; or which cause, or have a natural tendency to cause, injury or damage to business or property.

Significance Thresholds

To determine whether a project would have a significant impact to air quality, Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* (effective December 2018) asks whether a project would:

- 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 in 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

Criteria for determining consistency with MBARD's AQMP are defined in Section 5.3 of MBARD's *CEQA Air Quality Guidelines* (2008). A construction project would be inconsistent with the AQMP if it has not been accommodated in the emissions budget contained in the AQMP. If this is the case, the construction project would also have a significant cumulative impact related to attainment of the state ozone standard unless project emissions are completely offset.

For construction activities, MBARD has established a PM₁₀ threshold of 82 pounds per day. This threshold only applies if construction is located nearby or upwind of sensitive receptors. Sensitive receptors near the site include the college facility on Union Street; therefore the threshold of 82 pounds per day is applicable. In addition, a significant air quality impact related to ozone precursor or PM₁₀ emissions may occur if a project uses equipment that is not "typical construction equipment." According to MBARD, typical construction equipment includes, but is not limited to, dump trucks, scrappers, bulldozers, compactors, and front-end loaders. MBARD states that emissions of ozone precursors from construction projects using typical construction equipment are accommodated in the emission inventories of state- and federally-required air plans and would not have a significant impact on the attainment and maintenance of ozone ambient air quality standards.

In addition, a significant air quality impact related to carbon monoxide (CO) would occur if the project would cause one or more of the following to occur (MBARD 2008):

- The level of service (LOS) at an intersection or road segment to degrade from D or better to E or F
- The volume to capacity (V/C) ratio at an intersection or road segment to increase by 0.05 or more
- The delay at an intersection currently operating at LOS E or F to increase by ten seconds or more
- Reserve capacity at an unsignalized intersection currently operating at LOS E or F to decrease by 50 or more
- Substantial heavy-duty traffic or substantial traffic along urban street canyons or near a major stationary source of CO

a. *Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?*

The proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the 2015 AQMP. As discussed under *Significance Thresholds*, a construction project would be inconsistent with the AQMP if it has not been accommodated in the emissions budget contained in the AQMP. The project would not add housing or induce population or development growth. Roadway modifications included in the project would not add lanes or change traffic patterns and therefore would not increase capacity or volume of the existing roads. Therefore, the project would not result in additional emissions above those currently occurring on the existing roads, which have been accommodated in the emissions budget of the 2015 AQMP. The project would not conflict with the 2015 AQMP. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

b. *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?*

As mentioned under *Air Quality Management*, the NCCAB is designated nonattainment for the state standards for PM₁₀ and ozone. The NCCAB is in attainment of all other federal and state standards.

Construction

Construction of the proposed project would generate air pollutants associated with fugitive dust and exhaust emissions from construction equipment. Construction activities would include site preparation for addition of a prefabricated 300-400 square foot bathroom structure, installation of the bathroom and associated utilities, construction of a stage and viewing area, and approximately 31,650 square feet of repaving, including removal of existing pavement.

A significant impact would occur if the project resulted in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment, namely ozone or PM₁₀. As described above under *Significance Thresholds*, emissions of ozone precursors from construction projects using typical construction equipment would not have a significant impact on the attainment and maintenance of ozone ambient air quality standards. The project would include typical construction activities, such as site clearing and paving, and would not require atypical construction equipment. Therefore, a significant impact related to ozone emissions would not occur.

A significant impact from PM₁₀ emissions would occur if the project would exceed the threshold of 82 pounds per day. MBARD provides a screening criterion for determining whether or not construction activity could result in a significant PM₁₀ emissions impact. For a construction site with

minimal earthmoving,³ the potential threshold used for screening purposes is 8.1 acres per day. For a construction site with earthmoving,⁴ the potential threshold is 2.2 acres per day. Because the project would involve minor grading, the 2.2 screening threshold is used. The Plaza is 1.4 acres in size, and including affected portions of adjacent streets, the project site is approximately 2.3 acres in size. However, construction activity would occur on approximately 33,550 square feet (31,650 square feet of re-paving plus 1,900 square feet of construction), or 0.77 acre. Further, grading would be limited and would include preparing a foundation for the restroom and trenching to connect the sewer line. Therefore, the project would not exceed the screening criteria and per the MBARD guidelines, it is not anticipated to exceed thresholds for a potential PM₁₀ emissions impact. Project construction would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any pollutant for which the NCCAB is in nonattainment, and impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

The proposed project consists of minor construction, paving, and other site improvements to revitalize an existing plaza. The project would not increase the capacity or volume of existing roadways and would not add new permanent sources of emissions to the site. Because the project would not result in operational air pollutants and would not induce increased mobile source emissions above baseline levels, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in nonattainment under federal and state standards. Impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

c. Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

CARB identifies sensitive uses as “land uses where sensitive individuals are most likely to spend time,” such as “schools and schoolyards, parks and playgrounds, daycare centers, nursing homes, hospitals, and residential communities” (CARB 2017). The closest sensitive receptors to the project site are the Cabrillo College Watsonville Center across Union Street, approximately 50 feet from the project site, and residences and a youth center on Maple Avenue, approximately 240 feet from the site.

Carbon Monoxide Hotspot

A CO hotspot is a localized concentration of CO above a CO ambient air quality standard. Localized CO hotspots can occur at intersections with heavy peak hour traffic. Specifically, hotspots can be created at intersections where traffic levels are sufficiently high such that the local CO concentration exceeds the federal one-hour standard of 35.0 ppm or the federal and state eight-hour standard of 9.0 ppm (CARB 2016). The entire NCCAB is in conformance with state and federal CO standards, and most air quality monitoring stations no longer report CO levels. No stations in the NCCAB have monitored CO since 2012. The most recent CO measurement in the NCCAB detected an eight-hour maximum CO concentration of 1.4 ppm, which is substantially below the state and federal standard of 9.0 ppm (CARB 2019).

The proposed project would not increase the capacity or volume of the existing adjacent roadways. Therefore, the proposed project would not cause or contribute to a localized CO hotspot, and impacts would be less than significant.

³Generally assumed to be defined as a project without grading or excavation.

⁴Generally assumed to be defined as a project with grading or excavation.

Toxic Air Contaminants

The greatest potential for toxic air contaminants (TAC) emissions during construction would be from diesel particulate emissions associated with heavy equipment operations. TAC emissions would be generated during a portion of the ten-month construction period. According to CARB methodology, health effects from carcinogenic air toxins are usually described in terms of individual cancer risk, which is expressed as an estimate of the increased chances of developing cancer due to facility emissions over a 70-year lifetime (CARB 2005). Given the short-term construction schedule, the proposed project would not result in a long-term (i.e. 70-year) source of TAC emissions. In addition, there would be no residual emissions or corresponding individual cancer risk after project construction is complete. The project would not establish a long-term source of TAC emissions. Furthermore, the project would not increase the capacity or volume of existing roadways, so there would be no increase of long-term TAC emissions from motor vehicles on nearby roads. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

d. Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Based on the MBARD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines (2008), typical sources of objectionable odors include landfills, rendering plants, chemical plants, agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, and refineries. Exhaust from vehicles travelling along roadways may also release objectionable odors.

As described above, the proposed project would not change the capacity or volume of existing roadways. Nor would the project add a new source of odor-causing emissions. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

City of Watsonville
Watsonville City Plaza Expansion and Revitalization Project

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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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The 2.3-acre project site is a plaza and portions of adjacent streets that lie within an urbanized area of the City of Watsonville. The majority of the plaza's ground cover consists of turf. A paved area with a gazebo occupies the center of the Plaza, with six paved paths extending from the gazebo to adjacent streets. The Plaza also contains 35 trees, landscaped areas around the perimeter, and other built elements such as benches. Paved streets make up the entirety of the site's perimeter. As a small, developed site within an urban area, the Plaza has minimal habitat value.

Regulatory Setting

State

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) derives its authority from the Fish and Game Code of California (CFGC). The California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (Fish and Game Code Section 2050 et. seq.) prohibits take of state listed threatened or endangered. Take under CESA is restricted to direct mortality of a listed species and the law does not prohibit indirect harm by way of habitat modification. Where incidental take would occur during construction or other lawful activities, CESA allows the CDFW to issue an Incidental Take Permit upon finding, among other requirements, that impacts to the species have been minimized and fully mitigated.

The CDFW also enforces Sections 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515 of the Fish and Game Code, which prohibits take of species designated as Fully Protected. The CDFW is not allowed to issue an Incidental Take Permit for Fully Protected species; therefore, impacts to these species must be avoided.

California Fish and Game Code sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513 describe unlawful take, possession, or destruction of native birds, nests, and eggs. Section 3503.5 of the Code protects all birds-of-prey and their eggs and nests against take, possession, or destruction of nests or eggs. Section 3513 makes it a state-level offense to take any bird in violation of the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. CDFW administers these requirements.

Local

WATSONVILLE MUNICIPAL CODE

Under Chapter 7-11, *Street Trees*, of the Watsonville Municipal Code, it is unlawful to plant, trim, or remove any street tree without procuring a permit from the Director of Public Works.

Under Chapter 7-13, *Preservation of Historical Trees*, of the Watsonville Municipal Code, the City's Recreation Department and the Recreation and Parks Commission are authorized to recommend to the City Council that certain trees be "designated" in order to preserve the tree(s) for their special character, historical value, or aesthetic interest. The Recreation Department maintains a record of designated trees. Any permit application for work that would impact a designated tree is forwarded to the Recreation Department and the Recreation and Parks Commission for review.

- a. *Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as candidate, sensitive, or special status in local or*

regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

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?*

The project site is located in an urbanized area and is currently developed and used as a public space. The site does not provide high quality habitat for wildlife. While the site is highly unlikely to provide habitat for special status species, the site does contain trees that would be impacted by the project. These trees could contain bird nests and birds that are protected under the CFGC.

Improvement within the Plaza could result in direct impacts to nesting migratory birds protected under CFGC, during vegetation clearing, grading and other construction activity, through destruction or damage of active nests, or through disturbance to nesting birds from construction activity and noise. Impacts to non-special status migratory birds would generally not be considered significant under CEQA; however, loss of active migratory bird nests through nest destruction or nest abandonment would be a violation of CFGC. Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would prevent violations of CFGC.

Mitigation Measures

BIO-1 Conducting Nesting Bird Preconstruction Surveys

Ground disturbance and vegetation removal activities should be restricted to the non-breeding season (September 16 to January 31) for all segments when feasible. For ground disturbance and vegetation removal activities occurring in all project areas during the bird nesting season (February 1 to September 15), general pre-construction nesting bird surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist for all migratory birds, including special status birds and raptors (i.e., northern harrier, Cooper's hawk, horned lark, tricolored blackbird and white-tailed kite) not more than 14 days prior to construction activities involving ground clearing, vegetation removal/trimming, or building demolition. The surveys should include the disturbance area plus a 200-foot buffer around the site if feasible, a 500-foot buffer for tricolored blackbird and white-tailed kite. If active nests are located, an appropriate avoidance buffer should be established within which no work activity will be allowed which would impact these nests. The avoidance buffer would be established by the qualified biologist on a case-by-case basis based on the species and site conditions. In no cases should the buffer be smaller than 50 feet for non-raptor bird species, 300 feet for raptor species, a 500-foot buffer for tricolored blackbird and white-tailed kite. Larger buffers may be required depending upon the status of the nest and the construction activities occurring in the vicinity of the nest. If fully protected White-tailed kites are documented nesting within 500 feet of construction activities, CDFW should be consulted on appropriate avoidance and minimization methods, which would likely include work restrictions within 500 feet of the nest, biological monitoring for activity within the nest' line-of-sight, etc. The buffer area(s) should be closed to all construction personnel and equipment until juveniles have fledged and the nest is inactive. The implementing entity-approved biologist should confirm that breeding/nesting is completed and young have fledged the nest prior to removal of the buffer.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

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?

The project site is a Plaza in an urbanized area. The site and its surroundings do not contain riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities. The site contains open space and trees that could provide habitat for birds and other urban wildlife. The project would preserve most of the site's existing mature/healthy trees, and would result in a net increase in trees. Impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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?

The project site is a plaza within an urbanized area. No wetlands or potentially jurisdictional features occur within or adjacent to the project site. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

e. Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

The proposed project would be required to comply with Chapters 7-11 and 7-13 of the Watsonville Municipal Code, described above. Planting, trimming, and removal of trees would require a permit from the Public Works Director. The proposed project would result in a net increase of trees on the project site. Project plans also include preservation of three existing Heritage Trees and designation of approximately seven more of the site's existing trees as Heritage Trees. Commemorative plaques would be installed to highlight protection and appreciation of these trees (State of California-The Natural Resources Agency 2019). The project would not conflict with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. Compliance with existing regulations would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

LESS THAN 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?

The project site is not located within the boundaries of a Habitat Conservation Plan or a Natural Community Conservation Plan (USFWS 2019 and CDFW 2019). There would be no impact.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource as defined in §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Rincon prepared a Cultural Resources Technical Report for the proposed project (see Appendix A). The purpose of the report is to document the results of the tasks performed by Rincon, specifically a cultural resources records search, a field survey, archival research and an impacts analysis. The report is incorporated into the IS-MND in compliance with CEQA.

As a result of the background research and field survey, one CEQA historical resource, the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)-listed Watsonville City Plaza, was identified and assessed for project-related impacts. The Plaza was initially established in 1860 and is significant in the areas of community planning and landscape architecture. The NRHP nomination states the “plaza has been the physical and social center of the local community throughout its history. It is, and has been for many years, the beauty spot of Watsonville as well as a local landmark.” Additionally, the plaza is noteworthy for its bandstand designed by noted architect William Weeks. The 1.4-acre Plaza’s period of significance is listed as 1906, the year that the bandstand on the property was constructed by Weeks. The plaza Bandstand was also found to appear eligible for listing in the NRHP as an individual property through survey evaluation.

The California Historical Resources Information System records search also identified 33 previously-conducted cultural resources studies and 84 cultural resources within a 0.5-mile radius of the project area. Two of the previously-recorded cultural resources are located within, or encompass the project site. Downtown Watsonville, while not formally evaluated, was recommended for further study in 1999 as a historic district due to the number of historic buildings located in the downtown area (P-044-000395). The Plaza Park Bandstand (P-44-000948) is located within and is a contributing element of the Watsonville City Plaza. Additionally, the Plaza contains three trees which are designated as “Historic Trees” under Chapter 7-13 of the Watsonville Municipal Code. This designation is distinct from the designation of historic structures established under Chapter 8-13 of the Watsonville Municipal Code. In consideration of this and the trees planting dates (all of which occurred within the last 25 years), these trees are not considered individual historical resources under CEQA. These trees are however being retained as part of the current project and

will be protected in compliance with Chapters 7-11 and 7-13 of the Watsonville Municipal Code; they are addressed above in Section 4 *Biological Resources*.

One archaeological resource (P-44-000396), a multi-component site consisting of a possible prehistoric pestle and shell and historic period refuse, has been documented within the record search area. The City of Watsonville also contacted the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) and requested a Sacred Lands File search of the project site and vicinity. The NAHC responded on June 25, 2019, stating negative results.

Regulatory Setting

PRC §5024.1, Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines, and PRC §§21083.2 and 21084.1 were used as the basic guidelines for this cultural resources study. CEQA (§21084.1) requires that a lead agency determine if a project could have a significant effect on historical resources. A historical resource is one listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) (§21084.1), included in a local register of historical resources (§15064.5[a][2]), or any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript that a lead agency determines to be historically significant (§15064.5[a][3]). Resources listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) are automatically listed in the CRHR.

According to CEQA, impacts that adversely alter the significance of a resource listed in or eligible for listing in the CRHR are considered a significant effect on the environment. These impacts could result from physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of a historical resource would be materially impaired (CEQA Guidelines §15064.5 [b][1]). Material impairment is defined as demolition or alteration in an adverse manner [of] those characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for inclusion in, the California Register (CEQA Guidelines §15064.5[b][2][A]).

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) was established by the NHPA of 1966 as “an authoritative guide to be used by Federal, State, and local governments, private groups and citizens to identify the Nation’s cultural resources and to indicate what properties should be considered for protection from destruction or impairment” (CFR 36 CFR 60.2). The NRHP recognizes properties that are significant at the national, state, and local levels. To be eligible for listing in the NRHP, a resource must be significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture. Districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects of potential significance must also possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. A property is eligible for the NRHP if it:

- A. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. Is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of installation, or represents the work of a master, possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

In addition to meeting these criteria, a property must retain historic integrity, which is defined in National Register Bulletin 15 as the “ability of a property to convey its significance” (National Park Service 1990). In order to assess integrity, the National Park Service recognizes seven aspects or qualities that, considered together, define historic integrity. To retain integrity, a property must possess several, if not all, of these seven qualities, which are defined in the following manner in National Register Bulletin 15:

1. **Location.** The place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.
2. **Design.** The combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.
3. **Setting.** The physical environment of a historic property.
4. **Materials** are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.
5. **Workmanship.** The physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.
6. **Feeling.** A property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.
7. **Association.** The direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) was created by Assembly Bill 2881, which was established in 1992. The California Register is an authoritative listing and guide to be used by State and local agencies, private groups, and citizens in identifying the existing historical resources of the State and to indicate which resources deserve to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change (Public Resources Code, 5024.1(a)). The criteria for eligibility for the CRHR are consistent with the National Register criteria, but have been modified for state use in order to include a range of historical resources that better reflect the history of California (Public Resources Code, 5024.1(b)). Certain properties are determined by the statute to be automatically included in the CRHR by operation of law, including California properties formally determined eligible for, or listed in, the National Register.

The CRHR consists of properties that are listed automatically and those that must be nominated through an application and public hearing process. The CRHR automatically includes the following:

- California properties listed in the National Register and those formally Determined Eligible for the National Register;
- California Registered Historical Landmarks from No. 770 onward; and
- Those Points of Historical Interest (PHI) that have been evaluated by the OHP and have been recommended to the State Historical Commission for inclusion on the CRHR. To be eligible for the CRHR, a property generally must be at least fifty years of age and must possess significance at the local, state, or national level, under one or more of the following criteria:
 1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage.

2. It is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.
4. It has yielded or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Historical properties eligible for listing in the CRHR may include buildings, sites, structures, objects, and historic districts. A property eligible for the CRHR must also retain enough of its historic character or appearance to be recognizable as a historic property and to convey the reasons for its significance.

Compliance with the Standards

For the purposes of CEQA, impacts to a historical resource are considered mitigated below a level of significance when the project conforms to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* (the Standards) (CEQA Guidelines §15126.4 [b][1]). The goal of the Standards is to preserve the historic materials and distinctive character of a historical resource. Character-defining features are the tangible, visual elements of a building—including its setting, shape, materials, construction, interior spaces, and details—that collectively creates its historic identity and conveys its historic significance.

The Standards establish professional standards and provide advice on the preservation and protection of historic properties, and make broad-brush recommendations for maintaining, repairing, and replacing historic materials, and designing new additions or making alterations. They cannot be used, in and of themselves, to make essential decisions about which features of a historic property should be saved and which might be changed. Rather, once an appropriate treatment is selected, the Standards provide philosophical consistency to the work. There are Standards for four distinct but interrelated approaches to the treatment of historic properties: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction.

According to the Standards, rehabilitation is deemed appropriate “when repair and replacement of deteriorated features are necessary; when alterations or additions to the property are planned for a new or continued use; and when its depiction at a particular period of time is not appropriate, rehabilitation may be considered as a treatment.” The following lists the Standards for Rehabilitation:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Local

Chapter 8-13 of the City of Watsonville's municipal code authorizes the City Council, by ordinance, to designate structures, features, or integrated groups of structures and features on a single lot or site as "historic structures" if they have special character, or historical, architectural, or aesthetic interest (Municipal Code Chapter 8-13, Section 8-13.02[a]). "Historic structures" are further defined in Chapter 2, Section 9-2.200 as:

1. Listed individually in the NRHP (a listing maintained by the Department of the Interior) or preliminarily determined by the Secretary of the Interior as meeting the requirements for individual listing on the NRHP;
2. Certified or preliminarily determined by the Secretary of the Interior as contributing to the historical significance of a registered historic district or a district preliminarily determined by the Secretary of Interior to qualify as a registered historic district;
3. Individually listed on a state inventory of historic places in states with historic preservation programs which have been approved by the Secretary of Interior; or
4. Individually listed on a local inventory of historic places.

Alterations to historic structures as defined above is subject to review by the Planning Commission and Section 8-13.12 of Chapter 8-13 of the municipal code, which states:

The Planning Commission shall be guided by the standards set forth in this section in its review of permit applications for work or change of conditions on a historical structure. In appraising the effects and relationships established herein, the Planning Commission in all cases shall consider the factors of architectural style, design, arrangement, texture, materials and color, and any other pertinent factors.

- a) The proposed work shall be appropriate for and consistent with the effectuation of the purposes of this chapter and shall preserve or enhance the characteristics and particular features specified in the designating ordinance.
- b) The proposed work shall not adversely affect the exterior architectural features of the structure and, where specified in the designating ordinance for a publicly-owned structure, its major interior architectural features; nor shall the proposed work adversely affect the special character or special historical, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value of the structure and its site, as viewed both in themselves and in their setting.

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

As a property which is listed in the NRHP, the Watsonville City Plaza is considered a historical resource in accordance with CEQA. According to CEQA (§21084.1) a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource such as the plaza is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. Substantial adverse change means physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of the resource would be materially impaired. Material impairment is defined as demolition or alteration in an adverse manner [of] those characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and justify its eligibility for inclusion in the CRHR (CEQA Guidelines, §15064.5[b][2][A]).

The CEQA Guidelines further state that impacts to a historical resource are generally considered mitigated below a level of significance when the project conforms to the Standards. The Standards and associated Guidelines make broad-brush recommendations for maintaining, repairing, and replacing historic materials, as well as designing new additions or making alterations. The Standards are neither technical nor prescriptive, but are intended to promote sensible preservation practices. They cannot be used, in and of themselves, to make essential decisions about which features of a historic property should be saved and which might be changed. But once an appropriate treatment is selected, the Standards provide philosophical consistency to the work. There are Standards for four distinct, but interrelated, approaches to the treatment of historic properties: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. The Rehabilitation Standards were determined to be the most appropriate treatment for the project as they would provide the needed flexibility to meet the project's objectives while still retaining the historic character of the Watsonville Plaza.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards Review

The analysis presented in this section was based on the narrative project description and conceptual renderings for the project. The following presents a standard-by-standard analysis of the proposed rehabilitation of the Watsonville City Plaza.

Rehabilitation Standard No. 1: A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

The proposed project would continue the historic use of the Watsonville City Plaza as a community gathering space and public square. The addition of new features and elements such as the stage, group picnic areas, game tables, historic/art element pedestal, and restroom building would expand its function, but would not alter its overall historic use as a public town plaza and gathering locale.

Therefore, the proposed project will be used for its historic purpose and complies with Rehabilitation Standard No. 1.

Rehabilitation Standard No. 2: The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

The proposed project will retain and preserve the historic character of the Watsonville City Plaza. The historic character of the plaza is defined through its character-defining features, which as a historic designed landscape tie to its spatial organization, topography, vegetation, circulation, water features, buildings and structures, and site furnishings and objects. The project would not directly alter the significant spatial organization and topography, which will continue to exhibit its radial pattern with diagonal walkways and flat topography. Although the project will introduce new materials and features within portions of the defined quadrants, the spatial configuration and circulation of the plaza will remain intact and new materials will be compatible with the historic character. Further while, asphalt will be removed, this material is non-original and is not considered character defining.

The circulation pattern will be slightly modified through the reconfiguration of the entry point at the intersection of Peck and Union streets; however, this is being proposed to avoid damage to the root system of the historic tree at this location. Some vegetation is also proposed to be removed; however, with the exception of some trees, which date to the plaza's period of significance (1906), the specific plantings have been continually replaced and modified and do not date to the historic period. While conceptual at this time, it is anticipated the proposed plantings will be consistent in height, scale, and typology, and will continue to define the historic organization of the plaza. With respect to water features and buildings and structures, the proposed project would rehabilitate the fountain and historic bandstand. Through mitigation adopted as part of the project these activities will be carried out by qualified individuals in a manner consistent with the Standards.

The cannons are proposed to be relocated within the plaza near the existing water fountain along Main Street. However, historic aerial photographs indicate the cannons have been previously relocated within the plaza and their significance is not tied to their current location. Therefore, the project complies with Rehabilitation Standard No. 2.

Rehabilitation Standard No. 3: Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

The proposed project will introduce new features within the quadrants of the plaza. These are not anticipated to result in a false sense of historical development. Through mitigation adopted as part of the project, the landscaping, features, and materials will be differentiated yet compatible with the historic materials, size, and scale of the property and its setting. As a result, the project complies with Rehabilitation Standard No. 3.

Rehabilitation Standard No. 4: Changes to the property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

The period of significance is defined in the NRHP nomination for the Watsonville City Plaza as 1906. The cannon was added to the plaza in 1924 and specifically identified in the NRHP nomination, suggesting it is a feature which is contributing and has gained significance in its own right. This

feature is proposed to be retained as part of the proposed project. The project therefore complies with Rehabilitation Standard No. 4.

Rehabilitation Standard No. 5: Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

The proposed project will retain the distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques and examples of craftsmanship that characterize the Watsonville City Plaza. Character-defining features such as the spatial arrangement, topography, and circulation will be preserved in place, and vegetation will be consistent with historic landscaping and strategically located to define the plaza's spatial arrangement. Construction techniques and craftsmanship are primarily limited to the bandstand and the fountains, which will be kept in place and rehabilitated as needed in a manner consistent with the Standards due to project-specific mitigation measures. As a result the project complies with Rehabilitation Standard No. 5.

Rehabilitation Standard No. 6: Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

None of the historic features of the Watsonville City Plaza are proposed to be replaced. The asphalt which is proposed to be repaved or replaced with pavers is not original or considered historic, nor are the specific plantings which are proposed to be removed and replaced with new vegetation. The historic fountain and bandstand will be rehabilitated in accordance with the Standards per project-specific mitigation measures. The project therefore complies with Rehabilitation Standard No. 6.

Rehabilitation Standard No. 7: Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

Any rehabilitation work to the historic fountain and bandstand will be completed by qualified individuals in accordance with the Standards per project-specific mitigation measures. The project complies with Rehabilitation Standard No. 7.

Rehabilitation Standard No. 8: Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

Background research completed in support of this project determined that it is unlikely that intact subsurface archaeological deposits exist within the project site at any depth. No significant impacts to archaeological resources are expected to result from the proposed project and Rehabilitation Standard No. 8 does not apply.

Rehabilitation Standard No. 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

Although the project will introduce new features to the Watsonville City Plaza, they will not destroy historic materials that characterize the project and will be compatible with the historic character of

the plaza. Many of the physical materials in the plaza, such as the asphalt, vegetation, and landscaping, do not date from the period of significance. Rather, it is the spatial arrangement, circulation patterns, and location of plantings and vegetation, which work to define the overall character of the plaza. These critical elements will be retained as part of the proposed project, with the plaza's radial pattern, diagonal walkways, and use of vegetation and landscaping to define these spaces kept in place as part of the project. Although the pathway at the intersection of Union and Peck streets will be reconfigured slightly, this will permit the historic-era tree in this location to remain in place. Additionally, the specific historic materials of the bandstand and fountains will be kept in place and rehabilitated in a manner consistent with the Standards.

New additions to the plaza, including the partial infill of the quadrants and circular pathway enclosing them will be completed in a manner that is differentiated but compatible with the plaza's character-defining features. These new areas will be constructed completely within the existing quadrants and will not affect the historic site design of the plaza. The western-most quadrant will be designed to include a stage; however, a portion of this stage will be removable and utilized only during specific events at the plaza. This will enable the inner circular plaza to remain clearly defined and distinct from the outer quadrant. The game table and picnic areas will feature decomposed granite and concrete pavers which will be compatible with the natural vegetation and paved walkways, yet unique as to not recreate or falsely replicate original elements. While conceptual at this time, it is anticipated that the gaming and picnic tables, as well as the new restroom building will be of compatible materials and design as to be consistent with the historic character of the Plaza. Similarly, the new circular pathway will be constructed using unique materials as to not be confused with the historic pathways and circulation pattern. Similarly, the plaza is proposed to be expanded through the resurfacing of Peck and Union street through permeable pavers; however, this work will be completed within the right-of-way with compatible-but-differentiate materials and will be clearly divided from the historic boundaries of the plaza.

New vegetation and landscaping is also proposed as part of the project. This landscaping will be utilized in manner that is consistent with the historic character of the Watsonville City Plaza. It will be placed in specific locations to help define spaces and create curated viewsheds within the plaza. It will feature similar plantings as to those have historically characterized the plaza. The project therefore complies with Rehabilitation Standard No. 9.

Rehabilitation Standard No. 10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

The new features that are proposed by the project will be completed in such a manner that, if removed, would not impair the essential form and integrity of the historic property or its environment. The stage, game tables, picnic areas, and other project elements could be removed at a future date with no permanent effect on the resource. Therefore, the project complies with Rehabilitation Standard No. 10.

Historical Resources Impacts Summary

As discussed above, the project is anticipated to meet all 10 of the Standards for Rehabilitation and therefore can be considered to comply with the Standards for Rehabilitation. Per the CEQA Guidelines, projects that meet the Standards are generally considered mitigated below a level of significance. However, the rehabilitation plans for the bandstand and large fountain have yet to be fully developed and these project elements could have the potential to negatively impact these two

features and the larger plaza if completed in a manner that is inconsistent with the Standards. As plans for the Plaza evolve, it is recommended that a qualified historic architect or architectural historian be brought on to provide input to the design team on the items described in this analysis and provide ongoing Standards compliance review. These steps will facilitate and enhance project compliance with the Standards as the plans evolve.

Additionally, while specific construction methods have not been fully developed for the current project, ground borne vibration (GBV) generated by construction equipment or operations can also cause significant impacts to historical resources that are in close proximity to project activities. Construction-related vibration can cause damage ranging from minor cosmetic damage to major structural damage. Thus, GBV can harm the characteristics that make historical resources eligible for the CRHR. GBV resulting from compacting or other similar activities in close proximity to the bandstand and large fountain should be monitored to ensure vibration levels do not exceed established vibration levels for fragile buildings. Therefore, impacts would be potentially significant without mitigation. The following mitigation measures are required to avoid impacts to a historical resource.

Background research completed as part of this study identified existing and potential historical resources located along the street fronting the Watsonville City Plaza. These include the Lutunich Building at 406 Main Street and the Wells Fargo Bank (former Pajaro Valley National Bank) building at 326 Main Street. There are no direct project activities proposed for these or any other buildings located outside of the Plaza. Changes within the Plaza are anticipated to be consistent with the Standards and therefore will not result to a change of setting that could negatively affect the setting of any existing or potential historical resources. Although the installation of permeable pavers along Peck and Union streets will result in GBV, it is not anticipated that any of these construction activities will have the potential to cause significant impacts due to a lack of proximity and the existing conditions/construction methods of the fronting adjacent properties.

Mitigation Measures

CR-1 Standards Review

A historic architect or architectural historian who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards shall be retained to provide input and guidance throughout the design and construction process relating to the rehabilitation of the large fountain and bandstand, design of the bathroom building, and materials and design of new tables and/or benches. This will ensure that the project remains consistent with the Standards as plans evolve and that the project avoids significant adverse impacts to historical resources. This individual will provide ongoing consultation as needed and summarize the results in a memorandum to be submitted to the City as the lead agency for the inclusion in the administrative record.

CR-2 Vibration Impact Plan

Construction-related vibration generated by construction equipment can result in varying degrees of ground vibration depending on the types of equipment used, as shown in Section 13, *Noise*. Operation of construction equipment causes vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish in strength with distance. Old and fragile structures situated near the active construction area would be susceptible to vibrations, and may incur damage when vibration reaches peak levels. The historic plaza contains several masonry features that could be susceptible to ground borne vibration impacts, particularly the old fountain and the bandstand.

Construction methods have not been fully developed for the current project. To reduce potential impacts to fragile structures within the historic plaza, a Vibration Impact Plan will be developed to identify appropriate construction methods within the vicinity of fragile structures and include a strategy to monitor activity within the areas of concern. The plan will include measures to ensure construction vibration do not exceed established vibration levels for fragile buildings and if necessary, include measures to repair any minor cosmetic damage in-kind. The Vibration Impact Plan should be developed by the City in coordination with a qualified architectural historian or historic architect who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards (NPS 1983).

CR-3 Plaza Recordation

Impacts resulting from the alteration of the Watsonville City Plaza can be minimized through archival documentation of as-built and as-found condition. Prior to the commencement of construction activities, the City of Watsonville shall ensure that documentation of the property proposed for is completed in the form of a Historic American Building Survey (HABS)-Like documentation that complies with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Architectural and Engineering Documentation (NPS 1990). The documentation should generally follow the HABS Level III requirements and include digital photographic recordation of the plaza, detailed historic narrative report, and compilation of historic research. The documentation should be completed by a qualified architectural historian or historian who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for History and/or Architectural History (NPS 1983). The original archival-quality documentation shall be offered as donated material to the City of Watsonville Library and Pajaro Valley Historical Society, where it would be available to local researchers. Completion of this mitigation measure shall be monitored and enforced by the lead agency.

Impacts would be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1, -2, and -3.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

b. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource as defined in §15064.5?

Based on the absence of any previously recorded archaeological sites in the vicinity and the known history of the project vicinity, the project site is considered to have low sensitivity for archaeological resources. However, ground disturbance is proposed under the current project description. And has the potential to result in impacts to previously undocumented archaeological resources. Therefore, impacts would be potentially significant without mitigation. The following mitigation measures are required to avoid impacts to an archaeological resource.

CR-4 Unanticipated Discovery of Cultural Resources

If cultural resources are encountered during ground-disturbing activities, work in the immediate area shall halt and an archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for archaeology (NPS 1983) shall be contacted immediately to evaluate the find. If the discovery proves to be significant under CEQA, additional work such as data recovery excavation may be warranted.

CR-5 Unanticipated Discovery of Human Remains

The discovery of human remains is always a possibility during ground-disturbing activities. If human remains are found, the State of California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. In the event of an unanticipated discovery of human remains, the Monterey County Coroner must be notified immediately. If the human remains are determined to be prehistoric, the Coroner will notify the NAHC, which will determine and notify a most likely descendant (MLD). The MLD shall complete the inspection of the site within 48 hours of being granted access.

Impacts would be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-4 and -5

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

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

The discovery of human remains is always a possibility during ground disturbing activities. If human remains are found, the State of California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. In the event of an unanticipated discovery of human remains, the County Coroner must be notified immediately. If the human remains are determined to be prehistoric, the Coroner would notify the Native American Heritage Commission which would determine and notify a most likely descendant (MLD). The MLD must complete the inspection of the site and provide recommendations for treatment to the landowner within 48 hours of being granted access. With adherence to existing regulations, impacts to human remains 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
a. <i>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?</i>				

The construction phase of the proposed project would involve energy use for construction and paving activities. These activities would require the use of machinery and vehicles. The operational phase of the project would involve energy use for operation of the site's lighting and the new restroom. The scope of construction includes two new structures, a restroom and a stage, that would cover approximately three percent of the Plaza's square footage, as well as repaving of walkways and adjacent streets. As such, the scope of construction and operation of the project would not represent a substantial demand on local energy supplies. The City has determined that revitalization of the Plaza is necessary in order to preserve historic resources and improve function as a public place. Therefore, the project's energy consumption would not be wasteful or unnecessary, and new lighting fixtures would be expected to be more energy efficient than the fixtures currently in use. 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 Climate Action Plan (CAP) was adopted by the City Council in 2015. The CAP encourages pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly neighborhoods, increased transportation options, improved energy efficiency, reduced waste and increased recycling, and protection of open space, and quantifies the estimated GHG reduction savings of such programs.

The proposed project would preserve the majority of the Plaza's open space, and would improve pedestrian circulation capacity into and around the Plaza. As described in Section 8, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, the project would not result in significant impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, the project would be consistent with the City's CAP. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

City of Watsonville
Watsonville City Plaza Expansion and Revitalization Project

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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 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is made unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

a.1. Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential 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 expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?

The project site is located in a seismically active area. Watsonville is within an earthquake fault zone, as mapped by the California Geological Survey (CGS) (CGS 2019). The project site is not located on a fault; the nearest fault is the Vergeles Fault, approximately 1.25 miles to the east (DOC 2015). Therefore, there is no potential for rupture of a fault on the project site. Impacts would be less than significant.

The proposed project would make changes to an existing plaza, including addition of a restroom, a stage, new trees and plantings, and seismic improvements of the existing gazebo structure. The addition of these small structures would not substantially alter the existing level of on-site hazards related to strong seismic ground shaking, and seismic improvements to the gazebo would reduce the risk of seismic effects.

The site is currently used as a public space, and the project would not change the existing land use. Therefore, the project would not result in an increase in exposure of people or structures to adverse effects from seismic ground shaking or ground failure. Impacts would be less than significant.

a.3. Would the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

The project site is not within a landslide/liquefaction zone, as mapped by the CGS (2019). As described above, the project would not substantially alter existing hazards related to seismic events. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

a.4. Would the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?

The project site is located in a relatively flat area. The site and its surroundings are developed. There are no steep slopes or exposed soil areas near the project site that could result in a landslide. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

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

The potential for erosion generally increases after soil has been disturbed by clearing and grading, with loose soils creating conditions that lead to erosion. When vegetation is removed, soil is subject to blowing and water erosion. The proposed project would include tree removal, sewer line trenching, and minor construction activities. However, the majority of the 2.3-acre site would not be disturbed, and most project activity would consist of repaving/improving existing paved paths and structures. Site preparation for the proposed restroom would be minimal, as the structure would be 300-400 square feet in size and would be prefabricated, with minimal on-site construction activity required.

The project would be required to comply with Watsonville Municipal Code requirements that limit erosion and topsoil loss. These include Section 7-6.404(b), which requires stockpiling and reapplication of topsoil, and control of construction dust.

Compliance with applicable regulations would reduce erosion and topsoil loss impacts to a less than significant level.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

c. *Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is made unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?*

As discussed above in sections a.1-a.4, the project site is not susceptible to landslide or liquefaction, or to lateral spreading, which occurs as a result of earthquake-induced liquefaction. The project involves minor construction activity that would not exacerbate existing geologic hazards on the site. There would be no impact.

NO 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?*

Soils subject to shrink-swell potential could cause damage to structures and/or pose a safety hazard during a seismic event or due to elevation changes over time. The City of Watsonville General Plan does not identify expansive soils as a known geologic hazard. Furthermore, the proposed project includes only minor construction activity and would not substantially increase the amount of built structures on the site, or alter the site's land use. Therefore, impacts 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?*

The proposed project does not include the use or installation of a septic tank. The new restroom would connect to the sanitary sewer system. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

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

The Watsonville General Plan does not identify the potential for paleontological resources within the City. Due to the limited scope of construction activities, it is unlikely that the project would result in unearthing of paleontological resources. However, the project would require between 60-100 feet of trenching to establish a sewer connection for the proposed restroom. Therefore, Mitigation Measure GEO-1 is required in the case of unanticipated fossil discoveries during ground disturbance. Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would ensure that potential impacts to paleontological resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure

GEO-1 *Unanticipated Discovery of Paleontological Resources*

In the event that an unanticipated fossil discovery is made during the course of project construction, then in accordance with Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) guidelines (2010), it is the responsibility of any worker who observes fossils within the project site to stop work in the immediate vicinity of the find and notify a qualified professional paleontologist who shall be retained to evaluate the discovery, determine its significance and if additional mitigation or treatment is warranted. Work in the area of the discovery will resume once the find is properly documented and authorization is given to resume construction work. Any significant paleontological resources found during construction monitoring will be prepared, identified, analyzed, and permanently curated in an approved regional museum repository.

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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purposes of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Climate Change and Greenhouse Gases

Climate change is the observed increase in the average temperature of the earth's atmosphere and oceans along with other substantial changes in climate (such as wind patterns, precipitation, and storms) over an extended period of time. The baseline against which these changes are measured originates in historical records identifying temperature changes that have occurred in the past, such as during previous ice ages. The global climate is continuously changing, as evidenced by repeated episodes of substantial warming and cooling documented in the geologic record. The rate of change has typically been incremental, with warming or cooling trends occurring over the course of thousands of years. The past 10,000 years have been marked by a period of incremental warming, as glaciers have steadily retreated across the globe. However, scientists have observed acceleration in the rate of warming during the past 150 years. Per the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the understanding of anthropogenic warming and cooling influences on climate has led to a high confidence (95 percent or greater chance) that the global average net effect of human activities has been the dominant cause of warming since the mid-twentieth century (IPCC 2007).

Gases that absorb and re-emit infrared radiation in the atmosphere are called greenhouse gases (GHGs). The gases that are widely seen as the principal contributors to human-induced climate change include carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), fluorinated gases such as hydrofluorocarbons (HFC), perfluorocarbons (PFC), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆). Water vapor is excluded from the list of GHGs because it is short-lived in the atmosphere and its atmospheric concentrations are largely determined by natural processes, such as oceanic evaporation.

GHGs are emitted by both natural processes and human activities. Of these gases, CO₂ and CH₄ are emitted in the greatest quantities from human activities. Emissions of CO₂ are largely by-products of fossil fuel combustion, whereas CH₄ results from off-gassing associated with agricultural practices and landfills. Man-made GHGs, many of which have greater heat-absorption potential than CO₂, include fluorinated gases and SF₆ (USEPA 2018). Different types of GHGs have varying global warming potentials (GWP). The GWP of a GHG is the potential of a gas or aerosol to trap heat in

the atmosphere over a specified timescale (generally, 100 years). Because GHGs absorb different amounts of heat, a common reference gas (CO₂) is used to relate the amount of heat absorbed to the amount of the gas emissions, referred to as “carbon dioxide equivalent” (CO₂e), and is the amount of a GHG emitted multiplied by its GWP. CO₂ has a 100-year GWP of one. By contrast, CH₄ has a GWP of 25, meaning its global warming effect is 25 times greater than CO₂ on a molecule per molecule basis (IPCC 2007).

In response to an increase in man-made GHG concentrations over the past 150 years, California implemented Assembly Bill (AB) 32, the “California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006.” AB 32 codified the statewide goal of reducing emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 (essentially a 15 percent reduction below 2005 emission levels) and adopted regulations to require reporting and verification of statewide GHG emissions.

On September 8, 2016, the governor signed Senate Bill (SB) 32 into law, which requires the state to further reduce GHGs to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. SB 32 extends AB 32, directing CARB to ensure that GHGs are reduced to 40 percent below the 1990 level by 2030. On December 14, 2017, CARB adopted the 2017 Scoping Plan, which provides a framework for achieving the 2030 target. The 2017 Scoping Plan does not provide project-level thresholds for land use development. Instead, it recommends that local governments adopt policies and locally-appropriate quantitative thresholds consistent with a statewide per capita goal of six metric tons (MT) CO₂e by 2030 and two MT CO₂e by 2050 (CARB 2017). As stated in the 2017 Scoping Plan, these goals may be appropriate for plan-level analyses (city, county, subregional, or regional level), but not for specific individual projects because they include all emissions sectors in the state.

Significance Thresholds

The vast majority of individual projects do not generate sufficient GHG emissions to directly influence climate change. However, physical changes caused by a project can contribute incrementally to cumulative effects that are significant, even if individual changes resulting from a project are limited. The issue of climate change typically involves an analysis of whether a project’s contribution towards an impact would be cumulatively considerable. “Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064[h][1]).

The CEQA Guidelines provide regulatory direction for the analysis and mitigation of GHG emissions appearing in CEQA documents, while giving lead agencies the discretion to set quantitative or qualitative thresholds for the assessment and mitigation of GHGs and climate change impacts. As stated above, the 2017 Scoping Plan does not provide specific guidance to local jurisdictions for determining the amount of emission reductions to be achieved from land use plans or projects. Instead, it recommends that local governments adopt policies and locally-appropriate quantitative thresholds consistent with a statewide per capita goal of six MT of CO₂e by 2030 and two MT of CO₂e by 2050 (CARB 2017).

The City of Watsonville released a *Climate Action Plan* in April 2015 that serves to reinforce the values included in the draft *Watsonville VISTA 2030 General Plan Update*, which has not been adopted because of litigation. If adopted, the *Watsonville VISTA 2030 General Plan* would replace the *Watsonville 2005 General Plan* as the blueprint and roadmap for future growth and development in the City that focuses on sustainable goals, policies, and implementation actions related to smart growth and the preservation of valuable agricultural areas. Additionally, the *Climate Action Plan* encourages pedestrian and bicycle-friendly neighborhoods, increased

transportation options, improved energy efficiency, reduced waste, increased recycling, and protection of open space. The 2005 General Plan also encourages a safe and convenient network of bicycle facilities (Transportation and Circulation Element, Goal 10.4) and encourages pedestrian travel (Transportation and Circulation Element, Goal 10.5). Watsonville is committed to achieving the 2020 target set by the State of California in AB 32; namely, to achieve 1990 levels by 2020. Based on state guidance, the 2020 target is calculated as 15 percent below 2005 levels by 2020. Furthermore, as indicated in the *Climate Action Plan*, the city will continue on the trajectory to reach the 2050 reduction target by adopting a mid-term target of 25 percent below 2005 emissions by 2030. However, as of September 2019, the *Climate Action Plan* has not yet gone through CEQA review and is therefore not considered a qualified GHG reduction plan per State *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15183.5.

In the absence of a qualified CAP, projects in MBARD have used the quantitative thresholds established by (SLOAPCD), whose jurisdiction is adjacent to MBARD to the south, to assess GHG impacts because MBARD has not established numerical thresholds for GHG emissions. The SLOAPCD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* includes a bright-line threshold of 1,150 MT of CO₂e, as well as an efficiency threshold of 4.9 MT of CO₂e per service population per year (service population = number of residents + employees). The project does not include a service population (residential or employee); therefore, the threshold of 1,150 MT of CO₂e would be the most applicable threshold for use in this analysis. However, SLOAPCD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* includes a screening criterion for project analysis. The screening criteria are provided for general guidance and are based on project size in an urban setting and are designed to identify those projects with the potential to exceed the APCD's significance thresholds.

Per the *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, the screening criteria are not applicable for projects that would involve heavy-duty diesel activity and/or fugitive dust emissions. Additionally, the *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, states that a more refined analysis is required for projects that exceed the screening criteria or are within ten percent of exceeding the criteria. Therefore, because the project would generally involve site preparation, minor grading, construction, paving, and revegetation as outlined in Table 2, which would not involve heavy-duty diesel activity, the screening criteria is appropriate to use to determine if additional analysis is necessary or if the project would result in a less than significant impact related to GHG emissions.

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

SLOAPCD provides screening criteria for GHG impacts of urban projects, identifying project sizes that could be expected to result in exceedance of GHG emissions thresholds (SLOAPCD 2012). The most applicable project category for this project is “arena”, which lists a threshold of six acres. The project site is approximately 2.3 acres in size, including portions of adjacent roadways. Therefore, the project would not be expected to result in GHG emissions that would have a significant effect on the environment.

The proposed project involves roadway modifications that would improve pedestrian and bicycle access and safety. This is consistent with the goals and policies of the City of Watsonville General Plan⁵, as well as the City's Climate Action Plan, to promote pedestrian and bicycle transportation in

⁵ Transportation and Circulation Element, Goal 10.4 and Transportation and Circulation Element, Goal 10.5

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an effort to reduce vehicle GHG emissions. Additionally, the project would not add lanes and therefore would not increase capacity or volume increase of existing roadways. As a result, the project would not result in a long-term (operational) increase in GHG emissions. Furthermore, the proposed project improvements would better accommodate pedestrians at intersections surrounding the Plaza.

Construction would be short-term and temporary, lasting up to an estimated ten months. The project does not include substantial demolition or construction activities that would result in significant emissions of greenhouse gases or conflict with the City's Climate Action Plan. Impacts would be less than significant.

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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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- 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?*

The project involves the redesign of an existing plaza and would include repaving of paths and street/parking areas, restoration of a gazebo and fountain, and construction of a restroom structure and a stage. These project components would involve the temporary, short-term transport of construction and paving materials. The project would not involve hazardous materials other than the limited use of materials routinely used for construction work. The scope of construction is minimal, consisting of approximately one 300-400 square foot structure and 31,650 square feet of repaving. Project activities would not result in routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials occurring on the site following the construction phase.

The project does not involve any non-routine or substantial risks related to hazardous materials. Standard construction best management practices would reasonably prevent associated risks. Impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN 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?*

The nearest schools to the project site are Radcliff Elementary School and Watsonville High School, which are each approximately 0.25 mile from the site. In addition, the Cabrillo College Watsonville Center is adjacent to the Plaza across Union Street. The proposed project would not involve acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste. As described above under impacts a and b, the project would involve the use of materials routinely used for a minor construction project, but would not involve substantial or long-term use of hazardous materials. This impact would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- d. Would the project be located on a site 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 following databases compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 were checked for known hazardous materials contamination in the Plan Area:

- EnviroStor Database, California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)
- GeoTracker Database, California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)

According to the database search, there are no known hazardous material sites within the project site, and there are no active cleanups in the vicinity (DTSC 2019 and SWRCB 2019). The nearest prior cleanup site occurred at the corner of East Beach Street and Main Street under the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (GeoTracker case AGLO20025564); that case is listed as “terminated.”

Additional nearby prior cleanup events have occurred southwest of the project site on West Beach Street (GeoTracker case T0608700097) and southeast of the project site on Maple Avenue (GeoTracker case T0608700063); both cases are listed as “closed.”

No known hazardous materials sites are known to exist on the project site and the nearest hazardous materials cleanup cases have been resolved. This impact 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 for people residing or working in the project area?*

The closest airport to the project site is Watsonville Municipal Airport, located approximately 2.0 miles to the northwest. The project site is not within the Safety Compatibility Zones, as mapped by the Watsonville Municipal Airport Master Plan (2003). The project would not result in exposure to safety hazards from the airport. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

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

The City of Watsonville has not prepared an emergency evacuation plan. The County of Santa Cruz prepared its Operational Area Emergency Management Plan (EMP) under a Memorandum of Understanding with the County's cities, including Watsonville (County of Santa Cruz 2015). The EMP describes initial emergency response activities that include disseminating warnings and conducting evacuations.

The proposed project would not change the land use of the project site, would not add residents to the City, and would not alter traffic patterns or capacity of local roads. The project would not impair emergency response in the area and would not conflict with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. There would be no impact.

NO 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?*

As discussed below in Section 20, *Wildfire*, the project site is located in an urban area of the City of Watsonville and is not classified as having a high fire hazard. The project would redesign an existing plaza, including adding a restroom, but would not alter the site or its surroundings in a manner that would increase exposure of people or structures to wildfire hazards. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

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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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

The project would add a 300-400 square foot restroom and a stage to the site, resulting in a small increase in impervious surface area within the plaza. However, the project would reduce overall runoff by replacing existing paved surfaces in the adjoining streets with permeable pavers. In accordance with Section 6-3.535 of the Watsonville Municipal Code, the project would minimize runoff by incorporating permeable surfaces and limit the clearing of vegetation while adding a net increase in trees to the site. As such, the project would satisfy City Stormwater Post Construction Requirements (PCR), Performance Requirement Tier 1, which identifies site design and runoff reduction for projects that create and/or replace greater than or equal to 2,500 square feet of post-project impervious surface area, collectively over the entire project site (City of Watsonville 2014). See Table 2 for a summary of City of Watsonville post-construction requirements. The project would also comply with Regional and State Water Quality Control Board regulations related to water quality. Impacts related to surface and ground water quality would be less than significant.

Table 3 Summary of City of Watsonville Post-Construction Requirements

PCR Tier	Requirements
Tier 1	Performance Requirement 1 – Site Design & Runoff Reduction Projects that create or replace 2,500 square feet or more of impervious surface, including detached single-family home projects. Implement site design and runoff reduction measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limit disturbance of creeks and natural drainage features. ▪ Minimize compaction of highly permeable soils. ▪ Limit clearing and grading of native vegetation to the minimum area necessary. ▪ Minimize impervious surfaces. ▪ Minimize runoff by incorporating permeable surfaces and directing runoff toward permeable areas or to rain barrels for reuse.
Tier 2	Performance Requirement 2 – Water Quality Treatment Projects, except detached single-family homes, with 5,000 square feet or more of net impervious surface*. (Detached single-family home projects with 15,000 square feet or more of net impervious surface*.) Tier 1 performance requirements, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Treat stormwater runoff using one or more onsite systems, including low impact development treatment systems, biofiltration treatment systems, and non-retention based treatment systems. ▪ Project applicant must submit a Stormwater Control Plan to the City that sufficiently demonstrates that the project design meets performance requirements of PCR Tier 2.
Tier 3	Performance Requirement 3 – Runoff Retention Projects, except detached single-family homes, that create or replace 15,000 square feet or more of impervious surface. (Detached single-family home projects with 15,000 square feet or more of net impervious surface*.) Tier 2 performance requirements, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use low impact development standards to prevent offsite discharge of runoff from events up to the 95th percentile rainfall event. ▪ Where technical infeasibility prevents full onsite retention requirements, retention-based stormwater control measures shall be provided for no less than 10 percent of the project's impervious surface area. ▪ Project applicant must submit a Stormwater Control Plan to the City that sufficiently demonstrates that the project design meets performance requirements of PCR Tier 3.

PCR Tier	Requirements
Tier 4	<p>Performance Requirement 4 – Peak Management</p> <p>Projects that create and/or replace 22,500 square feet or more of impervious surface in Watershed Management Zone 1.</p> <p>Tier 3 performance requirements, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Control peak flows to not exceed pre-project flows for the 2-year through 10-year storm event. ▪ Project applicant must submit a Stormwater Control Plan to the City that sufficiently demonstrates that the project design meets performance requirements of PCR Tier 4. ▪ Submit an Operations and Maintenance Plan for structural stormwater control measures to the City of Watsonville for review and approval prior to final construction sign-off.

* Net impervious area equals new and replaced impervious area minus the total pre-project-to-post-project reduction in impervious area, if any.

Source: Ordinance No. 1299-14 (CM).

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?*
- 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 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 that would impede or redirect flood flows?*

The project would add a small amount of impervious surface area to the project site, in the form of a new restroom and stage. The project would also replace portions of surrounding streets and parking areas with permeable pavement. The use of permeable pavers would result in a net reduction of impermeable area, and would therefore be expected to decrease. Therefore, the project would not result in an increase in surface runoff from the site, or alter the site's drainage pattern.

The project is not located near a stream or a river and would not alter the site's topography. The project would not draw directly on groundwater supplies. The only water demand added by the project would be for a new two-stall restroom, and the irrigation of new plantings, which would only nominally increase demand on local water supplies. Impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

d. Would the project in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the project site is located in Zone AH, “Special Flood Hazard Area” (FEMA 2012). The City facilitated a Floodplain Management 8 Step Decision Making Process, pursuant to regulations under the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. The analysis determined that the project should be built as proposed on the site. The City will be required to purchase flood insurance for the project (City of Watsonville Environmental Assessment 2019). Furthermore, new structures added by the project would be limited to one restroom and a stage, and would not result in a substantial increase in potential pollutants that would be released due to inundation. 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?

As described above, the project would require water for the new restroom facility added to the site. The project would not directly extract groundwater or alter drainage patterns on the site. It would result in additional trees and the introduction and expansion of permeable pavement, which would be expected to marginally increase groundwater recharge within the project site boundary. The project would not substantially draw on or limit recharge of groundwater supplies. Impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

a. *Would the project physically divide an established community?*

The project involves improvements to an existing plaza and adjacent streets and does not change the basic land use function. There are no new roads, or other components that could physically divide an established community. There would be 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 project would not require a change in zoning or land use. The project is proposed by the City of Watsonville in order to revitalize an existing public space and preserve and enhance historic resources. As described in Section 4, *Biological Resources*, the project would not conflict with a plan or regulation adopted for environmental protection. Nor would the project conflict with a land use plan, policy, or regulation. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

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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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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?*

Mineral extraction does not occur, and is not proposed to occur, on or near the project site. The Watsonville General Plan does not identify mining activity or mineral resources near the Plaza (City of Watsonville 1994), and, according to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), there are no known mineral resources in the vicinity of the Plaza (USGS 2019). Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact on the availability of 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Noise Setting

The unit of measurement used to describe a noise level is the decibel (dB). However, the human ear is not equally sensitive to all frequencies within the sound spectrum. Therefore, a method called "A weighting" is used to filter noise frequencies that are not audible to the human ear. A-weighting approximates the frequency response of the average young ear when listening to most ordinary everyday sounds. When people make relative judgments of the loudness or annoyance of a sound, their judgments correlate well with the "A-weighted" levels of those sounds. Therefore, the A-weighted noise scale is used for measurements and standards involving the human perception of noise. In this analysis, all noise levels are A-weighted, and "dB(A)" is understood to identify the A-weighted decibel.

A 10 dB increase represents a 10-fold increase in sound intensity, a 20 dB change is a 100-fold difference, 30 dB is a 1,000-fold increase, etc. Thus, a doubling of the energy of a noise source, such as doubling of traffic volume, would increase the noise level by 3 dB; a halving of the energy would result in a 3 dB decrease.

Descriptors

The impact of noise is not a function of loudness alone. The time of day when noise occurs and the duration of the noise are also important. In addition, most noise that lasts for more than a few seconds is variable in its intensity. Consequently, a variety of noise descriptors has been developed.

The noise descriptors used for this analysis are the one-hour equivalent noise level (L_{eq}) and the community noise equivalent level (CNEL).

- The L_{eq} is the level of a steady sound that, in a stated time period and at a stated location, has the same A-weighted sound energy as the time-varying sound. For example, $L_{eq(1h)}$ is the equivalent noise level over a 1-hour period and $L_{eq(8h)}$ is the equivalent noise level over an 8-hour period. $L_{eq(1h)}$ is a common metric for limiting nuisance noise whereas $L_{eq(8h)}$ is a common metric for evaluating construction noise.
- The CNEL is a 24-hour equivalent sound level. The CNEL calculation applies an additional 5 dB(A) penalty to noise occurring during evening hours, between 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m., and an additional 10 dB(A) penalty is added to noise occurring during the night, between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. These increases for certain times are intended to account for the added sensitivity of humans to noise during the evening and night.

Sound Wave Propagation

Sound from a small, localized source (approximating a “point” source) radiates uniformly outward as it travels away from the source in a spherical pattern, known as geometric spreading. The sound level decreases or drops off at a rate of 6 dB(A) for each doubling of the distance. Traffic noise is not a single, stationary point source of sound. Over some time interval, the movement of vehicles makes the source of the sound appear to emanate from a line (line source) rather than a point. The drop-off rate for a line source is 3 dB(A) for each doubling of distance.

Vibration Setting

Vibration levels are usually expressed as single-number measure of vibration magnitude, in terms of velocity or acceleration, which describes the severity of the vibration without the frequency variable. The peak particle velocity (ppv) is defined as the maximum instantaneous positive or negative peak of the vibration signal, usually measured in inches per second. Since it is related to the stresses that are experienced by buildings, ppv is often used in monitoring and controlling construction vibration. Although ppv is appropriate for evaluating the potential of building damage, it is not suitable for evaluating human response. It takes some time for the human body to respond to vibrations.

Regulatory Setting

Local

WATSONVILLE 2005 GENERAL PLAN

Chapter 12, *Public Safety*, of the Watsonville 2005 General Plan addresses noise. The General Plan names a maximum acceptable exterior sound level of 60 dBA for noise-sensitive areas, such as parks, churches, and schools. The maximum allowable interior noise level is 45 dBA. Neither the General Plan nor the Watsonville Municipal Code specifies a noise level for construction activities.

WATSONVILLE MUNICIPAL CODE

Watsonville Municipal Code Section 5-8.01 prohibits any person on residential property or a public way to make or continue, or cause to be made or continued, any offensive, excessive, unnecessary, or unusually loud noise or any noise which either annoys, disturbs, injures, or endangers the comfort, repose, health, peace, or safety of others on residential property or public ways within the

City. Section 5-8.02 prohibits any noise that is louder than necessary and disturbs the quiet of residential properties and public ways between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. in such a manner as to be plainly audible at a distance of 50 feet from the sensitive receptor.

- 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?*

Operation

The proposed project would involve redesign of an existing plaza, including addition of a restroom facility and a stage, and modifications to surrounding streets. Changes to streets would not add lanes and would therefore not increase the capacity or volume of the existing roadway. Planned curb bulb outs would likely have the effect of slowing vehicular traffic in the vicinity of the Plaza. The proposed project would improve the Plaza's function as a gathering space and event venue but would not alter the uses that occur on and around the site. Addition of a stage would formalize the Plaza's capacity to be used as a performance venue, which may result in an increase in operational noise during events. However, events occurring at the Plaza would be similar in nature to those that occur now, and the project would not result substantially alter the capacity or use of the Plaza. Therefore, operational noise impacts would be less than significant.

Construction

Temporary noise impacts caused by construction activity would be a function of the noise generated by construction equipment, the location and sensitivity of nearby land uses, and the timing and duration of noise-generating activities.

The project's construction activity would last for an estimated 10 months. Construction activities would involve site preparation, minor grading and construction, paving, and revegetation. As of the date of this report, construction plans are not available for the project. A preliminary equipment list provided by the City includes the following equipment: excavator/backhoe, front-loader, skid-steer, jackhammer, vibratory plate compactor, grader/scraper, asphalt paver, double-drum roller, forklift/z-lift, 3-ton dump truck, auger, and a crane. Due to the limited scope of construction, the project would likely not require prolonged or noise-intensive use of the listed machinery.

Project activity that would generate substantial amounts of noise would be minimal and temporary, as the only new structures would be a stage/spectator area covering 1,500 square feet and a 300-400 square foot prefabricated restroom. Additional noise-generating project activity would include resurfacing portions of the Plaza and surrounding streets. Construction noise shall be temporary and shall be limited to daytime hours, per the noise ordinance codified in Watsonville Municipal Code Section 5-8.02, described above. Construction noise shall not exceed standards set by the General Plan or Municipal Code. Because project construction activities would be minor and temporary, impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

b. *Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?*

The proposed project does not include any substantial vibration sources associated with operation. Therefore, construction activities have the greatest potential to generate ground-borne vibration affecting nearby receivers.

Certain types of construction equipment can generate high levels of groundborne vibration. As described above under threshold a, project activities would require use of various construction machinery, including an excavator/backhoe, a vibratory plate compactor, and a jackhammer. The project would not require blasting or pile driving.

The City of Watsonville has not established vibration limits for construction activities. Vibration limits used in this analysis to determine a potential vibration impact from construction activities are based on information contained in Caltrans' Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual, which identifies thresholds provided by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, shown below in Table .

Table 4 AASHTO Maximum Vibration Levels for Preventing Damage

Type of Situation	Limiting Velocity (in/sec)
Historic sites or other critical locations	0.1
Residential buildings, plastered walls	0.2–0.3
Residential buildings in good repair with gypsum board walls	0.4–0.5
Engineered structures, without plaster	1.0–1.5

Source: Caltrans 2013

Sensitive receivers to project vibration impacts include the historic structures throughout the Plaza as well as the historic building on the corner of Beach Street and Main Street. Mitigation Measure CR-1 would ensure that historic structures are not damaged by construction activities. Therefore, construction vibration is assessed from the historic building on the corner of Beach and Main Street to the edge of proposed construction activities, at a distance of approximately 60 feet. Because the building is a historic structure, as described in Section 5, *Cultural Resources*, the “historic sites or other critical locations” threshold of 0.1 in/second is used for analysis of vibration impacts.

Project construction equipment with the greatest potential for vibration impacts would be that used for paving. Paving would utilize a vibratory plate compactor and/or an asphalt paver. For conservative analysis, vibration impacts of paving activity assumes use of a vibratory roller, the most similar paving equipment for which a vibration estimate was available. At a distance of 60 feet, a vibratory roller would result in limiting velocity of 0.014 in/second (Federal Transit Administration 2018), which would not exceed the threshold of 0.1 in/second.

To ensure that vibration impacts to on-site historic structures are less than significant, Mitigation Measure CR-1 is required.

Mitigation Measure

CR-1 Vibration Impact Plan

Construction-related vibration generated by construction equipment can result in varying degrees of ground vibration, depending on the types of equipment used. Operation of construction equipment causes vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish in strength with distance. Old and fragile structures situated near the active construction area would be susceptible to vibrations, and may incur damage when vibration reaches peak levels. The historic plaza contains several masonry features that could be susceptible to ground borne vibration impacts, particularly the old fountain and the bandstand.

Construction methods have not been fully developed for the current project. To reduce potential impacts to fragile structures within the historic plaza, a Vibration Impact Plan will be developed to identify appropriate construction methods within the vicinity of fragile structures and include a strategy to monitor activity within the areas of concern. The plan will include measures to ensure construction vibration do not exceed established vibration levels for fragile buildings and if necessary, include measures to repair any minor cosmetic damage in-kind. The Vibration Impact Plan should be developed by the City in coordination with a qualified architectural historian or historic architect who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards (NPS 1983).

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

- 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 project site is approximately two miles southeast of Watsonville Municipal Airport. The project site is not within the Airport's Safety Compatibility Zones, as mapped by the Watsonville Municipal Airport Master Plan (2003). Therefore, the project would not expose construction workers to excessive noise levels. The project would not include housing or new land uses that would expose people to substantial airport noise. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

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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)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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)?*

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

The proposed project involves redesigning an existing Plaza and its surrounding streets. The project would not involve residential or commercial development. The project would not displace any existing housing or people or create a long-term source of new employment. There would be an expected increase in social and cultural activities in the historic core associated with the improvements to the Plaza, but this would not lead to any direct impacts to population, housing, or displacement of people or housing.

NO IMPACT

City of Watsonville
Watsonville City Plaza Expansion and Revitalization Project

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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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2 Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3 Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4 Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5 Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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?*

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?*

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?*

- 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?*
- a.5. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered public facilities, or the need for 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 proposed project is a revitalization of an existing Plaza in the center of Watsonville with public services headquarters in the immediate vicinity. The project would not add new residents, permanent employees, or students to the City, and would not change the land use of the Plaza. The project site is served by the Watsonville Police Department and the Watsonville Fire Department. The project would not increase demand for police or fire service or result in a need for new facilities.

The Plaza is part of the City's parks system (City of Watsonville 2019b). Because the project consists of physical improvements to, and expansion of, the Plaza, the project would not result in adverse physical impacts to parks, or the need for new parks or other public facilities, but rather would improve parks and recreation facilities. There would be no impact.

NO 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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?*

The project site is an existing Plaza that is part of the City's parks system (City of Watsonville 2019b). The project would expand the Plaza's footprint by incorporating adjacent street-space into the Plaza. The project may result in a slight increase in use of the Plaza, but would not add to the local population or change use of the parks system as a whole. Furthermore, the project itself consists of improvements to a park, which will address physical deterioration of the existing facilities. Therefore, impacts related to the use and deterioration of parks would be less than significant.

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?*

The proposed project involves construction within and expansion and improvement of a recreational facility. The potential environmental impacts of the project are discussed in Sections 1-21 of this IS-MND. As discussed in Sections 4, 5, 7, and 13, the project could result in potentially significant impacts related to Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, and Noise. Mitigation measures in those respective sections would reduce potential environmental impacts to a less than significant level.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

City of Watsonville
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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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible use (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

a. *Would the project conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?*

To address traffic safety, Watsonville prepared its Neighborhood Traffic Plan (2017) and Draft Vision Zero Action Plan (2019). The Neighborhood Traffic Plan outlines the benefits of traffic calming methods, and the Draft Vision Zero Action Plan describes a systems approach to eliminating traffic fatalities.

The proposed project includes the following changes to the streets adjacent to the Plaza: repaving Peck Street with permeable pavers; repaving the Union Street parking area with permeable pavers; adding raised crosswalks (replacing existing crosswalks) with removable bollards at the intersections of Main Street/Peck Street and Peck Street/Union Street; and installation of an enhanced curb bulb-out at the Main Street and Peck Street intersection in the Main Street right-of-way..

The project would improve the existing Plaza but would not change the existing land use. Thus, the project would not result in a substantial increase in trips to the Plaza. Changes to adjacent streets included in the project would improve safety and efficiency but would not alter traffic patterns.

Repaving of Peck Street and adding removable bollards would expand the footprint of the Plaza and improve the City's ability to safely and efficiently incorporate the street space Plaza events. Street closing of Peck Street already occurs regularly during special events. The project would improve the street closing process but would not alter the existing use of the street. The project would also result in traffic calming around the Plaza, by adding raised crosswalks and an enhanced curb bulb-out. Because the project would not substantially alter traffic patterns or volume, and would result in traffic calming, impacts to the circulation system would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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b. *Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?*

The proposed project would not change the land use of the project site and would not alter traffic patterns. Therefore, the project would not result in a substantial increase in vehicle miles traveled on local roadways. This impact would be less than significant.

LESS THAN 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)?*

Changes to the geometric design of the project site would be to improve efficiency, safety, and access. Adding an enhanced curb bulb-out at the intersection of Main Street and Peck Street, raised crosswalks, and removable bollards would improve safety for pedestrians. The project plans also include Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access within the Plaza. The project would have no impact related to increasing design hazards or incompatible use.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

d. *Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?*

The proposed project would not diminish existing roadway emergency access to the project site or its surroundings. The project would improve parking areas adjacent to the site and would allow for more safe and efficient street closures for events at the Plaza. Therefore, there would no impact on emergency access.

NO IMPACT

18 Tribal Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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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, 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 2024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significant of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

PRC Section 21074 (a)(1)(A) and (B) defines tribal cultural resources as “sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe” and is:

1. 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
2. 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 these criteria, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

AB 52 also establishes a formal consultation process for California tribes regarding those resources. The consultation process must be completed before a CEQA document can be certified. Under AB 52, lead agencies are required to “begin consultation with a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project.” Native American tribes to be included in the process are those that have requested notice of projects proposed within the jurisdiction of the lead agency.

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The City of Watsonville prepared and mailed AB 52 notification letters on September 23, 2019. As of the date of this draft, no responses have been received. Therefore, for the purposes of this analysis, the City assumes that no tribal resources are present on the project site.

- a. 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 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 2024.1?*

To date, the City has not received a request for consultation under AB 52. As such, the City assumes that no tribal cultural resources are present on the project site for the purposes of this analysis. However, because the project involves ground disturbance, there is the possibility of encountering undisturbed subsurface tribal cultural resources during construction. Therefore, the project could result in potentially significant impacts to tribal cultural resources. Mitigation Measure TCR-1 is required to reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measure

TCR-1 Unanticipated Discovery of Tribal Cultural Resources

If cultural resources of Native American origin are identified during construction, all earth-disturbing work in the vicinity of the find must be temporarily suspended or redirected until an archaeologist has evaluated the nature and significance of the find and an appropriate Native American representative, based on the nature of the find, is consulted. If the City determines that the resource is a tribal cultural resource and thus significant under CEQA, a mitigation plan shall be prepared and implemented in accordance with state guidelines and in consultation with Native American groups. The plan would include avoidance of the resource or, if avoidance of the resource is infeasible, the plan would outline the appropriate treatment of the resource in coordination with the archeologist and the appropriate Native American tribal representative.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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 add one new two-stall restroom to the project site. Between 60-100 feet of trenching would be required to connect the new restroom to a sewer line. The site is already connected to water and electric lines. Watsonville is served by the Watsonville Wastewater Treatment Facility, which processes an average of 6.7 million gallons of wastewater daily (City of Watsonville 2019c). The addition of a two-stall restroom facility would not impact existing wastewater collection and treatment. Ground disturbance required for the new sewer connection

would be temporary. As discussed in Section 10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, the project would have a less than significant impact related to stormwater drainage and would be served by existing drainage facilities. Impacts related to utility connections and service 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?*
- 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?*

The City of Watsonville Water Division provides potable water to residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional customers throughout the City. The City provides 6,870 acre-feet of water annually through 14,782 municipal connections (City of Watsonville 2016). The proposed project would add a single two-stall restroom facility to the plaza, which would replace the use of portable restrooms. The project's demand on the water supply would be incremental. This impact 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 majority of solid waste generated in Watsonville is hauled to the Monterey Regional Waste Management District Landfill and Material Recovery Facility. Greenwaste is hauled to the Watsonville Landfill, which is city-owned and operated. According to the City, the landfill is nearing capacity but will remain in use as long as possible (City of Watsonville 2019d).

The proposed project would not change the amount of trash receptacles at the Plaza, or change the Plaza's land use. Solid waste generation may nominally increase if improvements have the result of attracting more public events to the Plaza, but the increase would be considered nominal, and waste management by event hosts would be anticipated pursuant to City requirements. The project applicant is the City of Watsonville, which is required to comply with applicable federal and state regulations regarding solid waste. Impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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?*

The project site is located in an urban area of the City of Watsonville. The entire City is within a Local Responsibility Area and is not within a California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Fire Hazard Severity Zone State Responsibility Area (CAL FIRE 2007). The project would make minor changes to one block of City streets, including adding bulb-outs. These changes would not substantially alter traffic patterns in a manner that would impair emergency response. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

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?

The project site is not in or near a state responsibility area and is not classified as having a high fire hazard (CAL FIRE 2007). The project site is relatively flat and is in an urbanized area with minimal wildland fire fuel. The proposed project would result in a net increase in trees on the site, but would not substantially alter the setting so as to exacerbate wildfire hazards. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

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?

The project site is not in or near a state responsibility area and is not classified as having a high fire hazard (CAL FIRE 2007). Infrastructure components of the project include alterations to the roads surrounding the plaza and water/sewer connections for a new restroom. These changes would not exacerbate fire hazards and the project would not require new infrastructure associated with fire prevention. There would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

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?

As noted above, the project site is not in or near a state responsibility area and is not classified as having a high fire hazard (CAL FIRE 2007). The nearest waterway to the Plaza is the Pajaro River, approximately 0.4 mile to the southeast. The proposed project would not exacerbate fire hazards on the project site or its surroundings. Therefore, there would be no impact related to flooding or landslides resulting from post-fire geologic conditions.

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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a. <i>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?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The proposed project would revitalize an existing Plaza, including repaving, minor construction, and a net addition of trees. The project would not change the land use of the project site and would not substantially alter the existing habitat value of the site, which is limited due to the site's small size and urban environment. With incorporation of mitigation measure BIO-1, *Nesting Bird Surveys and Avoidance*, the project would not have the potential to substantially impact wildlife species or habitat.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

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)?

As described throughout this report, the project would have no impact in comparison to existing conditions for agriculture and forestry resources, land use and planning, mineral resources, and population and housing. Therefore, as there would be no direct or indirect impacts, the proposed project would not contribute to cumulative impacts to these issue areas.

For all other issue areas, the proposed project would have either direct or indirect impacts have been determined to be less than significant, with or without mitigation incorporated. The proposed project includes minor construction, paving, tree removal, and tree planting. Impacts related to the project’s construction phase would be temporary, and, as described throughout the report, would not have substantial impacts on the environment due to the limited scope and duration of construction activities. Considered cumulatively, construction impacts would be incremental. The project’s operational phase would be similar to pre-project conditions. Therefore, the project would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts on the environment.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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

The project does not have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly, as discussed in Section 3, *Air Quality*, Section 9, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, and Section 13, *Noise*. The project would not conflict with an air quality management plan, expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations or hazardous materials, or expose sensitive receptors to substantial noise pollution.

The project would not result in a permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project. Construction noise impacts would temporary and minor due to the limited scope of construction activities. Environmental effects causing adverse effects on human beings would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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Rincon Consultants, Inc. prepared this IS-MND under contract to the City of Watsonville. Persons involved in data gathering analysis, project management, and quality control are listed below.

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Comments and Responses on the Draft IS-MND

This section includes the comments received during circulation of the Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS-MND) prepared for the Veterans Transition Center Project and responses to those comments.

The Draft IS-MND was circulated for a 20-day public review period that began on October 18, 2019 and concluded on November 7, 2019. The City received two comment letters on the Draft IS-MND; one from the Pajaro Valley Historical Association and a second from the Cabrillo Community College District. Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) there is no requirement to prepare response to comments for a Mitigated Negative Declaration [CEQA Guidelines § 15074(b).] Even in the context of an Environmental Impact Report, response to comments "...need only respond to significant environmental issues..." [CEQA Guidelines § 15204(a)]. Nevertheless, the City herein addresses the issues raised in the comment letters submitted on the Draft IS-MND.

The comment letters and responses follow. The comment letters have been numbered sequentially and each separate issue raised by the commenter has been assigned a number. The responses to each comment identify first the number of the comment letter, and then the number assigned to each issue (Response 1.1, for example, indicates that the response is for the first issue raised in comment Letter 1). Corrections or additional text discussed in the responses to comments are also shown in the text of the Final IS-MND in strikethrough (for deleted text) and underline (for added text) format.

Letter 1

COMMENTER: **Susan Jacobs and Louis Arbanas**

DATE: **October 24, 2019**

Response 1.1

The commenter states support of the project's adherence to community's interest and desire in maintaining the historical significance and messaging of the Plaza. Since this comment does not relate to the contents of the environmental analysis, no response to this letter is required.

City of Watsonville
Watsonville City Plaza Expansion and Revitalization Project

Letter 2

COMMENTER: **Jon Salisbury, Director, Facilities Planning & Plant Operations**

DATE: **November 7, 2019**

Response 2.1

The commenter states support of the conceptual site plans and the overall increase in the amount of trees in the park. Since this comment does not relate to the contents of the environmental analysis, no response to this letter is required.