



# MINUTES SPECIAL JOINT CITY COUNCIL, SUCCESSOR HOUSING AGENCY, & SUCCESSOR AGENCY MEETING

February 10, 2024

City of Watsonville  
Civic Plaza Community Rooms  
275 Main Street, Top Floor

**9:05 a.m.**

**1. ROLL CALL**

Mayor Quiroz-Carter, Mayor Pro Tempore Orozco, and Council Members Clark, Dutra, Montesino, Parker, and Salcido were present.

Staff members present were City Manager Mendez, City Clerk Ortiz, Assistant City Manager Vides, Police Chief Zamora, Fire Chief Lopez, Administrative Services Director Duran, Community Development Director Merriam, I.T. Director Gill, Library Director Martinez, Airport Director Williams, Deputy City Manager Manning, Assistant Public Works & Utilities Director Fontes, Assistant Community Development Director Meek, and Interpreter Landaverry.

Also present were Susan Harden of Circlepoint, David Sargent and Juan Gomez-Novy of Sargent Town Planning, Ben Sigman of EPS, and Maranda Thompson of Mead & Hunt.

**2. NEW BUSINESS**

**2.a. GENERAL PLAN WORKSHOP**

**Workshop Regarding 2050 General Plan Background, Approval Process, Guiding Principles, and Growth Options**

**General Plan Overview Presentation by Assistant Community Development Director Meek**

***Planning Areas & Considerations***

***Interactive Activity: Planning Area Exploration***

***Small Group Discussions on Key Planning Topics***

***Facilitated Group Discussion***

Member Dutra spoke about challenges with bringing new businesses to Watsonville and building housing and about the importance of collaboration among all stakeholders to achieve solutions.

Member Clark spoke about the need of analyzing pilot safety when looking into closing the Airport's crosswind runway. He stated infrastructure improvements were necessary prior to moving forward with additional construction projects.

Mayor Pro Tempore Orozco requested information about the potential impacts of closing or shortening the Airport's crosswind runway and about how many total housing units could be built in either scenario. She spoke about the importance of addressing the need for housing in the community and the potential for annexing an area in Buena Vista for that purpose.

Member Montesino spoke about the need for adding businesses and other attractions to the City to increase revenues, and about streamlining requirements for current businesses to encourage local investment.

Member Parker stated economic development should be a priority, spoke about the importance of residents voting, and stated City infrastructure needed improvements, which could be partly addressed through possible grant funding from the State.

Member Salcido spoke about the importance of exploring shortening or closing the crosswind runway, the need for housing options for all income levels, the possibility of annexing an area of Buena Vista, and implementing the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan. She requested additional information on a development on East Lake Avenue and the number of housing units that could be built should the crosswind runway be shortened or closed.

Mayor Pro Tempore Orozco spoke about workforce housing, exploring options outside of big box stores, and adding family entertainment options.

Mayor Quiroz-Carter spoke about the growing arts community, the importance of economic development, clarifying the process for businesses interested in coming to Watsonville, and how to better attract businesses.

Member Dutra stated a staff position dedicated to exploring economic development and education for the public on the process for allowing businesses to come into the City was necessary. He spoke about the importance of collaboration among all interested parties for the improvement of the City.

In answering Member Clark, City Manager Mendez stated that the City had an economic development consultant and that the Council would receive a presentation on the topic at their next regular meeting.

Member Clark spoke about the importance of collaboration and communication to achieve goals.

In answering Member Dutra, Mead & Hunt Consultant Thompson spoke about the differences with allowed development types near various types of airports.

Mayor Pro Tempore Orozco stated public safety, open parks spaces, and strengthening current partnerships should be key considerations.

**Future Growth Scenarios Presentation by Assistant Community Development Director Meek**

In answering Member Clark, Assistant Community Development Director Meek spoke about addressing potential flooding concerns related to possible annexation of property near Atkinson Lane for housing developments.

Assistant Community Development Director Meek, in answering Member Dutra, spoke about the possibility of constructing various types of housing, including single family homes, on the Atkinson Lane property should the City annex it in the future.

Member Dutra spoke about developing Freedom Boulevard in a more extensive manner and spoke about current restrictions due to zoning and airport safety zones.

Member Parker spoke in support of focusing on single family housing projects and expressed concerns with State funding restricting the type of housing that can be built.

In answering Member Parker, Assistant Community Development Director Meek spoke about how changing laws affected the City's ability to develop housing.

Assistant Community Development Director Meek, in answering Member Salcido, spoke about the differences between the various growth scenarios presented.

In answering Mayor Pro Tempore Orozco, Assistant Community Development Director Meek spoke about restrictions on constructing housing in specific areas due to airport safety zone concerns.

Member Montesino spoke about the impact of high-density housing on public safety services, education opportunities, and other resources.

Assistant Community Development Director Meek spoke about the reasons the Regional Housing Needs Allocation numbers for the City had grown and stated the potential growth scenarios presented allowed exploration of how to meet those numbers.

### ***Interactive Activity: Growth Scenarios***

#### ***Small Group Discussions on Growth Scenarios***

##### ***Facilitated Group Discussion***

In answering Member Dutra, Assistant Community Development Director Meek spoke about key considerations when exploring rezoning an area, community engagement efforts, and the State's density bonus law.

Assistant Community Development Director Meek, in answering Member Parker, spoke about the City's Housing Element which was in progress and challenges with State laws.

### **Summary and Next Steps**

#### **3. EMERGENCY ITEMS ADDED TO AGENDA – None**

#### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:28 p.m.

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Vanessa Quiroz-Carter, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Irwin I. Ortiz, City Clerk