

RESOLUTION NO. _____ (CM)

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO VOTE “YES” ON THE CITY’S ASSESSMENT BALLOTS FOR CITY-OWNED PARCELS FOR THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY MOSQUITO, VECTOR, AND DISEASE CONTROL PROPOSED BENEFIT ASSESSMENT, AND TO SUBMIT BALLOTS ON BEHALF OF THE CITY

WHEREAS, since 1993, the Santa Cruz County Mosquito and Vector Control Division, managed by the County Agricultural Commissioner, has protected local communities from mosquito and vector-borne diseases through surveillance, prevention, and environmentally responsible control of mosquitoes, ticks, rodents, and other pests that can spread disease; and

WHEREAS, the Division’s activities are funded by a voter-approved benefit assessment that has remained unchanged for nearly thirty (30) years, currently ranging between \$18.69 and \$24.26 per year for single-family homes; and

WHEREAS, due to increasing operational costs, inflation, and the potential reemergence of invasive mosquito species, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors in 2023 directed staff to explore an increase to the existing benefit assessment; and

WHEREAS, in August 2025, the Board of Supervisors approved a Resolution of Intention to levy the proposed assessment and to mail ballots to all property owners starting September 2, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the proposed increase for most single-family homes is approximately \$11.99 per year, with other property types assessed based on land use, size, and proximity to vector habitats, as detailed in the Engineer’s Report; and

WHEREAS, all funds raised through the proposed assessment would remain locally controlled and dedicated exclusively to mosquito and vector control services in Santa Cruz County; and

WHEREAS, benefit assessments are governed under Proposition 218, requiring that each property owner vote be weighted according to the amount of the proposed assessment, with approval requiring a majority of the weighted ballots returned; and

WHEREAS, ballots for the proposed assessment were mailed to property owners the week of September 2, 2025, and must be returned by November 4, 2025, with final results to be announced at the public hearing scheduled for Tuesday, November 18, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the cumulative annual assessment increase for all City-owned parcels is estimated at \$1,037.75, with any future increases limited to an inflation adjustment based on the Northern California Consumer Price Index (CPI), not to exceed three percent (3%) per year, subject to annual review and approval by the County Board of Supervisors.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, AS FOLLOWS:

1. The approval of the assessment increase is not subject to review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21000, et seq. and the CEQA Guidelines (14 Cal. Code Regs. §§ 15000 et. seq.), including without limitation, Public Resources Code section 21065 and California Code of Regulations 15378 as this is not a “project” that may cause a direct, or reasonably foreseeable indirect, physical change in the environment.

2. The City Council hereby authorizes the City Manager, to vote “YES” on behalf of the City of Watsonville on all assessment ballots for City-owned parcels affected by the proposed Santa Cruz County Mosquito, Vector, and Disease Control Benefit Assessment.

3. The City Manager, is further authorized and directed to submit said ballots to the Santa Cruz County Mosquito and Vector Control Division prior to the close of the balloting period on November 4, 2025.
