



Agenda Report

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, June 1, 2021

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR MERRIAM
PRINCIPAL PLANNER JUSTIN MEEK, AICP

SUBJECT: PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL TO
ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF 21 TOWNHOMES ON A 1.57± ACRE
SITE LOCATED AT 547 AIRPORT BOULEVARD (APN 015-321-01)

STATEMENT OF ISSUES

The project proposes to construct 21 row-style, two-story townhouse units on a 1.57± acre site located at 547 Airport Boulevard. Overall development includes installing new onsite circulation and parking lot, landscaping, common space amenities, stormwater facilities, and trash enclosure. Development of the project also involves discontinuing an existing rebar processing operation and demolishing an existing residence along with impervious surfaces, such as building foundations and surface parking areas. Project entitlements consist of a General Plan Map Amendment, Zoning Map Amendment, Planned Development, Major Subdivision (Tentative Map), Special Use Permit/Specific Development Plan with Design Review, and Environmental Review.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission:

- (a) adopt a Resolution recommending that the City Council adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration; and
 - (b) adopt a Resolution recommending that the City Council approve a General Plan Map Amendment, Zoning Map Amendment, Planned Development, Major Subdivision (Tentative Map), and Special Use Permit with Design Review and Specific Development Plan (PP2018-11) to allow the construction of the 21 townhomes on a 1.57± acre site located at 547 Airport Boulevard (APN 015-321-01)
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BASIC PROJECT DATA

Application: PP2018-11
Location: 547 Airport Boulevard (APN: 015-321-01)
Lot Size: 1.57± acre

General Plan: Industrial
Zoning: Industrial Park (CT)
Surrounding: Industrial in the IP Zoning District (west & south), Residential Medium Density in the Multiple Residential Medium Density / Residential Manufactured Home Park (RM-2/R-MH) Zoning District (east), and Transportation, Communication, and Utilities in the Public Facilities (PF) Zoning District (north)

Existing Use: Rebar processing facility and single residence
Proposed: Residential (townhouse units)
Surrounding: Residential (mobile home units), light industrial, airport

Flood Zone: The project site is not within a 100-year floodplain

CEQA Review: An Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared for this project, in accordance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Applicant/Property Owner: Raoul Ortiz, 547 Airport Boulevard, Watsonville, CA 95076

BACKGROUND

On May 17, 2017, the City provided Raoul Ortiz a pre-application letter (PP2017-72) for the construction of 21 townhome units on 1.57± acre site located at 547 Airport Boulevard.

On December 21, 2018, Raoul Ortiz, applicant and property owner, applied for a General Plan Map Amendment, Zoning Map Amendment, Planned Development, Major Subdivision (Tentative Map), and Special Use Permit/Specific Development Plan with Design Review and Environmental Review (PP2018-11) to allow construction of 21 townhomes at the subject site.

On January 25, 2019, staff provided the applicant an incomplete letter outlining issues that needed to be addressed for moving forward with the project.

On July 11, 2020, the applicant's architect Fred Lattanzio submitted revised plans in response to the incomplete letter.

On January 27, 2020, the applicant entered into a reimbursement agreement with the City of Watsonville for preparation of an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project. The draft Initial Study and proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration were available for a 30-day review period beginning Monday, August 24, 2020 and ending Tuesday, September 22, 2020.

On February 16, 2021, the applicant's architect Fred Lattanzio submitted revised plans to address incomplete items.

On April 3, 2021, the applicant's engineer Joel Ricca with Bowman & Williams submitted revised plans to address incomplete items identified by Engineering staff.

PROCESS

Amendment to the General Plan Land Use Diagram

The provisions of the General Plan text and the General Plan Land Use Diagram may be amended by the Council by resolution and according to procedures established in Chapter 14-12 of the Watsonville Municipal Code (WMC) whenever the public necessity, the general community welfare, and good zoning practices permit such amendment. [WMC § 14-12.700](#).

Any proposed amendment to the General Plan Land Use Diagram shall be reviewed by the Planning Commission, at a public hearing noticed in accordance with Part 9 of WMC Chapter 14-10 and conducted in accordance with Part 10 of WMC Chapter 14-10, for recommendation to the City Council. At the conclusion of the public hearing, the Commission shall adopt a resolution, recommending approval or denial of the proposed amendment, by the affirmative vote of the majority of the Commission members, subject to findings required by [WMC Section 14-12.708](#).

Upon forwarding the Commission recommendation for approval, modified approval, or denial in any matter by the Planning Commission to the Council, such recommendation shall be accompanied by a complete report of the Commission's action prepared by the Community Development Department, including a summary of the hearing, its findings, and a copy of the Commission resolution, minutes, along with any other pertinent material or information which will assist the Council in making its final determination in the matter. [WMC § 14-12.706](#). Upon receipt of the Commission's recommendation, and before adopting any amendment, the Council shall review the matter at a public hearing noticed in accordance with Part 9 of WMC Chapter 14-10 and conducted in accordance with Part 10 of WMC Chapter 14-10.

At the conclusion of the public hearing, the Council shall adopt a resolution approving or denying the proposed amendment, subject to findings set forth in WMC Section 14-12.708.

Amendment to the Zoning Map

The provisions of Title 14 and the Zoning Map may be amended by the Council by ordinance and according to procedures established in WMC Chapter 14-12 whenever the public necessity, the general community welfare, and good zoning practices permit such amendment. Pursuant to [WMC Sections 14-12.802](#) through [14-12.807](#), the map of the adopted Zoning Code may be amended in the same manner as the General Plan Land Use Diagram.

Planned Development Overlay District and Special Use Permit

The purpose of the Planned Development (PD) Overlay District is to provide a technique to foster development plans for eligible lands which serve public objectives more fully than development plans permitted under conventional zoning regulations; and to establish criteria for identifying

those parcels of land which are eligible for the special procedures available for creative development plans requiring special review and approval procedures.

The PD District is an “overlay” or “combining” district which is placed over or covers an existing base residential, commercial, or industrial districts.¹ The PD Overlay District shall be designated by the use of the letters PD following the underlying zoning designation. The regulations of the underlying district may be superseded, modified or amended upon approval of the planned development as provided in Part 25 of WMC Chapter 14-16. A PD Overlay District may provide for modifications on district regulations, where appropriate, in areas such as building setbacks, building height, lot area, parking, and use. [WMC § 14-16.2503](#).

Pursuant to [WMC Section 14-16.2502](#), the intent of the PD District is so that:

- (a) Planned development zoning will be granted only where the subject parcel is large enough to make innovative and creative site planning possible;
- (b) Applicants shall have the professional capability to produce a creative plan;
- (c) The public interest in achieving goals stated in the General Plan will be served more fully through the planned development process rather than through application of conventional district regulations;
- (d) The advantages to landowners afforded by the planned development process will be balanced by public benefits;
- (e) Natural or man-made features and resources of the site such as topography, trees, watercourses, and the like are preserved; and
- (f) A PD Overlay District shall only be allowed in any existing zoning districts.

The Planning Commission shall review the request for the establishment of a PD Overlay District and make a recommendation to the City Council, which shall review the matter at a public hearing and establish the PD Overlay District by ordinance. After adoption of a PD Overlay District, a Special Use Permit issued by the City Council shall be required for any and all uses in a PD Overlay District. An application for a Special Use Permit in a PD Overlay District shall include and be accompanied by a Specific Development Plan which, if approved by the City Council, shall become a part of the Use Permit. The recommendation by the Planning Commission, adoption by Ordinance of a PD Overlay District by the City Council, and issuance of a Special Use Permit by the City Council after adoption of a PD Overlay District shall in each instance be passed by at least five affirmative votes.

Before recommending or approving any PD Overlay District and related development plan, the Planning Commission and the City Council shall make the findings set forth in [WMC Section 14-16.2508](#).

¹ See American Planning Association “Property Topics and Concepts” website for more information on overlay zoning, <https://www.planning.org/divisions/planningandlaw/propertytopics.htm#Overlay>.

The purpose of the Special Use Permit is to ensure the proper integration of uses which, because of their special nature, may be suitable only in certain locations or zoning districts or only if such uses are arranged or designed in a particular manner. [WMC § 14-12.500](#). This special review shall be for the purpose of determining that the proposed use is, and will continue to be, compatible with surrounding, existing, or planned uses; and for the further purpose of establishing such special conditions as may be necessary to ensure the harmonious integration and compatibility of uses in the neighborhood and with the surrounding area. [WMC § 14-12.501](#).

Tentative Map

The Planning Commission shall review and make a recommendation on the Tentative Map and all staff recommendations pertaining thereto at a public hearing within 50 days after the filing of a tentative map application with the Community Development Department. The 50 days shall commence only after the project is deemed complete and after certification of an environmental impact report, adoption of a negative declaration, or determination that the project is exempt from CEQA.

In recommending approval or conditional approval or denial of the Tentative Map, the Planning Commission shall make all of the findings as applicable listed in [WMC Section 13-4.09\(d\)](#). In the event that one or more of the findings included in WMC Section 13-4.09(d) cannot be made to support approval or conditional approval of the Tentative Map, the Planning Commission shall recommend that the map be denied.

The recommendation to the City Council by the Planning Commission to approve, conditionally approve or to deny a Tentative Map application for a subdivision of five or more lots is not appealable. All such applications shall be forwarded to the City Council regardless of the Planning Commission's recommendation. Upon the receipt of the Planning Commission's report on the Tentative Map, the City Clerk shall set the matter for a public hearing before the City Council. Such hearing shall be set at the next available regular meeting of the City Council following the filing of the Planning Commission's report with the City Council and shall be held within 30 days thereafter.

The City Council shall approve, conditionally approve, or deny the Tentative Map within the 30-day period. The approval of the Tentative Map shall in no way relieve the subdivider of the responsibility to comply with the requirements of WMC Title 13 and to provide the improvements and easements necessary to meet all City standards, whether or not the same are set forth in the approval of the Tentative Map. The City Council may not approve a Tentative Map unless it makes all of the findings set forth in WMC Section 13-4.09(d). In the event that one or more of the findings included in WMC Section 13-4.09(d) cannot be made to support approval or conditional approval of the Tentative Map, the map shall be denied.

Design Review

All new construction, exterior remodeling, additions, or changes in use requiring additional parking, which involve structures used for multi-family residential, commercial, industrial or public purpose are subject to Design Review. [WMC § 14-12.400](#). No Building Permit shall be

issued for a development subject to Design Review until a Design Review Permit has been approved in accordance with WMC Chapter 14-12 and conditions of approval have been met.

When considering applications for Design Review, the Planning Commission shall evaluate the impact of the Design Review on and its compatibility with surrounding properties and neighborhoods to ensure the appropriateness of the development and make the findings set forth in [WMC Section 14-12.403](#). The findings for a Design Review Permit are substantially similar to those required for Special Use Permits, except for the finding set forth in subdivision (e) of WMC Section 14-12.403, which requires that additional design elements to ensure an overall harmonious design and minimize adverse effects of the proposed development on adjacent properties.

Environmental Review

The California Environmental Quality Act requires local and state governments to consider the potential environmental effects of a project before making a decision on it. CEQA's purpose is to disclose the potential impacts of a project and suggest methods to minimize those impacts so that decision-makers will have full information upon which to base their decision. Below is a summary of key provisions for the consideration and adoption of a negative declaration or mitigated negative for a project.

1. **Consideration prior to approval.** Prior to approving a project, the decision-making body shall consider the proposed negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration together with any comments received during the public review process.
2. **Standard.** The decision-making body can adopt the negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration only if it finds there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment.
3. **The Record.** The lead agency is to specify the location of the documents and materials constituting the record.
4. **Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting.** When adopting a mitigated negative declaration, the lead agency must also adopt a program for reporting or monitoring the changes it has required or made conditional on approval.

STANDARD OF REVIEW & APPEAL PROCESS

Whether a particular decision is adjudicative or legislative determines the requirements to support the decision. Legislative decisions involve the adoption of broad policies applicable to many situations (for example, general plan and zoning amendments). Legislative decisions generally require few, if any, findings.

Adjudicative (or "quasi-judicial") decisions, on the other hand, are not policy decisions. Adjudicative/quasi-judicial decisions apply already adopted policies or standards to individual

cases, such as a variance or conditional use permit application. Adjudicative/quasi-judicial decisions are based on evidence and must always be supported by findings.²

The proposed General Plan Map Amendment, Zoning Map Amendment, and Planned Development are legislative decisions as they involve amending the General Plan Land Use Diagram and Zoning Map with a PD Overlay District for the site. These legislative decision requires certain findings, as set forth in [WMC Section 14-12.708](#) and [WMC Section 14-16.2508](#).

The remaining decisions before the Planning Commission—a Major Subdivision (Tentative Map) and Special Use Permit/Specific Development Plan with Design Review—are adjudicative/quasi-judicial decisions and require findings, either for denial, or as recommended, for approval and be supported by substantial evidence. *Toigo v Town of Ross* (1998) 70 Cal App 4th 309

If the Planning Commission’s decision is appealed, the City Council will consider whether the action taken by the Planning Commission was erroneously taken and may sustain, modify or overrule Planning Commission’s action. In order for the Planning Commission’s decision to be overturned on appeal, the City Council must find that the action taken by the Planning Commission was erroneous and inconsistent with the intent of the Zoning District regulations that regulate the proposed action. [WMC § 14-10.1106](#).

A lawsuit is required to challenge a Council’s decision. A reviewing court will consider whether an adjudicative/quasi-judicial decision by the Council was supported by adequate findings. Courts scrutinize adjudicative/quasi-judicial decisions closely. An action may be overturned if the City (1) exceeded its authority, (2) failed to provide a fair hearing, or (3) or made a decision not supported by substantial evidence (also called “a prejudicial abuse of discretion”).

Another important difference between legislative and adjudicative/quasi-judicial decisions on appeal is the substantial evidence standard: in weighing evidence of what happened at the Council meeting, courts go beyond whether a decision was “reasonable” (the legislative standard). Courts reviewing adjudicative/quasi-judicial decisions look to make sure the decision is supported by substantial evidence. Denied applicants argue that there is no substantial evidence to support the decision. Cities usually assert there is substantial evidence to support the decision and rely on (1) the written words in the staff findings, (2) the statements and letters presented at the hearing, and (3) the words of the Planning Commission or Council.

DISCUSSION

Existing Site

The 1.57± acre project site is rectangular shaped and flat. Much of the property is undeveloped except for the single-family residence and portions of the site currently used for processing rebar. The residence, which fronts Airport Boulevard, was built in 1968 and is currently occupied. Behind it is a portable office space that serves as the business office for Monterey Bay Rebar. Behind fencing in the northwest corner is an area generally used for storage. Extending towards

² Quasi-judicial decisions require the decision-making body to take evidence and use its judgment to make factual as well as legal determinations about whether a particular property or project meets the standards established by the land use ordinance.

the rear of the site, parallel to the western side of the property is a long, narrow concrete pad that provides a level surface for processing rebar. The site is devoid of vegetation except for one pine tree in the northeastern corner.

The site is located generally in a light industrial area. To the west and south are properties with manufacturing, warehousing and other industrial development. As shown on Figure 1, a mobile home park borders the site's eastern boundary and single-family residences are a short distance to the southeast. Across Airport Boulevard to the north are hangars at the Watsonville Municipal Airport.

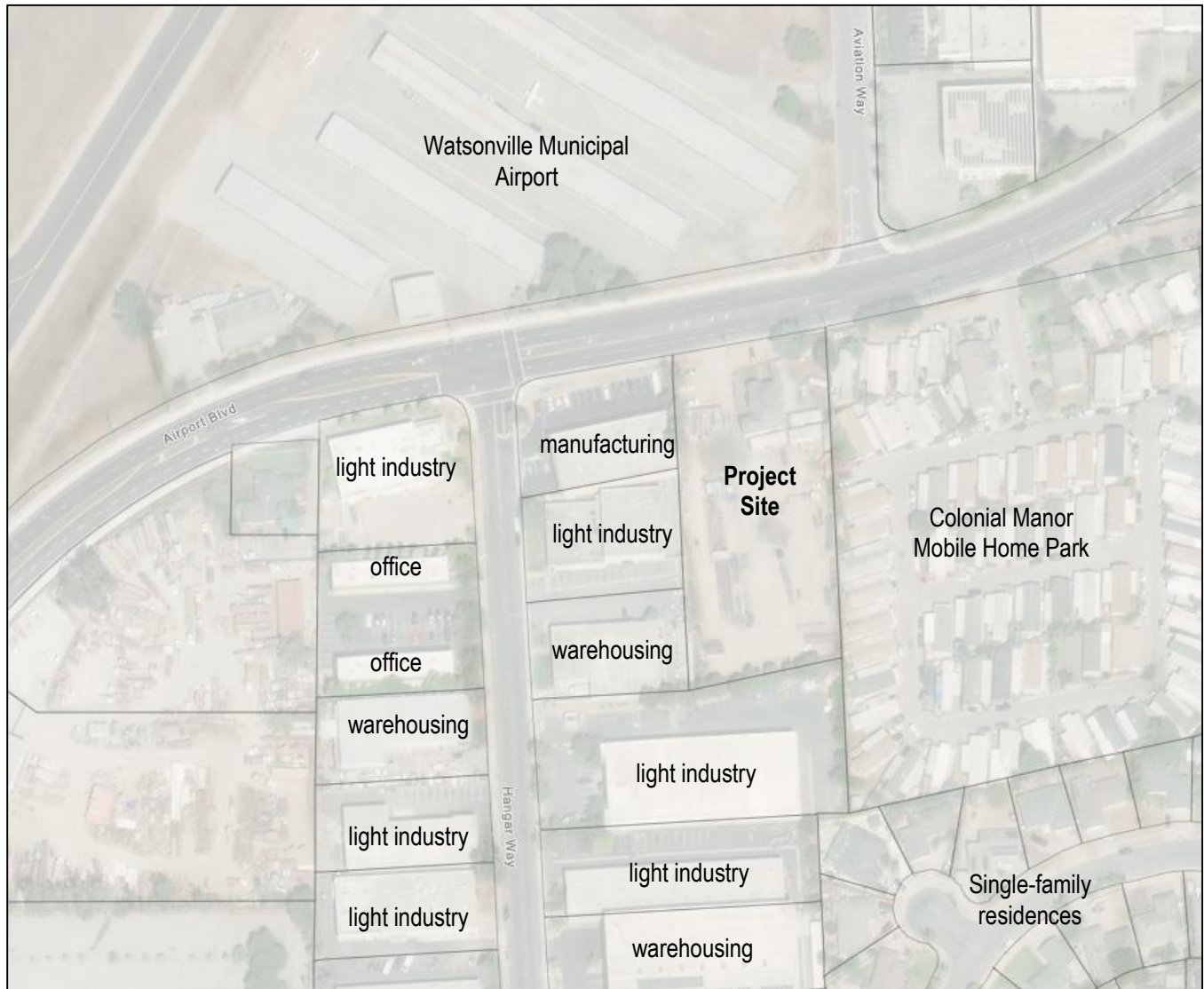


FIGURE 1 Aerial view of the project site and surrounding area
Source: Watsonville GIS Viewer, 2020

Proposed Project

The proposed project involves the construction of 21 row-style, two-story townhouse units. The proposed Floor Plan indicates that each unit would have three bedrooms, two and half

bathrooms, and a one-car garage (Attachment 2, sheets A2-A3). An additional parking space would be provided in the driveway of each unit along with 16 visitor parking spaces distributed throughout the site for a total of 58 spaces (Attachment 2, sheet A1). Vehicle access is proposed from a 20-foot-wide private driveway off Airport Boulevard. A four-foot-wide walkway extends into the site and wraps around the private drive to provide pedestrian access. Entries and front porches face the internal private drive. A private patio and yard area are provided to the rear of each unit. The proposed common area includes:

- a 384 square-foot “tot lot” play area;
- a covered picnic area south of the tot lot, approximately the same size, with BBQ grills, tables and a wood trellis;
- a lawn area of approximately 900 square feet between the tot lot and BBQ area; and
- a large “open space meadow” (approximately 3,300± square-feet) at the northeast corner of the site, bordered by benches, that also serves as a stormwater retention basin.

Other key project components are as follows:

- **Density.** The project would result in a density³ of 16.2 units per net acre.⁴
- **Grading and Drainage.** The project site would be graded, and stormwater retention would be accomplished through a combination of underground infiltration and aboveground retention. The project would create 51,083± square feet of impervious surfaces (Attachment 2, sheet A0, area of first floors, roadway, sidewalks and walkways, guest parking, porches and rear patios). As discussed in more detail in the section on drainage below, the project would comply with stormwater treatment requirements and includes bioretention areas in excess of what is required by regulations. The project is subject to the City’s stormwater management requirements.
- **Utilities and Infrastructure.** The proposed project would connect to existing water, wastewater, storm drainage, electricity, and telecommunication infrastructure. Water service, wastewater treatment, stormwater management, and solid waste collection are provided by the City. Electricity and natural gas are provided by PG&E. The project proposes relocating a stormwater drainage connection. The proposed bioretention area would meter runoff and direct the water into a new proposed storm drain running north/south across Airport Boulevard (Attachment 2, sheet T-4).
- **Removal of Existing Structures.** As part of the project, the existing single-family residence would be demolished and all equipment associated with processing rebar processing would be removed.

³ Density represents the number of dwelling units per net acre of land. Dwelling units include all residential units having sleeping, eating, cooking, and bathroom facilities, including single-family homes, mobile homes, townhouses, condominiums, duplexes (and other "plexes"), and apartment units. Net land area is calculated by taking gross acreage and subtracting undevelopable lands (e.g., wetlands) and the area in rights-of-way for streets and roads.

⁴ Calculation: 21 units ÷ (1.567 gross ac – 0.273 r/w ac) = 21 units ÷ 1.295 developable ac = 16.2 units per net ac

- **Street Improvements.** The street frontage along Airport Boulevard would be improved to City standards for curb, gutter, and sidewalk.
- **Project Construction and Excavation.** Construction is anticipated to begin soon after project entitlements (i.e., June 2021) and be completed in 18 to 24 months.

TABLE 1 Pervious and Impervious Surface Areas

	Area (sf)	Area (acres)	%
Building footprint	18,927	0.43	28
Other impervious (e.g., pavement, pathways)	32,156	0.74	47
Pervious (e.g., landscaping, open space)	17,196	0.39	25
Total Project Site	68,279	1.57	100

Source: Lattanzio, Inc., cover sheet A0 (01.3.2018), Airport Boulevard Townhouse Development

Potential Displacement

The project would not displace a substantial number of existing people or housing. Nevertheless, the project has the potential to displace the occupants of the existing home to be demolished. The new housing development of 21 residential units, however, would have capacity to house those displaced by build-out of the project. Because new dwelling units would provide housing for lower income households, rental prices would most likely not be a deterrent to existing residents who may elect to secure housing in the new development. As such, existing residents could feasibly be accommodated by the project’s proposed affordable housing development.

General Plan/Zoning Amendment

The project site is designated Industrial on the General Plan Land Use Diagram and is within the Industrial Park (IP) Zoning District. The intent of this land use designation is to serve the industrial needs of the community and the purpose of the IP Zoning District is to provide a separate and exclusive district for light, non-nuisance industry, business, service, and research work; to promote an industrial business, service, and research area which is not dependent on rail transport and not requiring outdoor storage; to foster and encourage the development of specialized manufacturing, business, service, and research institutions; to promote and protect design and landscape qualities in the district; to minimize traffic congestion through the provision of adequate off-street parking and loading; and to protect the district and surrounding area and any adjacent residential or commercial property from noise, illumination, glare, and unsightliness, including outdoor storage, odors, dust, dirt, litter, smoke, fumes, vibration, heat, fire, and other hazards. [WMC § 14-16.500](#). General categories of allowed uses include wholesale sales, heavy commercial, construction and trade shops, general manufacturing, food processing, and related services, businesses and uses.

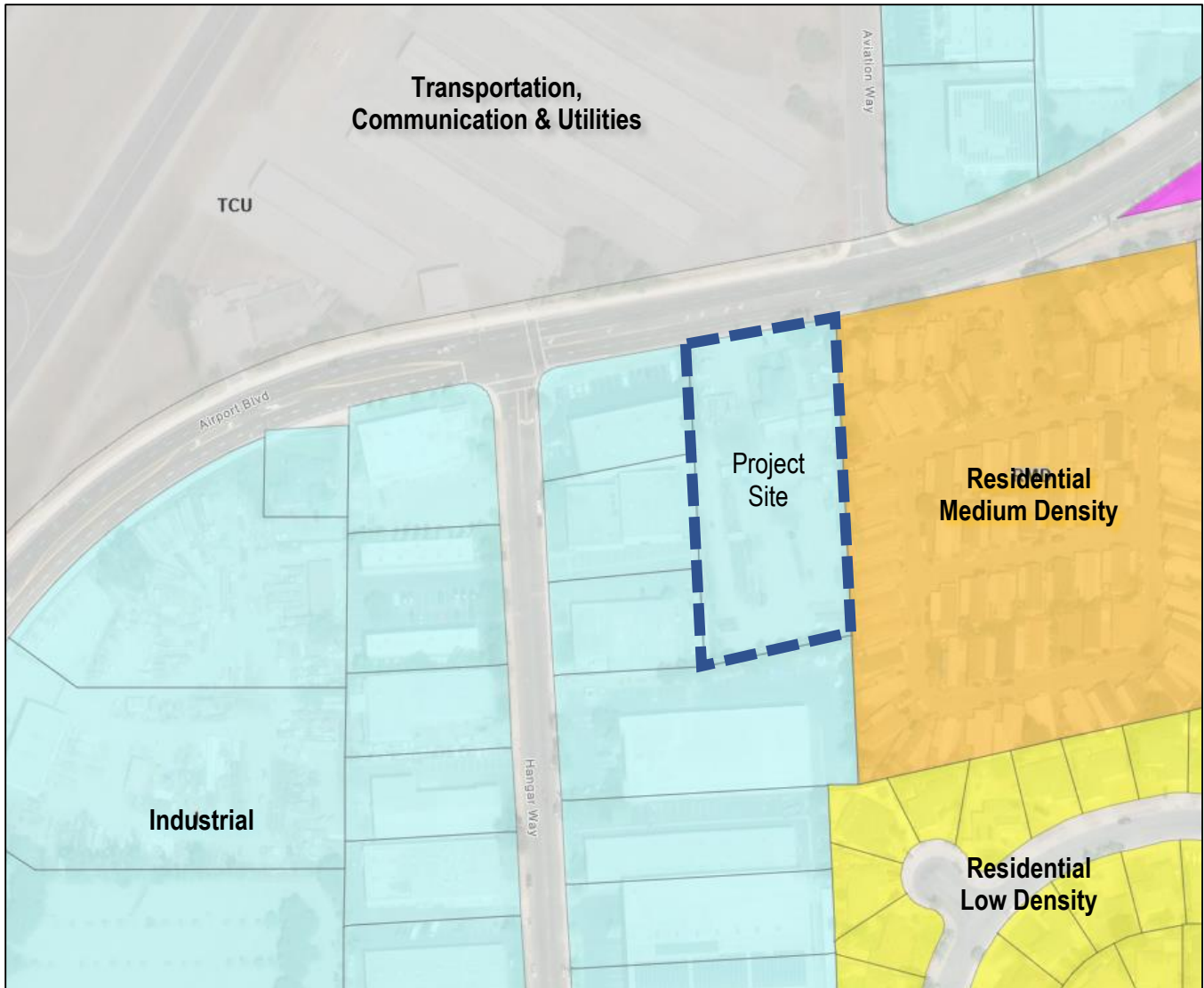


FIGURE 2 General Plan land use designations for the project site and surrounding area

Source: Watsonville GIS View, 2020

Residential development is not allowed on Industrial designated land or within the IP Zoning District. Therefore, the project applicant has requested changing the land use designation and zoning as follows:

- General Plan: Industrial → Residential High Density
- Zoning: IP (Industrial Park) → RM-3/PD (Multiple Residential – High Density/Planned Development)

The purpose of the Residential High Density designation is to provide living environments through various forms of housing developments at densities between 14 and 36.99 dwelling units per net acre. The project involves construction of 21 townhouse units at a density of 16.2 units per net acre. Therefore, the project is consistent with the residential density standards permitted in the Residential High Density designation. Furthermore, townhouses containing 11

or more dwelling units are permitted conditionally in the RM-3 Zoning District with issuance of a Special Use Permit.

Land Use Compatibility

The proposed project is compatible with existing residential neighborhoods on adjacent properties. The proposed amendments to the General Plan Land Use Diagram and Zoning Map would allow infill housing in a manner consistent with other nearby residential neighborhoods. The Colonial Manor manufactured housing to the east of the site includes higher-density housing. The proposed project is near, but not adjacent to, the existing single-family neighborhood southeast of the project site. The properties west and south of the site are predominantly light industrial in one and two-story tilt-up concrete buildings. The airport is north of the project site. None of these uses creates a significant compatibility issue such as noise impacts. In addition, a condition of approval requires the preparation of an acoustical analysis prior to issuance of a building permit to confirm noise levels will not exceed the following thresholds:

- 70 CNEL along northern portion of the site where building facades would be located, per the land use compatibility standards contained in the City's General Plan;
- 45 CNEL in habitable rooms; and
- 50 dBA Leq (1-hour) in other occupied rooms.

General Plan Consistency

The proposed project requires approval from the Planning Commission and City Council for a General Plan Map Amendment and rezoning from the current zoning of Industrial Park (IP) to Multiple Residential-High Density with Planned Development Overlay (RM-3/PD). Assuming adoption of the General Plan amendment, the project would not cause a significant environmental impact due to conflict with any applicable land use plan adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect, including the City's 2005 General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The project is not located within an adopted specific plan area.

The proposed project is consistent with the following General Plan goals, policies and implementation measures concerning housing, land use compatibility, design, and site improvement.

- **Housing Element Goal 3.0: Housing Production.** Provide housing opportunity for Watsonville's share of the regional housing need for all income groups.
- **Housing Element Goal 4.0: Removal of Government Constraints.** Where appropriate, mitigate unnecessary governmental constraints to the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing.
- **Housing Element Policy 3.1** – Encourage the production of housing that meets the needs of all economic segments, including lower, moderate, and above moderate-income households, to achieve a balanced community.

- **Housing Element Policy 3.2** – Provide high quality rental and ownership housing opportunities for current and future residents that are affordable to a diverse range of income levels.
- **Housing Element Policy 3.4** – Continue to implement the Affordable Housing Ordinance, Density Bonus Ordinance, and other programs as a means of integrating affordable units within new residential development.
- **Housing Element Policy 4.2** – Implement and enforce residential design guidelines to ensure that the community’s expectations are met with respect to the quality and style of housing projects.
- **Housing Element Program 17: Planned Development District.** The City will continue to use the PD designation to provide flexibility in developments and facilitate creative housing option as well as explore amendments to the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to encourage lot consolidation in districts with substandard lots, fee and development waivers for projects meeting redevelopment criteria and other incentives for developers and property owners in such districts. The City will consider other options to encourage lot consolidation, such as a smaller lot size for PD development.
- **Housing Element Program 18: Design Review Process** – The City will continue to use the Livable Community Residential Design Guidelines in concert with the City’s General Plan, Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance and other area plans. The City will continue to ensure that projects comply with the City’s design review process and the Design Guidelines.
- **Land Use Element Goal 4.7 Land Use Suitability** – Ensure that the orderly development of land for the needs of the existing and projected population within in the City limit and Sphere of Influence is based on the land’s overall suitability, including: the accessibility of existing and proposed public facilities, services, and utilities, physical and financial constraints; and/or growth inducing impacts.
- **Land Use Element Policy 4.G Land Use Suitability** – The City shall encourage the development of urban uses on those lands best suited for urban uses and discourage it on lands unsuited for urban uses.
- **Land Use Element Goal 4.2: Neighborhoods** – Conserve and improve the living environment of existing Watsonville neighborhoods.
- **Land Use Element Policy 4.B: Neighborhood Preservation** –The City shall plan for the protection of existing neighborhood qualities and the provision of adequate neighborhood facilities in developing areas.
- **Land Use Element Implementation Measure 4.B.2: New Neighborhood Facilities** – The City shall utilize land use controls, such as, specific plan, LOS standards, and zoning

development controls, to ensure balanced neighborhood development in a compact pattern, and to avoid premature extension of public facilities and services.

- **Land Use Element Implementation Measure 4.A.2: Land Use Compatibility** – The City shall monitor housing production to ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses.
- **Land Use Element Goal 4.4 Industrial Land Use** – Achieve economic diversification, living wage employment, the preservation of the agricultural economic base of the Pajaro Valley, and maintain a balance among jobs, housing, and other urban land uses.
- **Land Use Element Policy 4.D Industrial Land Use** – The City shall promote modernization of existing industrial plants and the location of new industrial facilities on lands planned for industry in *Watsonville 2005*.
- **Land Use Element Implementation Measure 4.D.4 Industrial Reserve** – The City shall maintain a reserve of industrial land sufficient to meet the long-term job creation goals and to enable the City to maximize economic opportunities consistent with the City's Comprehensive Economic Development Action Plan.
- **Urban Design Element Goal 5.1 Visual Resources** – Preserve and enhance the built and natural visual resources within Watsonville.
- **Urban Design Element Goal 5.2 Community Appearance** – Blend new development and recognized values of community appearance and scenic qualities, and ensure that new development enhances, rather than detracts from its surroundings.
- **Urban Design Element Goal 5.6 Urban Design** – Achieve high standards of street, site and building design that are both efficient, and aesthetically pleasing.
- **Urban Design Element Policy 5.B Design Consistency** – The City shall review new development proposals to encourage high standards of urban design and to ensure that elements of architectural design and site orientation do not degrade or conflict with the appearance of existing structures.
- **Urban Design Element Implementation Measure 5.A.4: Development Standards** – In addition to the Design Review Guidelines, the City shall use the adopted standards for multiple family residential developments to ensure that medium- and high-density development is designed so as to enhance rather than detract from the urban environment.
- **Urban Design Element Implementation Measure 5.B.3: Enhancement** – The City shall utilize the development standards, zoning ordinance regulations for each district, and the design review guidelines to ensure that new development is an asset to the existing neighborhood and community with regard to parking, landscaping, open space, and project design.

The project would provide housing on land suitable for residential development. The project would be required to provide 15 percent (3 units) of the 21 units as affordable, in accordance with City's Affordable Housing Ordinance. One of the units would be affordable at the above-moderate income level, one at the median income level, and one at the low income level. The 21 units would contribute towards achieving the RHNA⁵ figures in the City's 2015-2023 Housing Element for these income categories.

The site abuts existing utilities that can be extended to serve the project. The project is not anticipated to induce population growth other than the residents that would directly inhabit the proposed residential units.

The project is consistent with all development regulations of the RM-3 Zoning District and the City of Watsonville Residential Development Standards for multi-family projects with approval of the requested Planned Development and modifications to certain development regulations.

Additionally, the project is consistent with the City of Watsonville Livable Community Residential Design Guidelines (2001), as discussed in greater detail on pages 23-26.

The 1.57-acre project represents approximately 0.3 percent of the 559.6 acres of land designated as Industrial in the General Plan, and the same percentage of the 550.8 acres zoned either Industrial Park (IP) or General Industrial (IG). The existing industrial operation is small and not a major employer in the City. The site also abuts the Residential Medium Density designation to the east. Therefore, changing the designation will represent a small, marginal adjustment to the overall Land Use Plan with minimal changes to the City's industrial base and the ability to maintain a robust number of jobs in the City. It does not affect the agricultural economic base of the area. The conversion of this small site does not compromise the reserve of industrial land in the city. There will still be a robust industrial base on the roughly 550 acres of industrial land remaining in the city.

The project is consistent with the City's 2015-2023 Housing Element and, as noted previously, is consistent with providing housing (Goal 3.0) that helps meet the needs of all income levels or economic segments (Policy 3.1) and provides high-quality ownership housing opportunities for current and future residents (Policy 3.2). One existing residence on the site will be demolished. However, 21 new dwelling units, including 3 affordable-income units, will be constructed. This will help the City meet the housing needs outlined in the Housing Element while avoiding the inducement of sprawl associated with developing a vacant site elsewhere.

The proposed project includes General Plan Amendment, rezoning and adoption of a PD Overlay District to allow the proposed residential development at higher densities than would be allowed by the underlying zoning district regulations. The proposed PD Overlay District allows the creation of small lots with modifications requested to support the proposed townhomes.

⁵ The Regional Housing Needs Allocation (or "RHNA") is based on State of California projections of population growth and housing unit demand and assigns a share of the region's future housing need to each jurisdiction within the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG). These housing need numbers serve as the basis for the update of the Housing Element in each California city and county.

In summary, the proposed project, with implementation of conditions of approval, would be generally consistent with policies in the General Plan. Because general plans often contain numerous policies emphasizing differing legislative goals, a development project may be consistent with a general plan, taken as a whole, even if the project appears to be inconsistent with some of its policies. Based on a review of the General Plan’s goals and policies, the proposed project is in harmony with the overall intent of the City’s General Plan goals and policies, including those pertaining to commercial land uses, land use compatibility, design, and site improvement. It is within the Planning Commission’s purview to decide if the proposed project is consistent or inconsistent with any applicable City goals or policies. Based on the analysis presented above, however, the project meets the intent of the City’s General Plan goals and policies.

Zoning

The Zoning Ordinance implements the General Plan, regulates the future growth of the City, and promotes orderly community development.⁶ It includes the Zoning Map, which sets forth the designations, locations and boundaries of zoning districts.

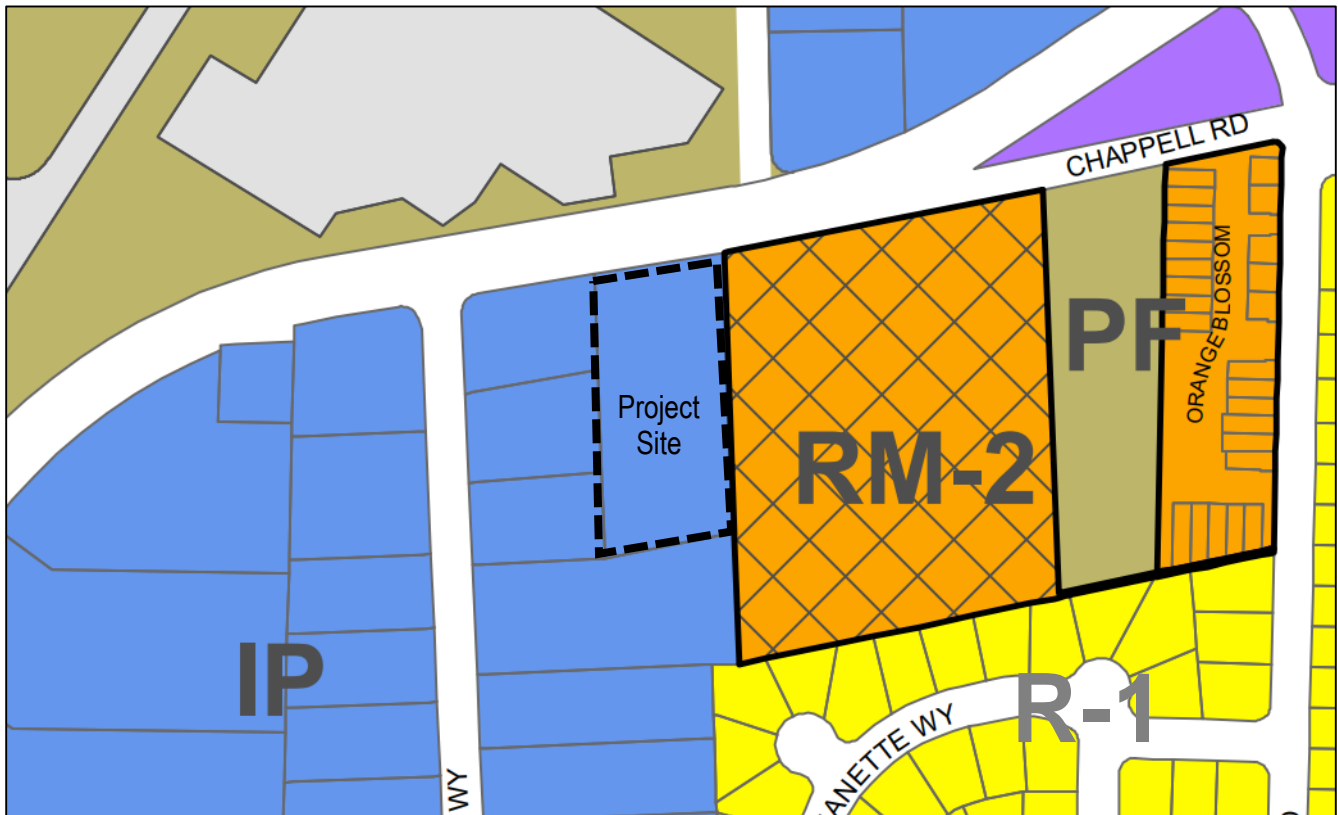


FIGURE 3 Existing Zoning Map

Source: Watsonville GIS View, 2020

⁶ The General Plan and Zoning are not the same. A general plan is a set of long-term goals and policies that a community uses to guide development decisions. Although the plan establishes standards for the location and density of land uses, it does not directly regulate land use. Zoning, on the other hand, is regulatory. Under the zoning ordinance, development must comply with specific, enforceable standards such as minimum lot size, maximum building height, minimum building setback, and a list of allowable uses.

The project site is within the Industrial Park (IP) Zoning District. As mentioned previously, the purpose of the IP Zoning District is to provide a separate and exclusive district for a variety of light industrial and business, service, and research uses.

The project is consistent with the list of allowable uses for and general purpose of the proposed RM-3 Zoning District, in that multi-family dwellings are a permitted use. Multi-family dwellings with 17 or more units are permitted conditionally with issuance of a Special Use Permit. The applicant has requested deviations from various standards in the Municipal Code and Residential Development Standards which may be approved as part of the issuance of a single Special Use Permit as part of the Planned Development application.

Conformity with Zoning District Regulations and Residential Development Standards

The proposed project is consistent with all development regulations for the RM-3 Zoning District and City of Watsonville Residential Development Standards (RDS) for multi-family rental projects with the following modifications:

1. Allow a one-car, rather than two-car, garage for each dwelling unit (RDS Section II.A.2);
2. Allow a 6-foot tall fence within the exterior side yard setback area where a maximum of 3' 6" is permitted ([WMC § 14-32.020](#));
3. Allow less than 4 feet of space between a parking stall and an adjacent building (RDS Section II.B.8);
4. Allow no setback where 5 feet is required between a side yard and a parking space (RDS Section II.B.5); and
5. Allow for no planter where a 5-foot-wide planter is required between parking spaces and adjoining property lines (RDS Section III.C.2.b).

Minimum Building Setbacks and Maximum Building Height. The project plans show the location of the dwelling units and buildings in relation to internal lot lines, property boundaries and public roadways (Attachment 2, Site Plan, sheet A1). Table 2 provides a summary of these buildings in relation to required front, side and rear yard setback and height requirements.

TABLE 2 Consistency of Buildings with District Regulations

Provision	Standard	Proposed
Minimum setbacks (feet)		
Front	15	15±
Side (perimeter PL)	5	10
Interior side	"0" Lot Line	0
Exterior side	10	10
Rear	10	10
Maximum building height (feet)	40	24±

Source: Lattanzio, Inc., Site Plan & Exterior Elevations, sheets A1 & A5 (01.3.2018 and 02.16.21)

Although Building 1 is just over 10 feet from the street right-of-way, it is not oriented to the street. Rather it faces the internal private road system. This building and the others are over 15 feet from the internal road system. It appears most appropriate to regard the distance from Building 1 to the public road as a side setback. As such, the project is consistent with the district regulation for side setback.

Minimum Net Land Area. The minimum net land area requirement for development in the RM-3 Zoning District is intended to limit the density of residential development based on the number of bedrooms per unit. Each of the 21 units in the project is 3-bedrooms. Each unit is required to provide at least 1,950 square feet of net land area. This development regulation results in a minimum required land area of 40,950 square feet. The project has 56,402 square feet of developable land which meets the standard.

Parking. The minimum parking requirement for residential multi-family projects is a two-car garage per dwelling unit, pursuant to Section II.A.2 of the Residential Development Standards and [WMC § 14-17.201\(a\)\(3\)](#). In addition, the minimum guest parking requirement for multi-family projects with up to 75 units is one space per four bedrooms.

As set forth in Table 3, a minimum of 58 spaces would be required. The project provides 21 garage parking spaces and 16 surface parking spaces for a total of 37 spaces. As a modification allowed through the Planned Development process, the applicant proposes to provide a one-car, rather than two-car, garage for each unit and provide an additional 21 parking spaces on each driveway, bringing the total to 58 spaces. A modification is requested to allow the parking space adjacent to Lot 12 to be less than 4 feet from the house on Lot 12. The applicant also requests a modification to allow parking spaces to be less than 5 feet from side property lines. A modification is also requested to allow less than 5 feet of planter width between the driveways of several units. The requested modifications are discussed further in the section *Requested Deviations from Development Standards* on pages 20-21.

TABLE 3 Minimum Parking Requirement

Unit Type	#	Spaces	Total Spaces
3-bedroom	21	2 per unit	42
Guest	--	1 per 4 bedrooms	16
Total			58

Landscaping/Buffer Areas. Pursuant to Section III.C.2 of the Residential Development Standards, 20 percent of the project site must be landscaped. The conceptual Landscape Plan (Attachment 2, sheets L-1.0) shows the location of proposed landscape areas. In accordance with this requirement, all areas of the site that are not utilized for buildings, patios, parking, pedestrian paths, or vehicle access are landscaped or open space, totaling 33 percent of the site. Proposed plantings include 17 new street trees (e.g., London plane and pistache trees), 16 accent trees (e.g., crape myrtle and flowering plum), 30 interior trees (e.g., Eastern Redbud and Brisbane Box), 17 evergreen trees (e.g., Box Leaf Azara, Yew Pine), 3 large native trees (Coast Live Oak), and a mix of shrubs, grasses and groundcovers.

A condition of approval requires the landscaping and irrigation design comply with the California Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, in accordance with WMC Section 6-3.801. The Residential Development Standards requires that a 5-foot-wide planter be located between any parking space and any side property line. Compact, surface parking spaces are located adjacent

to the side property lines of Lots 9, 12 and 13. A discussion of the requested modification is provided in the section *Requested Deviations from Development Standards*.

Street Trees. The City's Urban Greening Plan (2012) establishes a series of zones for planting street trees. Each zone expresses appropriate tree plantings. As shown on the Street Tree Program Framework Diagram, Airport Boulevard is identified as a "parkway."⁷ Therefore, a condition of approval requires the installation of street trees along the frontage of the project site.

Fencing. The proposed Site Plan and Landscape Plan (Attachment 2, sheets A1, L-1.0 and L-2.0) shows the location, height, materials and design for all proposed fencing. A 6-foot-high redwood fence would be located on the west, east and south property lines. The Residential Development Standards requires a 6-foot-tall decorative masonry wall on any property line separating a residential project from industrial development. Since industrial properties are located to the south and west of the project site, as a condition of approval, the plans shall be revised to provide a 6-foot-tall decorative masonry wall on the south and west property lines. A 6-foot-high wrought iron fence is proposed on the northern property line and connects to the 60-foot-tall wood fence on the eastern property line. The wrought iron fence and the northerly 15 feet of the wood fence are within the exterior side yard setback area. WMC § 14-32.020 provides that fences within an exterior side yard setback area shall not exceed a height of 3-feet 6-inches. The requested modification is discussed in the section *Requested Deviations from Development Standards*.

Trash Enclosure. A trash enclosure is required for projects with five or more dwelling units, pursuant to Section III.C.9 of the Residential Development Standards. A trash enclosure is proposed for the southeast corner of the site. Proposed materials will consist of metal gates and concrete block walls. New landscaping would also help screen the enclosure from view and prevent graffiti. Access to the enclosure has been reviewed by the Public Works and Utilities Department. A condition of approval requires the enclosures to be constructed to City standards, including the requirement for a solid roof cover (City of Watsonville Public Improvement Standard No. S-602). A condition of approval requires the applicant to ensure trash areas are routinely cleaned and secured at night.

Requested Deviations from Development Standards

The deviations are requested as part of the Planned Development process. The proposed zone change is from IP to RM-3 with the PD overlay district. The PD overlay is intended "to provide a technique to foster development plans for eligible lands which serve public objectives more fully than development plans permitted under conventional zoning regulations; and to establish criteria for identifying those parcels of land which are eligible for the special procedures available for creative development plans requiring special review and approval procedures." Before a PD District can be approved, the City must make several findings related to the proposed District and development plan. Each is discussed below along with an analysis as to the finding.

⁷ Parkways are defined as arterials or collector streets that have an arboretum-like character which could be enhanced. These corridors generally have significant space within the right-of-way for tree planting.

(a) *The District is:*

- (1) *Consistent with the General Plan and/or the Local Coastal Land Use Plan, and/or adopted area plans when applicable.*

As described previously, the project is consistent with the General Plan as a whole. The project is not subject to a Local Coastal Land Use Plan or any area plan.

- (2) *Consistent with the purposes of this chapter and other applicable sections of this title.*

As described below, the project is consistent with the provisions of the RM-3 Zoning District and the Residential Development Standards other than the requested modifications.

(b) *The General Development Plan:*

- (1) *Includes planned variations to underlying district regulations which serve public purposes to an equivalent or higher degree than would underlying district regulations.*

The requested modifications will enable the applicant to build more units and provide more open space than would otherwise be permitted on the property. This will in turn enable the units to be more affordable and help the City meet the 700 units necessary to fulfill the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) in the 2015-2013 Housing Element. Each of the requested modifications will be discussed individually below.

- (i) *Allow a one-car, rather than two-car, garage for each unit (RDS Section II.A.2).* The requested modification allowing the driveway to serve as a required parking space, and to have one-car garages, will enable the applicant to build more units than would otherwise be permitted. Since the parking spaces are oriented towards the internal street system and not towards the public right-of-way, parking on the driveway will generally not be visible from the public road. In addition, there is some evidence California-wide that car ownership is becoming less popular, which may mean that not every household will own two automobiles. Based on these factors, the requested modification is reasonable to help the City achieve the critical goal of providing more housing.
- (ii) *Allow a 6-foot-tall fence within the exterior side yard setback area (WMC § 14-32.020).* The project, rather than being oriented to the public street, orients the units internally toward the private street system. The north side of Building 1 functions as the side yard for the building. As such, it seems reasonable to allow fencing to control access to the yards and open space areas of the *project* and enable the residents to enjoy the use of the yard near the street. To mitigate the appearance of the fence, it will be constructed of wrought iron. This will help preserve a more open appearance. Landscaping will also be planted between the buildings and the fence. The requested modification is reasonable to control access to the site while creating a landscaped buffer behind the fence. As a

condition of approval, the height of the wooden fence along the western property line, near the street, will need to be reduced to preserve sight visibility for vehicles exiting the property.

- (iii) *Allow less than 4 feet of space between a parking stall and an adjacent building (RDS Section II.B.8).* The compact parking space adjacent to the home on Lot 12 appears to be less than 4 feet from the southeast corner of the building. However, anyone parking in this space will be able to easily open a car door as the side is not obstructed by the nearby building. As a condition of approval, wheel stops will be required at the front of all surface parking spaces to prevent vehicles from encroaching on nearby buildings, walkways or landscaping. Allowing this modification would therefore be reasonable.
- (iv) *Allow no setback where 5 feet is required between a side yard and a parking space (RDS Section II.B.5); and (v) Allow for no planter where a 5-foot-wide planter is required between parking spaces and adjoining property lines (RDS Section III.C.2.b).* Both of these requests are related. The project has a compact parking space adjacent to the southern side property line of Lot 9, adjacent to the eastern side property line of Lot 12, and adjacent to the western side property of Lot 13. The spaces are not on the house lots; they are located on the common area of the project. Because the project is a zero-lot-line development, in which the homes share a wall, development regulations applicable to more traditional single-family development are inappropriate. In this case, since the buildings themselves have no setback, it's reasonable to allow parking spaces to also enjoy a zero setback. In addition, only the three compact spaces on the common area are affected by the requirement for a planter separation from an adjoining property line. These spaces are interior to the site and not visible from the public right-of-way (Airport Boulevard). Landscaping flanks both side of the space adjacent to Lot 9; only a short section has a planter less than 5 feet wide. The two compact spaces between Lots 12 and 13 have landscaping on the non-abutting sides. Placing the parking spaces adjacent to each other allows a more efficient use of the land. The area in and around each of the parking spaces will still be landscaped. Allowing these modifications would therefore be reasonable.

- (2) *Can be coordinated with existing and proposed development of surrounding areas.*

The project will provide single-family homes in a multi-family configuration, providing a *reasonable* transition between the mobile-home park east of the site, the single-family homes further to the southeast, and light industrial operations to the west.

- (3) *Overall, provides an amenity level and amount of open space greater than what would have been permitted by the underlying district regulations.*

A total of 33 percent of the site is landscaped where 20 percent is required. The use of a zero-lot-line subdivision allows the developer to merge the open space into a

fairly large area along the east side of the site. The design includes amenities for adults and children and a passive recreation “meadow” that also serves as a stormwater detention basin. The area functions like a park serving the needs of the residents.

- (4) *If applicable, a final subdivision map for the proposed planned development shall be recorded within two years of the expected date of adoption of the General Development Plan for the planned development.*

It is reasonable to anticipate that the final map will be recorded within two years of approval of the Development Plan. This requirement has been included as a condition of approval for the project.

- (5) *Is planned so that the total development in each individual development phase can exist as an independent unit; adequate assurance will be provided that such objective will be attained; that the uses proposed will not be detrimental to present and planned surrounding uses, as shown in the General Plan, but will have a beneficial effect which could not be achieved without being located in a PD District.*

The project is intended to be developed in a single phase. The project is designed to be compatible with the mobile-home development to the east and light industrial to the west and south. The use of the PD Overlay, and approval of the requested modifications, will enable more units to be constructed which furthers various goals and policies of the Housing Element. It will also promote more affordable housing. In addition, the use of the PD Overlay, and the zero-lot-line style of the project, will enable the site to include what is in effect a park for the use of the residents. This would be unlikely to be achieved with more traditional development.

- (6) *Includes streets and thoroughfares, suitable and adequate to carry anticipated traffic, and the proposed densities will not generate traffic in such amounts as to overload the street network outside the development.*

The project includes a private driveway system that meets City regulations and standards. The Initial Study prepared for the project determined that traffic generation would not create significant impacts to the street network.

- (7) *Is designed so that existing or proposed utility services and facilities and other public improvements are adequate for the population densities and land uses proposed.*

Existing utilities serve the site and were determined to be sufficient to meet the needs of the project by the Initial Study.

- (8) *Is designed so that proposed ratios for off-street parking are consistent with parking regulations.*

As mentioned previously, the project includes a request for a deviation from the requirement that parking for each unit be provided in a two-car garage. The applicant is proposing a one-car garage and a second parking space on the driveway for each unit. The project is required to provide 42 enclosed parking spaces; 21 are proposed. A total of 58 parking spaces are required; 58 are proposed with the use of the driveway parking spaces. The proposed deviation is a reasonable way to promote the construction of much needed housing, including three units of affordable housing.

- (9) *Will not have a detrimental and unmitigatable financial impact on the City.*

The Initial Study prepared for the project determined that the project would not result in a need for significant new public services such that police, fire, sewer, water, or parks facilities would need to be upgraded to meet the needs of the project. During the plan check process, the City will collect a variety of fees including school fees. Once complete, the project will contribute property tax revenues to the city.

Conformity with Residential Design Guidelines

The City of Watsonville's Livable Community Residential Design Guidelines (2001) is intended to communicate the community's expectation for quality neighborhoods and housing. The Guidelines are used in concert with the City's General Plan, Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance and provides direction for shaping new residential development and infill housing in existing neighborhoods. The Design Guidelines add a qualitative direction for new projects in support of General Plan policies and provide guidance for increasing density with greater attention paid to amenities and creating interconnected and livable neighborhoods. The Design Guidelines also supplement the Zoning Ordinance, which establishes basic quantitative direction for residential development standards (e.g., setbacks, lot coverage, parking), by providing neighborhood and architectural design principles and objectives. For instance, the Design Guidelines provide ways to reduce the visual impact of parking. In addition, the Design Guidelines augment City engineering design standards with additional criteria for streetscapes and a greater variety of street sizes, including narrow alley streets.



FIGURE 4a Proposed building design (west elevation--typ.)

Source: Lattanzio, Inc., Building 1 Exterior Elevation, sheet A5 (01.3.2018)



FIGURE 4b Proposed building design (east elevation—typ.)
 Source: Lattanzio, Inc., Building 1 Exterior Elevation, sheet A6 (01.3.2018)



FIGURE 4c Proposed building design (street-facing elevation—typ.)
 Source: Lattanzio, Inc., Building 1 Exterior Elevation, sheet A5 (01.3.2018)

The project is designed in accordance with the Design Guidelines. The project provides buildings that are well-composed, balanced, and appropriately articulated on all sides and have facades with materials and architectural details that are aesthetically pleasing and harmonious. The massing of wall and roof planes are broken up by the use of balconies, dormers, trim, offsets in surfaces, and varying roof heights. Building materials are primarily stucco with a smooth troweled finish (painted different colors). Wood fascia is used on canopies that project over the entries on the end units in the street-facing (front) elevation; the fascia wraps around the east and west elevations of the end units. Standing seam metal roofs are used over the entries to other units. Wooden garage doors face the interior road system. Surface parking is located east of building one. Lots in view of the public right-of-way have landscaping and/or fencing to help screen parking spaces from view and minimize their visual impact. The project includes a common open space with amenities such as a tot lot, patio area with picnic table and barbecue, and a turf area for open play activities. The large meadow serves as a flexible play space as well as a stormwater detention basin. The entry driveway will include a texture to define the transition between the public and private realms. As such, the project design adheres to many of the principles and objectives in the Design Guidelines, including the following provisions:

- Section 3.21 Site Planning
 - Buildings should define community and common open spaces.
 - Public, community and private spaces should be clearly distinguishable.

- Units should provide “eyes-on-the-street” security by orienting towards streets and common areas.
- Site entries should distinguish themselves with added texture or use of contrasting materials.
- Entry drives to multifamily housing should be designed to create a positive identity for the project. Landscape and site design should frame and distinguish entry drives.
- Parking shall be screened by landscaping or buildings.
- Parking should be unobtrusive and not disrupt the quality of common spaces and pedestrian environments of multifamily development.
- Visible long and unbroken rows of parked cars or garage doors should not be permitted. Parking should be distributed throughout the site in discrete courts and garages.
- Services for multifamily development should not be visible from public areas. Trash bins, utility meters, transformers, and other service elements should be enclosed or otherwise concealed from view.
- Section 3.22 Common Areas
 - Multifamily development must provide both common and private open space for each unit consistent with residential development standards.
 - Common spaces and amenities should enhance the sense of community in multifamily projects.
- Section 3.23 Architectural Design
 - Multi-family projects should utilize a unifying theme and possess a common vocabulary of forms and architectural elements.
 - Visual interest should be created by articulation of facades, forms and use of color.
 - Building forms should be articulated by varying roof heights and wall planes; long, unbroken volumes and large, unarticulated wall and roof planes shall not be permitted.
 - Facades should have 3-D elements, such as chimneys, balconies, bay windows or dormers, to break up large wall and roof surfaces.
 - Every façade should be well composed, articulated and consistent on each façade.
- Section 3.24 Materials and Colors
 - Architecture should use a palette of materials which convey an image of quality and durability.
 - All facades should employ the same vocabulary of materials.
 - On corner units, architectural materials should be consistent on both exposed elevations.
 - Painted surfaces should use colors that reinforce architectural concepts and are compatible with natural materials, such as brick or stone.
- Section 3.25 Lighting
 - Lighting in projects should be designed for specific tasks (i.e., illuminating common areas, parking, paths, entryways, etc.).
 - Fixtures should incorporate cutoffs to screen the view of light sources from residents.

- Section 3.26 Landscape
 - All site areas not covered by structures, walkways, driveways or parking spaces should be landscaped.
 - Landscaping should support the distinction and transition between private, common and public spaces.
 - Landscape materials should be live plants; gravel, rock, bark and other materials are not a substitute for plant cover.
 - Landscape shall be permanent with automated irrigation; water-intensive plants, such as lawns and flowering exotics, should be used sparingly as accents.
 - Parking lots should be generously landscaped to provide shade, reduce glare and provide visual interest.

Site Access/Circulation

Existing vehicle access to the project site is provided by Airport Boulevard. The Traffic Impact Study prepared for the project indicates that the project would not generate traffic which would conflict with anticipated traffic levels in the neighborhood or require traffic control devices. In order to ensure adequate sight distance, Implementation of Mitigation Measure TRANS-1 would limit the height of landscaping near the driveway.

No sidewalk currently is located along the Airport Boulevard frontage of the property. A condition of approval requires the applicant to install street improvements to City standards, including sidewalks where absent or in need of repair.

Lighting/Visual Impact

Nighttime illumination has the potential to change ambient lighting conditions and create a visual nuisance or hazard. The impact of nighttime lighting depends upon the type of use affected, the proximity to the affected use, the intensity of specific lighting, and the background or ambient level of the combined nighttime lighting. Nighttime ambient light levels may vary considerably depending upon the age, condition, and abundance of point-of-light sources present in a particular view. The use of exterior lighting for security and aesthetic illumination of architectural features may contribute substantially to ambient nighttime lighting conditions.

Spillover of light onto adjacent properties (“light trespass”) has the potential to interfere with certain activities including vision, sleep, privacy and general enjoyment of the natural nighttime condition. Light sensitive uses include residential, some commercial and institutional uses and natural areas. Changes in nighttime lighting may significantly impact sensitive land uses if a proposed project increases ambient lighting conditions beyond its property line and project lighting routinely spills over into adjacent light-sensitive land use areas.

The project would provide lighting on the buildings and in the parking lot. Proposed lighting consists of wall-mounted light fixtures (to illuminate the buildings’ exterior and adjoining walks) and path lighting. No pole lighting is proposed on the property. Since only low-level lighting is proposed, the lighting levels are anticipated to adequately illuminate the site while being consistent with light levels in a residential neighborhood. Little to no light is expected to spill over onto adjoining residential properties. Therefore, the project is not anticipated to create a glare nuisance.

A new streetlight would also be installed in the public right-of-way along Airport Boulevard at the northwest corner of the site. This is a Public Works requirement to enhance street illumination and improve vehicular safety at night.

Drainage

New development and redevelopment construction projects are subject to the City's post-construction stormwater management requirements (PCRs).⁸ [WMC § 6-3.535](#). The proposed project is a PCR tier 4 type project, as it would create and/or replace more than 22,500 square feet of impervious surfaces to the project site. Attachment 3 provides a summary of PCR tiers 1 through 4 and their associated performance requirements for stormwater management and treatment. The project must comply with post construction requirements including performance requirement No. 2, which requires the project to treat stormwater runoff to reduce pollutant loads and concentrations using physical, biological, and chemical removal. The proposed project would result in an increase of impervious area, totaling approximately 51,634 square feet of impervious surfaces. Currently onsite there is a residence, office trailer and large concrete slab that will be removed. Runoff from all proposed impervious surfaces will be directed to the bioretention facilities where water quality treatment will begin. Runoff treatment is flow-based using a minimum four percent bioretention ratio to new or replaced impervious area. The project's 51,634 square feet of impervious area x 0.04 = 2,065 square feet of required bioretention. The site includes over 3,300 square feet in the rectangular open space near the northeast corner of the site.

The project plans include a preliminary Grading and Drainage Plan (Attachment 2, sheets C3.0 & C4.0) and Stormwater Control Plan (Attachment 4). As shown on these plans, proposed drainage facilities and post-construction features include directing runoff from impervious surfaces (e.g., roof, hardscape, parking areas) to a bioretention basin with a detention capacity of 3,750 cubic feet. These drainage management features are intended to control the flow rate and pollutant load to pre-project levels.

Engineering staff has reviewed the project's proposed drainage plans. A condition of approval requires the project to comply with the City's post-construction stormwater management requirements, pursuant to WMC Section 6-3.535.

Tentative Map

The applicant has proposed a Major Subdivision (Tentative Map) to subdivide the 1.57-acre site into 21 house lots and one common area lot. The house lots range from 1,565± to 2,217± square feet in area (Attachment 2, sheet C1.0). The common area, including the internal street, parking lot, common open space and stormwater detention area, is approximately 33,095± square feet.

⁸ The primary objective of the City's PCRs is to ensure the reduction of pollutant discharges to the maximum extent possible and prevent stormwater runoff from causing or contributing to a violation of water quality standards. The PCRs categorize projects into four primary tiers based mainly on the net increase in impervious surfaces that would result from a project (i.e., the amount of new and replaced impervious surfaces). Each PCR tier is linked to increasingly stringent performance requirements for stormwater management and treatment. Each PCR tier is subject to the performance requirements of that tier, plus the performance requirements of the lower tiers, as applicable.

Environmental Review

An Initial Study has been prepared for the project in accordance with the provisions of CEQA (Attachment 5). The Initial Study addresses the potential physical environmental effects of the project for each of the environmental topics outlined in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. Impacts to biological resources, cultural and tribal resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, noise, and transportation were found to be potentially significant but mitigable to less than significant. Impacts to other resource areas and environmental topics were found to be less than significant without mitigation.

The Initial Study was made available for public review and comment from August 24, 2020, to September 22, 2020. Hardcopies of the Initial Study were available for public review at the Community Development Department and Watsonville Public Library.

Table 4 provides a list of the federal, state, regional and/or local agencies along with private organizations and individuals that commented on the Initial Study.

TABLE 4 List of Commenters

Commenter	Agency/Group/Organization
Federal Agencies	
None	
State Agencies	
None	
Regional and Local Agencies	
None	
Private Groups and Organizations	
Lowell Hurst	City Council member

No significant impacts were identified in the comments. Mr. Hurst is a resident of the city; his comment reflects a community concern but does not raise a CEQA issue. The comment does not change the analyses or conclusions of the Initial Study. Responses are included as Attachment 6.

On February 16, 2021, the applicant made a slight revision related to the surface parking area dimensions, and he submitted a revised stormwater analysis to address increased detention requirements. These changes to the project do not result in any new impacts to the environment.

During preparation of this staff report, staff noted that the Initial Study needed to be updated to reflect the revised stormwater analysis. In addition, minor typographic and grammatical errors were corrected. It was determined that these changes did not change the findings of the initial study; therefore, the Initial Study did not need to be recirculated.

A Resolution for consideration by the Planning Commission recommending that the City Council adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration includes required findings, in accordance with Public Resources Code section 21080(c) and CEQA Guidelines section 15074. The findings adopt

feasible mitigation measures to reduce the identified significant environmental impacts of the project. A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) for the project would be adopted as part of this action (Attachment 7). The purpose of the MMRP is to ensure the mitigation measures adopted in the findings for the project are implemented, in accordance with CEQA requirements. All identified mitigation measures are incorporated as conditions of approval.

CONCLUSION

The proposed General Plan Amendment, Zone Change, Planned Development, Special Use Permit with Design Review, Tentative Tract Map, and Environmental Review (PP2018-11) would allow the construction of the 21 townhomes on a 1.57± acre site located at 547 Airport Boulevard (APN 015-321-01). The project is consistent with the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance with approval of the requested PD Overlay District and the modifications to standards through the Planned Development process. The project would provide much needed housing on an infill site adjacent to existing residential development. It will help accomplish the community's affordable housing goals in the Housing Element. The project design is consistent with the City's Livable Community Residential Design Guidelines. An Initial Study has been prepared for the project in accordance with the provisions of CEQA, which provides substantial evidence that the project would not have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, staff recommends that the Planning Commission (a) adopt a Resolution recommending that the City Council adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration and (b) adopt a Resolution recommending that the City Council approve the project entitlements, subject to findings and conditions

STRATEGIC PLAN

The purpose of the City of Watsonville's 2018-2020 Strategic Plan is to help the City prioritize its efforts, allocating both fiscal and human resources to achieve a shared vision and goals. The 2018-20 Strategic Plan identifies six goals, concerning housing, fiscal health, infrastructure and environment, economic development, community engagement and well-being, and public safety.

This action is consistent with Goal 1 of the Strategic Plan to expand quality housing opportunities, in that the project would provide 21 townhouse units and is designed in conformance with the City's objective standards concerning housing developments

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The project applicant would be required to pay development impact fees at either the time of issuance of building permits or certificate of occupancy. These one-time fees paid to the City by developers are used, for instance, to offset the additional cost of extending public services to a site along with partially funding road improvement projects.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION

The Planning Commission may recommend denial of the requested project entitlements, provided that the Commission provides substantial evidence contrary to making required findings.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Site and Vicinity Map
2. Plan Set (2-16-21 and 1-3-18)
3. Post-construction Stormwater Requirements Summary
4. Preliminary Stormwater Control Plan (Roper Engineering, 2019; Bowman and Williams, February, 2021)
5. Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (prepared August, 2020; updated May 2021)
6. Response to Comments Memorandum (October 26, 2020)
7. Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (October 13, 2020)