

ORDINANCE NO. Introduction (CC)

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE AMENDING CHAPTER 14-16 (DISTRICT REGULATIONS) WITHIN TITLE 14 (ZONING) OF THE WATSONVILLE MUNICIPAL CODE TO CONDITIONALLY PERMIT COMMERCIAL USES ON PARCELS ZONED PUBLIC FACILITIES (PF) AND LOCATED IN THE DOWNTOWN WATSONVILLE SPECIFIC PLAN AREA; AND FINDING THE ACTION EXEMPT FROM REVIEW UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15061(B)(3)

WHEREAS, Watsonville Municipal Code (WMC) Chapter 14-16 regulates uses and development in specific zoning districts in the City; and

WHEREAS, WMC § 14-16.802 identifies uses within the Public Facilities (PF) and Institutional (N) zoning districts that are permitted by right, subject to design review, require an Administrative Use Permit with Design Review approval, require a Special Use Permit with Design Review approval, require approval of a Temporary Use Permit, or are prohibited; and

WHEREAS, the PF zoning district only permits aviation-related commercial uses on the Watsonville Municipal Airport property; and

WHEREAS, no other commercial uses are permitted on parcels zoned PF in any other area of the city; and

WHEREAS, providing a permitting pathway for commercial tenants to occupy vacant tenant spaces in existing buildings on parcels zoned PF in the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan (DWSP) area supports the City Council Strategic Plan goal of economic development and multiple General Plan goals, policies, and implementation measures related to employment opportunities and revitalization of the City's commercial core; and

WHEREAS, City Staff reviewed the project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and determined that the project qualifies for a common sense exemption under California Code of Regulations Title 14, §15061(b)(3) because the proposed zoning text amendment does not have the potential for causing a significant impact on the environment and it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the amendment may have a significant effect on the environment; and

WHEREAS, on April 7, 2026, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing to review the proposed Zoning Code Text Amendments, at which time during the hearing, members of the public were given an opportunity to testify regarding the proposed amendments; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission considered all evidence received, both oral and documentary, and adopted Resolution No. 03-26 (PC) recommending that the City Council adopt an ordinance amending Chapter 14-16 (District Regulations) of Title 14 (Zoning) of the Watsonville Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, notice of time and place of the City Council hearing to consider the zoning code text amendment was given as required by law and a public hearing was held according to Part 9: Public Hearing Notice Provisions of Chapter 14-10: Administration and Procedure of the WMC; and

WHEREAS, on April 14, 2026, the Council held a duly noticed public hearing to review the proposed Zoning Code Text Amendments, at which time during the hearing members of the public were given an opportunity to testify regarding the proposed Zoning Code Text Amendments; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has considered all evidence received, both oral and documentary, and the matter was submitted for decision.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1: RECITALS

The foregoing recitations are true and correct and are hereby incorporated into this Ordinance.

SECTION 2: ENACTMENT

1. The City Council adopts an ordinance amending Chapter 14-16 (District Regulations) of Title 14 (Zoning) of the Watsonville Municipal Code, attached hereto as Exhibit A, to conditionally permit commercial uses on parcels zoned Public Facilities (PF) and located in the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan area.
2. The City Council finds that the proposed zoning code text amendments are consistent with the purposes of the General Plan and Municipal Code as set forth in Exhibit B, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference.

SECTION 3: CEQA

The City Council determined that the proposed Zoning Code Text Amendments are exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under the common sense exemption under CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) as it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the amendments to the Zoning Code would have significant effects on the environment because no actual physical project is being proposed at this time.

SECTION 4: PUBLICATION

This ordinance shall be published in the Watsonville Register-Pajaronian and/or Santa Cruz Sentinel in compliance with the provisions of the Charter of the City of Watsonville.

SECTION 5: EFFECTIVE DATE

This ordinance shall take effect thirty (30) days after its final adoption.

**Chapter 14-16
DISTRICT REGULATIONS**

Part 8: PF – Public Facilities and N – Institutional Districts

14-16.802 Permitted, development permitted, and Special Use Permit uses (Table).

The following list represents those uses, subject to the provisions of this title, in the Public Facilities (PF) and the Institutional (N) zones that are permitted by right (P), subject to Design Review (D), require an Administrative Use Permit with Design Review approval (AUP), require a Special Use Permit with Design Review approval (SUP), require an approval of a Temporary Use Permit (TUP), or are prohibited (X).

Any other use or service establishment determined by the Zoning Administrator to be of the same general character as the foregoing permitted uses, which will not impair the present or potential use of adjacent properties, shall be permitted. If the Zoning Administrator determines that the proposed use is more in character with the conditional uses for this zone, then either an AUP or SUP shall be required to be processed.

| Uses (See Section 14-16.803 for use descriptions) | PF | N |
|--|-----------|----------|
| (a) Institutional and uses of community significance | | |
| (1) Cemetery | SUP | SUP |
| (2) Churches and other places of worship | X | SUP |
| (3) Clinics and rehabilitation facilities (public/nonprofit) | SUP | SUP |
| (4) Community center and related facilities (public/nonprofit) | AUP | AUP |
| (5) Daycare center (public/nonprofit/private) | AUP | AUP |
| (6) Educational facility (public/private) | SUP | SUP* |

| Uses (See Section 14-16.803 for use descriptions) | PF | N |
|---|-----------|----------|
| (7) Galleries and museums (public/nonprofit) | D | AUP |
| (8) Large group care or group home (public/private/nonprofit) | X | SUP |
| (9) Hospital (public/nonprofit/private) | X | SUP |
| (10) Judicial center with or without jail facilities | SUP/AUP | X/X |
| (11) Nursing, convalescent and residential care facility (public/nonprofit) | X | AUP |
| (12) Post office* | AUP | AUP |
| (13) Use of community significance | SUP | SUP |
| (b) Lodging uses | | |
| (1) Campground (public) | SUP | X |
| (2) Conference center | SUP | X |
| (c) Government buildings | | |
| (1) Government offices (local/state/federal) | D | X |
| (2) Nonprofit organization offices | AUP | AUP |
| (3) Fire/Paramedic Station | D | X |
| (4) Library (public) | D | X |
| (d) Recreation uses | | |
| (1) Equestrian facility | SUP | X |
| (2) Golf course | SUP | X |

| Uses (See Section 14-16.803 for use descriptions) | PF | N |
|--|-----------|----------|
| (3) Membership club or hall | D | SUP |
| (4) Outdoor recreation with lighted facilities | D/AUP | AUP/SUP |
| (5) Park or playfield with lighted facilities | D/AUP | AUP/SUP |
| (6) Public Recreation Center | D | SUP |
| (e) Residential uses | | |
| (1) Affordable housing project (multi-family, rental) | SUP | X |
| (2) Caretaker's residence | AUP | AUP |
| (3) Emergency shelter | P | P |
| (4) Rectory/minister's residence | X | AUP |
| (5) Transitional housing | AUP | X |
| (f) Transportation uses | | |
| (1) Airport (airfield modifications) | D | X |
| (2) Airport support (terminal expansion) | D | X |
| (3) Aviation commercial (airport access) | AUP | X |
| (4) Aviation noncommercial (hangars and taxiways) | D | X |
| (5) Aviation compatible (research park improvements) | SUP | X |
| (6) Helistop | SUP | X |
| (7) Mass transit center | AUP | X |
| (8) Park and ride facility | D | AUP |

| Uses (See Section 14-16.803 for use descriptions) | PF | N |
|--|-----------|----------|
| (9) Parking structure or parking lot (primary use) | D | X |
| (10) Terminal and passenger service facility | AUP | X |
| (g) Utility and public service uses | | |
| (1) Electrical power substation | AUP | X |
| (2) Public or quasi-public facility other than listed | AUP | AUP |
| (3) Public safety telecommunication facility | D | X |
| (4) Sewage or water transmission lines | P | X |
| (5) Telecommunications site — Telecommunications site exceeding height limit of district | AUP/SUP | AUP/SUP |
| (6) Utility service facility | P | X |
| (7) Water tank, water treatment facility or sewer lift station | D | X |
| (8) Telecommunications facilities | SUP | X |
| (h) Accessory uses | | |
| (1) Accessory outside storage | D | AUP |
| (2) Accessory structure | D | D |
| (3) Shipping containers | D | D |

| Uses (See Section 14-16.803 for use descriptions) | PF | N |
|---|-----|-----|
| (4) Satellite earth station antennas | P | P |
| (i) Temporary uses | | |
| (1) Emergency noncommercial telecommunications facility | TUP | X |
| (2) Temporary batch plant | TUP | X |
| (3) Temporary construction office and/or yard | TUP | TUP |
| (4) Temporary dwelling unit | TUP | TUP |
| (j) DWSP Commercial Uses | AUP | X |

*State or Federal facilities not subject to City of Watsonville Review except as leasehold project.

Key:

- D — Requires Design Review
- SUP — Requires Special Use Permit with Design Review
- X — Prohibited
- AUP — Requires Administrative Use Permit with Design Review
- TUP — Temporary Use Permit
- P — Principally Permitted (may require a Building Permit)

(Ord. 1156-03 C-M, eff. May 22, 2003, as amended by § 1, Ord. 1373-18 (CM), eff. October 11, 2018, and § 2(3) (Exh. A), Ord. 1481-25 (CM), eff. October 9, 2025)

14-16.802.1 Accessory uses.

The following uses are only permitted with an Administrative Review Permit if a primary residential unit is provided or present on the site:

| | | |
|-----|----|--------------------------------|
| DLU | 02 | Accessory dwelling unit |
| | 02 | Junior accessory dwelling unit |

(§ 2(3) (Exh. A), Ord. 1481-25 (CM), eff. October 9, 2025)

14-16.803 Use regulations.

(a) Institutional and uses of community significance.

(1) Cemetery.

- (i) Definition: A place designated for the burial or retention of the remains of the dead whether human or animals, including crematories, mausoleums, and columbariums operated within the boundaries of the cemetery.
- (ii) Parking requirements: To be determined through a Use Permit.¹
- (iii) Loading requirements: To be determined through a Use Permit.¹
- (iv) Additional provisions: This use shall provide proof of having obtained and of having maintained, as may be periodically requested by the City, all applicable local, State, and Federal permits.

(2) Churches and other places of worship.

- (i) Definition: A facility principally used for people to gather together for public worship, religious training, or other religious activities.
- (ii) Parking requirements: One space per four (4) seats feet in the worship area, plus any parking required for accessory uses.¹
- (iii) Loading requirements: None.¹
- (iv) Additional provisions:
 - (aa) The structure height limitations of this code shall not apply to church spires, belfries, or cupolas;
 - (bb) One single-family dwelling used to house a church official and family is considered customary and incidental as a part of this use.
 - (cc) Daycares subject to an Administrative Use Permit.
 - (dd) Schools subject to a Special Use Permit.

(3) Clinics and rehabilitation facilities (public/nonprofit).

- (i) Definition: An establishment where patients are admitted for study/treatment by two (2) or more medical professionals.
- (ii) Parking requirement: One space per three (3) service units/beds plus one space per two (2) employees or one space per two hundred (200) square feet of area whichever is greater.¹

(4) Community facility.

- (i) Definition: A facility for a use of community significance, public or quasi-public, where public services or information is provided on a nonprofit basis, including but not limited to government offices, senior centers, meeting rooms, family counseling or family help centers, and police substations.
- (ii) Parking requirements: One space per two hundred and fifty (250) square feet of office area, meeting rooms thirty percent (30%) of maximum occupancy, or as determined by Design Review.¹
- (iii) Loading requirements: To be determined through Design Review.

- (5) Day care center (public/nonprofit).
 - (i) Definition: A facility providing less than twenty-four (24) hour care or supervision for fourteen (14) or more persons who are not related by blood, marriage, or adoption to the owner, operator, or manager. Such facility may operate by day or night, with or without compensation for such care, and with or without a stated educational purpose.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: One space for every eight (8) persons plus one space per employee.¹
 - (iii) Additional provisions:
 - (aa) This use shall provide proof of having obtained and of having maintained, as may be periodically requested by the City, all applicable local, County, State and Federal permits.
- (6) Educational facility (public/private).
 - (i) Definition: Buildings and uses for public or private educational or research activities associated with an academic institution which has a curriculum for technical, vocational training, or higher education.
 - (ii) Parking requirements:¹
 - (aa) Elementary or junior high school, one space per employee plus one space for every twenty (20) students of school design capacity.
 - (bb) High school, one space per employee plus one space for every seven (7) students of school design capacity.¹
- (7) Galleries and museums (public/nonprofit).
 - (i) Definition: A place offering or displaying artistic works, decorative objects or the like for public viewing or sale.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: three (3) parking spaces plus one space per eight hundred (800) square feet of floor space.¹
- (8) Large group care or group home (public/private/nonprofit).
 - (i) Definition: A facility which provides twenty-four (24) hour care or supervision of more than twelve (12) persons who are not related by blood, marriage, or adoption, to the owner, operator, or manager, and who do not meet the definition of a family. A group care or foster home may be operated by a public, nonprofit, or private agency. This definition includes halfway houses and drug or alcohol rehabilitation facilities for any number of persons, with or without twenty-four (24) hour care or supervision,
 - (ii) Parking requirements: One-half (0.5) parking spaces per bed or one and one-quarter (1.25) parking spaces per living unit, whichever is greater.¹
 - (iii) Additional provisions:
 - (aa) This use shall provide proof of having obtained and of having maintained, as may be periodically requested by the city, all applicable local, State, and Federal permits;
- (9) Hospital (public/nonprofit/private).

- (i) Definition: An institution where people are given medical attention and treatment including but not limited to related facilities such as laboratories, outpatient clinics, and staff offices on primarily an inpatient basis.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: One space per two (2) patient beds plus one per employee on shift with maximum personnel.¹
 - (iii) Loading requirements: One loading space for ten thousand (10,000) or more square feet of floor area.
 - (iv) Setbacks: Minimum setback of thirty (30), feet from any residential district.
 - (v) Additional provisions: This use shall provide proof of having obtained and of having maintained, as may be periodically requested by the City, all applicable local, State, and Federal permits.
 - (vi) Helipads: Helipads shall be allowed for hospitals as long as they are setback a minimum of two hundred (200) feet from residential uses and they do not include support facilities such as refueling or similar use.
- (10) Judicial center with or without jail facilities.
- (i) Definition: Buildings used for courtrooms, police stations, jails, and accessory offices.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: To be determined through a Special Use Permit.¹
 - (iii) Loading requirements: To be determined through a Special Use Permit.
- (11) Nursing, convalescent and residential care facility (public/nonprofit).
- (i) Definition: A facility which provides twenty-four (24) hour residential care to persons who are not related by blood, marriage, or adoption to the owner, operator, or manager of the facility. A nursing, convalescent, or residential care facility provides some level of skilled nursing or medical service to the residents.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: One parking space per five (5) patient beds plus one per each two (2) employees.¹
 - (iii) Loading requirements: To be determined by Use Permit
 - (iv) Additional provisions: This use shall provide proof of having obtained and of having maintained, as may be periodically requested by the City, all applicable local, State, and Federal permits.
- (12) Post office.
- (i) Definition: A facility owned and/or operated by the United States Postal Service where public mailing services, including distribution and delivery of mail, are provided.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: One space per three hundred (300) square feet of gross floor area over four thousand (4,000) square feet plus one per post office vehicle and one per three (3) employees.¹

- (iii) Loading: a minimum of two (2) loading spaces shall be provided and one additional loading space per each twenty thousand (20,000) square feet of building area.
 - (13) Use of community significance.
 - (i) Definition: A use determined to have significant historic cultural, economic, social, or environmental value to the City, which does not conform to the use regulations of the district in which the use is located as a result of either the adoption or amendment of this Code, and which cannot be made conforming through any other discretionary review process under this Code.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: To be determined through Use Permit.¹
 - (iii) Loading requirements: To be determined through Use Permit.
 - (iv) Additional provisions: The creation of murals falls within this definition.
- (b) Lodging uses.
 - (1) Campground (public).
 - (i) Definition: An area of land where accommodations for occupation on a transient basis are located or may be placed. This includes tents and recreational vehicles.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: One parking space per tent or recreational vehicle space.
 - (2) Conference center.
 - (i) Definition: An indoor overnight facility, including either a single building or multi-building complex with or without individual kitchens, which serves as a destination point for visitors, which includes conference facilities.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: One and one-half (1.5) spaces per room or two (2) spaces per cabin, plus one space per two hundred (200) square feet of meeting room(s).¹
 - (iii) Loading requirements: To be determined through Use Permit.
 - (iv) Additional provisions: Guest residency is limited to a transient basis.
- (c) Government Buildings.
 - (1) Government offices (public).
 - (i) Definition: A building/office used by Federal, State, County or City government agencies or an instrumentality thereof.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: One space per five hundred (500) square feet of floor area, or as determined by Design Review based on the type of use.¹
 - (2) Nonprofit organization offices.
 - (i) Definition: Buildings or offices used by an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) designated 501 3(c) entity. This use does not include medical/clinic facilities or other specific uses identified in this chapter where run by a non profit entity.
 - (ii) Parking requirement: One space per five hundred (500) square feet of floor area or as determined by Design Review.¹

- (3) Fire/Paramedic Station.
 - (i) Definition: A facility operated by a municipality, fire district, department, or private company which houses fire and paramedic equipment and may be used for the housing of personnel.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: To be determined through Design Review.¹
- (4) Library (public).
 - (i) Definition: Buildings used for public access to books, computers and other publications.
 - (ii) Parking: Ten (10) spaces plus one per each four hundred (400) square feet of floor area over five thousand (5,000) square feet.¹
 - (iii) Loading: To be determined through the Design Review process.
 - (iv) Other standards: To be determined through the Design Review process.
- (d) Recreation uses.
 - (1) Equestrian facility.
 - (i) Definition: A public or commercial facility for horse training, horse boarding, competitive equestrian events, rentals, sales and lessons.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: Determined through Design Review.¹
 - (iii) Additional provisions:
 - (iv) Setback requirements:
 - (aa) Structures intended or designed to house animals shall be located a minimum of fifty (50) feet from all lot lines.
 - (bb) Outdoor lighting of facility requires Use Permit approval.
 - (2) Golf course.
 - (i) Definition: A recreational facility primarily used for the purpose of playing golf, but which may include accessory eating and drinking areas, retail sales areas, locker rooms and staff offices. The use includes stand-alone driving ranges, miniature golf and “pitch and putt” facilities.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: four (4) spaces per hole, plus as required for accessory uses including but not limited to pro shops and restaurants. One and one-half (1.5) space per miniature hole or driving range station.¹
 - (3) Membership club or hall.
 - (i) Definition: A facility, including associated eating, drinking, and recreational facilities, owned or operated by a group of people organized for a common social, educational, service, or recreational purpose. These clubs are usually characterized by certain membership qualifications, payment of fees or dues, regular meetings, a constitution, and bylaws.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: One space per three hundred (300) square feet of floor area.¹
 - (4) Outdoor recreation, for day use or with lighted fields.
 - (i) Definition: An area or facility which offers entertainment, recreation, or games of skill for a fee where any portion of the activity takes place

- outside. This includes but is not limited to a rifle range, boating facility, or tennis facility.
- (ii) Parking requirements: As established through Title [9](#), Part 12 (Public and Quasi-Public Open Centers) standards and Design Review.¹
- (5) Park or playfield, for day use or with lighted facilities.
- (i) Definition: 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.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: As established through Title [9](#), Part 12 (Public and Quasi-Public Open Centers) standards and Design Review or planned development.¹
- (6) Public recreation center.
- (i) Definition: A publicly-owned area providing indoor recreational facilities such as multi-purpose rooms, basketball courts, training facilities.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: As established through Title [9](#), Part 12 (Public and Quasi-Public Open Centers) standards and Design Review or planned development.¹
- (e) Residential uses.
- (1) Affordable housing project (multi-family, rental).
 - (i) Definition: Two (2) or more rental dwelling units which are restricted in rental rates so as to meet the definition of affordable of the City or Redevelopment Agency.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: One and a half (1.5) spaces per unit for up to three (3) bedrooms; two (2) spaces per unit for four (4) or more bedrooms. Additionally, one additional guest space shall be provided per eight (8) bedrooms.¹
 - (iii) Density and Development Standards: Affordable housing developed under these provisions shall follow the RM-2 district regulations and minimum net land area standards.
 - (2) Caretaker's residence.
 - (i) Definition: An accessory structure intended to house an individual and immediate family who is principally employed by the principal use to provide maintenance, security or other services directly related to the facility.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: Two (2) dedicated spaces per unit.¹
 - (iii) Additional provisions: There may be no more than one caretaker's residence per facility.
 - (3) Emergency shelter.
 - (i) Definition: Housing with minimal supportive services for homeless persons that is limited to occupancy of six (6) months or less by a homeless person. No individual or household may be denied emergency shelter because of an inability to pay.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: As determined by Chapter [14-43](#).

- (iii) Development standards: As determined by Chapter [14-43](#).
 - (4) Rectory/minister's residence.
 - (i) Definition: Primary housing facility for ministry leaders, their family and guests which are located on the premises of the place of worship.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: Two (2) dedicated spaces per unit.¹
 - (iii) Additional provisions: There may be no more than two (2) residences per facility.
 - (5) Transitional housing.
 - (i) Definition: A structure or facility used as housing for a period of up to twenty-four (24) months for individuals and/or families who have been displaced from their home.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: One space per unit if an additional 0.5 (1/2) spaces per unit is available on the street directly adjacent to the facility. Otherwise, projects shall be designed to provide one and one half (1.5) parking spaces per unit on-site.¹
 - (iii) Development Standards: As determined by Use Permit.
- (f) Transportation uses.
 - (1) Airport (air field modifications).
 - (i) Definition: Facilities/modifications to the existing air field and infrastructure necessary to support safe aircraft arrival and departure which are identified in the Watsonville Municipal Airport Master Plan including but not limited to: Instrument Landing System (ILS) improvements, runway extension, taxiway improvements allowed when a master plan is approved.
 - (ii) Development Standards: As outlined in a master plan and developed in conjunction with Design Review.
 - (2) Airport support (terminal expansion).
 - (i) Definition: Facilities to improve airport operations identified in the Watsonville Municipal Airport Master Plan including but not limited to: airport administration, airport maintenance, aviation fuel facilities, pilot lounge and general services facilities, terminal expansion, and aircraft rescue and fire fighting facilities.
 - (ii) Development Standards: As outlined in Master Plan and developed in conjunction with Design Review.
 - (iii) Height of structures and use of airspace are specified in Chapter 4 of Title [9](#) of this Code.
 - (3) Aviation commercial (airport access).
 - (i) Definition: Facilities necessary to provide area for commercial uses that serve the needs of general aviation at the airport identified in the Watsonville Municipal Airport Master Plan including but not limited to: fixed base operator facilities involving the sale of general aviation products and services to the general public and limited service commercial facilities, such as avionics sales and repair shops, aircraft paint shops and aircraft maintenance facilities.

- (ii) Development Standards: As outlined in Master Plan and developed in conjunction with Design Review.
 - (iii) Height of structures and use of airspace are specified in Chapter 4 of Title [9](#) of this Code.
- (4) Aviation noncommercial (hangars and taxiways).
 - (i) Definition: Facilities necessary to provide area for non-commercial aircraft operators to store and service private aircraft which are identified in the Watsonville Municipal Airport Master Plan including but not limited to: new hangars, taxiways, fuel facilities.
 - (ii) Development Standards: As outlined in Master Plan and developed in conjunction with Design Review.
 - (iii) Height of structures and use of airspace are specified in Chapter 4 of Title [9](#) of this Code.
- (5) Aviation compatible (research park improvements).
 - (i) Definition: Facilities necessary to provide for non-aviation uses that support airport operations which are identified in the Watsonville Municipal Airport Master Plan including but not limited to automobile rental agencies, airport restaurant, motel, office park or research and development facilities.
 - (ii) Development Standards: As outlined in Master Plan and following the Commercial development standards within the City's development codes for the specific use or as developed in conjunction with Design Review.
 - (iii) Height of structures and use of airspace are specified in Chapter 4 of Title [9](#) of this Code.
- (6) Helistop.
 - (i) Definition: Any designated area outside of the airport used for the landing and taking off of helicopters for the purpose of picking up or discharging passengers or cargo including designated emergency medical patients. This use does not include fueling, refueling, or service facilities.
 - (ii) Additional provisions: This use shall provide proof of having obtained and of having maintained, as may be periodically requested by the City, all applicable local, State, and Federal permits.
 - (iii) Helistops shall be no closer than two hundred feet (200') to any residential zone.
- (7) Mass transit center.
 - (i) Definition: A transportation facility that serves as a transportation hub for buses, trains or other forms of mass transportation. These can be associated with Park and ride facilities.
 - (ii) Additional provisions: To be determined through the Use Permit process.
- (8) Park and ride facility.

- (i) Definition: A facility whose sole purpose is to provide parking for motor vehicles and bicycles with a connection to mass transit services or carpooling activities.¹
 - (ii) Additional provisions: To be determined through Design Review process.
- (9) Parking structure and parking lot (primary use).
 - (i) Definition: A structure or area the purpose of which is to allow the parking of motor vehicles, for a fee or not, as the primary use on a parcel.
 - (ii) Additional provisions: To be determined through the Design Review process including screening lots by landscaping from adjacent rights-of-way.
- (10) Terminal and passenger service facility.
 - (i) Definition: Establishments engaged in the operation of motor vehicle passenger service terminals including maintenance and service facilities, including bus and taxicab fleet operations.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: Customer and employee parking at one space for every two hundred and fifty (250) square feet of office area and one space for every one thousand feet (1,000') of maintenance service area vehicles related to the operation of the terminal may not be parked in customer or employee parking areas.¹
- (g) Utility and public service uses.
 - (1) Electrical power substation.
 - (i) Definition: A facility operated by an electrical utility company that acts as a collection and distribution point for electricity. The facility includes transformers, and other equipment that reduce high voltage current and transfer it to utility lines.
 - (2) Public or quasi-public facility other than listed.
 - (i) Definition: A public or quasi-public facility other than those specified in this chapter.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: To be determined through Special Use Permit.¹
 - (iii) Loading requirements: To be determined through Special Use Permit.
 - (3) Public safety telecommunication facility.
 - (i) Definition: A facility owned or operated by a governmental agency or a volunteer public safety agency officially sanctioned by a government agency for that purpose, utilized for the transmission and reception of electromagnetic or electro-optic information for public safety communication uses in accordance with the provisions of Chapter [14-35](#), Telecommunications Uses.
 - (4) Sewage or water transmission lines.
 - (i) Definition: Pipelines used for the transport of water (potable or non-potable) or sewage effluent.
 - (5) Telecommunications site.
 - (i) Definition: See Section [14-18.804](#).

- (ii) Additional provisions: Comply with Chapter [14-35](#), Telecommunication Uses.
- (6) Utility service facility.
 - (i) Definition: Any electrical distribution lines, natural gas distribution lines, minor gas regulator stations, cable television lines, telegraph and telephone lines, and gathering lines, or other minor service facilities.
 - (ii) Additional provisions: No buildings may be associated with this use.
- (7) Water tank, water treatment facility or sewer lift station.
 - (i) Definition: A water facility with a capacity of five thousand (5,000) gallons or more for purifying, supplying, and holding water, or a sewer lift station facility, each including appurtenant wells, pumps, and control buildings.
 - (ii) Additional Provisions: Comply with Chapter [14-35](#), Telecommunications Uses.
- (8) Telecommunications facilities.
 - (i) Definition: See Section [14-18.803](#).
 - (ii) Additional provisions: Comply with Chapter [14-35](#), Telecommunication Uses.
- (h) Accessory uses.

An accessory use must be a use customarily incidental to and on the same parcel as the main use. A use listed in Chapter 14-16.02 may be an accessory use if the Zoning Administrator determines that the use is customarily incidental to a main use. Except as provided in this section, an accessory use must comply with all regulations applicable to the main use.

- (1) Accessory outside storage.
 - (i) Definition: The outside placement, for a period of more than forty-eight (48) hours, of items which are customary and incidental to the main use of the property.
 - (ii) Additional provisions:
 - (aa) The area of placement may not exceed five (5%) percent of the lot area;
 - (bb) Items must be screened from the view of adjacent roadways and properties;
 - (cc) Accessory outdoor storage of agricultural products and operable agricultural equipment is exempt from these additional provisions;
 - (dd) For purposes of these regulations, recreational equipment includes motor homes, boats, and boat trailers, travel trailers, pick-up campers, tent trailers, utility trailers and similar equipment, and cases or boxes used for transporting recreation equipment, whether occupied by equipment or not. Recreation equipment must be parked or stored in a carport or in an enclosed building, or up to two (2) units may be parked behind the nearest portion of a building to the street, screened by a six

foot (6') solid fence or wall provided that equipment may be parked anywhere for a time period not to exceed forty-eight (48) hours during loading or unloading. Recreational equipment must not be used for living, sleeping or housekeeping purposes when parked or stored on any lot or in any location not approved for the use.

- (2) Accessory structure.
 - (i) Definition: A structure detached from, but located on, the same lot as the principal use, the use of which is incidental and accessory to that of the principal use, and not designed for human habitation.
 - (ii) Additional provisions: Any accessory structure is subject to the minimum requirements of the zoning district in which it is located; however, accessory structures less than fifteen feet (15') in height from adjacent pre-developed grade may be located five feet (5') from the side or rear lot lines within the rear yard area.
- (3) Shipping containers.
 - (i) Definition: Any enclosed container constructed of metal, wood, or other material which container was designed or patterned after structures used in containerized shipping operations used for temporary or permanent storage.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: None for temporary applications; at least one per three (3) container units for permanent applications as determined by Design Review.¹
 - (iii) Additional provisions: See Section [14-10.170](#).
- (4) Satellite earth station antennae.
 - (i) Definition: See Section [14-18.064](#)(8).
 - (ii) Development Standards: See Chapter [14-35](#), Telecommunications

Uses.

- (i) Temporary uses.
 - (1) Emergency noncommercial telecommunications facility.
 - (i) Definition: A facility owned or operated by a governmental agency or a volunteer public safety agency officially sanctioned by a government agency for that purpose used for the transmission and reception of electromagnetic or electro-optic information for public safety communication uses. This facility may operate for a maximum of six (6) months.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: To be determined through the Temporary Use Permit.¹
 - (iii) Loading requirements: To be determined through the Temporary Use Permit.
 - (2) Temporary batch plant.
 - (i) Definition: A temporary facility for mixing concrete, asphalt or similar paving materials.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: To be determined through the Temporary Use Permit.¹

- (iii) Loading requirements: To be determined through the Temporary Use Permit.
 - (iv) Additional provisions:
 - (aa) Limited to a maximum six (6) months for specific project needs;
 - (bb) The Zoning Administrator may limit the hours of operation where the use is to be located within six hundred feet (600') of residentially zoned property.
- (3) Temporary construction office and/or yard.
 - (i) Definition: A facility temporarily used as a construction or sales office or staging/storage area.
 - (ii) Parking requirements: To be determined through the Temporary Use Permit.¹
 - (iii) Loading requirements: To be determined through the Temporary Use Permit.
 - (iv) Additional provisions:
 - (aa) Office use limited to a maximum of twelve (12) months with up to two (2) six (6) month extensions;
 - (bb) Storage/staging uses limited to six (6) months with up to two (2) six (6) month extensions.
- (4) Temporary dwelling unit.
 - (i) Definition: A dwelling unit temporarily used by a watchperson during construction.
 - (ii) Additional provisions:
 - (aa) May be approved only in conjunction with the issuance of a Building Permit for a commercial project or a residential project involving construction of three (3) or more new dwelling units.
 - (bb) One unit per project site.
 - (cc) Unit must be connected to City water and sewer.
- (j) **DWSP Commercial Uses**
 - (1) **For parcels with the Public Facilities (PF) zoning designation located in the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan area, any commercial use may be allowed with an Administrative Use Permit unless prohibited elsewhere in the Watsonville Municipal Code.**

(Ord. 1156-03 C-M, eff. May 22, 2003, as amended by § 1, Ord. 1373-18 (CM), eff. October 11, 2018, and § 2(3) (Exh. A), Ord. 1481-25 (CM), eff. October 9, 2025)

¹ Parking requirements established by this Code supersede those established by Title [9](#), Chapter 3, for specific use listed.

ZONING CODE TEXT AMENDMENT FINDINGS (WMC § 14-12.807)

A. That the proposed amendment is consistent with the policies in the General Plan.

The proposed amendments are consistent with the following policies embodied in the General Plan as described below:

- **Goal 4.3 & Policy 4.C Commercial Land Use** - Revitalize the central business district and provide adequate neighborhood commercial services.

Supportive Evidence: The proposed zoning code text amendments would conditionally permit commercial uses on parcels zoned Public Facilities (PF) and located within the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan (DWSP) area. Providing a permitting pathway for additional commercial uses in the downtown area will help revitalize the central business district.

- **Goal 4.6 Local Employment** - Promote a variety of employment opportunities within the city providing living wage jobs to Watsonville residents. Stimulate creation of 7,500 additional jobs by 2005. Pursue opportunities for job skill training.

Supportive Evidence: The proposed zoning code text amendments would conditionally permit commercial uses on parcels zoned Public Facilities (PF) and located within the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan (DWSP) area. New commercial uses will provide additional employment opportunities for Watsonville residents within the downtown area.

- **Policy 4.C.4 Visitor Commercial** - The City shall plan for additional visitor-serving facilities within the central business district and in suitable locations in proximity to Highway 1.

Supportive Evidence: The proposed zoning code text amendments would conditionally permit commercial uses on parcels zoned Public Facilities (PF) and located within the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan (DWSP) area. Building such as the City Hall building located at 275 Main Street are both centrally located and visitor-serving, with an attached parking structure (Civic Plaza Parking Garage) serving commercial uses on surrounding parcels as well as visitors to the Civic Plaza, Watsonville

Public Library, and Superior Court of Santa Cruz. Therefore, permitting commercial uses in these locations will provide additional visitor-serving facilities within the central business district.

- **Implementation Measure 4.G.2 Multiple Use** - Wherever feasible and appropriate, and where the potential impacts and mitigation measures associated with mixed use can be identified and fully considered through the CEQA process, the City shall support intensification of use by combining uses on one site, e.g. residential and commercial, institutional and recreational.

Supportive Evidence: The proposed zoning code text amendments would conditionally permit commercial uses on parcels zoned Public Facilities (PF) and located within the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan (DWSP) area. Buildings such as the City Hall building located at 275 Main Street already include a mix of public uses, such as Watsonville Civic Plaza, Watsonville Public Library, the Superior Court of Santa Cruz, and the Civic Plaza Parking Garage. Adding commercial uses in these locations is feasible and appropriate because it will complement and support the existing uses.

- B. That the proposed amendment is compatible to the extent possible with the actual and general planned use of the adjacent properties.**

Supportive Evidence: The proposed amendments conditionally permit the same commercial uses principally permitted in Downtown Core and Downtown Neighborhood zoning districts in the DWSP area. Because all of the PF parcels identified are adjacent to or within those zoning districts, they are consistent and compatible with the land use regulations identified in the DWSP, which was adopted in October 2023, and the General Plan as modified by the DWSP. Therefore, the proposed amendment is compatible with the actual and general planned use of the adjacent properties.