

MEMORANDUM



DATE: September 1, 2021
TO: Alex Yasbek, Environmental Projects Manager
FROM: Justin Meek, AICP, Principal Planner
RE: City of Watsonville CAAP General Plan Text Amendment

BACKGROUND

The City of Watsonville has prepared a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) to provide a framework and process for updating policies, programs, practices, and incentives for the City, including residents and businesses, to reduce the City's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, combat the impacts of climate change, and explore carbon sequestration, habitat restoration, and repair of our natural world.

The CAAP will chart an ambitious, equitable, and realistic path for the City to achieve the Climate-Safe California Campaign goal of net-negative emissions by 2030, setting a goal for the City to remove more GHGs than it emits by 2030. The CAAP includes three types of initiatives in order to advance its desired climate resilience goals: climate *action/mitigation*, climate *adaptation*, and climate *restoration*.

To help achieve the resilience goals in the CAAP, a new policy and implementation measure has been drafted for inclusion in the City's General Plan.

PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT

The changes to the City of Watsonville 2005 General Plan Chapter 9, Environmental Resource Management, are provided below in underline (underline) for new additions. There are no proposed deletions from Chapter 9, Environmental Resource Management. Current text from Chapter 9, Environmental Resource Management, is shown below with original heading and original (plain) text for context and to illustrate changes to the 2005 General Plan in underline.

Introduction and Background (p. 111)

This chapter of Watsonville 2005 addresses the state planning requirements for conservation and open space. It presents goals and policies for the protection and wise use of the environmental resources found in the Watsonville Planning Area. Additional City policies and actions on the preservation and enhancement of important agricultural soils are found in the Growth and Conservation Strategy chapter (3).

The City shall prepare a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP). The CAAP provides a framework and process for updating policies, programs, practices, and incentives for the City, including residents and businesses, to reduce the City's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, combat the impacts of climate change, and explore carbon sequestration, habitat restoration, and

repair of our natural world. The CAAP policy and implementation measures are included in Policy 9.K Climate Action and Adaptation Plan. The CAAP is available on the City's website.

Climate (p. 112)

Rainfall increases with distance inland from the Bay. Average annual rainfall is about 17 inches at the mouth of the Pajaro River, 21 inches at Watsonville, and as high as 50 inches at the crest of Mount Madonna. Ninety percent of all precipitation occurs between November and April with February being the wettest month. Wind direction is generally from the west off Monterey Bay.

The City's CAAP includes three types of initiatives in order to advance its desired climate resilience goals. *Climate action*, or mitigation, refers to actions taken to address the causes of climate change and to reduce the impact people have on the climate system. An example of mitigation includes transitioning to low-carbon energy sources, such as renewable energy. *Climate adaptation*, on the other hand, refers to adjusting behaviors, systems, and infrastructure to reduce the impact climate change has on communities. Updating building codes to address future climate conditions and extreme weather events is an example of climate adaptation. *Climate restoration* consists of goals and associated actions, such as tree planting programs and soil carbon sequestration, intended to return climate systems to the safe and healthy state in which the natural world evolved.

Policy 9.K Climate Action and Adaptation (p. 128)

The City shall prepare and implement a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP). The CAAP shall be a fully enforceable document that establishes emissions reductions targets and identifies and quantifies strategies and measures the City will undertake to reach its targets. The CAAP shall also include a climate change preparedness analysis to address City adaptation to climate change. The City shall monitor and report on progress toward the emissions reduction targets on a periodic basis, with updates to the inventory every two years and an update to the CAAP at least every five years. The CAAP shall be a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)-qualified GHG reduction plan pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5. Therefore, all strategies and GHG reduction measures must be fully enforceable and feasible to implement by the City.

Implementation Measures

9.K.1 Climate Action and Adaptation Plan – The CAAP shall include the following:

- Conduct a baseline analysis (GHG emissions inventory) using the best available baseline year;
- Adopt an emissions reduction target;
- Develop strategies and measures for reducing emissions;
- Develop strategies and actions for adaptation to climate change;
- Develop a local carbon offset program;
- Implement strategies and measures identified in the CAAP; and
- Monitor emissions and verify results.

The CAAP shall be a standalone document that implements the requirements set forth in Policy 9.K. Updates to the CAAP, including, but not limited to, inventory updates every two years and updates to the CAAP at least every five years, shall not require updates to the 2005 General Plan or revisions to this Chapter through subsequent General Plan Amendments.

The CAAP developed in 2021 satisfies the implementation efforts above. To ensure progress and streamline update efforts, the CAAP is structured in a way that prioritizes project implementation through City commitments and ongoing monitoring. The CAAP and progress made towards its implementation shall be posted on the City's website.

City operations and actions, as well as land use approvals, will be required to be consistent with the CAAP.