



MEMORANDUM

To: Alex Yasbek, PE, Environmental Projects Manager, City of Watsonville
From: Kate Elliott, Director, Environmental Planning + Compliance
RE: City of Watsonville Climate Action and Adaptation Plan – Comments and Responses on the Public Initial Study/Negative Declaration (SCH #2021090075)
Date: October 19, 2021
CC: Steve Palmisano, Assistant Director of Public Works and Utilities, City of Watsonville; Darin Neufeld and Sharon Toland, Harris & Associates

The purpose of this memorandum is to document the comments received on the Initial Study/Negative Declaration (IS/ND) environmental document prepared for the City of Watsonville (City) Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) project, and to notify any public agency commenting on the IS/ND of the public hearing to be held for the project, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15073.

Circulation and Distribution of the IS/ND

The IS/ND was circulated for a 45-day public review period from September 3, 2021, to October 18, 2021, to obtain input on the environmental document and analyses therein, in accordance with CEQA.

The IS/ND was submitted to the State Clearinghouse (SCH) and thus distributed to State agencies, including the California Air Resources Board (CARB), Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 5, Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Region 3, Native American Heritage Commission, Office of Historic Preservation, Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) Region 3, and other state agencies deemed appropriate by the SCH. Caltrans was the only state agency to submit comments on the IS/ND.

Additionally, the City filed a Notice of Intent (NOI) to adopt the IS/ND with the Santa Cruz County Clerk, posted the NOI in The Pajaronian newspaper and on the City's website with a link to the IS/ND, and distributed the NOI and IS/ND to key stakeholders and those requesting notice.

Comments on the IS/ND and Responses

The City received comment letters from:

- Caltrans (October 5, 2021),
- Monterey Bay Air Resources District (October 18, 2021),
- Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency (October 1, 2021), and
- Anna Kramer, City of Watsonville Planning Commissioner (October 6, 2021).

The comment letters are attached. Following is a summary of the comments and responses to the comments.

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

Comment: This comment letter summarizes the proposed project, notes agency support for projects that include smart growth principles, expresses support for the CAAP transportation policies, and states that Caltrans looks forward to working with the City on future transportation-related projects.

Attachment 8

Page 1 of 13



Response: This comment expresses support for the project and does not raise an issue with the adequacy or accuracy of the environmental document. The City looks forward to working with Caltrans on future transportation-related projects.

Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD)

Comment: This comment states that the City's strategies to reduce carbon emissions to be sufficient to meet targets set by the state and to limit the City's emissions from having a significant effect on the environment. The comment letter also provides several grant opportunities for the City's consideration.

Response: This comment expresses support for the project and does not raise an issue with the adequacy or accuracy of the environmental document. The City appreciates the information provided.

Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency (PVWMA)

Comment 1: This comment introduces the letter and requests an update to the gross crop production value in Section 3.2 of the CAAP, Agricultural Vulnerability and Food Resilience, based on recent Santa Cruz County Crop Reports gross crop values and 2020 Summer Land Use Survey.

Response: This comment requests an update to a statistic in the CAAP and does not raise an issue with the adequacy or accuracy of the environmental document. The CAAP incorporated the best available information at the time of document preparation. The requested update does not change the strategies or conclusions identified in the CAAP. The City notes the information sources provided by PVWMA and will incorporate an updated gross crop production value in future CAAP updates.

Comment 2: This comment suggests expanding the discussion of climate change impacts on water supplies in Section 3.2.3.1 of the CAAP, Climate Risks to Agricultural Productivity -Drought.

Response: The comment requests expanding a discussion in the CAAP and does not raise an issue with the adequacy or accuracy of the environmental document. Expanding the discussion does not change the strategies or conclusions identified in the CAAP. This comment is noted and will be taken into consideration during future CAAP updates.

Comment 3: This comment suggests updating the water use data in Section 3.2.3.1 of the CAAP, Climate Risks to Agricultural Productivity - Drought.

Response: This comment requests an update to a statistic in the CAAP and does not raise an issue with the adequacy or accuracy of the environmental document. The CAAP incorporated the best available information at the time of document preparation. The requested update does not change the strategies or conclusions identified in the CAAP. This comment is noted, and the City will incorporate updated water use data in future CAAP updates.

Comment 4: This comment notes that increasing sea level threatens to exacerbate seawater intrusion through increasing head pressures, in addition to agricultural lands being impacted by flooding and tidal effects, and requests this information be added to Section 3.2.3.1 of the CAAP, Climate Risks to Agricultural Productivity – Sea Level Rise.

Response: This comment requests an expanded discussion in the CAAP and does not raise an issue with the adequacy or accuracy of the environmental document. Saltwater intrusion is noted as a potential contributor to drought in Section 3.2.3.1 of the CAAP. Expanding the discussion does not change the strategies or conclusions identified in the CAAP. This comment is noted, and the City will consider expanding on this topic in future CAAP updates.

Anna Kramer, City of Watsonville Planning Commissioner

Comment: This comment expresses general support for the project and requests that active transportation comprise a larger proportion of GHG reductions. The comment provides several suggestions, including: incentivizing transit or active transportation for short trips, road improvements to improve safety for active transportation, implementation of the *Vision Zero Action Item* list, solicitation of public input on active

transportation infrastructure, parking limitations, local busses, bicycle parking, commuter trip reduction programs for school district employees, and a no idling policy within City limits.

Response: This comment provides suggestions for additional CAAP measures and does not raise an issue with the adequacy or accuracy of the environmental document. Several of the requested measures are included in the CAAP document, as follows.

- Strategy T2, Increase Multimodal Transportation Facilities, includes several reduction measures and supporting efforts to increase active transportation. It is the purpose of this strategy to reduce vehicle miles travelled by replacing vehicle trips with non-motorized modes of transportation, such as walking and bicycling. The strategy includes Measure T2-A: New Pedestrian Improvements, Measure T2-B: Pedestrian and Cyclist Multimodal Enhancements, and Measure T2-C: Trails and Bicycle Master Plan that would implement new active transportation infrastructure and make roadway improvements to increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Strategy T3: Implement Parking Management and Measure T5-B: End-of-Trip Facilities, includes parking limitation and bicycle parking, respectively. Additional measures seek to reduce commuter trips across the City (Measure T5-A: Commute Trip Reduction Programs).
- Strategy T4: Prioritize Transit Movement includes transit-supportive treatments to incorporate a mix of roadway infrastructure improvements to prioritize transit movement over vehicle movement.

As described in Chapter 2 of the CAAP, Climate Action, reductions measures are specific strategies that are enforceable and are also able to be quantified with available data and methodologies. Additional supporting efforts are identified which represent additional actions that support each of the strategies and GHG reduction measures. However, the list of supporting efforts is not intended to be exhaustive or preclude implementation of additional GHG-reducing efforts. As noted in Chapter 2 of the CAAP, additional reductions beyond the CAAP reduction measures will be required to achieve net-negative emissions.

The measures suggested in the comment letter will be considered in future updates to the CAAP, and may also be implemented in the interim through individual projects or other planning efforts, such as the update to the Trails and Bicycle Master Plan. The Public Works and Utilities Department looks forward to working with the Planning Commission on GHG reduction efforts.

Conclusion and Final IS/ND

The comments received on the IS/ND do not raise an issue with the adequacy or accuracy of the environmental document and do not require revisions to the IS/ND. Therefore, there are no required revisions that would constitute a “substantial revision” as defined by CEQA (Section 15073.5[b]), and recirculation of the IS/ND is not required. Accordingly, the IS/ND that was circulated for public review is the Final IS/ND.

Public Hearing on the Final IS/ND

The City will be holding an in-person public hearing for the CAAP project at its regularly scheduled City Council meeting, as follows.

City of Watsonville City Council Meeting
Tuesday, October 26, 2021, 5:00 PM
City Council Chambers
275 Main Street, Top Floor
Watsonville, California 95076

Attachments

SCH Letter
Comment Letters (4)

California Office of Planning & Research State Clearinghouse (SCH) Posting

Climate Action and Adaptation Plan

Summary

SCH Number	2021090075
Lead Agency	City of Watsonville
Document Title	Climate Action and Adaptation Plan
Document Type	NEG - Negative Declaration
Received	9/3/2021
Document Description	The City of Watsonville is proposing to adopt the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP). The CAAP includes the City's 2017 baseline GHG emissions; identifies projected emissions in 2030, 2045 and 2050; establishes the emissions reduction relative to the statewide targets under Assembly Bill 32 and Senate Bill 32; and identifies 19 strategies and 33 measures the City will undertake to reduce GHG emissions. The project also includes amending the Watsonville General Plan Chapter 9, Environmental Resource Management, to include Policy 9.K, Climate Action and Adaptation Plan.

Contact Information

Name	Alex Yasbek
Agency Name	City of Watsonville, Public Works and Utilities Department
Contact Types	Lead/Public Agency
Address	500 Clearwater Ln Watsonville, CA 95076
Phone	(831) 768-3160
Email	alex.yasbek@cityofwatsonville.org

Location

Cities	Watsonville
Counties	Santa Cruz
Regions	Citywide
Zip	95076

Notice of Completion

Review Period Start	9/3/2021
Review Period End	10/18/2021
Development Types	Other (Climate Action and Adaptation Plan)
Local Actions	General Plan Amendment
Project Issues	Greenhouse Gas Emissions
Reviewing Agencies	California Air Resources Board (ARB), California Coastal Commission (CCC), California Department of Conservation (DOC), California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Bay Delta Region 3 (CDFW), California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Marin Region 7 (CDFW), California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), California Department of Parks and Recreation, California Department of Transportation, District 5 (DOT), California Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics (DOT), California Department of Transportation, Division of Transportation Planning (DOT), California Department of Water Resources (DWR), California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES), California Highway Patrol (CHP), California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), California Natural Resources Agency, California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Region 3 (RWQCB), California State Lands Commission (SLC), Department of Toxic Substances Control, Office of Historic Preservation, San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water, State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Water Quality, State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Water Rights

Attachments

Draft Environmental Document [Draft IS, NOI_NOA_Public notices, OPR Summary Form, Appx,]

NOI_WatsonvilleCAAP_IS-ND_Final PDF 203 K

Public Review_IS-ND_Watsonville CAAP PDF 3300 K

SCH_SummaryForm_WatsonvilleCAAP_IS-ND_rev PDF 574 K

Notice of Completion [NOC] Transmittal form

NOC_WatsonvilleCAAP_IS-ND_Final PDF 576 K

Disclaimer: The Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) accepts no responsibility for the content or accessibility of these documents. To obtain an attachment in a different format, please contact the lead agency at the contact information listed above. You may also contact the OPR via email at state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov or via phone at [\(916\) 445-0613](tel:9164450613). For more information, please visit [OPR’s Accessibility Site](#).

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

CALTRANS DISTRICT 5
50 HIGUERA STREET
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93401-5415
PHONE (805) 549-3101
FAX (805) 549-3329
TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/



Making Conservation
a California Way of Life.

October 5, 2021

SCr-Var
SCH#2021090075

Alex Yasbek, PE
Senior Civil Engineer
City of Watsonville, Public Works & Utilities
500 Clearwater Lane
Watsonville, CA 95076

Dear Mr. Yasbek:

COMMENTS FOR THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE CLIMATE ACTION AND ADAPTATION
PLAN (CAAP) NEGATIVE DECLARATION (NEG), WATSONVILLE, CA

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), District 5, Development Review, has reviewed the CAAP which provides a framework and process for updating policies, programs, practices, and incentives to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, combat the impacts of climate change, and explore carbon sequestration, habitat restoration, and repair of our natural world. Caltrans offers the following comments in response to the NEG:

1. Caltrans supports local development that is consistent with State planning priorities intended to promote equity, strengthen the economy, protect the environment, and promote public health and safety. We accomplish this by working with local jurisdictions to achieve a shared vision of how the transportation system should and can accommodate interregional and local travel and development. Projects that support smart growth principles which include improvements to pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure (or other key Transportation Demand Strategies) are supported by Caltrans and are consistent with our mission, vision, and goals.
2. Caltrans applauds the CAAP's transportation related strategies and measures designed to lower GHG's. We support the CAAP's commitment to providing alternative transportation options by incorporating smart growth concepts, increasing multimodal transportation facilities, implementing parking management, increasing transit, and using trip reduction strategies.

Attachment 8

Page 6 of 13

Alex Yasbek
October 5, 2021
Page 2

3. Caltrans looks forward to working with the City of Watsonville in the future on any transportation related projects on the State Highway System.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed project. If you have any questions, or need further clarification on items discussed above, please contact me at (805) 835-6543 or christopher.bjornstad@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Christopher Bjornstad

Chris Bjornstad
Associate Transportation Planner
District 5 Development Review

October 18, 2021

Alex Yasbek P.E.,
Senior Civil Engineer
City of Watsonville
Public Works & Utilities
500 Clearwater Lane, Watsonville CA 95076
alex.yasbek@cityofwatsonville.org

SUBJECT: DRAFT Climate Action and Adaption Plan (CAAP)/Initial Study/Negative Declaration

Dear Mr. Yasbek,

The Monterey Bay Air Resources District (District) thanks the City of Watsonville Public Works & Utilities for the opportunity to review and comment on the above-referenced document. The District finds the City of Watsonville's strategies to reduce carbon emissions to be sufficient to meet targets set by the State of California and to limit the City's emissions from having a significant effect on the environment.

In particular, the District appreciates the City of Watsonville's commitment to the net-negative emissions by 2030. In the City's CAAP path to reduce the City's GHG emissions please consider grant opportunities for the City, it's residents and certain businesses by checking to see what programs are available on our website:
<https://www.mbard.org/grants-incentives> .

Incentive programs available in support of:

- Design and construction of roundabouts and the use of adaptive traffic control systems (ATCS) at any signalized intersection along nearby collector or arterial roadways: <https://www.mbard.org/ab2766-motor-vehicle-emission-reduction-grants>.
- Diesel engine emission reduction:
 - School buses: <https://www.mbard.org/zero-emission-school-bus-program>
 - Diesel engine powered off-road heavy equipment are available through the Diesel Engine Equipment Replacement Program: <https://www.mbard.org/diesel-engine-equipment-replacement-program>
- Additional GHG reduction through programs for residents include:
 - Wood Stove Change Out Program <https://www.mbard.org/wood-stove-change-out-program> and
 - the Electric Vehicle Incentive Programs. <https://www.mbard.org/electric-vehicle-incentive-program>
 - E-Bike Incentive Program: <https://www.mbard.org/e-bike-incentive-program>

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 831.718.8027 or cdumyich@mbard.org.

Attachment 8
Page 8 of 13

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "CDuymich", with a large, loopy flourish at the end.

Christine Duymich
Air Quality Planner II

cc: Richard A. Stedman,
David Frisbey



Alex Yasbek <alex.yasbek@cityofwatsonville.org>

Watsonville Climate Action Plan - Draft out now

Casey Meusel <Meusel@pvwater.org>

Fri, Oct 1, 2021 at 2:50 PM

To: Alex Yasbek <alex.yasbek@cityofwatsonville.org>

Cc: Marcus Mendiola <Mendiola@pvwater.org>, Brian Lockwood <Lockwood@pvwater.org>

Hi Alex,

I had a chance to scan through parts of the City's Climate Action Plan and wanted to provide a few comments for your consideration. Please see below:

SECTION LOCATION

COMMENT

3.2.1 I suggest updating the gross crop production value. PV Water performs annual summer land use surveys that detail the acreage and type of crop production in the Pajaro Valley. Based on recent [Santa Cruz County Crop Reports](https://www.pvwater.org/images/about-pvwma/assets/annual_reports_assets/SGMA-WY/PVWater_AR_WY2020.pdf) gross crop values and 2020 Summer Land Use Survey, the Pajaro Valley is producing over \$1 billion of high value fruit, vegetable, flower, and other crops on ~28,500 acres. Source - https://www.pvwater.org/images/about-pvwma/assets/annual_reports_assets/SGMA-WY/PVWater_AR_WY2020.pdf, page 2.

3.2.3.1 – Drought You may want to expand on how/why water supplies may be impacted through climate change. Overall with climate change, current expectations are that average annual rainfall won't change substantially but the frequency of rainfall events is expected to be less and the intensity of storms greater leading to less recharge. In addition, with the increase of average temperatures, increased evapotranspiration is expected to create drier conditions. Additional detail can be found in the TM at https://www.pvwater.org/images/board-and-committees/Sustainable-GW-Planning-Committee/GSU22_WaterBudget_drafttopost.pdf

3.2.3.1 – Drought I suggest using more current water use data. In WY2020, groundwater made up about 87% of basin water use, delivered water (predominantly recycled) approximately 10%, and surface water approximately 3 % of basin water use. Approximately 81% of basin water use was for agriculture. These percentages vary year to year based on the amount and timing of rainfall, evapotranspiration rates, and other factors but I'd recommend using more current numbers.

3.2.3.1 – Sea-Level Rise In addition to ag. land being impacted directly by rising sea level through flooding of brackish surface water incursions and tidal effects, increasing sea level threatens to exacerbate seawater intrusion through increasing head pressures. Figures on page 15 and 26 of the TM at the link below illustrate potential sea level rise and the corresponding impact of onshore flows from the ocean. https://www.pvwater.org/images/board-and-committees/Sustainable-GW-Planning-Committee/GSU22_WaterBudget_drafttopost.pdf

Attachment 8

Please let me know if you have any questions about the comments provided and I hope things go smoothly on the 26th.

Page 10 of 13

Casey

Casey Meusel

Associate Hydrologist

PV Water

36 Brennan Street

Watsonville, CA 95076

ph: (831) 722-9292 x19

cell: (831) 254-0349

email: meusel@pvwater.org

website: www.pvwater.org



[Quoted text hidden]



Alex Yasbek <alex.yasbek@cityofwatsonville.org>

CAAP Considerations

Anna Kammer <annakso@att.net>

Wed, Oct 6, 2021 at 3:14 PM

To: Alex Yasbek <alex.yasbek@cityofwatsonville.org>

Good afternoon Alex,

It's very exciting to know that the city is looking to adopt a *Climate Action and Adaptation Plan* as a supporting document to the City's 2030 General Plan. It's great to see that our city is taking a leadership role in the fight against climate change.

After reviewing this document, I have a few observations for consideration that might add to our reduction in GHG overall. The attached document lists possible additions and changes to the CAAP that would make our plan more robust, and suggests achievable goals that would enhance addressing our climate goals.

One overall observation is that we need to have more of an emphasis on **increasing active transportation** to make it a higher percent of the solution for reducing GHG. Making active transportation safer and more accessible would go a long way towards incentivizing this option, and make it a more desirable option for residents.

Thank you in advance for your time in reviewing these options.

Anna

Anna Kammer*City of Watsonville Planning Commissioner
District 5 Representative***Climate Action Plan Suggestions for Consideration.docx**

13K

Attachment 8

Page 12 of 13

Climate Action Plan – Suggestions for Consideration

- Get people out of cars for short trips and incentivize them to make these trips by active transportation or by an expanded public transportation network. This would reduce our carbon footprint much faster than having people make those same trips by EVs.
- Keep vehicle traffic on major arterials rather than on neighborhood streets or collector streets. This can be done with road diets, raised cross walks, installation of safe crossings and prohibiting right turn-on-red from arterials onto neighborhood streets. These improvements would make neighborhoods safer for active transportation, and would also improve the quality of life for residents by reducing vehicle noise and emissions in neighborhoods.
- Use the *Vision Zero Action Item* list to complement and encourage active transportation goals that support increasing the percent of the solution that active transportation plays in reducing our emissions.
- Give people choices of HOW to add safer active transportation infrastructure, rather than a choice whether to add this infrastructure (i.e. “Do you want wider sidewalks or a buffered bike lane along this street?”, not “We’re taking away parking and adding bike lanes.”.)
- Prioritize safe active transport over vehicle convenience. Make choosing active transportation safe, accessible and desirable; alternatively, make driving a vehicle expensive and inconvenient. We can do this by:
 - Taking away street parking in favor of putting in wider sidewalks and bike lanes
 - Putting parking meters in the downtown area to encourage vehicle turnover and to generate revenue for the City
 - Adding more local circulator electric buses to the public transportation network, and give them exclusive access to priority destinations such as the library (For example, eliminate the parking in front of the library and have a shuttle bus stop there.), shopping centers and the downtown core
 - Putting safe, secure bicycle parking in strategic and convenient areas
 - Having “No Parking Zones” and bike/ped-only-zones near schools so students walking, riding and skating are safe from vehicle traffic
 - Adding a school district employee incentive program for reducing GHG (many of the school employees are locally based) such as car-pool only parking in school lots, safe, secure bicycle parking at school sites and
 - Have a “No Idling” policy within the City limits