



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

701 OCEAN STREET, 4TH FLOOR, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060
(831) 454-2580 FAX: (831) 454-2131 TDD: (831) 454-2123
TOM BURNS, PLANNING DIRECTOR

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

Date: August 7, 2008

To: All Recipients on the Distribution List (Attachment 1)

Lead Agency: County of Santa Cruz Planning Department
Contact: Todd Sexauer, Environmental Planner
701 Ocean Street, 4th Floor
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Subject: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

Project Title: Atkinson Lane Specific Plan/Master Plan EIR

Project Applicant: County of Santa Cruz Planning Department and City of Watsonville
Community Development Department

In implementing its duties under Section 15021 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the County of Santa Cruz Planning Department (as Lead Agency) intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Atkinson Lane Specific Plan/Master Plan (proposed project). In accordance with Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, the County of Santa Cruz Planning Department has prepared this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to provide responsible and trustee agencies with sufficient information describing the proposed project and its potential environmental effects.

The determination to prepare an EIR was made by the County of Santa Cruz Planning Department. As specified by the CEQA Guidelines, the NOP will be circulated for a 30-day review period. The County of Santa Cruz Planning Department welcomes responsible and trustee agency input during this review, specifically input is requested as to the scope and content of environmental information that is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the proposed project. In the event that no response is received by your agency by the end of the review period, the County of Santa Cruz Planning Department may presume that your agency has no comment.

Comments may be submitted in writing during the review period and addressed to:

Todd Sexauer, Environmental Planner
County of Santa Cruz Planning Department
701 Ocean Street, 4th Floor
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

The comment period closes at 5:00 p.m. on **September 10, 2008**.

REGIONAL LOCATION

The project site is located in unincorporated Santa Cruz County adjacent to the Watsonville city limits. Santa Cruz County is located between the San Francisco Bay Area and the Monterey Peninsula. The City of Watsonville (City) is located at the southern border of Santa Cruz County, 12 miles south of the City of Santa Cruz and 26 miles north of the City of Monterey. The regional location is shown in **Figure 1, Regional Location**.

PROJECT LOCATION

The project site consists of eleven parcels totaling approximately 67 acres located in unincorporated Santa Cruz County, adjacent to the eastern edge of the Watsonville city limits, south of Corralitos Creek and east of Freedom Boulevard. Atkinson Lane borders the project site to the northwest. Brookhaven Lane, Brewington Avenue and Paloma Way border the project site to the south and southwest. Atkinson Lane, Brewington Lane, Natalie Lane, and Wagner Avenue provide various access points to the project site. The project vicinity is shown on **Figure 2, Project Site**.

The northwest corner of the project site is located within the City limits. Approximately one half of the project site is located within the City's Sphere of Influence. The entire project site is within the City's 25-Year Urban Limit Line. The *Watsonville Vista 2030 General Plan (City of Watsonville General Plan)* designates the majority of the project site as a Specific Plan Area with portions designated as High Density Residential (17-42 dwelling units per acre), Environmental Management (wetland area), and Public Facilities (PG&E substation). The *County of Santa Cruz General Plan* designates the majority of the project site as Urban Residential-Low Density, with portions designated as Rural Residential, Urban Open Space, and Agriculture.

Project Setting

The majority of the project site is currently in agricultural production and the California Department of Conservation *Santa Cruz County Important Farmlands Map* designates the project site as "Prime Farmland" and "Farmland of Statewide Importance." A seasonal wetland/riparian area is present in the western portion of the project site. Corralitos Creek runs roughly west to east along the proposed project's northern boundary. Five single-family residences and various structures used for farming practices are located on the project site. The west side of the project site also contains a PG&E property consisting of an electrical plant/station. The project site is bordered by residential development to the south and west, and private agricultural fields to the north and east.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background

Measure U

In 2002, the voters of the City of Watsonville passed Measure U, which directs the distribution of new growth within and around the City. Measure U was designed to protect commercial agriculture lands and environmentally sensitive areas while providing the means for the City to address housing and job needs for the next 20 to 25 years.

Measure U establishes a 20 to 25-year urban limit line around the City, and directs growth into several unincorporated areas. The three primary areas of growth include the Buena Vista, Manabe-Ow (formerly Manabe-Burgstrom), and Atkinson Lane Specific Plan areas.

In accordance with Measure U, the *City of Watsonville General Plan*, which was adopted by the City Council in June of 2006, identifies the project site as a new growth area to accommodate up to 600 new housing units, including affordable units, townhomes, and single-family homes.

Memorandum of Understanding

The *County of Santa Cruz General Plan* and *Housing Element* require the rezoning of a 16-acre site within the project site to allow 200 housing units at a density of 20 units per acre by June 2009. The City

is also required to provide housing capacity on the remainder of the project site (City Expansion Area) to address its projected needs for the next housing element cycle.

To address these requirements, the City and County determined that it is in their mutual interest to jointly plan for the development of the entire project site. In 2007, the City and County entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to jointly pursue a Specific Plan/Master Plan for the project site. The MOU sets specific project requirements that will fulfill the City and County obligations to provide adequate housing for the region.

The MOU requires that the City and County create a development plan for the project site that addresses roadway layout, housing types and affordability restrictions, parks and schools, infrastructure financing, neighborhood concerns, protection of environmental resources, and specific development guidelines.

Project Summary

The County of Santa Cruz and the City of Watsonville are currently preparing a joint Specific Plan/Master Plan for the Atkinson Lane future growth area. The Atkinson Lane future growth area (project site) falls within the City of Watsonville Urban Growth Boundary (**Figure 2, Project Site**).

The total gross acreage of the project site is approximately 67 acres, which includes 16 acres of land to be re-zoned by the County prior to annexation by the City to meet County affordable housing goals. The MOU estimates that up to 200 units may be developed within the 16-acre area. Re-zoning by the City would follow after 2010 wherein the City may propose to annex the 16-acre County site, as well as the City expansion area.

Land uses and densities for the plan will be determined as part of the Specific Plan/Master Plan process. The *City of Watsonville General Plan* identifies that up to 600 residential units and 90 jobs may be generated in the planning area.

Providing adequate access to the project site to serve the anticipated development without overwhelming the existing circulation system is a critical project objective. The *City of Watsonville General Plan* assumes that Wagner Avenue would be improved and connected to Crestview Drive to serve as the primary access arterial between Freedom Boulevard and East Lake Avenue. Secondary access routes will be analyzed including Atkinson Lane and Brewington Avenue. The proposed project will also analyze additional infrastructure necessary to serve the area including sewer lines, water lines, storm drains, gas and electric, cable, phone, etc.

Proposed project goals include contributing to ongoing services of the City. To that end, the proposed project will analyze recreational and educational needs and opportunities and determine whether to provide new parks and/or education facilities in association with the proposed project.

The proposed project would create a financing method, such as a Community Service District, to fund the development of required new infrastructure and services as well as ongoing City services, such as fire protection, police protection, parks and recreation and public works services, etc. A Planned Unit Development (PUD) as allowed by Santa Cruz County Code will be prepared that incorporates conditions of approval for the 16-acres of land to be re-zoned by the County of Santa Cruz. The proposed project may also require an Urban Services Line Adjustment to include the Specific Plan and Master Plan areas, and a General Plan Amendment. The County of Santa Cruz Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will ultimately consider the PUD along with the EIR. The Specific Plan and EIR will be considered by the Watsonville City Council.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Each of the following environmental topic areas in the EIR will thoroughly discuss the existing conditions for each environmental issue and identify short-term and long-term environmental impacts associated with the project, and their levels of significance. Mitigation measures will be identified to reduce any potentially significant or significant impacts.

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Utilities
- Recreation
- Transportation and Circulation

The level of analysis for these subject areas may be refined or additional subject areas may be analyzed based on responses to this NOP and/or refinements to the proposed project that may occur subsequent to the publication of this NOP. The analysis will utilize project-specific technical reports and the analysis within the *City of Watsonville General Plan* and *EIR* where applicable.

Initial projections for each area of analysis are provided below:

Aesthetics

The project site is primarily comprised of undeveloped residential and agricultural land. The project proposes master planning and re-zoning of three agricultural parcels totaling approximately 44 acres within the project site and seven (7) residential parcels totaling 21 acres. The remaining 2.3-acre public facilities parcel would remain. Section 5.10.5 of the *County of Santa Cruz General Plan* requires the continued preservation of agricultural vistas. As such, the proposed project has the potential to substantially alter the existing visual character of the project site and views from adjacent neighborhoods and public spaces (e.g. roadways, community parks, etc.)

This EIR section will analyze potential changes in public views from adjacent lands and surrounding areas based on a site reconnaissance, evaluation of the proposed project, and photo documentation, as well as future sources of light and glare resulting from implementation of the proposed project. Consistency with relevant policies in the *City of Watsonville General Plan* and the *County of Santa Cruz General Plan* and any relevant ordinances will also be addressed in this section of the EIR. Mitigation measures will be identified for any potentially significant or significant impacts.

Agriculture

According to the California Department of Conservation *Santa Cruz County Important Farmlands Map*, the project site contains “Prime Farmland” and “Farmland of Statewide Importance.” This section of the EIR will include a discussion of historical and current land uses and will describe the soils at the project site according to the *Santa Cruz County Soil Survey*. This section will also include a discussion of the applicability of the *City of Watsonville General Plan* and the *County of Santa Cruz General Plan* policies related to agriculture that would be relevant to the proposed project.

Potential impacts related to the conversion of prime agricultural land to urban development at the project site would be evaluated using the California Department of Conservation Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) model. The EIR will also discuss potential offsite improvements that could potentially impact agricultural lands (e.g., the potential extension of Wagner Avenue to connect the project site with East Lake Avenue, utilities, etc.). Mitigation measures will be identified for any potentially significant or significant impacts.

Air Quality

This section of the EIR will include a discussion of the air quality setting (including climate and topography), environmental health effects of criteria pollutants, existing air quality in the project area, the regulatory setting, and potential short-term and long-term air quality impacts, including an assessment of Greenhouse Gases produced by the proposed project. This section will evaluate consistency with the *City*

of *Watsonville General Plan* and the *County of Santa Cruz General Plan* and the *Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD) Air Quality Management Plan*. Impacts and mitigation will be assessed according to the *MBUAPCD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines*.

Biological Resources

This EIR section will summarize existing biological resources at the project site. The EIR will quantify the loss of foraging and general wildlife habitat and evaluate the quality and significance of on-site habitat (e.g. riparian and wetland). Potential effects on special-status species both on-site and off-site in areas affected by the proposed project and supporting infrastructure (i.e., sewer and roads) will be identified. This section of the EIR will also address project consistency with the Resource Management Element of the *City of Watsonville General Plan*, the Conservation and Open Space Element of the *County of Santa Cruz General Plan*, and the County of Santa Cruz Sensitive Habitat Protection Ordinance and Riparian Corridor and Wetland Protection Ordinance as well as state and federal regulations. Mitigation measures will be identified for any potentially significant or significant impacts.

Cultural Resources

This section of the EIR will address cultural and historic resources based on the records search and field survey results documented in the cultural resources analysis conducted for the project site in the *City of Watsonville General Plan EIR*. Based on this analysis, this section of the EIR will include a discussion of existing setting and analysis of the potential project impacts to any resources found onsite, including any potential historical building and any potential sites important to Native American history and early European settlements. Potential impacts to cultural resources due to the extension of any offsite infrastructure (e.g., roads, water lines, sewer, etc.) will also be evaluated. Mitigation measures will be identified for any potentially significant or significant impacts.

Geology and Soils

As part of the EIR process, a geotechnical study will be prepared that (among others) will describe soil conditions and soil suitability and constraints for the proposed project. Based on the geotechnical analysis, this section of the EIR will describe the geologic setting of the project site, including seismic hazards, liquefaction, landslides and slope instability, expansive soils, and the potential for erosion and subsequent sedimentation to nearby Corralitos Creek and other drainage ways. Mitigation measures will be identified for any potentially significant or significant impacts.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

As part of the EIR process, a preliminary hazardous materials assessment (Assessment) will be prepared to evaluate the potential for hazardous materials at the project site. The Assessment will be based upon readily discernible and/or documented present and historic on-site uses and uses immediately adjacent to the site, and will generally characterize the expected nature of hazardous materials that may be present as a result of such uses. The results of the hazardous materials assessment will be summarized into this section of the EIR.

This section of the EIR will also discuss the potential for the project to create a significant hazard through the use, transport, or storage of hazardous materials, as well as potential impacts to emergency response plans. The potential for development to be located on parcels, which may have applied potential hazardous chemicals to agricultural lands within the project site, will also be evaluated. Mitigation measures will be identified for any potentially significant or significant impacts.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Based on a drainage analysis prepared for the proposed project, this section of the EIR will evaluate the following: surface water quality; existing drainage network, including information on channel conditions, culvert locations and sizing, and capacity of existing drainage facilities to pass flows; flood hazards; applicable City, County and state policies, programs, and standards associated with storm water detention and water resources; pre- and post-development runoff and detention basin size(s) and location(s); and potential offsite impacts associated with extension of utility lines to the project site. Mitigation measures

will be presented in the EIR to address detention and/or retention of storm water flows onsite and Best Management Practices to address surface water quality.

Land Use Planning

This section of the EIR will evaluate potential impacts related to land use in the project area that could result from implementation of the proposed project. This section of the EIR will describe the existing land uses in the area; discuss the distribution, location, and extent of proposed land uses, and analysis of the proposed project with respect to logical growth patterns, compatibility, and contiguity with development in surrounding areas; and discuss the Sphere of Influence Amendment and annexation into the City of Watsonville (and phasing) in sufficient detail to satisfy Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) requirements, pursuant to the requirements specified by California Government Code Section 56668. The analysis will also discuss the proposed Urban Services Line Adjustment. In addition, the potential need for an amendment to Appendix D of the County of Santa Cruz General Plan Housing Element will be discussed to accommodate the potential rezoning of additional parcels within the Atkinson Lane Master Plan area not previously identified as candidate housing sites.

Noise

This section will include a description of the existing noise environment, including nearby noise sources and noise sensitive receptors, and an evaluation of potential noise impacts of the proposed project. The existing noise setting will be based on noise monitoring and a site reconnaissance. The noise impact analysis will focus on changes in noise levels in the project vicinity due to an increase in traffic along area roadways, on-site stationary noise sources, and overall changes in ambient noise levels associated with increased human activity and the potential to affect nearby sensitive receptors. City and County noise standards that regulate noise impacts for land uses on and adjacent to the project sites will be discussed. Mitigation measures will be identified for any potentially significant or significant impacts.

Population and Housing

This section of the EIR will describe existing population, employment, and housing levels within the City and County. It will identify population, employment, and housing changes caused by the proposed project that have the potential to cause physical environmental effects (e.g. traffic, air quality, etc.).

This section will include: a determination of the current housing stock and housing needs according to the Housing Elements of the City and County; a determination of the jobs/housing balance that will result from the proposed project; and a discussion of potential impacts.

Public Services

The proposed project would result in an increase in demand for public services serving the project site. This section of the EIR will provide a description of the existing service levels in the project area, including documentation regarding existing staff levels, equipment and facilities, and planned service expansions. The section will identify significant public service impacts as a result of implementation of the proposed project. A discussion of City and County policies, programs, and standards associated with the provision of public services will also be addressed within this section. Each area of study, which will be described in this EIR section, is discussed below:

Schools

The project site is within the Pajaro Valley Unified School District (PVUSD), which provides public education in the City of Watsonville and the immediately surrounding area. Elementary Schools within one mile of the project site include MacQuidy Elementary School, Hyde Elementary School, Starlight Elementary School, Freedom Elementary School, Amesti Elementary School, Mintie White Elementary School, and Ann Soldo Elementary School. Lakeview Middle School and Cesar Chavez Middle School are the only middle schools within one mile of the project site and Watsonville High School (9-12) is the closest high school to the project site, located approximately 1.2 miles southeast of the project site. As part of the EIR, PVUSD will be consulted to discuss project impacts on the PVUSD and discuss the

potential need for new school sites within the project area. Any environmental impacts resulting from the proposed project's contribution to an existing or future capacity needs will be identified.

Emergency Services

The project site would be served by the Watsonville Fire Department and the Watsonville Police Department. The Watsonville Fire Department provides fire suppression services from two stations; one at Second and Rodriguez Streets, and a second at 370 Airport Boulevard adjacent to the Watsonville Municipal Airport. The department has mutual aid agreements with other fire departments in Santa Cruz County. Watsonville Police Department consists of a headquarters station in downtown and un-staffed satellite neighborhood stations located strategically throughout the rest of the City. The proposed project will be analyzed in terms of the ability of Fire Department and the Police Department to serve the project site and the impact of incremental demand upon these services with implementation of the proposed project.

Utilities

This section will address the construction and extension of domestic water service infrastructure and treatment facilities, wastewater, and other necessary utility systems. Implementation of the proposed project would increase demand to the existing service areas of utilities providers and would require a detachment from "County Service Area 12 Septic Maintenance District" and annexation into the City of Watsonville for sewer and water service. This section would also describe LAFCo policies, process, and requirements of annexation into the City of Watsonville for extraterritorial water and sewer service by the Watsonville Water Department prior to City annexation of the property, which will include evaluating potential water supply impacts and identification of significant public service impacts. Mitigation measures for any potentially significant or significant impacts will be identified.

Recreation

In the last decade, the City of Watsonville has significantly improved opportunities for recreation. However, the City faces a slight deficit of park acreage facilities and at 4.9 acres per 1,000 residents, the City does not meet the General Plan's requirement of five acres per 1,000 residents.

This section of the EIR will include a discussion of existing recreational facilities within the project vicinity and an analysis of the potential for the proposed project to result in increased use of these existing recreational facilities, as well as the potential for project development to require the expansion of existing recreational facilities or the construction of additional facilities, based on standards specified by the City and County General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. This section will also discuss the requirements of the Quimby Act (California Government Code §66477), County Park Dedication and Public Access Requirements (County Code Chapter 15.01), and City Park Land and Open Space Dedications (City Code Section 13-4.02).

Transportation and Circulation

The Transportation and Circulation section of the EIR will address increased traffic volumes on roadway segments and intersections. Primary routes that lead from the project site include, Freedom Boulevard, Green Valley Road, East Lake Avenue and Holohan Road. The *City of Watsonville General Plan* indicates that several of these roadways and intersections along the roadways would operate at level of service (LOS) C, LOS D/E or LOS E/F at General Plan buildout.

The proposed project is estimated to generate approximately 300 PM peak hour trips. These trips would be primarily home-base-work trips and would distribute locally within the City and County and regionally on Highway 1, Highway 152 and Highway 129.

A traffic impact analysis will be prepared for the proposed project, which will analyze existing, background, background plus project, general plan conditions without project, and general plan conditions plus project for 11 intersections and nine street segments. The County of Santa Cruz, the City of Watsonville and Caltrans standards will be used to evaluate the roadway segments and intersections.

The following street segments and intersections will be analyzed:

Street segments:

- Holohan Road between Airport Boulevard and Highway 152
- Holohan Road north of Green Valley Road
- Green Valley Road between Freedom Boulevard and Holohan Road
- Green Valley Road south of Freedom Boulevard
- Freedom Boulevard between Holohan Road and Gardner Avenue
- Freedom Boulevard between Atkinson Lane and Crestview Drive
- Freedom Boulevard between Highway 152 and Highway 129
- Highway 1 north of Harkins Slough Road
- Highway 1 south of Harkins Slough Road interchange/Highway 152

Intersections:

- Atkinson lane/Freedom Boulevard
- Gardener Avenue/Freedom Boulevard
- Brewington Avenue/Crestview Drive
- Crestview Drive/Freedom Boulevard
- Wagner Avenue/East Lake Avenue (Highway 152)
- Highway 152/Holohan Road
- Holohan Road/Green Valley Road
- Green Valley Road/Highway 152-Main Street
- Highway 1/ Harkins Slough Interchange Ramps
- Highway 152/Lincoln Street
- Highway 129/Lincoln Street

The County of Santa Cruz and City of Watsonville standards will be used to evaluate roadway and intersections. This section of the EIR will also address both on-site and off-site parking impacts associated with the proposed project and alternative transportation (e.g. transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities). This section of the EIR will also address regional impacts to area highways and roadway segments. Mitigation measures will be identified for any potentially significant or significant impacts.

Cumulative Impacts

Consistent with Section 15130 of the CEQA Guidelines, the EIR will discuss cumulative impacts of the proposed project, addressing each topic covered in the environmental analysis. The analysis will be conducted using projections contained in the *City of Watsonville General Plan* and the *County of Santa Cruz General Plan*.

OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

Effects Not Found to be Significant

This section will discuss those environmental issues found not to have an impact as a result of the proposed project. Mineral Resources will be the single issue discussed in this section.

Significant and Unavoidable Environmental Effects

This section of the EIR will describe any significant and unavoidable impacts on the environment that cannot be avoided or reduced to a less than significant level with the application of mitigation measures.

Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes Which Would be Caused by the Project Should it be Implemented

This section will summarize the major changes to the environment that would result with implementation of the proposed project. It will focus on the physical environmental changes in the project setting such as those caused by grading and paving, the level of commitments to use of non-renewable resources represented by the project, and potential for secondary impacts that may place additional burdens on non-renewable resources.

Growth Inducing Effects

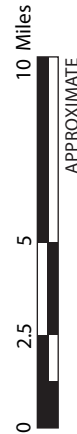
As a required discussion according to CEQA Section 15126.2(d), the EIR will include a discussion of growth inducing effects. The anticipated growth conditions in the project area and parameters for consideration of any secondary impacts from growth will be discussed. The section will evaluate the potential for the proposed project to generate additional growth in the area using standard growth analysis criteria, such as the project's potential to foster economic or population growth or its potential to remove obstacles to population growth through extension of infrastructure.

Project Alternatives

Under CEQA, environmental documentation must include an analysis of a reasonable range of alternatives to the project, including the "No Project" alternative. The proposed Specific Plan/Master Plan process currently underway will guide the selection of alternatives to the proposed project. The alternatives will be evaluated in less detail than the proposed project, within the same environmental topic areas listed above. Each alternative will be contrasted with the proposed project in terms of the extent to which project objectives and reduction in adverse impacts are achieved. The environmentally superior alternative will be identified.



Source: ESRI (2007)



APPROXIMATE



4/24/08, JN 70-100118

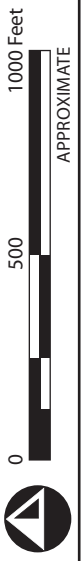
ATKINSON LANE SPECIFIC PLAN/MASTER PLAN EIR

Regional Location

Figure 1



Source: City of Watsonville (2007)



4/24/08, JN 70-100118

ATKINSON LANE SPECIFIC PLAN/MASTER PLAN EIR

Project Site

Figure 2

Attachment 1

Atkinson Lane Specific Plan/Master Plan EIR NOP Distribution List

Governor's Office of Planning and Research State Clearinghouse

1400 Tenth Street, Room 222
Sacramento, CA 95814

Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments

P.O. Box 809
Marina, California 93933

California Highway Patrol

Coastal Division
4115 Broad Street, #B-10
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-7963

Department of Transportation

Division of Aeronautics, MS # 40
P. O. Box 942874
Sacramento, CA 94274-0001

California Department of Conservation

Division of Land Resource Protection
801 K Street, MS 18-01
Sacramento, CA 95814-3528

California Department of Fish and Game

Bay Delta Region (Region 3)
7329 Silverado Trail
Napa, CA 94558

California Department of Food and Agriculture

1220 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5607

California Department of Housing and Community Development

1800 Third Street
Sacramento, CA 95811-6942

Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District

24580 Silver Cloud Court
Monterey, CA 93940

County of Santa Cruz Mosquito Abatement and Vector Control District

640 Capitola Road
Santa Cruz, CA 95062
Attn: Paul Binding

County of Santa Cruz LAFCo

701 Ocean Street, Rm. 318-D
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Attn: Patrick McCormick

California Department of Water Resources

P.O. Box 942836
Sacramento, CA 94236

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

1523 Pacific Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

County of Santa Cruz Flood Control and Water Conservation District (Zone 7)

701 Ocean Street, Suite 410
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Attn: Bruce Laclergue

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Ventura Office
2493 Portola Road, Suite B
Ventura, CA 93003

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

San Francisco District
1455 Market Street
San Francisco, CA 94103-1398

California Regional Water Quality Control Board Region 3

895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-7906

County of Santa Cruz Department of Public Works

701 Ocean Street, Suite 410
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Attn: Jack Sohriakoff

City of Watsonville Public Works and Utilities Department

250 Main Street
Watsonville, CA 95076
Attn: Gayland Swain

California Public Utilities Commission

505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

Pajaro Valley Unified School District

294 Green Valley Road
Watsonville, CA. 95076

City of Watsonville Police Department

215 Union Street
Watsonville, CA 95076
Attn: Linda Peters

City of Watsonville Fire Department

115 Second Street
Watsonville, CA 95076
Attn: Mark Bisbee, Chief

California Native American Heritage Commission

915 Capitol Mall, Room 364
Sacramento, CA 95814

County of Santa Cruz Agricultural Commissioner

175 Westridge Drive
Watsonville, CA 95076

City of Watsonville Parks and Community Services

30 Maple Avenue
Watsonville, CA 95076
Attn: Ana Espinoza, Director

County of Santa Cruz Sheriff's Office

701 Ocean St., Rm. 340
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Attn: Sergeant Roy Morales

California Department of Transportation

District 5
50 Higuera Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-5415

**County of Santa Cruz Department of Parks, Open
Space and Cultural Services**

979 17th Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95062



MONTEREY BAY

Unified Air Pollution Control District
serving Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties

Interim Air Pollution Control Officer
Ed Kendig

24580 Silver Cloud Court • Monterey, California 93940 • 831/647-9411 • FAX 831/647-8501

DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS

CHAIR:
Reb Monaco
San Benito
County

VICE CHAIR:
Simon Salinas
Monterey County

Lou Calcagno
Monterey County

Tony Campos
Santa Cruz
County

Dennis Donohue
City of Salinas

Doug Emerson
San Benito
County Cities

Gary Wilmot
Monterey
Peninsula Cities

Ellen Pirie
Santa Cruz
County

Ila Mettee-
McCutcheon
Monterey County

Sam Storey
Santa Cruz
County Cities

George Worthy
South Monterey
County Cities

August 22, 2008

Mr. Todd Sexauer, Environmental Planner
County of Santa Cruz Planning Department
701 Ocean Avenue, 4th Floor
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

SUBJECT: NOP FOR ATKINSON LANE SPECIFIC PLAN / MASTER PLAN EIR

Dear Mr. Sexauer:

Project's Cumulative Air Quality Impact on Regional Ozone

The District uses consistency with the 2008 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) for the North Central Coast Air Basin to determine a specific plan's cumulative impact on regional air quality (ozone levels). Please request a formal consistency determination from AMBAG for the proposed residential units and include it in the Draft EIR.

Project's Localized Air Quality Impact on Carbon Monoxide Levels

Localized impact is evaluated by determining if project build-out would create or substantially contribute to carbon monoxide "hotspots" (where federal or State ambient air quality standards are exceeded). If project or cumulative traffic would cause LOS to decline from D or better to E or F, dispersion modeling should be undertaken to determine if carbon monoxide concentrations would violate ambient air quality standards at sensitive receptor locations.

Odors, Nuisances and Sensitive Receptors

If the project would revise land use designations that might result in development of odors, nuisances or sensitive receptors in adjacent land uses, the Draft EIR should include an assessment of those impacts. District Rule 402, Nuisances, should be reviewed for applicable requirements.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures should be identified for any significant impacts on air quality. The Draft EIR should quantify the emission reduction effectiveness of each measure, identify the agencies responsible for implementation and monitoring, and determine whether mitigation measures reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Projects Impacts

The District has established the following thresholds of significance for individual projects: 137 lbs/day for VOC or NO_x, 82 lbs/day for PM₁₀, 150 lbs/day for SO_x, a significant decline in LOS, and a cancer risk greater than 10 per 1,000,000 people. (Please refer to Table 5-3 on page 5-6, and page 9-3 of the District's CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, February 2008).

The District's CEQA Air Quality Guidelines may be found on the District's website at www.mbuapcd.org under "Air Quality Plan".

Thank you for the opportunity to review the document.

Sincerely,



Jean Getchell
Supervising Planner
Planning and Air Monitoring Division

cc: David Roemer, AMBAG

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

50 HIGUERA STREET
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93401-5415
PHONE (805) 549-3101
FAX (805) 549-3077
TDD (805) 549-3259
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/>



*Flex your power!
Be energy efficient!*

September 8, 2008

SCr 152-T2.50
SCH# 2008082042

Mr. Todd Sexauer
County of Santa Cruz
Planning Department
701 Ocean Street, 4th Floor
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear Mr. Sexauer:

**COMMENTS ON THE NOTICE OF PREPARATION FOR THE ATKINSON LANE SPECIFIC
PLAN/MASTER PLAN**

The California Department of Transportation (Department), District 5, Development Review, has reviewed the above referenced project and offers the following comments to assist in preparing your Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

1. The Department 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.
2. To ensure the traffic study in the Draft EIR includes the information needed by the Department to analyze the impacts (both cumulative and project-specific) of this project, it is recommended that the analysis be prepared in accordance with the Department's "Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies." Please visit the Department's Internet site for a copy of these guidelines at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/developserv/operationalsystems/reports/tisguide.pdf>. An alternative methodology that produces technically comparable results can also be used.
3. The traffic study should include information on existing traffic volumes within the study area, including the State transportation system, and should be based on recent traffic volumes less than two years old. Counts older than two years cannot be used.
4. Given that this project will generate additional traffic and has the potential to significantly impact the State highway system, the Department requests that the following intersections, ramp nodes, and segments, be studied in addition to those identified in the NOP:

Mr. Todd Sexauer
September 8, 2008
Page 2

The intersections at:

- Highway 129 and Lakeview Road
- Highway 129 and Highway 152/Main Street
- Highway 152/Main Street and East Lake/West Lake Avenue
- Highway 152/Main Street and Freedom Boulevard
- Green Valley Road and Freedom Boulevard
- Airport Boulevard and Freedom Boulevard

The ramp nodes at:

- Highway 1 and Highway 129
- Highway 1 and Airport Boulevard
- Highway 1 and Buena Vista Drive

The segments at:

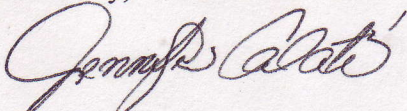
- Airport Boulevard, between Highway 1 and Green Valley Road
- Highway 1 mainline, from the Highway 129 interchange to Buena Vista Drive
- Highway 152 mainline.

- 4 Because the Department is responsible for the safety, operations, and maintenance of the State transportation system, our Level of Service (LOS) standards should be used to determine the significance of the project's impact. We endeavor to maintain a target LOS at the transition between LOS C and LOS D on all State transportation facilities. In cases where a State facility is already operating at an unacceptable LOS, *any* additional trips added should be considered a significant cumulative traffic impact, and should be mitigated accordingly.
- 5 The methodologies used to calculate the LOS should be consistent with the methods in the current version of the Highway Capacity Manual. All LOS calculations should also be included in the Draft EIR as an appendix made available for review.

We look forward to receiving the Draft EIR, and providing comments from a more thorough analysis. District 5 staff has been, and will continue to be, committed to working closely with you to achieve a shared vision of how the transportation system should and can accommodate interregional and local travel.

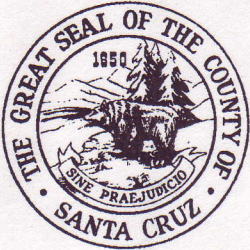
If you have any questions, or need further clarification on items discussed above, please do not hesitate to call me at (805) 549-3099 or by e-mail jennifer.calate@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

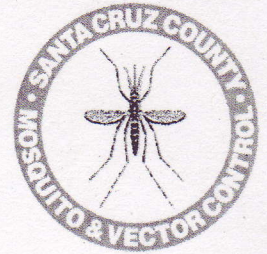


Jennifer Calaté
Associate Transportation Planner
District 5 - Development Review Coordinator

- c. State Clearinghouse/Office of Planning and Research
Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission



County of Santa Cruz



OFFICE OF THE AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER MOSQUITO AND VECTOR CONTROL CSA 53

640 Capitola Road, Santa Cruz, California 95062
(831) 454-2590 Fax (831) 464-9161 Internet www.agdept.com

KEN CORBISHLEY
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER

PAUL L. BINDING
MANAGER

September 10, 2008

Todd Sexauer, Environmental Planner
County of Santa Cruz - Planning Department
701 Ocean Street, 4th Floor
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Re: Notice of Preparation of an EIR for Atkinson Lane Specific Plan

Dear Mr. Sexauer:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed project. The proposed development is within the service area of the Santa Cruz County Mosquito and Vector Control CSA 53 (MVC). The MVC has provided mosquito control services to the City of Watsonville and the Pajaro Valley since 1994. As you may know, MVC reviews countywide development plans that involve riparian areas or that may contribute to standing water or mosquito breeding. This review is a pro-active element of our Integrated Mosquito Management practices. MVC powers including abatement are outlined and authorized within the California Health and Safety Code (Section 2000 *et seq.*).

Whatever form this housing development takes, it will expose residents to at least five important species of mosquitoes that disperse from the existing ponds and temporary rainwater pools. When nuisance or diseases vectoring species exceed threshold levels, relief efforts will need to be employed, and residents will be in the vicinity of larvicidal treatments including the occasional low-level use of a helicopter to treat ponded areas with granular mosquitocide.

Potential Human Health Impact

Project residents should be informed that the existing and planned wetlands for this development have the potential to produce outbreaks of mosquitoes at certain times of year, but that services to reduce mosquitoes are available. The MVC, through aerial, boat and ground-based treatments, can reduce significantly but not eliminate the nuisance. The proximity of the project to standing water increases the chance of exposure to mosquitoes.

The existing one acre pond has a recent history of mosquito breeding. Eutrophication and stagnancy encouraged by overgrowth of aquatic vegetation such as bulrushes, cattails and invasive exotic water hyacinth have reduced depth, circulation and water quality. It is hoped that restoration efforts will accompany development, but it should be initiated regardless of development to restore pond water quality and wildlife diversity. Adjacent neighborhoods would benefit from improved drainage to reduce rainwater ponding that produces floodwater mosquito species in the spring.

Stormwater structures that meet NPDES Best Management Practices to manage rainwater runoff should be designed to drain within a 96-hour time period, in order to avoid standing water that can breed mosquitoes. Mosquitoes can complete their aquatic stages and emerge as adults within a week. Any extended detention basin or retention pond should also be designed to allow ready access for mosquito control and maintenance vehicles (perimeter lane and ramp). Periodic maintenance should be required of the landowner to manage silting and over-growth of vegetation that may harbor mosquito breeding.

The increased runoff from surfaced area as a result of development, the detention basins, street gutters, catch basins and mitigation wetlands will possibly result in more water for longer periods in and around the project, and more mosquito breeding habitat.

The proximity of new homes will require that we lower the threshold at which treatments are required in order to reduce mosquito breeding to acceptable levels. Criteria used to determine the threshold are larval density, species significance, flight range, dispersal patterns and other environmental and meteorological factors. Quality of life could be impacted without mosquito reduction measures. With present or even increased levels of service, surviving mosquitoes could still be numerous enough to result in occasional complaints.

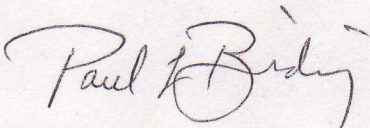
Due to the exposure to nuisance and disease associated with vectors that infestations of mosquitoes could cause residents of this project, the Hazards or Human Health element, if any, within the Environmental Impact documents should indicate **a significant human health impact exists that requires mitigation.**

Planners for the County and City of Watsonville and project developers can assist us to serve this area efficiently by:

- Ensuring that access easements are provided from the project to critical areas
- Providing for **long-term vegetation maintenance** to detention basins and other water management structures and access to same
- Designing basins and water management structures to allow for maintenance and rapid drainage

Please ensure that the MVC is included in future restoration and drainage planning. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Paul Binding
Manager, Mosquito and Vector Control

CC: Kieth Boyle, Principal Planner, City of Watsonville Community Development Department



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

1523 Pacific Ave., Santa Cruz, CA 95060-3911 • (831) 460-3200 FAX (831) 460-3215 EMAIL info@sccrtc.org

Todd Sexauer
Environmental Planner
County of Santa Cruz Planning Department
701 Ocean Street, 4th Floor
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

September 10, 2008

Re: Comments on Notice of Preparation (NOP) for an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Atkinson Lane Specific Plan

Dear Mr. Sexauer,

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) serves as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for Santa Cruz County. Please accept the RTC's comments on the NOP for the EIR on the Atkinson Lane Specific Plan.

The RTC supports the plan's objective of providing adequate access to the project site to serve the anticipated development without overwhelming the existing circulation system (p.3). The RTC supports several strategies for achieving this goal including linking land use decisions with transit, bikeway and pedestrian investments to provide a range of transportation options (*RTP* goals 3.3, 3.4). To minimize the vehicle miles traveled generated by the new development area, the RTC recommends that the County of Santa Cruz Planning Department and the City of Watsonville consider all transportation modes in the design of the new development area and work with the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District to address transit access to and from the site.

It is likely that the newly developed area will result in increased traffic on roadways in the vicinity, including the state highway system. RTC staff appreciates that the NOP specifies that the traffic analysis will include designated highway segments and intersections on Highways 152, 1, and 129. RTC recommends that the Highway 1/Airport Boulevard and Highway 1/Highway 152 intersections also be included in the traffic analysis. In some cases, new trips added to the highway facilities may increase delay during peak travel periods. Strategies to reduce vehicle miles traveled, including providing jobs near to new housing, may reduce the impact on these corridors.

RTC recommends that the master plan address bicycle and pedestrian safety and access on new arterials and roadways impacted by the new development and within the new development area (*RTP* goal 2.4.4). RTC requests that the master plan also consider how new bicycle and pedestrian facilities will connect with the existing bicycle and pedestrian network as well as safe routes to schools (*RTP* goal 3.7.2).

Finally, future investments will be required to maintain newly developed or enhanced transportation facilities. The RTC supports the implementation of a financing mechanism that will meet the funding needs of future investments and recommends that this be addressed as part of the planning process. (*RTP* goal 3.3.4)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the NOP for the Atkinson Lane Specific Plan. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Grace Blakeslee of my staff at (831) 460-3219.

Sincerely,



George Dondero
Executive Director

Cc: Commissioner Tony Campos
Commissioner Rivas
SCMTD

AMBAG

ASSOCIATION OF MONTEREY BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS

September 11, 2008

Mr. Todd Sexauer
Environmental Planner
Santa Cruz County Planning Department
701 Ocean Street, 4th Floor
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: MCH# 20080802 – Draft Environmental Impact Report for Atkinson Lane Specific Plan/Master Plan EIR

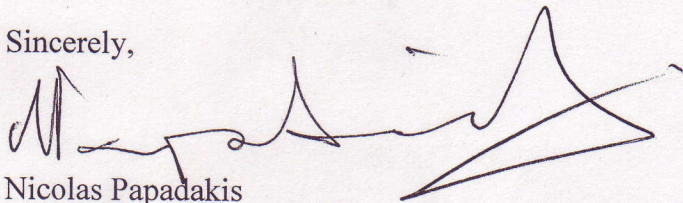
Dear Mr. Sexauer:

AMBAG's Regional Clearinghouse circulated a summary of notice of your environmental document to our member agencies and interested parties for review and comment.

The AMBAG Board of Directors considered the project on **September 10, 2008** and has no comments at this time.

Thank you for complying with the Clearinghouse process.

Sincerely,



Nicolas Papadakis
Executive Director

