

4.1.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

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- Regulatory Setting
- Municipal & Planning Boundaries
- Existing Land Uses & Vacant Lands
- Existing General Plan Designations & Buildout
- City Plans
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REGULATORY SETTING

California General Plan Requirements

Pursuant to California State (Government Code section 65040), each city and county in California must prepare a comprehensive, long-term general plan to guide its future. Seven elements are required by State law: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise and safety. By statute, the housing element must be updated every seven years. The City's updated General Plan is the subject of this EIR, but does not include the Housing Element, which will be updated at the intervals prescribed by State law. Communities may also adopt area and community plans, which are part of the general plan.

California Coastal Act

A portion of Santa Cruz is located within the coastal zone, which is subject to the requirements of the California Coastal Act (Public Resources Code Section 30000 et seq). The Coastal Act is intended to "protect, maintain, and, where feasible, enhance and restore the overall quality of the coastal zone environment and its natural and artificial resources." The Coastal Act requires preparation of a Local Coastal Program (LCP) for areas of cities and counties within the coastal zone, which must be certified by the California Coastal Commission (CCC). The City's certified LCP currently is part of the General Plan. All development in the coastal zone requires approval of a coastal development permit, which is administered by the City with its certified LCP. However, the CCC currently retains permit authority for portions of the Santa Cruz Harbor.

Local Agency Formation Commission Requirements

Pursuant to State law enacted in 1963 (Government Code Section 54773 et seq.), a Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) was established in each county to promote the orderly development of local government agencies, efficient provision of services, guide development away from prime agricultural land and discourage urban sprawl. In meeting its responsibility, LAFCO is required to review and approve or disapprove, with or without amendments, wholly, partially, or conditionally, governmental boundary change proposals with regards to Spheres of Influence, annexation, detachment, reorganization and/or extending a city's water or sewer service area (Santa Cruz LAFCO website; <http://www.santacruzlafco.org>). In addition to the regulatory responsibilities of LAFCO referred to above, the Commission is empowered to initiate and to make studies of existing governmental agencies. Such studies shall include but not be limited to inventorying such agencies and determining their maximum service areas and service capabilities.

Pursuant to State law, LAFCO must adopt a Sphere of Influence (SOI) for each governmental agency (including special districts. A sphere of influence means a plan for the probable future physical boundaries and service area of a local governmental agency that takes into account existing and future land uses, service needs and service capacities.

MUNICIPAL AND PLANNING BOUNDARIES

Municipal Boundaries

The City of Santa Cruz encompasses approximately 12.7 square miles, and its municipal boundaries are shown on Figure 1-1.¹ Santa Cruz has maintained clearly-defined urban boundaries as it has grown, formed by the UCSC campus and city-owned greenbelt lands (Moore Creek Preserve, Pogonip, and Delaveaga Park) as shown on Figure 1-2. The City's coastal zone, also shown on Figure 1-1, includes approximately 2,330 acres. The Santa Cruz Harbor is located within City limits but is operated under the authority of the Santa Cruz Port District, an independent special district. Development projects within Harbor lands and water are subject to coastal development permits from the City of Santa Cruz or the California Coastal Commission.

Sphere of Influence

The City's adopted Sphere of Influence (SOI) includes lands within City limits and some lands adjacent to the City, as shown on Figure 4.1-1, for a total of approximately 0.4 square miles within the SOI. In addition to land within the City limits, the SOI encompasses land in the Carbonera neighborhood near Highway 17, and along with a strip of land east of the City limits, between the Santa Cruz Harbor and 7th Avenue.

¹ All EIR figures are included in Chapter 7.0 at the end of the EIR (before appendices) for ease of reference as some figures are referenced in several sections.

In October 2008, the City of Santa Cruz filed an application to the Santa Cruz LAFCO to amend the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI), concurrent with the University's application to LAFCO for the provision of extraterritorial water and sewer services for a 374-acre portion of the UCSC campus identified as the North Campus (shown on Figure 4.1-1) for the development of 3,175,000 gross square feet of additional building space as described in the University's adopted 2005 Long-Range Development Plan (LRDP). Further description of the UCSC LRDP is provided below in the "State-Adopted Plans" subsection. At this time, no annexation of land is proposed, nor has the University proposed site-specific development or extension of infrastructure into the north campus area. The Santa Cruz City Council certified an EIR for the SOI amendment in August 2010, which was subsequently legally challenged. On July 20, 2011, the Superior Court of Santa Cruz County made a tentative ruling in which it upheld the adequacy of the EIR and the City's compliance with CEQA in all respects concerning the SOI amendment. The final ruling upholding the SOI EIR as adequate under CEQA was issued on August 31, 2011. The court is expected to issue its final decision in adopting its tentative ruling in full in early September. The applications for the Sphere of Influence Amendment and Provision of Extraterritorial Water and Sewer Services to UCSC are pending before LAFCO.

General Plan "Planning Area"

The State encourages cities to look beyond their borders when updating a General Plan. The City's *General Plan 2030* establishes and evaluates a "Planning Area," which includes land outside of the City limits, as shown on Figure 2-1. The Planning Area encompasses approximately 26 square miles and includes land within the City limits and adopted Sphere of Influence, portions of Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park and Wilder Ranch State Park, the northern portion of UCSC, which currently is not within City limits, and an area west of Graham Hill Road. The unincorporated land that is outside of the City limits, but within the Planning Area, remains under the jurisdiction of Santa Cruz County.

EXISTING LAND USES & VACANT LANDS

Existing Land Uses

Background studies prepared for the General Plan Update include estimates of existing land uses within the City. Existing land uses are summarized on Table 4.1-1 and depicted on Figure 4.1-2. Nearly 40% of existing land uses within the City are residential, followed by parks/open space and public/institutional each comprising approximately 25% of existing lands within the City. Approximately 8% of lands within the City currently consist of commercial and industrial uses, with remaining acreage being roads and vacant properties.

Vacant and Underutilized Lands

There are approximately 169 acres of vacant land within Santa Cruz's City limits (Design, Community & Environment, December 2006) as shown on Figure 4.1-3. In addition to vacant sites, there may be development opportunities on some of the City's underutilized sites, wherein the site is not completely developed and/or older development may be demolished and new development with a higher land use intensity may be constructed. Underutilized sites are

estimated to comprise a total of 185 acres within the City limits (Design, Community & Environment, December 2006) as shown on Figure 4.1-3. This map shows that all of Santa Cruz's commercial and industrial areas have a fairly large number of underutilized sites, including surface parking lots in downtown Santa Cruz and near the Santa Cruz Boardwalk. In addition, there are several large underutilized sites in the Harvey West area.

TABLE 4.1-1
Existing Land Uses in Santa Cruz City Limits

Designation	Acres	Percentage of Total Acres
	Subtotal	Subtotal
RESIDENTIAL		
▪ <i>Single-Family Residential</i>	2,068	30.3%
▪ <i>Two to Four Unit Residential</i>	198	2.9%
▪ <i>Multi-Family Residential</i>	311	4.6%
▪ <i>Mobile Home Park</i>	40	0.6%
Subtotal	2,617	38.3%
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL		
▪ <i>Commercial/Mixed Use</i>	252	3.7%
▪ <i>Office</i>	61	0.9%
▪ <i>Industrial</i>	197	2.9%
Subtotal	510	7.5%
PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL	1,756	25.7%
PARKS & OPEN SPACE		
▪ <i>Parks</i>	654	9.6%
▪ <i>Open Space</i>	1,068	15.6%
Subtotal	1,722	25.2%
PARKING & PRIVATE ROADS	59	0.9%
VACANT	169	2.5%
TOTAL	6,833	100%

SOURCE: Design, Community & Environment, December 2006

Approved and Pending Development Projects

There are numerous development projects that have recently been approved or have submitted use permit applications that are pending decisions. These include projects on some of the remaining vacant and underutilized sites. Taken together, these projects include approximately 35 single-family residential units, 425 multi-family residential units, 470 visitor-serving rooms, and approximately 460,000 square feet of commercial/industrial space.

EXISTING GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATIONS & BUILDOUT

Existing General Plan Designations

The existing General Plan Land Use Map is shown on Figure 4.1-4. The current land use designations for the City of Santa Cruz were created as part of the 1990 General Plan Update and include seventeen designations as summarized and described in Table 4.1-2.

Table 4.1-3 identifies the acreage of the existing General Plan land use designations within City limits. As can be seen, almost half of the lands within the City (about 43%) are currently designated for residential use, the majority of which are designated low density. Parks and open space designations (natural areas and agricultural lands) comprise the second largest portion of existing City General Plan designations (nearly 33%), the majority of which are natural areas. Of the remaining designations, approximately 13% are devoted to commercial, office, and industrial uses, and approximately 11% account for community facilities and UCSC.

Potential Buildout Under Existing General Plan

The 1990-2005 General Plan/Local Coastal Program estimated that approximately 2,030 residential units could be developed on vacant lands and an additional 460 units could be developed on underutilized residentially zoned sites. Thus, potential mixed use development on non-residentially designated sites was not considered in these previous estimates, nor were non-residential buildout estimates provided.

Buildout under the existing 1990-2005 General Plan was reviewed and updated for the City Planning Department by Design, Community & Environment (DC&E) as part of the General Plan Update process. The purpose was to account for mixed use, intensified redevelopment and non-residential development not estimated in the existing General Plan and to provide a buildout estimate using the same methodology that was used to project the draft *General Plan 2030* buildout. The assumptions and methodology are further described in Appendix B.

The buildout estimate included development potential on:

- a) Existing vacant lands;
- b) Redevelopment of uses on existing underutilized parcels to reflect intensification and/or mixed uses; and
- c) Limited residential infill and intensification of land use was assumed on existing underutilized parcels within the Seabright residential neighborhood given existing land use designations in this area.

TABLE 4.1-2
1990-2005 General Plan Land Use Designations

- ❑ VERY LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL. This is a large-lot designation allowing up to one dwelling unit per acre.
- ❑ LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL. 1.1 to 10 dwelling units per acre.
- ❑ LOW MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL. 10.1 to 20 dwelling units per acre.
- ❑ MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL. 20.1 to 30 dwelling units per acre.
- ❑ HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL. 30.1 to 55 dwelling units per acre.
- ❑ NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL. This designation allows for up to 30 dwelling units per acre and up to 30 employees per acre and serves residential neighborhoods with small scale commercial uses such as laundromats, grocery and convenience stores, and mixed-use projects.
- ❑ COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL. This designation allows for up to 30 dwelling units per acre and up to 60 employees per acre and is intended to primarily serve the general needs of the community and includes retail, service and office establishments.
- ❑ REGIONAL/VISITOR COMMERCIAL. This designation allows for up to 30 dwelling units per acre and up to 80 employees per acre. This designation covers three areas: downtown central business district, the beach area and the south of laurel area. Each area specifies a different intensity, type and mix of regional/visitor-serving commercial development.
- ❑ OFFICE. This designation allows up to 30 dwelling units per acre and up to 60 employees per acre and acts as a transition area between commercial areas and residential zones.
- ❑ GENERAL INDUSTRIAL. This designation applies to non-coastal industrial uses. it allows up to 30 dwelling units and 60 employees per acre.
- ❑ COASTAL DEPENDENT. This designation applies to land that is to be utilized for coastal-dependent industries and allows no dwelling units and up to 20 employees per acre.
- ❑ COMMUNITY FACILITIES. This designation applies to land with existing or proposed community facilities. it allows up to 80 employees per acre.
- ❑ UCSC. UCSC is a state institution with its own development plan; therefore, a distinctive land use designation is assigned to that portion of the campus within the city boundaries, excluding long marine lab. (It should be noted that the northern, undeveloped portion of UCSC is currently not within city limits, but this portion is designated as "UCSC" on the city's current general plan land use map.)
- ❑ PARK LANDS. This designation includes neighborhood, community and regional park lands used for passive and/or active recreational uses by residents and visitors.
- ❑ COASTAL RECREATION. This designation includes lands along the coastline including beaches and outdoor and open water areas that are used for recreational activities such as swimming, boating, fishing, surfing, picnicking and parking.
- ❑ AGRICULTURAL/GRAZING. This designation allows one dwelling unit for every 20 acres and includes land used for production of food and fiber.
- ❑ NATURAL AREAS. This designation is for land that should remain in its natural and undeveloped state. The land can be used for educational and recreational uses.

TABLE 4.1-3
Existing General Plan Land Use Designation Acreages

Designation	Acres	Percentage of Total Acres
	Subtotal	Subtotal
RESIDENTIAL		
▪ Very-Low-Density Residential	174	2.1%
▪ Low-Density Residential	2,442	30.1%
▪ Low-Medium-Density Residential	618	7.6%
▪ Medium-Density Residential	234	3.9%
▪ High-Density Residential	8	0.1%
Subtotal	3,477	42.8%
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL		
▪ Neighborhood Commercial	14	0.2%
▪ Community Commercial	304	3.7%
▪ Regional/Visitor Commercial	198	2.4%
▪ Office	56	0.7%
▪ General Industrial	352	4.3%
▪ Coastal Dependent	132	1.6%
Subtotal	1,056	12.9%
COMMUNITY FACILITIES	382	4.7%
UCSC	526	6.5%
PARKS & OPEN SPACE		
▪ Parks	490	6.0%
▪ Agriculture/Grazing	335	4.1%
▪ Natural Areas	1,746	21.5%
Subtotal	2,571	32.6%
TOTAL	8,118	100%
SOURCE: Design, Community & Environment, December 2006		

The buildout estimates assumed that not all development will happen at the maximum possible intensity, and that not every parcel with development potential will be redeveloped by 2030. Consistent with past development patterns, the projections assume that on average, all new development will occur at 80% of the maximum permitted residential density or floor area ratio (FAR). Secondly, the following assumptions were made regarding the amount of development likely by the year 2030.

- Vacant Lands: 90% developed by 2030
- Reuse Potential Parcels: 75% developed by 2030
- Seabright LM/M Parcels: 10% developed by 2030

Based on these assumptions, it was estimated that buildout of the existing 1990-2005 General Plan would result in the following additional development as summarized on Table 4.1-4. The corresponding geographic areas are shown on Figure 2-3.

- ❑ 1,655 residential units
- ❑ 1,038,456 square feet of commercial development
- ❑ 942,101 square of office space;
- ❑ 877,447 square feet of industrial development.

TABLE 4.1-4
Estimated Existing General Plan 2005 Buildout

GENERAL PLAN AREA	DWELLING UNITS	COMMERCIAL SQUARE FOOTAGE	OFFICE SQUARE FOOTING	INDUSTRIAL SQUARE FOOTAGE
Beach Area	54	21,872	0	0
Carbonera Sphere	0	0	0	0
Downtown	299	38,913	4,495	0
Eastside Sphere	82	52,925	106,522	0
Golf Club	117	0	0	00
Harvey West	27	158,303	106,490	262,645
Lower Eastside	141	40,066	60,367	24,706
Lower Westside	105	0	0	0
Mission Street	61	75,736	151,471	0
Ocean Street	-1	327,489	69,483	0
River St/Front Street	328	64,697	82,130	0
Soquel Avenue	68	88,684	177,369	0
Upper Eastside	143	8,895	17,791	0
Upper Westside	171	658	1,316	0
Water Street	27	43,390	86,780	0
Westside Industrial	34	116,828	77,886	194,714
Subtotal	1,655	1,038,456	942,101	482,065
Other Pending Development	161	310 hotel rooms	0	395,382
TOTAL	1,816	1,038,456 & 310 hotel rooms	942,101	877,447
SOURCE: Design, Community & Environment, October 29, 2009 and City of Santa Cruz Planning and Community Development Department				

As indicated in the PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Chapter 3.0) section of this EIR, these buildout estimates do not account for some major pending or approved projects (Design, Community & Environment, October 2009), most notably the Delaware Mixed Use Project, the Tannery Arts

Center, the La Bahia project and several other projects shown on Table 3-4 of the PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Chapter 3.0) section of this EIR. These projects have been added to the buildout projections to ensure that all potential development that could occur under the existing General Plan are considered, as these projects have already been approved.

CITY PLANS

The City has adopted 14 area and/or resource management plans as summarized on Table 3-5 in Chapter 3. The following section summarizes plans related to land use matters. Other relevant plans are discussed in the following sections of this EIR: AESTHETICS (Chapter 4.3); TRANSPORTATION & TRAFFIC (Chapter 4.4); PUBLIC SERVICES – Parks and Recreation (Chapter 4.6); and BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES (Chapter 4.8).

Housing Element

The Housing Element, which is a required General Plan element pursuant to state law, is prepared as a separate volume to the City's General Plan as it requires updates every seven years in accordance with State law. The City's existing Housing Element, which covers the years 2007 to 2014, was adopted in 2010 with final adoption and approval by the State Housing and Community Development Department in 2011. Given the shorter timeframe requirements for housing elements, the City's Housing Element is not part of the *General Plan 2030* document and not included in this environmental review for the draft *General Plan 2030*.

Local Coastal Program

The Local Coastal Program (LCP) consists of a land use plan, implementing ordinances and maps applicable to the coastal zone portions of the City to manage and protect coastal resources in accordance with requirements of the California Coastal Act. The City prepared and adopted its LCP as a part of the *1990-2005 General Plan and Local Coastal Program document*. The City is currently updating the LCP as a separate document, while coordinating closely with the *General Plan 2030* process.

Land Use & Area Plans

Some City plans have been adopted as part of the General Plan, and some have been prepared as "Area Plans". Area plans provide a more focused review of a specific area than provided in the General Plan. Summaries of these plans are provided below

BEACH AND SOUTH OF LAUREL COMPREHENSIVE AREA PLAN

The Beach and South of Laurel Comprehensive Area Plan (B/SOL Area Plan) was adopted by the City Council in October 1998. The California Coastal Commission certified policy revisions as an amendment to the City's General Plan/Local Coastal Plan in October 2002, but the B/SOL Plan is not part of the LCP. The purpose of the B/SOL Area Plan is to guide future development and redevelopment of visitor serving and residential neighborhood uses in terms of land use, circulation, and design (Santa Cruz 1998a). The Plan includes the commercial

Beach Boardwalk area, the residential Beach Hill and Beach Flats areas, and the area south of Laurel Street, generally between the San Lorenzo River on the east and neighborhoods off of Myrtle and Chestnut Streets on the east. The Plan's purpose is to:

- ❑ Propose a sensitive and realistic program for neighborhood preservation and revitalization in the beach flats, beach hill and south of laurel areas;
- ❑ Establish a comprehensive program for managing traffic and transportation, tourism and maritime assets, and linkage with the downtown; and
- ❑ Enhance the historic resort attributes of the beach area for residents and visitors.

The B/SOL Plan provides policy and land use recommendations for four areas: Beach Flats, Beach Hill, Beach Commercial area (i.e., Boardwalk), and South of Laurel area. The Plan also addresses housing strategies, circulation and parking, urban design, economic development and public and community facilities.

The Plan seeks to maintain and improve housing in the Beach Flats area to create a “diverse, quality residential neighborhood serving all income groups at urban densities and pedestrian scale.” The Plan also recommends a neighborhood conservation overlay for residential areas in Beach Flats. A historic preservation district and conservation neighborhood are recommended for Beach Hill with policies designed to improve the Beach Hill quality of life and to protect and enhance its historical resources. Recommendations for the Beach Commercial Area are aimed at stimulating appropriate economic development, including significant upgrading and redevelopment of lodging and attracting a conference center; expanding the lodging operational season; developing linkages with downtown; and expanding educational opportunities of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. The South of Laurel Area recommendations seek to create a diverse, urban density residential neighborhood that is pedestrian friendly.

The B/SOL Plan calls for major improvements and additions of commercial space, hotel facilities, residential uses, open space and infrastructure improvements necessary to accommodate existing and new development. The major components of development and/or land use intensification envisioned in the Plan are summarized below:

- ❑ 250-275 room conference hotel facility at the La Bahia site.²
- ❑ Approximately 125,000 square feet of new specialty retail/entertainment development.
- ❑ 157,000 square of commercial uses along major transportation corridors primarily along Pacific Avenue.
- ❑ 400+ new infill residential units at a variety of densities.
- ❑ Rehabilitation and redevelopment of existing residential, commercial and hotel properties (139 new hotel rooms in addition to the conference hotel).

² The B/SOL Plan supports a 250-275 room hotel with conference center on the La Bahia site and an adjoining property. However the City approved a 125-room hotel for the La Bahia site in 2009, which does not include a conference facility or development on the adjoining property, and thus, the approved project is smaller than what was supported in the B/SOL Plan.

- ❑ Multi-modal transit hub (Depot Park);
- ❑ 2-acre active recreation park in the South of Laurel area.
- ❑ Marine Sanctuary visitor center.

DOWNTOWN RECOVERY PLAN

The *Downtown Recovery Plan* was written to guide the rebuilding of Downtown Santa Cruz, which was devastated by the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. The plan was adopted by the City Council in 1991 as a specific plan with a General Plan amendment. The Plan covers the mixed-use area between the eastern banks of the San Lorenzo River, Center Street to the west, Laurel Street to the south and the blocks just north of Water Street. The Plan recognizes the Downtown as a place of commerce, cultural and recreation, as well as a place to live and work. The Plan seeks to strengthen the downtown area as a vital retail center and addresses land use, development standards and guidelines, circulation and parking, and open space.

The Plan proposes intensive mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented development along Pacific Avenue with ground-floor commercial uses that activate the street frontage, such as restaurants and galleries. A mix of housing types and offices is to be provided on upper levels, with parking located off-site. Along Front Street and the riverfront, the Plan calls for somewhat less intensive mixed-use development. The Plan envisions Cedar Street as a transition into a lower-intensity area, with a horizontal mix of uses. North Pacific Avenue is also seen as a lower-intensity area, though it would include ground-floor commercial uses and upper-level residential uses (Design, Community and Environment, December 2006).

SANTA CRUZ HARBOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The purpose of the Santa Cruz Harbor Development Plan is to increase the Harbor's capacity to serve recreational and commercial maritime uses. Land use policies specify that facilities that support boating, fishing, coastal recreation and visitor-serving uses will be favored over general office or retail uses. In addition, the Plan seeks to promote the intensification of these uses.

SAN LORENZO URBAN RIVER PLAN

The *San Lorenzo Urban River Plan* is the outcome of a planning process initiated by City Council in 1999 to update plans for the San Lorenzo River, Jessie Street Marsh, and Branciforte Creek. The plan serves as a guide for restoring and managing natural resources, riverfront development, and public access improvements for the lower San Lorenzo River, Jessie Street Marsh, and Branciforte Creek. The San Lorenzo River Urban River Plan promotes conservation of the river as a wildlife area, with complementary recreational uses. The *Urban River Plan* provides recommendations for specific public improvements and establishes design guidelines for redevelopment opportunity areas surrounding the river. New development proposed along the lower San Lorenzo River is subject to the guidelines of that *Plan*. Adjacent properties would be reviewed for their conformance to the *San Lorenzo Urban River Plan*.

The Plan also includes conceptual ideas to promote river-oriented development, site-specific recommendations for public areas along the river, and restoration recommendations. The Plan identifies Front Street and River Street as the best places to improve Santa Cruz's connection to

the river. Urban interface connections are envisioned as “fingers of green” that expand and connect the Riverway corridor into the adjoining community and neighborhoods. Recommended improvements include plazas, entry features, trail connections, interpretive features, seating, directional and informational signage, public art, tree planting, pavement treatment, and other design improvements. The Plan also identifies opportunities for redevelopment of specific sites. For example, it recommends redeveloping the Riverwalk Plaza site at Front Street and Soquel Avenue with smaller parking areas and buildings that have a stronger orientation to the river.

SEABRIGHT AREA PLAN

The Seabright Area Plan is intended to improve and preserve this historic, small-scale residential neighborhood in Santa Cruz’s Eastside. The Seabright Area Plan does not address the area between Soquel Avenue and Clinton Street. The Plan proposes land use changes that are reflected in the City’s current General Plan. The majority of Seabright is designated for single-family residential uses. Multi-family residential uses are concentrated near Seabright State Beach, a major visitor attraction, and along Seabright Avenue and Murray Street, two of the area’s major streets. The Plan recommends retaining the historic commercial node at the intersection of Seabright Avenue and Murray Street (Design, Community and Environment, December 2006).

Other Adopted Land Use Plans

EASTSIDE BUSINESS AREA IMPROVMENT PLAN

The purpose of the Eastside Business Improvement Plan, which addresses the Soquel Avenue and Water Street commercial corridors, is to bring beneficial change to the area through economic development and the creation of a distinctive physical environment. Most of the Plan’s recommendations focus on improvements for circulation, streetscapes and building façades. The Plan’s objectives include establishing a coordinated strategy for circulation, parking and streetscape improvements; developing a design program for buildings to improve aesthetics while retaining individual character in the area; developing a strategy to improve linkages between the eastern and western portions of the area; and developing a retail and promotional strategy. The Plan also refers to a 1996 market analysis that identifies the types of businesses with the best sales performance in this area that includes: auto dealers and suppliers, building materials, eating and drinking establishments, food stores, and home furnishings and appliances (Design, Community and Environment, December 2006).

WESTERN DRIVE MASTER PLAN

The Western Drive Master Plan, prepared in 1979, includes lands along Western Drive, generally between Arroyo Seco Creek on the east and Moore Creek on the west from Highway 1 to High Street. The Plan seeks to improve the Western Drive right-of-way; retain the rural character of the area, protect Moore Creek and Arroyo Seco Canyons; and provide public access to them. The following goals and objectives are identified in the Plan; however, the plan was accepted in concept by the City Council on September 11, 1979. It is, however, included in the City’s existing *General Plan/Local Coastal Plan 1990-2005*.

1. Preserve the rural character of the area where it now exists.
2. Establish criteria to continue the rural character as the area develops.
3. Preserve the existing trees.
4. Protect the quality of the adjacent canyons
5. Provide access to the canyon areas.
6. Maintain safety for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists with minimum impact to development and landscaping.
7. Rehabilitate disturbed areas.

The Plan establishes road, access, land use, design, landscaping and drainage recommendations for both publicly- and privately-owned lands to achieve these objectives.

Draft Plans

OCEAN STREET AREA PLAN

In May 2007, the City Council authorized staff to initiate Early Action Programs for the *General Plan 2030*, including the development of an Ocean Street Area Plan. A draft plan has been prepared that provides a background summary of existing conditions and details an overall vision and land use map for Ocean Street. The draft plan also includes goals, policies and actions,, as well as urban design guidelines. The proposed land use designations are the same as those portrayed on the Land Use Map in the draft *General Plan 2030*.

RIVER/FRONT & LOWER PACIFIC DESIGN GUIDELINES AND DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

A Design Guidelines & Development Incentives Study is being prepared for the River/Front & Lower Pacific area adjacent to the downtown area. Although envisioned as an important complement to the Downtown, the area continues to lag economically behind Santa Cruz's Downtown core on upper Pacific Avenue. It generally has higher vacancies, lower commercial rents, underutilized parcels, inconsistent development character and a lower quality pedestrian environment. The intent of the Study is to identify design guidelines and incentives that the City might implement to help remedy these issues by spurring development activity along the River Street, Front Street, and Lower Pacific Avenue corridor (WRT-Solomon E.T.C. February 2009).

A series of recommendations and alternative strategies for redevelopment have been developed and will be considered by the City Planning Commission and City Council, although the study is not a plan that will be adopted by the Council. General guidelines for redevelopment of the area emphasize promotion of mixed-use, river-oriented development with housing and visitor uses in some areas and preservation of commercial uses in other areas. The study also considers strategies and incentives to enhance cross-river connections, strengthen the riverway as a regional open space and recreational facility, enhance pedestrian and public access, support redevelopment and infill, as well as "catalyst" projects on key sites that would serve as an example of the type of development the City is seeking for the area. Circulation, shuttle, parking and streetscape improvements are addressed.

The study reviews two potential redevelopment sites. One site included a series of contiguous riverfront parcels just south of Soquel Avenue (Site #1), and the other was a large single parcel at the junction of Pacific Avenue and Front Street (Site #2). Mixed-use development concepts were developed for each site consistent with the vision for the area, including a strong orientation to the River at Site #1 and a strong definition of the southern gateway to Downtown at Site #2. Site 1 was found suitable for mixed-used housing (approximately 100 units) and commercial (approximately 40,000 square feet). Approximately 100 residential units also were identified for Site 2 with approximately 10,000 square feet of commercial uses (WRT-Solomon E.T.C. February 2009).

STATE-ADOPTED PLANS

The California Department of Parks and Recreation and the University of California have developed plans they administer as shown on Table 3-5 in Chapter 3. The three State Park plans are discussed in the Chapters 4.6 – PUBLIC SERVICES (Parks and Recreation) and 4.8 – BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES – of this EIR. The University plans and planned campus development and growth are summarized and analyzed as part of the “Cumulative Impacts” subsection of the CEQA CONSIDERATIONS (Chapter 5.1) section of this EIR. As state agencies, neither the California Department of Parks and Recreation nor the University of California are required to obtain local use permits from the City or County.

4.1.2 RELEVANT PROJECT ELEMENTS

SUMMARY OF LAND USE GOALS & POLICIES

The proposed *General Plan 2030* includes goals, policies and actions that address land use and future development. The **LAND USE** chapter is the “land use element” required by California Government Code Section 65302(a), and Public Resources Code Section 2762(a). The **LAND USE** chapter addresses: a) the distribution, location, and extent of the uses of land for housing, business, industry, open space, natural resources, recreation and enjoyment of scenic beauty, education, public buildings and grounds, and other categories of public and private uses of land; and b) standards of population density and building intensity for the land use designations.

The **LAND USE** chapter sets forth the following four goals with 24 associated policies and 61 accompanying actions that address land use.

- GOAL LU1** *Sustainable land use.*
- GOAL LU2** *A compact community with boundaries defined by the city’s greenbelt and Monterey Bay.*
- GOAL LU3** *Complementary balance of diverse land uses.*

GOAL LU4 *Land use patterns that facilitate alternative transportation and/or minimize transportation demand.*

The Land Use policies and actions address land use intensities, provision of services, and land use patterns, including preservation of open space. Several policies address job creation and commercial uses, as well as residential uses. Goal LU4 and its supporting policies and actions also seek land use patterns that facilitate use of alternative transportation and/or minimize transportation demand. (See also the TRANSPORTATION & TRAFFIC [Chapter 4.4] section of this EIR.) In addition, **GOAL CD5** in the Community Design section of the draft general plan strives toward “Walkable neighborhoods and districts of compatible uses and buildings.”

In addition, the draft policies and actions in the *General Plan 2030* also support updating or amending some land use or area plans and preparation of a new Ocean Street Area Plan. The Plan also calls for updating the City’s Area Plans as necessary to reflect new development, improvements and potential opportunities (CD2.1.1). The proposed plan updates include:

- ❑ Prepare Ocean Street Plan: CD.1.5, CD3.1.3, CD4.4.1
- ❑ Update Seabright Area Plan: CD2.1.6, LU3.9.1
- ❑ Update Downtown Recovery Plan: CD2.1.7
- ❑ Update San Lorenzo River Urban Plan: CD3.1.2

LAND USE MAP

The proposed *General Plan 2030* also includes a Land Use Map as required by State law that identifies land use designations throughout the City as shown on Figure 2-2. These designations include residential, commercial, mixed use, industrial, public and institutional, and parks and open space designations as summarized on Table 3-2 in the PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Chapter 3.0) section of this EIR (see page 3-11). The *General Plan 2030* includes allowable development densities for residential land use that are the same as residential densities under existing land use designations.

For commercial and industrial land use designations, the proposed general plan eliminates dwelling units and employees per acre limits that are specified in the existing 1990-2005 General Plan, as the underlying zone districts generally permit residential uses under specified conditions. Instead, the *General Plan 2030* proposes average Floor Area Ratios (FAR) for non-residential uses. FAR is a measure of the total building floor area in proportion to the size of the building’s lot. Specifically, FAR is the gross floor area permitted on a site divided by the total net area of the site, expressed in decimals. Residential density is, however, specified for the new mixed use land use designations.

The *General Plan 2030* Land Use Map and land use designations are largely unchanged from the 1990-2005 General Plan and Local Coastal Program, except for three new mixed use designations and changes in land use designations for three specified properties/areas as described below.

- ❑ **NEW MIXED USE DESIGNATIONS & APPLICATION:** Three new mixed use land designations have been developed and applied to the following areas.

- Mixed use high density (MXHD) designation is applied to segments of Soquel Avenue and Water Street that are designated Community Commercial in the existing General Plan. The MXHD designation allows a maximum FAR of 1.75, including a maximum of 30 dwelling units per acre. However, a project that meets a number of specific criteria, as determined by the Planning Commission, may have an FAR of up to 2.75, including up to 55 dwelling units per acre. Details would be included in the Zoning Ordinance.
- Mixed use medium density (MXMD) designation is applied to segments of Mission Street and Ocean Street that are designated Community Commercial in the existing General Plan. This new district would allow a FAR of 0.75 to 1.75 and a residential density of 10 to 30 dwelling units per acre.
- Mixed use visitor commercial (MXVC) designation is applied to segments of Ocean Street that is designated Community Commercial in the existing General Plan. The *General Plan 2030* also indicates that the designation may be applied to sites within 1,000 feet of Ocean Street's centerline and which front on Water Street, Soquel Avenue, May Avenue, or Broadway. The designation is intended to encourage high-quality visitor-serving commercial development along Ocean Street, particularly hotels and motels. However, it also accommodates other multi-story commercial development, such as office buildings. The MXVC designation allows a maximum FAR of 2.75. It does not allow any dwelling units; however, a project that meets specific criteria, as determined by the Planning Commission, may include up to 55 dwelling units per acre within this FAR. Details will be included in the Zoning Ordinance.

□ **LAND USE MAP CHANGES FOR SPECIFIC AREAS:**

- Golf Club Drive Property: Change the existing General Plan land use designation from Low Density Residential (1.1-10 DU/acre) to Very Low Density Residential (.1-1 DU/acre). However, a residential density of 10.1-20 dwelling units per acre could be applied to the 20-acre area with preparation and adoption of an area plan. This could result in more residential units (200+) than allowed in the existing General Plan (up to 100 units).
- Swenson Property: The existing General Plan land use designation is Low Density Residential (1.1-10 DU/acre). The draft *General Plan 2030* would allow Low Medium Density Residential (10.1-20 DU/acre)/Neighborhood Commercial/Office designations with preparation of a Specific Plan.
- Landfill and Resource Recovery Center: A 5.5-acre property adjacent to facility's entrance was recently acquired by the City and is proposed to be designated as "Community Facilities." It is expected that future uses would be ancillary to the landfill and Resource Recovery Center uses; specific uses have not yet been identified and will be determined in the future. However, the parcel is not planned for expansion of the landfill disposal operations (Arman, personal communication, April 2010).

According to the draft *General Plan 2030*, the mixed-use designations support the General Plan's goals and policies by encouraging new housing in places well served by transit. Each

mixed-use designation specifies the infill areas along Santa Cruz's transit corridors where the designation may be applied. Because these transit corridors also supply much of the City's commercial land, the mixed-use designations afford additional opportunities for the City's residents to live near their workplace. The draft plan also indicates that any site that is within one of these infill areas, and which also has a Community Commercial (CM) designation, may apply for a General Plan amendment to obtain a mixed-use designation. The City may choose to grant the mixed-use designation if it would support the General Plan's goals, policies, and actions.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Buildout Estimates

As described in the PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Chapter 3.0) section of this EIR, to aid the environmental analysis related to potential impacts of new development accommodated by the draft General Plan, the City considered whether to use the AMBAG population forecasts as a measure of potential future growth or to develop estimates related to land uses envisioned in the draft plan. It was determined that a "buildout" projection would be more closely linked with potential land uses supported in the plan, and therefore, a projection was developed for the City's Planning Department by Design, Community and Environment (DC&E). The projection considers the development potential under the proposed *General Plan 2030* that is estimated to occur in Santa Cruz by the year 2030. The projections are based on the draft Land Use Map, taking into account land use map changes, vacant lands, sites subject to reuse or redevelopment, and underutilized parcels, assuming that not all development will occur at maximum density. On the average it is assumed that all new development will occur at 80% of the permitted residential density or floor area ratio. The estimates also assume approximately 7.7 acres of land in the Harvey West area are designated Community Commercial in accordance with proposed Action LU3.2.8 that calls for directing large regional retail uses to the Harvey West area. The estimates are based on the following assumptions; a memo further explaining the assumptions and methodology is included in Appendix B.

- ❑ Vacant Lands. Existing vacant lands, including land use designation changes on Swenson and Golf Club Drive properties.
- ❑ Underutilized and Mixed Use Designations. Redevelopment and mixed use development given existing underutilized parcels and new mixed use land use designations and supporting policies as follows:
 - New Mixed Use Designations along Mission, Ocean, Soquel and Water.
 - Policies that encourage mixed-use development along the City's transit and commercial corridors (LU3.3.1 and LU4.1).
- ❑ Development in Sphere of Influence. Lands within the City's existing Sphere of Influence (SOI) were also considered. The draft General Plan policies do not support expansion of the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI) or annexation except for a small area in the Carbonera neighborhood and the north campus of UCSC. The City's existing adopted SOI includes the Carbonera area, as well as, an area along 7th Avenue. Since owners of lands within the existing SOI includes could apply directly for annexation to LAFCO, some limited development/growth has been

accounted for these areas that are within the City's existing SOL. (Potential development at UCSC is not subject to City land use regulations, and is discussed in the "Cumulative Impacts" subsection of the CEQA CONSIDERATIONS (Chapter 5.0) section of this EIR.

- ❑ Major Approved Projects. As discussed in the PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Chapter 3.0) section of this EIR, major pending or recently approved projects were not included in the buildout projections (Design, Community & Environment, October 2009), and were added to ensure that all potential development anticipated to occur during the General Plan timeframe is included in the estimate and considered in the EIR impact analyses. These developments include the Delaware Mixed Use Project, the Tannery Arts Center non-residential uses, the La Bahia Hotel Project, Marriott Hotel Project, and an addition to an existing hotel on Second Street.

Table 3-3 in the PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Chapter 3.0) section of this EIR, summarizes buildout estimates by planning area. As indicated, the projections estimate the following level of new development by the year 2030:

- ❑ 3,350 residential units
- ❑ 1,087,983 square feet of commercial development and 311 hotel rooms
- ❑ 1,273,913 square of office space;
- ❑ 776,926 square feet of industrial development.

The proposed *General Plan 2030* results in higher residential, commercial and office land uses, but slightly reduced industrial uses than would occur under the existing General Plan that is shown on Table 4.1-4. This is due to changes in land use designations for the Swenson and Golf Club Drive properties, addition of new mixed-used designations on segments of Mission Street, Ocean Street, Soquel Avenue and Water Street, and a future redesignation of industrial land in the Harvey West area to accommodate commercial uses (Design, Community & Environment, October 2009).

Policies Supporting Development / Intensification

Some of the draft *General Plan 2030* policies and actions support certain types of land uses and/or development, including new mixed-use use districts and/or intensified redevelopment. Specifically, as indicated above, new mixed-use districts are proposed along the City's four major transportation corridors: Mission Street, Ocean Street, Soquel Avenue, and Water Street. A new Mixed-Use River District (L3.6) also is proposed. Some policies support higher densities, infill and/or intensification of use. Policy LU1.1 seeks optimum utilization of infill parcels and consolidation of underdeveloped parcels (LU1.1.2). Another policy (LU3.8) allows maximum residential densities to be exceeded for the following uses: single-room occupancy (SRO) units; small ownership units (SOU); accessory dwelling units (ADU); density bonus units; and residential uses within areas designated High-Density Overlay District (HD-O). Intensified office development is encouraged in the downtown area (LU3).

Additionally, several General Plan actions support specific types of land uses or development, although site-specific locations are not identified. These facilities include arts and cultural facilities in a variety of zone districts (HA2.2.4), a performing arts center (HA2.2.5), high-end lodging (ED1.5, ED1.5.1), large regional retail uses in the Harvey West area (LU3.2.8), and

artist live-work units (HA4.4). Some policies address specific land uses in specific areas. For instance, neighborhood commercial uses are encouraged for the Prospect Heights neighborhood. Policy LU3.2 supports maintaining lands currently designated for industrial and office in land use designations that promote job creation and retention, and its accompanying actions seek employment-intensive uses (LU3.2.1) and support of uses in the Harvey West and Westside industrial areas. Public facilities supported by the draft plan include parks, schools, a transit center along the railroad, and a desalination facility (CC3.1.3) as part of the actions outlined to implement the City's adopted *Integrated Water Plan*, but specific sites are not identified for these uses.

Table 4.1-5 summarizes key proposed policies and actions related to land uses, density and intensity, and potential development. While most of these are in the "Land Use" chapter of the draft plan, some are in other chapters, including "Community Design" and "Economic Development."

Policies Related to City Expansion and Annexation

The draft General Plan policies do not support expansion of the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI) or annexation except in the Carbonera Area (LU2.2.1), the UCSC north campus area pursuant to the UCSC/City Comprehensive Settlement Agreement (LU2.2.2), and a 5.5-acre addition to the City's Landfill and Resource Recovery Center (LU2.2.3). As indicated above, owners of lands within the existing adopted SOI could apply directly for annexation to LAFCO.

4.1.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), State CEQA Guidelines (including Appendix G), City of Santa Cruz plans, policies and/or guidelines, and agency and professional standards, a project impact would be considered significant if the project would:

- 1a Physically divide an established community;
- 1b Introduce new land uses or alter the intensity of land uses, which could be considered incompatible with the surrounding land uses or with the general character of the area;
- 1c Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, a general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect; or
- 1d Conflict with any applicable Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan.

TABLE 4.1-5
Summary of Proposed General Plan 2030 Policies & Actions
Related to Land Use Intensity and/or Development

Increased Density and/or Land Use Intensity	- Expand HDO (amend Downtown Recovery Plan) to include Front Street and portions of lower Pacific: LU3.6.1 - Encourage transition to higher densities along transit and commercial corridors: LU4.1 - Amend ZO to increase number of stories allowed within existing height limits in Westside Industrial area: LU3.2.6 - Encourage higher intensity residential & maximum densities: LU3.7, LU3.7.1 - Allow specified residential uses to exceed maximum densities (i.e., SRO, SOU, ADU): LU3.8 - PD changes & incentives for underutilized lands: LU1.1.1, 1.1.2 - Pursue employment-intensive uses: LU3.2.1
Mixed Uses	- Increased development in new mixed use districts: LU3.3.2 (Revise ZO), LU4.2, LU4.2.2, LU4.2.3 - Mixed Use River District: L3.6 - Support mixed-use development in Downtown, along primary transportation corridors and in employment centers: LU4.1.1, LU4.1.3, LU3.3.1, CD3.3 (encourage assembly of small parcels), ED5.3 - Encourage mix of uses, including public facilities along Lower Pacific: LU3.5 - Revise ZO to allow live-work units: LU4.1.4
Expand Land Uses	- Amend ZO to allow development of arts and cultural facilities in wide variety of designations: HA2.2.4, HA3.1, HA3.1.2 (Art & Entertainment District) - Amend Downtown Recovery & BSOL Plans to allow additional public & commercial uses along Lower Pacific Avenue & Front Street: LU3.5.1 - Expand Beach Area services and employment: ED5.1.2
Support of Specific Land Uses	HOUSING - Encourage a variety of housing types, when appropriate: LU3.1.1 - Encourage development of artist studios and artist live-work units: HA4.4 VISITOR-SERVING - Develop new lodging & attract top-end, full-service hotel: ED1.5, ED1.5.2 - Promote eco-tourism (ED1.3, ED1.3.1) - Promote City as conference destination (ED1.4) and support new conference center (ED1.4.1) COMMERCIAL - INDUSTRIAL - Encourage light industrial and creative industry: LU3.2.3 PUBLIC FACILITIES - Encourage neighborhood facilities – parks, schools, daycare centers & neighborhood commercial services: LU4.3, LU4.3.1 - Develop Desalination Plant: CC3.1.3, LU3.10.2 (Initiate GP amendment with selection of desal plant site) - Transit Center along rail corridor: LU4.5, LU1.1.4 (Golf Club Drive area) - Encourage and allow arts and facilities in variety of zones: HA2.2.4 - Countywide Emergency Operations Center: HZ1.1.5
Site or Area-Specific Development Support	- Support Tannery Arts Center development: HA2.2.3 - Downtown performing arts center or expansion of Civic: HA2.2.5 - Revitalize lower Pacific area (south of Cathcart): ED5.5.7 - Harvey West - Direct large regional retail uses to Harvey West: LU3.2.8; - Westside - Allow incubator uses in employment intensive areas: LU3.2.4 - Eastside – Retain/strengthen medical offices: ED2.2.5 - Depot Part - Further develop as a multi-modal center: LU3.5.2 - Prospect Heights - Encourage neighborhood commercial: ED5.2.3 - Seabright - Support redevelopment of LI properties on Murray (ED5.3.2); consider infill/intensification in Area Plan update (CD2.1.6); promote beaches (ED1.8.13); provide shopping services (ED1.8.14) - Encourage the location of University-serving shopping and services on University lands: LU4.2.5

IMPACT ANALYSIS

Based on the significance criteria identified above, the following impact analyses address: the potential to divide an established community (1a), introduction of incompatible land uses (1b), and potential conflicts with plans, policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect (1c). There are no existing adopted Habitat Conservation Plans or Natural Community Conservation Plans within the City of Santa Cruz. The City is in the process of developing a HCP to cover incidental take of listed species associated with City] projects and operations, including water supply, flood control, and landfill improvements. A draft has not been completed, and this is addressed in the BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES (Chapter 4.8) section of this EIR. Thus, the proposed *General Plan 2030* goals, policies and planned land uses would not conflict with such plans (1d).

Impact 4.1-1: Divide an Established Community

Adoption and implementation of the *General Plan 2030* would not result in development or expansion of municipal boundaries that would result in a physical division of an established community. Therefore, there would be **no impact**.

The City of Santa Cruz is a compact urban community that is surrounded by natural barriers to outward expansion including the Santa Cruz Mountains, the Pacific Ocean and a designated greenbelt. The City is primarily built out and is surrounded on the west and north by mostly greenbelt, agricultural or open space lands and on the south by Monterey Bay. Thus, the City's western and northern borders are mostly defined by publicly- and privately-owned open space, agricultural, and park lands, which in conjunction with the Monterey Bay on the south, serve to limit the City's expansion. The Arana Gulch greenbelt property and the Santa Cruz Small Craft Harbor define the City's eastern boundary.

As an established community, new development accommodated by the proposed *General Plan 2030* would be considered infill development, both on limited remaining vacant lands, as well as, intensification and/or redevelopment on underutilized parcels. Thus, development would be within an established community and would not result in a physical division of an established community.

Furthermore, proposed goals, policies and actions in the draft *General Plan 2030* limit potential expansion of the City's boundaries. Land Use Goal LU2 envisions a "compact community with boundaries defined by the city's greenbelt and Monterey Bay." Supporting policies seek to maintain the City's urban development line and also include working with the County to preserve open space and agricultural land uses at the edge of the City. The proposed policies and actions also limit expansion of the City's Sphere of Influence (or annexation), except for three specified areas. These include: consolidation of a small area within the existing residential Carbonera neighborhood, most of which is included within city limits; the north campus area of UCSC pursuant to the terms of the UCSC/City Comprehensive Settlement Agreement; and a 5.5-acre parcel adjacent to the Dimeo Lane landfill and Resource Recovery Center.

A narrow band of land between the City's eastern city limit and Seventh Avenue is included within the City's existing Sphere of Influence, and, as such, property owners could apply for annexation. Currently within the unincorporated Live Oak area, this area is primarily residential with some commercial uses and many underutilized parcels. If annexation were approved in the future, this area would continue to be designated for residential uses and would be a logical expansion of the City without dividing an established community, as it is at the western edge of the unincorporated area known as Live Oak, which is also a developed area similar to the City.

Table 4.1-6 summarizes the proposed policies and actions that ensure that future development accommodated by the *General Plan 2030* would not result in physical division of an established community.

TABLE 4.1-6
Proposed General Plan Policies and Actions that Avoid Land Use Impacts

Type of Measure / Action	Policies / Actions
SUPPORT INFILL	• Ensure optimum utilization of infill parcels: LU1.1
LIMIT URBAN LIMITS	• Maintain City's urban development line at Moore Creek Preserve (east branch above Highway 1) and along the city limits below Highway 1: LU2.1
NO EXPANSION OF SPHERE OF INFLUENCE	• No expansion of SOI (LU2.2) except for three areas – a small area within the existing residential Carbonera neighborhood (LU2.2.1); the north campus area of UCSC pursuant to the terms of the UCSC/City Comprehensive Settlement Agreement (LU2.2.2); and a 5.5-acre addition to the City's Landfill and Resource Recovery Center (LU2.2.3)
SUPPORT PRESERVATION OF OPEN SPACE & AGRICULTURAL LANDS AT CITY'S EDGE	• Preserve open space at edges of City: LU2.3 • Work with County to maintain lands in open space west of City: LU2.3.2 • Support County policies for agricultural and grazing uses within the Planning Area and on the North Coast: LU2.3.5

Conclusion. The City of Santa Cruz is primarily built out and as an established community, new development accommodated by the proposed *General Plan 2030* would be considered infill development. Thus, development would be within an established community and would not result in a physical division of an established community. Furthermore, proposed goals, policies and actions in the draft *General Plan 2030* limit potential expansion of the City's boundaries and seek to maintain the City's urban development limits. Thus, the project would not result in an impact related to division of an established community.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required as a significant impact has not been identified.

Impact 4.1-2: Introduce Incompatible Land Uses

The proposed *General Plan 2030* does not introduce new land uses that would be incompatible with existing land uses or land use designations, although residential densities may increase in limited areas. However, with implementation of proposed *General Plan 2030* policies and actions, compatibility between new higher density residential uses with adjacent lower density residential neighborhoods would be ensured. Therefore, this is considered a *less-than-significant impact*.

The proposed *General Plan 2030* introduces three new mixed-use designations, which are applied to segments of the City's four major transportation corridors: Mission Street, Ocean Street, Soquel Avenue and Water Street. The designations include residential and non-residential land uses. However, the areas are currently zoned "Community Commercial," and residential uses are currently permitted with approval of a use permit or special use permit, subject to the a minimum net land area of the R-M (Multiple Residence-Medium Density District), which currently is 1,450 square feet. This represents a density of 30 units per acre under existing regulations. The proposed medium density mixed use designation maintains a residential density limit of 30 units per acre. However, the high density mixed use designation would allow up to 55 units per acre under specified conditions. The mixed use visitor designation (only along Ocean Street) also could allow up to 55 units per acre under specified conditions. Generally, existing lower density residential neighborhoods are situated adjacent to Water Street to the north of the proposed high density mixed use designation. However, the proposed segments along Soquel Avenue and Ocean Street that are designated for high density mixed uses generally are located adjacent to areas that are designated commercial and medium density residential. The medium density residential designation does allow up to 55 units per acre.

Thus, the new mixed use districts would not result in new land uses that could be considered incompatible with another land use, although the residential density could be increased in relation to existing adjacent uses in one area along Water Street. However, draft *General Plan 2030* policies and actions prevent potential land uses incompatibilities, as summarized in Table 4.1-7 below, in that it seeks to protect existing residential uses (LU3.9), seeks to ensure that infill and intensified development is sensitive to existing neighborhoods (LU4.1.2), restricts uses that are incompatible with industrial uses within industrial areas (LU2.3.6), and seeks to ensure appropriate land uses adjacent to open spaces (LJU3.1.1.2). The development permitted within the new mixed use designations may result in increased density or land use intensity, which may result in aesthetic or noise impacts to adjacent uses. These issues are discussed in the AESTHETICS (Chapter 4.3) and NOISE (Chapter 4.13) sections of this EIR. However, the proposed *General Plan* specifically calls for development of design guidelines to address the visual transition between areas of higher density and/or intensified development (i.e., along corridors such as Water and Soquel Streets) and adjacent existing developed neighborhoods with less intense development (CD2.1.3). The proposed Plan also indicates that development standards will be included in the Zoning Ordinance amendment to establish mixed use districts, which will ensure that siting, massing, and scale of infill and intensified development are sensitive to existing neighborhood and business districts (CD2.1.4).

The proposed *General Plan* does add new floor area ratios for the non-residential land use designations and eliminates residential densities in on-residential zones. The floor area ratios

would limit building mass, which is not currently regulated through floor area ratios in the existing General Plan.

Policy LU3.10 would allow community services facilities to be located in all land use designations, and its companion Action LU3.10.1 calls for amending the Zoning Ordinance to achieve this. This could result in incompatible land uses depending on what type of “community service facility” would be proposed, especially within residential districts. Currently public facilities are not permitted in R-1 or Residential Suburban districts. In RL, RM, and RH districts, educational, religious, cultural, public utility or public service buildings and uses are permitted, except for corporation yards, storage or repair yards, and warehouses. The General Plan does support development of a desalination plant (CC3.1.3), and Action LU3.10.2 calls for initial of a General Plan amendment when a specific site is selected. The proposed General Plan also calls for a potential transit center along the rail line in the Golf Club Drive area. Thus, the major public facilities that may be supported by the Plan are already addressed in other policies and actions. Furthermore, the existing zone districts generally allow other use or service establishments determined by the zoning board if they are in the same character as the permitted and allowed uses, subject special use permit approval.

TABLE 4-1-7

Proposed General Plan Policies and Actions that Avoid Incompatible Land Uses

Type of Measure / Action	Policies / Actions
ENSURE LAND USE COMPATIBILITY WITH EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS	♦ Protect existing residential areas: LU3.9 ♦ Ensure intensified development is sensitive to existing neighborhoods: LU4.1.2 ♦ Design principles and new guidelines for transition between higher density corridors and adjacent development: CD 2.1.3, CD2.1.4 ♦ Support more intensive commercial uses along commercial corridors, provided they are compatible with or transition to adjacent residential areas: EDD5.3.1 ♦ Appropriate land uses adjacent to open spaces: LU3.11.2 ♦ Compatible development within historic districts: HA1.9, 1.9.1-1.9.3 ♦ Restrict uses that are incompatible with industrial uses within industrial areas: LU3.2.7 ♦ Ensure appropriate land uses and development standards that do not adversely impact adjacent open spaces: LU3.11.2

Conclusion. The proposed *General Plan 2030* introduces three new mixed-use designations, which are applied to segments of the City’s four major transportation corridors in areas where mixed-use development is currently permitted with applicable development standards. Thus, the new mixed use districts would not result in new land uses that could be considered incompatible with another land use, although the residential density could be increased in relation to existing adjacent uses in one area along Water Street. However, with implementation of the proposed general plan, siting of future development would not be permitted if it were potentially incompatible with existing uses. Therefore, the project would not result in a significant impact related to

introduction of incompatible land uses. As currently written, LU3.10 and LU3.10.1 are somewhat broad, and subject to future interpretation that may allow potentially incompatible facilities within a residential neighborhood. Community service facilities are not defined in the General Plan; Action LU3.10.2 references a desalination facility. For clarity and to avoid confusion, LU3.10 and LU3.10.1 would benefit from being rewritten to be more specific as to the type of community service facilities that would be envisioned or eliminated as there are specific policies and actions addressing facilities specifically supported in the Plan – a desalination facility and rail transit center.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required as a significant impact has not been identified. However, revision of the following *General Plan 2030* policies and actions are recommended to avoid confusion regarding location of community service facilities.

Recommended Revisions to the Draft General Plan 2030

Revise LU3.10 and LU3.10.1 to better define community service facilities
OR delete as shown below.

~~LU3.10 — Allow community services facilities to be located in all land use designations.~~

~~LU3.10.1 — Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow community service facilities and uses in all land use designations as of right. Cf. HA2.2.4.~~

Impact 4.1-3 Conflict with Applicable Land Use or Other Plans

Goals, policies and actions of the draft *General Plan 2030* would not conflict with other adopted plans. The plan consistency analysis has not found any plan inconsistencies with the Draft General Plan that would result in adverse physical impacts. Therefore, there would be *no impact*.

The following subsection provides a review of consistency of the proposed *General Plan 2030* with local plans and policies. In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G, the review focuses on policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact. The City's existing adopted plans (see Table 3-5 in Chapter 3.0 of this EIR) are not part of the *General Plan 2030*, except for four plans (Downtown Recovery, Moore Creek Corridor, San Lorenzo Urban River, and Santa Cruz Harbor Development Plans). Review of consistency of the draft *General Plan 2030* with adopted plans is provided below. The focus will be on portions of those plans that serve to mitigate environmental impacts. Consistency with adopted Master Plans for the City's greenbelt lands is provided in the BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES (Chapter 4.8) section of this EIR.

Regional Plans

AMBAG has prepared “Envisioning the Monterey Bay Area – A Blueprint for Sustainable Growth and Smart Infrastructure” that is a blueprint for the future describing how the communities of the Monterey Bay area might grow in a sustainable fashion over the next 25 years. Regional and local agencies worked together to evaluate current trends regarding the distribution of population and employment in comparison to: 1) improving mobility; 2) reducing GHG emissions; 3) providing housing and employment opportunities; and 4) protecting natural and cultural resources. The study develops a preferred growth scenario that maximizes the achievement of these outcomes that will serve as the basis for SB 375’s Sustainable Communities Strategy that will demonstrate how the region will reduce per capita greenhouse emissions by 5% from the automobiles and light trucks by 2035 (AMBAG, March 2011).

Under the “Sustainable Growth Patterns” scenario developed as an alternative to current growth patterns, the region’s urban footprint would increase by 20,000 acres by 2035, which is less than half of the approximately 43,000 acres that are projected to otherwise be developed. Under this scenario, the majority of the region’s forecast growth occurs within a comfortable walking distance to transit corridors and neighborhood centers within “Blueprint Priority Areas” identified in the study that are primarily higher density lands within cities in proximity to transit and walking opportunities. The City of Santa Cruz is as a “Blueprint Priority Area.” Consideration of policies and specific actions to see this sustainable pattern become a reality would be within the purview of individual agencies.

The proposed *General Plan 2030* is consistent with the planning principles included in the draft blueprint plan. The draft General Plan includes new mixed use designations along the City’s major transportation corridors and supports infill and high density development.

City Plans

Generally, the City’s adopted area and other land use plans provide guidance for land uses, development siting and design, and circulation, but do not include policies related to environmental issues. The Downtown Recovery Plan includes a land use plan and development and street design guidelines, but not policies. Similarly, the Eastside Redevelopment Plan addresses land use and business improvements with a focus on design guidelines for improvements to streets, parking and building facades. The San Lorenzo Urban River Plan also does not contain specific policies, but generally presents recommendations for land use and development design improvements, access, and urban interface connections for focus sites and improvements along specified reaches of the river.

While the Seabright Area Plan includes policies, they address primarily development design, circulation and housing issues. The proposed *General Plan 2030* policies and actions that seek to protect existing neighborhoods and heritage trees are consistent with policies in the Seabright Area Plan that also seek to protect heritage trees and to maintain a scale of development consistent with the existing neighborhood.

The Western Drive Master Plan provides road, access, land use, design, landscaping and drainage recommendations for both publicly- and privately-owned lands to preserve the rural character of the area, provide access to the canyon area and preserve existing trees. The

proposed *General Plan 2030* does not conflict with these goals and recommendations, does not change the land use density in this area, and includes policies and actions to maintain the City's Heritage Tree Ordinance and protect heritage trees.

The Santa Cruz Harbor Development Plan includes policies and programs that address environmental quality, design, land use, circulation and parking, and parks, recreation and public access. The Environmental Quality policies seek to avoid the adverse impacts on the marine habitat within the Harbor, including management of dredging and disposal and water quality controls to protect water quality. The proposed *General Plan 2030* does not specifically address Harbor issues and does not include any policies or actions that would conflict with those in the Harbor Development Plan. The proposed General Plan policies related to protection of water quality, including Implementation of stormwater quality & water pollution prevention programs, would support and complement Harbor policies.

The B/SOL Plan primarily provides policy guidance for land use, development, design and circulation issues. Proposed Policy LU3.4 seeks to give priority to uses that serve both visitors and residents in neighborhoods near visitor areas and support improved recreational and economic opportunities at the Municipal Wharf (LU3.5.3). The proposed *General Plan 2030* also supports protection of historical structures, which is also advocated in the B/SOL Plan. It is noted that the estimate buildout projections for the Beach Area show about one fifth of new commercial development envisioned in the B/SOL Plan (approximately 22,000 square feet compared to 125,000 square feet).

Therefore, there are no apparent conflicts between the proposed project and applicable plans, policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental.

Conclusion. There are no apparent conflicts between the proposed project and applicable plans, policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect as discussed above. Therefore, the project would not result in an impact related to conflicts with local plans and policies.

Mitigation Measures

None are required as a significant impact has not been identified.

REFERENCES

City of Santa Cruz.

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- ❑ 1981. *Seabright Area Plan*.
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- ❑ October 29, 2009. "Methodology for General Plan 2030 Buildout Projections."
- ❑ December 11, 2006. "Land Use Background Report."

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