

809 Center Street • Room 206 • Santa Cruz, CA 95060 • cityplan@ci.santa-cruz.ca.us
JULIANA REBAGLIATI, DIRECTOR

March 2, 2009

NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

RE: City of Santa Cruz General Plan 2030 EIR

To Interested Agencies and Persons:

The City of Santa Cruz will be the lead agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report on the project described herein. Please respond with written comments regarding the scope and the content of the EIR as it may relate to your agency's area of statutory responsibility or your areas of concern or expertise. Your agency may need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project, if any is required. Responses are due within 30 days of the receipt of this Notice, as provided by State law. The contact person's name and address are listed below. Please include the name and phone number of a contact person at your agency in your response.

The project location, description, and potential environmental effects are presented below. An Initial Study has not been prepared. In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines section 15060(d), the City has determined that an EIR will be required for the project, and the probable environmental effects of the project that will be evaluated in the EIR are described in paragraph 4 below.

1. **Project Location.** The City of Santa Cruz, incorporated in 1866, is located approximately 75 miles south of San Francisco, 25 miles south of San Jose and 40 miles north of Monterey. The City has a total land area of 12.7 square miles, and is bordered by the Santa Cruz Mountains to the north, open space lands to the west, the Monterey Bay to the south, and a portion of the unincorporated urban community of Live Oak to the east. As of January 1, 2008, the City supported a population of 58,125 with a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, visitor-serving, educational, public facility, recreational, and open space uses.

The *General Plan 2030* planning area includes the following geographic areas as shown on Figure 1:

- All lands located within the incorporated Santa Cruz city limits (including the City's Graham Hill water treatment plant and Dimeo Lane landfill);
- Lands outside City limits but within the City's adopted Sphere of Influence that are located east of Highway 17 in the Carbonera neighborhood and along 7th Avenue to the east of city limits;
- Unincorporated lands to the north and west of the City that generally extend from Graham Hill Road on the east to the Dimeo Lane and the City's landfill on the west. This area includes Henry Cowell State Park, University of California lands located outside City limits, and Wilder Ranch State Park. State law requires the general plan

to consider any territory outside the city boundaries which, in the City's judgment, bears relation to its planning. These "lands of interest" total approximately 26 square miles.

2. **Project Description.** The proposed project consists of the City's *Draft General Plan 2030* (dated February 27, 2009), which is an update of the City's existing *General Plan and Local Coastal Plan 1990-2005* that was adopted in 1992 and subsequently amended. The General Plan is a comprehensive, long-range, and internally consistent statement of the City's development and preservation policies within the General Plan planning area. State law requires that cities prepare general plans and regularly review and update them.

Pursuant to State law, a General Plan must include the following elements: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Safety, and Noise. The draft General Plan (except for Housing as discussed further below) addresses the State's requirements in the following chapters and also includes optional subjects set forth in the State General Plan Guidelines related to community design and economic development.

- Historic Preservation, Arts, and Culture
- Community Design
- Land Use
- Mobility
- Economic Development
- Civic and Community Facilities
- Hazards, Safety, and Noise
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
- Natural Resources and Conservation

In addition to "Guiding Principles" set forth in the General Plan, the draft *General Plan 2030* provides goals, policies and actions to address each of the above topics. A goal is a general, overall and ultimate purpose, aim or end toward which the City will direct effort during the timeframe of the General Plan. A policy is a specific statement of principle or guidance that implies clear commitment; the direction the City elects to follow in order to meet its goals. An action is a program, activity or strategy carried out in response to adopted policy to achieve a specific goal.

A summary of the issues/topics addressed by the draft goals, policies and actions is provided below:

- The HISTORIC PRESERVATION, ARTS, AND CULTURE chapter includes four goals and associated policies and actions that address: 1) cultural resources (archaeological, paleontological and historical resources and historic buildings); 2) arts and cultural facilities and performances; 3) arts and cultural programs; and 4) establishing a strong identity as an arts and cultural community.
- The COMMUNITY DESIGN chapter includes five goals and associated policies and actions that address: 1) preservation of natural features that visually define areas with a built environment in harmony with its natural setting; 2) diverse neighborhoods and business districts with well-defined character; 3) design and

linkages between key areas; 4) attractive gateways, roadways and landscaping; and 5) walkable neighborhoods and districts with compatible uses and buildings.

- The LAND USE chapter includes four goals and associated policies and actions that address: 1) sustainable land uses; 2) a compact community with boundaries defined by the city's greenbelt and Monterey Bay; 3) complementary balance of diverse land uses; and 4) land use patterns that facilitate alternative transportation and/or minimize transportation demand.
- The MOBILITY chapter includes four goals and associated policies and actions that address: 1) facilitation of multiple transportation alternatives; 2) a safe, efficient, adaptive and accessible transportation system (including alternative transportation, transit, multi-modal systems); 3) a safe, efficient and adaptive road system; and 4) safe and inviting pedestrian and bicycle access.
- The ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT chapter includes six goals and associated policies and actions that address: 1) the city as a vibrant regional economic center; 2) growth in the city's tax base; 3) the University as a major contributor to and beneficiary of a successful local economy; 4) diverse, educated and skilled work force; 5) diverse and dynamic business districts; and 6) a sustainable economy.
- The CIVIC AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES chapter includes eleven goals and associated policies and actions that address: 1) an involved and informed citizenry; 2) provision of comprehensive community facilities and services; 3) a safe, reliable water supply; 4) a sustainable and efficient wastewater systems; 5) a sustainable and efficient stormwater system; 6) solid waste; 7) police services; 8) educational opportunities; 9) health and human services; 10) childcare facilities and services; and 11) technical innovation.
- The HAZARDS, SAFETY AND NOISE chapter includes six goals and associated policies and actions that address: 1) emergency and disaster readiness; 2) air quality; 3) noise; 4) hazardous materials; 5) light pollution; and 6) natural hazards, including hazards related to erosion, steep slopes, earthquakes, flooding, tsunamis, and dam failure.
- The PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE chapter includes four goals and associated policies and actions that address: 1) parks, open space and recreational facilities; 2) recreational programs, activities, events and services; 3) managed and convenient public access to open space lands and coastline; and 4) an integrated system of citywide and regional trails.
- The NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION chapter includes seven goals and associated policies and actions that address: 1) creek, riparian and wetland systems; 2) plant and wildlife habitat; 3) conservation and stewardship of resources; 4) actions in reducing and responding to global warming; 5) a sustainable urban forest; 6) protected open space and coastline; and 7) reduction in energy use.

A Land Use Map is included in the General Plan that identifies land use designations throughout the City as shown on Figure 2. The allowable development density for residential land use is defined as the minimum and maximum number of permanent dwelling units per acre over the entire project or development site. A mix of residential densities may be used to achieve that average. For nonresidential uses, including commercial, office, and industrial

uses, development intensity is expressed as an average Floor Area Ratio (FAR). FAR is a measure of the total building floor area in proportion to the size of the building's lot.

The General Plan 2030 land use designations consist of:

- ❑ RESIDENTIAL DESIGNATIONS
 - Very-Low-Density Residential (VL), 0.1 to 1 dwelling unit per acre (du/ac)
 - Low-Density Residential (L), 1.1 to 10 du/ac
 - Low-Medium-Density Residential (LM), 10.1 to 20 du/ac
 - Medium-Density Residential (M), 20.1 to 30 du/ac
 - High-Density Residential (H), 30.1 to 55 du/ac
- ❑ COMMERCIAL DESIGNATIONS
 - Neighborhood Commercial (NC), 0.25 to 1.5 FAR
 - Community Commercial (CC), 0.25 to 1.75 FAR
 - Regional Visitor Commercial (RVC), 0.25 to 3.5 FAR
 - Office (OF), 0.25 to 1.75 FAR
- ❑ MIXED USE DESIGNATIONS
 - Mixed-Use Medium Density (MXMD), 0.75 to 1.75 FAR, 10 to 30 du/ac
 - Mixed-Use High Density (MXHD), 1.0 to 2.75 FAR, 10 to 55 du/ac
 - Mixed-Use Visitor Commercial (MXVC), 1.0 to 2.75 FAR, 0 to 55 du/ac
- ❑ INDUSTRIAL DESIGNATIONS
 - Industrial (IND), 0.25 to 2.0 FAR
 - Coastal Dependent (CD), 0 to 0.1 FAR
- ❑ PUBLIC AND INSTITUTIONAL DESIGNATIONS
 - Community Facilities (CF), 0 to 2.5 FAR
 - UCSC Development (UC)
- ❑ PARKS AND OPEN SPACE DESIGNATIONS
 - Coastal Recreation (CR), 0 to 0.1 FAR
 - Parks (PK), 0 to 0.1 FAR
 - Natural Areas (NA), 0 to 0.1 FAR
 - Agriculture/Grazing (AG), 0.05 du/ac

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 the following:

- ❑ NEW DESIGNATIONS & APPLICATION: Three new mixed use land designations have been developed and applied to the following areas.
 - Mixed use high density designation is applied to segments of Soquel Avenue and Water Avenue that are designated Community Commercial in the existing General Plan.
 - Mixed use medium density designation is applied to segments of Mission Street and Ocean Street that are designated Community Commercial in the existing General Plan.

- Mixed use visitor serving designation is applied to segments of Ocean Street that is designated Community Commercial in the existing General Plan.
- LAND USE MAP CHANGES: Land Use Map Changes:
 - 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: Change the existing General Plan land use designation from Low Density Residential (1.1-10 DU/acre) to Low Medium Density Residential (10.1-20 DU/acre)/Neighborhood Commercial/Office.

Some of the *General Plan 2030* policies and actions also support mixed use districts and/or intensified redevelopment, such as a Mixed Use River District, expansion of the High Density Overlay on Front and lower Pacific, and additional height and intensity along Pacific north of Cathcart. A transition to higher densities along the City's transit and commercial corridors also is encouraged. Another policy 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). Additionally, several General Plan actions support specific types of development, although site-specific locations are not identified. These facilities include arts and cultural facilities, a performing arts center, high-end lodging, large regional retail uses to the Harvey West area, and a desalination facility site.

The Housing Element is prepared as a separate volume to the General Plan as it requires more frequent updates than the remainder of the General Plan in accordance with State law. Thus, the Housing Element is not part of the *General Plan 2030* document and not included in the environmental review. The Housing Element is being updated and is anticipated to be completed in spring 2009.

Additionally, the City's existing certified Local Coastal Program (LCP) is part of the existing 1990-2005 General Plan. As part of the current General Plan update, the LCP will be updated as a separate document. Thus, these two plans are not included in the General Plan 2030 document or accompanying EIR.

3. **Probable Environmental Effects of the Project.** After completing a preliminary review of the project, as described in Section 15060 of the CEQA Guidelines, the City has determined that an EIR should be prepared to assess the potential environmental impacts of this project. The EIR will analyze the effects of the proposed project on land use, public facilities and services, resources and hazards as further described below and will provide a determination of impact significance. At present, the City lacks sufficient information to make conclusive determinations on significance. The City will consider the written comments received in response to this Notice of Preparation in determining the topics and scope to be assessed in the Draft EIR.

This EIR is being prepared as a “program” EIR pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines section 15168 that allows a comprehensive review of the actions that comprise the draft General Plan. Subsequent development would be reviewed in light of the General Plan EIR to determine whether an additional environmental document must be prepared. Commonly called “tiering,” the environmental review for a subsequent project can be limited to those project-specific significant effects that were not examined in the General Plan EIR.

The EIR will assess significant environmental effects that may result from the implementation of plan’s policies and actions or development/growth accommodated by the plan. Direct and indirect, secondary impacts will be examined. General Plan policies and actions that serve as mitigation measures will be described and considered.

The topics to be addressed in the *General Plan 2030* EIR include:

- *Land Use.* The EIR will include a review of existing land uses and existing/planned buildout projections. To aid the environmental analysis, a “buildout” projection was developed by the City’s land use consultant for the General Plan. The projection considers the development potential of land permitted under the proposed General Plan that is estimated to occur in Santa Cruz by the year 2030. The projections are based on the draft Land Use Map, take into account land use map changes, vacant lands, sites subject to reuse or redevelopment, and underutilized parcels. Under the draft plan, the buildout projections estimate the following new development by the year 2030: a) 3,729 residential units; b) 1,292,289 square feet of commercial development; c) 1,318,916 square of office space; and d) 388,156 square feet of industrial development. The EIR will review consistency of the draft General Plan with other area plans.
- *Population and Housing.* The EIR will review population increases during the General Plan timeframe and effects of General Plan buildout on housing. Employment and jobs/housing issues will be addressed.
- *Public Facilities and Services.* The EIR will assess effects of General Plan buildout and growth on public facilities and services to include: a) transportation and traffic; b) water supply; c) public services and utilities; and d) hydrology and water quality. Consultation with the Water Department will be conducted in accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15083.5 and California Water Code section 10910.
- *Resources and Hazards.* The EIR will assess effects of General Plan buildout and growth on resources and hazards at a “program” level to include: a) aesthetics; b) biological resources; c) cultural resources; d) air quality, including global climate change impacts; e) geology and soils; f) noise; g) hazardous materials; and h) agricultural and mineral resources.
- Other CEQA-required sections will be provided, including Alternatives and Cumulative Impacts. The Cumulative Impacts section will include UCSC growth as envisioned in its *2005 Long-Range Development Plan*.

4. **Scoping Meeting.** The City of Santa Cruz will hold EIR scoping meetings on March 16, 2009 pursuant to CEQA section 21083.9 which require scoping meetings for projects of "statewide, regional or areawide significance." The purpose is to take oral comments on the EIR Scope of Work. A public agency scoping meeting will be held from 3 to 5 PM, and a public scoping meeting will be held from 6 to 8 PM. Members from the public and public agency representatives may attend either meeting. Both meetings will be held at Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium, 307 Church Street, Room ABC, Santa Cruz, CA 95060.
5. **Contact Person Name and Phone Number.**

Michelle King, City of Santa Cruz Planning and Community Development Department
809 Center Street, Rm. 206
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Phone: 831 420-5092

Responses to this Notice of Preparation are due by April 2, 2009.

Sincerely,

Michelle King, Senior Planner

FIGURE 1 – General Plan Planning Area

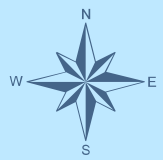
FIGURE 2 – Proposed Land Use Map



General Plan Planning Area



City of Santa Cruz
Planning Department
809 Center St. Room 206
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Ph: 420-5100



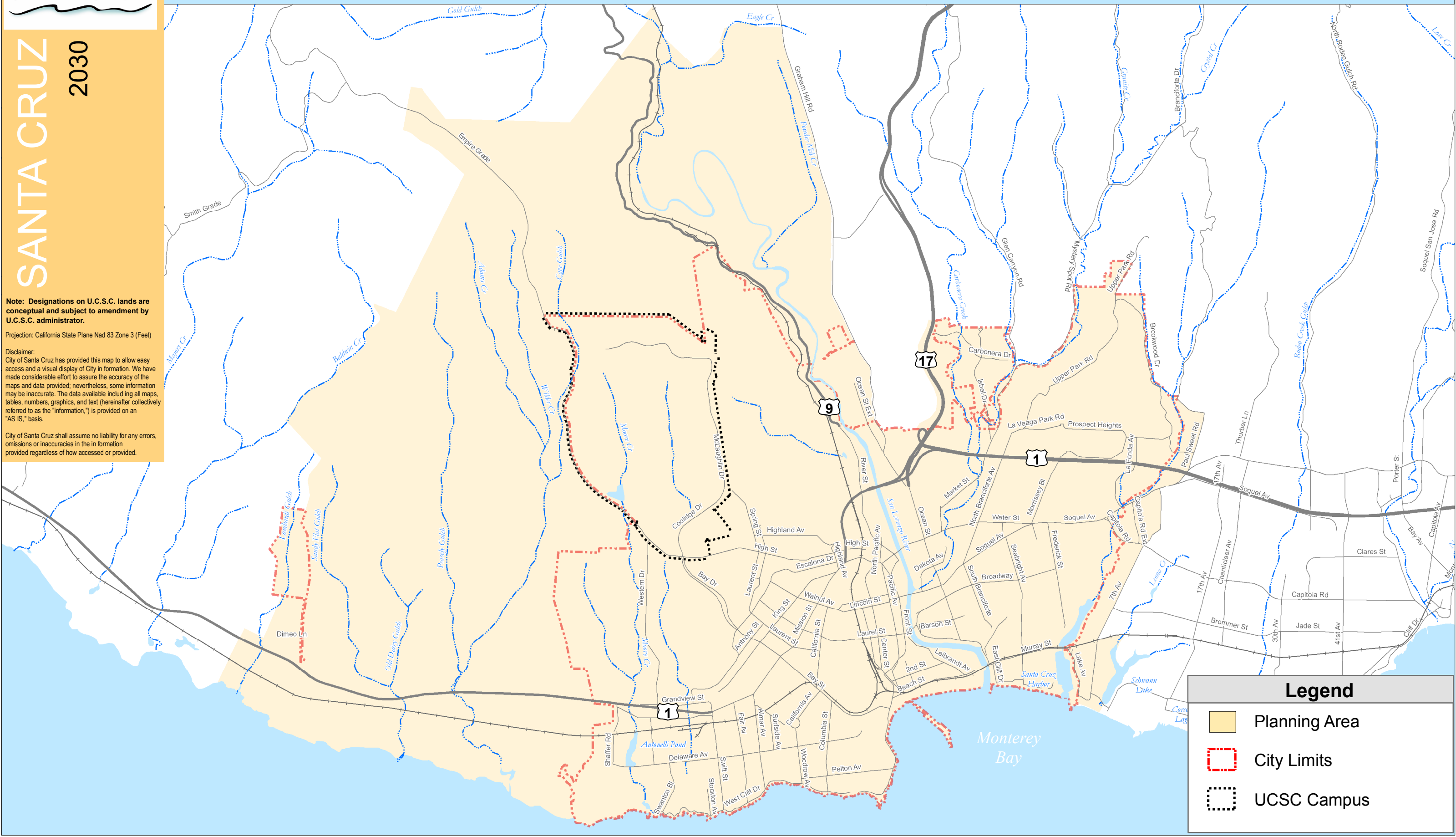
SANTA CRUZ
2030

Note: Designations on U.C.S.C. lands are conceptual and subject to amendment by U.C.S.C. administrator.

Projection: California State Plane Nad 83 Zone 3 (Feet)

Disclaimer:
City of Santa Cruz has provided this map to allow easy access and a visual display of City in formation. We have made considerable effort to assure the accuracy of the maps and data provided; nevertheless, some information may be inaccurate. The data available including all maps, tables, numbers, graphics, and text (hereinafter collectively referred to as the "information,") is provided on an "AS IS," basis.

City of Santa Cruz shall assume no liability for any errors, omissions or inaccuracies in the information provided regardless of how accessed or provided.



Legend

Planning Area

City Limits

UCSC Campus



SANTA CRUZ
2030

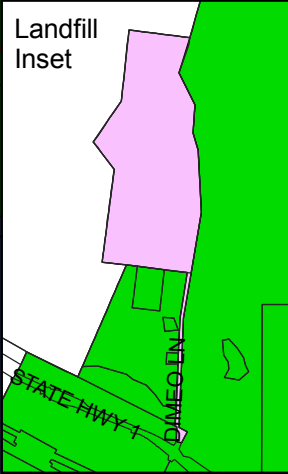
Note: Designations on U.C.S.C. lands are conceptual and subject to amendment by U.C.S.C. administrator.

The Land Use Diagram is intended to be used in conjunction with the General Plan 2030 Goals, Policies and Programs Document. The document describes the guidelines, standards, and description of the land use designations on the map.

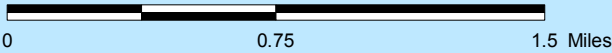
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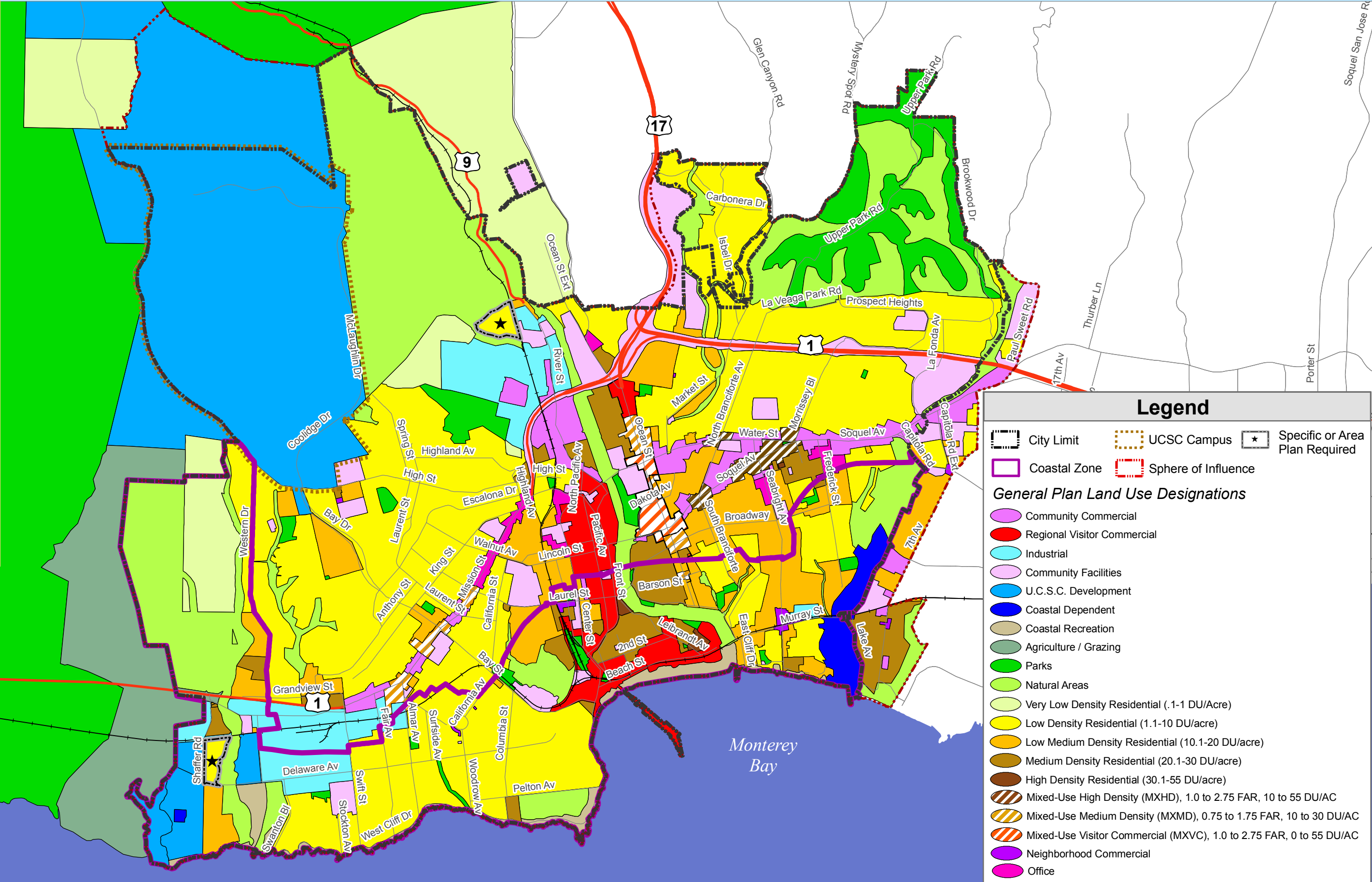
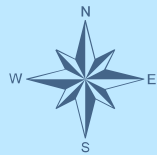
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General Plan Land Use Designations



City of Santa Cruz
Planning Department
809 Center St. Room 206
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Ph: 420-5100



Legend

City Limit

UCSC Campus

Specific or Area Plan Required

Coastal Zone

Sphere of Influence

General Plan Land Use Designations

- Community Commercial
- Regional Visitor Commercial
- Industrial
- Community Facilities
- U.C.S.C. Development
- Coastal Dependent
- Coastal Recreation
- Agriculture / Grazing
- Parks
- Natural Areas
- Very Low Density Residential (.1-1 DU/Acre)
- Low Density Residential (1.1-10 DU/acre)
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- Neighborhood Commercial
- Office