What’s the problem?
Shopping carts cost stores between $75-$150 each, yet many are removed from store property and end up abandoned in public spaces. Shopping carts create potential hazards when left abandoned along our roads, trails or bus stops, interfering with pedestrians and motorists. Retrieving stray carts and preventing shopping cart abandonment helps increase safety and keeps our town looking nice.

What are stores required to do?
The City of Watsonville’s shopping cart ordinance (Municipal Code 5-47.01) aims to solve this problem by requiring businesses to take steps to prevent theft and retrieve their property within 24 hours upon notification. Avoid fines by following these steps:

- Label all carts with store name, address, and phone number.
- Designate a company contact or person for retrieval.
- Post notices on storefront to discourage customers from removing property from store premises.

Everyone can help with stray carts
Community members are encouraged to report any abandoned carts they see. The best way to have abandoned shopping carts removed from your neighborhood is to contact the store to which the shopping cart belongs. Most stores hire a shopping cart retrieval service or use their own personnel to collect shopping carts that have been removed from the store premises. Residents can also submit an abandoned shopping cart pickup request to Customer Service at 831-768-3133 or customerservice@cityofwatsonville.org.

Doing Our Part
Watsonville’s Public Works & Utilities Department has a group of dedicated employees who help keep our town beautiful and litter-free. Regular street sweeping and weekly trail maintenance are part of the City’s efforts to keep public areas clean and safe. Only shopping carts that are abandoned in inaccessible areas or contain debris are picked up by City employees. Employees work diligently to keep our wetlands, parks, and public areas clean. Local businesses are encouraged to do their part as well.
The City of Watsonville, in partnership with the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission and Caltrans, are preparing a Complete Streets Plan for the downtown area to increase safety and accessibility for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists of all ages and abilities. Downtown improvements aim to increase access to businesses, create a vibrant atmosphere, improve facilities for people with disabilities, and support California’s climate change goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Input from local businesses is important in developing this plan. Please take a moment to give us your feedback by filling out an online survey.

https://www.cityofwatsonville.org/1620/Downtown-Complete-Streets-Plan

Contact Engineering Division at 831-768-3100