

DOWNTOWN WATSONVILLE SPECIFIC PLAN

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (9-05-19)

OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

In mid-2019, the City of Watsonville (City) initiated a Specific Plan for Downtown Watsonville that demonstrates a clear vision for the future of Downtown Watsonville. The Plan will build on the historic origins of the Downtown area, celebrating its historic buildings, community events, and open spaces, while harnessing new ideas, investment, and innovation. The Specific Plan will knit together the historic Downtown with adjacent industrial and residential areas to create walkable, complete neighborhoods with a mix of retail and services, amenities, employment uses, and residential buildings that help to activate Downtown throughout the day and into the evening, seven days a week. The Specific Plan will be a comprehensive planning document and regulatory tool for implementing the City's General Plan and guiding development in Downtown through customized land use and design regulations and recommendations for improvements to the public realm.

Throughout the estimated two-year process, Watsonville staff and the consultant team will ask the community for input on various aspects of the Downtown Specific Plan. City staff and the consultant team will listen, inform, and translate the community's and stakeholders' viewpoints and vision, and continually report back on how the information gathered will be shared and used. This Public Participation Plan (PPP) presents a "roadmap" or synopsis of the activities that will be undertaken to develop the Downtown Specific Plan. This Public Participation Plan outlines the engagement strategies that will be employed to support the technical planning and environmental efforts needed to help define a clear vision going forward for Downtown Watsonville.

WHY SHOULD I GET INVOLVED?

The plan is relevant to all who live, work, play, and invest here. In addition to residents, businesses and employees, community groups and nonprofits, developers, institutions, regional agencies and partners, schools, and many others will be invited to participate. All have a place and a valued voice in the planning process.

ENGAGEMENT PLAN OBJECTIVES

The engagement effort for the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan will be an open and transparent process, centered on key objectives including:

- Consistent, two-way communication between stakeholders and the City;
- Representation from diverse stakeholders including community members who may not usually participate in civic projects and government meetings;
- Education and communication to the public about the planning process;
- Gathering meaningful input and feedback from the stakeholders and the community at large to inform the planning process;
- Alignment of the plan with stakeholder and community needs;
- Solicitation and integration of feedback on key issues for Downtown Watsonville; and

- Community ownership of the process and final plan.

The project team will listen, inform, and translate the community's and stakeholders' viewpoints and vision using easily understood informational materials that are language and culturally appropriate. City staff will continually report back to the public regarding how the information gathered is being used in the development and adoption of the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan.

PLANNED ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Project Information Webpage – The City will create a dedicated project webpage on the City of Watsonville website. It will include information about the project, documents produced for the project, meeting summaries, and meeting announcements, among other materials. This website will provide information in both English and Spanish.

Stakeholder Meetings – Meetings will be held with representatives of a range of community groups, business leaders, advocacy organizations, and community leaders early in the engagement process to help identify key assets and opportunities.

Advisory Committee (AC) Meetings – The City will form a TAC, comprised of approximately fifteen (15) individuals, that is strictly advisory and non-voting and will meet up to eight (8) times during the planning process. The TAC will review plan concepts, guide the engagement process, and provide advice on plan direction. These meetings will be publicly noticed and Spanish translation will be provided at every meeting.

Community Workshops – Interactive community meetings will be held three (3) times during the project. These are expected to be evening or weekend meetings that last a few hours. Meetings will include a Discovery Workshop, a Joint City Council and Planning Commission Public Workshop, and a Public Draft Specific Plan Workshop. The format, structure, and activities of each will reflect the specific topic and stage in the process to gather input from participants and guide the development of the Specific Plan. Spanish translation will be provided at every meeting.

Pop-Up Workshops – To enable a broader diversity of community members to provide their input, the process will include “pop-up” events or “intercept” meetings at existing, well-attended events in Downtown Watsonville. The City will conduct pop-up workshops during the visioning and alternatives phases at existing events such as the local Friday Farmers’ Market, the Strawberry Festival, 4th of July, or similar occasions.

Online Engagement + Surveys – As a parallel process to the workshops, the City will use online surveys to engage the public. The surveys will be available through a link on the project webpage and topics will be selected by the City with input from the AC. Surveys will be translated into Spanish to ensure that all voices in the community are heard.

Watsonville Citizens Academy- November 21, 2019- For the first time, the City of Watsonville is providing a Citizens Academy, which has 19 participants. The Academy will be meeting with the Community Development Department on November 21, 2019, at which time information about the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan will be shared.

Watsonville High School Capstone Project- Every year, Watsonville High School seniors are required to create a community action project, also called a Capstone Project, in which they develop a program to benefit the community. In October, 2019, City staff will present the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan to the senior class

in order to recruit students to assist in outreach to Watsonville teens to gain valuable input in their vision of the downtown area. Staff aims to recruit at least 2 senior groups to create and conduct surveys of their peers in order to inform the Specific Plan

PROJECT WORKFLOW

The City will work closely with the consultant team to inform, consult, involve, and collaborate with the community and stakeholders throughout the development of the Downtown Specific Plan. The entire project is estimated to require two years of collaborative work.

Engagement activities will occur throughout the planning process during key phases, including the preparation and review of:

- Identification of Key Issues, and Opportunities;
- Visioning;
- Land Use and Multi-modal Transportation Alternatives;
- Design and development direction for the Specific Plan; and
- the Specific Plan and Environmental Impact Report.

HOW TO GET AND STAY INVOLVED

The City is committed to fostering public ownership of the Downtown Specific Plan and has created multiple ways to get involved in the process to update it, including:

- **Subscribe to the project email list** – Sign up through the project webpage or at a community event to receive the latest project and community event updates throughout the process.
- **Check out the project webpage** – Stay tuned for content updates that will be regularly posted on the project webpage; including summaries and photos from past events, updates on upcoming events, and draft and final copies of the Specific Plan.
- **Keep an eye out for project flyers** – Periodically the City will email and post flyers at key locations throughout the city to advertise upcoming community events and project updates.
- **Visit and engage with the City's social media channels** – Updates will be regularly be posted through the City's Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram social media platforms.
- **Attend public meetings and workshops** – Meet with your friends, neighbors, and colleagues and share your ideas at the many events planned throughout the next two years.
- **Complete online surveys** – Interactive online surveys will also be administered through the project webpage to provide convenient access to the planning process.
- **Talk to your neighbors, friends, and colleagues** – Spreading the word about the planning efforts and engaging in conversations helps to bring forth new ideas, refine existing proposals, and bring more people into the formal engagement activities of the process.

HOW YOUR FEEDBACK WILL BE USED

Input, ideas, and other information gathered through engagement activities will be recorded and compiled to ensure City staff, the Technical Advisory Committee, the public, and elected and appointed decision-makers have a full understanding of community and stakeholder opinions when drafting, reviewing, and adopting the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you have questions, comments, or would like additional information, please:

Visit the Specific Plan webpage at <https://cityofwatsonville.org/1626/Downtown-Specific-Plan>

Contact Justin Meek, AICP, Principal Planner, Community Development Department at (831) 768-3050 or downtown.specific.plan@cityofwatsonville.org.