

# CAPITOLA GENERAL PLAN

---

*Adopted - June 26, 2014*





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The General Plan was prepared with the help and creative thinking of many people. Listed below are the names of key individuals involved in the development of this document.

## City Council

Sam Storey, Mayor  
Dennis Norton, Vice Mayor  
Ed Bottorff  
Stephanie Harlan  
Michael Termini

## Planning Commission

Ron Graves  
Gayle Ortiz  
Mick Routh  
Linda Smith  
TJ Welch

## City Staff

Jamie Goldstein, City Manager  
Richard Grunow, Community Development Director  
Katie Cattan, Senior Planner  
Steve Jesberg, Public Works Director  
Carolyn Swift, City Historian  
Susan Westman, Community Development Director

## General Plan Advisory Group

Edward Newman, Chair  
Toni Castro  
Linda Hanson  
Jacques Bertrand  
James Wallace  
Kristin Jensen Sullivan  
Bruce Arthur  
Ron Burke  
Ann Wilson  
Erin Bernall  
Ed Bottorff  
Gayle Ortiz

## Consultants

PlaceWorks (Prime Consultant)  
RBF Consulting  
California Land Planning  
Strategic Economics  
Kimley-Horn and Associates

The work upon which this publication is based was funded in part through a grant awarded by the Strategic Growth Council. The statements and conclusions of this report are those of the City of Capitola and not necessarily those of the Strategic Growth Council or the Department of Conservation, or its employees. The Strategic Growth Council and the Department make no warranties, express or implied, and assume no liability for the information contained in the succeeding text.

The Safety Element of this General Plan was partially funded by a grant from the Community Development Block Grant Program, Disaster Recovery Initiative.

# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

LAND USE ELEMENT

OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION ELEMENT

MOBILITY ELEMENT

SAFETY AND NOISE ELEMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

GLOSSARY AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

## List of Figures

Figure I-1	General Plan Components .....	I-3
Figure I-2	Regional Location .....	I-5
Figure I-3	Planning Areas .....	I-6
Figure LU-1	Residential Neighborhoods .....	LU-3
Figure LU-2	Mixed-Use and Commercial Districts .....	LU-6
Figure LU-3	Public Facilities and Parks .....	LU-9
Figure LU-4	Land Use Map .....	LU-13
Figure LU-5	Potential Hotel Site Location .....	LU-27
Figure LU-6	41 <sup>st</sup> Avenue/Capitola Mall Vision.....	LU-29
Figure LU-7	Bay Avenue Vision.....	LU-36
Figure LU-8	City Hall/Pacific Cove Vision .....	LU-38
Figure OSC-1	Natural Resources .....	OSC-9
Figure OSC-2	Regional Watersheds .....	OSC-11
Figure MO-1	Existing Roadway Network.....	MO-3
Figure MO-2	Existing Traffic Volumes.....	MO-5
Figure MO-3	Bus Transit Routes.....	MO-9
Figure MO-4	Capitola Bikeways.....	MO-11
Figure MO-5	Capitola Sidewalk Inventory .....	MO-13
Figure MO-6	Capitola Rail Corridor.....	MO-14
Figure SN-1	Flood Hazard Zones.....	SN-4
Figure SN-2	Tsunami Inundation Areas.....	SN-6
Figure SN-3	Regional Fault Zones.....	SN-8
Figure SN-4	Liquefaction Potential .....	SN-9
Figure SN-5	Existing Noise Intensity Levels .....	SN-14
Figure SN-6	Future Noise Intensity Levels .....	SN-16
Figure ED-1	Share of Employment in Capitola by Industry.....	ED-4

List of Tables

Table LU-1 Existing Land Use.....LU-2

Table LU-2 Existing Parks .....LU-8

Table OSC-1 Government Code Open Space Classifications.....OSC-2

Table OSC-2 Capitola Communitywide Emissions by Sector, 2005.....OSC-5

Table MO-1 Capitola Street Classifications.....MO-4

Table MO-2 Intersection Level of Service Definitions.....MO-6

Table SN-1 Land Use Compatibility Standards for Community Noise Environments.....SN-17





1

# INTRODUCTION



# INTRODUCTION

The General Plan provides a vision for the future and establishes a framework for maintaining Capitola’s special identity over the next two to three decades. It establishes goals, policies, and actions that will guide conservation, growth, and enhancement in Capitola over the next 20 to 30 years. This chapter provides an overview of the purpose and contents of the General Plan, as well as a general description of Capitola and the General Plan Update process.

## Purpose

In California, General Plans serve as the “blueprint” for all future development in cities. The General Plan provides the fundamental basis for the City’s land use and development policy, and represents the basic community values, ideals, and aspirations to govern a shared environment over the life of the General Plan. The General Plan addresses all aspects of development including land use, environmental management and sustainability, traffic and circulation, housing, parks and recreation, and other topics. The General Plan’s policies are implemented through the Municipal Code, which includes the Zoning Code, Buildings and Construction Code, Subdivision Ordinance, and other City regulations.

California Government Code Section 65300 requires that all jurisdictions adopt a General Plan that is comprehensive, internally consistent, and long-term. Although it is required to address the issues specified by State law, the General Plan is ultimately organized in a way that best suits Capitola. The Plan should be clearly written, available to all those concerned with the community’s development, and easy to administer. This document supersedes the previous General Plan, which was adopted in 1989.

The overall role of the General Plan is to:

- ◆ Define a realistic vision of what the City desires to be in 20 to 30 years.
- ◆ Express policy direction in regard to the physical, social, economic, cultural, and environmental character of the city.
- ◆ Serve as a comprehensive guide for making decisions about land use, mobility, protection of environmental resources, housing, safety, and noise.

- ◆ Provide the legal foundation for zoning, subdivision, and public facilities ordinances; other adopted citywide plans; and compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- ◆ Present a clear and easy to understand format that encourages public participation and understanding.

Development and conservation in Capitola's coastal areas is also regulated by Capitola's Local Coastal Program (LCP). All development located in Capitola's coastal zone must be consistent with Capitola's certified LCP in addition to the General Plan.

While this General Plan establishes a 20-30 year planning horizon, it is intended that periodic updates will occur as needed to reflect changing conditions and to keep the General Plan current with state law and the community's visions and values.

## Organization and Contents

The General Plan includes this Introduction and five separate elements (with the State-required Safety and Noise elements combined into one element) that establish goals, policies, and actions for each given topic. The elements cover the topics required by California State Government Code Section 65302 as well as topics of particular interest to Capitola.

### General Plan Elements

A brief explanation of each General Plan element is provided below:

- ◆ **Land Use Element.** The Land Use Element designates where lands can be developed for specific uses such as residential, commercial, industrial, natural/open spaces, public facilities, and mixed uses. It also provides development regulations for each land use designation and overall land use policies.
- ◆ **Open Space and Conservation Element.** The Open Space and Conservation Element combines two elements required under State law: the Open Space Element and the Conservation Element. It addresses general environmental sustainability and stewardship, climate change and greenhouse gas reduction, air quality, renewable energy sources and energy conservation, biological resources, water quality and conservation, food production, waste reduction, as well as parks and recreation.

- ◆ **Mobility Element.** The Mobility Element specifies the general location and extent of existing and proposed major streets and other transportation facilities. The Element is correlated with the Land Use Element to provide adequate pedestrian, bicycle, motor vehicle, transit, air transportation, and emergency access to serve both new and existing land uses.
- ◆ **Safety and Noise Element.** The Safety and Noise Element provides information about risks in Capitola due to natural and human-made hazards, and contains goals, policies, and actions designed to protect the community and its property from hazards. It specifically addresses risks associated with geologic and seismic hazards, bluff erosion, beach erosion, climate change, flooding and inundation, fire hazards, and hazardous materials. This Element also addresses noise problems, quantifies current and projected noise levels, and establishes noise compatibility guidelines for different land uses.
- ◆ **Economic Development Element.** The Economic Development Element addresses Capitola’s local economy, community identity, and the City’s fiscal health. It identifies economic challenges and opportunities, discusses the green economy, and sets forth policies to promote economic vitality while fulfilling the community’s vision of the City.

The **Housing Element** is provided under separate cover as it is updated more frequently and on a set schedule as required by State law.

## Goals, Policies, and Actions

Each element of this General Plan contains background information and a series of goals, policies, and actions. Figure I-1 illustrates that policies and actions are at the same level of importance, and are both intended to support goals. In most cases, goals have both policies and actions. However, it is also possible for a goal to be supported exclusively by policies or actions. The following provides a description of goals, policies, and actions and explains the relationship between them:

- ◆ A **goal** is a description of the general desired result that the City seeks to create through the implementation of its General Plan.
- ◆ A **policy** is a specific statement that regulates activities in the city, guides decision-making, and directs on-going efforts as the City works to achieve a goal. A policy is on-going and requires no further implementation. The General Plan’s

FIGURE I-1 GENERAL PLAN COMPONENTS



policies set out the standards that will be used by City staff, the Planning Commission, and City Council in their review of land development projects and in decision-making about City actions.

- ◆ An **action** is a measure, procedure, or technique intended to help reach a specified goal. The City must take additional steps to implement each action in the General Plan. An action is something that can and will be completed. Taken together, the actions in this General Plan constitute a “to-do list” for the City of Capitola.

These goals, policies, and actions provide guidance to the City on how to direct change and manage its resources over the next 20-30 years.

## The City and its Planning Area

Capitola is a small coastal community in Santa Cruz County located east of the City of Santa Cruz along Highway 1. With a land area of 1.7 square miles, Capitola is home to a population of around 10,000 residents. Capitola’s regional location is shown in Figure I-2.

Figure I-3 shows Capitola’s city limits and Sphere of Influence (SOI). The SOI is a boundary that typically shows areas that jurisdictions may annex in the future, and for which urban services would be provided. State planning law requires General Plans to include the jurisdiction’s sphere of influence. The SOI boundary also signals to the County and other nearby local and regional authorities that Capitola recognizes that development within this area may have an impact on the future of the city.

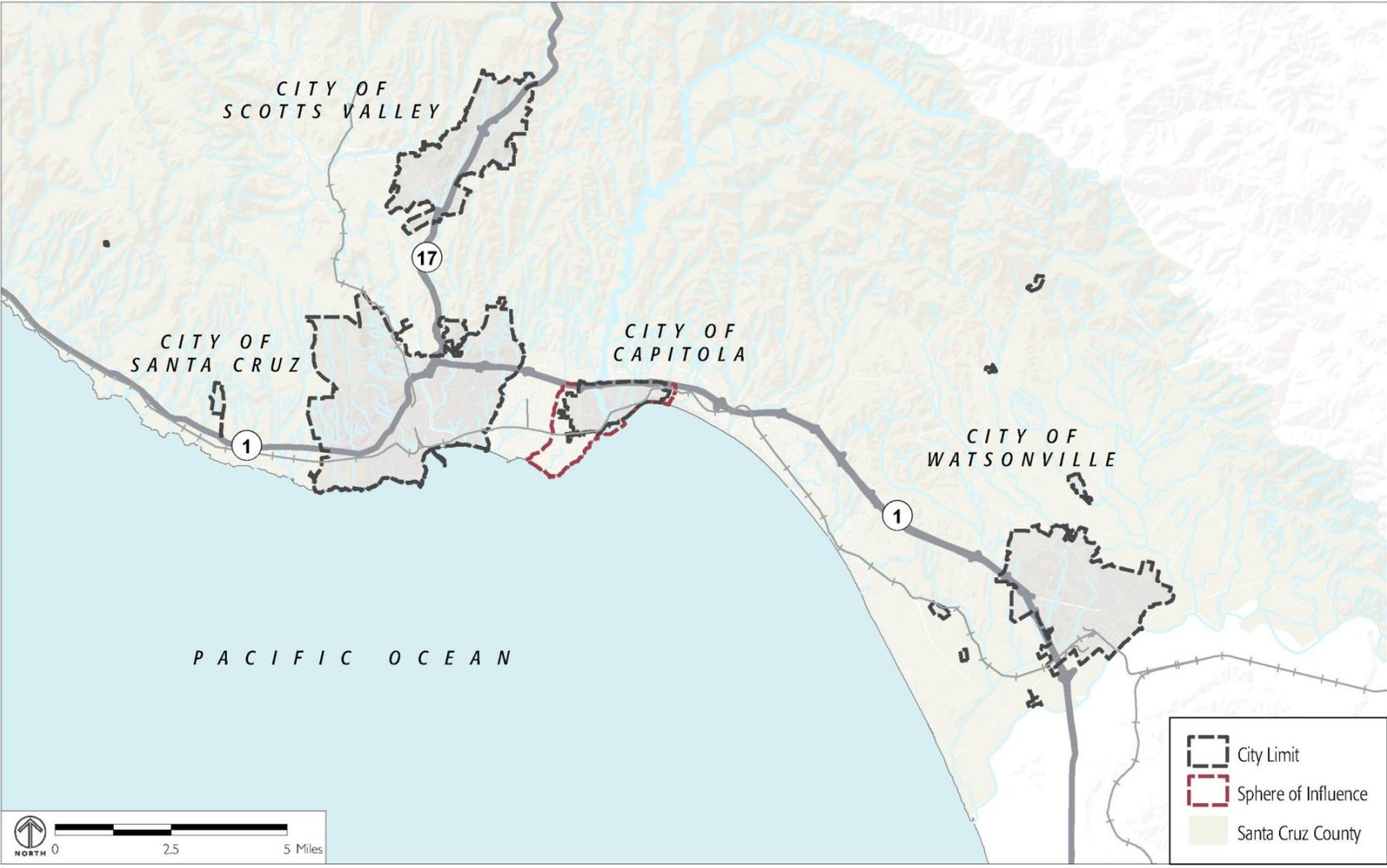
## Community Overview

Capitola is a unique coastal community with its own special sense of place. The heart of Capitola is the Village, which features an assortment of single-family and multi-family residences, shops, restaurants, vacation rentals, and recreational amenities. A variety of residential neighborhoods contribute to a distinctive identity



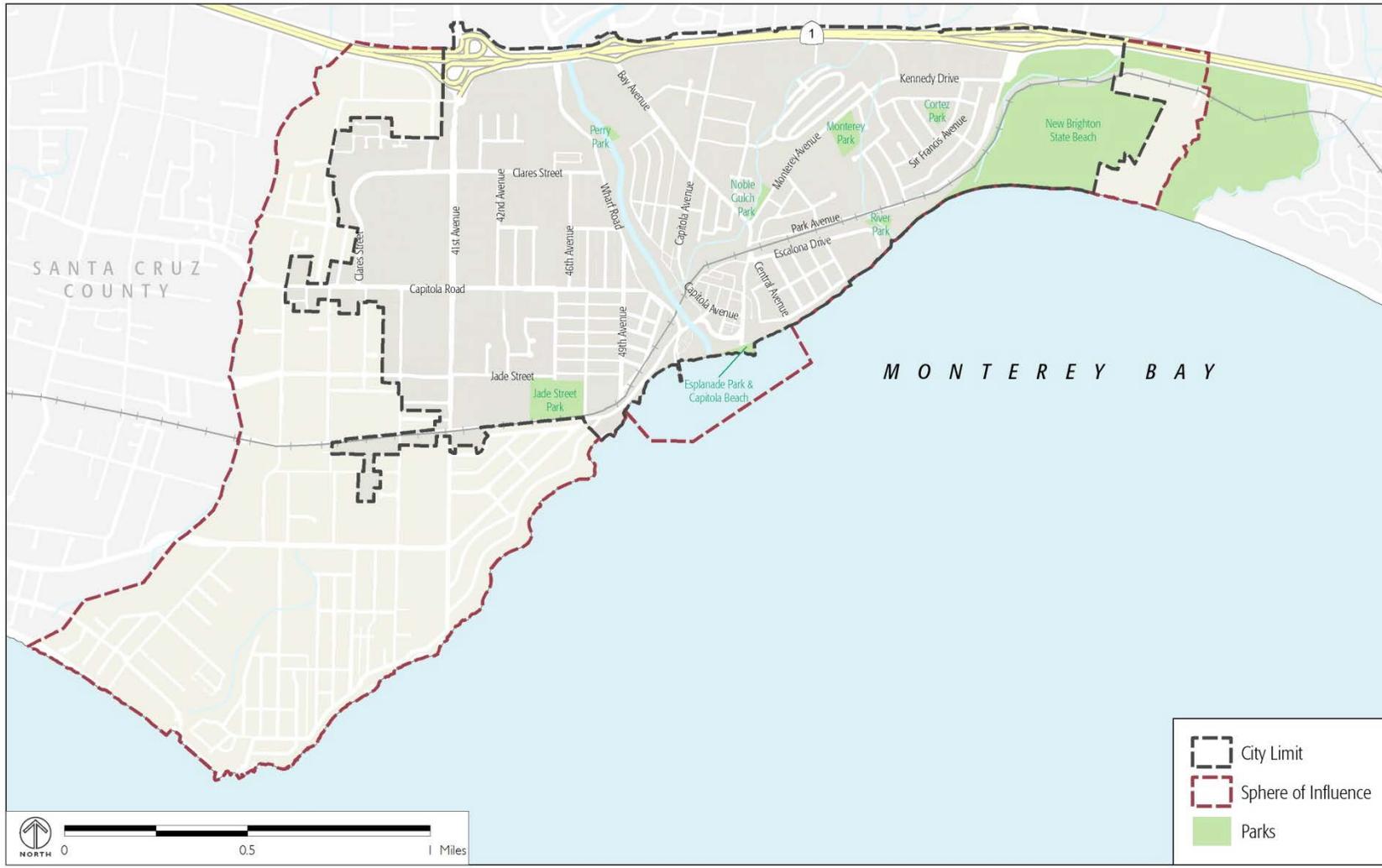
Capitola Village, circa 1920

FIGURE I-2 REGIONAL LOCATION



Source: City of Capitola, 2010.

FIGURE I-3 PLANNING AREAS



Source: City of Capitola, 2010; The Planning Center | DC&E, 2013.

and family-friendly character of the community. Capitola is also home to the Capitola Mall and other region-serving retail establishments along the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue corridor. Capitola’s rich history, beautiful natural setting, and strong community identity help to create a special place that is highly valued by residents and visitors alike.

## Capitola’s History

Capitola’s rich history provides a foundation to plan for the future. Below is a brief summary of Capitola’s history, prepared by former City Historian Carolyn Swift for the General Plan Update.

### Pre-History and the Colonial Period

Capitola’s earliest history evolved around the wetland at the mouth of Soquel Creek. A tribal unit of about 200 native inhabitants, the Uypi, lived here for thousands of years. The name Soquel derives from these Ohlone people and identifies the range of their settlement along the coast, the creek, and its tributaries. When the Santa Cruz Mission was established in 1791, the Uypi were taken to the mission compound. Their culture persisted, but their traditional home sites were lost.

The territory that defines present-day Capitola was awarded in two Mexican land grants. The 1,473 acre Rancho Arroyo del Rodeo took in the west side of Soquel Creek, including Forty-First Avenue, and was given to Francisco de Sales Rodriguez in 1834. Rancho Soquel, spreading over 1,668 acres, was received in 1833 by Maria Martina Castro Lodge and her husband, Michael.

### Early Development

Intelligent and ambitious, Frederick Augustus Hihn (1829-1913) arrived in California from Germany as the Gold Rush began. Settled in Santa Cruz by 1851, he soon owned sizable portions of the Soquel and Arroyo del Rodeo Ranchos. Among his 1856 acquisitions was a two-mile stretch between Borregas Creek and Soquel Creek and another parcel nearby that was part of Rancho Arroyo del Rodeo. This land was to become Capitola.

Construction of the 1857 wharf and the 1876 Santa Cruz-Watsonville Railroad was prompted by Hihn’s investments in industry. Freighters made frequent landings at the wharf until the rail line was purchased and improved by Southern Pacific Railroad in 1881. Today, the wharf and trestle border and identify Capitola Village.

As soon as the wagon route to Capitola was linked to a turnpike over the summit in 1858, inland valley residents came to the beach to escape the summer heat. Samuel Alonzo Hall, lessee of the beach flat, recognized an opportunity coming with passenger rail service. Lumber for the trestle was delivered in May 1874, and several weeks later—with Hihn’s approval—Hall opened Camp Capitola. The vacation retreat was named for a heroine in fictional novels by author E.D.E.N. Southworth.

As Capitola profited, Hihn took direct charge of the camp’s development. Lots between Capitola and Cherry Avenues were subdivided in 1882. The first privately owned cottages were typically small, without foundations or plumbing.

Few of these early cottages survive. City and fire officials ordered a majority of them torn down in the early 1960s. The Hihn Superintendent’s Building at the corner of Monterey and Capitola Avenue was spared. Given a foundation and renovated in 1973, it is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Today’s Depot Hill was defined in Hihn’s 1884 subdivision map. German-American families associated with the Turn Verein, a social and athletic club, built a cluster of houses on and near Cliff Avenue. A private family retreat known as the English Cottages was built in 1897 on the eastern end of the tract, between Railroad and Grand Avenues. The resort was renamed El Salto in 1911.

During the 1880s, Hihn invested \$5,000 in village improvements. Vacationers could rent lodgings or stay in the free campground. As Capitola expanded, the tents and older cabins were moved upstream. The tract gradually filled in with private homes and is now listed as the Old Riverview Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places.



*The Hotel Capitola and Six Sisters*

Above the wharf to the west, Hihn owned property halfway up the ridge, where he had located the railroad and trestle. Hilltop owner Dennis Feeley opened Camp Fairview in 1888. Hihn soon acquired it but added no amenities. The surrounding neighborhood was named the Jewel Box in the 1970s, its title inspired by Opal Cliffs.

Between 1894 and 1904, the 160-room Queen Anne/Colonial Revival-style Hotel Capitola, the Six Sisters duplexes, and similarly styled concessions along the ocean front were built. An electric streetcar line was then completed between Capitola and Santa Cruz, and a modern railroad depot was set at the top of the hill along Park Avenue. The resort reached a high point when Hihn promoted “Capitola by-the-Sea” as a setting for annual conferences. Lawn Way was his last Capitola project in 1911, and is listed in the Six Sisters/Lawn Way National Register Historic District.

### Rispin Era

After Hihn’s death in 1913, Capitola was left to a daughter, Katherine Cope Henderson. She sold the resort in 1919 to (Henry) Allen Rispin (1872-1947). Backed by the Capitola Company syndicate of investors, Rispin intended to profit by subdividing and marketing lots on undeveloped tracts. Inside the village, he tore down many older structures and offered others for sale. Hotel Capitola was sold.

The ocean front was modernized with concrete and stucco. In 1920, the Esplanade was paved and curved out onto the beach. The Spanish Colonial Revival-



*The Esplanade, Venetian, and Cliff Drive homes*



*Lawn Way cottages*

style Venetian Court was developed in 1924 on the former site of a long-established fishing village at the base of the wharf. Venetian Court is now a National Register Historic District.

As Capitola prospered in the mid-Twenties, land use patterns changed in the surrounding countryside. Upstream on the creek's west side, Rispin had anticipated that his 1921 Spanish Colonial Revival/Mediterranean mansion would inspire construction of similar architectural styles nearby. The borders of the resort bloomed instead with flowers.

West of Capitola along Forty-First Avenue, James Brown became a worldwide producer of the tuberous begonia. The bulb and flower industry spread to neighboring tracts along Forty-First and between Capitola Road and Clares Street. Capitola Mall and Brown Ranch Marketplace now occupy the ranch and farm site.

The 250<sup>th</sup> Coast Artillery's Camp McQuaide was established in 1926-27 to the east of the resort and along Park Avenue. Adjoining it was an "airdrome" to become the Santa Cruz-Capitola Municipal Airport in 1934.

Overextended financially, Rispin sold the Hihn water system and began to ignore basic public services. The subdivisions of Riverview Terrace and Fanmar Terrace took shape in 1928. Rispin left abruptly in 1929, and another Capitola Company investor, Robert Hays Smith, assumed ownership of his properties. Smith himself was bankrupt within a few years. The Rispin Mansion was sold in 1940. From 1941 to 1959, it was a convent for the Order of Poor Clares. Purchased by the City in 1985, the mansion was scheduled for renovation when it burned in 2009. The building has been sealed and its exterior preserved. It remains listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Sewer and street repairs, beach and creek pollution, adequate fire and police protection were all critical issues during the Great Depression. Hotel Capitola burned in 1929. An entire block was destroyed between Stockton and San Jose Avenues in 1933. Civic leaders began to discuss the need for municipal services.

After World War II, the Capitola Improvement Club was organized and campaigned for an incorporation election. Capitola became a city in January 1949, by a margin of 54 votes. Just completed, Highway 1 put a physical boundary between the two traditionally close communities of Capitola and Soquel.

### Postwar Era

Postwar growth hastened new construction. Closed in 1954, Capitola Airport property was the City's first annexation in 1959, preparing for the Cliffwood Heights subdivision. The 1962 opening of the nearby Cabrillo College campus added pressure for housing. Capitola shifted from a community of retirees and vacation homeowners to students and young families.

In the early Sixties, a clover-leaf was built on Highway 1 and Forty-First Avenue, and the roadway was upgraded. King's Market at the corner of Capitola Road and Forty-First Avenue, built in 1963 by George Ow, Sr., set in motion the expansion of retail business along the improved corridor.

Debating the future of the beach flat and adjoining bluffs, the City Council evaluated benefits of multi-story high rises. Cliff Apartments were built in 1964 on a former City-owned park site at the end of Grand Avenue. That year, Capitola adopted its first general plan.

Panic set in as the City resort then faced the greatest challenge of its history. Santa Cruz Harbor construction created a breakwater that blocked the sand that normally drifted down the coast to replenish the beach. Waves undercut ocean front building foundations, the storm sewer was exposed, and cliff erosion accelerated. Capitola's vacation economy shrank accordingly. A rock jetty built near the eastern bluff finally helped restore the shoreline beach after 1969. It cost more than \$1 million to get the beach back.



*The Elephant Train*

During the crisis, Council members investigated ways to keep the tourist resort attractive. A 1965 citizen group submitted ideas supporting a “small, intimate family-scale style of buildings” and a “rustic and individual character” rather than a “slick, modernistic style.” One quickly adopted suggestion was to rename the business flat “Capitola Village.”

Before the beach returned, artisans and “long-hairs” settled into empty storefronts and opened businesses with counterculture charisma. By the early Seventies, the young entrepreneurs joined the Chamber of Commerce and took a role in planning and politics.

Capitola’s fortunes improved dramatically as the 1975 General Plan was drafted. In a controversial move, the city annexed 38 acres of the Forty-First Avenue Brown Bulb Ranch property. Sutter Hill Development Company then built a shopping center to be known as the Capitola Mall. Annexation was approved in March 1975, and the mall opened in 1977. Proposition 13 passed in 1976. Capitola benefited as revenue for cities shifted from property taxes to sales taxes.

The Council was able to lower taxes, increase staff, and build a new city hall. Projects over the next fifteen years included a school gym, central parking lot and metering system, a park-and-ride shuttle, Rispin Mansion and wharf purchases, plans for a new library, construction of the Jade Street Park complex, and the start of creek habitat protection.

The Capitola General Plan of 1989 followed two disasters. The 1982 flood and 1983 high tide drew attention to coastal hazards and planning development in the flood plain. Focus was given to historic preservation as builders increasingly applied to remodel or replace the Village’s older structures. An architectural survey was completed in 1987 and three National Register Historic Districts were created.

A \$35 million mall expansion doubled the retail shopping area in 1988. Forty-First Avenue was widened in the shopping district to a six-lane boulevard, attracting new businesses and a number of smaller shopping centers. The opening of the Capitola Auto Center further increased tax revenue base, allowing the city to move with confidence toward the new millennium in 2001.

Today Forty-First Avenue is the most traveled street in Santa Cruz County.



*Sabra bar and restaurant*

## The General Plan Update Process

The process to update the Capitola General Plan began in 2010 and continued through 2014. During this period, a range of public input opportunities occurred to ensure that the updated General Plan reflects the community's vision for Capitola. The following outreach efforts were undertaken to involve Capitola residents and stakeholders in the process.

### General Plan Advisory Committee

The General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) was comprised of 11 members representing various neighborhood groups, the Planning Commission, and various City committees. The GPAC's charge was to review the progress of key project milestones and provide direction at critical decision points. The GPAC helped to guide the development of the land use alternatives for specific geographic areas, as well as goals, policies, and actions that address the city as a whole. GPAC meetings were open to the public and allowed all interested community members to voice their opinions regarding the content and direction of the General Plan. In total, there were 19 GPAC meetings.

### Public Workshops and Stakeholder Work Sessions

The following workshops took place to foster community participation in the General Plan Update process:

- ◆ **Issues and Opportunities.** This was the first formal public outreach event of the General Plan Update, and its goal was to educate Capitola residents about the General Plan Update process and solicit feedback from residents on key issues facing the community. Input from the workshop participants informed the overall vision, guiding principles, and major goals of the General Plan Update.
- ◆ **41<sup>st</sup> Avenue/Capitola Mall Re-Visioning Plan.** This workshop was focused on the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue/Capitola area. Workshop participants provided input on three conceptual alternatives for the mall properties and the future of the corridor as a whole.
- ◆ **Bay Avenue Workshop.** This workshop was focused on the Bay Avenue area from Highway 1 to Capitola Avenue. Workshop participants provide input on key issues and options for this area of Capitola.
- ◆ **Village and Beach Parking Lot/City Hall Area.** This workshop was focused on the City and Beach Parking Lot/City Hall area. Workshop participants provided input about the vision for the future use of the City and Beach Parking Lot/City Hall site.

- ◆ **Draft General Plan Update Review.** This workshop provided the public with the opportunity to review and learn about the draft General Plan, and provide comments for the final draft.

In addition, work sessions were held with focused groups of residents, property owners, and merchants to obtain more detailed input on specific geographic areas within the city.

### Environmental Review

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) required the City to evaluate potential environmental impacts that could result from adoption of this General Plan. The results of this evaluation were compiled in a Draft and Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Additional technical information related to the General Plan, including traffic analyses, can be found in the EIR. The City Council officially certified the EIR when it adopted the General Plan.

### Public Review and Adoption

A public review draft of the General Plan was published in December of 2013. The Planning Commission and City Council held three meetings to review and receive public feedback on the General Plan and its Environmental Impact Report between September and December 2013. The General Plan was ultimately adopted by the City Council on June 26, 2014.



# 2

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

---



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This chapter presents guiding principles for the Capitola General Plan. These guiding principles are a statement of core community values to guide growth, conservation, and enhancement in Capitola through 2035. Guiding principles served as a benchmark for the preparation of the General Plan, and help to define the community's unique identity and key aspirations for the future.

These guiding principles were prepared based on public input from a community workshop on March 3, 2011. At this workshop participants described what they valued most about living in Capitola, and discussed the following questions:

- ◆ How would you describe the essence of Capitola's identity?
- ◆ What do you value most about living in Capitola?
- ◆ How can the City best strengthen, protect, and enhance Capitola's unique character?
- ◆ Are there any threats to Capitola's character and quality of life? How might the City address these threats?
- ◆ What is your overall vision for Capitola over the next 10 to 20 years?

Following the community workshop, the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) crafted a set of General Plan guiding principles. These guiding principles were based on workshop input as well as GPAC members' sense of the unique values and aspirations of the community. After several rounds of revision, a final set of guiding principles were endorsed by the GPAC at a meeting on June 22, 2011.

# Capitola General Plan Guiding Principles

- ◆ **Community Identity.** Preserve and enhance Capitola’s intimate small-town feel and coastal village charm. Ensure that all areas of Capitola, not just the Village, possess a unique, memorable, and high-quality identity. Promote Capitola’s reputation as a community that is sustainable, historic, welcoming, and family-friendly.
- ◆ **Community Connections.** Provide year-round opportunities for residents of all ages to meet and gather in public places. Enhance the ability for residents to engage in civic life. Ensure that all neighborhoods enjoy access to high quality community events, services, and amenities that foster community connections.
- ◆ **Neighborhoods and Housing.** Protect and enhance the quality of life within residential neighborhoods. Strive for neighborhood improvements that foster identity and build stability, inclusiveness, and interaction. Minimize impacts to neighborhoods—such as noise, cut-through traffic, and overflow parking. Ensure that infill development and neighborhood improvements are designed with careful attention to scale, minimized impacts, and community benefits
- ◆ **Environmental Resources.** Embrace environmental sustainability as a foundation for Capitola’s way of life. Protect and enhance all natural resources—including the beaches, creeks, ocean, and lagoon—that contribute to Capitola’s unique identity and scenic beauty. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the effects of global climate change, including increased flooding and coastal erosion caused by sea-level rise.
- ◆ **Economy.** Support a local economy that is vibrant, diverse, and dynamic. Create a brand identity for Capitola that is grounded in the city’s unique identity. Support all local businesses, “green” businesses, and employers that provide jobs for Capitola residents.
- ◆ **Fiscal Responsibility.** Practice fiscally responsible municipal decision making to avoid shifting today’s costs to future generations.
- ◆ **Mobility.** Provide a balanced transportation system that accommodates the needs of automobiles, pedestrians, and bicycles. Reduce dependence on the automobile with a complete network of sidewalks, trails, and pathways, and support development patterns that encourage the use of public transportation. Promote transportation options that are safe and convenient for all residents, including youth, seniors, and persons with disabilities.
- ◆ **Health and Safety.** Promote a safe and healthy community for people of all ages. Ensure that residents, businesses, and visitors are protected from natural and man-made disasters. Continue to provide excellent public services that support the public well-being while enhancing a sense of community.



3

LAND USE



# INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Element establishes core policies to guide land use and development in Capitola. It identifies permitted land uses within the city and the allowed intensity of new development. The Land Use Element also describes the desired form and character of development, and how land uses can best preserve and enhance Capitola's unique sense of place.

The Land Use Element describes a pattern of development in Capitola consistent with the General Plan Guiding Principles found in Chapter 2. The Element provides a roadmap for growth, conservation, and enhancement in Capitola consistent with basic community values. Like all elements in this General Plan, the Land Use Element is guided by the principle of sustainable development. The Land Use Element supports a pattern of development that protects natural resources, supports economic development, and promotes access to opportunity for all residents.

The Land Use Element is divided into three sections, which cover:

- ◆ **Land Use Background.** This section provides background information about existing land use patterns, historic resources, natural spaces, and parks and recreation, topics addressed in this element.
- ◆ **Land Use Map and Designations.** This section presents the citywide land use map and describes the land use designations that apply in Capitola. Land use designations identify the permitted land uses and intensity of development allowed in all areas of the city.
- ◆ **Goals, Policies, and Actions.** This section presents the goals, policies, and actions to guide land use and development in Capitola.

# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## Existing Land Use

Within a small area of 1.7 square miles, Capitola contains a diversity of land uses. As shown in Table LU-1, over half of Capitola is occupied by residential uses. Single-family detached units make up 36 percent of the City’s housing stock. The remaining 64 percent of the City’s housing stock is comprised of apartments, condominium projects, and mobile home parks. There are more renter households than owner households in Capitola. Commercial and industrial uses occupy 21 percent of the city, primarily located along the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue corridor. Open space and recreational uses, including New Brighton State Park and Capitola Beach, occupy 14 percent of the city.

TABLE LU-1 EXISTING LAND USE

	Acres	Percent
Residential	442	52%
Commercial and Industrial	176	21%
Open Space and Recreational	118	14%
Other	109	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>845</b>	

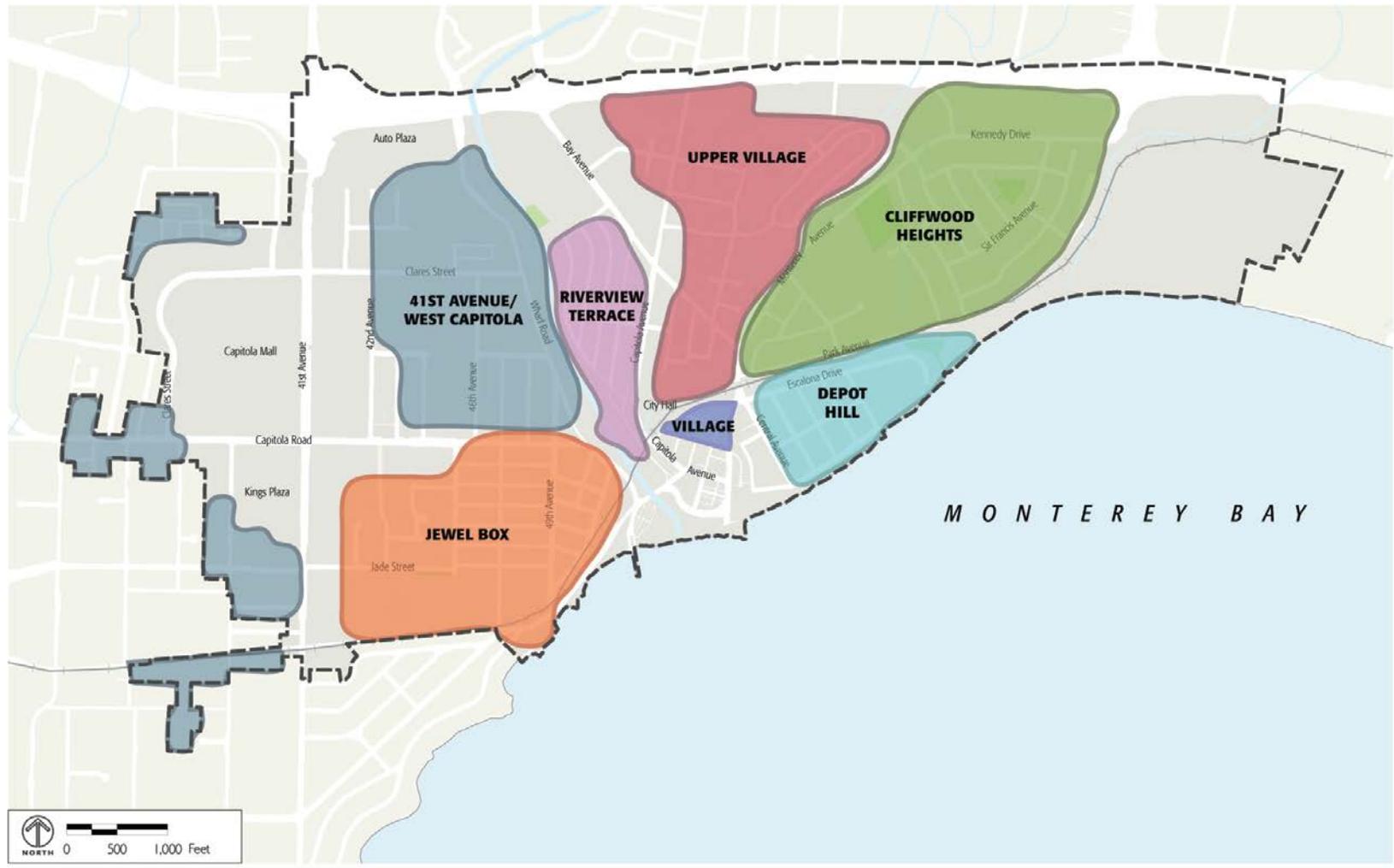
Source: Santa Cruz County Assessor, 2010.

## Residential Neighborhoods

Residential uses in Capitola are grouped together in neighborhoods, each with their own special character. The general boundaries of these neighborhoods are shown in Figure LU-1. Each neighborhood has a unique identity defined by its history, design character, land use mix, and natural setting.

- ◆ **41<sup>st</sup> Avenue/West Capitola.** The 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue/West Capitola neighborhood is comprised of an assortment of detached single-family homes, multi-family housing, and three mobile home parks. The area is known by some as the “North Forties” and includes the Trotter Street area. Housing constructed in the 1970s and 1980s creates a more modern feel to the neighborhood. The Rispin property, the Shadowbrook property, and the Capitola Library are located along the eastern edge of the neighborhood.

FIGURE LU-1 RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS



Source: City of Capitola, 2010.

\*Neighborhood boundaries are approximate.

◆ **Cliffwood Heights.** The Cliffwood Heights neighborhood consists primarily of detached single-family homes as well as multi-family housing on Monterey Avenue and Park Avenue. Homes are typically one or two stories occupying relatively large lots. Wider streets with sidewalks and newer homes contribute to a more contemporary feel to the neighborhood. Monterey Park, Cortez Park, and New Brighton Middle School are also located within the Cliffwood Heights neighborhood.

◆ **Depot Hill.** The Depot Hill neighborhood is nestled along Capitola’s shoreline and overlooks Capitola Village. Detached single-family homes on relatively small lots create an intimate feel. A high concentration of historic single-family homes, a variety of architectural styles, and a sidewalk exemption allowance contributes to the neighborhood’s coastal village feel. The Inn at Depot Hill and Monarch Cove Inn (formerly El Salto Resort) are located in the Depot Hill neighborhood.

◆ **Jewel Box.** The Jewel Box neighborhood is tucked in the northerly cliff, bounded by the Prospect bluff overlooking the Wharf and Village, located south of Capitola Road and east of 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue. East of 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue detached single-family homes occupy quaint lots. Vintage beach cottages and bungalows contribute to a coastal village feel in this community. Multi-family condominiums line the west side of 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue, with lawns between buildings. The Jewel Box neighborhood includes the West Cliff neighborhood and also contains two mobile home parks, the 10-acre Jade Street Park, School, and Community Center, and a few commercial establishments along Capitola Road.

◆ **Riverview Terrace.** The Riverview Terrace neighborhood is bordered by Soquel Creek, Capitola Avenue, Bay Avenue, and Center Street. The neighborhood contains a high concentration of historic homes, including many smaller cottages and bungalows. Many homes occupy small lots, with minimal setbacks and structures in close proximity to one another and the street. Narrow streets with on-street parking and no sidewalk contribute to a compact and intimate feel.



*Residences in the Depot Hill (top) and Jewel Box (bottom) neighborhoods*

- ◆ **Upper Village.** The Upper Village neighborhood contains a variety of housing types, including single-family homes, multi-family apartment complexes, and three mobile home parks. In many cases these different land uses are adjacent to or facing one another. Homes located closer to the Village tend to have a more historic and intimate character than those located closer to Highway 1.

## Capitola Village

Capitola Village is the “heart” of Capitola and possesses the charm of an intimate coastal village. The Village is a true mixed-use district with a diversity of visitor-serving commercial establishments, public amenities, and residential uses. During the summer months, the Village is a popular tourist destination. Visitors are attracted by Capitola Beach, unique accommodations, and the historic village character. Village residents enjoy these amenities year round. The Village is pedestrian friendly, with human-scale architecture and a diversity of public gathering places. Capitola Village contains a high concentration of landmark destinations such as the Esplanade Park, Capitola Beach, the Six Sisters, the Venetian, and the historic Capitola Wharf.



*Capitola Village*

## Mixed-Use and Commercial Districts

Beyond the Village, commercial areas in Capitola are focused around a number of mixed-use and commercial districts as shown in Figure LU-2. These districts vary widely in terms of their function, mix of uses, and general character. Some of these districts are primarily resident serving (Capitola Avenue, Bay Avenue), while others are more region serving (41<sup>st</sup> Avenue north of Capitola Road). All of these districts contribute to the economic vitality of Capitola and contribute to the community’s unique sense of place.

- ◆ **41<sup>st</sup> Avenue/Capitola Mall.** The 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue/Capitola Mall commercial district north of Capitola Road contains a number of region-serving shopping centers, including the Capitola Mall and Kings Plaza shopping center. Other land uses include the Brown Ranch Shopping Center, the Auto Plaza at the northern end of the corridor, the Whole Foods Market, the New Leaf Community Market, and a variety of other retail, office, and

FIGURE LU-2 MIXED-USE AND COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS



Source: City of Capitola, 2010.

\*District boundaries are approximate.

service establishments. South of Capitola Road, 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue transitions to a smaller scale neighborhood serving commercial district which is beach-oriented and reflective of its proximity to the ocean. This corridor features the Fairfield Inn and Best Western hotels and is home to the O’Neill surf shop.

- ◆ **Bay Avenue.** The Bay Avenue area is a neighborhood-serving commercial district with stores and services for Capitola residents and some regional shopping destinations. Land uses include the recently renovated Nob Hill shopping center, a large vacant parcel north of the Nob Hill shopping center, the Capitola Plaza shopping center, the Quality Inn hotel, and Gayle’s Bakery.
- ◆ **Capitola Avenue.** The Capitola Avenue mixed-use district is characterized by an eclectic assortment of small-scale offices, personal services, retail, multi-family housing, a mobile home park, and single-family homes. The Capitola City Hall, police station, fire station, and historic museum border the Village at the southern end of this district.
- ◆ **Kennedy Drive.** The Kennedy Drive industrial district is occupied by light industrial and service establishments and the City corporation yard.

## Public Facilities

Public facilities, such as schools, libraries, and emergency service facilities, are an important part of Capitola’s land use pattern. The location of key public facilities is shown in Figure LU-3. These facilities serve Capitola residents, visitors, and workers within the community.

## Parks and Recreation

As shown in Table LU-2, there are eight City parks in Capitola, totaling over 18 acres. Seven of these parks are smaller neighborhood parks, and one park (Jade Street) is a larger park with a community center intended to serve the entire community. Although not a City park, New Brighton State Beach is also located within Capitola. The Soquel Union Elementary School District (SUESD), which owns the Jade Street park property, intends to



*Mobile Home Park (top) and the Capitola Library (bottom)*

construct a new elementary school on a portion of the Jade Street park property. Table LU-2 generally describes the amenities provided at each park. The location of these parks is shown in Figure LU-3.

**TABLE LU-2 EXISTING PARKS**

Name	Size	Type	Amenities
Cortez Park	1.1 acres	Neighborhood Park	Open field and playground equipment
Esplanade Park	1.2 acres	Neighborhood Park	Oceanfront seating and grassy field
Jade Street Park*	9.9 acres	Community Center and Park	Community center, open field, and athletics fields, tennis courts, playground equipment
McGregor Park	1 acre	Community Park	Planned bicycle, skateboard, and dog run amenities
Monterey Park	4.0 acres	Neighborhood Park	Baseball diamond and athletic fields
New Brighton State Beach**	86.5 acres	State Park	Picnic areas, camping, and trails
Noble Gulch Park	1.3 acres	Neighborhood Park	Open field and picnic tables
Peery Park	0.8 acres	Neighborhood Park	Soquel Creek wooded area
Stockton Bridge Park	2,500 sq. ft.	Neighborhood Park	Walking trail, bench, interpretive signage
<b>Total</b>	<b>105 acres</b>		

\* Property owned by SUESD.

\*\*State park area within Capitola city limit

Source: City of Capitola, 2011.

FIGURE LU-3 PUBLIC FACILITIES AND PARKS



Source: Santa Cruz County and RBF Consulting, 2011.

## Historic Resources

Historic and potentially historic resources in Capitola are described in detail in the Capitola Historic Context Statement and Architectural Survey. Preservation and enhancement of these resources is an important goal for the City of Capitola.

A significant number of historic places and structures contribute to Capitola's unique identity and coastal village charm. Many of these structures are commercial and visitor-serving buildings located in the central Village, such as the historic Superintendent's Building. Capitola also has many historic homes in residential neighborhoods, and even historically significant public infrastructure such as the Trestle and Stockton Bridge, and historic Capitola Wharf. Preservation of these resources is essential to retain Capitola's community character and historical context.

Preservation of historically significant resources promotes tourism, enhances property values, and defines a community's sense of place.

Many of the officially designated historic structures are located in four National Register Historic Districts:

- ◆ **Old Riverview Historic District.** This district is located along the Soquel Creek just north of the Stockton Bridge and contains cottages adjacent to the Creek and the Riverview Pathway. The District includes houses on both sides of Riverview Avenue from Stockton Avenue to Bluegum Avenue.
- ◆ **Rispin Historic District.** The Rispin property is located along Wharf Road and Soquel Creek. The historic Rispin Mansion, currently vacant, is located within this district.
- ◆ **Six Sisters and Lawn Way Historic District.** The Six Sisters duplexes located on the Esplanade in the Village were originally built in 1903 and provide vacationers with oceanfront rental housing. The Lawn Way subdivision, located in the village center, was completed in 1911 and today features a high concentration of historic structures.



*Historic trestle crossing Capitola Avenue*

- ◆ **Venetian Court Historic District.** Located at the juncture of the Soquel Creek and the Capitola Beach, the Venetian Court was built in 1924 and consists of 24 residential units and a 19-unit hotel.

There are a number of designated historic structures in Capitola. Designated historic structures are historic structures that are listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, the California Historic Resources Inventory, or the Capitola Register of Historic Features. The majority of designated historic structures are located in the Village or along the Soquel Creek immediately north of the Trestle. Past surveys also have found many additional potential historic structures in Capitola. Many of these structures are concentrated in the Village and the Depot Hill neighborhood, in addition to structures found in the Jewel Box and Upper Village neighborhoods.



*Rispin Mansion, circa 1936*



*Capitola Hotel and the Six Sisters, circa 1904*

## Land Use Map and Designations

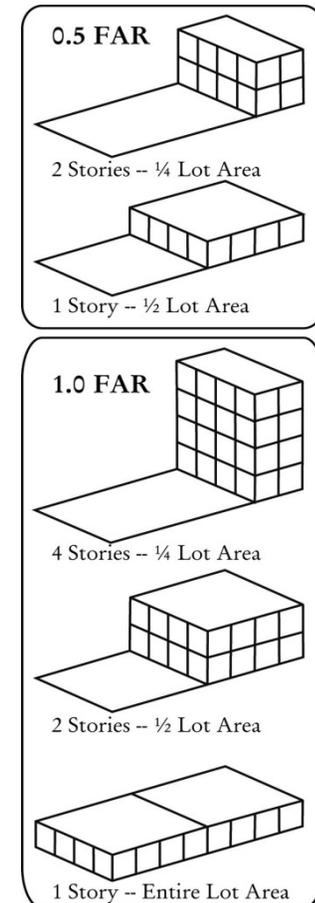
This section outlines land use designations for land within city limits, as shown in Figure LU-4. All new development in the city must conform to these designations.

This General Plan defines various land use designations by their allowable uses and maximum densities and intensities. The land use designations in the Land Use Element establish a range of densities and intensities of use in order to provide flexibility for development while still maintaining Capitola's existing character. The development levels listed here do not create entitlements to a specific number of dwelling units or amount of floor area. Densities on individual parcels may be lower due to site constraints or other City regulations such as minimum lot sizes as specified in the zoning code.

In this General Plan, standards of building intensity for residential uses are stated as the allowable range of dwelling units per gross acre; this means that the number of allowable units on a parcel can be calculated by multiplying the total number of acres by the allowable density. The zoning code also establishes maximum floor area ratios for residential uses.

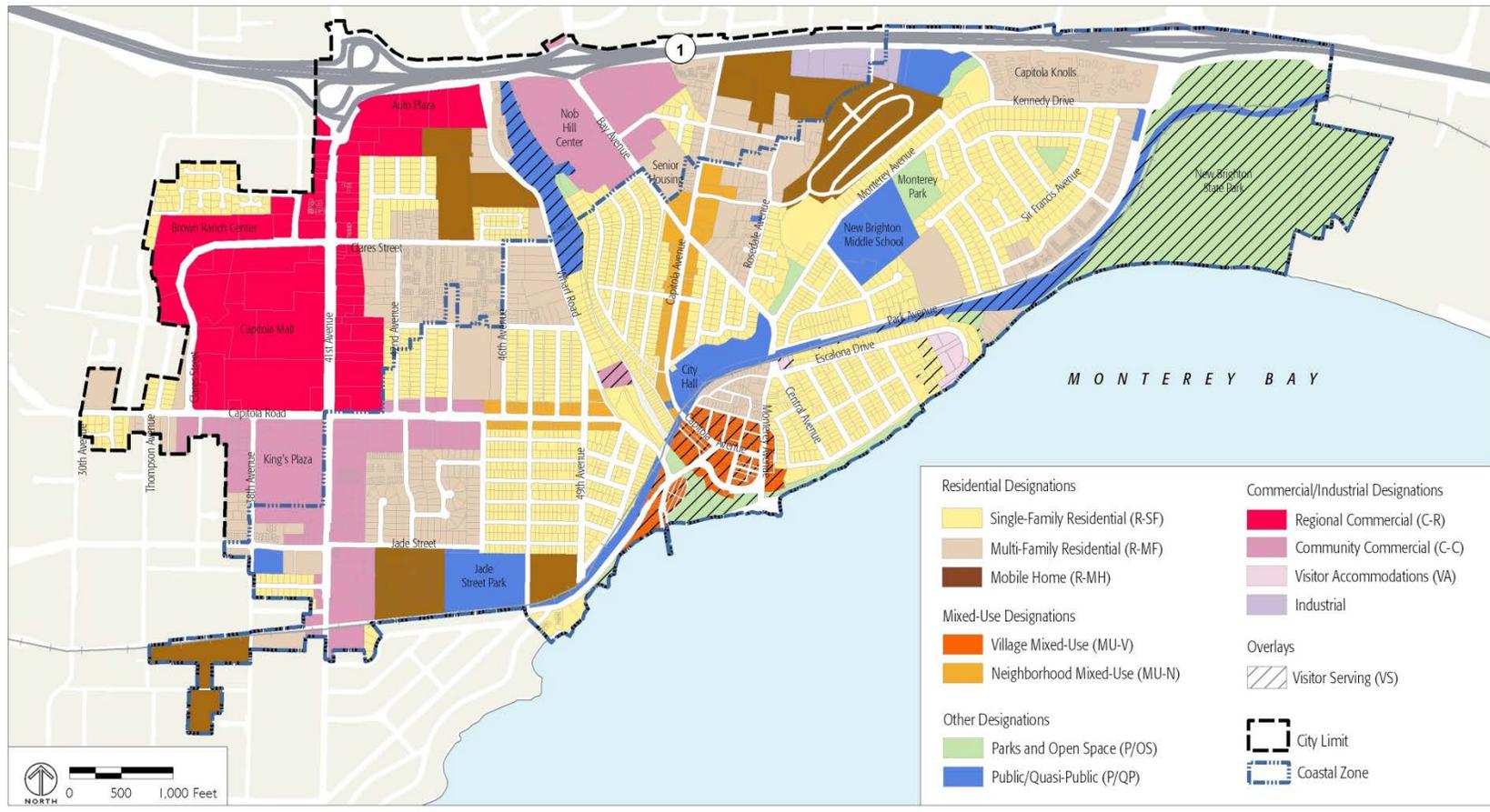
Standards of building intensity for non-residential uses are stated as maximum floor-area ratio (FAR) based on gross acreage. FAR is a ratio of the gross building square footage permitted on a lot to the gross square footage of the lot. Generally, FAR decreases as lot size increases. For example, on a site with 10,000 square feet of land area, a FAR of 1.0 will allow 10,000 gross square feet of building floor area to be built. On the same site, a FAR of 2.0 would allow 20,000 square feet of floor area. This could take the form of a two-story building with 100 percent lot coverage, or a four-story building with 50 percent lot coverage. A FAR of 0.4 would allow 4,000 square feet of floor area.

Maximum FAR's for a land use designation are an absolute ceiling, not an entitlement. Other controls in the zoning code, such as maximum permitted height, building coverage, and parking, also limit building intensity. Variances for FAR limits established by the General Plan are not permitted.



*Examples of floor-area ratio (FAR) calculation. FAR does not regulate building placement or form, only the spatial relationship between building size and lot size.*

FIGURE LU-4 LAND USE MAP



Source: City of Capitola, 2010.

The goals, policies, and actions contained in this Element provide direction on how the various land use designations should be developed to contribute to the overall character of Capitola. Allowed uses are generally characterized within each land use designation description of this General Plan. Additional use types may be permitted as specified by the zoning ordinance.

## Residential Designations

- ◆ **Single-Family Residential (R-SF).** The R-SF designation applies to residential neighborhoods primarily characterized by detached single-family homes. Permitted land uses include single-family homes and public facilities such as schools, religious institutions, parks, and other community facilities appropriate within a residential neighborhood. The maximum permitted residential density in the R-SF designation is 10 dwelling units per acre.<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ **Multi-Family Residential (R-MF).** The R-MF designation applies to areas primarily intended for multi-family residential development. All residential uses are permitted in the R-MF designation, including single-family homes, duplex homes, townhomes, and multi-family structures. Public facilities, such as schools, religious institutions, parks, and other community facilities appropriate within a multi-family residential setting are also permitted. The maximum permitted residential density in the R-MF designation is 20 dwelling units per acre.
- ◆ **Mobile Home Park (MH).** The MH designation provides areas for use as mobile home parks, a valuable source of affordable housing for Capitola residents. Mobile



*Jewel Box homes in the R-SF designation (top) and Fanmar Way homes in the R-MF designation (bottom)*

---

<sup>1</sup> Maximum densities prescribed by the General Plan are not entitlements and may not be realized due to other development regulations, including but not limited to, minimum lot size, setbacks, height, and parking requirements.

home coaches and other land uses typically associated with mobile home parks are permitted within the MH designation. A maximum of 20 mobile homes per acre are permitted in the MH designation.

## Mixed-Use Designations

- ◆ **Village Mixed-Use (MU-V).** The MU-V designation applies to the central Capitola Village area and supports a vibrant pedestrian-friendly environment that is the heart of Capitola. A fine-grain mixture of commercial, residential, visitor-serving, recreational, and public uses are permitted in the MU-V designation. The maximum permitted FAR in the MU-V designation is 2.0, with an FAR of 3.0 permitted for a hotel if special criteria are met as established in Action LU-7.3.
- ◆ **Neighborhood Mixed-Use (MU-N).** The MU-N designation applies to pedestrian-oriented mixed-use areas with an emphasis on resident-serving stores and services. Permitted uses in the MU-N designation include single-family homes, multi-family developments, retail, personal services, community facilities, and other uses compatible with an eclectic neighborhood-oriented mixed-use district. The maximum permitted FAR in the MU-N designation is 1.0.

## Commercial and Industrial Designations

- ◆ **Regional Commercial (C-R).** The C-R designation provides an area for general retail and services for Capitola residents and regional visitors. Permitted land uses include shopping malls, auto sales, general retail, personal and business services, restaurants, offices, similar commercial uses, and mixed-use residential projects. The maximum permitted FAR in the C-R designation is 1.5, with an FAR of 2.0 permitted if special criteria are met as established in Action LU-9.3.
- ◆ **Community Commercial (C-C).** The C-C designation provides an area for commercial uses primarily serving Capitola residents. Permitted land uses include gen-



*Capitola Village in the MU-V designation (top) and Capitola Produce in the C-C designation (bottom)*

eral retail, personal services, restaurants, offices, and multi-family housing as part of a mixed-use project. The maximum permitted FAR in the C-C designation is 1.0, with an FAR of 2.0 permitted if special criteria are met as established in Action LU-9.3.

- ◆ **Visitor Accommodations (VA).** The VA designation applies to areas that provide overnight visitor accommodations. Permitted land uses in the VA designation include hotels, motels, hostels, bed and breakfast lodgings, campgrounds, resorts, and ancillary visitor-serving food and service establishments. The maximum permitted FAR in the VA designation is 0.5.
- ◆ **Industrial (I).** The I designation provides an area in Capitola for light industrial and other employment uses. Permitted land uses include manufacturing facilities, vehicle repair, research and development laboratories, administrative offices, warehouses, and homeless shelters. The maximum permitted FAR in the I designation is 0.5.



## Other Designations

- ◆ **Parks and Open Space (P/OS).** The P/OS designation applies to public natural space, parks, and open space intended for recreational use and/or natural resource preservation. Parks, playgrounds, trails, recreational facilities, visitor centers, and other similar uses are permitted in the P/OS designation. There is no maximum permitted FAR in the P/OS designation.
- ◆ **Public/Quasi-Public Facility (P/QP).** The P/QP designation provides areas for public and community facilities serving Capitola residents and visitors. Permitted land uses in the P/QP designation include governmental offices, police and fire stations, community centers, schools, libraries, churches, and other similar uses. There is no maximum permitted FAR in the P/QP designation.



*Capitola Historical Museum in the P/QP designation (top) and a Kennedy Drive building in the I designation (bottom)*

## Overlay Designations

- ◆ **Visitor Serving (-VS).** The -VS overlay designation applies to areas where additional visitor-serving uses are permitted in addition to the land uses permitted by the base designation. Additional visitor-serving uses permitted in the -VS designation include hotels, motels, hostels, bed and breakfast lodgings, campgrounds, resorts, and ancillary visitor-serving food and service establishments. The maximum permitted development intensity within the -VS overlay designation is determined by the applicable base designation.

# GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

## COMMUNITYWIDE

**Goal LU-1 Maintain and enhance Capitola's distinctive identity and unique sense of place.**

### Policies

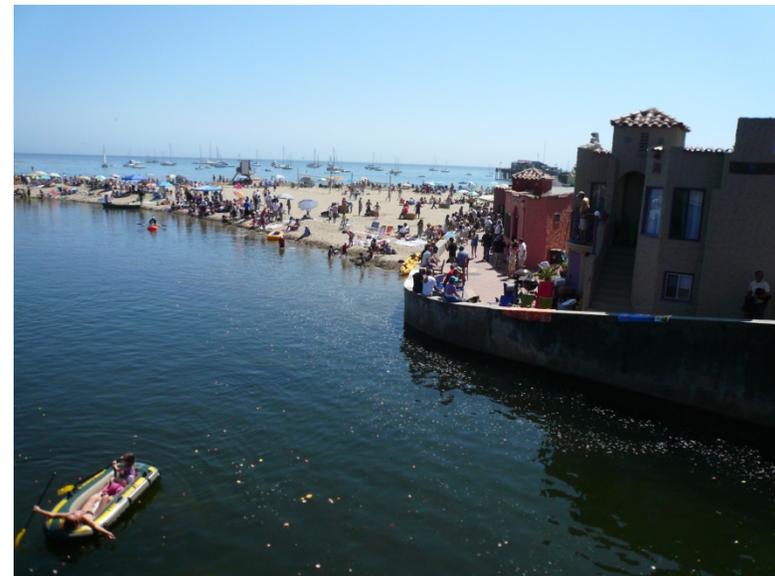
**Policy LU-1.1 Community Character.** Ensure that historic and cultural resources are maintained and that all new development enhances Capitola's neighborly feel, coastal village charm, and welcoming character.

**Policy LU-1.2 Design Quality.** Require all new development to feature high quality design that enhances the visual character of the community.

**Policy LU-1.3 Compatible Development.** Ensure that all new development is compatible with neighboring land uses and development.

**Policy LU-1.4 Community Involvement.** Encourage land uses that promote civic engagement, community interaction, and a sense of pride in Capitola.

**Policy LU-1.5 Inclusiveness.** Provide for a mixture of land uses that cater to the needs of people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities.



*Capitola's coastal village charm draws residents and visitors*

- Policy LU-1.6 Balanced Community.** Ensure that land use decisions balance the needs, interests, and concerns of Capitola’s residents, visitors, and workers.
- Policy LU-1.7 Economic Viability.** Ensure that land use patterns and new development enhance Capitola’s long-term economic viability and promotes sustainable (green) businesses.
- Policy LU-1.8 Public Involvement.** Encourage project applicants to consult with neighbors early in the project application review and approval process.

Actions

- Action LU-1.1 Design Guidelines.** Develop commercial and residential design guidelines that preserve Capitola as a unique coastal community and allow for development that will enhance the long-term economic viability of all of Capitola. Design Guidelines will address topics such as:
  - ◆ Unique characteristics and identity of specific residential neighborhoods.
  - ◆ Transitions between residential and non-residential land uses.
  - ◆ Sustainable building techniques.
  - ◆ Pedestrian-friendly commercial and mixed-use building design.
- Action LU-1.2 Kennedy Drive.** Require new development projects in the Kennedy Drive industrial area to make physical improvements that enhance the visual qualities of the area.

**Goal LU-2 Preserve historic and cultural resources in Capitola.**

Policies

- Policy LU-2.1 Historic Structures.** Encourage the preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, maintenance, and adaptive reuse of important historic structures in Capitola.
- Policy LU-2.2 Modification Standards.** Use the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties as a guide for exterior modifications to identified historic resources.

**Policy LU-2.3 Preservation Incentives.** Promote the maintenance, restoration, and rehabilitation of historical resources through the use of Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits, State incentives including the Mills Act and the California Cultural and Historical Endowment, and the California State Historical Building Code and other incentives as they arise.

**Policy LU-2.4 Public Awareness.** Work with the Capitola Museum Curator to encourage public education and awareness of Capitola's history and historical and cultural resources through public outreach, promotional materials, and other similar initiatives.

#### Actions

**Action LU-2.1 Historic Structures List.** Make regular updates to the City of Capitola Historic Structures List as new information becomes available, for example, during project review or if historic research yields additional information

**Action LU-2.2 Public Outreach.** Continue to work with schools, public agencies, and community organizations through contacts with Capitola Historical Museum Curator and the museum archives.

**Action LU-2.3 Historic Preservation Guidelines.** Develop Historic Preservation Guidelines to enhance and protect Capitola's historic resources. Guidelines will clarify:

- ◆ Process and criteria to determine the historic significance of properties.
- ◆ Permits and approvals needed to make modifications to identified historic resources.
- ◆ Design standards and guidelines for modifications to a historic resource
- ◆ Incentives for historic preservation such as the federal/State Certified Local Government Program

**Action LU-2.4 Local Register.** Establish a local register of historic resources and a historic district on Depot Hill.



*Home on Depot Hill that contributes to Capitola's identity as a quaint coastal village*

**Action LU-2.5 Historic Preservation Program.** Develop a comprehensive historic preservation program to strengthen the tools and resources available to protect historic resources in Capitola.

**Goal LU-3 Promote sustainable land use patterns that encourage transportation alternatives and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.**

Policies

**Policy LU-3.1 Land Use Diversity.** Encourage the most diverse mixture of land uses that the market will support within the mixed use and commercial land use designations.

**Policy LU-3.2 Walkability.** Encourage development and land uses that enhance a pedestrian-oriented environment.

**Policy LU-3.3 Infill Development.** Support well-designed infill development on vacant and underutilized sites that enhances Capitola’s quality of life.

**Policy LU-3.4 Transit and Pedestrian Access.** Encourage new residential and employment development in areas well served by transit and within walking distance of stores, services, and public facilities.

**Policy LU-3.5 Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections.** Require new development to provide for pedestrian and bicycle connections between residential and commercial areas.

**Policy LU-3.6 Street Closures.** Allow occasional street closures to create public spaces for temporary community activities. Plan and manage street closures to avoid diversion of traffic and parking into adjacent residential neighborhoods.

**Policy LU-3.7 Regional Outlook.** Support land uses in Capitola that contribute to a more environmentally sustainable regional development pattern in Santa Cruz and the Monterey Bay area. Consider the benefits and impacts of new development in Capitola to neighboring jurisdictions and the region as a whole.

**Policy LU-3.8 Intensity.** Within the Village Mixed-Use (MU-V), Regional Commercial (C-R), and Community Commercial (CC) designations, allow additional FAR only when the project provides substantial benefits to the community and minimizes or mitigates adverse impacts on adjacent properties as described in this General Plan.

## RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

### **Goal LU-4 Protect and enhance the special character of residential neighborhoods.**

#### Policies

**Policy LU-4.1 Quality of Life.** Ensure residential neighborhoods are walkable, safe, friendly, and provide a high quality of life for residents of all ages. Minimize unwanted noise and spillover parking in neighborhoods.

**Policy LU-4.2 Neighborhood Diversity.** Support diverse and inclusive neighborhoods for residents of all ages and backgrounds.

**Policy LU-4.3 Existing Housing.** Encourage the maintenance, rehabilitation, and improvement of the existing housing stock in Capitola.

**Policy LU-4.4 Public Facilities.** Ensure that adequate public infrastructure, facilities, and services are maintained in residential neighborhoods.

**Policy LU-4.5 Neighborhood Amenities.** Provide amenities within neighborhoods that support complete neighborhoods with unique identities.



*High-quality residential architecture contributes to residents' quality of life*

**Policy LU-4.6 Natural Features.** Protect and enhance natural features, including trees, hillsides, natural habitat, and riparian areas, that contribute to the unique identity of individual neighborhoods.

**Policy LU-4.7 Planning Projects.** Ensure that future planning efforts for non-residential areas carefully consider potential impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods.

**Goal LU-5 Ensure that new residential development respects the existing scale, density, and character of neighborhoods.**

Policies

**Policy LU-5.1 Neighborhood Characteristics.** Require new residential development to strengthen and enhance the unique qualities of the neighborhood in which it is located. Residential neighborhood boundaries are identified in Figure LU-1.

**Policy LU-5.2 Development Impacts.** Ensure that new commercial and residential development, both within and adjacent to neighborhoods, minimizes impacts to residential neighborhoods through incorporation of design standards and mitigation measures.

**Policy LU-5.3 Mass and Scale.** Ensure that the mass, scale and height of new development is compatible with existing homes within residential neighborhoods.

**Policy LU-5.4 Multi-Family Transitions.** Ensure that new multi-family housing located adjacent to single-family homes respects the size, scale, massing, and appearance of neighboring properties.

**Policy LU-5.5 Architectural Character.** Ensure that the architectural character of new development and substantial remodels complements the unique qualities of the neighborhood in which it is located and the overall coastal village character of Capitola.

**Policy LU-5.6 Minimized Traffic.** Encourage new housing to be located and designed in a manner that minimizes increased vehicle traffic on local roads within residential neighborhoods.

**Policy LU-5.7 Transportation Alternatives.** Encourage new housing that supports increased walking, biking, and use of transit, and that minimizes increased vehicle trips in Capitola.

Actions

**Action LU-5.1 Design Review.** Development applications should be reviewed by a City appointed design review group (e.g., Architectural and Site Review Committee) as part of the approval process to ensure high quality design, harmony with existing community character, and to avoid or minimize impacts to surrounding land uses.

COMMERCIAL AND MIXED-USE DISTRICTS

**Goal LU-6 Strengthen Capitola Village as the heart of the community.**

Policies

**Policy LU-6.1 Village Character.** Maintain the Village as a vibrant mixed-use district with residences, visitor accommodations, restaurants, shops, and recreational amenities.

**Policy LU-6.2 Residential/Commercial Balance.** Maintain and protect a healthy balance of commercial and residential uses in the Village.

**Policy LU-6.3 Businesses Diversity.** Attract and retain a diverse assortment of small-scale businesses that appeal to local residents, and visitors. Encourage family-friendly businesses and activities that appeal to people of all ages.

**Policy LU-6.4 Public Spaces.** Provide high quality public spaces available for the use and enjoyment of visitors and residents. Prioritize pedestrian access to these spaces and maintain amenities, such as seating areas, drinking fountains, restrooms, and landscaping, that invite and encourage pedestrian activity.

**Policy LU-6.5 Housing Types.** Maintain a diverse supply of housing types to support the Village as an area enjoyed by residents and visitors.



*Pedestrian activity in the Village*

- Policy LU-6.6 Vertical Mixed-Use.** Encourage vertical mixed use (i.e. housing above ground floor commercial) as a way to increase the vitality and activity in the Village.
- Policy LU-6.7 Community Events.** Support and actively encourage community events that attract visitors and residents to the Village, including the historic Begonia Festival. Encourage events that occur during the winter months and in the early evening to attract visitors and increase activity during these times. Plan and manage community events to minimize impacts on residential neighborhoods.
- Policy LU-6.8 Quality of Life.** Continue to maintain a high quality of life in the Village by keeping sidewalks clean and proactively addressing noise, odor, and safety issues.
- Policy LU-6.9 Capitola Wharf.** Maintain the historic Capitola Wharf as a free access public fishing pier for the use and enjoyment of Capitola residents and visitors.
- Policy LU-6.10 Village Hotel.** Consider the establishment of an appropriately designed new hotel in the Village to enhance the vitality of the area.

Actions

- Action LU-6.1 Entertainment and Recreational Opportunities.** Pursue opportunities to increase the amount of entertainment and recreational amenities in the Village, particularly those that strengthen a connection to the natural environment and coastal setting.
- Action LU-6.2 Residential Overlay.** Continue to enforce the Residential Overlay Zone, which restricts certain areas of the Village to residential uses.



*Human-scale development pattern in the Village*

**Goal LU-7 Ensure a high quality and distinctive design environment in Capitola Village.**

Policies

**Policy LU-7.1 New Development Design.** Require all new development to enhance the unique character of the Village.

**Policy LU-7.2 Public Infrastructure.** Ensure that all improvements to public infrastructure, including roadways, parking, sidewalks, bicycle facilities, public signage, and street trees, support a pedestrian-friendly environment and a distinctive sense of place.

**Policy LU-7.3 Scenic Resources.** Protect and enhance significant scenic views and resources that contribute to the unique identity and public enjoyment of the Village. Scenic resources include:

- ◆ The general pedestrian-oriented and coastal village character of existing development in the Village.
- ◆ Public and semi-public gathering places, including Esplanade Park, Lawn Way, Capitola Beach, Soquel Creek path, and the historic Capitola Wharf.
- ◆ Landscaping and streetscape amenities.
- ◆ Historic structures, including structures contributing to Capitola’s four National Register Historic Districts and structures listed on the official City of Capitola Historic Structures List.
- ◆ Natural features such as Capitola Beach, Soquel Creek and Lagoon, cliffs and bluffs, and vegetated banks.

**Policy LU-7.4 Parking and Transportation Alternatives.** Provide for additional parking and alternative transportation systems – such as an in-lieu parking fee program, a shuttle bus, remote parking, a new parking structure on the Beach and Village Parking Lot #1, and valet parking – to allow additional development and investment that increases vitality and activity in the Village.

**Policy LU-7.5 Hotel Guiding Principles.** Require any new hotel proposed on the site of the former Capitola Theatre to be consistent with the following core principles:

- ◆ The design of the hotel should respect the scale and character of neighboring structures and enhance Capitola’s unique sense of place.

- ◆ The hotel should contribute to the economic vitality of the Village and support an active, attractive, and engaging pedestrian environment.
- ◆ The maximum height of the hotel should remain below the elevation of the bluff behind. The bluff behind the hotel should remain legible as a green edge with existing mature trees maintained on site.
- ◆ The hotel design should minimize impacts to public views of the beach and Village from Depot Hill.
- ◆ Parking for the hotel should be provided in a way that minimizes vehicle traffic in the Village and strengthens the Village as a pedestrian-oriented destination. This could be achieved through remote parking, shuttle services, and valet parking arrangements.

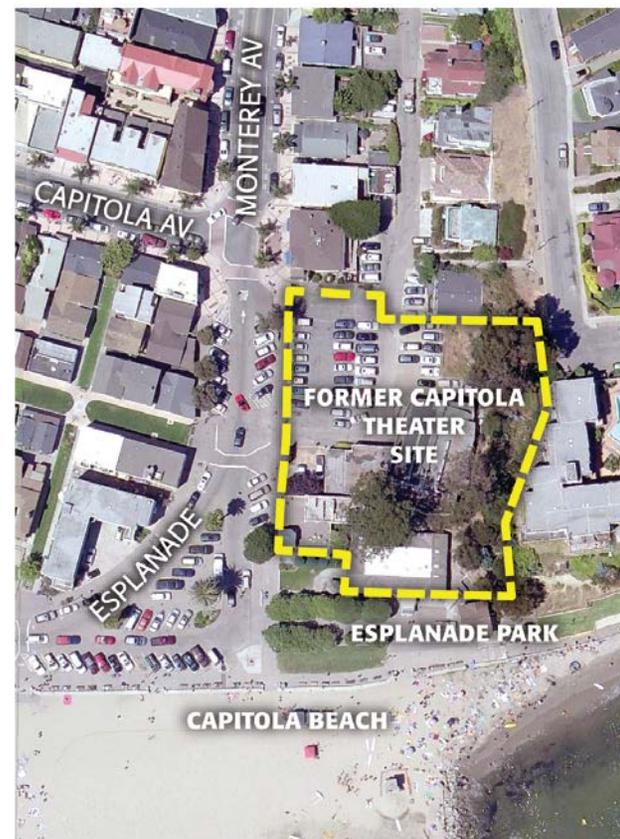
### Actions

**Action LU-7.1 Village Design Guidelines.** Update the Village Design Guidelines to reflect current conditions and to encourage new development that will enhance the unique qualities of the Village. These guidelines will help to protect scenic resources, support economic development, and enhance the Village as an area for both residents and visitors. Guidelines will also address increased hazards from climate change, including sea level rise.

**Action LU-7.2 Village Parking.** Develop a program to provide alternative parking arrangements for visitor-serving uses in the Village.

**Action LU-7.3 Hotel Floor Area Ratio.** Hotels in the Village may be developed with a maximum FAR of 3.0 if authorized by the City Council. To approve a request for an increased FAR, the City Council must find that 1) the additional FAR results in a superior project with substantial community benefit; 2) the project enhances economic vitality; and, 3) the project is designed to minimize adverse impacts to neighboring properties.

FIGURE LU-5 POTENTIAL HOTEL SITE LOCATION



**Goal LU-8 Support the long-term transformation of Capitola Mall into a more pedestrian-friendly commercial district with high quality architecture and outdoor amenities attractive to shoppers and families.**

Policies

**Policy LU-8.1 Phased Mall Redevelopment.** Encourage a phased approach to redevelopment of the Mall property. Early phases may include improvements to the Mall façade and front entrance, and new retail pads fronting 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue. These early improvements shall not conflict with the ultimate vision for the property, as represented in the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue/Capitola Mall Vision Plan (see Figure LU-6).

**Policy LU-8.2 Parking Lot Redevelopment.** Encourage the development of commercial and mixed-use structures on existing Capitola Mall surface parking lots located adjacent to 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Capitola Road including both sides of 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue. New pad development along 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue should enhance the design character of 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and support the long-term vision for the Mall as a pedestrian-friendly commercial destination. Ensure that parking lot redevelopment does not result in an inadequate supply of on-site parking that results in overflow parking in adjacent residential neighborhoods.

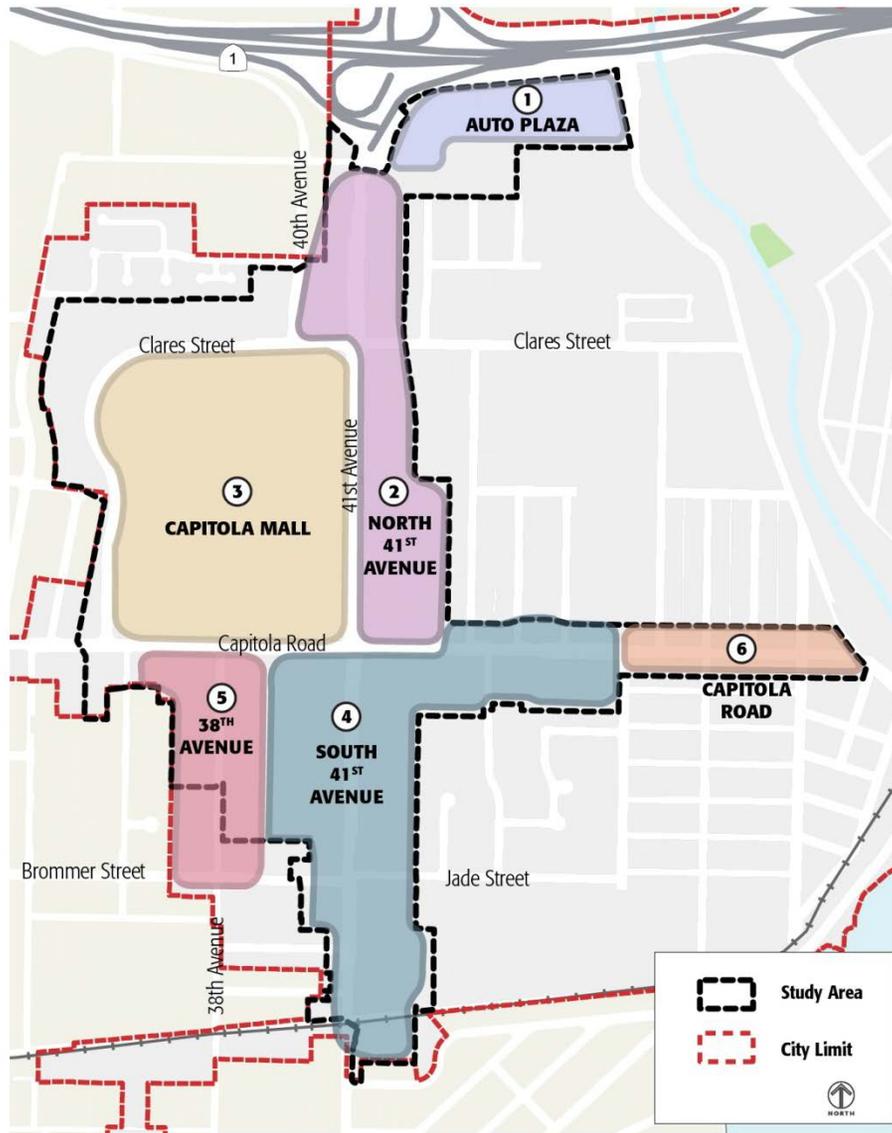
**Policy LU-8.3 Metro Center Relocation.** Support the relocation of the Metro Center to an alternative location on the Capitola Mall property that meets the operational requirements of Santa Cruz Metro and advances design goals for the Capitola Mall. Encourage the Metro Center to become a multi-modal facility with amenities for bicycles and integration with a possible future shuttle system in Capitola.

**Policy LU-8.4 Public Gathering Places.** Encourage the establishment of public gathering places on the Mall property—such as outdoor dining and courtyards—that provide space for people to informally meet and gather.



*Surface parking lot at Capitola Mall*

FIGURE LU-6 41<sup>ST</sup> AVENUE/CAPITOLA MALL VISION



- ① **Auto Plaza.** Support the long-term presence of auto dealers in areas adjacent to Highway 1.
- ② **North 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue.** Encourage new regional retail development along 41st Avenue that enhances the design character of the corridor.
- ③ **Capitola Mall.** Encourage the transformation of the Mall into a pedestrian-friendly commercial destination
- ④ **South 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue.** Encourage residential serving commercial, residential uses, and mixed-use development to increase pedestrian activity and support local businesses.
- ⑤ **38<sup>th</sup> Avenue.** Activate 38th Avenue with new multi-family housing, vertical mixed use, sidewalk-oriented commercial uses, and streetscape and infrastructure improvements.
- ⑥ **Capitola Road.** Strengthen connections to Capitola Village by improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities into the Village. Encourage uses that are compatible with the adjacent residential neighborhood.

**Policy LU-8.5 New Interior Street.** As a long-term vision for Capitola Mall, support the addition of a new interior street within the Mall property lined with sidewalk-oriented retail, outdoor dining, and pedestrian amenities. This new street should be connected with the existing street network surrounding the Mall property to enhance mall access for all modes of transportation.

Actions

**Action LU-8.1 Transit Center Relocation Funding.** Work with Capitola Mall owners and Santa Cruz Metro to identify funding for the relocation of the Transit Center.

**Action LU-8.2 Infrastructure Improvement Funding.** Identify funding sources for infrastructure improvements that will stimulate investment and redevelopment of the Capitola Mall property and provide urban amenities attractive to residential and mixed-use development.

**Action LU-8.3 Design Guidelines.** Update the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue Design Guidelines to reflect the vision for Capitola Mall as described in this General Plan.

**Goal LU-9 Encourage high quality development within the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue corridor that creates an active and inviting public realm.**

Policies

**Policy LU-9.1 Public Amenities.** Encourage new development to provide amenities that enhance the vitality of the corridor, such as outdoor dining and courtyards, public art, publically accessible or semi-public gathering places, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

**Policy LU-9.2 Entertainment Uses.** Within the corridor, encourage the establishment of new entertainment and commercial recreation uses, and the expansion of existing entertainment uses.



*Whole Foods Shopping Center on 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue*

**Policy LU-9.3 Destination.** Establish 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue as an attractive destination with activities for families and people of all ages that occur throughout the day and night. Where feasible, incorporate public art into public spaces.

**Policy LU-9.4 Retail Protection.** Discourage professional and medical offices in key locations that may displace retail establishments and diminish the economic vitality of the corridor.

**Policy LU-9.5 Neighborhood Impacts.** Minimize negative impacts – particularly traffic, parking, and noise – on residential neighborhoods adjacent to the corridor. Incorporate design or mitigation measures into projects to avoid or minimize neighborhood impacts.

**Policy LU-9.6 Residential Uses.** Minimize residential exclusive uses north of Capitola Road to protect this area as a regional retail destination.

**Policy LU-9.7 Village Connections.** Provide pedestrian and bicycle improvements along Capitola Road east of 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue to strengthen connections between 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Capitola Village. Encourage uses on Capitola Road east of 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue that complement adjacent residential neighborhoods.

**Policy LU-9.8 Public Spaces and Amenities.** Encourage new development at the 41st Avenue/Capitola Road intersection to include public spaces and amenities to strengthen the intersection as a focal point and activity center for the corridor.

**Policy LU-9.9 Streetscape Improvements.** Improve the physical appearance of 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue through the installation of additional landscaping in the public right-of-way, enhanced Highway 1 interchange features, and improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Actions

**Action LU-9.1 Auto Plaza Access.** During the Highway 1 High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane project design phase, work with Caltrans to identify ways to enhance visibility from 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue. Possible improvements include improved signage and pedestrian connections.



*Capitola Mall*

**Action LU-9.2 Auto Plaza Signage.** Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow more prominent signage for the Auto Plaza.

**Action LU-9.3 Increased Floor Area Ratio.** The City Council may authorize increased FAR for properties located within the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue corridor as follows:

- ◆ Properties fronting 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue or the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue/Capitola Road intersection with a Regional Commercial or Community Commercial land use designation may be developed at a maximum FAR of 2.0.
- ◆ Structures on properties fronting the east side of 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue must be set back a minimum of 100 feet from the property line abutting a residential property.

To approve a request for an increased FAR, the City Council must find that 1) the additional FAR results in a superior project with substantial community benefit; 2) the project enhances economic vitality; and, 3) the project is designed to minimize adverse impacts to neighboring properties.

**Action LU-9.4 Retail/Office Mix.** Take action to maintain an appropriate mix of retail and non-retail uses along the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue corridor. These actions will include:

- ◆ Continuing to require a Conditional Use permit for offices, medical services, and other non-retail uses in the Regional Commercial designation.
- ◆ Amending the Zoning Code to require the Planning Commission to specifically find that a proposed non-retail use will not detract from the economic viability of the corridor.
- ◆ Preparing a study to examine the optimal socio-economic mix of retail and office/professional uses on 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

# Enhancing Capitola's Commercial and Mixed-Use Districts

The General Plan envisions commercial and mixed-use districts to be vibrant and inviting areas that contribute to a high quality of life. To achieve this vision, these areas will need to become attractive destinations with a design character that is safe and inviting for pedestrians. New development in these areas, when it occurs, will need to be carefully designed to enhance Capitola's unique identity, minimize impacts to neighboring properties, promote transportation alternatives, and create a safe and welcoming environment for pedestrians. Mixed-use districts in Capitola include the Village and areas along Capitola Avenue and Capitola Road east of 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue. Below are general strategies that can be used in these areas to achieve these goals.

- ◆ **Compatibility.** The height, massing, setbacks, and design character of buildings should be sensitive to impacts on surrounding development.
- ◆ **Unique Identity.** Buildings should be designed to reinforce Capitola's unique identity in a way that complements the community's historic character.
- ◆ **Visual Interest.** New development should incorporate finely detailed building façades that contribute visual interest to the streetscape.
- ◆ **Pedestrian Orientation.** Buildings should be oriented towards the pedestrian realm with active ground floor uses and inviting storefronts facing the sidewalk.
- ◆ **Plazas and Open Space.** Semi-public outdoor spaces, such as plazas and courtyards, should be integrated into commercial development to help support pedestrian activity and connections to the public realm.



*Windows, landscaping, and architectural detail add visual interest to the Nob Hill shopping center on Bay Street*

- ◆ **Connections to Adjacent Properties.** Shared facilities such as driveways, parking areas, plazas, and walkways should be used to improve connections and integration of adjacent properties.
- ◆ **Parking Location and Design.** Surface parking areas should not be located adjacent to a public street. If unavoidable, surface parking areas should be visually screened with buildings, landscaping, or low walls and fencing along the edge to the sidewalk. Parking should be designed in clusters, encouraging walking between multiple destinations. Parking lots should incorporate safe pedestrian walkways between buildings.
- ◆ **Vehicle Access.** Points of vehicle access (curb cuts) from the street to the property should be limited to the minimum number necessary to serve the property.
- ◆ **Pedestrian and Bicycle Access and Circulation.** Clear, safe points of access to sites should be provided for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as vehicles.
- ◆ **Public Transit Access.** Bus stops should be evaluated for convenience, safety, visibility, and covered shelter.
- ◆ **Sustainable Design.** Sustainable design practices should be incorporated into new development, including climate-appropriate plant materials, sustainable stormwater solutions, and solar orientation.



*Buildings oriented towards the sidewalk support a pedestrian-friendly environment in the Village*

**Goal LU-10 Maintain and enhance the Bay Avenue commercial district as a thriving destination with businesses that serve Capitola residents and visitors.**

Policies

**Policy LU-10.1 New Development.** Ensure that new development enhances the design character of the district, strengthens existing businesses, and minimizes impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods. New development should occur in a manner consistent with Figure LU-7.

**Policy LU-10.2 Bay Avenue Streetscape.** Enhance the Bay Avenue streetscape in a way that improves the appearance of Bay Avenue, increases safety for bicyclists and pedestrians, and stimulates private investment within the area.

**Policy LU-10.3 Tree-Lined Boulevard.** Encourage a tree-lined boulevard streetscape character along Bay Avenue north of the Capitola Produce property. Encourage installation of drought tolerant and non-invasive street trees and landscaping along the Bay Avenue property frontage in conjunction with capital improvement or redevelopment projects.

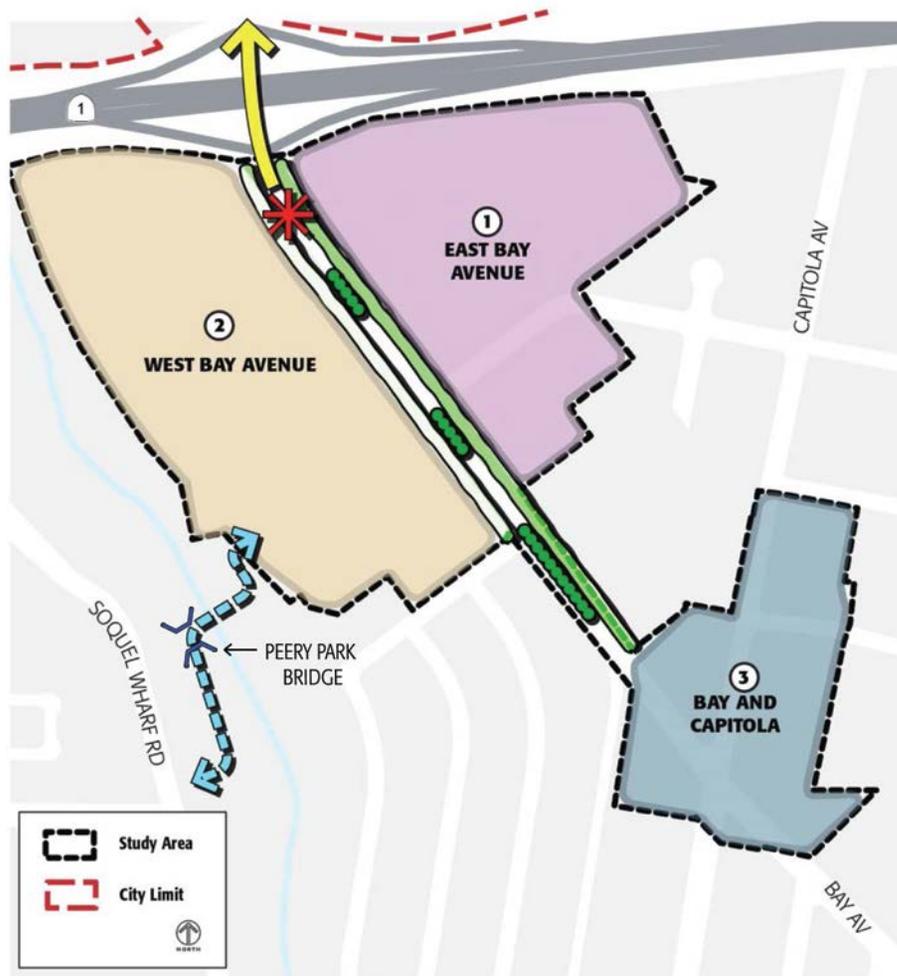
**Policy LU-10.4 Highway 1 Interchange.** Encourage Caltrans to incorporate an attractive landscaped gateway element and improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities as part of any significant renovation to the Bay Avenue/Highway 1 interchange.

**Policy LU-10.5 Recreation Access.** Maintain, and where feasible, enhance access to Soquel Creek, Peery Park, and the non-vehicular bridge over Soquel Creek, which serves as an important link to natural open spaces, the Rispin property, the Capitola Library, and Capitola Mall.



*Capitola Produce Market*

FIGURE LU-7 BAY AVENUE VISION



- ① **East Bay Avenue.** New development fronting Bay Avenue should incorporate street trees and landscaping to strengthen a landscaped boulevard streetscape character. Buildings should be oriented toward the street to support an active public realm along Bay Avenue and Hill Street.
- ② **West Bay Avenue.** Minimize new driveways on Bay Avenue through shared parking arrangements and joint use of existing Bay Avenue access points. Ensure that development on the Grimes property is carefully integrated with other uses in the area.
- ③ **Bay and Capitola.** Encourage a more urban design character with new development that invites pedestrian activity. Provide enhanced pedestrian amenities such as widened sidewalks and improved crosswalks. Where feasible, consider permeable surfaces for pedestrian improvements. If the Bay Avenue and Capitola Avenue intersection is reconfigured as a traffic circle, orient new development toward this new neighborhood focal point.

Actions

- Action LU-10.1 Medians.** Explore opportunities to install medians on Bay Avenue in locations where left turn movements for vehicles would not be restricted.
- Action LU-10.2 Roundabout.** Conduct a public process to study the feasibility of installing a roundabout at the Bay Avenue/Capitola Avenue intersection. The study shall consider impacts on traffic speeds, delays, and air quality.
- Action LU-10.3 Streetscape Master Plan.** Prepare a streetscape master plan for Bay Avenue that presents a unified design theme for the corridors and identifies specific improvements needed to implement this vision.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

**Goal LU-11 Utilize the City Hall/Village and Beach Parking Lot area for the benefit of the community.**

Policies

- Policy LU-11.1 Area Vision.** Support the long-term use and improvement of the City Hall/Village and Beach Parking Lot area as described in Figure LU-8.
- Policy LU-11.2 Parking Solution.** Prioritize City efforts to utilize the Village and Beach Parking Lot /City Hall site as the location for additional parking to serve the Village.
- Policy LU-11.3 Multi-Use Parking Structure.** Maximize year-round use of the parking structure by considering multiple uses in the structure, such as for special events in the off-peak season.



*Capitola City Hall*

FIGURE LU-8 CITY HALL/PACIFIC COVE VISION



- ① **Capitola Avenue.** Consider renovating the existing City Hall and Police Department building to elevate governmental offices and police facilities out of the flood plain. Also, consider moving City Hall to a new location, either to a higher elevation portion of the property or to an entirely new site within the city. If City Hall is relocated, redevelopment of the current City Hall site shall be consistent with the character of the Central Village and in accordance with the Village-Mixed Use land use designation.
- ② **Upper Pacific Cove.** Utilize this area for additional parking to serve the Village, preferable in the form of a multi-story parking structure. The parking structure should be sensitively designed to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Providing additional parking in this area to meet Village and surrounding area needs should be one of the City's highest priorities.
- ③ **Lower Pacific Cove.** Use this area for temporary parking to serve the Village. When additional parking is provided in the Upper Pacific Cove area, consider converting the Lower Pacific Cove area to a park/recreational/natural open space area. To the extent possible, daylight the stream that currently flows through a pipe under the site. Maintain the option that a portion of the site, particularly near Bay Avenue, could be utilized for a public or community facility.
- ④ **Monterey Avenue.** In the short term, maintain this area as undeveloped open space. Maintain the option to allow a public or community facility within some or all of this area.

## Actions

**Action LU-11.1 Parking Structure.** Design, approve, finance, and construct a new parking structure in the location of Beach and Village Parking Lot #1 to serve residents and visitors to Capitola Village and Beach. The design of the parking structure should minimize impacts on neighboring properties, improve pedestrian connectivity between the parking structure and the central Village, and incorporate sustainable design features. This can be done by:

- ◆ Minimizing structure mass and reducing visibility from surrounding areas by constructing the structure below grade of the adjacent railway.
- ◆ Locating the main pedestrian gateway to the parking structure on Capitola Avenue as close to the central Village as possible, and designing this gateway to have an inviting presence on Capitola Avenue.
- ◆ Providing a secondary pedestrian entrance to the parking structure from Monterey Avenue.
- ◆ Enhancing pedestrian and bicycle connections from Monterey Avenue to Capitola Avenue and the central Village.
- ◆ Accommodating the needs of persons with disabilities to access the parking structure and to get to and from the central Village.
- ◆ Making sidewalk, lighting, and other improvements to Capitola Avenue and Monterey Avenue between the parking structure and the Village.
- ◆ Providing a shuttle connection between the parking structure and the central Village and beach.
- ◆ Incorporating photovoltaic panels and electric vehicle charging stations into the parking structure design.

**Action LU-11.2 Multi-Use Parking Structure.** Evaluate the possibility of using a new parking structure to host special events in light of cost implications and neighborhood impact issues.

**Action LU-11.3 Phased Open Space Plan.** Develop a phased plan to convert the temporary surface parking on the Beach and Village Parking Lot #2 to open space, park, or other public use during the process of constructing a new parking structure.

**Goal LU-12 Utilize key public facilities and properties in a manner that enhances the quality of life of Capitola residents.**

Policies

**Policy LU-12.1 Rispin Property.** Utilize the Rispin property (APN 035-371-01 & 02) as a site for park and natural open space uses that serve both residents and visitors.

**Policy LU-12.2 Library.** Utilize City library funds to construct and maintain a new public library within Capitola that is appropriately sized and located to serve the entire community. Consider relocating the library from its current location on Wharf Road if a superior site becomes available.

**Policy LU-12.3 Police Station.** Maintain the Capitola Police Station in a central location with easy access to all areas within Capitola. Consider relocating the Police Station from its current location on Capitola Avenue to a location outside of the floodplain if an alternative site becomes available.

**Policy LU-12.4 Fire Station.** Support the continued operation of a Fire Station in a central location in Capitola with easy access to all areas within the community.

**Policy LU-12.5 Capitola Wharf.** Maintain the historic Capitola Wharf as a free access public fishing pier with a restaurant for the use and enjoyment of Capitola residents and visitors.

**Policy LU-12.6 McGregor Property.** Utilize the McGregor property (APN 036-341-02 at McGregor Drive and Park Avenue) as a location for park and recreational uses and natural spaces to serve residents and visitors. Consider development of the site with visitor accommodations if recreational uses are relocated to a more central site within the city.

**Policy LU-12.7 Capitola Beach.** Prioritize the maintenance and enhancement of Capitola Beach as a safe, clean, and enjoyable destination for Capitola residents and visitors. Protect recreational activities on the beach such as swimming, sunbathing, surfing, and junior guard activities.

Actions

**Action LU-12.1 Rispin Property.** Actively seek grant funding to enhance public access to and enjoyment of parkland and natural open space on the Rispin property (APN 035-371-01 & 02).

**Action LU-12.2 Wharf Improvements.** Prepare a feasibility study to evaluate potential improvements for the long-term viability of the historic Capitola Wharf, including issues related to access, restrooms, public safety, maintenance, parking, signage, and sea-level rise.

**Action LU-12.3 McGregor Property.** Develop and implement a plan to construct a multi-use park, natural open spaces, and recreational improvements on the McGregor Property.

**Action LU-12.4 Wharf Parking.** Consider adjusting parking regulations in the Wharf area to increase opportunities for residents to access the wharf, particularly in off-peak periods.

## PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

**Goal LU-13 Provide high-quality public parks that cater to the diverse needs and interest of Capitola residents and visitors.**

### Policies

**Policy LU-13.1 Park Types.** Provide a diversity of park types, including active low-investment (e.g. playfields and picnic facilities), and passive recreational facilities (e.g. natural areas suitable for quiet reflection).

**Policy LU-13.2 Neighborhood Parks.** Maintain a network of neighborhood parks throughout the city with a variety of facilities that cater to the needs and interests of park users. Ensure that neighborhood parks contain facilities that cater to youth, seniors, and people of diverse socio-economic backgrounds.



*Noble Gulch Park*

**Policy LU-13.3 Sustainable Park Design.** Design, construct, and maintain park facilities in an environmentally sustainable manner. This can be achieved with techniques such as:

- ◆ Preserving sensitive species and habitats.
- ◆ Designing environmentally friendly features into new recreational facilities.
- ◆ Using reused, renewable, locally sourced, and recycled materials.
- ◆ Employing integrated pest management practices as part of parks maintenance programs.
- ◆ Utilizing drought-resistant and climate-appropriate landscaping with water-efficient irrigation controllers.
- ◆ Integrating on-site stormwater management into park design.

**Policy LU-13.4 New Brighton State Beach.** Cooperate with the California Department of Parks and Recreation and other agencies to maintain, improve, and preserve New Brighton State Beach in a natural state to serve the region with a variety of nature-oriented and passive recreational opportunities.

**Policy LU-13.5 Ocean Recreation.** Maintain and enhance access to the waters of Monterey Bay and Capitola Beach as recreational amenities for residents and visitors.

**Policy LU-13.6 Beach Management.** Manage activities and uses in the beach area so that the beach continues to be a safe and enjoyable place for people of all ages and abilities.

**Policy LU-13.7 Beach Structures.** Prohibit permanent structures on the open, sandy beach area except for facilities required for public health and safety, to improve public access, or to maintain the health of the beach. Additions to the historic Capitola Wharf to improve public access and enjoyment are encouraged.

**Policy LU-13.8 Intergovernmental Cooperation.** Maintain partnerships and shared service agreements with local school districts and neighboring communities in order to enhance the



*Capitola Community Center at Jade Street Park*

range of opportunities available to Capitola residents and achieve cost savings.

**Policy LU-13.9 Special Use Facilities.** Support and encourage the location of special use recreation facilities, such as organic community gardens, dog parks, and skate parks, on available park or other public lands, where compatible with the existing and planned uses of surrounding properties.

**Policy LU-13.10 Soquel Lagoon.** Continue to allow and encourage recreational activities and events within Soquel Lagoon.

**Policy LU-13.11 Soquel Creek Access.** Maintain, enhance, and expand public access to Soquel Creek within Capitola Village.

**Policy LU-13.12 Jade Street Park.** Work cooperatively with the Soquel Union Elementary School District to ensure that when new school facilities are constructed on the Jade Street Park site, publicly accessible recreational facilities remain on a portion of the site.

**Policy LU-13.13 Monterey Park.** Develop Monterey Park as an active park site with neighborhood-serving recreational facilities and amenities.

#### Actions

**Action LU-13.1 Grant Funding.** Pursue all appropriate grant opportunities, including coastal access and natural open space grant programs, to fund improvements to existing parks and recreational facilities.

**Action LU-13.2 Safe Routes to Parks.** Identify improvements needed to fill gaps in the City's sidewalk system and incorporate these improvements into the City's Capital Improvement Program.

**Action LU-13.3 Beach Maintenance.** Continue to clean and improve the maintenance of the beach for recreational uses. Develop a program to continue to provide adequate public facilities such as restrooms, showers, and drop-off locations for beach-goers.

**Goal LU-14 Support recreational programs and community events that contribute to a high quality-of-life.**

Policies

**Policy LU-14.1 Range of Programs.** Provide a range of recreational programs and services to Capitola residents that cater to people of all ages, backgrounds, and activity levels. Continue to consider providing services and community grants to fund programs targeting seniors and special needs populations.

**Policy LU-14.2 Interjurisdictional Partnerships.** Continue to partner with other jurisdictions in the Mid-County area to maximize the diversity of recreational programs and activities available to Capitola residents.

**Policy LU-14.3 Community Interaction.** Support recreational programs that encourage the interaction of different segments of the Capitola population and help to strengthen a sense of community.

**Policy LU-14.4 Connection to Environment.** Encourage recreational programs that enhance the public connection to and appreciation of the natural environment.

**Policy LU-14.5 Community Events.** Continue to support community events such as the historic Begonia Festival that contribute to Capitola's unique coastal identity.

**Policy LU-14.6 Year-Round Events.** Encourage community events in the Village during the winter months that contribute to the year-round vitality of the Village.

**Policy LU-14.7 New Brighton Middle School.** Work cooperatively with the Soquel Union Elementary School District to provide elementary and middle school facilities for the children who live in Capitola.



*Capitola Begonia Festival*

Actions

**Action LU-14.1 Trails and Pathways.** Maintain existing trails and pathways.

**Action LU-14.2 Regional Trails.** Cooperate with the Regional Transportation Commission to encourage connections with regional trails such as the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail.

**Action LU-14.3 Coastal Recreation.** Explore opportunities to increase coastal recreational activities in Capitola, particularly activities that support environmental awareness and stewardship of the marine and coastal environment.





# 4 OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION

---



# INTRODUCTION

State law requires that a General Plan include both an Open Space Element and a Conservation Element. This General Plan combines these two elements into a single Open Space and Conservation Element that addresses their similar and overlapping concerns, and satisfies the legal requirements for both.

State law identifies a series of topics that must be addressed in the Open Space and Conservation Elements. The Conservation Element is required to address the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, including forests, rivers and other waters, fisheries, plants and wildlife, minerals, and soils. The Open Space Element must address a range of open space types, including six major categories of open space. Most of these types of open space are covered in this Open Space and Conservation Element while a few are covered elsewhere in this General Plan. Table OSC-1 lists all six types of open space and identifies where they are addressed in this General Plan.

Not all required topics are discussed in this Element because either they are included elsewhere in the General Plan or such resources do not exist in Capitola. For example, areas important for the preservation of historic and cultural resources are addressed in the Land Use Element, and open space for public health and safety is primarily discussed in the Safety Element. Meanwhile, Capitola does not have agricultural, forest, or mineral resources, so they are not addressed at all in this General Plan. Other federal and State laws require communities to address the community production of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, air quality, and solid waste and to develop impact reduction strategies. To this end, the Open Space and Conservation Element addresses the topics of GHG emissions reduction, air quality, and waste reduction.

This Element addresses the following topics:

- ◆ General environmental sustainability and stewardship
- ◆ Climate change and greenhouse gas reduction
- ◆ Air quality
- ◆ Renewable energy sources and energy conservation
- ◆ Biological resources
- ◆ Water quality and conservation
- ◆ Food production
- ◆ Waste reduction

TABLE OSC-1 GOVERNMENT CODE OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATIONS

Category	Element Addressed In:
<b>Open Space for the Preservation of Natural Resources</b>	
Plant and animal habitat areas	Open Space and Conservation
Rivers, streams, lakes, and their banks	Open Space and Conservation
Watershed lands	Open Space and Conservation
Areas required for ecological and other scientific study purposes	Open Space and Conservation
<b>Open Space Used for the Managed Production of Resources</b>	
Agricultural lands and rangelands	Not applicable to Capitola
Forest and timber lands	Not applicable to Capitola
Mineral resource production areas	Not applicable to Capitola
<b>Open Space for Outdoor Recreation and Scenic Resources</b>	
Areas of outstanding historic or cultural value	Land Use
Parks and other areas used for recreation	Open Space and Conservation
Areas of outstanding scenic value	Open Space and Conservation
Scenic corridors, trails, and links between different open space areas	Open Space and Conservation
<b>Open Space for Public Health and Safety</b>	
Areas requiring special management or regulation because of risks presented by natural hazards such as steep slopes or flooding	Safety
<b>Open Space in Support of the Mission of Military Installations</b>	
Areas associated with military bases	Not applicable to Capitola
<b>Open Space for the Protection of Native American Sacred Sites</b>	
Local tribal lands	Not applicable to Capitola
Any Native American cultural sites	Land Use

In addition to this Introduction, the Open Space and Conservation Element is divided into two sections:

- ◆ **Open Space and Conservation Background:** Provides background information about the various resources and topics covered in this Element.
- ◆ **Goals, Policies, and Actions:** Provides policy guidance for protecting and preserving the resources and addressing the topics covered in this Element.

# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## General Environmental Sustainability and Stewardship

The World Commission on Environment and Development defines *sustainable* as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. One of the guiding principles of this General Plan is to embrace environmental sustainability as a foundation for Capitola's way of life. This principle recognizes that Capitola's environmental resources, including the beaches, creeks, ocean, and lagoon, are a fundamental part of the city's character. Community involvement is a key aspect of a sustainable community, and the City of Capitola is committed to working with residents and businesses to promote environmental sustainability.

The City of Capitola has a strong track record of environmental sustainability objectives. In recent years, Capitola has undertaken the following sustainability initiatives:

- ◆ **Urban Environmental Accords.** The City has adopted the United Nations' Urban Environmental Accords, committing the City to work to achieve a set of 21 accords addressing the topics of energy, waste reduction, urban design, urban nature, transportation, and water.
- ◆ **Green Building Ordinance.** The City adopted a Green Building Ordinance, reducing energy demands, strain on infrastructure, and waste in new construction and redevelopment.
- ◆ **Community Tree and Forest Management Ordinance.** The City adopted a Community Tree and Forest Management Ordinance to protect and enhance the existing tree cover on public and private lands in Capitola.



*Capitola's Coastal Setting*

- ◆ **Leaf Blower Ordinance.** The City adopted a Leaf Blower Ordinance, restricting leaf blower use on residential property, which reduces noise and public health impacts, as well as fuel consumption.
- ◆ **Light Brown Apple Moth Resolution.** The City adopted a resolution opposing aerial spraying to eradicate light brown apple moth populations.
- ◆ **Plastics Ordinance.** The City adopted ordinances to ban the use of plastic bags and polystyrene foam food service ware.
- ◆ **Stormwater Ordinance.** The City adopted a Stormwater Pollution Prevention and Protection Ordinance to improve water quality.

## Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction

Climate change affects all communities in California, particularly in regard to water supply, flooding, air pollution, heat waves, and sea level rise. Due to its coastal location, sea level rise and related flooding and coastal erosion are critical issues in Capitola. Unless adequately mitigated, the effects of sea level rise could impact Capitola’s economy, public safety, and overall quality of life.

The City is taking a proactive approach in addressing greenhouse gas emissions reduction by developing a Climate Action Plan (CAP) in concert with this General Plan. Key components of the CAP are integrated into the General Plan, and General Plan goals, policies, and actions reinforce the CAP. The CAP is intended to be updated more frequently than the General Plan, ensuring that implementation of the CAP remains effective and in compliance with State climate planning laws. This approach is especially important given the constant flux of new research findings, technological improvements, and policy updates dealing with climate change.

### Baseline Inventory

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) prepared GHG emissions inventories for all member jurisdictions, including the City of Capitola. These inventories, completed in early 2011, identify citywide GHG emissions as well as emissions produced solely from City government operations occurring in the year 2005. GHG emissions are meas-

**TABLE OSC-2 CAPITOLA COMMUNITYWIDE EMISSIONS BY SECTOR, 2005**

Sector	Emissions (MTCO <sub>2e</sub> )	Percent of Total
Travel on Local Roads	26,001	34%
Commercial/Industrial	17,564	23%
Residential	15,590	21%
Travel on State Highways	14,705	19%
Waste Generation	2,160	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>76,020</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: City of Capitola Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory 2005 Baseline Report.

ured in terms of their global warming potential, expressed as metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO<sub>2e</sub>). In 2005, approximately 76,020 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> were emitted within the community of Capitola. As shown in Table OSC-2, which presents a summary of the findings of AMBAG's inventory for Capitola, AMBAG measured GHG emissions by sector. Transportation (mainly diesel and gasoline use) contributes the majority of the community's GHG emissions, divided between travel on local roads (34 percent) and travel on State highways (19 percent). GHG emissions as a result of City government operations comprised approximately one percent of the community's total emissions, or 838 MTCO<sub>2e</sub>.

## Air Quality

Capitola is located within the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB), which consists of Santa Cruz, San Benito, and Monterey Counties. The Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD) is the local agency responsible for air quality control and monitoring. The MBUAPCD shares responsibility with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) for ensuring that State and national ambient air quality standards are met within Santa Cruz County and the NCCAB. State law assigns local air districts the primary responsibility for controlling air pollution from stationary sources (i.e. non-moving, fixed-site sources, such as industrial facilities), while the CARB controls mobile sources (e.g. cars and construction equipment). The MBUAPCD is responsible for regulating air pollution, permitting and inspecting stationary sources, monitoring air quality, and air quality planning activities.



*Highway 1*



*Highway 1 (top) and Historic Capitola Wharf (bottom)*

In this portion of the NCCAB, marine breezes from Monterey Bay dominate the climate. These westerly winds predominate in all seasons, but are strongest and most persistent during the spring and summer months. In general, the air pollution potential of the coastal portion of the NCCAB, including Capitola, is relatively low due to these persistent winds. The NCCAB is considered in attainment for most air pollutants, which means that the Basin meets the State and national standards. However, the NCCAB is in non-attainment for ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) and coarse particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>). Vehicles are a significant source of these pollutants, both directly by combustion and indirectly by the interaction of combustion byproducts with one another and with ultraviolet (UV) light.

Sensitive receptors include those segments of the population that are most susceptible to poor air quality, such as children, elderly people, and sick people, as well as sensitive land uses, such as schools, parks, and residential communities. Air quality problems intensify when sources of air pollutants and sensitive receptors are located near one another. Since schools, parks, and residential areas are located throughout the city, the consideration of sensitive receptors is an important aspect of the General Plan.

## Renewable Energy Sources and Energy Conservation

The residential sector's energy demands constitute approximately 52 percent of the electricity and natural gas use within Capitola. Typically, the most important factors influencing residential energy consumption are the size of the house, the type of house (detached single-family or multi-family structure), the number of major appliances, and the construction and siting of the structure. Residential energy needs are often fulfilled by electricity or a combination of gas and electricity; the majority (73 percent) of energy used by Capitola homes is natural gas. Space heating is the most energy-consuming activity in residential structures.

The State of California requires local governments to address energy conservation and efficiency in new construction. The State Building Standard Code, including Title 24, requires energy conservation and efficiency measures for any new structures, additions to existing structures, changes to the footprint of structures, or changes to water and heating systems. In Capitola, the Building Department is responsible for enforcing all the provisions of Title 24.

## Biological Resources

There are several significant natural resource areas in the city of Capitola, shown in Figure OSC-1. As a coastal city, Capitola maintains a Local Coastal Plan, which provides detailed information about Monterey Bay's natural resources, as well as policies to conserve those resources that complement those in this General Plan.

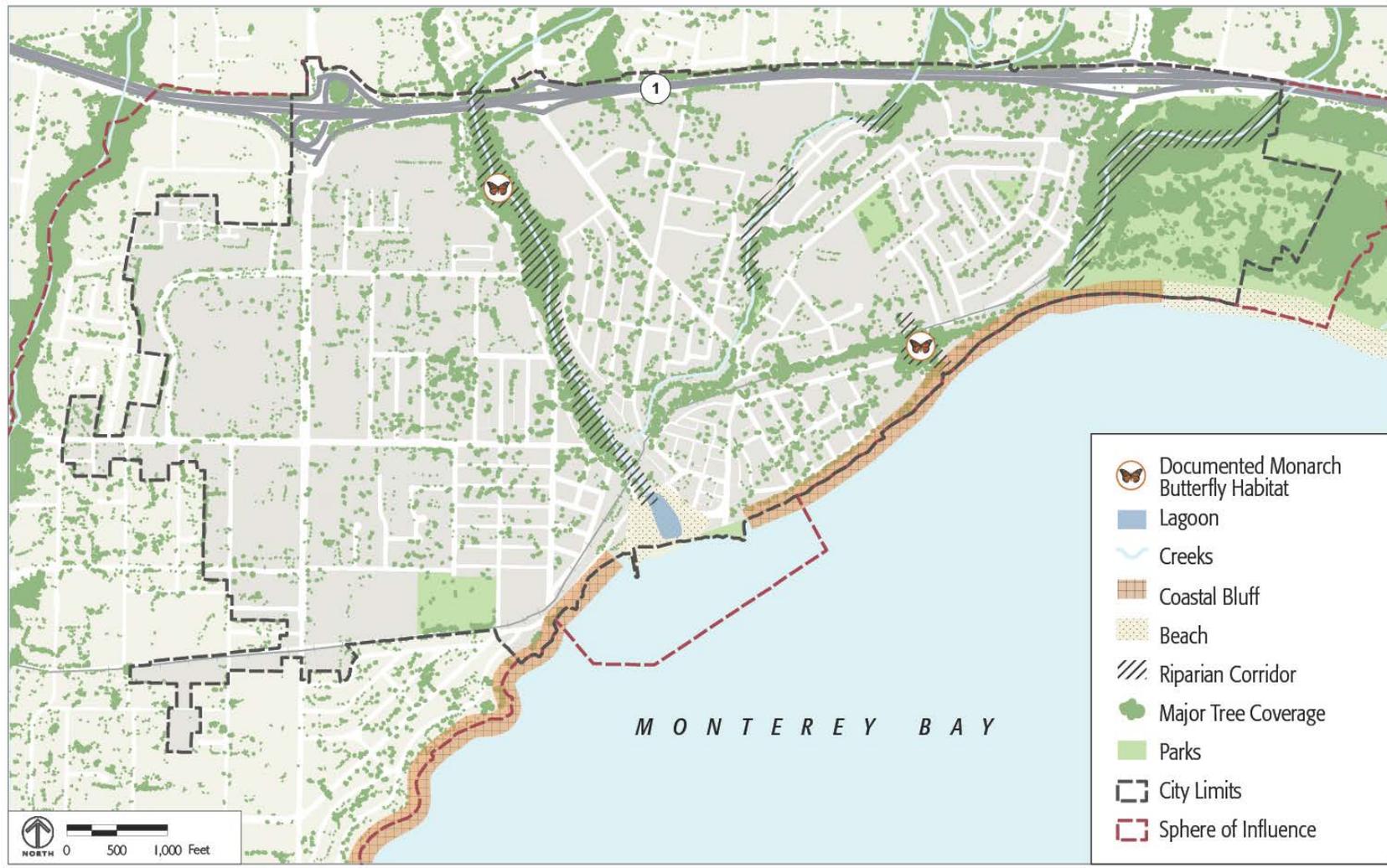
Significant natural resource areas in Capitola include:

- ◆ **Monterey Bay.** The southeastern portion of the city is fronted by the Monterey Bay waters. The Monterey Bay, its kelp beds and its shoreline provide an important habitat area for marine life of all varieties, including the endangered sea otter and endangered California Brown Pelican. In addition, the Bay provides opportunities for public recreation and enjoyment as well as commercial operations and ventures.
- ◆ **Soquel Creek and Lagoon.** Soquel Creek runs through the middle of the city into the Monterey Bay. The creek is a year round water source for the wildlife in the adjoining riparian corridor as well as an important wetland habitat. The lagoon area of the creek is the only significant habitat for migratory non-marine waterbirds within the Capitola city limits. In addition, the Creek supports steelhead with resident trout and non-sport species. In recent years, Soquel Creek has faced significant problems such as decreased downstream water flows and a decline in water quality. To address these and other problems, the City continues to implement its Soquel Creek Lagoon Management Plan and work with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.
- ◆ **Riparian Corridors.** Riparian corridors in the city include the woodland along the west side of Soquel Creek from the Stockton Avenue Bridge to the Highway One overpass (Soquel Creek Riparian corridor), the Noble Gulch Riparian corridor, and the Tannery Gulch Riparian corridor. Woodland in these areas include Black Cottonwood trees, California Sycamores, Coast Live Oaks, Eucalyptus, Monterey Pine, Acacia and Willow trees. These corridors provide important natural resources, visual relief and support for numerous wildlife and native vegetation.



*Soquel Lagoon*

FIGURE OSC-1 NATURAL RESOURCES



Source: City of Capitola, 2010.

- ◆ **Monarch Butterfly Habitats.** Monarch butterfly habitats are located along Soquel Creek and in the Escalona Gulch area. These areas provide overwintering sites for the migrating Monarch butterfly. Each fall, the Monarchs arrive to spend the winter on the branches of the eucalyptus trees. The orientation of the groves to wind and sun, the size and density of the trees, and the quiet, undisturbed setting are among the factors that make these sites among the few in the County suitable for the butterflies.

## Water Quality and Conservation

Soquel Creek is the primary water body in Capitola that flows year round; it flows from the Santa Cruz Mountains to Capitola and discharges to Monterey Bay. Soquel Creek is the primary drainage that makes up the Soquel watershed, which, as shown in Figure OSC-2, constitutes the majority of Capitola. There are also several other smaller drainages that drain into Soquel Creek or seasonally drain directly into Monterey Bay. The Arana-Rodeo watershed is located in the western third of Capitola, draining Arana Gulch and Rodeo Creek Gulch, which are located west of Capitola.

Historically, Soquel Creek was allowed to flow freely into Monterey Bay. Since the 1990's the City has implemented a Soquel Creek Lagoon Management Plan to construct a levee and develop a deep water lagoon with flows directed into a pipe beneath the beach to maintain fish passage. This plan addresses concerns for wildlife habitat and water quality issues.

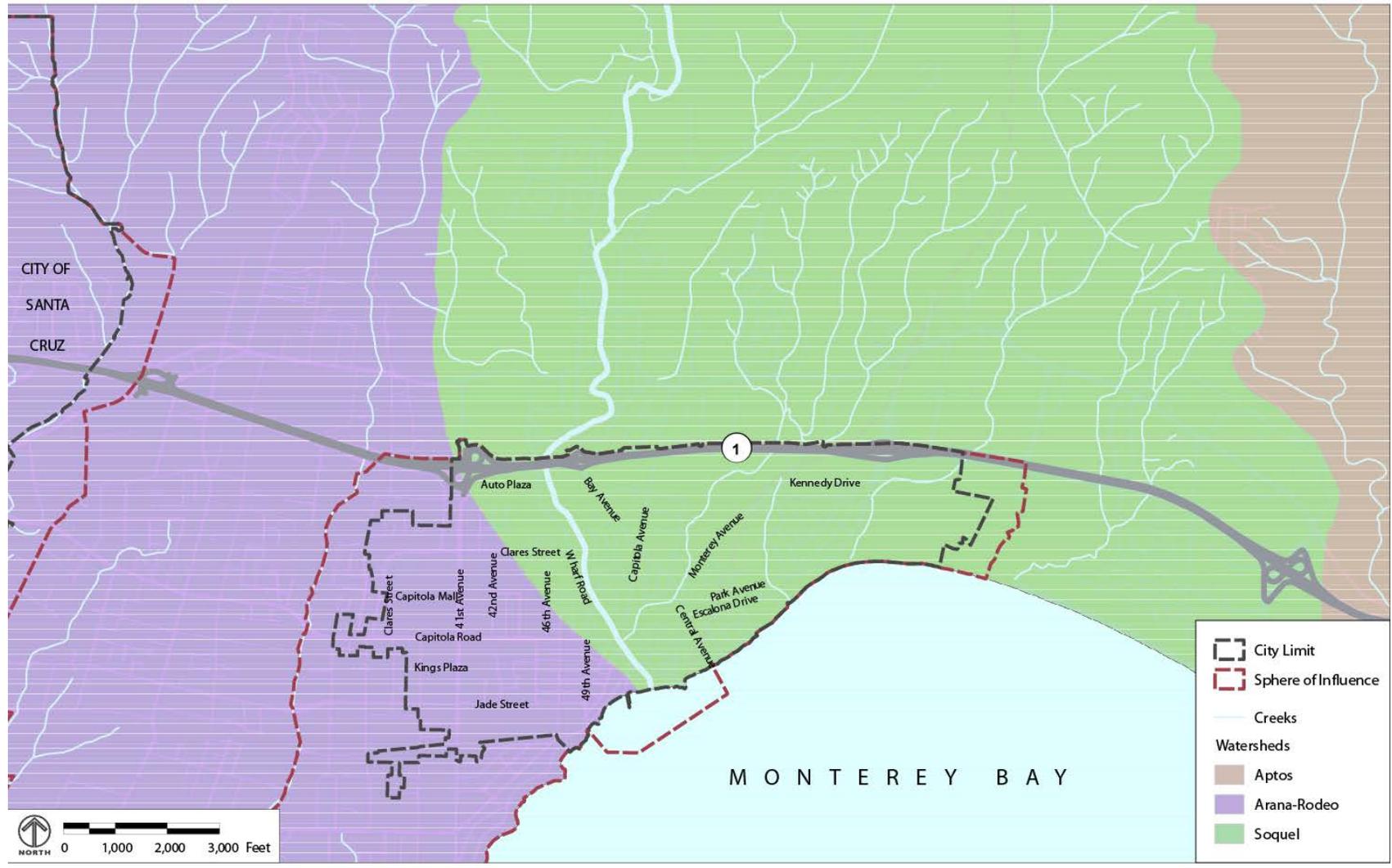
### Water Quality

Urban runoff is a major factor that determines water quality in urbanized communities like Capitola. When stormwater flows over impervious surfaces, it can carry non-point source pollutants like oil, grease, solvents, and petroleum products from roadways and parking lots into creeks and other water bodies into which the stormwater is eventually discharged. In Capitola, five storm drain outfalls discharge stormwater into Soquel Creek, three outfalls flow directly to the beach, and four outfalls discharge stormwater onto the coastal cliffs.



*Soquel Creek*

FIGURE OSC-2 REGIONAL WATERSHEDS



The City has prepared stormwater management plans to address water quality, among other goals, including a storm drain master plan for the Village and a citywide Stormwater Management Program that describes best management practices related to its drainage infrastructure, including zero discharge sidewalk cleaning. On July 25, 2013 the City adopted the Stormwater Pollution Prevention and Protection Ordinance which establishes regulations regarding illicit discharges to protect water quality.

Periodically, the waters at Capitola Beach are posted as being unsafe for body contact. From 2001 to 2004, and again in 2009, Capitola Beach was listed by the non-profit volunteer group Heal the Bay as being one of the 20 worst beaches in California due to high fecal coliform counts. As with all coastal lagoons in Santa Cruz County, Soquel Lagoon is permanently posted as unsafe for human contact. The waters off the beach are monitored by Santa Cruz County and posted when bacteria levels are high.

During summer months the Soquel Lagoon is created by closing a flume that prevents Soquel Creek from flowing into the ocean. This practice has enabled expansion of Capitola Beach and been occurring since the 1920's.

Bacterial contamination on Capitola Beach and Soquel Lagoon is attributed to many factors, including high numbers of birds roosting around the Lagoon and beach, urban runoff in the upper and lower watershed, leaky sewer lines, and manholes. Gulls and other birds are the major source of contamination, contributing up to 77 percent of the bacterial load at Capitola Beach. In 2008, the City constructed a biofiltration treatment wetland on ¼-acre of City-owned property adjacent to Soquel Lagoon to treat stormwater to assist with water quality improvement in the Lagoon.

## Water Conservation

Water for the City of Capitola is provided by the Soquel Creek Water District (SqCWD) for areas primarily east of 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue, and by the City of Santa Cruz Water Department (SCWD) for areas primarily west of 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue. The SqCWD provides approximately 90 percent of the total water used in Capitola.

Both the SqCWD and the SCWD are facing a number of critical constraints in their ability to provide enough water to meet current and future demands. The SqCWD relies entirely on groundwater for their water supply. Public and private groundwater users have and continue to exceed the estimated sustainable yield of the Soquel-Aptos Groundwater Basin, thus increasing the potential for seawater intrusion (i.e. the movement of salt water into freshwater supplies, which can contaminate drinking water supplies). Salt water-intruded reservoirs are rendered unusable and are estimated to require centuries to rejuvenate for continued use. In addition, the sustainable yield of the Soquel-Aptos Groundwater Basin may be less than currently

estimated. The SCWD relies almost entirely on surface water sources, and during drought conditions does not have sufficient supply to meet demand. To help address their respective supply issues, the two water purveyors have instituted a number of water conservation programs and have studied a possible desalination plant. Although there are no immediate plans to construct a desalination facility, such a plant could provide needed water supply during droughts, protect groundwater aquifers, and improve water supply reliability for regional users.

## Food Production

Because the majority of Capitola is developed, there are no commercial farming operations within the city limits. However, the surrounding Monterey Bay area is home to many small and organic farms that provide local food to the region. Capitola's climate is conducive to growing food; many residents have small gardens in their yards, and there are opportunities for community gardens in Capitola.

## Waste Reduction

The City of Capitola has a franchise agreement with Green Waste Recovery for the collection of refuse, recycling, and yard waste. Solid waste collected in Capitola is transferred to the Monterey Peninsula Class III Landfill located in the City of Marina, which is operated by the Monterey Regional Waste Management District. The landfill has a remaining waste capacity of approximately 40 million tons and an anticipated life capacity of 100 years.

The City of Capitola is very committed to recycling and sponsors recycling collection service through its Refuse, Recycling, and Yard Waste Collection Franchise Agreement with Green Waste Recovery. Currently, 51 percent of the city's waste is diverted from the landfill. Recycling collection is part of a comprehensive service package available to any resident or business of the city. Unlimited recycling collection is included in the cost of refuse collection, and recycling bins are "single stream," allowing all recyclable material to go into one bin; Green Waste Recovery sorts the materials at their Castroville facility.

# GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

## GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND STEWARDSHIP

### Goal OSC-1 Promote sustainability as a foundation for Capitola's way of life.

#### Policies

**Policy OSC-1.1 Sustainable Decisions and Actions.** Ensure that City policies, programs, and actions promote sustainability goals by protecting natural resources, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and preparing for the effects of climate change.

**Policy OSC-1.2 Resource Allocation.** Consider environmental sustainability when developing the City's annual budget and allocation of other City resources.

**Policy OSC-1.3 Connection to the Natural Environment.** Promote the public's connection to the natural environment as a way to build community, strengthen civic pride, and encourage environmental stewardship.

**Policy OSC-1.4 Regional Partnerships.** Continue to work with neighboring cities, Santa Cruz County, the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), and other governmental agencies to promote sustainability throughout the region.

**Policy OSC-1.5 New Development.** Encourage all new development projects in Capitola to incorporate sustainable building techniques.



*Permeable paving allows stormwater to filter through the surface of parking lots, improving water quality and reducing runoff handled by storm drains*

**Policy OSC-1.6 City Purchasing Practices.** Demonstrate environmental stewardship through City purchasing policies and practices.

Actions

**Action OSC-1.1 City Purchasing Policy Amendment.** Amend the City’s purchasing policies to prioritize green business practices and local businesses.

**Action OSC-1.2 Education Partnerships.** Form partnerships with local schools and community organizations to support programs aimed at teaching young people about environmental stewardship.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION

**Goal OSC-2 Reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Capitola as called for by Capitola’s Climate Action Plan.**

Policies

**Policy OSC-2.1 Climate Action Plan.** Ensure that all City policies, programs, and actions are consistent with the Capitola Climate Action Plan.

**Policy OSC-2.2 Regional Collaboration.** Participate fully in regional, State, and federal efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the impacts resulting from climate change.

**Policy OSC-2.3 Regional, State, and Federal Expertise.** Utilize the expertise of regional, State, and federal agencies when developing, revising, and implementing greenhouse gas reduction strategies.

**Policy OSC-2.4 Cost-Benefit Considerations.** Ensure that greenhouse gas reduction strategies optimize benefits relative to costs. Prior to adopting any greenhouse gas reduction strategy, consider the cost of implementation to the City and the private sector.

**Policy OSC-2.5 Consistency with Other Directives.** Monitor federal, State, and regional policies and directives relating to climate change, and adjust City policies and programs as appropriate to maintain consistency.

## Actions

**Action OSC-2.1 Climate Action Plan.** Implement strategies in the Climate Action Plan to achieve Capitola’s GHG reduction target.

**Action OSC-2.2 Climate Action Plan Updates.** Update the Climate Action Plan as required by State law. Updates will include:

- ◆ An updated GHG inventory.
- ◆ An overview of new knowledge on the causes of global warming and anticipated impacts of climate change.
- ◆ An assessment of the appropriateness and adequacy of Capitola’s GHG reduction target.
- ◆ An assessment of the cost effectiveness of measures.
- ◆ An evaluation of the effectiveness of existing programs.
- ◆ Modifications to goals, policies, and strategies as needed to achieve the GHG reduction target.

## AIR QUALITY

**Goal OSC-3 Support atmospheric conditions that are clean and healthful, provide maximum visibility, and meet air quality standards.**

## Policies

**Policy OSC-3.1 Air Quality Management Plans.** Cooperate with regional agencies—including the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, and the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments—in developing and implementing air quality management plans.

**Policy OSC-3.2 Development Design.** Encourage development project designs that protect and improve air quality and minimize direct and indirect air pollutant emissions by reducing vehicle trips (e.g. projects with access to transit and projects that provide walking and bicycling amenities), as well as by being energy-efficient.

**Policy OSC-3.3 Best Management Practices.** Encourage development projects to implement best management practices that reduce air pollutant emissions associated with the construction and operation of the project.

- Policy OSC-3.4 Wood-Burning Fireplace Alternatives.** Encourage low emission alternatives to wood-burning fireplaces in new and significantly renovated residential projects.
- Policy OSC-3.5 Stationary Sources.** Require that stationary air pollutant emission sources be located more than 500 feet and/or downwind from residential areas and other sensitive receptors.
- Policy OSC-3.6 Health Risk Assessments.** Use the results of the Health Risk Assessments required by the California Air Toxics “Hot Spots” Act to establish appropriate land use buffer zones around any new sources of toxic air pollutants that may pose substantial health risks.
- Policy OSC-3.7 Sensitive Receptors.** Ensure that residential development or other projects with sensitive receptors that are proposed within 500 feet of a stationary or mobile air pollutant source do not create any substantial health risks.
- Policy OSC-3.8 Roadway Materials.** Encourage the use of roadway materials that minimize particulate emissions.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES AND ENERGY CONSERVATION

### **Goal OSC-4 Promote increased use of renewable energy sources and alternative fuels.**

#### Policies

- Policy OSC-4.1 On-Site Energy Generation.** Encourage on-site energy generation in Capitola, including wind and solar, provided that significant adverse environmental impacts associated with such facilities can be mitigated.
- Policy OSC-4.2 Grid-Neutral Development.** Encourage grid-neutral development that produces at least as much electricity as it consumes in a year.
- Policy OSC-4.3 Photovoltaic Panels.** Encourage the installation of photovoltaic panels on new homes and businesses.
- Policy OSC-4.4 Solar Heaters.** Encourage the use of solar water and pool heaters.
- Policy OSC-4.5 Solar Access.** Protect existing development from the loss of solar access where possible.

**Policy OSC-4.6 Passive Solar Design.** Encourage passive solar design in new development, in which window placement and building materials help to collect and maintain solar heat in the winter and reflect solar heat in the summer.

Actions

**Action OSC-4.1 Climate Action Plan.** Implement measures in the Climate Action Plan intended to promote renewable energy sources and alternative fuels.

**Action OSC-4.2 Community Choice Aggregation.** Support the creation of Monterey Bay Community Choice Aggregation.

**Action OSC-4.3 Tree Protection Ordinance.** Amend the Tree Protection Ordinance to allow solar access and passive solar design in new and existing development.

**Goal OSC-5 Promote building techniques that increase energy efficiency and reduce consumption of natural resources.**

Policies

**Policy OSC-5.1 City Project Design.** Ensure that all City development projects serve as models of energy-efficient building design.

**Policy OSC-5.2 New Development Design.** Encourage new development to incorporate energy-efficient design features for HVAC, lighting systems, windows and energy management systems, and insulation that exceed Title 24 standards.

**Policy OSC-5.3 Public Outreach.** Participate in the efforts of other regional, State, and federal agencies to provide outreach to residents, businesses, and property owners on programs,



*Photovoltaic panels*

incentives, and regulations to increase energy efficiency.

**Policy OSC-5.4 Support for Energy Efficiency.** Continue to support organizations that promote energy efficiency and offer assistance to residents and businesses that wish to increase their energy efficiency.

**Policy OSC-5.5 Solar Orientation.** Require new development to incorporate measures that reduce energy use through solar orientation by taking advantage of shade, prevailing winds, landscaping, and sun-screens.

**Policy OSC-5.6 City Staff Expertise.** Ensure that all plan review and building inspection staff are knowledgeable about green building materials, techniques, and practices.

**Policy OSC-5.7 Grants for Energy Efficiency.** Continue to pursue grants to address existing energy inefficiencies in City facilities.

**Policy OSC-5.8 Budget for Reduction Measures.** Conduct periodic energy audits of City facilities and include any feasible energy cost reduction measures in the annual budget.

### Actions

**Action OSC-5.1 City Development Codes.** Periodically review and as needed update City development codes and regulations to promote innovative energy-efficient technologies.



*Urban tree canopy in residential neighborhood*

**Action OSC-5.2 Green Building Ordinance.** Periodically review and if needed amend Capitola’s Green Building Ordinance to ensure effectiveness of the regulations relative to Title 24 standards. Consider repealing the Green Building Ordinance if it becomes redundant with Title 24 standards.

**Action OSC-5.3 Green Business Program.** Continue to make energy improvements to City facilities to maintain Capitola’s certification from the Monterey Bay Green Business Program.

## BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

### **Goal OSC-6 Protect natural habitat and other biological resources.**

#### Policies

**Policy OSC-6.1 Natural Diversity.** Promote the preservation of native species, habitat, and vegetation types and overall natural diversity in Capitola.

**Policy OSC-6.2 Environmentally Sensitive Areas.** Protect, enhance, and, where possible, expand environmentally sensitive areas in Capitola, including:

- ◆ Soquel Lagoon
- ◆ Soquel Creek riparian corridor
- ◆ Noble Gulch riparian corridor
- ◆ Tannery Gulch riparian corridor
- ◆ Soquel Creek monarch butterfly habitat
- ◆ Escalona Gulch monarch butterfly habitat

**Policy OSC-6.3 Development Projects.** Ensure that new development avoids, minimizes, and/or mitigates



*Open space in Noble Gulch Park*

impacts to biological resources and sensitive habitat.

- Policy OSC-6.4 Regulatory Compliance.** Ensure that development is consistent with all federal, State and regional regulations for habitat and species protection.
- Policy OSC-6.5 Invasive Species.** Work to manage or eliminate invasive species from City-owned property and open space.
- Policy OSC-6.6 Monterey Bay.** Ensure that development and conservation activities in Capitola help to protect the environmental value of Monterey Bay.
- Policy OSC-6.7 Regional Collaboration.** Continue to participate in regional, State, and federal programs to protect biological resources in Capitola and the Monterey Bay region.
- Policy OSC-6.8 Eco-Tourism.** Support the development of new eco-tourism and other businesses that provide education and recreation services to clients and support the Bay and beach environment.
- Policy OSC-6.9 Urban Forest.** Continue to enforce the City's Community Tree and Forest Management Ordinance to protect trees on private and public property as important environmental and scenic resources.
- Policy OSC-6.10 Off-Shore Petroleum Development Prohibition.** Maintain the City's prohibition of off-shore petroleum supply, production, and support facilities in Monterey Bay.

Actions

- Action OSC-6.1 Marketing Strategy.** Pursue grant funding to develop a marketing strategy to attract new eco-tourism businesses to Capitola.

**Goal OSC-7 Preserve and enhance Capitola's creeks and wetlands.**

Policies

- Policy OSC-7.1 Riparian Landscaping.** Require landscaping for new developments along creeks or in wetlands to be native riparian vegetation.

**Policy OSC-7.2 Soquel Creek.** Continue to work with the California Department of Fish and Game and other regulatory agencies to ensure adequate water flows to support a healthy riparian habitat and permanent fishing resources in Soquel Creek.

**Policy OSC-7.3 Creek Alterations.** Prohibit channelizations or other substantial alterations of creeks and streams except for the following:

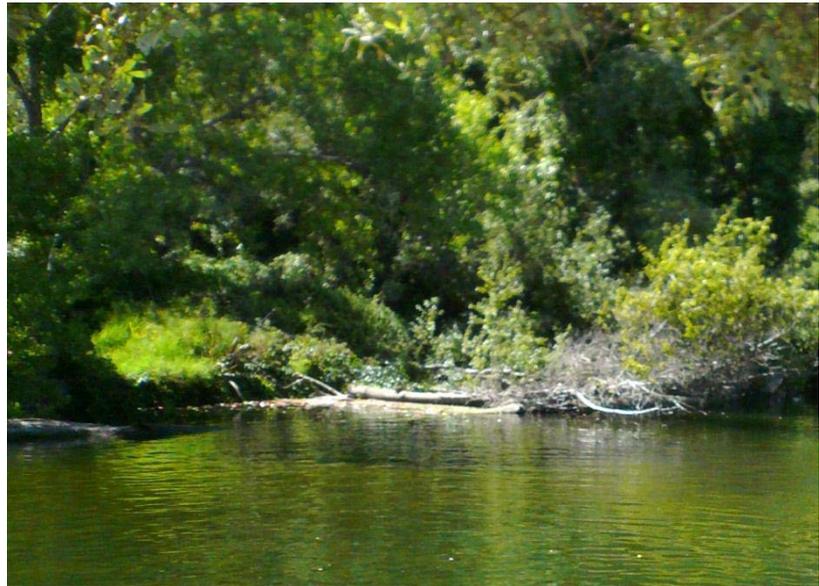
- ◆ Necessary water supply projects where no feasible alternative exists.
- ◆ Maintenance or enhancement of water supply.
- ◆ Flood protection for existing development where there is no other feasible alternative.
- ◆ The improvement of fish and wildlife habitat.

**Policy OSC-7.4 Creek Alteration Impacts.** Require permitted channelizations or stream alterations to minimize impacts to coastal resources, including the depletion of groundwater, and to include maximum feasible mitigation measures to mitigate unavoidable impacts. Bioengineering alternatives shall be preferred for flood protection over "hard" solutions such as concrete or riprap channels. Any creek alteration shall conform to the City's Stormwater Pollution and Protection Ordinance and any applicable state and federal regulations.

**Policy OSC-7.5 Creek Restoration.** Restore culverted or buried channels to their natural state wherever feasible.

**Policy OSC-7.6 Wetland Protection.** Protect and restore where feasible the biological productivity and quality of wetlands.

**Policy OSC-7.7 Biological Study.** Require the submittal of a detailed biological study for proposed projects where an initial site inventory indicates the presence or potential for wetland species or indicators. The study shall contain a delineation of all wetland areas on the project site. Wetland delineations shall be based on the definitions contained in Section 13577(b) of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations.



*Soquel Creek*

**Policy OSC-7.8 Wetland Habitat.** Require proposed development projects to protect and preserve wetland habitats that meet one of the following conditions:

- ◆ Wetlands that contribute to the habitat quality and value of undeveloped lands established or expected to be established in perpetuity for conservation purposes.
- ◆ Wetlands contiguous to riparian or stream corridors or other permanently protected lands.
- ◆ Wetlands located within or contiguous to other high value natural areas.

**Policy OSC-7.9 Creek Recreation and Access.** Integrate creeks with trails and other recreational open space and encourage public access along creek corridors where compatible with the protection of the creek’s resources.

Actions

**Action OSC-7.1 Riparian Plant List.** Develop a native riparian plant list for landscaping along creeks and in wetlands.

WATER QUALITY AND CONSERVATION

**Goal OSC-8 Provide for a high level of water quality.**

Policies

**Policy OSC-8.1 Creek Areas.** Maintain creek beds, riparian corridors, water courses, and associated vegetation in their natural state to assist groundwater percolation and prevent erosion and downstream sedimentation.

**Policy OSC-8.2 Non-Point Source Pollution.** Minimize, avoid, or eliminate non-point source pollution by controlling stormwater runoff, polluted dry weather runoff, and other pollution, in compliance



*Coastal Live Oaks adjacent to the City Hall parking lot*

with Capitola's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit and Stormwater Management Plan.

**Policy OSC-8.3 Best Management Practices.** Require all new development, public and private, to meet or exceed State stormwater requirements and incorporate best management practices to treat, infiltrate, or filter stormwater runoff and reduce pollutants discharged into the storm drain system and surrounding coastal waters during construction and post-construction, to the maximum extent practicable.

**Policy OSC-8.4 Landscaping and Re-Vegetation.** Require landscaping and re-vegetation of graded or disturbed areas for new development.

**Policy OSC-8.5 Native Plants.** Encourage the use of native plants in landscaping to minimize the need for fertilizer, pesticides, herbicides, and excessive irrigation, and to be in compliance with Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans.

**Policy OSC-8.6 City Properties.** Design, construct, and maintain City properties in a manner that maximizes water quality protection through:

- ◆ Designing new and renovated landscaped and paved areas that suit site conditions, protect water quality, and support sustainable maintenance.
- ◆ Using drought-tolerant native and non-invasive plant species.
- ◆ Incorporating Low Impact Development design techniques.
- ◆ Practicing the principles of integrated pest management.
- ◆ Selecting and using fertilizers that minimize negative impacts on soil organisms and aquatic environments.



*Stormwater bioretention swale*

**Policy OSC-8.7 Regional Collaboration.** Continue to partner with and support federal, State, and local agencies in regional planning and management initiatives to promote and enhance water quality in the Soquel Creek watershed. Participate in efforts to reduce storm-

water and urban runoff impacts to water quality, restoration efforts, and regional mitigation, monitoring, and public education programs.

**Policy OSC-8.8 Drainage Plans.** Require new development to protect the infiltration, purification, and retentive functions of natural systems that exist on the site. Drainage plans shall be designed to complement and utilize existing drainage patterns and systems, providing drainage for the developed area in a non-erosive manner.

**Policy OSC-8.9 Impervious Surfaces.** Require all new development to minimize the creation of new impervious surfaces and reduce unused impervious surfaces. Prohibit post-project peak stormwater runoff discharge rates from exceeding the estimated pre-project rate.

#### Actions

**Action OSC-8.1 Stormwater Infrastructure.** Develop a priority list and timeline for public stormwater drainage infrastructure improvements for all neighborhoods in Capitola.

**Action OSC-8.2 Funding for Stormwater Management.** Identify funding sources to upgrade existing inadequate stormwater facilities and address on-site retention of contaminants.

**Action OSC-8.3 Stormwater Management Program.** Update Capitola's Stormwater Pollution Prevention and Protection Ordinance as necessary to be consistent with State requirements.

### **Goal OSC-9 Promote water conservation.**

#### Policies

**Policy OSC-9.1 Water Use.** Maximize the conservation and efficient use of water in new and existing residences and businesses.

**Policy OSC-9.2 Drought-Tolerant Landscaping.** Utilize native, drought-tolerant plants for all City landscaping activities.

**Policy OSC-9.3 Public Outreach.** Work with water service providers, local non-profits, and other environmental organizations to educate the public about water issues and conservation measures.

## Actions

- Action OSC-9.1 Greywater.** Evaluate opportunities to develop and implement a greywater reclamation system for landscaping and other non-potable water uses for domestic, commercial, and industrial consumers. Encourage households and new developments to implement greywater reclamation systems.
- Action OSC-9.2 City Conservation Goals.** Establish water conservation goals for City buildings and operations.
- Action OSC-9.3 Water Efficiency Audits.** Cooperate with water district efforts to require water efficiency audits at point of sale for commercial and residential properties and the use of water conserving plumbing fixtures in all new development permitted in Capitola.
- Action OSC-9.4 Incentives.** Encourage water districts to develop incentive programs for the use of drought-tolerant landscaping and recycled water for landscape irrigation.
- Action OSC-9.5 Salt Water Intrusion.** Cooperate with the Soquel Creek Water District to identify and implement measures to prevent salt water intrusion into Capitola's water supply.

## FOOD PRODUCTION

**Goal OSC-10 Promote local food production and distribution systems to encourage healthy eating and minimize transportation impacts associated with food production and distribution.**

## Policies

- Policy OSC-10.1 Local Food Promotion.** Promote food grown locally in Santa Cruz County through marketing, outreach, and by providing locally grown and prepared food at City events, helping to reduce the transportation needs for food distribution while boosting the local economy.
- Policy OSC-10.2 Outlets for Local Food.** Encourage neighborhood grocery stores, farmers markets, and food assistance programs to increase their use of locally-grown and -prepared goods where feasible.

**Policy OSC-10.3 Serving Local Food.** Encourage institutions, such as schools, government agencies, and businesses to serve foods produced locally and in the region.

**Policy OSC-10.4 Access to Healthy Food.** Encourage increased access to affordable and healthful foods for all residents, especially low-income households.

**Policy OSC-10.5 Community Gardens.** Support the establishment of community gardens and organic food production on appropriate public and private property.

**Policy OSC-10.6 School Gardens.** Support the establishment of organic gardens in Capitola schools.

Actions

**Action OSC-10.1 City Properties.** Pursue opportunities that become available to use undeveloped City property or parkland for urban agricultural uses, such as community gardens and farmers markets. Should properties become available, develop a program to establish such uses in appropriate locations.

**Action OSC-10.2 Purchasing Policies.** Amend the City’s purchasing policies to encourage the use of foods grown in Santa Cruz County at City events.

WASTE REDUCTION

**Goal OSC-11 Reduce solid waste originating in Capitola.**

Policies

**Policy OSC-11.1 Solid Waste Diversion.** Work with Green Waste Recovery to increase community diversion of solid waste to 60 percent by 2020.

**Policy OSC-11.2 City Diversion Rate.** Increase the City government waste diversion rate to 75 percent by expanding reduction, recycling, and composting programs; practicing reuse; conducting waste audits; and promoting the purchase of environmentally friendly office products.

**Policy OSC-11.3 Demolition Material Recycling.** Continue to require mandatory recycling of building demolition materials.

**Policy OSC-11.4 Building Design.** Encourage building designs that minimize waste and consumption in construction projects.

**Policy OSC-11.5 Recycling and Composting Space.** Require adequate and convenient space for recycling and composting in all buildings.

**Policy OSC-11.6 Reusable Goods.** Encourage the use of reusable, returnable, recyclable, and repairable goods through incentives, educational displays and activities, and City purchasing policies and practices.

**Policy OSC-11.7 Consumption/Waste Reduction.** Encourage the reduction of waste and consumption from household and business activities in Capitola through public outreach and education activities.

**Policy OSC-11.8 Recycling at Events.** Require recycling at all public events.

#### Actions

**Action OSC-11.1 Diversion Incentives.** Identify and implement financial incentives to households and businesses to reduce the volume of solid waste sent to the landfill.

**Action OSC-11.2 Restaurant Waste.** Evaluate the feasibility of adopting a restaurant food waste reduction program or ordinance. Based on the results of this evaluation, adopt such a program or ordinance, as appropriate.

**Action OSC-11.3 Recycled Asphalt Pavement.** Encourage the use of recycled asphalt pavement (RAP) for commercial and community parking lots.

**Action OSC-11.4 City Purchasing Policies.** Amend the City's purchasing policies to promote the use of reusable, returnable, recyclable, and repairable goods.



5

MOBILITY



# INTRODUCTION

The Mobility Element establishes a framework for a balanced transportation system in Capitola that meets the needs of residents, workers, and visitors. It aims to support a range of transportation choices, including vehicle travel, transit, bicycling, and walking. The Mobility Element envisions a transportation system that enhances resident’s quality of life, supports a vibrant local economy, and promotes environmental sustainability goals. The Element also addresses the unique mobility needs of Capitola Village and residential neighborhoods that contribute to Capitola’s unique sense of place.

State law requires that the Mobility Element include “the general location and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, (and) terminals..., all correlated with the Land Use Element of the Plan” (Govt. Code, Sec. 65302[b]). In addition, the California Complete Streets Act (AB 1358), passed in 2008, requires all General Plan updates after January 1, 2011 to “plan for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, and highways for safe and convenient travel” and defines “users of streets, roads, and highways” to include pedestrians, bicyclists, users of public transportation, motorists, children, persons with disabilities, and seniors.

In addition to this Introduction, the Mobility Element is divided into two sections:

- ◆ **Mobility Background.** This section describes the existing transportation system in Capitola, including roadways, transit service, rail service, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- ◆ **Goals, Policies, and Actions.** Provides goals, policies, and actions to address the mobility needs of the City of Capitola.

# BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

## Roadway Network

The roadway network in Capitola consists of freeways, arterials, collectors, and local streets as classified by their function, commonly referred to as the functional roadway classification system (FCS). This traditional FCS is based on the mobility and access functions of roads for motor vehicle, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic and allows the City to properly design and manage roads to ensure safety and ease of maneuverability.

Street classifications are described in Table MO-1 and are illustrated in Figure MO-1.

## Existing Traffic Volumes

Figure MO-2 shows estimated average daily trips (ADTs) of vehicles on selected roads in and around Capitola. The ADTs are illustrated using color-coded lines, with red being the highest volumes, followed by orange and then yellow. Specific count data and the year of the count (shown in parentheses) is shown numerically at designated intersections and along roadway segments. ADT estimations were derived from data collected by the City of Capitola, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, and Caltrans. This data represents the most current information available at the time this General Plan was prepared.



*Highway 1 along Capitola's northern boundary*

FIGURE MO-1 EXISTING ROADWAY NETWORK



Source: City of Capitola and RBF Consulting, 2011.

**TABLE MO-1 CAPITOLA STREET CLASSIFICATIONS**

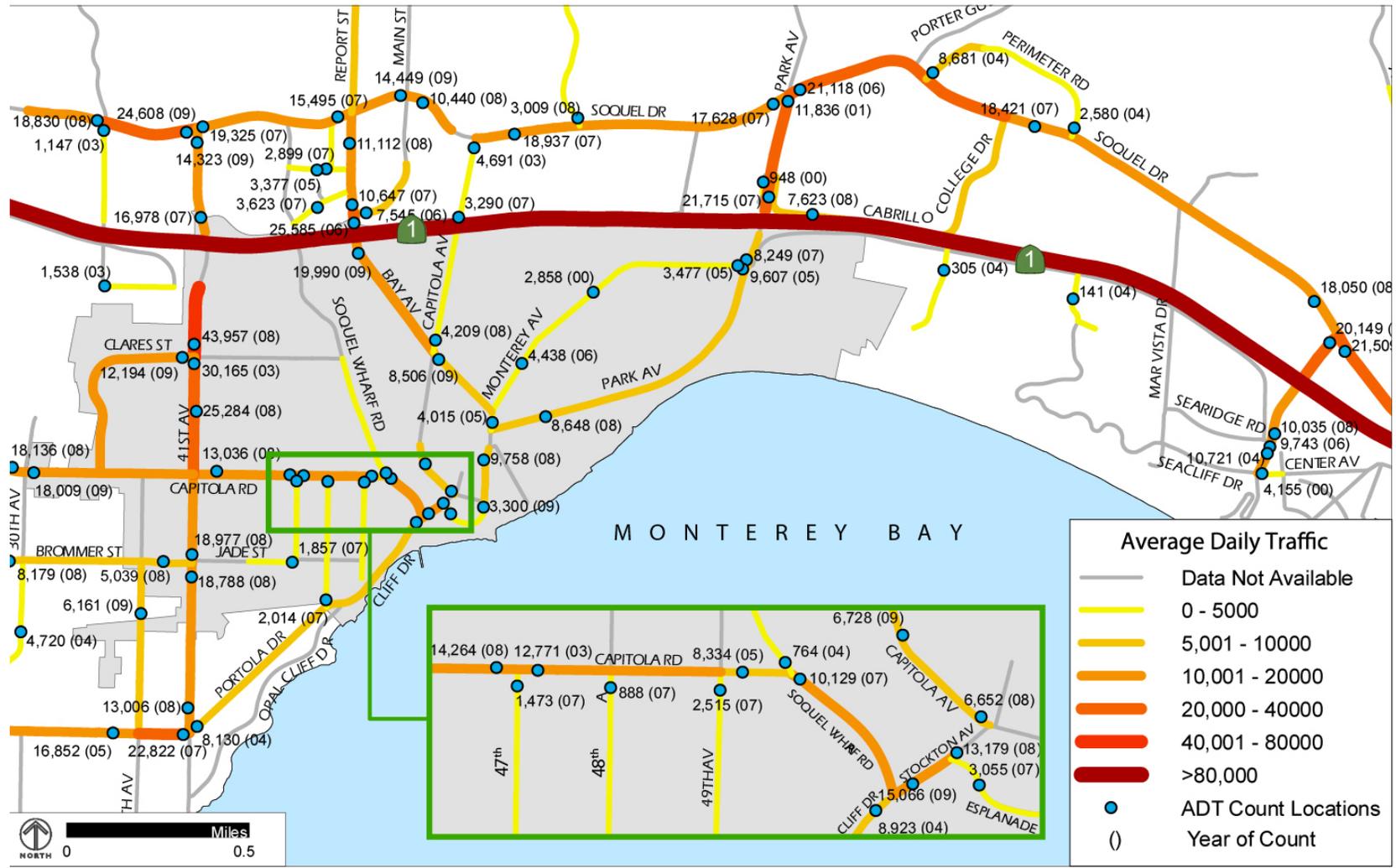
Street Classification	Description	Existing Average Daily Traffic Range <sup>1</sup>	Capitola Streets <sup>2</sup>
Freeway	Serves major centers of activity with the highest traffic volumes and longest trip lengths. Integrated internally and between major rural connections. Service to abutting lands is subordinate to travel service to major traffic movements. Design types are interstates, other freeways, and other principal arterials.	More than 80,000	Highway 1
Arterial	Trips of moderate length at a lower level of mobility than principal arterials. Some emphasis on land access. Often carries local bus routes and provide intra-community continuity but does not access neighborhoods.	6,500 to 45,000	41 <sup>st</sup> Avenue, Gross Road from Soquel Avenue to 41 <sup>st</sup> Avenue, Clares Street west of 41 <sup>st</sup> Avenue, Brommer Street, Bay Avenue, Capitola Road, East Cliff Road, Capitola Avenue south of Bay Avenue, Monterey Avenue south of Park Avenue.
Collector	Provides both land access and traffic circulation. Accesses neighborhoods and communities collecting and distributing traffic between neighborhoods and the arterial streets.	800 to 4,500	Clares Street (east of 41 <sup>st</sup> Avenue), Wharf Road, 38 <sup>th</sup> Avenue, Capitola Avenue (north of Bay Avenue), Monterey Avenue (north of Bay Avenue) and Kennedy Drive.
Local Streets	Primarily permits direct land access and connections to the higher order streets. Lowest level of mobility. Through traffic is deliberately discouraged.	Less than 2,000	All other streets

Notes:

1. Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes are derived from the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) and applied to the City of Capitola existing General Plan street classifications.
2. As defined by the existing Capitola General Plan, 1989.

Source: City of Capitola, SCCRTC, and RBF Consulting, 2011.

FIGURE MO-2 HISTORIC/RECENT TRAFFIC VOLUMES



Source: Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission Monitoring Program (non-highway traffic counts) and Caltrans (state highway counts), 2011.

## Level of Service

To evaluate the performance of roadways and levels of traffic congestion, Capitola uses a measurement known as level of service (LOS). LOS is a scale that measures the amount of auto traffic that a roadway or intersection can accommodate, based on such factors as maneuverability, driver dissatisfaction, and delay. Based on these measurements, it is possible to roughly estimate the impact of auto traffic at intersections throughout Capitola.

LOS is typically represented by a letter scale that ranges from LOS A to LOS F. As shown in Table MO-2, LOS A represents the fastest flow of traffic and LOS F represents significantly congested conditions.

## Complete Streets

The California Complete Streets Act (AB 1358) requires Capitola to plan for multimodal transportation networks in the General Plan. These networks should allow for travel by motor vehicle, foot, bicycle, and transit to reach key destinations in Capitola and the larger region. All street improvement projects should be viewed as opportunities to improve safety, access, and mobility for all travelers. Capitola can use complete streets design to enhance streets for all modes and all users no matter their age or ability.

**TABLE MO-2 INTERSECTION LEVEL OF SERVICE DEFINITIONS**

Level of Service	Description	Signalized (sec/veh.)	Unsignalized (sec/veh.)
A	Free flow with no delays. Users are virtually unaffected by others in the traffic stream.	≤ 10	≤ 10
B	Stable traffic. Traffic flows smoothly with few delays.	> 10 – 20	> 10 – 15
C	Stable flow but the operation of individual users becomes affected by other vehicles. Modest delays.	> 20 – 35	> 15 – 25
D	Approaching unstable flow. Operation of individual users becomes significantly affected by other vehicles. Delays may be more than one cycle during peak hours.	> 35 – 55	> 25 – 35
E	Unstable flow with operating conditions at or near the capacity level. Long delays and vehicle queuing.	> 55 – 80	> 35 – 50
F	Forced or breakdown flow that causes reduced capacity. Stop and go traffic conditions. Excessive long delays and vehicle queuing.	> 80	> 50

Source: Transportation Research Board, *Highway Capacity Manual 2010*, National Research Council, 2000.

## Capitola Village Parking

Parking is a key issue in Capitola Village. This is largely because Capitola Village is a higher density developed area and a desirable destination for a variety of local and regional users, particularly during peak summer, holiday, and weekend periods. Routine and predictable users include those destined for retail, restaurant, beach, and residential uses.

### Parking Supply and Demand

A 2008 Village parking study found a supply of 1,036 parking spaces in the Village. Of these spaces, 682 are off-street with the remaining 354 on-street (RBF Consulting, 2008). During peak summer, holiday, and weekend periods, parking demand often exceeds this supply. The 2008 study found parking demand on summer weekends to exceed supply by 176 spaces, and recommended increasing parking supply by 390 spaces for optimal circulation to accommodate existing land uses. In 2014 the new Village and Beach Parking Lot #2 opened, adding an additional 233 new spaces to serve the Village.

### Parking Management

Parking meters and pay stations are currently utilized in core areas of the Village as a strategy to manage the limited parking supply. The remainder of the parking supply is managed through the use of permits. A limited number of Village parking permits are provided to Village residents and employees.

Capitola also provides a Village shuttle bus service to reduce visitor parking in residential neighborhoods. The Village shuttle bus service is provided on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays during the summer (Memorial Day weekend through mid-September). This service transports riders from parking lot near the Highway 1/Bay Avenue interchange to the Village. The shuttle bus service is required by the California Coastal Commission as a condition of the City's residential parking program.

## Truck Routes

The City of Capitola does not have an ordinance that establishes designated truck routes. Truck routes restrict vehicles that are within a gross vehicle weight, licensed commercially as a truck, and used for carrying goods for pickup and delivery. Such an ordinance would require trucks to only drive on

truck-designated streets, except when necessary for egress and ingress by direct route to and from a restricted street for the purposes of loading or unloading.

A majority of the existing truck traffic travels along the existing arterial roads, particularly 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Clares Street, Capitola Road, Bay Avenue, Capitola Avenue and Cliff Drive in and out of the Village. However, cut-through traffic on residential streets is an issue. For instance, trucks delivering materials to stores at Kings Plaza, located on the southwest corner of 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Capitola Road, often use 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue and travel east to Brommer Street, and then north onto 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

## Transit Service

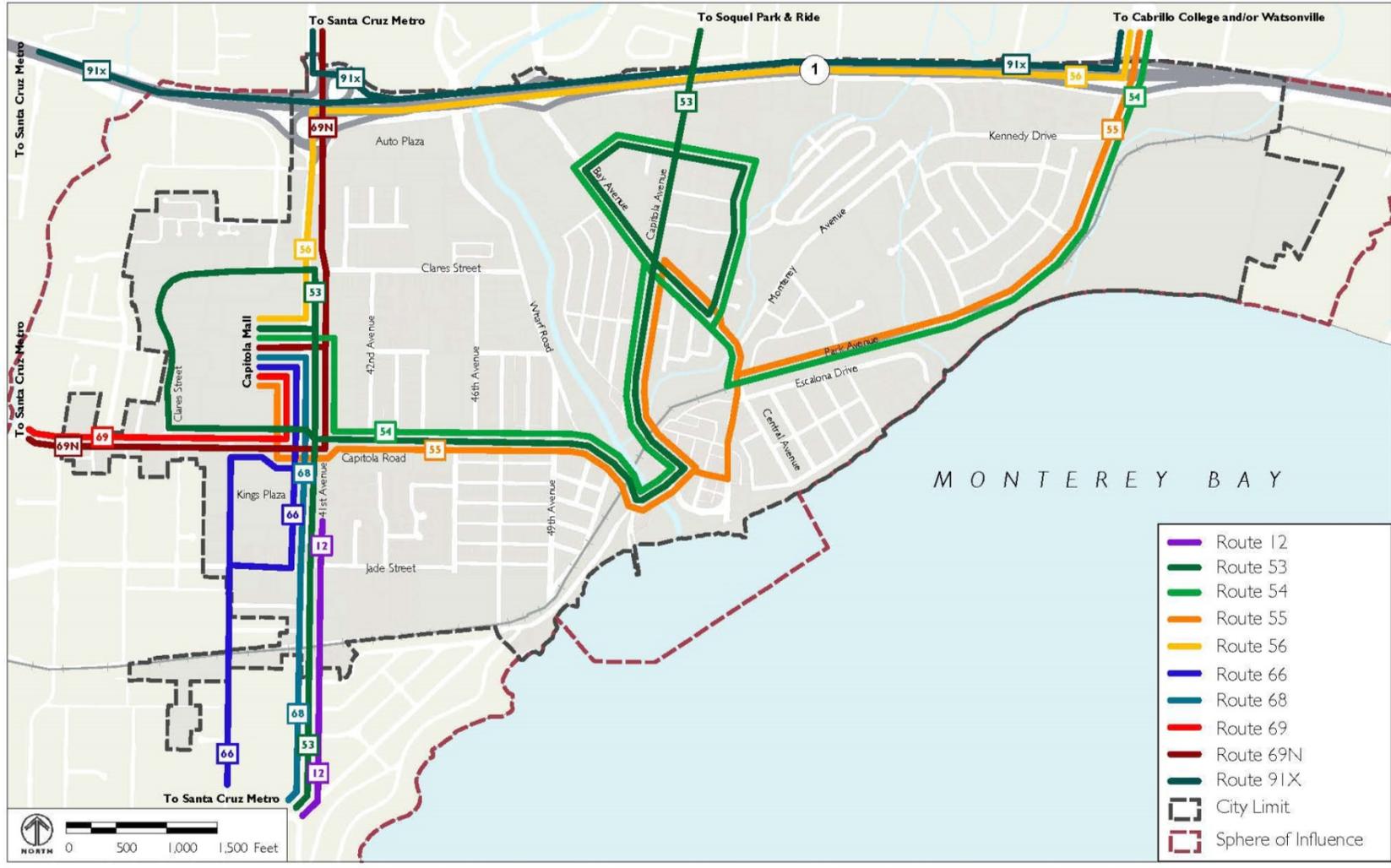
Bus transit service and paratransit service for people with disabilities in Capitola is provided by Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit (Metro). Metro serves all of Santa Cruz County and the cities of Scotts Valley, Santa Cruz, Capitola, and Watsonville. Metro partners with the Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC), the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), UC Santa Cruz Transportation and Parking Services (TAPS), and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) in overall transportation improvement planning and transit services.

As shown in Figure MO-3, there are ten Metro transit lines that service Capitola. With the exception of Line 91x, all public transit lines stop at the Capitola Mall, which serves as the primary mid-county transit hub. Three bus lines (53 with light service, 54, and 55) also serve Capitola Village. The primary transit routes overlap with arterials and collectors in the City. Arterial routes that also serve as transit routes include 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Capitola Road, Capitola Avenue, Bay Avenue, and Park Avenue.



*Metro Transit Center at Capitola Mall*

FIGURE MO-3 BUS TRANSIT ROUTES



Source: Santa Cruz METRO and RBF Consulting, 2011.

## Bicycle Network

In February 2011, Capitola adopted an updated Bicycle Transportation Plan (BTP). The BTP sets goals and objectives for the purpose of increasing the safety and convenience of bicycle commuting in and around Capitola.

According to the BTP, roughly one-third of all commuters in Capitola in 2000 had a less than 15-minute trip to work, which suggests that the distance traveled was likely less than 9 miles if driving at 35 mph, 2.5 miles if bicycling, or 1.25 miles if walking. All of these trips are achievable on a bicycle in less than one hour. By breaking down barriers to bicycle commuting, especially for those who live within 9 miles of work, the BTP identifies ways to improve bike ridership and achieve the BTP's goal of 5 percent of total trips and 20 percent of commuter trips by bicycle by the year 2020.

The BTP identifies a number of existing and proposed bikeways for Capitola, as shown in Figure MO-4. In addition to the bikeways shown in Figure MO-4, a multi-use trail for bicycles and pedestrians is planned along the The Santa Cruz Branch rail line corridor. The long term plan is for the multi-use trail to cross Soquel Creek along the trestle. In the short term, the rail trail will cross Soquel Creek over Stockton Bridge in the Village until sufficient funds are available to retrofit the trestle to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians.



*Bicycle lanes on 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue*

FIGURE MO-4 CAPITOLA BIKEWAYS



\*A sharrow, or shared-lane marking, is a street markings placed in the center of a travel lane to indicate that a bicyclist may use the full lane.

Source: City of Capitola and RBF Consulting, 2011.

## Pedestrian Circulation

Pedestrian mobility is accommodated primarily through sidewalks and dedicated pathways. Capitola has about 26 miles of roadways, of which about 50 percent have sidewalks. The City relies on the State Streets and Highways Code, which requires property owners to maintain sidewalks fronting their property, with the exception of some sidewalks in the Village. Dedicated pedestrian pathways, such as along Prospect Bluff, also enable pedestrians to reach destinations in Capitola where roadways do not permit direct walking access.

As shown in Figure MO-5, there are many areas throughout Capitola that do not have adequate or complete sidewalk facilities. Most notably, this includes a variety of streets between 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Wharf Road, a small neighborhood west of 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and north of Clares Street, various streets north and south of Bay Avenue, residential areas north of Capitola Village, a portion of Park Avenue, and the associated residential streets north of Park Avenue along McCormick Avenue.

## Rail Corridor

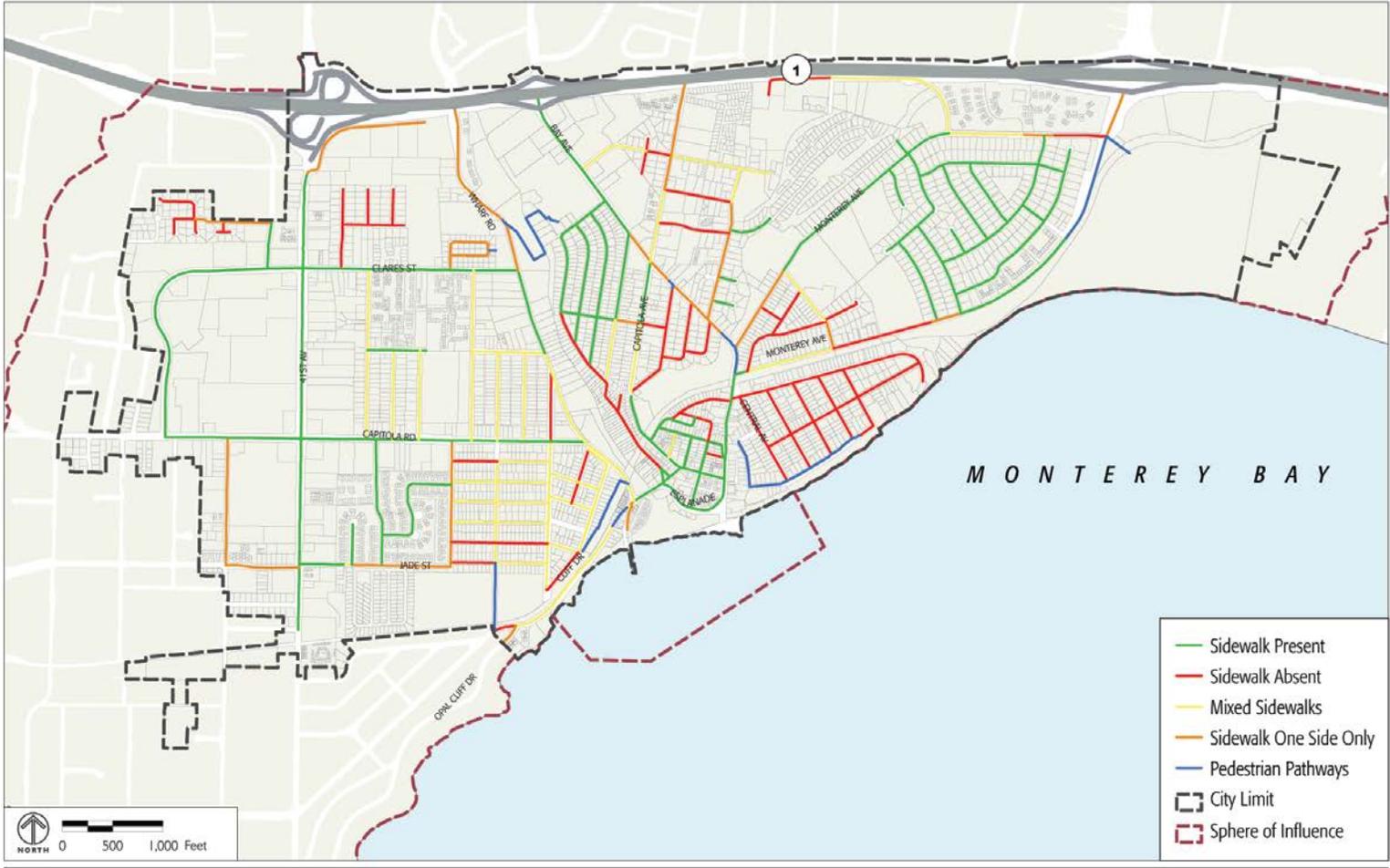
The Santa Cruz Branch rail line corridor parallels Highway 1 extending almost 32 miles from the community of Pajaro in Monterey County, to Davenport in Santa Cruz County. This line extends generally east to west through Capitola. As shown in Figure MO-6, within Capitola there are four at-grade crossings and two trestles, including a major crossing over Soquel Creek. The right-of-way is generally 50 to 60 feet wide.

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) acquired the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line right-of-way in the Fall of 2012 for recreational rail, preservation, and future transportation uses. Planned transportation uses within this right-of-way include passenger rail service, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and freight rail service. In 2013, the RTC adopted plans for a new multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trail parallel to the rail tracks as part of a master plan for the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network.



*Freight rail service crossing the trestle*

FIGURE MO-5 CAPITOLA SIDEWALK INVENTORY





# GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

## GENERAL MOBILITY

**Goal MO-1 Provide a balanced multi-modal transportation system that enhances mobility in a safe and sustainable manner.**

### Policies

- Policy MO-1.1 Responsive Transportation Services.** Promote multi-modal transportation services and facilities that are responsive to the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors.
- Policy MO-1.2 Reduced Vehicle Trips.** Encourage transportation strategies that reduce vehicular trips and air pollution, and promote energy conservation.
- Policy MO-1.3 Regional Collaboration.** Support regional efforts to increase alternatives which reduce single occupant vehicle trips, conserve energy, and reduce air pollution.
- Policy MO-1.4 Highway 1 Capacity.** Support regional efforts to increase the capacity of Highway 1 to accommodate future forecasted traffic demands, including the proposed Highway 1 high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) project.



*Vehicle and bicycle lanes on 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue*

## Actions

- Action MO-1.1 Funding.** Work with the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), Santa Cruz County, Caltrans, and other relevant organizations to seek funding in support of local mobility improvement projects.
- Action MO-1.2 Regional Plan Implementation.** Participate with Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), and Santa Cruz County to create and implement programs that coordinate the multi-modal transportation needs and requirements across jurisdictions, including but not limited to the Regional Transportation Plan, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Master Plan.
- Action MO-1.3 Highway 1 Crossings.** Coordinate with Caltrans to create improvements to the Highway 1 over- and under-passes in Capitola including roadway configuration, signal timing, and pedestrian/bike safety and access.

## ROADWAYS

**Goal MO-2 Provide for “Complete Streets” that serve all modes of transportation, including vehicles, public transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians.**

## Policies

- Policy MO-2.1 Complete Streets.** Support projects, programs, policies, and regulations to maintain a balanced multi-modal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of local roadways in a manner that is suitable to the scale and character of Capitola.
- Policy MO-2.2 Design Standards.** Follow accepted or adopted design standards when implementing improvements intended to fulfill the Complete Streets policy. Consider innovative or non-traditional design options where a comparable level of safety for users is provided.

**Policy MO-2.3 Community Context.** Support Complete Street improvements that fit within the context of the community and address unique conditions within Capitola.

**Policy MO-2.4 Maintenance.** Accommodate bicycling, walking, and public transit as a routine part of the City’s maintenance of roadways in Capitola.

**Policy MO-2.5 Existing Rights-of-Way.** Support opportunities to repurpose existing rights-of-way or create new rights-of-way to enhance connectivity for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit.

**Policy MO-2.6 Non-Motorized Connectivity.** Focus Complete Street improvements on primary connections from residential areas to schools, parks and recreation uses, civic uses, and community-serving commercial areas.

**Policy MO-2.7 Exceptions.** Provide facilities for all users in the construction, reconstruction, retrofit, repaving, and rehabilitation of City streets, except under one or more of the following conditions:

- ◆ The costs of providing accommodation are excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use; or
- ◆ The existing and planned population, employment densities, traffic volumes, or level of transit service around a particular roadway, as confirmed by the Public Works Director, is so low that future expected users of the roadway will not include pedestrians, public transportation, freight vehicles, or bicyclists.

Where exceptions occur for both City and private projects, documentation shall be publicly available and subject to review and approval by the Public Works Director.



*Wide sidewalks and seating are elements of complete streets in the Village*

## Actions

- Action MO-2.1 Complete Street Standards.** Develop a set of minimum and preferred Complete Streets standards that can be referenced when retrofitting existing roadways.
- Action MO-2.2 Capital Improvement Program.** Incorporate Complete Streets projects as part of the City's annual Capital Improvements Program update.
- Action MO-2.3 Dedications.** Establish by local ordinance the ability to require a dedication or irrevocable offer of dedication of real property for streets, alleys, and additional land as may be necessary to provide bicycle paths and/or local transit facilities, consistent with the provisions of the Subdivision Map Act or as otherwise allowed under State law.
- Action MO-2.4 Safe Routes to Schools.** Establish a Safe Routes to School Program and work with local schools to make improvements that promote safe walking and bicycling to schools that serve Capitola residents.

## **Goal MO-3 Provide a roadway system that enhances mobility and protects residential neighborhoods.**

- Policy MO-3.1 Arterial Streets.** Actively discourage diversion of traffic to local streets by maintaining maximum capacity on arterial streets and locating high traffic-generating uses on arterial streets.
- Policy MO-3.2 Street Widening.** Whenever possible, implement solutions that improve the efficiency of the arterial system without major widening.
- Policy MO-3.3 Level of Service Standard.** Continue to maintain the established level of service C or better at intersections throughout Capitola, with the exception of the Village area, Bay Avenue, and 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue.
- Policy MO-3.4 Reduced Standards.** Accept a lower level of service and higher congestion at major regional intersections if necessary improvements are considered infeasible, as determined by the Public Works Director, or result in significant, unacceptable environmental impacts.
- Policy MO-3.5 Impact Fees.** Require new development to pay its appropriate fair share of costs for future planned transportation improvements.

Actions

**Action MO-3.1 Neighborhood Traffic.** Monitor traffic volumes and vehicle speeds on local streets in residential neighborhoods as new development is proposed or as deemed necessary due to increased traffic volumes. Consider installing traffic calming measures if cut-through traffic increases as a result of adjacent development.

**Action MO-3.2 Signal Timing.** Update and maintain coordinated signal timing on traffic corridors, particularly on 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

**Action MO-3.3 Traffic Monitoring.** Monitor traffic as new development is proposed or when increased traffic volumes are observed to ensure that planned improvements are scheduled prior to deterioration of level of service below the desired standard.



*Traffic flow on 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue, an arterial corridor*

**Action MO-3.4 Impact Fees.** Prepare and implement a transportation impact fee program in the City of Capitola to ensure that new development pays its appropriate fair share of the costs, also known as “fair share contribution,” of improvements needed to accommodate the development when considered in the context of a Complete Streets transportation system.

**Action MO-3.5 Financing.** Finance circulation system improvements by using local revenues as a match to leverage federal and State funds.

**Goal MO-4 Provide a roadway system that enhances community aesthetics and promotes a high quality of life.**

Policies

- Policy MO-4.1 General Design.** Ensure that new and reconfigured roadways and roadway improvements are safe, functional, and attractive.
- Policy MO-4.2 Standards.** Require streets to be dedicated and improved in accordance with the adopted street standards. Any modifications from these standards shall require approval by the Public Works Director or Planning Commission, as appropriate.
- Policy MO-4.3 Streetscape Design.** Ensure that street trees, landscaping, and other streetscape design features on Capitola’s main arterials support a high quality design environment.
- Policy MO-4.4 Driveways.** Where appropriate and feasible, combine driveways serving small parcels to permit safer merging.
- Policy MO-4.5 Parking Access.** Promote efficient ingress and egress to and from parking areas and promote efficient internal circulation between adjacent parking areas to reduce congestion on roadways.
- Policy MO-4.6 Traffic Calming.** Consider using traffic calming measures on local and collector streets, such as narrow street openings, turning prohibitions, one-way streets, landscaping, etc. to improve vehicular and non-vehicular traffic safety and enhance the aesthetic character of Capitola’s neighborhoods.
- Policy MO-4.7 Utility Work Coordination.** Minimize disruption of newly paved or resurfaced streets by ensuring that road projects are coordinated with utility work.

Actions

- Action MO-4.1 Bay Avenue Roundabout.** Prepare a study and conduct outreach with business stakeholders and the public to evaluate the feasibility of constructing a roundabout at the intersection of Bay Avenue and Capitola Avenue.

## PARKING

### Goal MO-5 Provide for well-designed parking as part of a balanced transportation system.

#### Policies

**Policy MO-5.1 Balance.** Balance the need for adequate off-street parking with other community goals, such as increasing transportation choices and maintaining a high-quality design environment.

**Policy MO-5.2 Parking Efficiency.** Support the efficient use of land available for parking through shared parking, valet parking, parking lifts, and other similar methods.

**Policy MO-5.3 Parking Reductions.** Consider reduced off-street parking requirements for mixed-use projects, transit-oriented development, and other projects that demonstrate a reduced demand for off-street parking.

**Policy MO-5.4 Impacts on Residential Areas.** Ensure that new development in commercial areas does not create spillover parking that negatively impacts adjacent residential neighborhoods.

**Policy MO-5.5 Parking Design.** Ensure that parking facilities and garages are designed to be safe, attractive, and easy to use.

**Policy MO-5.6 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue.** Support long-term centralized parking that serves multiple properties within the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue corridor.



*Public parking along Cliff Drive*

Action

**Action MO-5.1 Parking Management.** Develop parking management tools that discourage motorists from circling city streets in search of parking. Provide conspicuous signage, web-based applications, demand-based pricing, and/or other means to direct visitors to available parking areas.

CAPITOLA VILLAGE

**Goal MO-6 Enhance access to and mobility within Capitola Village.**

Policies

**Policy MO-6.1 Traffic Congestion.** Reduce traffic congestion on roadways within the Village, particularly during peak summer times.

**Policy MO-6.2 Parking Supply.** Increase the supply of parking to serve the Village. Additional parking should be provided in locations that minimize traffic congestion in the Village, yet are within close proximity of the Village core. A new parking structure on the Village and Beach Parking Lot #1 site could provide needed additional parking.

**Policy MO-6.3 Signage.** Provide signage that effectively directs motorists to available parking serving the Village.

**Policy MO-6.4 Balanced Parking Approach.** Maintain a balanced approach to parking in the Village that addresses the parking needs of residents, merchants, and visitors.



*Signage directing motorists to Village and Beach Parking Lot #1*

- Policy MO-6.5 Transportation Alternatives.** Encourage visitors to enter the Village using non-automotive modes of transportation, including by walking, biking, and taking public transit.
- Policy MO-6.6 Bicycle and Pedestrian Connections.** Enhance bicycle and pedestrian connections to the Village from surrounding residential neighborhoods and commercial areas.
- Policy MO-6.7 General Environment.** Maintain an environment within the Village that prioritizes the safety and convenience of pedestrians and bicyclists.

Actions

- Action MO-6.1 Parking Technology.** Develop and implement a real-time “intelligent traffic management” system to inform motorists of the availability and location of parking.
- Action MO-6.2 Esplanade Parking.** When additional parking to serve the Village is provided in a new parking structure or equivalent location, initiate a study to assess the feasibility of converting existing parking on the Esplanade to publically accessible open space.
- Action MO-6.3 Bicycle Parking.** Install additional bicycle parking (e.g. bike racks/bike boxes) in the Village to accommodate seasonal demand and special events.
- Action MO-6.4 Parking Program.** Continue to maintain the Capitola Village/Beach parking program for Village users.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

**Goal MO-7 Improve and expand public transportation services for residents, workers, and visitors.**

Policies

- Policy MO-7.1 Regional Cooperation.** Support regional efforts to improve the availability, affordability, reliability, and convenience of public transportation service in Capitola.

**Policy MO-7.2 Transit-Friendly Development.** Encourage new development to be located and designed to support increased use of public transportation.

**Policy MO-7.3 Visitors.** Support efforts to increase the ability for visitors to travel to Capitola by public transportation.

**Policy MO-7.4 Transit Center.** Support the continued presence of the Santa Cruz METRO Transit Center in Capitola Mall or some other alternative location within Capitola.

**Policy MO-7.5 Commutes.** Support regional efforts to increase the ability for Capitola residents to commute by public transportation to employment centers in Santa Cruz and Santa Clara County.

**Policy MO-7.6 Rail Service.** Work with regional partners to explore the feasibility of passenger rail service on the Santa Cruz Branch rail line corridor.

**Policy MO-7.7 Paratransit.** Support paratransit alternatives such as the Santa Cruz METRO Paracruz program to ensure that public transportation in the City is responsive to the needs of the young, aged, handicapped and disadvantaged.



*Capitola Mall bus shelters*

### Actions

**Action MO-7.1 Improved Transit Coverage.** Work cooperatively with Santa Cruz METRO to continually assess and improve the coverage of transit service in Capitola by providing additional routes and increased service frequency.

**Action MO-7.2 Capitola Mall Transit Center.** Work with Capitola Mall stakeholders and Santa Cruz METRO to pursue the relocation of the Capitola Mall Transit Center to a more appropriate location on or near the mall property.

**Action MO-7.3 Bus Stops.** Improve existing bus stops to provide a safe and convenient access consistent with Santa Cruz METRO design standards.

## BICYCLES AND PEDESTRIANS

### Goal MO-8 Provide a complete network of bikeways and bicycle facilities in Capitola.

#### Policies

**Policy MO-8.1 Bicycle Transportation Plan.** Construct and maintain bikeways consistent with the Capitola Bicycle Transportation Plan.

**Policy MO-8.2 Regional System.** Ensure that the bikeways in Capitola are well integrated with existing and proposed regional bikeways in Santa Cruz County.

**Policy MO-8.3 All Users.** Ensure that bikeways in Capitola are safe and convenient for bicyclists of all ages and abilities.

**Policy MO-8.4 Safety.** Improve public safety by minimizing conflicts between bicyclists and motor vehicles on Capitola's roadways.

**Policy MO-8.5 Development Projects.** Encourage new development to provide bicycle amenities, such as bicycle racks, lockers, and showers for employees, that support commuting by bicycle.

**Policy MO-8.6 Curb Cuts and Driveways.** Minimize the frequency of curb cuts and driveways intersecting bicycle facilities.



*Bicycle and pedestrian path crossing Soquel creek.*

## Actions

**Action MO-8.1 Bicycle Transportation Plan.** Maintain and update the Capitola Bicycle Transportation Plan as necessary.

**Action MO-8.2 Capital Improvement Program.** Incorporate projects identified in Capitola's Bicycle Transportation Plan into the City's Capital Improvement Program.

**Action MO-8.3 Bicycle Connections.** Actively participate in efforts to implement new bicycle pathways in Capitola identified in the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Plan. Ensure that bicyclists can safely cross Soquel Creek when traveling through the Village.

**Action MO-8.4 Intersection Standards.** Establish City standards for intersection improvements, including front queuing zones, painted sharrow lanes, and bike detection signal systems, that are appropriate to detect and accommodate bicycles and their safe movement.

**Action MO-8.5 Highway 1 Interchanges.** Work with Caltrans to ensure that any future modifications to Highway 1 interchanges in Capitola improve safety and convenience for bicyclists.

**Goal MO-9 Provide high quality pedestrian facilities that support walking and the enjoyment of the outdoors in Capitola.**

## Policies

**Policy MO-9.1 Sidewalks.** Maintain a complete system of sidewalks to provide for safe, attractive, and convenient pedestrian circulation in Capitola.

**Policy MO-9.2 Pathways.** Maintain and improve pedestrian pathways in Capitola, particularly pathways providing pedestrian access to natural areas and scenic vistas.

**Policy MO-9.3 Priority Investment.** Prioritize pedestrian facility improvements that address public safety concerns, complete gaps in the existing pedestrian circulation system, and enhance pedestrian mobility in high-use areas.

**Policy MO-9.4 Development Projects.** Require new development to enhance pedestrian circulation through site and building design and the provision of pedestrian amenities.

Actions

**Action MO-9.1 Funding.** Seek funding to expand and improve sidewalks, pathways, and other pedestrian facilities in Capitola.

**Action MO-9.2 Obstacles and Obstructions.** Identify and inventory significant obstacles and obstructions, such as utility poles, traffic signal control boxes, overgrown vegetation, and root damage, on sidewalks in Capitola. Eliminate or mitigate these obstacles and obstructions as funding becomes available.

**Action MO-9.3 Capital Improvement Plan.** Include and address sidewalk improvements in the Capital Improvements Program.

**Action MO-9.4 Maintenance.** Continue the City's sidewalk maintenance program to ensure that sidewalks are adequately maintained and free of obstructions.



*Santa Cruz Branch Line right-of-way*





# 6

## SAFETY AND NOISE

The Safety and Noise Element was partially funded by a grant from the Community Development Block Grant Program, Disaster Recovery Initiative.



# INTRODUCTION

The Safety and Noise Element combines two elements required by State law, the Safety Element and the Noise Element. The Safety and Noise Element addresses risks in Capitola to the community's health and safety, identifying potential hazards and providing policies to protect against and mitigate those hazards.

The Safety and Noise element is closely related to Capitola's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). The LHMP documents and plans for mitigation of hazards in Capitola, and it makes the City eligible for federal financial assistance related to natural hazards. The specific hazards covered in Capitola's LHMP are earthquakes and liquefaction, coastal storms and flooding, sea level rise, drought, windstorms, coastal erosion and bluff failure, tsunami, hazardous materials, wildfire, and landslides and mudflows.

The Safety section of this element complements the LHMP, providing information about risks in Capitola due to natural and human-made hazards. It addresses the protection of the community from risks associated with the effects of:

- ◆ Flooding and tsunami inundation
- ◆ Seismic and geologic hazards
- ◆ Fire
- ◆ Hazardous materials

The Safety section also contains information and policies regarding general emergency preparedness, emergency response and public safety.

The Noise section of this element identifies sources of noise in Capitola and defines strategies for reducing the negative impact of noise to the community. Noise is an environmental pollutant that can threaten the quality of life and human health by causing annoyance or disrupting sleep and everyday activities.

State law requires that the General Plan include a Noise Element, which is to be prepared according to guidelines adopted by the California Office of Noise Control. In accordance with State law requirements, this Noise Element aims to limit community exposure to unwanted, unhealthy, and disruptive sources of noise.

In addition to this Introduction, the Safety and Noise Element is divided into two sections:

- ◆ **Background Information:** Provides information about current risks due to natural and human-made hazards, existing sources of noise, sensitive receptors, existing and future noise conditions, and noise and land use compatibility guidelines.
- ◆ **Goals, Policies, and Actions:** Provides policy guidance for reducing the risks to health and property due to natural and human-made hazards, and reducing community exposure to existing and projected noise sources.

# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## Flooding and Inundation

### Flood Hazards

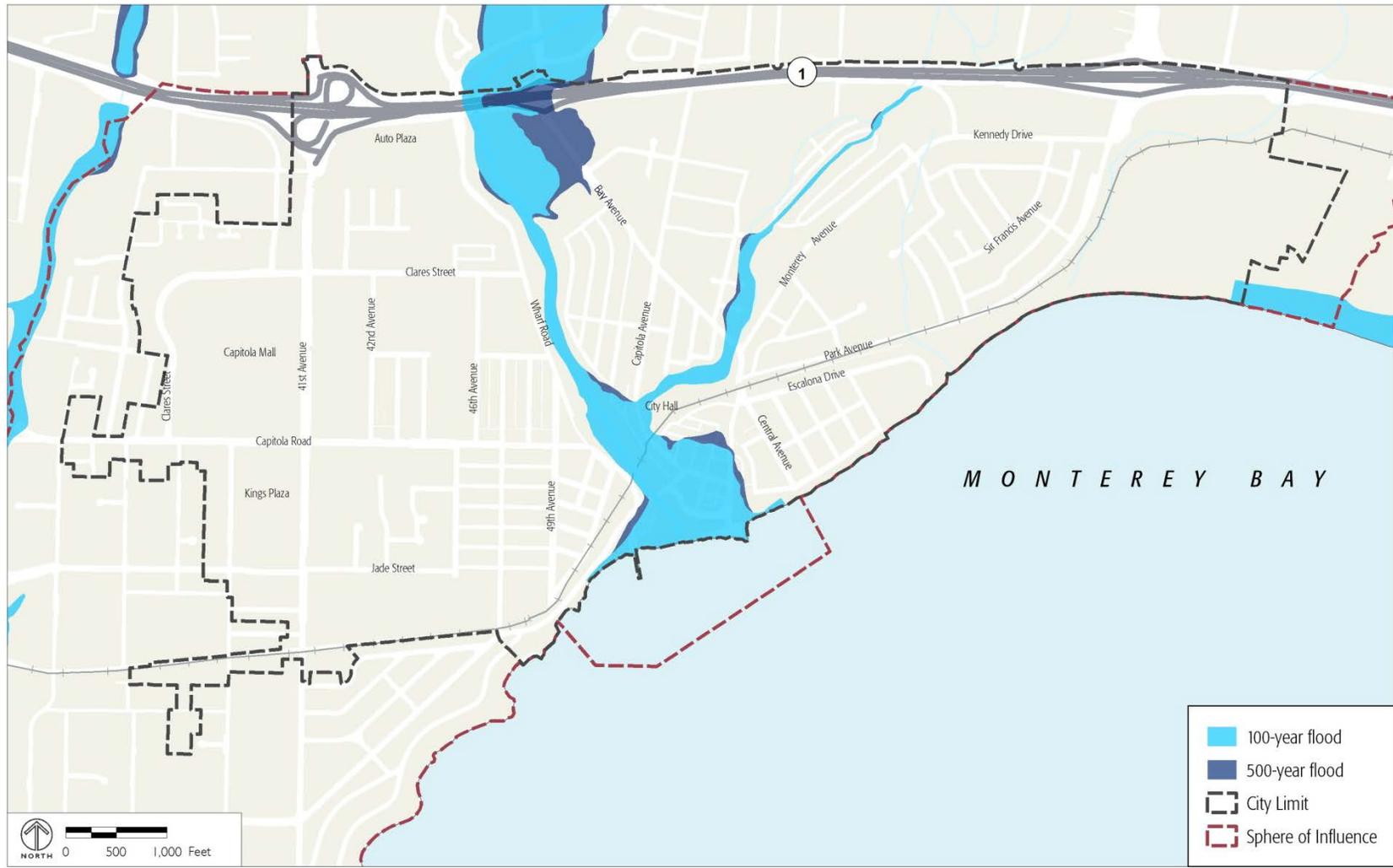
Flooding is a high priority safety issue in Capitola, particularly in the Village. During a heavy storm in March 2011, major flooding in the Village occurred when Noble Gulch overwhelmed its drainage pipe that extends under Village and Beach Parking Lot #2, causing significant damage to homes and businesses. This storm event and the failed drainage pipe vividly demonstrate the potential risks and vulnerability of flooding in the Village. Storm events such as this occur relatively frequently and create flooding risks for the Village. Flows associated with large storm events often result in significant amounts of vegetation debris, including trees and limbs, blocking flows, particularly at the Stockton Bridge, further exacerbating flood conditions.



*Recreational amenities within the tsunami inundation area*

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is responsible for mapping areas subject to flooding during a 100-year flood event (i.e. an event with a 1 percent chance of occurring in any given year). As shown in Figure SN-1, nearly all of Capitola Village, all of Soquel Creek, and a portion of Noble Gulch are within the 100-year flood zone. FEMA also manages the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which provides insurance to communities that participate in the program, and works with State and local agencies to adopt floodplain management policies and flood mitigation measures. The Community Rating System (CRS) is part of the NFIP; this voluntary incentive program encourages floodplain management that exceeds the minimum NFIP requirements by providing discounted flood insurance premium rates.

FIGURE SN-1 FLOOD HAZARD ZONES



Source: City of Capitola, 2010; Santa Cruz County, 2010.

## Flood Protection and Stormwater Drainage

The Santa Cruz County Flood Control, the Water Conservation District, and the City of Capitola provide flood protection and stormwater drainage for Capitola. The City of Capitola maintains its street drainage systems and relies on the County to provide major storm drain services. The infrastructure associated with flood protection and stormwater drainage includes underground systems, above ground drainage ditches and water courses, pump stations, catch basins, and outfalls.

## Tsunami Inundation Hazards

A tsunami is a series of traveling ocean waves generated by some kind of rare, catastrophic event, including earthquakes, submarine landslides, and volcanic eruptions. Tsunamis can travel over the ocean surface at speeds of 400 to 500 miles per hour or more, and wave heights at the shore can range from inches to in excess of 50 feet. Factors influencing the size and speed of a tsunami include the source and magnitude of the triggering event, as well as off-shore and on-shore topography.

As shown in Figure SN-2, nearly all of Capitola Village is located within the tsunami inundation area, as mapped by the California Emergency Management Agency.<sup>1</sup> Other inundation areas include Soquel Creek, a ¼-mile portion of Noble Gulch, and the Capitola shoreline. While the coastal cliffs would block inland flows, substantial erosion would likely occur as the result of a tsunami. In the event of a tsunami, people or structures within these areas could be exposed to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death due to flooding.

## Seismic and Geologic Hazards

Capitola’s geologic characteristics are heavily influenced by its coastal setting. The land is considered a marine terrace, a flat section of coastline that is terraced, like a staircase. Coastal streams, such as Soquel Creek, carve the landscape. Siltstone and sandstone make up the underlying geologic formation, with outcrops of severely weathered, soft, light grayish-brown sandstone in coastal bluff areas.

---

<sup>1</sup> The tsunami inundation area is considered a maximum estimate (i.e. based upon the maximum tsunami runup), taking into consideration a number of extreme, yet realistic, tsunami sources.

FIGURE SN-2 TSUNAMI INUNDATION AREAS



Source: California Emergency Management Agency, California Geological Survey, and University of Southern California, 2009.

## Seismicity and Faults

Capitola is located in one of the most seismically active areas of the country. Although there are no known active faults running through Capitola, there are several significant faults in the region, including the San Andreas, Zayante, and Palo Colorado-San Gregorio Faults. The San Andreas Fault, which is located in the Santa Cruz Mountains, and the Zayante Fault, which is located north of the city, pose the most probable seismic hazards to Capitola. Figure SN-3 shows the locations of the San Andreas and Zayante Faults.

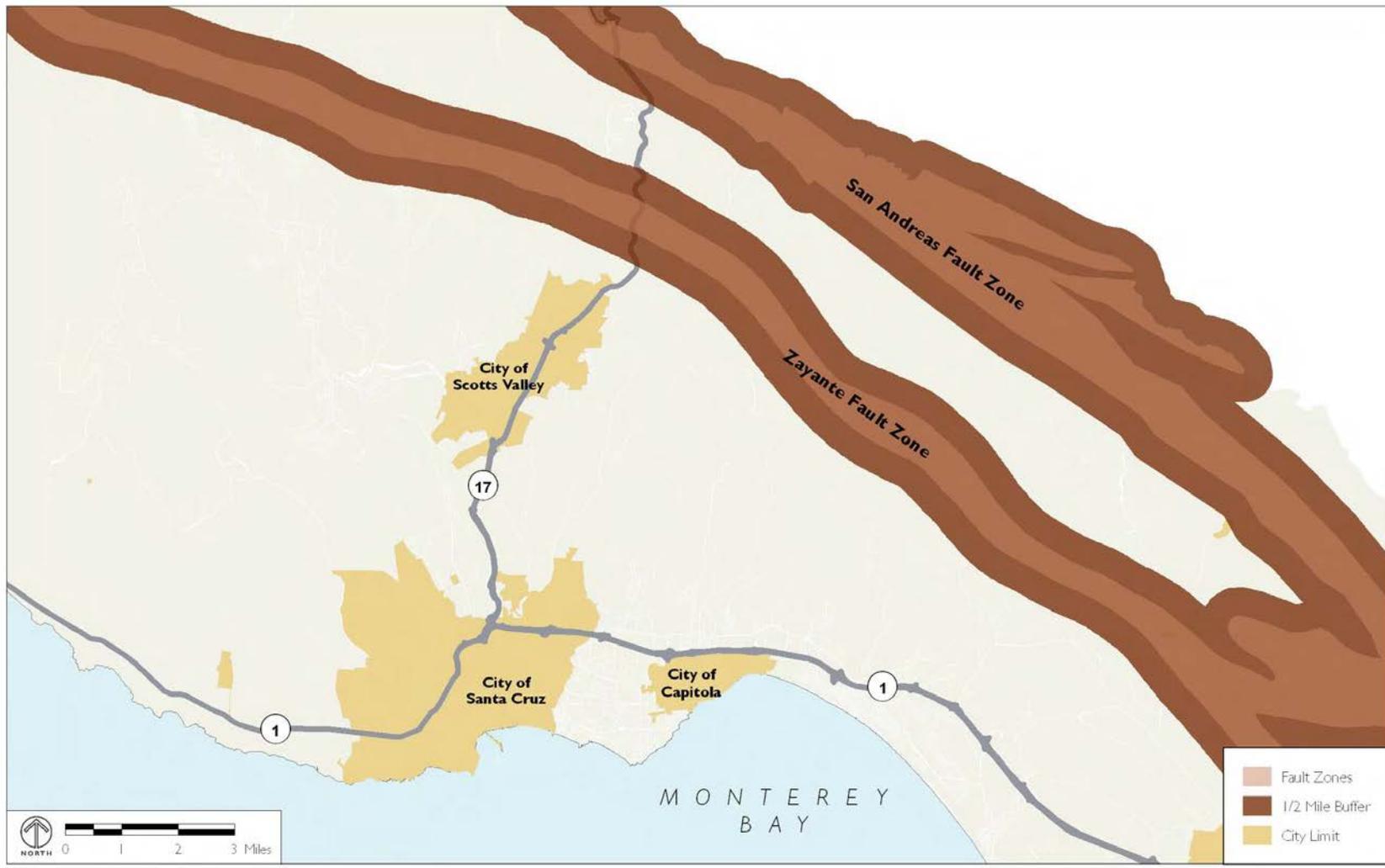
The main trace of the San Andreas Fault is approximately 9 miles northeast of Capitola. One of the largest earthquakes in the Santa Cruz area, the Loma Prieta earthquake occurred on October 17, 1989 due to movement on this fault, measuring 7.1 on the Richter scale and causing significant ground shaking in Capitola. The epicenter of the Loma Prieta earthquake was approximately 5 miles northeast of Capitola.

The Zayante Fault is located approximately 5 miles northeast of Capitola, and the Palo Colorado-San Gregorio Fault is located approximately 14 miles southwest of Capitola. The California Division of Mines and Geology considers the Zayante Fault active, although it has not caused any significant earthquakes historically—only some aftershocks after the Loma Prieta earthquake. The Palo Colorado-San Gregorio Fault is not well understood, but is considered potentially active.

## Liquefaction

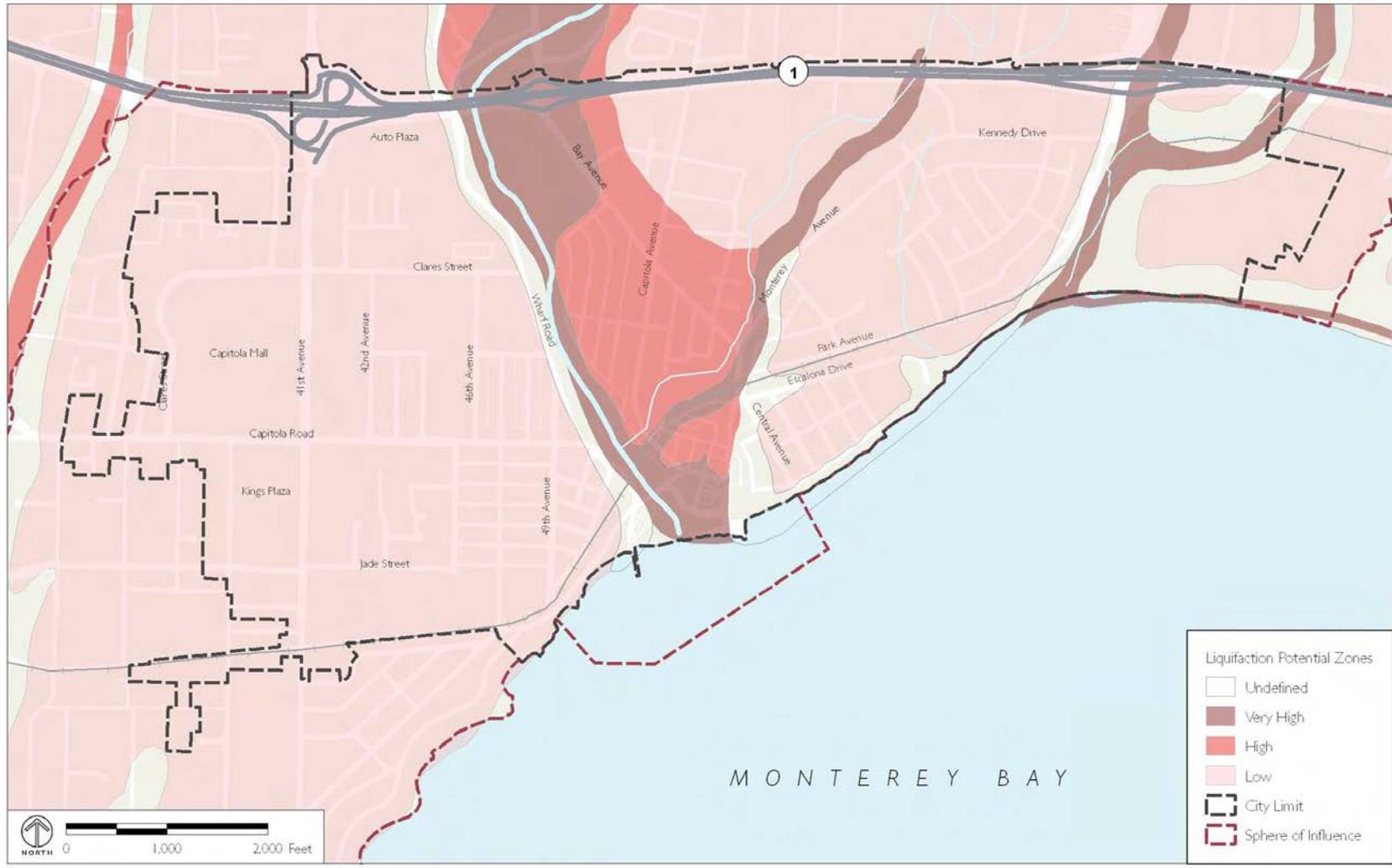
Earthquakes can cause soil liquefaction, in which loose, saturated sandy soils lose internal strength and transform from a solid to a liquefied state. This happens in sandy-type soils that are relatively free of silt and clay and that are saturated; liquefaction is also affected by the characteristics of the earthquake event, the proximity of the soil to groundwater, and human-made structures. As shown in Figure SN-4, significant portions of Capitola are susceptible to liquefaction.

FIGURE SN-3 REGIONAL FAULT ZONES



Source: United States Geological Survey, 1999 and RBF Consulting, 2011.

FIGURE SN-4 LIQUEFACTION POTENTIAL



Source: Geology and Liquefaction Potential of Quaternary Deposits in Cruz County, William R. Dupre, 1975.

## Landslides and Mudflows

Because the majority of Capitola is flat, landslides and mudflows are not a significant concern throughout much of the city. However, there are some areas of steep slopes, especially along creeks, gulches, and coastal bluffs, which are susceptible to landslides and mudflows. In particular, the areas above Soquel Creek, below Wharf Road, and along coastal bluffs, pose landslide risks.

## Fire

Based on available fire mapping for Santa Cruz County, there are no wildland fire hazard areas in Capitola, although there are fire hazard areas nearby in the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains. In addition, there have been no significant wildland fire events in Capitola. However, parts of Capitola with significant vegetation, such as along creeks and in and near the New Brighton Beach State Park, are susceptible to fire from natural or human-made causes. In particular, the Eucalyptus groves in Capitola, which are an invasive species, are highly flammable due to the large amounts of leaf litter on the ground and the oil content of the leaves.

Urban fires pose a greater threat to Capitola than wildland fires due to the urbanized nature of the city. Fire protection services for Capitola are provided by the Central Fire Protection District of Santa Cruz County (CFPD), which was formed in 1987 as a result of the consolidation of the Capitola, Soquel, and Live Oak Fire Districts. CFPD has four fire stations, one of which is located on 405 Capitola Avenue across from City Hall. The other stations are located in Soquel (one station) and Live Oak (two stations). CFPD has a response time goal of eight minutes or less from the time a call is placed for a fire emergency.



*Property on bluffs impacted by erosion and landslides (top) and CFPD fire station on Capitola Avenue (bottom)*

## Hazardous Materials

A “hazardous material” is defined by California Health and Safety Code Section 25501 as “any material that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment.” Improper handling of hazardous materials or waste may result in significant impacts on human health and the environment. Many businesses and residents in Capitola use hazardous materials and generate some amount of hazardous waste. Common hazardous waste is generated from gasoline service stations, dry cleaners, automotive mechanics, auto body repair shops, machine shops, printers and photo processors, and agriculture.

The Santa Cruz County Department of Environmental Health Services is the agency responsible for enforcing State hazardous materials and waste regulations in Capitola. Household hazardous waste is collected, free of charge, by the Santa Cruz County Hazardous Waste Program. The closest hazardous waste collection facility to Capitola is the Buena Vista Landfill, which is located approximately 15 miles south of Capitola off Buena Vista Drive.

## Emergency Response

The Santa Cruz County Operational Area Emergency Management Plan establishes a comprehensive approach to managing emergency situations in Santa Cruz County, including prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. The Operational Area Emergency Management Plan also identifies the organizational structure for emergency management responsibilities in the Santa Cruz County Operational Area. In addition, this Plan contains a threat summary for Santa Cruz County, which addresses the potential for natural, technological, and domestic security threats, including major transportation system related incidents. The potential for an automobile related threat exists primarily along Highway 1. No train service currently operates in Capitola, but were the train to become operational again, train derailment could become a potential hazard.

Capitola is also within the region covered by the Bay Area Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), which provides federal financial assistance for terrorism preparedness planning.

## Public Safety

Police protection services in Capitola are provided by the Capitola Police Department. Their main station is located on Capitola Avenue, adjacent to City Hall. The Police Department also operates a Community Outreach Center located in the Capitola Mall. Based on police data between 2008 and 2010, the largest numbers of infractions in Capitola were for larceny and vandalism/graffiti. The Police Department's average response times are well within comparable regional and State standards. In 2013, on-duty coverage rate was sufficient for both special events and normal day-to-day operations.

## Noise

Capitola's most significant noise concerns stem from roadway noise, particularly along well-traveled corridors such as Highway 1 and local arterials. Noise is generally defined as unwanted sound, and may produce physiological or psychological damage and/or interfere with communication, work, rest, recreation, or sleep. Noise is especially a concern in the vicinity of noise-sensitive uses, which are generally defined as locations where people reside or where the presence of unwanted sound could adversely affect the use of land, such as residences, schools, and hospitals.

### Noise Measurements

Noise intensity is measured on a decibel (dB) scale. On this scale, noise at zero decibels is not audible, while noise at 120 to 140 decibels is painful and can cause ear damage. There are several different ways to measure noise. Community noise is typically measured in decibels with A-weighting (dBA). The dBA scale provides compensation for human sensitivity by discriminating against frequencies to approximate the sensitivity of the human ear. For evaluating noise over extended periods, the "Day-Night Noise Level" scale (Ldn) and the "Community Noise Equivalent Level" (CNEL) are measures of the average equivalent sound level (Leq) during a 24-hour period. These measurements of noise account for greater sensitivity of noise receptors at night by adding 5 decibels (for evening hours between 7:00 pm and 10:00 pm) and 10 decibels (for evening hours between 10:00 pm and 7:00 am) to nighttime noise levels, and averaging the noise over a full day.



*Roadway traffic causes noise in Capitola*

## Existing Noise Sources

The primary noise source in Capitola is largely from automobile traffic (cars and trucks) traveling on local roadways. As a general rule, peak pass-by noise levels for passenger vehicles on local streets are 60 to 70 dBA at 25 feet. Buses, trucks, motorcycles, and poorly muffled cars produce pass-by noise level 5 to 15 dBA higher. The sound level of noise from traffic in decibels is related to the amount of traffic. Noise intensity increases as the proximity of the noise source physically approaches the listener to a greater degree. A doubling or halving of traffic volume typically results in a 3-dB increase or decrease, respectively, in the traffic sound level. A change of 3 dB is generally considered to be the threshold for a perceptible change in sound. In general, a 10-dB increase in noise level is perceived as a doubling in loudness.

Primary roadways that generate the most noise in Capitola include Highway 1, 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Capitola Avenue, Capitola Road, Bay Avenue, Monterey Avenue, Wharf Road, and Park Avenue. Trains are not currently operating in Capitola, but were operations to resume, trains along the railroad could become an intermittent source of noise, depending on their source of locomotion. Aircraft flying overhead is occasionally audible in Capitola, but is not a significant noise source relative to traffic noise. Other noise sources typical in this urban location include dogs barking, leaf blowers, and children playing. These sources are not significant compared to the noise produced by the dominant transportation sources.

## Sensitive Receptors

Noise sensitive land uses are typically given special attention to achieve protection from excessive noise. Noise sensitive land uses include residential areas, hospitals, libraries, schools, parks, and retirement homes. Highways and major arterials such as Highway 1, 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Bay Avenue, Capitola Avenue, Capitola Road, and Clares Avenue could have an effect on some sensitive land uses.

## Existing and Future Noise Conditions

Figure SN-5 shows the general level of noise conditions resulting from traffic traveling on roadways in Capitola, rated on a scale from Moderate to High to Very High. As would be expected, the highest noise levels are generated along Highway 1 and the northerly portion of 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue, where traffic volumes are the greatest. High levels of traffic-generated noise also occur along the city's arterial roads including the southern portion of 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue (where the roadway narrows from four to two lanes), Capitola Road, Clares Street, Wharf Road, and the four-lane sections of Bay Avenue and Park Avenue.

FIGURE SN-5 EXISTING NOISE INTENSITY LEVELS



Source: City of Capitola and RBF Consulting, 2011.

Figure SN-6 shows the projected future noise conditions resulting from anticipated traffic in 2035. These projected noise conditions are based on projected land uses, and this figure uses the same scale as the existing noise conditions figure described above.

### Noise and Land Use Compatibility Guidelines

The objective of the noise and land use compatibility guidelines is to provide the community with a means of judging the noise environment that it deems to be generally acceptable and to minimize noise-related complaints from residents. The compatibility policies shown in Table SN-1 should be used in conjunction with the future noise intensity levels in Figure SN-6 to identify locations that may require special treatment to minimize noise exposure.

If ambient noise levels in the area of a proposed project would exceed “normally acceptable” thresholds for the proposed land use category as shown in Table SN-1, the City will require a detailed analysis of feasible noise reduction requirements. As needed, noise insulation features must be included in the design of such projects in order to reduce exterior noise levels to meet the acceptable thresholds, or, for uses with no active outdoor use areas, to ensure maintenance of acceptable interior noise levels for the proposed land use.

FIGURE SN-6 FUTURE NOISE INTENSITY LEVELS



**TABLE SN-1 LAND USE COMPATIBILITY STANDARDS FOR COMMUNITY NOISE ENVIRONMENTS**

Type of Proposed Project	Community Noise Exposure in Decibels (CNEL) Day/Night Average Noise Level in Decibels (Ldn)					
	55	60	65	70	75	80
Residential Low Density Single-Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes	[Bar chart showing compatibility ranges for Residential Low Density Single-Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes]					
Residential – Multi-Family	[Bar chart showing compatibility ranges for Residential – Multi-Family]					
Transient Lodging – Motels, Hotels	[Bar chart showing compatibility ranges for Transient Lodging – Motels, Hotels]					
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	[Bar chart showing compatibility ranges for Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes]					
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters	[Bar chart showing compatibility ranges for Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters]					
Sports Arena, Outdoor Spectator Sports	[Bar chart showing compatibility ranges for Sports Arena, Outdoor Spectator Sports]					
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks	[Bar chart showing compatibility ranges for Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks]					
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries	[Bar chart showing compatibility ranges for Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries]					
Office Buildings, Business Commercial, and Professional	[Bar chart showing compatibility ranges for Office Buildings, Business Commercial, and Professional]					
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agriculture	[Bar chart showing compatibility ranges for Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agriculture]					

**NORMALLY ACCEPTABLE**  
Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.

**NORMALLY UNACCEPTABLE**  
New construction or development should be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.

**CONDITIONALLY ACCEPTABLE**  
New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.

**CLEARLY UNACCEPTABLE**  
New construction or development clearly should not be undertaken.

Source: Office of Planning and Research, California, *General Plan Guidelines*, October 2003.

# GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

## FLOODING AND INUNDATION

### Goal SN-1 Reduce hazards associated with flooding or inundation.

#### Policies

- Policy SN-1.1 **New Development.** Require new development to be located, designed, and maintained to minimize public exposure to flood hazards.
- Policy SN-1.2 **Sea Level Rise.** Consider anticipated increased flooding hazards caused by sea level rise when reviewing development projects proposed in areas susceptible to flooding hazards. Apply mitigation measures and/or adaptation strategies as appropriate to reduce the effects of sea level rise.
- Policy SN-1.3 **Site Drainage.** Require new development to incorporate storm drainage systems that minimize erosion and control the rate and amount of runoff so that development does not increase downstream flooding potential.
- Policy SN-1.4 **Impervious Surfaces.** Minimize impervious surfaces within the city to reduce stormwater runoff, protect water quality, and reduce flood hazards.



*Stockton Bridge crossing Soquel Creek*

- Policy SN-1.5 **Storm Drainage Infrastructure.** Improve and maintain City storm drainage infrastructure in a manner that minimizes public exposure to flood hazards.
- Policy SN-1.6 **Riparian Corridors.** Maintain healthy riparian corridors in Capitola to reduce stormwater runoff and increase flood protection.
- Policy SN-1.7 **Public Outreach.** Actively share information about flood hazards with Capitola residents, property owners, and merchants. Coordinate these public outreach efforts with the Santa Cruz County Public Works Department and the Santa Cruz County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (Zone 5).
- Policy SN-1.8 **Hazard and Floodplain Information.** Continue to work with appropriate local, State and federal agencies, particularly the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), to maintain the most current flood hazard and floodplain information for Capitola.
- Policy SN-1.9 **National Flood Insurance Program.** Continue to participate in the Federal Emergency Management Agency National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Require all new buildings and structures to be established in a manner consistent with the NFIP floodplain management building requirements.
- Policy SN-1.10 **Regional Coordination.** Participate in regional, State, and federal efforts to reduce flooding hazards, including efforts to maintain creeks and other waterways, address flood hazards on a watershed level, and respond to increased flooding hazards from sea level rise.

Actions

- Action SN-1.1 **Community Rating System.** Enroll the City of Capitola in FEMA’s National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System.
- Action SN-1.2 **Regional Coordination.** Continue to work with the Santa Cruz County Public Works Department and the Santa Cruz County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (Zone 5) to 1) plan for improvements to stormwater facilities to help minimize flooding impacts, particularly in critical flood-prone areas, and 2) evaluate the effectiveness of current policies and ordinances to ensure that stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces does not contribute to flooding.
- Action SN-1.3 **Drainage System Mapping.** Develop accurate GIS maps of the City’s drainage system in coordination with future updates of the Capitola Stormwater Management Program.

- Action SN-1.4 **Safety Element Updates.** Review and revise the Safety Element to identify whether any new housing areas are prone to flood hazards.
- Action SN-1.5 **Land Use Element Updates.** Regularly review the Land Use Element to account for new flood information made available during the previous year.

## SEISMIC AND GEOLOGIC HAZARDS

### Goal SN-2 Minimize loss of life, injury, and property damage due to seismic and geologic hazards.

#### Policies

- Policy SN-2.1 **Development Restrictions.** Prohibit structural development in areas where seismic and geological hazards cannot be mitigated, e.g., unstable bluff edges.
- Policy SN-2.2 **Mitigation.** Monitor and enforce mitigation measures to reduce risk for projects where geological and seismic hazards can be mitigated.
- Policy SN-2.3 **Seismic Analysis.** Continue to incorporate seismic risk analysis into the City's on-going building inspection program.
- Policy SN-2.4 **Bluff Erosion.** Ensure that new development is located, designed, and maintained in a manner that reduces hazards resulting from bluff erosion.
- Policy SN-2.5 **Retrofits.** Encourage retrofitting of structures, particularly older buildings, to withstand earthquake shaking and landslides, consistent with State Building Codes and Historic Building Codes.



*Property on bluffs impacted by erosion and landslides*

- Policy SN-2.6 **Hazard Considerations.** Continue to incorporate geotechnical hazard data into future land use decision-making, site design and construction standards.
- Policy SN-2.7 **Public Outreach.** Actively promote public education, research, and information dissemination on seismic and geotechnical hazards.
- Policy SN-2.8 **Critical Facilities and Services.** Ensure that seismic hazards are mitigated to the greatest extent possible for critical public facilities, infrastructure, and emergency services.
- Policy SN-2.9 **State Standards.** Continue to enforce all applicable requirements of the current California Building Code and the California Building Standards to minimize public exposure to seismic and geologic hazards.

Actions

- Action SN-2.1 **Funding.** Identify funding sources to assist in necessary seismic upgrades to City facilities.
- Action SN-2.2 **Transportation Infrastructure.** Work with Caltrans, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, and other relevant agencies to ensure the seismic safety and structural integrity of all bridges and overpasses in Capitola.
- Action SN-2.3 **Data Accuracy.** Periodically review the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, and Uniform Building Code to ensure that geotechnical data and information relating to seismic hazards is current and accurate.
- Action SN-2.4 **URM Program.** Continue the un-reinforced masonry (URM) program to retrofit all remaining non-complying buildings seeking structural building permits.

FIRE

**Goal SN-3 Protect lives and property from risks associated with urban fires.**

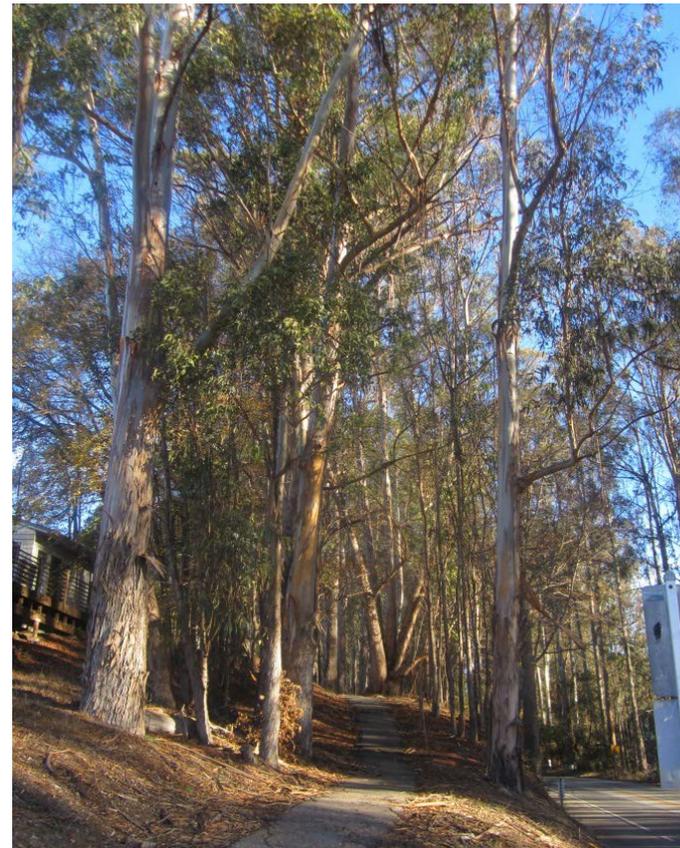
Policies

- Policy SN-3.1 **Cooperative Agreements.** Maintain cooperative fire protection and fire prevention agreements with the Central Fire Protection District of Santa Cruz County.

- Policy SN-3.2 **Public Education.** Continue to support the Central Fire Protection District fire safety and fire prevention public education programs.
- Policy SN-3.3 **City-Owned Space.** Maintain City-owned open space in a manner that minimizes fire hazards.
- Policy SN-3.4 **Development Review.** Encourage early review of proposed development project plans by the Central Fire Protection District.
- Policy SN-3.5 **Fire Hazard Risk Assessment.** Ensure that the development project review process addresses fire risk, including an assessment of both construction- and project-related fire risks, particularly in areas with significant amounts of vegetation.
- Policy SN-3.6 **Fire Safety Plans.** Continue to review fire safety plans for new development within designated wildland/urban interface areas. Fire safety plans shall address emergency access, site design for maintenance of defensible space, and use of non-combustible materials, as required by California Public Resources Code (PRC) 4290 and 4291.
- Policy SN-3.7 **District Support.** Support Central Fire Protection District efforts to minimize fire hazards through the removal of vegetation, hazardous structures and materials, and debris.

### Actions

- Action SN-3.1 **Invasive Species.** Cooperate with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to reduce any identified significant fire threat resulting from invasive species such as eucalyptus groves, which are not a constituent of protected habitat areas.
- Action SN-3.2 **Sign/Address Marking Visibility.** Monitor the visibility of road signs and address markings of businesses and residences, and address visibility issues to maximize fire response times.



*Eucalyptus trees along Park Avenue Trail*

Action SN-3.3 **Emergency Access.** Coordinate with public safety providers to implement feasible improvements and/or access plans for roadways with identified fire and emergency access deficiencies.

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

### Goal SN-4 **Protect the community from the harmful effects of hazardous materials.**

#### Policies

- Policy SN-4.1 **Mitigation Processes.** Mitigate hazard exposure from new development projects through the environmental review process, design criteria, and standards enforcement.
- Policy SN-4.2 **Site Assessments.** Where deemed necessary, based on the history of land use, require site assessments for hazardous and toxic soil contamination prior to approving development project applications.
- Policy SN-4.3 **Sensitive Receptors.** Prohibit land uses and development that emit obnoxious odors, particulates, light, glare, or other environmentally sensitive contaminants from being located near schools, community centers, senior homes, and other sensitive receptors.
- Policy SN-4.4 **Green Building.** Encourage green building practices that reduce potentially hazardous construction materials.
- Policy SN-4.5 **County Coordination.** Continue to coordinate with the Santa Cruz County Department of Environmental Health Services on enforcement of State and local statutes and regulations pertaining to hazardous materials and waste storage, use, and disposal.

#### Actions

- Action SN-4.1 **City Staff Training.** Provide on-going training for appropriate City personnel in hazardous materials response and handling.
- Action SN-4.2 **Municipal Code Review.** Review Chapter 7.100 (Hazardous Materials) of the Santa Cruz County Code, which is incorporated by reference into the Capitola Municipal Code; determine whether these provisions remain appropriate for Capitola, and amend them as needed.

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE

**Goal SN-5 Maintain effective emergency response procedures to ensure public safety in the event of natural or man-made disasters.**

### Policies

- Policy SN-5.1 **Coordination with Other Agencies.** Coordinate preparation efforts for natural and human-made disasters with the Santa Cruz County Office of Emergency Services, neighboring jurisdictions, and other governmental agencies.
- Policy SN-5.2 **Community Groups.** Support the efforts of neighborhood and civic organizations to prepare for disasters.
- Policy SN-5.3 **Emergency and Evacuation Routes.** Maintain a current and complete system of emergency and evacuation routes serving all areas of the city.
- Policy SN-5.4 **Urban Area Security Initiative.** Continue to coordinate with the Bay Area Urban Area Security Initiative to enhance preparedness efforts.



*Park Avenue, providing access to Capitola from the east*

### Actions

- Action SN-5.1 **Emergency Response Plan.** Work with the Santa Cruz County Emergency Services Administrator to periodically review the County-wide Emergency Response Plan and revise as needed to ensure adequate disaster preparedness.
- Action SN-5.2 **County Preparedness Exercises.** Continue to participate in Santa Cruz County Office of Emergency Services preparedness exercises and disaster simulations.

- Action SN-5.3 **Preparedness Training.** Continue to provide basic training for all City employees in disaster preparedness, first aid, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- Action SN-5.4 **Preparedness Outreach.** Periodically provide disaster preparedness information to residents through City newsletters, e-notify, information booths at public events, newspaper articles, or other methods. Information should address emergency supplies, training, evacuation routes, communication systems, shelter locations, and other similar topics.
- Action SN-5.5 **Critical Facilities.** Continue to study opportunities to relocate police, fire, and other first responders out of flood hazard areas.
- Action SN-5.6 **Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.** Periodically review Capitola’s Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and amend as needed to reflect changed conditions and new information.

PUBLIC SAFETY

**Goal SN-6 Maintain a safe environment in Capitola through the enforcement of the law.**

Policies

- Policy SN-6.1 **Police Services.** Maintain adequate police staffing, performance levels, and facilities to serve Capitola’s existing population as well as future growth.
- Policy SN-6.2 **New Development.** Identify and mitigate law enforcement concerns during the project review and approval process.
- Policy SN-6.3 **Physical Site Planning.** Require physical site planning that prevents crime by locating walkways, open spaces, landscaping, parking lots, parks, play areas, and other public spaces in areas that are visible from buildings and streets.



*Restaurant and bars along the Esplanade*

- Policy SN-6.4 **Lighting Plans.** Require lighting plans that support crime prevention, including adequate lighting for parking lots, sidewalks, and street.
- Policy SN-6.5 **Bars and Nightclubs.** When approving use permits for a bar or nightclub use, include conditions of approval that address potential public safety impacts from that use.
- Policy SN-6.6 **Crime Prevention Outreach.** Continue to provide commercial and neighborhood crime prevention information and training to merchants and neighborhood groups.

## NOISE

### **Goal SN-7 Minimize the community’s exposure to excessive noise.**

#### Policies

- Policy SN-7.1 **Noise Sensitive Land Uses.** Minimize the exposure of noise sensitive land uses to unacceptable noise levels as identified in Table SN-1. Noise sensitive land uses shall be as determined by the Community Development Director, including land uses such as residential areas, lodging facilities, libraries, schools, parks, and medical care facilities.
- Policy SN-7.2 **Noise Level Standards.** Ensure that noise generated from all land uses and activities in Capitola complies with the noise level standards identified in Table SN-1. The City Council may allow exceptions to these noise level standards when mitigation of noise impacts is not technically or economically feasible or inconsistent with other City goals, policies, and regulations.
- Policy SN-7.3 **Noise Control Ordinance.** Maintain Capitola’s Noise Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 9.12), which addresses the hours of operation of construction equipment, outdoor power tool use, leaf blowers, parking area vacuums, loud parties and activities, and vehicle noise.
- Policy SN-7.4 **Acoustical Analyses.** Require an acoustical analysis for all proposed projects that would locate noise sensitive land uses where the projected ambient noise level is greater than the respective “normally acceptable” noise level, as shown in Table SN-1, and require

mitigation of noise impacts that exceed the land use compatibility standards. An acoustical analysis required by the Noise Element shall:

- ◆ Be performed according to a scope of work that has been approved by the Community Development Director.
- ◆ Be the financial responsibility of the applicant for new construction and allow assistance for needed improvements for existing development.
- ◆ Be prepared by a qualified person experienced in the fields of noise assessment and architectural acoustics.
- ◆ Include representative noise level measurements with sufficient sampling periods and locations to adequately describe local conditions, predominant noise sources, and peak noise sources.
- ◆ Estimate existing and projected cumulative (2035) noise levels in terms of CNEL, and compare those levels to the adopted policies of the Noise Element.
- ◆ Recommend appropriate mitigation to achieve compliance with the adopted policies and standards of the Noise Element, giving preference to proper site planning and design over the construction of noise barriers or structural modifications to buildings. Where the noise source in question consists of intermittent single events, the report must address the effects of maximum noise levels in sleeping rooms in terms of possible sleep disturbance.
- ◆ Estimate noise exposure after the prescribed mitigation measures have been implemented.
- ◆ Describe a post-project monitoring program that could be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed mitigation measures.

Policy SN-7.5 **Rail Service.** Coordinate with the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission to ensure that any future rail service operating on rail lines in Capitola minimizes and/or mitigates noise impacts to neighboring land uses.



*Railroad right-of-way along Cliff Drive*

Policy SN-7.6 **Residential Additions.** Ensure that residential additions, garage conversions, and new second units are sited and designed to minimize noise impacts on adjacent properties.

Actions

Action SN-7.1 **Noise Ordinance Effectiveness.** Review, revise, and maintain Capitola’s Noise Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 9.12) to ensure that it effectively minimizes the community’s exposure to excessive noise.



7

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



# INTRODUCTION

The Economic Development Element aims to maintain and grow the Capitola economy. Capitola’s long-term economic health will determine whether residents and visitors will be able to enjoy a high quality of life and find opportunities for work and recreation. The Economic Development Element identifies economic challenges and opportunities, and sets forth policies that will guide the economy toward fulfilling the community’s vision and maintain the economic strength of the city.

In addition to this Introduction, the Economic Development Element is divided into two main sections:

- ◆ **Economic Development Background.** This section describes the existing economy in Capitola, its competitive position and employment composition. Capitola’s most significant economic sectors are also described in this section.
- ◆ **Goals, Policies, and Actions.** This section establishes goals, policies, and actions to support Capitola in achieving a fiscally responsible, vibrant economy with a strong community identity.



*Beachfront dining on Capitola Beach*

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Capitola economy is unique, yet firmly integrated into the larger regional economies encompassing Santa Cruz County and the Monterey Bay Area region. According to the Association of Monterey Bay Governments (AMBAG), the city's 9,918 residents and 6,170 jobs comprised about 4 percent and 6 percent of the respective totals in Santa Cruz County.

Despite its relatively small size, Capitola is a major shopping and tourism destination, offering a regional mall, a cluster of large-scale regional retailers, boutique retail, and beachfront tourist destinations. The remainder of the economy is primarily focused on retail that serves residents' daily needs, and professional services, with limited industrial or office space beyond those needs.

Capitola is a relatively small city located in a competitive region. In order for the city's retail and tourism attractions to succeed, its image is key to its ongoing success in continuing to attract shoppers and visitors and generating sales tax and transient-occupancy (TOT) tax revenue. These shoppers and visitors are drawn to the city's reputation as a family-friendly, accessible, historic, and ecologically-minded community.

### Commercial and Industrial Concentrations

Capitola contains the following major commercial and industrial concentrations:

- ◆ 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue is a regional destination for retail needs and generates over 80 percent of sales in Capitola. The area features a regional mall, several large-format retailers, grocery stores, automobile dealerships, and numerous smaller businesses.
- ◆ Capitola Village is an attractive seaside tourist destination. The area is small in scale and features locally owned restaurants and specialized boutiques selling clothes, jewelry, accessories, crafts, and similar goods.



*Light industrial uses on Kennedy Drive*

- ◆ Bay Avenue is a small retail concentration serving local and visitor needs, such as groceries and dining.
- ◆ Kennedy Drive features approximately three blocks of heavy commercial and light industrial uses.

## Local Independent Businesses

Local businesses contribute to Capitola’s unique identity and sense of community, which serves visitors and residents alike. They meet the daily needs of residents, provide jobs, and contribute to the city’s tax base and economic diversity. Independent local businesses are concentrated on Bay Avenue, in Capitola Village, and in other Commercial areas of the city.

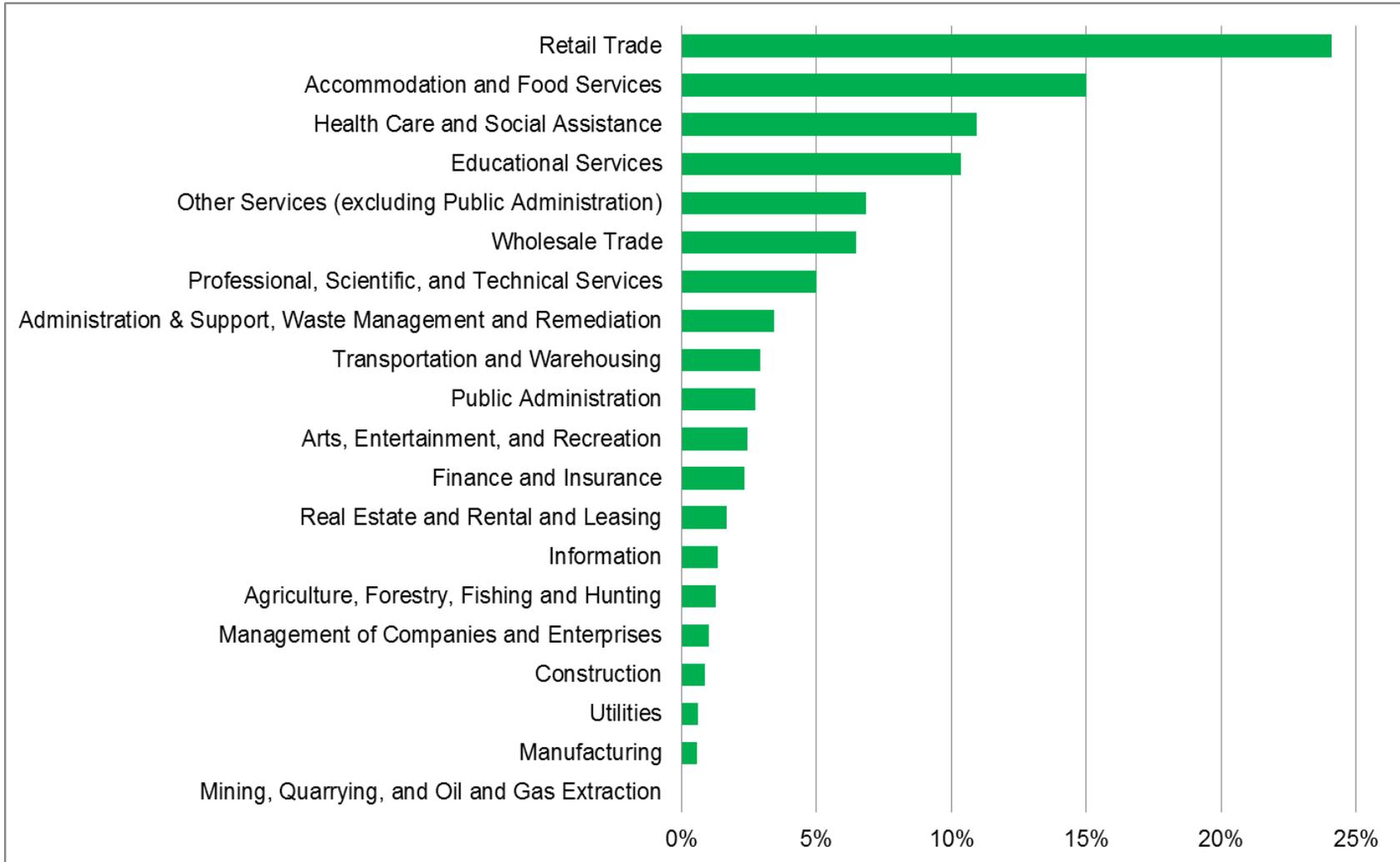
## Employment Composition

Capitola’s focus on retail and tourism is reflected in its employment mix. As shown in Figure ED-1, retail trade jobs account for nearly 25 percent of employment in the city, followed by hotel and restaurant jobs, which constitute 15 percent of the city’s employment. The remaining employment sectors represent a largely resident-serving economy, including health care, education, and professional services.



*Best Western hotel (top) and Capitola Mall (bottom) on the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue corridor.*

FIGURE ED-1 SHARE OF EMPLOYMENT IN CAPITOLA BY INDUSTRY



Source: US Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, 2011; Strategic Economics, 2011.

## Sustainable Jobs

The Capitola community has expressed a strong interest in growing a “sustainable” economy, i.e. businesses and services that enhance environmental sustainability through efficient use of resources. Though Capitola includes few businesses that produce the types of products and breakthroughs associated with the sustainable economy, there are opportunities for the city’s residents, businesses, and government to grow demand for efficiency-related products and services. Their collective purchasing decisions when renovating properties, buying goods, or choosing transportation can spur demand for a homegrown base of businesses that service and develop sustainable technologies and techniques, while also expanding the city’s reputation for ecological awareness. A growing “sustainable” economy would also provide jobs for residents. This benefit is particularly important because only 9 percent of the city’s employed residents are employed within the city, according to the 2010 U.S. Census.



*Local-serving retail and service at Bay Avenue and Capitola Avenue*

## Retail Sales

As a regional retail destination, Capitola captures sales five to six times beyond what the city’s residents could generate on their own, and sales taxes provide over 40 percent of the city’s annual revenues. The city’s fiscal well-being is therefore significantly dependent on healthy retail performance. Sales in the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue area, which comprise over 80 percent of citywide sales, suffered a slow decline from 2000 to 2010 as several large stores and an automobile dealership closed, while new competing retail locations opened elsewhere in the region. Fortunately, the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue corridor has shown resiliency, and these vacancies have since been filled. 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue stays competitive thanks to its central location and excellent highway access, but its older structures and retail formats may require long-term reinvestment to maintain ongoing success.

## Tourism and Lodging

Tourists are drawn to Capitola for its attractive beachfront, charming Capitola Village, family-friendly atmosphere, and easy highway access. Currently, most tourists are day-trippers, but additional high-quality hotels could help expand Capitola's appeal to longer-term visitors to the Santa Cruz region. At the same time, new hotels will increase the city's transient-occupancy tax revenue, which generated approximately 5 percent of city revenues in 2010.

## Competitive Position

Capitola has numerous competitive advantages:

- ◆ Existing, well-located concentrations of regional retail
- ◆ Easy highway access
- ◆ Attractiveness to tourists
- ◆ Identity as a charming and family-friendly beach town
- ◆ Natural resources suited for recreation
- ◆ A strong base of locally-owned businesses
- ◆ Small-town character
- ◆ Community emphasis on ecological awareness

The goals, policies, and actions that follow are intended to capitalize on these advantages to meet the city's long-term economic goals.



*Cable car at Shadowbrook Restaurant (top) and the annual Begonia Festival (bottom)*

# GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

**Goal ED-1 Encourage stores, services and unique community character that serve both residents and visitors.**

## Policies

- Policy ED-1.1 Regional-Serving Retail.** Maintain and adapt the retail base to changing market conditions which meet the needs of regional shoppers and residents.
- Policy ED-1.2 Resident-Serving Retail.** Maintain and expand the retail base with stores and services that meet the needs of residents.
- Policy ED-1.3 Local Business Growth.** Maintain and encourage Capitola’s base of small-scale and locally-owned businesses that reflect Capitola’s unique character and identity.
- Policy ED-1.4 Local Business Initiatives.** Pursue and support collaborations with local business initiatives/attractions to draw customers and visitors.
- Policy ED-1.5 Local-Serving Commercial Areas.** Maintain the Village, Bay Avenue, and Capitola Avenue as areas containing local, small-scale, and independent businesses.
- Policy ED-1.6 Expanded Services.** Support the expansion of services and amenities that cater to both tourists and residents.



*Local business in Capitola Village*

**Policy ED-1.7 Unique Identity.** Promote a unique brand identity for historic Capitola.

**Policy ED-1.8 Business Accessibility.** Expand access to local businesses by increasing walking and bicycle amenities and accommodating visitor parking in small-scale retail areas.

Actions

**Action ED-1.1 Merchant Surveys.** In collaboration with the Capitola-Soquel Chamber of Commerce and Capitola Village Business Improvement Area, conduct regular surveys of merchants to assess the needs and issues of locally owned and independent businesses.

**Action ED-1.2 Capitola Marketing Collaboration.** Support and participate in activities of business and tourism organizations such as the Santa Cruz County Conference and Visitors Council, Capitola-Soquel Chamber of Commerce, and Capitola Village Business Improvement Area, to promote and disseminate Capitola's identity and offerings.

**Action ED-1.3 Infrastructure Financing.** Study and monitor opportunities to establish new funding and financing mechanisms for infrastructure improvements benefitting merchants and property owners in Capitola's commercial areas, such as a business improvement district, assessment district, or community facilities district.

**Action ED-1.4 Maintenance of Public Spaces.** Actively partner with the Capitola Village Business Improvement Area to maintain and activate public spaces in Capitola Village.



*Lawn Way in Capitola Village*

**Goal ED-2 Provide businesses and jobs that create a healthy and stable local economy.**

Policies

**Policy ED-2.1 Diversified Economy.** Support a diversified economy to maintain Capitola's long-term economic and fiscal health.

**Policy ED-2.2 Tax Revenue.** Support additional visitor accommodation uses and retail sales to grow sales tax and transient-occupancy tax revenues.

**Policy ED-2.3 Fiscal Impacts of Development.** Consider the fiscal impacts from new development to the City when reviewing major development projects. Fiscal impacts should be considered as one of many criteria when taking action on a proposed project.

**Policy ED-2.4 Permit Process.** Maintain a clear, efficient process for processing business licenses and building permits/entitlements, including increased certainty of decision-making and elimination of unnecessary permit types.

**Policy ED-2.5 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue Destination Character.** Enhance Capitola Mall and the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue corridor as a regional and local retail, entertainment, and dining destination.

**Policy ED-2.6 Entertainment Uses on 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue.** Support growth of entertainment uses such as additional cinemas and full-service restaurants within the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue corridor for visitor- and community-serving uses.

**Policy ED-2.7 Core 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue Areas.** Limit the amount of non-retail uses within the core commercial areas of the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue corridor.

**Policy ED-2.8 Major Bay Avenue Development Projects.** Ensure that major development projects contribute to the vitality and enhance the function of Bay Avenue as a thriving commercial district.



*Marketing in Capitola Village*

## Actions

**Action ED-2.1 Economic Development Committee.** Continue to participate in the Chamber of Commerce's Economic Development Committee.

**Action ED-2.2 Business Attraction and Retention.** Meet periodically with the Capitola-Soquel Chamber of Commerce, Capitola Village Business Improvement Area, and other groups to discuss strategies to attract and retain desired types of retailers. As part of these meetings, review with the Chamber:

1. City regulations that may be discouraging retailers from locating in Capitola.
2. City investments and improvements that may help attract desired types of retailers, such as environmentally conscious businesses.
3. Ways to strengthen the City's reputation as business and environment friendly.
4. Methods to assist property owners and managers to attract desired types of tenants.
5. Methods to assist property owners to consolidate lot ownership as part of redevelopment efforts.

**Action ED-2.3 Fiscal Impact Analysis Guidelines.** Study the possibility of establishing guidelines requiring fiscal impact analyses for larger development projects in key commercial areas of the city.

**Action ED-2.4 Capital Improvement Program.** Ensure that infrastructure projects listed in the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) support Capitola's long-term vision for commercial and mixed use areas in Capitola, including the Capitola Village, the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue corridor, and Bay Avenue areas.

**Action ED-2.5 Auto Plaza Visibility and Access.** Identify ways to enhance the visibility from 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue. Possible improvements include improved signage.



*Village Sea Otter Kiosk*

## Goal ED-3 Expand and promote environmentally sustainable jobs and businesses in Capitola.

### Policies

**Policy ED-3.1 Regional Collaboration.** Encourage regional workforce development programs that promote careers in environmental sustainability.

**Policy ED-3.2 Sustainable Job Promotion.** Support the growth of jobs in Capitola focused on increasing environmental sustainability and energy efficiency.

**Policy ED-3.3 Alternative Office/Work Spaces.** Support alternative office and work space arrangements that increase opportunities for entrepreneurs and other small businesses.

**Policy ED-3.4 City Procurement Procedures.** Support local sustainable businesses through the City's procurement policies and procedures.

**Policy ED-3.5 Sustainable Business Incubator.** Support regional efforts to locate a sustainable business incubator in Santa Cruz County.

**Policy ED-3.6 Ecological Transportation Choices.** Support development of businesses that allow ecological forms of access, including commuting, through transit, bike lanes, walking, or transportation demand management.

**Policy ED-3.7 Regional Cooperation.** Cooperate with environmental organizations in the region to assist local businesses and residents in improving sustainable practices.

**Policy ED-3.8 Economic Development Focus.** Focus economic development efforts on environmental sustainability and ecological tourism industries to support Capitola's image as an environmentally-conscious community.



*Wharf Road mural*

Actions

- Action ED-3.1 Green Building Ordinance.** Periodically review and update Capitola’s Green Building Ordinance as a tool to support sustainable jobs and businesses in Capitola. Consider repealing the Green Building Ordinance if it becomes redundant with Title 24 standards.
- Action ED-3.2 Green Economy Matrix.** Utilize the Green Economy Matrix included in the Green Jobs Report as a tool to guide City policy related to promote sustainable jobs in Capitola.



8

# GLOSSARY AND BIBLIOGRAPHY



This glossary explains the technical terms used in the Capitola General Plan and common in the field of planning. Definitions come from several sources, including the California Office of Planning and Research and the American Planning Association's *Glossary of Zoning, Development, and Planning Terms*.

## ABBREVIATIONS

AB:	Assembly Bill
ADTs:	Average daily trips
AMBAG:	Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
CAP:	Climate Action Plan
CARB:	California Air Resources Board
CEQA:	California Environmental Quality Act
CFPD:	Central Fire Protection District
CIP:	Capital Improvement Program
CNEL:	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CRS:	Community Rating System
dB:	Decibel
dBA:	Decibel "A-Weighted"
FAR:	Floor Area Ratio

<b>FEMA:</b>	Federal Emergency Management Agency
<b>GHG:</b>	Greenhouse Gas
<b>GIS:</b>	Geographic Information Systems
<b>GPAC:</b>	General Plan Advisory Committee
<b>HOV:</b>	High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes
<b>LAFCO:</b>	Local Agency Formation Commission
<b>LCP:</b>	Local Coastal Program
<b>Ldn:</b>	Day-Night Noise Level Scale
<b>LHMP:</b>	Local Hazard Mitigation Plan
<b>LOS:</b>	Level of Service
<b>MBUAPCD:</b>	Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District
<b>NCCAB:</b>	North Central Coast Air Basin
<b>NFIP:</b>	National Flood Insurance Program
<b>SCWD:</b>	City of Santa Cruz Water Department
<b>SOI:</b>	Sphere of Influence
<b>SqCWD:</b>	Soquel Creek Water District
<b>UASI:</b>	Urban Area Security Initiative
<b>VMT:</b>	Vehicle Miles Traveled

# TERMINOLOGY

**Action.** An action is a program, implementation measure, procedure, or technique intended to help achieve a specified goal. (See “Goal”)

**Adverse Impact.** A negative consequence for the physical, social, or economic environment resulting from an action or project.

**Affordable Housing.** Dwelling units for which the housing payment is not more than 30 percent of household gross income for a specified income group.

**Arterials.** Major thoroughfares that carry large volumes of traffic at relatively high speeds. Arterials are designed to facilitate two or more lanes of moving vehicles in each direction and rarely contain on-street parking.

**Assembly Bill (AB).** Precedes digits indicating specific bill number (e.g. AB 32). An Assembly Bill is an idea or concept designed by a member of the California Assembly. Once an Assembly Bill is passed in both the State Assembly and Senate, it goes to the Governor for signature, veto, or approval without signature.

**Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG).** The regional planning agency for Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties, including the cities within these counties.

**Bicycle Path (Class I facility).** A paved route, not on a street or roadway, expressly reserved for bicycles traversing an otherwise unpaved area. Bicycle paths may parallel roads but are typically separated from them by landscaping.

**Buffer.** An area established between potentially conflicting land uses, such as agricultural and residential uses, which, depending on the potential impact, may utilize landscaping or structural barriers such as setbacks or roads.

**California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).** Legislation and corresponding procedural components established in 1970 by the State of California to require environmental review for projects anticipated to result in adverse impacts to the environment.

**Caltrans.** California Department of Transportation.

**Capital Improvement Program (CIP).** A program that schedules permanent improvements, usually for a minimum of five years in the future, that fits the projected fiscal capability of the local jurisdiction. The program generally is reviewed on an annual basis for conformance to and consistency with the General Plan.

**Capitola Register of Historic Features.** A list prepared by the City of Capitola that identifies structures, sites, and other features that may historically be significant to the local community.

**City.** City with a capital “C” generally refers to the City government or administration. City with a lower case “c” may mean any city or may refer to the geographical area.

**City Limits.** The legal boundaries of the geographical area subject to the jurisdiction of the City of Capitola’s government. For example, development applications for properties located within the city limits must be reviewed by the City.

**Collectors.** Roadways that connect local streets to “arterials”; collectors usually provide two travel lanes for automobiles, and may also have bicycle lanes.

**Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL).** A weighted measure of ambient noise using sound levels over the course of a 24-hour period.

**Compatible.** Capable of existing together without conflict or ill effects.

**Complete Streets Act.** A law that requires all road construction and improvement projects to evaluate how the right-of-way serves all who use it, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.

**Conservation.** The management of natural resources to prevent waste, destruction, or neglect.

**Cultural Resources.** Includes historic, archaeological, and paleontological resources, as well as human remains.

**Decibel (dB).** A unit used to express the relative intensity of a sound as it is heard by the human ear. The lowest volume a normal ear can detect under laboratory conditions is 0 dB, the threshold of human hearing. Since the decibel scale is logarithmic, 10 decibels are ten times more intense and 20 decibels are a hundred times more intense than 1 dB.

**Decibel "A-Weighted" (dBA).** The "A-weighted" scale for measuring sound in decibels, which weighs or reduces the effects of low and high frequencies in order to simulate human hearing. Every increase of 10 dBA doubles the perceived loudness even though the noise is actually ten times more intense.

**Dedication.** The turning over by an owner or developer of private land for public use, and the acceptance of land for such use by the governmental agency having jurisdiction over the public function for which it will be used. Dedications for roads, parks, school sites, or other public uses are often required by a city or county as conditions for approval of a development. (See "In-Lieu Fee")

**Density.** The amount of development or people per unit of area or property. (See also "Density, Residential" and "Floor Area Ratio")

**Density, Residential (du/acre).** The number of permanent residential dwelling units (du) per acre of land. Densities specified in the General Plan are expressed in dwelling units per gross acre. Gross acre measurements include easements, driveways, and private roads.

**Development.** The physical extension and/or construction of land uses. Development activities may include: subdivision of land; construction or alteration of structures, roads, utilities and other facilities; grading; deposit of refuse, debris, or fill materials; and clearing of natural vegetative cover.

**Development Review; Design Review.** The comprehensive evaluation of a development and its impact on neighboring properties and the community as a whole, from the standpoint of site and landscape design, architecture, materials, colors, lighting and signs, in accordance with a set of adopted criteria and standards.

**Duplex.** A free-standing house divided into two separate living units or residences, usually having separate entrances.

**Dwelling Unit (du).** A building or portion of a building containing one or more rooms, designed for or used by one family for living or sleeping purposes, and having a separate bathroom and only one kitchen or kitchenette.

**Erosion.** The process by which soil and rock are detached and moved by running water, wind, ice, and gravity.

**Fault.** A fracture in the earth's crust that forms a boundary between rock masses that have shifted.

**Flood, 100-year.** In any given year, a flood that has a 1 percent likelihood of occurring, and is recognized as a standard for acceptable risk.

**Floodplain.** The relatively level land area on either side of the banks of a stream regularly subject to flooding.

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR).** The size of a building in square feet divided by land area, expressed as a decimal number. For example, a 60,000-square-foot building on a 120,000-square-foot parcel would have a floor area ratio of 0.50. The FAR is used in calculating the building intensity of non-residential development.

**General Plan.** A compendium of City policies regarding its long-term development, in the form of maps and accompanying text. The General Plan is a legal document required of each local agency by the State of California Government Code Section 65301 and adopted by the City Council. In California, the General Plan has seven mandatory elements (Circulation, Conservation, Housing, Land Use, Noise, Open Space, and Public Safety) and may include any number of optional elements the City deems important.

**Geographic Information Systems (GIS).** A combination of approaches, programs, methodologies, and technologies to gather, store, manipulate, analyze, present, and interpret spatial information and data.

**Goal.** A description of the general desired results that Capitola seeks to create through the implementation of the General Plan. Goals are included in each element of the Plan and may include the key physical or community characteristics that the City and its residents wish to maintain or develop.

**Greenhouse Gas (GHG).** A gaseous compound that contributes to the greenhouse effect.

**Greywater.** The less contaminated portion of domestic wastewater, including wash water from clothes washers and laundry tubs.

**Grid-Neutral Development.** Development that generates enough energy to off-set its demands.

**Groundwater.** Water that exists beneath the earth's surface, typically found between saturated soils and rock, and is used to supply wells and springs.

**Habitat.** The physical location or type of environment in which an organism or biological population lives or occurs.

**Hazardous Waste.** Waste that requires special handling to avoid illness or injury to persons or damage to property.

**High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes (HOV).** Traffic lanes that are designated and reserved for vehicles with a minimum number of passengers during high-volume commute hours in order to encourage carpooling through faster travel. They are enforced with fines and traffic tickets.

**Household.** Person or persons living in one dwelling unit.

**Impervious Surface.** Surface through which water cannot penetrate, such as a roof, road, sidewalk, or paved parking lot. The amount of impervious surface increases with development and establishes the need for drainage facilities to carry the increased runoff.

**Infill Development.** Development that occurs on vacant or underutilized land within areas that are already largely developed.

**In-Lieu Fee.** Cash payments that may be required of an owner or developer as a substitute for a dedication of land for public use, usually calculated in dollars per lot, and referred to as in-lieu fees or in-lieu contributions.

**Landslide.** The downslope movement of soil and rock.

**Land Use.** The occupation or utilization of an area of land for any human activity or any purpose.

**Land Use Designation.** One particular category in a classification series of appropriate use of properties established by the General Plan Land Use Element.

**Leq, Equivalent Sound Level.** The average of sound energy occurring over a specified period. The Leq is equivalent to the same average acoustical energy as the time-varying sound that actually occurs during a specified period.

**Level of Service (LOS) Standard.** A standard used by government agencies to measure the quality or effectiveness of a municipal service, such as police, fire, or library, or the performance of a facility, such as a street or highway.

**Level of Service (Traffic).** A scale that measures the amount of traffic that a roadway or intersection can accommodate, based on such factors as maneuverability, driver dissatisfaction, and delay.

**Liquefaction.** A sudden large decrease in the shearing resistance of a cohesionless soil, caused by a collapse of the structure by shock or strain, and associated with a sudden but temporary increase of the pore fluid pressure.

**Local Street.** Provides direct access to properties; generally they carry the lowest traffic volumes.

**Mitigation.** A specific action taken to reduce environmental impacts to insignificant levels. Mitigation measures are required as a component of an environmental impact report (EIR).

**Mixed Use.** Any mixture of land uses on a single parcel, including mixtures of residences with commercial, offices with retail, or visitor accommodation with offices and retail. As distinguished from a single use land use designation or zone, mixed use refers to an authorized variety of uses for buildings and structures in a particular area.

**Mobile Home.** A structure, transportable in one or more sections, built on a permanent chassis and designed for use as a single-family dwelling unit.

**Mobile Home Park.** A parcel of land that has been planned and improved for the placement of two or more mobile homes for rental purposes for non-transient use.

**National Register of Historic Places.** A list prepared by the National Park Services of places worthy of preservation throughout the United States.

**Noise Contour.** A line connecting points of equal noise level as measured on the same scale. Noise levels greater than the 60 Ldn contour (measured in dBA) require noise attenuation in residential development.

**Noise-Sensitive Use.** A location where people reside or where the presence of unwanted sound could adversely affect the use of land, such as residences, schools, and hospitals.

**Open Space.** Open Space encompasses lands that essentially are unimproved and that have limited development potential due to the physical characteristics of the land, due to the land being restricted to agricultural production, due to the location of the land as a buffer between urban areas, or due to the scenic value of the land and its role in maintaining a community's sense of character or heritage.

**Overlay.** A land use designation or zoning designation that modifies the basic underlying designation or designations in some specific manner.

**Ozone.** An oxidant, O<sub>3</sub>, that at ground level makes up the largest single portion of smog. In the upper atmosphere, the presence of ozone acts as a protectant against harmful ultraviolet rays.

**Parcel.** A lot, or contiguous group of lots, in single ownership or under single control, usually considered a unit for purposes of development.

**Particulate Matter.** Minute, separate airborne solid or liquid particles including smoke, dust, aerosols, metallic oxides, and pollen.

**Policy.** A specific statement of principle or of guiding actions that implies clear commitment but is not mandatory. A general direction that a governmental agency sets to follow, in order to meet its goals before undertaking an implementing action or program. (See “Action”)

**Response Time.** The amount of time for an emergency services response, measured from the time of the distress call until arrival on the scene.

**Right-of-Way.** 1. The total street width needed to accommodate travel lanes, sidewalks and curbs, and gutters. 2. A strip of land acquired by reservation, dedication, forced dedication, prescription or condemnation, and intended to be occupied or usually occupied by a road, crosswalk, railroad, electric transmission lines, oil or gas pipeline, water line, sanitary storm sewer, or other similar use.

**Riparian Corridor.** A habitat and vegetation zone that is associated with the banks and floodplains of a river, stream, or lake. Riparian trees and shrubs are typically phreatophytes, plants whose root systems are in constant contact with groundwater.

**Safe Routes to Schools.** Pedestrian and bicycling routes that provide safe access to and from schools.

**Sensitive Receptors.** Members of the population who are most sensitive to air quality, including children, the elderly, the acutely ill, and the chronically ill. The term “sensitive receptors” can also refer to the land use categories where these people live or spend a significant amount of time. Such areas include residences, schools, playgrounds, childcare centers, hospitals, retirement homes, and convalescent homes.

**Sharrow.** A sharrow or ‘shared lane marking (SLM)’ is a pavement marking installed on streets popular with bicyclists but too narrow for conventional bike lanes.

**Slope, 30 percent.** A slope defined by 30 units of vertical elevation per 100 units of horizontal distance, measured on a line perpendicular to contours of equal elevation.

**Solid Waste.** Unwanted or discarded material, including garbage, with insufficient liquid content to be free flowing.

**Sphere of Influence (SOI).** The probable physical boundaries and service area of the city, as determined by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) of the county.

**Steep Slope.** An area with a greater than 30 percent slope.

**Subdivision.** The division of a lot, tract, or parcel of land into two or more lots, tracts, parcels, or other divisions of land for sale, development, or lease.

**Subdivision Ordinance.** An ordinance which establishes regulations for the division of a lot, tract, or parcel of land into two or more lots, tracts, parcels or other divisions of land for sale, development, or lease.

**Subsidence.** The gradual sinking of land as a result of natural or man-made causes.

**Sustainable.** Describes practices that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.<sup>1</sup>

**Topography.** The configuration of a land surface, including its relief and the position of its natural and man-made features.

**Traffic Calming.** Measures designed to reduce motor vehicle speeds and to encourage pedestrian use, including: narrow streets, tight turning radii, sidewalk bulbouts, parking bays, textured paving at intersections, and parkways between sidewalks and streets.

**Unincorporated Area.** Encompasses properties that are located outside of cities. Development in the unincorporated area is subject to County jurisdiction.

**Use.** The purpose for which a lot or structure is or may be leased, occupied, maintained, arranged, designed, intended, constructed, erected, moved, altered and/or enlarged in accordance with the City Zoning Code and General Plan land use designations.

**Watershed.** The total area above a given point on a watercourse that contributes water to the flow of the watercourse; the entire region drained by a watercourse.

**Wetlands.** An area that is inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions, commonly known as hydrophytic vegetation.

---

<sup>1</sup> World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, *Our Common Future, Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development*, Oxford University Press.

**Zoning.** The division of a city by ordinance or other legislative regulation into districts or zones, which specify allowable uses for real property and size restrictions for buildings constructed in these areas; a program that implements the land use policies of the General Plan.

## BIBLIOGRAHY

The following documents are referenced in the General Plan, or were used as background information during the General Plan Update process.

### City of Capitola Documents

41st Avenue Design Guidelines, 1984

41st Avenue Development-Mixed Use Report, 2009

Capitola Historic Context Statement and Architectural Survey

Capitola Historic Structures List, 2005

Capitola Village Parking Structure Planning Project, 2011

Central Village Design Guidelines, 1986

City of Capitola 1989 General Plan

City of Capitola Bicycle Transportation Plan, 2011

City of Capitola Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory 2005 Baseline Report, 2012

City of Capitola Local Coastal Program

City of Capitola Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2013

Economic Development Strategic Plan, 2007

General Plan Update Draft Environmental Impact Report, 2013

General Plan Update Final Environmental Impact Report, 2014

One-Way Traffic Analysis for the Capitola Village Area, 2008

Parking Analysis for the Capitola Village Area, 2008

Village Parking Study, 2008

Zoning Ordinance (Title 17 of the Capitola Municipal Code)

## County and Regional Documents

Central Fire Protection District Master Plan, 2007

Envisioning the Monterey Bay Area: A Blueprint for Sustainable Growth and Smart Infrastructure, 2011

Metropolitan Transportation Plan & the Sustainable Communities Strategy, 2013

Monterey Bay Air Quality Management Plan, 2012

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Management Plan, 2008

Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Plan, 2013

Santa Cruz County Integrated Waste Management Plan

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan, 2014

Santa Cruz Metro Short Range Transit Plan, 2007

Soquel Creek Water District Urban Water Management Plan, 2005



1625 Shattuck Avenue, Suite 300 | Berkeley, California 94709 | 510.848.3815 (f) 510.848.4315