

**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

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**TO:**  Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044  
Email: state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov

**FROM:** City of Watsonville  
Community Development Dept.  
250 Main Street  
Watsonville, CA 95076

Clerk of the Board  
Santa Cruz County  
701 Ocean Street, Room 500  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

**FILE NO.:** N/A

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**Project Title:** City of Watsonville 2023-2031 Housing Element

**Project Location - Specific:** Citywide

**Project Location - City:** Watsonville

**Project Location - County:** Santa Cruz

**Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:** The Project is the City of Watsonville 2023 - 2031 Housing Element, which represents the City's policy program for the 2023-2031 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Planning Period. The Project involves the adoption of the Housing Element Update, amending the General Plan to update the Housing Element for the current cycle, and certification of the CEQA document (i.e., Notice of Exemption).

Pursuant to State law, the City is required to update its Housing Element every eight years. In each eight-year planning cycle, the City is allocated a specific number of housing units (i.e., Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)). The RHNA quantifies current and future housing growth within a city. The Housing Element establishes the City's official housing policies and programs to accommodate the City's RHNA goals and identifies available candidate housing sites (69 total) to meet those goals. The Project would not implement or result in direct housing construction but would facilitate and provide a policy framework for future housing development throughout the City. The Project's beneficiary is the City of Watsonville.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** City of Watsonville

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** City of Watsonville

**Exempt Status (check one):**

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: \_\_\_\_\_
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Public Resources Code §21083  
State CEQA Guidelines §15061(b)(3) Common Sense Exemption, §15262 Feasibility and Planning Studies, and §15283  
Housing Needs Allocation

**Reasons why project is exempt:** The Project is exempt under the Common Sense Exemption because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the proposed 2023-2031 Housing Element Update would have a significant effect on the environment. The Project is exempt under the Feasibility and Planning Studies Exemption because it is a feasibility or planning study for possible future actions by the City. The Project is exempt under the Housing Needs Allocation as an action to implement a regional housing needs determination.

**Lead Agency Contact Person:** Matt Orbach, Principal Planner

**Telephone:** 831-768-3075

**If filed by applicant:**

- 1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
- 2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project?  Yes  No

**Signature:**  **Date:** 10/16/2024 **Title:** Principal Planner

- Signed by Lead Agency
- Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.  
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code

Date Received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_