

# City looks toward plan for annexed area

Watsonville - Annexation  
Development considered for

✓ 91-acre Manabe-Ow property

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With annexation of the Manabe-Ow property approved last year, Watsonville is beginning to plan just what kinds of businesses will end up on the 91-acre property.

On Tuesday, the Watsonville Redevelopment Agency will weigh a \$250,000 contract with RBF Consulting to prepare a specific plan for the property, as well the creation of a technical advisory committee to help craft the plan. Like a steering committee formed to guide development of the city's General Plan, the committee will provide feedback on major policy issues, said Community Development Director John Doughty.

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## PLAN

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"Initial discussion will focus on the realities of the development — matching up what the desire is in terms of jobs with what the local workforce can handle," Doughty said.

The plan is for the Manabe-Ow parcel to provide as many as 2,100 new jobs, which Doughty acknowledges may be an ambitious figure. The committee will help determine what types of businesses the city should try to attract and what existing Watsonville companies may be interested in expanding at the site, Doughty said.

Doughty is recommending 11 voting members and three non-vot-

ing City Council members to form the committee, including representatives from the Pajaro Valley Chamber of Commerce, Watsonville Wetlands Watch, the Manabe and Ow properties, the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau, locals residents and real estate, construction and financial specialists.

The goal is to complete the plan during the next year, when a draft could head to the Planning Commission and then to the City Council for discussion.

The Manabe-Ow annexation property, twice as large as the Westridge Business Park, will also include 25 acres of wetland restoration area and about six acres of workforce housing. Under the terms of a binding covenant, no "big box" stores or automobile businesses will be allowed on the site.