

# Watsonville revisits 2030 growth plan

✓ *Watsonville - Growth*  
 Staff recommends  
 revamp of sections  
 struck down by court

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WATSONVILLE — Nine months after a court tossed Watsonville's 2030 general plan, officials will take another crack at the city's blueprint for growth during the next two decades.

The City Council will consider how to move forward Tuesday.

Staff is recommending revisiting sections struck down by the court related to the airport, regional traffic and alternative development scenarios. To meet state law, the city should also study how future growth will affect climate change, staff recommended.

Interim Community Development Director Marcela Tavantzis said the city could continue to rely on its existing 2005 general plan, but it's in the best interests of the city to redo the more recent document.

The 2030 plan "contains some newer approaches to urban planning we would like to use," Tavantzis said, pointing to "livable community" provisions, such as developments that mix commercial, retail and residential uses and more emphasis on pedestrian access. "It really is more advanced."

The City Council approved the 2030 plan on a close vote in 2006, but it was challenged in court by pilots and a neighborhood group concerned about development near Watsonville Municipal Airport.

A state appeals court ruled in March that the city erred when it eliminated runway safety zones to permit as many as 2,100 homes to be built in the area near Buena Vista Road, and that traffic and development alternatives needed more study.

Bert Post, a resident of the Buena Vista area who opposed the original plan, said he hoped in the next go-around the city pays more attention to stakeholders.

Post said the plan will need to be scaled back, and he doesn't believe

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 the infrastructure, particularly water, will support more than 400 homes.

"We have to talk to each other and look at all the possibilities and try to bring it to an acceptable scale, not only for the resources, but for the stakeholders who have to live with it day to day," Post said.

Restoring the runway safety zones will cut down the number of houses that can be built on the site in any case.

Tavantzis said the city eventually will move forward with its planned expansion into Buena Vista and Atkinson Lane, areas targeted for future annexation in Measure U, an urban growth initiative approved by city voters in 2002.

But the housing market crash has taken the urgency out of the expansion.

Though Buena Vista and Atkinson can be developed under Watsonville's existing 2005 general plan, Tavantzis said the city's priority is for development inside its current boundaries.