

New buildings halted by Watsonville council

WATSONVILLE — The City Council passed ordinances Monday that will streamline permit processing and place a moratorium on new construction.

The fast-track permit processing is designed to speed up the reconstruction of homes and businesses devastated by last week's 6.9 earthquake and aftershocks.

The moratorium will apply to all new construction, and any projects that aren't in the final phase of

approval at this point, City Manager John Radin said.

Three projects awaiting their building permits will likely be allowed to continue construction. They are Motel 6, Rancho Grande and Valley Retirement, Radin said.

Reconstruction of homes will be speeded up by allowing work to proceed using a pre-approved repair plan. Businesses can get reconstruction permits if a structural engineer provides the city with a damage assessment report.