



To: Justin Meek, Interim Community Development Director, City of Watsonville

From: Audrey Zagazeta, President & CEO, Circlepoint

Subject: City of Watsonville General Plan 2050 Farmland Conversion Analysis

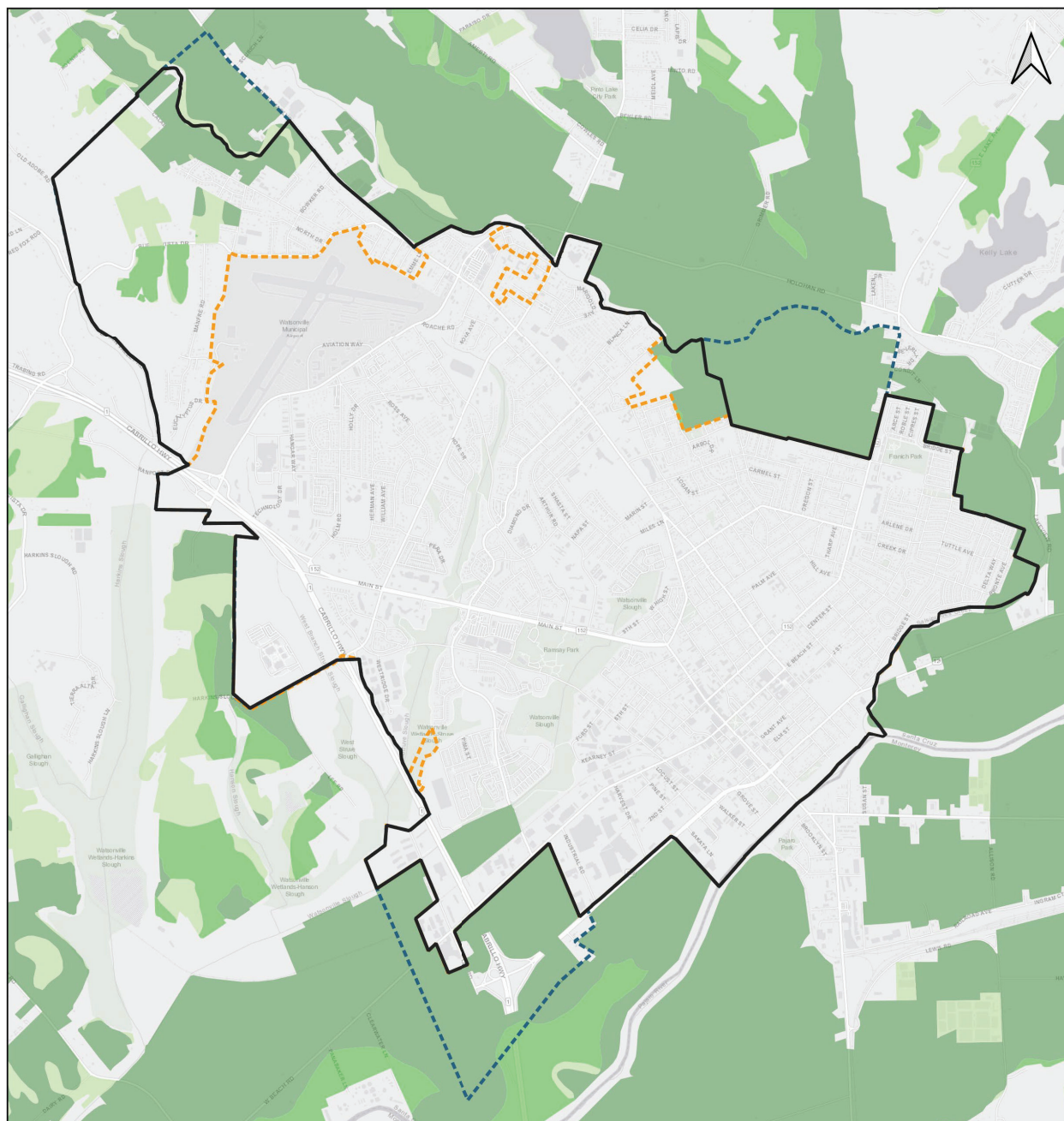
Date: March 21, 2025

The purpose of this memorandum is to quantify the amount of farmland converted from agricultural to non-agricultural uses due to new land use designations in the City of Watsonville (City) General Plan 2050. The information provided will assist the City in developing mitigation measures for inclusion in the Agricultural and Forestry Resources chapter of the General Plan 2050 EIR, aimed at potentially reducing the plan's impact on agricultural resources in the Plan Area.

As described in the EIR's Notice of Preparation (NOP), anticipated growth involves amending the existing Urban Limit Line (ULL) to include Area C and the Highway 1 Gateway and expanding Buena Vista to Freedom Boulevard (see Attachment 5 to the NOP showing areas of projected growth within the City's Sphere of Influence). These areas include agricultural land. Therefore, implementation of the General Plan 2050 would involve the conversion of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmlands located within the current and proposed/amended ULL. (No Farmland of Local Importance is included within the current or proposed ULL.). **Figure 1** below shows the types of California Important Farmland within the ULLs and near the City of Watsonville.

Figure 1 Important Farmland near the City of Watsonville

Important Farmland near the City of Watsonville



MAP LEGEND

- | | |
|---|--|
|  Current Urban Limit Line (ULL) | California Important Farmland |
|  Proposed Urban Limit Line (ULL) |  Prime Farmland |
|  Watsonville City Boundary |  Farmland of Statewide Importance |
| |  Unique Farmland |

0 0.5 1 mi



Map drafted by Circlepoint

Source: Santa Cruz County, 2024

Under the revised General Plan 2050, a total of 779.79 acres of farmland would be converted, including 675 acres of Prime Farmland, 41.03 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 63.76 acres of Unique Farmland. Within the total converted farmland, a total of 211.98 acres of farmland would be converted under the current ULL (which includes current development in Area A and Area B), including 122.63 acres of Prime Farmland, 35.41 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 53.94 acres of Unique Farmland. A total of approximately 568.1 acres of additional farmland would be converted under the proposed ULL (which includes Highway 1 Gateway area, extension of Area A, and Area C), including 552.66 acres of Prime Farmland, 5.62 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 9.82 acres of Unique Farmland.

Table 1 below shows the conversion of farmland within the current ULL and the proposed ULL:

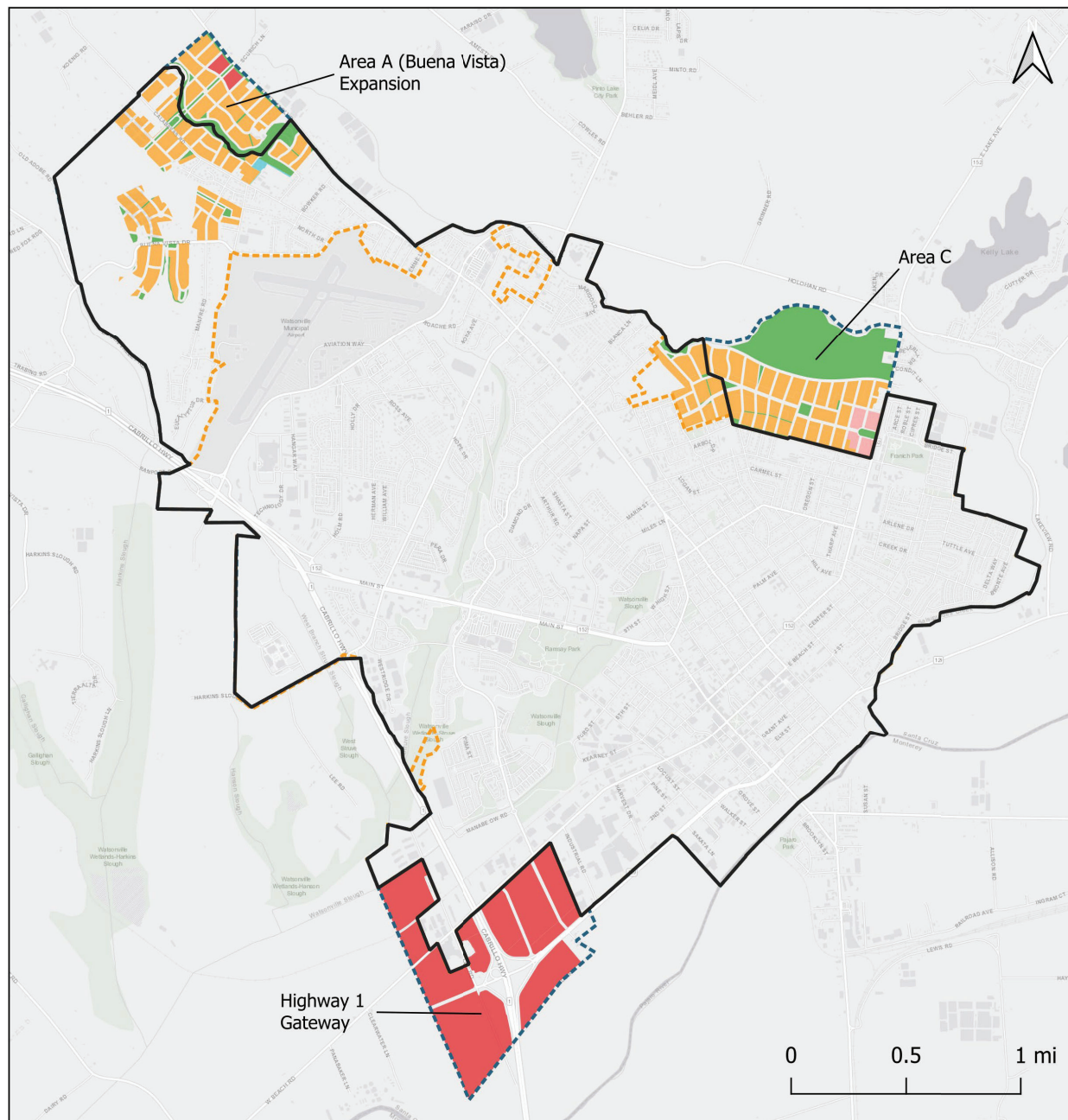
Table 1: Farmland Conversion under General Plan 2050

	Land Converted (sq ft)	Land Converted (acres)	Land Converted (sq miles)
Farmland Converted Under the Current ULL			
Prime Farmland	5,341,813	122.63	0.19
Farmland of Statewide Importance	1,542,357	35.41	0.06
Unique Farmland	2,349,540	53.94	0.08
Total	9,233,710	211.98	0.33
Additional Farmland Converted Under the Proposed ULL			
Prime Farmland	24,073,834	552.66	0.86
Farmland of Statewide Importance	244,642	5.62	0.01
Unique Farmland	427,776	9.82	0.02
Total	24,746,252	568.10	0.89
Combined Farmland Converted Under Current ULL Plus Proposed ULL			
Prime Farmland	29,415,647	675.00	1.05
Farmland of Statewide Importance	1,786,999	41.03	0.07
Unique Farmland	2,777,316	63.76	0.10
Total	33,979,962	779.79	1.22

Under the revised General Plan 2050, Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland would be converted into community facilities, natural open space, residential, commercial, and neighborhood corridor (mixed) uses. Within the current ULL, 1.84 acres of farmland would be converted into community facilities, 21.56 acres into parks or natural open space, 96.11 acres into residential and 0.01 acre into suburban corridors. Within the proposed ULL, an additional 113.45 acres of farmland would be converted into residential use, and an additional 101,54 acres of farmland would be converted into parks or natural open spaces, while 10.28 acres of farmlands would be converted into corridor mixed use in Area C. Approximately 230.26 acres of farmland would be converted into commercial uses in Highway 1 Gateway, where no residential conversion is anticipated. Approximately 60.89 acres of farmland would be converted into 44.81 acres of residential use, 10.83 acres into parks or natural open space, and 5.25 acres into commercial use in Area A (Buena Vista) Expansion. **Figure 2** below shows the conversion of Important Farmland permitted under the General Plan 2050 categorized by proposed land uses.

Figure 2 Farmland Conversion by Proposed Land Uses

Farmland Conversion by Proposed Land Uses



MAP LEGEND

 Current Urban Limit Line (ULL)	 Land Use of Conversion	 Parks/ Natural Open Space
 Proposed Urban Limit Line (ULL)	 Community Facilities	 Residential
 Watsonville City Boundary	 Corridor Mixed-Use	 Commercial

Map drafted by Circlepoint

Source: Santa Cruz County, 2024

Table 2 below outlines the total farmland conversion permitted under the General Plan 2050, categorized by the proposed land uses. While the City has not yet assigned specific future land uses for the expanded areas within the proposed ULL (Area C, Highway 1 Gateway, and Buena Vista Expansion), the available land use plans for these areas are included in the table below.

Table 2: Farmland Conversion by Proposed Land Use

Proposed Land Use/Area	Farmland Converted (sq ft)	Farmland Converted (acres)	Land Converted (sq miles)
Current ULL			
Community Facilities	79,973	1.84	0.003
Parks/ Natural Open Space	939,118	21.56	0.03
Residential	4,186,503	96.11	0.15
Neighborhood Corridor Mixed-Use	627	0.01	0
Proposed ULL			
Area A (Buena Vista) Expansion			
Residential	1,951,986	44.81	0.07
Commercial	228,864	5.25	0.01
Parks/ Natural Open Space	471,614	10.83	0.02
Total	2,652,464	60.89	0.1
Area C			
Residential	4,941,182	113.45	0.18
Corridor Mixed-Use	447,796	10.28	0.02
Parks/ Natural Open Space	4,423,174	101.54	0.16
Total	9,812,152	225.27	0.36
Highway 1 Gateway			
Residential	0	0	0
Commercial	10,030,220	230.26	0.36
Total	10,030,220	230.26	0.36

Note: Geospatial analysis result shows that the employment and neighborhood center land use will convert 86 sq. ft. and 16 sq. ft. of farmland, which is due to crossing boundaries and/or positioning errors.

In conclusion, a total of 779.79 acres of farmland would be converted under the General Plan 2050, including 675 acres of Prime Farmland, 41.03 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 63.76 acres of Unique Farmland. Compared to the current ULL scenario, the potential implementation of the proposed ULL would bring an additional 568.1 acres of farmland including 552.66 acres of Prime Farmland, 5.62 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 9.82 acres of Unique Farmland. The potential implementation of the proposed ULL would also lead to an additional conversion of farmland into 10.28 acres of mixed use, 158.26 acres of residential, and 235.51 acres of commercial land uses.