



# STAFF REPORT—CITY COUNCIL MEETING

January 7, 2015

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

**FROM:** Larry Oetker, Community Development Director

LPO

**PREPARED BY:** Alyson Hunter, Senior Planner

AAH

**DATE:** December 28, 2014

**SUBJECT:** The 2014 Annual Report of the City of Arcata Planning Commission

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the Council receive the following Annual Report of the Planning Commission.

**INTRODUCTION:** Pursuant to Government Code Section 65400, the following is the Annual Report of the Planning Commission to the City Council. The following discussion items were updated in the City Resolution No. 123-07, dated October 3, 2012.

**1. Progress on the Planning Commission’s Goals from 2014 –**

a) Continue to make the Samoa Specific Plan (now the Coastal zone-wide Local Coastal Plan update) a priority for the Planning Commission and the Community Development Department. STAFF APPLIED FOR AND RECEIVED A GRANT FOR \$54,000 FROM THE COASTAL COMMISSION TO COMPLETE THE LOCAL COASTAL PLAN (LCP) UPDATE. AT THE COUNCIL’S DIRECTION, THE DEPARTMENT CHANGED THE OVERALL SCOPE OF THE FORMER SAMOA SPECIFIC PLAN TO INCORPORATE THE ENTIRE COASTAL ZONE WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS FOR A MORE COMPREHENSIVE UPDATE. THE COUNCIL APPROVED ADDITIONAL FUNDING TO COMPLETE THE UPDATE. STAFF MEETS MONTHLY WITH COASTAL COMMISSION STAFF AND HAS MADE PROGRESS ON A VARIETY OF ASPECTS OF THE LCP. THE EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT AND MORE INFORMATION ON PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS WILL BE BROUGHT BEFORE THE PLANNING COMMISSION IN THE NEXT COUPLE OF MONTHS WITH THE FIRST DRAFT OF THE UPDATE BEGINNING REVIEW IN APRIL OR MAY.

The City Council adopted the last of the ordinances and resolutions, as recommended by the Planning Commission, needed to cause the Land Use Code and General Plan to be effective in the Coastal portions of the City on December 4, 2013. This was the first step in streamlining the City’s regulatory framework regarding land use in the Coastal zone. The update to the standards and policies of the City’s certified LCP is currently underway, as mentioned above. ON AUGUST 14, 2014, THE COASTAL COMMISSION APPROVED OUR TRANSMITTAL WITH MINOR MODIFICATIONS. THOSE MODIFICATIONS ARE READY TO BE SCHEDULED FOR COUNCIL APPROVAL AND RESUBMITTAL TO COASTAL COMMISSION FOR FINAL CERTIFICATION.

THE PLANNING COMMISSION/CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ON OCTOBER 14, 2014, FOCUSED ON THE LCP UPDATE, PROGRESS TO DATE AND NEXT STEPS. PUBLIC OUTREACH WILL BEGIN IN EARLY SPRING WITH DRAFTS TO PLANNING COMMISSION IN LATE SPRING.

a) Initiate the periodic review process on the Land Use Code to further refine this implementation tool of the General Plan. Recent court actions may have an impact on the City’s Inclusionary Zoning standards and will require the Commission’s review to ensure compatibility with state law and court decisions. THE PLANNING COMMISSION REVIEWED THE DRAFT HOUSING ELEMENT (HE) UPDATE IN THE SPRING AND MADE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CITY COUNCIL ON SPECIFIC POLICIES, MOSTLY RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND THE INCLUSIONARY ZONING IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES. THE COUNCIL ADOPTED THE DOCUMENT IN JULY AND THE CITY RECEIVED CERTIFICATION BY THE STATE OFFICE OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (HCD) IN AUGUST.

SUBSEQUENT LUC AMENDMENTS REMOVING SECTION 9.23-AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND MODIFYING SECTION 9.24.070-RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS WERE ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL ON OCTOBER 1, 2014.

THE COMMISSION ALSO PROVIDED A RECOMMENDATION ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CHAPTER OF THE LAND USE CODE WHICH WERE ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL ON OCTOBER 15, 2014.

- b) Provide local training for Commissioners. STAFF HAS OFFERED SEVERAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION WEBINARS HOSTED AT CITY HALL. ALL COMMISSIONERS ARE UP-TO-DATE ON THEIR REQUIRED ETHICS TRAINING.
- c) Conduct study sessions on regional planning issues that affect Arcata. OTHER THAN THE ANNUAL CITY COUNCIL/PLANNING COMMISSION STUDY SESSION ON OCTOBER 14<sup>th</sup>, THERE HAVE BEEN NO SUCH REGIONAL PLANNING STUDY SESSIONS.
- d) Make the Land Use Code and General Plan effective in the Coastal portions of the City. ALMOST COMPLETE – AWAITING FINAL ACTION BY COUNCIL ON MINOR MODIFICATIONS THEN RESUBMITTAL TO COASTAL COMMISSION FOR FINAL CERTIFICATION. EXPECTED TO OCCUR IN JANUARY 2015.

**2) Planning Commission Goals for 2015:** What focus would the Commission like to take in the coming year? Are there any aspects of the Land Use Code or General Plan that the Commission would like to see clarified? Are there community outreach efforts that the Commission would like Staff undertake?

- a) CONTINUE WORKING ON THE LCP UPDATE,
- b) TAKE A CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER REVIEW OF THE GENERAL PLAN TO AMEND INCREMENTALLY AS NEEDED, c) BEGIN DISCUSSIONS ON THE REGULATION OF MARIJUANA ASSUMING NEAR-TERM LEGALIZATION, AND
- c) CONTINUE TO MAKE PROGRESS ON PERMIT STREAMLINING

**3) Projects in 2014:** THE CITY’S MORATORIUM ON MEDICAL MARIJUANA DISPENSARIES EXPIRED ON MARCH 17<sup>th</sup> OF THIS YEAR. AS A RESULT, THE TWO OPERATING DISPENSARIES ON 6<sup>th</sup> STREET SUBMITTED USE PERMIT APPLICATIONS AND WERE APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION. BOTH ARE CURRENTLY IN THE PROCESS OF FULFILLING CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL AND OBTAINING BUILDING PERMITS FOR REQUIRED ADA AND FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS.

TWO OF THE APPROVED “STALLED SUBDIVISIONS”, Q STREET AND 30<sup>TH</sup> STREET, WHICH WERE DISCUSSED IN 2013, RETURNED TO THE COUNCIL THIS YEAR TO REQUEST THAT THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE REQUIREMENTS, INCLUDED AS CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL IN EACH PROJECT, BE REMOVED. THE COUNCIL REMOVED THOSE REQUIREMENTS FROM THE Q STREET PROJECT, BUT REMOVED ONLY THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING REQUIREMENTS FROM THE 30<sup>TH</sup> STREET PROJECT CITING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE JANES CREEK BRIDGE AS A NON-MOTORIZED LINK BETWEEN NEIGHBORHOODS AND TO THE JANES CREEK MEADOWS PUBLIC PARK.

OTHER PROJECTS

- ON JUNE 24<sup>TH</sup>, THE COMMISSION APPROVED THE *DEAD RECKONING TAVERN* USE PERMIT ON J STREET.
- ON AUGUST 12<sup>TH</sup>, THE COMMISSION APPROVED A MINOR USE AND DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE EXISTING *NO LIMITS DANCE ACADEMY* ON K STREET, GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE FOR THE ACQUISITION OF SEVERAL PROPERTIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE RAIL WITH TRAIL AND FOSTER AVENUE EXTENSION PROJECTS, AND AN AMENDMENT TO THE *ARCATA BAY CROSSING AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT* USE PERMIT.
- THE COMMISSION PERFORMED A GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW ON THE DISPOSAL OF CITY PROPERTY WITHIN THE PANORAMA SUBDIVISION. THE COMMISSION’S RECOMMENDATION WAS SUPPORTED IN COUNCIL’S ACTION TO DISPOSE OF THE WATER TANK PROPERTY.
- THE COMMISSION APPROVED A NEW VERSION (COONROD) OF AN OLD (ALLIANCE MEADOWS) “STALLED SUBDIVISION” AT 27<sup>TH</sup> STREET AND ALLIANCE ROAD ON OCTOBER 28, 2014.

ATTACHMENTS:

None.