

Vision

Suggested Consent Approval

“Arcata Today” (edit) – *“Arcata today: Arcata is home, a work in progress, with its natural beauty and resourceful citizens, and exemplary quality of life.”*

Add a statement after “We live resourcefully” and before “We move forward,” or somewhere before “We’re drawn to the Plaza”: *“We are resilient. We face hazards by adapting to a changing environment while limiting our harm to the ecosystem and its functions, and to global climate.”*

We share the benefits of California Polytechnic University Humboldt” – ADD to this statement: *“We work together to ensure that the University supports Arcata’s vision for our future, just as the City is an accommodating host to the University.”*

Add a statement (perhaps at the end): *“We work with neighbors. We work with neighboring jurisdictions and regional partners to tackle problems we can only solve together, and we expect and encourage our neighbors to work with us to fulfill our community’s vision.”*

I support the “Revised Vision Statement” (Appendix D). I don’t support the “Reorganized Vision Statement” (Appendix D2). The former is well written (see comments below) and concise. The latter has some empty language and is not nearly as effective.

Commissioner Pitch for Amendment

“We’re drawn to the Plaza” – Cut the added statement at the end. It would be fine to ADD a statement supporting community public spaces throughout the City, but not tacked on to this statement that recognizes the Plaza as Arcata’s unique center.

Under both **Equity and Connection and Community**: Religion is not called out as a characteristic. Do we want to call it out?

Land Use

Suggested Consent Approval

1. I propose adding the Sunset Neighborhood to the implementation measure I introduced at a previous land use element meeting and setting a timeline on that implementation measure of 2 years.
 - a. The sunset neighborhood has many of the same qualities that make it suitable for allowing increased density and mixed uses as the Bayview, Arcata Heights, and Northtown neighborhoods. This is also a direct suggestion from members of the public. The planning commission should consider the merits of up-zoning and allowing mixed use in that neighborhood in the future as well.
 - b. This implementation measure should be drafted as follows:
 - i. **City staff shall bring before the planning commission a proposed rezone to allow mixed uses and more housing in current R-L neighborhoods within walking distance of the plaza and Cal Poly Humboldt**

1. The Bayview, Northtown, Arcata Heights, and Sunset neighborhoods currently only permit low density housing despite being within walking distance of downtown and/or Cal Poly Humboldt. Staff shall develop a plan to upzone these neighborhoods in line with the Strategic Infill Redevelopment Program and bring the plan back to the planning commission for consideration within 2 years.
 - a. Responsible Party: Community Development
 - b. Time Frame: Year 2
2. I propose changing the definition of **Residential High Density [R-H]** as follows:
 - a. **Residential High Density [R-H]** High density residential uses are designated in central Arcata and other areas to allow increases in higher density above present levels multi-family housing located in proximity to commercial and employment uses, public services, schools, and parks. **Local-serving commercial uses such as corner grocery stores, coffee shops, etc. shall be permitted in [R-H] zones.**
 - b. We discussed this change at the last meeting regarding the land use element. Other Planning Commissioners and one member of the public agreed that allowing smaller, locally serving commercial uses in these zones created more walkable neighborhoods. It's nice to have a corner store that you can walk to rather than needing to use other modes of transportation to access another part of the city.
3. I propose an additional policy as follows:
 - a. **LU-1x Reduce Parking Maximums in the most walkable areas of the city.** Reduce maximum parking requirements within Infill Opportunity Zones.
 - b. Reducing maximum parking allowed within the areas planned to be the most walkable within our city will ensure that these areas are not dominated by cars and parking lots, making the more inviting for non-vehicle forms of transportation.
4. I propose changing the pie chart on page 2-2 of the Draft Land Use Element (Packet pg. 15) to split the residential slice into R-VL, R-L, R-M, and R-H zoning. This will give the reader a more accurate representation of how we dedicate land within the city to the various kinds of housing.
5. I propose changing the policy **LU-1e** as follows:
 - a. **LU-1e Development of a diversity of housing types.** The land use plan map shall provide sufficient quantities of land in the various residential use categories to allow for development of a variety of types of new housing units and residential environments. The purpose shall be to **maintain** achieve an appropriate balance between single-family housing on individual lots and multi-unit housing types.
 - b. As currently written, this policy assumes that we currently have an appropriate balance between land zoned for single family housing and multi-family housing. This word change erases that assumption while leaving in the desire to achieve an appropriate balance.
6. I propose changing the definition of **Commercial – General [C-G]** as follows:

- a. **Commercial - General [C-G]** This designation provides the full range of retail, entertainment, and service commercial uses ~~primarily~~ in, Valley West, C-G development must provide convenient access for patrons arriving by bicycle, public transit, motor vehicle, or on foot. ~~Businesses in the C-G area will be expected to provide sufficient on-site parking.~~ C-G areas are intended to have convenient access from residential areas in order to provide for day-to-day shopping and service needs. Residential densities allow up to 50 units per acre.
- b. As currently written, this section equates automotive travel with convenience. It also dooms Valley West to continue its current car-oriented development. I recommend that we remove parking minimums in C-G and allow developers to determine the correct amount of parking they feel is necessary for their projects to be commercially viable. This will allow the community to hopefully develop as more walkable and less car dependent over time as nearby residential densities increase.

7. I recommend we change policy **LU-4h** as follows:

- a. **LU-4h Petroleum extraction and processing** ~~The city of Arcata recognizes the national need for the responsible exploration, recovery and processing of the country's energy resources. However, t~~he City ~~also~~ recognizes the potential adverse impacts ~~such activities~~ petroleum extraction and processing ~~can~~ will have on ~~the climate as well as~~ sensitive land and marine resources and on the scenic quality of coastal resources. Therefore, the City finds that, in order to minimize adverse impacts to such resources, on-and off-shore petroleum product exploration, recovery, and processing should be confined to those geographic areas which now accommodate these uses and activities. Consistent with this policy, the City shall prohibit on-shore petroleum exploration, production, and processing within its boundaries, and shall oppose the use of off-shore areas south and west of Arcata and in Humboldt County in general for such uses.
- b. I don't see any reason for Arcata to "recognize the national need for" oil and gas exploration and development. We're in a climate crisis after all.

8. Although the need for housing is discussed, the issue of homelessness is not mentioned directly. I feel strongly that we should do so. Safe and secure housing is a human right. We live in the most prosperous country in the world; we should not have people without homes. We can address that in the following sections.

- a. **Guiding Principle C: Allow Encourage for** a range of housing choices that includes affordable ~~dwellings~~ housing for all community residents, including currently unhoused people, that accommodates families as well as individuals and groups, and varies in size and type to reflect the diverse character of the community and to provide equitable access to opportunities and resources in all of Arcata's neighborhoods.

9. **LU-6b: Compatibility between agricultural and adjacent non-agricultural uses.** This section begins with "Agricultural practices can include spraying of herbicides," Do we want to legitimize the use of herbicides in Arcata by explicitly including this statement in our General Plan? I suggest striking "spraying of herbicides" and starting the section with, "Agricultural practices can include application of fertilizer, operation of farm equipment...."

10. Principles and Goals

- a. Add a statement regarding “acknowledging and acting on strategies brought forward by members of Arcata’s Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities.” (In the draft there’s quite limited one tacked on to Principle A. Please also avoid acronyms.)
- b. Locate and allow location of land uses to minimize risks and exposure to environmental hazards, including seismic hazards and flooding. (Even though this should ALSO be included as a SAFETY and an ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE principle, it’s first and foremost a LAND USE principle and so should be up-front in this element.)
- c. Seek and encourage open and cooperative consultation and cooperation with managers of state land not subject to Arcata’s land use authority. (This refers to both the University and to the State’s retained jurisdiction in coastal areas, as well as a few others.)

11. **LU-1i: Maintain Arcata’s Historic Plaza Area as a major community center:** The draft policy ands with “Residential units shall be included, where feasible, in all new commercial development within the Plaza Area.” This repeats jist of LU-1f (Inclusion of residential uses). And an editing suggestion: Instead of “Residential units,” “housing” is more meaningful.
12. **LU-2: Residential Land use** “Objective” – add: “Allow for a mix of housing types and densities to ensure residents at all ages, income levels, and abilities ...”
13. **LU-4 Industrial Land Use** Objective: Hasn’t the City been supporting industries for 150+ years? (Is 50 years a typo?)[Staff response – yes. We’ll fix]
14. **LU-6a Agricultural and Natural Resource classifications – Agriculture Exclusive [A-E]:**
 - a. Consider adding to the end of the A-E classification text “*Agricultural and aquacultural product processing facilities for products originating outside of Arcata, and which are essentially industrial and require large-scale industrial buildings [add a threshold size?] are not appropriate for the A-E zone.*” (Presumably, existing ag-industries already approved may remain.)

15.

Commissioner Pitch for Amendment

1. I propose changing policy **LU-1c** as follows:
 - a. **Prioritization of transit and active transportation.** Reduce or eliminate minimum parking requirements ~~citywide. in areas where transit and active transportation is planned to support the transportation needs of the community, including neighborhoods where biking infrastructure, trails, complete streets, and transit is or is planned to be accessible.~~
 - i. I recognize that this policy was already changed based on my comments at a previous meeting. However, I worry that this current language accepts that there are areas of the city that we are choosing to leave un-walkable. My proposal makes this policy inclusive of the entire city.

2. **LU-2b: Diversity and choice in residential environments and LU-2c: Planned Development - residential.** These two sections represent another opportunity to incorporate wording to indicate that the City encourages housing for all, including currently unhoused people. I can suggest wording if we choose to do so.
3. **LU-6c: Protection of agricultural lands and uses within the City.** The second paragraph starts with “Private and public non-vehicular recreational activities such as hiking, riding, fishing, hunting, and other recreational activities....” I suggest we specify that the riding is non-motorized by adding that to the wording: “Private and public non-vehicular recreational activities such as hiking, **non-motorized** riding, fishing, hunting, and other recreational activities....”
4. **LU-1d: Streamlined Review and Standards in Infill Opportunity Zones:** We still haven’t discussed what this will be, either in the Gateway, much less city-wide. *When will we discuss and resolve this? Let’s not assume the model we adopt for the Gateway will hold City-wide. But it would be VERY CONFUSING if it doesn’t!* I’m very uncomfortable including this as a policy unless we have those discussions BEFORE making a recommendation to the City Council. *I recommend changing this policy to CONSIDER adopting streamlined review and standards for Infill Opportunity “Zones”.* Unless we have already addressed this in depth, include developing and adopting those changes as in implementation action.
5. **LU-1j: Encourage Valley West’s growth as a major community center for north Arcata:** Eliminate the sentence “High density residential use in the Valley West Infill Opportunity Area will be streamline”. It seems this is already part of the Infill Opportunity policy elsewhere, and we still haven’t figured out what that “streamlining” will be.
6. **LU-3a Commercial-Central[C-C] :** ‘The Commercial-Central Zone will continue to have no upper density limit’. *ADD: however, conditions of permit approval must avoid dangerous effects on public safety.*
7. **Table LU-4 INDUSTRIAL / PUBLIC FACILITY LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS**
 - a. “EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL & RELIGIOUS USES” are not listed for either of the Industrial zones. Would this prohibit vocational education facilities on an industrial site? (I support prohibiting K-12, daycare, or preschool facilities in Industrial zones.)
 - b. What is the point in including RELIGIOUS USES in this category? Can we eliminate mention of “Religious Uses” in this part of the Land Use element? (It doesn’t show up there in our current LUC.) Remembering 1st Amendment rights, the City has little regulatory authority over “Religious Uses” beyond enforcing its own property rights on city-owned sites, and safety rules.
 - c. Residential uses are allowed in I-L zones, though limited and requiring Use Permits. When we amend the Land Use Code and its Use Permit standards for residential uses of I-L sites, let’s think clearly and protectively about what IS allowed there, and who is vulnerable to those hazards (even in I-L permitted uses).
 - d. Urban Agriculture: I suggest allowing some “urban agriculture” on I-G and I-L sites, perhaps with a Use Permit to set appropriate conditions. Why is urban agriculture NOT allowed on Industrial sites (I-G or I-L), especially considering what IS allowed on them, and considering that industrial factories (with large-scale industrial structures) have been allowed on Ag Exclusive land? Which leads to ...

Ideas for Discussion

1. **LU-1k: Support and revitalize other existing neighborhood and commercial activity areas.** This section promotes travel by walking, biking, and transit. One of its intentions to reduce vehicle miles traveled. Yet, it also encourages “improvement of parking.” Do we want to also encourage the conversion of parking lots to other uses, such as housing, walkways, playgrounds, etc.?
2. Housing density limits are not expressed quantitatively in this element. Nonetheless, I suggest we consider adding language to address the possibility of housing bonuses affecting the overall density of development.
 - a. LU-2a: Residential Land Use Classifications. This section discusses different residential density zones. Given that the density bonus can be large and the rules covering the bonus are evolving rapidly, we can add language here so that we end up with a reasonable densities we can live with.
 - b. LU-3a: Commercial-Central (C-C): The last sentence reads, “The Commercial-Central Zone will continue to have no upper density limit.” Do we really want to say that? Would a 12-story building be allowed in this district?
3. **LU-1k: Support and revitalize other existing neighborhood and commercial activity areas.** Although not a “neighborhood” center, it would also help to have some explicit mention of Uniontown, especially in light of AB 2011. Uniontown might be a prime target for mixed use redevelopment (and a reasonable one), if not under its current owners, then under some future ownership by 2045.
4. **LU-2: Residential Land use** That’s real estate-talk. Change that to “residents.” The policy refers to “in higher density developments”. Clarify: Does that refer to RM and RH only? What about in those mixed use developments we’re expecting, and in :PD Planned Developments?
5. **LU-2c: Planned Development – residential: Add:** Planned Development may also incorporate non-residential uses *where they will not reduce safety or livability for residents, and must include adequate walkways, and set conditions for commercial operations.* (Avoid a scenario where commercial use is added to a residential :PD and brings dangerous vehicle traffic or constant loud noise into a previously kid-friendly, quiet area.)
 - a. The Implementation Measures list calls for the City to review sites in the :PD combining zone, and possibly releasing some of them from :PD requirements. However, new state housing laws already limit City discretion for projects that include affordable housing, and exempt some of those projects from CEQA review. The City should generally retain the discretionary review that the :PD combining zone provides, especially for already developed sites, to ensure that intensified development there does not threaten safety or existing environmental assets and recreational spaces.
6. **LU-3a Commercial use classifications** “Large scale retail uses shall require a use permit due to evaluate...” *Can we add a threshold size or scale?*
 - a. “Potential impact on existing and projected traffic conditions” – *Add: pedestrian and residents’ safety*
7. **Table LU34 COMMERCIAL LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS:** (Questions mainly)

- a. What is the rationale for adding Travel trailer [RV] parks to principally permitted uses in the C-G zone?
- b. Will eliminating animal sales and services make existing pet stores and veterinary services in C-G non-conforming? Or are these rolled into some larger category?
- c. Add to the “Gas sales” category electric vehicle charging stations? What about zip car rentals, etc?
- d. Restaurants, Bars, Taverns and pubs, nightclubs: Will bars still require a Use Permit? If we’re now allowing on-site cannabis consumption, should these be added to the list?
- e. Commercial Recreation / Entertainment: How come “outdoor recreation uses and services” are NOT allowed in either the C-C or C-M zones? Should they be?
- f. Educational, Cultural & Religious Uses: Since no “Religious Uses” are actually listed, and since the City has limited authority to regulate them anyway, should we take “Religious Uses” off the category title? (AND ... Does the City have discussion / condition procedures set up for when an Arcata church decides XYZ is actually a religious use, and demands services to support it?)
- g. Urban Agriculture: Not allowed in the C-C zone. So, NO herb or vegetable gardens on a temporarily vacant lot downtown? What about as an accessory use? (No commercial herb gardens in backyards and roofs? Or is that allowed under some other rule?)
- h. Commercial – General This is mainly Valley West. With a max residential density up to 50 “units” per acre in addition to commercial uses on the same site (???), with density bonuses likely to allow up to 90 dwellings per acre, what do we envision in Valley West for this allowable density, especially in light of AB 2011?

8. **LU-3e Commercial – Central** : Residential use is allowed as the primary use on vacant sites. Presumably, NO maximum density & no parking? Given current vacancy rates, may existing commercial buildings be converted to residential use anywhere in C-C? [Staff Response - I think that is the next step. This could be an implementation measure]

9. **LU-4b Little Lake** : The City has sat on cleaning up its Little Lake site for 20 years. There’s some new activity there now. (I’d heard “staging and material storage” for the WWTP upgrades?) The draft policy is: “... The site shall be planned as a mixed-use development including passive recreational uses and a dog park. Development shall be consistent with the adopted Long Range Property Management Plan.” That plan indicates the site should be used for “economic development,” which presumably means jobs. But the property management plan doesn’t go further than this. *I hope* our Sea Level Rise discussions on Tuesday will help us envision what types of structures could be safely allowed on that site – IF ANY – and strongly recommend against allowing permanent structures, or ANY “mixed use” that includes housing.

Throughout the Plan, let’s replace the term “passive recreational uses” with something that actually relates to land use / infrastructure, like “recreation facilities for walking, running, sitting, nature observation, and social interaction.” It’s more words, but better connotation in our sports-dominated society. [Staff response – no mixed use or residential use is planned on this site]

10. **Table LU-6: AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCE LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS**

- a. Coastal-dependent recreation in the A-E zone: What would this be? Duck hunting blinds? Kayak docks & rentals?

- b. Keeping confined animals isn't allowed in the A-R zone. No backyard hen coop? No backyard goat pen? It's odd that hens are allowed in residential zones but not in an ag zone. It might help to re-state the list of allowable uses to reflect scale of confined animal keeping (I think the LUC does this.)
- c. "Silvicultural operations" and "Aquacultural operations" are not allowed in either agricultural zone. It might make sense to allow tree nurseries and fish ponds, for example, with a Use Permit to protect groundwater and prevent noxious odors.
- d. Farm worker housing policy is clear for diked/ reclaimed former tidelands (**LU-6d2**) but not for other ag lands. Farm worker housing should count as "residential units" and "dwelling units" with standards identical to other housing or ADUs.

11. **2.3 IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES TABLE** – This is a bare-bones list, focusing on the near-term, with little except the "ongoing" items and Economic Development Strategic Plan 5-year updates that carries us beyond the first couple of years. It would be great to develop a much more substantial list of implementation actions to achieve the goals of the many policies in the Land Use element.

- a. It would help to include specific implementation measures for Policy LU-1b "Promotion of infill development and designated Infill Opportunity Zones," if only to identify a time frame for action.
- b. LU-4 Pedestrian-friendly activity centers: These measures are more policies themselves, than specific implementation actions, and will be only parts of the types of form-based standards that would be needed to implement them. Once we have experience with a form based code in the Gateway, would it make sense to include an implementation measure to consider developing appropriate standards for the other activity centers?
- c. LU-5 Business park plans: The city should seriously revisit the "business park" master plan idea for Little Lake, even though the City is committed to putting those 12 acres to some economic use. Developing a site plan for Little Lake: Yes. But let's reconsider calling it a "business park."
- d. LU-6 Planned Development Overlay: An inventory of :PD sites will be useful. (See comments above.) But beware of using this review to eliminate City development guidance and discretion as a gift to developers.
- e. LU-7 Commercial Visitor Serving Overlay – Is there a rationale for retaining the Visitor Serving zoning designation? It seems the proposed Land Use classification system has already assumed that the Commercial General classification is appropriate for Valley West, especially as so many of the motels there no longer serve "visitors."

12.