



Date: April 20, 2023
To: Arcata Planning Commission
CC: David Loya, Community Development Director
From: Oona Smith, Senior Regional Planner
Re: General Plan Update 2045: Draft Circulation Element and Draft Public Safety Element (Feb. & April 2023 draft)

Please accept these comments on the draft General Plan 2045. I offer these comments in consideration of the adopted objectives and policies of HCAOG's Regional Transportation Plan, *Variety in Rural Options of Mobility (VROOM) 2022-2024*. HCAOG looks forward to supporting and working with the City of Arcata, and all our regional partners and stakeholders, in achieving our shared goals for a healthy future.

Regarding the Draft Circulation Element (Source: *General Plan Update Discussion Guide – Commissioner Comments Compiled, And Bike Rack (current through 04/22/2023)*):

{HCAOG suggested edit in green and underlined} Commissioner's comment:

15) I propose the following changes to Policy T- 4c: The City shall employ ~~the following~~ a range of measures to reduce speeds and "calm" traffic throughout the city ~~in the various commercial areas, near schools, public recreation areas and in residential neighborhoods~~ to improve safety and comfort for those walking, rolling, biking, and taking transit, and to reduce the risks and severity of people getting harmed in car collisions.

Regarding the Draft Public Safety Element (April & Feb 2023 draft):

[page 6-7] PS-1a **City Emergency Response Plan.**

The City shall maintain a comprehensive response plan for emergencies, including seismic events, tsunamis, slope failures, floods, storms, fires, and materials spills or contamination. The plan will provide for timely and coordinated response to emergencies that threaten community residents, property, and vital services...

Some agencies, in their emergency planning documents post 9-11, also identify acts of war or terrorist attacks as potential emergencies. This could be added here if the City saw fit.

[pg. 6-7] PS-1b **Evacuation routes/transportation facilities.**

The last sentence in this policy could serve better as an implementation measure: "...An emergency access plan shall be developed for access to the east side of town (east of State Route 101) after a major seismic event."

[Page 6-21] **Policy PS-7 Crime Prevention And Response**

"Objective. Promote law enforcement agency and community group efforts to reduce crime and assure timely and effective responses to calls for service."

HCAOG has adopted statements and policies that commit to addressing structural racism and implementing anti-racist efforts (HCAOG Regional Transportation Plan (*Variety in Rural Options of Mobility 2022-2042*), "Renewing Our Communities" element). Consistent with that, we recommend that Policy PS-7 should include an objective and/or policy on anti-racism, supporting the stated goal

in the Public Safety introduction, “The goal of this Element is intended to facilitate safety from hazards, achieve racial and social equity, and enhance community preparedness and resilience.”

[page 6-23, 6-24] **Policy PS-8 Climate Adaptation and Resiliency**

HCAOG has an element entitled “Global Climate Crisis” in its Regional Transportation Plan. In that element, under the objective of Environmental Stewardship & Climate Protection, is this adopted policy:

POLICY CLIMATE-5. Traditional ecological knowledge: HCAOG acknowledges the value of indigenous sciences and knowledge and the need for indigenous perspectives in responding to the climate change crisis. HCAOG shall work to support indigenous-led climate adaptation approaches, and shall work collaboratively with tribes and tribal governments for mitigation, adaptation, and resilience to climate change.

Please consider developing policy that confirms the City’s support and interest in learning how traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) can inform and address the intent or objectives under Policy PS-8 Climate Adaptation and Resiliency. These three policies, among others, could benefit from direction from TEK:

- PS-8b Greenhouse Gas Reduction,
- PS-8e Food security and resilience, and
- PS-8f Wildfire Response and Preparedness.

The Public Safety element’s policies on climate mitigation and adaptation state that the City shall develop partnerships and networks with other agencies and partners (for example, PS-8c Regional Collaboration). This is an opportune place for the City to state its intent to partner and coordinate with tribal governments as well.