

Mads Odom

From: Alex Stillman
Sent: Friday, August 04, 2023 10:08 PM
To: David Loya
Subject: Fwd: Gateway District Form Based Code

Alex Stillman

iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Siddiq Kilkenny [REDACTED]
Date: August 4, 2023 at 9:49:01 PM PDT
To: Alex Stillman <astillman@cityofarcata.org>
Subject: Gateway District Form Based Code

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July 31,2023

Dear Alex.

I am a 57-year resident of Arcata. I have been active in the community as a school board member, City committee member, was Director of the Head Start Program for 30 Years and have been involved in many other community activities. I regularly read the Mad River Union and have followed the Gateway Plan progress closely.

You need to know that despite a few very loud people you have my full support to move forward with approval of the Gateway Form Based Code. The nay-sayers have thrown much mud on the wall about this plan in hopes that something will stick. And, as you know, there is also much misinformation and hyperbole being tossed about.

In almost every case the nay-sayer arguments do not hold water. They oppose the L street plan because it will ruin a tiny green area, when in fact the implementation of the plan will actually expand and improve the bicycle, pedestrian green area.

The say there is no budget for this. Of course, there is no budget because this is only a plan that may not come to full fruition for many years. It would be silly to build a city or fire department budget for the year 2040.

They say the bottomland will flood. Yes, perhaps 50% of Arcata including the waste treatment plant may flood. Arcata will have no alternative but to build levees around the town just as Amsterdam, which is 7 feet below sea level has done.

They say that the long proven economic theory of supply and demand regarding housing doesn't work. They cite a San Francisco study as an example. SF is one of the highest rent areas in the world and cannot be compared to Arcata.

They talk of the truck route as if L Street will become like I-5. The large trucks that come to Arcata deliver to the Co-op, Murphy's, Hensel's etc. If they do not drive on L Street, they would be on H Street. Would we have the trucks not deliver food to our grocery stores?

These are a brief sample of the misinformed and illogical arguments that are being made.

I talk to many Arcata people and some of the NIMBYs and BANANAs (Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Anytime) are old friends. But the overwhelming majority of Arcata citizens support your efforts in completing the general plan that includes providing housing and improving transportation in the Gateway area.

Petitions circulated at the Co-op include names of people who do not live in Arcata or even Humboldt County. These people are generally uninformed or misinformed. Do not fall prey to the nay-sayers' tactics.

As the plan moves forward the screams of the BANANAs will grow louder. They are a small group and do not represent the wishes of the majority.

Thank you for your service to our community.
It is a time-consuming and sometimes difficult job.

Sincerely,
Siddiq Steve Kilkenny



Mads Odom

From: Colin Fiske [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 07, 2023 12:48 PM
To: Scott Davies; Peter Lehman; Judith Mayer; Dan Tangney; Matthew Simmons; Joel Yodowitz; Abigail Strickland
Cc: David Loya
Subject: Comments for 8/8/23 Planning Commission Meeting

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Commissioners,

Thank you again for all of your work reviewing the Gateway Plan and zoning code and making them even more bike, pedestrian and transit friendly. We are particularly excited about your decision to eliminate parking mandates from the Gateway code, a long-needed reform which should also be extended to the rest of the city.

Please accept the following additional comments regarding some of the Gateway Plan "bike rack"/"other consideration" items which you will be discussing at your meeting tomorrow:

- **K & 11th Street redesigns.** Although there is disagreement over the eventual design of the L Street corridor, there has been widespread agreement about the need for redesigns of K and 11th Streets to allow for safer, more comfortable use by people walking, biking and rolling. Dan Burden's recent walk audit of these streets provides further impetus for change. Please move forward a recommendation to City Council for near-term redesigns of these two dangerous streets, which divide the Gateway Area and will stymie future walkability plans if left unaddressed.
- **K & 11th Street speed limits.** The Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) recommended lowering speed limits on K and 11th Streets from the current 25 mph down to 20 mph. (Dan Burden also recommended this.) Although this change may seem minor, a 5 mph difference at these speeds has a major impact on both the likelihood of a crash and the risk of death or serious injury resulting from a crash, particularly for pedestrians. A recent law, AB 43, provides new options for lowering speed limits, including providing for 20 mph limits in "business activity districts," a category which would likely apply to much of K and 11th Streets. There are lots of reasons to lower the speed limit here, and no good reason not to. Please recommend 20 mph speed limits on these streets.
- **Lane widths.** CRTP has advocated consistently for decreasing lane widths to 10 feet in street designs in order to calm traffic and provide more room for bike and pedestrian infrastructure. Dan Burden repeatedly emphasized the importance of 10 ft lanes as a design standard during his recent visit. 10 ft lanes are safe and are standard in many places, and there is just no basis for the idea that wider lanes are needed to carry higher volumes safely. Please decrease lane widths in street designs to 10 feet.
- **Parking meter revenues and their uses.** We again request that parking be metered in high-demand areas, including the Gateway Area, and that meter revenues be dedicated to transit improvements and/or bike and pedestrian infrastructure. Staff's responses to our previous comments have addressed only ticket revenue, not meter revenue, and are misleading. There are various legal ways that meter revenue can be directed to specific purposes, including establishment of a parking or improvement district. Additionally, even if meter (or ticket) revenue goes into the General Fund, the city can make a commitment to spend a commensurate amount on transit and/or bike and pedestrian improvements, just as it does with Measure G funding currently. It is also crucial to note that building and maintaining public parking is expensive, and offering it free to drivers is a major subsidy for driving. Metering is one step toward leveling the playing field for other modes of transportation and improving transportation equity.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

--

Colin Fiske (he/him)

Executive Director

Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities

www.transportationpriorities.org

Mads Odom

From: Fred [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 07, 2023 11:21 AM
To: Delo Freitas; David Loya
Subject: Draft Gateway Area Plan -- Version 3, July 11, 2023

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Hello, Delo and David --

A few items for your consideration.

1. Study Session on October 24.

On the web page cityofarcata.org/965/Arcata-Gateway-Area-Plan says:

The Council will have two study sessions on the Gateway Plan and the Gateway Code on August 22 and September 26, 2023.

At the June 27 PC meeting, Director Loya said: "Starting in August. August, September and October, you have joint study sessions scheduled for your second meeting in the month."

Could you please change the wording to show **three study sessions**, and add the **October 24** date to that sentence.

2. Put the Study Sessions on the Planning Commission Calendar

I've been corresponding with you (Delo) and Bridget Dory on this. Delo, can you take care of this?

It seems to me, based on conversations at the Planning Commission meetings, that:

- a. The regularly scheduled meetings for those 3 dates (starting at 5:30 PM) are now cancelled.
- b. The meetings scheduled on those same dates (starting at 6:00 PM) for the "Study Session" with the City Council can be added.

Please let me know when this has been taken care of -- for all 3 study sessions for both the City Council and the Planning Commission calendars.

3. Important: The 3rd Draft needs a disclaimer on the front cover, very similar to the disclaimer on the 2nd Draft.

The City's SIRP pages show that Version 3 (July 11, 2023) of the Draft Gateway Area Plan is now out.

This draft is dated **July 11**, 2023. The table of "Other Considerations" was reviewed for the first time (though not to completion) at the **July 25** Planning Commission meeting. Therefore, this draft cannot have included the Planning Commission's recommendations on that "Other Considerations" table -- because that event did not occur until after this draft came out.

Here's what was added onto the cover of the 2nd draft -- 6 days after it first was released.

"This Revised Draft incorporates Committee and public input received as of 9/30/22 that comports with the draft plan. Recommendations for changes to the Plan that are either in conflict with the draft or that have competing recommendations are included in a table that will be published separately. Recommendations for changes to the Plan that are either in conflict with the draft or that have competing recommendations are included in a table that will be published separately. Proposed changes in conflict with the draft have not been made at this stage because there are important discussions around several topics ongoing -- i.e. building height/massing and transportation circulation. Staff requires further input and direction from the Planning Commission on these topics before the policy related to them in the current draft is revised. The conclusion of these conversations and resulting direction from decision makers will produce in a subsequent revised draft."

[Taken from the 2nd draft cover. That last sentence may need to be revised.]

To be honest and in compliance, the 3rd Draft needs a disclaimer on the front cover, very similar to the disclaimer on the 2nd Draft. For the 4th draft, that disclaimer can be removed.

If you disagree with my assessment on the dates involved, please let me know. This draft is dated July 11. The Planning Commission discussed the "Other Considerations" table on July 25.

-- Fred Weis

Mads Odom

From: Fred [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, August 09, 2023 8:04 PM
To: Scott Davies; Dan Tangney; Judith Mayer; Matthew Simmons; Peter Lehman; Joel Yodowitz; Abigail Strickland; David Loya; Delo Freitas; Jennifer Dart
Subject: Notes from the Planning Commission meeting - August 8, 2023

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Notes from the Planning Commission meeting - August 8, 2023

To the Commissioners:

With bullet points so you can skim.

- **Welcome.** Welcome again to our newest Commissioner, Abby Strickland.
- **Your [Arcata1.com](https://arcata1.com) portal** is: arcata1.com/pc
I put links there that I believe are useful to you and the Council. The list is added to at the top, so you can scroll down and see what was of interest at times in the past also. Right now there are the links for the State density bonus laws, Dan Burden videos, the effects of smaller upper-floor step-backs, images of Woonerfs, and much more.

As a reminder: There is no sign-in on [Arcata1.com](https://arcata1.com) There is no tracking on who visits the website. I do not know who visits the website or what articles are looked at. It is completely anonymous in that way.

The [Arcata1.com](https://arcata1.com) website is organized by "chapters" -- based on functionality. The chapters are here -- and you can click on the links to go there directly:

- [Maps, Aerial Views, and 3D overall views](#)
- [The L Street Pathway and Linear Park](#)
- [Look & Feel and Planning in the Gateway Area](#)
with 3D images of buildings
- [Gateway Density & Feasibility Study](#)
- [Form-Based Code Overview](#)
- [Affordability and Home Ownership](#)
- [Parking in the Gateway Area](#)
- [The Creamery District](#)
- [Cal Poly Humboldt](#)
- [Parks and Open Space](#)
- Infrastructure: Fire Protection, Police, Wastewater Treatment (coming)
- [Gateway and City documents](#)
- Opinions and Viewpoints (coming)

- [Selected Letters and Articles from the Community](#)

- **Thank you to Commissioner Yodowitz** for his proposal that public comment be opened up at 8:23 PM. Clearly I was the only person present, although there could have been people on-line wanting to speak also. What I might have said wouldn't have taken longer than a minute or two. **We can note that his request just vanished** -- there was no discussion whatsoever on Commissioner Yodowitz's suggestion.
- Surprisingly to me, there was very little discussion on the upcoming City Council joint study session -- on what the Commission might want to bring up with the Council. Perhaps the Council will be determining what items are discussed.
- **K-L couplet video**. We look forward to the upcoming video on the couplet, to be out this Friday. My large hope is that it does not contain much (if any) of the bogus information that was in the GHD presentation on the K-L couplet from the August, 2022, joint study session, a year ago. We are aware that it is possible to make a safe, pedestrian- and bike-friendly road out of K Street, as the Commission has noted. If you want to read or watch last year's presentation (14 minutes), [see it here](#).
- **Density Bonus laws video**. There was a discussion on the very well-done 15-1/2 minute video from Director David Loya on the State Density Bonus Laws / Inclusionary Zoning / Community Benefits. **I regard this as a "must watch" video**. It is available on [Arcata1.com here](#), and is also highlighted on the Commission / Council portal page [arcata1.com/pc](#), along with many other timely and pertinent articles.

The article includes a **full transcription** of the 15-1/2 minutes, and is set up so you can read while you watch, or watch the video full-screen. If you are a faster reader, you can speed up the video to watch it in less time.

There is also a very good **3-page written summary** from David Loya on the State density bonus laws [here on Arcata1.com](#) and also linked on your portal page. It was in the March 14 and 27 agenda packets, and became kind of buried in those packets. It's important, and so I extracted it and saved it.

- In speaking on the state density program, inclusionary zoning, and the community benefits program last night, Director Loya said:

"It does impact the effect of the community benefits program. **I wouldn't go as far as to say we're not going to see community benefits from these projects**. But what I will say is that it does impact the effectiveness of those programs. And then it's hard to say which of the standards that we have baked into our Gateway Code would be subjected to waivers, and therefore, you know, we wouldn't see those standards as well. Whether it's a step-back or a setback, or, you know, whatever the architectural features are that we are requiring."

The conclusion in the Density Bonus laws video is:

"And our design standards and Community Benefits programs **are unlikely to be implemented** due to waivers and concessions."

I regard this as a crucial matter, which perhaps you will discuss further. If it indeed is the case that "our design standards and Community Benefits programs are unlikely to be implemented" then that's not a good situation.

- **Ten-foot lane widths.** The National Association of City Transportation Officials [has a page](https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/street-design-elements/lane-width/) on lane widths.
<https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/street-design-elements/lane-width/>

They state:

Lane widths of 10 feet are appropriate in urban areas and have a positive impact on a street's safety without impacting traffic operations. **For designated truck or transit routes, one travel lane of 11 feet may be used in each direction.**

Cities **may** choose to use **11-foot lanes on designated truck and bus routes** (one 11-foot lane per direction)

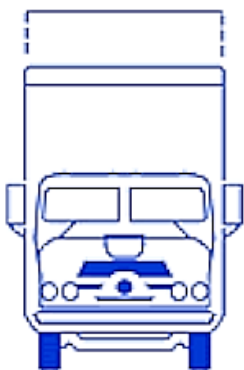
Previous research has shown various estimates of relationship between lane width and travel speed. One account estimated that **each additional foot of lane width related to a 2.9 mph increase in driver speed.**

K Street is designated by Arcata as a truck route. If the K-L Street couplet were to be selected -- and as you know I am very, very much opposed to this -- then by definition L Street would also be designated as a truck route, as it would be carrying the southbound traffic previously on K.

The NACTO webpage shows an image of a 48' road width (Arcata has 50' rights of way) composed of two 12' traffic lanes and two 12' parking lanes. Click the button and the image becomes: 11' bus-only lane, two 10' vehicle lanes, an 8' parking lane, a 3' buffer, and a 6' bike lane.

Please keep in mind that **a city bus is 8'-4" wide -- plus the mirrors.** A semi-truck is 8'-6" wide plus the mirrors. With the mirrors, a semi-truck can be up to 10 feet wide. Below, from the US Dept of Transportation:

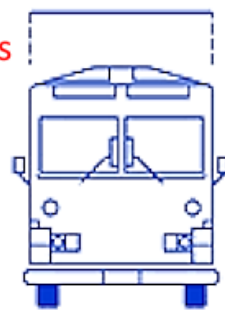
2.6 m (102.36 inches)



102" = 8 feet 6 inches

Excluding Mirrors
and Certain
Safety Devices

2.6 m (102.36 inches)



My recommendation would be for **10' lanes** on streets that are **not intended for bus transit traffic or regular truck traffic** -- and 11' lanes for those streets. Yes, we know that every foot of lane width (which equals 2 feet on a two-lane two-way road) counts... on K Street, in particular. On the 50' width of K Street, there could be an 11' northbound lane, an 11' southbound lane, and one 8' lane of parking. Total is 30' -- leaving 20 feet for, say, a two foot increase in sidewalk width on each side (4'), two 6' bike lanes (12') and two 2'

buffers with pylons (4'). Without the one parking lane, there is even more flexibility, of course -- but the one parking lane can certainly fit.

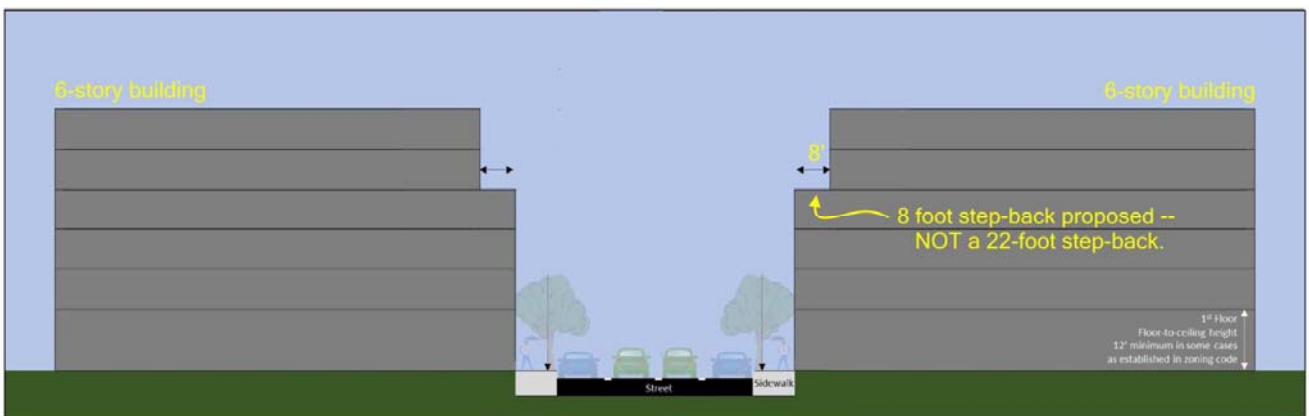
- **Bus stops.** When removing parking on both sides of K Street, there still needs to be pull-outs for bus stops. Street diagrams to this time have all been general and "high level" -- I say it's time to look at the real details on what the road actually is.
- **Dan Burden mentioned making a "chicane" for slowing traffic.** He suggested having parking on one side of the street for a half-block, and then on the other side of the street for the other half -- thus drivers could not travel in a straight line, and would have to steer a bit while travelling down the block.

In looking at K Street -- either in person or via a satellite view -- we can see that **the existing curb cut-outs** on K Street make for a parking layout on alternating sides for half-block sections quite feasible. **There are only 9 blocks that have to be dealt with** -- and these can be looked at on a block-by-block basis.

- **Size of the Arcata Plaza.** As noted, a city square block is a bit under 1-1/2 acres -- 1.46 acres. It is 250 feet square. That is the block only -- not the road. If we include the block plus the full width of road (50 feet), it is 300 feet square, or a bit over 2 acres -- 2.06 acres.

Thank you for upping the minimum size of the future park in the Barrell district from the too-small 0.5 acres to the 1.0 acre minimum. I still think it should be 1.5 acres, but a master plan is still far in the future, as was discussed.

- For a depiction of what an 8-foot-deep fifth-story stepback looks like on 6-story buildings, see [this article](#). I consider an 8-foot step-back to be woefully inadequate. We all are aware of the low angle of the sun here -- not just in the middle of Winter, but for half the year. An 8 foot stepback that's up at the height of Sorrel Place does nothing to help with the "canyon-like" feeling of tall buildings. And, by the way, the step-backs that are depicted in the diagrams shown in the draft Gateway Plans are **22 feet deep**.



Thank you.

-- Fred Weis