

City Council – Planning Commission Study Session -8-22-2023
Gateway Policy Review
Pre-Meeting Policy Ideas from City Council

Inclusionary Zoning

Inclusionary Zoning - Sarah

Questions:

By keeping inclusionary zoning requirement below the required percentage by State Density Bonus do you believe it will incentivize more development under the Community Benefits program?

Policy Recommendations:

I am in agreement with PC recommendation. Within community benefits program affordable, owner-occupied units provide the greatest number of points and are incentivized by the program.

Inclusionary Zoning - Meredith

I generally agree with the inclusionary zoning recommendation, but would like to ask some questions and get some clarification.

Inclusionary Zoning - Kimberley

- a) How are we going to deal with density bonuses vs. the Gateway community benefits program?
- b) I feel currently our percentages of 4% to 9% is exclusionary zoning rather than inclusionary zoning. A good start is 20%.
- c) GA-3d, GA-3e, GA-3f, GA-3g packet pg 62 (track change pg 60), I see nothing to guarantee or help home ownership opportunities.
- d) Attachment F- Table (Community benefits points table). I would like to address point assignments.
- e) Construction costs will go down. We don't want to paint ourselves into a corner and give everything away. We know the State laws are ever changing. State/Federal monies will be coming around the bend. Let's not get impatient and assume nobody will build.
 - i. GA-3k Incentivize affordable housing as a community amenity.
 - ii. 9.29.050.G -Change Inclusionary Zoning requirements to 4% and 9% for very low- and low-income income units- respectively. Yes, this definitely needs to change. We need to prioritize very low income and low-income housing, lest they become gentrified projects. Those who live here now, won't be able to

afford to live in the Gateway (artists, students, unhoused, 55 years or older, and mobility impaired).

K and L Couplet

K and L Couplet - Sarah

Questions:

Does the plan anticipate the development of Q street as part of the barrel district? It appears that Q street will go through to Samoa?

Has this circulation plan been looked at or discussed with Cal Poly Humboldt as they are growing their healthcare hub building on Samoa Blvd? With Caltrans who oversees Hwy 255?

Policy Recommendations:

People and place centric development. We need to start prioritize walking and biking in the downtown area over cars. More congestion on K street does not need to be alleviated by building more roads.

Development of L street should be limited to between 10th and 7th streets and it should be designed in the “woonerf” style with low speed limits, local traffic only, with cars yielding to pedestrians and bikes in the roadway. This woonerf could prioritize public art space in roadway or green belt/trail. In my conversations with Dan Burden he believes that one-way street couplets are a car centric solution to congestion. Solving congestion is thinking about the needs of cars above all else. (See street park Seattle or Wharf St. in Washington, DC) L Street should only be an implementation measure in the future if all other options or K street solutions have been explored and implemented.

K street needs to have parking reduced between Samoa and 11th to allow for a bike lane. The fact that K street doesn’t have a bike lane is unacceptable. I am requesting staff to provide options for making safety updates to K street including, removing parking to favor bike lanes, providing bulb outs, enhanced crosswalks especially in the school zone at 8th and K streets, reduced speed limits and speed feedback signs.

K and L Couplet - Meredith

The K/L Couplet is a part of the GAP that has been met with much conjecture, passion and conversation. I have been following the conversation closely, but really wanted to give the Planning Commission time to thoroughly discuss and come to their conclusions before I weighed in. Though I appreciate all the input from the community, in the end I came to the decision that I feel is best for the City and most accurately aligns with our values and desire

to have a walkable, safe community.

While revisiting the draft circulation element, several things jumped out at me, such as the removal of the couplet and removing parking on K- If we are going to have a complete streets City we have to be comfortable with not just making one street-L- accessible for all modalities, we have to continue that vision throughout the City when possible. In updating the GAP we have to prioritize shifting transportation from being car- centric to “one in which transit and active transportation are competitive, or superior, in terms of convenience, perceived and actual safety and accessibility for all residents.”

The backbone of my campaign was safer streets and responsible transportation, with an emphasis on public transportation and streets that are safe for all modalities. To that end, I would recommend not building any new roads, and maintaining L street as a linear park, and to continue to look for other alternatives to alleviate not only the congestion on K street but the barrier that K Street provides to safe access of the Creamery District and Gateway Area.

K and L Couple- Kimberley

Abandon K & L street couplet, in favor of addressing transportation safety issues on K street that can be mitigated now.

- a) I recommend investing in immediate safety improvements for K Street now.
 - i. Reduce speeds to 20 mph (as HCAOG and Planning Commissioners have recommended)
 - ii. Add additional crosswalks
 - iii. Increase frequency of crosswalk maintenance
 - iv. Designate crosswalk corners as no parking to increase visibility at intersections
 - vi. Add radar speed feedback signs
 - vii. Add multiple stop signs
 - viii. Install flashing crosswalk signals
 - ix. Begin discussion about removing sections of on-street parking spaces
 - x. Install speed humps, bumps or lumps
 - xi. Install curb extensions at intersections
 - xii. Implement the other recommendations from Dan Burden’s audit
- b) I recommend directing staff to develop a detailed scenario for L Street :
 - i. As a full-width (50 feet wide) Linear Park without routine car access (but WITH emergency access) AND providing car/truck access to land/sites west of L Street mainly from East-West streets
 - ii. Bring this scenario to the Planning Commission and Council for further discussion.
 - The City of Arcata Transportation Safety Committee has strongly recommended and has declared four times that they are against this K-L Street couplet.
 - Over 1000 residents have signed the petition to create a car-free linear park along L Street

- The Sierra Club Redwood Chapter North Group has endorsed the designation of the L Street Corridor as a Linear Park.
- iii. This corridor is already a beautiful “community benefit,” a treasured safe pathway and the perfect “opportunity zone” to become an even more amazing community treasure.

I could not have said this better so I will quote a community member:

“ This is a rare opportunity we have to potentially turn this corridor into something really special. That potential doesn’t currently exist anywhere else in Arcata. I feel it’s imperative we emphatically designate it as a people’s gathering place/destination that remains car-free. I’m not closing my eyes to the effect this would have on a proposed K St./L St. couplet, but I believe we can commit to this while also committing to doing something to ultimately improve K St. We may not have the best answers right now, right in front of us, but surely, we can work together as a community and even enlist additional experts, if necessary, in order to arrive at viable options that may not have been considered.”

- iv. Even if engineers were able to fit vehicles, parked vehicles, bicyclists, pedestrians, strollers, rollers, wheelchairs, walkers, etc into this space, the feel of the pathway would be significantly altered and the peace and tranquility would no longer exist.
- v. The Creamery District has worked on visioning since 2012, let’s not undo all of their hard work.

Building Height/Massing

Building Height/Massing - Sarah

I largely agree with the planning commission recommendation. I would be open to discussions about design review for larger buildings over 5 stories if that is a sticking point for other council members. On “gradients of agreement” for this topic I am in the 2-3 range. I am open to a larger discussion with councilmembers if they are uncomfortable with the PC rec.

Building Height/Massing - Meredith

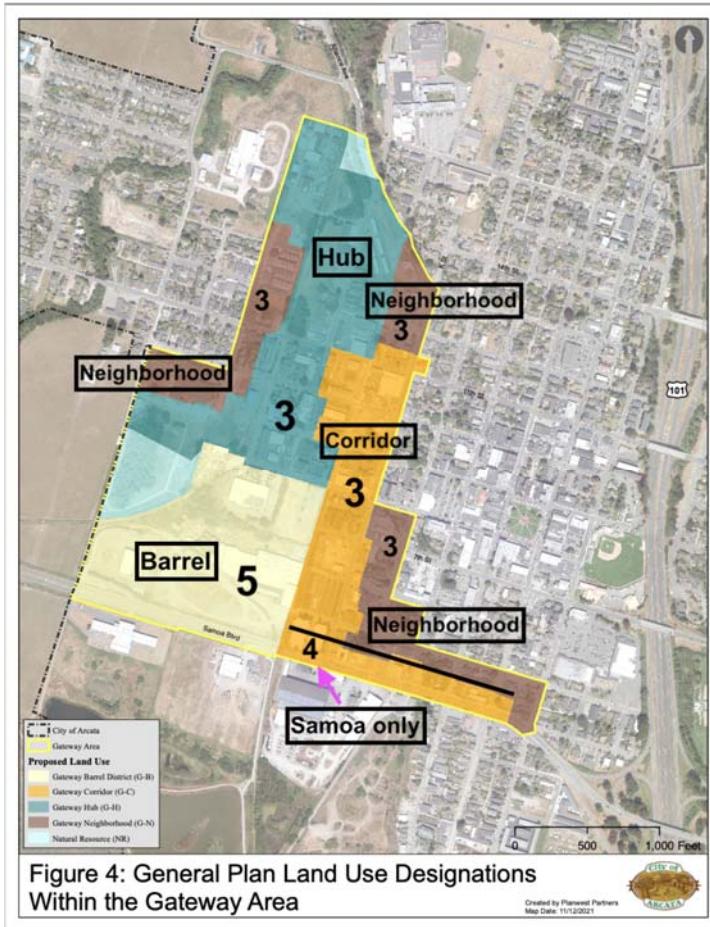
GB- 7 max- in the “implementation” section (pg 111) it states that the timeline for the Barrel District Master plan is still TBD. Will that affect how soon buildings will be able to be built?
 GH 6 max
 GC 5 max
 GN 4 max

What would we give up/what is preventing us from having stepbacks at the 4th story?

Density bonuses- If we say that the maximum height is 4 stories in the Gateway neighborhood, can builders, with the density bonus, then be able to go higher?

Building Height/Massing - Kimberley

- a) This is a big challenge without any visuals. We need 3D modeling examples to really make these decisions. Without the necessary tools this is what I came up with.
- b) Five (5) stories- but only in the Barrel District.
- c) I am separating the Corridor district into two building heights: four (4) stories along Samoa and three (3) in the rest of the Corridor.



- d) Require setbacks on all new developments. Without 3D solar shading models to reference, I propose anything over 2 stories will require a stepback (no more Sorrel Place buildings).
 - i. GA-9f. Solar Shading. Ensure new development minimizes solar shading to surrounding properties. This is a very important policy. I want to thank the energy committee for recommending this.
- e) Safe housing - I stand in solidarity with the Arcata Fire District (AFD). I am anxiously anticipating the Standard of Cover that is currently being developed with AFD, Cal Poly Humboldt (CPH), and the City.

- f) I propose nothing over 3 stories be next to any existing single family residential housing.
- g) Creating new housing is essential, but we must not lose sight that this in the end, is about people. Housing is a roof over one's head, but not necessarily a home. Cramming in people is not what we aspire to, but rather thoughtfully designed and people-centric housing.
- h) Let's link densities to the total number of bedrooms, rather than housing units, since 90 dwelling units with 3 bedrooms implies a much higher population than 90 dwelling units with one bedroom each.

Other Topics

Form Based Code and Community Engagement - Meredith

- Final thoughts: In our March council meeting, we agreed to pause community engagement meetings until the release of Form Based Codes. Now that these have been circulated and are being discussed by the Council and PlanCo, I think we need to have one more community engagement meeting and input before the Form Based Code comes to a Planning Commission and Council study session and a final decision is made.

Other discussion items: Kimberley

- a. Any ministerial approval should/must include a plan for an entire site or parcel, even if the actual development will be staged into the future. This isn't addressed anywhere in the draft, but after two recent projects for sites not in the Gateway (Westwood Garden Apartments and Greenview neighborhood), it does seem to be a really important point.
- b. In-person Community Open House
- c. 3D Modeling
- d. There are no schools, playgrounds, or parks (other than Wing Inflatables)