

Mads Odom

From: Lisa Pelletier [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 28, 2023 2:43 PM
To: Sarah Schaefer; Kimberley White; Meredith Matthews
Cc: Stacy Atkins-Salazar; Alex Stillman; Karen Diemer; David Loya
Subject: Thank you, and please hold another open house

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor Schaefer and Councilmembers White and Matthews,

I'd like to thank you for your decision in favor of creating a full width (car-free) linear park along L Street, and for eschewing the K-L couplet plan for good. I'm also very pleased to see that you will focus on improving safety along K Street, and making the L Street linear park a walkable and bikable route. It will be exciting to see how it develops, hopefully with input from the community.

I do think the issue of building heights in the Gateway deserves more discussion and community involvement. The last time you held an open house on this was in January 2022, the issue of building heights was a major concern for most of the people in attendance. I wasn't able to attend that meeting because we were in the middle of the pandemic, and I was more fearful then about catching COVID. So I'd like to see another opportunity for the community to address the issue of building heights, and I'm sure there are many others who feel similarly. It shouldn't be up to just 3 people to decide for the rest of us.

So I'm very pleased that you have indicated that you'd be willing to facilitate further community engagement by holding another open house or forum. I hope this will happen sooner than later, so our voices can be heard well in advance of any decisions being made.

I'll have more to say about the building heights, but I'll save that for later. For now you deserve high praise for helping to save our arts district with plans to improve the L Street Linear Park and make K Street safer. Kudos!! Thank you very much!!!

Lisa Pelletier
Arcata resident

Mads Odom

From: Alex Stillman
Sent: Monday, August 28, 2023 7:01 PM
To: Karen Diemer; Delo Freitas
Subject: Fwd: A letter in support of 7-story building heights.

Alex Stillman


Begin forwarded message:

From: Gen S 
Date: August 28, 2023 at 6:46:47 PM PDT
To: Sarah Schaefer <sschaefer@cityofarcata.org>, Meredith Matthews <mmatthews@cityofarcata.org>, Stacy Atkins-Salazar <satkinssalazar@cityofarcata.org>, Alex Stillman <astillman@cityofarcata.org>, Kimberley White <kwhite@cityofarcata.org>
Cc: Peter Lehman <plehman@cityofarcata.org>, Scott Davies <sdavies@cityofarcata.org>, Judith Mayer <jmayer@cityofarcata.org>, Abigail Strickland <astrickland@cityofarcata.org>, Dan Tangney <dtangney@cityofarcata.org>, Joel Yodowitz <jyodowitz@cityofarcata.org>, Matthew Simmons <msimmons@cityofarcata.org>, David Loya <dloya@cityofarcata.org>
Subject: A letter in support of 7-story building heights.

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Good Evening Arcata City Council,

My name is Genevieve Serna and I'm a resident and home owner here in the city of Arcata. Before, I begin I first want to thank all of the hard work and discussion you've participated in regarding the Gateway Plan these past few years. This is a big change for the city and your input isn't going unappreciated.

As the subject implies, I wanted to write-in expressing my support of the Planning Commission and staff's recommendation of building heights and massing laid out in the current plan.

I understand the fear that surrounds such a big potential change in the landscape of the city. I would be lying if I didn't, at one time, also let those fears inform my own opinions of that change. But after some discussion with some very good friends about what the city would lose if we didn't accept those changes, scared me more.

Without density, Arcata will not be able to meet its goals of walkable, bikeable streets.
Arcata won't be able to address its housing shortage in any meaningful way.
Arcata won't be able to stave off the suburban sprawl that consumes our precious green space.

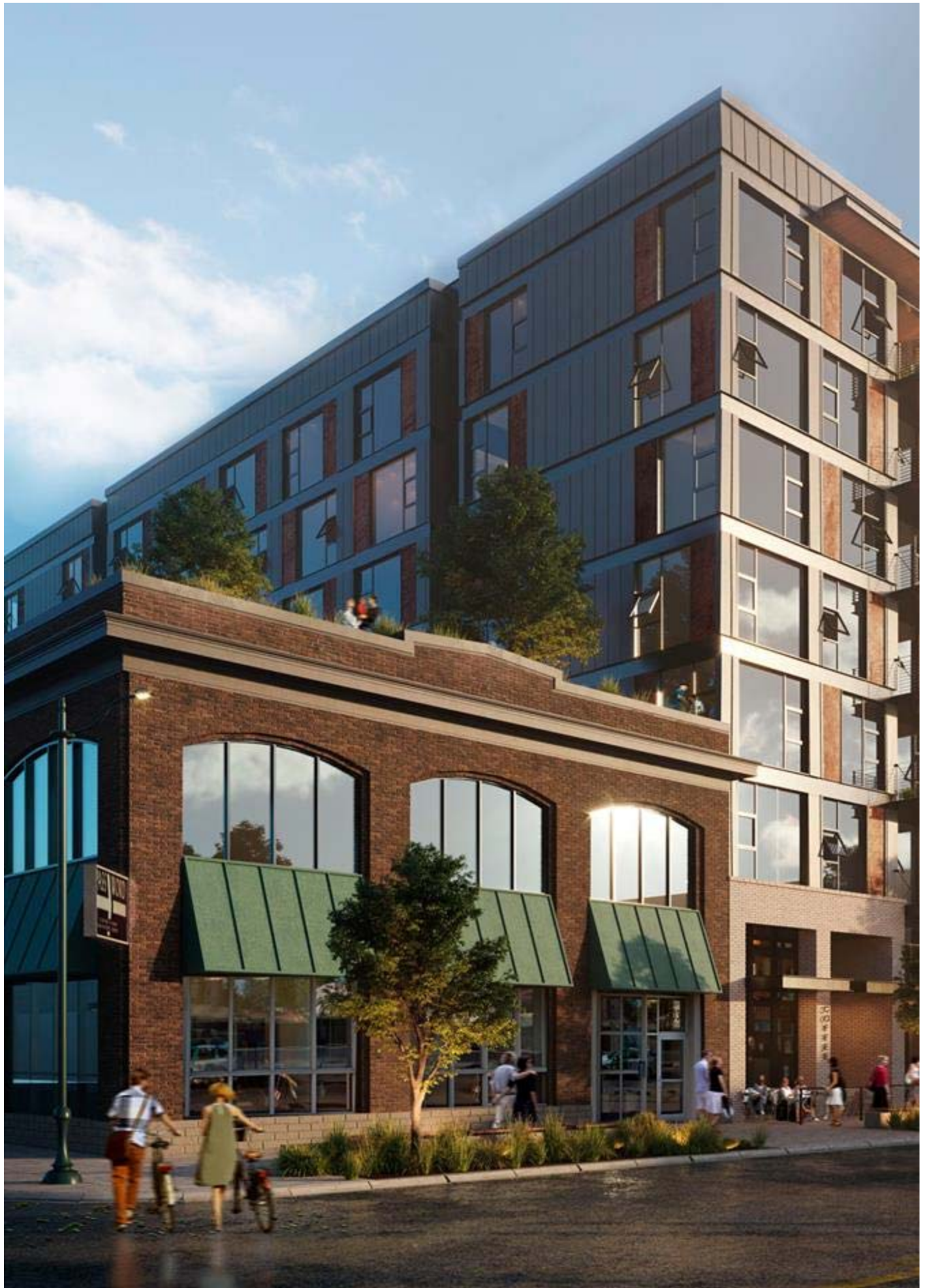
Whether we recognize it or not, Arcata has always been in a state of change and growth. It's different from the city it was 20 years ago and 20 years before that and so on. With this in mind I hope we also recognize that change and growth isn't inherently negative. That it won't dissolve what we love so much about our city.

Having grown up in the rural Central Valley, I've lived in small towns all my life and I can tell you first hand, the heart of Arcata has nothing to do with its small size or short buildings. But rather it's has everything to do with the people who come here to connect, to contribute and to live out the principles of equality, sustainability and community that Arcata encourages.

Before I wrap up I looked up some renderings of 7-story buildings and found this proposed construction (with no step-backs) next to two existing 2 & 3 story buildings in Spokane. While the rendered building is taller and newer than its neighbors, what's more important is what I don't see. The road beneath isn't shrouded in darkness. The people in front of it aren't eclipsed by its height. And the look of the apartments aren't reminiscent of the Section 8 housing of the 70's and 80's.

It's just a building. Pretty unremarkable and similar to ones I've seen before and ones I'll likely see in the future. What it does have is potential. Potential to house new Arcatans or the next essential North Country business. All good things that I hope for the city's future.

Please feel free to add this to your next meetings public comment and comments on your next Gateway Plan meeting.



Thanks again,
Genevieve E Serna



August 28, 2023

Dear City Council Members,

I attended the zoom meeting last week and was waiting online to weigh in. I was so happy so many were there to express their wishes for this very unique place we live in. We want to make Arcata even better than it is and your decision to listen to community's desires was refreshing. As you know, we often feel our concerns fall on deaf ears. I have heard every call made or person who writes a letter to a government official represents 2000 other voices who do not. My experience has shown that hardly anybody knows what's going on with the Gateway Plan and when they hear it they are quite dismayed.

I moved here from Chicago 23 years ago. Oh so happy to live in a small, clean, beautiful town with no traffic. No problem parking. No needed permits to park in residential areas. No parking tickets for expired meters. What a healthy place to live! I chose it for this reason! I have heard Sarah Schaefer express much dismay over people having to commute to work in Arcata. I shouldn't have to remind you that people commute up to an hour and more in HEAVY traffic every morning to get to and then from school and work. If we focused on putting in a transportation system (or coming era of electric cars) that made this commute environmentally friendly AND fast and easy, perhaps we could keep Arcata a LIVABLE city. Increasing the population to more than the area can sustain geographically and the risks involved (earthquakes, tsunamis, sea level rise, atmospheric rivers) is just going to turn this place into an overcrowded, uncomfortable place in which to live and people in the future will be turning to **FORTUNA** to live the kind of life we have here now. Why would we do that to this unique town?

I'll make the rest of my concerns as quickly as possible because I understand your time is valuable!

- 1) About making this a "walking" town. Please think of the aging population AND the young mothers with children. Let's not forget

that this is a pretty miserable place when it's 45 degrees and raining for how many months of the year. (And as for being a biking town...I suggest you get somebody out on Alliance and other main roads to get a pulse for how many people actually bike to town. I see more bikes in Chicago!) Again, biking in cold rain is not much fun.

- 2) I suggest getting an incredible transportation system worked out before allowing 1 car per unit as stated in your plan.
- 3) If you build, they will come. There's a big country out there. Lots of room. Better housing prices. If people are willing to move from SF or LA, they can just as well move out of state like so many others are. I'm sure you've read the article about CA population going down...not up as predicted. Things change quickly these days. One year the state mandates build housing, the next year a report comes out that people are leaving the state and the population is dropping.
- 4) If the city REALLY wanted to know how the people felt about the Gateway Plan they could have (and still could) send information to EVERY dwelling in the city to get a real pulse on how the community feels about how their town is going to change. That would have been TRUE transparency. Not every person has the time to read the news.

Thank you for the time it takes to read my concerns. And thank you for the work you do. I know this isn't an easy problem to solve. And, again, thank you so much for listening to the community regarding L Street!

Very Sincerely,

Lee Torrence