

## Mads Odom

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**From:** Cathy ChandlerKlein [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 08, 2023 1:48 PM  
**To:** Scott Davies; Peter Lehman; Judith Mayer; Dan Tangney; Matthew Simmons; Joel Yodowitz; Abigail Strickland; David Loya  
**Subject:** gateway

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Thank you all for hard work on this important issue.

I support Dan Burden's recommendations for lower speed limits (20 mph) and narrower car lanes. K and L are much debated. I am OK with K and L couplet but if alternative could work, probably better for the community. K could probably be redesigned in a way that leaves L a linear park.

I support metered parking with money going to support all non-car infrastructure.

Cathy Chandler-Klein, MFT  
Arcata resident

## Mads Odom

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**From:** Fred [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 24, 2023 9:19 PM  
**To:** Sarah Schaefer; Meredith Matthews; Kimberley White; Scott Davies; Dan Tangney; Judith Mayer; Matthew Simmons; Peter Lehman; Joel Yodowitz; Abigail Strickland; David Loya; Jennifer Dart; Delo Freitas; Karen Diemer  
**Subject:** New relevant articles / Considerations for height/massing/density, community benefits... more

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To: Councilmembers, Commissioners, Staff, City Manager

### 1. New relevant articles on [Arcata1.com](#)

- [Louis Sauer, architect: Low-rise dense housing in an urban setting](#)  
Estimated reading and viewing time: **5 minutes**. World-renowned architect Lous Sauer specialized in 3-story, high-density attached clustered townhouses in urban settings. I'm not proposing we'd want to copy the designs (they are very urban) -- only that they are worth looking at. Shown is a 1970 design that has a density of **45 units per acre**, with units of ~750 - 1,600 square feet, with every unit having a ~12 x 20 private space patio. For our needs, we'd rather go taller and have more public open space.
- [Please measure apartments by number of bedrooms, not number of units](#). Reading time: **2 minutes**. It's a more humane way of measuring how much housing we're creating.
- [The Gateway Code \(Form-Based Code\) – 2nd draft from Ben Noble, September 22, 2023](#). Reading time: **Lots**. This came out on Friday. Easily found and read here. Set up for larger screens or cell phones (though not recommended). The June 5, 2023, first draft is there also. Also included: [My first impressions of the 1st draft from Ben Noble](#), written the day after the first draft arrived. Reading time: 2 minutes.
- [Gateway Code form-based code – September 22, 2023 version — What's changed](#). Estimated reading time: **15-30 minutes**.  
A compilation of the changes from the June 5th 1st draft to this one. It would have been good to have a change log of what was added and changed. It wasn't supplied, so I made this. Are all the changes and suggestions that the Planning Commission discussed in this update? On first reading, I do not think that all are included.

### 2. The joint study session

We look forward to your joint study session on Tuesday. Here are some thoughts and considerations.

1. You are looking at height/massing/density. They are interrelated, yet are separate issues -- so **perhaps some time could be taken for each one** at some point. To some degree, there can be density without height. And as "upper income units, such as luxury penthouses" are brought up three times in the draft Gateway Area Plan, you can also have height without density. As an aside, the notion that a

developer can use the income from upper-story luxury apartments to help pay for the development of market-rate housing on the lower stories is a myth.

2. If it would be possible to **allow Commissioner Mayer to speak for 5 or 8 minutes on her views on massing**, we might see that it is improper massing that people fear, even though they think that height is the issue. It is fear of block-long buildings that shade the sidewalks, streets and nearby buildings. Massing issues can be attended to through a better-designed form-based code -- a better code than what we've got now.
3. On the matter of any direction or decision on height, I have this to say:
  1. Please do not spend too much time on this. It could be an endless discussion.
  2. As the Community Development Director has pointed out, **the proposed height recommendations of 7-6-5-4 could be used and sent out for the CEQA and Coastal Commission approval**. You or a future Council could (if it was wanted) **lower** the heights from those heights that were approved -- but they cannot be raised above what was submitted for CEQA and Coastal Commission approval.
  3. As a possibility, you could have 7-6-5-4 sent out for the approvals, and give assurance to the public that the Council and Commission will revisit the 7-story height of the Barrel district at the time that a Master Plan for the Barrel district is on the table. As another possibility, consider lowering the height of the Hub district (now at 6) to match that of the Corridor district (now at 5).
  4. The general thinking seems to be that if we can build higher, then there will be a greater number of apartment units, and the cost for each apartment unit will be lower. **The reality is that in going up above four stories, the cost for each story -- including stories one through four -- becomes greater**. I don't have a hard number -- perhaps 20%-25%-30% greater for all the stories. This is not just me speaking, or just Chris Dart of Danco speaking. There is a reason why in cities all over California and all over America, we see four-story apartments. (And three.) Where the land costs are dear, we see higher construction, of course. But that is not Arcata.

Please look into talking to builders about this. The Commission Chair is not open to the knowledge of just one person (Chris Dart) -- then, fine, seek out other builders. **Without knowing what builders are thinking, a discussion of height, tiers, community benefits, etc seems not of value**. We want a Code that attracts builders, while getting the density and design that we want.

5. **The Architect's Stakeholder Group** had one meeting with staff, on March 21, 2022. We don't know much from that meeting except **they recommended a six-story maximum**.

Why there has not been more engagement with architects and actual builders is something that I do not understand. In the Planning Commission's "Gateway Concerns and Solutions" conversation, which took three meetings of active discussion back in September-October 2022, there was talk of bringing in architects and builders -- but that impetus was abandoned. There was a lot from that Concerns and Solutions format that was abandoned.

4. You have **community benefits and inclusionary zoning** listed as priority topics. The actual Community Benefits program may be difficult to find on the City's website. (The latest version is on page 91 of the June, 13, 2023 Planning Commission agenda packet.) See it easily on Arcata1: [The Gateway Community Benefits program — Details of the “points” proposal](#). In the article, you can jump right to the points allocations.
5. As I've said, the points system needs a complete overhaul. Currently a developer gets 6 points for building student housing -- "Group living accommodations provide shared living quarters without separate kitchen or

bathroom facilities for each room or unit." Meanwhile, a 100% owner-occupied for-sale condominium would receive 4 points. **There is very little incentive for a developer to create owner-occupied housing.**

6. Also said before: Please allot some time to the discussion of the Community Development Director's expression of reality: **"And our design standards and Community Benefits programs are unlikely to be implemented due to waivers and concessions."** From his 15-minute video from July 28. The video and a full transcript for you to read are at [State Density Bonus Laws / Inclusionary Zoning / Community Benefits — David Loya presentation](#).

What I say is: **We have to make our Gateway Code and our Community Benefit Program more attractive.** As it is now, as the Community Development Director points out, a developer is not likely to use our Code and our programs.

7. As a specific but significant item: **Please consider removing hotels and motels as permissible uses in the Gateway Area Plan.** (Short-term occupancy.) It's listed in the GAP and the Code as an allowable use. For one thing, it's not the housing that we want. A parcel that has a hotel on it is a parcel that can't have apartments on it. And the parking is set at one car per hotel room -- that's a lot of space used up there too. A city block could have about a 65-unit hotel. In the Barrel district, a hotel could be larger.

Thank you. I hope you have a great discussion at your joint study session on Tuesday.  
Thanks for your work.

-- Fred Weis

URL Addresses:

<https://arcata1.com/louis-sauer-architect-low-rise-dense-housing-in-an-urban-setting/>  
<https://arcata1.com/please-measure-apartments-by-bedrooms-not-units/>  
<https://arcata1.com/the-gateway-code-form-based-code-2nd-draft-from-ben-noble-september-22-2023/>  
<https://arcata1.com/the-gateway-code-form-based-code-2nd-draft-from-ben-noble-september-22-2023/#first-impressions>  
<https://arcata1.com/gateway-code-sept-22-2023-version-whats-new/>  
<https://arcata1.com/community-benefits-details-points-proposal/>  
<https://arcata1.com/density-bonus-incl-zoning-comm-benefits-loya-presentation/>

## Mads Odom

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**From:** Fred [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 26, 2023 12:01 PM  
**To:** Sarah Schaefer; Meredith Matthews; Stacy Atkins-Salazar; Alex Stillman; Kimberley White; Scott Davies; Dan Tangney; Judith Mayer; Matthew Simmons; Peter Lehman; Joel Yodowitz; Abigail Strickland; Karen Diemer; David Loya; Delo Freitas; Jennifer Dart; Joe Mateer  
**Subject:** The September 25, 2023, Gateway Open House meeting – Synopsis and photos

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To: All Councilmembers, Planning Commissioners, Staff

On [Arcata1.com](http://Arcata1.com):

[The September 25, 2023, Gateway Open House meeting – Synopsis and photos](http://Arcata1.com/gateway-open-house-meeting-sept-25-2023/)  
( [arcata1.com/gateway-open-house-meeting-sept-25-2023/](http://Arcata1.com/gateway-open-house-meeting-sept-25-2023/) )

Estimated Reading time: 6 minutes

Last night's Gateway Open House meeting at the D Street Neighborhood Center was a minor success. Despite being held with just 2-1/2 weeks' notice and on a date that ignored a major religious holiday — and on a weekday late-afternoon, meaning that it was largely inaccessible to community members with regular jobs and people with a child or children — there was a good turnout. Over the 4 PM to 6 PM time of the two-hour drop-in meeting, an estimated 60 people attended.

**I strongly encourage the City to hold more of these open house meetings on a regular — monthly — continuous basis.** And additional open house meetings where people can engage in **group-wide open discussion**. Yes, it is considerable work to arrange for a meeting like this — we understand that. But the benefit to the community is enormous.

A large "thank you" to the Community Development Department staff for putting this meeting together. I say: **Let's have more community meetings.**

-- Fred Weis