

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Peter Lehman](#); [Scott Davies](#); [Abigail Strickland](#); [Millisa Smith](#); [Dan Tangney](#); [Joel Yodowitz](#); [Matthew Simmons](#); [David Loya](#)  
**Subject:** General Plan 2045, Gateway Area Plan, General Plan  
**Date:** Monday, May 13, 2024 10:36:32 PM

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Dear, Planning Commission Members, and David Loya

My scoping EIR statements, were emailed to you on March 6, 2022, and my first question was about noise, traffic, and air quality.

California Environmental Quality Act & Environmental Impact Report. The study is based on standard checklists covering topics such as air quality, traffic, and noise. The environmental effects of a project will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. The EIR shall also analyze any significant environmental effects the project might cause or risk exacerbating by bringing development and people into the area affected. The Noise Element is required by California cities and counties (Government Code Section 65302) It falls under the California General Plan Guidelines. Local governments must analyze and quantify noise levels, and the extent of noise exposure, through actual measurements. Under Government code section 65302(f) Noise Element Requirement primary arterial and major streets such H and 16<sup>th</sup> streets, G street, K street, to be monitored and noise research be done such as Average daily level of activity (traffic volume per days of the week, and seasonal variations. Distribution of activity over day and night time periods, day of the week, and seasonal variations. Average noise level emitted by the source.

Will the City of Arcata CEQA Environmental Impact Reporting be conducting a study on the Noise Element on the thousands of cars that will be increasing the air, noise pollution for residents on H and 16<sup>th</sup>, G, K streets and part of the Environmental Justice in local use planning (SB1000) ? The City of Arcata is not currently in compliance with the noise element. What actions are they going to take now and in the future to comply with the laws of the State of California? The Circulation system of traffic flow using the H street and G street for exiting and entering 101 North freeway is a disaster. The quality of life for people living on these busy streets in the future will be unbearable with the increase in air pollution and noise. This is a violation of SB1000 Environmental Justice in local planning.

- \* The City of Arcata has been in violation of the noise levels for the last two years.
- \* The noise study in this EIR is based on modeling of a 27 year old sound measurement. Page 47
- \* No new sound measurements were made for this EIR. Page 47
- \* Proliferation of modified muffler systems
- \* Even though it is not allowed by law, there is no enforcement. This is a major issue in Arcata that the State of California will have to enforce since the City of Arcata has failed in a systematic way.
- \* Diesel pickup trucks in far greater numbers louder and no testing of air quality for trucks and cars exhaust systems.
- \* Greater use of off-road or aggressive tread tires, and no enforcement of speeding trucks and cars. Mad Max Effect leading to deaths, injuries, and crushed cars in the City.
- \* Vehicles traveling faster on City roads. An increase in speed results in a large increase in noise from tires and hazardous brake dust in our air.
- \* Based on the Transportation Noise Contour Map in the draft EIR, the noise levels of large areas of Arcata already exceed the City's standard.
- \* Based on projected noise contours presented in Arcata General Plan 2020 as well as noise survey results, GHD estimates that existing road traffic noise levels within the City are generally in the range of 50dB to 65dB Ldn. At locations in close proximity to major roads, streets, and highways there are high noise levels exceeding 65dB Ldn. GHD and the City of Arcata failed to use the most basic sound meter equipment to study the current environment.
- \* Table 6 shows the maximum allowable transportation noise exposure (Appendix F, PDF page 1942,) Table 3-3 of the Arcata Municipal Code. This table shows that Noise Sensitive Land Use which includes Residential shall have a maximum sound level for outdoor activities of 60 dBA LDN.
- \* On March 16, 2022 I emailed the City of Arcata regarding noise violations.

Dear Mayor Atkins-Salazar

Thank you for your service on the City Council of Arcata. I am writing to you regarding some important laws and General Plan Elements that are law's of the State of California.

The State of California passed the Exhaust and Noise Bill in 2018. The law states Vehicle Code 21750 Every motor vehicle subject to registration shall at all times be equipped with an adequate muffler in constant operation and properly maintained to prevent any excessive or unusual noise, and no muffler or exhaust system shall be equipped with a cutout, bypass, or similar device. Vehicle Code 27151 No person shall modify the exhaust system of a motor vehicle in a manner which will amplify or increase the noise emitted by the motor of the vehicle so that the vehicle is not in compliance with the provisions of Section 27150.

The City of Arcata is not enforcing the Exhaust and Noise Law that was updated in 2019 to a fix it ticket. There are a large number of motor vehicles driving into the H street North-town Arcata heading down-town and then driving back up G Street where exhaust noise is over the legal limit. In early January 2022 I went to the Arcata Police with my concerns regarding Noise and the high speed of vehicles. They said they were not enforcing the Exhaust and Noise law, because of lack of resources and that I should talk to City Hall. I talked to the City of Arcata staff during the Farmers Market Day Frequently asked Questions for the Arcata Gateway Area Plan. The staff told me to write to the City Council of Arcata my concerns regarding the vehicle noise. I also reached out to David Loya by phone and email. I am very concerned by the lack of action with the City of Arcata regarding noise pollution. After air pollution, noise is the second biggest environmental factor causing health problems, increasing the risk of cardiovascular disorders, high blood pressure, sleep disruption, hearing loss, and heart attacks. Noise exposure has also been linked to cognitive impairment and behavioral issues in children. All people have the right to a reasonably quiet environment. City of Arcata 3.1.1 Noise Element. Within the Noise Element of the General Plan, it specifies an exterior noise standard of 60 dB CNEL and an interior noise standard of 45 dB CNEL for multi-family residential. The Secretary of Interior's Standards for the treatment of Historic Properties, Preserving windows, and the relation to noise/environment for Historic Neighborhoods and houses, circulation systems, such as roads and streets.

The Gateway Area Plan must do an EIR on the noise exposure from the addition of thousands of more vehicles using the major streets H & 16<sup>th</sup> streets, G street, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets, K street and Alliance Road. Government section 65302(f) Noise Element Requirement primary arterial and major streets that falls under the California Environmental Quality Act and the California General Plan Guidelines.

\* March 21, 2022 response to my March 16, 2022 letter to Mayor Stacy Atkins-Salazar

to me, Karen, Brian



Dear Gregory,

Thank you for taking the time to express your concerns over the loud exhaust pipes roaming around town. I am extremely sensitive to noise and every time one of those cars is in my vicinity it makes my heart race and is very upsetting to me. I completely understand where you are coming from. Unfortunately, we are very understaffed in our police department and so these types of issues are not prioritized (which I'm sure you can understand). As we rebuild APD and get back to fully staffed, we might see progress in these types of situations. I have included Chief Ahearn in on this email in case I have misspoken.

Regarding the Gateway Area Plan, I am currently awaiting a decision from the FPPC (Fair Political Practices Commission) to see if I am able to participate in decision making regarding that project. I own a home and business adjacent to the proposed area and may have a conflict of interest.

Thank you again for reaching out with your concerns. I'm sorry that I don't have any immediate answers for you. As I said before, I am with you 100% on the awful mufflers.

Sincerely,

Stacy Atkins-Salazar

Mayor, City of Arcata

707-496-4779

\* Two years later after this email, the Arcata police department has been fully staffed and there has been no enforcement of the noise standards. I have lost track of how many times I have spoken and emailed the City Council, City Manager, and leaders in the last two years. The City of Arcata is a complete failure to the people of Arcata and the State of California regarding the Noise

Element. GHD needs to perform a Noise Study for 2024 by actually doing a long term study with sound meter equipment on the streets of Arcata. The draft EIR is relying on projections of sound levels made by modeling actual sound measurements that were done in 1997, 27 years ago. The modeling is based on theory speculation, assumptions and not facts.

Arcata Fire District/ Wastewater Treatment Facility

April 9, 2024

Mayor Meredith Matthews  
City of Arcata  
736 F Street  
Arcata CA 955271

Dear Mayor Matthews,

We, the Board of Directors for the Arcata Fire Protection District (AFPD), **are writing to emphasize the critical importance of incorporating adequate fire protection measures into the final drafting of Arcata's 2045 General Plan**, particularly concerning Zoning and form code permitting for residential and mixed-use buildings taller than 40ft in designated opportunity zones such as the Gate Way Area Plan.

Our recommendation is rooted in the fundamental need **to ensure the safety of building occupants** and the capacity of our fire suppression staff **to effectively respond to emergencies**. Specifically, we propose that the permitting of such buildings be conditioned upon the establishment of sufficient fire protection features, systems, and emergency service capacity as outlined in existing fire codes. These include but are not limited to considerations such as fire department access, roadway width and height, water supply for fire suppression, automatic fire sprinkler systems, and emphasis on occupant egress, especially given our current staffing limitations.

We have previously communicated our concerns to the City in various forums, including letters, presentations, and meetings with key stakeholders. It is our shared responsibility to ensure that AFPD and our mutual aid partners are adequately equipped and trained to respond to fires and emergencies in buildings as anticipated in the General Plan.

**To address these concerns, the City, the District, and Cal Poly Humboldt are collaborating on a Standards of Coverage analysis conducted by an independent contractor.** This analysis aims to provide guidance on expanded staffing, facilities, equipment, and training requirements, along with associated costs. We anticipate this analysis to be completed by late 2024, at which point we can work towards achieving consensus on the necessary measures to fulfill the City's obligations to its residents.

**However, until funding is established, and district expansion is underway, we believe it would be imprudent to approve building permits and begin occupancy in the envisioned residential buildings.** The AFPD Board anticipates substantial increases in staffing, new or expanded stations, equipment, and training facilities to adequately meet the needs of our growing community.

We urge the City Council to consider our recommendation seriously and **work collaboratively towards implementing necessary fire protection measures in the final drafting of the 2045 General Plan.**

Sincerely,

Eric Loudenslager  
Board President  
Arcata Fire District

cc: Arcata City Council

Coastal Commission approval of Arcata's Wastewater Treatment Facility. Where will the City move the plant in the future?

At their September 8, 2022, meeting, the California Coastal Commission gave their approval to Arcata's plan to update and maintain our wastewater treatment facility. The permit allows operation of our sewage plant for a period of 30 years, through 2052 — with specific conditions.

And the conditions for continued operation are very clear.

- The City of Arcata has five years to come up with a plan to “identify a suite of strategies necessary **for protecting, relocating, or otherwise adapting [the Wastewater Treatment Facility]** as necessary to maintain safety from flooding and other coastal hazards in order **to minimize risk and assure stability**

and structural integrity and to ensure protection of coastal resources **over the longterm**

It is pretty well generally acknowledged that sea level rise will continue, and that all of the bay-front where the Wastewater Treatment Facility is located will certainly be under water. **So this plan, due in five years, is not really about protecting or adapting. The plan must be about relocation.** Every two years, Arcata will submit a report about water elevations — monthly figures, temporary flooding, King Tides, etc. — as well as to report on how the City is progressing with regard to “adaptation planning” as specified in Condition 4 (above). Because, in essence, what the Coastal Commission is saying is that the City has to figure out where the plant will be moved to — and has to figure this out within the next five years. Condition 4 clearly states that the City must “identify a suite of strategies necessary for protecting, relocating, or otherwise adapting” the Wastewater Treatment Facility to accommodate conditions “over the longterm (at least through 2100).” Well, to protect the plant through 2100, the dikes might have to be feet higher than what they are now. Is that an engineering possibility? **Or does Condition 4 tell us that we need to be looking at re-locating our sewage treatment plant — and that we need to figure out within the next five years just where it’s going to be.**

Here in Humboldt we have a greater degree of expected sea level rise than anywhere on the west coast of North America. Based on historical data, it is projected to be about 50% to double that of other regions. Why? Because of tectonic plate movement, our base-level land is subsidizing — getting lower. For every inch or foot of sea level rise, the land here is losing elevation at more or less the Design of Phase II of the AWTF upgrade project is currently on hold at the request of the State Water Board. **The State Water Board has requested that the City explore additional opportunities for long-range planning** for the AWTF and has provided technical assistance for a feasibility study which will examine a) **potential for alternative/additional siting for wastewater treatment facilities**, b) continued use of the existing treatment facility location beyond the Phase I design life, and c) capacity for future growth same rate, thus doubling the height (relative to the land) of the sea level rise.

1- 20-0711 (City of Arcata) 12 4. Coastal Hazards Adaptation and Implementation Plan. The permittee shall submit for review and approval by the Coastal Commission Executive Director a Coastal Hazards Adaptation and Implementation Plan (CHAIP) by September 8 , 2027 or at the same time as any future application for additional upgrades, including levee modifications or expansion, to the Arcata Wastewater Treatment Facility, whichever comes first (though the date may be extended for good cause if the City is making demonstrable progress). The CHAIP shall identify a suite of strategies necessary for protecting, relocating, or otherwise adapting the development authorized by CDP 1- 20-0711 as necessary to maintain safety from flooding and other coastal hazards in order to minimize risk and assure stability and structural integrity and to ensure protection of coastal resources over the long-term (at least through 2100). The CHAIP shall reflect the ongoing long-term sea level rise adaptation planning efforts by the City of Arcata, any relevant long-term planning and regional coordination with Humboldt County and the City of Eureka, and outreach and coordination with other relevant agencies, tribes, and stakeholders including but not limited to the State and Regional Water Boards. The CHAIP shall include/address the following: A. An analysis of current and future coastal hazards at the Arcata Wastewater Treatment Facility, including flood and erosion hazards caused by tidal inundation, extreme tides and storms, overtopping of dikes/levees, and elevated groundwater and/or reduced or inadequate drainage, which takes into account local sea level rise through at least 2100, considering medium-high risk aversion and extreme risk aversion scenarios, and based on the best available science at the time of plan preparation and any data gathered as part of the monitoring required by Special Condition 3. B. An evaluation of alternatives to the current wastewater treatment system to address any coastal hazard vulnerabilities identified, including but not limited to alternatives involving accommodation strategies (e.g., elevation of facility components), protection measures (dikes, levees, living shorelines, or other natural or engineered features), and retreat and relocation strategies (including retreat and relocation of all or portions of the development, or development of a new system for wastewater treatment including within the context of a regional approach). The evaluation shall describe the specific design elements and adaptation measures, including how different strategies may be used in combination and over time, to ensure the integrity and functionality of the wastewater system and protection of coastal resources. The information concerning these alternatives must be sufficiently detailed to enable the Coastal Commission to evaluate the feasibility of each alternative for addressing consistency with the Coastal Act, including whether the alternatives minimize risks of geologic and flood hazards and ensure protection of coastal resources. The evaluation shall include a feasibility analysis of the alternatives that assesses and considers all potential constraints, including geotechnical and engineering constraints, relevant Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) requirements (including but not limited to the State Bays and Estuaries Policy pursuant to Resolution 74-

43), project costs, and potential funding options. The identified adaptation strategies and overall long-term approach shall be the least-environmentally damaging feasible alternative, and a higher priority shall be given to strategies that avoid the use of hard armoring. C. A description of any anticipated additional development at the facility and surrounding site, such as but not limited to levee repair or expansion or other facility upgrades necessary for meeting water quality protection requirements which have been previously envisioned (e.g., as part of Phase II) but which are not part of the current application. The description shall provide detail on the need for the development, including with respect to relevant RWQCB requirements, and an explanation as to how such development will fit into the overall, long-term adaptation approach. To the extent feasible, this description shall include a cost-benefit analysis that addresses the costs associated with continued facility upgrades, including any protection measures or other strategies necessary to address flooding at the site, in comparison to retreat and relocation alternatives. D. A timetable for implementation of the CHAIP (and related proposed development as identified in part (C)) based on projections of SLR

and anticipated impacts from coastal hazards. If adaptation strategies would be implemented in response to defined triggers, such as amounts of sea level rise and/or impacts to the AWTF, the timetable should identify the time horizons over which such triggers are anticipated to occur. The timetable shall take into consideration expected timeframes for any necessary land acquisition, planning, permitting, design, and construction.<sup>5</sup> Submittal and Implementation of Final Approved Plans. A. NOT LESS THAN 30 DAYS PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT AUTHORIZED BY CDP 1-20-0711, the Permittee shall submit, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, a set of final construction plans that are consistent with all special conditions of this coastal development permit and that substantially conform with the 90% plans and associated specifications prepared by Carollo in association with GHD Inc. and dated October 2020 (Exhibit 5), except as further specified in Special Condition 15 below. B. Geotechnical Recommendations. All recommendations contained in the Updated Draft Geotechnical Report revised July 22, 2021 and prepared by Crawford & Associates, Inc. shall be adhered to including recommendations for site preparation, structural fills, compaction standards, seismic design parameters, foundation design, pavement subgrade preparation, drainage, and all other recommendations. The permittee shall submit evidence that an appropriate licensed professional (Certified Engineering Geologist or Geotechnical Engineer) has reviewed and approved all final design and construction plans, including foundations, grading and drainage plans and

1- 20-0711 ( City of Arcata) 11 maintenance or expansion to protect the existing AWTF from coastal hazards risks). At least six months prior to the expiration of the authorization period, the Permittee or its successors shall submit to the Commission an application for a CDP amendment to either (a) extend the length of time all or portions of the approved development is authorized and modify its design as needed to ensure consistency with the Coastal Act, or (b) relocate or remove all or portions of the AWTF and restore the affected areas to pre-development conditions or better (for the embedded pier foundations, which will be infeasible to remove in their entirety, the application must include provisions for removal and backfilling of the embedded pier foundations at least three (3) feet below grade). If a complete application is filed before the end of the authorization period, the authorization period shall be automatically extended until the time the Commission acts on the application. The required amendment application shall conform to the Commission's permit filing regulations at the time and shall reflect the approach(es) identified in the Coastal Hazards Adaptation and Implementation Plan (see Special Condition 4), as well as any necessary updates to reflect the site conditions and regional sea level rise planning approaches at the time of the amendment. 3. Coastal Hazards Monitoring and Adaptation Reporting. The permittee shall submit biennial (every two years) monitoring and adaptation progress reports to the Executive Director by September 1 of every other year, starting in 2024 and continuing throughout the duration of the CDP as provided in Special Condition 2. The biennial reports shall document the following: A. Water elevation data, including annual and mean monthly maximum elevations for each year over the biennial reporting period, and any long-term changes in these values and in mean sea level throughout the duration of the CDP; B. A description of any temporary or ongoing flood, erosion, or other coastal hazards impacts to the site or facility during the reporting period, including a description of the conditions causing impacts (e.g., King Tides, storms, overtopping and/or breaching of dikes, groundwater and/or drainage issues, or any combinations of the same); C. A description of any actions taken to address temporary flooding or other damages/impacts caused by coastal hazards during the reporting period as well as a description of how such actions are consistent with the overall adaptation planning approach identified in Special Condition 4 (once completed); and D. A description of any adaptation planning and implementation activities undertaken in line with the approach identified in the final Coastal Hazards Adaptation and Implementation Plan required by Special Condition 4 and any actions which are anticipated to be undertaken prior to the next reporting deadline.

Sea Level Rise, Tsunami, Earthquakes, Rising Groundwater

Will the City of Arcata be conducting a study of the wastewater discharge of 3,500 units into the Arcata Bay? Do we know what the current wastewater effects on the environment in Arcata Bay? What will the costs of the existing users be though fees such as infrastructure, fire, police, water and wastewater services? How will the City of Arcata be conducting a storm water prevention program when the streets are covered with parked cars in the Gateway Area Plan. This is currently a problem when a street sweeper cannot clean the streets because of parked cars. Tons of trash in the streets are washed down the storm drains each year into wetlands, rivers, and the ocean. Does the City of Arcata have enough off street parking for 3,500 units in the Gateway Area Plan and parking for economic activity in the area? The majority of people living in the Gateway area will need a car to drive to a job somewhere in Humboldt. Why did the City of Arcata Gateway Plan not address having a large section of the area for future jobs/industry?

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Tsunami Hazard Mapping shows most of the Arcata Gateway Area Plan in a Tsunami Zone. Why would the City of Arcata risk the lives of people constructing 3,500 new residential units in a Tsunami Zone?

The Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami resulted in over 18,000 dead on March 11, 2011. The magnitude 9.1 earthquake struck off the north coast of Honshu on the Japan Trench. A tsunami wave 133 feet in height that was generated by the earthquake

arrived at the coast within 30 minutes, topping seawalls and disabling three nuclear reactors within days. In the Sendi area the waves traveled at 435 mph and up to 6 miles inland. Initially, the earthquake caused the sinking of part of Honshu's pacific coast up to 3 feet. In north eastern Japan a 250 mile stretch of coastline dropped vertically by 2 ft allowing the tsunami to travel farther and faster onto land. Housing that was built in area's that were safe, ended up in the tsunami zone. Soil liquefaction was evident in areas of reclaimed land.

Northern California coast is the most earthquake and tsunami prone area of the continental United States.

Is the City of Arcata using the research and data from the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami to be used in the data for the Gateway Area Project Risk/Analysis?

\* Impact AES-a: Impact on the scenic views

Would adoption and implementation of the General Plan 2045 have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? Page 3.2-66.6-21 (PDF) page88)

The answer is yes. The new buildings would have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista

\* . The Coastal Act Laws and Regulation Chapter 3-Coastal Resources Planning and Management Policies Article 6 30251 states The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas. New development in highly scenic areas such as those designated in the California Coastline Preservation and Recreation Plan prepared by the Department of Parks and Recreation and by local government shall be subordinate to the character of its setting.

*(Added by Stats. 1976, Ch. 1330.)*

\**Rising Groundwater* Low-lying inland areas could flood from below by emergent groundwater long before coastal flood waters overtop the shoreline. Presentation by Aldaron Laird March 28th, 2023 to pc and cc. A sea level rise amount of just one or two feet – which is predicted to occur within the timeframe of this General Plan 2045 period, when coupled with a King tide / storm event, is likely to affect sections of Arcata that are considered appropriate for development.

\* Liquefaction: The areas most at risk of liquefaction are generally located along the Bay shoreline and Bay tributaries in former floodplains, marshplains, wetlands, mudflats, and open water areas that were filled for development. These same areas are at risk of rising groundwater, and as the groundwater table rises, the liquefaction risk is likely to increase.

\* What Sea Level Rise, tectonics mean for North Coast, by Lori Dengler

PUBLISHED: October 8, 2022 at 12:14 p.m. | UPDATED: October 8, 2022 at 12:35 p.m.

Sea level is rising more rapidly in the Humboldt Bay region than in any other place on the US West Coast. Cal Poly Humboldt's Center for Sea Level Rise has been looking at the implications and last Monday, the San Francisco Chronicle gave us feature treatment.

Sea level rise became news in the 1970s. Studies were published and in 1988 the UN formed the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was formed. Since 1993, satellite altimetry has provided a global picture of the rising oceans. The current estimate of average sea level rise is 3.4 millimeters (.13 inches) per year. There is no gray area here, it is a measured fact.

But the ocean isn't a bathtub, and the rise is not uniform, rising more rapidly in some areas and dropping in others. How water level changes locally is a function of many variables. The three most important are thermal expansion, the supply of water, and deformation of the sea floor.

Water expands as it warms. A warmer ocean raises sea level with no additional water. Expansion rates are complex and depend on salinity, temperature, and pressure. There are seasonal changes and longer ones. Thermal expansion in strong El Niño years can raise the background tide levels by nearly a foot.

Added water comes from three main sources: valley glaciers, the Greenland ice sheet, and the Antarctic ice sheet. I called them the three dominos when I taught about sea level rise. Alas, the valley glaciers are nearly gone and much of their contribution is already in the ocean. Melting of the Greenland ice sheet is well underway and all eyes are now on Antarctica. It will be the primary driver of sea level rise over the next century.

Little attention is paid to seafloor depth. It is not a constant. The weight of sediment, ice, or lava flows can depress it; removing weight causes it to rise. Tectonic stresses squeeze or stretch the crust.

Ice sheet melting and the warming climate are my top concerns when it comes to the future of human habitability but the response of sea levels to tectonics is closer to my area of expertise. I am fascinated by how sea levels give a picture of the forces at work

beneath our feet.

Sometimes those forces work quickly. The Great Alaska earthquake in 1964 lowered some areas by as much as 8 feet. Other locations like Montague Island rose up 30 feet. But most tectonic changes are very slow, occurring over decades and centuries as strain accumulates in between major earthquakes.

Tide gauges provide a record of those subtle changes. By averaging daily water levels, regional trends going back a half-century or longer emerge. NOAA maintains fifteen tide gauges in California. South of Cape Mendocino, they all show a rising sea at rates between 1 and 2.5 mm/year. The North Spit tide gauge south of Fairhaven on the Samoa Peninsula has a rate about twice as high, just below 5 mm/year. And to further complicate the story, Crescent City, 65 miles north of Humboldt Bay, is the only site on the California coast where sea level is falling. The land is rising more rapidly than the water.

Something very unusual is going on along the Northern California coast. Ocean temperatures and water supply are essentially the same yet over a space of 65 miles, we have the most rapidly dropping and the highest uplifting coasts in the State. The culprit has to be tectonics.

USGS scientist George Plafker was the first to note an unusual pattern of land level changes after the 1964 Alaska earthquake. He spent more than a year documenting areas that had uplifted and those that had dropped and proposed what today we know of as the megathrust earthquake cycle. In between great earthquakes, the slow forces of the subducting plate pull down the land near the edge of the plate offshore and squeeze the area further away causing a bulge.

The Cascadia subduction zone is similar to the geologic setting that produced the Alaska earthquake. The edge roughly coincides with the continental shelf. It is almost at the coast at Cape Mendocino and is further and further offshore heading north into Oregon and Washington. The simple megathrust model means we would expect that areas in Humboldt and Del Norte County where the edge is closer to be pulled down during interseismic times.

Tide gauges show a more complex story. The relative sea-level drop in Crescent City and Port Orford in southern Oregon point to a rising coast. But what is going on in Humboldt Bay?

Ah, the complexities of subduction zones. They aren't a single fault and Humboldt County is one of the few places on the planet where we can see the complexity on land. We are perched on the edge of the North American plate and the Gorda plate is being pulled beneath us. The pull may be slow, but it is relentless causing the edge to crumple, fold and, in some cases, break.

The 60-mile zone from the edge to the coast, the accretionary fold and thrust belt. The crumpling created Humboldt Bay and the lagoons. Secondary faults such as the Little Salmon and the Mad River fault zone cut across the coastal area. All of these features are also deforming at slow rates.

Could we get a better picture of Humboldt Bay if we had more tide gauges? Yes, and fortunately a group from Cascadia Geosciences led by Jason Patton has done this. There were temporary tide gauges in the past at a number of Bay locations and this team was able to track down four of them and compare their rates to the NOAA gauge. No surprise — their data show differences in rates around the Bay and one area is dropping even more quickly. Their paper is coming out soon and I will revisit the story then.

The implication for Humboldt is enormous. It will require moving wastewater treatment plants and moving/protecting roads and highways. Proposed developments like Arcata's Gateway project will find themselves in the tsunami hazard zone. And of course, these rates won't continue indefinitely. They are signs of accumulating strain on faults that will eventually rupture. When that happens, the Bay will look substantially different.

Note: \* NOAA maintains a global database of relative sea level rise as measured by tide gauges at <https://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/sltrends/>, the Chronicle article is at <https://www.sfchronicle.com/climate/article/california-sea-level-rise-17478689.php>.

*Lori Dengler is an emeritus professor of geology at Cal Poly Humboldt, an expert in tsunami and earthquake hazards. Questions or comments about this column, or want a free copy of the preparedness magazine "Living on Shaky Ground"? Leave a message at 707-826-6019 or email [kamome@humboldt.edu](mailto:kamome@humboldt.edu).*

Upon the next revision of a local hazard mitigation plan, adopted in accordance with the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-390), on or after January 1, 2017, or, if a local jurisdiction has not adopted a local hazard mitigation plan, beginning on or before January 1, 2022, the safety element shall be reviewed and updated as necessary to address climate adaptation and resiliency strategies applicable to the city or county. This review shall consider advice provided in the Office of Planning and Research's General Plan Guidelines and shall include all of the following:

\* A vulnerability assessment that identifies the risks that climate change poses to the local jurisdiction and the geographic areas at risk from climate change impacts, including, but not limited to, an assessment of how climate change may affect the risks addressed to the Arcata Wastewater Treatment Plant and Gateway Area Plan. The Humboldt County Grand Jury report The Sea Also Rises states that Antarctica could disintegrate within ten years leading to flooding the roads to the Arcata Wastewater Treatment Plant and creating an island.



Making California's Coast  
Resilient to Sea Level Rise:  
Principles for Aligned State Action

California's coast, bays, estuaries, and ocean are facing an immediate threat from sea-level rise. To improve effectiveness in addressing the immediate challenge of adapting

our state to sea-level rise, California state agencies with coastal, bay, and shoreline climate resilience responsibilities, including for coastal infrastructure and Californians' safety, endorse the following Principles for Aligned State Action. These Principles will guide unified, effective action toward sea-level rise resilience for California's coastal communities, ecosystems, and economies around:  
Best Available Science, Partnerships, Alignment, Communications,  
Local Support, Coastal Resilience Projects, and Equity

Background

- Californians' safety, local and state economies, critical infrastructure, and natural resources face increasing threats from sea-level rise (SLR).
  - Every scientific assessment since California's 2009 Climate Adaptation Strategy has revealed that coastal impacts from climate change-caused SLR will occur more quickly and be more severe than previously projected. California's coast faces a significant risk of experiencing SLR of up to 1.0 feet by 2030 and 7.6 feet by 2100.
  - Projections of future SLR point to significant impacts to California communities, with considerable environmental justice implications, upwards of hundreds of billions of dollars in impacts to property and development, impacts to statewide and regional water supplies, as well as significant damage to and loss of many miles of beaches, tidepools, coastal rivers, estuaries, and wetlands.
  - As California has repeatedly demonstrated, a bold, statewide climate agenda benefits our natural resources, health and safety, economy, critical infrastructure, and communities. Our state has led global efforts on climate change mitigation and is poised to do so on climate change adaptation.
  - These Principles will enable California to scale up coastal resiliency efforts through aligned strategies that create consistent, efficient decision-making processes and actions coastwide while improving collaboration across state, local, tribal, and federal partners.
  - Action now saves up to six times the cost of action later, allows time for the state and communities to test and leverage needed solutions, and prevents untold impacts. By enhancing alignment and partnerships now, we will significantly improve the climate resiliency of our coast, bays, shorelines, and communities, particularly frontline communities most vulnerable to the impacts of SLR.
- Goal

1. Develop and Utilize Best Available Science

- Apply best available science to planning, decision-making, project design, and implementation. Prioritize frequent engagement with stakeholders to ensure the science is actionable.
- Utilize SLR targets based on the best available science and a minimum of 3.5 feet of SLR by 2045.

\*

## CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT

### Chapter 3 - COASTAL RESOURCES PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT POLICIES

#### Article 8 – Sea Level Rise

##### Section 30270 - Consideration of the effects of sea level rise

The commission shall take into account the effects of sea level rise in coastal resources planning and management policies and activities in order to identify, assess, and, **to the extent feasible, avoid** and mitigate **the adverse effects of sea level rise**.

*Ca. Pub. Res. Code § 30270*


Added by Stats 2021 ch 236 (SB 1), s 2, eff. 1/1/2022.



\* Please address the conflicts the General Plan 2045 EIR/ Gateway Area Plan has with the California Coastal Act, Sea Level Rise, Local Coastal Program and SB1000 Environmental Justice in Local Planning.

Sincerely,

Gregory Daggett

From:   
To: [Meredith Matthews](#); [Stacy Atkins-Salazar](#); [Alex Stillman](#); [Kimberley White](#); [Sarah Schaefer](#); [Scott Davies](#); [Dan Tangney](#); [Matthew Simmons](#); [Peter Lehman](#); [Joel Yodowitz](#); [Abigail Strickland](#); [Millisa Smith](#); [David Loya](#); [Karen Diemer](#)  
Subject: from Fred Weis: Overall message about the General Plan / Gateway Area Plan public hearings  
Date: Monday, May 13, 2024 5:32:26 PM

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**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.

To: Honorable Mayor Matthews, Vice Mayor Alex Stillman, Councilmembers Stacy Atkins-Salazar, Sarah Schaefer, and Kimberley White  
Arcata Planning Commission Chair Scott Davies, Vice Chair Dan Tangney,  
Commissioners Matt Simmons, Peter Lehman,  
Joel Yodowitz, Abbie Strickland, and Millisa Smith  
City Manager Karen Diemer, Community Development Director David Loya

Dear Mayor Matthews, et al --

Over the next few weeks I will be sending many messages to the Commission and the Council. I do not apologize for the quantity of messages to you, but **I am sorry that I have to do this at all.** There are a great many errors in the General Plan update document and related documents, both large and small. Until the Council and the Commission recognize that this is a problem -- and the errors are corrected -- I will continue to point out these problem areas.

As just one example (of many), the Inclusionary Zoning figures given in the Gateway Code are incorrect. You can see this in section 9.110.050 -- Supplemental to Districts, G. Inclusionary Zoning, on page 31 (PDF page 33) of the 2nd edition of the "May 14, 2024" version. What is shown are the figures before the Planning Commission came to their determination, and before the Council (January 17, 2024) revised it.

**It has also become very clear that the Community Development Director has what can be regarded as a very odd idea of what **planning** for the L Street linear park and woonerf requires.** Planning for the buildings and planning for the community. One reason I bring up the "750-feet" bike parking distance discussion is that it illustrated the extent to which the Director will "dig in his heels" and try to defend an idea that was so obviously misconstrued. The Planning Commissioners, to their credit, saw through that one. He also attempted to defend his position to not include planning for the linear park and woonerf. The video and a full transcription of that section of the April 23, 2024, PC meeting are at [arcata1.com/plancom-gateway-code-4-23-2024-video/](https://arcata1.com/plancom-gateway-code-4-23-2024-video/)

**I want to get these documents complete, and done properly, so that the 3-person or 5-person Council, as is appropriate, can accept the documents.** In my view, as I have stated, there is no way that these documents are acceptable. It would be irresponsible to recommend them or approve them. There are determinations that

the Council and Commission have said they wanted that are not in these documents. There are items in these documents that have never appeared before the Planning Commission. There are things that the Community Directory has said are in these documents, but are not. And there continue to be areas in these documents that continue to be worded in a way that is ambiguous or inconsistent.

I will reinforce that it is not that I am seeking to put my notions into these documents. It is that the notions that the Council and Commission have said they want are not there, or are there incorrectly.

I will be sending these messages to everyone, even though clearly they do not apply to all the recipients. I ask you to use your own choice about what to read or not. **If I consider something to be important to be read by the majority of the recipients, I will make that clear.** I will make every attempt to have the subject line be sufficiently descriptive that you can identify if that message is important to you.

I have been wrong in some of my evaluations, and I do apologize for that when that occurs. I'll also apologize in advance if I say the same thing more than once. Of course I do have strong opinions. But when I say something is wrong or missing or not worded to say what the Commission intended, those are facts.

Pursuant to §1094.5 of the California Code of Civil Procedure, I will be sending in many documents for the record. You do not have to even glance at these if you don't want to. They will be clearly marked, and the subject line will indicate what they are.

As I have said, it is my view that these documents are not close to being considered as being in their final form. We are way beyond the stage where we can accept the promise or intention from the Community Development Director that he will put the changes in the final draft. There needs to be a document that is considered as done. **I have some ideas as to how these documents can get actually completed** that I will discuss with the Planning Commission.

Thank you for your work.

-- Fred Weis

From: [REDACTED]  
To: [David Loya](#); [Scott Davies](#)  
Subject: Fwd: Tuesday, May 14, Planning Commission meeting  
Date: Tuesday, May 14, 2024 7:42:26 AM

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To: Scott Davies, David Loya

Error, item 6.

Shows the EIR resolution as: Resolution PC-24-04

Actually is: Resolution PC-24-03

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Fred** [REDACTED]  
Date: Tue, May 14, 2024 at 7:28 AM  
Subject: Tuesday, May 14, Planning Commission meeting  
To: <[sdavies@cityofarcata.org](mailto:sdavies@cityofarcata.org)>  
Cc: <[dtangney@cityofarcata.org](mailto:dtangney@cityofarcata.org)>, Matthew Simmons <[msimmons@cityofarcata.org](mailto:msimmons@cityofarcata.org)>, <[plehman@cityofarcata.org](mailto:plehman@cityofarcata.org)>, <[jyodowitz@cityofarcata.org](mailto:jyodowitz@cityofarcata.org)>, Abigail Strickland <[astrickland@cityofarcata.org](mailto:astrickland@cityofarcata.org)>, <[msmith@cityofarcata.org](mailto:msmith@cityofarcata.org)>, David Loya <[dloya@cityofarcata.org](mailto:dloya@cityofarcata.org)>, Meredith Matthews <[MMatthews@cityofarcata.org](mailto:MMatthews@cityofarcata.org)>

To: Arcata Planning Commission Chair Scott Davie  
CC: Vice Chair Tangney, Commissioners Simmons, Lehman, Yodowitz, Strickland, and Smith  
Community Development Director David Loya, Mayor Meredith Matthews

Hello, Scott --

Some points I wanted to bring up regarding the Commission's meeting on Tuesday. With **topics in bold** and **important comments in red** so the reader can skim.

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I would promote scheduling a further review of the Gateway Code. As it is, the most senior member of the Planning Commission and the largest individual current-Commissioner contributor to the Gateway Area Plan process were shut out of the conversation on the Gateway Code review. A brief article on this (reading time: 1 minute) is at: <https://arcata1.com/commissioners-tangney->

[simmons-absent-gateway-code-review/](#)

2. **Announcing the vote:** When the time comes for a vote, it is helpful (and legally proper) to announce how each Commissioner is voting. This is true whether it is a straw vote or a formal vote. The video screen may not be focussed on the Commissioners, and so the viewing public may not be able to see what is going on. Thank you.
3. **Letter from the Arcata Fire District:** As you and the Commission may or may not be aware, the Board of the Arcata Fire District wrote a letter to the Mayor and the Council stating that the AFD cannot ensure the safety of people living in a building that is over 40 feet tall — a three-story building. A crucial line is: **“However, until funding is established, and district expansion is underway, we believe it would be imprudent to approve building permits and begin occupancy in the envisioned residential buildings.”** By "envisioned buildings" the AFD Board Chair is referring to the potential 4, 5, 6, and 7-story buildings of the Gateway area.

The AFD Board Chair requested that this letter be provided to the Planning Commissioners. To my knowledge, this did not happen.

On April 18, 2024, the Arcata Fire District Board wrote to the Community Development Director with a simple request: To provide that April 9, 2024, letter to the Planning Commissioners. **In my view, the one-paragraph summary that the Director provided in the staff report (page 54) is an improper and inadequate synopsis.** I feel the original letter should have been included in the packet, as requested.

I encourage the Commissioners to read the original letter.

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If the AFD Board Chair arrives after the Commission's public comment period is over at the time that the AFD Board Chair arrives, it might be appropriate to

**open up the public comment so that he can speak.** Thank you for considering this.

5. **Documents not in the agenda packet:** The documents that are referenced for this Tuesday meeting -- the draft General Plan 2045 document (which now includes the draft Gateway Area Plan Element), the draft Gateway Zoning Ordinance (the Gateway Code), the draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR), the Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) -- are not included in the Commission's agenda packet. **This seems very unusual, and possibly prone to difficulties.** If the Commission is recommending a document, it has to be fixed. **Documents on-line, by their nature, are not fixed.** As an example, the Gateway Code document was changed twice last week (prior to the agenda being released) -- and **both documents have a filename of Gateway-FBC20240514. This is an extremely poor practice** -- to not change a filename for a document that is different.

I can understand why we might not want to see the 1,990-page EIR document in the packet PDF, but I do not understand why the General Plan and Gateway Code were not there. We've had PDF packets that are that large before.

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In my opinion, **the datestamps should be included in the resolutions and announced verbally in the motion for the vote.**

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This is a very helpful table, for referencing the recent changes to the General Plan. It can be found in the Council's packet on page 51.

<https://arcataca.igmp2.com/Citizens/FileOpen.aspx?Type=1&ID=3421&Inline=True>

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I propose that it is unreasonable to provide only 4 days' time to read a 253-page document of the density of information as this is. Not only for me and other interested members of the public. **The Planning Commissioners are being asked to recommend a document that it is extremely unlikely that a sufficient majority have read. If the Commission votes to recommend this FEIR document, each member who votes yes is testifying that he or she has read this document.**

**If the Commissioner is not able to declare that to be true, then would the Commissioner abstain?**

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<https://arcataca.igmp2.com/Citizens/FileOpen.aspx?Type=1&ID=3245&Inline=True>

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To me, that stretch of Bayside Road went from being lined with a thick grove of Eucalyptus trees to looking stark and barren.

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Thank you.

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From:   
To: [Scott Davies](#)  
Cc: [Dan Tangney](#); [Matthew Simmons](#); [Peter Lehman](#); [Joel Yodowitz](#); [Abigail Strickland](#); [Millisa Smith](#); [David Loya](#); [Meredith Matthews](#)  
Subject: Tuesday, May 14, Planning Commission meeting  
Date: Tuesday, May 14, 2024 7:29:13 AM

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