

## LAND USE ELEMENT

### 2.1.1 INTRODUCTION

**Overview of existing land uses and resources.** Arcata's land use patterns have been shaped by many factors and reflect more than one-hundred and sixty years of community development. The early settlement of the town, initially called Uniontown, grew around a central plaza. Arcata's Plaza area, including a hotel, storehouse, and other commercial buildings, was originally constructed in the late 1800s and early 1900s and continues to be a major center of the community. The timber industry also left an indelible land use imprint on the community. Many of the lumber mills which operated in the late 1800s to mid-1900s, are now closed and the abandoned mill sites are undergoing a slow transformation to other uses. California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt (Cal Poly Humboldt) occupies approximately 160 acres east of State Route 101, within walking distance of the downtown area. The northernmost campus in the California State University system is the community's major employer and regional education center.

The City of Arcata acknowledges that the lands the City is located on are the unceded ancestral lands of the Wiyot tribe. The land that Arcata rests on is known in the Wiyot language as Goudi'ni, meaning "over in the woods" or "among the redwoods." Past actions by local, State and Federal governments removed the Wiyot and other Indigenous peoples from the land and threatened to destroy their cultural practices. The City of Arcata acknowledges the Wiyot community, their elders both past and present, as well as future generations. This Acknowledgment seeks to aid in dismantling the legacy narratives of settler colonialism.

Long before Humboldt Bay was "discovered" by European-Americans, the bay and tidelands were used by the Wiyot for food collection and villages. After early European settlement, there was a community dock and shipping port on Arcata Bay. The Arcata marsh now functions as a world-renown wastewater treatment facility and wildlife refuge. Some residential areas such as Sunset, Sunny Brae, and Bayside were developed while unincorporated, and then subsequently annexed to the City, creating the opportunity for diverse community nodes. Their lot sizes,



subdivision designs, and street configurations reflect County, rather than City, development standards. These and other factors have influenced the existing land use characteristics of the community and will play an important role in shaping land use patterns for the future.

Arcata's residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural/natural resource, and community facility uses are similar to those found in other communities. It is Arcata's mixture of history, the diversity of uses, and

the value placed on our history and diversity, that make the city unique. The Land Use Element contains goals, policies, and implementation measures for each land use category. These are intended to guide land use decisions, preserve important historical elements, and maintain diversity of use and character.

By recognizing and valuing the diversity of existing neighborhoods and prioritizing existing place-based strengths, the City can support the development of more connected and vibrant communities—and ultimately grow a more equitable, prosperous, and resilient region by targeting the places with the most potential to have a transformative impact on community and city prosperity.

To achieve these goals, the City of Arcata's Land Use Element identifies local "activity centers", (See Figure LU-c) meaning places within the City where a diversity of economic, physical, social, and civic assets cluster at a walkable neighborhood scale. Over the General Plan planning period, the City will target investment in economic development, infrastructure, and placemaking resources in ways that strengthen these centers, support their growth and development in more equitable ways, improve connectivity within and between them, and ensure that existing residents and businesses benefit from this new investment.

These identified existing activity centers are:

The Downtown/Uniontown Activity Center surrounding the Arcata Plaza and the core of Arcata's historic downtown is located north of State Route 255, west of State Route 101 and Cal Poly Humboldt, and east of K Street/Alliance Road. The Plaza area includes a mix of shopping, dining, and office uses, as well as residential, cultural, and civic activity. The Arcata Plaza is a unique historic public plaza and is home to many local events, including the Farmer's Market and Kinetic Sculpture Race, and has historically been considered the commercial, cultural, social, and civic center of the community. The downtown area is identified as one of the City's priority Infill Opportunity Zones (See Figure LU-a).

The Valley West Activity Center, in the northern part of the City between State Routes 101 and 299. This mixed commercial/residential area includes access to Carlson Park, a regional draw with access to the Mad River, as well as a shopping center and regional transit stop, visitor-serving commercial areas along Valley West Boulevard, a mix of businesses along Giuntoli Lane, and surrounding high- and medium-density residential areas. A portion of Valley West, including the shopping center and a portion of parcels along Giuntoli Lane, are identified as one of the City's priority Infill Opportunity Zones (See Figure LU-a).

The Northtown Activity Center, located between the central-commercial area and Cal Poly Humboldt. This area functions as the de facto corridor between Arcata and the University and includes a mix of commercial and medium-density residential developments. The "Arcata Heights" Neighborhood Conservation Area is located to the west, comprising primarily low-density residential uses as well as Arcata High School and the Stewart School building.

The West End/ Aldergrove Activity Center, in the northeastern part of the City to the east of the Valley West activity area. This area has a mix of general and limited industrial uses, including the Aldergrove Industrial Park, the Foodworks Culinary Center, and surrounding commercial, residential, and public open space areas.

The Samoa Boulevard and South G Street Activity Center, in the southern part of the City. This area includes general and limited industrial, general commercial businesses on both sides of Samoa Boulevard, and surrounding high-and medium-density residential areas.

Other smaller neighborhood-scale activity centers include:

The Westwood/Sunset Neighborhood Activity Center, in the western part of the City includes a shopping center and commercial businesses along Alliance Road and surrounding low-density residential areas.

The Sunny Brae Neighborhood Activity Center, in the southeastern part of the City. This area includes Sunny Brae shopping center and adjacent professional offices and surrounding residential areas.



**Infill Opportunity Zones.** In the Housing Element update in 2019, the City identified four neighborhoods whose current mix of uses present opportunities for infill development. These areas are near transit and existing activity centers, and the proposed mix of land uses is intended to allow residents to live closer to their places of work and thereby encourage alternative modes of transportation. These areas collectively are anticipated to produce approximately half of the City's infill growth during the *General Plan: 2045* planning period. The areas described below reflect current configuration as enacted at a policy level through the adoption of the City's 6th Cycle Housing Element; future planning may make minor modifications, to add or subtract acreage to areas described below.

The Downtown Opportunity Zone includes the City's center of commerce, encompassing roughly fifty-four acres of the Downtown and surrounding near Downtown areas. Land use designations include Commercial Central, Commercial Mixed, Residential High Density, and Public Facilities. This area is generally built out, but there are some parcels that have significant potential for redevelopment as well as several smaller parcels that could either be redeveloped if the zoning allowed more flexibility.

The Valley West Opportunity Zone includes roughly thirty-four acres in the north of the City situated along Giuntoli Lane and between Valley East and Valley West Boulevards. Zoning is exclusively Commercial General. The Valley West commercial areas have significant redevelopment potential for both housing and economic development opportunities.

The Gateway Area Infill Opportunity Zone is in the southwestern part of the City. This area includes one hundred and thirty-eight acres of land including a mix of commercial, industrial, and residential uses including the Creamery Building, which houses a variety of businesses and cultural organizations, including the Arcata Playhouse, Arcata's Local Arts Agency. The Gateway Area Plan establishes a broad range of high- and medium-density residential and mixed-use redevelopment with an emphasis on housing creation in this area due to proximity to Downtown and other community services and destinations.

Craftsman's Mall/St. Louis Opportunity Zone includes roughly forty-one acres near the geographic center of the urbanized portions of the City and Cal Poly Humboldt. The average parcel size is 0.7 ac or 29,145.7 sq ft, and the Craftsman's Mall property, which has the highest immediate potential for redevelopment is owned by Cal Poly Humboldt. This area is near Cal Poly's campus and is an ideal location for high density housing. It is surrounded by lower density residential zoning districts. The area also includes existing industrial uses.

The planned distribution of land uses throughout the City are shown on the land use diagram, which is included as Figure LU-a. In addition, the Land Use Element addresses the City's Planning Area. The Planning Area extends north to the Mad River, west to the Pacific Ocean, south into Arcata Bay, and east to include the upper watersheds of Arcata's creeks, as shown on Figure LU-b and described in the Growth Management Element.

**Guiding principles and goals.**

- A. Create a welcoming, safe, and racially equitable community through the promotion of racial equity, diversity, and accessibility in all City neighborhoods and land use. Achieve this by encouraging housing development and business development in and around existing activity centers, and promoting access to transit and healthy food, among other strategies.
- B. Acknowledge and act on land use strategies brought forward by Arcata's Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities.
- C. Establish and maintain a greenbelt around the City that consists of agricultural, forest, and natural resource lands, focusing future development in infill areas, as opposed to annexation of these lands. Preserve, as productive natural resources areas, the open agricultural lands in the Arcata Bottom, the forests on the eastern hillsides, and aquaculture in Arcata Bay. Protect other natural resource lands along the bayfront and watercourses for their ecological value as natural resource lands and community open space.
- D. Encourage a range of housing choices that includes affordable housing for all community residents, including currently unhoused people, that accommodates families as well as individuals and groups, and varies in size and type to reflect the diverse character of the community and to provide equitable access to opportunities and resources in all of Arcata's neighborhoods.
- E. Encourage retail, service, and professional businesses to locate and stay in the Commercial Activity Centers and Infill Opportunity Zones by increasing the amount of housing there.
- F. Promote commercial uses in the Downtown, Gateway Area, Westwood, Valley West, Sunny Brae, Bayside, and Greenview neighborhood centers to meet day-to-day retail and service needs of nearby residents.
- G. Designate industrial uses in existing employment centers and encourage labor intensive and technology-driven industrial and business uses in these areas rather than resource intensive uses.



- H. Maintain community facilities such as schools, community centers, parks and recreation areas, and other civic uses and ensure they are equitably distributed and located in areas that are accessible to all segments of the community.
- I. Encourage infill development of vacant, brownfield, and underutilized land designated for development as a way of meeting housing and employment needs without major extensions of infrastructure and services. Encourage high-density residential infill development and minimal parking ratios in Infill Opportunity Zones throughout the City. Ensure displacement and affordability issues related to the City's infill strategy are addressed.
- J. Permit vertical and/or horizontal mixed-use development close to clusters of activity and at major transportation crossroads where they can take advantage of higher levels of access.
- K. Retain agricultural and natural resource lands within the City.
- L. Encourage mixed use commercial/residential areas throughout the City through encouraging residential units on upper floors in commercial areas and other available strategies.
- M. Locate and allow location of land uses to minimize risks and exposure to environmental hazards, including seismic hazards and flooding.
- N. Seek and encourage open and cooperative consultation and cooperation with managers of state land not subject to Arcata's land use authority including Cal Poly Humboldt, lands within the California Coastal Commission's retained jurisdiction, and others.





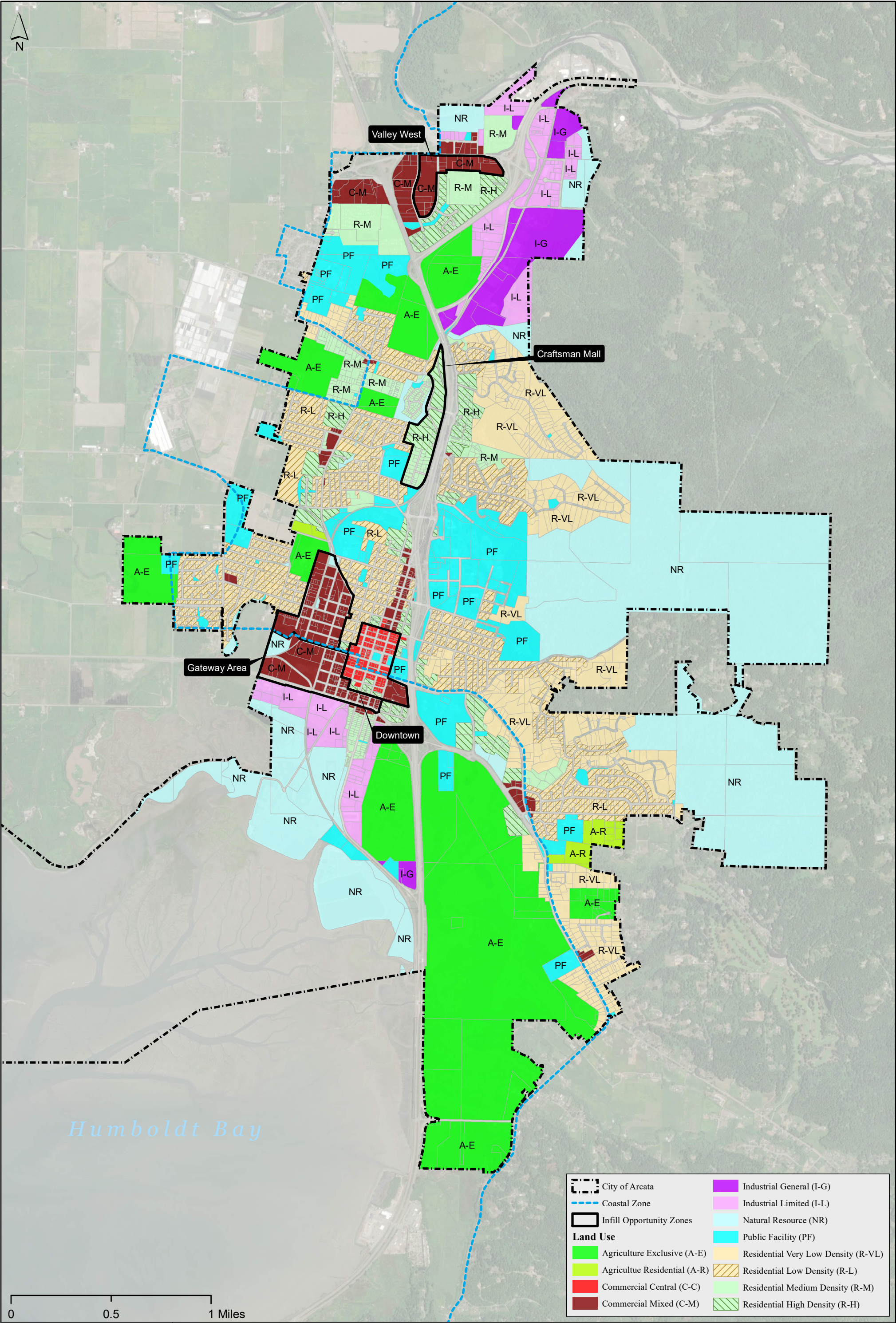
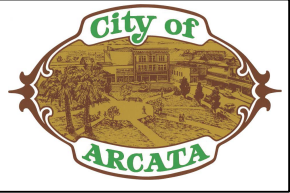


Figure LU-a

Created by Planwest Partners  
Map Date: 5/2/2024

# City of Arcata General Plan Land Use Map





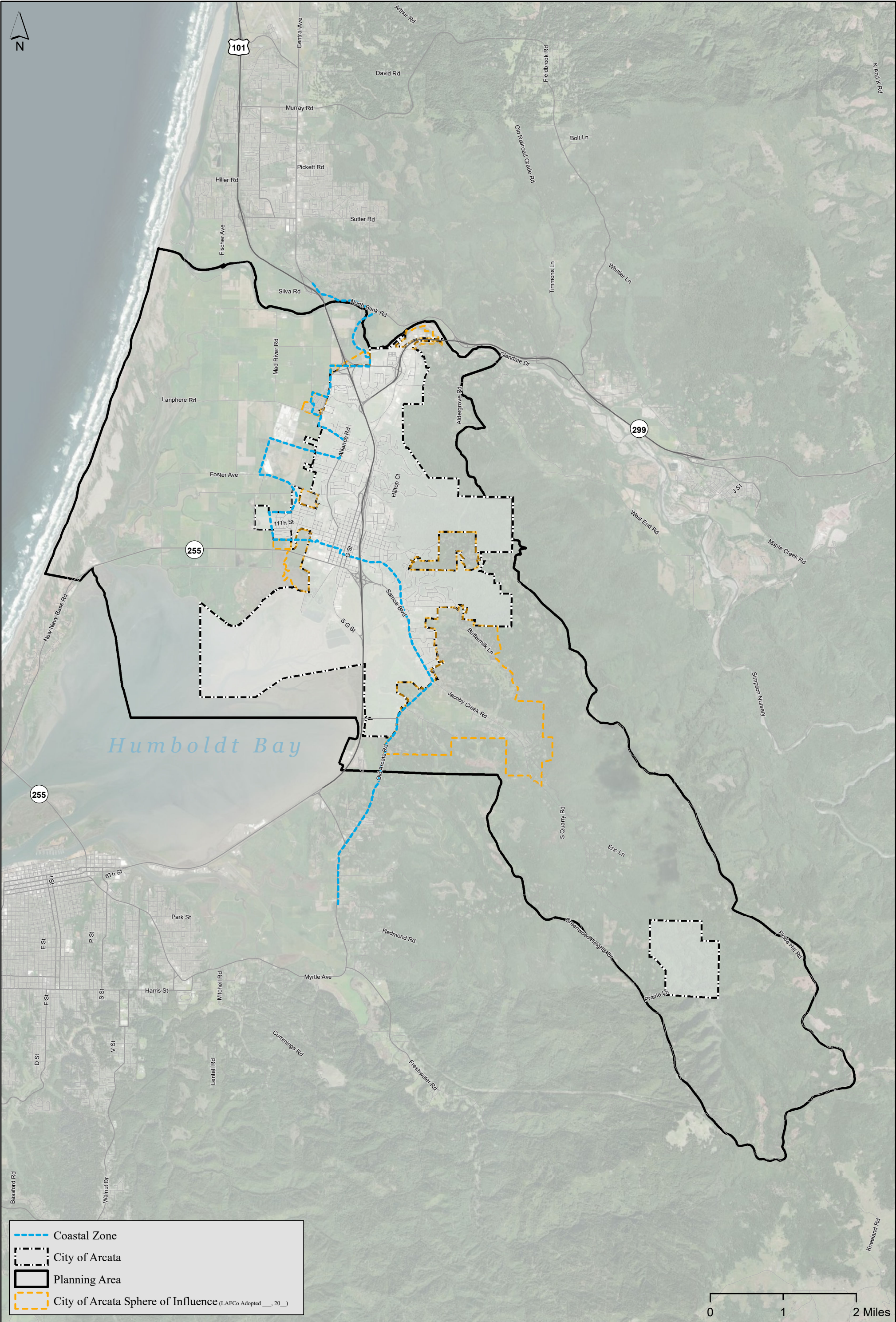
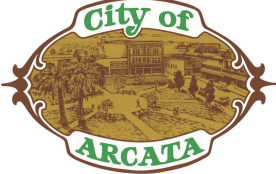


Figure LU-b

Sphere of Influence will be updated on  
LAFCo Adoption  
Created by Planwest Partners  
Map Date: 7/10/2024

# City of Arcata Planning Area





## 2.1.2 POLICIES

The Land Use Element contains the following policies:

- LU-1 Overall Development Pattern
- LU-2 Residential Land Use
- LU-3 Commercial Land Use
- LU-4 Industrial Land Use
- LU-5 Public Facilities
- LU-6 Agricultural and Natural Resource Lands

### POLICY LU-1 OVERALL DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

**Objective.** Establish a pattern of development that concentrates activity and amenities in a pattern of centers, clusters and mixes of uses to support the City’s focus on infill development and active transportation. Provide an overall land use arrangement that concentrates city-wide uses and functions in these areas with an emphasis on areas within walking distance of the central Plaza Area, Cal Poly Humboldt, and existing neighborhood and employment centers, which provide a mix of commercial services, residential uses, and community facilities.

To the maximum extent feasible, the City shall strive through its land use decisions to promote community health for all neighborhoods, with particular attention to those that have been identified as lacking in transit, clean air, grocery stores, bike lanes, parks, and other components of a healthy community.

- LU-1a **Protection of natural resources and agricultural lands.** The designation of open space throughout the City, and the agricultural greenbelt area around the City, are integral to Arcata’s future form. Agricultural [A-E] and Natural Resource [NR] designated lands make up over half of the community land base. Their productive, open space, and natural resource values are important to the community and shall be preserved.
- LU-1b **Promotion of infill development and designated Infill Opportunity Zones.** The City encourages appropriate redevelopment of certain parcels of land that are either underutilized, brownfields, or vacant, but surrounded by existing urban development. These sites represent development opportunities using existing infrastructure and shall have priority for development over vacant sites that are located outside the urban services boundary (designated in the Growth Management Element) that require investment in extension of infrastructure and services. The City’s Infill Opportunity Zones are intended to encourage and streamline infill development in these areas, based on available land and proximity to transit, services, jobs, and activity centers. Infill development may include new residential units in new or existing structures, development of accessory dwelling units on residential lots, and new or expansion of existing residential and commercial structures consistent with the provisions of the applicable land use plan designations. Infill Opportunity Zones are shown on the land use map (Figure LU-a).

- LU-1c **Prioritization of transit and active transportation.** Eliminate minimum parking requirements citywide.
- LU-1d **Reduce parking maximums in the most walkable areas of the city.** Reduce maximum allowable parking requirements within Infill Opportunity Zones to promote walkable communities. Minimize vehicle parking requirements and maximize walk, bike, and transit infrastructure.
- LU-1e **Streamlined review and standards in Infill Opportunity Zones.** Infill Opportunity Zones are intended to identify areas where the City plans to accommodate high density residential uses through a ministerial review process in order to facilitate housing production. In addition to creating a ministerial pathway for residential projects, applicable standards (parking ratios, height limitations, site coverage, etc.) shall be consistent with development at greater densities with a larger reliance on multi-modal transit.
- LU-1f **Inclusion of residential uses.** Commercial developments should include residential units where feasible. Where residential units are incorporated, some ground floor commercial should generally be maintained. Any residential development in new structures shall comply with the development standards of the applicable land use category.
- LU-1g **Variety of industrial uses.** Provide sufficient land for a broad range of industrial uses to retain and expand existing uses and attract new industries. Continue to support industrial uses that are intended to retain and generate living-wage jobs.
- LU-1h **Activity centers diagram.** The activity areas diagram (Figure LU-c) for lands within the City and the planning area land use map (Figure LU-a) show existing activity areas for the City. Continue to invest in improving housing, job, and active transportation access to these centers in addition to the City's identified Infill Opportunity Zones. Target investment in economic development, infrastructure, and placemaking resources in ways that strengthen these centers, support their growth and development in more equitable ways, improve connectivity within and between them, and ensure that existing residents and businesses benefit from this new investment.
- LU-1i **Maintain Arcata's Historic Plaza Area as a major community center in central Arcata.** The Plaza has historically been, and should continue to be, a commercial, civic, social, and cultural center of the community, and a location for community-wide special events. The area surrounding the Plaza (Commercial–Central area), including the adjacent commercial and mixed-use areas, shall be planned to accommodate retail establishments, entertainment services, restaurants, and business and professional offices. High density residential use in the Commercial–Central area is encouraged as an Infill Opportunity Zone. Housing shall be included, where feasible, in all new commercial development within the Plaza Area.
- LU-1j **Encourage Valley West's growth as a major community center for north Arcata.** Ensure City resources are allocated to improving accessibility, safety, and attractiveness of this mixed-use area, which functions as both a tourism destination

and a vibrant neighborhood commercial center for many neighboring residents. The area surrounding the Valley West Shopping Center, including the adjacent commercial, office, and residential areas, shall be planned to accommodate a large concentration of high-density residential development as well as retail establishments, entertainment services, restaurants, and business and professional offices. Continue to promote Carlson Park as a regional draw to access the Mad River. High density residential use in the Valley West Infill Opportunity Zone will be streamlined and residential units shall be included, where feasible, in all new commercial development within the Valley West Area.

- LU-1k Support and revitalize other existing neighborhood and commercial activity centers.** The existing neighborhood centers of Westwood, Sunny Brae, and Greenview are designated as mixed-use sites where additional retail establishments, personal and business services, and other neighborhood-oriented commercial services are encouraged to be developed. The City encourages residential uses in mixed use centers. Reinvestment to upgrade and/or expand existing commercial activity areas shall be encouraged. Upgrades should include improvements to existing centers including landscaping areas; provision of facilities to accommodate bicycles, pedestrians, and transit and to reduce vehicle trips; and residential units on upper floors or in new structures. Appropriate lands near these centers are designated for higher density residential uses to encourage walking and bicycling to commercial services.
- LU-1l Support and revitalize the West End/Aldergrove Employment Center as an industrial and business hub for north Arcata.** This area has a mix of general and limited industrial uses, including the Aldergrove Industrial Park, the Foodworks Culinary Center, and surrounding commercial, residential, and public open space areas. Light and general-industrial uses shall be encouraged to relocate and expand in this area.
- LU-1m Support and revitalize the Samoa Boulevard and South G Street Employment Center as an industrial hub for south Arcata.** This area includes general and limited industrial, general commercial businesses on both sides of Samoa Boulevard, and surrounding high-and medium-density residential areas. Light and general-industrial uses shall be encouraged to relocate and expand within the Adaptation Zone boundary of this area as described in the City's Local Coastal Program.
- LU-1n Land use plan diagram.** Ensure the distribution of land use designations guides permitted uses to align with the intended outcomes of pattern of development identified. The land use plan diagram (Figure LU-a) for lands within the City and the planning area land use map (Figure LU-b) show planned land uses for the City and surrounding areas. The land use categories, and the amount of City land allocated for each category, are included in Table LU-1.
- LU-1o Gateway Area land uses.** Gateway Area land use designations allow for a broad range of mixed-use redevelopment with an emphasis on housing creation. Gateway Area land use designations and policies are described in the Gateway Area Plan.



- LU-1p **Coastal land use plan.** The western portion of the Arcata Bottom, lands south of 7th and 8th Streets west of State Route 101, and lands south of Bayside and Old Arcata Roads east of State Route 101 are within the Coastal Zone, created by the California Coastal Act. The land use designations within the Coastal Zone are included in the Local Coastal Element, which is part of the City's Local Coastal Program (LCP).
- LU-1q **Maximum and minimum residential density standards.** In Commercial Mixed-Use and Central Commercial designations, allow residential uses. In each of these land use designations, do not establish a maximum residential density standard. Instead, allow residential density to be naturally restricted through other development standards, such as building height and Building Code requirements for minimum unit size. In addition, establish a minimum residential density standard in each of these land use designations, with exceptions established for some use types (such as theaters) and some building types (such as historically significant structures and the adaptive reuse of existing buildings). Allow buildings with residential uses to increase building height on a portion of the building.
- LU-1r **Incentivize projects that provide designated community amenities.** Establish ministerial permitting options and streamlined development processes for projects that create housing and provide designated community amenities.
- LU-1s **By-right approval.** Allow development projects participating in the community benefits program with by-right approvals when the project conforms to all applicable standards and design guidance. To promote housing production, limit participation in community benefits program to projects that include a minimum standard of residential units.
- LU-1t **Minimum residential density.** Require that all new development in C-C, C-M, R-M, and R-H land use designations provides at least some minimum quantity of housing units by establishing a minimum residential density (number of units per acre). Projects that do not provide the designated minimum residential density will need a use permit demonstrating they support the City's housing objectives.
- LU-1u **Mixed-tenure.** Encourage a mix of both owner-occupied and rental housing in C-C, C-M, R-M, and R-H land use designations.
- LU-1v **Residential relocation.** In addition to relocation support encoded in state law, support the re-housing of existing residents displaced by the redevelopment of properties containing existing residential uses.
- LU-1w **Racial equity and housing partner collaborations.** Continue to collaborate with community housing partners that work to promote racial equity and anti-discrimination in housing for both ownership and rental opportunities within the City.

**TABLE LU-1 LAND-USE PLAN CATEGORIES AND ACREAGES**

Arcata General Plan: 2045		Acres	%
Land Use Designations			
A-E	Agriculture - Exclusive	1,040.9	19.4%
A-R	Agriculture - Residential	34.2	0.6%
C-C	Commercial - Central	25.6	0.5%
C-M	Commercial - Mixed	218.6	4.1%
I-G	Industrial General	130.7	2.4%
I-L	Industrial Limited	201.9	3.8%
NR	Natural Resources	1,811.1	33.9%
PF	Public Facilities	442.3	8.3%
R-H	Residential - High Density	185.4	3.5%
R-M	Residential - Medium Density	191.2	3.6%
R-L	Residential - Low Density	545.2	10.2%
R-VL	Residential - Very Low Density	511.2	9.5%
Total		5,357.9	100.0%

*Note: The figures above do not include road rights-of-way, interchanges, or the portion of Arcata Bay within the City limits, nor do they include the Jacoby Creek Forest, a City-owned non-contiguous incorporated area.*

- LU-1x Form-based design standards.** Where high-density housing uses are appropriate, apply form-based design standards that allow high-density, multi-story buildings while simultaneously requiring a vibrant, community-oriented, street-facing built environment designed to fit a "human-centered" scale with codes designed specifically for each area where they apply.
- LU-1y Mixed-income neighborhoods.** Incentivize mixed-income neighborhoods with housing options available for all income groups. Housing in a mixed-income neighborhood should include deed-restricted units affordable to very low-income households, small affordable-by-design units, student housing, moderate income owner-occupied condominiums and townhouses, market-rate rental units, median-priced family-sized dwellings, and penthouse units for high-income households.
- LU-1z Incentivize mixed use as a community benefit.** Incentivize mixed-use projects that have a ground-floor non-residential (retail, office, light industrial, or other job-creation component) through the community benefit program where not otherwise required by the form-based code. Create incentives to mix compatible land uses.
- LU-1aa Partnerships with the Wiyot Tribes.** Seek partnerships with the Wiyot Tribes to support housing projects.

- LU-1ab **Land use and zoning that promote community health and wellbeing.** Patterns of land use and development can either promote or deter physical, mental, and social wellbeing in different ways. Support patterns of land use and development that encourage physical, mental, and social wellbeing, as well as shape activity centers, districts, corridors, and neighborhoods to support walking, biking, and transit.
- LU-1ac **State mandated housing production.** The City recognizes that the state's housing goals have resulted in laws that increase density above City established base density, removed discretion in housing development, required streamlining in approval processes, established by-right development for certain housing types, and has reduced local control over many land use decisions related to housing production. The City shall monitor and comment on state actions to advocate for reasonable solutions to housing production that meet both state objectives and City need for housing.
- LU-1ad **Term of Off-Premise Billboards and Prohibition.** Billboards along scenic roadways and other scenic areas impact the scenic quality by blocking views. Billboards are not only a blight within the City Arcata's jurisdiction but also within the surrounding County's jurisdiction and impact the City's viewsheds. The City shall limit the term of existing off-premise billboards by ordinance to provide for removal consistent with the Outdoor Advertising Act. The City shall prohibit the construction of new off-premise billboards along mapped Scenic Highways and coastal views.
- LU-1ae **Removal of Illegal Billboards.** Illegal and/or unsafe billboards on property within City jurisdiction shall be removed through code enforcement. The City shall advocate for removal of illegal billboards in areas outside of City's jurisdiction, including petitioning Caltrans' Outdoor Advertising Office to support removal of nonconforming billboards along highways within the Arcata viewshed.
- LU-1af **Removal of Billboards on Public Lands, Right-of-Ways and Public Trust Resource Lands.** Support efforts of area public agencies to remove billboards from their properties, rights-of-way and public trust resource lands.

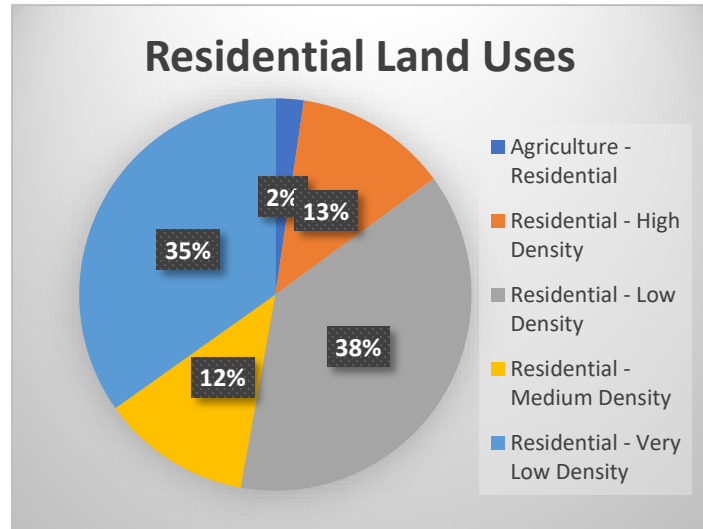
## **POLICY LU-2 RESIDENTIAL LAND USE**

**Objective.** Allow for a mix of housing types and densities to ensure residents at all ages, income levels, and abilities have safe, healthy, and affordable homes that meet their physical, social, and economic needs through housing production, preservation, and conversion that is compatible with established and planned neighborhood design elements.

- LU-2a **Residential land use classifications.** The following land use designations are applicable to residential lands. Table LU-2 defines permitted uses and densities for each classification.

Residential Very Low Density [R-VL]. This designation allows the lowest density residential development in areas where physical constraints, protection of natural features, or preservation of semi-rural character are important considerations. The R-VL designation is applicable primarily for lands with steep slopes and where the open space character of Arcata's hillsides and perimeter lands are to be preserved.

Individual homesites are allowed in hillside areas, as long as precautions are taken to prevent the excessive removal of vegetation and strict grading controls are enforced to prevent erosion. Development and grading on areas characterized by slopes over 25% should be avoided. Review of development proposals in all hillside areas shall ensure that seismic and geologic hazards are avoided or mitigated. More detailed hillside development standards are included in Policy PS-3c.



The R-VL designation allows creation of lots as small as 20,000 square feet, in the less-steep areas of Arcata's hillsides. Newly created lots in this zone must contain a buildable area of sufficient size and flatness to allow development without significant environmental damage or landform alteration. The development regulations for R-VL are intended to balance protection of the sensitive hillside environment with the need for quality housing sites. This designation is also intended to protect the existing rural environment in outlying areas of Arcata and to provide a transition between more urban uses and agricultural operations.

**Residential – Low Density [R-L].** The low-density residential designation primarily provides for single-family homes, duplexes, and accessory dwelling units on individual lots. This designation is found throughout the community, including the older, historical neighborhoods surrounding the Plaza Area, Sunny Brae, Sunset, and Greenview Terrace. Under current state land use and planning law, single-family zones are authorized to construct multiple dwelling units per lot in single family residential zones and may allow up to four residential units on most R-L lots.

**Residential – Medium Density [R-M].** Medium density residential unit types typically include duplexes, townhouses, co-housing, low density apartments, and modular housing located in mobile home parks.

Residential High Density [R-H]. High density residential uses are designated in central Arcata and other areas to allow higher density multi-family housing located in proximity to commercial and employment uses, public services, schools, and parks. Local-serving commercial uses such as corner grocery stores and coffee shops shall be permitted in [R-H] zones.

LU-2b

**Diversity and choice in residential environments.**

The City shall encourage residential developments that collectively provide a variety of choices for housing the community, including currently unhoused people. Units shall be diverse in terms of types of units, location, unit sizes, costs, design, amount of privacy, and neighborhood environment. Inclusionary measures shall be provided for affordable housing, and the City shall continue to collaborate with the Wiyot Tribe to further City and tribal housing goals. To encourage this, the City will implement inclusionary zoning in higher density developments and provide incentives to developers to include low- and moderate-income housing units in their proposals. Small lots shall be encouraged in RL, RM, and RH. Co-housing shall be allowed in zoning districts where applicable.



**TABLE LU-2 RESIDENTIAL LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS**

ALLOWABLE USES	R-VL	R-L	R-M	R-H
<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>				
Single-family dwellings	X	X	X	X
Mobile/manufactured homes	X	X	X	X
Mobile home park		X	X	X
Duplex dwellings	X	X	X	X
Multi-family dwellings		X	X	X
Planned developments	X	X	X	X
Group residential			X	
<b>SECONDARY USES</b>				
Small residential care facilities	X	X	X	X
Accessory (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) dwelling unit (ADU)	X	X	X	X
Bed and Breakfast Inns	X	X	X	
Home Occupations	X	X	X	X
<b>DENSITY</b>				
Density Range*	2 or fewer primary units per acre,	Up to 7.25 units per acre	Up to 25 units per acre	Up to 50 units per acre

Base Density does not include additional density allowed by state ADU, density bonus law.

**LU-2c Planned Development - Residential.** The purpose of a Planned Development shall be to: incorporate a mix of residential types, unit sizes, affordability levels, and styles in a coordinated manner to encourage housing for all, including currently unhoused people; allow clustering of units; provide larger, more usable areas of common open space; and protect natural resources or site features, such as creek side riparian areas, wetlands, and significant vegetation such as trees to incorporate health-promoting design. Planned Development may also incorporate non-residential uses with appropriate visual and noise buffers provided between the uses.



## POLICY LU-3 COMMERCIAL LAND USE

**Objective.** Grow a pattern of activity centers that meet the daily needs of the community and visitors and with a variety of retail goods, food, and services that are convenient, safe, accessible, and affordable to all.

### LU-3a Commercial use classifications.

The following land-use plan categories are applicable to commercial lands. Table LU-3 defines permitted uses for each classification. Large scale retail uses shall require a use permit to evaluate:

1. Potential impact on existing and projected traffic conditions;
2. Impact on municipal utilities and services;
3. Impact on the physical and ecological characteristics of the site and surrounding area; and
4. Impact on the community.



**Commercial – Central [C-C].** This designation covers most of the nineteen square blocks surrounding the Plaza and includes retail, professional office, civic, hotel, theater, residential, and similar uses. The Commercial-Central area forms the center of the City and is designed to be a high density, pedestrian-oriented activity area, with shops and services, banks, offices, restaurants, and entertainment supporting a variety of day and night activities. The Commercial-Central designation will have no upper density limit consistent with LU-1q.

**Commercial – Mixed Use [C-M].** This land use designation allows high-density infill development with a high degree of flexibility around uses. This land use designation is applied to parcels suitable for infill development, redevelopment, and densification. The Commercial-Mixed Use designation will have no upper density limit consistent with LU-1q.

**LU-3b Northtown Commercial Mixed-Use Area.** The continuation of mixed commercial and residential uses in the Northtown area should be encouraged; including allowing redevelopment to maximize housing opportunities.

**LU-3c Primary residential uses in Commercial – Central [C-C].** To maximize housing opportunities, residential uses are allowed as the primary use on vacant sites designated C-C.

**LU-3d Land use regulation to support health care.** Amend land use regulations to support provision and accessibility of healthcare services, including locations of healthcare providers in mixed-use and commercial land use classifications.

- LU-3e **Sidewalk dining.** Encourage sidewalk dining for restaurants and cafes along commercial and mixed-use street frontages. Areas planned for sidewalk dining may require wider sidewalks including privately-owned public spaces. Consider accessibility for the visually impaired in structures that may create sidewalk obstructions.

**TABLE LU-3 COMMERCIAL LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS**

ALLOWABLE USES	C-C	C-M
SALES OF GOODS & SERVICES		
General retail sales and services	X	X
Food retail sales and services	X	X
Specialty retail sales and services	X	X
Personal service establishments	X	X
Shopping centers	X	X
High-impact retail commercial uses	X	X
Wholesale trade and warehousing	X	X
Transient lodging	X	X
Travel trailer [RV] park		X
MOTOR VEHICLE RELATED SALES & SERVICE		
Motor vehicle sales and rentals		X
Motor vehicles services		X
Gas sales		
RESTAURANTS, BARS, TAVERNS AND PUBS	X	X
NIGHTCLUBS	X	X
COMMERCIAL RECREATION / ENTERTAINMENT		
Indoor recreation services	X	X
Outdoor recreation uses and services	X	X
Theaters	X	X
BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL OFFICES		
Offices designed to serve customer traffic	X	X
Offices designed to attract little customer traffic	X	X
Health services	X	X
EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL & RELIGIOUS USES		
Libraries, museums, art galleries, and similar uses	X	X
Mortuaries and funeral homes		X
PUBLIC & SEMI-PUBLIC USES		
Government administrative offices	X	X
Post offices	X	X
RESIDENTIAL		
Multi-family residential	X	X
URBAN AGRICULTURE		X

Some uses will require a Use Permit or other special permits as designated in the zoning ordinance.

- LU-3f **Relationship of building height to open space.** Allow for buildings over four stories using Community Benefits Program but require greater percentages of Open Space to be retained at ratios set in the Form-Based Code to ensure residents of high-density housing retain an excellent quality of life and easy access to high-quality open space.

- LU-3g **No maximum residential density.** Regulate building bulk and massing through design and community benefit measures; do not directly limit units per acre. Instead, encourage the maximum of dwelling units feasible within the allowed building envelope and allow other standards (e.g., height, setbacks, minimum units sizes) to collectively establish natural limitations on the number of dwelling units that can be developed.
- LU-3h **New non-residential uses.** Permit Commercial-Mixed Use and Commercial-Central land use designations in the City to allow mixed uses to complement residential uses. Ensure that all new non-residential elements of mixed-use development support an active and livable neighborhood, with residential, retail, office, and light-manufacturing uses thoughtfully blended together to create a cohesive neighborhood that feels complete. Allow flexibility in non-residential uses, with targeted limitations on uses that do not encourage street level human activity, livability, or neighborhood identity. Examples of uses that do not encourage human activity include heavy industrial uses, mini-storage, and outdoor automotive sales.

#### **POLICY LU-4 INDUSTRIAL LAND USE**

**Objective.** Provide for a variety of industrial uses that will retain and generate living-wage jobs, including labor-intensive manufacturing, processing, assembly, warehousing, services, and complementary non-industrial uses, in appropriate locations. Build on the City's 150-year history of supporting industrial jobs, businesses, and product generation by supporting new and existing users in identified industrial nodes.

- LU-4a **Industrial uses.** The following land use designations are applicable to industrial lands. Table LU-4 defines permitted uses for each classification.

Industrial – Limited [I-L]. This land use designation is intended to provide attractive industrial areas suitable for light manufacturing and limited commercial uses. High impact industrial uses more prone to produce noise, odors, heavy truck traffic, or dust such as lumber mills and recycling centers are not permitted in limited industrial areas. The I-L land use designation includes auto sales; service and repairs; sales of mobile homes, trucks and tractors; warehousing and wholesaling establishments; outdoor sales and storage lots; light industrial activities (when conducted within a building); and similar uses. Some retail sales uses and services, particularly those involving sales of products made on the premises, will be allowed as an accessory use. Residential uses may also be permitted where they are compatible with the nature of the production process, or the related sales of products made on the premises (such as artists' live/workspace).

The major I-L areas are the West End/Aldergrove employment center near the State Route 299/Giuntoli Lane interchange including the Aldergrove Industrial Park and Happy Valley; and areas south of Samoa Blvd. including Little Lake and along south G Street. These industrial areas will be the primary focus of industrial and mixed-industrial development and investment during the timeframe of this General Plan.

Industrial – General [I-G]. This land use designation indicates areas which are appropriate for manufacturing, large-scale wood processing and storage, auto wrecking and storage yards, and all other general industrial operations. Some industrial operations generate noise, odors, or traffic which make them incompatible neighbors with residential or most commercial uses.

**TABLE LU-4 INDUSTRIAL / PUBLIC FACILITY LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS**

ALLOWABLE USES	I-L	I-G	PF
SALES OF GOODS AND SERVICES			
Personal services establishments	X		
High impact commercial uses	X	X	
Outdoor sales and storage of merchandise	X	X	
Wholesale trade and warehousing	X		
Animal sales and services	X		
MOTOR VEHICLE-RELATED SALES AND SERVICES			
Motor vehicle sales and rentals	X		
Motor vehicle services	X		
Gas stations	X		
RESTAURANTS AND NIGHTCLUBS	X		
COMMERCIAL RECREATION / ENTERTAINMENT			
Indoor recreation services	X		
BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL OFFICES			
Offices designed to serve customer traffic	X		
Offices designed to attract little customer traffic	X		
EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL & RELIGIOUS USES			X
RESIDENTIAL	X		
PUBLIC & SEMI-PUBLIC USES			X
HIGH IMPACT MANUFACTURING & PROCESSING		X	
MODERATE IMPACT MANUFACTURING & PROCESSING	X	X	
LOW IMPACT MANUFACTURING & PROCESSING	X	X	
URBAN AGRICULTURE	X	X	X

**LU-4b Little Lake.** The former Little Lake Industries lumber mill on South “I” Street shall be developed for industrial or business park uses. The site shall be planned as a mixed-use development including passive recreational uses and a dog park. Development shall be consistent with the adopted Long Range Property Management Plan.

**LU-4c Happy Valley.** Development of a new “business park” at Happy Valley shall be a priority of the City. The site shall be planned as a mixed-use development. Development shall be consistent with the adopted Long Range Property Management Plan.

**LU-4d Conversion and reuse of industrial sites.** The City shall encourage the conversion and reuse of industrial sites such as closed lumber mill sites. An environmental site assessment will be required for sites where prior uses may have caused soil contamination. Manufacturing uses may be allowed on older I-G sites, where activities

are conducted in enclosed spaces and noise, light, air quality, or traffic impacts do not significantly impact adjacent uses.

- LU-4e **Incubator industrial sites.** Encourage small business incubator sites and cottage industries as part of the City's mix of industrial uses.
- LU-4f **Industrial performance standards.** The City shall periodically review and update adopted performance standards ensuring that new and upgraded industrial uses are attractively designed, keep noisy uses in enclosed spaces, do not emit light or glare off site, and contain other features that make them compatible with adjacent uses.
- LU-4g **Energy development, production, and use.** The City of Arcata recognizes the national need for the responsible exploration, recovery, and processing of the country's energy resources. The City also recognizes the potential adverse impacts such activities may have. Petroleum extraction is of particular concern on the North Coast. On- or offshore petroleum extraction will result in negative impacts on the climate and our coastal scenic resources, as well as our sensitive land and marine environments. Therefore, the City finds that, in order to minimize adverse impacts to such resources, on- and off-shore petroleum product exploration, recovery, and processing should be confined to those geographic areas which now accommodate these uses and activities. Consistent with this policy, the City shall prohibit on-shore petroleum exploration, production, and processing within its boundaries, and shall oppose the use of off-shore areas south and west of Arcata and in Humboldt County in general for such uses.

## **POLICY LU-5 PUBLIC FACILITIES**

**Objective.** Provide appropriate locations and sites for water storage and delivery; wastewater collection and treatment; drainage; solid waste management; fire protection; parks and recreation; civic and institutional uses; and education (public and private) facilities.

- LU-5a **Public Facility [PF] uses.** Public Facility land use category is applicable to those lands which are to be used for the various types of public facilities, except that some public facility uses are also allowed in other land-use categories. Public facility uses include certain uses which may be owned by private individuals, private organizations, or private institutions, as well as by government entities. Uses include schools, public services and administrative offices, wastewater and solid waste management facilities, public parking lots, parks and non-commercial recreation uses, golf courses, auditoriums, and other public assembly spaces, hospitals, cultural facilities, community gardens, communication (including telecommunications) and transportation facilities, and utilities. The types of uses allowable within this category shall be specified in Table LU-4
- LU-5b **Development standards for public facilities.** Standards applicable to the development of public facility uses shall be as specified in the zoning ordinance.

- LU-5c      Limitation of corporation yard expansion.** Development of the City corporation yard facilities shall be restricted to its existing boundaries. A landscape screen shall be maintained along the northern and eastern perimeter of the oxidation pond. Corporation yard relocation in response to climate change shall be considered during the timeframe of this General Plan.



**TABLE LU-5 SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR CERTAIN PUBLIC FACILITY AREAS**

AREA	SPECIFIC CONSIDERATION
Mad River Hospital Area  APN's 507-191-033, 507-191-076, 507-291-032 & 507-191-077	Hospital development on APN's 507-191-077 and 507-291-032 shall be developed consistent with the Master Site Plan adopted in 2011.

## **POLICY LU-6      AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE LANDS**

**Objectives.** Preserve and promote the sustained production of natural resources; preserve and promote the agricultural, forest, and aquaculture lands; and protect public natural resource/open space lands, including stream courses, wetlands, tidelands, and open space areas. Provide for complementary uses including farm worker housing, processing of agricultural and aquaculture products, and access for timber harvesting, in designated areas.

- LU-6a      Agricultural and Natural Resource classifications.** The following land use categories are applicable to agricultural and natural resource lands. Table LU-6 defines permitted uses and densities for each category.

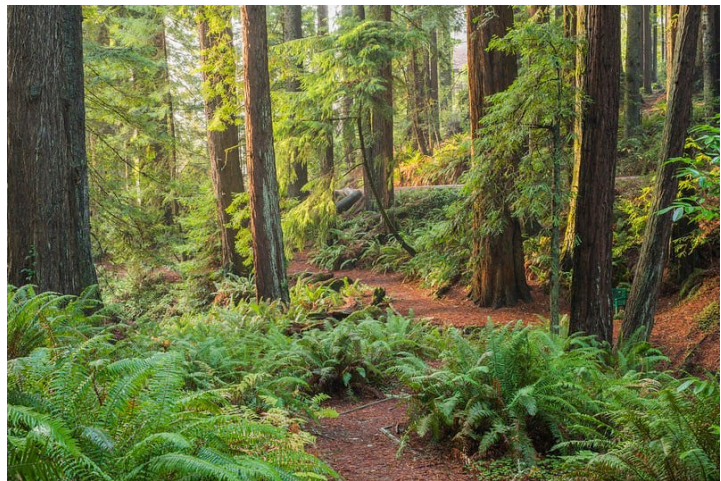
The Natural Resource [NR] designation is applied to public or private lands where protection of unique and/or sensitive natural resources, or managed production of resources, are the primary objectives. The Resource Conservation and Management element describes three subdistrict zones within the NR district which are designated: Wetland Stream Protection Zone (NR-WSP), Timber Production Zone (NR-TP), and Public Trust Zone (NR-PT). Examples of lands designated NR include the Community Forest (NR-TP), Janes Creek / McDaniel Slough Linear Park (NR-WSP), and the Arcata



Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary (NR-PT). Recreation may be considered as a secondary use when there are no adverse impacts to the protected resources. This designation is also applicable to productive resource lands, such as timber-producing forested areas (NR-TP) and aquaculture in Arcata Bay (NR-PT). The land between Cal Poly Humboldt and the Community Forest is an example of productive forest lands designated (NR-TP).

The NR designation is not applied to small or "pocket" wetlands, that exist on parcels large enough to accommodate development without adversely impacting the wetlands. The designation is also not applied to wetlands used as grazed agricultural lands, or riparian areas in other zones. These resource areas are protected by applicable stream and wetlands standards.

The Agriculture Exclusive [A-E] designation is intended to preserve land for agricultural production. The A-E designation is appropriate for lands with prime agricultural soils and wetlands that could be used as grazed agricultural lands. Structures associated with agricultural production, such as barns and farmhouses, are appropriate uses in A-E areas.



Agricultural and aquacultural product processing facilities for products originating outside of Arcata, and which are essentially industrial and require large-scale industrial buildings over 10,000 square feet are not appropriate for the A-E zone.

The Agriculture Residential [A-R] designation allows very low-density residential development on agricultural lands. Structures associated with agricultural production, such as barns and farmhouses, would be appropriate uses in these agricultural areas.

- LU-6b **Compatibility between agricultural and adjacent non-agricultural uses.** Agricultural practices can include application of fertilizer, operation of farm equipment, and use of local roads by slow moving and large vehicles. These practices can cause noise, health, light, odor, and travel impacts for residents in adjacent non-agricultural areas. To minimize these impacts, development of new non-agricultural uses that locate adjacent to existing agricultural uses shall maintain setbacks and establish buffers. The potential impacts of adjacent agricultural practices shall be required to be disclosed to future residents. Where new or expanding agricultural uses locate adjacent to existing non-agricultural areas, the agricultural user shall be responsible for maintaining setbacks and establishing buffers.

**TABLE LU-6 AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS**

ALLOWABLE USES	A-E	A-R	NR
RESIDENTIAL			
Single-family dwellings	X	X	X
Mobile / manufactured homes	X	X	
Secondary residential uses	X	X	
Bed & Breakfast (as secondary use with use permit)	X	X	
COMMERCIAL RECREATION & ENTERTAINMENT			
Coastal-dependent recreation	X		X
AGRICULTURE, MINING, SILVICULTURE & AQUACULTURE			
General agriculture, except keeping confined animals	X	X	
Agriculture, including keeping of confined animals	X	X	X
Agriculture-related processing facilities	X	X	X
Commercial greenhouse operations	X		X
Aggregate and other mining			X
Silvicultural operations			X
Aquacultural operations			X
NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION USES	X	X	X
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY			
Density Range	1 primary residential unit per parcel (and an accessory dwelling unit)	1 primary residential unit per parcel (and an accessory dwelling unit)	None

**LU-6c Protection of agricultural lands and uses within the City.** Agricultural lands represent an important natural resource within the City. The protection of agricultural lands shall include the following:

1. Lands designated Agricultural Exclusive [A-E] with Grade\* 1 and 2 soils are the City's prime agricultural resource; lands designated [A-E] with Grade\* 3 and 4 soils support less intensive uses than lands with higher grade soils, but are still viable for resource production. A-E lands shall not be developed, except for agricultural-related uses.
2. Agricultural uses on lands designated other than A-E shall be allowed and encouraged, consistent with other General Plan policies.
3. Existing agricultural practices on seasonal wetlands shall be allowed to continue, consistent with other General Plan policies.
4. The minimum lot size for lands designated A-E shall be twenty acres.

Private and public non-vehicular recreational activities such as hiking, horseback riding, fishing, hunting, and other compatible, low-impact recreational activities which do not require permanent structures, facilities, or foundations may be permitted in areas designated A-E if they do not interfere with adjacent agricultural uses, or limit potential of the site to return to agricultural use, or displace the wildlife utilizing the

area, especially in seasonal wetlands. This shall be implemented in the City's land use code.

LU-6d **Uses allowed in diked/reclaimed former tidelands.** Allowable uses and development in grazed or diked former tidelands are limited to uses compatible with the Public Trust. These uses are summarized below:

1. Agricultural operations limited to accessory structures, apiaries, field and truck crops, livestock raising, greenhouses (provided they are not located on slab foundations and crops are grown in the existing soil on site), and orchards.
2. Farm-related structures, including barns, sheds, and farmer-occupied housing, necessary for the performance of agricultural operations. Such structures may be located on an existing grazed or farmed wetland parcel only if no alternative upland location is available for such purpose and the structures are sited and designed to minimize adverse environmental effects on Public Trust resources and uses. No more than one primary and one secondary residential unit shall be allowed per parcel.
3. Restoration projects.
4. Nature study, aquaculture, and similar resource-dependent activities compatible with the Public Trust resources and uses.
5. Incidental public service purposes which may temporarily impact the resources of the area (such as burying cables or pipes).

LU-6e **Restoration of former tidelands.** The City of Arcata recognizes the need to restore former tidelands to salt marsh in order to adapt to rising sea levels and promote biodiversity and a safe environment. The City shall encourage and support the restoration of former tidelands, currently zoned Agricultural Residential [A-R] or Agricultural Exclusive [A-E].

LU-6f **Relationship with the Open Space and Resource Conservation and Management Elements.** The Open Space and Resource Conservation and Management Elements (General Plan Chapter 4) address the natural resource values of agricultural and natural resource lands. Lands designated Agriculture Exclusive [A-E] and Natural Resource [NR] are important components of City's open space, as defined in the Open Space Element. The conservation and management of these lands for their natural resource values, as well as their biological, hydrological and soil resources, are specifically addressed in the Resource Conservation and Management Element. The policies of both these elements shall apply to future agricultural and natural resource land use decisions.

### 2.1.3 IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES

#	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURE DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME
LU -1	<b>Zoning Amendments</b> Revise the City's Land Use Code and other zoning codes so zoning districts and land use regulations are consistent with the General Plan land use designations, densities, primary and secondary uses, building intensity, lot sizes, and coverages.	Community Development Department/ Planning Commission	Year 1
LU -2	<b>Conversion and Reuse of Inactive Mill and other Industrial Sites</b> Solicit property owner cooperation and pursue funding for environmental site assessments and clean-up of abandoned or inactive mill sites. Encourage conversion of these sites when proposed reuse is consistent with General Plan goals and policies.	Community Development Department/ Property Owners	Ongoing beginning in Year 2
LU -3	<b>Maintain Economic Development Strategic Plan</b> The Economic Development Strategic Plan is intended to be a guide for City actions pertaining to economic improvement. Update the report periodically for compliance with General Plan policies and the vision and needs of the community.	Community Development Department	Every five years; initiate update upon General Plan adoption.
LU -4	<b>Pedestrian-friendly activity centers</b> Update zoning to improve the walkability of commercial activity centers using such strategies as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish street-facing entrances as the norm through design standards and/or guidelines.</li> <li>• Update land use plan and zoning to concentrate retail land use designations in areas that are less than ½ mile across, and ideally along a single street that is less than 1000 feet from end to end.</li> <li>• Require maximum pedestrian block sizes of less than 300 feet in primary areas of activity.</li> </ul>	Community Development Department	Year 2
LU -5	<b>New Business Park Master Plans</b> Seek funding for and prepare business park master plans for the reuse of the Little Lake property for mixed-use development and the Happy Valley business park.	Community Development Department	Year 3
LU -6	<b>Planned Development Overlay</b> Evaluate application of Planned Development overlays throughout the City. Consider revising or removing PD overlays based on purpose and need.	Community Development Department/ Planning Commission	Year 2

#	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURE DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME
LU-7	<b>Commercial Visitor Serving Zoning Overlay</b> Evaluate the need for a Commercial Visitor Serving (CVS) zoning overlay to cover the area (or a portion) of the previous CVS land use designation in Valley West.	Community Development Department/ Planning Commission	Year 2
LU-8	<b>Residential-Low Density Rezone</b> City shall consider a rezone to consider allowing mixed uses and more housing in current R-L neighborhoods within walking distance of the Plaza and Cal Poly Humboldt, including: The Bayview, Northtown, Arcata Heights, and Sunset neighborhoods. Rezone in Neighborhood Conservation Areas should recognize key design characteristics of these neighborhoods.	Community Development Department/ Planning Commission	Year 4
LU-9	<b>Inclusionary Zoning</b> Adopt an ordinance implementing Inclusionary Zoning citywide requiring at a minimum 3% of the units reserved for very low-income, 6% for low-income, and 10% for moderate income households. The requirements will apply to projects with 15 or more base density units. The Council expects this measure to be initiated within three months of adoption of the General Plan.	Community Development Department	Immediate upon adoption



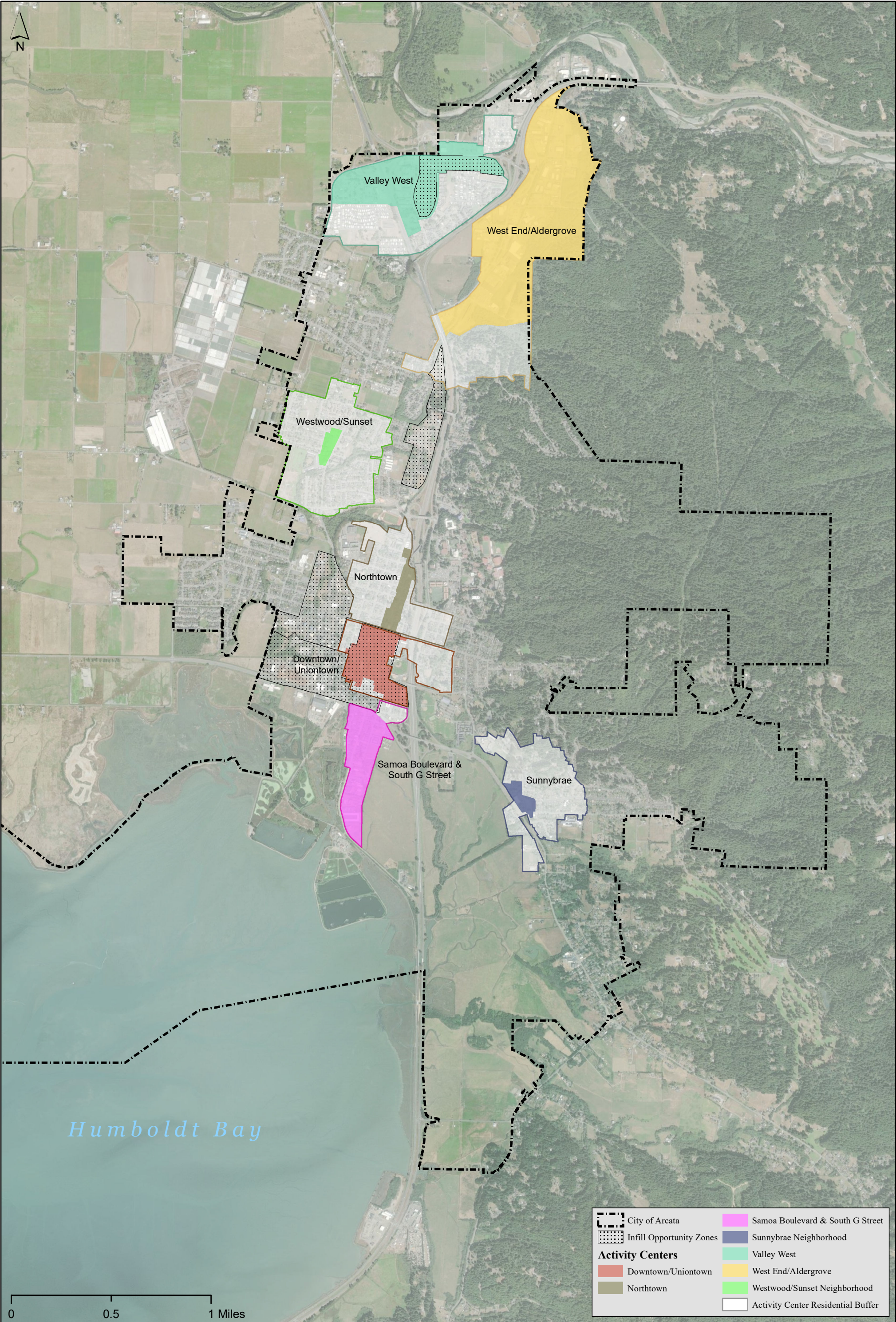


Figure LU-c City of Arcata Activity Centers

Created by Planwest Partners  
Map Date: 10/5/2023

