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## WESTERN GREENBELT PLAN

City of Arcata  
2018

*The Greenbelt protects environmentally sensitive areas and productive farmlands from urban development and sprawl.*

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The Western Greenbelt Plan serves as a flexible, comprehensive, and long-range planning document. It is a guide for identifying significant open space areas within the Greenbelt, as well as a guide for potential protection of agricultural land and natural resources, and it is a tool for planning and developing the entire Greenbelt system.

*A green belt or greenbelt is a policy and land use designation used in land use planning to retain areas of largely undeveloped, wild, or agricultural land surrounding or neighboring urban areas. Similar concepts are greenways or green wedges which have a linear character and may run through an urban area instead of around it. In essence, a green belt is an invisible line designating a border around a certain area, preventing development of the area and allowing wildlife to return and be established.*

A “greenbelt” is an area of land that is preserved for a non-urban land use. While established greenbelts serve a number of purposes, they tend to share two features suggested in the term “greenbelt”: an open landscape (“green”) and a linear shape (“belt”). Greenbelts have been established in many cities, serving in each case one or more purposes. Purposes of greenbelt designation may include:

- Providing for continued agricultural use;
- Delineating community boundaries.

A community separator function was called out as a key purpose of the establishment of the Western Greenbelt. It should be noted that strategies to protect Arcata’s Western Greenbelt area do not include pursuing annexation of the Greenbelt plan area unless that is part of another action.

## **Preface**

The Western Greenbelt has been mapped, see Appendices B and C. Over the years, the City has consistently prioritized the continuation of agricultural productivity with the intent to protect the prime resources that constitute the Arcata Bottom. The City has responded by developing and supporting strong protective policies, including a tight urban services boundary, protective agricultural zonings, annexation and right-to-farm policies. A small agricultural easement recently established at the historic Creamline Dairy, now home to Cypress Grove’s Cheese production facility, is a beginning towards realizing the goals that this plan envisions: to increase

the amount of permanently protected agricultural and natural area lands on the western edge of the City.

### **History of Agriculture on the Arcata Bottom**

#### **Arcata Bottom 1893. From Shuster Collection**

The Arcata Bottom is an estuarine floodplain that covers an area of 16 square miles, or approximately 7,000 acres. It is bounded to the north by the McKinleyville marine terrace, to the east by the Fickle Hill Ridge and by Humboldt Bay to the south. The western reach finds a narrow strip of sand dunes against the Pacific Ocean. The bottomlands and Arcata Bay are enriched by historical deposits from the Mad River through centuries of flood events and meandering courses. Floodplain landscapes are few in Humboldt County due to the recent geology of the Pacific Coast, which has resulted in a steep and mountainous terrain. Even though there are many large rivers, few areas along their reaches are wide enough to allow for large-scale deposition of river-borne sediment, which makes the Bottom a critically important landscape with rich soils and ample wildlife habitat (Haynes, 1986).



The first known people to live on the Bottom were the Batawat group of the Wiyot tribe. The Batawat group had numerous village, ceremonial and ancestral sites along the lower Mad River, bay and sloughs. Adhering to their cultural values only minimal alterations to the landscape were made to encourage the berries, wild parsley, potatoes and ferns that grew abundantly in the rich soils.

European settlement of the area started in 1850. Settlement brought about rapid decline of the native Wiyot people through slavery, genocide, disease, and forced relocation.

The first European residents brought rapid change to the landscape. Dikes and levees were constructed along the bay and sloughs to help prevent inundation, radically disrupting tidal exchanges while enabling agriculture to flourish. The first settlers grew barley, oats, peas and wheat in abundance. Grain and flourmills were constructed to process these bumper crops and at one time Humboldt County raised one-third of the oats produced in the state. Grain production diminished while potatoes grew in popularity and by 1870, the Arcata and Eel River bottomlands produced one-third of the potatoes grown in California. In fact, Humboldt County established its first agricultural reputation on the remarkable yield, size and quality of these potatoes. The late 1800's saw potato prices, freight costs and a worsening blight decrease profits and yield. Potatoes diminished and dairying took off in the late 1880's with the first creamery constructed on Upper Bay Road at the corner of Seidell in 1892.

By the turn of the century, the Mad River floodplain had been permanently imprinted with an agricultural landscape. Grain and potato production transitioned to dairy and by the latter part of the twentieth century creameries were abundant on the Bottom. To this day, dairying is the largest agricultural industry in the county. Original dairy homesteads with their associated barns and outbuildings scatter across the landscape, retaining a timeless and unique setting rarely found in California today.

In the last few decades, bulb and flower propagation has taken hold. Organic farming has also declared a growing place in the Arcata Bottom. Warren Creek Farms, Deep Seeded Farm and Tule Fog Farm now join Sun Valley Flower Farm and several dairies and cattle ranches on the western edge and beyond. The local market and support for organic fruits, vegetables and meat remains strong and continues to grow at a modest but steady pace. Historically along the western edge of Arcata, small farm subdivisions occurred and many of these smaller holdings are still present today. They have allowed for smaller organic operations to successfully move in and secure leases.

The rich soils needed to grow superb flowers, meat, and vegetables are the result of alluvial soils that have been deposited by the river over centuries. A narrow strip of prime Ferndale soil along Liscom Slough brings a subtle elevation above the surrounding terrain. The Loleta soil series is also present, and both of these prime soils skirt the western edge of the Arcata city limits.

Urban development pushed west unto these soils during the post-war timber boom, when housing for veterans returning from war and new workers coming to the region sparked Arcata's first housing subdivisions. Bloomfield Acres, Greenview Acres, Westwood Village and Pacific Manor are all subdivisions encroaching westward onto prime soils.

In the latter part of the last century, a large-scale annexation caught the attention of many citizens of Arcata who recognized that the open space and agricultural values represented by the bottomlands were important to preserve. Jane's Creek West, anticipated for the area just west of the City limits, involved the old Simpson mill site and surrounding prime agricultural lands.

### **City of Arcata Efforts to Preserve Agricultural Lands**

These rich soils, unique habitat, and historically infused landscape have not been overlooked over the years by the citizenry of Arcata. In 1975, Open Space and Conservation policies were established by the City. In 1989, the City updated these policies to address current growth and its impact to resource lands. A technical report identified and described Arcata's significant natural and open space resources, discussed development impacts to these resources and identified methods used to protect not only lands within the City, but also in the planning area. This report identified the two most critical resources as Arcata's agricultural land and soils and the hillside areas because, "they are the most affected by Arcata's growth and development patterns."

The City at this time recognized that agricultural land has value as open space when it is relatively undeveloped and without structures, offering a variety of visual experiences that offer aesthetic value. It also recognized that the continuance of open space values depends upon "maintaining the land in such open uses."

The City's technical report identified 1,222 acres (19%) of non-timber agricultural land within the City and 5,072 acres in the planning area with 83% of this in pasture, 6% in harvested food crops and 4 % in flowers and bulbs.

The City recognized at that time that growth of Arcata's residential areas created numerous

spaces where agricultural lands lie directly adjacent to residential areas, causing land use conflicts. It identified the creation of a “buffer” agricultural open space zoning between urban and agricultural zones as a mechanism that could be used to decrease this conflict. The technical report identified the most productive soils as those just north and west of Arcata’s urban areas and suggested that conservation easements could be utilized to protect these lands in perpetuity, since the methods utilized by the City -- zoning for agricultural use, the Urban Services Boundary, and the Williamson Act, -- were “weak and impermanent.”

The City of Arcata’s General Plan 2020 furthered all of these goals and more: “The agricultural lands in and around Arcata produce crops of raspberries, strawberries, lilies, daffodils, potatoes, corn, artichokes, hay (forage for cattle), and a number of other shallow rooted crops. There is community support for the continuation of dairy, beef, vegetable, fodder, and flower production in the City and the Planning Area, and recognition that protection of agricultural values, as well as open space and recreational values, is important.”

Humboldt County’s Bay Area Plan (1995) policy states that the “maximum amount of prime agricultural land shall be maintained in agricultural production...” and that conflicts shall be minimized between agricultural and urban land uses through “establishing stable boundaries separating urban and rural areas, including, where necessary, clearly defined buffer areas to minimize conflicts between agricultural and urban land uses.” Recently, the County of Humboldt included a Greenbelt Overlay as a strategy for planning for the Arcata Bottom in their General Plan update.

While agricultural policies of the Coastal Commission are currently highly protective of prime agricultural lands, a number of parcels outside of the Coastal Zone are left unprotected and vulnerable. The City of Arcata and the County of Humboldt have many policies and mechanisms in place to help protect these resources in the short term. Permanent protection is the intended goal of the City’s Western Greenbelt Plan.

### **Relationship to Other Plans**

#### ***City of Arcata General Plan 2020 Growth Management Element***

**GM-1d Greenbelt.** The rural and agricultural lands within the Planning Area are designated by the City as open space or greenbelt. The intent is that such lands shall not be developed with urban densities or uses and that land uses shall be limited to agricultural production and natural resources conservation.

#### ***Environmental Quality and Management***

**RC-5d Permanent protection for agricultural lands.** Protection of agricultural resources shall be secured through the purchase of conservation easements, development rights, and outright acquisition. The City shall work in conjunction with other entities such as land trusts, whenever possible, to preserve agricultural buffers and maintain and enhance agricultural uses on prime agricultural soils.

The Arcata General Plan 2020 also included implementation measures instructing the City to create two committees: the Open Space Committee and an Agricultural Advisory Committee. In 2000, the City created the Open Space Committee and in 2005 added the agricultural component to the committee.

The Committee's powers and duties are as follows:

- A. To serve in an advisory capacity to the City Council, Commissions, or City staff as appropriate in regard to matters that relate to policies affecting open space and agriculture.
- B. To participate in the preparation and development of a detailed open space program to implement the Open Space Element of the General Plan.
- C. To provide recommendations to the Council, Commissions, or City staff as appropriate on the acquisition and/or protection opportunities for open space and agricultural lands.
- D. To provide recommendations to the Council, Commissions or City staff as appropriate for specific actions to take to secure open space.
- E. To provide recommendations to the Council, Commissions or City staff as appropriate for promotion of sustainable agriculture.

***City Council adopted Goals for 2013-2014 includes the following:***

- 1) Evaluate and recommend open space funding mechanisms and options to generate revenue, and develop a management plan for the West Arcata greenbelt and open space & agriculture property purchased during the past five years.
- 2) Explore opportunities to acquire property or secure easements from willing sellers around the community forests and other open space lands.

The City of Arcata's Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP) for 2010-2014 states that the specialty agriculture, food and beverage industry is Arcata's second largest industry by number of workers, and is a target industry for the City's economic development. The EDSP's Sustainability Program strategies include encouraging local organic agriculture and agricultural commerce through promoting local produce/farm commodities and farm activities.



Arcata Bottom 1948

## Purpose and Goals

Currently, the City of Arcata owns and manages over 600 acres of agricultural land supporting cattle ranching, an educational Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and school gardens. The largest of these holdings, the Gannon Slough/Jacoby Creek Wildlife Area, located two miles south of the city center, creates a protected greenbelt of agriculture and wildlife habitat for the city. It is the purpose of this plan to create a similar agricultural greenbelt on the western edge of the city, while implementing the goals of the City of Arcata to permanently protect these valuable resources from urban development. The City of Arcata, through numerous policies and goals developed over many years, demonstrates a strong desire to protect the prime agricultural soils and lands on the western edge of the city limits. It is the purpose of this plan to implement these long standing goals.

Land competition, speculation and the prospect of urban encroachment threatens the economic viability of farms and livestock operations close to the city limits. Permanent open space protection of land within the Planning Area west of the city, which encompasses the entire Arcata Bottom, can significantly contribute toward permanently preserving lands adjacent to the city for important agricultural, scenic, natural resource, recreational and cultural values. This works in concert with State law that recognizes prime agricultural land as a limited and valuable resource discouraging its conversion to other uses. Protecting the rural working landscape of the Arcata Bottom is a goal that has been supported by the citizenry for generations. In a Farm Bureau survey completed in 2003, 92% of producers in Humboldt County agreed that current real estate prices have made it difficult to purchase or lease land for agricultural production. Eighty-four percent agree that the loss of productive land is a present threat to county agricultural production.



McDaniel Slough. South end of Western greenbelt: Kenworthy 2014

## Strategies

1. It is the intent of the City to protect agricultural and open space lands in the Arcata Bottom by acquiring or accepting conservation easements (partial interest) or land in fee (full interest) from willing landowners. The City of Arcata will continue to work cooperatively with willing landowners, public agencies and private conservation partners to conserve properties within the Greenbelt Area.
2. Maintain policies that promote the long-term agricultural and open space qualities of the lands on the western edge of Arcata from Humboldt Bay on the south, to the Mad River on the north to the Pacific Ocean on the west.
3. Incorporate passive use parks, trails and wildlife areas into the matrix of open space lands.
4. Work with UC Cooperative Extension to promote agritourism. Agritourism can include farm stands or shops, “U-pick,” farm stays, tours, on-farm classes, fairs, festivals, pumpkin patches, corn mazes, Christmas tree farms, winery weddings, orchard dinners, youth camps, barn dances, hunting or fishing, guest ranches, and more.
5. Explore the opportunity to utilize reclaimed wastewater from the Arcata Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) to be utilized for irrigation
6. Coordinate with the County of Humboldt to review development projects in the greenbelt area to ensure that the integrity of the greenbelt is maintained.
7. Establish a Parks, Open Space and Trails Fund. This Fund would be a dedicated source of funding that supports the operation and management of portions of the green infrastructure system. The City could work with a private financial institution to set up an investment account or work with a local foundation to establish the endowment. Contributions to the fund could be solicited from parks, open space and trail advocates, businesses, civic groups, and other foundations. The goal would be to establish a capital account that would earn interest and use the interest monies to support the green infrastructure maintenance and operations. Special events could be held with the sole purpose to raise capital money for the Fund. A special fund could also be used in the acquisition of high-priority properties that may be lost if not acquired by private sector. An example is the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway Legacy Fund in the state of Washington. The Mountains-to-Sound Greenway Legacy Fund is an endowment fund managed by The Seattle Foundation. Its purpose is the protection of the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway, for the public good, in perpetuity. It will be used to support restoration, enhancement, education and advocacy programs of the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway Trust. Arcata also has trust funds held at the Humboldt Area Foundation that include the “Arcata Forest Fund” and “Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary Fund.” These models could be expanded for the Western Greenbelt area.

The Western Greenbelt area is the equivalent of the City of Arcata’s Planning Area west of the city limits. Priority Greenbelt areas are identified within the Plan, to help implement and focus a strategy for permanently protecting agricultural and resource lands. The Western Greenbelt Plan maps do not identify specific parcels or convey specific offers of purchase, but establish areas of interest to the City for maintaining and communicating to the County of Humboldt priority lands.

The Greenbelt includes parcels within the city limits and parcels outside the city limits with 2,331 acres that are within Arcata’s Urban Services Area. It creates a community separator between Arcata’s residential neighborhoods and the County’s agricultural area west of the city.

Many of these properties are smaller parcels less than forty acres in size, and they often support small farms and local food production, some with direct marketing opportunities, such as CSA's. The Arcata Bottom lands, including lands to the west of the defined Greenbelt and within Arcata's Planning Area boundary, are largely devoted to larger farms, dairies, livestock ranches and other agricultural operations that contribute to the agricultural economy of the entire region and provide valuable open space and recreational opportunities for the citizens of Arcata. Bike riding, walking, jogging, kayaking, horseback riding and sight-seeing are recreational activities common across this scenic rural landscape. The Greenbelt Plan supports enhanced public access, including the Hammond Trail and California Coastal Trail, and trail connections under Highway 101 linking Wymore Lane to Heindon Road.

**The City will implement the following strategic methods towards these goals:**

- 1) Use a variety of tools such as conservation easements, fee acquisition, resale and lease as appropriate, to purchase and/or maintain agricultural uses.
- 2) Establish conservation partnerships to help facilitate the acquisition of easements and fee titles.
- 3) Work cooperatively with small agricultural operators to lease or buy back properties conserved by the Greenbelt Plan for the growing and marketing of locally grown crops.
- 4) Implement outreach and marketing to landowners in the Western Greenbelt to inform them of the benefits of participating in the conservation partnership.
- 5) Continue to support existing processing and marketing of agricultural products throughout the city, such as Farmer's Market and Foodworks, and will recognize and facilitate opportunities for growth in these areas.
- 6) Continue to encourage and hold agricultural easements deeded through the development approval process.
- 7) Continue to form relationships with agricultural partners that benefit the City and food security for the citizen's of Arcata such as incubator projects.
- 8) Consider annexation of permanently protected agricultural lands if it is beneficial to the City and property owner to do so.
- 9) Consider working with agricultural partners and related agencies to enhance interactive farm experiences for visitors such as farm stays and tours, educational and work programs.
- 10) Consider creating a permanent funding source for open space and agricultural lands such as a tax supported (sales, parcel, real estate transfer, etc.) Open Space District.

**Funding and Partner Opportunities**

**Northcoast Regional Land Trust** - a nonprofit organization with a focus of protecting land and water on nearly five million acres on California's North Coast encompassing Humboldt, Del Norte, and Trinity Counties (901 Samoa Bvd. Arcata, Ca. 95521 <http://nrlt.org>).

**Jacoby Creek Land Trust** - a community based organization dedicated to the protection of land with conservation values in the Jacoby Creek Valley, and around northern Humboldt Bay for scientific, historic, cultural, educational, recreational, scenic or open space values (PO Box 33; Bayside, Ca. 95524 <http://www.jclandtrust.org>).

**American Farmland Trust** - working with federal, state and local leaders and communities to develop legislation, implement policies and execute programs that keep farmers on their land and

protect our environment (1200 18th St. NW Suite 800, Washington, DC 20037 <http://www.farmland.org>).

**California State Coastal Conservancy** – a state agency that uses entrepreneurial techniques to purchase, protect, restore, and enhance coastal resources, and to provide access to the shore (1300 Broadway, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor, Oakland, California 94612-2530 <http://scc.ca.gov>).

**Land Trust Alliance** - promotes voluntary private land conservation to benefit communities and natural systems (1660 L Street NW, Suite 1100 Washington, DC 20036 <http://www.landtrustalliance.org>).

**The Nature Conservancy** - works with government officials and partners to support public policies that protect our lands and waters and balance growing development needs with those of nature; build relationships with communities, companies and governments; and increases funding for large-scale conservation projects (4245 North Fairfax Drive, Suite 100 Arlington, VA 22203-1606 <http://www.nature.org>).

**The Wildlands Conservancy** - overarching goal is to call people back to the beauty, wonder, and inspiration of the natural world and to encourage people to be participants in saving our magnificent landscapes and restoring California's rich biological diversity. Currently owns and operates California's largest nonprofit nature preserve system including the Eel River Estuary Preserve (9611 Oak Glen Road, Bldg. #12 Oak Glen, CA 92399 <http://www.wildlandsconservancy.org> ).

**The Trust for Public Land** – a national nonprofit that conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, gardens, historic sites, rural lands, and other natural places (101 Montgomery Street, Suite 900 San Francisco, CA 94104 <http://www.tpl.org>).

**United States Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture** - advancing knowledge for agriculture, the environment, human health and well-being, and communities by supporting [research](#), [education](#), and [extension](#) programs in the Land-Grant University System and other partner organizations. NIFA doesn't perform actual research, education, and extension but rather helps fund it at the state and local level and provides program leadership in these areas (1400 Independence Avenue SW., Stop 2201 Washington, DC 20250-2201 <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding>).

**Natural Resources Conservation Service Farm and Ranchland Protection Program** -helps purchase development rights to keep productive farm and ranchland in agricultural uses. The Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) provides matching funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farm and ranchland in agricultural uses. Working through existing programs, USDA partners with State, tribal, or local governments and non-governmental organizations to acquire conservation easements or other interests in land from landowners. USDA provides up to 50 percent of the fair market easement value of the conservation easement (<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/easements/farmranch>).

## **Appendix A – Policies and Information Sources**

### **Policies in General Plan 2020: Agriculture**

#### **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, except in the coastal zone where the minimum lot size shall be sixty acres. Designated uses for agricultural lands within the coastal zone shall include the following:
  - The "Permitted Uses" section shall include: "Agricultural Structures, including greenhouses or other nursery structures erected over exposed soil."
  - The "Conditionally Permitted Uses" section shall include: Greenhouses or other nursery structures erected on concrete perimeter foundations may be permitted if no less environmentally damaging alternate is available."
  - Greenhouses on slab foundations are prohibited.

#### **LU-1e Protection of natural resources and agricultural lands.**

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 conversion to other non-compatible uses shall be prohibited.

### **Resource Conservation and Management**

#### **Overview of agricultural resources.**

Agricultural lands represent an important natural resource within the City. Arcata's agricultural lands are currently used primarily for flowers, silage and hay production, food production, and livestock grazing. The Ferndale, Russ, and Loleta series are Arcata's most productive agricultural soils.

The agricultural lands in and around Arcata produce crops of raspberries, strawberries, lilies, daffodils, potatoes, corn, artichokes, hay (forage for cattle), and a number of other shallow rooted crops. There is community support for the continuation of dairy, beef, vegetable, fodder, and flower production in the City and the Planning Area, and recognition that protection of agricultural values, as well as open space and recreational values, is important.

Arcata's agricultural lands include farmed wetlands. Most of the farmed wetland areas around Humboldt Bay are former tidelands, once owned by the State, which private parties acquired from the State under the Swamp and Overflowed Lands Act. These lands were diked/reclaimed around the turn of the Century.

### **Environmental Quality and Management**

These areas are below ten feet in elevation, have relatively impermeable soils, and retain run-off for long periods of time. While the State conveyed the fee title interest in these former tidelands, they are still subject to an easement under the Public Trust Doctrine, for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of this state. Much of this Public Trust land bordering Arcata bay can provide important wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities.

These farmed wetlands are no longer salt and brackish wetlands, but now function as freshwater wetlands, with meandering year-round creek and slough channels. Arcata's diked former tideland areas typically include the less productive types of Loleta and Bayside soils and are generally used for pasture.

Soil classifications are based on the most recent surveys. In the event that an updated soil survey is completed in the future, the classifications and associated mapping shall be changed accordingly.

## **POLICY RC-5 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

**Objective.** Protect and enhance agricultural uses on prime agricultural lands within the City, and encourage more productive agricultural use of agriculturally suitable lands.

**RC-5a Promotion of and participation in agricultural Production within the City.** Diverse and intensive agricultural production and increased participation shall be promoted, in order to maintain the value of agricultural lands, improve the economic base, and increase employment and food production. The City does not, however, advocate more intensive agricultural uses and practices that would have adverse environmental impacts. Agricultural operations, such as Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) are strongly encouraged.

### **RC-5b Agricultural Advisory Committee.**

The City shall appoint an Agricultural Advisory Committee to advise on agricultural issues and programs. The responsibilities of the committee shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Development of a Community and Farm Protection Ordinance, as well as conflict resolution protocol.
2. Development of programs (educational, leasing, and purchase) that will encourage responsible productive uses of agricultural lands.
3. Identification of lands for preservation and/or acquisition programs.
4. Maintain a database of resources available to farmers, such as Williamson Act advantages, conservation easements, organic farming practices, and marketing strategies.

### **RC-5c Community and farm protection.**

Maintaining a compatible relationship between agricultural and residential uses will be based on:

1. Recognizing the rights of owners of productive agricultural land to make agricultural use of their land.
2. Identifying and minimizing potential conflicts between agricultural operations and adjacent residential, commercial, and community facility uses.
3. A Community and Farm Protection Ordinance shall provide a foundation for minimizing conflicts, educating the community, and a protocol for mediating unresolved disputes. Once adopted, the ordinance shall be mailed to all owners of agricultural and adjacent lands and disclosed to affected property owners at the time of parcel transfer.

## **Environmental Quality and Management**

**RC-5d Permanent protection for agricultural lands.** Protection of agricultural resources shall be secured through the purchase of conservation easements, development rights, and outright acquisition. The City shall work in conjunction with other entities such as land trusts, whenever possible, to preserve agricultural buffers and maintain and enhance agricultural uses on prime agricultural soils.

### **The following is from the growth management section:**

GM-3c Criteria for annexation of undeveloped land areas. All undeveloped lands proposed for annexation shall be added to the City only if the following criteria are met. The proposed annexation area shall:

1. Be within Urban Services Boundary and adjacent to existing urban development.
2. Not exceed the City's capacity to provide services and infrastructure to accommodate proposed development.
3. Have annexation timed so that availability of services and infrastructure is concurrent with need.
4. Have a positive or neutral fiscal impact, or other overriding public benefits;
5. Be in compliance with General Plan policies.
6. Not include prime agriculture land (Storie Index 60 or higher) other than with designation and pre-zone as Agriculture-Exclusive [A-E].

### **Guiding Principles and Goals. GP2020 growth element:**

- A. Lands in the Sphere of Influence should remain undeveloped until they are annexed to the City.
- B. Preserve the rural character and promote resource protection in the Planning Area.
- C. Maintain an Urban Services Boundary that serves only the existing urban area, and areas appropriate for development by the year 2020.
- D. Locate new urban development in areas contiguous to existing urban uses.
- E. Protect flood-prone, steeply sloped, streamside buffer areas and productive natural resource, agricultural, and forest lands from urban development.
- F. Incorporate greenbelts, designated natural areas, and other open space into the planning area and Sphere of Influence in order to maintain an identity separate from surrounding communities.
- G. Manage the timing and amount of growth in accordance with the ability to maintain acceptable levels of service and quality of life for existing and new residents

## **Primary Methods Key Actions/Activities**

### **Purchase**

Establish funding mechanisms for acquisition (fee of conservation easement) or land banking to create new buffers and/or to purchase sensitive lands between urban development and existing open space resources.

### **Regulation**

General Plan designations Assure appropriate uses and densities

Zoning classifications [same]

Cautious approach to annexation Avoid piecemeal or premature annexation

## **Secondary Methods Key Actions/Activities**

### **Provide protective planning context**

Coordination with other agencies Coordinate with LAFCo annexation policies and with County density standards

Land use compatibility Avoid uses that would diminish the agriculture/open space character of the greenbelt

Right-to-farm legislation Assure availability to farmers of standard farming practices

Mitigation ordinances

Require new development on farmland to secure for agriculture an equivalent (or greater) amount of other farmland

### **Assure appropriate land market conditions**

Minimize competition for land Manage development process within the greenbelt to avoid new uses or land divisions that might diminish agricultural focus

Channel urban growth elsewhere Assure that neighboring urban communities adequately respond to growth needs within their corporate limits

Avoid urban infrastructure Avoid extension of water or sewer lines that would increase potential Development.

### **Strengthen agricultural enterprises**

Tax relief Support measures that use agriculture/open space values as the basis for property taxation

Value-added enterprises Allow suitable onsite diversification

Branding Establish a market identity for local agricultural products

### **Assure supportive economic context**

Maintain agricultural infrastructure Assure that direct inputs to agriculture (like water supply) and indirect inputs (finance, warehousing and shipping, materials and supplies, labor) remain available

Farm-friendly policies and programs

Determine whether public agency strategies such as permit simplification are needed

Economic development component

Integrate local agriculture into regional and City economic development planning

## **Build Public Support**

Gain stakeholder consensus Communicate greenbelt purpose/needs to interested parties

Use outreach and education to garner public support

Establish clear statement of public purpose and strengthen public understanding and participation

## **Information Sources**

In preparing the Greenbelt Plan a variety of sources of information contributed to its content. The following is a listing of documents and individuals that were consulted in the preparation of the Plan:

Open Space and Conservation Element's Technical Report. City of Arcata 1989.

City of Arcata's Open Space Program. Adopted 1999.

City of Arcata's General Plan 2020. Adopted October 4, 2000.

City of Arcata's Land Use Code. Adopted 2009.

Humboldt Bay Area Plan. Humboldt County Local Coastal Program. April 1995.

Council Goals 2012/2013. Adopted June 6, 2012.

Acquisition Plan 2000. Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District.

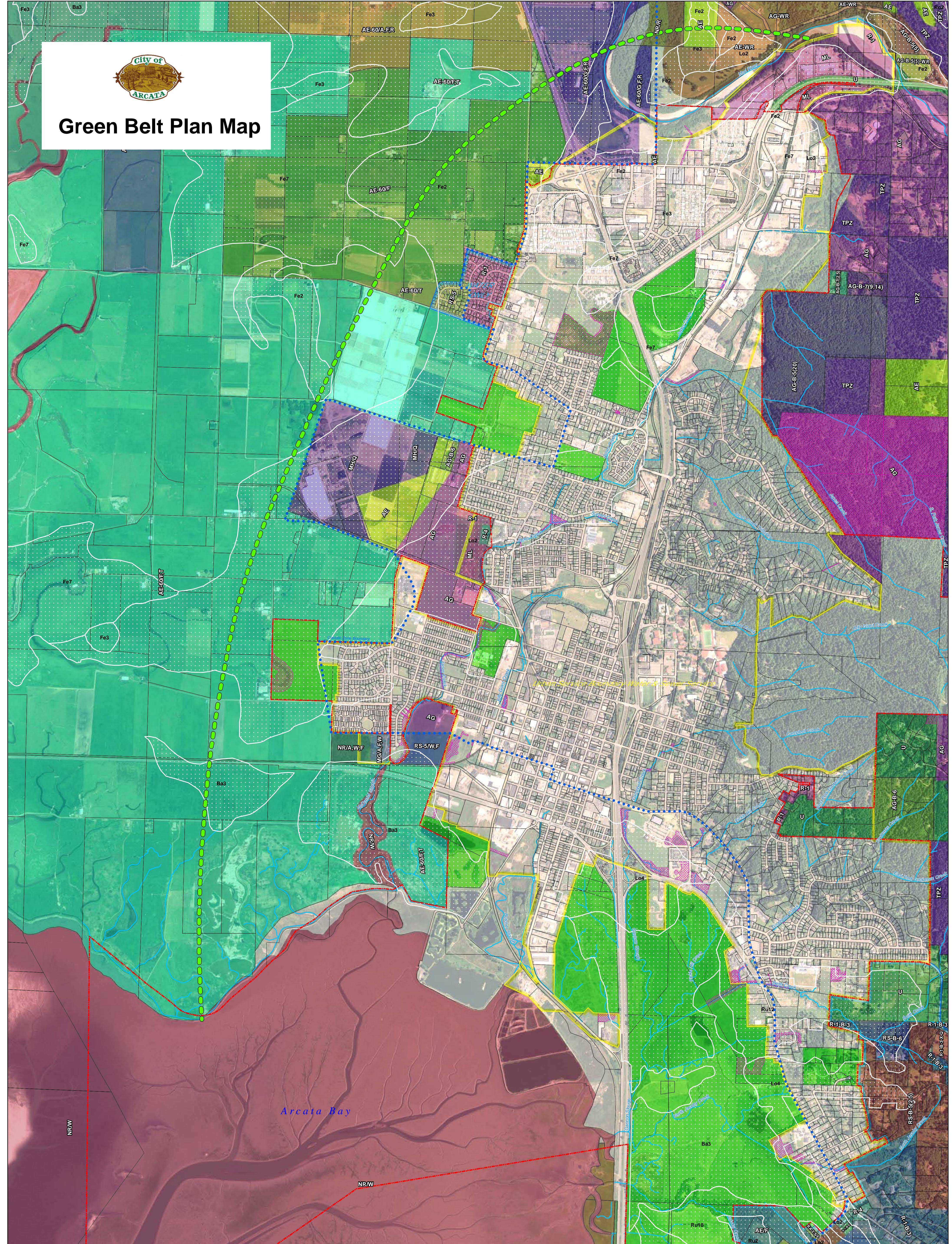
Food, Fiber and Flowers. A Special Report on Agriculture in Humboldt County. Spring 2000.

<http://mtsgreenway.org/donate/more-ways-to-supportcata> Bottoms: Flooding on a Changing Landscape. Christopher Haynes. 1986.

## **Appendix B – Greenbelt Plan Map (Zoning)**



# Green Belt Plan Map



## **Humboldt County Zoning**

AE	AG-B-5(20)	MH/Q
AE-60/A,B,F,T	AG-B-5(5)	ML
AE-60/A,F,R	AG-B-5(5)-P	NR/A,W,F
AE-60/A,F,T	AG-B-5(5)-WR	NR/R
AE-60/F	AG-B-6	NR/W
AE-60/F,T	AG-B-7(2.5)	NR/W,D
AE-60/G,F,R	AG-B-7(9.14)	PF2/A
AE-60/T	AG-WR	R-1
AE-B5(40)	CITY OF EUREKA	R-1-B-3
AE-WR	CR/A	R-1-B-3-X-Q
AE/F	MG/A	R-1-B-4

The logo for the City of Arcata GIS department. It features the words "City of" at the top and "GIS" in large, bold, white letters in the center, all contained within a green and blue circular emblem. Below "GIS" is the word "ARCATA" in a smaller, white, serif font.



## Western Greenbelt Plan Map Appendix C

