

## General Plan Update “Bike Rack” (current through 03/27/2023)

### 1. Land Use-Progress through March 27, 2023

Items in grey signify areas of discussion where no decision has yet been made.

#### Commissioner Pitch for Amendment

1. I propose changing policy **LU-1c** as follows:
  - a. **Prioritization of transit and active transportation.** Reduce or eliminate minimum parking requirements **citywide**. ~~in areas where transit and active transportation is planned to support the transportation needs of the community, including neighborhoods where biking infrastructure, trails, complete streets, and transit is or is planned to be accessible.~~
    - i. I recognize that this policy was already changed based on my comments at a previous meeting. However, I worry that this current language accepts that there are areas of the city that we are choosing to leave un-walkable. My proposal makes this policy inclusive of the entire city.
2. **LU-2b: Diversity and choice in residential environments and LU-2c: Planned Development - residential.** These two sections represent another opportunity to incorporate wording to indicate that the City encourages housing for all, including currently unhoused people. I can suggest wording if we choose to do so.
3. **LU-6c: Protection of agricultural lands and uses within the City.** The second paragraph starts with “Private and public non-vehicular recreational activities such as hiking, riding, fishing, hunting, and other recreational activities...” I suggest we specify that the riding is non-motorized by adding that to the wording: “Private and public non-vehicular recreational activities such as hiking, **non-motorized** riding, fishing, hunting, and other recreational activities...” [how does this conflict with current policy]
4. **LU-1d: Streamlined Review and Standards in Infill Opportunity Zones:** We still haven’t discussed what this will be, either in the Gateway, much less city-wide. *When will we discuss and resolve this? Let’s not assume the model we adopt for the Gateway will hold City-wide. But it would be VERY CONFUSING if it doesn’t!* I’m very uncomfortable including this as a policy unless we have those discussions BEFORE making a recommendation to the City Council. *I recommend changing this policy to CONSIDER adopting streamlined review and standards for Infill Opportunity “Zones”.* Unless we have already addressed this in depth, include developing and adopting those changes as in implementation action.
5. **LU-1j: Encourage Valley West’s growth as a major community center for north Arcata:** Eliminate the sentence “High density residential use in the Valley West Infill Opportunity Area will be streamline”. It seems this is already part of the Infill Opportunity policy elsewhere, and we still haven’t figured out what that “streamlining” will be. [develop objective standards to guide development review and approval...] staff needs to come back with these first.

6. **LU-3a Commercial-Central[C-C]** : ‘The Commercial-Central Zone will continue to have no upper density limit’. *ADD: however, conditions of permit approval must avoid dangerous effects on public safety.*
7. **Table LU-4 INDUSTRIAL / PUBLIC FACILITY LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS**
  - a. “EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL & RELIGIOUS USES” are not listed for either of the Industrial zones. Would this prohibit vocational education facilities on an industrial site? (I support prohibiting K-12, daycare, or preschool facilities in Industrial zones.)
  - b. What is the point in including RELIGIOUS USES in this category? Can we eliminate mention of “Religious Uses” in this part of the Land Use element? (It doesn’t show up there in our current LUC.) Remembering 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment rights, the City has little regulatory authority over “Religious Uses” beyond enforcing its own property rights on city-owned sites, and safety rules.
  - c. Residential uses are allowed in I-L zones, though limited and requiring Use Permits. When we amend the Land Use Code and its Use Permit standards for residential uses of I-L sites, let’s think clearly and protectively about what IS allowed there, and who is vulnerable to those hazards (even in I-L permitted uses).
  - d. Urban Agriculture: I suggest allowing some “urban agriculture” on I-G and I-L sites, perhaps with a Use Permit to set appropriate conditions. Why is urban agriculture NOT allowed on Industrial sites (I-G or I-L), especially considering what IS allowed on them, and considering that industrial factories (with large-scale industrial structures) have been allowed on Ag Exclusive land? Which leads to ...
8. **LU-1q State mandated housing production** -- The new proposed **LU-1q** works well. I like that this policy represents a City commitment to advocating for reasonable state approaches to housing production in a small city like Arcata. However, **I suggest ending the policy statement with “... meet both state objectives and City need for housing,” omitting the end of the draft sentence.** The plan says that elsewhere.
  - a. **LU-1q 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 ~~development that produces high-density, infill housing in mixed-use or residential projects in appropriately zoned and designated areas.~~
9. **New Policy LU-6f Restoration of former tidelands.** I'd like to propose an additional land use policy for inclusion in the Ag section of the land use element.
  - a. **LU-6f 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].

## Ideas for Discussion

1. **LU-1k: Support and revitalize other existing neighborhood and commercial activity areas.** This section promotes travel by walking, biking, and transit. One of its intentions to reduce vehicle miles traveled. Yet, it also encourages “improvement of parking.” Do we want to also encourage the conversion of parking lots to other uses, such as housing, walkways, playgrounds, etc.?
2. Housing density limits are not expressed quantitatively in this element. Nonetheless, I suggest we consider adding language to address the possibility of housing bonuses affecting the overall density of development.
  - b. LU-2a: Residential Land Use Classifications. This section discusses different residential density zones. Given that the density bonus can be large and the rules covering the bonus are evolving rapidly, we can add language here so that we end up with a reasonable densities we can live with.
  - c. LU-3a: Commercial–Central (C-C): The last sentence reads, “The Commercial-Central Zone will continue to have no upper density limit.” Do we really want to say that? Would a 12-story building be allowed in this district?
3. **LU-1k: Support and revitalize other existing neighborhood and commercial activity areas.** Although not a “neighborhood” center, it would also help to have some explicit mention of Uniontown, especially in light of AB 2011. Uniontown might be a prime target for mixed use redevelopment (and a reasonable one), if not under its current owners, then under some future ownership by 2045.
4. **LU-2: Residential Land use** That’s real estate-talk. Change that to “residents.” The policy refers to “in higher density developments”. Clarify: Does that refer to RM and RH only? What about in those mixed use developments we’re expecting, and in :PD Planned Developments?
5. **LU-2c: Planned Development – residential: Add:** Planned Development may also incorporate non-residential uses *where they will not reduce safety or livability for residents, and must include adequate walkways, and set conditions for commercial operations.* (Avoid a scenario where commercial use is added to a residential :PD and brings dangerous vehicle traffic or constant loud noise into a previously kid-friendly, quiet area.)
  - a. The Implementation Measures list calls for the City to review sites in the :PD combining zone, and possibly releasing some of them from :PD requirements. However, new state housing laws already limit City discretion for projects that include affordable housing, and exempt some of those projects from CEQA review. The City should generally retain the discretionary review that the :PD combining zone provides, especially for already developed sites, to ensure that intensified development there does not threaten safety or existing environmental assets and recreational spaces.
6. **LU-3a Commercial use classifications** “Large scale retail uses shall require a use permit due to evaluate...” *Can we add a threshold size or scale?*
  - a. “Potential impact on existing and projected traffic conditions” – Add: pedestrian and residents’ safety
7. **Table LU34 COMMERCIAL LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS:** (Questions mainly)
  - a. What is the rationale for adding Travel trailer [RV] parks to principally permitted uses in the C-G zone?

- b. Will eliminating animal sales and services make existing pet stores and veterinary services in C-G non-conforming? Or are these rolled into some larger category?
  - c. Add to the “Gas sales” category electric vehicle charging stations? What about zip car rentals, etc?
  - d. Restaurants, Bars, Taverns and pubs, nighclubs: Will bars still require a Use Permit? If we’re now allowing on-site cannabis consumption, should these be added to the list?
  - e. Commercial Recreation / Entertainment: How come “outdoor recreation uses and services” are NOT allowed in either the C-C or C-M zones? Should they be?
  - f. Educational, Cultural & Religious Uses: Since no “Religious Uses” are actually listed, and since the City has limited authority to regulate them anyway, should we take “Religious Uses” off the category title? (AND ... Does the City have discussion / condition procedures set up for when an Arcata church decides XYZ is actually a religious use, and demands services to support it?)
  - g. Urban Agriculture: Not allowed in the C-C zone. So, NO herb or vegetable gardens on a temporarily vacant lot downtown? What about as an accessory use? (No commercial herb gardens in backyards and roofs? Or is that allowed under some other rule?)
  - h. Commercial – General This is mainly Valley West. With a max residential density up to 50 “units” per acre in addition to commercial uses on the same site (???), with density bonuses likely to allow up to 90 dwellings per acre, what do we envision in Valley West for this allowable density, especially in light of AB 2011?
8. **LU-3e Commercial – Central** : Residential use is allowed as the primary use on vacant sites. Presumably, NO maximum density & no parking? Given current vacancy rates, may existing commercial buildings be converted to residential use anywhere in C-C? [Staff Response - I think that is the next step. This could be an implementation measure]
9. **LU-4b Little Lake** : The City has sat on cleaning up its Little Lake site for 20 years. There’s some new activity there now. (I’d heard “staging and material storage” for the WWTP upgrades?) The draft policy is: “... 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.” That plan indicates the site should be used for “economic development,” which presumably means jobs. But the property management plan doesn’t go further than this. *I hope* our Sea Level Rise discussions on Tuesday will help us envision what types of structures could be safely allowed on that site – IF ANY – and strongly recommend against allowing permanent structures, or ANY “mixed use” that includes housing.

Throughout the Plan, let’s replace the term “passive recreational uses” with something that actually relates to land use / infrastructure, like “recreation facilities for walking, running, sitting, nature observation, and social interaction.” It’s more words, but better connotation in our sports-dominated society. [Staff response – no mixed use or residential use is planned on this site]

10. **Table LU-6: AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCE LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS**

- a. Coastal-dependent recreation in the A-E zone: What would this be? Duck hunting blinds? Kayak docks & rentals?
- b. Keeping confined animals isn’t allowed in the A-R zone. No backyard hen coop? No backyard goat pen? It’s odd that hens are allowed in residential zones but not in an ag

zone. It might help to re-state the list of allowable uses to reflect scale of confined animal keeping (I think the LUC does this.)

- c. "Silvicultural operations" and "Aquacultural operations" are not allowed in either agricultural zone. It might make sense to allow tree nurseries and fish ponds, for example, with a Use Permit to protect groundwater and prevent noxious odors.
- d. Farm worker housing policy is clear for diked/ reclaimed former tidelands (**LU-6d2**) but not for other ag lands. Farm worker housing should count as "residential units" and "dwelling units" with standards identical to other housing or ADUs.

11. **2.3 IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES TABLE** – This is a bare-bones list, focusing on the near-term, with little except the "ongoing" items and Economic Development Strategic Plan 5-year updates that carries us beyond the first couple of years. It would be great to develop a much more substantial list of implementation actions to achieve the goals of the many policies in the Land Use element.

- a. It would help to include specific implementation measures for Policy LU-1b "Promotion of infill development and designated Infill Opportunity Zones," if only to identify a time frame for action.
- b. LU-4 Pedestrian-friendly activity centers: These measures are more policies themselves, than specific implementation actions, and will be only parts of the types of form-based standards that would be needed to implement them. Once we have experience with a form based code in the Gateway, would it make sense to include an implementation measure to consider developing appropriate standards for the other activity centers?
- c. LU-5 Business park plans: The city should seriously revisit the "business park" master plan idea for Little Lake, even though the City is committed to putting those 12 acres to some economic use. Developing a site plan for Little Lake: Yes. But let's reconsider calling it a "business park."
- d. LU-6 Planned Development Overlay: An inventory of :PD sites will be useful. (See comments above.) But beware of using this review to eliminate City development guidance and discretion as a gift to developers.
- e. LU-7 Commercial Visitor Serving Overlay – Is there a rationale for retaining the Visitor Serving zoning designation? It seems the proposed Land Use classification system has already assumed that the Commercial General classification is appropriate for Valley West, especially as so many of the motels there no longer serve "visitors."