

## MEMORANDUM

RE: Community Vision Statement

TO: City of Arcata Planning Commission

FROM: Delo Freitas, Senior Planner

Related engagement to date includes:

- Engagement in the last several years relevant to the SIRP includes the 2019 Climate Resilience Forum; and the 2019 Housing Element/Infill Market Study Engagement Report.
- Engagement in 2020 and 2021, including the December 2020 and February 2021 goal setting; the presentation to the HSU Associated Students Board; the Council Annual Goal Setting interviews; Council canvassing report-outs on themes from campaigning.

Community visioning at the beginning of this long-range planning effort aligned with feedback received on draft planning documents, which suggests that generally speaking people who live in Arcata love Arcata for the community and amenities this place offers, but there was an interest in speaking to the need for more support to ensure a stable and healthy future here for all. Some small tweaks to the content of the vision statement have been identified, including focusing more energy on Valley West, investing in the arts, and continuing to invest in both the mental and physical health of the community.

Common themes included:

1. Prioritizing Sustainability, efficient use of resources/land/energy.
2. Climate change/sea level rise, preparation and armoring, reducing GHGs.
3. Re-connecting with local indigenous communities.
4. Civic engagement and building power within community, including more diverse representation; Arcata connections/collaborations/communications.
5. Focusing investment beyond the core downtown into areas like Valley West-need to increase safety, address nuisances, provide services, address racial inequities.
6. Art as community beautifier and tool for healing and creative expression
7. Racial equity/Arcata for all including accessibility needs.
8. Youth/child support, care, representation, engagement
9. Sustaining/strengthening relationship with HSU
10. Thoughtful city growth-both infill and protection of greenspace, growth management.
11. Mobility and multi-modal investment (bike/ped/bus)
12. Health-mental, physical, spiritual, including youth health and homeless services.
13. Economic development, including HSU student pipeline, housing affordability, job support and training.
14. Human-centered design, including safe streets, edible landscaping, gathering spaces, art, greenspace.
15. Access to housing, affordable housing for rent and homeownership, including housing for CalPoly students, housing for seniors, housing for families.

The updates to the community vision statement are therefore minor and reflect some of the key themes that staff heard during the two visioning sessions we held in late 2020 and early 2021, as well as the results of the visioning survey, which was taken by roughly 500 participants and was open for one full calendar year.

Arcata citizens prioritize the environment and natural resources, as well as both living well and living sustainably. Thoughtful growth that prioritizes infill and enhancement of existing activity centers was also generally supported. Modifications to the vision statement are therefore minor and include: 1) enhancing language around infill development and activity centers; 2) creating language regarding tribal lands acknowledgment and racial equity within the city, and 3) identifying healthy communities and healthy behaviors as key to Arcata's success.

Two options have been provided for your review; the content of both is essentially similar but one option retains the original form of the city's current vision statement, and the second option is a suggested reorganization provided by Change Lab Solutions as part of their review of the General Plan for health and equity applications.

Both versions are draft and may be further refined by the Planning Commission in advance of City Council review. It is staff's recommendation that the vision statement philosophy remain substantially similar to the existing statement, with a simplified framework.