

In the policy mapping matrix, it is clear to see the hard work the planning staff has put into thoughtful, inclusive and future-minded policies for the City of Arcata and its residents. From transportation systems that support a car-free lifestyle and multi-modal form of daily commuting, to the design elements that would support a new form-based code for the city. The proposed plans are balanced, and well received. I especially want to commend the efforts to include mixed income neighborhoods and provisions for new home ownership in the proposed code. I support an implementation of these new codes in the general plan as opposed to only segregating new policy in the Gateway area. Increasing density across the city will help to ensure we can protect our beautiful slice of the planet.

There are only a few minor changes that I would like to propose as an alteration to what is outlined here now:

1. CM-5e include the use of scooters and motor assisted bicycles in infrastructure plans to ensure safety measures are in place as motor assisted (non-vehicular) means of transportation continue to grow. This would be to ensure proper protocols, safety measures and infrastructure to reduce the number of pedestrian or vehicle accidents.
2. D-1a: include provisions for environmentally friendly materials in “quality materials” to be able to guide future developments in a carbon-neutral or carbon-negative direction.
3. D-4a: Midblock Passageways: consider including specific design requirements to support green alleyways / “green street” infrastructure (as mentioned in GA-7a.6)
4. D-81. Consider a future allocation for a percentage of development costs to go towards public art installations and support for non-profit/community run arts programs (such as access to workshops, tools, etc.) to support the development and creation of high-quality public art.
5. GA-6f: Include “pedestrian-only” zoning in the proposed new public open space to support more pedestrian activity, seasonal street fairs / public outdoor events and walkable shopping and dining experiences.
6. LU-1r: Consider adding provisions (following Eureka’s Planning Code for Mixed Use Zoning) which would allow new developments with residential use to increase the maximum height by an additional story for 20% of the building footprint.
7. I would support including, not deleting, 5d. Incentivizing Artist Housing and Cultural Spaces as Community Amenities. Live/work units, deed-restricted low income housing and creating amenities to attracting artists (such as shared workspaces) are an invaluable asset to our community and the existing residents that are experiencing the first wave of displacement as Arcata begins to develop and expand.
8. 9z. I would also support the inclusion of 9z. To allow for more streamlined development process and increased development intensity for projects that provide enhanced architectural designs above the minimum. Beautiful cityscapes are indeed a community benefit and developers who go above and beyond should be rewarded. This will curtail unsightly and “bare minimum designs” in place of projects that include beauty as a standard for new building projects.
9. 3f I think it is pertinent to include 3f. Even if similar language exists in the Housing Element. It is crucial to call for the creation of affordable housing units including rent-restricted units, alternative ownership models such as equity housing cooperatives, and deed-restricted owner-occupied housing.
10. Consider adding provisions for small lot lines to better support first-time homebuying, smart downsizing, and development on lots that are smaller than what is standard for existing residential zoning.
11. Additionally, and finally, there is some text which includes some provisions to incentivize mixed-use development (LU-1aa) but it would be nice to see specific callouts in the land use section for tenement style housing where kitchens and bathrooms are shared between individual living units to provide housing which does not contribute as much infrastructure development as traditional housing with individual kitchens and bathrooms.

Overall these policy changes applied to the entire city would reduce speculation concentrated in the Gateway area and provide opportunities for new, thoughtful development in all areas of Arcata. Again, thank you for providing current and future residents of Arcata with such a forward thinking approach to city planning. I know oftentimes your work is overlooked or over-scrutinized by the public, but this penultimate general plan draft is something that is and should be praised and implemented. Thank you.