

City of Arcata General Plan: 2022 Annual Progress Report to the State Office of Planning and Research

Introduction.

This report is submitted by the City of Arcata Community Development Department to provide the State of California Governor’s Office of Planning and Research with information regarding the city’s current General Plan implementation, Housing Element progress, and forthcoming updates to certain elements of the General Plan.

This report was reviewed and accepted by the Arcata City Council via **Resolution 223-XX**, adopted **XXX, 2022**.

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SECTION 1. Measures associated with the implementation of the general plan.

This section reviews City progress toward implementation general plan goals and policies, and references individual elements associated with these measures.

For the 2022 calendar year, City focused many of its efforts on the following areas:

- Business and community support, with a focus on historically underserved areas;
- Infrastructure investment; and
- Continued long-range planning and associated community engagement.

1. Business and Community Support.

In terms of projects related to City investment in business and community, the following projects were undertaken:

1. Launched the Community Ambassador Program to assist with business support and service referrals in the downtown. Through December they had 1,964 personal interactions, responded to 81 complaints, picked up 1232 buckets of trash, and received 675 thank you(s).
2. Initiated a Safe Parking Pilot Program and awarded a contract for operations to Arcata House Partnership. The program served 76 different individuals totaling 5,800 bed nights in 2022. Seventeen individuals moved from the program into shelter housing, 19 went straight to permanent housing and several are still in process.
3. Opened the first of two Project Homekey hotel to housing conversions adding 54 units of affordable housing.
4. Held Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training for all City Staff.
5. Implemented free bus rides from June 1 - July 31, 2022, through a state grant.
6. Supported North Town and Valley West neighborhoods with over 12 volunteer cleanup days building community while beautifying these neighborhoods.
7. Hosted a National Prescription Drug Take Back Day.
8. equity arcata hosted 4 Home Away from Home COVID-safe food and household supply giveaways and is working to restructure to better support local equity efforts in 2023.

General Plan Policies/Implementation Measures Associated with these projects:

PS-8b Social services programs. The City administers certain social services, such as temporary and permanent housing programs. Other public agencies, including the State of California, and Humboldt County, offer social services, such as public assistance, and food subsidy programs. There are also non-profit, religious, social, and other organizations, as well as businesses that offer social services such as counseling, educational, family

assistance, child care, health education, and food subsidy programs. Social service needs shall be monitored, through population trend analysis and other indicators, and information disseminated to other social service providers.

PS-8c Needs of cultural groups and special populations. Cultural groups, such as Native Americans and other local ethnic populations, and special populations, such as those with physical and mental disabilities, may require more specialized services than those provided in community-wide programs. The City shall allow, where appropriate, use of public spaces for cultural group activities, and shall consider the needs of special populations in City programs, activities, and land use planning.

2. Infrastructure investment.

In terms of investment in City infrastructure, the city has undertaken the following measures in the past year:

1. Completed the Arcata Ridge Trail, a connected trail from Sunny Brae to West End Road and the Peanut Butter Trail, a more technical mountain biking trail in the Community Forest.
2. Installed a new radio system and upgraded the body worn camera system for the Police Department.
3. Awarded a bid to Wahlund Construction and broke ground on construction for Phase I of the Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrades which replaces old mechanical equipment, converts the treatment plant from chemical to UV disinfection and moves the City's wastewater Bay outfall point.
4. Completed 10th Street Sewer replacement between L and N Streets.
5. 13. Oversaw June and November Elections that brought the Passage of the Utility Users Tax and Excessive Utility Users Tax by 65%.
6. Initiated online building permitting through OpenGov and Issued 500 Building Permits (counter and online), including the two HomeKey hotel conversion permits.
7. Secured significant funds to develop Carlson Park including a rural recreation and tourism grant for \$812,949 to construct a new multi-age playground, a special event area with picnic tables and BBQs, a new restroom and trails.
8. Completed the 30th Street Bridge connecting Janes Creek and Westwood neighborhoods.
9. Completed the Shay Park Ninja Warrior Playground, painted basketball courts at Shay and Valley West Parks and secured \$1,000,000 grant from Senator McGuire for the Arcata Ball Park.
10. Broke ground on a 1-million-gallon water tank through the grant funded award of a \$3,390,975 contract to Mercer Fraser.
11. Installed a grant funded generator at the Transit Facility and took ownership of two new portable generators for emergency response.

General Plan Policies/Implementation Measures Associated with these projects:

Resource Conservation Element-Policy 6a Management of Arcata Community Forest. The City's forest management plan includes the following policies:

1. *Recreation and aesthetics resource management* - The community forest will emphasize dispersed, day-use opportunities. Recreational use shall not be allowed to impact other resources such as fish, wildlife, or watershed.
2. *Timber resource management* - To ensure the sustainable and long-term production of forest products, the rate of harvesting must not exceed the rate of production. Long-term productivity refers to the continuing ability of the forest to produce timber while retaining the associated values of watershed, wildlife, soils, recreation and aesthetics. This is dependent upon the use of management practices that do not allow for the deterioration or impairment of soil productivity or the alteration of the natural landscape beyond its ability to recover. For planning purposes, long term means that exceeding fifty years.
3. *Watershed resource management* - Water quality, soil, riparian, and aquatic biological productivity shall be maintained and enhanced through the application of City forest management standards and the implementation of watershed improvement projects.

Public Facilities Element-Policy F-2a Capacity and management of City wastewater collection system. The wastewater collection system is designed to transport community sewage to the treatment plant. The City shall update its Collection System Maintenance Program, at least every five years, to maintain current projections, management, and contingency programs for wastewater collection. The Plan shall identify needed collection system improvements and anticipated extensions, so that they can be budgeted for in the City's Capital Improvement Program. The City shall continue to monitor groundwater infiltration and surface water inflow (I/I) and take necessary action to ensure that these sources do not cause the collection system or the treatment plant to exceed capacity. The City wastewater collection system shall not be extended beyond the Urban Services Boundary except as provided in Policy GM-4b.

Public Facilities Element-Policy 2b Arcata Marsh wastewater treatment system. The City shall update its Wastewater Treatment Plant Master Plan, at least every five years, to evaluate the entire system; reflect any changes in treatment standards; ensure wastewater treatment is meeting current standards; verify that there is adequate treatment system capacity; and assure adequate water flows to maintain habitat. The City shall maintain the existing facilities of the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary and construct new facilities consistent with the Marsh Enhancement Plan adopted by the City Council.

Public Facilities Element-Policy F-2c Compliance with California Regional Water Quality Control Board wastewater treatment and discharge standards. The City shall regularly test its wastewater and make necessary adjustments in treatment levels, to ensure that it meets California Regional Water Quality Control Board standards. The City shall also keep its National

Pollution Discharge Elimination System Permit (NPDES) current and in compliance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency standards.

Transportation Element-Policy 4h Street maintenance. The Pavement Management System shall be maintained to identify and prioritize street maintenance projects in the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The maintenance program shall include regular street cleaning and repair of pavement, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes, and pay particular attention to conditions that discourage bike usage.

Transportation Element-Policy 5f Pedestrian enhancements. Prioritize implementation of improved pedestrian facilities and enhancements in areas of the city with the greatest need including the Arcata Plaza, Westwood Center area, the Sunset Avenue neighborhood, Samoa Boulevard, Alliance Road, Spear Avenue, Janes Road in the vicinity of the Pacific Union School, and Bayside Road in the vicinity of Jacoby Creek School. The following pedestrian improvements and safety enhancements should be considered in future planning for these areas:

1. Close sidewalk gap.
2. Install vertical curbs to keep vehicles from parking on sidewalks.
3. Reduce street crossing distance with curb extensions and smaller curb radii.
4. Use on-street parking as a pedestrian buffer.
5. Install textured crosswalks.
6. Provide adequate street lighting focused on crossings.
7. Restrict parking near crosswalks to improve sight distance.
8. Install rumble strips on approaches to crosswalks.
9. Plant street trees or place street trees in planters in the parking lane.
10. Relocate intersection stop bars five feet back from crosswalks to improve driver and pedestrian visibility.

Transportation Element-Policy 5g Pedestrian pathways and multi-use trails. Pedestrian pathways or multi-use trails for the exclusive use of non-motorized transportation modes should be provided. Pathways may be long facilities located along corridors or short facilities providing direct access through development projects or connecting areas not directly accessible by streets. Pathways should be planned to serve both recreational and commuter needs. The following shall apply to pedestrian pathways or multi-use trails:

1. Easement dedication. Dedication of easements for pathways through new private developments may be required.
2. Cooperation with local and regional agencies and jurisdictions. The City shall cooperate with other agencies to establish and maintain off-street pathways and trails utilizing creek, utility, and railroad right of way.
3. Foster Avenue Extension. Multi-use paths or trails shall be included in the Foster Avenue extension to Sunset Avenue.
4. Other Locations. Other potential locations for multi-use paths are within the North Coast Railroad right of way from Giuntoli Lane to Samoa Boulevard, along the west side of Samoa

Boulevard/Old Arcata Road east of State Route 101, and along the perimeter of Arcata Bay towards Manila.

Public Facilities Element-Policy 5e Maintenance of City streets and right-of-ways. The City's streets and right-of-ways shall be adequately maintained for public use. Utilities within rights-of-way shall be placed underground, when feasible, to reduce obstructions such as poles and above-grade utility boxes on sidewalks. Pavement and landscape management programs shall be periodically reviewed and prioritized.

Transportation Element Implementation Program T - 2: Pavement Management Program A pavement management program will evaluate roadway conditions, and schedule and complete needed maintenance and repair in a timely manner.

Transportation Element Implementation Program T - 3: Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Include transportation improvements, including bicycle and pedestrian facilities, in the City's CIP.

3. Continued long-range planning.

In terms of transportation/circulation, the city has undertaken the following measures in the past year:

1. Made significant progress on the City's strategic long range planning efforts including the Gateway Area Plan and General Plan Update, hosting dozens of meetings, pop ups and engagement opportunities both in person and online.
2. Reviewed draft versions of the Gateway Area Plan with seven city committees ranging from the economic development committee to the creeks and wetlands committee.
3. Reviewed draft versions of the Open Space Element, the Parks and Recreation Element, the Historical Preservation Element, and the Resource Conservation Element, with the Planning Commission and/or various City Committees

General Plan Policies/Implementation Measures Associated with these projects:

Design Element-Policy 1c Promote quality and diversity of design compatible with neighborhood context. Site and building design shall be harmonious with the neighborhood context, including existing structures. Within new subdivisions, diversity in building appearance rather than repetitive designs is encouraged.

Design Element-Policy 2j Incorporation of amenity features in new development. Any new development shall incorporate an appropriate combination of project enhancements in lieu thereof. Potential enhancements include, but are not limited to, the following:

- special paving materials in parking lots
- special architectural features
- public art, including sculpture and murals
- flower beds outdoor spaces for public use
- window boxes
- street trees or street furniture
- courtyards fountains or other water features awnings
- secondary pedestrian access from alleys
- planted wall trellises balconies or decks on upper floors
- recessed entryways
- sidewalk and/or entry mosaics or decorative tile

LU-1f Promotion of infill development. The City encourages appropriate redevelopment of certain parcels of land which 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) which require investment in extension of infrastructure and services. Infill development may include new residential units on upper floors of commercial structures, development of second 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. The Planned Development procedure shall be encouraged for coordinated development on larger infill sites.

LU-4b Conversion and reuse of old industrial sites. The City shall encourage the conversion and reuse of abandoned or inactive 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.

Design Element-Policy 1g Provide for bicycles, pedestrians, and transit in design. Design of commercial, industrial, and multi-family housing shall incorporate provisions for bicycle and pedestrian circulation, and bus transit. Facilities should be located and designed so that these alternative travel modes are fully interconnected.

Transportation Element-Policy 1a Investment in alternative modes. In order to provide a realistic and cost-effective

balance between travel modes, the City shall emphasize investment in alternative modes (bikeways, etc.) as a priority over increasing vehicular capacities of streets.

SECTION 2. Housing Element reporting requirements.

The Housing Element Annual Progress Report has been sent to the State Housing and Community Development Department separately from this report; however, a summary of units created in 2022 by income level is provided below. The City of Arcata is on an 8-year Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) cycle, spanning 2019 to 2027.

175 building permits in 2022. The City has now exceeded our very-low income allocation, with only 20 more low-income units remaining this planning period (2019-2027). This progress is partially due to the completion of two Homekey hotel conversion projects within the City. There were also 36 building permits not related to affordable housing which is double the number of non-affordable housing related permits in 2021 and a 33% increase from 2020 (which had 27). The City’s now completed over 50% of our RHNA allocation, which is on target for where the City should be at this point in the RHNA cycle.

Income Level		RHNA Allocation by Income Level	Projection Period - 01/01/2019-08/30/2019	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total Units to Date (all years)	Total Remaining RHNA by Income Level
Very Low	Deed Restricted	142	-	-	43	36	78	167	-
	Non-Deed Restricted		-	-	5	-	5		
Low	Deed Restricted	95	-	-	-	1	60	75	20
	Non-Deed Restricted		3	7	2	-	2		
Moderate	Deed Restricted	111	-	-	-	-	-	29	82
	Non-Deed Restricted		3	3	10	3	10		
Above Moderate		262	5	4	10	14	20	53	209
Total RHNA		610							
Total Units			11	14	70	54	175	324	311
Progress toward extremely low-income housing need, as determined pursuant to Government Code 65583(a)(1).									
		5						6	7
		Extremely low-Income Need		2019	2020	2021	2022	Total Units to Date	Total Units Remaining
Extremely Low-Income Units*		71		-	43	10	78	131	-

SECTION 3. Date of last update to the general plan, and information on forthcoming updates.

As noted above, the last comprehensive update to the general plan was in the year 2000. The City's Land Use and Resource Conservation and Management Elements were updated in 2008.

No General Plan goals, policies, objectives, standards or other plan proposals have been deleted, amended, or otherwise adjusted in the past 12 months. Similar to last year's report, the City is in the process of updating several Elements of the General Plan. This work has been funded through a Sustainable Agricultural Land Conservation grant through the Department of Conservation as well as through the State Department of Housing and Community Development's SB2 and LEAP grant programs to undertake updates to the General Plan that will guide future growth and development in the city, promote housing creation, and protect Arcata's natural and working agricultural lands by prioritizing and streamlining infill development.

These updates are combined into a long-term planning strategy known as Arcata's "Strategic Infill Redevelopment Program", which includes updates to General Plan goals and policies and City's Coastal Land Use Element, as well as implementation measures including updates to the city's zoning code to increase allowed residential density. These updates will prioritize targeted infill zones as well as create form-based provisions to guide the look and feel of future development.

More information on the City's Strategic Infill Redevelopment Program and how it intersects with the general plan can be found on the city's website at <https://www.cityofarcata.org/896/Strategic-Infill-Redevelopment-Program>. The current General Plan can be viewed online at <https://www.cityofarcata.org/160/General-Plan>.