



STAFF REPORT

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

July 25, 2023

TO: Honorable Chair and Commissioners

FROM: David Loya, Director of Community Development

PREPARER: David Loya, Director of Community Development

DATE: July 19, 2023

TITLE: **Consider a Recommendation to the City Council on the General Plan Updates**

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Planning Commission continue its review of the Gateway Code and the Gateway Area Plan and General Plan Other Considerations table and provide direction to staff and a recommendation to the City Council. As time allows, the Commission should consider the General Plan topics held over from previous meetings in the “Bike Rack”. The Commission may also consider any other General Plan topic.

INTRODUCTION:

The Planning Commission made a recommendation to the City Council regarding the General Plan and Gateway Code at its July 11, 2023, meeting. At that time, the Commission recognized the need for ongoing review of the Gateway Code, as well as potential targeted refinement of its recommendation on the General Plan Elements. This item provides the opportunity for Commissioners to provide additional recommendations to the City Council in this more narrow review.

Gateway Code

The Gateway Code (Attachment A) provides the zoning standards and permitting requirements for development in the Gateway Area (see Figure 1, Gateway Area Plan at <https://www.cityofarcata.org/965/Arcata-Gateway-Area-Plan>). Importantly, the Gateway Code provides a ministerial permit process for projects that: provide moderate to high density housing, comply with the objective standards, and provide community benefits. The Commission wished to continue its review of the Code after its July 11 recommendation.

The draft included here does not reflect the changes the Commission made. This is the June 5 Draft. Changes made at the June 27, July 11, and July 25 meeting will be incorporated into an August updated draft.

Areas that have been of interest to the public include: inclusionary zoning, building height and density, step backs and setbacks, parking requirements and other mobility standards, solar shading, and revisiting the L/K couplet. Comments received on the Code are at <https://www.cityofarcata.org/940/Engagement-Information> under the “Public Comments” tab.

General Plan

The Planning Commission made a recommendation to Council based on the June 27, 2023, Draft General Plan Elements (see staff report from July 11, 2023). Commissioners may be interested in targeted revisions. The Commission and public should refer to the June 27 Draft if they wish to make specific recommendations for changes.

Outstanding Recommendations – Almost all recommendations made by Committees and the Commission have been integrated into the draft General Plan documents. The changes have been integrated in line in the documents. The Gateway Area Plan was color coded to indicate the source of the recommended change. The revised drafts are located on the City’s website at <https://www.cityofarcata.org/974/General-Plan-Updates>.

Changes that were not integrated into the Gateway Area Plan were tracked separately in the “Other Considerations” table (Attachment C). The last Column in the Other Considerations table is the Planning Commission recommendation. Staff has populated the responses based on earlier decisions the Commission has made (e.g., retaining the K/L couplet and the L Street linear park as a policy in the plan).

Commissioners provided their input on this table prior to the meeting. Cells left blank in tables submitted by individual commissioners were considered to indicate concurrence with staff; items where non-concurrence was recorded have been noted in red text in the compiled table. The Commission should review and take action on this table to complete its recommendation with regard to changes that were not incorporated.

Although no topics received a majority commission vote, three topics received a split vote, which may warrant further discussion. Additional topics can be taken up by a majority interest of the Commission.

- 1) Retention of railroad right-of-way (Circulation and Mobility Element, policy T-5i)
- 2) Use of proceeds of metered parking (Gateway Plan policy GA-7a)
- 3) Gateway Area cross-sections lane widths (Gateway Plan Chapter 7: Mobility)

Staff is working on an updated clean draft of the General Plan Elements, which should be available by the end of July.

Bike Rack

The Commission intended to return to the bike rack items in the Discussion Guide (Attachment B) after their July 11 recommendation. The Commission should continue to use the Framework to work through these discussions. Comments received on General Plan policy proposed modifications from Commissioners Lehman and Mayer after publication of the July 11 packet have been added to the Discussion Guide.

Joint Study Sessions

The City Council and Planning Commission will hold joint study sessions on August 22, September 26, and October 24, 2023. These meetings will be recorded and, as always, public comment will be accepted. The agendas are still being developed, but the August meeting will cover the General Plan recommendation. Staff will provide an update on topic focus as the agenda formalizes.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Gateway FBC 6.5.23 (PDF)
- B. 2023-07-25 Discussion Guide (PDF)
- C. Other Considerations Table (PDF)

D. Mayer Additional Discussion Guide Comments (PDF)