



STAFF REPORT

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

January 09, 2024

TO: Honorable Chair and Commissioners

FROM: David Loya, Director of Community Development

PREPARER: David Loya, Director of Community Development

DATE: January 03, 2024

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

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Commission review the December 12, 2023, draft General Plan and provide comments or recommendations as necessary.

INTRODUCTION:

The Planning Commission spent most of its meetings during 2022 and 2023 reviewing various elements of the General Plan and Gateway Area Plan. On December 12, 2023, the Commission made recommendations to move several policies from the Gateway Plan to the General Plan. This work added to earlier recommendations and reviews of the Gateway Area Plan. The current revised draft version dated December 12, 2023, is the version the Environmental Impact Report will be based on. The Council reviewed the December 2023 draft General Plan, including the Gateway Area Plan, at their January 3, 2024, meeting. This item provides the opportunity for the Planning Commission to review the December 12, 2023, draft and provide direction as necessary.

BACKGROUND:

The Commission has been refining its recommendation to Council based on input from the Council at Joint Study Sessions held August 22, September 26, October 24, and November 28, 2023. Specifically, the Council requested additional input on the Community Benefits program and which Gateway Area Plan policies should be moved into other Elements of the General Plan so they would be effective Citywide.

DISCUSSION:

The Commission reviewed the proposed amendments to the Gateway Area Plan and made recommendations on December 12, 2023. The Commission used a variety of polling methods to arrive at majority consensus on each of the policies in the Gateway Plan. In their recommendation, some policies were retained in the Plan, some were moved to various elements of the General Plan, and others were deleted.

In addition, the Commission considered how to operationalize the policies in the Gateway Area once they were moved into other sections of the General Plan. The Commission recommended the

moving several of the policies related to development in the zone to the Land Use Element. Many of the Land Use policies were incorporated in the Commercial-Mixed Use section of the Land Use Element. To make the direct linkage with the Gateway Area, the underlying land use designation of the Gateway Area was changed to Commercial-Mixed Use.

The Gateway specific land use designations (Gateway Barrel, Gateway Corridor, Gateway Hub, and Gateway Neighborhood) combine with the base Commercial-Mixed Use land use designation to effectuate the standards in the Gateway Code. In this way, all the Commercial-Mixed Use policies apply in the Gateway Area unless Gateway Plan has more specific policy language. And, the Gateway Code that has been developed will apply in each of the sub-areas through the Gateway specific land use designations.

The Planning Commission's recommendation can be seen in the December 12, 2023, revised Elements of the General Plan and Gateway Area Plan. The complete draft General Plan, including the Gateway Area Plan is located at <https://www.cityofarcata.org/974/General-Plan-Updates>. The individual December 12, 2023, General Plan Elements can also be viewed on their respective webpages that are linked in the sidebar to the main General Plan page. The policy recommendations are shown in the policy matrix table (Attachment A).

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA):

The December 12, 2023, version of the Gateway Area Plan and the Gateway Code will be the basis for Environmental Impact Report, which will be released on, or around, January 31, 2024.

If the Council directs any changes to the Gateway Area Plan before its adoption, staff will evaluate whether the changes will require a new EIR process or if the changes can be identified and addressed in the Final EIR without having to start a new EIR process.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. policy mappingv2_PCadoptedv (PDF)