

RESOLUTION NO. PC-24-05

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF ARCATA PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDING THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPT THE GENERAL PLAN COMPREHENSIVE UPDATE AND THE GATEWAY CODE

WHEREAS, the General Plan is the overarching plan for ensuring social justice and racial equity while balancing community growth, development, resource protection, provision of public services, circulation and mobility, housing access and affordability, economic development and job growth, capital infrastructure investment, climate adaptation, and quality of life in the City. The City Council adopted the last comprehensive update to the City’s General Plan in 1999 for the planning period ending 2020; and

WHEREAS, the City has been involved in the public process of updating the General Plan for the next 20-year planning period since 2017 and has engaged the community in each stage of the development of the revised General Plan and implementing Gateway Area Code, from concept to iterative draft document review, holding more than 180 stakeholder engagements over a range of meeting types; and

WHEREAS, the City’s vision developed through this planning process inspires us to increase access and equity to people of all backgrounds, races, abilities, and economic means to opportunities for housing, jobs, health, and inclusion in our community; and

WHEREAS, the General Plan, with the inclusion of new chapters, such as the Gateway Area Plan and the Health Element, as well as updated chapters prioritizing modern, sustainable practices in environmental preservation, economic growth, urban infill, alternative transportation, and housing, is the blueprint defining the arc between the City’s vision and the current state; and

WHEREAS, the General Plan includes all required Elements established in state law, as well as several optional Elements allowed within the City’s discretion; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has held at least one duly noticed public hearing; considered hundreds of hours of deliberations, public comment, and targeted engagements; and has considered the whole of the public discourse and the record prior to making a recommendation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Arcata Planning Commission hereby recommends the City Council:

1. Adopt General Plan 2045 comprehensive amendment dated May 14, 2024, and the Gateway Code dated May 14, 2024, incorporated herein by reference, based on the required findings (Exhibit 1).

Attest:

Approve:

David Loya,
Community Development Director

Scott Davies, Chair
Planning Commission

Clerk's Certificate

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of Resolution No. PC-24-05, passed and adopted at a regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Arcata, County of Humboldt, California, held on _____.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS ____ day of _____, 2024, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTENTIONS:

David Loya, Deputy City Clerk, City of Arcata

EXHIBIT 1

FINDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ARCATA FOR A COMPREHENSIVE AMENDMENT TO THE GENERAL PLAN

I. FINDINGS

The following findings must be made by the review authority to approve the project.

A. § 9.92.050.A General Plan Amendment Findings. An amendment to the General Plan, zoning map or this Land Use Code may be approved only if all of the following findings are made, as applicable to the type of amendment.

1. *The proposed amendment is consistent with all other provisions of the General Plan;*

The proposed amendment is a comprehensive update to the General Plan that was adopted in 1999. This amendment includes a variety of changes to policy to modernize and improve the City's vision and goals to create a vibrant city that is accessible to all. The update includes two new Elements, the Gateway Area Plan and the Health Element, as well as a comprehensive revision to the Parks and Recreation Element, and several other minor to modest updates to other Elements. Each update and change was considered in the context of the entire General Plan, and is internally consistent. The Housing Element was not updated. Housing Element updates are regulated by State law.

The Gateway Area Plan has a body of policy that is specific to the geographic region established by the Plan boundaries. While some of these policies may be different than other similarly situated, designated, zoned, or otherwise apparently similar in some ways, the Gateway Area Plan identifies how these apparent conflicts are resolved. Though there may be apparent inconsistencies, the conflict resolution process outlined in the document resolves these conflicts and limits the scope of such policy by location.

The Coastal Land Use Element, which is part of the Local Coastal Program, was certified by the California Coastal Commission on October 10, 1989. This Element has several inconsistencies with the proposed amendment, as well as with the General Plan, which is being replaced and was last amended in 2018. Inconsistencies include identification of the Urban Services Boundary, the land use map, and scenic designations. However, these inconsistencies will be resolved with the adoption of a new Local Coastal Element, which will replace the Coastal Land Use Element, thereby resolving the existing conflicts. It is wholly within the City Council's discretion whether to resolve these inconsistencies in favor of the 1989 Coastal Land Use Element or in favor of the General Plan comprehensive update currently proposed. The Council chooses the latter and directs staff to correct the inconsistency by seeking certification of the

Local Coastal Element. Until the Local Coastal Element is certified, conflicts will be resolved as identified in the Local Coastal Element and the General Plan.

2. *The proposed amendment would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the City;*

The General Plan is specifically written to protect the public interest, health, safety, convenience, and welfare of the City, its residents, visitors, and businesses. The General Plan has several policies, programs, and implementation measures specifically written to promote the welfare of those who live, work, and play in the City of Arcata. The substantial evidence provided in the Environmental Impact Report adopted by the City Council on _____, 2024, illustrates that the proposed comprehensive update to the General Plan will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, and welfare.

Air quality impacts identified in the Draft EIR, and the mitigation measures to limit those impacts, have been identified as significant. Though feasible mitigation is implemented through the General Plan, it cannot reduce the impact to health and safety below significant. The EIR includes a statement of overriding considerations. The air quality impacts are in part associated with baseline air quality. Future development will continue to exacerbate air quality. The measures will provide reductions in the potential impacts.

The Arcata Fire District submitted a letter identifying their considered opinion that that District has a lack of capacity to serve larger scale buildings. The District noted the Standards of Coverage Study it is currently developing in partnership with the City and Cal Poly Humboldt. The District also noted that they seek collaboration with the City to close the service gap. The City will continue to partner with the District.

3. *The affected site is physically suitable (including absence of physical constraints, access, and compatibility with adjoining land uses, and provision of utilities) for proposed or anticipated uses and/or development.*

Many sites throughout the City have been redesignated in the General Plan comprehensive update. These redesignations were made in consideration of the physical constraints, access, and compatibility with adjoining land uses. Utility providers were consulted in the development of the General Plan 2045. There is sufficient capacity for current operations. Future development will require new utilities infrastructure to be built. Importantly, electrical infrastructure upgrades will be necessary with future growth and development. This is further documented in the project description and the Draft Environmental Impact Report.

- B. § 9.92.050.B Zoning Map and Land Use Code Amendment Findings.** An amendment to the General Plan, zoning map or this Land Use Code may be approved only if all of the following findings are made, as applicable to the type of amendment.

1. Findings required for all Zoning Map and Land Use Code text amendments:

a. *The proposed amendment is consistent with the General Plan;*

The Gateway Code proposes overlay zones that implement land use designations identified in the Gateway Area Plan, an Element of the General Plan. The proposed Zoning Map and text amendments that comprise the Gateway Code are, therefore, consistent with the new Gateway Area Plan. The proposed Gateway Code is also consistent with all other Elements of the General Plan.

b. *The proposed amendment would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience or welfare of the City.*

The Gateway Code proposes primarily mixed-use, multi-family housing development with an emphasis on alternative transportation, making good use of the proximity of the plan area site to the likely typical destination to promote these alternative modes. The development of additional housing, and specifically housing for HSU students, is supported by City policy outlined in the General Plan. In addition, referral agencies either supported or did not oppose the project, and they did not raise public interest, health, safety, and convenience or welfare concerns.

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2. Additional findings for Zoning Map amendments: *The affected site(s) is physically suitable (including absence of physical constraints, access, compatibility with adjoining land uses, and provision of utilities) for the requested zoning designation and proposed or anticipated uses and/or development.*

The Gateway Area is mostly a former industrial district that has transitioned over time to a mix of uses. The Gateway Code includes a range of sites that are physically suitable for redevelopment. While there are currently a mix of uses, with a range of compatibilities, the proposed uses will increase compatibility over time. These zoning considered the physical constraints, access, and compatibility with adjoining land uses.

Utility providers were consulted in the development of the General Plan 2045. There is sufficient capacity for current operations. Future development will require new utilities infrastructure to be built. Importantly, electrical infrastructure upgrades will be necessary with future growth and development. This is further documented in the project description and the Draft Environmental Impact Report.