



**COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT**

**2023  
GENERAL PLAN  
ANNUAL REPORT**

Prepared by Humboldt County Planning and Building Department March 25, 2024

Board of Supervisors Reviewed and Accepted, \_\_\_\_\_ 2024

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## Introduction

Government Code Section 65400 et seq. requires planning agencies to provide an annual report on the status of the jurisdiction's general plan implementation and the progress made toward meeting the jurisdiction's regional housing needs allocation. Planning agencies are required to provide the annual progress report ("APR") to the legislative body, California Department of Housing and Community Development ("HCD"), and the Governor's Office of Planning and Research ("OPR") by April 1 of each year. The statute does not specify in which order they be provided, nor do OPR or HCD require the report to be submitted to the legislative body prior to submittal. While the reports have the same filing deadline, there are only consequences for delayed filing of the housing element APR.

The purpose of this General Plan APR is to inform the Board of Supervisors and the residents of Humboldt County on the implementation status the General Plan for the time period from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023. Reporting the implementation status of the General Plan includes reviewing major land use activities undertaken during the reporting period. The APR process provides information that may surface the need to consider "course adjustments" or modifications to the general plan and any methods to improve implementation. Essentially, the APR provides accountability and transparency to the Board and the community on the progress made on the General Plan during the previous year.

GOVERNMENT CODE Section 65400(a)(2) itemizes the mandatory content requirements for the general plan APR and are detailed below. While there is no standardized form or format for the general plan APR, the Office of Planning and Research does provide guidance, most recently October 2022. The annual reporting requirements for the housing element, on the other hand, are prescribed by statute and are highly detailed. For the housing element APR there is a mandatory reporting form prepared by HCD that all jurisdictions must use.

Humboldt County's 2023 annual progress reports for both the General Plan and 2019 Housing Element were filed with the appropriate State agencies before the April 1, 2024, statutory deadline. The Governance Implementation Measure G-IM1 of the Humboldt County General Plan specifies the County's General Plan APRs are to be presented to the Board of Supervisors in a public hearing and copied to the Planning Commission. The public hearing requirement specified in G-IM1 establishes a higher bar for consideration of the APR than statute mandates, indicating accountability and transparency are local priorities.

The Board of Supervisor's consideration and acceptance of the 2023 annual progress reports for the General Plan and 2019 Housing Element is informational in nature, does not create or alter policy, and is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines Section 15306.

## 1.0 General Plan Annual Progress Report Content and the State General Plan Guidelines

The content of general plan APRs is specified in Government Code § 65400(a)(2) and is as follows:

- The date of the last revision to the jurisdiction’s general plan.
- The status of the general plan and progress in its implementation.
- The degree to which the jurisdiction’s approved general plan complies with the general plan guidelines developed and adopted by the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, in accordance with Government Code § 65040.2.

Specific to the jurisdiction’s housing element, document in the APR:

- The jurisdiction’s progress in meeting its share of regional housing needs allocation, referred to as “RHNA”.
- Local efforts to remove governmental and nongovernmental constraints to the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing, including housing for all income levels and housing for persons with disabilities. The program shall remove constraints to, and provide reasonable accommodations for housing designed for, intended for occupancy by, or with supportive services for, persons with disabilities.
- Compile and report housing data using the State-prepared forms. Reporting is on an individual application, entitlement, and permit basis. Reporting includes:
  - Building permits applied for and/or issued in the reporting year.
  - Planning entitlements and permits for the construction of a housing unit applied and/or issued in the reporting year. For Humboldt County, design review, Coastal Development Permits and Special Permits are the most common planning entitlements and permits that are reported in the APR.
  - Readiness: reporting issued certificates of occupancy or finales. This reporting may expand over multiple years as associated building permits were issued in a prior year.
  - For all of the above: the number of housing units; the type of housing unit; housing unit tenancy; estimated affordability, etc.
  - The number of housing units demolished or destroyed that are not replaced in the same reporting year.

As stated above, Government Code § 65400(a)(2)(F) requires jurisdictions to report the degree to which the jurisdiction’s approved general plan complies with the general plan guidelines (“GPG”) prepared and adopted by OPR. The GPG are prepared and periodically updated by OPR. The purpose of the GPG is to assist local governments in preparing general plans and the public in participating in that process. While the GPG provide an authoritative interpretation of state statutes and case law as they relate to planning, the GPG are advisory rather than prescriptive. As such, jurisdictions are able to address contemporary planning topics in a locally appropriate manner.

## **2.0 General Plan Status**

The current GPG were last comprehensively updated and published in August 2017. A 2020 update to the Guidelines was published to describe the 2016 Environmental Justice Element requirements. An Environmental Justice Element is required to be added to the General Plan when jurisdictions adopt or revise two or more elements concurrently after 2018. Humboldt County has not met that threshold, so an Environmental Justice Element has not been added to the County's General Plan yet.

On October 23, 2017, the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors approved the comprehensive update of the Humboldt County General Plan by Resolutions 17-94, 17-95, and 17-96. Prior to approval of the Humboldt County General Plan, the Board certified the Final Environmental Impact Report (State Clearinghouse No. 2007012089) prepared for the General Plan update. The General Plan was approved after 66 public hearings by the Board of Supervisors beginning in 2000 and more than 100 public hearings by the Planning Commission.

The General Plan establishes the kinds, locations, and intensities of land uses as well as applicable resource protection and development policies. Land use maps are used to show land use plan designations, constraints, and public facilities. Section 4.0 of this report discusses amendments to the General Plan that were approved in 2023, and planning activities that advanced implementation of the General Plan. General plans are to be updated periodically, however, there is no statutory requirement for how often to update the general plan. The planning period for general plans is typically 15-20 years.

Table D of the Housing Element Annual Progress Report (APR) form includes an update on the Housing Element.

## **3.0 Overview of Consistency with State General Plan Guidelines**

The Humboldt County General Plan used the GPG published in 2003 to guide the preparation of the update because the planning effort began in the early 2000s. While OPR published revised GPG guidelines August 2017, this iteration of the GPG was not used to guide the General Plan update as the County's update process was in its final stages. At the time of the August 2017 GPG release, the Draft Environmental Report for the General Plan update had been prepared, circulated, and public comments received and responded to; numerous public workshops and hearings had already been held to capture the community's visions and priorities. When staff prepared Humboldt County's 2019 General Plan APR, Planning staff reviewed the August 2017 GPG and determined that the County's General Plan meets the mandatory requirements described therein with incorporation of the work program contained in Table 2. The below discussion reviews how the County's General Plan meets the State's current GPG published in August 2017.

The approved General Plan contains eight of the nine mandatory elements: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, safety, and air quality. The ninth element is the Environmental Justice Element. The Humboldt County General Plan was approved in October 2017 which was prior to the effective date of Government Code § 65302(h)(2) that directs cities and counties to prepare an Environmental Justice Element. As described above, Humboldt County has not met the state's threshold requirements, so an Environment Justice Element has not been added to the County's General Plan yet.

Tribal consultation in accordance with SB 18 and AB 52 was undertaken and completed as part of the General Plan update process. On a project-by-project basis, local tribes are consulted pursuant to AB 52 and SB 18. The County's commercial cannabis land use regulations for both the coastal and inland areas of the County require tribal consultation for ministerial and discretionary projects.

The General Plan Guidelines recommend general plan APRs report collaborative planning with the military lands and facilities. The only military installation in the region is the Eureka Armory located entirely within the boundaries of the City of Eureka. The Department of the Navy operates Military Training Routes (MTR) or Military Operating Areas (MOA) that traverse the central parts of the County. The Military Training Routes comprised a three-dimensional airspace designated for military training and transport activities that have a defined floor (minimum altitude) and ceiling (maximum altitude). The MTR and MOA have been mapped and continue to be available to the public through the County's web-based geographic information system ([WebGIS](#)). Potential impacts of new development on military readiness is considered for discretionary projects, and notice is provided pursuant to the Government Code Section 65944(d).

The General Plan and its regulatory context are not static as amendments are made periodically to the governing statutes. Amendments legislated by the State may trigger the need to amend the County's General Plan. Planning staff regularly review legislative updates, cataloguing needed changes to the general plan and developing work programs to amend the General Plan to ensure ongoing compliance with State law. Outstanding updates to the safety, conservation, and land use elements triggered by the 2019 adoption of the Housing Element and flagged by HCD during their Housing Element certification review are an example.

In response to HCD, Planning staff developed work programs and timelines to complete outstanding updates, which are outlined in Table 2 below. These outstanding updates and the associated work programs have been incorporated into the Department's overall work program for Long Range Planning, and progress is reported in this General Plan APR even though they may not be itemized in Appendix A of the Humboldt County General Plan - the Implementation Action Plan. Planning staff reviewed the GPG and determined that the County's General Plan meets the mandatory requirements described therein with incorporation of the work program contained in Table 2.

#### **4.0 General Plan Amendments and Other Major Land Use Accomplishments in 2023**

This section presents information concerning changes made to the General Plan, other significant land use actions that made progress on implementation, and other priorities for land use decision making established by the Board of Supervisors during 2023. Details on the implementation of the 2019 Housing Element are contained in Section 6.0 below. General Plan Appendix A, Implementation Action Plan, is a comprehensive list of the General Plan implementation measures and is available at:

<https://humboldt.gov.org/DocumentCenter/View/62006/Appendix-A-Implementation-Plan-PDF>

## General Plan Amendments in 2023

### Approved–Completed

*Applicant Initiated.* The following changes were made to the General Plan and Zoning Code in 2023:

| 2023 Amendments |                |   |
|-----------------|----------------|---|
| Date            | Project        | Subject   |
| 11/28/23        | PLN-2021-17209 | General Plan Amendment (GPA) and Zoning Reclassification (ZR) of 25 parcels totaling 33.46 acres. The GPA is from Residential Low Density (RL) and Residential Estates (RE) to Residential Agriculture (RA). The Zone Reclassification is from Residential Single Family (R-1), Residential Multi-Family (R-3) and Residential Suburban (RS) to Agriculture General (AG), in the Benbow Area to facilitate historic agricultural use. |

*Department initiated.*

### *Safety Element*

The Safety Element of the Humboldt County General Plan was updated in 2023. The revisions include sections to conform with Section 65302(g) of the California Government Code which requires mapping and risk assessment for flood hazards, wildfire hazards, climate change, and emergency evacuation routes. These items were included as well as updates regarding landslides, subsidence, tsunami hazards, slope stability, river flooding, dam failure, coastal high water hazards, drainage management, fire hazards and severity, fire protection responsibility areas, community wildfire protection, critical facilities and infrastructure, essential public services, emergency response organizations, history of wildfire events, planning evacuation routes, airport safety, military training routes and operating areas, and emergency management. New sections were added for Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and Climate Change which addresses designated shelter sites, microgrids, drought response, and sea level rise. The Board of Supervisors adopted the amendments on June 27, 2023.

### Ongoing and In Progress

#### *Humboldt Bay Area Plan.*

The County is continuing work on an update of the Humboldt Bay Area Plan (HBAP). A major component of the update is the addition of sea level rise background information and policies to the Plan. Other significant components of the update include modification of the tsunami safety background information and policies, and a potential change in land use for some of the Coastal-Dependent Industrial lands on Humboldt Bay. Additionally, edits are being made to text and mapping throughout the HBAP to update it to be consistent with present circumstances and legal requirements, and to provide clarity. This HBAP update work was assisted with funding from two LCP grants totaling \$199,346.21. This ongoing staff work implements Land Use Element Implementation Measure GP-IM6, to maintain consistency of Ordinances and Plan Amendments with the General Plan and Local Coastal Programs.



### *Regional Sea Level Rise.*

The County was awarded a third LCP grant at the end of 2019 for \$100,000 to explore the potential for regional sea level rise planning for the Humboldt Bay region as part of the HBAP update process. Work associated with this grant was started in 2020 and closed in 2023. It consisted of outreach and research tasks that resulted in the *Humboldt Bay Sea Level Rise Regional Planning Feasibility Study* describing one or more potentially appropriate approaches for regional management of sea level rise on Humboldt Bay. The County is continuing to meet with regional partners and will be pursuing other grant opportunities to continue work on regional sea level rise planning.

### *McKinleyville Town Center.*

In 2023 staff continued to work with the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee, property owners, community members to implement the Town Center policies of the McKinleyville Community Plan (“MCCP”). In 2023, public meetings were held in person and on-line on throughout the year. The Town Center Plan draft was finalized, and a Request for Proposals was opened to complete the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the McKinleyville Town Center. A consultant was chosen, a contract was awarded, and the final project and EIR will be completed in 2025.

This effort extends to implementing the Design Review policies of Section 2642 of the MCCP:

1. Design review standards will be incorporated for the Town Center area as identified on the Plan’s land use maps. A Design Review Committee will be formed to develop those standards within the Town Center area. No Special Permit shall be required as part of the process.
2. The County shall adopt a Design Review ordinance which establishes clear development standards. The design review standards must be consistent and compatible with the overall principles, objectives and policies of the entire General Plan.

This ongoing staff work implements Land Use Element policy GP-P1 for the County to maintain community plans. This work also makes progress on the Land Use Element implementation measure UL-IM1 for the preparation of a neighborhood and town center ordinance and establish neighborhood and town center areas by zoning overlay during General Plan updates and Community Planning processes.

### *Climate Action Plan.*

Progress was made on the climate action plan (CAP). This effort involves coordination with all seven cities in the County to create a regional climate action plan. Early in 2022 the County produced an administrative draft and staff from all the cities provided feedback. We released a revised administrative draft that was reviewed by the cities and signed off as the project description to be evaluated in an EIR. Funding was secured and a consultant selected for completion of the EIR in late 2023. The consultant reviewed the document and discovered that, as drafted, the CAP would not meet the criteria to be qualified. The County hired that consultant to make required updates to the CAP to create a qualified document under CEQA to allow future development projects requiring environmental review under state law to streamline greenhouse gas impact analyses by demonstrating consistency with the CAP. Those updates to the CAP are scheduled for completion in mid-2024, and an EIR will be prepared for the document soon after that.



This effort implements policies and implementation measures in the Air Quality Element:

**AQ-P9. County Climate Action Plan.** Through public input and review, develop and implement a multi-jurisdictional Climate Action Plan to achieve reductions in greenhouse gas emissions consistent with the state Global Warming Solutions Act and subsequent implementing legislation and regulations.

**AQ-P10. County Government Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions.** To lead by example, the County of Humboldt shall reduce its 2003 greenhouse gas emissions from governmental operations consistent with the state Global Warming Solutions Act and subsequent implementing legislation and regulations.

**AQ-P11. Review of Projects for Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions.** The County shall evaluate the GHG emissions of new large scale residential, commercial and industrial projects for compliance with state regulations and require feasible mitigation measures to minimize GHG emissions.

**AQ-IM3. County-wide Climate Action Plan.** Develop and implement a Climate Action Plan that effectively mitigates the carbon emissions attributable to this Plan, consistent with the requirements of the state Global Warming Solutions Act and subsequent implementing legislation and regulations.

**AQ-IM4. County Government Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions.** The County shall prepare a Climate Action Plan for its governmental operations consistent with the Countywide Climate Action Plan that seeks emission reductions in the following areas:

- A. Energy Efficiency and Conservation
- B. Green Building
- C. Waste Reduction and Recycling
- D. Climate-Friendly Purchasing
- E. Renewable Energy and Low-Carbon Fuels
- F. Efficient Transportation
- G. Offsetting Carbon Emissions
- H. Promoting Community and Individual Action

**AQ-IM5. Greenhouse Gas Emissions.** Update the General Plan and Land Use Ordinances, as appropriate, to reflect the adopted countywide Climate Action Plan and the new state laws and regulations for greenhouse gas emissions when they become available.

**AQ-IM6. Review of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impacts of New Development.** Modify the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to assess GHG emissions of discretionary large scale residential, commercial, and industrial projects, and require feasible mitigation.

#### *Hydrogeologic study of watersheds*

The County applied for and was awarded \$3,100,000 in grant funding to commission a hydrological study (or studies) to identify the baseline groundwater supply for each of the 12 watersheds in the County, an average of \$250,000 for each watershed. The study would accomplish all the following goals:

- a. Inform how deep the wells being used for cannabis cultivation and other developments “should be”
- b. Inform potential/actual impacts of already approved permits/licenses/developments
- c. Inform potential impacts of pending development permit and licensing
- d. Develop a baseline for continued assessment of environmental decisions related to hydrology.

In 2023, the Planning and Building Department hired a consultant and hydrogeologist to complete the initial scoping of this broad effort and is awaiting the results of that study.

This work will help inform the following Water Resources Element implementation measures:

**WR-IM1. Critical Water Supply and Watershed Area Ordinance.** Prepare and adopt an ordinance to implement Critical Water Supply and Watershed Area policies.

**WR-IM2. Critical Water Supply and Watershed Area Designation.** Identify and designate Critical Water Supply and Watershed Areas through a zoning overlay process using best available scientific data, consultation with municipal water.

### *Water Conservation Program*

The County applied for and was awarded \$12,300,000 to implement a competitive grant program to fund transition of water use from surface diversions and hydrologically connected wells during the low-flow periods of the year by increasing rainwater catchment, forbearance, and water conservation. A grant of up to \$60,000 per parcel is available. This project progressed in 2023 by awarding \$9,700,000 to 178 individual applicants. Of that amount, \$8,100,000 has been distributed for 145 of these approved projects.

It implements the following Water Resources Element implementation measures:

**WR-P7. Funding.** Coordinate with local, state, and federal agencies, and conservation and watershed restoration related organizations, to identify and obtain sources of funding for water quality enhancement, fish passage projects, stormwater pollution management, and water conservation efforts.

**WR-P8. Requirements for Water Storage in Flow Impaired Watersheds.** New development not served by a public water system that seeks to rely upon surface water shall install water storage capable of providing 100 percent of the necessary water storage volume for the summer low-flow season (e.g. July-August-September). A forbearance agreement prohibiting water withdrawals during low-flow season shall be included as a performance standard for the project.

**WR-IM16. Sustainable Groundwater Plans.** Support the development of Sustainable Groundwater Plans consistent with California Water Code. Staff supported the efforts of the Public Works Department to prepare the Eel River Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

**WR-IM26. Promoting Water Conservation and Re-use.** Encourage water conservation and re-use practices by providing information resources for permit applicants on:

- A. Water-conserving design and equipment in new construction.
- B. Water conserving landscaping and other land management practices.
- C. Water conserving retrofit options for existing buildings.
- D. Residential water re-use options including graywater systems.
- E. Off-stream water storage systems including tanks and ponds.

### *Renewable Energy Program*

The County applied for and was awarded \$3,100,000 in grant funding to implement a competitive grant program for commercial cannabis provisional licensees to fund replacement of gas/diesel powered generators used for cultivation with renewable energy systems consistent with the 2023 state transition requirements. In addition to assisting provisional licensees, this program will also help some annual license holders subject to the 2023 state transition requirements to maintain their annual licenses. A grant of up to \$30,000 is available per parcel. This project progressed in 2023 by awarding \$2,530,000 to 85 individual applicants. Of that amount, \$2,250,000 has been distributed for 73 of these projects.

This work implements the following Energy Element implementation measures:

**E-P3. Local Renewable Energy Supply.** The County shall support renewable energy development projects including biomass, wind, solar, “run of the river” hydro-electric, and ocean energy, consistent with this Plan that increases local energy supply.

**E-P13. Incentives for Using Alternative Energy.** Encourage the use of renewable energy and environmentally preferable distributed energy generation systems in the county.

### *Water Quality Protection Program*

The County continued implementing a competitive grant program to fund road improvements and culvert replacements to improve water quality in impaired watersheds. Fourteen applications for grants were approved for funding for a total of \$582,143 of the \$600,000 grant. Remaining funds will be allocated to Public Works for road improvements on previously identified sites that will improve water quality in impaired watersheds.

This work implements the following Water Resources Element implementation measures:

**WR-P7. Funding.** Coordinate with local, state, and federal agencies, and conservation and watershed restoration related organizations, to identify and obtain sources of funding for water quality enhancement, fish passage projects, stormwater pollution management, and water conservation efforts.

**WR-P9.** Mitigate Controllable Sediment Discharge Sites Proposed development applications involving a site identified as part of the TMDL Controllable Sediment Discharge Inventory shall be conditioned to reduce sediment discharge.

**WR-P22. Watershed Planning.** Use watersheds as the geographic planning framework for water

resource planning and coordination with other regional, state, and federal planning, implementation, and funding efforts. Maintain relevant land use data on watershed basis to support watershed-based management and decision-making processes. Encourage and support continued research, investigation, and analysis of the County's water resources by federal and state water resource agencies, and local watershed restoration groups. Encourage compilation of data, such as the State Water Resources Control Board's water allocation data, the National Marine Fisheries Services and Department of Fish and Wildlife coho recovery plans, on a watershed basis

**WR-P23. Watershed and Community Based Efforts.** Support the efforts of local community watershed groups to protect, restore, and monitor water resources and work with local groups to ensure decisions and programs take into account local priorities and needs.

**WR-P24. Regional Water Management Planning.** Work on a regional basis through the North Coast Resource Partnership (NCRP) to ensure coordination and adaptive management between statewide water resource planning efforts, regional priorities, and local needs. The goals and objectives identified in the North Coast Integrated Regional Water Management Plan shall be considered in establishing County water resource priorities and policy positions.

**WR-P39. Restoration Projects.** The County shall encourage restoration projects aimed at reducing erosion and improving habitat values in Streamside Management Areas and wetlands.

**WR-P42. Erosion and Sediment Control Measures.** Incorporate appropriate erosion and sediment control measures into development design and improvements.

**WR-IM17. Water Planning and Coordination.** Actively encourage and participate in local and state water resource planning efforts that have the potential to achieve Water Resource Element goals.

**WR-IM18. Watershed Planning with Public Land Managers.** Participate in the planning activities of federal and state land management agencies to advocate for watershed-based planning and management approaches and policies and projects that are consistent with Water Resource Element policies.

**WR-IM19. Coordinate and Support Watershed Efforts.** Seek funding and work with land and water management agencies, community-based watershed restoration groups, and private property owners to implement programs for maintaining and improving watershed conditions that contribute to improved water quality and supply.

**WR-IM21. Water Resources Funding.** Work with public water suppliers, utility districts, stakeholder groups, and interested parties to seek and secure outside funding sources to implement this Element.

**IS-P12. Road and Drainage System Funding Sources.** Develop funding mechanisms and sources to support the construction and maintenance of road and drainage facilities consistent with the policies and standards of the Circulation and Water Resources elements.

*General Plan Elements.*

Table 1 below summarizes progress in 2023 to implement the elements of the General Plan. The Housing Element is described separately in the annual progress report.

**Table 1**

| Policy, Implementation Measure   | Staff Work in 2023  |
|--|---|
| Telecommunications Element: T-IM1. Adopt a Communications Facilities Ordinance that ensures compatibility of communications facilities with nearby land uses and establishes clear standards for such facilities.  | The Ordinance was adopted by the Board of Supervisors for the inland portion of the County in late 2022. In 2023, staff began work with the Coastal Commission to certify the ordinance in the Coastal Zone. The work is ongoing and will be completed in 2024.   |
| Economic Development Element: ED-IM4. Permit Streamlining for Business Growth. Update ordinances and permit processes to increase efficiency and reduce permit-processing times.   | The Planning and Building Department converted to entirely paperless permit processing in July of 2023. The County’s permit system is available online to users 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. Simple building permits are issued automatically at the time of application including during non-business hours. All Planning and Building permits are processed in a more efficient manner.               |
| Conservation and Open Space Elements, Scenic Resources: SR-IM2. Sign ordinance revision. Amend the sign ordinance to implement adopted policies for off-premise billboards and to consider other revisions to ensure community compatibility.                            | Planning staff researched other jurisdictions’ sign ordinances, completed sign ordinance drafts for coastal and inland areas, prepared for and conducted three public hearings at the Planning Commission. This project will continue into 2024 and will require additional Planning Commission hearings, hearings before the Board of Supervisors, and certification by the California Coastal Commission. |
| Safety Element: S-IM2. Hazard Planning Information on the Internet. Maintain countywide hazard land use planning data, such as fire district boundaries, State Responsibility Areas (SRA), hazard areas and plans on the internet.                                       | Completed in 2023. All hazard areas are shown on the Countywide GIS and will be updated as needed.  |
| Safety Element: S-IM4. Agency Coordination. County agencies shall continue to collaborate to develop potential short, medium, and long-term actions for a coordinated County-wide response to drought, emergency management, wildfire, and evacuation response services. | Ongoing. The County has an established Drought Task Force, and ad hoc committees for the Community Wildfire Protection Plan and the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan to meet these objectives.  |

**Table 1**

| Policy, Implementation Measure  | Staff Work in 2023  |
|---|---|
| <p>Safety Element: S-IM5. Coordination with CAL FIRE on State Responsibility Areas (SRA) Exception Requests. The County shall maintain efficient and timely procedures for processing SRA Exception Requests to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE).</p>   | <p>Complete, part of standard practice, ongoing.</p>  |
| <p>Safety Element: S-IM6. Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). Actively support and pursue the implementation recommendations in the CWPP. Periodically update the CWPP. The risk assessment portion of the CWPP shall be updated at least every five years.</p>  | <p>Ongoing. Planning staff have been added to the Humboldt County Fire Safe Council with the objective to ensure that land use planning, in particular planning related to the Safety Element, is closely integrated with the CWPP.</p>   |
| <p>Safety Element: S-IM18. Soils Reports Requirement for Residential Subdivision. The County shall require and review preliminary soils reports submitted by applicants for every residential subdivision and for each individual lot or project site where expansive soils have been identified or are expected to exist.</p>        | <p>This practice is ongoing.</p>  |
| <p>Safety Element: S-IM33. WebGIS Updates. The County shall update all hazard layer maps when new information becomes publicly available from state and federal agencies.</p>   | <p>This practice is ongoing.</p>  |
| <p>Air Quality Element: AQ-IM3. County-wide Climate Action Plan (CAP). Develop and Implement a Climate Action Plan that effectively mitigates the carbon emissions attributable to this Plan, consistent with the requirements of the state Global Warming Solutions Act and subsequent implementing legislation and regulations.</p> | <p>Funding was secured and a consultant selected for completion of the CAP EIR in late 2023. The consultant reviewed the document and discovered that, as drafted, the CAP would not meet the criteria to be qualified. The County hired that consultant to make required updates to the CAP to create a qualified document under CEQA. Those updates to the CAP are scheduled for completion in mid-2024, and an EIR will be prepared for the CAP soon after that.</p> |

### *Amendments to the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps.*

One of the follow-up actions prescribed by the General Plan is to update the County's Zoning Regulations and associated Zoning Maps (GP-IM6). The General Plan directed the update of the Zoning Regulations and Maps to maintain consistency and to operationalize the General Plan's goals, policies, standards, and implementation measures for everyday land use planning. Work was completed in 2018 and 2019, including conducting community workshops, and public hearings with the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. The Board approved the amendments to the Zoning Regulations and Maps on August 27, 2019. In 2020 work on this effort was paused pending resolution of ongoing litigation. That litigation was resolved in 2022 and final adoption of the Zoning Regulations and Maps will commence in 2024.

### **5.0 Needed Action: Community Plan Policies Awaiting Implementation**

The following paragraphs describe Community Plan policies from before 2002 that were not implemented and are now incorporated into the 2017 General Plan. In 2021, measures concerning the McKinleyville Community Plan are in the process of implementation.

#### Avenue of the Giants Community Plan

2540.1 The County shall request that the Save-the-Redwoods-League refrain from removing prime agricultural lands from resource production by acquisition.

2540.5 The County shall request that the impacts of increasing State Park land acquisition be addressed in the Park Management Plan and EIR.

#### Eureka Community Plan

5-2400 HOUSING: The County should revise the zoning ordinance to include the design review recommendations from Chapter 2403.

5-4200 CIRCULATION: After all feasible alternatives have been exhausted, the County shall adopt and periodically review a traffic impact fee ordinance that would require all new development to pay a fair share of transportation improvements.

#### Garberville/Redway/Benbow/Alderpoint Community Plan

##### 5000 Implementation

1. An outline of river access opportunities and improvements, which would enhance fishing and other recreational uses along the river, should be prepared for the Plan. Standards for access dedications for subdivision of lands with river frontage should be included in the outline.
2. Adopt a parking plan for Garberville.
3. Establish a Parking Authority for the downtown commercial district of Garberville.

#### McKinleyville Community Plan

##### 3244 Implementation for Noise Hazards

Standards shall be adopted as part of the County Building Regulations specifying sound insulation requirements which will implement the noise policies of the plan.



#### 4312 Implementation for Trails

A Trails Implementation Plan shall be prepared that includes a trail-by-trail review with recommendations for how easements could be gained and under what circumstances dedication of easements might be required.

**Table 2.** Additional General Plan Work Programs

| Government Code Section and Summary  | County Response to HCD   | Work Program   | Completion Timeline  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>65302(d) and (g) Safety and Conservation Elements.</p> <p>The safety and conservation elements must include analysis and policies regarding fire and flood hazard management and be revised upon each housing element revision.</p>   | <p>The Board of Supervisors adopted its local hazard mitigation plan (“LHMP”) on February 25, 2020. Given the content and regulatory overlap between the LHMP and the safety element and ensure consistency between the two regulatory documents, the County waited to initiate an update to its Safety Element until the updated LHMP was adopted. The LHMP includes assessment of climate change vulnerability, which will be a component of the safety element update.</p>  | <p>Commence updating the Safety Element upon adoption of the updated LHMP.</p> <p>Responsible Agency: Long Range Planning</p> <p>Method: General Plan Amendment</p> <p>Cost: \$70,000</p>  | <p>Safety Element updates completed in 2023.</p>   |
| <p>65302.10(b): Land Use Element.</p> <p>The land-use element must identify and analyze disadvantaged communities unincorporated island or fringe communities within spheres of influence areas or isolated long-established legacy communities) on, or before, the housing element’s adoption due date.</p>   | <p>The 2019 Housing Element includes the requisite content of GC § 65302.10(b): Table Z17 of Appendix G of the General Plan (the Housing Element Appendix) identifies the legacy communities located in the unincorporated area, and provides an updated summary of the infrastructure and service needs; Attachment J of Appendix G provides an updated detailed infrastructure analysis of these legacy communities; and Appendix F of the General Plan (the Map Book) includes maps of the unincorporated legacy communities. Policy IS-P26 of the Community Infrastructure and Services Element commits to updating the legacy community analysis with each Housing Element cycle, and H-S5 includes a standard to prioritize infrastructure funding for legacy communities.</p> | <p>During the Housing Element update cycle, the County will also amend the Land Use Element to include a reference to the discussion of Legacy Communities in the Housing Element Appendix (§8.12.23).</p> <p>Responsible Agency: Long Range Planning</p> <p>Method: General Plan Amendment</p> <p>Cost Range: &lt;\$30,000</p>                            | <p>By August 2027</p>  |
| <p>65302(h): Environmental Justice Element.</p> <p>A jurisdiction must address environmental justice element in its general plan by the adoption of an environmental justice element, or by the integration of environmental justice goals, policies, and objectives into other general plan elements upon the adoption or next revision of two or more elements concurrently on or after January 1, 2018.</p> | <p>Humboldt County does have numerous low-income areas as statutorily defined. The General Plan economic development policies and the 2019 Housing Element both contain measures to better address the needs of this population, e.g., Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (H-G7), completing an Assessment of Fair Housing (H-IM25), and stronger measures for tenants and rehabilitation of housing stock (H-IM13, H-IM16, H-IM69, H-IM70). The needed updates of the land use element, safety, and conservation described above trigger the requirement for preparation of an environmental justice element.</p>  | <p>Prepare an environmental justice element meeting the statutory requirements, to integrate environmental justice goals, policies, and objectives that are presently contained in other Elements, and incorporate public input.</p> <p>Responsible Agency: Long Range Planning</p> <p>Method: General Plan Amendment</p> <p>Cost Range: &lt;\$100,000</p> | <p>Concurrent with the amendment of two or more General Plan Elements</p> <p>This would follow publication of the 2020 US Census and HUD acceptance for filing of the State of California’s Consolidated Plan for the period of 2021-2026 for non-entitlement jurisdictions.</p> |

## **6.0 2023 Housing Element Annual Progress Report**

Pursuant to Government Code Section 65400, each jurisdiction must prepare an annual progress report on the jurisdiction's status and progress in implementing its housing element. The housing element Annual Progress Report ("APR") covers the previous calendar year's housing activity. The APR must be submitted to Housing Community Development ("HCD") and the Governor's Office of Planning and Research ("OPR") by April 1 of each year. For housing element progress reports, the content requirements are prescriptive and highly detailed. Timely filing of housing element APRs is a threshold eligibility requirement for many State funding programs.

The update cycle for housing elements is statutorily mandated, with the dates for when jurisdictions are to start and complete the update process specified by housing element law. When the 6<sup>th</sup> cycle began August 31, 2019, Humboldt County and the seven cities moved from a five-year cycle to an eight-year cycle, which will end August 2027. Due to the County's 6<sup>th</sup> cycle starting August 31, 2019, only housing units that were issued a building permit on or after that date are credited as progress towards the County's 6<sup>th</sup> cycle Regional Housing Needs Allocation ("RHNA"). See Attachment A for details on the 2023 Housing Element Annual Progress Report.