



STAFF REPORT – CITY COUNCIL MEETING

July 17, 2024

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: David Loya, Director of Community Development

PREPARER: David Loya, Director of Community Development

DATE: July 10, 2024

TITLE: **Consider Adoption of the General Plan Comprehensive Update with the Exception of the Gateway Area Plan.**

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Council:

- 1) Receive a staff report;
- 2) Accept public comment; and
- 3) Adopt Resolution No. 234-49 adopting the General Plan 2045 comprehensive update except for the Gateway Area Plan.

INTRODUCTION:

Council has been considering a comprehensive update to the General Plan for several years. This update includes adding two new Elements, the Health Element and the Gateway Area Plan, as well as adoption of a Form-Based Code, the Gateway Code, which would apply only in the Gateway Area. Prior to taking action to adopt these long-range plans and codes, the Council must first certify an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) by adopting findings. Two Councilmembers have recused themselves from discussions on the Gateway Area Plan and corresponding Gateway Code due to conflicts of interest. For that reason, the decision-making process has been divided into components that the recused members may not take action on and components they may. This report covers the General Plan comprehensive update with the exception of the Gateway Area Plan. All Councilmembers may act on this item. This action includes the updates directed by Council during their May 29, 2024, meeting.

BACKGROUND:

The City has been conducting public engagement and outreach to develop the General Plan 2045 for over seven years. The majority of the engagement, work product, and the environmental record is located at the City's website at <https://www.cityofarcata.org/896/Strategic-Infill-Redevelopment-Program>.

The City Council is the final review authority for the proposed amendments. The City Council must consider the Planning Commission recommendation, but the Council has the final authority to accept or reject specific recommendations.

Because two Councilmembers must recuse themselves from Gateway matters, this item deals with the balance of the General Plan. The Environmental Impact Report (EIR), Gateway Area Plan, and Gateway Code were discussed separately.

DISCUSSION:

The Planning Commission adopted Resolution No. PC-24-05 recommending approval of the May 14, 2024, versions of the General Plan at their May 14 hearing. These changes were reflected in the May 29, 2024, versions Council reviewed. The Council provided input at their May 29 meeting (Attachment B outlines the topics reviewed), which was incorporated into the July 17, 2024, version located at <https://www.cityofarcata.org/974/General-Plan-Updates>. Council should consider adopting the General Plan inclusive of the changes via Resolution No. 234-49 (Attachment A).

There will be several follow-on actions that the Council will consider to implement the General Plan 2045. Some of these implementation measures will happen in the coming months. For example, the Council provided direction to implement inclusionary zoning and the Community Benefits program must be adopted. Both of these actions, along with several zoning changes to make zoning consistent with the new General Plan, should be taken in the near term. Developing new zoning codes for the Infill Opportunity Zones will require additional engagement with those neighborhoods and will take several months to complete. Other actions identified as Implementation Measures in the General Plan 2045 will occur over the next several years.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

Adoption will update the City’s main policy document for the next 20-year period.

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REVIEW:

The General Plan received extensive public engagement and recommendations by City Committees. The Planning Commission reviewed the Committee recommendations and public comment, and made a recommendation based on the whole of the record.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA):

The Planning Commission adopted Resolution No. PC-24-03 recommending certification of the Environmental Impact Report and adoption of the Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations. The Draft EIR, Final EIR, and Findings found at <https://www.cityofarcata.org/1067/Environmental-Impact-Report> were incorporated by reference in their recommendation. The Council must certify the EIR and adopt the necessary findings before taking action on the General Plan.

BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT:

The Project was very nearly on budget. Due in large part to the number of public comments received, and because of unanticipated changes to parts of the plan, the project was over budget by \$25,000. This is 3.5% of the total budget.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Res 234-49 General Plan (PDF)
- B. General Plan changes (DOCX)