



STAFF REPORT – PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

TO: Honorable Chair and Commissioners

FROM: David Loya, Director of Community Development

PREPARER: Jennifer Dart, Deputy Director of Community Development

DATE: March 10, 2026

TITLE: Adopt Resolution PC-26-01 Recommending the City Council Accept the 2025 General Plan Annual Progress Report

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Commission Review the 2025 General Plan Annual Progress Report (APR) and Adopt Resolution PC-26-01 Recommending the Report to the City Council.

INTRODUCTION:

State law (Government Code Sections 65400 and 65700) requires all cities and counties to submit an annual report on the status and progress of their General Plan. Reports must be provided to the city or county legislative body, the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR), and the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) by April 1 each year. The legislature has set specific reporting requirements for the Housing Element of the General Plan, and those reports are submitted separately.

BACKGROUND:

The General Plan serves as the long-term blueprint for a city or county’s growth, guiding land use, housing, transportation, environmental conservation, and economic development policies. California law requires that each jurisdiction maintain and implement its General Plan to ensure orderly growth and alignment with State objectives, including housing production and climate resilience.

Arcata’s General Plan 2045 adopted July 17, 2024, establishes policies to accommodate projected population growth, support sustainable land use patterns, and enhance the quality of life for residents. The plan’s implementation is an ongoing process, requiring coordination among various City departments, regional agencies, and community stakeholders.

The Annual Progress Report (APR) provides an opportunity to evaluate the City's progress in implementing the General Plan, track key policy initiatives, and identify areas where adjustments may be needed. In particular, the APR informs decision-makers about progress toward housing goals outlined in the Housing Element, including the City's share of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA).

DISCUSSION:

The Annual Progress Report (APR) allows the City to review how effectively the General Plan is being implemented and to assess progress toward key goals. This includes evaluating land use

decisions, infrastructure development, environmental initiatives, and housing production relative to the City's RHNA obligations.

By tracking these efforts, the APR helps identify areas where policies are working well and where adjustments may be needed to better meet community needs and State requirements. The report also provides transparency for the City Council, Planning Commission, and the public, ensuring that growth and development align with the vision and priorities outlined in General Plan 2045.

There is no standardized format for General Plan APRs. However, the Office of Planning and Research recommends that cities leverage existing reports, such as budget documents, annual performance reports, and State of the City updates, to provide a comprehensive overview of implementation efforts. Arcata's APR follows this guidance by incorporating data from multiple departments and reports such as the Housing Element Annual Progress Report and City Capital Improvements Program, offering a broad perspective on how the General Plan is being put into action.

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REVIEW:

This report will be reviewed by the Planning Commission and forwarded to the City Council.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA):

The General Plan and Housing Element Annual Progress Report do not qualify as a project as defined in the California Code of Regulations Section 15378(a). The reports are administrative activities conducted by the City that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT:

The Annual Progress Report is a required submission under State law. While preparing the report requires staff time and resources, the State does not provide funding to cover these costs. Despite the lack of direct financial support, the APR remains an important tool for tracking progress on the General Plan, informing decision-making, and ensuring compliance with State requirements.

ATTACHMENTS:

A. Resolution PC-26-01