



February 13, 2014

Robert Morris, Chairman
Humboldt County Planning Commission
3105 H Street
Eureka, CA 95501

RE: General Plan Update – Housing Element

Dear Chair Morris and Commissioners,

Please find below our comments on the draft Housing Element.

We ask for **H-P2** to be modified as follows:

H-P2. Housing Opportunity. Eliminate Housing Opportunity Zones and apply the benefits countywide where appropriately zoned.

H-P4 Encourage Second Units is a good policy. Our only addition would be making second units principally permitted.

We recommend deleting **H-P11** due to the term Housing Opportunity Zone.

We recommend modifying **H-P12** to read:

H-P12. Residential Subdivision Permit Process. The County shall maintain an efficient, streamlined and predictable permitting process designed for residential subdivisions that fully meet the goals and policies of this Element.

We recommend deleting **H-P17** due to a potential property rights taking.

We recommend deleting **H-P20** because it could potentially lead to red-lining by lenders based on the perception that these neighborhoods are substandard and potential housing discrimination.

H-P28 needs to be consistent with your recent changes to Chapter 10.3, Biological Resources.

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H-S2 and **H-S3** should be deleted. Mid-point density is a potential property rights taking and the calculation is confusing to members of the public who are reading the plan to see how it applies to their project. For instance, if they see a density range of 3-17, they will assume they can build 3 units, while under the mid-point density guideline they would actually have to build at least 7. State law recommends mid-point density but does not mandate it. The landowner should be able to choose their density within the range stated in the General Plan; why have a range of densities if they are not honoring them?

We recommend modifying **H-S10** to read:

H-S10. Publication and Maintenance of the Residential Land Inventory. The County's residential land inventory, found consistent with state law according to Government Code Section 65583 (a) (3), shall be published to the internet to aid the identification of vacant and underdeveloped residential sites. Thereafter, during the Housing Element planning period, the County shall periodically update the GIS inventory **through grounds-truthing** for public information purposes to reflect development approvals, changes in estimated development potential of individual parcels or infrastructure constraints.

H-IM4 Internet Accessible Residential Land Inventory and Development Constraint Maps. We question the quality of the public GIS system, there is a disclaimer on the first page stating the system may be off by as much as 400 feet. Is there another, possibly internal, GIS that is more accurate? If so, that should be available to the public.

H-IM9 should be reformatted into bullets for easier reading.

We recommend modifying **H-IM10**, modify to read:

H-IM10. Tiered Environmental Review, The General Plan Update EIR analysis of the cumulative impacts of residential development shall be completed and presented in a manner that facilitates the use of the analysis for individual project environmental review. The County shall make use of tiered environmental analysis to reduce the burden of cumulative impacts analysis on individual residential projects. Responsible Agency: Planning and Building Department. Timeframe: January 1, 2018.

We have a question on **H-IM12**. Does state or federal law require Tsunami Hazard Areas? We worry potentially good development may not happen or a property rights taking may occur due to an assigned zone.

We have a question on **H-IM13**: Why is a specific parcel listed in the County Housing Element? HAR has not researched this parcel, but an individual parcel should not be singled out in a county housing element.

H-IM14: We would like to see the Planning Commissioners discuss this at a public meeting, it needs clarification.

H-IM15. The references in this implementation measure are wrong. It refers to IM17 & IM18, which is incorrect. The correct implementation measures need to be inserted.

H-IM17 Reduced Permit Requirements for Second Units. This needs to have the following relaxed standards added to it:

1. Requiring only one on-site parking space for second unit
2. Increasing lot coverage
3. Allowing separate driveways for the second unit and primary residence
4. Eliminate spacing requirement between main dwelling and detached second units
5. Reduce setback requirements (rear and side)
6. Relax level of service (LOS) standards
7. Relax requirement that the entrance door to the second unit be subordinate to the entrance door to the main house
8. Relax parking-space dimension requirements
9. Relax solar shading requirements or revise solar shading ordinance

H-IM18: What tax code is this referring to? It doesn't seem this implementation measure should be in a Housing Element.

H-IM19 and H-IM20: These both refer to checked or arrowed items in the appendix. These items need to be listed in the implementation measures. How can support be given to items that are not listed?


H-IM25 should be deleted because it could potentially lead to red-lining by lenders based on the perception that these neighborhoods are substandard.

H-IM32 & H-IM33: These are great but we would like to see these implemented sooner than January 1, 2018 as these may help the quality of life for residents of Humboldt County.

H-IM34: The narrative page 8-7 states this is found in IM29 when it is actually IM34. Comment: Yes, we want to see the Land Use Element updated to include SB244 and a public discussion about legacy communities needs to be held.

Thank you,

Victoria Copeland, Co-Chair
General Plan Subcommittee


Debbie Provolt, Co-Chair
General Plan Subcommittee

Cc: Kevin Hamblin, Planning Director
Michael Richardson, Senior Planner