



“Jobs, Housing & Property Rights”

March 7, 2011

Ms. Mary Gearheart, Chair
Planning Commission
County of Humboldt
825 Fifth Street, Room 111
Eureka, California 95501

Subject: Economic Development Element

Dear Chair Gearheart and Planning Commissioners:

We understand you plan to wrap up your discussions on the Economic Development Element this Thursday evening. Before you do, we thought it might be helpful to look back at some of the founding documents that set the General Plan update into motion.

We cannot find a date on the “*Critical Choices Report*”, however it appears it was probably distributed late 2000 or sometime during 2001. In referencing surveys of Humboldt citizens, it states:

“Eighty-six percent (86%) of respondents felt that the surrounding natural environment was extremely important to the quality of life in Humboldt County.”

“Respondents felt that the county should be putting the same, more or much more effort into all of the areas identified, with over 50% identifying permanently preserving open space and agriculture (54.6%) and conserving the natural environment (57.9%) as needing much more effort.”

HELP questions whether the surveys taken by the County were scientifically sound samplings. We find the findings in “Critical Choices” to be in sharp contrast to those taken by a professional polling company, Moore Information, Public Opinion Research, conducted on August 21 and 22, 2004. It reflects the following priorities of Humboldt citizens. Moore asked those polled, what issues are the most important on a 5-point scale from not at all important to very important.

Issue Number	1	Jobs & Economic Development	87 %
	2	Housing	69
	3	Crime / Safety	66
	4	Growth / Land Use	64
	5	Taxes & Government Spending	60
	6	Health Care for Needy	60
	7	Protecting Open Space	57
	8	Traffic / Transportation	50

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It is clear from the Moore poll, that economic development, i.e., jobs...is the number one priority of Humboldt citizens, and should be treated as such in the General Plan update.

We commend the Commission for incorporating the Economic Development Element into the GPU.

Sincerely,

Kay Backer

Kay Backer, representing
Humboldt Economic and Land Plan

cc: Planning Commissioners
County Board of Supervisors
Wendy Chaitin, County Counsel
Carolyn Ruth, Assistant County Counsel
Kirk A. Girard, Community Development Services Director
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