

Attachment C
To the January 13, 2014 Board Report

**Recommended Changes to Chapter 2 and 3 of the Draft Plan
based on PPWG input,
December 18, 2013**

Note: To minimize the potential for confusion that was expressed at the December 16, 2013 meeting, the text shown on the following pages is exactly what is proposed to appear in the Plan. It does not show differences from the Planning Commission recommendations, nor does it distinguish between Public Participation Working Group (PPWG) text and that proposed by staff. It also does not include all the recommendations of the PPWG, only those that are proposed to be accepted are included.

Chapter 2. Public Guide

2.1 Purpose

This chapter provides a guide for reading and using the Plan. It describes the organization of the Plan, the layout of a typical chapter, and the relationship of this document to other planning documents.

To maximize the public participation in land use decision-making and to educate the public about the broad public participation opportunities, this chapter describes the history of public participation from the beginning of the 1984 Framework Plan, and outlines ways in which the public may continue to be involved. This chapter emphasizes the public participation policies and programs in the Governance Policy presented later in Chapter 3. Additionally, this Public Guide provides guidance on the maintenance of the Citizens Handbook, a resource for those who want to participate in local land use decision-making.

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2.8 History & Overview of Public Participation in Land Use

“Broadened public participation at all levels of the decision making process; including education, study, workshops, hearings, and plan revisions” (1984 Framework Plan §1231.4) was a Major Plan Policy of the earlier General Plan for the County, the 1984 Framework Plan. The goal was to maximize the opportunity for individuals and groups to have meaningful participation in the planning process (1984 Framework Plan §1343).

This goal was developed from the understanding that the public would be more able to support policies guiding the development of the County when given an opportunity to participate in the development and review of the general plan. Through this exposure, and the contributions it made to the process and the product, the public gained greater understanding of the plan. Participation not only in the review of that document, but also in subsequent revisions improved what was adopted and ensured the Plan remained a current statement of public policy (1984 Framework Plan §1343).

As part of the Work Program authorized in October 1980 the Citizens Participation Advisory Committee (CPAC) was formed and charged with the responsibility of developing goals, policies and standards for public participation.

The material developed by the CPAC was reviewed by the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. The Board approved these policies as direction for developing the Hearing Draft, as well as reviewing it. These goals, policies, and standards were again reviewed by the Planning Commission in their preparation of the Commission Rules of Procedure. Revisions made for those Rules of Procedure were also recommended for inclusion in the Hearing Draft General Plan on September 30, 1982.

The Board of Supervisors, following the 26 month review and public hearing process of the Hearing Draft, adopted the Rules of Procedure as the Planning and Coordination for Public Participation § 1500 policies for inclusion as an integral part of the Humboldt County General Plan adopted on December 10, 1984.

The County recognizes the need for public involvement in the land use planning process. The successful application of any law depends to a great extent on the citizens' understanding and support of that law.

The most successful land use planning process, then, will provide for the education of the public. Knowledge of the process allows citizens to have meaningful access to the decision makers, evaluate alternative proposals, and make specific recommendations on hearing draft land use proposals.

In the most successful local determination of the future character of Humboldt County, the residents will understand the land use planning process, and the alternatives and reasons for decisions made that affect our County and our neighborhoods.

Besides, the individual residents and property owners, other citizens in the form of corporate, municipal and special district entities may also participate. In Humboldt County there are seven incorporated cities, more than fifty special districts providing varied services plus school and street lighting districts that will be affected by this plan. Much of the resource land of the County is in corporate and other forms of business interests and 28% of the County is in public ownership. This section of the plan provides direction for public participation in the planning process.

It is an essential function of a democratic society that public policy reflects the needs of the citizenry as expressed by the citizens themselves. Citizens will participate when they feel their participation will have an effect. But the large size of the County can make it difficult for citizen involvement. Plus, there are conflicting land uses and interests within the County which points to the need for creative solutions and a forum for resolution. The following goals and policies seek to provide the opportunities needed to overcome these challenges.

2.9 Goals and Policies

Goals

- PG-G1. Comprehensive Planning Documents.** A set of planning documents that is a comprehensive statement of public policy concerning land use and the provision of public services. (Chapter 3, GP-Gx)
- PG-G2. Community Plans.** Coordinated regional plans that include more than one incorporated city, community, special district, and/or unincorporated area. (Chapter 3, GP-P12)
- PG-G3. Accessible General Plan.** A comprehensive General Plan written in plain English which is readily accessible to the public and encourages citizen participation throughout the planning process. (Chapter 3, GP-Gx1)
- PG-G4. Meaningful Participation.** Maximum opportunity for individuals and groups to have meaningful participation in the planning process. (More detail, Chapter 3, GP-IM-5)

- PG-G5. Process Education.** Maximum opportunities to educate the public about the planning process and the citizen's role in it. (More detail, Chapter 3, GP-P10(G))
- PG-G6. Direct Access to Decision Making Process.** Maximum public access to the decision making process. (More detail, Chapter 3, GP-P10(F))
- PG-G7. Outreach Program.** Aggressive solicitation of input of the public through an "outreach" program of public participation. (More detail, Chapter 3, GP-P10(A))
- PG-G8. Direct Access to Decision Makers.** The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors provide the most direct relationship between the public and the decision makers. (More detail, Chapter 3, GP-P10(F))
- PG-G9. Budgetary Constraints.** Funding to provide opportunities for public participation in the land use planning process is maximized consistent with the budgetary constraints of the County.

Policies

- PG-P1. Planning Process Education.** The County shall provide education and information to the public to encourage participation in the planning process-prior to public hearings on the plan proposals in adequate time to insure informed participation. (Chapter 3, GP-P10(G))
- PG-P2. Method of Education.** The education of the public shall be provided through, but not limited to: Citizens Handbook, print and electronic media, and public meetings. (More detail, Chapter 3, GP-S4)
- PG-P3. Procedures for Fairness.** The Planning Commission shall treat people fairly regardless of income, race, religion or religious creed, color, age (over 40), sex (including gender identity and expression, pregnancy, childbirth and related medical conditions), sexual orientation (including heterosexuality, homosexuality and bisexuality), national origin, ancestry, marital status, medical condition (including cancer and genetic characteristics), mental or physical disability (including HIV status and AIDS), military service, or any other arbitrary factor.
- PG-P4. Access to Procedures.** Planning Commission procedures shall be prepared in a format and language that is clear and readily available to the public. (More detail, Chapter 3, GP-P3)
- PG-P5. Citizen Committees.** The County shall encourage the formation of citizen organizations and citizen committees to provide input on specific matters in a format consistent with the adopted policies and procedures. (More detail, Chapter 3, GP-P10(B))
- PG-P6. Community Plans.** The County shall encourage the development of Community Plans consistent with overall County policies in the General Plan.

- PG-P7. Community Input.** The County shall encourage a variety of views be taken into consideration in the development of Community Plans.
- PG-P8. Public Notification of Planning Commission Meetings.** The Planning Commission shall provide notification of meetings adequate to insure public participation consistent with the goals of this program. (Chapter 3, GP-P10(D))
- PG-P9. Planning Commission Meeting Accessibility.** The meetings of the Planning Commission whenever practical, shall be held in the geographic areas under consideration or, where the meetings of the Commission concern county-wide issues, as addressed in the General Plan, such meetings shall be held in the regional centers most representative of the issues to be addressed. (Chapter 3, GP-P10(C))
- PG-P10. Public Hearings.** Public hearings shall be organized to provide public opportunities to evaluate alternative proposals and participate in the choice of the preferred alternative. (Chapter 3, GP-P10(H))
- PG-P11. Cost.** The costs of review shall be minimized consistent with the requirements of this section by the following:
- Review on an exception or "consent calendar" approach
 - Focusing testimony and comments on specific issues being addressed.
- PG-P12. Planning Commission Committees.** The Planning Commission should be authorized to create subcommittees or recommend the creation of ad hoc committees from their membership, and to create joint committees for the conduct of planning matters. (Similar to Chapter 3, GP-P10 (B))

2.10 STANDARDS

- PG-S1. Planning Advisory Committees.** Planning Advisory Committees (PAC) may be created to help educate and facilitate public participation, review and prepare recommendations concerning special or technical planning matters that may have county-wide significance. Such PAC's should:
- A. Be established and appointed, subject to Board concurrence, by the Planning Commission;
 - B. Report directly to the Commission;
 - C. Be charged with a specific list of tasks and a schedule for completion;
 - D. Not be created as a standing committee;
 - E. Be composed of lay citizens and technical advisors. (Chapter 3, GP-S5)
- PG-S2. Community Advisory Committees.** Community Advisory Committees (CAC) should be created to review and prepare recommendations on planning matters that affect their individual communities. Such CAC's should:
- A. Be formed in the Community

- B. Be representative of the community make-up, report on the selection process used to form the CAC and be confirmed by the Board based on a recommendation by the Commission;
- C. Contain not less than five (5) nor more than eleven (11) members;
- D. Adhere to common CAC organizational guidelines adopted by the Board;
- E. In cooperation with County staff, direct all comments and questions on planning matters to the Planning Commission; CAC's will be provided County staff for answering questions, and making recommendations to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors;
- F. Establish a work program, regular meeting schedule and completion date;
- G. Prepare a map showing the limits of the community's area of interest and all such limits should be approved by the Planning Commission;
- H. Designate a contact person who will communicate with the Commission and inform the public;
- I. Hold local workshops and public meetings to receive public comments.
- J. Educate the public about its community plan and other planning programs that affect the community;
- K. Provide a forum for citizen comments, and provide a mechanism for relaying those comments to the Planning Commission;
- L. Advise the Planning Commission on planning matters that affect the community;
- M. Provide input to the Commission on specific matters in a format consistent with the adopted policies and procedures;
- N. Develop hearing drafts of Community Plans consistent with overall county policies in the Framework Plan;
- O. Community Advisory Committees should be included in all planning notification procedures that affect their area.
- P. Be advised of the CAC's role and responsibility, and, in addition to the education of the public, to listen to community members, bring forward their preferences and concerns in order to facilitate consensus building. (Chapter 3, GP-S6)

PG-S3. Public Education. The education of the public shall be provided through, but not limited to:

- Citizens Handbook
- Print and electronic media
- Public meetings
- Community Advisory Committees
- Public workshops, charettes, and facilitated discussions
- Direct mailings and email notices
- Internet Web pages
- Technical reports
- Interactive live remote (Chapter 3. GP-S4)

2.11 Implementation Measures

PG-IM1. Documents in County Library. The County will maintain an updated electronic library with Planning Regulatory documents, and provide a computer URL address to each branch in the County Library System.

PG-IM2. Orientation for Planning Commissioners. The County should continue to familiarize new Planning Commissioners with their job, and to explain new programs and regulations to existing Commissioners by providing them all the following:

- Providing a Handbook which includes Planning Commissions Operational Procedures, League of Cities Procedures,
- Providing copies to the General Plan and Development Codes,
- Periodic training by County Counsel.

PG-IM3. Citizens Handbook. The County shall develop and maintain a Citizens participation handbook to explain the planning process to Community Advisory Committee members and the general public. To maximize the education of the public, and as a guide and reference for informed citizen and community involvement in the planning process, the Handbook, at minimum, should contain the following topics: planning law, the history of land use planning in Humboldt County, General Plan revisions, and public participation options. (More detail, Chapter 3, GP-IM16)

Chapter 3. Governance Policy

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Amendments

As a long-term policy document with a 20-year planning horizon, the General Plan will likely undergo course corrections and refinements. While planning is a continuous process and periodic review to consider changes in circumstances is necessary, the Plan must also represent a sufficiently solid vision for long-term implementation such as infrastructure investments.

The Plan should strike a balance between the flexibility needed to respond to unique situations and the rigidity necessary to guide development decisions in a predictable and consistent manner.

Major reviews of the entire Plan are scheduled to coincide with state mandated five-year periodic review of the Housing Element. Major plan amendments should be responsive to changed circumstances, such as deviations from anticipated population growth, or address strategic needs, such as updates to community plans.

Apart from County-initiated amendments, there will be requests from private property owners for amendments to the land use designation for individual parcels. While this amendment process is critical to the flexibility of the Plan, the General Plan is a policy document for the entire county and may only be amended "in the public interest" as determined by the Board of Supervisors. In other words, the Plan can only be amended when the change has broad community consensus not merely because the change would benefit a particular property owner. Every General Plan amendment must also be consistent with the rest of the Plan or ...

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3.4 Goals and Policies

GP-PX. Evaluations. Public participation in any general planning legislative amendment and revision process shall be evaluated on a regular basis.

3.5 Standards

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GP-SX. Citizens Handbook. The Citizens Handbook is intended to serve as a self help tutorial and syllabus to facilitate individuals, communities and special interest groups in the understanding of the Humboldt County planning process. The handbook shall provide a user friendly format with figures and flowcharts and a reference index to locate specific topics and a glossary of definitions for commonly used general planning and zoning nomenclature. The Handbook, at minimum, shall contain the following specific chapters:

CHAPTER ONE: PLANNING LAW

1. California Legislative History - Milestones in Planning Laws
2. Present State Statutes

3. Office of Planning and Research Guidelines (OPR) Summary of What is Required of the County

CHAPTER TWO: COUNTY HISTORY OF PLANNING

1. 1965 Adoption of Original Plans
2. Subsequent Planning Activity
3. Humboldt County General Plan Documents
 - a. Regional Plans
 - b. City/Community Plans
 - c. Plan Elements

CHAPTER THREE: GENERAL PLAN REVISION PROGRAM

1. 1980 - 1984: County General Plan Revision Program
2. 1980: Twelve Policy Background Studies
3. 1980 -1982: Citizen Participation Program Development
4. 1981-1982: Public Participation Policy Adopted (§1500)
5. 1982: Citizens Handbook Adopted
6. 1984: Framework Plan Adopted
7. 1982 - 2002: County Community Plans Adopted
8. 1999 - Forward: General Plan Update Process

CHAPTER FOUR: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Citizens Handbook, Maintenance and Updating
2. Opportunities for participation
3. Citizen Participation: Individuals; Planning Advisory Committees; Community Advisory Committees; Ad-hoc Workgroups; Special Interest & Stake Holder Workgroups;
4. Hearing Drafts and Environmental Assessments
5. Draft Plan Review and Adoption
6. Mapping & Zoning
7. General Plan Amendments

APPENDIX:

1. Glossary
2. Bibliography

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3.6 Implementation Measures

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GP-IMX. Evaluation of Public Participation Programs. Evaluate the effectiveness of citizen participation programs, including public workshops and planning meetings including public hearings before the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors.

Definition of Citizen's Handbook (included in the Glossary of the Draft Plan)

Citizen's Handbook: A comprehensive reference work for educating and guiding the County citizenry about the development and application of California planning law, Humboldt County planning law, and the rights of individuals, groups and communities to have meaningful participation in any County legislative process of amending, revising or implementing general plan goals, policies, standards or implementation measures.

