

**From:** Judith Mayer [<mailto:jmayer@sonic.net>]

**Sent:** Thursday, May 15, 2014 3:19 PM

**To:** Richardson, Michael; Bohn, Rex; Fennell, Estelle; Bass, Virginia; Sundberg, Ryan; Lovelace, Mark

**Subject:** GPU Open Space & Conservation comments

TO: Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

From: Judith Mayer

About: Open Space & Conservation in the GPU

**I request that the Board of Supervisors retain crucial open space and conservation provisions in Chapter 10 of the General Plan Update, which the 2012 Planning Commission-approved GPU draft included after a rigorous public process and with overwhelming public support.**

Retain / reinstate policies to develop a regional trail system

Policy and planning that clearly support long-term development of a regional trail system is a crucial part of creating a livable future for Humboldt County. Only a regional trail system will ensure connection and integrated planning of trail segments that will help people move through our county on safely away from motorized traffic on foot, by bicycle, or on horseback. Only a clear policy that supports development of a regional trail system will ensure high quality and equitable access to the open space that we treasure, and which government, private, and non-profit groups agree is a valuable investment in Humboldt County's distinctive future.

Only reinstating the GOAL of developing a regional trail system in our General Plan Update will clearly and unequivocally support trail system development in an integrated manner over the coming 20 to 30 years.

In addition to overwhelming public support in Planning Commission GPU hearings and outreach meetings for a policy of planning and developing a regional trail system, the "Imagine Humboldt" process also documented support for a policy to develop a regional trail system. A regional trail system linking our natural wonders will attract and keep tourists (and their money) in Humboldt County. An integrated system will also provide an excellent reason for Humboldt residents to spend our own free time and recreation money close to home, enjoying and getting to know our own region, instead of fleeing to other places that have wisely developed regional trail systems.

Retain adequate stream and wetland buffers

It is crucial for Humboldt County's General Plan and land use regulations to retain adequate buffers to protect the ecological integrity of our region's streams and wetlands, as designated in the 2012 Planning Commission approved draft GPU. Failure to heed science-based recommendations embodied in the 2012 draft could put the County at risk not only of willfully allowing the degradation of our region's streams and wetlands, but may actually run counter to current statewide guidelines and regulations.

Reinstate goals and policies that protect greenbelts around designated urban and urban service areas

The Planning Commission approved draft GPU included goals and specific language that would ensure that future development patterns embody land use practices that are universally recognized in the planning profession as both efficient management and good governance. I urge you to reinstate goals and policies that will ensure that Humboldt development makes efficient use of both our fiscal and natural resources.

Judith Mayer, PhD, AICP

449 Blake Court

Arcata, CA 95521

(NB: I am a City of Arcata Planning Commissioner and teach in the Environmental Science and Management program at Humboldt State University. These comments are my own, and do not necessarily reflect views of either of those bodies. However, I am also a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners, and hold a PhD in City and Regional Planning, and believe that these comments DO reflect recognized standards in professional planning practice.)