

# Chapter 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Purpose of the EIR

This document is a revised Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the County of Humboldt General Plan Update (GPU). The EIR discloses to decision-makers, agencies and the public possible environmental impacts from approving the GPU. This EIR also identifies ways to minimize adverse environmental impacts of the GPU, and describes alternatives that may reduce or avoid its significant environmental impacts. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires this environmental review be considered before approval of the GPU. (State CEQA Guidelines §15121[a]).

This document is a substantial revision of the Draft EIR for the County of Humboldt GPU that was originally circulated for public comment between April 2, 2012 and June 15, 2012. The 2012 EIR has been revised to include environmental analysis of changes to the Planning Commission draft GPU made through the course of a series of public hearings conducted by the Board of Supervisors between June, 2012 and March, 2016, and tentatively approved by the Board of Supervisors. A listing of those changes is attached as Appendix U of this revised DEIR.

This revised Draft EIR also reflects changes made in response to public comments received on the initial Draft EIR, and the addition of significant new information, including updated data and analysis of traffic, noise, and greenhouse gas emissions.

The public, along with local, regional, state and federal agencies, are invited to review the revised Draft EIR and the Appendices and to provide comments. The EIR and its Appendices are available for review during normal business hours at the following locations:

- Humboldt County Planning and Building Department, 3015 H Street, Eureka, CA 95501
- Humboldt County Library, Eureka Main Branch, 1313 3rd Street, Eureka, CA 95501

The documents are also available online at:

- <http://www.humboldt.gov/273/General-Plan-Update>.

Comments should be directed to:

John Miller  
County of Humboldt  
Planning and Building Department  
3015 H Street  
Eureka, CA 95501

The comment period for the revised Draft EIR will begin **April 20, 2017** and continue through **June 9, 2017**. Written comments received during the review period will elicit a formal written response which will also be available for public review.

The revised Draft EIR, comments, and responses will all be combined together into the Final EIR, which will be presented to the County Board of Supervisors for consideration as they review the

proposed GPU.

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15200, public and agency review and evaluation of the Draft EIR will serve the following purposes:

- Sharing expertise
- Disclosing agency analyses
- Checking for accuracy
- Detecting omissions
- Discovering public concerns

In addition, the EIR may be used by the California Coastal Commission when approving the portions of the GPU in the coastal zone.

### 1.1.1. Tiering and Required Approvals

This EIR is a Program EIR, which is typically prepared for an agency plan, program, or series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and are related by any of the following characteristics, all of which would apply to the GPU:

- (1) Geographically,
- (2) As logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions,
- (3) In connection with issuance of rules, regulations, plans, or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program, or
- (4) As individual activities carried out under the same authorizing statutory or regulatory authority and having generally similar environmental effects which can be mitigated in similar ways. (CEQA Guidelines §15168(a))

This Program EIR is a first-tier environmental document that assesses and documents the broad environmental impacts that can be expected to occur from the adoption and implementation of the General Plan Update during the planning period to 2040, as more fully explained in Chapter 2 – Project Description. However, this EIR does not necessarily address the site specific impacts that individual development projects implementing the GPU may have. CEQA requires additional environmental review for these subsequent development projects to assess their site-specific impacts. If a subsequent project would have effects not examined in the GPU Program EIR, a second-tier CEQA document, such as a project EIR or Negative Declaration, would be required.

On the other hand, if it is determined that a subsequent project implementing the GPU would have no environmental effects beyond those analyzed in the Program EIR or would require no new mitigation measures, further environmental analysis would be minimized. In this way, environmental evaluation of future projects is to be based on (i.e., “tiered off of”) this EIR. Foreseeable future development actions that may tier off of this EIR include amendment of the zoning ordinance, applications for approval of subdivisions, coastal development permits, conditional use permits, and special permit requests that are consistent with the updated General Plan and within the scope of this RDEIR.

All mitigation measures in the certified EIR will be incorporated into future actions carrying out the General Plan. To assist in the implementation of the General Plan Update, this EIR contains recommendations for some of the analysis that will be needed in the future. For example, this EIR establishes performance measures that would be applied for future projects when the County issues permits and approvals required for those projects.

## 1.2. Evaluating Environmental Significance

For each impact identified in this EIR, a statement of the impact's level of significance is provided. Impacts are categorized in one of the following categories:

- A **less-than-significant** impact would cause no substantial adverse change in the environment.
- A **potentially significant** impact would have a substantial adverse impact on the environment but could be reduced to a less-than-significant level with mitigation.
- A **significant unavoidable** impact would cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment, and no feasible mitigation measures would be available to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.
- The term "**no impact**" was used when the topic area being discussed would not be adversely impacted by implementation of the General Plan.

The impact assessment provided in this document is divided into a number of individual impact statements that deal with specific topics. Following each impact statement is a discussion of the potential impact and the General Plan policies and implementation measures that help to mitigate this impact. The end of each discussion provides a statement identifying the level of the potential adverse impact.

Impact determinations are based on evaluation criteria drawn from adopted local, state, and/or federal policies, such as the current Humboldt County General Plan, the California Coastal Act, the Federal Endangered Species Act, and the CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations §§ 15000, et seq.). The evaluation criteria, along with applicable policies, plans, codes, and regulations, are stated for all environmental issues analyzed in the EIR.

## 1.3. EIR Review Process

### 1.3.1. Scoping the Issues To Be Discussed in the EIR

The EIR process begins with public scoping of the items to be covered in the EIR. For this GPU, the County of Humboldt Planning and Building Department (PBD) is the "lead agency", the agency with principal responsibility for carrying out the General Plan. The County distributed a Notice of Preparation (NOP) (Appendix P) to numerous agencies to let them know an EIR was being prepared for the GPU, and asking the agencies for comments on what should be included in the EIR. The agencies included the following:

- "Responsible agencies" such as the California Coastal Commission, whose approval is required for the coastal portion of the GPU to take effect, and
- "Trustee agencies", state agencies having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by the project which are held in trust for the people of the State of California. Trustee agencies for the Humboldt County General Plan include:
  - California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
  - California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)
  - California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
  - California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA)
  - California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP)
  - North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District (NCUAQMD)

- North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (NCRWQCB)

The NOP also sent to federal trustee agencies, including:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- NOAA Fisheries
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

The formal comment period on the NOP was from January 22, 2007, to February 22, 2007. The County held public scoping meetings, workshops, and public hearings from February 15, 2007, through January 30, 2009, soliciting additional input from agency representatives and the public on the items to be addressed in the EIR (see Appendix P).

The County also held General Plan Update workshops on draft land use maps in a number of Humboldt County communities between September 5, 2007, and September 26, 2007. The purpose of these workshops was to identify preferences and concerns of the affected public, public agencies, and other stakeholders. Input from these workshops was used to formulate the alternatives assessed in this EIR. These workshops were held in the following communities: Willow Creek, Orick, Trinidad, Fortuna, Garberville/Redway, Fieldbrook, Arcata/Eureka, South Eureka, and Petrolia.

The County prepared an Administrative Hearing Draft of the GPU in 2007, and held 14 public hearings with the Planning Commission prior to releasing the Planning Commission Hearing Draft on November 20, 2008, along with three Plan Alternatives. The Planning Commission conducted 76 meetings from April, 2009 through March, 2012 in order to take straw votes and refine the Planning Commission Approved Draft.

A Draft EIR for the Planning Commission Approved Draft GPU was circulated for comment on April 2, 2012. The Planning Commission considered the Draft EIR for the Project at public hearings on April 19, May 10, and May 17, 2012. Public Comments were accepted on the DEIR through June 15, 2012.

The Board of Supervisors held 66 public hearings on the Project and Plan alternatives from June, 2012 through March, 2016, to take straw votes and refine the Planning Commission Approved Draft GPU, resulting in the Board of Supervisors 2016 Markup Draft which is the Project being considered in this EIR..

SB 18 (Stats. 2004, ch. 905, as amended. Government Code sections 65352.3 – 65352.4, 65562.5) consultation with the area Native American tribes on the GPU was initiated on September 24, 2013. Consultation occurred between the tribes and the County on the proposed new land use designations that would be applied to the reservations and rancherias, the TL - Tribal Lands and TTL - Tribal Trust Land designations, and the Cultural Resources Element of the GPU through March 2014. In addition to the changes made to the GPU in consultation with the tribes, the County and the tribes established a standardized protocol for individual consultations separate from the GPU for future County CEQA review of projects that may be tiered from this Program EIR. The SB18 consultation process is further documented in Appendix K of this DEIR.

### **1.3.2. Prepare and Distribute Revised Draft Program EIR**

PBD and its consultants prepared this Revised Draft EIR to address the changes to the Project made by the Board of Supervisors since June, 2012, and to address the comments made on the 2012 Draft EIR for the Planning Commission Approved Draft. The Revised Draft EIR also incorporates significant new information which became available after 2012, as well as changes

in CEQA and General Plan law requirements that occurred after release of the 2012 Draft EIR. Copies of the Revised Draft EIR will be available for viewing at the PBD office, on its website, and at the Humboldt County Library. The Revised Draft EIR and a Notice of Completion were sent to the State Clearinghouse for distribution to the responsible, trustee and other state agencies.

### 1.3.3. Receive Comments on the Draft Program EIR

The Revised Draft EIR will be circulated for a minimum of 45 days from Thursday, April 20, 2017 through Tuesday, June 9, 2017 to allow the public, agencies and tribal governments to review and comment on the document. **No separate written responses to comments made on the 2012 DEIR will be provided in the Final EIR.** Any new comments must be submitted for the Revised Draft EIR. The county will only respond to those new comments submitted in response to the recirculated Revised Draft EIR.

### 1.3.4. Respond to Comments and Prepare the Final Program EIR

After the public review period, PBD will respond in writing to comments made during the review period. The comments and the responses will be appended to the Revised Draft EIR, which together then become the Final EIR. The written responses to comments on the Revised Draft EIR will be available for public review at least ten days prior to certifying the Final EIR.

### 1.3.5. Certify the Final Program EIR, Approve the GPU, and Prepare a "Notice of Determination"

Before approving the General Plan Update the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors must certify the Final EIR. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15090, certification requires that the Board of Supervisors find that 1) the Final Program EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA, 2) the Final Program EIR was presented to the Board of Supervisors and they reviewed and considered the information contained in the Final Program EIR, and 3) the Final Program EIR reflects the County's independent judgment and analysis. The Final Program EIR must be certified before the County can take any action on the General Plan Update or applications associated with the General Plan Update.

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15091, the County may not approve the GPU if the Final EIR identifies one or more significant effects on the environment that would occur if the GPU is approved or implemented unless the County makes one or more of the following findings for each significant effect:

- 1) Changes have been required in, or incorporated into, the GPU which avoid or substantially lessen the significant effect;
- 2) Such changes are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency, and have been, or can and should be adopted by that agency.
- 3) Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or alternatives identified in the EIR.

Further, the GPU cannot be approved unless either 1) it will not have a significant effect on the environment, or 2) it is determined that all significant effects on the environment have been eliminated or substantially lessened as provided in the Section 15091 findings, and any remaining significant effects on the environment found to be unavoidable under Section 15091 are determined to be acceptable because the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of the GPU, including any region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, outweigh or

“override” the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, as provided in CEQA Guidelines Section 15093. When a lead agency approves a project with significant effects that are not avoided or substantially lessened, a Statement of Overriding Considerations is required to document the reasons the agency finds that the unavoidable adverse environmental effects of a project are considered acceptable.

After certification of the Final Program EIR and approval of the GPU, the County will post a Notice of Determination with the Humboldt County Clerk, send it to anyone who previously requested notice, and submit it to the State Clearinghouse for posting. After the Notice of Determination has been posted, CEQA requires that a period of 30 days elapse before the General Plan Update can actually take effect; this provision is so that any person or agency who wants to file legal challenges to the Final Program EIR has sufficient time to do so.

## 1.4. Organization of the EIR

This EIR is organized as follows:

**Chapter 1 - Introduction and Summary:** provides an overview of the EIR, and summarizes the major issues, impacts and mitigation measures, and includes a list of common abbreviations in the EIR.

**Chapter 2 - Project Description:** describes the principles, purpose and assumptions of the GPU.

**Chapter 3 - Environmental Setting and Impacts:** describes the environmental setting and standards of significance, analyzes the environmental impacts, and proposes mitigation measures to reduce the level of impacts; also describes unavoidable significant environmental effects, and economic and social effects of the GPU.

**Chapter 4 - Evaluation of Plan Alternatives:** compares the environmental impacts of the GPU policies with alternative policies, including the No Project Alternative, which is what would occur if the GPU were not adopted, and development continued under the policies of the existing 1984 Framework Plan.

**Chapter 5 - Other CEQA Considerations:** evaluates the impacts of the GPU in terms of the following additional considerations:

- A. Significant Irreversible Effects
- B. Growth Inducing Impacts
- C. Cumulative Impacts
- D. Long Term Benefits versus Short Term Gains
- E. Mandatory Findings of Significance

Chapter 5 also identifies the organizations and persons consulted in preparation of the EIR and the preparers of the EIR.

**Appendices** - The appendices to this EIR are provided as separate attachments, and are incorporated into this EIR as if set forth herein in their entirety. They include:

- A. Summary of GPU Changes made by the Board of Supervisors June, 2012 - March, 2016
- B. *Critical Choices Report*, 2001- Identified issues to be addressed in the General Plan

- Update.
- C. *Building Communities Report*, February 2002 - Background report on population, housing, employment, land use and services.
  - D. *Natural Resources and Hazards Report*, September 2002 - Preliminary resource assessments for water resources, biological resources, forest resources, agricultural lands, parks and open space, cultural resources, mineral and energy resources, scenic resources, air quality, geologic, seismic and soil hazards, flooding, fire and noise.  
Volume I. Discussion Paper  
Volume II: Detailed Watershed Characteristics and Regulatory Framework
  - E. *Agricultural Resources Report*, October 2003 - Detailed assessment and policy report.
  - F. *Forest Resources Report*, October 2003 - Detailed assessment and policy report.
  - G. *Moving Goods and People Report*, October 2002- Existing conditions, planned improvements and policy options for transportation planning.
  - H. Transportation Analysis Supporting Documents
  - I. Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, 2013
  - J. *Sketch Plan Alternatives Report*, June, 2004 - A discussion paper for community workshops for selecting the preferred plan alternative
  - K. SB18 Consultation with Native American Tribes
  - L. *Local Coastal Plan Issues Report*, September 2003.
  - P. *Water Resources Technical Background Report*, November 2007 - Detailed water resources assessment.
  - Q. *Community Infrastructure & Services Technical Report*, July 2008 - Detailed infrastructure and public facility assessment report.
  - R. *Energy Element Technical Background Report*, October 2005 - Provides a framework and background information for the Energy Element.
  - S. Notice of Preparation and Responses
  - T. Assumptions used in development projections
  - U. Forecasts of Unincorporated Area Energy Consumption
  - V. Comparison of Alternatives

# Summary of the Revised Draft EIR for the Humboldt County General Plan Update

## S.1 Introduction

The County of Humboldt has prepared this Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the comprehensive update of the 1984 Humboldt County General Plan (General Plan Update, GPU, Plan, or Project) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act. This EIR evaluates the potential environmental impacts of implementing the GPU, and discloses these impacts to decision makers, agencies and the public.

This is the second EIR to be circulated for the GPU, and constitutes a significant revision of both the GPU and the previous EIR circulated in 2012. The currently proposed GPU and this EIR reflect changes made in response to written public comments on the 2012 Draft EIR, as well as input from the public and Board of Supervisors provided during the Supervisors' 66 public hearings held during the intervening years.

This chapter of the EIR provides an overview of proposed General Plan Update and its environmental consequences pursuant to Section 15123 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. This summary includes:

- A brief description of the proposed GPU and project objectives
- A summary of project alternatives
- Known areas of controversy
- Issues to be resolved, including the selection of an alternative and whether and how to mitigate significant impacts
- A summary of the GPU environmental impacts, and associated mitigation measures and alternatives that would reduce or avoid the impacts
- Public participation information to facilitate the public's review of this EIR

## S.2. Project Description and Objectives

Chapter 2 - Project Description contains a detailed description of the Project location and setting, and Project goals and objectives, which are summarized below.

### S.2.1 Project Description

The proposed Project consists of a comprehensive update of the 1984 Humboldt County General Plan. The General Plan Update expresses the community's goals for the distribution of future land uses for approximately the next 24 years until 2040, both public and private, and establishes policies, standards and implementation measures for future development. The RDEIR reviews and revises the basic assumptions regarding population projections and future land use demand, and proposes land use designations and diagrams (maps), together with policies, to meet that demand in a manner consistent with state law. The GPU has a 20 - 25 year planning

horizon, designating land to meet projected demands for residential, commercial, and industrial uses over the next 20 - 25 years.

The project analyzed in this EIR reflects the Board of Supervisors Markup Draft General Plan Update, October 19, 2015. The proposed General Plan Update includes goals, policies, standards, implementation measures, and land use maps recommended by the Planning Commission that were evaluated in the April 2, 2012 Draft Environmental Impact Report, as well modifications, additions, and deletions by the Board of Supervisors as tentatively approved during public hearings between June, 2012 and March, 2016.

The GPU provides for modest expansion of the urban areas currently reflected in the community plans. The Plan would increase infill opportunities and development in urban-service areas, while continuing policies protecting resource lands from fragmentation. Additional industrial and commercial lands would be made available for use based on historic demand in proportion to residential land uses.

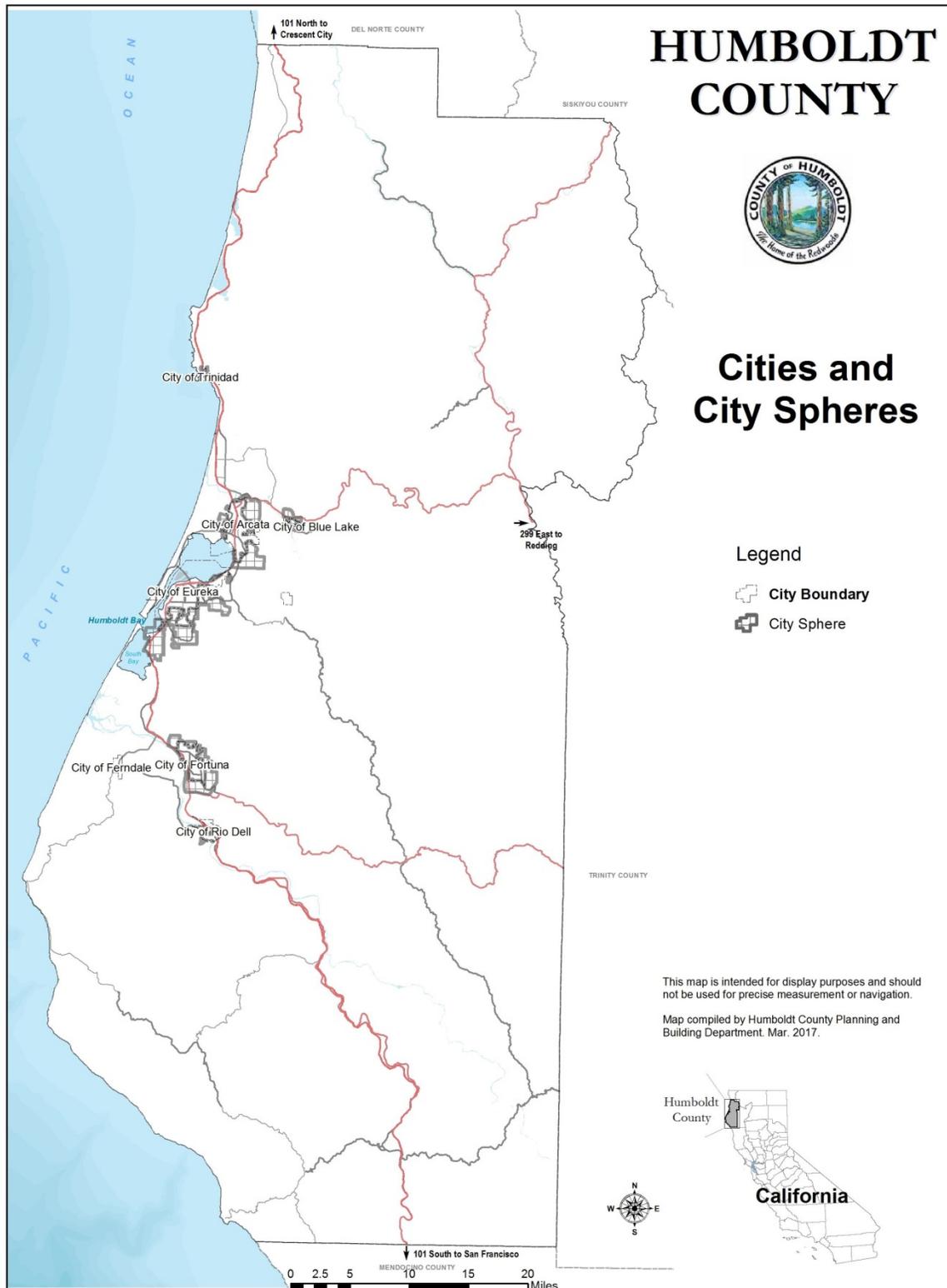
## S.2.2 Project Location

The project location, hereafter referred to as the planning area, is identified as the unincorporated areas of Humboldt County, including the 22 Community Planning Areas (CPAs) and six (6) Coastal Zone Planning Areas established by the County (see Figure 1-2). With 3,570 square miles (nearly 2.3 million acres) of land, Humboldt County is the fourteenth largest county in California as well as one of the more rural counties. There are seven incorporated cities in the County which are not included in the planning area (see Figure 1-1); however, existing land use patterns and sphere of influence plans of the incorporated cities have been analyzed in the General Plan Update planning process. Incorporated cities occupy 24,040 acres, or just about one percent of the total land area.

Approximately 30 percent of the county is either in public ownership or tribal lands. The National Forests, National Parks, and public land controlled by the Bureau of Land Management totals 110,000 acres, the State Parks System includes 76,500 acres, and other state lands comprise approximately 8,500. Tribal lands total approximately 130,500 acres (including reservations, rancherias, and other trust lands), or 5.7 percent of the total land area in the county.

Timber and agriculture lands account for the majority (approximately 60 percent) of the unincorporated County's rural land uses, including approximately 1,175,000 acres of Timberland Production Zone (TPZ) and 289,000 acres in Williamson Act preserves. It should be noted that some Williamson Act preserve areas also include TPZ zoned land. Rural residential land, which may also contain timber, agriculture, and grazing lands, occupies approximately 220,000 acres of the unincorporated area. Single-family residential-zoned lands cover 12,000 acres and an additional 1,200 acres are designated for multi-family housing.

Figure 1-1. Humboldt County Cities and Spheres of Influence.





### S.2.3 Project Objectives

As part of the process in developing and defining the objectives for the GPU, the Board of Supervisors considered a set of Guiding Principles to guide preparation of the Plan. These guiding principles are considered to be the Project objectives for purposes of CEQA analysis.

1. Ensure that public policy is reflective of the needs of the citizenry of a democratic society as expressed by the citizens themselves.
2. Preserve and enhance the diverse character of Humboldt County and the quality of life it offers.
3. Promote and facilitate the creation of affordable housing opportunities to meet current and future demands for all income levels.
4. Cooperate with services providers and promote efficient use of roads, water, and sewer services by encouraging development that is consistent with Land Use maps contained in the General Plan. Support home construction methods and alternative wastewater systems that are proven to minimize threats to human health and safety with a goal of reducing energy and water usage.
5. Support the County's economic development strategy and other efforts to retain and create living-wage job opportunities.
6. Encourage, incentivize and support agriculture, timber ecosystem services and compatible uses on resource lands.
7. Support individual rights to live in urban, suburban, rural or remote areas of the County while using a balanced approach to protect natural resources, especially open space, water resources, fisheries habitat and water quality, in cooperation with state and federal agencies.
8. Adhere to practical strategies that can be implemented utilizing constructive cooperation and common sense.
9. Provide a clear statement of land use values and policies to provide clarity in the County's permit processing system and simplify review of projects.
10. Maximize the opportunities to educate the public about the planning process, in order to have meaningful participation in the development and maintenance of the General Plan.
11. Support a broad public participation program at all levels of the decision making process, including study, workshops, hearings, a citizens handbook and plan revisions.

In general, the implementation of the proposed GPU land use maps and policy would:

- Generally maintain the characteristics of existing communities.
- Apply land use designations that support mixed-use development and other techniques to increase efficiency of land utilization, including the use of alternative subdivision standards, density bonuses, second unit incentives, live-work commercial centers, etc.
- Maintain current planned residential densities outside of community planning areas and facilitate opportunities for second residential units.
- Increase available resource production land protections using a range of planning tools such as, clustered development incentives, open space standards, conservation easements and regulatory reform.

## S.3 Project Alternatives

Chapter 4 - Evaluation of Plan Alternatives provides a detailed discussion regarding Project alternatives and how they compare. Following is a brief summary of alternatives to the proposed Project, including alternatives that were considered but rejected early in the GPU process and are thus no longer under consideration.

### S.3.1 Alternatives Considered by Rejected

**Sketch Plan 2: Expanded Growth Patterns.** This alternative proposed to increase developable parcels and densities compared to the existing Framework Plan. It was rejected early in the GPU process due to lack of public support.

**Sketch Plan 4: Mixed Growth Patterns.** This alternative proposed the increased development capacity of Sketch Plan 2 with higher urban density allowances and more resource protection policies, resulting in the highest potential number of building sites among Sketch Plan alternatives while maintaining resource lands protections. It was rejected early in the GPU process due to lack of public support.

**Housing Element Alternatives.** Two alternatives were evaluated and rejected during the updating of the 2009 Housing Element, required by law to move ahead of the other General Plan elements. One alternative that was rejected was based on a 2% annual growth rate, rather than the 0.5% projected by the Department of Finance, resulting in a residential unit requirement far in excess of state projections. The other alternative considered and rejected would have limited new residential development to properties in urban areas currently served by public water and sewer, and rural properties with on-site septic systems. This alternative was rejected because it would not provide for the residential land inventory required by the state.

**Alternative C: Expanded Growth Alternative.** This alternative proposed substantially more development than the Project and eliminated many resource protection policies. This alternative was rejected because it increases environmental impacts as compared to the Project, thereby requiring no further evaluation pursuant to CEQA.

### S.3.2 Alternatives to the Proposed Project

**Alternative A – The Focused Growth Alternative.** As compared to the Project, this alternative provides for a slight increase in planned urban residential densities in existing developed areas, reduces planned residential expansion (particularly on resource lands), can be characterized as a more contemporary plan by making increased use of modern planning concepts such as mixed-use development designations, and is more protective of resources and the environment. Alternative A was determined to be the “environmentally superior” alternative pursuant to CEQA.

**Alternative B – The 2008 Proposed General Plan Update.** This alternative is designed to balance protection of resource lands with the need for residential development through focused development, appropriate urban expansion, and incentive-based clustering policies to encourage conservation of resource production lands. Alternative B classifies approximately the same acreage as resource production, with far less residential capacity on these lands as compared to the Project, and is overall more protective of the environment than the Project.

**Alternative D – The No Project Alternative (i.e. development under the existing General Plan).**

This alternative considers future development patterns continuing under the existing 1984 Humboldt County Framework General Plan, using its policies and land use designations. This alternative would be more protective of the environment than the Project.

**Alternative PC – The Planning Commission-Recommended GPU.** This alternative considers future development patterns resulting from the GPU that the Planning Commission recommended to the Board of Supervisors in May, 2012. While there are many similarities between the Board's tentatively approved draft and the Planning Commission's recommended draft, there are some notable exceptions that in some cases increase environmental impacts, and in other cases decrease environmental impacts. With the exception of Standard BR-S5 Streamside Management Areas defined, this alternative would be more protective of the environment than the Project.

## S.4 Areas of Known Controversy

The issues that have thus far generated the most controversy are summarized below. These issues are further discussed in the various sections of Chapter 3 of this EIR.

### Resource Land Protection

The long-term sustainability of Humboldt County's agricultural economy hinges on the continued profitability of agricultural and timber operations and the availability of farm land and commercial timberland. Conversion of agriculture lands to other uses, such as rural residential and natural resources preservation, can negatively impact the agricultural industry as a whole. What measures should the County take to increase the long-term profitability of agricultural and forest land management and production?

Additionally, the area where houses and undeveloped forestlands meet can be a focal point for conflict between residential and resource land uses. Should the County implement development standards to address potential use conflicts?

### In-fill Development versus Dispersed Development Patterns

The Plan must provide for a sufficient supply of developable land with adequate services to accommodate expected growth. Should growth be focused in and around existing infrastructure and services which would generally mean in or adjacent to urbanized areas, or should growth be more widely distributed without regard to the current location of services and infrastructure, which would generally mean expansion into resource lands?

### Commercial Cannabis Activities

Unregulated cannabis cultivation, processing and manufacturing activities established throughout the County over approximately the past 50 years have resulted in environmental damage in many rural areas. Recent changes to state law allow local permits for commercial cannabis activities, and the County developed regulations to implement the new state laws. Will the new permit requirements improve environmental conditions while at the same time preserve and enhance the economic viability of the local cannabis industry as a regulated legal activity? The baseline impact of cannabis activities is briefly touched upon in Chapter 3.2 - Agricultural and Timber Resources of this EIR. The potentially significant environmental impacts of future changes to the County's regulatory program to address cannabis will be assessed in a separate EIR currently being prepared, and will not be evaluated in this document.

### **Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

The state requires reductions in GHG emissions from local government actions, which include not only project local governments implement themselves, but also local government approval of private projects. Actions to reduce GHG emissions include reducing energy use, waste, water use, transportation emissions, and improving energy efficiency in new development through siting and design considerations. Should the County take a leadership role to develop and implement a multi-jurisdictional Climate Action Plan to achieve regional reductions in greenhouse gas emissions? Should the County implement measures to sequester carbon on forest and agricultural lands?

### **Traffic Congestion and Transportation Facilities Funding**

Traffic congestion in and around the greater Eureka area, whether real or perceived, has been an ongoing issue during the GPU. Identifying necessary congestion relief improvements, the party responsible for those improvements and adequate funding mechanisms to facilitate construction of required improvements, has been a controversial topic. An example of this controversy is the ongoing issue of the Martin Slough Interceptor Traffic Impact Fee and Greater Eureka Area Traffic Impact Fee.

### **Balancing Private Property Rights, Environmental Protection, and Sound Land Use Planning**

The controversy associated with the County planning staff, Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, together with landowners and other community members, attempting to achieve the correct balance of these community values played out during the Planning Commission's and Board of Supervisors' review of, and deliberation concerning, several chapters of the GPU, most particularly regarding the land use chapter and land use maps. Has the correct balance of these competing values been achieved?

## **S.5 Issues to be Resolved**

The Notice of Preparation for the GPU EIR identified a number of potentially significant impacts or "issues", related to the following general topics, that could result from implementation of the GPU. These topics include:

- Aesthetics
- Agricultural Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation/Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems

This EIR addresses the potential impacts associated with these various topics, and identifies mitigation and/or project alternatives to address or "resolve" the impacts, including instances where impacts cannot be reduced below a level of significance.

In addition, remaining issues to be resolved by the Board of Supervisors include:

- Selection of the alternative and mitigation measures
- Adoption of implementing ordinances, including zoning maps, after adoption of the GPU
- Certification of the GPU and implementing ordinances by the California Coastal Commission, after adoption of the GPU and implementing ordinances.

## S.6 Summary of Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Table 1-1 provides a reference “key” for the abbreviations included in Table 1-2 for the policies, standards and implementation measures. Table 1-2 is a summary of the environmental impact analysis presented in Chapter 3 of this EIR. Table 1-2 summarizes the significant effects associated with implementation of the Project, together with proposed mitigation measures and alternatives that would reduce or avoid the effects.

## S.7 Public Review of the EIR

This EIR and Appendices are available to the public, and to local, regional, state and federal agencies, for the statutory 45-day public review period. Hard copies are available during normal business hours at the following locations:

- Humboldt County Department of Community Development Services, 3015 H Street, Eureka, CA 95501
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3015 H Street  
Eureka, CA 95501

The comment period for the revised Draft EIR will begin Thursday, April 20, 2017 and continue through Tuesday, June 9, 2017. Written comments received during the review period will elicit a formal written response which will also be available for public review. EIR, comments and responses will be combined into the Final EIR, which will be presented to the County Board of Supervisors for consideration as they review the proposed GPU.

Table 1-1. Abbreviations for General Plan Update Goals, Policies, Standards, and Implementation Measures.

Element or Chapter		Component	
<b>GP</b>	Governance Policies	<b>G</b>	Goal
<b>RD</b>	Rural Development	<b>P</b>	Policy
<b>MG</b>	Managing Growth		
<b>RR</b>	Rural Residential		
<b>FR</b>	Forest Resources		
<b>AG</b>	Agricultural Lands	<b>S</b>	Standard
<b>PL</b>	Public Lands		
<b>IS</b>	Community Infrastructure and Services		
<b>C</b>	Circulation		
<b>H</b>	Housing	<b>IM</b>	Implementation Measure
<b>CD</b>	Community Design		
<b>ED</b>	Economic Development		
<b>CO</b>	Conservation and Open-Space		
<b>WR</b>	Water Resources		
<b>BR</b>	Biological Resources		
<b>CU</b>	Cultural Resources		
<b>SR</b>	Scenic Resources		
<b>MR</b>	Mineral Resources		
<b>E</b>	Energy Element		
<b>AQ</b>	Air Quality		
<b>N</b>	Noise		
<b>S</b>	Safety		
<b>WM</b>	Waste Management		

Examples:

WR-P2 is Policy #2 of the Water Resources Element.

AQ-IM1 is Implementation Measure #1 of the Air Quality Chapter

Please Note: Proposed mitigation measures with underlining and strikethrough reflect proposed changes to existing language contained in the 2016 Board of Supervisors Markup Draft General Plan.

Table 1-2. Summary of Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures.

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Under Proposed Plan	Mitigation Measures that address impact	Significance After Mitigation
<b>Land Use</b>			
<p><b>Impact 3.1.3.2: Conflict with Other Applicable Land Use Plans</b>                      Implementation of the proposed County General Plan Update may conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.</p>	<p>Significant</p>	<p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.1.3.2.a.</b> Add the following implementation measure to the Growth Planning section of the Land Use Element to reduce potential impacts related to conflict between the General Plan Update and applicable land use regulations:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Implementation Measure GP-IMX, Zoning Consistency. Within two years after the adoption of the General Plan Update, revise the Zoning Regulations to re-establish zoning consistency with the policies of the General Plan and amend the Zoning Map to achieve consistency with the General Plan Land Use Map.</i></p> <p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.1.3.2.b.</b> Add the following narrative to Section 10.1.1, Relationship to Other Elements, and Table 10-A Conservation and Open Space Policy Summary, of the Conservation and Open Space Elements to fully demonstrate consistency between General Plan Update and state law:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>Add the following text to the Section 10.1.1, Relationship to Other Elements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Open Space for military bases, installations, and operating and training areas</i> — areas adjacent to military installations, military training routes, and underlying restricted airspace that can provide additional buffer zones to military activities and complement the resource values of the military lands. [add to the bottom of page 10-1]</li> <li>• <i>Open Space for Native American historic, cultural or sacred site</i> — Open space for the protection of places, features, and objects described in Sections 5097.9 and 5097.993 of the Public Resources Code. [add to the bottom of page 10-1]</li> </ul> <p><b>Open Space for military bases, installations, and operating and training areas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Narrative description of these open space lands and a map</i></li> </ul>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

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		<p><i>showing their locations is included in the Safety Element.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Policies to minimize impacts to military trainings areas are included in the Safety Element.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Policies to provide notification to the military are included in the Safety Element.</i> <i>[add to the bottom of page 10-2]</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Open Space for Native American historic, cultural or sacred site:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Narrative description of these open space lands is included in the Cultural Resources Section of the Conservation and Open Space Elements.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Policies relating to Native American Tribal consultation are included in the Cultural Resources Section of the Conservation and Open Space Elements.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Policies relating to the identification, protection, and enhancement of cultural resources are included in the Cultural Resources Section of the Conservation and Open Space Elements.</i> <i>[add to the bottom of page 10-2]</i></li> </ul> <p>Add to Table 10-A. Conservation and Open Space Policy Summary</p> <p><b>Open Space for Military Training Areas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Minimize impacts to military trainings areas</li> <li>B. Provide notification to the military of projects that could affect military readiness.</li> </ul> <p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.1.3.2.c.</b> Add a map identifying the Unincorporated Legacy Communities within the County as well as the following policy to the Community Infrastructure and Services Element to reduce potential impacts related to conflict between the General Plan Update and state General Plan law:</p>	

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		<p><i>Appendix F: Map Book. Add a map of Humboldt County showing the location of Unincorporated Legacy Communities.</i></p> <p><i>Policy IS-PX3, Unincorporated Legacy Communities. On or before the due date for each subsequent revision of its Housing Element, the County shall review, and if necessary amend, the General Plan to update the analysis of unincorporated legacy communities.</i></p>	
<b>Agricultural and Timber Resources</b>			
<p><b>Impact 3.2.3.1 Convert Farmland or Forest Land</b> Implementation of the proposed County General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use, and could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use, or result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.</p>	Significant	No mitigation available beyond the Draft General Plan Update policies.	Significant and Unavoidable
<b>Utilities and Services Systems</b>			
<p><b>Impact 3.3.3.2. Water Supply</b> Population growth during the General Plan Update planning period could result in insufficient water supplies from existing entitlements and resources, or result</p>	Significant	<p><b>Mitigation 3.3.3.2.a.</b> The following implementation measure shall be added to the Water Resources Element to ensure that water supply and availability is fully characterized within each watershed where such information is not adequately known:</p> <p><i>WR-IMx. Water Supply Evaluation and Monitoring. Conduct</i></p>	Significant and Unavoidable

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<p>in the construction of new water treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.</p>		<p><i>watershed level evaluations within two years after the adoption of the General Plan Update to determine the long term surface and groundwater supply, including seasonal, average, dry year, and multiple dry year supplies, and beneficial uses of water to determine an estimate of the quantity of water available for future development. Work with water and wastewater related special districts, regulators, and other appropriate organizations to monitor watershed conditions.</i></p>	
<b>Transportation</b>			
<p><b>Impact 3.5.3.1 Vehicle Miles Traveled</b> Implementation of the proposed County General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would cause a conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, or cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system.</p>	<p>Significant</p>	<p><b>Mitigation 3.5.3.1.a.</b> The following policies shall be added to the Circulation Element and would require the implementation of transportation demand management programs with new larger scale development in the unincorporated area.</p> <p><b><i>C-P3. Consideration of Transportation Impacts in Land Use Decision Making.</i></b> <i>Decisions to change or expand the land use of a particular area shall include an analysis of the impacts to existing and proposed transportation facilities and services so as to minimize or avoid significant operational, environmental, economic, and health-related consequences.</i></p> <p><b><i>C-Px9. Regional Transportation Demand Management Funding.</i></b> <i>Encourage HCAOG to seek funding to support transportation demand management planning and to promote strategies that can lower the demands made on the road and highway system, reduce energy consumption, and improve air quality.</i></p> <p><b><i>C-Px10. Transportation Demand Management Programs.</i></b> Require residential subdivisions and multifamily development that would result in fifteen or more dwelling units, and non-residential development that would employ greater than ten persons, and that require a discretionary permit, to comply with County transportation demand management programs.</p> <p><b><i>C-IMX6. Transportation Demand Management.</i></b> Amend the</p>	<p>Significant and Unavoidable</p>

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		<p><i>Zoning Regulations to include criteria for the development and implementation of transportation demand management programs as required by this Plan.</i></p>	
<p><b>Impact 3.5.3.2 Unacceptable LOS on Roadways within the County</b>                      Implementation of the proposed County General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways.</p>	<p>Significant</p>	<p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.5.3.2.a.</b> Amend existing policies and add the following implementation measure to the Circulation Element that establishes a multi-faceted program to lessen impacts relating to traffic congestion:</p> <p><b><i>C-IMX7. Congestion Relief Planning and Implementation Program.</i></b>  <i>The County shall utilize the best available traffic information, including the Humboldt County Travel Demand Model, other models and plans, and transportation impact analyses to identify roads that are currently capacity constrained or projected to become capacity constrained at some point as a result of General Plan implementation, and shall work cooperatively with HCAOG, Caltrans, applicable cities, HTA, or other agencies to implement a coordinated traffic management strategy to plan and prioritize transportation demand measures and roadway improvements to reduce roadway congestion along such roadways.</i></p> <p><i>The County shall use state and federal transportation improvement funds available directly to the County or through HCAOG, other grant funds, project related exactions, other available County funds, and impact fees to fund congestion relief improvements.</i></p> <p><i>The following steps shall be taken to address specific capacity limitations:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. Monitor vehicle trips and other modes of travel at regular intervals.</i></li> <li><i>2. Solicit public involvement in transportation improvement planning prior to implementing any improvements.</i></li> <li><i>3. Identify transportation demand management measures that could be applied to the areas served by the specific roadway(s) to reduce peak-hour vehicle trips and congestion, such as:</i></li> </ol>	<p>Significant and Unavoidable</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1. <i>Coordinate with school districts to expand school bus operations, create a "walking school bus" program, create programs for shared rides to school, or other programs to reduce school-related vehicle trips;</i></li> <li>3.2. <i>Coordinate with transit providers to identify strategies to improve and expand bus service and encourage ridership;</i></li> <li>3.3. <i>Coordinate with businesses served by the roadway(s) and encourage the use of appropriate transportation demand measures to reduce employee-related vehicle trips;</i></li> <li>3.4. <i>Identify bicycle and pedestrian enhancements that improve the ability of motorists to shift short trips to non-motorized modes.</i></li> <li>4. <i>Use the following roadway and intersection improvements, as appropriate, in combination with "E" below, to accommodate additional traffic volumes while providing a safe multi-modal circulation system:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.1. <i>Public education</i></li> <li>4.2. <i>Signage</i></li> <li>4.3. <i>Stop signs</i></li> <li>4.4. <i>Traffic signals or roundabouts</i></li> <li>4.5. <i>Traffic signal timing changes and signal coordination</i></li> <li>4.6. <i>Striped turn-lanes</i></li> <li>4.7. <i>Turn movement prohibitions</i></li> <li>4.8. <i>Bulb-outs and chicanes</i></li> <li>4.9. <i>Change stop sign location of two-way stop signs at four-way intersections to reduce unwarranted stops on parallel alternative routes</i></li> <li>4.10. <i>Develop parallel routes or make parallel routes into couplets</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>5. <i>Implement the following measures in a stepwise manner to provide additional vehicle capacity on existing two-lane roads:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.1. <i>Within the existing curbs, provide a two-way left turn lane (2WLTl), two travel lanes, and up to two parking</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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		<p><i>lanes when space permits – provides a capacity of up to 16,000 vehicles per day.</i></p> <p>5.2. <i>Provide 2WLTl, two travel lanes, two bike lanes, and up to two parking lanes when space permits (usually a parking lane needs to be removed to add bike lanes) - provides a capacity of up to 16,000 vpd.</i></p> <p>5.3. <i>Identify parallel alternate routes with available traffic capacity to which some of the excess traffic can be diverted and utilize intersection improvements listed in "D" above to encourage drivers to divert to identified alternate routes.</i></p> <p>6. <i>If transportation demand management measures and capacity improvements located within the existing two-lane cross-section have been demonstrated to be inadequate:</i></p> <p>6.1. <i>Consider accepting a lower level of service;</i></p> <p>6.2. <i>Within the existing curbs, provide four lanes consisting of two travel lanes and no parking - provides a capacity of up to 20,000 vpd. Note: Although a four-lane undivided roadway section provides more capacity than two lanes and one 2WLTl, the section with a 2WLTl is considered safer.</i></p> <p>6.2.1. <i>Within the existing curbs, same as above but with a.m. and p.m. peak hour left turn prohibitions into driveways and side streets - provides a capacity of up to 22,000 vpd.</i></p> <p>6.2.2. <i>Within the existing curbs, same as above but with a.m. and p.m. peak hour left turn prohibitions into driveways and side streets; widen curbs to provide left turn pockets at key intersections – provides a capacity of 24,500.</i></p> <p>6.3. <i>Consider widening the curbs to provide additional travel lanes, bike lanes, 2WLTl, medians, parking lanes, and sidewalks, all as needed to meet demands.</i></p> <p><b>C-Px. Countywide Traffic Impact Fee Program.</b> <i>In coordination with the cities within the County, shall develop and implement a</i></p>	

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		<i>countywide traffic impact fee program that addresses impacts on major roads resulting from development in cities and unincorporated areas. Adopt this fee within one year of the adoption of the General Plan Update. A traffic impact fee is currently being evaluated for the Greater Eureka Area, encompassing the Eureka urbanized area</i>	
<p><b>Impact 3.5.3.2.-1: Unacceptable LOS on U.S. 101 Between S.R. 255 in Arcata and 6th Street in Eureka</b>                      The travel demand model indicates that implementation of the General Plan Update will result in increased traffic that will cause U.S. 101 between S.R. 255 in Arcata and 6<sup>th</sup> Street in Eureka to operate at LOS D/E in 2028 and 2040. The minimum acceptable LOS on U.S. 101 in urban areas in Caltrans District 1 is LOS D.</p>	Significant	<p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.5.3.2.c.</b> Modify Policy C-P17 to demonstrate support for the implementation of Caltrans U.S. 101 Eureka-Arcata Corridor Improvement Project, in a manner consistent with the General Plan Update.</p> <p><b>C-P17. Highway Improvements.</b> Encourage state and federal highway improvements that promote safety and connectivity for all users, especially for communities with highway arterials. <b><u>The County supports a strategy for safety and operational improvements to the U.S. Highway 101 Safety Corridor that is implemented in a manner consistent with the General Plan.</u></b></p>	significant and unavoidable impact
<p><b>Impact 3.5.3.2.-2: Unacceptable LOS on U.S. 101/Broadway, City of Eureka</b>                      Implementation of the General Plan Update will result in increased traffic that will cause U.S. 101/Broadway in the City of Eureka to operate at LOS D in 2028 and 2040, which is the minimum acceptable LOS on U.S. 101 in urban areas in Caltrans District 1.</p>	Significant	<p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.5.3.2.d.</b> A Circulation Element policy shall be added to direct the County to participate in joint planning for the Broadway corridor:</p> <p><b>C-Px, U.S. 101/Broadway Corridor.</b> The County shall participate in joint planning for capacity improvements relating to the U.S. 101/Broadway corridor with HCAOG, Caltrans, and the City of Eureka.</p>	significant and unavoidable impact
<p><b>Impact 3.5.3.2.-3: Unacceptable LOS on Main St, Between 7th St and 13th Street, Fortuna</b>                      Implementation of the General Plan Update will result in increased traffic that will cause Main Street between 7<sup>th</sup> Street and 13<sup>th</sup> Street to operate at LOS D in 2028 and 2040.</p>	Significant	No mitigation available beyond the Draft General Plan Update policies.	Significant and Unavoidable

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<p><b>Impact 3.5.3.3 Regional Level of Service Standard</b> Implementation of the General Plan Update would generate levels of development that result in increased traffic volumes on roads within the County that could Conflict with an applicable regional level of service standard.</p>	Significant	Mitigation Measure 3.5.3.2.a will add an implementation measure that involves using best available traffic information, and working with other agencies to implement a coordinated traffic management strategy to plan and prioritize transportation demand measures and roadway improvements to reduce roadway congestion along such roadways, which will help reduce this impact as well.	Significant and Unavoidable
<p><b>Impact 3.5.3.2-4: Unacceptable LOS on Kenmar Road between U.S. 101 NB Ramps and S. Fortuna Blvd, Fortuna</b> Growth projected to occur during the General Plan Update planning period in conjunction with the growth in the cities within the County will result in increased traffic that will cause Kenmar Road between U.S. 101 NB ramps and S. Fortuna Blvd. to operate at LOS D or below in 2028 and 2040. The minimum acceptable LOS on U.S. 101 in urban areas in Caltrans District 1 is LOS D.</p>	Significant	No mitigation available beyond the Draft General Plan Update policies.	Significant and Unavoidable
<b>Noise</b>			
<p><b>Impact 3.6.3.2 Groundborne Vibration and Construction Noise</b> Implementation of the proposed County General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would result in exposure of persons to, or generation of, excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels or substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity</p>	Less than Significant	<p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.6.3.2.a.</b> Amend Implementation Measure N-IM7x., Noise Control Ordinance, to the Noise Element to require that construction noise parameters for discretionary projects be specified.</p> <p><i>N-IM7x. Noise Control Ordinance. Prepare and consider a noise control ordinance to regulate noise and vibration sources in order to protect persons from existing or future excessive levels of noise and/or vibration which interfere with sleep, communication, relaxation, health or legally permitted use of property. The ordinance shall define excessive levels of noise for construction activities to be incorporated as permit requirements and other noise sources and may exempt or</i></p>	Less than Significant

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above levels existing without the project.		<i>modify noise requirements for agricultural uses, construction activities, school functions, property maintenance, waste collection and other sources. The ordinance shall include responsibilities and procedures for enforcement, abatement and variances.</i>	
<b>Impact 3.6.3.3 Airport Noise</b> Implementation of the proposed County General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would locate development within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, and expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels; or expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels from a private airstrip.	Potentially Significant	<b>Mitigation Measure 3.6.3.3.a.</b> The following implementation measure shall be added to the Noise Element.  <i><b>N-IMx. Garberville Airport Noise Impact Combining Zone.</b> Add a Noise Impact (N) Combining Zone to the areas surrounding the Garberville Airport that are subject to noise levels equal to or above 60 CNEL according to Figure 5B of the 2007 Garberville Airport Master Plan Report, or the most recent Garberville Airport Master Plan Report.</i>	Less than Significant
<b>Hazards and Hazardous Materials</b>			
<b>Impact 3.7.3.2 Airport Safety Hazards</b> Implementation of the proposed County General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would locate projects within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport or private air strip, that would result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.	Potentially Significant	<b>3.7.4.2a. Mitigation Measure.</b> To ensure consistency between the ALUCP and the General Plan, prior to adopting the Land Use Diagram:  <i>Prior to adopting the <u>General Plan Update</u>, amend land use maps to ensure that maximum allowable residential densities and maximum allowable building occupancies are consistent with the Recommended Compatibility Zones contained in the March 1993 Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.</i>  <i>Or, The following standard shall be added:</i>  <b>S-SX. Airport Land Use Compatibility Zone Overlay.</b> <u>An Airport Land Use Compatibility Zone for all public use airports shall be established that matches the Recommended Compatibility Zones contained in the March 1993 Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, as amended, for Humboldt County Airports, and that limits the maximum allowable</u>	Less than Significant

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		<p><u>residential density and building occupancy for each land use designation subject to such zones, to the Airport/Land Use Safety Compatibility Criteria of the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (Table 14-A).</u></p> <p><b>3.7.4.2b. Mitigation Measure.</b> To ensure consistency between the ALUCP and the General Plan, the following implementation measures shall be added:</p> <p><u><i>S-IMx4. Update Airport/Land Use Safety Compatibility Criteria. The County shall update Airport/Land Use Safety Compatibility Criteria (Table 14-A), consistent with amendments to the ALUCP.</i></u></p> <p><b>S-IMx5. Airport Safety Review Combining Zone.</b> Amend the Zoning Maps to apply an <u>Airport Safety Review Combining Zone, indicated by "AP", that matches the outer boundaries of the Recommended Compatibility Zones contained in the March 1993 Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, as amended, for Humboldt County Airports. Until such time as the Zoning Maps are amended, places a note on the record for each parcel in Humboldt County's online permit management system that lies within the outer boundaries of the Recommended Compatibility Zones.</u></p>	
<p><b>Impact 3.7.3.4 Wildland Fire Risk</b> Implementation of the proposed County General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands.</p>	<p>Significant</p>	<p><b>3.7.4.5a. Mitigation Measure.</b> To lessen impacts resulting from the exposure of people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, the following mitigation is required. Amend Standard FR-S2 Forestland-Residential Interface (FRI), Section E to read as follows:</p> <p><b>FR-S2. Forestland-Residential Interface (FRI).</b> Require new residential subdivisions adjacent to TPZ and public forestlands to include forested buffers and building setbacks between residential uses and adjacent timberlands to minimize use conflicts and safety hazards and, if necessary, require fire breaks around all or a portion of the development in consultation with CALFIRE.</p> <p>For residential development, require compliance with fire safe standards, and ongoing fire protection management programs <b><u>developed by qualified experts.</u></b></p>	<p>Significant and Unavoidable</p>

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		For residential development in high and very high fire severity zones, require <u>the establishment and maintenance of a</u> fire breaks and open space adjacent to forestlands, consistent with CALFIRE recommendations, <u>and ongoing fire protection management programs developed by qualified experts</u> to ensure defensible space.	
<b>Geology and Soils</b>			
<b>Impact 3.8.3.1 Exposure to Seismic-Related Hazards</b> Implementation of the proposed County General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it exposes people or structures to potential substantial risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, strong seismic groundshaking, seismic-related ground failure (e.g., liquefaction), or as a result of landslides, erosion, or other unstable slope conditions.	Significant	No mitigation available beyond the Draft General Plan Update policies.	Significant and Unavoidable
<b>Impact 3.8.3.2 Soil Erosion or the Loss of Topsoil</b> Implementation of the proposed County General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would increase erosion such that water quality is substantially negatively impacted or results in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.	Less than Significant	<b>Mitigation Measure 3.8.3.2.a.</b> To lessen impacts relating to water quality resulting from increased erosion, the following mitigation is required: <i>Implement Mitigation Measures 3.10.3.1.a and 3.10.3.1.b from Impact 3.10.3.1: Degrade Water Quality or Exceed Waste Discharge Requirements in Chapter 3.10, Hydrology and Water Quality.</i>	Less than Significant
<b>Hydrology and Water Quality</b>			
<b>Impact 3.10.3.1 Degrade Water Quality or Exceed Waste Discharge Requirements</b> Implementation of the proposed	Significant	<b>Mitigation 3.10.3.1.a.</b> The following policy and implementation measure shall be added to the Water Resources Element to lessen impacts resulting from erosion, sedimentation, and siltation:	significant and unavoidable

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<p>County General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements; substantially alter the existing drainage patterns, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation; or otherwise substantially degrade water quality.</p>		<p><i>WR-Px. Continue to Implement Water Quality Regulations. Continue to implement Division 3, Building Regulations, Section 331-12, Grading, Excavation, Erosion, and Sedimentation Control Regulations, and Division 1, Planning Zoning Regulations Chapter 6 - General Provisions and Exceptions Section 314-61.1 Streamside Management Area Ordinance.</i></p> <p><b>Mitigation 3.10.3.1.b.</b> The following policy shall be modified to apply to all development in order the Water Resources Element to improve water quality within watersheds subject to TMDL Controllable Sediment Discharge Inventories:</p> <p><i>WR-Px2. Mitigate Controllable Sediment Discharge Sites. <u>Proposed Discretionary</u> development <u>applications</u> involving a site identified as part of the TMDL Controllable Sediment Discharge Inventory shall be conditioned to reduce sediment discharge.</i></p>	
<p><b>Impact 3.10.3.2 Deplete Groundwater Supplies or Interfere With Groundwater Recharge</b> Implementation of the proposed County General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted).</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>	<p><b>Mitigation 3.10.3.2.a.</b> The following policy shall be added to the Water Resources Element to improve groundwater recharge capacity:</p> <p><b>WR-Px. Enhance Groundwater Recharge Capacity.</b> Encourage watershed management practices that enhance infiltration of rainfall into the groundwater.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Under Proposed Plan	Mitigation Measures that address impact	Significance After Mitigation
<p><b>Impact 3.10.3.4 Housing within a 100-year Flood Hazard Area or Expose People or Structures to Flooding from Levee or Dam Failure, Tsunami, or Mudflow</b></p> <p>Implementation of the proposed County General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map; place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows; expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam, or inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.</p>	<p>Potentially Significant</p>	<p><b>Mitigation 3.10.3.4.a.</b> The following Safety Element implementation measure shall be added to require the County address new development in tsunami hazard areas:</p> <p><b>S-S7. Tsunamis.</b> New development below the level of the 100-year tsunami run-up elevation shall be limited to public access, boating, public recreation facilities, agriculture, wildlife management, habitat restoration, and ocean intakes, outfalls, pipelines, and dredge spoils disposal.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Under Proposed Plan	Mitigation Measures that address impact	Significance After Mitigation
<b>Biological Resources</b>			
<p><b>Impact 3.11.3.2 Wetlands</b>                      Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.</p>	<p>Potentially Significant</p>	<p><b>Mitigation 3.11.3.2.</b> The following implementation measure below shall be fulfilled to help address the potential impacts related to the definition of wetlands in the General Plan Update. Alternative language is presented below that would correct the existing logical flaw in Standard BR-S11:</p> <p><b>BR-S11. Wetlands Defined.</b> The County considers wetlands as lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water. <del>Wetlands must have all of the following three attributes: (1) at least periodically, the land supports hydrophytes, (2) the substrate is predominantly undrained hydric soil, and (3) the substrate is non soil and is saturated with water or covered by shallow water at some time during the growing season of each year.</del> <u>An area is wetland if, under normal circumstances, (1) the area has continuous or recurrent saturation of the upper substrate caused by groundwater, or shallow surface water, or both; (2) the duration of such saturation is sufficient to cause anaerobic conditions in the upper substrate; and (3) the area's vegetation is dominated by hydrophytes or the area lacks vegetation.</u></p>	

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Under Proposed Plan	Mitigation Measures that address impact	Significance After Mitigation
<p><b>Impact 3.11.3.5. Habitat Conservation Plans</b>                      Implementation of the proposed the proposed County General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would conflict with provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan. See Section 3.11.1, Habitat Conservation Planning (Page 3.11-5) for a discussion and list of HCPs in Humboldt County.</p>	<p>Potentially significant</p>	<p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.11.3.5.a.</b> To avoid impacts to established Habitat Conservation Plan areas through direct conversion to other uses, the following implementation measure shall be modified in the Conservation and Open Space Element, Biological Resources section that states the following:</p> <p><i><b>BR-IM1. Biological Resource Maps.</b> The County shall maintain <u>the best available data in the form of GIS maps for the location and extent of wetlands, critical habitats, streamside management areas, Habitat Conservation Plan Areas, rookeries, and ranges of species identified in the California Natural Diversity Database.</u></i></p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<b>Air Quality</b>			
<p><b>Impact 3.12.5.1. Conflict with Air Quality Plan or Violate an Air Quality Standard</b>                      Implementation of the proposed County General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan or violate an air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment.</p>	<p>Significant</p>	<p><i>While adoption of the proposed General Plan Update would not conflict with or obstruct the application of the current NCUAQMD PM10 Attainment Plan, there is no evidence that plan is adequate to reduce PM10 to a level less than significant. Because the County is in non-attainment status for PM10, increases in PM10 emissions that could increase exceedances are significant. Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in PM10 emissions. Although applying the General Plan Update policies and standards would reduce impacts that might otherwise be greater, the impacts remain significant and unavoidable.</i></p>	<p>Significant and Unavoidable</p>

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Under Proposed Plan	Mitigation Measures that address impact	Significance After Mitigation
<b>Greenhouse Gas Emissions</b>			
<p><b>Impact 3.12.5.1. Greenhouse Gas Emissions</b> Under the thresholds of significance set forth above, evaluation of whether or not GHG emissions generated as a result of implementation of the General Plan Update would have a significant impact on the environment, or would conflict with applicable plans, policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing emissions of GHG, cannot be definitively determined until the inventory of GHG emissions for 1990 has been updated in accordance with currently accepted protocols</p>	Significant	<p><i>Compliance with these policies would help reduce GHG emissions from future development under the proposed General Plan update. Additional reductions would be achieved by CAP actions that the County may develop that encourage the use of alternatively fueled and electrified equipment. However, because specific information about construction projects and yet-to-be developed CAP measures to reduce construction emissions are unknown at this time, it is uncertain what the future intensity the proposed General Plan update would exceed an adopted GHG significance threshold. Consequently, this impact is conservatively determined to be significant. Ensuring that emissions will fall below an adopted GHG emissions threshold is not feasible at this time. Therefore, this impact is considered significant and unavoidable.</i></p>	significant and unavoidable
<b>Cultural Resources</b>			
<p><b>Impact 3.14.3.1. Historical Resources</b> Implementation of the proposed County General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5.</p>	Significant	<p>The General Plan Update contains policies, standards and implementation measures which generally protect historical and archaeological resources or mitigate impacts to them. The General Plan Update policies and measures referenced above would reduce the anticipated impacts but not to a less-than-significant level. Historic structures may still be removed or substantially altered when building sites are prepared for new construction. Therefore, impacts to historic structures would remain a significant and unavoidable impact of the General Plan Update.</p>	Significant and Unavoidable
<b>Parks and Recreation</b>			
<p><b>Impact 3.14.3.1. Deterioration of Parks and Recreational Facilities.</b> Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would increase the use of existing neighborhood</p>	Less than significant	<p><b>Mitigation 3.15.3.1.a.</b> In order to protect existing parkland from deterioration that could result from development pursuant to the General Plan Update, the following Policies and Implementation Measures shall be added to the Community Infrastructure and Services Element:  <i>IS-Px. Parks Master Plan. In cooperation with other park service</i></p>	Less than Significant

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Under Proposed Plan	Mitigation Measures that address impact	Significance After Mitigation
<p>and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated.</p>		<p><i>providers, the County shall establish and maintain a Parks Master Plan that would assess current facilities within each inland and coastal planning area, determine appropriate locations for new facilities, and identify funding options.</i></p> <p><b>IS-Sx. Interim Parks and Recreation Standards.</b> Parks and recreation standards contained in the Government Code Section 66477 shall be used as the standard for parkland dedication in the review of divisions of land for which a tentative map is required pursuant to Section 66426, until such time that the County has established parks and recreation standards for new development that differentiate between urban and rural settings; specify acreage of park land of 3 acres per 1,000 residents; and specify land dedication, in-lieu fee, or other mechanisms to fund park and recreation improvements and funding for operation and maintenance.</p>	
<b>Scenic Resources</b>			
<p><b>Impact 3.16.3.1: Adverse effect on Scenic Vistas and Scenic Resources</b> Implementation of the General Plan Update would allow additional development and changes in land use, and contains new policies that could lead to damage or destruction of scenic resources and vistas</p>	<p>Significant</p>	<p><b>Mitigation 3.16.3.1.a.</b> Standard SR-SXXX, Scenic Highway Map , shall be added to the General Plan Update to reduce potential adverse impacts to scenic highways that could be caused by ministerial projects until SR-IM1, Mapping of Scenic Areas and Scenic Highways, is implemented:</p> <p><b>SR-SXXX. Scenic Highway Map.</b> <i>Until such time as a General Plan Scenic Highway Roadway Map is prepared and adopted, Humboldt County Highways listed in Sections 263.1 through 263.8 of the California Streets and Highways Code shall be considered to be Scenic Highways pursuant to Policy SR-P3, Scenic Highway Protection, and the County shall address the potential for significant impacts to scenic resources during ministerial and discretionary permit review.</i></p>	<p>Significant and Unavoidable</p>

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Under Proposed Plan	Mitigation Measures that address impact	Significance After Mitigation
<p><b>Impact 3.16.3.2: Visual Quality and Community Character</b>                      Implementation of the General Plan Update would result in increased development that could impact the visual quality and community character within the County.</p>	<p>Significant</p>	<p><b>Mitigation 3.16.3.2.a.</b> The following policy would lessen potential impacts to natural amenities that are important to visual character:  <i><b>BR-Px. Landmark Trees.</b> Establish a program to identify and protect landmark trees, including trees that exhibit notable characteristics in terms of their size, age, rarity, shape or location.</i></p>	<p>Significant and Unavoidable</p>
<p><b>Impact 3.16.3.3: Sources of Light and Glare</b>                      Implementation of the General Plan Update would result in increased development that would be new sources of light that could have adverse impacts day or nighttime views.</p>		<p><b>Mitigation 3.16.3.3.a .</b> In order to minimize light trespass, light pollution, and glare, new development and projects that would make significant parking lot improvements or add new lighting would be required to prepare a lighting plan. The following new program would need to be added to the Scenic Resources Chapter of the Conservation and Open Space Element:</p> <p><i><b>SR-IMX Lighting Design Guidelines.</b> Amend the Zoning Regulations to include lighting design guidelines for discretionary projects. Require new development and projects that would make significant parking lot improvements or add new exterior lighting to submit a lighting plan consistent with these guidelines. Lighting design guidelines should address:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. <i>Intensity – Acceptable standards shall be defined for various land uses and development types specifying the maximum allowable total lumens per acre.</i></li> <li>B. <i>Directional Control – Standards shall be developed to minimize the upward transmission and intensity of light at various distances from its source through the use of full-cutoff lighting, downward casting, shielding, visors etc.</i></li> <li>C. <i>Signage – Standards with respect to illuminated signs shall be developed that prohibit or limit the size, spacing, design, upward transmission of light, and hours of operation. In addition, signs should be white or light colored lettering on dark backgrounds.</i></li> <li>D. <i>Night Lighting – Hours of operation for various uses shall be specified in order to prohibit all night lighting except when warranted for public safety reasons. On demand lighting shall be encouraged.</i></li> <li>E. <i>Incentives – The County shall develop incentives for residents and businesses encouraging the conversion of existing lighting sources to</i></li> </ul>	<p>Significant and Unavoidable</p>

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Under Proposed Plan	Mitigation Measures that address impact	Significance After Mitigation
		<p><i>compliant ones.</i></p> <p>F. <i>Enforcement – These standards shall be incorporated into the County Development Code and design review process for new development.</i></p>	
<b>Energy Consumption and Conservation</b>			
<p><b>Impact 3.17.1: Land uses or development patterns cause wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy</b>                      Residential and commercial development generated by population growth during the General Plan Update planning period could cause wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy that have an adverse physical effect on the environment.</p>	Significant	None identified, beyond those to be included in the pending CAPE update and CAP	Significant and Unavoidable