

March 15, 2007

Members of the Planning Commission:

I am Ruthanne Cecil, Executive Director of the Center for Environmental Economic Development. Based in Arcata, CEED works on Sustainable Development projects, here and in other countries.

In California, we have consistently worked to promote sustainable policies and practices statewide in the energy-saving area of Recycling. More recently, we have begun research in local and market responses to AB32 – the newly passed Climate Change legislation in California. Four years ago, with state funding, we published a Green Building toolkit for California tribes, ahead of the curve on the Green Building movement.

Locally, we are proud to be among those catalyzing the Green Building effort, through several CEED projects. We are the nonprofit for Plan-It-Green, a volunteer-driven movement of local Architects, Planners, Builders, and Developers. These are professionals with the foresight to lead the way, to increase Green Building policies and practices. And CEED currently assists with the Environmental Technology Center and Hostel, to be sited near Eureka's Halvorsen Park.

Our work in the Arctic region, bridging Alaska, Russia, and the Nordic countries, includes indigenous-based research on subsistence economies and cultures, during this troubled time of Climate Change, and its impact on indigenous peoples, especially in the North.

These activities and many more, positioned us to assist as partners with the PlanWest team to write the Energy Element for the County. Personally, I reviewed the Energy Elements of more than 35 California cities and counties, choosing among policies in other jurisdictions to come up with the best mix for our unique region. Based on that, I would observe that Humboldt County's policies are NOT YET in the lead among forward-moving cities and counties, and we have some work to do to catch up.

Overall, CEED is pleased to see the Energy Element move forward, and to see Humboldt County poised to take its rightful place, energy-policy-wise, among the most livable, workable, and walkable communities in our nation.

Although either a strengthened Alternative B or Alternative A will move us in that direction, CEED supports the more aggressive approach of Alternative A. Under the threat of rapidly changing climate, we will not be suggesting half-measures. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.