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"Promoting Jobs & Housing for Humboldt Families"

June 21, 2007

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HUMBOLDT COUNTY
PLANNING DIVISION

Mr. Thomas Herman, Chairman
Planning Commission
County of Humboldt
825 Fifth Street, Room 111
Eureka, California 95501

Subject: General Plan Update
Safety Element

Dear Chairman Herman and Members of the Commission:

Safety-related issues impact several of the General Plan elements, including:

- Safety Element
- Land Use Element
- Housing Element
- Circulation Element
- Economic Development Element

1. SAFETY ELEMENT

In keeping with the State mandate that all general plan elements be consistent, we urge the County to evaluate safety as you consider: land use, housing, circulation, the local economy/economic development, and quality of life.

Humboldt County exceeds the State-wide average rate per 100,000 populations in:

- Forcible Rape
- Property Crimes
- Burglary
- Larceny-theft

What does this say about safety and our quality of life?

2. LAND USE ELEMENT

Humboldt County currently enjoys a rural character which HELP supports and wants to protect for the coming decades. There are those who propose all future develop occur in existing incorporated cities. This would dramatically change our rural character and result in an even worse safety record than Humboldt County is experiencing today.

3. HOUSING ELEMENT

The attempt on the part of some, to force all future housing into urban areas would follow the trend in other parts of the country and result in even higher crime than we are currently encountering.

4. CIRCULATION ELEMENT

As we study the maps being used by County Planning, it appears there is at this time at least, insufficient consideration being given to the need for additional roads. This is supported by Planners who state: "The County will not be building any more new roads." This concerns us for several reasons:

- A. Until the General Plan update process is complete and the new General Plan is adopted, how is it that staff has decided the County will not be building more roads? Where is the public input process? Why don't the Planning Commissioners and Board of Supervisors have a say in these decisions?
- B. Existing roads will be maxed out....some already are....if the densities currently being proposed by Planning in some areas become a reality.
- C. A recent survey among 45,000 site selection managers for companies looking to relocate, identify "Highway Accessibility" as the number one consideration for locating their operations. (reference "21st Annual Corporate Survey, 2006" published by AreaDevelopment Magazine)
- D. Inadequate roads and circulation typically results in unsafe conditions.

5. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

In the 2006, "21st Annual Corporate Survey" conducted among 45,000 real estate managers, "Low Crime Rate" ranks third in the list of quality of life considerations.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Much has been said about the need to protect our quality of life in Humboldt County. We could not agree more. There has been much discussion about what quality of life is. In the survey referenced above, Quality of life is identified and ranked as follows:

- 1. Ratings of public schools
- 2. Colleges and universities in the area
- 3. Low crime rate
- 4. Housing Costs
- 5. Health facilities
- 6. Housing availability
- 7. Cultural opportunities
- 8. Recreational opportunities
- 9. Climate

Mr. Thomas Herman, Chairman 6-21-07, cont'd

We appreciate this opportunity to participate in the General Plan update and encourage the Commissioners to take into consideration these issues as you proceed through the process.

Sincerely,

Kay Backer, representing
Humboldt Economic & Land Plan

cc: Bruce Emad, Planning Commissioner
Mary Gearheart, Planning Commissioner
Richard Hansis, Planning Commissioner
Scott Kelly, Planning Commissioner
Sef Murguia, Planning Commissioner
Jeff Smith, Planning Commissioner
Supervisor Jimmy Smith, District 1
Supervisor Roger Rodoni, District 2
Supervisor John Woolley, District 3
Supervisor/Chair Bonnie Neely, District 4
Supervisor Jill Geist, District 5
Loretta A. Nickolaus, County Administrative Officer
Kirk A. Girard, Community Development Services Director
Ralph Faust, County Counsel
Robert K. Best, Trainor Fairbrook Attorneys

helpcountyherman15