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May 14, 2007

To: Humboldt County Planning Commission

Re: General Plan Update
Group 4, Chapter 11, Economic Development

Dear Commissioners:

My principal concern with this chapter is the omission of several items from Alternative A. Absence of support for such basic things as "skilled & ready workforce" and "public water and wastewater" would make Alt A completely unsupportable by any reasonable person. Others, such as "streamlining," might be a bit more questionable, but I think that most environmentally concerned people would support them with some modifications.

My "ballot" for this chapter is attached. Here is a brief summary of my comments:

ED-G1 – Alternative A wording should be essentially the same as Alt B-C, except that it adds, "and strengthening local industry."

ED-G4 and ED-G5 – should be included in Alternative A.

ED-G6 – Include in Alt A with addition, "including improvements to public transportation and non-vehicular paths and trails."

ED-G7 – Include in Alt A.

Note that these last two goals, transportation networks and public water and wastewater, are intrinsic to an environmentally sound plan. As a board member of Redway CSD, I am particularly aware of the importance of "adequate public water and wastewater facilities" in protecting not only public health, but also our watersheds, our wildlife habitat, and recreation and tourism on our streams, rivers, and bay.

ED-P2 – Include in Alt A.

ED-P6 – Modify wording as follows: "Work with communities to promote the appropriate revitalization ...." By working with the communities involved, and by identifying the appropriate types of revitalization, we can avoid repeats of the Redevelopment debacle. The great flaw of the Redevelopment effort – and I'm speaking as an early and outspoken opponent of redevelopment in Redway – was not consulting with the communities **before** the plan was presented to the state to determine if the communities believed this was an appropriate type of revitalization for their town. Community support at the get-go is absolutely critical to the success of any revitalization effort. Early and honest (not goal-directed) outreach to the community also respects local self-determination, and goes a long way toward establishing constructive relationships between each community and County government.

ED-P10 – Include in Alt A. Appropriately located, well-planned and designed industrial parks with master environmental assessments would certainly enhance the County's ability to accommodate economic growth without materially damaging our environment.

ED-P13 – Include the first wording in Alt A and delete the "alternative" wording. Increased broadband capacity would certainly encourage "clean" businesses in rural areas of the County, as well as having many social benefits. I don't know of anyone who's opposed to this, regardless of their political or philosophical leanings.

ED-IM3 – add wording, "where appropriate."

ED-IM5 – Modify the wording and include in Alt A. With wording that applies some cautionary language to the proposed implementation measure, streamlining can be advantageous to good, environmentally-friendly businesses of the type the County wants to encourage. The modified wording simply requires that ordinances are reviewed for streamlining "without conflicting with other goals and policies of the framework General Plan."

ED-IM7 – Modify to add "make available to interested public" to this measure re informed public. This seems like a logical addition to the proposed measure.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Plan Alternatives Comparison Chart

The "Vote" column is provided for the user to indicate a policy preference. Enter a **R**etain, **D**elete or **M**odify.

Table 11-1. Plan Alternatives Comparison Chart

Plan Alternative				*Goals*	*Staff Remarks*	*Vote: R, D, M*
	B	**C**		**ED-G1. Stable Economy.** To enhance and maintain a diverse, stable, and growing local economy with an emphasis on base and emerging industries, innovation, entrepreneurship, and global competition.	See alternative wording below	D
A				**ED-G1. Stable Economy.** To maintain a diverse, stable local economy with an emphasis **on base and emerging industries, innovation, entrepreneurship, and strengthening existing local industries.**	Plan A alternative wording	M
A	**B**	**C**		**ED-G2. Broadband Internet.** To establish a reliable broadband internet infrastructure that distributes a choice of economically accessible broadband services into our most rural communities, and is not vulnerable to disruption. Integrate broadband service capability into new buildings and developments. Provide broadband access in remote or rural communities.		R
A	**B**			**ED-G3. Quality of Life.** To attract **outside** and retain **local** ~~young~~ talent by developing vibrant town centers that incorporate a mix of employment, housing, and retail uses as well as access to child care, transportation, and cultural and natural amenities.		M
A	**B**	**C**		**ED-G4. Skilled and Ready Workforce.** To foster a local workforce that is prepared to succeed in the industries growing in Humboldt County, which values early education, vocational training, and lifelong learning.	*Staff: Please add this to Plan "A" – vg*	M
A	**B**	**C**		**ED-G5. Streamlining.** To **review and** implement **,where appropriate,** permitting and licensing processes that are more responsive to the needs and timelines of the marketplace, particularly for microenterprises and home-based businesses.	*Staff: please add to Plan A -- vg*	M

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A	B	C		**ED-G6. Transportation Networks.** To have transportation facilities that allow freight mobility along the interstate highway system and provide connectivity between residential neighborhoods and employment centers, **including improvements to public transportation and non-vehicular paths and trails.**	*Staff: please add to Plan A -- vg*	M
A	B	C		**ED-G7. Public Water and Wastewater.** To have and maintain adequate public water and wastewater facilities to accommodate workforce housing and provide opportunities for businesses to grow.	*Staff: please add to Plan A -- vg*	R
A	B			**ED-G.8 Natural Resource Assets.** To protect productive agricultural, mineral resource, timber, and coastal dependent lands.		R
A	B			**ED-G9. Brownfields.** To clean up and reuse brownfield sites.		R
A	B			**ED-G10. Cooperation and Collaboration.** To build and maintain partnerships with cities, neighboring counties, and the private sector that build and enhance common assets and resolve common obstacles.		R
A	B			**ED-G11. Economic Development Assistance Programs.** To administer and support financial and technical assistance programs that support workers, businesses, and service providers.		R
A	B			**ED- G12. Informed Public.** To educate County residents of economic trends, emerging markets, innovations and opportunities for entrepreneurship that benefit the region's economic prosperity.		R
Plan Alternative				*Development Policies*	*Staff Remarks*	***Vote: R, D, M***
A	B			**ED-P1. Prime Employment Land Protection.** Identify and protect prime employment lands from conversion and encroachment of conflicting uses.		R
A	B	C		**ED-P2. Airport Expansion.** Support expansion of the airport to include service to major airport hubs and expanded flight schedules.	*Staff: please add to Plan A -- vg*	R
A	B			**ED-P3. Broadband Internet.** Promote the provision of broadband infrastructure in all communities.		R
A	B			**ED-P4. Workforce Housing.** Promote the development of workforce housing and mixed-use housing around multi-modal transportation options.		R

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A	B			**ED-P5. Child Care.** Promote the provision of child care facilities within business, commercial and industrial centers and housing developments.		R
A	B			**ED-P6. Revitalization. Work with communities to promote the appropriate** revitalization of underutilized lands in communities in transition due to the decline of resource-based industries.		M
A	B			**ED-P7. Brownfields.** Consider land use designations for brownfields to encourage cleanup and reuse.		R
A	B			**ED-P8. Commercial and Industrial Sites Database.** Maintain a commercial and industrial sites database and continue to improve accessibility to online information on commercial and industrial property.		R
A				**ED-P9. Commercial Retail.** Large format "big box" commercial uses shall not be located in the unincorporated area to avoid sprawl.	Plan A alternative wording	R
	B			**ED-P9. Commercial Retail.** Include standards for discretionary review of large format "big box" commercial uses to reduce their land use impact.	Plan B alternative wording	D
		C		**ED-P9. Commercial Retail.** Include standards for discretionary review of large format "big box" commercial uses.	Plan C alternative wording	D
A	B			**ED-P10. Industrial Parks.** Where appropriate, promote development of well planned and designed industrial parks catering to existing local, as well as outside opportunities. Encourage master environmental assessments for industrial parks in order to streamline the subsequent development process.	From Framework Plan *Staff: Include in Alt "A"*	R
Plan Alternative				*Investment Policies*	*Staff Remarks*	***Vote: R, D, M***
A	B			**ED-P11. Financial Resources.** Acquire and distribute financial resources for workforce training, economic research, infrastructure, and business development.		R
	B	C		**ED-P12. Freight Mobility.** Pursue financial and technical solutions to provide reliable interstate truck access on both U.S. 101 and State Highway 299.		R

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A	B	C		**ED-P13. Broadband Internet.** Support the development and management of a redundant fiber optic line that connects to the fiber backbone running along the U.S. 5 corridor. Support the expansion and delivery of broadband Internet in the rural or remote communities in the county through all appropriate technologies.	See alternative wording below *Staff: please add this to Alt "A" -- rg*	R
A				**ED-P13. Broadband Internet.** Support the expansion and delivery of broadband Internet in the rural or remote communities in the county through all appropriate technologies.	Plan A alternative wording *Staff: substitute above wording in Alt "A"*	D
A	B			**ED-P14. Workforce Housing.** Encourage production of housing at a price commensurate with income levels, and a transportation system to provide efficient connectivity between housing and places of employment to maintain satisfactory commute travel times and distances.		R
A	B			**ED-P15. Public Infrastructure.** Pursue and distribute funding and technical assistance to upgrade and enhance the water and wastewater facilities of communities.		R
A	B			**ED-P16. Brownfields.** Pursue and distribute funding and technical assistance to assess, clean up, and reuse brownfields.		R
Plan Alternative				*Partnership Policies*	*Staff Remarks*	***Vote: R, D, M***
A	B			**ED-P17. Job Growth.** Collaborate with economic development entities in the region to promote job growth, technical innovations, and entrepreneurship in base and emerging industries.		R
A	B			**ED-P18. Workforce.** Work with the education and private sectors to promote education, vocational training, professional development, and lifelong learning.		R
A	B			**ED-P19. Cities and Counties.** Collaborate with cities and neighboring counties to identify and implement regional economic initiatives that benefit base and emerging industries.		R
A	B			**ED-P20. Child Care.** Foster private/public partnerships with child care service and information providers.		R

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Plan Alternative				*Implementation Measures*	*Staff Remarks*	*Vote: R, D, M*
A	B			**ED-IM1. Ordinances.** Update ordinances related to economic development for consistency with the uses of base and emerging industries.		R
A	B			**ED-IM2. Commercial and Industrial Sites Database Mapping.** Update the Commercial and Industrial Sites Database on a two-year cycle and provide online maps of vacant industrial and commercial properties using the County's Geographic Information System.		R
A	B			**ED-IM3. Broadband Deployment.** Revise subdivision regulations to provide infrastructure for broadband internet**, where appropriate.**		M
A	B			**ED-IM4. Programs.** Support technical and financial assistance programs, including delivering capital, technical expertise, and training to businesses starting up and expanding.		R
A	B	C		**ED-IM5. Streamlining.** Provide regular review **to determine if ordinance changes to create greater efficiency and reduce permit processes for strategic targets such as but not limited to micro-enterprises, home-bases business and workforce housing will promote economic development goals without conflicting with other goals and policies in the framework General Plan.** ~~and improvement of ordinances and permit processes to increase efficiency and reduce permit processing times for strategic targets such as, but not limited to, microenterprises, home based businesses, and workforce housing.~~	*Staff: modify this statement and add to Alt "A." – pg*	M
A	B			**ED-IM6. Child Care.** Investigate and support financing tools that leverage public and private funding to increase the establishment, rehabilitation, expansion, and viability of child care facilities.		R
A	B			**ED-IM7. Informed Public.** Conduct and **make available to interested parties** public economic research relating to emerging markets, innovations, and opportunities in which the region may have competitive advantages.		M

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Plan Alternative				*Existing Framework Plan*	*Staff Remarks*	*Vote: R, D,*
			D	1. Promote economic development by coordination of efforts with both local economic development organizations and members of the private sector.	Replaced by P16, P17. P18 and P19	D
			D	2. Encourage a diverse range of commercial and industrial development consistent with community goals and the level of services provided in each of the cities and communities.	Replaced by G1, P1 and P9	D
			D	3. Continue to provide for, through General Plan amendments and zoning revisions as needed, an adequate supply of commercial and industrial land to maximize opportunities for development.	Replaced by P1, P7, P9, IM1, and IM2	D
			D	4. Prevent the loss of designated industrial lands to other uses requiring permanent facilities.	Replaced by P1	D
			D	5. Ensure that industrial or commercial development which requires provision for public water, sewage disposal, roads and other needed utilities and services is placed in a suitable urbanized area.	Replaced by P14	D
			D	6. Allow Resource Dependent Industrial uses outside of urban areas when such uses are: • dependent upon close proximity to resource production lands, and • not dependent on urban services.		D
			D	7. Where appropriate, promote development of well planned and designed industrial parks catering to existing local, as well as outside opportunities. Encourage master environmental assessments for industrial parks in order to streamline the subsequent development process.	Included as P10	D
			D	8. Locate commercial development in appropriate community centers that will assist and supplement existing commercial activity.	Replaced by P9	D
			D	9. Discourage strip commercial development, where appropriate.		D
			D	10. Encourage the economic opportunities for production facilities that efficiently utilize all products and by-products of forestry, fishery, or agricultural uses.		D
			D	11. Maximize local energy opportunities from the renewable resources found in the County.		D

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			D	12. Encourage innovative methods for pollution reduction and waste product disposal and utilization.		D