

HUMBOLDT 2025  
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE



# Community Design Toolkit

## A Discussion Paper for Community Workshops

*Prepared by*

Urban and Regional Planners  
**DYETT & BHATIA**

OCTOBER 2003



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# Introduction

This Community Design Toolkit recognizes those unique features that characterize Humboldt County communities; it is intended as a companion document to the sketch plans for use in the community workshops. It presents several policy options as it relates to the visual quality and character of the built environment of Humboldt County. It promotes Humboldt County's rural heritage, while allowing for future growth and development. In addition, the toolkit maintains a level of flexibility in order to be customizable to the local needs and preferences of each Community Planning Area.

The guiding vision and principles that characterize the toolkit are based on community input during the public outreach effort, summarized in the *Critical Choices Report*. Following the principles, policy options are presented for several areas of focus, including rural and natural resources, the urban/rural edge, street and block design, public areas, and neighborhood design. Finally, these policy options are applied to the sketch plans that were developed as part of this phase of the Humboldt General Plan update.

## VISION

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The citizens of Humboldt County envision a General Plan that will preserve the County's unique character and the quality of life they enjoy. They see the County continuing to be a place with a small town feel, a place to raise a family, with quality housing, schools, and recreational facilities. Many residents value the existing rural and natural character of their communities. As a result, forest and agricultural lands will be conserved, by encouraging development in existing urbanized areas and discouraging sprawl. Streets and roads will be improved, while expanding the existing pedestrian and bicycle paths. Additionally, the County will offer increased job opportunities and availability of affordable housing.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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The following principles are central to achieving objectives of growth management, and provide a basis for the Community Design policies in the new General Plan:

- Protect the scenic and rural character of the community by preserving agricultural uses and conserving the natural environment.
- Encourage land development that preserves a sense of place and a feeling of community.
- Implement and livable community tenets at the community plan level. This will be done through revised subdivision design ordinances, design concepts for residential and commercial development, live-work townscapes, town centers, and landscape policies.
- Limit the type and amount of public services by directing growth back into urban areas, through downtown revitalization and incentives for infill redevelopment.
- Discourage rural and suburban sprawl by promoting compact development patterns that integrate residential, commercial, office/ industrial and recreational uses. Practices

include mixed-use developments, traditional neighborhood developments, and cluster development.

- Reinforce the commercial centers of the Community Planning Areas.
- Maintain, develop and reintroduce pedestrian connections between existing and planned neighborhoods.
- Balance economic growth with quality of life.

## **KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS**

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The Community Design Toolkit details different options for addressing the basic design elements of development pattern, open space, streetscape, and building form. The different options are intended to illustrate different approaches to developing design standards that reflect the sketch plan alternatives. The options are further broken down to present alternatives that relate to the different residential land use categories that comprise communities. The illustrations, present in a matrix format on the following pages (Figures 1 and 2), provide alternative scenarios from which ideas can be extracted in order to achieve the desired community image. The tools fall into three basic categories:

### **DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS**

Guiding future growth is critical in order ensure new development is in balance with the community's goals of promoting community character, protecting valuable resources, and encouraging a healthy economy. How growth is distributed in the County will determine the pattern and density of future development. Key issues include subdivision size, rural clustering, and the street network (cul-de-sacs vs. connectivity or grid vs. curvilinear pattern). Options offer opportunities for infill that will discourage urban and rural sprawl.

### **OPEN SPACE**

The amount and type of open space that is preserved largely depends on the development pattern chosen. Strategies in the preservation and character of open space include urban growth boundaries (greenbelts), rural/urban interface definitions (hard vs. soft edge), and open space "tier"-systems. Types of open space include timberland, agricultural land, parks, and courtyards.

### **STREETSCAPE**

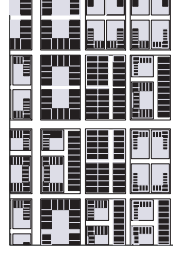
A community's streetscape has a significant impact on its visual character, livability and sense of place. The street width, landscaping, and presence of pedestrian paths/sidewalks can enhance or worsen the pedestrian or driver experience. The Community Design toolkit also provides options for hardscape, parking locations, and building setbacks.

**Residential Medium (RM)**

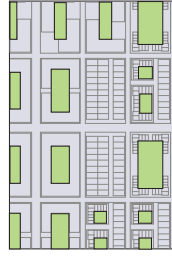
Sketch Plan 3



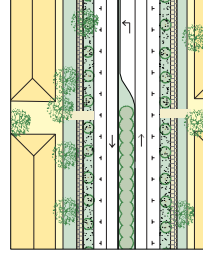
Eureka CPA



- Grid street pattern
- Small blocks



- Courtyards

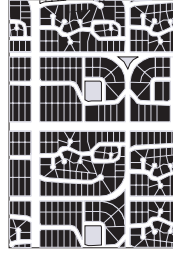


- Paved
- Curb and Gutter
- Street trees, median
- Pathway
- Street lights

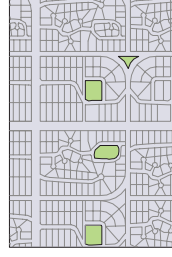
Sketch Plan 2



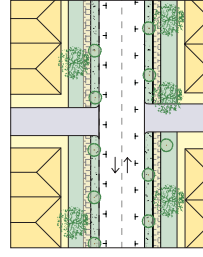
Eureka CPA



- Curvilinear street pattern
- Large blocks



- Less open space requirement



- Paved
- Swale
- Informal landscaping
- Pathway

**Residential Low (RL)**

Sketch Plan 3



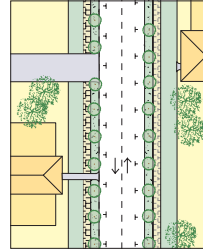
Eureka CPA



- Increased connectivity by limiting use of cul-de-sacs



- Surrounding greenbelts
- Neighborhood parks within 1/4-mile of 90% of residents



- Paved
- Concrete curb and gutter
- Pathway separated by planter strip
- Smaller ROW
- Smaller front setbacks or rear garage

Sketch Plan 2



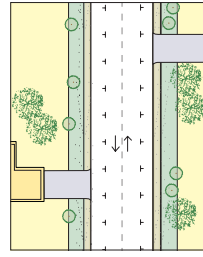
Hydesville



- Cul de sacs allowed with no limits



- No greenbelts around new developments
- Community and neighborhood parks



- Paved
- Swale
- No pathway
- Larger ROW
- Large front setbacks

**Rural Residential/Estate (RR/RE)**

Sketch Plan 3



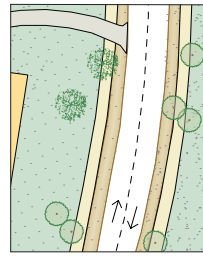
Hydesville



- Rural clustering



- Maximize open space
- Establish greenbelt buffers
- Hard edge
- Limit expansion beyond boundary



- Paved
- Swale
- Pathway
- Natural landscape buffer
- No fence
- No street lighting

Sketch Plan 2



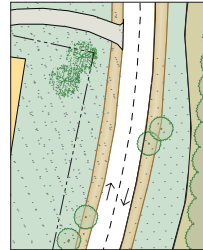
Hydesville



- Predominantly large lot rural residential zoning



- Protect critical natural resources
- Tier system
- Soft edge
- Allow expansion beyond urban limit line



- Unpaved
- Swale
- No Pathway
- Natural landscape buffer
- Wire or 'horse' fence
- No street lighting

Existing Conditions

**COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENTS**

Open Space

Streetscape

Figure 1  
**Residential Land Uses**

# COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENTS

## Village/Town Center

## Neighborhood Center

## Commercial/Business Park

Sketch Plan 2

Sketch Plan 3

Sketch Plan 2

Sketch Plan 3

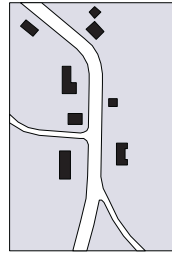
Sketch Plan 2

Sketch Plan 3

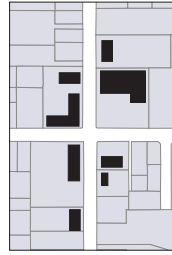
Existing Conditions



Glendale



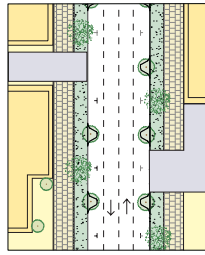
- Commercial strip
- Scattered buildings
- Large setbacks
- Room for septic tanks
- Low, one-story buildings
- Incorporate big-box development



- Large setbacks
- Primarily commercial strip (single-purpose)
- Low, one-story bldgs



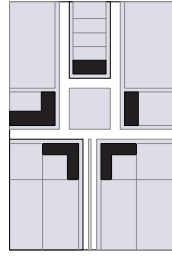
- Pedestrian-oriented corridor
- Paved
- Defined by buildings and street
- Site furniture



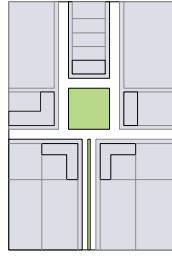
- Varied building setback
- Sidewalks
- Landscaping along building frontage
- On-street parking



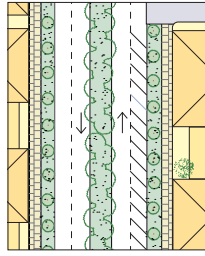
Eureka CPA



- Small setbacks
- Defined street grid
- Taller, mixed-use bldgs (e.g. commercial w/ residential)



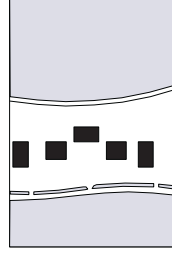
- Formal, defined open space
- Grass
- Defined by buildings and street
- Site furniture



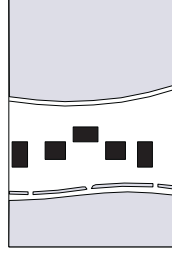
- No building setback
- Sidewalks
- Formal landscaping (street trees, median)
- Optional diagonal parking on street
- Shared parking in rear



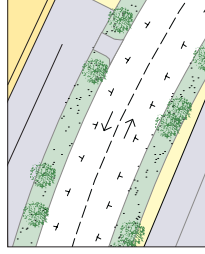
Airport Business Park



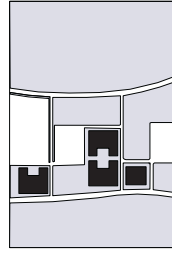
- Large setbacks
- Primarily commercial or office (no mix of uses)
- Limited access points



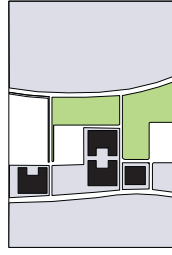
- No usable open space to serve users



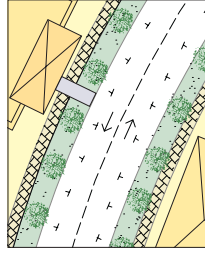
- Large building setback
- Large foreground parking lots
- Informal landscaping
- No pathway



- Minimum setbacks
- Incorporate mix uses (e.g. ground floor cafes)
- Alternate access points



- Usable open space and access to natural resources



- Small building setback
- Rear surface parking lots
- Formal landscaping
- Pathway
- Street lighting

Figure 2

## Commercial/Town Centers

## Rural and Natural Resource Areas

Humboldt County is a predominantly rural region with a unique North Coast environment, and maintaining open spaces for resource production, recreation, wildlife and aesthetics will be key to preserving the County's identity. In fact, the importance of natural resources to County residents was underscored by the responses received in the *Critical Choices Report*. Eighty-six percent of respondents felt that the surrounding natural environment was extremely important to the quality of life in Humboldt County, and is a major reason for living in the area.

At the same time, however, County residents identified the need to increase efforts in preserving open space and the natural environment. As identified in the *Building Communities* report, subdivision activity on agricultural and timberlands is widely dispersed within the County, and its conversion to urban uses is a major issue facing the County. The current General Plan has no policy targeting specific areas for development or conservation beyond the concept of urban development and expansion areas. More aggressive policies, however, have been included in recent community plans, such as in McKinleyville.

In order to achieve effective long-term protection for sensitive areas, one approach, identified in the *Critical Choices* report, is to use overlay zones to preserve the critical open space and natural resource lands. These overlay zones would be placed in areas of value to the community or inappropriate for development, such as floodways and floodplains, wetlands, unstable slopes, threatened species habitats, groundwater recharge areas, and Alquist-Priolo zones. Sketch Plan 2 relies more exclusively on the overlay zones, allowing development in rural areas, provided that the critical resources are protected. In all the sketch plan alternatives, land use designations for timber and agricultural lands reflect the need to apply development standards in a manner consistent with the long-term viability of the resource industries.



*Agricultural as well as natural lands should be preserved.*

Other options for protecting resources and the sense of open space, which is an important element of rural character, are provided in Sketch Plan 3. Most notably, the use of greenbelts and agricultural lands around communities and development standards designed to conserve rural landscapes. Development in these areas would be encouraged to use rural clustering techniques which preserve a significant percentage of the site in open space or agricultural use. Other techniques including conservation easements and transfer of development rights. Urban limit lines would also be applied to discourage development-inducing extensions of public water and sewer service.

## **POLICY OPTIONS: RURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE AREAS**

### *Sketch Plan 2*

- Identify critical natural resources for preservation. Apply overlay zones that apply specific standards to protect those resources.
- Create a two-tier system of TPZ zoning, with larger lot sizes for existing and potential industrial timberland and smaller lot sizes for timberland within or adjacent to community plan areas (Option 3.2).
- Create zoning provisions that allow reduced lot size for small-scale, intensive agriculture – either a new AE-15 zone or an AI Agriculture Intensive zone (Option 4.4).
- Complete Scenic Route Plans or Corridor Studies and adopt Scenic Corridor Overlay Zoning (Option 8.4).

### *Sketch Plan 3*

- For rural communities, retain at least 50% of the site as open space or agricultural use.
- Preserve rural lands for small-scale farming and grazing activities, critical habitat and watershed protection, passive recreation, and very low-density rural residential uses.
- Continue the use of the currently defined TPZ while using other regulations for additional protection of resource lands.
- Create a Timberland Infrastructure Maintenance and Improvement Program (Option 3.5).
- Support creation of greenbelts and agricultural buffers where agricultural operations may pose land use conflicts (Option 4.2).
- Develop heritage landscape protection provisions (Option 8.5).

## **Urban/Rural Edge**

The urban/rural edge is the transition zone between countryside and town. This edge is often defined by physical constraints (e.g. water and sewer service) as well as by visual character. These edges are commonly found where CPAs are separated from incorporated cities, and where a neighborhood is separated from surrounding agricultural and rural lands. The current General Plan does not establish explicit policies for buffer areas or transitional areas except that lands adjacent to agricultural and timberlands are to be planned for compatible uses. Some communities have used greenbelt concepts, while others have established a transitional land use designation as a means of ensuring land use compatibility.

The latter approach, as demonstrated in Sketch Plan 2, creates a ‘soft’ urban/rural edge, which is achieved by using a tier system of rural areas, agricultural areas, transitional areas, and urban or village limit lines. These lines are based on logical service areas, not a pre-

determined population target. While the higher intensity land uses, requiring sewer and water service, would be focused in the urban/village limit, development could extend into the transitional areas if market demand and service availability allowed. The tier system would help concentrate new development in and around existing communities, retaining a loosely- defined boundary between urban and rural development.

An alternative to the tier system would be to encourage a stronger distinction between urban and rural areas (for example, using greenbelts and agricultural buffers). This approach, shown in Sketch Plan 3, creates a sharper distinction between developable land and open space. It also minimizes infrastructure costs, as it focuses growth to specific areas. One approach for development outside growth areas would be just to allow services for planned development that is specifically oriented to resource industries, and is consistent with the County's economic development programs. This strategy has been implemented in the current McKinleyville Community Plan.



*A greenbelt can create a sharp distinction between developed and undeveloped land.*

## **POLICY OPTIONS: URBAN/RURAL EDGE**

### *Sketch Plan 2*

- Establish a buffer or transitional area where there is no natural boundary between urban and rural areas (Option 8.1.l).

### *Sketch Plan 3*

- Establish urban growth boundaries that preserve a clear distinction between developed areas and agricultural land (Option 8.1.k).
- Provide services for development outside urban areas only if such development is needed to support resource production (Option 8.1.m).
- Establish growth boundaries for rural communities that delineate logical edges and allow for reasonable development opportunities within these communities, while also promoting resource conservation in surrounding areas (Option 8.2.c).

## **POLICY OPTIONS: ENTRIES**

Gateways are the primary locations where people enter and leave a community. They provide initial impressions of the community and convey a “sense of arrival.” Some Humboldt County communities are entered from one of many directions, and as a result, the exact demarcation of an entry point is not always clear. The current General Plan has no specific policy targeting community identity and entries. Through the sketch plan, policies for entries could be articulated.



*Landscaping and entry signs can provide and improve a community’s identity, such as on Rohnerville Road in Hydesville.*

### *Sketch Plan 2*

- Identify key city entrances on primary vehicular corridors (e.g. Highway 101), and assign unique features to them. These features can include signage, lighting, and landscaping.

### *Sketch Plan 3*

- Identify key city entrances on primary vehicular corridors (e.g. Highway 101), intersections and special districts (such as town centers), and assign unique features to them.
- Demarcate the transition from rural to urban land with entry features. Lush trees planted closely on each side of the street can provide a transitional element as one enters from the rural area where the roads are marked with fewer trees.
- Increase density of development along primary vehicle corridors as one enters CPAs.

## **Street and Block Design**

State Highway 101, running north-south, is the major spine of the existing street network in Humboldt County. Other regional corridors, such as Highway 255, 36, and 299, connect the rest of the region. These state highways move through-traffic in and out of the County, but also serve local traffic with driveways into adjacent commercial developments. These highways often only accommodate two lanes of traffic, typically traveling at high speeds. Since these roads also serve local neighborhoods, their design is particularly important in creating a safe environment for non-motorized traffic, such as pedestrians, bicyclists and equestrians.

### *Street Pattern*

The character of local and arterial corridors varies greatly in their street pattern as well as in streetscape. Although a grid system roughly exists around incorporated cities (e.g. Eureka),

most CPAs follow a conventional street layout, utilizing curvilinear patterns and cul-de-sacs. The resulting fewer intersections and through-streets greatly limit interaction between neighborhood units.

This is most apparent in rural communities, as demonstrated in the ‘Community Form and Character’ chapter of the *Building Communities* report. In this report, eight study areas were evaluated according to the number of intersections, number of through-streets, average block size, and typical housing density. It found that Redway and Garberville have the greatest amount of connectivity with more intersections and through-streets than the other neighborhoods. The study areas in Orick and Orleans, however, are characterized by a single through-street, and also have the fewer number of access points. The number of access points—or streets entering a study area that connect with at least one other street—also represents a neighborhood’s level of connectivity.

While Sketch Plan 2 may create additional cut-throughs, the majority of the street pattern under this plan would continue to follow conventional street and block design. The streets in these neighborhoods are often longer, tend to be wider, and allow for faster speeds. Residential and commercial uses are separated in distinct areas that are often only connected through large arterial roadways, further emphasizing motor vehicle travel. In addition, most lots are large, creating long blocks and spread-out buildings that make it inconvenient for pedestrians who want to travel. Block sizes in commercial areas are the largest, due to the linear form of the development.

An alternative approach is the traditional neighborhood (Sketch Plan 3) where different land uses are located in close proximity to each other, and the street design creates a connected network with multiple routes to destinations. As a result, a grid street pattern is preferred over cul-de-sacs. Development also tends to be compact (i.e. clustering), with shorter blocks that encourage walkability.

### *Streetscape*

The streetscape design of these roadways ultimately contributes to the visual and aesthetic perception of the County as a whole. Currently, many of the County roads lack amenities (benches, paths, crosswalks, parks) and formal landscaping (street trees, medians). In addition, large front setback requirements (Table 3-1) make it difficult to define the street edge. Sketch Plan 2 will increase the amount of landscaping and paths, but will also allow current trends to continue.

The traditional neighborhood street (Plan 3) is narrower and is lined with trees that not only help slow down the cars but also create comfortable conditions for walkers and cyclists. Unlike Plan 2, this plan will include streetscape standards, particularly in commercial centers. While the recent McKinleyville Community Plan encourages pedestrian-friendliness by supporting policies such as reducing roadway widths and introducing landscaping, the current Framework Plan, incorporated into Sketch Plan 1, does not provide specific guidance on streetscape improvements.

Table 3-1: Existing Setback Standards

**Humboldt County Zoning: Front Setbacks**  
Principal Zones: Inland

<b>Minimum Front Yard Setback</b>	
<b>Residential</b>	
All Residential Zones (RS, R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, RA)	20'
<b>Commercial</b>	
Neighborhood Commercial (C-1)	None*
Community Commercial (C-2)	None*
Industrial Commercial (C-3)	5'
Highway Service Commercial (CH)	15'

\*Except that where frontage is in a block which is partially in a Residential Zone (RS, R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4) the front yard shall be the same as that required in such Residential Zone.



Residential streets vary greatly throughout Humboldt County. From left to right, an unpaved rural road in Carlotta, paved road with swale in Fortuna, and a larger road with sidewalks in Eureka/Humboldt Hill.

## **POLICY OPTIONS: STREET AND BLOCK DESIGN**

### *All Plans*

- Encourage non-motorized transportation within and between communities by creating connections with sidewalks, bicycle paths, trails, or roads.
- Introduce streetscape improvement elements such as sidewalks, planting strips, and landscaped medians.

### *Sketch Plan 2*

- Allow existing development patterns to continue, including large-lot and strip development.
- Continue typical pattern of unrelated suburban-style, cul-de-sac growth around neighborhood edges.
- Continue the creation of large blocks [greater than 750 foot block widths].
- Allow wide streets, with on-street parking and informal landscaping.
- Provide paved sidewalks only where road abuts commercial development. Pedestrian paths along residential roads are encouraged, but not required.
- Allow for large building setbacks.

### *Sketch Plan 3*

- Discourage land use projects which would result in noncontiguous 'leap frog' development.
- Through roads shall be provided when feasible in order to increase connectivity for the community.
- Discourage the creation of new cul-de-sacs, which decrease accessibility between adjacent neighborhoods. Cul-de-sacs or dead-end roads should only be allowed when critical areas inhibit the possibility of a through-road.
- Provide continuous sidewalks and bicycle lanes on both sides of major regional/arterial streets.
- Use traffic calming and speed control methods to keep traffic moving at a pace that is safe for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Support the reduction of roadway widths.
- Maintain a uniform setback of structures from the street. Encourage parking areas to be placed to the side or rear of structures (not in front).
- On-street parking should be allowed on local road minors and residential streets in order to assist in traffic calming.

## Public Areas: Town Centers, Squares, & Open Space

Neighborhood town centers are important in creating a sense of community and identity. In addition, a focal point, such as a plaza or green space, can provide formal and informal gathering spaces for local residents.

### *Town Centers*

In order to provide centers of activity, the General Plan Update could identify town or neighborhood centers. The character of these centers can vary. As they are found today in Humboldt County, many of these centers resemble the automobile-oriented development that occurred in the latter decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, placing commercial uses in strips along the arterials that carry traffic between neighborhoods and other destinations. Structures tend to be scattered and set back away from the street. In this approach, represented by Sketch Plan 2, there would be no strong incentives for intensification or mixed use within urban areas and rural centers. It would also accommodate Big Box commercial development (Option 8.6.a), and integrate less open space.

In contrast, Sketch Plan 3 would allow for more compact development in a town center, creating a well-defined public space. This public space would likely be in the form of a central square, or plaza. Mixed-use zoning would help facilitate economic development by allowing new development to contain space for small-scale businesses (Option 8.5.c) and have



*A large parking lot in front of non-descript buildings lack identity in Glendale (left), while a reduced parking lot, landscaping and traditional-style architecture give Scotia's commercial center (right) a unique character.*

allowances for home-based businesses.<sup>1</sup> Large format commercial development (“big box” stores) would not be allowed in the center in order to help sustain the viability of neighborhood and community scale commercial operations (Option 8.6.b). Development outside of urban and village areas would be discouraged, helping to further focus growth towards compact urban and village centers.

Currently, the County has no formal policy targeting specific areas for town centers, plazas or squares in rural communities. The revised McKinleyville Community Plan, however, introduces the creation of a Town Center District that permits mixed-use zoning, including higher density development.



*Informal public spaces exist around schools, such as in Orick.*

### *Open Space/Parks*

Humboldt County’s wealth of open space and parks attracts residents and tourists alike. It is home to several federal and state parks, including Redwood National Park and Humboldt Redwoods. While these parks may attract regional visitors, the smaller County parks represent valuable recreational space for the existing community. While individual cities within the County have developed park standards, there are currently no countywide park standards in Humboldt. Opportunities to improve the network of parks should be explored, especially in neighborhoods that have less access to open space. The basic choice presented by the two sketch plan approaches involves the proximity of residential development to neighborhood parks.

## **POLICY OPTIONS: PUBLIC AREAS**

### *Sketch Plan 2*

- Create a commercial corridor or strip that activates the streetscape.
- Place buildings near street edge in order to define corridor. Parking in the rear is encouraged but not required.
- A central plaza or square shall be bounded by a street on at least one side, and have a minimum area of 10,000 sq ft.

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<sup>1</sup> Consistent with the Home-Based and Small Business Development preferred choice and the Community Design preferred choice in the November 2000 Critical Choices Workshop Summaries

- Identify appropriate locations for new large format retail development (“Big Box Development”). Ensure that Big Box development does not adversely impact local communities or the existing retail sector of the economy (Option 8.6.a).
- Ensure that at least one large-scale park is accessible within one to two-mile distance from a residential neighborhood.

### *Sketch Plan 3*

- Encourage pedestrian-oriented village character, rather than strip malls, in neighborhood centers for local shops and services. Shops should front on streets rather than parking lots. Parking areas should not be located between buildings and the street edge.
- Create mixed-use village center zoning to facilitate small-scale business development in rural communities (Option 8.5.c).
- Place buildings in such a way to create a central open space, or plaza, where passive activity can occur. The plaza must be bounded by streets on at least three sides and shall front on a main street. It shall have a minimum area of 20,000 sq ft.
- Provide sites for neighborhood and community scale commercial development of sizes and at locations that offer both choice and convenience for County residents and shoppers while sustaining a strong retail base for the County, but do not allow large-scale Big Box retail development outside existing centers unless there is a demonstrated need (Option 8.6.b).
- Ensure that a neighborhood-scale park (specify size) is located within a ¼-mile from a residential neighborhood. Seek for opportunities to create a pocket park where the park accessibility is not available.
- Place higher density mixed-uses and or commercial uses adjacent to major parks to create safe and live atmosphere.

## **Neighborhood Design**

From the urban to the most rural, Humboldt County’s neighborhoods offer diverse experiences for their residents and visitors. Neighborhood design policies attempt to preserve the special character of these neighborhoods, while ensuring that new development enhances a sense of identity and place. The building blocks for this task include a mix of housing and commercial building types (as illustrated in Figures 5-1 and 5-2), parks, and community facilities, organized around a neighborhood focal point.

One approach to neighborhood design is represented by Sketch Plan 2, where future development would continue to occur where market demand is highest, most likely around the major incorporated cities in the Humboldt Bay area. This strategy would allow development to extend beyond the urban limits if the market demanded it. The majority of new residential development would continue to be single-family residential. Although policies

would allow a diversity of housing types, there would be no regulatory requirement to provide specific housing types.

Alternatively, Humboldt County can apply traditional neighborhood design (TND) principles within the CPAs (Sketch Plan 3). These design policies would promote compact, interconnected streets in a grid pattern, a clearly defined center, and neighborhoods that are oriented toward pedestrians. Additional elements of TNDs include: mix of land uses, a hierarchy of open spaces, moderate-density housing, a strong street edge, and architectural compatibility.

The current Framework Plan (Sketch Plan 1) does not incorporate Neighborhood Design principles beyond promoting a diversity of housing types.

## **POLICY OPTIONS: NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN**

### *Both Plans*

- Ensure an adequate supply of developable residential land at allocations with adequate public facilities and services to meet affordable housing needs (Option 8.4.d).
- Design local streets to accommodate both vehicular traffic and pedestrians. Strategies include minimum curb cuts along streets, landscaped sidewalks and medians, on-street parking, traffic slowing measures, pedestrian-scale lighting.

### *Sketch Plan 2*

- New residential development will continue to be predominantly single-family residential. A diversity of housing types is allowed but not required. These homes can have either front-loaded or rear-loaded garages.
- By allowing development to extend beyond the urban limits, a large neighborhood size may be created. Communities will create retail centers, which accommodate both the auto and the pedestrian, through orientation and scale, and incorporate ‘big box’ retail into pedestrian-friendly commercial areas.
- Encourage pedestrian-oriented corridor character to neighborhood centers for local shops and services.

*See additional policies on street pattern and town centers in Sections 3 and 4.*

### *Sketch Plan 3*

- Neighborhood services and recreation options should be within walking distance of the majority of residential areas.



*Front porches and walkways can create a pedestrian-friendly environment.*

*See additional policies on connectivity in Section 3. These emphasize the importance of interconnectivity and the need to limit loop streets and cul-de-sacs.*

- Encourage development of diverse housing types within a neighborhood by promoting variety in density, lot size, height, cost, color, and massing.

*Mixed use neighborhood cores (see additional policies in Section 4.)*

- Orient buildings toward the street or the central open space. The ground-level façade should be transparent and be articulated to human scale to create pedestrian-oriented sidewalks.
- Develop a sense of neighborhood identity through design elements at each neighborhood’s mixed-use core.

*Streetscape/Other*

- Ensure that garages do not dominate streetscapes by setting them back from the front of houses, locating them at the rear of the side.
- Promote social interaction through porches, front gardens, and windows overlooking front yards and sidewalks.
- Using alley system and courtyards to minimize driveways facing the street.
- Encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of older or historic structures.



*The character of a residential street can change depending on the location of car garages—Eureka CPA has both front-loaded (left) and side-loaded (right) homes.*

## How Community Design Options are Incorporated into Sketch Plans

<i>Community Design Element</i>	<i>Sketch Plan 2</i>	<i>Sketch Plan 3</i>
<b>RURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES</b>		
<b>Rural clustering</b>	Allowed	Encouraged with incentives and standards
<b>Protection of critical resource areas</b>	Use overlay zones	Use overlay zones and conservation subdivision design techniques (clustering)
<b>Protection of open space (other than critical areas)</b>	Larger lots give sense of open space, but more is in private ownership and is less connected	Open space is maximized through the use of easements, clustering, and TDRs
<b>TPZ land use</b>	Two-tier	No change from current policy
<b>Greenbelts</b>	Not Required	Encouraged with incentives

<i>Community Design Element</i>	<i>Sketch Plan 2</i>	<i>Sketch Plan 3</i>
<b>URBAN/RURAL EDGE</b>		
<b>Urban Development and Expansion Areas</b>	Replace with tier system, including transitional areas ('soft' edge)	Replaced with 'harder' edge between urban/rural lands
<b>Development outside urban limit</b>	Allowed	Discouraged, with incentives for conservation design
<b>Entry features</b>	On primary corridor	On primary corridor, intersections, & special districts

<i>Community Design Element</i>	<i>Sketch Plan 2</i>	<i>Sketch Plan 3</i>
<b>STREET AND BLOCK DESIGN</b>		
<b>Cul-de-sacs</b>	Allowed	Discouraged

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<b>Block size</b>	No Standards	Maximum 750 ft. block width to encourage walkability
<b>Street Widths</b>	Larger, more auto-oriented	Smaller, more pedestrian friendly
<b>On-street parking</b>	Allowed	Allowed; optional diagonal parking encouraged in centers to decrease land needed for parking
<b>Building setbacks</b>	Varied, deeper setbacks	More uniform, shorter setbacks

<i>Community Design Element</i>	<i>Sketch Plan 2</i>	<i>Sketch Plan 3</i>
<b>PUBLIC AREAS: TOWN CENTERS, SQUARES, &amp; OPEN SPACE</b>		
<b>Mixed-use centers</b>	Allowed	Encouraged, with specific land use designations and standards
<b>Commercial strip development</b>	Allowed	Discouraged
<b>Plazas</b>	No standards	Standards established - minimum of 20,000 sq ft
<b>Street edge</b>	Looser, varied setbacks	Tighter, continuous building edge
<b>Location of parking</b>	No specific standards	Shared parking and parking on sides and behind buildings encouraged
<b>Big-box development</b>	Allowed	Not Allowed
<b>Parks</b>	Community parks located where sufficient land can be assembled	Neighborhood parks within ¼-mile of 90% of residents

<i>Community Design Element</i>	<i>Sketch Plan 2</i>	<i>Sketch Plan 3</i>
<b>NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN</b>		
<b>Diversity of housing types</b>	Allowed, but not required	Promoted with incentives and development standards
<b>Front-loaded garages</b>	Allowed	Discouraged (Rear or side-loaded preferred)
<b>Front porches</b>	Allowed	Encouraged

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