



**Date:** July 19, 2022  
**To:** Netra Khatri, City Engineer  
Transportation Safety Committee Members  
**CC:** David Loya, Community Development Director  
**From:** Oona Smith, Senior Regional Planner

**RE: TSC Item 8.A. Consider Gateway Plan Update: Transportation & Circulation**

The City of Arcata’s “Draft Gateway Area Plan 2022” vision and guiding principles are well aligned with HCAOG’s 20-year Regional Transportation Plan, “Variety in Rural Options of Mobility 2022-2042” (VROOM). The Gateway Area Plan’s policies will support many of VROOM’s Safe & Sustainable Transportation Targets, which include, among others:

- Reduce GHG emissions in the Air District (NCUAQMD)
- Achieve percent mode shift
- Reduce vehicle miles travelled (VMT) by car
- Encourage/develop zero-emission vehicle infrastructure
- Invest in Complete Streets

In particular, the Gateway Area Plan will support HCAOG’s ambitious targets for housing and land use:

• **Efficiency & Practicality in Locating New Housing**

- iii) Starting by 2022, 80% of all new permitted housing units are in places with safe, comfortable, and convenient access to employment, shopping, and recreation by walking, biking, rolling, or transit.
- iv) Starting by 2022, all new housing contributes to a countywide reduction in per capita VMT from cars.
- v) By 2023/24, all jurisdictions have adopted GP/zoning incentives for building in “highly connected” areas and for other climate-friendly housing-development.

• **Convenient Access to Destinations**

- i) By 2035, 60% of the county’s population—equitably distributed regionwide—live in homes/ apartments/dorms where they can safely, comfortably, and conveniently travel to everyday destinations by walking, biking, rolling, or transit/micro-transit, and 80% do by 2050. “Safe, comfortable and convenient travel” means people are able to travel:
  - from home to work within 20 minutes in urbanized areas or within 35 minutes outside urban areas, without riding in a private car;
  - from home to essential non-work destinations (e.g., school, local shopping, transit connections) within 15 minutes in urbanized areas or within 30 minutes outside urban areas, without riding in a private car.

For the consideration of TSC Members and Community Development staff, below are my staff-level comments (in purple) on the Draft Gateway Plan’s **Policy Chapter 7. Mobility**.

**(1) GA-7a. Plan the Circulation System to Accommodate Planned Growth.** In planning for improvements to the overall circulation system, design the system to accommodate the planned amount of growth outlined in other policies. Ensure the circulation system supports increased demands for all forms of mobility – vehicles, trucks, transit, bicycles, and pedestrians.

~ Although it is clear that the planned growth will increase the volumes of all modes of travel, a policy to support an increased demand for driving seems potentially incongruous with the Plan’s car-free-lifestyle principle. I would suggest that the policy could instead “Ensure the circulation (mobility?) system supports a functioning, safe, efficient, sustainable multi-modal network.”

**(2) GA-7b. Design Mobility System per Plan Figures.**

Figure 8-Proposed Vehicular Circulation and Figure 9-Proposed Active Transportation Circulation:

~ If the Plan would show these two figures overlaid together, that figure would help readers more easily see (the concepts/proposals of) where drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians would and would not be sharing the road.

(3)~ The chapter uses the terms “circulation system” and “mobility system.” Are these two systems different?

(4) d. Outside of City rights-of-way, the alignments and widths of Class I trails (i.e. separated shared use paths) may need to be adjusted based on environmental constraints, community needs, the availability of right-of-way, and other factors.

(~ Just curious if this will never be true *within* the City rights-of-way, existing and future?)

(5) h. New roadway connections where (incomplete or?) none currently exist (such as the far west end of 6<sup>th</sup> Street connecting K Street to the L Street right-of-way) may be designed and constructed as either new vehicular roadways, pedestrian-only thoroughfares, or bicycle/pedestrian facilities that allow restricted vehicular traffic. The City Engineer will determine which type of facility to design and install based on available traffic data, existing environmental constraints, community interests, right-of-way availability, and other engineering factors, and the Plan’s principles.

~ The term “new vehicular roadways” sounds like they are for cars only. Would “new roadway” suffice? What is a “full vehicular roadway”(under i)?

(6) **GA-7e. Consider Non-motorized Campus Layouts.** ...provide for a wide right-of-way whose cross section includes ample on-street parking..

~ Can “ample” be objectively defined or clarified? (In GA-7f also.)

**(7) GA-7h. Mobility Infrastructure that Supports Car-free Lifestyle.**

b. Shorten Pedestrian Crossing Distances. Shorten distances for pedestrian crossings along K Street and 11<sup>th</sup> Street to improve overall walkability in the Plan Area. Evaluate other roadways within the Plan Area that warrant shortened pedestrian crossings.

c. Curb Extensions in All New Roadways. In all newly created roadways, incorporate curb extensions (“bumpouts”) to increase pedestrian visibility and safety at crosswalks, calm traffic speeds, and provide space for rain gardens, tree planting, street furnishings, and other amenities.

~ Although these related design features can help calm traffic, I suggest emphasizing decreasing driving speeds over shortening crossing distances. K Street and 11<sup>th</sup> Street are not particularly wide, but the speed that people drive their cars makes crossing more stressful.