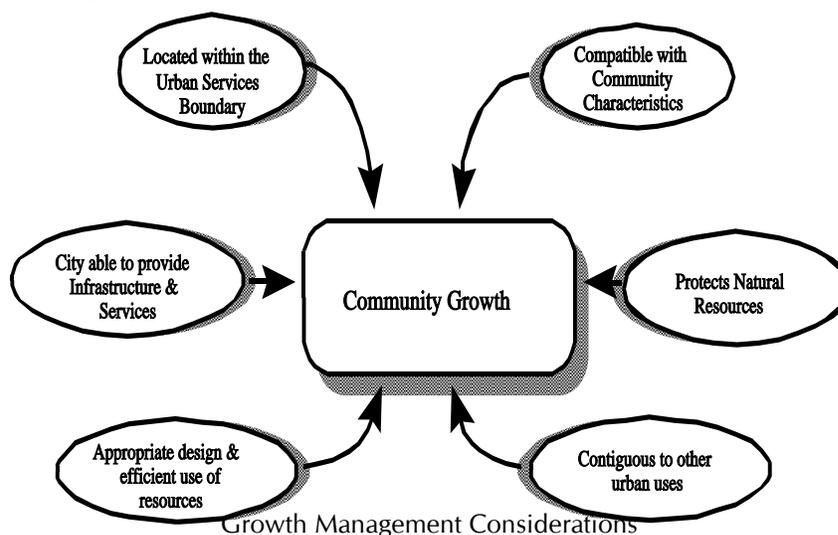


## ***GROWTH MANAGEMENT ELEMENT***

### **2.4 INTRODUCTION**

**Growth Management Overview.** Since it was originally incorporated in the late 1850s, Arcata has grown to an estimated 1998 population of about 16,500 persons. The General Plan includes an assumption of low population growth, to about 20,000 persons, by the year 2020. The majority of the City's growth has been, and is planned to be, located within the present City boundary, and concentrated around the downtown area, existing neighborhood commercial centers (see Land Use Element), and Humboldt State University. Growth is directed to these areas because they have existing urban services and infrastructure. There are currently about 7,500 students enrolled at Humboldt State University, with maximum enrollment limited to 8,500 (full time equivalent) students. This potential enrollment increase will also impact the size and characteristics of the City.



The City of Arcata has an incorporated area defined by its City limits; an Urban Services Boundary that defines the limits for extending City services and infrastructure so as to accommodate new development anticipated within the time frame of this General Plan; a Sphere of Influence boundary that indicates unincorporated lands which ultimately may be developed and annexed to the City; and a Planning Area which includes nearby unincorporated lands. Collectively, these planning features and the policies that guide related development activities, such as annexation, constitute the City's growth management program. The City's Sphere of Influence is shown on Figure LU-a, the Planning Area on Figure LU-b, and the Urban Services Boundary on Figure GM-a. Each of these features is described in more detail below.

#### Annexations/ Expansion of City Boundaries.

The Cortese/Knox Local Government Reorganization Act of 1985 sets forth the rules and regulations under which Arcata may expand its adopted City limits. The legislative intention of this law is to encourage orderly growth and development, which is considered essential to the social, fiscal, and economic well-being of the state. It recognizes that the

formation of local agency boundaries is an important factor in assuring that development is orderly. Within the legislation, the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) is given the sole and exclusive authority for the annexation of additional territory to a city. The Coastal Land Use Plan applies only to the land areas which are within the city boundary.



### Sphere of Influence.

Before LAFCo may approve territorial annexation, it must define and adopt a Sphere of Influence for the City. A Sphere of Influence is described as a plan for the probable ultimate physical boundaries and service area of a local agency.

The Sphere of Influence boundary includes all City lands and unincorporated lands that may be annexed as part of the ultimate development of the City. This ultimate development extends beyond the twenty-year time frame of the General Plan. Designating unincorporated (under the jurisdiction of the County) lands within the Sphere of Influence is done for two reasons:

1. It allows the City to plan for the eventual annexation and extension of services as part of community growth.
2. It designates uses for those lands that are compatible with adjacent City lands. The City's Sphere of Influence is adopted, as required by state law, by the Humboldt County LAFCo, a county-wide agency.

### Arcata Planning Area.

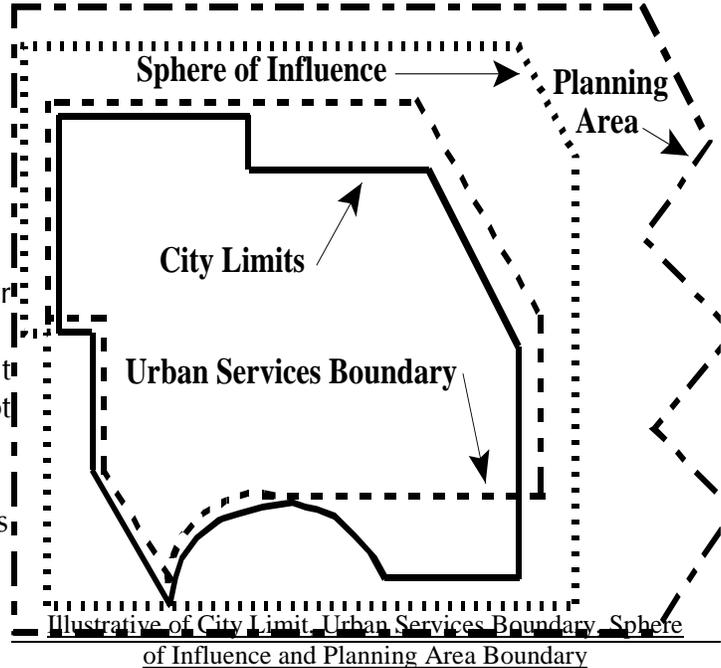
California planning law requires the City to adopt a general plan for lands within its limits and also for any land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its planning. Defining a Planning Area is a means by which the City can communicate its concerns for the future of surrounding lands under the jurisdiction of the County or neighboring cities. The Planning Area may extend beyond the City's Sphere of Influence.

The Planning Area includes the City, the Sphere of Influence and surrounding county lands that are intended to remain unincorporated, where uses and activities impact the City. The Planning Area boundary is determined by geographic features, such as the Pacific Dunes, Pacific Ocean, Mad River, Fickle Hill ridgeline, and hydrological features such as the watersheds of Arcata's creeks. Other considerations for determining the Planning Area include preserving viewsheds and maintaining a greenbelt around the City.



### The Urban Services Boundary.

The Urban Services Boundary is a mapped limit line surrounding the City's developed and developing areas. It can also include areas of the Sphere of Influence where urban development is planned. Inside the City limits, the boundary excludes areas inappropriate for urban development, such as agricultural lands and the community forest. Where it extends beyond the City limits, it does not extend outside the City's Sphere of Influence. The boundary is determined by the City's interest in extending services and infrastructure (water, wastewater collection, police services, etc.) to urban uses. The City provides certain areas, such as Jacoby Creek, with "water only" services. The Urban Services Boundary encompasses the area wherein urban development may occur during the General Plan's twenty-year time frame.



### Guiding Principles and Goals.

- A. Lands in the Sphere of Influence should remain undeveloped until they are annexed to the City.
- B. Preserve the rural character and promote resource protection in the Planning Area.
- C. Maintain an Urban Services Boundary that serves only the existing urban area, and areas appropriate for development by the year 2020.
- D. Locate new urban development in areas contiguous to existing urban uses.
- E. Protect flood-prone, steeply sloped, streamside buffer areas and productive natural resource, agricultural, and forest lands from urban development.
- F. Incorporate greenbelts, designated natural areas, and other open space into the planning area and Sphere of Influence in order to maintain an identity separate from surrounding communities.
- G. Manage the timing and amount of growth in accordance with the ability to maintain acceptable levels of service and quality of life for existing and new residents.

## 2.5 POLICIES

The Growth Management Element contains the following policies:

- GM-1 Planning Area
- GM-2 Sphere of Influence
- GM-3 Annexation
- GM-4 Urban Services and Urban Services Boundary

### POLICY GM-1 PLANNING AREA

**Objective.** Advocate appropriate uses and management for Planning Area lands outside the City boundary, including Arcata's creek watersheds and coastal areas, in recognition that they will affect the future form of the Arcata community.

GM-1a **Planning Area.** The Planning Area shall include all lands within the boundary shown on Figure LU-a. The Planning Area includes lands where any future changes or management practices are likely to have an impact on the City of Arcata. The City shall request that all land use applications received by the County, or resource management plans received by other agencies, be referred to the City. The City shall review and comment on these applications and plans. The City shall also advocate that the County implement policies and that property owners manage for the conservation of these unincorporated lands. This policy applies to lands within the Planning Area but outside the Sphere of Influence.

GM-1b **Referrals by Humboldt County.** The City shall review all development and infrastructure proposals affecting the Planning Area and communicate the City's position on these matters to the applicable decision-making body. Humboldt County shall be requested to refer all planning studies and applications for development in the Planning Area to the Arcata Community Development Department, for review and comment, prior to taking action.



GM-1c **Land-use designations within the Planning Area.** The City shall request that the County of Humboldt retain rural and agricultural designations on lands located within the Planning Area. The City shall request that the County adopt consistent land use designations for lands within the planning area but outside the Sphere of Influence, as shown on Figure LU-b.

GM-1d **Greenbelt.** The rural and agricultural lands within the Planning Area are designated by the City as open space or greenbelt. The intent is that such lands shall not be developed with urban densities or uses and that land uses shall be limited to agricultural production and natural resources conservation.

GM-1e **Resource Protection in the Planning Area.** Proposals which could affect the Planning Area's resources, including those resources addressed in the Resources Conservation and Management Element, shall be reviewed by the City. City review shall address the proposal's compatibility with applicable General Plan policy. The City shall communicate the intent of this policy to agencies with jurisdiction within the Planning Area (for example, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection for timber management, and the Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District for Humboldt Bay tidelands management) together with the policies in the Resource Conservation and Management Element.



## POLICY GM-2      SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

**Objective.** Designate an appropriate amount of urban reserve and open space land in the Sphere of Influence to provide for the ultimate development of the City.

GM-2a **Sphere of Influence.** The proposed Sphere of Influence boundary, which must be adopted by LAFCo for the City of Arcata, is shown on Figure GM-a. The boundary defines land parcels that are eligible for annexation to the City in the future. The City shall maintain an adequate amount of land in the Sphere of Influence to accommodate future growth, consistent with the goals and policies of this plan, as well as to protect open space and productive resource uses. Annexation of property may not proceed unless or until such lands are within the Sphere of Influence boundary.

GM-2b **Changes to the Sphere of Influence boundary.** The City shall comprehensively evaluate the Sphere of Influence boundary at least every five years, but more frequently if appropriate. Any boundary amendments shall be considered by the Planning Commission and recommended to the City Council, prior to any action by LAFCo. Any City decision to change the boundary shall be based on the following:

1. The resulting area has an adequate supply of land to accommodate projected

- housing needs allocated by the Humboldt County Council of Government.
2. Any owner of property located adjacent the Sphere of Influence boundary may request that the City add his or her lands to the Sphere of Influence.
3. Any such proposal shall also identify the requested land use designations and any other necessary or appropriate amendments to the various elements of the General Plan.
4. In considering such requests, and at each periodic comprehensive evaluation, the City Council, upon recommendation of the Planning Commission, shall determine whether it would serve the public interest to designate additional lands for which to provide municipal services and developed with urban uses.
5. An amendment to the Sphere of Influence to include additional lands shall be subject to environmental review pursuant to CEQA.
6. A proposal to amend the Sphere of Influence may be considered concurrently with an annexation request.
7. Any adjustment to the sphere boundary incorporates adequate provisions for open space.

**GM-2c Areas in Sphere of Influence intended only for partial services.** Some areas are included in the Sphere of Influence only for the purpose of receiving City water service, such as the Jacoby Creek residential area. Such areas are not to be considered for annexation during the 20-year time frame of this Plan.



**GM-2d City land-use designations.** The City's land use designations for parcels located within the Sphere of Influence are shown in Figure LU-a. These designations have legal force and effect only upon annexation of particular land areas to the City.

**GM-2e Prezoning of parcels within the Sphere of Influence.** Lands in the Sphere of Influence shall not be prezoned until the City considers particular annexation requests. Such prezoning shall be consistent with the City land-use designations for the Sphere area, or a General Plan Amendment would be required. The purpose shall be to provide maximum latitude to the City to determine the appropriate timing of expansion of the City boundaries, extension of services, and urban development.

**GM-2f County Land-use and Zoning designations in Sphere of Influence.** The City shall request that Humboldt County adopt agricultural, natural resource, or other rural

land use designations, within the Sphere of Influence, as a holding zone to prevent premature development prior to annexation to the City. This shall not apply to areas which are already fully developed such as Pacific Manor. The County's land-use designations are legally binding until annexation to the City is completed.

GM-2g **Resource lands in the Sphere of Influence.** The City shall periodically review the SOI boundary, especially to the west, to determine whether resource lands are being adequately protected.

### **POLICY GM-3 ANNEXATIONS**

**Objective.** Provide for logical annexations of unincorporated areas, within the City's Sphere of Influence and/or Planning Area, when the existing or proposed development is consistent with community character and City services can be adequately provided.

GM-3a **City annexation procedure.** The City prefers to consider annexation requests prior to LAFCo consideration. If area property owner(s) or residents request that the City initiate an annexation request to LAFCo, the following procedures shall apply:

1. Initiation:
  - a. If lands are inhabited, a petition must be signed by no less than fifty percent of the resident voters, or at least twenty-five percent of owners of property located within the annexation area;
  - b. If lands are uninhabited but consist of more than one parcel and owner, a petition must be signed by a majority of owners representing more than fifty percent of the annexation area;
  - c. If a single parcel, a petition must be submitted by owner(s).
2. The Planning Commission shall review and make a recommendation on the requested annexation to City Council.
3. Final Action shall be taken by Council regarding Resolution of Intention for annexation.
4. Following City Council approval of annexation request, including any accompanying General Plan amendment, pre-zoning ordinance and/or environmental document, the City shall transmit the annexation request to LAFCo for its consideration and decision.

GM-3b **Required materials for consideration of annexations of non-urbanized land areas.** The following shall apply to annexation requests where the land proposed to be added to the City is not developed with urban land uses prior to annexation:

1. The City, or experts under contract to the City, shall prepare a detailed annexation study addressing items "a" through "f" listed below.

- a. A comprehensive and detailed analysis of the fiscal impacts of the annexation, addressing the full range of revenues and expenditures. One-time capital costs of facilities, as well as recurring operating costs and revenues, shall be evaluated;
  - b. A study and/or proposal for tax-sharing agreements with other taxing entities, such as the County;
  - c. An accompanying General Plan Amendment, if requested or appropriate;
  - d. A proposed preliminary development plan, including phasing if appropriate;
  - e. An assessment of the City's capacity to provide facilities and services, including: wastewater collection and treatment; stormwater management; water supply and distribution; streets and circulation; fire protection; police services; parks; and others as appropriate;
  - f. A rezoning ordinance. The costs of preparing the annexation study, including City administrative costs, shall be borne by the property owner(s) requesting the City to consider the annexation.
2. An environmental document pursuant to CEQA.
  3. A Planned Development or Specific Plan may be required for any land area greater than five acres.

**GM-3c Criteria for annexation of undeveloped land areas.** All undeveloped lands proposed for annexation shall be added to the City only if the following criteria are met. The proposed annexation area shall:



1. Be within Urban Services Boundary and adjacent to existing urban development.
2. Not exceed the City's capacity to provide services and infrastructure to accommodate proposed development.
3. Have annexation timed so that availability of services and infrastructure is concurrent with need.
4. Have a positive or neutral fiscal impact, or other overriding public benefits;
5. Be in compliance with General Plan policies.
6. Not include prime agriculture land (Storie Index 60 or higher) other than with designation and prezone as Agriculture–Exclusive [A-E].

**GM-3d Criteria for annexation of areas with existing urban development.** All lands with existing urban development proposed for annexation shall be added to the City only if the following criteria are met. The proposed annexation area shall:

1. Be within the Urban Services Boundary and adjacent to existing city boundary.
2. Have facilities brought up to City standard prior to or concurrent with annexation.
3. Have costs of service extensions borne entirely by owners of annexing properties and not by existing City taxpayers or ratepayers, or, have a financing mechanism in place prior to annexation.

## POLICY GM-4 URBAN SERVICES AND URBAN SERVICES BOUNDARY

**Objective.** Define the boundary that limits the extent of City services and urban uses, within the City's incorporated area and Sphere of Influence. Extend City services to urban uses within the urban services boundary when provision of those services will not exceed the City's planned system capacities

**GM-4a Urban Services Boundary.**  The City shall maintain an Urban Services Boundary, beyond which urban services shall not be provided (except as provided for in Policy GM-4b), and urban development shall not be approved (see Figure GM-b). Rural residential development may be approved outside the Urban Services Boundary only if the development would not require the extension of water, sewer, and other public facilities. The area within the Urban Services Boundary shall be annexed at the time of development.

Any changes to the Urban Services Boundary shall be based on an analysis of soil type, vegetation, topography (slope), availability of public water and sewer services, existing property lines, existing land use, and potential for development. The boundary shall not be extended into the prime agricultural land or flood-prone areas on the west and south, nor extend past the Mad River on the north. To the east, the boundary shall not be extended into the steeper portions of Fickle Ridge, as designated on the General Plan Map. Parts of the Jacoby Creek and Bayside areas are included within the urban services boundary.

Only the Agriculture- Exclusive [A-E], Natural Resource [NR], and Public Facilities [PF] land use designations shall be applied to areas outside the Urban Services Boundary and within the Coastal Zone.

**GM-4b Services outside City boundary.**  The City shall not extend sewer mains or new water mains or provide new service connections to portions of the Planning Area outside the City Limits except under the following conditions:

1. **Emergency sanitary sewer connection.** The City may provide an emergency sewer line extension provided the following conditions are met:
  - a. The property is located within the City Urban Services Boundary for water and sewer.
  - b. The property is adjacent to the City limits.
  - c. The on-site sewage disposal system has failed.
  - d. It is not feasible to replace or repair the on-site sewage disposal system as evidenced by a letter from the County of Humboldt Division of Environmental Health.
  - e. The on-site sewage disposal system failure is considered a health hazard by the County of Humboldt Division of Environmental Health.
  - f. The owner has submitted a complete application to the City of Arcata for

annexation of the property within 18 months from the date that sanitary sewer service was provided.

- g. LAFCo has approved the emergency sanitary sewer connection.
- h. The sewer connection shall be sized to only accommodate the failed system.

2. The City may contract to provide sewer services to other service districts subject to the following guidelines:
  - a. Only those areas with existing contracts as of December 31, 1998 shall be served.
  - b. No new contracts for services shall be approved.
  - c. No new connections shall be allowed to the sewer lines in the area between the City Limits and the Arcata Planning Area Boundary.

[Revised by Ordinance No. 1377, September 2008]

**GM-4c Requirements and procedures for modifying Urban Services Boundary.** The following findings must be made to modify the Urban Services Boundary:



1. There are existing urban uses or urban uses designated on the land use plan map for the area being considered.
2. There is sufficient existing or planned infrastructure capacity to extend water, sewer, police protection, and other services, without reducing service standards for other areas.
3. The area to be served is adjacent to existing urban development.
4. The area to be served is within the City limits or Sphere of Influence.
5. City services extensions will not adversely impact natural resources in the area.

## 2.6 IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES

#	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME
LU-1	<b>Annexation Procedures (LUC Amendment)</b> Add City annexation criteria and procedures to the City's LUC (formerly LUDG) for consistency with General Plan policies.	Community Development Dept./ Planning Commission	Year 1
GM-1	<b>Sphere of Influence/Planning Area Application Review</b> Develop memorandum of understanding (MOU) between City of Arcata, Humboldt County, and LAFCo for review of development and use permit applications.	Community Development Dept.	Year 1
GM-2	<b>Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with County</b> Negotiate a MOU with Humboldt County that provides for City review and input on all proposed actions on Sphere of Influence/Planning Area lands.	Community Development Dept.	Year 1

#	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME
GM -3	<b>Urban Services Boundary</b> Update Title 5 and Title 7 of the Arcata Municipal Code to define and describe criteria for modifying Urban Services Boundary, consistent with General Plan policy.	Community Development Dept./ Planning Commission	Year 1
GM -4	<b>Update Sphere of Influence Boundary</b> Comprehensively evaluate the Sphere of Influence Boundary to ensure that City growth and resource protection objectives are being met.	Community Development Dept.	Every 5 Years
GM -5	<b>Rezoning Ordinance</b> Prepare and adopt a rezoning ordinance that does not allow resource lands to be rezoned, but requires consideration of land use designations at time of annexation.	Community Development Dept.	Year 2
GM -6	<b>Local Agency Formation Commission</b> Submit changes in Sphere of Influence and updates of maps to LAFCo, and request that maps be updated.	Community Development Dept.	Year 5

