

From: [Twila Sanchez](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Cc: [Madrone, Steve](#); [Burke, Mary](#)
Subject: Concerns and Recommendations Regarding the McKinleyville Town Center
Date: Saturday, September 13, 2025 12:14:53 PM

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Dear Humboldt County Planning Commission,

I am writing as a member of the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee (MMAC) and as a long-time resident of McKinleyville.

The McKinleyville Community Plan (MCP), adopted in 2002, outlines a vision for a Town Center that would create a balanced, traditional village form. My recollection is that over the course of more than five years of MMAC meetings, the “traditional village” concept may have been mentioned, but it was never given the full discussion this MCP policy deserves. As a result, the current proposal does not reflect that vision.

The MCP also stresses the importance of public participation, calling for a citizen-driven process to ensure broad community involvement in every phase of planning. Both the County and the MMAC did what we could to notify the public of our regular and special meetings. Still, I feel we fell short. I also recognize that our community has, at times, shown limited interest in participating in this process. Nevertheless, MMAC and the County must continue to improve outreach and communication with the community at large.

I **strongly** recommend that at least **one acre** within the Town Center be reserved for open space. Some have pointed to Pearson Park as sufficient, but those who attend “Music in the Park” know we have already outgrown that venue. With future housing development bringing thousands of new residents, our community will need additional space for gatherings, cultural events, and recreation. Setting aside one acre for this purpose would ensure the Town Center truly serves as the “heart” of McKinleyville, rather than simply a dense housing project.

Unfortunately, I am unable to attend the upcoming meeting.

Thank you for considering this request and for your commitment to shaping a Town Center that reflects the needs and spirit of our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Twila Sanchez

Member, McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee

From: [Mark Henry](#)
To: [CEQAResponses](#)
Subject: Deir
Date: Saturday, April 12, 2025 11:15:23 AM

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I am a resident of Mckinleyville and live on Mckinleyville Ave. I am concerned that limiting car travel on Central will cause increased traffic on Mckinleyville. We currently have a large volume of traffic during commuting times in am and pm. Limiting car travel during the day will cause further congestion during quieter periods.

Additional concerns are Fisher, Hiller and Railroad do not have complete sidewalks or bike lanes to Central thus impeding safe travel on these primary connector roads. Additionally, will there be a tram for disabled people and those wishing to stay dry during our long rainy season. The current bus schedule is insufficient to provide adequate transport through the town center. Sufficient transport would encourage people to avoid driving.

Thank you for your time.

Martha Henry

From: [Patricia Col](#)
To: [CEQAResponses](#)
Date: Friday, April 11, 2025 1:30:24 PM

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2650 multi family housing units on the roads in this town, are you dreaming. Fix the infrastructure before you start adding.

From: [Armand Frieditis](#)
To: [CEQAResponses](#)
Subject: Design ideas for the McKinleyville Town Center
Date: Saturday, April 12, 2025 3:54:03 PM

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I would propose designing a city center modeled after an Italian piazza. The idea is to create a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly hub that fosters community interaction, commerce, and cultural events. Here are some of the design features characteristic of such a piazza:

1. Pedestrian-Only Central Square

- **Cobblestone or patterned pavement** in the center, with benches, fountains, and greenery.
- **No cars allowed**, but with limited access for emergency vehicles and delivery trucks at designated times.
- **Outdoor seating** for cafés and restaurants spilling into the square. Perhaps the township could provide covered outdoor areas for local businesses (shared or individual) with heaters for winter months.

2. Surrounding Buildings with Mixed-Use Spaces

- **Ground floors:** Restaurants, cafés, gelaterias, boutique shops, and small grocery stores.
- **Upper floors:** Apartments, offices, or boutique hotels to ensure activity at all hours.
- **Architectural style:** Classic Italian elements like arched colonnades, terracotta roofs, and balconies with flower boxes.

3. Public Amenities & Landmarks

- A **central fountain or statue** as a focal point.
- **String lights or lanterns** for evening ambiance.
- **Performance space** for live music, markets, or festivals.
- **Shaded areas** with trees or pergolas for comfort.

Appeal of an Italian Piazza-Style City Center

- **Vibrant Social Atmosphere** – Encourages people to gather, dine, and interact, fostering community bonds.
- **Boost to Local Businesses** – High foot traffic benefits restaurants, shops, and street vendors.
- **Aesthetic Appeal** – The charming, European-inspired design attracts tourists and residents alike.
- **Reduced Noise & Pollution** – A car-free zone means cleaner air and a quieter environment.
- **Flexible Event Space** – The square can host farmers' markets, concerts, and seasonal festivals.
- **Increased Safety** – Fewer cars mean fewer accidents, making it family-friendly.

Here are some ideas for a phased implementation plan:

Phase 1: Planning & Community Engagement (6-12 months)

- **Public workshops & surveys** to gather input on design preferences and concerns.
- **Traffic & feasibility studies** to assess pedestrianization impact on surrounding roads.
- **Conceptual designs** from urban planners/architects, with cost estimates.
- **Pilot events** (e.g., a monthly "car-free day" or temporary market) to test public interest.

Phase 2: Infrastructure & Small-Scale Changes (1-2 years)

- **Convert one street or block** into a pedestrian zone (start small).
- **Add bike lanes, benches, and planters** to improve walkability.
- **Upgrade utilities** (underground wiring, better lighting) for a cleaner look.
- **Encourage businesses** to add outdoor seating (offer incentives like space heaters and covered spaces).

Phase 3: Major Construction & Landscaping (2-3 years)

- **Pave the central square** with cobblestones or decorative concrete.
- **Install a fountain, performance stage, or public art piece** as a centerpiece.
- **Expand pedestrian zones** to adjacent streets, restricting car access further.
- **Build peripheral parking garages** (if needed) to offset lost street parking.

Phase 4: Final Touches & Programming (Ongoing)

- **Host regular events** (farmers' markets, concerts, festivals) to drive foot traffic.
- **Add seasonal decorations** (holiday lights, flower displays).
- **Monitor & adjust** based on feedback (e.g., more shade, better signage).

Funding could come from municipal bonds, state/federal grants for urban revitalization projects, and a special tax district. Local businesses could also pay for naming rights, developers could contribute to public spaces in exchange for building permits, and crowdfunding for residents (e.g., "buy a brick" for paving the plaza).

The idea is to start small, (e.g., one blocked-off street) to prove the concept before major investment, use temporary materials (like removable bollards) to test changes before permanent construction, and highlight economic benefits (increased property values, tourism) to gain political and business backing.

Italy, of course, has dozens of examples of such successful piazzas. Here are some: Piazza del Campo, Siena, Piazza Maggiore, Bologna, Prato della Valle, Padua, Piazza Navona, Rome, Vigevano's Piazza Ducale, Piazza delle Erbe, Verona, and Piazza Cordusio, Milan.

I hope this note finds some positive receptiveness.

Regards,

Dr. Armand Frieditis

1305 Conifer Ct.

McKinleyville, CA 95519

From: [Steven Thiele](#)
To: [CEQAResponses](#)
Date: Saturday, April 12, 2025 9:08:02 AM

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I'm A resident of Northern Humboldt County.

I propose A civic Town Hall downtown with mix residential and commercial zones together, because the area is too diverse for participants to divide into separately.

Steven G. Thiele

P.O. Box 2593

McKinleyville, CA. 95519

Stevengethiele@gmail.com

From: [Stacy Becker](#)
To: [CEQAResponses](#)
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Zoning Amendment
Date: Saturday, April 26, 2025 8:49:14 AM

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Regarding the "road diet" portion of this [EIR](#): YES! I have been a McKinleyville resident for 23 years and Central has always been more of a freeway than a town-centered, pedestrian-friendly road. This road tends to be a major critique of many - lending downtown McKinleyville it's "strip mall" feel. Chamber efforts have helped- maturing and blooming trees, flower baskets, all good for decorative/friendly touches, but nothing would make more of a difference than implementing the solutions suggested by this plan. Imagine a town center road that allows school children crossing without a fleet of school staff and parents acting as crossing guards...

Stacy Becker, McKinleyville, CA

From: [Colin Fiske](#)
To: [CEQAResponses](#)
Cc: [Ford, John](#); [Tom Wheeler](#); [Matt Simmons](#)
Subject: Comments on Town Center DEIR
Date: Wednesday, May 07, 2025 11:54:15 AM
Attachments: [Comments on Town Center DEIR - April 2025.pdf](#)

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Hi John et al,

Please find attached comments from CRTP and EPIC on the McKinleyville Town Center DEIR. Don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Thanks,
Colin

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Colin Fiske (he/him)
Executive Director
Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities
www.transportationpriorities.org



May 7, 2025

Humboldt County Planning and Building Department
Long Range Planning
3015 H Street
Eureka, CA 95501

via email: CEQAresponses@co.humboldt.ca.us
cc: jford@co.humboldt.ca.us

RE: Draft McKinleyville Town Center Environmental Impact Report

Dear Humboldt County Planning and Building Department:

The Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities (CRTP) and the Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC) appreciate the opportunity to comment on the McKinleyville Town Center Zoning Amendment Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). We recognize and appreciate both the extensive public process and the significant investment of staff time that have led to the development of the Zoning Amendment, and we support many aspects of it, including the designation of the majority of the Town Center for mixed uses, the focus on walkable and bikeable design and pedestrian-friendly street frontages, the significant parking policy reforms, and the new street designs for bike and pedestrian safety.

Our comments herein are focused on improving the accuracy, completeness, and defensibility of the DEIR.

1. The EIR must clearly state that the county will not pursue the traffic study's recommended infrastructure changes, or must reassess impacts.

Appendix E to the DEIR is the Traffic Operations Study for the McKinleyville Town Center Project ("traffic study"). The sole purpose of this study is to predict future congestion at certain intersections in the vicinity of the Town Center, as measured by vehicular level of service (LOS), and recommend infrastructure changes at those intersections to reduce vehicular delay.

Vehicular congestion is no longer considered an environmental impact under CEQA, and LOS impacts are not considered in the main body of the DEIR. However, the traffic study is included as an appendix, and is relied upon in certain DEIR assessments, including the assessments of air quality, energy, noise, and transportation impacts. It is unclear whether these impact assessments use as inputs the traffic study's analysis of current conditions, projected future conditions, or projected future conditions with "mitigation" from the study's recommended delay-reducing

infrastructure changes. Public statements from county staff since the release of the DEIR have asserted that the traffic study's recommended infrastructure changes are not part of the CEQA "project" and are not analyzed in the DEIR, but other public statements have strongly implied that the county intends to construct these changes at some point.

If the county intends to construct the traffic study's recommended infrastructure changes, then they are clearly part of the "project" for CEQA purposes. CEQA defines a project as the whole of an action with the potential for either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change. The traffic study's recommended infrastructure changes would clearly be a direct result of the development of the Town Center pursuant to the Zoning Amendment. The county must therefore either clearly commit not to construct the traffic study's recommended infrastructure changes, or must assess them in the EIR. Planning to construct the changes but putting off analysis to a future time would be a clear case of prohibited CEQA "piecemealing."

We strongly urge the county to take the option of committing not to construct those changes, because they work contrary to the objectives of the project. Stated objectives include designing Central Avenue to "ease pedestrian and bicycle traffic, including traffic calming measures" and designing "intersections and streets within the Town Center to facilitate pedestrian movement, provide bicycle connections to commercial areas and transit stops" (p.4-10 et seq.). Reducing congestion by definition results in increased vehicular speeds, the opposite of traffic calming. Furthermore, the specific changes recommended by the traffic study all pose some level of increased risk to bicycle and pedestrian travel:

- The traffic study recommends intersection signalizations and roundabouts as congestion relief measures. However, safely accommodating bicyclists and pedestrians at roundabouts requires features like pedestrian hybrid beacons, and safely accommodating these users at signalized intersections requires features like bike turn boxes, "no right on red" rules, and longer crossing times for pedestrians—all features which are likely to increase vehicular delay. If signalized intersections or roundabouts are designed to minimize vehicular delay, therefore, they will not have such features and will not be safe for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- The traffic study recommends turn pockets and slip lanes at several intersections. Turn pockets increase pedestrian crossing distance and require additional mixing zones between bicycle and car/truck traffic. Slip lanes have all of these effects as well as increasing turning speeds and decreasing driver attentiveness. Both features, while they decrease vehicular delay, are inherently dangerous for bicyclists and pedestrians.¹

¹ See for example Jiang et al. 2020, Impact of right-turn channelization on pedestrian safety at signalized intersections, Accident Analysis & Prevention 136: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0001457519308802>.

- The traffic study recommends ending the Central Avenue lane reduction north of Heartwood Drive in order to increase vehicular capacity to the south. In contrast, CRTTP supports—and many McKinleyville residents advocated for—the eventual continuation of the lane reduction throughout McKinleyville. The current street design results in higher-speed traffic and longer pedestrian crossing distances with less safe bike infrastructure, and any limitation on the lane reduction will allow these impacts to continue.

These recommended infrastructure changes result partly from the fact that the traffic study does not consider bicycle, pedestrian or transit LOS, Quality of Service, or level of traffic stress (LTS)—only vehicular LOS. If other modes of transportation had been considered, it would have been noted, for example, that pedestrians already often have to wait through more than one full signal cycle at signalized intersections on Central Avenue, a condition which if applied to vehicles would result in LOS F.

In fact, in adopting a target vehicular LOS, the county’s General Plan Policy C-P5 also states that “Level of Service improvements for automobiles should not adversely affect Level of Service and/or Quality of Service for other modes of transportation, if possible,” a standard not met by the traffic study’s proposed changes. Even the traffic study itself recommends changing county policy to allow more vehicular delay in the Town Center area, to improve safety and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment (see p.18).

We therefore again strongly urge the county to commit in the EIR *not* to construct the infrastructure changes recommended by the traffic study. However, if the county does intend to construct those changes, or fails to commit not to, then they are clearly part of the “project” for CEQA purposes, and their impacts must be analyzed. These impacts are different in nature than those already analyzed in the DEIR, necessitating substantial changes to the document. For example, CEQA guidance is clear that “Building new roadways, adding roadway capacity in congested areas, or adding roadway capacity to areas where congestion is expected in the future, typically induces additional vehicle travel.”² Therefore, if these capacity-increasing changes are included in the Town Center project, the EIR’s vehicle miles traveled (VMT) assessment must be revisited, as the projects are likely to induce additional VMT. Furthermore, in light of the safety hazards discussed above, the EIR would also have to revisit its assessment of whether, per the CEQA Guidelines Checklist, the project would “substantially increase [transportation] hazards due to a design feature” or “decrease the performance or safety of [bicycle and pedestrian] facilities.”

Finally, we note that the traffic study itself is flawed in the following ways:

² Governor’s Office of Planning and Research. April 2018. Technical Advisory on Evaluation Transportation Impacts in CEQA. See https://lci.ca.gov/docs/20180416-743_Technical_Advisory_4.16.18.pdf.

- The study states that traffic volumes “were assigned to project area roadways based on existing travel patterns.” Existing travel patterns will clearly change as the Town Center project is built out, so this assumption is fundamentally flawed.
- The study uses the Humboldt County Travel Demand Model to estimate trip generation, but such models are notoriously bad at accounting for factors such as induced travel or travel evaporation,³ both core features of transportation behavior related to changing land use and infrastructure. The study appears not to include any consideration, for example, of planned public transit improvements or transportation demand management measures included in the Town Center Zoning Amendments. In fact, the study admits that the model is “somewhat insensitive to roadway design and context” (p.8).
- The study analyzes only peak hour vehicular traffic, meaning that any proposed changes are focused on temporary vehicular delays occurring during a very small period of time on any given weekday. The study does not assess traffic conditions at any other times in order to offer other possibilities for prioritizing infrastructure investments.

2. The vehicle miles traveled (VMT) analysis in the DEIR is not credible.

The DEIR relies on the Humboldt County Travel Demand Model to assess VMT impacts. As noted above, such models are known to fail when it comes to predicting induced travel and travel evaporation in response to changes in vehicular capacity and other infrastructure and/or land use changes. Furthermore, the result of the VMT analysis—asserting that the per capita VMT in the Town Center would be 3.3 (less than 20% of the countywide average) and the per employee VMT would be 2.2 (15% of the countywide average)—are extremely dubious.

It is patently clear that per capita VMT varies significantly in different areas of the county. Research generally finds that VMT is lower in both more densely developed areas, areas with a mix of uses, and near town or city centers,⁴ all of which would suggest that the county’s lowest VMT would be found near downtown Eureka. It is also without doubt that future McKinleyville Town Center development will have lower VMT than the countywide average, given the plan for higher density and a mixture of uses in the Town Center. However, a five- to six-fold difference in per capita VMT between the Town Center and the countywide average strains credulity.⁵

³ See for example Volker et al., 2020, Induced travel in the environmental review process, Transportation Research Record: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0361198120923365>. Excerpt: “...travel demand models do not typically include all of the feedback loops necessary to accurately predict the induced travel effect.”

⁴ See for example Buehler, 2011, Determinants of transport mode choice: a comparison of Germany and the USA, Journal of Transport Geography 19: <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/document?repid=rep1&type=pdf&doi=47c58200b85b7f5a3db2b879cf75b52c4c8e0055>.

⁵ For comparison, a recent national analysis found a difference of about 37% in per capita VMT between core urban counties and completely rural counties in the US. Ngo et al., 2024, The impact of urban form on the relationship between vehicle miles traveled and air pollution, Transportation Research Interdisciplinary Perspectives 28: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2590198224002744>.

Another recent document produced for the county, the Humboldt County VMT Study by Fehr & Peers, used commercial mobile phone location data to estimate VMT in different parts of the county, and found a range of residential per capita VMT from 13.7 in Eureka up to 27.9 in Ferndale. While the data used for the Fehr & Peers study, like the travel demand model, also suffer from limitations and weaknesses, and direct comparisons would be inadvisable, the result of the Fehr & Peers study seems somewhat more credible than the DEIR's results.

Furthermore, we object to the use of the countywide average as the baseline for VMT analysis. As both the DEIR and the Fehr & Peers study show, and as suggested by a large body of academic research, there is significant variation in per capita VMT in different parts of the county with different development patterns. A countywide average that combines such widely varying numbers results in a relatively meaningless figure. A more defensible approach would be to compare future Town Center VMT with current VMT in the McKinleyville area, not the countywide average.

Finally, since the VMT assessment was also the basis for the DEIR's greenhouse gas (GHG) impact assessment, the GHG assessment must also be revisited.

3. The DEIR's noise impact analysis must consider traffic calming as a mitigation measure, but must rule out building setbacks as mitigation.

The DEIR concludes that the project's noise impact on sensitive receptors on Railroad Drive will be significant and unavoidable (Impact 11-2), as well as cumulatively significant and unavoidable (p.18-16). The conclusion that the impact is unavoidable relies on an assertion that there are no feasible mitigation measures which could reduce the impact below the level of significance. However, the DEIR considers only three kinds of mitigation measure: soundwalls, "quieter" paving materials, and extra insulation (p.11-20). This analysis fails to consider one of the most effective potential mitigation measures: traffic calming.

Road noise is typically dominated by the noise of tires on pavement, which is proportional to the speed of traffic.⁶ Slower traffic produces significantly less noise. Road design features which reduce vehicle speeds are well known and certainly feasible on Railroad Drive. Therefore, the DEIR must require traffic calming on Railroad Drive as a mitigation measure for significant noise impacts. Traffic calming should also be incorporated into the required mitigation for Impact 11-3, traffic noise impacts to future sensitive receptors on Central Avenue.

Additionally, the DEIR suggests building setbacks as mitigations measures for noise Impacts 11-3 and 11-4. However, building setbacks and frontages are specifically regulated in the Town Center Zoning Amendment. Additional setbacks would significantly modify the project by effectively reducing development density and pushing buildings away from the sidewalk, negatively impacting the pedestrian realm and creating a more car-dominated landscape. These

⁶ See for example: <https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/noise/noise-overview/>.

changes would undermine the project's objectives, which call for key features like "higher density housing," "a full range of commercial uses," "pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods and commercial areas," and "human-scale residential and commercial areas" (p.4-10 et seq.). Setbacks are therefore not an appropriate mitigation measure.

Finally, the DEIR's noise impact assessment is based on the traffic study, which as discussed above has significant flaws. It is unclear whether the noise assessment assumes the implementation of the infrastructure changes recommended by the traffic study (p.11-17), which would increase traffic capacity and speed, and therefore noise.

4. The county's CEQA tiering intentions must be clarified.

The DEIR states that future projects in "substantial compliance" with the Zoning Amendment will receive ministerial approval, and "no new CEQA documentation would be required" if the development capacity is consistent with the levels contemplated in the EIR (p.4-21). While "tiering" is allowed under CEQA, it "does not excuse the lead agency from adequately analyzing reasonably foreseeable significant environmental effects of the project."⁷ Tiered projects are not exempt from CEQA documentation, but rather their impacts may be subject to less scrutiny only if they have already been contemplated in the original EIR. It is certainly possible to envision future projects in the Town Center area which are consistent with the Zoning Amendment, or for which the Zoning Amendment is irrelevant, but which have specific impacts that are not foreseen or contemplated in this DEIR. The EIR should clarify that tiering does not exempt future projects from CEQA entirely, and that projects with impacts unforeseen in the present EIR are not subject to tiering.

5. The VMT, greenhouse gas (GHG), and air quality effects of parking policies should be acknowledged in the DEIR.

The DEIR acknowledges that the Zoning Amendment eliminates off-street parking requirements for non-residential uses (p.13-13). This is accurate. However, the Zoning Amendment also eliminates off-street parking requirements for residential uses, and in fact includes a maximum parking ratio for residential uses (see Section 5.1.2 of the Zoning Amendment).

The elimination of parking minimums and creation of new parking maximums, along with other parking reforms in the Zoning Amendment, are transportation demand measures which will likely reduce vehicular travel, since residential parking availability is strongly correlated with

⁷ CEQA Guidelines 15152(b)

mode choice.⁸ This effect should be considered in the DEIR's assessments of air quality PM-10 impacts (p.5-18), VMT impacts (p.5-22), and GHG impacts (p.9-16).

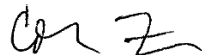
6. The DEIR's alternatives analysis is flawed.

The DEIR's statutorily required alternatives analysis considers an option of reduced density and intensity of development (Alternative 2), but does not consider an analysis of increased density. Increasing density—while further investing in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, improved transit service, and traffic calming—is a feasible option that would go even further toward accomplishing the project's objectives, and as such should be analyzed in the EIR.

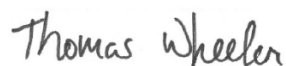
Furthermore, the analysis of Alternative 2—the only alternative considered aside from the No Project alternative—is deeply flawed. The DEIR asserts that Alternative 2 would reduce VMT, and therefore reduce impacts to transportation, air quality, and other related areas. However, as discussed above, the relevant transportation metric is VMT per capita, not overall VMT, and lower development densities are associated with higher per capita VMT. Thus, Alternative 2 would clearly increase transportation impacts, and likely impacts to air quality and other related areas. This fundamentally undermines the DEIR's claim that Alternative 2 is the Environmentally Superior Alternative.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



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⁸ See for example Millard-Ball and West, 2020, Residential parking supply has a stronger influence on household travel choices relative to a neighborhood's walkability and access to transit, Policy Brief: <https://escholarship.org/content/qt0nq3t3x3/qt0nq3t3x3.pdf>.

From: [Joey Blaine](#)
To: [CEQAResponses](#)
Cc: [Pat Kaspari](#)
Subject: MCSO McKinleyville Town Center DEIR Comments
Date: Friday, May 09, 2025 8:44:44 AM
Attachments: [2025-05-08 MCSO Mck Town Center DEIR Comments.pdf](#)

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To whom it may concern:

Please find attached a letter from McKinleyville Community Services District with our comments on the McKinleyville Town Center DEIR.

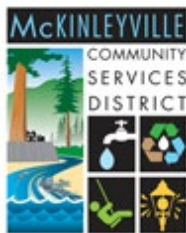
Thank you,

Joey Blaine, CMC

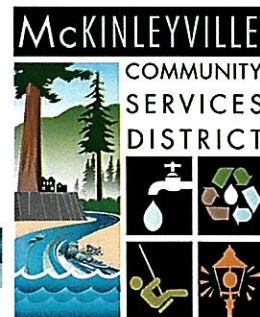
Board Secretary | Administrative Assistant | McKinleyville CSD

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May 8, 2025

Humboldt County Planning and Building Department
Long Range Planning Division
3015 H Street
Eureka, CA 95501
Sent via email: CEQAresponses@co.humboldt.ca.us

**RE: McKinleyville Town Center DEIR Comments
SCH # 2024031111**

To Whom it May Concern:

On April 10, 2025, the McKinleyville Community Services District (MCSD or District) received a Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) from the Humboldt County Planning and Building Department (County or Lead Agency) for the McKinleyville Town Center Zoning Amendment (Project), State Clearing House # 2024031111. MCSD appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback and understands the Lead Agency will accept comments through May 27, 2025. As the Agency that provides water, sewer, streetlights and Parks & Recreation services to the community of McKinleyville, MCSD has jurisdiction over these services and the related infrastructure associated with them. MCSD offers the following comments and recommendations in our role as Responsible Agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; Pub. Resources Code, §21000 et seq.). These comments are intended to minimize Project impacts on public resources.

Project Description

The County is proposing rezoning actions that would implement the vision and policies in the General Plan and the McKinleyville Community Plan for developing a Town Center in McKinleyville. The McKinleyville Community Plan identifies the Town Center location, which is illustrated and described in the DEIR. The rezoning actions would: 1) change existing zoning from a combination of residential, commercial, and public facility classifications to Mixed Use; and 2) apply Q-Zone combining zone regulations that modify the underlying Mixed-Use regulations, and that are intended to facilitate development design consistent with the Town Center vision.

The Town Center site is approximately 134 acres in size. New development capacity would be limited to vacant areas of the site, nearly all of which are located west of Central Avenue. As such, the DEIR focuses on environmental setting conditions in the vacant area west of Central Avenue and the impacts of developing that area. Up to 2,650 multi-family residential dwelling units, 632,800 square feet of retail/commercial building, and 271,200 square feet of office building capacity is being assumed. Existing developed portions of the site could redevelop over time, but it is assumed that such projects would not increase the existing number of residential units and/or amount of nonresidential building square footage on the subject sites.

The proposed project also includes a general plan amendment that would modify the definition of a wetland found in the McKinleyville Community Plan to ensure the definition is consistent with definition in the General Plan.

Once the County approves the rezoning and general plan amendment actions, it would be possible



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for the County to consider applications for individual projects within the site. At this time, the County has been in discussions with Life Plan Humboldt about its intent to develop a senior, aging-in-place project on about 15 acres of vacant land located south of Hiller Road. This is the only “reasonably foreseeable” individual project being considered within the project site as known to the County as of the date of the DEIR. Individual future projects proposed within the site that are consistent with the proposed zoning would not require further CEQA review. Projects which are not consistent may require further CEQA review, subject to the discretion of the Humboldt County Director of Planning and Building.

Potential Impacts

In general, the McKinleyville CSD is very supportive of this project and feels like the DEIR adequately addresses all potential impacts from this important addition to McKinleyville. MCSD offers the following comments in our role as Responsible Agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; Pub. Resources Code, §21000 et seq.).

Section 14.0 – Water Demand & Supply

The District worked closely with EMC Planning Group on this section of the DEIR. MCSD feels the analysis of potential impacts and the mitigation measure presented in the Section, more than adequately address the potential effects of the project. The District has been working with Life Plan Humboldt on the necessary water system upgrades to service that project, and as stated in the DEIR, the District will work with the owners of any future development to address specific project needs related to the water supply system.

Section 15.0 – Wastewater

The District worked closely with EMC Planning Group on this section of the DEIR. MCSD feels the analysis of potential impacts and the mitigation measure presented in the Section more than adequately address the potential effects of the project. The District has been working with Life Plan Humboldt on the necessary wastewater system upgrades to service that project, and as stated in the DEIR, the District will work with the owners of any future development to address specific project needs related to the wastewater system.

Section 16.7 – Parks & Recreation

MCSD feels the analysis of potential impacts presented in the Section more than adequately address the potential effects of the project. The District will continue to work with the County on the allocation of Quimby¹ funds generated from the Town Center to further develop and improve the Parks in McKinleyville.

Section 16.0 – Transportation

The District has extensive water and sanitary sewer infrastructure under all the existing roads within the Town Center boundary. Routine maintenance of these facilities frequently requires District vehicles and personnel to occupy one or more existing travel lanes on these roads and detour traffic around the work. The lack of through roads in McKinleyville frequently does not allow detours to adjacent roadways to get around the work and requires occupying travel lanes on the existing roads including reversing the flow of travel in the lanes or using turn lanes as travel lanes.

¹ The Quimby Act, which is within the Subdivision Map Act, authorized the legislative body of a city or county to require the dedication of land or to impose fees for park or recreational purposes as a condition to the approval of a tentative map or parcel subdivision map if specified requirements are met.

The District is fully aware of the need to help further ensure the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists along all the roads in McKinleyville and is aware of the potential conflicts between various modes of travel. The District does not have concerns about the proposed improvements detailed in the DEIR for Hiller Avenue or the other roads surrounding the Town Center. We feel these changes can be designed with minimal impact to District access to our infrastructure and feel that the proposed changes to Hiller would make our work, and the Public's interaction with our work, safer.

The District is, however, concerned with the proposed modifications to Central Avenue and potential impacts to the District's ability to access and maintain our water and sewer infrastructure under Central Avenue. The District has two water mains that run under Central Avenue as well as a sanitary sewer main that carries much of the wastewater flow from the east side of McKinleyville to our Wastewater Treatment Plant on the west end of Hiller Avenue. Potable water, firefighting water and sanitary sewer laterals come off the east and west sides of the associated mains and cross Central Avenue to service the businesses and residences.

Much of the existing commercial development along this portion of Central Avenue consists of restaurants and fast-food franchises. Although the District has a well-developed Fats-Oils-Grease (FOG) program to reduce the impacts of these constituents on the sanitary sewer system, this section of the sanitary sewer system requires the most routine maintenance. Routine maintenance consists of cleaning the sanitary sewer main a minimum of four times a year. When this work is performed, the District's equipment occupies one travel lane of Central Avenue and traffic is directed around the work using the other existing travel lane.

It is unclear from "Figure 4-3, Planned Central Avenue Cross Section" where our sewer main is located with respect to the proposed improvements, but the sewer main likely crosses under the easternmost proposed Landscape, under the Class 1 bikeway, under the next landscape buffer and under the northbound travel lane. This layout would make maintenance difficult and any repairs requiring the excavation of the sewer main would mean excavating through these features, increasing the repair costs significantly.

Routine maintenance for the water system consists of annual valve exercising. This takes place for one to two weeks of the year. Again, the District's vehicles occupy one of the travel lanes and the traffic is diverted to the other lane. With the loss of one travel lane, traffic will be diverted to the center turn lane, assuming there is not a vegetated median as shown on the cross section in the DEIR. Again, the cost for the repair or replacement of the water line under the bike lane or landscaping will increase these costs dramatically.

Given the likelihood that the Project would not be deemed to have Significant Impacts using the VMT methodology for CEQA, the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee (MMAC) requested a more robust traffic study be performed as part of the EIR analysis, which the County agreed to perform. As stated in the DEIR in the introduction to Section 13: *"The key source of information used in this section is the McKinleyville Town Center Q-Zone (Humboldt County 2024) and analysis conducted by W-Trans, the project transportation consultant. W-Trans also prepared an operations analysis. That analysis is not utilized in this EIR. However, it is included in Appendix E for informational purposes, in part, to show how the County's planned road diets for Central Avenue and Hiller Road would affect traffic flow."*

Indeed, the Study did make findings that: *"Under Future volumes with the addition of project traffic, six of the eight study intersections will operate at a level of service worse than LOS C during one or both peak hours."* For four of the impacted intersections, Murray Road/McKinleyville Avenue, Murray

Road/Central Avenue, Railroad Drive/McKinleyville Avenue, and Hiller Road/McKinleyville Avenue the W-Trans Report recommends traffic signals and/or roundabouts to achieve acceptable Levels of Service (LOS) and all of these recommendations should be implemented at some time whether the proposed Town Center project happens or not.

The W-Trans Report recommends that a southbound turn pocket be added back in at the Hiller/Central Avenue intersection and that the two southbound lanes that are being proposed to be eliminated, be added back in 100-feet north of the intersection of Heartwood Drive and Central Avenue. It does not appear to be a good use of anybody's money to eliminate two travel lanes, only to add them back in the future.

The District is concerned that the County is not conforming to the General Plan Circulation Element that requires:

C-P3. Consideration of Transportation Impacts in Land Use Decision Making. Decisions to change or expand the land use of a particular area shall include an analysis of the impacts to existing and proposed transportation facilities and services to minimize or avoid significant operational, environmental, economic, and health-related consequences.

C-P5. Level of Service Criteria. The County shall strive to maintain Level of Service C operation on all roadway segments and intersections...

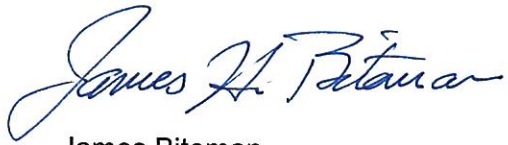
As stated in the W-Trans Traffic Study, the proposed changes to Central Avenue would not maintain the Level of Service C operation at six intersections, and two of those intersection would be eliminating travel lanes with the proposed changes. The report further recommends that these lanes be added back in at a later date. That does not seem to be a wise use of Public funding. The District highly encourages the County to determine how and when the proposed improvements will be funded and constructed to conform to the General Plan and consider the imposition of Impact Fees or other means to fund the recommended improvements.

It should be noted that another detailed level planning study has been performed for this section of Central Avenue and is cited in the DEIR. The County's "McKinleyville Multimodal Connections Project," October 2022, Mark Thomas, was a detailed planning and engineering analysis focused on improving the safety and multimodal use of Central Avenue. This detailed study recommended that the two travel lanes and central turn lane be maintained but reduced to 11-feet wide and a multiuse trail be added to the west-side of Central Avenue between Railroad Drive to Bella Vista Avenue. If adopted, that proposed design would address many of the District's concerns expressed in this letter and would still greatly improve bicycle and pedestrian safety.

The District would also disagree with the statement in Section 2.5-Areas of Known Controversy in the DEIR that there are no known areas of public controversy regarding the project. The proposed change to Central Avenue has been extremely controversial during the development of the Town Center Ordinance and continues to be so. The District would suggest that the Central Avenue proposed design contained in the DEIR should not be implemented without further detailed analysis, design charrettes, public input and review of design alternatives, leading to a final design selection.

Thank you for providing the District with an opportunity to respond. We hope this delineation of our concerns regarding the potential impact on the operation of McKinleyville's municipal services are useful to the DEIR process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "James H. Biteman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "James" being the most prominent.

James Biteman
MCSD Board President

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Patrick Kaspari". The signature is stylized, with the first name "Patrick" being the most prominent.

Patrick Kaspari, PE
General Manager, MCSD

McClenagan, Laura

From: Planning Clerk
Subject: FW: Public Comment for McKinleyville Town Center DEIR Re: Severe lack of accessible information: Trying to parse the McKinleyville Town Center Master Plan

From: JEANINE PFEIFFER <jeanine.pfeiffer@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 14, 2025 2:05 PM
To: Ford, John <JFord@co.humboldt.ca.us>; Planning Clerk <planningclerk@co.humboldt.ca.us>
Cc: JDunn@co.humboldt.ca.us; ceqaresponses@humboldt.ca.us; Madrone, Steve <smadrone@co.humboldt.ca.us>; kelleybrookgarrett@gmail.com; newsroom@northcoastjournal.com; news@madriverunion.com; jack@madriverunion.com
Subject: Public Comment for McKinleyville Town Center DEIR Re: Severe lack of accessible information: Trying to parse the McKinleyville Town Center Master Plan

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear County Planners, Staff, and Leaders:

As a professional and new resident of McKinleyville, I have vested interests in ensuring my newly adopted localities are healthy, well-planned, and well developed.

In witnessing the public events associated with the McKinleyville Town Center DEIR, it appears that the County is undervaluing community input and expertise, including the 2020 Community Survey with >330 participants. This is a grave and costly mistake.

Please extend the review of the McKinleyville Town Center DEIR to a minimum of 75 days.

My top concerns regarding the Proposed Project Alternative ("the Project") include the following:

1. McKinleyville Community Plan (MCP) Conflicts – The proposed Project Breaks from the Community Plan and violates California Government Code §65300 (consistency with General Plan)
2. The Project, as it stands, fails to incorporate rural design standards or community oversight. There are no architectural guidelines to preserve rural identity, despite a 2020 Community Survey showing strong support for a 'gentrified country' aesthetic.
3. The MCP-required Town Center Design Review Committee has been eliminated. Why?
4. The Project emphasizes high-density housing without mixed-use guarantees; instead of a phasing strategy to ensure balanced, community-serving development including (but not limited to) wetland protection, walkability, small-scale local businesses, and open space, the DEIR promotes wetland fill, vague open space commitments, and removes oversight.

5. The Public Needs More Time. The DEIR is over 1,000 pages long, and, as noted in my April 14th email (copied below), has not been conveyed to the public in a manner that makes it easy for the public to comment upon the content. Comparable projects in Sebastopol, Cotati, Windsor, and Arcata received 60–90 days of review; whereas McKinleyville received only 45 days.

Our community, and the generations that succeed us, deserve better.

Thank you for your attention.

Jeanine Pfeiffer, PhD
ethnoecologist
707.969.7490

On Apr 29, 2025, at 16:28, JEANINE PFEIFFER <jeanine.pfeiffer@icloud.com> wrote:

It is not often that a well-crafted email is so obviously left unread and unanswered.

On Apr 29, 2025, at 10:51, Ford, John <JFord@co.humboldt.ca.us> wrote:

Hi Jeanine:

You can find the DEIR
at: <https://humboldt.gov/DocumentCenter/View/137379/McKinleyville-Town-Center-Zoning-Amendment-DEIR-with-Appendices>

You can also find it broken down by chapters
at: <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/Project/2024031111>

Please let me know if you have questions

John

John H. Ford
Director of Planning and Building
(707) 268-3738



Effective July 1, 2024, the Humboldt County Planning and Building Department will reduce the in-person counter service hours. The new hours of operation will be from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, with the counter closed on Fridays.

From: JEANINE PFEIFFER <jeanine.pfeiffer@icloud.com>

Sent: Monday, April 14, 2025 4:29 PM

To: JDunn@co.humboldt.ca.us; Ford, John <JFord@co.humboldt.ca.us>; cegaresponses@humboldt.ca.us

Cc: Madrone, Steve <smadrone@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Subject: Severe lack of accessible information: Trying to parse the McKinleyville Town Center Master Plan

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Planning Director/Staff (Unsure who this is, as the name “John Ford” is listed in the first paragraph on the [website](#), but when we click on the email address, it is directed to someone else?):

I am a McKinleyville resident, and I have a significant number of neighbors who have the same concerns and questions noted in this email.

This is a follow-up request for action, in response to the April 11th - County of Humboldt-Government FaceBook post noting the following:

.....
“What is the McKinleyville Town Center Plan?

The plan outlines a vision to create a vibrant, walkable town center that includes a mix of housing, businesses, public spaces and preserved wetland areas. Part of the plan is to create a vibrant town center where people can live, work and gather, with easy access via walking, biking, driving or public transit.

To move this vision forward, the county is proposing:

- ➡ Rezoning the area as Mixed Use-Urban (MU1) to allow housing, shops and civic uses.
- ➡ Adopting a “Q-Zone” combining regulations that, among other guidance, would modify the proposed principal Mixed Use zoning regulations.
- ➡ Updating the definition of wetlands to better align with the county’s General Plan.

These changes could support up to:

-  2,650 multi-family housing units
-  632,800 square feet of retail/commercial space
-  271,200 square feet of office space

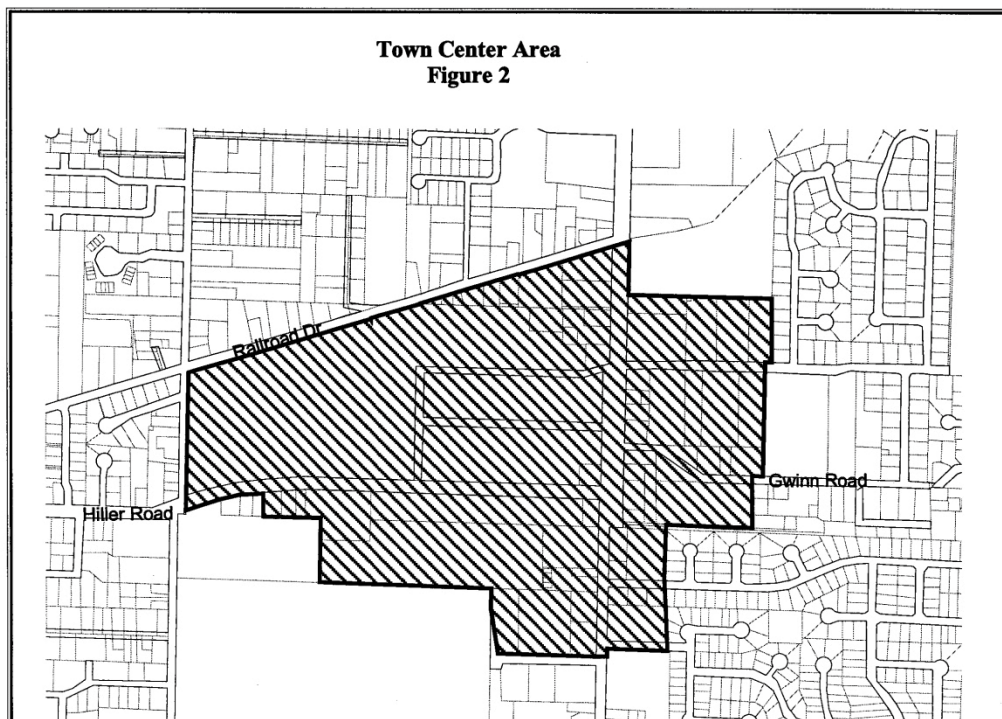
Development would occur gradually over time, with each project reviewed individually through the county's standard zoning confirmation process known as "Zoning Clearance Certification."

The Draft Environmental Impact Report examines how the proposed zoning changes could affect the local environment. Community members are encouraged to review the DEIR and provide feedback during the public comment period."

.....

Our primary concern is how difficult (impossible?) it is to parse the planning documents so that we can actually understand what is being planned. This was likely not done deliberately, with the intent of making it impossible to figure out what, exactly, is being proposed. But that is the outcome.

1. The DEIR that we are supposed to review and comment on, [McKinleyville Community Plan](#) (2022, rev. 2017) Section 2350 (Pages 10-12) contains only vague and abstract phrasing, and a map with a polygon. So, **no real information there,**



2. Documents associated with the [McKinleyville Town Center EIR](#) link to a plethora of PDF files, most of which are untitled, and each of which requires clicking on and downloading one-at-a-time to see if it yields relevant information....a process which is incredibly time-consuming and inefficient.

Draft Environmental Document [Draft IS, NOI_NOA_Public notices, OPR Summary Form, Appx,]

[_Cover_DEIR](#)
[PDF](#)
[1045 K](#)

[_Inside cover_DEIR](#)
[PDF](#)
[173 K](#)

[_Manual TOC](#)
[PDF](#)
[154 K](#)

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[DEIR Summary_Form_for_Document_Submittal](#)
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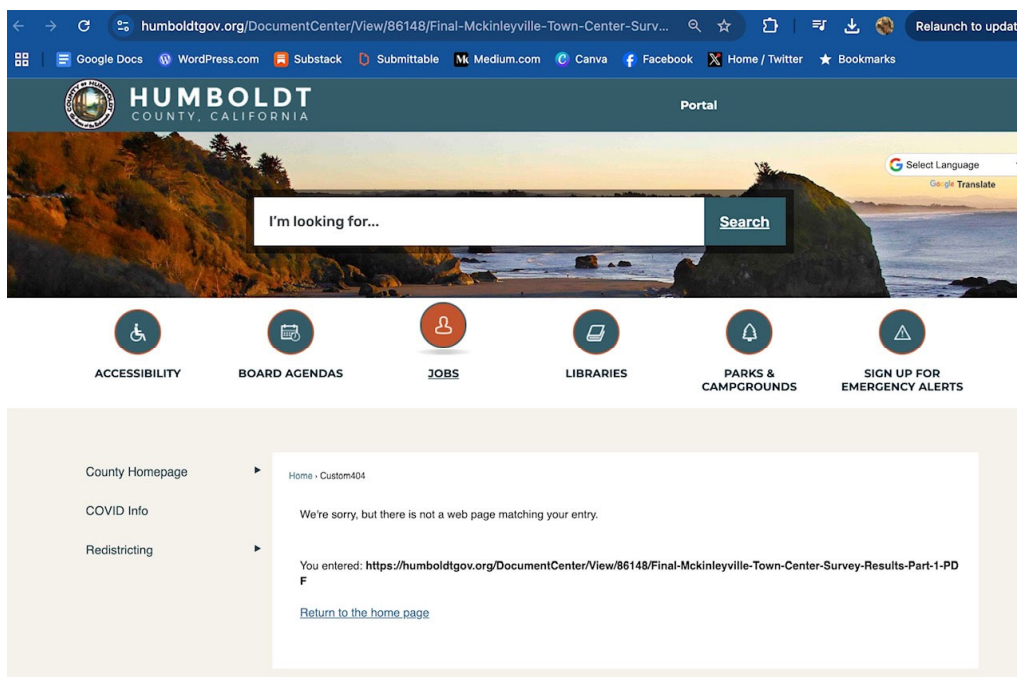
[Draft EIR SCH NOA](#)
[PDF](#)
[86 K](#)

[McKinleyville Town Center Combined Appendices](#)
[PDF](#)
[166967 K](#)

Notice of Completion [NOC] Transmittal form

[DEIR NOC Transmittal Letter_Town Center](#)
[PDF](#)
[116 K](#)

3. When we click on other document links, such as the “Final McKinleyville Town Center Survey Results,” the result is an error page. **Again, no information.**



When it is this difficult for a member of the public to ascertain what is being planned, we end up wasting everyone's time.

A clear synopsis on the main page, along with clear diagrams, would be immensely helpful.

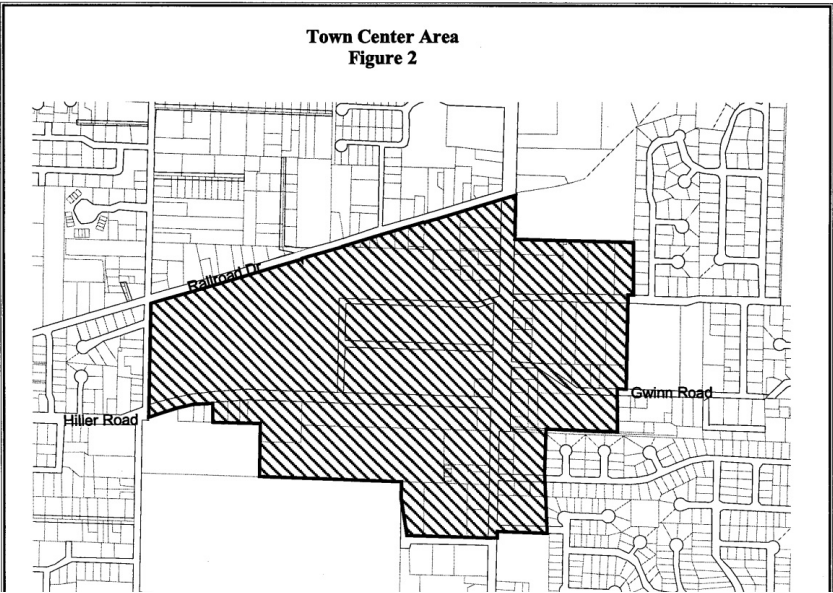
The public deserves better information, including a more streamlined process for accessing that information. Only a small % of McKinleyville residents will be present at the April 23 meeting; thus, everyone not present at the meeting, or wanting to provide informed commentary, needs much more than what is currently available on the website.

Thank you for your kind attention to this email.

Jeanine Pfeiffer, PhD

ethnoecologist

www.jeaninepfeiffer.com



2. Documents associated with the [McKinleyville Town Center EIR](#) link to a plethora of PDF files, most of which are untitled, and each of which requires clicking on and downloading one-at-a-time to see if it yields relevant information....a process which is incredibly time-consuming and inefficient.

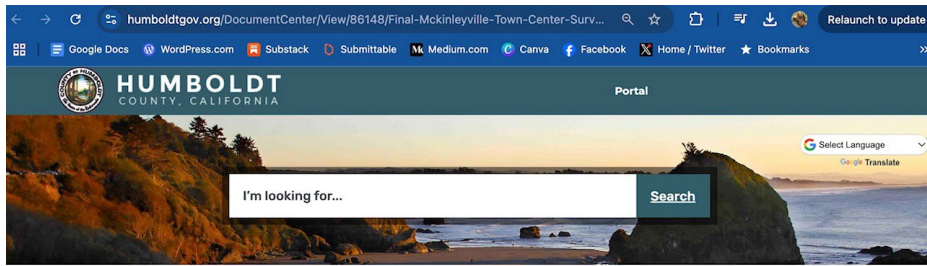
Draft Environmental Document [Draft IS, NOI_NOA_Public notices, OPR Summary Form, Appx,]

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Notice of Completion [NOC] Transmittal form

DEIR NOC Transmittal Letter_Town Center PDF 116 K

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You entered: <https://humboldtgov.org/DocumentCenter/View/86148/Final-Mckinleyville-Town-Center-Survey-Results-Part-1-PDF>

[Return to the home page](#)

When it is this difficult for a member of the public to ascertain what is being planned, we end up wasting everyone's time.

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The public deserves better information, including a more streamlined process for accessing that information. Only a small % of McKinleyville residents will be present at the April 23 meeting; thus, everyone not present at the meeting, or wanting to provide informed commentary, needs much more than what is currently available on the website.

Thank you for your kind attention to this email.

Jeanine Pfeiffer, PhD
ethnoecologist
www.jeaninepfeiffer.com

From: [Patti Stuart](#)
To: [CEQAResponses](#)
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center
Date: Monday, May 19, 2025 8:09:55 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

I'm writing to say that I oppose any plan that seeks to urbanize my small town. I moved here to live in a small town only to find that the planning department seems to see McKinleyville as the place where they can allow builders to do whatever they want. If people want to live in a high density setting with very little oversight and reasonable rents, go to Redding. Stay out of the wetlands and leave our little town alone.

Sincerely,
Patti Stuart
2298 Timothy Court
McKinleyville
Sent from my iPad

From: [Kevin Creed](#)
To: [Ford, John](#)
Cc: [COB](#); [Planning Clerk](#); [Madrone, Steve](#); [Hoyos, Maje](#); Sissem@emcplanning.com; [HSO-MAILBOX](#); mcsd@mckinleyvillecsd.com; thad@northcoastjournal.com; editor@madriverunion.com
Subject: Draft EIR McK Town Center: Wetlands Impacts comments
Date: Wednesday, May 21, 2025 4:52:52 PM
Attachments: [McK TC draft EIR Wetlands 5-21-25.docx](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Please find the attached comments addressing deficiencies in the draft EIR for the McK Town Center project.

Kevin Creed
McK resident

May 21, 2025

DRAFT

To: John Ford
Director of Planning & Building
County of Humboldt
3015 H Street Eureka, CA 95501

From: Kevin Creed
McKinleyville resident

Re: Comments on Draft EIR for McKinleyville Town Center: Wetlands Impact

Summary

The enclosed comments address specifically the wetlands impact section of the draft EIR for the McKinleyville Town Center project. The comments address:

- Jurisdictional determination sequencing vs approval of final EIR
- Q-Zone amendments to allow significant impact on existing wetlands with CEQA implications
- Deficiencies in the draft EIR with regards to wetlands protection and hazardous materials releases
- Deficiencies in specificity of responsibilities for the Wetlands Mitigation and Monitoring Plan

Impact 6.6, in Summary Table of Impacts

Mitigation Measure 6-6a. indicates: *Prior to commencement of construction activities*The draft EIR needs to be amended to clarify that in this context ‘construction activities’ include any disturbance of soils during site preparation. Because, in other parts of the dEIR a distinction is made between the site preparation, grading and construction phases. It must be clear that the requirement to submit to USACE jurisdictional wetland determination reports is all encompassing prior to any site disturbance and before the draft EIR can be finalized.

The draft EIR does not indicate the turn-around time that USACE must meet to make a jurisdictional determination following submission of the reports. Without this information in the EIR it is not feasible to assess the implications of the ultimate jurisdictional agency requirements on the environmental impact of the project especially before the draft Final EIR is submitted to the County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors for approval.

Impact of Q-Zone Amendments to Wetlands Determination

Pg 6-48, “. In McKinleyville, a one-parameter definition of wetlands was defined in the McKinleyville Community Plan. As described in Section 4.0, Project Description, the proposed Q-Zone regulations would modify this Community Plan requirement by requiring that the USACE three criteria definition be used to define wetlands solely within the Town Center site.”

To make a change to the McKinleyville Community Plan to amend the Q-Zone regulations for the benefit of the developer/project owner and to the detriment of the wetlands environment is WRONG!!! This circumvents the intent of CEQA and compromises the integrity of the County oversight role. How many times in the future will the County approve project specific regulatory amendments to appease the developer/project owner?? This would set a far reaching, detrimental precedent. What good is a community plan if it is compromised in this manner??

The 1 parameter criteria for defining wetlands should be applied over the ‘all 3’ parameters criteria because the 1 parameter approach is more environmentally protective.

Mitigation 6-6a, pg. 2-12: 14 Acre Offset Mitigation Clarification

EIR needs to specify that the 14 acres of offset wetland must be contiguous.in contrast to multiple separate parcels which total up to 14 acres. That is: one 14 acre site versus fourteen 1 acre sites.

The requirement should be that the 14 acres must be continuous.

Mitigation 6-6C: b. ...Purchase or dedication of land for wetland mitigation/offset ...

- How long is the project owner/developer responsible for maintaining the wetland?

- What review is provided by which agency(ies) to assess that the specific land purchased or dedicated will support a wetland on its own??
- Who monitors compliance and health of the offset wetland??
- If the offset wetland fails, what are the consequences for the Town Center project owner/developer?

Mitigation 6-6D, pg. 2-14 Wetland protection from hazardous materials releases

Mitigation 6-6D states, in part, *‘Potential fuel spills and leaks from construction vehicle/equipment fueling operations shall be prevented from entering wetlands/waterways. Designated fueling areas should be on a level grade and shall be at least 50 feet from any wetlands/waterways. The fueling area shall be protected by a berm to prevent runoff from leaving the fueling area.*

This mitigation is significantly inadequate because:

- It does not list all hazardous materials associated with construction equipment beyond fuel. Any release of these hazardous materials pose a significant risk to the wetlands.
 - Oil, engine and hydraulic (25 - 40 gal)
 - Coolants, antifreeze (5 gal)
 - Brake fluid (5 gal)
 - Diesel and/or gasoline fuel (40 – 50 gal)
- The mitigation only refers to protections at: *‘Designated fueling areas should be on a level grade and shall be at least 50 feet from any wetlands/waterways. The fueling area shall be protected by a berm to prevent runoff from leaving the fueling area.*

This mitigation is flawed because:

- Hazardous materials (aka Hazmat) releases from construction equipment can occur anywhere onsite but this mitigation only addresses fueling operations at a fixed fueling station;
- The mitigation requires only a berm at the fueling area preventing hazardous materials runoff, but as such would thus allow contamination of site soils within the fueling area;
- The mitigation fails to address mobile refueling operations common for construction equipment will be allowed or not;
- The mitigation/EIR fails to require hazmat spill containment kits on each piece of construction equipment stocked with sufficient absorbents for all the types of hazmat liquids specific to each piece of construction equipment;

- The EIR fails to require certification that all construction equipment operators are currently trained in how to respond to hazmat releases from the equipment per Cal-OSHA's HAZWOER Standard, Title 8, 5192;
- Any equipment operator not trained per the above is not allowed to operate any construction equipment onsite until such training is completed. Certification of compliant HAZWOPER training for all equipment operators shall be maintained onsite by each applicable contractor;
- All contractors and operations must comply with the all hazardous materials and hazardous waste programs under the site with the Humboldt County Division of Environmental Health as designated by Cal EPA as the Certified Unified Program Agency for the county.

Mitigation Measure 6-6C, pg. 2-13

Mitigation Measure 6-6C reads, in part, *'If impacts to jurisdictional wetlands are unavoidable, compensation for temporary and/or permanent impacts to jurisdictional wetlands shall be mitigated as required by the regulatory permits as informed by the Q-Zone regulations regarding protection, and conservation of wetland areas. Mitigation would be provided through one or more of the following mechanisms:*

a. A Wetland Mitigation and Monitoring Plan shall be developed that outlines mitigation and monitoring obligations for impacts to wetlands and other waters as a result of construction activities.

The EIR fails to specify who is responsible for developing the Wetland Mitigation and Monitoring Plan and fails to specify a deadline by which it must be submitted for approval.

The EIR must be more precise as to which oversight agency(ies) must formally review and approve the plan. As written the mitigation is too vague and thus is subject to misinterpretation, a 'crack' through which critical assessment and oversight is missed.

If you or your staff have any questions concerning the above don't hesitate to contact me.

Kevin Creed, McKinleyville resident

Cc:

Humboldt County Board of Supervisors : cob@co.humboldt.ca.us

Humboldt County Planning Commission : planningclerk@co.humboldt.ca.us

McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee : cob@co.humboldt.ca.us

County Supervisor Steve Madrone smadrone@co.humboldt.ca.us

Humboldt County Division of Environmental Health:

ENVHEALTH@co.humboldt.ca.us; mhoyos@co.humboldt.ca.gov

EMC Planning Group: Ron Sissem, Senior Principal

Sissem@emcplanning.com

Arcata Fire Protection District: rmacdonald@arcatafire.org

Humboldt County Sheriff's Office: hso@co.humboldt.ca.us

McKinleyville Community Services District: Pat Kaspari, General Manager,
mcsd@mckinleyvillecsd.com

North Coast Journal: Thadeus Greenon, thad@northcoastjournal.com

Mad River Union: Jack Durham , editor@madriverunion.com

From: pajaro@juno.com
To: [CEQAResponses](#)
Subject: Comments on DEIR
Date: Friday, May 23, 2025 11:46:39 AM
Attachments: [Mckinleyville Community Plan\(1\)-1.pdf](#)

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Thank You for listening.

Doug and Michele

To whom it may concern.

First off, a big thank you to those who have taken their time and energy to put together a draft plan for our town center area.

We have some suggestions regarding the McKinleyville Community Plan that address concerns raised by The McKinleyville Community Services District as well as other community members regarding the reconfiguration of Central Avenue through town in an effort to create a more bicycle and pedestrian friendly town center that isn't dominated by the ubiquitous automobile.

The Services District apparently has important water infrastructure buried beneath Central Avenue running both parallel and perpendicular to the roadway. This infrastructure can, and does, occasionally need maintenance. There is also the possibility of needing to replace some of it that would require the excavation of the roadway.

Many are concerned about "bottlenecks" in town from the elimination of a lane in each direction.

We have an idea regarding the roadway, traffic calming ideas, and also the intersection at Murray and Central.

Murray Road and Central Avenue is a prime candidate for a "round about". This intersection is heavily used and is a bottleneck at critical times of day. Keeping the traffic moving there would improve McKinleyville's flow of traffic.

Regarding Central Avenue. We drive down H street in Eureka with some regularity and it occurred to us that H street in Eureka is a good model for Central Avenue. Reduce the width of the four lanes to whatever is reasonable in the engineers view and change the speed limit to 30 mph with a possible 25 mph in the town center area. With the additional roadway available from reducing lane width create a bicycle lane on the West side of the road, possibly separated by some type of obstacle, to give a sense of safety. At 30 mph people are more able to be mindful of pedestrians and stop for crossings. Reducing roadway

width and the speed limit would calm the whole thing down from its current "buzz".

In regards to crossings, perhaps one or two more of the flashing crossings (possibly even at roundabouts) would also help to make Central Ave. a safer street and more user friendly to pedestrians.

Sincerely,

Douglas and Michele Kamprath
Mckinleyville residents on Blake Rd.

From: [Kate McClain](#)
To: [CEQAResponses](#)
Subject: Fwd: McKinleyville Town Center DEIR
Date: Monday, May 26, 2025 1:11:03 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

From: Kate McClain <katemccclain1@gmail.com>
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center DEIR
Date: May 26, 2025 at 10:16:36 AM PDT
To: CEQAResponses@co.humboldt.ca.us
Cc: jford@co.humboldt.ca.us

Dear Humboldt County Planning and Building Department:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the McKinleyville Town Center Zoning Amendment Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). I recognize the significant investment in staff time and energy to create the Zoning Amendment. However, as an engaged resident in this project for the last 10 years, I am deeply concerned that the proposed project and DEIR deviate substantially from the vision, policies, and priorities outlined in the McKinleyville Community Plan (MCP).

MCP was created in 2002 and included in the 2017 Humboldt County General Plan. Over the last 10 years, McKinleyville residents have organized 3 well attended community events to receive input. We have submitted our findings to the Planning Department all along the way. Using the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee as the vehicle for controlling the decision making, has sidelined the process for including the diversity of community voices. No one in our 3 community events ever suggested such dense housing to be concentrated on this property. This "Town Center" is clearly a "business deal" to benefit the finances of the land owner and State pressure to address housing shortages.

I join with other McKinleyville residents in submitting the following major areas of concern:

1. The Project Conflicts with the McKinleyville Community Plan (MCP)

- Over 6 acres of protected wetlands are proposed for fill.
- The project eliminates the Wetlands Combining Zone.
- Violates MCP Sections **2601**, **2602**, and **3422**, which emphasize the protection of wetlands, open space, and rural character.

- Violates **California Government Code §65300**, requiring consistency with the General Plan.

2. Lack of Rural Design Standards and Community Oversight

- The MCP-required **Town Center Design Review Committee** has been eliminated.
- No architectural or rural design guidelines are included in the DEIR.
- The **2020 Town Center Survey** showed strong community support for a "gentrified country" aesthetic—completely ignored in the DEIR.
- The absence of oversight threatens the integrity and identity of the Town Center.

3. High-Density Housing Without Mixed-Use Guarantees

- The DEIR prioritizes “high-density residential to support a commercial core” (p. 16-15), but the proposed **Q-Zone only** permits—not requires—mixed-use buildings.
- No phasing or implementation strategy ensures that commercial or civic components are built alongside housing.
- This risks allowing imbalanced development and missed opportunities for vibrant, community-serving spaces.

4. 2020 Community Survey Priorities Ignored

- Over 330 residents participated in the 2020 public survey.
- Top community priorities included:
 - Wetland protection
 - Walkability and pedestrian/bike safety
 - Support for small-scale local businesses
 - Access to open space
- These priorities are not reflected in the DEIR, which promotes wetland fill, removes oversight, and weakens commitments to open space and local business.

Conclusion

The McKinleyville Town Center should reflect the vision and values expressed in our MCP and public surveys. The current DEIR undermines those goals. I urge the County to:

- Revise the DEIR to align with the MCP,
- Restore the Design Review Committee and rural design standards,
- Include mixed-use mandates and phasing requirements,
- Respect survey priorities.

Sincerely,

Kate McClain 707 496-0865, 1786 Timothy Rd,
McKinleyville.

From: [Scott Shannon](#)
To: [Ford, John](#)
Cc: [CEOAResponses](#); [COB](#); [Madrone, Steve](#)
Subject: Comments re McKinleyville Town Center DEIR
Date: Monday, May 26, 2025 3:51:22 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Ford, et alia:

I have been a homeowner in McKinleyville and a resident of Humboldt county for 24 and 42 years respectively, and I'm writing to you today to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the proposed McKinleyville Town Center.

My criticisms of the DEIR and the Town Center project in general can be summarized as follows:

- 1) Many of the assumptions and projections in the DEIR and the Town Center concept itself are based on the current County General Plan and McKinleyville Community Plan, neither of which have been updated to reflect our new local economic realities.
- 2) The DEIR does not specifically identify increased population numbers and densities resulting from the Town Center project as "significant and unavoidable" impacts, when in the long term they could prove to be the most negative impacts of all.
- 3) The DEIR does not provide an estimate of the increase in absolute numbers of motor vehicles that would necessarily result from the completion of the proposed Town Center, nor does it outline any realistic solutions for dealing with those thousands of additional cars.
- 4) The Town Center proposal as currently envisioned has a palpably inorganic, contrived feel to it. It is not a grassroots movement arising out of the communal desires of the town's residents. Rather, it is utopian centralized planning being imposed upon the people by oligarchic powers-that-be, and as such, the entire process involved with its creation feels fundamentally undemocratic and even oppressive in character.

Discussion:

- 1) The County General Plan and McKinleyville Community Plan as originally devised date to the boom period of cannabis cultivation, which ended years ago. Thus, any proposals and projections that were based on those past economic conditions are now obsolete.

It should stand to reason, then, that McKinleyville in this new era of stagnant or diminishing growth does not need "an expanded grocery store, additional shops, a department store, hardware home supply, restaurants, office space, medical and dental clinic, a movie complex, town green for athletic and civic events, civic buildings, library, high density residential, laundromat, farmers market, residences above shopfronts, child care facilities, and art galleries."

For one, we already have (or had) many of those things, and we should not waste resources replacing what we obviously weren't able to sustain in the first place. The present-day economy of McKinleyville is objectively shrinking, not growing, so planning for anticipated growth is actually the precise opposite of appropriate.

There are two vivid local examples of this economic contraction. First, we're facing the ongoing loss of an entire shopping center's-worth of formerly-thriving retail establishments that once included a supermarket and national-chain department and drug stores, plus an adjoining movie complex. This in addition to numerous small businesses scattered throughout town that have failed in recent years.

But even more to the point, the current landowner of the main subject property can't even manage to keep their existing retail spaces occupied. That alone speaks to the fundamental futility of the entire enterprise.

2) Adding 6,000+ new residents to a semi-rural bedroom community of 15,000 is obviously going to strain services and existing infrastructure, and increased crowding will lead to an overall decline in quality of life for everyone. Furthermore, the estimates of employment generation in the DEIR seem wildly optimistic to me. People will only get and keep jobs if the economy supports the creation of new businesses, which given our present realities is very much an open question. Thus, the Town Center really does not guarantee any significant number of new jobs, let alone thousands of them. The only thing that is genuinely certain if the Town Center is built to capacity is that there will be 6,000 more people here, which, without commensurate employment, can ultimately lead only to societal decline.

Just because the Town Center sounds great on paper to some doesn't mean it will actually result in those desired outcomes. A relevant local example of an "idea whose time has come" that has fallen far short of expectations is the Airport Business Park. Now almost 35 years after its creation, it has yet to achieve even 10% of its built-out state. The courthouse there is also basically a "white elephant" that cost millions yet is never used for its intended purpose. But at least those dead-end developments didn't result in civic blight, which a failed Town Center most certainly would.

3) These 6,000 new residents will come here with cars, yet nowhere in the DEIR is even an estimate given of just how many more vehicles the completed Town Center will bring to McKinleyville. Everything related to vehicular traffic appears to be analyzed in terms of VMT alone. As a statistician, I can state with confidence: this is wholly inadequate. The most salient and straightforward descriptive statistic to examine here is an estimate of the absolute number of additional vehicles.

Vehicle ownership in the US is currently 0.85 cars per person, thus $6,000 \times 0.85 = 5,100$ additional vehicles that will be using our already congested roads. With basically only one arterial road into and out of the center of town, there's no feasible way Central Avenue can safely accommodate that kind of increase in traffic volume. Yet the only "solutions" proposed in the DEIR are restrictions like "road diet" and "traffic calming," which do not in any way address the fundamental problem of our roads already being at capacity and unable to bear the burden of thousands more vehicles.

4) I think the principal objection people have to the Town Center idea is its sheer size. The vast scale of it seems wholly inappropriate for a small town of 15,000. We don't need or want anything even approaching the magnitude that's being proposed. And it's simply not credible that this is all about "creating a unique identity for McKinleyville." That's just a trite platitude. A community's identity derives from its PEOPLE, not a cluster of buildings artificially tacked onto it by vested capitalist/corporatist/governmental forces.

Recommendations:

1) Update the County General Plan and McKinleyville Community Plan to acknowledge current local economic realities, and modify the Town Center project goals and DEIR accordingly.

2) Be forthright about the likely negative effects of adding 6,000+ new residents to a small town with no real guarantees of job creation. It's truly "pie in the sky" to assume a priori that building new retail space will automatically mean it will be occupied, thrive, and provide people with living-wage jobs. It's far more likely that it won't.

3) If the County really wants to relieve congestion on Central Avenue, create a second direct route from US-101 to the center of town. Hiller Road is the obvious choice. I recommend that the County petition the California Dept. of Transportation for a new exit on US-101 at Hiller, just like Trinidad Rancheria has done to create a new and safer traffic alternative for access to its casino. As long as Central Avenue is the only arterial street leading directly to McKinleyville's core, it will remain congested and a danger to those who use it. (I no longer drive on Central at all between School and Hiller out of fear for my safety; haven't for years now.)

Moreover, make the proposed improvements on Hiller Road between Central Avenue and McKinleyville Avenue a top development priority independent of whether or not the proposed new Town Center is approved or built. This

stretch has been in dire need of sidewalks and street lighting for decades.

4) Public commenting has its place in the process, but to be perfectly frank, most people nowadays lack the speaking/writing skills needed to effectively convey their opinions and concerns to government. (I, myself, utterly fail at public speaking.) The only real voice such people have is their vote. Consequently, I urge the County to allow the RESIDENTS of McKinleyville to cast votes on an advisory ballot measure on whether the Town Center as proposed should or should not be built. I realize the results of such a vote cannot be binding, but it would at least help reassure people that they retain some degree of democratic control over their community and accustomed way of life.

I hope my remarks and suggestions have been helpful, and I thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important civic matter.

Very truly yours,

J Scott Shannon
3280 Barnett Avenue
McKinleyville
jss3280@gmail.com

From: [Ashton Hamm](#)
To: [CEQAResponses](#)
Subject: McKinleyville DEIR Comment
Date: Tuesday, May 27, 2025 4:20:35 PM

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Hi there,

I'm a resident of Humboldt County (Arcata) and I'd like to make a comment for the McKinleyville Town Center Project. In general for the proposed mitigation plans (and specifically impacts 6-1 through 6-7) I'd like to propose consultation with the Wiyot Tribe for best management practices about identified protected species and restoration practices. I think it's imperative that tribal consultation happens and specifically with the Wiyot Tribe whose land this project is located on.

Thank you,

--

Ashton Hamm, RA
(they/them)
uxo architects
[707.273.4805](tel:707.273.4805)
uxouxouxo.com

From: [Madrone, Steve](#)
To: [D Z; Ford, John](#)
Cc: [Kelley Garrett](#); [Laura Norin](#); [Steven Saint Thomas](#); [s.rosas@earthling.net](#); [Kate McClain](#); [analora777@gmail.com](#); [hitchmiga4@gmail.com](#); [riley.garrett@gmail.com](#); [alunsford1997@gmail.com](#); [opal2005@gmail.com](#); [davidoug8@gmail.com](#); [DrPfeiffer](#); [Indiaking.93117@gmail.com](#); [rebeccamariehall@gmail.com](#); [jenpetullo@gmail.com](#); [assemblymember.rogers@assembly.ca.gov](#); [senator.mcguire@senate.ca.gov](#); [COB](#); [Planning Clerk](#); [ENVHEALTH](#); [mhoyos@co.humboldt.ca.gov](#); [Sissem@emcplanning.com](#); [mcsd@mckinleyvillecsd.com](#); [thad@northcoastjournal.com](#); [editor@madriverunion.com](#); [hank@lostcoastoutpost.com](#); [Lauren@kmud.org](#); [editor@times-standard.com](#); [tom@wildcalifornia.org](#); [epic@wildcalifornia.org](#); [colin@transportationpriorities.org](#); [jkalt@humboldtwaterkeeper.org](#); [CEQAResponses](#)
Subject: Re: Community Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report of the McKinleyville Town Center Zoning Amendment (SCH# 2024031111)
Date: Wednesday, May 28, 2025 4:25:40 PM

Thank you

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From: D Z <danielzellman@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 27, 2025 3:42:10 PM
To: Ford, John <JFord@co.humboldt.ca.us>
Cc: Kelley Garrett <kellybrookgarrett@gmail.com>; Laura Norin <Lnorin@zoho.com>; Steven Saint Thomas <ssaint01@gmail.com>; s.rosas@earthling.net <s.rosas@earthling.net>; Kate McClain <katemcclain1@gmail.com>; analora777@gmail.com <analora777@gmail.com>; hitchmiga4@gmail.com <hitchmiga4@gmail.com>; riley.garrett@gmail.com <riley.garrett@gmail.com>; alunsford1997@gmail.com <alunsford1997@gmail.com>; opal2005@gmail.com <opal2005@gmail.com>; davidoug8@gmail.com <davidoug8@gmail.com>; DrPfeiffer <jeanine.pfeiffer@gmail.com>; Indiaking.93117@gmail.com <Indiaking.93117@gmail.com>; rebeccamariehall@gmail.com <rebeccamariehall@gmail.com>; jenpetullo@gmail.com <jenpetullo@gmail.com>; assemblymember.rogers@assembly.ca.gov <assemblymember.rogers@assembly.ca.gov>; senator.mcguire@senate.ca.gov <senator.mcguire@senate.ca.gov>; COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>; Planning Clerk <planningclerk@co.humboldt.ca.us>; Madrone, Steve <smadrone@co.humboldt.ca.us>; ENVHEALTH <ENVHEALTH@co.humboldt.ca.us>; mhoyos@co.humboldt.ca.gov <mhoyos@co.humboldt.ca.gov>; Sissem@emcplanning.com <Sissem@emcplanning.com>; mcsd@mckinleyvillecsd.com <mcsd@mckinleyvillecsd.com>; thad@northcoastjournal.com <thad@northcoastjournal.com>; editor@madriverunion.com <editor@madriverunion.com>; hank@lostcoastoutpost.com <hank@lostcoastoutpost.com>; Lauren@kmud.org <Lauren@kmud.org>; editor@times-standard.com <editor@times-standard.com>; tom@wildcalifornia.org <tom@wildcalifornia.org>; epic@wildcalifornia.org <epic@wildcalifornia.org>; colin@transportationpriorities.org <colin@transportationpriorities.org>; jkalt@humboldtwaterkeeper.org <jkalt@humboldtwaterkeeper.org>; CEQAResponses <CEQAResponses@co.humboldt.ca.us>
Subject: Community Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report of the McKinleyville Town Center Zoning Amendment (SCH# 2024031111)

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Dear Mr. Ford,

Attached please find our comments on the *Draft Environmental Impact Report of the McKinleyville Town Center Zoning Amendment*. As we note, the County's proposal to eradicate wetlands and open the Town Center area to massive development—and to attempt to do so without providing meaningful opportunity for public involvement and review—is deeply problematic and directly contravenes the vision for the town set forth in the McKinleyville Community Plan, which, together with the Humboldt County General Plan, comprises the General Plan for the McKinleyville community.

Please contact us with any questions.

Respectfully,

Kelley Garrett (kellybrookgarrett@gmail.com), 2390 Bryan Rd McKinleyville
Laura Norin (Lnorin@zoho.com), 1125 Hayes Rd, McKinleyville
Steven Saint Thomas (ssaint01@gmail.com), 1165 Perini Rd., McKinleyville
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Sandra Rosas (s.rosas@earthling.net), 2390 Bryan Rd, McKinleyville
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McKinleyville
Jennifer Petullo (jenpetullo@gmail.com) 1715 Noble Ct, McKinleyville

May 27, 2025

To: John Ford
Director of Planning & Building
County of Humboldt
3015 H Street Eureka, CA 95501
jford@co.humboldt.ca.us

Re: Comments on the *Draft Environmental Impact Report of the McKinleyville Town Center Zoning Amendment* (SCH# 2024031111)

We are a group of concerned McKinleyville residents, homeowners, permaculturists, environmental professionals, retirees, and business owners. We submit these comments to express our grave concerns about the integrity, legality, and alignment with community values of the McKinleyville Town Center Zoning Amendment and its Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). The planning process has been compromised by conflicts of interest, misuse of public resources, and a fundamental departure from the vision articulated in the McKinleyville Community Plan (MCP), which, in concert with the Humboldt County General Plan, comprises the General Plan for the McKinleyville community.

The DEIR reframes the purpose of the MCP's placemaking Town Center Ordinance—from fostering a vibrant, civic-oriented center that enhances rural community character and provides the community with increased social, civic, and recreational opportunities—to promoting “a higher density of residential units to support a commercial core” (DEIR p. 16-15).

Mega-housing as an economic driver is certainly not a goal of the Town Center Ordinance. The project proposed with this DEIR is an **expedited** plan for thousands of housing units with **ministerial approval only** and with no architectural standards to protect and enhance our rural character. It promises little-to-no new public open space, fails to address or analyze glaring pedestrian safety and accessibility issues within the Town Center boundaries (e.g. lack of sidewalks on Gwin Rd), and fails to create any significant new social, civic, or recreational opportunities for our community. How does this project reflect community placemaking?

The DEIR's shift in project purpose misrepresents the actual project purpose, narrows alternatives, and misleads the public. In *County of Inyo v. City of Los Angeles*, 71 Cal. App. 3d 185 (1977), the Court of Appeals of California stated repeatedly that “an accurate, stable, and finite project description is the sine qua non of an informative and **legally sufficient** EIR” (emphasis added). This DEIR fails that test.

I. CEQA Violations and Environmental Deficiencies

A. Deficient Alternatives Analysis

The DEIR unlawfully excludes any preservation-focused alternative for the Town Center's last major open space (APN 510-132-031). No reduced-footprint, open space, or civic park alternatives were studied, despite their clear potential to reduce significant environmental impacts.

This omission violates **CEQA Guidelines §15126.6**, which require evaluation of reasonable alternatives. In *Laurel Heights Improvement Assn. v. Regents of the University of California* (1988) 47 Cal.3d 376, the California Supreme Court emphasized that discussion of alternatives is central to CEQA compliance.

The County's rejection of a park or hybrid alternative, claiming it doesn't meet project objectives, is circular and unlawful. Indeed, the MCP "Require[s] the dedication of open and recreation spaces as part of the approval of major subdivisions and other significant development projects" (MCP, p. 2). The project objective should have incorporated this requirement for open and recreation spaces. A park or hybrid alternative would have been consistent with an objective that aligned with the MCP.

B. Failure to Assess Cumulative Impacts

The DEIR proposes development of the last remaining 40-acre green space in McKinleyville's urban core, yet fails to analyze its cumulative loss in the context of:

- Wetland destruction;
- Sensitive Natural Community loss;
- Tree canopy and biodiversity reduction; and
- Disappearance of community green infrastructure.

Under **CEQA §15130**, such cumulative losses must be analyzed when impacts are "cumulatively considerable."

C. Improper Piecemealing

The DEIR and Appendix B—the Ordinance, propose wetland mitigation in anticipation of future, undefined projects. This is a textbook case of CEQA **piecemealing**—the prohibited segmentation of projects to avoid full environmental review. It allows mitigation before any development proposal is disclosed or assessed.

Additionally we echo DEIR comments provided to the County by the Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities (CRTP) and the Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC): “If the county intends to construct the [DEIR Appendix E] traffic study’s recommended infrastructure changes, then they are clearly part of the ‘project’ for CEQA purposes. ...The county must therefore either clearly commit not to construct the traffic study’s recommended infrastructure changes, or must assess them in the EIR.” (Letter dated May 7, 2025, available at the following link: <https://transportationpriorities.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Comments-on-Town-Center-DEIR-April-2025.pdf>.)

CEQA Guidelines §15003(h) and §15378 require evaluation of the “whole of the action.” *Laurel Heights* reiterated that interdependent actions must be evaluated together. The County cannot separate mitigation from future development proposals simply to expedite approval.

D. Conflicts with Adopted Plans

The DEIR fails to disclose or analyze its many inconsistencies with the MCP and Humboldt County General Plan, violating **CEQA Guidelines §15125(d)**. These inconsistencies include:

- Elimination of more than 6 acres of wetlands protected by MCP Sections 2601, 2602, and 3422;
- Removal of the Wetlands Combining Zone overlay;
- Redefinition of “wetlands” using a new three-parameter test not adopted in the MCP; and
- Effective abolishment of the MCP-mandated Town Center Design Review Committee (Section 2642).

By presuming that the DEIR proposed zoning changes will be adopted to remove a “Wetland Combining Zone” overlay and that a proposed, future amendment of the MCP to deregulate one-parameter wetlands will occur, the Ordinance violates California Government Code §65860, mandating zoning ordinance consistency with the General Plan (i.e. MCP). (*In County of Amador v. El Dorado County Water Agency*

(1999) 76 Cal.App.4th 931, the court emphasized that CEQA requires environmental review to be based on an existing, adopted general plan, not on speculative future amendments.)

Community Context From the MCP Section 2600: "The protection and enhancement of the community's rural qualities within the Urban Development Area is a priority with this Plan. Streams, streamside management areas, wetlands, open spaces, recreational areas and parks accessible to the public at large are identified as features which enhance the rural qualities within our community. The community has a history of protecting these features, and this Plan contains policies intended to carry this tradition forward to the next generation. As the community grows, these features will deliver a higher quality of life to its residents."

II. Process Failures and Public Participation Barriers

A. Inadequate Public Process

In September 2019, Planning Director Ford proposed that the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee (MMAC) take the lead in shaping the Town Center Ordinance, rather than convening a broader community-based working group. The MMAC accepted this role, positioning itself as both a public advisory body and a key driver of ordinance content. This consolidation of roles blurred lines between community representation and policy authorship, reducing opportunities for wider public participation and collaborative design.

At the County's behest the MMAC later appointed itself as the Town Center Design Review Committee, violating MCP Section 2642, Policy 1, which calls for the formation of an ad hoc Design Review Committee. (See also, p. A-6, "Design Standards Committee.") This consolidation of authorship and oversight is a clear procedural conflict of interest and undermines public trust and transparency.

Additionally, the DEIR's release was marked by:

- Failure to analyze the 2020 Town Center Survey results;
- Failure to post or publicize project development meetings in an accessible, timely manner;
- Failure to update the project website with current documentation;
- Failure to make the electronic document readily navigable through the use of hyperlinks, e.g., in the Table of Contents, table and figure references, and other internal and external references; and
- Failure to make hard copies of the 1,000+ page DEIR available locally.

These are not minor errors—they violate CEQA’s mandate for public participation and transparency.

Given the length and highly technical nature of the Draft EIR—and its profound implications for the future of McKinleyville—we request that the public comment period be extended by at least 60, and preferably 90, additional days. Furthermore, at least three well-publicized public meetings should be held in McKinleyville during this extended period. These meetings must be scheduled at varied times and days to ensure broad accessibility and should include participation from members of the Planning and Building Commission as well as the authors of the Draft EIR and Q-Zone regulations. These representatives must be available and prepared to engage directly with public questions and concerns. Fast-tracking this process with only a 45-day comment period and minimal public engagement undermines transparency and meaningful participation.

B. Undemocratic Approval Process

Section 4.6 of the DEIR proposes that future project approvals be ministerial—issued solely by the Planning Director—if deemed “substantially consistent” with the Q-Zone regulations and this DEIR. This eliminates oversight by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, bypasses public hearings, and gives overly broad discretionary power to an unelected official. Such ministerial approval circumvents the democratic process and removes any legal recourse for residents. For example, a large single-use structure (such as a massive data center or corporate complex) could be approved behind Safeway with no public input, even if inconsistent with the MCP, as long as the Planning Director deems it “substantially consistent” with the Q-Zone regulations and the DEIR. This framework must be rejected and replaced with robust public oversight.

III. Conflicts of Interest and Ethical Breaches

- In 2020, developer Greg Pierson publicly confirmed a **quid pro quo** agreement with the County—accepting increased housing in exchange for development rights. Such arrangements must be disclosed under CEQA and government ethics requirements.
- In 2023, Mischa Schwartz conducted wetland assessments on parcel APN 510-132-031 using County funds, after previously assessing the site for Pierson in 2019 and 2021. This dual role creates a serious conflict of interest and erodes the integrity of the analysis. Additionally, the use of taxpayer dollars to finance studies that ultimately support **private development goals**—especially when those goals involve environmental degradation (like filling wetlands)—can be

construed as a **misallocation of public funds**. CEQA requires that environmental review be **public-serving**, not a subsidy for private gain.

- The County solicited private funding for the DEIR from entities with a financial interest in the project. CEQA requires environmental review to be independent and free from undue influence.

III. Overdevelopment, Housing Policy Failures, and Community Character Conflicts

The proposed project would increase McKinleyville's population by up to **6,122 residents**, representing **growth in excess of 35%**. While our community supports additional housing (particularly, affordable housing), such a drastic increase threatens to overwhelm existing infrastructure, intensify traffic and public services burdens, and irrevocably alter McKinleyville's rural character. The DEIR itself acknowledges that a *Reduced Project Scale* alternative would meet the project's core objectives with significantly fewer environmental consequences. An alternative with the density of the *Reduced Project Scale*, or with even lower density, must be adopted in place of the Proposed Project if this project is to remain consistent with the MCP and CEQA's mandate to minimize environmental harm.

In tandem with excessive growth, the DEIR and proposed ordinance allow for **building heights of up to four stories** in areas of the Town Center, including adjacent to residential neighborhoods. This is incompatible with McKinleyville's low-rise rural aesthetic and the MCP's policy framework emphasizing modest, human-scaled development. To protect community character, building heights should be capped at **three stories (30 feet)** across all zones in the Town Center, with any additional height subject to robust discretionary review.

Moreover, despite placing new housing near jobs, transit, and civic amenities, the DEIR **fails to require affordable housing**, with apparently no plan for such housing apart from up to 50 senior units tied to the Life Plan Humboldt project. This omission represents a missed opportunity to meet urgent local needs and promote equity and diversity. At least **25% of all new housing units** must be deed-restricted affordable to **low- and very-low-income households** in perpetuity. Inclusionary zoning or a comparable affordability requirement must be added to the Q-Zone ordinance to ensure that growth is inclusive and responsive to our community's needs.

V. Flawed Technical Analyses

A. Traffic and Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT)

The DEIR traffic study uses outdated travel patterns and ignores known shifts due to the closure of Morris Elementary School and the relocation of students to a school site within the Town Center by Fall 2026.

Also, we echo the CRTP and EPIC comments of May 7, 2025, as follows: The DEIR's VMT analysis assumes per capita travel at 15–20% of county averages—an implausibly low figure. It fails to account for induced travel or local variation, relying on a model insensitive to land use context.

B. Wetlands and Natural Communities

- Figure 4-5 of the DEIR (page 4-15) depicts proposed bike paths through designated Wetland Restoration (WR) areas. While we support multimodal infrastructure, these proposals risk ecological harm. The DEIR fails to assess the impacts of these bike paths and to require enforceable mitigation strategies.
 - The DEIR fails to assess the impact of changing the MCP's wetland definition from a one-parameter to a three-parameter test. This change could exclude 10% of currently protected wetlands without any environmental impact analysis—a direct CEQA violation.
 - The DEIR describes “Protection and Conservation of Wetland Areas” in Appendix B—the Ordinance, McKinleyville Town Center Q-Zone Regulations—and states wetlands will be conserved through on-site protection and through **relocation and replacement of wetlands** to an area of APN 510-132-031 that lies just east of McKinleyville Avenue (Map 1–Zoning Map). The Ordinance fails to acknowledge that said action is in conflict with MCP policies that protect wetlands from new development.
 - Furthermore, the area of APN 510-132-031 proposed for wetland mitigation would expose the proposed resource to unacceptable levels of roadside runoff and significantly reduced wetland buffer areas as compared to existing conditions—greatly compromising the function and value of said mitigation.
-

VI. Community-Oriented Alternatives and Policy Solutions

A. Preserve the Open Space as a Civic Park

Retain APN 510-132-031 as a civic park with nature trails and passive recreation infrastructure. This would honor the MCP's call to protect wetlands while providing a generational opportunity to create a public green space in the Town Center core. This alternative avoids policy conflicts and legal issues posed by the DEIR's Alternative 1 and Alternative 2.

B. Expand the Town Center Boundary within the Highway Right-of-Way

Extend the Town Center boundary along Central Avenue from Anna Sparks to Murray Avenue using street calming, bike/ped pathways, bulb-outs, pocket parks, art installations, and flexible public-use zones. Such an alternative would allow for a comprehensive expansion of opportunity for community social and recreational access benefitting the town's entire commercial core utilizing just the County's old state highway right-of-way. The highway right-of-way is as much as 40' in places as measured from the top-of-curb and outward away from the street.

C. Revise Allowable Civic Uses in MU1

Amend the Q-Zone Ordinance to prioritize the following as civic uses in the Mixed Use (Urban) zoning:

- Urban agriculture and community gardens;
- Civic pop-up business infrastructure; and
- Civic plazas and cultural spaces.

These low-impact civic uses enhance livability and are entirely consistent with the intent of mixed-use zoning, which is to create lively, pedestrian-friendly areas that integrate residential, commercial, and civic functions.

D. Adopt a Strategic Arts & Economic Development Plan

To ensure the long-term vitality, identity, and economic resilience of the McKinleyville Town Center, we recommend that the Town Center Ordinance be amended to include the development and implementation of a Strategic Arts and Economic Development Plan—with dedicated components for Arts, Culture, and Local Economic Development. This plan should be adopted as a foundational element of the Town Center's civic framework, guiding future public and private investments in community arts, public space activation, local enterprise support, and cultural identity.

Such a plan should:

- Support local artists, markets, cultural spaces, and placemaking;
- Encourage adaptive reuse of vacant buildings;
- Promote the Integration of public art into infrastructure design; and
- Support climate resilience and sustainable development strategies.

A Strategic Arts and Economic Development Plan would strengthen McKinleyville's identity as a distinct, rural, and creative community, stimulate local economic growth, and enhance the livability of the Town Center through public engagement, cultural programming, and local business development. It would also position the community to secure external funding and catalyze investment consistent with community values and the McKinleyville Community Plan.

E. Implement a Vacancy Tax Incentive

To promote infill development and reduce pressure on undeveloped open spaces:

- Impose a modest vacancy tax on underutilized commercial properties; and
- Reinvest proceeds in façade improvements and small business support.

This would pressure landowners to lower unrealistic lease rates and reduce speculation, and it would refocus the project to support revitalization of existing underutilized commercial parcels within the developed Town Center footprint, rather than incentivizing wetland fill.

F. Pedestrian Safety Alternatives at Central Avenue

Alternatives must be developed to meet the Town Center purpose and needs, which include pedestrian safety at Central Avenue crossings. The McKinleyville Community Services District has raised significant concerns that may preclude a “road diet” on Central Avenue due to their need to service municipal water/sewer infrastructure, which requires access to the mid center-of-street “mains” and closure of adjacent lanes. Perhaps such an issue could be minimized by realigning Central such that said infrastructure is situated under either the northbound or the southbound lane (rather than mid-street)—allowing for servicing of facilities from outside the lane(s) of traffic and minimizing traffic obstructions. A soft-build using temporary infrastructure and quick-build techniques such as those that will soon be implemented on Hiller Avenue could be employed as a trial-run alternative.

VII. Requested Corrective Actions

We respectfully urge Humboldt County to:

1. **Reject** the current DEIR and the Q-Zone ordinance as incomplete and legally deficient.
2. **Reject** the wetland fill and the proposed redefinition of wetlands within the Town Center.
3. **Prohibit** any wetland mitigation that would reduce the function and value of existing wetlands within the Town Center.
4. **Withdraw** the proposal for ministerial approval, and reinstate public hearings.
5. **Reinstate** an independent, stakeholder-based Town Center Design Review Committee.
6. **Disclose** all consultant actual or potential conflicts of interest related to this process.
7. **Disclose** all Town Center developer/property owner communications with the County related to this process.
8. **Align** the project purpose with the MCP's objective to foster a vibrant, civic-oriented town center that enhances rural community character and provides the community with increased social, civic, and recreational opportunities.
9. **Extend** the public review period for the DEIR by at least 60, and preferably 90, additional days.
10. **Initiate** a public process to revise the Q-Zone Regulations to ensure that they:
 - Preserve key open spaces,
 - Revitalize existing commercial parcels,
 - Align with the MCP's rural character and ecological priorities,
 - Require that at least 25% of any new housing units be deed-restricted affordable to low- and very-low-income households, and
 - Incorporate pedestrian safety at Central Avenue crossings.
11. **Initiate** a new, fully independent EIR with meaningful public participation and review.

Thank you for your work on this project and for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Kelley Garrett (kellybrookgarrett@gmail.com), 2390 Bryan Rd McKinleyville
Laura Norin (Lnorin@zoho.com), 1125 Hayes Rd, McKinleyville
Steven Saint Thomas (ssaint01@gmail.com), 1165 Perini Rd., McKinleyville
Daniel Zellman (danielzellman@gmail.com), 1125 Hayes Rd, McKinleyville
Sandra Rosas (s.rosas@earthling.net), 2390 Bryan Rd, McKinleyville
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McKinleyville
Jennifer Petullo (jenpetullo@gmail.com) 1715 Noble Ct, McKinleyville

CC:

Assemblymember Chris Rogers, assemblymember.rogers@assembly.ca.gov
Senator Mike McGuire, senator.mcguire@senate.ca.gov
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors, cob@co.humboldt.ca.us
Humboldt County Planning Commission, planningclerk@co.humboldt.ca.us
McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee, cob@co.humboldt.ca.us
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Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC): Tom Wheeler,
tom@wildcalifornia.org, epic@wildcalifornia.org

Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities: Colin Fiske,
colin@transportationpriorities.org

Humboldt Waterkeeper: Jennifer Kalt, jkalt@humboldtwaterkeeper.org

From: [Emma Haskett](#)
To: [CEQAResponses](#)
Subject: Re: Life Plan Humboldt-Mckinleyville Town Center DEIR Comments
Date: Tuesday, May 27, 2025 6:34:03 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

One additional comment: Life Plan Humboldt intends to mitigate 1, 2 & 3 parameter onsite wetlands, and we would like this to be acknowledged in the DEIR.

Thank you!

On Tue, May 27, 2025 at 11:43 AM Emma Haskett <emmah@planwestpartners.com> wrote:
Hello,

I am writing on behalf of the Life Plan Humboldt development, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the DEIR:

Page 315, Sec. 16.5 Land Use Planning - Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures:

We request that the final sentence of this section be revised to clearly state that 30 units per acre is the **maximum** allowable residential density for mixed-use development in commercial zones (edit in blue): *This essentially creates the potential for mixed-use development in commercial zones with a residential density of **up to** 30 units per acre.*

Page 437, Map 2 - Frontage Types Regarding Nursery way 'street type': Map 2 designates Nursery Way as a "Street Type 1," which includes a requirement that buildings fronting this street be a minimum of two stories. Life Plan Humboldt's site plan includes one-story cottage-style residences along Nursery Way, designed specifically to support accessibility and aging-in-place for older adults. This creates a direct conflict between the zoning standard and the project's intended land use. We request that the County revise the Q-Zone standards for this segment of Nursery Way. The requirement for two-story buildings is incompatible with the scale, purpose, and functional accessibility needs of Life Plan Humboldt's residents.

Page 445, Sec 4.1.2.1 - Regarding Nursery way in the circulation plan: Nursery Way serves as the primary access point for the Life Plan Humboldt (LPH) campus, a planned Residential Care Facility for the Elderly (RCFE). As such, it will experience significant and consistent pedestrian use, including by older adults with mobility limitations. The proposed designation of Nursery Way in the community circulation plan raises serious concerns regarding pedestrian safety and compatibility with the intended land use. We urge the County to closely examine how this circulation classification will impact pedestrian safety on a campus designed to serve vulnerable populations. In alignment with LPH's mission and design objectives, the project is committed to improving Nursery Way for access to both pedestrian and bicycle public access. We request that the DEIR include mitigation measures or design standards that reflect the unique transportation needs of an RCFE and prioritize pedestrian-oriented improvements along Nursery Way

Thanks again, please reach out with any questions,

Emma

--

Emma Haskett

Project Manager / OPR

Planwest Partners Inc.

Arcata, CA 95521

Cell: (707) 845-3270

To: Humboldt County Planning Commission

RE: Agenda item F.3 McKinleyville Town Center Zoning Amendment Ordinance

Date: Meeting date September 18, 2025

From: Bonnie MacGregor

Major Concern: Inadequate open space conducive to public gatherings rendering the Town Center Ordinance (TCO) not in conformity with the McKinleyville Community Plan

Request for Change in the Town Center Ordinance

Section 4.4.5 Public Open Spaces:

The Town Center Ordinance calls for “A minimum of 20,000 square feet [$>1/2$ acre] of this shall be provided in a common open space area.” I request that this be changed to: “A minimum of 43,560 square feet [1 acre] of this shall be provided in a common open space area.”

Conformity with the McKinleyville Community Plan (MCP):

The Town Center Ordinance is to be in accordance with the whole MCP and to fulfil the Intent, Goals and Policies of Section 2350 Town Center. While most of these are well addressed in the proposed Town Center Ordinance, the call for open space for gathering is not. Below are sections of the MCP pertinent to this:

INTRODUCTION

1100:

Major plan proposals in the McKinleyville Community Plan:

3. Require the dedication of open and recreation spaces as part of the approval of major subdivisions and other significant development projects.

2600 URBAN LAND USE

The protection and enhancement of the community’s rural qualities within the Urban Development Area is a priority with this Plan. Streams, streamside management areas, wetlands, open spaces, recreational areas and parks accessible to the public at large are identified as features which enhance the rural qualities within our community. The community has a history of protecting these features, and this Plan contains policies intended to carry this tradition forward to the next generation. As the community grows, these features will deliver a higher quality of life to its residents.

2350: TOWN CENTER

Design of the commercial area is intended to create an aesthetic composition of buildings and open space that will encourage frequent use. Guidelines will help create a basis for building siting to assure a traditional village form and to avoid the standard strip shopping center look. The design encourages pedestrian and bicycle use, yet allows for convenient and safe automobile access.

Multi-family housing is located near the town center. The close proximity of housing, commercial services, parks and the provision of a comprehensive pedestrian pathway network ensure the opportunity for residents to walk to stores and services

Note: These two paragraphs have been omitted in quotes of the Town Center description in the DEIR, in the TCO and in Director Ford's overview. See comment below about what constitutes 'a traditional village form' in development planning.

2640 DESIGN REVIEW

The standards are intended to achieve architectural and design excellence in buildings, open spaces and urban design. They encourage and implement policies for the incorporation of publicly accessible open spaces, including parks, courtyards, gardens, passageways, and plazas into public improvements and private projects. Development of open space corridors, easements and trails shall be established as intended in the Plan. Future development should contribute to a sense of community character, should respect the community's social, cultural and economic diversity, and should emphasize human scale and pedestrian orientation.

2642 Policies

3. Mixed-use categories of zoning, including higher density urban housing above retail commercial uses and shopfronts shall be designed to include an abundance and variety of open spaces, such as urban parks,..

4320 PARKS

4321 Goals

1. Provide for all citizens a variety of enjoyable leisure, recreation, and cultural opportunities that are accessible, affordable, safe, physically attractive, and uncrowded. .

3. Designate adequate park sites for the future growth of the Community.

4322 Policies

1. As new development is approved, the goal of this Plan is to ensure that the combined amount of Humboldt County and MCSD park land meet the following minimum standards:

A. Community park land at 3 acres per 1,000 population.

B. Neighborhood and mini park/tot lots at 2 acres per 1,000 population.

4323 Standards

As development occurs, public neighborhood parks/open space/greenways augmenting the width of trails shall be provided within one-half mile or less for residents living within the urban limit zone of McKinleyville

COMMENTS AND CONCLUSION:

Currently Pierson Park is the primary open space/park for the 17,000+ residents of McKinleyville to gather for community events. It is zoned Public Use because the facilities that border on the park are all public facilities – no commercial or residential buildings face the park – so it is a destination park, not an everyday place where people meet nor where daily activities occur that draw people into interactions that create a sense of community.

The Town Center is not meant to be just a residential and commercial downtown. It is the focal point that will give McKinleyville the sense of place people have consistently called for. It is to reflect the unique qualities of the people and land that is McKinleyville and a place where people who live within and beyond the TC can come together as they shop and eat and visit with each other.

The Town Center Ordinance does an excellent job of providing the standards for the built environment. What it needs to ensure is that it serves these needs for “formal and informal social/community interaction.”

The way to do that is to require that the minimum open space in the undeveloped west side of Central Avenue be one acre. This green space will enhance the appeal for building residential units and attract commercial development that will far outweigh the loss of >1/2 acre. And it will then fulfil the last missing element of what is called for in the MCP for a traditional village form for our modern time.

It is a rare opportunity to create this unique enhancement to a town. I sincerely ask that you help us make it possible.

Thank you,

Bonnie MacGregor, McKinleyville resident

From: [Kelley Garrett](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#); [Madrone, Steve](#)
Subject: Public Comment – McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance & FEIR – Planning Commission Hearing, October 18, 2025
Date: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 10:21:26 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Commissioners,

The Town Center Ordinance and FEIR fail to comply with the General Plan, the McKinleyville Community Plan (MCP), and CEQA. This is not the Town Center McKinleyville needs, or asked for. As a member of the McKinleyville Organizing Committee, I spent multiple years lobbying for the project to be taken up by the County and I have attended nearly every ordinance meeting. This is what I have seen:

1. Community Excluded — Process Inconsistent with MCP

The Town Center ordinance project both began, and ended, with Brown Act violations. It began when the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee (MMAC) failed to publicly notice its decision to self-appoint as the Ordinance Design Task Force. It ended when the MMAC failed to provide the public with a complete agenda packet prior to voting to recommend FEIR certification.

The MMAC’s own Rules state it “will not have authority to make, set, [or] provide interpretation of... ordinances.” Yet, at Planning Director John Ford’s request, the MMAC appointed itself to serve as ordinance author — a clear mismatch of mandate and method. In doing so, rather than fostering community co-creation of the placemaking project, the MMAC reduced the public’s role to merely reacting to County proposals already in motion.

Conflicts of interest on the Ordinance Design Task Force (MMAC) included two realtors, a Pierson’s property tenant, a Life Plan Humboldt board member, and a property owner previously cited for wetland fill violations. These conflicts shaped ordinance provisions affecting wetlands, civic space, and land use.

The five-year process was marked by countless failures: public comments were inconsistently documented, letters were not published, recordings were withheld, and requests for dialogue were denied. Project noticing was inconsistent and, at times, unlawful.

Meanwhile, the County ignored its own 2020 survey, leaving the results collated but unanalyzed. Independent review of the survey results showed clear, consistent community support for wetland protection, expanded civic space, and preservation of rural character — all requirements of the MCP.

County resources online were difficult to find, often out of date, and poorly curated with broken links. County social media was also inconsistent in posting notices of upcoming meetings. As of October 17, 2025, no post had been made regarding the October 18, 2025 Planning Commission hearing on the Town Center Ordinance FEIR certification — even though recent posts advertised the August 21 Town Center workshop and a September 4 hearing on U-Haul signage.

In a final act of ordinance shaping on September 10, 2025, Planning Director Ford offered to double civic open space to one acre. Yet the MMAC — without allowing public comment — voted to reject that offer, once again sidelining community priorities.

The process consistently marginalized the public rather than including it.

2. CEQA Undermined — The Ordinance Is the Project

The FEIR compounds the problems with process by failing to analyze the ordinance itself. Near to all public comments were dismissed as “outside the scope of CEQA” because they addressed the ordinance rather than some future project. That premise is false. The ordinance *is* the project, and CEQA requires its environmental consequences to be fully evaluated. By telling the public otherwise, the County misinforms residents about their rights and decision-makers about their obligations.

Even more troubling, the FEIR admits that traffic studies were not used to inform street design. This reduces CEQA to a box-checking exercise rather than the planning tool it was intended to be.

3. Wetlands Subverted — Inconsistent with MCP and CEQA

MCP Section 3422, Wetland Policy 15, prohibits development that degrades wetlands on newly created parcels.

The ordinance circumvents this protection through Section 6.4’s “relocation clause,” which allows wetlands to be destroyed before parcels are created. Mitigation (including relocation or creation) is a compensatory measure for unavoidable impacts that have been fully evaluated, not a tool to bypass regulations. Filling and relocating wetlands without demonstrating that no less environmentally damaging alternative exists is a violation of MCP design review policies and directly conflicts with Policy 15 and Humboldt County Code § 314-61.1.7.6.6.

When Policy 15 *was* applied to Life Plan Humboldt, wetland fill was inaccurately rebranded as restoration. Meanwhile, when asked to define critical terms such as “degrade” and “natural resource value,” the County turned not to CEQA, the MCP, or regulatory science, but to the Cambridge Dictionary and Encyclopedia Britannica. CEQA requires determinations to be supported by substantial evidence (CEQA Guidelines §§ 15064(f)(5), 15384) and evaluated under accepted technical standards — not lay dictionary definitions.

The California Supreme Court has made clear that an EIR must rely on accurate data and adequate analysis (Laurel Heights Improvement Assn. v. Regents of Univ. of California (1988) 47 Cal.3d 376, 404–406) and that agencies cannot substitute conclusory assertions for reasoned evidence (County of Inyo v. City of Los Angeles (1977) 71 Cal.App.3d 185, 193–197). By substituting pop-culture references for regulatory criteria, the County failed to provide the substantial evidence CEQA requires.

The County has also shown itself ill-equipped to review wetland information, allowing glaring errors and omissions in the FEIR’s wetland analysis to go uncorrected.

Federal regulations under the 2008 U.S. Army Corps/USEPA Mitigation Rule prohibit mitigation sites from doubling as civic parks or open space. Yet the ordinance states that wetland mitigation areas will serve as recreational areas — a direct contradiction of both federal guidance and the MCP’s requirement for dedicated civic gathering areas.

Finally, the ordinance compounds these failures by granting ministerial approvals — staff sign-offs without hearings or CEQA review. Even where discretionary permits may be triggered, this track record raises serious doubt that the General Plan will be applied fairly or transparently.

4. Safety Ignored — Inconsistent with MCP and CEQA

In Fall 2026, hundreds of elementary school children will begin attending school inside the Town Center. Life Plan Humboldt will soon bring older adults to the area, while financially vulnerable neighbors will also be moving in. Yet along Central Avenue — the Town Center’s spine — sidewalks remain fragmented, non-ADA compliant, or missing entirely. The ordinance contains no binding requirement to remedy these conditions.

A Central Avenue “road diet” proposal has already fractured the community, and Planning Director Ford has publicly stated implementation may be decades away. That timeline is inconsistent with the MCP’s mandate for safe and accessible circulation.

It also violates CEQA. CEQA Guidelines § 15126.2(a) requires analysis of “any significant environmental effects the project might cause,” including hazards to pedestrians. Courts have repeatedly held that agencies cannot defer identification and adoption of mitigation measures to an uncertain future (*Sundstrom v. County of Mendocino* (1988) 202 Cal.App.3d 296, 307–309).

By postponing circulation improvements while authorizing thousands of new residents, schoolchildren, and elders to move into the Town Center, the ordinance effectively approves significant hazards without mitigation.

5. Civic Space, Mixed-Use, and Public Trust — Inconsistent with MCP and CEQA

What would the Town Center actually look like under this ordinance?

Imagine six acres of wetlands destroyed in the name of progress while multiple adjacent and chronically vacant commercial buildings sit unused. Imagine 6,000 new residents — a 30% increase in McKinleyville’s population — crowded into less than 2% of the land base. Imagine those residents housed in four-story blocks that permit large apartment complexes disconnected from ground-floor retail. Imagine buildings pushed to the sidewalk under form-based code requirements. Imagine just 20,000 square feet — less than half an acre — of new civic open space, while wetland offsets are misleadingly presented to the public as recreational assets. Imagine sidewalks and trails delivered piecemeal when triggered by private development rather than under a comprehensive plan to foster true walkability.

Planning Director John Ford claims this is what people told him they wanted. In more than five years of ordinance meetings, I never once heard community members ask for this.

This is not the “village-like” Town Center envisioned in the McKinleyville Community Plan. It is density without design: apartment blocks with token trails, wetlands erased, and a sliver of civic space wholly inadequate for the community it is meant to serve. Rather than guarantee mixed-use, village-scale design, the ordinance allows full apartment blocks separated from retail. No walkability audit or non-motorized access plan was ever conducted. Sidewalks on Central remain fragmented, and the ordinance includes no enforceable requirement for continuous, ADA-compliant pedestrian access.

Yet the County repeatedly claims that this ordinance implements the Community Plan. That is misleading. The Plan envisioned a Town Center with mixed-use development, meaningful civic and open space, and expanded opportunities for social, civic, and recreational life. The ordinance delivers none of these. It authorizes large blocks of stand-alone apartments, provides only a token plaza, and concentrates nearly 30% population growth within the Town Center on terms inconsistent with the Plan.

Conclusion

This process has fractured McKinleyville. Supporters see promised improvements delayed; opponents see unwanted changes forced through. Both sides are frustrated, and trust in County government is eroding.

The Planning Commission’s duty is not to ratify a flawed ordinance. It is to ensure:

- Consistency with the General Plan and MCP (Gov. Code § 65300.5); and
- Compliance with CEQA (Pub. Res. Code § 21002.1; CEQA Guidelines §§ 15125(d), 15126.2, 15384).

On both counts, the ordinance fails:

- **Process:** Brown Act violations, conflicts of interest, and ignored survey results sidelined the community.
- **CEQA:** The FEIR dismissed ordinance-related comments, ignored traffic data, and failed to analyze the actual project.

- **Wetlands:** Section 6.4's relocation clause directly conflicts with Policy 15, contradicts the Mitigation Rule, and lacks substantial evidence.
- **Safety:** The ordinance postpones circulation fixes for decades, creating foreseeable hazards without mitigation.
- **Civic Space & Mixed-Use:** The ordinance fails to deliver civic areas or walkability.

For these reasons, the ordinance and FEIR cannot lawfully be approved in their current form.

To restore legal integrity and public trust, the Commission must require corrections that:

- Delete Section 6.4's relocation clause and enforce Policy 15;
- Condition approval on near-term safety improvements to Central Avenue;
- Provide additional parkland and civic space;
- Guarantee true mixed-use development and walkability; and
- Reopen a genuine public process.

McKinleyville deserves more than shortcuts and compromises. It deserves a Town Center that reflects the MCP's vision, honors CEQA's safeguards, and restores faith in public process. What the ordinance offers instead is an intentional blueprint for the 140-acre Town Center to be developed through back-room deals — in violation of both the law and the public trust.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelley Garrett,

McKinleyville resident and retired environmental planner

McClenagan, Laura

From: Kelley Garrett <kelleybrookgarrett@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 6:46 PM
To: Planning Clerk; Madrone, Steve; Ford, John
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance Hearing 9/18/25

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Commissioners,

I would like it noted for the record that as of 9/17/25 at 6:30pm the County website for all town center info has failed in its duty to post public notice of the planning Commission hearing on the Town Center Ordinance FEIR certification to be held tomorrow night (9/18/25) <https://humboldt.gov/2564/McKinleyville-Town-Center-Master-Plan>

Thank you for your attention to this significant oversight.

Kelley Garrett, McKinleyville resident

Sent from my iPhone



Debbie Marshall
1306 Fernwood Dr.
McKinleyville CA 95519
dm-marshall@sbcglobal.net

May 14, 2025

Humboldt County Planning and Building Dept.
Long Range Planning Division
3015 H St.
Eureka CA 95501

RE: McKinleyville Town Center

I have been a Humboldt County resident for 50 years, 22 years living in McKinleyville. The rural atmosphere is one of the features I like most about the area. The McKinleyville Community Plan calls for the Town Center to serve as a community focal point with a mixture of land uses as a center for social interaction. The most popular choices for the area, from the Town Center Survey, included mixed use, apartments above restaurants and small specialty shops, open space parks and trails and a gathering area for families and special events. The McKinleyville Town Center Zoning Amendment establishes 2,650 multi-family dwellings in the area with a projected population of 6,122. This housing density does not promote a rural community. The congestion would discourage people from gathering in the area. This was not the outcome supported by the community. Hopefully adjustment will be made to the Q-zone project plan.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Debbie Marshall".

Debbie Marshall

PROPOSED REVISION TO MCKINLEYVILLE COMMUNITY PLAN

3420 SENSITIVE AND CRITICAL HABITATS

Wetland Areas

Such an amendment is inconsistent with the McKinleyville Community Plan (MCP) Section 2600 Urban Land Use which states in part "The protection and enhancement of the community's rural qualities within the Urban Development Area is a priority with this Plan. Streams, streamside management areas, wetlands, open spaces, recreational areas and parks accessible to the public at large are identified as features which enhance the rural qualities within our community. The community has a history of protecting these features, and this Plan contains policies intended to carry this tradition forward to the next generation. As the community grows, these features will deliver a higher quality of life to its residents."

Such amendment is inconsistent with MCP Section 3400 Resources which states "From the Mad River at the southern boundary to the Little River in the north, McKinleyville is blessed with an abundance of freshwater streams and wetlands resources containing habitats for numerous wildlife species of birds, fish and small mammals. These resources represent a unique scenic asset to the community while serving an important function as natural drainage channels. Retaining these areas in their natural state will nurture a higher quality of life as the community grows."

The proposed amendment will create inconsistencies within the MCP. Future decision makers will face conflicting MCP directives: citizens will be confused about the MCP policies and standards the community has selected; landowners, business and industry will be unable to rely on the MCP's stated priorities and standards for individual decision making. Beyond this—inconsistencies in the MCP can expose the County to litigation (as noted early on in public meeting on this subject by Humboldt County planning Director John Ford).

Further, California Planning and Zoning law Govt Code section 65860(a) states that land uses associated with zoning ordinances *shall* be compatible with the objectives and policies of the general (community) plan. The Planning and Zoning Law does not contemplate that general plans will be amended to conform to zoning ordinances. The tail does not wag the dog. The general plan stands. *The general plan is the charter to which the ordinance must conform.*

Per Humboldt County General Plan Section 312-50, amendment for zoning regs/maps requires a finding that the action is in the public interest (affecting the well-being, the rights, health, or finances of the public at large). What factual analysis was used to create such a finding?

Was there a receipt of petition for amendment filed by Pierson holdings?

Which BOS member will be recommending the amendment?

FINAL DRAFT TOWN CENTER ORDINANCE

General Comments

Community comments have largely been sidelined from use in scoping of the project. Little to no reflection of community comments regarding Community Space and Arts, Economic Vitality or Sustainability can be found in the plan.

The County plans to pursue housing for an approx 1000 additional people within the Town Center, but fails to balance the development with expanded economic opportunity. McKinleyville already experiences an exodus during commute times as people leave McKinleyville to work in Arcata and Eureka. Balanced development would site housing where the jobs are or would create new economic opportunities where housing is proposed. Without an expanded economic base, new housing will lead to increased reliance on motor vehicles within the Town Center.

Specific Comments

1 Purpose and Intent

Planners and developers will use the Purpose and Intent to interpret the ordinance's policies. Where's the passion and poetry? What is the mission and vision? This does not evoke images of rural character or a social community heart.

Per the MCP section 2351 Goals– the Town Center is to serve as a community focal point by providing an activity center and a place for formal/informal social interaction. The Town Center is to develop an area of mixed land uses which encourage bicycle and pedestrian travel, yet allows for safe and convenient automobile access. Overwhelming public comment over a period of 20 plus years has called out the need for greater areas of formal and informal socializing—not shopping and housing.

Map 1, Mixed Use

Per MCP section 3422 Policies#13 and #15—proposed development is not allowed within wetlands.

How were wetland boundaries determined?

4.1.1.1

When will we see work-ups of Dan Burden's recommendations drafted as an alternative for EIR evaluation?

Per the MCP, Central Ave treatments need to identify a funding plan as part of the Ordinance. With Dan Burden's national recognition and credentials—grant funding for a project using his recommendations is near to 100% assured for project funding.

The federal Infrastructure, Investments and Jobs Act will have billions of dollars available. Dan Burden recommended we get our project shelf-ready within the year to be poised to get some of the money.

4.1.1.2

Why is Hiller now the proposed town center "focal entry"? TC gateway focus has always been at Central between Library/Pierson Park to the east and McK Shopping to the west

4.1.4

Per Dan Burden's recommendations a Transit Facility should be located nearby, but not take up valuable real estate within the town center. Town Center real estate is to be used as a destination with sights and attractions.

5.5

Public Open Space is the foremost priority and consideration of the Town Center per voluminous public input over the last 25 years (1995 to 2020). Placement within the ordinance between Landscaping and Lighting deprioritizes it. Suggest moving this section to the beginning of the document.

We've had three years of ordinance planning and we have maybe eight written lines on public open space. Public open space is the preeminent community want/need from the TC. Two percent open space of any newly developed land is far removed from addressing community wishes/needs..

Per Dan Burden a Town Center must include a plaza.

Public open space needs to be publicly owned or we will get "no posting, no loitering" and gated gazebos like the McK Shopping Center has.

County plans to pursue grant funding for housing; County should pursue grant funding to purchase open space/community development.

Can we add a Strategic Arts and Economic Development Plan to the ordinance, and then form a citizen committee through the MMAC to pursue community development

funds? The Creamery District in Arcata was able to apply for and get grant funds because the city had a Strategic Arts and Economic Development plan.

6. Protection and Conservation of Wetland Areas

This misrepresents the actions of the project which proposes to revoke expansive MCP one-parameter wetland protections within the Town Center area, replacing them with the less conservative regulation of three-parameter wetland. The action would result in a net reduction of wetland area protected by the MCP and would fail to conserve and protect these lost resources. Move to strike "Protection and Conservation of" in title.

6.2

Project proposes the filling of an approx 4-acre depressional wetland and provides no alternatives to the action that would protect, conserve, or minimize the action. This is in violation of MCP section 2640 Design Review Policies 2642 #7 which states all designs shall include the protection of natural land forms through minimizing alteration caused by cutting, filling, grading or clearing.

6.3

Here the new proposed wetland definition for the Town Center is presented. This section would be better placed as 6.1 so that the proposed difference between Town Center and remainder MCP is front and center to the public.

Previously developed property should not be exempted from wetland protections. Development may occur within existing parcels per MCP, but must be fully mitigated when impacts cannot be avoided.

Storm drains should also not be exempted when wetland conditions are the "normal circumstance" per COE (Federal) regulation.

6.6.1.

Groves of red alder, Sitka spruce and willow are forested wetland types protected by the MCP.

Proposed amendment to the MCP violates State Planning law (see comments regarding MCP amendment).

Proposed amendment to the MCP fails to negotiate the standards of MCP section 1452.2 "Amendments". Information and physical condition have not changed; community values/community assumptions have not changed; there are no errors in the plan regarding the current, intended protection of one-parameter wetlands despite despite G. Pierson and some MMAC member assertions in public meetings to the contrary, and finally proposed amendment will not establish a use otherwise consistent

with a comprehensive view of the CMP.

6.6.1.1A minimum of 50% of the area containing the grove shall be retained for public open space and up to 50% may be incorporated into the developed environment.

Comment: Sitka spruce are great for a wetland setting but unless well set back are too large for incorporation into a developed environment--they can grow to over 200 feet. Further, as a wetland indicator species they are protected from development by the MCP.

From: [Karen Kersey](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Support Life Plan Humboldt
Date: Friday, September 12, 2025 7:08:30 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Please help the McKinleyville Life Plan Humboldt move forward with the development of Humboldt Commons and allow this Affordable Senior Housing project to keep on schedule and on budget. I am urging a positive vote for a top notch project.

Thank you for your consideration,

Karen D. Kersey

Sun, Aug 13, 4:03 PM
(4 days ago)

Kate McClain

to me

Lisa, would you be in a position to forward this podcast to McMac and MCSD folks? It's super encouraging. Safety, economics are so clearly documented.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Kate McClain <katemcclain1@gmail.com>

Date: August 13, 2023 at 11:2

Should Traffic Lights Be Abolished? (Ep. 454 Replay)

Freakonomics Radio

Americans are so accustomed to the standard intersection that we rarely consider how dangerous it can be — as well as costly, time-wasting, and polluting. Is it time to embrace the lowly, lovely roundabout?

Listen on Apple Podcasts: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/freakonomics-radio/id354668519?i=1000623991154>

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Kathleen Stone](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Support for Life Plan Humboldt
Date: Friday, September 12, 2025 2:02:00 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Planning Commission Members -

I understand that the MMAC has sent the Environmental Impact Report and McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. I am writing in support of Life Plan Humboldt and the approval of the above documents, which will allow for the future development of this community. I believe that Life Plan Humboldt has already shown itself, throughout the planning process, to fit well, within the goals of the MMAC.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Stone

From: [Kelley Garrett](#)
To: [COB](#); [Mary Burke](#)
Cc: [Planning Clerk](#); [Madrone, Steve](#); [Ford, John](#); [editor@madriverunion.com](#); [editor@times-standard.com](#); [redheadedblackbelt@gmail.com](#); [dezmondremington@gmail.com](#); [Lauren@kmud.org](#); [Twila Sanchez](#); [Kate McClain](#); [Bonnie MacGregor](#); [Steven Saint Thomas](#)
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Rezone Ordinance & FEIR
Date: Sunday, August 24, 2025 9:45:28 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

To: McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee
Re: Town Center Ordinance & FEIR

Dear Committee Members,

I write to you ahead of the August 27 meeting because two or three minutes of oral public comment cannot capture the gravity of the decision before you. The Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the Town Center Ordinance is not adequate under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)— and more importantly, it is not adequate for McKinleyville.

The County has admitted that the EIR “did not influence the content of the Ordinance.” At the same time, all of the technical studies — traffic, noise, wetlands — are premised on buildout under that ordinance. This is the Catch-22 at the heart of the process: the ordinance is analyzed but never revised, and the studies exist but never shape the ordinance. The public is left with the illusion that its input shapes the project — and you, as decision-makers, are left with the illusion of choice. In truth, neither the ordinance nor the FEIR has been shaped by genuine participation.

This is not transparency, nor is it stewardship. The ordinance pre-approves up to six acres of wetland fill, directly conflicting with McKinleyville Community Plan Section 3422 Policy 15. The FEIR concedes two significant and unavoidable impacts — traffic noise and air emissions — yet dismisses feasible community-based alternatives as “outside the scope.” That is not what CEQA requires, nor what McKinleyville deserves.

A Possible Compromise and Solution Exists

Greg Pierson’s quid pro quo with the County is no longer the driver of this project. In fact, Anne Pierson’s nonprofit has indicated an intent to steward the parcel behind Safeway with ecological values and community input. In that context, wetland fill is neither necessary nor consistent with recently stated goals.

If the ordinance were revised to eliminate the proposed wetland fill behind Safeway, it would resolve the most glaring conflict with Community Plan Wetland Policy 15. This change would also:

-
- Substantially reduce the risk of litigation,
- Strengthen the County's legal position, and
- Allow other Town Center projects, including Life Plan Humboldt, to proceed with far greater security.

In addition, if the ordinance were amended to remove ministerial approvals and restore discretionary project review, it would ensure that McKinleyville retains oversight of future Town Center development. This would demonstrate good faith, preserve ecological values, safeguard democratic process, and clear the most serious legal clouds without unraveling the ordinance as a whole.

This ordinance was drafted by the County. MMAC made some modifications, but the broader community was relegated to three-minute comments. Now you are being asked to recommend certification of an FEIR that does not meet CEQA's standards. That is not fair to you, and it is not fair to McKinleyville.

As MMAC members, you carry both responsibility and opportunity. You can insist on an FEIR that truly informs the ordinance, honors the Community Plan, and preserves the values of our town. Recommending these corrections is not obstruction; it is leadership. It is the choice to build a Town Center on integrity rather than contradiction.

I urge you to take that stand.

Sincerely,

Kelley Garrett, McKinleyville resident and Environmental Planner (retired)

Legal Context

California law is clear:

- **CEQA requires one stable, accurate project description** (*County of Inyo v. City of Los Angeles* (1977)). This FEIR can't decide what the project is. At times, it describes the project as the ordinance itself; other times, as a broader "program of development." The FEIR assumes discretionary approvals with public hearings and tiered review, while the ordinance (Sec. 5.1) makes approvals ministerial — staff

sign-off, no hearings, no CEQA review. This contradiction leaves the project description unstable. Under CEQA, an unstable project description undermines the entire analysis and invalidates the EIR.

- **Ordinances are CEQA projects.** The California Supreme Court has held that even regulatory ordinances must undergo CEQA review because they carry environmental consequences (*Save the Plastic Bag Coalition v. City of Manhattan Beach* (2011) 52 Cal.4th 155). While the County has argued the ordinance is not ‘development,’ the fact remains: it authorizes the fill of wetlands and other physical changes. Under CEQA, that makes it a project, and it requires a legally adequate EIR with real alternatives analysis.
 - **Zoning must conform to the General Plan as it exists.** Government Code §65860 requires zoning ordinances to be consistent with the general plan in effect at the time of adoption. Courts have rejected attempts to “cure” inconsistencies after the fact (*Yost v. Thomas* (1984) 36 Cal.3d 561; *DeVita v. County of Napa* (1995) 9 Cal.4th 763). The Town Center ordinance redefines wetlands in a way that removes protection of marginal wetlands, creating a direct conflict with the McKinleyville Community Plan. Yet the FEIR relies on a future amendment to the Community Plan to resolve that conflict. CEQA and state law are clear: such after-the-fact cures are not permissible. The ordinance must be consistent with the Plan before it is adopted.
 - **CEQA also requires disclosure of conflicts.** CEQA Guidelines §15125(d) requires EIRs to identify inconsistencies with adopted plans. Courts have rejected “bootstrapping” compliance by assuming amendments (*San Franciscans for Livable Neighborhoods v. City and County of San Francisco* (2018) 26 Cal.App.5th 596). The FEIR’s approach is circular: it admits inconsistencies, then says amendments will fix them. That is not lawful disclosure — it is an evasion of CEQA’s requirements.
 - **Public must be able to trust the plan on the books.** In *Orange Citizens for Parks and Recreation v. Superior Court* (2016) 2 Cal.5th 141, the Supreme Court ruled that the public and decision makers are bound by the published plan, not unwritten or future amendments. The County’s strategy here erodes that trust.
-

Top 6 Most Egregious Dismissals of Comment in the McKinleyville Town Center FEIR

1. Wetland Preservation & Policy 15

Comment: How does the ordinance comply with McKinleyville Community Plan Section 3422 Policy 15 (“No development in wetlands on newly created parcels”)?

FEIR Response: Claimed Policy 15 doesn’t apply, invoked Policy 14 instead, and said wetlands can simply be relocated.

Problem: This dodges a direct policy conflict. CEQA requires disclosure of inconsistencies with adopted plans, not rewriting history to fit the ordinance.

2. Public Parks & Open Space

Comment: Where is the civic park promised in the Community Plan? Why are mitigation wetlands being counted as “open space”?

FEIR Response: “Mitigation wetlands can also serve as open space.”

Problem: Wetland mitigation sites are legally restricted — no dogs, no gatherings, no recreation. Calling them “parks” misleads the public and denies McKinleyville real civic space.

3. Project Scale & Density (2,600+ units / 6,000+ residents)

Comment: Can McKinleyville’s infrastructure handle this level of growth? What about schools, water, traffic?

FEIR Response: Labeled concerns as “general opposition” — “no further response required.”

Problem: Project scale drives cumulative impacts. Brushing this off evades analysis of real, foreseeable consequences.

4. Safety for Children Walking/Biking to School

Comment: Will the ordinance improve safety for kids traveling to McKinleyville Middle School?

FEIR Response: “Traffic safety is not a CEQA issue.”

Problem: CEQA routinely treats pedestrian hazards and circulation conflicts as environmental impacts. Dismissing this strips away the community’s most urgent safety concern.

5. Vacancy Tax & Infill-First Alternative

Comment: Why not incentivize redevelopment of vacant parcels before filling

wetlands?

FEIR Response: “The comment does not address specific issues with the analysis ... No further response is required.”

Problem: CEQA §15126.6 requires serious consideration of feasible alternatives that reduce impacts. Refusing to analyze this option is unlawful.

6. Ministerial Approvals

Comment: The ordinance converts all future approvals into ministerial zoning clearances (Sec. 5.1) — no hearings, no CEQA review, no public voice.

FEIR Response: “Concerns about the project description itself do not raise concerns about the analysis ... No further response is required.”

Problem: This is the unstable project description problem in plain sight. The FEIR assumes discretionary approvals (hearings, tiering), while the ordinance makes approvals ministerial. CEQA case law (*Inyo v. LA, Washoe Meadows*) says such contradictions invalidate the EIR.

The Pattern

Across every critical issue — wetlands, parks, housing, schools, safety, and public participation — the County used the same brush-offs:

- “Not CEQA.”
- “Not about the analysis.”
- “No further response is required.”

Dismissal is not analysis. These failures leave the FEIR fatally flawed and legally vulnerable.

From: [Kelley Garrett](#)
To: [COB](#)
Cc: [Bonnie MacGregor](#); [Kate McClain](#); [Steven Saint Thomas](#); [E Johnson](#); [Ford, John](#); [Madrone, Steve](#); [Wilson, Mike](#); [Arroyo, Natalie](#); [Planning Clerk](#); [Damico, Tracy](#); redheadedblackbelt@gmail.com; dezmondremington@gmail.com; Lauren@kmud.org; editor@madriverunion.com
Subject: Letter of Concern – July 30 MMAC Special Meeting – Town Center Agenda Item
Date: Friday, July 25, 2025 12:10:45 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Members of the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee,

As residents of McKinleyville, we respectfully submit this letter of comment in advance of the July 30, 2025 MMAC Special Meeting. Regarding Item 7a, we are writing to express deep concern about the agenda's inclusion of MMAC's consideration of the Town Center Ordinance and Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR), for the purpose of making a recommendation to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

As of this writing, the FEIR—including the County's required written responses to comments submitted on the Draft Environmental Impact Report—has not been released to the public. Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the County is required to make the FEIR available to the public for a minimum of **10 days** prior to certification or recommendation by a decision-making body. This is codified in **CEQA Guidelines § 15088(b)**, and is further supported by Humboldt County's own procedures for EIR circulation.

Without public access to the Final EIR and the response to comments, MMAC cannot possibly make an informed or representative recommendation. Nor can the community provide meaningful input on the adequacy of the County's responses to environmental, procedural, and policy concerns raised during the Draft EIR comment period. To proceed under these circumstances would undermine both the spirit and letter of CEQA—and erode public trust in the Town Center planning process.

We urge the MMAC to **postpone any recommendation or action** related to the Town Center FEIR and ordinance until:

1. The Final Environmental Impact Report and responses to public comments are **formally released**, and
2. The public has been granted the legally required **10-day review period** following that release.

MMAC serves a vital role as a conduit for community voice. Please ensure that voice is informed, timely, and grounded in a transparent process.

Sincerely,
Kelley Garrett

Bonnie MacGregor

Kate McClain

Steven Saint Thomas

Elaine Johnson

August 17, 2023

Dear Director Ford and Members of the McKinleyville Advisory Committee,

Over the course of MMAC meetings addressing the Town Center Ordinance I have expressed concerns about how elements of the proposed Ordinance are out of compliance with the McKinleyville Community Plan. I am putting my concerns in writing now so these concerns can be recorded and in hopes that the Ordinance can be brought into compliance before being moved forward any further.

Design Review

The McKinleyville Community Plan (MCP) calls for the development of a Design Review Committee to create design standards and a design ordinance which develops clear development standards. These standards are to be consistent with the overall principles, objectives and policies of the entire General Plan. [section 2640 Design Review]

This is a significant section of the McKinleyville Community Plan (MCP) which was the result of much discussion and compromise in its conception and in the course of its approval. The current decision to eliminate both the design committee and the separate design ordinance should have gone through an amendment process. These ordinances were to be complimentary policies for Use /Zoning and Design which would keep the decisions for the appearance of the Town Center in the hands of the citizens of McKinleyville.

While much of the work of such a design committee has been accomplished in the development of Section 5 of the proposed Town Center Ordinance the MMAC is not a policy-making body so cannot substitute for a design review committee.

And, while a form-based set of standards would allow for a review for compliance rather than a design review for each project, the proposed Ordinance allows for requests for deviance from the design standards [Section 5.1.3.4]. The problem is that these decisions on these requests are proposed to be made to the Planning Commission as a Conditional Use Permit, thus taking appearance and design decisions out of the purview of the McKinleyville community.

This defies the spirit, principles, objectives and policies of the entire McKinleyville Community Plan which seeks to put decisions for the future of the community in the community.

Suggested remedies:

To be in compliance with the law, have each member of the MMAC, Director Ford, Anne Pierson, and the McKinleyville Chamber of Commerce choose a member for the Design Review Committee [there may be others who should be on this committee.]

This committee would work with the form-based standard format to assess the standards already developed, add anything they find missing, and finalize the standards to be included in the Town Center Ordinance package.

This committee would then only be activated again when there is a request to deviate from the design standards. This would keep the appearance and design decisions in the community while still eliminating the necessity for individual project review.

If we can stay in compliance with the McKinleyville Community Plan with the Town Center Ordinance then we will have a legal framework to hold us until either the town is incorporated or there is a time to go through a properly conducted amendment or update of the McKinleyville Community Plan.

Thank you,

Bonnie MacGregor



July 5, 2023

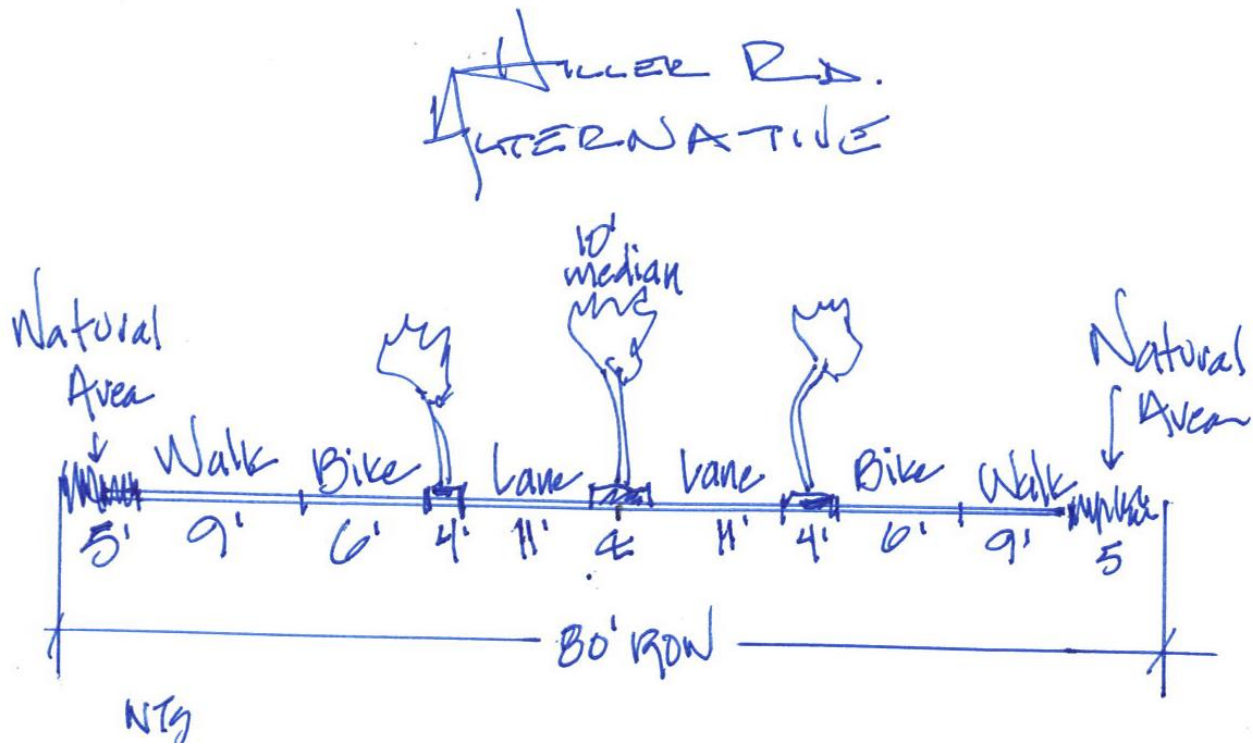
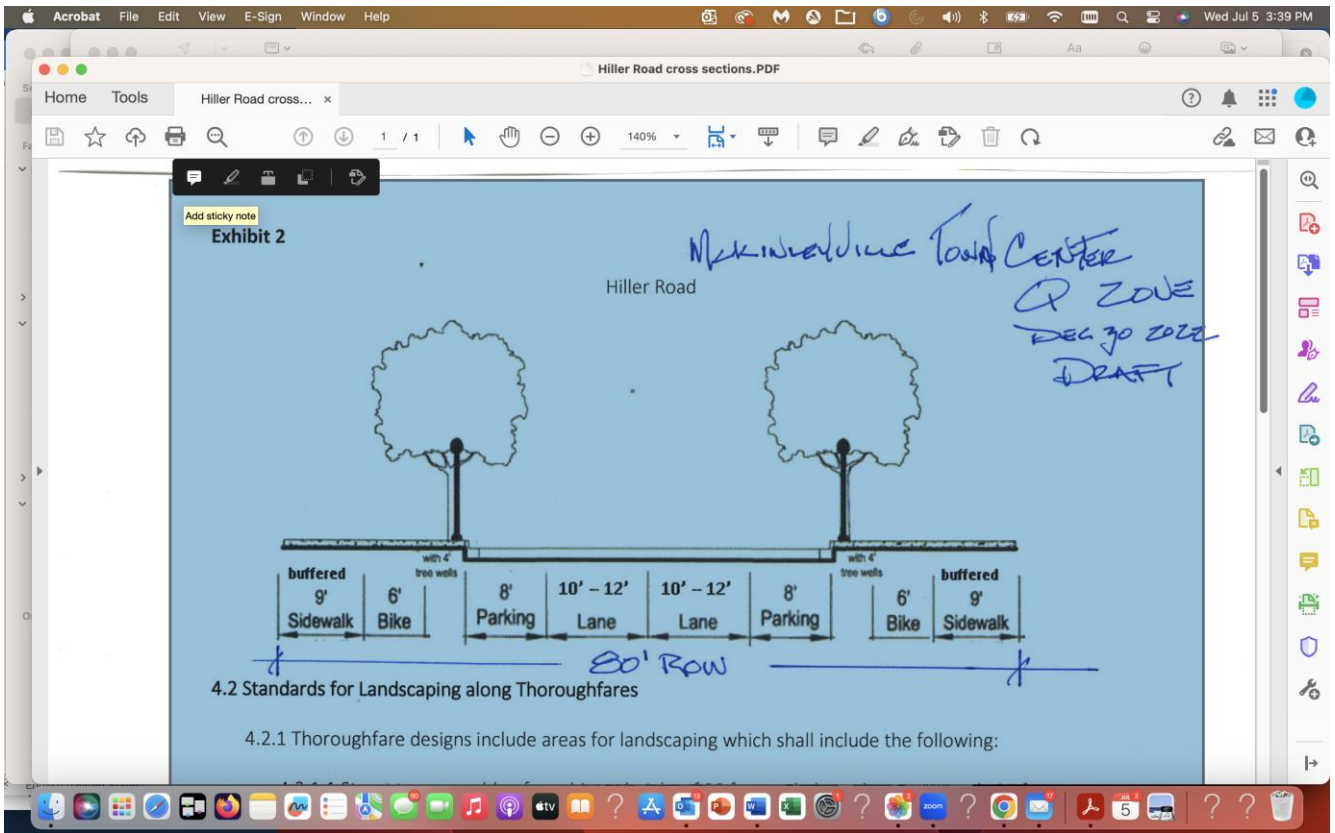
2475 North Bank Rd.
McKinleyville, CA 95519

Dear McKinleyville Advisory Committee and Planning Department Staff:

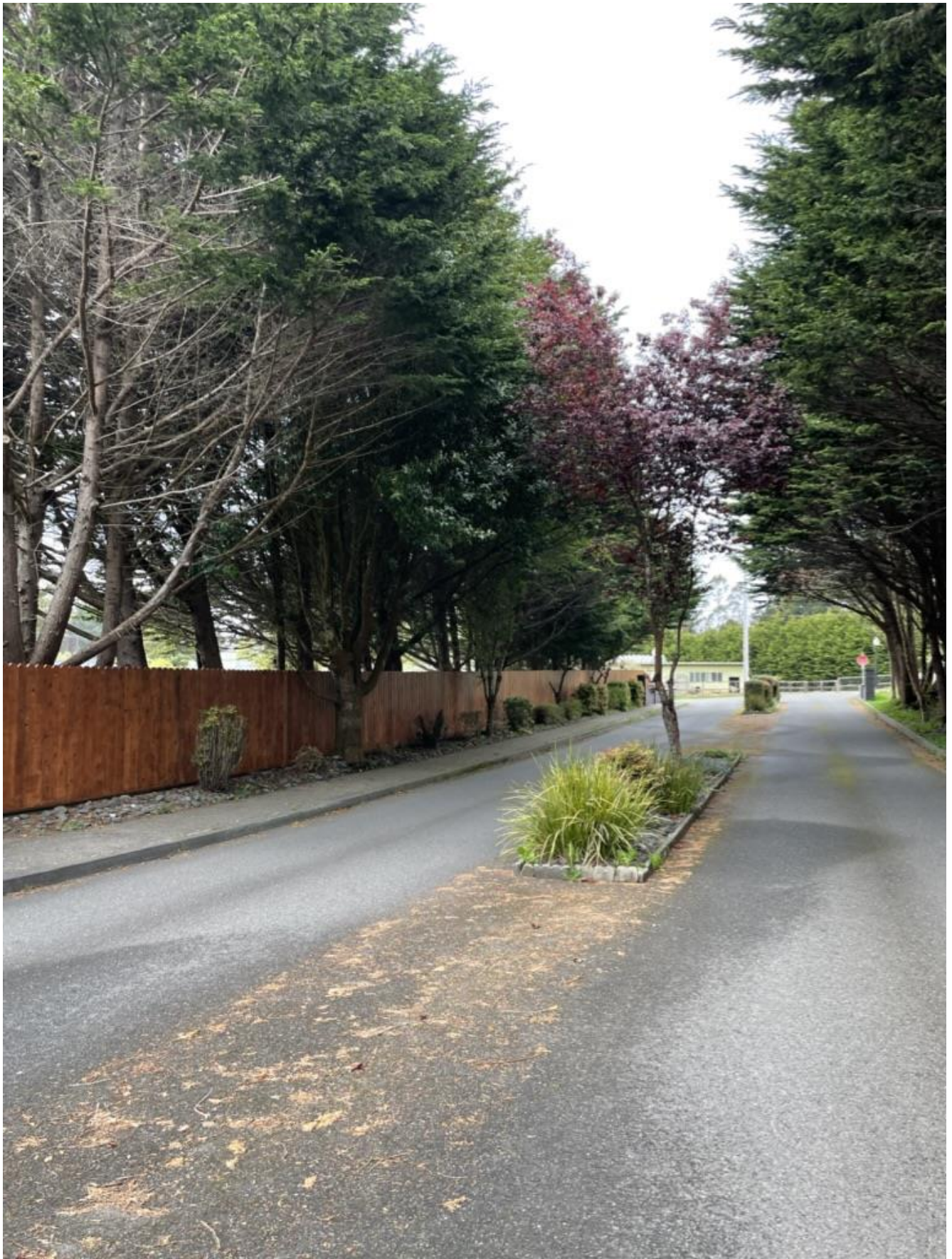
Life Plan Humboldt would like to suggest you keep an option open for Hiller Road that would beautify the street and facilitate pedestrian street crossing safety. LPH is purchasing the entire Pierson property south of Hiller and will be developing senior housing such that residents can age in community. Plans do not call for commercial development on that site. The McKinleyville Town Center Q zone document under consideration calls for parking along both sides of Hiller (Hiller Road Standards for Landscaping Along the Thoroughfare, p 16). We request you leave the option open for eliminating street parking, at least on the south side, to allow for placing a planted center strip in the middle of the road. Life Plan Humboldt will have landscaping staff that could maintain the center strip. I have attached what the current draft document includes, a proposed alternative and photos of a street in McKinleyville with a planted center strip.

Sincerely,

Ann Lindsay, President Life Plan Humboldt







From: [Karen Kersey](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Support Life Plan Humboldt
Date: Friday, September 12, 2025 7:08:30 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Please help the McKinleyville Life Plan Humboldt move forward with the development of Humboldt Commons and allow this Affordable Senior Housing project to keep on schedule and on budget. I am urging a positive vote for a top notch project.

Thank you for your consideration,

Karen D. Kersey

From: [Kathleen Stone](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Support for Life Plan Humboldt
Date: Friday, September 12, 2025 2:02:00 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Planning Commission Members -

I understand that the MMAC has sent the Environmental Impact Report and McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. I am writing in support of Life Plan Humboldt and the approval of the above documents, which will allow for the future development of this community. I believe that Life Plan Humboldt has already shown itself, throughout the planning process, to fit well, within the goals of the MMAC.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Stone

From: [Laurel Stiffler](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Life Plan Humboldt
Date: Saturday, September 13, 2025 6:38:19 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

I'm a 76 year-old woman living in Mckinleyville I own a home I have no family who will step into Shepherd me through The decrepitude of extreme old age I need Life Plan Humboldt to be a viable option for me in the next few years please please do everything in your power to make this a reality. A lot of of us are counting on it thank you.

From: [CJ Ralph](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: In favor of Life Plan Humboldt (aka Humboldt Commons).
Date: Sunday, September 14, 2025 11:45:22 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Planning Folks,

I am urging you to approve without delay the Town Center Final Environmental Impact Report and passage of the proposed McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance. I feel that this would have a marked positive impact on our community.

Thank you for your consideration!

Kind regards,

/s/ C.J. Ralph

--

CJ Ralph, 1710 Camellia Drive, McKinleyville, California 95519 707
499-9707 home: 707 822-2015

From: [Ann Lindsay](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Comments relevant to your 9/18/25 agenda
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 9:38:30 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

I am writing to urge you at your 9/18 meeting to accept the McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance and FEIR as approved by MMAC on 9/10/25. MMAC has worked for over 5 years with ample community input to craft a plan for Town Center development that will foster viable business and residential development while promoting non-motorized transportation and community engagement. Life Plan Humboldt has participated in this process and has fashioned our planned development of market rate and affordable senior housing in accordance to the Ordinance, including mitigation and enhancement of wetlands on the property south of Hiller Rd. We feel our planned development is consistent with the proposed Ordinance as well as the existing McKinleyville Community Plan and urge you not to be dissuaded from approval by a minority opinion to the contrary. Furthermore, the Ordinance and Community Plan will ensure that the larger vacant property north of Hiller Road will also be developed with carefully planned wetland mitigation and enhancement. Studies by GHD have shown existing wetlands to be of low quality and enhancing the quality would be environmentally beneficial.

Ann Lindsay MD

From: [Ashton Pease](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#); [Bohn, Rex](#); [Bushnell, Michelle](#); [Wilson, Mike](#); [Arroyo, Natalie](#); [Madrone, Steve](#)
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 4:26:16 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Please adopt the McKinleyville Town Center ordinance as written. The MMAC and the McKinleyville community have worked hard to develop the ordinance over the last six years. The result is a thoughtful document that will help catalyze development of a successful Town Center. Of course not everyone agrees on everything in the ordinance, but reopening old debates at this stage in the planning process would be counterproductive. McKinleyville deserves a safe, vibrant, welcoming Town Center, not just another spot on the side of the road. To accomplish that goal, Central Avenue itself must be redesigned, so drivers know they are entering an important, active public space, and should slow down and pay attention.

A lane conversion is needed on Central Avenue. The current five-lane street is too wide, fast, and dangerous. It's a major obstacle for anyone who wants to walk or bike in the area. For kids, seniors, and many other people to be safe and comfortable walking across the street or biking along Central, two of the current lanes need to be converted to safe, protected bike lanes.

The MMAC voted in support of the Central Avenue redesign after years of public discussions. There's no reason to revisit that hard-won agreement now. Lane conversions like this (aka "road diets") are an effective, widely implemented, and well-studied treatment. They make streets safer and increase the success of local businesses. And contrary to what some have speculated, they rarely have any negative impacts.

Regards,

Ashton Pease

From: cemone@reninet.com
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Cc: [Madrone, Steve](#)
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Plan
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 5:00:18 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello Planners,

I am happy to hear that the McKinleyville Town Center is finally going to be humanized! McKinleyville deserves to be more than a strip mall. For over forty years I have watched how the current development has not been supportive of community as the population has grown.

After literal years (6) of public input and discussion, the MMAC has voted in support of the Central Avenue redesign. So-called "road diets" have been studied extensively in other places and work well. So let's just do it here!

Please adopt the McKinleyville Town Center ordinance as written. The MMAC and the McKinleyville community have worked hard to develop the ordinance. Let's honor their work.

Carol E. Moné,
Trinidad

From: Claire Perricelli
To: [Planning Clerk](#); [Bohn, Rex](#); [Bushnell, Michelle](#); [Wilson, Mike](#); [Arroyo, Natalie](#); [Madrone, Steve](#)
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 3:44:33 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Please adopt the McKinleyville Town Center ordinance as written.

The MMAC and the McKinleyville community have worked hard to develop the ordinance over the last six years. The result is a thoughtful document that will help catalyze development of a successful Town Center. Not everyone agrees on everything in the ordinance, but reopening old debates at this stage in the planning process would be counterproductive. Now is the time for action for the future well being of the community.

Having a more pedestrian and bicycle friendly town will serve everyone over time. As Life Plan Humboldt develops it will make a huge difference to those of us who plan/hope to spend our final years there. It should also serve WeAreUp well as they develop their multigenerational living plan.

Thank you for your attention to this issue. Claire Perricelli, current Eureka resident with an eye on McKinleyville

From: [Joseph Zazo](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Fwd: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 2:54:40 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Thank you for considering,
- Joseph Zazo

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Joseph Zazo** <jz93@humboldt.edu>
Date: Mon, Sep 15, 2025, 2:21 PM
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors
To: <planningclerk@co.humboldt.co.us>, <rbohn@co.humboldt.ca.us>, <mbushnell@co.humboldt.ca.us>, <mike.Wilson@co.humboldt.ca.us>, <narroyo@co.humboldt.ca.us>, <smadrone@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Please support the redesign as is. I think it's a lovely idea. I remember being a child during my parents errands and work through McKinleyville. It never felt lively or safe, then or now. I'm happy to see us moving in a more thoughtful direction for future generations to experience a better, safer McKinleyville.

Thank you for considering my opinion and for the work you do.

~ Joseph Zazo

From: [Misael Ramos Carrasco](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Fwd: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 2:50:50 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Good afternoon,

I am a resident of Eureka and one who currently lives in an older home who would like one day to live in a more efficient dwelling worthy of modernization by way of a home energy system and other similar amenities that I cannot justify putting into my current home.

I would love to see the the McKinleyville Town Center ordinance approved as currently written in accordance with the assessment of the situation put forth by the coalition for responsible transportation priorities. The ordinance as written will create a modern walkable and naturally community oriented and human scale development where it is desperately needed.

Thank you,

Misael Ramos C.
W. Buhne St. Eureka

From: [Pat Thomas](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Life Plan Project
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 1:43:30 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Commissioners

I am writing in support of the Life Plan Project planned for McKinleyville. This project will give needed housing for seniors in a desirable setting and location.

Please approve at your next meeting

Patricia Thomas
1881 Bartow Road
McKinleyville CA 95519
pthomas3551@gmail.com

From: [Patrick Carr](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#); [Bohn, Rex](#); [Bushnell, Michelle](#); [Wilson, Mike](#); [Arroyo, Natalie](#); [Madrone, Steve](#)
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 3:12:36 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

I'm a resident of Arcata who does a lot of my shopping and visiting with friends in McKinleyville. I appreciate the approach that's been taken in planning the McKinleyville Town Center. We need more focus on pedestrian-focused town design, while accounting for the continuing need for parking, and I believe that the mix that's proposed here is the right one.

Thanks for considering my input.

Patrick Carr
1704 Virginia Way
Arcata

From: [shauna.mckenna](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Action Needed: Approval of Life Plan Humboldt Project
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 10:28:17 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

September 15, 2026

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I am writing to urge your approval of the McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance and FEIR which will guide the development of **Life Plan Humboldt (LPH)**. This crucial and thoughtfully developed project aligns with the county's goals and will bring significant community benefits.

This project is the result of five years of careful planning and public input. It will be the first development in the McKinleyville Town Center, acting as a catalyst for economic activity and creating a new hub for social and community interaction.

The project and the Ordinance also directly support the **Humboldt Climate Action Plan** by encouraging walking and biking. LPH will extend the Mid-town Trail and build a new bike and sidewalk trail along Hiller Road, creating vital public infrastructure and reducing reliance on cars. Residents of **Humboldt Commons**, the community LPH is developing, will be able to meet their basic needs and socialize without getting in their cars.

Furthermore, the project will help address the housing crisis by providing a senior living community that, in partnership with Rural Community Housing, will include low-income senior rental units on the same campus. This will not only provide much-needed homes for seniors—the fastest-growing group of homeless individuals in the area—but also free up existing housing for working families.

Finally, there is currently no other resident-driven life plan community like this within 200 miles. All homes will be designed for those who are mobility-challenged, addressing a critical need in our community.

To move forward without further delay, LPH needs the **Humboldt County Planning Commission's** acceptance and the **Board of Supervisors'** adoption of the **Town Center Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR)** and the passage of the proposed **McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance**.

Your timely review and approval are essential for this project. We have been planning for five years and are ready to begin construction, which will positively impact the community for generations to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Shauna McKenna

650-346-4671
LPH Volunteer

From: [Jennifer Kalt](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Fwd: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 9:57:04 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I have lived in McKinleyville since 1992 and was thrilled when the Municipal Advisory Committee was formed to advise the Planning Commission, finally giving us a voice in planning issues that affect our town.

I am writing to urge you to adopt the McKinleyville Town Center ordinance as written. The MMAC has worked hard for six years with input from many community members over many years. It reflects thoughtful deliberation and compromise that has been achieved after many public meetings.

The idea of a Town Center was first adopted in the 2002 McKinleyville Community Plan after 10 years of meetings. One thing people agreed on back then was that McKinleyville needs and deserves a safe and welcoming Town Center, and a critical element of a Town Center is that it must be a place where people of all ages feel safe and enjoy walking and bicycling. The best way to achieve this is to redesign Central Avenue as recommended by the MMAC.

The Central Avenue redesign will be good for businesses and for people who live and work in McKinleyville. Even if you drive, you become a pedestrian the minute you step out of your car.

Please support the MMAC's recommendations and approve the Town Center ordinance as written.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Kalt
McKinleyville

From: [julie neander](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Support for the McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 9:54:09 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

September 15, 2025

To: Humboldt County Planning Commissioners

Iver Skavdal	District 1
Thomas Mulder	District 2
Noah Levy	District 3
Jerome Qiriaz	District 4
Peggy O'Neill	District 5
Lorna McFarlane	At-Large
Sarah West	At-Large

Hello Planning Commissioners,

I am writing to ask you to adopt the McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance as written and support the Central Avenue Redesign to make Central Avenue much safer for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. The McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee (MMAC) has spent 6 years and numerous public meetings, workshops, and surveys to develop the current vision and strong draft ordinance for our future Town Center. One very important aspect to the plan and ordinance is the reconfiguration of Central Avenue from a four-lane roadway to a three-lane roadway with bike lanes to improve vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle safety.

Research conducted by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) found that four-lane to three-lane road conversions reduce the total number of crashes by 19 to 47 percent.

The reduction in lanes :

- <!--[if !supportLists]-->○ <!--[endif]-->Calms traffic
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->○ <!--[endif]-->Reduces weaving between lanes
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->○ <!--[endif]-->Improves side street vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle crossing safety
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->○ <!--[endif]-->Can improve emergency response time as emergency response vehicles can utilize the two-way left turn lane as an emergency travel lane
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->○ <!--[endif]-->Provides a dedicated space for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities, which can increase motorists recognition that they are using the roadway

As we look toward increasing housing and businesses in McKinleyville's town center, opportunities for folks to get to and enjoy open space, parks, and our local businesses is vital for any community. Being able to access those features safely is critical. The proposed road changes increase safety for all of us.

Thank you for supporting the community minded friendly town center plan developed by the MMAC and making our region's third-largest community safer, more walkable,/bikeable, and business and climate friendly.

Julie Neander
Fischer Avenue, McKinleyville

From: [Nancy Ihara](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#); [Bohn, Rex](#); [Bushnell, Michelle](#); [Wilson, Mike](#); [Arroyo, Natalie](#); [Madrone, Steve](#)
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 7:20:32 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello,

I support the McKinleyville Town Center ordinance as it is written. This ordinance was developed after years of public input and participation. It would be wrong, I feel, to disregard all the debate and discussion that took place over these years and make changes at this time.

I do not live in McKinleyville but I look forward to the experience of visiting and shopping in a community where cars do not dominate to the extent which they do today. I look forward to a community where pedestrians and bicyclists "share the road". I can imagine this Town Center being a model for other communities in our county and throughout the country.

Sincerely,

Nancy Ihara

From: [Nancy Stevens](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#); [Bohn, Rex](#); [Bushnell, Michelle](#); [Wilson, Mike](#); [Arroyo, Natalie](#); [Madrone, Steve](#)
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 8:41:31 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors,

I am writing in support of the McKinleyville Town Ordinance as it is currently written, which includes the Central Avenue redesign (approved by the MMAC).

Best,
Nancy Stevens
707-832-9963

From: marcochaton@gmail.com
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Comment on Agenda Item
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 9:47:48 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Greetings,

I am writing to comment on the September 18, 2025 agenda item F.3. (25-1130) McKinleyville Town Center Zoning Amendment Ordinance and would like to encourage the Commission to **approve and accept** the recommendations of the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee.

The McMAC has spent many years crafting and adjusting the proposed ordinance and have come up with a good solution for creating a vibrant and healthy town center in McKinleyville, my home. I currently live on Dows Prairie but look forward to moving into the Town Center at Humboldt Commons (Life Plan Humboldt) in the coming years and want a safe and convenient center to walk, shop and eat. Besides having thriving businesses within walking distance of my home, making Central Ave. safe for older seniors as well as young people is key, and I encourage you to make sure that crafting Central Ave. into a three-lane (from current 5-lane) thoroughfare through the Town Center is a priority.

Thank you for your support and the work you do to make our County wonderful.

Marc Chaton
marcochaton@gmail.com

From: [John Calkins](#)
To: [COB](#); [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Support for McKinleyville Town Center Zoning Ordinance
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 11:30:21 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Greeting Board of Supervisors and Planning Commissioners,

I am writing to affirm support for the McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance as passed by the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee (MMAC) on September 10th. I am a McKinleyville resident and have attended a majority of the MMAC meetings over the last 4 years. Attending these meetings has given me the opportunity to learn from planning experts like Dan Burden, why a road diet is critical to not only vehicular and pedestrian safety, but also to increasing business revenues in the town center. Hopefully at some point roundabouts will also be considered for the efficiency they bring and further reductions in accident frequency and severity. Roundabouts would reduce congestion.

Please pass the Town Center Ordinance with the current traffic calming configuration. Give McKinleyville the chance to experience a thriving economic downtown that is a safe and desired place for our families to live, work, and play. Traffic calming in the town center area is an integral part of making that happen.

Sincerely,

Johnny Calkins

(707) 496-0706 Cell

From: [stacy gillespie](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Re: Support McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 4:10:28 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Planning Clerk: Resending the below which had an incorrect email address for you.

From: stacy gillespie <stacygillespie@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 10:27 PM
To: planningclerk@co.humboldt.co.us <planningclerk@co.humboldt.co.us>;
rbohn@co.humboldt.ca.us <rbohn@co.humboldt.ca.us>; mbushnell@co.humboldt.ca.us
<mbushnell@co.humboldt.ca.us>; mike.Wilson@co.humboldt.ca.us
<mike.Wilson@co.humboldt.ca.us>; narroyo@co.humboldt.ca.us <narroyo@co.humboldt.ca.us>;
smadrone@co.humboldt.ca.us <smadrone@co.humboldt.ca.us>
Subject: Support McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance

Dear Members of the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors,

I submit this comment in support of adopting the McKinleyville Town Center Zoning Amendment as conceptually proposed. Years of careful planning and hard work have gone into it, resulting in a creative vision that includes designating a majority of the Town Center for mixed uses and transforming Central Avenue from a “freeway” into a cohesive, welcoming town center.

The traffic calming and redesign elements are ambitious, and they’re necessary. The current five-lane layout feels unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists. This proposal improves safety, walkability, and community character—strengthening the many reasons people choose to live in McKinleyville. The town has been evolving for the better over the past couple of decades, and this project has the potential to create a town center that’s both functional and inviting for everyone.

I recognize that many residents prefer the status quo, and their concerns are valid policy considerations for the County. Many of the public’s non-CEQA policy comments also raise important issues beyond opposition to the “traffic diet,” including broader considerations for preserving and enhancing the town’s attractive rural character and open space. While the FEIR correctly notes that CEQA doesn’t require a response to comments that do not raise significant environmental issues, I urge the Board to acknowledge these non-CEQA comments, even generally as in the staff presentation. Simply leaving them in the record without acknowledgment is insufficient, as it runs contrary to good governance, transparency, and responsiveness. Addressing these comments will demonstrate that decision-making is more than procedural, show that community concerns are heard, and help foster public trust—which is especially appropriate for this long-term, transformative project that will shape

McKinleyville for generations.

Overall, I believe aspiring beyond the current status quo is a worthwhile endeavor that should be pursued and support adoption of the proposal as written.

Thank you for your consideration.

Stacy Gillespie
McKinleyville

From: [Kathleen Clark](#)
To: [Bohn, Rex](#); [Bushnell, Michelle](#); [Wilson, Mike](#); [Arroyo, Natalie](#); [Madrone, Steve](#); [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 8:05:35 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello,

I lived in McKinleyville from 1991-1994. I then moved to San Jose to care for my grandmother, and have now, finally returned to McKinleyville! I have lived in several neighborhoods that underwent "road diets"... I know from experience, It is a hard concept for some, and is often not welcomed by neighbors initially, who don't want things to change... But change is inevitable... and populations are growing. It is the responsibility of our leaders to plan for the future, and make the hard decisions that are in the best interest of our community. It may not be accepted by all today, but it is necessary.

The "road diet" will take some getting used to, but in the long run, it is a much better choice. Creating a community that will accomodate a growing senior community, new residential developments, more retail, etc will require safety measures to ensure that pedestrians, bicyclists, children on their way to and from school, etc are protected. As this community grows over time, it is our responsibility as community members to plan for the future, and not think only of what is convenient to us today.

With appreciation,

Kathleen (Stahr) Clark
408-786-8513
1664 Fischer Avenue

From: [Marie Clark](#)
To: [Bohn, Rex](#); [Bushnell, Michelle](#); [Wilson, Mike](#); [Arroyo, Natalie](#); [Madrone, Steve](#); [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Re: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 6:20:30 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

I believe I had the clerk's email incorrect.

Marie

On Tue, Sep 16, 2025 at 8:19 AM Marie Clark <clarkmarie525@gmail.com> wrote:

Hello,

I'm new to McKinleyville and LOVE living here! I would love to support more local businesses but I don't feel safe biking up Central. I end up getting in my car and just drive to Arcata or Eureka. I understand a "road diet" helps move traffic along, it doesn't stop it.

A lane conversion is needed on Central Avenue. The current five-lane street is too wide, fast, and dangerous. It's a major obstacle for anyone who wants to walk or bike in the area. For kids, seniors, and many other people to be safe and comfortable walking across the street or biking along Central, two of the current lanes need to be converted to safe, protected bike lanes.

Thank you for considering my opinion. Please let the support for this change stay and move forward.

With appreciation,

Marie Clark
408-960-5166
1664 Fischer Avenue (I consider my address confidential information-please do not document online)

From: [Carol Rische](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance
Date: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 11:46:18 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Humboldt County Planning Commission,

Thank you for the good work you do for Humboldt County and our community.

I am not one who normally comments on projects before your commission. I urge you to approve the McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance and certify the EIR. The ordinance and subsequent projects are critically important, not only to McKinleyville, but also our region more broadly. It will significantly increase housing stock, create small businesses and economic opportunity, and allow construction of Life Plan Humboldt, the first Continuing Care Retirement Community within hundreds of miles, providing an important option for senior living *right here*.

It's Time to Move Forward

The Town Center concept originated decades ago. It was included in the McKinleyville Area Plan which was adopted 23 years ago (Dec 2002). The goals outlined for the Town Center were to:

- establish a unique identity for McKinleyville through the development of a viable town center, serving as a community focal point and providing a center for social/community interaction.
- develop an area of mixed land uses which encourages bicycle and pedestrian travel, yet allows for convenient and safe automobile access.

Development of the Humboldt County Town Center Ordinance started six years ago in 2019. The final ordinance results from years of thoughtful planning by County staff, and significant involvement and input from stakeholders and community members.

There has been significant community input and involvement the entire way. Two Citizen Advisory Committee worked on the plan in the early years - 19 diverse community members served and provided input and guidance. More recently, the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee has considered and provided much input to the Ordinance. And they provided an important forum for the community to participate and provide input via community surveys, and dozens of informational meetings and hearings.

The McKinleyville Community Advisory Committee *unanimously approved* the McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance at their last meeting.

Central Avenue Question

I understand some community members are urging denial given proposed changes to Central Avenue. There is no reason to delay adoption of the Ordinance and revisit this issue given the extensive planning and public input process which has already occurred. Again, McK MAC unanimously approved the ordinance with the proposed changes to Central Avenue.

I realize it is a significant change to a *section of* Central Avenue, and change can be hard. But what's the implication? It will increase the time to "get through" McKinleyville on Central Avenue. I assume most likely by a matter of minutes? While I live in Fieldbrook, I am in McKinleyville three or four times every week - shopping, eating, walking my dog, and attending Mad River Rotary meetings. I can afford a few extra minutes each and every trip.

More importantly, the proposed change is for the broader good. It will create a safer and calmer environment in and near the new town center. It will significantly increase pedestrian and biker safety for everyone, but especially children and seniors. Quick story... just this week, I was in McKinleyville when McK Middle School let out. Dozens of children were walking or riding their bikes. One young girl stood out. She was riding a motorized scooter, against traffic with no helmet - traffic was whizzing by her at 35 to 40 miles per hour.

LifePlan Humboldt

As already mentioned, this will provide a new and critically needed senior living option in our community. Approval of the town center ordinance is necessary to allow the project to proceed. LPH has already been hit with significant cost increases, and further delays will add to that. Please do not compromise this important project.

Thank you for opportunity to comment, respectfully

Carol Rische

Fieldbrook Resident
retired General Manager of the Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District

From: [Carol Schmitt](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Fwd: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors
Date: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 10:25:26 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Forwarding as had wrong email for you. Thank you for adding my comments to this important matter.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Carol Schmitt <csaschmitt@gmail.com>
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors
Date: September 16, 2025 at 7:35:35 AM PDT
To: planningclerk@co.humboldt.co.us, rbohn@co.humboldt.ca.us, mbushnell@co.humboldt.ca.us, mike.Wilson@co.humboldt.ca.us, narroyo@co.humboldt.ca.us, smadrone@co.humboldt.ca.us

Hello Supervisors and Commissioners,

I am a McKinleyville resident and am writing to express my full support the solid proposed Town Center Ordinance and, in particular, the traffic calming measures proposed.

The roads in question are not just short cuts to somewhere else, to be traveled at high speeds without regard to neighbors, visitors, and retailers. We have an opportunity to support walkers, bikers, runners, and children of all ages who appreciate how getting out of your truck or car creates more opportunities for businesses while making it safer for everyone.

We have a beautiful community. Like 1000s of other communities nationwide, the growing benefits to health and well-being of creating public spaces that are designed with people in mind and not automobiles is a boon for local economies. It's also healthier for the environment and everyone living here.

Traffic calming is one small part of climate adaptation. As we are seeing more climate refugees moving and vacationing North, creating these havens for strolling, biking, walking, and enjoying will make our community more valuable in the years to come.

Thank you for voting to make McKinleyville a community kids of all ages can enjoy at their own pace...

Sincerely,

Carol Schmitt
749 Montana Road

McKinleyville, CA 95519

From: [Erika Demers](#)
To: planningclerk@co.humboldt.ca.us; [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Fwd: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors
Date: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 6:34:15 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Forwarding this to the correct email for the planning clerk.

Erika (she, her, hers)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Erika Demers** <erikademers83@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Sep 17, 2025 at 6:28 AM
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors
To: <planningclerk@co.humboldt.co.us>, <rbohn@co.humboldt.ca.us>, <mbushnell@co.humboldt.ca.us>, <mike.Wilson@co.humboldt.ca.us>, <narroyo@co.humboldt.ca.us>, <smadrone@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Good morning

I am in support of slowing traffic for our town center. I live in McKinleyville and have for 20 years. We need a center that is accessible for everyone.

Thanks and hoping to move forward with this beautiful vision to have a center some day that could be a place for are community to connect and build together.

Thanks for all your hard work and appreciate your considerations. Take care

Erika (she, her, hers)

Wesley Chesbro
P0 Box 2691
1714 Bella Vista Rd
Mckinleyville CA 95519

Humboldt County Planning Commissioner Iver Skavdal

3015 H St

Eureka CA 95501

Dear Commissioner Skavdal-

As a resident and property owner in Mckinleyville I am writing to ask you to vote to adopt the Mckinleyville Town Center Plan as approved by the Mckinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee (McKMAC), including traffic calming for Central Ave and the higher housing densities that the plan proposes.

First, let me address traffic calming, by describing one of the most terrifying driving experiences I've ever had in over 50 years as a driver. A few months ago I was driving up Central Avenue in the right hand lane driving north. As I approached a crosswalk the pedestrian crossing flashing lights went off as two teenagers entered the crosswalk so I stopped for them.

As the two pedestrians stepped into the crosswalk I looked in my rearview mirror and saw a vehicle in the left lane proceeding at full speed. As I was blocking their view, the kids appeared to not see the approaching car and the driver to my left clearly did not see the teens.

As I panicked trying to decide in seconds what if anything I could do, the other car flew past missing those kids by inches. A moment's difference and I would have been witness to two tragic pedestrian deaths.

There is no reason why the main thoroughfare through the center of our town needs to be as wide as Highway 101 as it passes through Eureka on South Broadway. Four traffic lanes together with an extremely wide center turn lane create a dangerous crossing for children, our elders and people with disabilities.

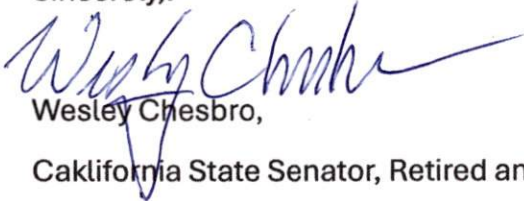
My wife is one of a number of Mckinleyville residents who due to their disabilities must use mobility devices to navigate our community. She uses an electric scooter and we have a neighbor up the street who is confined to a power chair and regularly travels up Central. All of these individuals face major challenges to their safety when they cross Central Avenue.

When compared to their safety and that of kids, Mom's pushing baby carriages and our elders, having the inconvenience of an extra minute or two to reach the shopping Center should pale by comparison.

I also strongly support the higher density housing designation that the McKMAC has proposed. Along with the Life Plan Senior Housing project, the Town Center Plan housing proposal will help to meet Humboldt County's pressing housing needs while creating a more vibrant business environment for downtown McKinleyville.

The Municipal Advisory Committee has put in years of work and public discussion. The Town Center Plan offers a balanced and well thought out vision for the future of McKinleyville.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wesley Chesbro", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Wesley Chesbro,

California State Senator, Retired and

Resident of McKinleyville

From: [Gordon Leppig](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for County Planning Commission
Date: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 4:06:44 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Humboldt County Planning Commissioners,

I am writing in full support of the McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance as written, including the much-needed lane conversion “road diet” on Central Avenue.

McKinleyville has been my home for over 30 years. While I am an active cyclist, bike commuter, and pedestrian on Central Ave., I also drive Central Ave. often enough. Central Ave. does not need five driving lanes. The automobile traffic on Central Ave. is fast and five lanes of traffic makes it feel unsafe to cross the road or bike on it because it actually is unsafe. I have former colleagues who used to live just east of Central Ave. but would always drive to the stores on the westside of Central because they never felt safe walking.

I believe that if we build separate dedicated bike lanes, then many more people will find it safe to get out of their cars and bike and walk. Pedestrian use will expand and central McKinleyville will become a much more pleasant, quieter, safer, integrated, and resilient community, while still having plenty of road left for automobiles to move freely.

Finally, 1) the MMAC voted in support of the Central Ave. redesign; 2) this lane conversion has had years of analysis and public comment; 3) lane conversions such as this, are shown to be effective in increasing traffic safety and making towns more livable, walkable and bikeable with few negative consequences.

Thank you for all you do,
Gordon Leppig

McClenagan, Laura

From: Cherie Newell <cherienewell55@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 6:02 AM
To: Planning Clerk; Bohn, Rex; Bushnell, Michelle; Wilson, Mike; Arroyo, Natalie; Madrone, Steve
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello Planning Commissioners,

I am writing to ask you to adopt the McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance as written and support the Central Avenue Redesign to make Central Avenue much safer for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. The McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee (MMAC) has spent 6 years and numerous public meetings, workshops, and surveys to develop the current vision and strong draft ordinance for our future Town Center. One very important aspect to the plan and ordinance is the reconfiguration of Central Avenue from a four-lane roadway to a three-lane roadway with bike lanes to improve vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle safety.

Research conducted by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) found that four-lane to three-lane road conversions reduce the total number of crashes by 19 to 47 percent.

The reduction in lanes :

- o Calms traffic
- o Reduces weaving between lanes
- o Improves side street vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle crossing safety
- o Can improve emergency response time as emergency response vehicles can utilize the two-way left turn lane as an emergency travel lane
- o Provides a dedicated space for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities, which can increase motorists recognition that they are using the roadway

As we look toward increasing housing and businesses in McKinleyville's town center, opportunities for folks to get to and enjoy open space, parks, and our local businesses is vital for any community. Being able to access those features safely is critical. The proposed road changes increase safety for all of us.

Thank you for supporting the community minded friendly town center plan developed by the MMAC and making our region's third-largest community safer, more walkable, bikeable, and business and climate friendly.

Cherie Newell

Fortune Street, McKinleyville

• • •

Cherie Newell
510-459-4222

McClenagan, Laura

From: Emily King Teraoka <Emily@stillwatersci.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 10:06 AM
To: Planning Clerk
Subject: FW: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello,

I have lived in McKinleyville for over 20 years. My kids go to McKinleyville schools and I am an active participant in the community. I have seen a lot of positive improvements in McKinleyville over the last two decades, but there is still a lot of work to do. I am writing to urge the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors **to adopt the McKinleyville Town Center ordinance as written**. The MMAC and the McKinleyville community have worked hard to develop the ordinance over the last six years. The result is a thoughtful document that will help catalyze development of a successful Town Center. Of course not everyone agrees on everything in the ordinance, but reopening old debates at this stage in the planning process would be counterproductive.

Central Avenue is the best way for my kids to bike from home to the Middle School. However, I don't like them to do that because the current five-lane street is too wide, fast, and dangerous. It's a major obstacle for anyone who wants to walk or bike in the area. For kids, seniors, and many other people to be safe and comfortable walking across the street or biking along Central, two of the current lanes need to be converted to safe, protected bike lanes. The McKinleyville Town Center ordinance as currently written will improve pedestrian and bike safety on the main street in our town and make it safe for my kids and many others to walk and ride bikes to the playground, skate park, library, and to school.

Thank you for your consideration,

Emily

Emily King Teraoka (she/her)
Ecologist
Emily@stillwatersci.com
office: (707) 822-9607
mobile: (707) 845-5349

Stillwater Sciences
850 G Street, Suite K
Arcata, CA 95521
www.stillwatersci.com
Stillwater Sciences is 100% employee-owned.

McClenagan, Laura

From: Jonathan Maiullo <elfmaiullo@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 9:13 AM
To: Planning Clerk; Bohn, Rex; Bushnell, Michelle; Wilson, Mike; Arroyo, Natalie; Madrone, Steve
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hi Humboldt Planning Commission,

Please, please adopt the McKinleyville Town Center ordinance as written, including the Central Avenue redesign approved by the MMAC. It would be great to see a new McKinleyville with a walkable/bikeable town center. Having a farmer's market in a parking lot is indicative of how limited public space currently is.

Thanks!

Jonathan Maiullo

From: [Judy Hodgson](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Please distribute to all Humboldt County Planning Commissioners
Date: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 5:09:56 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

I plan to make similar public comments on Thursday, Sept. 18.

Dear Commissioners:

As a reporter, I covered Humboldt County for 40 years before I retired. In 1980s, I was a reporter and editor of the Arcata Union. From 1990 to 2021, I was a reporter, editor, publisher of the North Coast Journal.

During my career, I covered hundreds and hundreds of public meetings, including this Planning Commission, the County Board of Supervisors, city councils and for many years, the McKinleyville Community Services District. In the 1980s I covered those meetings regarding the decision to redesign and widen Central Avenue.

There was a lot of good in that plan -- improved drainage, underground utilities, landscaped sidewalks with hanging flower baskets. The horse paths are very cool. But that 5-lane road through the center of town, wider than the freeway? It was just bad planning. It's dangerous. It encourages speeding. Cars pass each other on the left and the right when there are two lanes in one direction.

I have a pretty good memory. There was substantial opposition to 5 lanes back then. Many called it overbuilt and there were many who opposed the removal of the old cypress trees. They were in the minority then and they lost.

You have before you tonight a fabulous plan to redesign and reinvigorate McKinleyville on both sides of Central Ave. -- to create a real town center with a heart. That vote should be easy for you.

But I don't envy you. This great plan comes with a really hard decision about Central and there is substantial community pushback from those afraid of change.

Think of holding up a scale. On one side you have the vulnerable.
You have foot traffic that will only increase, people getting from place to place to shop or head to the gym, library or park.
You have bicyclists who are commuters or out for recreation.
You have students getting out of school.
You have moms with strollers
You have people in walkers, wheelchairs or scooters.

On the other side of the scale, you have cars who can slow down for four blocks -- and still get to where they are going;

Please be brave and do the right thing.

Judy Hodgson

McClenagan, Laura

From: Ken Hamik <kenhamik@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 8:36 AM
To: Planning Clerk; Bohn, Rex; Bushnell, Michelle; Wilson, Mike; Arroyo, Natalie; Madrone, Steve
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Comments for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello Planning Commissioners,

I am writing to ask you to adopt the McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance as written and support the Central Avenue Redesign to make Central Avenue much safer for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. The McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee (MMAC) has spent 6 years and numerous public meetings, workshops, and surveys to develop the current vision and strong draft ordinance for our future Town Center. One very important aspect to the plan and ordinance is the reconfiguration of Central Avenue from a four-lane roadway to a three-lane roadway with bike lanes to improve vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle safety.

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As we look toward increasing housing and businesses in McKinleyville's town center, opportunities for folks to get to and enjoy open space, parks, and our local businesses is vital for any community. Being able to access those features safely is critical. The proposed road changes increase safety for all of us.

Thank you for supporting the community minded friendly town center plan developed by the MMAC and making our region's third-largest community safer, more walkable, bikeable, and business and climate friendly.

Ken Hamik

Fortune Street, McKinleyville

Sept. 18, 2025

Re: Item F3. McKinleyville Town Center Zoning Amendment Ordinance [9/18/25 PC meeting]

Humboldt County Planning Commission,

Thank you for contributing your time and energy to serve on the Commission.

I am writing in support of adopting the McKinleyville Town Center Zoning Amendment Ordinance as recommended by the MMAC. The MMAC, the Planning Department, and many, many McKinleyville and nearby residents/employees/business owners have worked for years to collectively come to this point. They've worked very hard and, from what I have seen, have strived to listen to and to express varied points of view. I support respecting the work everyone has contributed over six years.

I travel to McKinleyville for work meetings and shopping. I primarily travel by public transit/walking and bicycling. The future Town Center will improve the experience of visiting that area, including Azalea Hall and the McKinleyville Family Resource Center.

Implementing the MTC Ordinance will support many Humboldt County General Plan goals and policies better than the status quo does. The MMAC's recommended McKinleyville Town Center Zoning Amendment Ordinance supports the following GP goals, policies, and standards:

Housing Element:

- H-G2. Housing Diversity
- H-G3. Workforce Housing
- H-P17. Promote Infill, Reuse and Redevelopment
- H-P21. Siting of Multifamily Housing Development

Circulation Element Goals:

- C-G1 Circulation System Safety and Functionality
- C-G2. Diverse Transportation Opportunities
- C-G4. Access to Active Transportation
- C-G5. Movement of Goods

Circulation and Land Use Policies, Standards, Implementation actions:

- C-P1. Circulation System
- C-P3. Consideration of Transportation Impacts in Land Use Decision Making
- C-P9. Circulation Planning for Bicycles, Pedestrians and Transit
- C-P24. Long Term Transit Plan
- C-P25. County-Wide Transportation Plan
- C-P28. Bicycles and Pedestrian Facilities in New Subdivisions
- C-P34. Traffic Calming
- C-P35. Protection of Designated Pedestrian and Bicycle Routes
- C-P39. Encourage Bicycle and Pedestrian-Friendly Development
- C-S5. Prioritizing Transportation Capital Expenditure
- C-S9. Prioritization of Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities and Routes
- C-IM15. Municipal Advisory Committee Review

C-IM18. Congestion Relief Planning and Implementation Program

I support the MMAC's recommendation for improving multi-modal design of Central Avenue, which is consistent with the basic project objectives of the McKinleyville Town Center, specifically:

- ii. Develop an area of mixed land uses which encourages bicycle and pedestrian travel yet allows for convenient and safe automobile access.
- vi. Identify design alternatives for Central Avenue which ease pedestrian and bicycle traffic, including traffic calming measures.
- viii. Promote development of pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods and commercial areas.

Converting car lanes and reducing speed on Central Avenue would apply one of the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) Proven Safety Countermeasures, which are data-driven and data-supported in being effective at reducing roadway fatalities and serious injuries. The FHWA states,

These strategies are designed for all road users and all kinds of roads—from rural to urban, from high-volume freeways to less traveled two-lane State and county roads, from signalized crossings to horizontal curves, and everything in between.

A Road Diet, or roadway reconfiguration, can improve safety, calm traffic, provide better mobility and access for all road users, and enhance overall quality of life. A Road Diet typically involves converting an existing four-lane undivided roadway to a three-lane roadway consisting of two through lanes and a center two-way left-turn lane (TWLTL).

A Road Diet can be a low-cost safety solution when planned in conjunction with a simple pavement overlay, and the reconfiguration can be accomplished at no additional cost. Typically, a Road Diet is implemented on a roadway with a current and future average daily traffic of 25,000 or less. (<https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures>)

I appreciate your consideration on this matter.

Respectfully,

Oona Smith

(Arcata resident, works in Eureka and countywide/regionally)

Cc: Director John Ford
MMAC

From: [Sylvia Mitchell](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Central Avenue Mckinleyville
Date: Sunday, September 14, 2025 11:26:16 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

I am commenting on the proposed changes to convert Central Avenue to single lanes in McKinleyville.

I am a fairly new resident having bought land in 2017 and worked toward building a house since then; the house is now completed and I live here full time. It is a great community and I feel fortunate to be able to live here.

I have seen a large increase in the amount of people using the roads in the past eight years and, considering the planned housing, the influx of newcomers who have discovered the area, and the push to increase tourism and create an active "town square", IMHO it would be a big mistake to narrow the path for automobiles. I have seen a lot of growth creating road crowding and there is more to come.

Please leave the road lanes as they are and enhance them with road markings and barriers as needed, and continue the landscaping efforts which are really improving the road.

Thanks for reading,
Sylvia Mitchell
Grange Road

From: [Courtney Taylor](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Comment for Planning Commission
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 2:49:25 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello. My comment to the commission is regarding the proposal for McKinleyville Town Center Zoning (file item #25-1130). My understanding is that the commission is considering a proposal to restrict the number of lanes on Central Ave, along with other changes, in an effort to attract more foot and bicycle traffic and to make the Ave safer while at the same time encouraging growth to the main business areas of McKinleyville and more migration to the town. While I support making Central Ave safer, I only see this plan causing more congested traffic and impatience for even more residents. Already, Central Ave gets backed up at certain times of the day. Recently, coming in from the south off-ramp, I had to suddenly break and got stuck close to the U-Haul business area, due to one truck looking to make a left-hand turn onto a private road, where there was no turn lane and just one lane going north. This situation is uncommon for me, but I am concerned that I will experience it more frequently once the entire avenue is reduced to one lane. I have the fortune of living not far from the main shopping center in town, within walking distance, and I recognize that I might not be terribly impacted at times by this change, while others who live more rurally have commutes to reach commerce areas, and they will be more heavily impacted. I would also like to request more attention be paid to two currently very unsafe intersections that I don't see getting any attention when McKinleyville roads are discussed. The intersection at Central and Pickett often has a queue of roads making left turns in both directions, at the same time as pedestrians are attempting to cross. These cars are supposed to yield to oncoming traffic and foot traffic, and as a frequenter of that area, I have been nearly mowed down several times a year by cars that do not yield, do not see pedestrians, or else treats them as obstacles to narrowly avoid. That intersection needs a separate lane and light for turning traffic. There is room there for it. Also, the intersection at McKinleyville Ave and Hiller Rd is asymmetrically designed and confusing for foot traffic to cross. It is also very difficult to navigate, as there are cars moving in unpredictable patterns through the intersection. They do not always signal when turning. I and my children have been honked and yelled at more than once to get out of the way for traffic, when we have the right of way. Crosswalks there, at the very least, would be helpful. So many families and students utilize this intersection daily. It needs to be made safer.

Thank you.

Courtney Taylor, McKinleyville resident

[Sent from AT&T Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Debbie Egger](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Cc: [Ford, John](#)
Subject: Public Comment regarding McK Town Center
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 11:43:15 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

To: Members of the Planning Commission Board

Subject: Concerns Regarding Proposed Changes to Central Avenue in McKinleyville

Dear Members of the Board,

As a McKinleyville resident of over 40 years, I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the proposed changes to Central Avenue being recommended by the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee (MMAC).

At the MMAC's Special Meeting on September 10th, Director Ford presented two alternatives for the reconfiguration of Central Avenue. *Alternative 1* retains the current four-lane thoroughfare while incorporating improvements for bicycle and pedestrian access. *Alternative 2*, which the majority of the MMAC supported, proposes reducing the road to two lanes with a center turn lane.

Unfortunately, the MMAC did not make the alternative layouts publicly available prior to the meeting. This lack of transparency appears to be a violation of the Brown Act, which requires that materials reviewed by advisory bodies be accessible to the public in advance. As a result, many community members, including myself, were not adequately informed or able to meaningfully participate in the discussion.

I urge the Planning Commission to forward a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors that supports the McKinleyville Town Center improvements **with the critical exception of maintaining four lanes on Central Avenue.**

As you are aware, the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) requires Humboldt County to accommodate 3,390 new housing units across four income levels between December 31, 2018, and August 31, 2027. Approximately 40% of these units must be located within the County's unincorporated areas. McKinleyville is expected to absorb a substantial share of this housing growth.

Director Ford, in the Final Environmental Impact Report, acknowledges that while a two-lane configuration with a center turn lane *may* allow emergency vehicles to pass, it would also “complicate and possibly delay emergency responses.” Given that Central Avenue is a primary corridor—and one where a fire station is located—this

potential delay should be considered a serious safety risk.

As a retired employee with over 24 years of service at the Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG), I understand the importance of balancing transportation and housing goals. While HCAOG advocates for reducing vehicle miles traveled and improving walkability and bikeability, those goals must be implemented in a way that supports—not hinders—the capacity for future growth, emergency response, and the needs of all transportation users.

McKinleyville deserves a transportation plan that supports all users—pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and transit riders—without compromising safety, mobility, or growth potential. I respectfully urge the Planning Commission to recommend **Alternative 1**, which retains the existing four-lane configuration of Central Avenue while incorporating improvements for non-vehicular travel.

Thank you for your attention and for your service to our community.

Sincerely,
Debbie Egger

From: [Pat Barsanti](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: FW: Comment regarding Central Avenue
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 2:19:11 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

From: Pat Barsanti
Sent: Monday, September 15, 2025 2:03 PM
Subject: Comment regarding Central Avenue

My name is Patrick Barsanti, and I have lived in McKinleyville for over forty years. I have commented on the town center, central avenue, and McKinleyville avenue several time, the latest was a letter read by Kevin Jenkins, a few months back.

I served on the first McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committed for 4 years, many of those years planning the Central Avenue safety corridor.

We had Humboldt County Public Works Director (Tom Matsen) along with other planning and county personnel assisting in obtaining the safety grant.

Many meetings occurred, with all interested parties present. The McKinleyville Organizing Committee, a special interest group was always in attendance providing their input, as well as law enforcement, fire department, and MCSD. We made sure everyone was represented. And what came out of these many meetings and sessions was central avenue as we see it now.

According to current statistics, the safety corridor has greatly reduced the number of accidents to only a few. Please don't change our Safety corridor as it has already been vetted.

The proposed traffic calming plan will cause the other adjacent streets to be greatly impacted, and I don't believe this concern has been addressed.

McKinleyville Avenue and the sidewalks are far below standards and need addressing. All the streets around the town center need addressing. There are open ditches that are dangerous, and sidewalks where ADA accessibility are a major concern. Poles and mailboxes, and driveways need to be maneuvered around, so they use the roadway instead.

We should not be looking to redo Central Avenue, as it was planned and paid for.

It has been mentioned many times that McKinleyville is growing rapidly, and there are two large projects planned that will increase the number of cars, trucks and other vehicles using the road: along with bicycles, pedestrians, and EV type cycles/scooters.

I am very upset that I spent four years planning this project with our community, and now others want to change it.

I demand that the committee heavily consider the DO NOTHING ALTERNATIVE.

Patrick Barsanti

Humboldt County Planning Commission

Re: McKinleyville Town Center

Good Day, Commissioners:

As a seated member of the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee, I was appointed as a result of my service on the Board of Directors for the McKinleyville Community Services District, elected by popular vote of community members within our District. I therefore have an obligation to represent **all** community members that make up our constituency.

After reading the written communication, hearing people speak at the podium, and taking into full account community members who have spoken up on social media over the last many years, I am not convinced that the majority of our community supports lane reduction on Central Avenue. I did not support lane reduction at the MMAC meeting of 10Sep25. I voiced the same sentiment at the Town Center Workshop during public comment. It simply doesn't make sense for the busiest thoroughfare in unincorporated Humboldt County to have throughput cut in half.

That said, some of the people in opposition have stated that they would be amenable to sensible traffic calming measures, so I was gratified to see that Alternative 1, as was presented to you at the Town Center Workshop, would offer such a measure. With the lane width reductions, we would see slower speeds, increased driver attentiveness, less severe accidents, more width for cyclists and pedestrians, and a shorter traffic lane crossing distance for pedestrians to go from one side of the road to the other. It would also serve to provide more safety for our utility workers, should they need to close a lane for maintenance purposes.

This is likely the most divisive issue in the ordinance, so compromise must be seriously considered. 'Winner take all' politics does not bode well for building commUnity.

Thank you for listening.

Scott W Binder

From: [Shel Barsanti](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Mck Town Center ordinance: Road diet opposition
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 12:40:29 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

To: PlanningClerk@co.humboldt.ca.us
Subject: Opposition to Central Avenue Road Diet

Dear Humboldt County Planning Commission,

My name is Shel M. Barsanti, CPA, longtime McKinleyville resident, business owner, and former Community Services District Director. I strongly oppose the proposed road diet on Central Avenue.

Central Avenue was redesigned ten years ago as a safety corridor with full community input. It carries over 10,000 vehicles per day and is the second busiest road in Humboldt County. Since implementation, there have been only five major accidents, mostly near the Shell station where lanes narrow.

A road diet risks more congestion, more accidents, and increased County liability. The option for no changes has always been available, and that is the option I strongly support.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Shel M. Barsanti, CPA
1276 North Park Lane
McKinleyville, CA 95519
Email: smbhma2023@yahoo.com

From: [Deborah Lankila](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: McKinleyville
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 8:39:14 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

To Whom it May Concern,

I'm a life long resident of McKinleyville that now lives in Fieldbrook. I work, shop, commute and walk the many trails McKinleyville has to offer.

I know reducing lanes on Central Ave would not achieve the serene vibe that is wanting to be achieved by MMAC. It would cause nothing but FRUSTRATION, CONGESTION, and above all take longer for our Emergency vehicles to get to their calls. It is already hard to pull in and out on Central Ave if you're not using a stop light. McKinleyville Community Services worker once said at a meeting "I guess we will just have to get used to having a harder time accessing our pipes on Central Ave". Why should they when they can do it easily with how Central is configured now? I also go back to what a person said on Facebook about Paradise. Paradise reconfigured their downtown to fewer lanes and nobody could get out when the fire erupted. The traffic was so bad people just gave up. Central Ave flows well now and will take the traffic in the future as McKinleyville grows.

I also disagree with the new proposed Town Center with over 6,000 people, tall buildings and moving the wetlands. What is wrong with the original Town Center that was originally agreed upon? Nobody wants to talk about that? We have store fronts that are empty now and has been for a long time.

I know this is a plan for the "Future McKinleyville" but who are we to dictate what the people of McKinleyville wants or needs in the future?

I have had people buy houses in McKinleyville because of the services and the easy of use of Central Ave.

I love my McKinleyville!

Deborah Lankila
Sales Associate, Realtor
MingTree Realty of McKinleyville
1629 Central Ave.
McKinleyville, Ca. 95519
707-839-1521 Office
707-839-1567 Fax
707-498-2646 Cell
DRE# 01185176

From: [Lenora McConnell](#)
To: [COB](#); [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: MMAC proposals
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 9:44:35 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

I would like to say that I have lived in McKinleyville for 60 years and my husband for 74 years.

I would like to express what the committee does not seem to understand is that:

1. We and everyone we talk to except the committee and their followers do not want Central Ave to be changed to single lanes (not even one block).
 2. The four way stop at Hiller and McKinleyville Ave works just fine the way it is!
 3. If we wanted a town center like the Arcata Plaza, we would move there!
- >What we really need is some stores that sell more than then groceries and medicine. AND some property owners that don't charge major rent and percentages of sales.

From: [Mary Barber](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Mckinleyville central Ave project
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 3:32:52 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

I have lived in Mckinleyville for over 35 years and have watched it grow. I really believe reducing the lanes to just one on central will be a total disaster. The only other option for traffic is Mckinleyville Ave which has two schools and residential neighborhoods. Please don't consider doing this. Thank you. Mary Barber

From: [Siobhan Martinez](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Central Ave road diet
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 10:09:39 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello,

I just want to add my vote to not reduce the lanes on Central Ave. in McKinleyville. My husband and I go there regularly to buy groceries and for doctor and dental appointments. It is already congested enough with two lanes. I can't even imagine who thought reducing the lanes would be a good idea.

Please remove the Central Ave reduction from the new plan.

Sincerely,

Siobhan Martinez

From: [Christopher Davis](#)
To: [COB](#)
Subject: Reduction of Lanes in McKinleyville.
Date: Sunday, September 14, 2025 4:39:13 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

To whom It May Concern,

The idea of reducing the number of lanes on Central Avenue in McKinleyville from four to two is the most poorly conceived and poorly thought out idea I have ever heard of. With rapid expansion already occurring within blocks of Central Avenue, reducing the number of lanes from a fully functional situation to a completely non-functional situation simply makes no sense. Please do not even consider this idea! It will strangle traffic in McKinleyville and make it miserable for those of us that live here to shop in town. The current four lanes works, and traffic is only going to get worse.

Sincerely,

Christopher Davis
2160 Baird Road
McKileyville, CA 95519

From: [Fraga](#)
To: [COB](#)
Subject: One lane
Date: Sunday, September 14, 2025 8:10:13 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

You need to come up with a better plan. Many will avoid going through town and hurt businesses that pay taxes that help make the community thrive. Listen to the residents.

From: [greg.gray](#)
To: [COB](#)
Subject: McKinleyville Central Ave plan
Date: Sunday, September 14, 2025 8:38:47 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Board of Supervisors and Supervisor Madrone -

As a McKinleyville homeowner and cyclist, I am writing to lodge my opposition to any plan attempting to reduce the number of lanes on Central Avenue. It is already highly congested, with poorly-timed lights, and reducing the number of lanes is not going to result in more pedestrians and cyclists, just more aggravation.

I understand the theory behind it, but this is the U.S., and this is not a walkable town, and it seems insane to reduce lanes as our populations swells. Do you really think all these dudes are going to abandon their oversized mantrucks and hop on a bicycle to drive to work? C'mon. I have a bike and love cycling, but I, like so many people, am too busy to sacrifice an hour of the day that instead goes to grocery shopping, dog or childcare, errands, and other essential matters. I ride on the weekend or after work when I can, but I will never ride on Central no matter the number of lanes.

Thanks,
Greg Gray
2270 Silverbrook Ct, McKinleyville

From: [Kathy Anderson](#)
To: [COB](#)
Subject: Mck Town Center
Date: Sunday, September 14, 2025 1:32:58 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

September 13, 2025

Supervisors,

Regarding the subject of McKinleyville Town Center and

specifically the reducing of Central Avenue from 4 lanes to 2 lanes. I am submitting my objections on behalf of myself and our Senior community.

As a volunteer and the board president of the McKinleyville Senior Center, I am involved in the activities, events, wants and needs of our senior population.

Safety first – Speaking in terms of driving and parking.

Reducing the lanes of traffic will add to the congestion that

already exists and will restrict the safe flow of vehicles along our main roadway. It will also divert some traffic to

McKinleyville Ave. and put residential

neighborhoods in harms way due to additional vehicles traveling that way.

Not too long ago, the MCSD was working along Central Ave. and closed lanes as needed. At times there was only one lane for through traffic open. I witnessed the congestion and confusion during that time, it was quite inconvenient, time consuming and dangerous to navigate.

As far as parking is concerned, the shopping center and other businesses have adequate parking available. I've seen renderings of the 2 lanes and diagonal parking along the sides.

Bad idea! Having senior drivers and others backing out of those parking places into oncoming traffic would be detrimental to all drivers. It would create delays and add to congestion, and very likely allow for accidents and injuries.

Bottom line is, McKinleyville does not need walkability, we don't have many places to shop at anymore and what we do still have, there is plenty of parking places available.

Please keep in mind our senior community members when making changes that will negatively affect them and others. We want to keep our 4 lanes of traffic, we want handicap parking places near our businesses to allow easy access for our disabled and for seniors. We do not need or want changes that

promote walk-ability, especially for those that face challenges walking any distance at all. We appreciate your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Kathy Anderson

Concerned Citizen

Board President/ Mck. Senior Center

1620 Pickett Rd.

McKinleyville, CA 95519

From: [Kendra McWilliams](#)
To: [COB](#)
Subject: Central Ave Changes
Date: Sunday, September 14, 2025 10:49:25 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

I have lived in McKinleyville for the majority of my life. When I was a child we had actual businesses for shopping other than grocery stores. Today we do not. Changing Central Ave from 4 lanes down to two lanes sounds like a recipe for disaster. The congestion would be a nightmare. There are already times when I cannot pullout of the bank or a gas station due to traffic. As much as I would like to think people are courteous they often are not and you can be stuck in a driveway for a long period of time with cars lining up behind you, two lanes will make this worse. McKinleyville is not a shopping town, we do not have the business like Arcata or Old Town Eureka to park and walk around. I would understand this plan a little better if that were the case. The only place I can think of off the top of my head where you can spend time shopping is Miller Farms Nursery. They have a lovely gift shop amongst other things but that wouldn't warrant changing the town's Main Street for transportation. All two lanes will do is be a headache for the residents trying to commute to and from work, leave a hair salon or bank or try and get out of a gas station. Leaving a restaurants during commuting hours will be the same, that's all McKinleyville has, no shopping but stores of convenience, restaurants, salons and medical practices, among others. It's not a town to stop and window shop, unless you're looking for insurance or a hair cut.

We have a growing population of un housed people in our community, wouldn't funds be put to better use for a solution to help those in need instead of a two lane road for a community with no shopping centers or boutiques? With that growing population, I fear it will be a hazard to pedestrians with a two lane.

We have kids on electric scooters that are already a hazard, I can't imagine how that will look with more congestion on our Main Street? Rarely do you see helmets and that is not being enforced. Kids don't know the rules of the road, those scooters zip through town way too fast, a lot of the time they are doubled up riding them, again with no helmets. Kids are unaware of driveways and don't check so when a driver is already frustrated with the wait due to traffic congestion they are not going to pay attention to a pedestrian or a scooter, people already don't pay attention. It's pretty scary.

As a long time resident of McKinleyville I oppose the proposed plan to remove lanes for Central Avenue. We do not have the businesses in our community for parking to shop, it seems like a waste. Businesses can't even stay open because the leases are too high. In addition, traffic will increase on McKinleyville Avenue. The speed limit is never enforced, people drive so fast as it is, this will increase traffic and there's an elementary school, once again this just sounds like a recipe for disaster.

I thank you for your time reading this.

Concerned Citizen.
Kendra McWilliams

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Kwirik Lee](#)
To: [COB](#)
Subject: Central ave.
Date: Sunday, September 14, 2025 2:50:19 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Please do not take Central Ave. Down to two lanes it would be a disaster for those that live here. It will give people just driving past and around to avoid the awful traffic that would create. We have ample pedestrian and bike lanes for our users. I have lived and worked here for 23 yrs and it's the first time I heard of this has me thinking of moving. I don't want to but it would make McKinleyville a impossible place to drive in.

Thanks, Kirk Boyum

From: [ana ana](#)
To: [COB](#)
Subject: McKinleyville RoadDiet
Date: Sunday, September 14, 2025 3:16:55 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Supervisor Madrone and Members of the Board,

I have lived in McKinleyville for 20 years, and my fiancé was born and raised here. He has lived in the Holly/Heartwood area his entire life. Together, we've witnessed many changes in our community, some we've supported, and others we've had reservations about. However, we feel strongly that reducing Central Avenue to one lane in each direction between Heartwood and Railroad would be detrimental to McKinleyville.

This stretch of Central is our town's main thoroughfare. Narrowing it would not only create congestion, but also slow emergency response times and make daily errands more stressful for residents who rely on their vehicles. Unlike denser towns, McKinleyville has very limited alternative routes. Forcing all drivers onto one lane would quickly bottleneck traffic, especially during peak hours, school drop-offs, or community events.

We absolutely support making McKinleyville safer and more accessible for pedestrians and cyclists. But Central Avenue has already undergone significant construction to add bike lanes, and we also have sidewalks on both sides of this section of town. These improvements were meaningful investments that have already made the street safer for non-drivers. Reducing the roadway further seems unnecessary and risks undoing the balance we currently have.

McKinleyville is growing, and we need a transportation plan that supports all users, without creating the kind of congestion and restrictions that could make our community less safe and less welcoming.

Thank you for considering the perspectives of those of us who live and

work here every day.

Sincerely,

McKinleyville Residents

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Moriah Trimm](#)
To: [COB](#)
Subject: Mckinleyville traffic suggestions
Date: Sunday, September 14, 2025 12:11:38 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hi there Steve,

My name is Moriah. I've been a resident of Mckinleyville the majority of my life (roughly 30 of my 38 years).

In my opinion, the idea of shutting Central Avenue down to two lanes is absurd. Mckinleyville is constantly growing. I have watched fields full of cows and forests turned into businesses and housing my whole life (earliest memory of this is the building of McDonalds and Kmart and the most recent being Danco building housing in the woods between here and Fieldbrook, and the plan to build up the town center).

I am all for progress. I know people are just going to keep coming. I know we need more housing and businesses. I have concerns about that as is, considering we have empty buildings already from businesses that couldn't make it. That's a different concern for another day.

I think cutting down traffic lanes is not going to make our current situation any safer for anyone. Drivers will become more rushed, more arrogant in their decisions. There are already bike lanes for bicyclists. Sidewalks for pedestrians, with gravel paths right next to them for the horses - horses which seem to becoming fewer in our town.

People are going to get hurt under this new plan. As is Mckinleyville doesn't have a huge history of bicyclists or pedestrians being hit. Mckinleyville is pretty safe in that regard. I don't think you should take away our ability to get to and from work, school, grocery shopping and bill paying in a timely manner to fit into some type of "beautification" in the name of supposed safety.

To me, the best thing that could be done would be for Mckinleyville to come through and replace the current sidewalks for pedestrians as they have become unsafe in many places due to tree roots and the fact that they are quite old. Should they choose to, they could also re-gravel the horse trails. Another alternative could be to pave those and widen the pedestrian walk way, or use the space to widen the bicycle lanes.

I just don't see how cutting down traffic lanes in the busiest part of town is a solution to making things safer.

I appreciate you taking my words into consideration.

Thank you,

Moriah Bell
1782 Holly Drive
Mckinleyville
(707)362-4550
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Niki Moore](#)
To: [COB](#)
Subject: Central Avenue
Date: Sunday, September 14, 2025 9:11:24 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Humboldt County Board of Supervisors/Steve Madrone,

I am a third-generation Humboldt County resident and have called McKinleyville home for the past 30 years. I've raised both of my sons here—they attended McKinleyville schools, played in local sports programs, and grew up as part of this tight-knit community. My younger son started in MYF and proudly moved on to the McKinleyville High School football program.

I share this because my roots here run deep, and I care deeply about the future of McKinleyville.

My daily commute takes me along Central Avenue, a vital artery that connects many of us to work, home, schools, and essential services.

I recently learned that the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee (MMAC) has recommended a “road diet” for Central Avenue, which would reduce it from four lanes to two. While I fully support efforts to improve safety and accessibility. I am deeply concerned about the impacts this change would have on traffic flow, safety, and the quality of life for working residents like myself.

Another serious concern is how this change would impact emergency response. Central Avenue is a major route for ambulances, fire trucks, and law enforcement. Even with four lanes, it can be difficult for drivers to safely move aside to let emergency vehicles through. Reducing the road to two lanes with a center turn lane will only make this more challenging and could delay critical response times. Public safety should be a top priority in any transportation plan, and I have not seen a clear explanation of how this road diet would account for the needs of first responders.

McKinleyville is not Arcata. We are not a college town, and many of us chose to live here precisely because of its open roads, ease of driving, and family-friendly infrastructure. Narrowing our main thoroughfare will likely result in congestion, delays, and increased driver frustration—especially during peak commuting hours. For many residents who rely on vehicles for work, childcare, and daily errands, this change would feel more like a burden than a benefit.

This proposal also seems out of step with McKinleyville's current and future growth. As our population expands, we need infrastructure that can accommodate more traffic, not less. A transportation plan should enhance mobility for all users—

drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders—without compromising the needs of any one group.

I strongly urge you to consider alternative safety improvements that do not require reducing Central Avenue to two lanes. McKinleyville deserves a balanced approach that prioritizes safety and supports the needs of a growing, working-class community.

Respectfully,

Niki Moore

McKinleyville Resident

From: [Teresa Coffman](#)
To: [COB](#)
Subject: "road diet" for McKinleyville's Central Ave
Date: Sunday, September 14, 2025 10:42:14 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello, I would like to express my and my husband Kurt Coffman's concern and disapproval for the proposal to make Central Ave. in McKinleyville one lane in each direction. Central is already congested at times of the day and that would make it so much worse. I believe, from what I've read, that with new housing going in McKinleyville is growing at a rate higher than Arcata and Eureka. I don't have a problem with that as I understand that growth is necessary, especially low income housing is needed, but to increase the traffic jams on Central Ave. would be a mistake. We live just 4 houses off of Central Ave. on Bella Vista Rd. and so to run errands I hop on Central a few times a day. This would make it a nightmare to drive down to Eureka Natural foods or Safeway, and I'd be tempted to turn the other way and do my shopping in Arcata instead.

I hope this proposal does not go forward.

Sincerely,
Teresa Coffman
805-341-0733

From: [Jeff Driver](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: MMAC City Center Plan
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 6:21:43 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear MMAC committee

I have lived in McKinleyville since 1989 and have seen a lot of changes in that time.

When I moved here the intersection of McKinleyville and Hiller only had stop signs for people driving on Hiller and it made it a dangerous intersection with multiple accidents.

I made multiple calls over 2 years with Humboldt County public works to make it a 4 way stop and they finally did in the early 90's.

With the MMAC city center plans of reducing part of Central ave from 4 to 2 traffic lanes I see a great danger to the motoring public.

Central ave is the major North and South travel route that was once highway 101. The only other route is McKinleyville ave with a 25 MPH speed limit with multiple driveways and a school.

The plan includes diagonal parking in the 2 lane area and with the increased traffic load on 2 lanes it would make it dangerous and near impossible to back out of a parking spot.

With the Fire Department also within the 2 lane area it would make it dangerous for both the Fire department and the traveling public with no place for people to pull over for emergency vehicles.

This is a bad idea that hasn't been planned out and has a lot opposition.

Attached is an article from the Arcata Union about intersection of McKinleyville and Hiller

Residents call intersection dangerous

By Jack Durham
Of The Union

Paul Kasberg of McKinleyville is getting accustomed to the sound of screeching tires, roaring engines and, on occasion, colliding cars.

But Kasberg doesn't work at a race track or a demolition derby. He doesn't need to — he lives at the intersection of McKinleyville Avenue and Hiller Road.

Since the Humboldt State student moved into a house near the intersection seven months ago, he has witnessed three or four bad auto wrecks and several fender benders, he said. At night he hears screeching tires and during the day he sees at least a dozen cars traveling "well in excess" of the 25 mph speed limit on McKinleyville Avenue.

"It's like a drag strip," he said.

Kasberg attributes some of the speeding to students from McKinleyville High School, which is located down the street.

Part of the problem may also be that drivers traveling on McKinleyville Avenue don't have to stop at the intersection — there are only stop signs for motorists on Hiller Road.

Because of concerns over safety at the intersection, McKinleyville resident Jeff Driver has been fighting to get a four-way stop installed for the past three years. It was only recently that the county Public Works Department decided to proceed with the request.

Don Raffaelli, deputy director of Public Works, said officials finally decided that there was enough traffic at the intersection to warrant a stop sign. In April, he said, an ordinance which



Mike Hansen/The Union

A crew from the Arcata-Mad River Ambulance Co. prepares to remove Mitsuko Abe from her car after an accident Monday at the intersection of Hiller Road and McKinleyville Avenue.

include language allowing a four-way stop at the intersection will be submitted to the county Board of Supervisors. If the request is approved, there should be a four-way stop installed at the intersection by late June or mid-July.

The additional signage should help "identify right-of-ways" and help motorists making left-hand turns, he said. Others, however, are less optimistic about safety at the intersection.

Jim Kirby, who lives nearby, said motorists are simply going to have to start using their heads and slowing down.

"It's inevitable that someone will get killed at this intersection," Kasberg said Monday, as he sat on his fence and watched rescue workers clean up after yet another accident.

The accident occurred at about 5:30 p.m., according to Officer Robert Spencer of the California Highway Patrol.

Mark Brandl, 21, of Arcata was traveling eastbound on Hiller Road when he ran a two-way stop and his Honda Accord struck a Honda Civic driven by McKinleyville resident Mitsuko Abe, according to a press release. Traveling southbound on McKinleyville Avenue, Abe's car spun around, slammed into Brandl's car, and hit a curb, according to Spencer.

Abe's car was totaled. She was taken to Mad River Community Hospital in Arcata with minor injuries. Brandl was injured.

Brandl claimed that he was new to the area and not familiar with the streets, according to the CHP. By the time he saw the stop sign, it was too late to stop, he reportedly said.

Kasberg said the intersection probably needs a blinking red light, or some other device to warn drivers of the stop.

Raffaelli, however, said four-way stop should be enough for the intersection, which, he said, has not been a problem spot.

Jeff Driver

From: [Eberhardt, Brooke](#)
To: [McClenagan, Laura](#)
Cc: [Ford, John](#)
Subject: FW: Mck Town Center ordinance: Road diet opposition
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 12:31:55 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Hello Laura,

Our office received another public comment. Please see below.

Thank you,



Brooke Eberhardt
Senior Board Services Specialist
County of Humboldt
825 5th Street, Room 111
Eureka, CA 95501
707-476-2385

From: Shel Barsanti <smbhma@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 15, 2025 11:46 AM
To: COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>
Subject: Mck Town Center ordinance: Road diet opposition

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello, I am a long time McKinleyville resident, business owner and former McKinleyville Community Services Director. I oppose the road diet in the ordinance and want no changes to Central Avenue. Ten years ago the road was designed for safety for walkers, bikes and cars. With 10,000 cars a day Central Avenue is the second busiest road in Humboldt county. Our town is made up of cul de sacs and road endings. Central is the only road that goes completely through town. That is why the county designed it as a safety corridor ten years ago. When the safety corridor was put in all McKinleyville residents were included in the design process. There have only been 5 major accidents on Central since the safety corridor was put in and most of those occurred by the Shell station where the road goes from 5 lanes to 2 lanes. It seems the county could have potentially more liability to accident suits if the road diet changes cause more accidents. THERE ALWAYS WAS THE OPTION FOR NO CHANGES ON CENTRAL DURING THIS TOWN ORDINANCE PROCESS AND I SUPPORT THAT. Thank

you, Shel Barsanti, CPA

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

From: [Eberhardt, Brooke](#)
To: [McClenagan, Laura](#)
Subject: FW: McKinleyville "Road Diet"
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 9:12:26 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Hello Laura,

Below is public comment our office received.

Thank you,



Brooke Eberhardt
Senior Board Services Specialist
County of Humboldt
825 5th Street, Room 111
Eureka, CA 95501
707-476-2385

From: Double D <sfdoubled@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 9:03 AM
To: COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>
Subject: McKinleyville "Road Diet"

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern:

As a lifelong resident of McKinleyville, I have concerns over the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee's plan to reduce portions of Central Avenue in McKinleyville from four lanes to two. Central Avenue is the main transportation route through McKinleyville and at certain times during the day, is highly congested. Reducing the lanes in half on this portion of Central Avenue will increase the congestion and the potential for increased safety issues. If enacted, I also foresee traffic using alternative routes through McKinleyville increasing congestion and potential safety issues on these alternative roads where there are no traffic signals to control traffic as there is on Central Avenue. My understanding is that the lane reduction plan has as one of its goals of increasing parking along this portion of Central Avenue for better access to local businesses. My observations are that there is ample parking for the local businesses along this portion of Central Avenue. To increase parking that will increase the potential for increased safety issues does not make sense. Please vote "no" on this proposal in order to limit the potential for increased hazards.

Thank you.
David Lonn

From: [Eberhardt, Brooke](#)
To: [McClenagan, Laura](#)
Cc: [Ford, John](#)
Subject: FW: Road changes
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 8:59:55 AM

Good morning Laura,

Please see below for public comment.

Brooke Eberhardt
Senior Board Services Specialist
County of Humboldt
825 5th Street, Room 111
Eureka, CA 95501
707-476-2385

-----Original Message-----

From: Christina Jolin <cmjolin55@icloud.com>
Sent: Monday, September 15, 2025 6:44 PM
To: COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>
Subject: Road changes

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Please do not take away driving lanes along central ave.
Please do monitor speed of drivers.
Please monitor and place speed bumps along Hiller road and Murray road towards Fieldbrook.
The speed and passing of vehicles on Murray road is getting dangerous Thank you, Christina Jolin
707-845-5878
Sent from my iPhone

From: [TOBIN TULLIS](#)
To: [COB](#); [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Mckinleyville Resident-AGAINST the Central Avenue Road Diet
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 5:09:37 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a single father of four school aged children and resident of McKinleyville on Anderson Ave.

I would like to voice my opposition to the proposed Central Avenue "Road Diet"

Eliminating lanes would be a terrible idea and cause massive jams, commute times, school pickup/drop off and more.

While I applaud thinking outside the box to increase physical activity, all this would create is a major headache.

I have 4 children that are about to be at 3 different schools. Getting them up and going is hard enough without having to plan on traffic in our small town.

This will not create the utopian view you are hoping for, but rather a logistical nightmare for already busy parents.

Thank you for allowing my voice to be heard.

Tobin Tullis
Six Street Marketing
Founder
925-784-2804

From: [Deborrah Egbert](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Cc: [COB](#)
Subject: McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee lane reduction
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 12:53:42 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

My name is Deborrah Egbert, I have been a resident of McKinleyville, CA since 1990. I graduated high school in McKinleyville, and have worked for over 24 years in McKinleyville, along with raising all 3 of my kids in McKinleyville. I am against the lane reduction that is being proposed.

As someone coming from north end of town and needing to cross traffic, turning left, to get to work. I would not be able to do this under the current plan. Is it the end of the world, no, but inconvenient, and would force me to go to light past work and turn around. I could also take Mck Ave (increasing traffic) then take Heartwood (increasing traffic) to turn at the light to get to work. I also still don't understand how putting bicyclists/pedestrians in the middle of traffic is safer? Anyone who remembers the 2 lane traffic not too long ago when work was being done should not be in favor of this, it was crazy, and did not help flow of traffic. It's also concerning that taking alternate routes would increase trafgice in neighborhoods that are not made to handle the increase in traffic, and may increase risk to pedestrians in said neighborhoods. Hoping this plan is not approved to continue to the next stage and they are sent back to the drawing board to consider other options, instead of pushing ahead their agenda.

Thank you for your time,
Deborrah Egbert, RDH

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

9/16/2025

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance road diet for Central Avenue in McKinleyville. While I understand that the goal of the road diet is to improve safety and encourage active transportation, I believe that it will have negative consequences for our community.

First and foremost, the road diet will result in increased congestion and traffic delays. Central Avenue is one of the busiest main roadways in Humboldt County for an unincorporated town, and reducing the number of lanes will only intensify the existing traffic issues. This will not only inconvenience drivers but also negatively impact turns to residential areas, some of which only you can get to through Central Ave and local businesses that rely on easy access to their storefronts.

The road diet would pose significant challenges for emergency personnel and their ability to respond quickly and effectively to emergencies. With reduced lanes and potentially slower-moving traffic, emergency vehicles may encounter difficulties navigating through congested areas, leading to delays in reaching their destinations. Central Avenue is the heart of McKinleyville and is the pathway for almost all emergency vehicles. These delays could have severe consequences for the safety and well-being of our community members, as well as potentially impacting the overall response time during critical situations.

A significant concern is the impact on existing turn lanes into businesses, residential neighborhoods, and schools. If the proposed road diet creates three lanes, it is unclear how these crucial access points will be integrated or affected. Similarly, I foresee difficulties for the McKinleyville Community Services District and other utility companies. Closing portions of the road for construction or maintenance, which can sometimes last weeks, will cause further congestion on Central Avenue and potentially incur additional costs for companies needing to provide extra traffic control. Furthermore, it is unclear what traffic control could potentially even look like.

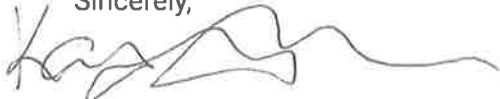
Currently, my lunch break commute from Central Ave takes approximately 8-10 minutes. However, the implementation of the road diet and reduced lanes on Central Ave would inevitably lead to increased traffic congestion and longer commute times. This would impact not only myself but every other community member fortunate enough to work and live in McKinleyville. Regarding maintenance, it is unclear who would be responsible for the upkeep of the "Street Trees" that are proposed.

I feel that the road diet will divert drivers to alternate roadways in our community, increasing congestion on streets such as McKinleyville Ave. This is particularly worrisome for the nearby McKinleyville High School and Morris School. During drop-off and pickup times, the additional traffic from the road diet could create further challenges for students, parents/guardians, and staff, potentially leading to delays, safety concerns, and an overall disruption to the school routine. Next year the McKinleyville Middle School will hold 4th-8th grade students, tremendously increasing

parents and guardians during drop off and pick up times as the "road diet" ends/starts right there on Railroad Ave.

In conclusion, I urge you to reconsider the proposed road diet for Central Avenue in McKinleyville. As someone that has ridden a bike, walked and even scooted on Central Ave I have never not felt safe. While safety and active transportation are important goals, there are other solutions that could achieve these goals without sacrificing the efficiency and convenience of our local transportation system. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Kalyne', followed by a long, horizontal, wavy line that extends to the right.

Kalyne Hannah
McKinleyville Resident

From: [Karen Ham](#)
To: [COB](#)
Subject: McKinleyville "Road Diet"
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 1:27:37 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

It is with great concern that the proposed "Road Diet" Does not become our Reality.
I don't know who even thought this is a grand idea.
It's bottle neck traffic on a daily basis to begin with.
Taking away a lane in each direction is not even remotely helpful.
We already have existing
Sidewalks
Bike lanes
There is far more vehicle traffic compared to bicycle traffic.
How do u expect Senior Citizens to get from any bank or Grocery store, medical office,
Dentist, eating establishment, Miller Farms,
Hair salon?
U want them to walk to all these places?
Carry a few bags of groceries home?
It is not a well thought out plan by any means
Maybe u think Senior Citizens are to start riding bicycles?
I don't know your thought process.
It will not work.

Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

September 13, 2025

BUS: All
Planning Clerk

RECEIVED

SEP 16 2025

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Supervisors,

Regarding the subject of McKinleyville Town Center and specifically the reducing of Central Avenue from 4 lanes to 2 lanes. I am submitting my objections on behalf of myself and our Senior community.

As a volunteer and the board president of the McKinleyville Senior Center, I am involved in the activities, events, wants and needs of our senior population.

Safety first – Speaking in terms of driving and parking.

Reducing the lanes of traffic will add to the congestion that already exists and will restrict the safe flow of vehicles along our main roadway. It will also divert some traffic to

McKinleyville Ave. and put residential neighborhoods in harms way due to additional vehicles traveling that way.

Not too long ago, the MCSD was working along Central Ave. and closed lanes as needed. At times there was only one lane for through traffic open. I witnessed the congestion and confusion during that time, it was quite inconvenient, time consuming and dangerous to navigate.

As far as parking is concerned, the shopping center and other businesses have adequate parking available. I've seen renderings of the 2 lanes and diagonal parking along the sides.

Bad idea! Having senior drivers and others backing out of those parking places into oncoming traffic would be detrimental to all drivers. It would create delays and add to congestion, and very likely allow for accidents and injuries.

Bottom line is, McKinleyville does not need walkability, we don't have many places to shop at anymore and what we do still have, there is plenty of parking places available.

Please keep in mind our senior community members when making changes that will negatively affect them and others. We want to keep our 4 lanes of traffic, we want handicap parking places near our businesses to allow easy access for our disabled and for seniors. We do not need or want changes that promote walk-ability, especially for those that face challenges walking any distance at all. We appreciate your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Kathy Anderson

Concerned Citizen

Board President/ Mck. Senior Center

1620 Pickett Rd.

McKinleyville, CA 95519

From: [Ken](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Central Ave/ Business 101 Lane reductions
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 11:46:09 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Greetings,

I am writing to express my concern about the possible decision to reduce the lanes on McKinleyville Ave/ Business route 101, this will have a significant impact on my daily commute.

This will cause severe congestion and cause people to be late. This will cause lots of frustration for many residents and will negatively affect local traffic flow and commerce, not to mention the impact on other roads that some residents will travel to avoid delays.

Thank you for your time.
Ken Lankila

From: [Kay Libolt](#)
To: [COB](#); [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Opposition to Central Avenue Road Diet
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 1:16:26 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

As a McKinleyville resident I would not want to see the plans for a Central Avenue road diet come to fruition. When I first heard about it I truly thought they were joking and had a good laugh—until I found out they were seriously considering it. Please do not approve. It would be a horrible change that would cause more congestion, more vehicle accidents, and would be a waste of funds. I sincerely believe most residents would agree.

No road diet, please!

Thank you,

Mike & Kay Libolt

1527 Hidden Fox Lane
McKinleyville, CA. 95519
(707) 845-4250

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Sylvia Mitchell](#)
To: [COB](#)
Subject: Fwd: Central Avenue Mckinleyville
Date: Sunday, September 14, 2025 1:51:49 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Sylvia Mitchell <stringcircle@aol.com>
Date: September 14, 2025 at 11:25:46 AM PDT
To: planningclerk@co.humboldt.ca.us
Subject: Central Avenue Mckinleyville

I am commenting on the proposed changes to convert Central Avenue to single lanes in McKinleyville.

I am a fairly new resident having bought land in 2017 and worked toward building a house since then; the house is now completed and I live here full time. It is a great community and I feel fortunate to be able to live here.

I have seen a large increase in the amount of people using the roads in the past eight years and, considering the planned housing, the influx of newcomers who have discovered the area, and the push to increase tourism and create an active “town square”, IMHO it would be a big mistake to narrow the path for automobiles. I have seen a lot of growth creating road crowding and there is more to come.

Please leave the road lanes as they are and enhance them with road markings and barriers as needed, and continue the landscaping efforts which are really improving the road.

Thanks for reading,
Sylvia Mitchell
Grange Road

From: [Michelle Grissom](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: McKinleyville/Central Ave
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 5:32:17 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

As a business owner in McKinleyville for the last 35 years, I DO NOT WANT Central Ave. changed.

Thinking it will make people walk and bike more is ridiculous. Having ONE LANE is ridiculous also.

Fix and repair what is there already. Spend less money and have a nice looking town.

Thank you,

Michelle and Rich Grissom

Central Ave Service Center

From: [Redwood Coaching](#)
To: [COB](#); [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Opposition to Road Diet on McKinleyville Avenue
Date: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 5:34:58 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my deep frustration and strong opposition to the proposed changes to McKinleyville Avenue, particularly the plan to reduce vehicle lanes in order to add a bike lane. This is an irresponsible and short-sighted proposal that does not serve the needs of our growing community.

McKinleyville is expanding. We need **four full lanes** to handle the increasing traffic flow. Reducing lanes will create congestion, frustration, and unsafe driving conditions. A “road diet” may sound good on paper, but in reality, it will choke off the main artery of our town. Residents, workers, families, and businesses rely on McKinleyville Avenue every single day, and adding more bottlenecks will only harm local commerce and quality of life.

While I support safe biking in our county, a bike lane should **not come at the expense of traffic lanes**. If the county wishes to support cyclists, then build dedicated bike routes alongside the roadways or create alternative pathways—not by stripping away essential lanes from a community already dealing with growth and traffic demands.

Please understand: the people of McKinleyville do not want this. We want a city designed for the future, not one stuck in gridlock because of poorly thought-out planning.

I urge you to stop this lane reduction and instead prioritize **keeping McKinleyville Avenue four lanes wide** to meet the needs of our expanding city.

Cindy Devore



From: [Jeff Hayes](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: McKinleyville Town Center Ordinance
Date: Thursday, September 18, 2025 12:33:22 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello Planning Commission,

I have an opinion regarding File #25-1130, Agenda item 3. I live on McKinleyville Avenue at the western edge of the project site. I'm a fan of the plan, except for one thing. Central Avenue should not be put on a "diet". A growing child should not be put on a diet. A number of things can be engineered on Central Avenue in the Town Center to increase safety for everyone, without reducing lanes that are vital to the free flowing traffic that we benefit from now. Here are three things that would help: 1. Designated turn lights can be built into the traffic signals for cars turning onto Central Avenue from Pickett and Gwin Roads. 2. Pedestrian crossing lights can be installed across the road. 3. Pull outs could be cut into the sidewalk area at the bus stops, thus preventing the buses from blocking a lane of traffic.

Thank you,

Jeff Hayes
2032 McKinleyville Avenue
McKinleyville, CA 95519

From: [Hooven, Tim](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Central Ave Road Diet
Date: Thursday, September 18, 2025 4:38:46 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Honorable Planning Commissioners,

I am writing to you today to express significant concerns regarding the proposed road diet for Central Avenue, which is a component of the McKinleyville Town Center. The stated objectives include reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) through features like transit-oriented development, pedestrian network improvements, and expanded bike facilities, aiming for a shift from vehicle use to non-vehicle use. While these goals are commendable, I am concerned about the practical application of the road diet on Central, and specifically the potential for these changes to push vehicle traffic into adjacent residential neighborhoods and roads, particularly McKinleyville Avenue.

From what I have read, road diets, especially on arterial streets, can lead to traffic diversion to alternate routes, causing increased congestion, unsafe conditions, and frustration in residential areas that are not designed to handle a higher traffic load. This is especially troubling for McKinleyville Avenue. There are two schools on that road, Morris School, and McKinleyville High School. McKinleyville Middle School is located at the Railroad Drive/Central Avenue intersection. An increase in diverted traffic through these areas could significantly impact safety for students and residents, as there are many students walking along Bates, Railroad, and McKinleyville Ave in the mornings and afternoons when the schools are in session.

A critical question arises: **where will the traffic go if Central Avenue's capacity for vehicles is reduced?** While the project claims VMT reductions, is it likely the people using Central Avenue currently will simply stop making those trips? It seems there is a greater likelihood that traffic congestion will increase to the point of diverting traffic to alternate routes. This scenario raises serious concerns for McKinleyville's residential streets.

Section 19.0, "Significant Unavoidable Impacts," the Draft EIR states the proposed Town Center project will substantially increase traffic volumes on local roadways, leading to increased traffic noise. The change in traffic noise levels along the segment of **Railroad Drive between McKinleyville Avenue and Central Avenue, and along the segment of Railroad Drive east of Central Avenue, would exceed the threshold criteria for noise exposure at noise-sensitive residential uses** along these road segments. I urge the County to conduct a thorough and transparent analysis specifically addressing the potential for traffic diversion to McKinleyville Avenue and other adjacent neighborhood roads. This analysis should clearly articulate how these crucial concerns, especially regarding **school and pedestrian safety**, will be mitigated effectively.

We already had a little taste of a road diet on Central when MCS D worked on their water lines a couple of years ago. I believe the contractor only closed one lane at a time and there was a noticeable increase in congestion and people using alternate routes such as McKinleyville Avenue. Perhaps we could do something temporary with traffic cones to see how it would work

before we get locked into a complete re-design on Central Ave.

Please don't solve one problem by creating a bigger one for the adjacent neighborhoods.

Thank You,

Tim Hooven
McKinleyville

From: [Gillian McIntosh](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Please don't ruin McKinleyville!
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 2:53:52 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Sent from my iPhone I just found out about the sabotage of my town. A town that has added so many subdivisions and businesses around the main road, Central Ave. They have lived here for generations and seem the largest expansion in the county. Now under the cover of secrecy, a handful of native have underhandedly created this plan to take away the main road that all the homes and businesses have built themselves around to make this town thrive. If you take away the two lanes both directions and make the main road one lane both ways, when it is already teeming with traffic and needs to be two lanes both ways all the way to Murray. That is what is needed with traffic. Did any even put a sign on the road about this? No. A notice in the McKinleyville Press? No. A sign about it I'm anywhere or coffee shop? No. This will close businesses that won't be able to restock. People who can afford to will move away. Pedestrians and drivers will be unsafe and there will be accidents and more aggression on the road. I have been here since 1999 and I will definitely move. This absolutely will destroy everything that people invested in when they moved here. Half a lifetime for me personally. No one at the gym knew about it. No one except the nine people on this website. This hickacks an entire town and spends money to destroy its character and ability to function. They can't even pick up the trash or poops on the sidewalks and road but they want to make it so that cars can't get through either? And pay money not to clean it up but reduce its function and betray anyone that has invested in a home or business on Central? This is criminal.

From: [Gillian McIntosh](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Imminent destruction of a town and its economy
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 3:49:29 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Sent from my iPhone McKinleyville has had a population boom. And now, there are a few people who made a plan to make the only main road in this town go from two lanes in both directions to one lane. This is with no impact reports, no flyers on the Central road to inform businesses or residents. There were no notices in the paper or coffee shops or grocery stores. There was a letting I found out about after it happened. No one know about this tans they have been asking to make it two lanes on both sides all the way to Murray because people are so aggressive when it merges to one lane. This is suicide for the businesses on Central and people will sell their homes and leave if they have to deal with worse traffic than there already is. These same people that are proposing this cannot even pick up the poop and trash on the sidewalk because of budget resubmit they want to spend money to make it hard for the people who invested here to get home, run errands, or get to work. It will be more road rage as well. The hopeless have the right of way here. This town is friendly, if not clean anymore. Please don't destroy a town that some of us raise our children in. Please at least do impact reports before following the whims of people who can conspired this plan while we are working and raising our kids. This will cause a lot of legal liability as well and whoever conspired to do this without research and a vote on a ballot at least will be sued by residents and businesses that take the loss.

From: [Linda Torres](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#)
Subject: Road diet
Date: Monday, September 29, 2025 9:37:00 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

As a 30 year resident of Mckinleyville I find it incomprehensible how a road diet could possibly benefit our growing community. I have thoroughly read the material and disagree that it will make McKinleyville a safer better place.

Please for the safety and convenience of our community please stop this nonsense.

From: [Damico, Tracy](#)
To: [COB](#); [Ford, John](#); [McClenagan, Laura](#)
Subject: FW: McKinleyville "road diet" concerns
Date: Monday, September 22, 2025 9:35:45 AM

Please see attached public comment regarding McKinleyville.

Thank you -

Tracy

-----Original Message-----

From: Amanda Lankila <amandajlankila@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 9:31 AM

To: COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Subject: McKinleyville "road diet" concerns

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello, below is a letter expressing my concerns as a McKinleyville home owner and resident regarding the proposed "road diet".

I'm writing you today as a concerned McKinleyville citizen regarding the plans to narrow central avenue.

I've looked over the plans many times and have read much of what's available and truly cannot understand how anyone can think this is a sound logistical plan for a family friendly, busy and growing town. While I can acknowledge that it would create a cute city center dynamic the value of that would be vastly overshadowed by the shortcomings. Central avenue already gets incredibly backed up, especially if one lane on either side is blocked off due to an accident or construction. Expecting this to be the "norm" everyday seems like a truly horrific plan. As a working mom of two kids with children in two different schools in town I also want to note that our local school district is split between several sites so many families have to cross town sometimes multiple times completely depending on where they live to access our public schools. McKinleyville already has accessibility issues like how there's no highway on ramp on hillier, and no eastern side road running parallel to central and creating a huge slow down to get across town without alternative options is incredibly irresponsible. The end goal of trying to make McKinleyville look nicer and more appealing to folks to walk around town is what's pushing this forward and while I respect that I cannot support a plan that is truly so logistically unsound for the citizens of our town. This move will create yet another barrier for families and working class folks in our community who are on the go each and every day and need our roads to be dependable and usable.

I truly believe there is a better way to create a town center without eliminating lanes in our growing town and hope that this plan is put to bed with a fresh idea in its place. Thank you for your service to our community.

Amanda