PLANNING DIVISION
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

3015 H STREET
EUREKA, CALIF. 95501-4484 PHONE (707) 445-7541

October 3, 2005

To: Department of Housing & Community Development
State of California
P.O. Box 952050
Sacramento, CA 94252-2053

Subject Humboldt County's WFH Annual Progress Report for 2004

Dear HCD Official,

Attached for your review and comment please find the 2004 WFH Annual Progress Report for Humboldt County (faxed and mailed October 3, 2005).

Please contact Michael Richardson at (707) 268-3723 if you have any questions about this matter.

Sincerely,

Kirk Girard
Director

Post-it® Fax Note 7671	Date 10/3/05	# of pages ▶ 12
To Paul McDougall	From M Richardson	
Co./Dept. HCD	Co. Humboldt Co	
Phone #	Phone #	
Fax #	Fax #	

ATTACHMENT D
WFH Annual Progress Report
on Implementation of the Housing Element
General Plan Report requirement pursuant to
Section 65400 of the Government Code

Jurisdiction: Humboldt County

Address: 3015 H Street, Eureka, California 95570

Contact: Michael Richardson Title: Senior Planner

Phone: (707) 268-3723

Report Period: 1/1/2003 To: 12/31/03

A. Progress in meeting Regional Housing Need

1. Total number of new housing permits issued

There were permits issued for 405 new housing units in 2004 according to the County Building Division.

2. Describe the affordability, by income level, of new units including the number of deed restricted affordable housing unit.

Based on a survey that was done for the 1998 Housing Element, it is assumed about 2/3 of the single family units constructed at market rates were affordable to above moderate income households, and the remaining were affordable to moderate income households. Of the single family homes that are second units, 2/3 of them are affordable to low-income households, and 1/3 affordable to very low income households. It is also assumed all the market rate multifamily units were affordable to low income persons, and the subsidized units were affordable to very low income persons.

Out of the 405 new units constructed in 2004, 37 of them were multifamily units, 310 were single family units and 58 were mobilehomes. Thirty (30) of the single family homes were second units, and 11 of the multifamily homes were subsidized by the federal HOME program. Accordingly, there were 21 units for very low income households, 67 units for low income households, 103 units for moderate income households and 214 units built for above-moderate income households.

3. Compare units added to regional housing need allocation by income category (very low, lower, moderate, and above moderate)

The following table shows the projected regional housing needs assigned to the County:

PROJECTED HOUSING NEEDS
HUMBOLDT COUNTY, 2001 - 2008

	Housing Units	
Income Category	Unincorporated Areas	Total County
Very Low	581	1,033
Other Low	378	676
Moderate	484	795
Above Moderate	645	1,471
Total	2,088	3,975

Source: Humboldt County Association of Governments; Regional Housing Needs Plan for Humboldt County; November, 2002.

COMPARISON OF HOUSING CONSTRUCTION AND
PROJECTED HOUSING NEEDS
HUMBOLDT COUNTY UNINCORPORATED AREAS, 2003

	2004 Housing Units	
Income Category	Projected Housing Need	Housing Construction
Very Low	83	21
Other Low	54	67
Moderate	70	103
Above Moderate	92	214
Total	299	405

Source: Humboldt County Planning Division, 2004

The table comparing the projected regional housing needs and actual construction shows a rather striking deficit in the number of lower-income units that needed to be produced according to the County's Fair Share allocation. Of particular note is the calculation that only 21 units for very low income households were produced whereas 83 units were needed, resulting in a deficit of 62 units.

Clearly there is a need for securing more grant funding for developing lower-income housing as well as a need for creating new incentives for producing lower-income housing. To address this issue, the Board adopted in December 2003 numerous zoning ordinance changes to encourage production of affordable housing, most notably Programs 1.1b, 1.1c, 1.1i. By bringing the 2003 Housing Element into full compliance with State law in 2004 also makes the County more competitive in securing housing grants for producing lower-income housing.

B. The effectiveness of the housing element in attainment of the community's housing goals and objectives

1. Include a program-by-program status report relative to implementation schedule from each program in the housing element; describe actions taken to implement each program.

The 2003 Housing Element identified a number of on-going policies and programs to meet the housing goals of the County. Each of the following policies and programs were implemented in 2004:

"1: Housing Supply

1.1. The County shall continue to implement the following programs to meet the housing needs of Humboldt County residents.

Building permits The objective of the County is to facilitate the construction of 1,408 additional single family units and 128 multifamily units by 2008.

Alternative Owner Builder (AOB) program. The objective of the County is to facilitate the construction of 117 units under this program in the next five years.

Second Units. The objective of the County is to facilitate the construction of 79 additional second units between 2003 and 2008.

1.1. To incorporate quantitative and qualitative analyses of future Census data into this document at the earliest possible date, in order to assess the types, quantities and locations of housing that are needed for various sizes of families in various income groups.

1.2. To complete and maintain a comprehensive land use map.

1.3 To complete and maintain a land use inventory for all residentially zoned areas.

1.4 To encourage second units where there are adequate public services and where compatible with adjacent land uses, and allow them in resource lands where compatible with resource protection policies

1.5 To provide for more affordable new housing ownership opportunities for low and very low income households, including smaller scale housing units.

1.6 The County shall all within its power to facilitate the production of affordable housing, particularly for low and very low income residents, including actively pursuing all possible funds to maintain and create low-cost housing in diverse areas of the County, and assisting developers in using State and Federally-funded housing programs.

1.7. The County shall encourage new housing developments for very low, low and moderate income households.

1.8 The County shall encourage self-help housing programs.

1.9 The County shall encourage new multiple-unit housing developments to build a certain percentage of their units for sale or rent at below-market rates for very low, low and moderate income families by providing a density, or other incentive bonus.

1.10 The County recognizes and supports the rights of tenants to secure habitable housing.

1.11 The County shall encourage the inclusion of residential units for low and moderate income families in new developments within the coastal zone, where feasible, pursuant to Government Code Section 66590.

1.12 The County shall encourage the replacement of housing occupied by low and/or moderate income families when converted or demolished within the coastal zone, where feasible, pursuant to Government Code Section 66950.

1.13. The County shall support all efforts to construct housing affordable to very low income persons.

1.14. The County encourages second units where there are adequate public services and where compatible with adjacent land uses, and allow them in resource lands where compatible with resource protection policies.

1.15. The County shall put an Article 34 Referendum on the ballot upon request of a government agency, or a citizens group willing to campaign for such a measure.

1.16. The County shall annually compete for CDBG funds as a means of developing local communities including improvements to and expansion of sewer and water lines and facilities for community planning areas and coastal communities.

1.17. The County shall maintain a current housing stock inventory in order to anticipate availability for an expanding population, and to set priorities for meeting the more critical housing shortages.

1.18. The County shall provide for density bonuses for developments containing at least 25% of the units for low or moderate income households or at least 10% of the units for lower-income households as provided in Government Code Section 65915.

1.19. Provide the staffing necessary to process building permits and subdivision applications in a timely fashion.

1.20. Adopt fees for service which support the cost of the permit and land use review processes.

1.21. The County shall encourage and support development by non-profit housing sponsors to maintain and develop housing affordable to low and very low income persons.

1.22. The County encourages future development based on energy efficient travel patterns and the location of existing services.

1.23. The County shall rezone lands designated for residential development under the General Plan to optimum development potential as soon as public sewer and water services become available. Until funding for expansion of public sewer and water facilities in the underdeveloped areas designated for urban development and urban expansion are obtained, the County will maintain zoning densities that reflect State and local health policies for individual wells and/or sewage disposal systems.

1.24. The County shall provide for development of single mobilehomes and mobilehome parks in residential zones throughout the community in accordance with the requirements of Government Code Sections 65852.3 and 65852.7 and consistent with General Plan/Community Plan residential land use densities.

1.25. The County should encourage the Planned Unit Development, Condominium, Limited Equity Cooperative, and Stock Cooperative housing as four methods to achieving more affordable housing.

1.26. The County shall discourage encroachment of residential subdivisions upon agricultural and other natural resource lands. Subdivisions of resource lands shall be allowed only where the resulting uses will not adversely affect the resource use of the site.

1.27. The County shall encourage the preservation of natural features of terrain and vegetation in new subdivisions in residential zones by clustering development, providing common open areas, smaller, more appropriate roads, and other compatible land use innovations in the development of new residential areas.

2: Housing Needs of Special Populations

2.1. The County shall support the elimination of housing discrimination.

2.2. The County shall actively assist the Humboldt County Housing Authority and non-profit corporations to develop and implement programs to assist very low, low and moderate income households, minorities, families with children, elderly, handicapped, and homeless persons to secure housing.

2.3. The County shall promote housing and support services for elderly and handicapped persons which encourage an independent lifestyle.

2.4. Community Plans, in the course of formulation or revision should henceforth designate adequate sites to accommodate the proportionate nomadic housing site needs for each community.

2.5. The County shall continue to distribute and post information on the enforcement program of the State Fair Employment and Housing Commission.

2.6. Support and coordinate the development of affordable housing for low income citizens, including multifamily, single family, and single room occupancy (SRO) units.

2.7. Support and encourage the development of transitional housing and homeless shelters.

2.8. To utilize federal, state and local funding programs for tenant-based rental assistance for the homeless and near-homeless persons, in securing and maintaining stable housing.

3: Regulatory Constraints

3.1. The County shall devise mutually acceptable means to meld the efforts of citizens and government to address the problems common to us all.

3.2. The County shall carefully complete an up-to-date, internally consistent, responsive General Plan and Zoning Ordinance that address the current needs and problems of the County citizenry, and which set forth a compatible vision for the future.

3.3. The County shall reduce, or limit increases, in application processing fees which adversely impact housing affordability.

3.4. The County shall foster greater responsiveness to public needs.

3.5. The County shall give the Planning and Building Divisions responsibility for formulating, implementing, and evaluating strategies to solve local housing problems.

3.6. The County shall encourage and be receptive to new and experimental techniques to facilitate optimum utilization of available sites.

3.7. Where consistent with State law, the Building Division shall encourage citizens to make partial repair of their dwellings without being required to rehabilitate beyond their economic means.

3.8. The County shall support tax programs which encourage citizens to maintain and repair their homes.

3.9. The County shall support the combination of private and public money to provide opportunities for financing not otherwise available to low and moderate income persons.

3.10. The County shall apply sensible and flexible housing standards to allow low-cost rehabilitation and repairs consistent with health and safety requirements.

3.11. The County shall endorse programs whereby students gain practical home construction, repair and weatherization techniques by repairing existing housing stock in the community.

3.12. The County shall encourage experimentation with new concepts in housing construction, designs, styles and ownership patterns.

3.13. The County shall mitigate regulatory problems and amend the housing codes to reflect acceptable alternative methods.

3.14. The County shall support alternative owner-built/ owner-occupied housing which does not infringe upon public health and safety.

3.15. The County shall promote helpful attitudes by regulatory agencies in order to encourage voluntary compliance with the regulatory process.

3.16. The County shall promote flexibility in parking requirements for housing developments, especially for seniors and in areas with public transportation.

3.17. The County shall provide the opportunity to consider the temporary placement and use of a second dwelling unit in excess of densities permitted in this General Plan in cases where specified findings can be made that there is legitimate hardship.

3.18. The County shall encourage the development of presently under-utilized residential parcels served by public sewer and water for optimum development potential under the zoning ordinance.

3.19. County departments shall thoroughly review building and development codes and ordinances with an eye to eliminating requirements not necessary to the protection of public health, safety and welfare.

3.20. Once a final building, sanitation or subdivision permit is issued, it shall not be retroactively denied, unless the permit was issued on the basis of false information of a substantial nature or significant information is obtained subsequent to the issuance of the permit.

3.21. During the subdivision or building permit process, an applicant may choose any one of the agencies that he or she feels creates the greatest obstacle to approval and receive a do-pass or a rejection from that agency before proceeding (this includes public hearings).

3.22. When requested by applicants, permitting agencies shall make appointments for on-site inspections. If agency representatives cannot keep appointments, they should make reasonable efforts to inform the person who made the appointment.

3.23. All ministerial permit denials shall include in writing specific statutes applicable. If possible, discretionary permit denials should include, in writing, specific statutes, regulations and policies applicable.

3.24. During building inspections, all noncompliance items must be listed and all subsequent inspections shall be limited to new work and verification of corrections of prior noted deficiencies.

3.25. Regulatory changes that cumulatively enhance the ability of Humboldt County's citizens to build and repair their own homes for their own use in a manner suited to their needs and desires shall continue to be encouraged. (Board of Supervisors Resolution #79-122 adopted September 11, 1979).

3.26. Building permit requirements for owner-built housing should be minimized consistent with the reasonable protection of health and safety.

3.27. The County shall maintain ordinances which allow the Building Inspection Division to approve building permits for residences and accessory structures in rural areas that are constructed to meet standards less restrictive than the Uniform Building Code (UBC).

3.28. If revisions to any of the Alternative Owner-Builder Ordinances are warranted, a formal Regulations Committee shall be officially constituted pursuant to the Board of Supervisors Policy on Committees and Commissions to perform ordinance review and revision tasks as outlined in an approved work program.

3.29. The Building Inspection Division and the Health Department shall provide inspections of homes to determine whether the structure complies with minimum health and safety requirements.

3.30. The Building Division and Health Department shall publicize the availability of a voluntary building condition inspection to be conducted for a fee commensurate with the service rendered.

3.31. Information on the availability of the inspection service should focus on communities containing a significant number of dwellings in need of repair.

3.32. The inspections service shall be strictly non-punitive, and shall be publicized as such.

3.33. To identify regulatory and tax constraints that effectively discourage rehabilitation and maintenance, and act to mitigate them.

3.34. The County shall review and streamline the permit application process on an ongoing basis, in all departments involved, in order to shorten the time required to process all permits, and to provide adequate information to prospective builders and developers.

3.35. The County shall encourage private developers, builders and financial institutions to work with public agencies and non-profit agencies in formulating strategies to solve local housing problems.

4: Conservation of Existing Housing

4.1. The County shall encourage the rehabilitation, rather than condemnation, of deteriorated housing.

4.2. The County, recognizing the need of tenants for energy-efficient housing, shall encourage the weatherization of rental units.

4.3. Incentives to rehabilitate, weatherize and maintain existing housing stock.

4.4. The County shall encourage and support programs that preserve and/or restore the unique character of older residences and neighborhoods.

4.5. The County shall encourage relocation, rather than destruction, of sound older housing threatened by development.

4.6. Public funds for the rehabilitation of low-income rental housing shall ensure that these rehabilitated units remain part of the low-income housing stock.

4.7. The County may allow legal, non-conforming single family and multifamily structures to be retained in new residential subdivisions even where the retention of these structures means that the general plan density for the parcel is exceeded. However, the creation of any parcels without an existing dwelling must be consistent with planned densities. The County shall require the repair of building, plumbing, mechanical and electrical hazardous conditions that exist in such non-conforming structures to meet acceptable health and safety codes.

5: Reduce Housing Construction and Improvement Costs

5.1. The County shall consider house solar orientation and energy effective landscaping during the review process.

5.2. The County shall encourage the use of alternative energy sources such as solar and wind power, with consideration for solar and wind rights in residential developments.

5.3. The County shall provide maximum opportunities for owner/builders to economize by doing what they can for themselves and to finish non-structural, non-mechanical work at their own pace.

5.4. The County shall encourage the use of low-cost, energy efficient, low-consumptive housing designs, materials and construction methods that reduce costs.

5.5. The County shall support the use of innovative construction and design methods that make more efficient use of land and building materials including water- conserving waste disposal systems, energy systems, dwelling designs, and uses of recycled materials for building.

5.6. The County shall encourage the use of financial leveraging of public and private funding to construct owner-occupied and rental housing.

6: Public Involvement and Education

6.1. The Planning Commission shall maintain clear, consistent and fair procedures for operation and relationships with the public, the Board of Supervisors, ad-hoc committees, and local, State and Federal agencies.

6.2 Planning Commission procedures shall be kept in a format and language that is clear and readily available to the public.

6.3. The County shall encourage the formation of citizen organizations to provide input on specific matters in a format consistent with the adopted policies and procedures.

6.4 The Planning Department shall provide notification of meetings adequate to insure public participation consistent with the goals of this program.

6.5 The meetings of the Planning Commission, whenever practical, shall be held in the geographic areas under consideration, or where the meetings of the Commission concern countywide issues as addressed in the Framework Plan, such meetings shall be held in the regional centers most representative of the issues to be addressed.

6.6 The Planning Commission shall encourage public participation in the land use decision-making process.

6.7 The County shall provide centralized public access to all relevant documents and information regarding housing activities.

6.8 The County shall promote standardization of housing and zoning terminology throughout government and the housing industry."

In addition to the on-going programs, there were a number of new programs that were targeted for implementation in 2004. They are identified below with a status report for each one.

1.1e. Make available at the public information counter of Community Development Services a GIS computer that will enable developers to identify real-time mapped constraints to housing development. Responsible Agency: Community Development Services. Timeframe: December, 2003. *This measure was not implemented in 2003 as the timeframe was overly optimistic, however in 2004 the County placed a GIS computer at the front counter that can be viewed by the public, although staff assistance is necessary to access the information.*

2.1b. Identify adequate housing sites for the low-income nomadic population throughout the County in proportion to the specific local needs as part of the ongoing development of the Land Use Element of the General Plan. Responsible Agency: Community Development Services. Timeframe: Ongoing. *This program is on-going with the adoption of each new community plan. There were no new community plans adopted in 2004 as the County is engaged in a 5-year comprehensive general plan update.*

2.1c. The County shall provide $600,000 in program service support to the Multiple Assistance Center ($200,000 per year over initial three year period), and shall consider similar commitments to the MAC after the initial three year period expires, based on program and cost efficiency outcomes. Responsible Agency: Dept. of Health and Human Services. Timeframe: On-going. *The County is providing the services as described in the above program.*

2. Assess effectiveness of actions and outcomes

As described in the response to #1 above, the County is struggling to produce housing affordable to lower-income households. To address this issue, the Board adopted in December 2003 numerous zoning ordinance changes to encourage production of affordable housing, most notably Programs 1.1b, 1.1c, 1.1i. Bringing the 2003 Housing Element into full compliance with State law in 2004 makes the County more competitive in securing housing grants for producing lower-income housing.

Aside from the production of affordable housing, the County is doing well in meeting its timeframes for the three (3) implementation programs scheduled for 2003; all the tasks were completed as scheduled.

C. Progress toward mitigating governmental constraints identified in the housing element.
Several programs were implemented with the adoption of Ordinance 2313A in 2003 to mitigate governmental constraints:

1.1b. Amend the general plan and zoning ordinance to allow apartments above commercial establishments in urban areas and to allow mixed residential and commercial uses in planned unit developments.

1.1g Adopt ordinance changes to allow encroachment into yard setback areas with a Special Permit in residential zones.

1.1h Adopt ordinance changes to allow tandem parking in residential subdivisions where detention basins are required..

1.1i Adopt ordinance changes to specify that the density standards under the General Plan are to be used in determining the number of dwelling units permitted on lots zoned Residential Multiple Family (R-3) and Apartment-Professional (R-4)

3.1c. Amend the zoning ordinance to specifically allow second units on roads that do not meet Road Category 4 standards provided the use is consistent with the County's Fire Safe Ordinance and served by public water and sewer.

These new rules are now a part of the zoning ordinance, and the new provisions were implemented in 2004 with the review of all development permits.

Also, Program 3.1b (Establish and fund a position in the Planning Division specifically designed to assist persons with developing materials necessary for complete applications.) made a full-time staff planner available to the public to help reduce governmental constraints by helping applicants with design suggestions and other guidance. This staff position remained funded for all of 2004.

In December, 2004 the Board of Supervisors adopted the following zoning ordinance changes to reduce governmental constraints for housing for persons with disabilities by providing the following process for "reasonable accommodation" consistent with the Americans With Disabilities Act:

a. The party requesting the modification or exception from any zoning or land use standard or regulation shall provide the Director of Community Development Services a written request for "reasonable accommodation" pursuant to the federal Fair Housing Act (FHA) and/or State Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA). The request shall describe the nature of the disability, the impact of the existing regulation or standard that has necessitated the request, and other methods or actions considered by the party to provide necessary relief and why the measure or measures were not found to be feasible.

b. Upon finding the request complete, and following consultation with any knowledgeable party or parties as determined appropriate, the Director shall

process the request according to the procedures for Special Permits. If this determination of modification of exception is related to a discretionary land use project, the matter may be taken to the hearing officer ahead of the project as a whole, so as to expedite review and render a decision on which other permit findings may be dependant.

c. In addition to the findings for approving Special Permits, approval of a request for reasonable accommodation shall include the findings, a) the request is the only feasible design and b) the request provides a "reasonable accommodation" consistent with the Americans With Disabilities Act.

The County also amended the general plan and zoning ordinance to add transitional housing and emergency shelters to the list of allowed uses in the zoning ordinance.