



# City of Fortuna

(707) 725-7600 - 625 11<sup>th</sup> Street – Fortuna, CA 95540

October 29, 2025

Brendan Byrd, PE  
Executive Director  
Humboldt County Association of Governments  
611 I Street, Suite B  
Eureka, CA 95501

Re: Letter of Support for Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) 7<sup>th</sup> Cycle Methodology

Dear Mr. Byrd,

The City has received your email dated September 29, 2025, regarding the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) Cycle 7 Methodology. In response, on October 20, 2025, the Fortuna City Council reviewed a staff report concerning the RHNA methodology.

Following this review, staff have been directed to submit a letter of support for the Humboldt County Association of Governments' proposed RHNA methodology, which includes a 50/50 jobs-to-population split. This methodology results in a total jurisdictional allocation of 479 housing units for the City of Fortuna.

Please let me know if you need any additional information or feedback.

Sincerely,

Amy Nilsen  
City Manager  
City of Fortuna  
(707) 725-1410

**Brendan Byrd** <brendan.byrd@hcaog.net>

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**RHNA**

1 message

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**Susan Nolan** <snolan@humboldt1.com>  
To: brendan.byrd@hcaog.net

Thu, Oct 16, 2025 at 8:54 AM

Dear Mr. Byrd,

I am writing to encourage you to emphasize housing development in already developed locations in the county, close to jobs, schools, and shopping.

Infill will support lower cost for government services. The county roads department already has a backlog that it may never catch up with. Also, more efficient, reliable, and lower cost utility distribution—I live at the edge of McKinleyville where the power routinely goes out in winter storms.

Other benefits include schools near by, shorter work commutes, walkable or bikable shopping, and more effective mass transit.

We Humboldters are proud of our local food production, but development often occurs on the county's limited acreage of quality ag soils.

Let's build the best Humboldt by concentrating growth near jobs and services, and preserving our ag lands and forests as they are. Thank you,

Susan Nolan.

### **Additional Public Comment Received for RHNA Public Hearing**

- In order to reduce VMT when deciding where to construct housing, identifying where people work is an obvious major strategic consideration. The closer people live to their workplaces, the fewer miles overall they normally will need to travel per day. The RHNA methodology should reflect this. The currently proposed 50/50 allocation between job location and housing does not. Job location should be a much larger factor in the decision-making process. – Nancy Ihara
- I am writing to encourage you to emphasize housing development in already developed locations in the county, close to jobs, schools, and shopping. Infill will support lower cost for government services. The county roads department already has a backlog that it may never catch up with. Also, more efficient, reliable, and lower cost utility distribution—I live at the edge of McKinleyville where the power routinely goes out in winter storms. Other benefits include schools near by, shorter work commutes, walkable or bikeable shopping, and more effective mass transit. We Humboldters are proud of our local food production, but development often occurs on the county's limited acreage of quality ag soils. Let's build the best Humboldt by concentrating growth near jobs and services, and preserving our ag lands and forests as they are.
- As you know, CRTP and our environmental allies [strongly urge a RHNA methodology which promotes the region's values and priorities by encouraging infill development and discouraging sprawl](#). Unfortunately, the proposed methodology does not do that. We reiterate our comments from September 15th, attached to this email for your reference, and urge changes to the methodology as previously described. We further request that the Board create an ad hoc committee or task force, including environmental stakeholders, to take the time to develop a consensus allocation methodology for the next RHNA cycle, although it is years away. – Colin Fiske (CRTP)
- EPIC strongly supports allocating more RHNA to areas of the County that will promote infill development rather than incentivizing urban sprawl. Urban sprawl both threatens Humboldt County's agricultural and timberlands (which provide important wildlife habitat) and increases our vehicle miles travelled and GHG emissions. Not to mention, urban sprawl is bad planning which can require the construction of infrastructure which our tax base cannot sustain. If you're interested in learning more about the cost of sprawl I recommend the Center for Biological Diversity's ["The True Cost of Sprawl: Bad Planning Harms People, Wildlife, and the Climate"](#) and California YIMBY's ["Sprawl Costs the U.S. \\$1 Trillion Every Year"](#). Anyone who has been following California politics will know that it is extremely rare for the Center and the CAYIMBY to agree on anything. However, they both can see that unchecked sprawl is an economic, social, and environmental disaster. Humboldt County is uniquely situated to prevent further sprawl now so that we do not have to pay the cost later. Through the RHNA allocation, HCAOG has the opportunity to encourage infill development rather than sprawl. In order to accomplish this, we encourage you to weigh existing jobs more heavily than the currently proposed 50/50 allocation between population and housing. - EPIC
- In response to your call for public comment on the RHNA methodology, we would like to point out that the proposed 50/50 allocation between population and jobs misses an

opportunity. Because HCAOG's Regional Transportation Plan and other public statements recognize the importance of infill housing, this preference should be baked in at the allocation level. Tilting the ratio more towards where the jobs are will reduce vehicle miles traveled. The impacts of building housing farther and farther out into undeveloped areas are becoming more severe as the climate changes and the need to preserve ecological resources becomes more crucial. The more vehicle miles traveled, the higher the impacts on the climate and overall environment. Insurance companies are already fleeing the state as wildfires, floods, sea level rise and drought take their toll. Construction costs are soaring, making housing more difficult to procure for many families. Jurisdictions struggle to find money necessary to build new infrastructure and extend services— such as fire protection—to outlying areas. In the interests of public good, we must focus on the more sustainable strategy of building where infrastructure already exists. People who really want to build houses outside of developed areas will find a way to do so. HCAOG's role is to disburse public funds in a way that prioritizes the type of growth we need to avert a disastrous future. – 350 Humboldt