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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## HCAOG RESTARTS REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ALLOCATION Public Input Will Now Be Greater Part of Process

Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) decided at its Thursday, Dec. 11 board meeting to restart the Regional Housing Needs methodology process to allow for public input.

The regional housing needs methodology is a process by which housing targets are generated for each of the seven cities and the unincorporated county. The Regional Housing Needs Plan generated from this process in the last cycle in 2003 targeted over the half the housing into the unincorporated county where there is less infrastructure, more tendency to convert farm and timberlands to development, and greater distances to jobs, schools, and other services.

In this cycle, the proposed methodology was supposed to be developed with public input, but the June meeting where a draft methodology was developed wasn't advertised. "This anomaly needs to be addressed and corrected," said Spencer Clifton, HCAOG Executive Director, at the meeting.

A Healthy Humboldt Coalition letter to HCAOG dated Monday, Dec. 8 questioned whether the public had been included in the process as required by government code, and requested that the process be opened to public participation.

"We believe a healthy discussion would be productive in deciding where to best direct growth in this plan," said the letter.

The housing targets generated by the RHNA process are used in the cities' and county's Housing Elements, and must accommodate enough housing for all income groups. All agencies' Housing Elements must be completed by Aug. 31, 2009.

The restarted timeline for the Regional Housing Needs Plan will run as follows:

There will be a 15-day notice for a hearing on development of the criteria, which can prioritize such factors as proximity to jobs, availability of public services, and commuting patterns. Once the proposed methodology is drafted and released, there will be a 60-day public comment period, before revisions are made and a final plan issued. Within 45 days of its issuance, HCAOG will hold a public hearing to adopt the final plan. Cities and county then develop their Housing Elements to accommodate the share of housing allocated to each entity.

HCAOG is comprised of representatives from the city councils and Board of Supervisors. To be informed of HCAOG meetings, contact [hcaog@pacbell.net](mailto:hcaog@pacbell.net) or call 444-8208.