



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 10/7/2025

File #: 25-1088

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Planning and Building Department

Agenda Section: Public Hearing

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:

Adoption of the Coastal Signs Ordinance as Modified and Certified by the California Coastal Commission that Amends Section 313-87.3 of the Humboldt County Code to Provide a Uniform Set of Standards for the Development, Siting, Size, Maintenance, and Installation of Signs Within the Unincorporated Coastal Areas of Humboldt County. The Previously Adopted Coastal Signs Ordinance (Ordinance 2736) was Certified by the California Coastal Commission on July 11, 2025, with Suggested Modifications Related to Lessening Impacts on Natural Resources, Protecting Public Views, and Preserving Public Access

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt the attached resolution (Attachment 1), to take the following actions:
 - a. Find that the proposed Coastal Signs Ordinance is exempt from environmental review under Section 15251(f) Exemption for Certified State Regulatory Programs of the CEQA Guidelines; and
 - b. Find the proposed Coastal Signs Ordinance is consistent with the Zoning Code, the General Plan, the Coastal Act, and State Housing Law; and
2. Repeal Ordinance 2736; and
3. Adopt the Coastal Signs Ordinance (Signs Ordinance - Coastal. Amending Section 313-87.3 of the Humboldt County Code to Provide a Uniform Set of Standards for the Development, Siting, Size, Maintenance, and Installation of Signs Within the Unincorporated Coastal Areas of Humboldt County) as Modified by the California Coastal Commission (Attachment 2); and
4. Direct the Clerk of the Board to publish the Post-Adoption Summary of the Coastal Signs Ordinance (Attachment 3) within 15 days after adoption by the Board, and to post in the Office of the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors a certified copy of the full text of the adopted ordinance along with the names of those Supervisors voting for and against the ordinance.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

This action supports the following areas of your Board's Strategic Plan.

Area of Focus: Safe & Healthy Communities

Strategic Plan Category: 1008 - Update General Plan ordinances for quality of environment

DISCUSSION:

Project Location: All coastal unincorporated areas of Humboldt County.

Present General Plan Land Use Designation: All land use designations.

Present Zoning: All zoning districts.

Environmental Review: The proposed ordinance amendments are exempt from environmental review under CEQA Guidelines Section 15251(f), Exemption for Certified State Regulatory Programs.

State Appeal: Changes proposed to the Local Coastal Program received final certification from the California Coastal Commission on July 11, 2025.

Executive Summary:

The Board of Supervisors is being asked to adopt the Coastal Sign Ordinance with minor changes made by the California Coastal Commission as part of their certification process. The Coastal Sign Ordinance was approved by the Board of Supervisors on April 9, 2024 (Ordinance 2736 - Attachment 5) and transmitted to the Coastal Commission. On July 11, 2025, the Coastal Commission certified the ordinance subject to the county adopting the Coastal Commission's suggested modifications shown in Attachment 4.

The Coastal Commission suggested the following modifications to the Coastal Signs Ordinance:

1. Addition of text to section 87.3.3.8 to ensure maintenance activities do not impact natural resources.
2. Addition of text to section 87.3.3.10 to protect public views and adequately carries out the visual resources protection policies of the county's six Land Use Policy (LUP) Area Plans.
3. Addition of text to section 87.3.3.11 to prohibit signs that interfere with public access to ensure that signs are consistent with policies of the County's six LUP Area Plans Coastal Act.

These changes do not substantially modify the ordinance and are regulations or policies that already exist in either the Coastal Zoning Ordinance or the Land Use Area Plans. Staff recommends the Board of Supervisors accept the changes and adopt the updated ordinance. If the Board adopts the suggested modifications, the Coastal Commission Executive Director will determine whether the county's acceptance is consistent with the commission's action and will report the determination to the commission at the next regularly scheduled public meeting. If the executive director reports that the changes are consistent with the commission's action, at that time, the ordinance will become effective.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

General funds (1100)

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Staff costs and other expenses related to work on the coastal ordinance, and preparation and review of this staff report total approximately \$20,000. The staff positions to complete this work are filled and allocated and are included in the General Fund contribution to the Long Range Planning unit 1100-282.

STAFFING IMPACT:

None.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

California Coastal Commission.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board may choose not to accept specific modifications to the proposed Coastal Signs Ordinance. Staff does not recommend this alternative because that would nullify the Coastal Commission's certification, and the County would have to re-start the process with the Coastal Commission.

Alternatively, the Board may decline to approve the Coastal Signs Ordinance if it finds that the evidence presented does not support making all the required findings. Planning staff has concluded that the evidence supports making all the required findings and does not recommend further consideration of this alternative.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Resolution
2. Ordinance No. _____
3. Post-Adoption Summary
4. Coastal Commission Adopted Findings
5. Ordinance 2736

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Meeting of: 4/9/2024 Board of Supervisors

File No.: 24-320

Meeting of: 2/15/2024 Planning Commission

File No.: 24-230

Meeting of: 1/18/2024 Planning Commission

File No.: 24-113

Meeting of: 11/16/2023 Planning Commission

File No.: 23-1532

Meeting of: 11/02/2023 Planning Commission

File No.: 23-1484

Meeting of: 10/19/2023 Planning Commission

File No.: 23-1418