

**RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
OF THE COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT**

**Resolution Number 25-033**

**Record Number PLN-2023-18849**

**RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT  
RECOMMENDING THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ADOPT THE INLAND VERSION OF  
THE OUTDOOR LIGHTING ORDINANCE.**

**WHEREAS**, California Government Code Section 65850, et seq. authorizes counties to regulate land use, and to adopt and amend general plans and zoning and building ordinances for such purposes, and sets forth procedures governing the adoption and amendment of such ordinances; and

**WHEREAS**, Humboldt County initiated the zoning ordinance changes herein to set design guidelines for outdoor lighting to protect unincorporated Humboldt County from light pollution and light trespass; and

**WHEREAS**, the Humboldt County Planning Commission held a Public Workshop on the Outdoor Lighting Ordinance on March 20, 2025, recommending that Staff incorporate revisions to the draft ordinance on a basis of deliberations of the Commission and public comment received; and

**WHEREAS**, on Wednesday, April 30, 2025, the Planning Division caused to be published in the Eureka Times-Standard, a newspaper of general circulation in Humboldt County, a Notice of Public Hearing on the proposed zoning amendments regarding Outdoor Lighting; and

**WHEREAS**, on May 15, 2025, the Humboldt County Planning Commission held a public hearing on the Inland Outdoor Lighting Ordinance.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Planning Commission makes all the following findings:**

**CONSISTENCY WITH THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)**

- 1. FINDING:** The requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act have been met. The Humboldt County Planning Commission has considered the Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) adopted for the General Plan on September 25, 2017, and the Addendum to the PEIR that has been prepared for this ordinance.

- EVIDENCE:** a) A project specific Addendum to the previously adopted Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) has been

prepared for consideration per section 15164 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

b) The proposed project does not present substantial changes that would require major revisions to the previous PEIR. No new information of substantial importance that was not known and could not be known at the time was presented as described in Section 15162(c) of the CEQA Guidelines.

c) This ordinance sets design standards for exterior lighting to reduce light pollution. The proposed ordinance will not cause a substantial increase in the severity of the identified cumulative impacts. No physical changes to the environment will occur with adoption of the proposed ordinance, beyond those that were previously considered. Therefore, the adoption of the proposed ordinance will not have new significant environmental effects or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant effects.

d) No new information of substantial importance has been introduced that would lead to new or different impacts compared with those discussed in the GP PEIR. Project components continue to build on, clarify, and modify policies, standards and implementation measures in the current General Plan. The types of development and resulting impacts would be the same as those evaluated in the GP PEIR. Therefore, there is no evidence that the proposed ordinances will result in one or more significant new effects not discussed in the GP PEIR.

## **PUBLIC INTEREST**

### **2. FINDING:**

Humboldt County Code Section 312-50.3.1 stipulates that amendments to the zoning code must be in the public interest. The proposed amendment is in the public interest.

### **EVIDENCE:**

- a) The intent of the ordinance is to set design guidelines for outdoor lighting and maintain dark skies. Humboldt County is known for its dark skies and the Inland Outdoor Lighting Ordinance seeks to protect and preserve the dark skies by limiting light trespass and light pollution, and is therefore in the public interest.

## **CONSISTENCY WITH THE GENERAL PLAN**

### **3. FINDING:**

Humboldt County Code Section 312-50.3.2 states that amendments to the Zoning Code must be consistent with the General Plan. The proposed Outdoor Lighting Ordinance is



consistent with the General Plan.

- EVIDENCE:** a) The Outdoor Lighting Ordinance is consistent with the 2017 Conservation and Open Space Element. The proposed ordinance incorporates the Humboldt County General Plan's goals to continue to protect Humboldt's scenic beauty. The proposed ordinance will implement Scenic Resources Standard 4 - Light and Glare and Implementation Measure 5 - Lighting Design Guidelines of the County's 2017 Conservation and Open Space Element of the General Plan.

#### **CONSISTENCY WITH STATE PLANNING LAW**

- 4. FINDING:** Humboldt County Code Section 312-50.3.4 requires any proposed amendment must not reduce the residential density for any parcel below that utilized by the California Department of Housing and Community Development in determining compliance with housing element law unless specific findings are made. The proposed amendment does not limit the number of housing units which may be constructed on an annual basis.

- EVIDENCE:** a) The Inland Outdoor Lighting Ordinance does not reduce residential density for any parcel utilized by the California Department of Housing and Community Development in determining compliance with housing element law. The Inland Outdoor Lighting Ordinance sets design guidelines for outdoor lighting and will not impact the residential density of Humboldt County.

#### **PURPOSE OF ORDINANCE**

- 5. FINDING:** The primary purpose of an ordinance is to establish local laws and regulations, often addressing issues not covered by state or federal laws. Ordinances are used to regulate activities, fix legal rights and duties, or prohibit certain actions within a municipality or county.

- EVIDENCE:** a) The Inland Outdoor Lighting Ordinance sets design guidelines for outdoor lighting which is currently not regulated. Humboldt County is known for its dark skies and the Inland Outdoor Lighting Ordinance seeks to protect and preserve the dark skies by limiting light trespass and light pollution.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Planning Commission recommends that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Humboldt:

1. Hold a public hearing in the manner prescribed by law;
2. Adopt the required findings prepared by Planning Staff;
3. Adopt the Inland Outdoor Lighting Ordinance amending the Zoning Regulations of the Inland Zoning Ordinance (Section 314 of Title III, Division 1, Chapter 4 of Humboldt County Code);

The foregoing Resolution is hereby passed and adopted after review and consideration of all the evidence on **May 15, 2025**.

The motion was made by COMMISSIONER SARAH WEST and seconded by COMMISSIONER LORNA MCFARLANE and the following vote:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Sarah West, Lorna McFarlane, Iver Skavdal, Thomas Mulder, Noah Levy, Peggy O'Neill

NOES: COMMISSIONERS:

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS:

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Jerome Qiriaz

DECISION: Motion carried 6/0

I, John H. Ford, Secretary to the Planning Commission of the County of Humboldt, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct record of the action taken on the above-entitled matter by said Commission at a meeting held on the date noted above.



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John H. Ford, Director  
Planning and Building Department