



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 3/19/2026

File #: 26-190

To: Planning Commission

From: Planning and Building Department

Agenda Section: Public Hearing

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:

Inland and Coastal Safe Parking - Safe Shelter Pilot Program Ordinance Amendment
Record No.: LRP-2023-18813
Countywide

An amendment to the Inland and Coastal Safe Parking - Safe Shelter Pilot Program Ordinance including language and numbering amendments and allowing an extension of the provisions in both ordinances until January 1, 2036, in alignment with State allowances for emergency housing standards under Senate Bill 1395.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Planning Commission:

1. Adopt the resolutions (Attachments 1 and 2) recommending that the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors take the following actions:
 - a. Find the Inland and Coastal Safe Parking - Safe Shelter Pilot Program Ordinance amendments are exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 21080(b)(4) of the Public Resources Code and Section 15269(c) of the CEQA Guidelines; and
 - b. Find the Inland and Coastal Safe Parking - Safe Shelter Pilot Program Ordinance amendments and extension comply with the General Plan, local coastal program, and Coastal Act; and
 - c. Find the Inland and Coastal Safe Parking - Safe Shelter Pilot Program Ordinance amendments and extension are in the public interest; and
2. Adopt an Ordinance amending Ordinance No. 2729 (Attachment 3) approving minor language amendments and extension of the Inland Safe Parking - Safe Shelter Pilot Program Ordinance and amending Title III, Division 1, Chapter 4 of Humboldt County Code, Section 314-61.05; and
3. Adopt an Ordinance amending Ordinance No. 2694 (Attachment 4) approving minor language and numbering amendments and extension of the Coastal Safe Parking - Safe Shelter Pilot Program Ordinance and amending Title III, Division 1, Chapter 3 of Humboldt County Code, Section 313-61.05 (now Section 313-60.1).

DISCUSSION:

The requested action is to extend the Inland and Coastal Safe Parking - Safe Shelter Ordinances until January 1, 2036. This is in line with SB 1395 and the State's decision to extend the provisions of Government Code Section 8698.4 until January 1, 2036, which

allows local jurisdictions to adopt streamlined, temporary emergency housing standards during a declared shelter crisis.

Humboldt County initiated the zoning ordinance changes to implement its General Plan Housing Element, which through Implementation Measure H-IM56 directs the County to fund and implement a safe parking pilot program and adopt an enabling ordinance or resolution for the pilot program. On June 7, 2022, the Board held a public hearing on the Inland and Coastal Safe Parking - Safe Shelter Pilot Program Ordinance and unanimously approved the Pilot Program in the inland and coastal areas. These ordinances allow a government agency, religious institution, non-profit charitable organization, or private non-profit organization to operate a Safe Parking - Safe Shelter site to provide homeless individuals and families living in a vehicle or outside a safe place to park or sleep at no cost while accessing services.

While the inland ordinance became effective 30 days after approval by the Board of Supervisors, the coastal ordinance still requires certification from the Coastal Commission to become effective. Both pilot program ordinances were set to expire 18 months from the effective date (January 2024 for the inland ordinance), unless otherwise extended. The purpose of structuring this as a pilot program was to determine the effectiveness of the ordinance before adopting it as a permanent ordinance.

At the end of November 2023, the provisions in the Inland Safe Parking - Safe Shelter Pilot Program Ordinance were not being utilized by any entity. During the 16 months from the inland ordinance's effective date, nobody had initiated a facility. To determine if there were provisions within the ordinance that discouraged the development of a safe parking facility, Planning and Building staff contacted the Department of Health and Human Services along with several homeless advocacy groups to research potential reasons as to why the program was not being utilized. The primary reason was these groups, and potential participants were not aware of the available pilot program as well as the lack of available funding to support such an operation. While no facilities were in operation, it was greatly expressed by the public and advocacy groups that these types of programs are greatly needed in Humboldt County to assist in addressing homelessness.

Rather than letting the inland pilot program expire without being tested, on January 9, 2024, the Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to extend the inland ordinance for an additional 2 years to allow the Planning and Building Department to conduct a public information effort and work with interested agencies to encourage development of Safe Parking - Safe Shelter facilities. The inland ordinance expired on January 7, 2026, and during the 2-year extension the Planning and Building Department received 1 application for a safe shelter facility, which was approved in June of 2025. However, no development has occurred on the site in association to the approval or to establish operation of the facility.

As the inland ordinance expired on January 7, 2026, staff is recommending that both the inland and coastal pilot program ordinances be extended until January 1, 2036, in line with SB 1395 and the State's decision to extend the shelter crisis declaration and provisions of Government Code Section 8698.4 until January 1, 2036. Government Code Section 8698.4 allows the use of emergency housing building code standards for emergency housing operations during the declaration of a shelter crisis. The proposed amendments to the inland and coastal ordinances will include updating language under subsections 61.05.3 (inland) and 60.1.3 (coastal) in both ordinances from referencing California Building Code Appendix X and California Residential Code Appendix O, Emergency Housing standards to reference the most current building codes Appendix Q and CJ and include other additional changes requested from Humboldt County Code Enforcement. These changes will require facilities to comply with the most current applicable building code for Emergency Housing standards.

The Board originally adopted the coastal ordinance as Section 313-61.05. This section number is already in use, and the new section number will be 313-60.1.

We have also added a provision to restrict the disposal of greywater or blackwater from recreational vehicles at sites, unless documentation is provided to show legal disposal in its Management Plan, to the coastal ordinance.

The inland ordinance would become effective 30 days after Board approval, and the coastal ordinance still requires certification from the Coastal Commission to become effective.

Effect of Ordinance:

The intended results of these changes is to continue allowing the use of the Safe Parking - Safe Shelter Pilot Program provisions and Government Code Section 8698.4 for Emergency Housing standards and to require compliance with current building code for Emergency Housing.

Environmental Review: The proposed ordinance extensions are statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 21080(b)(4) of the Public Resources Code (specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency) and Section 15269(c) of the CEQA Guidelines (actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency).

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The project was referred to County Counsel, the County Sheriff's Department, the Department of Health and Human Services, and Code Enforcement. Comments were received from Code Enforcement and have been integrated into the Inland and Coastal versions of the Ordinance.

State Appeal: Changes proposed to the Local Coastal Program (zoning ordinance provisions 313-60.1) must receive final certification from the California Coastal Commission before they become effective

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Planning Commission could decide not to amend the Inland and Coastal Safe Parking - Safe Shelter Pilot Program Ordinance to extend provisions of the ordinance in line with the state's decision to extend government code Section 8698.4 allowing the use of emergency housing building standards to house the homeless. However, this is not recommended as the County has one approved Safe Parking - Safe Shelter site that is not currently in operation but has plans to operate in the future.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Inland Resolution
2. Draft Coastal Resolution
3. Amended Inland Safe Parking/Safe Shelter Ordinance
4. Amended Coastal Safe Parking/Safe Shelter Ordinance
5. Code Enforcement Referral

Please contact Megan Acevedo, Associate Planner, at macevedo@co.humboldt.ca.us <<mailto:macevedo@co.humboldt.ca.us>> or 707-441-2634 if you have questions about this item.