



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 5/21/2026

File #: 26-504

To: Planning Commission

From: Planning and Building Department

Agenda Section: Public Hearing

SUBJECT:

Amendment to General Plan Safety Element to include updated Hazard Mitigation Plan (Chapter 14 of the General Plan); Record # LRP-2026-19541

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Planning Commission:

1. Open the public hearing,
2. Receive and consider the staff report, and accept public comment; and
3. Deliberate and comment on the draft amendments and alternatives presented; and
4. Adopt the attached Resolution to recommend the Board of Supervisors take the following actions:
 - a. Find the Amendment is exempt from per CEQA Guidelines Sections 15061(b)(3); and
 - b. Make all the required findings to support amending the General Plan,
 - c. Adopt the proposed amendments to the General Plan.

DISCUSSION:

The amendment to the Safety Element is to re-incorporate the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) into the Safety Element. The LHMP adopted in 2023 and incorporated into the Safety Element expired in 2025 and a new LHMP needed to be adopted and re-incorporated into the Safety Element. An updated LHMP was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in December of 2025. That action did not contemplate the need for the LHMP to be incorporated into the Safety Element of the General Plan. This action will modify the Safety Element to include the LHMP. This action is necessary for the General Plan to be in compliance with state law, and to be eligible for various types of funding. The

LHMP has been approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the California Office of Emergency Services.

California Government Code Section 8685.93 limits the State of California's share of disaster relief funds paid out to local governments to 75% of the funds not paid for by federal disaster relief efforts except when the jurisdiction adopted a valid hazard mitigation plan consistent with the Disaster Management Act of 2000. This plan must be incorporated into the safety element in the jurisdiction's general plan. The State may cover more than 75% of the remaining disaster relief costs in these cases.

All cities and counties in California must prepare a general plan, including a safety element that addresses various hazard conditions and other public safety issues. A community may decide to make the safety element a stand-alone chapter or incorporate it into another section of the general plan. California Government Code Section 65302.6 indicates that a community may adopt an LHMP into its safety element if the LHMP meets applicable state requirements. This adoption allows communities to use the LHMP to satisfy state requirements for safety elements. As the General Plan is an overarching long-term plan for community growth and development, incorporating the LHMP creates a stronger mechanism for implementing the LHMP. This LHMP and future updates will be integrated into the County's General Plan Safety Element. A LHMP must be updated every 5 years.

The LHMP for Humboldt County was written to include the cities within the county, community service districts, fire districts, the Harbor District, and the Shelter Cove Resort Improvement District. It is in two volumes. The first volume addresses the process of preparation and the hazards which confront the region. Volume 2 includes the specific issues and measures for each of the jurisdictions and districts. The plan can be found in the link referenced in Attachment 1.

In order for the Board of Supervisors to adopt a revision to the Safety Element to incorporate the LHMP it must be based on a recommendation from the Planning Commission. This is an important action as it affects the County's ability to obtain grant funding for pre-response planning, and reimbursement for actions taken in response to disasters.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

The proposed amendments are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15061(b)(3) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the proposed amendments may have a significant effect on the environment. The amendments are necessary to comply with state requirements and increase resiliency of structures and the environment in unincorporated areas to man-made and natural disasters.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Tribes and many other agencies were involved in development of the LHMP.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

There are not acceptable alternatives to incorporating the LHMP into the Safety Element of the General Plan

ATTACHMENTS:

1. [County Emergency Plans | Humboldt County, CA - Official Website](https://humboldt.gov/3011/County-Emergency-Plans)
<<https://humboldt.gov/3011/County-Emergency-Plans>>
2. Draft Resolution recommending that the Board of Supervisors adopt the Safety Element Updates into the General Plan.
3. FEMA approval letter
4. OES Letter dated July 10, 2023, approval of prior LHMP.