



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 5/21/2026

File #: 26-501

To: Planning Commission

From: Planning and Building Department

Agenda Section: Public Hearing

SUBJECT:

Mixed Residential Density Ordinance - Enabling Higher Densities within Housing Opportunity Zones, if Compliant with Development Standards.
Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN) 000-000-000
Record No.: LRP-2023-18368
Countywide

An ordinance to define Mixed Residential Density provisions in Section 314-56 of the Inland Zoning Regulations to allow up to 25 units per acre within Residential One-Family (R-1) and Residential Two-Family (R-2) zones in the Housing Opportunity Zones. Housing Opportunity Zones are exclusively within the inland region of Humboldt County, in portions of the Redway, Garberville, Miranda, Weott, Scotia, McKinleyville, Pine Hill, Humboldt Hill, Cutten, Myrtle town, and Ridgewood Heights areas.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Planning Commission:

1. Adopt the resolution (attachment 1) which does the following:
 - a. Finds the Planning Commission has considered the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) previously adopted for the Humboldt County General Plan as well as the Addendum to the EIR that was prepared for the Mixed Residential Density Ordinance project pursuant to Section 15164 of the CEQA guidelines; and
 - b. Finds the proposed project is in the Public Interest and is consistent with the General Plan and State Planning Law; and
 - c. Recommends the Board of Supervisors adopt the Mixed Residential Density Ordinance with one of the Alternatives for Section 314-56.6.5.10.

DISCUSSION:

The proposed ordinance is to implement Housing Element Implementation Measure H-IM61, which directs the County to amend the Zoning Regulations adding a principal zoning district to be applied within Housing Opportunity Zones that allow higher residential densities and flexible housing configurations to address workforce housing needs for existing and new development. To more efficiently achieve the same goal, the proposed ordinance instead modifies the R-1 and R-2 zones within the Housing Opportunity Zones to add additional higher density housing options that would be subject to additional development standards meant to limit impacts on neighborhood character. To remain consistent with the implementation measure, most new options may be principally permitted with a building permit, though certain developments would require a Conditional Use Permit.

The additions incorporated into the County Code are significant but meet the intent of the Housing Element approved in 2019. The following summarizes some of the key aspects of the proposed project.

- A. Permitted Structures. (314-56.6.3) The proposed code principally permits structures comprised of 2 to 5 units. Multiple multifamily structures can be developed on one parcel, provided they are below the 25 units per acre density and meet the development standards. For structures comprised of 6 or more units, a Conditional Use Permit would be required.
- B. Development Standards. (314-56.6.5) Any development that relies upon this ordinance for approval needs to meet the Development Standards in Section 314-56.6.5, most of which are tailored to make the higher density development either feasible or consistent with the surrounding neighborhood. The structures shall incorporate design elements to match the surrounding neighborhood and, if any street-facing façade is over 60 feet in width, shall incorporate recesses or extensions to read as a series of buildings no wider than 40 feet each. To support the higher density, the maximum ground coverage standard is raised to 45%.
- C. Parking Alternative. (314-56.6.5.10) Parking for the developments that may be approved by this ordinance would typically match the standard parking code (Section 314-109), but if a structure is comprised of four or more units, only 1 parking space per unit would be required. Between the parking code and this ordinance, only the lesser number of off-street parking spaces is required. Two alternatives are provided, both incorporate the above but Alternative 2 adds an option for one off-street parking space per two units for structures with six or more residential units that are also within one-half mile of an active bus stop that provides service at least twice daily, Monday through Saturday. Alternative 2 uses similar language and parking requirements as Density Bonus Codes.
- D. Exceptions. (314-56.6.6) Various subsections of this ordinance either do not belong with the Development Standards or apply only in very specific circumstances. These include prohibitions for development pursuant to this ordinance near or adjacent to industrial zones or uses, avoidance from Greenway and Open Space, and requirements to maintain at least as many dwelling units as

had been present onsite within the last five years.

These changes do not remove any ability for property owners to develop their property in a manner that could already be approved, the changes only add new options which have restrictions applied.

Environmental Review:

An Addendum to a previously adopted Environmental Impact Report has been prepared for consideration per §15164 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The project was referred to County Counsel.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Planning Commission could choose to modify the proposed ordinance based upon public input and Commission discussion.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Resolution
 - A. Draft Ordinance No. ____ amending Section 314-56 of HCC
2. CEQA Addendum

Please contact Augustus Grochau, Associate Planner, at agrochau@co.humboldt.ca.us or 707-441-2626 if you have questions about this item.