



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 7/28/2026

File #: 26-559

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Planning and Building Department

Agenda Section: Public Hearing

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:

Adoption of changes made by the California Coastal Commission to the Outdoor Lighting Ordinance Adding Section 313-105.1 of the Humboldt County Code to Set Design Standards for Outdoor Lighting within the Coastal Unincorporated Areas of Humboldt County and Amending Sections 313-138, 313-141, 313-147 and 313-154 (Definitions)

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Open the public hearing and receive the staff report and public comment; and
2. Close the public hearing.
3. Adopt the resolution (Attachment 1) to take the following actions:
 - a. Find that the proposed Coastal Outdoor Lighting Ordinance is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15251(f) of the State CEQA Guidelines, Exemption for Certified State Regulatory Programs; and
 - b. Find that the proposed Coastal Outdoor Lighting Ordinance is in the public interest and is consistent with the Coastal Act and State Housing Law; and
4. Repeal Ordinance 2768; and
5. Adopt the Coastal Outdoor Lighting Ordinance (Attachment 2) adding Section 313-105.1 of Chapter 3 of Division 1 of Title III of the Humboldt County Code, establishing uniform regulations for outdoor lighting within the unincorporated coastal areas of Humboldt County and amending sections 313-138, 313-141, 313-147, and 313-154 (definitions), as modified by the California Coastal Commission; and
6. Direct the Clerk of the Board to publish the Post-Adoption Summary of the Coastal Outdoor

Lighting 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:

Executive Summary:

The Coastal Outdoor Lighting Ordinance was approved by the Board of Supervisors on Aug. 19, 2025 (Ordinance 2768 - Attachment 6) and transmitted to the California Coastal Commission on Nov. 13, 2025. On Feb. 4, 2026, the Coastal Commission certified the ordinance subject to the county's adoption of the Coastal Commission's suggested modifications shown in Attachment 4.

The Coastal Commission suggested the following modifications to the Coastal Outdoor Lighting Ordinance:

1. Add the correlated color temperature (CCT) limit of 2700 Kelvins (K) to the Lighting for Residential Use standards of Section 105.1.5.
2. Apply the correlated color temperature (CCT) limit of 2700K specified in Section 105.1.6.3 (standards for parking lots for agricultural, commercial, and industrial uses) more broadly to apply to all outdoor circulation areas for these use types. Also apply the standards of this section to "Public Facilities" uses, including, but not limited to streets.

The above modifications were made by the Coastal Commission staff to further restrict CCT limit to 2700K and further protect the night sky and environmentally sensitive habitat areas (ESHA).

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

General funds (1100)

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Staff costs and other expenses related to research for both the inland and coastal ordinances, and preparation and review of the associated staff reports total approximately \$84,000. 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:

There may be an increase in workload for the Code Enforcement Unit, which is funded by the General Fund (1100-299), who would have to process lighting nuisance complaints and may need to verify lighting nuisances after normal business hours.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

California Coastal Commission.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board may choose to modify or not accept specific modifications to the proposed Coastal Outdoor Lighting Ordinance. Staff does not recommend this alternative because that would nullify the Coastal Commission's certification, and the County would have to restart the process with the Coastal Commission.

Alternatively, the Board may decline to approve the Coastal Outdoor Lighting 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 Certified Adopted Findings
5. Notice of Coastal Commission Action
6. Ordinance 2768

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Meeting of: 3/20/2025 Planning Commission

File No.: 25-386

Meeting of: 5/15/2025 Planning Commission

File No.: 25-645

Meeting of: 8/19/2025 Board of Supervisors

File No.: 25-887