



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 8/6/2026

File #: 26-830

To: Planning Commission

From: Planning and Building Department

Agenda Section: Departmental Report

SUBJECT:

A Public Workshop on the Humboldt Bay Area Plan (HBAP).

Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN) 000-000-000

Record No.: LRP-2023-18700

All of the unincorporated areas of Humboldt County within the Humboldt Bay Area Plan.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Planning Commission:

1. Request that staff present the staff report;
2. Receive public comment;
3. Deliberate and comment on the Humboldt Bay Area Plan Public Draft;
4. Provide guidance to Planning & Building Staff on any desired amendments to the draft Humboldt Bay Area Plan prior to a public hearing.

DISCUSSION:

Project Location: All unincorporated areas of Humboldt County, within the Humboldt Bay Area Plan.

Present General Plan Land Use Designation: All land use designations within the Humboldt Bay Area Plan.

Present Zoning: All coastal zoning districts within the Humboldt Bay Area Plan.

Environmental Review: N/A for workshop.

State Appeal: N/A for workshop.

Executive Summary:

Background

The Humboldt Bay Area Plan (HBAP) is being revised and updated as a collaborative project between the Planning Department and California Coastal Commission (CCC). The HBAP was originally certified in 1982 and establishes policies that govern the use of approximately 21,500 acres of land in the unincorporated area around Humboldt Bay and over 20 miles of Pacific coastline. The LCP has not been comprehensively updated to reflect the significant changes that have occurred locally and regionally over the last 40+ years and therefore, portions of the HBAP are no longer reflective of the current conditions or priorities of Humboldt Bay.

Proposed Changes

Changes to the HBAP include:

- General Edits (Update background information and policies to reflect current conditions, grammar, formatting, error corrections)
- Sea Level Rise (SLR) (Background information, policies, guidance from CCC documents)
 - Build on past efforts and will focus on SLR planning policy work to incorporate best practices for adapting to SLR, informed by the best science available and most recent CCC guidance, into the existing HBAP framework. These policies will be updated and refined based on new information and policy guidance. The draft policies will be refined, as needed, and the updated background information and policies will be incorporated into the HBAP update. The County anticipates the need for a mix of protection, accommodation, and retreat strategies and measures in order to provide both short-term and long-term protection from SLR impacts, while also providing the flexibility necessary to address a variety of static and changing circumstances in the most feasible and least environmentally damaging manner possible. New policies will additionally support enhancement and restoration projects that encourage SLR adaptation to protect coastal resources. Draft policies will be sent to CCC staff for review. These efforts will be focused on building resiliency to SLR impacts to roads, communities, agricultural land, and ESHAs in the unincorporated areas.
- Tsunami (Background information, policies, guidance from CCC documents)
 - Updating the background information and policies related to tsunami hazards based on the most current guidance documents and any other relevant best available science. Draft policies will be sent to CCC staff for review.
- Addition of Environmental Justice and Tribal History within document
 - Include and acknowledge the Tribal History of the area.
 - Integrate environmental justice principles into the LCP planning and regulatory framework, particularly regarding access to coastal resources, protection from and remediation of environmental hazards, and participation in decision-making processes. Gathering and integrating background information on the California Coastal Commission's most recent environmental justice guidance. This information will be used to develop the new environmental justice policy.
- Revise Urban Limit Lines

- Include review and analysis of the existing ULLs based on factors including: land use/zoning, proximity to existing development, transportation connectivity, coastal resources and will seek to address conflicts in water service areas (WSAs) and service extension requirements in consideration of the on-the-ground conditions for water service, while minimizing significant policy changes.
- Ensure consistency between Land Use Designation and Zoning
 - Updates to the HBAP and the Zoning Code to correct inconsistencies and accurately describe and depict existing conditions. These revisions seek to address conflicts and inconsistencies in service areas, Urban Limit Lines (ULLs), and land uses and zoning. Various inconsistencies between zoning, land use, existing conditions, land use jurisdiction, and/or mapping have been noted. Additionally, landowners requested land use and zoning changes to the HBAP planning area during the general plan update process that were previously approved by the BOS and submitted to the CCC and never finalized.
- Coastal-Dependent Industrial (Background information, policies)
 - The CDI lands within the HBAP planning area are critical to the current and future coastal-based economy of Humboldt County. Future development and use of these lands is dependent on various factors, including but not limited to historical uses, infrastructure, and environmental resources. These factors offer both opportunities and constraints for future development.

Public Draft June 1, 2026

The Humboldt Bay Area Plan Public Draft dated June 1, 2026 (Attachment 1) was released for public review and comment on June 1, 2026. The Public Draft was uploaded on the county's website [HumboldtGov.org/HumboldtBayAreaPlanUpdate <https://humboldt.gov/1678/Local-Coastal-Plan-Update>](https://humboldt.gov/1678/Local-Coastal-Plan-Update).

Revised HBAP Drafts

Humboldt Bay Area Plan Public Draft dated July 1, 2026 (Attachment 2) is the revised version of Attachment 1 to include public comments made during the 30-day review period. Revisions made in between June 1 - July 1 are highlighted blue in Attachment 2.

Both Attachment 1 and Attachment 2 include track changes to show revisions to the existing certified Humboldt Bay Area Plan. Humboldt Bay Area Plan Version 2 - Workshop Draft (Attachment 3) is the clean version of Attachment 2 and changes to the organization of the HBAP. Public comment mentioned that the red strikethrough and underline within Attachment 1 was distracting when reviewing the document. County staff wanted to include track changes in the first version of the revised HBAP document to clearly show proposed changes (Attachments 1 and 2) before updating the organization and structure of the document, as shown in Version 2 of the document (Attachment 3). Attachments 2 and 3 have the same content, the key difference between the two documents is the organization and Attachment 3 does not include track changes.

Public Engagement

A public meeting via Zoom was held on February 17, 2026, at 6pm, to provide an overview of how the

HBAP is going to be updated and reengage the public on the project.

A public meeting via Zoom was held on June 16, 2026, at 6pm, to go over the Public Draft, receive public comment, and answer any questions.

A public meeting via Zoom was held on July 7, 2026, at 5:30pm, to address questions and concerns over the Samoa Town Master Plan. This meeting was created in response to public comment.

Public Comments

Public comments from the public meetings, specifically the June 16th meeting, and public draft review period are as follows:

- Removal of the Residential High Density (RH) Land Use Designation - The RH land use designation was removed from the HBAP because there are no existing or proposed parcels to be designated RH.
- Requests for maps - There were multiple requests for maps to be available for this workshop. Both the public and County staff recognized the need for high-resolution maps for the final draft of the HBAP. Requests for maps included HBAP Planning Area Boundary with the Coastal Zone Boundary clearly differentiated, Coastal zone jurisdictions within HBAP, Existing and Proposed Overlay Zones within HBAP, and maps associated with Samoa Town Master Plan. Draft maps have been attached as Attachment 4.
- Shoreline Armoring - Concerns regarding shoreline armoring were raised during the June 16th Public Meeting. Attachment 2 includes more policies on shoreline armoring.
- SLR - More policies on SLR, protection of salt marsh, nature-based solutions, agriculture lands/former tidelands, “intermediate” vs “high” scenarios for SLR based on OPC guidance. Attachment 2 further discusses these concerns.
- Hazard Areas - Make a policy to not allow subdivisions in hazard areas, create a map showing hazard areas. A hazard area map is being developed. Most parcels in hazards areas are already subdivided/minimum parcel size or have a “X” combining zone which does not allow further subdivision.
- Promotion of infill - What areas should infill be encouraged? Infill shall be encouraged in areas within the Urban Limit Line that are not deemed a hazard area.
- Modes of access - Clarify modes of access, concern of electric bikes and scooters. The Public Access section will be revised to clarify what modes of access can be used to access public access sites.
- Port Overlay zone - More information on what is being proposed, would like a map of where the overlay zone is proposed. Attachment 2 has been updated to include more information on the proposed Port Overlay zone.

Public Comments - Samoa Town Master Plan (STMP)

Public comments concerning the updates to the STMP were received and included in Attachment 5. Revisions to the STMP in Attachment 1 were intended to clean up the STMP by removing archaic and/or completed policies. When reviewing STMP, staff noticed that STMP was missing revisions from the 2016 amendment to the plan (Attachment 6), which were approved by the Board of Supervisors and California Coastal Commission. Attachment 1 added the 2016 revisions to the STMP. Staff is not proposing new policies within the STMP. Attachment 2 and Attachment 3 only includes the 2016 revisions to the STMP, no changes are being proposed to the STMP.

Other Agency Involvement:

California Coastal Commission

Attachments:

1. Humboldt Bay Area Plan Public Draft dated June 1, 2026
2. Humboldt Bay Area Plan Public Draft dated July 1, 2026
3. Humboldt Bay Area Plan Version 2 - Workshop Draft
4. Land Use and Zone Change List
 - A. Land Use and Zone Change Maps
5. Public Comments
6. 16-1037 Text Amendments to Humboldt Area Plan

Please contact Reanne Meighan, Associate Planner, at rmeighan@co.humboldt.ca.us or 707-268-3713 if you have questions about this item.