



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 8/11/2026

File #: 26-733

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Planning and Building Department

Agenda Section: Public Hearing

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:

Adoption of an Ordinance Creating Density Bonus Regulations in Section 313-111 Sections 313-136 Through 313-157 (Definitions) of the Humboldt County Coastal Zoning Regulations to Reflect Changes Required by the California Coastal Commission

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) which does the following:
 - a. Find that the proposed amendments to the Coastal Density Bonus Ordinance are exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15251(f), of the State CEQA Guidelines (preparation and adoption of Local Coastal Plan; and
 - b. Find that the proposed amendments to the Coastal Density Bonus Ordinance are in the public interest and comply with the Coastal Act, local coastal program, and State Planning Law; and
4. Repeal Ordinance 2777 (Attachment 6); and
5. Adopt the ordinance (Attachment 2) which amends Title II, Division 1, Chapter 3 of Humboldt County Code Sections 313-111.1 and 313-136 through 313-157 Creating Provisions to Allow Density Bonus as modified by the Coastal Commission; and
6. Direct the Planning and Building Department staff to notify the Coastal Commission of the county's acceptance of the Commission's suggested modifications; and
7. Direct the Clerk of the Board to publish the Post-Adoption Summary of the Amendments to the Coastal Density Bonus Ordinance (Attachment 3), 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: Housing for All

Strategic Plan Category: 4002 - Increase and prioritize housing development

DISCUSSION:

The Coastal Density Bonus Ordinance as adopted by the Board of Supervisors on November 4, 2025 (Ordinance 2777 - Attachment 6) and transmitted to the California Coastal Commission on Dec. 11, 2025. On June 11, 2026, the Coastal Commission certified the ordinance, subject to the county adopting the Coastal Commission's modifications shown in Attachment 4.

The Coastal Commission suggested the following modifications to the amendments to the Coastal Density Bonus Ordinance:

1. Add subsection 313-111.1.5.2.1.5, which adds an additional finding for denying the development standard waiver requests described by Section 313-111.1.5.2, requiring that the waivers are also consistent with Local Coastal Plan provisions that require avoidance from significant coastal resource impacts.
2. Modify Section 313-111.1.4.2 and its associated subsections to add "conditions of permit approval" as a factor that could necessitate longer periods for affordability restrictions.
3. Modify Section 313-111.1.8.2 to add that Density Bonus Housing Agreements must be executed before the Coastal Development Permit may be issued for density bonus projects.

The above modifications were made by the Coastal Commission staff to ensure both the Coastal Commission and the county can protect against potential significant impacts to coastal resources when permitting density bonuses and additional incentives.

Effect of Ordinance:

The overall results of the amendments to the Coastal Density Bonus Ordinance are intended to provide state-compliant standards for permitting density bonuses.

Environmental Review:

The proposed amendments are exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15251(f), Exemption for Certified State Regulatory Programs, of the State CEQA Guidelines and pursuant to Section 21080.085, Rezoning which Implements an Approved Housing Element, of the State CEQA Guidelines.

State Appeal:

The changes proposed to the Local Coastal Program received final certification from the California Coastal Commission on June 11, 2026. Further changes to the proposed ordinance would require additional certification from the California Coastal Commission.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

The salary funding for research, staff tasks, and preparing the draft ordinance and staff report is included in the General Fund contribution to the Long-Range Planning unit (1100-282).

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Staff costs and other expenses related to research, staff tasks, and preparing the draft ordinance and staff report total approximately \$32,000.

STAFFING IMPACT:

Staff time required for reviewing applicable state laws will be reduced via implementation. Communication of the existence of density bonus regulations may increase staff interaction at the front counter and processing of proposals, regardless of decision.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The project was referred to County Counsel. All comments and recommendations have been incorporated into the draft ordinance.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Board may choose to modify or not accept specific modifications to the proposed Amendments to the Coastal Density Bonus 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.

ATTACHMENTS:

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1. Draft Resolution
2. Ordinance Amending Title Iii, Division 1, Chapter 3 Of Humboldt County Code Sections 313-111.1 And 313-136 Through 313-157 Creating Provisions To Allow Density Bonus
3. Post-Adoption Summary
4. Coastal Commission Report
5. Notice of Coastal Commission Action
6. Ordinance No. 2777

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Planning Commission Meeting of: September 18, 2025

File No.: 25-1120

Board of Supervisors Meeting of: November 4, 2025

File No.: 25-1215